

# harmony

*celebrate age*

When you get dentures,  
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## Loosing teeth can also cause...

### 1. Loss of self-esteem

Losing teeth can have a negative impact, creating lasting social and emotional consequences. Your smile is important to your self-esteem and confidence, which in turn plays a critical role in your overall health and happiness. Many of the people who now enjoy the benefits of dental implant supported teeth; state that their self esteem and self confidence have been restored as a result of improved appearance, function, comfort, and health. Your self-esteem and confidence will be improved because you will not have to worry about denture problems or people noticing that you have missing teeth.

### 2. Bone loss and facial aging

Facial changes naturally occur in relation to the aging process. When teeth are lost, this process is grossly accelerated with more rapid facial aging. With tooth loss the bone is reduced in height and thickness and due to that shrinkage of the jawbone may occur making the face look older. Today's dental implants integrate into the structure of your bone, they help stop shrinkage of your jawbone and thereby preserve facial appearance, and help people feel younger. As a result, it maintains the quality of life so that you can live and age with dignity and grace.

### 3. Potential speech impairment

With ill-fitting dentures, the teeth slip and slide around the mouth. The facial muscles become tense in an attempt to hold the teeth in place. This often results in mumbling, slurred speech or clicking noises. Implant supported replacement teeth allow you to speak with confidence in a relaxed and natural tone. Improve your speech by eliminating or reducing the "fullness" of full or partial dentures.

### 4. Inability to taste and enjoy food

As the jawbone shrinks, your chewing efficiency is reduced even more, making it difficult to eat certain foods. Also, a full upper denture covers the palate of the mouth and reduces the ability to taste foods. With dental implants, you can have the palate removed from your upper denture so you can taste and enjoy your food. Implants can restore chewing efficiency comparable to that of natural teeth. This allows you to eat your favorite foods with confidence and without pain. You can enjoy what everyone is eating and you don't have to think twice about it.

### 5. Avoidance of social interactions

Typical problem with dentures is that they become loose, and can fall out when laughing, sneezing or coughing without the use of adhesives and never fit or feel like natural teeth. They become loose fitting due to shrinking gum tissue, which then causes irritation to the mouth, sores and pain. Restoration of teeth with dental implants can bring back the patient's masticatory functions to normal. His facial appearance is improved due to the support the lip muscles now get from the new teeth. The patient is now able to speak better and more comfortably. Patients flash radiant smiles. Thus, implants offer a new lease of life to these dental cripples and their lifestyles change for the better to more sociable ones.

*Dentures are an antiquated solution to a serious health problem. Restore your teeth, your smile and your self-confidence with permanent dental implants and fixed teeth.*

Please consult your dentist for more information on treatment planning and medical evaluation and to find out whether Nobel Biocare dental implants or restorative solutions are right for you. Your dentist is the best person to evaluate whether dental implants are a viable solution for you.





JULY 2009 Rs 30

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*celebrate age*

## DESTINATION

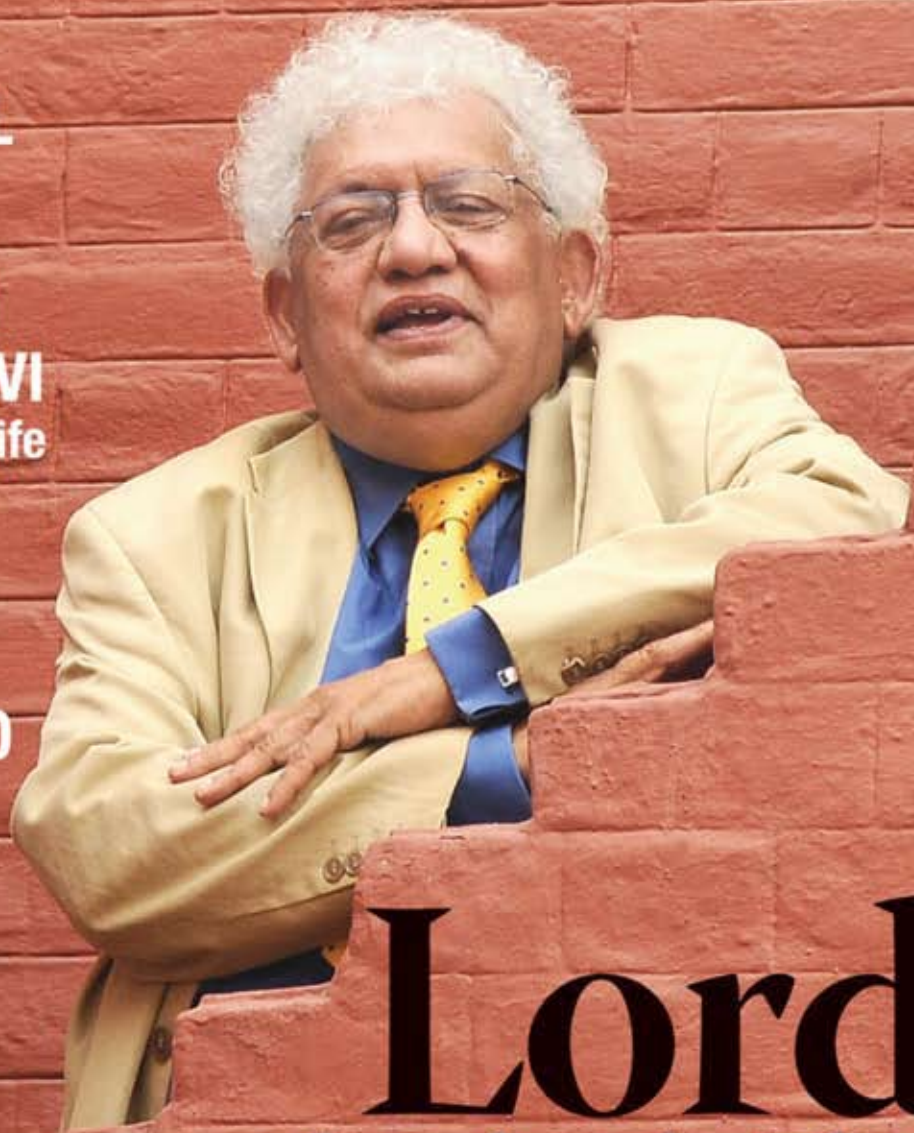
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## DIARY 100

**CENTENARIAN  
SATYAVATI DEVI**  
looks back on her life

## AUTHORSPEAK

An interview with  
bestselling author  
**PAULO COELHO**



**Lord**  
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Body signals to watch out for • Youngsters cheer up lonely silvers



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# Promises to keep

**W**hen silver dons yellow, the result is magic! We've seen this radiance of spirit at the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon; at the Airtel Delhi Vodafone Half Marathon; and now, for the second year running, in Bengaluru, when the city played host to the 4-km Harmony Senior Citizens' Run as part of the Sunfeast World 10 K Marathon on 31 May.

I thank our special guests—Kannada actor 'Golden Star' Ganesh, long-jump athlete G G Pramila, and former international shot-putter and Arjuna award winner S D Eshan—for being on hand to put that extra spring in the step of our participants. I would also like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the Harmony team in making the event possible and the help and support rendered to us by Reliance Communications, Medybiz, Procarn International and Godrej Security Solutions.

The month of May was momentous for more reasons than one. The long-awaited election result came in, handing the Congress-led UPA a decisive victory. We congratulate Dr Manmohan Singh for his second term as prime minister and all the ministers who have taken the oath of office—while some continue to retain their portfolios, there are new faces in the Cabinet too. For instance, we have a new minister for Social Justice and Empowerment; the post, formerly occupied by Speaker Meira Kumar, is now vested in the hands of Mukul Wasnik.

This is a ministry whose efforts are closely allied with the interests of Harmony for Silvers Foundation. We urge the new minister to keep alive the momentum that was



Donald Woodrow

established with the passage of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens' Act in 2007. For the Act to go beyond being mere words on paper, all our states must implement it—so far only 12 have done so (see 'Orbit'). The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, which initiated the Act, must now ensure that every state gets on board by spreading awareness on the implications of such an Act for our society. The Centre must also shake off the youth-centric mindset that has beset previous governments and institute policies and programmes that recognise the problems and potential of our silvers.

Ultimately, the creation of an equitable society that protects all its citizens is the true litmus test of a country's maturity. Economic and infrastructure development mean nothing without parallel social development. The people have spoken, giving the government a strong mandate to rule. It is now time for the government to act—it has promises to keep.

## A Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust Initiative

*Harmony—Celebrate Age—July 2009 Volume 6 Issue 2*

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**IRON LADY:** Even at 88, Kamal Kumari Baruah refuses to retire

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# column one

*Harmony's* new look has been much appreciated. We have been inundated with congratulatory phone calls; most of our callers wanting to speak to us personally to convey their wishes; thanking us for a life of change. It's an amazing feeling to be regarded so well. In return we promise a resolute mission of striving to raise awareness about issues and concerns close to your heart. This month, yet another example of 'a life of change' is on the cover—Lord Meghnad Desai ("An Englishman in New Delhi"). An acclaimed economist, Lord Desai loves reforms, even personal ones. Remarriage in his mid-60s, a book on legendary actor Dilip Kumar and now a political thriller set in Westminster, he always has a Hindi song on his lips and a bounce in his step.

*Harmony* makes change believable. Residents of an old age home in Bengaluru are changing in favour of a new-found bond with orphans, thanks to a group of youngsters collectively called We Belong. Dr Pushpesh Pant's menu in favour of vegetarians—we have to remind him to include vegetarian dishes each time and this month he obliges us! And our international columnist Dr Jane Barratt's column focuses on a world changing in favour of age-friendly cities and communities.

The other highlights of the issue include an interview with bestselling author Paulo Coelho ('Bookshelf') whose writings have altered a billion lives. And an interview with Satyavati Devi, the 100 year-old freedom fighter and mother of Krishna Kant, former vice-president of India. "A Patriot Speaks" is a glimpse into her way of life and a comment on the chasm between then and now. Cover to cover, it's all yours!

—Meeta Bhatti



When the Elder Line (1090), a 24-hour helpline for senior citizens was launched by Mumbai Police in 2005 following a spate of suicides and murders involving the elderly in the city and its suburbs, the response was overwhelming. Over 1,000 applications were received within months and within the next three years, the figures rose to over 3,500 senior citizens registered with the helpline. Outside the city and its suburbs, the reports of suicides and murders involving seniors in the neighbouring Thane districts of Mira Road, Bhayander and Thane City have been alarming of late. There have been accounts of abuse and harassment meted out to senior citizens by their family members as well as gangsters taking up shelter in the new constructions coming up in Mira Road.



I am a social worker, senior citizen and a crusader for senior citizens and I have been lobbying for months now to extend the Elder Line to these districts so that the elderly who live there can register themselves with the police and live a life of safety. I request you to lobby the state government to ensure that this happens at the earliest.

Diogo A Rodrigues, Mumbai

Warm greetings to the team at *Harmony*! I would like to congratulate you for completing five years of your journey, giving your readers a magazine completely devoted to the interests of senior citizens. In fact, I have begun to donate a copy of your magazine each month to a newly opened senior citizens' library in Dakor, Gujarat, which has a membership of 250. As Deputy Editor Meeta Bhatti writes in Column One in the anniversary issue in June, may *Harmony* continue to thrive on change and spectacular creative evolution.

J K Adhwaryu, Dakor

Heartiest congratulations to you on the completion of five successful years of publishing *Harmony* magazine for silvers. Your fifth anniversary special in

June featured the choicest selection of articles and photographs of achievers in diverse fields. It also covered a gamut of topics, from the practical to the spiritual needs of silvers. Keep up the good work.

Kusum Gokarn, Pune

I am a subscriber to *Harmony* and I thoroughly enjoy reading the magazine. Although I feel you are doing a wonderful job, I do agree with your food columnist Dr Pushpesh Pant in your anniversary issue ("Famous Five!") when he says that you should launch a Hindi edition of the magazine. I believe this would widen your reach. In fact, I am a translator-cum-editor and fluent in both English and Hindi. Right now, I am translating the Man-Booker Prize winner *The White Tiger* in Hindi. If you decide to take up Dr Pant's suggestion and start a Hindi



edition, I would be happy to chip in with my services.

**Manohar Notani**, *Via email*

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It was wonderful to read about Sharmila Tagore ("The Tagore Effect") in the May 2009 issue of *Harmony*. In being herself, she is playing the best role of her life! She continues to work actively as an actor, head of the censor board and goodwill ambassador. What's more, she is a supportive wife to her husband Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, one of India's greatest cricketers and



a wonderful mother to her children, who are all so accomplished in their own right. I wish this radiant lady, who still looks so young, the very best of luck, always. I also enjoyed the feature on silvers on their cycles ("Bicycle Diaries"). Bicycles are so much a part of life in India. Cycling is not just a great way to keep fit but is the most eco-friendly way to get around. It's wonderful to see that silvers still continue to use them. I hope your feature encourages many others to get back on their wheels.

**Ghanshyam Bharucha**, *Mumbai*

---

I am a member of the Raghothaman Nageyoga Vyayama Koota (laughter club) in Bengaluru and we



participated in the Harmony Senior Citizens' Run at the Sunfeast World 10 K Marathon on 31 May. The run was very well-organised and it was nice to see people from all walks of life in a show of strength and unity. We really enjoyed the run, the chill of the morning and the cheering crowds—it made us feel young and wanted again. We thank *Harmony* and look forward to many more occasions to be with you again.

**Poonam P Shenoy**, *Bengaluru*

---

I first saw *Harmony* magazine at the IHelpAge India office in my city. And then my son gave me a copy of the February 2009 issue of the magazine. It was inspiring to read Tina Ambani's editorial, "Team India", where she writes, "We must channel negativity into a positive force... a pledge to give back hope and renewal to our neighbourhoods, our communities, our country." I too have many success stories to share with you and look forward to seeing them printed. In the meantime, I plan to show *Harmony* magazine to everyone, wherever I go.

**Dr Karan**, *Jammu*

---

I am a 73 year-old silver citizen. At the outset, let me congratulate you heartily for the wonderful work you are doing for India's silvers for the past five years. I was a member of your excellent Harmony Interactive Centre in Girgaum, Mumbai. Its facilities, like a library, TV, game room and canteen, are indeed a boon to middle-class silvers who cannot dream of such luxuries in their small homes where they live with their families. Unfortunately, I could not continue to visit the centre owing to the long travelling time from my home. I am also a subscriber to *Harmony* magazine, which keeps me up to date on the latest developments in health, travel, finance and legal matters.

I would like to congratulate Tina Ambani on her newest project, the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital & Research Centre in Andheri, Mumbai. Along with thousands of silver citizens, I am covered under the Senior Citizens UNIT Medical Insurance Policy (SCUP) of the Unit Trust of India (UTI). When I visited the hospital, I discovered that the cashless facility of the scheme is not available there. This is unfortunate as most leading hospitals in the city offer silvers this facility. I request you to tie up with the UTI so that silvers can take advantage of the latest technology and medical facilities offered at your hospital.

**Anantrai M Deliwala**, *Mumbai*

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#### CLARIFICATION

In our May 2009 issue, we mentioned in Dr Vijaya Venkat's column (see 'Nutrition') that ripe mango consumed with milk aids weight gain. We would like to clarify that the recommendation was based on our own research. Dr Vijaya Venkat does not advocate the consumption of milk in daily diet.

# Thank you!

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## Special mention

*'Golden Star' Ganesh*

*Olympian (Long Jump) G G Pramila*

*Arjuna Awardee (Discus Throw & Shot Put) S D Eshan*



thanks all those who supported the Senior Citizens' Run at the  
Sunfeast World 10K Bangalore 2009!



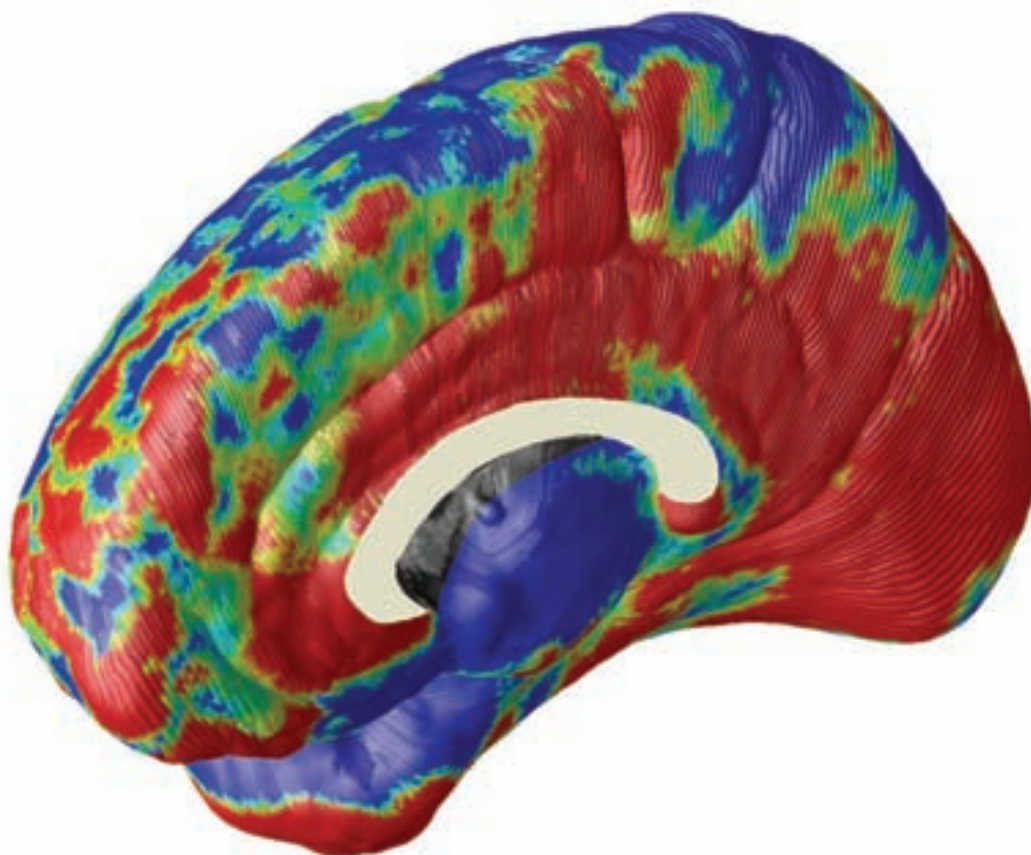
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## *White matters*

**F**orget grey matter, it's the white that counts. That recent conclusion by the Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute in Australia reverses traditional thinking about which part of the human brain deteriorates faster and strengthens the argument for maintaining an active brain in old age. The institute conducted a post-mortem study on 24 healthy brains and found a 32 per

cent loss in white matter volume (connecting fibres that transmit information) but only a 5 per cent loss in grey matter volume (outer layer, where neurons reside and are the source of information in the brain) between the ages of 46 and 92 years.

"The loss of grey matter owing to ageing is much smaller than previously reported and **healthy brain ageing is a process that predominantly affects**

**the white matter,**" according to study leader Dr Olivier Piguet. "These findings indicate that the source of 'brain power' is present throughout life in healthy adults and that decline will tend to happen because of lost connections in the brain. This underlines the importance of using our brain capacity throughout life to maintain and create new connections." The study is published in the June issue of journal *Neurobiology of Ageing*.

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»NEWSWORTHY

# Your ACT

**O**n 27 May, Gujarat became the 12th Indian state to implement the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens' Act. To this end, the state government has instituted the 'Gujarat Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens' Rules, 2009'. A tribunal to be headed by an officer not below the rank of sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) will be constituted in each of the sub-divisional areas. If children or relatives are found to be neglecting to maintain a senior citizen, the tribunal will order them to pay a monthly allowance of Rs 5,000 to the senior citizen. In case of a violation, the tribunal will have all the powers of a civil court to act against the defaulting children or relatives. The government will constitute an appellate tribunal for each district to hear the appeal from persons aggrieved, by an order of the tribunal. The government will also confer power on district magistrates to ensure that provisions of the Act are implemented properly. District social defence officers have been designated as maintenance officers. Apart from Gujarat, the Act has been implemented in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tripura, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Delhi, Assam and Jharkhand.





## O»NEWSWORTHY

## Positive

**THE STATE OF ORISSA** seems to be on a roll as far as **measures for silvers** are concerned. In May, the government announced that the state-supported Kartaavya Foundation will develop a **model village** for silvers in Jushuapur village on the Bhubaneswar-Puri Road. The self-sustaining project, which is expected to cost Rs 30 million, will house over 100 silvers from middle and higher-income groups. "Although there are nearly 50 old age homes in the state, of which three are funded by the state and the rest by the Centre, this village will provide the pleasure of community living," Rituparna Mohanty, social activist and managing trustee, tells media. On the heels of this announcement came the launch of a website, [www.kartaavya.com](http://www.kartaavya.com), which will serve as a forum to highlight the concerns of the elderly and promote intergenerational initiatives. That's not all; in June, the state government announced that it would establish **senior citizens' protection cells in police stations**—to begin with, 10 in Bhubaneswar. According to the 2001 census, 8 per cent of Orissa's population comprised silvers; that figure is expected to be over 10 per cent now.



## Assured entry

**H**ere's some great news for young silvers looking for cover. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA) has issued a notice stating that **all health policies must allow entry at least till 65 years of age**. It has also instructed insurance providers that difference in products for different ages should be highlighted in the prospectus. Any denial to health insurance for silvers should be made in writing with reasons that stand "scrutiny of reasonableness and

fairness" and the premium charged should be "fair, justified, transparent and duly disclosed upfront".

IRDA has also urged for mechanisms to reward policyholders for early entry and continued renewals. And insurers will reimburse at least 50 per cent of the cost incurred in pre-insurance medical examinations in cases where the risk is accepted. The directive will take effect for policies issued or renewed on or after 1 July 2009.

## O»NEWSWORTHY

## Gene protection



**Yeast** doesn't just give you bread—it may hold the secret to longevity. Researchers at University of California—San Diego have discovered **genes that protect the DNA of yeast from oxidising free radicals**. If such genes can be found in humans, drugs that mimic their protective effects could be used to prevent cancer and ageing. "Free radicals in the body can damage DNA, making some people take supplements to mop them up," study leader Trey Ideker tells *New Scientist*. "But, small doses of free radicals trigger changes in cells that stop more from entering. The discovery of genes in yeast can yield a more sustainable strategy in the battle against free radicals." The study was published in the journal *PLoS Genetics*.

## OVERHEARD



"At my age, I take anything I can get. I never stop ageing but I will never stop working either."

**Dustin Hoffman, 71,**  
Actor in London newspaper  
The Independent

## O» MEDIA WATCH



# Alzheimer's AWARENESS

In May, the HBO channel premiered *Alzheimer's Project*, a landmark four-part series exploring the disease through the daily lives of patients, caregivers and loved ones, and recent scientific breakthroughs. Co-presented by the American National Institute on Ageing, the series comprises *The Memory Loss Tapes*, which features seven patients in various stages of the disease; *Grandpa, Do You Know Who I Am?*, which tells five stories of children coping with grandparents who have the disease; *Momentum in Science*, which investigates cutting-edge research advances; and *Caregivers*, a collection of five portraits that highlights the sacrifices and successes of people who are experiencing the descent into dementia of their loved ones.

"Alzheimer's is one disease where there is hope in the public health

area but a lack of knowledge," series producer John Hoffman tells *The Los Angeles Times*. "Though great advances are being made, we have a tremendous amount of fear and anxiety." More than 5 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease. That figure accounts for one in every eight people over age 65, according to the Alzheimer's Association of America, making it "the second most feared illness after cancer" in Hoffman's words. However, as Richard J Hodes, director of the National Institute on Ageing, says in *Momentum of Science*, "We are on the brink of controlling one of the major diseases affecting world health." To ensure that the maximum number of people get this message of hope, HBO is distributing 5,000 screening kits of the series to non-profit bodies across the US. You can stream or download the series for free from <http://www.hbo.com/alzheimers/>

## O» TRENDS

## Village voice

AGEING in place just got more doable in the US with the formation of a growing number of neighbourhood networks. According to a report by news agency Tribune Media Services, these **self-help communities, also known as 'villages'**, offer silvers privacy at home along with access to healthcare agencies, services like plumbers and electricians, and volunteers. One example of such a 'village' is Community without Walls in Princeton, New Jersey, established in 1992. Today, it has 450 members divided into six smaller communities called 'houses'. All members pay dues of \$ 30 (about Rs 1,500) a year for the village corpus. The community runs on volunteerism—able-bodied silvers help those who are frailer in both one-off tasks (taking them to



the doctor) and chores (like providing meals to a bed-ridden neighbour). The village has linked up with a local non-profit agency that coordinates homecare, transportation, services and an emergency hotline. For this, silvers pay \$ 250 (about Rs 12,000) a year for one person or \$ 340 (about Rs 16,000) for a couple. On the other hand, Beacon Hill Village in Boston and Capitol Hill Village in Washington DC rely more on professional resources—annual membership ranges from \$ 500 (about Rs 23,500) for individuals to \$ 750 (about Rs 35,500) for couples.



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Bhuleshwar	22408890, 22413642	Malad (W)	28807088, 28823163	Versova	26342832, 26346248
Dadar (E)	24112232, 24172071	Nerul (W)	27704121, 27711131	Vile Parle (E)	26144977, 26191318
				Wadala (W)	24125638, 24172248



# Ten truths

From 31 May to 7 June, the New York branch of the International Longevity Centre held its 10th annual Age Boom Academy, a weeklong 'boot camp' where gerontologists shared their research and discoveries with journalists to promote a better understanding of the ageing process. Here are some insights that emerged from the event as reported by website [www.canada.com](http://www.canada.com)

**1** Age is often treated as being synonymous with illness, frailty and poverty, while most silvers are in fine form. Terms such as 'illderly' and 'wellderly' were suggested to highlight the distinction.

**2** After puberty, our risk of death doubles every seven years.

**3** In 1977, researchers found that \$ 2 (about Rs 100) was spent on cancer research for every three cents (about Rs 1.50) spent on ageing research. Not much has changed, even though finding a way to delay ageing would mean creating a treatment for cancer, heart disease and all other age-related diseases at once.

**4** 'Societal senescence' is the notion that humans are simply fated to grow old and die, an attitude that gets in the way of longevity research.

**5** Botanists define ageing as everything that happens from the beginning of development until death, while biologists define it as the decline that starts after organisms reach maturity.

**6** About 90 per cent of ageing research is conducted on tiny worms, fruit flies and mice, because they have short lives that allow researchers to quickly see whether something has an effect on their lifespan. Mice are a close genetic 'cousin' to

humans and researchers have already identified three drugs and more than 20 genes that can be used to extend a mouse's lifespan.

**7** It is estimated that 90 per cent of people working in the pharmaceutical industry spend their careers working on drugs that are never brought to the market.

**8** In all the discussions about increased cost and need, the upsides of a society full of older people are forgotten. Older homeowners keep neighbourhoods that are at risk from crime stable and watch each other's property, as well as help raise grandchildren, lead-

ing them to be described as "the only increasing natural resource in the world".

**9** About 90 per cent of people's health concerns can be handled over the phone but doctors don't encourage this as they don't get paid that way. One suggestion was that doctors should bill like lawyers and use phone and web consults as a more efficient way to help their patients.

**10** An 'ageing society' is a misunderstood term—it's not simply a society that has a lot of old people, but rather a society which has more old than young people.



**COOL THREADS:** Check out the best-dressed silvers in America on [advancedstyle.blogspot.com](http://advancedstyle.blogspot.com), a sartorial blog by New York-based photographer Ari Cohen.

## FAMILY FEUDS

It's official—new research has established that **family arguments get worse with age**. According to psychologists from the University of Michigan, the biggest aggravation is between parents and grown-up offspring, even when those 'children' are middle-aged. And stereotypes of fathers feuding with rebellious sons aside, the tension is worse between adult daughters and their mothers. The root cause seems to be the same: the children's anger at their parents trying to run their lives. The team arrived at these conclusions after studying the relationship between nearly 500 sets of parents and adult children aged 22 and upwards, in some cases into middle age. In each case, the parents and children lived within 50 miles of each other. The findings are published in the July issue of the journal *Psychology and Ageing*.

**A FIESTA OF SOLIDARITY: ON 7 JUNE, OVER 500 SILVERS MET IN THE CAPITAL'S DEER PARK TO CELEBRATE THE 30TH ANNUAL DAY OF THE SENIOR CITIZENS' COUNCIL OF DELHI. SILVERS SANG BHAJAN AND DISTRIBUTED BOOKS AND STATIONERY TO POOR CHILDREN.**

O»H PEOPLE

# Health's ANGELS

**Roopesh Kumar** (top right), 39, CEO of Agewell Technologies, was travelling on business abroad when his ageing parents had a medical emergency. The crisis set Kumar and his friend **Maneesh Mehra** (below), 38, thinking of a service that could cater to the needs of silvers who lived alone and needed medical assistance in the absence of their children. After a series of focus group discussions with the elderly and doctors, the two launched **www.eldess.com** in June 2009. Through the website, you or your children can locate doctors all over Mumbai; arrange for appointments with doctors, physiotherapists and alternate therapy providers; book a taxi to drop you at any clinic in Mumbai; book an attendant to accompany you; and share your health concerns and queries with other silvers on health forums. "The idea is to empower silvers with important healthcare information so they do not feel helpless," says Mehra, director of Agewell Technologies. "They have a say in everything they choose—right from the doctor, to the hospital and the tests." Kumar and Mehra now plan to add more services to the website such as assistance with real estate, retirement planning and security. They also conduct computer classes for silvers.



Courtesy: Maneesh Mehra



## IN PASSING

Veteran Hollywood actor **Dom DeLuise**, the comedian who was known for his sparkling act in *The Twelve Chairs*, *Spaceballs* and *Robin Hood: Men in Tights*, passed away on 4 May in California. He was 75.

The last Titanic survivor, **Millvina Dean**, died of pneumonia on 31 May. She was 97.

Writer **Kamala Suraiyya** (better known as Kamala Das), who was both admired and reviled for her

unflinching stance on female sexual desires and male hypocrisy, breathed her last in Pune owing to a respiratory ailment on 31 May. She was 75.

Playwright and actor **Habib Tanvir**, renowned for his masterpieces—*Agra Bazar*, *Charandas Chor* and *Kamdev Ka Apna Basant Ritu Ka Sapna*—passed away in Bhopal on 8 June. He was 85.

Legendary sarod maestro **Ustad Ali Akbar Khan** died of renal failure in California on 18 June. He was 87

## BIRTHDAYS

- Hollywood powerhouse **Morgan Freeman** turned 72 on 1 June
- Tennis legend **Bjorn Borg** turned 53 on 6 June
- Actor **Mithun Chakraborty** turned 59 on 16 June
- Beatles singer **Paul McCartney** turned 67 on 18 June
- Author **Salman Rushdie** turned 61 on 19 June



# Harmony in Bengaluru



On 31 May Bengaluru woke up to the excitement and bonhomie of the 2nd Sunfeast World 10 K Marathon. And over 1,750 silvers, dressed in Harmony's signature yellow T-shirts, gathered at the sprawling Sree Kanteerava Stadium for the **Harmony Senior Citizens' Run**, a part of the event. The 4-km run was flagged off by Kannada actor 'Golden Star' Ganesh (*below right*), long-jump athlete G G Pramila (*left, kneeling*), and former international shot-putter S D Eshan (*below left*). While some participants walked and others ran, everyone rooted for fun and fitness. S Kama-lamma, 80, and Krishnappa, 94, were felicitated as the oldest participants in the women's and men's category. A lucky dip notched up the decibels even higher. Prizes included Godrej safety systems; Reliance mobile phones; Art d' inox designer steel ware; and dining vouchers from BJN and Java Green.





## O»FACE OFF

# Bite me!

Cookies are no longer a guilty pleasure, if you believe American cookie maker DeLuscious. It has partnered with skincare company Borba to create **vitamin-enhanced anti-**



**ageing cookies** that ostensibly help the skin look flawless. The cookies contain Borba's signature mix of skin-nurturing antioxidants and nutrients that include antioxidants açai berries (from a palm native to Central and South America) and noni berries (tropical fruit found in the South Pacific). They boast more than nine minerals and vitamins, such as Vitamins B3, B6 and B12 and flaxseed, which is rich in omega-3 essential fatty acids. The cookies come in two flavours—oatmeal raisin and chocolate toffee white chocolate—and cost \$ 25 (about Rs 1,200) for six cookies.



For more, visit [www.delusciouscookies.com](http://www.delusciouscookies.com)

## O»WILD SILVER

# PARTY ANIMAL

Reaching the age of 21 is a significant landmark for a human—for a dog it's a ticket to fame. Ask **Chanel, the world's oldest dog**, who brought in her birthday in style on 7 May at New York City's Dog Hotel and Spa with a big bash and a cake. With an estimated human age of 120 years, the dachshund, who lives in swank Long Island with owners Denice and Karl Shaughnessy, certainly shows her years: according to media reports, her hair has turned completely white; she needs doggy glasses to protect her cataract-stricken eyes; catches a cold easily; and prefers short walks to long runs. Still, she retains her appetite—for chicken and multigrain pasta, and fun! Chanel will be listed in the 2010 edition of the *Guinness Book of World Records*, scheduled for publication this October.



## GET A HAIRCUT.

Beauty experts say you can take up to a decade off your age just by changing your hairstyle (without even colouring it!). According to hairstylists featured in the online edition of *Good Housekeeping* in May, simple measures like going shorter and sharper with your cut and changing your parting from the centre to the side can have the effect of a mini face-lift and snap you out of a 'style rut'.



## DANCE TO HEALTH.

Join a dance class in your neighbourhood. New research from Queen's University, Belfast, shows that social dancing has concrete social, mental and physical benefits for silvers—it staves off illness and even counteracts decline in ageing apart from warding off depression and dementia. "Social dancing leads to a continued engagement with life—past, present, and future—and holds the promise for successful ageing," says Dr Jonathan Skinner, who led the study.

## 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.

# NEW HORIZONS

**T**he Peter Principle, conceptualised by Lawrence J Peter in his book *The Peter Principle*, humorously states that people are generally promoted to their “level of incompetence” in a hierarchically structured organisation. The principle is based on the observation that, in bureaucratic structures, employees displaying competence in the lower

rungs are transferred upwards until a stage is reached when they are no longer competent. Often, we unconsciously apply the Peter Principle in our own lives. We believe that as we grow older, our levels of competence diminish. This dread of ageing is all pervasive and is particularly evident when we are at the cusp of the next decade. The 19 year-old feels that he will become old at 20, while his 79 year-old grandfather worries that he will become incompetent at 80.

What does happen is that our bodies experience wear and tear. Though diet and exercise combined with an ability to keep stress at bay do result in a fitter mind and body, we cannot shy away from the truth—that we slow down physically as we age. However, physical deceleration does not necessarily imply mental decay. Ageing, on the contrary, brings valuable experience. For example, after retirement from a long and illustrious career, cricketer Sunil Gavaskar turned into a perceptive commentator. Similarly former cricketer Greg Chappell turned into a coach after an outstanding career as one of Australia’s finest batsmen. Closer home, Jerome, a respected advocate I know,

continues to be professionally relevant in his twilight years. While the day-to-day legal documentation at his office is managed by his son and son-in-law, when it comes to problem solving, Jerome’s advice—gained over 40 years of legal practice—comes in very handy.

Why do youngsters consult senior professors in their college when they do not understand a subject? They do so because the professors are a storehouse of knowledge. The importance of a continuous learning curve cannot be underestimated. The trick is to eagerly expand our knowledge in a field we love. Meena, a tourist guide, who is in her mid-60s, has made it a practice to learn a new word in a foreign language every day. Some silvers are mentally as fit as a fiddle because they do not permit their grey cells to rust. Some solve crossword puzzles; others are avid readers or play scrabble.

As we grow older, we gain in experience but not necessarily in wisdom. I urge all my silver friends to remember that we are wise only if we can learn from our experience. Let’s not look at ageing as the road to mental decay but rather as an avenue to expand our mental horizons.

—Monica Fernandes, Mumbai



**HARNESSING THE GOLDEN YEARS:**  
Fernandes is a prolific freelance writer

## ETERNAL LOVE

**F**or me, it was love at first sight when I first saw my wife in the mid-1950s. Saroj was my junior in school. Though her parents were against our match at first, I was convinced that she was the one for me and managed to win them over in due course of time. I was 20 years old and she was 18 when we married in

1959. After our graduation, Saroj joined a local school as a teacher and I joined the Indian Navy.

Saroj was a warm and supportive companion through the 47 years of our marriage during which we weathered all the ups and downs of life buoyed by mutual trust and understanding and of course our five wonderful children—two sons and three daughters. I retired from the



**UNDYING BOND:** Ahuja with his wife Saroj

Navy in the mid-1980s and Saroj, who was vice-principal in her school, took voluntary retirement in the late '90s. Though she had diabetes, she kept it well under control with appropriate diet and medicines.

In 2006, Saroj slipped and fell while she was at home. We were in Nasik at that time. Though there was no fracture, her right leg was badly swollen. She was asked to wear a cast for three weeks. However, owing to persistent skin irritation and a growing sense of unease, she wanted the cast to be removed after two weeks. The cast came off but the pain was unbearable. We flew down to Mumbai, where our son lived. Before we realised it, gangrene had set in. Saroj's diabetic condition aggravated the infection further. The orthopaedic surgeon who was treating her advised amputation. Though I could not bear the thought of amputation, I consented to the surgery as that was the only way to save my wife. Saroj was furious when she learnt of my decision. After the surgery, her condition got out of control as gangrene had already spread to the rest of her body tissues. Slowly, she slipped into delirium and her speech became incoherent. On 7 February 2007, Saroj passed away after exchanging her last few words with me.

It took me a long time to come to terms with her death. Even now, there are days when I spend hours staring at her photograph and reminiscing about the good old days. I try to keep myself as busy as I can by going on long walks and participating in marathons—both in Mumbai and Bengaluru. I am a member of a senior citizens' group and often go out with friends to watch movies and plays. My children and grandchildren are wonderfully sensitive to my needs and take good care of me. Some of my friends have often suggested that I should marry again to ward off the loneliness. However, I cannot imagine anyone else replacing Saroj. As long as I have her memories, I am not alone.

—Partap Ahuja, Mumbai

## FRIENDS FOR A CAUSE

We have been good friends for a long time. Over the years, whenever we met, we always wondered what we could do to promote Indian culture. Finally, we zeroed in on the idea of a *sanskriti* (culture) club. We wanted our club to serve as a platform for talented women from various backgrounds to showcase and share their creative talents.

In September 1987, we formed a founder group along with other like-minded friends: Lata Bhatia, Saroj Rohit, Leelam Kapadia, Kokila Kakadia and Veena Desai. Today, our club has 150 members. Our meetings, conducted every month, open with a prayer or an inspiring thought that a member sings or reads out. At every meeting, members showcase their talents, which could be either dance, music, handicraft or painting.

Eight years ago, we pooled in our own money and started the Sanskruti Shikhar School—a special school for the mentally challenged. It is a daycare facility open to women of all ages and boys up to the age of 18. We have vehicles to pick up and drop our students and escorts to ensure that they get home safely. We have trained teachers who impart lessons on crafts, computers, home eco-



**DHARIA AND JIVAN:** tapping talent and fostering confidence

nomics and physical education. All members spend time at the school and contribute to day-to-day activities in some way or the other.

We are proud of our school and our humble contribution to society. We hope the future generation of women will make our dream even bigger and better. Interested people can contact us on (0)9391014643.

—Kumud Dharia & Renu Jivan, Hyderabad





Dr Jane

# Barratt

## For a better future:

governments and people need to work towards 'age-friendly' communities

In 2007, the Life Course and Ageing programme within the World Health Organisation (WHO) completed a project that is having a ripple effect globally, gathering momentum and attracting the interest of governments, the private sector and civil society and, most important, senior citizens. *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide*, conceived at the XVIII IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, was developed by the then program director Dr Alexandre Kalache and his colleague Dr Louise Plouffe.

The project focused on the 'lived' experiences of older people—that is, what seniors experience as age-friendly in their daily lives in the community—and involved them as full partners from start to finish. The WHO and their partners consulted with older persons and then with community leaders to identify the major physical and social barriers to active ageing. Each partner used this knowledge to develop, implement and evaluate local action plans to make the environment more age-friendly.

What made this project so empowering was that older people were at the centre of the development of focus groups that informed the WHO, academics and government to understand what an age-friendly environ-

ment 'looked like to them.' The collaborating communities included urban environments on all scales: from large metropolises to rural communities, from some of the oldest cities in the world to the more recently settled.

### The guide towards an age-friendly environment focuses on eight themes or domains:

- Outdoor spaces and buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Civic participation and employment
- Communication and information
- Community and health services

For each domain, a list of checkpoints (*see excerpt later*) are identified to measure just 'how age-friendly' the community in which you live is. Many communities and cities around the world have used the guide as a tool to assess their physical and social environment from the perspective of seniors' needs, before planning community action to address barriers or enhance opportunities in the eight areas of community living.

Because active ageing is a lifelong process, an age-friendly city is not just 'elderly friendly'. Barrier-free buildings and streets enhance the mobility and independence of people with disabilities, young as well as old. Secure neighbourhoods allow children, younger women and older people to confidently venture out to participate in active leisure and social activities. Families experience less stress when their older members have the commu-

nity support and health services they need. The entire community benefits from the participation of older people in volunteer or paid work. Finally, the local economy profits from the patronage of older adults. The operative word in age-friendly social and physical urban settings is 'enablement'.

The column this month gives you an insight into what older people in other cities are working on, in collaboration with civic organisations (such as Harmony for Silvers Foundation) as well as governments and businesses.

### DUNDALK, IRELAND

Dundalk is transforming from a traditional engineering-based economy into a new, knowledge-based centre. As an important urban centre on the economic corridor between Dublin and Belfast, Dundalk is set to grow substantially over the coming years as a result of infrastructure investment in Dundalk's 'gateway status'. Within the ecological, environmental, energy and social sustainability goals that are shaping its current development directions, Dundalk strives to be a really friendly place for people of all ages, and an example for promoting age-friendly communities nationally.

**What's working well** in Dundalk is the introduction of two service brokers (in Irish, *Cúltaca*) whose role is to 'help older people to help themselves'. Operating independently, they are linking older people with services, contributing to the improvement of existing services (e.g. home supports), and fostering the creation of new services (e.g. army-sponsored men's club). The development of an 'aware-

homes' initiative—fusing lifetime adaptable and sustainable housing and neighbourhoods, more responsive and integrated home supports, and inclusive ICT technologies.

### NEW YORK CITY

New York is home to more than 8.2 million people. In 2005, approximately 1.3 million of them were age 60 or older. Nearly half of older New Yorkers are members of an ethnic minority group; one quarter speak English 'less than very well'; women outnumber men by nearly 3 to 2; rates of poverty, disability, and living alone are higher than national averages; and the fastest growing segments are also the poorest: women living alone, ethnic minorities, and those aged 75+.

**What is working well in the age-friendly New York City project** is a new paradigm of planning for older adults by incorporating a vision of age-friendliness into planning across all sectors. Involvement of high-level government representatives has raised the profile of the project and brought new partners to the table. Older New Yorkers are actively involved in the process of going forward. The city has strength that can be built upon and optimised to improve the lives of older people—and all New Yorkers.

### AGE-FRIENDLY MUMBAI OR AGE-FRIENDLY SHANGHAI

Now many readers of *Harmony* may be wondering how Mumbai could become more age-friendly. Mumbai has one of the highest city populations in the world with over 12.6 million residents—there are approximately 811 women to every 1,000 men, mainly because many men with families in rural areas work in the city.

Shanghai has many of the same challenges that Mumbai faces today. Yet there is one distinct difference—it is working towards becoming age-friendly. It is also the largest city in mainland China with an estimated population of 20 million. In Shanghai, the bulk of buildings being construct-

ed today are high-rise apartments of various heights, colours and design. There is now a strong focus by city planners to develop more 'green areas' (public parks) among the apartment complexes to increase the quality of life for Shanghai's residents, quite in accordance to the 'Better City - Better Life' theme of Shanghai's Expo 2010.

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### Excerpt from the WHO checklist for age-friendly cities

#### Outdoor spaces and buildings

- Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels of disability, with non-slip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times.
- Drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections
- Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting, police patrols and community education.
- Public toilets outdoors and indoors are sufficient in number, and clean, well-maintained and accessible.

#### Transportation

- Drivers stop at designated stops and beside the curb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before driving off.
- A voluntary transport service is available where public transportation is too limited.
- Taxis are accessible and affordable, and drivers are helpful.
- Traffic signs and intersections are visible and well-placed.

#### Housing

- Sufficient, affordable housing is available in areas that are close to services and the community.
- Home modification options are available and affordable, and providers understand the needs of older people.
- Public and commercial rental housing is well-maintained and safe.
- Affordable housing for disabled older people, with appropriate services, is provided locally.

### Social participation

- Venues for events are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit and easily reached by public transport.
- Events are held at times convenient for older people.
- Activities and events can be attended alone or with a companion.
- There is consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation.

### Respect and social inclusion

- Older people are regularly consulted by public and commercial services on how to serve them better.
- Older people are visible in the media, and are depicted positively and without stereotyping.
- Schools provide opportunities to learn about ageing, and involve older people in school activities.
- Older people are recognised by the community for their past as well as their present contributions.

### Civic participation and employment

- A range of flexible options for older volunteers is available, with training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs.
- The qualities of older employees are well promoted.
- A range of flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older people to work is promoted.
- Discrimination on the basis of age is forbidden in the hiring, promotion and training of employees.
- Workplaces are adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.

### Communication and information

- A basic, effective communication system reaches community residents of all ages.
- Regular distribution of information is assured and a coordinated, centralised access is provided.

[www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age_friendly_cities_checklist.pdf)

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*Dr Jane Barratt is Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing*



The We Belong team (left); the silvers are as enthusiastic as the children when it comes to playing games (right above); at the birthday party of one of the silvers (below)

# Sunshine ♦ again

We Belong in Bengaluru brings a ray of warmth into the lives of those who had forgotten what it felt like to be loved, reports **Priya N**

**T**en year-old Jyoti and 82 year-old Grace have nothing much in common but for a gnawing sense of abandonment in their lives. Jyoti lives in the Angels Orphanage, and Grace in a home for the elderly run by Dignity Foundation. Both institutions share the same compound on Queen's Road in Bengaluru. However, six months ago, a new, almost alien experience has brought Grace and Jyoti together every weekend: fun. The man behind the sunshine is 26 year-old Kamal Nath who, with his friends, started an informal group called We Belong.

A software engineer at Infosys, Nath first visited the home for the elderly at the insistence of his friend, Chetak Kandaswamy. Kandaswamy, 27, a technology developer at Siemens, had organised an eye camp at the home a year ago. When Nath met the silvers, he was moved by their plight. Many of them were frail and had problems with mobility—their eyes bereft of all hope and happiness. The same evening, when he met the children at the orphanage next door, he was struck by an epiphany. He suddenly realised that the children and the elderly could offer each other what they so desperately craved—love and affection. All they needed was a platform where they could mingle freely with each other. Though the orphanage caretaker Sabeeha was more than willing to organise such an event, Christu Raj, the manager of the home, took some time to warm up to the idea. Nath then approached the chairman of the home, O John, who gave the go-ahead.

"I posted a notice on the bulletin board in my office seeking interested people who could join in the effort," recalls Nath, who received 28 responses the next day; some from friends and some from friends of friends. "The idea was to do whatever we could to bring in a little happiness and laughter in their lonely lives," he adds, candidly admitting that We Belong is nowhere close to being a formal NGO yet.

The first 'official' activity they undertook was whitewashing the walls of the home for the elderly. Electronics giant Sony India donated the money. Though Nath and his friends had hired a man for the job, he did not turn up because of a personal crisis. Eventually the We Belong team ended up painting the walls themselves. "It was a wonderful feeling to be able to make a difference to their lives with our own hands," says Kandaswamy.

While We Belong has about 70 members, weekend events—organised at least once a month—usually have 10 volunteers. Most events comprise board games like carom, singing, dancing (usually put together by the kids) and ball games like pass-the-ball, where the elders are as noisy as the children. Such events apart, members drop by to meet the elderly and the children whenever they are free.

It is evident that both the orphanage and the home—which look like shabby army barracks—are in dire need of funds and extra hands. The orphanage looks after 80 children and the home has 31 silvers. The orphanage has a large hall that









Next on We Belong's agenda is making provisions for proper healthcare and nutrition for the silvers; (above) the childlike enthusiasm on octogenarian Devaraju's face is hard to miss

has been converted into a room for the boys and another mezzanine level room for girls. The hall also doubles up as a dining area and playroom. While the children are friendly and open, the silvers were initially sceptical. Despite their reticence, Nath and his friends persevered on striking a rapport with them, realising that their battered trust could be rebuilt only with time and patience.

Six months on, the barriers are crumbling slowly. "Though some senior citizens at the home are unwell and wish to be left alone, some are very happy when they see us," says 26 year-old Sabeeha. For instance, 80 year-old Devaraju is as boisterous as any of the children and joins enthusiastically in their song-and-dance sessions. Padma, a resident at the home for the past eight years, is almost a surrogate caretaker for the silvers. "I treat Kamal and his friends as if they are my own children," she says. "They are like a breath of fresh air in this lonely place." Raju, another silver who was an affluent contractor earlier, has found a way to get past life's setbacks at the home. He makes the occasional rounds to ensure everything runs smoothly at the weekend events, which are full of good-natured teasing, laughter, jokes and revelry. The silvers have finally found the 'grandchildren' with whom they can share both wisdom and affection.

Though the lack of funds is glaring, the children do get a lot of love and attention. Sabeeha treats them as if they were her own—in fact, her two children live there with her. Most children aren't technically orphans. The parents

of some of them are in prison; some have parents who are abusive or have a drinking problem; and others have been abandoned. "We don't really probe much into the children's backgrounds because they don't like being questioned," says Nath.

Take Sudha, a student in Grade 5 at a local school who lived in a slum nearby. While she refuses to disclose whether she has parents or not, she nods her head vociferously when asked if she likes meeting Nath, Sabeeha and the rest. "I like it here," she says. "They are our friends. I don't feel like going back to where I came from. This is my home now." For 10 year-old Monica, the weekend sessions with the elderly and the We Belong members—Nath, Kandaswamy, Sabeeha and others—are akin to a 'picnic'.

With the carefree optimism of youth, the We Belong team does not brood over funds. "We send emails among our large circle of friends and they usually pitch in with whatever they can," says Nath. "We raise funds as and when we plan an activity." The money is sent to the bank account of any designated member and no questions are asked on the amount donated. For his part, Nath has spent around Rs 2,500 in the past six months. It is money well spent—the youngsters admit that the experience has changed their outlook on life. Now, they prefer to celebrate their birthdays by cutting a cake at the home instead of splurging on a birthday bash at one of the glitzy pubs like they did earlier.

Nath and his friends are now brainstorming on ideas to make the silvers independent and lead more meaningful lives. One tentative idea is to teach them how to make paper bags that could be marketed at shops and malls. They are also aware of the silvers' need for better healthcare and nutrition and are looking for tangible ways to address this. As for the intangibles, they have given the silvers a reason to smile. As octogenarian Grace says, "My son does come to meet me sometimes. But even then, sometimes it gets a bit lonely here. Every time these youngsters come over, I am filled with joy."

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# A PATRIOT speaks

The country's oldest surviving freedom fighter Satyavati Devi looks back on her life with Nitika Bajpayee

“How do I look?” counters Satyavati Devi when you ask her about her health. The centenarian's soft, tremulous voice is at odds with her tempestuous past—that of a passionate, sloganeering freedom fighter. Quaver apart, her voice is filled with conviction, just like her unflinching gaze. “Life was never a bed of roses... only because I didn't want it to be one,” says the New Delhi-based 104 year-old, who decided to join the freedom movement when she was just eight.

Born in Punjab, she has fond memories of her childhood. “I was the most pampered child though I had six siblings.” Till she turned 12, she lived with her maternal grandmother in Kalanor in Haryana, where she learned to speak fluent Gurmukhi. At a time when girls were not expected to go to school, Satyavati was very keen on an education. Her father, who was always supportive of her dreams, enrolled her in Kanya Maha Vidyalaya in Jalandhar, where she learnt Sanskrit, Urdu, Hindi and English.

In Satyavati's view, her years in school changed her forever. The school adhered to Gandhian philosophies and all teachers and students wore only khadi. “Though we were taught sewing, drawing and embroidery, I was most fascinated by the *charkha* [spinning wheel],” she says with a smile. Satyavati belonged to an era when Indian history was not confined to schoolbooks—it was in the making

all around her. As she read about the 1857 mutiny, she was also witness to the many atrocities perpetrated by the British. “Women were easy targets for British officers then, as they were physically more vulnerable,” reminisces the centenarian. “We always used to move around in groups of four or five.” Infuriated by the injustices around her, she joined the freedom movement against the backdrop of the volatile Swadeshi movement—a strategy that sought to topple the British empire by boycotting British products and encouraging the use of indigenous goods.

“Flag hoisting was taboo in those days, but we used to hoist the flag in sheer defiance,” says Satyavati. Though it has been 62 years since India broke free of the shackles of the British Raj, for her the years have only vivified her memories. And she has many: sheltering the great revolutionary Bhagat Singh in her house and helping him escape from jail; sending *rakhi* to Lala Lajpat Rai when he was jailed in Dharamshala; and leading processions against the British. “One of my fellow students, Sushila Devi, died fighting against the British,” says Satyavati, her eyes shimmering with pride.

After matriculation, Satyavati married Lala Achint Ram, a medical student from an affluent family who shared her patriotic zeal. Achint Ram, who later became a successful doctor, gave up his flourishing practice and his wealth to join the movement. “When Gandhi came to our house and asked

my husband to join the freedom struggle, my husband burnt over 30 suits and shoes as a mark of solidarity,” she recalls. After Independence, Achint Ram became a prominent Congress leader and member of the Constituent Assembly. However, the couple had to endure many adversities before the sun rose on independent India.





Courtesy: Satyavati Devi

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Though it has been 62 years since India broke free of the shackles of the British Raj, for Satyavati the years have only vivified her memories. And she has many: sheltering the great revolutionary Bhagat Singh in her house and helping him escape from jail; sending *rakhi* to Lala Lajpat Rai when he was jailed in Dharamshala; and leading processions against the British

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"Youngsters were so courageous and spirited then. We never hankered for money or power, but these days that's all that matters. We used to address India as Bharat and not Hindustan. Now everything has changed."



Satyavati's close ties with Indian politics were cemented further when her son Krishna Kant became vice-president of India. Seen here (seated) with former PM late P V Narasimha Rao (left) and Janaki Venkataraman, wife of former president R Venkataraman (right)

When Achint Ram was arrested during the Quit India movement, Satyavati shifted to her father-in-law's house in Kot Mohammed Khan village in Amritsar with her two daughters, Nirmala and Subhadra, and son Krishan Kant. She continued to participate in protest marches and was even jailed on many occasions, once with four year-old Subhadra and seven year-old Nirmala. She has no regrets though. "In jail, we women used to pile tables and cots on top of one another and give fiery speeches against the British," she says, a hint of mirth in her voice. "We even sang patriotic songs to the vexation of the officers." While jailed in Lahore for participating in the Quit India movement, she teamed up with other female inmates and even hoisted the flag in their prison cell. Satyavati and her husband were sentenced to three years' imprisonment for non-violent protests during the Quit India movement. Though she was often deprived of food and water for such defiance, the steely silver dismisses the torture casually: "We didn't care. Independence was all that mattered."

Freedom, when it finally arrived, tiptoed past Satyavati. She was at Lajpat Bhawan in Lahore cooking meals for hundreds of displaced women and children who had gathered there for shelter. "In a way, it was both exciting and strange as I was supremely happy yet so far removed from the jubilation," she recalls. Satyavati still can't bear to recount the agonies of Partition. The family moved to India in 1948. "We survived and came back," is all that she has to say.

While Achint Ram passed away in 1961, their son Krishan Kant went on to become the vice-president of India in 1997. Krishan Kant's wife Suman, a social worker and founder of Mahila Dakshata Samiti who lives with Satyavati, is in awe of her mother-in-law. "I am proud to be part of a family that truly believes in simple living and high thinking."

Satyavati continued to spin the *charkha* till two years ago when she had to undergo a hip replacement surgery. She still wears khadi. Though her eyesight is weak, she tries to read

newspapers and magazines and continues to keep a close watch on current affairs. Along with her daughter Subhadra, 80, she recently launched the book *The Illustrated History of the Freedom Struggle* authored by Pavan K Varma at the lawns of her residence on Krishna Menon Marg in New Delhi. The book, published by Penguin, features important events and moments of the Indian freedom struggle.

Though she is immensely proud of her country, she does not have a high opinion of Indian politics as it is today. "There are no great leaders left anymore," she says. Nor is she happy with the way Indian society and culture have evolved after Independence. She is dismayed by the blatant display of materialism and consumerism. "Youngsters were so courageous and high spirited then. We never hankered for money or power, but these days that's all that matters. We used to address India as Bharat and not Hindustan. 'Bharat' signifies the land blessed by the first ray of the *bhaskar* (sun). Now everything has changed."



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# An Englishman in New Delhi

*With a racy, new political thriller on the stands, another book on Indian culture and unity out this fall, and a five-year marriage that still inspires him, economist Meghnad Desai continues to reinvent himself in his professional and personal life. **Arati Rajan Menon** caught up with him on a recent visit to India to find out just why “every day is an event” for the Lord.*







**M**y full title is actually The Right Honourable Professor Meghnad the Lord Desai.” You want to chuckle when he says this but one look at his earnest face stops you in your tracks. There’s not a trace of pomposity in Meghnad Jagdishchandra Desai’s expression but a palpable sense of pride in what he has accomplished—a lad from Baroda who went on to become a leading economist in Britain and established the Centre for the Study of Global Governance at the London School of Economics; a Labour politician who has been a member of the House of Lords since 1991; and an author whose oeuvre encompasses economics, Marxism, Hindi cinema, Ezra Pound and, now, a political thriller centred on 10 Downing Street.

That apart, the jovial 69 year-old is also a smitten husband—five years ago, he married author-editor Kishwar Ahluwalia, 52, after a whirlwind romance that doesn’t seem to have faded. “My wife will kill me if I look sloppy,” he says, as he gamely changes from a *kurta* to a suit and back again for our photoshoot at their colourful home in Delhi’s Safdarjang Enclave that positively beams with contemporary art, film posters and Tanjore paintings, bric-a-brac of pottery, crystal and porcelain, and books, heaps of them. He sings the whole time—*Arre yaar meri tum bhi ho ghazab, ghunghat to zara kholo*—softly at first and then out loud following a gentle nudge. “I even sang to Kishwar in the registry office in London when we got married,” he says. “I’m happy and I sing.” Today, life for Lord Desai is a lilting tune.

#### IN HIS WORDS

**I have a brand new existence—you could call it Meghnad Desai Version 2.** A few years ago, I decided that I wanted to indulge my passions. I wrote a book on Dilip Kumar [*Nehru’s Hero: Dilip Kumar in the life of India*; Roli, 2004] and met my wife in the process. Life became very interesting. Then I retired from the London School of Economics [LSE] and resigned from many of the committees I was chairing. Since then, life has become even more fun—every day is an event.

**I was absolutely struck when I met Kishwar.** She was editing my book on Dilip Kumar and we met in Delhi. I had been single for eight years following a 25-year marriage [to economist Gail Wilson]. I had three British children in their 30s who did their own thing. She had two children and was virtually estranged from her husband. I had no idea about ‘Indian romancing’ so the only way to keep in touch with each other was to promise to do more books together! When I went back to Britain, we started talking on the mobile phone everyday, two or three times a day. One day she told me, “I will never have an affair with you.” I asked her to marry me instead. There was no reason for us to take such a step—it was a risk—except that we really, really, wanted to be together.

**Writing *Dead on Time* was a lark.** I wanted to write a breezy airport novel rather than an entry for a literary prize. It is very much an insider’s book set in Westminster, a milieu I’m comfortable with, with characters you think you recognise until they surprise you. It is both real and surreal with action, sex, the works. People ask me why I didn’t write about Indian politics but I don’t know the world of Indian politics the same way.

**I don’t deny my Indianness but refuse to wear it like a badge.** I live in London but I am in India from August to September and mid-November to mid-January every year. When in India, I’m allowed to be British, so I can be rude—and because I am Indian, I’m not accused of racism. When I’m in Britain, I’m completely British. I am comfortable in my skin and have never been regarded as an outsider. Perhaps that is because the academic com-





My mind and body are always ticking overtime. Every day for me is a crowded day. I find it amazing how so many people my age spend entire days just sitting down and reminiscing, reliving old times. I would rather be on my feet, experiencing new moments. Though I feel the aches and pains of my age, my mental faculties remain unimpaired. I actually feel more excited and charged up about life. I want to direct a film and learn how to paint

munity is so international in character. I must also credit my student days in Bombay in the 1950s, where I completed my master's. Unlike a city like Calcutta, where one language had primacy, Bombay was much more sophisticated. For a lad from Baroda, the cosmopolitan character of the city was a revelation. I went on to study at the University of Pennsylvania after which I began working at the LSE.

**I've been described as some sort of wunderkind because I had a PhD at 23.** I went to secondary school at the age of five; I was a matriculate at 14; an honours student before I was 18 and got a master's degree before turning 20. People in Britain are always amazed at this sort of thing but for us it was normal. My parents always had great expectations from me. For them, my education was a badge of pride. In those days, there were no consumer durables to show off so the children's grades had to be on display.

**For people in my generation, our sexual awakening was informed by cinema.** It reflected all our realities, dreams, desires and fears. I remember how hard I would try to get my hair to look like Dilip Kumar's! With my fascination for Bollywood, I'm just mapping my own youth. My real knowledge of Hindi cinema is only from the 1930 to the early 1960s though; after that it all gets a little flaky. I have seen a lot of new films, like *Om Shanti Om* and *Chak De* and was mildly entertained. But they didn't move me. Also, with cinema being served up to us on DVDs and VCDs, it is no longer the

raw, primary, heady experience we experienced as youngsters.

**I've seen the energy of youth from both sides—as a student in the US and as faculty in the LSE.** The 1960s were times of rebellion and social churn in the West with student protests everywhere [over issues such as civil rights, the Vietnam War]. I remained acutely conscious of the dividing line between the staff and students, refusing to become a mouthpiece for the students, but the ideas of the time undoubtedly seeped into my work.

I began with econometrics [applying statistical methods to the study of economic principles], moved on to Marx and then eventually to development economics, finding common ground with fellow economists like Amartya Sen. Over time, my view of economics became very broad and inclusive. And though I never lost the rigour of technical economics, my purpose became to map the unstable nature of capitalism and find policy solutions to issues of development.

**Nehruvian socialism never focused on essentials like education or health, which are true indicators of development.** If the state is not able to address these issues, we should let the private sector do it. For too long, the state has grabbed hold of these sectors because it has offered them leverage. Now, the stranglehold is being loosened. It's time for the state to be, well, statesmanlike and let the job get done.

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***Marx's Revenge: The Resurgence of Capitalism and the Death of Statist Socialism; 2002***

A provocative study of Marxism that amplifies the death knell of democratic socialism and announces the resurrection of capitalism, all fuelled by globalisation.

***Nehru's Hero: Dilip Kumar in The Life of India; 2004***

An unusual examination of Nehruvian ideals through the lens of Indian cinema. Desai draws incisive parallels between the machismo and secularism espoused in films of Dilip Kumar and the hope and idealism that pervaded the Nehruvian period.

***Dead on Time; 2009***

A whodunit spun around contemporary British politics spiced up with a peek-a-boo of real-life characters.

***Rediscovery of India; expected Fall 2009***

A book on Indian culture and unity.



**In India, our compassion for the poor is often laced with contempt.**

We have a very paternalistic view where we think they are mindless children who would fritter away any money we give them. That's a mistake—they would do what's best for them if we just gave them a chance. We need to give them the right incentives, remove obstacles from their path and then get out of the way. We don't need a prescriptive policy but a collaborative one that vests power in the people.

**Our industrious, talented and adaptable workforce will be the driver of modern India.**

Sixty-five per cent of our population is under 35 years of age. As Nandan Nilekani has observed, we are the only large economy in the world now with a hump of young people—let's focus on them. The youth don't remember Partition. That's why our political leadership should stop harping on things like the Jinnah controversy, for example. Why the hell does it matter now? These are irrelevancies for young India.

**There were two major takeaways from the recent elections.**

The first was the intelligence of the voter, who looked at development and stability rather than caste or religion. The second was that so many perennial prime ministers in waiting—like Advani, Mulayam, Lalu, Arjun Singh and Pranab Mukherjee—were finally taken out of the reckoning. Now, of course, the UPA has no excuse but to deliver. If not everything they promised, at least a reasonable amount.

**The BJP lost its cool on terrorism with Malegaon.**

That was its downfall. All terrorism is terrorism; you can't differentiate between the good and the bad sort. If you do, you lose your moral standing. Religion is a negative identifier. The BJP tried to use religion to bring the Hindus together. It failed to do that. It only helped divide them against the Muslims. Indeed, the fact that Muslims are still not completely safe in India even after 60 years of

independence is a major failure of Indian society. This election, though, has created a glimmer of hope in that regard.

**My next book, *Rediscovery of India*, views Indian politics through the prism of nationhood.**

There is actually no single, acceptable theory as to why we are a nation. Different nationalisms have asserted themselves in India but they remain within a framework. In fact, multiple nationhoods are negotiated and created every day within this rather ephemeral framework. So is India really a nation? What are the ties that really bind us? And how does our interaction with the world outside define our identity? I want to challenge people to think about these critical issues. I want to raise questions with this book, not dole out answers.

**I have written a play called *Aaj* but nobody likes it!**

It's about a female actor who makes one film, which is a huge hit, and then gives it up to get married and settle down to a life of anonymity while her director goes on to many successful films and much fame. Eventually, the tables are turned when she comes back in the news owing to a revival of her film while the director is forced to take shelter in her house. It's a rather Ibsenesque work with one final twist. Unfortunately, it's all a bit old-fashioned so perhaps I need to jazz it up.

**My mind as well as my body are always ticking overtime.**

Every day for me is a crowded day. I find it amazing how so many people my age spend entire days just sitting down and reminiscing, reliving old times. I'd rather be on my feet, experiencing new moments. Though I feel the aches and pains of age, my mental faculties remain unimpaired. I actually feel more excited and charged up about life. I want to direct a film and learn how to paint—I was terrible at it as a child. I also have my books to write and memories to create with Kishwar.



**AN INSIDE JOB**

**DEAD ON TIME**

By Meghnad Desai

HarperCollins; Rs 399; 238 pages

In 2007, British novelist Robert Harris gave us *The Ghost*, about a ghost-writer hired to write the memoirs of a recently retired British prime minister—the book was critically acclaimed for being a thinly veiled attack on the activities of Tony Blair and his cronies. At first glance, *Dead on Time* seems to take a leaf from the same page. The cast of characters is familiar enough: Harry White, a charismatic, young PM; his wife Elisabeth (Lisa) who has her own flourishing career; Oliver, the PM's spin doctor; the patrician Terence Harcourt, secretary of state for Europe whose sexual peccadilloes will prove his undoing; and Matt Drummond, the media baron who built his empire with his wife and then replaced her in his bed and business with a sexy and scheming Asian vixen. But just when you think you have it all figured out, Desai mixes it all up rather delightfully. The action heats up when Drummond commands one of his editors to run compromising pictures of Harcourt in his paper, even as White heads for Scotland, for the Old Firm football game between traditional rivals Rangers and Celtic, where murder lurks in the wings. By the end of it all, no one plays true to type anymore. As Desai tells us, this is “an insider's book”. The Lord knows first-hand the intrigue of Westminster, the indulgences of the powerful, the venality of sycophants and the immorality of media—he uses it all to concoct a racy read that's both spicy and savvy.

—Arati Rajan Menon



## Monsoon FEAST

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**H**ere's a feast that will never tamper with your diet, will make both vegetarians and non-vegetarians happy and bring forgotten tastes of rich spices and condiments alive. I work around it for family and guests in winters. But the heat has settled and the nip of early monsoon should be as good an occasion.

### Sadabahar Bharawa Mirch

(Stuffed capsicum)

**Preparation time:** 30 minutes

**Cooking time:** 10 minutes

**Serves:** 2

#### INGREDIENTS:

- Sweet bell peppers (capsicum): 2 (one red and one yellow); medium sized
- Button mushrooms: 100 gm
- Broccoli: 1 small floret
- Baby corn: 4 pieces
- A bay leaf
- Cloves: 2
- Brown cardamoms: 2
- Whole dried red chilli: 1; shredded after seeding
- Small onion: 1; finely chopped
- Garlic: 2 cloves
- Ginger-garlic paste: 1 tsp
- Meat *masala/tandoori masala/garam masala*
- Small pinch of low sodium salt
- Oil: 1tsp

#### METHOD

Wash and wipe the bell peppers clean, slice off the tops with a sharp knife and remove cores. Bring to boil about two cups of water in a pan and blanch the mushrooms, baby corn and broccoli in it for a minute, drain and keep aside. Mince coarsely when cool. Heat oil in a non-stick pan, add bay leaf and whole spices. When these begin to change colour, add onions and stir-fry till translucent. Add garlic-ginger paste and stir-fry for about 30 seconds; add the vegetable mince along with the powdered spices and salt, stir briskly for a minute, reduce heat and simmer till excess water evaporates. Remove the bay leaf and other whole spices. Pack the hollowed bell peppers with equal measures of the mince. Sprinkle shredded red chillies on top.



#### FRESH FACTS

Bell pepper (capsicum) is rich in carotenoids, Vitamin A and Vitamin C, and has more than a few health benefits. It stimulates digestion; lowers triglycerides; speeds up metabolism and also aids cardiovascular fitness. Pack one into your daily diet.



# Baigani Katli Churanwali

(On base of brown bread)

**Preparation time:** 10 minutes

**Cooking time:** 15 minutes

**Serves:** 4

## INGREDIENTS

- One large, round eggplant (brinjal)
- Brown bread: 6-8 slices; cut round
- Cumin powder: ½ tsp; freshly ground after dry-roasting on hot griddle
- Coriander seeds: ½ tsp; coarsely pounded after dry-roasting on hot griddle
- Pepper powder: ½ tsp
- *Amchur* powder: ½ tsp
- Dried ginger powder; ½ tsp
- Clove powder: ¼ tsp
- Cardamom powder: ¼ tsp
- Cinnamon powder: ¼ tsp
- Dried mint: ¼ tsp; crushed to powder

- Low sodium salt: ¼ tsp

- Oil: 1tsp

## METHOD

Wash and slice the eggplant into ½-inch-thick rounds. Sprinkle salt and keep aside. Apply oil to a non-stick pan to form a thin film of oil. Heat the pan and place the eggplant slices on it. Mix the powdered coriander, cumin and *amchur* and add to the vegetable. Cook on medium heat for about five minutes, turning once in between, pressing lightly with a wooden spatula. Remove and place each round slice of grilled eggplant on a round base of brown bread. Sprinkle aromatic clove, cinnamon, cardamom, ginger and mint powders. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint and enjoy hot or cold.



## FRESH FACTS

Eggplant, or brinjal, also known as poor man's meat, strengthens the body's defence against hypertension and diabetes. It is also an anti-flatulent and when roasted with a dash of salt, it can be an inexpensive home remedy for excessive phlegm.







## Murgh Shahjehani

(Creamy chicken)

**Preparation time:** 50 minutes

**Cooking time:** 10 minutes

**Serves:** 2

### INGREDIENTS

- Chicken breasts: 350 gm
- Thick yogurt: 100 ml
- Garlic paste: 1 tsp
- Ginger paste: 1 tsp
- Yellow chilli powder: 1 tsp
- Dried ginger powder: 1 tsp
- Green chilli paste: 1 tsp; ground after deseeding
- Turmeric powder: ¼ tsp
- White pepper powder: ¼ tsp
- Juice of one lime
- Raisins: 1 tbsp
- Pistachio nuts: 1 tsp
- Almond kernels: 8; soaked in water, skinned and slivered
- Oil: 3 tbsp
- Neutralite: 1 tbsp
- A pinch of low sodium salt

### METHOD

Wash and trim the chicken. Make deep gashes with a sharp knife. Blend ginger-garlic and green chilli paste with salt and all the powdered spices to make a marinade. Rub this well on to the chicken ensuring that the gashes are filled up too. Distribute the raisins, pistachio and almonds evenly in the 'pockets' formed by the gashes. Sprinkle lime juice and keep aside for 45 minutes.

Heat oil and Neutralite in a non-stick pan, place the chicken breasts on it and grill for about eight minutes, turning once in between pressing gently with a wooden spatula. Baste regularly with the remaining marinade.

### FRESH FACTS

Though it can play havoc with your breath, garlic is worth befriending for its wonderful qualities. It helps reduce the deposition of cholesterol on vascular walls and regulates blood sugar levels. It is also used by many to expel intestinal worms.







Vilas Kalgutkar; FOOD STYLING: Anita Sami

## Phirnee Firdausi

(Curd with a royal twist)

**Preparation time:** 10 minutes

**Serves:** 2

### INGREDIENTS

- Curd: 100 ml
- *Chhena*: 50 ml
- Skimmed milk powder: 1 tsp
- Unsweetened *rabri* (home-made by boiling milk on low heat till it is one-fourth its original volume): ½ cup
- Almond kernels: 20; soaked in water overnight and de-skinned
- Pistachios: 5
- Sugar-free sweetener (powder): ½ tsp

- *Kewra jal*: ½ tsp
- Rose petals for garnish

### METHOD

Whisk the *dahi*, *chenna*, *rabri* and skimmed milk powder with sugar-free sweetener. Slice almonds into thin slivers. Place almond slivers in a bowl, pour whisked yogurt on top and mix well. Transfer to earthenware/clay *shikora*. Sprinkle *kewra jal* on top. Garnish with rose petals and pistachios.

### FRESH FACTS

According to Ayurveda, almonds boost intellectual power and longevity. They are a rich source of Vitamin E and monounsaturated fat, which is good for your heart. In many cultures, almond oil is widely used for its skin-softening properties.





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POGLYCAEMIA OR LOW GLUCOSE LEVEL, STIMULANT LIKE  
COFFEE, IT IS ALSO A **RISK** FACTOR FOR HYPERTENSION,  
TYPE 2 DIABETES, **HEART ATTACK**, STROKE, **MEMORY**

**LOSS** AND OTHERS. GYMMING, DOING SQUATS, WALKING

VIGOR- OUSLY OR JOGGING EXERTS MORE STRAIN

ON THE KNEES AND THERE IS RESULTANT **PAIN**.

AFTER THE AGE OF 50, **DEGENERATIVE** **CHANGES**

TAKE PLACE, PARTICULARLY IN WEIGHT-

BEARING JOINTS, **EXCESSIVE WALK-** ING,

CLIMBING STAIRS (ESPECIALLY DOWN), USING

INDIAN- STYLE TOILETS, GETTING UP FROM

FLOOR OR A SQUATTING POSITION MAY CAUSE PAIN

IN THE JOINTS—A TYPICAL **SYMPTOM** OF OS

THRITIS, **SIGNALS**, BODY, FITNESS, FEELING FA- TI

EX- HAUSTED OR SLEEP-DEPRIVED, SUBTLE

SIGNS, EXERCISE REGIME, ENERGY, **DIET PLAN**,

BAL- ANCED DIET, SIX TO EIGHT GLASSES OF

WATER

ANXI- ETY, INADEQUATE SLEEP AND DEPRESSION,

HYPERTEN- SION, ARTHRITIS, SLEEP **DISORDERS**, CAR-

DIOVASCU- LAR SYMPTOMS, 1,500 CALORIES WITH ABOUT

60-70 GM OF PROTEIN DAILY, **RUMBLING STOMACH**,

**SLIGHT HEADACHE**, HYPOGLYCAEMIA

OR LOW GLUCOSE LEVEL, STIMULANT

LIKE COFFEE, IT IS ALSO A RISK

FACTOR FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES, HEART

ATTACK, **STROKE**, MEMORY LOSS

AND OTHERS, **GYMMING**, DOING

SQUATS, WALK- ING VIGOROUSLY

OR JOGGING EXERTS MORE

STRAIN ON THE KNEES AND

THERE IS RE- SULTANT PAIN,

AFTER THE **AGE OF 50**, DE-

GENERATIVE CHANGES TAKE

PLACE, PAR- TICULARLY IN

BEARING EXCESSIVE

**JOINTS**, **CLIMBING**

WALKING, (ESPECIALLY

STAIRS, ING INDIAN-

DOWN), US- TOILETS,

STYLE GETTING UP FROM THE

FLOOR OR A SQUATTING

POSITION MAY CAUSE

PAIN IN THE **JOINTS**—A

TYPICAL SYMPTOM OF

OSTEOAR- THRITIS,

SIGNALS, BODY, FEELI

**FITNESS**, NG FAT IGUED,

EXHA ED OR UST

ED OR SLEE

P-DE PRI

VED, SUB-

TLE **SIGNS**,

EXER- CISE

REGIME, ENERGY

LEVELS OF HUMAN

# SIGN LANGUAGE

SIGNALS GIVEN OUT BY THE BODY MAY INDICATE A HEALTH PROBLEM. LEARN TO READ THEM ACCURATELY, SAYS ANJANA JHA

Over the course of a lifetime, the body functions at different levels of fitness. Its fine tuning changes with age, and health problems begin to manifest themselves as external signals faster than when you were younger. So if you're feeling fatigued or sleep-deprived, do not consciously ignore these as age-related problems. These subtle signs given out by your body are actually health alerts and should not be knowingly disregarded, however insignificant.



## ENERGY

If you are often exhausted and feel your energy levels have evaporated, **Dr P Raghurami Reddy**, consultant psychiatrist at Asha Hospital in Hyderabad, has some answers.

### Should you stop your exercise regime?

A regular workout helps boost energy and discontinuing it is not the solution. You should check whether the amount of exercise is too much or if the implementation is incorrect as this can lead to depletion of energy reserves. Warming up is an activation technique and should always precede exercise sessions. Exercise regimes should also not be mechanically regular. A feeling of exhaustion could be the body's way of communicating that a change in routine is desirable.

### Should you change your diet plan?

A healthy body needs a balanced diet of cooked and uncooked food including salads, fruits and sprouts. Rather than reducing food intake, eat five or six times



**TIP**

**Balance a good diet with healthy lifestyle for maximum energy.**

a day. This not only provides energy to the body at frequent intervals but avoids overeating at mealtimes. Drinking less than six to eight glasses of water every day can also make you feel exhausted.

### Should you go for a health check-up?

A periodic check-up is advisable for silvers but unnecessary investigations should be avoided. Though fall in energy levels is common with age, a bigger slump may be because of physical or psychological conditions. A feeling of exhaustion may result from excessive stress, anxiety, inadequate sleep and depression as much as over-exertion and lack of relaxation. Depleted energy may also signal health issues like hypertension and diabetes.

## ENERGY SLUMP

Researchers from Columbia University Medical Centre reveal that almost one out of 5 silvers spend most of the day sitting on the sofa because of lack of energy. During the survey, over 2,100 participants aged between 65 and 104 years answered queries regarding energy levels. Though common in the elderly, lack of energy or anergia may be health-related—people classified as anergic reported arthritis, sleep disorders, cardiovascular symptoms and other problems.

## HUNGER

If you are on a diet regime and feel hungry frequently, **Priti Vijay**, senior dietician at Max Heart and Vascular Institute, New Delhi, has some answers.

### Should you stick to your diet and not eat anything else?

Three proper meals comprising breakfast, lunch and dinner plus light snacks during mid-morning and evening are recommended for silvers. They should ideally have about 1,500 calories with about 60-70 gm of protein daily. Unfortunately, many seniors tend to have erratic meals or skip meals altogether on some pretext or the other. If a diet re-



gime is being followed, there may be hunger signals like a rumbling stomach or slight headache if the quantity is not adequate. Junk food should be diligently avoided but salad, fruits and easily digested snacks should be eaten when you feel hungry.

### Should you eat something to avoid overindulging later?

Fruits for the mid-morning break and toast, biscuits or roasted *chana* and *besan chilla* in the evening are nutritious and filling. Depriving yourself can result in overindulging later with the wrong foods.

### Should you check if there's a medical explanation for your increased appetite?

It is advisable to check whether increased hunger is owing to any medical reason. Hunger pangs may be because of hypoglycaemia or low glucose level in non-diabetics; lower blood sugar levels also spike hunger in diabetics.

**Include foods in your diet that give a sense of fullness.**

**TIP**

## OUTSMARTING HUNGER PANGS

Modifying emulsifiers and stabilisers—common additives that stop fat and water from separating in processed food—can double the time for food to leave the stomach and twice as long for people to be hungry again. Researchers at Institute of Food Research and Nottingham University show that food remains longer in the stomach when water stays mixed with the oil. A stable emulsion meal makes you feel fuller and less hungry.

## SLEEP

If you tend to feel unusually sleepy during the day, **Dr S Ramanathan Iyer**, consultant physician and consultant Sleep Medicine at Dr LH Hiranandani Hospital, Powai, has some answers.

### Should you start taking afternoon naps?

With age, sleep is light and likely to be disturbed because of several reasons. Anxiety and worry as well as a disorder like snoring can result in lack of proper sleep. This makes us feel physically and mentally tired rather than fresh in the morning. Any deprivation in the quantity or quality of sleep is reflected by a sense of sleepiness during the day. Personal sleep cycles have individual variations and silvers who need an afternoon nap should take one as it refreshes the brain. Micro sleep is fairly common (and not alarming) with the elderly—nodding off to sleep while reading, and waking up when the newspaper or book falls.

**TIP**

Solving puzzles or reading an exciting book will help you stay awake.

### Should you have a stimulant every time you feel sleepy?

Stimulants are alerting agents and, if taken late in the evening, can have an insomniac effect till night. However, a stimulant like coffee is advisable when it is necessary to avoid feeling sleepy while driving or to complete an important task that can't wait.

### Should you check whether the change in your sleep pattern is health-related?

There might be a sleep complaint waiting to be detected. Obstructive sleep apnoea is a common condition that is mainly manifested by snoring and daytime sleepiness. Because breathing is obstructed in the upper airway owing to lack of muscle tone, sleep is disturbed. Prevalence of this problem increases with advancing age. It is also a risk factor for hypertension, type 2 diabetes, heart attack, stroke, memory loss and others.

#### SLEEP TALK

Contradicting conventional theory, scientists at Washington State University believe there is no control centre in the brain dictating time to sleep. Even while awake, you can feel drowsy and switch into a sleep state when independent groups of brain cells become fatigued. You eventually doze when a threshold number of such groups switches. This explains sleepwalking and sleep inertia (the sluggish feeling upon waking up in the morning).

**PAIN**

If any of your joints start hurting, **Dr J P Jain**, orthopaedic and joint replacement surgeon at Jagjivan Ram Hospital in Mumbai, has some answers.

### Should you ensure that the pain is not because of a new exercise?

Sudden pain in the joints is unlikely because of normal or

regular exercise. There is pain if a particular weight-bearing joint is stressed or physically over-exercised. For instance, gymming, doing squats, walking vigorously or jogging exerts more strain on the knees and there is resultant pain. It's advisable to consult a trainer to check if the exercise routine is incorrect. Sudden multi-joint pains are not likely to be exercise-related.

### Should you take rest and avoid unnecessary movement?

If the pain is acute, the exercise should be stopped for a couple of days till it reduces automatically. However, normal activities should continue. Moderate movement like walking will help recovery without aggravating the pain.

### Should you check if the pain is the beginning of an age-related condition?

After the age of 50, degenerative changes take place, particularly in weight-bearing joints. The body begins to give out signals that should be recognised and not ignored. Excessive walking, climbing stairs (especially down), using Indian-style toilets, getting up from the floor or a squatting position may cause pain in the joints—a typical symptom of osteoarthritis. However, this kind of pain is gradual and not sudden. Other pain-inducing conditions like gout can be ruled out with blood tests to check uric acid level.

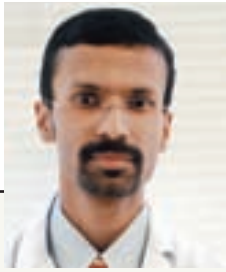


Keep quick-fix remedies like a hot water bottle and pain-relief sprays handy.

**TIP**

#### PLAIN BELIEF?

Despite extensive use of topical analgesic creams to alleviate muscular and joint pains, there is increasing doubt whether they actually work. Recent studies have found only limited evidence regarding the effectiveness of over-the-counter analgesic balms. Though minimal and inconclusive research has discouraged doctors at Mayo Clinic's Sports Medicine Centre in Minnesota from either supporting or refuting their efficacy, some doctors suggest users could benefit from a placebo effect.



# BOWEL WOES

Chronic constipation or diarrhoea can often result in haemorrhoids, says **Dr Atul N C Peters**

**I have been suffering from constipation for several years. After a recent check-up, my doctor told me that I have haemorrhoids. Is this common with ageing?**

Haemorrhoids can occur in individuals in any age group—even younger people. However, the problem is more common in people aged around 46 to 65 years.

**What exactly are haemorrhoids? What causes them?**

There are several groups of veins that surround the rectum and anus (or lower rectum). One group is known as internal haemorrhoidal veins, while the other is known as external haemorrhoidal veins. Haemorrhoids, also known as piles, are swollen and inflamed veins. The underlying cause of haemorrhoids is increased pressure within these veins and is often caused by chronic constipation or straining during bowel movement.

**What are the risk factors that can lead to haemorrhoids?**

A number of conditions can increase pressure within the haemorrhoidal veins. While they may not be the direct cause, they are considered risk factors—conditions or behaviours that increase your chances of getting a certain disease. It does not mean that everyone with these conditions will develop haemorrhoids, but the chances are higher.

Risk factors include:

- Straining during bowel movement,

or other poor bowel habits such as sitting for long periods

- Sitting or standing for long periods of time
- Chronic constipation or diarrhoea
- Ageing
- Pregnancy
- Anal intercourse
- Obesity

**What are the symptoms of haemorrhoids?**

Not everyone with haemorrhoids experiences symptoms. However, there are several factors that can determine specific symptoms in a person. The most common symptom of internal haemorrhoids is bright-red blood covering the stool, on toilet paper or in the toilet bowl. Other symptoms include a sense of vague anal discomfort and feeling of fullness after a bowel movement.

Pain is not a common symptom of internal haemorrhoids. However, an internal haemorrhoid may protrude through the anus outside the body, becoming irritated and painful. This is known as a prolapsed haemorrhoid.

External haemorrhoids are usually painless and don't bleed. They may cause itching and dryness around the anal region.

**What are the treatment options?**

Treatment usually depends upon the degree and type of haemorrhoids. Banding and cryotherapy (freezing

skin lesions) have been largely given up owing to high complications. Internal haemorrhoids in early stages can be treated with a high fibre diet to avoid constipation. Injection sclerotherapy where certain chemicals are injected around the veins to shrink them is another option. Newer methods to deal with the problem are MIPH or PPH—a minimally invasive procedure for haemorrhoids or procedure for prolapse and haemorrhoids, also commonly known as stapled haemorrhoidectomy.

**Does rectal bleeding always indicate haemorrhoids?**

No. Though haemorrhoids may be a common diagnosis for rectal bleeding, all patients with this symptom should be evaluated by a surgeon to rule out other causes like fissures, and anal and rectal polyps. People over 40 should also get a screening colonoscopy to rule out rectal or colonic cancers, especially if they have a family history.

## AVOID HAEMORRHOIDS

- Eat plenty of fibre (roughage) and cut down on refined and processed food
- Ensure adequate fluid intake (six to eight glasses of water a day)
- Have a bulking agent like psyllium seed husks (*isabgol*) to maintain soft bowel movement
- Avoid delaying or preventing bowel movement when there is an urge
- Exercise regularly to help prevent constipation
- Keep your weight under control

*Dr Atul N C Peters is senior consultant and chief of minimal access surgery at Max Super Speciality Hospital, Saket*





# Nature's PHARMACY

Figs and onions have amazing medicinal properties, says **Dr Vijaya Venkat**

## FIG

One of the first fruits mentioned in the Bible, it preceded the cultivation of grains and bore three crops a year. Worshipped as the Bodhi, revered in most religious traditions, and considered a sign of peace, prosperity and plenty, this cosmic tree is believed to have its roots in heaven and its branches and fruit reaching down to earth; even today a person can live on its fruit alone—the fig.

Biologically, the fig is a swollen, hollow receptacle with its stem completely lined with tiny flowers that develop into the true fruit. Regarded as nature's special labour of love, this fruit is a 'keystone species' occupying a unique niche, the role of co-evolution, sustenance and survival.

With no other food available, the fig can provide human needs more than adequately for quite a considerable time; such is its nutritive value. Fresh figs are rich in body and blood building elements, and, not surprisingly, are similar in composition to human milk. Their carbohydrates and proteins (the bulk and building materials for our body) are present in the form of easily absorbable and readily

- 87 per cent of figs are dried for the market
- Fig leaves can be a biodegradable substitute for paper, plastic and aluminium

digestible natural sugars. Sugar is the body food that energises our body and brain. Quickly absorbed by the intestinal tract, fig sugar and the tiny seeds in the fruit stimulate the intestines, keeping our alimentary canal clean—a key to good health.

Viewed from the conventionally accepted recommended dietary allowances (RDA), figs contain invaluable potassium, magnesium and calcium. These minerals are our body builders, whose capacity to prevent rapid degeneration is particularly beneficial for silvers. Figs also contain iron in an absorbable form. The presence of mucin and pectin makes figs a good laxative.

Eat fresh figs, not dried. If fresh figs are unavailable, soak dried figs before eating. Their medicinal and nutritional properties will keep you full and at peace.

## ONION

As a child, most of my improvised toys came from the kitchen. One such vegetable toy was the onion. My grandmother used to tell me, "God is everywhere", and one day she peeled and cut an onion lengthwise and there was Vishnu's *shank* (conch shell) hidden in it!

Considered the oldest cultivated vegetable, the onion was even worshipped by ancient Egyptians who believed that if buried along with the deceased, its pungent scent would infuse the breath of life into the dead.

Odour or no odour, the onion has fascinating healing properties. From anaemia to loss of virility, it aids elimination of toxins by purifying the blood. Acting as an agent to push toxins towards the skin, lungs, bowels, kidneys or liver (our five organs of elimination), an onion a day can help to keep diseases at bay. It is a rich source of sulphur—responsible for the odour—needed to combat blood diseases, and pimples and warts. Sulphur foods stimulate the liver and promote the flow of bile. Onion is also a good source of chlorine that assists in keeping our intestines and bloodstream clean. Some minerals in our food are effective only in the medium of organic water—and onions contain more than 86 per cent water. Other proteins, vitamins and fibres come in a low-fat combo with the added benefit of chlorophyll in green onions.

From urinary disorders to piles, jaundice and cholera; from skin outbreaks to snakebites, rheumatism and coronary malfunction; the onion can help. Truly nature's pharmacy at its best!



- Onion with lime is a natural immuniser with no side-effects
- Use onion for colds, coughs, irritations, asthma or epilepsy



*Dr Vijaya Venkat, Mumbai-based nutritionist and health activist, is founder and head of the Health Awareness Centre*



## WEIGHT WATCH

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

**Q:** I am overweight and suffer from osteoporosis. I know I need to exercise but can't seem to stick to a regimen. Please suggest an appropriate exercise programme for me.

**A:** As we age, two conditions—loss of muscle mass and osteoporosis—are further aggravated if one is overweight. Osteoporosis is loss of bone density leading to brittle bones. Often we mistakenly believe that exercise may lead to a fracture. In fact, the answer to bone mass loss is regular exercise, as it prevents your bones from getting weaker.

Before starting any exercise programme, do consult your doctor. A good exercise routine is to find household chores you can do regularly. This is an informal way to stay fit. For a formal routine, there are three types of regimes: strength training, especially for the back; weight-bearing aerobics; and flexibility. Split them into 15-20 minutes, maybe twice a day, as suitable.

Strength training includes using free weights like ankle or wrist weights or resistance bands. These exercises help to strengthen upper back muscles, muscles between shoulder blades, and improve posture. Weight-bearing aerobics include walking, stair climbing, gardening etc. These exercises work directly on the bones of your legs, hips and lower spine, and improve blood circulation. Most important is improving flexibility as it helps maintain body balance and prevents injury from accidental falls. Exercises like jumping, running or jogging can lead to fractures owing to weakened bones. Avoid any activity that is jerky, or requires you to bend forward, touch your toes or do sit-ups.

Visit Kaya Life for a complete exercise programme specially devised for you by our physiotherapist. Additionally, our dietician can provide a meal plan for daily calcium and other nutrients.



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



If you have a question for Dr Venkat or Dr Lewis, write to [contact.mag@harmonyindia.org](mailto:contact.mag@harmonyindia.org)



# Dr Anjali Mukerjee

## ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS ON NUTRITION, FITNESS AND HEALTH

### **I am a 70 year-old diabetic. Will the sugar content in dry fruits such as apricots, figs, prunes and dates affect my blood sugar level?**

Dates and figs are high in sucrose and dense in calories. You can include them in your diet in moderation as a part of an overall healthy diet. However, avoid them if your fasting blood sugar is above 130.

### **My wife has severe diabetes. Besides sweets, what foods should she avoid?**

Eating right, maintaining ideal body weight and exercising regularly will help your wife control blood sugar. High calorie and low nutritional value foods in addition to those with high sugar content should be limited. Foods to restrict are potato, yam, *arbi*, mango, grapes, banana, alcoholic beverages, fried and processed foods and refined flour. Eat whole fruits and whole wheat bread. A meal plan with reduced calories, even distribution of carbohydrates, and replacement of some carbohydrate with healthier monounsaturated fat (almonds, walnuts, flaxseed) can improve blood glucose levels.

### **Please suggest a typical diet for diabetics.**

There is no particular diet that works perfectly for any diabetic person over a long period. Adhere to certain important factors while planning a diet:

- Increase fibre in your diet—preferably up to 25-30 gm per day—with whole grains, whole pulses, nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables. One tablespoon of *isabgol* daily can increase fibre intake.
- To help control blood sugar, eat about the same amount of carbohydrates spaced throughout the day. If you eat more or less carbohydrates than usual at a given meal or from day to day, your blood sugar may fluctuate every day and also through the day.
- Instead of three heavy meals, eat five small mid-meals.
- Avoid refined foods like white rice, *maida*, dessert, soft drinks, chocolates, sugar and foods rich in fat.
- Consume fruits low in sugar like *jamun*, strawberries, pomegranate, guava.

- Eat sprouts. Rich in protein, calcium and nutrients, they help increase immunity and balance blood sugar.
- Diabetes increases risk of heart disease. Get no more than 5-7 per cent of your daily calories from saturated fat (preferably coconut oil). Choose monounsaturated fats like olive or canola oil, and avoid trans-fat.
- Take some antioxidants like Vitamins A, C, E and selenium. Certain minerals like zinc, chromium, selenium and magnesium help control blood sugar imbalances.
- Certain herbs available in pharmacies help control blood sugar, such as '*Karneem*' made from bitter gourd (*karela*), '*Jambukasav*' made from *jamun*.
- Exercise 30-40 minutes every day.

### **AN INDICATIVE DIABETIC MEAL PLAN:**

#### **Breakfast**

One cup green tea  
One tsp *methi* seed powder  
Two tbsp oat bran or wheat flakes with 150 ml skim milk or two slices whole wheat bread and two egg whites  
1 apple or a bowl of papaya  
5-6 almonds

#### **Lunch**

Two slices of whole wheat bread or bran chapattis  
Two cups cooked vegetables and one cup curd  
Salad (tomato, cucumber, cabbage, onion, mixed sprouts)

#### **Tea**

Vegetable juice (*dudhi* and mint)  
Two to three wheat biscuits or popcorn or handful of roasted *chana*

#### **Dinner**

Clear vegetable soup  
Soya chunks or a bowl of *rajma* or *kabuli chana*  
Two cups cooked green vegetables  
Fish (100 gm, grilled or steamed) twice a week  
Two slices of whole wheat bread or two *jowar chapatti*

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Nutritionist Dr Anjali Mukerjee is the founder of Health Total, a nutrition counselling centre. If you have a question for her, write to [query@health-total.com](mailto:query@health-total.com) Website: [www.health-total.com](http://www.health-total.com)





#### Yogic moves

#### Standing head-knee pose (*uttithita janu sirsasana*)

Stand up straight with your feet about a foot apart. Inhale, raising your arms overhead. Exhaling, lower them, simultaneously bending from the torso so your head drops low. Look towards your legs, breathing normally. Pass arms behind knees to hold them together, so that the head naturally draws closer to the legs. Ensure your knees are not bending. Continue normal breathing, holding for as long as comfortable. Inhaling, raise your hands overhead to return to base position. Repeat a few times. Avoid if you suffer from lower backache, high blood pressure or cardiac problems.

**Benefits:** This pose challenges physical skills like flexibility and balance. The gush of blood to the head helps recharge the brain and makes your face glow.



Shameem

# Akthar

## Rewire your brain: mental and physical exercise can boost your grey cells

Nature gifts us each with 100 billion neurons. Most of our anatomical brain development is completed by the age of seven, followed by a second spurt during adolescence. Till this point, nature's contribution is generous; after this, what we acquire is what nurturing (or experience) invests in us. Until recently, it was believed that once certain brain parts slackened they could never be retrieved; now, the secrets of the brain's amazing plasticity have come to light.

It's true that unused nerve cells die. But neuroscientists have discovered that their connections (dendrites) can grow right into old age. Like vines that climb around dead branches, when we learn new skills, the dendrites of nerve cells reach out to connect with other neurons. These connections matter more than the number of cells we have. Messages, as electrochemical impulses, leap between these connections over the gap called synapse. The more they are used, the more these connections become stronger, keeping our brain young. The mantra is clear: use it or lose it.

Internationally acclaimed yoga guru Swami Sivananda observed in several

books that maintaining a spiritual diary could improve mental strength. New evidence from American medical universities endorses this belief. Patients who chronicled emotional upsets enjoyed reduction in asthma attacks and a significant boost in immune T-cell production. Memory improved because the degenerative effects of the stress hormone cortisol were defused. According to Sivananda, while writing things down, the brain learns to adopt the attitude of a *sakshi* or witness, which can not only power health and promote memory skills but also help us manage anger, shed phobias and combat hypersensitivity.

Another way to boost mind power is through movement, especially exercise that works on hand-leg co-ordination and helps you relearn forgotten physical skills like balance. Brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) is a protein or 'growth factor' that is associated with memory and cognitive action, which are hit by age and disuse, often leading to forgetfulness and slow reaction time. Exercise reverses this by regulating BDNF in the hippocampus (which is involved with memory) and the fore-brain (dealing with rational thought). Thus yogic practices that challenge balance, including standing balancers, arm balancers and inversions, are a great way to get your brain rewired to youthful fitness.

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 advice given here)

# To your HEALTH!

**A**ccording to researchers from the University of East Anglia in the UK, **moderate consumption of alcohol lowers the occurrence of gallstones.** Experts examined the food habits of 25,000 men and women aged between 45 and 74 years and compared their alcohol intake during a 10-year period. The study concluded that two pegs of alcohol daily reduced chances of developing gallstones by one-third. Participants who developed gallstones were 62 years old on an average, and more than two-thirds were women. Participants who consumed two pegs were at

32 per cent lower risk compared to those who consumed very little or no alcohol. Clinical lecturer and study author Dr Paul Banim revealed that alcohol is known to increase the levels of good high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, which sustains the cholesterol structure in the bile and protects against cardiovascular diseases. "Just consuming alcohol may not meet the objective though," Dr Neerav Goyal, gastroenterologist at New Delhi's Apollo Hospital, tells *Harmony*. "Moderate alcohol is recommended for controlling HDL cholesterol levels along with dietary planning to reduce development of gallstones."





## TOMATO TO THE RESCUE

ACCORDING TO NEW FINDINGS by biotech company Cambridge TheraNostics, **lycopene—the antioxidant present in tomato skin—can help prevent cardiovascular diseases, stroke and cholesterol accumulation.** The scientists combined the red-coloured compound extracted from tomato skin with milk and soya bean proteins to produce an absorbable pill called Ateronon. A preliminary study of 150 people showed that over an eight-week period, low density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels decreased significantly with Ateronon, which promised to be more effective than statins. Reiterating its enormous potential, TV doctor Dr Rob Hicks tells British newspaper *The Sun* that the pill can reduce damage to the arteries, which eventually causes heart attacks and stroke. “It can extend life and also possibly save lives on a global basis,” he adds. However, Dr Sundara Valli, cardiologist at Nichani Hospital, Chennai, strikes a note of caution. “It is too soon to analyse the effects of Ateronon,” she tells *Harmony*. “The remedial effects of the new pill have to be tested according to Indian parameters. However, if the lycopene-based pill proves to be beneficial, it can work wonders for cardiac patients in India.”

Regular consumption of even a small dose of **aspirin is not advisable to prevent heart attacks and strokes.** Research at the Clinical Trial Service Unit, University of Oxford, confirmed



that its side-effects could hike risk of strokes, attacks and bleeds.

promotion

## Fixed Dentures



Dr. Vijailakshmi Acharya has MDS degree in Conservative Dentistry & Endodontics. She has advanced training in Aesthetic & Implant Dentistry. She runs a Multispeciality Practice in Chennai. She is a member of the Pierre Fauchard Academy and is an Associate Fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry.

***Q1. I am 78 yrs old and still have many of my front teeth. Recently they have become loose. I take good care but I am concerned.***

Teeth rarely loosen over a short period of time unless severe infection is present. A slow chronic infection affects the bone and gum and teeth may loosen in the final stages. Other causes of loosening could be if you have not replaced missing teeth, causing the remaining teeth to be subject to greater load thereby weakening them. Medications can also have side effects on dental health by causing drying of the mouth and thus more prone to infection and loss of teeth. Regular checkups should help prevent these problems. You can have permanently anchored teeth using Implants from reputed companies like Nobel Biocare to replace missing teeth.

***Q2. I am planning to get lower dentures, but will I have problems in eating normally or even speak properly after that?***

Lower dentures are usually a little inconvenient, as they tend to pack food and hamper speech. They are not very stable and most often only soft foods are possible. In order to solve this problem you can anchor your teeth with 2 or more implants depending on the amount of bone available. Nobel implants are made from pure Titanium and provide different options. The implants are the artificial roots, which once fixed in the bone serve as a strong support to your dentures. Once the implants get attached in the bone the lower dentures will be completely stable and you will be able to enjoy hard foods as well. Your speech will also be clear because these dentures are now stable.

***Q3. Are metals crowns harmful? What are the options, and what is Procera?***

Metal fillings have long known to be reactive in the mouth, especially when different types of metals are present. The shift is towards metal free restorations, particularly in ceramic. The latest trend is to use high strength all ceramics. Nobel Biocare, a Swedish company manufactures Procera that is ideal ceramic for this purpose. These are often aided by computers using CAD-CAM design for a long lasting, safe and esthetic crown. Procera is also accompanied by a global warranty.



## NOT SO SWEET

Sugar-free sweeteners may not be such a good idea for the body. According to latest research at the University of California-Davis (UCD), **consumption of fructose-based sweeteners can affect the body's predisposition to insulin and control over fats, leading to conditions related to heart attack and stroke.** During a 10-week study conducted on overweight people, participants consumed beverages sweetened with either glucose or fructose, which supplied 25 per cent of their energy requirements. Though participants from both groups added a similar

amount of weight, individuals on fructose-sweetened beverages not only revealed more intra-abdominal fat but also less sensitivity to the hormone insulin, which controls glucose levels in the blood. Signs of dyslipidemia or increased levels of lipids (fat-soluble molecules) in the blood were also evident. "Fructose is definitely far more reliable than standard sugar for people suffering from diabetes," Dr Dheeraj Bhalla of Max Heart Institute, New Delhi, tells *Harmony*. "However, specialists do not recommend fructose over a prolonged period as it can have an adverse effect and even harm metabolism. It's important to maintain proper proportions."



## In defence of CAFFEINE

**WE'VE ALL HEARD ABOUT THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF CAFFEINE.** Here's some good news: it can alleviate exercise-induced asthma. According to experts from Indiana University, **caffeine consumed within an hour of physical exercise can reduce symptoms of exercise-induced asthma (EIA),** a condition of respiratory difficulty triggered by physical activity. For EIA treatment or prevention, 9 mg caffeine per kg of body weight is as beneficial as an albuterol inhaler. A lesser quantity of caffeine helped reduce other symptoms like coughing and wheezing, but combining caffeine with an albuterol inhaler was not more effective. The research also concludes that a diet with less salt, more fish oil and antioxidants could probably reduce EIA as well as drug dependence. This is significant as the side-effects of drugs like albuterol and corticosteroids inhaled over a prolonged period of time are becoming a cause for concern. "Caffeine acts as a stimulant that ends up relieving nerve tension," Dr Uma Jaiswal, pulmonologist at Jaiswal Multi Specialty Hospital in Hyderabad, tells *Harmony*. "It is also recommended for people with respiratory problems. But consuming caffeine without consulting a medical practitioner is not advisable for people suffering from EIA."



## Memory enhancer

**L**atest scientific knowledge reveals that **foods rich in fat form long-term memories that send a message of fullness to the brain**—this information is now being used to develop a new drug to help enhance memory in patients of dementia and other brain disorders. Earlier research has shown that oleic acids are transformed from fats into a compound called oleoylethanolamide (OEA) in the small intestine, which sends hunger curbing signals to the brain. A new study at the University of California-Irvine (UCI) reveals that OEA also initiates memory consolidation—meaningless, immediate memories are converted into significant, enduring ones—by activating memory-enhancing signals in the amygdale, an area in the brain linked with a person's mental and emotional state. "OEA is part of the molecular glue that makes memories stick," says neuroscientist Daniele Piomelli, co-author of the study published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. It was noted that when OEA was blocked, there was a decline in memory retention. More research is required before concluding the benefits and side-effects of the memory pill being developed.

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# The true awakening

Consciousness is greater than thought, says Eckhart Tolle

**T**he human mind, in its desire to know, understand, and control, mistakes its opinions and viewpoints for the truth. It says: this is how it is. You have to be larger than thought to realise that however you interpret 'your life' or someone else's life or behaviour, however you judge any situation, it is no more than a viewpoint, one of many possible perspectives. It is no more than a bundle of thoughts. But reality is one unified whole, in which all things are interwoven, where nothing exists in and by itself. Thinking fragments reality—it cuts it up into conceptual bits and pieces. The thinking mind is a useful and powerful tool, but it is also very limiting when it takes over your life completely, when you don't realise that it is only a small aspect of the consciousness that you are.

Wisdom is not a product of thought. The deep knowing that is wisdom arises through the simple act of giving someone or something your full attention. Attention is primordial intelligence, consciousness itself. It dissolves the barriers created by conceptual thought, and with this comes the recognition that nothing exists in and by itself. It joins the perceiver and the perceived in a unifying field of awareness. It is the healer of separation.

Whenever you are immersed in compulsive thinking, you are avoiding what is. You don't want to be where you are. Here, now. Dogmas—religious, political, scientific—arise out of the erroneous belief that thought can encapsulate reality or the truth. Dogmas are collective conceptual prisons. And the strange thing is that people love their prison cells because they give them a sense of security and a false sense of 'I know'. Nothing has inflicted more suffering on humanity

than its dogmas. It is true that every dogma crumbles sooner or later, because reality will eventually disclose its falseness; however, unless the basic delusion of it is seen for what it is, it will be replaced by others.



**You have to be larger than thought to realise that however you interpret 'your life' or someone else's life or behaviour, it is no more than a viewpoint, one of many perspectives**

Spiritual awakening is awakening from the dream of thought. The realm of consciousness is much vaster than thought can grasp. When you no longer believe everything you think, you step out of thought and see clearly that the thinker is not who you are. The mind exists in a state of 'not enough' and so is always greedy for more. When you are identified with

the mind, you get bored and restless very easily. Boredom means the mind is hungry for more stimulus, more food for thought, and its hunger is not being satisfied.

When you feel bored, you can satisfy the mind's hunger by picking up a magazine, making a phone call, switching on the TV, surfing the web, going shopping, or—and this is not uncommon—transferring the mental sense of lack and its need for more to the body and satisfy it briefly by ingesting more food. Or you can stay bored and restless and observe what it feels like to be bored and restless. As you bring awareness to the feeling, there is suddenly some space and stillness around it, as it were. A little at first, but as the sense of inner space grows, the feeling of boredom will begin to diminish in intensity and significance. So even boredom can teach you who you are and who you are not.

You discover that a 'bored person' is not who you are. Boredom is simply a conditioned energy movement within you. Nor are you an angry, sad, or fearful person. Boredom, anger, sadness and fear are not 'yours', not personal. They are conditions of the human mind. They come and go.

Nothing that comes and goes is you. "I am bored." Who knows this? "I am angry, sad, afraid." Who knows this? You are the knowing, not the condition that is known.

*Excerpt from Stillness Speaks (New World Library; Rs 600; 144 pages). Eckhart Tolle is counted among the world's most inspiring motivational and spirituality gurus. His teachings find echoes in philosophies of Buddhism and theories of meditation*

**"From a superintendent in the Railways to an advocate for the visually impaired, my life has indeed changed tracks."**

**SAJAL SEN, 76**

## Empowering VISION

Shilbadra Datta

I always wanted to do something for society. After finishing college in 1953, I worked in the government's Permanent Liability Camps in Purulia to help improve the lives of refugee women with children. In 1957, I appeared for the Railway Service Commission examination and, the same year, joined as assistant station master in Biramdih in Purulia district. During my tenure, I realised that this dusty village was steeped in folklore and tradition. Later, as deputy special superintendent of Eastern Railway, I supervised the public address system manned by the visually impaired staff at Sealdah station. After retirement in 1991, I settled in Kolkata and started Ektara Lok Sanskriti Charcha Kendra, a folk culture centre, in Biramdih.

After my wife Gouri developed a food canal infection in 1995, my base in Kolkata became permanent owing to better medical facilities. Thus began my association with the West Bengal government-run National Association for the Blind (NAB) as member of the governing council. Improving the lives of the visually impaired became my agenda. Generous donors helped NAB initiate the Louis Braille Memorial Scholarship—a programme that awards monthly stipends of Rs 250 to 100 students pursuing higher education.

I initiated programmes to boost their self-esteem. In the past four years, we have organised many cricket matches and car rallies. A sighted person is at

the wheel but the entire navigation route is in Braille. It was a proud moment when two of our boys won gold at the SAARC meet organised by the All India Blind Sports Association in Ludhiana last November. On another instance, Zee Bangla approached me for its talent hunt for the blind. With my initiative, participants of the programme, which was telecast last December, were all from our institution.

In July 2008, I initiated a computer awareness programme starting six-month and one-year courses free of cost. Affiliation from the State Council for Technical Education is expected. All this will contribute to empower the visually challenged.

—As told to Sonali Majumder



## PAY STATION

EXPERTS ANSWER YOUR QUERIES AND CONCERNS ON JOBS AFTER RETIREMENT

**My wife and I live alone in a big house. As we have a few rooms that are unoccupied, do you think having paying guests is a good way to earn a regular income for a retired couple? Please advise us.**

Keeping paying guests is a feasible idea at any time. Despite the competition, there is always a demand for good accommodation in decent localities. There may be an initial investment if any architectural changes are required in your house—attached or common bathrooms, separate entry, kitchen facility. You will also need to provide basic furniture. Initially, advertise your paying guest accommodation through different networks like cable TV, leaflets or the newspaper. Word of mouth also helps. Tell your friends and acquaintances that you are looking for a paying guest. Also remember to get police verification done of a prospective paying guest, and obtain contact details of local references. This will help in the event of tenants defaulting on payments.

—Beena Bhareja

*Delhi-based Bhareja has been providing paying guest accommodation for the past 30 years*



**I am a retired army colonel. I enjoy spending time with little children. I plan to start a playschool. Please guide me.**

Though starting a playschool is a good idea, it requires tremendous effort. There are two ways in which you can approach the idea. You could either get a franchise of any of the popular playschool chains like Mother's Pride or KidZee or, alternatively, start your own playschool.

To become a franchisee, you would require space and training, besides a large capital investment. An established brand would have its own quality standards. You will need to ensure that the expected standard of quality is maintained. On the other hand, starting your own playschool without a brand name will demand much less capital investment, though

acquiring adequate space, staff and other infrastructure would be your headache. You would also need to appoint trained teachers to help share the responsibility of running the school. Remember, registration is important as you cannot function without completing necessary formalities and obtaining permission.

—Shiva Shankaran

*Shankaran is administrator of Milton Nursery School in Chennai*

**My automobile business is on the verge of closure. I would now like to start a courier service or a bill payment centre with minimum investment. Is this a feasible idea?**

Becoming a franchisee of any established courier company may require a lot of capital investment. However, if you are interested in starting a courier service, you can tie up with a local courier franchise in your area. After you accept letters and packets to be couriered from your area, the consignment is collected by them for despatch to different destinations. You earn a small commission for the service rendered. For setting up a bill payment centre, you can become a franchisee of a company offering the service like Easy Bill. Capital investment is not very high and the returns are also good. In fact, this is a profitable idea as every household needs bills to be paid on time. Then, there is the option to start both businesses simultaneously (if finances permit) and handle them from the same premises.

—G S Singh

*Singh is proprietor of Bawa Communications, a courier, bill payment and mobile recharge centre in New Delhi*



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technology, where each sheet is infused with a negative ion charge that repels allergens. The sheet also helps eliminate and immobilise allergens during normal washing. The sheets are tested and certified by the US FDA, Cotton Inc, RTI-USA, ISO and other international laboratories.

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## RECYCLE

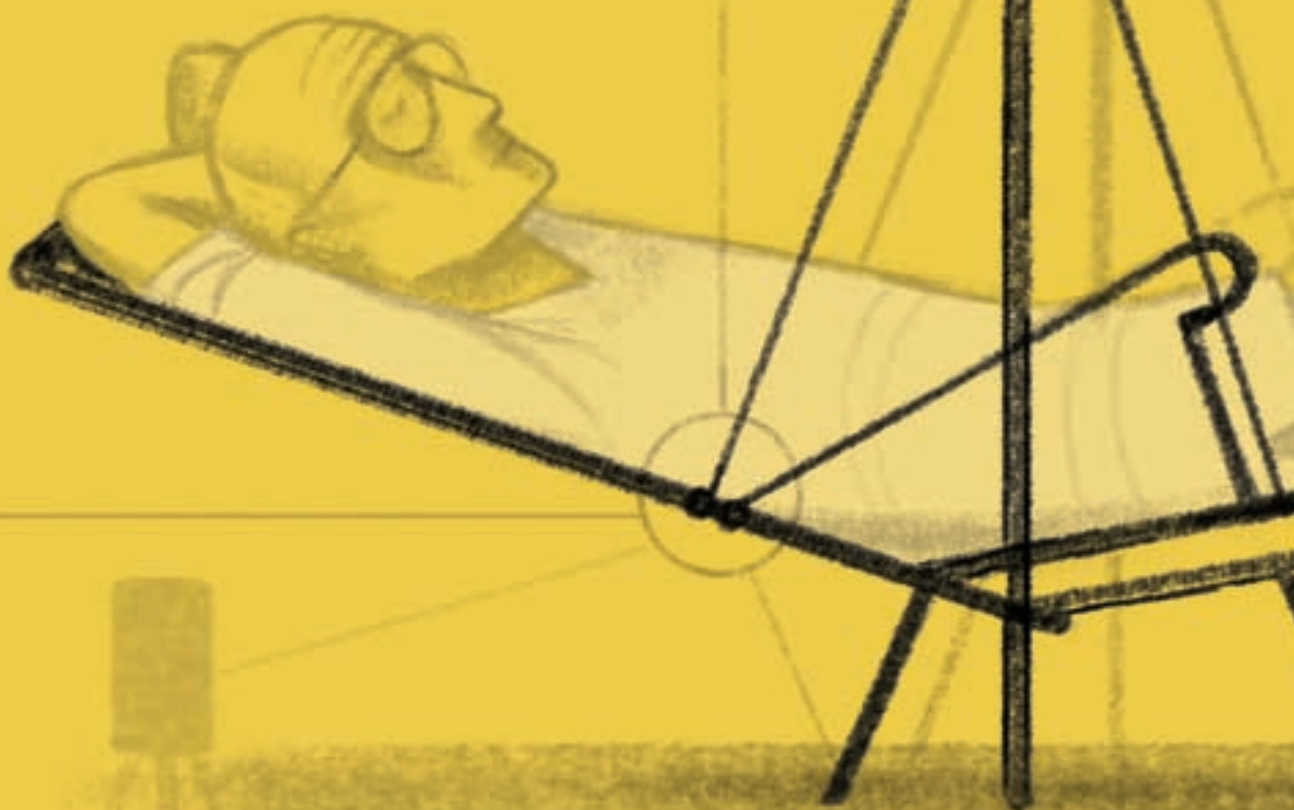
Instead of junking old CDs, use them around the house as part of décor or as utility:

- Want a great centrepiece for your table? Place a votive candle in the centre of a CD (shiny side up). The shiny

surface of the CD serves as a reflector to enhance the glow of the candlelight.

- Old defective movie CDs with colourful labels can also be used as coasters.

# SWING TO HEALTH



Sakrabhai Prajapati has designed a chair that lets silvers lie back and exercise

For silvers looking for a gentle exercise option that allows them—literally—to swing to fitness, Sakrabhai Prajapati has the answer. This 67 year-old from Kalol, Gujarat, has designed Maruti Jhoola, a “healthcare chair that allows you to relax and exercise”.

A trained physical education teacher, Prajapati taught in a school for six years before joining Mahendra Mill as a clerk. Soon after his retirement in 2000, he had a major accident where he broke his legs. To facilitate his recovery, the doctor recommended regular but gentle exercise. One day,





## WORLD VIEW

### Smart Clothes

Researchers at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland are developing hi-tech clothing to improve the lives of silvers. According to the BBC, the three-year project will see electronic devices built into clothing that could provide the wearer information ranging from TV schedules and email notifications to bus timetables; monitor temperature in the home and automatically adjust the thermostat; and keep a tab on the wearer's heart rate, blood pressure and balance and contact a doctor or relative in case of a medical emergency. The research team has described this merger of textiles and electronics as 'the beginning of a new industrial revolution'.

be flattened to become a bed, which looks like a hammock from the side. Apart from providing a gentle cardio workout, it helps reduce knee pain; battles osteoarthritis; fights abdominal fat; tones the limbs; provides acupuncture therapy to the lower parts of the legs; and increases blood circulation, reducing clots.

After doctors and a team from IIM-Ahmedabad validated the health benefits and safety of Maruti Jhoola, he started making more chairs in 2002—Prajapati has sold over 3,000 for Rs 2,800 each. He is not willing to sit back though. Now, with the help of Anil Kumar Gupta, a professor at IIM-Ahmedabad, he is working with Maharashtra-based company Janak Enterprises to manufacture and market the product with further aesthetic improvements. The new price tag: Rs 3,500.

Rahul Krishnan

when he saw his daughter-in-law swinging in the courtyard in the traditional *jhoola* (swing), he was inspired to build his own version where he could recline comfortably and yet give his body a gentle workout. The result was Maruti Jhoola, which Prajapati built in 2001.

Able to accommodate weight up to 120 kg, the chair, which is 4 ft high and 3 ft high, ends in a wooden plank at the base, which you push back and forth to work like a swing. How far and hard you push will determine the level of exercise. The chair is quite flexible and convenient. It can also



*To know more or to order Maruti Jhoola, contact Sakrabhai Prajapati at 09879519331*

***The first day at school***

*The first time you rode the bicycle.*

***The first crush you had at thirteen***

*The first drama you got a part in*

***The first day at college***

*The first date you went on*

***The first kiss***

*The first time you proposed*

***The first job interview***

*The first board meeting you addressed*

***The first day after retirement***

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## CANVAS connection

LATA AMARNATH MEETS A FAMILY THAT BONDS OVER COLOURS

**E**arly this year, in February, the Lalit Kala Akademi in Chennai held a group show of paintings titled Different Strokes. The exhibition generated more than an average share of buzz in Chennai's art circles—not just for the mesmerising works on display but also for the people behind it. After all, it's not very often that you come across an exhibition of paintings of artists from three generations of the same family. For Chennai-based Bhavani Raghunandan, 55, her son Mumbai-based Shashi, 30, and her father, P R S Tampi, 84, who lives in Kochi, putting the exhibition together was no easy task. Their scattered geography posed more than a few hurdles. "I spent a few months retrieving my father's works from all our relatives and friends," says Raghunandan, who is also the principal

of Vidya Mandir School, a prestigious educational institution in Chennai.

For the exhibition, Raghunandan filled her canvases with whisper-soft Chinese brushstrokes, while Shashi, who works with a private financial enterprise, contributed canvases devoted to the sea and landscapes in watercolours. Tampi, who specialises in oil portraits and landscapes, gave up painting two decades ago. However, he offered an enthusiastic nod when Raghunandan first suggested the idea of a family show. "I am too old to participate in another such exhibition," says the octogenarian. "All I hope is that the legacy survives in future generations of my family." His grandson Shashi is more optimistic: "I am planning an encore with my mother."





# Of paeans AND POLITICS

Hemant Mawale is struggling to keep *powada* alive in Pune, writes **Huned Contractor**

**W**hen, on the occasion of Shiv Jayanti or Maharashtra Day, various *mandal* in Pune jostle with each other to put up the best floats and announce paeans to Maratha king Shivaji from loud-speakers, one man is in huge demand: Hemant Mawale, or Shahir Mawale as he is popularly known.

Mawale is skilled at singing *powada*, a traditional Maratha form of music and verse that recounts the valour of Shivaji. "If it weren't for these two days in a year, *powada* would have been lost to the ravages brought on by cultural erosion," he says grimly. As a form of poetic recital accompanied by a rhythmic exposition of the *daf*, the *tuntuna* and the *dholak*, *powada* also finds a mention in the epic *Dynaneshwari*. Historical records reveal that *powada* was first heard in Maharashtra when Jijamata appointed Agindas, Maharashtra's first *shahir*, to write a *powada* to celebrate the victory of Shivaji over Afzal Khan. A *powada* can also be a comment on contemporary political events.

Past glory aside, Mawale sees a bleak future ahead: "It is a dying art form now as there aren't many *powada* singers or writers left." He rues the fact that while the state government has started heeding the demands of *tamasha* artists, not much has been done for *powada* singers because they do not have a strong lobby. "Last year, after much persuasion, I received a grant of Rs 25,000 from the government's Art and Culture Department to buy musical instruments," he says. "Later, I was told that the government has an-

nounced a special financial package for *powada* singers but there has been no further information." The stepmotherly treatment has demoralised the six or seven existing *powada* singers who now see no point in passing the tradition to the next generation.

Mawale is undeterred though. His Saturday evenings are reserved for *powada* tutelage during which he coaches about 70 children. "There are three regulars who have been learning it for the past seven years," says Mawale, whose own knowledge was derived from the renowned singer Shahir Kisanrao Hinge.

Mawale heard him sing *powada* 25 years ago, while he was on his way to school. Incidentally, Mawale's six-year-old son Honraj is already showing signs of becoming an accomplished *powada* singer.

Mawale works as a collection agent for a bank and has recently started an insurance agency. "I don't want a full-time job because that will leave me with little time for *powada*," he reasons. He feels state patronage can help keep the art alive. "It's only during elections that we are remembered because politicians in Maharashtra like to have a *powada* before their speeches." Mawale's cynicism barely conceals his anguish.

**C** REVIVAL



Hemant Patil



Courtesy: Jaanta Raja

## ALL THE KING'S MEN

**THOUGH** 'grandiose' comes close, the word still does not fully describe the sheer magnificence of the Marathi play *Jaanta Raja*. Note the logistics: a 100-ft-long five-storied rotating set; an 18-ft idol of goddess Bhavani; a four-track sound system with sophisticated light effects; a noisy troupe of elephants, camels, horses and bullock carts; spectacular fireworks; over 150 actors; and a spectacle lasting three hours and seven minutes. What makes it even more astounding is the octogenarian who helms it: 86 year-old Shivshahir Babasaheb Purandare.

*Jaanta Raja*, which has already completed 775 shows ever since it was first staged on 14 April 1985, continues to tour across Maharashtra, keeping alive the glorious spirit of Chattrapati Shivaji Maharaj and his exploits. It all started in 1974, when Purandare went to see Damu Kenkre's exhibition on Shivaji, which included an 18-minute skit on the king's coronation ceremony. The skit attracted more than 650,000 people in a span of 45 days. The widespread public interest sparked off an idea for a three-hour play on Shivaji.

Later, while in Italy for a study programme, Purandare happened to see a play based on a historical love story, which had 500 actors and 300 horses. Though he could not understand the language of the opera, he came back impressed by the scale of production.

Initially, *Jaanta Raja* was staged under extremely stringent financial conditions, recalls Purandare. He did not even have enough money to buy costumes for the actors and had to make do with one horse and no elephants. According to records kept at the Maharaja Shivachhatrapati Pratishthan, which has produced the play, over 7.5 million people have seen it to date including the non-resident Maharashtrian community in the US where it was staged in Boston. Today, of the proceeds accrued over the years, Rs 45 million has been invested into making it a self-sufficient production while the rest lies in fixed deposits as part of the organisation's corpus. For Purandare, *Jaanta Raja* is more than just a huge theatrical production—it's his life, his mission.

—Huned Contractor

## FLASHBACK FOOD

Is your palate tired of continental cuisine and longing for some robust traditional fare? Kolkata is the place to binge. The city's oldest and most sought-after *dhaba*, the 79 year-old Balwant Singh da Dhaba, has now sprouted a swank new restaurant, The Five Rivers: From the Kitchens of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, at Bypass Mall on Mani Square. And it's not just the name that's unusual. The menu is stacked with culinary marvels from the kitchens of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's once-sprawling empire that covered Peshawar, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, Kabul, Amritsar, Patiala, Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Food historian Jiggs Kalra is at the helm of the mouth-watering mission while the restaurant has been floated by the promoter of the *dhaba*, Dhanoa Food and Hospitality Pvt Ltd. Go, dig in.

### PAST PERFECT

The Piral Art Gallery is running an exhibition—for an "indefinite period"—of photographs dating back to the 1800s from the NCPA archives. On display will be works of iconic photographers, including Tarpada Banerjee, Ashwin Gatha, Pranal Patel and others. Walk in any day between 11 am to 6 pm.

# Soul TREK

Are you a yoga tourist or perhaps a spiritual seeker? **Shameem Akthar** lists seven Indian centres to revive the body and mind





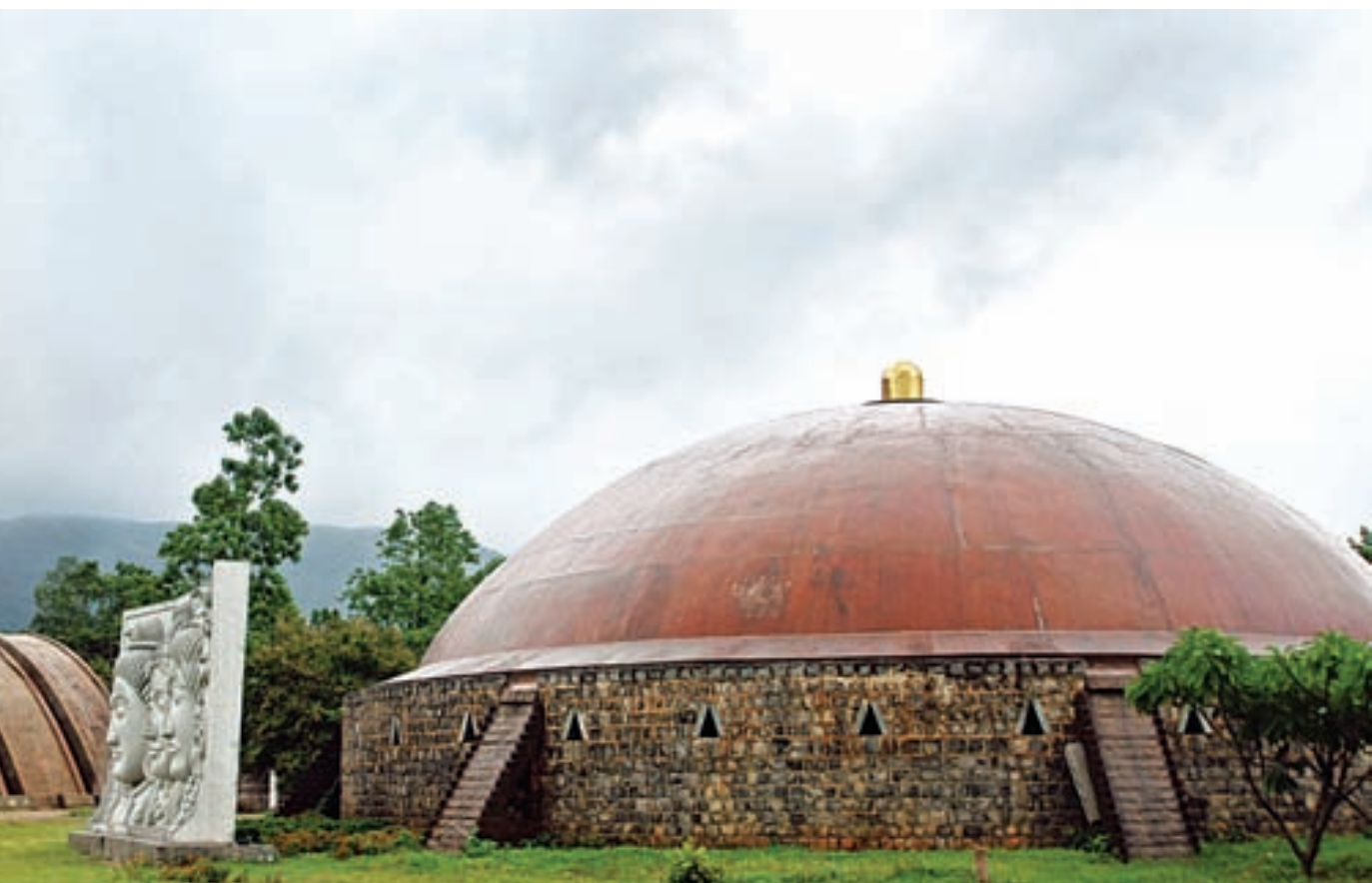


Isha Foundation

## ISHA FOUNDATION VELLIANGIRI HILLS, TAMIL NADU

There's definitely something very touristy about the Isha Foundation yoga centre. The road through dense forests to get to the Velliangiri Hills, 40 km from the bustle of Coimbatore. And the drama of the centre itself, stylistically conceived with a serpent motif at the entrance, a massive *lingam* that attracts the hordes, underground water bodies, and modern accommodation with plenty of attention to detail keeping in mind the needs of visitors. That's probably why this is an ideal place for a family yoga holiday—the kids would be as happy as the grandparents! Intriguingly, the centre manages to have its quiet spots and its loud ones—so all temperaments are appeased. The yoga sessions are a package of negotiable poses but done dynamically, thus upping the challenge. The emotional release encouraged at the end of all the sessions detoxifies the mind.

**Contact:** Isha Foundation, 15, Govindasamy Naidu Layout, Singanallur, Coimbatore-641005, Tamil Nadu; Tel: 0422-2515345, 2515470. Email: [ishastay@ishafoundation.org](mailto:ishastay@ishafoundation.org); [info@ishafoundation.org](mailto:info@ishafoundation.org); Website: [www.ishafoundation.org](http://www.ishafoundation.org)





## PARMARTH NIKETAN SWARGASHRAM, RISHIKESH, UTTARANCHAL

As its website proudly proclaims, the awe-inspiring beauty of the ashram, the clear, flowing Ganga, the majestic mountains, and the lush green forests promise to embrace and rejuvenate your entire being. The ashram has 1,000 residential rooms, all equipped with modern amenities. The daily spiritual detox regimen includes morning prayers, yoga, meditation, *satsang*, *kirtan* and lectures. Also on offer are nature cure programmes, Ayurvedic treatment, and Reiki and accupressure camps. It runs several yoga courses but its biggest draws are the Ganga *arati* and the annual yoga festival. The latter usually hosts some of the biggest names on the international yoga circuit, with great workshops conducted by them. Regulars love the spiritualised yoga on offer here.

**Contact:** Sadhvi Abha Saraswati (Mataji), Yoga and Meditation Section, Parmarth Niketan, PO Swargashram, Rishikesh-249304, Uttaranchal; Tel: 0135-2440088, 440077, 2434301; Fax: 0135-2440066; Email: [parmarth@parmarth.com](mailto:parmarth@parmarth.com); Website: [www.parmarth.com](http://www.parmarth.com)



Parmarth Niketan





## THE YOGA INSTITUTE MUMBAI

This is an unbelievably peaceful haven in the midst of raucous Mumbai. If you are looking for a soothing practice, heavily into *raja* yoga or the mind-culturing aspect of yoga, this is the place for you. Yoga that focuses on body aesthetics is frowned upon here, so the pace may be deliberately slow. The institute, located in suburban Santacruz, runs a variety of therapy-based yoga classes: pre-natal, post-natal, cardiac health, diabetes control, weight loss, asthma care and respiratory health, for example. All short courses are inclusive of meals.

**Contact:** The Yoga Institute,  
Shri Yogendra Marg, Prabhat  
Colony, Santacruz (East),  
Mumbai-400055, Maharashtra;  
Tel: 022-26110506, 26122185;  
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Vilas Kalutker





**SIVANANDA YOGA VEDANTA  
DHANWANTARI ASHRAM  
NEYYAR DAM, KERALA**

**S**prawled over 12 acres, this is a beautiful ashram, lushly green, set away from the hurly burly of Thiruvananthapuram with the soft drone of the nearby Neyyar dam and the occasional roars from lions at a zoo close by. Established by Swami Vishnudevananda—disciple of the Vedanta guru Swami H H Sivananda of Rishikesh—it is a complete yoga experience: rocking yoga sessions, grounding meditations, dynamic yoga practice that includes *pranayama*, and usually buzzing with some high-energy yoga course attended by students from across the globe. The meals are sparse and the rooms simple though. Yoga tourists are welcome but must always book in advance and stay a fixed



minimum of days as prescribed by the ashram. Rules include not talking during meals or wearing revealing clothes. This is a destination for serious yoga practice and can be addictive, with visitors usually revisiting, not knowing quite what attracts them so intensely to this style of yoga or this particular ashram.

**Contact:** *Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Dhanwantari Ashram, Neyyar Dam PO, Thiruvananthapuram District-695572, Kerala; Tel: 0471-2273093, 2272703; Mobile: (0) 9495630951; Email: yogaindia@sivananda.org; Web: www.sivananda.org*



**SRI RAMANASRAMAM  
TIRUVANNAMALAI, TAMIL NADU**

**T**here is an old-world simplicity to the Sri Ramanasramam—starting with the 400 year-old tree in its courtyard and the earnest chanting of Vedas emanating from its Veda Patasala where young boys learn to master Vedic scriptures. The modest ashram belies the giant status of Sri Ramana Maharishi—his teachings, associated with non-dualism, Advaita Vedanta and Jnana Yoga, have been translated in every known language across the globe and the ashram attracts both the religious tourist as well as the serious meditator. It can be noisy over weekends, local holidays or during the more pleasant months of the year (November to February) when international yogis beat a path to this small temple town, 120 miles from Chennai. Sri Ramana Maharishi became an international icon after British writer Paul Brunton wrote about him in his book, *A Search in Secret India*. In fact, William Somerset Maugham's book, *A Razor's Edge*, and its main protagonist's life are said to be drawn from Brunton's spiritual experiences in Tiruvannamalai. The guest rooms and cottages are clean and simply furnished, with basic amenities. The ashram does not charge any fee for boarding and lodging though voluntary donations are welcome. Booking, however, must be done well in advance. If the Maharishi's sayings resonate with your own spiritual leanings, this place can be an enthralling experience.

**Contact:** *V S Ramanan, President, Sri Ramanasramam PO, Tiruvannamalai-606603, Tamil Nadu. Tel: 04175-237200, (0) 9244937292; Email: ashram@sriramanamaharshi.org; Website: www.sriramanamaharshi.org*



Saishresh Sivaswamy



### BIHAR SCHOOL OF YOGA MUNGER, BIHAR

Another picturesque ashram with magnetic appeal among yoga lovers and students, it focuses on therapy-based short courses for those who wish to combine a yoga holiday with some serious yoga study. Such courses include food and lodging, advice on diet specific to a particular ailment, and yoga practice designed to control or cure the problem. Further, it has long courses for more serious yoga students, including *sannyasa* training and university level courses in yoga. Its stated intention: “to preserve and regenerate the total scope of yogic science by combining academic and scientific methodology with a spiritual vision”.

**Contact:** Secretary, Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger-811201, Bihar; Tel: 06344-222430, 220169; Web: [www.yogavision.net](http://www.yogavision.net)



Bihar School of Yoga-Munger

### VIPASSANA INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY DHAMMA GIRI, IGATPURI, MAHARASHTRA

If you are serious about meditation, this is the place for you. In fact, even followers of Vipassana—an ancient technique of meditation popularised by Gautama Buddha—who have done courses elsewhere want to visit this centre as do Buddhists from across Maharashtra and seekers from around the world. Founded by industrialist S N Goenka, the academy has a strict regimen, the one followed in all Vipassana centres, with meals only twice daily and seated meditation throughout the day. It starts well before the crack of dawn, with enforced silence during the

entire 10-day course. Those who repeat the course have to make do with just one meal a day, showing you just how austere and focused the entire experience is. There is no fee charged to ensure that there is no commercial angle that tampers with the pure spirit of the *dhmma* or the path. It is a powerful experience but you must be mentally geared up for what it demands of you.

**Contact:** Vipassana International Academy-Dhamma Giri, PO Box 6, Igatpuri, District Nasik-422403, Maharashtra; Tel: 02553-244076, 244086; Fax: 02553-244176; Email: [info@giri.dhamma.org](mailto:info@giri.dhamma.org); Website: [www.vri.dhamma.org](http://www.vri.dhamma.org)





# FEMMEPOWERMENT

Bequeath a legacy of gender equality, says **Vrinda Nabar**

**F**ollowing the unanimous election of Meira Kumar as Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the media has milked the theme of female empowerment, reiterating our gender achievements: a woman as President, another as chairperson of India's oldest political party, and now the Lok Sabha Speaker. Similar euphoria used to do the rounds when I was in college and Indira Gandhi became prime minister. The question of how much all this impacts the lives of Indian women is ignored or sporadically dug up when some ghastly occurrence (a dowry death, female foeticide) seems to merit a fresh look at the reality of women's lives.

What is more remarkable is how little attitudes have changed even among the middle class. On the day Meira Kumar became Speaker, I ran into an old school friend who told me her daughter was doing occupational therapy. "She couldn't get into medical school, but it's just as well. Girls should do what they can make time for once they're married." Listening to her reminded me of a similar conversation with another mother in the 1990s. Her daughter, an accomplished athlete who had done her school and state proud, had abandoned sports and opted for domestic science. "I persuaded her to take it up. I think it right for girls to do what they can use once they are married." This woman was herself a trained doctor. Was something of her own frustration contained in that statement? Or was she submitting to the juggernaut of social conditioning?

Why is it that the older generation has done little to promote a paradigm

shift in such perceptions though many of us came of age during the most rebellious and iconoclastic phase of the post-War era? Ever since women began questioning the inviolability of traditional roles, battle lines have repeatedly outlined the territories of the home and the workplace. The rules of the workplace were formed at a time when only men, by and large, worked. As these men were in no way restricted by demands on the home front, the work ethic did not incorporate these

**Older couples where the women stayed content as homemakers should grow sensitive to the fact that there is a whole world of opportunity outside**

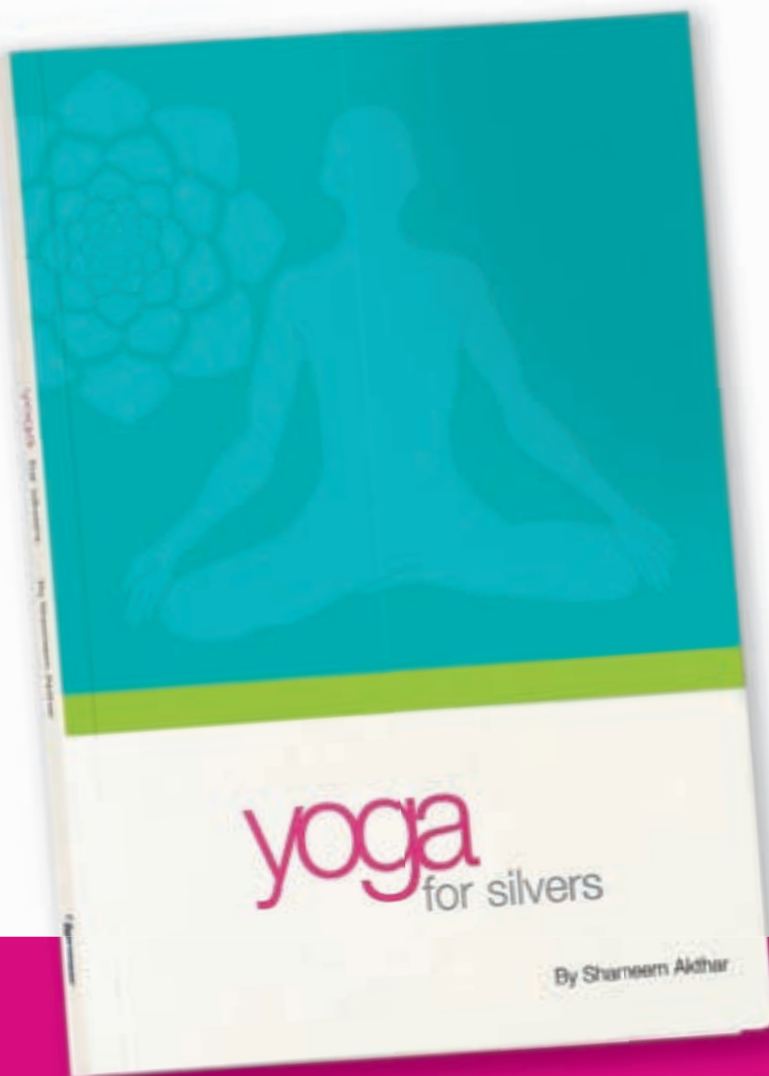
into its scheme of things. The entry of large numbers of women has had no noticeable effect on this workplace ethic and mindset, which still remains conditioned by male norms. Nor has social effort sought to provide alternative support systems for women who work. The State has so far not intervened forcefully in this area. And women themselves have been their own worst enemies. Many have reviled those who insist on a more realistic framework, saying women 'should not expect allowances to be made for them'. Terms like 'flexihours' continue to have pejorative overtones, suggesting that women work as a dilettantish diversion from household chores.

Is the expectation of a more employee-friendly ethic an unreasonable demand? Not all women who would like careers and are competent, trained professionals have either the economic affluence that facilitates good domestic help, or an extended family to fall back on. In an era where corporate HR is becoming so important, surely all those who claim to be equal opportunities employers need to realise that gender issues go beyond sexual harassment, are real, and need to be resolved pragmatically.

How can the older generation help change the current mindset? For starters, by changing themselves. We must learn to recognise that daughters can be good homemakers as well as career women. "One is not born, but becomes a woman," said Simone de Beauvoir more than 50 years ago. Men and women need to appreciate that this 'becoming', like all other evolutionary patterns in human civilisation, has the capacity to grow into something more than they had been led to believe. Older couples where the women stayed content as homemakers should grow sensitive to the fact that there is a whole world of opportunity outside. Women should resist the urge to fashion their daughters in their own image and insist on a more equal role for men and women both within and outside the home. Finally, the older generation should work to consolidate self-esteem and self-actualisation in women, thereby bequeathing a legacy of real female empowerment.

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





# yoga for silvers

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## “We pay a gigantic price for chasing our illusions”

**THE TIMING COULDN'T BE BETTER** for Paulo Coelho's *The Winner Stands Alone* (HarperCollins; Rs 325; 373 pages)—a scathing parable-cum-thriller on the cult of celebrity and the manipulation of dreams released while the superstar love-fest at the annual Cannes film festival played out on our TV screens. This book, too, is situated in Cannes, where the “Superclass” gathers annually to celebrate and validate their existence and the have-nots journey to have their dreams made, or alternatively shattered. In this bedlam arrives a multimillionaire businessman determined to “destroy worlds”—in other words, take multiple lives—to reclaim his ex-wife.

Since the explosive success of *The Alchemist* (1988), which went on to become one of the bestselling books in history and the most translated book by a living author (67 languages), the 62 year-old Brazilian has regularly served up his life-lessons—seasoned with allegory, magic realism and riveting prose—to an adoring public.

He tells *Harmony* what inspired his latest book and what makes him tick.

### What was the genesis of *The Winner Stands Alone*?

I wanted to explore how dreams can be manipulated and how people get shattered in the process. I'm not condemning vanity—all under the sun is vanity as King Solomon said. What I am interested in is how people allow themselves to be dispossessed of themselves. In our current society there are collective standards that are completely anonymous and yet many try to subscribe to them. Some people believe their happiness is conditioned by money, fame, beauty...how does that happen? This book arose from this central question.

You should make the difference between the price you pay for your dreams and the price you pay for your illusions. The ‘currency’ (if you wish) is always the same: your soul.



In the first case, you bet on doing something that brings enthusiasm to your soul—despite other people's opinions. The price you are paying in this case is the price of your freedom—which is high but ultimately worth it. In the other case, you crave for something that hasn't sprung from your deep-rooted convictions. You choose to follow the road that all abide to: the road either of financial security or the road of social excesses. Either way, these ‘sought af-

ter' avenues lead nowhere because they were built on cravings that are dictated by the industry.

**In the book, a character lists out 46 mantras of being normal. Do you really think there is a mantra to be normal, especially in old age?**

Yes, there is a mantra: cultivate your difference throughout your life.

**Is this book based on your own experiences?**

No, not really. On the contrary it is about the gigantic price we pay for allowing ourselves to chase illusions, instead of our true dreams. I don't think it's a moralistic book—I describe without concessions this 'dream factory' but I rely on the reader to be able to see in this rather a warning than a manifesto. This book is a portrait and I use murder as a symbol, as a metaphor to all the death-craving tendencies that rode in our souls when we chase an illusion.

**What inspires you to remain so prolific?**

I believe the need to keep on understanding myself and questioning the world is what motivates me the most. For me being alive—which means being able to meet people and travel—is what brings me joy. It's only by living intensively that I'm able to gather enough experiences, emotions, which guide me later on when I decide to write.

**How have ageing and other life experiences informed your writing and creative process?**

When we least expect it, life sets us a challenge to test our courage and willingness to change; at such a moment, there is no point in pretending that nothing has happened or in saying that we are not ready. The challenge will not wait. Life does not look back. A week is more than enough time for us to decide whether or not to accept our destiny.

**Is there any defining moment of your life that can inspire others?**

All moments are defining as long as you enable them to be. I've never seen myself as someone giving away mantras for making other people's lives more satisfying. I'm not responsible for others. Freedom is exactly that: people making their decisions by themselves, not giving it away for a 'guru' to answer and decide for them. I think the best advice is always to not follow advice. Try life by yourself. I'm just a man that has gone in the direction of his personal legend, taking risks and learning daily from all around me.

## A BRUSH WITH AN ICON

**R K LAXMAN: THE UNCOMMON MAN—  
COLLECTION OF WORKS FROM 1948 TO 2008**

BY DR DHARMENDRA BHANDARI

JAICO PUBLISHING HOUSE;

RS 1,500; 292 PAGES



A familiar figure for almost six decades, the Common Man has attained cult status. Bald, bespectacled and habitually attired in white *dhoti* and checked coat, he is “a silent sentinel to the follies of our political establishment and distils the sentiments of ‘common’ men and women across the nation”. An icon for generations of readers, he continues to quietly witness the evolving social, political and economic scenario in the country.

Sketching the life of the indisputable genius, personal friendship helped Dr Dharmendra Bhandari incorporate little-known minutiae to reminiscences. Revealing that R K Laxman identified himself as the Common Man, the biographical essay in the book shares interesting glimpses of India's most renowned cartoonist. Celebrated for his trademark cartoons and caricatures, Laxman is no less versatile as an artist. The watercolours, pastels and inks of animals, temples, landscapes and even nudes—besides his favourite Ganesha and crows—are a revelation. While his caricatures satirise Indian politicians and world leaders, litterateurs, actors, musicians and sportspersons through credible exaggeration, his cartoons chronicle contemporary political history. New imaginative captions give them a fresh lease of life. Puckish wit and incisive commentary make a formidable arsenal for Laxman's humour.

Compilations of Laxman's work are nothing out of the ordinary. What makes *R K Laxman: The Uncommon Man* stand out is the author's meticulous attention to detail visible in every page. A great addition to your coffee table.

—Anjana Jha



# AN EMPEROR SPEAKS



BABUR, THE FIRST OF THE GREAT MUGHALS, LAID CLAIM ON INDIA AFTER HE DEFEATED IBRAHIM LODHI AT THE FIRST BATTLE OF PANIPAT. HIS WIDE AND CHEQUERED CAREER IS WONDERFULLY DESCRIBED IN **BABURNAMA**, HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY THAT FALLS NATURALLY INTO THREE TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS: FARGHANA (WITH SAMARKAND), THE LAND OF HIS SUCCESSORS, KABUL AND HINDUSTAN. HERE IS AN EXCERPT.

One of the great defects of Hindustan being its lack of running waters, it kept coming to my mind that waters should be made to flow by means of wheels erected wherever I might settle down, also that ground should be laid out in an orderly and symmetrical way. With this object in view, we crossed the Jun-water [the Yamuna River] to look at garden-grounds a few days after entering Agra. Those grounds were so bad and unattractive that we traversed them with a hundred disgusts and repulsions. So ugly and displeasing were they that the idea of making a *Char-bagh* in them passed from my mind, but needs must! As there was no other land near Agra, that same ground was taken in hand a few days later.

The beginning was made with the large well from which water comes for the hot bath, and also with the piece of ground where the tamarind trees and the octagonal tank now are. After that came the large tank with its enclosure; after that the tank and *talar* in front of the outer residence; after that the private house or *khilwat-khana* with its garden and various dwellings; after that the hot bath.

Three things oppressed us in Hindustan: its heat, its violent winds, its dust. Against all three the bath is a protection, for in it, what is known of dust and wind? And in the heat it is so chilly that one is almost cold. The bathroom in which the heated tank is, is altogether of stone, the whole, except for the *izara* of white stone, being, pavement and roofing, of red Biana stone.

Khalifa also and Shaikh Zain, Yunas-i-ali and whoever got land on that other bank of the river laid out regular and orderly gardens with tanks, made running waters also by settling up wheels like those in Dipalpur and Lahore. The people of Hind who had never seen grounds planned so symmetrically and thus laid out, called the side of the Jun where our residences were Kabul. In an empty space inside the fort, which was between Ibrahim's residence and the ramparts, I ordered a large chambered well to be made, measuring 10 by 10, a large well with a flight of steps, which in Hindustan is called a *wain*. This well was begun before



the *Char-bagh*; they were busy digging it in the true rains; it fell in several times and buried the hired workmen; it was finished after the Holy Battle with Rana Sanga, as is stated in the inscription on the stone that bears the chronogram of its completion. It is a complete *wain*, having a three-storied house in it. The lowest storey consists of three rooms, each of which opens on the descending steps, at intervals of three steps from one another. When the water is at its lowest, it is one step below the bottom chamber; when it rises in the rains, it sometimes goes into the storey. In the middle storey an inner chamber has been excavated that connects with the domed building in which the bullock turns the well wheel. The top storey in a single room, reached from two sides by five or six steps that lead down to it from the enclosure overlooked from the well-head. Facing the right-hand way down is the stone inscribed with the date of completion. At the side of this well is another the bottom of which may be at half the depth of the first, and into which water comes from that first one when the bullock turns the wheel in the domed building afore-mentioned. This second well also is fitted with a wheel, by means of which water is carried along the ramparts to the garden. A stone building (*tashdin imarat*) stands at the mouth of the well and there is an outer mosque outside the enclosure in which the well is. The mosque is not well done; it is in the Hindustan fashion.

## BRIEFLY

At first **THE LONG WALK HOME** (Harper Collins; Rs 295; 272 pages) may seem like another book on the unrelenting trauma and grief of Partition. That it is, but it's also about how many of us have lived a lifetime struggling to forget it, succeeding seemingly, but finally succumbing to a sharp pang. Harbaksh Singh Bhalla is "a proud Sikh, following in the tradition of the gurus". Letting go of an 'opportunity' to go to Birmingham where his wife got a job as nurse years ago, he settles down to a quiet life in Ferozepur, Punjab, investing all his time and energy in his children Neymat, Noor and



Anant. One morning he wakes up to a heavy heart. The long walk to the bazaar and back home does little to girdle the memories of Lahore, the journey to India and the life with his family—the stories that he had consciously evaded all along stream past that morning. **Manreet Sodhi Someshwar's** narrative goes back and forth between Lahore, early days in Ferozepur and that long walk, laced with glimpses from lives of Baksh's family and extended family. In the process, *The Long Walk Home* manages not to alienate a whole new generation brought up on flying ambitions, city dreams and *Monsoon Wedding* fantasies.

"By accepting the creation of Pakistan, Hindus were admitting to their great failure in not being able to absorb Muslims. By asking for Pakistan, the Muslims were in effect admitting to their great failure in not being able to convert Hindus. Who likes to live next to one's greatest failure?" The thought-provoking question by Arvind

Sharma, a religious studies professor, is just one of the thousands that will haunt you after you read **THE GREAT DIVIDE-INDIA AND PAKISTAN** (Harper Collins; Rs 495; 380 pages). A compilation of 32 essays collected from both sides of the border, the book probes into a festering wound that has only deepened in the past 62 years. What also makes the book riveting is that it covers the influence of the divide over everything: art, economy, diplomacy and the very definition of secularism in both

countries. The strategic tension over the Rann of Kutch, the tireless one-upmanship over nuclear capabilities, the flagrant stance of the media and the relevance of Saadat Hassan Manto for both India and Pakistan—read it all and you will be enlightened. And yes, ashamed.



**MAKING BREAKTHROUGH INNOVATION HAPPEN** (Collins Business; Rs 295; 236 pages) is the culmination of a six-year joint discovery effort of Erehwon Innovation Consulting and Marico Innovation Foundation. Brought to life by **Porus Munshi**, the book describes how 11 Indians turned industry norms upside down to pull off the impossible. The case studies include 'orbit-shifters' like Su-Kam,

the biggest Indian corporate in the power backup industry today; Titan, which conceptualised and manufactured the slimmest water-resistant watch; Shantha Biotech, which developed a low-cost Hepatitis-B vaccine and unleashed biotechnology in India; and Aravind Eye Hospital, which perfected an assembly-line technique of surgery and developed a cost-effective revenue model to provide free service for the blind poor. Varied success stories but one message—being subversive and thinking differently are the prerequisites for achieving the impossible. Can innovation be used as a springboard to tackle challenges facing India today? The book's inspiration quotient makes it a distinct possibility.

The cover of **NO PRIME MINISTER** (Wisdom Tree; Rs 200; 154 pages) gives you a pretty good idea of what lies within: a diminutive Dr Manmohan Singh on his chair; on his left looms a large figure in a sari in a high-heeled shoe; her hand firmly on the top of his chair; no face necessary. Inside, you see different variations on this theme as well as the prime minister with friends and foes; about 150



sketches in all—the product of cartoonist **Sudhir Tailang's** inventive brush. "Singh is king," says Tailang in his foreword, maintaining that the frequency in which the PM is featured in cartoons is a sign of his "influence and importance in Indian politics". However, the cartoons themselves are less kind—many of the sketches show Singh bending over backwards to do the bidding of the US. Funny stuff, but Tailang would be wise not to expect bulk orders from Race Course Road.

## mindcasting

*pp.* Posting a series of messages that reflect one's current thoughts, ideas, passions, observations, readings, and other intellectual interests.

—mindcast *v., n.*

—mindcaster *n.*

**Example:** But the claim that Twitter is nothing but mindless inanities is just as wrong as the analogous claim for blogs—in fact it's precisely the same claim, five years later. There are other things you can do with the technology—the technical terms are 'lifecasting' [here's what I had for dinner] vs. '**mindcasting**' [here's a thought, a question, an observation, a link to something more substantial].

—Sean Carroll, "Twitter agonistes", *Discover*, 23 April 2009

“Nothing can be taught to a man; but it's possible to help him to find the answer within himself.

—Italian physicist Galileo Galilei (1564-1642)

## BET DIETING

*pp.* Betting money on losing weight, particularly where the money goes to a charity or other organisation that one disagrees with. Also bet dieter *n.*

**Example:** Bet dieting is the newest rage and there are a few websites that enable it, but stickK has an extra ploy: the 'anti-charity'. Choosing the most politically controversial non-profit charities to motivate someone to achieve their goals is a great idea. Science and the stock market know that risk is a much more powerful motivator than reward.

—Boomer Babe, "Bet dieting: If you lose, you pay guns, god and gays!", InventorSpot, 23 May 2009



## PLASTIC SECURITY

Paranoid about losing your credit card? Help is at hand with CPP Assistance Group's Card Protection Plan, India's first comprehensive credit/debit card protection service, run by a UK-based company. **The 24-hour service can be availed through different banks or by calling the toll-free helpline, 6000-4000.** Other than reporting the loss of your card and blocking it, the service offers you hotel and travel assistance if you lose your card while travelling. What's more, the service backs up important information, like your passport and driving license details, and helps you reapply for these documents if lost.

**The cost** A 'classic' membership for Rs 995 that covers hotel and travel expenses up to Rs 40,000; and a 'premium' membership for Rs 1,295 for expenses up to Rs 60,000.

## cosmetic neurology

*n.* The use of pharmaceuticals to enhance cognitive function in a healthy brain.

**Example:** Still, even if you acknowledge that **cosmetic neurology** is here to stay, there is something dispiriting about the way the drugs are used—the kind of aspirations they open up, or don't. Jonathan Eisen, an evolutionary biologist at U C Davis, is sceptical of what he mockingly calls 'brain doping'.

—Margaret Talbot, "Brain gain", *The New Yorker*, 27 April 2009

**cookprint** *n.* The energy and other resources used while preparing meals. [Blend of cooking and footprint.]

**Example:** Need help reducing your carbon **cookprint**? A new crop of climate-conscious cookbooks is turning 2009 into the year of the ecovore.

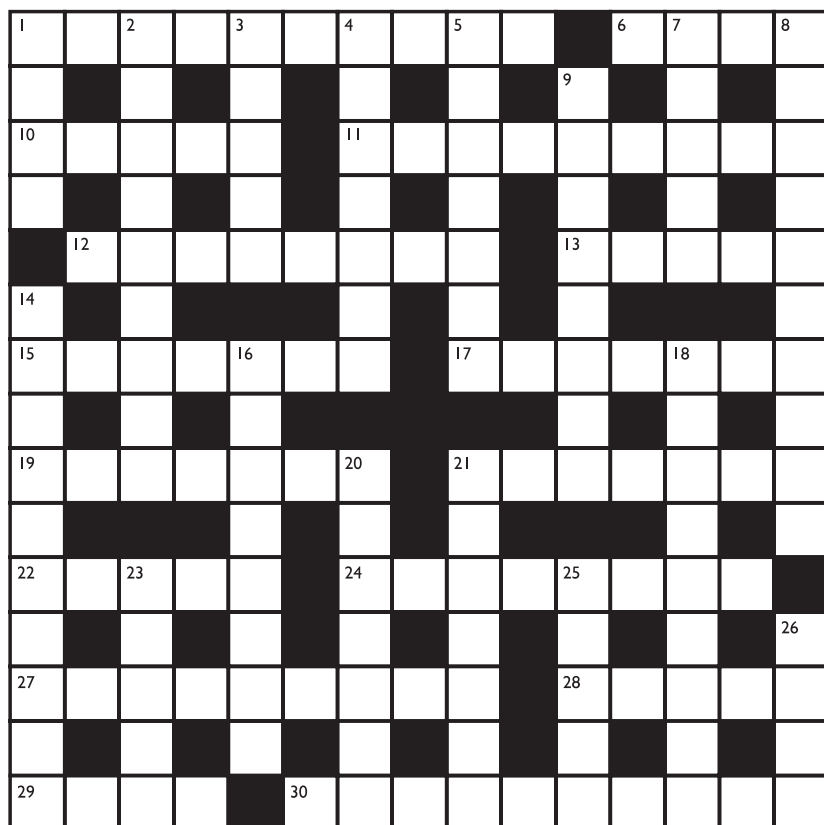
—"Here's a new crop of climate-conscious cookbooks", *The Kansas City Star*, 22 April 2009

**flotsametrics** *n.* The use of floating debris to study ocean currents. [Blend of flotsam and metrics.]

**Example:** Flotsametrics is the use of floating trash, such as a huge consignment of training shoes washed off a cargo ship in 1990, to study ocean currents.

—"Viewfinder: Opinions from around the world", *New Scientist*, 22 April 2009



**EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 57****BY RAJU BHARATAN****ACROSS**

- 1 Ravi Shanker said he composed, for her, *Mere toh Girdhar Gopal*, in Raag Khamaj, on the breakfast table in London! (4 6)  
 6 Special Swanton gush? (4)  
 10 On art, say it with flowers (5)  
 11 Computer attachment suggesting a set of writers totally against Sehwag? (4-5)  
 12 Was Tony Greig, from among the game's players, the first (via Kerry Packer) to reach out for it? (4 4)  
 13 Remember eminent scientist

Dr S Chandrasekhar's preaching the nutritive virtues of this mid-meal southern preparation? (5)

- 15 Not charged yet? (2 5)  
 17 Dancer Mai retreating to appear in Shak (7)  
 19 Fun's embracing Jia for those using film of only a particular brand (7)  
 21 *Dum maaro dum* has you instinctively sensing it is (3 4)  
 22 This country, place it before the Khan who wed Rita Hayworth in style (5)  
 24 Together, in the same pitch, observe: "Working in United News of

India, lad!" (2 6)

- 27 Bear turning into a semi-religion teaching Indira Gandhi a lesson (3 6)  
 28 The best part of the cake? (5)  
 29 The Orange Cap vis-à-vis Anil Kumble? (4)  
 30 The only real opposition our Melody Queen encountered (6 4)

**DOWN**

- 1 Animal doctor circular? No go! (4)  
 2 In 14 films coming in a row did they team (6-3)  
 3 A John unlucky as unlucky could be (5)  
 4 Image written about in NDTV offering? The idea! (7)  
 5 Apt description of those wearing their hair long at a stag party? (7)  
 7 Alexander's pride in a manner of speaking (5)  
 8 His 'left'-landing is considered the best the world ever saw (5 5)  
 9 Splitting hairs on the French Riviera? (8)  
 14 Fast if Ferg, steady if the association be with Andre (6 4)  
 16 UPA treatise in Hindi? (8)  
 18 Dictator *muni* embracing Sorabjee Soli (9)  
 20 Ila she's the one who tuned *Aansooan kee chhaon mein bhee hans le o dil waale* (with its distinct *tabla* effect) in Satyen Bose's 1954 *Parichay* (7)  
 21 To Gagarin Street on a visit? (7)  
 23 A wake-up call later (5)  
 25 Accepted by usage, Modi got up around one (5)  
 26 Has the one been invented which will fit Rakhi Sawant? (1 3)

For answers, see Page 77

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

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



## SOLUTIONS TO EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 57

**ACROSS:** 1 Vani Jairam; 6 Spew (*Sp/EW*: Special Swanton, Jim Swanton is E W Swanton); 10 *Toran* (*On art*, the 5 letters of *Toran* rearranged); 11 Anti-virus (*Anti-Virus*: a set of writers totally against *Sehwag*); 12 High rise; 13 *Rasam*; 15 To rouse; 17 Shiamak (*Davar*), *Sh/iaM/ak*: *Mai* retreating to appear in *Shak*); 19 'Fujians' (*Fuji.ans*, a coinage: *Fu(Jia)n's*: *Fun's* embracing *Jia*); 21 The Asha; 22 Italy [*It/Aly* (*Khan*)]; 24 In unison (*'In U. N. I., son'*); 27 Rae Bareli (*raeB/a reli/ Bear* turning, *reli* is semi-*reli/ gion*); 28 Icing; 29 Fits; 30 Rhythm King (*O P Nayyar*)

**DOWN:** 1 Veto (*Vet/o*, animal doctor *circular*); 2 Nargis-Raj; 3 Jonah (the five letters of *A John* rearranged is *Jonah*); 4 Imagine (*Imag/in/e*: *Image* written about *in*); 5 Antlers; 7 Porus; 8 Wasim Akram; 9 Overnice (*Over/ Nice*); 14 Steffi Graf (*Fast if Ferg*, the 10 letters of *Steffi Graf* rearranged); 16 *Upanyaas* (*UPA/nyaas*); 18 Mussolini *mu(S Soli)ni*; 20 Sailesh (Mukherjee), later an interior decorator/*Sailesh* is the 7 letters of *Ila she's* rearranged; 21 Tourist (*To/Uri/St*: To Gagarin Street); 23 Alert (5 letters of *later* rearranged is *alert*); 25 Idiom (*id/i/oM*: Modi got up around I (one)); 26 A gag

## SOLUTIONS TO BRAIN GYM

### SAY IT AGAIN

1. Beware of the dog
2. Beside himself
3. Blow the whistle
4. Better late than never
5. Bed of roses

### MUMBO JUMBO

Poodle  
Samoyed  
Dalmation  
Labrador  
Beagle

Final answer: Dog breeds

## MATH CHALLENGE

6	X	4	/	2	12
X		-		+	
9	+	8	X	3	33
+		-		X	
7	+	5	X	1	12
61		-9		5	

## SYLLACROSTIC!

IGNORE  
GEMINI  
NEMESIS  
ORB  
RECITAL  
ALIBI  
NEBULOUS  
COMPASS

Proverb: Ignorance is bliss

## SOLUTIONS TO SUDOKU

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

## SOLUTIONS TO KAKURO

	6	43	29	7	4			40	5
17	2	6	3	5	1		8	6	2
23	4	9	5	2	3		12	9	3
	7	5	2		13		5	6	2
	14	8	6		15		6	2	3
	18	1	9	6	2		16	9	7
	19	7	4	8		5	2	3	
13	9	4		27	8	9	7	1	2
8	5	3		28	2	7	5	8	6



## WE GO 50 YEARS BACK IN TIME

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# CLEARVIEW

This is the 50th anniversary of the progressive spectacle lens, or the progressive addition lens (PAL), which was first launched in 1959 by French company Essilor under its Varilux brand. Also known as varifocal or no-line bifocal lenses, they are used to correct presbyopia—the decreasing ability to focus on objects. The lenses

were the brainchild of Bernard Maitenaz, an engineer who went on to become CEO of Essilor. Though the product is now manufactured by many companies, Varilux lenses remain the preferred choice of ophthalmologists world over. According to Essilor, it has sold about 300 million lenses till date, with 20 new lens wearers being added every minute.

### THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: JULY 1959

- On 3 July 1959, Wimbledon saw its first champion from South America, when Alex Olmedo of Peru—also nicknamed 'The Chief'—won the men's singles title after beating Australia's Rod Laver.
- On 4 July 1959, The Cayman Islands became a crown colony of the British Empire.
- On 7 July 1959, Venus passed between Earth and the star Regulus at 1428 GMT, providing astronomers an opportunity to learn more about the planet.
- On 15 July 1959, more than 500,000 steelworkers walked off the job as the United Steelworkers of America called the largest strike in American history.

# Experience

## A second childhood

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the magazine



## “Work at achievable goals and start a movement only if you have the will to sustain it.”

**Indrani Malkani, 54,** *for launching a unique school bus service that reduces traffic congestion*



Vilas Kalgutkar

**I**ndrani Malkani is out to change the world one deed at a time. When the home-maker noticed the severe traffic congestion near The Cathedral & John Connon School in Mumbai's busy Fort area, she decided to find out why. She discovered that only 24 per cent of the students used the school bus service. Parents preferred to use their vehicles to drop their children because the buses often took long-winding routes. Malkani got to work on an efficient, safe and secure bus service. She studied the distribution of lanes and bylanes to chalk out a route. She then worked with school authorities to shortlist bus operators based on their quality of service and drew up an agreement of rules, violation of which drew a penalty. In 2002, Malkani launched the Model School Bus Service in collaboration with the school. The software-based service engages 52 GPS-enabled buses that can be tracked by the school authorities. With the participation of traffic police, cars were disallowed from entering the approach lane to the school, thereby reducing congestion. Today, over 95 per cent of the students use the service and the transport model is being replicated by other schools in Mumbai. Malkani—a keen traveller and a licensed pilot—formed the advanced locality management team in her upscale Malabar Hill neighbourhood; persuaded municipal authorities to make provisions for a demarcated hawkers' zone in the area; helped beautify Chowpatty beach; and helped implement an efficient dry and wet waste disposal system in 2000 in collaboration with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai.

—Chenelle Rodrigues



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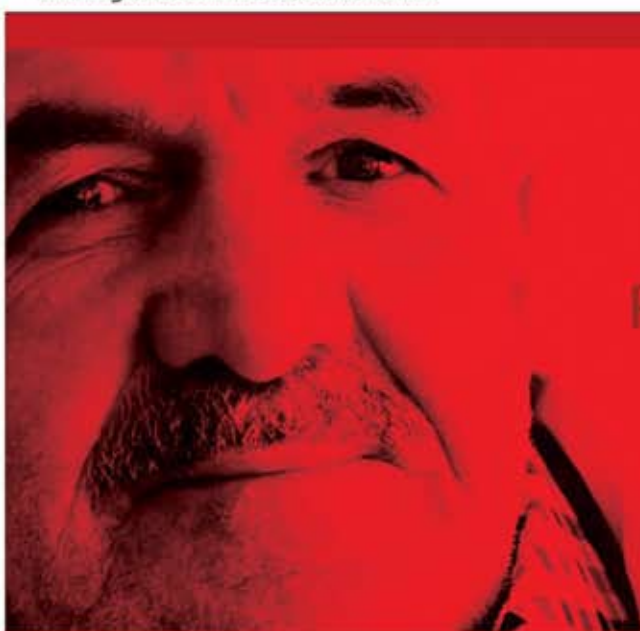
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