

harmony

celebrate age



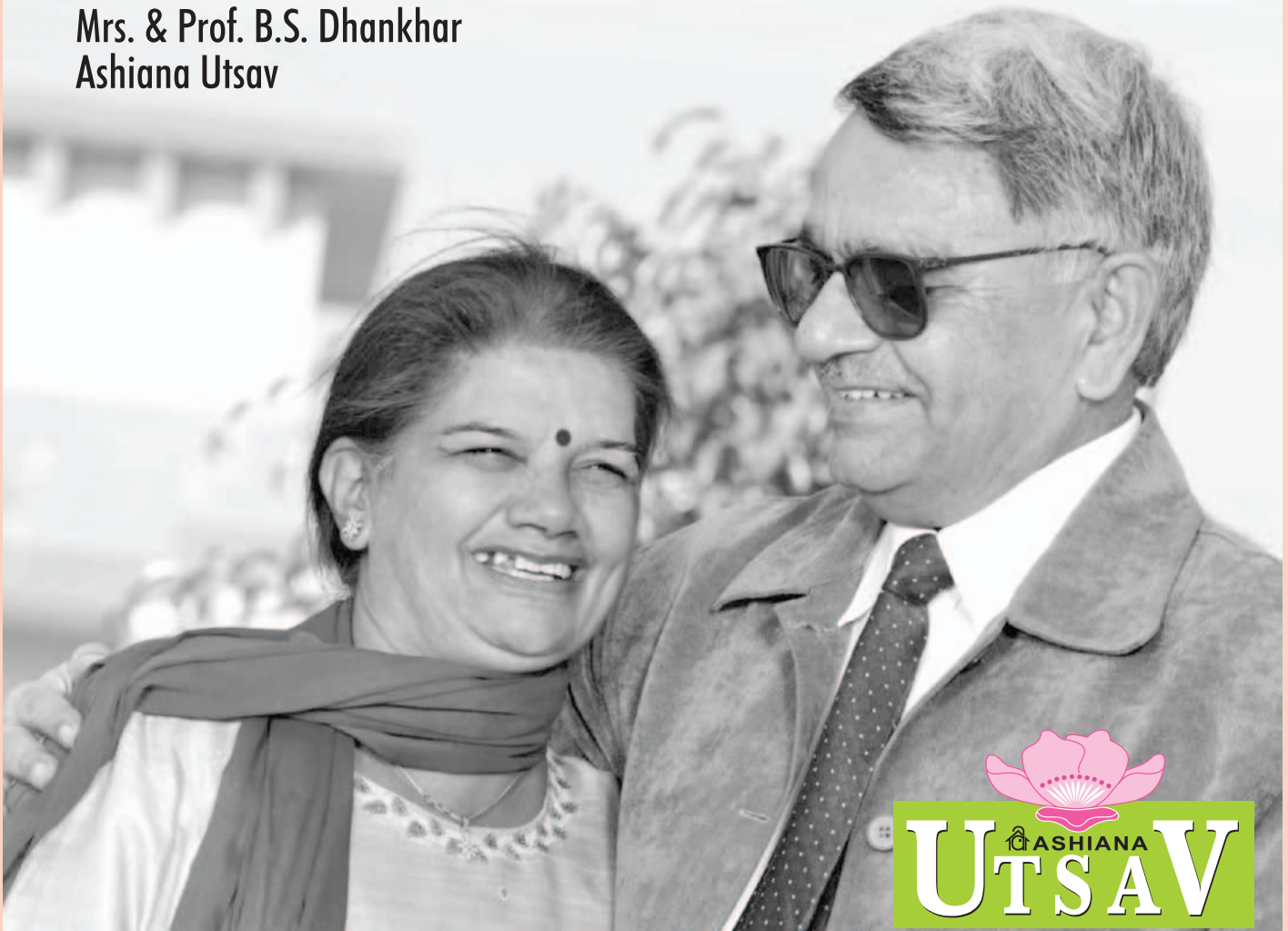
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WE ARE



TWO YEARS. AND THEY'VE been good. As *Harmony* celebrates its second anniversary, there's so much to look back on with pride.

When the Harmony Initiative first took concrete shape in June 2004, our stated aim was to improve the quality of life of India's elderly by bringing their problems to centre-stage and creating a nationwide movement in which 'silvers'—our coinage for 'seniors'—come together to forge a common identity and speak forcefully with one voice. It was an ambitious ask—but we are getting there.

People are beginning to sit up and take notice of silvers, and *Harmony*. Our three 5 km runs in January 2005 (Mumbai), October 2005 (New Delhi) and January 2006 (Mumbai), organised in tandem with the Standard





ritu nanda

(From left) *Aging Advances* featuring the Harmony run; delegates at the Pune conference on elder abuse; Harmony's first monograph

Chartered Mumbai Marathon and the Hutch Delhi Half-Marathon, got silvers on the front pages of newspapers in a determined and exuberant show of strength. It wasn't just India that paid attention. The Spring 2006 issue of *Aging Advances*, a magazine published by the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), featured a report on the 5 km run at the Mumbai Marathon on its cover.

Another defining moment for us came in April 2006, when International Longevity Centre in Pune invited Harmony to co-host a three-day workshop on 'International Perspectives on Elder Abuse'. The workshop was attended by over 100 participants—including experts from Australia, Singapore, Israel, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia and India—and

gave us a chance to draw this serious concern to the eyes of media and government.

Elder abuse is just one of the focus areas of the Harmony Initiative's first monograph, *Ageing in India in the 21st Century: A Research Agenda—Priority Areas and Methodological Issues*, which we launched in March 2006. Authored by Dr S Siva Raju, vice-president, Research & Training, Harmony, it aims to bring attention to concerns relating to ageing in India and suggest alternate approaches to study these issues. The monograph has been widely circulated to students, researchers, policy makers and leaders of business and public affairs, and we are convinced it can make a real difference in the way Indian society views—and studies—its elderly.

But to truly make a difference on a large canvas, it is essential to start small—at home. "My children were not bad but there were times when I wished they were more sensitive to my needs," wrote Girija Rao, a *Harmony* reader (see 'Response'). "But after reading your magazine, they have become more caring and loving, sharing my joys and sorrows."

It is probably the richest compliment this magazine has received. Because it tells us that we have achieved in some small way what we set out to do. Yes, it's been a great two years. And, with your support, the best is yet to come.

Tina Ambani

A Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust Initiative

Harmony—Celebrate Age—June 2006 Volume 3 Issue 1

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Editorial & Marketing Offices: 4th Floor, Maker Chambers IV, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400021. Tel: 91-22-30325423 (Editorial), 30325472 (Marketing).

Email: contact.mag@harmonyindia.org Printed and published by Anthony Jesudasan on behalf of Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust, 505, Dalamal

House, 5th Floor, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400021. Printed at Thomson Press India Ltd, 18-35 Milestone, Delhi-Mathura Road, Faridabad (Haryana)

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column one

June 2006 marks the second anniversary of *Harmony*. But there's more to celebrate than numbers.

On top of the list is success in emphatically travelling on the road to improve and empower lives of silvers in India. *Harmony* has done that through its content—we have been your storyteller, special newspaper, radio and television, bringing news, views, features and fun, tailored for you. In addition, we threw in surprises and special issues.

This month's special: The theme of 'Two'; to showcase it we have foregone some of our regular features, which will return next month. For the first section, 'Two Lives', we have chosen some wonderful seniors who live their lives twice over. They are dual achievers who sustain themselves through a regular job or business and yet have a second life to call their own. This encourages them to go out and do that something 'extra' to put a spring in their step—in some cases literally.

The second section, 'Take Two', is a recap of the past year. There's research, policies, trends, products, gizmos, games, destinations, books, films—our pick of the two best from the past year—giving you a comprehensive guide.

Over the next few issues, you will see some changes in *Harmony*. While we'll stick to our promise of preserving and continuing the current spirit of your magazine, it will be much more vibrant and vital.

It's the least we can do for you. Keep reading!

—Meeta Bhatti

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Even as we in India have made a mark on the globe as a reservoir of intellectual capital, as a Nation we are grappling with “quality of life” challenges. More so, in the hinterland, where poverty is a ground reality. To address these larger issues, we work in tandem with the Government, the District Authorities and NGOs. Our work is carried out under the aegis of The Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives & Rural Development, spearheaded by Mrs. Rajashree Birla. In over 3,700 villages, we reach out to 5 million people, in proximity to our plants. Our 150-strong team endeavours with missionary zeal to raise literacy levels, take health-care to the hut-step of the villagers, train them to eke out a sustainable livelihood, empower women, provide basic amenities and espouse social reform.

Developing model villages forms part of our strategy. This entails ensuring self-reliance in all aspects, and helping village development reach a stage wherein communities take over and we move on to replicate the model village project in other parts of the country. In the first phase we have zeroed in on 200 villages across the country. In a phased manner we aspire to cover all the villages we work in.

Slowly and silently our Group is trying to change the face of villages. From abject poverty to meeting the necessities of life. From dependence to freedom. From backwardness to progress, in more ways than one.

There is a palpable difference. Tens of thousands of villagers now seem self-assured, confident and happy at being able to move towards a sustainable livelihood. There is a new found dignity among them. For us, this is a way of living our values. A way of transcending the conventional barriers of business to send out a message that “we care”.





In the twilight years of my life, at 68, I have fallen in love with *Harmony*! It's varied, yet has similar undertones running through all the articles. The magazine serves as an eye-opener for children and forces them to come to terms with the gnawing loneliness faced by their parents.

Here's my own example. My son and daughter were not bad to me. But still there were times when I wished they could be a little more polite and more sensitive to my needs, like the desire for their company. I don't exaggerate at all when I tell you that after reading the articles in your magazine month after month, my children have become more caring and loving, sharing my joys and sorrows, taking trouble to make me feel important and wanted.

This has rekindled my zest for life and life has become worth living again. All this because of the amazing change in their behaviour, brought about primarily by *Harmony*. A golden hue now permeates my silver years, making me feel secure. What more could I ask for?

GIRIJA RAO

New Delhi

The letter of the month wins a gift from Vimal



class and elite. Considering that writers in India have always been reluctant to churn out books for children, Pai's work comes as a breath of fresh air.

ARVIND K PANDEY

Allahabad

*H*armony considers people above 55 'silvers' or senior citizens. I don't think this is correct. Most healthy men and women, except those who suffer from major ailments or face unfortunate family situations, remain quite active and energetic till 70. My father, who passed away two years ago at 97, always used to say that a person remains fit to work till 70. I am 67 and I feel the same way as do most of my friends, who are as old as me. Even sexually, those over your stipulated 55-year age-limit remain active for long. So treating them as old is unfair. In my opinion, the right age for categorising an individual as 'senior' or 'silver' should not be less than 65. Also, when you

write about senior achievers, please ensure that they are not less than 75. Only then will readers be inspired. Your story on Dev Anand is a case in point, and an inspiring choice.

DR CHIRANJIT PARMAR

Mandi, Himachal Pradesh

You are right when you say that those over 55 are active till 70. We may classify our readership as people over 55, but that doesn't mean we are branding them 'old' or 'worn out'. On the contrary, *Harmony* urges readers to celebrate age. The lower age bracket helps us reach a wider audience, an audience that can help build a positive society for silvers.

—Editors

I am in my 66th year and have lived a fulfilling life, in spite of several ups and downs. My passion for life has always kept me going and I treat life as a gift, to be treasured, cherished, and be thankful for.

I enjoyed "The Story Teller", your cover story on Anant Pai in May 2006. It's not easy to establish a rapport with children trapped in the charm of gadgets. Pai's potent combination of writing skills and rich imagination has allowed him to win them over. He seems to have first-hand experience of a child's psyche, which has enabled him to weave one story after another. Indeed, his comic strips have entertained a wide cross-section of children belonging to both the middle

I lost my husband more than 20 years ago in a road accident. My two sons live with their families in Singapore, following their dreams, and I have chosen to live here in Pune, on my own, indulging in all that brings me peace, fulfilment, and a sense of achievement. In my own small way, I try to educate the elderly about the importance of living life to the fullest. After all, old age is not a disease, but a normal phase of life. The best way to live it is by being useful to others in need. I even coach them against elder abuse, which is a deplorable aspect of society. Writing poetry is another hobby that keeps me going. Here are the lines of one of my own poems:

*There's much I have to offer, much I'd like to share,
Life's so full of action, there's much I'd like to try,
Isn't it a pity then, to just let days go by?"*

JONAKI BHATTACHARYA
Pune



I was delighted to see the article "Piece by Piece" in your May issue on my hobby of quilt making. I bought *Harmony* off a news stand but I have noticed that *Harmony* is not yet well known in Pune. I think it would be a good idea to send copies of your magazine to some libraries

in the city, like the United Services Library in Poona Club, or Crossword bookstore. In case you get inquiries about quilt making, please forward them to me.

TARA DEO

Pune

We will look into the easy availability of the magazine in Pune bookstores. We will also forward you any queries on quilt making.

—Editors

Let me congratulate you on your magazine. We got a free subscription when my husband bought our new Maruti car. Both of us enjoy *Harmony* very much. I read Shabana Azmi's article on air travel and I thought this was a good enough time to share the bitterness I experienced with Indian Airlines!

In July 2000, my husband turned 60 and we decided to celebrate his birthday at Kollur temple with my son, who was stationed in Kosovo. He was not sure whether he could make it. But being sentimental I wanted him to come, so we bought his tickets and forced him to make the journey with only about seven to 10 days off. He travelled two nights in a row. Our tickets to Mangalore and back were also booked. On the day of our departure, the airport called us to say the flight was delayed and that we should report to the airport only at 8.30 am. The call came just as we were leaving our home at 4 am. When we reached the airport at 8 am, we were told that out of the 17 passengers on the flight, 14 had been accommodated elsewhere and we were left without any option of proceeding on our journey. Though they gave us a ticket for the following

day, it didn't help—we wanted to visit the temple on my husband's birthday. My son had come to be with us in the midst of his work and we had spent Rs 50,000 for his ticket (a huge amount for us seniors). So, I went to the consumer court. The case was filed in consumer court. Our lawyer charged us Rs 6,000 fee. We were asking for a compensation of Rs 50,000 each for the stress and disappointment caused to us plus reimbursement of the amount of my son's ticket, which we had spent from our old age savings.

After a long-drawn court battle (it took five years), the court passed a judgement in our favour—Rs 10,000 for the "mental agony caused by the airlines". I told my lawyer that the legal battle gave me more mental agony than the case itself! And the airline got away without even a dent. We were told we could appeal, but for what? Another five years of mental agony?

LALITHA SHANKAR

Chennai

My daughter, who has been married for the past 15 years, still keeps in touch with her old school friends. When she comes for a holiday to Delhi, she meets them. I think it's a great way to rejuvenate yourself. I am 77 years old and recently attended a get-together of my own college. I found myself the oldest among the whole group. In spite of my age, everyone complimented me on my looks. It made me happy. It also helped me realise that happiness in old age is not about the wealth you have acquired but the health you've looked after!

SARLA LALL

New Delhi

I thought I should share my experience with *Harmony* readers. Last year in March, I was flying to Singapore from Delhi. The seat next to mine was empty. About 45 minutes after we were airborne, a young man came and occupied the vacant seat next to me. I asked him, "Where have you been so far?" He smiled and replied he was sitting with two

elderly ladies and had noticed that I was sitting alone, so he shifted. He assured I wouldn't be disturbed. We chatted for a while and then I dozed off. The young man woke me up saying, "Aunty, *so gaye kya?* (Have you gone off to sleep?)" I stared at him with a questioning look. He handed me something, "Aunty, *yeh aap ke liye* (this is for you)." He was giving

me a gift. I was surprised, and refused "I can't accept it," I said. His face betrayed disappointment. He said, "*Beta (son) bola na.* So you can't refuse." My age reminded him of his own mother. She was brutally murdered by their servant seven years ago. The incident left me teary-eyed.

ANU ANAAND
Jagraon, Chandigarh

AN INVITATION FROM HARMONY



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 - You have a funny or insightful anecdote about your grandchildren
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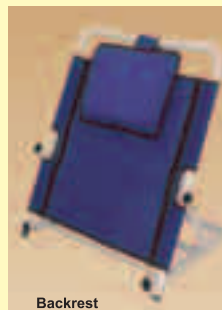
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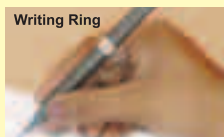
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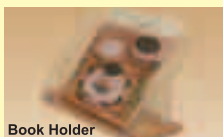
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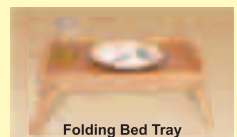
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RAM BHERWANI

Two choices

Shabana Azmi tells you how and when to say 'no'

We all know how to say 'yes'. What we don't know is when, and how, to say 'no'. As if with age we have lost the ability to swing our

head sideways. In fact, we find it easier to say no to ourselves than our employers, children, friends and relatives. We want to please everyone, so we take on additional assignments, and give in to our loved ones staking unreasonable claim on our time, money and energy.

Saying 'no' is a matter of practice, and your self-esteem. So think before committing to anyone. Ask yourself if this is what *you* want, and assure yourself that you are not doing it unless you want to—saying 'yes' should not be the result of mindless compliance. You may want to do it for love, personal enhancement and even as a one-time gesture. But if you don't, you can decline with grace and love. After all, no one knows more than you what is best for you.

Don't say 'yes' and regret it later. Also, don't say 'yes' because you agreed to something last time. Your last reaction shouldn't be misinterpreted as a stand taken. Don't let the other person confuse commitment with consistency.

Saying 'no' is a different realm, though. It takes confidence to draw the line between love and self-love and it takes power to decline. An understanding of your family dynamics, of a changing society and markets will help you with your decisions. Knowledge will allow you to be more discerning and make the right decisions.

My mother, for instance, keeps herself abreast with changing times through television and newspapers. She knows who to hang up the phone on, when to

politely decline a sales pitch and when to say 'no' to a favour demanded by a friend or relative. She knows her mind—it comes from being in tune with the world.

We all tend to believe the sales pitches we hear; we are less discerning about their merits and sometimes believe that we actually stand a good chance to win a lottery or a lucky draw. So we fall prey to high-pressure sales tactics, bogus prize offers, get-rich-quick schemes, get-thin-quick schemes, travel packages, charitable solicitations, connen asking for our bank account numbers and, in extreme cases, physical, emotional and financial elder abuse.

Another form of abuse, which is more subtle and hard to pin down, is ageism. As hurtful as sexism and racism are, ageism goes beyond sex and gender and trashes our needs and continuing contributions to society in areas as varied as pension, healthcare, housing and employment. Ageism objectifies and belittles us by making us

wait for our pensions, denying us special care in hospitals, by refusing us loans or even medical insurance and by asking us to leave the jobs we hold because we are past our prime.

Shouldn't you be saying a united 'no' to all this? Don't be afraid. Your voice will be stronger in greater numbers.

It takes confidence to draw the line between love and self-love and it takes power to say 'no'

Empower yourself and each other and speak out against anything that disturbs you. On an individual level, call the nearby police station if you feel threatened by any situation I have described in this column. What you must not do is let life slide past without saying anything. Your silence may not be the best thing for you. Confounded by a decision, don't leave it up to fate. You have the power to choose. Make the right choice.

Shabana Azmi, 55, is an actor, activist and former Rajya Sabha MP

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No time to age

Mahasweta Devi is firmly focused on life and her work

I crossed 80 in January this year, but as yet I have not found the time to stop. So I will write a few words based on myself as I am the person I know best. I will try to explain why I say that I am too busy to think of ageing.

I am a professional writer. For years, I have been writing field reports on tribals, the forest, the plight of common people, people's right to the basic human rights to food, water, electricity, schools, etc, etc. Till 2003, I travelled extensively to villages. It would take pages to explain my involvement with tribals but I surely want to refer to the 'denotified tribes of India'. Note the word 'denotified'. I am talking of nomadic tribes of India who, in 1871, were notified by the British as 'born criminals'. In West Bengal, I came across the Lodha tribals of Midnapur and Kheria Sabar tribals of Purulia. I have been fighting for them from 1978. Once branded as 'criminal tribes', the Government of India declared them as 'denotified'.

The stigma persisted. Such tribals all over the country, numbering about six crore, underwent many atrocities. We have built up strong organisations for them that continue to function.

In 1998, Dr G N Devy invited me to Vadodara to give a talk on (anthropologist) Dr Verrier Elwin. Bhasha Parishad, an institute for tribal languages, arranges this lecture every year. Bhasha has also built the first tribal academy at Tejgarh, near Vadodara. There, I talked of the plight of the denotified tribals of India. After that, the Denotified and Nomadic Tribes' Right Action Group (DNT-RAG), an all India organisation, was born. We reported atrocities on tribals to the National Human Rights Commission. That work still continues. Tribal women don't depend on their sons for livelihood. They work hard on their tiny

agricultural land, fetch water, tend to their cattle... There is no concept of retirement in their community. They have a better concept of bequeathing wealth though. I remember 60-plus Karmi Soren of Tulibar, Midnapur. An agriculture labourer, she owned a tiny hut and a small piece of land. Just before her death, she donated her property not to her only son but to the community. Eventually, Tulibar's first primary school was built there. It was aptly named Karmi Soren Memorial Junior High School.

On 1 May 1981 we held the first bonded labourer *chowpal* or *sammelan* in Daltonganj, the district headquarters of Palamau, Jharkhand. Rameshwaram, a local journalist, arranged everything. Thousands of bonded labourers, Muslims, Dalit and Adivasi came in a procession. We meet the district commissioner, and handed over our memorandum.

I have remained involved with people's problems, especially women. I would like to mention the 1980s, when I came to know that women were kept in Kolkata jails for years as 'non-criminal lunatic'

women. Of course, they were not lunatics. I visited them, wrote about them for Bengali newspapers.

Thanks to the cooperation from the state ministry and prison authorities and legal help cells, these women were released and rehabilitated in their families and women's homes.

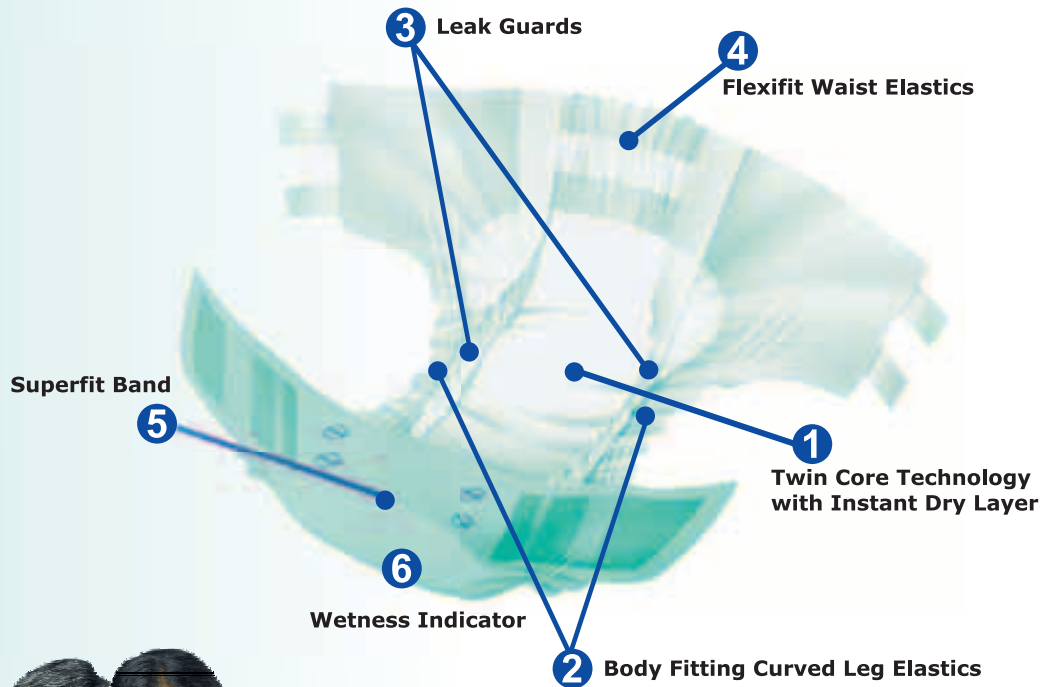
Although now I can no longer do what I did 20 years ago, people still come to me all the time with

their complaints, and I try to do what I can. When can I take the time to think of age, disability, pressure of work?

It is true that I cannot travel much these days. But I find no resignation in me. I want to work and work. Life has been too absorbing. I refuse to think of death too soon. After all, I am only 80-plus. Not old, really.

**I find no resignation
in me. I want to
work and work.
Life has been too
absorbing**

Magsaysay Award winner (1997) Mahasweta Devi, 80, is a Bengali novelist and a tribal activist



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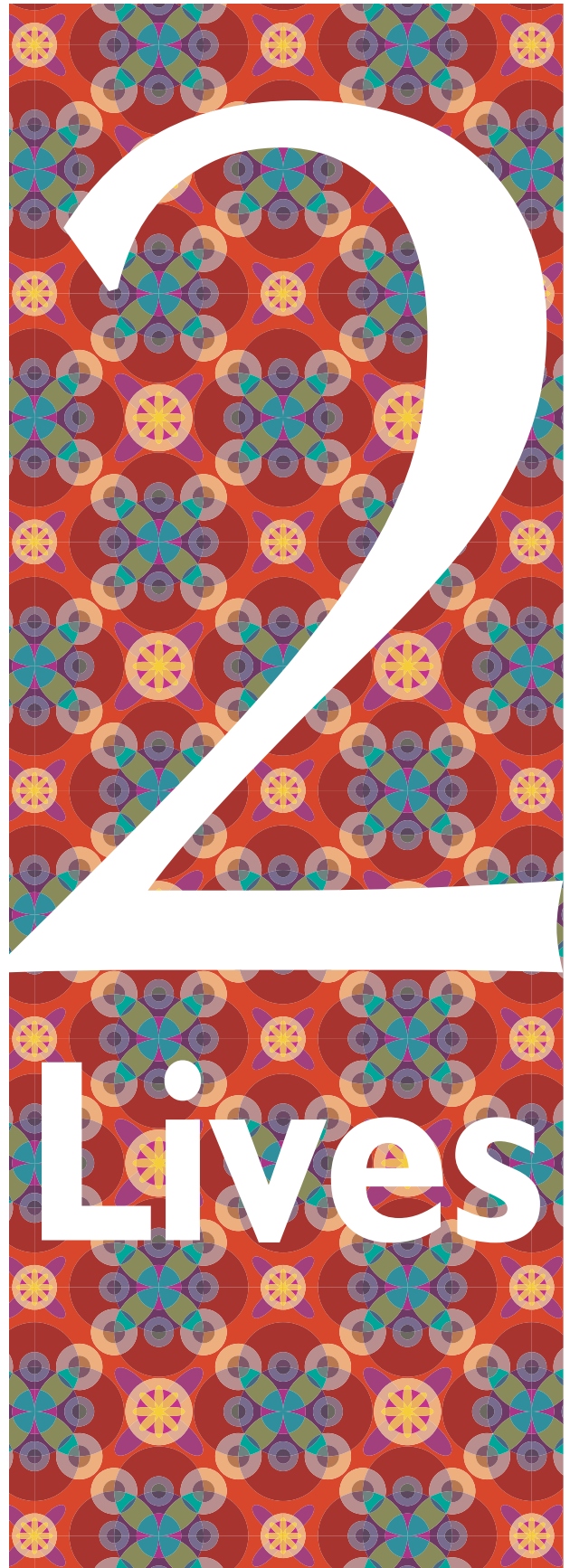
Many people are content with the treadmill that is everyday life—one track, one career, one frame of reference, one identity. There are others, though, who say ‘no’ to ‘one’. They want a life that is twice as rich, literally. This month, *Harmony* salutes these multi-tasking silvers who are playing a second innings of sorts, some while still at work, and others after retirement.

“It’s good to pursue your passion and make a living out of it,” says Mumbai-based doctor Sudhir Patwardhan, 56, whose life had two focuses—medicine and art—until recently. In 2005, he gave up his three-decade long career as radiologist to devote himself to his paintings. Dr M Sambasivan, 70, is a practising neurosurgeon at a hospital in Thiruvananthapuram. When he is out of the OT, he replenishes his inner resources by conducting *puja* at temples. “There’s a method in both science and religion,” he believes, “and we should look into the scriptures to find it.” His two spheres of living—one firmly rooted to the rational and the other following the spiritual and intangible—is his way to stay connected with this world and beyond.

There are some who have overcome hurdles—physical or otherwise—to continue doing what they love best. Take 66 year-old Ved Sharma from Amritsar. The former employee of the Railways had a sporadic romance with theatre till he was 51. Just when he was ready to focus on his plays, a paralytic stroke left his speech slurred. It didn’t stop him, though. With help from his daughter Vandana, a nurse, Sharma got back where he wanted to be—under the spotlights—after two years of recovery.

Indeed, life is not always easy for those bent on pursuing these double lives. Money is often a problem; another is separation from their families. But they take it in their stride. Chandrakant Patel, a 53 year-old bank manager from Baroda, goes on long treks every year and “doesn’t really care what it takes in terms of time, money and energy. It is all well spent”. Wife Rajeshree had a tough time understanding “this strange kind of passion” in the early years of their marriage. Then, she joined him once on a trek—and understood.

Harmony joins Patel and other spirited men and women like him from 14 cities, who live life two at a time, in order to listen, learn and understand. Join us.



Chandrakant Patel⁵³, Vadodara

BANKER

TREKKER

For this bank manager, being at **one** with nature and getting in touch with the **inner self** is the most rewarding experience



RAHUL GAJJAR



Some say life becomes harder as you climb higher. Chandrakant S Patel wouldn't agree—altitude gives the 53 year-old a sense of freedom. A manager at Bank of Baroda, Patel is an avid trekker.

He went on his first trek in 1978 through Kholi Pass, near Manali, with the Youth Hostels Association of India, and was hooked. From then on, Patel went trekking in the Himalaya. He struck a friendship with five to six trekkers who decided to trek together every year. In 1989, while soaking in the beauty of the snow-clad Himalaya mountains, they decided to start a children's adventure club. They called it Adventure Activities Promoters (AAP). Today, the number of trekkers from Gujarat joining AAP is the highest in the country. So far, Patel has introduced over 10,000 youngsters to the Himalaya.

Patel's man-management skills help him manage trekkers on expeditions, which last for 15 days but take almost a year of planning. "Being at one with nature and getting in touch with your inner self is the most rewarding experience," says Patel, who also takes part in adventure activities in the Himalaya, such as white water rafting, skiing and paragliding. All these require stamina and Patel builds it with a daily game of badminton (he represents Bank of Baroda in the lower leagues of badminton tournaments). He also takes BKS Iyengar yoga classes, and is now an instructor.

But age is catching up with him, and this has pushed him to groom younger leaders to keep the activities going. "Mountaineering is my life," he says. "I don't care what it takes in terms of time, money and energy. It is all well spent." Thankfully, his friends and family—wife Rajeshree and daughters Vidisha and Priyam—share his passion. To his young trekkers, Patel is 'C S Uncle'. Jahnavi, daughter of *gutkha* baron Rasiklal Dhariwal, joined Patel on a trek five years ago. She roughed it out just like everyone else—there is no compromise on discipline. "He energises his team mates," says Patel's colleague Rekha Desai, who has gone on more than five treks with him. For his part, Patel says, "Being with enthusiastic kids keeps me youthful too!"

—Sandhya Gajjar

Shankar Melkote 67, Hyderabad



CEO

ACTOR

Both his
preoccupations
have helped instil
discipline and
tolerance in himself
as well as
broadened his
perspectives

SOMA ANAND KUMAR

Shankar Melkote loves acting. He finds it more real than reality, and says it suits his outgoing nature. Melkote, CEO of a marketing company in Hyderabad, has been acting for the past 50 years. "Both preoccupations have instilled discipline and tolerance in me and have helped broaden my perspectives," says Melkote who acted in college plays before bagging comic cameos in Telugu films and television serials. Filmmakers thought he had the talent for Telugu cinema and Melkote thought he had the energy to hold a job and, at the same time, make time to act.

Soon he had blockbusters like *Nuvve Kavali*, *Anand*, *Santosham* and *Manmadhudu* to speak of. "Though my wife Rama sometimes complains that I don't have the time for running domestic errands," he says, adding that her grudge is justified as, in addition to a regular '48 hours a week' job, he spends about eight hours a week shooting and more in theatre-related activities. "But it's light-hearted banter and she understands that if I don't act I will fall apart," says the actor, who is now addicted to the professional recognition his 9-5 job brings and the appreciation he gains from his larger-than-life role.

—S Vani

Arvind Soni dreads Sundays—he has too much time on his hands. The retired combat engineer of the Indian Army, who has a 12-hour daily work schedule, would rather be lecturing his students on personality development or coaching them for the Services Selection Board (SSB) exams. Besides conducting daily personality development workshops—for 10 hours—at Cerebral Heights Institute at Geeta Bhavan Square in Indore, he spends his mornings coaching SSB aspirants for two hours.

A couple of years before his retirement in 1995, Soni was on the selection board of SSB. The experience sparked an interest in him to train aspiring soldiers. Disillusioned students, who have failed their exams or face other problems, come to him for help. He

counsels them and motivates them to tackle their exams, and life, with renewed confidence. “It’s a treat to groom them and put the spring back on their feet,” says the colonel.

It keeps him on his toes too. “When I return home after a hard day’s work, I am happy,” he says. “But I am happier when I go to work. If my work is taken away from me, there would be a great void in my life. After all, it’s all about directing human minds. It’s a challenge I love to take on,” he adds as an afterthought. Soni says his constant interaction with youngsters has helped broaden his own vision. “Today, I watch a fashion show on TV with a young boy’s eyes,” he says with a twinkle in his eye. “Of course, the perception is different!”

—Madhu Nahta

Col Arvind K Soni 60, Indore



SUBHANDU DUBE

SSB COACH

PERSONALITY ADVISOR

Training aspiring soldiers and counselling disillusioned students keeps him on his toes

Dr M Sambasivan 70, Thiruvananthapuram

NEUROSURGEON

PRIEST

Staying rooted
to the rational
and yet believing the
unexplained is
the neurosurgeon's
way to remain
connected with
science and
divinity



K NARAYANAN



Dr M Sambasivan does not favour substance over spirit. He recognises each in the other. A neurosurgeon who believes in divine power, Dr Sambasivan practices at the Cosmopolitan Hospital in Thiruvananthapuram during the day and on call, conducts *puja* and *havan* at the Satyavagheeswara temple of Karamana, Durga temple of Sreekandaswaram and the Mahaganapathy Temple in the city—monetary rewards from *puja* are used for philanthropic purposes. The former president of the Neurological Society of India and chairman of the Indian Institute of Scientific Heritage, Dr Sambasivan is the chairman of the advisory committee of the three temples.

His lawyer father, the late Mahadeva Iyer, initiated Dr Sambasivan into the world of Vedic learning in 1953. “I believe there’s a method in both science and religion,” he says. “But unless you look for it in the Vedas and *tantra*, you won’t find it. Apart from faith, it requires understanding.” Learning the scriptures and imbibing traditional values help raise concentration and perception, believes the doctor.

He also feels that divine intervention has helped him get success in his medical career. Dr Sambasivan claims to have performed the maximum number of aneurysm (an abnormal blood-filled stretching of a blood vessel or an artery resulting from disease of the vessel wall) surgeries in India at a time when everyone else was hesitant. He also devised a technique to operate posterior third-ventricular tumours—extremely complex brain surgery.

“My colleagues who watched me in action said it was as if I already knew what I was doing,” he says. “I believe it was nothing but blessing from heaven. “Call it extra-sensory perception or telepathy, there are incidents that happen and cannot be explained by science. So staying rooted to the rational and yet believing the unexplained is my way to remain connected with science and divinity.”

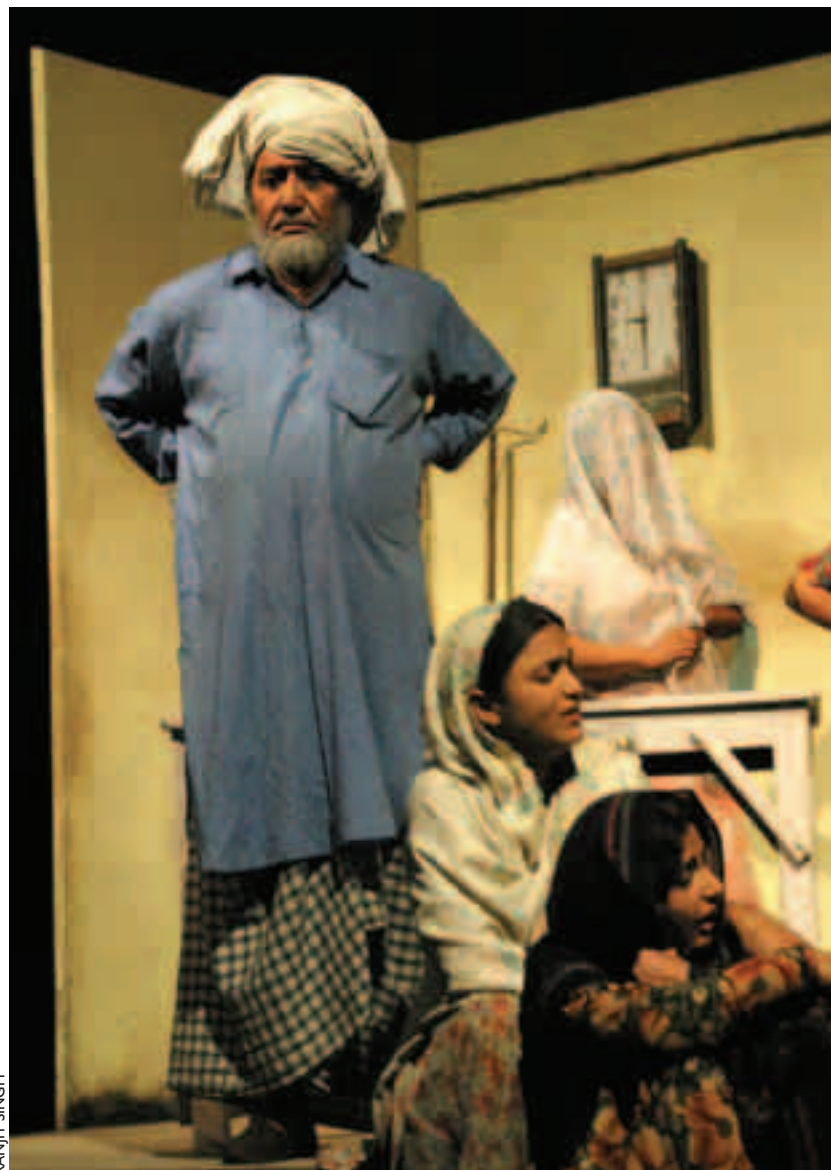
Now, Dr Sambasivan has furthered that connection, ensuring his two sons—Mahesh, a doctor, and Kumar, a management professional—learn the ancient scriptures.

—Naomi Narendran

Ved Sharma 66, Amritsar

RAILWAY EMPLOYEE
THEATRE ACTOR

The retired
Havaladar-Major
says he is a lousy
public
speaker, but put
him on a stage
and there's no
stopping him



RANJIT SINGH

Ved Sharma made his first stage appearance as a 17 year-old apprentice in the Railways in 1958. In the play, staged for 'Railway Week', Sharma played the female lead, a widow, with aplomb. It was the beginning of a life-long romance. "I am a lousy public speaker but put me on stage and there's no stopping me," he says.

Off stage, after 18 years in the Territorial Army division of the Railways, Sharma retired as Havaladar-Major in 1980. His career in theatre faced retirement too. In 1992, Sharma, then 51, was back on stage

when he joined a theatre group called *Manch Rangmanch*. A mild paralytic stroke in 1998 failed to keep him away from theatre. "I feel truly alive, mentally and physically, when I rehearse," says Sharma, who devotes three days a week to theatre.

There have been sticky moments too. "Once, I was rehearsing for a rather bold play dealing with man-woman relationships," he remembers. "When my wife Veena saw me in the 'arms' of another woman she was furious, but understood the situation later."

—Payal Khurana

Mitra Phukan knows all about dual roles. A vocalist in the genre of Hindustani classical music, she also writes fiction and translates books from Assamese to English. Her first novel in English (also the first by a northeastern writer), *The Collector's Wife*, was published last year by Penguin-Zubaan. "I enjoy the process of creating," says Phukan.

Phukan first sang on stage at the age of seven and has been performing on radio since she was 17. She started writing much later—her first collection of children's stories, *Mamoni's Adventure*, was published in 1986 by Children's Book Trust. A year later, it won her the UNICEF-CBT award for children's writing. Phukan's passions often intersect when her readers attend her concerts. A bachelor of music, she

has performed in several cities. Currently, she is involved with a Sangeet Natak Akademi project on traditional and regional music of India.

While she sees writing as a solitary preoccupation where she delves into her "inner resources and mental energy", Phukan describes her singing as a way to move other people by expending "considerable physical energy". She balances her two loves with her life as homemaker. "I am always available for my sons Rittique [24] and Rupam [he is 26 and recently moved to Bangalore after marriage]." Her biggest fan: businessman-husband Dilip. "This gives me time for *riyaz* in the morning and writing for a few hours after the *riyaz* and in the afternoon." She tells you her payback is a life that is (doubly) rich.

—Tapati Baruah Kashyap

Mitra Phukan 52, Guwahati



WRITER

SINGER

A vocalist of Hindustani classical music, she writes fiction and translates books from Assamese to English

Geeta Vasudevan ^{59, Chennai}

HISTORIAN

STUDY COORDINATOR

She 'awakens'
knowledge
through
cultural
heritage centre
Dakshinchitra and
Hayagriva Study
Circle, where
people **study**
the subjects they
have always
wanted to



PRASANNA VENKATESH



Passionate involvement is the key to all pursuits, believes Geeta Vasudevan. A PhD in ancient Indian history, Vasudevan is the author of *The Royal Temple of Rajaraja* (Abhinav Publications, 2003), a book on the most impressive monument of the Chola Dynasty. Her love for Indian history led her to promote cultural tourism through Dakshinchitra, a heritage centre set up in Chennai in 1991 to showcase traditional lifestyle in four villages in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. Here, she also created cultural programmes for visitors. Her zeal for learning—and encouraging the process in others—prodded her to establish the Hayagriva Study Circle, where people study the subjects they have always wanted to.

“Like my favourite poet, Robert Frost, I am not a teacher but an awakener,” she says. She believes Dakshinchitra helped her teach youngsters about community life and old crafts. Apart from taking visitors around the centre for a glimpse of the ‘Great Indian Show’, Vasudevan also introduced traditional meals at the heritage centre.

Then, she moved into a different zone of learning altogether. Inspired by the ‘Learning in Retirement’ courses so popular in the West, Vasudevan set up her own study circle on the same lines in September 2002. At the Hayagriva Study Circle, people between the age group of 20 to 80 years come to study their favorite subjects. The circle has completed 21 courses, including astronomy, temple architecture, gardening and art appreciation. Registration fee for every course is Rs 1,500 and the circle requires at least 15 to 20 participants per course to break even.

Initially, Vasudevan worked hard to make things work. Now, however, she has slowed down, working flexible hours—it is time to take a breather. “My interests have brought me the joy of recognition and I know what I am capable of achieving,” she says with pride. Vasudevan acknowledges the support of husband K Vasudevan, 66, friends and her two children, Prashant and Preeti (both are married and settled abroad), calling her work “the recipe for self-growth and success”.

—Mukta Hegde

Rameshwar Sharma 51, Bhopal



WIRELESS OPERATOR

MATCHMAKER

He does not see any
disconnect
between his **two**
lives; patriotism
and public
service go
hand-in-hand

MUJEEB FARUQUI

Rameshwar Sharma's house in Police Colony, off Bhadbhada Road in Bhopal, is easy to find—just follow the crowd in search of happily ever-afters. The wireless operator in the Madhya Pradesh Police Department has found fame as a matchmaker and wedding planner.

Sharma claims he has organised around 26,000 weddings, for free. "Sometimes, I even spend from my own pocket to arrange a marriage," he says. Sharma first 'arranged' a marriage when he was just 19—he matched the daughter of a distant relative

with a friend. Today, Sharma has a database of hundreds of personal coordinates that he matches on the basis of compatibility or horoscopes. He also counsels people on the evils of dowry, under-age marriages and overspending. Wife Shyamlatra holds the fort, meeting visitors, when Sharma is at work.

He doesn't see any disconnect between his two lives as a wireless operator and wedding planner. "They fulfil the motto of the Madhya Pradesh Police Department, 'Patriotism and Public Service'," he says.

—S Vani

Rama Tiwari's life became 'poetic' in 1987, after the birth of her first granddaughter Anviksha. She began scribbling a few lines of poetry in Hindi for Anviksha in the letters she wrote to her daughter Manisha in Delhi. Later, Tiwari sent some of these poems to *Rajasthan Patrika*, a noted Rajasthan daily. They got published and were an instant hit, just like her first book *Nanhi aur Nani*, a collection of children's poems in Hindi, published in 1997—later, it won her the prestigious Ratan Devi Sharma Smriti Puraskar.

Tiwari is also a translator. Proficient in Hindi, Rajasthani and English, she retired as a lecturer in English from Rajasthan's Government College in 1991. She translated Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* from English to Hindi in 2002, followed

by translations of R K Narayan's *Malgudi Days*, *The Guide* and *Swami and My Friends*. Currently, she's translating Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book* into Hindi. Tiwari credits her skills to genes—her late father Vishnu Dutt Sharma, former home commissioner of Rajasthan, was also a writer in Hindi, English and Rajasthani.

Today, Tiwari has 24 books—children's poems, short stories, novels, and translated works—to her credit. But the 66 year-old cherishes the experience of translating *Gitanjali* the most—she finished the translation in just 10 days. Her biggest reward: Her grandson Arnav (7), son Manoj's child, has an amazing vocabulary, and granddaughter Anviksha (18) has already started writing poetry.

—Dr Alka Sharma

Rama Tiwari 66, Jaipur



KAMAL JULKA

HINDI POET

TRANSLATOR

Proficient in
Hindi, Rajasthani
and English, she
is translating
Jungle Book
into Hindi

Maxwell Pereira 61, Delhi

DISTRESS CONSULTANT

OPERA SINGER

Pereira recalls how his **work** clung to him so much that he almost **forgot** to breathe. Then he **found** a **creative** outlet in **opera**



ANSHUMAN SEN



Delhi's former joint commissioner of police Maxwell Pereira is a hard man to define—the former cop who now runs a 'distress resolution consultancy' likes to spend his evenings singing opera. Really.

After three decades, Pereira retired from Delhi Police in 2004. He now lives in Gurgaon, from where he runs Maxwell Pereira Associates. "I used to get 10 to 20 calls a day from people facing various crises," he says. "So I floated my consultancy, which intervenes on behalf of clients, liaises with authorities like the police, and frees them from legal and bureaucratic wrangles." Pereira says the incessant ringing of phones is music to his ears. At night, though, a different kind of music takes him over when he performs with Capital City Minstrels, a 60-member amateur choir group.

Pereira joined the police force in search of new challenges. But soon the force became a prison in itself. He says work clung to him so much, he almost forgot to breathe. In 1971, desperate for a creative outlet, he formed a theatre group called Three Clubs in Delhi with venture capitalist Saurav Srivatava and restaurateur Govindam Ram. He also sang regularly at churches and parties. Forever trying to over-perform, Pereira's health and home suffered. He became hypertensive and started drifting away from wife Veronica, who left him in 1992.

During his posting to Delhi in 2000 as joint commissioner police (traffic), he signed up as bass singer with Capital City Minstrels (CCM), whose repertoire included masses, opera and the Blues. Pereira was appointed crisis manager of the ensemble, managing the idiosyncrasies of the artists, finding replacements and balancing the budget. "I am considered an ogre in CCM," he jokes. But he sings too. "I am not trained as a vocalist," he says a tad too modestly. Pereira has also written a book on sensational crimes of Delhi, to be published by Penguin. His latest assignment, though, is to play a quirky Army officer named Col Pinto in the Hindi version of the eponymous American cartoon serial, to be aired from June on Pogo and Cartoon Network. "It helps to bring out the child in me," he laughs.

—Teena Baruah

Col Murali S Naik 66, Pune



WELFARE OFFICER

AYURVEDIC HEALER

This **life** coach
helps ex-servicemen
stay **employed**
and people stay
healthy through
his **Ayurvedic**
herbs

HEMANT PATIL

As chairman of the Armed Forces Ex-Officers' Cooperative Society (AFEXCO), a body for retired defence personnel, Colonel (Retd) Murali S Naik supervises gainful employment for its members. Naik is also an Ayurvedic practitioner who prescribes medication for ailments ranging from kidney stones to asthma.

Working for ex-servicemen came naturally to Naik after his retirement in 1992. But he also wanted to indulge his passion for Ayurveda. His interest in Ayurveda was stirred in 1965 when, on a posting to

Nagaland, he saw people using herbs for healing. "I started reading ancient texts on this alternative therapy," says the soft-spoken colonel, who doesn't charge any fee for treatment, though the herbs cost money. "To save expenses, whenever I visit my village in Karnataka, I explore the forests there and pick up useful herbs," says Naik, who wakes up at 6 am, works for eight hours at AFEXCO and two hours at the clinic. "For the nature of my two lives, I am sometimes perceived as a life coach, and that keeps me motivated."

—Monisha Naik-Singh

At a loss for words in Bangalore? Join B V Raghavan's Kannada class. A deputy manager in a public-sector undertaking, Raghavan teaches for two to three hours every evening. His students include bureaucrats, doctors, students, foreign nationals and their wives, and silvers too. The class itself is all fun. Raghavan, fondly called Kannada *meshtroo* (teacher) by his students, coaxes them to speak the language. He begins with conversational Kannada, then moves on to the script—it's a difficult way of teaching, as it requires proficiency in both English and the regional language.

For Raghavan, though, it's a breeze. Urged by his father Venkatpathy since he was young to use free time constructively, he has always pursued Kan-

nada with a passion. Raghavan trained at the Department of Kannada and Culture in Bangalore as a teacher. Also trained in computers and public relations—skills he uses in his day job—he got a diploma in Kannada journalism from Kannada Sahitya Parishad, Bangalore. Raghavan first started teaching the language in 1973 at the Bangalore Tamil Sangham. In 1990, he set up the Kannada Prasara Parishad in Bangalore. Money is not the motivation. "We charge a modest fee to take care of the rent, watchman, course material and coffee."

On the home front, Raghavan and his wife Vijayalakshmi, 41, a botany lecturer in a local college, live in a rented house. But Raghavan couldn't be bothered. "I love what I do," he says.

—Mukta Hegde

B V Raghavan 52, Bangalore



ABHIJIT GHOSH

MANAGER

KANNADA TEACHER

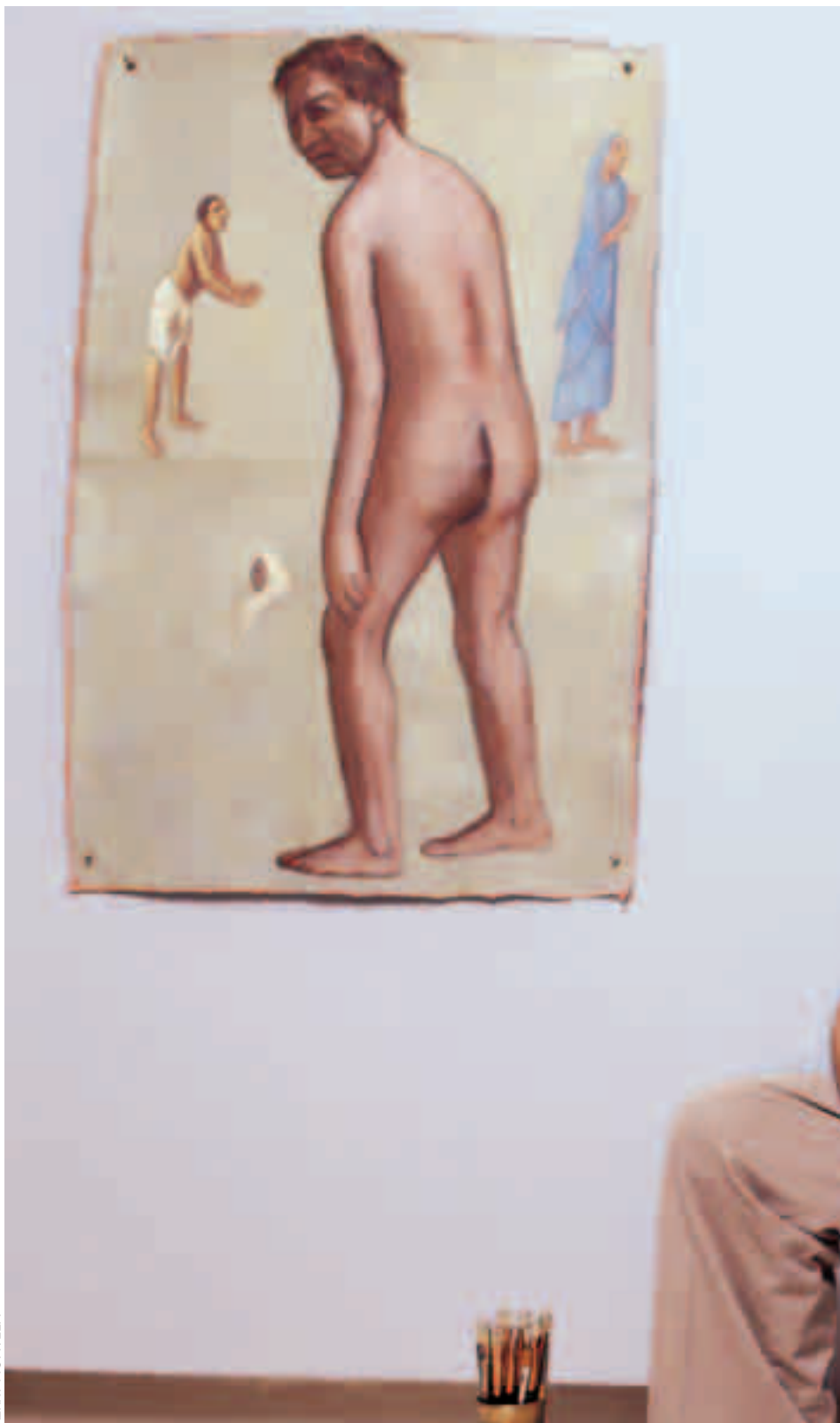
After hours, this senior manager in a public-sector company teaches people how to speak Kannada

Dr Sudhir Patwardhan 56, Mumbai

RADIOLOGIST

PAINTER

He believes
both technology
and art are soaring
exercises
of human
imagination



KERRY MONTEEN



For three decades, Dr Sudhir Patwardhan not just followed but went that extra mile with two different careers. A former radiologist, Patwardhan is also a renowned painter. From 1974 to 2004, before and between eight hours at his x-ray clinic in Thane, he spent about five hours at his studio, near his clinic.

“It’s good to be able to pursue your passion and make a living out of it,” says Patwardhan, whose first painting, *Irani Restaurant*, inspired by the commercial areas of Thane, was sold in 1979. A contemporary of legendary artists Bhupen Kakkar and Gulam Sheikh, Patwardhan paints cityscapes and charcoal portraits and also does the occasional terracotta sculpture. He often holds shows with artist friend Gieve Patel (also a doctor and playwright). And though he never saw a contradiction in his two careers—“technology and art are both soaring exercises of human imagination”—he thinks technology does not drive change, it enables it. “Art,” on the other hand, “can drive change.”

In 2005, Patwardhan shut down his clinic and turned to art. Now, he paints eight hours a day and uses his free time reading art books, listening to Indian classical music and visiting art galleries with wife Shanta, 56, a doctor and trained Kathak dancer. Shanta too quit her practice to master and teach Kathak. Their son Tanmay is settled in the US and the Patwardhans visit them occasionally.

In March this year, though, Patwardhan went to the US for another reason—a solo exhibition of his works at Bose Pacia Gallery, New York. Four paintings among them, themed ‘Artist in the Studio’, sold for Rs 22 lakh but he doesn’t see a fat pay cheque as his motivation. “I don’t look at my paintings as products,” says Patwardhan, who completes around eight paintings every two years and thinks his pace is relaxed in comparison to the much older M F Husain and much younger Atul Dodiya. “For me, art is something I can share, and I get richer in experience with each work.” With this pace—especially when he doesn’t have to slot his day between the clinic and studio—he says he can allow things to happen more naturally.

—Ruchi Shah

Harish & Geeta Kapadia

60 and 56, Mumbai

TREKKER

WRITER

WARLI ART PROMOTER

TREKKER

After **years** of
trekking, the
two still feel
it gives them a
new high



KERRY MONTEEN



You can take Harish Kapadia, 60, out of the mountains—but not mountains out of Harish Kapadia. Since he was 15 years old, mountaineering has been this former cloth merchant's escape from the urban humdrum. His wife is not far behind. At 56, she still treks and travels with her husband. A weekend trekker, Geeta Kapadia's travels brought her closer to Indian folk art forms. While she discovered Warli tribal paintings in the Sahyadris, Thangka in Tibet and Madhubani in Bihar, Kapadia explored the valleys of Garhwal, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

Harish Kapadia trained in rock climbing and trekking from the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling. His friends called him foolish when he took a month off every year exploring the virgin valleys of the Himalaya and Sahyadris. But Kapadia, with 85 trips to the Himalaya, 38 peaks, 15 books on mountaineering and the Patron's Medal of the Royal Geographic Society under his belt, laughed it off. "It was an unusual pursuit for a Gujarati!" he says.

Kapadia's aim: To go where no one has gone before. In 2005, his team discovered the true origin of Tsangpo River, which was earlier believed to originate from Mansarovar. The team found its origin to be in Tibet, from where it flows to become a part of the Brahmaputra. He plans each trip months in advance, chalking out routes and preparing for rescue facilities. Kapadia sold his business six years ago and started participating in five expeditions every year. In between, there have been books, a job as editor of *Himalayan Journal* and lectures at various institutes. His first book, *Trek to Sahyadris*, is a bible for trekkers in Maharashtra. "I love being surrounded by nature," says Kapadia.

Meanwhile, when wife Geeta's not trekking with her husband, she's busy with workshops on Warli art forms in schools and institutes like the British Council and Alliance Française, and for mentally challenged children. "It's important for me to salvage our culture but I don't promote it to make money," she adds. For the Kapadias, climbing is also about growing.

—Ruchi Shah

This has the
hindsight,
knowledge
and
experience...

This has the
foresight,
resilience
and focus...

*Together, the youth and the silver citizens
can make a winning combination.*

Yesterday and today can together work for a better tomorrow.



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TAKE TWO

PROD. NO.		
SCENE	TAKE	ROLL
Harmony's Picks		
DATE		SOUND
PROD. CO.		
DIRECTION		

Illustration: MAMTA JADHAV

We chose 'Two' as a theme for *Harmony's* second anniversary not as a gimmick, but for its idea of duality. 'Two' stands for the wisdom of past and future, giving up the old and adopting the new, spirituality and practicality, action and meditation, strengths and weaknesses, and idealism and vision. This past year, like the year before, *Harmony* brought out the best in you. 'Take Two' is a compilation of the two best in every field that aided this process.

So our request to culinary expert and *Harmony* columnist Dr Pushpesh Pant was to talk about two ingredients that you must abandon. He named red chillies and *garam masala*. He also gives two recipes where you can use black pepper and ginger as substitutes. Our yoga guru Shameem Akthar recommends *sarvangasana* and

paschimottanasana for your daily yoga hour—a shoulder stand and forward bend respectively; the two can be alternated with easier options as well. We have taken the theme further to other *Harmony* regulars and chosen the two best from research, home safety products, trends and technology.

We have also analysed what we think are the two most empowering policy decisions, help lines that work well, debilitating health conditions that can be reversed, old age homes that take good care of destitute elderly and two investment modes that will stand you in good stead.

There's leisure and entertainment too. Two destinations, two books, two gizmos, two films... In essence, this is the power of 'Two'. Come, discover it.

TWO WAYS TO MAKE YOUR FOOD TANGY

Many 'new year' resolutions are made in summer—it's a good time to give up some old things and adopt the new.

For starters, give up red chillies. My objection to the Portuguese import does not stem from any misplaced patriotism but is because of their domineering nature, which tends to overpower all other spices. Replace these scarlet scorchers with the queen of spices—peppercorn. It imparts a sharper taste to our food, characteristic of the *rajasik* repast mentioned in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

According to Ayurveda, black pepper (*marich*) is an effective remedy for dyspepsia, tremors, cold and asthma. Believe it or not, the Dutch and the French once used it as a mosquito repellent. Even today, it is incorporated in perfumes, lending them an exotic, oriental mystique where its presence is almost impossible to discern. Green peppercorns are even more beautiful and addictive.

25

MURGH KALI MIRCH ▼

(Pepper chicken; serves 2-4)

INGREDIENTS

- Chicken (boneless): 500 gm, cut in pieces
- Large onions: 1, finely sliced
- Ginger paste: 1 tsp
- Garlic paste: 1 tsp
- Freshly ground peppercorn: 1 1/2 tbsp
- Yogurt: 4 tbsp
- Oil: 4 tbsp
- Salt to taste

METHOD

Marinate the chicken in yogurt blended with the seasonings and sliced onions for at least 2 hours. Heat oil in a heavy pan and fry marinated onions till golden. Add chicken with marinade and fry till the moisture evaporates. Add a little water and cook till tender.



foodphotography.in; Food styling: SHUBHANGI DHAMADE



Another item on your spice rack that deserves the boot is the ubiquitous, powdered, mass-produced *garam masala*.

Forget the spiel about aroma; it is the *taseer*, the inherent property of ingredients, which should cause concern when the mercury shoots up. To add insult to injury, readymade—not home made—*garam masala* makes everything taste alike.

Try replacing it with dried ginger (*sonth*) and give your overburdened taste buds a well-deserved rest. *Sonth* is what lends many Kashmiri delicacies their distinct identity. It pairs beautifully with fennel powder.

Ginger, the noble rhizome, is truly one of the few ingredients representing a basic taste—not pungent, but astringent. Known to ancient Indians as *shringiber* or *ardraka*, it is recommended by Ayurveda for many ailments of the respiratory and digestive tracts. The ginseng look-alike also enjoys a reputation as a mild aphrodisiac.

Interestingly, ginger is believed to exhibit both hot and cool properties and is refreshingly delightful in sweets and savouries alike.

INJI PULLI ▲

(Ginger curry; serves 4)

INGREDIENTS

- Ginger: 30 gm, cut in small pieces
- Turmeric: a small pinch
- Green chillies: 3
- Tamarind pulp extract: 1 tbsp
- Coconut (grated): 2 tsp
- Oil: 4 tbsp
- Curry leaves: 20-30
- Mustard seeds: 1/4 tsp
- Coconut: 1/2 cup, cut into small pieces
- Salt to taste

METHOD

Heat 1 tbsp of oil and fry grated coconut till it changes colour. Add turmeric powder, mix and remove from fire. Grind without water. Now, heat 3 tbsp of oil in a pan and add the mustard seeds. When they begin to splutter, add green chillies, curry leaves, ginger and coconut pieces. Fry three to four minutes. Add the ground coconut mix along with tamarind. Now add 2 cups of water. Sprinkle salt and let the gravy boil till it thickens.

—Pushpesh Pant

After celebrating your 25th anniversary, celebrate your first.

The first time your eyes met.

The first time you mustered up the courage.

The first time you bared your heart.

The first time you heard "Yes".

The first date.

The first time you held hands.

The first fight.

The first time you made up.

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

and the babies and the bills intruded?

Because for the first time
you're at an age when
you can fall in love with each other
all over again.





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h
celebrate age **harmony**
the magazine

TWO WAYS TO MOVE YOUR BODY

Discipline has nothing to do with the availability of time—it seems more to be linked with state of mind at a particular time. Sometimes the mind simply rebels against the strict discipline required of yoga. But yoga recognises the mind's resistance to healthy habits! Therefore, experts advise you to choose a practical set of poses that can be practised in all circumstances. Here are two types of poses that are known to pave the route to perfect health.

TAKE A STAND



Shoulder stand 1 (*sarvangasana*) works out the entire organ system. Lie on your back and relax. Inhale. When you exhale, raise your legs 90° off the floor. Continue breathing normally while hoisting up your hip—use your palms for light support and let your elbows and neck bear body weight. Hold for a few seconds on the first attempt. Shift mental attention to the hip, lowering it gently back to the floor, one vertebra at a time. The feet should be the last to make contact with the floor. Relax, shut your eyes, spread your legs apart, hands away from the body.



Sarvangasana is not as advanced as most people mistakenly believe. Nevertheless, those who have been physically inactive or lead sedentary lives find the pose intimidating. As an alternative, such beginners may attempt **shoulder stand 2 (*kandharasana*)**: Lie on your back. Fold legs at knees, keeping feet flat on the ground, close to hips. Try grasping the ankles with your hands. If you can't, don't push it. Reach for your ankles and keep palms flat on the ground. Inhale. Exhale. Inhaling, lift hips as high as you can. This will cause a natural lock at the neck, when the chin presses into the chest. Continue breathing, keeping hips high. After a few weeks when you are more steady and regular, push your hips up further for greater impact. Hold up for a minute or so. Relax and return to starting position. This requires a lot of physical stamina. Instead, you may raise yourself and come back several times, synchronising the motion with normal breath. The latter is better for beginners.

Benefits: The natural lock at the neck in both poses traps the energy within the body, preventing it from leaking away and rejuvenating the body. Each works on the respiratory system, boosting capacity of breath. Both poses are mood elevators because they have a positive impact on major endocrine glands, including the thyroid.



Illustrations: MAMTA JADHAV

Metabolism is boosted, promoting weight loss. They also help control diabetes. Further, the spine gets a thorough workout. *Kandharasana* effectively heals lower backache.

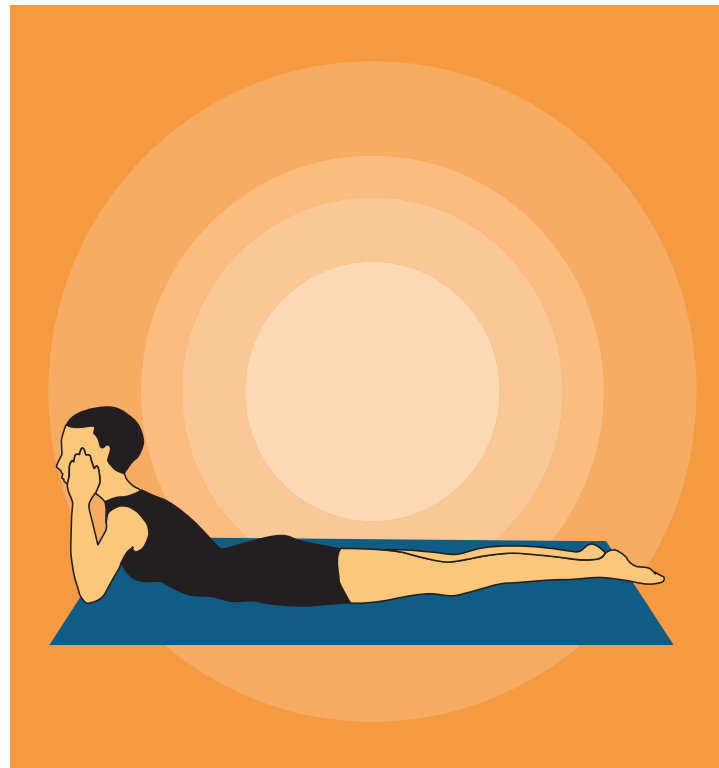
LET THE BLOOD FLOW



For the **westward-facing forward bend** (*paschimottasana*), sit up straight, with legs extended out and weight placed on your hips. Inhale and raise your arms overhead. While exhaling, bend forward and bring your arms down, too. Grasp your legs wherever you can—thighs, knees, ankles or feet—depending on how flexible you are. Now, look down. Throughout this *asana*, continue breathing. Do not struggle or try to reach head to knee initially—however, with regular practice, this is what you aim to do eventually. If you have severe lower backache, this pose should be attempted only after strengthening the back with other therapeutic poses. Another alternative is to place a thick cushion or bolster on the thighs and rest your head on it. This takes the pressure off the back. Inhale to return to starting position. *Paschimottasana* sends blood gushing to the brain, applies pressure on the abdomen and pancreas, extends the spine, and provides a good cardio workout.

Crocodile pose (*makarasana*) too offers these benefits in equal measure but only if held for long. The added benefit, though, is the gentle healing traction it provides to the spine, thus curing lower backache. For *makarasana*, lie on your stomach and fold arms to form a cushion on which to rest your cheek. Close your eyes. Touch big toes to the floor. Flare out heels. If this is tough because of heavy thighs or belly fat, keep feet spread out and far till the discomfort goes with regular practice. Keep mental focus on breathing, noticing the depth your breathing slowly acquires. This pose promotes deep diaphragmatic breathing. Initially, hold the pose only as long as you can. Gradually extend it to two or three minutes.

Benefits: In both poses, the pressure on the stomach massages major organs and endocrine glands. The adrenal and stress glands are soothed. Diabetes is brought under control while *makarasana*



also lowers blood pressure. Both are powerful de-stressors and promote deep abdominal breathing, which has incalculable benefits in healing and rejuvenating the entire body-mind complex. Blood circulation is boosted, especially in *paschimottasana*.

—Shameem Akthar

Are you suffering from **ARTHRITIS/ JOINT PAIN ?**



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TWO BREAKTHROUGHS

DOUBLE WHAMMY

Could a drug to treat diabetes prove effective against Alzheimer's? That's what scientists are hoping. Funded by GlaxoSmithKline, preliminary research involving 511 Alzheimer's patients proved that the condition can be triggered when brain cells can't properly use sugar—just as Type 2 diabetes. The theory is being tested on thousands of patients in the US, who are being given the diabetes

drug Avandia in the hope of slowing brain decay. Avandia and competing drug Actos treat Type 2 diabetes by re-sensitising the body to insulin. Apparently, diabetics are much more prone to develop Alzheimer's if they manage to live till 60 or 70 years. This is clearly disturbing news for India which has 3.5 crore diabetics and a steadily expanding grey population. Will a drug like Avandia, then, score a double whammy?

We'll wait—and hope.



25

BRAND KNEEW!

Our battle against osteoarthritis didn't end with Dr Vijay Naik's knee braces (see February 2005 issue of Harmony). We began looking for options to total knee replacement. That's when we heard of 42 year-old knee surgeon Nilen Shah and his quick fix. The procedure is called 'mini-subvastus', and is practised in Europe. An advanced version of subvastus, which means 'cut below the knee muscle', mini-subvastus involves a four-inch cut instead of a nine-inch incision to implant an artificial joint. Shah brought mini-subvastus to India. "You don't need to blast a wall to enter a room," says Shah, who operates through a keyhole. "Open the door and walk in." The results: instant pain relief, legs with 90° flexibility, recovery in two days without an aid, and the ability to squat in two months. A knee transplant enables movement without an aid in four months and squatting in six months. Mini-subvastus also cuts hospital expenses by 20 per cent. "The next best thing would be cartilage regeneration through stem cell therapy," says Shah. To know more, call 09819776842 or email drnilen@bom7.vsnl.net.in.

—Teena Baruah



Illustration: HARESH PATEL

Coming full circle

M V Kamath returns to his roots to find peace, and himself

This September, I will be 85. I suppose some would call it old age but I wouldn't. Old age is a state of mind. One is only as old as one thinks.

The one thing that has interested me all my adult life is writing. Since I retired as editor of the now-defunct *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, in 1981, I must have written about 40-odd books. This year, I have got two books published. A biography on Nani Palkhivala is in print and may be released next year.

I have been a loner most of my life and have been my own valet, butler, chauffeur and cleaner, and pride myself on being a good househusband. I have had three heart attacks, the last, a silent one, in April 2005. It was then that I finally realised that I need someone to take care of me. In Mumbai, I lived in my own small apartment in Khar with my memory and my books. But to my shock, I realised that I couldn't get anyone to take care of me round the clock and relieve me of such odd jobs as shopping, cooking and answering telephone calls. I am not lacking in close relations and friends, but the very thought of being a burden on them was abhorrent to me. I had to find a way to take care of myself.

In my hometown Udupi, I have my own large house that I share with two of my nephews. Manipal Academy of Higher Education chairman Dr Ramdas Pai insisted that instead of living in my house near Udupi, I should stay on the Manipal Campus where I would have all the medical help. His offer made sense. I have been allotted a three-bedroom bungalow overlooking a valley and I keep telling my friends I am in paradise. I sit out at night and watch the moon and the twinkling stars and am at peace. I am now working harder than ever without even realising it. I miss my friends in Mumbai, of course. But I had to make a choice. There are always two roads to choose from. And I chose to return to my roots.

I have no illusions about myself. An individual is a conglomerate of forces that are beyond his understanding. The closest analogy I can think of is that of a cloud. A cloud is formed without its being aware of its being as a result of the available humidity in the air. Out of nothing, it grows. In due course, it disintegrates into rain and is lost. Lost? No, it isn't. It is there in the grass in the fields, in the flowers in the garden, in the fruits on the trees, in the water of the rivers and ponds and in the waves of the sea. And in due course, another cloud gets formed.

We are clouds. It is presumptuous to think we have individuality. We are the products of elements of whose existence we are not even aware of. We are born out of nothingness and to nothingness we return only to reform and dissolve again, in an endless cycle. I have found my peace in accepting this simple truth. Unlike a cloud, a human being is aware of his or her individuality. But it is phenomenal and has no base in reality. When that's accepted, the ego dissolves like rain from the cloud and one understands the meaning of being and becoming. What else is *moksha*?

When you live intensely within yourself, your surroundings become secondary

I have had no difficulty whatsoever in leaving Mumbai and living in Manipal. When you live intensely within yourself, your surroundings become secondary. Having said that, I must still add that Manipal has given me a peace that urban Mumbai's turbulence could not. Adjustment, in the circumstances, has been easy. And life goes on. I look forward to the end, assured that in the end is the beginning, the only thing constant being continuity. I accept Robert Browning's wise words: "Grow old along with me: the best is yet to be."



M V Kamath, 84, former editor of *The Illustrated Weekly of India* (1978-81), writes on political and social issues

TWO WAYS TO TURN BACK THE CLOCK

WORK FOR LIFE

Don't head for that rocking chair—not just yet. Working till late in life might actually boost your longevity. Over 26 years, Shell Health Services in the US analysed the health of about 3,500 former employees of Texas-based petrochemical company Royal Dutch Shell PLC, who retired between January 1973 and December 2003. It concluded that those who quit working at 65 were more likely to enjoy a longer life than those who retired at 55. The findings were published in the October 2005 issue of the *British Medical Journal*.

"Those who retired at 55 were 89 per cent more likely to die in the first 10 years after retirement than those who hung on to their jobs," says lead author Shan Tsai. For those who are already retired, Tsai recommends exploring options for a second career. It's time to retire retirement.



Illustration: HARESH PATEL

LOSE THE STRESS

The next time your grandson tells you to 'take a chill pill', don't ignore him. Losing the stress can add years to your life. In a study published in October 2004 in journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Elisa Epel, assistant professor of psychiatry at University of California, San Francisco and her team found that stress—or even the perception of it—significantly shortened the length of telomeres, tips of chromosomes within cells that are used as a measure of the cells' ageing process. The shorter the telomere, the faster the body's deterioration. Top stress-busters, according to Epel, are exercise, meditation, hobbies and positive thinking. The payoff: "Learning to cope with stress can improve your quality of life, your mood, and your longevity," she says. Cool?

—Arati Rajan Menon

Freedom song

Mark Tully looks at his past, present and future



Courtesy: INDIAN EXPRESS

I love my freedom. There is the freedom from family responsibilities, being a grandfather is much more enjoyable than being a father—no responsibilities and lots of fun. There's the freedom from worrying about your future—most of it has passed! I still have two unfulfilled ambitions. One is very much a return to childhood occupation—having a miniature railway of my own. The other is less childish, relearning the tuba, which I used to play in my school's military band; or the piano, but my fingers are a bit arthritic for that.

Much of this freedom arises from no longer having a job—mind you, that's no freedom if you are not also free from financial worries; if, unlike me, you don't have a good pension. I had little freedom during the 22 years I was based in Delhi for the BBC. Being a foreign correspondent is a 24-hour job. It occupies your whole life. It can be boring—standing around for hours outside meetings waiting for a briefing, arguing with petty bureaucrats who want to stop you from doing your job (and there are plenty of them in India), hanging around airports when flights are delayed which used to happen a lot in my time, and listening to some pretty pointless questions and even more pointless answers at press meets.

I can't say I had a dull life when I look back on covering almost every major event in South Asia, from the Bangladesh War to the destruction of the Mosque in Ayodhya. So it's not surprising that when I was coming to the end of my 30 years with the BBC, I didn't believe my colleagues who had already retired who said to me, "You will wonder why you stayed at work so long." The first freedom I revelled in was the freedom to have a bath in the evening, put on my *kurta* and pyjamas, open a bottle of beer and know that no one could disturb me. There could be no calls from London, saying, "There's been an earthquake, an air crash, an assassination. Get there

as fast as you can." I no longer had to check the UNI file after returning from a dinner party. I could go to bed and wait for the next day's papers.

But before I could start to wonder what to do with my time, it was filled for me. I found myself returning to my university days. A BBC television producer asked me to present a series called the *Lives of Jesus*. I protested that the theology I had read at university was far too rusty but the producer, a distinguished theologian herself, promised to help me rub off some of the rust. Then I got another telephone call asking me to present a regular radio programme on the BBC which was to be suitable for transmission early on Sunday morning, to be repeated late at night. That required some theology too. The television series led to a book and the radio programme is still running, so I am now a better theologian than I was at university—that is not saying much because as a student I believed in only doing the amount of work required to scrape through my exams.

**Being a grandfather
is more enjoyable
than being a father,
no responsibilities
only fun**

I have enjoyed reading theology much more second time round and I am still enjoying that, building up my knowledge for a book I have been asked to write, comparing Indian religious traditions with Semitic religions—Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.

So 12 years on from retirement, I still enjoy myself by writing and broadcasting, and I will have to put off the miniature railway and the music at least until I finish the book. But there are two differences now, and both are to do with freedoms. I am free to reject any work I don't want to do, and I am free to pursue subjects in depth. As a foreign correspondent I could have been accused of knowing an awful little about an awful lot.

Sir Mark Tully, 70, is a former BBC South-Asia correspondent and Indophile



Rational instincts

Shakti Gawain urges us to follow our intuition

There is a universal, intelligent life force that exists within everyone and everything. It resides within each one of us as

a deep wisdom, an inner knowing. We can access this wonderful source of knowledge and wisdom through our intuition, an inner sense that tells us what feels right and true for us at any given moment.

Many people who are not accustomed to being consciously in touch with their intuition imagine that it is a mysterious force that would come to them through some transcendent mystical experience. In fact, our intuition is a very practical, down-to-earth tool that is always available to help us deal with the decisions, problems and challenges of our daily lives. One way that we often describe an intuitive prompting is a 'gut feeling' or a 'hunch'.

We are all potentially intuitive. Some of us consciously develop this ability, while a majority of us learn to disregard and deny it. Still, many people are unconsciously following their intuition without realising it. Fortunately, we can learn to be in touch with our intuition, to follow it, and to allow it to become a powerful guide in our lives.

In many cultures, intuition is acknowledged as a natural and important aspect of life. Every moment of daily life is guided by a strong sense of connection to the universal creative force. These societies create powerful rituals, such as group councils, dream sharing, chants, dances, and vision quests, which support their connection to the inner intuitive realms. Individuals within those cultures learn to trust and follow their own inner sense of truth and offer it as their wisdom to others.

Modern culture, on the other hand, does not acknowledge the validity or even the existence of intuition. We respect, honour, and develop the rational aspect of our nature but, at least until recently, have disregarded and discounted the intuitive side. Our school systems reflect and reinforce this bias. They focus almost exclusively on developing our left-brain, rational abilities and mostly ignore the development of the right-brain, intuitive, holistic, creative capacities.

The rational mind is like a computer—it processes the input it receives and calculates logical conclusions based on this information. The rational mind is finite; it can only compute the data that it has received directly from the external world. In other words, our rational minds can only operate on the basis of the direct experience each of us has had in this lifetime—the knowledge we have gained through our five senses.

The intuitive mind, on the other hand, seems to have access to an infinite supply of information, including information that we have not gathered directly through personal experience. It is able to sort out this information and supply us with exactly what and when we need it. Although the message may come through a bit at a time, if we learn to follow this flow of information, the course of action will be revealed. As we learn to rely on this guidance, life takes on a flowing, effortless

The rational mind is like a computer—it processes the input and calculates logical conclusions

quality. Our life, feelings, and actions interweave harmoniously with those of others around us.

Many of us have programmed our intellect to doubt our intuition. When an intuitive feeling arises, our rational minds immediately say, "I don't think that will work," or "What a foolish idea," and intuition is disregarded. We must train our intellect to respect, listen to, and express the intuitive voice.

Excerpt from Developing Intuition (2000). Shakti Gawain is a leader in the World Consciousness Movement

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TWO HOMES THAT REALLY CARE



TILAK VIHAR OLD AGE HOME, NEW DELHI

This is as close as it gets to a 'model' old age home. Run by the Department of Social Welfare, Tilak Vihar Old Age Home in the capital, which spans over two acres, was given a new lease on life in July 2005 with a Rs 72 lakh grant. It shows—40 airy double bedrooms with attached bathrooms, soothing landscaped gardens and roomy auditoriums and dining areas. HelpAge India has pitched in by stocking books at the library and furnishing the recreation room with tablas, harmoniums, and a TV and music system. The NGO has hired a yoga instructor to give weekly classes; dedicated one of its mobile health vans for medical checkups of residents every Friday; and even offered to run the place (the offer hasn't been accepted yet). For his part, 40 year-old superintendent Rajeev Saxena is doing his best to give the 25 destitute residents a caring nest. "At home, I tell

my children to make the most of life within limitations," he says. "I convey the same message here."



VISHRANTHI, CHENNAI

Are you lonesome? Walk into Vishranthi and you'll have 107 friends to pick from. This old-age home in Chennai was started for destitute women in 1978, but gradually well-to-do silvers living away from their families also started pouring in.

Each resident helps out with cooking and caring for peers along with the 26 caregivers on staff. "Being a part of daily activities stops them from brooding," says founder Savithri Vaithi, 75, who was honoured with the Vayoshreshtha Samman in October 2005 by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for her work. Vishranthi now houses an infirmary block; a shelter for runaway women; a home for children from broken families; an 18-bed medical care unit for elderly patients still requiring care; and an eight-room short-stay home for elders whose families are away. Intermediate care costs Rs 200 per day. "Nobody wants to go back home even after recovery," says Vaithi with a smile.

—Teena Baruah



TWO NUMBERS YOU CAN COUNT ON

When silvers need help urgently, who can they rely on? The telephone, perhaps. Indeed, the concept of emergency relief is catching on in India, with many cities initiating such services. Here are two help lines that have proven to be allies of the distressed elderly:

HELP LINE NO. 1253

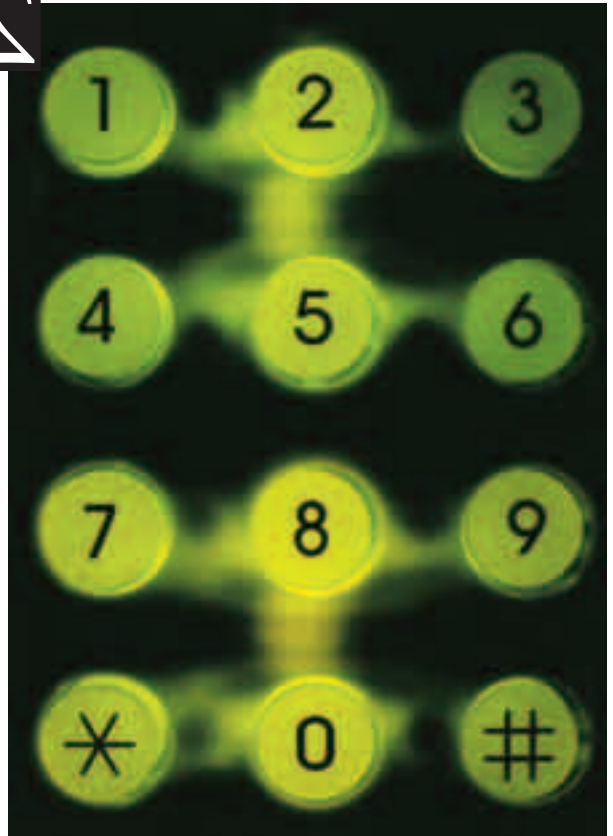
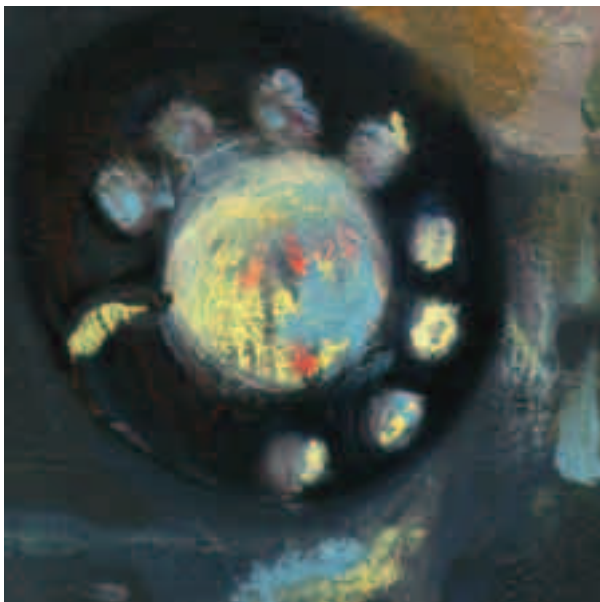
Based: Chennai

Run by: HelpAge India with Chennai Police

Mission: Help line No. 1253 was launched in Chennai in June 2004 to render medical help and aid in cases of theft or abuse. Within six months, the number of calls increased from two a week to 150. Today, it also offers shelter for destitute, neglected and abandoned elders; traces missing seniors; and provides counselling and legal aid.

Plus points: 1253 and 1291, a Delhi Police help line, were launched at the same time to address healthcare and crimes against the elderly, but 1253 went a step ahead by adding more core services, including provision of shelter to 201 elders and reuniting four missing silvers with their families through their network.

Timings: 24 hours



HELP LINE NO. 1090

Based: Bangalore

Run by: Bangalore City Police, with Nightingales Medical Trust, a Bangalore-based NGO.

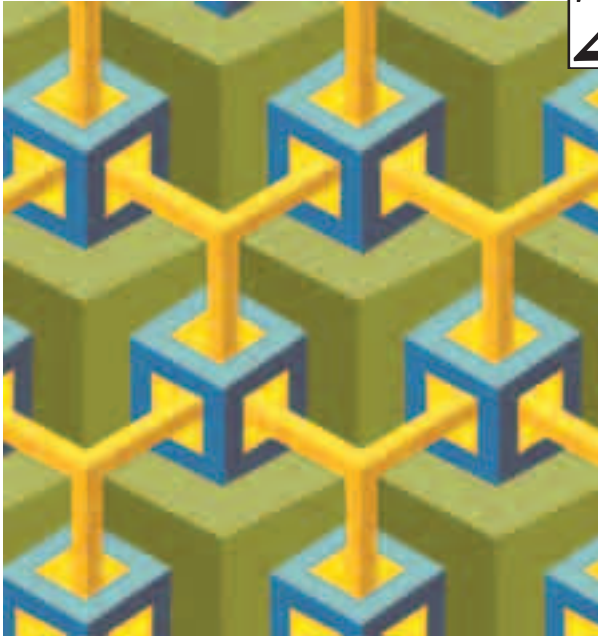
Mission: Bangalore City Police launched 1090 in April 2002 as a support system for physically abused, exploited, threatened or neglected silvers, or those who requiring information on police aid, rehabilitation, healthcare or legal advice. The help line receives about 25 calls every day.

Plus points: As it is one of the oldest help lines in India, even HelpAge India took help from 1090 before starting 1253 in Chennai. A whole list of services unique to 1090, including a pension helpdesk for the destitute elderly, has helped to make silvers aware about their rights.

Timings: 8 am to 8 pm

—Ruchi Shah

TWO TRENDS TO FOLLOW



22

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Senior citizens, especially those living alone, are making their homes safer, enabling them to live independently much longer. In a survey of 2,000 people aged 45 and over conducted by advocacy group American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and published in July 2005, 85 per cent said they had already made simple changes in their homes to make it safer, such as placing non-skid strips in bathtubs or safety bars in showers and handrails on both side of the stairwells to prevent falls.

The top 10 home improvements reported are levered doorknobs; grab bars in bathrooms; levered faucets in kitchen sinks; handrails on both sides of stairwells; grab bars in showers; removal of door thresholds; movable shower heads for those who need to sit down while having a bath; portable shower seats; widened doors to accommodate wheelchairs; and ramps for those using walkers and wheelchairs. The good news: you don't need to travel to the US for bringing your own home up to speed—all these modifications are easily available in India. For more information go to: http://www.harmonyindia.org/hportal/VirtualPageView.jsp?page_id=1908

— Arati Rajan Menon

WWW.SILVERS.COM

The World Wide Web is becoming familiar territory for silvers all over the world. "The total number of seniors is growing, the percentage of seniors online is growing, and the percentage of online seniors who shop is growing," Jakob Nielsen, a leading US-based Internet usability expert told *The New York Times* in October 2005. "In fact, this group of shoppers is increasing more than any other group." Meanwhile, a study by UK-based Internet bank cahoot in November 2005 revealed that close to two-thirds of the 55 to 64 age group in the UK are now online, with half the over-50 online community banking over the web. Apart from banking and shopping, silvers are also sharing their worldview with web logs or blogs (online journals). The good news: Indian silvers are not far behind.

According to a report released by the Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) in March 2006, silvers are a fast growing group of online users in India too—the number of 'senior netizens' is expected to rise to 3 million by 2007-2008. Indian silvers use the Net for email (99 per cent); to surf (70 per cent); chat (47 per cent); and trade stocks (26 per cent). Leading the way are *Harmony's* intrepid Mr and Mrs Purohit!



TWO STUDIES YOU CAN'T IGNORE



IT'S YOUR TIME

We've been saying it for the past two years—getting older can actually improve quality of life! And now there's research to back us up. A team from Imperial College and City University in London and Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, suggests that quality of life is above average for people between the ages of 50 and 84, and in some cases higher compared to earlier years. For the study, published in April 2006 in the online issue of *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, the researchers studied the effects of medical, social and economic factors on quality of life on 12,234 individuals in the UK. "Our study shows that post-retirement, quality of life actually improves as one gets older," says lead researcher Dr Gopal Netuveli from Imperial College. "Social engagement such as volunteering can improve quality of life, even in very old age."

While illness and financial difficulties were found to decrease quality of life, trusting relationships and safe neighbourhood were found to enhance it. So go ahead, live your best life.



LIFE BEGINS AT 40

Afraid your biological clock is ticking away? It's time for a fresh perspective. Researchers in the US and Austria have developed a new method of thinking about ageing. "The average person can get younger in the sense that they have even more years to live as time goes on," says Warren Sanderson of the University of New York, in the July 2005 issue of journal *Nature*. Here's how Sanderson and Sergei Scherbov of the Vienna Institute of Demography figured it out. For example, in 2000, the average German was 39.9 years old and could expect to live for another 39.2 years. But by 2050, the average German would be 51.9 years old, yet could still expect to live for 37.1 more years. That would mean that middle age would not arrive in Germany until a person reached the age of 52, rather than 40 as in 2000. The system uses 2000-01 as its reference year—so, if a 30-year-old in 2000 has 50 years more to live and a 40-year-old in 2050 also has another 50 years, then the 40-year-old of 2050 will have a standardised age of 30. Feeling younger?

—Arati Rajan Menon



TWO WAYS TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFE



22

A FIRM GRIP

Product: Grab rails

Why? They prevent nasty falls on slippery bathroom floors.

More info: Grab rails come in various sizes and makes. While steel ones are easily available at your local bathroom accessories store, those in plastic or brass may require a little bit of scouting. However, we recommend steel grab rails as they are easy to maintain.

Cost: Rs 755 and above

Where to buy: Any local bathroom accessories store. Or try out the ISO-certified products by Kich Industries. Call 022-30958462 for details.

—Amita Amin Shinde

It's imperative that you make your home safe to live in, especially if you live alone. Our October 2005 issue ("55 Ways to Make Silver Sparkle") highlighted assistive devices for seniors available in India. From those, we have chosen two must-haves—grab rails in bathrooms and a door-watch camera system.

EYES WIDE OPEN

Product: Door watch camera system

Why? Install one at your front door and screen all visitors.

More info: This investment guarantees minimum risk. Though expensive, it is a good safety option for silvers. After all, peace of mind comes with a price tag.

Cost: Rs 9,900 for a basic model; upgraded models cost more

Where to buy: Contact Eureka Forbes at 022-24301725.



JIGNESH JHAVERI

JIGNESH JHAVERI

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TWO GIZMOS WORTH A SECOND LOOK

CRUISE CONTROL

The gadget: *Turn-By-Turn Navigation System*

Tagline: You'll never get lost

Developed by: Garmin, USA. Distributed by Aerial Services Pvt Ltd, Bangalore. Pune-based Kalyani Net Ventures has developed India-specific software and database.

Launched: September 2005

The specs: The size of a car stereo, it can be plugged into the car battery and mounted on the dashboard.

The good stuff: This is a modified GPS (global positioning system), where a voice modulator (that sounds better than most backseat drivers) reads out directions, updates you on fuel position and engine condition, offers options of country and city maps, and guides you to landmarks like ATMs and hospitals. All this information is simultaneously displayed on a screen. For added silver safety, the system can also be linked onto Vehicle Tracking System software, which allows a vehicle to

be tracked from a central location. At present, the network covers only metros and major Indian cities.

The price: Rs 12,000 onwards for a basic model to Rs 60,000 for the most sophisticated version. Still want it? Log on to www.garminindia.net to find a dealer near you.



Graphic: HARESH PATEL



CALCULATED FITNESS

The gadget: *Pedometer HJ 109*

Tagline: Stay on track

Developed by: Omron, Japan

Launched: July 2005

The specs: Battery-operated, easy to use and appropriately anorexic—this is the size of a small calculator—it can be clipped on to your waistband.

The good stuff: For all of you who've decided to get off the rocking chair and move your bodies on the road to fitness, this nifty little gadget takes the effort out of

counting calories and encourages you to walk that extra mile. With a seven-day data memory, you know how much you have burnt. It also tracks and analyses information, like the number of steps taken and the distance covered during walks and body fat burnt. There's also a built-in 24-hour clock.

The price: Rs 800



Want it? Contact
Kosmochem Pvt Ltd in
Mumbai at 022-23447833/5018
or email enquiry@kosmochem.com
—Arati Rajan Menon

TWO TECHNOLOGIES TO CONNECT TO



Dear Mr and Mrs Purohit,

I'm sure this letter comes as a surprise! I will be away on vacation in July and won't be able to meet you for a while so I decided to write instead. I guess you would have expected an SMS or email considering the advancements in technology. But I kind of liked the idea of discussing the future with the help of an age-old communication tool like a letter. If you remember, when we last met, we had a brief chat about recent trends in technology. We never did have time to finish that conversation! I hope this letter will do the rest of the 'talking'.

I think you are already familiar with **broadband technology**. Broadband is basically a high-speed connection for two-way transfer of data, which includes digital images, words, sounds and information in any form. With so many new technologies developed in the past decade, it has become possible to break down any piece of information into bits of digital data and send them across digital highways at blistering speeds.

Our homes are already inundated with a lot of 'data'—television channels through a cable connection, calls through a telephone line and Internet through a dial-up or cable connection. People like me who work from home also use fax machines to receive documents over the phone. In addition, we all get information in a physical form—newspapers and magazine, bills, audio and video cassettes, books, CDs, video CDs and DVDs—delivered to us. Each of these services and products is provided by a different company or service provider and requires separate payment. Imagine all these services and products being delivered to your home through a single pipeline and by one service provider. That's the promise of broadband.

We are already witnessing the power of broadband in a limited way. Telephone companies provide voice telephony and 'always-

on' internet connections on a single line and some cable companies provide television and Internet on a single line—you can watch your favourite soap and check your email on the same screen. But don't mistake broadband for a mere substitute for your cable *wallah*, telephone company and Internet provider! It can do so much more.

Take video conferencing, for instance. You can have business meetings with your associates in remote offices sitting in your living room. You can 'consult' your doctor; 'attend' a parent orientation meeting in your child's school; 'oversee' the repair of your car in the garage—all from the comfort of your home or office. I believe it is just a matter of time that broadband companies will provide services like these through one pipeline. The technology is already available. Only issues like licensing, inter-connection, tariff, copyright and marketing need to be sorted out.

Now, from something as wide as broadband, let's move on to the incredibly small: **nanotechnology**. I'm sure you must have come across the term on the Internet.

'Nano' is a prefix that means extremely small or one-billionth—there are one million nanometres in a millimetre! Essentially, nanotechnology involves working with materials on an atomic or molecular scale to create highly miniaturised devices for specific applications, ranging from microelectronics to medicine.

The use of this emerging science can shrink the size of all the devices we use, from cell phones to laptops. Scientists believe that all future computing and information gadgets will be powered by nano particles, nano wires and nano tubes.

The potential of nanotechnology in the medical field is particularly fascinating. For instance, imagine the delivery of drugs in minute



FARZANA COOPER

quantities to kill cancer cells in the body without any harm to healthy cells; an implant the size of a pinhead that releases chemicals in the body when required' or tiny 'robots' to clean up clogged arteries in hearts of patients. All these methods of targeted drug delivery and treatment are possible through nanotechnology.

I will keep you updated on these and other new trends in the world of technology in my future letters and emails. Unfortunately, my visits to

Mumbai will now be infrequent, but I hope you SMS or email me whenever you find the time. And if I am 'out of network area' or your server is down, you can always bank on an old-fashioned letter, like this one!

Warm regards,

Dinesh

Dinesh C Sharma is a science and technology columnist based in New Delhi. He is a regular contributor to CnetNews.com (US) and The Lancet (UK)

TWO DOS AND DON'TS



22

DON'TS

For preserving capital, it is more important to know what not to do than what to do.

It's a volatile investment climate. The Sensex is gaining but is unpredictable by nature and mutual funds beckon with new launches. To combat ever-increasing inflation, the key is to invest in a way that optimises returns, risks, liquidity and tax-efficiency so that you earn returns over and above the inflation rate, thereby preserving your capital.

DOS

1. The Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme is one of the best plans you can invest in. The interest rate is 9 per cent payable quarterly, which works out to 9.31 per cent annually. Any 60 year-old can open an account, either singly or jointly with spouse, and can invest up to Rs 15 lakh—a couple can invest up to Rs 30 lakh together.

Though the scheme is for five years, the liquidity is excellent. The account may be closed anytime after a year of opening it. In case the account is closed after a year but before two years, there is a penalty of 1.5 per cent. If the account is closed after two years, the penalty is 1 per cent. Terminating the account after two years brings no losses. The scheme was last reviewed on 29 March 2006 when TDS (tax deducted at source) was imposed on the interest payment. Still worth a buy!

2. The Post Office Monthly Income Scheme is another excellent avenue. It offers 8 per cent every year, paid every month. This scheme is especially useful for those who do not receive a pension and require a monthly income. It remains a good investment.

1. As already mentioned, the stock market is at an all-time high. It is important not to get swayed by this. The rate of return of the index from 7,000 to 12,500 works out to an annualised 90 per cent. This rate cannot be maintained. Investment experts have emphasised that you should buy low and sell high to succeed in the stock markets. Taking equity exposure at this point in time would be reversing this rule and thereby courting trouble. In fact, if you already own shares, now is the best time to book profits, at least partially.

2. Taking advantage of this 'irrational exuberance', mutual funds and insurance companies (ULIP plans) are periodically coming out with new issues. It is important to realise that investing in equity-oriented schemes or growth plans is akin to taking exposure to the equity market. Both mutual funds and ULIP plans do not assure returns and an investor invests in them only at his own risk. If you have to invest in a mutual fund, choose monthly income plans.

—A N Shanbhag and Sandeep Shanbhag



TWO EMPOWERING PROVISIONS



OLDER PERSONS (CARE, PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE) BILL, INDIA

In July 2005, the Centre proposed the Older Persons (Care, Protection and Maintenance) Bill in the Rajya Sabha to provide care and protection to seniors. It asked for the establishment of a tribunal in each district to hear complaints of abuse of seniors and address them within six months. The Bill underwent several drafts before Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Meira Kumar announced the formulation of a restructured Bill, 'Central Model Legislation for Older Persons', for the social security and protection of senior citizens in September 2005.

The proposed Bill ran into rough weather when it indicated that it would exclude the Christian and Muslim communities, on the grounds that both have their own laws to help the elderly. Other areas like minimum pension amount and a section on elder abuse also need to be sorted out before the Bill is passed in Parliament this year. We are waiting impatiently.



LAW ON ELDER ABUSE, JAPAN

The International Longevity Centre, Pune, and Harmony Initiative recently co-hosted a three-day workshop (20-22 April) on 'International Perspectives on Elder Abuse' (see *Harmony*, May 2006). Localised surveys provide sketchy data on elder abuse as it largely goes unreported in India. But even as India debates the issue, Japan has actually taken a concrete step to counter it by passing a law on elder abuse in November 2005. The Japanese law — effective from April 2006 — defines abuse as assault that could cause physical injury, verbal abuse, neglecting care and wrongful management of the property of the elderly. It also states that anyone who discovers instances of elder abuse should inform local authorities, who would investigate with help from the police. Almost one-fourth of Japan's population will be 65 years or older at the end of the 21st century. Two studies conducted in 1993 and 1997 in Japan revealed that the most common form of abuse was financial. There were 2,000 reported cases of elder abuse last year in Japan.

—Trina Mukherjee



TWO NOTABLE ACTIVITIES



25

February 2006. Seventy members of the centre attended the camp in September—Dr Kulin Kothari, founder of the institute, and his team, diagnosed them. Seventy-six year-old Prabhakar Upasi and Balkrishna Naik, 75, had their cataract operations sponsored by Harmony. “I am very happy with the operation though the post-operation medication was a bit expensive,” said Upasi. Naik is also seeing better after his surgery. On the demand of members, Harmony organised a second eye camp at BCEIRC in February. Twenty-five silvers turned up this time.

The Harmony Interactive Centre (HIC) witnessed many developments in the past year. The good response received for yoga and computer classes prompted the centre to add T'ai Chi lessons. Health camps on bone density and dementia were also extremely well attended. However, our picks for activities of the year were the eye camp organised by the centre and the participation of members in *Loksatta's* Vote Mumbai campaign, a movement to demand greater accountability from the government.

In fact, the free eye camp, held at Bombay City Eye Institute & Research Centre (BCEIRC) at Babulnath, was organised twice, in September 2005 and

The Harmony Initiative has also joined hands with *Loksatta's* Vote Mumbai campaign in recent months. This people's movement aims to bring about a fundamental transformation in Indian governance through comprehensive political, electoral and judicial reforms. Currently based in Mumbai, the campaign will gradually go nationwide. This month, members of the centre will join about 2 lakh people in a march to Azad Maidan in Mumbai. Currently, members have been performing street plays in their neighbourhoods, showing the significant change the movement can bring to our bureaucratic government system.

—Ruchi Shah

ONE
-on-
ONE
Personal Classifieds



I am a 71 year-old based in New Delhi. I voluntarily work for the Indian Spinal Injuries Center. Anyone wishing to meet or wish the differently abled people can be my guest.

Contact Rajinder Kumar Jayswal on (011) 26122611; mobile: 09810633084

I am a 75 year-old filmmaker from Mangalore. I am interested in theatre, films and travelling. I would like to correspond with silvers with similar interests.

Contact Sadanand Suvarna on (0824) 2459952

I am a 61 year-old retired executive living in Pune. I have a huge collection of Long Playing records (1945 onwards) with information on singers and music directors. Those interested in listening or exchanging these rare records can get in touch with me.

Contact Ambrish Kumar Verma on mobile: 09371000966; email: ambrish_verma@rediffmail.com

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SOMEONE ABOVE
55 YEARS
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TWO DESTINATIONS FROM OUR TRAVEL INDEX



25

from Maharashtra and Karnataka come visiting regularly for extended weekends—most travel overnight by train or bus—others can combine Devbagh with nearby beaches (Gokarna, Lady's Beach) for a longer holiday. Memories of this trip will surely linger long after you return home.

THE HIGH ROAD

If rugged is your style and you aren't short on stamina, head to Leh. Don't forget your woollies and walking shoes though. You can take a flight—Leh's airport is Ladakh's only link with the outside world—but the real adventure lies in going by road from Srinagar or Manali. Gently rising green terraces, monasteries on top of

The 'senior' travel segment in India grew by 15 per cent in 2005-06. Summer of 2007, global travel company Thomas Cook will add to the promise with its "aggressive plans" for those who are 50 and better. The writing on the wall: Heighten your holiday quotient and go for life outside your comfortable confines. From all the destinations we have featured in the past year, we choose two, for two different kinds of people—laidback and adventurous. So pack your gear, essentials and, of course, *Harmony*.

SUNSHINE AND SAND

Devbagh Resort in Karwar, Karnataka, (*Harmony*, December 2005), run by Karnataka State Tourism Department, just lets you be. Steal a rejuvenating snooze in a hammock outside your cottage as the sun plays hide and seek, explore the villages around, meet the local people, fling sand up and enjoy beachcombing (the marine life is not so exotic but you will find some treasures), or sleep in your log hut with sea surf and whispering casuarinas for background music. And don't forget mealtimes at Gol Ghar, the guest dining room. Once there, enjoy real smiles, hospitality and wonderful food (the fish is fresh from the sea).

Adventurous travellers have options too. Banana boat ride and snorkelling cost extra, over the tariff of Rs 1,650 per night per person. While travellers



hillocks and starkly bare mountains; it's breathtaking terrain. "Whatever route you choose here, make sure you give your heart and lungs time to adjust to the altitude," advised travel writers Hugh and Colleen Gantzer in "Dusk on the Indus" (*Harmony*, July 2005). Press your ears against monuments and mountains and hear their histories come alive. Shey Palace is where all the kings of Ladakh were born, and the Indian missionary seer Padmasambhava brought Buddhism to Ladakh—his birthday is celebrated at Hemis monastery in late June.

—Meeta Bhatti

HUGH AND COLLEEN GANTZER

ASHOK DILWALI



NITIN RAI

Best is yet to be

Usha Rai recounts how age hasn't diminished her zest for life

As I crossed the decades—40s, 50s and 60s and there were snide remarks about greying hair, the wrinkles and the

occasional loss of memory as one faltered for a name—a Robert Browning poem and a popular song, learnt in school, kept my spirits high. The poem went like this...

*"Grow old along with me,
The best is yet to be.
The last of life,
For which the first was made."*

The Nat King Cole song was equally eloquent:

*"You will never grow old,
While there is love in your heart,
Time may silver your golden hair
As you dream in your old rocking chair
So keep my love in your heart, my darling
Remember the love tales we told.
For with my love in your heart, my
darling
You will never grow old!"*

I have no partner now but that has not diminished my joy for life. I have the little ones, who have grown to monstrous sizes and they in turn have lovely little ones who are the joy of my life. I have my work and though past my mid-60s I enjoy it immensely. In fact, I am a workaholic. Nothing gives me a greater high than a challenging job. I drive 30 km to work and back through maddening traffic and that too is a challenge. I still get excited when I see my byline in print—the bigger and better the display of the story, the greater the high. I have tried to keep in touch with my school and college friends and when we meet, the years melt away. We recall crushes over the priests who taught us, the various attempts to find out the

colour of the German nuns hair hidden under their headgear, the hockey matches, reading *Grey's Elegy* actually sitting on grave stones in the cemetery of Seminary Hills in Nagpur, the bike rides into town for the four-anna mouth watering *dosa*.

I can no longer play badminton or jog, because both knees have been replaced, but I enjoy my morning walks. I have given up the struggle for an hourglass figure and have accepted the rounded look of a refusing-to-age grandma. I love to pick flowers that I can float in bowls of water and can't help looking out for the most melodious birds. The koels' insistence call for a mate as spring turns to early summer continues to fascinate me as I peer through thick foliage to catch a glimpse of it. The golden oriole, the purple sunbirds darting into flowers to collect nectar and the long legged 'did-you-do-it birds' or lapwings continue to enchant me. I love to greet and exchange pleasantries with my morning walker friends. I love puppies and dogs with wet noses. My most faithful companion is Honey, a shaggy brown mongrel with liquid brown eyes.

**I am a workaholic.
Nothing gives
me a greater
high than a
challenging job**

I love to see my grandchildren growing up without taking responsibility for them. I love to cuddle them and buy their favourite fruits and ice creams. The joy of grandchildren is greater than the joy of bringing up your own children—because there is less responsibility. In indulging them, I indulge myself.

Ageing is all in the mind. Those who continue to be close to nature, doing all the things they loved whether it is walking, reading or writing will stave off the years. Economic independence and companionship, whether it is of family, friends or animals is important. It is good to feel wanted—to cook that special meal for a loved one, to knit the sweater in someone's favourite colours. I do believe "the best is yet to be!"

Usha Rai is a journalist who writes on development issues like environment, education and health

TWO MUST-WATCH FILMS



BLACK

Director: Sanjay Leela Bhansali

Cast: Rani Mukherji, Amitabh Bachchan

With Amitabh Bachchan crossing 60, filmmakers are designing roles appropriate for his age. Arguably the finest such character is Debraj Sahai in *Black* (2005), a film inspired by the life of Helen Keller. Debraj is the source of education, communication and inspiration for his deaf-dumb-blind student Michelle McNally (Mukherji). A brash, alcoholic, out-of-work senior, his life changes dramatically when he begins training Michelle. Director Sanjay Leela Bhansali refuses to sugarcoat a thing—from Michelle's struggles with speech and sight to the deterioration of Debraj's memory owing to Alzheimer's. But hope floats with Michelle refilling the blank spaces in her teacher's mind with the same lessons he taught her. *Sparsh* (1980) and *Koshish* (1972) explored similar territory.

What sets *Black* apart is it connects two unusual characters finding life in each other's pain and happiness.

22

VIRUDDH

Director: Mahesh Manjrekar

Cast: Amitabh Bachchan, Sharmila Tagore, John Abraham

Of the few films that revolved around seniors, even fewer connected with seniors. The second film that made it to our list is *Viruddh*, incidentally another Amitabh starrer. On many levels, *Viruddh* and *Rang De Basanti* share a similar plot—the illegal legal system, corrupt politicians and a dishonest police force. But while students go up against the political system in *Rang De...*, in this one, the senior protagonist (Bachchan) is up against a MLA's son who murders his son (Abraham). As Bachchan sets out to get justice, he is stonewalled at every step. *Viruddh* may not have set the box office aflame like *Rang De...* but Bachchan going one-to-one with his son's killer seems more logical, somehow, than the belief that assassinating a politician would revolutionise the country's political system. *Viruddh* also has some warm moments between Bachchan and his wife (Tagore).

—Ruchi Shah





ASHESH SHAH

A question of age

The best way to delay ageing is to accept it, says **V Gangadhar**

Who wants to age? No one. Even in our epics, King Yayati lived for long with many wives and girlfriends—but finally when age

began to tell, he asked his four sons if he could exchange his old age for their youth. The first three sons politely declined, but the youngest one, who loved his father most, agreed. He became old and Yayati made merry for some more years before realising that life is not always youth and fun. He blessed his son and returned his youth.

Indeed, we all want our youth to go on and on. When pretty young girls start to call you 'Uncle' you do get a shock, but then you realise it is something unavoidable. The experience is all the more shattering for people who are vain about their looks and depend on them for their profession, like film stars and models. The first wrinkle makes them constantly scurry towards the mirror. When the wrinkles begin to multiply, it is one beauty parlour after another.

Ageing affects not just the face, though it is the most vulnerable part of the body. The waistline begins to expand; it is increasingly difficult to get into trousers or jeans; and the sessions in the gym get longer and more desperate. Your favourite food items begin disappearing from the dining table and your life is controlled by the dreaded four letter word, DIET.

But don't despair. In the 21st century, there are enough materials to hide the ageing process. It all depends on how much you can spend and how much discipline you can instil in your life. Formerly, people used *mehendi* to dye grey hair; today there are dozens of expensive imported hair dyes available in every colour. For men, greying is not a

major problem; the steady loss of hair is more worrying. A receding hairline is a sure indication of ageing. You can brush your hair in different ways but the tell-tale signs will not go away. The final solution is a wig. Having never worn one, I can't talk of personal experiences, but I do know that the wig you choose should suit your personality and should not fall off!

There are also creams, lotions and a whole range of beauty products that promise to check the ageing process. And there are medical processes to 'lift' every part of the human anatomy to hide signs of ageing. The message here: Never give up. The struggle could be long, hard and expensive but perseverance does pay.

The ultimate compliment you can pay a middle aged woman who has taken recourse to anti-ageing treatments is to express wonder and disbelief at the sight of her teenaged daughter and exclaim: "Don't tell me she is your daughter; she is more like your sister!"

The best way to combat ageing is to think young and stay active doing what you enjoy the most

Genetics may soon halt the ageing process and usher in an era of permanent youth. This would be something against the laws of nature, like immortality. Do we really want that? I don't, but I know there are millions who would give anything to benefit from this scientific process.

I believe we can fight ageing only to a certain extent. After that, we should let nature take its course. There are men and women who age gracefully. Look at Pandit Jasraj, Nafisa Ali, Dimple Kapadia or Waheeda Rehman. How great they look! Do we think of them as old men and women? Certainly not. The best way to combat ageing is to think young and stay active doing something you enjoy doing. It is better to be among this group than those who are actually young, but look old!

V Gangadhar, 67, is a Mumbai-based journalist and columnist

TWO GAMES TO KEEP YOUR MIND TICKING

KAKURO

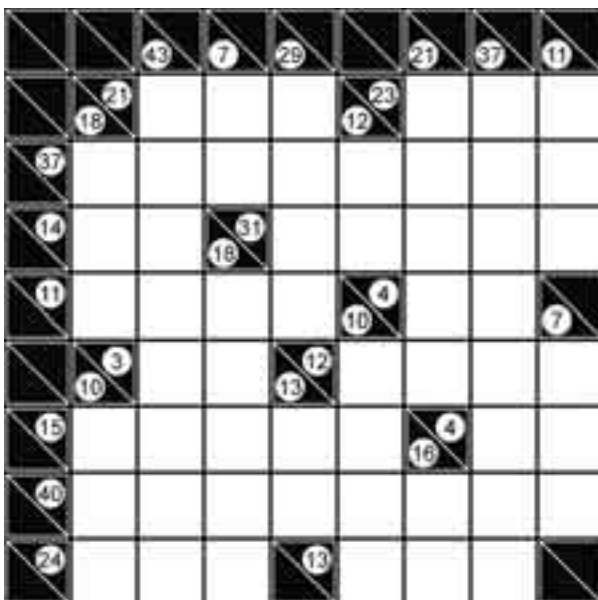
Tagline: Sudoku's big brother

What is it: Kakuro (also called Cross Sums, Kakro or Kakkuro) is pretty much the mathematical equivalent of crosswords.

Origin: US-based Dell Magazines started printing this puzzle 10 years ago under the name 'Cross Sums'. About three years ago, the Japanese rechristened it Kakro—it was a hit. And in September 2005, *The Guardian* newspaper in the UK first published it under the name Kakuro. Now it is syndicated, as Kakuro, in newspapers across the world, including India.

Where you find it: You can play online or download and print free puzzles from *kakuro.com*, *kakuro.net*, *kakuropuzzle.com*, *kakurolive.com* and *kakuro.info*.

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



CHAUPAD

Tagline: Blast from the past; fun for the family

What is it: Chaupad (for two or four players) is one of the oldest games in India—the popular game of Ludo is derived from it. There are many regional variations like Dayakattam, Pachisi, Champad and Pagade.

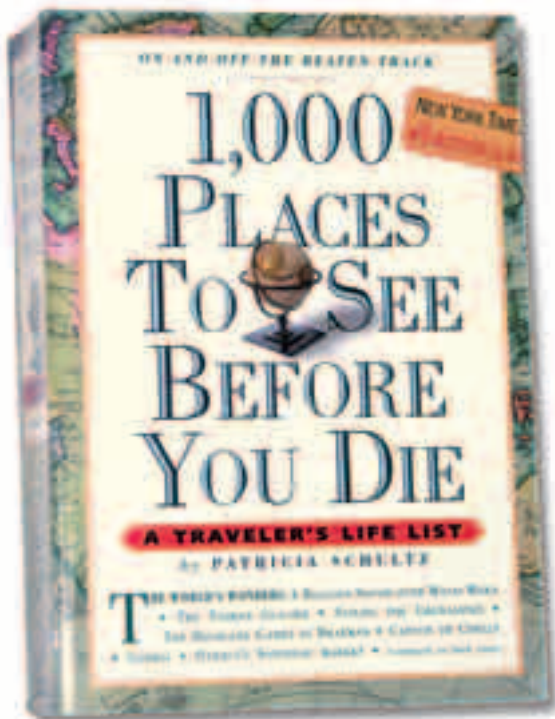
Origin: There is evidence that forms of Chaupad existed from 4th century AD. It finds mention in the *Mahabharata*—Yudishtira and the Pandavas gambled away their fortunes and kingdom to the Kauravas. Now, many sites devoted to traditional games are repackaging and selling Chaupad.

Where you find it: You can buy the game online on *kreedagames.com* (Rs 400), *indiavarta.com* (Rs 400) or *indiaplaza.com* (Rs 500).

Rules: The game is for four players (partners sit opposite each other). Each player should move all four pieces around the board to finish. The game is only won when both partners have all eight pieces home. More than one piece from the same side can occupy the same square. But your piece can be captured by the enemy and sent back to 'Start' if his piece lands on your square. In an exciting alternative, two or more pieces of the same shade that land on the same space can be melded together to form 'super-pieces', and then move as if they were a single piece.

—Arati Rajan Menon

TWO GOOD READS



WANDERLUST

Don't be put off by the word 'die' in veteran travel guide writer **PATRICIA SCHULTZ's** *1,000 Places to See Before You Die*. This book, with the baseline 'A Traveller's Life List', is actually all about living, and wanderlust—both intrepid travellers and frequent-armchair-flyers are invited. Schultz takes readers on a breakneck tour—continent by continent—of the best places in the world to visit. Some are well known, others you couldn't spell to save your life. A sampling: The Great Wall of China, Botswana's Okavango Delta, the Alhambra in Andalusia, Spain, the Tuscan hills surrounding San Gimignano in Italy, Ipanema Beach in Rio, the backwaters of Kerala, Oaxaca's (Mexico) Saturday market, and the Buddhas of Borobudur in Indonesia. There's little less than a page on each location and it's followed by information on how to get there. The best part is Schultz' lively prose—stylish and seizing on exactly what makes each destination worthy, it prevents the book from degenerating into a 'to-see' grocery list. **Workman Publishing; Rs 700; 974 pages**



STAY SVELTE

Who's the slimmest of them all? Well, in 2004, Frenchwoman Mireille Guiliano threw down the gauntlet with *French Women Don't Get Fat: The Secret of Eating for Pleasure*. In late 2005, 45 year-old Japanese woman **NAOMI MORIYAMA** fought back with her book *Japanese Women Don't Get Old or Fat: Secrets of My Mother's Tokyo Kitchen*, co-written with her husband New Yorker William Doyle. Only 3 per cent of Japanese women are obese—compared to 11 per cent in France (yup) and 34 per cent in the US—and their life expectancy is the world's highest. She credits this to the "seven pillars": fish, vegetables, rice, soy, noodles, tea and fruit. The book has enough facts, statistics, extremely doable recipes, menus and history to send French—and all Western—cuisine scurrying for cover. Calling large portion sizes "the bane of the Western world", Moriyama offers up an age-old Japanese mantra: *Hara hachi bunme*, which means 'Eat until you are 80 per cent full'. Left unsaid is the fact that you should probably eat Japanese. **Bantam Dell; Rs 820; 276 pages**

—Arati Rajan Menon



Make your mark

It's time for silvers to get media exposure, says **Amita Malik**

I was in Montreal some years ago and was struck by the Canadian media's attitude to women. I opened the *Montreal Star*, one of their best dailies, one morning to find two women on the women's page. One was a top American actress, I think Katherine Hepburn, and the other a top Soviet scientist. I felt strongly that the scientist should have gone on the science or general pages and the actress on the entertainment page. But on reflection, I said to myself, at least they have a women's page, while we in India get tucked away any old where under the excuse of no gender bias.

And now, on the second very happy birthday of *Harmony*, I am sad to find how badly elderly people (*Harmony* at least accords them the courtesy of calling them 'silvers') are treated and covered in our media. The only time they get top billing is when they are murdered in lonely flats, their children having emigrated to the West. Or when there are chilling instances of elderly parents being thrown out of their flats by greedy sons and daughters to whom they have given their flats in their old age. The same goes for radio and TV. Some radio stations under All India Radio have programmes for women and separate programmes for children. But where, oh where are the programmes for elders? Sometimes one gets a cursory look into old age homes, which can be chilling places where the elderly are herded together with rare visits from relatives and no interaction whatsoever with Generation Next.

Harmony has held out a ray of hope for elderly people. It has tackled all possible problems, from pension and tax to Medicare and use of Internet for readers. *Harmony* has even encouraged silvers to take part in marathons. It is no accident that one of the oldest marathon runners in the world is a Sikh gentleman in London. In fact, I read a news item recently about some top firms realising the priceless

experience of retired people and hoping to draw on their talent to better their output.

I also feel that elderly people, who have been so vocal in *Harmony*, should bombard the print media with letters to the editor and well-written articles, and also ring up newspapers, possibly their newsrooms, if they have something interesting to say. I know it is easy coming from someone like me in the media, who can lift a telephone and get through. Busy people in newspapers have little time for stories concerning elderly people's day-to-day problems. But I find women reporters seem to be more concerned with this kind of problem and might be interested.

As for TV channels, I am glad to report that more and more older people now form part of the audiences in programmes where there is a panel discussing a particular subject, such as NDTV's *We The People* with Barkha Dutt and *The Big Fight* with

Vikram Chandra. I believe that if you hear of a subject where you know you have something useful to say, TV channels would welcome you in the audience and you will get a chance to express your views. It is not only retired generals and bright young students who make valuable contributions from the audience. As a professional TV watcher, I have noticed that many more elderly people, some very

articulate, some very angry and some with a lot of wisdom as well as a sense of balance are taking part in these programmes.

So what about you, the readers of *Harmony*, who have already made a mark in print? You might well become a TV star, not only on English TV but the many good Indian language channels all around the country!



The elderly should bombard the print media with letters if they have something to say

Amita Malik, often referred to as 'the first lady of Indian media', is a columnist and film critic



ASHESH SHAH

Cryptic mind

Raju Bharatan indulges in some two-in-one word play

Here is something classically tautological: 'Who the dickens wrote *A Tale of Two Cities*?' Alan Cash, as my cryptic mentor,

put the point in a peanutshell when, upon receiving my wedding invite, he cabled: "The very best to Girija and you—with never a cross word!"

Alongside the Commonsense Crosswords in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, I had C R Mandy for my first editor. As his most junior prodigy, I was entrusted with laying out 'Newlyweds', a page that Khushwant Singh later fancied titling 'Newlybeds'. Now, in the 1952 caption I gave to a wedding picture, Rukmini Devi somehow got printed as Rukmini Devil. She looked a devil, too, so that I faced the sack, come morning. A-tremble, I entered CRM's cabin. But that British editor of Irish descent simply asked: "Now, young man, how do we get out of this jam of Rukmini Devil?"

"Printer's Devil—let that be the correction we carry!" I responded, greatly daring. "Publish it as such straightway!" came back CRM, amused by my insouciance. *Devi* turning into *Devil* thus planted the idea of the 'two-in-one' in my crossword-inclined mindset. Thus did I, in my impressionable youth, envision *beloved* as *be(love)d*—love in bed. Observe, too, how 'sex at noon taxes' reads as 'sex at noon taxes' the other way. Not for nothing do the 24 letters making up 'President Clinton of the USA', imaginatively rearranged, read: 'To copulate he finds interns'.

The idea of two mindgames to help you stay young lies in the fact that the compiler has some set words that he is set upon fitting into the square. The idea is to make even the not-so-young feel agile in the

mental act of solving by noting, for instance: 'Old ball here could be new'. The answer is: Chris (Old). So is *groom* the answer to *Man of the Match*.

Suppose it is an eight-letter word I am fitting into the middle of the square and I startle you by saying that there would be no *printed* clue at all for it. Next, I ask the artist actually to *letter* (into the square) RAS as the first three letters of the missing eight-letter word. Puzzled about there being no *printed* clue at all for this one, as you finish with solving the rest of the square, you discover that the missing five letters ('following' RAS) are PUT IN. Belatedly, you awaken to the fact that (after RAS) PUT IN is what the compiler wants *put in*—to complete the eight-letter word as *Rasputin*.

Likewise, HANG ON in the square. Since, for *hang on*, I have the vivid clue: 'What to ask the guy who's all set to 'swing', but who's still expecting a telephonic reprieve, to do?' Just ask him to *hang on* and the pardon could come! Hang it all, if it is a new password not easily forgotten you want, I recom-

mend RAVIVAR. Seeing how its seven letters read the same RAVIVAR in reverse. Three other seven-letter passwords reading the same in reverse: *reviver*, *rotator*, *deified*. If Nepal is in the news right now, royalty you associate with the elephant, while the eight letters of *elephant* are made up of *The Nepal*. So the riddle for *elephant*: *The Nepal weightlifter*. In a similar vein, if I say, 'They are enough to give you a

splitting headache', your answer, dash it, has to be *hyphens*, hasn't it? So must you tumble to a *drop in the ocean* as the answer to the poser: 'Little could the parachutist welcome it.'

No clue yet to the two-in-one mindgame? Not even if I say, 'There is a two-in-one tang to her' and identify *mermaid* as the answer? Note that the 11 letters of *desperation* recast into *A rope ends it*.

The idea is to make the not-so-young feel agile in the mental act of solving puzzles

Harmony's indefatigable Raju Bharatan, 72, is the first Indian to set the Sunday Cryptic in The Times Of India

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SAY IT OUT LOUD



Say not, 'I have found the truth',
but rather, 'I have found a truth'.
—*Lebanese author and poet Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931)*

The truth is more
important than the facts.
—*American architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959)*

A lie told often enough becomes the truth.
—*Soviet leader Lenin (1870-1924)*

The public will believe anything, so long as it is not
founded on truth.
—*English poet, critic and biographer Dame Edith Sitwell (1887-1964)*

A lie can travel halfway around the world while the
truth is putting on its shoes.
—*American writer Mark Twain (1835-1910)*

SUDOKU FOR YOU

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

Choose a number from 1 to 9, and place it in the
grid. Every digit from 1 to 9 must appear once, and
only once, in each of the columns, rows and in each
of the sets of nine boxes.



New terms that have made their appearance in newspapers, magazines, books and websites

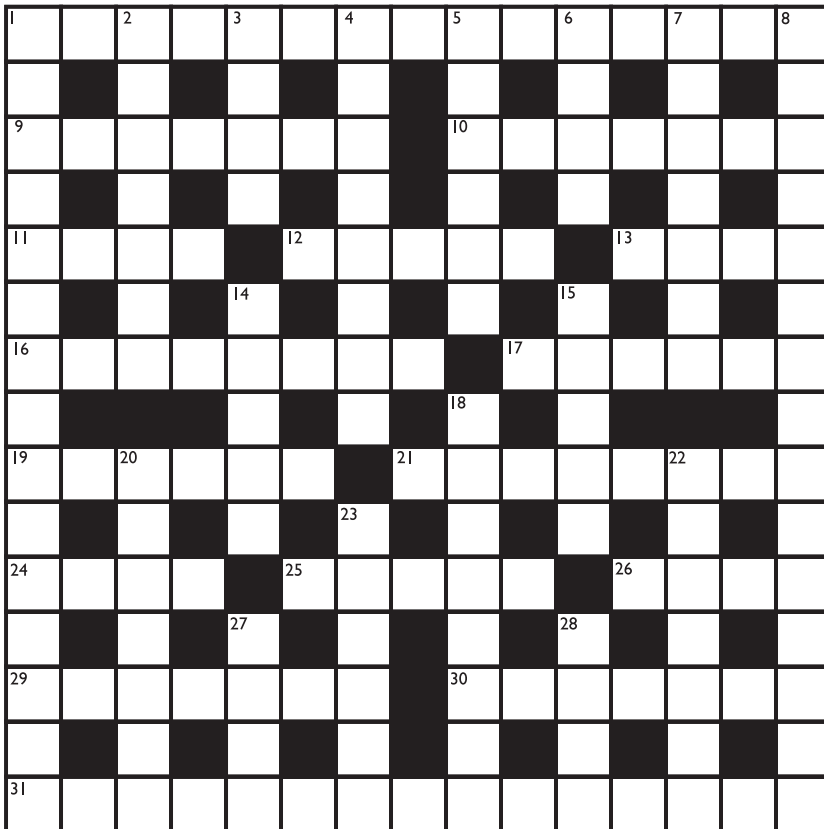
crunchy con *n.* A conservative who is ecologically
aware and has interests in natural products and
organic foods. [Shortening of crunchy conservative.]
Example: Is there room under the conservative
umbrella for someone who respects the free market,
but resents what its unfettered expression is doing to
our cities and lives? Apparently, there is. In fact,
people like me even have a name: **crunchy cons**.
—*Jonathan Kay, "Confessions of a crunchy con",*
The National Post, 24 April 2006

spime *n.* A theoretical object that can be tracked
precisely in space and time over the lifetime of the
object. [Blend of *space* and *time*.]
Example: Everything grows miscellaneous. And
people are transformed into ubiquitous findable
objects (UFOs), along with pets, products,
possessions and places. These UFOs, which Bruce
Sterling labels **spimes**, are objects precisely located
in space and time. They ingest their own metadata.
They accumulate histories. They network with peers.
They are scary, infinitely complex and almost
inconceivable.
—*Peter Morville, "A garden of forking paths", Bulletin of*
the American Society for Information Science and
Technology, 1 February 2006

more cowbell *idiom.* Something extra that will take
a project or endeavour to a higher level.
Example: The show had a little bit of everything,
from dancers, flaming inline skaters, blacksmiths
and fake cows rolling around to a K-tel soundtrack
for the athletes' parade. Could have used **more**
cowbell, though.

—*Steve Schrader, "Maier 'fans' are drug testers",*
Detroit Free Press, 11 February 2006
Courtesy: www.wordsplay.com

THE WORD IS OUT



EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 21

By Raju Bharatan ACROSS

- 1 One exception to the rule that what goes up must come down (3 4 2 6)
- 9 Caribbean-sounding place in Worcestershire witness to a majestic Viv Richards hundred? (7)
- 10 The 1982 Gulzar film with a tang all its own (7)
- 11 Part of foot (4)
- 12 Fourth of the seven deadly sins (5)
- 13 What a legendary cropper Nutan came (opposite Pradeep Kumar) in this 1956 eponymous role, after saying she was too raw to play *Anarkali*, when so titled was *Mughal-e-Azam* (4)
- 16 Suggesting ear for music, yet having sten for core! (8)
- 17 Wodehouse holding on before Al, festive time it is (6)
- 19 Natural to the mind? Not if the suggestion be that the whole pub just waded into the meal! (6)
- 21 Does what Shane Warne display as ear-wear flesh him out as the horny one? (4-4)
- 24 Named after Polly Umrigar at the club entrance to Wankhede Stadium, underscoring the thing that 'Palm Tree Hitter' left open when facing Freddie Trueman! (4)
- 25 This paper, didn't L K Advani habitually ask for it in his early

- years as Opposition leader? (5)
- 26 Brand-value car wondering if it should be exclusively Roman Catholic-occupied? (4)
- 29 Eccentric Doordarshan coming between one ball and another (7)
- 30 *Taj Mahal* Rani turning into Bai (4 3)
- 31 ...the seven letters of 'century' do the seven letters of Bradman stand for (7 4 4)

DOWN

- 1 Shelley Winters, all soap-sud in the bath-tub, was not one to so let men run all over her (4 2 5 4)
- 2 Neither here nor there in the harem (7)
- 3 To withdraw to Kruger (4)
- 4 Rating Nadia deserved for her defiant-gymnast feat of fleeing her country with her love? (3 2 3)
- 5 Let's raise one to 'Idiot Boxer' Bucknor (6)
- 6 Not a beauty patch on her was Zeenie Baby in *Manoranjan* (4)
- 7 Did *Baghban* see Hema Malini so Amitabh-thaw as to dispel the notion of her ever having been one? (7)
- 8 Military man heading state seeking to legitimise his rule through adult franchise? (7 8)
- 14 The one who wrote: "I think I shall be among the English Poets after my death." (5)
- 15 Dish for Vajpayee Government going after Miss Derek! (5)
- 18 Stable accommodating at something that could be asserted (8)
- 20 No point scoring off every ball? (7)
- 22 Produce enough evidence to get the body buried dug out? (7)
- 23 Kick in being Helen? (3 3)
- 27 Island on which to be marooned with a bundle of mischief? (4)
- 28 Trust Rahul to outpace any batsman in the world at getting to the victory target with them (4)

For answers, see page 81

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

NEW 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. The clue, *Walls have them yet they hear not*, has *EARS* for its answer. Next, *pertinacity* could split into *Pert* in a city, *face to face* into *facet of ace*. For *ANISEED*, the clue could be: *Carminative I see inside and outside*—*AN(I SEE)D*. The possibilities are endless.

BRAIN GYM

MINDBENDERS



These puzzles will definitely make you work your brain and put your lateral thinking and logic skills to the test!

1. I281B4

Determine which of the following letters-numbers completes the sequence above: S 0 V Q U 22

2. Without writing anything or using any calculating device, say if there are more 2s or 8s to be found in all of the numbers from 1 to 50,000.

3. If two of the following statements are false, what chance is there that the egg came first? Round to the nearest whole percent.

Note: If any part of a statement is false, then the entire statement must be false.

- A. The chicken came first.
- B. The egg came first.
- C. A is false and B is true.

4. If everyone in Ramgarh owns a number of dishes that is always an even number, no one owns more than 274 dishes and no two people own the same number of dishes, what is the maximum number of people in Ramgarh?

5. If each letter in the following equations represents a number from 1 through 9, determine what number each letter represents.

A. $A+A+B+C = 13$

B. $A+B+C+D = 14$

C. $B+B+C+D = 13$

6. Should the letter I be on the top or bottom row?

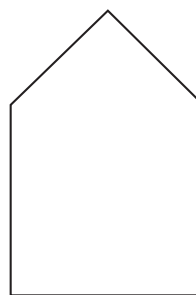
A H J K

B C D E F G L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

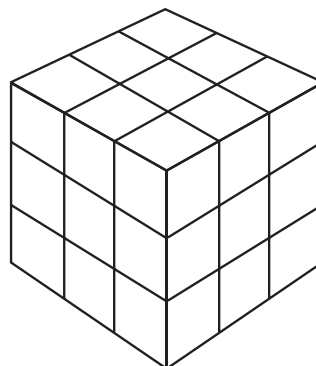
Courtesy: www.puzz.com

PICTURE THIS

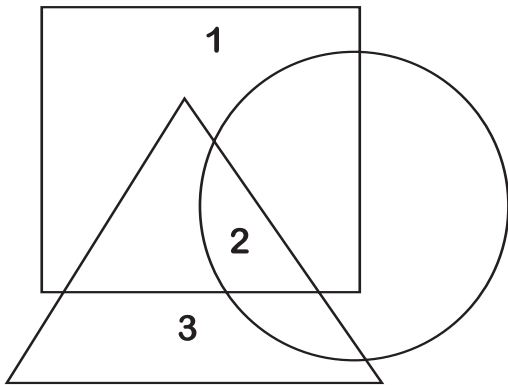
1. What is the least number of pieces a carpenter can cut the piece of wood below to form a square table top?



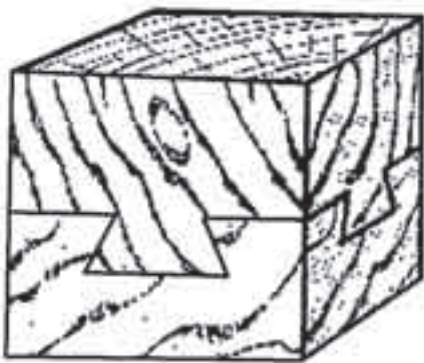
2. Is it possible for a carpenter to cut a cube of wood into 27 equal cubes in only six cuts? Is it possible to do it in fewer cuts?



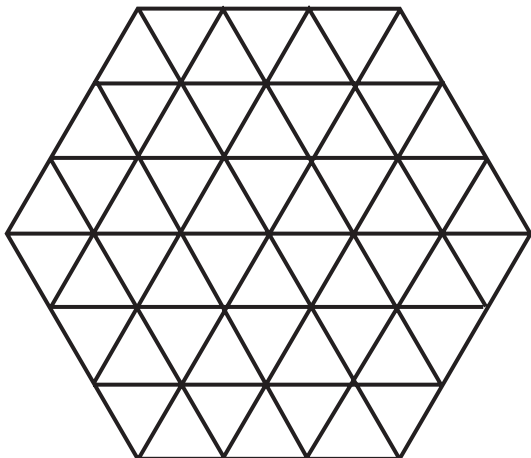
3. Place the remaining numbers from 4 to 10 in the seven divisions of the above figure so that the outer divisions total 30 and each geometric figure totals 30.



4. How did the carpenter make a cube dovetailed together exactly as shown above?



5. How many regular hexagons does this picture contain?



Courtesy: www.enchantedmind.com

THE NUMBER 'TWO'



The number **Two** is a number, numeral, and glyph. It is the natural number following One and preceding Three. Here's a look at some of the properties of this simple number:

In mathematics:

An integer is called 'even' if it is divisible by two. Two is the

smallest and the first prime number, and the only even one—for this reason it is sometimes humorously called 'the oddest prime'.

In science: Two is the number of polynucleide strands in a DNA double helix. It is also the atomic number of helium and is considered the first 'magic number'—in nuclear physics, a magic number is a number of nucleons such that they are arranged into complete shells within the atomic nucleus.

In astronomy: Two is the number of stars in a binary star system.

In human culture: The duality of all things is an important notion in most cultures and religions. The most common dichotomy is perhaps the one of good and evil, but there are many others. In Hegelian dialectic, the process of antithesis creates two perspectives from one. Two is a lucky number in Chinese culture and there is a Chinese saying that goes, "Good things come in pairs." It is common to use double symbols in product brand names, like double happiness and double elephants. In Finland, two candles are lit on Independence Day—putting them on the windowsill invokes the symbolical meaning of division, and thus independence. And in the philosophy of Pythagoras, the dyad is the second thing created.

In numerology: According to numerologists, the positive traits of the number two are cooperation, adaptability, sensitivity to the needs of others, partnering, a tendency towards arbitration or mediation, modesty, sincerity, spiritual inclination and diplomacy. Negative traits, on the other hand, are shyness, timidity, fear, self-consciousness, an obsession with detail and depressive tendencies!

VISUAL CHALLENGE

PENCIL AND PAPER

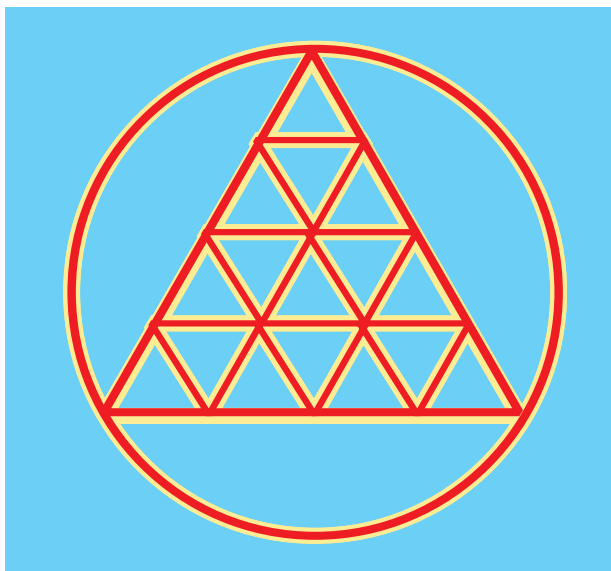
1. **Starry sky:** The object of this puzzle is to connect all the 16 stars on the left with exactly six connected straight lines without lifting your pencil off the paper. The lines must go through the centres of the stars.



2. **Around dodecahedron in 20 points:** The graph in the circle on the left is a two-dimensional projection on the plane of a dodecahedron (a three-dimensional solid with 12 pentagonal faces). Each green point on the graph represents the respective vertex of the dodecahedron, and each white line between any two points the respective edge. The object of this puzzle is to visit all the 20 green points on the graph. You can start at any point but you may visit each point only once. Moving from point to point you have to travel along the white lines (alleys) only. You have to finish at the point where you've started your journey.

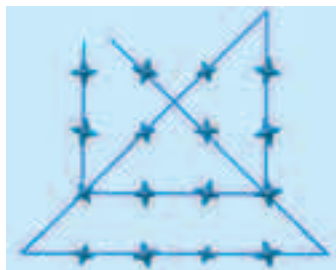


3. **In Ancient Greece:** Can you draw the ancient symbol shown in the illustration with one continuous line, making the minimum possible number of turns? You're allowed to go over the same lines more than once.



Solutions

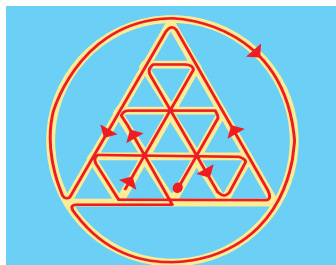
1



2



3



SOLUTION TO SUDOKU

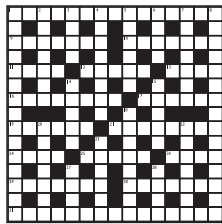
76

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

EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 21

77

ACROSS: 1 the cost of living; 9 Kington (sounding like Kingston); 10 *Namkeen*; 11 inch; 12 anger; 13 *Heer*; 16 listener (li/sten/er: *sten* as core); 17 PONGAL (P/ON/G before AL, PG standing for Wodehouse); 19 innate (inn/ate); 21 stud-bull; 24 (Polly Umrigar) Gate; 25 White (paper); 26 MERC (Me/RC?); 29 ODDBALL (O/DD/BALL: DD coming between *one ball* and *another*; 30 Bina Rai (B/ina R/ai: *Rani* turning into *Bai*); 31 nothing less than...



DOWN: 1 take it lying down; 2 eunuchs; 3 OTTO (ot/to: *ot* is *to* withdrawn); 4 Ten on Ten; 5 finger; 6 Irma; 7 iceberg; 8 General Election (*General* standing for *Military General*); 14 Keats; 15 BONDA (Bo/NDA); 18 statable (st/at/able: *stable* accommodating *at*); 20 not a dot; 22 unearh; 23 the leg; 27 (Geeta) Bali; 28 ones

SOLUTIONS TO MINDBENDERS

78

1. If you 'read' the series, it says 'I too ate one before'. The only option offered that makes any sense is U, or 'you'.

2. There are more 2s. Each number from 20,000 to 29,999 begins with a 2, which greatly weights the scale in favor of the 2s. The number of 8s would not begin to catch up with 2s again until you get well into the 80,000s.

3. 0 per cent. C must always be false, because it is impossible for A and B to both be false AND C to be true. If C is false, B is also false.

4. 138. The number can be quickly found by dividing the maximum number of dishes, 274, by 2, because half of the numbers are even and half of them are odd. However, you must also add 1 to the answer to include 0, which is an even number.

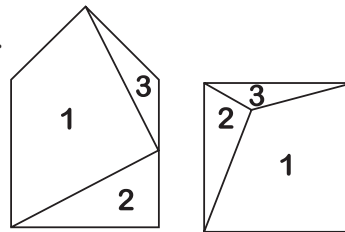
5. A=3, B=2, C=5, and D=4.

6. I would be found on the bottom row. The only thing that A, H, J and K have in common is that each one of them has an 'A' sound when pronounced, which is a feature that all the other letters lack.

SOLUTIONS TO PICTURE THIS

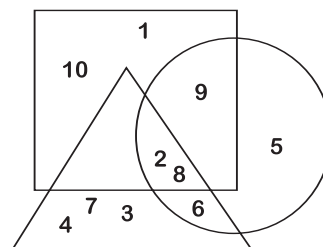
78

1.

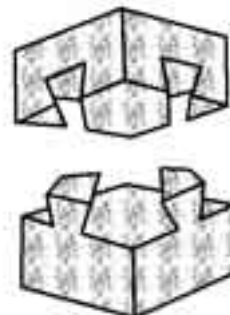


2. The carpenter must use six full cuts. To prove this, consider the middle cube. It must have six faces and each must be made with a separate cut.

3.



4.



5. 27



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