

JUNE 2007 Rs 30

harmony

celebrate age

3rd Anniversary
Special

Celebrate
happiness!



What researchers think

Exclusive columns by

B K S Iyengar • Urvashi Butalia

Bulbul Sharma • Sankarshan Thakur

Plus: Check your Happiness Quotient

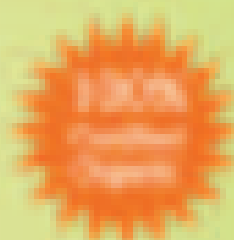
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The magazine for silver citizens



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IN STEP WITH TIME

TIME DOESN'T BROOK ANY interference. The challenge, really, is to ride along with its pace and harness it to make the most of every minute, rather than be swept in its tide.

In 2004, believing that we owe our elderly more than just lip service, the Harmony Initiative was born. Three years on, I'm proud to say we've used our time well.

Today, the initiative is a Foundation, with all the stability and ambition the term signifies. Apart from strengthening our original facets—*Harmony*, the magazine; our portal www.harmonyindia.org; and the Harmony Interactive Centre in Mumbai—Harmony for Silvers Foundation now includes a Research Division that publishes monographs and policy reviews on ageing-related issues.

We sponsor events such as the Senior Citizens' Run as part of the Mumbai and Delhi marathons and have begun to offer exclusive services for silvers like Harmony Holidays. We promote advocacy

on a national level and represent the concerns of India's elderly at international forums.

In short, we are becoming recognised as the definitive voice of silvers in this country. And we plan to grow further with regional language editions of *Harmony* magazine, more research reports, interactive centres in other cities and a range of exclusive services for silvers.

While we continue to set a frenetic pace for ourselves, I believe we must take some time out to look around us, smell the roses, as it were.

On a personal level, I feel a sense of deep satisfaction when I see how *Harmony* has evolved. When we began, we were path-breakers, finding our feet, trying to reconcile intent with the difficulties of building the right team and developing appropriate strategies to move ahead. I remember the sleepless nights, the concerns about challenges facing us and the enormity of our dreams. Today, we know we are on the right track.

RITU NANDA



Meanwhile, as *Harmony* goes about its work, touching the lives of silvers, it has altered my life completely. I am more centred, focused and fulfilled, and look forward to my own tomorrows with confidence and optimism. Indeed, believing in yourself and chasing your dreams can bring meaning, self-actualisation and contentment to life. And these add up to 'happiness'. It's not just the theme for our third anniversary issue but a state of mind mirrored in the eyes of the many incredible silvers who have peopled these pages for the past three years. Happy reading.

Tina Ambani

A Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust Initiative

Harmony—Celebrate Age—June 2007 Volume 4 Issue 1

Publisher **Anthony Jesudasan** Editor **Tina Ambani** Deputy Editor **Meeta Bhatti** Assistant Editor **Arati Rajan Menon**

Special Correspondent **Teena Baruah** Consultant Editor **Sudeep Chakravarti**

Design Head **Ritu Nanda** Visual Coordinator **Anuradha Joshi** Production Manager **Rajeev Nambiar** Graphic Designer **Mamta Jadhav**

Design & Imaging **Haresh Patel, Anand Sutar** and **Rohidas Adavkar** Editorial Coordinators **Glenn Fernandes, Anita Rosario**

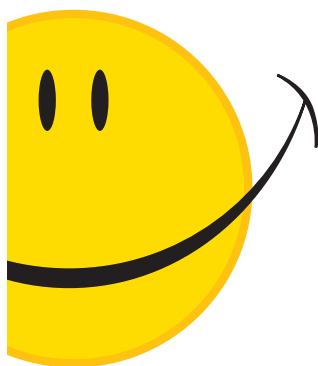
General Manager, Business Development **Shrenik Mehta** Deputy Manager **Anuya Chauhan** Assistant Manager **Nikhil Wadhvani**

Editorial & Marketing Offices: 4th Floor, Maker Chambers IV, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400021. Tel: 91-22-22785423 (Editorial), 22785472 (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, Plot No. 5/5A, TTC Ind. Area, Thane-Belapur Road, Airoli,

Navi Mumbai-400708 **Disclaimer:** The material provided by *Harmony* is not a substitute for professional opinions. Readers are advised to seek appropriate advice from qualified and licensed professionals in the concerned field. © Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust. All rights reserved worldwide.

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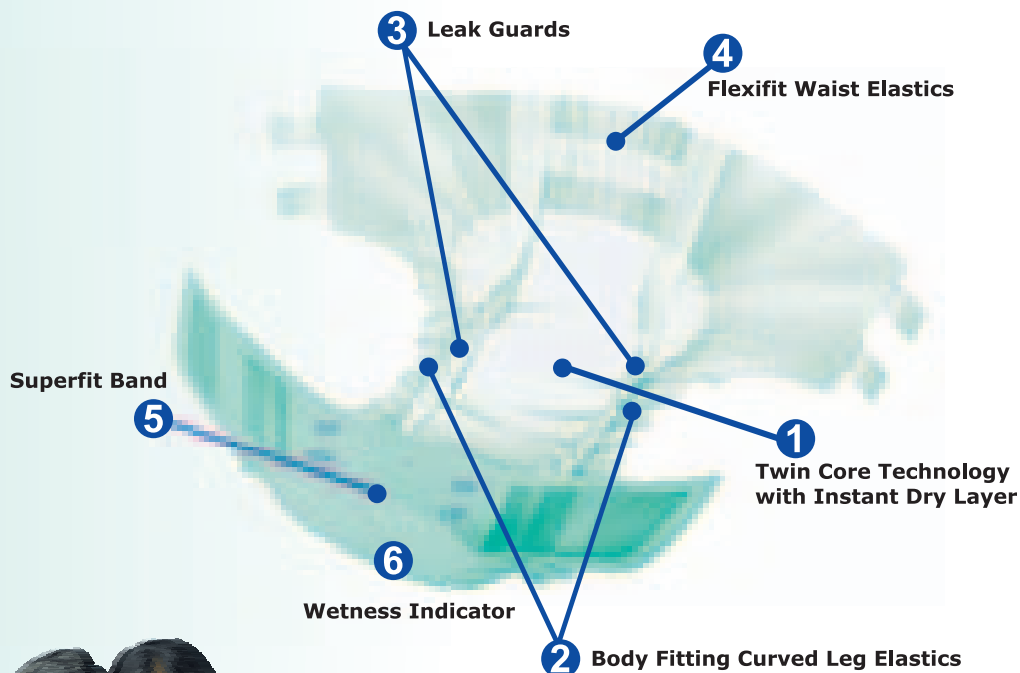
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LOOK FOR



Cover art
by **MAMTA JADHAV**

For subscription assistance contact: HarmonyCare, Living Media India Ltd, A-61, Sector 57, Noida (Uttar Pradesh) - 201301. Phones: **New Delhi:** (95120) 2479900 from Delhi and Faridabad; (0120) 2479900 from Rest of India **Fax:** (0120) 4078080; **Kolkata:** 033-22821922, 22827726, **Fax:** 22825398, 22827254; **Bengaluru:** 080-2212448, 2290562, **Fax:** 2218335; **Mumbai:** 022-24444423/4/5/6 **Fax:** 24444358; **Chennai:** 044-28478525-44 **Fax:** 28472178; **Email:** harmony@intoday.com



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column one

Harmony is three. Since inception, the magazine has stuck to its slogan: Celebrate Age. *Harmony* is about positive outlook, approach, mindset and philosophy. It's about harnessing happiness at every age. Through our regular sections like 'What I Love', 'In Focus', 'Second Careers', 'Worth Your While' and 'Showing the Way', we have brought to you stories of people who have found cheer in hobbies, social objectives, work and pursuit of health.

So, for our third anniversary, we decided to make happiness a special theme. "In Pursuit of Happiness" celebrates fidelity to a worthy purpose. It pays tribute to remarkable people who have made it their second nature—central to their happiness is work, altruism, volunteerism and spirituality. In each journey, you will find experiences that will echo your own.

We also have viewpoints of people who have led extraordinary lives. And if you want to measure how happy you are, take the Happiness Quiz—a universally accepted test. Dr Edward Diener, a psychologist from University of Illinois who studied 'life satisfaction' for 25 years, designed it two decades ago and it still holds true (despite the fact that parameters of happiness have changed drastically).

Elsewhere, we have yogic *asana* for happiness by Shameem Akthar, cool treats by Dr Pushpesh Pant, and the latest news on your neighbourhood post office. For any gap in your life, you can rely on *Harmony*. But before that, rely on yourself. You have an advantage—it's called 'Advantage Age'.

—Meeta Bhatti



It is gratifying to see that twin towns Pimpri and Chinchwad, adjacent to Pune and known informally as New Pune, are setting an example for big cities. The

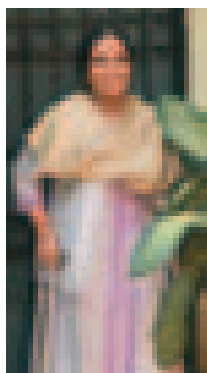
Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), in its budget estimate for financial year 2007-2008, has made a provision of Rs 20 crore for a new housing project in accordance with the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) of the Central Government, where low-income groups can get housing for Rs 2 lakh. While congratulating the corporation, I request the corporation to consider another pioneering suggestion.

For decades, Pune has been a city of pensioners. Owing to Chinchwad's proximity to both Mumbai and Pune, a large number of silvers have settled down here. It would be a great help if a similar low-cost housing project is built here for them. PCMC could even allot flats of this type to silvers on rent with the condition that the tenancy shall be automatically terminated with the death of the silver couple. If the proposed scheme is successful, PCMC could consider floating more projects like this and set an example for other municipal corporations across the country to follow. Such colonies would give silvers, who are denied any consideration by society and government, a chance to live independent and safe lives.

S B PRABHU

Pune

The letter of the month wins Orthaheel footwear, from Orthofit, a Mumbai-based sports medicine and rehab clinic



I read about Janak Taneja's remarkable recovery after an open-heart surgery and hip transplant ("Walk over the Edge", April 2007) with great

interest. For a healthy and happy life, I believe that a person should wake up early and welcome the sun at dawn. Go for a morning walk and do some yoga. Walking is the best exercise. Even silvers

should walk at least 8 to 10 km a day. If this seems too arduous, break it up into two walks, one in the morning and the other in the evening.

MAHESH KUMAR

Via email

Upon my return from the US recently, I read issues of *Harmony* magazine from October 2006 to March 2007 in one stretch! I was impressed by Amita Malik's article, "Too High for Me" in the February 2007 issue. The Indian Standards Institute framed the National Building Code in 1983 for all public

buildings and development works by contractors, architects and supervising agencies. Every item, right from foundations and roofs to roads, steps and staircases, is covered under the code. There is also provision in this code for the handicapped and senior citizens—Appendix 'E' Clause 12.21 specifies the standards to be followed. In fact, Varishth Nagrik Vichar Manch, a senior citizens' body based in Indore, had organised a discussion on barrier-free mobility in association with the Indian Institute of Engineers in February 2006 to discuss adherence to the code. I feel we should lodge a complaint with a consumer forum for non-compliance with the National Building Code wherever applicable.

CHANDRA SHEKHAR KANUNGO

Indore

This is in response to Tina Ambani's editorial, "Our 10 Per Cent is You", in the January 2007 issue of *Harmony*. Silvers, who will soon constitute about 10 per cent of our population, are unacknowledged and ignored. *Harmony* should create a central employment pool in Mumbai where all silvers can submit their CVs in an exhaustive



place of reemployment) with a nominal annual registration fee, renewable every year. The total money to be remitted must include the annual subscription fee of *Harmony* magazine and service charges to meet the expenses of the pool, which should keep live contact with potential employment providers.

Further, the government should be pursued to make a mandatory provision to constitute an advisory board for government and semi-government organisations, development authorities and municipal corporations for overseeing formulation and implementation of every project. Such an advisory board must consist of retired silvers who were experts in the field concerned. This will improve the working of government projects while the honorarium provided to the silvers will help them financially.

S K BHATTACHARYA

Indore

format (with status of health, family responsibilities, financial situation, support from children, service experience, choice of

CONTRIBUTORS

This month, legendary yoga guru **B K S Iyengar**, author and painter **Bulbul Sharma** and **Urvashi Butalia**, author and head of not-for-profit publishing house Zubaan, write for our third anniversary special, "In Pursuit of Happiness", representing a triptych of Body, Mind and Soul. While Iyengar firmly establishes the health-happiness link and the role yoga can play in achieving contentment, Sharma speaks of the importance of taking the time out to listen to your mind. And Butalia, after elaborating upon her myriad sources of happiness, comes to the conclusion that it is a uniquely individual state of mind, determined by the choices we make.

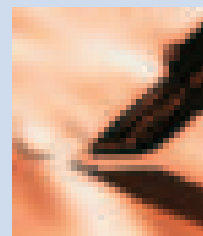
Meanwhile, in 'At Large', **Sankarshan Thakur**, executive editor of *Tehelka* and winner of the Prem Bhatia Award (in 2001) for excellence in political journalism, looks at the other side. Perhaps, he says, happiness comes most easily to those who have nothing to lose and little to chase, least of all the idea of happiness.

AN INVITATION FROM HARMONY

We are looking for contributions from our readers. Write to us if...

- You had an experience related to money or finance
- You faced a serious health problem and conquered it
- You know of someone who has done something exceptional after the age of 55
- You have an hobby or an interesting travel experience to share
- You have a funny or insightful anecdote about your grandchildren

...and we'll print it in the column 'Your Space'



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WILD SILVER



CHEETA'S BIG DAY

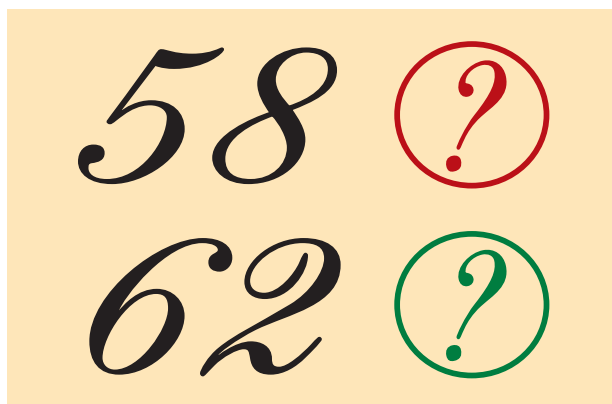
His coat is peppered with silver now but **Cheeta, the chimpanzee** that starred in the Tarzan movies in the 1930s, still loves monkeying around. At his 75th birthday party on 12 April in Palm Springs, California, thrown by his trainer Dan Westfall, with whom he lives, the veteran actor "romped around the room and greeted guests enthusiastically", reports Associated Press.

Cheeta made his movie debut in 1934 and starred in about a dozen Tarzan films before retiring after an appearance in *Dr Doolittle* in 1967. But he's still very much the star. "He still signs autographs [see photo]," says Westfall. "There's plenty of life left in him. He likes to go to the drive-through and get a hamburger. And he loves partying with friends." Considered the world's oldest chimp—chimpanzees rarely live past their 40s in the wild and past their 60s in captivity—Cheeta's only health problem is that he has been diabetic for about seven years. That explains the menu at the birthday party: sugar-free cake and diet cola.

NEWSWORTHY

NUMBER GAME

There are two contradictory rumours doing the rounds in the capital. According to some media reports, senior bureaucrats are lobbying the Sixth Pay Commission to increase retirement age for government employees from 60 to 62 years. The reports state that the proposal has found favour with the government. If implemented, nearly 150,000 government employees would get to work for two more years and the government would end up saving nearly Rs 5,000 crore in gratuity payouts and other retirement benefits. In 1998, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government had raised retirement age from 58 to 60 on the suggestion of the Fifth Pay Commission. However, a representative of an association of retired bureaucrats in Delhi says such



a reform is unlikely. "In fact," he says, "the next pay commission will most likely bring retirement age back down to 58 years as unemployed youth are the priority for Finance Minister P Chidambaram." We'll keep you posted on further developments.

SILVER WORLD



The world is unmistakably silvering. The **number of elderly people (over 65) will triple in the next 25 years**, according to Somnath Chatterji of Multi-Country Studies at the World Health Organisation. He also says the phenomenon of a rapidly ageing population is no longer confined to affluent nations—developing nations are also shifting from a comparatively young population with infectious diseases to an older population where chronic diseases, such as heart disease, are more common. Chatterji cites China and India as among the most notable examples. A report by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon this year projected that by 2050 the number of older persons (aged 60 or more) would exceed the number of children for the first time. By then, there should be nearly 2 billion elderly, up from about 705 million this year.

Help wanted: An **old age home** in **Mirpur**, a village in Midnapore, West Bengal, will soon be **demolished**. Saroj Nalini Dutta Memorial Association, which runs the home, is planning a new 1,500-1,800 sq ft building. If **you can help**, contact Aloka Basu, vice-president of Saroj Nalini Dutta Memorial Association, at (0) 9331056926.



ANALYSE THIS

AIR WORTHY



The next time you fly, don't be worried if you spot silver hair in the cockpit. Research published in journal *Neurology* finds that the **decline in physical and thinking skills that comes with age for pilots may be outweighed by their experience**. In the study, led by Joy L Taylor of the Stanford/VA Ageing Clinical Research Centre, 118 pilots aged between 40 and 69 were repeatedly tested in a

simulator over three years. Older pilots did not do as well the first time they used the simulators, which tested skills in communicating with air traffic controllers, avoiding traffic, keeping track of cockpit instruments and landing. But as the tests were repeated, their skills declined less than the younger ones. In traffic avoidance, all the pilots' skills improved over time, but those of older pilots improved more than younger ones. Under current regulations in the US, commercial airline pilots must retire at age 60, but some pilots are pushing to work longer—the results of this study will definitely add to the debate.

Under the knife: In the UK, almost **230,000 pensioners** have undergone **cosmetic surgery** to look young, according to a study by insurance and asset management company AXA UK. Also, retired people are so keen to embrace plastic surgery that almost one in 10 (9 per cent) would **go under the knife** or have **Botox injections** to change something they did not like about themselves.

INNOVATION

CONNECTIVITY

Silvers in Australia may never want to leave home. Ekoliving, a tech company based in Springfield, Queensland, has developed a '**media centre**' for **older Australians** that offers home entertainment, control of all appliances from one screen and, most significant, video communication that will enable them to video conference with their doctors and family. "Now, the elderly needn't make an arduous trek to the doctor for a routine consultation," says Steve Rudlin, advisor to Ekoliving. "They can also stay connected with their family in other parts of Australia or the world." Costs vary depending on the size of the house and the equipment installed. For more details, check out www.ekoliving.com

eko intelligent home

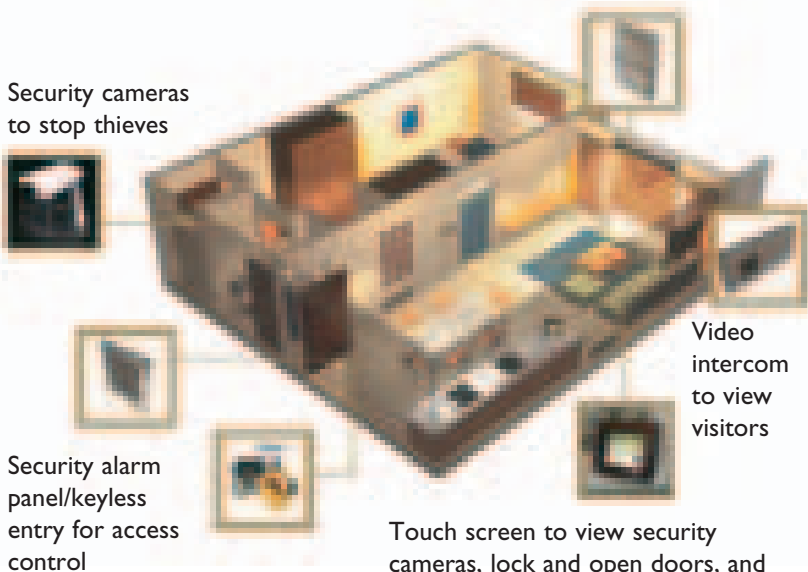
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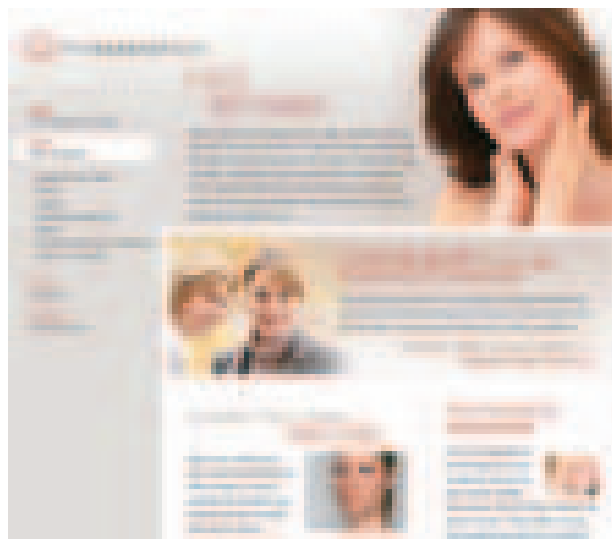
Touch screen to view security cameras, lock and open doors, and get information from the Internet



MEDIA WATCH

FIRST LOOK

Here's a new website to help women navigate the anti-ageing minefield. Developed by pharmaceutical major Allergan, www.thenaturallook.co.uk aims to be a one-stop shop for women in Britain sourcing the latest and most credible skin ageing information, allowing them to make informed choices when considering cosmetic procedures and surgical options. "The growth of the Internet has given rise to an increase in the wealth of misleading information," Rajiv Grover, consultant plastic surgeon and member of the website's advisory board, says in a press release. "Reviewed by an independent panel of European experts in dermatology, plastic surgery and aesthetic medicine, the site will provide clear, balanced information on the condition of skin ageing, and the full range of treatments available today." Highlights of the site include a comprehensive clinic locator for further advice and treatment, and a 3D 'Before & After' modeller where visitors can create 'before' and 'after' images of themselves.



Unfortunately, only residents of the UK can register for the modeller right now, but check out the site for the latest on invasive and non-invasive cosmetic procedures.

TECH TALK WITH PUROHITS



Illustration: FARZANA COOPER

Yahoo will soon provide unlimited free storage to its nearly 250 million email users who currently get 1 gigabyte (gb) of storage. With this move, it will better rivals, Microsoft Corp and Google Inc, which provide 2 gb and 2.8 gb of free storage, respectively.

TRENDS

MORAL POLICE

Wearing red armbands and caps, they call to mind the 1960s

Cultural Revolution and Mao's Red Guards. But capitalists and 'rightists' are not their target. Instead, these Chinese 'silver soldiers' are part of a government-approved **Moral Police Constabulary**, dedicated to ridding Beijing of four social ills: spitting, swearing, smoking and queue-jumping. Retired factory worker Ma Runtian, 74, one of the hundreds who have signed up to walk the beat and reprimand fellow citizens for unruly behaviour,



tells *The Telegraph*, UK, "If they don't listen to me, I write their names in my notebook and report them to the officials. Those displaying bad behaviour will have their names shown on community billboards, and others will learn from their mistakes." Former civil servant Liu Ruinian, 70, volunteered as he wants his city to smarten up before next year's Olympics. As they are volunteers, the Moral Police do not work weekends, or when it rains.

ROCK ON



Men over 50 can't get over the summer of '69. According to research by UK-based media and market research company Mintel, today's **British male baby boomers are refusing to let go of the swinging '60s**. Almost half of men over 50 are still just as likely to go to pop and rock concerts as to classical musical concerts and recitals (15 per cent). These are far more popular than jazz concerts (10 per cent) and operas (7 per cent). Male boomers are also doing their best to keep up with today's changing music world; one in four (26 per cent) have downloaded music or videos from the Net. Angela Hughes, consumer research manager at Mintel, tells *The Times*, "With many artists who made their names in the 1960s and '70s still performing, boomers have the opportunity to relive their youth at concerts."

Get fat free: Check out www.americanheart.org/FaceTheFats, a great new tool to teach you the difference between good and bad dietary fats. This educative and entertaining website also provides an **'interactive fat calculator'** and **recipes** to cut down fat in your diet.

LOVE THAT

CAN YOU SAY PETANQUE?

Queen Marie Antoinette was just one of the millions of people in France who relished the **old world game of petanque** (pronounced 'petaunk'), which originated in Provence in the South of France. The game is said to be slowly dying out in France but has found popularity in an unexpected quarter—silvers in Japan. Today, petanque, or 'petanku' as the Japanese call it, is played by an estimated 400,000 players in Japan. There's even a Federation Japonaise de la Petanque (FJP), or Japanese Petanque Federation, which was founded in 1983. It boasts 7,000 paid-up members, 47 branch offices and more than 100 tournaments a year. The average age of FJP members is 60, and the game's surging popularity follows it having caught on as an alternative to *getoboru* (a homegrown version of croquet) as the game of choice at senior citizens' clubs.

The game is played by throwing steel balls or boules, measuring 71-80 mm in diameter and weighing 650-800 gm, as close as possible to a small wooden jack that the French endearingly call a



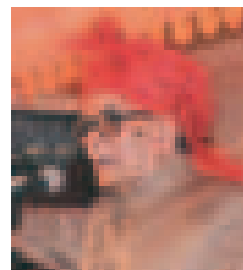
cochonnet (little pig). Battle is normally joined on a hard dirt or gravel area at least 15 m long and 4 m wide. Matches—between individuals or teams of two or three—are divided into rounds, with points scored for each boule that is nearer to the jack than the opponent's nearest boule. "The game is a great way to interact with people in a convivial ambience," 59 year-old Yoshii Komori of Kyoto tells *Paris Match* magazine. "And it's a game of strategy. There's much more to it than meets the eye."



Indy's back: The treasure-seeking, sexy adventure hero **Indiana Jones** will soon be back on screens. But the pace of *Indiana Jones 4* will

take star **Harrison Ford's** age into account. "He'll play his age in this movie with what's appropriate," says producer **George Lucas**, acknowledging that his 64 year-old leading man isn't as sprightly as he once was. "The chases are more suspenseful than speedy. But he will still charm the hell out of the women and rock on!" The last Indiana Jones film came out over 15 years ago.

OVERHEARD



"Our culture is changing. Old people are not treated the way they were in the past. Now, elders who live alone and have landed property are being killed by anti-social elements. Society should take care of its senior citizens."

— **Vice-President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, 84, in Punjab Kesri**

Welcome to the section where you can share your thoughts and experiences on anything under the sun. Write in with full contact details, and make this space your own!

LOVE OF LANGUAGE



Courtesy: OLENCIO COUTINHO

The de Sousas with children from their neighbourhood

As a senior citizen, there are many ways to fight feelings of loneliness and isolation. You could take up a hobby—like painting, writing or cooking—or perform a voluntary service. Emita and Bernardino de Sousa chose to learn languages. To their native fluency in Portuguese and Konkani, they have added English, French and most recently Italian.

“Learning languages keeps them connected with the larger world”

Languages are hard to learn at any age. What motivates this couple, he 79 and she 72, to learn a new language at this stage in life? “Studies are food for your mind and your spirit,” volunteers the soft-spoken Emita. “Everybody needs to learn.”

With this guiding principle, the de Sousas signed up a few years ago for a refresher French course at the Alliance Française in Panjim, Goa. They started with a slight advantage. As students in the 1940s in Goa, then a colony of Portugal, French was part of their school curriculum. Bernardino, particularly, had been compelled to master the language when he

studied engineering, as most technical books were available only in French. At the Alliance Française refresher, the couple came through with flying colours, matching or surpassing students less than half their age. Fuelled by this success, they have never looked back. Last year, they signed up for a beginner’s course in Italian at the University of Goa.

“Learning Italian has brought so much activity,” says Bernardino. Adds Emita, “We were the oldest in the class, but we didn’t feel any difference.” Led by their teacher, and with their classmates, they have now formed the Circolo Italiano (literally, Italian Circle), a social group that cooks Italian dishes together and watches Italian movies, all the while improving their language skills.

Learning a language helps Emita and Bernardino stay connected with the larger world. “At our age,” says Emita, “of course we can do lots at home. But it is important to do things with others. You don’t feel disconnected, isolated or set apart.” How do they discipline themselves to study? Aren’t there days when they’d rather take a nap than learn verb conjugations? As at any age, they tell us, there is no substitute for hard work.

Both Bernardino and Emita are aware that, while their ability to absorb new knowledge remains as keen as ever, their capacity to retain and memorise seems to have dropped. Approaching this with characteristic spirit, their solution is simply to work harder. They read and re-read their lessons, answer comprehension exercises in books and online, play CDs to learn the right accent and intonation and help each other practice their newly learned vocabulary.

When they are not studying, Emita and Bernardino can be found enjoying other creative activities. Emita encourages her husband’s talent in art by requesting him to prepare scale drawings for her craft projects. He does crossword puzzles; she tries new recipes. He takes his grandchildren for a swim;

she decorates the house for Christmas. As with their language lessons, they approach every activity with earnestness and enthusiasm. “Our goal,” sums up Bernardino, “is to always do something productive among other persons.”

—Suhag Shirodkar

(The idea for this article came from Jayantilal Bariya, 70, and the de Sousas were interviewed by Mohini and Mallika Shirodkar Bariya, 11.)

AHEAD OF DREAMS

My life has always been centred on sports. It was wrestling in the beginning. I spent most of my childhood undergoing extreme physical training in a neighbourhood *akhara* at Gujranwala, Pakistan. After Partition, we moved to Rohtak, Haryana. I still recall how excited I was travelling to Delhi on 15 August 1947 to listen to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru’s speech. Later, I joined the Army and switched from wrestling to weightlifting.

After retirement, I had the time and independence to pursue my athletic ambitions. I took part in the first Indian Veteran Athletic Meet in 1979 in Chandigarh. I met Milkha Singh who was the secretary of the Veteran Athletic Federation of India. Since then, I have participated in the event every year.

I am 83 and a cancer survivor. In 1980, I was diagnosed with stomach cancer. During my second chemotherapy session, an intestine got punctured and I was re-operated upon. I couldn’t participate in the Veteran Athletic meet that year as, during my second surgery, 60 per cent of my stomach was removed and I lost 28 kg overnight. Within a year, I regained 12 kg with the help of *pranayama* and light exercises like spot-running and jogging.

In September 1981, I participated in the national meet in Hyderabad and won a silver medal in long jump. For relay race, I won a bronze at the Asian Veteran Athletic Meet in Malaysia in 1990. I continue to take part in 100 m and 200 m race and long jump.

I don’t play to win. Sometimes, just before reaching the finishing line, I get a muscle pull and the runner



Silver jubilee of the Delhi Veteran Athletic Championship

behind me gets ahead. I do not regret it. I participate in sports like races and long jump to stay motivated, healthy and positive about life. I feel great interacting with both young and old athletes. It’s much better than sitting at home and nagging my wife Rattan.

I have stayed busy. In collaboration with WHO’s representative and marathon champion Sunita Godara, I organise sports events to generate awareness on World Health Day and Aids Day.

Whenever I get to know about such events, I bring together a group of 50-60 seniors from my neighbourhood to participate.

I get them registered, collect their T-shirts, brief them about parking and, if needed, even chide them for being so thoroughly undisciplined. In fact, Godara often tells her 70 year-old father to be as active as I am.

I am also part of the Delhi state Veteran Athletic Association, which has been organising annual athletic events for the past 25 years without any government assistance. I wish there were more activities like the Indian Veteran Athletic Meet and Harmony Senior Citizens’ Run.

—S N Wadhawan, Delhi

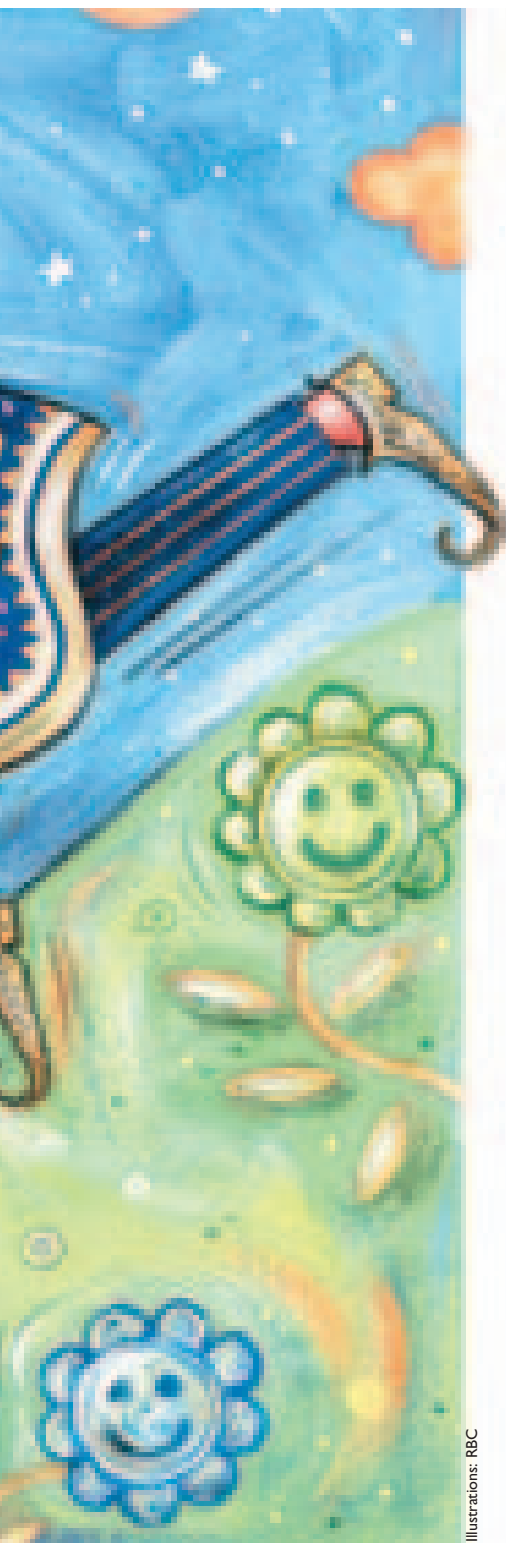
“I participate in sports to stay motivated, healthy and positive about life”

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In Pursuit of Happiness



p iness



Illustrations: RBC

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If you thought 'happiness' is all about intangibles—birdsong in your ears and love in your heart—you may be in for a shock. It has now been reduced to a diagram. Three American psychologists have put their heads together to devise a pie chart to determine individual happiness. Half the pie is determined by a genetic set point—you may be sunny or grumpy—and circumstances determine about 10 per cent of the differences in our happiness levels. And the remaining 40 per cent, they estimate, is due to 'intentional activities'—strategies that keep us happy over and above genetic disposition.

Clinically plotting such a delightfully amorphous state of mind may seem distinctly unfunny or just plain silly. But then, happiness is the new Grail with countless books, articles, clubs and websites dedicated to its discovery. In fact, Indian bureaucrat and poet J S Mishra has just released a book titled *Happiness is a Choice* (Excel Books). A new course offering 'keys to happiness' by psychology lecturer Tel Ben Shahar at Harvard University, has seen record enrolments. Even countries are now being assessed for national mirth rates—last year, Adrian White, an analytic social psychologist at the University of Leicester compiled the first 'world map of happiness' where Denmark emerged the winner out of 178 countries (India clocked in at 125). And Bhutan, Australia, China, the UK and Thailand are all developing a 'happiness index' to measure the well being of their citizens.

But how on earth do you measure happiness? Or even define it?

There are so many takes on happiness, from the facetious—writer Ambrose Bierce calls it a most agreeable sensation arising from contemplating the misery of another—to the metaphysical, and somewhat bombastic, view of philosopher Aristotle who calls it the meaning and purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence. We also (for obvious reasons) like Mahatma Gandhi when he says, "Happiness is when what you think, what you say,

and what you do are in harmony”, but that’s just one more opinion.

While you’ll never get people to agree on what constitutes happiness, there’s less argument when it comes to its determinants. As British economist Richard Layard, professor at London School of Economics and author of *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science*, says health, financial situation, work, community and friends, personal freedom and values all play a role in determining our happiness levels, notwithstanding age.

SILVER, AND HAPPY?



IN FACT, research in the West suggests that people actually get happier as they age. In February 2007, economists David Blanchflower of Dartmouth University in the US and Andrew Oswald of Warwick University, UK, documented how happiness follows “a U-shaped age pattern”—it starts off relatively high in young adulthood, then falls, bottoming out on average around age 45, and then rises after that year and on into old age. In another study that’s sure to bring cheer to families and friends of perennial grouches, researchers from the University of Michigan announced last year that even people who are born grumpy will get happier with time. They believe this could be a result of people getting better at handling challenges and lowering expectations as they age, making success and happiness more likely. The extra time to nurture relationships, hobbies and lifestyle pursuits doesn’t hurt either.

Closer home, there are several opinions. Dr Aruna Broota, clinical psychologist and professor in the Department of Psychology, Delhi University, is engaged in the first phase of a research project on ‘Ageing and Happiness’. Of the 300 lower and upper middle class silvers her team has interviewed, she says only 40 participants (about 13 per cent) had a positive attitude towards growth and ageing with most other suffering from discontentment and depression. While Dr Madhumati Singh, senior psychologist at Samvedna Psychiatric Clinic and consultant with the National Institute of Social Defence in the capital, agrees that the greater percentage of silvers are pessimistic and feel they have “missed the bus”, her estimate of ‘happy silvers’ is more encouraging. “Some people do become progressively happier with old age,” she says. “I would put the figure at three people out of every 10.”

Dr Anand Prakash, counsellor at Delhi-based help line Snehi, and professor of psychology at Delhi University, puts the figure at about four in every 10,

Silvers who see retirement as an opportunity to relive their dreams are able to experience greater happiness

saying, “Only emergent life experiences and the fulfilment of expectations make for happiness. To become happier, elders should have something to look forward to.” In Singh’s opinion, this ‘something’ is a second opportunity to relive their dreams. “Elders who believe this feel happier and freer,” she says. Indeed, ‘free’ is a word echoed by Himanshu Rath, founder and chairperson of Age-well Foundation, which runs Aadhar, a help line in Delhi. Rath offers another take on it. “There are many contented elders who, after a lifetime of work, have no more responsibilities, no more pressure,” he says. “This lack of responsibility can make them euphoric. Whatever they do, they enjoy it.”

But enough with all this theorising about ‘age and happiness’, maintains Dr Sudhir Khandelwal, professor of psychiatry at Delhi’s All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). “Age is not a criterion

for happiness,” he insists. “Rather, three main dimensions influence it, for everybody. The first is undoubtedly physical and mental health. The second is environmental and involves a person’s financial resources with adequate security and shelter. And the third, spiritual dimension is equally important where a person needs to have the time and resources to enjoy his faith and spiritual beliefs.”

HEALTH AND HAPPINESS



KHANDELWAL IS onto something here. Across the world, several studies validate the hypothesis that healthy people are happy people. However, there are an equal number of studies that suggest happy people are healthy people, too.

Sheldon Cohen, Robert E Doherty and Sarah Pressman, researchers in Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, studied the relationship between mental and physical health and happiness for close to a decade before announcing in 2005 that people who report more positive emotions seemed to display lower rates of chronic illness, symptoms and pain. The team, however, played it safe, saying more rigorous research was required to substantiate the link between happiness and health in a concrete way.

Those like Madan Kataria, founder of the seminal www.laughteryoga.org, don’t need ‘rigorous research’ to tell them what they know: happiness is a physical state of joy. A medical practitioner until 1995, Kataria, a Mumbai-based doctor, felt stressed about

not being as popular as other doctors and not earning as much.

“But I loved cracking jokes with my patients and making them laugh,” he says. “It made them, and me, feel so much better. When I ran out of jokes, I decided to laugh without them.” Kataria had read in *Prevention*, an American health and lifestyle magazine, that you can even fake laughter (clinically proven to reduce stress and blood pressure, protect the heart, improve brain functioning and boost the immune system) if you can’t actually laugh, as your body won’t know the difference.

It’s been 12 years, and today there are 5,000 laughter clubs in 55 countries. “In these times, there are

Several studies validate the hypothesis that healthy people are happy people. An equal number suggest that happy people are healthy too

very few reasons to be happy,” says Kataria. “We see everything in a negative light, especially when general health deteriorates and children cease to respond to our emotional needs. This is the time when it is important to at least be in a physical state of joy. That’s when laughter clubs can help.”

Another proven key to bliss is yoga (see *Yoga Rx*, page 50). As Dr R M Matthijs Cornelissen of the Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry explains, “In the Vedic tradition, *ananda* (delight) is seen as being present in the essence of everything that exists. Happiness is thus not something that depends on what you have, but what you are.” Several studies suggest that yoga doesn’t just help the body but can affect positive states of mind, despite life’s highs and lows (see “*The Supreme Secret*” by B K S Iyengar, page 25). In 1993, a British team measured the effects of three relaxation techniques—sitting in a chair, visualising happiness and yoga—and found that yoga contributed most to alertness, mental and physical energy, and zest for life.

DOES MONEY COUNT?



SOMETIMES A one-liner inadvertently captures the truth: money can't buy happiness but it sure makes misery easier to live with.

The connection between money and happiness is complex. In June 2006, economist Alan B Krueger and psychologist and Nobel laureate

Money may not be able to buy you happiness, but there's one precious luxury it can buy: the freedom from having to worry about money

Daniel Kahneman of Princeton University wrote in *Science* magazine that income plays an insignificant role in day-to-day happiness. According to their research, those with higher incomes had more chores and less fun, devoting more time to working, commuting, childcare, and shopping; they were also under more stress and tension than those in lower income brackets.

This may hold true for a country like the US, not so for India. "Money is certainly a determinant of happiness for seniors in India," says Khandelwal of AIIMS. "You need good health for happiness. And

as we are not a welfare state, you need money for health." To this, Rath adds, "Sillvers who are economically independent are invariably happy as they have a degree of self-confidence." As author and happiness blogger Gretchen Rubin says succinctly, "There is one precious luxury that money can buy: the freedom from having to worry about money. Money may not buy happiness, but it provides a margin of comfort."

Rajat Mitra, a clinical psychologist and director of Swanchetan Society of Mental Health in Delhi, puts things in perspective when he says money gives you comfort, not well being—"that happens when you are at peace with yourself. The other day, a client told me that a person to whom he had lent money could not return it. He said, 'I don't remember these things.' That's happiness."

NETWORK ENABLED



ULTIMATELY, GOOD health and money mean little without people to share it with—family, friends, neighbours. As a wag once said, happiness is the result of being too busy to be miserable. For instance, researchers in the West have established that happiness comes more easily to people who are married (imagine!), in regular contact with friends and relatives, and who live in communities where they know and trust their neighbours.

India is pretty much on the same page. "Social networking—whether it is with family, friends or a community group—plays a very important role in

happiness,” says Prakash of Snehi. “It provides necessary anchors and defines how a person relates with the immediate environment.”

Praveen Ansal, counsellor and manager of home care service of Heritage Hospital in Hyderabad, maintains it’s all a question of attitude. “While most seniors who come to us are preoccupied with how long they have to live, I know one couple, 85 and 78 years old, who attend social gatherings at our club,” he recounts. “They help their aged neighbours but don’t take too much on, making sure they look after themselves. They love intergenerational events like musical nights, tambola and dance. In fact, we had a Valentine’s Day party this year where many elders behaved like they were on their first date, wearing natty pullovers and hats and stylishly holding their walking sticks!”

SOUL SUPPORT



ANOTHER SOURCE of social glue, world over, is, of course, religion. Michael Nielson, a psychologist and professor in Georgia Southern University who has studied the religion-happiness link extensively, writes that religious involvement is associated with an increase in happiness, especially among older people. He says religion provides people support and a sense of being connected to a higher power.

While religion is essentially an inward experience, outward engagement with society through volunteer work also contributes to happiness. In a paper titled *Conditions of Happiness*, psychologist

Ruut Veenhoven of Erasmus University in Rotterdam, says that people involved in voluntary tasks in clubs, churches and political organisations profess to be happier than those who do not.

Meanwhile, Dr S D Gokhale, president of the International Longevity Centre in Pune, which works in the areas of training, research and advocacy for population ageing, says, “Volunteering keeps feelings of loneliness and alienation at bay.” His ‘Volunteers Bureau’, established in 2003, has 450 registered silvers who work for orphans, the disabled and lonely seniors. According to Gokhale, the bureau was set up to use the skill and experiences of the elderly, offer them opportunities to work, and motivate them—all factors that promote happiness.

Indeed, Gokhale’s strategies form the engine that drives *Harmony - Celebrate Age*, the magazine for you. For the past three years, we have relentlessly profiled silvers who have given themselves—and those around them—reason to smile. These men and women have found happiness in their careers, passions, social causes, creativity, causes, and in pursuit of good health, and we have profiled them in our regular sections like ‘What I Love’, ‘In Focus’, ‘Worth Your While’, ‘Second Careers’ and ‘Showing the Way’.

Religion brings happiness for many silvers as it provides support and a sense of connection to a higher power

This month, however, to celebrate our third anniversary, we thought we would view our heroes through the happiness lens. In keeping with *Harmony*’s holistic worldview, we feature exceptional silvers from across the country who have overcome their own limitations and life’s obstacles to find contentment through myriad journeys of Body, Mind and Soul. Each story touches a chord; each life teaches us valuable lessons. There are insightful, touching columns and a quiz to help you assess your HQ, or happiness quotient. Come feel the joy with *Harmony*!

—Teena Baruah, Smita Deodhar and Anjana Jha

"DANCE TO LIFE'S
MUSIC, ANYWHERE,
ANYTIME"



ALOKANANDA ROY 56 Kolkata

HER STORY Committed to dance since she was four, Alokanda Roy radiates joy whatever she does, whether it is coaching students at Chandalaloke Cultural Academy in Kolkata, teaching dance to poor children from slums or holding stress-relief workshops for prisoners at Presidency Jail in the city. Married at 20 to pilot Chandan Roy who died in a crash 17 years later, Roy was left with two teenaged children and a sense of loss. The only thing that kept her afloat was

her passion for classical dance. Roy's rewards from dance have been many—performing Odissi in its classical form, as taught by her late guru, the renowned Sanjukta Panigrahi, at national and international venues; matching Odissi movements to Latin rhythms and Japanese drums in Hiroshima; dancing to German music in Switzerland surrounded by the Alps; and staying physically, mentally and emotionally healthy. And, later, finding an understanding life partner. He had lost



SHILBHADRA DATTA

his wife and had met Roy for help with his daughter's school admission.

HAPPY BECAUSE... After four decades of practice, Roy firmly believes that someone who is physically unfit cannot be completely happy. "My body is like a shrine for my soul. If that is not intact, how can the soul survive?" she asks. Yoga, freehand exercises and other regimented sessions can get boring, she admits. But dancing or anything to do

with it—teaching, rehearsing, designing costumes for performers—makes her heart sing too. A decade ago, Roy's heart skipped a few beats when she was bedridden for a year with a back problem. With the help of her orthopaedic consultant, her recovery was miraculous and soon she was up and about, working 18 hours a day. "How can I take a break from a break? I can relax only if my body does what it loves most."

—Ruma Dasgupta

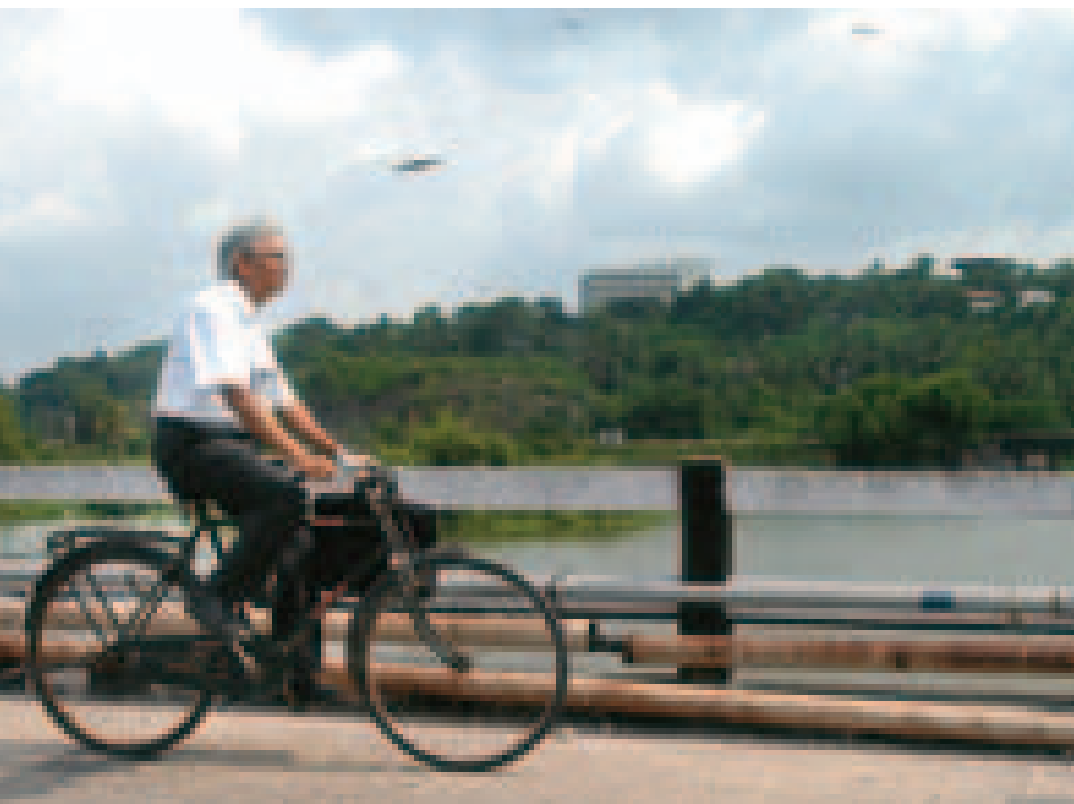
MADHUKAR TALWALKAR 74 Mumbai

HIS STORY Founder of the Talwalkar's chain of gymnasiums, Talwalkar calls himself the "brand ambassador of his business". Taut muscles and glowing skin. He wasn't always this way. Shorter than average and scrawny, as a young lad he was a bit of an embarrassment to father Vishnu Talwalkar, athlete and wrestler of local repute who started the New Physical Gymnasium at Khar in suburban Mumbai in 1939. At the age of 25, Madhukar decided to engineer his own makeover in his father's gym with wooden clubs and dumbbells, pyramids and other homegrown exercise techniques. His reward: a buff body and—surprise!—increased height. He threw up his ("dead-end and monotonous") job as textile engineer and set up the first Talwalkar's Gymnasium in 1965, on Linking Road in Bandra, Mumbai with modern equipment like treadmills and machines for strength training. Today, Talwalkar's has 42 branches spread across Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, Indore and Kochi. And Madhukar Talwalkar continues to brim with new business

ideas, such as overseas expansion, tie-ups with department stores to introduce health corners, and retailing fitness merchandise.

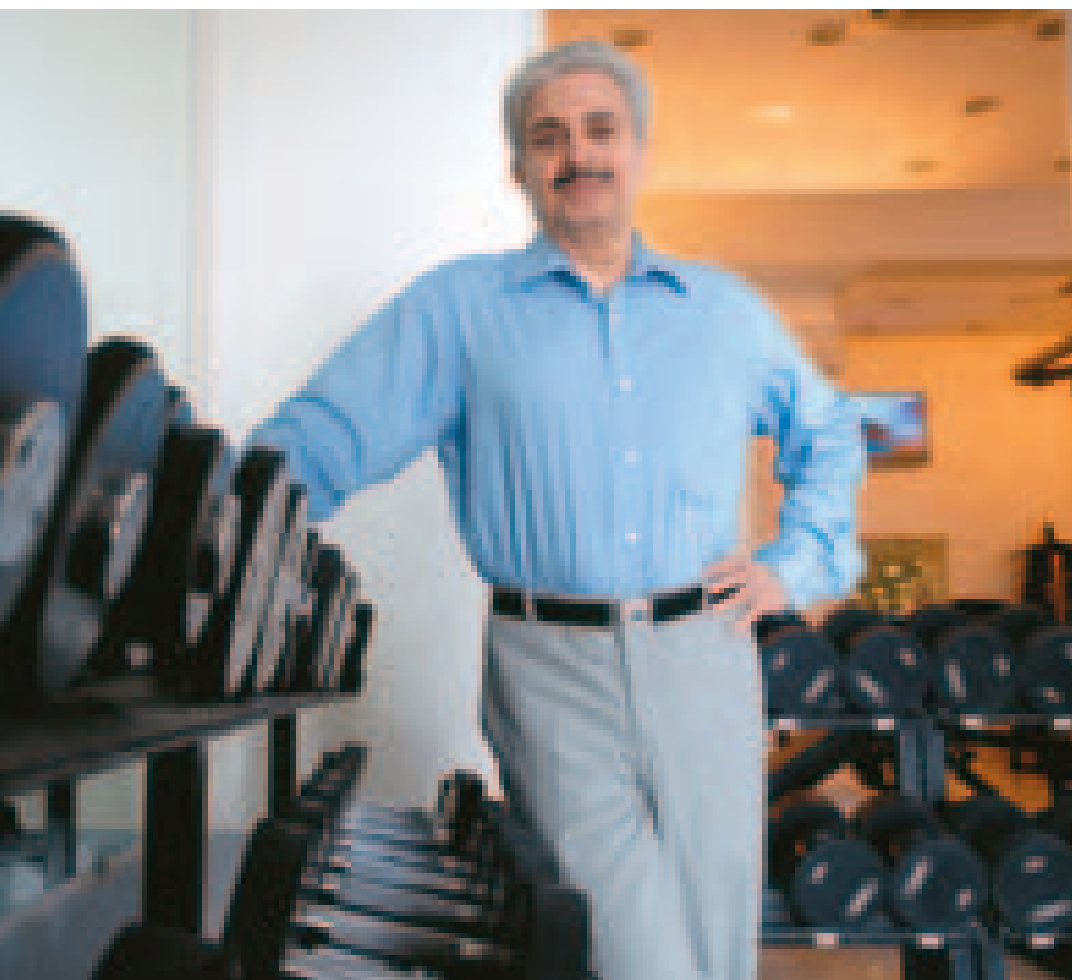
HAPPY BECAUSE... By making physical fitness, which was his passion, his profession, he has enjoyed every moment of his working life. "Good health is a necessary condition for happiness," says the vegetarian, teetotaler and non-smoker who still works out four days a week, sleeps eight hours everyday, and takes mineral and vitamin supplements. "A physically unfit, slothful person with lifestyle-induced illnesses cannot claim to be truly happy. Just one hour of exercise a day can work wonders for the body. When the body is healthy, we face the world with confidence and courage, become more resilient to stress and stay upbeat." Adding to his HQ is his large family: wife Usha, children Girish, Geeta and Seeta, his brothers, their wives, nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

—Smita Deodhar



ANIL WARRIER

**"YOUR WORK
SHOULD BE A
PLEASURE,
A HOBBY"**



**“LEARN TO
LOVE YOUR
BODY”**

V ADI MURTHY 61 Thiruvananthapuram

HIS STORY Born in Rajamundhry in Andhra Pradesh, this ‘real’ rocket scientist joined Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) in Thiruvananthapuram (then Trivandrum) in 1973 following his PhD from IIT Kanpur—he’s been there since. Currently associate director of the space centre, in the past Murthy worked with President Kalam on the satellite launch vehicle (SLV-3) project. “A great team leader, he’s also a lovable person,” he recalls. Today, Murthy is busy with India’s lunar mission, Chandrayan, and is on the Planetary Defence Committee’s global project to deflect asteroids before they strike the earth, but still finds the time to commute to work every single day (a roundtrip of 16 km) on his bicycle. He started in 1980. “I began cycling because it was hard to coordinate my timings with office transport. The cycle allows me maximum leverage.” It also helps him with work. “We sometimes battle an issue or a scientific or technical idea for days on end,” he says. “When I’m cycling, I allow my subconscious thoughts to come to the surface and get my best ideas.”

HAPPY BECAUSE... Cycling helps give his ideas free rein and keeps him fit—“I’ve already covered about 120,000 km, roughly the equivalent of three times the distance round the earth. I will keep cycling as long as my limbs permit,” says Murthy, who is married with two children. His wife is a teacher, daughter Rejitha will soon join the Bank of Switzerland and son Aditya works for Disney. “When I was 30, I thought 40 would be old age. Now, 40, 50 and 60 have passed by. Perhaps I will start to feel like an oldie at 70. I combine mindsets at six, 16 and 60 years of age! I am like a child at six, gazing at the world in all its wonder, then a 16 year-old brimming with enthusiasm, and also a man of 60 with wisdom to share.” A vegan (he doesn’t eat any products derived from animals) since 1991, Murthy says he respects all animate (“I’ll even sing an ant an obituary), and inanimate objects. “Even they have a universe of their own and an eerie kind of life that we have no clue about”.

—John Mary

"CHASE A
GOAL—BUT
DON'T LET
THAT BE
MONEY"



ANAND K SOMA

BRIGADIER GOPAL RAO 71 Hyderabad

HIS STORY After retiring as a doctor from the Army in 1994, Brigadier Gopal Rao now works as honorary medical superintendent at Bhavan's Sarda Devi Hospital in Secunderabad. As much as work, a physically active life keeps Rao going. A regular at Ranjit Singhji Institute in Hyderabad, he can't imagine life without sports. "Crazy about badminton", he has also enjoyed hockey, football, cricket and *kho kho* over the years. Rao learnt about sports—and sportsmanship—with his seven siblings in a sprawling house in rural Andhra Pradesh. While work and sports have taught him discipline, his doctor-wife Lalitha, 63, taught him *pranayama* (yoga breathing technique) three years ago. The combination of the two has kept him in good stead. An early riser, Rao starts his day by washing down sprouted *methi* with two glasses of water as "it's good for diabetes". He

then exercises for half an hour—his routine includes exercises for the spine and joints; a 2-km walk four days a week; and badminton twice a week. He used to play at tournaments until two years ago; osteoarthritis forced him to slow down.

HAPPY BECAUSE... Rao, who once scoffed at *pranayama* has now discovered the secret of remaining calm. "I realised the benefits only when I started," says Rao, who does 25 minutes of the technique every day. Otherwise, his exercise routine hasn't changed for years. "Come hell or high water, wherever I go, nothing stops me from my exercises, some of which are for my osteoarthritis," he says. "I still suffer from diabetes and mildly high cholesterol, but I have never felt better."

—Shyamola Khanna



Supreme secret

Health and happiness go hand in hand, says **B K S Iyengar**

Happiness and health are hard to define in totality as both are interwoven. Health is not just a state of being free from illness or

injury, and happiness is not just momentary pleasure or contentment. From my experience (I wasn't a healthy person until my youth), I can say that health and happiness go together though they have different dimensions. Harmony, balance and rhythm are just expressive words for health and happiness whereas both are experiential states.

As nature has qualities of dullness (*tamas*), vibrancy (*rajas*) and illumination (*sattva*), health and happiness too have these characteristics as well as dimensions. These dimensions in health and happiness are ethical, physical, mental, intellectual, conscious, conscientious, and divine. So, it is hard for anyone to restrict the meaning and feeling of health and happiness in words.

Health is contentment in one's total well being of life from the layer of the skin to the layer of the soul. On one hand, owing to its sensitivity, it can be compared to a live electrical wire or hot coal; on the other hand, it's like a river. Having said that, it's also not something you can buy. It has to be earned with 100 per cent sweat and inspiration. It's here that yoga comes in.

The science of yoga first brings out a person's instinctive mental and intellectual weakness and educates him to build up ethical health, which is the foundation of health, in the form of restraint (*yama*) and discipline (*niyama*). Then, it deals with poses (*asana*) and breathing (*pranayama*) for controlling muscles, joints, ligaments and tissues, so the energy we draw in and release is prolonged and held in store for right use and distribution. The respiratory

and circulatory systems are the gates of health. *Asana* and *pranayama* keep the anatomical bodies (*anamaya kosha*) and physiological bodies (*pranayama kosha*) in a state of purity and sanctity.

From overall health of the body, yoga moves to culture the senses of perception (*indriya kosha*), mind (*manomaya kosha*) and intelligence (*vijnanamaya kosha*), building emotional health in the form of stability and intellectual health through *pratyahara* (to restrain or to withdraw), which is the fifth element in the eight stages of Patanjali's *Ashtanga Yoga* and belief (*dharna*).

The penultimate stage of yoga, meditation (*dhyana*) helps you experience the conscious and the conscientious state of health. The last stage is *samadhi*, when you develop a profound state of attentive awareness from the skin to the soul and from the soul to the skin. This is divine health or supreme state of well-being.

**YOU CAN'T
BUY HEALTH—YOU
HAVE TO EARN
IT WITH SWEAT
AND INSPIRATION**

Through these various aspects of yogic *sadhana*, a dull body becomes vibrant and then both body and mind are lifted and transformed to an exalted state of health illuminating the body, mind and soul as one without division. This, for me, is divine health.

Patanjali, the compiler of *Yoga Sutra*, speaks of seven states of mind or consciousness—emerging, restraining, individualised, tranquil, attentive, fissured and pure or divine consciousnesses. These seven states represent knowledge of the body, knowledge of energy, knowledge of the mind, knowledge of intelligence, experiential knowledge, absorption of the flavours of life's knowledge, and knowledge of self-cleansing. If you reach all these states of knowledge, and awareness, you savour the flavour of profound health and happiness that remains ever fresh, like a river. ■

Legendary yoga guru B K S Iyengar, 89, was the first to introduce yoga to the West. He lives in Pune

"DON'T LET PAIN
OVERSHADOW
YOUR JOY"

SURINDER SINGH AZAD 65

Amritsar

HIS STORY "Breaking records is my passion," says Azad. This former Central Excise customs superintendent in Amritsar is credited 11 times in the *Limca Book of Records*—he accomplished 10 of these feats after retirement. Azad can expand his chest by 22.8 cm; a normal person can't go beyond 5-6 cm. He can drive a scooter at the slowest speed in the fourth gear—2.65 km per hour. He can also snap his fingers 292 times in a minute, clap 12,178 times in an hour, rotate his arm 136 times in a minute, and his wrist 290 times in a

minute. But the one that baffled even the engineers at Bajaj Auto: driving his scooter 70 km with just one litre of petrol. His aim: to break 100 records, which would be "a record in itself". Growing up, he often wondered how to get famous. He moved up steadily from the post of a lower division clerk to customs superintendent with Central Excise but always felt something was missing. One day a friend at the gym remarked on his remarkable chest expansion and Azad started working seriously on it. In 1990, Azad, then





RANJEET SINGH

48, got his first citation in the *Limca Book of Records*. With the support of his wife and children, nothing could stop him. And money has never been a problem, as he wisely invested Rs 1.5 million from his retirement benefits—he runs his household on the interest. “I don’t need any help from my children; I help them instead.”

HAPPY BECAUSE... “There are no monetary gains; it is the recognition and fame that makes me happy,” says Azad, who gets his high from being

recognised on the roads of Amritsar. “I wanted to show the world that elderly people can also accomplish a variety of feats. People feel that we become useless after we are old. I’ve proved otherwise.” According to Azad, he draws his inner strength from God. “I pray for five minutes twice a day. After wandering for the first four minutes, my mind focuses completely on Him in the fifth minute. That one minute sustains me for the whole day.”

—Payal Khurana

KIRAT SINGH 59 Coonoor

HER STORY Singh knows all about incredible highs, and unbearable lows. Just 17 when she married Rajpal Singh, an enterprising planter, she moved to Kotagiri in the Nilgiris. They had three sons, splurged on a 120 year-old beauty of a house—Crossways—in Coonoor and lovingly bought and refurbished old teak and rosewood furniture for it. But brick by brick, her idyllic world came shattering down around her. Singh lost her husband in 1988 at the age of 45. With great difficulty, she managed to put the tragedy behind her and dedicated herself to her children. Then fate cruelly struck again, snatching Vikram, her youngest son, away—an episode she is still reluctant to discuss. To make things worse, in 1995 came an incident that almost unhinged her—her home was attacked by dacoits and Singh and her eldest son Ramneek were badly wounded, barely escaping with their lives. “The trauma seemed unbearable,” she recalls. Worried about her well-being and emotional health, her sons suggested she return to work with furniture to

keep busy. Singh hesitantly began by inviting friends over to buy restored pieces. As word spread and enquiries began pouring in, she opened Vriksh, “a trove of antiques, collectables and elegant furniture”, at Crossways. Working with wood helped Singh gradually regenerate her spirit and regain her confidence. Today, at 59, she is a loving mother and mother-in-law, a doting grandmother and a successful entrepreneur, whose clientele includes interior designers, businesspersons and celebrities.

HAPPY BECAUSE... Much like the mythical *kalpavriksha*, ‘the tree that grants all wishes’, Vriksh has given her self-belief, identity, and the ability to smile again. Calling her work “her source of strength”, she feels her life is like the wood she works with; its grain is constantly expanding, contracting and warping with the weather to become beautiful and seasoned over time.

—Supriya Kutty



ARUN HARSH

**“MANKE HARE
HAAR, MANKE
JEETE JEET
(SELF-CONFIDENCE
WINS)”**

"THE BEAUTY
OF WOOD LIES
IN ITS
IMPERFECTION,
SO IT IS WITH
LIFE"



NIKKI BEULENS

GOVIND KALLA 65 Jodhpur

HIS STORY As the sun goes down in Jodhpur's old walled city, retired schoolteacher Govind Kalla steps out of his home to join a *hathai*, a group of men aged 16 to 90 who, every evening, play chess or cards, gossip and share views on the day's breaking news. Kalla was first introduced to this traditional chat post—every *mohalla* has one—when he was 16. "This is where we learnt to speak and argue intelligently," says Kalla who taught geography and English until 2000—in 1983 he won the National Award for Education for using innovative techniques like puppetry and sketches to teach. Known as 'guru' in his neighbourhood, Kalla was also behind the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation's sound and light show of *Ramayana* from 1970 to 1980. He has also been an art director for a few Rajasthani films. He lives with his three sons who are also teachers. His family, letters from former students and his social network developed through *hathai* keeps Kalla going. "It was at a *hathai* that my marriage was announced to the community. I did the same for the marriages of my

three sons and birth of my grandchildren. It's a unique Jodhpur experience."

HAPPY BECAUSE... *Hathai* is an addiction for Kalla—he says he can't sleep at night if he skips a session. "It's reassuring to know help is always around the corner; that feeling of security contributes to happiness. There's no scope for loneliness when you're surrounded by people who pool in money to bail you out of a financial crisis, remind you about the last day to submit tax returns, and bombard you with so many health tips that you'd willingly rush to a doctor." Kalla's *hathai* can sort out any civic issues without official help. And it can discuss Ayurvedic cures for impotency and analyse Liz Hurley's wedding in the city with equal ease. There's also unsolicited advice, though. "One tip I have not taken is to grow a long, curled Rajasthani moustache, though it is known to help you cloak your emotions when pitted against a tyrannical Marwari wife."

—Teena Baruah

“TIME IS
VALUABLE AND
WE SHOULD
USE IT WELL”



V RAMESH

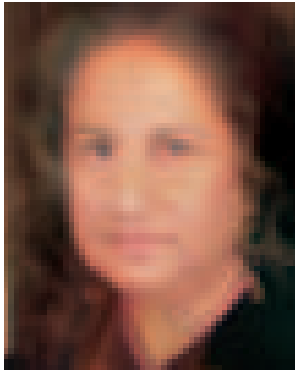
BOMBAY GNANAM 55 plus Chennai

HER STORY Educated in a girls’ school in Mayuram in Tanjore district, Gnanam grew up in an orthodox Brahmin home run by her parents and her sister Meena, 28 years older than her. Her plight—she had been rejected by her husband—left an indelible impact on Gnanam, who was married at 16 to A Balasubramaniam, an Indian Revenue Service officer. The small-town girl soon discovered big-city life, and her own talents. Following a stint with a theatre group in Mumbai, Gnanam wrote a play on dowry. To stage it, in 1989 she put together a group of housewives from Breach Candy, Mumbai, christened the Mahalakshmi Ladies Drama Group. Since then, Gnanam has written, directed and produced one play every year. The all-women group shifted to Chennai when Gnanam relocated there in the early ’90s, and the prefix ‘Bombay’ got attached to

her name. Members of the group—from kids to housewives, students and maids—work for free. “Drama should hold up a mirror to society,” she says. Her subjects range from dowry to post-natal depression, divorce, euthanasia and homosexuality.

HAPPY BECAUSE... She believes her plays present life-changing solutions to family problems. “Even if a handful of people go home thinking about what they have seen, I have achieved my goal. And I have established independent financial security [she also acts in films and ads].” Yet, she calls herself a “traditional” woman who dotes on her husband, two sons, daughter-in-law and grandchildren. “At my age, I am happy with what I have. That contentment is what wisdom is all about.”

—Padmini Natarajan



The inner voice

Let your mind show you the way, urges **Bulbul Sharma**

He is light firmly fixed for everyone to see, the thought swiftest among all who fly. All the gods, with one mind and one will, rightly come to the one source of thou-

ght. My ears fly open, my eye opens, as does this light that is fixed in my heart. My mind flies up, straining into the distance. What shall I say? What shall I think?

—Hymn from the Rig Veda

The mind has a mind of its own. We have all experienced that at some point or the other in our lives. It can be a demon, angel, friend, enemy, and saviour. When I was a teenager, I thought I was in total control of my mind. I could order it around like a slave and it would do everything I wanted. Feel happy, proud, high and energetic. I shouted and my mind followed my instructions like a trained dog jumps to his master's voice. It was a comfortable, smug attitude and I mistook it for happiness.

As I grew older, my life grew more complex. Husband, children and career to cope with, various emotions to juggle, I gradually realised my mind was not as obedient as I had assumed. It would now often sit and look at me defiantly when I asked it to do something for me. It would go and sit in the corner with its face turned towards the wall. 'Hey, what is the matter?' I would ask it, surprised at this new attitude. Where was my obedient genie that came out of the lamp at my bidding? Who was this new person sitting in my head like a heavy, unpleasant load? I was confused, angry, irritated and then worried. Very soon I realised I would have to obey its orders and not the other way around.

I was 40 when I started getting anxiety attacks. At first I was not alarmed. Ok, it was new but I could handle it. I was happily married, had two lovely

kids and was totally involved in my art. I was participating in exhibitions all over the world; my books were being translated into French, German and Italian. Life was great. But my mind had other plans. It now sat heavily on my shoulders and told me: "Be afraid, be anxious, panic, because the world is not a safe place like you had thought. There is darkness and more darkness waiting to engulf you."

For five years I fought with my mind to gain control but it was having a good laugh at me. Then, finally, exhausted by this internal battle that no one else seemed to notice, I admitted defeat. "What you want me to do?" I asked wearily. "I want you to sit quietly and listen to what I say," replied my mind.

It was difficult at first. There were so many things to do, goals to achieve. Others might win the race if I sat still or even slowed down. Greed, envy, fear, all kinds of demons kicked me as my mind played

tricks. But I learnt to centre myself, observe my breath and look within. It was like learning to walk again. I took one small step at a time. It was not easy for a restless person like me, but I began to feel a sense of silence dawning upon my mind.

This, I realised, was true happiness. My mind, body and soul

were in harmony. I meditate, not every day, but as often as I can. I spend time alone each day listening to my mind. Sometimes it still shows me how to be greedy and angry, but not for long. It has become my best friend now and I am no longer running on a treadmill looking for happiness outside.

I get angry, frustrated when things are not going my way, but then my mind shows me the way and I feel joy in everyday life. Now I know that, true happiness is sitting quietly watching a butterfly dance on a flower and there is no greater joy for me than my granddaughter and I making a painting together. ■

I SPEND TIME
ALONE EACH DAY
LISTENING TO MY
MIND—IT IS MY BEST
FRIEND NOW

Bulbul Sharma, 55, is a Delhi-based author and painter



P NAVEEN

HIS STORY When Station Road Colony in Dewas, a town near Indore in Madhya Pradesh, slumbers, Talreja wakes up at 3 am, makes 100-odd *roti* and steps out at 5 am to feed stray dogs—he has been feeding them for the past 57 years without fail. As a child, Talreja used to wake up early to the sound of his mother grinding wheat on a *chakki* (a traditional stone grinder). “I used to get up and steal *roti* from the kitchen and feed the dogs,” he remembers. “After watching me do this for days, she started cooking extra *roti* for my stray friends.” The habit continued over time. A senior

vaid (practitioner of Ayurveda), Talreja makes about Rs 10 on each packet of herbal medicine he sells. Half his earnings are spent on preparing food for dogs. These days, he cannot walk great distances but that has not disrupted his routine. “I have seen five generations of these dogs,” says Talreja, who has given them all names. Many people, including his three sons, disapprove of his daily ritual and shy away from revealing their father’s mission. But that does not deter Talreja one bit, to the extent that he even takes care of their special diets, such as reducing the quantity of food



"THINK OF THE
WHOLE WORLD AS
YOUR HOME"

R C TALREJA 87 Dewas (near Indore)

in summer months. Talreja sorely misses his wife who died three years ago and encouraged him in his endeavour.

HAPPY BECAUSE... "The mind gives you the impression that if something is gained or obtained, it will become happy. However, that happiness remains elusive no matter how many things are gained or obtained," says Talreja, adding that happiness is when what you think, what you say and what you do are in harmony. "If you ask a spiritual master a question about life, existence and

universe, he will not give you an answer. He will give you a method—a method to practice and discover the answer by yourself... as I have done for myself. I feel extreme happiness and peace of mind by waking up early in the morning and feeding stray dogs." After feeding the dogs, at 5.30 am he distributes *prasad* to those neighbourhood children who are up and about, waiting for 'Talreja *chacha's*' sweets. The fact that they are up so early pleases him. "It's healthy to wake up early in the morning."

—P Naveen



AJAY KUMAR SINGH

**"FORGET
SUPERSTITION
AND BELIEVE
IN REALITY"**

BHICOO J MANEKSHAW 84 Delhi

HER STORY Bhicoo J Manekshaw's fondness for good food and cooking evolved in her grandmother's kitchen in Mumbai. The first Indian student to graduate from the Cordon Bleu School of Cooking in London, she has had a career spanning 50 years. She credits travelling with her Air Force doctor-husband Jamie (General Sam Manekshaw's younger brother) for the recipes she has collected over the years. She doesn't hesitate to ask anyone for a recipe—at the time of this interview, she offered her *kaliwala* (craftsman who coats utensils) lunch; when he said he had already eaten *khichdi*, she asked him how he makes it. Manekshaw has written three cookbooks, published by Penguin: *Traditional Recipes of India*, *Parsi Food and Customs* and *Feast of Love: 50 Classic Menus*. "I don't need an anti-depressant. I just go to kitchen and peel a potato!" she says, recalling how cooking raised her spirits following her husband's death eight years ago. She lives with her little dachshund Oscar and works at her daughter's restaurant Basil & Thyme in Santushti complex, Delhi.

HAPPY BECAUSE... The regular kitchen sounds of washing, chopping, frying, baking, stewing and the clatter of utensils energise her. "I find pleasure in planning menus, classic recipes and celebrating meals," she says. "Throw me a challenge, like a power cut in the middle of a beer-cake preparation and I will come up with an innovation, a beer soufflé!" She amuses her team of cooks with her *Bambaiya* Hindi and twists their ears when they go wrong. "I have little patience with catty, misinformed clients and often tell them never to return to the restaurant, thereby agonising my son-in-law Sunil Chandra, who owns the eatery," she adds. At family get-togethers, Manekshaw loves to earn applause from her daughters Sherna and Erna, sons-in-law and four delightful grandchildren when she brings hot soufflé or Christmas pudding from the kitchen with a flourish. "My happiest moment is to sit back and watch them take the first bite and go into raptures."

—Teena Baruah

MAHINDER SINGH 57 Lucknow

HIS STORY Singh was just another ambitious bureaucrat in the Uttar Pradesh government having clawed his way up from a financially unstable childhood and years of toil as a farmer in his village, Abdullahpur (in Saharanpur district, Uttar Pradesh)—until his world fell apart. In 1994, he lost his 16 year-old son Ravi to cancer. Unable to come to terms with the tragedy, Singh—never a follower of any religion—began to search a host of religious texts for answers. Eventually, he found them in Buddhism. “Buddhism is a way of life,” says Singh, today a special secretary in the Finance Department. “It tells you that the solutions for our dissatisfaction lie inside us though we look for them outside. Everything is transitory. When you lose somebody or something, we must realise that it is inevitable and accept it. Buddhism is not optimistic or pessimistic; it is realistic.” Singh’s meditation sessions twice a day helped him overcome his grief, and his study of Buddhist literature changed his entire worldview. “When I want to know something, I want to know it from his

roots,’ he says. Indeed, so intense has been his study that he is now considered an authority on Buddhism. Apart from writing extensively for magazines, he spoke at the World Buddhist Leaders Conference in December 2006 in Sarnath on ‘spreading Buddhism through television’ and was honoured by the Dalai Lama for his ‘sincere and active contributions’ to Buddhism in February 2007. Singh is also a life member of the Mahabodhi Society of India.

HAPPY BECAUSE... He lives in the present, with no worries about the future and no regrets from the past. Singh credits yoga, regular walks and a healthy diet for his good health. Although he acknowledges that his family—wife, three married children and grandchildren—are a source of pleasure and delight, he says he attains true joy when he meditates and is cut off from the world. “When there is no sensation, there is neutrality, and there is happiness.”

—Nabila Zehra Zaidi



SANJAY ARORA

“THE NEXT
LESSON—ON
LIFE OR FOOD—
COULD COME
FROM ANYONE”

"A POSITIVE
ATTITUDE IS
THE CATALYST
FOR A HEALTHY
LIFE"



HEMANT PATIL

DR PRANAY PATRA 55 Pune

HIS STORY Seven years ago, Patra, driven by his belief in the healing power of nature, gave up his job as assistant foreman of an explosives factory in Khadki, Pune, to pursue naturopathy. After securing a diploma from Mahatma Gandhi Nature Cure and Yogic Science College at Kothrud in the city, Patra has used touch therapy (at his clinic Pain Relief) to treat chronic pain from cervical spondylosis, frozen shoulder, slipped disc, sciatica, lumber spondylosis, arthritis, restricted movement of fingers and toes, and all kinds of sprains. "The real cause of pain is often not what we think," he explains. "It could be because of contraction of nerves or muscles located elsewhere in the body. These create a mechanical imbalance between the muscular, skeletal and nervous system." With neck pain, the hidden contraction is either at the elbow or

upper chest; in a frozen shoulder, it is again at the elbow and armpit; for backache, it is in the hip region or above the ball-and-socket joint. After years of dedication, devotion and practice, Patra says he can sense the abnormality in a body, which he releases through his touch. For permanent relief, Patra recommends exercises and yoga—he learnt yoga at the B K S Iyengar Institute.

HAPPY BECAUSE... "My work is my philosophy. The satisfaction of healing cannot be compared," says Patra, whose work helps him connect with his patients. "I see God in the body of my patients and treat them as if I am serving Him. I cannot explain how I feel when I see patients leave my clinic with little or no pain."

—Khursheed Dinshaw



My way

Happiness is all about the choices we make, says **Urvashi Butalia**

Every day, as I sit in *vajrasana* in my yoga class, breathing the fresh morning air, listening to birdsong, concentrating on my breathing and emptying the mind, I think, surely this is happiness: a puremoment in an otherwise mad day, where I can stop, breathe, think, feel, listen and just be. Soon after, at home, I join my mother (she's 86) and my brother and sister-in-law for a cup of tea, and we talk and laugh and read the papers, and I think, this too is happiness. An hour or so later, in my office, busily working, chatting with colleagues, editing, writing, talking to authors, being in the presence of knowledge and intelligence, learning, and sometimes teaching, I think that this can also be added to my bank of happiness. As can the hours I spend reading, writing, drinking a cup of coffee or a glass of wine, playing cricket with my seven year-old nephew, or learning about computers from the 11 year-old one.

I'm hard put to define what this feeling is, but I know that I recognise it when I meet it, just as I recognise its opposite. And I'm not unique in this, for while happiness is something we all seek, it's also something that is very individual, specific to what you want, or need, or feel.

Over the years, all over the world, we've become experts at collecting data. We have figures that tell us that women live longer in India than men, or that more women are now seeking to come into the workforce, or that a new law may help to address the question of violence within the home—all of these provide one sort of picture, one sort of reality. They tell us that conditions of life may have improved, but what they don't tell us is what lies behind and beyond figures. And one of those questions is: are people happy?

Domestic violence may stop because there's a law that will send the perpetrator to prison if he so much as raises a hand to his wife, but a coercive restraint does not imply a change in attitude, which is what real happiness is about. The presence of a law may help to prepare the ground for a person to be happy, but it does not, in itself, bring happiness.

And this is why, I guess, the happiness index is now becoming a part of different statistical reports. Bhutan, for example, was one of the first countries to adopt such a concept. And yet, how do you determine whether or not people are happy, and is happiness a constant state of being, something that doesn't change? How do you track this elusive thing called happiness? These are not easy questions.

I have always been a more or less happy person. Perhaps the warm family I belong to has something to do with it. But equally, perhaps some choices

I made early also touch on this: I have long been in love with publishing, but at some point I realised that if I stayed on in my job in a large publishing house, I would end up unhappy for there were few ways for women to make it to senior levels. So I started my own publishing house, something that made me much happier. And it wasn't

only ambition, but the possibility of constantly learning, and being able to combine both political commitment (to the women's movement) and professional capability (in publishing).

So I guess somewhere happiness has to do with the choices you make and trajectories you follow, but also with the conditions in which you live, the realities of daily life, that make those choices possible, and the spaces you find within these—after all, if life is very hard on you, it's still possible to find happiness (even if fleetingly) in the colour of a flower, the song of a bird, or the pages of a book! ■

**HAPPINESS IS
INDIVIDUAL, SPECIFIC
TO WHAT YOU
WANT, OR NEED,
OR FEEL**

Urvashi Butalia, 45, is an author and runs Zubaan, a not-for-profit publishing house

What's your



Happiness is Dr Edward Diener's family business. The psychologist from University of Illinois has been studying 'life satisfaction' for over 25 years and his wife and son, both psychologists, are collaborators. He says social skills and close interpersonal ties make us the happiest—in other words, making time for friends and family. In the 1980s, Diener devised this quiz to determine an individual's level of happiness—it is now considered by psychologists and researchers across the world as one of the most reliable ways to assess personal satisfaction levels for adults in every age group. Take the Diener quiz and discover your happiness quotient...

How satisfied are you? To find out, read the following five statements. Then, use the 1–7 scale to rate your level of agreement and add your answers together.

■ **In most ways my life is close to ideal.**

■ **The conditions of my life are excellent.**

■ **I am satisfied with my life.**

■ **So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.**

■ **If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.**

Scale

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Slightly disagree

4 = Neither agree nor disagree

5 = Slightly agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly agree

Now, add up your scores.

Happiness Quotient?



35 - 31 HIGHLY SATISFIED

People who score in this range love their lives and feel that things are going very well. Your life is not perfect, but you feel it is about as good as life gets. Furthermore, just because you are satisfied does not mean you are complacent. In fact, growth and challenge might be part of the reason you are satisfied. For most people in this high-scoring range, life is enjoyable, and the major domains of life are going well—work, family, friends, leisure, and personal development.



26 - 30 SATISFIED

People who score in this range like their lives and feel that things are going well. Of course your life is not perfect, but you feel that things are mostly good. Further, just because you are satisfied does not mean you are complacent. In fact, growth and challenge might be part of the reason you are satisfied. For most people in this high-scoring range, life is enjoyable, and the major domains of life are going well—work, family, friends, leisure, and personal development. You can draw motivation from those areas of your life that you are dissatisfied with.



20 - 25 SLIGHTLY SATISFIED

You have an average score. The majority of people are generally satisfied, but have some areas where they would like some improvement. Generally people who score in this range have areas of their lives that need improvement, but would usually like to move to a higher level by making some life changes.



15 - 19 SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE IN LIFE SATISFACTION

People who score in this range usually have small but significant problems in several areas of their lives. Or they may have many areas

of their lives that are doing fine but one area that represents a substantial problem for them. Although temporary dissatisfaction is common and normal, a continual level of dissatisfaction across a number of areas of life calls for reflection. Some people can gain motivation from a small level of dissatisfaction, but often dissatisfaction across a number of life domains is a distraction, and unpleasant as well.



10 - 14 DISSATISFIED

People who score in this range are substantially dissatisfied with their lives. People in this range may have a number of areas of their lives that are not going well, or one or two areas that are going very badly. If life dissatisfaction is a response to a recent event such as bereavement, divorce, or a significant problem at work, the person will probably return over time to his or her former level of higher satisfaction. However, if low levels of life satisfaction have been persisting for some time then some changes might be in order—both in attitudes and patterns of thinking, and probably in life activities as well. Further, a person with low life satisfaction in this range is sometimes not functioning well because their unhappiness serves as a distraction. Talking to someone can often help to get moving in the right direction, although positive change will be up to the person.



5 - 9 EXTREMELY DISSATISFIED

People who score in this range are usually extremely unhappy with their current life. In some cases, this could be in reaction to a recent unhappy event such as the death of a loved one, or even unemployment. The dissatisfaction a person is experiencing can also be a response to a continuing problem, such as alcoholism or addiction. If you fall in this range, please speak to a friend, family member or counsellor for help and advice.

Courtesy Professor Edward Diener, University of Illinois



Nothing to lose

Sankarshan Thakur on the alchemy of ineffable happiness

I have reported misery all my life. Poverty and its rouge rainbow of injustices. If you are a journalist in this country, that's what you want to

do because there is always so much of it to tell and, strangely, fewer and fewer willing to tell it. Suicides by faceless farmers in nameless villages; deaths of unlamented children; the tedium of destitution; the hundreds of thousands pressed between manmade insufficiencies and nature's excesses.

The poor. We do not know, or really care, where they come from and where they go. Poverty. We do not know, or want to know, what its physiognomy might be. Those we reserve our pity for can be some of the happiest people you will come across. Go to a village square by twilight and you will know what I mean. There's contentment in the air that the prosperity in the world cannot provide you.

I am not trying to script a paean to poverty here. I am not saying the poor are happy to be poor so let them remain. I am merely arguing there is something elementally flawed with 'having' and 'wanting'—it pitches you in a vicious loop that spins the happiness out of having, it reduces it to a hapless race of forever wanting. As Marcel Proust said, "As for happiness, that is really useful to us in one way only, by making unhappiness possible."

This is something that happens to me each day in the city. There's a palm scraping the cold car windowpane at the traffic light. Who is it? You wouldn't want to know. Enough that they don't bother you, these car-window delivery boys and girls. Enough that they are gone to another car, hawking a world they know so little about—happy-lovely homes, designer interiors, Mediterranean

holidays, what child Madonna is wanting to adopt *a la* Angelina Jolie, what Kate Moss is wearing, what J Lo isn't, J Lo, wrapped in cellophane, at discounted rates. But you aren't inclined. J Lo's the ring tone on your cell phone. You are listening to her on your CD changer in your mobile air-conditioning.

There's another tap on the window. Soft, insistent, a cringing press of palms beyond the toughened glass. A face, with matted hair, mottled teeth, imploring eyes. Then the lights switch. The car glides ahead. The apparition from the blighted world is gone. That's how close most of us get to poverty—hand-shaking distance, but kept at bay by cold glass.

For most of us poverty remains an invisible line, beneath which lie tangled abstractions that we have escaped, and that someone else will take care of. The government. The leaders. The bureaucracy. The budget. Fate. God. There is a prescribed potion of cures—democracy and philosophy alchemised. It may not cure poverty, but that alchemy purges our guilt. We do not realise that that alchemy has

greater uses; it is the alchemy of ineffable happiness.

People we reserve our pity for can be some of the happiest people you come across

Sure, it is wrapped in the guilt of those that have but it works for those that do not. This is the alchemy of that potion—one portion democracy, three portions philosophy. Fate. Fatalism. Stoicism. The poor don't agonise over their poverty as much as we do. Poverty is their life, not a passing concern.

They are easy to please. A draught of toddy, a bundle of twigs for winter, a single fish snapped at the end of a daylong vigil at the pond, a sackful of leaves to burn, a rupee accidentally found. In a way, they can be less careworn than those located above them in the well-being index. They have less to lose. They have nothing to lose. They have little to chase, least of all the idea of happiness. That is why, perhaps, it comes to them most easily. ■

Award-winning political journalist Sankarshan Thakur, 45, is executive editor, Tehelka

5532 women experienced miracles in April. *And then again in May.*

When miracles made their way in April

April witnessed a phenomenon like no other. The Pond's Miracle Boutique, held in Chennai and Bangalore, saw women come face-to-face with the future. Not only did they see hidden wrinkles, age spots, fine lines and other signs of ageing under their skin, but they also learnt how to deal with them immediately and effectively. So that by taking care of them today, they could keep tomorrow's ageing signs for another day.

A peek into beyond

Looking into the future was made possible by the VisioFace, a revolutionary machine that uses high-resolution imaging to bring forth ageing signs. As a result, 5532 women across Chennai and Bangalore saw what lies beneath their skin. And for most of them, it wasn't pretty.

Every problem has a solution. Some have miracles

After identifying the problem correctly, the women tried Pond's Age Miracle. Enriched with the goodness of CLA, Pond's Age Miracle helped reduce age spots and bring about a positive change in wrinkles.

The Dermatologists, present at the Miracle Boutique recommended Pond's Age Miracle Cream, Serum, Face wash, Toner, Make-up remover, Eye cream or a combination of them, based on the problem at hand.

ADVT.

Then in May

While in April, women saw the changes that their skins' future held for them, May saw changes in their husbands. After trying Pond's Age Miracle for as little as 7 days, noticeable results were observed by women.

Flowers, candle-lit dinners, sweet nothings, long drives, second honeymoons all came back into season. And no one complained.

Says Deepa (Chennai, 31), "My husband surprised me by renting a bike on a Sunday evening, and we rode all around town, just like in our college days."

Like Deepa, several women across the country brought romance back into their married lives. And all it took was a little peek into the future with Pond's Miracle Boutique.



POND'S miracle boutique

Scientific analysis to reveal your true signs of ageing

*Based on a chromameter reading and photo self-assessment against untreated skin in a clinical test.

Crisp and cool

Dr Pushpesh Pant presents recipes that take the sting out of summer

Strangely, India's culinary repertoire is weak in 'cold' repasts. The subcontinent is synonymous with summer and the season can be quite scorching, and debilitating, especially for silvers. The appetite is sluggish, and the climate not conducive to physical exercise. The body requires replenishment of nutrients drained by the heat. We have long tried to invent recipes that meet the dual test of being 'cooling and cool to touch'. Barring the odd *taeer sadam*, a *raita*, *dahi*

bhalle or *pachadi*, it is only rarely that a genuine cold delicacy (a main course dish apart from accompaniments) is encountered. This month, I present *dahi ke baigan*, a 'gift' from Ranjita, a young Oriya housewife, and *satranga salad*, an improvisation on the Russian theme. Both these have other virtues—they are easy to prepare and digest, and healthy choices in terms of calories. Leftovers, if any, can be put in the fridge and served again without the hassles of reheating.

SATRANGA SALAD

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

- Potatoes: 100 gm; boiled, peeled and quartered
- Apples: 200 gm; in bite size cubes
- Cottage cheese/tofu: 75 gm; small chunks
- Pineapples: 100 gm; canned pieces
- Hardboiled egg whites: 2; quartered
- Carrots: 75 gm; boiled and diced
- Chicken sausage: 100 gm; grilled and sliced
- Beans: 50 gm; boiled, cut in diamonds
- Walnuts (for crunchy garnish): 50 gm
- A leaf of lettuce to make salad bed

DRESSING

Mix 1 tbsp of lemon juice with 1/4 tsp of honey and 1/2 tsp sugar free sweetener. Add 3 tbsp of yogurt mixed with 1/2 tsp of mustard powder, black pepper and salt to taste. If you wish to moisten the salad dressing more, add 1 tbsp olive or refined oil.

METHOD

Assemble all ingredients in a salad bowl and pour dressing. Mix well. You can replace chicken and eggs with stir-fried vegetables of your choice. Before serving, you can add button mushrooms cooked gently in a pan without water, and yellow and red bell peppers char-grilled lightly on the stove.





DAHI KE BAIGAN

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

- Eggplant (*baigan*): 250 gm (round or long, as you like it)
- Curd: 200 ml; whisked and mixed with a spoonful of water
- Ginger-garlic paste; 1 tbsp
- Cumin powder; 1 tsp
- Coriander powder: 1/2 tsp
- Red chilli powder: A pinch
- Turmeric: A pinch
- Asafoetida: A pinch
- Oil: 1 tbsp
- Salt to taste
- Green chillies: 2-3; slit and deseeded

- Coriander leaves: A large sprig

THE TEMPERING

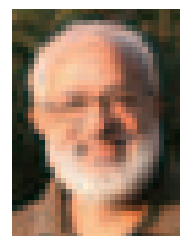
- A sprig of curry leaves
- Mustard seeds: 1/2 tsp
- Red chillies (optional): 1-2

METHOD

Wash, pat dry and slice eggplants round or lengthwise. For smaller ones, you can choose not to separate them at the stem. Coat a non-stick pan with a thin film of oil and preheat it on stove. Put in ginger-garlic paste and stir fry for about a minute. Add the powdered spices and salt dissolved in a spoonful of water. In this, cook eggplant till tender, turning once or twice with a wooden spatula. Mix curd with water and boil it in a separate pan, stirring

continuously to ensure that it does not curdle. When cooked (it stops smelling raw), remove from flame.

Heat leftover oil in a frying pan. Add asafoetida and then put the mustard seeds in. When the mixture begins to crackle, add whole red chillies. As soon as the chillies change colour, add curry leaves. Pour the tempering over the curd mix. Now, combine the cooked eggplant and curd in a large bowl. Garnish with green chillies and coriander. 🌿



Dr Pushpesh Pant, our culinary expert, is a documentary producer, author and die-hard foodie

Turn down the sound

Tinnitus could be responsible for the incessant noises in your head. But information and determination can help get things under control, writes **Sheila Kumar**

All of us hear noises inside our heads at one time or the other. For most of us, it is a fleeting phenomenon. But for others, these noises affect hearing. Different people hear different sounds. It could be bells ringing, waves at sea, water rushing, humming, clicking, shrill whistling, a pulsated roar, sound of a helicopter, the sizzle of an egg frying, the buzz of a doorbell, all the time. This aural affliction is called tinnitus. It refers to the conscious experience of sound originating in the head of the person in the absence of an objective source. In short, it's a phantom auditory experience.

Ongoing studies by the US-based Tinnitus Research Consortium and the American Tinnitus Association have pegged tinnitus sufferers worldwide at 100 million, and counting. Many hear noises only occasionally but as many as 10 million afflicted people hear noises loudly, affecting their lives daily. They spend their days worrying about the noises; they spend sleepless nights worrying about possible tumours inside the brain.

SOURCE OF SOUND

Till the 1980s, it was believed that tinnitus was a result of damaged inner ear. However, most experimental research could not substantiate this claim. Studies by the Tinnitus Research Consortium and the American Tinnitus Association have now established that it is often a reaction to medication, food allergies, diabetes, heavy smoking and excessive alcohol intake. Foreign objects lodged in the ear, nerve damage or irritation, middle-ear infections that at any time in life could have damaged the ear, and severe wax build-up can also lead to tinnitus. At times, blood rushing through an injured vein causes a ringing sound.

Another cause is hearing loss because of ageing, when the membrane within the ear canal dries out. Almost all sufferers have had some degree of hearing loss. And in many cases, when that aspect is dealt with, the tinnitus may dramatically vanish or decrease in intensity.

Professionals who are exposed to some amount of loud noise at their workplace (hangar mechanics, pilots, welders,

drillers) also suffer from tinnitus at some point in their lives. Patients report an increase in tinnitus when they suffer from headaches or are otherwise stressed; in such cases, ringing becomes a veritable roar.

"Understanding how our brain reacts to noise is vital," says Delhi-based ENT surgeon Lt Col Sabari Girish. "The brain usually takes in some noise from the environment and classifies it as potentially threatening, neutral or non-threatening. That message gets passed down and the body reacts in an active, alert or passive manner. In the case of tinnitus, as the brain cannot relate the noise to any previously classified noise, it will classify it as threatening and send frissons of alarm racing inside your head. This puts your mind and body on an adrenaline high. Insomnia, depression, anxiety and panic attacks are some of the problems tinnitus sufferers fall prey to."

Research has also shown that after five minutes in a sound-proof room, 94 per cent of normal individuals experience tinnitus. Their description of sounds they hear match exactly with those



In remote regions of China, tinnitus is welcomed as a sign of wisdom. In parts of Turkey, it portends good luck. And Dr Pawel Jastreboff, a neuroscientist from Atlanta, says certain sects in India feel tinnitus is an intimate message from God.

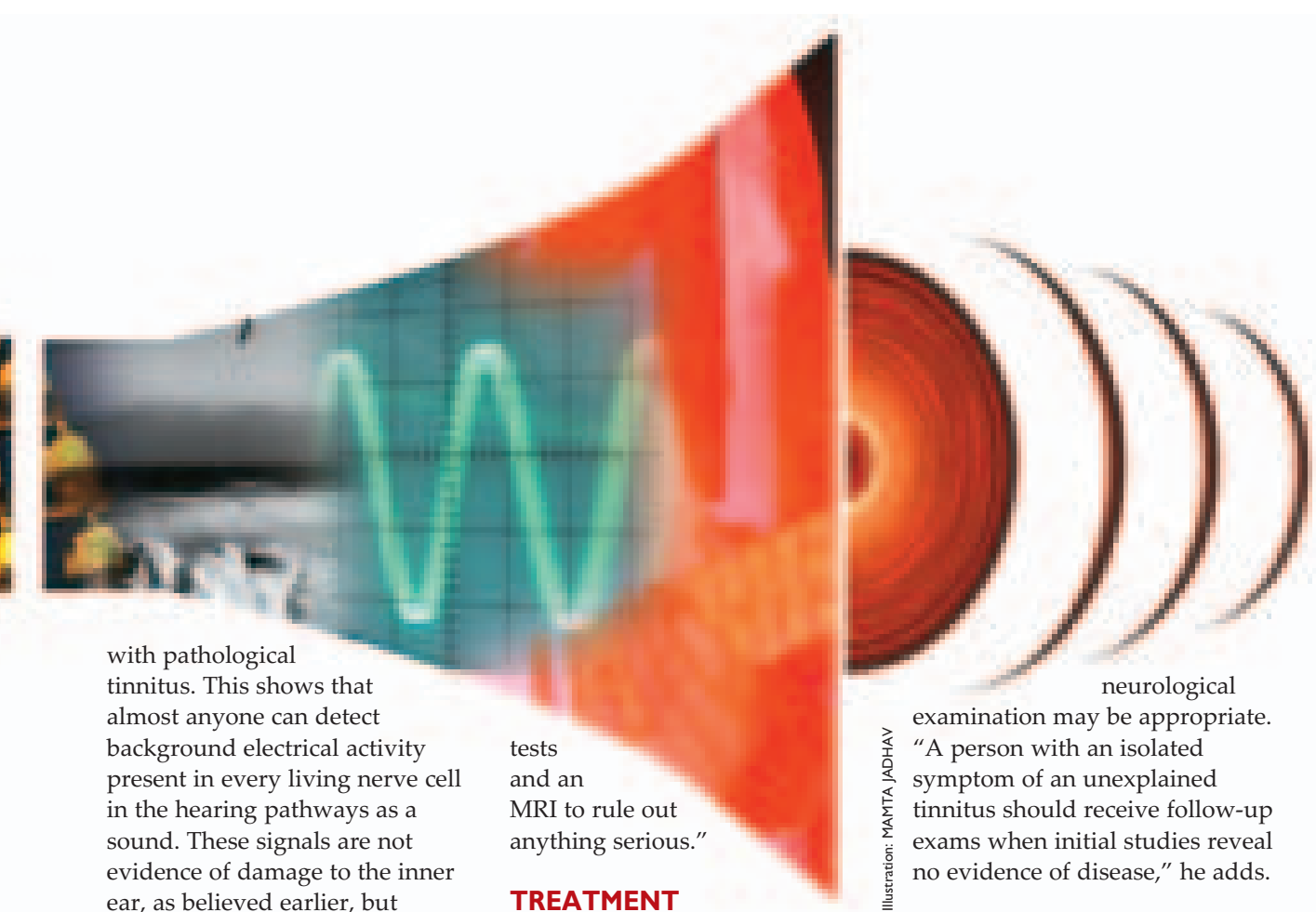


Illustration: MAMTA JADHAV

with pathological tinnitus. This shows that almost anyone can detect background electrical activity present in every living nerve cell in the hearing pathways as a sound. These signals are not evidence of damage to the inner ear, as believed earlier, but compensatory activity that occurs all the time in our auditory systems. Compensation can occur as a response to changes in our sound environment (like silence) to hearing loss. It's good to think

tests and an MRI to rule out anything serious."

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Even today, most treatment is based on the theory that it is a result of damage to the inner ear. Pharmacological agents are still being used with no scientific

neurological examination may be appropriate. "A person with an isolated symptom of an unexplained tinnitus should receive follow-up exams when initial studies reveal no evidence of disease," he adds.

Effective medications include drugs like carbamazepine and intravenous lidocaine or barbiturates, but Varadarajulu reveals that these may have serious side effects. Another method is to manage tinnitus with masking—it has met with mixed success. Maskers introduce an external masking sound into the affected ear, minimising or eliminating the perception of tinnitus. However, their efficacy is less than 30 per cent. According to Varadarajulu, a hearing aid may be beneficial by addressing the primary hearing problem and masking tinnitus.

If tests, including MRI, are clear, the patient needs to accept that tinnitus cannot be cured—only managed. Most specialists expect patients to learn to live with it.

In the absence of effective treatment, many 'alternate therapies' have mushroomed. "Don't fall prey to quacks touting

As believed earlier, tinnitus is not evidence of damage to the inner ear

of the sounds produced by this compensatory activity as 'the music of the brain'.

"In some cases, tinnitus is a symptom of cardiovascular disease, abnormalities in the blood vessels of the brain, Meniere's disease [disorder of the inner ear], anaemia, aneurisms, acoustic trauma, and tumours in the head," adds Dr Girish. "If nausea, dizziness, rapid breathing, vertigo or unsteadiness in walking, difficulty in hearing and hallucinations accompany tinnitus, patients must take aural

evidence for their efficacy. These include lignocaine (a local anaesthetic), vitamins, minerals, and ginkgo biloba (an extract from the Chinese herb ginseng).

"All patients must first have a thorough otological and audiological examination," says Dr Reginald Varadarajulu, a Bengaluru-based neurologist. There are many instances where auditory imagery could include hymns or jingles. These may be confused with psychotic disorders like schizophrenia. If there are additional symptoms, a complete



wonder cures," warns Dr Girish. "You need to be aware so you cannot be needlessly alarmed. Also, don't resent your condition or attempt to constantly monitor it. Learn to relax completely. Wear earplugs or moistened balls of cotton in your ears at bedtime [tinnitus is more pronounced at night when the noises of the day fade] if you find they help. Talk

to your ENT specialist about maskers. They give off subtle sounds that mask the problem but do not block hearing."

SELF-MANAGEMENT

A new approach is gaining ground. Called **tinnitus retraining therapy** (TRT), it was developed at Yale University in 1980. It calls for retraining the

subconscious auditory system to accept tinnitus as natural, not a threat or warning signal. It can take months and occasionally even years for this to happen. Ideally, a multi-disciplinary team (ENT specialists, audiologists, behavioural psychologists and habilitationists) should guide the patient with the process.

Tinnitus retraining first involves learning the cause of the problem. This is followed by resetting subconscious filters that look for alarming sounds. It also requires training the patient to get habituated to sounds, making them meaningless. Success is measured by absence of reaction to sounds while sleeping, working or when free. As a result, tinnitus becomes less of an enemy. "Today, TRT is accepted as the most successful

I am a 70 year-old retired veterinarian. I am president of the National Academy of Veterinary Sciences in India, which represents the profession. The organisation has about 400 fellows and members, including serving and retired directors of research institutes, vice chancellors, deans, and professors of veterinary colleges from across the country. I am interested in animal welfare, especially humane treatment of experimental animals, and general preventive healthcare. I would also like to promote veterinary education in India. In this regard, I would like to correspond with likeminded people in the country through email.

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tool for treating tinnitus the world over,” says Dr Girish. “Once it loses its sinister meaning, however loud it has been, it begins to diminish.”

Effective counselling is an important aspect of tinnitus management. Many patients get intimidated by it. They need to be made fully aware of the condition. This needs to be coupled with firm reassurance from both the neurologist and the audiologist that it can be made to fade away.

According to Dr Prakash Kumar who treats tinnitus sufferers at his clinic at Durgapur, West Bengal, patients must be trained

to turn phantom sounds into the humming of the refrigerator. Dr Anirban Biswas, a Kolkata-based neurologist, who treats about a 100 patients every month, says he does not purport to offer a cure. “We can only offer a better quality of life,” he says. “The annoyance can definitely be reduced by treatment and psychotherapy, but the sounds cannot be totally stopped.” In cases of objective tinnitus, generated by an organic defect like a tumour or a developmental defect in a blood vessel in the vicinity of the ears, doctors can offer a surgical cure—but such cases are few. “Most of the cases are subjective, where we cannot point to the cause, and so a

curative treatment is not possible,” says Dr Biswas.

Ultimately, tinnitus sufferers need to help themselves. Realise that it’s not a dangerous illness, label it a nuisance and file it away. Don’t obsess over it. Stop listening for sounds. Keep busy; surround yourself with other kinds of sounds like soft music. Practice yoga, reflexology, undergo a soothing massage, do some form of exercise to keep the blood circulating—all these have been proven to help. Ultimate management is to reach a point where you don’t let tinnitus affect your quality of life. It can be done. All you need are information and determination. ■

With inputs from Lt Col Sabari Girish, ENT surgeon, Army Research and Referral Hospital, Delhi; Dr Reginald Varadarajulu, neurologist, Wockhardt Hospital, Bangalore; and Dr Anirban Biswas, a Kolkata-based neurologist

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Bone-weary

Dr Vikas Gupta answers queries on orthopaedic problems

Q My mother, a 63 year-old housewife, has been complaining of joint pains for the past two years. She has

recently been diagnosed with osteoporosis. What is osteoporosis and how can a person prevent it?

Osteoporosis is a condition characterised by low bone mass and the deterioration of bone architecture, leading to bone fragility and increased risk of fracture. The bone normally rejuvenates itself through a process of bone absorption and formation called bone remodelling. Osteoporosis happens when bone breakdown, or absorption, occurs at a rate faster than bone formation—with increasing age and after menopause owing to hormonal changes. Other risk factors for osteoporosis are caffeine, smoking and excessive use of alcohol. A diet rich in calcium is considered the first line of prevention. Oral supplements in the form of calcium tablets may be prescribed. Exercise also stimulates the bone remodelling cycle but consult a doctor before beginning a fitness programme. Hormonal (oestrogen) therapy has been used to treat osteoporosis for many years. Today, newer, non-hormonal treatment options are available.

Q I am 52 year-old housewife and have been experiencing pain in my left knee for the past three months. It hurts more when I climb stairs. What treatment do I require?

It looks like you have early stage osteoarthritis, which is a degenerative, age-related problem. Initially, it is treated by exercise (physiotherapy), topical pain relievers, oral pain medications, and injections into the joint. Exercise has been shown to reduce pain and improve flexibility, strength and endurance. Activities that place high loads across the joint, such as lifting weights or running, should be avoided. Instead, try walking and cycling. Obesity increases the risk for osteoarthritis of the knee. Losing excess weight may help prevent osteoarthritis or decrease the rate of progression.

Using a cane also decreases the load on the joint and relieves pain. But in later stages, when pain starts interfering with daily living, surgery becomes advisable. A partial or total joint replacement can be done depending on the extent of the problem. Consult an orthopaedic surgeon for specific treatment.

Q I am 63 years old and have been experiencing pain in the base of the thumb for the past year. The pain intensifies even if I hold something small like a glass of water. My physician told me that I have arthritis. Does arthritis occur in the thumb and what is the treatment?

The condition you describe is called osteoarthritis of the first carpometacarpal (CMC) joint. It occurs owing to wear and tear with age. Physiotherapy is effective for relief of symptoms for CMC joint pain. Treatment initially begins with splinting the thumb in a comfortable position. The patient then begins exercises and work simplification techniques. Heat therapy in form of hot fomentation, wax bath and local ultrasonics are also effective. All these are supplemented with oral pain medicine. If pain still continues, a local injection into the joint may be used. In the worst-case scenario, a patient may require joint fusion or replacement to relieve pain. Contact your doctor for your treatment options.

Q I am 62 years old and have pain and stiffness in my elbow for the past four years. The doctor says it is degenerative arthritis as a result of a 20 year-old injury. Can this really be true? And can this joint be replaced with an artificial joint like a hip or knee joint?

Yes, an old injury can result in degenerative arthritis, especially after a fracture where the bone has not set properly. Besides the hip and knee joints, shoulder, wrist, finger, ankle, toe and elbow joints can be replaced with an artificial joint but there are specific indications and contraindications for such a procedure. Ask your doctor to discuss these with you. ■

Dr Vikas Gupta is an orthopaedic consultant at Fortis Hospital, Delhi

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Be blissful

Shameem Akthar on how to find happiness with yoga

Recently, neuroscientists did research on 'the happiness quotient' among volunteers—the man they dubbed the 'world's happiest man'

was a yogi. Matthieu Ricard, 60, ducked a great career as a scientist to become a monk in Tibet.

During the study, volunteers had 256 electrodes wired to their brain. Ricard's brain recorded intense activity in all those parts associated with happiness, including the superior prefrontal cortex. Other bliss indicators included a fabulous immune system, ability to withstand great stress, and great concentration. Ricard, who has written *Happiness: A Guide to Developing Life's Most Important Skill*, believes the mind must be trained to be happy. And this training happens on a fast-track when you meditate. Ricard says we all have a baseline to which we return immediately after an intense emotional experience, positive or negative. With meditation, this baseline is upped, so we attain a constant state of happiness.

Two separate studies done in Europe found that *hatha* yoga practices actually elevated a person's bliss quotient. Indicators recorded among one set of volunteers included greater alertness, energy, and curiosity to learn new things. The other set showed less reactivity to external stressors, less emotional outbursts and better ability to fall asleep.

You can gain all these bonuses with yoga. Have a daily *asana* practice. Include stimulating breathing exercises (*pranayama*) like skull-cleanser (*kapalabhati*), cool off with a calming one, like humming bee (*bhramari*). And always wind up with meditation. The most vital aspect that links all three is your ability to do each of these with a meditative temper. Many mistake meditation with being grim or sombre. Actually, meditation in yoga is equated to pure *ananda* (bliss). Remember this as you keep resetting your facial expression so you are smiling from within: sensitive cranial nerves that pass through your face set off the sympathetic nervous system when you grimace, even unconsciously. This creates a template for anger or depression. ■

Yogic moves Bliss meditation (*ananda dhyana*)

This is a simple technique to help you attain greater control over your thoughts and elevate your baseline for bliss. Sit in any meditative posture. Keep an alarm clock with a soft chime beside you to time your meditation, starting with three minutes. After a few weeks, increase it to five, and later to 15 to 20 minutes at least. Before beginning to focus, decide on an image. It could be your favourite deity, a work of art or even someone you love. Now close your eyes. Retain the image in your mind for the next three minutes. The mind will begin to wander after about four seconds.



Illustration: MAMTA JADHAV

Bring it back to this image again and again. While retaining the image, add more details. For example, if you are focusing on a deity, visualise its jewellery and costume. Intensify your awareness so all five senses are involved in creating the image lucidly. After the alarm rings, slowly rub your palms together, press them lightly on closed eyelids and open your eyes.

How it works: It creates intense concentration, which powers your will power. Often, sadness is a chaotic state of the mind that slips helplessly into despair. This is difficult to fight unless the mind is trained to reject this state and choose happiness. That training comes only with yogic *dhyana*.

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

HEALTH BYTES

SLEEP THERAPY

If you can't memorise new information easily, sleep on it. Researchers at Harvard Medical School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, asked 48 people, aged between 20 and 45, to learn 20 pairs of words—12 hours later, they tested their power to recall them. Some participants were taught the words at 9 am, while others learnt them at 9 pm and then went to sleep. The study found that those who had normal, healthy sleep routines remembered 12 per cent more words from the list than those who learnt the words at 9 am. "The memory boost could be caused by the brain replaying daytime information during sleep, similar to a rehearsal," lead author and neurologist Dr Jeffrey Ellenbogen explains to *Los Angeles Times*.



MEMORY BACK



Lost memories can be restored, claims neuroscientist Li-Huei Tsai in the May issue of *Nature* magazine. Associated with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (in Chevy Chase, Maryland) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, she used mental stimulation and drug treatment to reverse memory loss in mice suffering from Alzheimer's. Her team placed genetically engineered elderly mice in an environment with a changing assortment of toys, treadmills, and other mice. Soon they noticed an improvement in learning ability and revival of some long-term memories. "Alzheimer's and other types of dementia apparently don't erase memory from the brain," Tsai told Reuters. "It remains in storage but cannot be retrieved owing to brain damage."

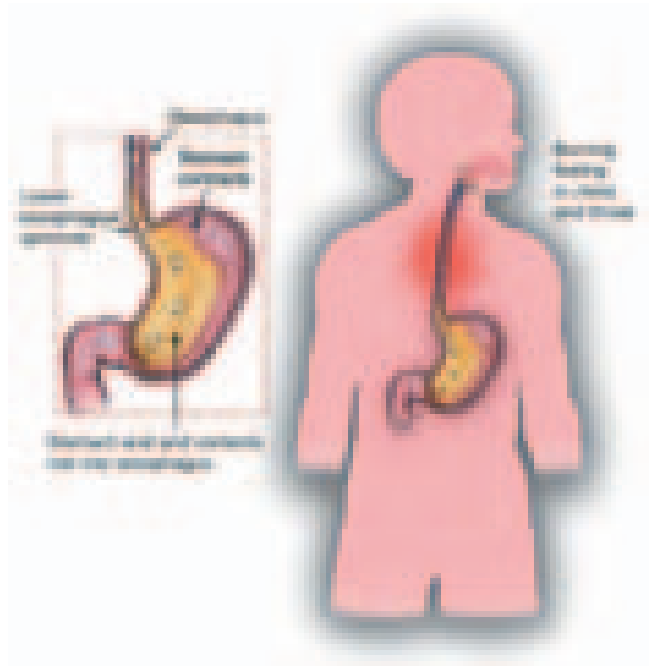
NUTRI NATION

Indians are on the high road to health and wellness. A study by the National Sample Survey Organisation says we are consuming more vegetables and fruits, less red meat, pulses, chicken and eggs, less saturated fat. There's also been a switch to healthier cooking mediums like sunflower, corn and soya. Over the past decade, smoking has dropped by 30 per cent in urban areas and 26 per cent in rural India. The survey, which covered 79,298 rural and 45,346 urban Indian households in 2004-2005, shows we aren't drinking milk that much, in both rural and urban India, but our egg intake has gone up by nearly 60 per cent in rural India. We are also spending more on healthcare than ever before.



SWALLOW THIS

About 71 per cent of the adult population in major Indian cities suffers from heartburn, or a burning sensation in the oesophagus. The Health Care Welfare Society (HCWS) and ENO (a range of antacids manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline) conducted the study on 400 participants (aged between 25 and 55) from eight cities—Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Bhopal and Hyderabad. Anup Singh, head of HCWS, blames it on changing eating habits, erratic lifestyle and spicy food. "Stress, lack of sleep and long working hours are the other causes," he tells *Harmony*. Dr Vivek Raj, gastroenterologist at Max Hospital in New Delhi, adds, "If untreated, it could further cause ulcers, bleeding of the oesophagus and cancer of the food pipe. To avoid heartburn, you need to control weight, cut down on alcohol, coffee, smoking and carbonated drinks, and keep a gap of two hours between dinner and bedtime."



UNSPOKEN NEED



Widex India Pvt Ltd has launched a new set of hearing aids. The new Inteo and Aikia offer little room for error and superior clarity. While Inteo has a noise diary, speech and noise tracer, spatial sound tracer audibility extender

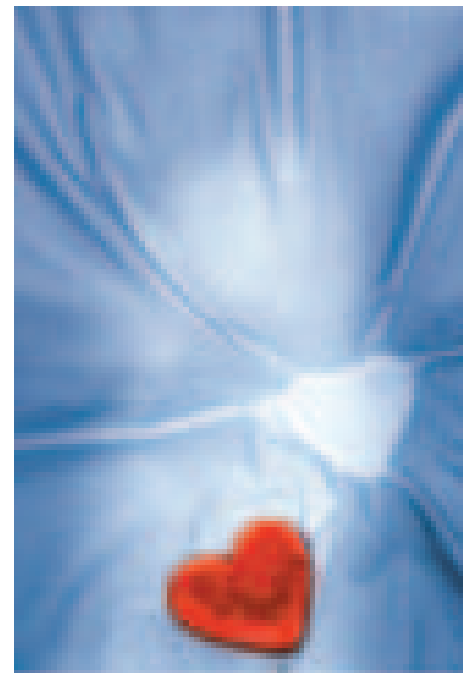
and speech enhancer, Aikia offers all this and a speech intensification system to reduce active noise. With their remarkable sound reproduction, these two models are being touted as the best on the market today. The micro wonders come in a three different colours—black, winter silver and pearl white. For details, contact Shakeel H Rizvi at 0172-27257733 and 2726825 or email widexindia@widexindia.com



HEART ALERT

To mend a damaged heart, scientists at the Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh have crafted a robotic leech called Heart-Lander. The gadget is inserted below the ribcage through a tiny incision. This can be done without general anaesthesia; thereby reducing the time patients need to spend in the hospital. Once inside, it can inject drugs, attach pacemaker leads and may even be able to

destroy damaged tissue. Outside the body, the surgeon controls the two-ounce robot using a joystick and monitors its progress on a television screen. However, Professor Peter Weissberg of the British Heart Foundation warns in newspaper *Daily Mail*, "It is a long way from the lab to the operating theatre." Despite successful operations on animals, the first human trial is at least three years away.



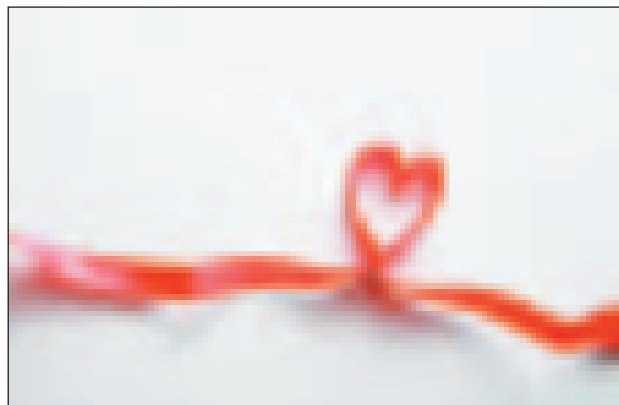
HEALTH BYTES

REALITY CHECK

The Government of India has now made it mandatory for officials above 40 to undergo an annual health check-up. This April, 500 officials from the IAS, IPS and Forest Service in Rajasthan took cardiac, haemoglobin, blood sugar, cholesterol, liver and kidney tests—their health was graded and they were advised to consult a specialist if needed. “There’s a correlation between health and efficiency,” says P Kumaran, 70, former director general, Defence Estates, Ministry of Defence. “When officials spend long hours at work, it triggers health problems that affect their performance. This proposal will help prevent serious diseases.”



HAPPY HEART



A heart attack is no longer the No. 1 killer. A study by cardiologist Dr Keith Fox at Edinburgh University

claims that deaths owing to heart attacks have reduced by as much as 50 per cent. The study is based on data derived from 45,000 people from 14 countries who had suffered heart attacks or deadly blockages between 1999 and 2006. The results are published in the latest issue of *Journal of American Medical Association*. The reasons for the improved state of the human heart are not hard to fathom—modern hospitals and the latest equipment and medicines. As Dr S Vaishnav from the Asian Heart Institute, Mumbai, says, “The door-to-needle time, which is the time between the patient realising he has a worrying chest pain and his getting a specific clot buster, has now reduced to 90 minutes.”

5 WARNING SIGNALS OF FIVE COMMON DRUGS

- **Anti-allergic medicines like Avil and Allegra:** These may cause drowsiness, affecting ability to drive or operate hazardous machinery. May prove fatal if preceded or followed by alcohol.
- **Anti-diarrhoea drugs like Ciplox-TZ and Norflox-TZ:** When taken, avoid alcoholic drinks as the combination may cause flushing of the stomach leading to dehydration.
- **Anti-angina drug Sorbitrate:** Should dissolve under the tongue. Should be kept in an airtight dark bottle. It becomes ineffective after four weeks of opening the bottle.
- **Anti-arthritis drugs like Voveran, Brufen, Indomethacin and Neproxen:** They may be dangerous for patients with heart or kidney problems as they can worsen both.
- **Aspirin:** Take after meals to prevent stomach irritation. Avoid in case you have a history of bronchial asthma (it may cause an asthma attack) and stomach ulcers or severe indigestion as it can cause bleeding ulcers.

—Contributed by Dr Ashok Seth,
chairman and chief cardiologist,
Max Heart and Vascular Institute

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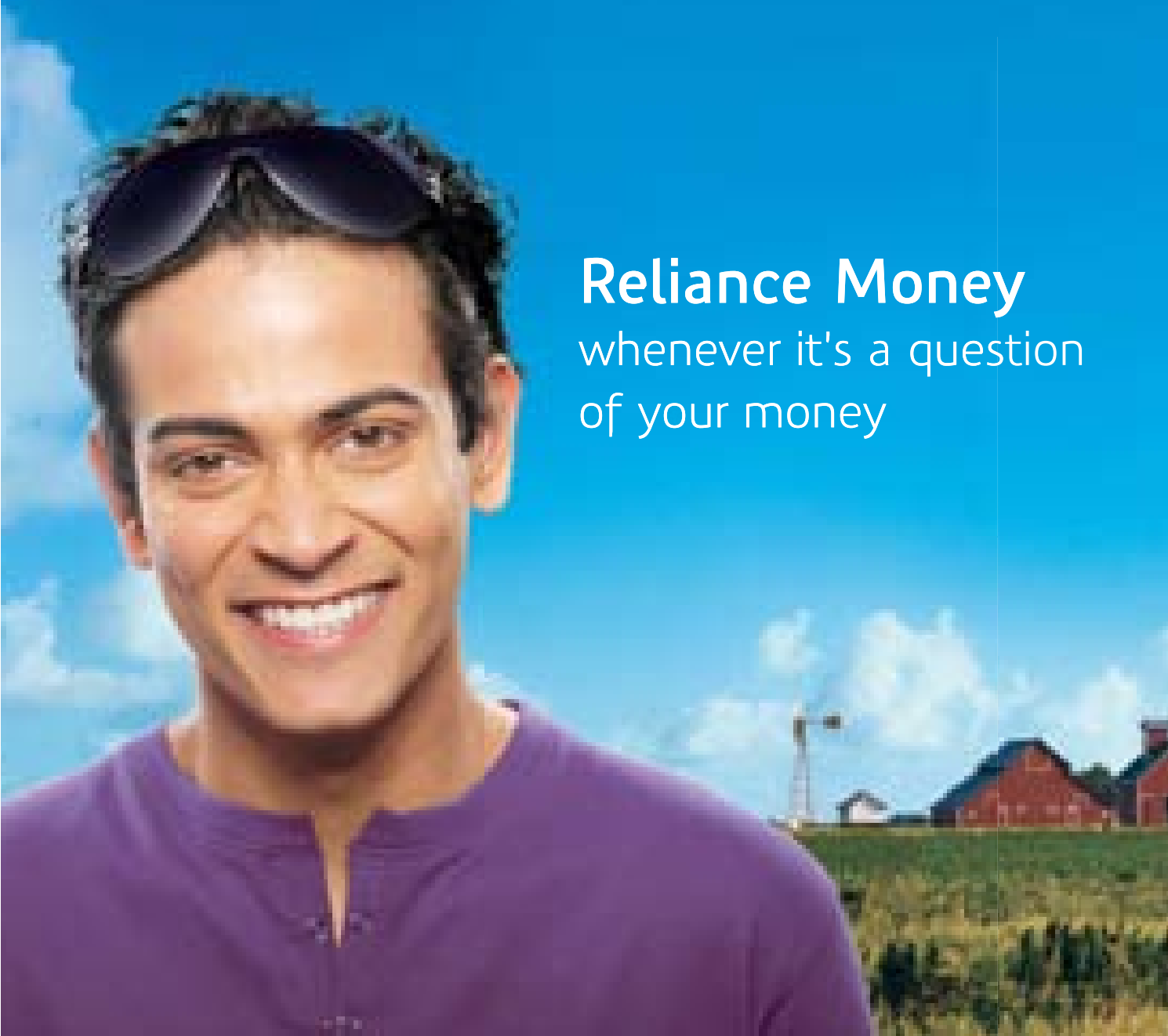
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Beyond mail

Smita Deodhar takes a look at the Indian postal system's efforts at connecting the dots



MAMTA JADHAV

The ubiquitous post office plays a key role in the Indian economy. With its network of 155,333 branches, 89 per cent of which are in rural areas, it offers basic banking and investment services to the most remote regions in the country. The postal network is double the size of all banks in the country put together (all nationalised banks together have 65,000

branches in India and all scheduled commercial banks have 69,417), and its services have played a pivotal role in mobilisation of small savings over the years. Though the quality of service is subject to debate, government-sponsored post office savings schemes enjoy a high degree of trust and thrive on returns comparable with other fixed income instruments.

However, with skidding stamp sales and the rise of private mutual funds, banks and insurance companies that have created new investment avenues, India Post has had to shore up its revenues while responding to changing customer needs. Since the 1990s, it has been trying to increase its range of services, including financial products—a case of innovate or perish. With

no proper information sharing and publicity system in place, most of us know about only its basic schemes.

For instance, it is fairly common knowledge that you can open a savings account, recurring deposit account and time deposit account at any post office branch across the country. Schemes like the National Savings Scheme, Kisan Vikas Patra, Public Provident Fund, Monthly Income Scheme (MIS) and the Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme (SCSS, launched

office that may surprise you...

RETAIL OF FINANCIAL PRODUCTS

Many banks and asset management companies have tied up with India Post to retail their financial products. Mutual funds and bonds of Principal-PNB, Prudential-ICICI, SBI, IDBI and RBI are sold through post offices. In 2004, the postal department collaborated with the UTI to retail 17 of its mutual fund products from select post offices. Currently, over 250 post offices offer this

from over 205 countries. This service is available at 8,500 post offices. Remittances worth Rs 17,075 million were made in 2005-06, generating revenue of Rs 215.9 million for the department.

E-POST

This pilot project is underway in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. Based on a person's geographical address, he is given an 'E-post ID'. The post office, on the customer's behalf, downloads his emails, prints them and delivers them. This will enable those who don't have access to computers, like many silvers, to get email from anywhere in the world.

E-BILL POST

This facility is currently available in Bengaluru and Kolkata, but will soon start in other cities. It can be used for payment of utilities like electricity, telephone, mobile phone, and water. The department has tied up with BSNL, Airtel, RTO and electricity distributors for over-the-counter payments from customers.

DISTRIBUTION OF COINS

India Post has also already started distributing coins on behalf of RBI—made necessary by

The post office will soon download, print and deliver email to people without a PC

in 2004) have proven popular with investors. And postal life insurance (PLI), introduced in 1884 for postal employees, is also available to military personnel and employees of government and semi-government bodies. For the rural population, the postal department also introduced Rural Postal Life Insurance (RPLI) schemes in 1995.

All this may be old news but here's a snapshot of some new services provided by the post

service and the network is growing steadily. The objective of these initiatives is to provide the common man easy access to market-based investment options.

INTERNATIONAL MONEY TRANSFER

The rising number of Indians working abroad has led to a demand for convenient remittance channels. The department has tied up with Western Union Money Transfer to give its customers the facility of receiving remittances

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occasional coin shortages. Post office branches collect bagfuls of coins from the RBI and distribute them from their counters for a small commission. The pilot project was initiated in Mumbai and covered 20 post offices.

RETAIL OF NON-LIFE INSURANCE PRODUCTS

In a tie-up with the Oriental Insurance Company, India Post will soon retail non-life insurance products as corporate agents through major post offices.

ACCIDENTAL DEATH INSURANCE COVER

All postal account holders can avail of accidental death insurance of Rs 100,000 at an annual premium of Rs 15. This was introduced in January 2006 in collaboration with Oriental Insurance Company.

INSTANT MONEY ORDER

The instant money order, launched in January 2006, is an online domestic money transmission service that enables customers to receive money in minutes from the post office providing the service. It is currently available at 58 post offices.

STREAMLINED SERVICES

Payment of interest on MIS and SCSS is cumbersome, requiring account holders to personally collect the payment from the post office at regular intervals. To address this problem, the department (like banks) has introduced a system of tokens at interest payment counters. Available only at some post offices right now, it will soon be introduced in other post offices with heavy traffic. In 2006, the department also enabled doorstep delivery of

quarterly interest on MIS/SCSS through money order after paying a commission. Alternatively, investors can opt to receive payment through a post-dated cheque.

FINANCE MARTS

To improve efficiency as well as ambience, some post offices are being remodelled into exclusive 'Finance Marts', one-stop shops for savings bank services and services like international and domestic money transfer, mutual funds, pension funds, electronic fund transfer, and insurance. These are currently manned by staff trained by the Association of Mutual Funds of India. In 2005-2006, 142 marts were opened, mostly in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The idea will soon be extended to other states. ■

IN THE NEWS

DA HIKES IN GUJARAT AND PUNJAB

Three weeks after the Central Government announced a hike in dearness allowance for employees, Gujarat and Punjab extended similar largesse to state government employees and retirees. From 1 January 2007, both states will pay 35 per cent of basic salary as DA instead of 29 per cent. The downside: Gujarat's expenditure will go up by Rs 1.6 billion, while Punjab's pension liabilities will rise by Rs 400.36 million.

PNB LAUNCHES REVERSE MORTGAGE

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched a reverse mortgage scheme where seniors can get a loan of up to Rs 1 million against their residential property. The interest rate is 10 per cent a year while the margin of the bank is 20 per cent. With reverse mortgage, seniors can obtain a monthly stream of income by mortgaging their house to a financial institution (in this case, PNB), which they can own and occupy in their lifetime without repayment or servicing of the loan. PNB's loan is

for a period of 15-20 years for individuals between 60 and 70 years and 10-15 years for those above 70 years. Heirs may settle the loan after the demise of the couple taking the loan. If not, the bank will sell the house on the market to make the recovery. Other banks like Oriental Bank of Commerce and Allahabad Bank are also in the process of designing reverse mortgage schemes.

INSURING JUSTICE

In a judgement that has invited cheer from the people and censure from insurance companies, the Supreme Court has decreed that the legal heir of a person who dies in a road accident (whether a dependent or not), has the right to compensation under Section 140 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. The insurance industry is unhappy as it feels the verdict will give rise to an increase in claims ratio (the amount paid out as claims in proportion to the amount received as premium, in any accounting year). The possible fallout: the industry may be forced to hike premium on accident insurance.

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Income and wealth

Legalpundits answers questions on tax deducted at source and wealth tax

Q What is the tax deducted at source (TDS) when a residential flat is given by an individual to a company on lease for residential purpose? How often does the company need to issue TDS certificates to the owner? Further, can the owner (an individual with salaried income) use this certificate to discount his taxes? If yes, how? If there has been loss of income from house and property after taking into consideration the rent, can a document be submitted to the tenant so there is no TDS?

A Until 31 May 2002, rent paid by persons other than individuals and Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) for accommodation taken on 'regular basis' was subject to TDS under Section 194-I of the Income Tax Act. From 1 June 2002, even individuals and HUF have been brought under the TDS net—for all such

payments made by them, they have to deduct tax on behalf of the government and deposit it. If the payment exceeds Rs 120,000 and is made to another individual or undivided family, TDS needs to be at the rate of 15.75 per cent; if the payment is made to another individual or entity, TDS needs to be at the rate of 21 per cent.

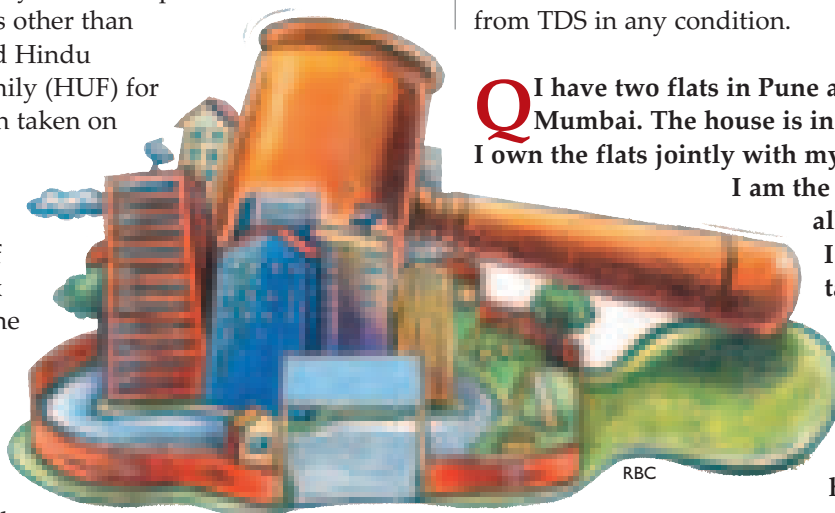
The person (a company, in your case), at the time of paying rent in cheque or cash, needs to deduct 15.75 per cent of the total rent amount paid to the resident. No deduction is made if the aggregate rent credited or paid to the payee during the financial year is less than Rs 120,000.

The deductor (tenant) must issue TDS certificate using Form 16/16 A within a month of deducting tax. A consolidated yearly TDS certificate can be issued only if the payee (owner) requests one within one month from the end of the financial year. Failure to issue TDS certificate within the prescribed time attracts a penalty of Rs 100 for every day of delay, the maximum penalty being subject to the amount of TDS. The payee can then use this certificate to reduce tax liability at the time of filing tax returns. For calculations, the payee can deduct the TDS amount from the net tax payable. However, the statute does not allow exemption from TDS in any condition.

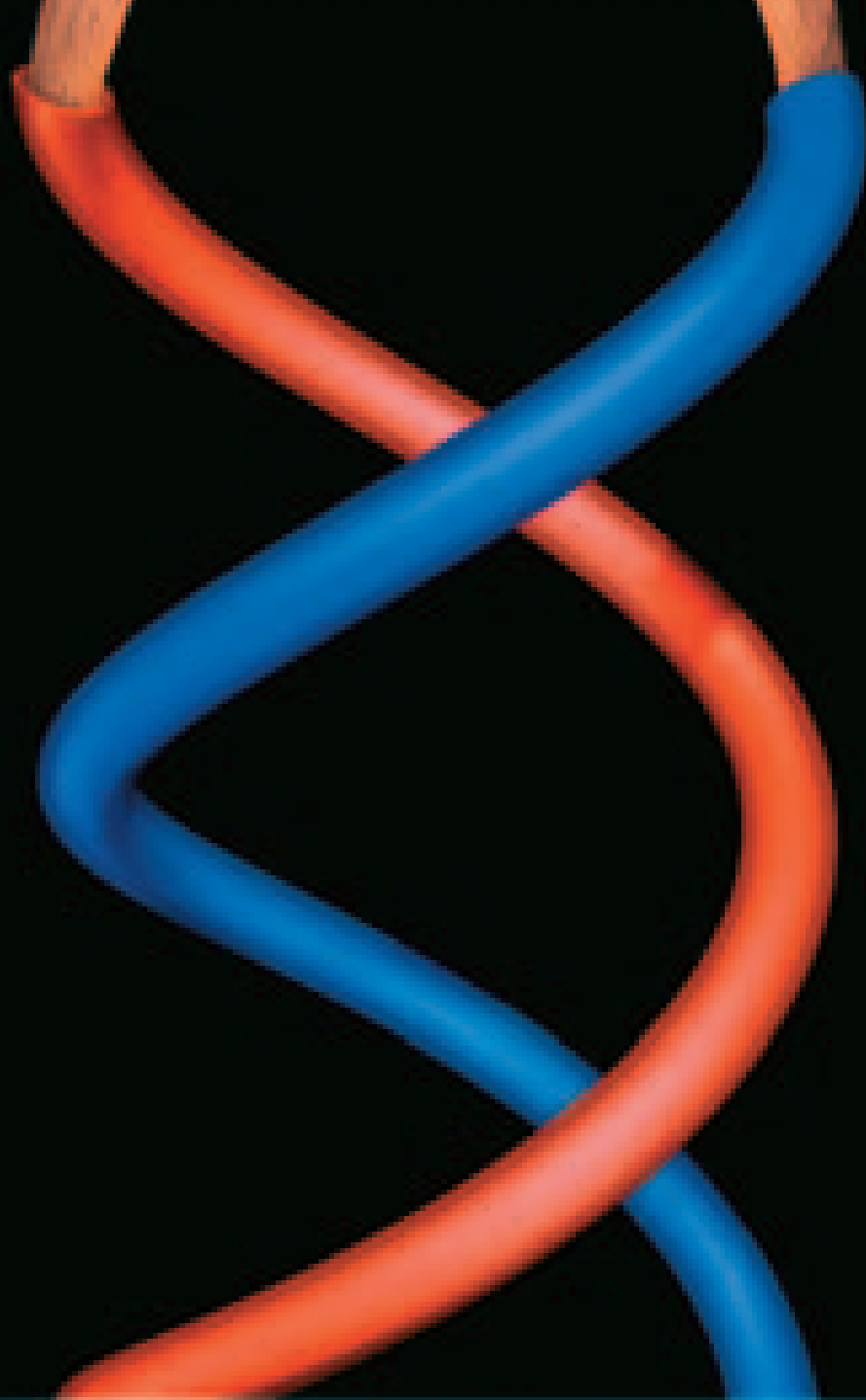
Q I have two flats in Pune and a house in Mumbai. The house is in my name and I own the flats jointly with my wife and my son.

I am the main owner in all properties. Do I have to pay wealth tax for all of them? My son lives in one of the flats with his family. Can he pay the wealth tax for his flat?

A Under the Wealth Tax Act, an assessee can claim exemption for any one house in case he owns more than one. The choice is yours whether to claim exemption on the house property having higher value or the flat(s). The Registrar of Stamps does not recognise the co-owner in case of a jointly owned flat. It is always the first name that is considered to be the owner of the flat or house. Therefore, you will have to pay wealth tax on any two houses and claim exemption on the one that has a higher market value. As your son lives in one of the flats, you may gift the flat to him and pay only appropriate stamp duty. For more information or clarification, please contact your lawyer. ■

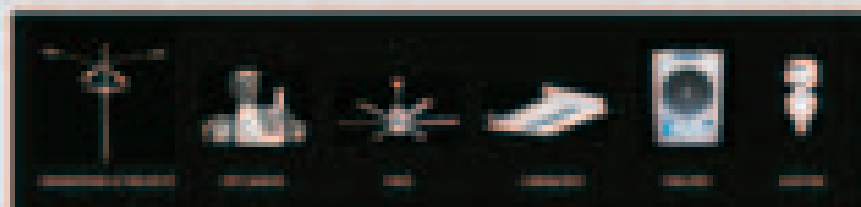


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BOOKSHELF

Identity crisis

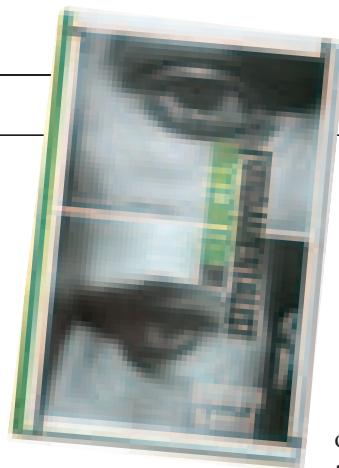
The Reluctant Fundamentalist

By Mohsin Hamid

Penguin/Viking; Rs 295; 184 pages

How does an Ivy League graduate who analyses 'fundamentals' become a 'fundamentalist'? We find out through the course of a gripping monologue by Changez, who tells his story to a mysterious American at a Lahore cafe.

Changez is living the American dream, working in New York for a blue-chip valuation firm, Underwood Samson. He's even in love—white and wealthy Erica, though damaged after losing her longtime love to cancer, slowly starts to open up to him. But when the twin towers crumble, so do his moorings. With his name and face rendering him suspect, Changez begins to perceive the hardening of attitudes and closing of ranks among New Yorkers. Even harder to handle are the stirrings of his own mind. He becomes introspective yet defiant, growing a beard almost as if he's testing the boundaries of the prejudice around him and shoring up his own identity. Plagued by a growing resentment



of America, he leaves behind the life and girl, and returns to teach in Lahore, where he acquires a reputation (unwillingly) as an 'anti-American spokesman'.

Alternatively polite and threatening, familiar and sinister, Changez keeps you interested because his story is believable, yet forceful. Hamid's prose eschews the lyricism of *Mothsmoke* (his first, award-winning novel about class in Pakistan) to become more blunt, fitting for a book that tackles issues like identity and Islam and doesn't shy away from holding up a mirror to our innermost feelings. When Changez first hears about the twin towers, his reaction is to smile, not because he is "a sociopath" but because it gives him pleasure to see America "so visibly brought to her knees". It's just one of the many instances in this book that Hamid manages to get into your head—and refuses to leave it.

—Arati Rajan Menon

Hope in dreams

A Mirror Greens in Spring

By Selina Sen

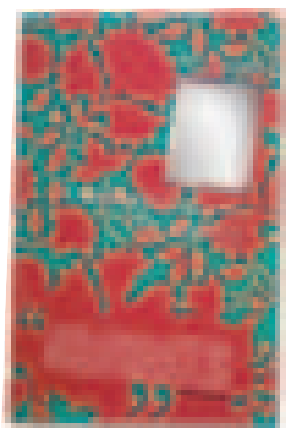
India Ink-Roli Books; Rs 295; 298 pages

Mymensingh in Bangladesh is a moment frozen in Dadu's Technicolor memories. His wife—Dida to the family that includes their widowed daughter and two granddaughters—plans

her daily constraints in the kitchen ("The fish in her *koftha* curry might turn out to be green plantains in disguise, her dry mutton, jackfruit dressed as lamb"). Fatigue is scored as lines on Dida's daughter Meera's brow whose elder daughter Chhobi grew overnight after her father's death, and the younger, more beautiful Sonali can't imagine her life in reverse gear. At 19, she falls in love with Sonny and his Punjabi good looks, only to run away and marry his friend Karan. Set when 'India was

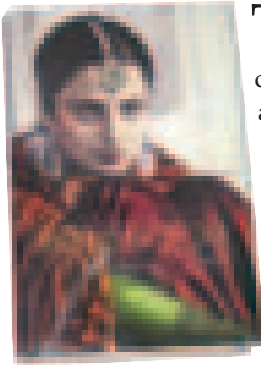
Indira, and Indira was India', *A Mirror...* is about a displaced Bengali family coming to terms with life in Delhi of the 1980s—when women aspired to have their own boutiques; men, a Maruti car; retirees their secure monthly income from selling rooftops for hoardings; and Sikhs, justice for being targeted after Indira Gandhi's assassination. The family lives through history in the making, with Sonali's life in full-throttle—including a maritime misadventure—guiding them to a realisation that Delhi is where life is. And when Dadu confidently waits for the "colonnaded courtyards of Mymensingh to swim into focus", his thoughts reach his home in Delhi. A gripping page-turner about a family's struggle to make their dreams reality.

—Meeta Bhatti



BRIEFLY

Just like villager Mukhtar Mai, whose autobiography *In the Name of Honour* was featured in *Harmony* in February, **Salma Ahmed** too experienced abuse, sanctioned by Pakistan's patriarchal society. But Ahmed's privileged family background enabled her to forge a successful career in business (as a ship-breaker) and politics in an emerging Pakistan. In **CUTTING FREE** (Roli Books; Rs 295; 262 pages), she tells her story candidly, making no excuses for her 'amorous dalliances'—she was married thrice—or even for abandoning two of her six children. The best part, though, is her account of her political career. Ahmed, who was elected to the national assembly in 1985 and interacted closely with leaders like General Zia, provides an insider's look at the jockeying for power endemic to Pakistani politics.



The jacket of **BOLLYWOOD: A HISTORY** (Roli Books; 495 pages; 380 pages) lauds the "vivid brilliance" of the narration of author **Mihir Bose** and calls the book "the first comprehensive history of this social and cultural phenomenon". Huh? Apart from a mildly amusing account of Bose's first attempt to chronicle Bollywood over a decade ago for a British newspaper—accompanied by the infamous Pamela Bordes as his photographer—and a few competent chapters on the evolution of Mumbai's film industry in the early 20th century, there's nothing vivid, brilliant or comprehensive in sight. Bose's own voice is hardly heard through this book, which seems to be derived in large part from the extensive bibliography. The gaps are plugged with hearsay and gossip. His choice of subjects is also bewilderingly arbitrary. Finally, there's the editing—or lack of it—with an appalling frequency of spelling mistakes. How many ways are there to spell (Subhash) Ghai?

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Help wanted!

Good domestic help is hard to find, rues **Amita Malik**

I don't know about other cities and towns but in Delhi and Kolkata, it is becoming increasingly impossible for professional families

who do not belong to very high-income groups to get proper domestic help to run their homes. The best, highly trained cooks, drivers, maids and other helpers now get five-figure salaries. They easily get jobs with embassy people and people with high salaries in the corporate sector and quite often go abroad on lucrative jobs, sending home enviable sums of money to their families until they return home to build their own house in their village or town. We professionals cannot compete with them.

I was once given a maid for week. A charming, trained girl who cooked as well as she ironed. On her last day with me, I found her ironing bed sheets at 11 pm. "Why aren't you in bed?" I asked. "I could not leave, ma'am, without leaving everything in order," she said. I paid that girl Rs 100 a day during that week and offered her Rs 3,000 if she stayed on. Which was what I could afford. But she politely informed me that she was going to Italy with an ambassador's family, which had been transferred there.

My father—a professor and not a millionaire—had a bungalow where the *mali*, *dhobi* and at least three other helpers lived on the premises. We treated our help as family and addressed them as *maasi* (aunt) or *dada* (elder brother). They were helped to marry off their children and given something for their retirement. No more. The part-timers we have to carry on with, in the absence of servants' quarters, flit in and out while doing five other part-time jobs. You cannot threaten to sack them if they come late or absent themselves without leave because they just walk out, sure to get another part-time job.

Many of us are prepared to pay more for trained domestic help. There is an agency in Delhi run by nuns that supplies trained girls. Their honesty and good work are vouched for. But they are mostly snapped up by foreigners. I once waited for over a year in a queue. When I finally got a girl, she left saying she could not work in a house without children. And I could do nothing about that.

I have two friends who seem to have a knack for training women into fine help. In one month, they are clearing plates at sit-down meals and passing the wine around. While most of us do not need such superior staff, we do need people who can cook well, use a steam iron, operate the washing machine and serve guests with tea or *nimboo pani*. I have said to these friends, "Why don't you set up a place to train domestic help so we don't waste precious time supervising them?" Trainers have to be as responsible and aware of our needs as those they train.

Unfortunately, in most towns and cities, placement agencies have sprung up that take a fat fee, up to two months' salary, as commission. They give no guarantee and ask you to get the police report done. Then a relay race starts, as they have assured you that if the first person doesn't satisfy you they will send another. After they have sent you two inefficient people, they say they've done enough and forfeit your deposit. Even murders have been traced back to domestic help supplied by agencies, not to speak of thefts and burglaries.

**Placement agencies,
who charge fat fees,
often supply
unreliable or even
criminal domestics**

So once again, may I urge women good at training help to set up establishments for training a small number at a time to begin with. They can charge those they train a fee when they get a job and also charge those of us who employ them. It would fill a vacuum and help professional silvers like us to pursue our personal and domestic lives. ■

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

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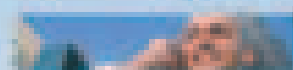
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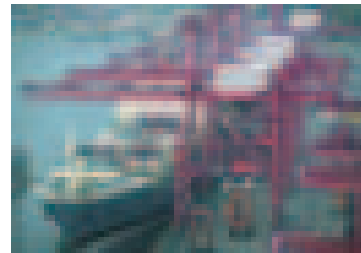
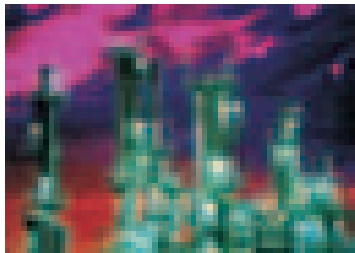
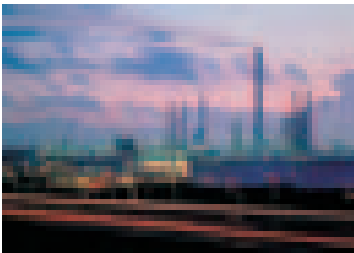
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Courtesy: BARRY JOHN ACTING STUDIO



CURTAIN CALL

Theatre guru **Barry John**, 62, who made Delhi his home from the 1960s, directing plays and training students (his first batch included Shiney Ahuja and Manoj Bajpai), is moving to Mumbai. His new 5,000-sq-ft studio in Andheri, next to soap queen Ekta Kapoor's studio, is called Barry John Acting Studio. "I was told that it made better commercial sense to change the name from Imago Acting Classes. The theatre group will still go by the name of Imago," John tells *Harmony*, adding with a wink, "Dropping names is fashionable in Mumbai."



WEATHER MAN

Rajendra K Pachauri, 66, is in the 'hot' seat. As the chairman of United Nation's top panel on climate change—the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)—he is working with scientists, economists and government officials from more than 100 countries to prepare an ongoing report on global warming, detailing the forward path to reduce emissions and avert catastrophe. A PhD in economics and industrial engineering, Pachauri is working overtime, sometimes

turning up at his office in New Delhi at 3 am. "In the next 25 years, countries will need to take drastic measures in switching to cleaner technologies and policies," he tells *Harmony*.

YOU BET!

A decade ago, **Alec Holden** from Epsom in Surrey, UK, pronounced he would live to be 100. His surety was a bet of 100 pounds. On 24 April, Holden picked up his winning cheque of 250,000 pounds from bookmaker William Hill. A teacher and a carpenter, and later an engineer, Holden has two sons aged 70 and 60. He credits his longevity to porridge for breakfast and "remembering to keep breathing". He says it was



Courtesy: NEWSQUEST

also important not to worry about anything, do as little work as possible, and go on lots of holidays. Holden believes in playing chess as a daily jog for his ageing mind. "For the past few months, I have been keeping watch for any hooded groups from William Hill standing in the street," he joked in a BBC interview. While bookmaker Hill has raised the target age bets from 100 to 110, Holden received a birthday card from Queen Elizabeth II.

H PEOPLE

BE A SPORT

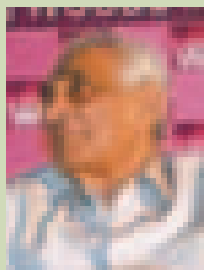
Mumbai-based **Shirish Nadkarni**, 57, is featured in the latest issue of the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the “only world champion playing with a replaced knee in a sport involving running”.



Courtesy: HT

Nadkarni, a badminton champion, recently played doubles with partner Hubert Miranda at the World Seniors Badminton Championship in Taipei. In 2005, he won a gold and two silvers at the World Masters Badminton Championship in Canada. Nadkarni's list of maladies is as long as his achievements. Four arthroscopic surgeries to fix his knee, four operations to set right two slipped discs, a broken wrist, a snapped tendon in his right foot, an extreme case of tennis elbow, spondylosis (spinal osteoarthritis), a massive heart attack in 2005 and surgery in May last year to correct a bleeding eye. Despite all this, Nadkarni continues to play. “I’m crazy about badminton,” he tells *Harmony*. If you take the game away from me, I will not live more than six months.”

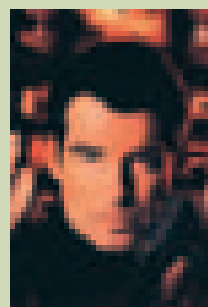
BIRTHDAYS



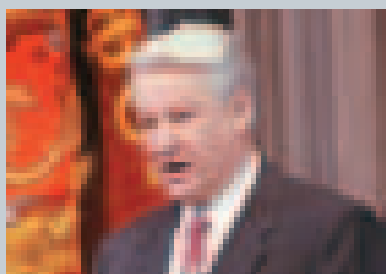
Filmmaker **B R Chopra**, 93, celebrated his birthday on 24 April with students of Subhash Ghai's film school Whistling Woods. Chopra planted a tree in the campus and checked out the institute on his wheelchair. He also presented the institute a copy

of *Mahabharata*, his TV epic.

Irish actor **Pierce Brosnan** turned 54 on 16 May. He is best known for playing British spy James Bond in *Goldeneye* (1995), *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997), *The World Is Not Enough* (1999) and *Die Another Day* (2002). His stepfather William Carmichael, a World War II veteran, took him to see his first Bond film, *Goldfinger*. “I remember seeing a naked lady covered in gold paint, and a man who killed with his hat,” he told media.

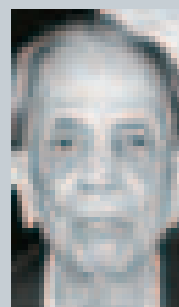


IN PASSING



The Russian Republic's first democratically elected president **Boris Yeltsin** came to power in 1991. Two months later, he put down an attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev. Credited with playing an important role in introducing

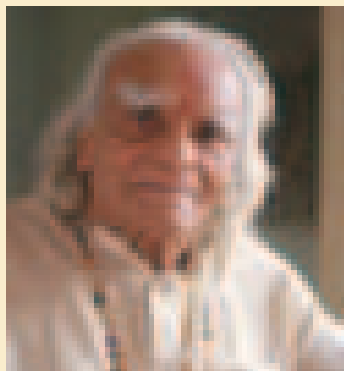
democratic reforms in Russia, he was described by CNN reporter Jill Dougherty as “oversized, a big-barrel chest of complete charisma”. In December 1994, Yeltsin sent tanks to stop the fighting in Chechnya in what would become a 21-month conflict. Later, he said he couldn't tolerate the “disintegration of Russia” and acknowledged his actions might have been a mistake. Yeltsin may have been a failed statesman, but he had a unique ability to connect with people. He died of heart failure on 24 April at the age of 76.



Industrialist **Charat Ram** was the son of Lala Shriram, founder of institutions in Delhi like Shriram Kala Kendra and Lady Shri Ram

College for Women. Ram, who served as president of FICCI in 1973-74, was a votary of liberalisation—his group owns companies like SIEL and Usha International. He died of cardiac arrest on 15 May. He was 89.

MILESTONES

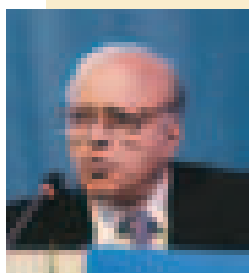


Acknowledged. Yoga guru **B K S Iyengar**, 89, for creating a set of eight yoga *asana* that improves the immune system of breast cancer survivors. Recently, researchers from Washington State University reported at a meeting of the American Physiological Society in Washington DC, that the method not only promotes psychological well-being of breast cancer survivors but also boosts their immune system.

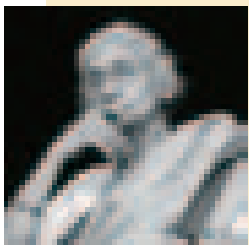


Courtesy: AKSHAYA

Featured. **Chelekkodan Ayesha**, 87, on the poster for the Kerala government literacy campaign. A resident of Kavanoor village in Malappuram district, this gritty silver has a large appetite for letters. Just last month, she appeared for the State School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) examination. Ayesha has also recently completed a basic computer training programme with the help of donations from NGOs.



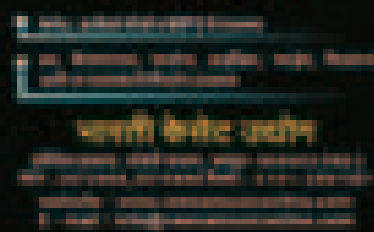
Nominated. 'Father of Economic Ecology' **M S Swaminathan** (top), 82, acclaimed by *Time* as one of the 20 most influential Asians of the 20th century; and scholar of Indian classical dance, art and architecture



Kapila Vatsyayan, 79; both to the Rajya Sabha on 10 April.



Awarded. Actor **Dilip Kumar**, 85, the Dadasaheb Phalke Ratna Award for enriching the legacy of Hindi cinema. The Dadasaheb Phalke Academy, representing 36 film associations, last honoured Sunil Dutt in 2001 with the same award.



SAY IT OUT LOUD



Your parents, they give you your life; but then they try to give you their life.

—American writer *Chuck Palahniuk*

Parents are the bones on which children sharpen their teeth.

—British actor and Oscar winner *Peter Ustinov*
(1921-2004)

The first half of our lives is ruined by our parents, and the second half by our children.

—American defence lawyer *Clarence Darrow*
(1857-1938)

The thing that impresses me the most about America is the way parents obey their children.

— *Edward, Duke of Windsor* (1894-1972)

The reason grandparents and grandchildren get along so well is that they have a common enemy.

—American humorist and journalist *Sam Levenson*
(1911-1980)

THE WORD IS OUT

spoliation *n.* Destruction of email records, either purposeful or without thought to the consequences.

Example: It is an ugly piece of legal jargon. But if you haven't put in place an email archiving policy, you may learn its meaning. Samsung Electronics found that out a couple of years ago when its failure to produce requested emails in a legal dispute with Ottawa's Mosaid Technologies Inc led a New Jersey judge to conclude the tech giant had engaged in email **spoliation** (or destruction) to prevent the messages' contents from hurting its case.

—Joanna Pachner, "Archiving Old Email a Compliance and Legal Issue", *The Globe and Mail*,
12 April 2007

pay as you throw *adj.* A fee based on how much garbage a household or business generates. Also: **pay-as-you-throw, PAYT.** —*adj.*

Example: Two dozen area communities could be saving money under a programme to reduce the amount of trash hauled to landfills. Known as **pay as you throw**, the programme has been around for more than a decade. Residents buy special garbage bags or stickers for their trash barrels so that the more they toss, the more they pay. Conversely, the more they recycle, the more they save. Communities that institute the programme save as much as 35 per cent in the amount of trash they ship out.

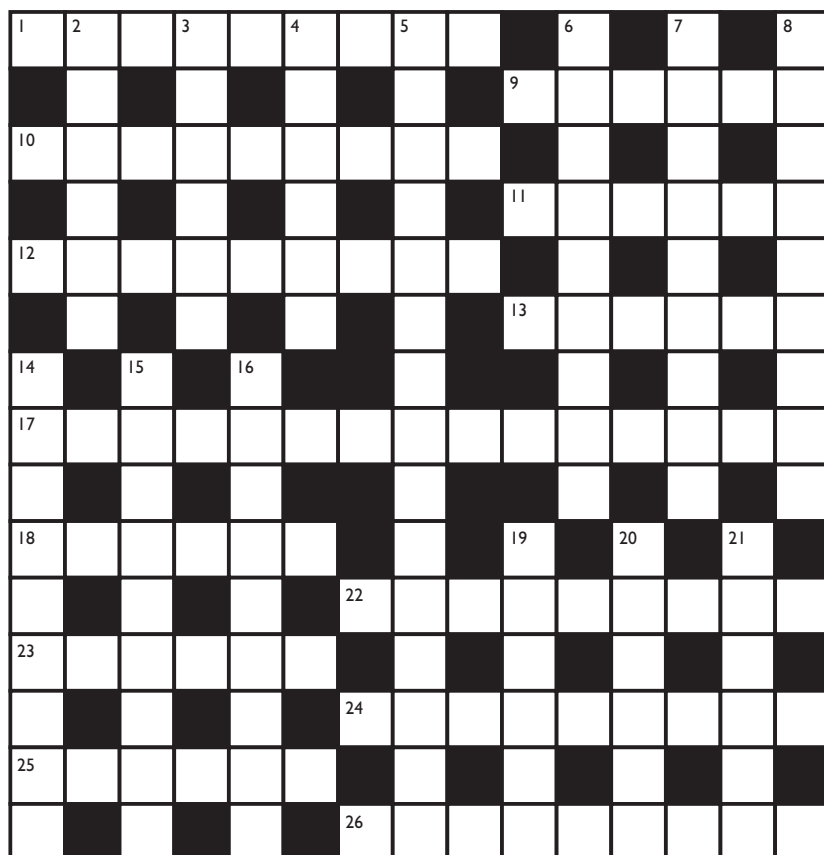
—Megan Woolhouse, "Burning Bucks",
The Boston Globe, 22 February 2007

ethical eater *n.* A person who only or mostly eats food that meets certain ethical guidelines, particularly organically grown food and humanely raised meat, poultry, and fish.

—**ethical eating** *pp.*

Example: I belong to a new demographic called **ethical eaters**. We buy books like *Eating with Conscience*, *Portrait of a Burger as a Young Calf*, and *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. We want our food to have been happy in death. At the same time, we want it so fresh and unprocessed that it still tastes, and nourishes us, like it is full of life.

—Trevor Corson, "Lobsterpalooza",
Boston Magazine, 1 July 2006



EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 32

By Raju Bharatan
ACROSS

- 1 Election of one now hugely depends upon Mayawati with her 57,216 votes (9)
9 Just keep up appearances? (4 2)
10 Shut up, will you! (9)
11 Hair-do placing Legislative Assembly in a pit (1 5)
12 Do Sachin-Sourav now so 'Macduff' Rahul? (4 3 2)
13 Trust V Shantaram to be not cagey about totally Indianising *The Blue Angel* theme by tellingly ruralising it (6)

- 17 A spot reminder of Chetan Sharma (3 4 4 4)
18 Tabloid, Russi Karanjia style (3 3)
22 For which Mahendra Singh Dhoni had saved up that sixless 91 (not out) during 'The Grudge ODI Match' in Bangladesh? (1 5 3)
23 Fight Bachelor of Medicine in coat (6)
24 Aptly describing what the ageless Asha Bhosle gamely faced from a years-younger Brett Lee on song! (5 4)
25 What Rakhi Sawant still has to be for you to identify her as 'The

Daatoon Dame' (2 4)

- 26 Just the title for a Mandira Bedi book, now that her encounter with SONY and Mark Nicholas is at an end? (4 2 3)

DOWN

- 2 Too up in red, the groundwork solidly done (6)
3 Who says it's you alone who did it? (2 3 1)
4 The tall-scoring basketballer's standing invite (4 2)
5 That 'ace' clinching a Davis Cup game for India is, army style (8 7)
6 'Assigned Areas of Performance' (right till the semifinal stage) there were to the lifting of the World Cup by Ricky Ponting's Australia (3 6)
7 Asha on Rekha and how! (5 4)
8 Well might Rod Laver, batting left-handed, have viewed a leg-before-wicket dismissal as such (4-5)
14 Shabana Azmi is and yet isn't (4 5)
15 Shobha's Shobha, Jassi following Shakespearian character (9)
16 Something Vijay Hazare's 1952 India Team in England remains, following those stunningly consecutive dismissals of Pankaj Roy, Dattu Gaekwad, Madhav Mantri and Vijay Manjrekar (4-5)
19 Leeds first, not bat oil! (6)
20 M F Husain's reaction to any suggestion of a permanent ban? (2 4)
21 Well in which you spot average Lord instinctively associated with British rule (6)

For answers, see page 80

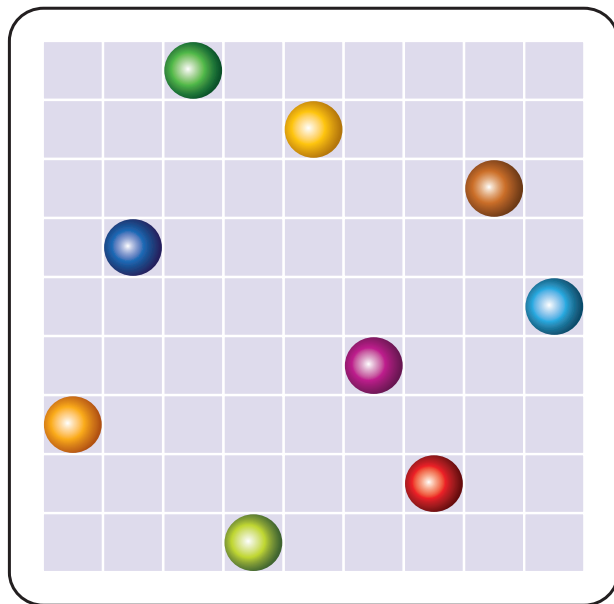
Raju Bharatan is the originator of the 'Sunday Cryptic' crossword in *The Times of India*, where he set the first 1,500 puzzles

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

FIGURE IT OUT

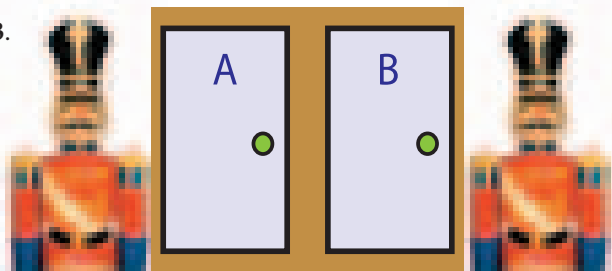
1. Nine pearls are placed in the cells of a 9 x 9 grid in such a way that no pearl is in the same row, column, or diagonal as any other one. Three pearls can be moved to adjoining cells (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally) and yet no pearl would be in the same row, column, or diagonal. Can you figure out these three pearls and the adjoining cells they should be moved to?



2. A five digit number is represented by ABCDE. If we add the number 1 in front of ABCDE, then times 3, the result number will be ABCDE appended by the number 1 (as shown in the figure). What is this five digit number?

$$\begin{array}{r}
 1ABCDE \\
 \times \quad 3 \\
 \hline
 ABCDE1
 \end{array}$$

3.



There is a prisoner who is about to be executed. The king decides to give him one last chance to live. There are two doors, the life door and the death door. There is one guard standing by each door. Those two guards know which door is the life door and which is the death door. However, one of them always tells the truth and the other always tells a lie.

There is no way you can identify which door is the life door or the death door. There is no way you can distinguish who is telling the truth. The prisoner can only ask one guard one question. Then he needs to choose a door to walk in. If he walks in the death door, he will be executed. If he walks in the life door, he can have a new life. He did choose the life door and lived. What was the question he asked? How did he choose the door after he got the answer from one of the guards?

4. Think of a single word that goes with each of these words to found a compound word, or a word pair that functions as a compound word.

For example: volley, field and bearing, when combined with the word 'ball', form volleyball, ball-field and ball-bearing.

1. blue, cake, cottage
2. stool, powder, ball
3. big, soil, table
4. made, cuff, left
5. motion, poke, down

SUDOKU FOR YOU

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

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.

KOFFEE WITH KAKURO

	5	26				8	12
9				8	18	9	
7			16				
	27		25				22
	10			12			
		20		12			
	8	9					11
16					9		
12					17		

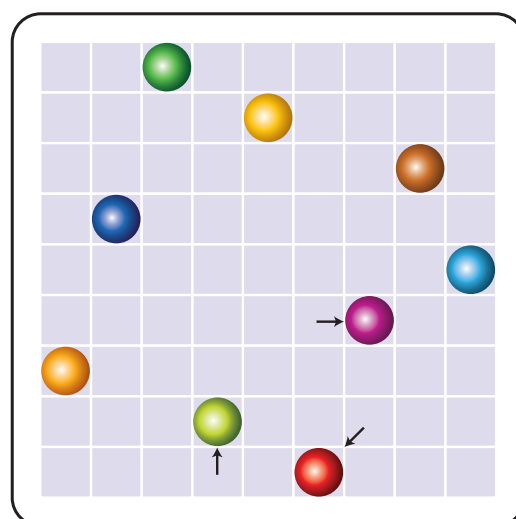
The object of a Kakuro is to insert digits from 1 to 9 into the white cells to total the clue associated with it. However, no digit can be duplicated in an entry. For example, to total 6, you could have 1 and 5, 2 and 4 but not 3 and 3. You may, however, use a number again in the same row or column.

SOLUTIONS TO BRAIN GYM

Figure it out

78

1.



2. There are two ways to resolve this puzzle.

The first way is to use logical reasoning.

As $E \times 3$ gives us the last digit 1, E must be 7. At the same time, 2 will be carried over to the next position.

As $D \times 3 = E - 2 = 5$, and E is the digit 7, D must be 5. At the same time, 1 will be carried over to the next position.

As $C \times 3 = D - 1 = 4$, C must be 8. At the same time, 2 will be carried over to the next position.

As $B \times 3 = C - 2 = 6$, B must be 2.

As $A \times 3 = B = 2$, A must be 4. At the same time, 1 will be carried over to the next position.

As $1 \times 3 + 1(\text{carry}) = 4 = A$, we do have a correct number $42857 = ABCDE$.

The second way to resolve this puzzle is through algebra.

Let us use X to represent the number ABCDE. So the number 1ABCDE can be represented by $100,000 + X$. At the same time ABCDE1 can be represented by $10X + 1$.

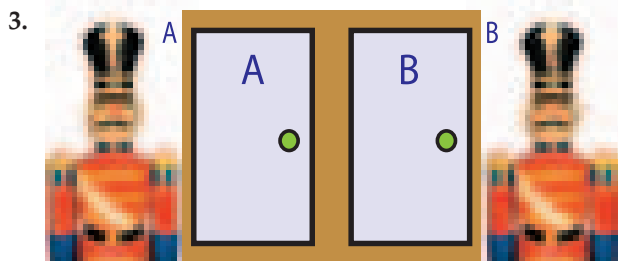
Then we can list out an equation and the calculation like this:

$$\begin{aligned}(100000 + X) \times 3 &= 10X + 1 \\ 300000 + 3X &= 10X + 1\end{aligned}$$

HEADSTART

299999 = 7X
X = 42857

Finally, we have ABCDE = 42857.



Assume the guard A is by door A and guard is by door B. Let the prisoner go to guard A and ask him the question. A typical question is: "If I ask guard B what door is door B, will the answer from guard B be life door or death door?" If the answer is life door (door B), he can walk in door A safely. If the answer is death door (door B), he can choose door B and walk in. This is because the question goes through two levels of questions from two people. The overall answers will always be a lie because there is always one lying and the other telling the truth. He can always choose the other door to the answer.

4.

1. Blue **cheese**
Cheesecake
Cottage **cheese**

2. **Foot** stool
Foot powder
Football

3. Big **top**
Topsoil
Tabletop

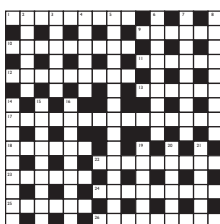
4. **Hand** made
Handcuff
Left **hand**

5. **Slow** motion
Slowpoke
Slowdown

EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 32

ACROSS

1 President; 9 seem to; 10 loudmouth; 11 A PLAIT: (A P/LA/IT, LA standing for Legislative Assembly); 12 lead him on; 13 Pinjra; 17 the very last ball; 18 Red top; 22 a rainy day; 23 COMBAT (CO/MB/AT:



MB, Bachelor of Medicine, in COAT); 24 first over; 25 on neem; 26 Tell It All

DOWN:

2 rooted (r/too/ed: too up in red); 3 So did I; 4 drop in; 5 National Service; 6 set points; 7 Umrao Jaan; 8 foot-fault; 14 Star Actor; 15 Desdemona: De's/De/Mona (De's De, Mona following); 16 zero-rated; 19 DIESEL: Leeds first: the 6 letters of DIESEL rearranged, taking I (in DIESEL) as first; 20 My foot; 21 (Lord) Wavell: Wlav/ell: Well in which you spot average, av being abbreviation of average

SOLUTION TO SUDOKU

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

79

SOLUTION TO KAKURO

	5	26				8	12
9	3	6		8	18	2	7
7	2	5	16	2	3	6	5
			25				
	27	7	9	6	5	22	
	10	8	2	12	8	4	
			20	8	7	2	3
	8	9					11
16	3	2	6	5	9	7	2
12	5	7			17	8	9

9

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Text: TAPATI BARUAH KAUSHIK; Photo: SUBHAMOY

“Every individual is a social being, and therefore has a social responsibility. And once the community reposes its faith in you, you can do a lot in your individual capacity.”

*In 1997, when Nripendra Nath Sarma retired as head of the geography department, Cotton College, Guwahati, and shifted to a new home in Juripar, he had no postal address—at the time, all localities in **Guwahati** had names, but no house numbers. “Even the postman delivered letters by asking neighbourhood shopkeepers.” So, when Sarma became secretary of Juripar Unnayan Samiti, a public body in his locality, he decided to number the houses. He mapped the entire locality, divided it into 120 plots and 16 by-lanes, and numbered them. That was in 2001. Coincidentally, A K Absar Hazarika, one of his former students, was deputy commissioner. “After seeing our work, he numbered all the houses in the city,” recalls Sarma. Within two years, every house in Guwahati had a number. Next, Sarma put up banners on every gate asking people not to dump garbage in the ‘juri’ (the natural stream that flows through Juripar). The 66 year-old is also secretary of a girls’ school where students are charged a nominal fee of Rs 40 a month, and an active member of the local Senior Citizens’ Committee.*



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