

harmony

MARCH 2005 Rs 20

celebrate age

A helping hand:
Caregivers
Candid camera:
Mrinal Sen

A noteworthy man

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan



Now, life begins at sixty.

Presenting Seniors Postpaid plan from Airtel

There are some things that get better with time. Like when you reach sixty, you reach the perfect time to live life. And freedom to communicate constantly, is the first step on the road to a livelier life. That's exactly where Airtel's Seniors Postpaid plan comes in. It allows you to call select numbers at discounted rates. You are also entitled to discounts at various medical outlets. So choose this plan for yourself today and start living your life afresh.

BE ALL YOU CAN BE

SANJAY LEELA BHANSALI'S latest film *Black* has been written about a lot. Critics have raved about the quality of filmmaking, the fine performances, the fact that it is possibly the first real 'international' film made in India. I thought it was outstanding too. It's a tough, gritty movie that tackles painful issues, but there was nothing depressing, nothing 'black' about the film. Rather, it was profoundly inspiring.

The two central characters are a little girl who can't speak, hear or see, and her teacher, a demanding idiosyncratic man. As the film progresses and the teacher succumbs to Alzheimer's disease, the student takes control in a reversal of roles, breaking through his self-imposed wall. This moving film about two challenged people who wrestle, scrap, fight and never give up, proves without doubt that the constraints of the body are no match for the triumph of the spirit and the mind.

This is something we believe in deeply at *Harmony*. While, month after month, our health stories give you information about a variety of ailments, as a counterpoint we bring you profiles of real-life heroes in our 'Showing the Way' section, people who refuse to let the limitations of their bodies dictate the way they choose to live. Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, osteoporosis, arthritis, these are mere words for them, while the phrase 'giving up' has been banished altogether from their dictionary. They know, as we do, that nothing is impossible.

A little help from others doesn't hurt though. *Black* explores the human connection—how two incredibly different people, both struggling with their demons, reach out and enrich one another. This very connection drives our initiative. The letters you write in to the magazine, the number of hits on our website www.harmonyindia.org and the feedback received from the members of the Harmony Interactive Centre at Girgaum,

ritu nanda



Mumbai, all speak of the need for a platform where silvers can listen, and be heard, where they can reach out and connect to others.

The Harmony Initiative is that platform. And at the core of the initiative is you. We all have inner demons, our inhibitions, our perceived limitations that stop us from being all that we can be. Banish such negativity from your life and believe in yourself. It's time for you to change your attitude towards yourself and strive for *sanyam*, an inner balance that leads towards the path towards greater self-awareness. There's a whole new life out there just waiting to be lived. Don't shy away from it.

Tina Ambani

Tina Ambani

A Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust Initiative

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column one

Today, many daughters and sons find themselves called upon to care for their ageing or ailing parents. It may be a short-term commitment or one that lasts for years. Such a situation can challenge and complicate the whole family dynamic—with roles, responsibilities and feelings changing—and often lead to confusion, helplessness and frustration.

In “A Helping Hand”, we discuss the availability of professional caregivers in India and the option of hiring one. Called upon for formidable physical and psychological support, these caregivers often become indispensable to their elderly dependents.

This issue of *Harmony* is full of motivational articles about people ‘of an age’ who do remarkable things, and not for the glory or the money. Vidyasagar Jolly in Jalandhar addresses pension problems of people in his area, Rathna Murthy in Bangalore runs a library for children and teaches French and Carnatic music despite severe arthritis, and Rama Anand in Delhi turns defective and discarded tyres into chic furniture.

You will find the photo essay, “Retro-active”, an interesting collage of ‘old things’—from the black-and-white Weston TV to *bidi* boxes, from good old-fashioned goggles to the foot-operated sewing machine. In some indefinable way, all these formed the warp and weft of our daily lives but now, suddenly, they’ve faded into the mist of the past. We hope you enjoy the ride down memory lane.

—Meeta Bhatti

FIRST AID

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I was astounded by the spirit shown by silvers during the recent Mumbai Marathon. Apart from the celebrity-filled Dream Run, it was the Harmony team that hogged the limelight. The enthusiastic response from the participants as well as the public who cheered them along was great to see. Congratulations for such a huge success in your first year. Is it possible to sponsor regular runs, perhaps on a quarterly basis, at different cities across India so that more seniors could participate?

MAHESH M SANJAGIRI

Mumbai

I took part in the silver citizens' run with my friends and enjoyed it tremendously. It was an unforgettable experience and we thank the Harmony team for their hospitality and arrangements. This was a first for us and we will definitely participate in your events in future.

CHANDRAKANT C BHULA

Mumbai

Harmony is a fountain of inspiration with its focus on issues and profiles of personalities. It is a morale booster not only for seniors but anyone who happens to browse through it. Many elders feel worthless after a certain age but the magazine provides a perfect platform for them to eliminate the dejection. V Mani and his wife Saroja, featured in "A Family for Life" in your February issue, deserve special praise for their service to the children of convicts.

INDIRA GOPALAN

Bangalore

Your editorial in the January issue, "Resolution 2005", is a heartwarming and bold initiative



Hearty congratulations on your wonderful Hmagazine. I am 60 years old and head a senior citizens' group in my building. I send your magazine to all 50 members and they love it. A teacher of French and music for the past two decades, I retired at the age of 58. And it is since then that I feel my life has really started. It is a beginning for doing all the things I have wanted to do. I am now working with organisations like Agni, Clean Bombay and 0 (Zero) Garbage. I also participated in the 21 km marathon and completed it, both in 2004 and 2005. I am enjoying the best years of my life, meeting and interacting with all kinds of people in different fields. What an innings!

NANCY CONTRACTOR

Mumbai

The letter of the month wins a gift from Vimal



for middle-class silvers. I commend your proactive approach in projecting the financial and healthcare needs of silvers. The problem is that policymakers, themselves in their prime despite being in their silver years, are oblivious of the difficulties of other silvers. As such, proposals like scrapping the 2 per cent cess on education, at least for silvers, may be one step towards reducing the financial burden to some extent. The inclusion of the 'Orbit' section in the New Year issue was welcome. In fact, all the articles in the issue were enjoyable and immensely readable.

DIPAK KUMAR DATTA

Kolkata

I am 18 years old. This January, I purchased Harmony for the first time after seeing Amitabh Bachchan on the cover. I discovered later that it was a magazine for silver citizens. I liked the content

of the magazine, especially "Silver Reign", the hot list of silvers who reigned in 2004. I was delighted to see Sonia Gandhi, Kanchan Chaudhary, Hema Malini and Kiran Mazumdar Shaw on the list. And Fauja Singh is a great example for young guys who hate to run. Of course, Big B steals the show. I hope in future issues you cover silvers like Lata Mangeshkar and Field Marshal Arjan Singh, who have had exemplary careers.

ANUP MANCHALWAR

Nagpur

I picked up the January issue and liked the magazine, especially the larger type-size, which is perfect for older readers. I especially enjoyed Khushwant Singh's column on longevity. I've been a fan of his for a long time.

MADAN MOHAN PRABHAKAR

New Delhi

Hobbies are very important to keep a silver citizen's mind occupied and active. Some neighbours, who are members of a local senior citizens' organisation, have been inviting me to join them. But at 71, I feel I am too young! I always have enough to keep me occupied. The hobbies I have developed and the books I have collected on them will keep my mind active and interested for the remaining years of my life. While I enjoy reading quite a few articles in *Harmony*, I appreciate the 'Headstart' section the most, with the crossword, brain gym and visual challenge. These help keep the mind active. I have written a book along these lines, called *Creative Problem-Solving*. My hobbies also include chess and bridge. I have written a chess column for almost 25 years and bridge column for the past few years in *Kumar*, a Gujarati magazine. I have also written an award-winning book on the basics of the game—its fourth edition is now in print. It may be a good idea to start a column on hobbies such as chess and bridge in *Harmony*.

SURESH M MODY

Mumbai

Congratulations for launching your magazine. I wanted to share the experience of an elderly friend to warn readers about the pitfalls of matchmaking on the Internet. My friend was very lonely after his wife died about five years ago. After about two years, he decided to find a new life partner. Someone recommended the Internet to him and he met an NRI lady online. They got married but it did not last more than three months. She left India and, till date, has not returned.

ANURODH SHARMA

New Delhi

My brother gave me a wonderful gift recently – a subscription to *Harmony*. It is a capsule packed with power to boost the morale of silvers and I have become addicted to it. I am 64 but I don't look and feel old. It is because I keep the zest of living burning in my heart. After retirement at the age of 60, in 2000, I started writing poems, short stories, articles and novels in English and Hindi and I have won many prizes for my work. Age is no bar to literary achievement.

NALINI SHARMA

Bhilai

CONTRIBUTORS

Mumbai-based

Asit Chandmal is an authority on wines, champagnes, cigars and fine food. He knows where to buy the best cheese on your next trip to Paris. This former finance director of TELCO remains a financial consultant to overseas companies. He has also published a book, *One Thousand Suns*, on J Krishnamurti. Chandmal is *Harmony's* 'Man at Large' this month, writing about his grandmother Moti Mamma.



Chennai-based

Sheila Kumar dons and doffs many hats, that of journalist, army wife, mother, quiche-maker par

extraordinaire but it's the travel writer's beret she cherishes the most. After an 11-year stint with the Times Group, she is now relishing the freelance life. This month, in "Rock Stars", she writes about her trip to the Bhimbetka rock shelters with her aunt Uma.



AN INVITATION FROM HARMONY

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

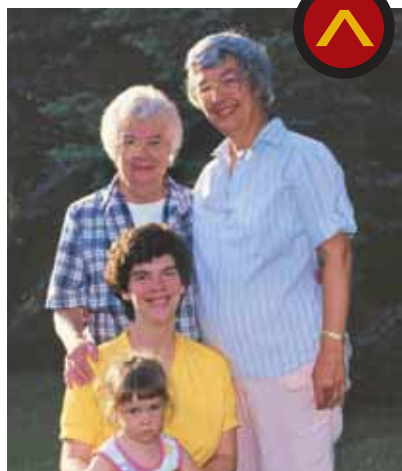
- You had an experience related to money or finance which others can learn from
- You faced a serious health problem and conquered it
- You know of someone who has done something exceptional after the age of 55
- You want to share your hobbies and interesting travel experiences with others
- You have a funny or insightful anecdote about your grandchildren ...and we'll print it in the column 'Your Space'

Mail us at 4th Floor, Maker Chambers IV, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400021. Or email at contact.mag@harmonyindia.org

ANALYSE THIS

50 AND HAPPY

Women are happiest in their wrinkle-free 20s, right? Wrong. A new American



study—*Aging Redefined II: A Frank Perspective on Marketing to Women as They Age*—shows that silver women believe life actually gets better as they get older. The online study was conducted among 1,155 women from 20 to 97 by Frank About Women, a US-based marketing-to-women communications company. It showed that overall wellness among women, particularly their happiness, steadily grows after 49, reaching its zenith when they are in their 70s. Forty-two per cent of women in their 20s are “extremely” or “very satisfied” with their overall wellness. That percentage jumps as they grow

older, reaching 46 per cent for those in their 50s, 50 per cent for those in their 60s, and 66 per cent for women in their 70s. The same trend holds true for satisfaction with family relationships. “When you’re in your 20s, 30s and even 40s, it’s common for women to put their lives under a microscope and feel like they’re not living up to their full potential in terms of work, home and family,” says Carrie McCament, senior director, Frank About Women. “By the time a woman reaches her 50s, she has really hit her stride. She is happy, confident and financially astute.”

ME, MYSELF AND I

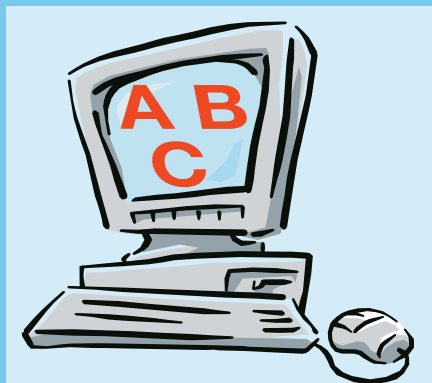
After years of reading research on them by other people, silvers in Canada are doing it for themselves. An innovative pilot project developed by the University of Calgary has recruited and trained seniors as researchers to talk to others in their age group about the challenges of making the golden years live up to their billing. “This is the beginning of a process where the research agenda itself is set by seniors,” says Nancy Marlett, a professor in the university’s community rehabilitation and disabilities studies programme. “It’s about making sure they understand how to make science and research work for them.” The ultimate goal is to attract other groups across Canada to start up similar seniors-on-seniors research and create a network of projects and then pool results.

In the Calgary project, developed in conjunction with the city-based Kerby Centre for seniors, 20 seniors research the keys to happy and healthy ageing. The focus they chose was resilience, and

the role it plays in growing old gracefully. Finding a single definition for resilience was difficult, but the common thread among all the seniors’ stories was that it came with upbringing. The yearlong study should be completed by the end of next month. Then, the seniors will begin analysing their data, which will find its way into academic papers and workbooks for their peers.



NET WORKS



User-friendliness just took on a new dimension. Recognising that silvers are slow at taking to computers—in part because they find small text on the screen hard to read and a mouse hard to click owing to arthritis—computer firms are value-adding to their products. If you suffer from failing vision, your computer can read on-screen text out loud. Microsoft's Windows XP and Apple Computer Inc's Mac OS X operating systems both contain simple screen readers at no extra charge. And IBM has introduced Home Page Reader, a \$149 (about Rs 6,500) programme that can also magnify the words. You can sample it on www.ibm.com/able. The next version of Windows, codenamed Longhorn, will automatically identify users who need extra help. Windows will guide you as you try out different type sizes, colours, and contrast settings. And people who find it hard to hold down the Control key while pressing another key will be offered a feature that makes the Control key 'sticky,' so it stays active after a single tap. The version is expected to debut in 2007. Until then, go to www.microsoft.com/enable, where you can click on 'baby boomers'—the name for a person born shortly after World War II—a link for tips to create a version of Windows appropriate for you.

CYBERSPACE

DIGITAL DIVIDE

Most seniors haven't yet woven the web into their lives, say researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation, California. According to a recent study by the foundation, only about 30 per cent of people aged 65 and more in the US have gone online since 2004. Seniors on the wrong side of the digital divide miss out on important online health information, including drug discounts. The report also found that just 5 per cent have gone online to buy prescription medicine. It's a pity, says Susannah Fox, associate director of the Pew Internet and American Life Project. "A doctor doesn't always have time to go through all the health questions that someone might have, but the Internet has time. Dr Google has the time." Seniors have been slow to go online because they have no exposure to computers, don't recognise the value of the Internet or can't afford a computer or Internet access. Groups such as the national non-profit organisation SeniorNet have stepped in to help solve the problem—SeniorNet tailors its classes for the 50-plus, teaching them how to use the Internet, email, digital photography, online financial management and computer security.



LOOK WHO'S CALLING

Intel, the world's largest manufacturer of communications products, is developing technology that could well render current caller ID systems obsolete. The 'context ID telephone' is designed to help memory-impaired elders. When the phone rings, a monitor displays the number of the party calling, just like traditional caller ID systems. But since a computer and network technology control the system, a photo of the person associated with that number and a brief synopsis of the last conversation can be displayed too. For now, all data is logged in by family members through the Internet. But future versions could use speech-recognition technology that would store and display conversations using specific key words. Intel says the system is designed to help ease the daily stress faced by seniors and ensure they don't shy away from phone calls and social interaction because of memory lapses.



TRENDS

THE SILVER VOTE

With the UK general elections around the corner, the ruling Labour Party is pulling out all the stops to target the silver vote. The first step: a pensioners' manifesto to encourage "active ageing" among voters. The party is also dividing up the electorate into larger segments—"broad age bands" to personalise the campaign and show different groups of people what it can do for them. For existing pensioners, the party will play up its commitment to maintaining their incomes through the media. Workers in their 50s, meanwhile, will receive messages focused on how Labour plans to help them prepare for retirement, including allowing them to work beyond the traditional retirement age of 65 if they choose to. Finally, under consideration is a simplified state pension, the Citizens' Pension, which will see everyone receive the same basic amount regardless of their National Insurance contribution. The proposal is designed to improve the income of women pensioners. Under the present system, many miss out on the full basic pension because they have to take time out from work to bring up their children and can't build up their contribution kitty. If introduced, this would be the biggest single shake-up of the state pension scheme since it was introduced more than 50 years ago.



OFFBEAT

GRANDPA JAIL

After libraries, day-care centres and communities, it's time for an 'only-for-silvers' prison. Germany has drawn up a blueprint for Europe's first jail built specifically for old-age prisoners, called *Opa Gefaengnis* or grandpa jail. Since 1995, the number of criminals aged over 60 in the German criminal justice system



has risen by 28 per cent. The state of Lower Saxony, the proposed home for the jail, alone has 8,000 pending court cases in which the accused are over 60. The jail will be built to accommodate walking frames and wheelchairs. The cells will have special earpieces and instead of a gym, there are plans for a health spa and physiotherapy sessions. All beds and toilets will have handrails and nurses will be available

around the clock. The jail will cater to both men and women, but the inmates will be segregated.

Germany believes the increasing number of elderly people with time on their hands and diminishing pensions is luring them into crime. The 'grey crime wave' runs the gamut from fare dodging and shoplifting to drug smuggling and armed robberies. Japan may well be taking note. Last year, 30,000 criminals aged over 65 years were arrested in the Asian country—an increase of 320 per cent from 1994.

NAUGHTY BOY

An octogenarian great-grandfather is facing expulsion from a primary school in Kenya for being disruptive. Kimani Maruge, aged 84 and believed to be the oldest schoolboy in the world, enrolled himself in the infant class of the Kapken-duiywo Primary School last year, after the government abolished primary school fees. Maruge could not go to school as a boy because he had to tend cattle. But his classmates' parents are not happy. They claim he's a smart Alec prone to histrionics, disruptive in class and stops their children from concentrating on their lessons. They also allege that Maruge—who topped his class last year—is a teacher's pet while questioning his grades. He calls the accusations "poppycock".

HERITAGE

LEASE OF LIFE

In January this year, two heritage buildings—157-year-old Bishop House in Kolkata and 85-year-old Ballard Bunder Gate in Mumbai—received a new lease of life. While Bishop House was saved from demolition by the Calcutta High Court, the gate was rescued from behind a naval scrap yard that has been storing junk since 1950.

The decision to annul Calcutta Municipal Corporation's (CMC) petition to demolish **Bishop House**, built by the Church of England as the Bishop of Calcutta's residence, came in the wake of

unprecedented public pressure, media reports and a writ petition filed by Kolkata-based NGO, People United for Better Living. Complete with Ionic columns on its fascia and elegant wooden staircases, the heritage site serves as the residence of the current Bishop of Calcutta Reverend P S P Raju, who had moved out on the plea that it was in bad shape. The high court directed the CMC and West Bengal Heritage Commission to grade the structure according to heritage guidelines.

The **Ballard Bunder Gate** at Mumbai's naval dockyard served as the entrance to the Ballard

Pier railway station from where the Frontier Mail embarked on its long journey to Peshawar in the 1920s. The landmark vanished from the radar when it was included in the naval dockyard in 1950. The gate is now undergoing restoration and will soon open to public view.

Not so lucky is Mumbai's **Metro Cinema**, constructed in 1938 by Metro Goldwyn Mayer. The theatre that hosted India's first film awards in 1954 now awaits the demolition squad. It will give way to a multiplex by the end of the year.

Ballard Pier railway station



Photo courtesy: Bombay. The Cities Within

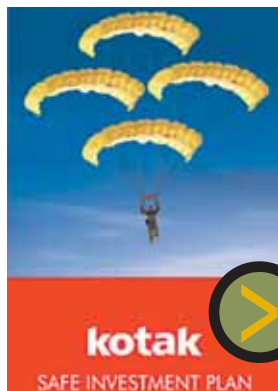
HEALTH BUZZ

TO THE BONE

Kolkata has a new osteoporosis and arthritis specialty clinic. It was inaugurated last month as part of Bhagirathi Neotia Woman and Child Care Centre, a unit of Park Hospitals Ltd, on Rawdon Street.

memory glasses n. Eyeglasses that include a small video camera attached to a wearable computer that has been programmed to recognise certain faces and objects, and then tell the user—such as an Alzheimer's sufferer—what he is seeing.

YOUR MONEY



RETIRE EASY

Kotak Life Insurance has launched the Kotak Retirement Income Plan giving you long-term market-linked returns with the guarantee of the sum assured. With four investment options—Gilt Fund, Bond Fund, Floating Rate Fund and Balanced Fund—the scheme gives the investor

the option of allocating money in one or any combination of funds, depending on the risk-return appetite. In addition, the investor can shift between funds at any time during the term. On retirement, you can take a cash lump sum of up to a third of the total amount, which includes the insurance and investment component. The balance two-thirds will be used to buy an annuity of your choice from Kotak or any other insurer available. The maximum age to enrol is 60. For more details, call the toll-free customer care number 1600-22-8081.

EXTRA COVER

The Andhra National Bank, in collaboration with LIC, has launched two insurance schemes especially for senior citizens—Ab Jeevan Prakash for 55 to 60-year-olds and Ab Jeevan Prakash Plus for 60 to 65-year-olds. Introduced in January, these schemes provide both life and health insurance.

Meanwhile, State Bank of Patiala's insurance scheme Super Suraksha was launched in collaboration with State Bank of India Life Insurance at the bank's main branch at Kalka last month. Open only to account holders, the plan will provide insurance cover against death in an accident.



NEWSWORTHY



ON TOUR

The Army is taking 40 silvers from Poonch district in Jammu & Kashmir on a tour across North India under Operation Sadhbhavana. The scheme was introduced in 1997 for the residents of the strife-torn state; its aim is to accelerate a return to normality. On its national integration agenda is *watan ka ser*—a trip across North India. This year,

Dargah Sharif in Ajmer and Pushkar in Rajasthan are two of the stops. The Army had earlier taken children from J&K to various parts of the country and its success prompted the tour for silvers. "We would like the locals to see what's happening in this great country of ours," says Lieutenant General Sudhir Sharma, GOC 16 Corps.

BUS STOP

On January 24, hundreds of silvers in the capital were turned back empty-handed when they went to Delhi Transport Corporation bus depots to get their Rs 67 concessionary passes renewed. The reason? The Social Welfare Department has not yet coughed up Rs 2 crore due to the transport authority for providing concessional travel. DTC authorities have promised to revoke the order as soon as they are paid the money. Till then, silvers will have to pay an extra Rs 80 a month.

SHOPPING LIST

PACK A STING

Here's safety, right out of a can: Cobra self defence and crime-prevention chilli and pepper spray. Priced at Rs 499, inclusive of tax and courier charges, the irritant spray claims to have 20 times the strength of red chilli powder and the ability to quell a mob of 15 to 20. Manufactured by

Bangalore-based Aax Global, Cobra is non-lethal and sprays a high emission cloud up to 6 ft. A half-second burst into the face of the attacker will cause coughing, nausea, choking and blocked vision. When sprayed, the red chilli extracts—oleoresin capsaicin—also cause confusion and disorientation. Cobra works immediately on contact, faster than tear gas, which takes 15 to 20 seconds to take effect. While the maximum effect remains for 45 to 60 minutes, it takes at least two to three hours for it to completely wear off. And it's as easy to use as a can of deodorant or room freshener—just aim in the general direction of the attacker and press the nozzle. There are no permanent effects and in case of accidental discharge, you flush your eyes with water and wait till the effect wears off. Launched in October 2003, Cobra is available over the counter at Health & Glow outlets in Bangalore and Dr Morepen Lifespring stores across Delhi. Silvers in other cities can email cobra_sds@yahoo.co.in or cobra_pepper_spray@indiatimes.com, or call 093425 37713, for details.

HALF TIME



Now when the doctor asks you to take half a tablet, you can follow his prescription to the T, with the Deluxe Pill Splitter, manufactured by US-based Apex Medical Corp. Even those with arthritic fingers or failing vision can use it safely. Simply place the pill on the self-centering platform, lower the lid and

press lightly. It's so compact that it fits neatly into a pocket or purse. Priced at \$ 5.95 (or about Rs 260), the product can be ordered online from www.seniorshops.com.



FLY HIGH

Over 50 and young at heart? Malaysia Airlines salutes you with its special senior citizens' offer with discounts up to 30 per cent on all sectors, both return and one-way. These fares are also applicable to an accompanying escort of any age. With 29 weekly flights ex-India from seven gateways and an award-winning cabin crew, this could be an experience of a lifetime. Destinations include Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Europe and the US, and the offer is valid for travel till March 31. For more details, contact your nearest Malaysian Airlines counter at **Mumbai:** 022-56505757; **Delhi:** 011-51025555; **Hyderabad:** 040-23410292/3/4; **Chennai:** 044-52199999; **Bangalore:** 080-22122991/2/3/783; **Ahmedabad:** 079-26403622/54/55; **Kolkata:** 033-22824433.



TEAM SILVER

After its first two investigative teams—comprising six men and women between 18 and 25 years in 2003 and eight teenage girls in 2004—provided inputs on product design to Hyundai Motor America, the auto company chose silvers for its third team. Eight adults between 60 and 78, recommended by the Chicago-area Association for the Advancement of Retired People (AARP), toured the Chicago International Auto Show last month. They attended new product launches and gave their opinions on the vehicles on display. They also documented their impressions and participated in a taped interview. This feedback will be shared with Hyundai's marketing and product development departments. "Hyundai wants to know what today's seniors want in their vehicles to plan for future products that might appeal to this growing demographic," says Curt McAllister, a representative for Hyundai.

ON THE ROAD

TEST DRIVE

While it's easy to get blood pressure or cholesterol tested, there really hasn't been a way for silvers to test their driving skills. Until last month, that is. The American Automobile Association (AAA) Michigan has introduced a first-of-its-kind, scientifically validated tool to help seniors test driving skills in the privacy of their own homes. *Roadwise Review: A Tool to Help Seniors Drive Safely Longer* is a CD-ROM that measures eight physical and mental abilities that are leading indicators of crash risk among older drivers. These include leg strength and general mobility, necessary to control acceleration and braking; working memory, important in following directions, remembering traffic rules and using information on highway guide signs; and visual search, testing a driver's ability to quickly find and recognise traffic signs and landmarks. The programme also offers feedback to guide the user's driving decisions. AAA Michigan, working in cooperation with the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging, will provide free copies of the CD-ROM to senior services' agencies throughout the state.



granny bank n. Savings held by grandparents used to pay for their grandchildren's education, first home, and other expenses.

MEDIA WATCH



Photos: PETER GRANSEER

BEAUTIFUL SUNSETS



In 2002, photographers Vijay and Samar Jodha launched their 324-page pictorial tribute to India's silver generation—*Ageless Mind and Spirit: Faces and Voices from India's World of Elderly*. Along the same lines is *Growing Old the American Way*, an award-winning exhibition that opened at the Belfast Exposed photographic gallery last month. In 1960, developer Del Webb built America's first seniors-only community, Sun City, in

Arizona. His corporation now has 15 such establishments spread across the US, where it is estimated that as many as 10 per cent of citizens over 70 live in age-segregated communities. For the past few years, Austrian photographer Peter Granseer has been documenting life in these enclaves and his photographs have won him several prizes, including a World Press Photo Award in 2002. A selection of 30 of these images went on view at the gallery.

GOOD SENSE

Britain as a nation is getting older and product designers are cottoning on to the fact. Like The Alloy, who did a rethink on the kettle for those with a weak grip or trouble lifting objects. The result was 'Kettlesense', a machine that works like a coffee percolator and dispenses water into a mug or teapot without the user having to lift and pour a heavy unit full of boiling water. With its stepped level jug, users can easily see or feel how much cold water they are putting in. And the funky big paddle switches are easy to use with a palm, or even an elbow. However, Kettlesense still lacks a manufacturer. "We have got quite far with quite a few but in the end they all get cold feet," says a spokesperson for The Alloy. Pity.



Welcome to the section where you, our readers, can share your thoughts and experiences on anything under the sun. Write in, and make this space your own

VICTORIES

THE 'OHO' EFFECT



I have just turned 91 and some kind friends greet me thus: “*Tamari tabiyat oho chhey.*” ‘Oho’ in Gujarati means superb, excellent. Once in a while I am asked about the “how” of the *oho* effect.

Well, the *oho* effect has three components. First, God’s grace that generally gives you good health. Second, God’s gift—both my daughters-in-law look after me with understanding, anticipating my needs. Then comes the third ingredient, where I am the hero. For the past four decades, I have adopted BETPRO—an all round ‘betterment programme’. The key is awareness or mindfulness. It is a continuous monitoring of myself at three levels: thought, word and deed. I cannot lower my guard even for a moment. Awareness is not easy. The most challenging task is monitoring, controlling and correcting my thoughts. Next is control of speech—both written and oral expression. Then comes behaviour.

Let me tell you how I go about generating the total *oho* effect. The first step is introspection—examining my thoughts, speech and behaviour. Every night

before sleeping, I conduct an audit of my thoughts, words and deeds that occurred during the day. I see whether I deviated from my predetermined norms. I do this honestly. And then order my mind never to commit such aberrations again. Once the nightly introspection is in place for, say, a month, I split it into two sessions. I introspect from 3 o’clock in the afternoon back to the time I got up in the morning, and from bedtime back to 3 o’clock. Once this routine is established and it works, I again split the introspection into a two-hourly procedure. This results in awareness and my mind becomes a monitor, a *chowkidar*, enabling me to control my thoughts, speech and behaviour. My family has a history of senile dementia and forgetfulness, which usually manifests itself after 70, and I don’t want the same to happen to me.

You must never brood over the past. I cannot erase my memories of a very difficult life. But I should not brood because it often leads to reliving past trauma. That is dangerous. I say this from my personal experience. Once, in Gandhinagar (Gujarat), I was sitting alone and my mind went back into the past. It dragged me into a dark thorny tunnel of a painful past experience; I actually relived it. When the incident had happened in the past, I was 23. When I relived it in 1992, I was 78. My nerves, and heart, could not take it and I landed up in the ICCU at Gandhinagar Civil Hospital. It took a couple of months before I could walk and talk normally.

I am okay now. I eat frugally, don’t drink or smoke and keep regular hours. I travel light and do not carry emotional baggage. I try to live in the present. I also practice visualisation (imaging). That combined with introspection, autosuggestion and awareness give me the *oho* effect.

To keep my memory and brain honed, I read, write and learn. I have written 14 books—three in English and 11 in Gujarati—all after my trip to the ICCU, after crossing the 78th milestone of life. May you be blessed with the *oho* effect too.

—Lt Col (ret’d) C C Bakshi, Ahmedabad

SILVER TIPS

Secure your assets: It's hard to accept but children can betray the trust of parents. If a house or any other immovable property is owned by a senior citizen, it should not be transferred to anyone except through a will—that too, preferably to a surviving spouse. You must always keep adequate assets to generate a fixed income for yourself for life.

Invest wisely: For fixed income earners and pensioners, the best option is the Post Office Monthly Scheme. If you have already availed the maximum limit of Rs 3 lakh in an individual account and Rs 6 lakh in a joint account, the best plan is to invest Rs 15 lakh in the Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme. Avoid shares except for multi-national companies with a proven record. Invest in different instruments to minimise losses. Keep some money in fixed deposits too for easy liquidity.

Think healthy: Those who use their brain effectively live longer. Be mentally active as far as possible. Keep yourself occupied in some work or activity.

Family ties: Lead the family wisely and involve all members in important decisions. Your children should respect you, not fear you. Take time out for your grandchildren; teach them moral values.

Live humbly: Banish the ego and learn to say sorry. Sometimes all it takes is a genuine apology to mend frayed relationships—with family and friends.

Stepping out: Silvers must go out every day for some time. Walk a mile or two everyday in the morning and evenings. Make sure your total walk time is not less than one hour daily. If your health permits, take up some part-time social work. Learn new skills like computers and expand your horizons. Go out of town to visit friends and relatives twice a year if possible. Give yourself—and your family members—some space.

Write it down: A journal or diary is one of the most powerful therapeutic tools you can gift yourself. Here, you can write down all your thoughts and unburden yourself.

—Mahesh Kapasi, New Delhi

EAT SMART

'Jihwa chaapalyam'—the desire for tempting food—is always hard to resist. But following my husband's heart attack when he was about 50, my family learnt to eat right, eat smart. Here's our daily menu, which we arrived at by consultations with the doctor and reading many nutrition books and magazines:



BREAKFAST

A cup of cereal in milk; fruits including at least half an orange or sweet lime, a banana and a chikoo or apple, strawberries and black grapes; dry fruits—two almonds, two walnuts (or six to eight groundnuts), and a few raisins or dates).

LUNCH

Chapattis or rice; dal; one carrot—skin scraped off and grated if required; a beetroot—skinned and grated or steamed; sprouted *mung* dal; garlic—2 or 3 pods; raw green vegetables (spinach, cabbage or lettuce) with salt and pepper; one cucumber.

DINNER

Chapattis (one or two) or light snacks; dal; a fruit—usually papaya.

Oil should be used minimally. In fact, we have switched over to olive oil. My husband also avoids ghee, butter and cheese. If you have an early dinner, it is excellent to have a cup of warm milk before retiring to bed. In addition to this diet regime, my husband walks for 40 minutes to an hour everyday.

—S Vijayalakshmi, Mumbai

We reserve the right to select articles in order to offer fair representation and relevance to readers. Articles will be edited to suit space and editorial considerations. Harmony takes no responsibility for advice offered in this column

The pension petitioner

In Jalandhar, Vidya Sagar Jolly is the man to visit if you have pension problems, writes **Teena Baruah**



Photos: RANJIT SINGH

The nameplate outside one of the houses in the murky lane of Naya Bazaar, in Jalandhar, reads Vidya Sagar Jolly, MA. Behind the pale blue door is a small living room that also serves as the head office of the All India Central Government Pensioners' Association (AICGPA). The room

is cluttered with two steel cupboards, a Remington Rand typewriter, a wooden coffee table, two worn sofas, three-dozen trophies and unwieldy stacks of letters. But as Jolly walks in, wearing a three-piece suit and a moustache inspired by actor Raj Kapoor, the room brightens up. In this part of the city, Jolly is a

hero. Even rickshaw *wallahs* nod reverentially as you mention his name. The 68-year-old pension activist's war cry: 'Don't treat pensioners as files'.

Jolly retired 10 years ago from the Punjab Telecom Department. Then, he was better known as *taar babu* (chief telegraph master).

After retirement, five of his friends had their first brush with delays in receiving their pension. Jolly offered to help as he had worked as a welfare officer in the past and knew the Pension Rule, 1972, like the back of his hand. Introduced to bring in uniformity within all central government services, the rule is the same for every one—from clerks to bureaucrats—across India.

Three months later, his friends were at his door to thank him. Jolly then began studying pensioners' cases and landmark judgements from law journals. Soon he was being looked at as the local pension guru. "Understanding legal documents and typing letters addressed to *babus* was easy as I had a Masters in English from Punjab University," recalls Jolly. Within two years, he

**Jolly (left) at his desk;
the rewards of activism**



was flooded with cases, mostly from villagers and widows, who had no clue what Family Pension entailed. In 1996, with some monetary help from his first five clients, Jolly started the AICGPA for central government employees and their family members. He often handles cases for free. His rewards then arrive in the form of

a *rakhi*, a hand-written poem about him, or a basket of farm-fresh fruits.

One of his first clients was Sukhwinder Kaur. An 80-year-old widow of a Central Public Works Department road-roller man in Assam, she was drawing a pension of Rs 100 per month for two decades. Jolly began writing letters to bureaucrats and politicians in Assam, sending reminders every three weeks. Two-and-a-half years later, his efforts paid off and Kaur's pension was raised to Rs 1,900 a month, with an additional medical allowance and

arrears amounting to Rs 1.55 lakh. Kaur insisted on donating Rs 10,000 to Jolly's association and became its life member.

Jolly's efforts, however, never went down well with his late wife Janak. She never forgave him for converting one of their four pocket-sized rooms into an office. And playing host to dozens of teary-eyed guests 24/7 drained her emotionally. "She was a simple soul, so she never protested till she died in 2001," remembers Jolly. He now lives with his younger son Dinesh, a senior mechanic in a rail coach factory in Kapurthala, daughter-in-law and six-year-old grandson Sahaj. Every evening, when he goes to the neighbourhood Company Bagh, hand-in-hand with Sahaj, he feels fresh, energetic and "at least 20 years younger", a quality that he needs to help the 7,000 members of his association.

The AICGPA has grown considerably in the past eight years. Championing the cause of 35 lakh central government pensioners and family pensioners of Ludhiana, Sangrur, Amritsar, Kapurthala and Chandigarh in Punjab, it has 144 life members. Having made a one-time payment of Rs 1,000 each, they meet at the neighbourhood Shishu Model School once a month.

Jolly also edits an 18-page magazine, *Pensioner's Friend*, which he launched soon after the association—a subscription costs Rs 150 a year. A part-time typist

Championing the cause of 35 lakh central government and family pensioners in Punjab, the AICGPA has 144 life members

and a delivery boy assist him but Jolly plans to buy a computer and hire an office assistant as soon as the AICGPA gets 200 life members, a figure he hopes to achieve by next year. Despite its uninspiring production quality, it is rated as one of the best 14 pensioners' journals in India, and includes letters to the government and replies from the departments concerned, sugarcoated with spiritual nuggets, jokes and poems contributed by readers.

"Before we publicised the disability allowance released by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in 1996, hardly anyone in Punjab knew that something like this existed," says Jolly with pride. Disability allowance was first introduced in the 1970s. In 1996, after the Fifth Pay Commission, the NDA increased the amount depending on the level of

disability. In 2002, the allowance, which was tax free, was also introduced for the defence and paramilitary forces. The journal has its own fan club now, which includes Jalandhar-based scientist Sarjit Singh, who sends Jolly Rs 200 to Rs 300 every alternate month apart from the subscription fee.

Jolly's way of working has remained the same since he started the forum. Step 1 is to send letters to the Department of Pensions and Pensioner's Welfare, and the prime minister. "Some pension officers now request me to just call them," he says. "But I



have more faith in the written word." Next, he publishes these letters—along with the replies—in his magazine. Reminders are sent after three to five weeks. In case he gets no reply, Jolly visits the pension offices personally and encourages his friends in local newspapers to write on the issue. This usually does the trick.

There are cases that have to be dragged to court, and some take years to settle, though Jolly has never lost a case. He began fighting for a revised pension for the late Gurcharan Singh, a retired CPWD engineer in Jalandhar, while he was still alive. His

physically challenged son Panvir finally received the pension with arrears after three years, when both his parents had passed away. He used the money to open a grocery store in Jalandhar. Another victory for Jolly.

Behind Jolly's and AICGPA's success also lies the support of people like A K Kapoor, a former deputy commissioner of income tax; S R Kang, former judge of the Jalandhar Consumer Forum; Dev Raj, former deputy general manager of telecom; retired police officer Harinder Singh Bawa; and Col Tilak Raj, former chief postmaster general. "If you fight alone, you usually lose," says Col Raj. "Back it up with a team and no one can stop you." About Jolly, he says, "Sometimes,

after helping him with some of the cases at the Consumer Forum. "It makes me feel like a member of a large family, where everyone's opinion is welcome," says Kang. "His letters have a considerable impact on government departments as he backs his claims with pension rules and judgments from old cases. They are so strongly worded that you don't bother about the grammatical errors."

Jolly's friends also include politicians. Fifty-two-year-old Satyapal Jain, a former MP from Chandigarh, says, "Jolly is a friend, a very persistent, assertive and aggressive one! None of my replies have got lost in his files. He publishes them in his magazine, giving me credit for my contributions." But the association

"Don't treat pensioners like files"

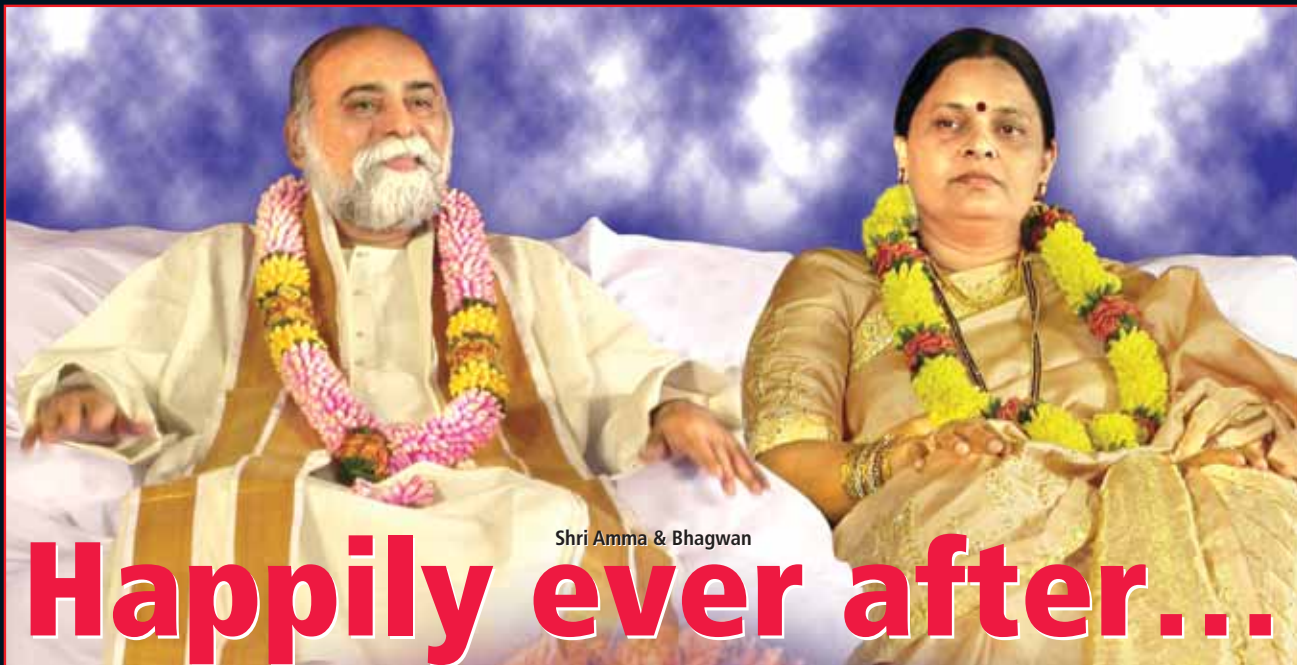
—Vidya Sagar Jolly

I wonder if he's really 68. The amount of work he does can only be done by a 20-year-old." There's another reason behind Jolly's success. Explains Delhi-based 79-year-old pension activist S S Ramachandran, "Jolly has considerable clout in the local media. He can get work done by encouraging journalists to write about the wrongs in society." Bawa, 67, who retired from the Indian Police Service (Punjab cadre) in 1995, calls Jolly "the father of pensioners". "You should see him dealing with widows," he says. "He spends hours reassuring them. You'll find them smiling by the time they leave his office."

Kang, 70, who retired from the Indian Revenue Service in 1992, decided to join Jolly's association

has a blacklist too. It includes the Finance Ministry, which still doesn't recognise the 60-plus as senior citizens, and the Department of Pensions and Pensioner's Welfare. "This department was created by Rajiv Gandhi 20 years back and was left to the mercy of the Ministry of Finance," rues Jolly. "At present, all its good intentions are crushed by its lack of independent administrative and financial powers."

For his part, Jolly continues the good fight. His future agenda: getting pensioners nominated to Parliament; a simple procedure for widows' pension; a 2 per cent higher interest on savings of silvers in banks and post offices; a subsidised old-age home in Jalandhar; and a tax-free pension. Jolly good. ■



Shri Amma & Bhagwan

Happily ever after...

Are you interested in a fairy tale... the sort of story that ends with 'and they lived happily ever after'. Then listen to mine, you will be listening to yours.

I thought I was a normal child coming from a very ordinary family until I suddenly became conscious of what was happening to me. I scolded and criticized myself endlessly. I judged and condemned others too very easily - either within myself or to others. I realised that I suffered with the unconscious feeling that I could not please anyone and that I was not good enough. I felt I was a third wheel in any relationship. I felt I was yelling my pain into eternity where my voice trailed away unheard by any. I felt none was taking the pains to understand me. The days passed and the frustrations within me was becoming unbearable and controlling the flow of my life. I found a desperate need to control people around me. Many were my achievements and many were my losses, many fights and many dreams... my life was one long process of waiting, expectation and begging love from people. Strangely I found people around me were no different from me.

Then my guardian angel took pity on me and decided to pull me out of the horror of my mediocre existence. I found myself at the Oneness University attending a basic level course. I was told that Sri Amma and Bhagavan were Avatars for enlightenment and God realisation, worshipped by millions across the globe.

Well, truly speaking I didn't aim that high. What I needed was a first aid for my wounded, tired and parched soul.

The retreat was a revelation. I saw most of my relationships were built because of fear and were also breaking because of the same fear. I all the time had the fear of losing those I loved. This was driving me mad. An obsession to possess and control people and a frustration at not being able to, was my experience over the years. How much ever unacceptable, I saw I was seized with jealousy or hate towards so many people. I was unhappy and insecure and did the same to all those around me.

My relationships were certainly in doldrums. Hurting and getting hurt was the saga of my life.

In a film we watched Bhagavan say, "Life is relationships. You come into existence only in relationship with family, profession, nationality, gender, etc. You are like a circle each relationship forming a sector. When any one relationship is not alright 'You' are not alright. The discord in your relationships manifests itself in the external world as varied problems like ill health, lack of finance or retarded

spiritual growth."

One particular insight hit me like a thunderbolt. I saw I had turned my family into a garage and was busy trying to repair other people's heads with a spanner and a screwdriver. When they refused to be repaired, I was hurt. A constant need to change the other to suit myself coloured my life totally.

Bhagavan said in the Darshan exclusively for the participants, "The problem with human relationships is the constant endeavour to understand the other. Innumerable factors, in fact the whole universe acts upon a person creating him from moment to moment. When somebody is changing all the time, how could you possibly understand him? Any effort to understand is futile. By the time you understand he would have changed. Trying to understand is like peeling an onion. You land up nowhere."

Indeed I had landed nowhere. And the culmination of all this wisdom happened through a Deeksha, which was more of 'Shaktipath'. As God's power coursed through my veins, all craving to change or understand the other ceased and a calm descended on me.

I now experience myself, my self centeredness and my fears. I experience people around me. The nagging of my husband also has become an experience from which I no more run away. My job with

all its stress is okay now. My relationships are flowering. The search for joy and peace ceased as Bhagavan made me realise that it was the search for peace that had actually caused the violence within. Every situation however painful, I can now convert into bliss. The Oneness University, true to its name has brought about 'oneness' within me and oneness with my near and dear ones. And I have been living happily ever after...

- Prenetha

(Prenetha is a leader in a woman's cause. She is also an environmentalist educating villagers about maintaining a natural eco-balance through kindness to animals and trees. She can be contacted at prenethaji@indiatimes.com)

March 7th being the Janmadina of Sri Bhagavan, all devotees could pray on this auspicious day for their desires and problems. Every year this day, Sri Bhagavan steps up His grace with the sankalpa of mankind's enlightenment. You could also send in your prayer requests with your photographs to the Oneness University. Special prayers would be conducted for you at Nemam in Sri Amma's darshan. Send in your prayers either through email to krupadarshan@sify.com (with subject as "Prayer Request") or post it to "Krupa Darshan" - #33, Rutland towers, 4th floor, Shafee Mohammed Road, off greams road, Chennai - 600006.

VARA DEEKSHA where Sri Amma grants boons to all the seekers, happens every week from Wednesday to Sunday at the Oneness Centre Tiruvallur District

Address: Nemam, Andersonpet, (via Tirumazhisai), Nemam - 602107, Tamil Nadu.

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I still listen to K L Saigal and
watch Guru Dutt's masterpieces.

I still go to my old bank, take the token
and wait for my turn.

I still miss the smell of gum on the inland letter.

I still manage to find spare parts
for my vintage Amby.

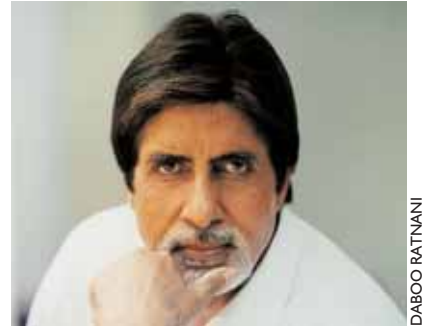
I still enjoy filter coffee at
India Coffee House, *Estd.* 1940.

I still think Sunny's better than Sachin.

I still have to download *pritam aan milo*
on my computer.



It takes two to tango



A MARRIAGE IS NOT ABOUT rituals and legalities—it is about the desire to be together. I have been married over 32 years and I think what's really important is for a couple to accept each other for what they are. It's a strength of conviction, an unspoken bond. Respecting that bond will allow you to continue together.

It would be wonderful if marriage were Utopia but the reality is that it is a continuous process of adjustment between two people. With each passing year, there are difficult times to negotiate, moments that challenge domestic peace. When children come along, there is an added dimension. The couple have to agree on how best to nurture them. And once they are grown up, their choices also become topics of debate at home.

My father used to say, "When you get married, love flies out of the window. After that, it is all about *aloo, dal ka daam kya hai, atta ka price kya hai.*" It's real life. Silly issues crop up all the time: 'Where are my clothes?' 'The food is served and you are not at the table.' 'You didn't notice my new sari.' Only if you address them openly do you realise how trivial they are. Otherwise, the tension festers and builds up into acrimony.

It's important to respect the sanctity of the home—the man should realise that for the woman, the home is her nest. She has built it with love and care and she will

fight to preserve it. Everything can happen... you can fight, you can be living in different rooms. Do whatever you want—but do it within the confines of the understanding that, this home is ours and we won't let it be destroyed.

If you happen to be a celebrity, you also need to project the fact that you want to be together. You can have your differences inside the house but don't wash your dirty linen in public. If they get even a whiff of trouble, the media writes about it. It can test a marriage. And if you are both celebrities, it's even harder. You can have different viewpoints on

their decision. Having brought our children into the world, we owe it to them to provide happiness in which to flourish. It is an unpardonable crime when they suffer because of our mistakes. In fact, I even think it is fine to put up a front for the sake of your children. If it means giving up on something, give it up, but protect the children at all costs, especially if they are young and impressionable. By the time they are older, you are usually reconciled to your differences. Very few people start thinking of divorce at 60 anyway. It may happen in the West, but it seldom happens here.

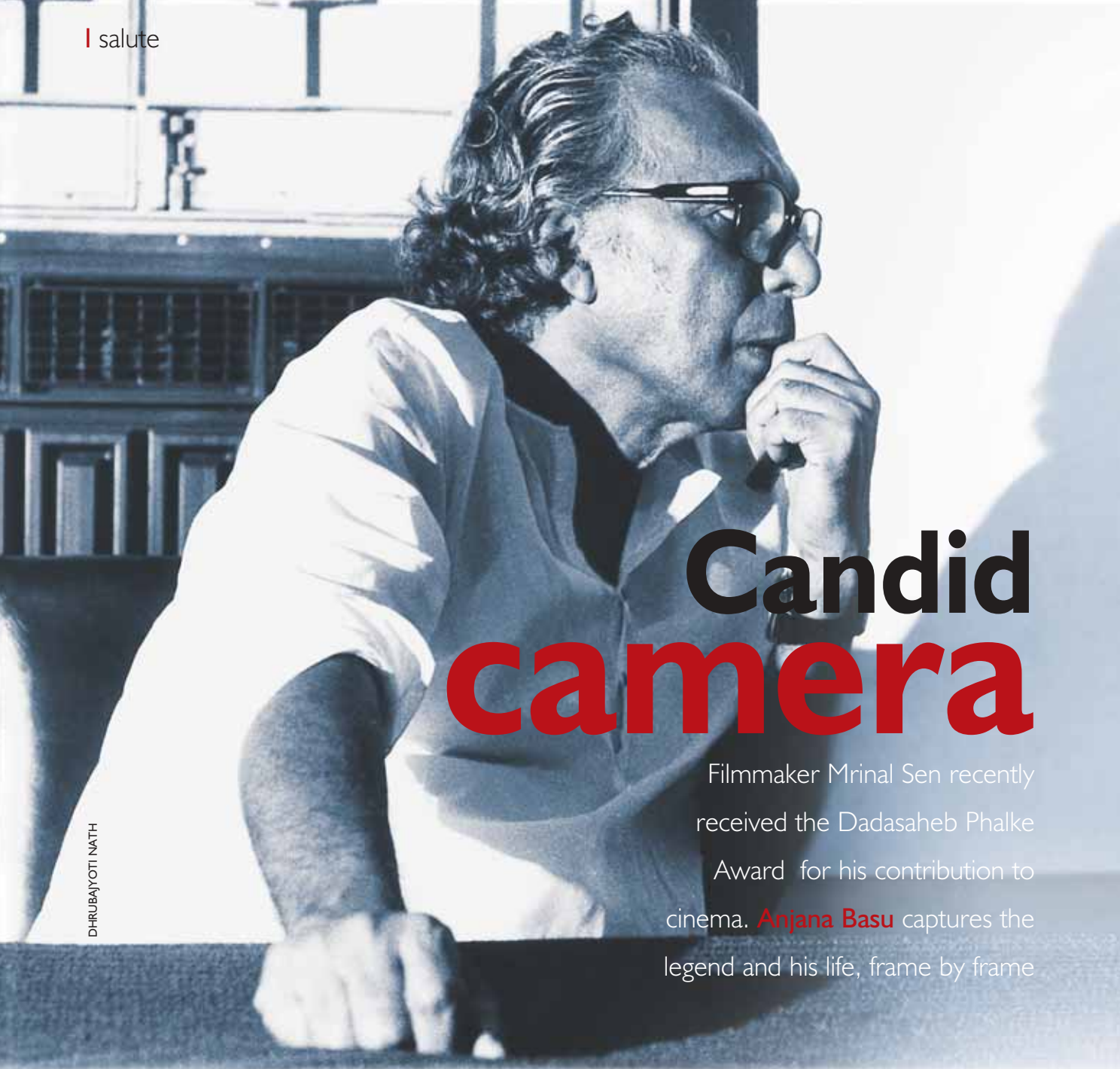
Marriage is about the desire to be together and respect for the sanctity of the home

an issue and the media goes to town with it. It is horrible to see a husband and a wife sleeping on the same bed yet communicating through a newspaper. So it's essential that the couple sits down together, arrives at a resolution and puts on a common front. Paradoxically, this can help a marriage because you are forced to deal with issues; it opens up lines of communication.

If a couple has irrevocable differences, they can go their separate ways. But if there are children involved, they need to reconsider

What does happen when you're older, though, is the arrival of grandchildren. It can rekindle the bond between a husband and wife. Grandchildren give you something in common again and there's more communication. When they visit, the house lights up and there is so much activity. And once they leave, you look at each other and say: 'Why can't we repeat the same atmosphere of joy even when they're not there? How wonderful it would be?' So you decide to order flowers, watch a movie, go for a drive, just the two of you. It brings the spark back. ■

Amitabh Bachchan, 62, is an actor and goodwill ambassador for UNICEF



DHRUBAJYOTI NATH

Candid camera

Filmmaker Mrinal Sen recently received the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for his contribution to cinema. **Anjana Basu** captures the legend and his life, frame by frame

Most film critics still rave about Mrinal Sen's political films made during the Naxalite unrest in Kolkata in the 1970s. Films that were made with the intention—Sen quotes writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky—to see “human beings remain human everywhere”. Films that also won awards at major film festivals, including Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Moscow, Karlovy Vary, Montreal and Chicago.

Let's start with the full-frame approach. “One of the most incorrigible senior citizens I know, and one of the nicest,” says 50-year-old Suhasini Mulay, among the first actors to work with Sen. In 1969, Mulay acted in *Bhuvan Shome*, a film about a bureaucrat who tries to escape to a simple village life only to return to his world. “After all, can Mrinal Sen leave the world of celluloid for a retired life?” Cameraman Shashi Anand, who has worked with him extensively, calls Sen “a

man who shoots and runs and then runs and shoots again”. From both Mulay and Anand emerges the conviction that his 82 years cannot dim Sen's light.

The camera pans the man at work. Mussed hair, white sideburns, a white, sometimes rumpled, kurta and an atmosphere that evokes Charminar smoke and conversations in the Coffee House. Sen's photographs in papers are as familiar as the history of the *adda* and queues to see the latest film

festival outside Nandan Cultural Centre in Kolkata. A man who shoots and runs. Former National Film Development Corporation head Deepankar Mukhopadhyay called him 'Maverick Maestro' in his biography by the same name, published in 1995.

ZOOM IN Sen's film tally currently stands at 28 feature films—the latest being *Aamar Bhuvan* (2003). Set in a Muslim-majority village, the film is radically different from Sen's straight and simple storytelling of Indian family life. Ask him who inspires him and he replies, "Primarily, I was and am still inspired by filmmakers of my own time." Like Federico Fellini, Akira Kurosawa, the great directors whom he rubbed shoulders with at film festivals; his contemporary Satyajit Ray, with whom he had a memorable love-hate relationship.

Sen has been honoured by governments the world over, including the French who rewarded him with the Commander of Arts and Letters in 1983. Two years before that, he received the Padma Bhushan. He was an honorary MP from 1998 to 2003. Sen was also the President of the International Federation of the Film Societies between 1990 and 1999. In his

recently published autobiography, *Always Being Born*, he says, "I wish I could start from a zero point... and, treating all my films as dress rehearsals, could have made them over again. Correcting my own conclusions would have been my all-time wish."

FLASHBACK Mrinal Sen was born on May 14, 1923, in Faridpur, Bengal (now in Bangladesh). He came to Kolkata to study physics and began his involvement with what he always called "my big city". As a student, he came in contact with the Communist-linked Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), which was founded in 1943 after the great Bengal famine and influenced many doyens of Indian theatre. Surrounded by friends like Ritwik Ghatak, Salil Chowdhury and Kalim Sarafi, he discussed Marxism over cups of tea at Paradise Café, an *adda* in central Calcutta. Though he was never a card-carrying party member, Marxism stayed with him, lending a distinct leftist accent to his work.

His first encounter with films was purely by accident. "It was in the Imperial Library (now, National Library) that I chanced upon an unwanted book, *Film*, written by Rudolf Arnheim," recalls Sen. "I

hardly watched films at the time." He was interested, but lacked the time to take it further. Instead, he left Kolkata to follow a career as a medical representative. The job ended in drama worthy of one of his own films—one evening, in 1951, in a Jhansi hotel, he stood in front of the mirror, shouted, made faces and broke down, before resigning from his job three days later.

The world gained a filmmaker. After returning to Kolkata, he eventually found himself work as a studio technician. In 1953, Sen made his first film, *Raat Bhore*. "The first and the last turning point was this film," he says. "Pure garbage. After that great debacle, I went into self-exile and then started again without looking back. What I am today is the logical extension of what I was then." Two years later, in 1957, he tried again. The breakthrough came with his third film, *Baishey Shravana* (Wedding Day), a love story that ends in a famine, made in 1960. He went on to make *Punascha* (Over Again, 1962), which explored the problems that arose in a household when the wife went to work. From overtly political films, Sen shifted to making films that, instead of looking for enemies outside, looked at the enemy within his

SALIM PAUL



Mrinal Sen directing cast, including Naseeruddin Shah (far right), and crew on the sets of *Khandahar* in 1983



Sen at his apartment on Beltola Street in Kolkata

own middle-class society. Most of his films were made on shoestring budgets shot on location.

THE REAL PICTURE It might be all too easy to slip into storyteller mode: a young Marxist struggles to make it as a filmmaker, becomes known as an agent provocateur who defies convention, and then achieves guru-status.

But is it that easy to categorise the man? “The essence of Mrinalda is the combination of uncertainty and conviction that keeps you young,” says actor Dhritiman Chatterjee, who has worked in Aparna Sen’s *36 Chowringhee Lane*. “I first worked with him in 1973 in *Padatik*, a film about an activist who escapes from a prison van and is sheltered by a young woman. Five days before shooting was meant to wrap up, nobody knew how the film would end—not even Mrinalda. Seven years later, the same sense of improvisation pervaded my next film with him, *Aakaaler Sandhaane*.” The film, released in 1980, was about the 1943 Bengal famine. “I remember that Smita Patil and I totally improvised at least two long dialogue scenes. Hurried discussion, no rehearsal, roll camera... and off you go!” he laughs.

Distinctly his own person, Sen is a playful man who, at 82, still bolts up the stairs to his third floor flat

on Beltola Street in Kolkata. He is also “petrified of ghosts”, reveals Suhasini Mulay.

Anjan Dutt, who worked with Sen in *Chalchitra* (1981), *Kharij* (1982), *Mahaprithvi* (1991) and *Antareen* (1993), before going on to make his own films, calls him his inspiration, associate and friend, saying, “He allows his actors the freedom to act the way

remembers him fussing endlessly about how long her eyebrows would take to grow back.

This attention to detail and passion for his art come through in every frame. “I live in the instant present as everybody does,” Sen says. Majumdar adds, “He’s as old as I am!” And wife Gita, who was a student with Sen before going on to act in his films,

“Sen allows his actors the freedom to act the way they choose, confident in their performance”

—Filmmaker Anjan Dutt

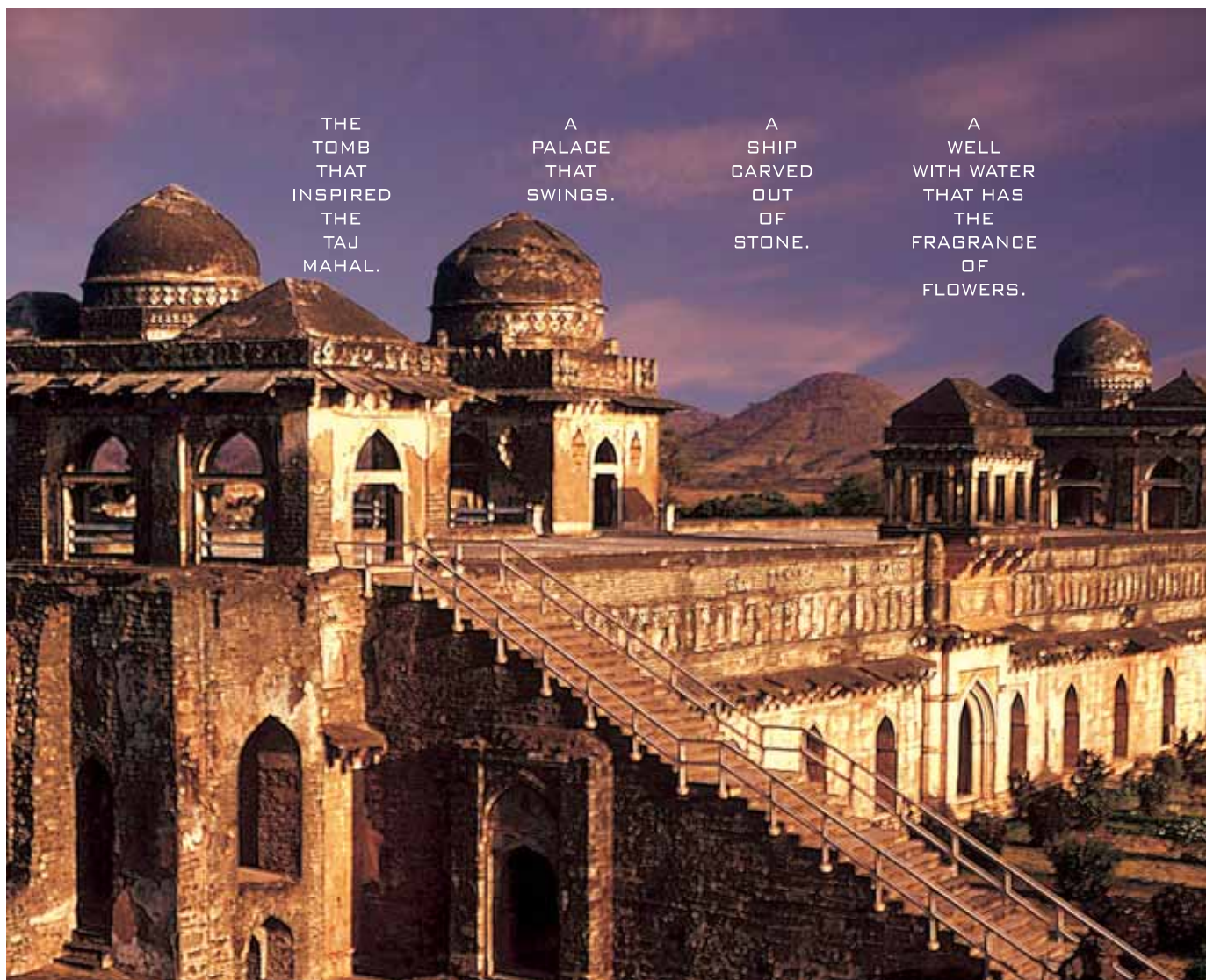
they choose, confident that once he had cast them the performance would be true.” Adds Chatterjee, “Our politics have so much in common. Today, when capitalism and George Bush are tearing the world apart, it is important for direct, even, strident political cinema to return. It can’t change the world. But perhaps it can give some of us a little hope.”

Actor Sreela Majumdar, now 43, met Sen when he was looking for a new face for his film *Parasuram*. They met at a theatre—she saw a man with grey sideburns, he saw the dark-skinned girl he was looking for. He exclaimed, “But you have plucked eyebrows! If I were younger, I would never fall in love with you!” Majumdar

says, “He’s a very good storyteller. And he does brilliant off-the-cuff work.”

THE BIG CLOSE-UP For Sen, it has been the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for contribution to cinema he received on February 2, 2005. When asked about it, Sen famously said, “My wife gave me a peck on my cheek. After a very long time.” The same playfulness that led actor Joan Fontaine to call him “a delicious liar” when she met him at the Berlin Film Festival in 1982—he told her she looked as young as the day she starred in *Rebecca* in 1941.

THE FINAL FRAME The hero walks towards the sunrise. Credits. ■



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A portrait of Amjad Ali Khan, an elderly man with grey hair, wearing a white button-down shirt and a colorful, patterned shawl. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. His hands are clasped in front of him, and he is wearing a watch and a ring.

A NOTEWORTHY MAN

Carrying forward a venerable musical lineage, Amjad Ali Khan has evolved a unique language for the sarod, giving the instrument a new dimension and recognition worldwide. **Vatsala Kaul** tunes in to his world of sound



Ustad Amjad Ali Khan has always been particular about *tameez* (manners). One episode the musician would like to brush away as a “bad dream” is his *jugalbandi* with shehnai maestro Ustad Bismillah Khan in December 2003. One hour into the concert at Science City Auditorium, Kolkata, Bismillah Khan stopped playing and hurled expletives at the organisers for bad acoustics. The sarod maestro stormed out, returning to perform solo for an hour after the 89-year-old shehnai player had left. He later called the senior musician “money-minded, with no respect for fellow musicians”. Ayaan Ali Bangash, his younger son, says, “You don’t have to be technically superb to be in *Abba*’s good books. All you need to do is be punctual and show respect.”

These days Khan *saab* is a changed person. He has learnt to hide his emotions better. “My face reveals nothing,” he says. “Controlling emotions is also a *sadhana* (discipline).” Till a few years ago, Amjad Ali Khan was offended by being called anything but ‘Ustad’. The musician’s elder son Amaan says, “*Abba* can really be misunderstood. He is a very private person, and can also be abrupt. It sometimes makes people think he is arrogant. While he is not judgemental, he has a strong sixth sense. And most of the time he is right about people.”

There’s been another change in the musician. The number of hours he spends in *riyaz* (practice) is no longer important to him. “More than *riyaz*, it’s preparing for a performance that counts,” he says. “It’s important to know how much intensity you create with each *sur*. If by mistake someone has chosen this line to make money, he will always be disappointed,” he adds, heading for the basement of his Sadhna Enclave home in South Delhi.

This is his ‘den’, with brown leather sofas and books. This is where he reads his newspaper every morning that he is home. Here is also a collection of nearly 200 LPs and photographs—the young Amjad and wife Subhalakshmi caught in expressive frames, and Amaan and Ayaan at concerts. Just before you enter the room, to the left of the marble staircase is the music room, a sanctum where music is invoked, worshipped and celebrated.

Music is what keeps Amjad Ali Khan going. In fact, it’s the only thing that energises him, making him fly across continents to perform and teach for at least six months a year. Recently, on one such trip, he conceived the idea of opening an academy in Chicago. Nothing comes between Khan *saab* and his music—neither socialising nor entertainment. “I want to make the sarod as popular as the guitar,” he says. “But I don’t want to impose my concept of music on people. If people find my music appealing, they enjoy my world of sound.”

It’s been his world for a lifetime. Born on October 9, 1945 in Gwalior, young Masoom—his name was later changed to Amjad—learnt the meaning of responsibility early. His great-grandfather Gulam Ali Khan Bangash had modified the rabab—an ancient string instrument from Afghanistan—into the sarod. “It was always a struggle,” he remembers. “My father was a man with no concern for a bank balance. Instead he lived by a deep faith in God.”

Amjad’s two brothers had followed the family’s musical tradition, but somehow couldn’t cross the barrier. It depressed his father, Ustad Haafiz Ali Khan, because his contemporaries’ sons had all made their place in the musical world. At the age of six, he gave his first performance and by the



Amjad Ali Khan captured through the lens of son Ayaan in Dubai during a concert tour last month

time he was 12, Amjad performed solo at the Sadarang Musical Festival in Kolkata.

In 1957, Amjad Ali Khan's family moved to Delhi and the music continued. "I became a *buzurg* (senior) very early in life," he says wryly. The heir of the Senia Bangash gharana has received innumerable awards over the years—including the Padma Vibhushan in 2001. He has also played at almost every prestigious venue in the world, including Carnegie Hall and the Royal Albert Hall. Yet, he considers singer Begum Akhtar's refusal to perform after him at an AIR concert in Srinagar, in the 1960s, the biggest accolade—the musician who performs last is considered the best.

Khan *saab* 'sang' through the sarod—dhrupad, khayal and even bhajan and folk music, something no one had attempted before. "I was able to give a new dimension

to the sarod's tonal quality, get it to express a human voice." When his children were young, he even regaled them by playing nursery rhymes on the sarod.

"I want to make the sarod as popular as the guitar. But I don't want to impose my music upon people"

—Amjad Ali Khan

Amaan is now 27 and Ayaan, 25. Inheritors of the legacy, both are musicians in their own right. Ayaan recalls how it was strange as a child to draw a father with a sarod, rather than a briefcase. "*Abba* was the lenient one, *Maa* was the one who made sure we did well at school," says Ayaan.

Khan *saab* believes his wife should be awarded for keeping the family together. "I tell Amaan and Ayaan that whenever they perform, they must introduce themselves not just as my sons, but the children of Subhalakshmi and Amjad Ali Khan. In India, everything ends at the father, but the real guru is their *Maa*. I feel sad for women who are scared of their husbands."

Subhalakshmi Khan, 59, is definitely not one of those. "Khan *saab* has never stopped me from doing anything," she says. "The problem is that he finds it difficult to express himself."

He first saw Subhalakshmi in 1974—her Bharatanatyam performance followed his recital. He had a sour relationship and an incompatible marriage behind him. She was a beautiful Assamese danseuse and they married in 1975, despite her family's apprehensions.

बूंद बूंद में विश्वास



Kinley is a trademark of The Coca-Cola Company.



Subhalakshmi is the woman behind the Bangash men's stage settings and splendid kurtas and shawls—he, however, chooses his own pens, with which he signs autographs, and watches; he loves collecting them and the Rolex is his favourite. “The three go to concerts, they look lovely, play good music, but a lot goes behind it,” she says, laughing.

The Bangash men now invariably perform together, and Khan *saab* has been often accused of promoting his sons. He counters, “People want to know how my sons play, just as they want to know how Amitabh Bachchan's son acts.”

Off stage too, the family enjoys quality time together. They love to go to movies and take time off while performing overseas to sight-see. “Keeping your family happy is also a form of worship,” says the musician. And then there's his original way of worship—his sarod. “I speak through it,” he declares. “When I am alone, I suddenly start humming. The melody comes to me through a cosmic power. I accept it and give it a name.”

“As a child it was strange to draw a father with a sarod, rather than a briefcase”

—Ayaan Ali Bangash

Among these melodies are 40 new ragas he has created. The one that stands out is ‘Subhalakshmi’. “It's the only raga I have composed for a person who is alive,” he says.

“I used to tell Amji,” says Subhalakshmi, using the endearment only she is allowed to use, “I do so much for you. Why don't you compose a raga for me and call it



Amaan (left) and Ayaan (right) with Khan and Subhalakshmi

Jwalamukhi? When he released the raga and called it ‘Subhalakshmi’, I was so embarrassed.

Amji. What does he call her? “He doesn't call me anything,” she smiles. “Once Ayaan came

their teens. The other close friend is Dr Nirmal Mattoo, whom he met in the US in 1997. Says Dr Mattoo, from Old Brookville, New York, “I respect his concern for preserving musical traditions.”

This concern has found expression in many ways. The ancestral Bangash house in Gwalior has been converted into a museum. And the Ustad Haafiz Ali Khan Memorial Society founded by the musician works to propagate classical music in India and abroad.

“I feel music is like a garden and everyone can blossom,” he says. “But for centuries, there has been competition amongst *gharanas*. Perhaps that's why we have never been able to create orchestras like Western musicians.”

back from school, saying everyone laughed at him because he told them that his mother's name was ‘Listen!’ That's what Khan *saab* calls me.”

Besides his family, Amjad Ali Khan is close to only two other people. One is Arup Sarkar of the Anand Bazaar Patrika group, whom he met while they were in

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Retro - active

Fashion is as dependably cyclical as a well-greased ferris wheel. Polka dots, bellbottoms, neon colours, pencil-thin eyebrows, puffed sleeves, Patiala salwars and polyester pants all routinely make their appearance, roll away, and then reappear to a chorus of oohs and aahs from style gurus.

Not everything in popular culture has the same shelf life. There's a law of silent displacement at work in our homes and lives, a wave that slowly, insidiously, washes out everyday objects from all around us and flows back in with 'new' treasures. Italian appliances company Smeg may have brought back the chunky, clunky pre-frost-free refrigerator and rebranded it retro-chic, and the old HMV gramophone player may have achieved 'antique' status, but most of the things we grew up among have vanished from our lives. Like black-and-white Weston TVs lovingly encased in wooden shutters with kitschy carvings. Standard-issue black telephones with huge dials waiting for your finger to turn them. Sunshine-yellow Dalda aluminium cans adorned with a green tree—an invitation to cholesterol. Igloo-like white thermocol roti-keepers.

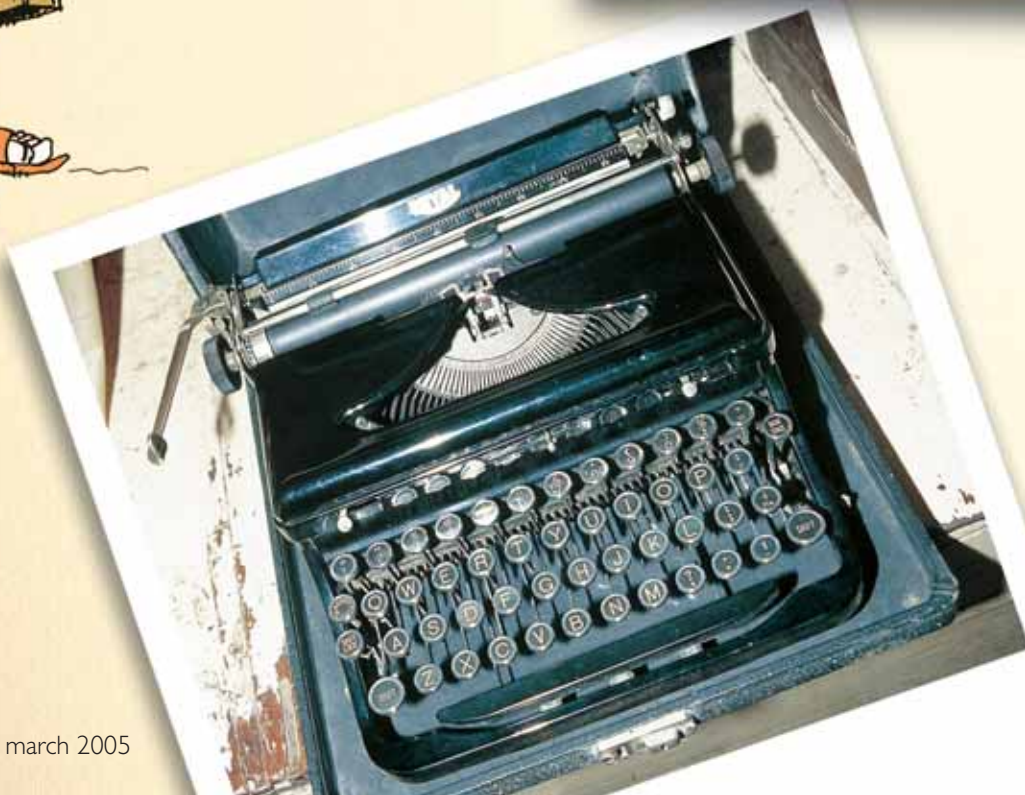
The spirit of the time is streamlined and refined, from the oil we use to the radios we listen to. Call it consumerism, globalisation, or just progress. For most of us, this is 'cool'. Let's face it, Bhimsen Joshi sounds better on CD than LP. There are others though, people who may have never heard of Australian hip-hop rock band Regurgitator, but who would subscribe completely to their anthem: *I like your old stuff better than your new stuff*. These are the people who still feed their grandchildren sweets from cracked Nutrine toffee tins, search obsessively for old music for their gramophone players in flea markets, invite you for coffee and cake served off three-tiered teak stands, whose homes would make hawkers in antique markets salivate with envy.

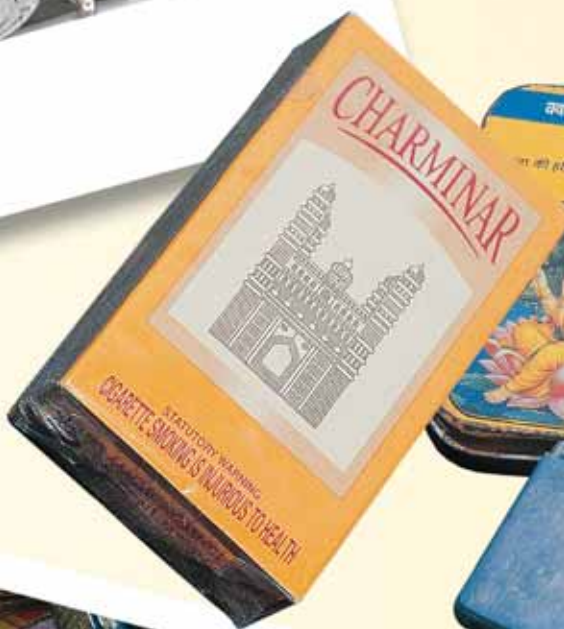
We know three such people, and they showed us some of their favourite things...



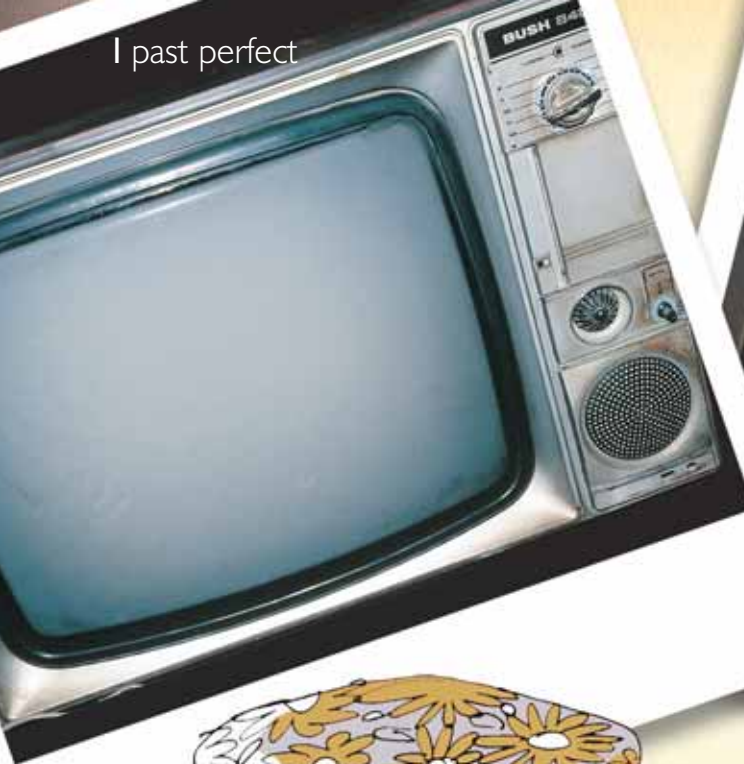
DEB BOSE. PROFESSOR OF LITERATURE.

What's a night out with the comrades at the *adda* without Charminars. Will save the *bidi* for the long night ahead in my room writing poetry on my trusted typewriter; for love letters, the fountain pen. Perhaps I'll phone her. Or stare at her pictures taken on my camera, if only loading it were easier. Or maybe I'll just browse through my old magazines and imperialist propaganda to get the revolutionary juices flowing.



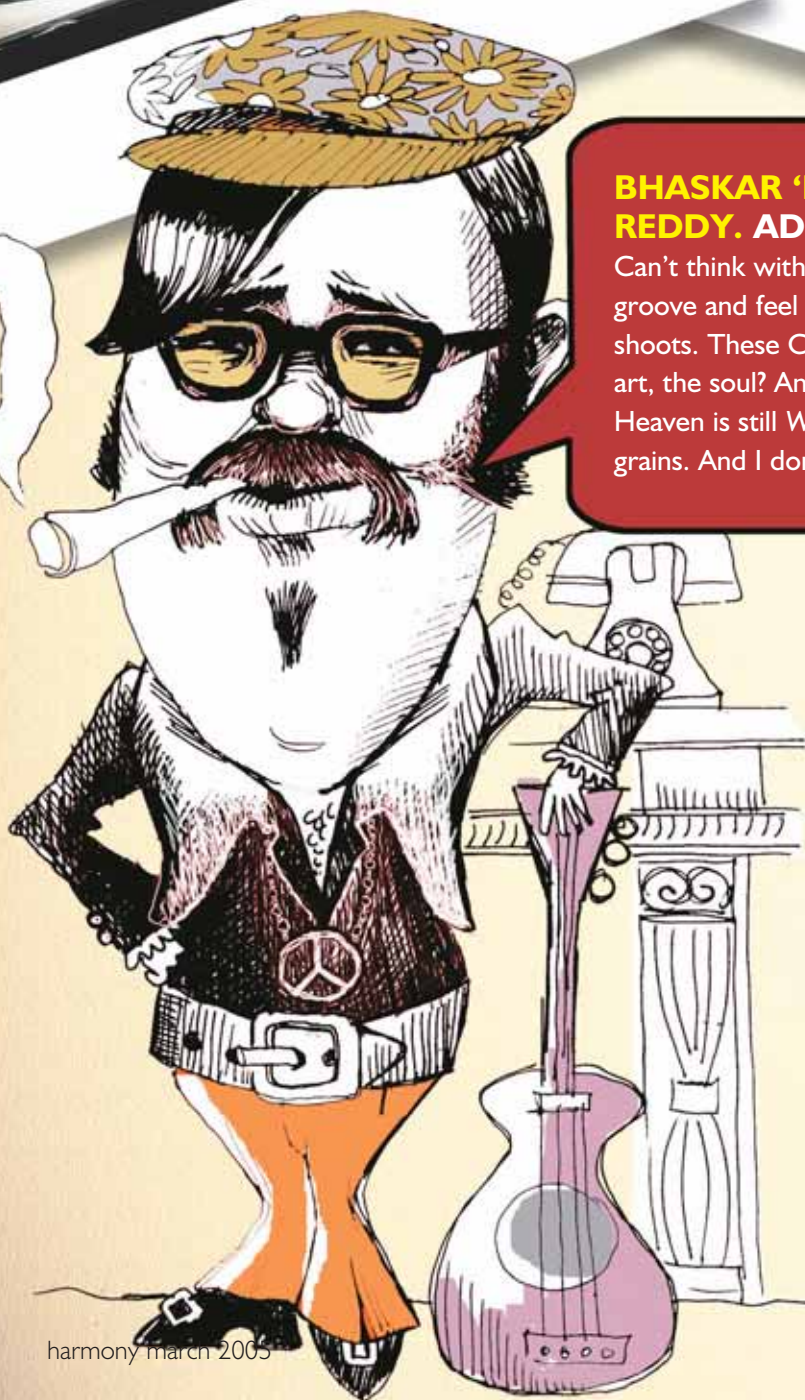


I past perfect



**BHASKAR 'Baks'
REDDY. AD GURU.**

Can't think without music. Need to put the needle on the groove and feel the vibe. And the jazzy tape deck for outdoor shoots. These CD players are simply useless man. Where's the art, the soul? And these flat-screen TVs, 'savvy' DVDs...all bogus. Heaven is still Woodstock running on my VCP. Hey, I love the grains. And I don't need a remote either.





| past perfect





**RITA SEQUEIRA.
NATURAL HEALER.**

Fashion just isn't what it used to be, you know? I mean, the girls in the gym laugh when they see my goggles and my keds. It's, like, so annoying. And they don't believe I sew my own clothes. Hey, this pret-shet is not for me. Anyways, getting ready for a hot date, a quick blow dry and a spritz of Chanel. Maybe the snakeskin bag would scare him off. I'll tell him it's faux. And the cookies I baked for him, stacked up in my gorgeous old biscuit tin, should soften him right up. Oh yeah.



Concept: RITU NANDA; Text: ARATI RAJAN MENON;
Photos: PAT, RITU NANDA; Illustrations: FARZANA COOPER

Spring cleaning

Yogic exercise and diet can sweep away the winter cobwebs and give you a lithe body and a fresh mind, says **Shameem Akthar**



ACCORDING TO ANCIENT texts, spring is the best season for yoga. Though the different regions of our land have their own seasonal quirks, the period before summer is the ideal time for the body's own spring cleaning.

Winter lifestyle changes—like sleeping more and exercising less—leave their traces. Our body also accumulates metabolic waste from the fatty foods we consume as insulation against the cold. In Ayurveda, this waste is called *ama*. Picture it as a sticky substance clogging up the flow of your blood. It can cause muscle aches, weak immunity to colds, dull skin and headaches. If we sweep away this mess through yogic diet and practices, we are guaranteed a body that feels lithe, a fresh mind, and a spring in our step.

To do a few rounds of *suryanamas-kar*, facing a spring sun, is the best way to clean up the body, power the bones and stretch the muscles. The eyes too are rejuvenated, while Vitamin D from the sun's rays helps our bones store up calcium better. The tree pose is another easy detoxifier. It offers a complete stretch and kick-starts peristalsis—the muscular movement of the digestive tract—thus preventing constipation, the body's reaction to *ama* accumulation. Other cleansing practices include calmness-inducing breathing like *nadi shodhana pranayama*. The powerful belly-breathing incited by the skull-cleanser

(*kapalbhati*) practice gets our digestive system back on track. It also clears up clogged sinuses and enhances blood flow to the brain. All forward-bends and spinal twists massage the liver. Forward-bends also clear up blood circulation, particularly to the face.

Springtime also blesses us with the right harvest of food to detoxify. The fibre in fruits and vegetables sweeps out the *ama* like efficient brooms. The earth's abundance and the sun's *prana* are trapped in this bounty. Instead of eating *prana* second-hand, as

happens with non-vegetarian food, yoga encourages us to take in the sun's strength straight from the bottom of the food chain.

This period is also one of transition between the winter's extreme cold and summer's searing heat. The body readies itself to meet this challenge. At this time, some of us succumb to floating allergens owing to hormonal imbalances. Yoga offers us the best workout of the endocrine glands, strengthening us, easing us into summer with a stronger constitution. ■

Yogic moves

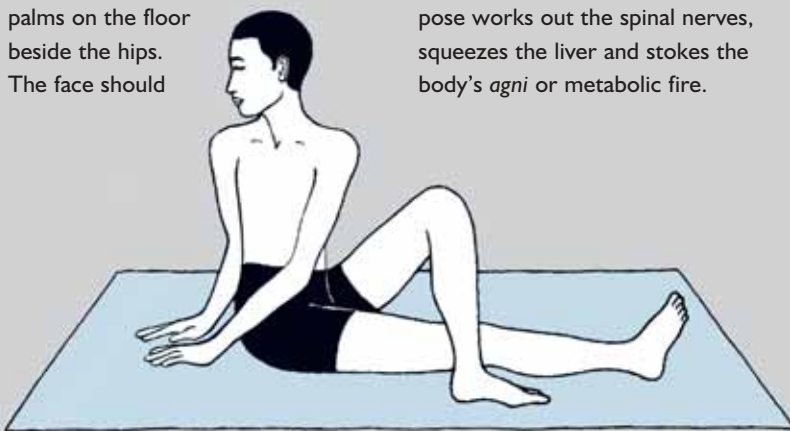
Spinal twist (*meru wakrasana*)

This is a gentle spinal twist. Sit with legs out in front. Inhale. Lift the left leg, place it over the right leg, left sole beside the right knee. Exhale.

Twist to the right, palms on the floor beside the hips.

The face should

also twist to the right, as far back as possible. Hold the pose, breathing gently. Exhale. Release the pose. Repeat the other side. Do not exert too much initially, particularly if you have lower back pain or serious digestive disorders like ulcers. This pose works out the spinal nerves, squeezes the liver and stokes the body's *agni* or metabolic fire.



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



Master of arts

Knee implants have not stopped Rathna Murthy from teaching French and music, and running a library in Bangalore, finds
Shivmeet Deol

She is on her feet all the time. Bustling between the kitchen and the children's library she runs at her home in Bangalore, taking time out to practise Carnatic music for at least an hour daily and giving French tuitions twice a week, Rathna Murthy, 77, has her hands full. "There is no time to feel lonely or bored," she says. As for the metal implants in both her knees, they are a non-issue.

Armed with a walker, Murthy makes every waking hour count. She is up at 7 am everyday and ends her day at 9.30 pm, taking just half an hour out in the afternoon for a nap. Sometimes, in the evening she accompanies her 84-year-old husband S S Murthy, a retired electrical engineer, for a short stroll around the backyard of her home in Jayanagar. "People think we're too active but it's not as if we're running around playing tennis," she says. "It's normal

to not sit idle. I'm just being myself, and thankful that I'm not dependent on anyone."

Murthy has suffered from osteoporosis and arthritis-related problems for over 15 years. But it was only in 1999 that she underwent a proper check-up in Delhi, which immediately led to surgery to insert metal implants in both knees. She still continued to manage all the household chores and even drove around town shopp-

ing and visiting until her right knee completely gave way in January 2003.

Murthy underwent a second knee replacement surgery in December 2003. She is now on bone-strengthening medication—the only medicines she takes. And she insists that her routine remains practically the same as it was 30 years ago. The only marked difference is that she does not go out alone as much.

Murthy recalls the time when she spent several hours in the kitchen preparing snacks for the children

to the UK in the 1980s,” she remembers. “The children here didn’t have access to enough good books.” In this neighbourhood, at least, thanks to Murthy’s efforts, the battle against the onslaught of cartoon imports like *Pokemon* and *The Jetsons* is being hard-fought.

“Though most of the children have grown up and gone away, there are still about 30 to 40 who come here regularly,” she says. In the early ‘90s, she tried to lure children away from cable TV by having the empty plot next door cleaned up and converted into a badminton court. “But many

Besides looking after her 1,500 odd books, Murthy also has her lifelong love of Carnatic music to keep her busy. It is hard for her to practise or teach since the implants in her knees don’t allow her to sit on the floor anymore but she perseveres. She now sits on the chair and teaches a class of two. Nobody wants to commit to the rigorous training that classical music requires anymore, she complains.

Her French tuitions receive better response—she teaches seven students. Both Murthy and her husband are linguists and the



Photos: ABHIJIT GHOSH

Murthy would love to see a chain of libraries, such as hers

coming to her house to read. Now, though she serves visitors a cup of coffee usually accompanied with homemade cake, all brought in on a tray-cum-basket attached to her walker, she confesses she can’t stand long enough to cook, and has finally hired some help.

Running the library, though, is no trouble. In 1985, Murthy put together a small collection of books and converted the foyer in her house into the ‘Vivekananda Children’s Library’. Since then, she’s been known as ‘library aunty’ by the children of Jayanagar. “I got the idea from a visit

parents were discouraging”, so she focused on getting the children to read instead.

“Why not have a chain of libraries, like food stores?” Murthy asks. She urges other publishers to follow the example of the Cambridge University Press sales centre, which donated several books to her library. She charges members only Rs 50 a month, with a deposit of Rs 100. “Is it too much to ask of people who spend Rs 200 on a pizza?” She bemoans the lack of interest shown by parents, saying, “They don’t participate in the children’s reading.”

Thanks to Rathna Murthy’s efforts, the battle against the onslaught of cartoon imports like *Pokemon* is being hard-fought

former teacher of French picked up Hindi and Marathi from her years in Delhi and Mumbai, and speaks Kannada and Tamil as well as English and Telugu, her first language.

Language, literature and music make Murthy’s world complete. She has five children—one lives in Delhi, two in the US and two in Bangalore—and seven grandchildren. But Murthy and her husband prefer to live on their own. “They have their own lives,” she says candidly. “And we have separate interests.” Plenty. ■



Purity of prayer

According to **Swami Vivekananda**, true worship exists in the unselfishness of the heart, not in ceremony

IT IS IN LOVE THAT RELIGION exists and not in ceremony, in the pure and sincere love in the heart. Unless a man is pure in body and mind, his coming into a temple and worshipping Shiva is useless. The prayers of those that are pure in mind and body will be answered by Shiva, and those that are impure and yet try to teach religion to others will fail in the end. External worship is only a symbol of internal worship; but internal worship and purity are the real things. Without them, external worship would be of no avail.

People have become so degraded in this *Kali Yuga* that they think they can do anything, and then they can go to a holy place, and their sins will be forgiven. If a man goes with an impure mind into a temple, he adds to the sins that he had already, and goes home a worse man than when he left it.

Tirtha (place of pilgrimage) is a place which is full of holy things and holy men. But if holy people live in a certain place, and if there is no temple there, even that is a *tirtha*. If unholy people live in a place where there may be a hundred temples, the *tirtha* has vanished from that place. This is the gist of all worship—to be pure and to do good to others. He who sees Shiva in the poor, in the weak, and in the diseased, really worships Shiva; and if he sees Shiva only in the image, his worship is but preliminary. He

who has served and helped one poor man seeing Shiva in him, without thinking of his caste, or creed, or race, or anything, with him Shiva is more pleased than with the man who sees Him only in temples.

A rich man had a garden and two gardeners. One of these gardeners was very lazy and did not work; but when the owner came to the garden, the lazy man would get up and fold his arms and say, 'How beautiful is the face of my master,' and dance before him. The other gardener would not talk much, but would work hard, and produce all sorts of fruits and

poor and weak, all animals, and all His creation. Which of these would be the more beloved of Shiva? Certainly he that serves His children. He who wants to serve the father must serve the children first.

Selfishness is the chief sin, thinking of ourselves first. He who thinks, 'I will eat first, I will have more money than others, and I will possess everything'; he who thinks, 'I will get to heaven before others, I will get *mukti* before others', is the selfish man. The unselfish man says, 'I will be last, I do not care to go to heaven, I will even go to hell if by doing

If a man goes with an impure mind into a temple, he adds to the sins he already has

vegetables which he would carry on his head to his master who lived a long way off. Of these two gardeners, which would be the more beloved of his master?

Shiva is that Master, and this world is His garden, and there are two sorts of gardeners here; the one who is lazy, hypocritical and does nothing, only talking about Shiva's beautiful eyes and nose and other features; and the other, who is taking care of Shiva's children, all those that are

so I can help my brothers.' This unselfishness is the test of religion. He who has more of this unselfishness is more spiritual and nearer to Shiva. Whether he is learned or ignorant, he is nearer to Shiva than anybody else, whether he knows it or not.

And if a man is selfish, even though he has visited all the temples, seen all the places of pilgrimage, and painted himself like a leopard, he is still further off from Shiva. ■

*Excerpted from The Penguin Swami Vivekananda Reader.
Edited by Makarand Paranjape; 328 pages; paperback; Rs 395.
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EK BALM TEEN KAAM



THE TIPPLE EFFECT

Ladies, drink to this. A study of more than 12,000 elderly women conducted by Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, and published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, suggests that women who consumed light to moderate amounts of alcohol daily had about a

20 per cent lower risk of experiencing problems with their memory and cognitive abilities later in life than teetotalers. "Women who were consistently drinking about half to one drink per day had both less cognitive impairment and less decline in their cognitive function compared to women who

didn't drink at all," said Francine Grodstein, senior author on the study. Earlier studies have similarly suggested that alcohol may help the brain and protect the heart by improving blood flow.

Red wine, in fact, can make you look better too. It's being touted as the latest natural anti-ageing product ingredient—Red Wine Facial Lotion and Pomegranate Wine Body Polish have already entered Western markets. Researchers credit this to the polyphenols and antioxidants naturally

present in wine, especially red wine, which promote arterial health and seem to counteract the effects of ageing more effectively than Vitamins E and C.



HALDI POWER

Can the relatively low incidence of Alzheimer's disease in India—only one-fifth of that in the US—be credited to good old turmeric in our food? That's what researchers at the University of California in Los Angeles are investigating in a pilot study begun last month. Extra cellular deposits of protein in the brain—called plaque—stick together, forming fat-like globules, which initiate gradual fading of memory. It is hoped that turmeric—or curcumin—would break up this plaque, much like soap breaks up oil. Tests on mice have been encouraging; now researchers are hoping that a turmeric-loaded pill will have the same effect on humans.

IT'S IN THE GENES

Good health has nothing to do with it. Even if they're in fine shape, older people with the higher-risk genotype for Alzheimer's disease can suffer major problems with prospective memory—the ability to remember what they need to do in the future, such as take medications or make a doctor's appointment. According to a research team from the University of New Mexico, people who carry the high-risk 'e-4 allele' on both their apolipoprotein E (ApoE)

genes—a gene shown to be involved in the onset of Alzheimer's—are eight times more likely to develop Alzheimer's as non-carriers while people with the high-risk allele on only one ApoE gene are three times more likely.



The team studied a group of 32 healthy, dementia-free adults between 60 and 87 years old. Half of them carried the e-4 allele and half did not. The participants were asked to write a specific word when they saw a target word. Far more often than the non-carriers, the e-4 carriers forgot to write down the specified word when they were supposed to. The study, which appears in *Neuropsychology* journal, suggests that testing prospective memory may prove useful as an early diagnostic tool for Alzheimer's disease.

THE BIG PICTURE



This one will surprise you. In a study published in the journal *Neuron*, psychologists at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada, say the ageing process actually improves the ability to grasp the 'big picture'. Researchers measured how long it took for study participants to indicate in which

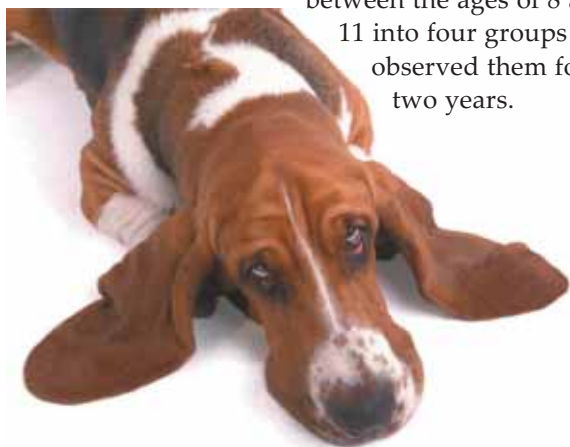
direction a set of bars moved across a computer screen. Younger participants were faster when the bars were small or low in contrast. When the bars were large and high in contrast, however, silvers were faster.

"The results are exciting not only because they show an odd case in which older people have better vision than younger people, but also because it may tell us something about how ageing affects the way signals are processed in the brain," says Patrick Bennett, senior author. The results suggest that the ability of one neuron to inhibit another is reduced as we age. Inhibition helps younger people find objects within clutter, but this makes it hard to see the clutter itself. The large, high-contrast bars are 'tuned out' because there is nothing hidden within them. Older brains, on the other hand, do not 'tune out' the bars so they can perform the task faster.

STAY SHARP

Learning new tricks from old dogs may ward off the mental decline that comes with growing older. These include good diet, exercise and mental stimulation. A study reported in medical journal *Neurobiology of Aging* suggests that dogs and people experience remarkably similar cognitive declines as they age and that a healthy lifestyle may help maintain brain health as we age. In the experiment, researchers taught old beagles—one of a breed of small hounds—to find treats under different coloured boxes. The dogs that ate an enriched diet, got more exercise and had the benefit of toys and playmates were far more likely to figure it out. The study divided 48 beagles

between the ages of 8 and 11 into four groups and observed them for two years.



HEARD IT?



Here's some great news for the hearing impaired. A study conducted at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston has identified a protein made by the retinoblastoma, or Rb1, gene that prevents the regeneration of inner ear cells that are critical to hearing. In studies conducted with laboratory mice—mice have an ear structure similar to humans—researchers found that by eliminating the effects of that single gene, they could cause inner ear cells to re-grow, replacing nerve endings, called hair cells, that are often lost to injury or age. "Most deafness is caused by the loss of these hair cells," said Zheng-Yi Chen, leader of the hospital research team, in the journal, *Science*. "Now we have the means to regenerate these cells."

ENCAPSULATED



■ A group of drugs used for treating epilepsy has been found effective in prolonging the lifespan of worms—scientists hope they might have a similar effect on humans too. Kerry Kornfeld of Washington University in St Louis, Missouri, and his team tested the drugs on a tiny, short-lived worm called *Caenorhabditis elegans*. Kornfeld and his team now plan to test the drugs on flies and mice.



■ Last month, America's largest health maintenance organisation Kaiser Permanente banned the distribution of Bextra—a Cox-2 inhibitor used to treat arthritis and other inflammatory diseases—manufactured by Pfizer Inc because it could increase the risk of heart attacks or strokes. Bextra is in the same class of drugs as Celebrex and Vioxx. Vioxx was pulled off the market in October 2004.



■ Folic acid supplements and folate-rich food—like oranges, leafy greens and fortified grains—may help women reduce their risk of hypertension. A report published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* says among older women, taking more than 1,000 micrograms of folate daily appeared to prevent about six cases of hypertension per 1,000 women. But the researchers at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital cautioned that they are not ready to recommend that women start increasing their folate intake, yet.

■ When researchers added the compound, Pheromone 10:13, to perfume and gave it to post-menopausal women, they reported more petting and kissing with partners. Pheromones are airborne chemicals secreted from the body and recognised by their smell—this one, isolated from the armpit sweat of young women, acted as a turn-on for older men. Biologist Winnifred Cutler, the discoverer of the pheromone, is keeping its identity confidential until patents have been granted to her organisation, The Athena Institute for Women's Wellness Research in Chester Springs, Pennsylvania. ■



Golden retreat

Designed exclusively for silvers, the Golden Nest retirement commune in Pune offers convenience, comfort and security

Silvers Dhiren and Renu Gupta have just assured themselves a golden retirement—they've booked a flat at Golden Nest, a commune designed exclusively for senior citizens at Kalyani Nagar in Pune. "Both our sons live abroad and we do not know what the future has in store for us," they say. "We wanted to be among people who are sharing and caring."

They are not alone in their concerns. As youngsters increasingly move out of their homes to settle abroad, there is an urgent need for exclusive housing projects like Golden Nest. Till recently, residential facilities for senior citizens comprised old-age homes, set up and managed by government or charitable and non-profit organisations. The lack of medical equipment and care, and an absence of recreational facilities rendered these homes mere shelters. Worse was the stigma attached in living in such homes—a sense of being neglected and abandoned.

With this in mind, Vascon Engineers Pvt Ltd and Manisha Constructions conceived of the Golden Nest housing project. Golden Nest is the first project of its kind, encompassing exclusive amenities suited to the needs, temperament and requirements of elderly persons. The running and maintenance of the complex is in the hands of the Golden Nest Marigold Foundation for senior citizens. The trust, which has on board members from the Housing Development Finance Corporation, Golden Nest Developers Pvt Ltd, and nominated residents, will also organise various cultural and social activities for residents to take part in and enjoy.

"Everything here, from the toilets to the furniture and the apartment itself, is senior-friendly," says M H Dalal, director and chief executive officer of Golden Nest. More than five years of intensive research and planning has gone into the design of this commune to help seniors lead a life of dignity and honour in a home of their own. "Over here, silvers won't have to compromise on their existing lifestyles," adds R Vasudevan, chairman cum managing director, Vascon Group.

The group discovered that NRI children were interested in investing in a senior citizen's development project for their parents, rather than leaving them alone and unprotected in an unsafe world. Indeed, with the first phase of 53 flats already complete, the response from NRIs has been astounding. Fifty per cent of the flats have already been booked. The second phase of 57 flats is still under construction.

The decisive factors working in favour of Golden Nest are convenience, comfort and security. To be operational from June 2005, the 'silvers only' residential complex of three high-rise buildings is being constructed

according to international standards. The commune offers a choice between modular studios (545 sq ft), one-bedroom flats (680 sq ft), and two-bedroom flats (1,230 sq ft) for Rs 16 lakh, Rs 20 lakh and Rs 36.5 lakh respectively, all fully furnished. What's more, the builders have given interested buyers the option of booking the apartment partially furnished as well.

Being a part of the Golden Nest family gives you access to a host of benefits. Hassle-free maintenance, timely repairs, convenient bill-payment facilities, diligent housekeeping even within apartments, 24-hour security and laundry services are just some of the features being offered to residents. Other benefits include cable TV connection, computer connectivity, installation of grip rails, anti-skid tiles, full handicap accessibility, emergency alert system, home theatre, recreation and meditation room, library, walking track, physiotherapy room, guest accommodation, and maintenance management of all utilities. Each building has two elevators including stretcher elevators, and a fire-detection and fire-fighting system has been installed. An in-house cafeteria, private dining facilities, and a tie-up with caterers and a restaurant for door delivery are some of the other services being planned.

Healthcare—arguably the primary concern for silvers—has not been ignored either. An arrangement with the nearby Ruby Hall clinic provides all residents with 'special status'—they need not fill any forms or give any money as advance during a medical emergency. Moreover, residents will be entitled to discounts on facilities at the hospital. Special arrangements for a standby ambulance and doctor have also been made. Take the case of Hari Haran, an NRI settled in Canada, who zeroed in on Golden Nest after conducting a personal survey of old-age homes and other senior citizens' projects in Pune. "I want to entrust my ailing mother in safe hands," he says. He found the right place.

At Golden Nest, every apartment is a home in the truest sense of the word, where every detail, however minute, is considered, leading to physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Your home is now waiting for you. If you would like to book an apartment or, better still, gift your parents a home, contact Golden Nest at Survey No. 15, Kalyani Nagar, Pune-110014; call 020-30907279/1055, 09822028131 (mobile number of M H Dalal); or email at info@goldennestindia.com, sales@goldennestindia.com. For more information, check out the website www.goldennestindia.com.

—Kanchan Maslekar





A helping

With the breakdown in traditional support systems and shortage of hospital beds, an increasing number of elderly require home care by professional caregivers. But is India equipped to provide it? *Harmony* looks for answers

After retiring as a nurse from Chennai Hospital in 1998, Suvedhna Murthy went back to Hyderabad to be with her family. A year later, her life was interrupted when her 86-year-old mother was diagnosed with vascular dementia and Murthy took on the task of caring for her. “The hospital couldn’t keep her for too long, so I brought her home,” remembers Murthy. She thought she had seen it all. But nothing prepared her for informal nursing at home.

Today, there is a persistent shortage of beds in long-term care facilities across India. The responsibility of caring for the ailing, then, often falls to a loved one. In Murthy’s case, a nurse coming in for a few minutes to take her mother’s blood pressure or a support worker visiting once a week just wasn’t enough. She needed more help.

someone who feeds him, administers regular medication, takes care of sanitation and monitors mobility. For three years, Murthy did all that on her own, sacrificing her personal life, before her mother passed away in 2002.

PREPARE TO CARE

In India, professional caregiving is not yet a well-defined concept. Culturally, family members have stepped in to take care of anyone with a degenerative illness. However, times have changed and so have traditional support systems.

“With work pressures and children staying away from home, old people are usually left with no one to care for their needs,” says Dr Jacob Roy, who set up India’s first caregiving training centre in 1992 in Kochi, under the aegis of the Alzheimer’s Related Disorder

short-term diploma course that comprises basic nursing, training in operating special gadgets for dependents, and orientation programmes that help them build up emotional intelligence in order to provide psychological support to the dependent. Financial returns—from Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000 per month—depend on skills. Ideally, those willing to join the sector should be

Caring for the elderly at home can be very demanding. If family members aren’t able to cope, hiring a professional caregiver is the best option

hand



The rub of it is that home care isn’t nine to five, Monday to Friday. It’s about being on call 24/7. And while informal caregivers—usually family members—are ready to put their lives on hold, like Murthy, they just aren’t able to cope. Sometimes, the only option is a professional caregiver—someone trained to take care of a dependent’s daily needs,

Society of India. Primarily targeted at Alzheimer’s patients, the institute offers a one-year programme in Community Geriatric Training.

Caregiving is hard work, usually undertaken by young people from impoverished areas in Bihar, Jharkhand and Punjab who can’t afford a three-year nursing course. Instead, they take up a

physically strong, with decent communication skills, a positive attitude and an alert mind. They should also be prepared to adapt. Ripen Kumar, a 40-year-old facilitator at the Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (Vimhans) in New Delhi, recalls living on a vada sambar diet for years while caring for a Southern Indian client.

Meanwhile, the caretakers—those that employ the caregivers—need to define areas of work clearly for caregivers; hire from reputed agencies and crosscheck references; take care of their needs, like giving them access to the toilet; give them ‘downtime’ for leisure; and arrange for replacements intermittently to give them a break. Ira Misra, 55, who lives alone in her South Delhi home with her ageing mother, says, “I encourage my mother’s general caregiver to bring a book along. If she doesn’t read, she will feel bored and demoralised.” For



H. MAHESH



PRABHAS

Misra, who tried looking after her mother on her own before hiring someone, the caregiver is a partner, not domestic help.

WANTED, CAREGIVER

Misra employs a primary caregiver, a person who attends to healthy yet dependent older people. For over a decade, experts have been debating whether India needs such caregivers or specialised ones—those who assist chronically ill seniors. Curiously, little research has been done on the issue. Though the Pune-based International Longevity Centre is

conducting research on 2,000 families in the city, the results, expected by July this year, will hardly reflect a pan-India scenario.

The centre’s deputy director Radha Raj, 65, feels India needs caregivers for chronically ill patients only. “Traditionally, general caregiving is provided by family members,” she adds. But Dr Sadanand Nair of YASHADA, a Pune-based organisation that established the Institute for Productive and Empowered Old Age (IPEOA) last year, disagrees with Raj. With old people increas-

In India, there are only a handful of reputed institutes that train caregivers—the demand is 70 per cent more than the availability

ingly left with no one to care for them, Nair insists that India needs generalised care that combines respect, physical aid and company. “A caregiver should be trained in homeware and bedside assistance,” says Dr Nair, adding that he plans to launch a generalised training programme in Pune soon. Dr Nair is trying to encourage medical colleges across India to include caregiving as a regular course, and students from impoverished sections of society to take it up as a career. “It should be treated on a par with nursing and not as an easy substitute,” he says.

In India, there are only a handful of reputed institutes that train caregivers. Vimhans and the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) in New Delhi, the Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology in Kolkata, Heritage Hospital (in collaboration with South Australian University in Adelaide) in Hyderabad, Chandigarh-based NGO All India Women's Conference (AIWC), Janaseva Foundation School in Pune, NISD in Bhubaneswar, Red Cross in Kottayam, Kerala, and Dr Jacob Roy's Community Geriatric Training in Kochi, Kerala, which is training its ninth batch. All these institutes train caregivers for a period of three to 18 months at a fee of about Rs 500 per month. These institutes also provide placement to all those who finish the course, easily done considering the demand for caregivers is 70 per cent more than the availability.

NISD, which started mobile training centres in Agartala, Bhubaneswar and Chennai in January 2005, figures in the wish list of most aspiring caregivers. Training with this five-year-old institute, the only one recognised by the government, can get them jobs in government-run old-age homes and day-care centres, which according to the rules must have at least one caregiver on their rolls. In fact, for every year's batch of 25 seats in each centre, NISD gets 500 applications. "The idea is to form a resource base for integrated geriatric care by teaching health management, nursing, financial management, operating technical aids, orientation on legal issues and helping patients draft

their wills," says Satyendra Prakash, director of NISD. The institute, which was launched as part of the National Policy on Older Persons, an initiative by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, is also uploading contacts of its trained caregivers, on its website www.nisd.gov.in. The facility will be available by the end of this month.

To contact caregivers trained by the National Institute of Social Defence, log on to www.nisd.gov.in



Opposite page, Simrita Chaudhry of Vimhans in Delhi; a Vimhans caregiver tending to a patient

PRABHAS



The team of caregivers at Heritage Hospital, Hyderabad

"Very few private hospitals in India are willing to make investments on our future geriatric caregivers," rues Simrita Chaudhry, who heads geriatric caregiving training at Vimhans. Vimhans started training caregivers in 1996. Today, there is a demand for at least 12 caregivers every day that the institute can't fulfil. Only 40 graduate from the hospital every 18 months. They train at patients' homes for a year, cooking for them, administering medication, attending to bedpans and helping with acupressure and exercises. After every visit they come back with new experiences, like patients of dementia refusing to take showers or those who complain that their caregivers have eaten their food.

The students at Vimhans mostly come from NGOs and old-age homes and are sent out as long-

term caregivers for families, returning to the institute when the patient dies. "Many of us earn well, are treated with respect, get blessed at least five times a day, become a part of the patient's family, live in luxury with air conditioners and heaters," says Nargis, a 29-year-old caregiver who works for a senior, ailing

For many silvers, their caregivers are indispensable. "She's like my walker," says 91-year-old Dinesh Kumari about her caregiver Sheila

lady in South Delhi. "What else can a person with a secondary school pass expect?" With the highs, though, there are lows too. "Last month, when I went to my client's home she looked very ill," recalls Nargis. "She was partially paralysed and begged me to give her poison. I felt completely drained. And I felt relieved the next morning when I heard she had passed away."

CAREGIVER'S FATIGUE

Like Nargis, caregivers often experience a confluence of physical exhaustion, emotional overload and frustration. Globally, this is known as 'caregiver's fatigue'. According to a study conducted by the US-based National Academy of Sciences in 2003, the stress of taking care of a family member with dementia has been shown to adversely affect a person's immune system

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for up to three years after their caregiving period ends, thus increasing their chances of developing chronic illness themselves. Another reason for hiring a professional caregiver.

"Caregivers often lose their mental balance," says Dr Kalyan Bagchi, president of Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Society of India, New Delhi. "In such situations, it is better to hire a professional to attend to the patient for a few hours a day or on a 24-hour roster, depending on financial support." Bagchi remembers how, a few years ago, one of his friends developed Alzheimer's. He sat by the window all day and told his wife that he was waiting for his mother, who died 20 years ago. "These circumstances can be very distressing for an untrained caregiver," says Bagchi.

Various institutes have tried to address this problem. In Kochi, Dr Roy has started a day-care centre to give caregivers a break from their 24-hour shift. Heritage Hospital in Hyderabad soon plans to launch training institutes for caregivers in Pune and Mumbai. It has also instituted a caregivers' club called the National Family Caregivers Alliance, offering them a platform to share their experiences. "We also plan to organise lectures to educate and assist caregivers working with the hospital," says K R Gangadharan, director of Heritage Foundation.

On the same lines, AIWC in Chandigarh organises a get-together for its caregivers every three months, so they can exchange notes. The association's general secretary, Raminder Kalsi, in charge of training geriatric caregivers since 2000, personally

advises her students. And Vimhans has hired a training facilitator who guides caregivers and even visits and counsels families where they work.

For these families and the patients themselves, their caregivers are indispensable. "She's like my walker," says 91-year-old New Delhi-based Dinesh Kumari about her caregiver Sheila. And Delhi-based R C Gupta, who has Parkinson's, arthritis and suffered a brain haemorrhage a few years ago, goes even further: "If a girl like Pushpa is born or gets married off to a family, no one in that house will ever fall ill, ever."

—With Teena Baruah
in Delhi, Shyamola Khanna in
Hyderabad and Tejasvini Naidu
in Chennai and Kochi

For more information on caregiving training institutes, see page 94



H. MAHESH

Dr Jacob Roy's Community Geriatric Training centre in Kochi, Kerala

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A new loo

The bathroom is potentially the most hazardous room in the home, says

Arati Rajan Menon

But simple modifications can transform it into a safe zone

On average, a person spends about an hour a day in the bathroom. That's about three years of your life! It's the room where your day begins and ends. It's also the most potentially hazardous room in the home—one of the leading causes of accidents for seniors is falls in bathrooms. It's possible, though, with just a few modifications to make your bathroom a safer place.

GRAB BARS

Grab bars 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.

You can get imported grab bars at bathroom retail stores or get them made from a local fabricator at a fraction of the price in brass or steel. Remember that they need to be strong enough—ideally, they need to support up to 115 kg—and your wall needs to be strong enough to support them. They also need to be screwed in securely. A bar that has a textured surface will be easier to grip. You should also leave enough space between the grab bar and the wall to fit your fist in.

FLOORING

Slippery flooring is a major bathroom hazard. Fortunately, there are a variety of low-

Photos: ARMITAGE SHANKS catalogue



Grab bars protect you from falls, while faucets with lever handles (inset) are much easier to use



maintenance anti-skid tiles available. Prices for branded anti-skid tiles, Indian and imported, range from Rs 100 to Rs 300 per sq ft. You can shop around for Chinese imports or tiles from small-scale companies—they will be cheaper but their lifespan suspect. Non-slip rubber bath mats with suction cups are also a great idea in wet areas. They won't slide off the floor, making them secure to stand on while you're bathing or even brushing your teeth. These are widely available and prices start at Rs 300.

TOILETS

Getting on and off a low toilet is hard on the legs, knees and back. A silver-friendly toilet should sit at least 17 inches from the floor. If you don't want to install a new toilet, you can ask your plumber to put a small platform under your existing one in case of a floor-mounted toilet. Wall-mounted toilets can be easily placed higher on the wall, with minor plumbing modifications. You can also buy a seat that raises the height of your toilet. Make sure it is well attached so that it doesn't slip when someone sits down.

Some people have trouble reaching certain areas of their body, which makes it hard for them to clean themselves after they use the toilet. A hygiene or jet spray hooked up to the wall or the back of the toilet—which can be installed for as little as Rs 1,300—is a great solution, and eliminates the need for a bucket and mug or toilet paper. The bidet—a fixture similar in design to a toilet for bathing private parts—is

becoming very popular too. Prices start at Rs 2,000. There are also imported bidet seats available that fit on top of your toilet and can be programmed through a console to wash and air dry. These would set you back at least Rs 30,000.

SHOWERS

Rather than relying on the traditional mug and bucket or an overhead shower that pelts water down on you, a hand-held shower makes bathing more pleasant. You can sit down comfortably, yet enjoy a continuous water flow. It should be mounted securely at a level that is easy to reach. Prices begin at Rs 2,500.

Install a shower seat that attaches securely to the wall to make bathing more comfortable. If you have a small bathroom, you can opt for one that folds back when not in use. These cost about Rs 2,000.

SINKS AND STORAGE

Any standard sink with a rounded edge is safe for silvers. Just make sure there are no cabinets built below it. They make access difficult, especially for people on a wheelchair. Keep a counter next to the sink and in the bathing area for easy access to toiletries. Keep all storage shelves in the bathroom at eye-level. And use pull handles instead of knobs for drawers so that they slide open with ease.

FAUCETS

Choose faucets with lever handles rather than knobs, which are hard to turn, especially if you suffer from arthritis. And pick one handle to turn on the tap, not two—you can turn on both the hot and cold water with one hand. Prices range from Rs 1,500 to Rs 5,000. Motion-sensing taps that turn on the water when you put your hands under the faucet and turn it off when you pull your hands away will set you back Rs 10,000. There are also imported anti-scald devices available that ensure you don't get burned where a thermostat sets the required temperature of hot water. If the cold water fails, the system shuts off. The price is a turn-off though—Rs 30,000.

HELP AT HAND

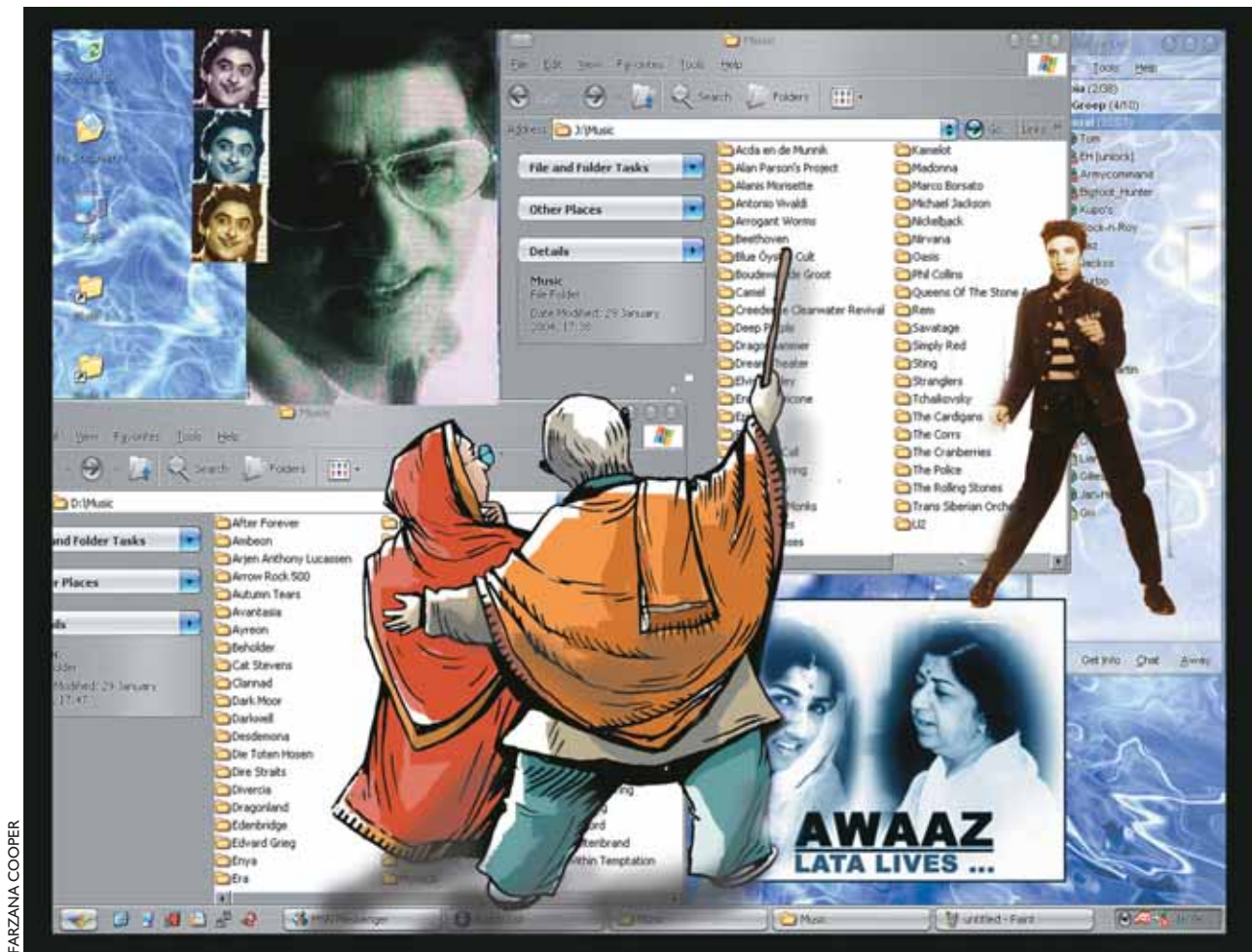
There are other little things you can do to ensure your safety. A telephone extension can prove invaluable if you slip and fall, or if the lock of the bathroom gets jammed. Install a phone near your shower or toilet; hang it low so you can reach it even if you are on the floor. Another idea is to install two-way locks so that someone can unlock the door from outside in case of an emergency. It comes in handy when your grandchildren come to visit too.

With inputs by Viral Shah, Partner, C Bhogilal & Co, Fort, Mumbai, a bathroom solutions provider

Window shopping

The Purohits discover the joys of buying merchandise online.

Helping them browse is **Sachin Kalbag**



FARZANA COOPER

This January was unusually cold in Mumbai, a city that has rarely seen the mercury dip below 15 degrees Celsius. Early morning was a drag, and the alarm clock at the Purohits' home, which chimed at 5 am without fail, was reset to 7 am. The couple suspended their evening walks too, preferring to entertain their fellow walkers at home.

So there I was one chilly evening, warming my hands on a hot cup of cardamom tea and listening to the haunting voice of Pandit Jasraj, the Purohits' favourite singer. "You know there's a new CD out by Pandit Jasraj," Mrs Purohit told me. "And if my husband weren't so lazy, we could be listening to it now." The CD wasn't available at the local music store, and Mr Purohit

argued that it was too much of an effort to "go hunt for it at one of the bigger stores far away".

Mrs Purohit wasn't pleased. "Now, for some things you have to leave the house," she harrumphed. "You can't shop from your armchair." At this point, I had no choice but to interrupt. "Of course, you can!" I exclaimed, much to Mr Purohit's delight

and his wife's apparent disbelief. "You can buy music, books, anything you like on the Internet."

Mr Purohit, immediately energised, dragged me to his computer and demanded that I show him how and where, right away. We first visited *in.indiatimes.com*—after we clicked on the online shopping link, we scrolled down for 'Music', which we found under the subtitle 'Entertainment'. From the list of Indian classical music options, Mr Purohit selected the Hindustani vocal segment, where he found his favourite Pandit Jasraj at the top of the heap. "At least they know quality," he said. He found the new CD he had read about and clicked on 'Buy'. That took him onto a list of payment options, which included credit card and cash on delivery. "If we give our credit card number to them, they might steal our money," said a very concerned Mrs Purohit. Like her, many Indians fear paying by credit card online, so the cash on delivery option is a welcome one.

Mr Purohit was thrilled. He browsed some more and decided to pick up a Mallikarjun Mansur CD too. "In his heyday, he was the best," he said nostalgically about the great vocalist. Mrs Purohit, after a casual glance at the monitor, was getting excited too. "You can even shop for air tickets and hotel bookings!" she cried, ever the travel enthusiast. "Yes, yes," said her husband impatiently. "Now, let's move on."

Next, I took them to *rediff.com*. For some reason, there was no music section here and Mr Purohit was disappointed. But he

was mollified when he saw their large selection of books. He bought a few self-help books for himself and books on spirituality—a new interest—for his wife. He even bought some Feng Shui wind chimes and a laughing Buddha for Mrs Purohit. But he couldn't find an American book—*Feng Shui for Beginners* by Susan Henman—that his daughter had recommended in her last email.

"She mentioned that she bought it from some place that sounds like a river," he recalled. "Amazon?" I asked. "That's it!" he replied. "Well, *amazon.com* is an online store too, and we can go there now," I told him. The sheer size of the web store

Since many people are afraid of paying by credit card online, most Indian shopping sites offer a cash on delivery option

fascinated the Purohits—books, electronics, music, and just about anything an individual or a home would need. Mrs Purohit had her heart set on some exquisite kitchenware. But considering that the site does not accept cash on delivery, only credit card payments, I suggested an easier alternative. "Since your kids live in the US, why not ask them to send it for you, instead of sending you money this month?" He loved the idea.

Then, anxious to check out other hot "international" shopping sites, he went to *ebay.com*, where again the choice was immense.

The 'Antiques' section caught his eye; Mr Purohit has a good collection of Indian antiques and ebay's extensive collection of Egyptian, Greek and Roman antiques made him want to expand his horizon. The good thing about ebay, he told me knowingly after five minutes of browsing the site, was that you could buy straightaway or bid for merchandise through an auction. "Oh, really?" I exclaimed, pretending to be surprised.

By now the evening cuppa had segued into dinnertime and it was time for me to attempt a graceful exit. "Tell us more sites before you leave," Mrs Purohit commanded, and I rattled off a list: *baazee.com* for anything under

the sun ("even naughty things, no?" giggled Mr Purohit, being a compulsive newspaper devourer); *fabmall.com*, best for books and music; *sify.com*, another portal with a wide range; *hamaracd.com*, a fun site where you can customise CDs by choosing any song you want; and *firstandsecond.com*, fantastic for books and magazines. "There are some of the most credible and reliable Indian shopping sites," I told her. "Now, Mr Purohit needn't ever leave the house to shop." She had the last word, though. "Well, he'll still have to take me sari shopping for Valentine's Day." ■

Sachin Kalbag is executive editor of Digit, India's leading technology magazine

A duty to maintain

Legalpundits throws light on how neglected parents can seek maintenance from their children with the help of the law

IN JANUARY 2005, A LUCKNOW court passed a verdict in favour of 70-year-old Liaqat Ali, ordering his five sons to pay him Rs 200 each every month as interim maintenance. Ali had his own watch-repair shop until his failing eyesight made it impossible for him to work. Two of his sons worked in Saudi Arabia and the other three had taken over the shop. Driven by poverty, he sought the help of two lawyers. They filed a case in the Family Court, under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). It was one of the few instances that the Act—normally invoked by wives to claim maintenance from husbands—was used by a parent.

Q What does Section 125 of the CrPC, 1973, say about parents' maintenance?

A It states that an individual is bound to maintain his parents, wife and children. If a man with the means to maintain his family refuses to do so, the dependents can claim maintenance under the Act.

The Maharashtra government amended its provisions to enhance the maximum limit of maintenance allowance from Rs 500 to Rs 1,500. This amendment—Section 125(i)—is applicable only to the state, and the Act is called the Code of Criminal Procedure (Maharashtra Amendment) Act, 1998. Under consideration is a Parents Maintenance Bill passed by the Himachal Pradesh Assem-



bly in 1996. It introduced a simple procedure for parents to claim maintenance. A similar bill is underway in Maharashtra and Goa. Until these receive approval from the President, Section 125 of CrPC is the only legal provision neglected parents can refer to.

Q How can parents claim maintenance under this?

A Earlier, maintenance could only be claimed from the son. After an amendment, parents can now claim maintenance from daughters too. Also, NGOs can file cases for aggrieved silvers. For this, they need a power of attorney—a declaration that the NGO will always represent the parent in court. A lawyer can also file a case on behalf of a senior citizen, after being vested with a similar

power of attorney. Seniors can seek remedy from the Lok Adalat (people's court) as well. Allowance can also be claimed under Section 12 of the Human Rights Protection Act, 1993. The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, also has provisions for parents. However, there are a few difficulties. Section 20 (3) of the Act states that old parents can seek maintenance when they are unable to maintain themselves out of their earnings or from other property. Most cases filed under this Act are settled out of court, as it is difficult to prove that a parent is unable to maintain himself.

Q What is the time limit for the enforcement of the maintenance order?

A Referring to reforms in personal law, Section 125 of CrPC had been amended to provide for guaranteed interim compensation within 60 days to parents seeking maintenance.

Q What requisites must be satisfied before an order of maintenance can be passed?

A These three essential requisites to be satisfied are:

- The person liable to provide maintenance has the means
- He has neglected or refused to maintain the dependent
- The dependent is unable to maintain oneself ■

Courtesy: Legalpundits International Services Pvt. Ltd. For advice from Legalpundits, mail us or email at contact.mag@harmonyindia.org or fax at (022) 22852217. Harmony takes no responsibility for advice offered

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Membership open

The Harmony family is ready to expand

THE HARMONY INTERACTIVE CENTRE AT Girgaum is ready to expand. It is conducting an active in-house campaign encouraging members to invite friends to join in. Incentives are being offered in the form of gifts like Dabur Chyavanprash and Zandu Kesari Jeevan. In fact, the main notice board on the sixth floor is covered with brightly coloured posters offering jars of the herbal products to members who bring in more than three new enrolments.

"We are offering the gifts as a token of appreciation to members for helping us increase the Harmony family," says Joyce Savel, administrator. Seventy-four-year-old Ramesh Samel, a regular since last May, has already introduced a friend to the centre. Like the others, he is excited about meeting new people "on the same wavelength". Members believe that the centre's enthusiasm will rub off on the new entrants, making a difference in their lives too. Meanwhile, Harmony's aim is to increase the physical presence of members in the centre. "There is a lot of participation during the common birthday celebrations and festivals," says Savel. "However, on other days, only about 120 of the 306 members come in." With three floors—including a library, canteen and indoor games area—Harmony has space to accommodate more.

The Harmony team expects membership to pick up at the Anand Mela, to be held on March 19. Non-members will be invited to join in the fun. This entertaining event will see members in charge of food stalls, selling idli, dosa and fast food like bhelpuri and vegetable burgers. Health camps, inter-generational programmes and debates are also planned. "This is a wonderful opportunity to hold a number of qualitative events under one roof on the same day, so that everybody benefits," says Hiren Mehta, project coordinator. All the members of the centre are gearing up for the day. Next month, we'll tell you how it went.

—Priyanka Deshpande

To know more about the centre and its activities, call us at (022) 30976440/6441 or email centre.thakurdwar@harmonyindia.org



HIREN MEHTA

Satyanarayan puja at the centre

THIS MONTH

FITNESS

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays; 10.30 am to 11.30 am (men); 4 pm to 5 pm (women). Yoga classes conducted by instructors from Kaivalyadham Centre, Marine Drive

MUSIC

Thursdays; *bhajan* from 4 pm to 5 pm. Marathi *sugam sangeet* from 5 pm to 6 pm

GROUP THERAPY

Wednesdays; 4 pm to 5 pm (men); 5.15 pm to 6.15 pm (women). Sessions will be conducted by Dr Anjali Chhabria, Dr Sharita Shah, Aruna Prakash

COMPUTERS

Monday to Saturday; 8 am to 9.30 am and 6.30 pm to 8 pm

HEALTH TALK

Mar 4. First-aid tips; Mar 12. Varicose veins

WOMEN'S DAY

Mar 8. Celebrating International Women's Day

EVENT

Mar 19. Anand Mela

COMMON BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Mar 31

Programmes are subject to last minute changes

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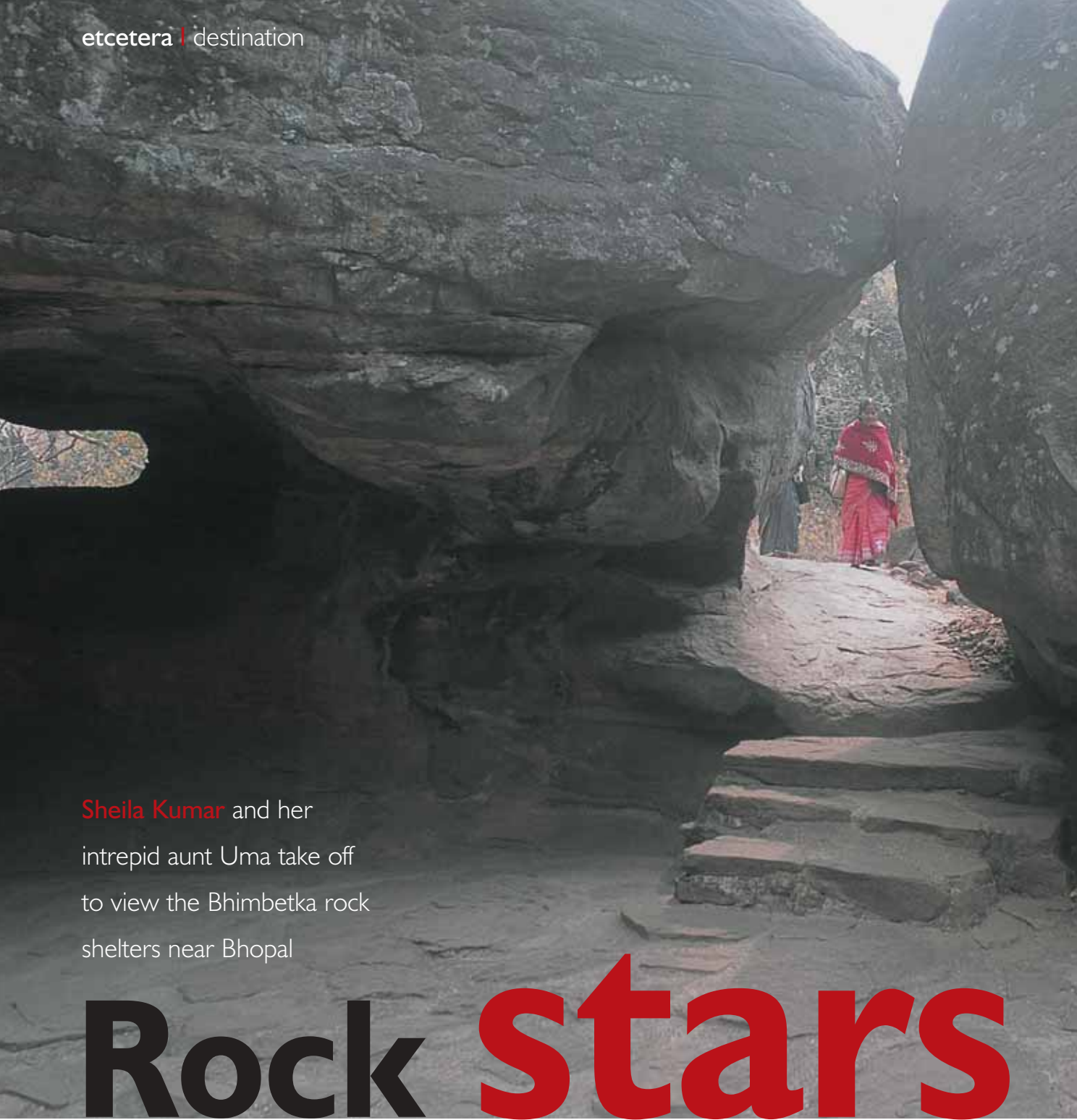
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Sheila Kumar and her
intrepid aunt Uma take off
to view the Bhimbetka rock
shelters near Bhopal

Rock stars

Why not Khajuraho? Or the Orchha temples? The stupa at Sanchi? We could have chilled out at Panchmarhi, or gone tiger-spotting in Bandavgarh.” The person shooting off these questions is me. The person declining to answer them is my aunt Uma.

Bertie Wooster had a whole clutch of aunts; I have just the one. Sometimes, I think one is more than enough. My mother’s sister Uma was born under a travelling star. Age has not slowed her down much that I can perceive. At 57, she brings all the curiosity and enthusiasm of a female Bruce Chatwin to the places she goes to. As the chosen

one who accompanies Uma on all her trips inside and outside India, it is I who sometimes feel my age. Today, we are 45 km south of the capital city of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal, driving through barren landscape on bad roads towards the prehistoric caves of Bhimbetka. Auntie Uma always, but always, takes the road less travelled.



The Bhimbetka caves date back to the Neolithic Age, 5,500-1,000 BC

Aunty is about to broaden his horizons though. Mine, too. "Bhimbetka has South Asia's richest collection of prehistoric paintings," she says, with nary a look at her guidebook. "The rock shelters date back to the Neolithic age, 5,500-1,000 BC. This wilderness we are passing now is the Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary, famous for its leopards, jackals, and sloth bears." Then Mahesh Kumar breaks in excitedly, "*Ji haan!* When the intense cold gives over, all the animals Auntyji talked about come out." Auntyji looks suitably gratified.

The moment we reach the parking lot, a guide, the lone human out there, comes up. He says the Archaeological Survey of India guide is not around but he, Shashi, would show us around the caves. We follow him up the thin gravel path that leads to gigantic rock formations standing majestically against the skyline. "The caves are 1,000 years old," he begins his spiel in a practiced tone. "No, they are not," Aunty tells him kindly, but firmly. "The earliest paintings go back to between 10,000 and 25,000 years ago." Not the most auspicious of starts.

It's like being in a time warp. Bhimbetka is a ridge that rises over what were once dense forests. Serrated masses of enigmatic rock stand stolid, with all indications that a ragged river and many creeks may have run through here at some time. The rock shelters, grooves and grottoes stretch for some 10 km and look like a throwback to biblical times, especially the overhanging

Photos: BHALU MONDE

The day is a bleak one, the grey slow-moving clouds overhead matching the boulder-splattered plains, which in turn complement the ridge of glistening black rock that rises above us on the crest of the Vindhya ranges. Sal forests, now standing stark and shorn of leaves, line what passes for a road in Madhya Pradesh. Aunty

and the driver Mahesh Kumar are talking about Bhimbetka. It's said that Bhima, the mighty Pandava, had rested awhile here, long ago, hence the name Bhim-bet-ka. However, it is clear that beyond his muttered "*etihaasik gufa*" (historical cave), Mahesh Kumar's knowledge of the caves is desultory at best.



The tracings depict the lives of the cave dwellers and a host of animals in subtle hues that have remained intact

rock ledges. All of it is enveloped in an eerie silence with an occasional wind whistling through the 30 species of trees, all bare now.

We get to see 15 of the 600 excavated caves, set in rock formations straight out of a Tim Burton film. It says 600 in my guidebook; Shashi says there are over 1,000 caves, big and small, in Bhimbetka. Aunty wants to speak but catches my eye and keeps quiet.

The day has become greyer now and a sharp, cold wind whistles through the denuded branches. Brittle leaves crunch underfoot. We really seem to have left all vestiges of civilisation behind. On the heels of that thought, a crackling noise makes me jump. It is Aunty opening a packet of chips. She is addicted to them, wolfing them down by the pack, neatly folding the empty packets and keeping them in her handbag till she comes upon a waste bin.

Excellent tactic to stave off hunger when there are no food or drink stalls around, as is the case here.

Bhimbetka by night, I think to myself, must be the scariest place on earth. "This place," pronounces Aunty happily, "is wonderful. It's like a prehistoric artists' colony." She is right. What prolific artists

even the fat of animals, and crushed leaves. Some were done at a height that probably involved the use of some sort of ladder.

The colours are subtle, and have remained intact owing to the chemical reaction from the oxide on the surface of the rocks—an example of nature helping art. The

Bhimbetka where Bhima, the Pandava, is said to have rested once, has South Asia's richest collection of prehistoric paintings

these people were! The tracings, going all the way back to the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Chaleolithic and Medieval ages, depict the lives of the cave dwellers executed in red, green, yellow and white using silk cotton, animal fur or squirrel tail, coal, haematite, manganese and soft red stone,

artists seemed to have a particular fondness for animals, since depictions of deer, boar, leopards, tigers, panthers, rhinoceroses, antelopes, fish, frogs, lizards, squirrels and birds abound. The more predatory the animal, the larger it looms next to insignificant man in these paintings.

It was a busy life for the prehistoric man. Hunting, dancing, horse and elephant rides, gathering food, attending animal fights and masked ceremonies, drinking bouts, burials, the paintings chronicle lives long gone but not forgotten. Not as long as these amazing paintings exist. Interestingly, superimposition on some paintings shows that some of the canvases had been used again and again by different artists. Apart from some skeletons—the dead were buried under the floor of these very caves and the excavated grave of a 12-ft skeleton is now in the Museum of Natural History in Kolkata—blades, scrapers, cleavers, axes and

The rock shelters and grottoes stretch for 10 km

even the remains of food-stuff were excavated from this area.

It is a play of darkness and light as we walk in the wintry sunlight, peer into shallow caverns. Aunty observes, “There are no signboards or historical details in English. Most irritating.” Shashi isn’t going to let that one be. “We are there to give ‘Englees’ tour, no?” he asks indignantly. We opt for a tactful silence.

We turn for last looks at the rocks as we drive off. “It seems that when construction work was on in these parts, sometime in 1956, a whole lot of prehistoric tools and implements were dug up,” says Aunty. “It was as if a museum full of Palaeolithic relics

FACT FILE

How to get there

Bhimbetka is 45 km away from Bhopal but owing to the bad roads, the journey to the caves takes almost three hours

Air: Bhopal’s Raja Bhoj Airport has flights coming in from Mumbai, Delhi and Indore

Train: Bhopal is a major junction with trains coming in from the north, west and south

Cave timings: 10 am to 5 pm

Entry fee: Rs 14 including vehicle, \$5 for foreigners; Mondays closed

Taxi fare: Approximately Rs 1,200 to and from Bhopal. Bargaining is mandatory

Where to stay

Bhopal has a couple of luxe hotels, like the Noor-Us-Sabah Palace, a Welcom Heritage property, and the Jehan Numa Palace, privately owned by the Nawabs of Bhopal, and other more modest ones like the Ranjeet Lake View Hotel.

For contact details, see page 94



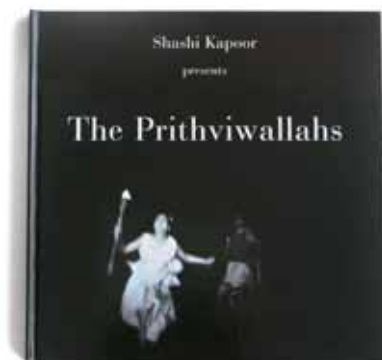
lay just under the topsoil.” I look around at the singularly monotonous scenery and reflect that life is never as one-dimensional as one perceives it to be.

“Did you notice?” asks Aunty suddenly, with some asperity. “The prehistoric woman was the archetypal Indian woman. She cooked, cleaned, bore children, and did nothing else.” And then, inspiration strikes me. “Aunt Uma,” I say, earnestly. “How do you know the artists weren’t women? The paintings are classic home décor.” Aunt Uma falls into a reverie as she ponders this probability.

The drive back to Bhopal is a relatively silent one. Good trip, this, I tell myself on a satisfied note. The caves were simply fascinating, a page from a history book coming alive. And it isn’t often that I can have the last word with Aunt Uma. ■

THE PRITHVIWALLAHS

By Shashi Kapoor
with Deepa Gahlot
Roli Books; Rs 895; 153 pages



of India, raised his hands to the sky and declared, "My God, if you don't make me an actor and a star here, I will swim the seven seas and go to Hollywood."

The dramatic beginning continued to an even more dramatic acting life. His exceptional good looks were backed by equally remarkable luck. One day on a set, the hero of the film *Cinema Girl* failed to turn up and the heroine Ermelene picked him as her lead actor out of a line-up of extras. From

Hindi cinema. Sadly the theatre could not make ends meet, and whatever success it achieved was based on the driving spirit of Prithviraj, who led it through a mix of genius and democracy.

This book, written by his son Shashi Kapoor in collaboration with journalist Deepa Gahlot, outlines the life and creation of an extraordinary man. It is written in three acts, like a play, spanning three generations. From the birth of Prithviraj Kapoor's dream, the theatre's journey and



At the age of 21, a charismatic young man called Prithviraj Kapoor left his home in Peshawar and journeyed to Bombay in search of that elusive chimera called stardom. In typical Hindi film style, this was totally against the wishes of his family who wanted him to become a lawyer. Prithviraj, however, was adamant. Leaving his wife behind until he could make a career for himself, he arrived in Bombay carrying a suitcase and a hockey stick. There he stood in front of the Gateway

Cinema Girl, Prithviraj went on to act in films like *Sher-e-Arab* (1930), *Vijay Kumar* (1930), *A Bid for the Throne* (1931), *Toofan* (1931) and the first Indian talkie, *Alam Ara* (1931). He was splashed across a million schoolbooks as Sikander. At the peak of his career, Prithviraj launched Prithvi Theatres in 1944 and began to take his troupe of actors across the country, performing path-breaking plays. The names of those who acted with him at the time read like a who's who of



Prithvi through the years; Kapoor with daughter Sanjna; (opposite page) with wife Jennifer

the constant struggle that plagued its founder to the second act where Shashi and Jennifer

Kapoor enter the story and the theatre acquires a tangible presence in Mumbai, to the third, featuring Shashi Kapoor's children. Over the years, Prithvi Theatre has become a landmark, synonymous with theatre in Mumbai. Since the tragic death of Jennifer, Prithvi's activities have gone beyond the confines of the building at Juhu. Steered by Sanjna and Kunal Kapoor, it now hosts international theatre festivals and plans for further extensions are planned.



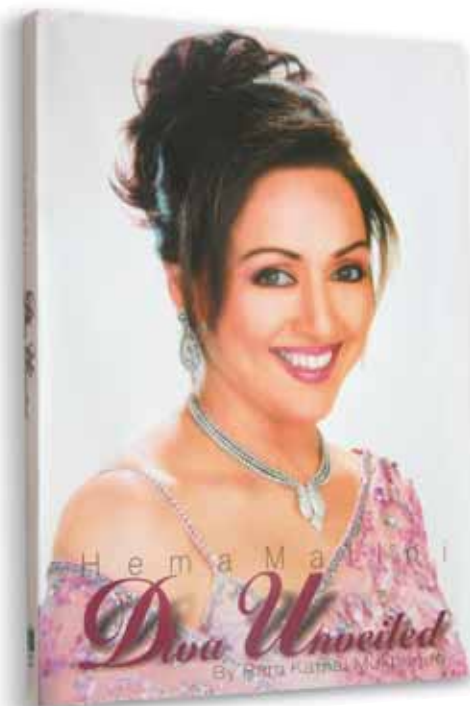
Deepa Gahlot, while organising the information, has wisely allowed Shashi Kapoor's voice to come through, so that the narrative sounds like a collection of affectionate anecdotes. These have been combined with the history of the theatre and the legendary men and women who brought it to life. At one level, the book throws light on a family that dominates Hindi film in India, along with the stars who took the stage side by side with them. At another, this is an invaluable addition to Indian theatre history that, currently, is short of adequate documentation. Family saga, fan memorabilia, call it what you will, *The Prithviwallahs* is a fascinating book with a wealth of photographs, a must for anyone interested in theatre and the Kapoor *khandan*.

—Anjana Basu

HEMA MALINI—DIVA UNVEILED

By Ram Kamal Mukherjee; Magna; Rs 1,500; 285 pages

To call Hema Malini beautiful is like calling \$ 1 billion a lot of money. It's obvious. But that doesn't stop *Stardust* journalist Ram Kamal Mukherjee from using the adjective, and many other synonyms of it, at least 20 times in each chapter. That's still forgivable—the



grammatical errors that pepper this book aren't. As you wade through the purple prose and sigh over the spelling mistakes, you realise one thing: Mukherjee worships Hema, and refuses to apply any sort of objectivity while discussing the remarkable—and colourful—life of this dancer-turned-actress-turned-Rajya Sabha MP.

What you do get is an incredible amount of trivia about the film industry from the 1960s to the present, previously unread dope on Hema's relationships—from

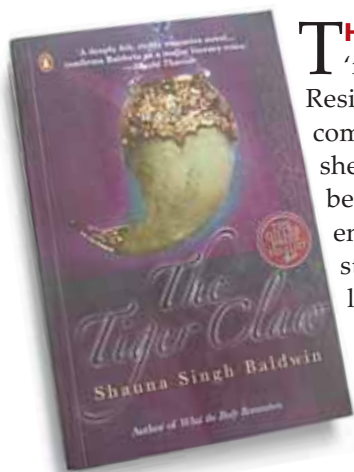


Sanjeev Kumar, Jeetendra and Girish Karnad to Dharmendra, of course—and insight on her often difficult relationship with her domineering *Amma* and her own stick-to-itiveness when it came to marrying her man. There's an enthusiastic foreword from Amitabh Bachchan. And then there are the photographs: luscious studio poses, film stills and snapshots from family albums provided by Hema. Strictly for 'Dream Girl' fanatics, like Mukherjee.

—Arati Rajan Menon

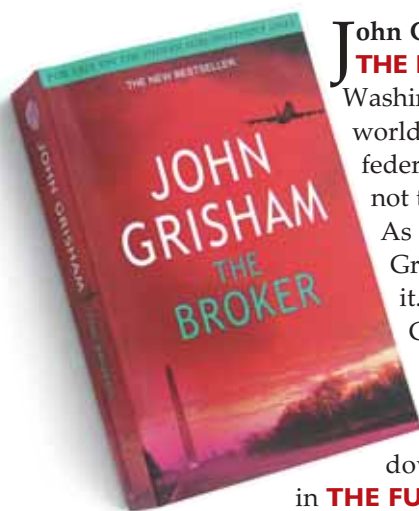
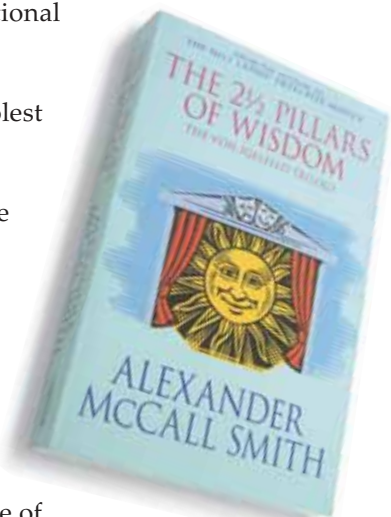


BRIEFLY



THE TIGER CLAW (Penguin; Rs 450; 570 pages) is Shauna Singh Baldwin's 'factional'—a mix of fact and fiction—account of the life of French Resistance spy Noor Inayat Khan. Khan, whose father was an Indian Sufi composer and mother an American, is thrown into prison by the Nazis where she writes letters to her unborn child and her lover Armand, a Jewish musician, before finally being killed at the Dachau concentration camp. When the war ends, her brother Kabir combs France trying to find her. Baldwin tells Khan's story evocatively, through her brother's narrative and her own letters. Identity is at the core of this book with Khan not just navigating danger and romance during the turbulent years of World War II but a middle path between her traditional roots and contemporary reality.

Alexander McCall Smith creates the coolest literary characters. In *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*, he gave us the feisty Mma Precious Ramotswe, and in **THE 2½ PILLARS OF WISDOM** (Abacus; Rs 357; 394 pages), you have the gauche yet supremely pompous Professor Dr Moritz-Maria von Igelfeld, who inhabits the rarefied world of the Institute of Romance Philology at Regensburg. This omnibus edition has three novels—*Portuguese Irregular Verbs*, *The Finer Points of Sausage Dogs* and *At the Villa of Reduced Circumstances*—through which you follow von Igelfeld from his student days to 'maturity', so to speak. A laugh a minute.

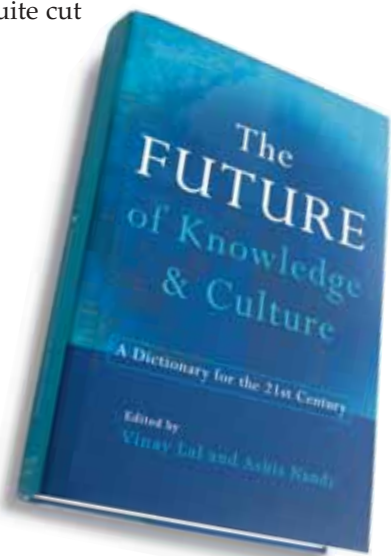


John Grisham leaves the law far behind in **THE BROKER** (Arrow; Rs 245; 467 pages), a tale of Washington powerbroker Joel Backman, with the inside track on the world's most sophisticated satellite surveillance system, hidden away in a federal prison. The CIA transplants him to Bologna, Italy, with a new identity, not to protect him but to see which foreign intelligence agency kills him first. As thrillers go, this has enough momentum to keep you turning the pages. By Grisham's standards, though, this doesn't quite cut it. The verdict: Back to the courtroom Mr Grisham.

A for architecture, B for Bollywood and C for Coca-Cola, all the way down to Y for Yahoo—that's what you get in **THE FUTURE OF KNOWLEDGE & CULTURE:**

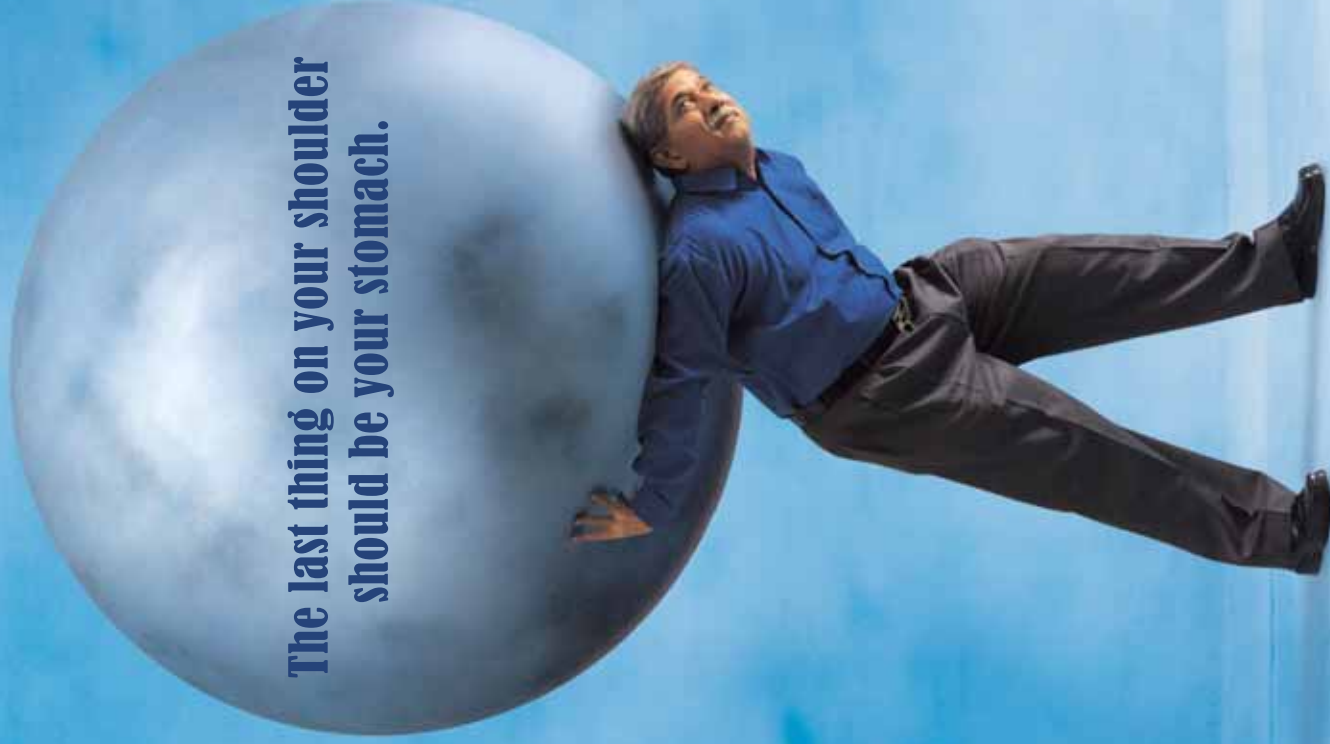
A DICTIONARY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (Penguin;

Rs 595; 375 pages), edited by historian Vinay Lal and sociologist Ashis Nandy. Organised around the ideas, products and practices of 21st century everyday life, this book tells us where we're at, and where we're going as a society, through the words of some seriously avant-garde thinkers. From scholar-activist Gustavo Esteva, associated with the Mexican Zapatista movement, writing on grassroots to social anthropologist Raminder Kaur on spin-doctors, each of the 65 entries invites you to rethink the world we live in.



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Goodness gracious

Amita Malik is bowled over by silvers who age with grace and dignity and retain old-world manners



IT SEEMS INCREDIBLE. SHE IS 48, still enjoying her tennis and not giving excuses or whining about her age. It was an honour for India to have Martina Navratilova playing in the doubles event at the Hyderabad Open. The only sad note was that the electronics media seemed to give more coverage to the actual play by Sania Mirza than Navratilova. But Martina stole the limelight in her own inimitable way by posing for the cameras in a sea-green sari with a bindi, earrings, necklace and ornament on her forehead. She winked at the camera and said she felt very comfortable in a sari. Asked if she intimidates her opponents with her formidable record, she gave a typically witty answer: "Not any more. They used to be intimidated 20 years ago, but now they try to beat me so that they can talk about it."

And what a record she holds. Making her debut at Wimbledon in 1971, she went on to win all the grand slams several times, in singles and doubles. On her partnership with Leander Paes, with whom she won the Wimbledon doubles in 2003, she said: "He is a very positive person and he gets fiery and I get fiery and we start a fire." In fact, when Leander was lying ill in an American hospital in the year when she would have partnered him again, she not only rang up every few days to enquire about his health but refused to play mixed doubles until he got better.

In sport, silvers begin their retirement in their late 20s, and rarely in their 30s. But look at Andre Agassi, still putting up a fight against young players in his late 30s and getting solid support from the audience wherever he plays because of his personality.

It is not only in sport that silvers age with grace and do not find it necessary to deny their age. A classic example is Amitabh Bachchan. He remains a legend and plays 'old' parts with aplomb, and his courtesy remains impeccable. I remember a middle-aged woman who came up to the dais

is our *Ma*." I felt very small and remained corrected. And my mother was charmed.

I wrote about young film people, as they then were, like Om Puri and Naseeruddin Shah when they started their careers. Such courteous people. Om now has silver hair and so does Naseer; they accept parts suited to their age and give tremendous performances. But I'll never forget that when we were in Bhopal some years ago for the shooting of a film, and Om Puri had been invited by the university to address the students, as soon as the principal intro-

The courtesy of Amitabh Bachchan, Om Puri and Naseeruddin Shah is impeccable

to answer questions in *Kaun Banega Crorepati*. In her nervousness, she dropped her handkerchief. Bachchan immediately came round to her side of the table, picked it up and handed it over to her with a smile. Similarly, actor Prithviraj Kapoor retained his old-fashioned courtesy to the last. When I was going to China with a delegation headed by him, my mother came to the airport to see me off. I introduced her formally to him as "My mother Srimati Lalitha Roy". Prithviji did a low *namaskar* to her and looked at me a little sternly as he said: "So, this

uced him, he said, looking at me in the audience: "No, I think Amitaji should speak to you first, she knows more about cinema than most of us." I was astounded by his graciousness and courtesy. Which still remains undiminished.

This is what Indian culture and civilisation is about. And I maintain that today's young generation, whether students or professionals, boys or girls, also retains that quality, although it is fashionable to dismiss them as rude and thoughtless. They are nothing of the sort. ■

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

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FIRST LOVE

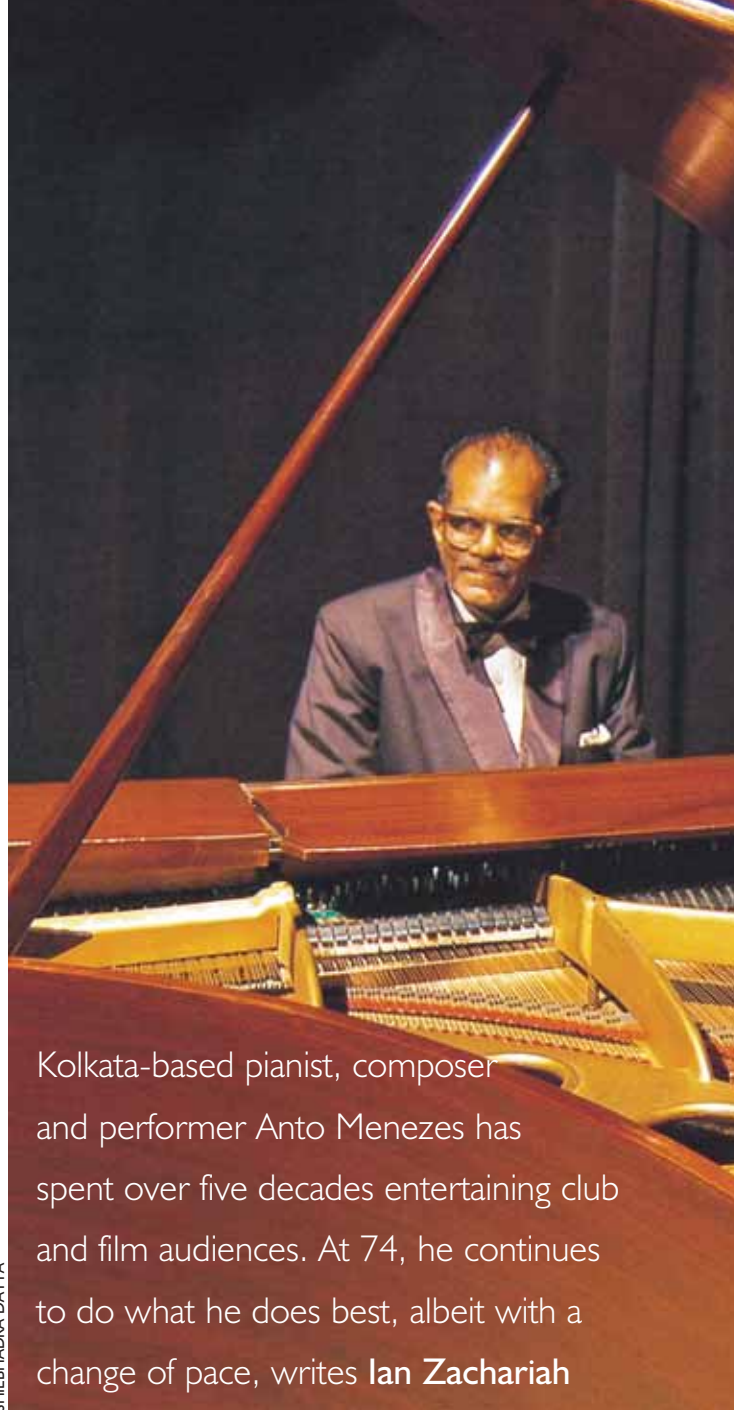
I have always loved jazz, though I have played everything. When I was working for Satyajit Ray and Salil Choudhury in Calcutta, I played Bengali music. In Bombay, I played Hindi music for R D Burman. I have also played Rabindrasangeet more than 50,000 times—many of the great artistes I played for are dead and gone, like Chinmoy Chatterjee, Debabrata Biswas, Suchitra Mitra and Hemant Mukherjee. Sometimes my appointment diary had four recordings a day. I would go to one studio, lay down a track and move on to the next. I still play occasionally for old, special friends like Manna Dey and Ajoy Chakravarty. But jazz remains my first love. I spent most of my years playing at the nightclub Mocambo on Free School Street in Calcutta. Those were good years, the '60s, with singers like Pam Crain, Eve, Sweet Lorraine and Hazel.

MY MUSIC

I was a very busy musician. Now, I have given up going to studios and playing at nightclubs and hotels. I have six children: Romulus, Thomas and Lorraine live in Australia; Louisa lives in Goa; and Dorothy and Cedric live in Calcutta. They didn't like the idea of my carrying on and on. Not that I have totally left the field. I now enjoy it my way. I love western music, so I keep doing shows with friends like Pam and Usha [Uthup]. I play at Calcutta Club on Fridays, plus I do shows at the Hyatt Regency, Taj Bengal and ITC Sonar Bangla. I use a grand piano and mostly go solo. Occasionally, a violinist accompanies me. I am also invited at a number of exclusive house parties. I am well versed with all the oldies and can go back 70 years. So don't ask me to play today's music! I can't. I love music and I love to create different types of music. But jazz is my cup of tea, so I focus more on jazz.

CITY OF DREAMS

In 1950, I came to Calcutta from Madras as a radio officer. I came for an exam, but fell in love with music—it was alive in the city. I decided I was coming back for the music, and within a year I did. When I came, the scene was totally different. All the top hotels had foreign bands, class musicians from all over the world. The Grand Hotel on Chowringhee [known today as The Oberoi Grand] itself had five bands.



Kolkata-based pianist, composer and performer Anto Menezes has spent over five decades entertaining club and film audiences. At 74, he continues to do what he does best, albeit with a change of pace, writes **Ian Zachariah**

I love the city. When I visit my children who are settled in Australia, they ask me to stay on, so I stay for a couple of months to please them. But Calcutta pulls me back. Maybe it's my circle of friends. Maybe it's everything. I started my career here—it's like coming back home. And fortunately I live in the heart of the city, so everything is close and easy for me. No wonder I couldn't stay in Bombay. When R D Burman took me there in 1966, everything was at a distance—schools, studios—so I came back. People here appreciate my kind of jazz and I get a lot of satisfaction when I see them enjoying themselves. I watch the crowd, try out a Bengali song, and if I see that they like it, I go all out. Even with a mixed crowd, I can play any kind of music.

SHILBHADRA DATTA



All that

jazz

MY FAMILY

These days, I am teaching my grandchildren, making sure their studies don't suffer. Savio, 10, and Angela, 8, play the keyboards and have a terrific feel for music. They have already performed at several venues—they played jazz at Planet M where Usha introduced them to Calcutta, and old favourites like *Besame mucho* and *La bamba* at a show recently organised by *The Telegraph*. They also play Goan tunes at Goan Nights and Rabindrasangeet at benefit shows for seniors. I teach other children too. Kids are my focus. To give them practice material for half an hour, I spend three to four hours arranging the music with big band sound. Even musicians like

Pam and Usha are bowled over by the sound—they just can't believe it can happen. I don't think anyone has tried [the technique of] two people sitting at one piano and playing my kind of music. It's a fun gimmick. Mostly three hands are used, with the younger participant playing the bass line. I also love writing music for the children. I get terrific satisfaction from it.

WHAT'S COOKING

I love cooking, even though I get very little time for it. But whenever I want to change the taste of the daily diet, I go into the kitchen. You will be surprised how a few spices can change the taste of a dish. Like a few notes can change the music. ■



Moti mamma

Asit Chandmal remembers his grandmother and a time of exquisite taste and savoir-faire

MY MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS were both Nagar Brahmins from Surat. My grandfather was educated at Cambridge and Heidelberg Universities, and then passed the difficult Indian Civil Service examinations. He returned to Surat in 1906. When he married my grandmother, Iravati, she was only 16. He was tall; she was very short. He was fluent in English; she spoke only Gujarati. He was well travelled; she had never left Surat.

During their blissfully happy marriage, he encouraged her to become a 'modern woman'. My

grandmother learnt English, travelled to Europe every three years, for six months at a time, permed her hair, wore high heels, all before 1912. She even visited Surat wearing a fur coat, and was told off by her relatives: "The local dogs will bark at you!" Of course, this did not stop her, since her husband always indulged her, never admonished her.

My grandfather was posted to Benares, Srinagar, and Bikaner, which gave my grandmother plenty of scope for socialising with the highest strata of society. She entertained English viceroys

and Indian maharajas. But she always had a compassionate side to her. She opened a home for widows and orphans in Benares, and was awarded the Kaiser-e-Hind medal by the then Viceroy, Lord Irwin, for her social work.

She moved to Bombay after she was widowed, in 1940, to be with her five children and (eventually) 10 grandchildren. We lived in a rambling bungalow in Malabar Hill, surrounded by an extensive garden with fruit trees and a vegetable patch. Moti Mamma brought me up. I adored her, even though I was subjected to her

remedies at the slightest sign of an ailment, medicines and treatments popular in Dickens' London.

I remember the food in the 1940s and '50s. We started with an English breakfast. For lunch, it was delectable vegetarian Gujarati food. At teatime, relatives and friends invariably arrived, uninvited, and were welcomed warmly. Tea was flavoured with lemon grass and a freshly ground masala. This was accompanied by homemade snacks. For dinner, we had western food. Dessert was either a hand-churned ice cream, often made with fruit picked off the trees in the garden, or a very English caramel custard, baked apple, bread and butter pudding, blancmange or sherry trifle.

All recipes were Mrs Beeton's, published in the mid-1800s, and the table was always laid impeccably. There was a properly trained butler, and a gloved bearer, for serving the food individually, each plate being replaced after use by another warmed one. A chef for western food and one for Gujarati food completed the retinue. We were taught the correct use of tableware from the age of four. When we ate *Gujju* food with our fingers, the second knuckle was hardly ever smeared—my grandfather left little money, but plenty of *savoir faire*.

There was always much laughter and gossip, and occasionally intensely serious conversation, at her house, especially when her daughter Pupul Jayakar and the great philosopher J Krishnamurti were present, as was often the case. In fact, my grandmother took me out of school when I was nine, for three months, to accompany her to Poona, where



Moti Mamma with her great-granddaughter

Photos courtesy: ASIT CHANDMAL

The table was always impeccable and we were taught the use of tableware from the age of four

she had rented a house, to be Krishnamurti's hostess. It was in 1948, a period of intellectual ferment, and there was a constant stream of visitors. I obtained the finest education conceivable for a nine-year-old, all because of my grandmother's foresight.

At the age of 65, she encouraged her daughter Nandini to start a school for destitute, often orpha-

ned, children in her garden. She took a major interest in it till she died at 86. Today, 50 years on, Bal Anand still exists, run by her granddaughter Devyani, housed on the street where she lived.

My childhood idyll lasted till I was 19. Then I left the Garden of Eden, to make my way in the world. I thank God, and my grandmother, that I grew up in paradise. ■

Asit Chandmal is a Mumbai-based food critic and columnist

BIRTHDAYS



Usha Khanna, pioneer of Mumbai's first art café Samovar at Jehangir Art Gallery, turned 75 on January 17. Over the years, Samovar—

opened in 1964, and named after a Kashmiri teapot—has been witness to many celebrations like actor Kabir Bedi and dancer Protima Bedi's courtship, and artist Jatin Das' marriage. Khanna, a Kashmiri by origin, also chose to celebrate her birthday at Samovar with her two daughters—journalist Malavika Sanghvi and theatre actor Devika Bhowani.

Pandit Jasraj, doyen of Hindustani classical music from the Mewati *gharana*, turned 75 on January 28. When the late Carnatic vocalist M S Subbulakshmi heard him live in the 1970s, she said there was God in his voice.



When he is not performing live, Jasraj teaches music to "mostly Indian students" in America.

Bal Thackeray, Shiv Sena chief, turned 78 on January 23. Balasaheb began his career as a political cartoonist in the 1950s, and went on to launch the hardline Hindu outfit in 1966. The Sena chief, who has never stood for elections, is known as *Hindu Hriday Samrat* among loyalists.



ON SONG

Singing diva **Asha Bhosle**, 73, was the lone Indian artist chosen to perform at the MTV Asia Aid concert for the tsunami victims in Bangkok's Impact Arena last month. Performing alongside her, from Asia and around the world, were Thai sensation Tata Young, Japanese pop queen Namie Amuro and Canadian punk-pop group Simple Plan. Bhosle sang the new version of her percussion-based song *Dhanho ki aankhon mein* from the Bollywood '70s flick *Kitaab*. The most senior artist at the concert, Bhosle had the crowd screaming for more. Other celebrated names like Jennifer Lopez and Ronan Keating sent in pre-recorded tapes.



MARATHON MEN

With the ultimate goal of being the oldest to run the mile, 94-year-old **Fauja Singh** kept pace with athletes from 16 countries across the world at the Lahore International Marathon on January 30. New Delhi-based cardiologist **Dr Ashish Roy**, 72, and 13 other Indian athletes joined Singh to participate in Pakistan's first-ever international marathon. Political bigwigs in Delhi viewed it as "a step forward in promoting people-to-people contact between neighbours". While the marathon carried prize money totalling \$ 100,000, a special award of \$ 5,000 was given to Singh for bettering his personal best in the 10 km-run. Adidas' poster boy—and *Harmony's*, in the January 2005 issue—donated the money to a local charity.



IN PASSING

Marxist painter **Altaf Mohammedi**, 62, known as Altaf, died on January 16 of jaundice. He had held a show outside Union Carbide in Bhopal on the first anniversary of the gas tragedy in 1985. Altaf had recently expressed a wish to shift to abstract art.



It was a low-key funeral for a leader still officially under disgrace. **Zhao Ziyang**, 85, the former general secretary of China's Communist Party who was stripped of power for supporting students during the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, was

placed under house arrest soon after and had not been seen since. He had suffered a series of strokes before passing away on January 17.

Style icon of the 1970s, **Parveen Babi**, 50, lived her last years in virtual seclusion in her Mumbai apartment. Her schizophrenic moods filled the gossip magazines during the late 1970s and '80s, and Babi faded away from the silver screen. The actress, who was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1977 as the face of the modern Indian woman, died on January 20, alone and unattended.



He dominated late night TV for 30 years—from 1962 to 1992—as the host of the *Tonight Show* on NBC. **Johnny Carson**, 79, was a puckish comedian and, during his reign, was the biggest star on American TV.

After retirement in 1992, Carson focussed on tennis, his yacht and a monthly poker game. He died of emphysema on January 23.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



It's 400 years since the first edition of Miguel De Cervantes' masterpiece, *Don Quixote*, rolled off the press. Cervantes' home country Spain has begun to organise conferences, readings, adaptations, concerts, new plays and films as part of the anniversary celebrations to commemorate the comic classic.

Within a year since its appearance in January 1605, the book had three editions. Today, *Don Quixote* is the most widely read and translated piece of literature the world over, after the Bible. Its author, however, died penniless at the age of 58 in 1616.

ART KARAT



Brinda Karat, 57, in her trademark handloom sari and 50-paisa-sized bindi, is every bit the conscientious social activist. After 35 years in politics, the general secretary of the All India Democratic Women's

Association—the CPI (M)'s women's wing—is now in the news for her celluloid debut in her niece Sonali Bose's film *Amu*. And she's getting rave reviews for her performance.

For such unconventional moonlighting, Karat had to ask the party's permission before signing on to play actor Konkona Sen Sharma's surrogate mother. Will she act again? "Never," she declares. "This was the last time." The rush of attention bothers her. Karat also has another complaint: "All that people can talk about is the film. It's as though the three decades of work I have put in don't matter."

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AWARDED

The Padma Bhushan to Kashmiri singer **Shameem Dev Azad**, social worker **Gladys Staines**, film director **Muzaffar Ali**, Wipro chief **Azim Premji**, film director **Yash Chopra**, playback singer **Manna Dey** and journalist **Mark Tully**, among others. Cartoonist **R K Laxman**, former national security advisor the late **J N Dixit**, artist **Milon Bannerjee**, former J&K chief minister **Karan Singh**, and the dean of Bombay Hospital **B K Goyal**, were awarded the Padma Vibhushan.



Mark Tully



Manna Dey



Muzaffar Ali



Azim Premji



R K Laxman



Karan Singh



J N Dixit



B K Goyal



Yash Chopra

GRASS ROOTS



The last time he was here, in 1987, the Nobel laureate described Kolkata as “devastating” and “fascinating” in the same breath. At the same time, 77-year-old **Gunter Grass**—writer, artist and interventionist in socio-political issues of global concern—expressed a desire to return soon. But the time was never right. Now, 18 years later, in January, an invitation from the Max Mueller Bhavan brought him back. His 10-day agenda comprised poetry readings, discussions and an interface with literature students. After his first visit in 1975, Grass had compared the city to a “pile of shit” and a “swarming-stinking” metropolis in his novel-cum-travelogue *The Flounder* (1977). His understanding for Kolkata grew during a longer stay, in 1986-87. He transcribed his experiences in *Show Your Tongue* (1988), saluting the vitality of the poor living in slums while lashing out at the closeted indifference of the rich and the upper middle-class. In a more recent work, *My Century*, Grass has dedicated a chapter to Kolkata. The city’s intellectual community, who stayed aloof on his last visit, welcomed him this time round. ■

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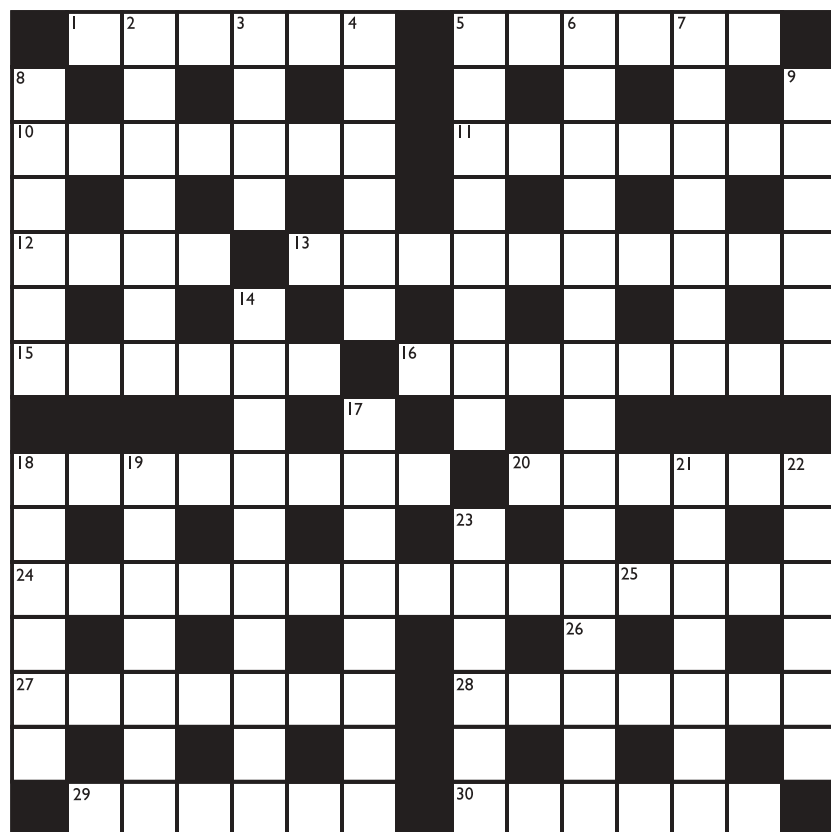
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BSE 100 Index value was 1637.97 on October 6, 1995 and 3599.86 on Feb 15, 2005. *NAV as on February 15, 2005.

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EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 6

By Raju Bharatan

ACROSS

- 1** Special Investigation Team constituted by Yechury & Co to oversee DD's news slanting? (6)
5 No soft German fiscal options for Eastern Railway? (6)
10 This touch still eludes Ma Prem Rithambara as far as Sourav's India goes (7)
11 Name US cat turning into Envoy Extraordinary (7)
12 Groping for quiz answer that is: "Wife and sister of Osiris" (4)
13 Witness to President Abdul Kalam's standing, as the

Government at the Centre changed (8-2)

- 15** Air base (6)
16 Company man ahead of Electronics Corporation of India girl showing a clean pair of heels! (8)
18 What there could have been on Navjot Singh Sidhu's being hit 'between wind and water' (1, 3, 4)
20 His ex-staffer M J Akbar as Khushwant Singh's bugbear (6)
24 'Indian sweet potato' seeing Rajiv Gandhi transforming DD into a cultural kaleidoscope? (10)
25 Just the foil to Adams (4)

- 27** Fan seated under which to view *The Seven Year Itch*? (7)
28 Schwag look reversing the 'All Is Lost' trend? (7)
29 The Svend of Badminton? (6)
30 Goes after Nepal (6)

DOWN

- 2** Style of marble in which, P N Oak for one could have contended, the Sonia Congress is trying to recast the Taj Mahal (7)
3 Something not quite at Sourav's finger-tips? (4)
4 Gym raising Air Worthiness Division --- swear! (2, 4)
5 To reveal something the *Hatayogi* hardly looked as he sank like a stone (8)
6 *Rajdhani* of the Kauravas with your 'I CONNECT' Editor for its core! (10)
7 A reasonable thing only for Englishman Michael Vaughan to do in front of Steve Bucknor? (2-5)
8 Suraiya's following (6)
9 Oppose bet about an over first (2, 4)
14 Ravi rap turning tan the kind of 'Vote For Change' optimistically expected in Bihar (10)
17 Siegfried Sassoon quote: "I am making this statement as a wilful -- of military authority because I believe that the War is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it" (8)
18 Sonia minus a spokesperson (6)
19 The state of being Ajit Agarkar (2, 1 4)
21 The Tau was in the Lal-like way he stepped aside for V P Singh to become Prime Minister (7)
22 Heads always in line (3-3)
23 What the Ugly Duckling of Politics emerged as (6)
26 Clincher on how many *r*'s there are in 'harass' (4)

For answers, see page 94

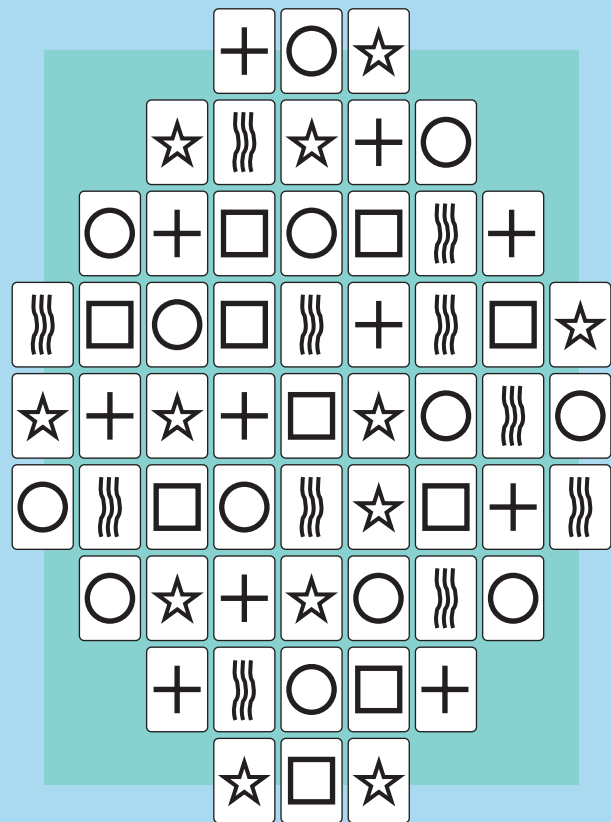
Raju Bharatan is the originator of the Sunday Cryptic in *The Times Of India*

NEW TIPS FOR BEGINNERS: A whole variety of clues goes into framing a cryptic puzzle. For instance, the anagram. The clue here could be: *Unresting opponent of authority* (*Unresting* being the 9 letters of *insurgent* rearranged). Another variety of clue is the palindrome—*DEIFIED*, when viewed backward or when viewed up in a Down clue, reads *DEIFIED* all the way. Next, there could be the clue (8-letter answer) reading: *Complete view of daughter sandwiched between parents*—*PANORAMA* (*PA/NORA/MA*). The 8-letter solution to the clue, *The framework of our constitution*, is *SKELETON*. At times, what looks straight could prove tricky. For example, the clue, *How we stand*—has *UNITED* for its 6-letter answer. The clue, *How we fall*, has *DIVIDED* for its 7-letter answer. The clue, *Walls have them yet they hear not*, has *EARS* for its answer. Next, *pertinacity* could split into *Pert* in a city, *face to face* into *facet of ace*. For *ANISEED*, the clue could be: *Carminative I see inside and outside*—*AN(I SEE)D*. The possibilities are endless.

VISUAL CHALLENGE

CROSS IT

Hidden within this array is a cross-shaped piece consisting of five cards, each with a different symbol. Can you find it?



For solution, see page 94

Courtesy: www.puzzability.com

BRAIN GYM

THINK LATERAL

1 Dummy: The letters from the three words below can be taken apart, unscrambled and merged to form three separate words all of which are synonyms. Can you find them?

CLIMBER MONITOR NIECE

2 Unscramble: The king of conundrums lives in the MANLIEST CAGE.

3 Something fishy: How long does it take for you to solve weird riddles? Time is passing as we speak...tic...toc! This one involves absolutely no academia. If you don't solve it you might be ill. As far as difficulty is concerned it's the easiest one. Can you solve this?

4 SO: What colour is her blouse?

5 Judy is five times as old as Henry. In two years, she'll be three times as old, and in six years she'll only be twice as old. How old will Judy be in seven years?

For solutions, see page 94

Courtesy: www.puzz.com

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Wrinkles should merely indicate where the smiles have been.

—Mark Twain in
Following the Equator

Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.

—Douglas MacArthur,
American general who commanded
the Southwest Pacific
Theatre in World War II

I'm really appalled by plastic surgery. We've got to make friends with those sags and wrinkles, as they represent our lifetime experience.

—American actor and fitness
guru Jane Fonda

LAUGH LINES

An elderly lady did her shopping and, upon returning to the parking lot, found four young men leaving with her car. She dropped her bags and drew her handgun, screaming loudly, "Get out of the car, scumbags!" The four men got out and ran like mad, whereupon the lady proceeded to load her bags into the car and get into the driver's seat. She was so shaken that she could not get her key into the ignition. She tried again, and then it dawned on her. A few minutes later, she found her own car parked five spaces farther down. She loaded her bags into it and drove to the police station. The sergeant to whom she told the story pointed to the other end of the counter, where four pale young men were reporting a car jacking by an elderly woman described as less than 5 ft tall with glasses and curly white hair carrying a large handgun.

|||

Three old ladies met on the street on a very stormy day. The wind was so strong and loud that they had difficulty in hearing each other. "It's windy," said one. "No, it's Thursday," said the next. "So am I," said the third. "Let's go and have a drink!"

|||

A married couple, both 60 years old, were celebrating their 35th anniversary. A fairy appeared to congratulate them and grant them each one wish. The wife wanted to travel around the world. The fairy waved her wand and the wife had tickets in her hand for a world cruise. Next, the fairy asked the husband what he wanted. He said: "I wish I had a wife 30 years younger than me." So the fairy picked up her wand and the husband was 90.

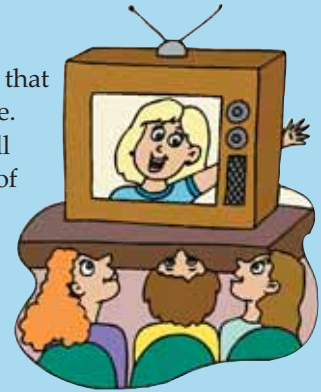
|||

Three elderly men were at the doctor's office for a memory test. The doctor asked the first man, "What is three times three?" "274," was his reply. The doctor rolled his eyes and looked up at the ceiling, and said to the second man, "It's your turn. What is three times three?" "Tuesday," replied the second man. The doctor shook his head sadly, then asked the third man, "Okay, your turn. What's three times three?" "Nine," said the third man. "That's great!" said the doctor. "How did you get that?" "Simple," he replied, "just subtract 274 from Tuesday."

BACK TO SCHOOL

INSIDE THE TELEVISION

There are two amazing things about our brains that make television possible. First, if you divide a still image into a collection of small coloured dots, your brain will reassemble them into a meaningful image. Second, if you divide a moving scene into a sequence of still pictures and show the images in rapid succession, the brain will reassemble them into a single, moving scene.



Most TVs in use today rely on a device known as the cathode ray tube (CRT) to display images. In a CRT, the cathode is a heated filament in a vacuum created inside a glass tube. The ray is a stream of electrons that naturally pour off a heated cathode into the vacuum. Electrons are negative and the anode is positive, so it attracts the electrons. The stream of electrons is focused into a tight beam and then accelerated. This tight, high-speed beam of electrons flies through the vacuum in the tube and hits the flat screen at the other end of the tube. This screen is coated with phosphor, which glows when struck by the beam.

In a black-and-white screen, there is one phosphor that glows white when struck. In a colour screen, there are three phosphors arranged as dots or stripes that emit red, green and blue light. There are also three electron beams to illuminate the three colours together. On the inside of the tube, there is a thin metal screen called a shadow mask, which is perforated with small holes aligned with the phosphor dots (or stripes) on the screen. When a colour TV needs to create a red dot, it fires the red beam at the red phosphor, and similarly for green and blue dots. To create a white dot, red, green and blue beams are fired simultaneously—the three colours mix together to create white. To create a black dot, all three beams are turned off as they scan past the dot. All other colours on a TV screen are combinations of red, green and blue.

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A HELPING HAND**PAGE 50**

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www.jansevafoundation.org

National Institute of Social Defence, West Block 1, Wing 7, RK Puram, New Delhi-110066.

Tel: 011-26100058. Website: www.nisd.gov.in

Red Cross, Gandhi Nagar PO, Kottayam, Kerala.

Tel: 0481-2560238, 2585338.

Website: www.redcrosskottayam.org

Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (Vimhans), No. 1, Institutional Area, Nehru Nagar, New Delhi-110065. Tel: 011-26310510, 26310520.

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ROCK STARS**PAGE 68**

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HEADSTART SOLUTIONS**PAGE 90****EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 6**

ACROSS: 1 SITCOM (SIT/Com); 5 ERHARD

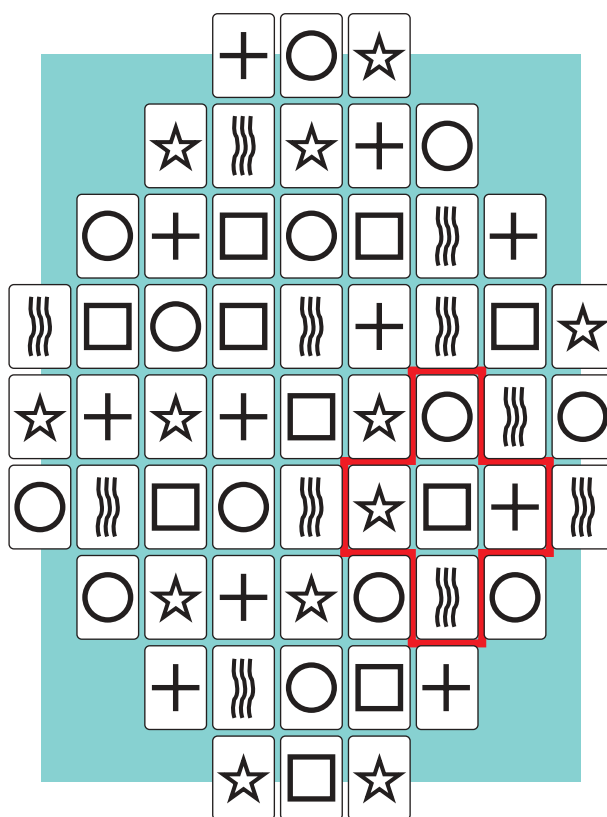
(ERhard), ER representing Eastern Railway; 10

Healing; 11 EUSTACE (E/US tac/E), EE short for Envoy Extraordinary, tac is cat turning; 12 Isis (Is.. is); 13 Swearing-in; 15 Hangar; 16 COMANECI

(Co/man/ECI), Co standing for Company, ECI for Electronics Corporation of India, it is a reference to Nadia, of course, showing a clean pair of heels, right up to the time of her proving a 'runaway'; 18 A box item (box meaning batsman's abdomen-guard); 20 SUNDAY; 24 Bharatiyam (Bharati yam: 'Indian sweet potato'); 25 Eves; 27 Khaitan (recall the seven-year guarantee going with the Khaitan fan); 28 Winsome (Win some); 29 Prince (Pri/nce), a reference to Svend Pri; 30 Naresh

DOWN: 2 Italian; 3 Coin; 4 MY GAWD (MYG reads

GYM when raised, AWD expands into Air Worthiness Division); 5 Elevator (its 8 letters become 'To reveal' when rearranged); 6 HASTINAPUR (Has/Tina/pur), Tina as core of Hastinapur; 7 Re-argue; 8 Shaikh (Suraiya's surname); 9 Be anti (Be/an/t i), Bet about (around) an, i standing for first); 14 PARIVARTAN (Parivar turning into Ravi rap); 17 defiance; 18 Ambika (Soni), Sonia minus a; 19 On a pair; 21 Devious (Devi/ous); 22 Yes-men; 23 Paswan (Pa/swan); 26 Oner (meaning clincher, oner splits into one r)

VISUAL CHALLENGE**BRAIN GYM**

1 IMBECILE MORON CRETIN

2 ENIGMA CASTLE

3 Scales. The true question is in the title. Take the last letter from each sentence and you have something that's definitely fishy! The second sentence with its broken text is a subtle hint that something is up with this paragraph.

4 Blue. Remove the letters 's' and 'o' from the word 'blouse' and you have the word 'blue'. Once again, it's all in the title.

5 Judy will be 17 in seven years.



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“In 1988, after I saw *Sparsh*, I switched off the lights and tried to draw in the dark. What emerged was abstract art, and then patterns began to emerge. Later, I put together an illustrated alphabet book for the visually impaired. I am also planning a comic book that combines Braille and nail drawing. However, I haven’t yet found a publisher.”
—P T Deshpande

Watercolour and crayon painter P T Deshpande, 70, stopped cutting the nails of his right hand after watching the film Sparsh. Occasionally dipped into photo colour, these became his brushes for an unconventional canvas that could be felt—and hence seen—by a visually impaired audience. A former employee of the Registrar General of India (Census), Deshpande retired in 1992. Three years later, he took his art to the students of the Blind Relief Association in New Delhi. Initially, the principal thought it was a publicity gimmick. But Deshpande proved her wrong by continuing with his once-a-week class for a decade. The artist persuaded the teachers there to let the students grow their nails long in three fingers and even taught them how to clean them. Deshpande now lives in Nagpur—he takes care of his grandsons Nikhil, 13, and Kartik, 9, and teaches mentally challenged children to paint and make greeting cards.



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