celebrat ge

in the long run

MILKHA AND NIRMAL SINGH KEEP THE MAGIC ALIVE PLUS: Stories of togetherness and tips that click FOOTSTEPS Fashion designer Shaina NC's parents are her life

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Lessons ON LOVE

Love is in the air this month in *Harmony*. Mr and Mrs Milkha Singh stand resplendent on our cover; our pages are peopled with them and other silver couples who have kept the dream alive long after the blush of youth has worn off. If you read about their lives, you will discern a common thread that unites them all: they refuse to take their relationship for granted.

It's a lesson worth learning. Enduring love is not a montage of passionate moments but a shared voyage of growth, evolution and discovery. It's a state of engagement with another person that allows no room for complacency, neglect or ennui. Over time, keeping this bond nourished becomes even more imperative. Make your home a cocoon of comfort where you can rediscover each other slowly, at your leisure. Learn new skills together and take the time to appreciate each other's pleasures and pastimes. Share your thoughts and emotions without fear of censure. Remember all the factors that drew you to one another and appreciate all that you have created together. And let your partner become your best friend that is the secret to real togetherness.

In fact, it was heart-warming to see so many silver couples at the Harmony Run at the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon on 17 January—sharing the excitement, feeling the buzz and exulting in the moment. As always, the event kicked off the New Year on a perfect note: silvers in action, out front and centre for all to see. It's the sixth silver run in Mumbai; there's so much awareness in the city now about the event and the intrepid silvers who make it their own. Akshay Kumar who energised the participants with his spontaneity and verve—he broke into a jig much to everyone's delight—told us how



inspired he was by the silvers. He's promised to be back next year.

My thanks to Akshay, Gulshan Grover, who comes out to support us every year, and Anjana Sukhani for cheering the participants on. Also, I'd like to acknowledge the support of Abbott India, Ashiana Housing, Dabur India, Domino's Pizza, Essel World, LG, Hindustan Unilever, JW Marriott, Procam International, Zimmer India and, of course, the Reliance ADA Group companies (BIG Cinemas, BIG 92.7 FM, BIG Home Videos, Reliance Communications and Reliance Infrastructure Ltd) who helped us make it a memorable morning. Above all, three cheers to the participants who reinforce our faith in silver power and underscore Harmony's message: Celebrate Age.

Indeed, it takes very little to transform the mundane into a celebration. Spirit, for one, passion and a zest for living that impels you to make each moment magical. All these qualities lie within each of us—find them and make every day special.

Ina Ambam

A Harmony for Silvers Foundation Initiative

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RESPONSE

column ONE

Let the sparks fly this season. Let that flame never die. Love is as important as your health, the bank balance and your own house. On the cover this month are 'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh with his wife Nirmal ("Mr and Mrs Singh"). Reliving their days as a young couple, they speak about sharing the good and bad times, their careers as struggling sportspersons, days when collective wisdom was wiser than common sense and national pride more important than money; the days when a glance could express a thousand words and holding hands was a needless gesture. Completing our love package are couples who stay connected ("Two of a Kind") by sharing interests and principles. Despite all the love, you may not like some of your spouse's habits-the way he squeezes the toothpaste tube or how she insists on cutting onions in the same room you're in. Our 55 dos and don'ts are as eternal as your sentiments. Cut them out and press them under the glass of your worktable; just like she once pressed in her book the flower you gave her and you her letters.

Harmony helps you reinvent your outlook to love and life. To reinstate your faith, we introduce you to people you would otherwise never meet. Dr Padmanabha Vyasamoorthy ("Virtual Link", 'Orbit') worked on educating himself in information technology way into his later years, only to channel his commitment to help fellow senior citizens overcome their inhibitions when it comes to computers. And Lily Sawant ('Speak') doesn't subscribe to traditional methods of teaching and believes our children can find answers to all their questions out in the field. Inimitable role model! That's Harmony for you.

—Meeta Bhatti

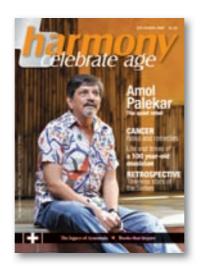
onsidering that senior citizens flock in large numbers to Himachal Pradesh for religious *vatra*, a seminar on 'Senior Citizens and Tourism in Himachal Pradesh' was organised on 30 November 2009 at Bachat Bhawan, Shimla. This was attended by more than 125 participants from various sectors of society, including 30 senior citizens, representatives of the hotel industry, and students and staff of the Institute of Heritage and Tourism, Shimla. Speakers deliberated upon the problems of senior citizens when they travel

pick



and suggested ways to make their experience better, which in turn would give a further impetus to tourism in Himachal Pradesh. In fact, Manisha Nanda, principal secretary, tourism, language and culture, in the Himachal Pradesh government, laid stress upon the experience of senior citizens, which could be harnessed to great benefit. Many speakers hailed senior citizens as the brand ambassadors and custodians of Indian culture and traditions. The conclusion of the seminar was that the services of senior citizens should be utilised for the promotion of tourism. They should be given facilities to visit important cultural landmarks along with the younger generation. This will help preserve our traditional body of knowledge while keeping our elders emotionally engaged and occupied.

Dr V K Sharma, Via email



I twas wonderful to read the December issue of *Harmony* magazine. I believe grey hair is an ornament of honour and should be respected by society. Old age is the most important part of one's life. The past is something we cannot change. Often, bitter experiences cause negative thinking and pessimism. But we must not let the past take hold of our future. Our response to life makes a huge difference so we must always be positive and optimistic.

Nirmal Kumar Dey, Bokaro

I just received a copy of *Harmony* magazine. Your story on "Superfoods" (January 2010), which featured my recipe for garlic bean and corn honey rice, was very nicely covered. The magazine on the whole is really very informative. Best wishes to the entire team.

Komal Taneja, New Delhi







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 $T^{hank you for sending us the copy}_{of Harmony magazine with Chef}_{Sanjeev Kapoor's recipe for crunchy}_{celery and cucumber salad with}_{flaxseed ("Superfoods", January 2010). The magazine sure looks good and we hope for a long association with the publication.}$

Tripta Bhagattjee, Khana Khazana India Pvt Ltd, Mumbai

n 12 September 2002, when I was 73 years old, I suffered a terrible accident. I was riding a two-wheeler when a car dashed into my vehicle from behind, throwing me on the road. I broke seven ribs and lav unconscious on the road for about half an hour before I was taken to a nearby hospital. The initial diagnosis of the consulting orthopaedic surgeon was complete rest and medication for six months. I took his advice for the first week and then started my own therapy, which included yoga asana, breathing exercises, acupressure, Reiki and dietary modifications. To the surprise of doctors, and my friends and family members, I recovered in 45 days. I firmly believe that we have the power to control our health and we must never underestimate it. I now teach others to do the same.

Dr Ranjit Gohel, Via email

I have been a regular subscriber to your wonderful magazine for the last five years and enjoy it thoroughly. In fact, I have found it to be a good birthday present for many of my friends. However, I have a suggestion. Can you please enlarge the font size of your text to make it more legible for your readers, as many of them may be suffering from cataract and glaucoma? They may be having trouble reading. I hope you will accept my suggestion.

Sarla Lall, New Delhi

Lave been reading *Harmony* for several years now. After reading the inspiring stories of silvers in your magazine, I thought I should share something about my life with other readers. In 1994, I was diagnosed with a heart problem and was advised to go on brisk walks. On one such walk, I came across a member of a prayer group. Gradually we started a prayer group of our own. All of us would pray for 10-15 minutes after

CONTRIBUTOR



"If we don't protect our heritage, who will?" asks heritage conservationist Abha Narain Lambah, 39. In this issue, as a prelude to the feature "Glory in Ruins", she lays bare her frustration and angst at the abysmal treatment meted out to heritage monuments in India. Lambah holds a Masters degree in conservation architecture from the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi. Head of the heritage restoration firm Abha Narain Lambah Associates in Mumbai, she has been involved in the restoration of historical landmarks such as the Municipal Corporation Head Office, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Asiatic Library, Sir JJ School of Art and Mani Bhavan in Mumbai: Chandramauleshwar temple in Hampi; and the 15th century Maitreya Buddha temple in Ladakh, among many other notable projects. She is also a consultant for the Ajanta Caves World Heritage Site.

our daily morning walk. For the past 10 years, I have been making notes on spirituality, and have compiled them into a book, *In Search of Almighty*, which I plan to publish soon. My daily prayers have brought a radical change in my health and outlook. I urge all silvers to pray as a part of their daily routine.

M P Pai, Mumbai



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'

Mail us at Reliance Centre, 1st Floor, 19, Walchand Hirachand Marg, Ballard Estate, Mumbai-400001. Or email at contact.mag@ harmonyindia.org

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

harmony

heeks painted with the Indian tricolour. T-shirts with witty and quirky messages on terrorism and global warming. First-timers flush with wide-eyed enthusiasm. And veterans raring to take on the challenge one more time. On 17 January 2010, the 1,900 silvers who had gathered under the Harmony banner to participate in the 4.3-km Senior Citizens' Run at the 7th Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon were dressed to deliver a message: age has no bearing on enthusiasm.

)»EVENT

First-timer Jyotsna Joshi, 72, a retired accountant, had come alone to check out the "masti my friends keep telling me about". Roopchand Jain, 73, and his wife Kanakdevi, 65, were dressed in full Rajasthani attire and promised to complete the marathon. Tina Ambani, chairperson, Harmony for Silvers Foundation, flagged off the run joined by actors Akshay Kumar, Gulshan Grover and Anjana Sukhani. Kumar even sang and danced on stage with the silvers. A lucky dip at the end saw many winners taking home mobile phones, pizza vouchers, cinema tickets and an assortment of gift hampers. Encore, we say!

Photos: Haresh Patel; Jit Ray; Utkarsh Sanjanwala bit











Above, clockwise from top: a group of friends from Warden Road; Roopchand Jain, his wife Kanakdevi and daughter Pushpa in Rajasthani attire; silvers in colourful headgear; first-timers G M Mody and his wife K G Mody; below: silvers in action; opposite page, clockwise from top: Tina Ambani flagging off the silver run; with actors Anjana Sukhani and Gulshan Grover; with one of the winners of the lucky dip; actor Akshay Kumar posing for a picture with one of the participants



SURFING IN SINGAPORE: IN A BID TO ACCELERATE DIGITAL INCLUSION, SINGAPORE WILL SET UP 100 HOT SPOTS WITH COMPUTERS AND INTERNET SERVICES FOR SILVERS TO USE FOR FREE. THE STATE WILL ALSO OFFER FREE INTERNET TRAINING FOR ELDERS.

O»NEWSWORTHY

Joint research

hile acrimony builds about the assaults on Indian students in Australia, here's a heartening sign of cooperation between the two countries. A research project by Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani in Rajasthan and Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, is seeking to apply simple engineering principles to develop solutions for India's silvers. "We first conducted research to identify common problems faced by the elderly," Professor Nirupama Prakash of BITS tells media. "Now, we are working with Swinburne's Centre for Ageing to develop products based on the age-related weakening of the body." Her counterpart from Swinburne, Professor Ajay Kapoor, adds, "Just as we have done in Australia, this research will allow us to come up with designs, and adapt existing ones, to address daily challenges facing the elderly. For instance, while preparing dinner, if seeing the saucepan is a problem, perhaps it can be created in a colour that can be perceived better, or if shakiness is an issue perhaps the design can be changed to a two-handled saucepan. More advanced examples of engineering are swivelling seats or strategically placed handles to make it easier for seniors to get in and out of cars."



Inspiration can be sought from home-grown products like Wazeer Hayath's sensor-operated Blind Man's Stick (*Harmony* January 2009 issue)



LONGEVITY, off the shelf

ou may soon be able to shop for a new, healthier body. Researchers in the UK are working to enable silvers to buy body parts 'off the shelf' in future. The £ 50 million project at the Institute of Medical and Bioengineering at Leeds University will create hip and knee joints that last for 50 years instead of 20, and new heart valves and patches on arteries that last a lifetime. Key to this is the development of technology that ensures that the body does not reject these parts. The team has already developed a procedure that strips donated human heart valves of all foreign DNAthese are still beating four years after being transplanted. "We believe the programme could deliver 10 new products within five years, and halve the time such innovations take to get to the market," Professor John Fisher, director of the institute, tells London newspaper The Times. "By 2015, we absolutely believe we will deliver improvements for patients through the National Health Service and commercial products that will be sold throughout the world."

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O»ANALYSE THIS

The look of life

f you don't look your age, you won't just get compliments but a longer lease on life. According to research Led by Professor Kaare Christensen, an expert on ageing at the University of Southern Denmark, people whose faces belie their real age also live longer, enjoy better health and are less likely to get dementia. In 2001, his team investigated important age-related traits, such as physical cognitive functioning and telomere length (which indicates the ability of cells to reproduce) in a total of 1,826 Danish twins aged 70 years and over. Their faces were also photographed and a group of independent assessors were asked to estimate their age from the pictures. In addition, each twin of a pair had their age assessed on different days. When death records were used to track the survival of the twins over a seven-year period, the team found that perceived age was significantly associated with survival and better physical and cognitive functioning and telomere length," writes Christensen in the December 2009 issue of the British Medical Journal. "This was true even after adjusting for chronological age, sex, and the environ-



ment in which the subjects grew up. Further, the bigger the difference in perceived age within a twin pair, the more likely it was that the older looking twin died first. Thus we conclude that perceived age based on facial photographs is a strong biomarker of ageing."

DR FEELGOOD: A STUDY ON JOB SATISFACTION AMONG AMERICAN DOCTORS REVEALS THAT THOSE WHO TREAT CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY ARE THE HAPPIEST. THIS HAS COME AS A SURPRISE TO MANY, AS GERIATRICS HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN REGARDED AS AN UNPROFITABLE AND UNGLAMOROUS SPECIALITY.

STAYING SHARP FOREVER

EVER WONDERED how some silvers manage to stay in the game while others just can't keep up cognitively? A team at Nathan Kline Research Institute in Orangeburg, New York, led by Irish neuroscientist Dr John Foxe, says it's all about using the frontal lobes of the brain. They studied brainwave activity (EEG) in a group with an average age of 75. Each subject was asked to do two tasks-one involving letters and the other with numbers-switching back and forth between the two. While all subjects displayed age-related decline in their brain, some of them found it much



easier to accomplish the switching between tasks than their peers. "The high performers overcame their deficits by making fresh use of the reasoning part of the brain, the frontal lobes," concludes Foxe in the journal Human Brain Mapping. "We found their brains had been substantially reorganised, thus enabling them to compensate." The real takeaway is that this performance may be replicable. "There is a lot of plasticity in the frontal lobes, even as you get older," adds Foxe. "If these folks can learn the trick, we may be able to find how to teach others to do it."



O*TRENDS



World over, gerontologists are increasingly calling attention to sexual activity among silversand the need to develop sex education programmes for them. Here's a case in point. A recent survey by the Seoul Metropolitan Government and the University of Seoul revealed that three out of 10 people over the age of 65 in the South Korean capital have sex at least once a month. Of these, 76.4 per cent have sex with their spouse and 16.2 per cent with prostitutes, while the rest engage in intercourse with 'boyfriends' or 'girlfriends' they meet at senior welfare centres or through other organisations and meetings. Among those silvers who are sexually active, 53.4 per cent say they are satisfied with their sex life. While 18.2 per cent reveal that they use drugs for erectile dysfunction like Viagra or lubricants, 10.3 per cent admit that they had been infected with sexually transmitted diseases in later life, mainly from sex with those other than their spouse (prostitution: 65.2 per cent). "Based on the results of the survey, we plan to develop sex education programmes for senior citizens and expand counselling service and lectures," Kang Byoung-ho of the Seoul Metropolitan Government tells Reuters. "It is the need of the hour." And not just for Seoul.





O CANADA!

ACCORDING TO MEDIA REPORTS, ACTOR AKSHAY KUMAR WILL ORGANISE A FUNDRAISER IN TORONTO FOR INDIAN SILVERS WHO MIGRATED THERE TO JOIN THEIR CHILDREN, ONLY TO BE SUBSEQUENTLY NEGLECTED, ABUSED OR ABANDONED BY THEM.

O»LOVE THAT

GO GRANNIES!

hile world leaders were confabulating in Copenhagen at the UN Climate Change Conference in December 2009, the Raging Grannies of California were making their voice heard on the subject in downtown San Francisco. As London newspaper The Guardian reports, the women, dressed f amboyantly in bright reds, greens and purples, and sporting feather boas and huge Edwardian-style hats, brought traffic to a standstill, screaming environmental protection slogans. "We get out and protest; and we do it in living colour," says 'Granny' Ruth Robertson. "We promote peace, justice, social and economic equality through song and humour." Apart from protest marches, the group also performs short comedy skits to draw attention to issues that range from healthcare reform and abortion rights to immigration. The first Raging Granny group was formed in British Columbia in Canada about 20 years ago; soon after, many chapters have emerged in the US.

ONFOCUS

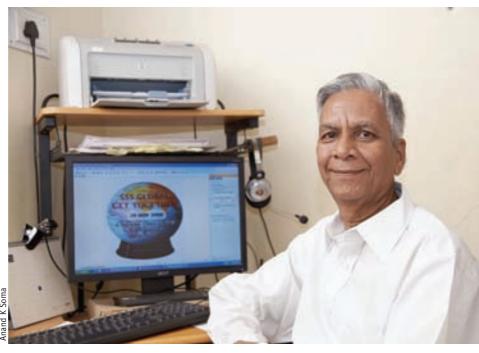
VIRTUAL LINK

DR PADMANABHA VYASAMOORTHY IS CO-OPTING SILVERS TO THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION

e was introduced to computers more than three decades ago—today **Dr Padmanabha Vyasamoorthy** uses them to bridge the gap between silvers and the outside world. "Seniors experience alienation and isolation owing to societal changes and they find the rapid technological transformation intimidating," the 68 year-old tells *Harmony*. "I believe the cyber world can change this to some extent and my mission is to contribute as much as possible."

After doing his B Sc from Madras University in 1962, Vyasamoorthy worked as a chemist in a private company for two years before switching over to library science. Completing his B Lib Sc in 1966, he joined Technical Teachers Training Institute in Chennai as a librarian. Ranking first in both B Lib Sc and M Lib Sc-which he completed in 1984-encouraged him to complete his PhD in library and information science from Gulbarga University in Karnataka. Much earlier, though, in 1970, he left Chennai, his city of birth, and moved to Hyderabad to join IDL Chemicals (now Gulf Oil Corporation) as librarian/technical information of cer. That's where he first started using computers in 1977.

The potential of computers and information technology held Vyasamoorthy in thrall. Taking voluntary retirement in 1992, he did a oneyear stint with Informatics India Ltd before joining Satyam Computers. "I started Satyam's knowledge management services and set up India's first knowledge repository from



1994 to 1996," he recalls. He went on to work on a four-year project with ICICI Knowledge Park and set up a virtual information centre in 2001-02—another first in India—and trained people for it. Subsequently, he served as knowledge management advisor to several organisations including the Andhra Pradesh Senior Citizens Confederation (APSCCON).

Having spent most of his working life in Andhra Pradesh, settling down in Secunderabad was a natural choice for Vyasamoorthy. And his experience with silvers impelled him to use his passion—computers—to transform their lives through social networking, discussion forums and new knowledge. In 2002, he set up an online discussion group, *www.groups.yahoo. com/group/sss-global.* "With about 535 members and a daily exchange of about 30 messages on varied topics, it was ranked 7th by Yahoo four years ago as one of the most vibrant discussion forums for senior citizens among 1,300 similar groups across the world," he says with evident pride.

That's not all. Vyasamoorthy, who is also a member of many Hyderabad and Secunderabad-based senior citizens' associations, organised a computer training programme for about 45 silvers in 2007. He also contributes senior-specific articles to sulekha.com, merinews.com, cplash.com, triond. com and ezinearticles.com, and edits a newsletter called Blazing Twilight that is circulated among senior citizens' associations. Further, he updates his site apsccon-second-careers.blogspot. com every week with openings for silvers extracted from jobsahead.com, naukri.com, monsterindia.com and other sites. Not surprisingly, this connected silver is always on the lookout for other silvers to join the information revolution-his calling card is vyasamoorthy@gmail.com

-Nisary Mahesh

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Special mention Akshay Kumar, Gulshan Grover & Anjana Sukhani



thanks all those who supported the Senior Citizens' Run at the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon 2010!





O»MEDIA WATCH

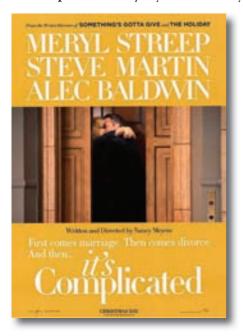
Go Slow

he 'SLOW' (strategic; long-term; organised; wilful) approach is the fast track to a youthful tomorrow, according to Australian authors Kate Marie and Christopher Thomas. Their book *Fast Living, Slow Ageing* (Mileage Media) urges us to "reframe ageing as a positive state, one of growth and possibility, with quality, connection and awareness". They don't like the phrase 'anti-ageing', stating, "We use the word 'slow' rather than 'anti' as slow is achievable and anti is not! Being able to turn back the clock is a myth." Their precepts include regular health checks to enable early detection of health risks; managing your environment to make it more enabling and healthy; making exercise a priority; looking after your mind; ensuring quality of life; and adopting an antioxidant-rich diet. Although we've heard it all before, the easy-to-read format makes it easy to hear all over again. Go to *www.slowageingbook.com* to find out more.



Delightfully complicated

IF YOU'VE SEEN *Mamma Mia!* and *Julie & Julia*, you'll know just how the most talented American actor of our time has taken her age and used it deliciously to make her even more watchable and alluring. And now Meryl Streep, all 60 years of her, turns it up another notch with *It's Complicated*, **a "menopausal comedy"** by director Nancy Meyer. Streep plays Jane,



a wealthy—and extremely feisty-Californian divorcee and bakery owner caught in a love triangle; behind Door No. 1 is Adam (Steve Martin), a sensitive architect; while Door No. 2 bangs open to reveal Jake (Alec Baldwin), her alpha-male ex-husband who left her for a younger woman but now wants back in. Amid all the comedy, Meyers uses her three handsome protagonists to take frequent pot-shots at America's obsession with the pursuit of youth, forcing viewers to confront the very real lives of silvers who continue to love and lust as they age. The line of the film: Adam telling Jane, "Your age is one of my favourite things about you."

OVERHEARD



"I THINK PEOPLE LOOK FUNNY WHEN THEY FREEZE THEIR FACES. THAT'S JUST ME. I DON'T GET IT."

—Actor Meryl Streep, 60, telling *Stuff* magazine why she doesn't want chemical or surgical touch-ups to look younger

LASH OUT!

Here's a double whammy for women with thinning eyelashes—Avon's Anew Lash Transforming Mascara + Serum increases volume by up to five times. "This new dual-ended mascara has an anti-ageing formula to both lengthen and strengthen lashes," goes the company's press release. "One of the main signs of ageing is that more eyelashes fall out on a regular cycle as new ones grow. This product includes creatine to reinforce the inner structure of hair and increase tensile strength." Priced in the US at \$ 10 (about Rs 450), the product is expected to be available in India soon.

O»FACE OFF



DAILY FIX

This could well be the mother of all cosmoceuticals—Innéov Fermeté is a daily pill developed by global giants Nestlé and L'Oréal that claims to banish wrinkles and make skin look younger. The sweet red pill contains lycopene-the pigment found in tomatoes—Vitamin C and isof avones extracted from soybeans; all powerful antioxidants that help protect tissue against damage. As London newspaper *The Telegraph* reports, the pill was tested with two groups of female volunteers: 90 post-menopausal women aged 51-69 and 70 others with an average age of 45. In each study, the women were divided into those who took the new pill and those who swallowed a placebo. After six months, the skin of those taking the real drug showed an 8.7 per cent better rate of elasticity (ability to spring back into place rather than leaving wrinkles). The f ipside: it is expensive (£ 25= about Rs 1,800 for a 10-day supply) and takes a long time to show results (about three months). Innéov Fermeté is already on sale in parts of Europe and South America and is expected to be launched worldwide in spring.

Mimic the **CLINIC**

In the UK, the end of 2009 saw the launch of four gadgets that mimic clinic treatments to zap wrinkles and restore the blush of youth. Here's a quick look, courtesy www.marieclaire.co.uk:

Tua Tre'nd: In true fairy godmother style, it has a wand that delivers an electric current to tighten and tone facial muscles while its massaging action works like a facial exercise and plumps up the face. The manufacturers guarantee an improvement in skin tone within a few weeks and a visible reduction in fine lines after 10 weeks. Price: £ 209 (about Rs 15,400); www.tuatrend face.com

Dermaroller Home Meso-Rejuvenation: Think you can handle tiny spikes (or micro needles) running over your face? Well, they penetrate only to a maximum depth of 0.20 mm and the promised payof is stimulation of the epidermis, plumper and more glowing skin. Price: £115 (about Rs 8,500); www.genuinedermaroller.co.uk

Facial Flex: Based on the principle of weight resistance to improve muscle tone, this gizmo is placed between the corners of the mouth and held together by elastic bands in the middle. This won't help you with wrinkles but the makers claim impressive results on sagging areas after using it twice daily for two minutes. Price: £45.99 (about Rs 3,400); www.rosemary conley.com

)rbit

Slendertone Face: Again, be prepared to be zapped by an



electrical impulse that gently stimulates facial muscles to firm and tone while adding volume to your face. In a few weeks, your face is expected to feel firmer and your complexion clearer and more radiant. **Price: £300 (about Rs 22,000);** www.slendertone face.com



O»H PEOPLE

BIRTHDAYS

- Actor Nana Patekar turned 59 on 1 January
- Australian actor **Mel Gibson** turned 54 on 3 January
- British singer **Rod Stewart** turned 65 on 10 January
- French president Nicolas Sarkozy turned 55 on 28 January

VISITOR

Who: Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina When: 10-12 January Why: She was in Delhi to sign treaties related to mutual legal assistance in criminal matters; mutual transfer of convicted prisoners; fight against terrorism; organised crime; and drug trafficking. She was conferred with the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development.

IN PASSING

Kannada superstar **Vishnuvardhan** died of cardiac arrest on 30 December. He was 59.

Wildlife conservationist Billy Arjan Singh died on 1 January. He was 92.

Veteran Marxist leader and former chief minister of West Bengal **Jyoti Basu** passed away on 17 January owing to multi-organ failure. He was 95.

American author **Erich Segal** died of a heart attack on 17 January. He was 72.

WORK IT OUT.



Long-term physical activity has an anti-ageing effect at the cellular level, a new German study suggests. And with exercise now becoming a religion world over, there are no more excuses to stay away. Reuters recently reported how pensioners in Moscow are taking to the city streets once a week on cold winter mornings for group exercise sessions organised by state-sponsored community centres. Bravo.

FOUR TORCHBEARERS

Many silvers assume the young generation does not care much for traditional values and wisdom. However, **Pooja Mohite, Rinkita Gurav, Aruneel Sadadekar** and **Tanumoy Bose**—all in their early 20s—believe silvers have a lot left to contribute to society. They are pursuing their Bachelors in Mass Media from Bhavan's College, Mumbai. As part of their final year project, they have come together to make a documentary on the experiences of silvers.

Tentatively titled *A Look Through Their Eyes*, the 45-minute documentary has interviews with ex-army men, writers, freedom fighters, media professionals and activists who bring alive the ethos and spirit that guided them through India's partition, Independence and Nehruvian socialism "We wanted to take history out of the textbook and present it through the perspective of people who have lived it and who have so much to share with us,"



says Mohite. The film was presented at Bhavan's College Auditorium on 27 January; the budding filmmakers are hoping to screen it at intercollegiate film festivals and seniors homes later. If you have inspiring experiences to share with the group or know someone who has, contact *neel*877@gmail.com

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FLOWER POWER

I love bright colours; maybe that explains why I enjoy converting colourful plastic bags into flowers. I have always loved crochet, knitting, stitching and embroidery. At 92, however, my fading eyesight hampers the pursuit of such intricate crafts and I concentrate mostly on flower-making.

I learned the craft as a student from the nuns at my school in Sind where I grew up. Unlike me, they used crepe or tissue paper. I make use of flimsy carry bags to make gorgeous carnations, roses, lilies, gladioli, daisies and sweet-peas. Then I decorate the blooms with gift-wrapping paper, golden foil and coloured envelopes, or wrap them around sitaphal (custard apple) seeds or pistachio shells, to form buds. I also use paper canvas, which is commonly used to wrap fabrics in shops. I dip the canvas in dyes before cutting into petals. The other day, I fashioned a Feng Shui Fortune-Bamboo from a pale green plastic bag that was lying around the house. Many people have mistaken it for a real plant!



Spirit in bloom: Kaur with her creation

I live with my daughter Suman in Pune. She runs a successful boutique, which is also a great source of raw materials for me. She has instructed her tailors to retain all leftover scraps of fabric, sequins, beads and lace. I make bouquets with these and sometimes stitch them onto fabric to make attractive tea-cosies and cushioncovers. When Suman brings the fabrics home, I smoothen them out; cut out the petals; and fashion them into flowers using wires and string. Then I tie them together in bunches. Sometimes, I arrange them in a basket, or entwine them like a garland.

I love to gift bouquets to anyone who visits us, and it gives me great pleasure to see their eyes light up. On my sonin-law's birthday—he is a retired army officer—I gave him a huge pot of blue gladioli, made from the plastic shopping bags that we had brought home from the popular shop Westside. My daughter has filled every corner of her house with these flowers. Everyone who comes home says it's like living in a garden.

I have cataract vision and my fingers are not as nimble as they used to be. I am not fond of watching TV as it gives me a headache. But I like to keep myself occupied all day. Our domestic help often asks me, "Why don't you rest?" However, I would rather spend my time creating beautiful memories I can leave behind. The flowers I create leave no room for negative thoughts as I'm constantly planning out my next bouquet, my next experiment. The flowers create a positive, cheerful environment, and my entire family envelops me in their love. What more can I ask for?

—Narain Kaur, Pune

GREEN HARVEST

At the age of 51, I lost my job. Though it was one of the worst moments of my life, the resulting turmoil also introduced me to a latent talent that I had never quite explored fully: gardening.

I am from a small village in Tenali in Andhra Pradesh. After doing my post-graduation in public administration, I joined New Horizon Sugar Mills in Pondicherry as a trainee. By 2002, I had risen up the ladder to become a sales manager. Unfortunately, in 2003, owing to a huge management crisis, the company was forced to shut down. For the past six years, I have been pursuing a lengthy battle in court along with 350 other employees to claim my salary dues and gratuity. From 2004 to 2008, I have been harassed by the police, Central Excise Department and CBI for interrogation, as the company owners have been absconding and I was one of the key authorised officers in the company.



Gardening partners: Mohan with his wife Shyamala

Though I had always enjoyed good health all my life, after losing my job I took to chain-smoking and drinking. However, I pulled myself together before I hit rock bottom and signed up for mind control courses.

In 2006, I vacated the company housing quarters and decided to start life afresh. I had a small plot—approximately 2,600 sq ft—around my house. With tender care and patience, my wife and I have turned it into a flourishing fruit and vegetable garden. Today our garden is lush with papaya, banana, guava, *chikoo*, sweet lime, gooseberry, lemon, brinjal, okra, radish, snake gourd, bitter gourd, spinach and mint. We grow everything without using any pesticides and we also tend to a vast variety of plants on our terrace. Along with fruits and vegetables, we have also nurtured a profusion of flowers and medicinal herbs like *tulsi* and turmeric. We experiment with sustainable eco-friendly techniques such as rainwater harvesting to water our plants.

Today, our garden has grown into a satisfying source of income. People come over to buy fruits and vegetables from our garden and we use our own produce for daily cooking. My house is cool even in hot summers with birds, bees, squirrels and butterflies flitting in and out. With so much flora and fauna around us, I have even honed my skills as a photographer.

In Indian mythology, there is a legend that describes how Krishna brought the flower, *parijatham*, all the way from heaven to gift it to his wife Rukmini. In my case, I am happy that I could present *parijatham* that's been nurtured by my own hands to my wife Shyamala.

—Jagan Mohan, Pondicherry

SHINING EXAMPLE

I teach at the Netraheen Vikas Sansthan in Jodhpur, a residential school that works for the rehabilitation of

visually impaired children. I am proud to work with an organisation founded by one of the most inspiring women I have ever known: Sushila Bohra.

Sushila*ji* is 69 years old, and a role model for everyone around her. Her dynamism and warmth have remained untarnished in all the years I have known her. She comes from a Marwari Jain family and displayed a keen interest in social work at a very early age. Over the years, she has started an orphanage, a home for the destitute, a *khadi* centre and an initiative to encourage financial independence in women. Thanks to her enterprising spirit, she was chosen by the Rajasthan government as project director of the District Development Agency.



Bohra: Pushing the boundaries for the visually imparied

She set up the Netraheen Vikas Sansthan in 1977 with just two students on the rolls. Today the Sansthan has 350 boys and 120 girls. All of them are taught free of cost and have a free hostel facility. Despite her hectic schedule and many commitments, Sushilaji always makes it a point to spend a significant part of her day with the students. The warmth and ease with which she interacts with them is truly worth emulating. She never goes out of her way to sympathise with the special condition of her students; instead she always encourages teachers at the Sansthan to help the students tap their latent skills and instil in them the confidence and courage to face life and society at large. Her efforts have been rewarded on more than one occasion-besides many other awards and accolades, the Netraheen Vikas Sansthan was named the Best Service Institution in 2007 by the Rajasthan government. I think that Sushilaji is an inspiring example of how we can enrich our lives and the world around us as we grow older.

—Inder Singh Sisodia, Jodhpur

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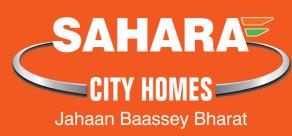


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MALLS

Ranjit Singh

Min Centres

Milkha Singh. The only Indian athlete to win a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games. Nirmal Saini. Captain of the international women's volleyball team in an era when Indian sportswomen were a rarity. Together, they form a team that has played, laughed and loved for close to 50 years. **Anjana Jha** spends an afternoon with a couple of winners

e've clearly caught Nirmal Saini on a bad day-it's Lohri, they have a lunch appointment and her husband has committed to the Harmony interview without consulting her. Still, the 73 year-old is grace personified, serving us sweets and steaming cups of coffee. She even offers us a delicious home-cooked lunch when her husband eventually cancels the appointment. Her effortless elegance is echoed in the cream-and-beige living room of the imposing house in Chandigarh's Sector 8, enlivened by f owers on the wall and in vases, crimson here, white and gold there. Her real pride and joy, however, stands next to her impeccably attired in a dark formal suit: Milkha Singh, her husband, the Flying Sikh of athletic lore, 'Sardarji' to her. "She's a little upset with me but she won't be angry for long!" the octogenarian whispers to us in a conspiratorial tone. As we see his 'Madam'-as he has always called her-posing with him for pictures, giggling when he takes her hand, we believe him.

The chemistry is still palpable between these two athletes—she was a volleyball champion—after almost half a century together. Their four children complete the circle; it is indeed a telling sign that the trophies won by their youngest, Jeev, a championship golfer, are the only awards displayed in their home. Together they have negotiated life's twists and turns, victories and heartbreaks, with companionship, understanding and an enduring love. Here's the story of Mr and Mrs Singh:

Could you share with us the secret of your happy marriage?

NS: We've been together 48 years. My advice to young married wives is

simple: During the first two years, say 'yes yes' to everything he says. Then in the third year, you'll automatically become the boss! I'm speaking from personal experience. But frankly, women should be prepared to submit more. It's something we have to accept gracefully.

Did sports bring you together?

NS: We met in Colombo in 1956. I'd gone with the Indian volleyball team for the Indo-Ceylon championships and he was there for an international athletic meet.

MS: I saw her playing—she was wearing a skirt....

NS: I've never worn a skirt! [Incredulous.] Even during international matches, I always wore *salwar kameez* while playing.

MS: We met at a dinner hosted by an Indian businessman for all the players. Though we were attracted to each other, we didn't keep in touch after our return to India. Then in 1958, I accepted an invitation to lecture at her physical education college in Patiala and saw her sitting in the first row. During the camp that followed in the next 15 to 20 days, we would often meet and just keep talking. There was no question of even holding hands!

So was that the beginning of your romance and courtship?

MS: No, there was no contact again for the next two years. Like most sportsmen, I had girlfriends and fans in every city! For a while, I got involved with a girl from a well-to-do Delhi family. We met again during the National Games in Delhi.

NS: That was 1960. I was physical director of Lady Irwin College and had taken my girls for training.

MS: I had joined the Punjab administration in Chandigarh as deputy director of sports that year after getting my

discharge from the Army. I had joined in 1951 as a jawan. Chief of Army Staff General Thimayya loved me like a son and was reluctant to release me. He said he would promote me to the of cer cadre and make me a lieutenant; that way I would be a brigadier when I retired. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had to intervene. Then, destiny played a masterstroke. She too moved to Chandigarh as assistant director of sports in 1961 and we started working together. We'd meet regularly at work; have lunch together; visit university grounds for training together. People started talking.

So you decided to get married?

NS: We had two years of courtship. However, we faced a lot of objection from our families initially. I am from a Hindu background while he comes from a Sikh Rathore Rajput family.

MS: We even considered court marriage for a while but her brother as well as Pratap Singh Kairon—then chief minister of Punjab—managed to persuade her father. Once the families agreed, we had a traditional ceremony in 1962 with all the *sardar riti* observed at the Darbar Sahib in Pathankot.

Did marriage put an end to your career, Mrs Singh?

NS: I decided to quit playing competitively after 1962 but I continued to work in the administration. Other than the marriage, there was the age factor as well; I was 27 years old. Also, I didn't want him to be bothered with things like running the house or looking after the children. He had already struggled so much in life.

Please share those turbulent days with us.

MS: Ours was once a large family in Muzaffargarh district in what is now

Pakistan. But only four of us survived. After witnessing my parents being killed in a massacre during Partition, I managed to cross the border to Ferozpur and travel to Delhi by train with other refugees. The railway station was my home for almost three weeks before I learnt my elder sister had also escaped and was living in Shahdara in east Delhi. Many people were reunited thanks to the 'lost and found' announcements regularly made over loudspeakers at the station.

NS: I was much more blessed. We were an affluent family in Shekhupura in Pakistan where my father was a well-known lawyer. Though we lost everything when we migrated to India, my father was fortunate enough to become an executive in the Municipal Corporation in Jalandhar.

Settling down in a new environment must have been difficult for you.

NS: I joined school in sixth grade in Jalandhar. I enjoyed academics and after completing my post-graduation in political science from Punjab University in 1958, I joined the Government College of Physical Education in Patiala. I was a gold medallist in the diploma course.

MS: I tried to join the Army thrice but was rejected each time. I had no one to do *sifarish* [backing] for me. Finally Makhan Singh, my elder brother who had been conscripted by the British Army during World War II in 1940-41, helped me out. I joined the Army's electrical mechanical engineering branch in 1951 as a technical *jawan*. The salary was a princely Rs 39 and 8 anna, of which Rs 10 had to be compulsorily remitted every month to family. I would send the amount to my sister.

How did you discover sports?

NS: I started playing different games while I was in school and especially enjoyed volleyball, netball, basketball, hockey and badminton.

MS: As a child in Pakistan, I would never walk the 2-3 km to the village school—I would run. After fourth grade, I joined high school in Kot



"When I won a gold medal in athletics in the 1958 Commonwealth Games, Vijayalakshmi Pandit gave me a message from Pandit Nehru who wanted to give me a reward, anything I wanted. I asked him to declare one day as a national holiday to celebrate my victory! In those days, there was no money in sports; *izzat* [honour] was everything"

-Milkha Singh

Addu city and continued to run the 10-km distance to school. I had no shoes and still remember how the scorching sand burnt my feet during summer; I'd stop to cool them wherever there was a patch of grass. Then within a fortnight of joining the Army, I participated in a cross-country race where 10 from among 500 jawan were to be selected for athletics training. I came sixth despite developing severe stomach pain after just half a mile and being forced to stop and rest several times. After my selection, my mentor havaldar Gurdev Singh trained me for hours every day-I would practice running on the railway tracks in Secunderabad against the speed of a metre gauge train.

Describe some of your successes on the field.

NS: Though I was an inter-university

level badminton player, volleyball was my forte. During the National Championships held at Patiala in 1956, our team from Punjab won the title without losing a single game and retained the No. 1 position in the country till 1963. I was the national champion for seven years and captain of the women's volleyball team.

MS: I owe a lot to the Army. Coming from a remote village, I was ignorant about athletics with no idea about the Asian or Commonwealth Games leave alone the Olympics. I tasted my first success at the Services Athletic Meet in 1955 where I came 2nd in the 200 m and 400 m races. At the National Games held at Patiala the following year, I won both events. In 1958, I broke the 200 m and 400 m records at the National Games at Cuttack. Incidentally, it was the first time I wore shoes—I used to run barefoot earlier!

Tell us about some of your international experiences.

NS: I led the women's volleyball team when we played in Colombo in 1955; we ended up winning all the games. Our team also played in the Indo-Russian championships at Moscow the following year.

MS: I made my Olympic debut in Melbourne in 1956. The night before the trials, I was actually beaten up by fellow-competitors; they were record holders that I'd defeated who didn't want me to participate. At Melbourne, a *sardar* was a rare sight in those days. I remember Australia's sprint queen Betty Cuthbert's fascination with my turban. I tied it on her and she posed for so many pictures. Eventually, I presented the turban to her!

It was two years more before I made my mark in international events, winning two gold medals (200 m and 400 m) at the Tokyo Asian Games and one gold medal at the Commonwealth Games in Cardiff (400 m). Till today, I have been the only Indian athlete to win a Commonwealth gold in athletics. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, who was the Indian high commissioner to the UK, congratulated me and gave me a message from Pandit Nehru. He wanted to give me a reward, anything I wanted. I asked Panditji to declare one day as a national holiday to celebrate my victory! In those days there was no money in sports; izzat [honour] was everything.

How about disappointments?

MS: I will never forget the 400 m race at the 1960 Rome Olympics where Otis Davis, Carl Kaufman, Malcolm Spence and I all broke the Olympic record. It was a photo finish and though I clocked 45.6 seconds, the difference of just 0.1 second made me miss the bronze. I've cried only thrice in my entire life-twice in sadness and once in joy. The first time was when I saw my parents being killed and the second was when I lost the medal in Rome. I wanted to stop running after that but I received thousands of letters of encouragement from people. Their faith in me helped win the gold in the

Jakarta Asian Games in 1962.

The only time I cried in happiness was after winning gold at the Commonwealth Games. As I stood on the victory stand and watched the Indian f ag f utter to the strains of our national anthem echoing around the fully packed stadium, I could not help tears of joy from streaming down my face.

Mr Singh, who first called you the Flying Sikh?

MS: President Ayub Khan of Pakistan called me the Flying Sikh after I defeated Abdul Khaliq-Pakistan's fastest runner and winner of the 100 m gold at the Tokyo Asian Games-in Lahore in 1960. I'd defeated him earlier in the 200 m at Tokyo. It was incredible to be so recognised despite the fact that there was no television in those days. In fact, I saw one for the first time in India in 1982. A fellow athlete in Germany had presented me with a black-and-white set in 1960. I brought it back to India and installed it with great care but all I got on the screen was static grains of light! Even the transistor I bought in Melbourne in 1956 was a big thing. After a cup of coffee at Gaylord's, I'd walk around Connaught Place, the transistor slung casually on my shoulder with a song playing. People were amazed and followed me around as if I were a madaari [juggler].

Tell us about the awards and accolades you received.

MS: I received the Padmashri in 1958. In fact, we're the first sports family in India with two Padmashri awards; Jeev received his in 2007. In 1959, I was awarded the international Helms World trophy; the only other Indians to be honoured with this award are hockey great K D Singh Babu and tennis ace Ramanathan Krishnan. I was also given the Arjuna Award in 2001-my son Jeev had already received it in 1999! They gave me this award for lifetime achievement more than 40 years after my Padmashri; it was like getting a matriculation certificate after post-graduation. In fact,

I was a member of the committee that instituted the award in 1961; it is intended to recognise outstanding performance of sportspersons at an international level. Accepting it with players who had not done well even on a national level would have been an insult.

Why are none of your trophies displayed at home; only your son's?

MS: My wife is a gem of a lady. She's better than any medal or trophy! Actually I donated all my trophies to the national sports museum at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi. I've now requested the authorities to transfer the trophies to the sports museum in Patiala.

Was it hard for both of you to leave the world of sports?

MS: We never really left. For many years, I regularly attended the Olympics, Commonwealth and Asian Games, and national meets. As director of sports, I promoted different games in schools and colleges. Even now I enjoy going to stadiums, attending athletic meets and offering guidance and coaching tips. I also considered starting a sports academy but it never took off because of bureaucracy and red tape.

NS: During my tenure, my contribution towards developing sports complexes and playgrounds in Chandigarh, including the hockey and tennis stadiums, has been significant. The standard of sports also improved. Besides national meets, I organised an international level regatta and hockey championship.

Did you always want your children to be in sports?

MS: No, we didn't. Unless you're at the top, it's not paying to be a sportsperson. A district-level player is worth nothing.

NS: Earlier sports had no future; there was no concept of it being a career option. Even today, it is plagued by political interference, lack of longterm planning and lack of dedication. Our daughters were born in quick succession—Aleeza in 1963, Mona in 1964 and Sonia in 1965—while Jeev followed in 1971. We wanted them to do well academically. Today, Aleeza is a textile designer, Mona is a doctor, Sonia is a psychologist and Jeev is a graduate in business administration. **MS:** All credit to her! She'd teach the

children and help with the homework. When she slapped them occasionally, I'd get very upset though. I remember not speaking to her for almost a month once. I must add that all our children married of their own will. I believe if I could do it, so could our children. In fact, our second son-inlaw is a Christian.

Today, Jeev is also a world-ranked golf player....

MS: Jeev was crazy about golf since he was eight or nine years old. He'd come back from school, dump his bag and rush off to the golf course. To put an end to this, I sent him to Bishop Cotton School in Shimla. I remember giving him a tight slap because he had refused to go—the first and only time I ever hit any of my children! He continued to play whenever he came to Chandigarh. Then in 1985, he insisted on participating in the National Junior Golf Championships in New Delhi. He won; the prize was a threeweek coaching session in London. I realised I was being obstinate. So I brought him back from Shimla and started spending five to six hours every day training him as best as I could.



"My advice to young married wives is simple: During the first two years, say 'yes yes' to everything he says. Then in the third year, you'll automatically become the boss! Frankly, women should be prepared to submit more. I decided to quit playing competitively after 1962. I didn't want him to be bothered with things like running the house. He had already struggled so much" *—Nirmal Singh*

If a child has to succeed—at sports or anything—he needs full support, time and attention of his parents. In fact, when he won a scholarship to study in the US after winning third position at the Junior World Cup in Melbourne, he didn't want to go. Even his mother supported him as she couldn't imagine him living so far away but I put my foot down. Today, he lives with us but is rarely home for more than three or four days at a time. He travels the world playing golf.

NS: His wife Kudrat, who is also from Chandigarh, normally accompanies him but she's expecting their first child now.

What about other grandchildren? How often do you meet them?

NS: Aleeza has an 18 year-old daughter and a 12 year-old son while Sonia has three-and-a-half year-old twins a daughter and a son.

MS: We get together thrice a year; in the US in summer; in India once a year; and once abroad wherever Jeev is playing. Somewhere in Singapore or Europe, perhaps London where he has a house.

You have also adopted the son of *havaldar* Bikram Singh, a Kargil war martyr....

MS: Bikram Singh was a nationallevel boxer. After reading about his family in the newspaper, my wife and I first decided to donate Rs 100,000 but changed our mind and adopted Manjit instead. Admitting him in Chandigarh's Shivalik Public School will give him opportunities he'd never have got in the village. A sum of Rs 50,000 a year is set aside for him and Jeev has been told that this should continue till his education is complete.

How do you spend your free time as a couple?

MS: We're both very social and enjoy playing cards with friends. Of course, we've decreased the number of functions we attend because of age! Both of us like music—I like *ghazal* while she prefers *bhajan*. We also have a good collection of Punjabi songs.

NS: I enjoy watching films but he doesn't, so I go with friends once in a while. I recently saw *3 Idiots*. In all our years of marriage, we've watched only two movies together. I think it was *Mahal* and *Mehbooba*.

MS: And during one of them I fell asleep halfway! When she roused me, I left her to watch and went home. Our taste in food matches though. We both relish Indian cuisine; even when we are abroad, we look out for Indian restaurants. I love *dal*, *bharta*, *bhindi* and *karela* cooked by her. And yes, *gajar ka halwa*!

What bothers you about each other? Any habits or quirks?

MS: She snores a lot. At times it's so loud that I have to shake her awake. **NS:** Sometimes I just go to another room so he can sleep properly. And

What do you do for Mrs Singh? MS: I give her all my love!

no, he doesn't snore at all!

How do you both remain so fit?

NS: By God's grace neither of us have any health problems. Both my knees were replaced in 2003 but I'm fine now. I took up golf as an exercise in 1996 and still play nine holes three or four times a week—wearing trousers! *Sardarji* plays all 18 holes.

MS: I play four or fives times a week. I started playing in 1967. I still jog 3 km at Sukhna Lake thrice a week and work out at the gym at home another three days. I think exercise and diet are very important. We should eat frequent meals but only half of what we need at our age. According to records, I was born in October 1935 but I've no idea what my real birth date is! In those days in the village, births and deaths were associated with seasons and events. According to my elder sister, I was born the winter that our cow gave birth to a calf; that was probably around 1929. So that makes me 80 now!

Has age made any dif erence to your outlook on life?

MS: I don't believe in another life. The past is dead and the future is unknown, so enjoy the present. Nor do I believe in palmistry or astrological predictions. A person changes the lines of his destiny by sheer hard work. Will power can enable anyone to achieve anything. That's why I don't enjoy the company of old people! They make little groups and keep complaining and finding fault with the younger generation. It's wrong to expect children to keep doing their duty because of what you've done for them. Give them advice but don't force them to follow your dictates.

NS: *Sardarji* could've been a politician or minister because of all our contacts but we're happy to be what we are. But I strongly believe in the stars and often consult astrologers!

Is there anything you'd like to do dif erently in life?

MS: Given a chance to live my life once again, I'd do everything exactly the same way. **NS**: [Beams.]

COVER FEATURE

1: DON'T LOOK BORED—EVEN IF YOU ARE—WHEN HE'S DISCUSS-ING SOMETHING.

2: Get her a small radio for the kitchen.

3: GET TWO NEWSPAPERS OR SPLIT ONE INTO TWO; KEEP THE SUPPLEMENT FOR THE LOO.

4: PLACE A REQUEST FOR HIS FAVOURITE OLD NUMBER ON THE LATE NIGHT RADIO SHOW. AND YES, FIGURE OUT A WAY TO KEEP HIM AWAKE.

5: PULL HIS CHEEKS WHILE HE IS READING THE NEWSPAPER— JUST FOR THE HECK OF IT.

6: DON'T FIGHT THE NEXT TIME HE THROWS A TOWEL ON THE BED—PUT A RACK IN YOUR BED-ROOM TO HOLD IT.

7: BUY A PET AND DISCOVER THE JOYS OF PARENTING ONCE AGAIN!

8: DON'T PANIC IF HE INVITES FRIENDS AT THE LAST MOMENT— KEEP SOME READY-TO-COOK FOOD IN YOUR FRIDGE.

9: IF HE MENTIONS YOUR SNOR-ING, REMIND HIM THAT YOU'VE PUT UP WITH HIS MUCH LONGER.

10: DON'T SWITCH ON THE LIGHT WHEN YOU GO TO THE TOILET AT NIGHT; USE A TORCH INSTEAD.

11: REMEMBER THAT SHE MAY FALL IF YOU WET THE BATH-ROOM FLOOR.

55 ways to keep your relationship alive and your sanity intact!

13

EXCHANGE THAT LOUD, RUSTLING POLYTHENE BAG WITH A BOX FOR YOUR MEDICATION; IT DOESN'T QUITE SOUND GOOD ANY TIME OF THE DAY.

14: GET SOMEONE TO SKETCH YOUR PORTRAIT TOGETHER.

15: SURPRISE HER WITH FLOW-ERS ONCE IN A WHILE—EVEN IF IT'S JUST A SINGLE STEM OF HER FAVOURITE LILY.

16: HE PREFERS YOUR LAP OVER THAT PILLOW. SNUGGLE UP.

17: GIVE UP SOMETHING FOR EACH OTHER. HOW ABOUT THAT PAUNCH?

18: GO FOR WALKS TOGETHER; YOU CAN ALWAYS SLOW YOUR PACE FOR PART OF THE DISTANCE.

19: HOLD HANDS IN PUBLIC. IT ISN'T AGAINST THE LAW.

20: IF HE CAN WATCH YOUR SERIALS, YOU CAN CHEER THE INDIAN CRICKET TEAM WITH HIM.

21: SMS HER A MUSHY COMPLI-MENT WHEN SHE IS OUT BUYING GROCERIES.

12: ENCOURAGE HER TO HAVE A DAY OUT WITH HER FRIENDS—WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT YOUR MEALS. 22: BUY HER A SMALL PLANT— YOU CAN TEND IT TOGETHER.

23: IN EVERY ARGUMENT, CUT THE CHASE AND SAY SORRY.

24: RENT A DVD OF A BLACK-AND-WHITE CLASSIC YOU SAW TOGETHER.

25: TWO IPODS ARE BETTER THAN ONE RADIO.

26: THE GOOD SIDE OF THE BED FOR THE LIGHT SLEEPER.

27: LET HER CRIB ABOUT THE EXTENDED FAMILY; AFTER ALL, SHE'S LISTENED TO ALL YOUR RANTS AGAINST THE BOSS FOR MANY YEARS.

28: LISTEN TO EACH OTHER'S VOICE. READ OUT A JOKE, A POEM OR AN EXCERPT FROM A BOOK.

29: ON HER BIRTHDAY THIS YEAR, INVITE HER CLOSE FRIENDS OVER FOR AN OVERNIGHT HEN PARTY.

30: ONCE A WEEK, SKIP THAT WALK WITH YOUR BUDDIES TO WALK WITH HER.

31: OPEN AN EMAIL ACCOUNT FOR HER AND FLOOD HER WITH MESSAGES.

32: FOR ONCE, GO TO THE LOO WHEN YOU FEEL A FART APPROACHING. JUST BECAUSE SHE HAS NEVER COMPLAINED DOESN'T MEAN SHE LIKES IT.

33: PENCIL IN ONE PICNIC A MONTH IN YOUR DIARY.

34: PLAN A HOLIDAY TO A CITY THAT DOESN'T CONTAIN CHILDREN, RELATIVES OR FRIENDS.

35: PLAY CARDS. AND REMEMBER IT'S NO FUN IF YOU DON'T CHEAT.

36: PULL OUT ALL YOUR OLD ALBUMS AND GO THROUGH THEM TOGETHER.

37: WATCH GENERATION FILM TOGETHER TO SHOW YOU THAT NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE.

38: RESPECT HER INDIVIDUALITY AND NEED FOR SPACE.

39: REWARD A WEEK OF FASTIDIOUS DIET WITH A LAVISH SUNDAY LUNCH.

40: SEND HIM A TELEGRAM— SAYING 'I LOVE YOU'. **41**: START A SIMPLE EXERCISE ROUTINE TOGETHER AND ENSURE YOU BOTH STICK TO IT.

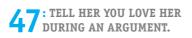
42: MAKE TEA FOR HER ON SUNDAY MORNING; THEN AWAIT A SCRUMPTIOUS BREAKFAST.

43: THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN INVITE YOUR FRIENDS UNANNOUNCED.

44: TAKE HER OUT FOR A ROMANTIC DINNER FOR TWO EVEN WITHOUT AN OCCASION.

45: TECHNOLOGY IS A GREAT LEVELLER; STAY ABREAST TO SHARE GOOD TIMES.

46: TELL WHAT A GOOD JOB SHE'S DOING WITH THE GRAND-KIDS—ONE OF THOSE SUNNY SMILES IS SURE TO HEAD YOUR WAY.



48: SURPRISE HER WITH A HOLIDAY PACKAGE. NEXT TIME, LET HER CHOOSE.

49: THE NEXT TIME HE HOGS YOUR SIDE OF THE BED, SUGGEST SWITCHING SIDES.

50: TICKLE HIM. OF COURSE, WHEN HE LEAST EXPECTS IT.

51: TRY TO DEVELOP AN INTEREST IN EACH OTHER'S HOBBIES AND PURSUITS.

52: TWO SMALL TELEVISION SETS ARE BETTER THAN A BIG ONE.

53: WAKING UP LATE TO READ? THAT'S WHAT READING LIGHTS ARE MEANT FOR.

54: WATCH A MUSHY ROMANTIC FILM TOGETHER INSTEAD OF THE THRILLER YOU'D RATHER SEE.

55: WHEN YOU ARE AT THE beharmacist, buy her a luxurious shower gel along with that pain relief spray.

Two of a **KIND**

While many couples drift into monotony with the passing years, there are many who discover a common passion. Meet five couples who are proof that togetherness is the best way to beat boredom

Iona And Trevor D'Cunha

SECUNDERABAD

Between Trevor and me, he is a better sport," admits Iona D'Cunha. The 61 year-old and her husband Trevor, 63, have been playing golf together for the past three years. Trevor, an ex-Army of ficer, didn't have much time for the game earlier because of work while Iona is an old hand. She has been playing for a decade now and is a member of the 'South Indian Golf Addicts Society'. After his retirement, Trevor too has been teaming up with Iona for tournaments. "All my life I have been an add-on to him, but now it gives me great joy when I put his name as my add-on,' says Iona with visible glee.

While golf is a passion for Iona, for Trevor it's just another way to unwind. The two often compete against each other and sometimes even bet on their scores—the loser owes the winner hard cash! However, there is something that both have agreed to disagree on: taking tips from each other on improving their golfing technique.

—Shyamola Khanna



Cicily and Joseph Pooppally

ALLEPPEY

The Pooppallys—80 year-old Joseph and 68 year-old Cicily—run the Pooppally Heritage Homestay in Alleppey, Kerala. A former college principal, Joseph converted his 114 year-old house into a homestay after his retirement 14 years ago. Spread across three acres, near the banks of the river Pamba, the homestay is a labour of love popular among foreign and Indian tourists.

While Joseph takes care of business, Cicily dishes out Malayalee delicacies for their pampered guests. Although Joseph helps her out in the kitchen, Cicily—with typical tongue-in-cheek hauteur—points out that he is only a *sous* chef (assistant chef).

Both feel the mutual exchange of ideas and the debates have only cemented their 42 year-old marriage further. "We discuss ways to add new services and improve existing ones," says Cicily. When they don't have guests, the two love to nurture their garden where they grow vegetables and fruits. "We get to spend more time together now than when we were young," they say in unison.

—Nisary Mahesh

Gracy and Dr Abdul Salam

PUNE

either difference in religion nor Dr Abdul Salam's blindnesshe has been visually impaired since the age of 11—prevented Gracy, now 65, from eloping with him 38 years ago. Salam, 69, a retired senior bureaucrat, is also a linguist who is f uent in 12 languages. Together he and Gracy started Helpo in 1987, a NGO that helps poor women in rural areas to become financially independent. Thanks to the enterprising duo, many women in Saswad in Maharahstra have been able to start their own small-scale ventures and lead secure lives.

Dr Salam spends a large part of his time travelling across the country and around the world to spread awareness and raise funds; back home, Gracy looks after the mountainous paperwork. "Helpo has made us inseparable," says Salam. "When there are differences in opinion, we tackle them with logic and reason." The couple is not just united over a cause; they also practice meditation and yoga together. With so much to share, they have a long way to go.

—Mita Banerjee



Lakshmi and Suryanarayana Padmasola

SECUNDERABAD

or fellow residents of the ICRISAT (International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics) colony in Secunderabad, Lakshmi and Suryanarayana Padmasola are the ideal couple, admired for their spiritual leanings. For this, 'Suri'—as Suryanarayana likes to be called credits his wife of 44 years.

Seven years ago, Lakshmi attended a Vedanta discourse by Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati and was drawn to the philosophy. Suri, who was a personnel manager with ICRISAT, was initially only "her driver", as he puts it. After retirement, when he attended a couple of sessions, he felt equally drawn to Vedanta. These days, the Padmasolas attend *satsang* and discourses together. Even at home, the couple often spend time together reading books on spirituality and discussing the various interpretations of the philosophies.

Suri believes Lakshmi, 63, is more spiritual and compassionate than him. "She is fully committed to everything she does without being emotionally involved," says the 71 year-old. "Sometimes when I get drawn to worldly things, she holds me back." Lakshmi clarif es that the essence of Vedanta is to live life like a *sakshi* (witness) and to accept it like *prasadam*, which can sometimes be sweet and sometimes bitter. No matter how bitter life gets, for this couple it's just a sweet song of togetherness.

—Shyamola Khanna

Monique and Daniel Dubosclard

BENGALURU

T t's not easy to imagine a retired couple giving up everything they have known to relocate to a foreign country. But Monique and Daniel Dubosclard did just that. Three years ago, the French couple, who ran a business selling cheese in a small village near Paris, packed their bags and shifted to India. All they had to spur them onward was the hope of a better life. "We couldn't have done much better in France and as we had visited India earlier and liked the country, we decided to move here," says Daniel, 60. Today, their company, La Fromagerie Fresh Foods, supplies cheese to various shops and restaurants in Bengaluru. Life in India hasn't been a cakewalk. Neither speaks fluent English and they are still adjusting to the cultural differences. However, they don't regret their decision; they have an assistant who doubles up as an interpreter. In fact, their move has brought them even closer as they rely on each other for company and conversation. And both enjoy travelling and exploring different cultures. On their wedding anniversary recently, they had their own private party where they waltzed to a song. Proof that it's never too late to enjoy small, shared pleasures.

-Priyadarshini Nandy

Experience

A second childhood

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A daughter's DTARM

38 harmony celebrate age february 2010

FASHION DESIGNER SHAINA NC TELLS **RAJASHREE BALARAM** WHY HER PARENTS NANA AND MUNIRA CHUDASAMA WILL ALWAYS BE HER FIRST PRIORITY

0

I feel blessed to have had such a cosmopolitan upbringing. Dad is a Rajput and Mom is a Muslim. So we celebrate both Diwali and Eid with equal fanfare. We also celebrate national holidays, such as 15 August, with great gusto.

I have been a daddy's girl all my life. Dad was always easier to 'melt' and Mom was always the disciplinarian. She inspires this feeling of great awe and respect in me. Especially because of the way she has always been independent. She balanced her career—she was working with a bank—and her family beautifully. And she did it at a time when most women stuck to home and hearth. Of course, I cannot deny that as a child I resented the time she spent in office.

I believe genes do work—I inherited my sense of fashion from Mom. From banking she moved on to



fashion design and pursued it with great passion. T ere were many women who dabbled in fashion design in those days but there were very few so fully committed to their craft. She has always been such a stylish lady. In particular, I love the way she drapes saris. She is also a great organiser with a f rm grasp of every little detail about her household. And she is fabulous at accounts, which I am terrible at.

From Dad, I inherited my passion for politics and social work. I enjoy discussing current af airs with my father. He has been penning social messages on banners for years now. I enjoy watching him when he deliberates on the right play of words. We both also love listening to good speeches.

Mom is my reality check. She keeps all of us rooted. If she feels I am too much in the news or taking the wrong decision, she points it out without mincing words. Dad is a more relaxed person. He loves people, conversation and rarely ever gets stressed.

These days, with my hectic career, I feel very guilty when I am not able to spend enough time with my parents. T ough we don't get to meet every day, we always keep each other updated about the goings-on in our lives. My parents are my oxygen. My day seems incomplete if I don't hear their voice.

Dad has made Sundays a family day. T e whole family my brother, me and my sister, and our respective spouses and children—get together at my parents' house on Sundays. It's a highly animated af air with an elaborate meal and conversation about everything that's happening in our lives Whenever I need to take a major personal decision, I always turn to my parents for advice. My husband often teasingly wonders why I even bother asking him for his opinion. For me my parents come before everyone else

and the world around us. We are not over-demonstrative as a family. But we know we are there for each other if any one of us needs a listening ear or a shoulder to lean on.

Earlier we used to iron out our differences through discussion. Now we have heated arguments sometimes. Maybe that's because we don't get to discuss things the way we used to. But at the end of the day, our dif erences not withstanding, I appreciate the fact that my parents have encouraged me to air my views openly.

My parents have always given me all the space I need. Neither of them has ever forced their choices or decisions on me. For instance, Mom—despite being a highly respected fashion designer in her own right—never interferes with my work. She rarely of ers an opinion unless I ask for one. Of course, we both love observing people who are well turned out.

When I entered politics, my father did not spoon-feed me. He told me to decide things on my own. T ough I sought his counsel, he never tried to colour my viewpoint. He wanted me to learn from my own experiences without preconceived notions or prejudices.

My parents maintain the same discipline with my children that they did with us. T ey are not the typical overindulgent grandparents. And I am thankful to them for not mollycoddling my children; my daughter is 10 and my son is three. I cannot just thrust my children on them whenever I am busy; I like the fact that both my parents lead busy, fulf lling lives of their own.

They are rather flexible and keep pace with changing times. However, they often tell me to slow down a bit. T ey f nd the pace at which I work shocking. But I guess all parents are like that; aren't they?

I cannot imagine my life without my parents. Whenever I need to take a major personal decision, I always turn to them for advice. My husband often teasingly wonders why I even bother asking him for his opinion. He knows that, for me, my parents' opinions will always come f rst. Let me rephrase that. For me, my parents come before everyone else—including my husband and children.

500V&

BURST OF HEAL

DR PUSHPESH PANT SERVES UP TWO NUTRIENT-RICH RECIPES THAT FEATURE FRUITS—FRESH AND DRIED—AND VEGETABLES, ALONG WITH A GENEROUS DOLLOP OF INSPIRATION

Gil-E-Firdaus Fruit mania

Preparation time: 30-40 minutes Cooking time: 15 minutes Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

- Hung yogurt: 200 gm
- Milk: 500 ml
- Rice: 3 tbsp
- Dried apricots: 50 gm
- Sultanas: 50
- Black peppercorns (coarsely ground): 1 tsp
- Preserved amla: 100 gm; rinsed, deseeded and coarsely chopped
- Lychees in syrup: 100 gm; drained, rinsed and halved
- One banana (ripe but firm; peeled and mashed)
- One orange (medium-sized, kernels only)

• Dried ginger powder: 1 tsp A small sprig of fresh mint leaves

METHOD

Soak dried apricots overnight in water. Boil in the same water for 10 minutes. Drain, cool, remove stones and puree. Soak some rice in water. Boil milk till only a quarter of the original volume remains. Add the rice and cook on medium heat for about 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Sprinkle ginger powder, stir again and remove from flame. Keep aside to cool. Blend hung yogurt with banana in a bowl, add lychees and other fruits-chopped and pureed-except orange kernels. Mix well and add to the cold kheer. Garnish with orange kernels and mint leaves.



FRESH FACT

Lychee doesn't just taste great, it is also packed with Vitamin C, riboflavin, potassium and copper. But don't wait too long before you pop one in; it does not have a long shelf life.

Baigan Paneer Brinjal and cottage cheese calypso

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

INGREDIENTS

- One round brinjal
- One firm cabbage (small)
- *Paneer*: 100 gm
- Kashmiri red chilly powder: ½ tsp
- Dried ginger powder: ½ tsp
- Cumin powder: ¹/₂ tsp
- Dried mint powder: ½ tsp
- Green chillies (deseeded and chopped): Two
- Lemon juice: 1 tsp

METHOD

Remove the outer leaves of the cabbage. Slice into quarter-inch-thick slices. Slice the brinjal similarly. Cut paneer into squares of similar thickness and cut with a tiny bowl into discs. Line a non-stick frying pan with a thin film of oil and pan-grill brinjal pieces until brown. Press lightly and turn once. Sprinkle red chilly and cumin powder and remove from flame. Now pan-grill paneer pieces similarly and sprinkle dried mint and dried ginger powder before removing. Place on top of brinjal discs. Blanch the cabbage in boiling water for two minutes, refresh in ice cold water. Place on top of *paneer* and garnish with green chilies. Sprinkle lemon juice on top.



FRESH FACT

Low in calories, brinjals are high on potasssium and calcium. Eat them as you will—roast, mashed. Brinjal cooks easily and is also purported to be a cure for insomnia when eaten roasted.



HEAR IT BEAT

A WOMAN'S HEART IS AT GREATER RISK THAN EVER BEFORE. **SWATI AMAR** CAUTIONS YOU TO TAKE CARE

ndia has the highest incidence of heart-related diseases in the world; the numbers are likely to double in the next few years. Researchers have long been aware that heart disease, which according to the World Health Organisation will kill almost 20 million people by 2015, is exceptionally prevalent in the Indian subcontinent. According to a WHO report, India is likely to account for 60 per cent of world's heart patients by 2010-it is, in fact, on its way to becoming the world's CAD (coronary artery disease) capital.

An alarming development is that heart attacks and other related ailments afflicting women are on the rise. It is popular knowledge that women are not prone to heart attacks because the hormone progesterone protects them from heart diseases. However, with new lifestyle-acquired diseases, old medical wisdom could soon turn on its head. For women with early onset of diabetes and hypertension (both lifestyle diseases), the benefits of this hormone are lost and the chances of developing cardiovascular diseases are high.

According to Dr Sanjay Kumar, senior consultant interventional cardiologist at Fortis Escorts Group of Hospitals in Delhi, the symptoms of heart attack in women are very different from those in men. While the classic symptoms of angina are chest pain beneath the sternal bone and radiation of pain to the back and left arm and shortness of breath, these may not be presented explicitly in many women. Often, the pain is less severe or the location and radiation may be different. Another amazing fact is that the

ECG of most women, even those with no heart disease, usually reveals abnormality. The reason for this is not well understood. Women often suffer from chest pain owing to various reasons; hence, even if older women complain of such a pain, there is a tendency to not consider and diagnose a heart attack. Dr B Somaraju, chief of cardiology at Care Hospitals in Hyderabad and chairman of Care Group, agrees, adding that public education about heart attacks and heart ailments will go a long way in creating more awareness and prevention of heart diseases.

THE CAUSES

Risk factors for CAD, on the other hand, are similar in both men and women. Weight gain around the middle, smoking, and family history of heart disease and diabetes are some of the reasons why more and more men, and now women, are suffering from heartrelated diseases. "Diabetic women are four times more prone to heart attacks than non-diabetic women," says Dr Kumar. Heart ailments also afflict younger women owing to lifestyle changes and habits such as smoking and consumption of alcohol.

The biggest killer, according to Dr Kalyani Nityanandan, is stress. A consultant cardiologist in Chennai, Dr Nityanandan believes that stress levels go up for women who take up serious careers. The biggest risk factor in women, though, is their genetic disposition. If heart disease, diabetes and hypertension run in a woman's family, and also in her husband's family, she could even pass CAD on to her children. Dr V V Bashi, chief cardiac surgeon at MIOT Hospitals in Chennai, says menstruating women are protected from heart attacks by female hormones. No ischemic heart diseases normally occur in menstruating women as long as they are not diabetic, hypertensive or have a family history of heart disease or obesity. After menopause, though, women are almost equal to men in susceptibility to CAD. For women on contraceptive pills, it's marginally riskier because the benefit of progesterone is lost with the pill. Moreover, the pill increases the tendency to develop clots anywhere in the body, including the heart.

PREVENTION

To begin with, women with a family history of hypertension and diabetes should take steps to prevent the onset of diabetes and hypertension. From the age of 40, they should go for regular medical checkups. Tests such as glycosylated Hb or glucose tolerance test can help identify risk of diabetes. "We must also include an annual, comprehensive health checkup in medical essentials," says Dr Somaraju. "The list includes lipid profile, cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar check every year. CAD is a silent killer and is often overlooked. A medical checkup will unearth any early symptoms."

Dr Kumar from Fortis says that women are fast catching up with men in the incidence of heart attacks. While changes in lifestyle have had a severe impact on the health of Indian women, fitness is still not a priority. Also, even as the habit of smoking has come down in developed countries, it is on the rise in India and smoking in women is a serious healthcare issue. He advises preventive measures such as restricting or avoiding hormone therapy in women, especially if they suffer from diabetes and hypertension. Good control of blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, quitting smoking and avoiding alcohol, exercise and a balanced diet can go a long way in keeping heart ailments at bay.

For his part, Dr Bashi has performed bypass surgeries on many young women. As a cardiac surgeon, he encourages women to take precautions considering the difficulty and high risk in performing procedures in most women as they have smaller arteries. Surgical results for women are less optimistic when compared to those of men. Even in older women, especially those who are small-built, risk during bypass, stenting and angioplasty is high because their arteries are small. Considering this, it makes sense to take measures to ensure that you have a healthy heart.

The most important step is weight control. Keeping one's weight down is not a Herculean task. "There is no excuse for not doing any physical exercise," says Dr Somaraju. Walking for about 30-40 minutes at least five days a week could do the trick. One need not walk for a long time at a stretch; walk for 15 minutes twice a day. After a brisk walk, your metabolic rate goes up for two to four hours, which

is very healthy. In fact, contrary to the myth that walking after lunch is undesirable, 20 minutes of walk after lunch and dinner is good for health. One must also realise that there is no short cut to exercises and no dieting will help you without it. At the same time, vigorous exercises at a gym might not help either. Ideal exercises like walking, swimming and cycling involve a large group of muscles. If you lose more than 2 kg a month, you can be sure to put it back on almost immediately. Weight loss should be slow and steady.

To reduce stress, working women should redefine their outlook to life. It is good to be flexible about targets. Make a list of the work you want accomplished, which need not include shopping for groceries, but all the activities you can fit into your next day's itinerary. Planning should even include any confrontation or discussion you want to resort to at home or work. Also fixing your priorities and being definite about them are important.

Meditation, yoga and music help reduce tension. You can do your household chores while listening to music. Also, every one of us has worries that lurk in some corner of our mind and we cannot wish them away. "I have found an innovative way to tackle my worries," says Dr Nityanandan. I set apart some time every day to think about them. I call it my 'worrying time.' If my worries surface during any time of the day, I try to relegate them to my worrying time!"

CONTROL MEASURES

- Don't treat your stomach like a garbage can. Pass on the leftovers and stick to fresh foods.
- Do not eat unless hungry; and eat as soon as you are hungry. If you allow your hunger to linger for long, you may end up overeating because it takes about 20 minutes for the centre in the hypothalamus in the brain to get the feeling of satiety.
- When you feel hungry, try to have a salty snack; it will immediately help dispel hunger.
- Always try to include carbohydrates and proteins in your meals as they stay in your stomach for a long time and even out the sugar plateau in your blood.
- Be kind to yourself. Don't cook only for your family. Make food especially for yourself, too.
- Try to have salads and buttermilk whenever you are hungry.
- To dispel worry about heart attacks, have practical and attainable targets, enjoy your work, do exercises regularly, eat proper meals at the right time, understand your genetic predisposition to certain health conditions and take adequate precautions, and be generally relaxed.

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Colon control: Yoga can battle irritable bowel syndrome

Irritable bowel syndrome or IBS is a common, though largely untreated, health problem whose symptoms can swing between diarrhoea and constipation. Although doctors have not conclusively established what causes IBS, everybody agrees that stress is a major culprit. Controlling stress and introducing lifestyle changes can go a long way in dealing with the problem.

Yoga is recommended widely to treat IBS because of its power to control stress. As the gut is thick with nerves, it is particularly sensitive to pain. Also, the immune system seems to be closely related to the gut and its reactions. Under stress, the immune system also reacts by either firing off too much or getting into a go-slow mode. Again, neurotransmitters called serotonin are found in the colon. In the brain, serotonin is thought to influence mood. But when the gut is under attack, more of serotonin stays back in the colon, making the person more sensitive to pain. This also affects the movement of the colon, making it too fast (causing loose motions) or too slow (causing constipation).

Certain foods (wheat, rye, barley, dairy products, chocolates, alcohol) as well as medications can trigger the condition while a fibre-rich diet that helps retain water in the gut can ease the dryness that leads to constipation. Further, reducing food intake can help tremendously as IBS seems to be linked to large meals.

Yoga can help by toning the gut. Full body stretches like the palm tree (tadasana) and stick pose (yastikasana) will remove the flaccidity of the digestive tract. Backbends like the bow (*dhanurasana*), cobra (*bhujangasana*) and locust (salabhasana) tackle constipation, while forward bends like the seated forward bend (paschimottanasana) and standing forward bend (padahastasana) can help to abate diarrhoea. Meditations like sleep of yoga (yoga nidra) can lower stress and aid repair while concentration practices (dhyana) like the inner silence practice (antar mouna) can help control reactivity, which seems to be a major trigger.

As the immune system is also implicated, strengthening it through practices like the wheel (chakrasana), the backbends mentioned above, and breathing practices or pranayama like the skull-cleansing practice (kapalabhati) and bellows breath (bhastrika) will help reduce embarrassing episodes that can restrict social life. Considering that medication prescribed is known to have side-effects and requires a lot of tightrope walking as the symptoms swing between two extremes, yogic practices coupled with lifestyle changes are possibly the best way to combat it.



Haresh Patel

YOGIC MOVES Standing forward bend (*padahastasana;* also called *uttanasana*)

Stand up straight. Inhale, raising your hands overhead. Exhale, extending your hands out as if reaching for the wall in front of you. Now, lower your hands till they reach the feet. If that isn't possible, touch your legs where you can. Hang the head low. Continue breathing normally. (In the first few weeks, you can bend your knees slightly, but later try to keep the legs straight to maximise the benefits.) Hold the pose, breathing normally. Release. Repeat a few times. After a few weeks, learn to hold the pose longer. Avoid if you suffer from lower back pain or very high blood pressure.

Benefits: This pose helps you lose weight and control diabetes. It also prevents age-related bone shrinkage and keeps the face young and wrinkle-free.

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)



Brain food: Eat right to power up your grey cells

I recently read that diet can help delay the onset of degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. Please suggest a diet that can be beneficial in preventing these diseases.

Advances in medical science and improvement in quality of life have boosted longevity, thereby contributing to a marked increase in the percentage of elders in our country. This has led to greater attention being given to the management of age-related diseases. The risk of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's—both major neurological disorders—increases with advancing age, though chanc-

es of an early onset could be higher in the event of family history. The most worrying aspect of these disorders is the gradual decline in our ability to function independently. Unlike other organs, as degenerated brain cells cannot be replaced by new ones, it is essential to protect our brain-the master controller of the body. Although the two diseases are incurable, a slew of mounting evidence has pointed towards the ability of diet in preventing them. As both are associated with cellular damage initiated by free radicals, reducing oxidative stress appears to be a logical choice to diminish the intensity, and sometimes the progression, of these neurological disorders.

The anti-oxidation approach involves modification of lifestyle which includes diet, physical exercise, sleep and mental activities.

THE BRAIN-HEALTHY DIET

Add a splash of colour to your diet with fruits and red, yellow and green vegetables. Rich in fibre and free radical fighting polyphenols, Vitamin A (beta carotene) and Vitamin C, fruits and vegetables protect the cells from free radical attack.

Choose foods low in saturated fats and cholesterol—lowfat dairy products and lean meat over full fat milk and red meat. Several studies have shown that high blood cholesterol is a risk factor for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.



Try to eat several meals throughout the day. Avoid processed foods, refined f our products and sugary foods that cause a sudden spike in blood sugar levels and brain cell inf ammation.

Include high-fibre foods such as vegetables, beans, wholegrain foods, bran and cereals in your diet.

Have foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids—f axseeds, walnuts, salmon, mackerel and tuna; they are potent antioxidants and potentially helpful in brain health.

Drink two to four cups of green, white or oolong tea daily. This has been scientifically proven to be beneficial in preventing oxidative stress and brain damage.

Limit alcohol consumption and stop smoking. Generated free radicals accelerate As Alzheimer's and Parkinson's are associated with cellular damage initiated by free radicals, reducing oxidative stress appears to be a logical choice to diminish the intensity, and sometimes the progression, of these neurological disorders

the process of ageing and progressively deteriorate brain health, making it vulnerable to disorders.

Raspberries, strawberries and blueberries play a protective role against oxidative injuries to the brain.

Avoid excessive exposure to environmental pollutants like pesticides, insecticides, smoke and noise that increase stress and free radical damage.

Consider supplementing your diet with antioxidant, multivitamin and multi-mineral supplements. One brain-friendly nutrient that can do wonders is coenzyme Q10. Several studies have highlighted the relationship between low levels of this nutrient and Alzheimer's.

Enrich your diet with brain-friendly nutrients like thiamine (Vitamin B1) and Vitamin B12 that prevent gradual decline in cognitive functions associated with ageing.

Remember to get your daily dose of exercise in any form: brisk walking, swimming, workouts at the gym, or even enjoyable activities like dancing. Ayurvedic herbs for maintaining good brain function by balancing *vata* can be used to prevent brain damage. Some herbs that are effective include *brahmi*, *yashtimadhu*, *shankhpushpi*, *haritaki* and *shatavari*. Remember that these must be taken under the supervision of an Ayurvedic practitioner.

The search for a miracle drug to cure Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease is still a distant dream. A healthy diet combined with proper physical exercise, adequate sleep and regular mental stimulation will help you remain fit and keep your brain working longer. It's never too late to give utmost priority to good health. Start today.

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

After my doctor advised me to lose weight, I cut down my food intake and started walking for half an hour about four times a week. But after losing a couple of kilos initially, there has been no change in weight. What kind of exercise would help?

Quite often when you take up an exercise programme, there is an initial weight loss that occurs quickly through water and fat loss. But the water returns and the exhilaration of the initial weight loss is replaced by disappointment. Sometimes, the weighing scale reading barely appears to change despite diet and exercise. This can happen owing to false expectations of unsafe high targets healthy weight loss is about half a kilo to 1 kg a week. It is also necessary to understand that metabolism and certain behaviours may get in the way of losing weight. Some people have speedier burn rate—men burn more than women—and after the age of 40, the metabolism slows down. Although you can't control these factors, there are ways to give your weight loss a boost.

First, make sure that you are in the aerobic walking zone—exercise intensity where the body uses both stored fat and carbohydrates for energy. To check, invest in a good pedometer that records aerobic walking, or try to recite a sentence after your walk has ended. If you can do it comfortably, you are not in the zone. Second, take up muscle building activities such as weight or resistance training to increase your metabolic rate. Lift weights or use resistance bands.

While we have looked at your exercise regime, we need to examine your eating behaviour. Remember to keep yourself well hydrated with eight to 10 glasses of water a day. Eating more often in moderation is better than eating less often. Avoid 'crash diets' as they lower your metabolism and your rate of weight loss.



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



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

Decoding the future

team of scientists at the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology in New Delhi has successfully conducted the **first human genetic mapping of an Indian**. Researchers from the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan and China completed the first human genome project in 2003, but region and community-specific mappings will help identify the susceptibility of diverse populations to different disorders. Dr Sridhar Sivasubbu and Dr Vinod Scaria led the two-year project and decoded the genome sequence of an anonymous healthy Indian citizen that involved mapping 3.3 billion base pairs in the DNA molecule.

Though scientists plan genome sequencing of 10 more Indians, the genetic variations would not be adequate to come to any conclusion regarding vulnerability of a larger population to specific diseases. "Hundreds, if not thousands, of studies are required before a clear pattern emerges," Dr Sivasubbu tells *Harmony*. "Only then can we say if a certain pattern actually contributes to disease susceptibility." Discussing the biggest advantage of gene mapping, he adds, "If technology is cheaper and applicable in clinical settings, it will help in predictive medicine by identifying specific susceptibility to various health conditions."



The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare plans to set up **medicinal plants across the country** at a cost of Rs 6,500 million. The new research laboratories and processing units under the aegis of the Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH) department will benefit regions that have lagged behind in the private health sector in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

INCONTINENCE REWIRED

team of surgeons performed India's first nerve rewiring surgery at Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai last December. Paediatric surgeons Dr Amrish Vaidya and Dr Ketan Parikh, neurosurgeon Dr Abhaya Kumar and neurophysiologist Dr Poornima Shah assisted Chinese surgeon Dr Chuan-Guo Xiao during the three-hour long procedure. Devised by Dr Chuan-Guo, the revolutionary technique will help patients suffering from incontinence as a result of spinal cord injury or spina bifida. "If loss of urinary control is left untreated, it may lead to repeated urinary infections and the possibility of renal failure," says Dr Vaidya, who convinced Dr Chuan-Guo to come to Mumbai. "New nerve connections can take between six months and two years to become functional; they bring hope to patients who would otherwise depend on selfcatheterisation to empty their bladder," he tells Harmony. "Changes in bladder function will cause less pressure to be transmitted to the kidneys, which is helpful in decreasing renal damage in the long term." According to Dr Chuan-Guo, the success rate is over 80 per cent. There is also improvement in stool control. "The procedure is life-changing for many patients," adds Dr Vaidya. "It will help boost selfesteem and independence in individuals with an otherwise productive life."



promotion

Dental Implants



Dr S M Balaji PhD in Maxillofacial Surgery

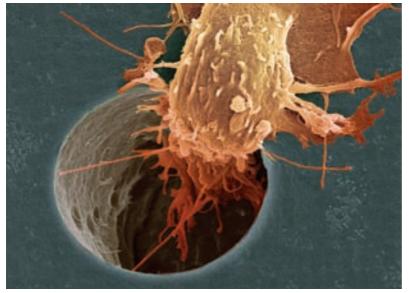
Q1. I wanted to replace my carious teeth using implants. But my dentist says that I need to wait for at least four months to get the tooth. Why is it so? Can't I get a tooth immediately after removing the decayed tooth?

The reason is simple—you need time to heal. But take heart, you can also get a tooth immediately—provided the bone surrounding the tooth is sound and healthy. After removing the tooth gently, we can insert an implant to replace the root of the tooth. The metal and the bone surrounding it will have to heal and bond well so that when the outer crown part of the tooth is attached to the implant, it can withstand the bite forces and remain stable.

The four-month "rest" period from the implant insertion to the implant "loading" is necessary for the gluing of the implant metal to the bone, a process known as osseointegration. In case the bone surrounding the tooth (therefore the implant) is good, it can be loaded immediately and such procedures are commonplace nowadays. If it is not possible, at least a temporary tooth will be provided to you immediately so that you need not remain toothless for a long time.

Q2. I was informed that as I have lost a lot of bone in my upper jaw, I cannot have a fixed denture. Can implants solve this problem? My existing dentures that need to be removed at night are also very loose.

Any denture will require some good bone structure to be stable. But if you have a lack of bone, we can definitely do a bone grafting to improve the bone structure for placing an implant or constructing a denture. We have high tech procedures and implants that can cater to patients with bone loss. You can definitely have stable dentures with the help of implants.



A NEW LEAD

ccording to a new Swedish Astudy, high blood glucose increases the risk of developing cancer, with women being more vulnerable than men. Researchers analysed blood sugar levels in 274,126 men and 275,818 women, with an average age of 44.8 years, from Austria, Norway and Sweden. They followed up after a decade to compute how many had developed cancer or succumbed to the disease. Though the comparisons don't directly prove that blood glucose levels alone lead to cancer, the study significantly suggests that high blood sugar levels might promote tumour growth by acting as a source

of fuel for tumour cells, particularly rapidly multiplying ones. "More extensive research is required before the findings can be validated," Dr K P Singh, senior consultant diabetologist at Fortis Hospital in Mohali, Chandigarh, tells Harmony. "There were studies in Europe that linked the widely-used insulin glargine (popularly known as Lantus insulin) with increased risk of cancer, but nothing has been proven. However, in my experience, several patients who have no family history of diabetes but suffer from high blood sugar levels and unexplained weight loss have been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer."

The next time you buy drugs from a chemist, remember to carry along a prescription by a qualified doctor. The State Drug Controller has recently written to the Chemists' Association of Delhi advising that



wholesalers and retail chemists should dispense drugs only against a valid prescription of a registered medical practitioner or be ready to face legal action.

CANCER protection

Scientists at Harvard University have developed an implant-based cancer vaccine that has shown promising results in experiments to eradicate **melanoma tumours in mice**. The fingernail-size vaccine (8.5 mm in diameter) can be inserted anywhere under the skin. Tumour-specific antigens filled inside the disc, made of FDAapproved biodegradable polymer, activate immune cells to attack tumours. The discs release cytokines—protein molecules secreted by the immune system—that recruit dendritic cells. These cells enter the implant, and on contact with antigens of the tumour report to the adjacent lymph nodes, whereby the immune system is alerted to track and destroy the tumour cells. This technique helps destroy foreign cells while protecting natural tissue. Results of successful testing with mice were recently published in journal *Science Translational Medicine*.

Yoga shiromani and acharya Shameem Akthar urges the elderly to heal body, mind and soul with ancient yogic habits that are easy to learn. From the philosophy behind practices and poses to step-by-step instructions with illustrations, this is a comprehensive guide written especially for Silvers. A publication by Foundation Empowering Senior Citizens By Shameem Akthar Special offer for Harmony readers! get 20% off buy the book at Rs 140 against regular price of Rs 175 _____ Personal details: Mr/Mrs/Ms Address State Postal Code City Email Phone___ I wish to pay by: Cheque Cheq made payable to "Harmony for Silvers Foundation" for Rs_____ (Add Rs 10/- for non-Mumbai cheques) Send form to Anita Rosario, Harmony for Silvers Foundations, Reliance Centre, 1st Floor, 19, Walchand Hirachand Marg, Ballard Estate, Mumbai - 1

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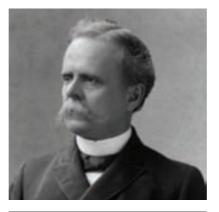
Soul saga

Our soul has only evolved through eons of struggle, says Amory Bradford

The soul is a prediction of clearer vision, truer thought, more unselfish love and wiser choices. It is a prophecy of the perfect man. History is also prophetic of larger souls. The stream of human history, after it has been followed backward a few thousand years, leads into the region of legend and myth-that is, to a time when history could not be written because there was no writing, and when all truth was conveyed in symbolical forms. That means toward a time of narrow experience, and of knowledge far more limited than the present. Memory, in those days, was enormously and abnormally capacious and retentive, but there was no appreciation of humanity.

Few lessons from the experiences of others were possible, because the mind was filled with merely tribal legends. What was called early civilisation was only relatively splendid. There was unsurpassed poetry but no science, ample brawn but diminutive brain, much passion but little love. Out of the darkness of the past the stream of history, very narrow and shallow at first, has emerged and steadily expanded and deepened. Men are now equally intense but far clearer in vision, nobler in purpose, and purer in character. Their laws year by year have become more humane, their sympathies less contracted, their institutions more civilised. Nature's secret drawers have been unlocked.

We are sometimes told that science has added much to the store of man's knowledge but nothing to the strength of his mind or the nobility of his character. That is a serious mistake. With the enlarged visions of the universe, with clearer conceptions of our cosmic relations, with the national neighbourliness which is now a necessity, the capacity and the quality of the soul must change. Nay, it has already changed, for we inhabit the same lands over which savages formerly roamed, and we find in the earth and air what they never found.... Knowledge tends to enlarge the mind by which it is acquired.



If there has been progress in institutions there must have been an equal progress in the souls, which are the real forces by which progress is always won

History has moved along a bloody pathway, or, to revert to the figure of a stream, is indeed a river of "tears and blood". The horrors of the process by which the race has been lifted can hardly be exaggerated. I do not forget them while I put stronger emphasis on the fact that the outcome of all the struggle of individuals, the conflict of classes, and the wars of nations has been a nobler and purer quality of soul—not less heroic but more sacrificial, not less strong but far more virtuous. The growth of the individual soul is mirrored in the progress of the race. When we have learned to read aright the history of the world, we are informed as to the interior forces which have made civilisation. Events are expressions of thoughts; institutions are manifestations of soul. If there has been progress in institutions there must have been an equal progress in the souls which are the real forces by which progress is always won. As history has been the evolution of humanity toward finer forms, so it is the assurance that the forces which have been at work in the past will not cease, but steadily continue until "the pile is complete". The perfect society will be composed of perfected individuals. History as prophecy is harmonious with soul as prophecy.

Browning wrote in Rabbi Ben Ezra, "Praise be thine! I see the whole design, I, who saw power, see love now perfect too; Perfect I call thy plan; Thanks that I was a man! Maker, remake, complete, I trust what thou shalt do! Therefore Isummon age, to grant youth's heritage, life's struggle having so far reached its term; Thence shall I pass, approved a man, for aye removed, from the developed brute; a god though in the germ." Browning holds that while in the future there will surely be expansion of soul, evolution as a physical process is at an end. Henceforward there will be no passing from one species to another. Species have to do with physical organisms, not with spirits. Soul in man is but God "in the germ".

Excerpt from The Ascent of the Soul (The Outlook Company) by Rev Amory H Bradford. Bradford was a pastor at the First Congregational Church at Montclair, in New Jersey, USA

First Aid

"If you believe you can do something, you can acquire the ability to do so. This helped me establish Omashram."



Compassionate crusader

was born in 1938 in Verem, in Goa. After completing my graduation from Mumbai in English and economics, I started my career in advertising with a private company called Shilpi. I soon decided to move to Bengaluru and branch out on my own as an advertising professional. I was 59 years old when I quit this field to join the India Population Project VIII, Karnataka, as an advisor from 1997 to 2001.

Retiring at the age of 63, I had no intention to sit back. In 2001, after visiting a few old age homes to observe their functioning, I started Omashram in Bengaluru with former colleagues Geetha Shankar and Prarthana Upadhyaya. Registered as a charitable trust, Omashram functions from three separate rented premises and has 35 residents. We have added a new address to the list; it will help us accommodate 25 more members. Besides kitchens with full-time cooks, we have trained nurses and a doctor on call. A team of volunteers spends time with residents. We have also started basic computer education classes for those who are interested.

Initially, we made it a pay-and-stay avenue for people over 60. After we managed to obtain funding from individual and corporate donors, we have been providing shelter to at least 10 to 15 abandoned elders. Those who can afford them pay for the services. While many enjoy good health, there are others who suffer from dementia and Alzheimer's. Many have died here.

Since childhood, I have enjoyed writing. In 2005, I published The Western Ghats, a book that highlights the irreversible destruction of ecology. I have just completed two more books-Mahadayi/Mandovi River Valley and The Flight of Gods: Hindu Temples & Shrines of Goa-commissioned by the Government of Goa. Both have been written after extensive travel. Every Sunday morning, my virtual newsletter on environment and wildlife is mailed to about 1,500 readers. After retirement, I wrote a short book titled The Elderly-an analysis of the ageing population depicting the plight of the elderly in India. Published in 2002, copies were distributed free to help senior citizens work towards active ageing.

—As told to Nisary Mahesh

ART SMART

EXPERTS ANSWER YOUR QUERIES AND CONCERNS ON JOBS AFTER RETIREMENT

I have taught art to schoolchildren for many years and would now like to curate an art exhibition of a known artist. Do you think it is a feasible idea?

It would be more practical to start with an introductory show of upcoming artists. First, identify a few artists in your city-outstation ones would involve additional liabilities like travel, stay, transportation of work-and make studio visits. Once the artists are confirmed, you need to find a business group to sponsor space. The exhibition can be held at any art gallery, hotel or even a residence (as is the trend these days). Catalogue printing is the curator's responsibility; you will need to collate information about the artists, their recent works and images. Depending on the size of the canvases, display about 25 works of art-ideally four or five works each by five artists. To be a success both in terms of number of visitors and sales, the show should continue for a minimum duration of one week. You should be prepared to invest about Rs 100,000-even more, if there is no sponsor-for expenses like starting a website, invitation cards for the inauguration, high tea, and local transportation costs. Your commission could vary from 30 to 50 per cent.

-Koeli Mukherjee Ghose

Ghose is a curator and art historian based in Hyderabad



Following my husband's retirement last year, we decided to settle down in Kolkata. I have been thinking about teaching spoken English to housewives. How do I go about it?

Teaching a language can be very rewarding but it is essential that you have an excellent grasp of the language and good communication skills. Though no investment is involved, you should reserve a room in your house to hold classes in relative privacy. Remember that you will be dealing with mature women who may feel hesitant to open up before anyone other than their fellow students. Besides word-of-mouth publicity, you can put up notices or distribute computer-printed handbills in residential buildings and clubs. It is advisable to take three one-hour sessions a week with two or three persons at a time—there's always a tendency for a session to carry over for some extra time. Teach four or five new words in each class, giving students enough time to practise in the class and at home. As they gain confidence, involve them in situation-based conversations about subjects ranging from organising a

kitty party and going shopping to attending parent-teacher meetings. Encouragement combined with an easy and informal atmosphere will help you get better results.

—Gayatri Singh

Kolkata-based Singh conducts English language classes at her residence

I am a 58 year-old housewife living in a joint family in Pune. Please advise me how to organise a smallscale exhibition and sale of clothes or handicrafts at home.

Rather than handicrafts, clothes are more likely to attract clientele. Try to plan your sale during the festive season—business always picks up during this period. Plan to hold the exhibition for two or three days in a moderately spacious room. Instead of combining different types of garments like saris, salwar kameez sets or baby outfits, select just one variety and stock at least 100 pieces covering a range of prices. Salwar kameez would be a good choice, as the investment can be limited between Rs 30,000 and Rs 50,000 unless you opt for a high-end selection. Buy from wholesale textile markets in Mumbai-Mangaldas Market, Hindmata Cloth Market-and mark up your prices by 25 to 50 per cent. Be sure that each item is properly tagged to avoid any confusion. Though goods cannot be purchased on a refundable basis, many shops agree to exchange unsold items if they are in good condition. Managing such a sale single-handedly is difficult and you will need one or two people to assist you. For small-scale exhibitions, word-of-mouth publicity is sufficient. -Vaishali Gokhale

Gokhale organises garment exhibitions at her residence in Pune

INSIDE P62: Heritage in danger P74: Was Sherlock Holmes gay?

C COLLECTION

TOYS ARE US!

tcete

In 1990, while restoring his large ancestral house in Pune, Vilas Karandikar went scouting for antique brass rivets to prop up an old swing. The search led him to many brass metal dealers in Pune. At the shop where he finally found the rivets, Karandikar also chanced upon an array of *bhatukli* (miniature utensils). *Bhatukli* is a charming reminder of life in India 500 years ago when girls were married off in their childhood and often carried small

utensils to their in-laws' homes where they played make-believe games with the miniature pots and pans.

Culture

Recollecting his own childhood memories of playing with *bhatukli*, Karandikar bought the entire set and unwittingly launched what went on to become a lifelong passion. Today the 63 year-old has a collection of 1,500 *bhatukli* made from copper, brass, mud, wood and silver. Weighing 125 kg, the entire collection is packed into 50 large boxes at his house and has been exhibited over 150 times all over India and abroad. "I need four assistants to help me set up each exhibition," says Karandikar who, in 2003, entered the *Limca Book of Records* for his unique collection. People queue up outside his house to see the collection for an entry charge of Rs 10. And after they leave, Karandikar spends hours polishing every piece and putting it back into its designated box.



Passion for POETRY

Iftikhar Imam Siddiqui keeps an 80-year legacy alive

ostly confined to his one-room flat in Grant Road in central Mumbai after an accident in 2002, Iftikhar Imam Siddiqui zealously guards a rich

literary legacy. As editor of the 80 year-old Urdu monthly magazine *Shair* (Poet), Siddiqui carries forward a tradition his grandfather the revered poet-freedom fighter, Seemab Akbarabadi—started. Launched on 15 February 1930 in Agra, *Shair* has battled countless storms, including financial crunch, over the years. Yet, as Siddiqui claims, "the death of *Shair* will be akin to the death of an institution that has inspired and groomed generations of Urdu poets and writers, including poet-lyricist Nida Fazli." Along with his two brothers, Siddiqui works hard on the magazine—reading the manuscript, editing contributions from In-

dia and abroad, and replying to hundreds of letters. "*Shair* provided a platform to a budding Nida when nobody knew him," says Siddiqui. "And he is just one of the many Urdu poets who went on to become famous."

The resolute silver is understandably a bit worried about *Shair*'s future. Unfortunately, today Urdu has become a language of Muslims alone, and even many Muslim children



ch guage of Muslims alone, and even many Muslim children are not learning the language. Yet *Shair* has a respectable readership—mainly the Urduloving Diaspora, including the US and Canada. Fortunately, some ardent lovers of *Shair* in Mumbai have established the Shair Literary

Trust that ensures that the magazine, unlike several other literary magazines in the subcontinent, doesn't shut shop. *Shair* enjoys another distinction, that of being run by a single family for over eight decades. It is also probably the only publication that has kept all the letters it has received in the past eight decades—the letters are stacked in gunny bags, trunks and bundles in the same room where Siddiqui lives

and works. Seemab Akbarabadi would have never imagined that the sapling he planted in the tumultuous pre-Partition days would continue to bloom for so long.

–Adab Nawaz

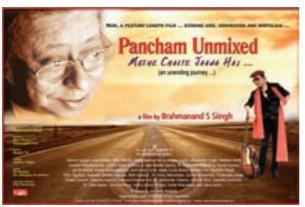




St Xavier's College in Mumbai celebrated its 140th anniversary in January with the release of a commemorative book, *St Xavier's College: Celebrating Diversity since 1869.* The 200-page coffee-table book is filled with pictures of its majestic Gothic architecture, large laboratories, chapel, quaint gargoyles, musty shelves, and anecdotes and views

of alumni. It also carries wonderful details on college excursions, snippets from college magazines and poetry and prose from ex-students that reveal how the faculty goes beyond universityprescribed syllabi to make education more engaging and exciting. Both photographer David D'Souza and writer Shabnam Minwalla who worked on the book are alumni of St Xavier's. The book was launched at a glittering event on 3 January at the college campus. Many of the former students—who are now luminaries in their individual fields (such as actor Vidya Balan, radio compere Ameen Sayani and former Attorney General of India Soli Sorabjee)—were felicitated at the event. The book is priced at Rs 3,000.

BACK TO BURMAN



HERE'S A TREAT FOR FANS OF R D BURMAN: PANCHAM UNMIXED, A TRIBUTE BY DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER BRAHMANAND SINGH. THE PACKAGE COMPRISES A DVD THAT FEATURES A TWO-HOUR DOCUMENTARY ON THE COMPOSER'S LIFE PUT TOGETHER FROM INTERVIEWS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY; A BOOK WITH FACTOIDS ON HIS SONGS, STYLE OF WORK AND PERSONALITY; AND A DVD WITH 30 UNFORGETTABLE NUMBERS BY THE ECCENTRIC GENIUS. GET IT FOR RS 999 AT A MUSIC STORE NEAR YOU.

RARE FINDS

VC Scott O'Connor, an English Orientalist, once claimed that the Khuda Bakhsh Public Library in Patna has 'one of the finest collection of



Moslem literature' in the world. Unfortunately, not many Indians are aware of the library's unique distinction. Located close to the banks of the Ganges, the library is the largest repository in India on Islamic literature and art. It has 21,000 Oriental manuscripts and 250,000 printed books in English, Urdu, Persian and Arabic, besides thousands of calligraphic masterpieces and works of art from the Iranian, Kashmiri, Mughal, Central Asian and Rajasthani schools. The library was opened in 1891 by Khuda Bakhsh, a high-ranked government officer who inherited a large collection of rare manuscripts and books from his father, Maulvi Mohammad Bakhsh, a man of letters and passionate book collector. Funded by the Ministry of Culture, the library has been declared by the Indian Government as an Institution of National Importance by an Act of Parliament in 1969. Though books are lent only against member cards, its Curzon Reading Room is open to all.



TEE TIME!

C LEGACY

VANDANA SHUKLA MEETS A FAMILY IN CHANDIGARH WHO CANNOT GET ENOUGH OF GOLF

ardayal Singh Johl, 77, has been playing golf from the time when golfers in Chandigarh used to take a break from their game to have *nimbu pani* and cake brought in by their womenfolk from home. This was the early 1960s, when Chandigarh was not the swish city we know today. In fact, Johl, who headed the landscape wing of the chief engineer's office back then, is responsible for the landscape of the Chandigarh Golf Course.

"I was a reluctant golf player initially as I was busy with work, but my boss Kulbeer Singh nudged me towards the sport," recalls Johl. "He would ask us to close the office at 4.30 pm, play golf for some time and resume work at night." As the modest nine-hole course turned into a full-fledged 18-hole golf course in 1973, Johl and



his wife became regulars at Chandigarh Golf Club—so much so that they even moved their residence from Sector 16 to Sector 7 to be closer to the course. Today, their sons Ajay, 47, and Amandeep, 40, too have made a name for themselves in the golf circuit. Ajay (*see pic, centre*), an architect, has won many amateur championships, while Amandeep plays professional golf in Asian and European circuits.

In 1969, when Ajay took to golf, it was not exactly a popular or lucrative

sport. "All my fellow golfers were retired officers, yet I used to be at the game for 12 hours a day," says the passionate golfer who hits the course only on weekends now. His 24 yearold daughter Mina takes after him. Now based in Egypt, the civil engineer swung the club for the first time when she was just four years old and has participated in many tournaments since. "We love to discuss the game both on and off the course," says Mina, whose mother is the only one in the family who is not a golfer.



RESURRECTING GANDHI

CLARA QUIEN, A BRITISH ARTIST WHO LIVED IN KASHMIR BETWEEN 1935 AND 1952, WAS THE ONLY ARTIST FOR WHOM MAHATMA GANDHI AGREED TO POSE FOR A SCULPTURE. OVER THE YEARS, THE STATUE FELL INTO DISREPAIR. NOW THE CENTRE OF SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE HAS LAUNCHED A FUND-RAISING INITIATIVE TO RESTORE THE STATUE TO ITS FORMER GLORY. AFTER RESTORATION, THE STATUE WILL BE ON DISPLAY IN THE GARDENS OF WOLFSON COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE. The first day at school The first time you rode the bicycle. The first crush you had at thirteen The first drama you got a part in The first day at college The first date you went on The first date you went on The first kiss The first time you proposed The first job interview The first board meeting you addressed The first day after retirement

BUTTERFLIES never retire

The first click of the mouse.

The all new







GLORY IN RUINS

OUR HERITAGE LIES NEGLECTED NOT JUST IN OUR STREETS AND BYLANES BUT IN OUR COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS. CONSERVATIONIST ABHA NARAIN LAMBAH TELLS US WHY WE CAN'T BUILD A GREAT FUTURE ON A CRUMBLING PAST

appu loves Babli"; "Raju loves Hema"—such romantic outpourings often appear engraved upon old ageing walls of historic monuments. In a feat of *filmi* heroism, these lovesick Romeos manage to inscribe domes of medieval tombs or parapets of formidable fortifications. Little do these starry-eyed lovers realise the folly of their seemingly harmless declarations of love, as invaluable pieces of history are made victims of such inane actions.

Scribbling on walls is not the only way our city folk manage to defile historic buildings. Film posters and-during elections-a medley of political posters and bills are stuck on many a historic facade. Many an old relic is today used as a dumping ground for rubbish and walls of old buildings are the ubiquitous screen to answer nature's call. It is difficult to walk along the historic quarters of Indian cities, where the overpowering stench far outweighs the historic experience. Many abandoned monuments today have become homes to squatters; Mahim Fort in Mumbai houses a veritable slum colony. Across the country, we see fabulous monuments littered with plastic bags and rubbish.

Today, it must be practically impossible to find a monument in the country-right from the Lodi tombs of Delhi to the forts of Daulatabad, and even the caves of Ajanta and Elephanta-which does not bear marks of this vandalism. In what may seem like a national pastime of enthusiastic young lovers, such graffiti seems to find its way even into the hallowed environs of national monuments and protected buildings. It is not uncommon while travelling on a train to notice advertisements for a marriage broker painted on the walls of a medieval haveli. And some ingenious squatters also manage to use the edifices of old tombs as homes, while local advertisers promote their enterprise through bold advertisements painted on monuments.

Many more heritage structures, all over our cities, are being engulfed by slum settlements or completely taken over by hawkers and hoardings. According to international conservation charters, the area around a historic monument should be treated in a special manner and any construction activity in its close proximity should be disallowed. This is definitely something that doesn't hold water in Indian towns; often, monuments form a convenient backdrop for a local chai shop or paanwala. Along the Victorian arcades of Dadabhai Naoroji Road in Mumbai and neoclassical edifices of Kolkata, many historic façades are showered with paan stains. Another breed of vandals is the professional



Shilbhadra Datta

Mihir Singh

Prasad

'antique hunter'. These are the most virulent of them all, steadily chipping away at the historic fabric itself. Scouring old buildings for commercial gains, they quarry for old pillars, carved doorways and *jharokha* to sell as drawing room attractions to rich clients both in the domestic market and abroad, where there is a ready clientele for such products. In spite of the Antiquities Act of the Government of India that forbids the export of artefacts over a hundred years old, wooden pillars from Chettinad homes, Shekhawati *havelis*, medieval *chattri* and wooden doorways find their way into private collections and socialite homes.

Commercialisation too has taken its toll. Most of the old quarters of towns and cities also happen to be the commercial districts. So, whether it is the Bara Bazaar in Kolkata functioning as the core area of the city, or the wholesale markets of Chandni Chowk in Delhi, most historic buildings find themselves engulfed by rampant commercialisation. A typical 19th century building near Mumbai's Crawford Market would be practically unrecognisable from its original state owing to the many additions wrought by subtenants and division of property among generations of owners.

Lopsided planning can also be the cause of concern when development and modern infrastructure become the root cause of the problem. For centuries, the mud monasteries of Ladakh stood proudly in the desert climate. The unbaked mud bricks used in their construction braved hundreds of years, well preserved by the sterile, dry climate of the arid desert. However, owing to the efforts of locals and government bodies to promote forestation, Ladakh has received more rainfall in the past few years than in decades earlier. This changed microclimate may be welcomed by the agriculturists of the region, but has created immense conservation problems for the ancient mud structures that are under threat of being washed away by the precipitation. Though the enhanced water supply and tapped water is a boon to the residents, the immense runoff caused by it is damaging the foundations of the mud buildings.

Rent control has also led to loss of heritage in many cases. Originally framed to protect the rights of economically weaker tenants, this blanket legislation is vastly exploited. According to present laws, the onus of maintaining the property rests on the landlord. However, in most cases of old buildings, the rental income is so low that, more often than not, the owner lands up paying more money in municipal taxes than his rental income. In such a case, the land owner is in no situation to invest more money in maintenance and repair, and the building falls into decay. This scenario has resulted in many historic buildings and *haveli* gradually decaying till they finally collapse—an immense loss of architectural heritage and, in many cases, invaluable lives.

Vandalism of historic buildings, thus, is not limited to direct acts of malice and destruction. It can result from poor planning policies, short-term progress, misplaced enthusiasm or even misdirected development. And it is not only the duty of government agencies, the Archaeological Survey of India and planning bodies to protect national heritage—a significant role can be played by common people through non-governmental organisations, citizens' pressure groups, or even vigilant individuals. So, the next time you see a local Romeo exhibiting his artistic talents on a historic wall, make sure you give him a piece of your mind! ETCETERA culture | heritage | bookshelf | memento | enlighten | the way we were | headstart | speak .

RANI-NO-HAJIRO, AHMEDABAD

Built by Sultan Ahmed Shah in the 15th century for the first queen of Ahmedabad, today Rani-no-Hajiro (Queen's Tomb) has little to do with history and instead rubs shoulders with commerce. Vendors selling an assortment of 'ladies' goods' have lined up their stalls on the facade of the Hajiro located in the Manek Chowk area of Ahmedabad—across the Badshah-no-Hajiro (Sultan Ahmed Shah's tomb), an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) monument. In its heyday, the Hajiro was held in reverence as the tomb of Shah's many queens. Today, squatters obscure its identity and ceaseless traffic drown out its cry for revival.





MAHIM FORT, MUMBAI

Overlooking Mahim Bay, Mahim Fort was once a strategic watchtower used by the English to pre-empt enemy assault. Built in the 15th century, the fort was originally in the hands of Bahadur Shah of Gujarat from whom it was wrested by the Portuguese, who later ceded it to the British as dowry. Its present inhabitants, though, care little about its rich history—an ugly rash of slums has encroached all over it and parts of the fort have caved in owing to tidal erosion. Though listed as a Grade 1 heritage structure, municipal and state government authorities have yet to make up their mind about whose responsibility it is to preserve it against further dilapidation.



VICTORIA HALL, CHENNAI

One of the most prominent landmarks of Chennai, the 123 year-old Victoria Public Hall is in dire need of restoration. The hall, managed by the Victoria Hall Trust, was once a popular venue for balls, lectures and stage performances. Designed by Lord Chisholm, it stands on three acres of land leased out by Chennai Municipal Corporation for 99 years in 1886. With the expiry of the lease in 1985, a legal tussle ensued between the Corporation and the Trust, which sought an extension on the lease. The matter remains unresolved. Meanwhile, the cracks on the walls of the hall gape wider.



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CLIVE HOUSE, KOLKATA

HARRY F.

Once the house of Lord Robert Clive, a civil servant of the East India Company who defeated the rulers of old Calcutta in the Battle of Plassey in 1757, Clive House is a pale shadow of its former opulent self. Parts of the mansion are occupied by Bangladeshi immigrantssome who have inhabited it for over five decades. Despite wobbly pillars, mounting debris, a peeling façade and qnarled trees growing out of walls, the decrepit structure still has an aristocratic bearing. Though the ASI had initiated restoration work a couple of years ago, its efforts were brought to a halt by the squatters who occupy the house.





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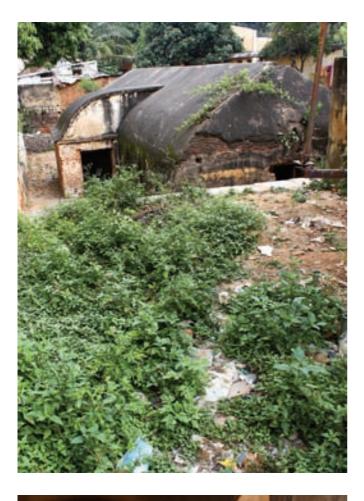


LAL GUMBAD, DELHI

No one knows whether Sheikh Kabiruddin Auliya was a wandering Sufi saint or a mendicant. His tomb, the 600 year-old Lal Gumbad in Malviya Nagar, though, still draws a trickle of followers who pay homage with candles and invocations. Though an obscure board lists the square sandstone structure as an ASI monument, there is no board that informs you about its origin or the era it belonged to. The park where the tomb is located is also strewn with garbage at one end. The caretaker of Lal Gumbad hopes the structure will receive a facelift well before the Commonwealth Games to be held later this year.









TIPU SULTAN'S ARMOURY, BENGALURU

At the end of a long drawn out wrangle between the State Archaeological Department and South-Western Railways, a landmark decision issued in November 2009 will now see Tipu Sultan's 242 year-old armoury in Kalasipalyam making way for an additional railway track between Bengaluru and Mysore. The railways claim they have the expertise to shift the armoury to another location. The armoury was once used by the Sultan and his father Hyder Ali to store missiles, many of which were gifts from rulers of other kingdoms. At present, it's just another inconspicuous block of stone covered with cobwebs, and littered with junk food wrappers.



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Prasad

PASSAGES



Pride without prejudice

AN EXTRACT FROM *GITA RAHASYA* (1911) BY LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK

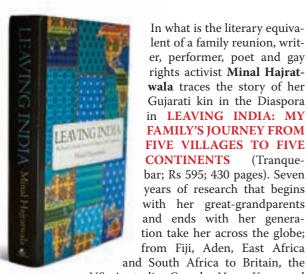
hen this principle of the Karma-Yoga in the Gita has been accepted. one can properly account for and justify the pride of one's family, the pride of one's country, or other similar duties on the basis of that principle. Although the ultimate doctrine of this philosophy is that, that is to be called Religion which leads to the benefit of the entire human race, nay of all living beings, yet as pride of one's family, pride of one's religion and pride of one's country are the ascending steps which lead to that highest of all states, they never become unnecessary. Just as the worship of the qualityful (saguna) Brahman is necessary in order to attain to the qualityless (nirguna) Brahma, so also is the ladder of pride of one's family, pride of one's community, pride of one's religion, pride of one's country. Necessary in order to acquire the feeling of vasudhaiva kuttumbakam ('the whole universe is the family'); and as every generation of society climbs up this ladder, it is always necessary to keep this ladder intact.

In the same way, if persons around one, or the other countries around one's country are on a lower rung of this ladder, it is not possible for a man to say that he will always remain alone on a higher rung of the ladder; because, as has been stated above, those persons who are on the higher step of that ladder, have occasionally to follow the principle of 'measure for measure', in order to counteract the injustice of those who are on the lower steps. There is no doubt that the state of every human being in the world will improve gradually and reach the stage when everyone realises the identity of the Atman in every created being. At any rate, it is not improper to entertain the hope of creating such a frame of mind in every human being. But, it naturally follows that so long as every one has not reached this ultimate state of development of the Atman, saints must, having regard to the state of other countries or other societies, preach the creed of pride of one's country, which will for the time being be beneficial to their own societies.

Besides, another thing, which must also be borne in mind, is that as it is not possible to do away with the lower floors of a building, when the higher floors are built; or as the pickaxe does not cease to be necessary because one has got a sword in one's hand; or as

fire does not cease to become necessary, because one has also got the Sun, so also does patriotism, or the pride of one's family, not become unnecessary, although one has reached the topmost stage of the welfare of all created things. Because, considering the matter from the point of view of the reform of society, that specific function, which is performed by the pride of one's country, is not achieved by the realisation of the identity of the Atman in all created beings. In short, even in the highest state or society, patriotism and pride of one's family and other creeds are always necessary to the same extent as equability of reason. But, as one nation is prepared to cause any amount of harm to another nation for its own benefit, on the basis that the pride of one's own country is the only and the highest ideal, such a state of things is not possible if the benefit of all created beings is looked upon as such ideal. If there is a conflict between the pride of one's family, the pride of one's country, and ultimately the benefit of the entire humankind. then according to the important and special preaching of the ethics, which is replete with equability of reason, duties of a lower order should be sacrificed for duties of a higher order.

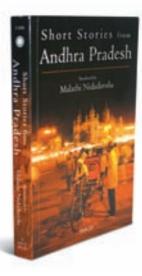
BRIEFLY



In what is the literary equivalent of a family reunion, writer, performer, poet and gay rights activist Minal Hajratwala traces the story of her Gujarati kin in the Diaspora in LEAVING INDIA: MY FAMILY'S JOURNEY FROM FIVE VILLAGES TO FIVE CONTINENTS (Tranguebar; Rs 595; 430 pages). Seven years of research that begins with her great-grandparents and ends with her generation take her across the globe; from Fiji, Aden, East Africa

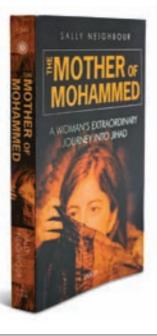
US, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong and New Zealand. In telling her family's story, she is able to address larger issues-the lures that have led so many people away from India (from personal motives to socioeconomic realities) and the pulls that keep them rooted to the motherland wherever they may live. In the process, we get a glimpse of "the meeting place where character intersects with history" through interviews with over 75 relatives. The most touching part of the book, however, is the sound of Hajratwala's own voice when she writes about her "border crossings"; moving out from her parents' shadow and being accepted for her literary talents—and her sexuality. A valuable insight into alienation and assimilation.

The English is far from flawless. The grammar is clumsy in places. The conversations are stilted at times. But many of the protagonists who roam the pages of SHORT STORIES FROM ANDHRA PRADESH (Jaico; Rs 295; 456 pages) are unforgettable for the rustic simplicity and old-world values they believe in. Their naiveté bursts forth unrestrained in their dialogue, making them rather endearing and often amusing. Malathi Nidadavolu, who translated the anthology from Telugu to English, has compiled 18 stories of writers who are distinguished names in Andhra literature. The stories are

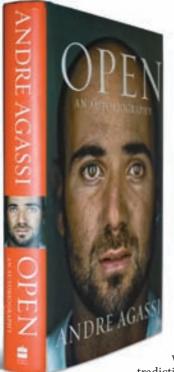


devoid of any layers or subtle nuances, and the characters are black or white-never grey. At the core of each tale is a sparkling truth on neighbourliness, community values, gender dynamics, administrative corruption and loneliness, among many other issues that confront us every other day. Look out for the gems of plain old common sense scattered carelessly. In one instance, an old village couple is perturbed by their daughter's urban abode. "Those croton plants, without flower or fruit, are something! Indira said they exhale oxygen. Isn't it strange closing the windows and breathing the oxygen the croton plants exhale?"

Winner of three Walkley Awards for excellence in journalism, investigative journalist Sally Neighbour deserves another accolade simply for steering clear of bias and maudlin prose while telling the story of an elite jihadi. A thoroughly engaging work of non-fiction, THE MOTHER OF MOHAMMED (Jaico; Rs 295; 315 pages) walks us through the life of Robyn Merry Hutchinson, a marijuanasnorting backpacking beach bunny from Mudgee, Australia, and her metamorphosis into the burkha-clad Rabiah Marvam Hutchinson, the wife of a top Al Qaeda ideologue living in jihad-soaked Kandahar. Known in CIA circles as the 'Elizabeth Taylor of the jihad' and as 'the mother of Mohammed' among her peers, Rabiah-when



she is still Robyn-abandons Christianity when she sees more rootedness in the immutable laws of Islam. From Australia and Indonesia to Pakistan and Afghanistan, Neighbour sticks close to Rabiah through every triumph and loss, never straying far from the angry turgid vein of Al Qaeda. The book is an outcome of Neighbour's twice-weekly meetings with Rabiah for over a year. When we close it, it's not the sensationalism that stays with us as much as the author's sensitivity. Neighbour stays faithful to her foreword: "Rabiah's story might provide some answers... help us understand the magnetism of the Islamist cause, which has made it among the most momentous religious and political movements of our time."



ADVANTAGE AGASSI

OPEN BY ANDRE AGASSI HARPERCOLLINS; RS 599; 388 PAGES

"I hate tennis." That reiteration is perhaps the biggest gobsmacker in Andre Agassi's autobiography. Not the confession of drug use or even the fact that he wore an artificial hairpiece for years, the malfunction of which possibly cost him his first Grand Slam final, the 1990 French Open. The biggie is that the tennis legend hates his sport. Yet, tennis is what defines him, a con-

tradiction he struggles with for most of his career, never more so than when he contemplates his penultimate professional game in the 2006 US Open: "Please let this be over. I don't want this to be over."

Pushed by a driven, emotionally abusive father into the "prison" that was celebrity coach Nick Bollettieri's academy in Florida, the lad from Las Vegas played and rebelled in equal measure; a boy with neon pink lava shorts and a leonine, streaked mane growing up in the klieg lights who rues his lack of education enough to set up his own school. Agassi bares his soul to ghost-writer JR Moehringer, a Pulitzer prize-winning author who refused to take a cover credit despite Agassi's insistence. Moehringer just supplies the words; they are uncomplicated and real, allowing Agassi's emotion to shine through. Boundless gratitude for his trainer and Man Friday Gil Reyes and coach Brad Gilbert. Heartbreak over failed relationships with hometown girlfriend Wendi Stewart and ex-wife Brooke Shields. And love at last with fellow tennis icon 'Stefanie' Graf (never Steffi because Stefanie was the way she saw herself), a kindred soul with a dominating father. In a hilarious anecdote, Agassi tells us how the two alpha dads almost came to blows during their first meeting. From the courtship that began with a practice session-"every forehand felt like foreplay"-to a marriage solemnised barefoot in jeans and the birth of two children, Agassi's adoration of his wife is fulsome, sometimes bordering on the twee.

But all this gooiness is punctuated with enough grit to make this book sing. The insider view of the game will thrill

not just tennis enthusiasts but those who are moved by accounts of guts and glory. Indeed, the finest moments come during the tennis matches, not necessarily the big ones but the games that *mattered*; epic duels with Pete Sampras and grudge-fests with Boris Becker where you can smell the sweat and hear the cheers. These set pieces of drama underscore a truism that Agassi repeats: "A win never feels as good as a loss feels bad." *Open* gives you the best seat on Centre Court to experience this.

—Arati Rajan Menon



one on one

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 and special talk therapy to overcome loneliness. You can contact me at: *Dr Kusum Doshi At Home Medicare Services, 1 Ankita Apts,*



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

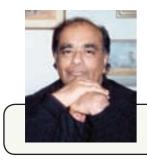
I am 70 years old and I live in Kolkata. I have published 12 books. My latest book Senior Citizen's Handbook (pages 120, priced Rs. 75) has become very popular and a second edition has just come out. I am sending complimentary copies; post free, to the secretaries of Senior Citizen's Associations and Housing Societies against a written request. Individual seniors can procure the same at a discount. You can contact me at: S C Kakar ME/5, Niva Park III Brahmapur Kolkata 700 096

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: V S Narayana Swamy Building 8-B, 302, Neelam Naaar. 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. I would like to help lonely seniors by offering companionship and moral support. You can contact me at: *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. You can contact me at: *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 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



A TWIST TO THE TALE

Timeri Murari solves the most puzzling Sherlock Holmes mystery

▼alk about longevity. This year Sherlock Holmes will be 123 years old. He began as a squib, a short story, A Study in Scarlet, by Arthur Conan Doyle, and from there grew into a sort of industry. I read most of the Holmes short stories when I was in school. We had a good library for popular fiction as the school librarian was also a great fan of P G Wodehouse, and we had the whole collection. Tolstoy, Dickens, Chekov, Dostoevsky, James Joyce and Hemingway, among others-possible Nobel Prize winners-never made it past the front gate, let alone the librarian's desk. There was also the complete Encyclopaedia Britannica in glass cabinets, but none of us went near the collection for fear of becoming contaminated by knowledge.

At that age, we read books innocently-for the story, for the action and adventure and the villains brought to justice. Holmes was the mastermind of detection. I don't remember which story had that line from Holmes: 'Why didn't the dog bark?' And from that simple observation, he deduced brilliantly that the dog knew the murderer and, therefore, he was a member of the household. I thought that pretty clever, except that I have a dog that wouldn't bark if a helicopter landed in my garden. It would wag its tail and welcome the invaders with affectionate licks. Holmes was fortunate he had a barking dog to help him solve the crime.

Once film was invented, it wasn't too long before producers realised they had a goldmine of detective stories to make with a great lead character. Over the years, 75 actors have played Sherlock Holmes in over 200 films. I remember the early ones with Basil Rathbone in his deerstalker hat, accompanied by a portly Watson played by Nigel Bruce. They were in 14 films together. Even the Russians made a television series on Sherlock Holmes!

The latest Sherlock Holmes film has subtly tackled the question that prowled my mind for years: Were Holmes and Watson gay?

There was one aspect of Holmes that intrigued me, even as a schoolboywhy didn't he have a wife? He always hung around with Watson, which I suppose was acceptable for schoolboys who had best friends and best enemies. But we also had an interest in the opposite sex. So a suspicion lurked in me that there could be a stranger relationship between these two icons of detective fiction. It remained dormant as most of those old detectives avoided women. When did Hercule Poirot chat up a woman, except to deduce a motive for murder and not to seduce her? All that changed when along came James Bond who, with his 'shaken, not stirred martinis', knocked the women off their pedestals and into his bed.

Now film director Guy Ritchie, who was married to Madonna, has intro-

duced some frisson in the relationship between Holmes and Watson. He has applied his 21st century mind and morality and brought them up to date. They weren't 'best friends' but possible 'partners', the new term for such relationships. The latest Sherlock Holmes film has subtly tackled the question that prowled my mind for years. Ritchie has posed the question: Were Holmes and Watson gay? It appears there is a hint of this underlying relationship between the two in this new film that does make some sort of sense to me. After all Watson lived with Holmes in Baker Street. But then he married and vacated Baker Street. Did he leave behind a broken-hearted Holmes? Suddenly, Watson's wife died, conveniently, and he returned to live with Holmes in Baker Street happily ever after. Why else would he return as, from all accounts, emphasised too in this new film, Sherlock was a most anti-social human being? He couldn't bear to socialise with people, and the only person he tolerated for great lengths of time was Watson. Holmes admits: "I am not a wholesouled admirer of womankind": in fact, he finds "the motives of women... so inscrutable... How can you build on such quicksand? Their most trivial actions may mean volumes... their most extraordinary conduct may depend upon a hairpin."

This is the century in which a thousand closets are bursting open, and maybe this was one we had not noticed closed before.

Timeri Murari, 61, is an author and screenplay writer living in Chennai



WARMIST n. A person who believes that the current global warming trend is the result of man-made factors. Also: global warmist. —adj. Example: The road to Copenhagen has proved to be a rocky one. This past fortnight, ahead of the climate-change summit that starts in the Danish capital on Monday, the air has been thick with pejorative cries of 'warmist' and 'denier'. The former are those who subscribe to the view that the increase in the Earth's temperature in recent decades is the fault of man's profligate use of the planet's fossil fuels; the latter may or may not dispute that the temperature is rising, or that it is in some way man's fault, but are certainly not convinced that dramatic remedial action is required.

> ----"Copenhagen climate summit: A time for ingenuity and political leadership", *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 December 2009

WHEREDUNIT n. A murder

mystery or detective story where the location of a crime plays a central role. Also: where-dunit.

Example: In some mystery novels, the **wheredunit** is as important as the whodunit. The locale, rather than merely serving as the backdrop to the plot, is an essential ingredient that lifts the story out of the ordinary, providing an ambience found nowhere else.

—Robert Wade, "Blood flows in the wilderness as fast as it flows in the city", *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 19 September 2004

LICENCE TO CHILL

Now people in Mumbai and Pune can choose to have their driving licences delivered home. To check the increase in bogus driving licences—obtained by many applicants by misstating their addresses—the Maharashtra State Transport Department has now approved a proposal to home-deliver driving licences within five days of application. Applicants will be charged Rs 50 as expenses towards speed post. However, the option to collect licences personally still exists. The department also plans to launch a computerised test mechanism that will enable it to issue a learner's licence within two hours. Less encouraging is the news that the Government of India is considering a cap of 72 years on the age of drivers across the country. *Harmony* will keep you posted.

NONTROVERSY *n*. A false or non-existent controversy Example: Unfortunately a number of gotcha moments only became controversial when the media, like blood-deprived leeches, clung to the **nontroversy** and spun it through its continuous loop of 24-hour news, which only contains an estimated 30 minutes of new news according to a recent *Political Fallout* study.

—T M Lindsey, "Got scandal?: Iowa's bottom nontroversies of 2008", *Political Fallout*, 4 January 2009

foodoir (FOO.dwar) n. A

memoir that includes recipes or that is focused on food, meals, or cooking. [Blend of *food* and *memoir*.] **Example:** Done well, memoirs about love and food go together like steak and martinis. Meals are a perfect application for the 'show, don't tell' directive, from proposal soufflé to break-up pastina. These **foodoirs** have become a successful subset, one part chick lit mixed with one part chicken lit.

—Christine Muhlke, "Kiss the cook", *The New York Times,* 6 December 2009

meformer *n*. A social network user who posts updates that mostly deal with the user's activities, thoughts, and feelings. [*Cf. informer.*] **Example:** Love tweeting about your social life and crave the opportunity to share your thoughts, feelings and emotions? Then you're a **meformer**. But if you prefer posting links to news websites, love interacting with friends and have a cult following you're an informer.

—Amelia Harris, "Tweeting is just all about me", Sydney MX, 21 October 2009

Formerly, when religion was strong and science weak, men mistook magic for medicine; now, when science is strong and religion weak, men mistake medicine for magic.

— Hungarian psychiatrist Thomas Zsasz

WE GO 50 YEARS BACK IN TIME

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

hough John Lennon's iconic English rock band stirred into action in the late 1950s, it was officially christened 'The Beatles' only in 1960. The band grooved under four other names before they settled on their legendary title.

In 1957, when Lennon acquired his first guitar, he teamed up with close friend Pete Shotton to start the Black Jacks. However, it took less than a week for the two to tire of their newly minted name before they changed it to The Quarry Men-both Shotton and Lennon having attended Quarry Bank High School for Boys in Liverpool. Later, when Paul McCartney and George Harrison teamed up with Lennon in 1958 and 1959 respectively, the group was rechristened Johnny and the Moondogs. In 1959, inspired by singer Buddy Holly's group The Crickets, Lennon and his friends briefly went around calling themselves The Silver Beatles, before finally emerging as The Beatles in 1960 to reflect the 'beat'-the word the foursome often used to describe their music.

THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: FEBRUARY 1960

- On 8 February 1960, Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom issued an order that she and her family would be known thereafter as the House of Windsor.
- On 8 February 1960, work was completed on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (HWOF) in Sunset Boulevard in

Los Angeles, California. The HWOF is a 5.6-km sidewalk embedded with more than 2,000 five-pointed terrazzo stars dedicated to celebrities and fictional characters.

 On 13 February 1960, France tested its first atomic bomb in Reggane.

EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 64

	 	 									_
1	2	3		4		5		6		7	8
9						10					
11			12						13		
		14						15			
16							17				
						18					
19	20				21					22	
				23							
24			25						26		
		27						28			
29						30					
31											

BY RAJU BHARATAN ACROSS

- 1 What Dungarpur, as The Admirable Crichton, continues to CCI-symbolise? (3 4 2 3 3)
- **9** The Barrington brand? (7)
- **10** Not shorthand for Gary Kirsten's pet position (4-3)
- 11 Stop me and buy one (4)
- 12 What Meena Kumari hadn't on her as she passed away (1 4)
- 13 How Lata Mangeshkar's chosen to go through life (4)
- **16** Amenable to the idea of brain surgery? (4 4)

- **17** Sujatha Manohar's Shakespearian model? (6)
- **19** Vladimir Nabokov's imagery of the sexually precocious Bengali lass? (6)
- 21 The grand 1981 success of K Balachander's and Kamal Haasan's *Ek Duje Ke Liye* as affirmed by its Hindi-debuting leading lady? (8)
- 24 After Saira Banu who? (4)
- **25** Denis not mocking directly (5)
- 26 The apple cleaved into half must (4)
- **29** Sums are withdrawn for Dutch scholar (7)
- **30** The happening for the new-wave maker to film? (7)

31 Just your morning cup of tea (3 5 2 5)

DOWN

- 1 Dismissive message sent by the awkward Charlie Griffith bouncer? (4 2 2 5 2)
- 2 If Khushwant Singh has one, this compiler doesn't know about it! (2-5)
- **3** Three wheels that could make your head reel (4)
- 4 Dance pitching Arab into sand (8)
- **5** Indian Army fill out as due from either son or daughter (6)
- **6** Maybe the turncoat should but be certain he wouldn't (4)
- 7 Adjudge as 'stumped' (4 3)
- 8 Still has all BCCI feeling stumped, liaising with Lalit Modi (8 7)
- 14 Ask Shabana about her (5)
- 15 Sir rising about to upset 'meals ready' (5)
- 18 Where it comes to dancing footwork, you have to in the case of Helen (4 2 2)
- 20 Lie outside mead ready for drinking (7)
- **22** Country having Alec climbing in poetical India (7)
- 23 A potential successor to King Arthur? (2 4)
- 27 The same speedy Khan going up and down (4)
- 28 The very first Test between India and the West Indies was, believe it or not, his very first match as a cricket commentator—played at the Kotla in the year 1948, starting 10 November (4)

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.

For answers, see Page 79

BRAIN GYM

SHAKE AND STIR

The four blue lines represent a martini glass and the green dot in the centre, an olive. Move just two lines and remove the olive out of the glass.



LETTER UP

Each of these words start and end with the same letter. Can you fill up the correct letter in each word?

rom

rou

regan

apto

ardia

verd

oas

leri

eapo

rmad

GETTING PROVERBIAL

In each of the following eight proverbs, one letter of each word is replaced with another. Can you guess the original proverb?

- 1. I switch is mine raves mine.
- 2. So nets if food mews.
- 3. Won't budge I took my ids covet.
- 4. Calf I load it wetter that so break.
- 5. Ill word end so plan takes pack I pull toy.
- 6. I pool ant has honey ale boon panted.
- 7. If as dot oven mill she far lazy sines.
- 8. Won't kook I lift horde is she couth.

NUMBER GAME

7	4	8
3	9	7
6	5	10
?	8	4

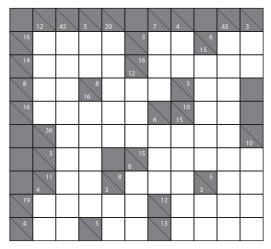
Can you guess the missing number in the last row?

SUDOKU FOR YOU

			5	4			6	
	9		5	6			3	
⊢	9			0			2	
	1		8			5	4	7
	3				1			
7	2	5						4
	4	1				6	7	8
		3			2		9	
4	5	2				7		3
8	7			5				

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

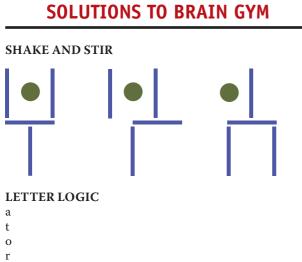


The object of a Kakuro is to insert digits from 1 to 9 into the white cells to total the clue associated with it. However, no digit can be duplicated in an entry. For example, to total 6, you could have 1 and 5, 2 and 4 but not 3 and 3. You may, however, use a number again in the same row or column.

SOLUTIONS TO EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 64

ACROSS: 1 The Days of The Raj; 9 Kenstar; 10 Long-leg (not *shorthand*); 11 Ices; 12 A bean; 13 Solo; 16 Open mind; 17 Portia; 19 *Lolita*; 21 Ratified (*Rati*/fied); 24 Asma; 25 Snide (*Denis*, its 5 letters rearranged); 26 Tell (*William*); 29 Erasmus (*sums are* withdrawn: meaning *sums are* reading in reverse); 30 Tsunami; 31 *The Times of India*

DOWN: 1 Take it or leave it; 2 Ex-niece; 3 Auto; 4 Saraband (S/Arab/and); 5 Filial (*Fil*/IA/l: *IA is Indian Army*); 6 Hang; 7 Rule out; 8 Jagmohan Dalmiya; 14 Smita; 15 Rotis (r/ot/iS: Sir rising about to upset); 18 Hand it to ('footwork' of Helen); 20 Limeade (*Li*/mead/*e*: *Lie* outside *mead*); 22 Iceland (*I*/celA/*nd*: *Alec* coming up in *Ind*); 23 An Ashe (reference to the 1975 Wimbledon winner Arthur Ashe); 27 Immi (reads *Immi* going *up* and *down*, Immi: short for Imran Khan); 28 (*Dev Raj*) Puri



- С
- 0
- t
- c t
- a

GETTING PROVERBIAL

- 1. A stitch in time saves nine.
- 2. No news is good news.
- 3. Don't judge a book by its cover.
 4. Half a loaf is better than no bread.
- 4. Halt a loat is better than no bread

- 5. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.
- 6. A fool and his money are soon parted.
- 7. It is not over till the fat lady sings.
- 8. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.

NUMBER GAME

Multiply the first two numbers in each row and subtract the third number from the resulting number. The answer will be 20 for all four rows.

 $7 \ge 4-8 = 20$

3 x 9-7 = 20

6 x 5-10 = 20

3 x 8-4 = 20

SOLUTIONS TO SUDOKU

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

SOLUTIONS TO KAKURO

	12	45	3	20		7	4		45	3
16	6	4	1	5	m	2	1	6 15	5	1
14	1	5	2	6	16 12	1	3	4	6	2
×	2	6	8 16	3	1	4	3	2	1	
16	3	1	4	2	6	6	10 15	1	9	
	36	7	6	4	5	1	2	3	8	10
	3	2	1		15 8	2	1	5	3	4
	11 4	8	3	8	1	3	4	5 3	2	3
19	3	9	2	1	4	12	5	1	4	2
4	1	3	5	2	3	13	3	2	7	1

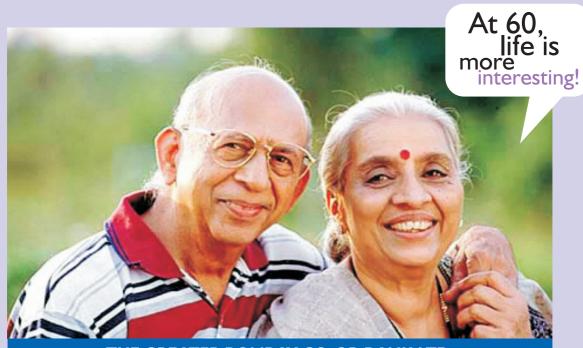
"My worries and fatigue vanish when I am surrounded by children."

Lily Sawant, 63, Mumbai, for teaching poor and visually impaired children



ily Sawant is not a qualified teacher but, in the past 40 years, she has taught thousands of children in Delhi, Aurangabad and Mumbai—free of cost. Teaching is a passion she first discovered when she moved to New Delhi in 1972 with her research scholar husband. One day during the summer vacations, when she noticed a group of children playing under the blazing sun, Sawant felt she could help them utilise their time more constructively. She decided to teach them math and English using stories and puzzles. Then, they moved to Aurangabad where she continued to teach hundreds of children in rural areas. At the age of 53, Sawant learnt Braille and Morse code in Mumbai to reach out to visually impaired children. Today she volunteers as a teacher at the National Association for the Blind, besides 50 other schools in the city. Her teaching methods are unique; she uses flowers to make litmus paper and fruits to explain the workings of the solar system. The spirited silver is unconventional in other ways too—she rarely bothers to use a blackboard and likes her students gathered around her in a circle.

—Anjali Rego



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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					
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