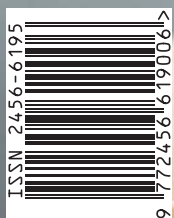


harmony celebrate age

NOVEMBER 2018 ₹ 40

The magazine for silver citizens

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PROACTIVE
Dr M S Sunil builds
homes for the
needy in Kerala

ENCOUNTER
Romulus Whitaker's
rendezvous with
creepy-crawlies



Tigers and
more at
Tadoba

Festive foods
with a twist

Impact of the
falling rupee
on silvers

SUNIL GAVASKAR

MAN OF THE MATCH

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Move for HEALTH

There is a greater India beyond our cities.

Today, there is a vast geographic divide between urban centres and the rest of the country in terms of access to even the most basic medical care, let alone specialised diagnosis and treatment. This is especially true when it comes to cancer, one of the biggest public health challenges of our time. In Maharashtra alone, which has the second highest incidence of cancer in the country, people—from silvers to the smallest of children—have little choice but to travel to large cities for treatment in the face of the greatest odds. And even when they do make it, affordability often becomes an acute concern. What good, then, is medical progress if it is the privilege of a few, rather than the prerogative of us all? After all, cancer doesn't discriminate—and nor should we.

With this in mind, in 2016, we announced a life-affirming initiative to bridge the abyss between our cities and the hinterland by establishing 18 radiation, chemotherapy and diagnostic centres in Tier II and III towns in Western India. Now, with our first three centres—in Akola, Solapur and Gondia—ready to open their doors, we stand at the threshold of a new dawn for cancer care. These centres will be equipped with state-of-the-art technology and defined by the comprehensive care that defines Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai.

We are determined to leverage our expertise to 'Contain, Combat and Conquer Cancer'. This is no mere slogan but a goal for us all. Indeed, many types of cancer are curable if diagnosed in time. What's more, in many instances, cancer can be kept at bay with the right lifestyle choices.



Dabboo Ratnani

Exercise is one such choice, a key element of healthy ageing. And this year, close to 1,200 silvers displayed their commitment to stay active at Harmony's Senior Citizens' Run, held as part of the Airtel Delhi Half Marathon on 21 October. I salute them for their spirit and take this opportunity to thank Procam International, Nobel Hygiene, VLCC Wellness, Smith & Nephew Healthcare India, and the BSES Rajdhani Power and BSES Rajdhani Yamuna teams for their support, as well as M Damodaran, our guest of honour, for flagging off the race. And, of course, a special shout-out to the Harmony team for their tireless efforts in making the run a success.

Indeed, turning silver may not be a choice, but living healthy is. There's no time like the present to get on your feet and take those first steps towards a more active life. Get moving—your life could depend on it.

Tina Ambani

A Harmony for Silvers Foundation Initiative

Harmony Celebrate Age—November 2018 Volume 15 Issue 6

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50 cover feature



Master batsman and former Indian cricket captain Sunil Gavaskar on the best innings of his life

Cover photograph: Haresh Patel

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WEB EXCLUSIVE www.harmonyindia.org



PROVING HIS METTLE

The first Indian Army officer to complete the Ironman Triathlon, Major General Vikram Dogra believes life has endless potential

Total number of pages in this issue of *Harmony-Celebrate Age*, including covers: 84



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column one

One of my most cherished memories is meeting the team that won India's first World Cup in 1983. I was 12 years old. My father was posted in the Indian High Commission in London and a special reception was organised to honour the victors—I remember wearing my best frock, my first pair of heels and the biggest smile on my face as my father took me to the reception. I came back with one name on my lips: Sunny Gavaskar. He was personable, witty, friendly; one of the few stars at the reception who didn't talk down to us kids. I became a fan.

That charm, candour and self-deprecating wit remain, as we discover in our cover feature, "Still Sunny". After wowing us on the field, he continues on strike with his company PMG and his career as commentator. That said, he insists, "The best hat I wear now is that of a grandfather. It's an education in itself."

Our other silver heroes this issue include the inspiring Dr M S Sunil, a college professor in Kerala who has provided a roof and succour to countless people, and herpetologist Romulus Whitaker, who has worked assiduously to conserve snakes and crocodiles in India and change our perception of these reptiles.

Elsewhere this month, we discuss how the fall of the rupee affects you and serve up dietary tips on eating smart this festive season.

Finally, we take you on a thrilling trip to Tadoba Andhari forest reserve in Maharashtra where, to borrow loosely from William Blake, *tiger, tiger, is burning bright*—much like *Harmony*!

—Arati Rajan Menon

On 9 November 2017, the Reserve Bank of India had directed all banks, including small finance and payments banks, as follows: "... in view of the difficulties faced by senior citizens of more than 70 years of age and differently abled or infirm persons (having medically certified chronic illness or disability) including those who are visually impaired, banks are advised to make concerted effort to provide basic banking facilities like: pick-up of cash and instruments against receipt, delivery of cash against withdrawal from accounts, delivery of demand drafts, submission of 'Know Your Customer' (KYC) documents and life certificates from the premises or residences of such customers."

Banks were "advised to implement these instructions by 31 December 2017, both in letter and spirit". Almost 11 months have elapsed since these instructions were issued, but the banking woes of seniors and other listed members are yet to be addressed. The main reason cited by the banks is shortage of staff; ever since higher compensation was awarded to staff, banks are reducing staff strength.

Further, senior citizens often find their ATM transactions 'timed out' owing to the quick response required by ATM machines. Bank servers also provide endless grief to elders in the form of long waits, sometimes for simple tasks like withdrawal of cash against cheques or updating passbooks.

The main lacuna in senior citizens' banking, however, remains not in services to them but in the rate of interest on their fixed deposits. Since 2011-2012, the declining rates have reduced senior citizens' income by 30-40 per cent. They have been crying hoarse and knocking on the corridors of power but to no avail.



The Honourable Vice-President of India Venkaiah Naidu brought cheer to the faces of senior citizens gathered at Vigyan Bhawan on 1 October 2018 for International Day of Older Persons, when he shared his opinion that the rate of interest on senior citizens savings should be at least 12 per cent. We all hope he gives these instructions to the concerned authorities and our future days are spent in poise.

K D Bhatia
Via email

Writing is not something that comes easily to me. So, to read about adventurous individuals and their legacies written in such an eloquent and engaging manner is quite a pleasure. I hope to get more wild stories and maybe one day see myself in these pages!

Snehal Joshi
Via email

HITS OF THE MONTH

Our most-read stories in
October 2018 on

www.harmonyindia.org

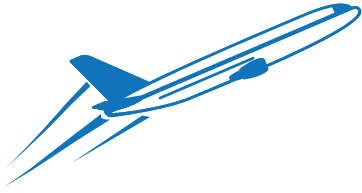
1. Hysterectomy after menopause (March 2018)
2. The life of Aai (March 2018)
3. The guardian of kingdoms (October 2018)



📺 MEDIA WATCH

Bellissima!

Milan is considered one of the fashion capitals of the world. And not surprisingly, it is home to a host of glamorous fashionistas who cock a snook at irrelevant numbers like age. Angelo, a fourth-year Milanese dental student, celebrates these silver foxes in his **Instagram page Sciuraglam**. "They are always in the centre of Milan, because they are rich," he tells the British edition of *Vogue* magazine. "If I go to Bar Luce, there are always women there having coffee." (*Scuira* translates to 'rich woman' in Milanese dialect.) So what does Angelo look for? "Inner beauty." He explains, "I really can't describe it, beauty is beauty. And they have to wear something that I would wear if I were a woman." *Sciuraglam* has a growing fan base with about 128,000 followers, and counting. Check it out for yourself at 📍 www.instagram.com/sciuraglam



TAKE FLIGHT

Here's another reason to take that trip—budget carrier **IndiGo has announced a 6 per cent discount to senior citizens on domestic flights.** The discount is applicable on the base fare of the ticket booked from the airline's official website till 31 December 2018. However, you cannot web check-in on tickets booked under this scheme and the offer cannot be combined with any other discounts. Also, it is mandatory to carry valid identification documents with date of birth to the airport; failure to produce the same will lead to additional charges. So, log on to www.goindigo.in and plan your next vacation!



The power of this ancient Indian discipline is now being felt across the world. In the tiny Chinese village of Yugouliang in Hebei province, 52 year-old local official Lu Wenzhen seized upon yoga as the answer to the problem of loneliness faced by elderly residents. (The average age of a Yugouliang resident is 65.) While the silvers were sceptical at first—Lu wasn't a trained instructor and had learnt some basic poses on the Internet!—they came around slowly. As *straitstimes.com* reports, he began with a small group, enticing them with yoga mats. As more people joined, Lu enrolled in a state-sponsored yoga course and became a qualified judge for yoga competitions. In February 2017, the turning point came when the State General Administration of Sports, which oversees the country's athletics, named Yugouliang '**China's first yoga village**' and the village was granted a sum of \$ 1.5 million for a nursing home and a yoga pavilion, where villagers can practise year round. Going forward, Lu has big plans: he wants to turn Yugouliang into a yoga training base for farmers from all over China.

COMPLETE CARE The Elderly Ecological System and Services, a joint initiative by Thai universities the Research University Network (RUN), Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology (SIIT) and Thammasat University, and Japan-based Advanced Information Valuable Service (AIVS), is working on a **project to assist and monitor the daily activities of silvers and send alerts in case of an emergency.** The pilot stage has been implemented in three hospitals in Thailand's Samut Sakhon province. Equipped with multiple wireless sensors with rechargeable solar batteries, the system tracks activities and provides regular status updates to relevant people through line messaging. According to project leader Virach Sornlertlamvanich of SIIT, the system is specially designed to provide complete elder care, including a bed-fallout preventive alarm and sleep-hygiene monitoring system, vital signal analysis tools, dementia and Alzheimer's patient-tracking system and drug-use assistance, among others. Is India listening?



HELP AT HAND A new helpline was launched in the premises of Municipal High School in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, for silvers to seek redress of their grievances. Along with the helpline, a physiotherapy and fitness centre has also been set up. Established with the support of HelpAge India, the facility will serve as a walk-in centre for legal aid with designated personnel to render assistance in filing petitions, seeking maintenance from children, and any other legal issues.

DIGITAL DEALS Silvers in South Korea are getting some help from their government to stay better connected with a mobile data plan discount programme. Under this initiative, retirees will be able to save a total of Won 189.8 billion (about ₹ 212.4 billion) annually.

Photographs by iStock

COLD COFFEE

"Just because my body doesn't work as well as it used to doesn't mean my mind is affected"

Sometimes, the coolest franchises in the world can be distinctly un-cool. American coffee giant **Starbucks is in hot water owing to accusations of discrimination against older employees.** An exclusive series of interviews conducted by website *huffingtonpost.com* revealed that many employees over the age of 40 are the targets of ageism by management. The behaviour ranged from being unfairly criticised at work and given

fewer responsibilities to ostracism and unfair dismissal. Despite repeated complaints to human resources, managers indulging in such bias faced no serious consequences because of poor internal investigations. "We come with a lot of experience and you're throwing that experience out the window to get someone here who's younger and who you can pay a little less to," Andrea, one of the interviewees, told the site. "Just because my body doesn't work as well

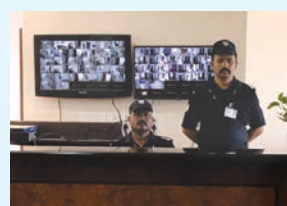
as it used to doesn't mean my mind is affected." Many of the victims of such bias have now taken the matter to the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, hoping to expose the prevalence of ageism in the industry. This is not the first time Starbucks has been confronted with such allegations; in 2013, the company was sued by a 63 year-old former employee for wrongful termination based on ageism, which was resolved by a settlement. Old habits clearly die hard.

TRINITY FOR LONGEVITY

In July, we told you about the ongoing research on longevity by Jim Mellon and his team at Juvenescence Ltd. Now, Juvenescence has joined hands with The Buck Institute for Research on Ageing and Insilico Medicine for a multiyear research partnership; they have also formed Napa Therapeutics Ltd, an

organisation that will commercialise the outcome of the research. The trio is working to understand a new molecular pathway that can be potentially involved in ageing and age-related diseases and using the learnings to develop molecules to target this pathway. "This is a unique opportunity to use cutting-edge artificial intelligence to accelerate drug discovery," Eric Verdin, managing director, president and CEO of The Buck Institute, tells media.

RESORT-RESIDENCES FOR SENIORS



A large slice of the young generation is ambitious and therefore constantly travels across the country, if not overseas, thus leaving their loved ones, often elderly parents, alone at home. Keeping house in addition to taking care of their health and completing day-to-day chores is both tedious and stressful for elderly individuals.

Addressing this growing concern with a practical yet sensitive approach is Pune-based Gagan Properties, which has shaped its vision into reality. The result is Nulife, an ultra-modern, world-class resort-residence facility for senior citizens of our country.

A magnificent project sprawled across several acres of holistic goodness at Kamshet near Lonavala, this facility is a haven of comfort for senior living, owing to its adherence to international standards. Justifying its dynamic tagline that reads 'Grow Young', Nulife is that place where seniors can age gracefully while living in the midst of raw nature. Here, they can live a serene life while immersing themselves in pleasant weather and an unpolluted environment.

HEALTHCARE AND SECURITY – YOUR LIVES ARE PRECIOUS!

Nulife recognises that seniors are vulnerable and that they also worry about

their safety and security. Therefore, protecting senior lives is top priority. The residential facility has tied up with Oyster and Pearl hospitals, making it possible to have a hospital equipped with an ICU inside the residential complex with dedicated doctors, nurses and a resourceful pharmacy. This ensures that professionals are always available to take care of the medical needs of seniors, as and when required.

Other NuCare facilities included in the apartment price are a 24x7 ambulance service, periodical preventive medical check-ups, routine physiotherapy, daily housekeeping, weekly laundry services and round-the-clock security services including CCTV surveillance.

DESIGN AND DETAILS – THE SCULPTURE THAT INSPIRED MANY!

The design of Nulife premises reflects a profound understanding of the ageing process, which inspires the support it provides its residents. It is a true representation of what Nulife provides – nourishing the potential offerings of a rich and fulfilling life to all its residents.

From large doorways, no-step entries and wide corridors, to personalised panic alarm bands, grab bars in washrooms and anti-skid flooring, this project has been planned by globally renowned architect Perkins Eastman,

USA. These specifications are only a few of the many design details that have been incorporated to create a little piece of paradise just for you.

PERSEVERANCE AND SKILL – THE TEAM!

A vision of Gagan Properties, Nulife is the culmination of the best experiences of 21 years of work in real estate. It is a brand that is receptive to innovation and customer satisfaction on progressive levels within the real estate sector. Having delivered more than 6,000 apartments to satisfied clients, and with more than 6 million sq ft currently under construction, the credibility of this project couldn't be better. It offers authentic comfort and style to our beloved elders.

The first phase of the Nulife project has 342 apartments up for grabs, with 1 and 2 BHK apartments quoted at a starting price of just ₹ 48 lakh. Nulife introduces itself as a new way of aspirational living for senior citizens in India and is destined to change senior living on a nationwide scale. Hurry and contact Nulife to avail the best offer, now!

For more information
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WEEKLY ACTIVITY



Actual Photo

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All Inclusive

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Maintenance*

ENJOYING CRICKET



Actual Photo

NuWellness

- Meditation zone & yoga terrace
- Temperature controlled pool & jacuzzi
- Geriatric fitness center
- Dedicated wellness center

SENIOR CITIZEN CARE



Actual Photo

NuConvenience

- Daily shuttle services to Lonavala & Talegaon
- E-Kart for internal transport
- Concierge desk

MEDICAL FACILITIES



Actual Photo

NuLifestyle

- Mini golf
- Card room
- Indoor game zone
- Library
- Amphitheater
- Badminton court
- Community dining hall
- Audio visual room

GAMES DELIGHT



Actual Photo

- Hospital with ICU Facility
- 24x7 Ambulance Service
- Nurse on Call for Emergencies

- Canteen & Cafeteria
- Periodical Health Check-Up
- Weekly Physiotherapy Session

- Dedicated Wellness Center
- Daily Housekeeping Service
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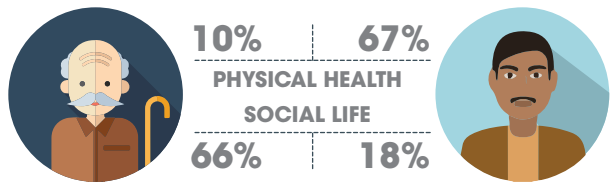
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POINTS OF VIEW



DO CHILDREN REALLY UNDERSTAND the needs of their silver parents? Consider the results of *Jug Jug Jiyenge*, a survey conducted by IVH Senior Care in partnership with Wellness Health and You (Age-Friendly India). The survey was conducted (via personal, telephone and email interviews) on a gender-mixed sample size of 1,000 silvers each from Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Delhi-NCR,

Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal as well as their children, who have lived away from them for at least five years. The results revealed that only 10 per cent of silvers consider physical health as a concern while

66 per cent are worried about maintaining their social life and meeting their daily needs. Contrast this to the perspective of their children—67 per cent are worried about their parents' health, with only 18 per cent apprehensive about their parents' social life! "The disparity in thinking of children living away from home and their elderly parents raises many red flags," G S Grewal,

elder care specialist and consultant at Max Hospital, tells *The Hindu*.

"While children worry about the physical health of their elderly parents, the parents' key concerns highlight underlying mental health issues. Living a socially secluded life in the absence of children often predisposes elders to a feeling of loneliness, which can later transform into depression."

While children worry about the physical health of their elderly parents, the parents' key concerns highlight underlying mental health issues

ON ALERT

The Maharashtra government is setting an example for other states—it has instructed the state police to set up an Internet and GPS-based emergency alert system for silvers. Further, the police are in the process of setting up a senior citizens' helpline in all districts and commissionerates. Each district, commissionerate and state police headquarters will also have an appointed nodal officer to help resolve issues related to silvers. Way to go!

PENSION PLUS

On Gandhi Jayanti, the Assam government launched a ₹ 400-crore pension scheme, Swahid Kushal Konwar Sarbajanin Briddha

Pension Achoni. Silvers will stand to gain from the scheme via direct benefit transfer (DBT) into their bank accounts. "The scheme is one of its kind in the country as the state government has designed it from its own resources," Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal tells media. "It will be for all senior citizens, irrespective of their financial and societal affiliations." According to Assam Finance Minister

Himanta Biswa Sarma, about 15,000-20,000 seniors will gain from the scheme as payment will be credited to their respective accounts on the first day of the month from the state treasury.



TAX OFF

On the occasion of the International Day for Older Persons on 1 October, the West Bengal government announced a waiver of 10 per cent on property tax for silvers. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also announced that the state would set up helplines for elders and open geriatric care units in district hospitals.

SILVER SCREENING

In October, Axis Bank and Lowe Lintas took the bank's silver customers on a trip down memory lane with 'Flashback'. Special screenings of old Bollywood classics were organised for silvers in Inox theatres in eight cities including Indore, Bhubaneswar, Bengaluru, Delhi and Mumbai. "Flashback film festival has been designed as a unique engagement programme to enable our senior




customers to re-experience their youth," Asha Kharga, CMO, Axis Bank, tells website *brandequity.economictimes.indiatimes.com*. "The experience was replete with vintage cars and old-world refreshments to make it come alive."

Photographs by iStock



100 NOT OUT! Japan's centenarian population has hit a record high of 69,785, with women accounting for 88.1 per cent. According to the health ministry, medical advances and increased health awareness have caused this historic jump of 2,014 persons from last year, which is nearly seven times higher than it was two decades ago. At present, there are 61,454 women and 8,331 men over the age of 100, including former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, who turned 100 in May.



**WORLD
DIABETES DAY**
14 NOV

Friends Adult Diapers presents

THERE'S NOTHING SWEETER THAN FRIENDS!

Currently, India represents 49 per cent of the world's diabetes burden, with an estimated 72 million cases in 2017. This figure is expected to almost double to 134 million by 2025. Individuals with diabetes deal with a variety of health issues—incontinence is one of them

THE DIABETES-INCONTINENCE LINK

There is a known link between diabetes and incontinence. Excessive weight, common for diabetics, can put extra pressure on the bladder. Similarly, reduced immunity and complications arising from diabetic medication are also factors contributing to incontinence. That said, neuropathy has been diagnosed as the most prevalent cause for incontinence in diabetics.

HITTING A NERVE

According to the Canada-based Simon Foundation for Continence, our body has a network of automatic nerves that run from our heart to bladder, which can be affected

by diabetic neuropathy, including nerves in the bladder and the bowel. More often than not, incontinence is caused by damage to these nerves and muscles. Most patients with nerve damage suffer from urge incontinence, a situation where you have

no sensation that you need to urinate, and have a harder time controlling the bladder. Friends Premium Adult Diapers, which protect you from accidental leakage and come with a 10-hour guarantee, would be ideal for such patients.

ALL DAY AND NIGHT

People with massive nerve damage can end up with overflow incontinence. In such cases, the bladder constantly releases urine throughout the day, never truly emptying itself. In fact, no matter how many times one uses the restroom, the bladder will release urine through the day and night. Friends Overnight Adult Diapers, designed for nightlong use with 16-hour protection from leakage, can be helpful in such a scenario. For extra protection at night, one can also use Friends Underpads, which can be laid on the bed.

A GAME-CHANGER!

Indeed, using adult diapers is the best way to manage and deal with incontinence issues related to diabetes. The decision to switch over to adult diapers may not be an easy one—but it can be a game-changer when it comes to quality of life. It will put you back in control, help reclaim your dignity and peace of mind, and let you live your best life.

**Watch
this space
next month for
more from
Friends!**

*Make them a part
of your stories.*



**8 HOURS
PROTECTION**

Why should a small problem like urine leakage hold your parents back, from doing what they love? With Friends Adult Diapers you can now make sure they are a part of your stories without any fear.



Available in S, M, L & XL

TRIPLE ADVANTAGE



Specially designed
for Indian bodies



High
Absorbency



Wetness Indicator

FRIENDS
— ADULT DIAPERS —
Live Young

SMART PANTS!

British scientists at the University of Bristol are developing **smart trousers that can help people stand up, take the stairs, and get around without a wheelchair.** Using technologies that imitate muscle and bone movement, these robotic pants are made of soft graphene, which toughens in contact with heat to provide support to the knees and ankles, and contain a plastic bubble that can be quickly inflated to act as artificial muscle for bionic strength. Easy to slip on and off, the pants will also be able to feed back information to a monitoring system and the patient's doctor on the user's health and movement. "We wanted to use this power to get people out and about, out of their living room chairs into the kitchen to make a cup of tea," Professor Jonathan Rossiter from the Bristol Robotics Laboratory at Bristol University told participants at The British Science Festival. "If you can do that and help people to stay as independent for as long as possible, you increase their functional capability and cognitive capability; it reduces the load on the state and the care system. Our dream is to make these devices ubiquitous so that in six

Easy dressing waistband

Automatically loosens or tightens for easy dressing and undressing

Artificial muscles

Help you stand up and move around

Foot straps

Keep the clothing in place

Power and electronics

Wearer can control how much the clothing helps them

IMU sensors

Inertial Measurement Units sense your posture, allowing the clothing to help you move and prevent falls

Active stiffening brace

Provides support at the knee to help you stand up for longer

FES arrays

Functional Electrical Stimulation arrays can stimulate your muscles to help with rehabilitation and let you move with your own strength

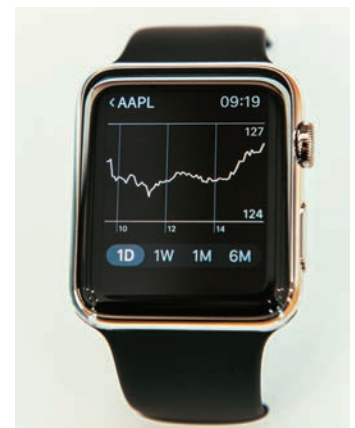
the pants will also be able to feed back information to a monitoring system and the patient's doctor

or seven years' time, anyone can go into Boots and buy a pair of trousers off the shelf and they would help you move around." The pants are expected to hit the market within the decade.

WATCH THIS

IT APPEARS tech giant Apple wants a bite of the senior wearables market. The recently announced **Apple Watch Series 4 will feature fall-detection technology in addition to a built-in electrical heart rate sensor that can take an electrocardiogram (ECG) and other silver-friendly voice-activated assistants and sensors.** The fall-

detection tech functions with the help of an accelerometer and gyroscope to identify occurrence of hard falls and can call for help with directions if it senses immobility after a fall. Experts, however, have been quick to point out the limitations in substituting regular medical alert devices with the watch: low battery life and small screen size.



DID YOU KNOW? A 30-YEAR STUDY PUBLISHED IN *JOURNAL OF AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CARDIOLOGY* INCLUDING 3,307 CORONARY HEART DISEASE PATIENTS FOUND THAT THOSE WHO ENGAGED IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HAD A 36 PER CENT LOWER CHANCE OF EARLY DEATH COMPARED TO THOSE WHO GOT NO EXERCISE AT ALL.



Photographs by iStock

OH, THOSE WRINKLES!

Here's a reason to frown. **Facial lines are not just markers of ageing, they could also be potential markers of heart health**, according to a new study conducted at Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Toulouse, France. The researchers checked the data of 3,200 healthy adults aged between 32 and 62. When the subjects were examined after 20 years, those with a wrinkle score of one or more stood a higher chance of dying of cardiovascular disease than those who had no wrinkles at all. The theory is that wrinkles are an early sign of ageing blood vessels. Changes in collagen protein and oxidative stress cause atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries—as well as those darned wrinkles.

BRAIN TALK

Dementia is a difficult condition to manage, with an added emotional toll on patients and their families. Thus, anything that helps understand the illness is a step forward. While earlier studies have suggested that inflammation of the brain raises the risk of dementia, a new one is offering a more nuanced understanding of this correlation. Scientists at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, US, analysed 1,532 participants from data collected through the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study (ARIC) to examine cardiovascular risk factors among middle-aged people. After that, they tracked levels of a blood marker of inflammation, called C-reactive protein, to check its relationship with dementia. They found that **heightened inflammation that lasts from mid-life to late-life is associated with cognitive decline**. This means chronic, not temporary, inflammation effects structural changes in the brain and leads to dementia. The findings were reported in journal *Neurobiology of Aging*.



IT'S A DATE!

Dates are considered high in natural sugar, but a report published in *Medical News Today* says they are a powerhouse of nutrients as well. **Dates...**

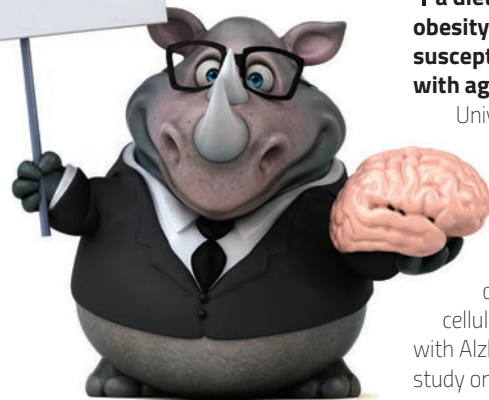
- are high in fibre and make you feel full for a long time
- contain potassium, an electrolyte that helps in better heart health and muscle buildup
- contain polyphenols, an antioxidant compound that protects the body from inflammation
- provide essential nutrients such as Vitamin B6 and iron, and are a great alternative to sweets with empty calories.

FOOD FOR BONES

They say you are what you eat—and people suffering from osteoporosis should be filling their grocery carts with components of the Mediterranean diet. This diet, known to be partial to vegetables, fruits, nuts, olive oil and whole grains, slows bone loss, scientists have found. A study conducted at the University of East Anglia, UK, randomly selected 1,000 volunteers aged between 65 and 79 years from various European countries, and divided them into two groups; one group consumed the Mediterranean diet while the other didn't. A bone density test after 12 months showed that **the Mediterranean diet reduced the rate of bone loss in people with osteoporosis** while it had no effect on participants whose bone density was normal. The findings were published in *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.



Weighty Issue



Individuals who are overweight are carrying a heavier burden—**a diet that contributes to obesity may also make you susceptible to Alzheimer's with age.** Researchers from Brock

University in Ontario, Canada, studied the effects of an obesity-inducing diet on factors such as insulin signalling (how the body uses sugar) and markers of inflammation and cellular stress, all associated with Alzheimer's. As part of their study on mice, one group was fed

a diet high on fat and sugar and the other a normal diet. After 13 weeks, researchers compared the mice that ate the obesity-inducing diet to a younger set of mice. They found that the older mice had markers of inflammation, insulin resistance and cellular stress in areas of the brain associated with long-term memory and Alzheimer's. Brain centres responsible for complex cognitive tasks and emotional and behavioural functions showed insulin resistance. The findings were published in journal *Physiological Reports*.



THE VITAL VITAMIN

We already know Vitamin D is crucial to maintaining a healthy immune system and healthy bones. And according to recent studies, there appears to be a relationship between Vitamin D insufficiency and chronic painful conditions such as fibromyalgia and other musculoskeletal conditions. These studies suggest that Vitamin D supplementation has a positive impact on chronic pain caused by these conditions.

CATCH IT EARLY

Detecting oesophageal cancer earlier just got easier with **'WATS 3D imaging', a technique that allows doctors to detect precancerous cells in the oesophagus** (food pipe), also called Barrett's oesophagus. This technique brushes the entire area of the oesophagus, unlike a traditional biopsy with forceps, which covers only 20 per cent of the oesophagus. The new technique thus increases the accuracy of the biopsy and facilitates detection of pre-cancerous cells.

Earlier studies demonstrate that stomach and oesophageal cancers can be 'sniffed out' on one's breath. The technique has the individual blowing into a bag, with one's breath then being analysed for markers in the volatile organic compounds present in the breath. Scientists at Imperial College, London, claim the test is 85 per cent accurate. The study was published in *Jama Oncology*.





Photographs by Humayun Khan

Bhaag Dilli bhaag!



On 21 October, as morning broke over the majestic Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, the venue for the Airtel Delhi Half Marathon, it was clear something special was about to happen. Slowly, but surely, close to 1,200 silvers descended into the Harmony Senior Citizens' marquee; first a trickle, then a swarm, finally a raucous, rousing storm—it was time, without a doubt, for the 11th edition of the Senior Citizen's Run in the capital!

"The warmth of Harmony and the cold Delhi nip are such an inviting juxtaposition," shared Sunil Sikri, 63, retired professor of business studies turned life coach (and one of the first to arrive). "It rids us of all negative energies." Echoing this sentiment, Narendra Kumar, 63, who has been participating in the event for the past seven years, said, "It's pleasing to know that Harmony is there to keep us seniors engaged and I like to think we keep the organisation engaged too. It is like we are both meant for each other!"

Soon enough, the silvers, clad in signature yellow shirts, made their way to the flag-off point at the





stadium. So excited were they, that they actually jumped the starter's gun, much to the amusement of the commentators! Waved forward by guest of honour M Damodaran, former chairman of Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI), and the Harmony team, they variously walked and ran, ambled and danced through the 2.4-km route. Meanwhile, some chose



to stay back at the marquee, waiting for their friends to return. Like H S Bhandari, 77, a participant for the past eight years, who chose to sit this one out owing to knee trouble while his wife Sunaina Bhandari, went ahead with the run.

First to return was Dayanand Hooda, 65, a sense of accomplishment writ large on his face, his friends Rohtash, 62, and Ramkrishna Sharma, 68, following close behind. "We are seasoned runners and all of us represented Haryana state once upon a time," he shared. With over 22 gold medals each in long-distance running over the years, it was only fitting that they continued to lead the pack.



Indeed, everyone had their own triggers, their motivation for being present. While 68 year-old Col (retd) Shekhar recalled his days at the Indian Military Academy where he would jog for hours on end, Geeta Pradhan, 62, saw the event as an opportunity to come together with her friends and share some banter, and a group of silvers from Ashok Vihar Senior Citizens' Association



dedicated their run to late prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. There were visitors from out of town too. Maheshwar Sahu, 64, travelled all the way from Orissa to participate in the run. "I want to travel to Scotland and run the Edinburgh Marathon and break the world record in my age bracket for half marathon," he told us. "I have been training for the past two years and participating in marathons throughout the country as a test to prove my mettle." He has promised to meet us again at the Tata Mumbai Marathon in January!



After the run, it was time for refreshments and recreation at the marquee, with master of ceremonies Abhay and comedian Rohit Thakur entertaining the silvers with music, dance and jokes aplenty (there was also some cross-dressing for good measure!). Our oldest participants, Madan Swaroop Sethi and Usha Mittal, both 99, were honoured for their spirit, senior citizens' organisations from the capital were felicitated and lucky-dip winners awarded with gift hampers. Another major attraction, before and after the run, was the photo-booth set up by Nobel Hygiene—participants queued up patiently to get their picture clicked and take home 'proof', as it were, that they were 'champions'.

We never doubted it for a minute!



STAY SAFE ONLINE

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

With that in mind, Unmukt Festival, India's biggest event for senior citizens, announced its presence in Hyderabad with the first Unmukt Knowledge Series programme in partnership with Google, the world's No. 1 online search engine.

Over 70 silvers participated in the first of the series held on 9 October in Hyderabad. Addressing the gathering, Dr K R Gangadharan, Founder, Heritage Foundation, shared that though senior citizens are productive individuals, they are also vulnerable to abuse. Quoting a finding from a study by the London School of Economics, he added, "Indians get old when they become 60, but other countries talk about it only when they

reach 80." Speaking about Unmukt Festival, India's first-of-its-kind festival for silvers, he said it aims to empower silvers while making them independent and tech-savvy. The festival will be held at HITEC, Hyderabad, on 15-16 December this year and addresses issues relevant not only to silvers but their families as well. *Harmony-Celebrate Age* is the media partner for the event.

Speaking at the event, Monimita Sarkar, Managing Director, KW Conferences, said the objective of the Unmukt Knowledge Series programme was to engage silvers in meaningful dialogue.

Releasing an online safety guide for elders in English and Hindi, Sujata Mukherjee, Trust & Safety Research

and Outreach Lead, Google, laid emphasis upon the importance of online safety and explained some terminology from the guide in simple language to help silvers familiarise themselves with the terms. "The guide will soon be available in other languages too," she added.

Google made a brief presentation on 'Online Safety for Senior Citizens', covering four areas: protecting online accounts, exercising care when sharing something online, identifying and avoiding scams, and keeping online conversations positive and respectful.

The guidelines included:

- Keep your passwords strong and long with a minimum of



Clockwise from top left: Sujata Mukherjee, Trust & Safety Research and Outreach Lead, Google; Dr K R Gangadharan, Founder, Heritage Foundation; Monimita Sarkar, Managing Director, KW Conferences; Dr Sandeep Nayani, Neurologist, Apollo Hospitals

eight to nine mixed characters, used in combination of lower and uppercase letters, numbers and symbols. Think of an easy-to-remember sentence; for instance, 'I have two cats at home named Tom and Jerry.' Take the first letter of each word using lowercase and uppercase letters and make 'IhtcahnTaJ'. You can even replace letters with numbers or symbols and create the password, 'Ih2c@hnT&J'.

- Use password manager to remember multiple passwords.
- Beware of online scammers who use different techniques to trick people into revealing their personal and financial details.

- Exercise care while sharing—know what you are sharing and with whom. Most important, think about why are you sharing: Do they really need to know?
- Keep online conversations positive and respectful. If you are subjected to cyberbullying, mute, block and report.

Dr Vasanth Kumar, General Physician, and Dr Sandeep Nayani, Neurologist, from Apollo Hospitals—the knowledge partner for Unmukt Festival—highlighted the importance of taking care of one's physical and mental health as one ages. While dispelling the myth that high blood pressure is normal with ageing, Dr Nayani said people

who walk for at least two miles per day are less likely to develop dementia. "Keep mentally active by solving crosswords and Sudoku, reading books, listening to music, and so on, to help prevent memory loss and prevent or delay the onset of dementia," he said.

The concluding session of the day was on financial health. "The 35 years of income we generate has to provide for about 30 years after retirement," said Kartik Damodar, CEO, Guardian Capital Investment Advisors, who conducted the session. His presentation included an interactive game on the lifecycle of saving and investment as well as tips on analysing the market using easily available tools.

The TIME has come!

On the eve of the 1st Annual Senior Care Conclave: Igniting Industry for India's Ageing Sector, to be held on 1 November 2018 in New Delhi, organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Association of Senior Living in India (ASLI), **M H Dalal**, founder & chairman, ASLI, and CMD, Oasis Senior Living LLP, shares his perspective on the senior living sector in India

The senior living sector in India is at the cusp of an epic start. With nearly 120 million seniors (almost equal to the entire population of some countries), there exists an untapped and overlooked opportunity for investment

and development, apart from the acute need in this sunrise sector for ageing seniors. A significant section of these seniors are independent, financially stable, well-travelled and socially connected. Thus, India provides an opportunity to developers, corporates, service providers, healthcare players and operators to create country-specific solutions, while leveraging learning from across the globe.

THE BUSINESS OF AGEING

A large stumbling block for senior living in India is the social stigma attached to the concept of senior living communities because such communities are commonly referred to as 'old-age homes'. And while independent and active senior living projects currently being offered in India have been accepted wholeheartedly by some section of the targeted population, much more ground needs to be covered to make this concept acceptable universally.

At present, in India this sector is dominated by builders and developers. The immediate need is for reputed corporate and professional developers with a strong emphasis on service laced with passion, commitment and empathy to enter this industry versus pure-play, real-estate players, forming a dedicated vertical for senior living. Corporates, not necessarily involved in real-estate ventures, and real-estate investment trusts (REITs) dedicated to this sector can provide the much-needed traction and impetus. In fact, for corporates, this sector is an

attractive business option with dedicated verticals that can also fit into their CSR initiatives.

The entry of entities that see the merit of this sector and who are willing to pour in serious money to

create continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) on a large scale will be the tipping point for this industry, as will be the entry of life and personal insurers who will tailor a product for senior care, so that both the insurer and provider are covered for expenses.

WALKING THE TALK

We, as senior living providers, must be prepared to walk the talk. Providers will need to be personally and actively involved in continuous day-to-day operations of the community. They will need to be on the board of the trust/foundation/company/entity that is overseeing the running of the com-

munity. Simply handing over the community to a facility management company for operations with a manager may not be enough.

What's more, we need to evolve from the ownership model to the globally time-tested deposit/deferred fee or lifetime occupancy models. This will ensure more accountability and involvement of the principal provider as the underlying asset will still be on their books, unlike the case of the ownership model. The ownership model also carries the 'risk' of residents forming a co-op housing society or resident welfare association and wanting to take over the running of the community. This is already happening in some earlier developments, wherein the residents now want to take over the management. Though this could be legally correct, it would defeat the purpose of senior residents receiving hassle-free care and service.

Presented by



Magazine partner

harmony
celebrate age

THE POTENTIAL IN INDIA

In India, currently only one in every 10,000 seniors is engaged in some form of senior living, compared to 12 seniors in every 100 in the US and 4 seniors in every 100 in Australia. Dedicated senior care requires trained manpower and human resources, covering the spectrum from doctors trained in geriatric care and paramedical staff to graduates in public service. Currently, senior care providers in the independent and active senior living space often hire human resources with a hospitality and healthcare background. We must set up standalone and focused training centres and institutes that offer a curriculum related to this industry, thus creating a viable career option for people.

FOUR AREAS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS INDUSTRY ARE:

- **Intent and scope:** Dedicated entities with a corporate structure to scale up services and offer all segments of care; a bundle of real estate, hospitality and healthcare
- **Model:** Deposit/fee/lifetime occupancy for more accountability and involvement
- **Scale:** Large formats to achieve cost and service-efficiency encompassing all levels of care; a genuine CCRC
- **Human resources:** To set up institutes/universities for training personnel so that a pipeline of specific and specialised talent is available to the sector with a visible career path.

Watch this space for a report on the event



WIRED WORLD

History is testimony to how human behaviour has shaped the world over the centuries. The times and the environment we live in greatly impact our behaviour as well as our lives. Having said that, the last decade has witnessed a huge transformation in human behaviour and I attribute it to the advent of technology.

The advancement in technology has led to a boom in the world of social media and communication. The open spaces in our mind have been largely occupied by the Internet. The idea of contemplation and thrill of seeking answers have been replaced by the chatter of the keyboard for ready information on Google and Yahoo.

Forwards have become the latest fad today as against originality. To sum it all, I call it the 'wired grid'. The transformation has altered the way we speak, think and act and yet it has remained ingenuously veiled and subtle. And the irony is that the current generation has accepted this ignominious change.

There's little doubt that technology has numerous advantages. It has brought the world closer for us and made us connect with those who are miles away in distance. Our daily tasks have become planned and convenient. In spite of all this, the new generation on the whole has become less patient and is living a frenzied pace of life.

Let me illustrate this with an example. My young neighbour here in India as well as my daughter who lives in Hong Kong not only share the flat number '4' but their daily routines and lifestyles. Both share the same 8-to-8 work schedule that includes rushed mornings with breakfast in hand, hurried goodbyes and working late on the dinner table. Everything is urgent and every minute counts for them. There's an urgency in saving even that fraction of a second that takes one to write a word; so a 'because' has been changed to 'cuz'.

Handed down from their parents, the ethos of schedule and speed has penetrated the subconscious minds of the young. This makes me recall my childhood days when I used to live in Poona. I walked home from school and meandered through the alleyways and streets watching squirrels and chasing



Brigadier P K Chakravarti rues today's hyperconnected world

butterflies. I realise that such carefree moments will never be experienced by the new-fangled generation.

Living life in the fast lane, I wonder if creativity is being threatened (or completely lost) by the wired world. I wish to recover what has been lost. I wish to live in a simple, slow and wire-free world.

—Brigadier P K Chakravarti, Bengaluru

A PEOPLE'S COP

Back in the 1980s, when a young police officer, fresh out of the Academy, took up his first posting, he learnt a lesson that would steer his course for the rest of his career. It was a time when touts held sway over cinema halls in Jorhat in Assam, where he had been posted in 1987.

Kuladhar Saikia, then additional superintendent of police, rounded up a dozen touts and was planning a bigger crackdown when he had a life-changing conversation. "There was this man who walked into my office and said he appreciated what I had done. Then he said he was one of those touts I had rounded up and that his wife had to sell the only gold chain she possessed—that was a wedding gift from her parents—to bribe a police sub-inspector to get him out of detention. In that moment, I realised I had only aided and abetted a bigger crime by curbing a smaller one," he says.

That fateful encounter left an indelible mark and Saikia decided his policing methods would always be guided by compassion and empathy. Sure enough, it's been a beacon for the 1985 batch IPS officer, who was appointed Director General of Police in Assam recently.

Saikia has always looked beyond the crime, seeking to understand the criminal's motivations. This unusual perspective led him to develop a community-based approach to his work, which has since been the pivot of all his projects. He is noted for initiating Project Prahari, which he launched in 2001. It was a time when witchcraft-related crimes and lynchings were sweeping Kokrajhar district, where Saikia was posted as deputy inspector general of police (western Assam). He realised that

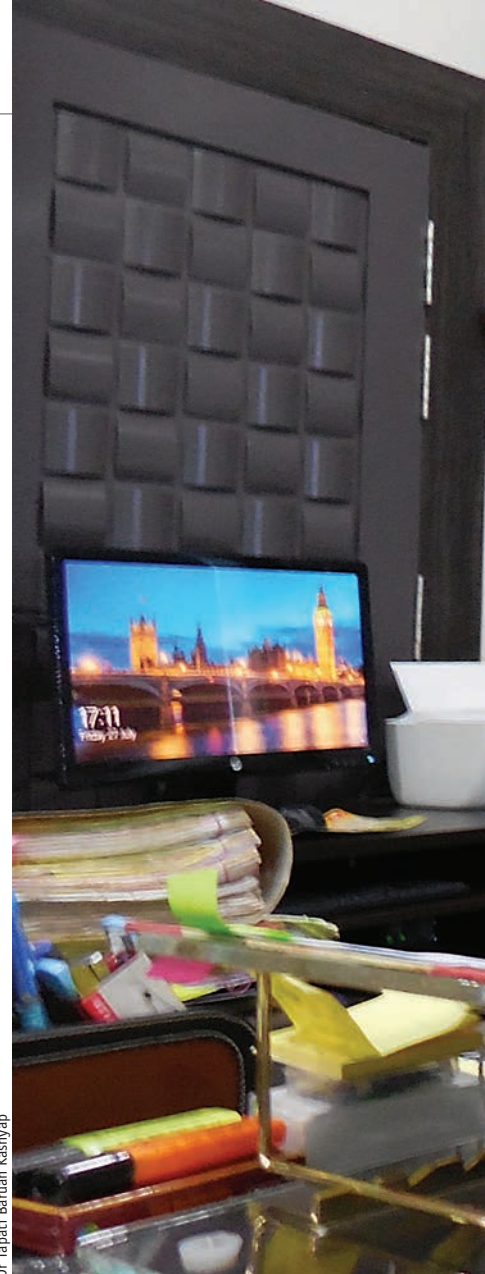
to stem this wave, he would have to include all relevant stakeholders, such as citizens, village leaders, students, women's groups and the police.

"While the police had picked up a number of persons, I found there were socioeconomic reasons behind these crimes," shares the top cop, who has twice received the President's Police Medal. "Communication was poor, healthcare was in a shambles, illiteracy and belief in superstition were high, and the communities were heavily dependent on quacks in the absence of doctors and health workers. I initiated Project Prahari, which involved more civilians than police personnel to eradicate witch-hunting."

The Prahari Project, which was implemented in 50 villages in Assam, was not only heartily embraced by the tribal villagers, it also contributed to curbing insurgency to a large extent as well as social prejudices and economic backwardness. It was so effective that it has been suggested as a model of good governance by the Centre's Bureau of Police Research & Development. It was also noted as a model of women's empowerment by the Government of India in its status report submitted at the UN General Assembly meet on gender in 2005.

This innovative model of community participation has been included in prominent management and public policy institutions as material for training purposes. In 2014, *Harvard Business Review* published a three-part case series titled *Being A Change Agent*, holding up Saikia's work as a stellar management model.

Scratch the surface a little and you will perhaps understand why Saikia is such a unique police officer. His empathetic nature stems from a



Dr Tapati Baruah Kashyap

literary bent that has earned him a Sahitya Akademi award for Assamese literature in 2015, for his short story collection titled *Akashor Chhabi Aru Anyanya Galpa* ('Picture of the Sky And Other Stories').

One of only four IPS officers who have been conferred this coveted literary award, Saikia has a body of literary work that includes a novel, three plays, a collection of essays and 19 collections of short stories, one of which—*If A River and Other Stories*—was released this February.

Being a writer probably helps him look at crime in ways other than



a regular police officer. “I see a lot of different things when I handle a crime or a difficult situation,” he says. “I look at things from the socioeconomic angle as well as the psychosocial angle. I always look at the backdrop and the various compulsions that may have pushed people to commit a crime.”

In a classic case of life influencing art, Saikia says some of his short stories relate to his work. “In my stories, like *Ravan Habildar* and *Sipahi Dinabandhu*, the protagonists are police personnel. Through such stories, I try to reveal life and love,” he muses. Other themes include

students and youth, and stories centering on rural life.

Saikia hails from Rangiya, a town about 52 km from Guwahati. “My father was the founder and headmaster of Rangiya High School, while my mother was a homemaker who also took part in adult literacy campaigns for the village women,” says the police officer, the youngest of seven siblings. A brilliant student, he is an alumnus of Ramjas College, Delhi, after which he acquired a master’s degree from the Delhi School of Economics. He also spent a couple of years teaching economics at Hindu College in Delhi, before making it to the Indian Police

Service in 1985. Saikia was intent on an all-round education and earned the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship for Community Leadership. He also did a stint as a consultant for the World Bank and is often invited to the Indian Institutes of Management around the country and management institutes overseas to speak on economics and other issues.

Our top cop has, at times, been accused of being too ‘soft’. Saikia chuckles and says, “As a policeman, I can be as tough as anybody else. But I believe a lot of things can get done by being ‘soft’ too.”

—Dr Tapati Baruah Kashyap

BIRTHDAYS

Actor **Shah Rukh Khan** turns 53 on 2 November.

Actor and filmmaker **Kamal Hassan** turns 64 on 7 November.

BJP leader **Lal Krishna Advani** turns 91 on 8 November.

Actor **Zeenat Aman** turns 67 on 19 November.

Author and activist **Suzanna Arundhati Roy** turns 57 on 24 November.

Actor **Irrfan Ali Khan** turns 56 on 30 November.

IN PASSING

Filmmaker **Kalpana Lajmi** (featured in the March 2014 issue of *Harmony-Celebrate Age*) died owing to kidney cancer on 23 September. She was 64.

Padma Shri recipient and TV and radio commentator **Jasdev Singh** passed away after a prolonged illness on 25 September. He was 87.

Krishna Kapoor, wife of legendary actor Raj Kapoor, died after a cardiac arrest on 1 October. She was 87.

Environmentalist and former IIT professor **G D Agarwal** passed away owing to a heart attack following a 111-day fast on 11 October. He was 87.

Legendary Hindustani classical musician **Annapurna Devi** died from age-related illness on 13 October. She was 91.

MILESTONES

- Athlete **Mann Kaur**, 102, won a gold medal in the 200-m race at the World Masters Athletics Championships in September in Malaga, Spain.
- Music composer **Hridayanath Mangeshkar**, 80, was conferred the lifetime achievement award at the Marathi Filmfare awards in September in Mumbai.
- Writer **Dr P S Shankar**, 86, was honoured with the Senior Citizens' Award for Literature by the Karnataka government in October in Bengaluru.
- To mark the International Day of Older Persons, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu honoured eminent silvers for their contributions with the Vayoshreshtha Samman in October in New Delhi; **Rajalakshmi Parthasarathy** (92) and **Nagindas Hargovind Sanghavi** (98) in the centenarian category; **Muniyamma** and **Manveer Narang** in the iconic mother category; **Prof P Venugopal** (76) for his service in the medical field in the lifetime achievement category; **Nadoja Veeranna** (83) and **Wareppa Naba** (77) in the creative arts category; and **Dr Rajpal Singh** in the sports and adventure category.

OVERHEARD

"It's so annoying to be female and consistently going, 'Have I got to see a story again about a guy who does things that I've already seen a guy do a million times?' So I'm bored. The difference now, as I get older, is that I'm released by my boredom. I no longer bother. I'm free to go and look for new ideas and new voices. I'm able with absolute comfort and ease to reject so much. It's fantastic being this age. I'm old. We're constantly watching films where older men have wonderful roles and older women really don't. But I'm a character actor, don't forget. If you've got form and you're a character actor, you're much better off because you're not fighting the way you once looked."

—British actor **Emma Thompson**, 59, speaking to entertainment website *Vulture*



Dinodia Photo Library

Get on the board. Board games are proven to improve coordination; delay memory loss and sharpen cognition; elevate your mood by boosting your serotonin levels; and keep boredom and depression at bay. Choose games like Scrabble, chess, Ludo, Monopoly, checkers and Battleship—you can play them with your partner or friend, just the two of you, or with the whole family when they come visiting this festive season.



iStock

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Then: Pizza box Now: Solar oven

This is an exciting experiment to execute with your grandkids and teach them about solar energy. You will need a pizza box, sheets of aluminium foil, black (preferably, construction) paper, a pair of scissors, clear wrap, tape, pencil/wooden skewer and a sunny day! Cut open a square flap on top of the pizza box, leaving a 1-inch border on the sides. Stick aluminium foil to the bottom side of the flap, shiny side out, and smoothen out the edges. Place another sheet of foil (shiny side up) on the inside at the bottom of the pizza box. Place one sheet of black paper on top of the foil. Use clear plastic wrap on the underside of the lid to seal the opening created by the flap. Make the box as airtight as possible. Last, use a wooden skewer or pencil to prop the solar oven's lid up at a 90° angle from the box. Voila, your low-cost, environmentally-friendly oven is ready. Now, use it to heat your food during hikes/treks, pasteurise water, and, if feeling adventurous, sterilise instruments.



RECYCLING FACTS

- Pizza boxes are made from corrugated cardboard; however, the box can't be recycled once it is soiled with grease, cheese and other foods.
- Composting pizza boxes is the best option. Do it along the waxed paper; it will take longer to degrade but eventually will.

MORE RECYCLING IDEAS...

- 1 THE STIFF CARDBOARD OF PIZZA BOXES CAN BE CUT IN DIFFERENT SHAPES TO BE USED AS A STENCIL FOR VARIOUS PATTERNS AND/OR CAN BE CUT TO MAKE PUZZLE PIECES TO ENGAGE YOUR GRANDCHILDREN.
 - 2 YOU CAN INVERT THE PIZZA BOX'S FOLDS AND FLAPS TO MAKE A LAPTOP STAND.
- TIP: CHOOSE ONE WITH FANCY ARTWORK ON IT.



YOGA RX BY SHAMEEM AKTHAR

Shoulder the burden

Muscle activation through yoga is the best rehab and 'prehab' for shoulder pain

Shoulder pain is a common problem that afflicts all age groups. Unfortunately, it is taken less seriously than other problems of the back and torso, with the lower back often getting more attention. Shoulder pain is often normalised as part of the travails of living, treated with the same scant attention we accord a common cold. But, like the latter, it can be chronic, repetitive, disrupt normal life and progressively get worse in the absence of care.

The problem is compounded by the fact that shoulder pain can occur owing to a cluster of causes (when it is not triggered by a specific accident). This makes it difficult to curb it at the source. The triggers may include lifestyle (if sedentary) or postural defects that arise from professional demands (as with makeup artists, hairstylists, surgeons, cooks, sportspersons); excessive use of gadgets like the laptop, where the body remains scrunched up in a particular way; how you sleep; and even your personality type (whether you thrust your chest out aggressively or crouch it inwards in a timid fashion).

Though medication to relieve pain may help, this should never be a long-term solution. Optimally, your problem should be diagnosed by an expert and you should take appropriate remedial measures as suggested. However, the most important way to find relief is to self-engage, by actively working the muscles of the shoulders in a remedial fashion. Ideally, you should have consulted a physiotherapist for a set of poses (most are yoga-related) and you need to make them part of your life on a daily basis. Even when the pain leaves, you must continue with the practice to prevent future episodes.

Using the right pillow (there are several medically prescribed brands available) and mattress will also help in cases where the pain is owing to your posture while sleeping. If your work requires you to be seated hunched up for long, you must take timed breaks to relieve the tension in the upper back. The problem may

YOGIC MOVES

Twisted triangle pose
(*parivritta trikonasana*)

Stand with feet a metre apart, right foot turned to the right side, left turned inwards. Ensure heels are in one line. Arms should be held out at shoulder level. Inhale. Exhale. Twist to the right side, placing your left palm beside the right foot (use a yoga block if you are not able to reach the ground). Point your right hand straight up. Twist to turn to look at raised hand. Hold for a few seconds, breathing normally. Release by returning to your original position. Repeat for the other side. Advanced practitioners can take their hand over the foot for a more challenging modification. **Points to note:** Avoid if you suffer from vertigo, because this pose requires balance. Keep your eyes lower if you are still struggling with balance. Try to keep your legs and arms straight throughout. **Benefits:** This pose helps with most spinal issues. It is used as therapy in many chronic ailments. It aids digestion because of the pressure at the abdomen and improves balance and tones the limbs.



Photographs by Haresh Patel

KNOW YOUR KRIYA

Victory breath (*ujjayi pranayama*)

Make a soft hissing sound at the throat (it should not be harsh, loud or irritating to the throat) as you inhale and exhale. Try to do the two movements—*inhalation* and *exhalation*—equally by counting. Do a few rounds. (In the image, the hand at the throat is used representatively, to indicate where slight pressure may be applied internally.) The hands should ideally be in a *mudra* while doing any *pranayama*; the eyes remain shut. Ideally, nine to 12 rounds may be done, morning and night.

Benefits: This *kriya* is very healing and used to treat spinal and back issues. It calms the mind and releases the psychosomatic triggers that often cause shoulder tension. It is also useful in lowering blood pressure.



not be apparent while working but will erupt later. The best way to do this is to use reminder alerts on your phone or gadget, so you get to move about. Therapeutic postural correcting braces are also available and may be worn to create a muscle memory for the correct posture.

Though martial arts have always used the idea of muscle activation to relieve pain, in therapeutic sciences it is now coming into its own as the right way to deal with chronic pain. More than the movement itself, it is how you engage the muscles, by deliberately focusing on them, extending and contracting them as required. These do not need to be elaborate poses or practices, but simple movements. For instance, just holding your arms at shoulder level, and extending them as if pressing into a wall, will activate muscle groups. In shoulder pain, in fact, most movements that offer relief are simple.

A regular practice of yoga is the best rehab and 'prehab' in shoulder pain episodes. Therapeutic schools of yoga

suggest simple ones, like the prayer pose (*pranamasana*), where the palms are pressed against each other in front (and behind the back in an advanced version), or shoulder rolls (*skanda chakra*), which have different variations, the mountain pose (*tadasana*) and cow-face practice (*gomukh asana*). In some of these, you may not be able to fully extend the arm initially. In that case, you can use a yoga belt; if that is not available, a simple shawl or waist belt may be used.

Those with a regular yoga practice may include the triangle pose (*trikonasana*) and all its variations; angle pose (*konasana*) and its variations; mountain pose (*parvatasana*) and its variations; seated twists like the half-spinal twist pose (*ardhamatsyendrasana*); Sage Marichay's pose (*marichayasana*), Sage Bharadwaja's pose (*bharadwajasana*); chest openers like the pigeon pose (*kapotasana*) in its modified version with props; and the bow pose (*dhanurasana*) with suitable modifications according to your need and with expert advice.

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 the advice given here)



I always add a year to myself, so I'm prepared for my next birthday. When I was 39, I was already 40.

—American actor Nicolas Cage (b. 1964)



IT'S NEVER 2 LATE BY JACK YORK

A BEACON OF HOPE

Nishad Lakhani and her husband have built a housing model that allows elders in Canada and the US to live in a dignified, respectful manner

Doing my work for It's Never 2 Late in the US, I'm on the road virtually every week, talking, presenting and meeting individuals tied to senior living and ageing. I've been doing that for almost 20 years now. But my relationship with *Harmony-Celebrate Age* has added a new twist. When I'm talking to random strangers, if I get a whiff that they may be from India, all of a sudden the conversations turn to my columns, my visit to Hyderabad, and an introduction to *Harmony*. The first reactions of 'who is this guy' usually turn into fascinating conversations transcending geography and cultures. That's the case once again this month—I am delighted to introduce you to Nishad Lakhani.

I met Nishad in Arizona a few weeks ago. I was at a unique senior living conference that was highlighting a growing ageing model in the US: converting family homes into places elders can live in a small, communal setting. I learned about the work she is doing along these lines in Florida. Nishad was born and raised in Toronto, Canada, and got her first taste of real estate at a very young age. Working with her father, she gained knowledge in construction, learned all the different trades, and continued working on and off as a labourer in the construction industry. She bought her first piece of real estate in 2008—and hasn't stopped since. She now invests in both residential and commercial real estate. Part of her success has come in investing in real estate designed specifically for seniors, a desire she feels was fuelled

by her parents. "Coming from an Indian-African background, my parents have always taught us to respect and take care of our elders, give them love, care, compassion and support, as they do for us," she explains.



The details of her life and her journey are fascinating. She was born and raised in Canada; her husband is from Mumbai. Her family is from a small town just outside Porbandar in Gujarat and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; she was raised with Indian traditions and values. Her parents brought those values to Canada and raised her sisters and her with the philosophy that everyone should be given quality of life with respect, dignity, love and the best level of care. Also, being from the Ismaili community, she has always been guided by her spiritual leader: to get a good educa-

tion, gain the knowledge to be the best at what she wants to do; and be ready to use that knowledge and education to help those in need. That spirit of giving has framed her work to this day.

In 2015, Nishad and her husband decided they would start helping children in India—he had always wanted to open an orphanage and care for the kids that were less fortunate. "To open an orphanage, we needed to come up with a monthly cash flow, so we decided to invest in commercial real estate in the US and use the monthly profits for a good cause," she explains. "We adopted a group of children who were orphaned or from the streets in India."

Surprisingly, this experience had a correlation with senior living in the US. They travelled to a property in Tennessee that turned out to be unlicensed and were shocked to see the conditions the seniors were living in. They realised—just like with the orphans in India—that there was a serious need to help seniors. As they delved further into the issue, they realised this was a serious problem and an opportunity: seniors, especially those living with memory loss, needed a new model.

As is the case with many other visionaries in this space, Nishad does not have any formal education in ageing, rather she has learned through personal experience. Her grandmother, father and father-in-law have all been through or are going through health issues, particularly dementia and Alzheimer's. She has personally seen

and dealt with this terrible disease and seen its effects on her loved ones. Her husband Shams has over 20 years of extensive experience in the health industry in three different countries and holds two master's degrees, in public health and health administration. They combined their expertise and started the path of a new housing model.

Nishad's Indian culture, drawn from her parents and husband, influences her work and passion. It's very simple to her, the concept that if you do good to others, good will come to you. She loves so much about India: the history, the food, the culture and, of course, shopping! She loves her life in Canada now and sees many similarities—good and bad—between the US and Canada. There is beauty in the nature and the culture of both countries, according to her, but it's hard for her in either country to see some people treat others disrespectfully. "We all have a heart and blood running through our veins," she says. "If someone is in trouble, help them as best as you can, whether it is with assistance, support or just giving them a smile." Nishad misses the

The model Nishad is putting together truly represents the future. Rather than large institutional buildings, her communities are true homes with a small number of residents and an easier-to-manage smaller staff

richness of Indian culture but would like to see more consistent education in the country, believing that would lead to higher standards of living, particularly when it comes to women, the elderly and the disadvantaged. She is optimistic, though, that that day is coming.

I see hundreds of communities a year in my travels for iN2L, and I feel the model Nishad and her husband are putting together truly represents the future. Rather than large institutional buildings, her communities are true homes with a small number of residents and an easier-to-manage smaller staff than is found in traditional senior living models. It will be exciting to see her real-estate business prosper. But her magic, from my perspective, is not in the business dealings of her communities; it's the orphans! They

now have a group of about 100 kids in India that they care for with the proceeds of their senior living communities and commercial properties. They have been able to give these children the love, care, education and health they deserve. Her goal is to give them the opportunity to be and do anything they wish to. Their model is to help more seniors in the US and Canada through their real estate and continue to channel that success to help more children in different parts of the world.

A remarkable woman, a remarkable story. Nishad and her husband have built a housing model that allows elders in Canada and the US to live in a dignified, respectful manner—and that success allows children in India to have hope. It's a beautiful thing; thanks, Nishad, for the inspiration you provide.

York is co-founder of *It's Never 2 Late*® (iN2L), an American company dedicated to helping older adults realise the full benefits of today's technology



As you grow old, you lose interest in sex, your friends drift away, and your children often ignore you. There are other advantages, of course, but these are the outstanding ones.

—Former British politician Richard Needham (b. 1942)



In this column, we answer your queries on personal and social issues related to ageing, elder care and intergenerational relationships

Q. My husband retired four months ago and it was something both of us were looking forward to. The reality, sadly, has been completely different. He has nowhere to go to and spend his time productively. His presence at home the whole day has resulted in a lot of interference in household activities, which he has no clue about. He is suddenly critical of my way of handling things and I seem to be stuck at home with an angry, old man. How do I handle this situation?



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A Retirement brings a major change in one's life and like all changes, for some time, it is difficult to adjust to. While some people feel they have worked for too long and look forward to retirement, many silvers I have worked with believe they have retired too soon, and some are even petrified of the retirement years. Indeed, very few are able to plan right for their retirement; the majority of silvers create a rosy picture in their minds and when it is time, they find it far from reality. Let us understand this reality.

Retirement means:

- Loss of/reduced income
- Loss of a lifestyle
- Loss of a profession
- Loss of colleagues
- Loss of professional challenges
- Loss of a routine
- Loss of status
- Loss of privileges
- Empty hours
- Feeling of uselessness

If not handled properly, retirement can lead to:

- Suppressed anger
- Outbursts of anger
- Arguments
- Marital discord
- Loneliness
- Isolation
- Depression
- Financial instability
- Homelessness
- Fragmented family
- Compromised lifestyle

In your case, there seems to have been insufficient retirement planning. I can suggest some steps for you and your husband to make this phase of your life productive and meaningful.

The first step would be to sit with your husband and understand what he is feeling. Then, explain to him how you are feeling. Only when you both understand each other's anguish and empathise with each other can solutions be found.

Some steps you can both take to give each other space are:

- Part-time employment
- Volunteering
- Making a routine for the day
- Socialising
- Distribution of household tasks
- Keeping some 'me' time

Some things you can do together are:

- Plan an annual holiday/weekend getaway
- Join social groups
- Cook a meal together
- Do a physical activity together
- Plan get-togethers with family and friends

It is important that you both keep your individual relationships alive. The more you communicate positively with each other, the happier your sunset years will be. Having a good relationship with family, both close and distant, friends and neighbours also adds zest to life.

Q. My mother-in-law is 68 and has a severe knee problem. She has been advised to take the support of a walking stick but refuses to use it owing to the stigma attached to it. We are scared she might fall and hurt herself. What can we do to help her?

A. This phenomenon of the elderly not wanting to use a walking stick was one of the findings of my doctoral work. There is a resistance in using visible aids such as walking sticks as they are seen as an acknowledgment of ageing. There is also a factor of vanity. Recently, I visited a 94 year-old who was recovering at home after

a hip surgery. She was able to walk with her stick but refused to leave home with it. She told me frankly, "I refuse to advertise my old age and helplessness." So the problem you face is a fairly common one.

Be very kind and polite to your mother-in-law when speaking about the issue. Let your husband gift her a

lovely wooden stick on any occasion, like her birthday, and cajole her into using it occasionally. When she uses it and finds it beneficial, she will accept it as part of her life. Some silvers even create a collection of walking sticks to match their attire! Just don't make it an issue as she must already be feeling gloomy about reaching the next step of ageing.

Dr Rana is a New Delhi-based social gerontologist and Founder of Positive Aged. Email her with your queries at positiveaged@gmail.com or write to us at contact.mag@harmonyindia.org. Visit www.positiveaged.com



CULTURE CAMEOS

I am 78 years old and write stories for kids along with my two writer friends Neelima Sinha, 79, and Neeta Berry, 65. These stories are illustrated and published under the aegis of AWIC (Artists, Writers and Illustrators for Children), the Indian section of IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People), an international organisation committed to bringing books and children together.

As part of AWIC, we have been travelling across the globe over the past eight years in support of IBBY's conferences. This year's edition, the 36th IBBY conference, was held from 30 August to 1 September in Greece with the enticing, and culturally relevant, theme: 'East Meets West around Children's Books and Fairytales.'

Thus, we left for our sojourn to every literary dreamer's ultimate destination. We were excited to see this ancient land of Socrates and Homer with its ancient history and civilisation; the monuments, museums and temples depicting Greek mythology. It was a surreal experience to imbibe their culture and, at the same time, present our own culture to the world. Nilima Sinha's paper, *Presenting Ancient South Asian Literature to the West - Helping Promote Better Cultural Understanding Globally*, compared different



Bagchi, Sinha and Berry at the IBBY conference in Greece

cultures and their influences over the world. And Nita Berry presented *India's Panchatantra – An Intrepid Globetrotter*, tracing the eventful journey of Sanskrit literature's oldest collection of fables and the world's oldest collection of stories for children.

While the trip fuelled our passion for the written word even further, the tranquil blue of the Aegean and the ancient marvels of mythological Greece offered us great respite from the fast pace of the world.

—Indira Bagchi, Delhi



MONEY MATTERS BY PRIYA DESAI

Your money's worth: Silvers feel the pinch as the rupee takes a tumble

Old dilapidated buildings collapse, foot-bridges collapse, but why is the rupee's exchange rate following suit?" asked an old-timer from our rummy group with mischief in his eyes. I could discern the source of this humour-garnished query as he was looking at the front page of a newspaper with the image of a rupee note under a red hammer. This comment set the economist in me wondering whether the downslide of the rupee should be a source of concern for silvers.

Currently, not a single day passes without financial news peppered with expressions such as 'currency turmoil', 'rupee on a roller coaster', etc, with reference to the falling exchange rate of our national currency. In an uncertain domestic and global environment, every piece of negative news in the world of finance and international trade contributes to a downward shift in the external value of the rupee.

What impact do these changes have on our day-to-day lives? To find an answer, it's important to understand what causes fluctuation in the exchange rate of the rupee.

Exchange rate decoded

The exchange rate of the rupee is its price in terms of the currency of another country. This price is generally expressed in terms of the US dollar, as it is the most widely used and accepted international currency.

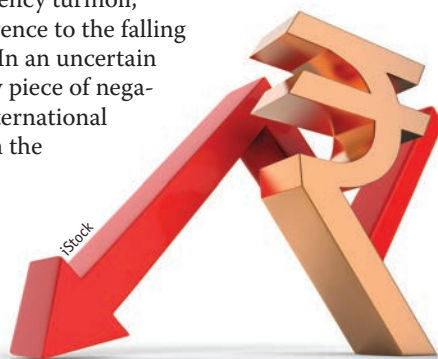
The rupee-dollar exchange rate indicates the number of rupees against one unit of the dollar. This is also referred to as the direct quote of the rupee exchange rate. But a rupee exchange rate against other currencies like the euro, Japanese yen, and many other currencies is also available.

The Indian rupee's exchange rate is market-determined (floating exchange rate); it fluctuates in tandem with demand and supply. Till 1991, this rate was pegged to the US dollar and was fixed. Different countries follow different methods of fixing the exchange rate. An example of a pegged or fixed rate is the Saudi Arabian riyal rate against the US dollar.

In India, the Reserve Bank of India publishes on a daily and monthly basis the rupee exchange rate against major

currencies such as the US dollar, euro and Japanese yen. These are also known as spot exchange rates. The given table shows how the value of the rupee has slid against the US dollar over the past three years, and more rapidly in recent times. In the current year itself, the rupee depreciated by 16 per cent.

The minute-to-minute and daily fluctuations in the exchange rate are crucial for foreign exchange markets where currencies are traded on a continuous basis. The players involved are banks, financial institutions, currency traders, exporters, importers, money transferers, etc.



Factors that cause volatility

There has been a significant increase in the volatility of the rupee exchange rate in recent months, eliciting positive and negative reactions from various sections. There is a range of factors at play that has contributed to the rapid depreciation of the rupee.

Although the RBI and other government sources have been maintaining an eagle's eye on the situation, they have also adopted an arm's-length policy in dealing with the matter. This is evident in their reluctance to intervene and stem the slide, leaving the situation in the hands of market forces. Some important factors that explain the volatility in the rupee exchange rate are as follows:

- Global markets have turned volatile, sending similar waves to emerging markets such as India. The trade war between the US and China has increased the threat of protectionism across the world, creating barriers to increased exports from countries such as India.
- As the US economy picks up and pushes up interest rates, hot money flows are reversing their direction from emerging markets such as India to the US. This creates pressures on the demand for dollars and a slide in the external value of the rupee.
- Crude oil prices continue to be at an all-time high and are constantly moving upward, disrupting the financial budgeting of oil-dependent countries such

as India. Crude oil imports contribute 80 per cent to the oil requirement of our country. Rising oil prices have increased oil import bills, worsening the current account deficit.

- The big mess in the banking sector has exacerbated the situation and made it harder to contain the falling exchange rate. The IL&FS debacle has only worsened the banking scenario.
- None of the above factors seem to be in retreat mode, with new challenges to the stability of exchange rates not being ruled out. It would appear that the Government is underplaying the role of this volatility by emphasising the strong macro fundamentals of the Indian economy. Optimistic growth projections from the IMF are aimed at positioning India as the world's fastest growing economy.

It is also contended that many other currencies have depreciated far more than the rupee, alluding to currency depreciation as a global phenomenon. But that doesn't lessen shocks to the Indian economy in any way.

The impact

The common man is oblivious to the complexities of exchange rate mechanisms. However, people start scrutinising how the falling rupee exchange rate impacts their day-to-day life when:

- **They pay more for petrol and diesel:** Transport operators quietly transfer higher fuel prices to consumers by increasing the prices of goods and services. Parents start paying more for school bus services. Imported items such as mobile phones, computers, refrigerators and other goods become pricier. In short, a weakening rupee results in various inflationary pressures.
- **Loans get costlier:** Most people who have raised loans from banks for cars, homes, education, etc, will have to rework their financial planning for the year. This is because interest rates start rising as the rupee becomes weaker. A weaker rupee requires tightening of monetary policy. In simple words, depreciation in the rupee value results in upward pressure on interest rates.
- **Foreign capital outflows increase:** The hawkish interest rate policy adopted by the US is attracting capital flows to that country. A weaker rupee becomes the perfect ammunition for hot money to flow to other attractive destinations. These trends have an adverse impact on India's economic growth.

Exchange rate of rupee against dollar

YEAR	DATE	EXCHANGE RATE*
2015	01 Jan	63.3
2016	01 Jan	66.2
2017	01 Jan	67.67
2018	01 Jan	63.7
2018	28 May	68
2018	18 Sep	72.37
2018	05 Oct	73.58
2018	10 Oct	74.13
2018	12 Oct	73.79

* Rupees = 1 US dollar
Source: Reserve Bank of India

The implications

Silvers are far more likely to feel the pinch, as they have a limited kitty to bank on. For them, a minor compensating factor is the slightly higher interest rate on savings, especially from non-bank fixed deposits, bonds and non-convertible debentures (NCDs). But it is necessary to be highly cautious while investing in private-sector FDs. The IL&FS fiasco is a lesson in gross financial mismanagement in our country.

Meanwhile, a section of silvers may be rejoicing when they find higher remittances in their accounts caused by a weaker rupee. But their joy can be short-lived, especially if they are making foreign travel plans. They will have to fork out larger amounts as the rupee depreciates. In addition to higher airfares, they'll be paying far more rupees to spend a dollar abroad.

What's on the horizon?

The exchange rate of the rupee that touched ₹ 74.22 on 5 October 2018 created ripples in the Indian economy and led to a bloodbath on the stock market, wiping out crores of rupees. Silvers were affected by this crash, as their investments in stocks and mutual funds plummeted in value.

Although the drop in the value of the rupee has impacted everyone, silvers have taken the worst beating. They need to rework their asset allocations to pare down further risk.

The Indian economy is unlikely to be spared of these global crisis headwinds as well as domestic challenges. And these can become a spoke in the wheel of economic growth and lead to higher inflation. In all likelihood, this volatility will be a fixture in the period ahead and silvers will have to alter their financial strategies to protect their nest eggs.

The author is an economist based in Mumbai



NUTRITALK BY NAINI SETALVAD

Indulge with care

Simple changes in your daily lifestyle and eating habits can brighten up your festive season



Photographs by iStock

Diwali brings with it immense joy and happiness. However, amid the air of festivities, we tend to binge on irresistible sweets and fried savouries and our joy soon turns into guilt. Silvers suffer most at such times—the bingeing turns into addition of calories, weight issues and, ultimately, health problems.

We all know that eating the wrong food is the root cause of our daily spiritual, mental and physical worries. Even ancient historical texts mention the gods consuming nourishing grains, scrumptious vegetables and delicious fruits as they believed in the power of nutritious, healthy foods. Unfortunately, today, we choose unhealthy foods such as white sugar, white refined flour, artificially coloured

preservatives and chemical-laden foods over wholesome foods. We need to sit back and understand that it's important to shield our bodies from the hidden effects of these 'legalised illegal drugs'. Making the shift away from them will help boost immunity and protect us from diseases.

This Diwali, as we celebrate the victory of good over evil, let us usher in good health by eating right. So get rid of unhealthy food and add organic fruits, vegetables, whole grains, pulses, fats, spices and plenty of water to your daily diet. This will infuse your body with abundant energy and good health and strengthen your mind. Consider the following changes in your lifestyle and food habits.



Healthy festive foods

NON-FRIED SAVOURIES

- *Handwa*
- Sweet potato chaat
- Baked potato peas
- *Ameri khaman*
- Stuffed masala *khichiya*
- *Paniyaram*
- *Sabudana* khichri
- *Paanki*/corn *paanki*
- Stuffed paneer

MEAL CHOICES FOR EATING OUT

- Dahi aloo chaat
- *Fada ni* khichri
- *Thalipeeth*
- Sautéed veggies with rice
- Vegetable korma and tandoori roti
- Tomato soup with bake au gratin and whole-wheat buns

Lower your sweet intake: No Diwali celebration is complete without sweets but pay attention when you gorge on them. Enjoy the pleasure of eating sweets with small bites that prevent you from reaching out for more. Also, opt for homemade sweets that are healthy, as you know exactly what ingredients they contain. If you must opt for outside sweets, choose ones made from natural sugars. High sugar consumption puts you at risk for liver disorders. Also, though sugar-laden items give you an instant boost of energy, your energy level will drop equally fast.

Consume less salt: Salty foods cause water retention and swelling in the body and increase your blood pressure. So go easy on such foods.

Control your portions: Remember the trick; a small plate means less food. When visiting your friends and family for Diwali, eat in smaller plates to control the quantity of food you eat. Avoid second helpings.

Stay hydrated: Overeating during festivals means not having enough water, which causes dehydration in the body. Remember to sip water throughout the day or sip on liquids such as coconut water, buttermilk or fruit juices to maintain your electrolyte balance. Stay away from alcohol and aerated drinks or mocktails that are high in sugar and also lead to dehydration.



HOMEMADE SWEETS

- Beetroot halwa
- Fruit custard with stevia
- Baked sandesh
- Baked gulab jamun
- Baked yoghurt
- Sweet rice
- *Sheera* (made with jaggery)
- Steamed *modak*
- *Phirni*
- Fruit chaat

Plan your day smartly: Plan your festival visits in such a way that you can have your major meals at home. If you have to eat lunch and dinner outside, choose your foods wisely. Avoid oily foods and gravies and switch to more vegetables, dals and salad-based meals.

Gift good health: Diwali is a time when we visit our near and dear

ones with festive gifts. Instead of sweets, fried snacks and refined items available at stores, why not gift good health to your family and friends for the festive season? Dry fruits such as dates, figs, raisins and nuts like almonds, walnuts, cashew nuts and pistachios or an assortment of seeds like flaxseeds, sesame seeds, chia seeds and sunflower seeds make ideal gifts.

Easy festive recipes

FRUIT SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- Ripe banana: half
- Apple (or orange): half
- Strawberries: 4 to 5; chopped
- Pineapple: 100 gm; chopped
- Dates: 2; chopped
- Raisins: 2 tbsp
- Mint leaves: 4 to 5; chopped
- Lemon juice to taste

METHOD

Peel and dice the fruits into cubes. Mix all the fruits in a bowl, add dates, raisins and mint leaves. Squeeze lemon in it and toss well. Chill and serve. (Note: Mix lemon juice immediately after cutting the apples and bananas to prevent them from turning brown.)



STUFFED KHICHU

INGREDIENTS

For the *khichu*

- Rice flour: 1 bowl
- Water: 3 bowls
- Cumin seeds: ½ tsp
- Chilli paste: ½ tsp
- Salt to taste

For the stuffing

- Coconut: 2 tbsp; grated
- French beans: 2 tbsp; chopped
- Carrots: 2 tbsp; finely chopped
- Green peas: 1 tbsp
- Green chilli paste: ¼ tsp
- Coriander leaves: 1 tbsp; chopped
- Dry mango powder: ¼ tsp
- Salt to taste

METHOD

Take water in a deep non-stick pan; add cumin seeds, green chilli

paste and salt to it and boil on high flame for 2-3 minutes. Add rice flour and mix well, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon so no lumps get formed. Cover with a lid and allow it to cook on slow flame, stirring in between, for 5-7 more minutes or till the mixture leaves the sides of the pan. Divide the *khichu* into equal portions and make small balls of it. Boil the French beans, carrot and peas in another vessel till they become soft. Now, take a pan and add the boiled vegetables to it. Mix salt, green chilli paste, coriander, coconut and dry mango powder with it to prepare the stuffing. Flatten the *khichu* balls, insert the vegetable stuffing in the centre and fold from all sides. Serve hot stuffed *khichu* with a mixture of red chilli powder and oil.

SWEET POTATO CHAAT

INGREDIENTS

- Sweet potato: 100 gm; boiled and cubed
- Pomegranate seeds: ½ cup
- Green chilli: half; finely chopped
- Ginger: ¼ inch; finely chopped
- Chaat masala: 1 tsp
- Coriander leaves: ¼ cup; finely chopped
- Lemon to taste
- Rock salt to taste

METHOD

Add the sweet potato cubes, pomegranate seeds, green chilli and ginger in a bowl and toss it well. Squeeze lemon juice on top, add chaat masala and salt, and mix well. Garnish with coriander leaves and serve.

Setalvad is an obesity and lifestyle disease consultant who offers diet counselling at Health for You, a wellness clinic in Mumbai, as well as online. Visit www.nainisetalvad.com for more details or write to contact.mag@harmonyindia.org if you have any queries for her



Dr Sunil and patron Benny Varghese with beneficiary Lekha Cheranikal and her children

Photographs by Shaji Vettipuram

THE ‘homemaker’

Dr M S Sunil builds homes, facilitates basic aids and offers a life of dignity to the underprivileged in Kerala, writes **Sahil Jaswal**

In 2005, when Asha from Koduman village received the keys to her newly constructed house, she couldn't stop tears from rolling down her cheeks. The 400 sq-ft house was self-contained, with two rooms and a galvanised roof, completely different from the one she previously lived in—a plastic shed with a makeshift dupatta that loosely hung in place of a door. After her parents passed away, Asha lived with her grandmother and struggled hard to make ends meet. “I was moved to tears when I learnt about her financial condition. The house she lived in was unsafe; so I decided to help her by building a new house for her,” says 57 year-old Dr M S Sunil, a zoology professor at Catholicate College in Pathanamthitta, situated in Central Travancore region in Kerala.

Dr Sunil is a sterling picture of humanity and compassion for thousands of underprivileged and homeless people of

Pathanamthitta. From creating employment opportunities and facilitating a steady income to building homes for the homeless and paying their utility bills, she has helped them to the best of her abilities. “The extent of our dreams is limited to our basic needs of survival, something that most people are deprived of,” she reasons. “When a home becomes a reality for whom it was a once a dream, it opens avenues for bigger dreams and greater potential.”

Back in 1989, Dr Sunil never dreamt that her small acts of charity would pave the way to a journey towards philanthropy. As a 28 year-old PhD student conducting research at the aquatic biology and fisheries department in the University College at Shankhumugham, Thiruvananthapuram, she served food to impoverished children outside the university gate and helped them with clothing. “I was always passionate about helping people and

“I accept money from one patron for one house to maintain authenticity and transparency. Hence, during the handing-over ceremony, I announce the name of the patron, so people know the ones who showed kindness and compassion”

inclined towards solving their problems,” she says. “Back then, I didn’t know it was called social work.”

Later, in 1994, she joined as a zoology teacher at the Catholicate College in Pathanamthitta. Though her charity continued in small ways, she truly explored her philanthropic bent in 2005 after joining as an officer of National Service Scheme programme that focussed on community service. There, she came across many students who needed financial help and decided to make a difference to their lives. Her first beneficiary was Asha, an MSc student at Catholicate College, from Koduman village.

Dr Sunil procured some land with the help of the village council. With an extensive and demanding collection drive, she managed to collect ₹ 60,000 and got a brand new house constructed for Asha. The rehabilitation completely turned the student’s world around. Today, many years hence, she’s employed as a teacher at Government Vocational Higher Secondary School in Kaipattoor, Kerala, and married to an Army personnel with a daughter studying at Kendriya Vidyalaya. The project also set the trend for more success stories to follow.

Sreelatha, another beneficiary of Dr Sunil’s largesse, also lived under a makeshift plastic shed in the same area.

A solo breadwinner in her family, she worked hard to support her paralysed husband, two daughters and a niece. But this time, Dr Sunil moved on from conducting a collection drive; she looked for a benefactor instead. “Within three days, she found a benefactor for our house. Even in those three days, she personally came over to our place to provide us food and financial aid. To date, she helps us with medicines, books and other basic needs,” says Sreelatha.

With time, those in need of help started directly approaching Dr Sunil, who was actively involved with empowerment and development programmes. People from her village as well as strangers knocked on the doors of ‘Kripa’, her home in Azhoor, near Pathanamthitta town. But the doors would be open to only those who asked for help for other people. There were some she stumbled upon on her own or who approached her directly, but she made it a point to conduct extensive research to assess the family’s financial needs.

With time, people began trusting Dr Sunil for her transparency and generously came forward to help. Among the first benefactors was Kokkathodu-based K P George, who is currently running for municipal elections in Fort Bend County, Texas. His example paved the way for more sponsors from India, as well as beyond borders. The impressive list includes Dr Philipose Mar Chrysostom, metropolitan emeritus of Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church; Dr K P Yohannan, founder and metropolitan bishop of Believers Eastern Church; and P J Kurien, educationist, social activist and former deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

As a policy, Dr Sunil began to adhere to single donors for one house. “I accept money from one patron for one house to maintain authenticity and transparency. Hence, during the handing-over ceremony, I announce the name of the patron, so people know the ones who showed kindness and compassion,” she explains. Whenever there was a shortage of funds, she never hesitated to put in her own money; at one time, she even roped in her husband P Thomas, who owns a supermarket in Pathanamthitta, to fund the construction.

Over the years, Dr Sunil’s work of building homes has grown from strength to strength. And helping her in her selfless journey is K P Jayalal from Konni, who has been





Gifting a sapling to beneficiary Rajani Ezhakulam while presenting her foundation's 105th home; distributing school kits to children in a flood-affected area

Opposite page: Dr Sunil and Malayalam novelist-writer Benyamin with beneficiary Mary and her son Joel during a house handing-over ceremony

actively working with her since 2008. Jayalal is a man of few words but immense zeal to rehabilitate people. Under the umbrella of Dr M S Sunil Foundation, they have built 107 homes till date, the latest in Pandanad, which was drastically affected by the recent Kerala floods. Together, they have also rehabilitated 74 families in Pathanamthitta, one in Kollam district and two in Alleppey district.

As part of her charity work, Dr Sunil has donated livestock to over 30 families to help them maintain a steady source of income, donated books and stationery items to over 1,000 students, provided spectacles for silvers, supplied hearing aids and donated over 278 wheelchairs to the differently abled, sometimes through sponsors or out of her own pocket. She also helps people pay their utility bills and provides grocery kits to over 50 families every month to improve their standard of living.

That's not all. Being the NSS district coordinator since 2014, Dr Sunil is responsible for organising blood donation drives and seminars on environmental protection. "We organise at least four blood donation drives every year and collect an average of 300 units of blood with each drive. My college students and I have donated blood many times and so have our families," she shares. She was bestowed the 'best blood donor motivator' award by NSS for five consecutive years.

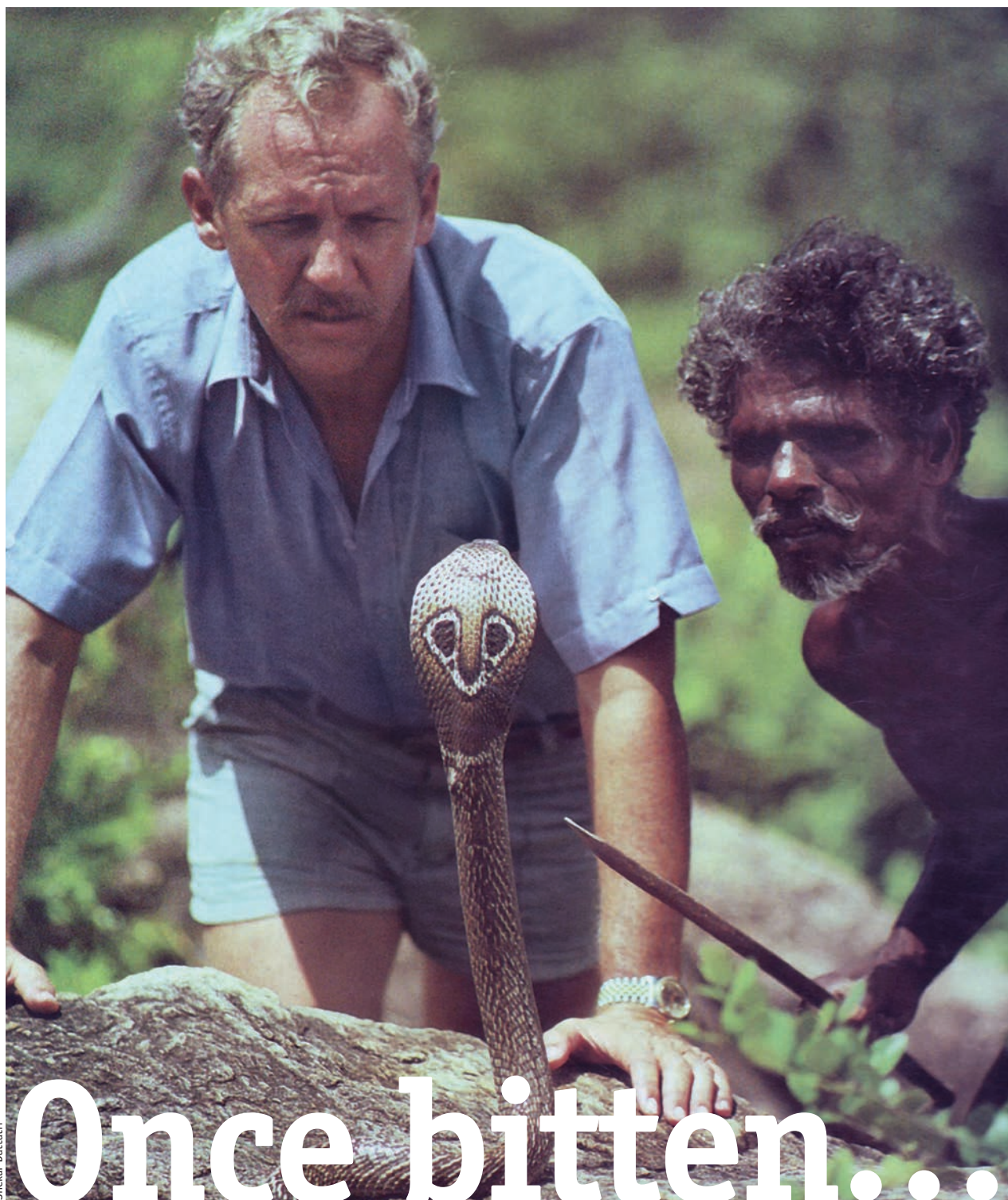
She is also a part of the District Police Programme and actively works towards raising awareness against drug abuse and traffic

violations. "I have known Dr Sunil for the past 10 years and she has really inspired the masses. It is difficult to quantify the impact generated by her work but the large number of people showing up in her drives keeps everyone in high spirits," asserts Leelamma A R, sub-inspector of Thannithodu police station, Pathanamthitta, who also helps Dr Sunil with logistics and supports her in these programmes.

Dr Sunil also financed an operation for a women's employment unit for manufacturing LED bulbs some time ago. Unfortunately, the project was shut down within three months owing to lack of financial assistance. "We made about 800 LED bulbs at that time and all of them are now being used in the houses we've built," she reveals.

During the Kerala floods this year, her foundation conducted relief work by providing clothes, food kits, garments and kitchen utensils. "Most areas were adversely affected in our region and many people had lost their homes," she says. "Our volunteers coordinated with the district collector of Alappuzha district and helped as many as 75 families." Not surprisingly, the next house being built under the foundation is for a flood-affected family.

In recognition of her contribution to society, this year she was honoured with the Nari Shakti Puraskar, the highest civilian honour for women in India, by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development. Not one to rest on her laurels, Dr Sunil declares, "There are miles to go before I rest." ✨



Shekar Dattatri

Once bitten....

Chennai-based herpetologist Romulus Whitaker has a charm and rare enthusiasm towards creepy-crawlies, and has saved countless lives through his decades-long work, writes **Jayanthi Somasundaram**

Romulus Whitaker was hard to miss on the streets of Madras in the 1970s. The handsome young man with an American twang and natural swagger would cruise around the city on his motorcycle, a 3-ft snake tangled in his flowing hair.

Whitaker was a poster boy all right, just not the typical kind. The arresting image drew international attention to his work with snakes in a country where these reptiles are usually regarded as a symbol of evil. “My favourite image is that of a cobra shielding the Buddha from the sun or being used as a belt by Ganesha or a necklace by Shiva,” says the 75 year-old herpetologist, who was conferred the Padma Shri for his work earlier this year.

Indeed, no single individual has contributed as much to the conservation of snakes and crocodiles in India as Whitaker, who along with like-minded colleagues has set up six pioneering institutions that are changing the way Indians perceive these reptiles. “The best thing about my work is that it sends waves of interest out to younger, more energetic people to keep this work rolling,” says the Chennai-based conservationist, who is famously known for setting up India’s first snake park in the city, then called Madras, in 1972.

Whitaker caught his first snake when he was just four. It was at their family country estate in New York state that he brought home a non-venomous American garter snake. “My mother said, ‘How beautiful!’, and soon she bought me *The Boy’s Book of Snakes* by Percy A Morris,” he smiles. This was his first book on snakes. It triggered an obsession and soon he started a collection of milk snakes, garters, ribbons and ring-necked snakes at home.

When Whitaker turned seven, his mother married into a well-known Indian family and they moved to Bombay, now Mumbai, in 1951. For the next 10 years, Romulus went to boarding school in Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu, where he spent his weekends scouting for snakes and learning jungle lore from local hunters in the forests.

After finishing high school in 1960, Whitaker returned to the US for further studies. Following a failed attempt at college and a stint as a travelling salesman and merchant seaman,



Cedric Bregnard

he worked at the Miami Serpentarium run by legendary snake man Bill Haast, a man he calls his guru, from whom he learned the techniques of safely and humanely extracting venom.

Returning to Madras, Romulus started out by producing and selling snake venom. “I was sourcing snakes, particularly kraits, from all over India and came to know the Irula snake catchers in South India,” he shares. The Irula tribe of Tamil Nadu are aboriginals whose traditional occupation is catching rats and snakes. “When I first met them, all I wanted was to work with them, learn from them, and involve them in developing more of my ideas.”

Eventually he rented a plot of land with an old house, where he put up snake enclosures, a signboard, and got some newspaper publicity. The people of the ‘Land of Snakes’ needed to see and learn about these much-maligned yet fascinating creatures, he reasoned.

The experiment worked. It was also the beginning of Madras Snake Park (now the Chennai Snake Park). “The Tamil Nadu Forest Department gave me a 25-year lease on a plot of lovely scrub jungle in Guindy Deer Park, right in the heart of the city. The new snake park was an overnight success and soon we were getting a million visitors a year.” It attracted generous media coverage and among the high-profile visitors was then prime minister Indira Gandhi. “Mrs Gandhi went away with a new appreciation for snakes, lizards, crocodiles and turtles, which she later acted upon,” says the herpetologist.

Whitaker showing a harmless ratsnake to school children in Agumbe

Opposite page: Whitaker and Irula Chokalingam with a spectacled cobra, 1988

From snakes to crocodiles is but a small step and Whitaker soon found himself on a new mission. "My former wife Zai and I realised the snake park was not big enough to breed crocs, which had become endangered in India. So we had to raise money to buy land to set up the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust. We had a total of ₹ 14,000, which we had got as wedding gifts and bought the first 3 acre of what is now the famous croc bank on East Coast Road in Chennai."

After setting up the crocodile bank, Whitaker went back to university and earned a BSc degree in wildlife management from Pacific Western University in the US. "The only reason I wanted the degree was so that I could apply for a PhD. I thought people would see me as a 'serious' herpetologist, not just a 'pop' one." He never did pursue the PhD though as he was having far too much fun chasing snakes in jungles around India and learning on the field.

Whitaker has written over 200 scientific papers on reptiles, in addition to founding India's first herpetological journal, *Hamadryad - Journal of Tropical Asian Herpetology*, now in its 37th year of publication. He also has eight books to his credit.

His work on king cobras and snake venom research has been featured in books, magazines, and documentaries, including the Emmy-winning *King Cobra* produced and directed by Whitaker himself. His fascination for the king cobra, the world's largest venomous snake, resulted in a collaborative study with Matt Goode, an ophiologist (a herpetologist

who specialises in snakes) from the University of Arizona in the US. The study combined research, public education and a plan for the snake's conservation. "Hundreds of adult king cobras are rescued from people's homes and gardens every year and many king cobra nests are found and monitored," he says. "The work goes on and the king cobra has now become the most studied snake of the more than 300 species of snakes found in India."

Some of Whitaker's fondest memories are of his snake-hunting adventures with the Irulas. In 1975, hundreds of Irula families were rendered jobless when the snakeskin industry was dealt a death blow. While this was a landmark conservation measure for snakes, for the Irulas, it spelt doom. Whitaker shared his venom extraction knowledge and techniques with the Irulas and set up the Irula Snake Catchers Cooperative Society in 1978.

The Irula Cooperative is the only organisation allowed to make legal use of snakes in India. (They have licences for 8,000 snakes each year for their venom; after extraction, they release them.) It now supplies 80 per cent of the venom needed to make the over 2 million vials of anti-venom used to treat snakebite in India each year. Whitaker has also taken the Irulas to Florida to trap pythons that are wreaking havoc on the endemic mammals and birds in the Everglades National Park.

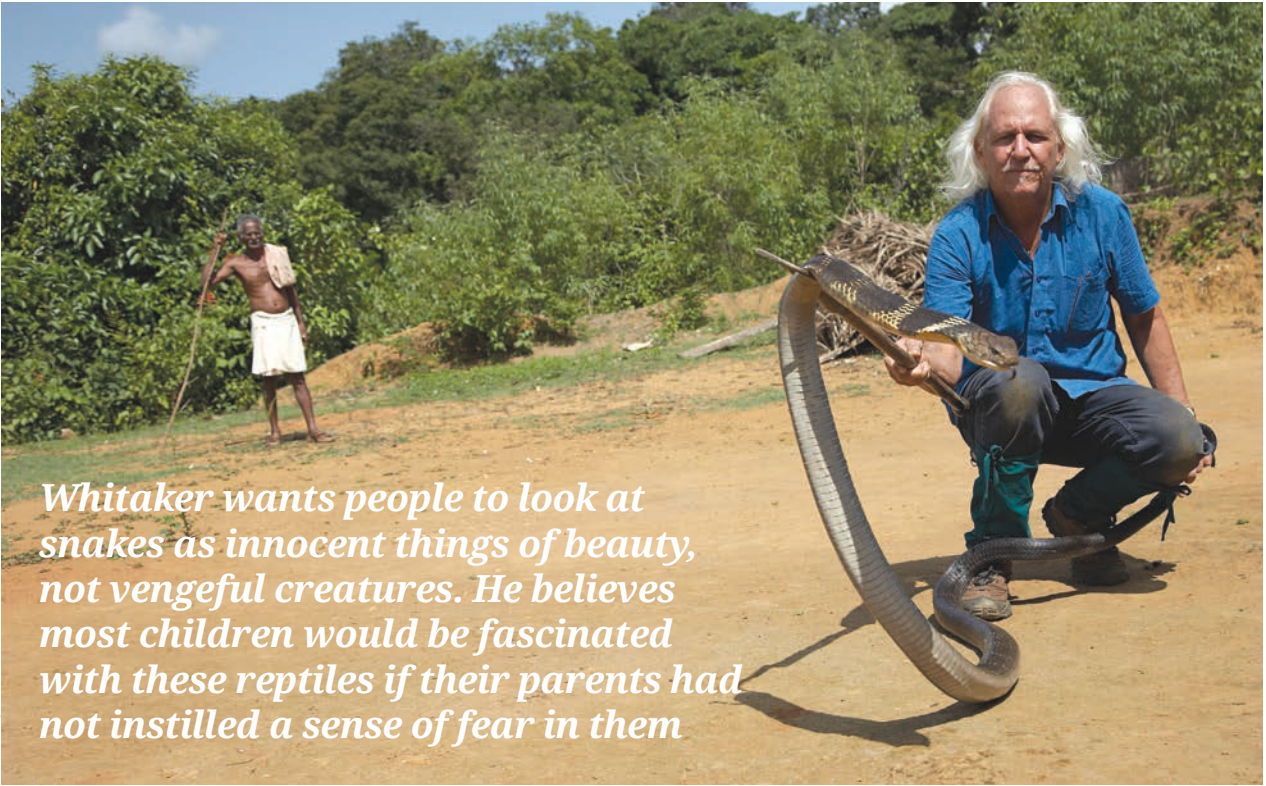
For Whitaker, embarking on a sub-career in filmmaking in 1985 was purely to reach out to more people. His first film was a collaborative effort with his school friends in 1985. "It was called *Snake Bite* and was the story of how two people were bitten by snakes. While the first was treated by a village quack, the latter got a shot of anti-venom at the hospital. Anti-venom wins!" he cheers. The film went on to win a gold medal from the British Medical Association.

Later, he produced and directed a full-length feature film, *Mudalai* (Crocodile) with his former wife Zai, for the Children's Film Society of India. In 1989, the film won many awards including the Silver Elephant at the 6th International Children's Film Festival, and Best Feature Film at the International Centre for Film for Children and Young People. Made in Tamil, Hindi and English, the film was also screened as part of a Christmas Eve telecast in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1991.

Receiving the
Padma Shri
from President
Kovind in 2018

Opposite page:
With a rescued
king cobra in
Agumbe





Whitaker wants people to look at snakes as innocent things of beauty, not vengeful creatures. He believes most children would be fascinated with these reptiles if their parents had not instilled a sense of fear in them

“This encouraged me to meet the National Geographic people and that’s how I met my wife Janaki Lenin, a film editor. We put together the idea of *King Cobra*,” he reflects. The 53-minute film, shot in the rainforests of Kerala and Karnataka, won an Emmy Award for Outstanding News and Documentary Programme in 1998. “One of the best things about that project was that we were able to buy a new jeep, which we used to drive around the Western Ghats. We had so much fun that I even thought of telling Nat Geo that I would just do the reece trips,” he jokes.

For someone who can’t stay away from the wilderness, Whitaker now spends a lot of time in front of a computer, writing proposals on behalf of Madras Crocodile Bank Trust, where his son Nikhil is curator. This project researches the venom of snakes from different Indian regions in order to test the efficacy of anti-snake venom. “As the India project manager for the Global Snakebite Initiative, an international NGO, I’m helping to collect venom samples to improve Indian anti-venoms, promoting a nationwide snake conservation and snakebite mitigation outreach programme by producing short videos and involving schools and rural communities,” he tells us. “I’m doing this for the people, as much as I’m doing it for the snakes.”

Like most other wildlife conservationists, Whitaker cannot always quantify his work. But there are times when figures can speak for his success. When he co-authored *Snakes of India, the Field Guide* in 2004, there were 276 species of snakes that had been documented in the

country. As of July 2018, he notes, a total of 302 species have been identified in India, including several wolf snakes, vine snakes, cat snakes and tree snakes.

Whitaker wants people to look at snakes as innocent things of beauty, not vengeful creatures. He believes most children would be fascinated with these reptiles if their parents had not instilled a sense of fear in them.

“Both our boys Nikhil and Samir were fearless about snakes and other creepy crawlies. As parents, we had to actually caution them and teach them what they could and couldn’t touch. Once, Samir came up to us carrying two venomous saw-scaled vipers, exclaiming, ‘See *Dada*, cat snakes [which are harmless lookalikes of vipers]!’ I calmly told him to put the snakes down, very carefully, and then gave him the requisite shaking and shouting so he’d remember to be more careful,” Whitaker laughs. He still savours the memory of his 8-ft pet python slithering out of his parents’ apartment on Marine Drive, Mumbai, sending his neighbours running for cover! “Later, I found it hiding under a trunk in our own store room,” he grins.

Whitaker points out that snakes are under considerable pressure from habitat loss, especially those that live in the dwindling forests of the Western Ghats. “And in the Eastern Ghats, king cobras are being killed on sight even though there is no record of a king cobra bite in that region,” he rues, admitting that at 75, age has slowed him somewhat. But given the amount of work that is yet to be done, he says he is inspired to act even faster. 🌿

STILL SUNNY!

:: cover feature ::

Master batsman and former Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar, who has remained on strike with his management company and role as commentator after retirement, shares his remarkable journey with **Neil Joshi**

He arrived on the scene with a bang at the age of 17 when he was named 'Best Schoolboy Cricketer' in 1966. Sunil Manohar Gavaskar's style of batting and stroke-making sent the bowlers fetching and left the audience in awe. If there was anyone in the Indian team who could prove a match for the 'fearsome quartet' in the Caribbean Islands, it was the 'Master from Mumbai'.

Gavaskar was under the tutelage of his uncle and former cricketer Madhav Mantri, which meant he aimed to be as close to a perfectionist as possible while always being able to stoutly put a 'price on his wicket'—he recollects how his uncle once berated him when he threw his wicket away after scoring a double ton. When he arrived on the big scene, Gavaskar was made to wait for a good two years before he was selected as a member of the Bombay Ranji squad. So fierce was the competition then, that all he wanted was a match or two to show his prowess. When he finally got the opportunity, he didn't disappoint—Gavaskar soon made his way into the Indian team and was sent on a jet to the celebrated tour of West Indies in 1971. The 'Little Master' had arrived and his critics were silenced.

Part of the first World Cup winning team, which stands at the top of his personal list of achievements, Gavaskar also played in the prestigious World XI squad, which included the greats of the era, and was chosen by Sir Donald Bradman himself. The original Indian 'Wall' went on to break his record for the most centuries (he had the highest of 34 tons and was the first to surpass Don Bradman's 29). After being eulogised for his dexterity on the field, he took to the mike—over a period of three decades, he has become the voice of Indian cricket, on radio or television—and 'played straight' with his columns. Now, 69, Gavaskar looks back on his career, travels, his partnership with his family, and his love for his favourite sport: badminton! Here are some excerpts from an exclusive interview.



SUNNY THE 'BUSINESSMAN'

It's been over 33 years for Professional Management Group (PMG). Was it a risk to venture into this sphere, especially during your playing days, and has your decision to enter management been vindicated?

To sustain the company and make it what it is, more than 90 per cent of the work was done by Sumedh Shah. We started the company in October 1985. We were earlier into player management and got off that as it wasn't an easy stream at that time. We then focussed on columns and TV programmes and got into golf and tennis. We came back into player management 10 years ago. Today, PMG is what it is owing to the huge contribution of Sumedh. Now, Sam Balsara and N D Mehta are partners in the company.

As a sportsperson, where jobs were far and few, you were associated with companies like ACC and Nirlon. After that, was it a conscious move to get into player management?

Cricket wasn't a career in those days; if you were a half-decent cricketer, it got you a job in a corporate entity. The Times of India Shield used to be huge and there were lot of corporates who participated and got mileage if their team did well. Players playing in the 'D' division could showcase their potential. Companies like the Tatas would have their best team in the 'A' division but one of their teams would also play in the 'D' division. So one needn't be playing for India or Ranji Trophy; even if you were a good club cricketer, you could land a job. Those jobs meant you would work till your retirement age of 60.

You have been the Indian voice in the international arena for the past three decades; what prompted you to take a role behind the mike?

I think I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time. It was 1990 and Sachin Tendulkar had got his first century in England. At that stage, too, it didn't look like I wanted to do commentary. Also, I didn't want to travel the world for matches that didn't involve India. I was clear in my mind about that. Then, India went to Australia and I was invited to do commentary for Channel 9. When cable TV came into India, BCCI won a landmark case against Doordarshan and broke its monopoly; the cricket board was paid for the broadcast rights to show the 1993 England tour of India. From there on, it became a second profession for me. PMG is still my primary profession.

You are regarded as India's first 'Little Master'. How did that moniker come about?

The 'Master' was first used for Jack Hobbs. He scored 197 first-class hundreds and 100 of those came when he was over 40. Those were the days when people played on uncovered pitches; achieving this feat was incredible. Hanif Mohammed from Pakistan batted for three days to



Hareesh Patel

get his 337 against the West Indies. At that time, it was the English winter. All the English writers were trying to avoid the winter at home and went to the Caribbean to get the 'sun' and 'cricket'; one of the writers called him the 'Little Master'. So after that, whoever was short and scored well was given that title! The original one was Hanif Sir.

LITTLE BUMPS & EARLY STRIDES

You waited almost two years to get into the Bombay squad and were on the sidelines for most of that time. How difficult was it to cement a place in the Ranji team?

It was very difficult to get into the Bombay team. You had eight to nine players in the national side from Bombay. So, the popular talk in those days was, "It is easier to get in to the Indian team than the Bombay team." I understood it wasn't going to be easy and that I may get a match or two in my entire career. I had to prove myself to know whether I belonged there.

I played one match for the Irani Trophy, which was against the Rest of India; 21 players were vying for a place in the India team to go to Australia, for which the squad was going to be announced after the match. I was the



22nd player and didn't consider myself in contention; I failed in both the innings. After that, I didn't get an opportunity to play for another three years despite scoring runs for clubs and inter-university cricket. That's how Bombay cricket was and I am not complaining about the fact I wasn't chosen. There were players who were scoring runs in the Bombay team who couldn't be dropped.

By the time you cemented your place in the Bombay team, you must have learned a lot from your travels with 'greats' in the team. Could you shed some light on your travels and how they helped you become a better cricketer?

The Bombay Cricket Association (now Mumbai Cricket Association) took care of the players very well. We travelled first class and virtually got the entire bogie

BEST FOOT FORWARD:
Gavaskar and Kapil Dev during a local match in 1980



Harmony Archives / Courtesy: Sunil Doshi

With former cricketers Maninder Singh (extreme left), Mohinder Amarnath (second from left) and Praveen Amre (second from right). Also seen are commentators Sushil Doshi (third from right) and Charu Sharma (extreme right)

to ourselves. This was because we were the champions. Unlike now, where the support staff outnumbers the players, we had just one manager and a masseur. There was a great bonding experience. Suppose we travelled to Calcutta, we would spend two nights in the train and it was fantastic for the simple reason that the youngsters and seniors would congregate in one cabin. The youngsters would lie on the upper berth while the senior players would sit below and play cards to pass time. Even while they were playing cards, we would be talking cricket, there was a bit of leg-pulling—we were soaking in all the experience and knowledge. This also meant we could see the greats as pure ‘human beings’. Sometimes, one is overawed by them but luckily that didn’t happen to us because they showed us their personal side. They would be sitting in shorts or lungis or wearing a plain *ganjee* [vest]; when you see someone in very casual attire, all the formalities seem to be broken. I would recommend it to anybody! Even touring in a team bus was a great bonding

experience, especially when we were touring in England. Where is a chance to do something like this in an aircraft?

Who were your mentors and what did you learn from them?

When I played for Dadar Union [Matunga, Mumbai], I had my uncle Madhav Mantri [who started Dadar Union], V S ‘Marshall’ Patil, Vasudev Paranjpe, Ramnath Kenny, Narayan Pai and Naren Tamhane around. When we met, we could see the discipline in them. Whoever you were or however popular, if you didn’t come half an hour prior to the match and if you came a minute after 10 am, you were dropped. They mentored us by telling us to keep our shoes white, our leg-guards white. There was no issue about getting your clothes dirty on the field, but then you had to wear your whites the next day.

Please tell us more about Madhav Mantri as an influence on your career.

Both he and my father Manohar were huge influences on me. I make a mention of Madhav Mantri at almost every corporate

“The World Cup win cannot be compared to anything. That was the greatest moment of my career; that win still gives me goosebumps. Nothing can match that win and nothing comes close. We were happy to have hundreds of Indians thronging the ground after the match”

event with regard to my playing career. Our residence was at a distance from his and we would visit him only once in two to three weeks. But when we shifted closer during my first year of college, I remember going to his house very frequently. One day I opened the drawer of his cupboard and saw a lovely woollen sweater. There were also so many caps. So I asked him, “Can I have this cap? You have so many of them.” He said, “No, I can’t give it to you. You have to earn it. These are the caps I have earned. Unless you earn it, you can’t get this cap.” These words had a profound impact on me as they taught me the value of hard work and not getting things easily in life. Today, you can get the Indian cap easily owing to merchandising as well as counterfeiting. It’s available for ₹ 100 on the street. I really feel sad about it. In Australia, the merchandise available for fans is different from what is worn by the players. Everything remains the same, but the logo is different. There is a distinction; it has to be earned.

We believe your mother would celebrate every ton you scored by gifting you some money....

At the end of the series, my mother would give me a rupee for every run I scored. So if I scored 500 runs in a series, my mother would gift me ₹ 501 in an envelope. Despite shifting residences, I have most of those envelopes unopened and in the old currency. It was more like a blessing. My father would treat his colleagues at his office with sweets every time I scored runs.

You have often been compared to the great Sir Donald Bradman. Could you share the incident when ‘three Bradmans’ converged at one place?

It is huge honour to stand on the same pedestal with Sir Donald Bradman. Nobody can be compared to him; he was such a phenomenon. Nobody in the game will ever come close to his average when they finish playing cricket, nor to the consistency with which he scored his runs. His appetite for double and triple hundreds, whether playing first class or international cricket, was immense. We were part of the Rest of the World (RoW) team that travelled to Australia in 1971-72. The Australian government had cancelled the tour of South Africa owing to apartheid and we had come to fill in the season. I was in the RoW team with Sir Garfield ‘Gary’ Sobers. In those days in Adelaide, you got off the tarmac and walked to the airport. Sir Bradman, who had picked the RoW team, was waiting for us and especially for Gary Sobers, whom he

got along very well with. Bradman asked Sobers, “Where is that little fellow from Bombay?” At that time, Zaheer Abbas, who was also in the team, also came forward to meet Bradman. The good old Rohan Kanhai saw that and exclaimed, “Here is the ‘Bombay Bradman’, there is the ‘Karachi Bradman’ and here is the ‘Real Bradman’!”

SKIPPER’S CAP & THE CUP FOR LIFE

Did you enjoy your captaincy? How important was it to be in form to get the best out of your boys?

It was enjoyable 95 per cent of the times. You won’t find it enjoyable if you are not pulling your weight in the team. I could not ask the players to do things when I was not doing well. It was not difficult to motivate the players at all. We were among hundreds of players vying to be in the Indian team. None of us took it as a privilege; we never took it lightly.

The 1983 World Cup was a big win....

The World Championship in 1985 was close to being on a par with the World Cup. But the World Cup is the World Cup. That win cannot be compared to anything. That was the greatest moment of my career; that win still gives me goosebumps. Nothing can match that win and nothing comes close. It was a magnificent moment to watch Kapil Dev lift the Prudential Cup on the Lord’s balcony. We were happy to have hundreds of Indians thronging the ground after the match.

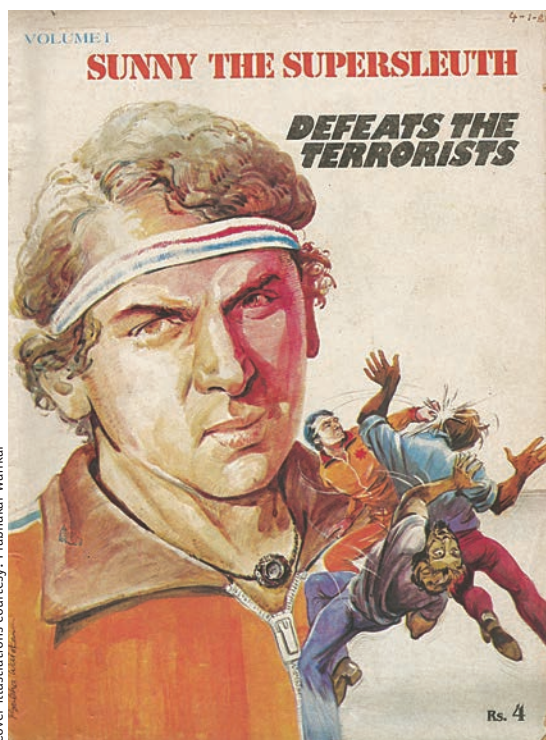
LOOKING BACK

You have enjoyed close rivalries against teams, some of them really intense. Which teams you would identify as the fiercest in your times?

Clearly, the West Indies and Australia were the teams you always wanted to do well against; so was Pakistan. Sri Lanka wasn’t a Test playing nation until the last couple of years of my playing career. Pakistan had some great players in the 1970s. I cherished playing against Pakistan but, most important, I got to learn something new from every game.

Was retirement a tough decision or could you see it on the horizon?

I got the message almost a year earlier. In the last couple of years of my playing career, I was looking at the clock



around teatime and saying to myself, “Another 20 overs of fielding till the end of play.” That is when it struck me that I wasn’t enjoying myself on the field. And when the time came it was easy for me to take a call on retirement. [Gavaskar played his last Test against Pakistan in Bengaluru in March 1987 and his last ODI versus England in Mumbai on 5 November 1987 in the World Cup semi-final.]

Surpassing Don Bradman’s 29 centuries would be one of your most cherished moments....

I would imagine so. Initially in my career, to share a dressing room with some of my heroes like M L Jaisimha, Salim Durani and Ajit Wadekar and then playing my first series against the likes of Rohan Kanhai and Gary Sobers was unbelievable. I met ‘Don’ in my first year of international cricket in November 1971 when I toured Australia after England and West Indies. It was a tremendous learning experience.

Who was the best skipper you played under?

I enjoyed playing under Ajit Wadekar (*also read “Off the cuff” on page 70*). When I started playing for Bombay, he was my skipper, and also when I made my debut for the Indian team. Ajit as a captain was tremendous and had his own methods of doing things. He often used Eknath

Solkar and me to pass the message to others. He would scold us to make others aware despite us doing nothing. As we were Mumbai boys, he could say things to us. He would later come and tell us that the message was meant for someone else! Look at the success he had in the West Indies and England—he was the first captain to register India’s first wins in those two countries. I played under six to seven captains but Ajit was the best.

THE ‘SUPER’ STAR

How did it feel to be part of the comic strip, *Sunny The Supersleuth*?

I was pleasantly surprised to see a comic strip few days ago when someone came up to me for an autograph. I was seeing that after a long time. I would like to get hold of the copy. I know that I am comfortable flying but superheroes go all over the place and fly like a rollercoaster or a giant wheel—I don’t think I can do that!

Did you ever feel your story should be documented in a movie?

My life has been quite well-documented. There hasn’t been much documented on Dhyan Chandji. If someone should be on the silver screen, it should be him. I don’t think my life needs to be documented!

“For me, the No. 1 sport is badminton, over and above cricket. I didn’t have the legs and lungs to play singles as a profession. Cricket is my life and what I am is because of cricket. However, had I not made my mark in cricket, I would like to have done so in badminton”

THE ‘BETTER’ INNINGS

How often did your wife Marshneil accompany you on tours? Did she have to take a backseat while you were travelling with the team?

I preferred to take my wife everywhere, wherever I toured. The BCCI didn’t tell us officially but they generally didn’t want wives to be a part of the first half of the tour because that is when you are getting into the groove and you have certain official functions, like visiting the Indian ambassador at the embassies. When I got married, I was a vice-captain and got a room for myself. So she could stay and it would not disturb anybody. Later on, when I stepped down from captaincy and had to share a room, there was a question about how to adjust. I wasn’t the only one with a wife on tour. To accommodate our partners, we would request the fast bowlers for their rooms. The Kapil Devs, Madan Lals and Karsan Ghavris wouldn’t sleep on the bed; they slept on the floor to rest their backs. So we had to request them early for their rooms—100 times out of 100, they accommodated us!

How do you spend a regular day now?

I usually take it very easy, sleep and read a bit.

It’s hard to believe that badminton is a sport you rate over cricket!

For me, the No. 1 sport is badminton, over and above cricket. I used to play till five to six years ago. I didn’t have the legs and lungs to play singles as a profession. I think it’s a fabulous game that requires high skill and stamina. Now, fitness has become an integral part of the game. If you see the rallies, they are 40-50 strokes, which is just amazing. Cricket is my life and what I am is because of cricket. However, had I not made my mark in cricket, I would like to have done so in badminton.

LIFE TODAY

What’s it like to be a grandfather?

The best hat I wear now is that of a grandfather. It’s an education in itself. When you spend time with your grandkids, it’s a big stress-buster.

You are not known to be a foodie....

There are only six to seven days of the year when I eat like a pig! The rest of the year, I eat very little. I am

a small eater. I am not a good guest to have at one’s home. Generally, the hosts feel I haven’t liked their food because I eat such small portions. That’s probably the reason I have stayed so small!

Would you have found a place in the team today?

I don’t think I would have found a place in the present Indian team. The game today is far more entertaining than when we played or even before we played. There are so many shots being played; second, the players are so fit, athletic and agile. It’s a delight to watch them throw themselves on the field, run fast between the wickets and hit the big shots. There has been a lot of innovation in shot-making, like scoops, switch hits, etc.

Do you believe cricket is a batsman’s game?

Cricket has always been a batsman’s game. But it’s the bowler who gets six deliveries; even if he is hit for five sixes, he waits for the batsman to make one mistake and sends him back to the pavilion. That said, even though the sizes of bats have been changed recently, batsmen are strong now. They go to the gymnasium and pump weights. The sixes they hit out of the stadium are also because of the quality of the bats.

Why were you reluctant to coach the Indian cricket team?

I will be very honest: I am not a good watcher of the game. Even when I was playing, I wasn’t a good watcher. Suppose I got out early, I would come into the dressing room and read a magazine or novel or reply to letters and then go out and watch the game. I wasn’t like G R Vishwanath or like my uncle Madhav Mantri; they were ball-by-ball watchers. I wasn’t ever that and still am not, even when I am doing commentary. If you are not a ball-by-ball watcher, you cannot be a coach or a selector. It is only when you focus that you can assess a bowler or batsman. I am unable to do it and hence cannot be considered for a selector—or even give it a thought.

Looking back, would you do anything differently?

I have absolutely no complaints from life. I have been very blessed; I am very happy and content. I used to tell everyone my ambitions were on the field of play. Off it, I have none. I have still not retired and I am still batting. As long as ‘He’ keeps me blessed, I will bat. 🌸

A tiger is seen from behind, walking through a dense field of tall, golden-brown grass. The tiger's orange fur with black stripes is visible. The background is slightly hazy, suggesting a natural habitat.

DESTINATION

Tiger, tiger, burning bright

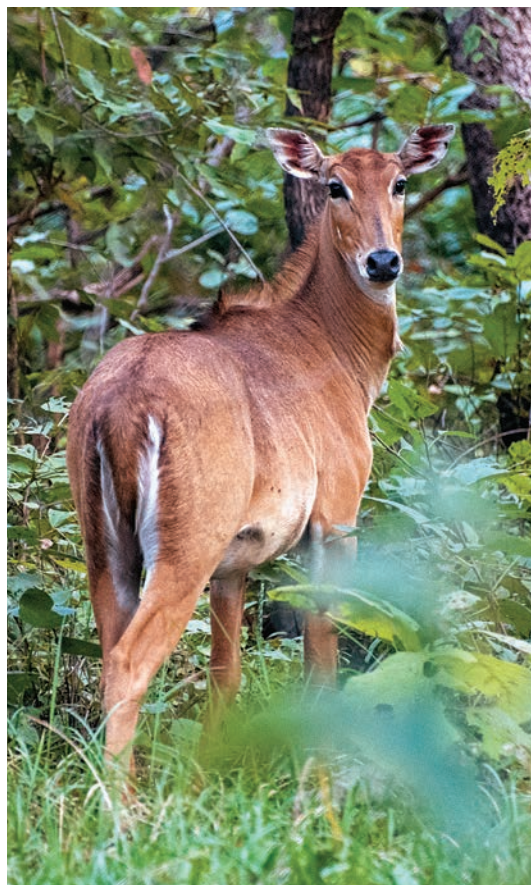
A Project Tiger reserve, Tadoba Andhari is one of the
best places in the world to sight a tiger in the wild



Gustasp and Jeroo Irani



We were caught in a nasty traffic snarl, surrounded by vehicles stacked bumper to bumper and in no hurry to go anywhere or willing to give an inch of space to anyone wanting to get through. Not that we wanted to go anywhere. We had arrived and were equally determined to hold our ground and not cede an inch to intruders with designs on encroaching on our patch of turf. A few vented their frustration in hushed voices but no one really cared, for we were all focused on one thing alone: the tiger.



Clockwise from top left: An Indian bison or gaur; a female nilgai; a sambar stag

Opposite page: Spotting tigress Choti Tara from safari jeeps

Yes, tigress Choti Tara (T7 in forest department records) and her two sub-adult male cubs were the guilty ones and the cause of the traffic chaos on the narrow forest trail in the middle of Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve in northwest Maharashtra. The three cats strode like royalty across a golden meadow of sundried grass, indifferent to the ruckus they had created. Camera shutters tripped wildly as wildlife enthusiasts, sporting phallic lenses, and tourists with cell phones captured the striped felines, their fur coats rippling in the sun. There were around 25 to 30 vehicles stacked up along the trail that fringed the grassland and, as word spread about the 'sighting,' more raced in to add to the tight squeeze.

"You are very lucky to see the tiger on your first game drive," the forest guide accompanying our vehicle congratulated us. On an average, visitors get to see a tiger once in every four game drives; that, our guide added, ranked Tadoba as one of the best places in the world to see a tiger in the wild. Now that we had seen the queen and two

princes of the jungle, we were keen to meet the other residents of the forest.

Thankfully, Choti Tara decided to lead her family away from human intrusion, and we were able to navigate our way out of the thinning traffic jam. The prized tiger sighting behind us, Bhautik Desai, the naturalist from Svasara Jungle Lodge, decreed it was time to enjoy our packed safari breakfast. We drove through a meadow of golden grass that rippled in the gentle caress of the wind to a ledge overlooking a water hole. "You never know; a tiger might just stop by here to have a drink," he said, as we munched on sandwiches and sipped our coffee.

Suspense—not knowing what surprises the forest might spring on you—is what makes a wildlife safari so compelling. Much as we would have liked to encounter a tiger again, we realised two tiger sightings on a single game drive was probably asking for too much. All the forest had to offer us was a lone ibis by the waterfront, the song of birds,



Suspense—not knowing what surprises the forest might spring on you—is what makes a wildlife safari so compelling. Much as we would have liked to encounter a tiger again, we realised two tiger sightings on a single game drive was probably asking for too much

pink and white wild-grass blooms nodding in the wind and spider webs draped like delicate lace on branches of trees. We packed the scraps of our meal, making sure we left no imprint of our presence behind, and drove on.

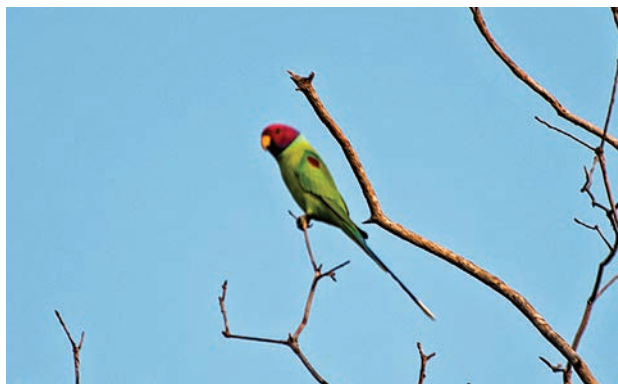
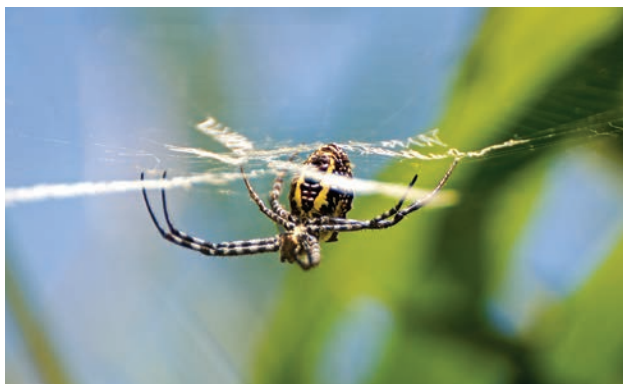
Then we encountered a gaur, also called the Indian bison, who had a serious issue with our presence in his domain. The strapping specimen with rippling muscles that body builders would have envied stepped out from the thicket on to the forest trail in front and stopped to give us a once over. Apparently, he did not like what he saw and made his displeasure known by grunting and threatening to charge us with his rapier-like horns. Okay, message registered. Our driver needed no prompting, and started to back up. Only when we had backed up far enough did the menacing beast cross over to the other side of the unpaved safari trail. “Most unusual,” the naturalist observed. “These animals are generally quite gentle.” Maybe so, but we thought he looked exceptionally handsome and striking in his angry avatar.

Other natives of the forest such as the sambar stag sporting an impressive set of antlers and his female companion

with a fawn in tow, a mongoose, a troop of monkeys were by and large indifferent to our presence. A cursory glance to see we meant no harm, and they returned to their grazing and foraging.

Our base camp at Svasara Jungle Lodge was abuzz with excited chatter when we arrived. Almost every guest who had been out on a safari drive that morning had seen Choti Tara and her two cubs. This is because Tadoba operates on a different system from most other national parks that require vehicles to remain within the zone they have entered. At Tadoba, there are six entry gates but once a vehicle is in the park, it may roam anywhere it chooses. As a result, when there is a tiger sighting, as was the case on our morning game drive, everyone converges on the spot, creating a traffic jam.

Guests soon moved to their rooms but we hung on in the airy lounge with Ranjit Mandal, the general manager of the resort, a passionate wildlife enthusiast. He regaled us with stories of tiger encounters and sightings over the years since the inception of the resort in 2011. He filled us in about the lineage of the present stock of tigers in the



We set off on a fascinating nature walk that turned out to be an insect safari of sorts. And then we saw a kill. Not a tiger kill but a wood spider wrapping its dinner—a fly trapped in its web—in a silky white cocoon

Clockwise from top left:
Signature spider;
plum-headed parakeet;
red-naped ibis;
six-spotted ground beetle;
crab spider

Opposite page: Safari trail through a meadow and through the jungle

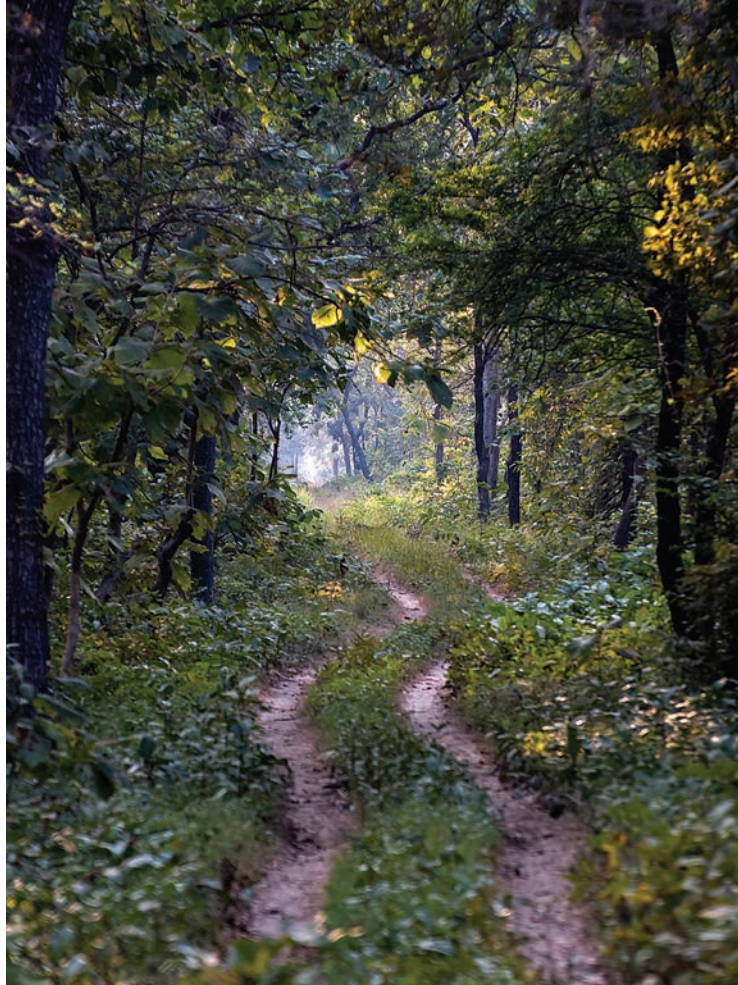
park; of the different territories that dominant males controlled. He spoke of Maya, one of the most magnificent tigresses he had ever seen, and of how Maktasur, the usurper, had ousted Gabbar as the alpha male and laid claim to all the tigresses, Maya included, in his territory.

He then showed us a spider web crawling with little ones that had recently hatched. Yes, his love of the wild embraces all things, big and small. “All the trees you see here, except one, are less than seven years old,” he informed us as we walked around the property. It did not take rocket science or horticultural insight to figure that out. The simple fact is that this was barren land, except for that one tree, when they started to build the resort. Today the 10-acre property is a forest retreat studded with orange orchards, a butterfly garden, bamboo groves and 12 rooms (each with a private sit-out) in a single

creeper-draped row. Eco-friendly is the underlying theme of the resort: solar panels, recycled water treatment plants and low-slung functional cottages that blend into the landscape.

That evening we set off again with Desai on a fascinating nature walk that turned out to be an insect safari of sorts. Crab spiders; grasshoppers camouflaged in the grass; beetles hiding in the crevasses of tree trunks.... The prized sighting was a spotted beetle; a black beauty with six large symmetrical white spots on its body. And then we saw a kill. Not a tiger kill but a wood spider wrapping its dinner—a fly trapped in its web—in a silky white cocoon.

We returned to our lodge, dusty and tired, and after a quick shower headed to the convivial space outside the Teak House (an open-sided, red-tiled roof dining area), where



MAHARASHTRA

Tadoba



GETTING THERE

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve, one of the 29 Project Tiger reserves in India, is a two-hour drive from Nagpur, the closest airport and most convenient railway station.

ACCOMMODATION

There are a number of budget lodges and homestays. Svasara Jungle Lodge with its scenic location and superior standards is the best option. Website: www.svasararesorts.com; Tel: (0)9370008008

SAFARI

Safaris have to be booked in advance and online. Contact Maharashtra Tourism at www.maharashtratourism.gov.in

fragrant cups of tea downed with moist cake and pastries satiated incipient hunger pangs. Some guests relaxed at the pool-spa in the embrace of a forest, revelling in its signature therapy, which included abundant use of juicy Nagpur oranges. We lingered on with other guests around a bonfire, swapping tales of sightings as a new moon smiled at us from a star-laden sky.

Early next morning, we braved the chilly bite in the air as we set out on a game drive via Alihanja gate. This part of the forest, rimmed by the Chimur Hills, is one of the most charming parts of the national park we were told. As we were not looking for tigers this time around, there was no sense of urgency—no scanning the ground for pug marks or listening for cheetal and sambar alarm calls that might indicate where the striped cat might be lurking. It was time to look up and admire the biodiversity around us: soaring teak trees, bone-

white Indian ghost trees, creaking bamboo groves and mahua trees on whose fermented fruit langurs and sloth bears get drunk. We learned to appreciate the ingenuity of creation in the tangled canopy around us: a marching column of flaming red fire ants; a long-tailed rufous tree pie; an oriental magpie robin... we stopped and cut the engine of our vehicle to listen to the song of the forest; the rustling of leaves blending in with a symphony of bird calls.

"How was the safari?" someone asked as we rolled into the resort. Before we could reply 'amazing', the guest who had shared our vehicle snapped: "Nothing. We saw nothing." Were the two cheetal stags, horns locked in combat, nothing? Was the sambar with her fawn, their fur coats glinting in the rays of the morning sun, nothing? Sadly, our companion was wearing tiger blinkers, which blinded him to the abundant beauty that is Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve. 🌸

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Inside the artist's studio

After completing a collection of 350 close-up portraits of famous authors, photographer Rohil Chawla set his sights on his next project: 3D portrait sculptures that take us into the studios of India's greatest artists. We got a first glimpse recently at a group exhibition at Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi. This latest offering, titled *The Artist, Unboxed*, featured nine artists: Raza and Ram Kumar (both were shot a short time before their deaths recently), Akbar Padamsee, Krishen Khanna,

photography

Sakti Burman, Atul and Anju Dodiya, Anjolie Ela Menon and Paresch Maity. Five years in the making, the series pays homage to Indian modernists and the sanctity of the artist's studio. "These artist photo sculptures of sorts are meant to be immersive in spirit and add a physical dimension to the portrait but retain the essential purist approach of the original image through 'the box', my continuing and favourite graphic device of choice," writes Chawla in his artist's note.

Clockwise from top left: Akbar Padamsee; Anjolie Ela Menon; Anju & Atul Dodiya; Krishen Khanna

A century in service

Ahdoo's, the eatery of choice for those living in and those visiting Srinagar, turned 100 this year. Owner Ghulam Hasan speaks to **Shyamola Khanna** about his family's legacy

Ghulam Hasan (*in pic*) looks impeccable in his long white Pathani kurta and *shalwar*. He sits on an easy chair and keeps a watchful eye on the family business. His son Hayat Alam Bhat is crunching numbers at the billing counter.

As the gentle afternoon sun seeps in and delicate aromas waft through the air, Hasan, 72, is reflective. Srinagar's legendary eatery Ahdoo's completed 100 eventful years earlier this year, with four generations of his family at the helm. Established in 1918 by Hasan's grandfather Mohammad Sultan, Ahdoo's was the first bakery in Srinagar. "It was a sensation when it opened," he says, "because, back then, no one in the Valley had heard of baked goods."

Hasan tells us it was the then Maharaja of Kashmir who sent his grandfather to be an apprentice at Firpo's, the East India Company's confectionary in Calcutta. When he returned, Sultan and his cousin set up Ahdoo and Sons in 1918, naming it after Abdullah Ahad, Hasan's great-grandfather, who was an accountant for Maharaja Hari Singh. In the early days, Ahdoo's, as it was later called, used to cater to the Maharaja and his family, but it was also open to the general public.

The bakery's success over decades led to the opening of a restaurant that serves sumptuous Kashmiri cuisine and lodging facilities and has stood open through thick and thin, right above the bakery. Hasan himself has been around for over half a century, networking with authorities, seeking permissions and safeguarding the establishment.



Shyamola Khanna

"Through the 1970s, we had a tough time keeping the hotel rooms open," he remembers. "We struggled but we survived. When the city was under the siege of insurgents, foreign diplomats were in Srinagar to get first-hand accounts of the situation on the ground. They stayed with us and we got a lot of attention from international and Indian journalists, which put us on the map."

legacy Since 2010, the day-to-day functioning of Ahdoo's has been handed over to his son Hayat Alam Bhat. "Hayat has free reign over the establishment and has grand plans of taking the brand to Mumbai and Delhi," says Hasan. He, on the other hand, involves himself in the one place he cannot stay out of: the kitchen. "I get to taste everything that is being cooked," he says with a smile.

Hasan arrives at Ahdoo's much before the restaurant opens to hungry customers and goes straight to the kitchen. He supervises everything, especially the work on the meats and various masalas. "Ours is a very meat-oriented cuisine, lovingly prepared with lots of dried herbs and spices, which allow us the freedom to cook throughout the year," Hasan tells us with pride. Having spent most of his life around this kitchen, he knows how to treat his meat. "For the classic *rista* and *gushtaba* [meatballs] the meat is pounded for hours till it develops an elasticity of its own, so we don't need to use eggs or other binders. Our *rogan josh* is a world apart from the one served in northern India as part of Mughlai cuisine."

Vegetarian food is scarce on the menu, but there are a few conces-

sions. “Our *haak*, or collard greens, is unique to the valley; this leafy vegetable does not grow anywhere else. Then there is methi *chaman*, one of the typical Kashmiri dishes favoured by the Pandits.”

People come to Ahdoo’s from far and wide in search of the legendary Kashmiri *wazwan*, the fabulous spread of primarily mutton dishes that make up a typical Kashmiri festival repast.

“One young lady had come to relive her father’s experience,” Hasan remembers. “She said he had travelled to Srinagar via Rawalpindi before Independence and had told her about our restaurant where he had a meal.”

Indeed, amid the violence and chaos that has plagued the Kashmir valley in the decades following Independence, Ahdoo’s has managed to remain open. In the early 1990s, the establishment earned the nickname ‘mini Press Club’ as it was the only lodging option for out-of-state media personnel stationed there. According to Hassan, it was very difficult to run the place during the militancy. “The only reason it stayed open was because when the situation went down, both Indian and foreign journalists occupied the rooms. The hotel is right in the centre of the city, and most of the news going out of Kashmir was telecast from here.”

Through it all, the staff at Ahdoo’s have stood their ground and gone about their work cautiously but dedicatedly. Hasan is inordinately proud that he has no ‘new’ members

“One young lady had come to relive her father’s experience. She said he had travelled to Srinagar via Rawalpindi before Independence and had told her about our restaurant where he had a meal”

on staff—everyone who works at Ahdoo’s has been around for over 25 years. With a nod in their direction, Hasan says, “Ghulam Nabi, who is probably 68 or 69—no one knows for sure!—is the oldest person on staff, followed by Sayeed Yousuf, who is 65.” Ahdoo’s also pays a pension to three retired employees, one of whom is nudging 90!

When the 2014 floods devastated and destroyed the capital city, Ahdoo’s had to resume operations quicker than other establishments. “We had to reopen because of customers, and we could because our restaurant and rooms are above the ground floor,” says Hasan. This was also a chance for Hayat Alam to redo the place with a touch of his own design sensibilities. While the restaurant is typically Kashmiri with wooden panels and wooden furniture, the hotel lobby has a gallery of archival photographs of old tribal valley leaders from at least a hundred years ago.

As Hasan walks us along the gallery, he admits that he cannot stay away from Ahdoo’s. “When would I stop coming here? I am 72 now, so maybe after 10 or 15 years!” he says with a twinkle in his eye. Finally, he leaves us with some words of warning. “People who are not used to too much meat should try our dishes one at a time. So have the *gustaba* one day and come back for the *rogan josh* the next day. Try the *rista* on the third day. You can always have the *methi chaman* and the *haak* to ease the palate,” he says with a wink.

“ I wasn’t mesmerised, I was enchanted. Her [Naina Devi’s] voice came from another world. Nainaji was not just a musician but also a dear friend who was deeply saddened by the plight of the singing and dancing girls and would always rue the sanitisation drive (anti-nautch movement) in the country. She wasn’t from their world but learned from them. The word *tawaif* deserves respect, not disdain. A lot of them were singers and not sex workers. People think of them as prostitutes, undermining their value as great musicians. In all these years, I’ve realised that one needs to give these women their due respect. And I plan to keep speaking on their behalf.

—Author **Pran Neville**, 95, who was the oldest living author in India till he passed away on 11 October, speaking on his long association with Hindustani classical vocalist Naina Devi in his last interview to The Indian Express



Photographs by Shyamola Khanna

GOING WITH THE FLOW

Koeli Mukherji Ghose, 51, allows the energy of her materials—paper, water and ink—to decide the form and texture of her art as her imagination intercedes only through a few simple tools. We watched her at work at her open art studio at the Ailamma Art Gallery in Hyderabad, as she conjured up some fabulous figurative abstracts through the ancient Japanese art of *suminagashi*. In a candid chat, the art curator introduces us to her work and her muse. Excerpts:

What is an open art studio?

The concept of the open art studio is not new. It is an exhibition of my work as well as a chance for young artists to see how I work. It creates a bridge between the viewer and the artist.

Tell us a little about *suminagashi*.

Suminagashi is a Japanese technique that dates back to the early 12th century. It is the art of harnessing the energy of water with the help of marbling inks (also called *suminagashi*

art

inks) and creating a base. The colours flow with the water and create their own shapes, after which you take a print of the marbling. With that as a base, I create my own line drawings. It is a lot like finding shapes in clouds. It also then becomes a collaborative art form between the water, the inks and the energies therein.

What have you learnt from this experiment?

When I take my studio out in the open, it is not just an exposition of my work. I await an interaction with those who walk in and bring their own thoughts and experiences, and convince me to think in another way. I felt I should do *suminagashi* here as it is a non-threatening kind of art. The water carries my work forward and to a different level. I have no expectations; the texture of the paper asks me to move in a certain direction and I do.

What tools do you use?

The tools of my art are water and water-based paints. The paint has a



foaming element in it, which makes it stays afloat. Once the print is taken and allowed to dry, I etch my figures with the help of handcrafted quills and broad scoops fashioned out of bamboo stems and branches. Some of these tools were fashioned by Poosapati Raju, the eminent calligrapher.

How did you get into art and painting?

I was in Class 11 when my father took me to watch M F Husain at the Tata Centre, Mumbai. I was amazed at his speed. He told me that if I had an idea, I should work on it quickly and without hesitation. To date, I try to copy the late master in speed and dexterity.

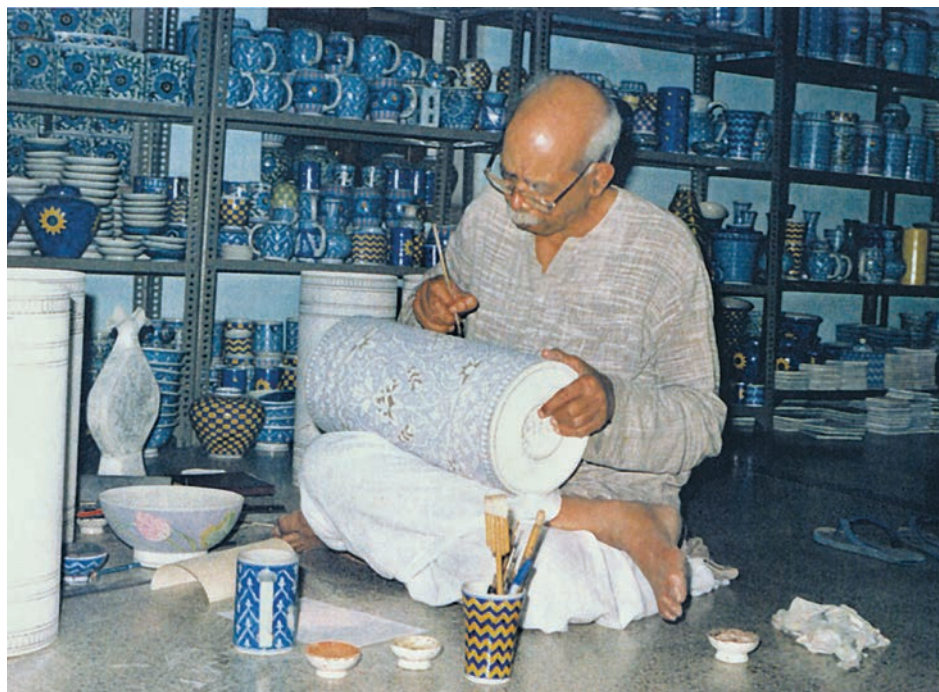
—Shyamola Khanna

MA'HEART'MA: You can now hear the father of the nation's heartbeat at the National Gandhi Museum in New Delhi. On the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary last month, the museum released a digital multimedia kit containing a selection of audio recordings and video footage from Gandhi's life, including the heartbeat. The lub-dub was recreated digitally using EEG (electrocardiography) data from different stages of his life.

SOUL MUSIC

To get lost in the magic and wisdom of the words of Kabir, head to the Mahindra Kabira Festival in Varanasi. The life and works of the 15th-century mystic poet will be celebrated through music, literature, talks and heritage walks around the city. The festival will feature a rich collage of artists from folk traditions and the Benaras gharana, *dadra*, *thumri* and *khayal* gayaki styles, as well as *pakhwaj* and tabla players, all interpreting Kabir in their own unique way. The third edition of the festival, which will be held between 16 and 18 November, will feature author Devdutt Pattanaik, Bhakti scholar Purushottam Agrawal and bhajan singer Omprakash Nayak.

The revivalist



“

He combined deshi rang or the mineral pigments from the Rajasthani miniature and fresco painting traditions with knowledge of Japanese natural dyes, pigments, inks and paper which complemented his understanding of the ceramic techniques inherent to blue pottery

Kripal Singh Shekhawat was best known for his work reviving the Jaipur blue pottery tradition. But a recent retrospective of the late artist's works at the Ceramics Triennale reveals the varied art forms that influenced and inspired him. Over 100 works of art will be on display at the exhibition, titled *Kripal: The Art of Kripal Singh Shekhawat*, until 19 November at Jawahar Kala Kendra in Jaipur, where a book of the same

name was also released. “Not only did he introduce new patterns and designs, he combined *deshi rang* or the mineral pigments from the Rajasthani miniature and fresco painting traditions with knowledge of Japanese natural dyes, pigments, inks and paper which complemented his understanding of the ceramic techniques inherent to the blue pottery medium,” writes curator and author Kristine Michael in the book.



OFF THE CUFF BY RAJU MUKHERJI

A SALUTE TO THE CAPTAIN: One of only three skippers who led India to Test victory on English soil, Ajit Wadekar (1941-2018) was an intelligent and inspiring leader who was never given his due

Only thrice has India won a Test series on English soil. The captains were Ajit Wadekar (1971), Kapil Dev (1986) and Rahul Dravid (2007). Ironically, not one of the above three has ever been rated very highly as a captain in India. In fact, captains who lost or drew the series in England have been eulogised in the Indian media! Cricket history reveals that the England tour is always the most difficult for Indians. Since 1932, India has played 17 Test series on English soil and lost 13 of them. Most Indian captains who lost or drew have been those who were supposed to possess exceptional cricket brains.

Yet, the exceptional achievements of the three successful Indian captains in England have not received their due recognition. Superb leaders of men like Ajit Wadekar, Kapil Dev and Rahul Dravid never received any acclaim for their leadership qualities. Very strange, indeed. And very unfortunate.

Wadekar's captaincy career was a giant wheel in motion. For a period of three years, he was right on top, having won every series that came his way. Then, in a matter of weeks in 1974, he came crashing down. He became a villain whom everybody wanted to curse and kick.

People forgot that he had won a series against West Indies in their backyard in 1971, and repeated his success in England against a very strong team in 1971. The following season, in 1972-73, his team beat England in India. Australia had just beaten England. So if there was a system of ranking at the time, India would have been the top cricketing nation in the world in 1972. Thus, Wadekar won three series in succession, a feat no other Indian captain has ever been able to replicate. He was indeed unlucky that he never had Zimbabwe and Bangladesh in the opposition.

Wadekar received almost no credit for his team's success. It was always claimed that he won with 'Tiger Pataudi's men!' Till the last day of his life, he maintained, "If that were the issue, why did Tiger not win with his own men?" Absolutely to the point.

However, in 1974, Wadekar's team lost all its three Tests in England. It was a disastrous tour for India with all the top stars available. The moment that happened, his house in Mumbai became the target of stones and bricks. Ajit Wadekar actually had almost the same players as he did in 1974. Yet the media forgot all about 'Tiger Pataudi's men' and laid all

the blame on Wadekar's captaincy! Disappointed and upset, Wadekar retired immediately from all forms of cricket on his return from England in 1974.

There is a notion in India that Indian cricket came of age in 1983 when the Prudential World Cup was won in England. Actually, huge amounts of money began to flow into Indian cricket since 1983 on account of the great achievement of Kapil Dev and his men. In reality, Indian cricket began to get the respect of the oppositions from 1971. That particular year was the turning point of Indian cricket in more ways than one. Except in one series, in 1968-69, Indian cricketers had always been on the losing end on overseas tours ever since their inaugural tour of England in 1932.

In 1968-69 Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi's men won a series abroad for the first time. The opponents were the weak New Zealanders. No one took the Kiwis seriously at the time. In fact, along with New Zealand, teams from India and Pakistan were considered weak oppositions away from home. After having experimented with a host of potential talents for about two years, in 1971 the chairman of the national selection committee Vijay Merchant—among the best-ever openers—omitted Pataudi from the captaincy saddle. This was major 'news' at the time. The obvious choice was his deputy Chandu Borde. He, too, was dropped. A studious, reticent young man by the name of Ajit Wadekar was elevated to the post amid much accusation of provincial bias.

But Merchant stuck to his ideas. He brought in young people with outstanding performance in domestic cricket. Merchant had no time for 'fancy players' with supposed potential and no performance. All those who were tried and had failed to perform during those two seasons were gently sidelined.

Thus, Ajit Wadekar was fortunate that he had the 'grey matter' of Merchant to guide him. He was selected as captain because he had led Bombay and West Zone to innumerable victories in domestic cricket. He knew what leadership was all about and, very important, knew how to win.

Surprisingly, Wadekar never played serious cricket while at school. He was a very bright student and had once even maxed his algebra paper. While a school student, his cricket was restricted to casual matches with his neighbourhood peers. In college, his cricket suddenly flowered and he became a regular in the strong Bombay University side.

At the time, he was a fluent player of exceptional elegance. His stylish stroke play was a connoisseur's delight. Drives and cuts came naturally to him. He joined Shivaji Park Gymkhana, one of the bastions of Marathi cricketers in Bombay. There, he honed his skills under the careful guidance of various former cricketers, as is the custom in Mumbai even today.

Wadekar was not satisfied in being stylish alone. He developed a gluttony for runs and more runs. No amount of high scores would satisfy his appetite. This approach stayed with him in every domestic championship. He would 'murder' spin bowling under any conditions. High-rising deliveries of extreme pace troubled him. But then who did not have problems against such deliveries? As the great Rohan Kanhai, among the greatest of 'hookers', once said, "None of us like 90 mph deliveries coming to our face; it is only that some play them better than others."

Unfortunately, Wadekar was ignored for a long time by the national selectors. Finally, when he could not be neglected any more by the sheer weight of his performances, he made his debut in 1967 in his late 20s. But, by then, his style had changed beyond belief. He was no longer the fluid stroke maker of yore. His approach was of a man who had come to make the most of his limited opportunities. He was very effective, no doubt, but no longer the graceful striker he had been.

Wadekar led from the front. He taught us that we were good enough to beat the best in the world by our own methods. He did not copy others. Did not bother to find out what Australia, England and West Indies were doing. He concentrated on India's strength. He relied on spin bowling and on close-in catching to win matches for India.

Wadekar selected his XI on the basis of 'horses for courses'. The moment the genius of Salim Durani gave India the victory at Port of Spain, skipper Wadekar's total concentration was to hold on to the lead till the last day of the series. In England, too, at the Oval he realised that if anybody could give India a victory, it would be Bhagawat Chandrasekhar. He had Chandra to plunge the dagger in and hold on till the opposition submitted. Wadekar had a set of the most brilliant foursome around the batters to accept even catches that

Illustration by Jit Ray

Ajit Wadekar never played to the gallery. He made no friends with the media for support, never compromised on his tough approach. He preferred the company of books to the company of flatterers at the bar



could hardly be rated as chances. Men like Eknath Solkar, Venkataraghavan, Abid Ali and he formed a quartet that was the best-ever close-in cordon the world had ever seen.

People who criticise Wadekar conveniently forget that he did not possess a single pace bowler worth mentioning. He had a wicketkeeper who was more of a showman. Apart from the young Viswanath and the younger Gavaskar, skipper Ajit Wadekar never possessed another batter of world renown. He fought the best with very limited talent. But the brilliant man got his mix in the right proportion. He taught India that we could beat the best in their own backyard. Today, it may not appear to be a difficult task, but back in the 1970s it was a yeoman effort. None thought it could be achieved. When it did happen, our media was so servile that instead of praising Wadekar and his boys, they began to say that the opposition was weak!

Ajit Wadekar never played to the gallery. He made no friends with the media for support, never compromised on his tough approach. He kept his wit for his after-dinner speeches. He preferred the company of books to the company of flatterers at the bar. An everlasting memory of Wadekar was at the Moin-ud-Dowlah Trophy championship at Hyderabad in the early 1970s. While most players would be at the lounge on the first floor of the Fateh Maidan's Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium, nursing their drinks, the India skipper would be seen in his room with a book and beer for company. He evinced a keen interest in the book I was reading. He borrowed it and returned it within two days mentioning, "I am a fan of Che Guevara as well."

The next time I met him was in his chamber at a nationalised bank in Mumbai. He was the sports convenor of the Banks' Sports Board. As the representative from Calcutta, I asked him if it would be possible to have observers sent to the neglected northeast of India to unearth sports talent. Wadekar kept his ears open and gave his assent.

Some banks carried out the directive very diligently. One of the discoveries happened to be a teenager from Sikkim, Bhaichung Bhutia. Actually, it was a former football player from Wadekar's bank, Bhaskar Ganguly, who can be given the credit for the discovery.

Kolkata-based Mukherji is a former cricket player, coach, selector, talent scout, match referee and writer



The pleasure sutra

Her name is preceded by the self-conferred title ‘Kamadevika,’ meaning the goddess of love. London-based **Seema Anand** is a mythologist and narrative practitioner, working with the uses and implications of ‘oralness,’ specialising in storytelling. “We are the stories we tell,” she observes.

An acknowledged authority on the *Kama Sutra*, Anand lectures on Eastern erotology, tantric philosophy and the mahavidya, among other subjects. Her work on the revival and reproduction of oral literature from India is associated with the UNESCO project for Endangered Oral Traditions. Her book *The Arts of Seduction* (Aleph Book Company; ₹ 499; 188 pages) draws inspiration from the *Kama Sutra*, and is a guide to making what has been reduced to an act of instant gratification into an art form. In an email interview with **Srirekhha Pillai**, Anand talks about all things sexual. Excerpts:

How has the sexual act evolved over time with specific reference to India?

I’m not sure I would call our attitude to sex an ‘evolution’. As Indians, I find we live in a twilight zone when it comes to sexual attitudes. We are born of the soil that produced the *Kama Sutra*, considered the act of love to be a form of bhakti, that nurtured the *leela* of divine and mortal lovers, and believed sex should be refined to the level of an art form. But we are also all brought up on missionary attitudes, which considered sex to be the original sin, the

work of the devil. And directly or indirectly, this is the attitude that pervades our thinking and colours our sexual behaviour. And it has screwed us up completely!

Look at our reaction to the language we use. The word ‘orgasm’ has undertones of the ‘dirty’, of something that shouldn’t be mentioned in polite society. The words *kama* or *rasa*, however, stir up feelings of deliciousness, images of sun-kissed bodies glowing with fragrant oils, perfumed hair wound around the lover’s neck...everything is poetic.

Why is the *Kama Sutra* groundbreaking?

This is the first book that acknowledged that both men and women have an equal right to pleasure. Till this point, which is around the 3rd CE, Hindu dharma had held that women did not have an independent source of pleasure. Unlike men, a woman did not have visible erections and orgasms; it was impossible to see either her arousal or satisfaction. So it was believed that a woman’s pleasure depended on the pleasure of a man—when he came, that was when she experienced orgasm too.

The *Kama Sutra* says that not only do women have an independent source of pleasure but they do not even need a man for it. It explains the intrinsic difference between the sexuality of men and women. The man’s arousal, says the *Kama Sutra*, is like fire, with his heat starting at the genitals and flaring upwards, easy to ignite, easy to douse. A woman’s arousal is like water, beginning at the head (the

mind) and flowing downwards. It takes much longer to bring to the boil but also much longer to cool down.

It explains how the nature of a woman's orgasm differs from a man's—something that even Freud, as late as the 19th century, wasn't able to do. With understanding far beyond its time, the *Kama Sutra* explains that women are the recipients of pleasure and attention in equal measure to men. It says that it is the man's role equally to learn and practise the arts of seduction; it is his reputation equally that depends on how well he can please his lover; and it is his job to make sure that he brings his lover to a satisfying orgasm—much as she would do for him.

What are the therapeutic effects of sex?

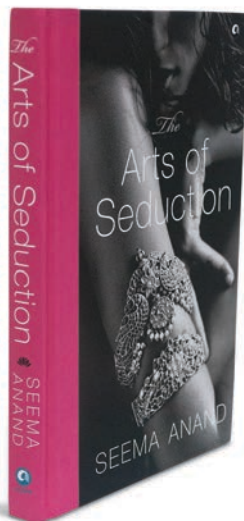
Sexual energy is the highest form of energy. During sex, every part goes into activity: breathing changes, blood circulation speeds up, every gland secretes hormones, literally every part of the body metabolises. In olden times they believed that with the help of breathing patterns and different sexual positions, you could move this energy around the body as a healing force. But, I think if we approach intimacy with an attitude of real pleasure and joy, and take our time to enjoy it, even that will have a therapeutic effect. Sex is good for you. Good sex is great for you!

How relevant is sex for silvers, given our whole emphasis on *vanaprastha*?

I think sex is something one should want to enjoy for the entire length of your life, like chocolate. Moreover, sex with a long-term partner has far more potential for pleasure. The *Kama Sutra* says lovers are not easy to come by and should not be discarded easily either. Good sex is developed over time with equal participation from both partners. Familiarity, comfort and a lack of instant arousal—all the things you think make things boring—are what make for the best sex. Because the longer it takes for arousal to happen, the more enjoyment and pleasure it leads to.

How can silvers keep themselves engaged in physical pleasures?

One of the most important reasons to have sex as you get older is that it is the best medicine ever. It keeps the body and brain working better; during sex your bodily functions are energised, which means your metabolism improves. Science has determined that sexual activity produces more



grey cells! Sex is also the most effective way to stop boredom creeping into a marriage and keeping the relationship close and loving. So in an ideal world, we should all be enjoying sex or physical intimacy or at least the desire for it for the entire length of our lives. Desire and pleasure should be a state of mind. Physical intimacy should be a natural result of having shared a life with someone. It should be something that one wants, as opposed to a distasteful or annoying duty. The reality, however, is very different.

The *kama shastra* say 'habit' is the death of desire. For excitement to occur, one has to try something new; one has to feel that there will be some kind of surprise, even if it is a tiny little one, to look forward to. For most couples, as they grow older, sex becomes quicker and more habitual (if it happens at all), which leaves the men feeling dissatisfied and grumpy and women feeling dissatisfied and disinclined. And the weird thing is, even though the benefits of changing our attitudes towards sex are so great—and it's not difficult to do—this is the one thing most people are unwilling to work at. It's just too much effort and too much water under the bridge. But good sex is better than Vitamin-B complex and will save you a lot of money on doctor's bills.

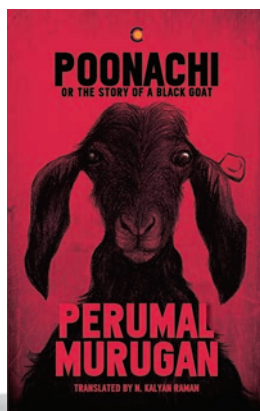
What are your top five tips and props for silvers?

Getting back into sex doesn't mean doing it every night. Remember, it's not a duty. Start with once a month. Make it a date night. Prepare for it: bathe, perfume yourself, change the sheets, put flowers near the bed, whatever makes you feel good. Make it special. Organise a few fantasies in your head to help you along, in case it doesn't work at the beginning. Decide that you are going to enjoy it. Don't jump straight into it. Lie in bed and watch TV together for a while as you kiss and chat. Let this be your foreplay. Don't feel that you have to go all 'hot and heavy'.

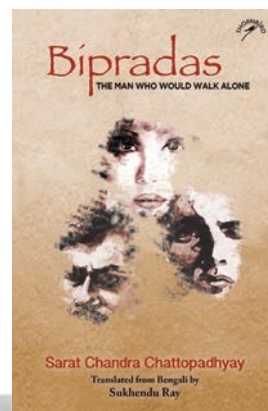
Relax completely and take it slow. Flirt with different types of *paan*. There is a whole vocabulary and set of traditions around *paan* in lovemaking. Explore it. It's subtle, suggestive and sexy at the same time. Kiss each other more often. Kiss each other in passing for no reason—just a quick brush on the lips. Make your partner feel irresistible. Once a week, go out together and gossip. The *Kama Sutra* says that two lovers sitting together exchanging gossip stories is a form of foreplay; it builds up intimacy and anticipation.

Let there be pleasure....

Check out the extended interview on www.harmonyindia.org

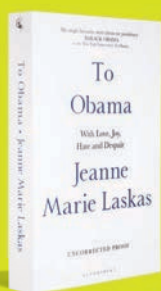


Hailing from a family of farmers, **Perumal Murugan**, the face of contemporary Tamil writing, offers a unique insight into the life of a goat in **POONACHI - OR THE STORY OF A BLACK GOAT** (Westland; ₹ 499; 173 pages), imbuing it with a full range of emotions. The book begins like a fable, with an unnamed silver couple being gifted a goat kid by an unknown, mysterious stranger. Through the book, the relationship between the kid—now named Poonachi—and the silver couple evolves—shifting from its purely loving nature to one more transactional, leading to a tragic ending. The author makes our hearts well with tenderness for the eponymous goat, who discovers that freedom comes at a price. Shortlisted for the JCB Prize for Literature 2018, the book, meticulously translated by **N Kalyan Raman**, takes a dig at man's proclivity for power and abuse, bondage and greed, and surveillance and subjugation. A classic Murugan novel, it's a social and political commentary of our times, a stirring fable that reminds us of the beast man is!



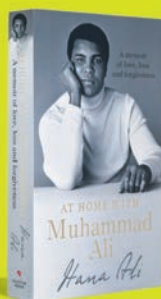
The remarkable thing about a master storyteller like **Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay** is the manner in which he writes about the obvious and the ordinary, making it intriguing and exceedingly engaging. In **BIPRADAS: THE MAN WHO WALKS ALONE** (Niyogi Books; ₹ 395; 259 pages), he once again portrays the famed feudal landscape of Bengal with a range of characters. Bordering on a conflict of cultures, the story pivots on the intricate grid of human relationships. Bipradas's stoic character is put to test with the introduction of Bandana, his wife's cousin—a young, beautiful, emancipated girl whose questioning temperament unsettles the Mukhujye's household, which is steeped in ancient Hindu traditions. Complementing the hero is his younger sibling Dwijadas, who is rational and a believer in free thought. **Sukhendu Ray's** nuanced translation highlights the novelist's panache for narrating stories in a simple manner.

Also on stands



To Obama **Jeanne Marie Laskas**

Bloomsbury; ₹ 499; 416 pages
An intimate look at one man's relationship with the American people at a time when empathy intersected with politics in the White House.



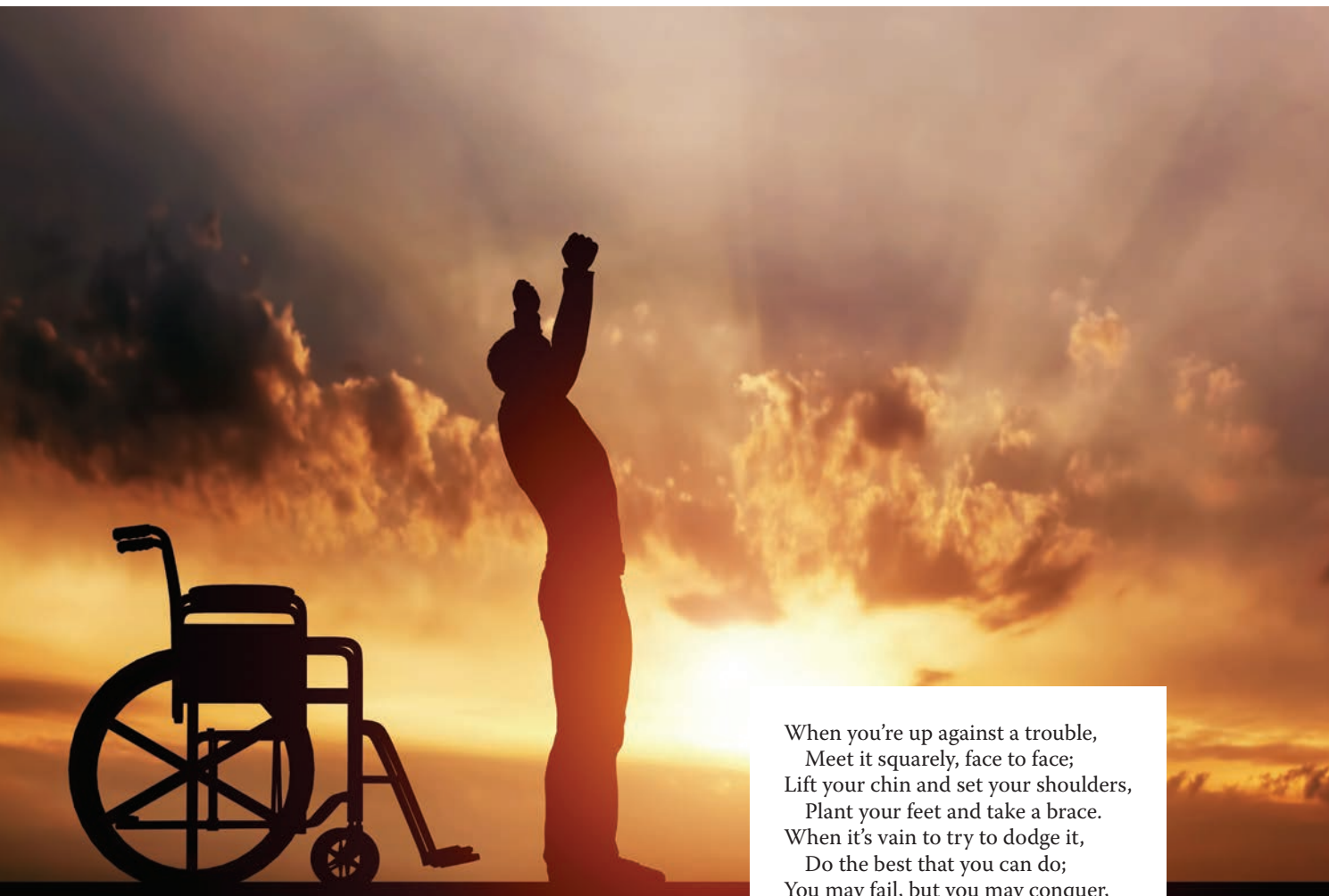
Muhammad Ali **Hana Ali**

Penguin; ₹ 699; 460 pages
Penned by Ali's daughter, a moving, behind-the-scenes portrait of the greatest sporting icon of our age.



The New Silk Roads **Peter Frankopan**

Bloomsbury; ₹ 599; 304 pages
A major reassessment of world history and a reminder that we live in a world that is profoundly interconnected.



See it through

Edgar Albert Guest celebrates the resilience of the human spirit and its ability to bounce back

When you're up against a trouble,
Meet it squarely, face to face;
Lift your chin and set your shoulders,
Plant your feet and take a brace.
When it's vain to try to dodge it,
Do the best that you can do;
You may fail, but you may conquer,
See it through!

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Black may be the clouds about you
And your future may seem grim,
But don't let your nerve desert you;
Keep yourself in fighting trim.
If the worst is bound to happen,
Spite of all that you can do,
Running from it will not save you,
See it through!

Even hope may seem but futile,
When with troubles you're beset,
But remember you are facing
Just what other men have met.
You may fail, but fall still fighting;
Don't give up, whate'er you do;
Eyes front, head high to the finish.
See it through!

A prolific English-born American poet, Guest (1881-1959) was known as the People's Poet for his inspirational verses

THE SCIENCE OF GIVING

Jessica Cassity writes on why it pays to be kind

Small acts of kindness are sometimes powerful enough to make major headlines. In fact, you've probably read about or watched a few of these stories. Here's how it usually plays out: One person will do a good deed—such as placing a cup of coffee on reserve for a homeless person, or paying off a stranger's layaway balance at Kmart—then a trend will start, with more and more people getting in on the act. The result is a feel-good story for all. The benefactors are happy to have done a good deed and the recipients are pleased to have been given a small but meaningful helping hand.

However, the circle of generosity doesn't end there—in fact, it's exponentially bigger. Recipients of kindness generally want to keep paying it forward, says James Fowler, professor of medical genetics and political science at the University of California, San Diego. In fact, in one of Fowler's studies, he found that a single act of kindness typically inspired several more acts of generosity. The scientific name for this chain of altruism is 'upstream reciprocity', but you can think of it as a domino effect of warm and fuzzy feelings: If you drop a quarter into an expired parking meter, the recipient of that small act of generosity will be inspired to do a kind act for someone else, and on and on.

So where do these good feelings come from? When you are kind to another person, your brain's pleasure and reward centres light up, as if you were the recipient of the good deed, not



the giver, according to research from Emory University. This phenomenon has actually earned the nickname 'helper's high' among psychologists who study generosity, and some researchers theorise that the sensation is also due to a release of endorphins, those feel-good chemicals associated with runner's high. It's no surprise then, that a 2010 Harvard Business School survey of happiness in 136 countries found that people who are altruistic—in this case, people who were generous financially, such as with charitable donations—were happiest overall.

Of course, part of why giving feels good is because we know we're lifting someone else's spirits. Receiving a gift, assistance or even an encouraging smile activates the brain's reward centre, a phenomenon that's hard to explain but easy to feel—just think back to the last time a stranger held the door for you or your partner surprised you with your favourite

meal. The sudden appearance of these positive feelings is what helps keep the giving chain alive: Somebody who has just received a bit of kindness is elevated, happy and grateful, making them likely to help someone else, according to a 2007 study from Harvard University.

But there's more. The effects of kindness can be so great that you actually don't have to be directly linked to a giving chain to get in on the act. By simply witnessing generosity you may be inspired to do something generous of your own, according to new research from Fowler, who found that simply observing kindness can spur more acts of good. Humans often mimic behaviour they see, and that includes generosity, which explains why some of these stories of small acts of kindness become bigger news: Even people who simply hear about a giving chain are often inspired to give, starting a chain of positivity all their own.

Cassity is the author of Better Each Day: 365 Expert Tips for a Healthier, Happier You. She writes on health, fitness, and happiness for various publications

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We go 50 years back in time to bring you products, people, events and fashion that have influenced the world

QUEEN of the skies



An aviation milestone, it shrank the world and changed the way air travel was conducted. The Boeing 747, unveiled at the custom-built assembly plant in Everett, near Seattle, on 30 September 1968, was designed to fly long-haul flights with twice as many passengers as Boeing's pioneering 707. Over six stories tall, the aircraft seated 374 passengers and weighed 300 tonne. At a time when flying was considered elite, it opened up the skies, making air travel affordable. Indeed, with the 747, the age of the jumbo jet had taken off!


Everything about the 747 was 'jumbo'. It took 50,000 construction workers, mechanics and engineers to assemble it. Even the assembly plant at Everett—which can hold 75 football fields—remains one of the largest buildings in

the world by volume. Incidentally, the aircraft's genesis can be traced to a military request for a transport carrier for heavy loads. Although Boeing lost its bid, the research and designs were put together to roll out what became known as the 'Queen of the Skies'.

Today, the 747, with its distinctive 'giant hump' in the front, enjoys a coveted place in popular culture, having starred in movies such as *Air Force One*, *Airport 1975* and *Executive Decision*, among others. Versions of the 747 have also operated as Air Force One, ferrying the US president across the globe. Until 2007, the 747 remained the largest civilian airplane in the world. Though many airlines are now retiring their fleet of passenger jumbos after decades of reliable service, the 747 continues its journey as a freight carrier.

THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: NOVEMBER 1968

- On 5 November, Republican candidate Richard Nixon was elected the 37th president of the US.
- On 8 November, the divorce between The Beatles' John Lennon and first wife Cynthia came through, leaving him free to marry Yoko Ono.
- On 12 November, NASA announced it would launch three astronauts as part of Apollo 8, to be the first persons to orbit the moon.
- On 14 November, Yale University announced it would admit women students for the first time in its 267-year history.



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 kiss
The first time you proposed
The first job interview
The first board meeting you addressed
The first day after retirement

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The first click of the mouse.

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celebrate age



As we celebrate World Philosophy Day on 15 November 2018, here is a selection of philosophical terms to commemorate philosophical expressions and the history of the knowledge system

abhinivesha

Abhinivesha is a Sanskrit word meaning 'self-love' or 'will to live'. In Indian philosophy, *abhinivesha* was regarded as an aspect of *avidya* (ignorance). Some other manifestations of *avidya* were said to be fear, attachment, and aversion, all of which were thought to generate karmic bondage and prevent one from attaining spiritual liberation. Lumped together with these, *abhinivesha* has a negative connotation, even though in the Indian tradition it was not necessarily wrong, and even commendable at times, to exhibit self-love and a healthy will to live and prosper in the material world. So presumably, the negative connotation of *abhinivesha* is an indication that what may be otherwise permissible can be improper or morally wrong if pursued in excess or for the wrong reason.

A FORTIORI ARGUMENT

an argument that moves from the premises that everything that possesses (a) certain characteristic(s) will possess some further characteristic(s) and that certain things possess the relevant characteristic(s) to an eminent degree to the conclusion that a fortiori (even more so) these things will possess the further characteristic(s). The second premise is often left implicit, so **a fortiori arguments** are often enthymemes (an argument in which one premise is not explicitly stated). An example of an a fortiori argument can be found in Plato's *Crito*: "We owe gratitude and respect to our parents and so should do nothing to harm them. Athenians owe even greater gratitude and respect to the laws of Athens and so a fortiori should do nothing to harm those laws."

agape

Unselfish love for all persons. An ethical theory according to which such love is the chief virtue, and actions are good to the extent that they express it, is sometimes called *agapism*. **Agape** is the Greek word most often used for love in the New Testament, and is often used in modern languages to signify whatever sort of love the writer takes to be idealised there. In New Testament Greek, however, it seems a general word for love, so that any ethical ideal must be found in the text's substantive claims, rather than in the linguistic meaning of the word.

BLACK BOX

A hypothetical unit specified only by a functional role, in order to explain some effect or behaviour. The term may refer to a single entity with an unknown structure, or unknown internal organisation, which realises some known function, or to any one of a system of such entities, whose organisation and functions are inferred from the behaviour of an organism or entity of which they are constituents. Within behaviourism and classical learning theory, the basic functions were taken to be generalised mechanisms governing the relationship of stimulus to response, including reinforcement, inhibition, extinction and arousal. The organism was treated as a **black box** realising these functions. Within cybernetics, though there are no simple input-output rules describing the organism, there is an emphasis on functional organisation and feedback in controlling behaviour. The components within a cybernetic system are treated as black boxes. In both cases, the details of underlying structure, mechanism and dynamics are either unknown or regarded as unimportant.

philosophia perennis

A Latin phrase meaning a supposed body of truths that appear in the writings of the great philosophers, or the truths common to opposed philosophical viewpoints. The term **philosophia perennis** is derived from the title of a book, *De Perenni Philosophia*, published by Agostino Steuco of Gubbio in 1540. It suggests that the differences between philosophers are inessential and superficial and that the common essential truth emerges, however partially, in the major philosophical schools. Many philosophers have used the phrase to characterise Neo-Thomism as the chosen vehicle of essential philosophical truths.

ousia

An ancient Greek term traditionally translated as 'substance'. Formed from the participle for 'being', the term **ousia** refers to the character of being, beingness, as if this were itself an entity. Just as redness is the character that red things have, so ousia is the character that beings have. Thus, the ousia of something is the character that makes it be, its nature. But ousia also refers to an entity that possesses being in its own right; for consider a case where the ousia of something is just the thing itself. Such a thing possesses being by virtue of itself; because its being depends on nothing else, it is self-subsistent and has a higher degree of being than things whose being depends on something else. Such a thing would be an ousia.

ch'i

Chinese term for ether, air, corporeal vital energy, and the 'atmosphere' of a season, person, event, or work. **Ch'i** can be dense/impure or limpid/pure, warm/rising/active or cool/settling/still. The brave brim with **ch'i**; a coward lacks it. **Ch'i** rises with excitement or health and sinks with depression or illness. **Ch'i** became a concept coordinate with li (pattern), being the medium in which li is embedded and through which it can be experienced. **Ch'i** serves a role akin to 'matter' in Western thought, but being 'lively' and 'flowing', it generated a distinct and different set of questions.

infima species

A Latin word meaning 'lowest species', a species that is not a genus of any other species. According to the theory of classification, division and definition that is part of traditional or Aristotelian logic, every individual is a specimen of some **infima species**. An **infima species** is a member of a genus that may in turn be a species of a more inclusive genus, and so on, until one reaches a summum genus, a genus that is not a species of a more inclusive genus. Socrates and Plato are specimens of the **infima species** human being (mortal rational animal), which is a species of the genus rational animal, which is a species of the genus animal, and so on, up to the summum genus substance. Whereas two specimens of animal—e.g., an individual human and an individual horse—can differ partly in their essential characteristics, no two specimens of the **infima species** human being can differ in essence.

per accidens

Latin phrase meaning by, as, or being an accident or non-essential feature. A **per accidens** predication is one in which an accident is predicated of a substance. An ens (entity) **per accidens** is either an accident or the 'accidental unity' of a substance and an accident. (Descartes, e.g., insists that a person is not a **per accidens** union of body and mind.)

Compiled from The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, accessible at <http://stoa.usp.br/rdeangelo/files/-1/10954/Cambridge+Dictionary+of+Philosophy.pdf>

KIRAN BAJPAI, Gwalior

“We are trying to create awareness that using cloth during the menstrual cycle is unhygienic and that pads are not a luxury, but a need”



Courtesy: Kiran Bajpai

When the Government recently exempted sanitary pads from the Goods and Services Tax, one of those who rejoiced was **Kiran Bajpai**, whose Padwomen Foundation has been distributing free sanitary pads to seven villages near Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. The 56 year-old has been buying sanitary napkins in bulk at ₹ 2.20 per pad from a Ghaziabad-based company for the past

two years. Each village is taken care of by a group, who make a list of women who cannot afford napkins. While the pads are distributed free for the first four months, a nominal fee of ₹ 1 per pad is charged afterwards. With menstruation still a taboo topic in these villages, and many women supplementing cloth with dry grass, one of the greatest challenges for Bajpai was to change the mindset.

—Aakanksha Bajpai



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