

harmony celebrate age

The magazine for silver citizens

SEPTEMBER 2011 ₹ 30

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MEET THE MEN WHO GAVE US
OUR SPORTS LEGENDS

FILMMAKER
GOUTAM GHOSE ON
THE MOVIES THAT
MADE HIM

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ROCKSTAR RIP

India needs no introduction to Shammi Kapoor.

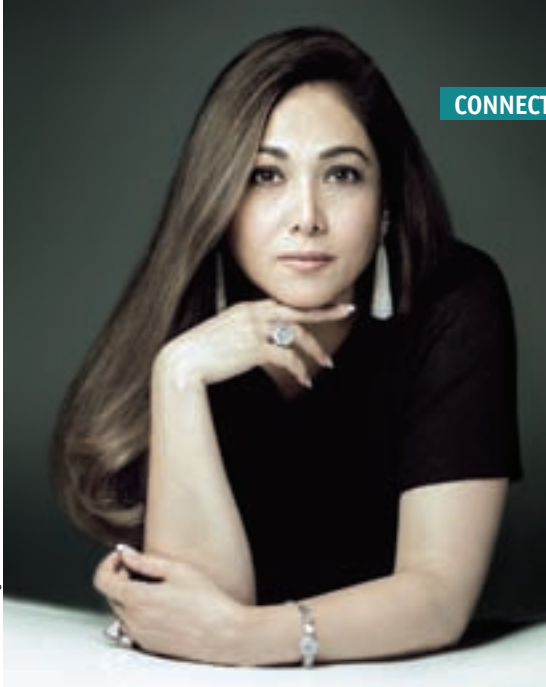
In a career spanning over a hundred films, he took the screen by storm with his exuberance, effervescence and clarion call: Yahoo! His versatility and magnetic personality won him legions of fans and roles that just didn't dry up with the inevitable march of time. In fact, the last film in which he makes an appearance, *Rockstar*—how wonderfully appropriate, that!—is yet to be released.

But Shammi Kapoor was much more than an actor. He, more than anyone I know, epitomised Harmony's mantra of active ageing. A tech-enthusiast who pioneered the use of the Internet in India, he was founder-chairman of the Internet Users Community of India (IUCI) and maintained a website dedicated to the Kapoor family titled *junglee.org.in* in inimitable style.

That's not all. He battled diabetes for many years with visits to the gym—in fact, he was photographed in the October 2004 issue of *Harmony-Celebrate Age* for a feature on fitness, wearing his tracks and trademark smile, exhorting his contemporaries to start an exercise regime of their own. It was a defining moment for the magazine.

The pages of my own life too have been indelibly marked by his presence. I came to know Shammi uncle well in the early 1980s when we worked together on films like *Yeh Vada Raha*, *Harjaee* and *Wanted*. It was a time when I was trying to go beyond glamour and establish myself as an actor. When I struggled with a scene charged with emotion in *Yeh Vada Raha*, Shammi uncle (who played my father) was there to help; he guided me with pa-

Suresh Natarajan



tience and skill to help me deliver what was one of the most powerful scenes of my career.

It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship that went on to encompass our families. On our outdoor stints, we went trout fishing together in Srinagar; I went shopping for pearls in Hyderabad with Neela aunty; we shared wonderful times. The bond only deepened with time and we would often lunch on the spur of the moment in Mumbai. Through the years, Shammi uncle never lost his sense of wonder for the world; he remained eager to learn and embraced the new with fervour and passion.

I remember an incident about five years ago—a car driving past me in Mumbai, the driver honking away to get my attention. It was Shammi uncle behind the wheel of his Mercedes, showing off his new acquisition, radiant, rambunctious, a man firmly in control of his life, his destiny. It is how I want to remember him, always.

Pina Ambani

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ROAD WARRIOR

S P Jatan talks about the highs and lows of neighbourhood activism

IN HIS OWN COIN

Narendra Tole makes a museum out of his astounding coin collection

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column one

The year has seen the stars rise and fade. Though the Commonwealth Games scam took the pleasure out of pride, it didn't taint the reputations of our sporting stars. And then we saw cricket at its best and worst. Through it all, the names that didn't make the headlines have helped our stars keep their heads held high. They are the men who inspired, nudged and sometimes whipped these star players to do their best and, in the process, created legends. "Chak de India" gives us a peek into their personal diaries and professional associations. Read the feature and learn why P T Usha, Saina Nehwal and Virender Sehwag rule the world the way they do.

It's the time of the year when drumbeats of festivals will make all our collective silences resound. And before we blink, another year will be gone. So much would have happened in between and, yet, on looking back, there will be nothing significant to talk about. But when one gets talking, the conversations (of love, food and relationships; the Randhawas in "Soul Food and Soul Mates") won't end. There's always more to say.

We should thank a higher power that time has been kind: for good health (if you follow Anjali Mukerjee and Madhukar Talwalkar); for good memories ("Magic in Motion" with filmmaker Gautam Ghosh); and simply because it didn't stand still. For, when time stands still it hurts. It's only when we get the feeling that it's moving that it heals. And the months from August to December are healing in nature.

So go with the flow. If you find the drumbeats too overpowering, open the windows as much as you want. But do leave them open a little at least.

—Meeta Bhatti

So many people equate old age with loneliness. First, however, we must define loneliness in real terms. Loneliness is not being alone; it is having nothing to do. If you don't have a hobby yet, it's never too late to pick up one: reading, sightseeing, painting, gardening. There's also the option to work: part-time work where you choose your schedule or volunteer work with NGOs that brings its own rewards. In essence, as we grow older, we must realise that a world of opportunities awaits us—if we seize them, loneliness is no longer an option!

We must also stop complaining for attention and the time of others. Having gone through the same situation, we must understand that our children are grown up and have a family of their own. Instead of reprimanding them, try your best to remain close to them by sharing some of their responsibilities without interference in their decisions.

Most important, look after your body; a healthy body is the key to a happy mind. Ensure that you follow a proper healthy diet; have a regular medical check-up; and start a regular exercise regime that includes walking and yoga. Moreover, attitude is everything. Stop brooding over your age and reach out to others—it will change forever the way you look at yourself and your life.

P K Mhatre *Mumbai*

I am a senior resident of Goa and a member of a local non-government organisation called Forum of Senior Citizens of India. The NGO serves senior citizens through medical camps, lectures and talks on subjects of special interest to its senior members. The organisation subscribes to *Harmony-Celebrate Age*. Recently, I went through a copy of the magazine and was impressed by its contents. I was interested in knowing what the governments of developed countries like the US, UK, Japan, Germany and France are doing for their silvers. Have you ever published reports in this area? I also read about the Kasturi Senior Citizens Home in Thrissur with interest and would like



to know their address so I can contact them and serve other seniors.

T S Ashoka *Goa*

Harmony-Celebrate Age covers the international landscape of ageing, policies and infrastructure and related news regularly in the 'Orbit' section of the magazine. Jane Barrett, Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing, covered the international scenario and developments for a year in an exclusive column for the magazine in 2009-10. Please visit www.harmonyindia.org for her columns.

—Editors

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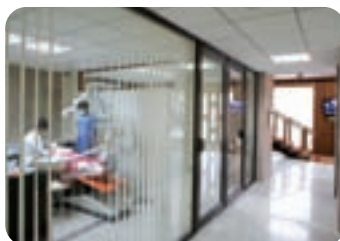
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"As you grow older you want to travel less, you slow down, and you want your comforts," says author **Shashi Deshpande**, 73. "But living in the moment, as one learns to do, each journey seems new, there's no 'I've-done-this-before' feeling." Deshpande brings with her a wonderful whiff of sea, salt and history in her vivid travelogue on Murud Janjira. ('Destination', "Sentinel in the Sea"). Author of many bestsellers—*The Dark Holds No Terror*, *Narayanpur Incident*, *The Binding Vine*, *That Long Silence*, *In the Country of Deceit*—Deshpande has always given us stories that are deeply rooted in India and follow the many inner conflicts in our collective hearts. Though often labelled a feminist, she is averse to tags of any nature. Deshpande holds degrees in economy, law and English literature, and has won the Sahitya Akademi Award. She lives in Bengaluru.



"The trouble about the word is it needs a little quiet," writes 74 year-old **Keki N Daruwalla**. "A small slice of silence wouldn't do any harm to anyone, but

it is so hard to get." The poet-author, who has written an exclusive column in 'Etcetera – Bookshelf' this month, has skilfully parlayed these inspirational silences into critically acclaimed volumes over the years. A former IPS officer who retired as additional director in the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), he received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1984 for his volume of poetry *The Keeper of the Dead* and the Commonwealth Poetry Prize for Asia in 1987 for his collection, *Landscapes*. His first novel, *For Pepper and Christ*, was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Fiction Prize 2010 for UK and Asia.



"Never think or ponder how old you are today. Treat every new day as the first day of the rest of your life," says Mumbai-based journalist **Shishir Joshi**, 42, who urges seniors to take up citizen journalism in his column ('Exclusive', "Movers and Doers"). In his last assignment, Joshi was group editorial director of the MiD DAY Group. Prior to that, he worked with TV Today as its executive editor, and with NDTV as its sole business correspondent. He has also had reporting stints with *The Indian Express* and *CNN.com*, and was a consultant news manager with the Sahara network. Three years ago, Joshi co-founded the JM Foundation for Excellence in Journalism, a not-for-profit institution, through which he launched India's first mentorship-based journalism programme. Under the umbrella of the JM Foundation, he also initiated what could arguably be India's first teach-

ing programme in citizen journalism. In the past year, the foundation has trained over 400 citizen journalists across six cities. Joshi is a lawyer by education; a postgraduate in mass communication; and a Chevening Scholar in Broadcast Journalism, from Cardiff University, Wales, UK.



AN INVITATION FROM HARMONY

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► NEWSWORTHY

A different HAPPINESS

Happiness is a truly amorphous quantity—it isn't just hard to quantify, it's also hard to standardise. A new study of 4,000 Americans by the University of Pennsylvania has found that **young and old people actually experience completely different emotions when they say they are happy.** While for younger people, about 60 per cent of happiness is based on feelings of excitement, for silvers 80 per cent of happiness corresponded with levels of contentment. There is some agreement, however, on what happiness means—across all demographics, people rated happiness as more important (an average of 85 per cent) than money (75 per cent) or romance (60 per cent) to keep their life on an even keel. The study was published in journal *Social Psychological and Personality Science*.

Sign language

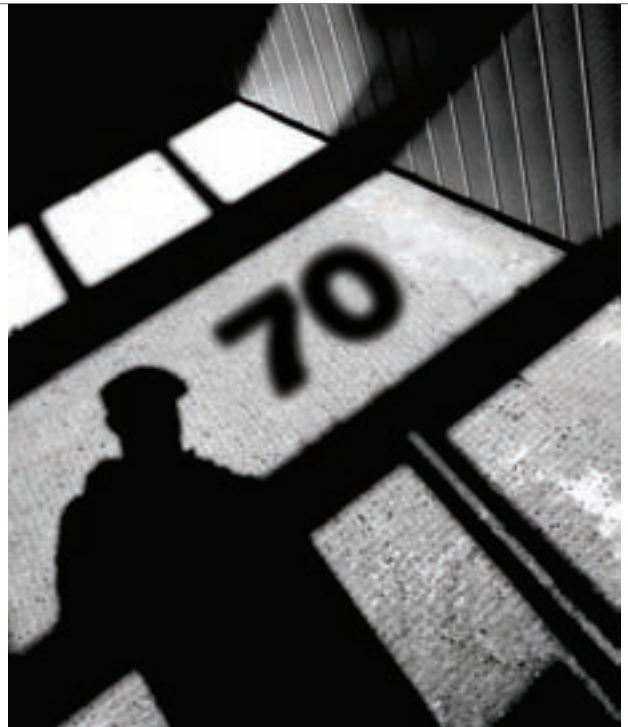
How do you know you're getting old? When British insurance firm Engage Mutual asked over 2,000 people between the ages of 18 and 65 this question, they came up with some rather interesting answers, as London newspaper *Daily Express* reports.

From the **Top 50 signs of ageing** to watch out for, here are the Top 10:

- Falling asleep in front of the TV
- Feeling stiff
- Groaning when you bend down
- Losing your hair
- Hating noisy pubs
- Thinking teachers/policemen/doctors look really young
- Getting more hairy—ears, face, eyebrows, nose
- Struggling to use technology
- Forgetting people's names
- Not knowing any songs in the Top 10

And another 10 we liked:

- Driving very slowly
- Imagining that your ears are growing
- Getting shocked by how racy music videos have become
- Wearing corduroy trousers



- Telling people exactly what you are thinking, even if it isn't polite
- Applying for a cemetery allotment
- Deciding to drive instead of drink
- Taking a cushion to the football game because the seats are so uncomfortable
- Watching advertisements for vacuum cleaners
- Giving up *The Guardian* [more liberal] newspaper in favour of the [more conservative] *Daily Express*

The silver market

Don't underestimate the silver consumer. That's the message broadcast loud and clear by Australia's The WISE Agency, which specialises in communications and marketing to people over 50. Based on research conducted across Australia, the UK, Canada and the US, it recently released a fact sheet demonstrating how **people over the age of 50 are the fastest growing consumer segment**. According to the report, they:

- Control over 70 per cent of all disposable income with \$ 1.6 trillion in spending power with more than \$ 1 trillion of that spent on goods and services

- Account for 50 per cent of all discretionary spending
- Earn 26 per cent higher per capita income than the national average
- Spend \$ 7 billion online as well as



more time online than teenagers

- Have a cumulative household value of \$ 19 trillion
- Purchase over 40 per cent of all new cars and over 80 per cent of luxury new cars
- Represent more than 80 per cent of leisure travel.

"Our research shows that people over 50 will not ride the wave of communicating strategies focused on the younger generation," comments Nadia Henry, managing director of The WISE Agency. "This is not a demographic that can be an add-on to anything. They have very distinct communications needs and expectations."

Elder FORCE



The potential of silvers—a constant refrain at *Harmony-Celebrate Age*—is something many people pay lip service to, time and again. Finally, one state has decided to walk the talk. The **Haryana government recently announced that it will use the services of retired people for implementing a variety of social schemes.** Under the ‘Social Networking Scheme’ introduced by the state’s Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, silvers will serve as resource persons in fields like education, technical education, health, rural development, urban development, and construction of roads and buildings. “Senior citizens’ committees will be constituted according to the interest and experience of retired professionals from specialised fields,” a government spokesperson tells media. “One such committee is already at work in Hisar and Sirsa districts on rural development projects.” We hope other states across the country take a cue.



Forgotten at work?

They may be working later into their lives today but **silvers are still being neglected when it comes to training and performance management.** That’s the conclusion of a report by Britain’s Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) titled *Employee Outlook: Focus on an Ageing Workforce*. It discovers that about 46 per cent of workers over the age of 65 have not had a formal performance appraisal in the past two years or never, compared to a survey average of 27 per cent. Older workers are also less likely to receive training than younger workers—51 per cent of workers over 65 report receiving no training in the past three years or nev-

er, compared to 32 per cent across all age groups. “The survey finds that too many older workers are currently neglected in the workplace when it comes to training and performance management, with some employers perhaps assuming older staff are nearing the end of their working lives and need less attention,” writes Dianah Worman, CIPD’s diversity adviser, in the report.

“This is worrying considering that from October employers in Britain will no longer be able to force employees to retire at a certain age and will therefore need to focus on developing performance management systems to more effectively integrate with older workers.”

2012 HAS BEEN DECLARED THE EUROPEAN YEAR FOR ACTIVE AGEING AND SOLIDARITY BETWEEN GENERATIONS BY THE EUROPEAN UNION. MEMBER STATES ARE EXPECTED TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVE AGEING AND MAKE IT A PRIORITY IN THEIR POLITICAL AGENDA; PROMOTE ACTIVITIES TO FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION BASED ON AGE; GO BEYOND AGE STEREOTYPES; AND REMOVE OBSTACLES IN TERMS OF EMPLOYABILITY.

Award for **ADVOCACY**

Silver advocacy has its rewards. In a media release, Pune-based International Longevity Centre-India (ILC-I) has invited applications for the **Anjani Mashelkar Inclusive Innovation Award**, instituted to “fuel and recognise innovations for creating resources for the poor and old”. “Poor and old people need affordable solutions that can come from technological innovations such as making a hearing aid 10 times cheaper, or non-technological innovation, such as affordable cataract surgery,” says renowned scientist Raghunath Mashelkar, who has provided the endowment for the Anjani Mashelkar Inclusive Innovation Award. “This is a small step in recognising such efforts.” The nominations will be for prototypes or proof of concepts which, if supported, have the potential to be successful innovations.

ILC-I has also invited applications for the **B G Deshmukh Award** for excellence in promoting qualitative ageing and the **S D Gokhale Award** for promoting the cause of the aged by a young and upcoming journalist. The last date for submission of candidature for any of these awards is 31 December. To learn more, write to the International Longevity Centre-India (ILC-I), 1779/84, Sadashiv Peth, Gurutrayee Smarak, Bharat Scout Ground, Pune-411030; call 020-24450067, 65002595; or email longevetic@gmail.com. Website: www.ilcindia.org

SERVICE WITH A SMILE: THE HARMU BRANCH OF STATE BANK OF INDIA IN RANCHI HAS ESTABLISHED A ‘PLATINUM LOUNGE’ FOR SILVERS, WHERE THEY CAN BE SERVED IN COMFORT AND AVAIL SPECIAL FACILITIES.

IN DEFENCE OF YOUR PENSION

Defence pensioners now have technology in their corner. Last month, India’s Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) Nand Kishore launched **Sangam, a software project that will facilitate the Ministry of Defence in issuing corrigendum pension payment orders** to retired service personnel. In a media release, the CGDA explained that Sangam comprises a special corrigendum pension payment system that will contain all the basic details of the original pension payment order as well as details of family pension, disability pension and any other type of pension available to a pensioner. The system gives a new ID to each pensioner, which will help to readily access all data relating to the person. The project will also help in grievance redress. About 1.8 million defence pensioners are expected to be benefitted by the launch of Sangam in the long run.



Power TRIP

While modern governments are still waking up to the wisdom of silvers, the ancients knew better. New research by the University of Cambridge indicates that **elders were put in positions of power in Bronze Age communities**. The findings rely on the study of graves in two cemeteries in the Traisen valley in Austria. These cemeteries were used by Bronze Age farmers about 4,000 years ago; the older cemetery was used between 2200 and 1800 BC, while burials at the more recent cemetery took place between 1900 and 1600 BC. While the very definition of age differs considerably from ours—life expectancy at the time was about 30—it is apparent that age brought with it certain benefits. For instance, men who outlived others were buried with rare bronze axes instead of stone ones. Women who died younger had to make do with trinkets made of dog’s teeth! “If you lived longer, you became a leader,” writes lead researcher Jo Appleby in the online edition of the *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*. “This entitled you to privileges and enabled you to exercise more power.” Interestingly, only 3.5 per cent of the 714 individuals buried in the older cemetery were over 60, and only 8.8 per cent of the 258 buried in the younger cemetery had reached that age.

Flirting with **fertility**



Just when silvers are determined to bring sexy back, here's a little lesson in discretion: **overt sexual behaviour could lead to premature ageing.** At least among birds! According to the BBC, a 10-year research study conducted by the University of Burgundy in France on the fertility patterns of North African Houdou bustards revealed that the more times male birds performed their mating ritual, also known as 'booming', the more dramatic the decline in their sperm count and consequently their fertility. (The male bustard 'booms' by flaring up his striking feathers and running around, emitting a low-pitched call.) "The males can boom for as much as 18 hours a day, six months of the year," says lead researcher Dr Brian Preston. "But males that had invested most effort displaying to females in their earlier years experienced the onset of this age-related decline in fertility at a younger age and effectively seem to burn out sooner."

MEMORY goes ape

They say elephants never forget. Unfortunately, the gift of eternal memory doesn't extend to monkeys. New research from Yale University establishes that, much like humans, **apes become more forgetful with age.** As reported in journal *Nature*, the study analysed spatial working memory in the brains of six Rhesus macaque monkeys of different ages: two young; two middle-aged; and two old. (Spatial working memory holds information for only a short time, but it is the key to effective everyday functioning.) The team found that there were age-dependent differences in the response of a particular group of neurons in the monkeys called 'delay' neurons. These literally hold the memory 'in mind' by continuing to



fire without outside stimulation; when they stop firing, the memory is lost. During the study, the middle-aged and the elderly monkeys showed much lower firing rates in their neurons than the young monkeys, making

their spatial memory weaker. "This fits with what we see in middle-aged and elderly people," writes lead researcher Amy Arnsten. "It is harder to shift attention and hold things in mind especially with distractions."

HOT WHEEL

There's a solution in sight for silvers who have trouble easing into the driver's seat. American company TRW Automotive has developed a **powered retractable steering wheel that can fold away into the dashboard**, giving drivers more space to get settled. As auto website *themotorreport.com.au* reports, the wheel features two retractable handles that close and contract before folding away. While the vehicle is switched off, the wheel remains

folded away. Once the driver is in position and the engine is on, the steering wheel is re-deployed, fixing into a position preset by the driver. "The key benefit is to make it much easier for elderly drivers or other drivers with reduced mobility to get in and out of the vehicle," says Manuel Poyant, development manager at TRW. "Owing to the significant growth of small cars, this technology could open up the possibility for even smaller cabin designs."

Thought for food

Believe it or not, malnutrition plagues silvers even in 'developed' countries like the UK. To deal with the problem, which is steadily on the rise especially among those who live alone, innovation think-tank Cambridge Design Partnership has developed '**Naturally**,' a **concept to supply, cook and serve nutritious individual meals** from fresh ingredients while simplifying the physical challenges of shopping and preparation. London newspaper *The Times* explains how it works. The system starts with a bowl-like packaging system for the raw ingredients—this facilitates a supply chain through commercial food manufacturers, retailers or even communities, offering consumers a range of recipes. The second element is a small, low-cost cooking appliance. Customers choose

the meal they want and add tap water to the pre-prepared bowl of ingredients, place it in the unit and start the



cooking cycle. The smart packaging technology ensures the machine automatically cooks and prepares the meal. With the cooking bowl also doubling as the serving dish, the meal can be eaten immediately.

"This demonstrates our ability to address the need for the older generation to become less reliant on care systems and experience the satisfaction of preparing a fresh meal while removing some of the dexterity and logistic challenges," says Ben Strutt, head of industrial design at Cambridge Design Partnership. "This will reconnect them to the sensory experience of cooking and eating and keep them healthy." Cambridge Design Partnership is now in talks with potential commercial partners to put Naturally on the market.

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Model makeover

Iconic piano man Billy Joel immortalised this cover girl on video in the 1980s as his *Uptown girl*. Three decades later, model-actor Christie Brinkley continues to turn heads uptown (and downtown) with her sun-kissed good looks. And now, the 57 year-old wants to let you in on her beauty secrets with the launch of **Christie Brinkley Skincare**, developed in association with former executives from skincare giant L'Oreal. The range, which is expected to be in stores late autumn, will comprise anti-ageing products under the 'Daytime' and 'Night Time' labels. "This is not just another celebrity endorsed skincare line," she announces to media. "I founded the company and have taken great care to bring together the beauty secrets that have helped me maintain my youthful appearance." No word yet on prices but if you live in the States, you can sign up for free samples at christiebrinkleyskincare.com



Bloom in a bottle

Jumping spectacularly onto the anti-ageing bandwagon, French upscale cosmetics company Sisley has launched an advertising blitz in the West to market its latest skincare treatment: **Black Rose Cream Mask - Instant Youth**. In a media release, the company claims the product can "instantly refresh, smooth and energise thanks to its plumping formula rich in trace elements, vitamins and anti-ageing ingredients". In fact, the mask promises to 'redensify' skin and restore luminosity in just 15 minutes. The fast track to beauty may cause a slow burn in your wallet though—a 30 ml jar of the stuff will retail for \$ 170 (about ₹ 7,700). Care to try it?

Play a hand (or two) of bridge. It stimulates the brain, helping to preserve memory and keep dementia and depression at bay, and boosts the immune system. Plus, the social benefits are tremendous too. Just ask Rhonda Davies, who has been playing bridge at the Seniors Lounge at the Newport Community Centre, Rhode Island, in the US, for over eight years now. (The Seniors Lounge just celebrated its 10th anniversary.) “It’s a fun way to keep busy,” says the 81 year-old. “And if I ever want a date for the movies, I can just take one of my bridge partners!”



FACTS

- » There are over 22,000 plastic processing units and over 150 plastic processing machinery manufacturers in India.
- » In 2000, India was the largest consumer of plastic. By 2010, it had cleaned up its act to some extent, moving down to the No. 3 position.

Then: Empty Toothpaste Tube **Now: Sharp Items Holder**

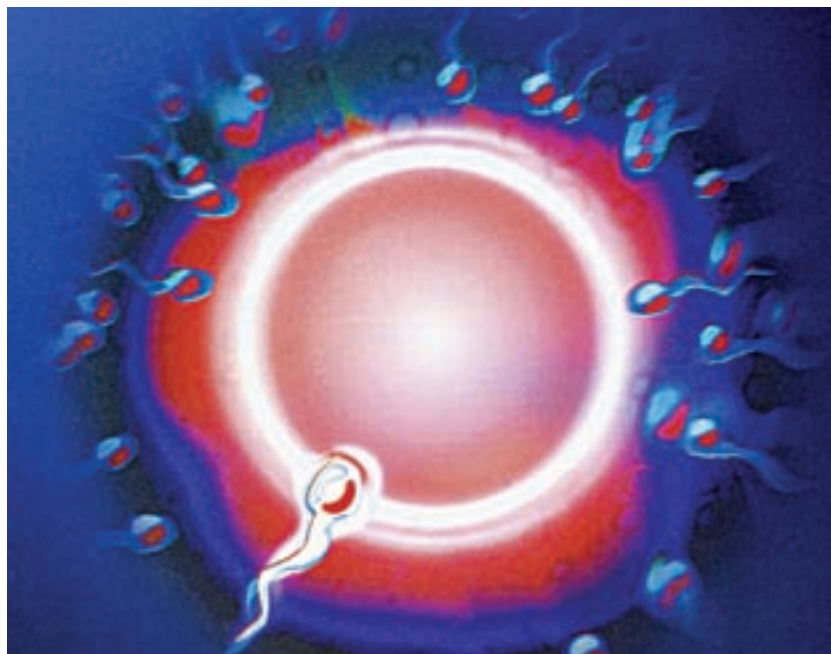
Tired of being poked with sharp items such as scissors or knife while rummaging through your kitchen drawers? The empty toothpaste tube in your toiletries cabinet can prevent you from wincing next time. Cut the tube in two halves with scissors. Use hot soapy water to rinse and clean the lower half completely. Use the lower half to store sharp items. (You can even cover the pointed end of your scissors with the toothpaste cap.) The top half of the tube—once thoroughly cleaned—can be used as an ingenious nozzle to ice a cake.

MORE RECYCLING IDEAS...

Follow the same instructions and you can make a pen/pencil holder out of an empty toothpaste tube. Colour or paint as desired.

Haresh Patel

HORMONE HIGH



Researchers from Brown University in Rhode Island in the US have shown that **women with good levels of the antimullerian hormone (AMH) produced more eggs for in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) procedures and therefore were more likely to conceive** than those with low levels. Made by small follicles in the ovary, AMH helps regulate the growth of the eggs and its level indicates ovarian reserves. "AMH can help predict the success of an IVF treatment," Dr Shilpa Saple Rotunda, IVF specialist at the Centre for Human Reproduction in Mumbai, tells *Harmony-Celebrate*

Age. "The dose given for stimulation of ovaries entirely depends on how your hormones will react to it." The researchers found that women with low AMH levels—less than one nanogramme per millilitre—in the first test on average yielded only about six eggs, while women who had more than three times as much AMH provided about 20 eggs on average. "A hormonal test, however, only helps to understand a prerequisite for the treatment," adds Dr Rotunda. We believe the study is of great consequence for women going in for IVF in their later years, though the social and medical repercussions are debatable.



Anytime **YOGA**

If you thought enough has already been said and written about yoga, think again. Kaivalyadhama, one of the oldest yoga centres in India, has recently launched *Yoga for Seniors* (₹ 250; 205 pages), a compact yoga reckoner, authored by Ravi M Dixit. The book, divided into five sections, covers more than yoga *asana*; it lucidly explains the lifestyle changes we need to make to gain a healthier body and calmer mind. Besides analysing the theories and practices of yoga, it informs us about the ageing process; importance of vitamins; the complexities of hormonal changes; naturopathy; Ayurveda; water therapy; laughter therapy; music therapy; and Reiki and pranic healing. Though the book deserved better editing and design, one can't complain—it has enough substance to deserve a place on your bedside table.

KEEPING IN MIND THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF CATARACT AMONG THE ELDERLY, JORHAT LIONS EYE HOSPITAL—THE SECOND BIGGEST EYE HOSPITAL IN ASSAM UNDER THE BANNER OF LIONS CLUB—IS OFFERING LOW-COST TREATMENT TO POOR PATIENTS IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH AND NAGALAND. STARTING JUNE, DOCTORS HAVE PERFORMED OVER 15,000 CATARACT OPERATIONS.



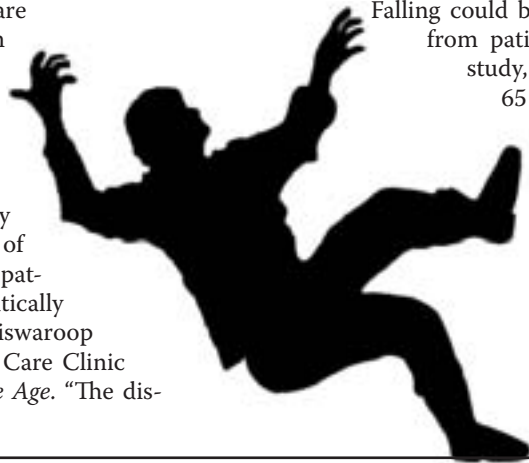
Early signs

A recent study conducted by researchers from Washington University proves that **falls and balance problems may be early indicators of Alzheimer's disease.**

Scientists have found that falls are the earliest indicators of brain changes in Alzheimer's patients and the best marker of high levels of amyloid plaques (deposits of peptide and amino acids found in the brains of Alzheimer's patients). Until now, falls had only been associated with progression of dementia in Alzheimer's. "The pattern in Alzheimer's has dramatically changed over the years," Dr Biswaroop Dey, senior psychiatrist at Dey's Care Clinic in Pune, tells *Harmony-Celebrate Age*. "The dis-

ease has a direct correlation with the food we eat, environmental pollution and even daily stress. Earlier, it was associated only with people above the age of 65; today, there are reports of a person aged 35 suffering from Alzheimer's.

Falling could be an early sign, though signs differ from patient to patient." For this particular study, scientists studied 119 volunteers, 65 years or older. Brain scans showed that 18 participants had high levels of amyloid plaques and, as a result, greater vulnerability to falling, while the others had normal levels of amyloid plaques. "Alzheimer is a slow running process," adds Dey. "More and more research is being done in the field and the discoveries are as varied."



HELPAge INDIA, ALONG WITH SENIOR CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION OF NERUL, HAS STARTED A NEW PHYSIOTHERAPY UNIT FOR SILVERS IN THIS NAVI MUMBAI SUBURB. RUN BY DOCTORS FROM PRIVATE HOSPITALS, THE CENTRE PROMISES FREE THERAPY FOR OLDER PEOPLE BELOW POVERTY LINE AND A CHARGE OF ₹ 20 FROM OTHERS, WHICH WILL GO TO THE ASSOCIATION AS WELL.



Skin deep

An analysis of various medical studies conducted at American Academy of Neurology states that **patients with Parkinson's have greater risk of melanoma**, the most dangerous type of skin cancer and the leading cause of death from skin diseases. The research examined 12 studies conducted between 1965 and 2010 that looked at a possible link. "It so happens because people with Parkinson's undergo complex biochemical cerebral and physical changes," Dr Hiranmay Saha, senior consultant psychiatrist at Global Hospital in Kolkata, tells *Harmony-Celebrate Age*. "These can lead to various other diseases." The new study has revealed that men with Parkinson's disease were twice at risk, while female patients were one-and-a-half times as likely to be diagnosed compared to those without Parkinson's. There was no clear link found between Parkinson's and non-melanoma skin cancer.

KUDOS KUMUDINI!

C K Kumudini is 80 years old and packs a mighty wallop. The Kochi-based silver recently won a prolonged legal battle against a local coir products export company N C John & Sons for polluting groundwater in her area. In 2001, the company opened a bleaching and dyeing unit in Thumboli in Alapuzzha. A year later, Kumudini noticed the lotuses in her pond wilting and a film of oily



effluents floating on the surface of the pond. She checked in her neighbourhood and found that water in each

family was murky and not potable. Roping her nephew into her crusade, she got in touch with the Pollution Control Board (PCB) and sought tests to confirm her fears. The tests revealed a high level of contamination. When notices and memos issued by the PCB went unheeded by the directors of the company, Kumudini filed a writ petition in 2005 charging the company's six directors with criminal offence. All six now face up to two years' rigorous imprisonment.



A SENSATIONAL LIFE

Incredible, but true. Director and actor **Aparna Sen** continues to dazzle us with her creativity. The 63 year-old filmmaker has always drawn wide applause for her sensitive work. But her recent release, *Iti Mrininalini*, triggered even more anticipation for its partly autobiographical content. In the film, mostly set in the 1970s, Sen plays ageing actor Mrinalini Mitra who looks back on her life as she contemplates suicide and gets ready to pen her concluding letter. Besides some highly charged moments, the movie is worth watching for the chemistry Sen shares with her male leads—the much younger Rajat Kapoor and Priyanshu Chatterjee—as well as for her daughter Konkona Sen, who plays a younger Aparna.

SISTER'S DAY

After working with leprosy-afflicted patients for nearly three decades, Bengaluru-based **Sister Jacqueline Jean Mcewan** was preparing to leave India with a heavy heart two months ago when she was denied a visa. The 63 year-old Montfort missionary nun, a British-born Catholic, has worked with Sumanahalli (Goodwill Village) for the better part of her life. Temporary solace came when the missionary society she worked with sought a visa extension from the Home Ministry, and Mcewan's departure was postponed by a month. However, a lifetime worth of dedication and perseverance turned out to be stronger than red tape and geographical boundaries. On the intervention of Home Minister P Chidambaram, Mcewan's visa was finally restored to an unlimited period. And now that the paperwork fracas has settled down, Mcewan, popularly known as the Mother Teresa of Sumanahalli, is back on her mission: running a mobile clinic for leprosy patients, a service she started in 1982.



HIP HIP HURRAY

Put your hands together and cheer for **Bhau** and **Shalaka Korgaokar**, a Mumbai-based couple who started the city's first women's *govinda* group in 1996. Over the years, Bhau, 59, and Shalaka, 58, have rounded up more than 300 women to be part of the Gorakhnath Mandal and have travelled to Dwaraka, Jaipur and other cities to stage human pyramids on Janmashtami. The group, comprising school and college students, nurses, homemakers and lady police officers, travelled to Mathura for a special performance on 20 August.

BIRTHDAYS

- Latino pop singer **Gloria Estefan** turns 54 on 1 September
- Motivational coach **Dr Phil McGraw** turns 61 on 4 September
- Actor **Rishi Kapoor** turns 59 on 4 September



- American actor **Racquel Welch** turns 71 on 5 September
- Singer **Asha Bhosle** turns 78 on 8 September
- American guitarist **Joe Perry** of Aerosmith turns 61 on 10 September
- American director **Brian de Palma** turns 71 on 11 September

OVERHEARD

- "I have never found a book that talks about everything from the psyche and spirit and wisdom to penile implants. So I decided that I'd write about as much of the research as I possibly could—everything I wanted to know as a woman who is 73 years old and still sexually active. I see people who aren't traditionally beautiful but if they are having good sex, you can tell."

Hollywood actor and fitness fiend Jane Fonda who recently authored a book Prime Time on the joy of being old



IN PASSING



- Ethnomusicologist and musician **Ashok Ranade** passed away after a prolonged illness on 30 July in Mumbai. He was 73.
- Singer and musician **Shanti Kaul**, who sang for Radio Kashmir and Doordarshan, passed away on 1 August. He was 73.
- Actor **Shammi Kapoor** passed away on 14 August. He was 79.

- Art director **Samir Chanda**, known for his work in *Guru*, *Omkara* and *Rang De Basanti*, passed away on 18 August in Mumbai from heart-related ailments. He was 54.



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HAND THAT SHELTERS

While travelling across the country and overseas with the Indian Air Force, I had always dreamt of returning home to do my bit for poor, elderly women. But it was only in 2005 that my dream began to take shape. Six years later, in June this year, I finally opened a residential facility for destitute women on the outskirts of Guwahati. Called Seneh (Assamese for 'love and affection'), my residential facility has two single-storey structures with seven rooms and can accommodate 16 women.

Why would a chemical engineer who retired from the Armed Forces dream of a project like this? Well, as president of the Assam Association in New Delhi, I was engaged in flood-relief work in Assam in 2005. I will never forget one elderly woman whose bamboo hut was flooded but refused to evacuate because her 28 year-old son was bed-ridden. It was a gut-wrenching experience and jolted me to get my dream project going.

I believe I get my spirit of social work from my mother who, despite our penury, always rushed to the aid of others in need. My father died early on and even though we were 12 children, my mother was always helping others. For instance, it was because of her that a family in our town, abandoned during a cholera outbreak in the 1950s, managed to survive.

That is why Seneh, or the Bhabada Devi Memorial Home for Destitute Old Women, is strictly for *keun-kisu-naikiya* ('no one to look after') women. It's been only a couple of months and we already have two residents. One of them is Premada Sundari Pal, who I found under a plastic sheet below a culvert near Guwahati. The other resident is Priyabala Karmakar, a widow who lost her job as a domestic help because she could no longer mop the floor or wash clothes. My satisfaction comes from giving these destitute women a second chance at life, and I can't explain how I felt when Priyabala said she wanted to earn again by making pickles!

Thankfully, working on Seneh has been smooth sailing and I encountered no obstacles. I invested my post-retirement savings and pension and bought the plot in 2006. My son and son-in-law also contributed generously. I then opened a trust with nine other trustees, including many of my brothers, sisters, friends and well-wishers. And volunteers

are still coming forward. For instance, a retired doctor-couple has volunteered to be doctors-on-call for Seneh. They also run our four-hour Sunday OPD for the poor people in the neighbourhood. People like this make it all seem easy. As I am based in Delhi, I rent a flat in Guwahati for two weeks every month so I can supervise and work at Seneh. Needless to say, I spend every waking moment at the facility. I am also very grateful to my wife Dipali for her help and support. A retired schoolteacher, she is also a trustee with Seneh. As she is also a member of a Delhi-based NGO for cancer patients, her experience in running our facility is invaluable.



Tapati Baruah Kashyap

Barua (centre) has given the destitute a second chance at life



Haresh Patel

Savkur, a self-taught artist with a penchant for perfection, paints landscapes inspired by the beauty of nature

As we only recently opened Seneh, there's a lot of work still to be done. To get elderly destitute women to our facility, I have spread the word among several NGOs including an old-age home in Guwahati called Aamaar Ghar, Snehalaya, Missionaries of Charity, Brahmakumaris, Deepshikha and Ashadeep. And one of our trustees, Mitra Phukan, a noted writer and columnist, is working on our website.

I am now bursting with excitement with future plans, including a crèche for children of daily-wagers and maids in the locality. This will also keep our residents busy. When I think about it, when we open our hearts to those who need us, there is no limit to how much we can give.

—Atul Chandra Barua

CANVAS OF LIFE

Our community gatherings at Borivali in Mumbai are always a joyous chance to catch up with old friends. But they are especially dear to me as I get an opportunity to preen my feathers and exhibit my paintings.

Before I retired from Union Bank of India, I indulged my boyhood dream by painting greeting cards as I had little free time. But after I retired in 1988, I took to painting acrylic-on-paper landscapes. That's when I knew what sheer exuberance felt like. My job involved frequent transfers and tours to far-flung cities and towns, and it was during these journeys that I soaked in the beauty of the countryside. I stored myriad memories of the magnificence of

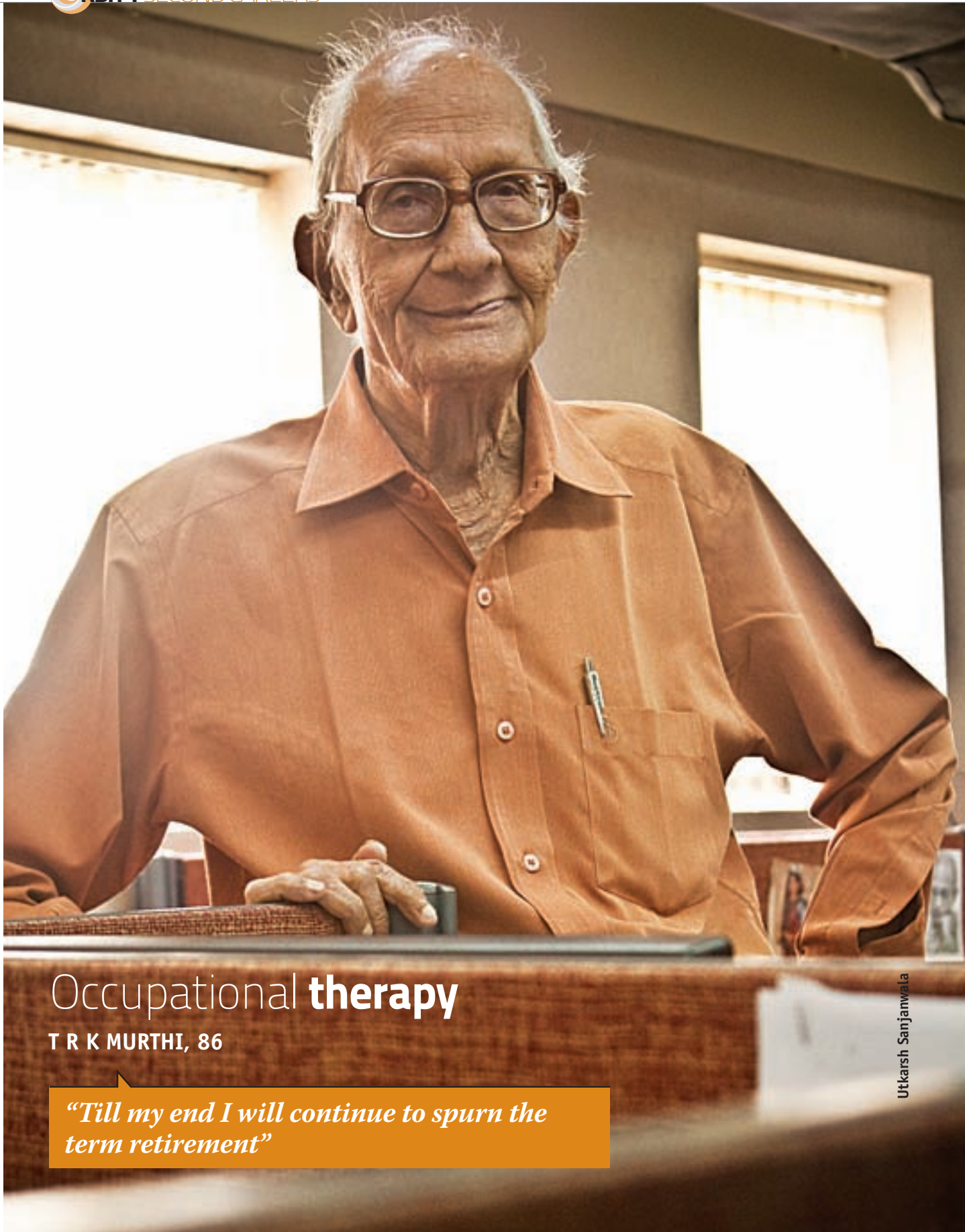
Mother Nature in exquisite detail and now generously dip into this bank for inspiration. Gurgling rivers, the calmness of lakes, rushing waves and simple village life...oh, how spectacular is our planet!

One of my muses, though, was a wizened, old lady I was seated opposite on a tram in Chennai. I was only 16 then and I felt compelled to sketch her. When she realised what I was up to, she advanced menacingly towards me, perhaps to chastise me. So, before she could snatch my sketchbook, I added a handlebar moustache and goatee. When she looked at my drawing, she retreated and alighted at the next stop, satisfied my sketch bore no resemblance to her!

I am a self-taught artist with a penchant for perfection. So I've spent hours and hours labouring over a landscape before I've ended up tearing it up when it doesn't impress me. And inspiration can strike at odd hours. Which is why I often find myself awake all night, brush and palette in hand.

Satisfaction comes from gifting my landscapes to friends and relatives; thanks to word of mouth, I have sold 10 paintings. But my wife remains my biggest critic. When I seek her opinion on a landscape I may have taken days to complete, hoping she will erupt in raptures, all she says is, "It's okay, not bad." I can't complain, for that is exactly what I tell her about her culinary experiments! Although painting is very cathartic, I also play the sitar to relax. I have arranged for a guru to teach me some *raga* and can't wait to start my love affair with my next exploit!

—Shyamsundar Savkur



Occupational **therapy**

T R K MURTHI, 86

“Till my end I will continue to spurn the term retirement”

Utkarsh Sanjanwala

REWRITING TOMORROW

Experts answer your queries and concerns on jobs after retirement

My second stint on the job market started quite inexplicably when I lost my son Hari to pneumonia. He was 46; the responsibility to look after his family [wife and two children] fell on my shoulders.

In 1947, I came to Mumbai as a 22 year-old with just a matriculation certificate and my married sister. My duty was to get her safely to her husband and go back home to Palakkad, Kerala, where my family had a thriving textile business. But destiny had some other plans for me. My brother-in-law told me there was a vacancy at J Walter Thompson, an ad agency. I went for the interview without much hope; I had no qualifications. But my command over the English language was good. I was also employed for the brief current affairs test I passed. My job was to handle media filing, which entailed managing newspaper cuttings, and my salary was a princely sum of ₹ 50.

In 1955, I shifted to Everest Advertising as media manager. My job was to meet clients for putting out advertisements and advise them on how and where to spend money. Along the way, I also learnt the ropes of public relations. I stayed with them for almost three decades. I tried to retire like everyone else at the age of 60, but my wife passed away and sitting at home was simply not an attractive option. So Everest offered me the role of a consultant public relations manager.

In 2000, Rediff took over Everest; they had their own PR department and my services were no longer needed. My son was actively running a computer assembling business but his partner absconded with more than ₹ 1.5 million. To pay off the debt, he started working as an engineer in Australia when his health started failing. He came back for the treatment, but couldn't survive the illness.

I sold my house in Kalina and moved to Mira Road. Looking for a job in my 70s while battling a huge personal loss was not easy. After a long waiting period, I bagged the position of business development executive for two media houses—*Afternoon Despatch & Courier* and *Corporate India*. I have assured them that they have to pay me only if I get them advertising revenue. I tap my old contacts and make fresh ones and get 5-15 per cent commission, which helps me earn ₹ 15,000 to ₹ 20,000 per month. My biggest high is seeing my granddaughter study for her master's in psychology.

Work is truly a blessing. It energises me both mentally and physically. My doctors are surprised I have no major health issues and I only have my work to thank for that. Till my end I will continue to spurn the term 'retirement.'

—As told to Dhanya Nair Sankar

I recently retired as a teacher. Now I am looking for a job in the publishing industry, preferably something to do with writing. What are the possible opportunities?

Today, publishing is one of the most thriving industries. While there are no jobs exclusively related to writing (which is an author's domain), with relevant experience you could join as a copy editor. As copy editor, your role involves editing, rewriting, coordinating with writers and proofreading. Some publishing houses have niche areas of interest, such as academic books, political books or health books. This calls for spending quality time with writers and the editor to get the hang of the subject. You also need to be good with software like Microsoft Office and its various applications. Research skills are also crucial. Publishing houses generally prefer postgraduates and even doctorates with good command over the language, sound knowledge of a number of subjects, and editing skills. The starting salary for such a job ranges between ₹ 20,000 and ₹ 60,000 per month.

—Jyothi Rajmohan works as a copy editor in a Bengaluru-based publishing house

I recently retired as a school librarian. While working, I learnt the art of glass painting and got hooked to it. Now I want to set up my own studio and conduct classes. How do I go about it?

Before setting up your own studio, it is best to brush up your skills if you have not been practising the art lately. Ideally, you should start a small studio at home if space permits; or assign a corner for painting if not conducting a class. If you have enough funds, you can rent a small one-bedroom flat in your neighbourhood; it can act both as a studio and training school. You should showcase samples of your glass painting, like glasses, wall hangings, window paintings, to name a few. You will also need to buy basic materials like cleaning fluids, thinners, colours, stencils, transparency sheets; painting surfaces like glass, mirrors, bottles; and cleaning materials, not forgetting the oven. All this may cost a little over ₹ 50,000. Once you are set, you can advertise in local newspapers, and even create your own website, blog or Facebook page. One glass painting can fetch you anything between ₹ 2,000 and ₹ 10,000; even more depending upon the size of the piece as well as the work involved. For glass painting workshops/classes you should not take more than five students in a batch. This will help you build a solid reputation in the field.

—Sancheta Mehta conducts glass painting workshops in Delhi



EATING RIGHT BY ANJALI MUKERJEE

Protect your eyes: Macular degeneration can't be cured but can be prevented

I have read about specialised nutrition and diet for preventing macular degeneration, a retinal disorder that eventually causes loss of vision in the centre of the visual field. Could there really be a diet to prevent it?



Eyesight is the most treasured among all our senses. As we grow older, its protection is a valid concern. Two common disorders of vision in older people are cataract and macular degeneration. Both cause gradual loss of vision and can hinder certain activities like driving and reading. As our age advances, the cells of the macula—a yellowish area in the central part of retina—begin to show signs of ageing and this leads to a slow loss of central vision.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for age-related macular degeneration. However, it can be prevented by reducing the related risk factors:

- **Oxidative stress:** It is associated with free radical overload and low level of antioxidants that occurs more frequently with ageing.
- **Smoking:** Smokers have higher chances of macular degeneration.
- **Obesity:** It is linked with oxidative stress and hence increased risk for macular degeneration.

- **High blood pressure and high cholesterol:** Individuals with hypertension and abnormal blood lipid levels have an increased risk of macular degeneration.

The food we eat has an impact on our waistline, arteries and even the brain. Good nutrition is associated with a reduced risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and eye disease. Eating the right foods can preserve vision as you age and prevent/stop macular degeneration. Our eyes have naturally occurring antioxidants called lutein and zeaxanthin that reduce damaging free radicals.

Lutein is a potent antioxidant that protects the eyes, heart, brain and skin, fights cancer, keeps lungs healthy, and fights arthritis. It is found in dark green leafy vegetables and egg yolk. Vegetable sources include broccoli, corn, spinach (in raw form), turnip greens, spring onions and cabbage. Zeaxanthin is an important carotenoid that prevents macular degeneration. Sources of zeaxanthin include yellow and orange fruits and vegetables like orange pepper, oranges, peaches, sweet potatoes, mangoes, melons and pumpkin. It is also found in egg yolk and spinach. Other foods bene-

Antioxidants like lutein, found in green vegetables and egg yolk, and zeaxanthin, found in red and yellow fruits and vegetables, protect the eyes

Good for the eyes are apples, onions, green peas, cherries, pears, grapes, garlic, mustard, oily fish and blueberries. In addition, juice made from wheatgrass, barley grass, tomatoes and carrot is very helpful in combating oxidative stress in the body.

Certain vitamins and minerals also prevent macular degeneration. These include:

- **Vitamin C:** It not only prevents macular degeneration but fights colds, cancer and heart disease, and helps build strong teeth and healthy gums. Good sources include *amla*, broccoli, tomatoes, citrus fruits, papaya, mangoes, red/yellow/orange peppers, potatoes and kiwi.

- **Zinc:** It is a vital mineral as it helps in the production of enzymes in our body, builds a healthy immune system, and maintains our sense of smell and taste. It can be found in protein-rich foods such as lamb, pork, chicken, salmon, clams and lobster. Vegetarian sources include pumpkin seeds, wholegrain cereals, brown rice, whole wheat bread, potato, yoghurt, milk and cheese, yeast, peanuts and beans. You can also take a high-strength multi-vitamin and multi-mineral supplement that contains at least 50 mg of zinc and 150 mcg of selenium.

- **Vitamin E:** Also known as the beauty vitamin, it protects cells from damage caused by free radicals, and aids in the prevention of several kinds of cancer, and eye and heart diseases. Good sources include wheat germ oil, sunflower seed and oil, safflower, corn, soybean, almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, spinach, broccoli, kiwi and mangoes.

- **Vitamin A:** It is known for maintaining good vision, and preventing night blindness and cataract. Excellent

sources include raw carrots, sweet potatoes, spinach, cantaloupes, carrots, broccoli, apricots, pumpkin (also winter squash, which is a form of *kaddu*) and mangoes. Bilberry is known as a vision herb as it has a beneficial effect on all types of visual disorders.

- Certain **spices** also have antioxidant properties, including cloves, oregano, cinnamon, ginger and turmeric. Spices also provide natural anti-inflammatory compounds. These compounds help control the inflammatory processes that underline conditions like macular degeneration.

Vision is one of the greatest gifts. Protect your eyes and correct your vision naturally. Overexposure to sun also leads to macular degeneration. Wear sunglasses whenever possible. There is no cure for age-related macular degeneration; however, a well-balanced diet as suggested will give your eyes the best opportunity to fight this disease.

Dr Anjali Mukerjee is a nutritionist and founder of Health Total, which has 15 centres in Mumbai to treat obesity and other health related disorders. Visit www.health-total.com If you have a question for Dr Mukerjee write to contact.mag@harmonyindia.org



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  By Omprakash



WEIGHT WATCH BY MADHUKAR TALWALKAR

Step up: It's time to manage your weight

Last month, I suggested stretching exercises for a reader who was battling an acute case of plantar fasciitis. As a result, he had stopped exercising and gained weight. After tuning your body to stretching, here's a gentle weight loss programme to follow. Make sure you do a complete warm-up before starting the exercises and a complete cool down at the end of the session.

Push-ups

Start by lying face down on the floor. Place your arms next to your shoulders. Push up, keeping your body straight. Lower. Repeat 15 times.

Lying fly

Grab two light dumbbells. Lie on the floor, facing upwards. Keeping your arms straight, raise the dumbbells to meet above your chest. Lower slowly and hold just above the ground. Repeat 15 times. Try to keep a little bend in your elbow so as to not cause injury. Do 15 lying flys.

Shoulder press

Start with the dumbbells at about ear level. Raise them above your head and lower again. Do 15 repetitions (also called reps).

Dumbbell laterals

With both arms pointing towards the ground, hold the dumbbells in front of you. Raise them in a circular motion until your arms are parallel with the floor. Hold; then return to starting position. Do 15 reps.

Seated triceps extension

From a seated position, hold one of the dumbbells above your head with both hands. Make sure the weight is not too heavy. Lower the dumbbell behind your back, keeping the upper arm as vertical as possible. If you find this too easy, use one arm instead of two. Do 15 reps.

Lying triceps extension

Lie down on the floor, facing upwards, holding a dumbbell in each hand, with arms extended towards the ceiling. Lower the dumbbells towards your head while trying to keep your upper arms as still as possible. Return to the starting position. Do 15 reps.

Lying dumbbell pullover

Start by lying on the floor, holding a dumbbell in each hand with palms facing your feet. Lower the dumbbells to the floor above your head. Don't let them touch the floor to

keep tension on your muscles. Return to starting position. Do 15 lying dumbbell pullovers.

One-armed row

Put your left knee on a chair, lean forward and support your body with your left arm on the chair. Hold a dumbbell in your right hand. Lift the weight by raising your elbow towards the ceiling. Hold. Return to the start. Do 15 reps.

Dumbbell bicep curl

Either standing or seated, hold a dumbbell in each hand, lowered towards the floor. Raise the right dumbbell towards your chest, while keeping your upper arm relatively still. Start with your palms facing your sides, then curl the dumbbell as you raise it, so your palm faces your chest. Repeat with the left dumbbell. Do 15 reps.

Dumbbell squats

Holding the dumbbells by your sides, bend at the knees and lower your body until your thighs are perpendicular with the ground. Try to push your hips back as you lower, so your knees don't extend over your toes. Hold before returning to starting position. Do 15 dumbbell squats.

Stiff-legged dead-lift

From a standing position with the dumbbell held in front of your thighs, bend forward from the waist. Lower the dumbbells to your knees, then return to standing position. Keep your legs straight with a slight bend in the knees. If you have any back problems, bend your knees to take the pressure off your back. Do 15 reps.

Lying bridge

Lie on the floor, with face up and feet on a chair. Raise your waist toward the ceiling; hold before returning. Do 15 reps.

Do these exercises every alternate day (thrice a week) and keep yourself hydrated. Cut down on sugar and fat in your diet, get more fibre and break your meals into more frequent, smaller portions. Start now!



*Madhukar Talwalkar is chairman of Talwalkar's, one of India's largest chain of fitness centres with 78 branches across major cities.
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If you have a question for Dr Talwalkar write to contact.mag@harmonyindia.org*



YOGA RX BY SHAMEEM AKTHAR

Muscle your mind: Get inner power with yoga

Every other quality one desires to cultivate in life comes from one source: inner strength. Possessing this strength is often a matter of training, upbringing and early influences in our life. Many of us flounder simply because we believe that this rare quality cannot be acquired. However, yoga, which uses the body to train the mind, has poses that create tremendous inner power.

Obviously, such poses must be attempted only after a foundation of regular practice has been established. The finale of strength can be reached only on a base of regularity, determination, and willingness to learn. The main ingredient in cultivating strength of the body and, then, mind through yoga is regularity of practice.

The intriguing part about poses that muscle your mind is that they appear rather simple. Their form or execution requires no contortions. The learning graph is controllable by the practitioner, unlike with other poses, to develop balance or flexibility. In terms of form, they ask the minimum in terms of limb coordination. Most of them do not even require you to balance, though as you advance in practice balancing poses must be exploited to further your progress.

The best poses for creating inner strength are largely from the warrior pose (*virabhadhrasana*) variation. As you advance, these also include flexibility of the back (through

backbends), calmness of mind (through forward bends), and mental harmony (through balancers). Some good examples include the foundation poses from the *virabhadra* sequence; backbends like the crescent (*ardha chandrasana* series); and forward bends include the standing crane (*bakasana*). Other poses on the floor include the bridge/inclined plane/plank pose (*setuasana*) and its variation and backbends such as the bow pose (*dhanurasana*) and wheel (*chakrasana*).

Although the poses are easy in terms of form, the deeper you reach into them in each execution, the greater the mental tone you acquire. For instance, the basic *virabhadhrasana* is seemingly simple. But after half a minute, the legs may begin to wobble and hands will slacken when the muscles fatigue. To overcome this requires tremendous courage and determination of the mind. Also, the focus of action must be minutely fixed: for example, though in the above pose the legs seem to be taking the brunt of the pose, the actual muscular action comes from the hips, inner thighs and the core band of muscles running along the abdomen. For the hands to remain upright, the strength must come from the shoulders and upper back. These are also psychosomatic spots of strengths that 'hold you up' against all odds. Often, you will find that these are areas that give in to pain or collapse under extreme stress. These poses create the inner strength to hold against external provocations.

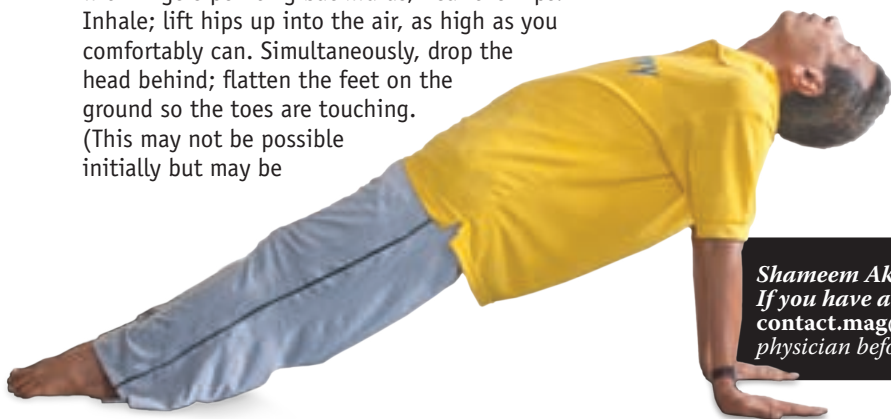
YOGIC MOVES

Bridge/inclined plane pose (*setuasana*)

Sit with legs out in front. Place your palms with fingers pointing backwards, near the hips. Inhale; lift hips up into the air, as high as you comfortably can. Simultaneously, drop the head behind; flatten the feet on the ground so the toes are touching. (This may not be possible initially but may be

achieved once you gain strength and flexibility.) Continue normal breathing. Hold for a few breaths. Inhale. Exhaling, relax hips back to the ground.

Model: Nand-Kumar Vaidya
Harmony Interactive Centre
Photographer: Haresh Patel



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)

Champions against Diabetes.

Most of us are aware that with over 50 million diabetics, India is on the brink of becoming the Diabetes capital of the world. Today, almost everyone knows someone who has Diabetes!

Dealing with a disease like Diabetes can be challenging. Yet there are diabetics who have inspired others - with their determination, sheer optimism and willingness to learn and manage their disease. These spirited individuals have not only demonstrated that diabetes can be controlled and life can continue to be fulfilling, but are 'exceptional champs' because they have also inspired and motivated others to manage their diabetes well.

Meet Mr. Chintamani Ghaisas and Dr. Mukesh Doshi - winners of 'I Am A Champ', India's first National Diabetes Awards instituted by Sanofi to celebrate diabetes control.



not panic nor was I shocked when my doctor gave me the news. I accepted it and knew I had to manage my sugar levels."

A union leader, who had life pretty much by the knuckles, he had to slow down on his aggressive career after being diagnosed with diabetes as his condition was still not in control. Due to injuries that remained unhealed from union fights, Mr. Ghaisas' participation in union affairs reduced. With the support of his management, Mr. Ghaisas made a conscious decision to change his profile and shifted to the Human Resources department within his company. He then made a conscious effort to control his

What is 'I Am A Champ'?

'I Am A Champ' is a Sanofi initiative to recognize patient champions from across India, who have managed to control their diabetes successfully.

- 5000 diabetes patients were nominated by their doctors from across 45 Indian cities for the first IAAC awards held in November 2010
- Of these, 42 patients were declared to be 'Champions' by an eminent jury comprising model and doctor - Aditi Govitrikar, fitness expert - Leena Mogre, celebrity chef - Tarla Dalal, distinguished psychiatrist - Dr. Anjali Chabbria, popular actor and television host - Gaurav Kapur, and Associate Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences - Dr. Srilatha Juvva.
- The champs were assessed on various parameters such as their understanding of diabetes, awareness about diabetes complications, their fitness and diet regime, and the '**Champ**' factor.

Mr. Chintamani Ghaisas has successfully controlled his diabetes for the last 25 years. His blood sugar levels are consistently within limits and at 62, he leads a life more active than even people half his age. Not surprisingly, Mr. Ghaisas was nominated by his doctor for 'I Am A Champ' wherein he emerged a winner.

Mr. Ghaisas, first came to know about diabetes when his father got diagnosed with the disease. Six months later, in a routine check-up, Mr. Ghaisas discovered that he too had diabetes. "I was diagnosed as a diabetic just when I was starting to know more about it."

He describes his first reaction to his diagnoses as neutral. "I did



Third from left, Mr. Ghaisas, receiving 'I Am A Champ' trophy



Second from right, Dr. Doshi, receiving 'I Am A Champ' trophy

diabetes with the help of his doctor and his family. Today, Mr. Ghaisas is not only a diabetes 'Champ', but is also a successful Human Resources consultant. He is an active member of a non-profit organization that works to create diabetes awareness.

The fighter that he is, Mr. Ghaisas made fate dance to his tunes with his 'never say die attitude'. "Firstly, I accepted my condition and then I made a step-by-step plan to tackle the situation," he said.

Mr. Ghaisas had to follow a very rigid time table in the initial days post-diagnosis. Being impulsive by nature, he found it extremely difficult at first. His motivation came from the fact that slowly his sugar levels started coming within acceptable limits. Over the years, his lifestyle is back to normal and is infact healthier than before. "You will never see me sleep after 5 am in the morning. I get up early, go for my walk and practice yoga." And then, with a smile on his face and a spring in his step, Mr. Ghaisas steps out to face the daily grind of the hectic Mumbai life.

When asked about his secret mantra that helped him become a champ, he says:

"Just one word - Limits. It's not like you have to starve; just do everything within limits. One needs to be vigilant about blood sugar levels and calorie intake."

He goes for regular check-ups and even takes special care of his footwear to avoid injuries - that could occur and get missed - due to neuropathy, a micro-vascular complication of diabetes.

"Dealing with diabetes is much easier when you have the support of your family and loved ones", says Mr. Ghaisas explaining, that his mother and wife were actually much more serious about his condition than he was.

Acknowledging a problem and living with it are two different things, and many might argue that the latter is always more difficult - that living with diabetes is indeed demanding.

But to Dr. Mukesh Doshi, our other Champ from Mumbai, diabetes management is nothing but practicing a few simple steps in one's day to day life. "I don't feel restricted. Nothing changed in my life post my diagnosis with diabetes. One must take medicines regularly, which I did. That's all," explains the 60 year old, who is a doctor by qualification and a businessman by choice.

On a long bus drive 12 years ago, Dr. Doshi experienced one of his first symptoms of diabetes - a frequent need to use the bathroom. The bus had to be stopped and with his medical knowledge, he was instantly able to identify this most common symptom. "Recognizing

early symptoms is very important. One must know the symptoms of diabetes, and must contact one's doctor immediately without any hesitation. Seeking treatment at the right time can make all the difference," says Dr. Doshi, who is now in tune with the 'diabetic life'.

He recalls a difficult patch, when his blood sugar was out of control for a long time and his physician suggested the use of insulin. "Initially it was difficult", he admits. But once his physician explained how insulin injections would actually help him have a much better quality of life, he decided to try it. Soon enough he got his blood sugar under control.

Dr. Doshi also highlights an important fact. Insulin use is not to be feared by the diabetic patient. Its use is not considered the end stage of the disease, as what is a common prevailing myth. In fact insulin injections can help control sugars, when many oral antidiabetic drugs fail to do so. With current injection technologies, insulin injections have become virtually painless, and are considered by doctors as an important tool for a diabetic to gain control over his diabetes. "There is nothing really to worry about", he states with conviction.

When asked about his 'simple steps' to controlling diabetes, Dr. Doshi considers regular exercise as the first, diet care as second, regular and proper intake of medicines as third and fourth but the most important aspect he says, is "to follow a relaxed stress-free lifestyle and maintain a positive outlook".

He reiterates, "Do not neglect diabetes. Treat it, rather than worry about it." According to this Champ, regular monitoring of blood sugar is the key to prevent complications and stay in control.

Champions like Dr. Doshi and Mr. Ghaisas have now taken it upon themselves to spread awareness about diabetes control and are working towards educating more and more people about the condition. While Mr. Ghaisas is very actively involved in spreading the message through a magazine called 'Awakening', Dr. Doshi talks about it to others during his early morning walks and at social gatherings.

These champions are an inspiration to millions of diabetics. Sanofi is proud to honor these Champs who symbolize triumph-over-diabetes and are a beacon of hope for countless other diabetics who often believe that 'life is over' once they are diagnosed.



Mr. Ghaisas and Dr. Doshi have demonstrated that diabetes can be controlled through a blend of medicine compliance, necessary lifestyle changes in diet and exercise; and most importantly, a positive attitude.



SOULFOOD AND SOULMATES JIGYASA GIRI AND PRATIBHA JAIN MEET ANITA AND MAJOR GENERAL (RETD) G S RANDHAWA, CHANDIGARH

The third in the exclusive SoulFood and SoulMates series about life, love and food that unites hearts

It was a very interesting meeting with this dynamic, diametrically-opposite-in-views, handsome couple from Chandigarh: Major General (retd) G S Randhawa from Patiala and his ever so young-in-spirit wife Anita from Kashmir. He is 67 and she 63. While Major General *Sahib* is calm and spiritual, Anitaji is a fun-loving grandmother who has an unbelievably young relationship with her children and grandchildren. He is an avid reader of scriptures and meditates diligently, while she enjoys interior design and playing cards and is a proud homemaker. Their son Abjit is a proficient polo player like his father and an entrepreneur, while their daughter

Shemain has inherited her mother's creativity; whether it is clothes, homes, shoes... she is always designing something.

Jigyasa Giri and Pratibha Jain: Tell us how you met.

Major General Randhawa: After the war of 1965, my cousins and I went to Bareilly where I met Anita at the Boat Club party. We danced together till the wee hours; in the morning, I proposed to her.

Anitaji: He then went to my father and asked for my hand in marriage. He even played the mouth organ to impress my father!

He: We courted each other for the next six months and then married in Banbasa near Bareilly.

What attracted you to each other?

She: He was a polo player and a handsome Army officer. Obviously, I was immediately attracted.

He: She was beautiful and charming; still is. The night we danced we realised we shared a passion for western music and waltz. Some years later, we even won a prize as waltz dancers. Anita is trained in Kathak as well.

She: Oh that was long ago...when I was in college. In fact, I have



Devanshu Sharma



Jit Ray

"When food is cooked at home and the family sits together to eat, it strengthens bonds. One should also eat what one has grown up eating"

performed at a gathering where Pandit Nehru was the guest of honour. But I gave it up and waltzed my way into his life instead.

We heard that one of your friends once said that Anitaji is the sensual and Major General Sahib is the spiritual part of this marriage... and together you have made a beautiful family. What are your views on love, marriage and commitment?

He: Marriage is a spiritual bonding of two souls. It's a beautiful institution, so you must take your vows and stick to them. But things are changing. Modern couples are so independent that it probably makes them intolerant and impatient. We see so many divorces over frivolous issues.

She: It is important to adjust. We learnt that in our Army life. Both of us may fight, disagree, be poles apart, yet love and mutual respect for each other are our greatest bonds. I also think that people must find their own partners in life. It is always better that way, whatever turn the marriage may take. It is important to evolve and live each day like it is your last. And this is how we have lived our life together.

Do you have many disagreements?

She: We used to fight a lot earlier... now it's just over silly things. He was more romantic earlier and made such good wine, but now he only lectures me on health food and spirituality.

He: Food is important, but not as important as we all make it to be. We are here on earth for our karma, and the sooner we get spiritual the better. Food is only means to a healthy life.

What is your favourite home food? Do you enjoy similar cuisines?

She: Oh, we are very different in our tastes. I love to cook vegetarian and non-vegetarian Kashmiri cuisine. I also like spicy food and south Indian dishes. But he likes bland, health food—salads and organic food.

He: I've never bothered much about food. In the Army, we are trained to eat anything we get. I prefer vegetarian food and I believe one must eat just enough and with gratitude.

Any words of wisdom on home cooked food as against eating out?

She: When food is cooked at home and the family sits together to eat, it strengthens bonds. After a busy day, there's nothing better than a family dinner. I also believe that one should eat what one has grown up eating.

He: Eating out every other day is a sad trend, especially with the overkill of junk food and fast food options available. It causes obesity and so many other health problems. Home food is the best and we must educate our children to eat simple meals, even when they have to eat out. And always eat in moderation.

She: He may say anything, but he still likes a few good dishes apart from his salad. For instance, my special Kashmiri *saag methi paneer*, which I am glad to share with you.

Saag Methi Paneer

A common Kashmiri side-dish, authentically cooked in mustard oil. You can use any other oil of your preference if you like.

Ingredients

- *Paneer* (cottage cheese): 250 gm, cut into medium cubes

- Spinach (*palak*): One large bunch or two medium bunches
- Fenugreek leaves (*methi*): a small bunch
- Dry red chillies: 2
- Garlic: 5-6 cloves, chopped fine
- Onion: 1 small one; chopped fine
- Coriander powder: ½ tsp
- Red chilli powder: ½ tsp
- Mustard oil: 2 ½ tbsp, and for deep frying
- Salt to taste

Method

Wash spinach and fenugreek leaves under running water. Drain. Snap off the ends of the larger spinach leaves and roughly tear the leaves up. Chop the fenugreek leaves. Set them aside together. Heat 2½ tbsp mustard oil in a wok. Reduce heat and add chillies. As they turn deep red, add chopped garlic and onions. Sauté for 2-3 minutes and add spinach and fenugreek leaves, red chilli powder, coriander powder and salt to taste. Allow to cook on low flame, stirring occasionally until tender, when the oil starts to separate. In the meanwhile, heat the oil for deep frying in another wok. When hot, deep-fry *paneer* cubes until golden; remove and drain off excess oil by placing on absorbent paper. Toss the *paneer* into the simmering greens. Add ½ cup hot water, stir and allow to cook over low flame for 10-15 minutes. Switch off the flame and transfer to serving dish.

Serve with steaming hot rice.

Jigyasa and Pratibha are authors and publishers of two award winning books Cooking at Home with Pedatha and Sukham Ayu. They specialise in documenting culinary traditions. Visit them at www.pritya.com



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CALL TO ACTION BY SHISHIR JOSHI

Movers and doers: You can change your world, one neighbourhood at a time

When 73 year-old Bernard M, a resident of suburban Andheri in Mumbai, woke up early one morning, as he usually did, he noticed that the massive Neem tree adjoining his building compound wall had come crashing down, damaging property, a vehicle and obstructing traffic. "What should we do?" Others in the society looked towards him for help. One, because they were too busy to do something about it themselves; and two, they knew he was resourceful enough to have all the answers.

This time, even Bernard was nonplussed. For two days, he fretted and fumed. Eventually, he managed to get hold of 'someone', who guided him properly. Within hours of making phone calls to the appropriate and designated officers, the tree had been lifted away and the solution was found. One full week of effort had gone by.

Situations like these are common—missing drainage covers; unrepaired drains; water overflowing from badly connected pipelines; a potholed road where an old friend stumbles and falls; or a theft in your neighbourhood. If I ask most of you, "What did you do when you came to know of it?" the most common refrain would be, "What do I do? I don't know whom to reach out to."

Senior citizens, for their sheer experience over the years and maturity in dealing with situations, are best in such crisis-handling—but, only if trained well. That many of them have stepped back from active day jobs, have a command over language and are better communicators also help tremendously in finding a solution. It goes without saying that the more mature you are, the more seriously you are taken by the powers that be, in any given situation. The choice is yours; either you build up anger and frustration to add to your woes, or you become a citizen journalist and rationally solve the problem.

Seniors are ideal candidates to become citizen journalists. All you need is a sense of responsibility, maturity and the ability to read and write. Everything else can be learnt.

Do you need to be technology-savvy? Not really; but it always helps. But before that, let's take a quick look at what citizen journalism is all about. You often read about it in the papers and hear it on news channels. In India, as broadcast journalism became more expensive, many news

managers also saw it as a wonderful gimmick to have citizen 'reporters' across the country. These were people who passed on information to channels, free. In return, the channels offered these reporters their 15 seconds of fame.

But, by merely sending a picture, do you qualify to be a citizen journalist? Mainstream media may say yes. But if one judges by the integrity and rigours of good journalism, the answer is no. While the origins of citizen journalism

Seniors are ideal candidates to become citizen journalists, for their maturity in dealing with situations. That many of them have stepped back from active day jobs, have a command over language and are better communicators also help tremendously. The choice is yours; either you build up anger and frustration to add to your woes, or you become a citizen journalist and rationally solve the problem

are as old as journalism—when pamphlets and reports were issued by citizens—some of the most powerful pieces of journalistic writing can be traced back to the initiatives of citizens as reporters, not reporters as professionals as you see today.

At the Journalism Mentor (JM) Foundation for Excellence in Journalism, we chose to create a teaching programme on Citizen Journalism (CJ) for senior citizens like you, the ones with a conscience. Our attempt in teaching CJ to the common man (in Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Goa and Bengaluru) has taught us many lessons—seniors show as much zeal in learning as a young businessman, teenager or housewife would. However, when it came to grasping concepts and persevering with the required follow-up, seniors had an edge. To have a workshop exclusively for seniors was thus always on the agenda, delayed only for want of resources.



Images of activism from the archives of *Harmony-Celebrate Age*

The workshops not only acquaint participants with the laws that have an impact on their lives (civic, police, press, PILs, RTI, Lokpal and consumer laws) but teach them journalistic ethics; to gather and verify facts; to ask relevant questions; and to direct these questions at the right people. Eventually, workshop participants are taught how to write news articles. While language and qualification are no barrier at all for the Foundation's customised CJ programme for seniors, age is an important criteria—only those above 60 can register. Even the faculty is carefully chosen; only experts who have had a rich experience of associating with seniors have been roped in.

In the past, the Mumbai workshops have seen names like Justice B N Srikrishna; DGP of Maharashtra D Sivanandan; additional BMC commissioner Subrat Ratho; consumer guidance expert Dr M S Kamath; RTI expert Krishna Raj Rao; Lokpal activist Mayank Gandhi; Navi Mumbai Police Commissioner Ahmed Javed; Karmayog founder Vinay Somani; and filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani, just to name a few. We've also had a host of eminent journalists including *Loksatta* Editor Kumar Ketkar, *Hindustan Times's* Sumana Ramanan, *MiD DAY* Editor Sachin Kalbag, and Saam TV's Chandramohan Pupalla, among others.

However, journalists write to be read—the sine qua non for journalism to be effective is an audience. And the

purpose of the workshop is not just to teach and walk away; that's just the beginning. However, one must remember, CJ is more about citizenship, and not about becoming a journalist. That's why six months ago, the JM Foundation created the news site, www.citizensreport.in, an open forum for potential reporters. All articles on the site are vetted by a distinguished editorial team, which does not upload any news coverage unless it meets high journalistic standards. From an article on a Dharavi schoolteacher to photographs of Mumbai's newest bomb sites, the reports are by non-professional journalists with various day jobs. Some of the reports that newspapers appreciate appear in the mainstream media as well, with the name of the citizen journalist as 'Reporter'.

Of course, citizen journalism is not constrained to Mumbai. There are citizens, and active senior citizens in different parts of the country. And anywhere we find like-minded seniors, we shall be there.

It is really easy to sit back and complain about the state of the nation. It's even easier to gossip or make unsubstantiated allegations instead of taking up the honour of being proud citizens very seriously, as a duty to your country. The choice remains with you. Sit back and grumble—or get ready to report.

Shishir Joshi, 42, is a senior Mumbai-based journalist and founder of JM Foundation for Excellence in Journalism. The citizen journalism workshop for senior citizens will be held from 23-25 September. To register, call 022-40155197/ (0)9820985853; email lavanya.varadrajan@journalism.org.in or citizenjournalism@journalism.org.in; or check details on www.journalism.org.in. The last date for registration is 15 September. Venue to be announced shortly

Silvers for Anna!

Though it will be a long time before public opinion around Anna Hazare's movement against corruption funnels into a consensus, the nationwide stir inarguably shook the establishment out of long-numbed complacency. Adding might to the scream were silvers who gathered in thousands on the streets of Mumbai last month.

Utkarsh Sanjanwala captures the fire that won't retire





CHAKDE INDIA



Behind the glamour, fame and heroics that come with sporting success lies an equally compelling saga of blood, sweat, tears, toil, and the keen eye of a coach. Instrumental in spotting the talent of their wards and plotting their paths to fame, coaches are truly the unsung heroes of the sporting firmament. While many have lived the dream themselves and are now paying it forward, others—like candles—have consumed themselves to light the way for young aspirants. What they have in common is an unerring instinct for recognising aptitude; the commitment to transform that aptitude into achievement; and a vision that believes the game is bigger than them—and their students. **Radhika Raje** speaks to seven such stalwarts who, in their own unique ways, have brought glory to the Indian tricolour.

O M NAMBIAR ■ 72

The alchemist

He single-handedly nurtured a home-grown athlete into India's Golden Girl. And through P T Usha's every triumph on the track and field, he lived his very own dream—to do his country proud

📷 Sivaram

CLAIM TO FAME: Coach to sprint queen P T Usha

GOING FOR GOLD

Sure, he coached other top-class, middle-distance runners like Vandana Rao, Saramma, Beena Augustine and Sukumari. "But what made P T Usha my special student was her unusual fervour," says the former athletics champion, for whom familial responsibilities meant leaving the track forever. The turning point came in 1975, when Nambiar joined the Sports Council of India. "Usha had just emerged as a potential top runner and I offered to train her."

The septuagenarian has a simple coaching philosophy: "We believe in doing rather than making claims." This "doing" was evident in his coaching regimen, which often required Usha and him to start training at 3 am. "Four gold medals in an international event is a record no Indian has broken to date. Moulding her fulfilled my desire to do something for the country," he says, his voice quivering with emotion. Then, he laughs quickly, "Usha's friends Shiny Wilson and M D Valsamma would spy on her to find out what I slipped her secretly after every race."

SPRINTING AHEAD

"I still train students back home in Kerala to keep fit as a fiddle"

SCALING HURDLES

Nambiar lived vicariously through Usha's every conquest and disappointment. But mentoring India's most coveted athlete was no cakewalk. He thus savours the lone battle he fought to get Usha to participate in the Asian Track and Field Championship in Kuwait in 1983. "Indian sports were dominated by the North but we fought to the finish. We even begged then prime minister Indira Gandhi's office to allow Usha to participate. Eventually, she took gold in the 400 m."

If he was the wind beneath Usha's wings, Nambiar could not always watch his protégé throw her arms up in victory at the finish line. "Back then, coaches weren't given accommodation, food or even the Indian blazer," he shrugs. "We had to pay for everything and still take the athletes everywhere. Till 1983, I was not able to accompany Usha to international games."

Nambiar is the first recipient of the Dronacharya Award. And despite having achieved what most coaches can only aspire to, he says with humility, "I may not be as famous as my student but I am proud of what I do."





AKHTAR ALI ■ 71

To serve with love

His determination to stay ahead of the game helped him turn out some of the greats of Indian tennis

📷 Shilbhadra Datta

CLAIM TO FAME: Coach to tennis flag-bearers Leander Paes, Ramesh Krishnan, the brothers Amritraj and, of course, his very own son Zeeshan Ali

KEY TO SUCCESS

A squash enthusiast before he took to tennis, Ali switched sports after he won the Bengal Championship Junior. "Everyone said I was better at tennis. Also, tennis is more glamorous than squash," he says, a mischievous twinkle in his eye.

A Davis Cup finalist in 1967, Ali took to coaching to support his family when his father died. But it was his buoyant personality and sense of humour that helped him hang up his racquet with grace. "A top player is on the top for a while. After that people will forget him. What I do as a coach is self-satisfactory. Your students thank you and that's the difference." Ali attributes his success to his natural inquisitiveness and yearning to keep learning. "I took coaching courses in Australia and the US. I was national coach in Belgium and in Malaysia. The game keeps changing, technology keeps changing. It is difficult to keep up if you don't broaden your perspective," he explains.

Like everything else in life, Ali answered his calling with unwavering determination. "Teaching a forehand and backhand

is easy but motivating the mental aspect of the player is the challenge. That's what helped me train a few legendary players like Amritraj and Paes."

The veteran coach rues that money and glamour have corrupted the game he loves so dearly. "Everyone wants a piece of the pie. Even coaches have forgotten the true essence of coaching. When Leander and Zeeshan started their careers, things were very different. Today, tennis players are celebrities. Coaching is also very lucrative, the money is big. It's all glamour."

ADVANTAGE ALI

Age has not withered his passion for tennis and he's still shooting aces. Besides coaching the Junior Development Programme for Tennis in Kolkata, he is engaged in community work including charity for schools, orphans and medical camps. "God has been very good to me and this is my way of giving back." And, no, he has not succumbed to temptation. "I still get international offers to work but I prefer staying in my own country. People think I am a fool but I know my priorities." With a winning scorecard like his, he could easily say, "Game, set and match!" But not Akhtar Ali, who would be "happy to die on a tennis court".

HIS KICK SERVE

**"I love *sher shayari*.
I also like to crack jokes
and make people laugh"**



AMAR NATH SHARMA ■ 67

Batman

Bringing budding cricketers to the mainstream from the fringes, coaching for him is the noblest profession

📷 Anju Mohan





CLAIM TO FAME: Coach to Virender Sehwag

AROUND THE WICKET

He made the difference and made us proud. And as much as his mother Krishna, cricketer Virender Sehwag has another person to thank deeply: his coach A N Sharma. A cricketer (he played until 1977) who looked up to Vijay Merchant, Sharma's career soon turned to physical training—which he felt was more suited for him than what he was looking for. And, as imagined, it led him to his destiny. “I wanted to coach; maybe that’s why I never took my career in cricket seriously,” says Sharma, who trained at the National Institute of Sports in Patiala. And during his tenure at the Government Boys School in Delhi he spotted his most loyal and loving student, Sehwag.

BATTING ORDER

Sharma hasn't trained other famous cricketers and believes popularity doesn't make any difference to a coach. “What’s important is that we [coaches] are training sportsmen from the root, with the hope that they achieve what they are looking for. The noblest profession ever, coaching is like being in a place of worship.”

There have been ups and downs but it has been a good journey, he believes. “Some have respected me for my abilities

while some question them.” But Sharma has no regrets, even if the game he so loves doesn't provide for everybody involved. “I train in a government school and would like my students to get more equipment, which is where Viru helps and makes me happy.” Despite new bats and balls though, he feels students have to apply themselves 80 per cent to the game; it's only the remaining 20 per cent that's a coach's contribution.

BACK SPIN

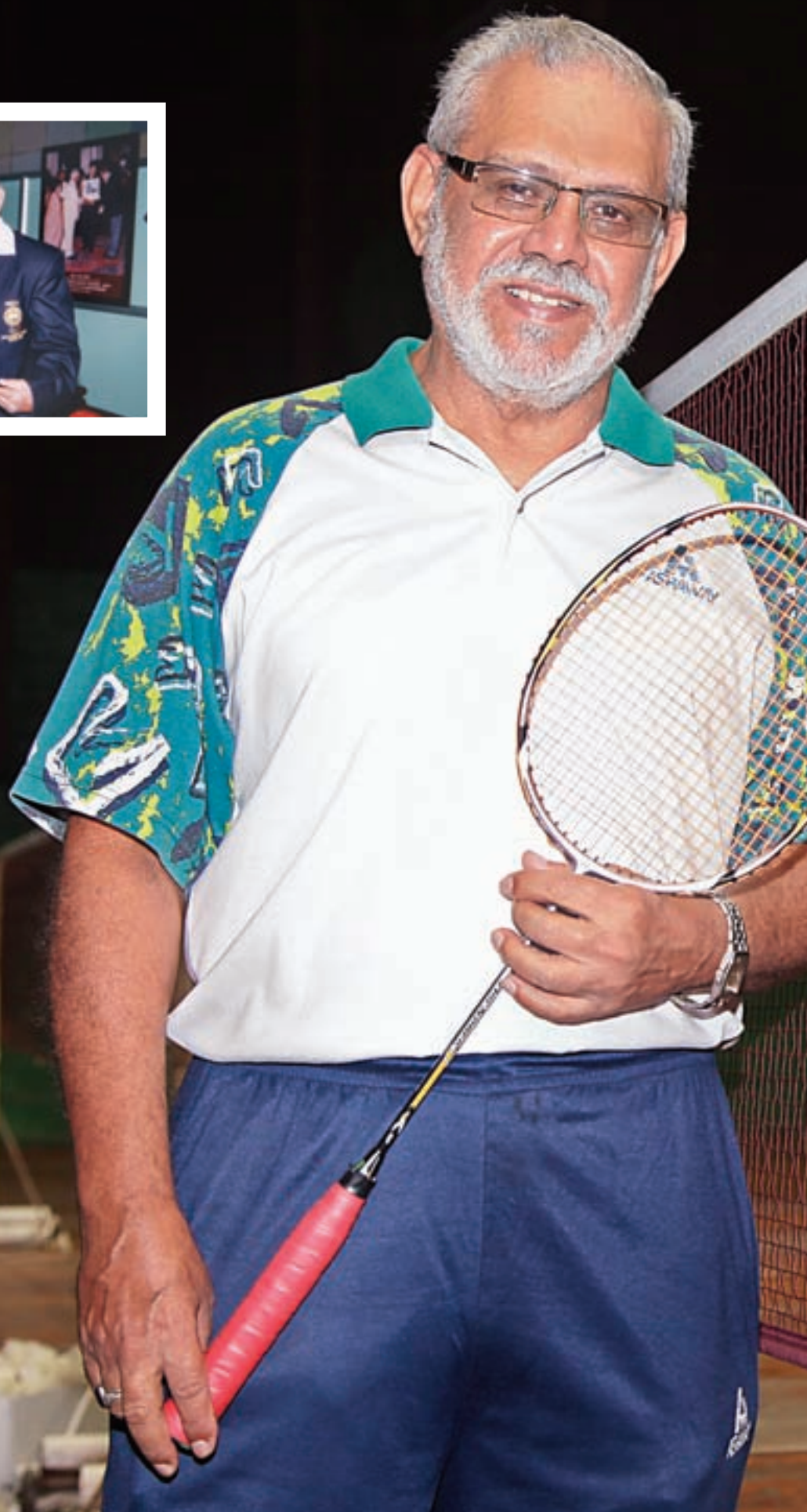
“These days, however, students don't feel loyal towards their coaches,” rues Sharma. “I have had students who turn to me for training but start looking for selectors and join academies the moment they think they are playing well. It's very sad.” He recalls how when a selector approached Sehwag to play for his academy, Sehwag declared that it didn't matter how he played—if he played, it would be under Sharma.

While it's all about fame, money and politics, not everyone, he says, can be a Tendulkar or Sehwag. “It can never happen overnight. Being ‘them’ means immense hard work, practice and passion; the game demands it,” says Sharma who is critical of coaches who want to change the natural abilities of students and refrain from nourishing their innate skills. “I firmly believe hard work makes a lot of difference. So as a coach you have to keep a student inspired.”

HOWZZAT?

“Though I haven't been a coach to Viru for three years, we regularly talk about his strokes, fitness goals and even mundane things over the phone”







S M ARIF ■ 67

Racket man

For him, all the world's a badminton court. But the world-class, 'all-round' coach says there's more to life than sports

📷 Anand K Soma

CLAIM TO FAME: Coach to Saina Nehwal

LUCK BY CHANCE

Football at 7 am, cricket in the afternoon and badminton in the evening. That badminton won the day is now history. But for S M Arif, coaching the game happened quite by chance. "My physical director would always tell me I had a knack for explaining techniques and improving the game of other players," recalls the former state-level badminton player. "So he suggested I take up coaching."

Although coaching made him feel like the 'odd man out' in a business family, the young shuttler persisted and qualified as a coach. Arif has since given the country some of our biggest champions like Saina Nehwal, Pullela Gopichand and Jwala Gutta.

COURTING CHAMPIONS

Arif is on the court from 9 am to 12.30 pm every day. After that, he mingles with his students and trainees, discusses videos of the game, tricks of the trade or a tournament aired on TV. A man with no pretensions, Arif says he never once dreamt of becoming a star player himself. "During my time, there was no one to guide me," muses the Dronacha-

rya Award winner. "Had I focused on any one sport, I may have become a national-level badminton player."

Calling badminton a "costly game", Arif remarks that "there's so much money in the sport today". Not to mention how much the game has changed. "Power and speed are taking over the game," shrugs the unassuming coach. "People want the fast and high life and badminton offers that."

BE A SPORT!

"Arif Saahab", as he is popularly called, has a valuable message for parents: "The Almighty has given everyone talent. One simply needs to nourish it. Mental focus is important. Unfortunately, parents today force their children to focus on education and encourage sports only as entertainment. But if you focus enough, you can excel equally, at academics and sports." Arif should know. Before coaching became an all-consuming passion, he indulged his love for semi-classical music. He was also a voracious reader. "My father used to ask me if I actually read those books or was just turning the pages!" A young 67, Arif has a long way to go before he calls it quits. "I talk about badminton, Saina and my other students all the time," he laughs. "I'm surprised my wife has stayed with me all these years."

MATCH POINT

"I live in an old house with my mother, sister and wife. And my only son, who got married recently, lives nearby. Who wouldn't be happy?"

GURBAKSH SINGH SANDHU ■ 57

Ringmaster

Coach to India's best boxers, the handsome turbaned silver can knock out anyone with his dynamism

📷 Sanjay Kurl

CLAIM TO FAME: Coach to Vijender Singh

WARMING UP

G S Sandhu never dreamt of becoming a famous boxer but he was always sure he would help a champion fighter claim his own brilliance. "You will find many who want to become boxers, but how many do you find who can spot talent and hone it?" asks Sandhu, adding smugly "I took the initiative." His gaze is flinty; one can imagine those eyes baiting and instigating a battered fighter to get up and give back as good as he gets. Maybe it's his childhood years at the Sainik School in Gujarat that instilled the steel in his soul. It's also where he first took to boxing. "I used to practise in the ring every single day."

COUNTDOWN

When he started out, Sandhu wanted to take boxing to a higher level. "We had no coaches when I started boxing. So I completed my diploma in coaching from National Institute of Sports (NIS), Patiala [the first ever course for boxing introduced in India], and went to Germany for my master's in boxing." As not many had heard of the profession, he initially battled with embarrassment when people called him 'P T Master'. Undeterred he coached national camps from 1979 till 1986, then focused on junior and sub-junior camps for a few years till he was appointed chief national boxing coach in 1993. And though he has played mentor to Vijender Singh, Suranjay Singh and Jaypal Singh, he refuses to be called more hardworking than his students: "Coaches answer queries and motivate or pacify boxers; what my students do in terms of effort is unmatched."

BIG BLOW

"When I first meet the boys, I analyse their attitude towards boxing; check their technical movements; verify their psychological strength; and size up their performance," says the charismatic silver. "When all this is ticked in my head, I know the boxer has the mettle to make it big. I knew it with Vijender, Suranjay and Jaypal." Sandhu feels coaches should explain to students that boxing needs consistent practice. "Young boys get impatient and give it up for a job or because they lose interest."

UPPER CUT

He considers the present scenario 'the golden era' of boxing. "When I started, boxing raked in incentives of only ₹ 75,000 to ₹ 100,000, but today there is a lot of money being pumped in." State authorities and institutes pool in to the tune of ₹ 4 million every year, and further contributions are made by private hostels and organisations. Most of the money is utilised to buy equipment.

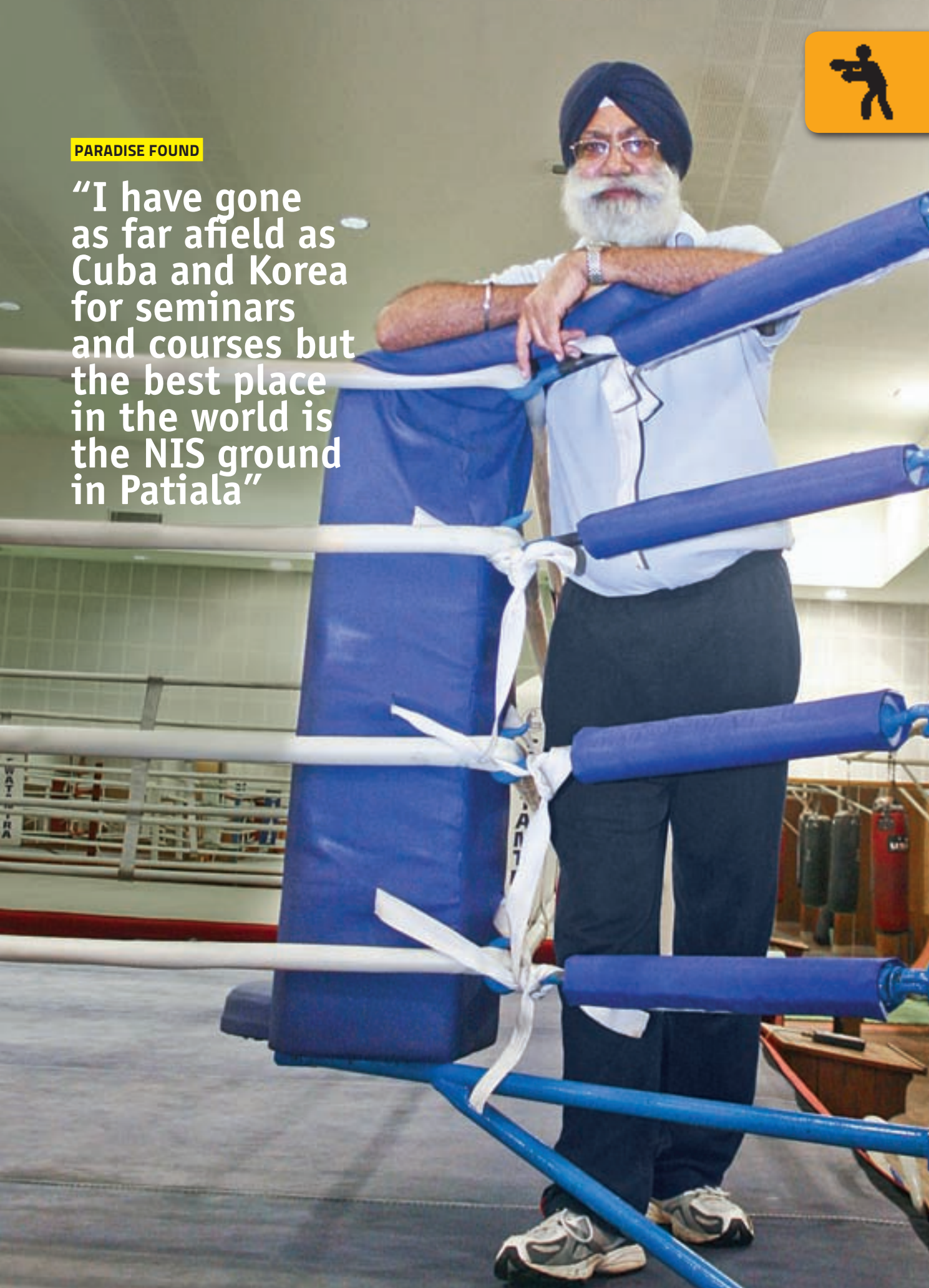
VELVET GLOVES

The strong-willed coach has a softer side few know of. "My daughter and son have both finished their post-graduation and I don't even know when they grew up." Sandhu believes he ignored his own children while building the lives of others. "We get travelling allowance for the family and I have never availed of it," says the boxer, who typically unwinds with a game of billiards.



PARADISE FOUND

"I have gone as far afield as Cuba and Korea for seminars and courses but the best place in the world is the NIS ground in Patiala"



JOAQUIM CARVALHO . 51

A pitch for hockey

Once voted the best centre-half in the world, he has moved from star player to super coach with consummate ease

📷 Utkarsh Sanjanwala

CLAIM TO FAME: Coach to Dhanraj Pillay

EARLY STRIKER

He first picked up a hockey stick as a callow 10 year-old—it's hardly left his side since. Joaquim Carvalho started his career playing for Mahindra and Mahindra and then took to the field for the Indian Hockey Federation (IHF). "I have played the game with an extreme passion," he says. It shows—wearing the national colours as a dashing centre-half, this Arjuna Award winner and Olympian has helped India win a slew of gold, silver and bronze medals in myriad tournaments. In fact, at the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984, he was voted the best centre-half in the world.

PLAYING IT FORWARD

Becoming a coach, for Carvalho, was inevitable. "While I was playing, we used to regularly participate in international hockey camps. It was a rule that we would return from these events and coach upcoming students as we didn't have too many coaches at the time." The experience held him in good stead as he went on to train (Padmashri) Dhanraj Pillay as well as Olympians such as Jude Menezes, Prabjot Singh, Mark Patterson and Deepak Thakur. "Coaching is behind-the-scenes work that is as important as what happens on the pitch; you need to be able to recognise talent and nourish it," he says. "For example, I knew Dhanraj had talent, passion and amazing speed. I had to convince his elder brother to let him play for Mahindra's."

LEVELLING THE FIELD

In Carvalho's view, hockey—India's national game—remains a poor cousin to cricket. "Most of the money goes



to promote cricket," he rues. Although he believes things have improved in terms of better equipment and infrastructure and more attention being given to the sport, there's a long way to go. "We have immense talent but we do not have sports schools or national academies where such talent can be encouraged. It's high time we start respecting hockey as a sport."

HOME GAME

Today, Carvalho spends most of his day on the grounds of IHF, conceptualising techniques, training students, discussing moves. Wife Vandana Rao, an Olympian athlete herself, understands. "It helps when you have a family that is empathetic," he says. "My son is into sports too though I don't think he wants to make a career of it...whatever makes him happy."



CHANGEOVER

“I can change my personality in a trice. Off-field, I joke and laugh with my students but on-field I push them to focus. There is a level of distance that comes from respect”





SUNNY THOMAS ■ 70

Sunny side up

How do you go from being a schoolteacher to India's first national coach for shooting? Here's a man who proves it's never too late to hit the bullseye

📷 Jit Ray

CLAIM TO FAME: Coach to Anjali Bhagwat and Jaspal Rana

THE RELUCTANT COACH

Sunny Thomas is called a 'reluctant coach' with good reason. "I took up coaching after I retired as an English schoolteacher in 1997 because the Kerala sports authorities coaxed me to," confesses the man who has since coached "everybody who is anybody" in India's shooting history. "I didn't even have 10 per cent of the experience of the players I coach and I refused at least three coaching offers," admits India's first national coach for shooting.

THE TRIGGER

Thomas gave himself 12 months but soon he was hooked. "Shooting was only a pastime when I was a teacher. I was fascinated by ammunition, which is what attracted me to the sport," says Thomas, former national champion and five-time state champion. His sons are national shooting record-holders.

Far from the aggression the deadly sport suggests, this sharpshooter is a picture of humility and admits he never

had fame and glory in his sights. "Shooters come from wealthy families and I didn't stand a chance. Besides, how could I have harboured such hopes when I had never imagined I would even coach?" wonders Thomas, who is sometimes called "grandfather" by his students because he is so protective of them.

SURESHOT

With 34 years of teaching under his belt, Thomas developed an eye for spotting talent early on. So it was easy to tell that Anjali (Bhagwat) would make it big one day. "You just know it when you recognise passion in a student. She had postponed her pregnancy for innumerable tournaments. Now, after delivering a baby this year, she is already back at the range. This girl has so much enthusiasm that she redesigned her home to include a shooting range just so she could practice. Yes, it's easy to spot commitment."

Thomas is probably the only coach who is content with the Indian government's approach to their sport. "At times, we may fall short of ammunition but what really matters are the opportunities we are getting, unlike many other countries," he muses.

THE NEXT TARGET

"If I am not touring, I am practising with the players or conducting physical therapy. Now my family has asked me to set aside time for my 70th birthday in September"

OEUVRE

MAGIC

in motion

Photographs by Shilbhadra Datta

Bengali director Goutam Ghose's film *Moner Manush* won the Golden Peacock Award for the Best Film at the 41st International Film Festival of India 2010.

The chronically restless director, however, is far too steeped in his work to adopt a proud swagger for his achievement. Partha and Priyanka Mukherjee meet the man to find out what it is to eat, sleep and breathe cinema

Goutam Ghose can be rarely found in one place for too long. If he is in the US today, tomorrow afternoon might find him in London, and the weekend in Santiniketan in North Kolkata, where you could see him scouting his next location. Expectedly, our interview with him, which was supposed to be over in a few hours, segued into a few months. "Doesn't your family feel neglected as you are away all the time?" we ask him. "It is Khuku [as he calls his wife Nilanjana Ghose] who brings me back home," he tells us wryly. Ghose's family has accepted his long absences as a necessary burden of his genius. He couldn't even be present while organising his only daughter Anandi's marriage. "Khuku did everything and I was a mere guest," he tells us sheepishly. "On the day of the reception, I was shooting in Bangladesh. I came, ate and returned to my location."

We meet the 61 year-old at his South Kolkata residence, on one of those rare instances when he is between films. As he gets ready to meet us, we observe that even the artefacts in his drawing room are faithful representatives of his eccentricity—the doll he used in *Gudia* sits in one corner; a piano rests in another; a large-scale model of a Swatch wristwatch that he brought from Rome looks down from a wall; and a wide assortment of miniature Rajasthani artefacts occupy the otherwise minimal space.

Ghose greets us in his trademark plaid shirt tucked in jeans, complete with stubble and a warm smile. We

follow him to his study, crowded with books, magazines, cameras and files. The phone rings and before we can grimace, he requests his wife to answer it. And he finally takes a few moments off to talk about what he cannot get enough of: cinema. Excerpts from our conversation:



Your films, from *Mabhoomi* to *Moner Manush*, confront a stark reality. Why are you more drawn to such subjects?

We have embraced so-called globalisation. And yet India is not prepared for such radical change. It has caused huge disparity and civic disorder. We are concerned only with earning money. Our land, forests and rivers are being consumed by the so-called industrial revolution, leaving those who once lived there in a shambles. We live in an incredible, incurable,

complex country. Our democratic rights seem only to apply to a section of people. So the angst and anger are always there. But I am not a slogan-monger. I am a keen observer of what is happening and I express myself through my medium. For instance, in *Gudia*, I have tried to speak up against consumerism. Similarly *Dekha* is an allegorical film on our seen and unseen worlds.

You started your career making documentaries and still make them despite your successful innings in mainstream cinema. Why are you so drawn to documentaries?

I always feel a special thrill to leave home with a camera and roam around unknown, uncharted lands, confronting stark realities while exploring yet another socio-cultural aspect of the subcontinent. I am always struck by the same questions: Why is our country so incredible? Why is it so beautiful? Why is it so diverse? The diversity is, to me, the most fascinating aspect of India. That is what makes India so exciting, that it is full of contradiction, turmoil, and that it still lives on.

Your first documentary was *New Earth*, which you made in 1973. There were reports you almost drowned while shooting.

We got an assignment from the State Irrigation Department, for a film on the Kangsabati River. While filming the Kangsabati in spate, I was engrossed in capturing the fury of the river and I was almost swallowed up. Someone screamed from the shore and I instinctively threw everything into the river to scramble to safety.

When I looked back, the boulder I had been standing on was lost in the raging river. That documentary taught me many lessons—above all, how to confront reality with a camera and how to plan shots while filming.

Then came *Hungry Autumn*, during which we roamed through impoverished villages in West Bengal and recorded the exodus of people to Calcutta, in search of food and shelter. The documentary received many awards at international film festivals and created a lot of controversy at home because of its anti-establishment content [smiles].

But so did *Paar*, one of your most acclaimed works....

After *Dakhal* and *Grihayuddha* were released, I told my producers that I was not prepared to make another feature film. Then, a weekly publication began publishing terrifying stories from Bihar. So I decided to make a documentary on the land feuds there. After I returned from Bihar, I wanted to depict the caste feuds there through a feature film. So I decided to base *Paar* on an incredible short story by Samareesh Bose. The film is about a couple who run away from their village only to find their dignity trampled upon in the city. They begin looking for work and ultimately find a job taking a herd of pigs across a river. Crossing the river was a metaphor for human endurance.

Is it true that Naseeruddin Shah learnt to swim for his role of 'Naurangia' in *Paar*?

[Laughs] When I approached Naseer for the first time he didn't tell me he didn't know swimming. Imagine his passion as an actor! He immediately started to learn at the pool of the Sea Rock Hotel. But swimming in a hotel pool is nothing compared to swimming across a river in monsoon when the water is ferocious. He almost drowned in the river while shooting and lifesavers had to rescue



Ghose at home with the doll that played the central role in *Gudia*. The film explored the surreal relationship between a ventriloquist and his dummy

him from the turbulent Ganges. So the climax of the film was shot with great trepidation. Eventually, the film got many awards all over the world including the Silver Lion; Naseer, deservedly, got the Best Actor's Award at the Venice Film Festival, and back home both Naseer and Shabana won the National Award. In fact, when the film was screened in Tokyo, a Japanese lady said to me: "Mr Ghose, it's incredible the way you have projected human endurance..."

***Antarjali Jatra* must have been a test of your endurance....**

[Smiles] In 1829, the practice of *sati* was banned by Lord Bentinck. But it continued across Bengal and neighbouring areas. The burnings were conducted in complete secrecy, as *sati* was considered a divine act. This was the backdrop of *Antarjali Jatra*. A century later, when Roop Kanwar was forced onto the pyre of her husband in Rajasthan, the news made

headlines around the world. After that incident, the Censor Board became very tentative about films portraying *sati*. The Board stopped screenings of the film, saying the message of *Antarjali Jatra* might be misinterpreted by viewers. They felt there were elements in the film that glorified the ritual. But my intention was just the opposite. I arranged for a special screening to show the film to people who matter in the field of the arts and literature. All of them were vocal against the decision of the Censor Board. M J Akbar wrote about it in his editorial column, and writer Dibyendu Palit dubbed the decision an insult to the classic novel by Kamal Kumar Mazumder. Finally, the Censor Board passed the film.

You are always on the lookout for fresh themes. What came after *Antarjali* was so totally removed from it.

I was looking for inspiration from a new field of the arts—theatre, music, etc. So I planned a documentary on Utpal Dutta. Next, I got an assignment from NFDC in collaboration with the Sangeet Natak Akademi. They were planning to make documentaries on India's great musicians. From a list of musicians given to me, I chose Bismillah Khan—because in the beginning of any project, we utter the word 'Bismillah' as do the Mohammedans. After that, I made a documentary on Kanika Bandopadhyay. I fondly named it *Mohar*, as she was christened by Rabindranath Tagore. She had lived in Santiniketan all her life and called herself an *ash-ram balika*.

You also made some teleserials. Why did you stop that?

I started work on the first-ever sponsored teleserial in West Bengal. It was called *Bangla Golpo Bichitra*. Unfortunately, I could only finish three episodes. They started telecasting the whole thing in such a way that I had to churn out an episode every day and this was not my cup of tea.

Your first feature film *Mabhoomi* (1980) on the Telangana Rebellion must have been especially difficult, as you were directing a film in a language totally unfamiliar to you. What was that like?

When G Rabindranath, producer of Mrinal Sen's *Mrigaya*, and P Narsingh Rao, approached me to make a feature film in Andhra Pradesh on the struggle of the Telangana peasants, I rubbed my eyes in disbelief. I developed a script based on a short novel by Kishenchander, *Jab Kshet Jagey*, about a Telangana peasant uprising in the 1940s. I travelled extensively in Telangana with Partho Banerjee, my script and dialogue collaborator, P Narsingh Rao and Pran Rao, to meet people who had participated in

"I am always struck by the same questions: Why is our country so incredible? Why is it so diverse? The diversity is what makes India so exciting. That it is full of contradiction, turmoil, and that it still lives on"

the struggle. With a small budget and large canvas, *Mabhoomi* taught me lessons in every aspect of filmmaking. The box-office success was unexpected. Critics described it as a new dawn in Telugu cinema. After *Mabhoomi*, I was flooded with offers from Telugu producers but I wanted to return to West Bengal to make feature films in my own language. I wrote a script based on a complex novel by Samareesh Bose, *Sreemati Café—Café De La Sreemati*, keeping then matinee idol Uttam Kumar in mind for the role. Unfortunately, the project didn't take off because of the sudden demise of Bengal's all-time favourite hero.

Among all your films, *Patang* is the only one that does not express your angst but rather provides a note of hope and affirmation.

Patang was based on the real-life story of a boy and his mother, a dream nipped in the bud owing to poverty and the nexus between local administration and mafia. The entire industry asked me not to risk shooting in Gaya [Bihar], a place infested with notorious people. I had the safety of stars like Naseeruddin Shah, Shabana Azmi, Om Puri and Mohan Agashe to worry about. But I took the risk and made the film.

That's a long journey you have covered for someone who never thought much of cinema.

As a child, I had no interest in cinema. I was preoccupied with magic and sports. Perhaps the world of magic, at a subconscious level, triggered my passion for magic in motion: cinema. I grew up in a family where even the pet was culturally exposed. My father was a professor of English literature. My uncles were musicians and my mother too was an ardent connoisseur of all forms of art. Even the games we played were culturally stimulating. Music, acting, recitation, debate were all part of our leisure activities. We were all exposed to different religions and festivals, and never raised as frogs in a well; our parents wanted us to grow in a culturally charged environment that was not blindfolded by superstition, or polluted by the stench of murky politics and infamy.

And of course you enjoy cooking?

[Smiles] You know if you ask a *Bangla*, as people of Bangladesh are called fondly, about cooking, the answer is, 'To us the first thing for life is cooking,' all kinds of food. I personally enjoy cooking. I remember, director Harisadhan Dasgupta once told me that an efficient cook is like an efficient filmmaker who has the perfect sense of proportion. ✨



Sentinel in the sea

Janjira Fort in the middle of the Arabian Sea is as formidable today as it was 600 years ago when it was built. Author **Shashi Deshpande** braved a choppy sea to get there and found history waiting for her on the other side



Three hundred years of colonial rule have so cut us off from most of the world, except Britain, that the present wave of globalisation seems a new phenomenon. But our entire western coast is dotted with reminders of earlier

contacts with the world, mainly with those who came to trade—this, even before the Europeans arrived. One of the important relics of the maritime history of India is the island fort of Janjira. Its fascinating and little-known story, as well as its proximity to Mumbai (a mere five-hour drive) make us decide to visit the place.

Our destination is Murud in Raigad district. One can get there by boat as well, but we travel by car, taking the Goa highway, going past Wadkal Naka (the breakfast halt) where we get off the highway, and then past Alibaug. After Alibaug the road becomes more interesting as it winds round the hills. Now, there's

FORT LORE

In the 15th century, the local fisherfolk took permission from the Nizam's *thanedar* (general) and built a wooden fort on a large rock in the sea to keep a watch on pirates. When the headman of the fisherfolk later started asserting his might, the Nizam sent one of his commanders, Piramkhan, to the fort. Piramkhan imprisoned the fishermen. He was later succeeded by Burhankhan who demolished the wooden fort and built a stone fort in its place between 1567 and 1571 and named it Mehroob.

a whiff of the sea and we get occasional glimpses of it. And then comes Murud. A fishing village at one time, perhaps, but now something a little more than that, though clearly not a madly popular tourist destination.

Our resort, we find with pleasure, is beautifully located. We have only to descend a few steps to get to the beach. It is high tide when we get there, and the purring of the incoming waves is a pleasing sound. But we decide to explore the town first. Stepping outside the gate, we find we have to walk in single file on the few inches of space given to pedestrians, while buses and trucks thunder past us. We give up and go to the beach, which is quiet, almost like a private beach. And peaceful, something we do not expect in a place so close to Mumbai. Post-monsoon (the best time to be here), the sea is well-behaved, its monsoon unruliness a thing of the past. Nevertheless, there are no swimmers, not even the locals. And no hawkers,

(From top) Visitors on board the ferry warily eye the steps at the alighting point; pirates no longer attack the Janjira Fort but its rusty cannons still keep a silent watch; the freshwater pond inside the fort is an unexplained mystery





either. It is now low tide and we can see that the sea has ebbed a long distance, leaving stretches of glistening wet sand. There is a pony offering rides to kids and a horse-driven little carriage that goes jingling up and down, the bells playing a gay tune as the pony trots across the beach. We watch the sunset, always the most spectacular show on earth, and end the day looking forward to tomorrow and Janjira Fort. Once again we drive through winding roads as we make for Rajapuri jetty, from where we take the boat for Janjira. As we walk to the jetty through a narrow lane, we are only a few inches away from houses on either side; but, though the doors are open, scarcely anyone turns to look at us as we go past. Obviously they are used to tourists. But our co-passengers must be locals, for they get into the boat, a very basic sailing boat, with the ease of veterans, while we struggle to find comfort on the narrow wet planks. Suddenly there is a buzz and we see the fort. We know it is an island fort but we are not prepared for the astonishing sight of it, rising, like an offering, from the sea. That it is built on rock comes painfully home to us when we have to land. No soft landing, this. Because of the rock, the boat can't get too near and we have to leap off it on to the rock. There is a man waiting below to help

the old and the faint-hearted. "My *bhai*," the boatman remarks; he is also to be our guide. "Follow me," the *bhai* says and we follow him up the steep slope of the rock and into the fort.

Janjira Fort has a long and strange history. Some say that it was built by the Kolis, others that it was built by Siddi Johar in the 12th century. The Siddis are Abyssinian Muslims who came as traders, some of whom settled in India along the coast. The guide's story does not tell us why they stayed on, why they needed to fortify themselves and how they got enough money to build this fort. Whatever it is, in time they established their presence on the coast and became part of the tumultuous history of this part of India.

The fort is mostly in ruins now, but we are shown the rusty cannons, the lookout apertures that enabled the inhabitants to see anything approaching and, the greatest miracle, a large freshwater well, which made living possible here. It is tiring going up and down among the broken walls and slippery slopes, but when we get to the top, we have a wonderful view of the sea. While the guide tells us about the existence of a tunnel under the

NAME GAME

The word Janjira is not native to India, and may have originated after the Arabic word *Jazeera*, which means an island. Similarly, the Marathi word *Habshi* is thought to be a corruption of Abyssinian. Murud was once known in Marathi as Habsan, or Abyssinian's land.

sea and a concealed backdoor escape route, I think of the miracle of the monsoon winds that brought ships and people from various lands as traders, adventurers and colonisers, some of whom stayed on and became a part of this country. Like Malik Amber, the most famous Siddi of all, who strengthened the Janjira Fort and rose from being a slave to becoming the regent of Ahmednagar. He had perfected the art of guerrilla warfare even before Shivaji and defeated both the mighty Mughals and the Bijapur king at the battle of Bhatvadi in 1624.

The guide's patter seems to consist more of legend than facts, but he is right in emphasising the power of the Siddis, who at one time were, a historian says, the strongest active power



FACT FILE

GETTING THERE

By road: Murud is 165 km away from Mumbai. State transport buses operate from Mumbai Central to Murud's Durbar Road. The most convenient way to get to Murud-Janjira is by ferry or catamaran from Gateway of India.
By rail: Trains will get you as far as Roha and Panvel from where you can take a bus to Murud.

WHERE TO STAY

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 Cell: 919423377247/
 919833667985/919322267984
 Email: info@seashellmurud.com
 AC ₹ 3000 + taxes
 NON AC ₹ 2500 + taxes

The majestic ramparts rising from the sea

on the Konkan coast. The guide is right too when he says the fort was never conquered. The Dutch, the Portuguese, the British—they all failed. Even Shivaji could not conquer it. His son, Sambhaji, after successive failures, built another fort, Padmadurg, across the sea. Bajirao Peshwa too failed, though he captured a great deal of Siddi lands in Raigad district. Strangely, while all the other powers have now vanished, the Nawab of Janjira (at some time, a Siddi chief metamorphosed into the Nawab) still has his palace in Murud. (Out of bounds to tourists, unfortunately.)

Two hours are not enough to see the whole fort; you need two days, the guide says. But another boatload of tourists is coming in, it is time to leave. This is our last evening and we

have promised ourselves a ride in the *ghoda-gadi*. It is a wonderful experience riding in the carriage to the accompaniment of the gay jingling bells, the tiny sound somehow making itself heard above the resonance of the waves.

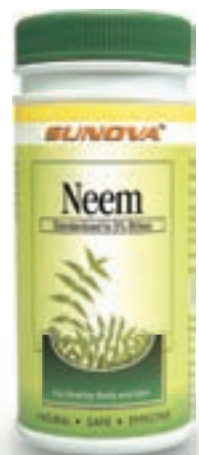
We walk back to our resort, leaving the susurrating murmur of the waves behind us, softened and muted by the surrounding silence. In the resort, there are families everywhere, adults relaxing over drinks, children running about. Fairy lights strung along the paths have been switched on; the place looks enchanting, the people transformed. It is peaceful and relaxed. A great place, we agree, for a weekend stay, combining relaxation and a slice of not-much-known-history of the country in equal measure.



Winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award, Shashi Deshpande lives in Bengaluru

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Chemistry of ART

Hemant Patil

Khursheed Dinshaw meets a silver who has decoded the creative formula of chemicals

After retiring as an industrialist a decade ago, Subhash Sancheti took up painting. While that may not sound extraordinary enough as a hobby, his choice of medium is anything but run of the mill: the 75 year-old paints with chemicals. "When I retired I used to be holed up in my studio for eight hours where I experimented with 100-odd chemicals and came up with four that could produce startling colours when used with oil colour," says the Pune-based silver who paints on mica, tile and acrylic-coated sheets.

Sancheti calls his paintings—he has 2,000 to his credit—chemical capillary action paintings. He doesn't use a brush, preferring to use his bare hands, threads and a shaving blade. His fingers move as quickly as his mind; all he needs is an hour-and-a-half to finish a 4 ft × 16 ft painting, while miniatures of 6 mm × 8 mm are over and done with in less than two minutes. It's fascinating to watch Sancheti at work as he applies pressure on the

canvas with his fingers, and then slides and lifts them to create areas of shadows, depth and lightness. "I don't plan my works beforehand," he tells us. "I develop the colour combinations after they flow on the base."

ART

All his paintings are stored in plastic bags in his cupboards. At the time of his exhibitions—four so far—he frames them. In June, his works were shown on Marathi television channel, Sahyadri TV. Ten years ago, when he started out as an artist, students from the Film and Television Institute of India shot a 10-minute documentary on his art.

However, for Sancheti, painting is more than an act of creative release. "Each colour has its own significance," he says. "Art is akin to meditation. To bond with it one should turn off all social, religious and moral barbed wires." His personal succour is a painting he made some time ago depicting the symbol of *Om*. "It has a spiritual quality and I feel it leads me to the right answers when I am going through a bad patch."

Behind the mask



Recently Chavara Parukutty became the first female Kathakali artist to have completed 50 years in a male-dominated sphere. Outspoken and inspiring, she tells **Nisary Mahesh** how she danced her way to fame in a man's world

Chavara Parukutty is a picture of quiet triumph. Her pride isn't glaring, yet tangible—and rightfully earned. Parukutty first stepped onto the stage as a Kathakali artist at a time when women were more content being a part of the audience. And though many women followed her footsteps, very few held onto the firmament for as long as she did. Recently, Parukutty completed 50 years as a Kathakali artist, the longest any female artist has persevered in the field.

An inspiration for many Kathakali aspirants, Parukutty credits her success entirely to one man: "I owe everything to my father, Sankaran Achari. He was a goldsmith but an ardent connoisseur of all art forms." Besides her father's en-

DANCE

couragement, she admits destiny too played a key role. As a child, her spontaneous dance performance in school impressed her teacher so deeply he decided to tutor her without any fee. Parukutty joined her school troupe and began enacting minor roles in dance dramas. At 16, at her father's request, Kathakali master Mudavilakad Gopala Paniker offered to teach her. "I couldn't distinguish between Kathakali and other art forms," she confesses. "But Paniker Master infused a lot of confidence in me." Later, she also received training from legends Poruvazhi Gopala Pillai Asan and Mamkuda Vishnu Namboothiri.

"Breaking into an all-male citadel was no cakewalk," says Parukutty as she recollects her early days of hardship. "People were critical and openly expressed doubts about



Photographs by Haksar RK

whether women could do justice while handling macho characters like Duryodhana. Men thought the emotionally challenging parts were unsuitable for women.”

It took courage to go after her dream. In 1958, she joined Krishnavilasom Kathakali Yogam in Kollam, an experience she remembers with great warmth. “We were like one large family,” she recalls. “My stint with them brought me wonderful performance opportunities.” Parukutty had her first significant break in 1960, when she performed with the troupe in Delhi. There was no looking back. A spate of other performances followed—in Mumbai and Chennai.

However, like many women artists, she took a break from her career after marriage. Unfortunately, the relationship was short-lived, and after bearing a child, she returned to her career. Parukutty admits the rigorous and extensive training process involved in being a Kathakali artist can be daunting for women. “Very often, the performances last all night and one is too tired to cope with the domestic chores

that a married woman is expected to do at home for her husband and children,” she explains, quickly adding, “It’s tiring but I enjoy the challenge.”

At 67, she spends six hours tutoring her students every day at her dance school, Kerala Natya Dhara, which she started in 2003 in Shankaramangalam. (At present, nearly 350 students are being trained in different performing arts at the school.) Parukutty’s daughter Dhanya is a graduate in Bharatanatyam from Kerala Kalamandalam and is working as a dance teacher in Coimbatore. “She has been immensely supportive, especially as my critic,” she tells us with a smile. “Now that she is on her own, I can dedicate all my time to Kathakali.”

For someone who has delivered over 1,500 performances, Parukutty sounds hungry for more. Her greatest dream is to perform for an international audience. And the feminist in her is unapologetic about her ambition: “A woman can do anything that a man can. Kathakali is no exception.”

DANCE OF SURVIVAL

The late Bharatanatyam dancer Mohan Khokhar spent his entire life documenting and archiving Indian dance history and turning his house in Delhi into a repository for his collection of photographs, sketches, costumes, films, recordings, and paintings. Khokhar also hoped till his last breath to find a home for his collectibles. Though the government could do well by sanctioning a museum, Khokhar's son, dance critic Ashwin Khokhar, is trying to introduce the world to the precious memorabilia. Recently he conceptualised the exposition



A Century of Indian Dance: 1901-2000, organised by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in Delhi. The exhibition, also called the national launch of the 'Mohan Khokhar Dance Collection', showcased everything associated with dance, and included dance forms represented on firecracker boxes, calendars, sketches and textile paintings. None of it is digitised. And like his father, Ashwin too is searching for a place to store it, though right now it's occupying significant space in his home in Chennai. Hope burns bright—and so does the prospect of loss; the collection is slated to be exhibited in New York and Paris. With appreciation for Indian art abroad at an all-time high, one wouldn't be surprised if Khokhar's dream finds a nest far away from his motherland.



Ivory's trumpet

Though ivory or *haathi dant* (elephant's tusk) was used extensively earlier to fashion jewellery and accessories, the ban on inlay work of ivory introduced under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 saw ivory receding from the shelves. And though this was good news for tusk-ers, the artisans earning a living from ivory inlay work had to work hard to keep their heads over water. The Wooden Handicrafts Centre (WHC) in Boothgarh at Hoshiarpur, Pun-

jab, is now striving to bring about a change in their fortunes. The WHC regularly showcases works of artisans in international exhibitions and often receives visitors from abroad keen on studying the art. Officials at the centre are also working hard to train young men and women in the art to save it from extinction. Of course, it no longer involves a precious piece of the pachyderm—inlay is now strictly confined to acrylic plastic inserts on wood.

HOLY EXHIBITS

MUMBAI, THE CITY KNOWN FOR ITS MULTICULTURAL VIBRANCY, WILL NOW UNVEIL ITS FIRST MUSEUM OF CHRISTIAN ART. THE 2,000-SQ-FT MUSEUM IS SCHEDULED TO OPEN THIS MONTH AT THE ST PIUS SEMINARY IN SUBURBAN GOREGAON, AND WILL INITIALLY FEATURE 150 EXHIBITS INCLUDING A 200 YEAR-OLD CHURCH ALTAR, CHURCH SILVER, STATUES OF SAINTS AND THE HEADDRESS WORN BY A PAST POPE. THE MUSEUM WILL ALSO HAVE AN AMPHITHEATRE WHERE YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ARTEFACTS THROUGH AN AUDIOVISUAL FACILITY. BESIDES THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION, THERE WILL ALSO BE A TEMPORARY EXHIBITION TO SHOWCASE DIFFERENT EXHIBITS AROUND THE YEAR.

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*Snatch thy money from the purse of Time!
Like Omar, come down from thy camel!
Beware of incurring obligations, beware!
How long wilt thou sue for office
And ride like children on a woman's back?
A nature that fixes its gaze on the sky
Becomes debased by receiving benefits.
By asking, poverty is made more abject;
By begging, the beggar is made poorer.
Asking disintegrates the Self
And deprives of illumination the
Sinai-bush of the Self.
Do not scatter thy handful of dust;
Like the moon, scrape food from thine own side!
Albeit thou art poor and wretched*

*And overwhelmed by affliction,
Seek not thy daily bread
from the bounty of another,
Seek not waves of water
from the fountain of the sun,
Lest thou be put to shame before the Prophet
On the Day when every soul
shall be stricken with fear.*

Asrār-i Khudī by the great Pakistani poet Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) was translated by English orientalist Reynold A Nicholson in 1915 as *The Secrets of the Self*. It is modelled on the style of *Masnavi* written by Sufi saint Rumi. Unlike Hindu philosophers, who addressed the head while explaining the doctrine of the unity of being, Iqbal, like all Persian poets, imparts the same doctrine, aiming it at the heart. Here is a poem that urges us to keep our head high amid penury....

*Thou who hast gathered taxes from lions,
Thy need hath caused thee
to become a fox in disposition.*

*Thy maladies are the result of indigence:
This disease is the source of thy pain.
It is robbing thine high thoughts of their dignity
And putting out the light of thy noble imagination.
Quaff rosy wine from the jar of existence!*

*The moon gets sustenance from the table of the sun
And bears the brand of his bounty on her heart.
Pray God for courage! Wrestle with Fortune!
Do not sully the honour of the pure religion!
He who swept the rubbish of idols out of the Ka'ba
Said that God loves a man that earns his living.
Woe to him that accepts bounty from another's table
And lets his neck be bent with benefits!
He hath consumed himself
with the lightning of the favours bestowed on him,
He hath sold his honour for a paltry coin.
Happy the man who thirsting in the sun
Does not crave of Khizr a cup of water!
His brow is not moist with the shame of beggary;
He is a man still, not a piece of clay.
That noble youth walks under heaven
With his head erect like the pine.
Are his hands empty? The more is he master of himself.
Do his fortunes languish? The more alert is he.*

*The beggar's wallet is like a boat tossing in waves of fire;
Sweet is a little dew gathered by one's own hand.
Be a man of honour, and like the bubble
Keep thy cup inverted even in the midst of the sea!*



Of writing and solitude

Every writer screams for a little space inside his mind, says **Keki Daruwalla**

The written word is pretty fastidious; something like the proverbial dainty cat that would not wet its feet. I am obviously talking of creative writing, whether poetry, drama or stories. Of course, journalism invents words by the bushel, by the wagon, and I am sorry to say by the garbage heap, heap upon heap.

The trouble about the word is it needs a little quiet. A small slice of silence wouldn't do any harm to anyone, but it is so hard to get. You can get gold at some price but, pal, silence just ain't possible. You can't get it for love or money, not even by bartering a G-2 licence handed over to you across a greasy palm. I am not just talking of noise, though God knows we have more than our share. God does know, for even he sitting in the sky hears it—our motor horns squeaking or blaring away. When cars cross a red traffic light, they are the noisiest; for they warn not just the world but the cosmos that they're goin' through chum, like it or not, and anyone coming in the way does so at his peril. The car horn at a green traffic light is a gentler, nervous, nudging honk telling the car in front to get past before the light switches to red. A metro line has come almost right above my flat now. It is not too noisy but when I said this to my granddaughter, she told her mother, "The metro there must be really loud, if Grandpa can hear it." This set me thinking. If the city noise is too much for the semi-deaf like me, what must it be for those with their eardrums intact?

I am not talking of this noise alone. There is the other terrible noise, the avalanche of events and speeches that comes through the morning papers. Some Norwegian kills his own people because they tolerated other people. You think about his logic. Your attention turns to the Arab spring. How many have been killed by Assad's tanks and machine guns in Syria today, with protesters dying by tens and fifties in Hama, Holms and even Aleppo, a city as old as Constantinople? I have tasted the kebabs of Aleppo, and though slightly bland for our spice-besotted taste-buds, they were magnificent. The minority Alawis are in power there and the army, consisting mostly of Alawis, is slaughtering Sunnis. Syria needs a National Commission for the majority!

Stories of blood leave a hangover worse than whiskey. Newspapers are full of battles against Gaddafi; suicide bombers in Afghanistan; and Sunnis bombing an amalgam of Shia shrine-and-pilgrims in that Arcadian terrorist haven that goes by the name of Pakistan. Lovely place this Pakistan, with an exceedingly honest president called Zardari, a mild-as-a-Franciscan-monk ISI and an austere foreign minister who is known for her pristine simplicity in attire and handbags.

The trouble with writing is you can't lock the world out. Even the Internet is full of spam, the cell phone full of unwanted calls and messages. Our world is turning into bedlam. A writer will have to be like those *rishi* of old—

move into the Himalaya, Gangotri or Badrinath or the Nubra valley. Spiti would be a wonderful place to go also, though a month later you would feel like getting back to the world. Solitude overtakes everyone with age. Fledglings fly away, as they should. Spouses part; one has to go before the other.

We are talking of space, a story or a poem is basically a thought process. The idea behind it is at times not crystal clear till you reach the end. Yet a general direction is laid out by the subconscious. But you need to be with yourself. That is solitude, which does not mean a hut in a high pasture. Solitude also means you are not invaded by too many extraneous inputs, calls or a hangover of a bloody scene witnessed on the TV screen or read about in the morning paper.

Why on earth do you need solitude, you'll ask? Because a fiction writer reshapes reality. (Some of our reporters do the same though!) As it is, as Orhan Pamuk says, "Reality is a slippery thing." Hindu philosophers dubbed reality as *maya*, illusion. And yet, reality becomes bloody real if a truck hits you, or if the Income Tax raids your house. The storyteller's reality is of the imagination, as he or she manoeuvres character and event according to his artistic conception. The writer needs some elbow room, which translates to space and some silence.



Poet and author Keki N Daruwalla, 74, lives in Delhi. His latest release, *Love Across the Salt Desert* (Penguin; ₹ 299; 230 pages) is a selection of short stories from his acclaimed oeuvre

The wise clown

In the preface to **THE TIMES OF MY LIFE** (Tranquebar; ₹ 495; 340 pages), author and noted journalist **Jug Suraiya** urges us to not read the book in one sitting and treat it with a respectable measure of contempt. Suraiya uses the remaining bulk of the book to prove why we shouldn't take him seriously. At various points, he calls himself a verbal hooker, a two-rupee liberal, a thief, and even the court jester who farts behind the throne. This disarming self-deprecation is the book's greatest strength.

Suraiya remains in chatty mode right till the last word, as he takes us back to his days in the *Junior Statesman*, the youth magazine of *The Statesman*, and then his long stint in *The Times of India* in which he wrote a sneering weekly column that first introduced 'Hinglish' in the newspaper known for



its stiff British upper lip. He doesn't bother with niceties when he reminisces about former distinguished colleagues—or for that matter, friends and relatives. (His recollections of his first meeting with the now venerable editor M J Akbar who was then a teenager in uniform shorts is bound to have your lips curling up at the corners.) The sarcasm and humour bubble and tumble out of every page as we get to know his wife, his mother,

JUG'S TAKE

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of humour

Delhi Belly and Other Misadventures in the Middle Kingdom (Rupa, 1991)

A Taste for the Jugular (Rupa, 1994)

The Great Indian Bores (UBSPD, 1996)

Juggling Act (Times Group Books, 2005)

A Tika for Jung Bahadur (Times Group Books, 2006)

his mother-in-law and even his fruit vendor at Masudpur Mandi in Delhi where he lived in a DDA flat flummoxed by perennial water shortage. The book has its moments of profundity though—especially when Suraiya talks about the injustices we wreak on animals and each other, and the deceit among politicians and commoners. Read. Laugh. Think.

—Rajashree Balaram



When we won

In all the angst and anguish we have faced as a nation in the past couple of years, there has been one shining moment that brought us all together in a collective outpouring of joy: our victory in the Cricket World Cup finals on 2 April 2011. In **CHAMPIONS: HOW THE WORLD CUP WAS WON** (Harper Sport; ₹ 599; 145 pages), **Suresh Menon** recaptures the euphoria while chronicling our road to the win. From scorecards to strategic moves; details of every run scored and wicket taken; the roles of the captain, coach, stalwarts and young Turks; there's no aspect of the rollercoaster ride he leaves untouched. And the pictures underline each moment on the pitch, taking us back to the days when we as a nation were glued to our TV sets in hope and anticipation. "The 1983 win showed that 'we can'; this one, that 'we must win,'" writes Menon. A tribute to what we can achieve when we choose to believe.

—Radhika Raje

ONE FOR KEEPS

The Illustrated History of Indian Cricket by Boria Majumdar (Rupa; ₹ 1,295): Celebrate India's love of the sport with this pictorial feast. The highs and lows, agony and ecstasy...it's all there. Open the pages and soak in the experience.



Oh, Calcutta!

One set of characters, myriad situations. That's the premise of **Gautam Benegal's 1/7 BONDEL ROAD** (Wisdom Tree; ₹ 195; 123 pages), a collection of short stories set in the 1970s in Calcutta that feature a single protagonist, Tutul. The epitome of a child whose incorruptibility is evident by his thinking and perception of the world, he views the behaviour of his family—artist-father, teacher-mother, didactic brother who sees Tutul as a latent sociopath—friends, neighbours and teachers through his own prism. The family moves through 10 spectacularly sketched scenarios that detail, in their own way, the churn of the times: the march of Communism; the crashing of industries; flooding; people fleeing from cities. What makes their telling unique is that each situation is captured through a child's point of view. For instance, in "The Bread Hunters", Tutul, his brother and a local boy take off in a raft in the floods to look for bread. In this and other stories, Benegal mixes irony, humour and political commentary effortlessly. Making the read even more compelling are the illustrations in mixed media made with charcoal, crow quill pen and ink on wet paper with a wash. Enchanting.

—Radhika Raje

Beyond the body

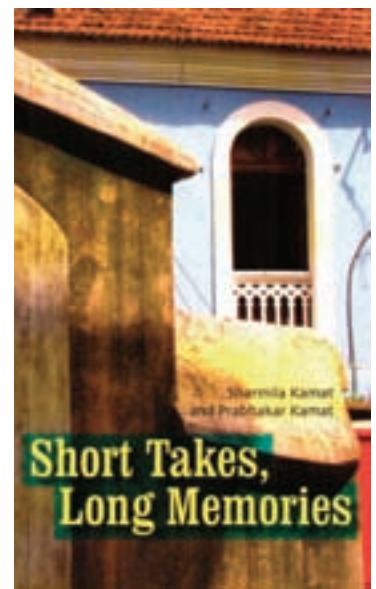
Eminent Sanskrit scholar **A N D Haksar** doesn't want the world blushing anymore at the mention of the *Kama Sutra*, Vatsyayana's ancient treatise, which is widely considered to be devoted to human sexual behaviour. Haksar's recent translated version **KAMA SUTRA: A GUIDE TO THE ART OF PLEASURE** (Penguin Classics; 240 pages; about ₹ 1,100) clears more than a few myths associated with one of the most widely sought-after texts in the world. While the mind instantly conjures complex

copulatory positions when one thinks of the *Kama Sutra*, Haksar's translated version throws light on the six other sections of the book that have been so far relegated to the margins: courtship, marriage, polygamy, life in a harem, extramarital affairs and aphrodisiacs. The former diplomat emphasises that the 2,000 year-old treatise was as much about social relations between men and women as their baser urges. And by the way, the original did not have any erotic illustrations on sexual positions.



Goan rhapsody

A retired IAS officer and diplomat from Goa brings us an insightful book on the state. **Prabhakar Kamat's SHORT TAKES, LONG MEMORIES** (Rupa; ₹ 195; 185 pages) guides us away from the beaches and shimmering sunsets to the quirky habits, cuisine and colourful history of the state—chiefly its transition from a Portuguese colony to a legitimate part of the Indian democracy. The book is endearing as much for the warmth with which Goa comes alive in its pages as for its authorship: Kamat has co-written the book with his daughter Sharmila.



One God fits all

Your religion urges you to build bridges not fences, says **Ralph Waldo Trine**

Christ was one of the greatest heretics the world has ever known. He allowed himself to be bound by no established or orthodox teachings or beliefs. Christ is pre-eminently a type of the universal. He allowed himself to be bound by nothing. He was absolutely universal and as a consequence taught not for his own particular day, but for all time. This mighty truth which we have agreed upon as the great central fact of human life is the golden thread that runs through all religions. When we make it the paramount fact in our lives we will find that minor differences, narrow prejudices, and all these laughable absurdities will so fall away by virtue of their very insignificance, that a Jew can worship equally as well in a Catholic cathedral, a Catholic in a Jewish synagogue, a Buddhist in a Christian church, a Christian in a Buddhist temple. Or all can worship equally well about their own hearthstones, or out on the hillside, or while pursuing the avocations of everyday life. For true worship, only God and the human soul are necessary. It does not depend upon times, or seasons, or occasions.

The sacred books, the inspired writings, all come from the same source—God. God speaking through the souls of those who open themselves that He may thus speak. Some may be more inspired than others. It depends entirely on the relative degree that this one or that one opens himself to the Divine voice. Says one of the inspired writers in the Hebrew scriptures, “Wisdom is the breath of the power of God, and in all ages entering into holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets”. Let us not be among the number so dwarfed, so



Let us not be among
the number so dwarfed,
so bigoted as to think
that the Infinite God
has revealed Himself
to one little handful
of His children

limited, so bigoted as to think that the Infinite God has revealed Himself to one little handful of His children, in one little quarter of the globe, and at one particular period of time. This isn't the pattern by which God works. Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that revereth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him, says the Christian Bible.

When we fully realise this truth we will then see that it makes but little difference what particular form of religion one holds to, but it does make a tremendous difference how true he

is to the vital principles of this one. In the degree that we love self less and love truth more, in that degree will we care less about converting people to our particular way of thinking, but all the more will we care to aid them in coming into the full realisation of truth through the channels best adapted to them. The doctrine of our master, says the Chinese, consisted solely in integrity of heart. We will find as we search that this is the doctrine of everyone who is at all worthy of the name of master.... The moment we lose sight of this great fact we depart from the real, vital spirit of true religion and allow ourselves to be limited and bound by form. In the degree that we do this we build fences around ourselves, which keep others away from us, and which also prevent our coming into the realisation of universal truth; there is nothing worthy in the name of truth that is not universal.

It was Tennyson who said, “I dreamed that stone by stone I reared a sacred fane, a temple, neither pagoda, mosque, nor church, but loftier, simpler, always open-doored to every breath from heaven, and Truth and Peace and Love and Justice came and dwelt therein.” Religion in its true sense is the most joyous thing the human soul can know, and when the real religion is realised, we will find that it will be an agent of peace, of joy, and of happiness, and never an agent of gloomy, long-faced sadness. It will then be attractive to all and repulsive to none. Adequacy for life, adequacy for everyday life here and now, must be the test of all true religion. If it does not bear this test, then it simply is not religion.

Extracted from In Tune With The Infinite (1910) by Ralph Waldo Trine, a mystic, philosopher and author, and one of the early flag-bearers of the New Thought Movement. His seminal work In Tune With The Infinite sold over 2 million copies

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Crusade of CONSCIENCE

The greatest global movement against violation of human rights began 50 years ago as a modest letter-writing campaign. Amnesty International (AI), an international non-government organisation, began as an inflamed idea in July 1961 in London when Peter Benenson, an English lawyer and writer, read a newspaper report about two Portuguese students who were sentenced to seven years in prison for raising a toast to freedom; this happened during the autocratic regime of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar. At that time, Portugal was the last remaining European colonial power in Africa.

The incensed Benenson wrote an article "The Forgotten Prisoners," in *The Observer* newspaper, asking readers to write letters expressing solidarity towards the students. AI was founded to coordinate such letter-writing campaigns. The response gained the force of a juggernaut, and within a year thousands of letter-writer groups



were formed in various countries. Today Amnesty has over 3 million supporters, members and activists in 150 countries and territories around the world, who don't just scream themselves hoarse against brutal injustices and human rights violations, but work equally hard to garner public opinion to put pressure on governments complicit in such violations. As of now, they are campaigning for—besides hundreds of other issues—abolition of the death penalty; reinvestigation of CIA torture cases closed by the US government; protest against public flogging of people accused of adultery; and abusive practices as part of anti-terror laws in India. AI won the Nobel Prize for peace in 1977 for its tireless campaign against human torture, and the United Nations Prize in the field of human rights in 1978. A minor point worth noting: Indian-born Salil Shetty is the present secretary general of AI.

THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: SEPTEMBER 1961

- On 3 September, Afghanistan sealed its side of the border with Pakistan as a result of the Pakhunistan dispute.
- On 5 September, skyjacking, the act of hijacking an airplane, was made a federal crime by the US, punishable by 20 years to life in prison, and, in some cases, execution. The law also provided a penalty of \$ 1,000 for illegally carrying a concealed weapon onto an aircraft.
- On 26 September, FIFA's (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) annual conference formally suspended the Football Association of South Africa.

“It ain't no sin if you crack a few laws now and then, just so long as you don't break any.

—Mae West

omega male

n. The man who is least likely to take on a dominant role in a social or professional situation.

Example: These **omega male** partners of 'breadwinner wives' are exactly the people who are transforming the gender dynamics of family and spurring a revolution in engaged fatherhood. In fact, the much-maligned qualities that qualify men as omega males—an apparent absence of testosterone, a childlike affinity for fun, a surplus of disposable time—are exactly the qualities that can transform men into remarkable fathers.

—Christopher Shulgan, “The daddy shift: How ‘slackers’ can make pretty good fathers”, *The Globe and Mail*, 17 June 2011

bacn

n. Non-personal, non-spam email messages that you have signed up for, but do not necessarily want or have time to read.

Example: The smart labels feature essentially focuses on **bacn**, that brand of email that people subscribe to and generally want to read—but don't have time for right now. Think bank statements, neighbourhood newsletters, airline frequent flier programme updates and targeted advertisements from stores where you actually shop.

—John D Sutter, “Google ‘smart labels’ aim to de-stress email”, *CNN*, 9 March 2011

elderburbia

n. Suburbs that have a predominantly elderly population.

Example: In **Elderburbia**—a term coined by cultural anthropologist Philip B Stafford, and the title of his book on the challenges of ageing in place—the way houses and neighbourhoods were built in the 1950s, '60s and '70s isolates people as they age.

—“Elderburbia: Suburban sprawl isolates our ageing population”, *The Post-Standard*, 8 June 2011



BUZZ

Drum maaro drum

Can't resist drumming your fingers on any surface every time you hear a song? The Delhi Drum Circle is just the place for you. A group of music lovers from various countries meet every second Saturday at Deer Park in Hauz Khas to play a wide assortment of musical instruments—mainly hand-drums such as West African djembes, didgeridoo, the Indian dhol and tabla, besides the shankh and the ghatam, to name a few. There are no hard and fast rules to do with age or ability; people from all walks of life, from age three and above, are free to join. The event invariably draws a fascinated crowd as strollers hover around to enjoy the exotic booming sounds. Thankfully, the gathered musicians are hardly bothered by the attention; you are also free to sway or gyrate to the rhythm. Though drum circles are common in the US, Singapore and Thailand, in India they are steadily raising a noise in Mumbai, Bengaluru and Delhi. Margot Biggs, an American writer, launched the Delhi Drum Circle on Facebook in 2009, starting with five members. Today, the circle has more than 1,000 members online! Join in. Or take your grandchild along if you want him or her to start drumming. Check out [Delhidrumcircle@groups.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/Delhidrumcircle/)

“I hope the little I am doing to level the city’s roads can make some difference”

Ishrat Ali Chunawala, 55, Mumbai, for filling up potholes voluntarily



Photographs by Huzefa Kaka

Amid the wide uproar against the government for the terrible condition of Mumbai’s roads, there is a simple hardworking man who prefers to tackle the problem than talk about it. Auto-rickshaw driver **Ishrat Ali Chunawala** was injured last year owing to one such crater-like pothole on the Mumbra-Thane road. “My auto turned upside down and I injured my collar bone,” the 55 year-old tells us. “I had to be home for six months to recuperate fully. I lost out on my earnings as well as my savings on medicines and surgery—all because of the negligence of the people responsible for taking care of the roads.” Since then, Chunawala has been on a mission to ensure that nobody goes through the same ordeal.

When complaints filed by him and the local auto-rickshaw association to the Thane Municipal Corporation went repeatedly unanswered, he decided to take matters in his

own hands by filling up potholes on his daily travel routes. “I see so many bikers falling and cars being damaged every day,” he says. “People have died in accidents because of the dangerously uneven roads.” To fill the potholes, this never-say-die silver carries special tar-based mud blocks discarded as waste by construction workers. He also picks up loose soil and small stones from construction sites. After stacking all these in his rickshaw he simply fills up every pothole he finds on his way with his ingenious brand of sealant. Sometimes the waste does not fit well into the grooves but Chunawala remains optimistic: “Initially, they may look unlevelled but after a couple of heavy vehicles ride over them, they start adapting to the shape of the pothole and become even. It may not be a smooth ride but at least it provides some measure of cushioning.” Chunawala is hopeful that, some day, bystanders join him in his efforts. “A lot can be altered in this city if we get together.”

—Radhika Raje

singlism

n. Workplace discrimination against employees who are single; the negative stereotyping of single people.

Example: The growing numbers of individuals marrying later or not marrying at all, combined with high divorce rates, have resulted in a growing number of adults who will live a considerable portion of their adult lives as singles. Despite this trend, recent empirical investigations suggest that singles face a particular form of stigma and discrimination, termed **singlism**.

—*"The stigma of 'Singlism': ever-single women's perceptions of their social environment"*, SAGE Insight, 22 June 2011

FIBRESHED

n. The region that produces the fibres and other raw materials for the clothing used by a person or family.

Example: If you've never heard the word **fibreshed** before, you aren't alone. It wasn't in the local lexicon until a year ago, when West Marin textile artist Rebecca Burgess made it up. Now, it's on the lips of the kind of environmentally conscious fashionistas who filled Toby's Feed Barn in Point Reyes Station this month for the first ever fibreshed fashion show.

—Paul Liberatore, *"West Marin textile artist is a fibreshed fashionista"*, Marin Independent Journal, 26 May 2011

last name effect

n. The closer a person's childhood surname is to the end of the alphabet, the faster that person tends to make purchase decisions.

Example: The last name effect is a continuum, researchers found. So a Rodriguez will buy quicker than a Garcia. Those with last names in the middle of the alphabet make purchases with middling speed.

—Gregory Karp, *"It's academic!"*, Chicago Tribune, 18 February 2011

HYDRAIL

n. A railway system that uses hydrogen fuel cell technology; a train powered by hydrogen fuel cells.

Example: Hydrogen trains, or **hyd rail**, are not subject to many of the barriers preventing the mass adoption of fuel cell transportation, and their deployment could provide a transportation infrastructure around which additional hydrogen and fuel cell applications may be built. The first hydrogen-powered train models are currently being demonstrated in Japan and Europe.

—*"Appalachian State University co-hosts International Hyd rail Conference in Spain"*, US States News, 14 April 2008

FILTER BUBBLE

n. Search results, recommendations, and other online data that have been filtered to match your interests, thus preventing you from seeing data outside of those interests.

Example: Those same kind of surprises don't seem to happen to me the same way with online information. In the digital world, I find myself tending toward existing in a self-selected **filter bubble**. It's the difference between getting too much of what I like and not enough of what I need.

—Kevin Griffin, *"Front: Your Former Vancouver Art Magazine"*, The Vancouver Sun, 24 June 2011

“When
love and
trust meet,
their ultimate
byproduct is
surrender.”

—Osho

teacup

n. A college student with a fragile, easily shattered psyche.

Example: Toughen up, **teacup**. No matter how brilliant you think you (and your argument) may be, the day will come when you will be told in no uncertain terms that you are laughably wrong. Will you cry? It's bad enough that the teacups think, feel and act as they do. That the rules of the law proof game are to encourage this teacup behaviour is absurd.

—Scott H. Greenfield, *"Law School Lessons: The Teacup Rule"*, Simple Justice, 4 May 2010

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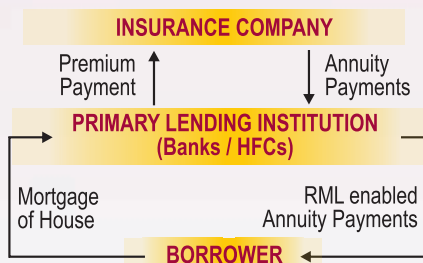
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Age	Property Value	LTV	Net Monthly RMLeA*
			Range
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65	1000000	60%	Rs. 2267 to Rs. 3987
70	1000000	60%	Rs. 2419 to Rs. 4816
75	1000000	70%	Rs. 3311 to Rs. 7166

* Net of Servicing Charges subject to detailed terms.

The above estimates are indicative and the actuals may vary depending upon the age of borrower, annuity options and other terms of the Primary Lending Institutions..

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