harmony

OCTOBER 2016 ₹ 40

Oct 1
WORLD
ELDERS

The magazine for silver citizens

LEGACY

A FAMILY IN MELKOTE LIVES BY GANDHIAN **IDEALS**

FOOTSTEPS

SITAR MAESTRO SHAKIR KHAN ON DAD USTAD SHAHID PARVEZ KHAN

DESTINATION

Resplendent **RANAKPUR**

DR RAGHUNATH MASHELKAR



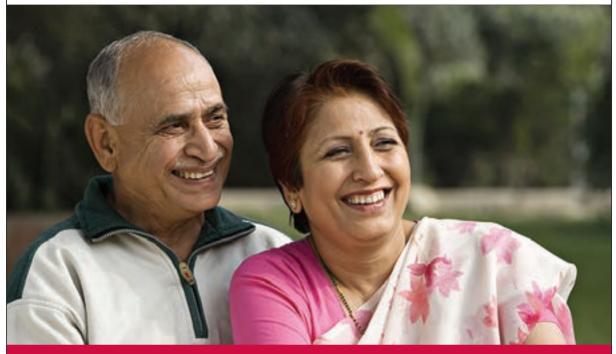
INCLUSIVE INNOVATORS



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IMPERA1

Digital inclusion is no longer a luxury—it is an imperative.

Since the inception of this magazine, we have urged you to embrace technology, expand your digital learning, and enjoy the many benefits of the Internet. Indeed, as we move forward as a nation, these benefits are not limited to connecting with family across the shores, growing one's network of friends through social media, indulging in retail therapy, and accessing an unlimited source of information and entertainment. Today, for silvers, digital inclusion has become an enabler of personal empowerment and independence.

From filing your tax returns to paying utility bills, getting a passport to updating details on your PAN or Aadhar card, conducting bank transactions to downloading your medical reports and booking bus, rail and train tickets, it's all possible from the comfort of your home, unaided—no lines, no touts, no agents.

And now this: On 14 September, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley launched a web portal under the Digital India initiative—the Web Responsive Pensioner's Service. The portal, www.cpao.nic.in, developed by the Central Pension Accounting Office, will be a one-stop destination for central civil, family and freedom-fighter pensioners to learn the status of their pension cases and payments processed by the central ministries and departments and banks as well as redress any grievances. For over 12 lakh government pensioners, this means instant access to information and freedom from red tape.



Coming on the eve of World Elders' Day on 1 October, this is extremely good news. It is also the perfect incentive for the tech-shy to overcome their reservations and diffidence. Smartphones, tablets and devices are more user-friendly and interactive than ever before and the Internet is no longer the preserve of the urban elite. In fact, a report by the Boston Consulting Group and the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) predicts that the Internet 'class' of the future will be older, more gender-equal, mobile, rural and vernacular than their counterparts today.

So what are you waiting for? Let go of your fear and take the plunge into the digital world. Believe me, it gets easier—and a lot more fun!—as you learn and explore. It's time to get connected to a world of information and inspiration, self-reliance and self-actualisation. You owe it to vourself.

Two Julan

A Harmony for Silvers Foundation Initiative

Harmony Celebrate Age—October 2016 Volume 13 Issue 5

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A NEW AWAKENING Jaipur's Sadhana Garg is teaching the Rana community in Rajasthan to reinvent themselves

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

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column

Every October, India celebrates the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. For the team at Harmony-Celebrate Age, it is also a time to raise a toast to silver power on World Elders' Day. And this vear, we are honoured to feature on our cover India's foremost technocrat Padma Vibhushan Raghunath ('Ramesh') Mashelkar who has channelled the ideals of the Father of the Nation. "When you have an exhaustible resource, it is our duty to conserve it for future generations," he tells Assistant Editor Sai Prabha Kamath. "Reflecting upon this Gandhian philosophy, I created the mantra 'Gandhian engineering' to get 'more from less for more."

In 2011, Mashelkar instituted the Anjani Mashelkar Inclusive Innovation Award (named after his mother) under the aegis of the International Longevity Centre-India to promote low-cost solutions for the poor and elderly. Ahead of this year's event, we present the innovations of past winners, a testament to the power of ideas-and India.

Undoubtedly, sarvodaya (welfare for all) is the need of the hour—a vision shared by the Koulagis of Melkote in Karnataka. For over half a century, three generations of this family have propagated Gandhian values, cementing a unique legacy of community development. Equally inspiring are the activities of the 'Pride of Madras'. former top cop V Vaikunth, ranging from the rehabilitation of prisoners to vocational training for orphans and the physically challenged.

Heartening, indeed, to see that the Mahatma remains with us in spirit and idea; his words translated into concrete deeds. Happy Elders' Day! -Arati Rajan Menon

Tt is heartening to see *Harmony*-LCelebrate Age touch upon the issue of ageing with such insight. The September cover story, "Hear & Now" was a good read with case studies I could relate to. My grandmother's hearing has slowly been deteriorating. However, seeking treatment (or not seeking treatment) is a matter of pride. While she has been able to gracefully adjust to old age, she is very sensitive about her ears. In fact, one of her old friends has also suffered massive hearing loss over the years. Just the other day I walked in on them chatting and realised that each of them was reminiscing about two different stories from two different times. Yet both seemed to be carrying on the conversation with equal gusto, with bouts of laughter here and there. I was going to point it out to them, but then I thought, there is perhaps true bliss in ignorance. Who was I to disturb that!

Padma Gore Bengaluru

his is to congratulate Tinaji for bringing out *Harmony-*Celebrate Age, an excellent magazine for senior citizens. I hope you expand it across the country including smaller cities and towns where we need to spread awareness on health and other ageing-related issues. I suggest you also bring out the magazine in vernacular languages so that your useful articles and messages reach the masses.

Asha Sheth

Chairperson Vasant J Sheth Memorial Foundation

This is with reference to the ▲ 'Money Matters' column in the September 2016 issue of Harmony-Celebrate Age. The interest rates for the Fixed Deposit (FD) and Small Savings Scheme in banks, in which senior citizens primarily invest, are



decreasing with time. The additional interest of 0.05 per cent made available to senior citizens does not correspond with the inflation rates of our time. This, therefore, does not provide a reasonable return for seniors to depend on in their retired lives. This is despite the fact that FDs have a viable liquidity facility. It is ideal for those who do not wish to take the risk of market fluctuations.

It is my suggestion that the Reserve Bank of India and Government fix the minimum reasonable rate for senior citizens at 12 per cent, at least on the FDs, with all nationalised banks. With changing times and the continual inflationary trend, the real worth of the rupee is constantly falling. Insurance schemes for deposits in banks should be improved, up from the present limit of ₹ 100,000 to ₹5 million.

As the share market is not quite for the common man and especially not for senior citizens who don't have a hand in the game, the safest mode of investment is the bank FD. Improving the system would contribute to the welfare of seniors and other individuals who still see fixed deposits as a secure mode of investment.

Mahesh Kapasi

Via email





RETURN TO ROOTS

Bhaaji kha lo, beta. Reminds you of your grandmother? That's kind of the point. It turns out that the traditional Indian. low-meat diet is really good for you. So good, in fact, that researchers from the Sunlight Nutrition and Health Research Centre in San Francisco are saying it might reduce your chances of developing Alzheimer's disease. The traditional diets of countries such as India, Nigeria and Japan—all low on meat—have been associated with a 50-per-cent reduction in Alzheimer's **risk**, according to the study, which was conducted using data from Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Egypt, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and the US. The study was published in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition.



hotographs by iStoc



DRINKING YOUR HEART OUT?

♦ The belief that a glass of wine a day is good for heart health could be nothing but a deadly myth. Researchers from the University of California at San Fransisco, US, found that daily, long-term consumption of alcohol could enlarge the heart's upper left chamber, known as the atrium. This, in turn, can convert into atrial fibrillation, a condition in which the heart beats irregularly and fails to properly pump blood around the body. Drinkers prone to irregular heart rhythms are, therefore, susceptible to heart conditions like a stroke or blood clots. Researchers analysed the data of 5,220 participants with an average age of 56. They underwent electrocardiograms (ECGs), where scans were taken over six years and 1,088 cases of atrial fibrillation were detected. It was found that drinking just 10 g of alcohol can increase the risk of developing the condition by 5 per cent. The study was published in the journal, *American Heart Association*.



Double whammy

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THOSE PESKY MOSOUITOES COULD BE HURTING YOUR HEART. RESEARCHERS FROM THE CLINICAL RESEARCH AND ACADEMICS DIVISION OF FORTIS HEALTHCARE LTD, NEW DELHI, HAVE FOUND THAT DENGUE FEVER, SPREAD BY MOSQUITOES, ALSO CAUSES ELECTROCARDIOGRAPH (ECG) AND ECHOCARDIOGRAPH (ECHO) CHANGES IN PEOPLE WITH NO PRIOR HEART CONDITIONS. IN PATIENTS WITH HEART DISEASE, THE STUDY FOUND THAT USING BLOOD THINNERS COULD BE ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS ONCE THEY HAD CONTRACTED DENGUE. SO, APART FROM BLOOD TESTS, HEART PATIENTS WHO CONTRACT DENGUE ARE ADVISED TO GET AN ECG AND ECHO IF THEY EXPERIENCE CHEST DISCOMFORT AND SHORTNESS OF BREATH.

EYEING OMEGA

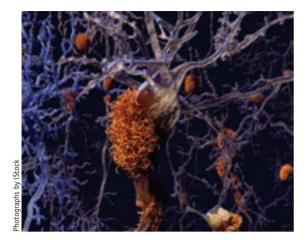
This should be no problem if you love fish as the benefits of Omega-3 fatty acids found in them are legendary. Now it turns out it could also help save your eyesight if you're diabetic. Diabetic retinopathy is damage caused to the retina as a result of diabetes, and it carries a risk of eventual blindness. Researchers in Spain are now saying that the risk of diabetic retinopathy can be slashed if you get enough Omega 3 in your diet. They analysed data from people who participated in Primary Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases with a Mediterranean Diet (PREDIMED). a randomised trial that ran from 2003 to 2009 in Spain and tested the benefits of a Mediterranean diet with added virgin oil or nuts. About 3,600 participants aged 55 to 80 had Type-2 diabetes during the trial. In a follow-up six years later, 69 new cases of diabetic retinopathy were found. However, people who had met the ideal Omega-3 fatty acid intake of 500 mg per day when the study began-two weekly servings of fish—were 48 per cent less likely to contract retinopathy. The findings were published in JAMA Ophthalmology.



PLUS-SIZE RISK

iwali is almost here and we all know what that means an endless stream of *mithai* during the festive season. You might want to stop and think before you unwrap those sweet nothings, though. Researchers from the World Health Organisation's International Agency for Cancer on Research (IARC) have found a link between obesity and an increased risk of developing eight types of cancer: stomach, liver, gall bladder, pancreas, ovarian, thyroid, blood and meningioma (a type of brain tumour). The study, published in The New England Journal of Medicine, was based on a review of over 1,000 studies on excess weight and cancer risk. It found that the risks for these cancers were similar for men and women around the world; for most of these cancers, the higher the body-mass index (BMI), the greater the risk. The rationale is that excess fat leads to an overproduction of oestrogen, testosterone and insulin, all of which can promote cancer.





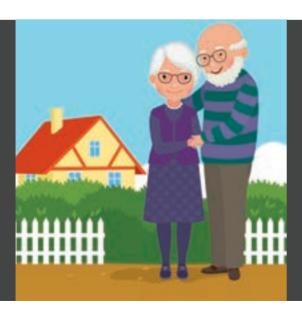
BREAKTHROUGH

In what is being heralded as a breakthrough, researchers at the renowned Mayo Clinic in Minnesota have found a way to measure anti-ageing protein GDF11 and thus predict future risk of disease. For some years now, GDF11 has been regarded as a biomarker of ageing; in 2014, two Harvard studies had claimed that restoring GDF11 levels could regenerate physical and cognitive functions. However, the difficulty in measuring GDF11 levels was holding the scientific community back—until now. "This is a crucial first step," Dr Nathan LeBrasseur, part of the team, tells media. "We need further studies to understand how we might be able to use GDF11 as a predictor of health outcomes as and for potential therapeutic benefits."

GOOD NEWS IN GURGAON: THE HARYANA URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (HUDA) HAS ANNOUNCED THAT IT WILL BUILD AN OLD-AGE HOME IN GURGAON. A SITE HAS ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR THE BUILDING IN SECTOR 46. THIS WILL BE THE SECOND SUCH HOME IN THE CITY—THE FIRST IS IN SECTOR 4.

SOUTHERN COMFORT

The Andhra Pradesh government is planning to establish three old-age homes under the public-private partnership (PPP) model in three districts: Visakhapatnam, Guntur and Anantapur. With an allocation of ₹ 1.39 crore, each home will accommodate 100 residents. The state government has directed the collectors of these districts to identify NGOs, senior citizens' associations or companies as part of their corporate social responsibility to come on board for the project. While the state will pay for staff salaries, the partner will shoulder expenses for building rent and food and medicines for residents.



CAPITAL MOVE

Aashirwaad, a new home for silvers located on Delhi's Kali Bari Marg, is set to open its doors. Developed by the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), the air-conditioned, Wi-Fi enabled home will have the capacity to accommodate 60 men and women and feature round-the-clock nurses, regular doctors' visits and a host of recreational facilities. These include a library and indoor games; yoga and music classes; and group discussions, lectures and meditation. "We are planning to involve other elderly people in the locality in the classes and indoor games so the residents get the opportunity to mingle with more people," A K Singh, director of the NDMC's Welfare Department, tells media. "The activities will also help the home be run like a day-care centre for other elderly locals." Charges are about ₹ 5,000 for dormitory services and ₹ 7,500 for a double room per month.



END OF DAYS

The journey's end is a topic of endless fascination and concern to many of us, yet equally considered taboo and off limits. Now, CareSearch, an Australian website that shares resources on palliative care, has developed Dying2Learn, a free, massive open online course (MOOC), which seeks to build community awareness of palliative care and engage individuals in a discussion on end-of-life issues. The course will seek to examine how contemporary society and media address death, and probe our own reactions to death during the age of the Internet. Participants can involve in discussion boards, download learning materials and share resources. To learn more, go to www.caresearch.com.au

BETWEEN THE LINES

Two recent releases by Australian publisher Scribe tackle ageing and disease with sensitivity and flair, reports website www.theaustralian.com.au. While Melanie Joosten explores different facets of ageing thorough her accounts of visits to nursing homes and her exploration of fiction in A Long Time Coming: Essays on Old Age, Johannes Klabbers chronicles his year as an unpaid intern in a large Melbourne cancer hospital in I Am Here: Stories from the Cancer Ward. Both titles are available on amazon.com



Figuring out the puzzle

geing gracefully is all about being able to adapt to one's changing life situation, including health challenges, says Mirabai Sampat, a retired social worker. Sampat should know. The 95 year-old was sharing her experience with ageing and caring for her husband when he was diagnosed with terminal cancer.

Sampat was speaking at a recent symposium titled 'Life Over 90', organised by Mumbai's Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, which has launched a new Geriatric Clinic headed by Dr Sandeep Doshi. To sensitise medical practitioners to the special needs of elderly patients, the clinic had invited six silvers over the age of 90 to talk about their experiences with health and medical issues, and related concerns.

One of the speakers Kantibhai Vora, 92, recalled the day he was told that his wife had dementiabut the doctors didn't explain very much. His successful career as an architect hardly prepared him for what came next. "A week before she passed away, her behaviour was different and I was angry because I thought she was deliberately not doing what she was supposed to do," Vora told the group. "Doctors are knowledgeable in treating patients, but I am the patient too. And if someone had said she couldn't control anything, I would have been better able to understand what was happening."

Sampat recounted how she insisted, when her husband was dying of lymphoma, that doctors in the hospital refrain from making decisions without involving his oncologist. "When someone is in hospital, they need someone to advocate for them at all times," she said.

Unlike other medical specialists, geriatricians confront complex cases, which are usually time-consuming and where the diseases they are dealing with can only be managed but never cured. Given their patient profile, geriatricians must be sensitive, patient and advise their patients on how to live a good and useful life. Sometimes, they need to gently tell their patients not to worry about every ache and pain and, instead, help them focus on improving their quality of life.

Unlike other medical specialists, geriatricians confront complex cases, which are usually time-consuming and where the diseases they are dealing with can only be managed but never cured.

For Dr Sandeep Doshi and the geriatric team at Kokilaben Hospital, understanding the complexities of each case—"figuring out the puzzle" is what makes geriatric medicine worthwhile, even when a cure is out of reach. Doshi pointed out that the new Geriatric Clinic uses a team approach and as it is located in a large multispeciality hospital, any specialist's opinion is just a phone call away. "Our doctors at Kokilaben Hospital look at their patients instead of typing notes into a computer, and take more time with older patients and answer their questions," he said.

The American Geriatrics Society estimates that there are 7,000 geriatricians currently practising in the US whereas, in India, there are very few, if any at



Dr Sandeep Doshi

all. Yet, regardless of the speciality in medicine, doctors in India are increasingly going to be working with the elderly. Just consider the numbers. More than 400,000 people aged 80 and above received knee replacements last year; 75 per cent

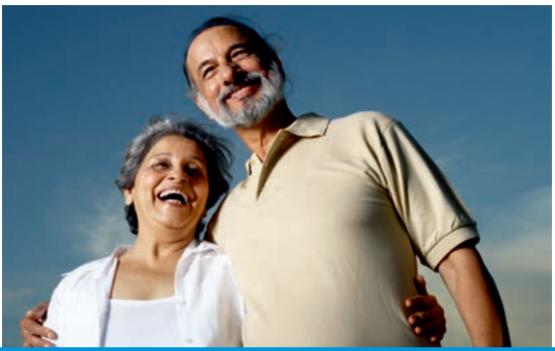
of men and 55 per cent of women over the age of 75 have coronary heart disease; and the most common medical procedure among people aged over 65 is cataract surgery. Successful outcomes depend on the patient's cooperation and that requires 'an understanding of who the patient is,' say all experienced geriatricians.

Bringing a smile to the participants of the symposium was an 80 year-old retired professor of economics, who pointed out, "Growing old is a question of being able to adapt to your changing life situation, having a little less energy, not being quite as healthy as you were before."

Here's some inspiration. Four years ago, a grandmother of four teenagers was hospitalised twice for congestive heart failure until she learnt how to manage the disease through medication and diet. She also has an occasional irregular heartbeat and only recently began walking with a cane. To keep her spirits up and stay as healthy as possible, she swims at least three times a week, serves on several committees addressing silver issues and is a fan of comedy shows because "getting a laugh every day is very, very helpful".



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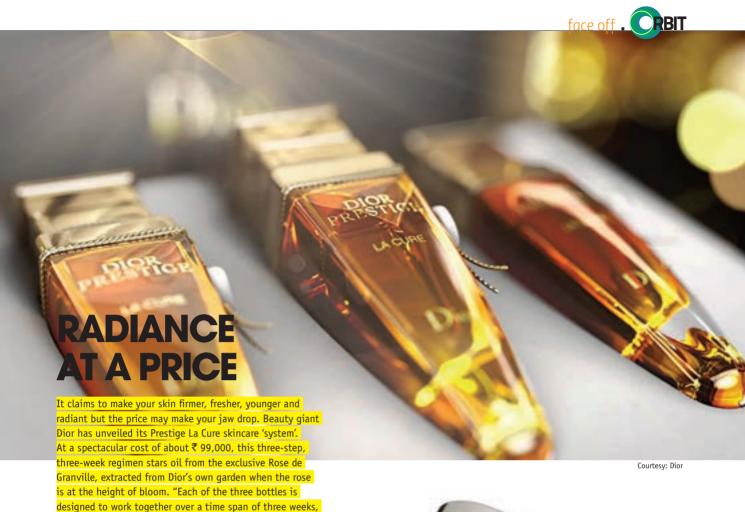
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BEAUTY BITS

We can't attest to its efficacy but it's definitely one of the coolest looking products you'll see. Korean skincare brand J. One's Hana Cream is a jar full of single-use pods that promise to combat free radical damage, brighten the skin, and reverse the signs of ageing. Ingredients include peptides to boost collagen and help firm skin, niacinamide and hyaluronic acid to hydrate, and antioxidant fullerene to protect skin as well as a blend of natural oils and extracts. A jar full of these little beauties will set you back \$ 50 (about ₹ 3,300)—go to www.glowrecipe.com/products/ hana-cream if you're interested.



THE INVISIBLES





BAD MEDICINE

How many pills are you popping?

A new study by the University of British Columbia in Vancouver contends that women over the age of 65 are 23 per cent more likely to be overprescribed meditation than their male counterparts. As the university's website news.ubc.ca reports, the researchers found that while one in four men

▼ hey're lost in plain sight. **While**

silvers suffer the most during

received 'problematic prescriptions', for women it was close to one in three. The reasons include silvers wanting to continue medication they took in their 50s; over-prescription of sleep aids; women's faster metabolisation of drugs; gender roles and social circumstances. "I expect that by empowering women with knowledge about the harms of medications, we can help drive decisions to try switching to safer therapies," says Cara Tannenbaum, a member of the research team. The study has been published in the journal *Age and Ageing*.



Watch out: Fresh from its success with a smartwatch for kids, Chinese company Omate has launched the Wherecom S3 for silvers. Powered by Android and supported by 3G, features include a dialler, pedometer, message hub, alarm reminder for medication and an SOS button to notify contacts over Wi-Fi or 3G about the user's GPS location. Other specs: a 1.54-inch, 320 × 320 colour display with 512 MB of RAM, 4 GB of storage and a battery life of close to two days on a single charge. The smartwatch, to be launched in France and Spain this fall, is priced at Euro 149 (about ₹ 11,000)—to learn more, go to www.omate.com/omate_S3.html

TV MONITOR

The 'idiot box' is now a lifesaver! Marketing company Cheil Worldwide, a division of the Samsung Group, has developed the KT Life Saving TV that watches out for silvers living alone. As website campaignbriefasia. com reports, Cheil was commissioned by South Korean telecom company KT to create a code that allows one's TV to communicate via a set-top box with designated mobile phones. For silvers registered with the plan, a text message is automatically sent to a family member/caregiver as soon as they switch on their TV. If there is no TV activity for 24 hours, another message is sent to the family member as well as a social worker to alert them. The project operates under the assumption that most silvers living alone switch on their TV first thing in the morning. Following the success of a pilot test last year, the service is now being rolled out across the country. "In the past 10 years, the number of seniors has doubled in South Korea," Kate Hyewon Oh, executive creative director of Cheil Worldwide, says in a media release. "A lot of them fear dying alone. The idea behind the KT Life Saving TV was to create a technology that not only helps them in their daily lives but also raises public awareness of this social issue."



WALK STEADY

As part of the EU's ACANTO project, which aims to increase the number of silvers who engage in sustained physical activity, researchers from six European countries, with the support of tech giant Siemens, have developed the Friendly Robot Walker or 'FriWalk'. As website techcrunch.com tells us, FriWalk, kitted out with depth sensors and cameras to detect health risks, can function as a mobility walker as well as a personal trainer. Users wear special insoles that enable the walker to monitor the position of their feet, gait and pressure applied on the ground. Going forward, the aim is to connect all users through a "cyberphysical" social network, enabling them to share information about events and activities. FriWalk is currently being tested by silvers in Spain, Italy and England.



Get a canine companion: Want a friend who'll cherish and protect you? And a proven way to bust stress? Adopt a retired police dog. In Bengaluru, the Karnataka police has urged people to come forward and adopt these brave canines, who have been trained in detecting bombs and stopping burglaries, murders and other criminal activities. While these dogs, primarily German shepherds, Dobermanns and Labradors, typically live up to 12 to 13 years, they retire by nine to 10 years and languish till their last days in an animal welfare organisation, separated from their handlers with whom they develop a deep bond. If you are in Bengaluru and interested, call 080-25710856, 22942370 and give one of these heroes a home.





Then: CD/DVD

Now: Decorative wall plate

Too many useless CDs and DVDs lying around the house? Here's a way to put them to good use. You need an old ceramic plate, a bunch of old CDs, kitchen shears, glue and some readymade putty or white cement (optional). Use the kitchen shears to cut up each CD into uneven geometrical shapes. Using the glue, stick the bits of CD on the plate with the reflective metal surface on top. Start from the rim and go inwards, leaving a little space around each piece. Once you cover the surface, ready the putty (if using). Fill in the space between the pieces with putty using a spatula. Use a damp cloth to wipe the surface clean as you go along. Your decorative wall plate is now ready. Take it to a local hardware store and have them fix it up with a metal ring.



RECYCLING FACTS

- CDs and DVDs are made of polycarbonate plastic (75 per cent), a layer of metal dye and a reflective layer made of aluminium or even gold.
- Manufacturing half a kilo of plastic (used to make 30 CDs) requires 300 cubic feet of natural gas, 2 cups of crude oil and 24 gallons of water.
- It is estimated that it will take over 1 million years for a CD to completely disintegrate in a landfill, making it the worst way of disposing CDs.
- CDs can be recycled into high-quality plastic used to make automotive industry parts, raw material to make other plastic, office equipment, street lights, electrical cable insulation and jewellery boxes.

MORE RECYCLING IDEAS...

- 1. STICK THE CUT CD PIECES ONTO DIFFERENT SURFACES TO INCREASE THE DECORATIVE VALUE—ON A DULL JEWELLERY BOX, PHOTO FRAME OR MIRROR FRAME, FOR INSTANCE.
- 2. BLING UP THE GRANDCHILDREN'S CLOTHES BY STICKING PIECES ON THE COLLAR OF YOUR GRANDDAUGHTER'S SHIRT, OR THE CUFF OF THE GRANDSON'S SLEEVE—ENSURE THERE ARE NO JAGGED EDGES THOUGH!

Finger-lickin' happy!

TARINDER JEET SINGH, 68, HYDERABAD

My wife Guddi and I are professed foodies. As Punjabis in Kolkata, where food has become a way of life, getting into the fast food business was something waiting to happen.

After an adventurous culinary journey, Guddi and I are now thrilled to serve up the most delicious *kathi* kebabs, shawarma and many other lip-smacking items from our food truck, Parathawallas and Grills, in Hyderabad. Guddi is especially pleased that her recipes and food ideas have caught on with young Hyderabadis. She is in and out of the truck, nattering on in Bengali to Sujoy, our young chef who looks after the Bengali food being served. Some young people stop to tell us how good the food is and nothing could make us happier!

By qualification, I studied ceramic engineering from Kolkata University and worked in that line for nearly 20 years before winding up and relocating to Hyderabad. I had developed asthma and doctors said the dust in my work environment had damaged my lungs. I had visited Hyderabad for work and fell in love with the city. So, in 2000, we moved to Hyderabad, lock stock and smoking *chulah*! Within six months, we set up a Punjabi food outlet called Sardarji in Yousufguda.

While I supervised the kitchen, making sure it was well-stocked and clean, Guddi trained the cooks and looked after the menu. We did well but had to wind up in 2007 owing to some legal issues. I tried a short foray into mining and lapsed into a 'retired life' for three years. Then, in 2013, Guddi's sister and her husband came to settle in Hyderabad after a stint in the US and shook us out of our som-



nolence. They have always loved our food and convinced us to start a food truck. And that's how Parathawallas and Grills came into being.

Obviously, the items on call were limited. We agreed on three to four varieties of parathas, *kathi* kebabs, shawarma, sandwiches and a few other snacks. Combining Punjabi and Bong food sensitivities thus delivered an interesting menu—on one hand, the famous *kathi* rolls of the Nizams with spicy chicken keema stuffed in a maida roti with salad; on the other, *gobi* paratha, *keema* paratha or *aloo* paratha served with fresh homemade dahi and pickles!

We had all the permissions in place and our menu ready by May 2013. First, we parked at Srinagar Colony and business was just picking up when someone raised objections to our being there. So we moved to Filmnagar. It turned out to be ideal. There are no neighbours, no competition and plenty of customers. And guess what? Our regular customers from Srinagar Colony have found our new location and come back to us!

As we have added some Chinese and Indian dishes to our menu, we have to make some preparations at home, like the base curry for the Indian dishes and some dumplings and noodles for the Chinese offerings. Otherwise, for the shawarma, *kathi* rolls and the parathas, everything is done out in the open.

All the food is freshly served, which is a huge draw. We take great pains to supervise everything and ensure good hygiene. Fresh ingredients are used every day. We take no shortcuts. Guddi, her sister and I take turns in the kitchen while my brother-inlaw is our PR man. He talks to the customers, solicits their opinions and asks them whether our food lives up to their expectations. All in all, it's a family affair.

In future, we hope to give our franchise to younger people. We are getting on in years and cannot do as much as we could even five years ago. That said. I would like to be remembered for our food, especially our parathas!

-As told to Shyamola Khanna



RUN KRISHNAN is an Ironman, boomed the loudspeaker as the 67 year-old Chennai-based businessman crossed the finish line at the Ironman Asia-Pacific Championship in Cairns, Australia, this June. Only those who complete the race in the given time can wear the crown.

Here's what it takes: Swim 3.8 km, cycle 180 km and run 42.2 km, all within 16 hours and 30 minutes. "I completed this triathlon in 16 hours, 27 minutes and 35 seconds," beams Krishnan. "I just scraped through." He confesses that although his hotel was just 200 m from the finish line, he simply collapsed into the arms of his waiting wife Nandita at the end of the challenge and limped into the hotel.

The championship is one of the most challenging day-long sporting events in the world. Recalling his feat, our triath-lete says that the sea was rough and the waves swelled 2-m high. In the cycling leg of the race, his bicycle started to make clanging noises after 30 km. "For the next 150 km, I had to ride with caution and ensure I made it to the finish. If it broke down, I would not have qualified." With over 1,500 participants, Krishnan says the locals were great, cheering them all along the scenic town. "The oldest participant was an 83 year-old Japanese who, unfortunately, was not able to complete the challenge."

Krishnan participated in his first triathlon as recently as in 2013, the Half Iron Man in Austria, but he ran his first marathon in Pune in 1987. "I've always been into marathons. With constant running, there is intensive wear and tear on the joints. I was slowing down so I decided to try swimming and cycling as they are low-impact sports."

It's got to be the craziest way to 'slow down', that too for a 67 year-old! Krishnan trained six months for the event,

amazingly without a personal trainer, relying only on online training modules. "I have been running marathons from the age of 38 in India, the US, Japan and Germany. However, I started cycling regularly only because of the triathlon," he says, adding that he swims three times a week and had to ramp it up for the competition.

The punishing nature of the event demands as much determination as discipline; it also builds character, Krishnan points out. "This sport teaches you to never give up. A lesson I've learnt is that you win just by showing up." Training like this automatically transforms one's lifestyle. "You retire to bed early as you are motivated to wake up early to practice. People who drink and smoke have cut down or given it up altogether," says this vegetarian.

Krishnan does not advise all silvers to take up running but says a brisk half-hour walk every day is mandatory for a healthy life. And, with the advice of a doctor, he believes all silvers can consider cycling and swimming. "In 2011, my knees were completely worn out and my doctor even advised against climbing the stairs. A couple of months after that, I ran the Chicago marathon," he grins.

Being a member of the Chennai Runners, who organise the Chennai Marathon annually, Krishnan says the team has devised a programme called '10 Weeks to 10k' to help people train for marathons. "The module even includes how to walk efficiently, without too much effort," he reveals. In the process of setting up a gym to help people complete triathlons, Krishnan says he is yet to set his sights on his next run although he has a long-term goal that he cherishes. "I am looking forward to the day when I can start and finish a triathlon with my granddaughter," he says, quickly adding that she is only two years old right now!

—Jayanthi Somasundaram





BIRTHDAYS

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan turns 71 on 9 October.

Actor Rekha turns 62 on 10 October.

Journalist and TV anchor **Prannoy Roy** turns 67 on 15 October.

Former Indian cricketer and MP **Navjot Singh Sidhu** turns 53 on 20 October.

Indian-American author, public speaker and New Age sage **Deepak Chopra** turns 69 on 22 October.

Former US Secretary of State and Democratic presidential nominee **Hillary Clinton** turns 69 on 26 October.

Entrepreneur, author and philanthropist **Bill Gates** turns 61 on 28 October.





IN PASSING

Noted Odia filmmaker and actor **Gobind Tej** passed away on 18 August following a brief illness in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Former international cricket umpire **Subrata Banerjee** died on 19 August 2016 in Kolkata. He was 71.

Veteran trade union leader **Sharad Rao** died on 1 September in Mumbai. Rao is acknowledged for his role in mobilising the work force in both the organised and unorganised sectors. He was 78.

Assamese poet, literary critic and author **Nalinidhar Bhattacharyya** passed away on 2 September in Guwahati.
He was 95.

The world's oldest surviving Test Cricketer from South African, **Lindsay Tuckett**, passed away on 5 September in Bloemfontein. He was 97.

MILESTONES

- Photographer Surendra
 Jain Paras, 70, was recently
 awarded the Swatantrata
 Sangram Senani Jawaharlal
 Darda Smriti Lokmat
 Patrakarita Puraskar for
 his services in the area of
 photojournalism.
- At the same award ceremony, journalist **Prakash Bhandari**, 68, was honoured with the Ashok Gehlot Lokmat Mitrata Puraskar for his work.
- Indian-American physicianauthor **Abraham Verghese** was awarded the prestigious 2015 National Humanities Medal on 22 September at the White House by US President Barack Obama.





HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

THIS IS THE PLACE TO DO IT. REACH OUT TO FELLOW READERS WITH INTERESTING ANECDOTES,
INSPIRING STORIES AND HEARTWARMING MOMENTS FROM YOUR LIFE. WRITE IN WITH FULL CONTACT DETAILS,
AND MAKE THIS SPACE YOUR OWN.

OUT OF THE BOX

As a consumer, I have never enjoyed eating pizza out of a box. Thanks to the way it is delivered, it is soggy and loses much of its flavour by the time you eat it. The problem intrigued me especially as I am a businessman who manufactures corrugated boxes, apart from other industrial products.

Then, one day, eight years ago, I had my 'eureka' moment. I was driving on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway and thinking about the pizza I had eaten the previous night. It was the same old story. This time, even as I pondered the conundrum, a solution sprang to mind.

I took the corrugated box in which
I stored my cassettes and CDs in the
car, pulled out a pocket knife and started
working on the box. In about 30 minutes, I had a solution—yes, it was possible! That's where my journey with
my brand VENTIT started.

My design is simple. Hot food releases steam, which when obstructed leads to condensation. This is absorbed by the food, as a result of which it becomes cold and soggy. Food needs to breathe when it is delivered. The innovation ensures that the heat doesn't escape; only the water vapour or moisture does. Hence, the food not only remains hot but is also not soggy. The upshot is that it is also an ecofriendly product and can be recycled.

Although the design came to me in an instant, it took over seven years to put it out in the market as I waited to patent it first. The next step was adapting the design to the delivery of other food items such as dosas, parathas and even jalebis.

In 2014, a gentleman from the US, Scott Wiener, called my office and asked about the box. A pizza connoisseur who conducts pizza tours in Manhattan, Wiener asked how the box worked. So I sent him some samples. Wiener published a book on pizza boxes from around the world, and in all his interviews, he said the world's best pizza box was not made by an Italian but an Indian!



Mehta's creative streak led him to design properly ventilated pizza boxes

Then, last year, an Indian PhD student from Amsterdam got in touch with me and said he wanted to study our box as part of his thesis on 'thermo-fluid dynamics'. To be honest, I had no clue what it meant but it is essentially about the movement of air. We spoke on Skype and I was happy to help him. I had a simple question for him: With the release of steam, shouldn't the pizza turn cold owing to a drop in temperature? I had my own explanation for it but wanted a scientific one. A month later, I received a 40-page explanation! It was too much for me, so he later sent me a video explaining it.

Indeed, I've always loved experimenting; when I was a young chap, I had installed speakers on my bike by connecting them to the bike battery. I could listen to music on the go and drew a lot of attention when I took my bike out for a spin! My pizza box idea was a natural outcome of this creative restlessness. We've got a number of awards for our design and, of course, there is a sense of satisfaction that comes with it. I am 62 now and working towards marketing the product in various places. I want consumers to know what is available out there and demand it. If this product were from another country, people would be lining up for it. Things are changing gradually but it is still a challenge.

-Vinay Mehta, Mumbai

MY FRIEND, MY INSPIRATION

My Indian-American friend and army veteran Lt Col Om Julka turned 98 on 30 August. I wonder what he was thinking as he stood on the threshold of a century. However, as always, my friend was nonchalant about the impending century. He smiled and said cheerfully, 'Que sera sera (Whatever will be, will be).'

Julka is a source of great inspiration, even envy, to me and his fellow silver friends in Cleveland, Ohio, where he lives. This group of distinguished senior Indian-Americans meets twice a week for coffee at Starbucks. When there is a birthday, it is celebrated with lunch at an Indian eatery. All of them are in their 70s and 80s.

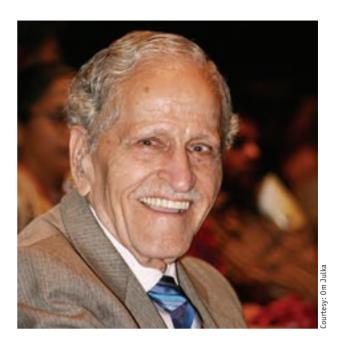
The next senior after Julka, at 90, is Prof Hans Nagpaul. Dr Vinod Joshi, a retired anaesthetist, is the baby of the group at 72. "It is great to be part of this group. We mostly discuss current affairs, economic, social and, sometimes, Indian politics. I am mostly asked about medical info and advice," Dr Joshi told me over the phone from Cleveland.

Julka is in reasonably good health, much better than some half his age. He walks ramrod straight and doesn't use a walking stick. He was in a jovial mood when I phoned to wish him for his 98th birthday. 'Do you still drive?' I asked. "Yes, I used to drive until a few months ago and my driving licence is valid till the age of 100," he replied with pride. "However, my children have now forbidden me from driving."

His army career was very eventful. In 1962, during the Chinese invasion, he was in Army Headquarters and had the opportunity of visiting the office of prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, where defence minister Krishna Menon and Gen Kaul discussed the war situation. And on India's Republic Day, in 1966, Julka—then a major—stood near president Dr S Radhakrishnan and announced the names of the winners of the Bravery Awards for the 1965 War with Pakistan. He also saw action in the Bangladesh War in 1971.

One of his proudest moments was when he touched the feet of Mahatma Gandhi in 1938-39 during one of the latter's visits to Delhi. He was in Delhi when Gandhi was assassinated and was witness to the sea of human heads that followed the open hearse that carried his body.

Blessed with an interesting personality, Julka has an uncanny knack of learning languages and his repertoire includes English, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Sanskrit and German. Even at this age, he often uses the Internet and is also learning computer programmes. He has great interest in genealogy and has been working diligently on compiling



At 98, Lt Col Julka leads a happy social and family life

his Julka family tree. He says he has been able to trace his family lineage up to 400 years!

To what does he attribute his longevity? "Age is just a number for me. I don't feel I am ageing but only growing up. I am a non-smoker and a teetotaller, barring the occasional glass of red wine. I enjoy simple food such as dal, roti, vegetables or even chicken or lamb; I do not eat beef or pork. I am fond of fruits and nuts, albeit in moderation." Keeping fit is vital at any age and my friend says, "I walk a mile every day, weather permitting. I avoid medicines of any kind unless compelled by some ailment. I make sure I am not constipated. Also, 'early to bed, early to rise' is equally important."

He mentions two more ingredients to living a long and healthy life: simple living and the abundant affection he receives from his four children, seven grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. "A stress-free, happy social and family life is a *sine qua non* for a long life. I also have some pastimes that keep me happily engaged," he says. In fact, one of Julka's sons has established an endowment fund called 'Om Julka Endowment of the Moses Cleveland Scholarship Programme' at Cleveland State University. It extends scholarships to brilliant students from lowincome families.

"I have a large number of good and sincere friends. I have seen it all and done it all. There is nothing else I desire now. I am now 98 and whether or not I reach my centenarian year is in His hands," he concludes.

-Raj Kanwar, Dehradun



YOGA RX BY SHAMEEM AKTHAR

Music, mind, movement The link between singing bowl healing and yoga



iStock

inging bowl meditation and healing therapy is now enjoying a huge revival in the West and rewinding its way back to the lands of its origin. It is difficult to pin it down to any Asian country because all records show that music healing belongs to the entire Asian continent. However, the similarity of bowl therapy in the mountain belt establishes it as part of Himalayan tradition. The bowls contain in them the sounds of water, rain, thunder, wind and the deep howl of all these elements in the caverns and rocks of the mountains.

The connection to yoga is direct and dramatic. In all bowl traditions (Eastern and Western), the bowls contain the seven notes, with dominant notes linked to specific chakras. There are two dominant traditions—Vedic and Tibetan—with different connections of the notes to the chakras (somewhat like Eastern and Western star signs).

That said, most singing bowl therapies will have at least seven bowls. They will be placed to align with the chakra map. If single bowls are used, they will also be placed at or near the body part that requires healing. The chakra connection with the bowl is deep, right from the seven metals used—from copper to gold. The placement of the bowls, either alongside or directly on top of the body part, is common to most traditions. There has been a recent spurt in crystal bowl therapy, with different gemstones used to create bowls. They too are chakra-related and the therapy is similar to the metal ones.

The connections not just with yoga but related sciences make bowl therapy an exciting, complementary practice. Aroma oils aligning with different chakras, as discussed in an earlier column (January 2016) of this series, and crystal therapy, with related crystals placed on the body of the practitioner (July 2016), or within the bowl, make it a happy, involved, healing movement.

YOGIC MOVES Closing seven gates (shanmukhi mudra)

Sit in a meditative posture. Close your eyes. Place hands on the face, as seen in the image. Shut your ears with your thumbs and press down on closed eyes with index fingers. Place each middle finger on either nostril. Let your ring and little finger remain above and below the closed lips respectively, on either side. Use the pressure of the middle finger to relax (when inhaling); press lightly, when retaining breath. Relax again when breathing out. Breathe in, retain, and exhale with awareness. Do a few times. After a while, focus on inner sounds you hear. Turn the mind inside. Often you start off by hearing

the body—breath, swallowing, etc. Keep the mind involuted, with awareness on the breath throughout. It is a recall of the *anahat nada* or

unstuck sound—as with the bowls, it is not in the sounds but the vibrations shimmering between that you feel the magic. Do for a short while initially because the arms are likely to get tired. Later, increase duration. This mudra may be done during the hours of the day when outside sounds and distractions are less. **Benefits**: It heals the parts of the body above the neck, and most related ailments. It also teaches mental focus and stamina.

Nan yar? (Who am I?) Teachings by Sri Ramana Maharishi

the internal sounds of

This is a small booklet. It is possibly not well-known among Indians but is part of the spiritual tradition of all seekers the world over. In this book are some of the most lucid explanations shared by sage Ramana Maharishi with his disciples in a simple Q&A format. He takes all the abstruse Advaita teachings and simplifies them, shorn of all the trappings that keep the terrific truth of yoga hidden from most of the world.

The question and answer goes somewhat like this:

Koham? (Who am I?) Na deham (Not this body). So ham So ham (I am That, I am That). I am not this body, not these thoughts, not these emotions, not this intellect. I am not in all these apparent things. I am beyond them. I am That.

It is a powerful and yet simple lesson. And among all the recent *jnana* yogis, Ramana is the most lucid. He talks in short sentences, clearly dealing with the immediate essence of the question and giving an answer that

appeals not just to the intellect but our common sense. With him, *jnana* yoga (yoga of the intellect) leaves its ivory tower and walks with the seeker. This is a must-read for anybody struggling with spiritual questions of yoga. Here is another sample quote from this booklet, available free online:

Q: How will the mind become quiescent? A: By the inquiry 'Who am I?'. The thought 'who am I?' will destroy all other thoughts, and like the stick used for stirring the burning pyre, it will itself in the end get destroyed. Then, there will arise self-realisation.

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)

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The first time you rode the bicycle.
The first crush you had at thirteen
The first drama you got a part in
The first day at college
The first date you went on
The first kiss
The first time you proposed
The first job interview
The first board meeting you addressed
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HEART TO HEARTH BY PRATIBHA JAIN

A series about silvers who believe nurturing the body and mind is the key to joy

Seasoned with love

Rita Barua • CHENNAI

I went expecting some delicious Bengali vegetarian recipes and an interesting conversation. But when I left, I carried back an experience that was so poignant and unexpected—of seeing a family where caste and class distinction have been erased, paving the way for mutual care and respect. A quality Rakhi Kapoor has inherited from her beautiful mother, Rita Barua, 63, a Bengali from Chennai. I met them both at Rakhi's home; we chatted over a warm cuppa and delicious snacks.

Namaste Ritaji. A pleasure to meet you. Can we start at the beginning?

Rita Barua: I grew up in an orthodox Hindu family in Tripura [Agartala]. My parents were strict and my mother was very particular that we excel in whatever we did. During college days, I was really involved in student forums and almost decided to join politics. But I did not pursue it. Sometimes, when I see where some of my friends are today, I do wonder if I made the right choice.

You mean you wish you had pursued either a career or social work?

Yes. My daughter keeps saying I did not use my potential at all. But life takes its own turns and we have to prioritise. After my post-graduation, I met my husband D J Barua. We decided to get married. He is a Bengali Buddhist, so that decision was a big one as it was an interfaith marriage.

Did the respective families agree easily?

His father was delighted because one of their gurus, a Buddhist monk, met me and told him right away that I would be perfect for his son. My parents also took a great liking to him. As luck would have it, on the third day after our marriage, he got a job in ONGC where he worked until he finally retired as group general manager.

"I have always had one strict rule: the family has to share one meal together. Usually it is dinner. There is something about eating together that creates a bond among the people sharing the meal. And if the meal is comfort food, it is even more binding"

When did you shift from Kolkata to Chennai?

My husband's job was transferrable, so I could not take up a job. When my daughter Rakhi was born, I felt that unless I settled down, I could not give her a good upbringing. So in 1983, when my husband was transferred to Chennai, I decided to settle down here. He continued with his job but Chennai became our base. This feels like my hometown now.

That's wonderful. So you must have brought up your children singlehandedly most of the time.

Yes, I was like a single mom to my son and daughter. My son Rahul has settled in Texas, US. My daughter Rakhi is in Chennai and runs a maternity studio. I feel satisfied when I see my children and their success.

How did you manage during their growing years?

We were always blessed with good domestic staff. Otherwise it would have been tough to manage.

As we were speaking, a young toddler came by and stood at the entrance of the room, gurgling with delight. Instantly, Rakhi and Ritaji exclaimed with echoed delight and started playing with her. I thought she was a neighbour's child, well-dressed and carrying lovely stuffed toys. I stared in disbelief when Rakhi told me the little one, Arohi, was the daughter of her domestic staff, Pintu Singh.

I have heard of people who carry no caste and class distinctions in their heart. But to see it face to face is heart-warming.

Rita: My husband was hardly ever at home; even when he was, he was never the disciplinarian. In his extended absence, my staff was my support system. To me, they are my family.



Rakhi: We have grown up listening and seeing our parents treat their staff with equal respect and dignity. It is now second nature to us. And in turn, they really take care of us. You should see the way my staff manages the house, touchwood!

By then, Pintu Singh came with a round of snacks and served us with

such affection that I could see Rakhi meant what she said.

I am truly touched. Tell me more.

Rita: I used to tell my staff one thing: The house and everything else are second priority. You are here for my children. We tell them what we expect but do not nag them. We give

them freedom. This is their house too. To me, Arohi is as dear as my grandsons Ricky and Rian. She gives me as much pleasure. Tell me, if we can spend lavishly on our friends and relatives, why not on our staff who are such an integral part of our life? Rakhi does not like to cook but Pintu Singh knows to prepare her favourite dishes. He has learnt from me.

Rakhi: She enjoys rubbing it in that I do not cook. But my *bhabhi* Suparna has made up for it. She cooks really well and can lay out a delicious spread on the table effortlessly.

Rita: Yes, Suparna just picked up on her own and now makes even our traditional Bengali dishes very well.

According to you, is food a connecting factor?

Of course. This is why I have always had one strict rule: the family has to share one meal together. Usually it is dinner. There is something about eating together that creates a bond among the people sharing the meal. And if the meal is comfort food, it is even more binding.

What are some of your favourite family recipes?

Rakhi: Let me answer that. Mom not only cooks well but loves to feed endlessly. We are all crazy about her typical Bengali dishes such as *chorchori* and *labra* (both are mixed vegetables). Also her kheer with the special jaggery that comes around winters—*patali gur* (date palm jaggery). Her *parwal* with khus-khus gravy known as *potol* is to die for.

And yet, Rakhi, you don't like to cook?

Rakhi: My husband Vijay and I enjoy entertaining and I depend on Pintu Singh for that. In turn, we also treat him and his family. We take them out for dinners on their birthdays.





Rita: People matter, whether they are relatives, friends or people who work with you. More than anything, I remember the good social work I did with the Mahila Samiti where I was the president. I enjoy interacting with people and I truly believe in this sentence: "Alone I can smile, together we can laugh; alone I can say, together we can speak; alone I can enjoy, together we can celebrate. We are nothing without each other."

What's on the bucket list?

Nothing much, but I do miss being with my little grandson Rian. I still remember enjoying walking with him in the stroller when I visited Texas last month. The open and clean spaces and the long walks are a cherished memory.

As I left, I could see Rakhi carrying little Arohi to the park opposite her house, wiping her nose and tidying her dress, amid squeals of laughter. Indeed a heartening moment to carry back home.

POTOL POSTO

Pointed gourd with poppy seeds masala

Known as *potol* in Bengali and *parwal* in Hindi, pointed gourd cooked in a gravy of coconut and poppy seeds is a family favourite at Rita Barua's home. A popular Bengali dish, it is cooked by making thin slits on the gourd so it does not break, yet allows the spices to be soaked into the vegetable well.

Ingredients

- Pointed gourd: 8; medium-sized
- Bay leaf: 1
- Turmeric powder: 1/4 tsp
- Panch phoran [a mixture of cumin

(jeera), nigella (*kalonji*), fenugreek (methi), coriander (*dhaniya*) and mustard (rai) seeds]: 1 tsp

- Green chillies: 2; slit
- Cumin powder: 1/2 tsp
- Yoghurt: 1 tbsp; beaten
- Mustard oil: 2 tbsp
- Salt to taste

For the paste

- Poppy seeds (khus-khus): 1 tbsp
- Coconut (fresh): 1 tbsp: grated
- Green chillies: 2

Method

Scrape the pointed gourd lightly and create small lengthwise slits around it such that it doesn't break. Soak the poppy seeds for 10-15 minutes in hot water. Grind along with coconut and green chillies into a thick paste. Heat ½ tbsp oil in a thick-bottomed pan and add the pointed gourd. Add a pinch of turmeric and salt and stir gently for 3-4 minutes on low heat until the gourd turns light brown Transfer to a dish and set aside. In the same pan, heat 1 tbsp oil and add the bay leaf. Add the panch phoran, green chillies and the poppy seed paste. Stir for 2 minutes; add turmeric powder, cumin powder, voghurt, salt and roasted pointed gourd. Sprinkle water and let cook for 3-4 minutes. Switch off the flame and drizzle mustard oil on top. Serve with steamed rice or hot rotis.

Ritaji's recommendations

Replace fresh coconut with coconut milk for a richer gravy.

Add a dash of oregano at the end for an enhanced flavour.

Make the popular *jhinga posto* with the same recipe, substituting pointed gourd with roasted potatoes and/or tender ridge gourd (*jhinga* in Bengali, *turai* in Hindi).

Pratibha Jain, an author and translator from Chennai, is the co-author of two award-winning books Cooking at Home with Pedatha and Sukham Ayu. Her area of specialisation is documenting Indian traditions through research, translation and writing



Photographs by Sumukh Bharadwai

Saritha Rao Rayachoti discovers different embodiments of sarvodaya in one family

t is late afternoon in the temple town of Melkote in Mandya District, Karnataka. The street leading to the Kalyani, the temple tank, is bustling with a herd of goats, children returning home from school, even a bike that emits a loud horn as it passes the home of the Koulagis: Surendra Koulagi, his late wife Girija, their son, Santosh, daughter-in-law Geetha, and grandchildren, Sumanas, Supraj and Suhasini.

For over 56 years, three generations of the Koulagi family and their friends have risen to meet need-based challenges in society through the Janapada Seva Trust, a voluntary organisation that has propagated the Gandhian values of self-sufficiency, sustainability and sarvodaya ('upliftment for all') with little dependence on the government.

The most intriguing aspect of my visit is the discovery that each generation of this family has paved its own path through the social challenges that define its times and, in the process, discovered Mahatma Gandhi and his ideals.

Surendra Koulagi, 82, impeccably dressed in khadi, has just returned home from a visit to Mysuru, which is 50 km away, but wears his age lightly. Sitting in the jaguli or veranda, the octogenarian speaks of other journeys. "After my matriculation in the 1950s, I went to Bombay in search of a job. I worked for an advocate, typing up his cases. There, I met Dinshah K Mehta, a naturopath and close associate of Gandhiji. Many freedom fighters of that time used to visit the Nature Cure Clinic for rest or treatment and, there, I came in contact with Javaprakash Narayan."

This was a momentous meeting that would change the course of not only Surendra Koulagi's life, but those from disadvantaged backgrounds whom he has rehabilitated, as well as two generations of his own family, chief among them his son Santosh and grandson Sumanas.

Surendra Koulagi went to work for freedom fighter and social reformer Jayaprakash Narayan between 1954 and 1959. "Though it was a short period, it was very educative. I was a servant, secretary, typist. I also used to make his bed. I helped in cooking and cleaning the vessels for his wife Prabhavati."

He travelled extensively with Jayaprakash Narayan, but longed to work independently in a village. "I had already imbibed the principles of Gandhiji, Jayaprakash Narayan and Vinoba Bhave, so it was an urge in my mind to select a village to work in. I chose Melkote because, at that time, it was famous for its handloom industry." The need of the hour, however, was different.

"India lives in her seven hundred thousand villages"

—Mahatma Gandhi

t the time the Janapada Seva Trust began in 1960, Surendra Koulagi found there were no facilities in rural India for disabled children, especially those affected by polio. So, in 1963, he started a residential facility in Melkote called Karunagruha with children from states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and even distant Gujarat.

"Karunagruha was housed in a country-tiled, humble structure with no electricity and no cement flooring. There was only a front door and windows. From the beginning, I felt there was no need for separate schools for these children; they must move within larger society and society must also accept them. The children travelled to the government school in a bullock cart."

In the 1990s, the success of the polio eradication campaign implemented by the Indian Government led to fewer incidences of the disease. There were also government initiatives now available for children with disabilities. There was no longer a need for a residential facility like Karunagraha.

"We thought the infrastructure must be used for some social cause," says Surendra Koulagi. "The government also wanted good volunteer organisations to take care of abandoned children in the district, so we started an adoption centre in 2010. About 30-40 children have been placed in families."

Surendra Koulagi's pride is palpable when he talks about a recent reunion of the children of Karunagruha. "They are now all grown-up, married, some are even grandfathers! When they came to Karunagraha as children, they were barely six years old!" The Trust also recently organised a get-together of the families where children from the adoption centre have been placed.

Over the years, other initiatives started by Janapada Seva Trust include a condensed education course for women who had discontinued their studies to complete the SSLC exam, a primary school, a pre-university college, a printing press for destitute women, and summer camps for children in and around Melkote.

Today, Surendra Koulagi is president of the Karnataka Sarvodaya Mandal and is often invited to share his wisdom and insights on applying Gandhian thoughts and ideas to solve problems in today's society, which he also shares in the magazine he publishes called *Janapada Vichara*. Among the numerous accolades for his service to society, the Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Outstanding



Contribution in the field of Constructive Work was conferred on him in 2014.

The activities of the Janapada Seva Trust are managed by Surendra Koulagi's son, Santosh, who is also the secretary, along with support from friends and other members of the Trust, like Sheelavath, K Manu, Dr Manohar, Ramesh, and president of the Trust C S Janardhan.

"Our trust has got many activities, and I am directly or indirectly involved in them," says Surendra Koulagi. "My son and my grandson are managing and taking Janapada Seva Trust forward with innovative ideas. I just admire, give encouragement, appreciate, and bless. That is my role now."

"To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves" —Mahatma Gandhi



antosh's journey is different from his father's, but no less fascinating. When he was in fifth grade, his father sent him to Bengaluru to live with his uncle. He spent about 12 years there, and returned to Mysuru to study engineering. A Japanese farmer was instrumental in life taking a different turn for Santosh.

"In the 1980s, there were pro-people movements in Karnataka," says 55 year-old Santosh. "People were talking about ecology and the environment. Masanobu Fukuoka's book *One-Straw Revolution* made a big impact on all of us. It was a new concept and a very different kind of book. We thought it talked about technology of agriculture but it was more about life and philosophy." He adds wryly, "We wanted to get rid of Gandhi, but Fukuoka says in his last page that his was a Gandhian way of farming."

At that time, there were only a few magazines in Kannada and even a small piece in a Kannada publication reached many people, shares Santosh. "I wrote an article about Fukuoka but did not expect to receive such a response for it. That was a turning point in my life and Fukuoka was

a major inspiration for me to stay back in Melkote." Such was the influence of Fukuoka's book that Santosh also translated it into Kannada as *Ondu Hullina Kranthi* and became actively involved in the farmers' movements of the time. "Back then, coming from the city, we didn't know much about agriculture. The only thing we knew was to criticise the short-sightedness of the agriculture department and the Green Revolution. But it did bring about a very big movement in Karnataka and people started organic farming."

A piece of land originally purchased for the children of Karunagruha to grow vegetables was transformed into a centre for learning about non-violent, sustainable living alternatives called Hosa Jeevana Daari ('a new way of life'). The campus is used for seminars and workshops by non-traditional schools as well as colleges and institutions like Nagarjuna College from Bengaluru, which aims to give its students an insight into alternative lifestyles that may be far removed from their own. And for 13 years, the Trust organised a five-week experiential programme on rural India, development issues and the environment for

"Khadi is the sun of the village solar system"

—Mahatma Gandhi



a student group called the Edinburgh Global Partnership from the University of Edinburgh.

"A lot of the younger generation is becoming part of our work and that is a big hope," says Santosh. "We want them to think about alternatives to the current lifestyle; we should be critical about mainstream society."

In 2009, the Trust also began Nene Bana ('a forest of reminiscence') that attempts to revive a 10-acre piece of land into a forest and nursery for native tree species that have gradually become endangered over the years. Around the same time, in the premises of Hosa Jeevana Daari, the Trust began a khadi unit, which is at the heart of the work of Santosh's son, Sumanas.

ith an improvised wheel spinning yarn in the background, and the clacking sound of looms, the 24 year-old narrates the turning point in his young life. "Some of our visitors here—naturalists and wildlife biologists—used to take me to Melkote Wildlife Sanctuary nearby. It is a protected area for the grey wolf.

I was very passionate about wildlife and wanted to get into conservation. When I went to Oxford for my master's in biodiversity conservation, the programme was more holistic and I began to understand that I just can't conserve wildlife in national parks. Everything is connected, from economics to philosophy. Unless we redefine the idea of development and well-being, it is not possible to save wildlife."

Sumanas began to appreciate khadi and Gandhi's thinking behind it, even using it as a case study for his PhD. Along with some friends, he is now infusing new ideas into what is essentially an old weaving process. The khadi weaving and dyeing unit at Hosa Jeevana Daari uses hand-spun yarn to weave yardage, saris, dhotis, dupattas, stoles, towels and handkerchiefs. They also have a tailoring unit that sews garments from kurtas to quilts and uniforms.

Sumanas' focus is that weavers must get a fair compensation for the work they do. This has drawn to the unit more people who want to weave for a living—a marked difference to the situation in the beginning, with young weavers

"To me I seem to be constantly growing. I must respond to varying conditions, and yet remain changeless within"

—Mahatma Gandhi



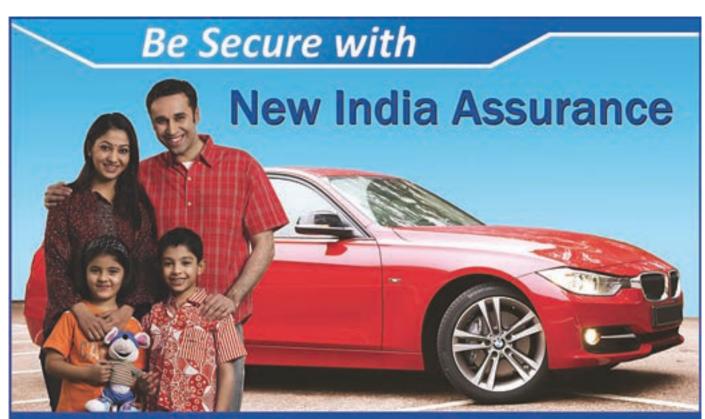
moving away from the craft perfected over the generations by their forefathers. Further, he is emphatic that there is such a thing as a maximum scale after which efficiency goes down. "We have only 11 looms but people come every day and want to join. If someone is interested and are willing to do their own thing, we can guide and support them. It should be a model where people can come and see and are able to do it themselves."

oday, while the Janapada Seva Trust primarily runs the adoption centre, the native forest initiative, the khadi unit and the resource centre for sustainable living alternatives, what sets it apart is its ability to adapt to the needs of the times and ensuring that growth is at a modest pace.

"Scaling up activity was not at all a priority for Janapada Seva Trust," affirms Santosh. "Only if we are small can we be flexible and experiment with alternatives. What we want most of all is to stay relevant." While this calls for some agility on the part of the Trust, the one constant that guides their work is Gandhi and his compelling thoughts and ideas on subjects like self-sufficiency, sustainability and social development.

"You can make lot of comments on Gandhi over a cup of coffee," says Santosh, "but if you really try to do something serious in your own field, you really can't escape from, or ignore Gandhi. The three generations in my family, we started admiring Gandhi because of that." Sumanas, perhaps, articulates it best when he says, "My grandfather, my father and myself...we look at Gandhi from different perspectives. When he started, my grandfather was more into traditional Gandhian ideas. My father found that Fukuoka mentions in his book about being inspired by Gandhi and Gandhian ideas. He discovered Gandhi through agriculture. In spite of coming from such a background, I had never seen Gandhi in a traditional perspective. I used to think that what my father and grandfather were saying was completely insane—in the age of computers they were talking about charkhas. I discovered Gandhi through the perspective of ecology and the environment and that's why I moved into khadi."

As I leave Melkote, I take in the rapidly passing fields and villages in the gloaming—that transient time between sunset and nightfall, where the fleeting light of day meets the first tinge of inky night—and marvel at the timeless, lasting impact of one man's inquiries into the self and society. **



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It's tough having the legendary Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan as your father. But it was tough love that brought out the prodigious talent in sitar maestro Shakir Khan, finds **Suchismita Pai**



hakir Khan was home for the Eid holidays and, this time, he got to celebrate the festival with this father, Padma Shri Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan. That's a rare treat for the young sitar maestro, on whose able shoulders rests the legacy of one of the world's oldest and greatest classical traditions: the Etawa Gharana.

For the 34 year-old musician, home in Pune is a place filled with revelry and impromptu music sessions. It was Shakir's great-great-grandfather Ustad Imdad Khan who founded the Etawa Gharana, which has focused exclusively on the sitar and surbahar, a variant of the sitar.

The eighth in an unbroken chain of musical talent, Shakir is very much his father's son. He has spent years of rigorous training under his dad, and says his heart lifts at the very hint of praise from his reticent mentor. Trained initially as a Hindustani classical vocalist and on the tabla, Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan is recognised as one of the finest living sitar players in the world. Now his son is making him proud with his brilliant performances at some of the most prestigious music festivals across India.

He has also made a foray into international fusion, with performances with the European jazz ensemble, Taalism, and Indian bands Mukti and Soundscape. Indeed, from Ustad Imdad Khan, whose performance was lauded by Queen Victoria, then monarch of England, to the highly decorated Ustad Shahid Parvez, Shakir Khan has had rather large shoes to fill.

Excerpts from a chat with the young maestro....

I cannot remember a time when there was no music at home. It probably coursed through my mother's veins and certainly my father's. So I have listened to it in my mother's womb. I have woken up to the stains of *riyaaz* reverberating through the house and have been lulled to sleep by music. I once fell asleep listening to music right in the middle of Laxmi Road, during the Dagdu-Sheth Ganapati Festival in Pune. My dad was playing at the concert and I wandered on to the stage as I was often wont to do. While everyone else was enthralled by it, I dozed off right next to him as



It was my mom who would enforce the rigour. She would ensure we put in the requisite practice as mandated by my father even when he was travelling. She would be his eyes and ears. So I give equal credit to both my parents for making me who I am. My brother and sister play musical instruments but only as a hobby. I was the oldest and first to start learning from my father. I also ended up being the one who pursued it as a vocation. I chose to follow the musical legacy and the only pressure I feel is what I subject myself to.

My father handed me my first sitar at the age of four, when I could barely hold it, and I got my first lesson ensconced in his lap. Maybe it was the security of his lap that has cocooned me all along and helped me accomplish so much. Unlike teenagers who rebel, I was more than content to follow in my father's footsteps. I never really thought of anything else. I was interested in math but it was a purely academic interest.

I liked the idea of solving math problems and in some ways music, too, is about the right notes adding up.

I was raised in the *gurukul* system, where all my father's students were treated as equals. I was a student first and son next, especially when it came to class. There were no special lessons, no extra attention just to push me ahead. We have all imbibed that from my father and believe privilege has to be earned, not inherited.

My father was never effusive with praise but if he said 'theek

hai' [that's okay], it was high praise and my heart would leap. He believes encouragement is different from tareef or praise. That is also a family tradition. His father held him to high standards of performance as he does me. I believe it is the highest compliment as it propels us to what is most pure.

He was more a guru than a father, perhaps also because no other child in school or around us had a teacher who was also their parent. It was unusual but I felt quite privileged.

My father has never used his reputation to help me get ahead. I have earned every public performance I have given as the organisers wanted me there. If they ever asked him, he would tell them to listen to me first and take me only if they liked what they heard. His philosophy was that you could get one performance because of your lineage

but if you want to be successful, you need to prove your mettle through your talent. He did this for himself and expected nothing less from us.

I have forayed into international, fusion music and my father has never frowned upon my choices. He is a purist but not in the usual sort of way. He believes, and has inculcated in us the belief, that whatever we do, we must do it with dedication. Dedication and devotion are pure, whether you are experimenting with jazz, or flamenco, or any other form of music. There is so much to learn about music from every part of the world and he encourages me to give it my all while staying rooted.

I treasure many childhood memories of me and my dad. I was an avid cricket fan and player as a child. Once, when I was eight years old, I was practising music with my father even though I was to play a cricket match with

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my friends. I was distracted and my father noticed my lack of focus. Upon learning that my mind was on cricket, rather than chastising me, he got me kitted up with cricket togs and took me to the ground. He waited till the match was over, cheered me on and then took me home. Once back home, we resumed practice where we had stopped, as if it was the most regular thing to interrupt music practice for a game of cricket!

It is not always possible to coordinate our travel, performances and engagements, and that makes playing with my father all the more precious. At

the Tansen Festival in Gwalior in 2007, we both reached the venue separately and met on stage. There were no preordained performance sets, and my father started on an impromptu note, inviting me to join in with a mere glance. I could tell he was happy with my performance as I matched him note for note; as it reached a crescendo, the music held not just the audience but all of us in its embrace. Playing with my father is exhilarating. He can, with a mere look, signal where the music is going and spur me on and help me evolve as a musician.

I idolise my father and always have. He is happy with where I am but there are miles to go before I fulfil my part in our musical legacy. My father and I both go where our music takes us but Pune is home. And when we meet, like this Eid, I treasure every moment. The love, laughter, conversation and strains of music... it is all in perfect harmony. What more could a musician want? **





When divinity illuminates ghats of Varanasi

Earthen lamps add sparkle to Dev Deepawali celebration in the city of temples

he ghats of Varanasi always fill one with spiritual energy. However, there is one particular occasion in the year when divinity descends upon all the banks of the Ganga—the evening of Kartik Purnima—when the holy city celebrates Dev Deepawali.

On the full moon day of the Kartik month, which falls 15 days after Diwali, the 80-odd ghats of Benaras are illuminated with earthen lamps or *diya*, conveying a semblance of celestial celebration. It is believed that on this day Gods descend on the earth; millions of lamps are lit to

accord them a grand welcome. It is also believed that it was on this day that demon Tripurasura was killed by Lord Shiva. Hence, Dev Deepawali is also known as Tripurotsav and celebrates the victory of good over evil. Not just the ghats, but even the temples of Varanasi are decked up with lamps to make it a grand spectacle.

Dev Deepawali is not a celebration in isolation. In fact, it's the grand culmination of the four-day Ganga Mahotsava that starts on Prabodhini Ekadashi. Although the events are supported by UP Tourism, it's the people's participation that makes it truly spectacular.

On Kartik Purnima, locals as well as tourists start collecting on the ghats—Dasashwamedh ghat being the most sought after—for



taking part in the celebrations. While most take part in the decoration, some just come to soak in the dazzling sight.

The actual celebration starts with an invocation to Lord Ganesha through Ganpati Vandana. Dev Deepavali ceremony is performed by 21 Brahmins and 41 girls chanting vedic mantras, followed by Deep-Daan or offering of lamps to the Gods.

As dusk sets in, the steps of all ghats—from Varuna to Assi—are lit with millions of earthen lamps. The river also gets a cover of thousands of floating lamps, as devotees welcome the Gods by floating diya in the Ganga. If you thought Ganga Aarti in Varanasi was a big draw, just watch the maha aarti that follows Deep-Daan on Dev Deepawali. It would render all other aartis lacklustre.

The beautifully illuminated evening culminates in Nritya Ganga, a performance by world-famous artistes such as Birju Maharaj, Girija Devi, Chhannulal Mishra and Rajan-Sajan Mishra on the ghat.

"If one wants to see Kashi in all its glory, one must visit the holy city during the five days of Ganga Mahotsava and Dev Deepawali. The city never looks so radiant," says Rajendra Mishra, who owns a holiday home for backpackers near Assi Ghat.

"For most travellers and spiritual seekers alike, Varanasi is a dream destination. People from all over the world throng the city and stay here for days, seeking spiritual peace, meditating on the banks of the holy river Ganga and paying several visits to the temples in what is popularly known as the city of temples. Dev Deepawali in Varanasi or Dev Diwali is that time of the year when Varanasi truly seems like an abode of the Gods, not just of temples.," says travel writer Pallavi Siddhanta in her ode to the festival on 'www.holidify.com'.

As mentioned earlier, Dev Deepawali is the time when Ganga Mahotsava reaches its zenith. The four day-festival is celebrated by locals as a mark of gratitude to the holy river. The first three days of the festival showcase the cultural wealth of the city and are completely devoted to music and dance. With the who's who of Indian classical music and dance performing on the bank of the Ganga, thousands of tourists descend from all over the world to watch them live. The mahotsav

factfile

Main dates

11 November—Ganga Mahotsava starts on Prabodhini Ekadashi

14 November—Dev Deepawali on Kartik Purnima

How to reach

Air: From Delhi, Mumbai and Lucknow

Train: From all major destinations Road: From all major destinations

Distance

Delhi—800 km approx

Mumbai—1,488 km approx

Lucknow—275 km approx

is also an opportunity to savour local delicacies at makeshift shops that spring up all along the ghats. From *litti-chokha* to Banarasi *chaat* and from *jalebi* to *rabri*, one can have the best of it all at one place.

So, what are you waiting for? Plan your trip in advance. A little delay, and you might miss the bus. Dev Deepawali after all is the occasion when Varanasi becomes the most sought-after destination!

—Namita Bajpai



The INNOVATOR

Sai Prabha Kamath in a rare conversation with India's foremost technocrat Dr Raghunath A Mashelkar, who believes it is the power of ideas—not the size of the budget—that fuels innovation

t's not often you get to meet one of the greatest scientists and nation-builders of our times. Thus, the task of interviewing India's foremost technocrat Dr Raghunath Anant Mashelkar was admittedly daunting. Not to mention that researching this multifarious personality turned out to be a never-ending exercise!

A good omen, however, was the date of our interview, 27 July—the first death anniversary of legendary scientist-former president Dr A P J Abdul Kalam—making our meeting extra special. Dressed impeccably in a dark blue suit, Dr Mashelkar receives us warmly in his spotless and sophisticated office on Pune's Baner Road, unmindful of our early arrival. And as we begin to understand the man behind the scientist, a shloka from the Ramayana comes to mind: Janani Janma-bhoomischa Swargadapi Gariyasi (Mother and motherland are superior to heaven).

Over the years, the 73 year-old's life and career have reflected this belief. Brought up by his poor, widowed mother, he strived to fulfil her wish—of scaling great peaks in education. In 2010, in her memory, he instituted the annual Anjani Mashelkar Inclusive Innovation Award under the aegis of the International Longevity Centre-India (ILC-I) (of which he is president), in an effort to fuel ultra low-cost solutions for the poor and elderly.

Indeed, since the 1970s, his work has dovetailed with the government's efforts in nation-building and he has played a crucial role in shaping the country's science and technology policies. As chairman of the National Innovation Foundation and Reliance Innovation Council, he is deeply

involved with India's innovation movement and has been promoting the concept of Gandhian engineering—getting 'more from less for more'—around the world. As president of Global Research Alliance, an organisation with 60,000 scientists across the world, he scripted the \$ 55-million Vietnam Inclusive Innovation project and, as a result, has become the global ambassador for 'inclusive innovation' that meets the needs of people with a low income. What's more, for over two decades, Dr Mashelkar has been propagating a balanced intellectual property rights regime and has spearheaded the successful challenge to the US patent on Basmati rice as well as the use of turmeric for healing wounds.

Little wonder then, that 35 institutions, including the universities of London, Salford, Pretoria, Wisconsin, Swinburne and Delhi, have conferred honorary doctorates on him. And his pioneering work has won him accolades aplenty including the S S Bhatnagar Prize (1982), Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Technology Award (1991), JRD Tata Corporate Leadership Award (1998), the Padma Shri (1991), the Padma Bhushan (2000), Material Scientist of the Year Award (2000), Star of Asia Award (2005), President of Indian National Science Academy (2004-06) and the Padma Vibhushan (2014).

Never one to rest on past laurels, Dr Mashelkar—nicknamed Ramesh—powers ahead. Often referred to as a 'dangerous optimist' for his positive vision for India, he is very active on social networking service Twitter. "I am a great believer in spreading good news and have great fun on my Twitter handle," he says. Pointing to his tweets in memory of Dr Kalam, he says, "The entire nation misses him. Today, while paying respects to the People's President, I have recalled my memories with him."

"IN SPITE OF BEING A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED COUNTRY, INDIA HAS DONE WELL IN SCIENCE. I AM HAPPY TO SEE YOUNG MINDS TURNING TO SCIENCE; THE QUALITY OF OUR RESEARCH IS GOING UP AND OUR PRESENCE IS BEING FELT IN THE WORLD OF SCIENCE"

EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW

A bright young boy with a humble beginning... please share your journey.

I was six when my father passed away and my mother, with me in tow, moved from our native village Mashel to Mumbai to make a living. She did odd jobs to make ends meet; even two square meals a day was a struggle for us. Until I was 12, I walked barefoot and studied under the streetlights, I went to Union High School, a Marathi medium municipal school in Girgaum. It was supposed to be the poor school for the poor but the teachers were rich in values and ideologies. Despite being one of the toppers in the SSC Board Examination, I considered quitting studies as my mother didn't have the means to afford higher education. Our friends collected ₹ 200 to get me admission in Jai Hind College. Subsequently, I could continue my education due to a scholarship granted by the Sir Dorab Tata Trust. It is rather paradoxical that I still go to Bombay House—where I used to go every month and collect the ₹ 60 scholarship amount—as I am on the board of directors of Tata Motors and chairman of their CSR committee. Life has truly come full circle.

Who were your inspirations and mentors? What were the turning points?

My first inspiration is my mother, an unlettered woman herself, who goaded me to achieve more in studies. My second inspiration is my science teacher Principal Bhave from Union High School who ignited the passion for science in me and gave me the philosophy of life, 'Focus and you can achieve anything'. My first turning point was meeting my guru Prof Manmohan Sharma under whom I completed my PhD within three years. I have imbibed a lot of values from him. Ours is a unique combination of guru and shishya—both of us are FRS [Fellows of the Royal Society]. Another turning point was meeting my mentor Bharat Ratna Prof C N R Rao later in my life. He has the ability to set very high goals and spot young talent. Even today, at 83, he has the energy of an 18 year-old; he gets up at 4.30 am every day and by 8.30 am,

he is in the laboratory. He still produces 40-50 research papers a year. Meeting this amazing person had a deep impact on my life. He gave me the important lesson of climbing up a limitless ladder of excellence. He has received all awards in science except the Nobel Prize and hopefully he will receive it sooner than later.

Following a degree and doctorate in chemical engineering (from the University of Bombay), you had a cosy job in the UK. What made you return to India?

That was an important career decision I made in 1974 when I returned to India from the UK, where I was well-settled. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had sent Director General of CSIR Dr Y Nayudamma to get the best and the brightest minds from India settled around the world, and offer them jobs on the spot, cutting red tape. Dr Nayudamma painted such a picture about the future of India and the need for young scientists in nation-building that within half an hour of meeting him, I decided to head back home. The fact that there were many more attractive offers from other countries didn't matter at that time because I always think from my heart.

What has been the most memorable moment of your life?

When I received the FRS, in London, in 1998. I signed in the same book where Newton had signed. I was thrilled to discover Newton's signature on page 9! For a boy who walked barefoot till 12, it was a moment of great pride.

You have coined the term 'Gandhian engineering'—innovating in a way different from standard practice. How significant is it for the world today?

Mahatma Gandhi said, "The world has enough for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed."
When you have an exhaustible resource, it is our duty to conserve it for future generations. Reflecting upon this Gandhian philosophy, in 2008, I created the mantra 'Gandhian engineering' to





Photographs courtesy: Dr R A Mashelkar

get 'more from less for more'. We would always do less from less. If one can afford a scooter, we try and give him a better scooter for the same price. But Ratan Tata set out to make a car for the same price without compromising on quality. This way, we are getting more from less for more [people]. This is affordable excellence. Even the poor have aspirations—they have the right to enjoy the same quality at an affordable price. However, this requires a completely different strategy. In 2010, C K Prahalad, one of the greatest thought leaders, and I wrote what later turned out to be a breakthrough paper, "Innovation's Holy Grail", for Harvard Business Review that showed how exactly we can achieve that. The incredible idea of 'more from less for more' has now caught the attention of the world; in fact, the World Economic Forum held a session on it only six months after we published our paper. The basic concept of Gandhian engineering—creating products and services with quality. sustainability and affordability—has come to centrestage now.

Are you happy with India's progress in science and technology?

In spite of being a resource-constrained country, India has done well in science. Indians may not have won many Nobel Prizes in science—but that cannot be the only benchmark. I am happy to see young minds turning to science; the quality of our research is going up and our presence is being felt in the world of science. In technology, too, we have

done well in terms of affordable excellence. We have done a Mars mission for just \$ 74 million, whereas the US did it for \$ 671 million. When we were denied the cryogenic engine and supercomputer by other nations, we came up with our own versions without anybody's help. Through our indigenous Chandrayaan-1, we were the first to discover water on the moon's surface. I am happy that we have accomplished these milestones with limited resources and a low-cost Indian budget.

Indeed, we are seeing reverse brain drain in India now....

Earlier, Indian scientists, academicians and researchers looking for greener pastures turned to other countries. But the scenario is changing and India is becoming a land of opportunities. As industrial enterprises are seriously getting into research and innovation, there is great demand for scientists here. Around 1,000 leading foreign companies have set up their research and development centres in places such as Bengaluru, Chennai, Pune, Gurgaon and Hyderabad, and around 2 lakh scientists and technologists are working with them. With our institutions expanding rapidly— 30 new central universities, several new IITs and IIITs—graduates from top schools like Berkeley, MIT and Cambridge are accepting faculty positions in India. Today, more and more high-quality young scientists are returning home as our facilities are as good as other countries and technological advancement is on a par with the world. In fact,

Mashelkar
with family
in England
in the
1970s;
with
mother and
wife—"two
women
who have
a played a
major role"
in his life

:: cover feature ::





With Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, "a close friend for over four decades": with young winners of the National Innovation Foundation's awards for children in March 2016 at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi

India has become a global research and development platform, something I had predicted in 1995 in my Thapar Memorial Lecture, which was presided over by none other than Dr Manmohan Singh. But people refused to believe me then and called me a 'dangerous optimist'. Twenty years later, that dream has come true!

Have there been limitations to research and development in the country?

Yes, only our mindset. We have been satisfied with being first to India. But we have to dream of being first to the world. We have to open new windows of knowledge ourselves. When we do the first, we are followers. When we do the second, we become leaders. Breakthroughs should take place in our country. When people complain about lack of resources in the country for research and development. I give them the example of a young scientist, Konstantein Novoselov in his mid-30s from Russia who made the revolutionary discovery of graphene [considered a wonder material in electronics with the potential to transform the future] using just scotch tape and flakes of carbon graphite. The groundbreaking experiment led him to share a Nobel Prize in Physics with Andre Geim, in 2010. Hence, it is the power of the ideas that matter, not size of the budget. In fact, one can see more innovation in adversity.

As president of ILC-I, what made you institute the Anjani Mashelkar Inclusive Innovation Award, named after your late mother?

Though my mother faced many a hardship, she led a life of courage and dignity, and motivated me to scale great heights in academics. I instituted the award honouring her last wish—of using science to help the disadvantaged and poor elderly. Through the award, we endeavour to promote inclusive innovation rooted in Gandhian engineering. Our ultimate goal is making high tech work for the poor. Solutions should be extremely affordable—not just low-cost, but ultra low-cost (see page 50). That is the true meaning of inclusive innovation—not just the 'best practice' but the 'next practice'.

You chair the expert panel of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. What is your roadmap for a clean India? Is it a distant dream?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has, indeed, set a challenging target by 2019. I chair the 19-member committee that will leverage technology to improve sanitation and the availability of potable water in India. We are building close to 50,000 toilets per day, ahead of our target, except the fact that it is uneven in different states. I believe the bigger challenge is in creating social awakening in using toilets. However, I appreciate

"WE HAVE TO DREAM OF BEING FIRST TO THE WORLD. WE HAVE TO OPEN NEW WINDOWS OF KNOWLEDGE OURSELVES, RATHER THAN JUST LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOWS CREATED BY OTHERS. WHEN WE DO THE FIRST, WE ARE FOLLOWERS. WHEN WE DO THE SECOND, WE BECOME LEADERS"

our prime minister for his courage and conviction in starting this campaign that has become a mass movement. I hope we live up to his expectations.

What is your secret to success?

Work, work and work. I get up at 4.30 am and don't go to bed before 11.30 pm. Five hours of sleep is more than adequate for me.

What are your other interests?

I don't go to bed without listening to classical Indian music, though I don't understand its nuances. I find it soothing and relaxing. I have an amazing collection of technical books and biographies—from celebrities and politicians to sportsmen and leaders. I am more interested in reading about the process in which personalities developed.

I believe your wife Vaishali was your student before marriage....

[Smiles] Yes, my wife Vaishali is the sister of my close friend. I was tasked with giving her tuitions in subjects where she was weak, and I fell in love with her. She is a wonderful human being and has played an incredible role in my life. Also, she is a fabulous artist and has held exhibitions of her paintings in Pune and Mumbai. With my 24×7 work schedule, she has brought up our children, Shruti, Shubhra and Amey, admirably.

What do they do?

My daughter Shruti has done her master's in communication studies from Pune University and is a homemaker. My second daughter Shubhra is a lawyer in the US. My son Amey is with GenNext Ventures—he leads the accelerator for start-ups, trying to contribute his own bit to our prime minister's mission of 'Start-up India'!

Do you think technology has made lives easier for silvers?

Certainly. Today, I find many elders quite at ease with their smartphones. Messaging services such as

MILESTONES

1982: S S Bhatnagar Prize

1991: Padma Shri

1995-2006: Director General, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi; enunciated

"CSIR 2001: Vision & Strategy"

1998: Fellow, Royal Society (FRS), London

2000: Padma Bhushan

2003: Medal of Engineering Excellence by World Federation of Engineering Organisations, Paris

2004-06: President of Indian National Science Academy

2005: The first Asian scientist to receive the Business Week (USA) Stars of Asia Award

2010: Wrote "Innovation's Holy Grail", a path-breaking paper, along with C K Prahalad for *Harvard Business Review*

2011: Released the book, Reinventing India

2014: Padma Vibhushan

Oct 2016: To receive his 36th honorary doctorate from Monash University, Australia

WhatsApp and Skype and social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter are helping them beat loneliness. With lifestyle apps, silvers are finding it easier to keep a tab on their health and fitness too.

While keeping themselves busy, how can silvers become change agents?

Your biological age doesn't matter—you are as old as you think you are. At 93, Sir G I Taylor wrote a single-author paper on the stability of the soap bubble. Hildebrand wrote about diffusion in structured solids when he was celebrating his 100th birthday. Each one is capable of contributing to society in their own way. Keep going till your last moment. *





ANJALI MASHELKAR INCLUSIVE INNOVATION AWARD WINNER 2015

RAHUL RASTOGI AGASTA SOFTWARE PVT LTD FOR SANKET FCG DEVICE

The product: Sanket ECG Device is a hi-tech innovative solution for personal cardiac care. This pocket-sized heart rate device is the fastest, most affordable and accurate monitor for cardiovascular diseases and stress management.

The catalyst: Stress and cardiovascular diseases are global killers, with about 4 crore people across the world dying every year because they fail to reach the hospital on time. A majority of Indians live in rural areas, away from hospitals. Thus, a device that affordably, accurately and speedily monitors the heart health of Indians is the need of the hour. This realisation—and his own father's heart condition that couldn't be operated upon owing to diabetes—prompted Rahul Rastogi and his wife Neha to develop a prototype device that could detect heart trouble. This led to the birth of the Sanket ECG device.

How it works: The 12-lead ECG recorder is a quick screening and analytic tool that connects to a smartphone wirelessly. Just place both thumbs on the glass slots and wait for the readings; within a few minutes, it displays and records the ECG graphs. The ECG report can be shared easily with a doctor via email or Bluetooth. As it is user-friendly, Sanket can be used to monitor heart health on a daily basis.

USP: The device marks a dramatic shift in the way we approach cardiac care, doing away with expensive ECG machines, distant hospitals or laboratories, and skilled technicians. Being affordable, it has been mass-adopted in rural set-ups. The company is working closely with tech giants and will soon have a simultaneous data processing capability of 1 million. What's more, the analytics will be able to predict heart and overall health in a mere 15 seconds of use.

Cost and availability: While a conventional ECG machine costs ₹ 40,000 to ₹ 200,000, the

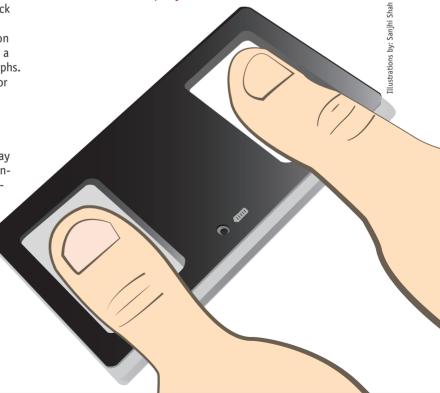


Sanket ECG monitor costs just ₹ 9,999 and is available on Amazon; Android and iPhone apps are also available free of cost. For more details, visit www.agatsa.com

DID YOU KNOW?

- ECG (electrocardiography) is a non-invasive procedure to monitor heart activity.
- It is performed on a patient with symptoms like pain or discomfort in the chest, palpitations, abdominal pain, nausea and weakness.
- ECG displays the readings in the form of signals that are understood by specialists.
- The electrical impulses determine your heart's rhythm.
- ECG doesn't send any electricity through your body; it merely measures the electricity in your heart.





ANJALI MASHELKAR INCLUSIVE INNOVATION AWARD WINNER 2013

LEO MAVLEYAXIO BIOSOLUTIONS FOR AXIOSTAT

The product: Axiostat is a sterile, non-absorbable haemostatic dressing for wound in trauma care for temporary control of bleeding wounds. This clinically validated product can help save the lives during emergencies such as accidents and disasters. It is also useful for people with bleeding disorders and those who use blood thinners—many silvers are on blood-thinning medications, for whom profuse and unstoppable bleeding can be life-threatening.

The catalyst: According to inclusive innovator Leo Mavley, globally almost 10 people die every minute from traumatic





traumatic life-threatening bleeding is the cause of death. Unfortunately, trauma care, which is essential to improve chances of survival and prevent lifelong disabilities in victims, is not easily accessible to all. In fact, according to a report by WHO, injury is expected to be the third leading cause of death in India by 2020. Having taken bleeding patients to hospitals, Mavley realised the need for a product that stems traumarelated bleeding.

How it works: Axiostat utilises a unique patented manufacturing process that can control severe haemorrhage within minutes. It uses 'chitosan', a natural biomaterial extracted from shellfish that is highly purified and processed. The technology works on the principle of adhesion owing to charge. It is designed to be positively charged; blood cells carry a net negative charge. You just need to place the dressing on the wound and apply uniform pressure for two minutes. When the blood comes in contact with Axiostat, oppositely charged components attract and form bonds. This results in a strong adhesive seal that acts as a mechanical barrier preventing blood from leaking out.

USP: Axio Biosolutions is the first company in India to design, develop and commercialise an emergency haemostat for trauma care that is effective and affordable. For details, visit www.axiobio.com

DID YOU

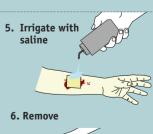
- Haemostatic agents are used during surgical procedures to achieve haemostasis, or clotting of the blood.
- They vary on the basis of their action, composition, ease of application, adherence to tissue and cost.
- Categories of haemostatic dressings include haemostats, sealants and adhesives.







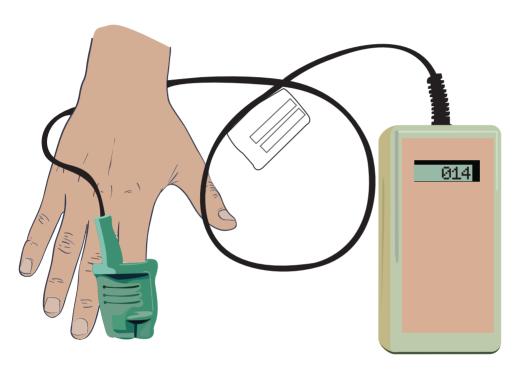
4. Apply secondary dressing if necessary





MYSHKIN INGAWALE BIOSENSE TECHNOLOGIES FOR TOUCHB





The product: ToucHb is a needle-free anaemia screening technique. It is a low-cost, portable, systemic healthcare solution with the potential to help millions in developing countries.

The catalyst: Undiagnosed and untreated anaemia can often be life-threatening. Anaemia, or abnormally low haemoglobin in the blood, affects more than half the children under five years of age all over the world and is also the biggest cause of maternal mortality in the developing countries. According to a study, 136,000 women die during childbirth every year because of complications at birth, most of which are associated with undetected anaemia which is often left untreated. Innovator

Myshkin Ingawale developed ToucHb from the conviction that these deaths were completely preventable.

How it works: ToucHb comes with a probe into which the finger is inserted. The probe is embedded with tiny diodes that send a signal to an iPad-sized device, which measures the haemoglobin levels in the blood.

USP: ToucHb is simple, inexpensive and non-invasive and requires no needles, hi-tech gadgets or trained assistants, making it ideal for rural areas. Ease of use, speed of diagnosis and affordability without compromise on quality make this device outstanding. For details, visit www.biosense.in

FAST FACTS

- Anaemia develops when the blood lacks enough healthy red blood cells or haemoglobin.
- Certain forms
 of anaemia are
 hereditary and
 infants may be
 affected from the
 time of birth.
- A person with anaemia feels tired, breathless and experiences low energy, heart palpitations and symptoms of fainting.
- Women in the childbearing age are susceptible to anaemia owing to loss of blood from menstruation.
- Older adults are prone to low haemoglobin levels owing to a poor diet and other health conditions.

DR BHAWANA CHANANA DIRECTOR-PROFESSOR AMITY UNIVERSITY

FOR LOW-COST HYGIENE PRODUCTS



The product: Inclusive innovator Dr Bhawana Chanana's low-cost diaper for adult incontinence is a path-breaking innovation to improve the hygiene in poor elders. It uses indigenously available raw material (extracted from virgin waste like cotton knitwear fabric waste and agro-residues like bagasse from sugarcane fibres) to recycle, upcycle and process low-cost adult diapers. Dr Chanana's other innovation is Suvidha, a low-cost brand of quality sanitary napkins made of cotton knitwear.

The catalyst: After completing her PhD in fabric and apparel science from Delhi University's Department of Home Science. Dr Chanana worked with the Government's Department of Science and Technology (DST) and helped set up units and machines in the rural and peri-urban areas. Having worked closely with silvers and during her visits to hospitals and old-age homes, she realised urinary incontinence is a real concern that often goes neglected. With the cost of a normal adult diaper as prohibitively expensive as ₹ 45 to ₹ 80 per unit, elders, especially in old-age homes, are left suffering. Also, her work with women led her to realise the crying need for low-cost sanitary napkins to promote better personal hvgiene.

How it works: These diapers significantly reduce skin irritation that normally leads to the formation of bedsores and reduce the risk of mishaps owing to involuntary leakage of urine from the bladder in silvers. And the sanitary napkins made of knitwear waste are eco-friendly, highly absorbent and safe to use.

USP: Owing to the indigenous design and the engagement of NGOs and self-help groups to produce and market these

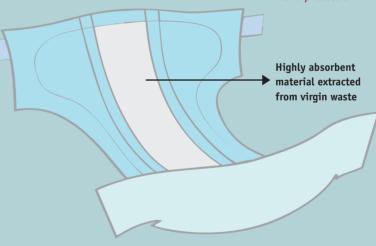
products, they are affordable and accessible, without compromising on quality. Both products stand their ground against more expensive products in the market—the diapers measure up in terms of looks, length, girth and thickness to suit the user, while a three-cycle assessment of the napkins received a positive response from women.

Cost and availability: The diapers cost ₹ 15 to ₹ 18 per unit (up to one-fourth the cost of commercially available diapers) while the sanitary napkin is available at ₹ 1 per unit. Both products are available all over India. To learn more, contact bhawanachanana@gmail.com

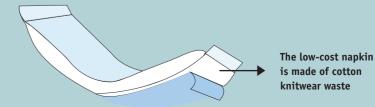
WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN ADULT DIAPER

- The diaper should hug your body correctly.
- It should be comfortable to wear.
- It should be highly absorbent to soak in the moisture and prevent sores or rashes.
- It should protect from odours.
- It should give you complete coverage and protection.

LOW-COST ADULT DIAPER



ECO-FRIENDLY SANITARY NAPKIN



:: cover feature ::

ANJALI MASHELKAR INCLUSIVE INNOVATION AWARD WINNER 2011

DR SHYAM VASUDEV & K CHANDRASHEKHAR

FORUS HEALTH FOR 3NFTHRA



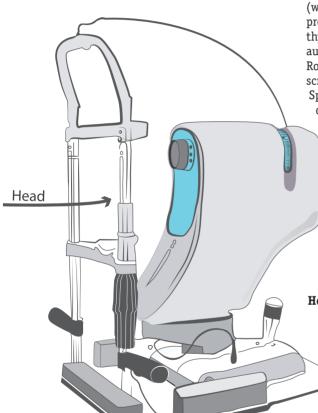
The product: 3nethra is a portable non-invasive, non-mydriatic (without dilating the pupil), low-cost imaging device that helps pre-screen five major eye diseases—cataract, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, cornea and refractive error—with its inbuilt, auto-detection software. It is available in three types, Classic, Royal and Flora; besides which there is 3nethra Neo for neonatal screening; 3nethra Kiddo for refraction for kids; and 3nethra Specto, the world's first wearable phoropter (ophthalmic testing device/refractor).

The catalyst: India has 15 million people suffering from blindness; 80 per cent of these cases could have been prevented with timely screening. While working at the Philips Innovation Campus (the Bangalore-based R&D unit of Netherlands-based Philips), Dr Shyam Vasudev and K Chandrashekhar, inspired by Aravind Eye Care, aimed to develop an affordable, technology-based solution for early detection of eye diseases. They worked further to develop such a device at the Indian Institute of Science and created 3nethra.

How it works: 3nethra has a retinal camera with an inbuilt refractometer. It captures images of the retina and generates an automatic report about the problem within five minutes of screening.

USP: Affordable, profitable and sustainable, 3nethra enables those at risk of losing their eyesight to detect the problem early and start treatment. It can be operated by a minimally trained operator and presents a value proposition for everyone in the eye-care chain, from silvers to doctors, eye hospitals, rural entrepreneurs and pharmaceutical companies.

Cost and availability: 3nethra costs just one-sixth of the price of collective prescreening devices at ₹ 500,000, compared to other devices that range between ₹ 500,000 and ₹ 1.8 million. Manufactured in Bengaluru, it is available all over the world—to date, there have been 1,200 installations in 25 countries and has touched the lives of 2 million people. For more details, visit ♀ www.forushealth.com



OTHER TYPES OF EYE IMAGING

Optical coherence tomography

Colour fundus photography

Fluorescein angiography

Indocyanine green angiography

Fundus autofluorescence

Corneal topography

Slit-lamp photography

External photography

External photographyOptic nerve head analysis

Endothelial cell-layer photography



Harmony-Celebrate Age

www.magzter.com

India's premier magazine for senior citizens, Harmony-Celebrate Age, is now available on international digital news stand Magzter











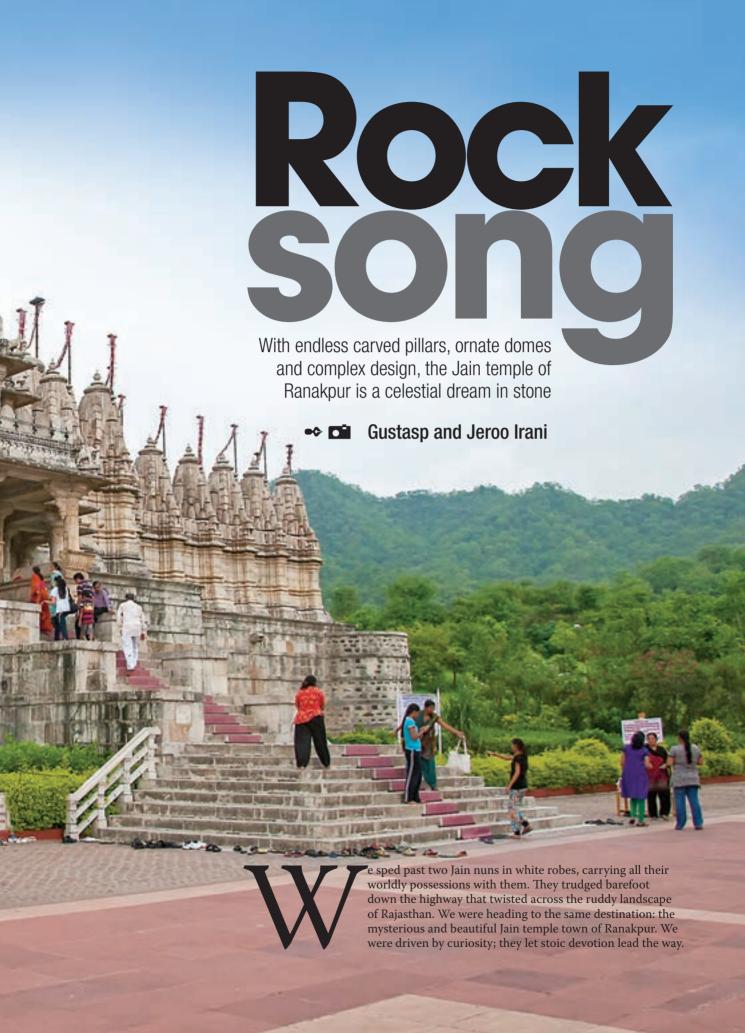


The magazine can now be downloaded and read on a variety of digital platforms such as iPad, iPhone, Android, Windows 8 and tablets.

Download the free Magzter app or log on to http://www.magzter.com/IN/Harmony-for-Silvers-Foundation/Harmony---Celebrate-Age/Lifestyle/ today to read the latest issue of Harmony-Celebrate Age.







The moment we stepped inside this architectural marvel, we were awed by the complexity of its design: endless carved pillars, ornate domes and small shrines that encircled the main one that houses the four-sided figure of Lord Adinath, the first of the 24 *tirthankara* (teaching god)

Tucked away in the folds of the forested Aravalli hills, the ancient 15th century temple of Ranakpur, 90 km from Udaipur, has something for everyone. It took us a while, and the promptings of our pujari-guide, to unravel the layout of the temple complex that stands on a massive plinth measuring 48,000 sq ft.

The moment we stepped inside this architectural marvel, we were awed by the complexity of its design: endless carved pillars, ornate domes and small shrines that encircled the main one that houses the four-sided figure of Lord Adinath, the first of the 24 *tirthankara* (teaching god). We were surrounded by a profusion of delicate carved sculptures depicting various deities, saints, celestial beings and playful nymphs.

Slowly, the complex scheme started to unravel into a symmetric whole, as the pujari-guide revealed that the temple has 29 halls, 20 domes and 1,444 pillars, all covered with lavish and delicate carvings. Astoundingly, no two pillars are alike. So also the overhead domes adorned with lavish images around ornate central pendants. The entire complex has been planned in such a way that natural light pours in through open courtyards. And no, it was not the light playing tricks but one pillar was distinctly crooked. According to the resident-pujari, it was intentionally built that way: a flaw to establish the fact that perfection is the prerogative of the Gods.

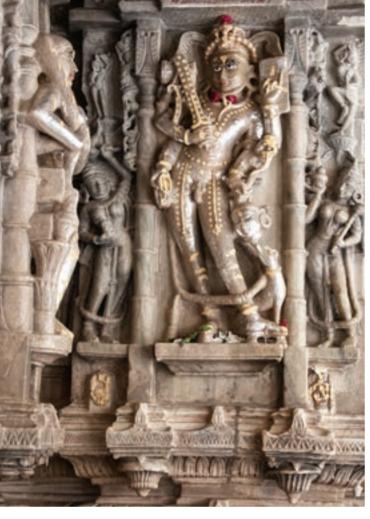
Ranakpur, we felt, was different from most Indian temple towns in that we did not feel a sense of compelling claustrophobia. There was no urgency to pay our respects to the main deities and move on. We could sit in one corner and meditate in the soothing caress of

its spiritual embrace or spend hours admiring this divine creation of embroidered marble.

Captured in stone are delicate etchings that depict scenes from the scriptures. The most striking is a frieze of mesmerising patterns that portray the story of prince Parshava. According to legend, the prince came upon an ascetic performing a fire sacrifice and realised that a snake lay trapped in one of the logs of fire. Overcome by pity, he grabbed an axe and split open the log and set the snake free. Naturally, this offended the ascetic who, because of his penance, was reborn a celestial being. One day while riding across the sky, he saw prince Parshava performing penance and decided to rain on his parade and drown him. Meanwhile, the snake that had been saved from the ascetic's fire was reborn as the lord of the Nagas. He saw Parshava was in danger and spread his thousand-headed hood protectively over the prince's head, coiled himself under his saviour and lifted him above the rising water line.

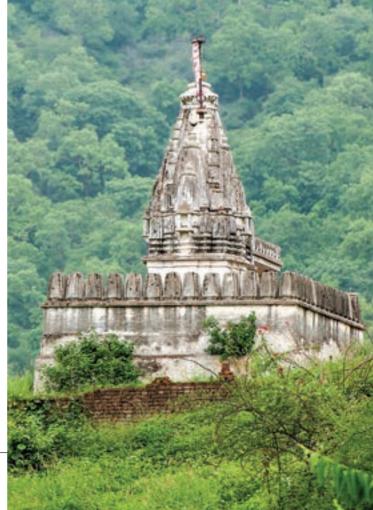
Another small panel depicts Dharnasah, the person who commissioned the temple, and Depa, the sculptor who designed it. Dharnasah was a wealthy Jain and prominent minister in the court of Rana Kumbha, the ruler of Mewar. One night in 1394, Dharnasah had a dream about the celestial vehicle used by heavenly beings and awoke the next day determined to rebuild it on earth in the form of a temple. The king was more than happy to help Dharnasah realise his dream and granted him a site along the banks of river Maghai. His sole condition was that a small township be established around the temple and named after him. Finding the man who could translate his dream into stone

Clockwise from top left: The deities who protect the temple; a pujari grinds a holy paste; one of the smaller temples in the Ranakpur temple complex; prayer drums in a corner of the temple











proved to be a long and frustrating exercise for Dharnasah. Then, one day, Depa, an eccentric recluse, knocked on his door and presented him with an architectural drawing that could well have been conceived in the heavens. Sculptures and craftsmen laboured for almost 50 years before the temple was consecrated in 1439 and dedicated to Lord Adinath.

However, around the 17th century, sensing the gathering of war clouds, the pujaris of the temple played safe and concealed the main statues in cellars under the temple and fled. Invading vandals desecrated the temple and reduced Ranakpur to ruins. Over time, it became the refuge of dacoits and criminals. Then, in the early part of the 20th century, pilgrims rediscovered the temple and were probably amazed that something of such exquisite beauty was lost to the world for so long. With loving care they started to restore it to its pristine glory.

Sharing the temple complex are smaller shrines built in a more conventional style. They might have been impressive if they had been standalone shrines at another location. Sadly, they pale in the shadow of the main structure. We did,

however, stop to pay our respects to the gods enshrined in them, and then moved on to check into Fateh Bagh hotel.

Fateh Bagh has its own fascinating tale to tell. Earlier, this boutique palace hotel of the HRH Group had another avatar, another name and even another location. It was a royal palace known as Rawla Koshilav and located some 50 km from where it now stands. Time and neglect reduced the heritage property to ruins. Then, in 2002, an engineering miracle took place when the crumbling palace was dismantled brick by brick and re-assembled at its present location and enhanced with trimmings that reflected its regal heritage.

As dusk embraced the surrounding Aravalli Hills, we were back at the temple complex to partake in the evening *aarti*. Diyas flickered on the stairs leading into the shrine and the central sanctum. A lone nun sat in front of the main deity lost in meditation, oblivious of her surroundings. We were tempted to capture her moment in pixels but then dropped our cameras to half-mast. It would have been a shame to intrude, as we were restless tourists constantly on the move. She, however, seemed to have arrived at her spiritual destination. **





GETTING THERE

By air and rail: The closest airport and railway station are at Udaipur, 90 km away. By road: State transport and private buses ply between Udaipur and Ranakpur, but services are irregular. The ideal way to get around is by car or private taxi.

ACCOMMODATION

In addition to Fateh Bagh (www.hrhhotels.com), there is Maharani Bagh Orchard, a WelcomHeritage hotel (www.welcomheritagehotels.com) located in the hunting lodge of the former rulers of Jodhpur and Rajasthan Tourism's Hotel Shilpi Tourist Bungalow (www.rajasthantourism.gov.in).

TIPS

Foreigners are allowed inside the temple only after 12.30 pm and may not enter a cordoned-off area in front of the main shrine. Photography is allowed within the temple only after 12.30 pm.









Face value

Picture this: S Balachander with his veena near an imposing boulder, Sunderlal Bahuguna with arms open wide against an excavated hillside, Vikram Seth lost in happy thought, and filmmaker Mrinal Sen leaning on a car door, interspersed with images of *bazigar* (acrobats) from Rajasthan peering softly into the camera. These are just some of the arresting faces, known and unknown, that

photography

feature in photographer Raghu Rai's new photo-book, *People: His Finest Portraits* (Aleph, ₹ 999, 183 pages). Comprising

photographs shot over half a century, the book is a celebration of Rai's 50-year career as a photojournalist and documenter. "Until I began selecting photos for this book, I hadn't realised how many of my good works are actually portraits," says the 73 year-old veteran in the foreword of the book. "The truth that lies beneath the public face is what makes a person interesting to me, and consequently makes for a compelling portrait."

She rocks

here's 'different', and then there's **Geetu Hinduja**. A Mumbai-based singer-songwriter whose music video *Sisterhood* is making waves on the worldwide circuit, the 56 year-old says, in many ways, the song mirrors her own life. Co-written with a friend, the single celebrates womanhood, and the sense of empathy and compassion women have towards each other. **Rachna Virdi** caught up with the elegant musician with her signature chic silver crop, who is having the time of her life.

What gave rise to the video Sisterhood?

Last year, five of us did a bunch of concerts called 'Girls and Guitars'. We were all very different but, as women, there was a strong bond between us. During the concerts, one of the singers, Kelli Eagan from Boston, and I wrote a song together. We called it *Sisterhood* and sang it at the end of every concert. Later, I got some more musicians, tweaked it a little and launched it on YouTube, MTV and VH1 on International Women's Day (8 March) this year.

What was the idea behind the video?

The video comes from the space that is my history—the kind of life I have led and the concerns I've had. I have grown up in a woman-centric family and spent a lot of time with women. We are four siblings; three of us are sisters. After marriage, I had sisters-in-law. I also have three daughters. To some extent, I find women far more interesting than men as they have an interesting way of resolving problems and overcoming difficulties. There are amazing stories about the grit and resilience they exhibit.

A collaboration of different musicians... what was the energy like working together?

Yes, it was a collaboration of eight fabulously talented women. Apart from me, there's Vivienne Pocha, an established Indie musician who sings for Bollywood occasionally; Vasuda Sharma, Shubhangi Joshi and Alisha Pais, all three unique powerhouses who are singer-songwriters and play various instruments, ranging from the ukulele to electric guitar; Nandini Shankar, an accomplished violinist; Mynah Marie who plays the accordion and the keyboards; and Naama, who plays the drums.

What does Sisterhood aim to achieve?

The video aims at bonding between women from all over the world. A woman is able to understand or empathise



with another woman much more than someone from another sex. Ultimately, empathy, compassion, generosity and sharing of space go a long way.

I've been singing for 30 years and have played the guitar

Tell us about your romance with music.

for an almost equal number of years. I got into music
when I was a teenager but in an irreverent and unfocussed
manner and never took it into a professional arena.

After my marriage and second daughter, I studied
the guitar once again and continued to do some
online courses in Hindustani classical music to
evolve on my own. Later, I got into art consultancy but
music was always my first love and I found my way back
into music.

What inspires you in life?

I get inspired by people and their stories. Period. I love listening to interesting stories of humans, their lives, how they survived and what drove them—that inspires me.

What's next for you?

Music. I've just finished doing a new EP [extended play] called *About time*.

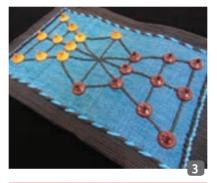




Games of **YORE**

Board games were once a popular source of entertainment among adults and children alike. There was a time when every household had a cardboard or cloth game such as Aliguli Mane (Mancala), Pagaday (similar to Ludo) and even

games chess or Paramapada (Snakes & Ladders). In an attempt to revive interest in these games of yore, Ramsons Kala Pratishtana, a Mysuru-based trust, has been conducting Kreeda Kaushalya, a traditional board games exhibition, since 2007. "In this age of Pokemon Go, Facebook and WhatsApp, people are excited when they see, touch and unfurl a real Pagaday cloth beautifully created in Kalamkari. There is much satisfaction in flicking and cutting your opponent's counter with your own counter!" R G Singh, honorary secretary of Ramsons, tells Harmony-Celebrate Age. Over 25 handcrafted games will be on display (and sale) at Kreedaa Kaushalya till 31 October at Pratima Gallery, Mysuru.











- 1. Pagaday
- 2. Chemmaramma plays *Aliguli Mane* with her grandaughter and the neighbourhood children in her village Ummattur in Karnataka
- 3. Dash Gatti
- 4. Chaukabara
- 5. Batik Navakankari
- 6. Batik Panchi
- 7. Round Paramapada (Snakes & Ladders)

Laxman unplugged

T's R K Laxman like we have rarely seen—unrestrained and unpublished. Conducted by the Indian Institute of Cartoonists (IIC), Bengaluru, Doodu's Doodles is an upcom-

ing exhibition (15-23 October) of 97 doodles by the legendary cartoonist, made over 16 years on a sketch pad given to him by his elder brother R K Srinivasan. "When *Doodu* [as he was fondly





called] would visit us in Mysuru on holiday, he used to doodle while my father and he conversed. So, one day, in 1975, my father brought him a scrapbook and made him doodle on it instead. It usually resulted in that day's conversation having some bearing on the drawings," says Srinivasan's son and Laxman's favourite nephew, R S Krishnaswamy, in a note. It all stopped in 1991, when Srinivasan passed away, but Krishnaswamy was left with a treasure trove of Laxman's doodles that was later picked up by V G Narendra, director of IIC. "Drawn all those years ago, these doodles still find relevance today," Narendra tells us. "So come October, Laxman's birth month, we will exhibit these drawings as a tribute to the legend."

MOHAN BEFORE THE MAHATMA

WHEN THEATRE DIRECTOR MANOJ SHAH THOUGHT TO DO A PLAY ON GANDHI, HE DECIDED TO TELL A STORY LESS TOLD—THAT OF MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI BEFORE HE BECAME THE MAHATMA. BUT WITH LIMITED RECORDS ON GANDHI'S EARLY YEARS, SHAH HAD TO INNOVATE. "I PLACED HIS CHARACTER IN THE CULTURE OF THAT TIME, AND FUSED IT WITH THE LANGUAGE AND STORIES OF THAT PLACE. I WANTED TO SHOWCASE HIS STATE OF MIND AND THE JOURNEY THAT LED HIM TO BEING MAHATMA GANDHI." TITLED MOHAN'S MASALA, THE PLAY IS A FICTIONAL RETELLING OF THE LIFE OF A 20-SOMETHING MOHAN (MONO-ACTED BY PRATIK GANDHI). CONTRARY TO THE IMAGE OF GANDHI AS A LEAN MAN IN A WHITE LOINCLOTH, MOHAN APPEARS IN A PURPLE SUIT AND EXPERIENCES LIFE LIKE A REGULAR YOUNG MAN, EXPERIMENTING WITH SMOKING, NON-VEGETARIAN FOOD AND WOMEN. WRITTEN BY ISHAAN DOSHI. THE PLAY WILL BE STAGED AT ASPEE AUDITORIUM, MUMBAI, ON 2 OCTOBER, GANDHI'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY.





Infinite art

Following the successful showing of Part 1 of *Laxman Shreshtha: The Infinite Project*, Part 2 of the exhibition with his later work will open on 14 October. The two-part retrospective is a celebration of the 79 year-old abstractionist by the Jehangir Nicholson Art Foundation (JNAF) in collaboration with CSMVS, Mumbai. Curated by cultural theorist Ranjit Hoskote, the works on display have been collected over 40 years by Shreshtha's most dedicated patron, the late Jehangir Nicholson himself, before his death in 2001. "Nicholson pursued Shreshta's work relentlessly, resorting to mild subterfuge if the artist was not willing to sell. This has resulted in one of the best collections in the country, with every subsequent decade represented by at least 10 works," says Kamini Sawhney, curator of JNAF, in the exhibition note.

"Classical music is considered to be archaic with no connection to the times today. Neelaji has showed she is in tune with current technology and means of communication through her generous gesture of putting out material and information that was once closely guarded. **Several compositions** ceased to exist because they were not passed on in time to any student. The whole idea of sharing one's entire repertoire — including annotations and comments — is a remarkable move in terms of imparting knowledge. Using the tools in a manner she has done is a fantastic and admirable step."

Hindustani classical vocalist
Shubha Mudgal on Neela
Bhagwat, 74, guru of the
Gwalior Gharana, who
scanned and uploaded her
entire collection of Gwalior
Gharana compositions
acquired over a lifetime
on Wikimedia, speaking
to Mid-day

FACING THE MUSIC



Tarun Bhattacharya, and Sagar Paul on the keyboard, accompanied by the haunting rendition of Vande mataram that seamlessly transforms into Saare jahan se acchha, with Praveen Ghodkindi on the flute. Those who attended the One World Fusion 2016 music concert didn't need their imagination; they caught it live at Ravindra Bharti Auditorium

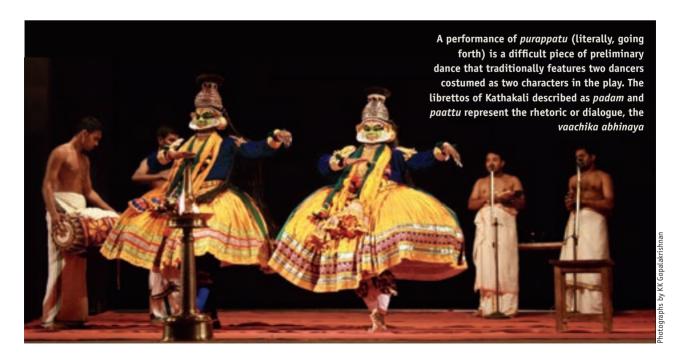
in Hyderabad, on the eve of Independence Day. The event, organised by Sangitanjaly Foundation and supported by Telangana Tourism, was a fundraiser for the Autism Ashram on the outskirts of the city. "I had been looking forward to playing with Tarun Bhattacharya and this was the perfect opportunity to initiate our friendship and professional relationship," Brooks tells us. Adds Pt Bhattacharya, "We had immense joy bringing it together and the audience was truly amazed at what they saw."

—Shyamola Khanna



Dance DIARIES

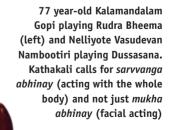
Kerala's landscape and its classical arts have something in common: both are intensely dramatic. Author K K Gopalakrishnan's love for his homeland Kerala and dance form Kathakali inspired him to pen *Kathakali Dance-Theatre: A Visual Narrative of the Sacred Indian Mime* (Niyogi Books; ₹ 3500; 298 pages). In his view, Kathakali, which is woven with colourful and mythical fables and enjoys a rich, 400-year history, is a classical art form that remains contemporary. From its history, evolution and notable exponents to the intricacies of the dance form, he throws light on every aspect of Kathakali, enthralling aficionado and layperson alike. Here are some visual highlights from the book.





Kalamandalam Sangeeth Chakyar playing Arjuna, a pacha in Kutiyattam, in Subhadradhananjayam. Pacha is a type of character that means pious with the face painted in green and portraying satwa guna (virtue/purity). The classification of the types of characters in Kathakali is substantially influenced by Kutiyattam (also Koodiyattam, a form of Sanskrit theatre performed in Kerala)







Chenta training at Kerala Mandalam, where players are trained to play a variety of rhythms. The chenta is primarily made of the core (katal) of superior quality jackfruit trees

Kalamandalam Narayan Nambeeshan playing the *maddalam*. The trunk of the *maddalam* is made from the core of the jackfruit tree. A typical *maddalam* weighs about 15 kg



Kalanilayam Rajan
performing on the itakka. For
the female roles in Kathakali,
the chenta is replaced with
itakka, believed to be a
musical instrument of the
heavens. Itakka is both an
accompaniment for vocal
music as well as percussion
instrument







Celebrated poet **Pablo Neruda** (1904-1973) writes of the need to measure life not in years but in moments well lived

I don't believe in age. All old people carry in their eyes, a child, and children, at times observe us with the eves of wise ancients. Shall we measure in meters or kilometers or months? How far since you were born? How long must you wander until

like all men instead of walking on its we rest below the earth? To the man, to the woman who utilised their energies, goodness, strength, anger, love, tenderness, to those who truly alive flowered, and in their sensuality matured. let us not apply the measure of a time that may be

something else, a mineral mantle, a solar bird, a flower, something, maybe, but not a measure. Time, metal or bird, long petiolate flower, stretch through man's life. shower him with blossoms and with bright water or with hidden sun. I proclaim you

road. not shroud, a pristine ladder with treads of air. a suit lovingly renewed through springtimes around the world. Now, time, I roll you up, I deposit you in my bait box and I am off to fish with your long line the fishes of the dawn!

Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971, Neruda was a Chilean poet and politician. Hailed by Gabriel Garcia Marquez as "the greatest poet of the 20th century in any language", Neruda wrote in green ink, his personal symbol for hope





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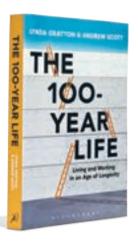
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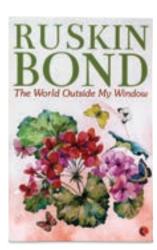
THE 100-YEAR LIFE: LIVING AND WORKING IN AN AGE OF LONGEVITY (Bloomsbury; ₹ 329;

241 pages) offers insight into how to live a long, fulfilling and productive life. Lynda Gratton and Andrew Scott present compelling statistics to show how the average life of humans has gone up over the years and is likely to increase still further in the years to come. Although the statistics are US-(and other developed countries)-centric, the general trend is consistent

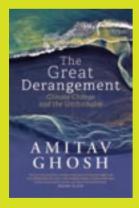
across the globe. The authors point out that the typical three-stage life—education, work and retirement—may be a thing of the past, as Millennials tend to make unconventional decisions about work and relationships. The book is an absolute must-read for anyone who wants to understand the change in societal dynamics. It discusses not just tangible assets such as house and money but intangible ones such as relationships, health, balanced living and knowledge. While the book encompasses mathematics, statistics, economics and psychology, it does so without overwhelming the reader with jargon, always remaining true to its purpose of exploring the complexity of the 100-year life.

Published to mark the 82nd birthday of **Ruskin Bond**, **THE WORLD OUTSIDE MY WINDOW** (**Rupa**; ₹ 150; 120 pages) is an anthology of 38 short stories and poems, and takes a peek into the colourful natural world around us, peopled with innumerable insects and birds. Each section—the wonderful world of insects, birdsong in the mountains and the loveliness of ferns—unravels amazing facts, while providing interesting and intriguing insights. Dragonflies, ladybirds, scorpions, wasps and other big and small insects come alive in Bond's writing. Bulbuls, sparrows, parrots—birds he has seen in Delhi, Dehradun and Mussoorie—all become a part of this ode to nature.

What is remarkable is that Bond's knowledge about flora and fauna is not acquired from pages of a biology text, but gathered over years of his deep and abiding connection with the natural world. Written in simple language, the book promises to be a handy guide for the urban reader, opening up a small window into the wonderful world we often miss out on during the daily grind.



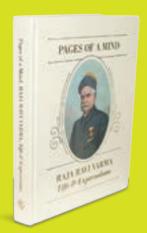
Also on stands



The Great Derangement Amitav Ghosh

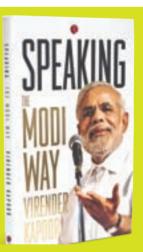
Penguin; ₹ 399; 284 pages

In this groundbreaking return to non-fiction, Ghosh examines our inability to grasp the scale and violence of global warming and climate change.



Pages of a Mind
Edited by Vaishnavi Ramanathan
Piramal Art Foundation; ₹ 2,500;
223 pages

This collection of essays explores the phenomenon of Raja Ravi Varma, a seminal figure in the history of Indian art, and his enduring appeal.



Speaking: The Modi Way Virender Kapoor Rupa; ₹ 195; 145 pages

Analysing the Prime Minister's famed oratorical skills, the author doles out tips on how to speak, persuade and inspire like Narendra Modi.

Write move at 80!

t is rare for a layman to think of writing his autobiography, that too in the silver years. But this is exactly what Dehradun-based householder **Krishan Aneja** has done. At 80, he has written his life story running into nearly 400 pages under the somewhat unusual title, *Karmath Jeevan*. According to Aneja's own admission, all his life he has written nothing but audit objections and notes, and has no pretensions of being a writer.

Aneja and his family arrived in India as refugees from West Punjab after four days of perilous train journey in September 1947. He was 11 then. When his father passed away, it was left to his unlettered mother to shoulder the responsibility of taking care of a large family comprising four sons and three daughters. The family spent a few months in refugee camps in India where Aneja did his initial schooling. Though he began his working life humbly as a junior clerk, Aneja rose step by step in his career, shifting from one company to another, and finally retiring in 1994 as general manager in the finance and accounts department of India's oil behemoth Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd (ONGC). While working, he completed his graduation as a private student.

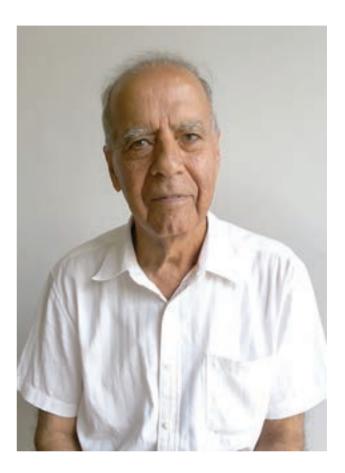
Aneja's story is one of sheer determination and willpower. In an interaction with **Raj Kanwar**—who himself stepped this month into his 87th year—Aneja discusses why he wrote his autobiography at 80.

What made you to write your memoirs so late in life?

First, I believe it is never too late in life to do anything that fascinates an individual and becomes an obsession. And second, an overpowering urge is in itself a great motivating force that pushes an individual to embark upon a challenging venture. My life journey apparently may not seem so interesting and eventful; yet there are many takeaways for the inquisitive and the receptive. Also, I became determined to leave in writing for the Aneja clan a rich legacy of which I am sure my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren will be proud.

What did you wish to achieve by writing your autobiography?

I believed a great satisfaction would be mine if I pour out truthfully what I lived through happily in my long journey of over eight decades on this planet. Another reason was my desire to bare myself for the benefit of my coming generations.



How did you decide on the unusual title *Karmath Jeevan*?

Frankly speaking, it occurred to me that my life journey was modeled on 'Karmath' as enshrined in the *Bhagavad Gita*. For a few years, I used to regularly visit Kali Bari temple in Dehradun and listen to several learned scholars on the *Gita* and imbibed much of its philosophy. After much discusren sion and lot of churning, *Karmath Jeevan* was chosen as the title.

What gave you the confidence to successfully undertake such a massive writing project when all your working life you had written nothing except audit notes and objections?

I have no pretensions of being a writer, leave alone author. Thus embarking upon such a massive writing project appeared to be a Herculean task. Yet, my confidence in my

own capability and ingenuity to do justice to it was unbounded.

The book has so many minute details about your past colleagues and their idiosyncrasies. Did you keep diaries or notebooks?

I had no diaries or notebooks to refer to. I'm glad I could recall what had transpired at different stages in my working life and could put it on paper.

Did you plan a broad outline of the book in advance?

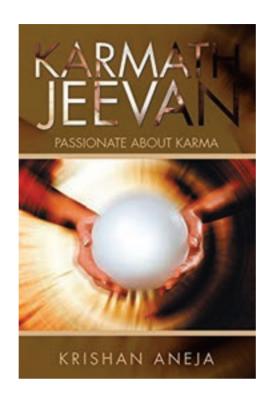
No. I didn't. However, I did scan the autobiographies of some celebrities and searched on Google for ideas and inputs for structuring, etc. and the dos and don'ts. Still. I was nowhere near finding answers until Sandeep, my older son, presented me a book and told me, "Dad, please read it. It may help you come out of your dilemma." He was right! The book, Zig: The Autobiography by Ziglar, was the autobiography of eminent American author and motivational speaker Hilary Hinton 'Zig' Ziglar, and it gave me insight on formatting.

How old were you when you started writing? And, what was your everyday writing schedule?

I was about 75 when I started writing. I had no idea about the size of the book and the time it was going to take. I used to spend about three hours daily, in the afternoons and evenings, writing.

From a junior clerk you rose to a top position in ONGC. How did you plan your career?

My elders' decision to send me to a school in the refugee camp in Kurukshetra in 1948 turned out to be visionary. That motivated me to continue with my education as a private student while in service. After graduation,



"Embarking upon such a massive writing project appeared to be a Herculean task. Yet, my confidence in my own capability and ingenuity to do justice to it was unbounded. I had no diaries or notebooks to refer to. I'm glad I could recall what had transpired at different stages in my working life and could put it on paper"

I searched for a job with better growth opportunities and ioined the Audit and Accounts Department, Punjab, Shimla Shimla was part of Punjab at the time: Himachal Pradesh was yet to be formed], as an auditor in November 1959. In due course, I joined **Bharat Heavy Electricals** Ltd, Haridwar, and Bokaro Steel Ltd in higher positions. In 1982, I joined ONGC, Dehradun, as a joint director in their finance department and eventually superannuated from there in 1994 as general manager. That, in a nutshell, is my career graph.

Did you at any stage during your four-year writing marathon feel like giving it all up?

At no stage did it occur to me to give it up. Recalling various episodes of my journey stimulated me, and I enjoyed being happily busy!

About your wife Krishna, you write, "...beautiful companion-in-arms in thick and thin of life, a crusader imbued with a unique sense of courage and dashing spirit who sprinkled love in abundance all around in the family."

What I wrote about Krishna is no exaggeration. She stood by

me shoulder to shoulder while creating her own world of dreams. She is an excellent homemaker and has taken great care of all of us. Her life story is much more poignant than mine. God willing, I shall endeavor to take it up soon.

Tell us about your family.

Krishna and I have three children: Sunita, Sandeep and Asish. Sim and Jyoti are our daughters-in-law and Aarushi, Anushri, Shardul, Arihant and Munn are the grandchildren. To me, being sensitive to each other's susceptibilities, though geographically far away, is a sure sign of mutual love and respect.

Let's be the change!

Go within to uncover your true compassionate self, says Will Donnelly

ahatma Gandhi was right when he suggested we become the change we wish to see in the world. Though at times the world looks like a complete mess, our life's work isn't to look outside ourselves to make the world a better place. Our work is to look within and to make that a better place.

Each of us must cope with what it means to be a human being, and we all cope differently. As consciously spiritual beings, our work is to have the courage to look into the dark recesses of our minds and hearts, and face what, today, might seem unbearable. Along with bitterness, cruelty, and the rumination of terror, each of us possesses darker aspects of humanity that we often would prefer to avoid. Many spiritual and religious groups focus on just this-avoidance of the dark psyche. When it seeps out in a weak moment, we'll furtively seek to mask it or justify it, but it is there nonetheless.

Throughout the ages, the sages simply remind us of our work. Listen to the still small voice. Encourage love and kindness. But what seems easy to forget is that we will hear many voices along this path—the victim, the abuser, the addict, as well as the saint, the healer, the protector, and so on. In this inner realm, there can be no spiritual bypass: Each inner voice must be heard in order for us to make any sense out of our lives and to find where our true gifts for this life's incarnation may be buried.

Behind every addiction, every cruel intention, every ounce of ill will, there

lies buried a softer and more powerful gift—a constructive strength rather than a destructive weakness—if we have the courage and wherewithal to search. The bigger the problem, the bigger the gift.

Yes, this journey toward discovery often feels impossible. First, it feels impossible to admit that parts of our own psyche are pretty crappy. Then, it feels impossible to believe that we could have the strength to overcome these deeply embedded psychological core beliefs and fears.



As spiritually committed beings, it is not our task to save the world, but nor are we free to neglect the suffering we have created in it. Our task is to show up each day, humbly committed to staying awake. If we are awake, compassion is inevitable as we find the suffering of others unbearable, almost as if it were our own suffering. Christ was a great example of this.

So here's a helpful thought: Just do what you can. It's not how far you go in life but how far you've come that makes the difference. To put this in

pragmatic terms, maybe the deep racist just decides that their gut is tired of being frazzled with hate (it really does get exhausting!). So they just seek to neutralise their thoughts of hatred and simply focus on other things. Another person might be working on the same basic issues, but now is ready to be kind to those of a different ilk, to see them as human just the same. Yet another might take it even further.

If you believe in the Jungian collective unconscious, you begin to understand why mystics always say that even small shifts make a difference. The great collective conscious is always listening, always absorbing the collective state of humanity, and we are all sharing in it....

More than ever before, human beings are awakening, expanding and allowing for diverse acceptance of human rights. As we continue to do this inner work, we are contributing to something important, something mystical, something well beyond ourselves. Even though these short-term moments of mass shootings and dark mayhem make us think we are going in the wrong direction, overall the opposite is actually true.

As each of us commits to cultivating our true civility—our compassionate hearts—we unearth our buried treasure. It's always within, but dormant unless we beckon it forward. Once brought forward, this stunning treasure holds more spiritual wealth than can ever be imagined.

Never give up the search for your goodness. You are a buried treasure!

A certified yoga teacher and writer, Donnelly lives in Hawaii, where he conducts healing retreats

IRON LADY

Bold and brave, often to the extent of being brash, she was called the 'Iron Lady of India'. During her tenure as prime minister of India for three consecutive terms from 1966 to 1977 and a fourth term from 1980 till her assassination in 1984, Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi took decisive steps, including the 1971 war against Pakistan—leading to the creation of Bangladesh—imposition of the Emergency from 1975-1977, and India's first successful nuclear bomb testing in 1974. The most dramatic face of Indian politics, Gandhi was adored and reviled in equal measure. Such was her statesmanship and repute that American diplomat and political scientist Henry Kissinger admitted in his memoirs that Gandhi

"outclassed and outmanoeuvred" US president Richard Nixon (1969-1974) during the Bangladesh crisis. Even Atal Bihari Vajpayee, her bitter critic, sang paeans to her guts after the 1971 war, comparing her to "Maa Durga".

Born into a political family, Gandhi became India's first female head of government on 19 January 1966, after Lal Bahadur Shastri's death. Her leadership, however, came under continual challenge from the right wing of the party, led by Morarji Desai, and culminated in her expulsion from the party in 1969. Undaunted, she formed a new faction, which swept the elections in 1971, riding on the populist slogan, "Garibi hatao". The same year, India's armed forces achieved a conclusive victory over Pakistan, resulting in the birth of Bangladesh.

Buoyed by this success, Gandhi led her party to landslide victories in state legislative assemblies. However, she had to contend with increasing civil unrest brought on by food shortage, inflation and regional disputes. Shortly afterward, Raj Narain, her defeated Socialist Party opponent from the 1971 election, charged her with violating election laws. In 1975, Allahabad High Court convicted her of election infraction and banned her from politics for six years. Gandhi declared a state of Emergency, imprisoned political opponents, curbed constitutional rights, muzzled the press, and initiated unpopular policies, including government-enforced sterilisation. Widespread resentment

led to her party's rout in the 1977 polls. The next year, her supporters broke away from the parent party to form the Congress (I) Party, with the 'I' standing for Indira. In the 1980 national elections, Gandhi and her fledgling party registered a spectacular win.

Gandhi's last term was marked by threats to the political integrity of India, with several states seeking a larger measure of independence from the Union Government. Sikh separatists led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale fortified the Golden Temple complex at Amritsar, the holy shrine of the Sikhs. Gandhi ordered the Army to attack and oust separatists from the complex. The exercise, codenamed Operation Blue Star, resulted in extensive damage to the shrine and the killing of hundreds of Sikhs, igniting an uprising within the community. Five months later, Gandhi paid for it with her life when her Sikh bodyguards pumped 31 bullets into her on 31 October 1984.

> Termed the "only man in her cabinet", Gandhi evoked bittersweet emotions during her tenure. While she struck a populist chord by annulling privy purses and nationalising banks, her ruthless destruction of democratic institutions painted her as an autocratic ruler.

THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: OCTOBER 1966

- On 4 October, Israel applied for a treaty of association with the European Economic Community (EEC), referred to as the 'Common Market' at the time.
- On 6 October, California banned hallucinogenic drug LSD, the first US state to do so.
- On 10 October, the first world conference on Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence was held in Madrid.
- On 19 October, Paramount Pictures was acquired by Gulf and Western Industries, heralding the birth of 'corporate Hollywood'.

"Through my work, I'm trying to figure out who I really am"

V Vaikunth, 75, Chennai, on rehabilitating prisoners and other welfare activities



onducting vocational training programmes for juvenile delinquents, ensuring water supply to remote villages in Tamil Nadu, and overseeing infrastructure development for government schools are all in a day's work for 75 year-old V Vaikunth, former director general of police. Having served the police in various capacities for over 35 years—earning seven President's medals—Vaikunth realised the need to rehabilitate prisoners, many of them women and juveniles, to offer them a second chance in life. "During my years of service, I was bogged down by bureaucratic challenges," he recalls. "Once you step out, you see the world for what it actually is." Vaikunth set the ball rolling when, as inspector general of prisons, he helped a murder case convict pursue a PhD in math, enabling him to earn a teaching job on release from jail. Immediately after retirement, Vaikunth plunged headlong into social service, helping a school near Chengalpet set up classrooms. "Earlier, the students used to attend classes under a banyan tree. I spent nearly ₹ 200,000 from my pocket," he reminisces. Over the years, Vaikunth has conducted various workshops and training programmes to rehabilitate former prisoners. His focus, however, has been on rehabilitating women prisoners, "as women face more challenges than men on

being released from jail". He enrols them in skill-training workshops conducted by his trust, Sree Balaji Seva Trust, set up in 2002 to fund his philanthropic endeavours. Several women trained by the trust have been hired by garment export units, empowering them financially. The trust also runs periodic vocational training programmes for orphaned children and the physically challenged. In 2013, it collected enough funds to ensure water supply to Orathi, a village near Maduranthakam in Kancheepuram district, besides facilitating group housing schemes and women's cooperative milk societies in two villages in the district. And recently, after realising that the Chennai Corporation School on Eldham's Road had a leaky roof, and the midday meal served to the kids didn't have enough vegetables, Vaikunth equipped the school with a new ceiling and an organic vegetable garden on the terrace. The Sree Balaji Seva Trust is also in the process of supplying haemo-dialysis units to about 100 government hospitals all over Tamil Nadu free of charge. Recognising his work, the Rotary Club of Madras and the Senior Citizens Group of Besant Nagar have honoured Vaikunth as the 'Pride of Madras'. Ask him about it, and he modestly replies, "I would say that I'm still in search of my true self."

—Shivani Arora



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