

JUNE 2009 Rs 30

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The magazine for silver citizens

5

DENTAL
REVELATIONS

THEN WHY SHOULD YOUR **TEETH** HAVE ONE?

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No more Myths...Know more Facts

Five Myths on Dental Implants

Myth 1: Dental implant treatment can be painful and takes too much time to heal

Truth: Conventional treatment normally takes around 3 to 6 months. However today, the state-of-the-art guided surgical techniques are convenient alternatives to place dental implants in a single session using keyhole surgery technique of NobelGuide. NobelGuide gives you the right solution with complete planning, minimal invasive surgery & comparatively less pain leading to a quick healing. Usually the level of discomfort is less but in case of any pain, it can be treated with ordinary painkillers.

Myth 2: Success rate of dental implants is expected to be lower

Truth: With more than three decades of practicing dental implants as a solution to missing teeth and over a million patients treated, statistics confirm a success rate of nearly 95% in natural bone. However, success rate also depends on patient's health status or whether he/she is a smoker and the placement of the implant. Regular checkups and diligently maintaining one's oral hygiene is also of utmost importance in preventing failure.

Myth 3: Dental implant is an expensive procedure

Truth: Interestingly, most people assume that dental implant is more expensive than the alternative methods of tooth replacement. Though dental implant requires an initial investment but the basic reason for this cost differential is due to the fact that the other treatments require extensive repairs, replacements to preserve the integrity of facial structures and prevent additional tooth loss compared to dental implants.

Myth 4: I am too old for dental implants

Truth: Age is not a deterrent, anyone healthy enough to undergo routine dentistry is healthy enough to get a dental implants. The oldest known patient with dental implants is 90 years and the youngest is 16. Implants were initially developed for older patients that could not work a removable prosthesis and later they have become the choice for younger patients too.

Myth 5: Dental implants give artificial looks to the teeth

Truth: Implants give us the ability to restore something that is fundamental to our own body. Almost everyone wants to smile more frequently and feel more secure when they talk and laugh. Dental implants allow you to do everything you want with total self-assurance. Since dental implants integrate into the structure of your bone, they prevent the bone loss and gum recession that often accompany bridgework and dentures. Procera crowns over a dental implants look and feel like your own teeth. Moreover dental implants do not suffer from normal teeth problems such as decay and hot/cold sensitivity.

Five Facts on Dental Implants

1. Implants are a better treatment option over Crowns and Bridges

Lost or damaged teeth can now be quickly and easily replaced with a more permanent, natural looking and functional alternative of dental implants. Since dental implants prevent the adjacent teeth from grinding down to be used as anchors for the dental bridge, it's a better solution to the problem of missing teeth. The success rate of dental implants are highly predictable.

2. Missing Teeth should not be left untreated

When you lose your teeth, you gradually lose the bone that supported them. A missing tooth leads to the nearby teeth drifting, or tipping, into the vacant space. Chewing can be more difficult and tooth decay becomes more prevalent. Problems in occlusion (bite) can arise, making it difficult to close the mouth. If left untreated, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorder may even develop. So from a dentist's standpoint, there are far greater concerns than just appearance. It's much better to replace a tooth BEFORE the side effects kick in.

3. All implants are not the same

Dental Implants like any other medical device has to be chosen with utmost care, your dentist will be able to explain why different implants have different success rates. Global companies like Nobel Biocare have invested more than 4 decades on research and scientific studies. Nobel Biocare has a range of dental implants for all clinical indications. Factors such as the surface of implant, clinical data, FDA approvals and product warranty must be considered before selecting the right implant for you.

4. Dental Implants improve quality of life

Dental implant-supported replacement teeth look, feel and function like natural teeth. This means that you can eat and drink whatever you choose with improved taste and appetite. But most importantly, dental implants often improve quality of life in a very concrete way. People who have felt embarrassed and worried because of their tooth problems earlier, are often overwhelmed with what new permanent teeth can do for to their self-esteem and flash radiant smiles. Dental implants are truly a revolution, solving an age old problem safely and predictably.

5. Dental Implant treatment is available in my city

Dental Implants are widely acceptable and easily available. Established companies like Nobel Biocare have invested in India on training and awareness. For a list of dentist you may visit the website www.nobelismile.in. If you can't find a dentist in your locality on this site, you may get additional information from your neighborhood dentist.

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



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[+]

Author Timeri Murari recommends five favourite travel spots

The Treasure Called Life:
An essay by writer Mimlu Sen

Satish Gujral, Kuldip Nayar, Mark Tully, Gulzar and Krishna Sobti on the turning points in their lives

Five

- lifesavers
- second careers
- recipes
- tenets of life
- innovations
- must-reads

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

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High 5

FOR five years, we have been holding up a mirror to your dreams. In 2004, we embarked upon our journey to bring quality to the lives of silvers across India—to build a platform where they could express themselves and to give voice to their aspirations.

Harmony for Silvers Foundation began with three facets—*Harmony* magazine, our national voice; our website harmonyindia.org; and the Harmony Interactive Centre in Mumbai—which have gone from strength to strength over time. While the centre regularly adds new activities to enrich the lives of members, the magazine and website do not shy away from reinventing themselves to stay relevant to our constituency, sharpen their focus, and become more interactive and user-friendly. In fact, following on the heels of our website redesign last month, *Harmony* magazine presents a new look for our 5th anniversary issue.

Simultaneously, over the years we have added new initiatives to expand our reach, scope and commitment to the silver cause, such as the Harmony Senior Citizens' Runs at the Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru marathons; our Research Division, which conducts scientific studies on ageing and policy research; Harmony Publishing, which prints special titles for silvers; and our annual Harmony Silver Awards, where we honour silver achievers.

Our efforts have not gone unnoticed. Today, 'silver power' has gone from being a mere catchphrase to a call for action. Over the past five years, it has been gratifying to see that an increasing amount of newsprint is being dedicated to silvers—their concerns are being discussed more



Donald Woodrow

than ever before. Even more significantly, more and more people are coming forward to make this their cause.

For instance, Kiran Chopra in New Delhi, whose Varishtha Nagrik Kesari Club, seeks to offer hope to lonely silvers and empower them to discover their potential. This potential was on breathtaking display at an event held in Delhi in May (see 'Orbit') to mark the release of Chopra's book *Blessings*, which addresses the ageing experience in India. The silver fashion show held to commemorate the show brought the audience to its feet!

Indeed, I salute the Varishtha Nagrik Kesari Club for its commitment to silver empowerment. Such efforts will go far in rousing greater consciousness in society at large and building an inclusive, nationwide movement to forge a common identity for silvers. If government, civil society, organisations working for silvers and, most important, silvers themselves come together with single-minded dedication, we can usher in a new dawn of opportunity. It's time to welcome the sun—together.

Tina Ambani

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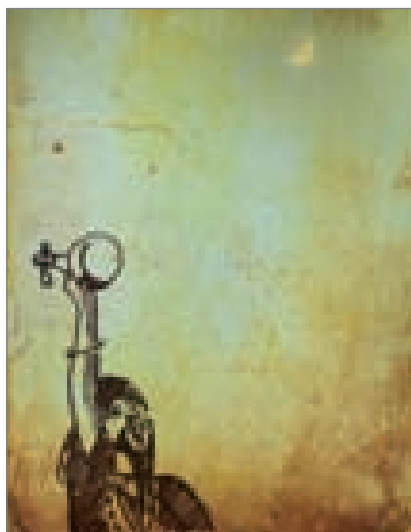
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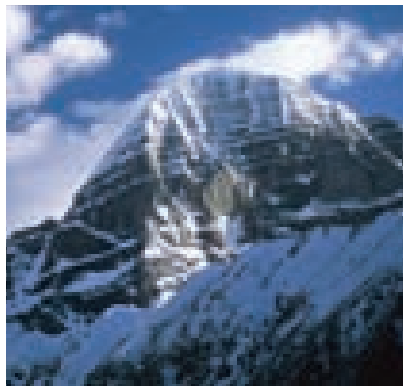
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PLAY TO WIN: Five hobbies to gladden the body, mind and soul

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column one

Five years. Another milestone. Renewed energy. En route, *Harmony* has evolved, experimented with new looks and has undergone invigorating changes. We thank you for never resisting. It proves that you, as much as us, welcome transformation.

On cue, for the 61st issue, we present a brand-new *Harmony*. Jit Ray, our creative director, worked on a contemporary design for more than three months and researched a new typeface for better readability. And the editorial team worked tirelessly on a special concept for this special issue. The result is a breathtaking, modern approach to silvering with grace and dignity.

Five is more than a number. Five are the elements that comprise life—water, earth, air, fire and ether. Five are the basic pillars in Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. Five are the basic tastes and a Perfect Fifth is the most consonant harmony. To celebrate our fifth anniversary, the June issue focuses on the harmony, spirituality, sacredness, science and robustness of the number 5. There are interesting factoids, interviews, voices and views from optimistic life coaches, believers, scientists and health experts. Five recipes by resident foodie Dr Pushpesh Pant and five travel recommendations by author Timeri Murari complete this comprehensive issue. The icing on the cake is an essay by first-time silver author Mimlu Sen. Her words celebrate age and tradition and ignite a fire of metamorphosis, notwithstanding age.

On that note, we promise (as always) much more in the coming years—after all, *Harmony* thrives on change, improvement and creative evolution.

—Meeta Bhatti

PUBLIC PROVIDENT FUNDS (PPF) are one of the best avenues of investment available. However, as the maximum term is just 20 years, after retirement and after the life of the PPF, silvers again contribute to such funds. In many cases, they do not live till the maturity period of 15 years and the amount invested goes to their nominee. This is indeed unfortunate because while they are living, silvers are not able to access their money. For most middleclass silvers, life after retirement can often be a struggle to make ends meet, so that's when they need the money the most. Thus, I would request the government to allow partial or full withdrawal of their PPFs after they turn 65 or 70. This can be permitted once a year, for example. I request *Harmony* to take up this matter with the Finance Ministry.

K K Moorthy, *Via email*

TWO GREAT THINGS that the government has done

recently include the introduction of the reverse mortgage loan for senior citizens and the National Pension Scheme, which was launched recently. A hearty thanks to all those involved! Another good move would be to offer the reverse mortgage loan to property owners. This would encourage the reconstruction of dilapidated buildings that are in danger of collapse; Mumbai's skyline (vertical and horizontal) would change; tenants would get possession in new buildings; and the stock of new housing and commercial spaces would increase. Let us give new life to residents and owners of old buildings who are unwilling to part with their ancestral assets that they have been retaining for decades despite all the troubles and expenses thus incurred. The money of the banks would be fully secure as the loans would be against mortgage of property with a very high market price. I hope the new government implements this scheme.

Alok Tholiya, *Mumbai*

CONTRIBUTORS

Mimlu Sen is a translator, musician, music producer and composer. She collaborates with *baul* musician Paban Das Baul on all his recordings, performing with and managing his group on their concert tours around the world. She has travelled and worked between India and France since 1969, and was born and raised in Shillong. She is the author of *Baulsphere*; it's her first book. "Just months before his death (he must have been 69 then), my father said, 'I have realised that affection (*sneha*) flows downwards; we love our children and they will love theirs and so on..." It's pointless trying to reverse the flow," says Sen. She makes it a point to remember this when she deals



with her own children in particular, and young people in general.

OPEN YOUR EYES TO EVERYTHING
THAT'S NEW IN THE SILVER WORLD



» FACE OFF



Defy wrinkles

In 2007, Britain went into a tizzy when a television documentary claimed that the **Boots Protect & Perfect Face Cream** (£18.50 or about Rs 1,400 for 30 ml) was as effective at combating sun damage as prescription products—Boots went on to sell millions of tubes. Now, here's more evidence that will drive the cash registers wild. A study conducted by the Univer-

sity of Manchester has conclusively established that the cream can visibly reduce wrinkles and sun damage. In a year-long double-blind clinical trial involving 60 volunteers, 30 people used Protect & Perfect, while the other 30 used a normal moisturiser. A comparison of 'before' and 'after' photographs and an examination of faces of participants for signs of sun damage such as moles and wrinkles

showed significant differences between the two groups.

The study involved nine people wearing a patch containing the solution on their sun-damaged forearms for 12 days. A 6 per cent formulation of a cream, later revealed to be the Boots serum (which contains pentapeptides), increased levels of proteins, fibrillin-1 and procollagen-1, essential for the elasticity of skin. "This may suggest a role in the general repair of skin for the cream's peptide combination," says Chris Griffiths, professor of dermatology at the University of Manchester. "The cream may also go on to be classed as a medicine for treating sun-damaged skin." The study appears in the May issue of the *British Journal of Dermatology*.

Southern comfort

IN THE WAKE OF THE ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN, developers across India are targeting specific niches to drive sales. One such venture is **Gardens@Orchid Springs**, a residential project for silvers in Anna Nagar, Chennai, by Bengaluru-based Alliance Group. The project, designed by Singapore firm Surbana, will offer 225 apartments with silver-friendly features such as anti-skid floors, grab bars and panic alarm buttons in bathrooms, and wider passages and doorways to enable free movement for wheelchairs. Priced at Rs 2,999 per sq ft, the apartments are available in two sizes: 650 sq ft (single bedroom) and 890 sq ft (two bedroom). Other amenities at this gated community will include landscaped gardens, a 24-hour medical clinic, community centre and library. Residents will also enjoy maintenance and housekeeping services, a common pool of chauffeur-driven cars and guestrooms on payment—all at competitive rates.

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Ecare

In what promises to be a landmark initiative, Microsoft Corp announced the launch of **Microsoft Citizen Service Platform (CSP)**, a worldwide e-services platform for elderly care, in late April at the third Local and Regional Government (LRG) Solutions Forum in Bilbao, Spain. UK-based Microsoft partners Cerrus International Ltd and CareWorks Ltd have already rolled out the e-services platform to elderly communities in China and the UK to considerable success, according to a media release from Microsoft. The platform has been test-driven in Sun City, Beijing, the world's largest 'ageing care city' and Medway Council in North Kent in the UK. In both places, the system has transformed the delivery of care services by enabling authorities to maintain a database of silvers with details of their medical histories and caregiving needs. Ambulant silvers get e-reminders for checkups while those who are house-bound receive care at home. If silvers require additional help or wish to discontinue care owing to changed circumstances (such as a relative coming to stay), they can inform the authorities directly through the Internet. The benefits: speedier delivery of care, lower costs and a move towards a self-directed model of care.

To learn more, go to www.microsoft.com/emea/presscentre/LocalRegionalForumVPR/default.aspx



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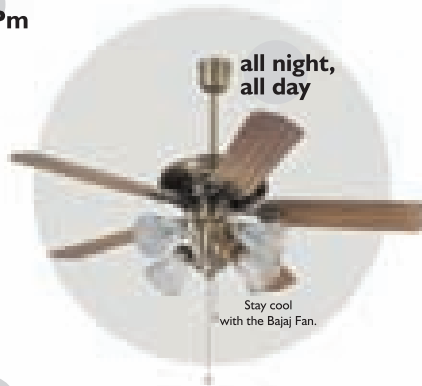
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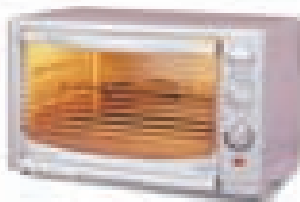


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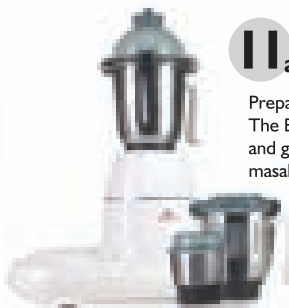
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SILVER-FRIENDLINESS now has a symbol. British charities Age Concern and Help the Aged have launched an accreditation scheme called **Age OK**, a seal of approval for products and services that experts have judged to be 'age-friendly'. In addition to the product approval mark, the charities will also launch an organisational accreditation in 2010, which will be awarded to businesses that take into account the overall customer experience for older people. This will include aspects such as shop design, customer service and marketing activity. The first recipient of the Age Ok accreditation is digital television services provider Sky, for its Sky+ remote control, which is easy to grip and has a user-friendly menu and large keys to help those with failing vision.



►TRENDS



JOURNEY'S END

This was no ordinary divorce petition. When 74 year-old Roshan Cooper moved to end her 40-year marriage with Dadi Eruchshaw, 80, citing "physical and mental harassment", it made the newspapers. And while the Bombay High Court has reportedly asked the couple to settle their dispute amicably, the case has given expression to the growing self-determination being evidenced among an increasing number of silvers. **"More senior citizens are divorcing than ever before,"** Supreme Court lawyer Praveen Agarwal tells media. "I've handled three cases in Delhi in just the past couple of months."

Older Indians may actually be thinking about what they want for the first time in their lives, according to Mumbai-based divorce lawyer Siddharth Soni. "Once the children are settled and one is through with financial liabilities, it is the right time to think about oneself." Lawyer and women's rights activist Flavia Agnes insists the trend is not a new one. "The first such case I got was 10 years ago when a 65 year-old woman sought separation from her husband on account of violence," she says. "She had been putting up with it all her life for the sake of her children and now that they were settled, she wanted an end to her agony."

NEW PENSION SCHEME: THE FIVE-YEAR WAIT FOR THE NEW PENSION SCHEME (NPS) IS OVER. ANY INDIAN CITIZEN BETWEEN 18 AND 55 YEARS OF AGE CAN SIGN UP FOR THE VOLUNTARY PENSION SCHEME, REGULATED BY THE PENSION FUND REGULATORY & DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (PFRDA). TWENTY-TWO POINTS OF PRESENCE (POPS) HAVE BEEN NOMINATED WITH AUTHORISED BRANCHES TO ACT AS COLLECTION POINTS. AT PRESENT, TIER-I INVOLVING A CONTRIBUTION TO A NON-WITHDRAWABLE ACCOUNT IS OPEN. LATER, THE SCHEME WILL INCORPORATE TIER-II ACCOUNTS, WHICH PERMIT VOLUNTARY SAVINGS THAT CAN BE WITHDRAWN ANY TIME.



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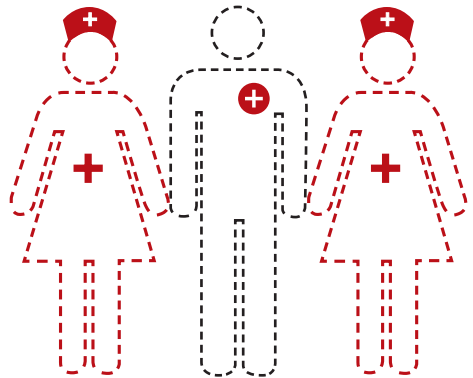
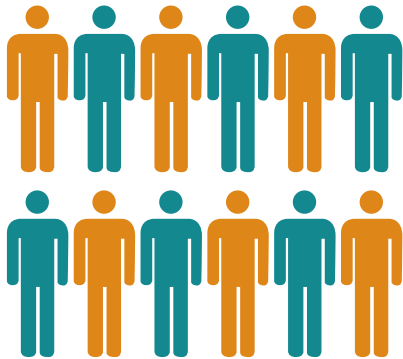


Electronic Alarm
Systems



ONE for TWO

The Japanese government is attempting to tackle two of its major concerns—unemployment, and a rapidly silvering population—in one shot. In the past few months, it has begun a concerted effort to channel some of the growing ranks of the unemployed to care for the elderly in nursing homes, reports news agency Reuters. Here's the reasoning.



An estimated 400,000 contract workers have been laid off in the country from October 2008 to March 2009 owing to the economic recession.

Meanwhile, the nursing care sector needs to add more than 120,000 people in the next two years to provide optimal care for the country's silvers.

IT'S A DIRECT consequence, if you put two parts of an equation together, falling employment in manufacturing and a need for labour in the health care sector," says Martin Schultz, senior economist at the Fujitsu Research Institute in Tokyo. Further, Prime Minister Taro Aso has announced 2 trillion yen in funding to help secure jobs, much of which will be spent by local governments on funding

career changes into elderly care. But there's no guarantee that the plan will work as planned. "Similar attempts to funnel workers from one sector to another in Europe have met with little success," concedes Schultz. "So there's a big question mark here." The main concern is that contract workers may lack a natural empathy for the elderly that no amount of training in care techniques can provide.


silver web

45%

That's the percentage of web users in the US aged between 70 and 75 years as against 27 per cent in 2005. According to experts at a global worldwide web conference in Madrid, the sharpest rise in web use in developed nations has been among people aged 70+.


RECORD BREAKER?

There's a new contender for the longevity sweepstakes—Sakhan Dosova, from Kazakhstan, who claims to have turned 130 on 27 March 2009, threatens to displace Jeanne Calment, who died in 1997 in France at the age of 122. 'Officially', the oldest living person in the world today is 114 year-old American Edna Parker. The age of Dosova, who has 10 children—the oldest is 76—came to light during a recent census. Demographers are hard at work to verify her claim.



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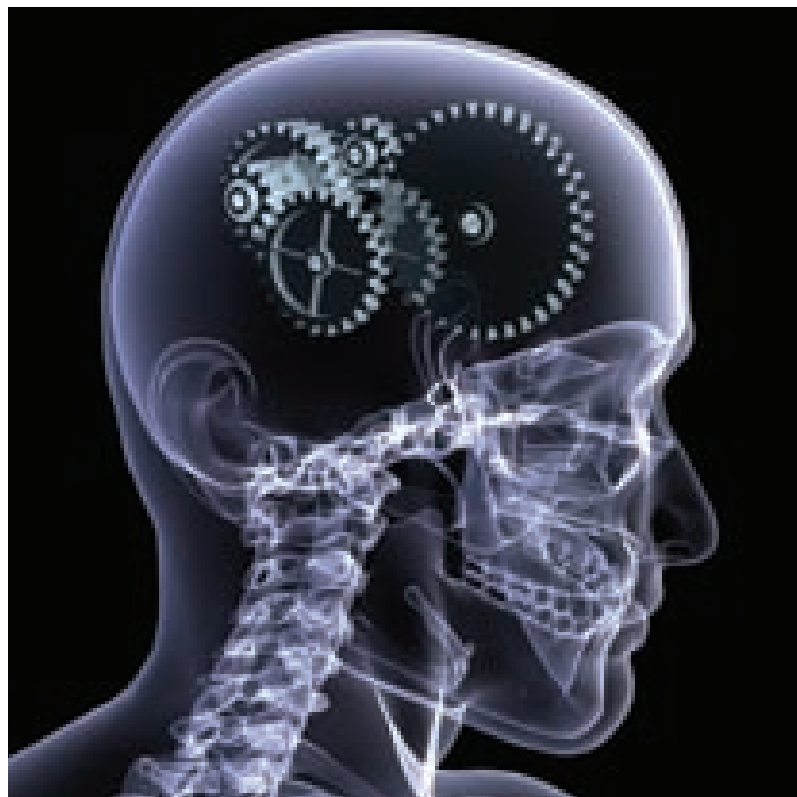


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At home with Max

KEEPING PACE

Here's another example of the power of human adaptation. Ageing brains actually 'compensate' for declining memory performance by going slower, or use different regions to process information, according to a new study from Melbourne's Swinburne University of Technology. The study compared the brain activity of men aged 59-67 with men aged 20-30, while both groups performed a range of memory-related tasks. The simpler tasks assessed 'working memory' and the more difficult tasks assessed short-term recognition of visual images. Similar levels of accuracy were achieved by both groups but response times were slower for the older adults across all tasks.

"The findings showed that some changes in brain activity may reflect the brain's effort to compensate for this decline," writes team leader Helen MacPherson in the April issue of journal *Brain and Cognition*. The older and younger adults relied on different brain regions in order to perform the same recognition functions. "At low task demands, such as simply remembering the shape of an irregular object, older adults don't need to recruit additional neural resources in order to successfully complete the task," adds MacPherson. "But with increased task difficulty such as recognising pictures of everyday objects and then making a contextual judgment about where these images were presented on a computer screen, more parts of the brain come into play."



Stress for survival

STRESS isn't as bad as it's cracked up to be. As London newspaper *The Independent* reports, gerontologist Dr Marios Kyriazis, president of the British Longevity Society and author of the book *Anti-Ageing Medicines* (Watkins), believes that **stress—provided it's short term—can do wonders for the immune system and ageing process.** "Stress is vital for survival," he says. "There's a lot of research that points to mild and moderate stress working in the body's favour by increasing the production of regenerative proteins that nourish brain cells, enabling them to function at peak capacity. These cells reinforce the neural connections and physical repair pathways that usually deteriorate with age."

He's not alone in his belief. A recent study conducted at Texas University revealed that people who spent most of their lives in undemanding jobs had a 43 per cent risk of dying prematurely—indicating that a regular dose of pressure at work actually keeps you healthier. Other studies indicate that short-term stress benefits memory function and can protect against diseases such as Alzheimer's, and that it may staunch oestrogen production, thereby helping to prevent breast cancer. Further, people who experience moderate levels of stress before surgery have been proven to recover better than those with high or low levels of stress.



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O»EVENTS

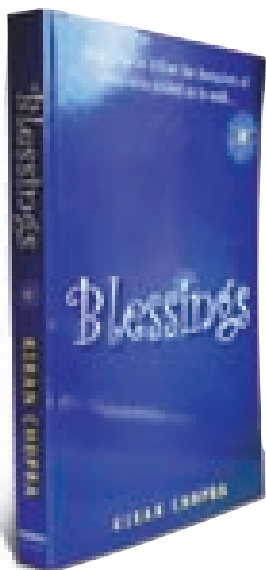
MAXIMUM BENEFIT

In association with Max Healthcare, the nationwide super speciality chain of hospitals, Harmony for Silvers Foundation held two free health camps in the Keshavpuram and Sarita Vihar areas of Delhi on 3 May and 17 May respectively. The response was overwhelm-



ing—over 450 silvers attended the camps and received medical advice from specialist doctors on ailments ranging from hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases to osteo-arthritis. A large number got their ECG, blood sugar and blood pressure tested. Participating silvers received a special discount card from Max Healthcare, one of India's first comprehensive provider of standardised healthcare services. Through the discount card, they can avail special discounts on an array of services provided by Max.

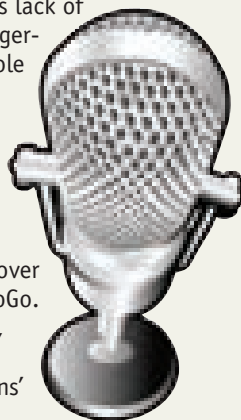
Silver fusion



ON 2 MAY, Kiran Chopra, founder of the Varishtha Nagrik Kesari Club, a Delhi-based initiative for silvers, released *Blessings*, a book that addresses the challenges of ageing in India and calls for greater intergenerational bonding, independence and empowerment for the elderly. Tina Ambani, chairperson, Harmony for Silvers Foundation, was the guest of honour at the event. "Through this book, I want to draw society's attention to the lives of our elders," said Chopra to the audience. Another highlight of the event was a fashion show where about 25 members of the club walked the ramp in clothes by designer Ritu Beri. "I am amazed at the energy levels of these silvers," said Ambani in her keynote address. "Harmony for Silvers Foundation and the Varishtha Nagrik Kesari Club have the same vision. We are committed to enriching the lives of silvers through our many facets."

TALK ABOUT SEX.

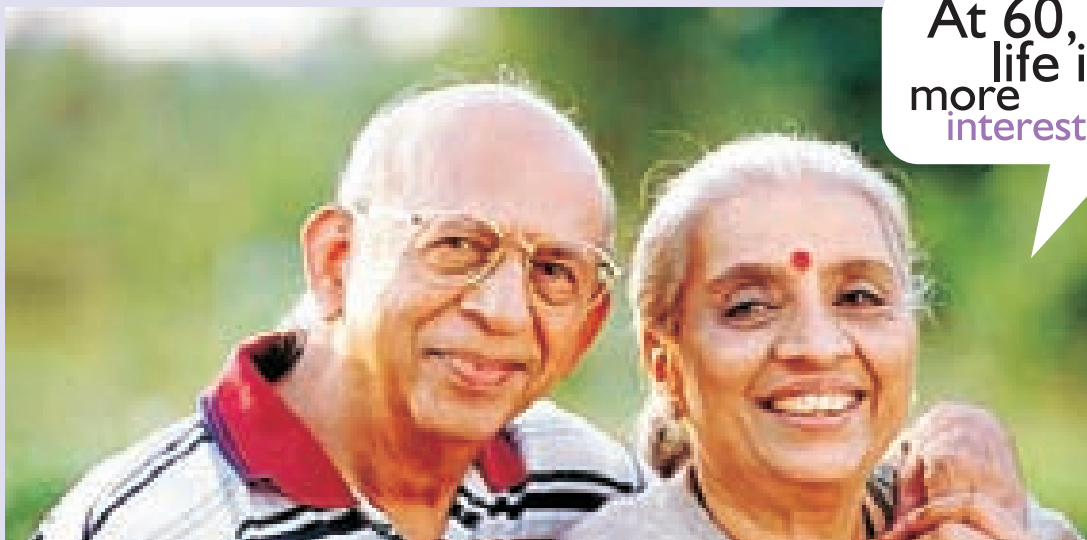
While silvers across the world remain sexually active, discussions about safe sex remain taboo. This lack of awareness can be dangerous, according to Nicole Hergert, a counsellor at the Calgary Sexual Health Centre in Calgary, Canada. The centre has developed a sex education programme for those over 65 called Seniors A GoGo. Under the programme, a group of silvers will travel to senior citizens' clubs across the city and perform plays to spread awareness, clear misconception and answer questions about sexual health.



SING FOR HAPPINESS.

Music is known to reduce stress, relieve anxiety and keep depression at bay. Take a cue from the Silver Song Club at the Age Concern Exeter Centre in St Thomas, Exeter, in the UK and set up a singing group at your community centre or senior citizens' organisation. "This is a wonderful opportunity to involve our members in a participative and dynamic activity that can be enjoyed by all," says Martyn Rogers, director of Age Concern Exeter. "Apart from improved health and sense of well-being, they're having loads of fun!"





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Hemant Patil

Farmer's friend

RAMESH ARNALKAR is currently on a pilgrimage to Pandharpur. But the Pune-based 60 year-old is not just chanting litanies on his way—he is helping out scores of poor farmers. In the past two months, Arnalkar has helped 400 farmers plough 5,000 acres of land in Alandi, Hadapsar and Jejuri on his way to Pandharpur. He spends four to five days in each village to lend his tractor to poor farmers. Two years ago, upon hearing about farmer suicides in Marathwada, Arnalkar, an electronic goods businessman, purchased a tractor from

his own savings and started lending it to farmers—free of cost. Farmers just have to spend Rs 500 for fuel cost and driver's wages, a pittance compared to the Rs 30,000 they would have to shell out for a tractor. Farmers also save time. Where bullocks take nine hours to till one acre, a tractor takes only one-and-a-half hours. "It's ironic that we get our sustenance and nutrition from the food that farmers grow yet we never really bother about their welfare," rues Arnalkar who now plans to approach companies to donate tractors so he can help more farmers.

IN PASSING

Veteran communist leader and freedom fighter **Ahilya Rangnekar**, who was involved in the Samyukta Maharashtra movement in 1960, passed away in Mumbai following a heart attack on 19 April. She was 82.

J G Ballard, author of *Empire of the Sun*, *Crash* and *The Drowned World*, died of prostate cancer in London on 19 April. Ballard was 78.

Actor **Feroz Khan**, the swaggering 'cowboy' of Indian cinema, who brought Western sophistication to Indian screens with *Apradh*, *Dharmatma*, *Qurbani* and *Jaanbaaz*, passed away in Mumbai after a prolonged battle with lung cancer on 27 April. He was 69.

BIRTHDAYS

- American musician and singer **Billy Joel** turned 60 on 9 May
- Creator of the sci-fi epic *Star Wars* **George Lucas** turned 65 on 14 May
- *Ghazal* singer **Pankaj Udhas** turned 58 on 17 May
- American cultural icon **Bob Dylan** turned 64 on 24 May
- Actor **Pareesh Rawal** turned 59 on 30 May

MILESTONE

SHAMSHAD BEGUM, 90

The mellifluous nasal voice behind such hits as *Leke pehla pehla pyaar*, *Kahin pe nighaein kahin pe nishana*, *Mere piya gaye Rangoon* and *Kabhi aar kabhi paar* received the Phalke Golden Singer Award at a star-studded event organised by the Dada Saheb Phalke Academy at Bhaidas Hall, Vile Parle, in suburban Mumbai on 4 May.

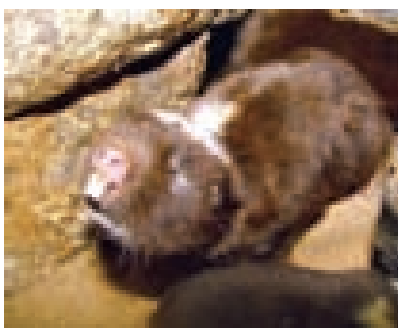


The Indian Express

O» WILD SILVER

LUCKY RAT

There's something special about the mole rat—the world's longest-lived rodent. Just like the short-lived mouse and the hapless human, its cells are full of cell-damaging oxygen free radicals. But here's the difference: the mole rat has found a way to live with it. "When we compare the lab mouse with the naked mole rat, we find a striking difference in their systems," Asish Chaudhuri, a biochemist at the University of Texas Health Science Centre, tells magazine *Wired*. "Their proteins are still working. Even when damaged, the functions are maintained." His colleague, physiologist Rochelle Buffenstein likens the phenomenon to rusting cars. "In other species, the axles rust," she quips. "But in naked mole rats, it's just the doors. You can basically hit them with a sledgehammer, and the proteins don't unfold. Something makes them inherently more stable." The team is now working on identifying what this 'something' is—the answer could hold the key to a new generation of anti-ageing therapy for animals and humans alike.



O» MEDIA WATCH

NATURALLY SILVER

In *The Japanese Skincare Revolution: How to Have the Most Beautiful Skin of Your Life at Any Age* (Kodansha International), 66 year-old Japanese skincare guru Chizu Saeki urges readers to use what they have at home rather than buying expensive products. So you have a three-minute mask with cotton, water and any old moisturiser; a water bottle face massage; an instant sauna using a shower cap; and pure fantasy—Saeki says thinking about attractive men promotes the secretion of hormones beneficial to the skin. According to Saeki, "Growing older just means you've lived. Anything else is a lie. You should live naturally."



For over a decade, Citi has been committed to providing opportunities to empower people who dream of change for a better tomorrow.

Citi's community support programs have evolved through partnering with NGOs by providing capacity building grants which facilitate financial strength, competence, exposure and training. Citi Foundation's philanthropic grants have provided opportunities for NGOs to scale up their micro credit programs at the grassroots; set up financial education institutes, created awards to recognize and honour successful micro entrepreneurs, and facilitated education of underprivileged children. In addition to funding, Citi employees devote time, efforts and skills to work for the benefit of the community.

As the process of socio-economic change gathers momentum across the nation, we at Citi are proud to be a part of this change.

Citi never sleepsSM





Dr Jane

Barratt

Being connected:

Maintaining social contacts with family, friends and neighbours helps ensure good health

In this issue of *Harmony*, I want to talk about being connected, being part of a community and family caregiving. Every year the New Zealand government examines the level of wellbeing in its country, considers how it has changed over time, and how different groups in its population are coping. Wellbeing is defined as 'those aspects of life that society collectively agrees are important for a person's happiness, quality of life and welfare'. The report is organised around 10 domains: health, knowledge and skills, paid work, economic standard of living, civil and political rights, cultural identity, leisure and recreation, physical environment, safety, and social connectedness. It is social connectedness that I am particularly interested in at the moment. You may ask, 'Why?'

When you have been around as long as I have in the same field of study (ageing and disability), policies are often either being reinvented or recycled and words and phrases become fashionable again. Sometimes there is chance to shine a light on a new problem that should never have even got to the 'problem stage'. When did we stop having time for family, or stop being able to spend a day with friends, or even read a book, listen to our favourite music or talk with grandpar-

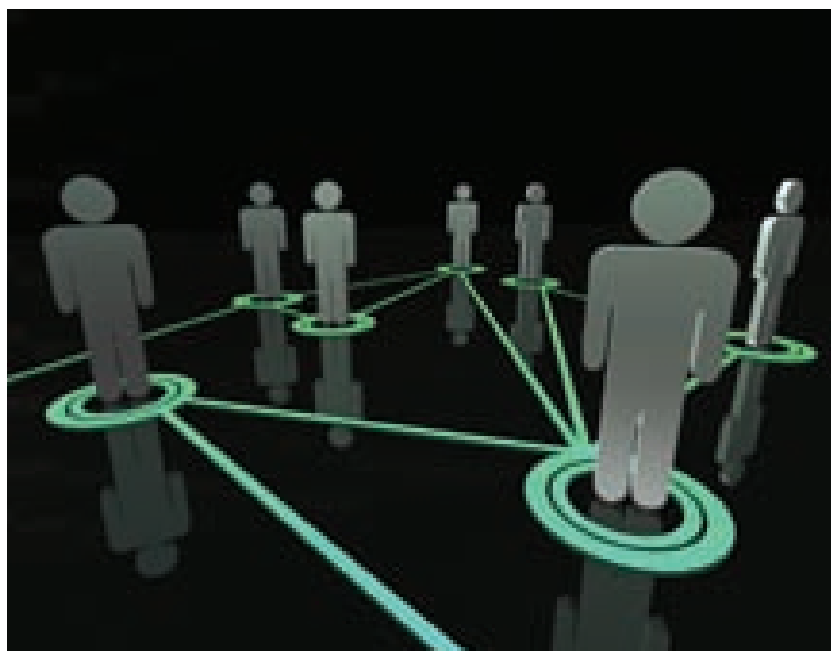
ents? Have we lost the art of talking to one another or, in the language of the day, being connected?

According to the New Zealand report and numerous other studies, social connectedness is fundamental to wellbeing. People are defined by their social roles, whether as husbands or wives, parents, children, friends, caregivers, team-mates, staff or employers, or some other role. Relationships with one another give people support, happiness, contentment and a sense of belonging. Relationships are also the building blocks of networks that provide a safety net or safe place during hard times. Being connected is also about joining with other people of all ages to achieve shared goals that benefit one another and the community.

For example, 'Nissan Neighbours' is a community initiative that reflects the interests of the employees of the company of Nissan.

One of the most important aspects of social connectedness is the relationship a person can have with one's spouse. This relationship is often founded upon a publicly proclaimed commitment such as a marriage and contributes to a person's reported level of wellbeing.

There is a demonstrated link between social connectedness and positive outcomes for individual health and wellbeing. Social connectedness is nurtured when family relationships are positive, and people have the skills and opportunities to make friends



and to interact with others. However, there can be several barriers like language differences and perceived or actual inequality among family members. These barriers are further reinforced if family members do not relate to one another or have very different value systems.

Five indicators were used to measure New Zealand's levels of social connectedness: telephone and Internet access in the home, regular contact with family and friends, trust in others, the proportion of the population experiencing loneliness, and contact between young people and their parents. Together, the indicators measure the opportunities and the actual levels of connection between people, both within their immediate social groups and within the wider community.

Let's consider the domain of telephone and access in the home. In 2003, Dr Tomoko Kanayama from Ohio University in the US studied the use of technology by older people in Japan. He concluded that elderly people in Japan are becoming part of virtual communities. The research revealed that elderly people enjoyed interaction in a variety of language forms, ranging from haiku to emoticons, by combining traditional text-based Japanese culture with a new virtual culture, despite the limitations of text-based communication. Also the technology helped them to be part of a virtual community that included being socially connected, supportive and having companionship. The elderly created a sense of greater closeness by sharing their old memories.

Contact with family and friends is central to our identity. When people are forced to leave their home for a period of time—for example, studying overseas or in another city, or being hospitalised for a period of time—the lack of social connectedness may have an impact on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the person. Contact may be increasingly limited, leading to feelings of loneliness. Work

by several technology companies reveals another way of being connected and being 'part of family'. For example, a piece of everyday life can be preserved by family members by sending photo and text messages to an e-photo frame.

Trust in others is important to creating a community. High levels of trust give rise to cooperative behaviour among people and contribute to our ability to nurture positive relationships. A study of older people's views and experiences of resources in later life in 2007 by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that older people, despite lack of trust in the financial industry, may advise their children and grandchildren to make provision for their own retirement.

There is a demonstrated link between social connectedness and positive outcomes on individual health and wellbeing

Looking at trust through a community lens, research has shown that strong trust and social cohesion among citizens in a neighbourhood mitigates the effect of socioeconomic deprivation. Neighbourhood social resources are also associated with better individual self-rated health. Living alone, being alone, loneliness and isolation are all concepts that have been related to 'social exclusion'. Living alone does not mean that a person is lonely or isolated or excluded. A recent study in the US helps us understand the differences and the consequences.

The study of some 3,000 older adults between 57 and 85 years of age shows that those who feel most isolated report 65 per cent more depressive symptoms than those who feel least

isolated. The consequences of depression can be substantial, as it reduces a person's willingness to exercise and may increase health-risk behaviour such as smoking and alcohol intake.

The study also reveals that the most socially connected older people are three times as likely to report very good or excellent health compared to those who are least connected, regardless of whether they feel isolated; older adults who feel least isolated are five times as likely to report very good or excellent health as those who feel most isolated, regardless of their actual level of social connectedness; and social disconnectedness is not related to mental health unless it brings feelings of loneliness and isolation.

SKIP stands for Seniors & Kids Intergenerational Programmes and is an example of a group of initiatives that have been borne out of the recognition that older people have a set of skills and learning to share. The contact (vis-à-vis connection) between young people and older people at SKIP is a three-pronged initiative comprising school visitation, mentoring hearts and music enrichment.

The school visitation programme brings together students and residents in a nursing home. Class trips to the nursing homes enable the students to learn valuable life skills and gain a greater understanding and compassion for older people. Older people appreciate the companionship and share their stories of life; together, they learn from each other and form unique and rewarding friendships.

Being connected—whether it is through technology or a handwritten note—means that someone is thinking of you. The 'full circle of care' is being part of a community and that community could be any person you 'connect' with any day.

Dr Jane Barratt is Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing

The treasure called life

Even the greatest seers are only human and therefore prone to error. The best way to know yourself is really on your own, says musician-author **Mimlu Sen**

As I write, the silent hum of earthworms, those little snakes that turn the soil, turn the soil to trap the trees. Mysteries. A quarter moon, like a newly snapped arc of a fingernail, rises in the sky and fades as the dawn flushes the eastern sky outside my window.

Nature, in constant movement, ecosystems quietly evolving around us, some springing into new life, others disappearing forever. If those earthworms were not working overtime, if those sea slugs were not nibbling seaweed without pay, trapping trees and mapping oceans, humanity would indeed be lost today.

In spite of the fact that man has destroyed our forests, poisoned the waters of this earth, pierced through the ozone layer with toxic emissions, tied and strapped youth to compulsive money making, nature still provides all the answers we need to emerge out of this new dark age into a luminous new future.

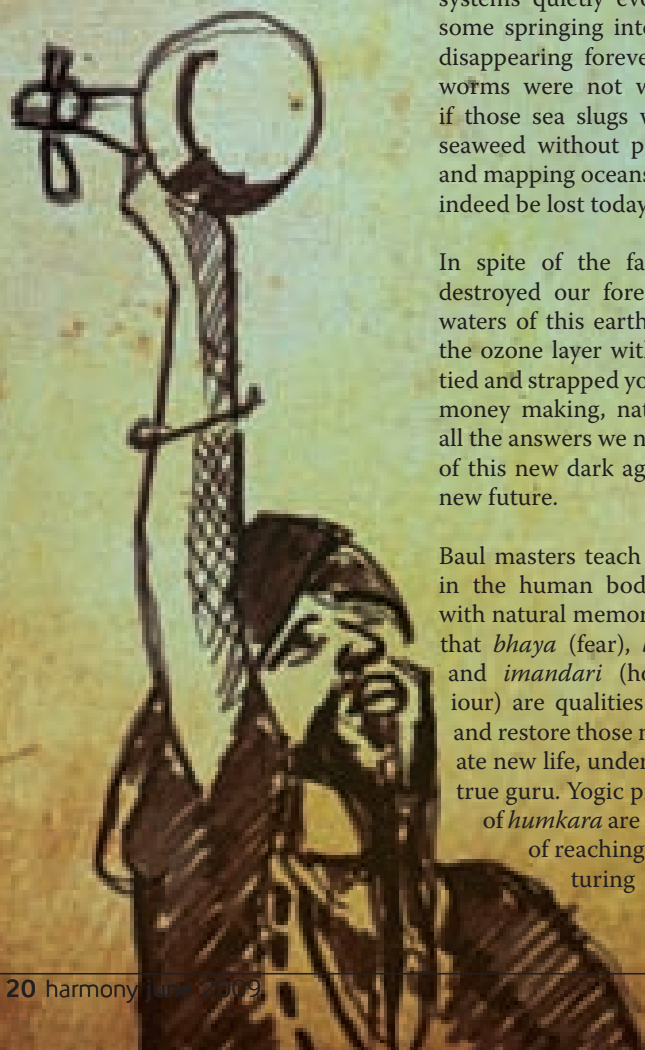
Baul masters teach us that every cell in the human body is impregnated with natural memories. They teach us that *bhaya* (fear), *bhakti* (devotion), and *imandari* (honourable behaviour) are qualities that can retrieve and restore those memories and create new life, under the guidance of a true guru. Yogic practice and the art of *humkara* are merely techniques of reaching the sublime. Nurturing nature, therefore

humanity, is the only and the prime condition of such a liberation. A guru can only show you the way. The rest must be achieved on your own.

The keyword of the Bauls is *ulta sadhana*. Now many think that if the Bauls were really *ulta* they should be walking backwards. However, this is not what is meant by *ulta*. The quest of the Baul is to turn yourself upside down, to seek the man of the heart, the one who lives within us, unseen. You cannot see yourself physically unless you look in a mirror although others can see you. To see your inner self, you need to close your eyes, to be face to face with yourself. Spiritual power is power over the self and not over others.

Baul Guru Shri Haripada Goshain, who left us exactly a year ago at the age of 103, drew a mini manual of *ulta sadhana* with coloured felt pens in my notebook in 1992. These included a series of texts in Sanskritised Bengali, along with a series of illustrations.

Before I describe these paintings, I must relate the background of this particular initiative of his. We were invited to represent Baul culture at a lively book fair, Ecritures Croisees, held in Aix en Provence, dedicated that year to images and writings of Bengal. Hari Goshain, then 86 years old, and his partner Nirmala Goshain, dressed in saffron robes of sages, were bitterly disappointed that our Baul contingent was relegated to a multicoloured tent on the main



square in front of the Bibliotheque Mejanas, whereas the main action of the book fair took place inside the library with a scintillating cast from Bengal, including members of the Ray family.

Humiliated by what they took to be a slight, they began to behave like any other ordinary Indian tourist when we returned to Paris. They insisted I take them shopping. They bought a great big canvas bag that they stuffed with things: two full-length orange synthetic jackets for themselves, a very ugly Swiss cuckoo clock, a torchlight with a plastic can-can girl whose light shone out from between her legs once kicked high in the air, a ghetto blaster, a camera and a dozen lighters. Ma Goshain stuffed herself with prawns, bought herself an old rose cardigan just like mine, and soaked in suds for hours in the bathtub. She soon began to feel weak and giddy and felt as though she had lost her sense of balance. As this happened on a weekend, I had to call SOS doctors to come to her rescue. The doctor told me she had developed a serious disturbance of the endolymphs in her cochlear canal from excessive water in her ear that caused giddiness and falling.

I scolded them hard as a daughter would and told them I was surprised to see them behaving like ordinary people. After all they represented a great and noble tradition, known among the Bauls as the fifth *veda*, transmitted orally from the night of time. All they had to do was to write it down and perhaps a book would be published and this would ultimately get them to the centre of another book fair.

After a lifetime of *sadhana*, this additional prick to Hari Goshain's ego made him aware of the urgency of writing down and illustrating his immense repertoire of yogic and spiritual knowledge. Since then, he filled in 125 notebooks. Unfortunately, no one knows where they disappeared after his death last year. Hari Goshain left



You cannot see yourself physically unless you look in a mirror although others can see you. To see your inner self, you need to close your eyes



me a sure treasure in my notebook to be shared with all. Two philosophical paintings describe the human condition: *The Vault of Existence No 1* and *The Vault of Existence No 2*.

The first vault represents a human being in a state of unawareness, feeding on honey from a beehive, unconscious of the bees buzzing around to sting him. Our man is framed by two chequered pillars representing the span of his life. A white rat, Day, and

a black rat, Night, nibble at these pillars. Our man keeps feeding on honey, ignorant of the snake that has its jaws wide open to devour him, blind to the tiger that also waits for him on an upper branch to devour him.

The second vault represents a metamorphosed being, one who has mastered his forces. He serenely balances seven pots on his head, the white rat and the black rat walk away from the pillars of time, the serpent falls asleep and the tiger walks away and on top of the pots, the joint form of the lovers Radha and Krishna swing on a pole above his head and man becomes immortal.

Hari Goshain and Ma Goshain were transformed by their visit to the West much to the discomfiture of their disciples from the villages of the Mana area on the banks of the river Damodar. In the Bhairavasthan, the statues of Shiva and Durga, Laxmi and Saraswati, Ganesh and Kartika suddenly took on a new pink sheen. The Swiss cuckoo clock played through a microphone awakens the villagers of Nabasana to prayer and when he went night fishing in the river Shalini which flows next to his ashram, he used the French can-can girl to light up the waters and draw in the fish.

These great yogis were innocent. They showed us their vulnerable side, teaching us that even the greatest of *sadhu* are only human and therefore prone to error, that the best way to know yourself is really on your own. Break loose of your habits, look into yourself, and your store will always be full, for inside you is a repository of infinite energy.

Translator, musician, music producer and composer, Mimlu Sen is the author of the recently released Baulsphere (Random House India; Rs 395). She lives in Paris and has extensively travelled with Bauls, the wandering bards of Bengal

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A RECIPE FOR EVERY TASTE AND EVERY SEASON BY **DR PUSHPESH PANT**

In Indian tradition, there's a taste for every season—bitter, sweet, salty, pungent, *umami* and astringent. That makes it six. *Umami*, the Japanese cheesy/yeasty flavour, is alien to our palate and omitting it brings the count to five; so does dropping the astringent taste (*kashaya*)—*amla*, *elaichi* and *adrak*—which is seldom found in family menus. The sextet offers *Harmony* readers the luxury to renounce any one taste and substitute it with another. The

name of the game, then, could be 'Choose your *panchratna* culinary gems'!

On the occasion of *Harmony*'s fifth anniversary, I present six recipes for each taste so you can choose your own five. I have tried to adequately represent different regions and balance vegetarian with non-vegetarian (including fish and fowl), a dairy recipe and a dessert. Hope you approve.



TASTE: BITTER (KATU)

Methi Kishmish

(Fenugreek seeds with raisins)

Preparation time: 45 minutes
(plus time to soak fenugreek)

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves: 8

INGREDIENTS

- Fenugreek seeds: 200 gm; soaked overnight in milk in the refrigerator
- Coriander powder: 5 tsp
- *Kairi* (raw mango reserve)
- Red chilli powder: 2 tsp
- Turmeric powder: 2 tsp
- Milk: 2 cups
- Dried raw mango powder (*amchoor*): 30 gm
- Cooking oil: ½ tbsp
- Raisins: 100 gm
- A generous pinch of asafoetida
- Salt to taste

METHOD

Heat water in a pan and add the soaked fenugreek seeds (with milk) and bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce to low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the milk is fully absorbed. Remove and wash the boiled fenugreek in running cold water, drain and keep aside. Heat oil in a deep pan, add asafoetida and stir until it puffs up. Add coriander, red chili and turmeric (dissolved in ¼ cup of water) and stir-fry until the moisture evaporates. Then add fenugreek seeds and *kairi*. Stir for four to five minutes, add raisins, *amchoor* and salt, and stir for about two minutes. Remove and adjust the seasoning.

FRESH FACTS

Raisins are rich in easy-to-assimilate iron. Owing to their alkaline nature, they are also an effective home remedy to ward off acidosis, a condition where the acidity of body fluid is abnormally high. In some parts of Europe, gin-soaked raisins are eaten to treat arthritis!





TASTE: PUNGENT (TEEKHA)

Paneer Tikka Kalimirch

(Peppery cottage cheese cubes)

Preparation time: 4 hours

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

- Cottage cheese: 1 kg; cut into medium-sized pieces
- Boiled onion paste: 50 gm

FOR MARINADE

- Cream: 50 ml
- Ginger paste: 15 gm
- Garlic paste: 15 gm
- Low sodium salt to taste
- Black pepper: 3 tbsp; freshly crushed
- Green peppercorns (drained and rinsed if using 'in brine'): 2 tbsp
- Lemon rinds: 2
- Roasted plain flour: 50 gm
- Oil: 40 ml

METHOD

Make a deep criss-cross sign in each cottage cheese cube without breaking it. Prepare the marinade by mixing cream, onion, ginger and garlic paste, salt, crushed pepper, lemon rind, roasted plain flour and oil. Coat all cottage cheese pieces with this marinade and also fill some into the slits in the cubes. Keep aside for about two hours. Take a skewer and pierce marinated cottage cheese pieces through it leaving a gap of one inch between portions. You can use a small onion, potato or a slice of capsicum in between the pieces to prevent them from slipping off the skewer. Pan grill/roast over a charcoal grill or in a pre-heated oven at a moderate temperature for about 10 minutes. Garnish liberally with green peppercorns.

FRESH FACTS

A carminative—a substance that helps prevent the formation of intestinal gas—black pepper also stimulates the breakdown of fat cells.



TASTE: SWEET (MADHURA)

Nimish

(Creamy confection)

Preparation time: 45 minutes
(plus time to refrigerate cream)

Serves: 6

INGREDIENTS

- Full cream milk (pasteurised but not boiled): 2 litres
- Cream: 500 ml
- Cream of tartar: 1 tsp
- Sugar-free sweetener (powder): 1 cup
- Rose water: 1 tsp
- Pistachio nuts: 2 tbsp; finely sliced

METHOD

Mix full cream milk, cream and cream of tartar. Refrigerate overnight. Take the bowl out of the fridge early next day and add four spoons of sweetener and rose water. Whisk at high speed. Transfer the foam to a tray. Repeat the process till all the milk is used. Sprinkle sweetener on top and in between the layers of the foam. Sprinkle pistachio nuts and refrigerate (not in the freezer) till it's time to serve.



FRESH FACTS

Cream of tartar is a derivative of the wine industry. The crystallised substance formed on the inner walls of wine barrels is scraped, purified and ground to produce cream of tartar.

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APNA BAZAR





TASTE: SOUR (KHATTA)

Khatti Macchali

(Tangy fish)

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

- River sole fillets: 500 gm
- One bay leaf
- Honey: 1 tsp
- Lemon juice: ¼ cup
- Pepper: 1 tbsp; coarsely pounded
- Red chillies: 2; soaked and shredded

- Low sodium salt to taste
- One small sprig fresh coriander/ mint

METHOD

Wash the fish and cut into bite-sized pieces. Boil for about five minutes. Remove, drain and keep aside. Blend honey, salt and lemon juice in the cup, then add pounded pepper and shredded red chillies. Place the fish in a platter and pour the dressing over it. Ensure all the fish pieces are well coated with the dressing. Check seasoning and enjoy with steamed rice.

FRESH FACTS

The word 'sole' is purported to be derived from the fish's strong resemblance to a sandal. The river sole belongs to the catfish family. Catfish are known to eat almost anything that settles at the bottom of the ocean: algae, worms, vegetables, even driftwood.



TASTE: SALTY (LAVANA)

Lukhmi

(Mince-filled pastry)

INGREDIENTS

- Mutton/chicken/vegetable mince: 250 gm
- Red chilli powder: ¼ tsp
- Cumin powder: ½ tsp
- Green chillies: 2-3; deseeded and chopped
- Ginger: 1-inch piece; scraped and minced
- Fresh coriander leaves: ¼ cup; chopped
- Ginger paste: 1 tsp
- Garlic paste: 1 tsp
- Lemon juice: 1 tbsp
- Oil: 1 ½ tbsp
- Low sodium salt to taste

FOR THE PASTRY DOUGH

- Plain flour: 125 gm
- Ghee (clarified butter): 2 tbsp
- Yogurt: 1 tbsp
- Salt to taste

METHOD

Heat water in a pan and boil the mince with salt, turmeric and red chilli powder, along with the ginger and garlic paste. Cook till tender. Heat oil in a frying pan and add coriander and green chillies and fry for about a minute. Now add the boiled mince. Fry till water dries up completely. Keep aside to cool. Pour lemon juice. Knead soft dough by mixing a little salt, ghee and yogurt with the flour, adding the required quantity of water. Cover the dough and keep aside for half an hour in a cool place, preferably refrigerator. Divide the dough into equal portions. Roll each portion into a round ball. Dust with a little dry flour on it and shape these balls into oblong pieces. Place a little mince in the centre, fold over to cover the mince and seal the edges. Trim off the uneven sides with a sharp knife to make neat rectangular *lukhmi*. Bake the *lukhmi* till golden brown.

FRESH FACTS

The recipes of signature dishes are still fiercely guarded in many traditional Hyderabad families. So much so that these are only shared with daughters-in-law and not daughters, as they believe that when the daughters marry into other families, the recipes would lose their exclusivity.





Vilas Kalguter; FOOD STYLING: Anita Sarin

TASTE: ASTRINGENT (KASHAYA)

Amle Ki Achaari Subzi

(Pickled gooseberries)

INGREDIENTS

- Indian gooseberries (*amla*): 500 gm
- Turmeric powder: 1 tsp
- Red chilli powder: ½ tsp
- Cumin powder: ½ tsp
- Coriander powder: ½ tsp
- Mustard seeds: ½ tsp
- Fennel seeds: ½ tsp
- Low sodium salt
- Juice of 5-6 lemons
- A sprig of fresh coriander

METHOD

Wash the *amla* berries and prick them. Soak in water overnight and rinse well. Boil with turmeric and red chilli powder and then drain. Spread out to dry in shade (covered with fine mesh) to remove all moisture. Put a non-stick pan on medium flame and line it with a thin film of oil. Add *amla* and stir-fry for about two minutes. Sprinkle powdered spices along with the salt and lemon juice and cook for another two minutes. Garnish with fresh coriander.



FRESH FACTS

Stock up on your body's Vitamin C; include *amla* in your daily diet. The fruit was extensively used to treat an outbreak of scurvy following a famine in Hissar, Haryana, in 1940. A single *amla* has as much Vitamin C as two oranges.

FIVEALIVE!

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, JOINT PAINS, DIABETES, HEARING PROBLEMS AND DEMENTIA ARE FIVE HEALTH CONCERNS THAT CAN RENDER SILVERS VULNERABLE. **NITIKA BAJPAYEE** TAKES A LOOK AT THE LATEST TOOLS AND RESEARCH TO KEEP THESE IN CHECK



Pressure CONTROL

Hypertension or high blood pressure not only aggravates chances of cardiovascular ailments but can also lead to diabetes. Generally not linked to age, high blood pressure can develop in younger people. However, it should be kept under control because it can lead to chronic diseases in later years. "Preventing cardiovascular diseases in the elderly is possible by checking hypertension regularly," says Dr (Col.) B Karla, senior consultant at Artemis Hospital, Gurgaon. While a blood pressure reading of 130/80 is

recommended for patients suffering from diabetes and hypertension, 140/90 is an acceptable level for diabetic patients without hypertension. Hypertension is linked to rennin-angiotensin-aldosterone (RAA) hormones that regulate blood pressure levels. The narrowing of small arteries in patients of hypertension results in the increase in blood pressure. "Some new drugs have been introduced in India this year—**angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB)**, ol-

mesartan and telmesartan can help control and block RAA hormones," says Dr Karla. "A new version of the statins is also available in the Indian market to reduce cholesterol levels in patients with hypertension." Though widely recommended in India, it is not advisable to take the medication without consulting a doctor.



LIFESAVER

New product: The three-colour LED display screen of Panasonic's electronic digital blood pressure meter gives a simultaneous analysis of blood pressure level and pulse rate.

● According to a new analysis by cardiologists from Duke University Medical Centre, daily intake of low-dose aspirin reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke.



Forget me not

Every year 4.6 million new cases of dementia are reported worldwide; Alzheimer's disease, the most common cause of dementia, accounts for 60-70 per cent. "Believed to be a direct result of ageing, symptoms like loss of memory, intellectual decline, behavioural changes mostly go undiagnosed initially," says Dr Rahul Chandhok, senior consultant psychiatrist, Fortis Hospital, New Delhi. It's unfortunate, as earlier intervention could better the prognosis.

Ongoing research has seen the introduction of a drug marketed under the brand name Aricept. "Introduced in India 18 months ago, **Aricept helps develop better cognitive**

behaviour," says Dr Chandhok. "Prescription of drugs like donepezil, rivastigmine and galantamine that improve cortical acetylcholine (main chemical messenger) levels has also seen a recent increase. Used for treating mild to moderate dementia, some have adverse side effects and should be taken only after proper diagnosis."



LIFESAVER

Battery-powered wrist transmitters emitting radio signals help locate wandering dementia patients in the US. Though not yet available in India, identity tags with patient information and contact numbers can be a substitute.

New research: Researchers at the University of Kansas School of Medicine are conducting Phase II clinical trials to confirm the safety and effectiveness of intranasal insulin therapy for Alzheimer's disease. Used as a nose spray, the insulin improves memory without affecting blood sugar or insulin levels.

PAIN LESS

The study of pain has, in recent years, attracted different fields such as pharmacology, neurobiology, dentistry, psychology and physiotherapy. When pain becomes chronic, it is an illness that can adversely affect both body and psyche. "Physiotherapy is considered to be a bankable practice to manage pain, especially for silvers," says Dr Aruna Motilal Pol, physiotherapist at Mumbai's Kallanagar Bandra East Nursing Home. "Chronic pain owing to cervical spondylitis, arthritis, back and neck pain leads to loss of flexibility and problems with mobility."

"A new treatment called interferential current therapy (IFC) has been introduced for chronic pain," says Dr Pol. "By promoting soft-tissue healing, the therapy helps control spondylosis and back pain, as well as pain occurring after orthopaedic operations. It also reduces post-surgical complications." The therapy is also effective for circulatory ailments and muscle spasms.



LIFESAVER

COX-2 inhibitors, a new class of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), can selectively block the COX-2 enzyme—COX-1 and COX-2 enzymes control prostaglandin, a hormone-like substance that causes pain and swelling in arthritic patients. Available in the form of celecoxib, the drug impedes production of prostaglandins without irritating the stomach.



noise, PLEASE!



Cochlear implants make sound an experience for people with severe hearing impairment. About a year ago, two types of implants were introduced in India—implant based on Electric Acoustic Stimulation (EAS) and the Middle Ear Implant. “EAS uses a hearing aid and a cochlear implant together in the same ear,” says Dr Jahnvi Thakur, ENT specialist, Sarthi Health Care, Mumbai. “While the hearing aid acoustically amplifies low frequencies, the implant electrically stimulates the middle and high frequencies, and the inner ear processes acoustic and electric stimuli simultaneously.” Still rare in India, the **Middle Ear Implant is a new direct drive hearing technology**. “It uses a vibrant sound bridge device and is ideal in cases of mild to severe hearing loss.” The cost of surgery is around Rs 200,000 to Rs 300,000.”



LIFESAVER

Hearing and speech impaired people can communicate through Vodafone Essar’s ‘Sambhav’ prepaid card launched in Kolkata. Priced at Rs 151, the card provides 500 free SMS and Rs 10 worth of calls for any emergency.

SWEET DANGER

In India around 95 per cent of diabetic patients suffer from Type 2 diabetes, a condition in which, despite sufficient insulin the body is resistant to it. “**A new test, HbA1c, measures the amount of glycated haemoglobin in the blood,**” says Dr Nitesh Singh of Junior Doctors’ Association, Bengaluru. Best recommended for Type 2 diabetes, it detects the level of plasma blood glucose irrespective of whether the patient has eaten or not. “The HbA1c gives a breakup on the history of the body for up to three months. It is widely accepted in India as it reduces the risk of cardiac complications. Most good pathology labs offer it at Rs 500.”



LIFESAVER

● Dipeptidyl peptidase IV (DPP-IV) inhibitors regulate glucose level without causing hypoglycaemia or low blood sugar, a side-effect of diabetes treatment.

promotion

Fixed Dentures



Dr S. P. Aggarwal, a distinguished orthodontist and implantologist is the director of the Delhi-based Green Park Dental Institute & Research Centre, the only ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certified institute of its kind.

Q1. I have existing removable dentures. Can I get them fixed with implants?

If you have existing removable dentures, we can modify our implant surgeries around them so that they can be fixed to your implants. However, I must add that most patients who see implant-supported fixed bridges are so impressed by them that they discard their dentures and go for the bridges.

Q2. My dentist has advised me to extract all my teeth because of a gum disease. Can I plan my dental implants before my teeth are extracted?

For a long time, dentists used to extract teeth and wait for six months for the bone to heal before putting implants. But with the advent of modern implant designs, we are able to save both time and trouble in such cases. Today, you can consider having a dental implant just as the tooth is being extracted, as immediately after tooth extraction, the jaw bone begins to shrink. You cannot stop this from happening. If the situation is ideal, the tooth can be extracted and an implant placed at the same time or very soon after the extraction. Newer implants made of pure titanium and reinforced with cutting-edge surface treatments like Tiunite have the ability to not only preserve bone, but also encourage new bone formation. So if your gum disease has been managed properly, you can go in for immediate post-extraction implants.

Q3. What is Procera Implant Bridge (PIB)?

A PIB (Procera Implant Bridge) is the latest technological advancement in dentistry. Basically, the entire set of teeth is designed by the computer, then manufactured in pure titanium by robotic plants and fixed over implants placed by your dentist. It is manufactured only in three laboratories in the world, based in Sweden, USA and Japan. The greatest advantage of a PIB is that it is very firmly fixed (cemented or screwed) to the bone via implants so much so that the patient need not (or rather cannot) remove it to clean it. The PIB feels and functions very much like your natural teeth and patients swear that it is worth every rupee that they have spent on it.

be the change

Shameem Akthar shares five
life-transforming yoga practices

Yoga can change your life. This is particularly true for some of its practices owing to their psycho-physiological impact. They work on the primitive part of our nervous system, over which our conscious mind has little control. By tweaking it, these practices reach deep into those aspects of our personality that trip us up, both physically and emotionally, and rectify things that are otherwise beyond our control.

Indeed, scientific research has documented the impact of these practices on our brainwave pattern, shifting it from the more common chaotic beta wave to alpha wave. The harmonisation of the left and right hemispheres of the brain caused by some of these practices also accounts for the sense of equilibrium we feel in body and mind. Certain practices can temper our rash, instinctive responses with rationality. Here are five such practices that can change the way you view life.





ENERGY CHANNEL PURIFYING PRACTICE (NADI SHODHANA)

This is the simpler version of a breathing practice or *pranayama*—the advanced version is best learnt under expert guidance. Sit cross-legged. Hold your left hand in the chin *mudra* with the tips of your index finger and thumb touching. In the right hand, hold your index finger and thumb out—you will use each to shut and open your left and right nostril respectively. Close your right nostril with the right thumb, inhaling gently from the left nostril. Next, exhale from the right nostril by

lifting your thumb off it. Then, inhale from the right nostril and exhale from the left. This is one round. Do up to 10 rounds. This is a safe practice that can be attempted by anybody.

How it works: This practice balances the right and left hemispheres of the brain, helping you gain a proper perspective of any problem or situation. It relieves anxiety and has immense therapeutic value in all ailments, both emotionally and physiologically. It boosts cardiac strength and respiratory capacity and calms the brain owing to altered brainwave pattern.

WARRIOR POSE (VEERASANA)

Sit in the common thunderbolt pose (*vajrasana*)—to do this, go down on your knees and sit back so hips are rested on flared heels, with big toes touching lightly from inside. Now bending your right knee, raise it, keeping the right foot flat on ground. The right hand should be bent at the elbow and placed on the right knee. Place your chin on your right hand. Close your eyes and sit in a meditative fashion for a few minutes. Release leg, and do for the other side.

How it works: This pose is said to control a restive mind by changing the brainwave pattern and harmonising both our emotional and logical selves. It creates a state of restful alertness.



VICTORY BREATH (UJJAYI PRANAYAMA)

Sit in any meditative practice. Close your eyes. Inhale and exhale deeply a few times. Then, inhale with a soft hissing sound that is felt at the throat. Exhale with the same sound. This is one round. Do up to nine rounds. There should be no stress or strain at the throat. Initially, inhalation length should be equal to exhalation. With time and practice, you must learn to increase the length of exhalation, making it longer than inhalation. Avoid if you suffer from low blood pressure.

How it works: This is a cure-all practice that regulates the hormones, calms the system and busts stress. It works on the parasympathetic nervous system, getting it into repair mode so mind-body ailments are cured or controlled. It is also good for the voice.



ROARING LION FACE POSE (SIMHAGARJASANA)

Sit down. Place palms flat on thighs. Inhale deeply. As you exhale, roll out your tongue as far out and below as you can. Roll up your eyes towards the ceiling. Ensure that your entire face feels thoroughly stretched both ways. Tuck your chin lightly in. You can hold your breath for a count of four to 10. Release. Repeat a few times. However, avoid prolonged breath retention if you suffer from epilepsy, hypertension or cardiac problems.

How it works: This pose exercises the 53 facial muscles powerfully, giving them an anti-gravity workout. It is a powerful energiser and mood elevator. It also works on the carotid sinus, ensuring more oxygen intake and thus greater facial glow. It has a toggle effect on blood pressure, spiking it if it is dangerously low, or lowering it when it is unhealthily high. It works out the 'acu-points' that run along the hairline and temple, which promote hair growth, maintain clarity of vision, and provide relief from respiratory problems and stress. Similarly acu-points along the temples and around the eyes are massaged. These provide relief from nasal congestion and stress-related ailments, fight crow's feet around the eyes and removes puffiness around them.



Shameem Akhtar 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)

YOGA OF SLEEP (YOGA NIDRA)

Lie in the corpse position. To do this, lie down on your back. Spread out your feet a little away from each other. Your hands should be 45° off the body with palms facing upwards. Close your eyes. Relax the body consciously by moving your awareness over it gently. Become aware of your breath, retaining your focus on it. This too relaxes body and mind. Next, consciously take your mind through the classic 61 points of the body. Start with the forehead and move to the throat. Shift your attention to the right side of body. Focus on the right shoulder joint, elbow, wrist, tip of each finger, and re-track your awareness back to the throat. Then, shift attention to the left side, starting with the left shoulder joint, elbow, wrist, tip of each finger, and back along the same route. Shift your attention to the heart and right breast, then heart, the left breast, and back to the

heart. Then move to the stomach and the entire abdomen. Shift back to the right side of the body, moving your focus from the right hip, knee and ankle to the tip of each toe. Move your attention back along this path, returning to the abdomen. Then, cover the left hip, knee, ankle, tip of each toe, and back the same route till you return to the abdomen. From here, return to the navel, heart, throat and forehead to complete the practice.

How it works: This practice soothes the mind, silencing its static. Yoga *nidra* also encourages what is known as a 'hypnagogic' state, where scans have shown a distinct change in the brainwave pattern. While the Bihar School of Yoga affirms that this is an alpha-wave pattern (rested alertness), Swami Jnaneshwara Bharati (an American who follows the Himalayan tradition of yoga) believes the brain experiences the deeply relaxing delta waves.



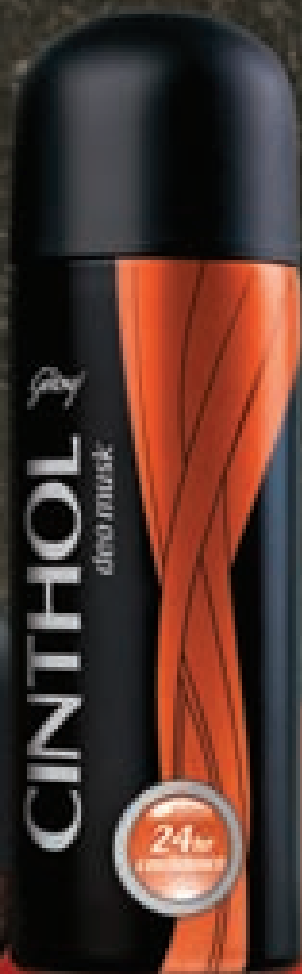
YOGA IN THE NEWS

The global economy may have gone bust, but yoga is booming (and how). Recession-hit executives in US are queuing up for 'yoga holidays' to restore equilibrium in their lives. The Kripalu Centre for Yoga and Health, an upscale yoga retreat in Massachusetts, US, is geared for an 80-room expansion and is opening a tuition-free

programme for layoff victims to cope with retrenchment blues. Closer home, Baba Ramdev held a special yoga camp for employees of the Bombay Stock Exchange during which he urged participants to beat recession with yoga. "Yoga not only de-stresses you, it teaches you that sitting idle is sin," said Ramdev. "When we work towards achieving our goals, we will sail through any economic crises." Amen.

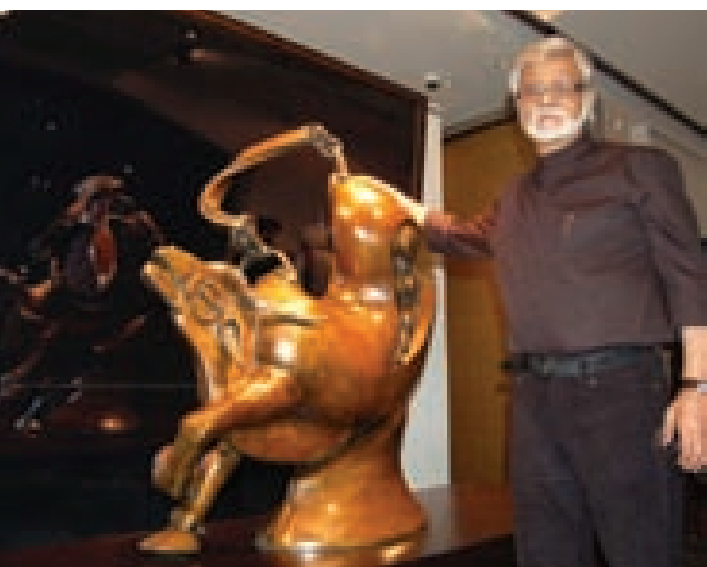
***ENERGIZE YOURSELF
WITH THE SENSATIONAL
MUSK FRAGRANCE.***

***NEW CINTHOL
DEO MUSK.***



Moments of destiny

While American philosopher Irwin Edman may have dismissively quipped that “life is always at some turning point,” it is undeniable that events—both personal and societal—have the power to alter the trajectory of our lives. Five gifted silvers share their defining memories with **Humra Quraishi**

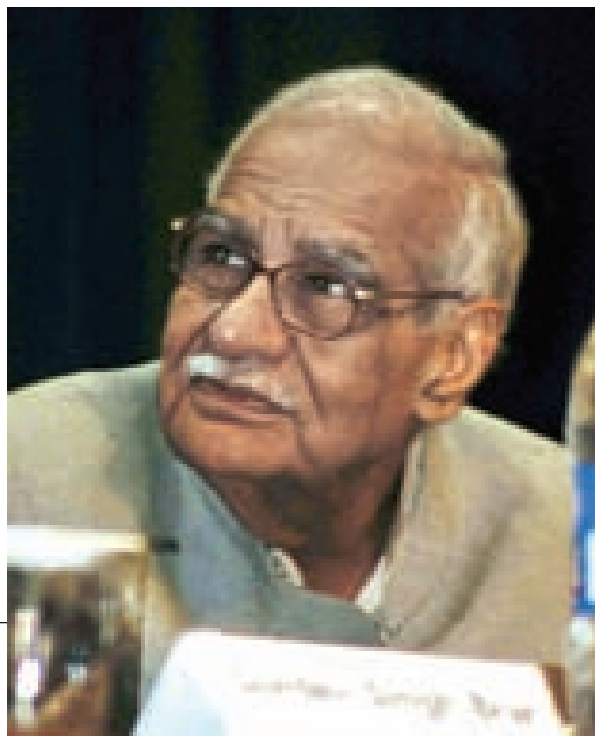


SATISH GUJRAL
83, artist, sculptor, graphic designer, architect

An accident changed the course of my life. I was on a family holiday in Pahalgam as a young lad. We had set up camp next to the river Lidder and, one fateful afternoon, I was foolhardy enough to try and cross the river by leaping from one boulder to the next. I missed the flat top of one of them and was swept away into the icy, raging torrent. I was washed downstream where I crashed into the rocks. When I was rescued, I had bruises all over my body and high fever. I ended up with osteomyelitis, an infection of the bone. My femur had to be cut to prevent the infection from spreading further. Complications from the injury and infection affected my hearing, speech and academic prowess. That’s when I turned my attention to art; it was the best way open to me to express myself. And after an extremely difficult and frustration-ridden phase, Lahore’s Mayo School of Arts provided me hope—and the tools to craft a new life.

KULDIP NAYAR
85, journalist, author, human rights activist

The turning point in my life was the Emergency, declared by Indira Gandhi in 1975. I was already a senior journalist at the time and rather close to Mrs Gandhi. I could never have imagined that I would be picked up, detained and jailed. And during my imprisonment in Delhi’s Tihar Jail, I witnessed some very grim realities—how innocents were jailed, how anybody could be detained and kept imprisoned for years. I remember, one night, I heard cries from another cell; the next morning when I went there, I found it vacant. When I asked the jail staff, I learnt that innocents were stuffed in those cells. I saw for myself how people were being denied their fundamental human rights. I decided that once I got out, I would make this my cause and write about the plight of the people. I joined the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) and Citizens for Democracy. To this day, I continue to focus attention on what’s happening to the hapless individual at the grassroots level. Even today, the situation is grim.



The Indian Express



The Indian Express

MARK TULLY
73, journalist, author

In 1965, I returned to India. I say 'returned' because I was actually born in Kolkata, but I went to the UK with my family when I was nine years old. I came back to work for the BBC. At that time, of course, I never really recognised it as a landmark or anything. In fact, I was sure that I would get back to England in a couple of years after completing the term of my posting. But I ended up staying back in India—it's been decades now. Later, I did return to the UK for work twice, for short periods, but from 1977 I have been here non-stop. Living in India, I have been tremendously influenced by Indian philosophies, religions, the very outlook on life. I have never ever regretted my decision to stay on. I have this feeling of belonging here, a bond that has only become stronger with time. I will never leave India.

GULZAR
71, poet, lyricist, filmmaker

In the late 1940s, when I was a schoolboy, I lived with my family in Delhi's Subzi Mandi locality. My father ran a shop that sold *topi* [caps] and *thaila* [bags]. After school, I had to sit there for hours. I used to borrow old books from a bookseller. I began by reading thrillers, and soon began to pester him for more books. One day, in exasperation, he gave me a copy of *The Gardener* by Tagore. It was my introduction to literature—poetry, the classics. And it changed my perception of the written word. I began to read writers like Munshi Premchand. Further, I became drawn to Urdu poetry because in school, our *maulvi sahib* used to arrange sessions of *baithbaazi*, where we took turns to come up with *apt shair* [Urdu couplets]. These sessions roused the poet in me.



HT



The Indian Express

KRISHNA SOBTI
84, author, essayist

There have been so many ups and downs in my life; I have witnessed so many changes. Every event changes your life, but you should create your own internal reserve to be able to face those changed circumstances. I spent my childhood in the two colonial cities of New Delhi and Shimla—our lives were as organised as those times. I still remember my father taking us to historic places, like the Khooni Darwaza in Delhi. We also participated in the *Phoolwalon ki sair* [the annual festival of flower sellers]. We would visit our ancestral hometown in undivided India and my memories remain vivid—standing atop a *tila* [hillock] with the wilderness around me. It was fodder for creativity. Now, we are in times of tumult. These are 'turning points' too—for us all. Politicians are spelling out the word 'democracy' in a different way! It's depressing to see how little reasoning there is. These changes will be reflected in how we live our lives.

Lessons for life

THE PASSING YEARS MAKE US WISER BUT DO NOT NECESSARILY MAKE LIFE ANY EASIER. SOME QUESTIONS CONTINUE TO LOOM IN FRONT OF US, AND SOME ANSWERS STILL PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK. *HARMONY* PRESENTS FIVE EXCERPTS ON ASPECTS THAT DETERMINE OUR LIVES AND OUR WORLD, OUTSIDE AND WITHIN: NATURE, DESTINY, KARMA, PEACE OF MIND AND RELATIONSHIPS

Good earth

Mother Nature is often the best teacher, says **Thomas Moore**

It's early summer, and the sunflowers are about seven feet high in the garden off the kitchen. I'm reminded that in the fifteenth century, Marsilio Ficino recommended that everyone turn toward the mystery of his own nature the way a sunflower turns toward the sun. In all things, even in the most recondite mysteries of the soul, nature is the first and finest of teachers.... Mountains, rivers, and deserts, enjoying a lifetime far exceeding our own, give us a taste of eternity, and an ancient forest or gorge reminds us that our own lives are brief in comparison. In nature, we become sensitive to our mortality and to the immensity of the life that is our matrix, and both of these sensations, mortality and immensity, offer the foundation for a spiritual life. For all our well-equipped investigations and classifications, nature remains full of mystery: the farther the physicist explores the subatomic world, the more mysterious nature appears; and the more pictures we receive from beyond our solar system, the more it inspires awe and wonder. By confronting us with irreducible mysteries that stretch our daily vision to include infinity, nature opens an inviting and guiding path toward a spiritual life.



"Nature and dance help me distance myself from a problem and see things from a different perspective. Nature always soothes and elevates me from the humdrum. And reminds me that we are just one of her creations."

Shovana Narayan
—Kathak dancer

In religious practices around the world, we find spirituality and nature going hand in hand—among the Irish monks who built their stone monasteries on windy, raw islands and steep promontories inhabited mainly by goats, among the Tibetans who developed a highly sophisticated approach to the spirit in the thin air of their mountaintop

monasteries, in the tropical rainforests where nature is revered in exotic ceremony and icon, or on the American plains where earth and sky are honoured as divine sources of life.

Many of us who limit spirituality to a book or a church long for something more. Traditional peoples know that nature feeds the spiritual life as nothing else can. What is required is simple proximity, contemplation, ritual, and a spirit of piety. If we can allow ourselves to be stunned by nature's beauty, complexity, simplicity, devastating power, vast dimensions, and unexpected quirkiness, then lessons in spirituality will pour into us without effort on our part. But it isn't easy to be so naive and open in an age of scientific sophistication. We want to harness nature and not be directed by it, study it and not learn from it, get it under firm control and not let it have influence over us.

Nature is not only a source of spirit; it also has soul. Spiritually, nature directs our attention toward eternity, but at the same time it contains us and creates an intimacy with our own personal lives that nurtures the soul. The individuality of a tree or rock or pool of water is another sign of nature's soul. These intriguing natural beings not only point outward toward infinity; more intimately, they

also befriend us. It's easy to love groves of trees or mountain ridges, to feel related to them as though by blood, and to be secure in their familial protection.

One of the great challenges we face as we develop technology and expand scientific knowledge is to preserve nature as a source of spirituality. Recent history has proven how easy it is to lose an appreciation for the sanctity of nature and to get so caught up in the material dimensions of our science that we fall deeper into materialism and lose touch with spiritual values. Then we not only destroy nature out of the shallowness of our appreciation but also lose nature's gift of spiritual sensitivity.

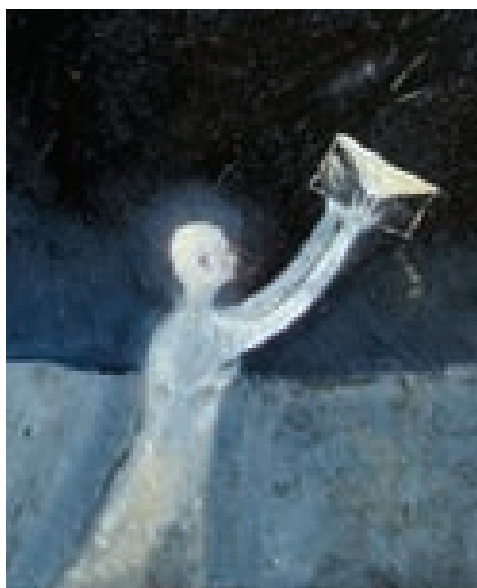
Excerpt from The Re-Enchantment of Everyday Life (G K Hall & Co., Rs 550, 656 pages). Thomas Moore has lived as a monk in a Catholic religious order for 12 years and is a lecturer in the areas of archetypal psychology, mythology and imagination



As you sow...

You can shape your destiny,
says **James Allen**

A man only begins to be a man when he ceases to whine and blame, and begins to search for the hidden justice that regulates his life. And as he adapts his mind to that regulating justice, he stops blaming others as the cause of his condition, and builds himself up in strong and noble thoughts; he ceases to kick against circumstances, but begins to use circumstances as aids to his more rapid progress, and as a means of discovering the hidden powers and possibilities within himself. Law, not chaos, is the dominating principle in the universe; justice, not injustice, is the soul and substance of life. Righteousness, not corruption, is the supreme force in the spiritual



"Destiny is a negotiable truth that can be altered. I think praying doesn't change one's destiny, but positive thinking and actions definitely can. Our prayers are all about asking for more; it's time we said a prayer of thanks for all that we have. After all, don't most of us have a lot more than what we actually deserve?"

Mahbanoo Mody Kotwal
—Theatre director, actor and
stand-up comic

government of the world. This being so, man has but to correct himself to find that the universe is right. And during the process of setting himself right, he will find that as he alters his thoughts towards things and other people, things and other people will alter towards him.

The proof of this truth is in every person, and it therefore reveals itself through introspection and self-discovery. Let a man radically alter his thoughts, and he will be astonished at the rapid transformation it will effect in the material conditions of his life. Men imagine that thought can be kept secret, but it cannot. It rapidly crystallises into habit, and habit solidifies into circumstance.

On the other hand, beautiful thoughts of all kinds crystallise into habits of grace and kindness, which solidify into sunny circumstances. Pure thoughts crystallise into habits of modesty and self-control, which solidify into circumstances of repose and peace. Thoughts of courage and firm decision crystallise into positive habits, which solidify into circumstances of success, plenty, and freedom. Energetic thoughts crystallise into habits of industry, which solidify into circumstances of pleasantness. Gentle and forgiving thoughts crystallise into habits of gentleness, which solidify into protective circumstances. Loving and unselfish thoughts solidify into circumstances of abiding prosperity

and true riches. A particular train of thought persisted in, be it good or bad, cannot fail to produce results. A man cannot directly choose his circumstances, but he can choose his thoughts, and so indirectly, yet surely, shape his circumstances.

Let a man cease from his harsh thoughts, and all the world will soften towards him, and be ready to help him. Let him put away his weakly and sickly thoughts, and the opportunities will spring up on every hand to aid his strong decision. Let him encourage good thoughts, and no hard fate shall bind him down to wretchedness and shame. The

world is your kaleidoscope, and the varying combinations of colours that at every succeeding moment it presents to you are the exquisitely adjusted pictures of your ever-moving thoughts.

Excerpt from As a Man Thinketh (DeVorss & Company, Rs 175, 68 pages). James Allen was a philosophical British writer known for his poetry and inspirational writing



Karma counts

Everything dies except your deeds, says
Harold Kushner

The dying have taught me one great lesson that I never would have learned without their help: most people are not afraid of dying; they are afraid of not having lived. People can accept the inescapable fact of mortality. What frightens them more is the dread of insignificance, the notion that we will be born and live and one day die and none of it will matter. People don't really want to live forever. Living forever would be like reading a good book, or watching a good movie, that never ended. People understand that the story of their lives has to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. But what they desperately want is to live long enough to get it right, to feel that they have done something worthwhile with their lives, however long.

Author Milan Kundera has written, "Everyone has trouble accepting the fact that he will disappear, unheard of and unnoticed in an indifferent universe." When Mark Twain has Tom Sawyer attend his own funeral and listen to the eulogies of people who think he has died, I think he is tapping into a universal fantasy that at our funerals we will hear people speak of how much they miss us and we will be comforted that our lives made a difference. Some people strive

to do great things, or terrible things, to make sure that they are noticed in life and remembered after death. Others turn to religion for the reassurance that the universe is not indifferent.

When all of us come face to face with our mortality, either because of the accumulation of years or because we have seen names and numbers in the obituary pages that strike uncomfortably close to home, people like me who write books have an advantage over other people. For at least a while after my time is over, my books will still have a place on library shelves and in people's homes. More than that, the survival of my ideas and my values (much more the real me than my physical body) will rest with people who write me letters and come up to me after my lectures to tell me what my books have meant to them. But in the final analysis, the key to my immortality, the reassurance that my life has mattered and was not lived in vain, is not that different from the key to yours or anyone else's. I find it in the work

I have done, the acts of kindness I have performed, the love I have given and the love I have received, the people who will smile when they remember me, and the children and grandchildren through whom my name and memory will be perpetuated.

I have cherished, and I would commend to you, the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know that even one life has breathed easier because you lived—that is to have succeeded."

The Talmud records this exchange between two of the sages: "Our ancestor Jacob never died."

"How can you say that? The Bible describes him as dying in Egypt and being buried in Hebron."

"A good person, even in death, is still alive."

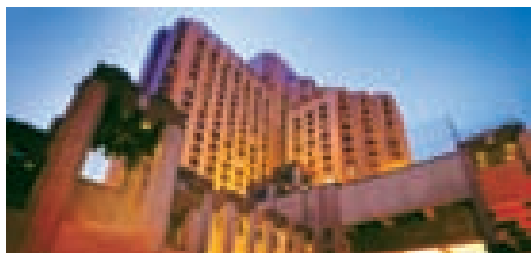


"I have begun to believe in karma now more than ever. Bad karma does not merely pave the way for future retribution, it also corrodes our peace of mind. I never let anything drown out the voice of my conscience. Life is too short and it's never easy living with regrets and guilt anyway."

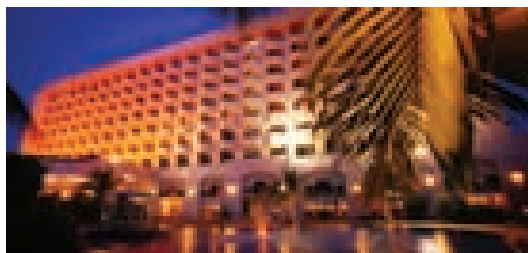
Jehangir Sabavala
—artist

Excerpt from Living a Life That Matters (Anchor Books; Rs 436; 166 pages). Harold Kushner is an American rabbi and author of many theological books

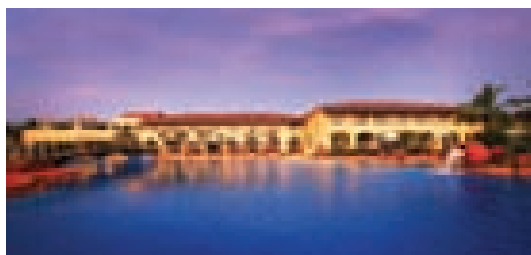
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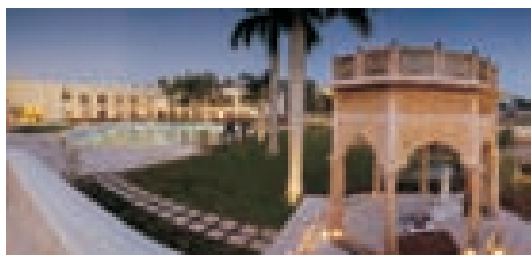
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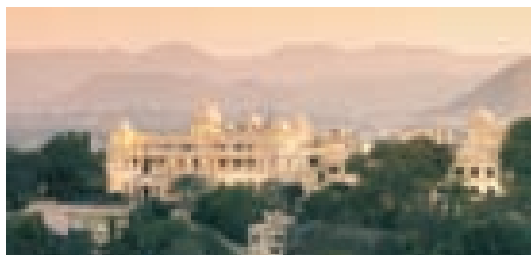
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The oasis within

You are a receptacle of peace, says
Swami Ambikananda Saraswati

Peace isn't something you ultimately receive when you slow down the pace of your life. Peace is what you're capable of being and bringing to every encounter and event in the walking moments of your life. Most of us are waggling a nonstop internal mental skirmish with everyone we encounter. Being peaceful is an inner attitude that you can enjoy when you've learned to silence your incessant inner dialogue. Being peaceful isn't dependent on what your surroundings look like. It seldom has anything to do with what the people around you think, say, or do. A noiseless environment isn't a requirement.

St Francis's famous prayer states it better than I can: "Make me an instrument of thy peace." In other words, St Francis wasn't asking God to provide him with peace. He was asking for guidance to be more like the peace he trusted was his Source. Being peace is different from looking for peace.

This principle isn't about merely choosing tranquil thoughts when you're feeling frayed and anxious. I suggest picturing a container deep within yourself out of which all your thoughts flow. Inside of this container, at its very centre, imagine a candle flame. You need to make a commitment that this flame in the centre of the container holding all of your thoughts will never, ever even flicker, although the very worst may go before you. This is your container of peace, and only peaceful thoughts can fuel the burning candle. You don't need to

change your thoughts as much as you need to learn to be an energy of peace lighting the way and attracting serene, harmonious thoughts and beings. In this way, you'll become a being of peace.

Obviously, you take this inner receptacle with you wherever you go. When people attempt to put some kind of pressure on you, when you feel overwhelmed, or when situations

arise that previously incited your distress or bellicosity, you can immediately turn to your inner candle flame of peace and see how to keep your light glowing. This is being the peace that you wish for yourself. This is offering a matching vibration to your desire to be a tranquil and amicable being, rather than a person suffering from the disease of trying to make life go faster. You've already seen the results of that folly, and you notice the symptoms of stress in virtually everyone you meet.

As a being of peace, you make a huge impact on those around you. It's almost impossible to be totally stressed out in the presence of someone who has

opted to be peace. Peace is a higher and faster energy—when you're being peace, just your presence alone will often nullify the uneasiness and tension in those around you. In fact, this state causes pheromones of measurable energy to emanate from you. They affect others, who become more peaceful without even being aware of the transformation taking place. The secret of this principle for restoring balance to your life is: be the peace and harmony you desire. You cannot get it from anything or anyone else.



"Peace of mind is the direct link between an individual and society. Philosophers like J Krishnamurti have stated that whatever we feel inside is reflected on our relationships outside. There are many emotions that surface when I come across any injustice—anger, frustration, anguish and sorrow. Though meditation helps, brooding over a problem only leads to non-productivity. What finally helps is sharing, not isolation."

Aruna Roy
—Activist

Excerpt from Age with Spirit: Five Ways to Embrace Change in Your Life (HarperCollins; Rs 295; 206 pages). Swami Ambikananda Saraswati is the founder of the Anahata Touch Healing System and the Traditional Yoga Association that trains yoga practitioners to become teachers

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Even as we in India have made a mark on the globe as a reservoir of intellectual capital, as a Nation we are grappling with "quality of life" challenges. More so, in the hinterland, where poverty is a ground reality. To address these larger issues, we work in tandem with the Government, the District Authorities and NGOs. Our work is carried out under the aegis of The Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives & Rural Development, spearheaded by Mrs. Rajashree Birla. In over 3,700 villages, we reach out to 7 million people, in proximity to our plants. Our 250-strong team endeavours with missionary zeal to raise literacy levels, take health-care to the hut-step of the villagers, train them to eke out a sustainable livelihood, empower women, provide basic amenities and espouse social reform.

Developing model villages forms part of our strategy. This entails ensuring self-reliance in all aspects, and helping village development reach a stage wherein communities take over and we move on to replicate the model village project in other parts of the country. In the first phase we have zeroed in on 300 villages across the country. In a phased manner we aspire to cover all the villages we work in.

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

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

ADITYA BIRLA CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS





To forgive is divine

The strength of your relationships depends on your ability to pardon, says **Hugh Prather**

Anger and judgment can sometimes poison circumstances instantly, sometimes slowly, but whether their first effects are 'controlled' or 'unrepressed,' they are never wholly eliminated from the system through some alchemy of time. In fact, people tend to become more narrow and bitter the older they get. The buildup occurs because the validity of the judging 'faculty' is never questioned. Grievances are swept into corners of the mind and gradually there is no room to think, no room for light, no room for fun. Now each judgment becomes part of our identity, a point of pride, and we don't like having them questioned.

Forgiveness is the alternative, but forgiveness does not mean releasing all criminals from prison or spending more time with someone who pushes our buttons. Forgiveness is a thought, not a behavior. It is an inner expression of self-respect and integrity. The grounds for forgiving are simple: grievances are unworthy of you.

As we go through the day, it's as if at some point we are shot with a poisoned arrow, and although not recognised at the time, the deterioration begins. Something happens, we interpret it, and this little picture, carried in the mind, begins releasing its toxins. Soon we are reacting badly to almost everything and we don't know why. It just seems that 'things are not going well,' even though on other occasions we have been able to glide through far more than this.

Form the habit of scanning your mind—not second-guessing your

motives but staying aware of what your ego, your fear of happiness, is up to. The thoughts that arrest the mind must be recognised before the mind can be set free. Your own ego can become like the neighbour's dog you have agreed to take for a walk. Your function is to keep it moving along and not let it stop and sniff. When it gets too interested, it gets in trouble. And it is when your ego stops to dwell on some wrong, some unfairness, some slight, that you will feel injured.

How many remarks were inoffensive until we thought about them? How many mistakes failed to delay us until we turned them into sins?

To forgive means no more than to continue walking toward your goal. If you see that some picture of an earlier event is poisoning you, do not try to dishonestly change

the picture, for you will think you are trying to alter reality. Merely look closely at it and let it go.

Forgive, but don't wonder how you must now act. Forgive, but don't try to convince another to forgive. Forgive, but don't hold yourself superior because you have done so. Simply forgive. Wrap your forgiveness around you like a cloak of light, armour that protects your happiness but closes no one out. Forgiveness is not a 'the devil can take you' attitude. It is a clear shield of love that lets the person in but does

not let in judgments that betray the person. The armour you wear is your goodwill. Put it on every day and the arrow of circumstance will not penetrate. This will be so because you will not send the arrow back. Nor will you take it with you. You will think nothing of it. And there is nothing more to happiness than this.



"The passing years have made me more tolerant and forgiving. Now, I don't take offence easily because I have finally realised that when I get angry at something that someone has said or done, I only end up hurting myself. The best tactic is to forgive and forget."

Nafisa Ali

—actor and social activist

Excerpt from How to Live in the World and Still Be Happy (Magna Books Division; Rs 175; 243 pages). Hugh Prather is an American author, minister and counsellor

Favourite FIVE

Embarking on a second career is not a question of age but one of enthusiasm and energy. **Anjana Jha** looks at the most popular options for silvers

Retirement age today merely signifies a conventional dateline for working—definitely not a parameter for ability to work; a fact *Harmony* highlights with successful second career models and expert comments on evolution in work dynamics. However, checking out the employment scenario for our anniversary issue, *Harmony* met with disappointment. Despite employers increasingly

acknowledging the valuable contribution retired silvers can make, placement bureaus like *monsterindia.com*, *naukri.com* and *clickjobs.com* are more inclined to younger applicants. A search for silver-friendly agencies led us to *jobsretired.com*, a job portal for silvers. A brainchild of 60 year-old Ravi Panagariya, the website—believed to be one of its kind in India—was inaugurated on 30 June 2008.

TAKING THE INITIATIVE

RAVI PANAGARIYA was senior vice-president at HEG Ltd Durg when he decided to take voluntary retirement in 2006. Moving back to his hometown Jaipur, he was confident that his experience would get him another job. Eventually, acquaintances helped him obtain three consultancy jobs. “Obviously, finding a job again depends on the retired person’s initiative and contacts,” he candidly admits.

Realising that most silvers face similar difficulties, Panagariya resolved to make the job-hunting process easier. He contacted several organisations in Jaipur and requested them to inform him about openings for retired people. Inserting an advertisement in a local newspaper on 1 January 2008, he invited silvers interested in second careers to contact him. Within a few days, the free service received a response from about 70 job aspirants—retired government officials, bankers, accountants, army officers, engineers. Encouraged by the response, Panagariya and his wife Asha, 58, decided to expand the service. They launched *www.jobsretired.com* [Interested persons can call 0141-2620844 or email rkpanagariya@rediffmail.com].



Gopal Sanger

Silvers can post their resumes on the website or apply for jobs; and employers can advertise vacancies and access resumes. The free service encourages both retired silvers and small and medium enterprises—Lotus Learning, Woven Magic, Sondhi Enterprises, Jain International, Kaushal Medicos—to register. Currently, the databank has over 1,200 resumes and a listing of 61 vacancies.

“Those who are not computer-savvy can either email or post their resumes to me,” says Panagariya, who uploads the information on their behalf. “However, our new helpline has re-

ally simplified the process.” Starting a computer training institute for teaching soft skills to silvers in Jaipur is next on Panagariya’s agenda.

Admitting that certain jobs have more openings, he identifies the five most popular sectors as NGOs, education and training, administration, consultancy and entrepreneurship. But whichever the preferred field—the same questions cross the mind—the challenges of the new job; skills or training required; how to apply; how much money to expect; and working hours. *Harmony* spoke to silvers who have gone through the process.

NGOS

After being a teacher of sociology for 25 years, **SRABONI HAZRA** retired from Mahadevi Birla School, Kolkata, in March 2007. For the past two years, the 62 year-old has been working as education and awareness officer at Craft Resource Centre, a fair trade organisation working for the socioeconomic progress of marginalised artisans at the grassroots level. The Centre provides artisan groups from all over India assistance related to finance, marketing, export and design. "My teaching background has helped in my new responsibilities that include welfare measures to ensure equity and justice, documentation and correspondence with international buyers," says Hazra.

Job description: Senior level personnel

Skills/training required: Experience from earlier job

How to apply: Word of mouth; advertisement

Money that can be earned: Rs 8,000 to Rs 10,000 per month

Expected hours of work: 7 to 8 hours for 5 to 5½ days a week



Shilbadra Datta

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Exercising the exit option in April 2007, **NITA JHAVERI** resigned as chief manager of State Bank of India

in Ahmedabad. After signing off on a fulfilling career, Jhaveri was hungry to take on a new one that could harness her long-honed professional skills and yet offer fresh challenges. The

desire to utilise her experience of over 30 years prompted her to take up education and training as a second career. Reputed training centres offer job-oriented training to help aspirants become employable and obtain suitable placement. "Institutes usually focus on coaching students for different careers," explains the 56 year-old. "For example, an institute can specialise in preparing students for competitive exams, banking and financial services, or learning languages and soft skills."

Job description: Senior faculty member

Skills/training required: Experience in relevant field; good theoretical knowledge of the subject; flair for teaching

How to apply: Advertisement; recommendation

Money that can be earned: Rs 30,000 to Rs 45,000 per month; Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,500 per session [visiting faculty]

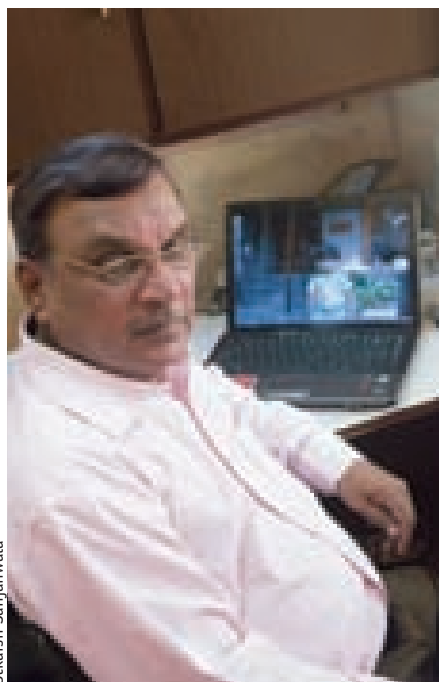
Expected hours of work: 40 hours a week



Samir Pathak

ADMINISTRATION

After almost 28 years in Bharat Bijlee Ltd, **SUBHASH WAGH** worked for eight years with an Italian collaboration that manufactured hydraulic elevators before retiring in 2005. Mumbai-based Wagh then joined a fledgling manufacturing unit at Versai as manager. "Helping establish the small-scale unit producing elevator components and train local people was a challenge," says the 64 year-old. "Not only did it require good leadership, but also the right approach and attitude along with strong interpersonal skills. Knowing the importance of saving time and manpower, I laid stress upon imparting necessary training to the workforce."



Utkarsh Sanjanwala

Job description: Managerial work
Skills/training required: Upgraded computer skills; keeping track of technological developments
How to apply: Advertisement; contacts
Money that can be earned: Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000 per month
Expected hours of work: Around 40 hours a week

CONSULTANCY

Three years ago, **VINOD KUMAR** decided to get empanelled with a few reputed consultancy companies. After retiring as general manager of Metro Railway Kolkata in 2004, Pune-based Kumar opted to register himself as a consultant rather than start his own consultancy firm. "This gives one the flexibility to choose assignments," says the 64 year-old civil engineer. "Civil engineering projects play an important role in improving the country's infrastructure and knowing that my expertise can make a positive contribution makes me feel good."

Job description: Senior managerial or technical personnel
Skills/training required: Upgraded



Hemant Patil

computer skills; knowledge of technological developments in area of specialisation

How to apply: Advertisement; direct application to company websites; contacts

Money that can be earned: Rs 100,000 to Rs 200,000 per month
Expected hours of work: 40 to 48 hours a week

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

After retirement in January 2006, **COL MAHAVEER KUMAR JAIN** refused private-sector job offers to return home to Jaipur and start his own security agency. The Directorate General Resettlement (DGR) under the Ministry of Defence assists ex-servicemen in their resettlement career and Col Jain opted for an institute-sponsored security management course. "Starting my agency has given me independence in the city of my choice," says the 57 year-old. "Arpan Suraksha Agency is registered with the DGR and my

security services are used by various PSUs and government organisations. I am happy to help ex-defence personnel with re-employment."

Business description: Starting a security agency
Skills/training required: 6-8 weeks course on security services
How to hire: DGR; advertisement; personal contacts
Money that can be earned: Rs 20,000 to Rs 30,000 per month
Expected hours of work: Erratic 4-6 hours a day

—With inputs from Nitika Bajpayee



Gopal Singher

Assist, protect and EMPOWER

Nitika Bajpayee looks at five categories of products that have transformed the lives of silvers

[+]

Innovators share a wish list of technology they would like to see

Illustrations: Rahul Krishnan





TEA-HEATING PEN DEVICE When dipped in a cup, this device would heat its contents. A signal light would inform the user when the beverage is heated.

—Wazir H (featured in January 2009)

WHEELCHAIRS

You may be surprised to learn that the earliest record of a wheelchair dates back to the 6th century—a stone slate found in China testifies to its use! Of course, over the years, this ubiquitous wheeled mobility aid has evolved considerably. Today's wheelchairs—manual or electric—can be customised for the user in terms of the seat size (width and depth), seat-to-floor height, seat angle, foot, leg and back rests, and optional accessories such as anti-tip bars or wheels, safety belts, extra support for limbs or neck, tray for food and holder for a water bottle, and even a commode.

Manual or self-propelling wheelchairs

These require human power to move them, either from the user or an attendant. Many manual wheelchairs can be folded for storage or placement into a vehicle. Indian manufacturers offer them in a variety of models.

Cost: Rs 4,000 onwards

Electric wheelchairs

These run (at the speed of about 6 km per hour) with the help of electric motors, which are powered by batteries. While older and portable models have a separate charger unit, newer models have an 'on-board charger' that can be plugged into a standard wall outlet. In the past couple of years, these wheelchairs have entered the Indian market from China, Japan and Europe.

Cost: Rs 45,000 onwards



SECURITY DEVICES

With silvers often being soft targets for criminals, a key prerequisite to independent living is security. Further, diminished faculties may lead to accidents within the home, such as fire or gas leaks. Fortunately, security systems have come a long way from the burglar alarms of old. Today, the Indian market offers a host of devices for every budget that can keep intruders out and warn silvers against calamities within.

Burglar alarms

The most basic security devices, these battery-operated systems sound a loud warning upon unauthorised entry. These detect intrusion only upon direct impact with a point of entry.

Cost: Rs 300 onwards

**Electronic sensors**

These highly sensitive devices can detect and track vibrations as well as breaking of glass and cutting of metal anywhere in the premises.

Cost: Rs 2,500 onwards

Visitor monitoring systems

These enable residents to see, hear and speak to visitors before opening the door. The system usually comprises a camera outside your home (with a visibility of up to 25 ft) that relays images to a display screen on a telephone or wall unit inside.

Cost: Rs 7,000 to 18,000

**Fire/smoke alarms**

These electronic devices (with battery backup) monitor ambient air quality in the premises. An alarm is sounded the instant smoke levels increase so that inhabitants can evacuate the premises immediately.

Cost: Rs 1,000 onwards

Gas leakage alarms

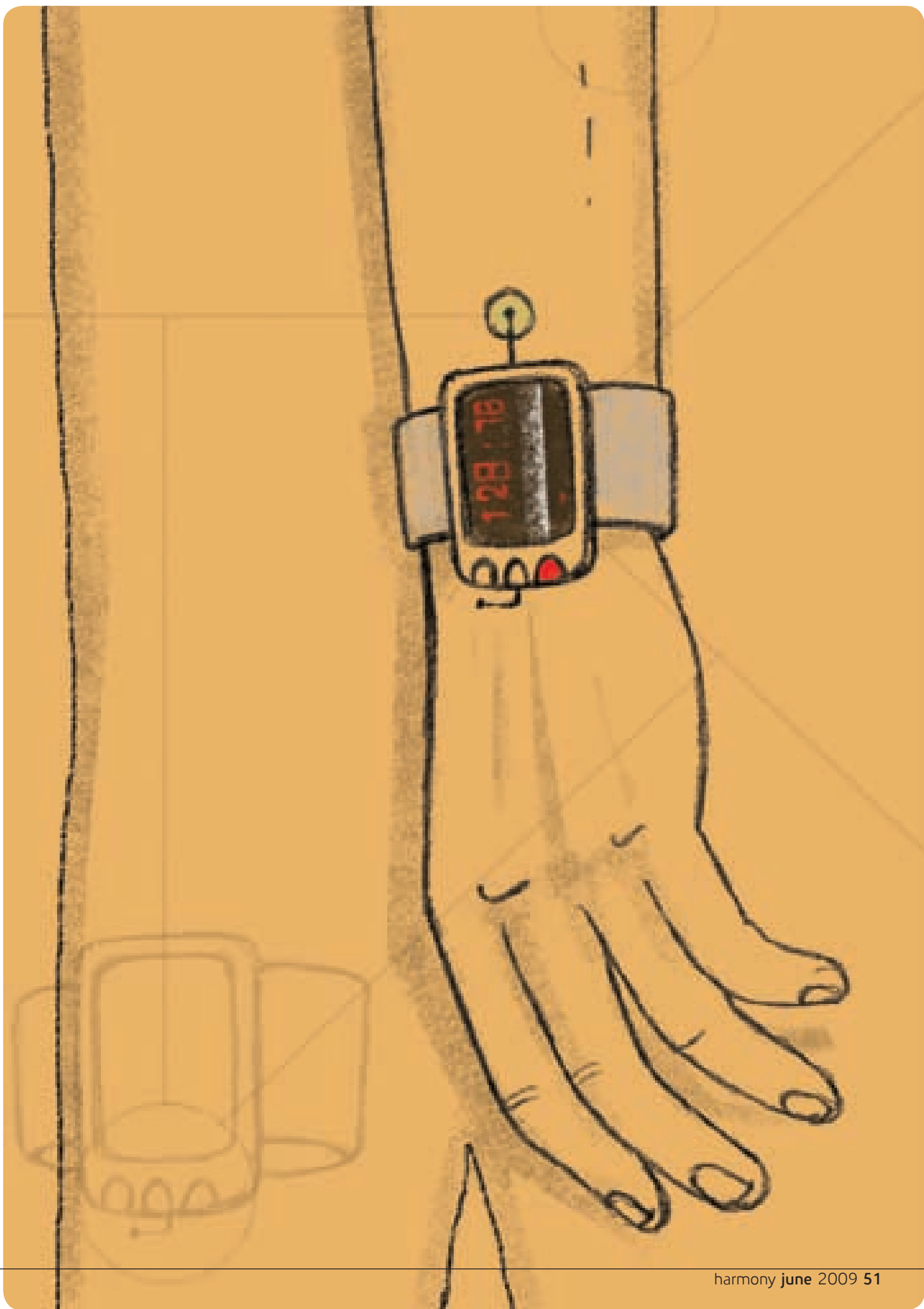
These electronic devices (with battery backup) detect leakage of LPG or CNG gas and alert inhabitants with a loud alarm.

Cost: Rs 700 to 1,500

SOLAR SUGAR MONITORING DEVICE Activated by solar energy, this portable device would work like any other blood sugar diagnostic device, using a drop of blood to check blood sugar. The device would work indoors and outdoors.

—Prem Singh Saini (featured in March 2009)









SOCIAL NETWORKING DEVICE This device would facilitate interaction between silvers and younger people, thereby stimulating grey cells and keeping dementia at bay.

—Gayatri Menon (featured in September 2008)

SILVER-FRIENDLY BATHROOMS

On average, a person spends about an hour a day in the bathroom, about three years of one's life! But for silvers, it's a potential danger zone—one of the leading causes of accidents is falls in the bathroom. Just a few modifications, however, can make the bathroom a safer place and go far in enabling independent living.

Non-slip/anti-skid tiles

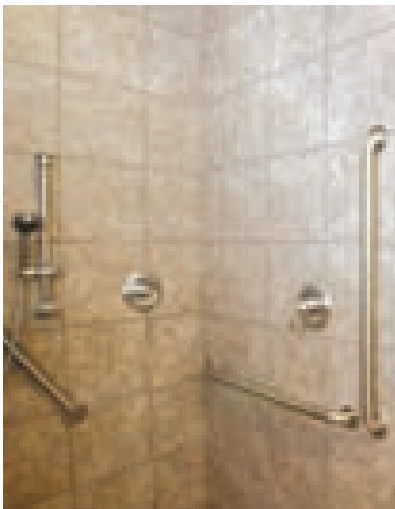
These low-maintenance tiles with low-absorption levels—available in an array of colours and sizes—ensure greater safety in 'wet' areas.

Cost: Rs 100 per sq ft onwards

Non-slip rubber bath mats

These mats with suction cups are another great idea in wet areas. They won't slide off the floor, making them secure to stand on while bathing or even brushing teeth.

Cost: Rs 300 onwards



Grab bars/toilet safety rails

These help you get on and off the toilet, help you stand up and keep steady in the shower, and keep you from slipping on wet tile. Wall-mounted ones are the most stable—they attach to the wall at both ends and you can position them how you want. Some attach to the wall at one end, connecting to a hinge. When you're not using them, they fall back. Sheltering-arm grab bars provide the best support. These come around both sides of the toilet and look like the armrests on a chair.

Cost: Rs 1,500 onwards

Hygiene/jet sprays

These devices, hooked up to the wall or the back of the toilet, make it easier for people to clean themselves, easily getting to the hard-to-reach areas and eliminating the need for a bucket and mug or toilet paper.

Cost: Rs 1,300 onwards

Automatic lights

No more fumbling in the dark. Ideal for the bathroom—and all over the house—these lights automatically turn on when they detect a human presence. When the room or area is vacant, they turn back off after a given period of time.

Cost: Rs 2,000 onwards



Faucets with lever handles

These are easier to turn than knobs, especially if you suffer from stiff joints owing to arthritis.

Cost: Rs 700 onwards

SPEAKING DEVICES

For the visually impaired or silvers who find it hard to read the displays of devices, speaking gadgets have come as a boon. Overseas, such 'talking' gadgets are already very common—from weighing scales to blood pressure monitors—and they are gradually appearing in the Indian market too.

Talking wall clocks

An inbuilt speaking circuit allows these battery-operated devices to announce the time every hour (or half an hour if desired). They can also be programmed to state the room temperature and come in an array of sizes, shapes and colours.

Cost: Rs 300 onwards



Electronic sensors

Talking calculators: As the user presses each number or symbol, these devices announce them so you are sure that you have inputted correctly. Then, they state the answer.

Cost: Rs 200 onwards

Talking washing machines

These devices give voice instructions to the user ('drop detergent', 'close lid', 'change cycle') as well as warnings ('overload', 'insufficient water'). Some also have language options—Electrolux Kelvinator's Washy Talky speaks in Hindi, English and Tamil.

Cost: Rs 20,000 onwards

AUTOMATIC WARMING SHOES

Powered by electricity, they would relieve pain in conditions such as arthritis, muscle sprains and spasms.

—Prem Singh Saini (featured in March 2009)









HEART ATTACK SENSOR A nanofabricated sensor device strapped to the body that would relay messages of an imminent heart attack in a person through global positioning system (GPS) to his or her doctor.

—A team at IIT Mumbai

SELF DIAGNOSTIC DEVICES

People suffering from conditions such as hypertension and diabetes require regular checkups to monitor their condition and ensure that their medication remains effective. But for many seniors who suffer from ambulatory difficulties or live far from a doctor, this often proves difficult. Today, self-diagnostic devices have come to their aid—these are portable, easy to operate and show accurate results.

Blood pressure monitors

With easy-to-read LCD/LED display screens, automatic power supply and large buttons, these user-friendly digital devices read blood pressure

and pulse rate from the wrist.

Cost: Rs 1,500 to Rs 5,000

Blood sugar monitors


These devices calculate blood sugar level in less than 10 seconds. A test strip with a blood sample (just one drop) is inserted into the device and results appear on the monitor.

Cost: Rs 1,200 to Rs 3,000



Yes, we can!

YOUR VOICE CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS. DON'T BELIEVE US? MEET FIVE SILVERS WHO ARE BUSY MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD, THEIR CITY, THEIR WORLD




“If you want to make a difference to someone’s life, you won’t let anything stop you.”

ASA DUTTA,
80, empowering women in the slums of Guwahati

Text: TAPATI BARUAH; Photo: SUBHAMOY BHATTACHARJEE

Asa Dutta refuses to sit back and let life pass her by. A former college lecturer, Dutta retired in 1987. She then joined Shri Sarada Sangha, a branch of the Ram Krishna Mission. Under her leadership, the NGO initiated an adult literacy programme in the early 1990s focusing on women living in slums in Guwahati. Dutta guided hundreds of women on the path to literacy. At the same time, she realised that education alone could not empower them. She approached sewing machine manufacturing company Usha to set up a tailoring school in

the slums where women could learn tailoring free of cost. While many women set up their own tailoring service, others were offered job opportunities in garment factories. In 2005, owing to frail health, doctors advised Dutta to ease up her frenetic pace. In 2007, the octogenarian completed a course in counselling from the Peace Centre in Guwahati. Though she does not tour the slums any longer, scores of poor women approach her regularly to seek advice on personal and financial matters. Besides counselling them on remedial measures, she continues to write letters on their behalf to relevant government bodies.



“Never give up on your dreams. I think of myself as the stamp that sticks onto the envelope till it reaches its destination.”

R SRIRAM,
79, driving the idea of a garbage
power plant in Bengaluru

Text: PRIYA N
Photo: PRASAD DURGA

For R Sriram, life got even busier after retirement. The 79 year-old, who retired as chief engineer from Karnataka State Electricity Board (KSEB) in 1987, is championing more than one cause. Thanks to his efforts, Karnataka will have its first garbage power plant in a couple of years. The proposed plant will convert 350 tonne of garbage everyday to generate 9,000 MW of electricity and methane, which will be piped to households as an alternative to LPG. Sriram first proposed the idea to the KSEB two decades ago, but his recommendation got entangled in administrative lethargy. But hundreds

of letters sent to government authorities over the past two decades have finally borne fruit. The government is now sizing up the proposal and plans are on to set up the plant in a landfill on the outskirts of the city. Sriram is also vice president of Trees for Free Trust, an eco-conservation group that has planted more than 20,000 trees in the past two decades. Further, a significant part of his day is focused on Ashvasan, a senior citizens' group that reaches out to lonely silvers. What's more, he is also supervising the upcoming orchidarium in Lal Bagh, in Bengaluru. Indeed, according to him, life is too short and 24 hours too little.



“The differently abled children I deal with keep me on my toes and help my mind stay young.”

MEENAKSHI BALASUBRAMANIAN,
62, helping differently abled youngsters in
Mumbai stand on their own feet

Text: RAJASHREE BALARAM; Photo: VILAS KALGUTKER

Sometimes the desire to change the world is borne out of one's own anguish. For Meenakshi Balasubramanian, her younger son Akhil's disability—he is mentally challenged—provoked her to reach out to others in the same situation. Balasubramanian, who earlier worked as a senior software professional, started the Mutually Beneficial Activity (MBA) Foundation in 2001 to help differently abled youngsters become self-reliant and lead meaningful lives. Starting from a one-bedroom flat in Chembur in suburban Mumbai, the MBA Foundation, sustained by private donations, opened two other centres in Mumbai, that serve as an 'office' and daycare/lifecare centre for over 120 mentally and physically challenged youngsters. At the Foundation, youngsters make and market soaps, candles, incense sticks, bags, greeting cards and squashes. They are

also taught skills like telephone operation, data entry and basic accounting.

The soft-spoken 62 year-old, supported by her husband, 68 year-old C R Balasubramanian, encourages her wards to do everything on their own—approach clients, conduct exhibitions, make presentations and follow up on product deliveries. The youngsters take home a stipend ranging between Rs 900 and Rs 3,600 every month derived from the sale of the products and donations. Balasubramanian has also helped around 50 differently abled youngsters find employment in private firms. She now plans to set up a residential centre in the outskirts of Mumbai in collaboration with a senior citizens' home, so retired parents of differently abled youngsters can live in close proximity to their children.

“Plants are our guards. Let’s protect them the way they protect us.”

DR M RAMAMURTHY,
54, created a biodiversity park
in Visakhapatnam

Text: RAJASHREE BALARAM

Photo courtesy: Dr RAMAMURTHY

Dr M Ramamurthy can talk about plants for hours. The 54 year-old’s passion is not limited to words alone though. The zoology professor is the driving force behind the six-acre biodiversity park near RCD Hospital in Visakhapatnam. Together with their students, Ramamurthy and his wife Mangathayi (also a professor) are founders of the Dolphin Nature Conservation Society, an eco-conservation group. Set up in 2004, the biodiversity park has more than 2,000 species of plants—600 species of rare endangered plants include a living fossil, ginkgo biloba,

dating back to the dinosaur age. The park is also home to rare species of butterflies, geckos and birds. Ramamurthy proposed the idea of the park to the area’s district collector in 2001, after which it took him three years to nurture it to the lush abundance it displays today—he spends around Rs 8,000 every month on the park’s upkeep. Though he is stretched for funds, he is not short of enthusiasm and support—his wife, two sons and students assist him with maintenance including nurturing plants, planting saplings, recording botanical data and supervising fauna.

At present, the park is open only to botanists, zoologists, researchers and school and college students. Many medical researchers from all over the country visit the park to study the medicinal plants at the park and explore new possibilities in traditional medicine. Ramamurthy and his students now plan to expand the park and create more such eco-zones all over the country.





“The least we can do for animals is let them live with dignity.”

LEELA PARULEKAR,
73, opening a home for
abandoned strays in Pune

Text: KHURSHEED DINSHAW
Photo: HEMANT PATIL

Leela Parulekar's love for animals runs deep—her spacious bungalow in Pune is home to over 200 abandoned and injured stray animals. Besides 100 dogs, there are 25 cattle, 15 birds and a couple of donkeys and pigs. Parulekar, now ailing and wheelchair-bound after a paralytic attack, has been running the Jeevraksha Public Trust that looks after these animals for the past 55 years. Besides food and shelter, the animals also receive 24-hour medical attention; the gritty 73 year-old has hired two doctors—and a nurse to supervise her pets' needs. However, not every animal who comes here stays on. Birds injured by kite strings are nursed back to health and returned to the skies after a few days. Parulekar loves her animals too much to keep them on a leash. They have a free run of the house and the surrounding yard. In fact, she now uses her bathroom as her drawing room, as she says a bed, a shelf, a wash basin and a commode are all that she needs anyway. Monthly expenses for running the shelter touch Rs 250,000. Parulekar survives on her inheritance; her father Nanasaheb Parulekar was a well known philanthropist and founder of the Marathi daily *Sakal*. Money is the last thing on her mind though. The half French-half Indian animal lover has a deeper concern: “Who will look after my pets when I am gone?”

आपका जीवन आसान बनाने के लिए हम जो हजारों प्रयास करते हैं



प्रस्तुत हैं उनमें से कुछ....

- गृह स्वामियों के हित में बैंकों एवं आवास वित्त कम्पनियों का **विनियमन एवं पर्यवेक्षण**
- महत्वपूर्ण वित्तीय बैकअप एवं संबद्ध संसाधनों सहित हाऊसिंग सेक्टर को **वित्तीय सहायता**
- भारत के ग्रामीण एवं शहरी निर्धन वंचित वर्गों को आवास प्रदान करने के लिए **माइक्रो फाइनेंस (सूक्ष्म वित्त ऋण)** की व्यवस्था
- ग्रामीण आवास क्षेत्र में पुनर्वित्त प्रचालन को बढ़ाने हेतु **ग्रामीण आवास निधि** द्वारा रु. 2000 करोड़ की अनुदान राशि
- व्यक्तिगत उधारकर्ताओं के हित में कम ब्याज दर पर आवास वित्त कम्पनियों के 20 लाख से कम पुनर्वित्त होम लोन के लिए रु. 4.000 की **विशेष पुनर्वित्त सुविधा**
- दीर्घावधि उपायों सहित हाऊसिंग सेक्टर का **संवर्धन एवं विकास**
- **वरिष्ठ नागरिकों के लिए आरएमएल योजना**, जिसने साबित किया

है कि यह उनके हित में विशेष रूप से नियोजित एक सामयिक सामाजिक सुरक्षा तंत्र है।

- **एनएचबी हाऊसिंग इंफो इंडिया**, भारत का एक हाऊसिंग पोर्टल है, जो व्यापक सूचना प्रदान करने के साथ-साथ ग्राहक हितैषी, 24 x 7 x 365 इंटरफेस है।
- **होम लोन काउन्सलिंग** एक होम लोन काउन्सलिंग डिप्लोमा प्रोग्राम है जो एनएचबी द्वारा प्रायोजित बैंकिंग एवं फाइनेंस संस्थान द्वारा आरंभ किया गया है।
- **एनएचबी रेजीडेक्स** एक अभूतपूर्व बाजार इनडेक्स है जो विशेष रूप से हाऊसिंग सेक्टर के सभी शेयर धारकों को सेवा प्रदान कर रहा है।

संसाधन

- **एनएचबी सुनिधि एवं एनएचबी सुवृद्धि** सावधि जमा व्यक्तिगत एवं संस्था स्तर पर आकर्षक विशेषताओं से युक्त विश्वसनीय निवेश के मौके प्रदान करता है।



राष्ट्रीय आवास बैंक

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A traveller's diary

Bitten by wanderlust?
Author Timeri Murari recommends five
places that stand out in his memory

KAILASH MANSAROVAR

As I grow older the call for adventure becomes louder, a chance to experience more before the end descends abruptly. When I saw the notice in the newspaper that the application date for the pilgrimage to Mount Kailash and Mansarovar was closing, I decided to apply. It was the adventure in the Himalaya that I wanted most, and here was a way of doing it. To my surprise, I was accepted.

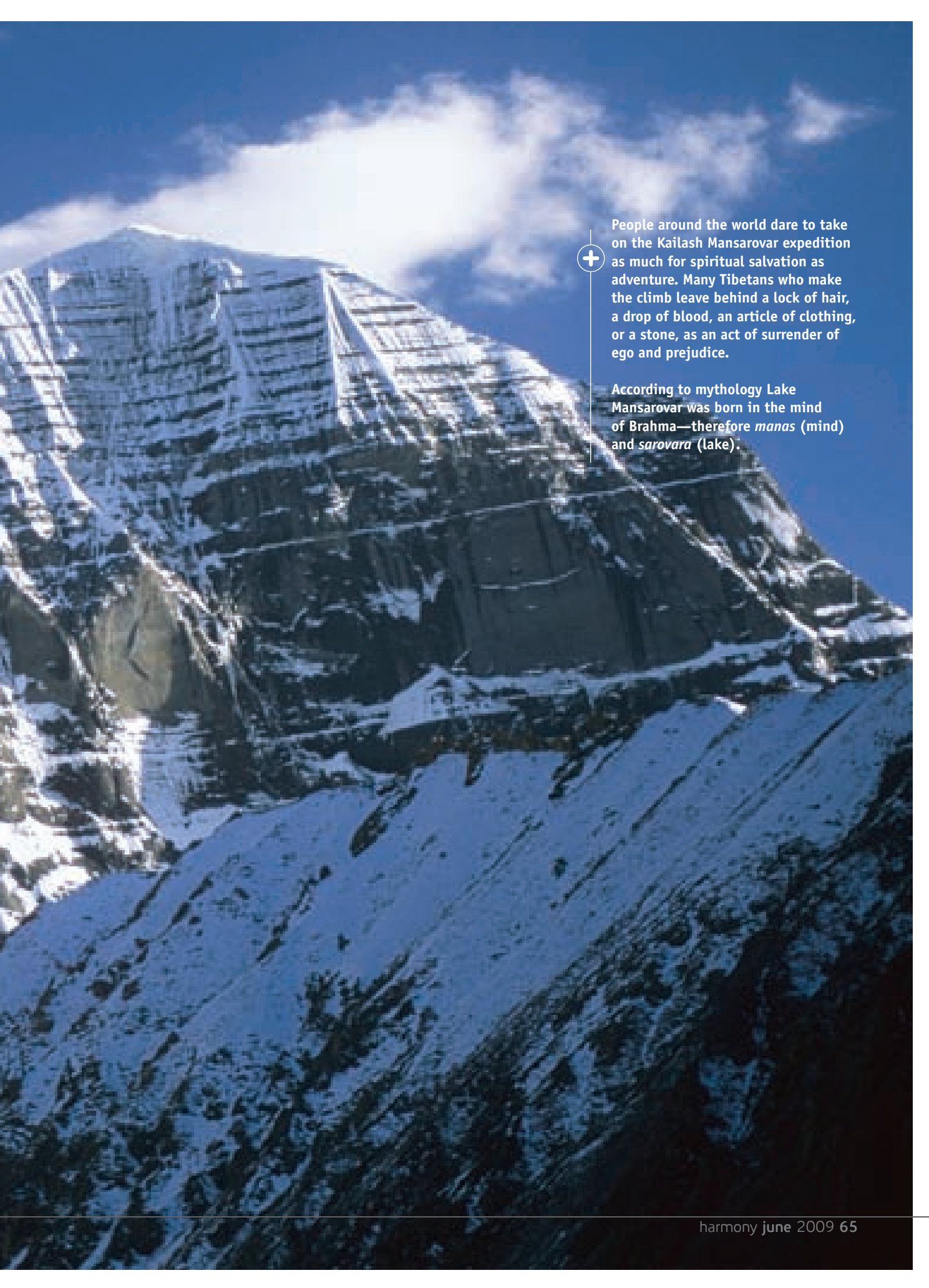
This pilgrimage is conducted by the Indian government and you have to pass a medical in Delhi, so one does need to be fit, no matter what your age. When you pass, you're driven up the foothills through Uttaranchal to Dharchula near the Nepal border. I was with 30 others and if I was looking for an adventure I couldn't have chosen a more arduous one. On the second day, we had to do an 18-km trek along a narrow ledge atop the ferocious Kali River. The ledge was a rollercoaster. The accommodation was, rightly, Spartan, sharing a floor with a dozen others on exhausted mattresses.

On the second day, I learned that distances in the Himalayas are

not horizontal but vertical. And the climb was a steep 80°. At 64, I wasn't the oldest. Jamsaheb, a slim, wiry man, was 70. I was handicapped by a recent knee surgery and limped the best I could. By the fourth day, fitness kicked in, though the limp remained, and I finally experienced the Himalaya.

As far as I could see were snow-capped peaks, savage triangular slopes, clear air and, at night, the Milky Way close enough to touch. The hardest part was yet to come. To enter Tibet we had to cross the Lipulekh Pass at 5,334 m—where it's near impossible to breathe. It was a one-step, five-minute-deep-breaths climb. I knew I would have to climb even higher if I was to perform the *parikrama* (circumambulation) of Mount Kailash and cross the Dolma La.

It was a bitterly cold day when I crossed at 5,550 m. Kailash towered above me and I knew countless pilgrims had died making the journey. Although Mansarovar is the highest lake in the world, and mirrors the sky with its subtle changes in colouring, for me the *parikrama* of Kailash, the physical conquest, was the best adventure I'd experienced. I'll always keep looking for others.



People around the world dare to take on the Kailash Mansarovar expedition as much for spiritual salvation as adventure. Many Tibetans who make the climb leave behind a lock of hair, a drop of blood, an article of clothing, or a stone, as an act of surrender of ego and prejudice.

According to mythology Lake Mansarovar was born in the mind of Brahma—therefore *manas* (mind) and *sarovara* (lake).

HAMPI, KARNATAKA

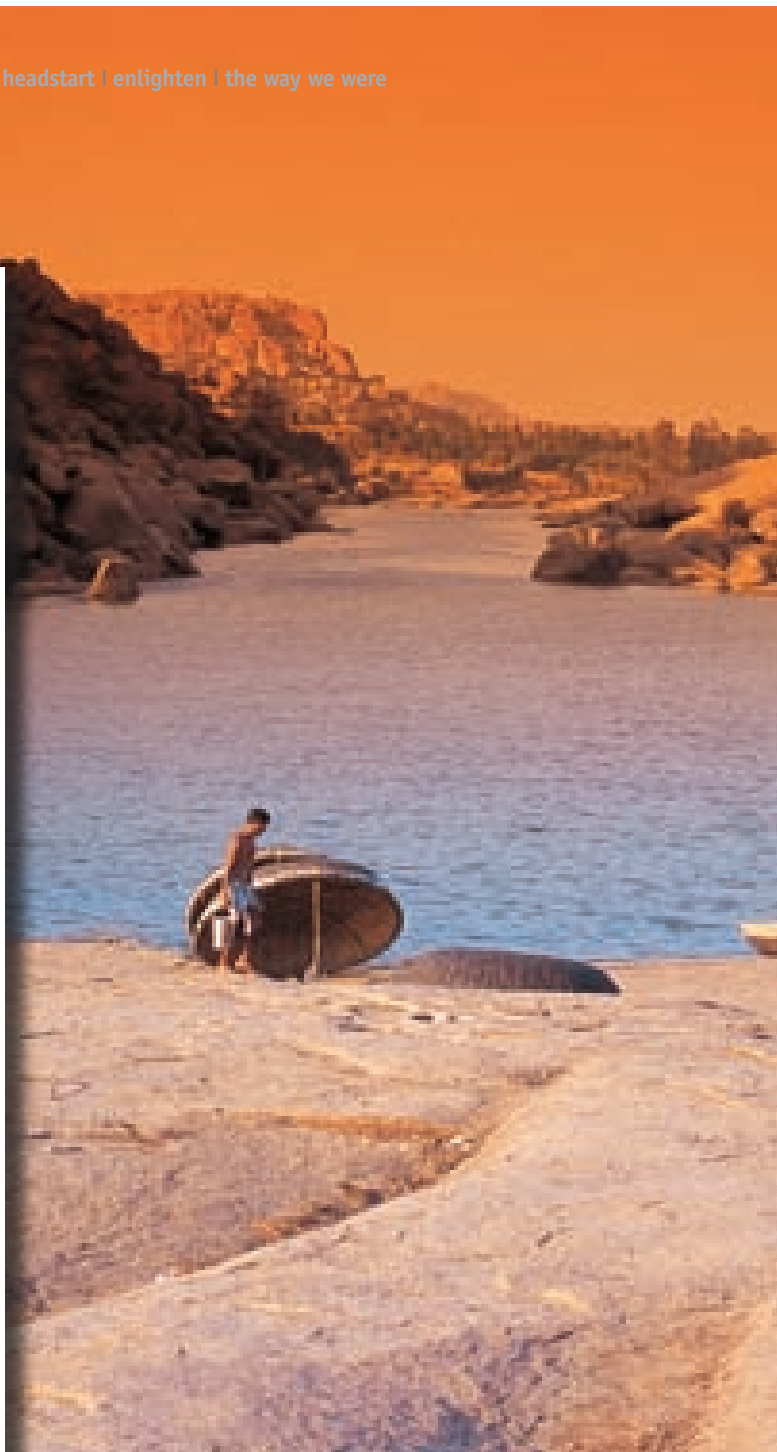
India is the graveyard of empires. Up north we can glimpse their skeletal remains—the Afghans, the Mughals, the British. There are others scattered around India that I've passed through. But the one I've returned to twice is the Vijayanagara Empire that existed from the mid-14th century to 1565.

In 1443, Abdur Razzaq, the Persian envoy, wrote "The city of Bidjanagar (Vijayanagara) is such that the pupil of the eye has never seen a place like it, and the ear of intelligence has never been informed that there existed anything to equal it in the world."

The first time I went to Hampi by car from Bengaluru, but by the time of my second trip there was a train to Hospet. Hampi is the ruin of the capital of the empire and it's the perfect place to spend a few days exploring the ruins. It's too scattered to be done in a day or two. I spent four days in the Mallagi hotel in Hospet the first time, but on my second trip I stayed virtually at the doorstep of Hampi at the government guest house.

Hampi is now a world heritage site and the Karnataka archaeological department has been restoring what they can over the years. You'll need a good guide to take you around. On my first day I climbed up to the ramparts of the fortress walls to look out over the spread of ruined temples, palaces and the royal elephant stables. The landscape is also filled with huge boulders; doubtless the city was built around them, the granite used for the buildings. And you can glimpse a tributary of the Tungabhadra River flowing through the low rocky hills. I took a coracle across and heard strange music coming from a nearby cave. When I looked in, a European was sitting cross-legged playing a guitar and the cave had the perfect acoustics.

The next day I wandered through the temple, the excavated temple tank—a great architectural piece—and then to the palace area. The elephant stables are as wonderful as the cool palaces with the indoor pool. There are ruined gateways, ruined watchtowers and many broken temples. Each night I dreamt of what had been, and saw it all anew the next day. I'll probably return as there is still a lot to see beyond the ruined city.





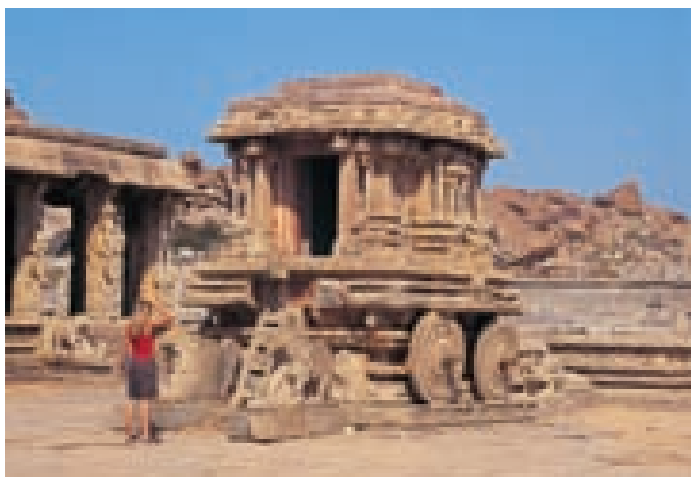
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The boulder-strewn landscape of Hampi is straight out of a surreal dream. Though the heaps of boulders perched precariously over one another may look like pieces of abstract art fashioned by the human hand, these boulders—millions of years ago—were part of gigantic granite monoliths. Over the eons, storm, water and heat honed the monoliths into their present unique form.

While building the Hampi temples, Vijayanagara sculptors used an innovative way to slice each boulder. They drilled holes along the boulder, fixed wooden pegs into the holes and poured water over the holes. The soaked wood expanded in size and neatly sliced the boulder into two.

(Clockwise from top) Coracles moored to the banks of the Tungabhadra; ruins of a tower; the famous chariot inside the Vitthala temple complex; heritage status notwithstanding, hawkers throng the ruins to peddle a variety of wares

Prakash Israni



KONARK, ORISSA

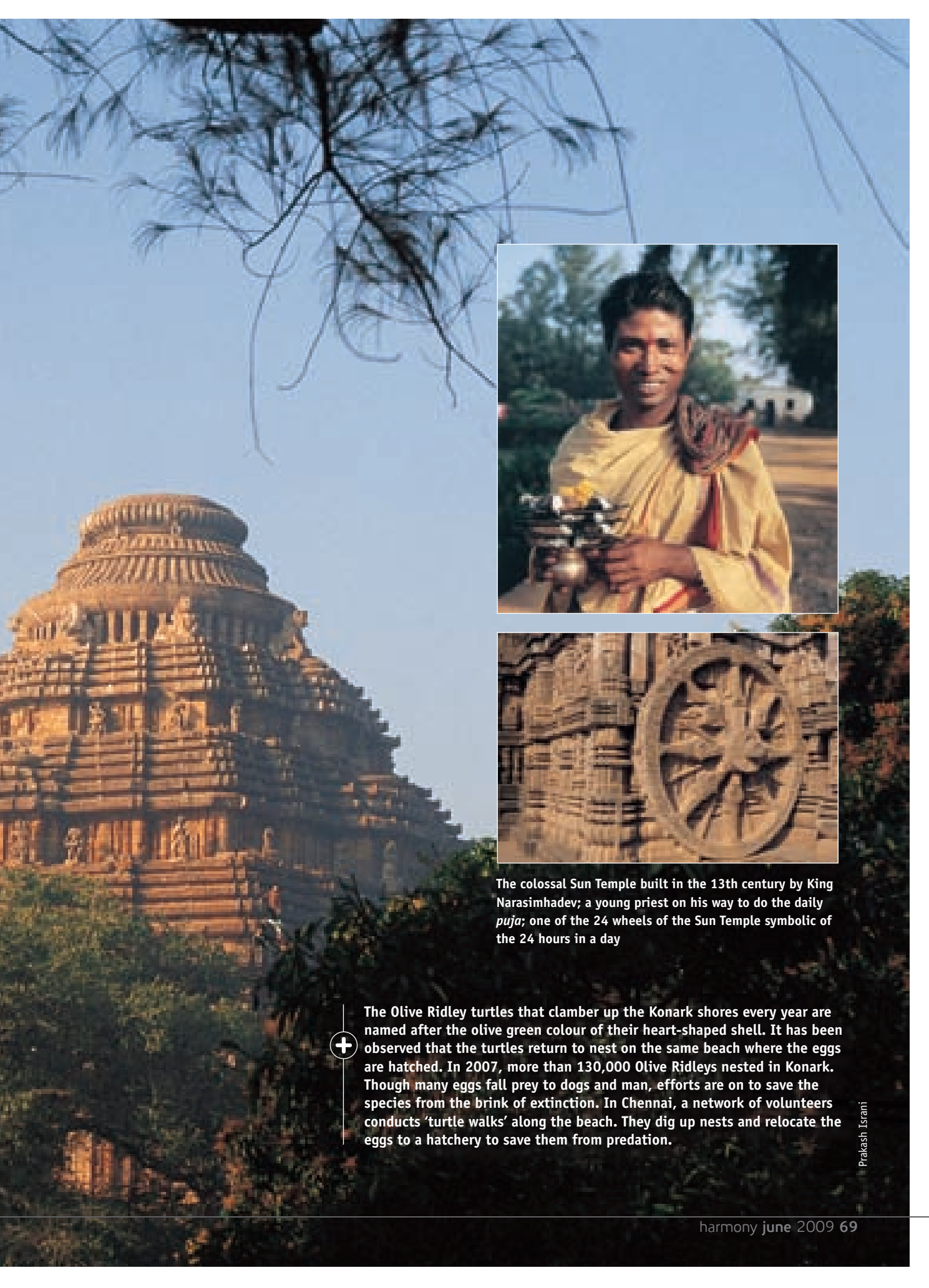
India has the second longest beach in the world and I grew up near it—the Marina in Chennai. It was a place of pleasure in the evenings, a stretch of clean sand as far as a child's eye could see. But, over the years, all our popular beaches have become colonised by crowds and stalls. For instance, Goa has been invaded by backpackers and has become tacky. Finding a quiet, beautiful beach along India's huge coastline was a daunting challenge. I didn't want to find one so remote that I needed a helicopter to get to it.

Then I found one by chance. I was making a film around Konark when I discovered a beautiful beach, seldom crowded, no stalls, and just a few metres away. Just before dawn, standing on the deserted beach, watching the sun rise, I could understand why the sun temple was built. The sun's rays lit it with cool morning light and the beach and the sea became a seamless part of the temple.

I imagined that King Narasimhadev (1236-1264 AD) must have stood where I was standing on the white sands watching the sun rise and decided he would build a temple at this very spot. It is a massive structure in the shape of a giant chariot on 12 pairs of exquisitely carved wheels and drawn by seven prancing horses. The entrance to the temple is guarded by two great lions crushing a war elephant. And each elephant lies on top of a human. The temple symbolises the stride of the sun. It's now a world heritage site and the whole complex is set in a well-maintained garden.

Nearby there is a state government guest house with spare but comfortable rooms, and a bit further away are a couple of backpacker hotels. During the day there are visiting tourists and coconut sellers cluttering the landscape. But by dusk they've retreated and it's the best time then to go out onto the beach when it's cool and the sea just a sleepy murmur.

During the turtle nesting season, the beach does get crowded with them as they've swum from as far away as the Pacific Ocean to lay their eggs here in shallow pits dug in the sand. Tragically, though, you'll also see dead turtles killed by the trawlers that are supposedly prohibited from fishing on this coastline. If you time your visit right, you can wait for the eggs to hatch and help protect the babies from poachers and birds, make it to the sea and start the cycle of life all over again. Where else can you find a sun temple to your back, a clean beach underfoot and life's natural cycle around you?



The colossal Sun Temple built in the 13th century by King Narasimhadev; a young priest on his way to do the daily *pūja*; one of the 24 wheels of the Sun Temple symbolic of the 24 hours in a day



The Olive Ridley turtles that clamber up the Konark shores every year are named after the olive green colour of their heart-shaped shell. It has been observed that the turtles return to nest on the same beach where the eggs are hatched. In 2007, more than 130,000 Olive Ridleys nested in Konark. Though many eggs fall prey to dogs and man, efforts are on to save the species from the brink of extinction. In Chennai, a network of volunteers conducts 'turtle walks' along the beach. They dig up nests and relocate the eggs to a hatchery to save them from predation.

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK, ASSAM

I confess I have a weakness for wildlife. It probably stems from my childhood when, once, driving the ghat road to Ooty an elephant took a dislike to our car and heaved it down the road. I couldn't blame it; after all it had been living there long before we noisily invaded its habitat. I find being close to nature soothing, calming and reassuring. As I had seen the African rhino in Kenya, I thought I must visit our own rhinos before they're all poached away. Kaziranga isn't easy to reach. The drive from Guwahati, the nearest airport, is around four hours along good roads, and Assam's flat beauty is seductive.

Kaziranga is the oldest reserve in India. Apart from the one-horned rhino there are also tigers, panthers, elephants, bears and countless species of birds. It's bordered by the Brahmaputra River, which floods the reserve every monsoon. The authorities have built low hills for the animals to retreat to from the flood waters.

There are a number of 'lodges' in Kaziranga. Normally, I prefer basic accommodation for safaris but, as I'd gone on New Year's Eve, I ended up in a three-star, the Iora, as the others were fully booked. It turned out to be very comfortable. It's a 10-minute drive from the hotel to the Kaziranga entrance on a cool afternoon.

The jeep has its guide and the narrow dirt road cuts through the jungle. Unlike our other sanctuaries, Assam is also one of the richest biodiversity zones in the world. It's a lush, beautiful, tropical state and you can almost feel the vegetation growing as you drive through. I doubt we'll spot a tiger in such thick undergrowth and the high elephant grass. At first, all I can spot is a lone *barasingha* [a swamp deer, native to India and Nepal], and my rhino seems to be shy and secretive. And then I see one, still as a massive boulder only a few feet off the road. He, or she, is built like a tank, solid, powerful, a massive beast of armour-plated hide and the vicious horn rising above its mouth. Mentally comparing it, I believe it is larger than the African rhino. Soon, we saw others, mostly at a distance around the ponds and lakes. Apart from a jeep ride, the reserve also has elephants to take one through the tall grass.

As only Assam has the rhino, it's certainly worth the journey, though for tigers Ranthambore offers the best sighting while other jungles are just too dense to spot it.





In 2005, when the park celebrated its centenary, park officials invited the descendants of Lord Curzon. He started the movement for the conservation of rhinoceros in the region, which finally led to the creation of Kaziranga Proposed Reserve Forest in 1905.

According to the lore of the Karbi tribes who live around the park, a woman named Kajir once ruled over the area which finally led to the place being called *kajir-a-rang* (the village of Kajir).

The ideal time to visit the park is between November and April, as during the monsoon the swollen Brahmaputra gushes through the low-lying grasslands and animals tend to migrate across the park.

CHENNAI CITY

I discovered that a trek was the best way to get a street's-eye view of a city that we skim past in our cars, two-wheelers or buses. Every city has its sites not shown on the average tourist map. There are hidden alleys, cul-de-sacs, forgotten buildings that no one notices, except the historian. In some ways it's better than a trek in the wild as, if you get tired, you can always return to your hotel or home.

Sriram V is one of Chennai's historians with an eye for the city's cultural past as well as the locations where artists—dancers and musicians—once lived. As a people, especially in Tamil Nadu, we're philistines about our past. We either neglect it, allowing great temples or palaces to just disintegrate, or quite deliberately destroy them to put up ugly high-rises. As Tamil Nadu has no heritage act, I thought I'd better join a city trek to get a glimpse of our disappearing past. Sriram V conducts his treks during the winter months.

My trek started early before the traffic and the heat built up. We began on Esplanade near the High Court. The beautiful but old YMCA building built in 1890 was under threat of demolition. It's a four-storey building with an Indo-Saracenic exterior. The YMCA one however had been neglected and Sriram took us on a tour of the interior—so cool with those high ceilings, *chunam* (lime) walls and stone floors. Fortunately, for the city, there's a stay on the demolition—for the moment.

But along the Esplanade flows Georgetown where the famous *madrasi*—lawyers, landowners and musicians—once lived. We walked to the beautiful Armenian Church (1772) with its belfry of six bells. Down another street, the famous *devadasi*, Bangalore Nagarithamma, once held court. The building, barely standing, now is cluttered with office boards. On Bunder Street (No. 41) is the house of Kovur Sundaresa Mudaliar where the saint-composer Thyagaraja stayed when he visited Chennai. As we wander down Georgetown, Sriram has a story for every old building. The tragedy is that, unlike in Europe, we don't place placards on the buildings to tell us who lived there. Every city has these kinds of treks, and they're worth every moment of your time to glimpse a vanishing past. There was one city trek I wanted to do in Kolkata recently but unfortunately it was the wrong time of the year. As city treks are organised by private citizens, you need to find out when and where long before you visit.

For quick facts on these destinations, go to 'Destination' on www.harmonyindia.org



Bangalore Nagarathnamma who lived in Georgetown was among the earliest Indian women to pay income tax. She was a renowned *devadasi*. (*Devadasi* were girls pledged to deities who dedicated their lives to singing litanies and performing dances in temples.) In 1911, when she published *Radhika Santwanamu*, an 18th century erotic classic written by Muddu Palani, a courtesan, she triggered India's first obscenity trial. A champion of women's rights, Nagarathnamma was skilled in both classical dance and music.



Though it's been two decades since the late Tamil superstar turned politician MG Ramachandran passed away, thousands of fans still flock to the MGR Memorial every week; (inset) Mount Road; Valluvur Kottam, a chariot shaped structure dedicated to Tamil poet and saint Thiruvalluvar

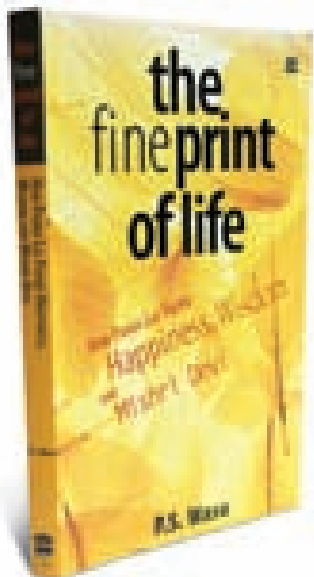
WordPOWER

Arati Rajan Menon recommends five books that can help you steal a march on destiny

HAPPINESS AT HAND

THE FINE PRINT OF LIFE: HOW PANNA LAL FOUND HAPPINESS, WISDOM AND MISHRI DEVI

BY P S WASU HARPER COLLINS; RS 195; 177 PAGES



'Life skills facilitator', P S Wasu's job descriptor, doesn't quite capture the joy he brings to people—he shows his clients how beautiful life is and then gives them the tools to celebrate it. *The Fine Print of Life* brings his workshop home to you. 'Minding It', 'Finding It', 'Seeing It', 'Being It', 'Walking It' and 'Playing It' are Wasu's 5 ½ wheels—with 'It' being 'life'—each a cyclical train of thought that can turn out to be our "wheel of fortune, triggering our creativity, releasing our passion and setting our life on a roll". We explore these wheels with the help of characters like Panna Lal, Mishri Devi, Hira Lal and Jalebi Devi. In them, we see our own struggles and successes; through them, we see the possibilities inherent in our paths. If life is indeed an ecstatic journey of self-discovery as Wasu insists, he's just handed us the keys to a Porsche to travel it in style.

Silver takeaway: Explore your mind; live on surprises; find your Shangri-la

+ Excerpt

To all appearances, Panna Lal is doing well for himself. He has a good job, a beautiful apartment and a loving family. But deep down in his heart, he has a nagging feeling that something is missing in his life. There is a vague longing to bloom, to be creative, to be playful, to let go of inhibitions, to connect, to experience joy and to have a sense of fulfilment.

Come to think of it, there is a kind of nostalgia in this longing. What Panna Lal longs for is actually the Shangri-la he lost in the process of growing up. So perhaps it is a longing to become a child again! Of course, he can't become a child at the physical level, but certainly he can be one at the psychological level. He can do so by removing the debris from his Shangri-la and nurturing it back to its original lushness. Once he does that, he will be ready to play in his Shangri-la. He will be ready to bloom, to be creative, to be playful, to let go of inhibitions, to connect, to experience joy and to have a sense of fulfilment.

There is a Panna Lal in all of us. Whether we are 'successful' or 'not so successful' in life, we all have an unexpressed longing to become children again and play in our own Shangri-la.

It is possible for us to be full-time children while we continue to do what we normally do as grown-ups. Far from being a hindrance, it will make us more efficient and effective in what we do. When we have the openness of a child, we will have fresh perceptions. As a result, we will have new ideas that will bring us better solutions to problems. We will be more creative. When we cultivate the enthusiasm of a child, we will pursue our goals with greater passion. As a result we will have greater chances of being successful.

When we immerse ourselves into a task fully the way children do, we will do it better and faster. When we develop the keenness and sensitivity of a child's mind, we will be more responsive to what needs doing in our life. Living as full-time children will not only satisfy our inner longing to play in our Shangri-la, it is the only way to live optimally and to have a fulfilling life.

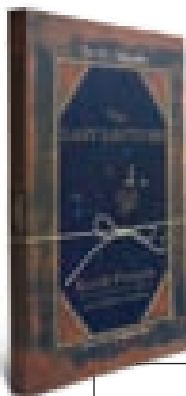
SEIZE THE DAY

THE LAST LECTURE

BY RANDY PAUSCH

HODDER; RS 295; 206 PAGES

There's a tradition in Western academe known as the 'last lecture'. Eminent professors are often called upon to imagine that this was the last time they would speak: What wisdom would they confer upon the world? When 47 year-old computer science professor Randy Pausch stepped in front of his audience at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to deliver his last lecture in 2007, he didn't have to pretend—he was dying of pancreatic cancer. But his lecture, titled 'Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams' was no dirge but a celebration of life, a clarion call to seize every moment. (You can watch it on www.youtube.com/watch?v=ji5_Mq-icxSo) Its incredible resonance prompted this book, released just weeks before Pausch succumbed to his illness in late July 2008. Expanding on the theme of his lecture, he takes us through what he's seen, what he's learnt, with stories, aphorisms and anecdotes, displaying a wicked sense of humour and keen insight. Challenges,



for him, are to be relished ("brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something") and risks taken. For this lesson in positive psychology, the professor gets an A+.

Silver takeaway: Seize every moment; savour challenges; enable the dreams of others



Be the 'First Penguin'

Failure is not just acceptable, it's often essential, insists Pausch. For the 'Building Virtual Worlds' course he taught at Carnegie Mellon, he created a 'First Penguin Award' that went to the team that took the biggest gamble in trying new ideas or new technology, while failing to achieve their stated goals. "In essence, it was an award for 'glorious failure' and it celebrated out-of-the-box thinking and using imagination in a daring way. The other students came to understand that First Penguin winners were losers who were definitely going somewhere. The title of the award came from the notion that where penguins are about to jump into water that might contain predators, well, somebody's got to be the first penguin."

STOP THE SEARCH

DOING NOTHING

BY STEVEN HARRISON

WISDOM TREE; RS 195; 132 PAGES

Do you want a glimpse of daybreak after a dark night of the soul? If you still haven't found what you're looking for after years of spiritual searching, listen to Steven Harrison. He studied the world's philosophies, sought out every mystic, seer and yogi he could find, and subjected himself to severe austerities and meditation but his questions continued to plague him. Then he decided to do nothing—"as it turns out, nothing is a surprisingly active place, but it is here that we discover who and what we are." The simple act of stopping the search, he argues, can help you discover your true nature. "Thought constricts or limits but consciousness is limitless." Harrison urges readers to let this consciousness lead us through the collapse of the self, making us truly free. We then become a force field of energy that freely communicates with those around us, without any distortion from preconceived notion, ideol-



ogy or religion. This contact with others, in Harrison's view, will transform us, and life as we think we know it.

Silver takeaway: Discard dogma; communicate without language; set your consciousness free



An evolutionary leap?

According to Harrison, we age because we remember to do so as an expression of our genetic code. But do we have to accept it as a finite conclusion? Not in his view. "Many life-forms regenerate," he argues. "Some simple life-forms are virtually immortal. What is the effect of consciousness on the ageing process, on the encoded memory of the genetic material? Death itself becomes a question in the face of consciousness." He insists that the "quantum/mystical/magical universe" we inhabit has the potential for eradication of disease, ageing, and death. We just have to lose thousands of years of conditioning and let our consciousness imbibe an unconditioned energy, free from thought or memory. "This energy entered into the psychosomatic conditioning, thereby transforming it, may be the next evolutionary leap."

TAP YOUR ENERGY

THE ONLY WAY OUT IS WITHIN

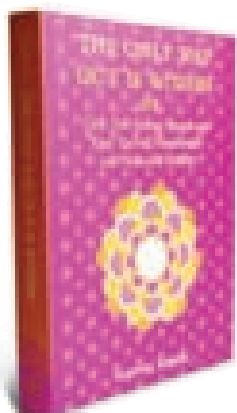
BY ROHINI SINGH

HAY HOUSE; RS 195; 258 PAGES

Right off the bat, alternative healer and personal growth teacher Rohini Singh tells you that this book isn't for casual 'browsers' but serious 'seekers'—people who are looking to explore the self. Social conditioning that begins in childhood, which tells us how to feel, behave and conform, lets our outer world dominate our inner one, she insists. The key to health, happiness and self-actualisation, then, is to put your inner self back on top. For this, the key is your 'invisible energy system'. In lucid language, she helps the reader gauge the efficiency of this system; identify energy guzzlers and emotional traps; use the mind (rather than letting it use you); choose the physical, mental and emotional states you want to dwell in; and co-create your reality. A

journey of empowerment, where the stops include insights from diverse sources (the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the Buddha, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, even Anais Nin) and the terminus is true self-awareness.

Silver takeaway: Release negativity; boost your energy; happiness is a choice



What are 'energy thieves'?

How does our life force dwindle? Singh blames 'energy thieves' or emotions that drag you down. Here's her list of the bad guys:

Worry: "an imaginary screen onto which we can project images of the future"

Holding on to hurt: "keeps you chained to the past"

Guilt: "wears you out as you continue to carry it"

Regret: "taunts us—or haunts us"

Fear: "a game of simulation where you forget it's only a game"

Grief: "precludes you from acknowledging the gift of life"

Self-pity: "a deliciously sharp well—one small slip and you're in"

Jealousy: "colludes with suspicion to tie you up in a web of misery"

Anger: "the symptom, not the cause, of the underlying malaise"

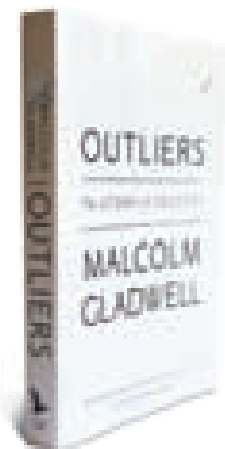
DECODING SUCCESS

OUTLIERS

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

PENGUIN; RS 399;

309 PAGES



Here's a reality check in a world obsessed with the 'individual': achievement comes not just from extraordinary talents but extraordinary opportunities. That's the refrain of *Outliers*—a scientific term to describe phenomena that lie outside normal experience—Malcolm Gladwell's attempt to explain why some people achieve dizzying heights of success. While he recognises the innate talents of certain individuals, he effectively argues that we are so blinded by the myth of "the best, the brightest and the self-made", that we often ignore the "accumulative advantage" that helped them hone these talents, such as strong cultural legacies; the chance to practise their skills (10,000 hours, he says, is the ticket to greatness); their "practical intelligence" as opposed to just IQ that tells them what to say, to whom, and for maximum effect; and even plain old fashioned luck that enabled them to be at the right place at the right time. To prove his theories, Gladwell uses a variety of examples, from the Beatles and Bill Gates to paddy farmers and math whiz-kids in Asia. While the tone of the book remains conversational, the underlying message is a compelling one: success is within our grasp if we make the effort to understand the factors that drive our world, and our own place in it.

Silver takeaway: Know your potential; understand your cultural legacy; control success



Authorspeak

"Outliers are men and women who, for one reason or another, are so accomplished and so extraordinary and so outside of ordinary experience that they are as puzzling to the rest of us as a cold day in August. My wish with *Outliers*, the book, is that it makes us understand how much of a group project success is. When outliers become outliers it is not just because of their own efforts. It's because of the contributions of lots of different people and lots of different circumstances—and that means that we, as a society, have more control about who succeeds—and how many of us succeed—than we think. That's an amazingly hopeful and uplifting idea." (www.gladwell.com)

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VINTAGE WISDOM

Ageing does not necessarily mean decay, argues Vrinda Nabar

The recent national elections were noteworthy for several reasons, not least because if the opinion polls conducted in the run-up to them are to be believed many of India's Generation Next would like the old to retire from the political arena and make way for the young. There is nothing essentially wrong in this sentiment: after all, even the *śāstra* prescribe graceful retirement (*Vanaprāsthāśrama* and *Sanyāsāśrama*) from the ways of the world in one's autumn years! What are disturbing are the add-ons: the insinuations that the old had nothing useful to contribute, that they were hampering the country's race towards becoming a global major—in goodness knows what.

Are we to assume then that today's India is no country for old men (or women)? At one level it is true that for too long we have allowed our way of life to be dominated by personality cults rather than the meaningful nurture of second-order leadership, and the point about newness is well taken when applied to our world outlook as a whole. Stasis sets in when those in power are reluctant to contemplate change, believing they are indispensable, while the impatience of the young is as old as human history. We've all been rebels in our time, and if the cause was generally lost in the maze of rhetoric it never seemed to matter.

So is it merely my advancing years that makes me wary of the glib confidence with which youthful India is said to have dismissed its ageing gen-

eration? Maybe it is to some extent, though I would like to believe that my reservations go beyond my personal situation. I accept the validity of change and need little persuasion that newer (younger) blood could recharge any system with much-needed vitality. But I am sceptical about the view that this could only happen if the old were axed. Successful change recognises the dialectics of the old and the new and is able to synthesise both

I accept the validity of change and need little persuasion that newer (younger) blood could recharge any system with much-needed vitality. But I am sceptical about the view that this could only happen if the old were axed

creatively. Will the young necessarily deliver on this score? The age factor isn't necessarily everything. I would hold a brief for humility and tenacity—solid if 'old-fashioned' attributes that were generally lacking in many of the statements allegedly made by the young Indians interviewed, as was the perception that there are no easy short-cuts to most things, especially not to running a country.

My responses have a great deal to do with my conviction that ageing

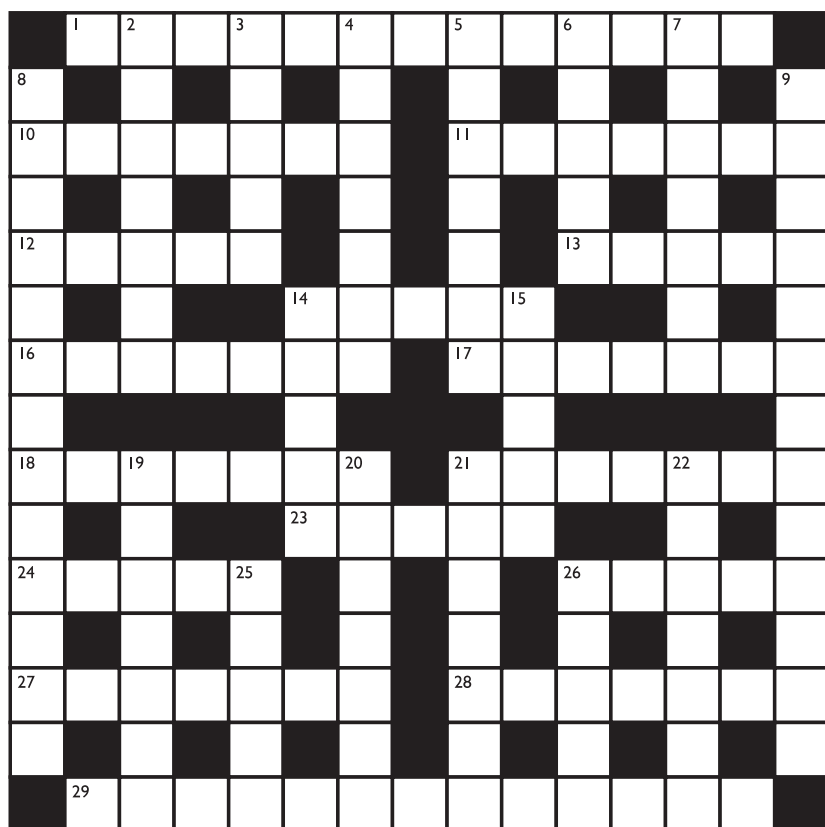
need not necessarily mean decay. I am far from arguing that the old have no limitations. Insecurity, bitterness and emotional blackmail are no strangers to growing old but they are universal failings that youth is not proof against either.

Besides, there are also those whom age has not withered—not in the metaphorical sense anyway. Many of my role models have always been men and women who retained their sense of humour, curiosity, zest for life, optimism, and resilience despite the natural slowing down that age induces; who were able to look at themselves, wrinkles, arthritis, failing memory and all, and be ready to face the best and the worst of each new day; who gracefully accepted that the old order had to make way for the new even if it conflicted with their most cherished principles.

Can such individuals be dispensable in any scheme of things? Only the smug who believe they have nothing to learn would think so. As I write this, the country's political future remains riddled with uncertainties, the negotiations of power play have reportedly begun, and the next few weeks will showcase yet another chapter in the saga of Indian democracy. I for one do not see the age demography of those who assume political centrestage as drastically changing, but I do hope for the country's sake that both young and old grow more sensitised to the larger socio-political complexities at stake. ■

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

EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 56



BY RAJU BHARATAN

ACROSS

- 1 How she made your eyes swim! (7 6)
- 10 What the craft content, in V V S Laxman's willow, turns his batting into? (3 4)
- 11 Not far from Delhi, groping for a definition of what Aishwarya's sporting? (7)
- 12 Pays the price for being up to the neck in trouble? (5)
- 13 All that you get to see of Katrina Kaif on TV (5)
- 14 Singer Mukesh's idea of producing a
- palindrome! (5)
- 16 Certainly put to evocative use, on the piano, while playing in praise of the Elephant God? (7)
- 17 No-go position the recklessly speeding motorcyclist is headed for, clearly? (4 3)
- 18 Tellingly apt description of the Mukerji hero? (7)
- 21 How they line up, begging for this official's favour! (7)
- 23 A mast Prasad every inch as good a *tabla* player as Alla Rakha? (5)
- 24 Khushwant Singh storing ore associated with xeroxing? (5)

- 26 Seed-eating songbird incorporated in Field Hospital (5)
- 27 Before Padmini Who? (7)
- 28 Chilled drink yielding ace edit (4 3)
- 29 Imagine, at 71.64, this opener's 'first-class' cricket average abides as next only to that of Sir Donald (95.14) Bradman (5 8)

DOWN

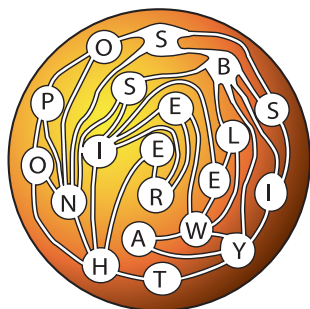
- 2 Ten after ton going over an indebted Shakespeare character (7)
- 3 Mandira does Mark Nicholas still in our mind's eye (5)
- 4 Sister as inescapable agent of downfall? (7)
- 5 Intoxicating as a server female? (7)
- 6 Identity so assumed as to make Muhammad's role look unclear? (5)
- 7 On which skates the wintry hockey team trailing by a goal in the last two-three minutes of play (4 3)
- 8 No budding genius did Sharmila Tagore look in this avatar (7 2 4)
- 9 With O P Nayyar's Shamshad Begum-mised *Kahein pe nigaahen kahein pe nishaanaa* did she, oddly, unfold in C.I.D. song on the Hindustani screen (7 6)
- 14 Consumed by a burning desire to fiddle? (5)
- 15 Born before the girl? (5)
- 19 Leer-oil for Siren of the Rhine (7)
- 20 Shipping usage long as long could be, the Scotland one (7)
- 21 Retile a workshop? (7)
- 22 A big fat hen to follow (4 3)
- 25 *Taans* Town in Madhya Pradesh (5)
- 26 "Main - ho ke aate hoon!" Helen could still say (5)

For answers, see Page 82

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

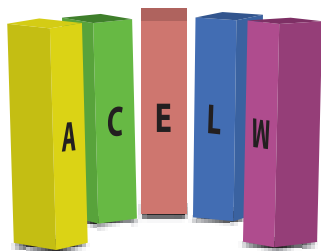
Tips for beginners: A whole variety of clues goes into framing a cryptic puzzle. For instance, the anagram. The clue here could be: Unresting opponent of authority (Unresting being the 9 letters of insurgent rearranged). Another variety of clue is the palindrome—DEIFIED, when viewed backward or when 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 MARS TOUR



Here is a map of the newly discovered cities and waterways on our nearest neighbour, Mars. Start at the city marked with T, at the South Pole, and see if you can spell a complete English sentence by making a tour of all the cities, visiting each city only once, and returning to the starting point.

WHAT ANIMAL?



Can you arrange the five pieces with letters on them to spell the name of an animal?

AN EASY ONE



Rearrange these letters to make one word.

CROSS-OUT

NAISNIENLGELTETWEORRSD

Write down the letters shown in the figure on a sheet of paper. The object is to cross out nine letters in such a way that the remaining letters spell a single word.

THE MAZE

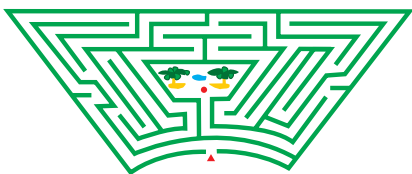


illustration) to its centre (marked with the red dot).

GET LOGICAL



Alphabets A through R are printed above the box, in the box, and beneath the box. Can you continue on for S to Z and place them correctly according to the scheme?

SUDOKU FOR YOU

	9		5		1	8		
	8		9				7	3
2					7			
3		1		5			4	9
			4	6	9			
4	5			7		2		6
			7					8
1	4				5		2	
		6	8		4		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		9	
7				16		18		
			25					
	27							
		10					22	
					12			
				12				
	8	9	20					
								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.

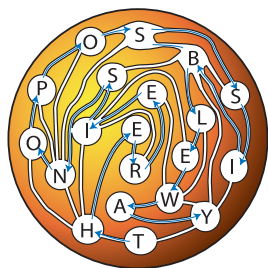
SOLUTIONS TO EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 56

ACROSS: 1 *Bathing Beauty* (MGM role in which Esther Williams excelled); 10 Art form (*craft content contrast*); 11 Raisina (*Rai's/in/a...*); 12 Hangs; 13 SLICE (from that mango-juice TV spot); 14 Nitin (*Mukesh*): Nitin reads *Nitin* backwards, it's a palindrome); 16 (*The*) Ivories (*keys on the piano*); 17 Dead end; 18 Killjoy; 21 Almoner (official distributing alms); 23 Samta (Prasad): 5 letters of *Samta* rearrange as *A mast*; 24 Kores (*K/ore/S: Khushwant Singh storing ore*); 26 Finch (*F/inc/H, FH* standing for *Field Hospital, inc* for *incorporated*); 27 Lalitha (Padmini & Ragini, the Travancore Sisters); 28 Iced tea (as *ace edit* do the 7 letters of *Iced tea* rearrange); 29 Vijay Merchant

DOWN: 2 Antonio (*an/ton/10: Ten after ton going over an*); 3 Hooks; 4 Nemesis (Neme/sis); 5 Barmaid; 6 Alias (Muhammad Ali/as); 7 Thin ice; 8 Kashmir Ki Kali; 9 Waheeda Rehman; 14 Neros; 15 Neela (*nee/la, nee meaning born; la is the; girl represented by Neela*); 19 Lorelei (7 letters of this *Siren of the Rhine* rearrange as leer-oil); 20 Yardarm (Scotland Yard/arm: long as long could be); 21 Atelier (means *workshop*, 7 letters of *atelier* rearrange as retila e); 22 Nine ten (*A big fat hen*); 25 Satna (its 5 letters rearrange as *Taans*); 26 Flesh (*Main flesh ho ke aatee hoon!*)

SOLUTIONS TO BRAIN GYM

THE MARS TOUR



'There is no possible way' is the solution.

WHAT ANIMAL?



Stumped? Turn the piece with W upside down to give you an M. Now you can make the word 'camel'!

AN EASY ONE



CROSS-OUT

The classic solution to this puzzle is to cross out every other letter, starting with N. This eliminates NINE LETTERS, leaving A SINGLE WORD as shown on the right. By crossing out the nine letters A through I, you leave the word GO.

NAISNIENLGELTETWEORRSD

N I N E L E T T E R S
A S I N G L E W O R D

NINE LETTERS
A SINGLE WORD

THE MAZE

The path is shown in the illustration with the red line.



GET LOGICAL

Each alphabet on the top has straight lines only. Each alphabet in the box has mixed straight lines and curves. Each alphabet at the bottom has curves only.

Therefore, S goes to the bottom, T, V, W, X, Y, Z go to the top, U goes into the box.

SOLUTIONS TO SUDOKU

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

SOLUTIONS TO KAKURO

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

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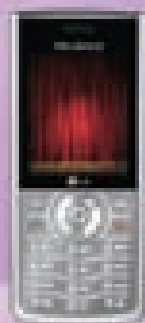
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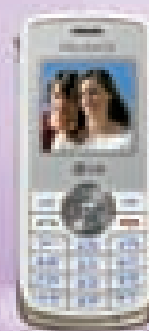
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- QWERTY Keypad
- MP3 Player / Bluetooth
- External Memory



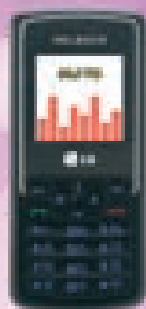
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- FM Radio
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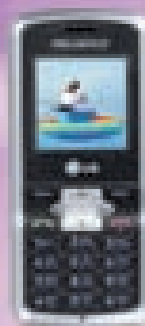
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- Hindi SMS



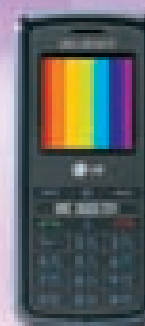
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- 65,000 CSTN Colour Display
- Rhythmic keypad lighting
- Built-in Speaker phone
- Hindi SMS



LG 3500

- 65,000 CSTN Colour Display
- Rhythmic keypad lighting
- Built-in Speaker Phone
- Hindi SMS



LG 3510

- 65,000 CSTN Colour Display
- Rhythmic keypad lighting
- Built-in Speaker Phone
- Hindi SMS



GLAM TRAM

A century ago, the tram was Kolkata's favourite mode of transport, trundling through the city roads at a lazy pace. Today it's a charming oddity on the threshold of a swank makeover. The Calcutta Tramway Company (CTC), formed in 1880, plans to launch 20 new modified electric trams in the next two years. The new look will include a transparent polycarbonate body, spacious interiors, and large open windows. CTC is a state-run company that operates trams and buses in and around Kolkata. The Kolkata tram is the oldest operating electric tram of Asia, running since 1902.

prebituary *n.* An obituary composed or published prior to a person's death; a prediction of failure, particularly of a political candidate. Also: pre-bituary.

Example: Perhaps *The Times* could pioneer the concept of **prebituaries**, by celebrating the lifetime achievements of notable people to mark their 65th birthdays. It would be a wonderful boost to their social life as they entered retirement. They could also read the bulk of their obituary at the breakfast table, rather than having to wait for the full text and then only being able to read it from their cloud using a powerful telescope.

—Adrian Fisher, "A novel idea?", *The Times (London)*, 16 July 2008

kettle *v.* To manoeuvre protesters into a small area using a cordon of police personnel and vehicles. —*n.* —*kettling pp.*

Example: The anarchists, the police seemed to feel, were such an imminent danger to society that they needed to be **kettled**—in other words, to have three police vans crawling along blocking their left-hand side, and a tight line of police one behind another on their right-hand side, to make sure there was no possibility of break-out.

—Bibi van der Zee, "Kettled anarchists increase worry for G20 demonstrators", *The Guardian*, 30 March 2009

UBICOMP *n.* A computing model in which information technology is pervasively and seamlessly integrated into the objects and activities that people use in their daily lives. Also: *ubi-comp.* [From *ubiquitous computing*]

Example: In our **ubicomp** (ubiquitous computing) future, cities and their inhabitants will be dotted with sensors and radio relays. The data from those devices will bombard each of us with more of the sights, sounds, smells, and vibrations we are trying to get away from. Isn't rush hour on the Green Line quite enough?

—Mark Baard, "Personal tech", *The Boston Globe*, 14 January 2008

crowd mining

pp. Extracting useful knowledge from large databases of social information. Also: *crowd-mining*.

Example: The six billion people on earth are changing the biosphere so quickly that traditional ecological methods can't keep up. Humans, though, are acute observers of their environments and bodies, so scientists are combing through the text and numbers on the Internet in hopes of extracting otherwise unavailable or expensive information. It's more **crowd mining** than crowd sourcing. Much of the pioneering work in this type of Internet surveillance has come in the public health field, tracking disease.

—Alexis Madrigal, "Crawling the web to foretell ecosystem collapse", *Wired Science*, 19 March 2009

“Always, there is a drop of madness in love; yet always, there is a drop of reason in madness.”

—German philosopher F Nietzsche (1844-1900)



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WE GO 50 YEARS BACK IN TIME

TO BRING YOU PRODUCTS, PEOPLE, EVENTS AND FASHION THAT INFLUENCED THE WORLD...



mini on the move

This is the 50th anniversary of Mini, the iconic car designed by British engineer Sir Alec Issigonis to be both stylish and affordable. Its classic design made the car an overnight sensation in the British automobile market. And the euphoria didn't die out—sales crossed the 5 million mark in 1986. Produced by the British Motor

Corporation until 2000, BMW took it over in 2000 and updated the classic—it is now available as a Hatch, Convertible or Clubman—winning over a new generation of fans. What we love: the 'Design Your Own Mini,' where you can select a body style and configure your preferences to get your dream wheels.

THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: JUNE 1959

- On 5 June 1959, the first government of the State of Singapore is sworn in.
- On 8 June 1959, The USS Barbero and US Postal Service attempt the delivery of mail via Missile Mail.
- On 9 June 1959, The USS George Washington is launched as the first submarine to carry ballistic missiles.
- On 25 June 1959, Eamon de Valera is elected the third president of Ireland, a position he held for 14 years. Valera fought fiercely for an independent Ireland and was often imprisoned for his revolutionary zeal.
- On 26 June 1959, the Saint Lawrence Seaway, the world's longest inland waterway opens, offering ocean-going ships access to North America's Great Lakes.

The first day at school

The first time you rode the bicycle.

The first crush you had at thirteen

The first drama you got a part in

The first day at college

The first date you went on

The first kiss

The first time you proposed

The first job interview

The first board meeting you addressed

The first day after retirement

BUTTERFLIES *never retire*

The first click of the mouse.

The all new

www.harmonyindia.org



*the website
celebrate age*

Famous five!

Harmony's columnists share their take on the magazine



HARMONY LOCATED A SLOT THAT WAS VACANT AND FILLED IT WITH DISTINCTION. IT INFORMS, ENTERTAINS AND ENLIGHTENS. IT HAS A COMPOSITE QUALITY BY WHICH VARIETY IS RATIONALE. IT HAS EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS, BUT IT IS LIMITED BY CELEBRATING AGE. IT SHOULD REACH OUT TO YOUNGER PEOPLE TOO.

—Crossword maestro Raju Bharatan



Harmony is at the forefront of issues touching the lives of seniors and their families in India as well as in many parts of the world. It is far reaching, contemporary and, at times, confronting publication that challenges the stereotypical images that society has created around the elderly. Being informed with accurate and up-to-date information is the hallmark of excellence in communication that enhances the wellbeing of its readers. Readers of *Harmony* are intelligent, thoughtful and possess sound knowledge that will enlighten generations that come behind them. It is with pride and humility that I have the pleasure of writing for *Harmony* and being part of the revolution of change for older people and future generations in India. Congratulations on this important benchmark—may there be many more to celebrate!

—International columnist
Dr Jane Barratt

Harmony has provided a much-needed outlet for older Indians because it emphasises their potential while not discounting their special needs—a fine balance that was welcome and long overdue. Writing for the magazine has made me think about issues concerned with ageing that are both personal and social and I'm really glad *Harmony* encourages humour and irony in both its contributors and its readers because these make for positive thinking about conflicted and not always cheery experiences.

—Exclusive columnist Vrinda Nabar



MY EXPERIENCE OF BEING WITH *HARMONY* IS LIKE BEING WITH MY OWN FAMILY. THERE IS A SENSE OF COMFORT WHEN I INTERACT WITH THE TEAM. HERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR YOU AND APPRECIATE AND RECIPROCATE—SOMETHING THAT IS VERY RARE THESE DAYS. *HARMONY - CELEBRATE AGE* IS A GOOD MAGAZINE AND CATERES TO THE CAUSE IT HAS TAKEN UP. ITS FOCUS KEEPS EXPANDING TO GIVE MORE TO SILVERS, HELPING THEM OVERCOME THEIR INHIBITIONS AND FEARS BY INTEGRATING THEM INTO THE WORLD OF THE YOUTH. THE MAGAZINE IS EVOLVING FAST AND EFFECTIVELY. IT'S TIME *HARMONY* INVOLVES TEENAGERS AND BRINGS THEM ON THE SAME PLATFORM AS SILVERS.

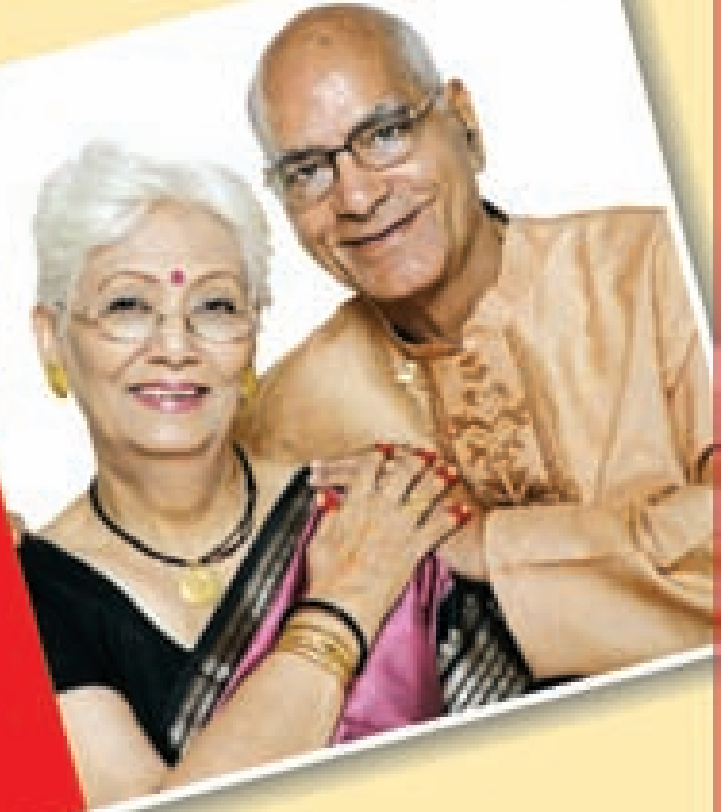
—Yoga acharya Shameem Akthar

I enjoy writing for *Harmony*. Some of my friends didn't know I loved cooking but now they do. And readers have followed the recipes I have written and enjoyed preparing them. I enjoy thinking up recipes that are sweet but have no sugar, and recipes low on salt and spices. As a silver, even I enjoy reading the magazine. It's a fantastic publication helping people grow older with dignity and grace. An edition of *Harmony* in Hindi—every quarter or a special issue once a year—would take it to the masses.

—Resident foodie
Dr Pushpesh Pant



... and they
lived happily
ever after.



CENT Swabhimaan Reverse Mortgage Scheme

Always sensitive to the needs of the aged, Central Bank of India has designed Cent Swabhimaan - a Reverse Mortgage Scheme that helps them live with dignity and self-esteem. Now senior citizens can monetize their property and live happily for the rest of their lives.

Highlights:

- All senior citizens of 60 years of age or above are eligible.
- Loan amount: 40%-60% of the mortgaged property's realizable value. (Maximum Rs. 1 crore)
- Attractive rate of interest.



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Warmest greetings on the 5th anniversary of Harmony

