



*harmony*  
**celebrate age**

JULY 2015 ₹ 40

The magazine for silver citizens

**KAUSHIKI  
ON SONG WITH  
DAD AJOY  
CHAKRABORTY**

**ANJINA  
RAJAGOPAL'S  
HOME FOR THE  
HOMELESS**

**Food, family & more with**

**JIGGS KALRA**

**ACHHE DIN FOR SILVERS? • SALZBURG SYMPHONY • INDIAN VENTRILOQUISM'S FIRST FAMILY**

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Suresh Natarajan



# Fitness first

It was an event like no other.

No matter which side of the fence—or mat—you're on, it is undeniable that the first ever United Nations International Yoga Day on 21 June was a success. Across the world, yoga enthusiasts gathered in a show of solidarity and strength, from Delhi to Paris, New York to Xingtai and even Kabul. In fact, the New Delhi event at Rajpath made it to *Guinness World Records* for the most individuals and individuals from the largest number of nationalities performing exercises at a single venue.

It's also undeniable that the event—that coincided with summer solstice—has bolstered the image of both India, bringing an ancient tradition to the fore, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he is credited with urging the UN General Assembly to hold it.

As inevitable with an event of this magnitude, and the PR opportunity it presents, there have been sideshows aplenty, with people from every part of the spectrum using it for political mileage or a few lines of newsprint.

It's unfortunate. Rather than addressing any of the controversies, why not strip the entire issue to its bare bones

devoid of sectarian and spiritual hues? Let's choose instead to see yoga as a vehicle of wellbeing that balances body and mind, a route to fitness and better health that is accessible—and customisable—for us all.

We, at *Harmony—Celebrate Age*, have believed this all along. While our magazine has undergone many changes since inception 11 years ago, one thing has remained unchanged: 'Yoga Rx', the column by yoga *acharya* Shameem Akthar. In fact, this connection has also extended to a book published by Harmony and authored by Akthar, titled *Yoga for Silvers*. Her precepts and prescriptions have informed and inspired our readers for over a decade, testifying to the untold benefits of the discipline and its value for silvers.

Ultimately, it should be about fitness—physical and mental. There can be many paths to this end; yoga is just one of them. Choose yours. It's really that simple.

## A Harmony for Silvers Foundation Initiative

*Harmony Celebrate Age*—July 2015 Volume 12 Issue 2

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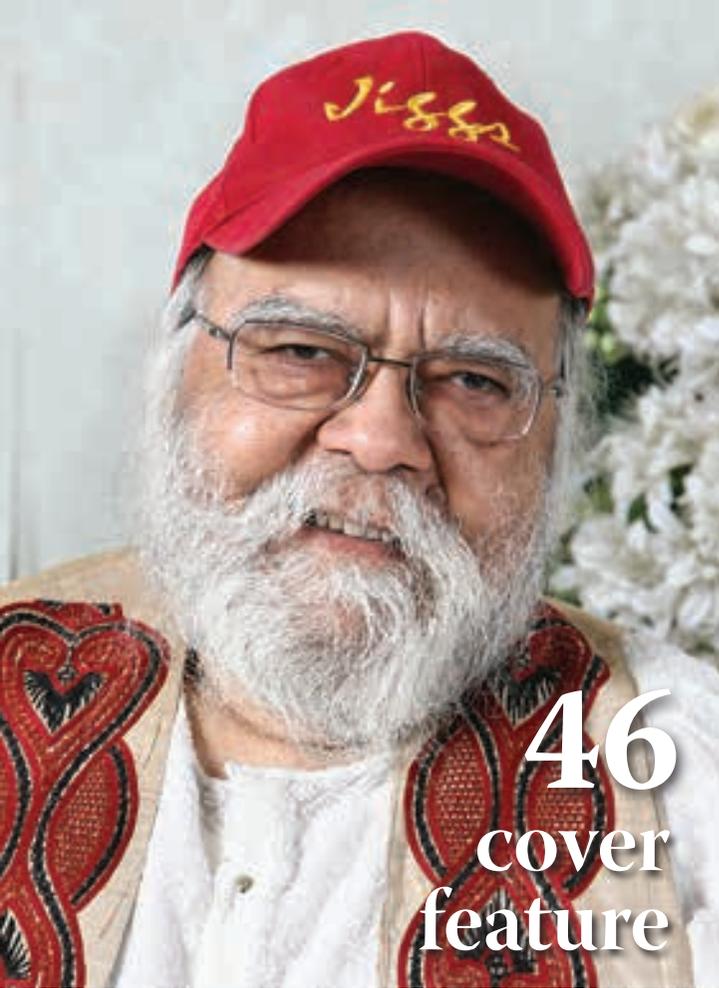
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**Editorial & Marketing Offices:** Reliance Centre, 1st floor, 19, Walchand Hirachand Marg, Ballard Estate, Mumbai-400001. Tel: 91-22-30327115 (Editorial), 30327102 (Marketing). Email: [contact.mag@harmonyindia.org](mailto:contact.mag@harmonyindia.org) **Printed and published** by Dharmendra Bhandari on behalf of the owners, Harmony for Silvers Foundation

**Printed** at Thomson Press India Ltd, 18-35, Milestone, Delhi-Mathura Road, Faridabad-121007 (Haryana). **Published** at Reliance Energy Centre, Santacruz (East), Mumbai 400055. **Disclaimer:** The material provided by *Harmony* is not a substitute for professional opinions. Readers are advised to seek appropriate advice from qualified and licensed professionals in the concerned field. © Harmony for Silvers Foundation. All rights reserved worldwide. Reproduction in any manner is prohibited.

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Cover photograph: Himanshu Kumar

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WEB EXCLUSIVES [www.harmonyindia.org](http://www.harmonyindia.org)



### HIGH ON HORSE POWER

*Sabrina Siga talks about her love for horses and reinventing her technique*

### ART APART

*Niru Chhabra on her experiences in painting on rice grains and micro-calligraphy*

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



## Choose U.P. to shoot your next blockbuster movie

Scenic locations, modern facilities and exciting incentives are now available



### Shri Akhilesh Yadav, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh, introduced



- The distribution of **film subsidy** under the film policy
- Signed an **MOU** to set up a film city
- Inaugurated **U.P. Film Bandhu's website**
- Launched **U.P. Film Policy booklet**

With a view to encourage film production in the state, the Uttar Pradesh Government has decided to increase the amount of subsidy given as an incentive. Each film produced in the state is now entitled to a subsidy of up to **Rs. 2 crore**. The Government's effort in this direction will not only help promote the growth of the film industry, but also generate numerous employment opportunities in the state.



For more information log on to [www.filmbandhuup.in](http://www.filmbandhuup.in)

# column one

For Jiggs Kalra, on our cover this month, food is both art and science. “There is nothing called *andaaza* [guesswork],” he insists. “If you want the dish to taste consistent, follow a tried-and-tested recipe. And if it’s your own creation, record it in your own cookbook. This would make the perfect gift for your children.” Indeed, legacy is forever on the mind of “The Great Gastronomer”. A pioneer of food journalism in India and chronicler of our culinary legacy, he is now mentor to his son Zorawar, as they seek to excite the palate in the form of “Indian Cuisine, Version 2.0”. As Zorawar says, “My father and I are crusaders for Indian food.”

Crusades can take many forms. Take the case of Noida-based Anjina Rajagopal, who has dedicated over 25 years of her life to homeless and abandoned children. In addition to a home, Bal Kutir, this proactive silver also runs a school, rehab centre, vocational institute and institute for children with special needs. Just like “Mummy”, as she is lovingly called, guides her wards on a voyage to self-actualisation, Hindustani classical singer and Padmashri Ajoy Chakraborty has inspired his daughter Kaushiki Deshikan Chakraborty to follow in his footsteps, imbibing his legacy while innovating as an artist.

Elsewhere, we analyse how the promise of *Acche Din* can be made more inclusive to provide financial security to silvers. And treat you to images of dance icons and innovators from Leela Venkataraman’s book *Indian Classical Dance: The Renaissance and Beyond*. If your feet insist on soaring further, fly with us to Salzburg, the setting for *The Sound of Music*. Yes, the hills are—still—alive!

—Arati Rajan Menon

I have just returned from a month-long trip to Shimla. There, I encountered one of the most amazing women I have met. At 70, she lives in a nearby village, in a cottage in a large apple orchard which she manages all by herself, with a little help from her nephew. Though she grew up there, life took her for a spin around the world before she returned to her hometown about five years ago, her last stop being New York. She brought along her two little dogs, both as ripe as her, one with a limp. Yet they have become canines of the mountains, marching along with their mistress to inspect the apples, into town, and wherever else she needs to be. I had visited the orchard many years ago, long before she took charge. Her golden hand has changed its face and the yield has soared. But they’re having problems with storage and distribution. She has no doubt though that the yield will increase next year. However, she doesn’t seem worried. I am 35. Meeting her has given me great hope for old age.

**Teja Jana**  
Mumbai

I just read the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue of *Harmony-Celebrate Age* and must congratulate you for the fabulous job. It is indeed a collector’s item. The immense research that has gone into compiling those gourmet journeys (“The Gourmet Getaway”) is evident. From Kashmir’s age-old recipes to a Malayali man’s rediscovery of the jackfruit, and the philosophical conundrum the writer faced when stuck between a glaring *gopuram* and mouth-watering food, they were all delightful to read. Keep up the good work.

**Nina Dinshaw**  
Pune

## ERRATUM

In the June issue of *Harmony-Celebrate Age*, we failed to mention that the article titled “Scent of a Rose” in the ‘Etcetera’ section was written by **Suparna-Saraswati Puri**. We regret the omission.

—Editors

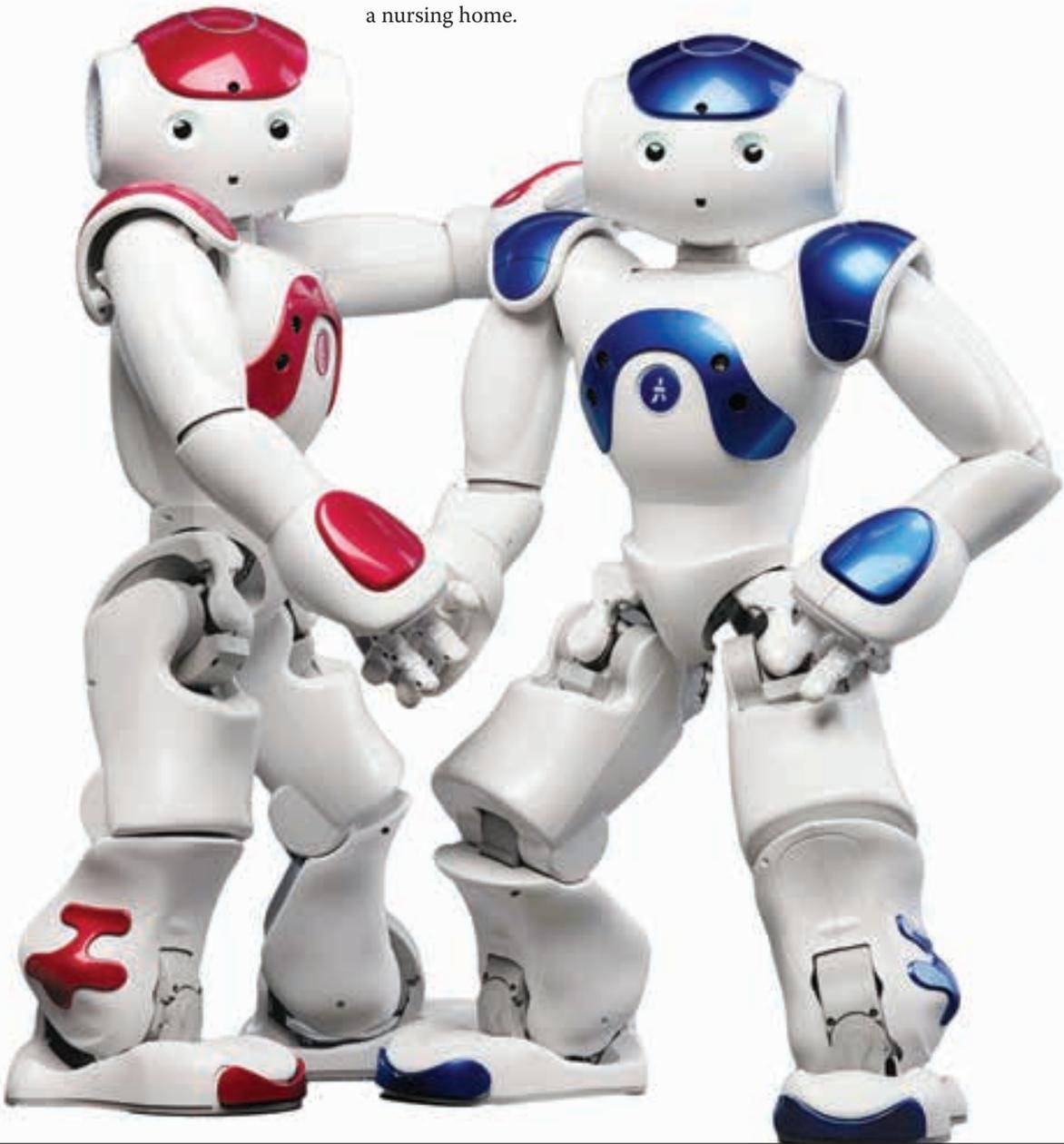
## CONTRIBUTOR

Our columnist in ‘At Large’ this month, Professor **Shrikala Warriar** is an anthropologist with a PhD from the University of London. She is credited with developing the first validated degree programme for Ayurveda in the West and is the Dean of MAYUR University, London. She hails from the well-known community of Warriars in Kerala, traditionally connected with temples and Ayurveda. Dr Warriar is a fellow of the Higher Education Academy and has undertaken research for several organisations, including the National Health Service in the UK, World Health Organisation, British Red Cross, The King’s Fund and Helen House, the first children’s hospice in the world. She has contributed to *Enterprising Women*, an anthology of essays by 10 women anthropologists in the UK (edited by S Westwood and P Bhachu), and *Desh Pardesh*, a collection of ethnographic studies on South Asian communities in Britain (edited by Roger Ballard). *Dates and Meanings of Religious and other Multi-Ethnic Festivals*, a book she co-authored with John Walshe, provides a cross-cultural perspective on rites of passage and the celebration of festivals. It has been widely used as a resource in schools, colleges and other institutions in the UK and as a textbook for undergraduate courses in religious studies in some American universities. Her latest book *Kamandalu: The Seven Sacred Rivers of Hinduism*, besides taking a close look at the rivers, establishes their exalted position in Hindu mythology.

 CUTTING EDGE

## A first for France

The Japanese have been doing it for many years; it appears the Europeans are now following suit. As website [www.west-info.eu](http://www.west-info.eu) tells us, **the 60-cm, 5-kg NAO robot is engaging and entertaining silvers in a nursing home in the French town of Issy-les-Moulineux**—it reads them newspapers and magazines, walks them through their morning workout, plays bingo and chess with them, reads them poetry, and sings to them when they're blue. And yes, it also alerts medical staff in case of a fall or any other crisis. According to the website, this is the first time in France that a robotic assistant is working in a nursing home.



Courtesy: Aldebaran

# The silver iPad

The device will feature simpler interfaces, larger fonts, dictation features, and an array of apps for older needs and interests



Jon Simon



As tech combos go, it doesn't get better. Giants **Apple and IBM have partnered to roll out a new iPad in Japan**

**designed for silvers.** As *Financial Times* tells us, the device will feature simpler interfaces, larger fonts, dictation features, a modified version of video telephone service FaceTime, and an array of apps for older needs and interests. This will include custom-built apps from IBM's Global Business Services group, such as medication reminders, exercise information and diet suggestions as well as grocery shopping and job search services. Japan is home to the fastest ageing society in the world, with around 25 per cent of its population (about 33 million) over 65. "In terms of older consumers, all countries will soon look a lot like Japan," says Tim Cook, chief executive, Apple. "Adapting products to follow the demography of scale is an imperative that Apple understands." Under the project, as many as 5 million iPads will be delivered to Japanese silvers by 2020.

# EUROWALKER

The joys of Europe will soon become more accessible to its silvers—a **robot walker is under development to guide people with cognitive decline or walking difficulties through crowded areas like shopping centres, museums and other public buildings.** Part of the EU-funded DALi (Devices for Assisted Living) project, the robotic cognitive walker (c-Walker) can be taken to, or picked up at, the place to be visited, gently guiding the person around safely. The device takes corrective action when the user comes across any kind of obstacle or incident or runs into a heavy crowd. "The

c-Walker is aimed at providing physical and cognitive support to older adults," Luigi Palopoli, professor at Italy's Trento University who coordinated DALi, says in a media release. "It can give them confidence in public environments. The device is full of hi-tech solutions, but the user is not necessarily aware of them. She or he comes into contact with a 'standard' walker, with a few additions such as the display and does not need any kind of computer literacy." For instance, at a shopping centre, the silver would

pick up the c-Walker at the entrance, select the profile most suited to them on a simple touch-screen and choose the shops to visit. The c-Walker will

**"The c-Walker is aimed at providing physical and cognitive support to older adults"**

then recommend the best course and guide the user using visual, acoustic and tactile interfaces. The c-Walker can connect with remote sensors, such as surveillance cameras, and other

c-Walkers deployed in the environment. The c-Walker, which has been tested at residential care homes in Spain and Italy, will cost around € 2,000 (about ₹ 145,000) per device.



## LEMUR LESSONS

Their animated cousins have entertained us aplenty in *Madagascar*. Now lemurs are set to teach us a thing or two about ageing. Researchers from Duke University in North Carolina engaged in the study of dwarf lemurs, which live two to three times longer than similar-sized animals, have found that their ability to put their bodies on 'standby' mode could be their key to longevity. "Hibernating dwarf lemurs can reduce their heart rate from 200 to eight beats per minute," writes study co-author Marina Blanco in *Journal of Zoology*. "Breathing slows, and the animals' internal thermostat shuts down. Instead of maintaining a steady body temperature, they warm up and cool down with the outside air. It may also be that torpor increases longevity by protecting cells against the build-up of oxidative damage that is a normal by-product of breathing and metabolism. If your body is not working full time metabolically speaking, you will age more slowly and live longer." As lemurs are closer to humans biologically, this discovery is expected to aid the quest for anti-aging genes in humans.

## Go fish



While researchers usually study resilient, 'ageless' species to find valuable clues to longevity, a team from Stanford University is turning the approach on its head. As *The New York Times* reports, they have focused their energies on the turquoise killifish, remarkable for how fast it ages. One of the shortest lived vertebrates in the world, the fish, which originates from East Africa, takes just three months for it to go from spry to decrepit, losing muscle tone, becoming infertile and, essentially, falling apart. The scientists have now sequenced the fish's genome in a bid to learn why exactly this happens at such a rapid pace.



## Cat out of the bag?

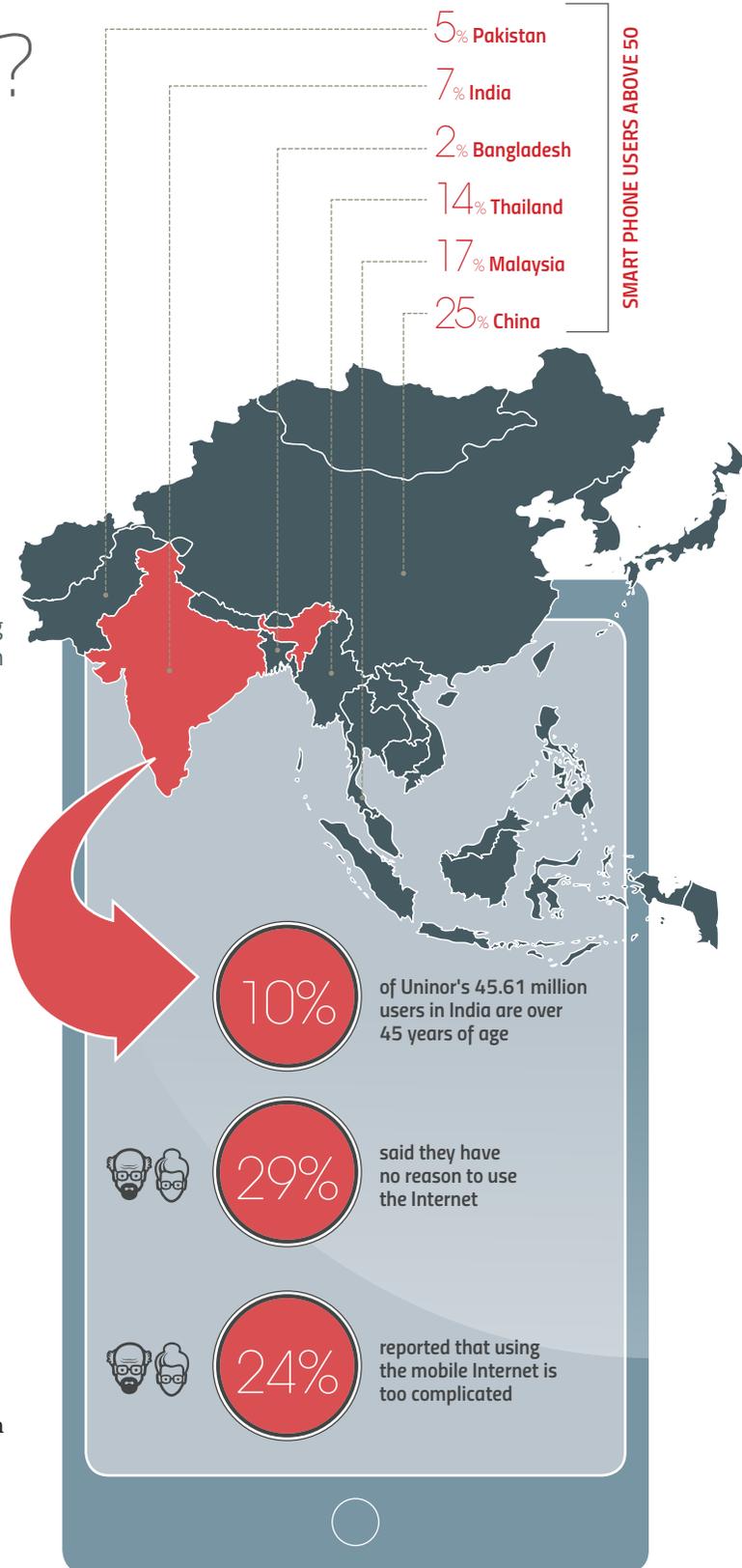
**TREAT YOUR CAT** with more respect—she may hold valuable clues about your own health and longevity. A multi-university team of geneticists in the US has started the process of sequencing the genomes of 99 domestic cats. As website [www.geneticliteracyproject.org](http://www.geneticliteracyproject.org) tells us, the work will benefit both humans and felines by mapping the mutations and underlying conditions that afflict the two species, such as kidney disease and other age-related conditions. In fact, cats experience similar versions of Type 2 diabetes, asthma and retinal atrophy to humans; they can even be infected with a virus related to HIV with symptoms close to those with AIDS. "It's a great time to be in cat genomics," William Murphy, a geneticist at Texas A&M University and team member, tells the website. "Plummeting costs for DNA sequencing now make it possible to do genomics cheaply and cat genomics, long under-funded compared with similar efforts in dogs, is benefitting. We're finally at the point where we can do all sorts of things we wanted to do five or 10 years ago."

# DISCONNECTED?

Seniors are still relatively disconnected from the mobile Internet boom. That's the conclusion of Norwegian telecom multinational Telenor Group following a study of customer data from four of its markets: India, Thailand, Bangladesh and Malaysia. It suggests that, in some of these markets, **the senior segment represents as little as 2 per cent of active mobile users, with still fewer using smartphones.** "Given our vision of Internet for All, it is a source of concern that senior citizens in our Asian markets are not fully receiving the benefits of the mobile Internet," says Sigve Brekke, executive vice-president and head of Asia operations, Telenor Group, in a media release. "The Internet can be a vital way of maintaining civic participation and even receiving basic citizen services in the near future. As several Asian societies anticipate increasingly ageing populations, we must work to achieve connectivity for all, not just the young." Here are some highlights from the study:

- Elderly populations throughout Asian markets are less engaged with the Internet, particularly via mobile.
- Only about 10 per cent of Telenor's 45.6 million subscribers in India are over 45 years of age.
- Of mobile phone users in India overall, only 6 per cent are over 50 years of age.
- Of mobile data users, only 1 per cent are 50 years or older.
- The top reasons cited by consumers for not using mobile data are related to perceived utility and complexity of the services. Of this demographic, 29 per cent said they have no reason to use the mobile Internet and 24 per cent reported that using it is 'too complicated'.
- National prosperity has a strong correlation with the prevalence of mobile Internet usage—data usage in Malaysia is far higher than that observed in India and Bangladesh.

You can read the entire report at [www.telenor.com/media/articles/2015/the-unconnected-senior-citizens-of-asia/](http://www.telenor.com/media/articles/2015/the-unconnected-senior-citizens-of-asia/)





**BANK ON YOUR PENSION:** Here's some good news for the valiant silvers who have fought for the motherland. **The Central Government has authorised freedom fighters covered by the Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension scheme to receive pension through one of 19 banks.** As media reports indicate, the task was entrusted to the State Bank of India (SBI) earlier but certain irregularities impelled the shift. These include paying pension to over 3,000 people who had been deceased for long, wrong payment and delayed payment of revised dearness relief. "To avoid hardship, pensioners have been advised to

open an account in any bank of their choice from the 19 banks authorised, and the banks have been advised to open their accounts on a priority," said a government spokesperson. The following banks have been authorised: Allahabad Bank, Andhra Bank, Bank of Baroda, Bank of India, Bank of Maharashtra, Canara Bank, Central Bank of India, Corporation Bank, Dena Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Indian Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Punjab & Sind Bank, Punjab National Bank, Syndicate Bank, Union Bank of India, United Bank of India, UCO Bank and Vijaya Bank.

NEWSFLASH

## Care for cops

Kerala police chief K S Balasubramanian has recommended the establishment of old-age homes across the state for retiring police personnel. He made the remark while inaugurating the 32nd state conference of the Kerala Police Pensioners' Welfare Association (KPPWA) in May.

## Quid pro quo

A spokesperson at the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) tells media that silvers will soon begin to play an advisory role in the implementation of citizen-centric works. For its part, the BMC has promised to provide ID cards to all the senior citizens in the city to enable them to avail different services on a priority basis, from transport and healthcare facilities to quick entry into places of worship.

## Act 1

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has announced a special healthcare scheme for the state's theatre artists over the age of 65 years and an increase in their monthly pension to ₹ 1,500.



Dinodia Photo Library

# Work on



Japan is beginning to understand the potential of Generation A—and employ it. An increasing number of **Japanese firms are retaining employees beyond the age of 65** in a nod to their rich experience and established professional network. For instance, as news agency Reuters reports, prefab home builder Daiwa House Industry Co has adopted a new system with no age cap where employees over 65 will be eligible for part-time

contracts working four days a week—their salaries will be fixed but their bonuses will be lower than those of regular employees. Machinery tool trading company Trusco Nakayama Corp raised its retirement age from 63 to 65 and post-retirement employment age to 70. And real-estate agency Tokyu Livable has announced that employees who meet the requisite criteria will be kept on as contract workers till the age of 70. Is Corporate India listening?



# Brain power

On 17 June, the silvers at Harmony Interactive Centre in Girgaum, South Mumbai, enjoyed an interactive session on 'work after retirement' with non-profit organisation Xperience Powerhouse. Representative Manisha Thakkar explained that the organisation helps silvers from varied professions connect with the corporate world as there is huge demand for talented people. With their wealth of expertise, modest salary expectations and willingness to work from home, silvers can help fill the gap. Urging the silvers present to work for their own self-esteem, dignity, independence and financial freedom, she informed them that Xperience Powerhouse could get them employment in various fields such as accounting, documentation and data entry. The session ended with a round of questions and answers.

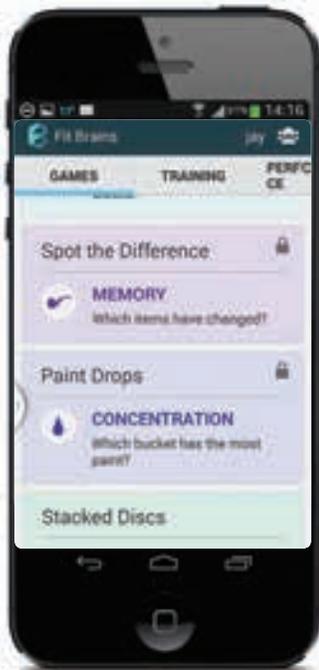
Earlier, on 12 June, the silvers at the centre attended an informative session



on meditation and its benefits. The session began with five minutes of meditation by Varsha Paatkar, who elaborated on the Sai Karuna Mission Organisation and Dr Uday Shah, in whose team she started learning healing techniques. There are two main types of meditation, she explained: active and passive. Active meditation is guided meditation where one is generally instructed by another person. On the other hand, passive meditation involves the observation of one's breathing and meditation without any

intervention from another. For passive meditation, she gave the example of Vipassana, a way of self-transformation through self-observation. Paatkar went on to tell the audience about different types of meditation: Chakra, Mantra or Jaap, Prayer, Nadbrahmha, Gibberish, Kundalini, Tratak, Sun, and Omkar. Whichever the type, she added, the goal is the same. When asked how long silvers should meditate, she recommended beginning with five to 10 minutes and increasing it to 15 to 20 minutes.

Photographs by Haresh Patel



## FIT BRAIN TRAINER

**Available for:** iOS 7.0 or later

**What it does:** With 24 brain games and around 360 workout sessions, this app gives your grey matter a great workout. Part of Rosetta Stone’s Fit Brains programme, this top-rated app helps improve memory and recognition, concentration, attention span, mental IQ, hand-eye coordination and reaction speed. The app allows you to measure your cognitive performance across six major brain areas and track and compare your training scores with others of your age and gender.

**After installation:** Once the app is installed, it creates your profile and opens a screen with three options: Games, Training and Performance. The Games option gives you a list of various games available and what type of brain power—concentration, problem-solving, memory, visual—it will help you with. Once you start a game, it displays your score and time; you have the option to put a game on pause. In the Training option, the app shows your score and how many sessions you have completed in a specified brain area. According to this, you can choose to do more training sessions or move on to the next area of brain training. And Performance, of course, is self-explanatory!

A TEAM OF IT EXPERTS AND DOCTORS FROM MADHAVBAUG, AN ORGANISATION OF CARDIAC CARE CENTRES IN THANE, MAHARASHTRA, HAS LAUNCHED THE HEART HEALTH METER (HHM) APP TO MONITOR THE HEALTH OF YOUR HEART. THE APP CALCULATES YOUR RISKS FOR CARDIOVASCULAR EVENTS AND OFFERS RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO REDUCE AND MANAGE THEM. THE APP CAN BE DOWNLOADED FREE ON GOOGLE PLAY FOR ANDROID CUSTOMERS; IT WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE ON THE WINDOWS AND IOS PLATFORMS.

## PAINTERLY

**Available for:** iOS 7.1 or later

**What it does:** Here’s a chance to channel your hidden Rembrandt without any technical knowledge of painting or drawing. This app takes images stored in your iPad and lets you embellish them to craft new visual delights. Paint as you will, create new atmospheric effects, add splashes of colours and let your imagination run riot. The only drawback: you can’t create new pictures, just paint on the ones already present in your device.



**After installation:** Once installed, register your device with the app and you are good to go. When you open the app, it asks you to choose a picture from your camera roll/picture gallery. After you select one, you can choose from 15 stock grounds (canvases), 66 brushes and a wide range of filters. The app allows a single-tap, full-screen view and a zoom view of the picture. Users can save an ongoing project in the archive folder and finish it later. You can even use other apps at the same time.

**Be a fab granddad!** According to researchers at Kings College, London, looking after grandchildren is beneficial for the health of silvers. This is especially true for grandparents with prior ill-health or low incomes. While studying the health histories of silvers caring for their grandchildren, the researchers factored in life experiences such as marital history and experiences of bereavement.



Then:  
Used car tyre  
Now:  
**Coffee table**

Do you have used car tyres wasting away in your garage? Here's an exciting way to repurpose them: create a coffee table. All you need is two car tyres, plywood, glass, glue, a jigsaw and paint. Clean your tyres with soap and water and ensure they do not have any large rips or holes. Once they are clean, leave them out in the sun to dry. Measure the tyre opening and cut the same size of plywood using your jigsaw; be really careful while doing so. Keep the measured tyre at the top of the second one and fix the plywood on it with glue. Use an ample amount of glue and ensure the plywood is fixed to the tyre. Now, paint the plywood according to your choice and place the glass on top of it. You can even paint the tyres or upholster them with fabric to add that extra jazz.



**RECYCLING FACTS**

- It is estimated that 259 million tyres are discarded annually. Owing to their heavy metal and pollutant content, tyres pose a risk for the leaching of toxins into groundwater when placed in wet soils.
- Scrap tyres present unique recycling and disposal challenges because they are heavy, bulky and made from a variety of materials. However, more than half of recovered scrap tyres can be used as tire-derived fuel (TDF), which is a low-sulphur, high heating value fuel.

**MORE RECYCLING IDEAS...**

1. MAKE A STOOL BY USING JUST ONE TYRE; PAINT IT ACCORDING TO YOUR CHOICE. INSTEAD OF THE PLYWOOD, PUT CUSHIONING ON THE OPENING.
2. TURN YOUR OLD TYRE INTO AN OTTOMAN BY COVERING THE PLYWOOD AND TYRE WITH A ROPE IN A CIRCULAR MOTION AND FIXING IT WITH GLUE.

# The OJ effect



In a world where what's good for you one day is labelled bad the next, this is comforting news—OJ is still considered good for you. A new study by Reading University in Berkshire, England, says **drinking orange juice every day can boost brain power in silvers**. For the study, 37 healthy volunteers aged 60 to

81 drank 500 ml of orange juice every day for eight weeks. The researchers measured the memory, reaction time and verbal fluency of the participants at the start and end of the study and found an 8-per-cent improvement in their score. They attribute this to the flavonoids present in oranges. Flavonoids are a plant-based compound with antioxidant properties

helpful not just for memory but for the heart, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease as well. And as Bhakti Samant, chief nutritionist, Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, tells us, "Flavonoids are not found only in oranges; they are also present in grapefruit, apples, strawberries, limes, plums, berries, wine and tea."

## The Original Superfood

 = 60 different carotenoids  
Juice of 1 orange

 = 90% of recommended Vitamin C in a single serving

Rich in hesperidin, pectin and magnesium that reduce cholesterol and lower blood pressure



**ENSURES HEALTHY HEART**



Rich in powerful antioxidants that strengthen the immune system



+  = anti-inflammatory properties that help in relieving arthritic pain



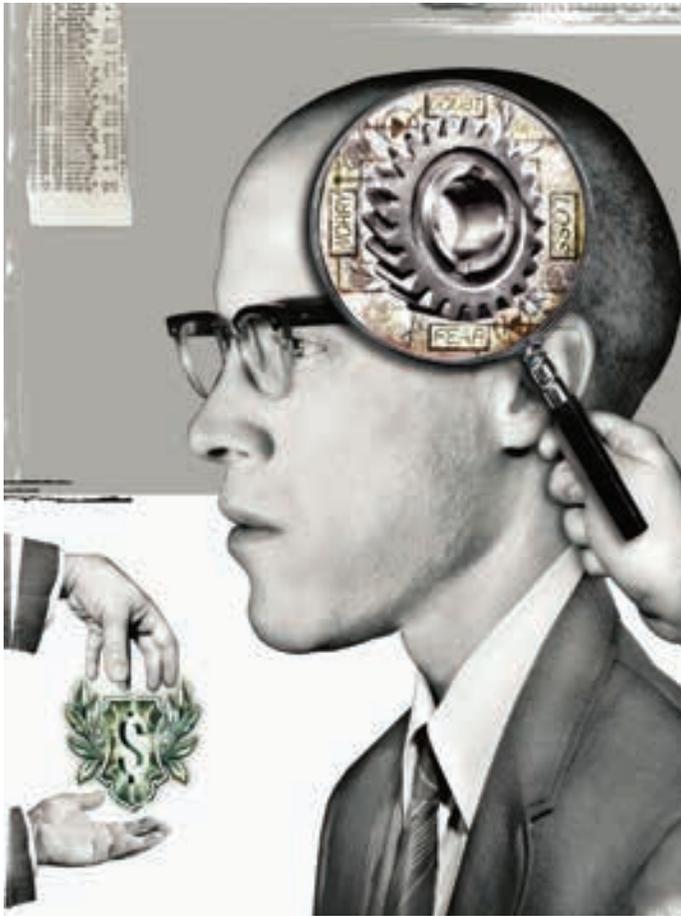
helps in weight loss

**RELIEVES CONSTIPATION AND PREVENTS ULCERS AND KIDNEY STONES**



Maintains healthy skin, bone, teeth and improves sperm quality





# Mind your brain

According to a new study published in journal *Neurology* by the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health in Pennsylvania, middle-aged people suffering from diabetes should be screened for cognitive difficulties. The researchers conducted three cognitive tests—measuring information-processing speed, manual dexterity and verbal intelligence—and examined the brain MRIs, physical exams and medical histories

**More proof, if we needed it, of the body-brain link**

of 97 people with Type-1 diabetes in comparison with 81 people with no history of diabetes. The MRIs revealed that 33 per cent of people suffering from Type 1 diabetes had moderate to severe level of damage to the white matter of the brain, a symptom of neurological disorder. In the three cognitive tests, patients of Type-1 diabetes scored lower than their healthy counterparts. Type-1 diabetes, generally found in children and young adults, occurs when the body stops producing insulin which converts sugar into energy. The researchers say further studies are required to qualify the exact impact of diabetes on the brain and to detect potential interventions.

# DON'T IGNORE DEPRESSION

It's all too often swept under the carpet or buried deep for fear of social censure. However, three new studies indicate that **depression, when left untreated, could lead to more severe medical conditions** such as stroke, heart disease and even Parkinson's disease.

**Study 1:** A study by the Levanger Hospital in Norway's Nord-Tordelag County, recently presented at the annual meeting of the European Society of Cardiology's Heart Failure Association, states that people who suffer from depression have a 40 per cent increased risk of heart failure and cardiac events than people who do not. The researchers noted a strong association of death during the year following discharge of patients from hospital with moderate to severe depression.



**Study 2:** A study by Harvard University's T H Chan School of Public Health, published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*, examined 16,178 participants over the age of 50 and suggests that depression might trigger underlying vascular problems, including infection and stroke. It reveals that people with depression have twice the risk of stroke even after the symptoms of depression have eased.

**Study 3:** In a study by the Department of Community Medicine and Rehabilitation, Umea University, Sweden, published in journal *Neurology*, researchers compared 140,688 people with depression to 421,718 people without depression and found that 1 per cent of people with depression developed Parkinson's disease compared to 0.4 per cent of those without. All participants were above the age of 50 and were followed for up to 26 years. The study also revealed that people with depression developed Parkinson's disease earlier than people without depression.

# Choc there!

We know dark chocolate is good for us. Now, we hear **even milk chocolate could be heart-healthy, if consumed in moderation.** Researchers from the University of Aberdeen in Scotland monitored 21,000 people for 11 years and found a 11 per cent lower risk of

cardiovascular events in those who ate chocolate—most participants ate milk, not dark, chocolate. They attribute this to the bioactive plant compounds called polyphenols found in cocoa beans. The study was published in the journal *Heart*.



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## Statins, again

Last month, in these pages we discussed that statins, which are widely prescribed to control cholesterol, could be associated with the onset of diabetes. This month's news is a tad better! According to a study by researchers from Rutgers University, New Jersey, and University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, **statins do not cause memory lapses or memory loss as previously feared.** The study was published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association—Internal Medicine*.



**PROTEIN PLUS:** New research conducted in fruit flies, rats and monkeys by the scientists of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, the University of California - San Diego, and other institutions has found that the **protein vinculin might extend the longevity of those suffering from cardiovascular disease.** When the researchers induced vinculin-rich genes in fruit flies, they survived 150 per cent longer than their vinculin-deficient counterparts. Scientists are now looking to additional research to develop targeted gene or drug therapy related to vinculin.

# Stroke of genius

When he says Debi Prasad Roy Chowdhry who sculpted the Triumph of Labour statue at Chennai's Marina Beach was his teacher, **S K Ramanujam** wears a faraway look. "In 1956, when I enrolled with the Government College of Fine Arts [in Chennai], there were only 30 of us in class and he recognised my work," beams the 77 year-old cartoonist, who signs off as 'Rahnu' in all his work.

'Rahnu' was recently conferred the Kalai Muthumani Award 2015 by the Tamil Nadu government's Department of Art and Culture for a lifetime of exemplary work. A multifaceted illustrator, Ramanujam's deft pencil strokes have helped thousands of children overcome many an academic challenge. "I was trained by the government to draw for textbooks," says the artist. "I created illustrations for primary school textbooks for subjects like mathematics and social sciences. For senior students, my

work features in their zoology and botany books. I was able to simplify complex concepts for easy learning."

Ramanujam's father was a draughtsman and he believes he inherited his skill. "My father could draw with both hands. My brothers took up professions like medicine, civil and so forth. So my father was proud that I took up the arts and carved a path for myself," remarks the creator of the *Kutti* and *Kundu* comics. "Straight after I learnt fine art, before I got myself a full-time job as art master at Santhome Higher Secondary School, I used to sell my landscape paintings at the Victoria Technical Institute in Chennai. In a year, they would probably sell one piece for a mere ₹ 750," he laughs.

Somewhere down the line, Ramanujam was asked by the state government of Mylapore whether he could illustrate textbooks. Ecstatic at the prospect, he accepted the offer and was sent to Delhi for training. The ace illustrator continued to teach art in school but opted for early retirement in 1991 to teach art full time.

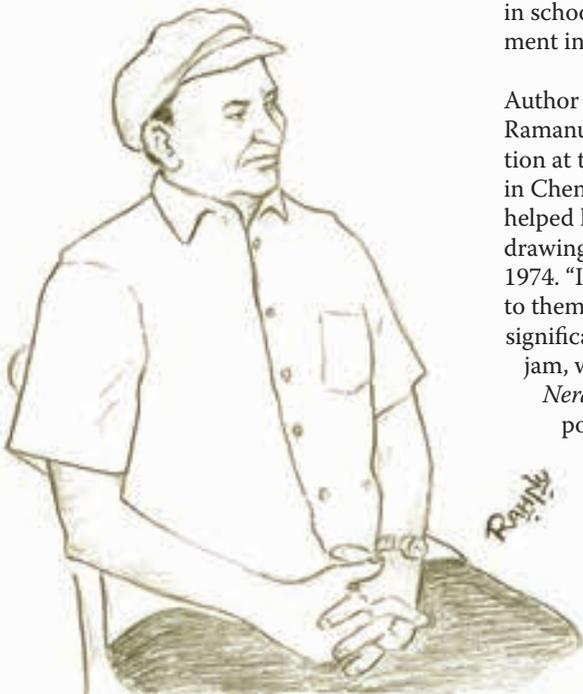
Author of three books on cartooning, Ramanujam held his first solo exhibition at the Russian Cultural Centre in Chennai in 1974. The exhibition helped him pitch the idea of teaching drawing on TV to Doordarshan in 1974. "I had to explain the concept to them as cartoons had no real significance back then," says Ramanujam, whose show *Ranuvin Cartoon Neram* is a part of Tamil cultural pop culture. Between his art classes, where students range from the ages of five to 60, Ramanujam found time to set up a research and training institute called Rahnu's Cartoon Training Centre in 1980. "Although I learnt the arts formally in college, cartoons were

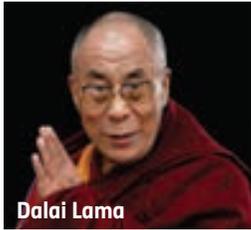


a genre that I studied on my own, by reading and practice," he reveals. "I am publishing the results of my research as a thesis titled *Keli Padam Kathai* [which means 'cartoon' in Tamil]. Did you know starting with cavemen, cartoons have been used as a means of communication? In India, we paint faces of demons on pumpkins on no-moon day, and in villages, farmers create scarecrows. They are all forms of cartoons. Before the *Shilpa Shashtra* came into being, the forms and the imagery of Gods were very creative. This was a way to attract people and share religious information."

For this cartoonist, 24 hours a day is never enough. Shuttling between his training centre and animation studio, Ramanujam says his life is busy, busy, busy. This ace cartoonist, who has set up a small animation studio managed by his grandson, has always had the knack of adaptation. So, if he spent years honing and mastering his craft, he now teaches a 'Learn to Draw in 10 Days' course. The irony is not lost on Ramanujam, but he shrugs: 'You have to move with the times.'

— Jayanthi Somasundaram





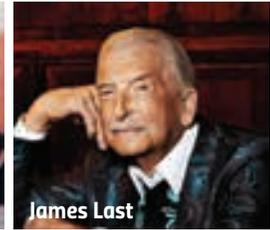
Dalai Lama



Astad Deboo



Sudha Shivpuri



James Last

## BIRTHDAYS

Former US president **George W Bush** turned 69 on 6 July.

Tibetan spiritual leader **Dalai Lama** turned 80 on 6 July.

American actor and filmmaker **Thomas Jeffrey 'Tom' Hanks** turned 59 on 9 July.

Former Indian cricketer **Sunil Gavaskar** turns 66 on 10 July.

Indian contemporary dancer and choreographer **Astad Deboo** turns 68 on 13 July.

Theatre and film actor **Naseeruddin Shah** turns 66 on 20 July.

## IN PASSING

Popular Indian stage, film and television actor **Sudha Shivpuri** died on 20 May from multiple organ failure. She was 77.

Wrestler **Prem Nath**, a gold medallist at the 1974 Commonwealth Games, passed away on 1 June. He was 64.

German composer and Big Band leader **James Last** died on 9 June in Florida after battling a brief illness. He was 86.

Renowned architect **Charles Correa** passed away on 16 June in Mumbai following a brief illness. He was 84.

Former Indian cricketer **Hemant Kanitkar** died after a prolonged illness on 9 June at his residence in Pune. He was 72.

## MILESTONES

➤ 92 year-old **Harriette Thompson**, a cancer survivor, became the oldest woman to complete a marathon— she finished the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon in San Diego, California, in 7 hours, 24 minutes, 36 seconds. It was her 17th Rock 'n' Roll Marathon.

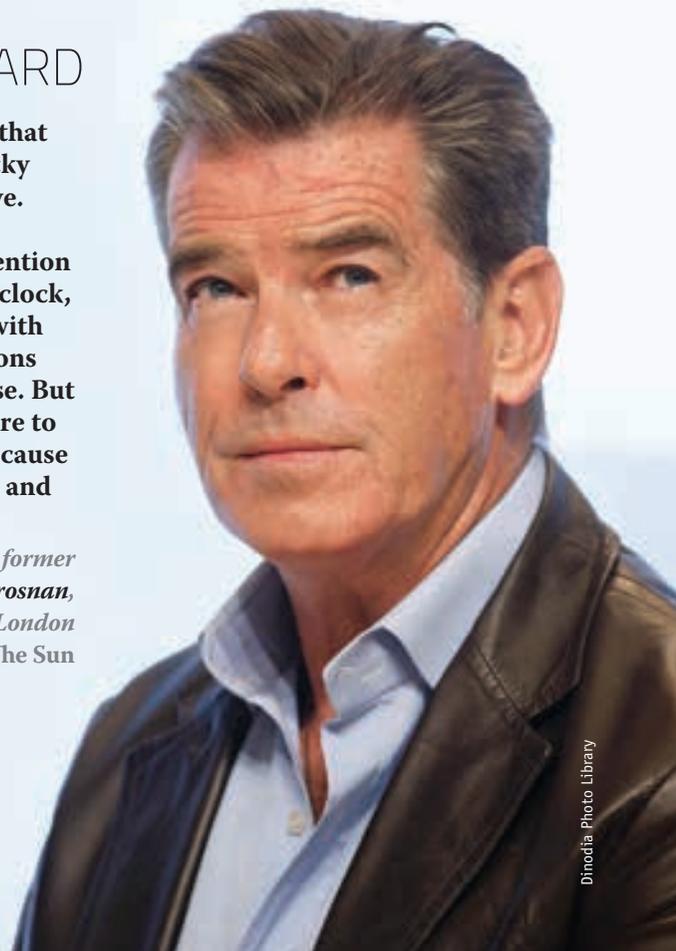
➤ The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** was presented with the Space Pioneer Award for 2015 in the science and engineering category in recognition of its efforts in accomplishing the Mars Orbiter Mission in its very first attempt, during the 34th Annual International Space Development Conference held at Toronto in Canada in May.

➤ Finally, 102 year-old **Ingeborg Syllm-Rapoport** got her PhD in June in a special ceremony from the University of Hamburg, Germany. She was turned away 77 years ago, even after completing her thesis on diphtheria, for being of Jewish descent.

## OVERHEARD

**“Ageing is a gift that some are not lucky enough to receive. There’s so much concern and attention to reversing the clock, on fighting age with potions and lotions and whatever else. But signs of ageing are to be celebrated because life is wonderful and so fragile.”**

—Irish actor and former 007 **Pierce Brosnan**, speaking to London newspaper **The Sun**



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## 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.

### MINDING MY LANGUAGE

I am blessed with many talents and, as a result, there is never a dull moment in my life! One of my skills is the gift of painting and I pursued this hobby when I was living at Mumbai's Nair Hospital, where my husband was a pathologist and warden of the hostel. I used to make paintings of the sculptures at Ajanta and Ellora, and gift them to the medical students at Nair. After all these decades, I have just one precious painting left with me.

I have another unique talent—the ability to talk in reverse, in no less than five languages, English, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati and Sanskrit. In 2014, I was honoured by the Arya Samaj in Jamnagar, Gujarat, for this extraordinary feat, and have applied to *Guinness World Records* for an entry.

I developed this unique ability quite by chance when I was a child. I used to accompany my dad to his office and we used to take the same route every day. To break the monotony, I began reading the road signs and signboards on shops in reverse. After a little practice, it became a reflex—all one has to do is say something to me and I can say it back in reverse! My husband, son and daughter have been very supportive of me and it was my husband, who passed away in 2007, who suggested that I apply to *Guinness*.

My talent got me interviewed by the BBC, who came over to my home in Mumbai. I told them my new project was to pair the letters of words and talk in pairs. They were taken aback and joked that their governments should use this as a code language. I thanked them for the idea and said I would approach the Indian Army and offer my services to them! I was also interviewed by a French journalist, who asked me to recite poems in reverse. I did that and they told me later that they had added music to the recording and broadcasted it in their country.

I was born and raised in Jamnagar, and have been fond of reading and writing since I was a child. The constant quest for learning was one of the reasons I learnt five languages and can read and write in all of them. It is this passion that prompted me to become an author, and I am about to publish my sixth book. In one of my books, I have converted the essence of the *Bhagavad-Gita* into *bhajan* so the common man can understand it. I have also written other *bhajan*-based books dedicated to gods and saints like Sai Baba.



**Antani can talk in reverse in five languages**

I give full credit to my husband for encouraging me to write. It is because of his hard work that I came up with my first book. My husband was very fond of classical music and had knowledge of *raga*. I remember waking up at midnight and telling him that I had suddenly come up with a line to write and he would note it down instantly. Then we would start looking for a *raga* that synced with it.

I am 75 years old now and live with my son in Ashokvan in Mumbai's Borivali East. I also visit my daughter in Canada as often as I can. I was once a schoolteacher in Jamnagar and I now use that passion to teach my grandson and some of the children in the building where I live. It's entertaining, it keeps me informed, and it keeps my mind sharp. I believe that every silver should keep busy with things that help others rather than spending time gossiping. Believe me, I have tried that as well!

—Jyotsna Antani, Mumbai

## JUST TRIPPIN'

Three years ago, at the age of 63, I took an incredible road trip. In 79 days, I drove 26,504 km and covered 28 Indian state capitals and ascended Khardung La, arguably the highest motorable mountain pass in the world.

Motoring is in my blood and I have participated in motorcycle rallies in my younger days. I used to often drive from Kolkata, where I worked, to Kerala, my hometown, and other destinations within India. A Formula One enthusiast, my passion for driving literally knows no bounds. So this pan-India trip was meant to be a solo drive but I ended up going with my wife Geetha, my daughter, son, brother and brother-in-law, who were perhaps concerned that the trip was too daunting for a senior citizen going solo. We started the trip in Mumbai and drove straight to Kolkata and then to the Northeast.

The most spectacular experience in the Northeast was the drive to Tawang. The route carved through hills, exposing views of valleys and high mountains beyond. The mountain passes here, especially Se La at 13,700 ft, are fabulous but the roads were terrible. The Northeast provides unbelievable vistas and the solitude is unbelievable.

After covering Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur and Tripura, we returned via Guwahati to Kolkata. From there, with

### Chacko atop the highest motorable pass in the world



Rahul Chacko

good roads all the way, we motored effortlessly through Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The monsoon was delayed and we experienced some of its fury only on the day we left Kochi. Thereafter, it was dry through Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Punjab, all the way to J&K where, after enjoying the salubrious weather in Srinagar, I drove to Zoji La (11,578 ft). It was tough. There were barely any tarred roads, and the combination of dust and water in many places made it a quagmire. From there, it was a long drive between walls of snow, through barren mountains and over rutted roads to Kargil, which we reached late at night.

From Kargil, we crossed Fotu La (13,478 ft) but a landslide beyond Lamayuru delayed us for an hour, till the Army allowed cars to proceed on a tight, twisty trail through rocky mountains. Treacherous terrain well above the tree line, with steep ravines and loose sand, really tested my driving till about 40 km from Leh when we broke out onto a flat plain. The landscape here is surreal—dry mountains and huge rocks that look like a lunar plain.

The next day, we ascended the mighty Khardung La. On the Leh-Manali Road, we climbed Tanglang La and Lachlung La. The next day, I drove across Barachala La to Keylong. From there, we left early morning to cross the Rohtang Pass (13,050 ft) before noon. We crested that without difficulty and, after encountering yet another landslide, made it safely to Manali and from there to Shimla.

By then, I had covered the tough parts of the drive. Only Chandigarh, Dehradun, Lucknow, Jaipur, Nagpur, Raipur and New Delhi were left. I covered these in a fortnight. Despite some inclement weather and a few landslides, my ambitious road trip concluded without a hitch. And, oh, did I mention that I did the entire trip in a Nano? When I drove down Khardung La, everyone heading up to the pass cheered, clapped or gave me a 'thumbs up', all amazed that a tiny Nano piloted by a silver-haired senior had made it to the top of the world.

With India done and dusted, the world now beckons and that plan is slowly unfolding. It is said, "A man is not really old until regrets take the place of his dreams." And I am still dreaming.

—Thomas Chacko, Kochi



Shyamola Khanna

# When the time is right

**WG CDR (RETD) A B BHUSHAN, 74, HYDERABAD**

**M**y philosophy for life came from my experiences after I took voluntary retirement from the Services at 45. I am a former transport pilot with the Indian Air Force (IAF). I joined the Services in 1962 when our forces were taking a beating during the Chinese aggression. Lata Mangeshkar was singing *Ay mere watan ke logon* while Jawaharlal Nehru was making rousing speeches.

I was barely 20 when I discontinued my professional course in agriculture at the University of Hyderabad to join the IAF in 1963. But a freak accident downgraded my medical category in 1976, which meant I would never rise up the ranks. By then, I had acquired a BA honours degree in psychology from Pune University while I was posted at the National Defence Academy, and when I turned 40 in 1984, I earned an MBA degree from Madras University. In 1988, I opted for voluntary retirement and took my chances in the outside world.

For three years, I worked with Medinova, a medical diagnostics company. It was tough as I had no experience and was much older than my colleagues. I made up by working extra hours. After work, I used to teach at a management school, thrice a week. Then, I joined the Eenadu Group's Margadarsi Chit Funds, where I worked for two years. I joined the administration department of Pennar Group in 1993. I continued there till 2012, when I turned 70. I was the managing director of one of their companies for the past six years and now serve on the board of directors.

Alongside my corporate journey, I was elected president of the Hyderabad Management Association. Then, I was appointed chairman of the Indo-US Chamber for Andhra Pradesh and South India, and was later on the National Committee—the only *fauji* to do so! I continue to be associated as an executive committee member of these bodies.

With the active support of then chief minister Chandrababu Naidu, I was able to divert the US Consulate to Hyderabad at a time when it was headed for Bangalore! My widespread network of business associates, especially those based in the US, worked out an interesting sister-city agreement for Hyderabad and the city of Riverside in California, in 2000.

The one thing I am truly proud of is OLIVE, an online verification engine I helped install at the US Consulate in Hyderabad. This portal has since helped hundreds of thousands of aspiring students and job seekers from Hyderabad quickly clear their documents for the US.

Prior to OLIVE, students from Hyderabad and job aspirants were often rejected as their papers and verifications were either dubious or too lengthy. After OLIVE, things have become streamlined and smooth as the very student of the city is in the log now. This is especially important as Hyderabad is one of India's premier tech hubs and techies from here are in great demand in the US.

My wife Rekha has always been a great support. My two sons are doing well, married and with kids of their own. One lives in the US and the other in Singapore. My wife and I travel a lot but we have both surrendered our US Green Cards as we love our home here and have no intention of living anywhere else.

I am very happy today, doing all the things I like to do. I edit the monthly newsletter of the RSI, a Services club. Once a week, I volunteer my services at the ECHS (ex-Servicemen's Health Scheme), and I also dabble in stocks and shares.

When I look back, I have no regrets at all. Everything I did was right for that time. Everything that happened was also right for that time. This is my philosophy for life.

—As told to Shyamola Khanna



## YOGA RX BY SHAMEEM AKTHAR

We all have a list of healthy foods. But the latest buzz is the glycaemic index (GI). Did you know that watermelon is as bad (in terms of calorie intake) as an ultra sweet dessert? This is because it has a high GI. This means the food releases energy fast in the blood and causes a spike in blood sugar, which crashes very soon to create hunger. Thus, it is better to choose a food with a low GI that releases energy slowly. This could mean a small bite of dark chocolate, which has a low GI and is packed with antioxidants and nutrients. And believe it or not, pumpkin has a high GI despite seeming to be deceptively watery and fibrous—spinach is the better choice. So eat smart.

## CANCER

21 June to 22 July

**T**his is a secretive sign; hardworking, attached to money, temperamental and ultra sensitive. So the yoga plan to deal with these aspects would involve working on grounding oneself first. This usually means focusing on practices that calm the root psychic centre (*mooladhara* chakra). One system under a constant state of threat is the digestive tract, with the personality's sensitivity seeming to take a toll on this centre; for this, practices dealing with the navel/crown jewel centre (*manipura*) would be relevant.

This would mean working on poses that strengthen the legs (for the root *chakra*) and those that apply pressure at the abdomen in a positive way (for the navel centre). For the former, standing balances and inversions are advised. Some examples include the standing crane (*bakasana*); standing crescent (*ardha chandrasana*) series; warrior poses (*virbhadrhasana* series); the palm tree pose (*tadasana*); and the one-legged prayer pose (*eka pada pranamasana*), to name a few. All the lying leg raises, from the lying toe-holds (*supta padangushthasana*) series, are also advised. For the navel centre, twists like the half spinal twist (*ardhamatysendrasana*), Sage Bharadwaja pose (*bharadwajasana*) and spinal column pose (*merudandasana*) are advised. Other poses that tone the delicate digestive tract include the lying energy release (*supta pawanuktasana*) series. The seated thunderbolt (*vajarasana*) will calm both the stomach as well as the mind. The lying thunderbolt (*supta vajrasana*) may be practiced though it may require props in the initial stages. The abdominal fire pose (*jatharagniasana*) and its variations are invaluable to deal with digestive tract issues. And *kriya* like the metabolic fire cleansing practice (*agnisara kriya*) are advised.

All the practices mentioned above calm the highly sensitive cancer personality; doing them in any form would serve this purpose. Breathing exercises (*pranayama*) and meditations should also be added as Cancerians advance in their practice.

Shameem Akthar is a Mumbai-based yoga acharya. If you have any queries for her, mail us or email at [contact.mag@harmonyindia.org](mailto:contact.mag@harmonyindia.org). (Please consult your physician before following the advice given here)



## Abdominal fire pose (*jatharagniasana*)

Lie down on your back, with legs folded at the knees. Keep feet flat, close to the hips. Spread your arms out on ground at shoulder level. Inhale deeply. Exhaling, drop both knees to the right side. Hold for a few seconds, breathing naturally, till you feel a firm pressure along the entire waist. Inhale, raise knees

back to the centre. Exhaling, drop both knees to the left side. Initially, the knees may not touch the ground but you can be aware that this is the desired position; usually with regular practice, the body will become flexible and supple at the waist to do this. Hold, breathing naturally. Inhale, raise knees back to the centre. This is one round. You may do up to five to 10 rounds.

**Points to note:** Ensure both knees are stacked on top of each other and are not slack. Also, ensure feet are close to the butt. Ensure the elbows are also pressed down and do not rise up or become slack. As you improve in practice, you may look at the right elbow when the knees drop to the left and vice versa. **Benefits:** This pose soothes the digestive system and helps to heal and strengthen it. It makes the entire body flexible, helps loss of fat at the waist and provides spinal tone.

**Model:** Susanda S Vadke,  
Harmony Interactive Centre  
**Photographer:** Haresh Patel



## Renal relief: Eat right to slow the progression of chronic kidney disease

I am 70 and suffer from chronic kidney disease (CKD). Can you suggest a kidney-friendly diet to slow the progression of the disease?

CKD is a slow progressive loss of renal function over a period of months or years and defined as an abnormally low glomerular filtration rate, which is usually determined indirectly by the creatinine level in blood serum. CKD is a condition that arises owing to advanced and progressive damage of kidneys with impairment of renal function. Few functional nephrons remain and CKD results in what is usually termed uremia, a condition resulting from renal failure, when kidney function is compromised; waste product normally excreted in the urine is retained in the blood. In essence, it is a gradual and progressive loss of the ability of the kidneys to excrete wastes, concentrate urine and conserve electrolytes. CKD can range from mild dysfunction to severe kidney failure; it can lead to severe illness and requires some form of renal replacement therapy (dialysis). Eventually, it can progress to end-stage renal disease (ESRD).

### What should you eat?

Feeding is challenging in CKD as anorexia and taste changes reduce food intake. The main focus of dietary management is on protein, sodium, phosphorus, water and adequate non-protein calories.

**Calories:** 35-50 kcal/kg body weight should be supplied mainly comprising carbohydrates and fats for a protein-sparing effect.

**Protein:** Low phosphorus intake, restricting mixed proteins to 20-30 g/day. The recommended protein intake is 1-1.3 g/kg. Include bread, fruits, rice, vegetables and pasta and avoid excessive meat, fish, poultry and eggs.

**Fats:** Recommended for energy along with carbohydrates. Avoid saturated fats that are not good for health like butter, lard and shortening and include healthy fats like vegetable oils.

**Carbohydrates:** Should provide the main source of energy to reduce body protein breakdown. Sugars and cereals from which proteins are removed are liberally permitted as



Dinodia Photo Library

wheat starch and protein-free bread. Vegetables and fruits are suitably processed to decrease potassium content.

**Fluids:** The usual fluid permitted is the volume of daily urine with an additional 500 ml for essential loss through respiration. With progressive kidney damage, the volume of urine diminishes. This results in water accumulation in the body.

## Feeding is challenging in CKD as taste changes reduce food intake. The main focus of dietary management is on protein, sodium, phosphorus, water and adequate non-protein calories

**Potassium:** Intake of potassium should be reduced as increased serum potassium (hyperkalemia) results from tissue breakdown releasing potassium and scanty urine decreases urinary potassium excretion. Avoid avocados, bananas, melons, oranges, prunes and raisins, kale, plantains, spinach, potatoes and tomatoes, beans (baked, black, pinto) and include apples, cranberries, grapes, pineapples and strawberries, cauliflower, onions, peppers, radishes, summer and zucchini squash and lettuce.

**Phosphorus:** Too much phosphorus in your blood can lead to weak bones so low-phosphorus foods should be included like corn or rice cereals, unsalted popcorn and lemonade. Avoid foods like whole-grain bread, bran cereals and oatmeal, nuts and sunflower seeds.

**Sodium:** The ability to conserve and excrete sodium is limited and, therefore, a close watch is necessary. In most cases, 1-3 g of sodium (½ tsp to 1½ tsp of salt) and 1,500-3,000 ml fluid will maintain sodium and water balance with dialysis. In the stage of scanty urine, intake is restricted to 1-1.5 g sodium and 750-1,500 ml fluid. Sodium overload is associated with water retention, detected clinically by oedema of the legs, pulmonary congestion and hypertension. Sodium restriction is then necessary. Do not add salt to your food when cooking or eating. Try cooking with fresh herbs, lemon juice or other salt-free spices. Choose fresh or frozen vegetables instead of canned vegetables.

### Diet principles

- Your food should be high in calories with 1 g/kg of protein.
- Salt should not be added in cooking but the prescribed amount should be added separately.
- Avoid canned foods, salted nuts, products containing baking soda, cornflakes, processed cheese and preserved foods like pickles and chutney.
- To reduce potassium content, boil vegetables with more water and drain off excess. Avoid fruits, fruit juices and coconut water. If potassium is to be restricted, avoid tea, coffee, *bajra*, maize, *ragi*, wheat flour (whole), jam, jellies, sauces, chocolates, vegetables, meat soup and dry fruits.

### READERS ASK

**My father has recently developed haemorrhoids (piles) that result in rectal bleeding and discomfort. What food precautions do we need to take to ease the symptoms?**

Haemorrhoids (piles) are a condition in which the inflammation of the anus or lower rectum area occurs. This condition is very painful and leads to bleeding also. As constipation can be a common cause, a diet high in fibre is recommended that enables the stool to pass easier without strain and helps digestion. High-fibre foods include whole grains, pulses, legumes and products made from bran cereals, breads, whole pasta, oats, etc. Legumes and beans like kidney beans, black-eyed peas and black beans should be included daily in the diet. Fresh fruits and vegetables with their peels are rich in fibre. Fruits like papaya and banana act as laxatives and should be included in the diet. Prunes, figs, strawberries, raisins and apples are good sources of fibre and vitamins. Green leafy vegetables like spinach, cabbage and asparagus also aid digestion; other greens like zucchini, celery and cucumber are also good for piles. Avoid caffeinated products like tea and coffee. Chillies and other spices should be included in moderate or low quantity. Avoid foods that do not contain fibre such as refined flour and processed products.

- Milk, ice-cream, *kheer*, yoghurt and *lassi* are permitted.
- In place of plain rice, preparations like *pulao*, fried rice, sweet rice can be included in the diet. The amount of rice used in these preparations should be the same as plain rice.
- Preparations in which dal and rice are used such as *idli*, *dosa*, *khichdi*, etc, could be exchanged for rice and dal but the quantity of rice and dal should be the same in each preparation.
- Include egg preparations like omelettes, boiled and fried egg, egg *pulao*, scrambled egg and egg curry.
- Choose from the following vegetables: broad beans, snake gourd, tender *tinda*, cucumber, field beans, bitter gourd, French beans, okra, green mango, tomatoes and pumpkin.
- Use sour tamarind, sour lime and coriander for flavour.

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## Hear and now: Beware of impaired hearing and balance



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*“Blindness separates us from things, but deafness separates us from people”*

—Helen Keller

Humans are blessed with five awesome senses, among which hearing has a unique role. The physiological changes associated with ageing affect hearing too. Damage to the inner ear can affect the equilibrium of the body.

### Difficulty in hearing

There are certain causes for hearing deterioration that are completely curable.

- **Ageing:** As a result of age-related changes in the blood vessels and nerves, some damage can occur in the inner ear. This progressive deterioration starts after 40 years of age. Such degenerative processes affect both ears equally. Men are affected more commonly than women. If hearing loss becomes acute enough,

hearing aids can be used. While conversing with elders with such hearing difficulties, it is better to look at their face and speak slowly and clearly with moderate loudness, rather than shouting too loud. This enables them to understand certain words by observing the lip movements of the speaker. If difficulty in hearing is neglected, it can lead to loss of communication with near and dear ones in the long run. Isolation, in turn, can trigger depression.

- **Wax in the outer ears:** Wax is normally secreted by the glands of the outer ear to protect the ears. But once this wax keeps accumulating, it can lead to decline in hearing. If this problem is sorted out early, regular application of olive oil in the outer ear will ease the removal of wax. Wax removal should preferably be done by an ENT specialist.
- **Blockage in the middle ear:** When microbes infect the throat, they can slowly invade the middle ear

too via the Eustachian tube. As a result, the mild hearing impairment of old age gets exaggerated. This problem, *otitis media* (i.e. infection of the middle ear), can be treated with antibiotics.

- **Changes of the middle ear bones:** There are three small bones in the middle ear: the malleus, incus and stapes. These tiny bones help in sound amplification and transmission. Degenerative changes in these bones can lead to hearing difficulty. One important problem seen in the middle aged people is otosclerosis (thickening of middle ear bones). Such conditions can be treated by microsurgeries.
- **Adverse effects of drugs:** Certain drugs can be toxic to the ears and cause hearing loss, such as antibiotics (especially streptomycin, which is given to kill tuberculosis, bacteria), diuretics, etc.

### Hearing aids

A few years ago, the usage of hearing aids was considered cumbersome. But in this modern era where we breathe science and drink technology, a wide range of hearing aids that can meet each patient's needs are available. Some of these are so tiny that they are almost impossible to discern. It's important to remember, though, that continuous use of a hearing aid will not restore hearing; it just makes it easier to hear by amplifying sound.

### Types of hearing aids

Hearing aids can be broadly classified into two types.

- **Type I:** This type amplifies sound (air conduction mode) and is used more frequently. It includes the **pocket model**, which is used for people with very severe hearing loss and is especially useful for children with congenital deafness; the **behind-the-ear model**, which is used for people with mild to moderate hearing loss; the **model attached to spectacles**; the **model fitted inside the ear**; and **aids inserted into the cochlear canal of the inner ear** that are almost invisible from the outside and are programmed and controlled by computers.
- **Type II:** For people with no ear canal, or those with a blocked ear as a result of chronic infection, a device fitted over the mastoid bone behind the ear is used.

### Troubles of the throat

Troubles of the throat should be attended to promptly.

- **Difficulty in swallowing:** Pain and difficulty during swallowing are common problems. This difficulty can

### READERS ASK

**I am a known diabetic for the past 10 years. Recently, I have developed poor vision in my right eye. The doctor diagnosed a case of diabetic retinopathy and advised laser treatment. After a few sittings, my vision has improved. Please tell me more about this ailment.**

Diabetic retinopathy is damage to the retina that results from diabetes mellitus. This is common in people with a history of poorly controlled blood sugar levels. It occurs when blood vessels in the retina are damaged over time by high levels of sugar in the blood. At first, high blood sugar levels cause the blood vessels to leak blood and fluid into the retina, which can lead to blindness through bleeding, retinal detachment or glaucoma. People with diabetic retinopathy may have no symptoms. Some people experience gradual vision loss. An ophthalmologist can diagnose diabetic retinopathy by examining the retina through a dilated pupil. Fluorescein angiography may be performed, in which a dye is injected into an arm vein and the retina is photographed. Treatment usually involves using a laser to seal abnormal blood vessels and decrease leakage. This procedure is called laser photocoagulation. It prevents further vision loss but rarely improves vision.

be for solids, liquids or both. At times, this can be the first caution bell of an underlying malignancy. Hence, it is advisable to consult a doctor at the earliest after encountering difficulties swallowing.

- **Speech difficulties:** Ageing can affect speech. Speech and voice modulation is primarily carried out by the vocal cords. The vocal cords and other parts of the sound-producing apparatus start shrinking with age. Prolonged hoarseness of voice in old age can again be an alarming sign for cancer. Hence, it should be attended to with utmost care at the earliest stage.

Such simple problems should not be neglected as a normal physiological change of ageing. With the help of medicines, hearing aids and surgeries, problems of the ear, nose and throat can be cured completely, thereby paving way for holistic living.

*Padma Shri Dr V S Natarajan, a specialist in the field of geriatric medicine, runs Memory Clinic, a service for silvers in Chennai. If you have a question for him, write to [contact.mag@harmonyindia.org](mailto:contact.mag@harmonyindia.org)*



**HIS LADLE LOVE** BY PRATIBHA JAIN

# The taste of tradition

**G CHANDRASEKHARRAN • PUNE**

An engaging series about silver men who wield a deft ladle in the kitchen

He describes *sirukizhangu* (a seasonal root) as having the fragrance of first rain on dry earth. He laughingly informs me that *sambar podi* is not traditionally used in preparing *sambar* but only in *kozhumbu*. And he gives simple tips such as boiling rather than roasting garlic

if you don't want the flavour to be overpowering. As his daughter rightly states, "He simply enjoys cooking and sharing recipes." A Tamil Brahmin currently residing in Pune, G Chandrasekharran, 64, belongs to a family where men seem to enjoy cooking. We meet and chat about

traditional cooking, family bonding and mango recipes as it is summer and mangoes are aplenty.

***Namaste* Mr Chandrasekharran. Your daughter Rajmi has spoken highly about your cooking. How did you develop an interest?**

I grew up seeing my father in the kitchen when my mother was unwell. He was an excellent cook and I remember how he would actively participate in temple cooking. Earlier, when there were festivals and *puja* in temples, the community would come forward to do the cooking and



not employ caterers. My father was always at the helm of these activities. At home, I often pitched in to help with the cooking and enjoyed it. I think I have been cooking right from my teens.

### Where did you grow up?

My ancestors are from Tirunelveli, but I grew up in Chennai. I have lived there for over five decades. In 1999, I took voluntary retirement from Central Government service. After that, I became vice-president in a software company. Recently, I retired from there and have moved to Pune to stay with my son.

### Do you cook even now?

I don't cook on an everyday basis but still cook quite often. Earlier, there were more reasons to cook, such as when my wife went to her parents' home during summer vacations. As we have always been a small family, if ever my wife needed a break or was unwell, I happily took over the cooking.

### What are the dishes you enjoy cooking?

I like preparing sweet dishes such as *payasam* [*kheer*] and *rava kesari*. My mother made excellent Mysore Pak and I have learnt that dish from her. However, what I cook more often are typical Brahmin recipes that comprise our everyday meal. Traditionally, our meal is a three-course meal consisting of steamed rice with *sambar*, *rasam* and finally *mor* or buttermilk. This practice continues even now. We prepare many varieties of *kozhumbu* and side-dishes but we do not use too much *masala* or spices in our cooking.

**Yes, most Brahmin cuisines, even from other states of India, are quite *sattvik*.**

That is true. The flavours are quite subtle. For instance, even though we add garlic to *rasam*, we do not roast it at all as it has an overpowering flavour. If you boil garlic, the flavour is not as strong.

### That's a good tip. So when do you boil the garlic?

We boil it separately and when it is well cooked, add it to the *rasam*.

### Your daughter Rajmi is full of praises for your white *rasam*. She calls it your signature dish.

[Laughs] It is quite simple actually. I used to experiment now and

**“You cannot force anyone to learn cooking; there will be disasters. There has to be an inner urge. Only then can a person excel and explore their creativity. You must also allow children to find their own way in the kitchen”**

then when the children were at home. I have a son and a daughter. I prepare *rasam* with lemon juice and *rasam* powder. Once it is ready, the sediments settle at the bottom and what you see on top is almost transparent. So we ended up calling it white *rasam*! Otherwise, I have not deviated much from how my parents cooked. For instance, do you know that most Brahmins do not eat *sorakkai* [bottle gourd]. For generations, many families have never eaten *sorakkai*. It is the same as how being a Jain, you may have never eaten brinjal. On the other hand, one of my favourite vegetables is *sirukizhangu*, a seasonal root that grows during November

and December. It is very popular in my native village, Tirunelveli, and always reminds me of the fragrance of first rain on dry earth.

### I am enjoying noting this down. Do you make *masala* at home or have you switched over to readymade powders?

As far as possible, we don't make a compromise on taste. So all powders, whether *rasam* powder or *sambar* powder, are prepared at home. However, we prepare *sambar* only with freshly prepared *masala*, which is the *arachuvitta sambar*.

### You mean you don't use *sambar* powder to make *sambar*?

That is a misnomer. Despite its name, *sambar* powder is not added to *sambar* but only to other *kozhumbu*. It is actually a *kozhumbu podi*.

### Interesting. So tell me, what is your daily routine like?

I wake up in the morning and begin the day with morning *puja* and chanting along with my wife. Apart from the daily routine, I really enjoy spending time with my grandsons. I also surf a lot on the Internet. My daughter Rajmi is a popular food blogger and we often discuss how we can make recipes more interesting.

### What recipes would you like to share today?

I enjoy cooking with seasonal vegetables and fruits. If it was winter, I would have shared a recipe using *sirukizhangu*. Being summer, it can be a mango recipe. In my native place, we had a huge mango tree growing in our courtyard and made many varieties of pickle. So I can give you whatever recipe you like—raw mango rice, mango pickle or raw mango dal!

**Thank you, they sound delicious. Before you move on to the recipes, tell me, did you ever teach your children to cook?**

No, you cannot force anyone to learn cooking; there will be disasters.

**What is the requirement to become a good cook?**

There has to be an inner urge. Only then can a person excel and explore their creativity. You must also allow children to find their own way in the kitchen. I learnt from my father and now my son also cooks quite easily and my young grandson keeps announcing that he is going to become a chef when he grows up.

## **Maanga saadam** (Raw mango rice)

This is a spicy and sour rice dish popular during summer when sour mangoes taste their best.

### **Ingredients**

- Uncooked rice: 1½ cups
- Sour raw mango: 1; medium
- Turmeric powder: ½ tsp
- Salt to taste

### **For the tempering**

- Oil, preferably gingelly oil: 1 tbsp
- Ghee: 2 tbsp
- *Udad*: 1 tsp (optional)
- Mustard seeds: 1 tsp
- Asafoetida powder: 1 tsp
- Green chillies: 2; slit into half

### **Method**

Pressure-cook the rice using 3 cups of water. Set it aside to cool. If you prefer, you can boil the rice in an open pan instead. Each grain of the cooked rice must be easy to separate but soft. Wash, peel and grate the sour raw mango and set aside. Heat the oil and ghee in a shallow pan. When it is hot, add the *udad* and mustard seeds; as they start spluttering, add the asafoetida powder and green chillies. Lower the flame and add the grated mango and turmeric powder. Sauté this for 5 minutes, until the liquid that the mango gives off is fully absorbed. Finally, add the cooled rice and salt to taste; mix well and switch off the flame. Serve hot with *vadam* or chips.





## **Maanga paruppu** (Dal with raw mango)

A delicious dal Mr Chandrasekharran's family also enjoys drinking as a soup.

### **Ingredients**

- Tur dal: 1½ cups
- Raw mango: 1; medium sized
- Green chillies: 2
- Turmeric powder: ¼ tsp
- Asafoetida powder: ¾ tsp
- Salt to taste
- Coriander leaves for garnishing

### **For the tempering**

- Ghee: 2 tbsp
- Udad: 1 tsp (optional)
- Mustard seeds: ¼ tsp
- Red chilli: 1; halved
- A few curry leaves

### **Method**

Pressure-cook the dal in 4 cups of water. Churn and set aside. Peel and chop the mango into tiny pieces or grate; cook with 1 slit green chilli, turmeric powder, asafoetida powder, and half a teaspoon of salt, along with 1 cup water. Simmer on a low flame until the raw mango is cooked. Add the dal, let it simmer for 2 minutes and switch off the flame. In a small pan, heat the ghee. Add the *udad* and the mustard seeds; as they start spluttering, add the red chilli, curry leaves and 1 green chilli. Pour this tempering over the cooked dal mixture. Garnish with coriander leaves. Serve hot with steamed rice or as an accompaniment to chapattis. Tip: Instead of green and red chillies, you can add fried *mor milagai* (sun-dried chillies) to the dal for a spicier flavour.

*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 Sanjeeta K K

# After celebrating your 25th anniversary, celebrate your first.

The first time your eyes met.

The first time you mustered up the courage.

The first time you bared your heart.

The first time you heard "Yes".

The first date.

The first time you held hands.

The first fight.

The first time you made up.

Shouldn't you be celebrating, that first rush of love  
before life

and the babies and the bills intruded?

Because for the first time

you're at an age when

you can fall in love with each other

all over again.





If you're above fifty five, we believe Harmony is just the magazine for you. Filled with human interest stories, exciting features and columns, Harmony encourages you to do just one thing: live young.

*harmony*  
celebrate age

# Don't exclude Generation A!

The Government needs to design and draft legislation that takes care of silvers before they can partake in the long awaited *Acche Din*, writes Dr Priya Desai

**T**here has undoubtedly been a sea change in the way the world perceives India today. Our country is being recognised as an Asian economic giant. India's image has imbibed more sheen; Indians are getting recognition in every field ranging from technology to finance. On home shores too things seem much brighter. The economic data released by the Government indicates a revival of growth, with the latest figures pegging growth at over 7 per cent from a dismal 5.4 per cent just a year ago. The Reserve Bank of India maintains that inflation is under control and consumer inflation is decelerating from double digit levels. Little wonder then, that the report card of the new Government is flaunting its new economic policies, programmes, as well as this data as harbingers of *Acche Din*, a prominent poll promise.

## Decoding data

The words *Acche Din*, though, would mean different things to different sections of the country:

- For the corporate world, it would mean more economic reforms to conduct business in a hassle-free environment, growth in investments and business expansion.
- For working professionals, it would mean gainful employment, better job opportunities and higher earnings.
- In comparison, the aspirations of silvers are vastly different, and are linked to their capacity to earn and spend and the limitations under which they function.

Unfortunately, so far the common man hasn't really perceived any tangible change either in his income levels or standard of living. This is because these highly touted improvements have not yet percolated down.

## The simmering question

The question doing the rounds is this: Do ground realities corroborate the data and statistics fed by the Government? The predominant feeling among the layman is that the jetsetters are much better off than they were before and that the sheen hasn't really rubbed off on the not-so-privileged segments of society. Unfortunately, many silvers would agree with this, with most of them feeling the pinch of the ever-widening chasm between their earnings and spending.

That said, the expectations of silvers are modest. They don't want to be seen as roadblocks in the Government's success story. Instead, they want to be an intrinsic part of the Government's economic game plan, with policies that are senior-inclusive.

## Issues that matter

Owing to their dependence on a restricted financial kitty that has been eroding of late—with falling deposit interest rates, inflationary pressures and the inability to add new earnings in a country where age is a unfavourable factor when it comes to employment avenues—silvers are under severe financial constraint. To make matters worse, expenditure is also on the rise. Regardless of how loudly the Government shouts from the rooftops about maintaining a tight handle on inflation, the billow-

ing prices of a variety of goods and services in the market—vegetables, groceries, milk, medicines, medical services and mediclaim premiums, transport, electricity, domestic services—make basic requirements appear to be luxuries. However, it's possible to ameliorate the situation by lowering the prices of vegetables, groceries, milk and other food items; this will help not just silvers but other sections of society as well.

## Ill-effects of medical services

Even as advancing age necessitates frequent visits to doctors, medical specialists, hospitals and chemists, inflated prices tend to put these services out of reach for many silvers. With family doctors also donning the role of consultants, fees have gone up considerably. Is it not severely inflationary when the fees of ophthalmologists, orthopaedics and consulting physicians undergo a 50-per-cent rise in a single year? Rising in tandem are mediclaim policy premiums, medicine prices, and medical test charges. Compared to the actual fees charged by doctors, mediclaim policies are often ridiculously priced, making a mockery of them. For instance, cataract surgeries have a ceiling of ₹ 20,000 in most mediclaim policies against ₹ 30,000 charged by eye doctors, excluding the test and follow-up fees paid by the insured.

## The solution

Here are some steps that could rectify and redeem the situation:

- The Regulatory Insurance and Development Authority needs to look at the unfair practices under mediclaim policies that result in



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## The Regulatory Insurance and Development Authority needs to look at the unfair practices under mediclaim policies that result in escalating premiums and depleting benefits for silvers

escalating premiums and depleting benefits for silvers.

- The annual Budget must provide higher medical exemption allowance for routine check-ups.
- Fees charged by specialists should be mandatorily capped at a lower level for silvers.
- Just as senior citizens are eligible for concessionary fares for long-distance travel, there should be a provision for concessions on local transportation too.
- Another important area concerns the tax exemption limit applicable to senior citizens. Their depleting disposable incomes on account of falling FD interest rates—in which most of their savings are locked—makes it difficult for them to take advantage of higher savings exemption limit. As it is, the need for expenditure rather than savings is more urgent

among silvers. An exemption limit of a minimum of ₹ 500,000 from the current ₹ 300,000 would be highly beneficial.

### Lessons from the West

The Government needs to give serious thought to how silvers in developing countries are treated with care and understanding. Take, for instance, the situation in New Zealand, a very small country compared to ours, where Government medical officers are always willing to walk that extra mile for silvers. The least we can do is provide basic services to our burgeoning silver population at concessionary rates to compensate for their falling incomes and savings.

We have ignored the welfare of seniors long enough. Society has transitioned from a joint family system to a nuclear family system, and the lot of silvers has worsened with no recourse to any alternative system. Finally, it is the responsibility of a changing

society to take care of those who are not able to function optimally.

### In conclusion

*Acche Din* still eludes senior citizens. While India is on the cusp of economic changes that can catapult her as one of the major economic powers of the world, it is not at all clear whether her growing army of silvers will be able to partake in the fruits of growth and development. As the various issues faced by them become more critical, it is incumbent on the Government to design policies and programmes that can put them in a comfort zone in their twilight years. I'd like to end with a quote from the last speech made by Hubert H Humphrey, former vice-president of the US: "The moral test of the Government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; those who are in the shadows of life; the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

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*The writer is a Mumbai-based economist*



Anjina Rajagopal with her children at Sai Bal Sansthan



Photographs by Himanshu Kumar

# Mum's the word

Anjina Rajagopal's Bal Kutir in Noida has been teaching homeless children to make the best of life for over 25 years, finds out **Ambica Gulati**

**T**he compound of Bal Kutir is always buzzing and cries of 'Mummy, Mummy!' periodically rent the air. And it's not only the children who live in this home for the homeless that use this name for her; the staff too fondly refers to her by that moniker.

"It's been more than 25 years since I became a mother to children like these," smiles 62 year-old Anjina Rajagopal, executive director of Saikripa, the NGO that runs Bal Kutir in Noida's Sector 12. "My sisters always point out how lucky I am, to always be surrounded by children as their own children have grown up and are living their own lives. But my home always has laughter, fresh energy and lots of activity,"

'Executive director' is a cold and soulless label for someone who has committed her life to sheltering and raising homeless and abandoned children, and giving them a foundation to build a future. Rajagopal made this her life's mission ever since she opened her children's home, Bal Kutir, in 1990. It's been a long and emotional journey for this Andhra-born change-maker, who also runs a school, rehab centre, vocational institute and an institute for children with special needs in Delhi.

'Mummy' gives us a tour of Bal Kutir, whose cheerful ambience is infectious. A German shepherd barks nearby while children enjoy their lunch in an open cafeteria. No one seems to notice visitors. Some children are rushing about doing their chores, others are playing, some have just returned from school, while others are watching TV as they eat lunch. The bedrooms are on the first floor of the three-storey building and it looks rather cramped for 50 children. But Rajagopal clarifies that the young girls and boys stay in separate hostels in Sector 12 and only the little ones live in the main building.

There is so much joy and so much peace at Bal Kutir that it is difficult to believe deep emotional wounds are hidden behind those smiles. Rajagopal says she always wanted to provide a home to the homeless and she had never intended getting married and having children of her own. Still, it wasn't an easy choice. One of seven siblings, she was raised in a middle-class family in Bellary in Karnataka. Just when she had completed her schooling, her mother passed away from cancer and, soon after, one of her brothers was diagnosed with a hole in the heart and passed way.



“The biggest challenge has always been space. When children grow up, they need more space—reading space, playing space. We have not been able to expand and develop the way we would have liked to. Even in the school, we are not able to increase the classes and the number of children because we are renting the property....”

Despite the two tragedies in her life—or perhaps because of them—a young Anjina developed a deep sense of compassion. She would sit by her window and watch children from orphanages asking for donations and this left a deep impact on her. “I always wondered why they had to live like this, and what I could do to help them.”

Then an aunt in Delhi offered to help Rajagopal’s father with raising the children, and the family moved to the capital. Her two elder sisters got married and Anjina was in charge of the household, her three younger brothers and her father, whose health was sliding.

She found a job with *The Times of India* and worked in the administrative division for over a decade. She gave it up to finally pursue her mission in 1988, a year after her father passed away. Rajagopal registered Saikripa in 1988 with the help of a friend, Rita Pal, who is also the president of Saikripa while running her own advertising agency.

To learn the ropes of running a mission like hers, Rajagopal worked with a rural development agency called Pradan. “It gave me a three-month fellowship and I travelled across India to study orphanages,” she says. “I even

stayed for a few days at Bal Gram in Lonavala. Pradan also helped me with the legalities. It was an eye-opener for me. I learnt the intricacies of the work and was even more determined to go ahead with my decision.”

Saikripa was dormant for two years with no child under its care and “I would sometimes fret and think that maybe it was not the right thing to do”. But, one day, in 1990, on her way to work in Delhi, Rajagopal found a nine year-old physically challenged boy being thrashed on the street. Apparently, this happened every time the child begged for food.

She took the boy home, lodged a First Information Report with the police and waited for a family member to appear. No one came. And that’s how Bal Kutir was born. Rajat, as Rajagopal named him, was her first ward. He had a speech and hearing impairment and was bow-legged. Rajagopal had his legs operated upon so that he could walk without supports, and enrolled him in an enabling centre in Lady Irwin College. Rajat is now 37 years old and teaches accessory design to children with special needs at Mata Bhagwati Chadha Niketan, a special school on the Noida expressway. He gets a stipend and lives at Saikripa.



**Students develop skills at the Sai Vocational Centre, which helps them make a smooth transition from education to employment and entrepreneurship**



As Bal Kutir gained momentum and sources of funding became more steady, Rajagopal opened four more institutions under her Saikripa foundation: Sai Shiksha Sansthan, a school; Sai Bal Sansthan, a rehabilitation centre for street children; Sai Vocational Centre; and Sai Vatsalaya Vatika for special children. “Over the years, the biggest challenge has always been space. When children grow up, they need more space—reading space, playing space. We have not been able to expand and develop the way we would have liked to. Even in the school, we are not able to increase the classes and the number of children because we are renting the property and are therefore restricted to a single-storey building.”

A typical day at Bal Kruti begins early, at 5 am. The children say their prayers, eat breakfast and are then off to school. Then, there’s lunch and recreation, maybe coaching or tuition for some, evening prayers and then dinner and perhaps TV before being packed off to bed. The older ones make their way to their respective hostels nearby. Festivals are celebrated and summer vacations mean travelling to different parts of India. Vacations in the

past have included trips to Chandigarh, Aurangabad and Shirdi. And there are annual charity shows such as puppet shows and dance dramas.

“We are happy we can study in peace and are looked after very well. We are so busy preparing for school and homework that there is little time to think about anything else. After school, we also have tuitions,” says 15 year-old Chandani, a Class XI student, as her many ‘sisters’ nod in agreement. “We also enjoy going shopping with ‘mummy’ for our clothes,” she smiles, shyly.

Rajagopal finds success in each of her wards, whose futures she so carefully moulds. At the age of 26 today, Pooja has completed a diploma and is studying B Pharm in homoeopathy through distance learning. She was brought to Bal Kutir as a six year-old by a fruit juice vendor in Delhi. Pooja now helps with the daily running of Saikripa and is almost like an assistant to Rajagopal. She lives at Saikripa and takes care of the minor medical needs of the children, and still finds the time to work with a homoeopath to hone her medical skills. “I never dreamt

According to the law, the children at Bal Kutir should become independent by the age of 21, and Rajagopal says there is special focus on preparing each individual for life outside Saikripa

I would ever be independent,” she says. “I can take care of myself and would like to be more settled in my career before I get married. I have a cell phone, a bank account and even a gas connection!”

In 31 year-old Rajendra, Saikripa has shaped an ambitious, hotel management graduate. Sometime in 1992, after his parents passed away, Rajendra's grandfather brought him to Rajagopal. He was about eight or nine years old then. He graduated from school and pursued a hotel management diploma from the YMCA while holding down a job with a local mall. Then he bagged an internship and subsequent job with a prominent group of hotels in Gurgaon. “I was always very interested in cooking, so when the time came, I thought I should make a career out of it. Mummy has also guided me because of my interest.” Now Rajendra wants to see what the world has to offer and is hoping to find a job abroad.



According to the law, the children at Bal Kutir should become independent by the age of 21, and Rajagopal says there is special focus on preparing each individual for life outside Saikripa. “We have even arranged marriages for some of them. One girl found her companion, so we checked the family and met them. Now she has two children.”

There is no dearth of people and organisations that will vouch for the work Saikripa is doing. Dr Archana Sharma, who heads the free initiatives of the Saket City Hospital in Delhi, has been part of the free camps with Saikripa since 2013. “I am very moved when I see Anjina Rajagopal with the children. They are like one large family. We regularly conduct camps in both her schools, free of cost,” says Dr Sharma. She first met Rajagopal when Prakash, a nine year-old boy from Bal Kutir, was treated at Saket City Hospital for a month, free of cost. “Prakash had brain fever and none of the other hospitals in the vicinity would take his case. He still comes to our hospital for periodic check-ups.”

There are no government-run shelters in the Gautam Budh district under which Noida falls. So Saikripa has become a crucial pit-stop in the child rescue missions in the district. Satya Prakash, programme manager at FXB India Suraksha—a collaborative organisation of the Childline service (1098)—says of Saikripa, “We can always depend on them, especially when we require temporary shelter for the younger girls in the 36 hours we take to track their families.” And of Anjina Rajagopal, he adds, “I haven't come across a dedicated person like her in all the states I have worked in. She is a passionate and astute person, and very particular about her children.”

Rajagopal says that with five institutions under her charge, she is now scouting for a second-in-command who will keep Saikripa ringing with laughter. “I am looking for someone who will devote their life to this cause. We can employ somebody but that will not give the required result,” she says. In other words, apply only if you think you could qualify as ‘Mummy’!

—With inputs from Natasha Rego

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# Hitting the high notes

Kaushiki Desikan Chakraborty inherited her father's prodigious vocal talent and expresses it through a varied palette. In an interview to **Partha and Priyanka Mukherjee**, the rising star of Hindustani classical music talks about her musical journey and what it means to be Ajoy Chakraborty's daughter

**I**t is not often that an artist achieves success at such a tender age, especially one who has big shoes to fill. Kaushiki Desikan Chakraborty, though, has proved equal to the task—at the age of 35, the versatile vocalist has already carved a name for herself, both critically and commercially.

Kolkata-based Kaushiki is the daughter of renowned Hindustani classical singer Ajoy Chakraborty, 63, recipient of as many as four awards of the highest order from the President of India: Padmashri (2011), Sangeet Natak Akademi (Delhi, 1999-2000), Kumar Gandharva (National Award, 1993) and Best Male Playback Singer (Bengali film *Chhandaneer*, 1990). An exponent of the Patiala *gharana*, Chakraborty naturally set the bar exceptionally high for his daughter.

Kaushiki started learning music at the age of two and, ironically, it wasn't under her father's tutelage. Her mother Chandana, an accomplished singer herself, was her first *sangeet* guru. At age 10, Kaushiki studied under Jnan Prakash Ghosh, her father's guru and mentor, and was then enrolled at the ITC Sangeet Research Academy (SRA).

Hailed as a 'teenage prodigy', Kaushiki delivered her first major performance at the age of 16 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, before a constellation of stars of Indian classical music: Ustad Allah Rakha Khan, Zakir Hussain, Sultan Khan and Amjad Ali Khan. The maestros unanimously agreed that a new star had been born. Why, when she performed at SRA, speakers had to be installed outside the auditorium so that those who couldn't secure tickets to the recital could listen to her sing while standing outside.



The budding vocalist went on to tour the world with her father. She has shared the stage with him and many of the pillars of Hindustani classical music like Pt Bhimsen Joshi, Ustad Zakir Hussain and Ustad Rashid Khan. Among her major concerts have been the Dover Lane Music Conference, the ITC Sangeet Sammelan in India, the Spring Festival of Music (California), Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Sangeet Mahotsav and Parampara Program (Los Angeles).



Photographs courtesy: Kaushiki Desikan Chakraborty

But if these were badges pinned to the resume of any talented classical singer, Kaushiki wanted more. She embraced a variety of genres of music, including contemporary and pop, and has participated in music channel MTV's *Coke Studio*, which features live performances and fusion music. She has sung playback for Hindi and Bengali films and even did a cameo in Rituparno Ghosh's *Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish*.

Between performances, rigorous practice sessions, raising a son, and being, well, Kaushiki Desikan Chakraborty, the gifted singer also hosts a weekly television talk show called *Gaan-Golpo ar Gaan* (Songs, Stories and Songs), featuring singers on entertainment channel Ruposhi Bangla.

We met Kaushiki at her Jodhpur Park residence in Kolkata, where she enthralled us with anecdotes about

her musical beginnings, her journey as a singer and what it means to be her father's daughter. Just back from the US, where she regaled music aficionados in Boston, Minneapolis and New York, Kaushiki says she thrives on the adrenaline rush just as much as she needs the inner discipline that her training as a classical vocalist brings. Excerpts from a candid interview...

**It was Ma who gave me my first music lesson. Ma is my first *sangeet guru*.** Although she never took up singing professionally, she is an accomplished singer. She took it upon herself to train me in the initial stages. Ma always sheltered me from the cut-throat world so nothing could obstruct my cultural and, especially, musical growth.

**I was born in Kolkata but I spent most of my childhood in Shyamnagar, North 24 Parganas, before I was enrolled in a school in Kolkata.** After that, Shyamnagar became my weekend resort. In Kolkata, I found myself at the ITC Sangeet Research Academy, Tollygunge, a hermitage-like setup where my father took me through the paces. Here, discipline was the first and last word. It is still that way with him. And, according to him, anyone who is associated with music should practise the same kind of self-control, lest one's focus shifts. During *riyaaz* [music practice], he is like Hitler and I sometimes have to practice for eight to nine hours at a stretch. *Baba* will never give up until we, his disciples, achieve the perfection he expects from us.

**I was born a daughter but grew as a student.** I shall never forget those times when *Baba* sang in *aakar* and I repeated them in *sargam* or when *Baba* started with the complex *alankar* and I took over from him to complete it.

**My formal initiation to music began under Guru Jnan Prakash Ghosh,** to me *Gaan Dadu*, who was also a guru of my father. According to tradition, *Baba* took me to his mentor and *Gaan Dadu* accepted me as a *Ganda Bandh Shagird* (formal disciple). My grooming continued under his tutelage until he sent me back to *Baba* when his health began to fail.

**I enrolled at the ITC Sangeet Research Academy** as a student under the guidance of my father. My musical journey in the truest sense began when I was in my early teens. *Baba* guided me to several platforms all over the country and abroad. He began imparting valuable musical knowledge so I grew enlightened and became a complete musician. But I am yet to learn a lot.

**I am very, very proud of my father.** How many children can boast of being an offspring of such an illustrious figure? How many budding singers can have the opportunity to share the stage with maestros like Ustad Amjad Ali

Khan, Pt Hariprasad Chaurasia, Pt Bhimsen Joshi, Ustad Zakir Hussain and Ustad Rashid Khan at the dawn of their careers? Regardless of talent, that would never have been possible for me except that I am the daughter of Pandit Ajoy Chakraborty. But I do not bask in the glory of my father; I mature day by day under the tutelage of a savant. *Baba* is a kind of person who purifies your inner soul and brings out the best in you. No matter how rigorous your training under his auspices, you learn what devotion is all about. It gives you the strongest footing in life.

**My parents taught me how to achieve the perfect balance in life.** Despite my tight schedule of training and *riyaaz*, I never let music stand between me and my academic career. They helped me lead a disciplined life. I secured a

first class both when I graduated and at the master's level. For my master's degree, I got a gold medal from Jadavpur University, where I specialised in philosophy.

**Why did I choose philosophy as my subject?** Everyone who has taught me music—Ma, *Gaan Dadu* or *Baba*—has taught me that the path to musical excellence cannot be achieved only by technical brilliance. One needs to have philosophical realisation to reach a sublime level of music.

**I knew my professional career was imminent when I started to spend a considerable amount of time training,** when my inner self prompted me to sing professionally at public concerts and, of course, when *Baba* flagged off my solo journey into the hearts of my listeners.



"*Baba* is a kind of person who purifies your inner soul and brings out the best in you. No matter how rigorous your training under his auspices, you learn what devotion is all about"



I was noticed instantly and aficionados all over the country and overseas accepted me as a singer with promise.

**I have visited several nations—the US, England and countries in Europe.** Initially, I went as the daughter of Pandit Ajoy Chakraborty to attend concerts; later, the organisers felt I too could be included in the list of performers. I sang and grew in confidence as an individual performer. *Baba* seemed happy but, for him, there is no limit to perfection and he has always inspired me to raise the bar.

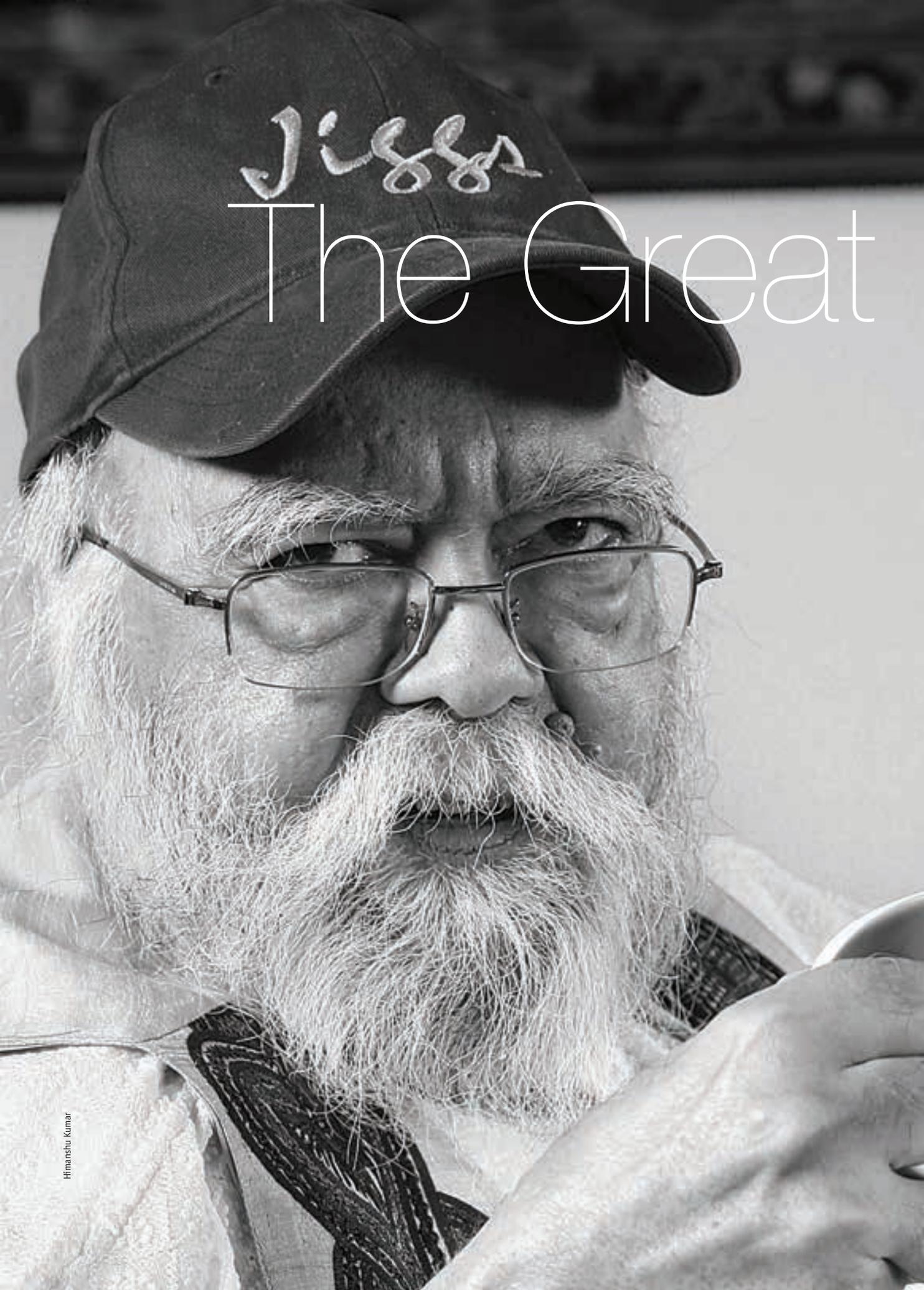
**One of my high points came in 2005**, when BBC Radio 3 World Music Awards honoured me for my album *Pure* (Sense World Music). I have enjoyed a few more accolades after that and it was also a tremendous feeling to sing in the same album [titled *Vande Matarm 2*] with Lata Mangeshkar. Even A R Rahman asked me to sing in *Water*, a film that earned an Academy Award nomination.

**I've always been open to all kinds of genres of music:** Indian classical, contemporary, even pop, playback, Tagore songs and collaborations. But I never forget that whatever I sing is an extension of classical music, which is ultimately my home. A true performer has to give one's best and cannot afford to think about the kind of music it is or the remuneration one will earn. To me, singing is another name for the veneration I offer Goddess Saraswati. I always keep

that in mind, while performing classical numbers, while singing playback or during productions for *Coke Studio!* I have imbibed all this by studying *Baba*. He always inspires me to give 100 per cent, regardless of the genre.

**Rituparno Ghosh wanted me to act in a film** before I finally appeared in a special sequence in *Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish* as myself [a singer] in a song sequence. Initially, *Baba* was not keen on my acting in a film made by such a successful director. He thought a film made by him would be a sure success and that might draw my attention to acting at the cost of my singing career. Thank God that didn't happen! In fact, I got my first offer to sing playback in the remake of *Umrao Jaan* but I had to decline as I was busy with my classical music shows in the US. I have sung playback for 11 films so far: *Water* (2005), *Jaani Dekha Habé* (2011), *Chaplin* (2012), *Paanch Adhya* (2012), *Teen Kanya* (2013), *Shnyo Anko* (2013), *Goyner Bakso* (2013), *Thirumanam Ennum Nikkah* (2014), *Ramanujan* (2014), *Gulab Gang* (2014) and recently *Lorai*.

**I run the SVA (Soul, Voice, Aspiration) Charitable Trust** with a view to create a platform for famous and not-so-famous, yet talented, singers while retaining the heritage of Indian classical music. I do not believe in reflected glory for I always wanted to be me and myself with the best wishes of my parents, husband and, of course, my listeners. ✨



# Jesse The Great

# Gastronome

**Food and family combine deliciously for pioneering food writer and consultant Jiggs Kalra as he works with son Zorawar to delight a new generation of Indian diners, discovers Arati Rajan Menon**

**I**n 1971, when food writing was neither a fad nor fashionable—how times change!—*The Times of India* commissioned J Indersingh Kalra to write ‘Platter Chatter’, India’s first restaurant review column. For the 23 year-old culinary enthusiast, it was the beginning of a journey spanning over four decades as columnist-author, gastronome, food consultant to hospitality’s finest, and restaurateur. For ‘Jiggs’, as the world knows him, there have been landmarks aplenty: ‘Rasoi’, the first syndicated column of its kind; *Daawat*, India’s first reality food show; *Prashad—Cooking with Indian Masters*, dubbed ‘the Bible of Indian cuisine’ with 7 million copies sold and counting; and the honour of being the first Asian to be inducted into the prestigious International Food & Beverage Hall of Fame. Even more significant, he has helped revive India’s lost cuisine and introduced it to the world—as well as discerning Indian gourmands.

Today, while he continues to consult with other restaurants, his focus is on being

‘mentor’ to Massive Restaurants, a venture by his son Zorawar that brings innovative and inventive food concepts to a new generation of Indians. It encompasses Masala Library, a premium gourmet fine-dining concept (Mumbai); Made in Punjab, a smart-casual funky Punjabi restaurant (Delhi and Mumbai); and Farzi Cafe, a molecular bistro that serves up Indian food with a twist (Gurgaon). A fourth concept, Papaya, will open soon in Mumbai—this pan-Asian concept will be a departure for the Kalras, whose heart lies with Indian cuisine.

“Both Dad and I are crusaders for Indian food,” affirms Zorawar. “Indian cuisine is the most complex, sophisticated and elaborate and we want it to be recognised as the top cuisine in the world.” For the father who has dedicated his life to the same end, this is sweet music indeed. Jaunty in his trademark baseball cap and colourful red vest—“It’s a favourite; I’ve had it for years”—he visibly lights up when Zorawar enters the room. “Can you believe how lucky I am to have a son like this?” he beams.

Legacy means everything to Kalra. Much of our conversation at his spacious home in Gurgaon, which he shares with wife Lovejeet and Zorawar's family, is peppered with references to his grandchildren. They're away in Chandigarh and the house is silent—too silent, insists the doting grandfather. "You should meet my granddaughter, the most adorable creature on the planet," he says. "She's my little poppet and I plan to teach her everything I know." She's a lucky girl.

### Excerpts from an interview

#### You are a self-taught cook. Who inspired you?

I come from a typical Punjabi family; my father was from the Indian Armed Forces and a stickler for discipline. He expected me to follow in his footsteps but I had other plans. Reading and writing were a passion from a very young age. My exposure to the kitchen happened thanks to my grandmother—her mutton *beliram* still remains my favourite—and my mother, one of the finest cooks I've ever known. I consider them my mentors.

#### Another guru—and friend—was the late Khushwant Singh, we hear....

Yes. After college, I got the opportunity to work with *The Times of India* in Mumbai. As I was new to the city and a foodie by nature, I found it tough to find recommendations on good places to eat. In those days, there were no food columns in print media or shows on Doordarshan, then the only television channel. This gave me the idea to start a food column. Mr Khushwant Singh, my editor, supported the idea; that's how I began writing on food.

#### How did your TV show *Daawat*—a first for India—come about?

We were invited by Sashi Kapur, then director-general of Doordarshan Delhi, and Jaya Chandiram of the Central Production Centre to produce a pioneering food show on television to explore regional cuisines and make the audience aware of India's culinary vastness and history. This required extensive research, travel and interaction with various communities, including in remote areas. I suggested we also incorporate information about the Ayurvedic basis of Indian cuisine, so we met nutritionists, *hakim*, *vaidya* and scholars of history. It took over a year to get our research in place before commencing the shoot. Our work entailed the herculean task of passing the test of two disciplines: videotainment and gastronomy. *Daawat*

Kalra with son Zorawar (seated next to him) and daughter-in-law Dildeep (extreme left) at one of his restaurants



## From Kalra's kitchen

### Punjabi Khichdi

*Khichdi* is a classic dish. Don't forget to have it with *khichdi ke chaar* *yaar...* *dahi*, *papad*, *ghee*, *achaar*. Though, if you want to keep it light, eat it sans accompaniment. I indulge each time I return from a foreign trip.

#### Ingredients

*Dhuli* (yellow) *moong dal*: half cup  
Basmati rice: half cup  
Water: 4-and-a-half cups

Clarified butter (*ghee*): 1 tsp  
Cumin seeds (*jeera*): 1 tsp  
Black peppercorn: 6  
Cloves (*lavang*): 4-5  
Onion: 1, finely chopped  
Ginger: ½", grated  
Garlic cloves and curry leaves: 6-7  
Salt; to taste

#### Method

Wash rice and dal in running water. Drain. Heat the *ghee* in a pan. Add cloves and black pepper, followed by cumin. When it crackles, add onion, ginger, garlic and curry leaves (they're good for the heart and add to the flavour). Stir it until golden brown. Then, add rice and dal, followed by



water—thrice the quantity of rice and dal. Let it boil, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally until the mixture is thick and viscous and of porridge like consistency. Serves two.

(Featured in *Harmony—Celebrate Age*, August 2004)

became an instant hit and a benchmark for Indian television as the country's first reality food show. It was also in great demand overseas and remains one of the sizeable commercial successes of the country's public broadcasting network. This was followed by *Zaike ka Safar* on Zee TV.

**Writing a book must have been a seamless transition for you.**

I had already started working on my first book, *Prashad—Cooking with Indian Masters*. It is one of the most sought-after books on Indian cuisine and included as part of the curriculum in hotel management institutions. After the success of *Daawat*, *Zaike ka Safar*, *Prashad* and some of my other works, I co-wrote a few other titles on Indian cuisine with my friend Pushpesh Pant, who was my companion on the trails of *Daawat*.

**Now, food shows are ubiquitous.**

Today, everyone has become interested in cooking and wanted to be a chef! It is no longer a profession that is looked down upon. Much of this can be attributed to numerous culinary shows, Indian and international, which have opened avenues that a lot of people weren't aware existed or thought possible.

“Indian food had never been documented; there was no ready text and everyone was following their own version. I took it upon myself to revive, restore and record Indian cuisine through my various interactions”

**Your columns, books, TV shows have served as a record of India's food history. What impelled you to document our culinary heritage and how did you go about it?**

When I started writing my food column, I realised that there were no written records capturing the centuries-old tradition of Indian food. Everything was based on *andaaza* [guesswork] and handed over by mother to daughter before marriage or by mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law after marriage. In this process, the knowledge of many culinary marvels and iconic preparations started diminishing and, in some cases, was lost altogether. As my column began to garner interest from audiences of all ages and demographics, my writing started taking the shape of something larger. I began to interact

with chefs, erstwhile royal *khaansaama*, housewives, historians and culinary legends from various regions to uncover India's culinary history and record data. I started taking notes, comparing them and compiling them. Wherever there were differences, I took a median of all and wrote the recipes. Indian food had never been documented; there was no ready text and everyone was following their own version of the dish, leading to the dilution of recipes. I took it upon myself to revive, restore and record Indian cuisine through my various interactions.



Himanshu Kumar

### Could you give us an example?

There was this one time when I was asked to gather recipes from ladies who had crossed the border during Partition. After painstaking research, I was able to find and connect with 10 such ladies; most of them were from Sindh province. During the course of my interaction and cooking sessions with them, I realised they all had the same recipe for a specific dish, with slight differences here and there. I enquired upon the origin of the recipe and they all had almost the same thing to say—it had been handed down and followed in their household for generations. All 10 recipes were based on the *andaaza* system of cooking; I wanted to change this through recording all of them.

### Please share some highlights of your long and rich professional career.

One of the biggest highlights was when I had the privilege to serve His Excellency Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana during their trip to Jaipur. Another was being inducted into the International Gourmet Hall of Fame. However, the happiest moment of my life was when my elder son Zorawar came home after completing his MBA from Boston's Bentley University and shared that he wants to get into the hospitality industry. I was ecstatic when he said he wanted to realise his dream of becoming a restaurateur and one day create my magnum opus. This came true the day we launched Masala Library by Jiggs Kalra in Mumbai.



Courtesy: Jiggs Kalra

### With son Zorawar; at a family outing

### One can see that family means everything to you!

They are the true highlights of my life! My wife Lovejeet has stood by me through the toughest of times and helped raise the best children we could ask for, our sons Zorawar and Ajit. The family has grown to encompass my daughters-in-law Dildeep and Sukhu, and my most adorable grandchildren Amaara, Fateh and Aaliyah.

### How has your relationship with your Zorawar evolved with the establishment of Massive Restaurants?

The journey working alongside him hasn't been an easy one but both of us have found common ground, agreeing to disagree, thereby creating innovative concepts. He understands his audience extremely well and it's an added advantage that he has a highly developed palate of his own to be able to work the flavours of dishes well, making my life a little easier. So while I help him on the cuisine knowledge side of things, his hard work, persistence and passion for Indian food drive the business side.

### How has the dining-out concept in India evolved? Has Indian cuisine lost ground to foreign cuisines?

The actual proliferation in dining out in India has come about only in the past two decades and these are exciting times for restaurateurs and chefs as well as diners. Competition is always healthy and it has made us stand up and take note of the need to focus more on Indian cuisine and work on offering uniqueness to bring it back to the forefront, in India and globally. Our restaurant concepts Masala Library by Jiggs Kalra, Farzi Café and Made in Punjab have been credited with doing this over the past two years. Today, we see a lot more diners choosing to dine at an Indian restaurant compared to four or five years ago.

## Tell us the thought process behind the food concepts you offer.

Indian cuisine must take centre-stage once again and be at the forefront of innovation while catering to the evolving palate. Since its commercial proliferation, it had come to a point of stagnation and, thus, we believe we should make the effort to elevate Indian food and reintroduce it to the world in its modern avatar—we call it Indian Cuisine, Version 2.0. Progressive Indian cuisine, retaining the traditional essence of Indian food, is the way forward. We aim to give the cuisine a new lease of life, appealing to guests of all ages, generations and demographics, and establishing it as the primary choice of cuisine while making plans to dine out.

## Are Indians today game for experimental food and new concepts?

With exposure to global trends, guests are now looking for unique, experiential dining options that don't just offer good food but an avant-garde dining experience surprising their palate and senses. The tremendous response we have received across all our restaurant concepts are proof of that. In fact, the basis of our restaurant Farzi Café was to bring Indian food back 'in vogue', breaking the mould of the cuisine being old, boring, very heavy to digest and lacking novelty. It's my favourite of all our restaurants!

## Today, what is the perception of Indian cuisine abroad?

Mostly the concept of Indian cuisine outside India is focused on the dishes found and served on the dining tables in North India and need not necessarily represent the country's culinary landscape. Despite a global presence, the cuisine has lacked authenticity, standardisation and a sense of panache. As a unified region, we have never focused on taking pride in our cuisine and presenting it in the right manner to the rest of the world, leading to abundant variations, most of it not remotely authentic. Sadly, the cuisine hasn't seen much innovation over time; if you ask anyone to give you a visual description of Indian cuisine, more often than not you will get to hear about the classic black dal in a deep bowl with a swirl of cream; rich, main course dishes simmered in strong spices; traditional breads stacked in a small basket glazed with butter; and overtly sweet desserts presented in locally sourced tableware. The portions are huge, with a focus on quantity rather than quality and presentation. Many international travellers during their

visit to India have been rather surprised with the vastness and robust nature of Indian food and exclaimed on the absolute lack of similar flavours among a multitude of restaurants overseas serving Indian food. However, in the recent past, with us taking pride in presenting our own food in the right light, the perception of Indian food is fast changing and I am hopeful that in coming years, Indian food will lead with its authenticity, innovation and robustness.

## Other than your role as mentor to Massive Restaurants what keeps you busy today?

My grandchildren. I also watch TV—lots of news, the series *Ashoka*. I have missed out on a lot of medieval Indian history. They should make a show on Razia Sultana instead of the rubbish they usually serve up. I also enjoy watching movies. Last night, I saw *Ram Leela* with Deepika Padukone—it blew my mind [smiles cheekily].

## Do you find that age has diminished your passion for food?

What is age but a number! We are as young or old as the heart and mind allow us to be. If you want to follow your passion, nothing can come in the way, not even age.

## We read somewhere that you have turned vegetarian over time. Is that true?

I'm a hardcore Punjabi and eat non-vegetarian food with a lot of pleasure even today. Of course, when you end up eating more home-cooked meals, the diet is controlled with a balance between vegetarian and non-vegetarian food,

which at my age you do need to be a little cautious about [laughs]. Actually, truth be told, I tend to become vegetarian when I feel like it. My love for veggies happened because of my father who was an ardent fan of vegetables. He would insist on making even non-vegetarian dishes with at least one vegetable as part of them. *Lauki mus-salam* is one my favourite dishes.

## Finally, tell us your food philosophy in a nutshell.

There is nothing called *andaaza*. If you want the dish to taste consistent, follow a tried-and-tested recipe. And if it's your own creation, don't be dependent on your memory; record it in your own cookbook. This would make the perfect gift for your children. ✨

## Quick bites with Jiggs!

**Favourite dish:** *Kaleji ka raita*; easy to make and wonderful to taste

**On your table every day:** *Raita*

**Strangest dish you ever tasted:** Unusual but wonderful *gosht ki kadhi*

**Go-to comfort food:** *Murgh malai tikka*; not too hot and easy to digest

**Dishes you detest:** I don't detest any dish but I'm not too fond of *karela* [bitter gourd] and *methi* [fenugreek]. However, I have to live with them because of my diabetes



# Salzburg symphony

With buildings and landmarks steeped in history, this heritage Austrian town radiates old-world charm, writes **Manjiri Prabhu**

**T**he green serene waters of Venice slid farther and farther as the bus rumbled towards Austria in the early morning light. I was headed to Salzburg, the birthplace of Mozart, and also familiar to movie buffs as the pristine location of *The Sound of Music*. I had been invited to write my next novel at Schloss Leopoldskron, a baroque palace facing a blue-green lake and the Untersberg Mountain, where major parts of the movie were shot. The exciting reality actually dawned on me only as I stood in front of the majestic *schloss* that October morning.

Well, let me get back to the beginning. The bus from Venice took me to Villach, from where I caught a train to Salzburg. At the Salzburg station, I was received by my host, Thomas, director of marketing and communications, Salzburg Global Seminar, who invited me home and introduced me to his family. Later, picturesque, winding roads took us to Hotel Zistelalm, a quaint restaurant

Schloss Leopoldskron  
against the majestic  
Untersberg Mountain

on top of Gaisberg Mountain. With wooden beams overhead, printed flowery curtains over broad glass windows and green-checked tablecloths on shiny tables, it was my first introduction to the rustic, wooden magic of Salzburg. My hosts ordered *frittatensuppe*—beef broth topped with strips of sliced pancake and a salad with chicken strips—for themselves. I was treated to a vegetarian meal of *kasnocken*—small pasta dumplings in melted cheese, accompanied by onion rings, a lip-smacking local favourite! Thus began my two-week-long tryst with Salzburg and its pastoral ambience.

Schloss Leopoldskron, a unique rococo palace built as a family estate for Prince-Archbishop Leopold von Firmian in 1736, is undoubtedly the pride of the place. Count Firmian, however, died before he could live there and it passed on to his nephew Count Laktanz, a patron of arts. What is thrilling is that though Count Firmian's body is buried in the cathedral, his heart lies in the chapel of the palace he had commissioned! The *schloss* stayed in the family for around 100 years before it fell on bad times and passed hands in a sorry state of affairs until 1918, when famous Jewish theatre director-actor Max Reinhardt bought it and completely renovated it, bringing it back to its former glory. He also used it as a setting for some of his plays. When the Germans took over Salzburg during World War II, they seized the *schloss* and plundered it. But when the war ended, it was handed back to Reinhardt's widow. The *schloss* is now open as a hotel owned by the Salzburg Global Seminar. Daniel, the GM of the hotel, encouraged us to enjoy every nook and cranny of the grand structure and the antique furniture, telling us, "People appreciate the hotel more once they realise it's not really a hotel!"

What fascinated me most was the library, modelled on the St Gallen monastery library in Switzerland. With bookshelves embedded within polished wooden arches and 28 pillars, a huge fireplace, and wooden floors that creaked, the library transported me to another era. The surprise element was the secret staircase, hidden behind a bookshelf, like a delightful discovery that catches you unawares in a mystery novel! It spirals quietly to the upper floor of the library—the only access route to the first floor of the library—and leads to Reinhardt's private apartment, which is now open to guests as the Max Reinhardt suite. The hall with its huge chandeliers, paintings and frescoes is where guests devour the choicest of dishes from across

## Salzburg radiated a sense of calm. It was secure in its tradition, settled in its history and happy in its art and culture. In perfect balance, the result was a heritage city, in perfect harmony

the world and experience the flavour of royalty. It opens out to the terrace and gardens that overlook the scintillating lake. This is where many memorable scenes of *The Sound of Music* were shot and, so many years down, the landscape is still identifiable with the scenes.

As I stood gazing out at the lake, the swans glided gracefully by while the ducks quacked and hunted for bits of food along the banks. On the opposite bank, the walking path wound round the lake. I passed cyclists, young mothers with perambulators and joggers plugged to headphones. Couples sat on the benches, engrossed in each other. I stared at the fortress in the distance, the pristine-white *schloss* and the adjacent pale-pink Meierhof—a building almost a century older. The sky changed myriad colours, a cool breeze skimmed over the sun-drenched lake waters and I sensed an inner peace that only nature can create in you. If you've ever been to Salzburg and taken The Sound of Music Tour, you would remember that the tour operators pass the *schloss*; tourists are not permitted entry in the premises. I was indeed lucky to have stayed and soaked in its riveting charm!

As I was researching Salzburg, Thomas was keen that I get a feel of the real Salzburg. He took me for lunch to Stiftskeller St Peter, ensconced between the monastery walls of St Peter's Archabbey. Incidentally, it finds mention in the notes of Alcuin, a scholar, dated 803 AD, making it the oldest inn in Central Europe. With brick-layered domes and spaces divided by the arch pillars, hanging mood lights, polished wood, red cushions and wafting smells of different dishes, the ambience did justice to its reputation. While Thomas ordered a soup of prime beef, dough pockets, sherry and some meat, I had a risotto of apple and calvados, pine nuts, and *grana padano* cheese. My host's brother, Wolfgang, a veterinarian, joined us for a dessert of *Salzburger nockerl*, a sweet soufflé, and we happily made plans for their visit to India.

After lunch, we made a quick visit to St Peters' Graveyard, one of the oldest Christian cemeteries in Salzburg with beautiful wrought-iron grave markers and stones. Only few Salzburg families have a dedicated space in this cemetery. A chapel of St Margaret stands at the centre of the cemetery. Thomas pointed out their family vault, with the grill a shade of particular green, which was recently renovated to resemble its original baroque colour. Everywhere I glanced, flowers adorned the gravestones, turning it more into a place of celebration than mourning!

By then I had realised that everything about the city, with its old-world charm, had a soothing influence on me. The cathedral dome that had survived multiple fires over the centuries but still was a breathtaking marvel, Mozart's birthplace and residential quarters, the musical heart of their history; the *festung* or fortress perched on top of the hill visible from any corner of the city, acting as the guiding landmark for tourists; the bridge that connected the *Alstadt* (old town) to the new city festooned with lovelocks; the Mirabelle Palace and Gardens where the song *Do re mi* from *The Sound of Music* was shot; the quaint shopping street Getreidegasse and the open-air big chessboard; or simply the innumerable churches, monasteries, museums and sculptures steeped in history—Salzburg radiated a sense of calm. It was secure in its tradition, settled in its history and happy in its art and culture. In perfect balance, the result was a heritage city, in perfect harmony.

Numerous times since my arrival I was told that I was indeed lucky that it wasn't raining in October. I decided to make the most of it by visiting Untersberg Mountain. An intern from Salzburg Global Seminar, Jonathan, accompanied me. Twice, my heart jumped out of my mouth as the cable car lurched and lifted against the cliff wall. But from top, the view was breathtaking; the town spread out like a chequered carpet of green and gold thanks to the late afternoon sun. We could even spot Schloss Leopoldskron, a tiny dot in the vast universe. As tourists took different paths for a 360° view, Jonathan recorded a small interview with me. Despite the wind whistling through our hair and ears, we managed to pull it off rather successfully. A quaint hotel on the top of the mountain served excellent tea and the afternoon was well-spent.

Though busy researching for my novel, I managed to squeeze in visits to original Salzburg haunts, including Café Tomaselli, which was founded in 1700. The early morning sunshine lay like a cloak of glistening haze as Thomas and I crossed the squares, the baroque fountain sculpture in Residenzplatz which absorbed the brilliant sunshine in a halo, and the archbishop's residence to reach Café Tomaselli in the middle

Clockwise from top left: St Peters' Graveyard, one of the oldest Christian cemeteries in Salzburg; a painting at the Venetian Room of Schloss Leopoldskron; inside Café Tomaselli; at Getreidegasse, the shopping street; an eat-out atop Untersberg Mountain; residence of Mozart



The stunning, serene landscapes and perfect combination of charm, history and camaraderie had triggered a transformational, self-exploratory process in me. A search, I gathered, would probably end with the novel that I had set in motion



The pristine-white *schloss* visible opposite the lake Leopoldskroner Weiher

Dinodia Photo Library

of Alter Market. A riot of flowers bordered the roof and entrance of the café like embroidery. Inside, the décor was earthy, with cane chairs, a newspaper stand that spelled tradition, and pastries served on trays. Thomas ordered *frühstück Tomaselli*—basically Viennese croissants—tea and a sizzling, mouth-watering cheese egg omelette. It was one of the most memorable breakfasts I have ever had, relaxing in a café that dated back to early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

During my last hour in Salzburg, before my flight back to India, I strolled by my habitual path around the lake one final time. The early morning sheen was ablaze over the lake and the *schloss*. Untersberg Mountain reflected clearly in the water as the swans and ducks glided from one end to the other. My stay in Salzburg had wound to a close and I experienced an acute sense of yearning. I had arrived as a stranger but knew that I was departing like family, thanks to all who treated me so, including Thomas who introduced me to the original Salzburg life and pampered the novelist in me; his mother, who drove me to Maria Plain Cathedral and plied me with gifts; Daniel, the hotel in charge; members of Salzburg Global like Jan,

the fellowship manager, who offered me a personal tour of the *schloss* and the fortress; and the innumerable staff who in their own insightful ways touched a chord with me. My novel had begun its journey. But I had discovered something far more important than fiction: peace. The stunning, serene landscapes and perfect combination of charm, history and camaraderie had triggered a transformational, self-exploratory process in me. A search, I gathered, would probably end with the novel that I had set in motion.

The words from *The Sound of Music* song, *Raindrops on roses*, raced in my mind:

*When I'm feeling sad...I simply remember my favourite things and then I don't feel so bad...*

I resolved that, henceforth, should I ever feel sad or lonely, all I needed to do was revisit my most favourite place in the world—Salzburg—in my mind, and relive those memorable moments. And then I wouldn't feel... so bad! ✨

*The first day at school*

*The first time you rode the bicycle.*

*The first crush you had at thirteen*

*The first drama you got a part in*

*The first day at college*

*The first date you went on*

*The first kiss*

*The first time you proposed*

*The first job interview*

*The first board meeting you addressed*

*The first day after retirement*

*BUTTERFLIES never retire*

**The first click of the mouse.**

The all new

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## Crafting stories

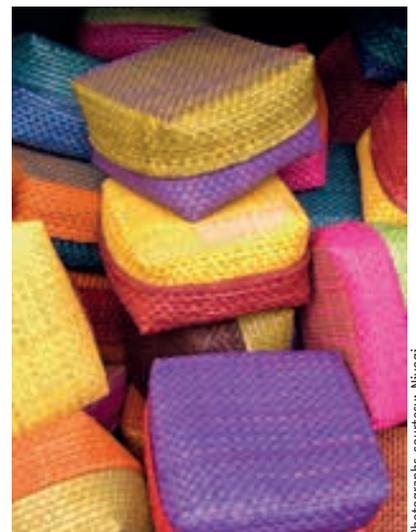
Whether a delicate fish pattern woven over the borders of a sari from Sambalpur in Odisha or the crisscross of a Tripura basket, crafts are unique ways of asserting our identity. These works of art draw from our shared beliefs and common history, and give expression to the social, cultural and religious needs of the community, tribe and, sometimes, even the race. Yet, each is a piece unto itself—the creation of an individual and distinctive pair of hands. **Jaya Jaitly's** *The Artistry of Handwork* (Niyogi; ₹ 395; 121 pages) captures and catalogues some ancient crafts, many of which are endangered today.



Delicately crafted with the finer details marked in colour, the clay toys of Uttar Pradesh once enjoyed royal patronage. They comprise slices of everyday life, besides mythological characters, animals and bird figures.

### handicrafts

Woven with dyed local palm leaves, Chettinad baskets from Tamil Nadu—now mostly used for storing knick-knacks—were originally used as containers for temple offerings or measuring grain.

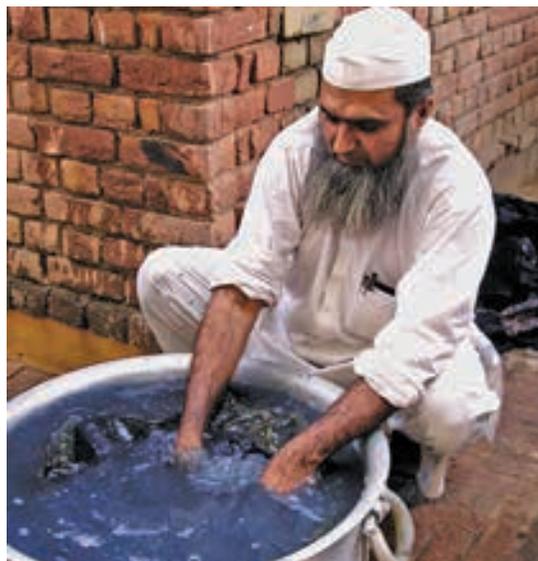


Photographs courtesy: Niyogi

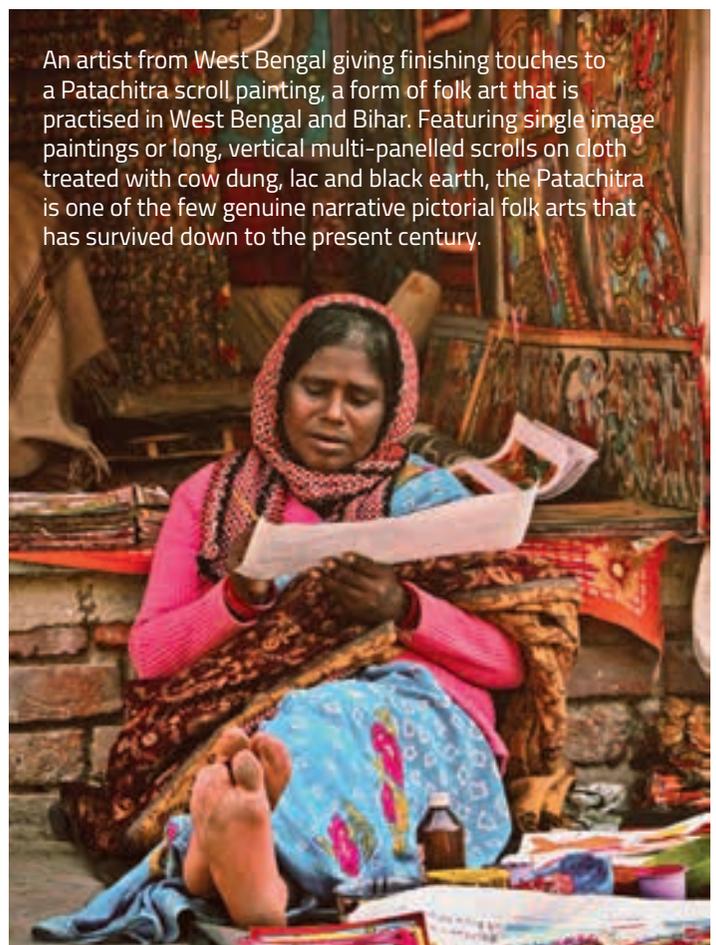
Traced to 8th century AD, Patachitra bottles from Odisha are an example of how art can be practised in complete harmony with nature. Kept alive by the tribals of the state, these hand-painted bottles depict episodes from mythology and folklore, and rely on natural colours and dyes.



Mastery over complex dyeing techniques gave India a distinct edge in the textile sector in pre-industrial times. One of the favoured means of dyeing was indigo, produced from the leaves of the shrub *Indigofera tinctoria*. Seen here is an artisan soaking cloth in indigo dye in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, a major centre of spinning, weaving and natural dyeing.



Believed to have been introduced by Islamic missionary Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom in the 15th century, walnut wood is the mainstay of the cottage industry of Kashmir. These three-dimensional carvings depict forms and motifs that have evolved over the centuries, and are achieved through measured strokes of chipping, carving and rounding of the surface.



An artist from West Bengal giving finishing touches to a Patachitra scroll painting, a form of folk art that is practised in West Bengal and Bihar. Featuring single image paintings or long, vertical multi-panelled scrolls on cloth treated with cow dung, lac and black earth, the Patachitra is one of the few genuine narrative pictorial folk arts that has survived down to the present century.

# Meet the Padhyes

Natasha Rego discovers how the first family of ventriloquy still holds its audience in raptures



Nilesh Bhanushhe

At the Indian Centre for Ventriloquism and Puppetry in Mumbai, myriad puppets, muppets and marionettes sit quietly in glass cabinets. But when paired with their creators—the Padhyes, pioneers of ventriloquism in India—they come alive with voices, emotions and characters distinct to each of them.

Over a career spanning 40 years, legendary puppeteer-ventriloquist Ramdas Padhye has built himself an empire of over 2,000 puppets—including the enormous white bunny singing “*karram-kurram*” in the Lijjat Papad ad that ran in the 1980s, the eerie Taty Vinchu of Marathi horror movies *Zapatlela 1 & 2* and the more recent ‘Active’ puppet for the Tata Sky ad starring Aamir Khan as a ventriloquist, to name just three from his extensive body of work.

Padhye was “destined to be a ventriloquist”, for his father was, perhaps, India’s first. “As a professional magician and puppeteer in Bombay in the 1920s, my father, the late Yeshwant Keshav Padhye, learnt to misdirect his voice from a book!” he recalls. But to be a good ventriloquist, misdirecting one’s voice through almost closed lips and

manipulating the puppet are only part of the skill. “You must also have a dramatic flair for impromptu dialogue... and you must be a bit of a writer.”

Padhye grew up watching his father and wanted the puppets to talk to him too. “I went through nine years of *riyaaz* and started with my father’s wooden dummies. I gave my first performance on 1 May 1967 at the Birla Krida Kendra in Chowpatty. Seven days later, I lost my father,” he says in a choked voice.

As a young adult, Ramdas was a student of mechanical engineering by day and ventriloquist by night; his filler acts at cabaret performances in five-star hotels for English-speaking audiences earned him popularity. At one such performance in 1968, he was spotted and invited to perform for former prime minister Indira Gandhi in Delhi. After the Hindi-English act in which his puppets wore partially western outfits, Mrs Gandhi gave the 23 year-old invaluable advice: to Indianise his puppets. “That’s when I realised the only way to make this art grow was to take puppets to people in their own clothes and language,” says Padhye. Since then, his puppets wear kurta-pyjama and speak regional languages such as Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati.

## legacy

The 1970s marked the opening of a fresh chapter in Padhye's life. With the show *Meri Bhi Suno* on Door-darshan, he popularised social messages such as family planning and children's education using quirky husband-wife puppets Ardhavatrao and Awadabai that he inherited from his father. "The audience expects humour when they see a puppet. We sugar-coated serious topics and it worked well," he recalls delightedly, while admitting that Jim Henson's *The Muppet Show* and American TV series *Sesame Street* had a great bearing on his style. "Also, when I first went to America for a show, I discovered the material they use is more flexible and easy to handle. This is when my engineering skills came in handy; I could easily grasp the mechanisms and eventually start making my own puppets."

In 1980, he found a companion in his wife Aparna, a postgraduate in Marathi literature and singer. "We planned performances together. We have had house-full shows where I'd be anchoring and singing and he would do his ventriloquist act," says Aparna. "She writes most of the dialogues," adds Ramdas. Soon, along came Satyajit and Parikshit. Like his father before him, Satyajit too grew up watching his father perform. "I always knew I wanted to be a ventriloquist," he says. Satyajit gave his first performance at the age of 13. In fact, he juggled a challenging education (he is a qualified CA) with his passion for puppets. And his younger brother Parikshit, a Forex consultant by profession, assists his father and brother whenever they need it.

At 32, Satyajit is one of the most sought-after ventriloquist-puppeteers—a rare talent—in the country today. While Ramdas took the art to the masses, Satyajit's agility

with modern technology is taking the art to the next level through YouTube and newly sprouting comedy clubs. In fact, when amusement theme park Imagica, near Mumbai, acquired an electronic puppeteering rig for interactive shows with a live audience, they called Satyajit to work on it and direct the show.

As fate would have it, Satyajit too found a life partner Rujuta—a trained animator—who complements his work. "She has a creative bent of mind," he says. "She's more artist than performer, very good with colour, texture and presentation." As for Rujuta, the marriage has been "a dream come true. I didn't want to do a 9-to-5 job and I didn't want to be married to someone who did."

**While Ramdas took the art to the masses, Satyajit is taking the art to the next level through YouTube and comedy clubs**

Together, the Padhyes have performed in over 9,000 shows around the world, including television, films, commercials and live shows. "No artist can survive without the support of family," says Ramdas. "I am so fortunate that my family shares the same passion as me." As pioneers of ventriloquism in India, the family believes it is time to propagate the art, for which it has set up the Indian Centre for Ventriloquism and Puppetry in Chembur, where anyone can join on of their workshops. "But very few are actually interested in learning the art," rues Ramdas. "Children come for summer courses, but no one takes it forward."

When asked what the future holds, Satyajit responds, "With various entertainment channels, the future looks exciting. But to take it forward, you have to be creative and original." Ramdas drives home the point: "Create your own style and add new skills to the art. Let it evolve."



Sanjay Ramchandran

## Udupi on a platter

Udupi cuisine is famous for its signature dishes such as *masala dose*, *bisi bele hulianna*, *gojju*, *saaru* and *payasa*. These age-old treats have been documented by mother-daughter duo Malati Srinivasan, 83, and 66 year-old Geetha Rao in *The Udupi Kitchen* (Westland, ₹ 371). While Canada-based Srinivasan is the brains behind the book, her Bengaluru-based daughter Geetha is the brawn. "These authentic family recipes are drawn from my childhood memories of the Madhwa-Brahmin family we belong to," says Srinivasan. To this Rao who researched the religious and geographical context of the cuisine and wrote a comprehensive 'Introduction to Udupi Cuisine', adds, "As the book is also targeted at a western audience, we had to find the international names of the ingredients and cooking utensils; a *bandle* became a wok and a *patre* became a saucepan. We had to convert traditional measurements like tumbler and fistful into cups, teaspoons and tablespoons for easier understanding."

# SPACE CRAFT

Veteran scientist Kumud Chandra Bhattacharyya is on a mission to popularise space science among children, finds out **Tapati Baruah Kashyap**

**I**t was the time India was struggling to enter the elite space club dominated by the US, USSR, China and France. An inspiring lecture in August 1971 by the father of India's space programme Dr Vikram Sarabhai turned out to be a life-changing experience for a young IITian. "Sarabhai's fascinating talk on space technology inspired me to look at it as my career," says eminent scientist Kumud Chandra Bhattacharyya. "A few months later, I joined Indian Space Research Organisation [ISRO] as a Scientist Engineer Grade 2. And there was no looking back."

During his 35-year tenure in ISRO, Bhattacharyya was part of several prestigious satellite projects such as SLV-3, Augmented SLV and, most important, Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and INSAT. "In the SLV mission, our project director was Dr A P J Abdul Kalam. Our first step was to make a computer that was required for navigation. Till then, there were only three computers in India, at IIT-Kanpur, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, and TCS, Mumbai," he reminisces. "Making our own first computer was a great experience in itself."

In fact, Bhattacharyya became one of the first few scientists to travel to NASA for advanced training on

spacecraft in 1980. At this time, India was making rapid strides in space technology and defence research. "These projects led to the development of vital software that serve as the backbone of our country's space missions and air defence today," he says.



Tapati Baruah Kashyap

In 2002, Bhattacharyya moved to Shillong to head the North East Space Application Centre (NESAC).

**science** "Our main achievement at the NESAC was the application of remote sensing in development activities about atmospheric science," he shares. "It also helped detect the onset of epidemics like Japanese encephalitis and enabled detailed mapping of biodiversity, setting up the Edusat network across the region and supporting the telemedicine network covering the medical colleges of major hospitals."

After retiring from NESAC in 2007, the 68 year-old is now guest faculty with the National Power Training Institute (under the Ministry of Power) and advisor to the Assam State Electronic Development Corporation (AMTRON). Today, he is engaged in finding a relationship between science and astrology. "I have been reading many books on mythology and astrology and, in the process, trying to find out what kind of correlation exists between the two."

Of late, he has also embarked on a mission to write books on space technology in Assamese to attract young talent. "Most children, especially those living in rural areas and studying in vernacular medium schools, are not aware of the kind of opportunity available in scientific research. I am, therefore, trying to inspire them by taking basic information to them."

In fact, his recent Assamese book *Bismayakar Antarikshar Katha* (The Marvellous Story About Space) is the first of its kind that deals with space science and technology for children. The response has prompted Bhattacharyya to bring out an English version of the book, which is expected by December 2015.

What next? "I am trying to popularise the use of solar power and renewable energy, which can benefit schools that have been provided with computers, but do not have electric supply."

# Bengaluru blues



Wikihlesh Murthy

*An Ode to the Blues 2015* festival in Bengaluru featured an assorted line-up of artists from across the world, including renowned UK guitarists Rick Payne and Steve Treble, and legendary African korist Madou Sidiki Diabate. What started off five years ago as a tribute to Robert Johnson—considered the father of the blues—on his 100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary, has now evolved into a 10-day annual music ritual for the connoisseurs of blues. Also featured were The Chronic Blues Circus and Ministry of Blues from Bengaluru and Soulmate from Shillong.



## Mission cleanup

Cleanliness is next to Godliness, they say. A pioneer in corporate housekeeping and transit guest house management Monika Uberoi realised the importance of cleanliness much before the government woke up to the clean-up movement with Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. For four decades, Uberoi has dedicated herself to housekeeping and property management in India and for 25 years, she has been cleaning up for an elite clientele through her company Upkeep Services. "Housekeeping is a fledgling business in India. Labour issues, lack of good quality cleaning materials and companies unwilling to pay for better standards are just some of the challenges we face," shares Uberoi. With her vast experience, the 69 year-old is now writing a book on housekeeping and maintenance for corporate houses and home makers in India, which is slated for release later this year. "With this book, I rededicate myself to the cause of Clean India," she says. Bravo.



Photographs courtesy: Niyogi

Kuchipudi exponents  
Raja and Radha Reddy

Opposite page: Kalanidhi  
Narayanan and her  
disciples demonstrate  
Bharatanatyam abhinaya

# Rhythmic reverberations

The period between 1930 and 1970 is referred to as the Dance Renaissance in India as classical dance traditions went through a period of unprecedented change. Noted dance critic **Leela Venkataraman** takes us through the evolution of the classical dance forms of India—Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Manipuri, Mohiniattam, Odissi and Sattriya—in her book, *Indian Classical Dance: The Renaissance and Beyond* (Niyogi, ₹ 2,500, 336 pages), where she juxtaposes the historical perspective with the contemporary scenario. “An era has passed and one doubts if we will see the likes of another Balasaraswati or Kelucharan Mohapatra or Shambhu Maharaj.... But there is a small section of hard working, talented youngsters willing to be guided by the right gurus, who are eager to take the art forward without diluting its intrinsic identity,” writes Venkataraman. “The future of classical dance will be shaped by them.”





Bharatanatyam dancers late Balasaraswati (below), Vyjayanthimala Bali (right) and the Dhananjayans

Opposite page: (clockwise from top left) Odissi proponent Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra; Kathak maestro Pandit Birju Maharaj; Manipuri Pungcholom Guru Tanil Singh ji group





A Kathakali performance of Othello by Sadanam Balakrishnan and Leela Samson; a Kathak production by Kumudini Lakhia

Opposite page: (clockwise from top left) Anwasha Mahanta performs the Sattriya form of Assam; eminent Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam dancer Yamini Krishnamurty; Bharati Shivaji strikes a Mohiniattam pose





# The sacred seven

In Hinduism, rivers are not just life givers but carriers of a legion of myths, legends and spiritual stories, writes **Professor Shrikala Warriar**

It is customary for Hindus to commence *puja* with an invocation to the seven sacred rivers:

*Gange cha Yamuna chaiva Godavari Sarasvati  
Narmada, Sindhu, Kaveri jale'smin sannidhim kuru*

In 2012, I started work on my book *Kamandalu: The Seven Sacred Rivers of Hinduism*, spending many happy hours in our university's library and accessing rare Hindu sacred texts in the British Library, the Wellcome Collection and at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. As the book neared completion around mid-July, along with my husband, I made a trip to India. The monsoon was in full force and in Mumbai, where we stopped, we had to make way through heavy downpours to offer prayers at the temples of Siddhivinayak, Mahalaxmi and Babulnath. We then travelled south to Aluva, a small town in Kerala, where the Periyar River winds around the famous Shiva temple, known as 'Southern Kashi'. As the rainfall continued unabated, the normally serene river took on a frightening prospect, overflowing its banks, surging over high garden walls, sweeping away cars, including ours, in its wake. With the power supply failing in the area, we left for Guruvayoor, famed for its Krishna temple. At this point, we felt it was time to conclude the book and at my husband's suggestion, I dedicated it to Krishna and left a copy of the Epilogue at the altar. That evening, the rains stopped!

Water is a prerequisite for the performance of any Hindu ritual, whether it is in temples or at homes. A *kalasha* or pot filled with water and topped with a coronet of mango leaves and a coconut represents life, well-being and prosperity. A focus of worship, it is also the means by which one expects to acquire fullness and abundance. Within the complex Hindu dichotomy of sacred and profane, flowing water is believed to have heightened spiritual attributes. It not only removes dirt and impurities but has the ability to attract beneficial influences. A dip in a holy river is believed to expiate sins committed over several lifetimes and is a means of liberating oneself from the cycle of repeated

births. After cremation, the ashes of a deceased person are immersed in a river in order to facilitate the soul's journey to its transcendent source.

The term *Sapta Sindhu* or 'seven rivers' appears repeatedly in our sacred texts, although the membership of this cluster fluctuated widely. In the course of time the term was specifically applied to the Sarasvati, Sindhu (Indus), Ganga, Yamuna, Narmada, Godavari and Kaveri rivers. They are also referred to as *Sapta Ganga* or *Saptapurnyandi* and are invoked at the start of important rituals, as their symbolic presence as witnesses is necessary to achieve the desired effects.

**Sapta Ganga are invoked at the start of important rituals, as their symbolic presence is necessary to achieve the desired effects**

My interest in Hindu mythology and philosophy grew while I was developing the BSc (Hons) Ayurveda degree programme for our university in London—incidentally, the first fully validated undergraduate degree in Ayurveda in the West. Our students, mostly female, from all over Britain, Europe and the US, and several of them with degrees from Oxford, Cambridge and other universities, were fascinated with the myths relating to Ayurveda, especially the story of the churning of the ocean and the emergence of

Lord Dhanwantari bearing the pot of *amrit* or nectar.

I had the opportunity to pursue my own interest in these areas further when I scaled back on my teaching commitments in 2012. The seven rivers weaving their way through the rich fabric of Hindu mythology, culture and history seemed particularly important especially since the legends about them involved a distinguished cast of divine, saintly and human characters.

The mighty Sindhu from which the word 'Hindu' is derived dominates the *Rig Veda*, and was the cradle of a great civilisation of unparalleled sophistication. The river Sarasvati, on whose banks the Rig Vedic sages conducted fire rituals or *yajna*, merged seamlessly with Sarasvati, the Goddess who symbolises fluidity in the form of speech and music and who is revered as the patron of learning and the *Veda*. Ganga is venerated as *trilokapathagamini*,

the celestial river that emerged from the toe of Vishnu and was imprisoned in Shiva's matted locks before being led by Sage Bhagiratha down to the earth and then to the subterranean world to liberate the souls of his ancestors. Yamuna is forever associated with the childhood and adolescence of Krishna and his friends, the cowherds and *gopi* of Vrindavan, and it is at Panchavati by the Godavari where Rama, Sita and Lakshmana spent many years of their exile and from where Sita was abducted by Ravana. Kaveri, also known as *Dakshina* Ganga, is lauded as the garland around Vishnu's neck, while Narmada is believed to be a daughter of Shiva and so named because she is the 'giver of delight'.

Many towns and cities along the course of the seven rivers were designated as *tirtha* or places on earth where

*arati* performed every evening at the Dasashwamedha Ghat in Varanasi. Though I visited Varanasi as a child, the memory of the glow of the lamps reflected in the inky waters of the Ganges and the sound of conch shells is still very vivid.

During the *Adiperukku* festival which is celebrated on the 18th day of the Tamil month of *Adi* throughout the Kaveri delta to herald the start of a new agricultural season, a variety of rice dishes cooked with different flavourings such as lemon, tamarind and jaggery are offered to the river goddess Kaveriamma. She is conceptualised as a woman in the first trimester of pregnancy who craves different tastes.

River worship also takes the form of *parikrama* or circumambulation as is customary around deities in temples. Narmada *parikrama* is regarded as one of the most meritorious acts that a person can perform. Many pilgrims undertake the 2,600-km round trip on foot.

One of the largest religious events in the world centred on river worship is the Kumbha Mela, which occurs every third year at four places in India in rotation, namely, Hardwar, Prayag, Nashik and Ujjain. Prayag stands at the confluence of three sacred rivers—*Triveni sangam*—the Ganges, Yamuna and Sarasvati. In the popular imagination, the three river goddesses, mounted on their distinctive *vahana*, the crocodile, tortoise and swan respectively, arrive here from three different directions. There is no temple dedicated to the river goddesses, for the *sangam* itself is deemed holy.

The *Sapta* Ganga have been the lifeblood of India from time immemorial. They have promoted agricultural prosperity and satisfied people's desire for wealth, health and all forms of happiness, while inspiring saints like Adi Shankaracharya, Tulsidas and Tyagaraja to compose the most sublime, spiritually uplifting poetry and music. It's also pertinent how the *Dharmashastra* issue strict injunctions about keeping the waters clean and undefiled in much the same way that deities in temples are honoured. Mythology and tradition not only endorse and celebrate these beliefs but provide a meaningful context for understanding and addressing the present-day concerns of sacred and secular ecology.

salvation could be easily achieved. *Kashi yatra* remains the highest aspiration for many devout Hindus because of the guarantee of spiritual liberation or *moksha* to one who dies within this city's boundaries. Ganga, as the quintessential transcendent river, is believed to be present in every stream and rivulet and all rivers are said to be present in the Ganges.

The divinity inherent in rivers is acknowledged by rituals very similar to those conducted daily in temples and in millions of Hindu homes. Thousands partake in the Ganga



Harmony Archives

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*Professor Warrier, the author of Kamandalu: The Seven Sacred Rivers of Hinduism, is an anthropologist based in London*

# The rain SONG

Even as the monsoon sets in, we bring you *Beloved, Let Us Once More Praise The Rain*, by Pulitzer-winning American poet **Conrad Aiken**

Beloved, let us once more praise the rain.  
Let us discover some new alphabet,  
For this, the often praised; and be ourselves,  
The rain, the chickweed, and the burdock leaf,  
The green-white privet flower, the spotted stone,  
And all that welcomes the rain; the sparrow too,—  
Who watches with a hard eye from seclusion,  
Beneath the elm-tree bough, till rain is done.  
There is an oriole who, upside down,  
Hangs at his nest, and flicks an orange wing,—  
Under a tree as dead and still as lead;  
There is a single leaf, in all this heaven  
Of leaves, which rain has loosened from its twig:  
The stem breaks, and it falls, but it is caught  
Upon a sister leaf, and thus she hangs;  
There is an acorn cup, beside a mushroom  
Which catches three drops from the stooping cloud.  
The timid bee goes back to the hive; the fly  
Under the broad leaf of the hollyhock  
Perpend stupid with cold; the raindark snail  
Surveys the wet world from a watery stone...  
And still the syllables of water whisper:  
The wheel of cloud whirs slowly: while we wait  
In the dark room; and in your heart I find  
One silver raindrop,—on a hawthorn leaf,—  
Orion in a cobweb, and the World.



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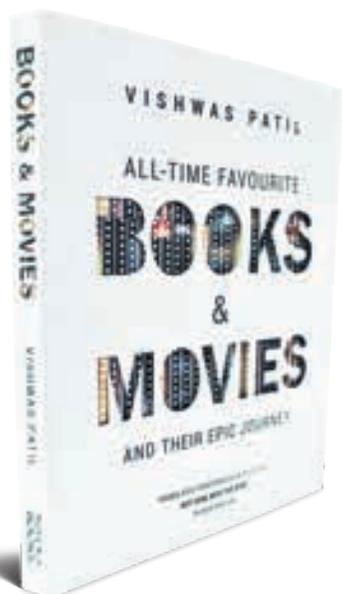
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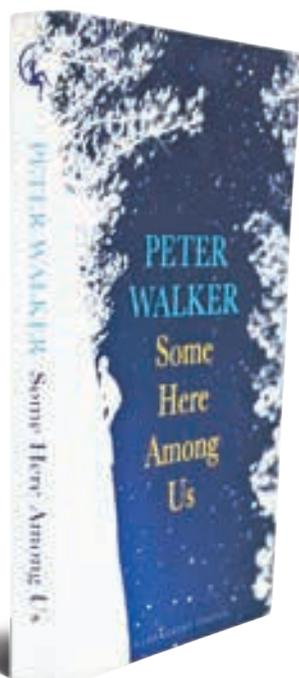
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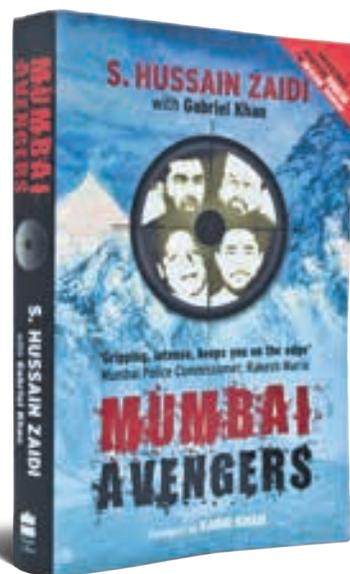
Authors and filmmakers are continually trying to shed light on our strange world through their books and movies. **ALL-TIME FAVOURITE BOOKS AND MOVIES AND THEIR EPIC JOURNEY (Niyogi; ₹ 595; 223 pages)**, translated by **Nadeem Khan** from **Vishwas Patil's** Marathi book *Not Gone with the Wind*, gives insider stories of how cult movies such as *The Godfather* and *Gone With The Wind* were churned out of great works of fiction. The author also digs deep into the strange, and sometimes disturbed, lives of authors. Patil draws parallels between the lives of the writers and the characters they created. It's also a sad commentary on the state of affairs that many literary classics have got their due only after being adapted on the silver screen. The author compares movies and stories with parallel plotlines and characters from different milieus. The book encapsulates Patil's fascination for research and brings to the fore his amazing storytelling talent to keep readers engrossed with interesting tidbits of history never heard before. If the life of a writer intrigues you as much as the story, go for it.

**Peter Walker's** novel **SOME HERE AMONG US (Bloomsbury; ₹ 399; 275 pages)** is a beautiful and timely reflection of love and loss. It recounts the tale of two generations living through personal and political upheavals during the Vietnam and Iraq wars. The story opens in 1967 in New Zealand, where students take to the streets protesting the Vietnam War, humming The Beatles' *All you need is love*. Meanwhile, they too fall in and out of love while going on a road trip down the East Coast of the North Island. We are introduced to Race, Candy, Fitzgerald and



Morgan. Immediately afterwards, Morgan—the idealist among them—dies. The rest move forward through the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, their friendships tested and pulled apart and reconfigured anew. The novel moves back and forth through time and space. While dealing with larger issues, Walker doesn't forget to sketch the effect they have at a personal level. Broad in scope, the novel brilliantly explores the generational shift of ideas and ideals.

**Hussain Zaidi** is back with an intense, edge-of-the-seat thriller, **MUMBAI AVENGERS (HarperCollins; ₹ 113; 373 pages)**. Co-authored with **Gabriel Khan**, the story is set against the backdrop of the 26/11 terror attacks that took place in the metropolis. It deals with a motley group of fearless individuals led by retired Lt Gen Syed Warris. Frustrated with the inertia of the political class and with justice nowhere in sight, the avengers decide to take things into their own hands. As the story travels from India to Dubai, Istanbul, Sweden and Pakistan, the stakes get higher. There are narrow hits and misses; disguise, deception and chases follow. The story is an interesting mix of fact and fiction; Zaidi's understanding of the world of crime—he has been a crime reporter for decades—lends credence to the plot. Though this is his first foray into fiction, the transition is smooth. The book has all the ingredients needed for a fast-paced movie, with conflicts between key characters, shades of romance, nail-biting encounters and a fitting finale. With the foreword written by Bollywood director Kabir Khan, it won't be surprising to see a movie adaptation soon.



# Quantum of god

Modern scientific discoveries run parallel to mystical truths revealed by our ancient seers and scriptures, writes **Paolo Giubellino**

Creation of the universe is still a mystery. Let's hope that the newly discovered Higg's Boson wrongly dubbed as the 'God particle' leads us in the right direction to know the full truth. However to say that only science has the monopoly on truth is quite myopic and disrespectful to other approaches. Science could have monopoly on facts but not on the 'Truth' despite much advancement.

On the other hand, the ancient Hindus from India inquired into the 'Ultimate Reality' or 'Truth' using a totally different approach and didn't spend \$ 5 billion on a collider inside a 27-km tunnel like they did to discover Higg's Boson. We know who Mr Higgs is by now but not many know about the Indian scientist Satyendra-nath Bose whose last name is behind the name 'Boson'.

The truth-seeking *Dharma* communities of ancient India have a solid heritage of inquiry into the truth and have some fascinating discoveries to share. These esoteric truth-seeking communities continue to exist till today in India with an enlightened Guru as the Chief Scientist and the disciples as the researchers.

The mystical research disciples of India operate on a paradigm that is not easily understood by science, but yet very methodical in their analysis. Their main emphasis was on personal experience 'within' rather than experiments 'without'. Really speaking, the approaches, equipments and methods

of mysticism are quite different to that of science and cannot be compared by any standard. Barring the quest, perhaps, everything else is different.

So where can we find the history of truth-seeking in India? The questions, method and discoveries of the ultimate truth are mainly found in the end part of the ancient Vedic literature i.e. in the *Upanishads* collectively called 'Vedanta'. In the archives of *Vedanta*, the quest for truth simply begins with a question much like in modern science.



Even before the search begins, the Indian spiritual masters logically assert that we are just "part" of the universe. So naturally they ask, "How can the part know the whole?" The wisdom traditions of India, especially *Vedanta*, define Reality or Truth in the most rational way. *Vedanta* defines Truth as "That which exists in all periods of time, in the past, in the present, and future, without any change".

The mystics of the *Upanishads* called the true source of all creation 'Brahman', which literally means 'ever

expanding'. The assertions of truth suggest that there cannot be any God sitting in some heaven creating a universe. In the *Upanishads* the sages declare that *Brahman*, the truth, is infinite being, infinite Consciousness, and infinite Bliss. Finally the seers proclaim that only by becoming the whole can one know the whole as we find in the *Mundaka Upanishad* that "*Brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati*", which means "The knower of the *Brahman* becomes the *Brahman*". If anything, the truth-seekers in ancient India seemed to have gained an intimate personal experience of the 'God principle' rather than a 'God particle'.

Somehow the culture of the truth-seeking *rishi* accorded very low priority to documenting the discoveries of their quest. Nor were they interested in getting them validated in scientific circles. However, new-age books like *The Tao of Physics* by Fritjof Capra and *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* by Gary Zukav are providing evidence on the parallels of Eastern mysticism and modern physics. These popular scientists maintain that the mystics have experienced the truth that seems to match with what physics is discovering now.

What if today's scientists discover that the DNA of all living beings has the same God principle which is the secret to the mystery of creation? I guess one would have to say *Aham Brahm Asmi*, meaning 'I am Brahman (GOD)' as said in the *Brihad-Aran-yaka Upanishad* from the *Yajur Veda*.

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*Giubellino (born 9 November 1960) is an Italian experimental particle physicist and the spokesperson of CERN, the European Organisation for Nuclear Research. You can read the full article on [www.beliefnet.com](http://www.beliefnet.com)*

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# Rosie and her guide

The desires of a married woman had never before been so deftly handled in mainstream Indian cinema; never before had our audiences empathised with a woman walking out of a stagnant marriage to live with her beloved. A compelling masterpiece, *Guide* released in 1965 to break new ground. Based on R K Narayan's novel of the same name, this was a story of exploration and emancipation of two interwoven lives: dancer Rosie Marco and glib-talking tourist guide Raju. By depicting the married heroine, played by Waheeda Rehman, leaving the oppressive atmosphere of her home to move into the guide's (Dev Anand), *Guide* questioned existing social mores. This is no happy ever-after though, as Rosie discovers how vulnerable relationships can be in the face of insecurity.

When it first premiered in New Delhi in the presence of the entire cabinet sans the prime minister, *Guide* was declared a flop. The English version, written by American novelist Pearl S Buck and directed by Pole Tad Danielewski, never saw the light of day till it was screened at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival, 42 years after it was made. Though the Hindi version was to be initially directed by Chetan Anand, the baton changed hands with Chetan disagreeing with Dev Anand's selection of Rehman as the lead. Not wanting to compromise on his selection of Rehman, thanks to her proficiency as a dancer, the star producer decided to rope in younger brother Vijay 'Goldie' Anand to wield the megaphone, despite the latter's doubts about the acceptance of the infidelity angle.

Goldie, however, was able to handle the complex theme in a non-judgemental manner. For her part, Rehman effectively conveyed her character's repressed energy and desires with her expressive eyes and breathtaking dance moves. Her exultation at newfound freedom was captured beautifully in the song *Kaaton se kheench ke anchal*; the recklessness was all too evident with Rosie dancing on the edge of a ledge. Despite being reviled by R K Narayan,



*Guide* picked up all the major Filmfare awards, including Best Actor and Actress, Picture, Director, Cinematography, Story, Dialogue and Music. With evergreen numbers such as *Tere mere sapne*, *Gaata rahe mera dil*, *Din dhal jaaye*, *Piya tose naina laage re*, *Wahan kaun hai tera*, *Mohse chhal kiye jaaye* and *Kya se kya ho gaya*, S D Burman's lilting score was his career-best. Fifty years later, *Guide* still remains a cult cinematic experience.

## THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: JULY 1965

- On 4 July, Dr Martin Luther King Jr delivered 'The American Dream' address at Atlanta.
- On 8 July, a bomb exploded in a rear lavatory aboard Canadian Pacific Air Lines Flight 21 in midair over Canada, killing all 52 people on board.
- On 14 July, US spacecraft Mariner 4 flew by Mars, becoming the first spacecraft to return images from the Red Planet.
- On 26 July, the Maldives received full independence from Great Britain.

“ There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age.

—Italian actor Sophia Loren

## Infinity machine

n. A mocking reference to a smartphone or similar device, particularly one connected to the Internet and its seemingly infinite resources.

**Example.** On my morning bus into town, every teenager and every grown-up sits there staring into their little **infinity machine**: a pocket-sized window onto more words than any of us could ever read, more music than we could ever listen to, more pictures of people getting naked than we could ever get off to.

—Dougald Hine, “What good is information?”, *Aeon*, 6 March 2014

## Data lake

n. A massive amount of data stored and readily accessible in its pure, unprocessed state.

**Example.** To prepare for this onslaught, some IT leaders are urging the creation of **data lakes**. These are centralised repositories based on Hadoop that draw raw data from source systems and then pass them to downstream facilities for utilisation by the knowledge workforce.

—Ron Bodkin, “Getting the most from your data lake”, *Forbes*, 29 May 2015

## Gateway vegetable

n. A palatable vegetable that encourages more adventurous vegetable consumption.

**Example.** We call pea shoots the **gateway vegetable**, because when we grow them in the classroom, children just eat them by the fistful until green juice is running down their faces.

—Emily Armstrong, “Harvest of the month: Pea shoots”, *Martha’s Vineyard Times*, 23 February 2015

## NAIL HOUSE

n. A house that remains in place while a development project proceeds around it, particularly because the owner of the house stubbornly refuses to sell to developers.

**Example.** Sometimes, Chinese homeowners refuse to cash in, either because an offer is too low or for more principled reasons, and their property remains standing while the new project shoots up around it. Dingzihu, or **nail houses**, as these won’t-budge properties are called, have become symbols over the past several years of brave defiance of the powerful wealth that’s driving new development.

—Laura Bliss, “Chinese ‘nail houses’ won’t budge for new development”, *City Lab*, 13 April 2015

## swatting

n. A hoax that involves phoning police and providing false information that causes the dispatch of a SWAT team to the hoax victim’s home.

**Example.** A Canadian teen has pled guilty to more than 23 counts related to a series of **swatting** incidents across Canada and the US. ... In a swatting incident in February, Minnesotan air force veteran Joshua Peters had his house raided by armed police while he was broadcasting live to thousands of viewers.

—“Lizard Squad member pleads guilty over 23 counts related to swatting”, *The Guardian* (London), 22 May 2015



**BUZZ**

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**Just remember,  
once you're over  
the hill you begin  
to pick up speed.**

—German philosopher Arthur  
Schopenhauer (1788-1860)

## Wait-learning

*n.* Learning that takes place while a person is awaiting the completion of some other task.

**Example.** We present an instant messaging (IM) prototype WaitChatter that supports the notion of **wait-learning** by displaying contextually relevant foreign language vocabulary and micro-quizzes while the user awaits a response from her conversant.

—Carrie J Cai, et al, "Wait-learning: Leveraging conversational dead time for second language education", DSpace@MIT, 1 April 2014

## “Football can help foster harmony, teamwork and sportsmanship”

Gobinda Saha, 65, Kolkata, coaches young children in the sport



Shilbhadra Dutta

It's 6.30 am; young boys troop into the Raipur Club turf, south of Kolkata, holding a football in one hand and a pair of boots in another. Donning bright jerseys with their favourite footballer's name and number, they are here to learn football from their 'sir', **Gobinda Saha**, who has been coaching the children for free since 2011. The 65 year-old, who grew up in Nawadeep, 107 km from Kolkata, has been a football enthusiast since he can remember, dreaming of the game even while wide awake; hungrily scouting newspapers and magazines for sports news; and going to bed with a football by his bedside. "I want to shape young minds," says Saha, who believes rampant consumerism and the competition to excel at studies is "robbing children of a normal childhood." For his part, Saha sacrificed his dreams of being a professional football player to pursue higher studies in organic chemistry, to fulfil the promise he had made to his father Hemachandra, who lost his business and property while fleeing Bangladesh in the 1950s, and had to build from scratch in India. Though Saha went to Kanpur to pursue a career in academics, the smell of the leather ball and the sight of the green turf were too strong to resist. He went on to represent Nadia district football XI at the age of 19. Reminiscing about those days, childhood friend Deepankar Bhattacharjee says, "He

always used to sleep with his boots and football next to his pillow!" Bhattacharjee remembers Saha as having tremendous sense and skill of ball control. As luck would have it, while he was doing his honours degree in chemistry at Kanpur University, spotters from the Shimla Young Club of Delhi recruited Saha for prestigious tournaments such as the Rovers Cup, Durrand Cup and the DCM Cup in 1974. While in Kanpur, Saha also picked up books, coaching manuals and VHS cassettes of Latino Futbol Club to fine-tune his own understanding of the game. "Though the Latin American countries are essentially poor, they produce brilliant footballers. With a similar ground condition, climate and even social structure, it shouldn't be difficult for us to replicate their success," he reasons, glancing at his young wards ranging from grade I to grade XII, who are going through routine practice. Saha, who retired from Duncan Fertiliser as a scientist after working for 40 years, doesn't just give the children tips on playing the game but pitches in by giving them tuitions in physics, chemistry and mathematics for free. Extolling the virtues of the game in building strength and vigour and motivating youngsters while fostering team spirit, Saha shares a quote from Swami Vivekananda, "You'll be nearer to heaven through football than with the study of the *Bhagavad-Gita*."

—Shilbhadra Dutta

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