

harmony celebrate age

SEPTEMBER 2015 ₹ 40

The magazine for silver citizens



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WITH FILMMAKER
JAHNU BARUA

THE LEVER LEGACY
OF LAUGHTER WITH
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100

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Every Life Matters

We are the WORLD

Mark the date—25 September 2015 will be a red-letter day for the world.

On this day, the new Global Goals will be unveiled at the United Nations General Assembly in the presence of 193 leaders. It will also mark the start of an unprecedented campaign to communicate these 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to 7 billion people in seven days across the planet (*see H Report on page 14*). From ending poverty, inequality and disease to promoting education, equality, environmental sustainability and partnerships, the Goals cover a gamut of concerns that affect us all. Thus, the campaign aims to reach out directly to us, the people, urging us to come forward, take ownership of our planet, and stem the damage of the past to safeguard the future.

There is remarkable resonance between The Global Goals Campaign and the work we do at Reliance Group. We too believe that to build a better tomorrow, we must take along each stakeholder and every segment of society, and we view partnerships and co-creation as building blocks to sustainable development. This philosophy drives our CSR initiatives, which seek to touch—and transform—lives. Thus, when we were approached to lead the campaign in India, we saw a natural synergy. Reliance Group is proud to be playing a leading role in promoting the Global Goals mandate through our existing communication channels; we are integrating the campaign into our business processes and promoting it through our customer platforms.

Suresh Natarajan



Communication is the first step. The second, and even more vital, is commitment. Going beyond the worldwide launch and the seven-day campaign of Project Everyone, it will take a continuous, sustained, determined effort by every stakeholder—that's you and me—for such an ambitious initiative to bear fruit. No government or corporate house or NGO can craft this level of change in a vacuum; each one of us must come forward and be counted. Make no mistake, we all have the power to make a difference; what's important is to believe in that power and use it, in whatever way we can, for the greater good.

Start small, start local, reach out, reach ahead—small, simple steps can lead to a web of interconnection, a force-field of possibilities and potential that grows, embracing us, and those around us, leaving us enriched and the planet better than when we found it. This is our world—and we are the world. Let's make it what it should be.

Tina Ambani

A Harmony for Silvers Foundation Initiative

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Publisher **Dharmendra Bhandari** Editor **Tina Ambani** Deputy Editor **Arati Rajan Menon** Assistant Editor **Sai Prabha Kamath**

Special Correspondent **Srirekha Pillai** Sub-Editor **Natasha Rego** Correspondent (Mumbai) **Aakanksha Bajpai** Design Consultant **Jit Ray**

Studio Manager **Haresh Patel** Graphic Designer **Dattaguru Redekar** Production Manager **Rohidas Adavkar** Website Coordinator **Ajit Nair**

Additional Vice-President, Business Development **Shrenik Mehta** Manager, Business Development **Vikaran Chauhan** Marketing Coordinator **Johnsi Nadar**

Editorial & Marketing Offices: Reliance Centre, 1st floor, 19, Walchand Hirachand Marg, Ballard Estate, Mumbai-400001. Tel: 91-22-30327115 (Editorial), 30327102 (Marketing). Email: contact.mag@harmonyindia.org **Printed and published** by Dharmendra Bhandari on behalf of the owners, Harmony for Silvers Foundation

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THE PARSII CONNECTION

Following Khordaad Saal, Dinyar Contractor traces the journey of the Parsis in theatre

OFFICER'S CHOICE

The many faces of Dr Daphne Rebello, Andhra Pradesh's first female IAS officer

FOR SUBSCRIPTION ASSISTANCE CONTACT: HarmonyCare, Living Media India Ltd, A-61, Sector 57, Noida (Uttar Pradesh) - 201301.

Toll-free: 1800 1800 100 **Phones:** New Delhi: (0120) 2479900 from Delhi and Faridabad; (0120) 2479900 from Rest of India

Fax: (0120) 4078080; **Kolkata:** 033-22827695 **Fax:** 22828949; **Bengaluru:** 080-2212448, 22213037, **Fax:** 2218335;

Mumbai: 022-66063355 **Fax:** 24444358; **Chennai:** 044-28478525 **Fax:** 24361942; **Email:** harmony@intoday.com

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शानदार **UP** की जानदार कहानियाँ

The exciting stories, springing up from the verdant and glittering land of Uttar Pradesh, can be heard from all the Akashvani Centres of Uttar Pradesh along with your favourite FM Radio Channels.

(Broadcast of 'U.P. Ki Kahaniya' also starts from Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Allahabad, Agra, Mathura, Rampur, Najibabad, Bareilly, Faizabad, Obra and Jhansi centres of Akashvani)

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and from 8:45 p.m. to
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storyteller Neelesh Misra

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Big FM : Agra, Aligarh, Bareilly, Kanpur, Allahabad, Jhansi, Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Vadodara, Surat, Chandigarh, Jhalandar, Patiala, Amritsar, Hisar, Kota, Ajmer, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Shimla, Delhi, Mumbai and Ranchi

Red FM : Varanasi, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Jaipur

Radio Mantra: Varanasi, Gorakhpur and Karnal

You can also listen to 'U.P. Ki Kahaniya' on **YouTube**.

बन रहा है आज,
सँवर रहा है कल



column one

How do you put your best face forward? In March 2006, our cover feature "Face-Off" aimed to shed light on research, products and techniques to peel the years away. Over nine years later, the anti-ageing juggernaut remains unstoppable, with advancements in technology and a rapidly expanding client base, as we report in "Face Value", along with perspectives from leading specialists. "I believe beauty and ageing are very personal concepts and cannot be generalised," says Vandana Luthra, founder of VLCC Group. "Every person should do what makes them feel beautiful and empowered."

If a positive self-image is one way to empowerment, spreading knowledge and awareness is another. Just consider Padma Bhushan Jahnu Barua. An encounter with the prolific Assamese filmmaker reveals that he has made over 200 educational television programmes for rural India in 2,400 villages as part of ISRO's Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) programme and remains committed to generating awareness about disability, environment, art and culture, and rural development.

Elsewhere this month, we discover how Jamie Janumala came to follow in the footsteps of her father, comedian Johnny Lever; we learn how the proposed Gold Monetisation Scheme gives us an opportunity to convert a dormant asset into an earning one; and we walk the streets of Dublin, which resonate with the city's rich literary past. One more treat for book lovers: in an exclusive column, veteran journalist and writer Raj Kanwar tells us why his friend, beloved author Ruskin Bond, has remained a bachelor. Wouldn't you like to know?

—Arati Rajan Menon

The Freedom Files' special in the August 2015 issue of *Harmony-Celebrate Age* brings to mind the common characteristic in all your subjects: Sacrifice, a majestic deed which differs largely from ordinary 'giving'. Sacrifice is forsaking one's comfort for the greater good, making offerings without reservations. It can be life-changing (a mother sacrifices her career for the sake of her child) or it can be small and heart-warming (grandparents sacrifice their afternoon nap to take care of the grandchildren while their parents are away). But the greatest sacrifice of all is for one's principles and beliefs. It is the thought that earned this country her freedom: sacrifice for the sake of humanity, for motherland, for freedom. It is sad how the magnanimity of that deed has been lost among the younger generations. Why, even contemporary generations of our freedom fighters seem to have forgotten! Only a handful are remembered after their death, on death days and birthdays. They are featured on stamps, books and currency notes. The 'sacrifice' of the remaining millions, both men and women, has gone unnoticed and

left their descendants in poverty, longing for government pension for freedom fighters to be rightly distributed. In conclusion, on those days set aside to celebrate mothers, fathers, grandparents and elders, let us find a way to show gratitude to those people who have made great sacrifices for us. It's a two-way stream. Let us as ageing parents show love and affection to our offspring who make sacrifices to keep us in their lives and care for us.

N Subramanian
Chennai

Check out the
three winning recipes
of our
Culinary Legacy Contest
on page 70.
Each winner receives
a copy of
Recipes from a Diary,
a cookbook by **sandesh**
expert Indu Bokaria

CONTRIBUTOR



Our columnist this month in 'At Large', **Raj Kanwar** says, "Much of the first half of my adult life had been like a roller coaster ride with more 'downs' and fewer 'ups'. I was called a 'rolling stone'. Happily, unlike other rolling stones, I gathered much moss during my 65 year-long assorted career." Kanwar has been in and out of professions such as journalism, public relations and advertising before turning entrepreneur. He voluntarily retired in 2000 as chairman of S K Oilfield Equipment Co. Pvt Ltd. Since then, he has been contributing columns and articles to several daily newspapers including *Hindustan Times*, *The Hindu*, *The Times of India*, *Sunday Mid-Day* and *The Tribune*. He is contributing editor, South Asia, for *World Oil*, the largest selling oil journal in the world; he is also India correspondent of *Indo American News*, published from Houston, Texas. Kanwar is the author of the official history of the ONGC, *Upstream India*, and a co-contributor to an anthology on Dehra Dun, titled *Once Upon a Time in Doon*, edited by Ruskin Bond and published by Rupa & Co. "Come October, I will be 85, but I have never felt 'retired' even once," he says. "I am happy living a meaningful life in Dehra Dun, contributing to the wellbeing of my community and enriching myself by reading and writing."

inside

P20: The 'accidental' mathematician

P18: Prostate pointers

NEWS ● VIEWS ● PEOPLE ● RESEARCH ● TRENDS ● TIPS



 **MEDIA WATCH**

SUNSET BOULEVARD

Robin Williams plays an ageing husband who faces his hidden homosexuality in his final film *Boulevard*, which is expected to release soon. The actor's death at the age of 63 in August 2014 stunned the world.

Dinodia Photo Library

Relight the fire

This one is strictly for the silver singles out there—**Facebook is a great place to hook up with your old flame once again.** Just take a cue from the Brits. A survey by website *silversurfers.com* claims one in six Britons over the age of 50 are logged on to Facebook to find old sweethearts and upload selfies to

show how well they have aged. And as newspaper *Daily Mail* adds, nearly half the people over 50 on Facebook think they will use the site more to help them stay in touch with their girlfriends. "Over 3,000 people completed our survey and the message is clear: Facebook is king of social media for the over-50s," Martin Lock, CEO of *silversurfers.com*, tells the newspaper. Nearly 81 per cent of the site's silver users say they check Facebook more than once a day while 37 per cent check what friends are up to. The most popular posts for this constituency: nostalgia, human-interest photos, and 'life hacks' (useful tips).

a great place to hook up with your old flame



BITTERSWEET

If you're into over-the-top, rambling Tamil potboilers, this will come as a pleasant surprise. Directed by Biju Viswanath, ***Orange Mithai (Orange Candy)* is a sensitive film that explores loneliness and the empty nest syndrome.** A silver man, Kailasam—ironically played by 37 year-old actor Vijay Sethupathi—who lives alone in a huge house in a small village fakes a heart attack for attention. During his journey to the hospital in the ambulance, his need finds echo in the paramedic that escorts him, a young man who has lost his own father and craves paternal love. Though the script is far from perfect—occasionally descending into melodrama—the film is tight (just about 90 minutes) and poignant enough to strike a chord.

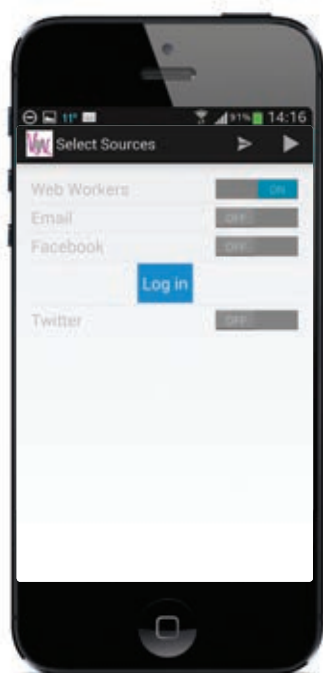
An open book

Books really are wonderful things—they serve to inform and inspire; they have the power to open minds and hearts and fuel debates personal and public. They also dare to evocate on issues on which people refrain to speak. Dementia is a prime example. With this in mind, a group of Australian children's authors are collaborating on the occasion of World Dementia Awareness Month in September to showcase their stories and raise awareness of the impact of dementia on families. Website australianagenda.com.au has more on the books:

- ***When I See Grandma*** by Debra Tidball and Leigh Hedstrom (Wombat Books): Winner of the children's book section of the CALEB award 2014, and shortlisted for Speech Pathology Book of the Year 2014, this book shows the many ways in which children can brighten up the lives of their grandparents, including those who live in retirement communities.

The author royalties of this book are being donated to the Hazel Hawke Dementia Research and Care Fund.

- ***Lucas & Jack*** by Ellie Royce and Andrew McLean (Working Title Press): This book, shortlisted for the Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year 2015, shows kids that silvers can be fun and encourages them to be more curious, imaginative and empathetic.
- ***Celia and Nonna*** by Victoria Lane and Kayleen West (Ford Street): A picture book about the special bond between children and grandparents; coping with change; and navigating uncharted territory.
- ***Harry Helps Grandpa Remember*** by Karen Tyrrell and Aaron Pocock (Digital Future Press): An insight into the realities of dementia and Alzheimer's, this grant-winning book chronicles the morphing relationship between grandparent and grandchild, where the one who is cared for eventually becomes the caregiver.



VIZWIZ

Available for: iOS 6.0 or later; Android 4.0.3 or later

What it does: This free app facilitates answers to your questions in a minute or less; it allows silvers with visual problems and anyone with difficulty in reading small font to receive quick answers to questions about their surroundings. An easy-to-use identification app, it can recognise objects, distinguish between two things and speak aloud for you. Users take a picture with their phone, ask a question out loud, and then receive multiple spoken answers.

After installation: When the app starts, the camera will open on the screen. Get as much of the image as possible on the view field; ensure clarity and click the picture. The screen will then change and your question will be recorded when you click on the mike in the upper panel. After recording, a new screen will be loaded where you choose your destination for your question and picture. The choices are made via toggle switches. Double-tapping each switch activates or deactivates it. Once you've made your choice, activate the send button. VizWiz will then load the 'Answers' screen. Note that the answers will take time to process. One can close the app and return later. The rate at which the answers appear will vary. When you re-launch the app, the answer screen will be right there.

Apple India is engaging in health innovation with Research Kit, a new iOS software framework that lets people volunteer to join medical research studies. It will enable people to participate in tests for Parkinson's, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, asthma and breast cancer. Researchers can build a medical testing app for iOS that's accessible far from their physical lab. Users can sign up and instantly start recording data. The touchscreen can sense biorhythms of users to detect inconsistencies that may signal a disease. The immediate benefit to users: they will gain insight into their health status even before the researchers' study is published.

SIMPLE SENIOR PHONE

Available for: Android 2.3 or later

What it does: This app enables easy usage of smartphones for silvers who are not well-versed with technology or have reading problems. It magnifies the icons on your phone. For instance, the usual Android device consists of 20 icons on a screen at a single view, whereas this app will let you view four icons at a time (in a single view) and use the services without having to strain yourself visually or mentally. The four important icons will automatically appear first (Call, Text, SOS and Locate).

After installation: The interface uses large buttons with big fonts, making the design more accessible. You will first be greeted by a quick start guide that briefly explains the basics. To access menu and settings, click the menu button. When the senior phone appears, you can change the shown applications, set up carer and contact numbers, SOS, location settings and more. To prevent another user from exiting the senior mode, you can set the senior phone application as the default home screen of the phone. Options available would be 'Always' or 'Use by Default'. Once done, the phone will be locked to senior mode. Additional apps can also be downloaded from the 'Manage Apps' menu; new apps can be installed and added to the phone.





Community vs. crime

“While we were doing our survey, we found that many senior citizens refused to take any help from the police...”

How’s this for bridging not just one gap but two? As website *iamin.in* reports, in suburban Mumbai’s Kandivali area, **students of Thakur College have joined hands with the police to fight against crime against silvers.** Undertaken under the National Service Scheme (NSS), the students are given forms and asked to meet silvers across Kandivali’s Samta Nagar and gather information on them. “With students, we have a wider reach,” Vijay Nawathe, assistant PRO, Samta Nagar Police Station, tells the website. “They have a different effect over people

compared to us.” Simultaneously, the move also works to engender trust in the police among sceptical silvers. “People have a terrifying image of the police,” says Jui Abhale, a student involved in the project. “While we were doing our survey, we found many senior citizens refused to take any help from the police as they didn’t want to get involved in any trouble. We want them to be able to contact the police in a critical situation. We want them to trust the police.” As Sushil Shinde, head of the NSS department in Thakur College, sums up, “It’s a two-way benefit.”

Hail Haryana

The Haryana government has notified an action plan framed according to the provisions of Section 22(2) of the Haryana Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizen Act, 2007 and Rule 24 of the Haryana Maintenance of Parents and Senior Citizen Rules. Under this initiative, each police station will maintain an up-to-date list of silvers in its jurisdiction; visit them at regular intervals (at least once a month, with a social worker or volunteer as far as possible); attend to their complaints and render requested assistance promptly; and form volunteer committees to ensure regular contact between silvers living alone and the district administration.

HEALTH CLUB Mumbai’s Nanavati Hospital has launched Live 360@60, a club that aims to provide silvers a platform to share stories, games and exercises as well as learn more about relevant health issues and engage in ‘innovative wellness activities’.



Harmony Archives



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Last order

This might sound morbid. But for most Indians, the last rites are an extremely significant ritual and lack of facilities and poor planning often mar the event. In the belief that our loved ones deserve a dignified end, Mumbai-based cinematographer Sanjay Ramgude has established Sukhant Antyavidhi Seva, which provides funeral plan-

ning services to families in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane. "In India, we have a lot of nuclear families and, in an emergency it is often difficult for relatives to rush in immediately. In times like these, Sukhant Antyavidhi Seva comes to the rescue and gets all the arrangements done," explains Ramgude. There is also a special 'package' that offers the family of the deceased a memento in the form of a mini documentary filmed at the time of registration. To learn more, visit www.sukhantfuneral.com or call the 24-hour helpline, (0) 8655808080/68888678. The organisation is now working on a mobile app.

MARKET WATCH



RELIGARE HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS TO BRING OUT A SEPARATE SUITE OF PRODUCTS FOR SILVERS, ACCORDING TO ANUJ GULATI, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CEO. "WE'RE WORKING ON A PROPOSITION TO OFFER PRODUCTS FOR THIS CATEGORY, INCLUDING COVERS FOR PRE-EXISTING AILMENTS," HE TELLS BUSINESS STANDARD. WATCH THIS SPACE.

The adventurers

Retirement can be an adventure if you live it right. That's the conclusion of British NGO collective Remember A Charity. Its study of over 2,000 people reveals that **pensioners in the UK are "living later life to the full, ignoring their age, and enjoying themselves"**, as Rob Cope, director, tells website www.express.co.uk. Here are some highlights of the survey:

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Pensioners are increasingly embracing their retirement years with 29 per cent admitting they feel and behave at least 20 years younger



26

per cent are more likely to seek out and try new experiences



35 per cent
Backpacking



55 per cent
New language



13 per cent
Sky diving



5 per cent
Tattooing

38
per cent

FEEL MORE
CONFIDENT
NOW COMPARED
TO WHEN THEY
WERE YOUNGER



44
per cent
active

12
per cent
active

10 PER CENT ARE
FUNDRAISING FOR
GOOD CAUSES



48 per cent are meeting friends for drinks at least once a week and 7 per cent are going on blind dates while 8 per cent are using dating websites



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PLAY TO WIN

Playtime just acquired a whole new dimension. It first began, as website *huffingtonpost.com* tells us, with Finnish company Lappset's concept for an outdoor exercise park, which found thousands of takers in Europe and Asia. Now, taking the concept a step further, American non-profit KaBoom! and healthcare firm Humana have found great success with **intergeneration playgrounds with equipment for all ages challenging body and mind**—with exercises for balance,

flexibility and cognition. They have already built 53 such playgrounds across the US, serving over 135,000 children and 60,000 seniors, and there are more on the anvil. "Play is a great connector for adults and seniors and the children in their lives," Sarah Pinsky, director of client services at KaBoom! tells the site. "In addition to the cognitive and physical benefits of play, it can also reduce stress in elders and kids." And let's not forget the intangible benefits of greater bonding between generations.



Silvering Deutschland

Germany's Federal Statistical Office reports that over one in five people in the country are 65 or older—and they are working longer than ever before. In 2005, 5 per cent of people aged 65 to 69 were still employed; in 2014, that figure rose to 14 per cent. Germany has the second-highest number of silvers in the European Union, behind Italy. Of its 81 million people, 17 million, or 21 per cent, are 65 or older. By 2060, one in three people in the country will be over 65.

Global Goals and You

Why silvers matter for the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development Campaign

Although the facets of development can bring many benefits economically, socially and even politically for a country's citizens; the downside can see certain sectors of society become marginalised and disenfranchised, as they fall behind. According to charity Age International, there will be 1.3 billion elderly people in the world by 2030, making up 16 per cent of the total population, with most living in developing countries. This figure serves as a timely reminder that more needs to be done by world governments and policymakers to include the needs of a burgeoning elderly population in all key social and developmental policy initiatives at a grassroots level.

To address this issue, set amid a wider framework to educate and empower all sectors of society to counter such ills as extreme poverty, inequality and climate change by 2030, the initiative, **The Global Goals Campaign**—the brainchild of acclaimed British filmmaker, humanitarian and campaigner Richard Curtis—aims to make the UN's previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for sustainable development, now known as the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), famous. The new Global Goals, which were drafted in 2012, will be unveiled by the UN on 25 September 2015 in the presence of 193 leaders.

The mission of the new Global Goals Campaign is to communicate them to **7 billion people in seven days** following their launch at the UN General Assembly on 25 September. The Global Goals comprise 17 ambitious targets to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and tackle climate change by 2030. These include eradicating extreme hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV-AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and establishing a global partnership for development.



THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development

So why are the new SDGs at the forefront of the agenda again now? Put simply, many of the global goals, through lack of a dissemination of information and inertia by governments and policymakers, were not met by world leaders, and hence have once again been put back on the agenda of the UN, with a mandate this time to make available the vitally important message of the new Global Goals to each and every citizen.

In keeping with this directive, the new Global Goals are particularly relevant to India's

silvers. According to Age International, the world's senior citizens must be included in the SDGs framework for the following reasons:

- **Protection of human rights:** Every senior citizen must have access to healthcare, social protection, employment and education. Currently older people's needs are often neglected and services are often inaccessible.
- **Making their voice count:** All data collected to formulate policy must include age-specific information in order to give an accurate picture of who is being reached through development programmes, and how best to continue supporting vulnerable elderly people.
- **Ensure longer lives are healthier:** With people's life expectancies increasing, governments need to shift their focus to enable seniors to manage their multiple health conditions, enabling them to continue contributing as workers, carers and valued members of the community.
- **Ensure senior citizens have access to social protection:** Currently only one in four elderly people has access to a pension, and some have no source of income at all. The Global Goal to eradicate extreme poverty aims to give people of all ages access to work,

THE GLOBAL GOALS

For Sustainable Development



a minimum wage and social protection by governments.

- **Stop inequality:** The Global Goal to end inequality must realise that discrimination and prejudice is an issue that affects people of all ages, and can be particularly profound for elderly people. Senior citizens play a vital role in their local communities as well as contributing to the economy and society; therefore discrimination inhibits their ability to make a contribution to society.

Key activities

The Global Goals Campaign has laid down the gauntlet for world leaders to heed the messages of the new Global Goals, and to take urgent action to include the goals as part of their strategic policymaking framework. With the combined power of world governments and the voice of global citizens, the Global Goals are more accessible than

The Global Goals Campaign aims to make the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) famous. The new Global Goals, which were drafted in 2012, will be unveiled by the UN on 25 September 2015 in the presence of 193 leaders

they have ever been. To coincide with the unveiling of the Global Goals, the campaign will roll out several pioneering initiatives to get its important message across nations, and across every generation. Some key activities to be undertaken include:

- **Radio Everyone:** 7 billion people have access to radio. A seven-day pop-up radio station, with unique content curated by influencers from around the world and distributed by the world's largest broadcasters such as 92.7 BIG FM, will be launched. In India, Hrithik Roshan, A R Rahman and Priyanka Chopra will support the Radio Everyone campaign.
- **Online:** 2.6 billion people are online. The campaign is working with the world's top websites to communicate the goals, such as *Google/YouTube, Huffington Post, Yahoo, and Wikipedia*, whose community will translate the goals into over 200 languages.

- **The world's largest lesson:** 1.9 billion children are in school. The largest collaborative education project the world has ever seen in partnership with UNICEF, *Times Education Supplement*, Pearson, and Sir Ken Robinson will be delivered globally.
- **Broadcast:** Through Global Citizen initiative, The Global Goals Campaign will recruit tens of millions of people who will support organisations campaigning to tackle the goals. Richard Curtis is also co-curating a special one-hour TV spectacle live from the Global Citizen Festival stage, which will be headlined by Beyonce, Ed Sheeran and Coldplay in Central Park, New York, on 26 September with Coldplay's Chris Martin. The show will be live-streamed on *YouTube* and shown by broadcasters across the world. Last year, 60,000 people attended the event and 40 million watched worldwide.
- **The world's biggest connection:** 5 billion have access to a mobile. In partnership with Global Citizen, the campaign is working with five of the largest mobile operators worldwide, including Reliance Communications, to send a global text to each and every customer on the day the goals launch.
- **Cinema:** 1.3 billion have access to cinema. SAWA (Global Cinema Advertising Association) is giving access to its cinema network around the world, giving £ 15 million of inventory and screening a bespoke advert written by Sir John Hegarty.
- **The world's best brands:** In partnership with Global Citizen, global brands such as Reliance Group, Unilever, Royal Mail, Virgin, Standard Chartered and *HT Cafe* have given unique access to their employee base, distribution network and branded assets to amplify the world's largest project.
- **The world's largest prayer:** 6 billion have a faith. The campaign will work closely with the UN, action/2015 and interfaith groups to launch the world's largest prayer during the seven days of Project Everyone.

For more information on the campaign, please visit www.globalgoals.org

Source: www.ageinternational.org.uk/what-we-do/Policy-where-we-stand-/Position-statement-on-the-post-2015-goals-for-development/?gclid=CKfV0-Xdr8cCFE-WtAodDEIESQ



After celebrating your 25th anniversary, celebrate your first.

The first time your eyes met.
 The first time you mustered up the courage.
 The first time you bared your heart.
 The first time you heard "Yes".
 The first date.
 The first time you held hands.
 The first fight.
 The first time you made up.
 Shouldn't you be celebrating, that first rush of love before life and the babies and the bills intruded?
 Because for the first time you're at an age when you can fall in love with each other all over again.

If you're above fifty-five, we believe Harmony is just the magazine for you. Filled with human interest stories, exciting features and columns, Harmony encourages you to do just one thing: live young.

harmony
celebrate age

Sing and hear. Let the music flow through your home and join a *satsang* or choir group for added pleasure. Adding to the body of work on the therapeutic effects of music, a recent study by Brunel University in the UK contends that music can have an 'anaesthetic' effect, reducing the need for pain relievers after surgery. That apart, music is proven to lower blood pressure, battle stress, improve cognition, keep Alzheimer's and dementia at bay and engender a happier outlook on life.



Harmony Archives



Then: Egg cartons Now: Chimes

Is a corner in your kitchen stacked with papier-mâché egg cartons that have been lying there for months on end? Here's a way to use them to brighten up your home.

You will need egg cartons, watercolours, a medium-size paint brush, wooden beads, bells and yarn. Cut and trim the egg cartons down to individual domes; this doesn't take too long, so don't worry. The number of domes you use depends on how long you want to make your chimes. Use the watercolours to paint the domes with a colour that complements the beads.

After they dry, punch a hole in the top. You could also use a thick nail to punch the hole and wiggle it around. Then, cut a piece of yarn of suitable length and tape the ends to make it look like a shoelace. Thread one of the painted domes, alternating it with five to 10 beads (depending on the size of your beads). Fit a small bell inside the dome, so it is not visible from the outside. Repeat the same process till you come to the end of your thread and fasten it with a sturdy knot.

Hang it up by tying it to a nail or just plastering it on to the wall using colourful or transparent tape.



RECYCLING FACT

- Recycling a tonne of papier-mâché egg cartons can save 7,000 gallons of water, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, around 20 trees and enough energy to power the average home for six months. This represents 64 per cent energy savings, 58 per cent water savings and 60 pounds of air pollutants.

MORE RECYCLING IDEAS...

1. VEGETABLES, POTATOES AND ONIONS CAN BE STORED IN EGG TRAYS, SO IN CASE THE VEGGIES 'WEEP', THE OTHERS IN THE TRAY ARE SECURED AND WON'T GET INFECTED.
2. INSERT HALF AN EGG SHELL IN EACH DOME OF THE EGG CARTON, FILL IT WITH SOIL AND PLANT A SEED. WHEN THE SAPPLINGS GROW, TAKE THE CARTON TO A GARDEN AND BURY IT IN THE SOIL, LEAVING THE CARTON AND EGG SHELLS TO GET DECOMPOSED.

PROSTATE POINTERS

Here's a discovery with great import for diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer. Scientists from the Cancer Research UK Cambridge Institute at the University of Cambridge and Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge have found that **prostate cancer can be divided into five types, depending on its DNA**. This will help doctors distinguish between fast-growing

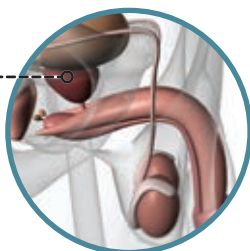
prostate cancer from slower forms and prescribe drugs appropriately. Two of the forms are the most dangerous forms as they grow rapidly and require urgent treatment; another two forms are less dangerous as they progress slowly; and the fifth can be included in both categories. To arrive at their conclusion, the researchers studied samples of healthy and cancerous prostate tissue from over 250 men.

The prostate is located beneath the bladder and surrounds the urethra

The prostate gland is a small walnut-sized gland in men that makes seminal fluid, which helps carry sperm out of the body



Normal prostate



Prostate with cancer

SYMPTOMS

No symptom until it spreads

TIMELY DIAGNOSIS

If there is suspicion, only ultrasound-guided biopsy can set the diagnosis

THERAPIES FOR EARLY STAGE

Close monitoring, radical prostatectomy, brachytherapy (internal radiation), external radiation

THERAPIES FOR ADVANCED STAGE

Hormone and chemotherapy

WE SHOULD NOT FORGET

20 per cent of advanced prostate cancer patients will undergo fractures due to osteoporosis or bone metastases

POSSIBLE THERAPY COMPLICATIONS

Erectile dysfunction, urinary disorders, incontinence, fatigue, depression

Prostate in numbers



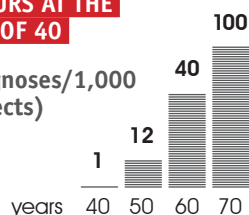
One out of four cancer cases are prostate cancer

2nd

most common cause of cancer death

OCCURS AT THE AGE OF 40

(diagnoses/1,000 subjects)



2-4 TIMES

more likely to develop cancer if father or brother had cancer



1/6

will develop prostate cancer during his life time

**FAQ with Dr Fateh Singh,
Urologist, Nanavati Super
Speciality Hospital, Mumbai**

What is prostate cancer?

Also known as carcinoma of the prostate, it is the development of cancer in the prostate, a gland in the male reproductive system. Most prostate cancers are slow; however, some grow relatively quicker. The cancer cells may spread from the prostate to other parts of the body, particularly the bones and lymph node.

What are the causes and symptoms?

Factors that increase risk of prostate cancer include age and family history of the disease. About 99 per cent of cases occur in men over 50. Having a first-degree relative with the disease doubles the risk. Other factors include a diet high in processed meat, red meat and milk products or low in certain vegetables. There may be no symptoms initially. In later stages, a person can experience pain urinating, blood in the urine and pain in the pelvis and back. A disease known as benign prostatic hyperplasia may produce similar symptoms. Other late symptoms include feeling tired owing to anaemia.

What precautions should one take?

One should avoid consuming too much processed meat and processed milk products. Eat more raw vegetables and fruits. It is also helpful to have regular checkups after the age of 50; screen for prostate cancer, a yearly digital rectal examination (DRE), sonography, and early prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing will help. Avoid exposure to sexually transmitted diseases.

What are the treatments available in India?

Early detection can help control prostate cancer. As it is generally a slow growing disease, it can be controlled with the latest treatments. All types of treatments are available in India, including radiation therapy, hormonal and chemotherapy and radical surgery.

FLUSH HIV

It has eluded scientists for decades. But finally, **a permanent cure for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) may be in sight.**

Researchers from the University of California, Davis, claim that HIV can be completely flushed out of the patient's body after treatment through a compound called PEP005 combined with a molecule called JQ1. The combination increases HIV activation in the blood after which it is 'killed' to flush it out of the body completely. Interestingly, researchers have been working on this 'shock-and-kill' theory for years—it now appears to have borne fruit.

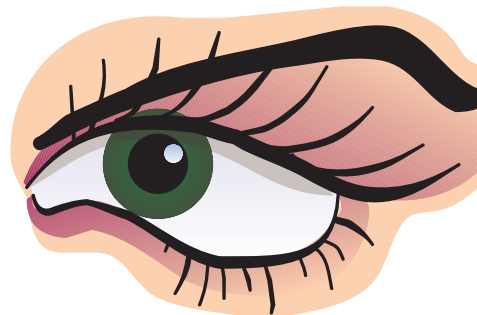
A clean breast

Scientists at Imperial College, London, have found a **new technique to predict breast cancer** by measuring the levels of a chemical called methyl, present in the white blood cells. They tracked the blood samples of around 2,600 women from the UK, Norway, Australia and Italy for an average of nine years, focusing on the changes of the DNA of white blood cells, and found

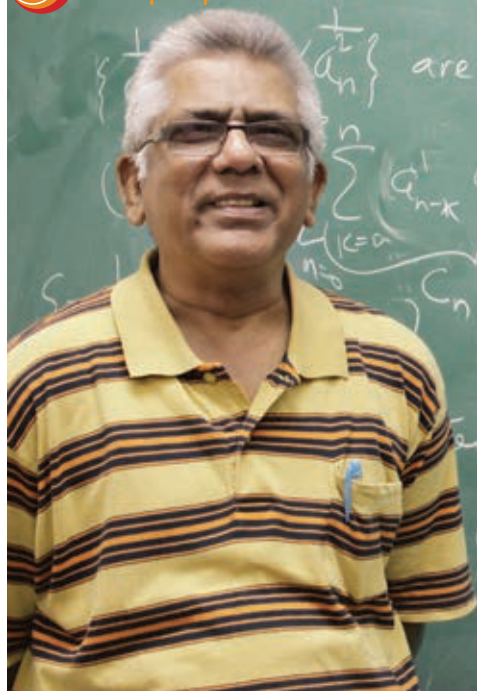
that women who developed breast cancer had lower levels of methyl. Levels of methyl can be affected by external factors such as alcohol consumption. While the team hopes that this finding can lead to a routine test to help predict breast cancer, they say more research is needed to clearly establish the connection between methyl and the development of breast cancer.

Seen this?

A collaboration between Sichuan University, Sun Yat-Sen University and the University of California, Davis, chapter of Beijing Genomics Institute has identified **lanosterol, a molecule present in the lens of the eye, as the key to prevent lens protein aggregation that leads to cataract.** In animal tests, treatment through lanosterol reduced cataract severity and increased transparency. At present, the only treatment for cataract is



surgical removal; this discovery, published in journal *Nature*, opens the door to the possibility of a non-surgical solution.



The 'accidental' mathematician

Maitreya J A

When Prof Gadadhar Misra was in school, if you had told him he would win the prestigious Biju Patnaik Award for Scientific Excellence one day, he would never have believed you. "I became a mathematician purely by chance," he says. "When I was in school and college, I was an average student; my grades were never great." In fact, Misra also received the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for Science and Technology in 2001, the highest science award in the country.

So, why mathematics? "Back when I was a student, things were simple," says Misra, chairman, Department of Mathematics at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru. "If you were a very good student, you got physics. If you were good, you got chemistry; if not, you got mathematics. And only if you wanted to become a doctor did you take biology."

On how the 'accidental' mathematician came to pursue the subject as a career choice, Misra reveals that he was steered by his teachers. "I was a backbencher, and I went where life took me. I thought no one noticed me. But some of my professors at Sambalpur University did. They mentioned me to a few universities

in the US, saying that if I applied to them for further studies, they should accept me. Then they suggested that I apply to do my PhD in mathematics overseas. I did, and the rest, as they say is history," says the 59 year-old specialist in operator theory.

Misra won a full scholarship to Stony Brook University, New York, where he got a PhD for the thesis *Curvature Inequalities and Extremal Properties of Bundle Shifts* under Ronald G Douglas. He taught at universities in the US for three years before returning to India and joining the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata in 1986. Three years later, he joined the Indian Statistical Institute in Bengaluru as an assistant professor and was promoted as professor in 1993. He finally joined the IISc in 2007.

Misra hails from Chiplima, Sambalpur in Odisha, from a family of academicians. His father taught at the agricultural college; his eldest brother is the director of the Institute of Mines and Minerals Technology, Bhubaneswar; the second is a squadron leader in the Indian Air Force; the third works in a software company in Bangalore; and the youngest recently contested the Lok Sabha elections from Bharampur in Odisha.

He says that when he was growing up, Biju Patnaik (former Odisha chief minister) was an inspiration. "Patnaik helped many young people get an education, and now this honour feels special," he says.

As a passionate teacher, he has valuable advice for students: "Youngsters today think they will wake up one day and become famous, that success will just come to them. Let me tell you, a lot of hard work goes into whatever anybody does, that you don't see. You should put in that hard work; only then will success and fame follow."

When asked what he is working on now, Misra chooses an interesting metaphor. "Imagine an aircraft flying to an airport. It is about to land. It has many, many parts, and all of them are doing different things. In this situation, if you have to predict what will happen next, or what to do next, to land the plane, there are many unknowns. You need an equation to find every unknown. An engineer will look at each machine individually, like an equation. But as a mathematician, I look at the whole problem, a way to solve all the equations at once. In a nutshell, that's it but, of course, way more complex." Indeed.

—Maitreya J A



Asha Bhosle



Shabana Azmi



George Cole



Om Prakash Munjal

BIRTHDAYS

Actor **Rishi Kapoor** turned 63 on 4 September.

American actor and singer **Racquel Welch** turned 75 on 5 September.

Activist and Gandhian **Ela Ramesh Bhatt** turned 82 on 7 September.

Playback singer **Asha Bhosle** turned 82 on 8 September.

Lead guitarist of rock band Aerosmith **Joe Perry** turned 65 on 10 September.

Actor **Shabana Azmi** turns 65 on 18 September.

IN PASSING

Former Madhya Pradesh minister **Jagannath Singh** passed away on 3 August after a prolonged illness. He was 69.

Hollywood actor **George Cole** died on 5 August following a brief illness. He was 90.

Eminent Kannada poet and freedom fighter **Kayyara Kinhabanna Rai** passed away on 9 August. He was 101.

Veteran Marathi stage actor, singer and drama producer **Bhalchandra Pendharkar** died on 11 August. He was 94.

Founder of Hero Cycles **Om Prakash Munjal** passed away on 13 August following a brief illness. He was 87.

MILESTONES

➤ Mathematician **Dr Amalendu Krishna** was awarded the 2015 Ramanujan Prize for his outstanding contribution in the area of algebraic cycles, algebraic K-theory and the theory of motives.

➤ Hindi litterateur **Kashinath Singh** was chosen for Uttar Pradesh's highest literary award Bharat Bharti for the year 2014. The award is given by the UP Hindi Sansthan every year.

➤ Prof **Mustansir Barma** was awarded the 2015 Gujar Mal Modi Award for Innovative Science and Technology.

OVERHEARD

“So many women are being weak about ageing. I find it annoying. It’s ridiculous to imagine you can stay young forever and live forever. There’s a beauty and respect in age. I haven’t done a single thing to my face. I do have lines—I laugh a lot. But never in a million years would I have work done. I do yoga, I do exercise, and I put on face cream. Laughing a lot is really good for you, embracing your children’s future and embracing your grandchildren and not having regrets and not being bitter and not being angry.”

—British model and actor **Jerry Hall**, 59, tells *Radio Times* magazine



HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

THIS IS THE PLACE TO DO IT. REACH OUT TO FELLOW READERS WITH INTERESTING ANECDOTES, INSPIRING STORIES AND HEARTWARMING MOMENTS FROM YOUR LIFE. WRITE IN WITH FULL CONTACT DETAILS, AND MAKE THIS SPACE YOUR OWN.

PAINTING PEACE

'Go within or go without' is a saying that pretty much sums up my approach to life. And I try my best to imbue every living moment with a touch of variety and creativity. It all started in 1972, when a few friends and I formed a *bhajan* group. I loved those singing sessions as I felt I 'opened up' more on days when I sang. Unfortunately, like many such voluntary groups, ours too disintegrated and fell apart.

Painting helps Zaveri connect with her inner self



My two children were growing up then and I ran a business manufacturing semi-waterproof paints. I also took an interest in my husband's pharmaceutical business, which left me no free time. But having my office at home helped me juggle these chores efficiently.

In 1984, when my children were grown up, I took to interior designing with my sister-in-law and we ran a thriving business for 20 years. In 2004, my elder son decided to settle abroad, which required me to travel back and forth frequently to help him settle down. This compromised the business and it gradually diminished.

My current passion is painting. I joined an art class at the age of 61 in 2006. It started as a mere suggestion from a friend. But my interest grew by leaps and bounds as I discovered that painting helped me connect with my inner self. Slowly, I grew proficient in oil paints and acrylic, and developed my own style. I am proud to state that I have sold around 50 paintings over the years.

However, it is not monetary rewards I am after. The act of painting calms me and I realised just how the burden of daily chores had turned me into a hyperactive person. When I paint, I create 'me' time! Before I stand at my easel, I carry out a lot of research. I use the Internet to explore various artists and their works; I go through pamphlets and books, and keep an eye out for photographs my son clicks when he visits different places. I don't restrict myself by following any rules; I paint anything I feel will look beautiful on canvas and I trust my instinct.

I practise this hobby in a small corner of my house. Loaded with acrylic and oil paints, accompanied by 30" x 50", 4 ft x 3 ft canvases with hordes of brushes, this corner helps me connect emotionally and bring out unique elements in every painting. Painting gives me the liberty to 'create peace' not just on canvas but within my soul, which is perpetually covered in layers of fear.

So far, my life has been an exciting journey as I have never allowed fetters to limit my mind. My advice to every senior: Do not believe in age limits; if you have the passion and spark, age is just a number. When you hold your coffee mug in your hand every morning, allow yourself to connect with that inspiring force within you that drives you to live the next 24 hours to the fullest.

—Yashodhara Zaveri, Mumbai



Suparna-Saraswati Puri

A PROUD 'HANDYMAN'

I am only a matriculate but have always nurtured an insatiable urge to learn. My compulsive curiosity has allowed me to lead a dignified life, essentially as a repairman, and it doesn't bother me that it is perceived as *kabaadi kaam* [scrap work]. My fascination with gadgets and utility items began when I was barely seven years old. Anything that involved a technical process got me engrossed.

Partition led my father, employed with the Bhakra Nangal Dam, to shift from Lahore to Shimla, where I was born in 1947. We lived there for 10 years before moving to Delhi and later to Chandigarh in 1969. For the past 47 years, my reputation in the Tricity of Panchkula-Chandigarh-Mohali has grown essentially because I mend antiquated household gadgetry and electrical appliances by using odd spare parts. I remember the days when pressure cookers ruled a *grihani's* kitchen and its repair was a lucrative business. I recently bumped into an old client, who told me I had repaired a pressure cooker that belonged to him 22 years ago, which made it older than his eldest child!

However, this recognition did not come easily. In the 1980s, my two brothers and I would trawl the city of Chandigarh every morning, visit all the popular kitchenware shops, collect pressure cookers that had been returned for repair, and take them home to work on them. We would pore over these items in our home's one-room 'laboratory' and return each piece to the shops by evening.

Pal has mastered the art of reassembling utility goods

We did this for many years and we were tagged as the '*chaar number walleh*' (our house was No. 4, in Sector 15). Over time, from pressure cookers, we expanded to other electrical goods like toasters, automatic blenders, food processors, music players and so on, which further widened our clientele. The overheads were minimal and we lived in a joint family, so most of what we earned became our profits. The 1980s and 90s were indeed the golden period of my life.

I don't claim to know everything about every gadget that lands up on my desk. However, I am keen to learn and explore. I have handled products of varied brands, both local and international, and have never felt at a loss after dismantling them, even when unfamiliar with the company. My enthusiasm to learn about assembling and reassembling household goods has never let me down!

I am the proud father of three daughters and my talent has allowed me to live an honourable life. I believe in savouring the present instead of worrying or complaining. The two constants in my life are my love for cooking and the joy of preparing bed tea for my wife as I have done since the day we were married. I am a vegetarian and do not like eating out. Age may have slowed the pace with which I work but certainly not my keenness to learn and deliver a service that is fast disappearing from urban living.

—Prem Pal, Chandigarh

Pushing your boundaries

COL (RETD) FRANCIS MACHADO, 61, BENGALURU

A story told by a Rev Fr Furtado during my days at St Joseph's Boys High School, Bangalore, has had a lasting impact on me. It is about a gentleman who retired from his profession at the age of 60, and being dissatisfied with his unproductive retired lifestyle, managed to gain admission to a medical college. Becoming a doctor at the age of 70, he continued to work in hospitals and clinics, basically to provide pro-bono medical services to patients for another 10 or more years.

I joined the National Defence Academy [NDA] at Khadakwasla, Pune, in 1971, a few months before the Indo-Pak War. After three years of training at NDA, and another year at the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, I was commissioned in the rank of second lieutenant. I had thought joining the Army would be an escape from studies. Little did I know that I would be studying and learning more, every single day of my service life! Service in the Armed Forces often provides opportunities outside your core profession. When you train and learn to plan for war, you also become better at planning and organising other issues.

At the age of 44, after serving for 24 years, I decided to leave the Army and applied for premature release. My release came through just before the Kargil War of 1999.



Margaret Machado

"Part of my work is human resources, and it gives me pleasure to be able to sometimes pass on a few tips and wisdom to youngsters... the downside is their interests basically revolve around Bollywood. There is so much more to do and experiment with"

It was a localised war, so I was not recalled. I would have rejoined gladly.

I have not once missed the Army or the way of life, partly because I am a sort of hands-on person, and did things for myself. I sought premature retirement so that I could do other things. Besides, owing to my career, my children had made too many moves from one military station to the next, and it was time to put them in good schools in one city. Bangalore was the obvious choice as that's where I grew up.

After working with friends, I moved to Dubai and worked as a school administrator for less than three years. After a point, the drudgery of waking up, going to work and not being able to do anything else got to me. So I decided to return to Bangalore and be with my family. Since then, I have been working as a manager (administration), at Trellisys.net. And this has basically been my second career since then.

Trellisys is a young IT company filled with young and brilliant minds, and the past 10 years have been a delightful experience for me, watching young minds at work. These are the people who strive to excel and quietly improve the quality and status of Brand India. It is a small company by Indian IT standards but it has a large list of clients in over two continents.

My job is general administration, and our admin tail is very short. This exposure has helped me learn a great deal more about how the world functions outside the Army, about various other government functions

that apply to small businesses relating to the export of software. Part of my work is human resources, and it gives me pleasure to be able to sometimes pass on a few tips and wisdom to youngsters.

The downside is that I get to see the resumes of young employees and young hopefuls who want to join the company. It is sad to see that their hobbies and interests basically revolve around Bollywood movies and music. There is so much more to do and experiment with.

This second career has also given me time to focus on other interests. Things I wanted to do, such as painting, bonsai-making, photography and carpentry, among other interests. It has given me the time to build a new home with a workshop. Having a place of your own where you can work on a hobby helps work off the stress of everyday life.

I have never undergone any formal training in anything other than the Army and yet I have taught myself photography and painting oil on canvas. I have even sold a few paintings and earned a decent packet. Choose a hobby that can give you an alternative source of income. Carpentry is a new hobby, and I have been able to fabricate some quality furniture that we use in the living room of our home.

A friend recently asked me how I managed to learn to make a piece of carpentry. My answer was that I just gave it a shot. If you do not try, you will never know whether you can or cannot do it. Chances are that you will succeed.

I am a retired bank manager and have always been great with kids. I would like to spend my retired life running a crèche out of my home. How should I go about setting this up?

Based on the size of your home, you will have to decide on the number of children you want to admit. The age group of zero to 12 years will be ideal as many young children in cities finish school in the first half of the day.

With these details sorted, make sure you equip your space with educative toys and suitable books to engage the children. Be sure to have a timetable of activities according to the age group. If you decide to take on more than 10 children, it may be beneficial to employ someone to help you clean up after them, so no child goes unattended or no untoward incidents take place. Remember, you will be responsible for these children while they are with you. It is advisable to have the kids bring their own food from home so you won't have to track their allergies and sensitivities.

Once all this is set up, register your setup and put the word out there. Hang a board outside your home so passersby become aware of your service. You will be surprised by the number of walk-ins, and at first this should be enough. The fee you charge should correspond with the facilities and meet the expectations of parents. It adds value to announce that yours is not just a care-giving centre but an educative one. Soon enough, your retired life will be filled with the noise and laughter of little ones.

—Caroline D'Mello runs a chain of day care centres in Mangalore



Happy heart: To mark World Heart Day on 29 September, we show you the dietary way to cardiac health



Dinodia Photo Library

It is a myth that cardiac disease affects only silvers and men. In fact, all ages and population groups are affected by heart problems, including women and children. Be aware and take necessary preventive steps to reduce your risk.

Non-modifiable risk factors

- **Age:** Simply getting old is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease; risk of stroke doubles every decade after the age of 55.
- **Family history:** Risk increases if a first-degree blood relative has had coronary heart disease or stroke before the age of 55 (male relative) or 65 (female relative).
- **Gender:** Men are at greater risk of heart disease than premenopausal women. But after menopause, a woman's risk is similar to a man's. The risk of stroke is similar for men and women.
- **Ethnic origin:** People with African or Asian ancestry are at higher risks of developing cardiovascular disease than other racial groups.

Though there are non-modifiable risk factors you can't help, you can do a lot to reduce your risk of heart disease, such as eat healthy, engage in physical activity for 30 minutes per day for at least five days a week, and stay away from tobacco. Hypertension, abnormal lipid profile and diabetes are other risk factors for heart disease, which in turn are related to lifestyle. Don't forget: every healthy change, no matter how small it may be, counts!

Eat right

- Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains and legumes. Increase in dietary fibre helps lower bad cholesterol.

- Eat a variety of lean protein foods. Chicken, fish, and vegetable proteins are better than red meat (beef, pork, and lamb), which contains more saturated fat and cholesterol. Fish and some vegetable sources contain omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to help reduce the risk of abnormal heart rhythms that can lead to sudden cardiac death. Limit processed meats to no more than two servings a week.
- Choose fat calories wisely. Limit total fat grams and avoid trans-fats. Replace saturated fat with unsaturated fats such as canola, olive and peanut oil. Also, limit total cholesterol.
- Limit sugar. It contains empty calories. Go for whole fruits if you have a sweet tooth.
- Watch your sodium intake.

Superfoods

Superfoods are those foods that contain large amounts of vitamins, minerals, polyphenols and antioxidants and help reduce the risk of chronic diseases and prolong life. People who include more superfoods in their daily diet are healthier compared to those who don't. Some superfoods are great for the heart—they help lower cholesterol, reduce inflammation, and slow down the formation of plaque in the arteries (atherosclerosis). These include:

- **Chia seeds:** These help stabilise blood sugar and reduce junk food cravings. Chia is an excellent source of essential fatty acids, which are important for heart function. They are high in soluble fibre, which is proven to help lower cholesterol. They can also help in weight loss by slowing the speed at which our bodies break down food. Also, as the seeds retain so much water, they can help a dieter feel fuller for longer. They also aid sleep as they contain tryptophan, an amino acid that works with serotonin in the brain to naturally promote sleep.
- **Green coffee:** This helps reduce bad cholesterol because of the antioxidants present. It also lowers blood pressure. Another benefit of green coffee is that it provides you with more energy while reducing your appetite, helping you control craving.
- **Nuts:** A small handful of almonds not only makes a tasty snack, it's also nutritious and great for the heart. Apart from heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, this little nut is also loaded with nutrients like Vitamin E, protein, magnesium, phosphorus and zinc. Walnuts are full of omega-3 fatty acids and, along with almonds and macadamia nuts, are loaded with mono and polyunsaturated fat. Plus, nuts provide fibre, calcium and folic acid.
- **Beans:** They are a great source of complex carbohydrates, fibre and protein. Also, they are an excellent

source of molybdenum and folic acid. They provide good nutrition for the heart as they are low in fat. Black, pinto and kidney beans have soluble fibre that absorbs cholesterol from the digestive tract.

- **Tofu:** Whole soy foods are an excellent source of lean protein and don't contain unhealthy fats and cholesterol. All soy products, including tofu, contain polyunsaturated fats in high amounts that are good for heart health. Soy also reduces blood pressure and decreases bad cholesterol.
- **Salmon:** It contains heart-healthy omega-3 fats, which are also known to boost brain development, fend off depression, have superb anti-inflammatory powers, and lower the build up of plaque in the arteries. Salmon also decreases the level of triglycerides and controls irregular heartbeat. Be sure to pick the wild kind, which is lower in mercury and higher in omega-3s.
- **Blueberries:** These contain Vitamin C, Vitamin K and manganese. They aid digestion, activate the liver and spleen, and are a good remedy for urinary diseases and diabetes. They also regulate heartburn, purify the blood, help cure anaemia and stop skin eruptions. Further, they relieve throat infections and other respiratory diseases. They contain antioxidants called flavonoids that decrease blood pressure and help blood vessels to dilate.
- **Avocados:** They are rich in monounsaturated fat, and lower bad cholesterol while raising the levels of good cholesterol. Avocados also help in absorption of beta carotene and lycopene, which are essential for heart health.
- **Oats:** They are rich in soluble fibre, which absorbs cholesterol from the digestive tract—this is then eliminated from the body instead of being absorbed into the bloodstream. Products made from oats like biscuits, *atta*, breads and bran also help control heart diseases by eliminating excess cholesterol.
- **Flaxseeds:** These are rich in omega-3 fatty acids which are very good for a healthy heart. They are high in fibre, which reduces cholesterol and triglycerides. They can be added in salads, smoothies and oatmeal or blended with milk.

Namita Jain is a wellness specialist and celebrity nutritionist at Diet Mantra and has written bestsellers on diet and fitness. Visit www.dietmantra.in. If you have any questions for Namita Jain, write to contact.mag@harmonyindia.org



YOGA RX BY SHAMEEM AKTHAR

Your ability to balance is a sign of youth. This is not just a yogic perspective but a new discovery of science. When key players in the nervous system fail to do their job owing to disuse, the cerebellum is also affected. This affects limb coordination and the kinesthetic intelligence involved with balance. Playing games, cycling, dancing, use of gym balls, balance boards or training in martial arts can rewire your ability to balance.

VIRGO

22 August to 21 September

This is a sensitive sign with psychic intuitive-ness that connects to people in a positive way. This translates into so much giving that it can cause the Virgo physical exhaustion, digestive problems and a flighty nature that comes from high energy levels.

So, the yoga prescription is very simple: a grounding practice that focuses on clearing the problems of the digestive system, but anticipating likely issues: irritable bowel syndrome, constipation and other digestive mishaps. Another issue that bothers the Virgo is over-thinking; this affects their breathing rate, their lower psychic centres. This means leg or hip problems.

The best way to design a yoga programme for the Virgo is by maximising the potential for grounding to take care of all the disturbed centres: the mind, navel and the lowest or the root centre (*mooladhara* chakra) that deals with hips and legs. This means all standing poses and their several variations. This must include balancers that challenge and static squats (that work the hips) and dynamic poses like the crow-walking pose (*kawachalanasana*) or dynamic squat (*druta utkatasana*). Backbends that tone the hips, such as the bow pose (*dhanurasana*), also service the navel centre. Challenging the oblique muscles along the waist with side planks (*Vasisthasana*) is important too. In India, there is a lot of timidity to attempt poses such as the latter that challenge the wrist. But you could start off with soft variations that help prepare you for this pose.

Further, breathing exercises (*pranayama*) like the victory breath (*ujjayi*) are ideal to calm the mind. Of all the *pranayama*, this is the most healing and grounding. It is also one of the few that may be done in any posture, including lying down. Meditation with focus on the *mooladhara* and geometric *mandala* with squares as the dominant feature may also be included. Regular practise is one of the surest ways of healing and grounding this high-energy sign.

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 the advice given here)



Happy baby pose
(*ananda balasana*)

Lie on your back. Fold either leg at the knee. Place palm on top of the foot/sole as shown. Ensure foot is parallel to the ceiling. Flare the knees away from the body, taking care to see that the forelegs are parallel to each other. Rest

the back fully ensuring hips have not raised up and off the ground. Hold for 15 seconds and progressively increase time in the pose up to a minute. Continue normal breathing throughout. To wind up, lift both legs up in the air, straightening them. Inhale deeply and exhaling, lower the legs to the ground.

Benefits: This pose uplifts mood; tones hips and legs; works the urogenital system; and prepares you for challenging forward bends.

Model: Mangala Pathak,
Harmony Interactive Centre
Photographer: Haresh Patel

The first day at school
The first time you rode the bicycle.
The first crush you had at thirteen
The first drama you got a part in
The first day at college
The first date you went on
The first kiss
The first time you proposed
The first job interview
The first board meeting you addressed
The first day after retirement

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HIS LADLE LOVE BY PRATIBHA JAIN

Colour plus

RANDHIR KASHYAP • GURGAON

An engaging series about silver men who wield a deft ladle in the kitchen

Colour plays a pivotal role in his creativity, whether it is at work or wielding the ladle over his stove. As he visualises the final colour of the dish, he makes a choice of certain ingredients. What to add and what to refrain from are all decided and inspired by colour. Like an artist selecting hues from the colour palette, 68 year-old Randhir Kashyap selects the various ingredients, putting together a delectable treat for the eyes and palette.

It is this sense of aesthetics coupled with a penchant for perfect taste that gives his life added zest. Talking to him, it becomes evident that his genius as a fashion and interior designer extends to cooking as well. A Punjabi from Old Delhi, he now resides in Gurgaon in a beautiful house where his special touch is evident in every nook and corner.

Namaste. Tell us something about your early years.

I was born and brought up in a joint family. Though our roots are in Lahore, I grew up in Old Delhi. I graduated with a bachelor's in law [LLB]. But my aspiration lay in fashion and food.

What is the first memory you have with regard to the kitchen?

I have many memories related to the kitchen in our home, considering that

interest in food was instilled in me at a young age. But the one memory that has always stood out is that of an incident when I was eight years old. My father was cooking dinner and I was observing the process of him putting together various condiments in the preparation. At one point, he covered the vessel with a lid so the steam would not escape. I was totally fascinated. It was a simple incident but left a deep impact upon me. If I am asked to draw that scene, I can sketch it in detail—the house, kitchen and that stove.

“The recipe for a good cook is a dash of patience, a sprinkling of adventure and liberal doses of openmindedness.... I believe that this is not just specific to cooking, but is relevant to living life as well”

I can see that you had an artistic fascination with food even as a child.

[Laughs.] Around the same time, I was standing in the kitchen one day watching my mother cook. She asked me to climb a stool and hand her the salt container from a shelf.

Accidently, another jar tumbled over and before anyone could gain control, chilli powder had fallen all over my face and eyes. I still remember how the incident upset my mother to tears.

Oh no! Did that incident scare you away from the kitchen!

Not at all. On the contrary, I went and hugged my mother since I could not bear to see her crying.

And how did you begin the exciting career graph as a designer?

Though I studied law, I moved into fashion design. I was always interested in clothes and fashion. I used to model and did some shows in star hotels. In college, I was popular for my sartorial style. I did not pursue law even though I was very interested in criminal law; instead I initially chose to repair lamp shades. My brother-in-law saw my enthusiasm for colours and silhouettes and inspired me to become a designer.

It is amazing how people become instrumental in our dreams. So where and how did you begin?

It all began in 1972, when I moved to Germany for two years. I was enamoured with how Indian clothes were showcased there as a fashion statement. I did some export work at that time. I received further exposure and leads during my travels to Italy and later to Portugal. I made good friends and they gave me great references and contacts. I guess my desire to have my dreams accomplished kept me going.

That is so true. And where did you enjoy working the most?



Himanshu Kumar

Many places, though most of my work experience has been in Europe. In Italy and Portugal, I worked with various fashion houses. In Italy, I worked with Fausto Sarli, the designer who specialised in embroidery for bridal dresses. I got involved in getting embroidery done on his garments from India. I worked with him from 1990 for about eight years. In Portugal, I gathered experience with many designers, the most popular being designer duo Manuel Alves and José Manuel Gonçalves. With them, I learnt not only fashion but interior design. They were both professors at the University of Lisbon. Working with them was a great learning opportunity and a priceless

experience for me. I also worked with João Rôlo, who was into haute couture as well as mass production. Needless to add, it was a challenge for me and also earned me good recognition in Lisbon. It provided me with an opening into designing high-fashion leather garments.

When did the store in Delhi open?

In 2005, I opened a store called Studio Europa in Defence Colony market where I showcased artefacts sourced from across the globe. Beginning with Brazil, Spain, Italy, Portugal, France and Belgium, I sourced rare pieces. I still remember the parrots from Ecuador made from burnt tree wood.

I had also sourced red candelabras that had 24-carat gold added for colour as well as black chandeliers. My best-selling pieces, though, were tulips from Portugal.

Tell us about your interior design.

I did some exciting interiors for high-end apartments for builders such as Supertech. In Cape Town, I did the interiors for a 64-storey building called North Eye. I also undertook the Krrish Housing Provence project in Gawal Phari and Manor One Platinum 321 for Kashish Developers.

Between all this, how did you get interested in cooking?



I think I inherited my love for cooking from my father. I learnt many preparations from him. But I truly refined my culinary skills during my stay in Italy. Whenever I invited friends and colleagues home, they would want me to treat them to some authentic Indian food. This was much before the Indian curry went global. I still remember how they all enjoyed my biryani—it was indeed a favourite.

Has there been any major change in your own cooking over the years?

Earlier, I was completely hands on and did all the cooking work on my own. Now I get the preparation done and the vegetables chopped in advance so all I have to do is the final cooking. Presentation is very important to me; so much so that sometimes I just focus on the colour of a dish and arrive at choosing the ingredients that are needed.

What would you say is the secret of good cooking?

Rely on your own taste buds. I also believe that the love for good food plays a part. Speaking about myself, I have always been open to experimenting with different cuisines. I also pride myself on identifying spices just by their aroma and taste.

Are you partial towards any particular ingredient?

What I really enjoy is adding wine while cooking to give dishes a robust colour. For example, I add red wine to some curries, white wine to mushroom dishes and cognac to desserts. Simply mouth-watering!

Can you share a quick example with me?

Of course; you must try my mushrooms cooked in white wine. Chop mushrooms into thin slices. Heat olive oil in a pan and add cloves,

peppercorns, bay leaf and chopped onions. Sauté until the onions turn golden. Add thinly sliced mushrooms along with salt and white pepper. Mix and add some white wine. Cover and cook for 15 minutes. Drizzle some cream and serve with steamed rice and green salad.

Delicious. Do you recognise what makes your work special?

I think I have a gift for colour. I am guided by colours. Whether it is clothes or apartments or food, a sense of colour is important. To me, it adds balance and proportion. For instance, a meal cannot be of all red food; there has to be a combination and balance of red, green and yellow dishes. I am also guided by the layout. Before I sit for a meal, I want the table arrangement to be in a certain manner. I have trained my domestic staff and they now do an exquisite job of arranging the cutlery and dishes.

That sounds interesting. According to you, what traits must one inculcate to become a good cook?

There is no guideline in particular. But I think the recipe for a good cook is:

- A dash of patience: Watch the alchemy of food at work as you combine various ingredients; it is fascinating.
- A sprinkling of adventure: Do not be afraid to try out that new ingredient and flavour.
- Liberal doses of open-mindedness: Be open to various kinds of food and taste.

I believe that this is not just specific to cooking, but is relevant to living life as well.

Finally, what vegetarian dish would you like to share?

I think you will enjoy trying out my baked brinjals.

Baked brinjals

Ingredients

- Brinjal: 1 large; sliced thinly
- Cornflour: 1 cup
- Oil: for deep frying
- Cheese: for topping
- Parsley and oregano herbs: for garnishing
- Salt to taste

For tomato paste:

- Fresh tomatoes: ½ kg
- Onion: 1; chopped fine
- White pepper: ¼ tsp
- Bay leaf: 1
- Olive oil: 1 tbsp
- Salt to taste

Method

Heat oil for deep frying in a pan. In a separate bowl, add 1 cup of water and salt to the cornflour and make into a thin batter. Dip the brinjal slices in this batter and deep-fry in the hot oil until golden. Set aside on an absorbent tissue. To make the tomato paste, chop the tomatoes into large chunks and blend them into a fine puree. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil and add the bay leaf and chopped onions. Sauté until they turn golden. Add the tomato puree, salt to taste and white pepper. Cook until the puree reduces and becomes a thick paste. Use a Pyrex dish for baking. Place the fried brinjal slices and tomato puree in alternate layers in the dish. Top off with a layer of grated cheese. Season with parsley and oregano. Bake in a moderate oven for 25-30 minutes or until the cheese turns brownish-golden. Serve hot.

*Pratibha Jain, an author and translator from Chennai, is the co-author of two award-winning books **Cooking at Home** with Pedatha and Sukham Ayu. Her area of specialisation is documenting Indian traditions through research, translation and writing*



Dr Dominic Benjamin
Consultant Geriatrician & Diabetic
Specialist for Older People,
Bangalore Baptist Hospital

Adult vaccination

Vaccines are most often discussed in the context of childhood vaccination to prevent common illnesses. Vaccinations have produced amazing results in the eradication of diseases such as polio and small pox. In a developing country like India, older adults are living longer and their numbers are increasing steadily. At the same time, they are exposed to a significant burden of infectious diseases that can be significantly reduced by timely vaccination.

Apart from protecting themselves, adults should consider the benefits of vaccination to the family and community. In most cases, a person who is vaccinated against a disease cannot spread the disease to other people. High rates of vaccination help protect those around us who cannot be immunised for health reasons (such as illness, age or allergy). This principle is known as herd immunity, or community immunity.

Adult vaccination is strongly recommended for adults above 50. Following are the vaccines available in India:

1. Pneumococcal Vaccine

- * Recommended for anyone above 50 with one of the following long-term health problems: heart disease, lung disease, sickle cell disease, diabetes, alcoholism, cirrhosis, leaks of cerebrospinal fluid or cochlear implant
- * Anyone above 50 with a condition that lowers resistance to infection, including lymphoma, leukemia, HIV or AIDS, kidney failure, a damaged or missing spleen or organ transplant
- * Anyone living in a nursing home or a long-term care facility
- * International travellers and pilgrims

2. Influenza Vaccine

Seasonal influenza vaccination—that protects against respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses—is recommended for adults every year. The vaccine usually changes every year due to newer strains of influenza. It is available in two forms—injectable and inhalable. For those above 50, the injectable vaccine is recommended.

3. Tetanus/Diphtheria and Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis Booster Vaccines

A combination vaccine against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough), DPT is given in childhood. A booster shot is needed every 10 years which is given in the form of a vaccine called Td.

4. Shingles (zoster) Vaccine

The vaccine is recommended for anyone who is 60 and above, even if they have reported a previous case of shingles, a painful localised skin rash caused by the varicella zoster virus.

5. Hepatitis A Vaccine

It is recommended for adults with chronic liver disease, bleeding disorders, food handlers, homosexual men and drug addicts.

6. Hepatitis B Vaccine

It is recommended for adults with chronic liver disease, HIV, haemodialysis patients, living with infected partners, homosexuals and drug addicts.

The message is clear: vaccination is useful in reducing morbidity, mortality and disease burden in the community. There's a need to bring about a cultural shift to improve the uptake of adult vaccination.

IT'S TIME FOR THE VACATION I ALWAYS PLANNED BUT NEVER HAD.

Now, nothing stops me
from doing the things
I love. I am vaccinated.



INDDTC1115003/12th May 2015



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Will the Gold Monetisation Scheme glitter?



Dinodia Photo Library

The economy will benefit hugely even if a fraction of hoarded gold can be monetised. **Dr Priya Desai** wonders if the scheme will find takers

The maxim 'all that glitters is not gold' rings true even today. Regardless of the number of precious metals that get used in crafting jewellery, gold continues to carry an undeniable sheen.

In gold we trust

Gold is precious. In India, gold is available in a variety of forms including jewellery, coins and

bullion; it occupies prime place in the asset holdings of individuals, families, financial institutions as well as religious institutions like temple trusts. These assets are passed on from one generation to another and continue to accumulate and grow in value. Today, the precious metal commands such a high price that most people can't afford to buy even small gold coins as an investment, but the irony is that they still strive to do so!

Government takes note

Our fascination with the yellow metal has now attracted the attention of the Central Government and the Reserve Bank of India. In recent years, banks and non-bank financial companies (NBFCs) too have floated gold loans. The Government is now considering a draft proposal of the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS)—announced in the 2015-2016 Budget—which aims to induce people

to monetise and unlock the value of their gold hoardings.

However, this proposed move raises some important questions: Why should the Government want to access privately held gold and put it to use in national interest? And why does it want to frame a scheme for this purpose? There is a rigorous rationale and urgency underlying this move.

The rationale

It may come as a surprise to many that India is one of the largest consumers of gold in the world. It has a share of 26 per cent of total physical demand for gold globally;

an estimate by the Federation of Indian Chambers and Commerce and Industry (FICCI), gold hoarding in India amounts to 20,000 tonne.

Supporters of GMS maintain that even if a fraction of this 20,000 tonne of hoarded gold is attracted, it will directly benefit the economy. The domino effect will unravel growth in the finance sector as well as the gems and jewellery industry, and will reduce import levels.

Salient features

GMS will replace the Gold Deposit and Gold Metal Loan schemes currently in operation in banks. This is how it will work:

- On maturity of the deposit, an option to receive the amount in gold or cash will be available. For example, if 100 gm of gold is deposited and the interest rate is 2 per cent, the maturity amount will be 102 gm of gold or equivalent cash at the end of the year
- Like fixed deposits, breaking of the lock-in period is allowed
- Purity verification of gold will be done by an internal accredited lab or a government-backed one
- Melting of the gold product will be done only after the approval of the depositor

Typically, Indians deposit their valuable gold assets in bank lockers where rents are always on the rise, resulting in a higher annual cost to safeguard it. GMS offers an opportunity to convert a dormant asset into an earning one

this demand is broad-based across all sections of Indian society. Large imports of gold amounting to 800-1,000 tonne per year are an indication of our insatiable appetite for gold. In 2014-15, India's imports of gold stood at 967 tonne, valued at \$ 34.4 billion. The domestic production of gold in India is insignificant (about 2 tonne) and recycling of gold is rare.

These imports address various needs such as the gold requirements of our voluminous gems and jewellery industry that exports its products and is estimated to employ 2.5 million people. Of course, the private demand for gold never wanes in good times or bad.

Gold imports are a matter of national concern because they adversely impact the current account deficit of the Government. According to

- Metal accounts will be opened in the name of people who have gold deposits
- Interest will accrue to the depositors of gold on these accounts
- Entry level deposits will be as minimum as 30 gm (upper limit is not known). Deposits can be in the form of jewellery, bullion or bars
- Banks have the freedom to fix interest rates
- Gold savings account will be for a minimum period of one year with rollout option in multiples of a year
- As per the draft norms, both principal amount and interest will be valued in 'gold'

- The purity verification process will take place in the presence of depositors
- There is no income or capital gains tax

Prima facie, GMS is an improvement over the earlier schemes that proved unattractive in accumulating gold deposits, which remained a meagre 15 tonne in 16 years.

GMS offers an opportunity to convert a dormant asset into an earning one. Typically, Indians deposit their valuable gold assets in bank lockers where rents are always on the rise, resulting in a higher annual cost to safeguard it. It is still unclear as to what the tax liabilities of depositors will be when physical gold is converted into gold deposits.

Breaking habits

Banks will play a central role in the scheme, as they will have to administratively gear themselves to create trust in depositors, and cajole them to hand over an important asset that is shackled by the chains of old habits and sentiments. As jewellery will be melted and reused, it's obvious that heirlooms and favourite jewellery will remain out of the purview of this scheme. Indians have preferred gold as a form of savings as it:

- Can be bought in small amounts when surplus cash is available
- Can be liquidated in small amounts when required
- Is light in weight compared to its value
- Can be easily passed on through generations

GMS will put to test assumptions that Indians are always spending on gold, have a sentimental attachment to it and, therefore, are unwilling to part with it. It would be pertinent to point out that a significant amount of the total annual expenditure of Indians is on gold jewellery and coins (8 per cent).

However, a comprehensive FICCI survey conducted in December 2014 titled *Why India Needs a Gold Policy* had two key findings that suggest otherwise. People's sentimental attachment to gold jewellery seems to have diminished over time. Also, standardisation in the physical market, especially relating to price and quality, emerges as a major requirement of gold buyers. These

RATIONALE BEHIND GOLD PURCHASES

Why do you buy gold?	% of people*
Safe investment	76.62
Adornment	52.54
Festivals	42.24
For dependent's marriage	34.54
Special occasions	30.99
Collateral	29.92
Gifts	25.30
Convert into jewellery	23.05
Towards specific objectives	12.17
Others	2.21

*Out of 4,846 people interviewed
Source: FICCI and World Gold Council Report

GMS will put to test assumptions that Indians are always spending on gold, have a sentimental attachment to it and, therefore, are unwilling to part with it

findings should work in favour of GMS. Despite these, if the scheme is to be a success, banks—which need to introduce new instruments such as metal accounts and metal loans—will have to be aggressive with their marketing campaigns.

By no means is India the only country that has experimented with the monetisation of gold. Turkey succeeded in monetising 300 tonne of gold in two years after building a strong market infrastructure for it. China too has a standardised gold policy, an efficient market supported by a

robust infrastructure. We can take a leaf from their experiences and make our scheme a success too.

Silver story

Fluctuations and volatility in gold prices are matters of concern. From 2008 to 2013, there was a 40 per cent rise. Since 2014, there has been a downward slide with a 1.7 per cent dip in the price of the yellow metal. In 2015, prices dropped a further 2 per cent, with a closing price of ₹ 24,695 for 10 gm (99.5 purity) as on 7 August 2015. According to the *Money Control* website, bullion has posted its seventh straight week of losses, which is gold's longest weekly losing streak since 1999. Will there be a turnaround? There are very few optimists.

Many silvers hold considerable gold assets and keep contemplating on how to distribute them among children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. Each piece of jewellery carries a unique story, and holds sentimental value. The new developments related to GMS

are unlikely to enthrall them. Will the scheme give silvers a new avenue to put their closely held assets to use? Will they be able to break off sentimental shackles to part with their gold? Only time will tell.

Maybe they will recognise the truth of Warren Buffet's words, "Gold gets dug out of the ground in Africa, or someplace. Then we melt it down, dig another hole, bury it again and pay people to stand around guarding it. It has no utility. Anyone watching from Mars would be scratching their head."

The author is an economist based in Mumbai

Experience

A second childhood

Wouldn't it be great to have a second childhood? To start life afresh? Because at Harmony, a magazine for people above fifty five, we believe that age is in the mind. Which is why, you should live young.

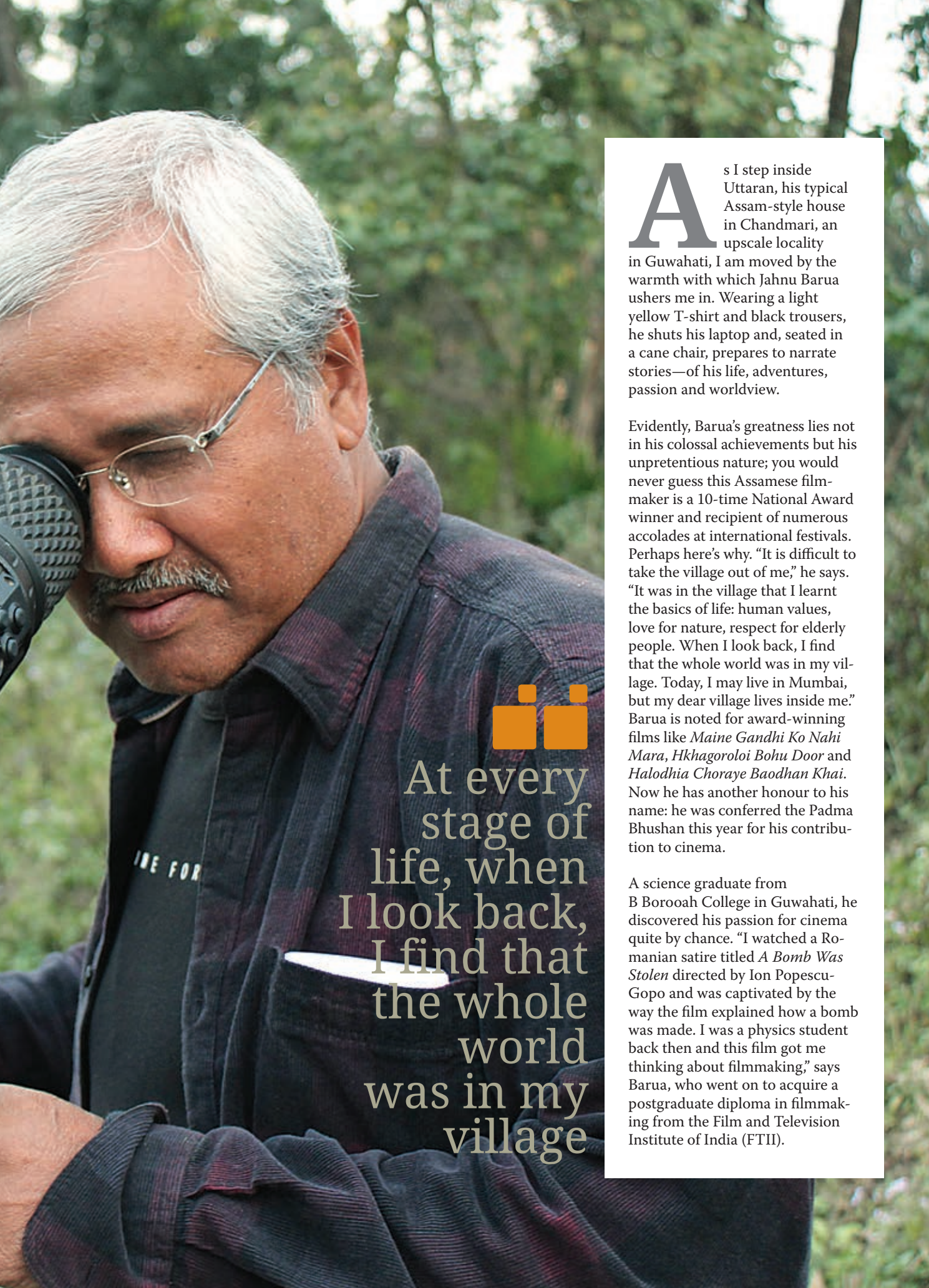
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celebrate age

Director's cut

Recipient of the Padma Bhushan this year, Assamese filmmaker Jahnua Barua discusses his craft and the social issues dear to his heart with Tapati Baruah Kashyap





As I step inside Uttaran, his typical Assam-style house in Chandmari, an upscale locality in Guwahati, I am moved by the warmth with which Jahnu Barua ushers me in. Wearing a light yellow T-shirt and black trousers, he shuts his laptop and, seated in a cane chair, prepares to narrate stories—of his life, adventures, passion and worldview.

Evidently, Barua's greatness lies not in his colossal achievements but his unpretentious nature; you would never guess this Assamese filmmaker is a 10-time National Award winner and recipient of numerous accolades at international festivals. Perhaps here's why. "It is difficult to take the village out of me," he says. "It was in the village that I learnt the basics of life: human values, love for nature, respect for elderly people. When I look back, I find that the whole world was in my village. Today, I may live in Mumbai, but my dear village lives inside me." Barua is noted for award-winning films like *Maine Gandhi Ko Nahi Mara*, *Hkhagoroloi Bohu Door* and *Halodhia Choraye Baodhan Khai*. Now he has another honour to his name: he was conferred the Padma Bhushan this year for his contribution to cinema.

A science graduate from B Borooah College in Guwahati, he discovered his passion for cinema quite by chance. "I watched a Romanian satire titled *A Bomb Was Stolen* directed by Ion Popescu-Gopo and was captivated by the way the film explained how a bomb was made. I was a physics student back then and this film got me thinking about filmmaking," says Barua, who went on to acquire a postgraduate diploma in filmmaking from the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII).



At every
stage of
life, when
I look back,
I find that
the whole
world
was in my
village



Barua receiving the Padma Bhushan from President Pranab Mukherjee earlier this year; with wife Gayathri and son Ozu

It's been a long and adventurous journey since, from starting his career in 1976, when he assisted Vikas and Aruna Desai on their Hindi film *Shaque*, releasing his first film *Aparoop*a in 1982, bagging the Padma Shri in 2003, and now the Padma Bhushan. He has directed 12 Assamese films and one Hindi film; has contributed to *Mumbai Cutting*, an anthology of short films in Hindi; and has a Hindi film in post-production.

Sharing his creative process, the director-producer-writer tells us, "I wake up at 5 o'clock every morning and write for two-and-a-half hours. I call it my 'idea bank', from where I have got stories and scripts for the 15 films I have made so far." He lets us in on another secret, a ritual he follows while taking an evening walk. "I sing loudly when I go out to walk. I repeat a particular song every day, and sometimes repeat one or two particular stanzas as I keep walking briskly." This, he says, exercises the hippocampus, a small region of the brain primarily associated with memory and spatial navigation. "Exercising the hippocampus makes my mental engagement more organised, and doing it regularly keeps my memory mechanism fit," explains Barua, who also happens to be a black belt in karate.

The celebrated filmmaker is a fount of intriguing stories, and I am more than happy to listen, prodding only to steer the conversation every now and then. Here are some highlights from our conversation:

Family

Jahnu Barua was born in 1952, the sixth among 11 children, in Japisojiya village in Sivasagar district in Upper Assam. "My father had read only up to Class VI," Barua tells us. "And although he began as a *mohurer* [subordinate employee who keeps records] in a tea estate, he rose to become the head tea house [production supervisor,

in tea parlance]. My mother was a typical village woman who commanded a lot of respect. One, she was an expert and much sought-after midwife; two, she was the village judge and arbitrator, and resolved petty disputes in the village. And, three, she was also a sort of doctor and would dispense numerous concoctions she made from medicinal plants that she grew in her little garden." His father was an equally inspiring person. "He used to buy us a lot of books. The day I got promoted to Class VIII, he gave me the Assamese translation of Ernest Hemingway's *Old Man And The Sea*. It changed my notion about life and work, and Hemingway's words, 'A man can be destroyed but cannot be defeated', became the catch-line of my life."

Barua is also full of praise for his wife Gayatri, with whom he has a son—her father was a child actor in the first Assamese film *Joimoti* (1935). "She has been producer and production controller for several of my films. She is very supportive and knows exactly what I look for," he says.

Childhood

Barua looks back at his childhood with fondness. "I spent a few years on the tea estate with my father, and then two years in the village. But the primary school I attended was destroyed in a fire one day, so I went with one of my sisters to a middle school about one-and-a-half kilometres away." Barua says he was especially fond of geography. "In those days, the school was just one large room with students of three classes separated by two ropes. When I was in Class III, Phukan Sir, the only teacher for all three classes, asked the students of Class IV to point out Pamir Knot [a mountain range] on the map of Asia on the wall. As all of them failed to do so, I raised my voice from the other side of the rope and said 'I can'. I took the cane from Phukan Sir, stood on his chair and pointed at Pamir. The others got caned, but they thrashed me when school was over!"

“I find the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren most interesting. The two generations come back again and again to the stories I try to tell”

Human relationships

“The world is about human relationships,” he insists. “I find the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren most interesting. The two generations come back again and again to the stories I try to tell. Both are innocent, both are unbiased and simple. The old man wants to give whatever he has gathered in life but today’s society ignores him. This leads to a disconnect in the transfer of knowledge and values. Likewise, young people are also innocent. But lack of good guidance kills the purity of the younger generation.” This relationship between grandfather and grandchild is best depicted in the trilogy, *Hkhagoroloi Bohu Door* (1995), *Pokhi* (1998) and *Konikar Ramdhenu* (2003). “The first deals with the innocence in the old man and the child. The second is about how unbelievably simple a child and an old man can actually be. And, finally, in *Konikar Ramdhenu*, I speak about their desire to live,” he explains

Assamese cinema

No other director has brought so many laurels to Assamese cinema, in both the national and international arenas, as Barua. He is the first Assamese director to win the ‘Best Film’ (*Halodhiya Choraiye Baodhan Khai*) and ‘Best Director’ (*Xagoroloi Bohudoor*) awards for the state. “The problem is that there are very few cinema halls in Assam,” he rues. “Moreover, the market is in the grip of distributors who are not interested in exhibiting Assamese films. Despite that, people are making good films in Assam, even if only a few.” Based in Mumbai, he has tried his hand at Hindi films. *Maine Gandhi Ko Nahi Mara* (2005)—his only Hindi film so far—has fetched him three awards; interestingly, all of them overseas. He, however, does not want to discuss his second Hindi venture, *Har Pal*, which is in the post-production stage.

Barua and TV

Very few, even in the industry, are aware of Barua’s contribution to the growth and development of television in India. Barua was among a group of television producers at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) under the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) programme, during which he made over 200 educational television programmes for rural India in 2,400 villages in six states, which included a large number of schoolchildren and teachers. He produced more than 30 short films

before taking to feature films, and even today finds time to make documentaries, short films and TV programmes.

Barua’s television productions include a few episodes of *Ek Kahani*, a 1997 Doordarshan serial produced by Manju and Jyot Singh; *Shruti-Madhur*, a Doordarshan tele-serial dealing with women’s empowerment; Assamese tele-serial *Jibanar Batot*, based on the eponymous Assamese novel; and a tele-film called *Tingkhang*, among others.

Pet cause

After cinema, the issue that preoccupies Barua the most is creating a separate time zone for the Northeast. According to him, while the sun rises in the Northeast about two hours earlier than on the 82.5°E longitude, people lose valuable time every day while waiting to match their routine with the rest of the country.

“The time difference between India’s eastern and western borders is about two hours and seven minutes. With only one time zone covering the entire country, there has been a huge imbalance in utilisation of daylight and dark hours, resulting in economic loss. The Northeast is situated farthest east of the IST longitude and has therefore suffered the most. As they are two hours ‘late’ doing everything, people in the region have lost their sense of priority. This has resulted in unproductive tendencies, more alienation, disturbance in the biological clock, degeneration of society, minimised sports and physical activities, and massive wastage of power,” says Barua, who has been vigorously campaigning for creation of a separate time zone for the region based on the 105°E longitude.

Is age a limitation?

The 65 year-old does not feel he is growing older. “I become more energetic with every passing day,” he asserts. “Moreover, I regularly engage in walking, meditation, exercise and yoga to keep fit.”

When not working on a film or documentary, the noted filmmaker is busy organising documentary festivals (he was president of the Indian Documentary Producers’ Association for three terms till 2009), interacting with the youth, and generating awareness about disability, environment, art and culture, and rural development. The question of age, quite evidently, does not arise! ❀



Legacy of laughter

Jamie Janumala, daughter of film comedian Johny Lever, tells **Deepa Narayanan** why being born to a celebrity dad may not necessarily imply a silver spoon, especially when working in the same profession

While growing up, Jamie Janumala, better known as 'Jamie Lever', knew she had a liberal sprinkling of her dad's talent. Her dad, Johny Lever, 57, is one of the most respected comedians in the Hindi film industry today. He also regularly performs live around the world.

We meet the talented 27 year-old at her Andheri home in Mumbai, where cutouts of Charlie Chaplin line the wall near the entrance. We are astonished at how closely she resembles her father and cannot help but wonder if Jamie's choice of career may have tipped the balance *against* her. "I admit I still get nervous about living up to, not only his reputation, which is very high, but his expectations of me,



Photographs courtesy: Jamie Lever

which are even higher,” Jamie says, as we sit down to a cup of tea in her study. Jamie didn’t have her career handed to her on a silver platter—quite the opposite! Johnny Lever has often admitted in interviews that he didn’t want his children to follow in his footsteps, considering the struggle he faced in the industry. “He was very clear that my brother and I had to complete many steps in our education—graduation, post-graduation, work experience, etc—before we set out to do what we wanted to,” reveals Jamie. “So even as I was sure he wouldn’t let me get into the industry, I did well in my graduation at Jai Hind College, Mumbai, and headed to London for my post-graduation in marketing



Johnny and Jamie in an episode of *Comedy Circus Ke Mahabali*; Jamie as a little girl with her famous father

communication from University of Westminster, and did well there too. But by the end of my stay in London, I was dead sure that if there was anything I wanted to do in life, it was acting.”

In 2012, when she returned from London, Jamie began approaching various comedy clubs in the city for a chance to audition. After performing as a main comic in at least one of these clubs, in December 2013, she auditioned for *Comedy Circus*—the popular reality-based television series renamed *Comedy Circus Ke Mahabali* for the season—and was chosen to perform for the whole season, winning rave reviews. Currently awaiting the release of her debut film *Kis Kisko Pyaar Karu*, opposite comedian Kapil Sharma, Jamie also shares the stage with her dad on his show, *Johnny Lever Live*, touring with him world over. Despite the burden of expectations, Jamie is slowly but steadily making her mark as a stand-up comedian and actor.

Excerpts from the interview:

I used to do stage shows back in school and college but I discovered my passion for acting in London. While living there, I joined a church and began singing in the choir. The leader asked me if I wanted to audition for a singing role in a musical he was doing. I told him I could act too; he got me an audition for both and I made the cut. I worked between 9 am and 5 pm daily, after which I took a two-hour ride in the Tube to get to rehearsals.



Jamie during a *Johnny Lever Live* show; celebrating a birthday with father Johny, mother Sujatha and brother Jessey

I would rehearse till midnight, take the two-hour Tube ride back home, and be back at work at 9 am the next day. I was exhausted but I couldn't have been happier. When we finally put up the play, I was amazed by the appreciation that flowed in. Soon, another play came about with another group and I knew I wanted to do nothing else all my life. I knew it was time to let my dad know.

Because he had struggled to find his place in the industry, my dad was very clear that if I was to make it at all in comedy or in the movies, it had to be on my own. He wanted his kids to go through at least some part of the struggle he went through. So he made no calls, asking anyone to 'take me on'.

After I returned from London, he asked me if I was still keen on pursuing comedy, and I said 'yes'. 'Then do something about it; go find some work,' he told me. I began contacting comedy clubs in the city, telling them I was a budding comedian. I was given an open slot for newcomers at The Comedy Store in Andheri. My first act went down well and I was called for main comic roles. There has been no looking back since.

He always talks of how he had no option but to stay in the film industry because he couldn't hone any other talent. 'I don't want my kids to be in that state of perpetual gamble,' he often repeats. Apart from my education, he ensured I also polished my soft skills. When I was 10, he realised I was musically inclined and enrolled me in Hindustani music classes. They helped; the USP of my stand-ups is that they are part-musicals. Now I take hip-hop dance classes and lessons in diction to polish my language, and anything else that tips the scales for me.

"My dad was very clear that if I was to make it at all in comedy or in the movies, it had to be on my own... he made no calls asking anyone to 'take me on'."

I think performing with my dad is the biggest platform a comedian can get. But he is a perfectionist and a very hard taskmaster. After I confessed my professional ambitions, he visited me during my last year in London and offered me a 10-minute slot on his European tour. 'If you want to enter the comedy business, prove yourself here,' he told me. 'And you had better be good, because people have spent money for their tickets and my reputation is at stake.' That was probably the most nerve-wracking show for me, performing in front of him, by myself. But I got a standing ovation. I have done more than 60 shows with him on *Johnny Lever Live*. Yet almost every day I am yelled at for not working hard enough or not doing my job well enough. It

is very tough to battle expectations like that. Sometimes, I am confused about whether he is my dad or my boss.

I have seen people's faces light up when they simply look at my father. That inspires me to some day achieve that too. I remember a 90 year-old Parsi woman who came up to me after a performance with my dad to tell me how happy she was

with the performance. To think that I contributed to her joy made me very happy.

Joking around is a responsibility, and my dad has certain principles about it. For starters, he keeps his jokes clean. And I stand by him. When I began, he cautioned me about giving in to the temptation of doing vulgar jokes and jokes with double entendre. We respect that there is an audience for that kind of humour too but people enjoy the clean comedy that we do. So we don't want to enter that market. We believe this talent is a gift from God, and we will not defile it in any way. ✨

What is 60?

The number of push-ups you have to do this week.

The number of movies you have to catch up on.

The number of bad jokes you cracked last month.

The number of times you told your grandson

to get away from the TV set and get a life.

The number of places you have to travel to.

What it's not, is your age.

At least not in your head.

Or in your heart.



If you're above fifty five, we believe Harmony is just the magazine for you. Filled with human interest stories, exciting features and columns, Harmony encourages you to do just one thing: live young.

harmony
celebrate age

:: cover feature ::



Facevalue

In today's image-driven world, the anti-ageing juggernaut appears unstoppable with products, treatments and services aplenty to put your best face forward, reports **Aakanksha Bajpai**

In his riveting 2012 book *Immortality*, British scholar Stephen Cave divides the quest to live forever into four distinct paths over the course of history: trying to stay alive with the aid of magic or science; seeking resurrection in the same physical form or an altered plane of existence; seeking solace through the concept of the soul that will live on beyond the death of our physical bodies; or becoming immortal through one's body of work or creative legacy.

The more metaphysical routes to immortality aside, the search for eternal life has become akin to an obsession with the scientific community today. From genetic modification and caloric restriction to antioxidants, stem cells, blood infusions and a cure-all anti-ageing pill, every possible avenue to stop the biological clock is being explored in laboratories world over. Interestingly, in June, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) heard arguments from a team of doctors and scientists to approve anti-ageing drugs as a new pharmaceutical class. The subtext is clear: ageing is now being viewed as a disease that can be *cured* rather than a natural process that will run its course.

Meanwhile, even as researchers continue to search for ways to alter the core, cosmetology and dermatology are working overtime on the exterior.

The market

While the politically correct are quick to deride 'the beauty myth', in today's image-driven world, appearances definitely count. As do the numbers being raked in by 'anti-ageing' products and services. According to *Anti-Ageing Market—Global Industry Analysis, Size, Share, Growth, Trends, and Forecast 2013-2019*, a report by US-based Transparency Market Research, the anti-ageing market is growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 7.8 per cent and is estimated to be worth \$ 191.7 billion by 2019.

The report also states that countries like India, China, South Korea and Japan will attract maximum sales for products and devices. Further, data released by Euromonitor International in 2012 estimated the market for anti-ageing products in India at about ₹ 1,200-1,400 crore—and growing at a rapid clip.

"The beauty and wellness industry today is a very scientific and technology-driven industry," affirms Vandana Luthra, founder, VLCC Group, an Indian multinational with operations spanning 300 locations in 143 cities and direct company-managed operations in 14 countries. "Companies such as ours are betting big on R&D, which will drive innovation and be the differentiator."

On offer

Today, a bouquet of anti-ageing products, treatments and services is on offer to help you put your best face forward. What distinguishes them is their level of invasiveness. While completely non-invasive techniques include creams, serums and facials, minimally invasive techniques comprise BOTOX, fillers and platelet-rich plasma (PRP) skin rejuvenation, invasive techniques include body contouring, liposuction, lipofilling, scar revision and obesity surgery.

The advantage of non-invasive or minimally invasive treatments is that they do not involve downtime, as Dr Jamuna Pai, founder, Blush Clinics Pvt Ltd, with a presence in Mumbai, Pune and Delhi, points out. “Non-surgical procedures give almost instant results but the downside is that the results are temporary and involve repeated visits to the doctor, which could be twice a year. Invasive procedures definitely give long-lasting results but, of course, involve the risks of surgery and anaesthesia.” Dr Chaitali Gandhi, consultant dermatologist and cosmetologist at Mumbai-based Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital (KDAH), also attests to the upside of non-invasive procedures. “A patient with a tight schedule can even come in during lunch and do a procedure,” she says. “We always update ourselves on the latest procedures and have the latest machines and technology.”

That said; let's take a closer look at some popular options available in India today:

- **Creams and serums:** Every new day brings a new cream or serum (for day and night) that promises to banish our wrinkles. While the jury's still out on the efficacy of most of these products other than sun protection and moisturising, their popularity remains unquestioned. Hot brands in this segment include Olay, Ponds, L'Oréal, Garnier, Revlon, Nivea and Lakmé, along with higher-end products from luxury companies like Estée Lauder, Lancôme, Clinique, Kiehl's and La Prairie, among others.
- **Therapeutic peels:** Available in different formulations for different skin types, peels tackle pigmentation, dullness and fine lines while exfoliating and hydrating the skin, giving it an instant glow. Options range from simple fruit peels to more exotic concoctions with ingredients like seaweed and collagen and the advanced 'oxy jet peel', where a supersonic two-phase jet with micro-droplets of liquid and oxygen works to brighten the skin. Some peels may require more than one session.



Vandana Luthra,
founder, VLCC Group

“Given its relatively low entry barriers, the beauty and wellness industry has seen a proliferation of smaller players and mom-and-pop shops. Quality is definitely an issue as there is no standardisation, no certification, often poor hygiene and a lack of trained professionals to administer treatments”

- **BOTOX and fillers:** Minimally invasive ways to treat severe lines and wrinkles, BOTOX and fillers are rated as the most popular treatments today. Prepared from botulin (a protein produced by bacteria *Clostridium botulinum*), BOTOX is injected into muscles, blocking signals from the nerves and inhibiting the ability of the muscles to contract—this causes wrinkles to relax and soften. Most often used on the forehead, crow's feet, brow and frown lines, it generally requires repeat sessions every six months. Meanwhile, fillers are specialised injections with hyaluronic gel that help restore facial volume, re-contour the face, correct the drooping angle of the mouth,

augment the cheek and lip, and even work on the nasolabial folds. Repeat sessions are required every year or so.

- **Mesotherapy:** This procedure involves multiple tiny injections of various pharmaceuticals, vitamins, peptides and hyaluronic acid into the mesodermal (subcutaneous) layer of the skin. It has multiple applications, from face or neck rejuvenation to hair loss treatment, weight reduction and body contouring. “The treatment helps improve the texture and complexion of the skin,” says Dr Rekha Sheth, founder of the Mumbai-based YUVA Clinics. “For patients with a low threshold for pain, a technique called mesoporation is also available.”
- **Thermage:** This non-invasive procedure uses radio frequency (RF) to heat underlying collagen-rich areas of the skin. This enhances the body’s own renewal processes to tighten and rejuvenate the skin and encourage the creation of new collagen over time. The results of this single procedure become increasingly apparent over time and last for about a year. It works for the full body, including neck, eyelids, face, abdomen and thighs.
- **Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) skin rejuvenation:** Better known as the ‘vampire’ facelift, this increasingly popular technique involves the reinjection of platelet-rich plasma—derived from the patient’s own blood—back into the skin of the face, as multiple micro-injections. The growth factors present in that serum help minimise the appearance of wrinkles and scars.
- **Thread-lift:** In this non-surgical procedure, polydioxanone threads are injected under the skin to remodel collagen. It helps tighten skin, reduces acne scars and stretch marks, and enables skin rejuvenation.
- **Facelifts:** Facelifts straddle the line between invasive and non-invasive treatments as they can be done both ways. The non-invasive technique eschews the scalpel for radio frequency, ultrasound or a combination of both to reduce fine lines around the eyes, nasolabial folds, jowls and perioral lines.
- **Liposuction:** This invasive treatment to remove unwanted fat from the body involves attaching a cannula (tube) to a vacuum pump and inserting it into the areas of fat to be removed.

Experts say an ideal candidate for the treatment is someone with a steady weight who is within about 20 per cent of their ideal weight.

- **Lipofilling:** Also known as fat transfer or fat grafting, it’s a three-stage procedure to fill up facial features, breasts, buttocks and other body parts from a person’s own fat. First, excess fat is taken from a body part through liposuction. Then, the fat is filtered to separate blood, oil



Dabho Ratnani

Dr Jamuna Pai,
founder, Blush Clinics Pvt Ltd

“Non-surgical procedures give almost instant results but the downside is that the results are temporary and involve repeated visits to the doctor, which could be twice a year. Invasive procedures definitely give long-lasting results but, of course, involve the risks of surgery and anaesthesia”



Dr Charudatta Chaudhari,
consultant - plastic surgery, KDAH

“People who are happy in life do not age much compared to those undergoing a lot of stress. If you can fight the stress and the physiological changes it brings in the body, the ageing process will be very slow. Thus, stress management and diet are very important”

and local anaesthetic from the cells. In the third stage, fat cells are injected through a fine cannula to the desired place where more fat is required.

- **Scar revision:** There are many techniques for this. Chemical reconstruction involves the use of lasers to resurface deep scars. The dermaroller technique uses special rollers with needles for collagen induction, skin rejuvenation and reduction in scars and stretch marks. And in scar

How bizarre does it get?

Crazy international fads that have us gobsmacked

- **Snail facial:** Snail gel contains mucus secreted by snails, which is said to repair and regenerate skin.
- **Placenta facial:** Placenta is rich with nutrients, minerals, amino acids and proteins, which are said to help in skin rejuvenation.
- **Geisha or bird poop facial:** Droppings of a nightingale native to Japan are said to help whiten the skin, balance skin tone and treat hyper-pigmented skin.
- **Leech facial:** Leeches placed on your body start sucking your blood and eventually drop off. This therapy, which dates to medieval times, is said to help cleanse the blood, heal skin grafts and restore circulation.
- **Sperm gel facial:** The antioxidants in sperm are said to diminish wrinkles, smooth skin, and help tame and prevent pimples.

revision surgery, surgeons perform cosmetically accepted surgery on post-burn, acne or post-surgical scars.

- **Obesity surgery:** Known as bariatric surgery, it is considered after repetitive failure of non-surgical weight loss methods for people with a body mass index (BMI) of 37.5 kg/m² or people with a BMI of 32 kg/m² with illness related to high weight. Even after a successful procedure, the patient needs to make lifelong lifestyle amendments to maintain weight. The surgery can be performed laparoscopically or robotically.
- **Cosmetic dentistry:** Anti-ageing dentistry includes teeth whitening, porcelain veneers and crowns, dental implants to replace cracked, crooked and worn-down teeth, and even ‘smile lifts’ where teeth are repositioned to provide support to the upper lip, thereby lifting and tightening the face.

New and now

While tried-and-tested procedures and treatments remain client favourites, both established players and new entrants to the market are pushing the envelope to embrace new global trends and customise products.

“There are not only new skincare products but new gadgets, techniques, lasers and injectables being introduced in the cosmetic market almost every day,” says Dr Pai. “The latest trends include the use of stem cells for rejuvenation of not only skin, but hair and scalp, joints and any other organ that needs it; injectable skin brightening products for the whole body; new laser devices to remove scars with less pain and downtime; and new-age cosmetic surgeries that are painless and almost scar-free. For example, Blush offers the Coolsculpting procedure that helps target and treat stubborn fat layers without surgery and downtime.”

For its part, VLCC offers its own signature services. “We have something even better than the vampire facelift; the Cellular Matrix treatment, where we treat blood with Autologous PRP and a natural biopolymer called HA24 that helps mitigate the impact of ageing,” reveals Luthra. “For best results, an initial treatment of three sessions is recommended. Other offerings include the Gold Thread-lift, where an actual web of pure 24-carat, gold-coated threads is woven into the facial skin and underlying soft tissue; Comfort Pulse Technology, the newest generation of Thermage; and Stem-Cellogist TX Professional treatment, offered exclusively by VLCC. The company has also launched a range of high-performance skincare products called BelleWave. “The breakthroughs we have achieved include the extraction of cultured stem cells from a rare species of apple for use in our formulation, and the use of advanced encapsulation technology for time-release of ingredients into the skin,” she adds.

“Fibroblast culture is a recent development in anti-ageing,” shares Dr Charudatta Chaudhari, consultant - plastic surgery, KDAH. “Small skin biopsies are taken and fibroblasts are developed from these to be used as fillers for the same person. This is available only in selected centres in India.” And Dr Sama Rais, consultant dermatologist and cosmetologist, KDAH, adds, “We also offer non-invasive liquid facelifts; it’s a two- to three-hour process.”



Dr Rekha Sheth,
founder, YUVA Clinics

“The philosophy of pro-ageing involves ageing gracefully. In the West, earlier people wanted to look much younger than their age. But now, with the advent of the pro-ageing movement, they prefer to age gracefully. It is on the rise in India too. In fact, this is what we have always advocated—to have fresh, glowing, healthy skin”

“Newer anti-ageing and non-invasive procedures for skin tightening use radio frequency or ultrasound or a combination of both,” explains Dr Sheth. “Fractional lasers also improve texture and fine lines. These are high-energy laser beams that penetrate deep into the skin and help in collagen remodelling.”



Dr Sangeeta Velaskar,
vice-president and head, medical services and R&D,
Kaya Skin Clinic

“Consumers in smaller cities have become more aware about anti-ageing. According to our experience, we know they are more willing to experiment with different products and services to achieve the desired results. Owing to the penetration of technology, they are updated on the latest trends”

Meanwhile Kaya Skin Clinic, which has a chain of 101 clinics across India and 19 in the Middle East as well as 16 ‘skin bars’ in India, offers an Age Arrest System, which comprises advanced services and technologies like microdermabrasion, collagen-building and skin-tightening services. “These non-surgical solutions can be combined to address every single sign of ageing,” says Dr Sangeeta Velaskar, vice-president and head, medical services and R&D, Kaya Skin Clinic. “These include natural skin rejuvenation with PRP, intense clarity peel, fine thread contouring and Youth Renew Marvel with Thermage.” Kaya has also developed

Eat away your wrinkles

**Nutritionist, author and wellness expert
Namita Jain shares her anti-ageing
must-dos—and don’ts**

- Foods rich in antioxidants like vegetables and fruits prevent damage of cells by destroying free radicals in the body formed by sun exposure, stress, hormonal changes and pesticides.
- Cut down crash diets—they are short in essential vitamins and nutrients and will accelerate the ageing process.
- Drink at least six to eight glasses of water per day as it keeps the skin hydrated.
- Herbal and caffeine-free teas are good for you too.
- Avoid smoking and alcohol.

two specialised product ranges—Refine & Renew, and Youthfull Excell—to tackle signs of ageing and premature ageing.

In addition to all-India players, niche city-based players are also making a mark in this competitive market. For instance, Mumbai-based Sketch, established by dermatocosmetologist Dr Swati Srivastava and clinical nutritionist Dr Riddhesh Jani, offers leading-edge aesthetic and slimming treatments, including personalised masks and creams for different skin types and signature anti-ageing diets. “Recent developments in anti-ageing treatments include glutathione injections, which are extremely popular for full body rejuvenation and skin whitening; cryolipo technology for fat removal and body contouring; non-surgical thread-lifts that remodel your collagen and show fantastic results in double-chin reduction; stem cell therapy with the patient’s own stem cells for hair growth and hair fall; and laser-assisted lipolysis, the newest revolution in the body shaping market, which is a simple body toning and contouring technique, without incision or suction,” they tell us.

Proceed with caution

The side-effects of many of the treatments mentioned above are limited to temporary redness, peeling, swelling or mild bruising, with general precautions to be followed for a period of time before and after the treatment. Depending upon the procedure undertaken, these could include protection from sun exposure, avoidance of certain topical creams, blood thinners and salon procedures, and curtailing physical activities like gymming, yoga and swimming.

More significant, though, is quality control to ensure the absence of long-term side-effects. While established players strictly adhere to this imperative with trained dermatologists and FDA- and CE-approved equipment and procedures, there is no shortage of players with dubious antecedents and questionable training. "Given its relatively low entry barriers, the beauty and wellness industry has seen a proliferation of smaller players and mom-and-pop shops," rues Luthra. "Quality is definitely an issue as there is no standardisation, no certification, often poor hygiene and a lack of trained professionals to administer treatments."

"In all these treatments, it is very necessary that the doctors know what they are doing and are well aware of the strengths and shortcomings of their machines," underlines Dr Rais of KDAH. "Side-effects can only happen if things are not done well. The right knowledge and right training are very important."

For her part, Dr Pai says, "India is still relatively new where quality control is concerned for the aesthetic market. The beauty industry is now being regularised and standardised. Till recently, there were no strict guidelines and protocols in place. It's only for a few years that beauty and medicine have merged, making it essential for strict conduct codes to ensure there's no malpractice."

Broader base

While the industry continues to grow in quality and scale, so does its target audience—today, geography and sex appear to be no barrier for people flocking for anti-ageing treatments. "The market for anti-ageing services is growing rapidly in Tier II and Tier III cities," says Luthra. "Our Cellular Matrix and Gold Threadlift services, apart from the metros, are much in demand in Jaipur, Bhopal, Indore, Raipur, Agra, Baroda and Vijayawada, to name a few cities."



Haresh Patel

Dr Sama Rais, consultant dermatologist and cosmetologist, KDAH

"In all these treatments, it is very necessary that the doctors know what they are doing and are well aware of the strengths and shortcomings of their machines. Side-effects can only happen if things are not done well. The right knowledge and right training are very important"

Dr Velaskar confirms this trend, saying, "Consumers in smaller cities have become more aware about anti-ageing. According to experience, we know they are more willing to experiment with different products and services to achieve the desired results. Owing to the penetration of technology, they are updated on the latest trends."

Another trend is the increasing number of men who are opting for treatments. "In the past, men used to find it embarrassing to talk about skincare but now with increasing awareness and availability of a lot of procedures with no downtime, a lot of



Dr Swati Srivastava, dermatocosmetologist, and **Dr Riddhesh Jani**, clinical nutritionist, *Sketch*

“A lot of bizarre treatments are becoming popular because of celebrities endorsing them and marketing them without any trials undertaken. Such treatments create hype and the expectations of patients increase. And when they don’t get the desired results, they are disappointed”

men are opting for our treatments,” says Dr Sheth. Our respondents echo this across the board, with the ratio of men to women at their clinics ranging from 30-40 per cent. In fact, considering the surge in its male clientele, Dr Velaskar shares that Kaya has designed two anti-ageing products—Skin Energizing Cream and Multi-Action Skin Revitalizing Cream—especially for men.

Start and stop

All this begs the question: when does the quest for ageless beauty actually begin? And where does it end? The majority of dermatology and cosmetology experts—including some of our respondents—all reiterate the need to start young (as early as the

20s) to combat the signs of ageing with a regular skincare regimen and preventive products as well as mild services. As Dr Pai points out, “Rising beauty concerns, improving purchasing power and increasing influence of media are propelling the aesthetic market exponentially. With increased awareness, the youth has realised it is better to start treatments early in life to delay the signs of ageing from coming up.”

Ironically, while the younger generation becomes increasingly preoccupied with staving off the signs of time, a backlash is slowly becoming apparent in the West against the anti-ageing juggernaut. The growing popularity of the ‘pro-ageing’ movement—which urges us to accept our age and embrace it—is

Market surf*

Name of the procedure/ treatment	Indicative price	Frequency of sessions
BOTOX	₹ 15,000 onwards	1 session, must be repeated after 6 months
Fillers	₹ 22,000 onwards	1 session, must be repeated after 1 year
Facelift	₹ 360,000 onwards	1 session
Fractional laser	₹ 1,500 onwards	6-8 sessions
Laser hair reduction	₹ 1,600 onwards	6-8 sessions
Liposuction	₹ 130,000 onwards	1 session
Pigment laser	₹ 1,500 onwards	6-8 sessions
Peels	₹ 1,300 onwards	More than 1 session
Radio frequency/skin tightening	₹ 3,000 onwards	6-8 sessions
Thread-lift	₹ 6,000 onwards	1 session, may need maintenance sessions as it starts wearing off
Thermage	₹ 6,000 onwards	1 session, may have to be repeated after 1 year

* All the information above is indicative. Actual prices and number of sessions depend on various factors like part of the body to be treated, skin type, and degree of severity of problem to be treated.



Haresh Patel

Dr Chaitali Gandhi, consultant dermatologist and cosmetologist, KDAH

“Our consultation involves taking a very detailed medical history of patients where we address the problem, how we will treat it and what they can expect. We counsel patients and run them through the steps of the procedures. With our holistic approach, we have a pretty good success rate”

is testament to this. Buoyed by scientific research that establishes that age satisfaction brings a host of physical and emotional benefits, famous pro-agers, including actors Jamie Lee Curtis and Helen Mirren, are urging their fellow silvers to shed their obsession for youth and live life to the fullest. For instance, Curtis wrote a piece for the *Huffington Post* a couple of years ago deriding the term anti-ageing, author Marcia Newman has released an acclaimed book titled *Five Gifts of Pro-Aging* that celebrates the ‘grey-roots’ movement, and make-up artist and model Cindy Joseph has released a pro-age cosmetic line under the Boom brand that seeks to enhance the silver visage rather than erase the years behind it.

BOTOX and fillers are the most popular anti-ageing treatments today

Hareesh Patel

While pro-ageing is yet to become a clarion call in India, there are takers aplenty for a more holistic view. “The best make-up anyone could wear is a smile!” says Dr Chaudhari of KDAH. “People who are happy in life do not age much compared to those undergoing a lot of stress. If you can fight the stress and the physiological changes it brings in the body, the ageing process will be very slow. Thus, stress management and diet are very important.” Nutritionist, author and wellness expert Namita Jain echoes this, saying, “A healthy diet can prevent the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.”

The choice is yours

All considered, though, whether one chooses to face the march of time naturally or take the help of technology, labels like ‘anti-ageing’ and ‘pro-ageing’ are just that—labels. Our paths are much more unique, and individual. “I believe beauty and

ageing are very personal concepts and cannot be generalised,” says Luthra. “Every person is beautiful, and should do what makes them feel beautiful and empowered. If a facelift makes you feel beautiful or confident, so be it. Why worry about what others think?”

Indeed, ‘personal’ is the keyword here, one reiterated by Dr Pai as she quotes from her new book, *No One Has To Know*. “To embrace ageing in its entirety without addressing it at *all* is a very personal conversation you need to have with yourself, and whether you should or shouldn’t use advanced anti-ageing techniques is entirely up to you. You have to always remember why you are doing it in the first place: to make yourself happy. Embrace your decade. Love yourself. Because even when you use the most sophisticated anti-ageing treatments that exist, without self-acceptance and self-love they are of no use.” ✨

What speeds up ageing?

You're only as young as your lifestyle, writes **Jamuna Pai**

Skin is a tattletale. It usually tells people things you don't always want them to know. It could tell your clients that you pulled an all-nighter on the presentation you are making before them. It could tell your spouse that the fight you had kept you up all night. It could tell a trained dermatologist or cosmetologist that you have dandruff without them even checking your scalp. Skin also tattles on the life you are leading: a smoker has a lot more pigmentation or patchy skin, and is more wrinkled than say his or her own brother or sister from the same gene pool. No one gossips more than skin. You can keep it quiet with make-up sometimes, but that's neither a smart answer nor a long-term one.

Skin also reflects your inner turmoil—your PCOS, your hormones, your stress levels. Having treated thousands of clients over the last twenty years, I now feel that I can look at anyone and tell if they are stressed, if something is worrying them, or if they're happy or in love. The skin and the eyes radiate truth.

Of the many reasons we age, many are because of us. Not because of our genetic inheritance or because we're becoming older but because of what we do—consciously or unconsciously—to ourselves....

The 'Ageing Maths' game

Zoom.

Life in the fast lane isn't all bad. High living can be fun. But it can also speed up more things than you may like. There are so many things that we do on the treadmill of life that age us and even if stepping off it is not a choice we can always make, we could delay the onset of many visible signs of ageing by just making a few alterations.... These changes will also increase the overall quality of your health, help in the prevention of heart disease and diabetes as well as assist in weight management.

To give you a better idea of how your lifestyle and habits affects your skin, let's play a game. Let's call it the 'Ageing Maths' game. To make it interesting, for every point below, add one to two years to your current age to get your final 'ageing age'.

Do you wear sunscreen every day? If not, add two years to your age.

Does heavy stress take over your life?

If yes, add two years to your age.

Do you think you have been eating 'ageing' foods?

If yes, add one year to your age.

Do you get enough sleep? If not, add one year to your age.

Are you drinking enough water? If not, add one year to your age.

Are you a heavy drinker? If so, add one year to your age.

Do you exercise? If not, add a year to your age.

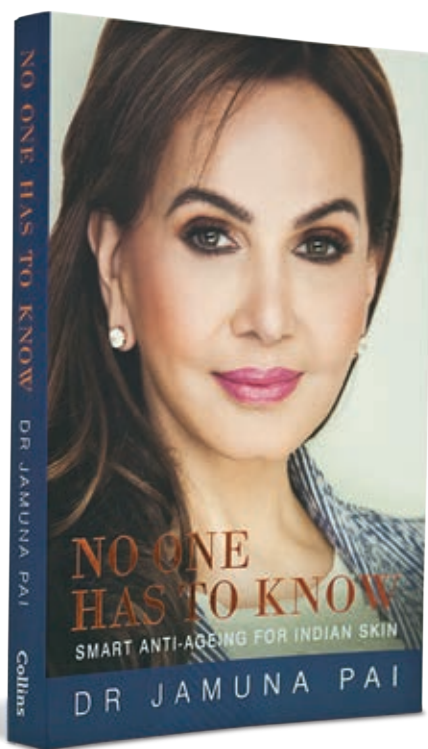
Do you take care of your skin on a daily basis, both at night and during the day? If not, add one year to your age.

Are you a smoker? If yes, add two years to your age.

To find out your 'ageing age', add your actual age (A) to the additional years you have added for every habit that ages you (B) mentioned earlier.

So how old are you really?

Needless to say, lifestyle-related ageing does not happen always in this precise, mathematical manner. And even if it did, your genes will come into play even if you are guilty of all the things above. So if you're forty-five and have an ageing lifestyle and feel you still look your age when you look in the mirror, you're right. The point of the Ageing Maths game is to simply warn you to never underestimate the impact of your lifestyle on the ageing process.



Extracted from No One Has To Know by Jamuna Pai (Collins; ₹ 299; 244 pages)

JOURNEY

The Irish chapter

High on literary contexts, connections and trivia, Ireland is a book lover's paradise

✦ 📖 Susheela Nair



As I amble around the streets of Dublin, the words of Belfast-born poet Louis MacNeice echo in my head...

*This never was my town,
I was not born or bred
Nor schooled here and she will not
Have me alive or dead
But yet she holds my mind
With her seedy elegance,
With her gentle veils of rain
And all her ghosts that walk
And all that hide behind
Her Georgian facades.*



Trinity College, the hub of literary luminaries



The sight of the first editions of Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Dubliners*, Stoker's *Dracula*, an 1804 edition of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and an 1899 edition of Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* at the Gallery of Writers gives me an instant adrenaline rush

In this capital city of Ireland, no matter where you go, a prolific and rich literary heritage is palpable. With four Nobel laureates—W B Yeats, George Bernard Shaw, Samuel Beckett and Seamus Heaney—this tiny island's contribution towards literature is remarkable. No wonder then, that Dublin was dubbed the UNESCO City of Literature in 2010. As I embark upon a literary sojourn to uncover unknown facets of legendary wordsmiths such as Shaw, James Joyce, Beckett, Jonathan Swift, Heaney and Yeats, I feel like a student of literature.

With statues of authors popping out of nowhere and bridges and streets named after them, literary ghosts are discernible everywhere in Dublin. While you'll run into poet-novelist Patrick Kavanagh staring into the still waters of the Grand Canal, in Merion Square Park you'll find a statue of the legendary Oscar Wilde (he was

born across the street) sprawled on a boulder and etchings of his immortal lines such as, "I can resist everything except temptation". At the intersection of North Earl Street, you'll encounter a statue of James Joyce in his signature circular spectacles and walking stick. The words of Yeats, Shaw, Beckett and Heaney echo all around the town. As we step into the portals of Dublin Castle—the seat of the UK's administration in Ireland till 1922, and now an Irish government complex—our guide John Byre explains that Edmund Spenser wrote a major part of his epic poem *The Faerie Queene* here.

Our next stop is the Dublin Writers Museum housed in a restored 18th-century Georgian mansion on Parnell Square. Formerly the home of John Jameson, a member of the family renowned for its Irish whiskey, the museum boasts lavish plasterwork and decorative stained glass windows.

It houses an amazing collection of rare editions, manuscripts and literary memorabilia. The hall downstairs with modern paintings of writers leads to an outdoor Zen garden with a café at the rear. The museum's basement restaurant, aptly named Chapter One, is one of the city's best, with delectables such as tomato plate with smoked buffalo mozzarella, feta cheese mousse with salt baked beetroot, fresh blackberries with baked custard and gingerbread. Just next door is the Irish Writers' Centre, where the Irish Writers' Union, the Society of Irish Playwrights, the Irish Children's Book Trust and the Translators' Association of Ireland hold meetings and conduct business. It's also a meeting place for scribes.

The grand Gallery of Writers houses James Joyce's piano, and the portraits and busts of Irish writers, among which the most impressive is John B Yeats's portrait of George Moore.



The churchyard of Drumcliffe Church is the final resting place of W B Yeats; opposite page: Dublin Castle where Edmund Spenser worked on *The Faerie Queene*; James Joyce's piano in the Dublin Writers Museum

pen in another room, what appeals to me the most is Samuel Beckett's black Bakelite phone equipped with a red button 'to exclude incoming calls'!

On my way back, I reflect upon the nuggets of information the curator has shared with us. No textbook ever taught me that Oscar Wilde was a promising boxer while he was studying at Trinity College. Nor did I know that Samuel Beckett was born on Friday the 13th in April 1906. Another startling revelation was that James Joyce, who was at the forefront of the modernist movement, suffered from astraphobia—the fear of thunder and lightning—which influenced his writing to a large extent.

Later, as we head to the 40-acre Trinity College, the very thought that Oscar Wilde, Samuel Beckett and Jonathan Swift might have treaded the cobbled pathway as undergraduates gives me goosebumps! A sculpted Oliver Goldsmith—legendary novelist, poet and playwright—standing on a pedestal by the main arch welcomes us. We also find a sculpture of famed sculptor Henry Moore lazing under a tree. The library's Long Room has a hushed reverence about it. At 213 ft, this, presumably one of the world's most spectacular reading rooms, is a vast space with stacks and stacks of vintage texts. Marble busts line the room, the finest being that of Jonathan Swift. A long queue deters me from taking a close peek at the *Book of Kells*, an ancient rendering of the first four gospels. However, the level of detailing in the lettering and illustrations is so bright that it doesn't escape my notice.

Our next literary stop is the James Joyce Centre located in a beautifully

From room to room I follow the Irish literary trail that dates as far back in time as the 16th century when Spenser wrote *The Faerie Queene* inspired by the time he spent on the Emerald Isle. I come across a number of first-edition books, some of which carry notes and inscriptions by authors. The sight of the first editions of Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Dubliners*, as well as Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, in addition to an 1804 edition of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and an 1899 edition of Oscar Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, gives me an instant adrenaline rush.

As Robert Nicholson, curator of the literary museum, shepherds us around, I find plenty of memorabilia. I stumble on poetess Mary Tighe's writing desk, a bronze head of George Bernard Shaw, the roll-top desk of famed Irish poet Austin Clarke and a teddy bear owned by novelist Mary Lavin. Peering through a glass top at the letters and postcards sent by writers offers me insight into their lives and evolution as writers. Though there are delightful ephemera like playwright Kate O'Brien's Remington Portable and short story writer Frank O'Connor's black fountain



Lissadell House
where Yeats spent
his poetic weekends

Each pub we visit has a literary association; while Toner's was Yeats's choice, The Palace Bar was frequented by Brendan Behan... just off Grafton Street is Davy Byrne's Bar, a favourite with Joyce, which he made immortal with a mention in his *Ulysses*

restored Georgian townhouse. It gives us an insight into the life and works of Joyce, and seems more like a study centre than a museum. In the stunning park next to St Patrick's Cathedral—founded by Jonathan Swift—is the writers' walk with a series of plaques paying tribute to some of Ireland's greatest authors, including George Bernard Shaw, Samuel Beckett, James Joyce, Oscar Wilde and Jonathan Swift, among others.

We immerse ourselves further in Dublin's rich literary heritage while quenching our thirst with the Literary Pub Crawl—a tour that takes us through the favourite watering holes of literary legends. We start at Duke Pub on Duke Street, from where we head to other haunts while two actors recite verses and regale us with theat-

rical performances and entertaining tales about Joyce, Beckett, Brendan Behan, Oscar Wilde and other literary giants, even as we tremble in the biting cold. Each pub we visit has a literary association; while Toner's was W B Yeats's choice, The Palace Bar was frequented by Brendan Behan. Located just off Grafton Street on Duke Street is Davy Byrne's Bar, a favourite with Joyce, which the writer made immortal with a mention in his *Ulysses*. We also learn that Beckett used to live just above this pub as a student at Trinity. The tour culminates with a literary quiz.

Our next port of call is the impressive Lissadell House, home of the Gore-Booth family, which was once Yeats's weekend home. Situated in Lissadell, 12 miles from County Sligo, it's in

close proximity to the majestic Ben Bulbin table mountain, and figures prominently in Yeats's poems. Next, we proceed to Drumcliffe Church, located at the foot of the Ben Bulbin. The church sits atop the 6th century foundations of a monastery. The round tower on the main road dates from the earlier building. The peaceful churchyard here is the final resting place of W B Yeats. His grave is marked with a dark, modest stone. Buried alongside is his young wife, Georgie Hyde-Lees. The moving epitaph, "Cast a cold eye on life, on death. Horseman, pass by!" comes from his poem *Under Ben Bulbin*. Like his legion of fans, I pay tribute to the great legend whose 150th birth anniversary is being celebrated this year. There couldn't have been a better end to our literary sojourn. ✨



Mr Ramesh

Lullaby lady

Septuagenarian Nallammai Singaram never learnt music formally. The only songs she knows are the Tamil *thaalattu* (lullabies) her mother and grandmother sang to her as a child, which she in turn sang her children and grandchildren to sleep with.

Unfortunately, four years ago she underwent thyroid surgery that drained the sweetness out of her voice and rendered it coarse. But thanks to sophisticated sound recording technology, this was hardly an obstacle when she decided to record this age-old knowledge for posterity. Having lived an austere life in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, the 73 year-old boldly stepped into a recording studio in October 2014. She made the first-ever recordings of 12 Tamil *thaalattu* that, until now, have only been passed down through oral tradition.

“Lullabies are not mere songs, sung to make a child sleep,” says Singaram. “They carry our history, culture, love, family pride, devotion, morals and more, in a language that is inseparable from our lives.”

Each song is tinted with dialects unique to the Sivaganga and Pudukkottai districts of Tamil Nadu, and ranges between two to four minutes. These include *Valli thaalaattu*, *Ramar thaalaattu*, *Thaatha-paati thaalaattu*, *Seervaraisai murai thaalaattu* and more, all guaranteed to take the native Tamilian back in time to a childhood scored by more rustic music. The mythological and moral significance of each song is recited by Tamil poet Avichi Krishna, and musician Jacob Samuel has created lilting melodies on the keys to back Singaram’s renditions.

music

“Today’s science reveals that the foetus senses sounds when in the womb,” says the discerning grandmother. “If that is so, isn’t it possible that infants can comprehend the messages of these songs? Our shrewd ancestors used these *thaalattu* as an instrument to sow virtue in the minds of their young ones.” Distressed at the ignorance of the new generations to their cultural identities, this is Singaram’s contribution to preserve the past for future generations.

—Natasha Rego



Rock STAR

Mumbai. Alongside, she displayed watercolour and acrylic works on paper. Akthar believes she managed to learn art late in life with a simple trick: Keep the mind open to possibilities. "For me, it was really a meditative experience," she says, explaining how her yoga practice fused into this new path. "I kept my mind open like a child, not expecting to fail when I decided on a particular project. Nor did I become complacent if it was a technique I'd tried before. It is very exciting to grow in your work just by watching over your mind, and its ready habit of inhibiting you with preconceived ideas."

art

The subjects of her work range from a simple fallen autumn leaf or a dragonfly perched fragile yet strong on a stem to elephants, tigers, cats and dogs. In fact, just before she prepared for the show, Akthar was commissioned to do 10 elephant

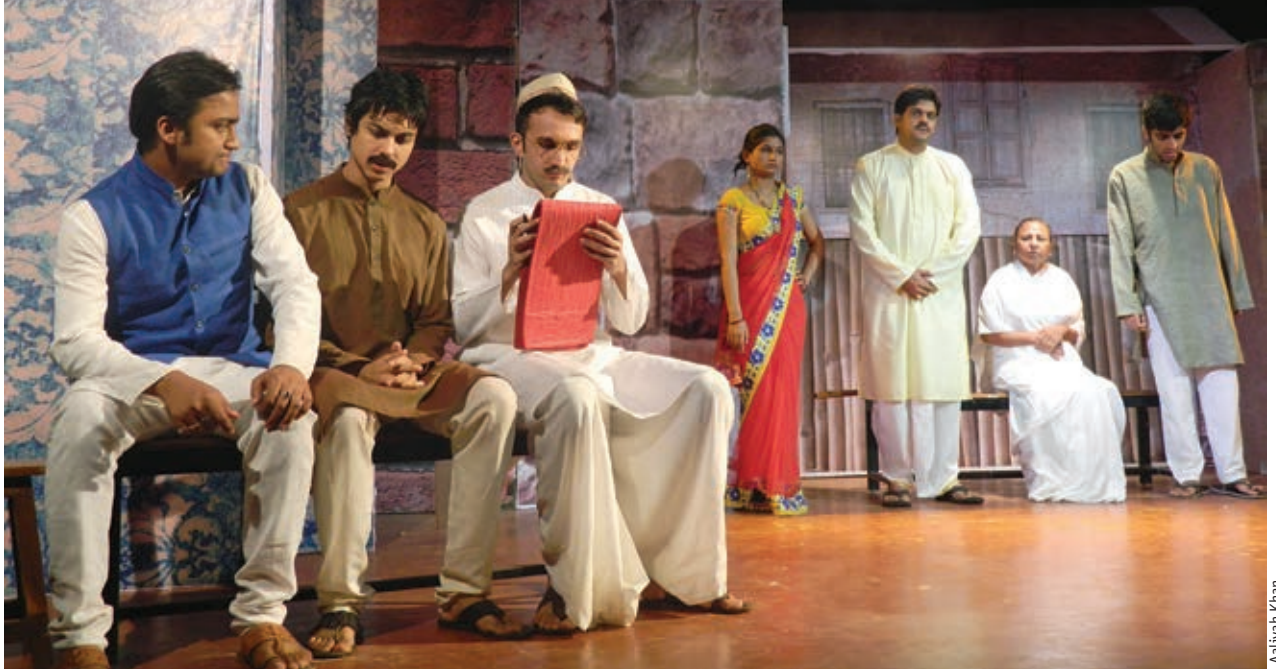


portraits for a training institute in UK called Elephant Connect, which wanted to gift them to its corporate clients. Another acquaintance has commissioned four Chinese brush paintings as a gift to her husband. "What excites me about my art is that there is an immediate connection with what I am creating; people are picking up what appeals to them, what they can enjoy looking at on a daily basis," she says. "It validates my self-belief." Look out for another show soon!

Shameem Akthar, our yoga columnist and author—including *Yoga for Silvers* published by Harmony for Silvers Foundation—held an unusual exhibition in August: *Nature Rocks*. The 52 year-old self-trained artist (she started painting and drawing just last year) put up over 100 "portraits of nature" on rock, from 1 inch to over 1 ft, at Yoga Kuteer, her studio in Bandra,

PREMCHAND REMEMBERED

To mark the 135th birth anniversary of legendary Hindi writer Munshi Premchand, theatre artists of the Ideal Drama and Entertainment Academy (IDEA) staged 135 short stories at a 10-day festival in Mumbai called *Prem-Utsav*. Beginning on 31 July, they performed an average of 13 plays a day at Sathaye College Auditorium, each story ranging between a few minutes to a whole hour. "We've been holding *Prem-Utsav* for the last 10 years as a festival like this reinforces our otherwise eroding literary heritage. Munshi addresses morality, culture, tradition...his teachings are still relevant today," affirms Mujeeb Khan, director of IDEA and *Prem-Utsav*. "It's a free festival. Anyone is welcome, because it's about preserving our literature and spreading awareness."



Aaliyah Khan



Designed by Jugal Mody

Interpreter of melodies

Can you imagine the cultural hub south Mumbai was 150 years ago? A multidisciplinary exhibition titled *Making Music Making Space*, held recently at the city's Kitab Mahal, helps us paint a mental picture. Using interviews, archival material, rare photographs, live recordings, audio and video installations, curator Tejaswini Niranjana takes us through a century of the rise and transformation of Mumbai's Hindustani classical music heritage. Towards the second half of the 19th century, performance venues sprang up across the city, from Girgaum to Dadar, complementing the residential and industrial complexes of the city's newest migrant settlers. Laxmi Baug, Brahman Sabha, Jinnah Hall and Trinity Club were some of the favourites. "But as the central and western suburbs began to grow by the 1950s, there was large-scale out-migration of Girgaumites to those areas, depriving singers of platforms and audiences," notes Niranjana, who collaborated with filmmaker Surabhi Sharma and architect Kaiwan Mehta among others for the exhibition.



IN TUNE WITH TODAY

Pankaj Mishra

Priyanka Singh discovers how veteran musician Tapas Das keeps the Bangla folk-rock scene alive

When I first heard the popular number *Bheegi bheegi si* from the Hindi film *Gangster*, little did I know that the electrifying music was originally composed by a 1970s Bangla rock band, Moheener Ghoraguli. While the song in the film bares the soul of a cliché, lovelorn romantic, the original lyrics dwell upon the ill-effects of television on the human mind: *Is the world growing smaller/ in the hands of this satellite-cable idiot box/ innocently placed in the drawing room, trapping our mind... the outline of faces blur/ but the addicted eye to the screen/ is like a moth to a flame... we're sitting together, watching/ we're together, yet alone/ you and me, in a new India....*

Over the years, several songs of Moheener Ghoraguli have been meted the same kind of treatment by the film industry. “Forget paying us, most of the time the filmmakers don’t even credit the band,” rues the band’s founder member Tapas Das.

We meet Das, now in his 60s, at his quaint apartment in Behala in south Kolkata. His acoustic guitar lies quietly against a wall scribbled with Bangla lyrics, while an old desktop and stereo system take up a smug corner. With his frizzy salt-and-pepper mane, Bapida, as he is endearingly called, reminisces about Moheener Ghoraguli, India’s first rock band. “The band was born out of the unrest and peasant upris-

music

ing that characterised West Bengal in the 1970s.” Das recalls the trips he made to Alipore and Dumdum prisons in Calcutta with his guitar to visit his revolutionary friend Gautam Chattopadhyay, who eventually went on to lead the band. “Those were heady times, rife with students, intellectuals and social activists supporting the CPI-ML revolution trying to overthrow the government. Monida [Chattopadhyay] was arrested several times for his alleged links to the Naxalbari movement.” However, like many young idealists of their time, Chattopadhyay and Das eventually lost their faith in the CPI-ML manifesto. “Instead, we explored a new way to nurse our anger against the establishment through song and

decided to start a band,” says Das, who, incidentally, is the only founding member living in India today. “Unlike the mainstream music of those days, we took up themes we felt strongly about: politics, poverty, injustice, love, loneliness and prostitution.”

Influenced by the music and message of The Beatles, Bob Dylan, Creedence Clearwater Revival and the likes, the band wrote, composed and sang its own songs. Their choice of combining western instruments with rural Bengali folk music, Baul, and rock music was rather unusual. They sang about issues faced by the common man in his everyday life. Their audience was sparse and very few recognised the musical reform they had set in motion. “We were not accepted by the audience because they only knew of music that came to them through the mainstream,” recalls Das. “Our instruments and our language couldn’t yet find a place in the people’s hearts even though we sang in Bangla.”

In its first instalment, Moheener Ghoraguli lived a short life of six years and put out three albums. “With no money and nowhere else to go, Monida and I were the only ones left in Kolkata while the others left the country to pursue other dreams.” But the duo never stopped jamming. Decades later in 1996, they found a way to revive the band and keep it going amid young, contemporary artists until Chattopadhyay’s demise in 1999. During this time, they produced some of their most dense music such as *Prthibita Naki* (1999) and *Take Jato Tarai Dure* (1999), and launched five albums, leaving future audiences with enough material to mull over.

Perhaps owing to the newfound consciousness derived from the age of information, Moheener Ghoraguli’s music has found relevance with the thinking musician of the country today. The band’s sound and message resonate with the current independent rock scene so much that



Moheener Ghoraguli: India’s first rock band

Led by the dynamic late Gautam Chattopadhyay, Moheener Ghoraguli (meaning Moheen’s horses) was formed in 1975 and comprised Tapas ‘Bapi’ Das (guitar, vocals), Abraham Mazumdar (violin, keys), Pradip ‘Bula’ Chattopadhyay (bass, flute), Biswanath ‘Bishu’ Chattopadhyay (drums) and Tapes Bandopadhyay (guitar, vocals), as well as Ranjon Ghoshal (design and presentation). Raja Banerjee joined the band when Tapes quit in 1978. Initially, they were known as Saptarshi, but later renamed themselves Moheener Ghoraguli—inspired by the poem *Ghora* (horses) by early 20th century Bengali poet Jibanananda Das.

it is now being recognised as decades ahead of its time. “When I judge music competitions around the city now, I find several groups singing our songs,” notes Das.

Today, Das heads a band, Moheen Ekhn, and is working on bringing out an album with new-age musicians, apart from mentoring young talent from Kolkata University. “The idea with Moheen Ekhn is to introduce our folk music into the mainstream and internationally, with influences of Latin American percussion and East European protest songs,” he shares. He is also in the final stages of preproduction for a Bangla feature film he has scripted, with eight songs already written, composed and recorded. He col-

laborates with his wife, documentary filmmaker Sutapa Ghosh, when they can agree on their creative opinions—“which is not too often,” he assures us cheerfully. In 2011, Das suffered a leg fracture. “When he gained consciousness, the first thing he asked me was, ‘Will I be able to perform on stage again,’” recalls Ghosh.

It is this innate passion that has kept Das going, for name and fame have long eluded him. “Moheener Ghoraguli now dictates the music of that period,” he says with satisfaction. “The influence of our music in today’s rock scene, rhythmically and lyrically, is quite profound...people old enough to be my grandchildren come to see me, enquiring about our music. What does that prove?” Enough said.

The culinary connection

In our June 2015 anniversary issue, we announced a Culinary Legacy Contest where we invited our readers to share a family recipe passed down generations. Here we feature the three best entries; each winner takes home a free copy of Indu Bokaria's *Recipes from a Diary*, a cookbook of Indian vegetarian recipes. Congratulations!



**Anita Badani, 50,
Chennai**

ADAD PAAK

This is a traditional Gujarati sweet dish that was taught to me by my grandmother, whom I lovingly called *Ba*. Though I have learnt various dishes from her, this is the most special because she insisted I learn this dish to perfection. This delicious, nutritive dish provides strength and warmth during cold winters. *Ba* would prepare it for me every winter, just as I do for my family today.

Ingredients

- Udad flour: 250 gm; coarsely ground
- Mawa (solidified milk): 250 gm; grated
- Gum crystals: 250 gm; small
- Dry coconut: 250 gm; shredded, lightly roasted
- Ghee: About 1 cup

For the dry fruit mix

- Almonds: 200 gm
- Piprimul: 200 gm
- Sunth (dried ginger) powder: 200 gm
- Nutmeg: 10 gm
- Cardamom: 10 gm
- White pepper: 10 gm
- Javantri (mace powder): 5 gm

For the sugar syrup

- Sugar: About 7 cups
- Saffron paste: ¼ tsp
- Water (enough to soak sugar)

Method

On a low flame, heat half the ghee in a heavy bottomed pan. Deep-fry gum crystals till they puff up. Drain. Crush into a fine powder. Keep aside. Strain the ghee. In the same pan, heat strained and remaining ghee on low flame. Add flour and extra ghee if required. Sauté till light brown in colour. Add *mawa*. Stir well. Keep aside.

For the dry fruit spice mix, separately clean and grind all the ingredients. Mix all the powders and keep aside. For the sugar syrup, boil sugar and water in a big pan on low flame. Cook till the sugar melts. Strain to remove scum. Add saffron paste and stir. Simmer till it reaches one-thread consistency and immediately add the coconut, sautéed flour-*mawa* mixture, powdered gum crystal and dry fruit spice mix. Stir well. Leave it to cool. Shape in the form of *laddoo* and store in an airtight container.



**Preksha Bothra,
18, Chennai**

PAANI KA ACHAAR

This is a pickle made with water (yes, there's no oil!). Passed down traditionally by my beloved grandmother Vasantha Kumari Bothra, this yummy *achaar* is our family's favourite and finds place on our everyday menu.

Ingredients

- Raw mangoes: 1½ bowls; cut into small pieces
- Yellow mustard seeds (*Rai ka dal*): 1 bowl



- Red chilli powder: 1 bowl
- Fennel seeds (*saunf*): 2 tsp
- Black cumin (*kalonji*): 2 tsp
- Asafoetida (*hing*): ½ tsp
- Haldi: ½ to ¾ tsp
- Salt: ¼ bowl

Method

Mix all the above ingredients, except the raw mangoes, and soak the mixture for at least 2 hours in water. Take this mixture in a *parat* (a big plate with high edges) and mix well with your hand (you may use gloves)

for a minimum of 20 minutes. Keep adding water little by little as and when required. Taste the mixture to ensure that the salt content is slightly on the higher side (to balance the sour taste of the raw mango pieces). Add the raw mango pieces and mix well with your hand. Your pickle is ready! Store at room temperature for 1-2 days and ensure the water in it isn't too less for it to dry. After that, store it in the refrigerator. Add a little water to the pickle and mix well before serving.

Tip: If you want the pickle to last longer, add *haldi* and salt to the raw mango pieces and mix well. Keep aside for about 3 hours, mixing intermittently. Strain the water the raw mangoes leave owing to the addition of salt, and dry under the sun for some time. Now, use these raw mango pieces for the pickle.



**Premalatha Venkat,
36, Chennai**

TRICOLOUR MIXED VEGETABLE PORIYAL

This is our family's favourite side-dish. When I was young, I never used to eat vegetables. So my mother would mix the veggies with the rice and I would eat it thinking it was vegetable *pulao*. Eventually I realised that it was just a *poriyal* mixed with rice. Today, the trick works with my young son too!

Ingredients

- Cabbage: ¼ kg
- Carrot: 150 gm
- Beans: 150 gm
- Moong dal: 1 tbsp
- Haldi: 1 pinch
- Fresh coconut scrapings: 4 tsp
- Salt to taste

For tempering

- Oil: 3 tsp
- Mustard seeds: 1 tsp
- Split black gram dal: 1 tsp
- Curry leaves: 2 sprigs
- Green chillies: 3
- Onion: 1 small

Method

Wash and soak *moong dal* in water for 15-20 minutes. Strain and set aside. Finely chop all the vegetables including onion and green chillies. Heat oil in a pan and add the mustard seeds. When they splutter, add black gram dal and as it turns golden, add curry leaves, green chillies and onions. As the onions turn translucent, add chopped carrots and beans. Add strained *moong dal*, salt and turmeric. Mix well. Cover the pan and allow to cook for 10 minutes. Add cabbage and allow to cook for 5 more minutes. Switch off the flame and add the coconut scrapings.





How Ruskin Bond missed the 'matrimonial bus'

A longtime friend of the writer, **Raj Kanwar** recalls how he lived on sheer guts and wit during his initial days of struggle

"Do you see what I see?" gushed Ruskin Bond excitedly as we stood in the balcony of his rented room overlooking Astley Hall on Rajpur Road in Dehra Dun. I gave him a blank look, confused and perplexed. "What do you mean?" I asked. "Don't you see those beautiful young college girls walking down the street, gossiping and laughing?"

"Of course, I do see them and I have been seeing them every day."

That was the first day Ruskin wore a pair of new glasses. His vision had become impaired and only the week before, at my instance, he had got his eyes examined by Dr B S Rathke, whose two sons were our friends. His brand new glasses gave an entirely new perspective to Ruskin's vision, enabling him to clearly see the familiar street scene below. "Oh my God," Ruskin grumbled. "Now I realise what beautiful things I have missed all these months!"

This was in late 1955; his vision had weakened over the previous few months as he did much of his work by lamplight. The power supply to his stepmother's shop and house had been disconnected owing to non-payment of electricity dues; she didn't have enough funds to get it restored.

His first novel, *Room on the Roof*, had been accepted by André Deutsch Ltd, a London publishing house, and he had also wangled in advance £ 50 against future royalties to pay for his return voyage to India. But the publisher dilly-dallied for three years over its publication, keeping

Ruskin in much suspense. The book was finally published in 1956 to rave reviews; but it would take Ruskin a couple of other books to be counted in the privileged class of published authors. Its publication, however, had raised Ruskin's stature in the eyes of editors of *The Illustrated Weekly*, *The Statesman*, *The Hindu* and *The Tribune*, who would happily accept his short stories. *The Weekly* even serialised his *Room on the Roof*.

"Do you know what the biggest irony of life is? ...when we are little boys, big girls kiss us, and when we are big boys, little girls kiss us!"

—Ruskin Bond

Ruskin was then a struggling freelance writer selling his short stories to the now defunct *The Illustrated Weekly of India*; its amiable Irish editor C R Mandy had taken a fancy to his style. Other leading newspapers and magazines such as *The Sunday Statesman*, *The Hindu*, *The Tribune* and *Outlook* lapped up Ruskin's simple stories. One of the publications that regularly accepted his stories was *My Magazine of India* from Madras. He would unhesitatingly send them his short stories and articles rejected by more reputed publications, and it would greedily accept those stories, for which it paid a paltry sum of five rupees.

I was then a Dehra Dun stringer for *The Statesman*, *The Indian Express* and *The Tribune*; their complimentary copies were delivered daily at my house. I was the first one to rush to Ruskin if his story was published. Ours was then a hand-to-mouth existence; I was a fortunate as I lived with my family, so whatever I earned was pocket money. Ruskin, on the contrary, was the breadwinner, and had to pay rent to his step-mother. He was entirely dependent on earnings from his writing.

Ruskin's writing fees and my retainers would generally be sent by money orders. The General Post Office was near the Clock Tower; Ruskin and I would walk down the small distance from Astley Hall at 9.30 am around the middle of each month to check if any money order awaited us. Though our income was meagre, our tastes were expensive. We would then have a glass of cold coffee crème and a king-size mutton samosa for eight *anna* at Kwaliti and Indiana, two of the more expensive restaurants at that time. Ruskin was generous to a fault and often paid for beer and coffee for most of his student friends, who invariably accompanied him.

Most of Ruskin's fans have often wondered why he stayed a bachelor when many of his female fans not only admired his storytelling skills but also romantically fantasised about him. When I asked Ruskin about it, he had a ready explanation. "A large number of these admiring girls were, to begin with, just kids to be taken seriously!" Taking on the demeanour of a philosopher,



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Ruskin asked, “Do you know what the biggest irony of life is?” “Life is full of ironies,” I replied. Ruskin again looked at me, and said, waving his hands, “The biggest irony of life is that when we are little boys, big girls kiss us, and when we are big boys, little girls kiss us!” Now, I will let Ruskin tell in his own words how he missed the ‘matrimonial bus’.

“When I was young, I was attracted to and infatuated with young girls, but that attraction gradually faded when the girls went their own way without even as much as saying a goodbye. There was a beautiful Vietnamese girl in London, whom I immensely liked. Soon, we started dating. But then one fine day she suddenly left—without a single word—for home to join her family in those turbulent civil war years in Vietnam. I was heartbroken but there was nothing much I could do.

“Then there was a Punjabi girl in Delhi whom I liked, but her family

thought that she was too young to marry” he sighed. “It’s a long story of teenage crushes, instant infatuations and all else that generally happen to men of marriageable age. When I was young and personable, most parents or even the daughters did not find me a ‘suitable boy’, possibly owing to my financial instability. And when finally I had gained that stability and more, I was in my 50s and past marriageable age. Do you now get what I meant by the worst irony of life? When I was young, I didn’t have enough money to attract marriage proposals and when I had acquired that money, I was no longer young!

“Happily, by then, I had become a ‘householder’ and soon over the years I became head of a growing family. It so happened that in 1969-70, I had employed Prem and his wife Chandra as domestic help. While the couple looked after my household chores, they also gave birth to three children. Then those three children grew up and got married. In the course of

natural progression, they too became parents. Blissfully, now I am grandfather of three and great-grandfather of seven children. That is, in a nutshell, my story of the ‘missed bus’!”

Ruskin is today a much-published and venerated author. Though not many of his books became bestsellers, most of them have had repeat editions, entertaining over three generations of children and a large number of adults too. One of his books recently had a reprint after 50 years. Four of his stories have been adapted for movies. While *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra* won him the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992, he was given the Padma Shri in 1999. He was given the Padma Bhushan only last year. He is so busy writing these days that he has given up socialising. Today, Ruskin is undoubtedly the most durable author, having written uninterrupted for over 60 years. At 81, he’s still very much in love, but with the Himalaya, which he calls his home, and the world of words.

Kanwar is a Dehra Dun-based journalist and writer

A maverick world

It's not often that an author debuts at 70. Winner of the Hindu Literary Prize 2014, **Ashok Srinivasan** creates a cerebral world in his debut collection of 13 short stories, *Book of Common Signs* (HarperCollins; ₹ 399; 177 pages). Oscillating between the real and the unreal, his characters sometimes have a mythical and magical quality about them. With a tone that is refreshingly young and unique, Srinivasan manages to keep the reader surprised. The award-winning author, who is busy readying his debut novel *Once Upon a Time*, talks about the art of writing, and striving to find his voice as an author in an email interview with **Srirekha Pillai**.

You have been writing since you were 14. Why did it take so long to come out with a book?

It took me a long time to find my voice, and when I did find it, I could see it was nothing but a composition of other voices belonging to other people—mostly dead and distant writers. Just when you think you can harness your voice, you find it was only your vanity that misled you into thinking your voice was at your service; every attempt at writing is a new labour of love. I am a slow writer. Others who are gifted with facility, felicity and flow write faster than me. I wanted to see my book in print and yet I was unable to let go of my work; the former impulse won at last after I had a large enough collection of stories to choose from. Coming to this book, not all the stories I have written find inclusion in it. The earliest story in this collection, "Ex-votos for a Mask Maker", was written some 40 years ago, and published in *Helix and Luna* in Australia.

While revisiting the stories that are part of *Book of Common Signs*, were you critical? Also, did they undergo drastic changes before appearing in the book?

authorspeak



Sumeth Prasad

"No writer can ever choose his 'perspective'—as you call it— of the reality or the world he creates. You are what you write, inescapably. Or else you are inauthentic"

I generally take so long—years actually—in reworking and editing my own work that when I do revisit it, the changes I make, if any, are quite minimal.

The anthology is pervaded by an overwhelming sense of darkness. Does that reflect your perspective of the world?

No writer can ever choose his "perspective"—as you call it—of the reality or the world he creates. You are what you write, inescapably. Or else you are inauthentic. A work is recognisably by a certain author because it is like a retina scan, a fingerprint, a signature or a DNA sample.

Usually authors make dedications to people close to them. You have dedicated the book to the people of strife-torn areas like "Palestine, Pakistan, the Tamils of Sri Lanka and Jews of the world over". Why so?

The world has often been held up in certain areas of Indian thought as *Maya* or an illusion; and if that is so, the autonomous world of the writer may well be an illusion of an illusion. It is offered as a small consolation and comfort to those who have suffered from the hard reality of war and strife. The political implications are inescapable.

You seem to have a strong connection with the city of Kashi, a strong presence in many of your stories.

I agree that there seems a strong connection to Varanasi in two of my stories but that is wholly illusory as I have spent no more than five days in that city. I am sure it is different for other writers but in my case, as often as not, the location chooses me and not the other way round.

Have you left a lot of characters incomplete and dangling like

the author in “Ex-votos for a Mask Maker”?

If any character in a story is incomplete, for me, the story itself would be incomplete. But in the story you mention, the partial characters destroy the author before he can destroy himself or them.

Was it your love for books that made you choose a career in publishing with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)?

That must have been it as I drifted into being an editor with Orient Longman before I joined ICCR.

What has been the most enriching experience at ICCR?

The sudden exposure—alas not too often—to authentic works of beauty that uplift the spirit!

Which authors do you enjoy the most? What is it about their craft that fascinates you?

I am drawn to writers whose works display significant form graced with emotional intensity. The list of authors I enjoy reading and re-reading would be far too long to enumerate here.

Your debut novel *Once Upon a Time* is being bandied as a savage fairytale for adults. What is it about?

In this savage fairytale for adults, the narrator, Brinda Murty, is born and brought up in a traditional, joint family household that sprawls all over the place, crowded with hangers-on of every description. She can recall things that happened before she was born. She comes of age in the crush of relatives and outsiders in a home where not just time but history itself has gone wonky. While still in her early teens she discovers that physical bodily contact (even when intimate or forced) with her heals

I was seven months old when I first visited Salem. I remember Rukmini carried me on her hip into the central courtyard somewhere between the drumstick and curry trees one overcast day and holding me out in both her outstretched arms, she looked me in the eye and said: “You will never grow old. It is here, in this very house that you will be raped by an Englishman. You will then burn with a secret fever. The world will go on as usual but not your clock. An element of incandescence will become part of your natural make-up. People will speak of you in hushed whispers. Intimacy with the rot and decay in others will increase your effulgence. Even as they emerge from the ooze of decomposition, made clean and whole, those whom you save will denounce you. Unrequited love will be your lot because your love will be a ghost and not a man like other men; he will be a composite construct of other people’s desire to possess you. That is why, his features will appear and disappear on other faces; just as other aspects of him like smell and touch will trouble you all your days. By the time of your death your fever will have burned both, those who have possessed and lost you and those who never had you. In brief, your life will be a series of set pieces culminating in your being publicly stoned to death which later generations will read as a supreme sacrifice and fashion for themselves from the fragments of your real and imagined life story, to satisfy their deepest needs, the complete iconography of a mother goddess.”

Rukmini was as fallible as any oracle and not everything she said was exactly true. However, I have memories of an even earlier period: of my elder sister, Sarla’s last illness in my paternal grandfather Dev Murty’s house in Pudukotai—she was dead three years before I was born.

(Excerpted from Once Upon a Time)

some people; it seems to work best with those whom she does not love.

The joint family slowly disintegrates, disperses and new entrants take their place as time stops for Brinda. She leaves home and takes up her university studies in another city. Her father disappears into the vastness of America, her mother becomes a victim to the comfort of drugs and strangers, and her only brother, Janak, a poet, is committed to a lunatic asylum. Brinda herself is repeatedly raped but remains inviolate. As the others around her age and decay with corruption she remains young and grows ever more radiantly beautiful; the price she has to pay is a deepening loneliness. She falls desperately in love with Gautam, a man who turns out to be a ghost. Gautam disappears without a trace.

Brinda joins a modelling agency and is later arrested, incarcerated and prosecuted, preparatory to her being publicly stoned to death. This, in short, is the story of a feminine Christ figure. [See excerpt.]

As opposed to a short story, a novel allows the luxury of pages to develop a character. Would you call that a liberating experience?

Sometimes, yes; because ironically, limitations can at times confer freedom on one and be a liberating experience just as a boundless expanse can, under certain circumstances, be constricting or even claustrophobic.

How did your family react to your debut book?

I think they were glad that their long wait was at last over!

Learning curve

With September ringing in International Literacy Day and Teachers' Day, we celebrate learning by bringing an extract from **Roald Dahl's** *Matilda*, published in 1988

Matilda was a little late in starting school. Most children begin Primary School at five or even just before, but Matilda's parents, who weren't very concerned one way or the other about their daughter's education, had forgotten to make the proper arrangements in advance. She was five and a half when she entered school for the first time.

The village school for younger children was a bleak brick building called Crunchem Hall Primary School. It had about 250 pupils aged from five to just under 12 years old. The head teacher, the boss, the supreme commander of this establishment was a formidable middle-aged lady whose name was Miss Trunchbull.

Naturally Matilda was put in the bottom class, where there were 18 other small boys and girls about the same age as her. Their teacher was called Miss Honey, and she could not have been more than 23 or 24. She had a lovely pale oval Madonna face with blue eyes and her hair was light-brown. Her body was so slim and fragile one got the feeling that if she fell over she would smash into a thousand pieces, like a porcelain figure.

Miss Jennifer Honey was a mild and quiet person who never raised her voice and was seldom seen to smile, but there is no doubt she possessed that rare gift for being adored by every small child under her care. She seemed to understand totally the bewilderment and fear that so often overwhelms young children who for the first time in their lives are herded into a classroom and told to obey orders. Some curious warmth that was almost tangible shone out of Miss Honey's face when she spoke to a confused and homesick newcomer to the class.

"I want to help you to learn as much as possible while you are in this class. That is because I know it will make things easier for you later on," Miss Honey went on. "For example, by the end of this week I shall expect every one of you to know the two-times table by heart. And in a year's

time I hope you will know all the multiplication tables up to 12. Now then, do any of you happen to have learnt the two-times table already?"

Matilda put up her hand. She was the only one.

Miss Honey looked carefully at the tiny girl with dark hair and a round serious face sitting in the second row. "Wonderful," she said. "Please stand up and recite as much of it as you can."

Matilda stood up and began to say the two-times table. When she got to twice twelve is 24 she didn't stop. She went right on with twice thirteen is 26, twice fourteen is 28, twice fifteen is 30, twice sixteen is ..."

"Stop!" Miss Honey said. She had been listening slightly spellbound to this smooth recital, and now she said, "How far can you go?"

"Well, I don't really know, Miss Honey. For quite a long way, I think."

"What is it then, two times four hundred and eighty-seven?"

"974," Matilda said immediately. She spoke quietly and politely and without any sign of showing off.


"Now tell me, Matilda," Miss Honey said, "try to tell me exactly what goes on inside your head when you get a multiplication like that to do. You obviously have to work it out in some way."

"I've always said to myself that if a little pocket calculator can do it why shouldn't I?"

"Why not indeed," Miss Honey said. "The human brain is an amazing thing."

"I think it's a lot better than a lump of metal," Matilda said. "That's all a calculator is."



A photograph of an elderly man with a grey beard and a young girl with dark hair, both smiling and playing in a pond. The man is in the water, and the girl is sitting on a wooden dock, splashing water towards him. The water is dark blue, and the dock is made of wooden planks.

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THE TOM AND JERRY EFFECT

Today, 'Tom and Jerry' is a commonplace phrase synonymous with never-ending rivalry as epitomised by the lead characters—a gray house cat with a Machiavellian glint in his eyes and a brown cherubic yet cheeky mouse—of the popular animated series of the same name. The duo became household names when the *Tom and Jerry* cartoon series hit television on 25 September 1965, debuting on CBS in the US.



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The slapstick comedy, popular with children and adults alike, revolves around the mayhem and destruction that ensues—crumbling cabinets, shattering dishes, littering rooms—following Tom's numerous attempts to capture Jerry. It's another thing that Tom hardly ever succeeds in catching Jerry, who smartly outwits his rival and pokes fun at him. However, there are numerous instances when Tom and Jerry display genuine friendship; at times they even set aside their rivalry to pursue a common goal.

Like other animated cartoons of the time, this show too—based on an animated series of short films made by William Hanna and Joseph Barbera—had its share of controversies over racial stereotyping. Tom's owner Mammy Two Shoes is a heavy-set middle-aged black woman, whose face is never revealed, and is shown as having a rodent problem.

Similarly, the lead characters are shown with dark faces and large lips when they emerge from explosions. The show has also earned flak over some of the most violent gags devised in theatrical animation; the protagonists are shown battling it out with axes, hammers, firearms, explosives and poison in an attempt to outdo each other. However, despite these, *Tom and Jerry* was named among the 'Greatest Television Shows of All Time' by *TIME* magazine in 2000, and still enjoys a good run across the world, including India, Japan, Southeast Asia, Germany, the Middle East, and Eastern European and Latin American countries. It's also known that the BBC, in the past, would turn to *Tom and Jerry* to fill the gap and retain its audience when faced with disruption in its schedule. Meanwhile, the devilish duo—also starring in motion pictures, comic books and video games—continues to delight audiences around the world with fun-filled frolic.

THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: SEPTEMBER 1965

- On 9 September, Tibet was made an autonomous region of China.
- On 12 September, Hurricane Betsy hit Florida and Louisiana, killing 75 people.
- On 13 September, The Beatles won their first Grammy for *A hard day's night*.
- On 27 September, the world's largest tanker ship, Tokyo Maru, was launched in Yokohama, Japan.

“ There is always some specific moment when we become aware that our youth is gone; but, years after, we know it was much later

—American journalist and author Mignon McLaughlin (1913-1983)

Goat's-cheese curtain

n. An imaginary boundary that separates urban sophisticates from those with simple, traditional or uncultured tastes.

Example. Might I suggest that you come out from behind the **goat's-cheese curtain**, take some leave, jump in your Eurochic ride and actually leave the city limits and spend some time outside.

—Igomi Watabi, “Infiniti Q50 2.0T review - photos”, *CarAdvice*, 29 September 2014

Brontobytes

n. 2 to the power of 90—approximately 10 to the power of 27—bytes, or one thousand trillion terabytes.

Example. Thinking about quantities such as zettabytes and **brontobytes** may seem very theoretical now, but...our need for increasing amounts of storage space has grown far more quickly than we ever thought it would. So while we will probably live to see the days when it is common to carry a petabyte in our pocket, our grandchildren and great-grandchildren might one day be carrying around a bronto on their bionic implants.

—Bernard Marr, “Big data: What’s a Brontobyte again?”, *SmartDataCollective*, 11 February 2015

JENGATECTURE

n. Building designs that consist of a series of stacked, offset boxes.

Example. As more consumers demand greener lifestyles, yet are pushed into condo living arrangements due to urban space constraints, architects are reconsidering traditional skyscraper designs in favour of those more catered to the eco-conscious market. The solution may be Jenga-like, stacked structures that incorporate space for gardens and open areas.

—“Jengatecture”, *Trendhunter*, 18 May 2011

Mobisode

n. A short programme, or the edited highlights from a longer program, designed to be watched on a small, mobile screen such as a digital media player or a mobile phone.

Example. Indeed, ESPN’s content is perfectly suited for the mobile world. Sports fans, after all, like to closely monitor their favourite players and teams—timely information that fits comfortably into what media executives call ‘snack size’ content. The News Corporation, steward of the Fox Network and Fox Studios, is so fond of short cell-phone videos that it has trademarked a term to describe them: **mobisodes**.

—Louise Story, “Yes, the screen is tiny, but the plans are big”, *The New York Times*, 17 June 2007

Thick data

n. Data related to qualitative aspects of human experience and behaviour, particularly when used as context for the analysis of a large data set.

Example. Consider, for instance, that the term **thick data** is already giving ‘big data’ a run for its money as a buzz phrase. Thick data is simply the idea that numbers alone aren’t enough. To really understand data, you often need to consider things like human emotion, which is rarely data-driven.

—Mike Cassidy, “Big data is yielding to thick data and that’s a good thing”, *BloomReach*, 3 May 2014

Silver Alert

n. A public notification that provides information on, and asks for help in locating, a missing senior, particularly one who has a cognitive impairment such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

Example. Mr. Casey, who sits on the Senate Special Committee on Ageing, said the issue of seniors suffering from dementia who wander off is a growing problem as Americans age and more seniors are cared for at home. He held a news conference Friday at United Neighbourhood Centres of Northeastern Pennsylvania's West Scranton Senior Centre to discuss creating a **Silver Alert**, which would inform law enforcement and the public when a senior goes missing.

—David Falchek, "Casey: 'Silver Alert' needed to protect seniors with dementia", *The Scranton Times-Tribune*, 1 February 2014

I think your
whole life shows
in your face and
you should be
proud of that

—American actor Lauren Bacall (1924-2014)



Want to work?

Notices announcing 'Job opportunities for retired professionals' are not the most common sight. That's what makes this so special. Mumbai-based Xperience Powerhouse is a social enterprise that leverages the technical skills of retired men and women and

gives them a second chance at a career. Acting as a pivot between companies and retired individuals, it gathers work assignments and outsources them to those registered on their database with the required skill-sets. On their list already are professionals ranging from bankers, housekeepers, florists and drivers to accountants, content writers, doctors, carpenters and many others who have signed up to take on full-time work or part-time assignments. If you want to join the list or can provide suitable work opportunities for retired professionals, write to [Xperience Powerhouse at careers@xph.co.in](mailto:careers@xph.co.in) or call +91 9833221976.

BUZZ

Sockmageddon

n. A long or intense struggle with washing, folding, or pairing socks.

Example. This allows me to help Noelle and Caedmon with breakfast, clothes and their very important, yet terribly elusive socks. I hate folding them, they love losing them... we live in constant **sockmageddon**.

—Leanne Penny, "Penny family update", *LeannePenny.com*, 6 February 2015

Mirdle

n. An undergarment designed to give a man a slimmer appearance, particularly at the waist.

Example. Precision pouch. The waist eliminator. The Saxx package separator. Ab control tank. This is the language of selling body-shaping underwear to men.

What you must not do is call them girdles (or the more gender-specific **mirdles**), supportwear or even shapewear.

—Fiona Smith, "What's under your colleague's suit?", *Australian Financial Review*, 4 July 2014

“Changing mindsets and getting people to look beyond physical disabilities are huge challenges”

Meera Shenoy, 56, Hyderabad, gets placements for persons with physical disabilities



Shyamola Khanna

As a journalist writing on development issues, **Meera Shenoy** used to trudge to remote villages to highlight the plight of tribals and rural youth. An assistant editor with *Business India*, Shenoy had an epiphany one day. “I no longer wanted to just highlight development work, but be a part of it,” she says. This ultimately led to the genesis of Youth4Jobs in 2012. The organisation has been instrumental in placing people with locomotor, speech and hearing disabilities and partial visual impairment in firms such as McDonald’s, KFC, ITC Hotels, HDFC Bank, Tata Teleservices, Unilever and Lifestyle, among 200 companies. With tailor-made modules offering training in English, computers and soft skills, Youth4Jobs has catered to over 6,400 people with disabilities so far. “Over 40 per cent of our successful candidates are girls,” says the 56 year-old Shenoy proudly. “While helping the youth stand on their feet, we also wanted to offer companies an alternative labour pool of loyal workers,” she explains. Whether it’s the physically disabled Bollam Renuka who is senior team manager at an international bank or Mekala Trinadh with locomotor disability, who has been hired by a renowned video game maker, the success stories churned out by Youth4Jobs are many. Today, Youth-

4Jobs has a presence in eight states including Telengana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, besides Andhra Pradesh, and is supported by Axis Bank Foundation, Wadhvani Foundation and Tech Mahindra Foundation. Earlier, as part of the World Bank-sponsored first jobs mission for rural and tribal youth in Andhra Pradesh in 2004, Shenoy launched market-linked training programmes across the state, helping over 150,000 youth land jobs over five years. The project was featured in *Knowledge@Wharton*, *Harvard Business Review*, *Stanford Social Innovation Review* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Married to Subodh Shenoy, a physicist of international repute, Shenoy is also a member of the National Skill Development Agency and a senior advisor at the United Nations Development Programme. Winner of the prestigious NCPEDP-Shell Helen Keller Award—given to people and organisations working towards promoting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities—Shenoy says her aim is to “train and place 20,000 youth by 2020”. On the immediate agenda, however, is exploring the viability of training youngsters with mental disabilities, and putting finishing touches to her book, *You Can*.

—Shyamola Khanna

“Securing her health is my way of saying thank you for all that she’s done.”

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