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Punjab, the land of five rivers, though largely truncated during India's Independence from 200 years of British colonial rule and the Partition, finds a pride of place among the country's regions and states and always emerges at the top in the national anthem. Punjab is shaping modern-day India for several reasons.

The land of five rivers

Punjab, the land of five rivers, though largely truncated during India's Independence from 200 years of British colonial rule and the Partition, finds a pride of place among the country's regions and states and always emerges at the top in the national anthem. Punjab is shaping modern-day India for several reasons. Punjab's folk culture goes far beyond popular bhangra dance; the history is vast, legends and great personalities born in Punjab are innumerable.

Since the early days of the invasions from the West, Punjab was always the first hit. No wonder, the region has seen violence and bloodshed for centuries. The brave men and women fought valiantly to protect the nation.

Punjabis have contributed immensely to the Indian Army during and after the British period. In the Independence movement, numerous freedom fighters from Punjab led from the front.

Punjab powered the green revolution, and made India self-reliant in food. Much of the wheat in India is produced by Punjab since it is one most fertile tracts in the world. Punjab is called the Granary of India. Some accounts suggest, it produces 20% wheat, 14% cotton, and 9% rice of India, which is equivalent to 2% cotton, 2% wheat and 1% rice for the world at large.

Though the birthplace of the great Guru Nanak is not in today's Punjab, it is home to majority of the Sikhs and the Holy Golden Temple is situated in Amritsar; the legacy of 'Sapta Sindhu' (there were seven rivers originally as found in ancient texts) or 'Panchanada' goes far back. History has it, the city of Taxila, currently located in west Punjab in Pakistan, was founded by Taksh the grandson of Bharat, brother of Ram. The Taxashila University (6th century BCE - 5th century CE) was one of the most ancient learning centers in the world, where the great Chanakya taught.

Greek conqueror Alexander's mission had to experience a pause when they reached the border of India. He invaded Punjab around 450 BCE and defeated the famous and mighty king Puru. Puru did not accept the defeat

and asked Alexander to show him the same respect as is due to the royal kings. Alexander gave the kingdom back in to respect the greatness of the king. Punjab is fortunate to see the descent of many great Gurus of the Sikh panth, including Guru Govind Singh who founded the Khalsa to protect the land and society from the invasions and incursions by foreign forces.

Ironically, Punjab had to encounter the separatist Khalistani movement about three decades after the traumatic and bloody partition, which put its economic growth and prosperity on the back foot. Thousands of lives were lost and hundreds of families had to pay a heavy price due to this violent movement. If not for this separatist menace, Punjab would have developed beyond our imagination.

A peaceful and prosperous Punjab is on the path of rapid industrialization, where the largest number of steel rolling mill plants in India is located. However, it must be remembered that development is not same as industrialization. Great balance in the economic development between the urban and rural must be maintained. Else, disparity will increase, culture and heritage will suffer, and social unrest may increase. Vast fertile farmland has to be preserved and only high yielding industries should be given priority. Rapid fall of ground water level in many areas requires immediate long term steps where technology can help a lot.

However, in recent times, while states like Gujarat and Karnataka are receiving foreign investments, Punjab needs to do more since the flow is quiet low. While the environment in Punjab is peaceful, more work needs to be done to remove certain perceptions to boost investors' confidence. The new government scheme for NRI investment which will spend 75% for the rural infrastructure development will accept 25% from the NRIs can go a long way if NRIs are reached out and they respond positively. So far the success is seen in some pockets only.

Punjabi and other NRIs must play a bigger role to harness Punjab's growth. Let Punjab rise to raise the stature and strength of India and Indians everywhere.

Inside...

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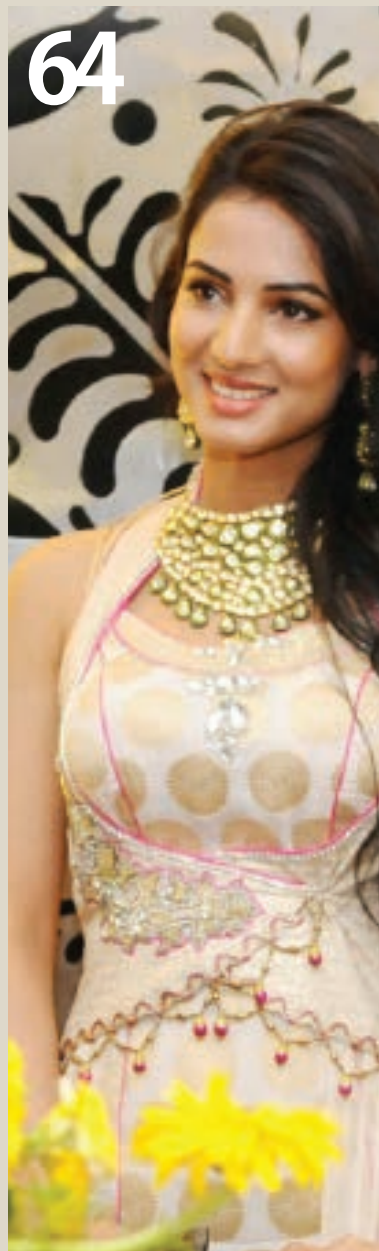
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**The new worldview
 will come from
 tomorrow's India, and
 not riding on the crest
 of 'past heritage and
 culture of religion' et
 al, but on the dreams
 of the contemporary
 global citizens in a
 knowledge-based
 society.**

Governance Awaits a Paradigm Shift

India's Planning Commission has come out with ludicrous figure of Rs 32 a day (less than a US dollar) as the poverty-line for urban Indians, and yet lower Rs 26 a day for their rural counterparts.

With a nation having 8% plus GDP growth (though largely jobless growth) — second highest rate after China in the world, and a per capita income of above Rs 130 a day (less than US \$3) what wisdom made to zero in on these ridiculous figures can at best be answered by the architects of the poverty line.

It is being increasingly felt that the polemics in the nation need to rapidly change within both the government and the civil society. The shift has to happen from per capita and GDP growth-rate figures to pragmatic social security measures, public healthcare and education amenities, job creation and effective public distribution system and mass use infrastructure coupled with life-sustaining resources.

While rural and urban health missions are laudable, how much of these have reached the grass-roots and their tangible impact are matters of equal concern. Nationwide rural employment guarantee scheme is an admirable policy only if the job it guarantees makes a fundamental impact on the rural economy and life, and not couched in disguised unemployment. Public distribution system is in totters in several states. The Right to Education has been a revolutionary law. But it is limiting, flouted and hamstrung by several caveats. To make matters worse, lack of infrastructure and initiatives at the grass-roots has taken much of its sheen.

Independent India's most outstanding legislation has been the Right to Information (RTI), which came after protracted civil society struggle on the lines of Jan Lokpal, which is a work in progress. Increasingly, the RTI is being under-

mined by muzzling it in the name of government secrecy, national interests, murder of whistleblowers, police inaction to protect RTI initiatives and pendency etc.

Unfortunately, the most corrupt face of government has been on display in the past three years juxtaposed with the most inefficient squabbling of the Opposition and judicial activism.

The non-violent, rights conscious, non-partisan but politically aware civil society has

been cornered by all political hues and burdened with all-time high inflationary trends till Gandhian Anna Hazare-led movement burst into Indian public life.

There is no denying that a sleuth of powerful anti-corruption laws, radical electoral reforms, police and judicial initiatives, Citizens' Charter in all government offices, and a public awareness against bribes and kickbacks are needed in earnestness while burying all communal differences.

Caste and religion — the great divide-and-rule tool — have been kept alive by the votaries of vote-bank politics.

Development, not just growth; accountability, not just action; execution, not just policy; employment, not just consumption; and distributive justice, not just expenditure: these need to be the hallmarks of the governance of tomorrow. And, the civil society must create its own mechanisms to ensure an effective implementation of the basic tenets of governance.

The dawn of new India has set in. It may take a while, but non-violent, social change will certainly have a salutary and participating effect on the democracy, which has been, at best, representative till date. The new worldview will come from tomorrow's India, and not riding on the crest of 'past heritage and culture of religion' et al, but on the dreams of the contemporary global citizens in a knowledge-based society.



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Now I am fascinated with another character who is not from a comic book but a real life one. He is hell bent on teaching the corrupt baddies of India a lesson. This 74-year-old man is not from the planet Krypton but a village Ralegan Siddhi in India. He also has a better sartorial sense than Superman as he wears white dhoti and cap.

The Power of Celibacy

When I was a kid, I was fond of reading Superman Comics. It was interesting to know how the Dalton Comics character Clark Kent--the Superman got his strength to fly faster than the speed of a bullet, operate independently of gravity and propel himself through the air at will, look through reinforced steel doors through his X-ray vision and freeze the baddies who wanted to destroy the earth with his super cold breath. I came know from the comics that he got his superhuman strength from the planet Krypton where he was born.

I however never understood why Superman had an atrocious sense of dress. I never understood why he used to wear his red "chaddi" on the outer side of his blue garments unlike the mortals like us who wear on the inside. But nevertheless I enjoyed reading the heroics of the man from the planet Krypton.

Now I am fascinated with another character who is not from a comic book but a real life one. He is hell bent on teaching the corrupt baddies of India a lesson. This 74-year-old man is not from the planet Krypton but a village Ralegan Siddhi in India. He also has a better sartorial sense than Superman as he wears white dhoti and cap.

But like the rest of India I was also intrigued as to how he gets immense strength to take the entire Government of India by its horn single handedly without taking a morsel of food for days together. This question which was niggling me was also troubling a very senior RJD leader who is well-known for producing a number of children. When his curiosity got the better of him he posed this question in the Lok Sabha. During a discussion on Lokpal Bill the RJD MP reportedly suggested that doctors should conduct a research to know how the 74-year-old Gandhian managed without food for 12 days.

In reply Anna said "it was it was brahmacharya (celibacy) that made

me so strong. How can the RJD leader who has produced so many offspring understand the power of celibacy".

When I went to Ralegan Siddhi on September 13 I realized the power of Anna when 17 channels including Hindi, English and Marathi had converged with their top bosses like Rajdeep Sardesai, Barkha Dutt, Punya Prasun Bajpayee and several others eagerly waiting outside to get an interview with him. All these channels with their whole production team were waiting outside like cricket fielders ready to grab the ball the moment it comes near them. These channels almost fought with one another as to who will be the first to interview Anna and who will broadcast the same first. Looking at the commotion Anna refused to come out for some time till the different news channels decided among themselves as to who will interview him first. At one point two channels guys almost came to blows in front of Anna over the issue but were stopped by the other waiting news men. They however managed to exchange filthy abuse in front of the Gandhian which was enough to make any decent person blush with embarrassment and shock.

Each channel took nearly half an hour to 45 minutes for interviewing Anna and he kept patiently replying to their same boring stereo typed question with ease. Even if he was fed up by 17 channels parroting the same questions he did not make it obvious. Perhaps it was his brahmacharya which gave him the power to tolerate the pestering journalists. I don't know which needed more efforts-- to stave off pangs of hunger during his indefinite fast or to tolerate pesky journalists who put mikes near his mouth.

Now I know why Clark Kent, the Superman never married his long-standing girl friend Lois Lane. It was not just his Kryptonian origin which was giving him superhuman powers, but also his brahmacharya.

Losing his celibacy to her would probably have meant losing his superhuman powers.



Touching New Heights

Rahul Kumar tracks down all the essential features in the state of Punjab which helps the state to become the promising power of India.

Punjab, a state known for its farms, greenery, freshness, hospitality and culture; over the time Punjab has seen many developments in various industries like scientific instruments, water meter, electrical goods, financial services, machine tools, textiles, sewing machines, sports goods, tourism, fertilizers, garments, bicycles. With so many developments in various industries; there is one industry which represents true and culture of Punjab. After so many years of freedom, it is still the largest industry in Punjab.

Agriculture – vital for economic growth

Agriculture is the largest industry in Punjab making it the largest provider of wheat to India producing around 2 million tones every year. Agriculture in Punjab is highly popular all over India. Punjab is well-known for its agricultural activities and plantations. Agricultural activities have occupied a high percentage of land in Punjab because of its land which is perfect for cropping. Irrigation facilities have lessened the

hindrance of rainfall in agriculture activities. The main sources of irrigation in Punjab are canals and tube wells.

The major agricultural products in Punjab comprise of wheat, maize, rice, and bajra. Rice is produced highly in Gurdaspur, Amritsar, and Kapurthala districts. The other major crop cultivated by Punjab includes sugarcane, potatoes, groundnuts and cotton.

The arrival of Green revolution has bought up the improvement in Punjab agriculture and making evident changes not only in the economy of Punjab but also the nation as a whole. People of Punjab are very emotional to agriculture as this is what their forefathers used to do and they have the feeling of belongings to agriculture. This is why after so many years of freedom; agriculture is still the largest industry in Punjab.

Hospitality at its best

India is known for its hospitality, giving best possible comfort to the visitor and making their visit memorable. Punjab is the first states which

strikes in mind when it comes to hospitality in India, a glass full of Lassi, some 15 people running around you make you eat something or the other. Hospitality is in the gene of Punjab. People in India and all over the world make their visit to Punjab throughout the year to have the feeling of freshness in the air and experience the beauty of farmhouse and culture of Punjab.

It's never too late to make a right decision; Punjab Government is making a strong step forward in hospitality segment to promote tourism. Knowing the fact that people are more fascinated about farmhouses and rural villages of Punjab, the Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board (PHTPB), marketing wing of Punjab Tourism, Government of Punjab, has come up with a plan to promote farmhouse in its surroundings. Various farmhouses have been set up by the government to offer option for travelers to stay, feel the lifestyle and access the cities for outing. These farmhouses are like farmhouses will act like home stays providing the unmatched Punjabi hospitality that the state is known for.

It's not only the government is making such initiative in hospitality segment, various big players like Taj, Reddisson is also making their way to Punjab with their Hotels to promote hospitality in the state for elite class of people as well.

Travel through the farms

Punjab has always been a favorite spot for tourist, and such initiative by government and private companies is adding to the experience of people coming in there.

The most important tourist center in the state is Amritsar with its Golden Temple. This temple is considered to be the holiest of all the pilgrimages of Sikhism and houses Akal Takht, the supreme governing body of Sikhism. The Jalianwallah Bagh is a small park in the city where the British police massacred many pilgrims in the year 1919. Wagah is the only open land point between India and Pakistan. The Changing of Guards and the ceremonial lowering of the flags ceremony at sundown are great tourist attractions and have their own symbolic importance.

Ludhiana is famous for its hosiery and woolen goods and products from Ludhiana are exported all over the world. For its production of hosiery, Ludhiana is also known as the Manchester of India. It also boasts of the world famous Punjab Agricultural University, which organizes the Kisan Mela every Year. Nearby is Killa Raipur, which is famous for its Rural Olympics. Patiala is famous for its healthy food, loving people, wonderful parandaas, exciting Patiala peg and jootis. Easily accessible and well maintained, Patiala is a place that would give one the much-needed tranquility far from urban chaos. The Sports School and the Moti Bagh Palace are some of the places that one must visit to get a clear picture of the past of the state. Chandigarh is the capital of both Punjab and Haryana. The city is considered to be a Mecca of modern architecture and planning all over the world. What makes Chandigarh extraordinary is the fact that within four decades, a barren landscape has been transformed into a modern and model human habitation. Jalandhar is an ancient city but not much of its evidence is left now. Today, it is a major rail and road junction and an army cantonment.

Education, an essential tool

Punjab is served by leading institutes of excellence in higher education. All the major arts, humanities, science, engineering, law, medicine, veterinary science, and business courses are offered, leading to first degrees as well as postgraduate awards. Advanced research is conducted in all major areas of excellence. Punjab Agriculture University is one of world's leading authorities in agriculture. Major universities of Punjab are Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; Punjabi University, Patiala; Panjab University, Chandigarh; Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana; Punjab Technical Univer-



sity, Jalandhar; Punjab Medical University, Faridkot and Punjab Veterinary Sciences University, Talwandi Sabo. Punjab also has many institutes of repute such as National Institute of Technology, Jalandhar and Thapar Institute of Engineering and Technology, Patiala.

Real Estate – the boom continues

The face of Punjab real estate has changed rapidly with the entry of corporate house taking it to all new different level, making it more professional and presentable. The Silver City Group of Companies, Ansals, Gulmohar, DLF Parsvnath Developers and Omaxe Construction Ltd already made their way to the state. Somehow small companies are still in existence but the number of big players entering the Punjab real estate arena is increasing day by day.

Real estate is one of the booming sectors in Punjab and with big names in house it is being forced to be more transparent in its dealing, leading no frauds in future. Professionally qualified people have been the major source of transparency in the deals.

Ludhiana, Mohali, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Patiala, Hoshiarpur, Khanna, Gurdaspur, Kapurthala, Nawanshahr, Ferozepore, Ropar, Faridkot, Muktsar, Moga, Bathinda, Rajpura, Mansa and Sangrur are being some of the major cities and town in Punjab being part of such revolution.

Punjab has seen growth in almost every over the years but real estate is one which is gaining the maximum boom; real estate infrastructure has enabled them to harvest rewards. Prices of property in Punjab are its increasing day by day over the past few years; having lots of competitor being in the market. According to the big players of real estate business, the chances of decline in property prices are like a dream with open eyes reason being simple increase in the construction cost. The state is making handsome investment in the commercial sector

In the arena of real estate Punjab has taken a major lead compared to other states, with mega housing and retail infrastructure projects like villas, Farm Houses, Residential Apartments, Commercial Complexes, shopping Malls and

Townships. Today wherever you take your eyes some new construction project whether is residential apartments, villas or shopping complexes is in motion to change the face of Punjab what it is used to be or what we have seen in Hindi Cinema.

Along with all the other cities mentioned earlier, Amritsar has especially seen the major growth in the real estate sector with excessive land price, reason being simple being one of the most beautiful cities in India and where the maximum number tourists making its visits. Golden Temple, Akal Takht, Amrit Sarovar Central Sikh Museum and Jallianwala Bagh are the main attraction making the excessive land price for their buyers. Government of Punjab is also encouraging the innovative real estate developers in Amritsar under their Urban Development Policy with an array of commercial and residential projects. This initiative of Punjab government promoting investments has gained them positive results with large scale investment in the reality sector. The values of Amritsar has further increased with such construction and upgrading of city airport.

Punjab, with this revolution has graduated from independent house in private colonies to luxury penthouse, townships, multi-storied housing, Shopping Malls and other commercial complexes.

When it comes to the well planned city of India, the name of Chandigarh emerges first. Over the time the radius of Chandigarh has increased to 40-kms from mere 8-kms. One of the major growths in the city is development of 375 acre Chandigarh Technology Park (CTP) at Manimajra, north-east part of Chandigarh, and IT park in Mohali, attracting the attention of IT companies to the city. Just like cyber cities of India; Bangalore and Hyderabad, this project has boasted the amenities in Chandigarh as well. Adding to that, gigantic real estate company DLF has set up its Infocity within the Chandigarh Technology Park (CTP) zone, to extend world-class facilities to these techno-giants. Punjab will be always the best destination for all the Indians and will be the cynosure of all the eyes.

TOTAL INTEGRATION

Neha Saluja reports on how Punjabis have transplanted their vibrant culture and colourful tradition to faraway Canada.



India's biggest agricultural hub, Punjab, has become an inseparable part of a Canadian province for several decades. No wonder, Canada is often referred to as mini Punjab.

Punjabis' link with Canada traces its origin almost 100 years ago, when some members of the community had migrated to this North American nation for a prosperous life. Today, they comprise the bulk of the Indian population in Canada.

Punjabi radio channels and news papers, gurdwaras and community associations dot the length and breadth of the country. Almost every fourth family in Punjab has some relative in Canada.

Canadian-Punjabi grooms are in great demand in Punjab. Marriages between Punjabi girls and NRI boys are rampant, and the Punjabi market in south Vancouver is nothing less than Chandigarh's traditional bazaar.

Punjab's writ looms large in Canada. For instance, Punjabi is taught in the University of British Columbia (UBC), and some Punjabi classes don't even have a single student of Punjabi origin.

Latest census figures show 3,67,505 living in Canada have mentioned Punjabi as their mother tongue, a growth of 35 per cent since 2001.

Balwant Sanghera, president of the Punjabi Language Education Association (PLEA), is confident that Punjabi will soon become the fourth most spoken language in Canada.

Hospitals, city halls, airports and markets carry Punjabi signage. Sign boards of 'Assi Punjabi Bolde Haan' (we speak Punjabi) at banks is a common sight. Guidelines on provincial issues – elections, health, old age and education along with government bills and notices — are released in Punjabi.

Vancouver mayor Sam Sullivan is a Punjabi speaker. Last year, he surprised everyone by delivering a speech in Punjabi at a Sikh function.

Punjab has made its own mark of all times. Punjabi power has flourished across Burgeoning Brampton, where the South Asian population has grown to about 85,000 people, or about 21 per cent of the city's residents. By deploying political strategies that appeal to new immigrants, Punjabi-Canadians have emerged to form an almost impenetrable political monopoly in north of Mississauga, a Toronto suburb.

Drafting friends and family to win nominations, launching platforms that highlight immigrant concerns and utilizing a huge volunteer network to garner votes gives Punjabi Canadian candidates a distinct edge.

Desi glory

Vancouver has a Punjabi Market, a throwback to a similar bazaar in Chandigarh, where all Phulkari items are available

Eight Canadian-Punjabis have been elected to Parliament this year

Gurbax Malhi, the most prominent Punjabi in Canada, was the first Sikh politician to enter Parliament wearing a turban. Though he had an enviable electoral record since 1993, he lost to a fellow Punjabi-Canadian, Bal Gosal

About 600 youngsters (3 to 18), from the US and Canada participated in traditional Punjabi dances in July at Fresno's Roeding Park.

Canadian Sikh Balwinder Singh Kahlon led 'Drug Awareness Walk across Canada'

A grand welcome to honour Balwinder Kahlon and DAFC team was organized in Sikh Spiritual Center also known as Rexdale Gurughar in Toronto. Members of South-Asian Media also honored Kahlon this year.

Neer Bajwa, a Canadian-Punjabi was runner-up in the Miss India Canada pageant, and is now working with Star TV and ZEE TV

Casting the desi spell on Canada, Punjab has left no stone unturned in building a country of their own thousand if miles away from their motherland. The ice sledges of Canada can be said to have tinted saffron in the past century. Gurpreet Singh and his family, who live in Vancouver, like thousands others, have found his own unique 'connect' with the nation. "There is not much of a difference actually, we have five rivers flowing in Punjab and here we have the Great Lakes," he said with a wink and chuckle. "I miss the rains", said his wife.

"We have settled here and we visit India often. It's nice to go back for a holiday but Canada has become an inseparable part of our lives, we feel at 'home' here and going back is no longer an option," said Singhs' children Simran (17) and Harjyot (13).

Tour de Punjab

Rahul Kumar in conversation with Geetika Kalha, Principal Secretary of Tourism in Punjab, about the state's plans to increase its tourist footfall.

Excerpts from an Interview - Punjab's very own version of Palace on Wheels, a luxury train aimed at foreign tourists and NRIs, had run into bad patch because of the crippling haulage charges which had nearly derailed the project. What is the present status?

We have already run one luxury train on Sikh Takht route last year, which was very successful, and highly appreciated as well. It was run by the luxury holidays, a private company with logistic support from Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board "PHTPB" the only feedback was that it was little expensive. To overcome the issue of high expenses we have entered in to a Memorandum of Understanding with IRCTC and we are running train in the month of December and February in this financial year, which will be followed by four such trains in the next financial year. These are Semi luxury train on the lines of Buddhist circuit train. The same train we are going to run on the Sikh circuit.

Do you think the project is viable considering the steep cost? Most of the Luxury trains are running into losses.

The Punjab government has come up with the Master Plan for creating various circuits around Heritage, Freedom Trail, Farm and Ecotourism in the state. Could you throw some light on it?

We have different circuits; at the moment they have pilgrim circuit and freedom train circuit. We are also starting badshahi sadak trail. We are already in existence and also some of them are very well renovated and some are still in the process but pilgrim circuit and freedom are very well renovated and we have spend around 8 crores on their renovation. We are trying to get luxury bus through private partnership to cover the sikh circuit along with tourism circuit.

Regarding farm, these are the policies of government and at the moment they have around 17 farmhouse running, listed with PHTPB; owned by their owner who act as both hosts and guides to the visiting tourist. it's a very different experience to be in punjabi



Geetika Kalha
Principal Secretary of Tourism in Punjab

farm house and it is for the private people to take the advantage of such policies of government. We are signing MoU with Mahindra and Mahindra to market and sell farmhouse under its brand.

"The MoU will help the product to reach a wider market, eventually helping the farmhouse owners and bringing money to the villages." We are also trying to tie-up with makemytrip.com as well.

Similar is for the ecotourism, there is a policy and anybody wants to start any eco tourism venture he/ she can follow the policy

The heritage city of Amritsar has been identified for development under the Mega Destination project. What would this development entail?

Mega Destination project is going on and there

is already a heritage village coming up, the town hall is being developed and conserved, also Govinder port is being developed and the rambagh garden is in process, these are the heritage building and it takes time to renovate or develop them. They have to study it first and only then they can start renovation and repairing part.

The state tourism department is also in the process of developing birth places of great freedom fighters of India. What exactly is the plan and how much amount is going to be spent on it.

It is not only the birth places of great freedom fighters which they focusing to develop, according to her it could be anything related to freedom fighter. We are also planning to renovate the Anglosic memorial site, completed Lala Lajpat Rai's house.

India's most popular tourist circuit consists of the Delhi-Agra-Jaipur Golden Triangle. Amritsar is so far quarantined from it. If Amritsar can be integrated into this circuit, it will become Delhi-Agra-Jaipur-Amritsar Golden Quadrangle, which will boost tourism. Is the government thinking on these lines ?

It depends on the travel agent to integrate. But their trains covers the destination, it will cover Amritsar, Agra, Jaipur and Delhi.

Hospitality industry people feel that though Amritsar has a number of fairly decent two star and three star hotels, it lacks the four star and the high end five star hotels. If the government encourages the hospitality industries then it will be able to attract a lot of foreign tourists who come to visit the Golden temple. What is your opinion?

Things are not like this now, Hotel Owners and companies are also taking Amritsar in serious note. We are in the way to construct few four and high end five star hotels in the city of Amritsar, We are encouraging hospitality sector and that is why big names like Taj and Redisson is making their way to Amritsar, while ISTA already made its way in Amritsar.

Punjab: Where Life is Celebration



Entertainment and zeal are the two adjectives which one can utter about Punjab. Punjab is known worldwide for the dedication of their sons for their motherland. What is unique about Punjab is that it is one of the oldest civilizations of the World. The word Punjab derives from an Indo-Iranian word meaning the land of five rivers. Punjab witnessed many a religious movements including Bhudhism, Sikhism which got world-wide appeal. And thus it has a saga of its own culture, Folklore, dress, food and culturally inclined people.



GEOGRAPHY

Punjab is located in northwestern India, and has an area of 50,362 km². It extends from the latitudes 29.30° North to 32.32° North and longitudes 73.55° East to 76.50° East. It is bounded on the west by Pakistan, on the north by Jammu and Kashmir, on the northeast by Himachal Pradesh and on the south by Haryana and Rajasthan.

TOURISM

Tourism in Punjab include various sites of the Indus Valley Civilization, the ancient fort of Bathinda, the architectural monuments of Kapurthala, Patiala, and Chandigarh, the modern capital designed by Le Corbusier. The Golden Temple in Amritsar is one of the major tourist destination of Punjab.



WILDLIFE

The Sivalik area is the richest area of Punjab in terms of floral and faunal diversity. There are a number of wetlands, bird sanctuaries and zoological parks across Punjab. These include the Hari-Ke-Pattan National Wetland and Wildlife Sanctuary at Harike in Firozpur District, the Kanjli Wetland, the Kapurthala Sutlej Water Body Wetland.





CIVILIZATION

Punjab is the cradle of the Indus Valley Civilization, more than 4000 years old. Archaeological excavations, throughout the state, have revealed evidences of the magnificent cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro, which lived and died along the banks of the mighty Indus and its tributaries.



MUSIC AND DANCE

Punjab is a region in the world, which has a diverse style of music. However, it is musically best known as the home of bhangra, a lively folk dance that evolved into a popular form of electronic music among overseas Punjabis in the United Kingdom and United States. Giddha is also a popular Punjabi dance practised by women in Punjab.



CUISINE

Punjabi cuisine can be non-vegetarian or completely vegetarian. Punjabi fried and tandoori-baked fish, tandoori baked and butter chicken, kababs baked on charcoal, Patiala's Shahjahani Palao and a variety of chicken and mutton curries and vegetable and meat biryanis with lassi are relished the world over.



AGRICULTURE

Punjab (the five rivers region) is one of the most fertile regions on earth. The region is ideal for wheat growing. Rice, sugar cane, fruits and vegetables are also grown. Indian Punjab is called the "Granary of India" or "India's bread-basket." It produces 60% of India's wheat, and 40% of India's rice.

FESTIVALS

The festivals in Punjab have always been celebrated with much exuberance and fanfare. For the masses these festivals are popular occasions for social interaction and enjoyment. The festivals of Punjab have one common objective of bringing people together to participate in the happiness of the occasion. Gurupurabs, Lohri, Baisakhi is common festivals of Punjab.



Infographic: Shayoni Dhar

JALANDHAR

A Treasure Trove of Sports Goods

N Sai Balaji elaborates on the manufacturing of different sports equipments in the *sher* of India – Jalandhar and how the city has emerged to become a hub of sports industry.

Located at a distance of 144 kilometres from state capital of Punjab, Jalandhar tramples any thoughts of what one would expect of Punjab. Jalandhar like any ubiquitous city or village of Punjab never only relied on agriculture or farming. It moved on with considerable swiftness, adapting to divergent methods for survival by making its own distinction. Jalandhar inherited industrialisation with time, industries such as auto part manufacturers, surgical instruments, rubber goods and the lucrative of all the sports manufacturing industry compassionated its reputation prudently.

Robust of all which landed Jalandhar with a golden egg from the international market was its sports manufacturing arm. International companies started felicitating the city with their presence, adding the extra charm for local traders, craftsmen, distributors and prominent of all the cottage industry. It exports its products to countries like United Kingdom, United States of America, Germany, Australia and many more. Sports manufacturing has always been a staunch for the city's glorification.

Punjab's rich contribution to Indian sports is an undisputed reality which imbibes into the pragmatic approach it inherited. Outsourcing a term perennially associated with Information Technology is obscurely deep rooted in the sports city. Bigwig companies contract local traders, manufactures and more or less the cottage industry to produce sports material for them. "We are given requisite details regarding specification of materials and quality for manufacturing of sports items", said Satish Kumar, President Priya Sports Industry. "Later our produced

goods are quality checked and we brand them with logo and the company name from which we are given a contract."

Companies with better resources to invest have been insightful in managing their manufacture. Their shrewdness to involve the local craftsmen, the cottage industry (which includes the small and the medium scale companies) augmented the bigwigs' growth and also has created interdependent network.

The small and the medium companies lack the funds for investment, resources, manpower and the vital of all contacts to endure on their own. Such a prospect to expand their business through outsourcing has bolstered their base and validated their prominence in the industry.

"If we have to grow, we have to grow bigger", said R C Kohli managing partner of Beat all sports (BAS).

Beat all sports one of the sporting giants in Indian market which is responsible for manufacturing and supplying bats for little master Sachin Tendulkar. South African stylish batsmen Harshim Amla and West Indian cricketer Darren Sammy are among the list of super stars whose bats manufactured by BAS.

Mange Ram the artisan responsible for crafting the little masters bat is part of the organisation. The company innovates and communicates with either party to inculcate the desirable changes and requirements for the manufacturing of the bat.

"In order to compete with China's we need to have better proficient and skilled labour, efficient machinery, state of art infrastructure and outstanding of all, support of the government", added R C Kohli. Jalandhar expansion has encountered certain hin-

drances which are obliterating the optimism to flourish. "Meerut reasons for prosperity can be counted on the abundance of agriculture labour and other labour available nearby", argued Satish Kumar. "There has been a crisis of skilled labour in Jalandhar. People are reluctant to work for long hours for the same amount which they make from others works."

According to Satish, workers used to migrate from Bihar, parts of Uttar Pradesh to engage themselves into the industry. Circumstances have turned around, now people prefer to work in their native places by compromising for low pay scale due to various reasons such as staying with family, low cost of expenditure and many more.

"Lack of proper wages and irregular work", said Karnial Singh former president of Force industry Mazddori Union "has caused paucity of workers hence leading to crises."

"It takes 12 people to make one ball and eleven players to play the same one", said Kuldeep Kumar owner of APG sports industries. He believed the cottage industry is being downplayed due to its economic stature. "Look at the IPL players, who play with goods we manufacture, they earn millions", added Kuldeep Kumar. "But on the other hand we lurk around to find funds, break our heads to manage labour and manage transport expenses in this fuel hike period. Our earnings are nominal and our situation is bleak when we don't have any orders."



Kuldeep Kumar managed to contact Sachin Tendulkar and Anshuman Gaekwad through email to express their plight and to find a plausible solution. "I waited for many days but there was no response", said Kuldeep Kumar with agony.

"Even if one worker takes a leave the work of the remaining 11 gets stranded and the ball is not made", said Satesh Kumar elaborating the direct impact worker crises brings to industry. "Over that to fill the space we need to hire two or three worker temporarily to fill the void hence increasing our production cost."

With rising prices the cost of producing is on rise, making things worse for the industry. "Leather prices have doubled in recent decade", said Kuldeep Kumar "which can be attributed to the fact that leather is imported from others states like Jammu and Kashmir and regions nearby. Hence fuel prices directly affecting the cost." Crude oil prices have been on a climb inflicting an increase in prices of petrol and diesel.

"China's brewing influence in manufacturing is due to the support it receives from the government", adds R C Kohli. "To compete with an emerging China we need to improve our industry as well."

R C Kohli believes to counter China we need to build infrastructure that can contend with it. We need to train our work force to such level that their efficiency betters. "Look at China their work forces is very work resourceful", said R C Kohli. "We need our government to put its hand up and establish work training centres to attract youth to sports industry."

Many in the industry suppose a firm role of government is needed at this hour to augment the industry position internationally. Employing over 150 employees BAS aspires to come in hand to hand with international brands like Adidas, Nike and many more. "To come in terms with the quality and reputation of international brands such as Adidas and Nike first we need an up gradation of the present infrastructure", said R C Kohli briefing the complexities of Indian brand values. "There is a lot of competition in the sector itself which is forcing us to innovate and grow."

"All we require and hope is for good support from the government side", said R C Kohli. "We had order of one lakh footballs during the FIFA world cup season hence advanced our infrastructure. Now we have no orders."

Assistance is a pre requisite to solve any remaining predicaments. Allowing various channels to mobilise and act in is a recommended at this state of fixture.

"We need support and assistance from banks", confesses Kuldeep Kumar "to mobilise raw materials, labour and many more logistical requirements. But to procure a bank loan for a medium scale entrepreneur it's an uphill task."

"Comparing interest rates of banks in China and India which feed the industry with finances there is a mammoth difference of 4-5%", said K.C Kohli. "Which is huge, we need to progress meaning our policies have to be formulated for assisting the industry."

Magnificence associates with an identity when the ailments present are cured and healed. Such a tricky job has surfaced with Jaladhar. Rapid urbanisation and growing needs has confiscated the holistic success it achieved over the years with little recognition. Entrepreneurs desire recognition and want freedom from the traditional methods of managing the industry. Both Kuldeep Kumar and Satesh Kumar have acclimatised with progressing world. APG sports and Priya sports have launched their own websites for individual orders. They seek independence and prefer to brand their hard work. Kuldeep Kumar has been part of the set up from the late 70's and Satesh from the late 80's.

Their aspiration to free from clutches of burden and self survival is a welcome initiative since it only brings more opportunity to innovation and progression. Beat all sports with its big brand name and its historical existence, which reads as since 1953 only repudiate any claims of India's brands being volatile to competition and sustenance.

Jalandhar which arises from the land of shers (lions) Punjab for sure is not a faint heart. Its tribute to Indian sports is irrefutable. Numerous players have been pumped and are been pumped into various streams of Indian sports. A perfect analysis of the setup would enamour us to spear head a new proverb, 'Sports starts from Punjab'.



Kuldeep Kumar,
Owner APG sports Industry

"If we have to grow, we have to grow bigger", said R C Kohli managing partner of Beat all sports (BAS).

"To come in terms with the quality and reputation of international brands such as Adidas and Nike first we need an up gradation of the present infrastructure", said R C Kohli briefing the complexities of Indian brand values. "There is a lot of competition in the sector itself which is forcing us to innovate and grow."



PROGRESSIVE PUNJAB

An Investment Destination of India

“Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) explores economic engagement opportunities in the State of Punjab”. A report by **Mritunjay Kumar**.

OIFC supports Punjab, one of OIFC’s Partner States through its State Page (refer to picture), to project and promote investment opportunities to overseas Indians in key focus sectors. OIFC has tied up with its State Partners for smooth facilitation and providing these updated state-specific investment opportunities to our overseas Indian investors. OIFC aptly showcases its Partner States resources, keeping pace with the Nation’s development and progress. The advantages that these States enjoy are specific and help them in developing their focus in key sectors accordingly. For example, Punjab has emerged as a key hub for textile based industries including yarn, readymade garments and hosiery besides other specialties specific to

each state. OIFC will help Indian Diaspora / Overseas Indian investors, to avail the benefits of investing in state-specific opportunities in specific sectors.

Punjab, the richest state in India that throbs with the vibrant culture, has always moved on the path of prosperity. The state known as the “Food basket and Granary of India”, has been awarded National Productivity Award for agriculture extension services for consecutively ten years from 1991-92 to 1998-99 and 2001 to 2003-04.

Punjab is really on its way to rapid industrialisation through coordinated development of small, medium and large scale industries. It has been declared as one of the best states in India in terms of rail, road and transport net-

work as per National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), 2007. Ludhiana, a district in the state of Punjab, has been adjudged as the best place for doing business in India as per the World Bank Study, 2009. With the up-gradation of Amritsar International Airport and another International Airport coming up in Mohali, Punjab is geared to be one of the finest and easily accessible tourist as well as business destinations in South Asia.

Major highlights of the State

- Human Development Index (2001): 0.537 (Rank 2nd among 15 major states)
- Strong Industrial Base:
 1. 1,60,640 Small Scale Units

The screenshot shows the OIFC website interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Login, Join OIFC Network today, SERVICES, ASK THE EXPERT, LIVE CHAT, and CONTACT. The main header features the OIFC logo and a quote from Dr. Manmohan Singh, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India: "India is a land of opportunity that places premium on enterprise and creativity... Invite you, the Overseas Indians, to make use of the investment and business opportunities that India now offers. This is the time for all of us to become strategic partners in India's progress." Below the quote is a navigation menu with links: Home, Investing in India, Sectors, Network, Resources, Partners, Services, FAQs, Newsroom, Facts, and About. The main content area is titled "Partners" and "State Partners" with a dropdown menu for "Punjab". A sidebar on the left lists "Partners" and "State Partners" with a list of states: Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Orissa, and Punjab. The main content area for Punjab includes a "Punjab" heading, a date "DIPCSeg 06, 2011", and a grid of images showing industrial and agricultural scenes. Below the images is a text block: "Punjab, a state known for its vibrant culture and tradition, is rapidly witnessing industrialisation through coordinated development of small, medium and large scale industries. Agriculture is one of the biggest segments in Punjab, with the state being the largest single provider of wheat to India. Some of the other major industries include Textile & Apparel, Rubber and Paper, Machinery and Parts, Chemicals, Auto and Auto Parts, Leather, Sports Goods, Steel Rolling and Re-rolling, IT and Electronics". To the right of the text is a quote from Parkash Singh Badal, Chief Minister Punjab: "We are very keen to have a nuclear power station in Punjab". Below the quote is a "HIGHLIGHTS" section with a "NEW" sub-heading: "The NRI cell of Punjab Police has started an integrated video conferencing service to help in resolution of problems of the state".

The State-Partners Page for Punjab on OIFC’s portal, <http://www.oifc.in/Our-Partners/State-Partners/Punjab>

2. 400 Large & Medium Scale Units
- Total investment in industry (2008-09): Rs. 47,250 crores
 - India Today's 'State of the States Survey' has ranked Punjab as the Best State for 4 consecutive years(2007-2010), in the following indices:
 1. Infrastructure
 2. Consumer Markets
 3. Agriculture
 - Attained top rank on the 'Infrastructure Development Index', as per CMIE report, 2001
 - Punjab is projected to become a power surplus state by 2013
 - Classified as 'The Mall Capital of India'
 - One of the leading states in providing best infrastructure and facilities to primary and upper primary schools based on EDI for the year 2009 by National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA)
 - One of the strong education network amongst the States with 13 universities
 - One of the 1st states in India to set up a technical university

Special facilities for NRIs/PIOs

The Punjab Government being aware of the immense contribution of the Punjabi NRIs to the socio-economic development of Punjab, has set up a separate Ministry for NRI Affairs in March, 2007.

State Policies & Incentives of the State

Tax incentives & exemptions for NRIs

The Punjab Government intends to receive larger investments by NRIs. Government of India wants to give reliefs as well as concessional tax rate along with simplifying tax regime for people who are investors in the state. These NRIs are also given special status under the law of Income Tax. Apart from the general provision which deals with computing long term gains and then the tax liability that is seen in section 48 and section 112, Chapter XII-A. This contains special provisions that relates to the incomes from non-resident Indians. Also, section 115AC also provides provision for tax on income from shares or bonds which is purchased through foreign currency.

Investment subsidies for NRIs

New Industrial Policy 1996 has given special thrust to the development of Agro-based industry and to build conducive industrial climate to attract fresh investments and also facilitate the growth and expansion of existing industry. Some of the incentives provided under this policy especially to NRIs include:

- Setting up of an exclusive focal point in Mohali for NRI entrepreneurs.
- Reservation of industrial plots for allotment

in all focal points and industrial estates in the state for NRIs.

- Preference to NRI entrepreneurs by State Industrial Development and other promotional corporations, while finalising proposals for joint ventures/assisted sector projects.
- A special cell in the Directorate of Industries, "Udyog Sahayak", to provide "single window" facility and to ensure time-bound clearance to all investment proposals received from NRIs.

Incentives for FDIs

Punjab has received Rs 5,000 crore of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the last four years in several sectors, according to Mr Manoranjan Kalia, Punjab Industry and Commerce Minister. Some of the potential sectors where NRIs can invest into the state include that real estate, education, services and IT.

Business Opportunity

Single window

To help entrepreneurs obtain speedy clearances for setting up industry in Punjab, the Government has set up a special cell called Udyog Sahayak (industry facilitator). All knowledge driven industries such as IT, electronics and biotechnology have a separate "single window" service mechanism under Punjab Information and Communication Technology Corporation Ltd.

About OIFC:

Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC), a not for profit public private initiative of Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), was established in 2007 with a mandate of:

- Promoting Overseas Indian investments into India and facilitate business partnerships,
- Establishing and maintaining a diaspora Knowledge Network,
- Function as a clearing house for all investment related information,
- Assisting States in India to project investment opportunities to Overseas Indians; and,
- To provide a host of advisory services to PIO's and NRI's.

For further details log on to www.oifc.in

or contact :

Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre
C/o Confederation of Indian Industry
249-F, Sector 18, Udyog Vihar, Phase IV
Gurgaon – 122015, Haryana, India
Tel: +91-124-4014055
Fax: +91-124-4309446
Email: oifc@cii.in
Web: www.oifc.in

Some of the special agencies that help in facilitating industrialisation in the state include:

- Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation
- Punjab Small Industries & Export Corporation
- Punjab Financial Corporation

Investment Opportunities

Punjab adjudged as the best place for doing business in India as per World Bank Study, 2009

- Clean & proactive political & business environment
- Complete hassle free dealing with Government
- Industrial Facilitation Act enacted
- Special incentives & facilitation for Mega Projects
- Single point project clearance mechanism implemented
- Exemption from zoning regulations
- Presence of effective judicial system
- Time bound statutory & non-statutory clearances

Key Policy Updates

The government of Punjab is committed to provide a congenial atmosphere to the existing and prospective investors and entrepreneurs in the State through various policies such as:

- Industrial Policy 2003
- Notification Textile Policy 2006
- IT Policy 2001
- Biotech Policy 2006
- Tourism Policy 2003
- New and Renewable Source of Energy Policy 2006 (NRSE)

DESTINATION PUNJAB

New Growth Ahead

Large companies, SME's , hospitality sector, service providers, cultural organisations ... all of have lots to cheer about this festive season as CII's 4 day Expo at Amritsar Destination Punjab gets underway. A report by Rahul Kumar.

As good emerges victorious over evil and Ravana is consigned to the flames by Lord Rama on Dushhera on October 6, another victory for Punjab's industry takes shape the very next day as CII's Destination Punjab is inaugurated at Amritsar on October 7. The 4 day Expo, being held in association with the Government of Punjab, is a unique platform created for the business world to interact and forge partnerships and bring forth newer investments and entrepreneurship opportunities for the future in Punjab.

Destination Punjab will benefit the key sectors like Farm Equipments, implements and machinery; Textile and textile machinery; engineering goods; auto and machine tools, leather and sports goods and tourist and hospitality. It will aim at providing momentum to the industrial success of Punjab and the event also highlights the extensive B2G interactive and participative session and knowledge events.

"The state of Punjab has huge potential for growth, but needs to be properly branded. The need of the hour is aggressive planning, stated Ms Kamna Raj Aggarwala, Chairperson, CII Punjab State while detailing on about the event at a press conference in Amritsar. Destination Punjab can be considered a proactive step towards branding Punjab and to fetch more investments into the state. "Especially for MSME, which forms the backbone of the state, it is a great platform for showcasing their strength and benefitting from visiting delegations and corporate clientele," she stated.

According to Mr Suneet Kochhar, Chairman, CII Amritsar Zonal Council, "CII's prestigious events have always created an investment platform for the state, be it our Industrial Expo at

Haridwar, Agrotech at Chandigarh or Cera-glass at Jaipur. With knowledge events like buyer seller meet, vendor development programs and focused sectoral discussions, CII is confident that Destination Punjab will promote the interest of the industry and state in a com-



posite manner". We will also be coming out with 100 success stories on entrepreneurs of Punjab.

Talking about the other facets of Destination Punjab, Ms Kamna told "Besides the business part, we have also created a platform for the artists of Punjab to nurture, sustain and promote the Punjabi culture". Looking determined, she remarked "Our motive is to put Punjab on the national and international circuit, businesswise and culture wise"

"Aptly being organized by CII at Amritsar, which apart from having its religious importance is also going to become the gateway of Punjab soon, I see Destination Punjab as an opportunity to explore emerging possibilities and provide the thrust to the industrious success of Punjab", - Mr Rajat Agarwal, Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar

A great start to a great festive season, Destination Punjab is all set to bring in cheer to industry in Punjab!

The state of Punjab has huge potential for growth, but needs to be properly branded. The need of the hour is aggressive planning, Besides the business part, we have also created a platform for the artists of Punjab to nurture, sustain and promote the Punjabi culture.

-Ms Kamna Raj Aggarwala, Chairperson, CII Punjab State

Balle Balle keeps this Mayor fit

Meghna Agarwal meets the *Punjab da puttar* who has taken Bhangra to a new level.

Bhangra has enjoyed a surge in popularity worldwide, both in traditional form and as a fusion with genres such as hip-hop, house, and reggae. Bhangra, the lively form of dance originated in the Punjab region in Southeast Asia. As Bhangra continues to move into mainstream culture, the mayor of Pune, a Punjabi by birth, has taken the dance form to a new level. Mohansingh Rajpal, the mayor of Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has turned Bhangra into a form of exercise which solves the dual purpose of enjoyment and relaxation for him.

“Punjabis are famous for dancing and I enjoy it. I do bhangra every morning for exercise. I do it daily for at least 15-20 minutes. It keeps my body energized and also gives me relaxation,” Rajpal said.

Rajpal who has been fond of dancing since childhood hails from an area near Sialkot, now in Pakistan. Rajpal who believes that he is a born dancer is said to be ready to dance on every given opportunity. “Since childhood I have been very fond of dancing. I can dance on any kind of music. I am a born dancer and I dance as per the music. During the Ganapati celebrations here in Pune I often dance when I get the opportunity,” he said.

Rajpal though has not had any formal training in the dance form takes naturally to Bhangra. “I have not learnt any dance form. I have not taken any formal training. But dancing comes naturally to me,” he said.

Bhangra happens to be an integral part of Rajpal’s lifestyle. His love for dance is evident from the fact that he has been dancing since his childhood doing Bhangra at the Ganapati mandals in the city. “Yes, I have always been interested in Bhangra. I used to dance in the Ganapati mandals in the city of Pune. In fact when I was in school I had a very thin body and weighed only 52 kg,” he said.

Despite the fact that Rajpal has been born and brought up in the city of Pune itself, he takes great pride in being a true Punjabi. “I have been born and brought up in Pune. I studied in the Guru Nanak High School at Pune. But, I am very much a Punjabi. I love Punjabi cuisine. I visit the gurudwaras in the city. But since I have been

born and brought up in Pune, I know Marathi as well. At home I and my wife, we mostly speak Punjabi. But my children do not know the language,” he said.

Even in Pune, Rajpal celebrates all Punjabi festivals with great fervour. “I celebrate all the Punjabi festivals, including Lori and Baisakhi with great zeal. In fact at the Pune Municipal Corporation I organized Baisakhi festival when I joined the PMC 2 years back,” he said. Rajpal will complete two years in this year December as the PMC mayor.

The metropolis city of Pune with a population of a total 32 lakhs has people from all over India. “Pune is a metropolitan city. The local population of the city is only 5-6 lakhs. Rest of the population of Pune has migrated from other states. Pune has accepted all the outside cultures with equal zeal,” he said.

Though Rajpal has not been to Punjab very often, he says the Punjabis are known by their food and Bhangra. “I have visited Punjab a couple of

times, but not very often. But three things are the USP of the Punjabis - the Punjabi food, the bhangra and the Punjabi music,” he said. “I love Punjabi music. I love listening to Daler Mehndi and Malkit Singh and their likes,” he added.

The Punjabi music and dance gives the city mayor new energies to give his hundred per cent to his work. “I stopped dumping of garbage in the open areas. I also improved the transportation of city by purchasing 250 new buses for better public transport. I also worked on improving the condition of the rivers and widening of the city roads,” he said.

Rajpal has a few plans in the pipeline for the city. “I want to improve the hygiene and sanitation of the city. I also want to start some new projects like making the hills in and around the city greener,” he said.

Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) was recently ranked as the third best municipal corporation in the country at an awards function, organized by the All India Institute of Local Self Government in the year 2011. “Pune as a city has got a great civic sense and infrastructure. There is no water problem at all. Apart from all this, the weather is so pleasant, which is a bonus,” he said.

“Pune will soon have a museum dedicated to Sachin Tendulkar. The land for the museum has already been allotted and we will even begin work on the 20th of October this year itself.

From then on the museum will take about one and a half year to get completed,” he added.

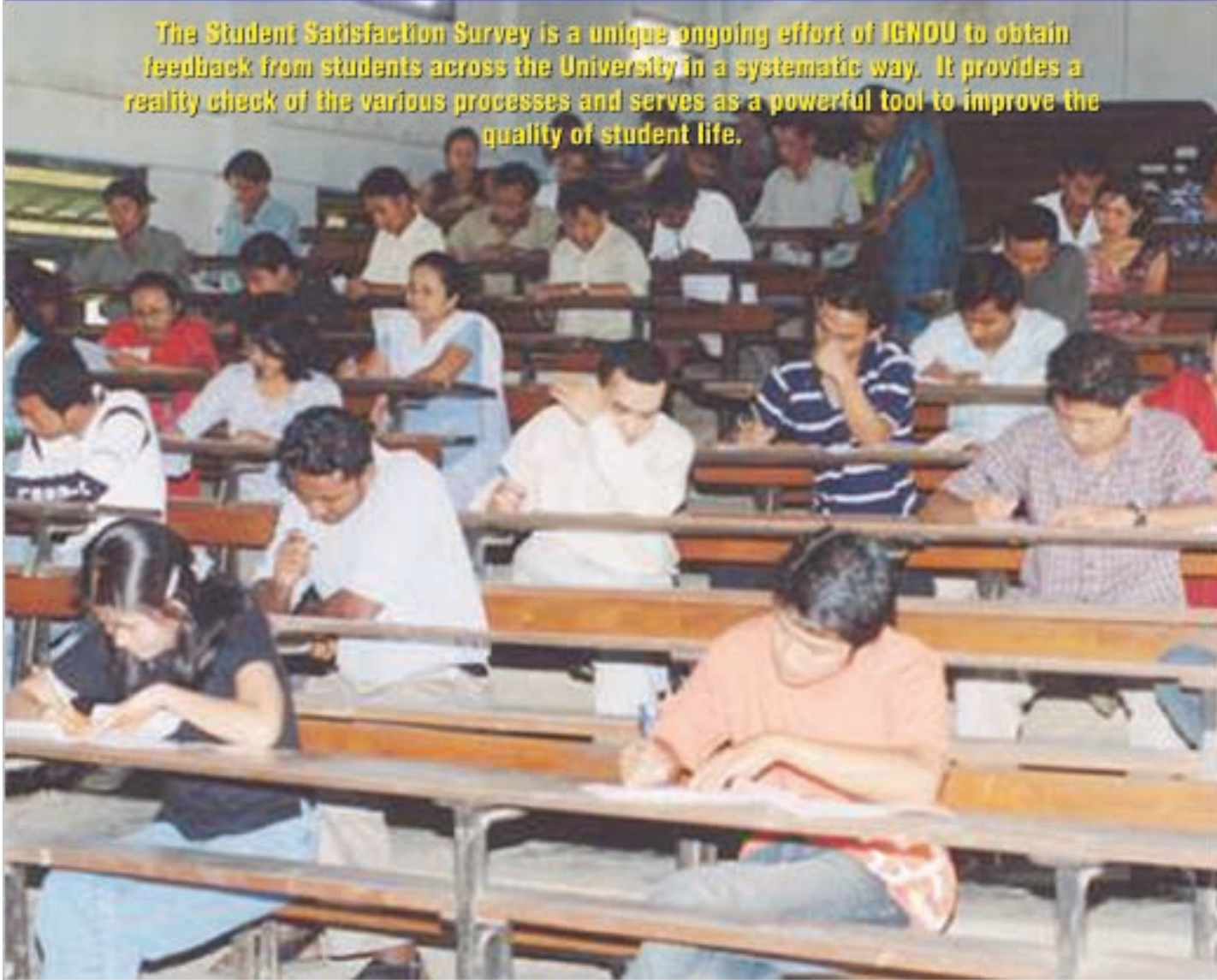
Rajpal’s parents who hailed from Sialkot, Pakistan migrated to India and settled in Pune during the partition. “My native place is Sialkot in Pakistan. During partition my ancestors migrated to India and settled in Pune. My parents are no more. My father had a charcoal business in the city of Pune,” he said. “We are 6 brothers, including me. Only one of the brothers is settled in Madhya Pradesh, the rest five of us are all in Pune itself,” he added.

The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) currently consists of 149 directly elected corporators, who are led by the Mayor of Pune. PMC’s jurisdiction’s total area is 430 km² making it the biggest municipal corporation in Maharashtra as per area. The Mayor of Pune acts as an ambassador and representative of the city with some duties and executive powers.



Mohansingh Rajpal, the mayor of Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC)

The Student Satisfaction Survey is a unique ongoing effort of IGNOU to obtain feedback from students across the University in a systematic way. It provides a reality check of the various processes and serves as a powerful tool to improve the quality of student life.



**Kind Attention: All Past and
Present Students of IGNOU !
Now you rank our performance...**

Dear student,

As the largest distance education institution in the world, we have always endeavoured to provide students with contemporary knowledge and competencies. It is our belief that you as the former or present student is the best person to judge how far the university has succeeded in its efforts. To gain your invaluable impressions, we present here a short questionnaire. Your inputs will help us improve our services and evolve more student friendly study programmes. Each programme / course of the University, the Schools and the Disciplines and the Support Service Units of the University will be rated annually based on these inputs. Best wishes to you.

Thank you,

Vice Chancellor, IGNOU

Student Satisfaction Survey



Enrolment No. **Mobile No.**.....
Name..... **Programme of Study**.....
Year of Enrollment..... **Year of Completion**.....
Age Group : Below 30 31 - 40 41 - 50 51 and Above **Gender** : M F
Caste..... **Religion**..... **Physically Handicapped**.....
States..... **Regional Centre**.....
Study Centre Code.....

Dear Student,

Please take a few moments to answer the following questions regarding your experience with IGNOU's course materials and processes. This will help us in our continuous efforts to attain quality benchmarks.

Thank You

| Serial No. | Questions | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Undecided | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied |
|------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Was there sufficient information about the programme through its website and print media? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | Did you receive your Student I-Card and enrolment number on time? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | Did you receive the learning materials on time? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | Did the contents in the print materials provide sufficient knowledge of the subject? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | Was the quality and coverage of printed learning materials sufficient? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | Did the supplementary study materials (audio/video) support you? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | How do you rate the coverage of the materials on Gyan Darshan/Gyanvani? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | What is your experience of the counselling services delivered by your academic counsellor in the study centres? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | Were the counselling sections interactive? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | Were the academic counselling sessions well organized? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 | Were the assignments provided and returned in time? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 | Did the feedback on assignments help in clarifying the concepts? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 | Were the project proposals clearly marked and discussed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 | Were any changes in the counselling schedule communicated in a timely manner? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15 | Were Hall Tickets for the Term-End Examination received on time? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16 | Was the procedure for examinations clear? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17 | Were result and grade cards of the examinations provided in time? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18 | Please provide an overall rating for the programme that you attended. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

After filling cut out this questionnaire and mail it to:

STRIDE, Block - 14, IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi - 110 068

Expertise and Experience Higher Education

Mritunjay Kumar aggregates several opinions of leading educationists from around the globe which debated on many tossing and turning features of Higher Education on the occasion of October 5, World Teachers' Day.

Dr. G S Singh

These all we need :

• Meritocratic values.

Hire the most qualified faculty members, Enroll the brightest students, Reward both students and staff for top performance and lastly Fairness and consistency are central supports of academic meritocracy.

• Governmental support

Research universities are public institutions. Even in the United States, some private research universities receive significant government support for research. In India, only the government has the resources to support research universities. Funding must be consistent and sufficient to support a vibrant research agenda. Research universities cannot be built on the cheap.

• Internationalization.

Research universities are by their nature international institutions, linking with other similar universities in other countries and participating in the international scientific community. India has the advantage of its use of English, the world's language of science, and its possession of a large group of academics who have received training at the best universities abroad. India must take steps to broaden its international reach.

Subba Iyer

Part of the disconnect is because management is both an art and science. In their quest to streamline admissions, there's a high emphasis on "standardized tests". This gets accentuated by the way most MBA programs are actually delivered. Each course gets delivered as a compartmentalized module, often isolated with the rest of the course. The focus on grade and school ranking often makes learning subservient and is often in conflict with the basic outcomes that an MBA education strives to build. There is so much emphasis on content; often at the cost of context. Hence, most students go through the MBA program accumulating a body of knowledge, without necessarily trying to absorb them, synthesize them in some meaningful or contextual way and internalizing them.

Marshall Potts, UK

I have recruited MBA students and personally I would not look at one under the age of 30. The reason for this is three fold; firstly Expertise and Experience or Empirical Evidence of "can talk about and can do". Secondly how do you measure what they know, there is such a vast difference in curriculum it's very difficult for an employer to make a value judgment of a particular individual to the business. Finally credibility and the market's perceptions around MBAs. In the 1990s the Financial Services and Banking Sector embarked upon a large scale recruitment drive for MBA students citing the possibility of a 30% increase in salary earning capability for students who hold an MBA. My first two points ended all of this and a major rethink happened.

Wherever Higher Education or Business Schools are concerned there has to be a preparing of students for the future needs of Industry and impact on the Economy / competitiveness.

Dr. Rahul Choudaha, New York

1. Indian B-schools Bubble published in EDU magazine
With more than 3,000 B-schools, India has three-times the number of B-schools as compared to the US. This difference becomes stark considering that the size of the Indian economy is one-tenth of the US economy. According to All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), last year nearly 60,000, or 30 per cent of the approved 200,000 management seats, remained vacant. Institutions have to start questioning if they are contributing to expanding the B-school bubble or containing it?

2. A crisis of confidence in Indian higher education?
How a foreign institution seeking partners can distinguish between ISB and IIPM, when neither is recognised by AICTE? To take an investment analogy: in India, it is difficult to tell a junk bond from a blue-chip stock. India is a promising investment market but you have to make sure you know where you are investing. Moreover, India itself has to step up its efforts to create investor confidence and build an enabling investment climate.

Krishan Khanna, Mumbai

As far as B-Schools are concerned, I have had the occasion to visit a number of them in Germany & Switzerland.

Two distinct features stand out, besides the normal requirements of good teachers, etc.

1. Students MUST have 2 to 3 years business experience before they join
2. Students are put onto actual "Business & Economic Projects" run by world class consultants as 'Assistants & Jr. Staff' so they get actual on-the-ground experience while they are studying.

We are in a tearing hurry to "Churn Out" MBA's like pop corn...the final results are all to see...

P V Ramana, Navi Mumbai

A. The Parents invest in a recognised University Degree or an AICTE approved PGDM, hoping that these credentials will lead their ward to a career. For them the Product is the Degree/Diploma

B. For the student, it the job at the end of the course, he often does not care whether the program is recognised or approved by AICTE or just a PGPM. Witness the success of SP Jain at one end, and the 'apparent' success and survival if IIPM at the other end, and various avatars in-between.

What we sell is the Value-Add that is perceived by the student's world - his family, his employer and his/her significant life partner. If there is no perceivable value addition in the 2 years, then the institution has failed in the job. Some do it with knowledge, some do it with sheer attitude. Some do it with Goebbelsian propaganda - we are the best!

Prabhakar Waghodekar

In spite all the limitations of MBA degree, one has to agree to:

1. MBA students are more charged with confidence compared to other graduates.
2. MBA student is aware; more or less, of such tools as: system approach, problem solving, lateral thinking, reasoning and logic, integrated approach, human behavior, goal focused, sub-optimization, etc.
3. The image of MBA programme, in public mind, is different compared to other degree programmes, especially in terms of placement and earnings.
4. It is necessary that in case of non-MBA students, introduce a few courses related with the approaches mentioned above, and instill more confidence amongst them so that there will be balanced brain-gain in all vital socio-economic-cultural areas.

Irmel V. Marla, Kerala

I suggest that in India, we should consider a similar approach as the German Technical Universities are applying: prerequisite for admission is 6 to 12 months (!) practical internship in respective industries/companies under real work conditions. The applicants have to make a report, and the employer has to certify it. It functions very well - and in many cases, the students go back there in their holidays and also, find jobs later when their earlier performance is appreciated. That way, the companies are also benefiting and are more than willing to invest some money. Of course, it would require some change of mindset & attitudes, as usually manual labour is naturally connected with this internship, but it would be useful and a big experience for our students.

Prof. (Dr) Satish Ailawadi

Being an MBA myself and with extensive experience in industry and academia, I strongly feel that our expectations from MBAs are unreasonably high. With my experience, I can confidently say that business can never be learnt in the class room whether it is at IIMs or otherwise. But still we can't discount business education as there are a few major benefits that the students get in a b-school class room. These are:

- (1) A structured knowledge of how business functions,
- (2) Exposure to real life business situation through simulation, games and case studies,
- (3) Ability to listen to and appreciate others' view points and inculcate team spirit.
- (4) Opportunity to develop self- confidence, presentation and communication skills.

With the above skills the MBAs learn faster while on the job as compared to non-MBAs and also commit less errors. This is what I have experienced in 31 years of corporate experience. It is not that non-MBAs cannot learn above skills, the only thing is that they would take a bit longer and perhaps commit a few mistakes in the process which can be expensive both for the organization as well as to themselves.

Thiagarajan TVS

Few things we need to take care are :

1. We need innovative teaching. How can we expect students to be innovative in learning? As faculties we have to be innovative in learning and then teaching. We also need to articulate how we can be innovative.
2. Rather than thinking of changing the system throughout the country, why don't we identify certain educational institutions in some cities and deploy the able and experienced members of this forum to improve the quality of teaching through periodic seminars for the teachers but without demanding any money from the participants. This can be done in collaboration with managements of select institutions. If managements are hesitant, HEF can organise the seminars in an informal way during week-ends. The handpicked members too can bombard the identified teachers with periodic articles and books that can stimulate the thinking of teachers. This will help us know where we are and where the participants are.
3. Later, once the scheme is successful, able teachers can be empanelled to provide lucrative opportunities through the contacts members have.
4. If HEF wants to earn money all the time, there again we need innovative approach, rather than following the well-trodden path. Like we are detailing the services of Dr. Seshadri, let HEF select dozen members of this forum who have the power to talking in front of huge gathering. Let HEF identify ten different topics suiting to requirements of industries and educational institutions, prepare the material, rehearse well months in advance and advertise in the dailies for periodic lectures. Let HEF decide the share of percentage of income. Why a dozen only? We can even make 100 for country-wide approach. Here, the lectures have to be top-notch! Participants have to be minimal for effective interaction.



Festive Fervour

Mritunjay Kumar presents the celebrations and rituals performed during Durga Puja and also spotlights on dandia raas of Navratri.

Durga Puja also called as Navratri is one of the most celebrated festivals of India to invoke the grace of Mother Durga. It is a grand affair through out the country, with celebrations differing from each other, but entertaining a central concept of worshipping the Divine Mother Durga.

With the auspicious Navratri festival all set to begin, devotees are leaving nothing to chance to welcome Goddess Durga for the nine-day festival. Very much like various parts of the country, this festival is celebrated with equal fervour and devotion in the city. Artists are working round the clock giving final touches to the idols of Goddess Durga.

Clay Statues of Goddess Durga

West Bengal specializes in the making of clay idols of Goddess Durga for the festival. It requires painstaking efforts in the making of the clay models yet fulfilling and rewarding in the culmination of it.

The effort associated with the making of the clay idols of Goddess Durga involves a lot of rites and rituals. The clay for the idols

is collected on Akshaya Tritiya on the banks of River Ganges. After performing the required rites, the clay out of which the idols are made is transported. A significant event associated with the process is 'Chakku Daan', meaning 'donation of the eyes'. The Eyes of the Goddess is then painted on 'Mahalaya' or on the first day of the Puja. The artisans who paint the eyes of the mother keep a fast for a day, following a vegetarian diet.

The making of the clay models involve different aspects and each of them is entrusted to different groups while the making of the head, face, arms and feet are attended to by the experts called 'Pals'. It is a methodical process done with care and expertise. The skeleton is created with bamboos and straw on which the clay modelling is created.

Beautiful pandals

Durga Puja Pandals are structures where the Goddess Durga is installed for the purpose of worship in the neighbourhood. Streets turn into numerous places of worship overnight. The Pandals are either elaborate grand expressions or modest ones. Today different themes are adopted for the Pandals and prizes are distributed for the best form of creativity .

Preparations at homes

People gear up for the celebration of the much awaited festival. The houses are tidied and decorated as some people also perform Durga Puja in their homes. They start looking out to purchase the best idol of the Mother for their worship. They also shop for clothes and ornaments for the decoration of the idol.

Some women engage in making sweets and savouries for the festival. People who keep fasts for Navratri tune their bodies to take up their fast by following lighter forms of diets.

Dandiya Raas and Garba at Navratri

Famous, devotional and folk dance 'Garba' is performed during Navratri. Now mostly in all the states of India this Garba dance is being performed. Navratri festival is enjoyed by the people of Gujarat and other states in full extent.

They are very excited during Navratri. Navratri the holy festival in Gujarat is celebrated by performing the Durga pooja first and then Dandiya Raas. Garba is basically folk dance of Gujarat and performed only by the women and Dandiya Raas is performed by men and women together. Dandiya Raas where men and women wear colorful dresses and join the dance in circle and carry colorful Dandiya sticks.

FUN, FROLIC AND FESTIVALS

Festival season brings with it lots of warmth, cheer and an opportunity to connect with friends and family. **Mayura Amkant** speaks to Indians across the world on what the festive season means to them.



Upcoming Indian Actor, **Ekta Khosla** adds, "I am a Hindu and we therefore celebrate festival like Diwali, Ganesh Chaturti and Raksha Bandhan at my home. My favourite festival is Ganesh Utsav. I love the way people come together and perform the Aarti, offer prayers and sweets to Lord Ganesha. The people in our building organize games and events where people from all age groups and castes set aside time from the daily humdrum and celebrate."



Sakeina Dohadwala – Chief Marketing Officer, Bluebird Apparels Trading I.L.c, Dubai says "I am an Indian born mother who ardently follows Islam and respects all religions equally. I love celebrating all the festivals that my friends celebrate. After I have moved to Dubai about a decade ago, I mostly celebrate Diwali other than Eid, however, back in India it would be almost all of the important ones. I believe that festivals allow interaction with friends and family. Otherwise the speed at which our lives are moving, we would have no time for each other at all. Festivals to me mean getting a break from the hectic working days and chilling with friends and family"



Kunal Bhatia – General Manager, Allied Oilfields & Industrial Supplies, Doha, "I see the festival celebrations as an attempt to recreate the Indian atmosphere, abroad. We practice Hinduism at my home. My wife, son and I are moderately Indian when it comes to celebrating Indian festivals i.e. we celebrate a few important Hindu festivals. We mainly celebrate Diwali at home, the highlight being the traditional pooja in the evening with traditional clothing followed by some firecrackers and play cards."



Aleya Hussain Jung, Account Manager, Corporate Business Development with Visiting Nurse Association of Brooklyn in New York says "We ease the longing for family by spending time with our own kind during festive season. Being a true New Yorker, festivals are just another excuse to interact and socialize. I would like to add that though my wife and I don't put too much importance on the festival itself, I believe that at some level, it keeps us Indians grounded and connected to our culture. I strongly feel that it preserves our identity. Since we are not born in USA, I believe, we always long to be in India during festivals."



Delnaz Chibber, Director - Pelican Suites, Toronto - an Indian born Parsi, married to a Punjabi - "We are very Indian when it comes to celebrating festivals - as Indian as any Indian could be. Toronto is another little India by itself. I do not find myself in a different country at all. Here people speak Hindi and Punjabi and wear Indian outfits everywhere. The kurtis and mojris sold in major fashion outlets here are very well accepted by the non-Indian crowd too. Indian festivals are awaited and there is lots of pomp and joy all around at such times. However, even though everything is similar to India, during festival times all of us here miss our relatives and friends from India. Indian festivals are celebrated and replicated but the spirit of India is missing".



Samyukta Manoj, a Service Officer with Barclays, UK believes that "I am a Hindu Saraswat married to a Malyali, both of us are Indian born. We have been working and living in UK for over 6 years now. We don't really celebrate Indian festivals elaborately at our home however we would love to. We have decided to celebrate Diwali, Onam, Vishu and Gudi Padwa from this year onwards so that our little daughter learns and enjoys them."

The author is Head-Communications Management – Whistling Woods International, School of Media and Communication



Anna Hazare

Anna to bowl another Googly

The 74-year-old Gandhian Anna Hazare is preparing to confront the government on the issue of Electoral Reforms, says Chandran Iyer, who was in Ralegan Sidhi.

With several Member of Parliaments (MPs) cooling their heels in the jails on charges of corruption and many others waiting in the queue to enter the portals of Tihar jail, what transpired at the crucial Team Anna core committee meeting at Ralegan Siddhi on September 10 and 11 is likely to give shivers to the MPs who are already reeling from the tsunami of his Jan Lokpal Bill agitation which put the government on the back-foot.

The shocker for the government is Anna Hazare's plan to write to the prime minister Manmohan Singh suggesting various electoral reforms that need to be undertaken in tandem with the steps to pass a strong Jan Lokpal Bill. The biggest sore point for the politicians is going to be the fact that Hazare is drafting a letter to the prime minister seeking his views on the right to recall a Member of Parliament and the right to reject candidates who stand for elections.

Imagine the reaction of the government as and when it gets this letter from Hazare. As of

now nearly a third of MPs – 158 of 543 – in Parliament face criminal charges. Seventy four of them face serious charges such as murder and abduction. Many of the MPs including the Congress MP Suresh Kalmadi, Samajwadi Party MP Amar Singh, DMK MP Kannimozhi who is the daughter of the former Tamil Nadu chief minister M Karunanidhi, A Raja and others are breaking chappathis in Jail. What will happen to people like the RJD MP Lal Prasad Yadav who has 63 cases against him with the most infamous of them being the fodder scam if the government is forced to enact the right to recall a MP and the right to reject candidates who stand for elections? Interestingly Lal Prasad Yadav is member of standing committee which would look into lok pal bill!

MP's facing criminal charges is not a new phenomena. It has preceded several times in the past. For instance in 1996 the then Union Communication Minister Sukhrum went to jail on charges of corruption as he was accused of bestowing undue favour in the telecom equipment scam flouting tender norms. When CBI raided his residence they got 3 crore cash. He

went to jail for 3 years.

Another MP who faced criminal charges was Siby Soren. In 2005 Soren was forced to resign as Union coal minister after he was asked to appear as an accused in the Chirudih massacre case, in which he was later acquitted.

The chief minister of Tamil Nadu, Jayalalita has had her share of jail stay on charges of corruption. Due to an anti-incumbency wave and several allegations of corruption and malfeasance against her and her ministers, she lost power to the D.M.K in 1996, in a landslide defeat. Now she has bounced back and returned as the chief minister.

But the MP who made his party tremor and collapse because of corruption charges is A Raja, the main player in mother of all scams called 2g scam. He is accused of making government loose whooping 1 lakh seventy thousand crores!

If one makes a list of politicians who have been accused of corruption then the list could become pretty long as there are several of them including Suresh Kalmadi, Madhu Koda,



Reddy brothers etc.

The criminalization of politics is not confined to one or two parties but most of them are tarred with the same brush. BJP has maximum MPs having criminal cases – 42 MPs have criminal cases against them, out of which 17 MPs have serious criminal cases against them.

It has followed by congress – 41 MPs with criminal cases out of which 12 MPs have serious charges against them. SP has 8 MPs with criminal cases out of which 7 has serious charges, followed by Shivsena which has 8 MPs with criminal charges out of which 3

have serious charges.

Though all the political parties publicly proclaim that they are opposed to giving tickets to people with criminal background, when the election comes everything changes. Instead of giving tickets to people who have clean character and track records, tickets are distributed to those people who have the element of “winability” among them even if they have questionable characters. Money-power, muscle-power, corrupt practices and unfair means are being freely employed to win the elections.

The reason why so many criminal elements enter into politics is not hard to seek. They feel that if they become a politician, then they can escape the long arm of the law as they themselves become law-makers.

In fact criminalization of politics has become one of the biggest blot for the Indian democracy where votes are purchased by notes and goondas and criminals are used to eliminate political rivals or capture booths. The sad part is that after committing heinous crimes many of these elements manage to extract tickets to contest elections and often make their way to the Parliament and Assemblies, which is the highest governing body in the country.

In the good old days politicians went to jail protesting against the British government. They went to jail for a noble cause of bringing freedom to India and the people of India saluted them. But now many of the MPs have gone to jail for corrupt practices.

Thus if the Anti Corruption leader Anna Hazare and his team starts agitation for electoral reforms with the thrust on Right to Recall an elected representative and a Right to Reject a candidate who is fighting elections, then there is every possibility that there could be a much bigger confrontation between Anna Hazare and the government in the months to come.



PEEPLI LIVE SEQUEL II



Anna with Rajdeep Sardesai

With nearly 25 Outdoor Broadcasting Vans lined up in front of Padmavati temple in Ralegan Siddhi the venue of the brain storming session of Team Anna and his core committee members and several reporters and camera men thronging the venue to cover the event, the whole village looked like a film set where shooting was going on.

Publicity mongers wearing outlandish apparels with photographs of Anna had a good time hogging the publicity as the TV reporters who were perpetually hungry to show visuals relating to Anna Hazare were more than happy to turn their cameras on them and elicit their bytes. One could see godmen, contortionists and freeloaders trying their best to get some free publicity.

The manner in which the TV media went overboard in their coverage here would remind one of the movie Peepli Live. One correspondent from a prominent Hindi Channel from has been practically living in Ralegan Siddhi since the past several days. In fact several stringers of news channel are staying in the Training centre at Ralegan Sidhhi and are having free meals at the hostel in Ralegan.

After the two day meeting was over, it was the turn of the Editors of Television channels to throng the venue for “one-on-one” interview with Anna Hazare. The visiting editors included Rajdeep Sardesai, Barkha Dutt, Punya Prasun Bajpayee, Rahul Kanwal and several others. The funny part was that practically all of them asked more or less the same questions to Anna and he replied the same set of answers and yet all the channels claimed it was their “Exclusive”.

AGAINST CORRUPTION

Voices of Youth



Bhrashtachar Mitao.. Bharat Bachao
 "we can stop corruption"

Few went to Ramlila to show their support, few marched in their hometown, few kept fast along with Anna, few criticized the protest and few fitted into the shoes of silent observer. The anti-corruption movement that Anna Hazare and his associates have launched rocked the establishment in India to its foundations and to liken Hazare to Gandhi. Many have looked at the socio-political and economic factors that triggered the movement and unleash their voices in the aftermath of movement.

Graphic: Anand Roy



Anti-corruption courts, a website to file complaints, CCTV cameras and surprise checks or raids on offices by appointed officers of the anti-corruption group. This will catch officials unprepared and keep them on their toes. These raids should be made at any-time and not at fixed intervals.

Grishma Bhuta, Gujarat



There is need to bring changes in our system which creates vicious circle and people are caught in it. Use media as a weapon- Corruption has taken its toll on every department, including our law enforcers. How can the public trust them? The media is the only weapon to unmask the corrupt.
 Mridanjli Rawal, Haryana

Making provisions for harsh deterrent punishment against corrupt acts of different hues, which should also include adulteration, cheating consumers through sub-standard products & services, etc. Transparency and stricter scrutiny of government tenders/orders, including auction/sale of public-owned assets.

Deepankar Thakur, Shimla



A research should be done to locate the affected areas of corruption, voices of citizens should be kept in front of Government and to find out the reasons behind this and people involved in corruption. A workshop should be taken in every nook and corner of the country to get rid of this disease.

Amit Tyagi, UP





LET'S DRAW THE LINE!

Arjya Patnaik questions the Planning Commission of India on its decision of pushing the poverty line downwards.

"Excuse me sir..", I stopped a man walking towards his car dressed in a designer suit with his laptop bag.

"Yes?!"

"Could you please answer a question for me?"

"What's it?"

"What are the material things that you require for leading a happy and comfortable life?"

"Well, madam that answer will be a bit long (giggles). A plush 4BHK house in south Bombay, a red convertible or SUV may be, a high end residential MBA college amidst the hills for my son, a holiday in Europe or perhaps UK (coz London is amazing) every year, the best of branded apparels, watches, shoes, wallets, laptops, cell phones, home appliances, a three course meal in a five star hotel once a week, etc etc. Guess I am still forgetting a lot many essentials!"

"Thank you sir"

"Hello, chachi!" I smiled at a vegetable seller sitting by the same roadside. I asked her, "What are the material things that you require for leading a happy and comfortable life?"

She immediately answered "That is such an easy question! Two square meals a day (Sigh, only if I could sometimes feed my children with vegetables but the prices are too high. I sell vegetables every day, but only manage to feed my children with dal-roti) , a roof to protect my family from sun and rain, money to get my children to complete their matriculation (What to do, tuition teacher demands 120 rupees every month!), 'not so torn' clothes, my husband coughs a lot since he works in a mine; need to

pay for his medicines and doctor fees at times (We go to the doc only when we have extra money, can't afford the luxury!). I am asking for a lot na, beta??" [Mind you, there is not 'etc' category here in the end]

It must be clear in your mind that I spoke to a RICH insurance banker at first and then to a POOR vegetable vendor. But the planning commission of India would not be in consensus with what we think. According to them, the vegetable vendor chachi is doing fine. She is not really POOR. Unable to understand? You may be thinking that the statement is almost absurd? It is so obvious that the vegetable vendor chachi is POOR. "Ahem, ahem! Our planning commission would beg to differ!!"

The PC's verdict:-

The Planning Commission has told the Supreme Court that poverty line for urban and rural areas in India could be provisionally placed at Rs. 965 per capita per month and Rs. 781 per capita per month respectively.

"So? What does this mean?" you may ask, if you are also bothered about the raging economic divide in India and if you are concerned about the 40.74 crore people who are below the much discussed 'Below Poverty line' or you are simply bothered that how does this imply that the Planning Commission believes that the vegetable vendor chachi isn't POOR??"

As per the declaration of the Planning Commission, if an individual living in urban India spends Rs. 32 per day and an individual living in rural India spends Rs. 26 per day; then they

shall not be considered to be POOR i.e those individuals shall not fall into the BELOW POVERTY LINE (BPL) category. Hence, the PC would declare the vegetable vendor chachi as NOT POOR/ NOT BPL.

In fact, the PC was considering restricting the spending limit at Rs. 20 per day but they revised the figures and fixed it at Rs. 32 and Rs. 26 respectively to exempt people from the BPL category.

To put it in simpler words, the PC has said those spending in excess of Rs 32 a day in urban areas or Rs 26 a day in villages will no longer be eligible to draw benefits of central and state government welfare schemes meant for those living below the poverty line. According to the new criterion suggested by the planners, if a family of four in Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore or Chennai is spending anything more than Rs 3,860 per month on its members, it would not be considered POOR.

The Committee said its "proposed poverty lines have been validated by checking the adequacy of actual private expenditure per capita near the poverty lines on food, education and health by comparing them with normative expenditures consistent with nutritional, education and health outcomes." Please find below the costs worked out by the planning commission and conclude for your own self as to how realistic and well thought out these figures are:-

This Montek Singh Ahluwalia led PC report has been greeted with a lot of flak, outrage, opposition and rejection from several sections of society.

"One doesn't need only food for living -

there are many other requirements for leading a good life. If we analyze the figures given by the Planning Commission it seems as if they are based mostly on the food requirements of the residents of Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh but if we compare the food requirements of a Punjabi, then they don't match", observed SS Johal, noted economist and former vice chairman of the Punjab State Planning Board.

A family of five spends Rs 2500 to Rs 3000 every month only on food items. Also, there are other daily requirements other than food. One needs to spend on hygiene, health, rent, clothing, etc for basic subsistence. The minimum expenditure for a person living in a city will be

| Amenities required for an individual (RURAL) | Per Day Cost (RURAL) |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Cereals | Rs. 5.5 |
| Pulses | Rs. 1.02 |
| Milk | Rs. 2.33 |
| Edible Oil | Rs. 1.55 |
| Vegetables | Rs. 1.95 |
| Fruits | 44 paise |
| Sugar | 70 paise |
| Salt | 78 paise |
| Other foods | Rs. 1.51 |
| Fuel to run the kitchen | Rs. 3.75 |
| Rent and conveyance | Rs. 49.1 per month = Rs. 1.636 |
| Healthcare | Rs. 39.7 per month = Rs. 1.323 |
| Education | Rs 29.6 per month = 99 paise |
| Clothing | Rs 61.3 per month = Rs. 2.04 |
| Footwear | Rs. 9.6 per month = 32 paise |
| Personal Items | Rs. 28.8 per month = 96 paise |
| Total expenses for a comfortable (NOT POOR) day | Rs. 26.799 |

close to Rs. 100.

National Advisory Council member Aruna Roy said it reflected the government's lack of empathy for the poor. "This extremely low estimated expenditure is aimed at artificially reducing the number of persons Below the Poverty Line and thus reduce government expenditure on the poor," she alleged.

"Apart from meeting, lunches and relaxing, the Planning Commission is not doing anything," said D P Tripathi, the chief spokesperson of NCP.

Ideally, income alone should not be the lone criteria and the government should include social vulnerability, gender, access to basic amenities like clean water and good environment as indicators of poverty, according to experts. This seems to be a cruel joke and robs the poor of dignity and is in violation of the Directive Principles of State Policy.

Slamming the government, the BJP has called the move anti-poor. "The government does not want to provide food security. They are shying away from their responsibility. The NAC has only announced need for food security, but in reality the government is not interested in offering food security to the poor. That

Chitthi Aayi Hai!

Rural Development Minister Jairam Ramesh wrote to deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Montek Singh Ahluwalia (excerpts of the letter):

I would like to question the current methodology. Relying on the plan panel's estimate to arrive at cut-offs will not resolve the problem. I assert that there is a need for different yardsticks to identify household for various schemes. I propose three options out of which Plan A is politically the best option available and also best ensures that no poor household is excluded

Plan A: There should be no single BPL list or card. There should be an exclusion criteria and "all the non-excluded households be part of one main list with subsidiary lists for specific programmes". These households will be entitled to various schemes based on their various deprivation and inclusion criteria and a cumulative score, he adds.

Montek Singh Ahluwalia wrote back to Jairam Ramesh while he was in US (excerpts of the letter):

We shall consider all the pros and cons before arriving at a final decision on the issue. There is utter confusion on the subject. However, there is no necessary connection between a fixed poverty line and eligibility for the subsidised food and in any case, Food Security Bill will discuss the priority category".

is why the government has come up with such an affidavit, wherein poverty won't be removed, but the poor will be removed from the list. We vehemently oppose this move, we challenge the government that they should come forward and discuss the niceties and various points regarding the affidavit," BJP leader Prakash Javadekar said.

NC Saxena of the National Advisory Council, however, defended the planning commission. Since the BPL in 1972 was Rs 1.50 per day taking inflation into account it has been increased to Rs 32 now which will help comparing data on reduction in poverty. "Planning Commission has not said anything new as it has just quoted the old Tendulkar report so why all these noise against it now? It looks irrelevant," he said and added that the commission could be criticised for insensitivity in the use of language but technically it was correct.

Rejecting the argument that low estimated expenditure is aimed at artificially reducing the number of persons 'below poverty line' so as to reduce Government expenditure on the poor, Saxena said already most of the Government programmes like NRHM, MGNREGA, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan etc are not targeted to BPL alone and available to APL. The only targeted programme for BPL is PDS, but that too is going to change as under the proposed Food Security Bill no BPL-APL divide has been made.

The Congress is vehemently trying to play down the report. "These are not final figures, so it is not right to make casual remarks. There can be genuine bona fide differences in opinion, but they should put their views before the Planning Commission. There is no question of treating any input lightly," Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi said.

The planning commission might have decided to bridge the gap and smudge the line be-

tween 'shining India' and 'not so shining India'. This could be their way out – DENIAL. Simply refusing to believe that there exists a "not so shining India", that several crores of our population is below the poverty line, that people are POOR! The PC's attempt is to push down the POVERTY LINE and draw it as low as possible so that India is considered higher up in the Human Development Index (HDI) where India currently ranks 122 on a comparative scale. While countries like Bhutan have included "happiness" as one of the determinants of development along with life expectancy, literacy, education and standards of living; our country's planning commission has decided to push the poverty line downwards for transforming into a "developed" nation from a "developing" one. Great planning!! Let's draw the line!! Or would our PC prefer it there was no line at all??

The 'NOT POOR ANYMORE' speak

Name: Ghanshyam

Location: New Delhi

Occupation: Peanut Seller outside the gates of Yojana Bhawan on Parliament Street in New Delhi

He said: Let the Planning Commission step out and teach us how to live on Rs 32 a day... I will work free for them for the rest of my life."

Name: Sai

Location: Mumbai

Occupation: Auto Rickshaw Driver

He said: When the government increases the price of fuel often, thereby increasing the cost of living, how can the spending limit for BPL members be so meagre?

'Vision 2020 on track'

Shekhar Srivastava in conversation with
Beni Prasad Verma, India's Union Minister of Steel

The Union steel ministry is working on the draft of a new national policy, which aims to replace the 2005 norms, and make it in sync with the changing global dynamics. India hopes to be the no 2 producer of steel in the world, only next to China. The sector's rapid and structured growth will help boost the nation's infrastructure. Excerpts :

Presently, India ranks fourth in steel production. How do you see its future?

India is No 4 in steel production and China is on top. But by 2020, our production will cross 200 million tons, and we will become No 2 in the world. China will still remain No 1 as it does not export steel. Though we have increased the export duty from 5% to 20% to curb the export, and we are going to increase the duty by another 10%. Government policy suggests export cannot be banned.

The proposed National Steel Policy (NSP) that would replace the 2005 norms is likely to be more robust and focus on regulatory hurdles, taxation issues and infrastructure bottlenecks.

Recent land acquisition rules could prove to be a big hurdle to this industry. What's your take?

The land acquisition is a big hurdle to mining and setting up a plant. But the land acquisition bill is tabled in the Lok Sabha and will be through after a few debates. The steel ministry has asked state governments to allot useful land. The ministry has decided to set up steel processing plants in Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki, Jhansi, Mirzapur, Gonda. The ministry of mining has apprised the steel ministry about the huge iron ore deposit at Lalitpur in Uttar Pradesh. We have requested the U.P. government to allot the land to us, and we may set up a steel plant at Lalitpur in the future. We would require 2,000 acres to set up the plant. The U.P. government should extend support since it will help create employment opportunities.

Experts say the steel industry is facing a scarcity of coking coal.

With the fate of over 100 iron ore mines in south India hanging in balance, production could take a severe hit. What's your opinion?

There is no shortage of coking coal, and production does not suffer because of its scarcity. We are importing coking coal from Australia, New Zealand and the US, though the profitability has gone down due to its high cost. Most of the small and medium-sized steel industries don't require coal for producing steel as they have induction and electric furnaces.



Beni Prasad Verma,
Union minister of steel

The ministry is formulating a new national Policy and a vision document on steel sector. Could you shed some light on it?

The ministry is working on a new steel draft policy, which is likely to be ready by December.

Four sectoral committees have been formed to study various aspects. The proposed National Steel Policy (NSP) that would replace the 2005 norms is likely to be more robust and focus on regulatory hurdles, taxation issues and infrastructure bottlenecks. Besides, the policy would address the industry's increasing dependence on imports by increasing production. A panel, under top steel officials and experts, was set up to draft the new policy to suit the industry's changing dynamics. The ministry is also planning to ensure that Indian companies secure raw material assets more aggressively. Once the draft is ready, an inter-ministerial panel will discuss the proposed changes, and then the final report would be sent to the Cabinet for its approval.

The committee, comprising 11 members, will look into the reports of the task force set up by the steel ministry on issues related to environment, raw material, economical and infrastructure ahead of drawing up the final draft. This will also take into account the problems in increasing capacity. We should make India a reliable exporter of quality steel rather than being a net importer. It would also look into boosting capacity expansion. The industry has undergone huge changes since 2005. It will also make the industry take informed decision about investment in new capacities.

Of late, the steel industry has been facing severe problems following delays in projects, obtaining necessary environmental clearances, allocation of mines, protests against land acquisition and high input costs. Besides, the industry is getting increasingly dependent on imports. The new policy would try to address issues that are hindering capacity expansion.

The existing policy had projected an annual growth in steel demand at 6.9%, whereas it is growing in excess of 9%, said C S Verma, chairman of SAIL, who was sitting next the minister.

Steel imports have soared to 7.3 million tons in 2009-10 from 1.4 million tonnes in 2001-02. Several mega steel projects of both foreign and domestic steel conglomerates have not been able to start production since they have not got environmental clearances, hit land acquisition roadblock or still negotiating allocation of mines, the bureaucrat added.

Issues relating to environment, forest and others have stalled work on 222 greenfield projects in various parts of the country. How is the ministry tackling these issues?

With a view to making various operations in steel industry environment-friendly, green



Beni Prasad Verma at SAIL event

audit and life cycle assessment of existing steel plants (including sponge iron units) would be encouraged. This would reduce emissions and effluents, minimize and better manage solid waste generation and improve resource conservation such as energy and water. There are some fine examples of environmental performance in the steel sector. However, the steel sector would join the efforts of other industries to improve environmental performance even more. The secondary steel producers would be proactively assisted in shifting to processes that are more environment-protective. A similar policy would be followed in assisting natural resource industries, such as iron ore and coal mining, where scientific mining and mineral processing would be encouraged. Environmental and forest clearances would be granted within a specified timeframe. Though local value addition would be given priority, the government would encourage iron ore trading to make this essential raw material available to the iron and steel industry across India. The government would encourage investments in adding value to iron ore fines. Scientific mining would also be encouraged through consortia of small users and by prescribing a minimum economic size for mines. The steel industry has been facing severe problems following delays in projects, obtaining necessary environmental clearances, allocation of mines, protests against land acquisition and high input costs. Besides, the industry is getting increasingly dependent on imports.

Both ArcelorMittal and Posco had entered into pacts with Odisha and Jharkhand governments over five years ago for setting up of Rs 1.5 lakh crore projects that are still stuck due to want of various regulatory clearances. Have you taken any initiative to ensure that development of backward states does not suffer for want of regulatory hurdles?

South Korean steel-maker POSCO received a

green signal for its \$12 billion project in Odisha in early September along with several riders. The ArcelorMittal project is still not cleared as it requires some more regulatory clearances from the ministry of environment and forest (MoEF). We are in talks with the MoEF.

You are seen as an influential Kurmi leader. What has been your contribution for the community?

I am not a Kurmi leader, I am a Congress leader, and I don't believe in casteism.

You have changed many parties. How comfortable are you in Congress?

I am very comfortable in this party, and this is the right place for me.

You were a founding member of the Samajwadi Party in 1992. How would you compare these two parties as far as their policies are concerned?

The Samajwadi Party was formed in 1993. The ideology of Congress is absolutely different from other political parties, and ours is most suitable for the nation.

Major steel companies in India:

- Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited
- Steel Authority of India
- Tata Steel
- Visveswarayya Steels
- Bokaro Steel Plant
- Bhilai Steels
- Essar Steels Limited
- Jindal Steel & Power
- KVS Ispat
- Jindal Steels Limited

Vrat fashions Modi's progressive outlook



Prakash Singh Badal, L.K. Advani with Narendra Modi

Kintu Gadhvi decodes Gujarat CM Narendra Modi's three-day sadbhavna fast that many think is the stepping stone for becoming key BJP's prime ministerial aspirant in the 2014 parliamentary polls.

Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi recently undertook a three-day Sadbhavna fast for peace and harmony. It appears that Modi has successfully completed what in Indian tradition called vrat – fast with a resolve. Even his detractors accept that it was not only a successful 'good will' mission but also a grand event of political foresight that has sent a message across: his leadership reaches beyond Gujarat.

Many say that Modi, the consummate politician and an able administrator, emerged as one of the stronger contenders for the BJP's prime ministerial aspirant in the 2014 parliamentary polls, riding on this successful sadbhavna fast that promised to promote amity and communal harmony in Gujarat. The Gujarat strongman not only attracted the national media, but also helped settle factional feud within his own party.

Modi's detractors have slammed him for imitating Gandhian Anna Hazare's fast model. However, they said that his fast had political overtones and opposed by his rival Shankarsinh Vaghela. One of his staunchest critics, Mallika Sarabhai said that it was wastage of tax-payers money. As Modi made light of beginning his fast on his 61st birthday, saying he had never celebrated it, Vaghela hit

out at his pretension. In a failed attempt to blunt the outcome of the programme, the Congress party has slammed it as 'the biggest political stunt of the decade'.

The Gujarat CM remained unfazed in the face of trenchant criticism. "My fast is not against anyone... that was, is and will never be my agenda. Just like the world praises Gujarat's model for development and governance, that day is not far when people will discuss our model for inclusive growth and communal harmony," Modi said to a cheering crowd at Gujarat University's plush convention hall in Ahmedabad.

Many said that it was a brilliant strategic move to not only unite and emotionally charge the electorate but also send a message to Indian minorities: in Modi's heart there is place for everyone. The Gujarat CM had invited many Muslim leaders to embody BJP's Gujarat unit as a pro-Muslim party. Many Muslim bureaucrats participated in the fast.

Terming Gujarat his family, Modi said the day was not far off when the world would discuss it as a model state. Top BJP leaders, including L K Advani, attended the function and heaped praise on the CM's governance.

The BJP tallest leader in Gujarat said the success of his endeavour would mean an end to vote-bank politics. "The mission is to unite, not divide. Gujarat is my family, the six crore

Gujaratis' happiness and grief, dreams and aspirations is mine," he asserted.

"I can say with pride that we want to move ahead and give something back to the nation. A state like Gujarat can pull another state which is not so developed. We have the strength and the capability," he told the cheering crowd at the Gujarat University's plush convention hall.

Leader of opposition in the Rajya Sabha Arun Jaitley too praised Modi's governance, saying: "There is politics of honesty in Gujarat. On the other hand, there is an atmosphere of corruption at the centre."

Recounting the Gujarat earthquake of 2001, the communal violence of 2002 and the serial blasts of 2008, Modi said that each time the people have emerged stronger and have touched new heights of development.

"In 2002, we were struck with communal violence. People were thirsty for each other's blood. Innocent lives were lost. To normalise the tense situation, we used all our might. At that time, I had said in any civilised society such a thing should not happen, but everyone cursed and maligned us. No one supported us," he said.

"People said Gujarat was finished, and that investors will not come here. But we crossed that hurdle and developed by leaps and bound," he added.

He went on to say that he chose the occasion to "reach across to people" because he felt this was a stronger medium than just his words. In an attempt to reach out to the Muslim community, he said: "If any part of the body is weak, the entire body cannot be termed as healthy. Similarly, if any community is weak in the state, it cannot be considered as a developed state."

The event was attended by several top party leaders within the BJP, one AIADMK leader and several chief ministers from various states.

Modi has attracted investments of huge sums via his Vibrant Gujarat summits which have helped build his image as a development icon around the globe. Many say that this event was Modi's most significant 'positioning' exercise, surpassing the effects of the investment summits.

When Gujarat has become a symbol of growth and development in the country which is leading the nation in various sectors including agriculture, infrastructure and green energy, Modi has established himself not only as the best chief minister and administrator of a state, but also a national and international leader with a clear vision. Here one finds that the ancient tradition of *vrat* is playing a major role in the life of a leader, who has a progressive outlook.



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RAJASTHAN

The Sun Shining Brighter

Rajasthan has emerged as the most attractive destination in India for investment in Solar Power Sector, finds out Archana

For centuries, the spirited Rajasthanis had battled the desert land and the harsh sun in the western part of the state. And amidst this difficult terrain blossomed one of the most colourful and vibrant cultures in the world. Times have changed. Today Rajasthan is one of the most rapidly transforming landscapes, and economies, in India. Cities are booming and villages are prospering. Rajasthan- a fundamentally strong state with conducive business environment makes investing in the State a celebration of life.

While talking of investments, one of the prominent sectors which is gaining popularity from investors perspective is Solar Energy. In years to come, solar energy has a critical role to play in India's growth story. India is one of the fastest growing industrial and economic powerhouses in the world. At a time when alarmingly high carbon emission is taking its toll on the planet, the answer to face these challenges lies in augmenting the power generation capacity through sustainable, low carbon technologies like wind, biomass and solar.

No conversation on the future of solar

power in India is complete without a discussion on Rajasthan. The largest state in India is blessed with two critical resources that are essential to solar power production: high level of solar radiation per square inch and large amounts of contiguous, relatively vast barren tracts of flat undeveloped land,

The western Indian states have the highest levels of solar radiation and Rajasthan has most intense solar radiation areas. Rajasthan is uniquely placed to tap solar radiations with 300-330 clear sunny days. Daily average radiation ranges between 5kWh/m² in north-eastern hilly areas and 7kWh/m² in western regions. This is comparable to deserts of California, Nevada, Colorado and Arizona. About 60% of the land in Rajasthan is arid or semi arid and the total desert area in the state is 208,110 sq km. The average daily solar radiation translates into 1600 to 2000 kWh/m². Barmer, Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur are the key regions with highest solar radiation. Rajasthan also has abundance of minerals such as zinc, quartz and salt (necessary for Solar CSP). The state is India's leading producer of zinc and quartz.

India's National Solar Mission with an ob-

jective to establish India as a global leader in solar energy envisages a target production capacity of 20000 MW by 2022. In the first phase Rajasthan accounts for 81% of the allocation under the Grid-connected scheme of National Solar Mission (NSM). Rajasthan has got highest number of projects (12 projects of 1MW each) under Rooftop & Small Solar Generation Programme. 52% of the total sanctioned projects are under Off-Grid Solar Application scheme of the NSM.

The state government aims at developing Rajasthan as a global solar power hub of 10000-12000 MW capacity over the next 10-12 years to meet energy requirements. Simultaneously, the state will grow into an R&D hub for deployment of various combinations of solar power technologies and solar based hybrid co-generation technologies which will focus on improving efficiency in existing applications, reducing cost of balance of system.

The State Government will develop Solar Parks of more than 1000 MW capacity in identified areas of Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Barmer districts. It will provide the necessary infrastructure, regulatory and other govern-



ment support required through the nodal agency to rapidly ramp up Solar Power generation capacity in the State. The State will extend all facilities and fiscal incentives provided by Central Government/ National Solar Mission to manufacturers in Solar Parks. RREC will act as a Nodal Agency for development of Solar Parks in Rajasthan.

Rajasthan Solar Energy Policy 2010

The Government of Rajasthan has announced the Rajasthan Solar Energy Policy 2010. This clearly articulated progressive Policy offers a number of incentives for setting up solar power units in the state.

Incentives under Solar Energy Policy-2010:

- Exemption from Electricity Duty
- Grant of incentives available to industrial units shall be available to the Solar Power producers as well
- Availability of water for power generation
- Reservation of land to be completed within 30 days
- Allotment of government land at 10% of DLC rate (Agriculture Land) for Solar Power project

Solar Power: Major Existing Players in Rajasthan...

- Lanco
- Abhijeet Group
- Sonthalia Group
- Punjlloyd
- Reliance
- Mosear Baer

- Procurement of private land for solar power project/solar manufacturing plant
- Conversion charges shall be 10% of charges levied for Industrial purpose under the relevant rules.
- Power purchase agreement; third party sale/captive use/sale to other states through open access
- Open access for third party sale

Availability of water for Power Generation

Water Resource Department will allocate required quantity of water from Indira Gandhi Nahar Project canal/the nearest available source for development of Solar Thermal Plants subject to the availability of water for power generation.

The Real & Effective Single Window

Rajasthan Government has been taking various steps towards improving the investment climate and simplifying the regulatory system in the State. Towards this objective, the Rajasthan Enterprises Single Window Enabling and Clearance Act-2011 has been promulgated. It is a Statutory Mechanism rather than an Administrative System which is binding on the various Departments and Officers for providing time bound clearances/permissions for setting up investment proposal/businesses in the State. This system is backed by an online electronic clearance mechanism for a transparent, online submission and tracking of investment applications.

If there is a place to invest in the solar power sector, the place is Rajasthan. And if there was a time to make this investment, the time is now!

Solar Power: Rajasthan is the place to invest...

- Rapidly growing and industrializing state: Large local & regional demand
- Imminent development in the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor
- Rajasthan blessed with two critical resources for solar power production: high level of solar radiation per square inch and large amounts of contiguous, relatively flat, undeveloped low cost land.
- High availability of power
- Abundant raw material availability
- Substantial labour cost advantage
- Good availability of skilled and semi skilled manpower
- Accounts for 81% of allocation under Grid-connected scheme of National Solar Mission
- Excellent access to markets and raw material bases
- Clearly articulated, progressive Solar Power Policy
- Rajasthan Investment Promotion Scheme 2010
- Rajasthan Enterprises Single Point Enabling and Clearance System

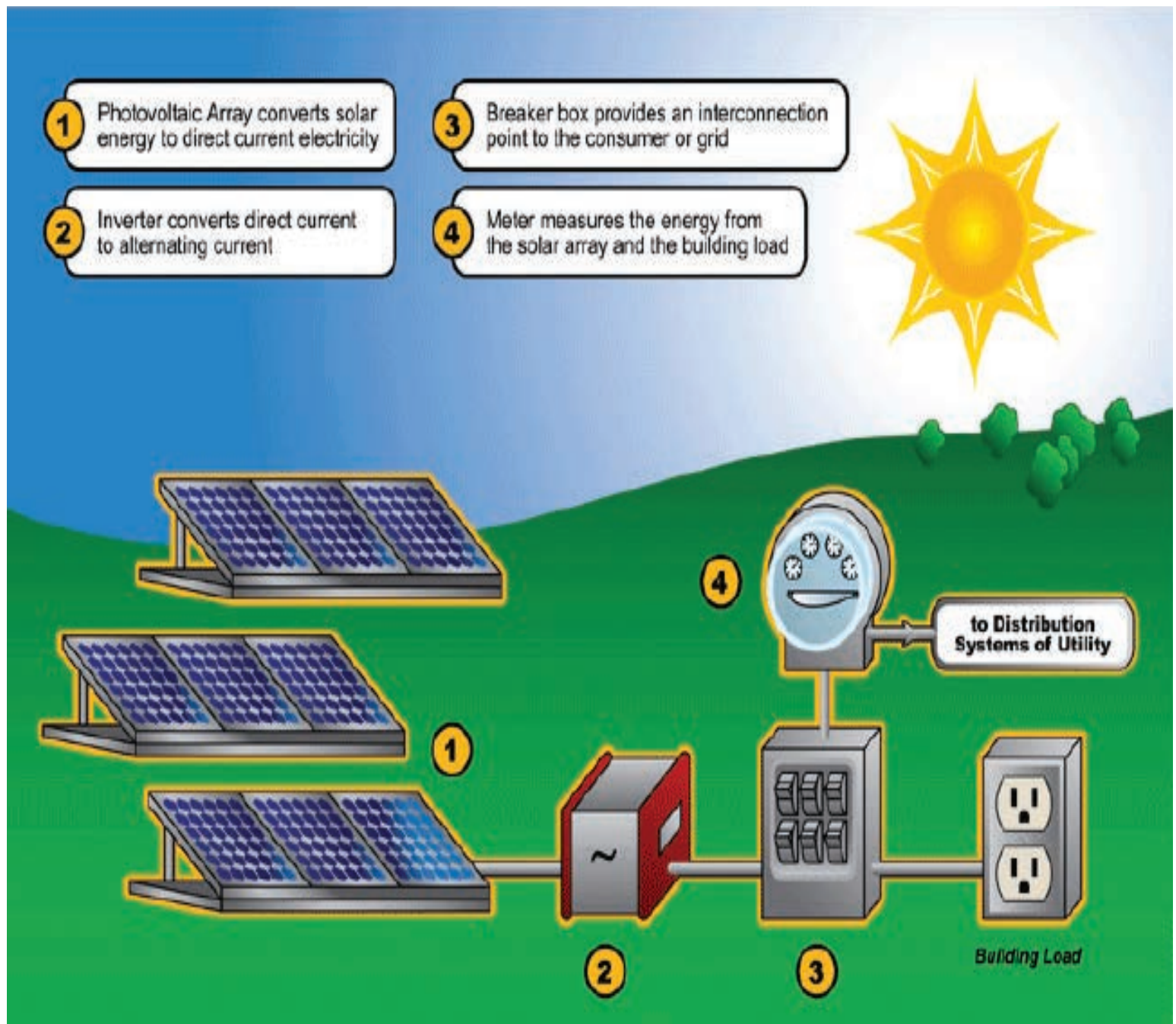
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What is Solar energy and how it works?

Solar energy, radiant light and heat from the sun, has been harnessed by humans since ancient times using a range of ever-evolving technologies. Solar radiation, along with secondary solar-powered resources such as wind and wave power, hydroelectricity and biomass, account for most of the available renewable energy on earth. Only a minuscule fraction of the available solar energy is used. Solar powered electrical generation relies on heat engines

and photovoltaics. Solar energy's uses are limited only by human ingenuity. A partial list of solar applications includes space heating and cooling through solar architecture, potable water via distillation and disinfection, daylighting, solar hot water, solar cooking, and high temperature process heat for industrial purposes. To harvest the solar energy, the most common way is to use solar panels.



Rajasthan Investment Promotion Scheme (RIPS) 2010

Rajasthan provides a package of financial incentives and subsidies for investors.

Subsidies:

- RIPS 2010 provides investment subsidy to all eligible investors of an amount equal to 30% of the tax deposited, without any linkage with payment of interest and wages.
- Employment generation subsidy @ Rs.15000 per employee/annum. For women, SC/ST and persons with disability this amount has been enhanced to Rs.18,000 per employee/annum.
- These subsidies have been announced for 7 years, but to give boost to the MSMEs in the notified area, time limit has been extended to 10 years.
- Procedure for subsidy disbursement has been simplified by introducing a Challan for Adjustment through Treasury (Form VAT-37B).

Exemption from Taxes:

- Some of the tax exemptions announced in RIPS are
 - 50% exemption from payment of Electricity duty;
 - 50% exemption from payment of land Tax;
 - 50% exemption from payment of Stamp duty on purchase or lease of land and construction/improvement on such land;
 - 50% exemption from payment of conversion charge payable for change of Land use.
- The exemptions have been announced for seven years for payment of Electricity duty, and Land Tax

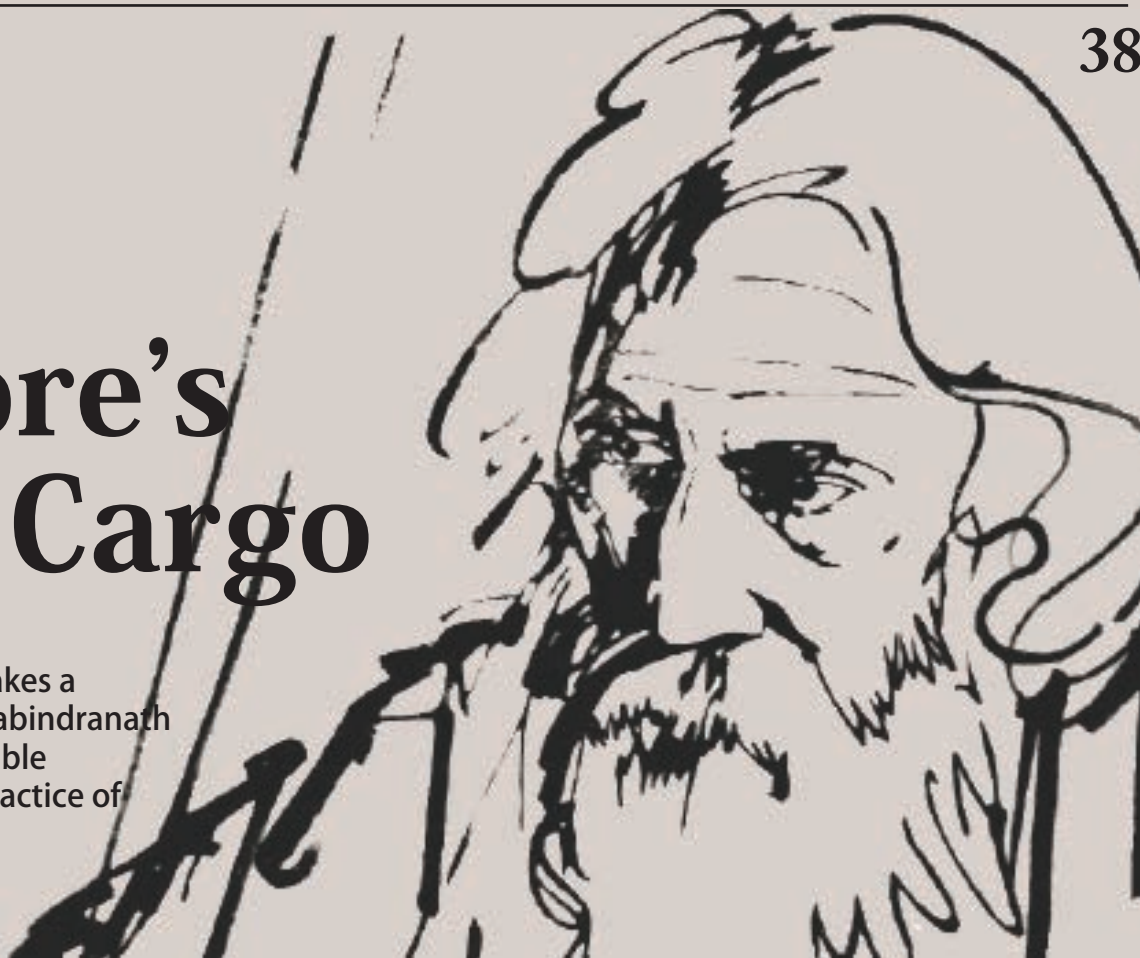
General Facts

- Solar Energy is better for the environment than traditional forms of energy.
- Solar energy has many uses such as electricity production and heating of water through photovoltaic cells and directly for drying clothes.
- Solar energy can also be used to heat swimming pools, power cars, for attic fans, calculators and other small appliances. It produces lighting for indoors or outdoors.
- You can even cook food with solar energy.
- Solar Energy is becoming more and more popular. The worldwide demand for Solar Energy is currently greater than supply.



Tagore's Best Cargo

Dr Pinaki Bhaduri takes a memorial ride on Rabindranath Tagore's unforgettable thoughts and his practice of education.



At the end of the day

It was surprising that at the end of the day, Rabindranath Tagore declared his educational experiment to be his priority in spite of his worldwide name and fame as a man of literature.

He was Asia's first Nobel laureate and he stormed the world of literature. But in 1940, when he was only a year away from death, he became mostly anxious about the future of his dream project — the Viswabharati. He appealed to Gandhiji to take charge of the 'best cargo of (his) life'. Gandhiji handed over the letter to Abdul Kalam Azad for necessary action. Consequently in 1951, Viswabharati was given the status of a Central University.

It may be recalled that at that moment Tagore and Gandhi were not particularly in the best of relations following the Congress presidential election at Tripuri in 1939 where Subhas Chandra Bose defeated Gandhi-backed candidate P Tandon. Ultimately Subhas had to relinquish office. Tagore tried to patch up but to no avail.

Despite this adverse situation, Tagore had no option but to appeal for Gandhiji's intervention to save his educational/social/cultural institution.

Earlier, Tagore attempted otherwise. He felicitated Subhas at Viswabharati in January 1939. There he asked Subhas for his favour to ameliorate the condition of Viswabharati. But Subhas was not in a position to provide such promise due to his political pre-occupation which finally led him out of the country.

These two episodes reflect Tagore's genuine concern for the educational odyssey which he had began in 1901. He only looked forward to provide his countrymen an atmosphere which is free of ignorance and vibrant with hope and happiness.

How it all began

Tagore had been to various schools in his boyhood days. He liked none of those. Everywhere the students were subjected to humiliation, so much so that he himself used to act as a violent teacher while treating the railings of the verandah of his residence as his students. He poured all his impatience, anger and partiality in the canning of his railing-students. Had those being alive, Tagore commented, they would have succumbed to those brutal punishments. The teacher-Tagore was equal to any narrow-minded teacher of the day. He remembered his school days when he was in China in later years:

"When I was young I gave up learning and ran away from my lessons... I fled the classes which gave me instruction but did not inspire."

He found the fellow students in the school to be of coarse and crude nature. The teachers were no good either. If by any chance, he had a friendly sympathetic teacher, he gratefully remembered him all through his life. Such was one Mr Peneranda, a Xavierian teacher who once lovingly asked the unmindful boy: "Tagore, are you not keeping well?" Tagore remembered him in his Jibansmriti with adoration long after.

1. Excerpts from Tagore-Gandhi correspondence
..... Accept this institution under your protection giving it an assurance of permanence if you consider it to be national asset. Viswabharati is like a vessel which is carrying the cargo of my life's best treasure and I hope it may claim special care from my countrymen for its preservation...
(2nd Feb, 1940, handed over to Gandhi)
The touching note you put in my hands has gone straight into my heart... Viswabharati is a national institution. It is... also international. You may depend upon... all I can in the common endeavour to assure its permanence.
(MK Gandhi, 19/2/1940, on way to Calcutta)

2. Excerpts from The Philosophy of Leisure
.....the cultivation of leisure has been a vital necessity... the human world... has its prairie land of fertile leisure and forest land of self-assertive life... leisure can give balance to reckless rush of ambition.

He also wrote some stories where he deliberately made the caricature of the teachers whom he did not like. It might be a point of research to find out whether the seed of an ideal school started germinating within him from then only.

Apart from schools, there were various coaching arrangements for Tagore at home. There at times, he used to feel at ease. Sitanath Dutt had Sunday class of science with practical demonstration. The boy looked forward to those Sundays with eagerness. This drove him towards making up of scientific outlook to everything. Conversely, one of his teachers

while teaching anatomy brought a human vocal chord and demonstrated the voice mechanism. The boy was shocked since he thought talks were generated from the total man. This dissection may pinpoint the locale, but it cannot overshadow the role of the man himself. Here the boy at one stroke became the philosopher-thinker.

Tagore's intention

Tagore wanted to enthuse the children with joy of life, flow of happiness, growth of independent rational inquisitiveness. While preparing the examination questions, he never asked for anything which could be memorized and vomited on the answer scripts. For example, he quoted the lines of Madhusudhan's epic poem and asked the students to visualize and depict the Ram-Sita cottage. This required imagination and intelligence.

The educators were of opinion that the best means of educating a child is by concentration of mind, while Tagore thought just the opposite. He explained:

...Mother nature knows that the best way is by dispersion of mind... It is the utter want of purpose in child-life which is important... The child, because it has no conscious object of life beyond living, can see all things around it, can hear every sound... I have a deep-rooted conviction that only through freedom can man attain the fullness of growth.

He also said in a letter:

...flavour or sweetness may not be required to do a work, but work is not the ultimate end or aim... it is the joy that fulfills any work. The mind must not be dried up...

Tagore believed that students would learn about the tree by climbing on it and playing with it. They should sit in the open under the shades of trees. They will learn some portion of their syllabus while walking with the teachers. They will spend the evening knowing the stars, singing songs, listening to stories of epics and history. Tagore might have lifted this idea from his boyhood while travelling in the Himalayas when his father gave him the lessons of the sky. He used to sing there at his father's wish. Not that all students will be a singer but their inheritance of joy will increase substantially, he opined.

But this does not mean Tagore did not meet with any opposition to his teaching methods and strangely those were not so much from the British rulers but from his own countrymen. There were a remarkable number of people who doubted the efficacy of his system. Those included Jadunath Sarkar who vehemently opposed the poet's policy, so was Nirode Chowdhuri and sometimes even Jagadish Bose, the poet's fast friend. The poet lamented that he sacrificed his money, time and energy but those went unappreciated. People tried to stall the endeavour by asking the friends, acquaintances not to send students to Santiniketan.

Tagore believed that mother tongue is the best means for teaching but he did not rule out English. He wrote the famous Sahaj Path for children's Bengali beginning. At the same time he wrote three English language teaching books too.

Tagore introduced a novel thing at Santiniketan which is called sense training. After only looking at things or a while, the students were asked to guess the numbers, the weight, the length etc of objects. All such imaginative games would magnify the sensitivity of the participants. He never hesitated to forward the difficult tasks to perform for his children. He allowed them to read through books without consulting to learn the difficult words. He knew that by straightway going through the book will be enough to give them an insight into the language.

Tagore, as a teacher, tried to get the correct answer from the students by trial and error. He never used to provide the answers.

This and all these made his training infested with joy.

Tagore vowed for education at the highest level, but students wanted to pass examination and go for job security. Tagore then turned his attention to rural people with his 'Siksha Satra'. He hoped that importance of employment may not be that high to villagers and hence they will 'learn' more freely. But there also people were not interested outside utility though Tagore tried to infuse the longing for fulfillments of life. There was a blending of cultural and vocational aspects of life and livelihood in Siksha Satra with creativity as well.

After this it was the turn of the girls on whom Tagore banked. But the girls too were getting interested in profession only.

Tagore also provided opportunity for people who could not come down to his school. Anybody anywhere could sit for Viswabharati courses. This was the precursor of today's distant education, which only a poet could conceive.

The world outside

Tagore was gradually accepted as an educator worldwide. He was invited by Canada National Council of Education as a teacher in 1929. There he lectured on "The philosophy of Leisure" and condemned the rapidity in the society. "We may forget that slow production of leisure is of immense value to man... time is money, but leisure is wealth."

Mr Findlay, the famous English teacher dedicated his "Foundation of Education" to Tagore.

Even Russian society invited him in 1930 as one people's teacher.

There had been a series of institutions in the line of Tagore's thought. Some of those can be mentioned here. They are Paul Gehib's School of Mankind in Germany, Soewardi's Taman Siscoa (Garden of learning) in Indonesia, Elmhirst's Dartington Hall in England, Wilmot Pereira's school Sri Palee in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). These schools are still in vogue.

Many foreigners too came to Santiniketan either to stay and or teach/work on their own. Some of them are Elmhirst, Andrews, Pearson, Stella Kramerish, Thompson, Sylvan Levi, Formici, Tucci, Wintermiz, Lesni, Geddes et al. Tagore brought Takagaki from Japan to train the students in Judhutsu, a form of martial art.

Tagore also tried to elevate his University to a world university because he believed only educational cooperation can forestall the divisive trends in the world. Men like Roman Rolland happily endorsed it.

With the educational pattern in Santiniketan, Tagore also established Sriniketan to uplift the social and educational backwardness of the villages. What he said was meaningful....

.....The poverty problem is not so important. It is the problem of unhappiness that is the great problem.. our object is to flood the chocked bed of village life with streams of happiness.

Tagore was determined to spread sweetness and light.

All said and done

Though 'all' could not be said in one installment, we can still find out to the high points of Tagore's thoughts on education. The life despite its ills, appeared to be joyous to Tagore. He desired to make the teaching and learning an enjoyable process. He laid out his seat of attainment in the lap of nature, far from the madding crowd.

In its wide open space, in the company of loving nature, in the daily chores, in the cultivation of tender habits, in the novelty of the syllabus one could feel the ideal, happiness and emotion all around.

Students passed out from Santiniketan became eminent both nationally and internationally in later stages of life. Promotho Nath Bisi, Syed Muztaba Ali, Satyajit Ray, Dinkar Kaushik, Benodbehari Mukherji were only to name some of them.

Benodbehari came to Santiniketan with eyesight on one of his eyes losing gradually. He had a flair for painting. Tagore confined him to painting only with aids for English speaking. Benodbehari lost his vision completely but went on to be a great artist even in his blindness.

It is true Tagore tried to lift us out of the necessity to the call of the essential. He was not totally successful.

We, in turn, became absolute failures.

The ill-fated Fort

The Red Fort is twice the area of Europe's largest palace, the Escorial of Bourbons in Spain. While the Escorial still remains intact and exuberant, the Red Fort lost its grandeur within two centuries ending with the British takeover. **Red Fort Faces Decay, Unless..... Ratnadeep Banerji** delves out the travails of this jinxed Fort of splendour.

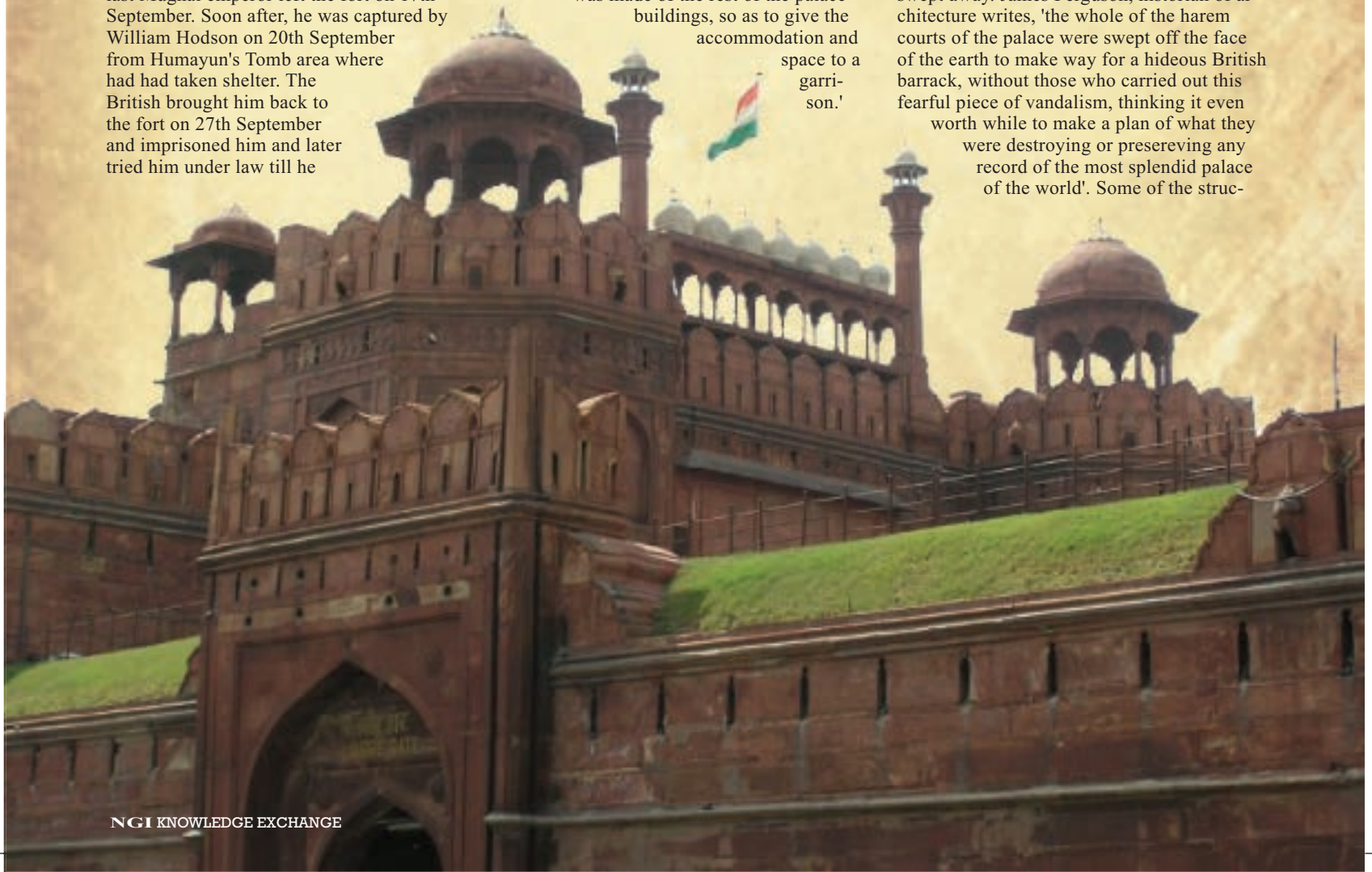
Originally called Qila-i-Mubarak, meaning the Blessed Fort, it could not even withstand two centuries of Mughal occupation. The humongous Fort built within a decade (1638-1648) became the palace for Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's new capital, Shahjahanabad abandoning his erstwhile capital of Agra.

This fortress palace of Shahjahanabad stood out the acme production of Mughal cognoscenti post 16th century. After the failure of 1857 uprising, Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal emperor left the fort on 17th September. Soon after, he was captured by William Hodson on 20th September from Humayun's Tomb area where had had taken shelter. The British brought him back to the fort on 27th September and imprisoned him and later tried him under law till he

was exiled to Rangoon, the next year.

The destruction of the Red Fort started with the 1857 uprising and continued unabated for the next eight years tantamounting to an irreparable loss. An immense pile of rubble stood gathered wistful of the grim marauding of the Fort. Besides, five hundred yards of area around the Fort was shaven off its gardens, pavilions and mosques though temples were left intact. Gordon Sanderson in his Archaeological Report admits, 'With the exception of the more important buildings on the East front of the Fort, and the Diwan-i-'Am and the Naubat Khana, a clean sweep was made of the rest of the palace buildings, so as to give the accommodation and space to a garrison.'

The dilapidated condition of the fort was in fact largely due to English occupation of the fort after the mutiny. After the fort was seized by the British military, several structures were razed away. The arcaded paved streets, central canal along with the fountains were removed completely. The seraglio with its imposing baths, courts and gardens met the same fate. The emperor's courts, gardens and colonnades were not spared and the entire public and private sector got exterminated. The plantation paths, fountains, channels and flower beds of the exotic Hayat Baksh ('life-bestowing garden') and Mehtab Bagh were swept away. James Ferguson, historian of architecture writes, 'the whole of the harem courts of the palace were swept off the face of the earth to make way for a hideous British barrack, without those who carried out this fearful piece of vandalism, thinking it even worth while to make a plan of what they were destroying or preserving any record of the most splendid palace of the world'. Some of the struc-



tures located in the emperor's garden got partial reprieve like the Hira Mahal. Zafar Mahal, Sawan and Bhadon pavilions of the non-existent Hayat Baksh. Wash houses and urinals came up in front of the marble pavilions of Sawan and Bhadon. Both the main entries to the Fort bore brunt of the marauders. The Lahori Gate with the Chatta Bazaar and the Delhi Gate leading to the Naqqar Khana were shorn off their connecting colonnades, arcades, screens and courts. The battlements of the barbicans vis-a-vis Lahori and Delhi Gates were brought down and the tops of the walls were covered with earth for purposes of defence. Both the Lahori and Delhi Gates were renamed Victoria and Albert Gates respectively and the moat around them were filled up.

The Red Fort pavilions were not demolished but became hotbed of epicurean revelry. The imperial quarters had valuable effects and decorative features. The exotic black marble panels serenading the throne at Diwan-i-Am and the inlaid panel of Orpheus in front of the throne were embezzled by Colonel John Jones who went on to sell the booty to the British government for 500 dollars. He was later accorded knighthood. Diwan-i-Am also had some splendid plaques behind the jharokha that got removed. The gilded copper domes of Musaman Burj and Moti Masjid and also the chattris atop Diwan-i-Khas with sheets of copper were dismantled unscrupulously and



auctioned off. The prodigious red walls of the Fort also got obliterated. The gravestone of Brigadier-General John Nicholson was made from a large stone slab taken from the Fort. After the British suppressed the Mutiny, both the British as well as the Indian soldiers who gained access to the Fort indulged in rapacious acts like digging out the inlaid stones from Diwan-i-Khas area. Such vandalism went unthrottled.

The aesthetic setting of streets, houses, mosques and gardens within the Private Common that lay north of Chatta Chowk was completely revamped with grotesque and uncouth barracks, married officers' quarters and wash houses. Now the roadside were shorn off its erstwhile organised paved paths along flower beds and arcaded forecourts with fountains and canals. The inner edge of the Fort's wall that used to be the patrol area now gave way to workshops and godowns of executive engineer and barrack master. A new parade ground came up in the area that used to be Mehtab Bagh and the royal storerooms, kitchens and regalia chambers.

The remaining pavilions met quite the same fate. Rang Mahal became a temporary mess lounge for officers. The adjacent Mumtaj Mahal pavilion was initially made a military prison that bore defacement of its marble walls by the prisoners. Later it became a sergeants' mess.

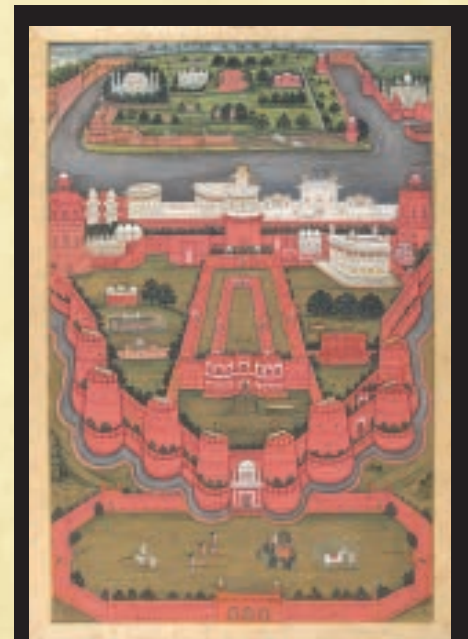
Barrack-style unplastered brick walls replaced the railings and screens of Mughal architecture. The loftily cusped arches of Shah Burj was now devoid of its gilded dome, the King's Tower were bricked up to provide a temporary military office. The posterior chamber of Shah Burj that earlier had a wondrous system to lift up water from the river went on to become the armoury shop. Zafar Mahal or Jul Mahal turned into a swimming pool for the British officers.

This brutish management of the Fort was however regretted by some British. Major General Cunningham in his various reports mentioned, 'I would strongly recommend that...the Diwan-i-Khas be restored to its original state of an open audience Hall.....is used as a canteen and on the right of the throne is a bar for serving liquor! To the left of the throne is an enclosure of bamboo screen work, in which Nubee Bux keeps a soldiers' coffee shop!' The Diwan-i-Am was turned into a sprawling lounge for officers. The emperor's private entrance route to it was used as a canteen and as refreshment rooms. The Naqqar Khana that led to the king's presence became the staff sergeants' quarters.

Chatta Bazaar was denigrated into catering supplies to European soldiers of the Fort.

Again, the introduction of the East India Railway in 1864 - 65 led to considerable destruction of the Red Fort. By the end of the 19th century, there were some Englishmen though proud of their victory over the Mutiny, decried over the dishevelled condition of the Fort.

Even after Indian independence, the Indian Army continued its control over the fort till December 2003. But thanks to the works of Archaeological Survey of India, right from the days of Cunningham till this day some amount of restoration has been achieved. The Red Fort stands far spruced than what it used to be a century back in the aftermath of Sepoy Mutiny.



Mazhar Ali Khan's picture of the Red Fort:

Sir Thomas Metcalfe, the then British governor was a generous patron of Delhi's artists. Between 1842 and 1844 he commissioned a Delhi artist named Mazhar Ali Khan, the then favourite artist of Bahadur Shah Zafar. Mazhar Ali Khan was well versed in the old Mughal techniques, but working for Metcalfe, he used English watercolours on English paper employing English architectural elevations as his models. He succeeded in producing stupendous mélange of English and Indian ways, a new type of painting, known today as the Company School.

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Pep it up...and, how!

Indian cricket team does need some innovative ways to pep it up. No conventional ways for it, 'coz the losses have been most unconventional. Rajesh Iyer looks at a few wonder potions that could be of some use.

It's been a battering no less, one can't argue. But, then to a nation that's used to all kinds of battering and bashings, this must not take much fretting over. Wrong! This is cricket and it comes after many years of consistent non-losing, or at least camouflaged behind those drawn series. Things wouldn't have been considered grave had it happened a decade back or more. Earlier generations would not have even fluttered their eyelashes at the scorecard of a series reading 4-0. They'd seen it once too often. But, things they are a changin', as Dylan crooned or already changed, at least till the Indian team landed in England. That's when the team decided to cater to the sense of déjà vu of the generations of yore.

Wise alecs from the fraternity (who doesn't belong to it in this cricket-crazy nation!) have their share of what could be done. Change the combination, bring in some, kick out others, amend selection patterns, a right mix of new blood and experience... well, there's a plenty when it comes to these suggestions that fly thick and fast from every nook and cranny. But, it's doubtful if these old fashioned ways would be of any help. The problems are new and the solutions ought to be new as well. And, even as you might find some of them downright silly, tell you what, sillier the better.

To begin with, the Indian cricket team could meet with their friendly neighbourhood psychiatrist, who could either use one of the old Freudian techniques or some new method she or he had created to pull them out of this crappy block that's both mental and physical. With the way the players had been on the field, one doubts if they would mind sprawling over the shrink's couch.

The team could even think of going to the umpteen Bengali Babas each of whom have magical potions that can cure just about everything. There had been tall, confident and repeated claims of virility for those fit for a grave, success in education for those who can't even spell 'fail' leave alone accept they are one and what not. These Babas seem to know every problem and have solution for them all and more. Can't they whip up one such razzmataz-

zle for the befuddled cricketers?

If even those bigger, dubious Babas are of no help, help could be sought from their poor cousins who perennially park themselves by the Indian roads with speakers blaring about their understanding of human problems. Even though they mostly stick to physical problems, Indian cricket team's problems could be physical ones as well. Well, injury isn't ruled out. See, we're already heading somewhere. And, if you hear what they say from their blaring speakers and manage to decipher some words, you would realise that they keep referring to the stomach being the centre of all problems. Now, that's not odd. If there's one thing that's common all the members of Indian cricket team, as also to the millions of fans it's that they had not been able to stomach the defeats. Wow, now that the stomach's in play, could these wonder physicians be wrong.

But, then you still don't know. You never can tell with the Indian cricket team. They might just require something stronger. Hey, how about getting Paraguay's model Larissa to strip like she promised to encourage her soccer team in the last world cup. Not that it won Paraguay a world cup, but it surely must have got it some win, if we were to analyse in detail. And, no pun intended, thank you!

Hey, didn't our own model, a babe named some Pandey, promised something similar. Now, wait! That's where could lie a catch! Could be just possible that the possibility of such an eventuality must have scared these

poor chaps in white flannels, who thought losing was a better option that be faced with some such sight. Pandey baby, wherever you are, on behalf of billions of cricket crazy fans, could you just stay put and zip up. Clothes, mouth and all. Thank you.

Just in case none of it works, there's always Baba Ramdev and his Rambaan upaays. Goddammit, if he can cure AIDS and homosexuality with his yoga, tell me one reason he can't straighten this cricket team. Any bet on that!

(Rajesh Iyer happens to be the editorial and creative director of a media group and babbles when he isn't whipping up books and stuffs like that for kids)



Of Society, Caste, Human Evolution & Indian Thinkers

In this series, author **Kanchan Banerjee** attempts to find the origin of casteism in India along with the nation's original idea of varna classification and discusses how social classes were ostracized. He also explores how the original varna system had an evolutionary plan embedded in it as expressed by various Indian thinkers and in what ways many modern thinkers' work especially in the fields of developmental psychology are following a similar pattern to classify socio-psycho evolution of people and societies.



The word caste, though of foreign origin, has almost become a part of common vocabulary of Indian languages. It evokes negative or emotive feelings since that is what it has been made to represent. Casteism is almost synonymous with apartheid in South Africa.

In India, it elicits debates and controversies regarding social order. In the Western world, when one reads various text books on India, invariably caste appears prominently. It seems, it is the only thing India has to worry about, and all the problems are connected to it. On the other hand certain groups, especially the ones involved with dalit ('the oppressed lower caste') movements, many of them are abroad, and some of their leaders are neither dalits nor

Indian. These groups are trying to internationalize the issue of caste to the world, especially to the UN, that the discrimination of people based on their caste identity is nothing but human rights violation. Indian government has taken innumerable steps to rectify caste problems. Untouchability was banned in 1950. The state has given many privileges to the people who are from backward classes. Indian politicians are known to be apt manipulators of caste fault lines.

However, unfortunately, caste has been grossly misunderstood from the outset, and the actions taken to correct this misunderstood system has not produced expected results namely, the elimination of what it stands for and its attendant misappropriations. And the mistakes were made by even by stalwarts like B R

Ambedkar and other founding fathers of the Indian constitution. It is little wonder that the English system of education has done so much harm to the spirit of India; the subject of caste has been exploited by the Marxists to promote their agenda and many groups around the world, including Christian missionaries, who have taken advantage of this misunderstood social system to further religious conversion.

The word 'caste' was imposed on the Indian idea of *varna*, *jati* and *kula* to engineer divide and rule benefits.

In this series, I explore the original ideas, meanings and aims related to *Varna*, *Jati* and *Kula* and at the same time will try to understand what really happened to this system to become so degenerated where people of one class started to hate another. The irony is, the lost knowledge in history is that the ancient *varna* system was to uplift the society and people to their highest potentials. Swami Vivekananda said, "We believe in Indian caste as one of the greatest social institutions that the Lord gave to man. We also believe that through the unavoidable defects, foreign persecutions, and above all, the monumental ignorance and pride of many Brahmanas who do not deserve the name, have thwarted in many ways, the legitimate fructification of this glorious Indian institution, it has already worked wonders for the land of Bharata and it destined to lead Indian humanity to its goal."

This write up is a rediscovery of one of the most misunderstood systems in the world. We will soon discover why Portuguese 'caste' is not at all the Indian Varna System. We will also explore what some of the authorities such as Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo (both hailed from non-Brahmin family and are revered by majority of Indians) had to say on this. Later, we will see how *varnashram* is relevant even now and its social progress in this day and age. While the deeper understanding of the subject matter may not immediately

solve the problem of discrimination, but can definitely awaken the social leaders to realize what India's goal has been in terms of progress and evolution, and what other possible alternative options are available to deal with social harmony and progress.

The problem with caste

Nowadays, the discussions on social discrimination on caste lines have been reduced to 'upper caste vs. Dalits' debate. In politics, it is a fashionable and useful tool. One takes it for granted that the caste system is the real culprit and thus must be done away with, despite the fact that caste distinction in the urban area is fast eroding and that many people from 'upper caste' are economically or politically weak. Very few go deeper into the genesis and formulations of social structure that dates back over a few centuries. A majority blamed Manu or other Hindu scholars or scriptures for the social ills. Be that as it may, how come those who *sang sarva mangalm* suddenly became 'casteists' and persecuted their own people? They did not turn evil overnight! Due diligence is par for the course for the scholars. This leads to two pertinent questions: How did Indians survive the massive onslaughts of foreign forces and how would they today appreciate the struggle of their ancestors, countless agony, torture and deaths they faced to live with pluralism and democracy as their core value?

The people or at least their ancestors who advocated concepts such as *sarva mangalam* (welfare for all) or *sarve bhavantu sukhinah* (let everybody be happy, healthy and blessed) or even *aham brahasmi* (I am the Brahman) must have been of extraordinary mind. To Hindus, it comes naturally, and takes it for granted. However we don't find similar philosophies in other societies, rather most are merely reflecting the philosophy of 'survival of the fittest'; and when it comes to religion, to many, the 'others' are basically enemies. Very few cultures have expressed or practiced the idea of *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* (the 'entire world is one big family').

The whole world is being benefitted from several very unique systems from India. In the field of 'better living', hatha yoga and ayurveda are very popular around the world. Indian contribution in language, mathematics, astronomy, and various material sciences are enormous, and now finally being recognized by the world. There must be something unique in the Indian system.

Apart from sati, the caste system has been the dirtiest stigma on the Indian society as depicted in every possible literature and text on its socio-cultural mores worldwide.

But what is this caste system? Many advocates simply say this is a division of labour as it exists in virtually every society – the thinkers, the administrators and soldiers, the traders and the labourers. Many compare with the idea of 'blue-collar' and 'white-collar' professions. This

Indian government has taken innumerable steps to rectify caste problems. Untouchability was banned in 1950. The state has given many privileges to the people who are from backward classes.

It is little wonder that the English system of education has done so much harm to the spirit of India; the subject of caste has been exploited by the Marxists to promote their agenda and many groups around the world, including Christian missionaries.

For over 100 years, scholars, writers, sociologists parroted the British version of the caste-story which depicted India as a caste-ridden society before the world, though they were part of this dirty game

classification is an oversimplification of the system, and does not really serve much real purpose in this era. On the other hand, critics say that it has been a machine to exploit and discriminate people. Discrimination based on social class has caused unimaginable misery to a large section of Indian population. But who is responsible? The Brahmins? The Kings? Invaders or rulers?

Search for origin of Caste system in India:

India was an educated society and a leading industrial and exporting nation on earth. No wonder, travellers and historians did not find many horror stories based on caste discrimination as evident from their accounts.

Around seventh century, Chinese traveller Hueng Tsang has written extensively about the Indian society. However, there is no mention of social discrimination in his writings. Though there must have been diverse social classes, there was likely symbiotic co-existence. Some Western scholars like A L Basham suggested that the current form of jati system of India developed not too long ago. Perhaps, this system came into force about a thousand years back. Alberuni, who came along with invader Mahmud Ghaznavi, in his writings on the Indian society (1030 CE) mentioned the four classes based on the *varna* and another *antyaja*, who lived outside of the mainstream (shoemakers, chandals etc.). "Much, however, as these classes differ from each other, they live together in the same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings," he wrote. Perhaps, a rigid and discriminatory system was fallout of the Islamic invasions.

Caste system became more rigid because of the foreign domination, and the colonial rule ex-

tended for centuries. There are clear evidence of various *jatis* fought against the invaders and were forced to abandon the mainstream, and lived on the social fringes. At times, they lived in forests and became one of the 'lower' *jatis* in long run due to lack of interaction with the mainstream.

Indian scholar Ram Swarup has written: "With the advent of Islam. . . the system also acquired undesirable traits like untouchability. . . during the Muslim period, many Rajputs were degraded and they became scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Many of them still retain the Rajput gotra. . ."

A similar interpretation applies to *bhangis* (sweepers). William Crooke of Bengal Civil Service tells us that the "rise of the present *Bhangi* caste seems from the names applied to the castes and its subdivisions, to date from the early period of Mohammedan rule". Old Hindu literature has mention of *bhangis*. In traditional Hindu rural society, he was a corn-measurer, a village policeman, or a custodian of village boundaries. But scavenging came along with the Muslim and British rule. Their numbers also multiplied. The 1901 Census reveals, *bhangis* were most numerous in Punjab and United Provinces which were the heartland of Muslim domination.

Even during the 16th and 17th century, European travellers mentioned about the caste system in passing. Apparently they did not find compelling reasons to study the system since it was not as significant or at least, if there were events such as fights or conflicts. In his book 'The History of Hindustan' Alexander Dow (published in 1768) spared roughly a page to describe Indians social system that reflects that nothing extraordinary was there.

The modern day study of Indian social system became noticeable in the 1891 Census, which introduced something called 'Index of Castes'. The colonial Portuguese had introduced the word 'caste' to describe the Indian social system; we will find out later that the British actually super imposed it.

For over 100 years, scholars, writers, sociologists parroted the British version of the caste-story which depicted India as a casteist society before the world, though they were part of this dirty game. Only recently along with the theory of Aryan racism and invasions, people have started asking questions about the validity of the caste system being and Indian apartheid system. Scholars like Nicolas Dirks (Columbia University) opined that the caste system is in contradiction with the Indian tradition. He squarely blamed the British for it, saying, "the product of an historical encounter between India and the British colonial rule." (Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India, Princeton University Press, 2001, P. 5).

[Part 2 will try to understand current caste system and what the original Indian ideas and system had been]

SANATANA DHARMA

Science and Truth

Anant Garg explains the inextricable link between reasoning and sanatana dharma, the cornerstone of Hinduism

Religion and science tend to have a rocky relationship. From Galileo's execution in the sixteenth century to the fiery courtroom battles between creationists and evolutionists, people have always approached old-style religion with suspicion. However, there exists an ancient culture where scientists were not burned at the stake but rather celebrated and revered, a culture that welcomed questioning and encouraged experimentation. Hindu Dharma, also known as Sanatana Dharma or the eternal way of life, views science and spirituality not as conflicting but rather as supplementary.

Like science, Sanatana Dharma is driven by the fervent desire to know the truth of this world. While material sciences, such as biology and chemistry, seek to understand the physical world, Sanatana Dharma is the science of spirituality and seeks to understand the mind and self. It addresses fundamental scientific questions, such as: who am I, what is God, and what is my relationship with God. The beauty of science is that it is based on natural laws that can be tried and tested and do not discriminate. For instance, the law of gravity applies to everything in the same way. Sanatana Dharma is also about discovering these laws of nature that apply to everyone uniformly and universally. For example, the law of karma states that we always bear the consequences of our thoughts and actions; thus, we create our own destiny. This law applies equally to everyone and everything in the universe. As Krishna has shown in the Mahabharat by accepting the curse of Gandhari, even God cannot escape the results of his actions.

Hindu Dharma did not originate with a single prophet or at any particular point in time, but is rather based on the collective personal experiences of ancient scientists known as rishis. Their work method was scientific, empirical, and rooted in experimentation. Like any good scientific experiment, their experiments are replicable and can be verified by anyone, anywhere, and at any time – this is exactly what the word “sanatana” means: it was applicable in past, it was applicable today and it will be applicable in future. Over the years, many great souls have validated the

truth of these spiritual teachings for themselves. In fact, the way to achieve spiritual perfection is not by simply reading and hearing about spirituality, but through personal experience out of one's own actions. Blind faith has no place in Sanatana Dharma.

Such a scientific tradition was able to flourish because ancient India was an environment receptive to the collection of knowledge. The Rig Veda declares, “Let noble thoughts come to us from all directions.” The Hindu tradition embraces and encourages questioning and reasoning. For example, the Upanishads are structured as question-answer conversations between the disciple and teacher. In the 1800s, a young boy named Narendra constantly asked people whether they had seen God, only to receive negative answers. Only after Ramakrishna Paramahansa told him with confidence that he had seen God did Narendra accept Ramakrishna as his guru and grow to become the great Swami Vivekananda. It is because Hindu Dharma encourages questioning and dissent that it grew to become such a rich, all-encompassing culture.

Just as science has evolved and expanded over time, people have added to the knowledge base of Sanatana Dharma over time and continue to do so in the current time. Sanatana dharma is not static and continues to evolve. In a way Hindu dharma can be thought of as relentless pursuit of truth. There are mainly two categories of Hindu scriptures. The first are the Shrutis, which includes the Vedas and Upanishads, scriptures that are sanatana and abide forever. They are built on fundamental principles and natural laws about the nature of the self (Atman), the nature of God, and the Atman's relationship with God. The Smritis deal with the practical application of these principles and include the Puranas and Agamas. The second category can change with time, place, and situation. Great saints and reformers, such as Shankaracharya, Madhavacharya, Buddha, and Mahavir, have appeared from time to time and added to the richness of the Hindu culture by reinterpreting and devising methods of social interactions according to the needs of society at that time. The fact that Hindu Dharma has this ability to

change and evolve makes it scientific in nature.

The English writer Aldous Huxley once said, “All science is the reduction of multiplicities to unities.” Hindu thought encompasses this very idea. The theme of the Upanishads is to find the ultimate unity of things. The Mundaka Upanishad says, “Kismatinnu Bhagavo Vigyaate Sarvavidam Vigyaatam Bhavati - What is that by knowing which we know everything else?” The ancient rishis used the scientific method to seek principles that would unify and explain the whole of the human experience. The forest was their university, and their own mind was their laboratory. They used a discipline called yoga to concentrate their attention inwards. They discovered that this unifying principle is consciousness, and its study is called brahmavidya, translated as both the supreme science and the science of the Supreme. They discovered that the innermost essence of our Self is the Atman, and that the Atman is no different from the ultimate reality, Brahman, the divine consciousness that permeates this entire universe.

The reason Hindu Dharma is Sanatana, or eternal, is because it is scientific in nature. Therefore, it is only natural that Vedic India was home to a flourishing scientific tradition. The ancient Hindus developed modern numerals, the decimal place system, zero, algebra, and trigonometry. Surgeons like Sushruta performed and perfected operations as complex as caesarian sections and cataract surgeries. Tremendous advances were made in the fields of metallurgy, astronomy, chemistry, and Ayurveda, a holistic healthcare system. The root of these great discoveries was the scientific spirit of Sanatana Dharma, a way of life that leads us to the discovery of ourselves and the whole universe.

Anant Garg (18) is a sophomore at New York University majoring in Finance and Statistics. (This essay has won the first prize in college category in the essay competition and scholarship program organized by the Om Temple near Boston, USA. The organizers have announced topics for 2012 competition for world-wide participation, which can be found on their web-site: www.omtemple.com)

Faith vs. Reason

Tejas N Dave explains the evolutionary and spiritual basis of deity worship and making rounds to temples



Hindus are often chided based on the concepts of deity worship and *mandirs*. Many claim that the practices are primitive, unintelligent and unrefined. This essay, however, strives to illuminate upon the evolutionary and spiritual basis of the practices.

The first point of discussion is the concept of deity worship. As I previously mentioned, many people snicker at the practice and cast it off as primitive. However, when viewed through a scientific lens, the practice exemplifies the evolutionary identity of human beings. According to the Dual Representational Theory that originated from the research of Dr. Judy DeLoache of the University of Virginia, being able to impute characteristics beyond the purely physical characteristics of an object is what sets the human brain apart from all other animals. What this means is that we, as humans, can take an object and feel that the object has qualities that are not intrinsic to that object. It is based on this quality that we are able to utilize tools such as languages, on which our current society relies so heavily upon. Thus venerating what many call simply stone objects as God is actually exercising the abilities that make us human; without it, we

may as well slide down the evolutionary scale to chimpanzees.

Based on the preceding discussion, one may understand and come to appreciate the beauty of deity worship, however another question arises. Why do these stone statues need to be housed in architecturally appealing houses, or *mandirs*? Research has shown that stimulating multiple senses at the same time lead to greater retention and understanding. A *mandir*, in essence, is the same concept. At the *mandir*, beyond just the murtis, one smells the aroma of the *agarbatis* (incense sticks), and the sounds of the *ghantas* (bells). With multiple senses being stimulated at the same time, the meanings and feelings of holiness last longer within the self. Another argument states asks that if God is omnipresent, why must there be temples? In response to this let us take the analogy of air. Air exists everywhere on Earth, but we still need a fan to feel that air, to create enough of a concentration of air so that it has a noticeable effect on the body. Similarly, the concentration of divinity in the temple is required in order to produce a noticeable effect on the soul.

This brings us to the final part of our discussion which is the *manifestation* of divinity. Note the emphasis on “manifestation”. Con-

sider once again that in a nutshell the practice of deity worship is worshipping a piece of stone. In this process you have mentally manifested divinity in an otherwise inert, inanimate and uninteresting piece of stone. Now consider this: if you can envision God in a piece of stone, why can't you envision God in your neighbor? This is the central purpose and underlying meaning of the deity worship system, and that is to recognize that God resides in every object, every person and every organism. And this is how divinity is literally manifested. One has taken a previously ordinary object or person and made it divine.

Thus it is quite evident that deity worship is simply an extension of our human nature and that the *mandir* system is designed in order to compound the feeling of divinity. Finally this system allows one to manifest and see divinity within other things, plants, animals and people.

Tejas Dave (17) is a student at Pearland High School in Texas. (This essay has won the first prize in high school category in the essay competition and scholarship program organized by the Om Temple near Boston, USA. The organizers have announced topics for 2012 competition for world-wide participation, which can be found on their web-site: www.omtemple.com)

Health for Humanity

Dr Guna Magesan recounts the Yogathon, an unique health event which left spellbound to lots of Yoga and health freaks in New Zealand.



New Zealand cities witnessed a unique health event from 13th to 27th of August 2011. People from all walks of life and different age groups participated in a two-week “Health for Humanity” Yogathon. The youngest participant was 3 year old in Wellington and the oldest was 82 years old from Auckland. The event was free and open to all to participate.

The participants aimed to collectively perform 100,000 repetitions of ‘Surya Namaskar’ (Sun Salutation) over a period of 15 days. A repetition of Surya Namaskar consists of a series of yoga postures of well-balanced movements linked with simple breathing technique. The final tally was 89,058.

Mr Venkat Koppaka, the national coordinator for Yogathon, said it was indeed a great achievement considering this event was happening for the first time in New Zealand.

Yogathon 2011 was launched simultaneously in Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua, Wellington and Nelson. Registrants from other places such as Christchurch, Taupo, Nelson, Coromandel, Hawkes Bay, Whangarei, and Motueka also participated.

“In Auckland city alone we had four cen-

tres namely Henderson, Mount Eden, North Shore and Flat Bush,” said Mr Koppaka.

The enthusiastic response to Yogathon 2011 came from more than 50 groups and nearly 1000 individuals. This also includes two members of Parliament, Dr Rajen Prasad and Sue Moroney, from Auckland and Hamilton respectively. Group registrations included Yoga studios, dance schools, community and social organisations, gyms/ health clubs, and community schools.

This year three groups namely Wellpark College of Natural Therapies, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh and Art of Living Foundation performed more than 10,000 Surya Namaskars each. Certificates will be given to these three groups during the Rotorua Deepawali Festival 2011.

This programme was successful because of a number of yoga teachers and volunteers, many from non-Indian community. Plans for Yogathon 2012 are already afoot, following the enthusiastic and positive comments by participants. Rotorua has already formed a committee for Yogathon 2012.

“We will widen the scope of Yogathon 2011, and invite schools and hospitals (doctors and district nurses) to participate in this planned annual health initiative. We also aim

to take Surya Namaskars to prison inmates,” said Dr Rajiv Chaturvedi, Media and Public Relations Officer, Hindu Council of New Zealand.

Surya Namaskar is an important and vital part of yogic practice. Its importance becomes more relevant in today's world which is full of tensions and worries, as it combines the various Yoga techniques in a condensed set comprising of asana, pranayam, and dhyana.

The purpose of Yogathon is to promote Yoga widely in a scientific perspective of health, to help introduce it as a part of school curriculum in future, encourage healthy living, and connect Yoga schools and practitioners in New Zealand through participation in this planned annual event.

The organisers thanked all their sponsors and supporters: Lottery Grants Board (the primary sponsor). Baba Ramdev's JMJK group in Auckland, media partners (Radio Tarana, Access Radio Wellington, Indian Weekender, Indianz Outlook, Anahata Yoga Retreat, and volunteers in various cities, as well as all the group and individual registrants. Sponsorship of prizes in Wellington by Mrs. Aparna Roy and Mrs. Mohini Kumar was gratefully acknowledged.

A thoughtful Session



Prof Baladas Ghoshal

“ We have a ‘fire-brigade’ foreign policy. Prevention is not thought of. Our foreign policy is reactive, not pro-active! ,” exclaimed Professor Baladas Ghoshal, visiting Professor, Academy of Third World Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia & Visiting Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi Former Professor of Southeast Asia and South-West Pacific Studies & Chairman, Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi.

A very distinguished looking gentleman, with a very kind smile graced the Whistling Woods International School of Media and Communication campus a fortnight back with a memorable discussion series on Media and International affairs that most of us will never forget.

He began by giving me a succulent overview of the media’s role in politics. Laying special emphasis on the responsibility of the media to show an unbiased view of both sides of the problem, he went on to illustrate how the authenticity and integrity of media has become almost non-existent in the recent past. Clearly wanting to exploit our analytical side, he said, “Justice needs reform at the bottom of the process- the police station, not the Supreme Court.”

Lynette D’souza in conversation with Prof Baladas Ghoshal on the global perspective towards media and more.

Professor Ghoshal has discussed on how China is managing its rise as a superpower was highly informative indeed. They have managed to create a rather aggressive image for themselves in the eyes of the world. China slowly realised that the world did not look too kindly upon them and decided to tweak their foreign policy. According to professor Ghoshal, India and China cannot afford to be enemies and that co-operation between the two neighbours is essential. He believes that India’s slight hostility roots from China’s support of Pakistan with regards to the Kashmir issue. China’s development of the ‘string of pearls’ as possible military ports surrounding India came as a revelation to us. Diplomats are suggesting that India should also build a ‘String of pearls’ to encircle China as a preventive measure. It has also been highly recommended that India develop close relations with China’s rival, Japan.

He also discussed the role of media in international relations. He launched into the exact definition of International relations and diplomacy and highlighted their importance. Professor Ghoshal enlightened us on the actual job of a diplomat and even about diplomats suspected in espionage. He even threw light on the history of media being used as propaganda as in the time of the cold war between the United States of America and Russia. He told us how America realised that public opinion was of vital importance and exploited the media to garner public support. Making particular ideologies popular was very important to them. Thus, they indulged in embedded journalism and other forms of media manipulation such as staged media events and carefully scripted sound bites. It is kind of interesting to note how the U.S has not changed this tactic at all. It continues to ensure that public opinion is always in their favour.

The last part of the conversation was devoted to reinforcing in our minds just how powerful social media can be. He acquainted us with Twitter revolutions. “For many, the idea that anything meaningful can come out of a 140 character message (called a ‘tweet’) is preposterous,” he said with much gusto. He then proceeded to cite the example of the Egypt Upheavals and how the objections to a dictatorship were always present but they were just not voiced until earlier this year. The younger Egyptian generation were unhappy with how the country was being run and needed some mobilisation through social media. Their achievement is truly commendable.

It just goes to show that social media can be a very effective tool to bring about awareness and reform. It might not have an immediate impact, but the long term effect is commendable. Social media consists of a force that sensitizes and involves people like no other media platform. The only drawback, according to Professor Ghoshal, is the generation divide it creates as the older generation is less attuned to the world of social media. Thus he concluded stating that while diplomacy has to be used in matters of international affairs, mass media helps promote diplomacy in a big way and therefore should not be underestimated.

I hope to have this brilliant mind, with his calm and composed nature in my midst once again to enlighten further and to help me to be more responsible media student in the light of International Affairs.

MANI KAUL

Harbinger of Indian New Wave

Ratnadeep Banerji pays a tribute to veteran filmmaker, the face of Indian film industry.

A cinema can shimmer beyond the visual tapestry. Mani Kaul charted that unpitched domain. Not hankering the populist mainstream Indian cinema, he remained eclipsed from the potboiler fame. 'The ebb and flow in the film, a poetic ensemble of words that is once visual and internal' was integral to Mani, he put it thus. Demise at 66 is a rude jolt. He was to shoot 'Under Her Spell' about Rossellini but for his health. His beatnik perception took him on a roughshod passage in dire straits, but he never yielded to the hackneyed film producing.

Born as Rabindranath Kaul on 25th December, 1944 in a Kashmiri Pandit family of Jodhpur, he rose to be a maverick filmmaker and a film academic. He turned out to be the nephew of actor and director Mahesh Kaul. Initially he was an acting student at Film and Television Institute of India, later to flip over to direction course. There he received the tutelage of Rirwik Ghatak that later popped

up in his later works. Tarkovsky and Bresson had also made their dent upon him.

His debut film *Uski Roti* (1970) is hailed to usher in the Indian New Wave, not clinging to the erstwhile Indian cinematic form and technique. This fetched him Filmfare Critics Award for best movie and three more times for *Ashad ka ek Din* in 1972, *Duvidha* in 1974 and *Idiot* in 1993. He notched the National Film Award for best direction in 1974 for *Duvidha* and again in 1989, *Siddheshwari* was awarded the National Film Award for the best documentary film.

He made features, documentaries

Mani was an extraordinary colleague to work with. Never for a moment in all our interactions did age come in between us despite he being a good twenty five years older than me. There was always wicked laughter in our banter about some grim irony of life or the work we did.

We would lament the Indian lack of initiative about the good things in life in general that was reflected in the lack of taste for good cinema. The conversations we had were endless. It was always fascinating to listen to his anecdotes which could date back to his childhood days. We were in the selection committee for the Osian's Cinefan Festival. We would watch around 400 or so films in a period of two months.

- Kaushik Bhaumik



Mani Kaul

and shorts in total 24 of them. Duvidha won him the Interfilm Award at Berlin's Forum in 1975 and Naukar Ki Kameez, his last film brought him the Netpac award at Rotterdam in 1999. He was a member of the jury at the Berlin Film Festival in 1971 and was director of Osian's Cinefan Film Festival till the time of his death and also the Creative Director of the film house at Osian's Connoisseurs of Art, Mumbai. He had also taught music in the Netherlands.

Nazar was based on Dostoevsky's 'The Meek One' wherein he infused his own time-frame that had profundity of its own idea with the interior monologue bifurcated into a dialogue. This attempt showcased his real acumen. Mani carped on, 'Cinema for me is a plastic, not a performing art.....It should be

direct sculpting in time'. In his documentary Dhruvad, he streaks across several coordinates of music and architecture in the matrix of volume and space. His films evoked intrepid imagination.

What is 'new and bold cinema?' In an interview, he once stated, "The dividing line for my films and documentaries is thin. Some of my films like 'Siddheshwari' are like poetic documentaries'. Uski Roti fell insipid on Indian audience. But Mani remained upbeat, 'A new thought that is the purpose of my films.....If the film is to show you something that is already known, not only by the filmmaker but also by the audience, where will it lead us?' On being termed his films as experimental, he would retort, 'My films are not experimental, because I know what I'm

doing. They are experimental, they don't know what they are doing'.

The fecund mind of Mani lapped up music, painting and dance and also devoured upon ancient texts. He went on to learn rudra veena from Ustad Moiuiddin Dagar for several years to become an astute player himself. He sang Dhruvad, painted canvasses and sculpted as well. He maintained, 'An artist is a strange, individual birth'.

The 68th Venice International Film Festival from 31st August to 10th September will screen the restored version of Duvidha, as a tribute. The National Film Development Corporation has decided to launch home videos of Mani's works.

Obituaries



King of uninhibited moves - Shammi Kapoor

Actor Shammi Kapoor, the dancing star who revolutionised the image of Hindi film heroes in the 1950s and 1960s with his carefree and flamboyant personality, died last month. The star who gave Indians the liberating Yahoo yell in 1961, the actor had been unwell for some time and was on dialysis. He would visit doctors thrice a week for the medical procedure.

The recipe for his success was a makeover as a flamboyant yet lovable lover boy and an uninhibited style of dancing. The freshness and style saw him deliver big hits like An Evening in Paris, China Town, Kashmir Ki Kali, Janwar and Jungle.



Legendary Producer - Surinder Kapoor

It surely has been a tough and challenging period for Bollywood. Last week one of the most well known film producers Surinder Kapoor (father of Anil, Boney and Sanjay Kapoor) passed away earlier today. Surinder was 84 years old and suffered a cardiac arrest resulting in his death. In his illustrious career, Surinder has produced memorable films such as Hum Paanch, Woh 7 Din, Judaai, Pukar and No Entry.



Ace lensman - Gautam Rajadhyaksha

Ace Bollywood and fashion photographer Gautam Rajadhyaksha, whose glamorous photoshoots helped propel many actors to stardom, passed away following a massive heart attack. He was 62. Rajadhyaksha was very popular among film personalities and worked on portraits of almost all the leading stars of the Indian film industry. A cousin of writer and socialite Shobha De, Rajadhyaksha was a keen collector of opera recordings and had held several talk shows on the subject. He was also involved with projects concerning Western and Indian classical music.

ings and had held several talk shows on the subject. He was also involved with projects concerning Western and Indian classical music.



The Nawab of Pataudi - Tiger Patuadi

Legendary cricketer and former Indian captain Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi, who was admitted to a prominent city hospital last month following lung infection, passed away on September 22, 2011. One of India's finest captains, Pataudi made his test debut in Delhi against England in 1961 and played the last of his 46 tests against West Indies in 1975 in Mumbai. Pataudi is survived by his actress wife Sharmila Tagore and three

children, two of whom are also actors.

Generations of film makers during the 1960s to the 1980s considered Mani this iconic director, who did it his way and implicitly scorned the mediocre majority. That the popularity and adulation of the majority path was somewhat missed, was a hiccup which no original thinker can avoid. I was introduced to Mani with much laughter and in those moments the deepest of intellectual burdens appeared graceful as a result of existentialist humor. Thus his humor, wit and jokes remain clearest in my mind. Mani was a master on telling his own jokes on himself. One classic goes like this: Mani's new landlords, an elderly couple invited him upstairs to dinner one night. The husband was very keen to introduce Mani to his wife, proud of having such an iconoclastic film-maker as his tenant. During conversation the husband told his wife "Did you know that Mr Kaul's new film is about this man waiting at the bus-stop..." "No, no, please do not tell me the story and spoil my joy," she immediately tells her husband. Mani calmly smiles at both and says "I am sorry he has already told you the story." How we both laughed when he first told me this anecdote as an introduction to his work.

Another nugget suddenly emerged, seeing my receptiveness to the black humor. Mani begins: "My uncle used to be this famous actor Raaj Kumar, and one day we met at some film party. He shouts out from across the room and calls me to him and his friends: "Heh Jaani, Mani, what is this I am hearing? You want to join films and that you are making a film, and that it is called Uski Roti. What is this? A film on roti, woh bhi uski roti, no one will see it. Come with me, join me, we will make a film together, we will call it Apna Halwa. What do you say?" Mani mimicked the famous Raaj Kumar voice so beautifully you forgot about all the subtle tones, all the art cinema and mainstream differences, the choice to pursue happiness or wisdom, the lone struggle or the group orgies, the triumph of success or integrity, on and on you could read meaning in the mundane.

- Neville Tuli, Chairman Osian



Standing for a Cause

When India goes through a transitional phase, is it possible for branches of society to stand aloof? Little wonder that Hindi movies have been there during these times and showcased some major social issues that India faced. **Rajesh Iyer** tries to understand this association.



While we see many recent Hindi films responding to recent social issues, no one can deny that this association of Hindi films and social issues dates back to the time of independence. While the country was in the grip of fervour at having achieved independence and at a crossroads as to what social path it would take in the years to come, Hindi cinema became not only a minute observer of the changes the country was going through, but became a part of this progressive movement. The euphoria and the immediate introspection were clearly visible in the movies of makers like Mehboob Khan and Raj Kapoor, among others. Raj Kapoor was instrumental in taking social stands through his movies like *Awaara* (1951) and *Shri 420* (1955). While the former was a take on haves and have-nots that India was getting deeply divided into, the latter focussed on the crass greed the country had started feeding upon in the name of success.

Shri 420 showcased how ethics were being tossed out and success by any means was virtually becoming an anthem among a fast moving class.

The social turbulence grew with the years and the ever widening gap between the haves and have-nots became a reality no one could ignore. It was showcased poignantly in Bimal Roy classic *Do Bigha Zameen* (1953), a story about a poor farmer and his family's migration to city after his land is being eyed by a greedy landlord and the eventual hardships they face in the big city. Even though Bimal Roy had De Sica and other Italian neo-realist masters as his benchmark, the film captured the imagination of the audience worldwide and became a watershed of sorts for socially relevant films to come.

Another good representation of the collective rot in the society beneath the facade was showcased in Amit and Shombu Mitra's *Jagte Raho* (1956). The stark contrast of a poor, naive villager stuck among the city's greedy,

wily and corrupt lot was much more than mere symbolic. The film showed many stratum of the society, each mired in its own callous world, throwing norms, ethics and values to wind.

While big cities were being taken over by the corrupt elements, the villages weren't aloof from this problem. Many films showcased the pathetic situations of rural India. The greedy landlords to scheming merchants appeared in almost every other film. But, none perhaps captured both the eroding and holding on to the ethos like Mehboob Khan's epoch-making *Mother India* (1957). A movie with a widow as its protagonist showed her stand for her values, keeping the hawk-like creatures at bay and even sacrificing her own son in the end for the up-keep the moral values. These films coming close on the heels of collective oaths everyone took to taking this country to righteous path was a jolt to the facade many put in the name of nationalism.

Hindi films slowly started veering to other

social problems confronting the nation, one among them being of dacoits. It was a menace for long, but by late fifties and early sixties had become a national nuisance, something which prompted movies like *Ganga Jamuna* and *Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai* among others. The problems of dacoits would continue to rear its head in the years and decades to come and seventies would see many socially relevant films on this subject.

The seventies saw India face its own set of social issues. One, like most western nation, was the drug abuse that was becoming rampant among the urbanites. Dev Anand made his classic *Hare Rama Hare Krishna* (1971) that bared this issue. Seventies also saw a milestone change with the rise of what most term as the parallel cinema. It perhaps started with Shyam Benegal's *Ankur* (1973) which was a commentary on the class divide and social exploitation that still plagued the nation after years and years of false promises and lack of sincere action.

The parallel cinema took upon itself to showcase many such social issues and some wonderful films were made during the years to come. While Ketan Mehta explored the same class divide in his film *Mirch Masala* (1984), Benegal looked at the world of the prostitutes in *Mandi* (1981). But, it wasn't only the bleakness that they portrayed, but the bright side of social development and change. Benegal made *Manthan* (1976) on the amazing success of the milk cooperative of Gujarat, which was a definite mark of rural empowerment.

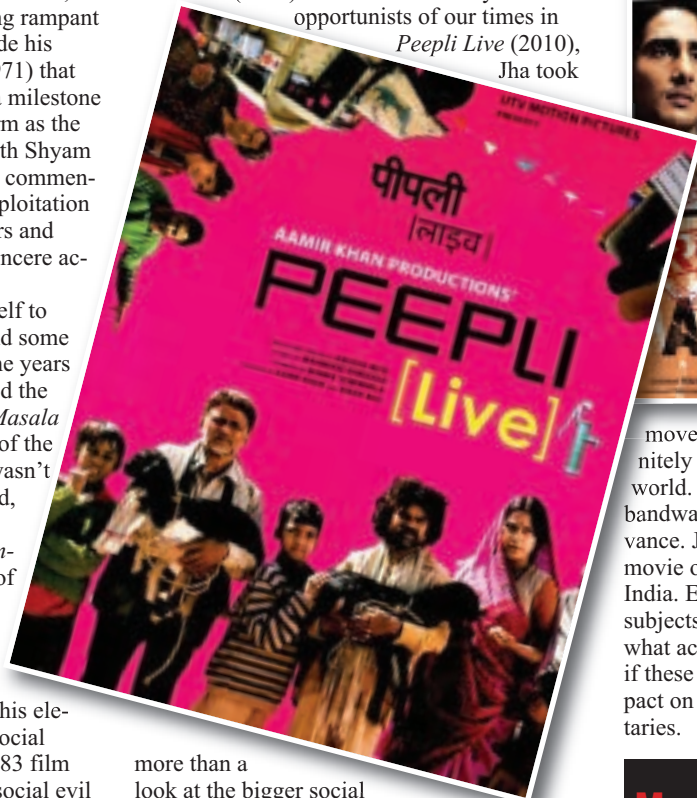
The eighties saw coming back of the great showman, Raj Kapoor into his element when he made his take on the social problem of child widowhood. His 1983 film *Prem Rog* was a wakeup call to this social evil that still reared its head despite the changes that swept the society.

Even though the next decade and a half hardly saw much movement on this front, save for odd ones like Mani Ratnam's 1995 commentary on religious riots, *Bombay*, the films of the recent past had again woken to taking up socially relevant issues as the backbone of their stories. Madhur Bhandarkar made his gritty *Chandni Bar* (2001) about the social evil of a woman in distress among the hawk-like men and their ulterior motives.

Love for nation took a different turn in the recent films, far removed from the films of yore, especially of Manoj Kumar. The protagonists no longer wore patriotism on their sleeves, but their love for the nation was not less by any standard. How else could anyone explain the protagonist of *Swades* (2004) wanting to chuck his high-profile NASA job to come to a small village and solve their basic

problems of electricity. Or, for that matter the youth brigade of *Rang De Basanti* (2006) who would do a modern encore of the great revolutionaries of the independence movement, this time fighting the greedy, corrupt politicians.

These films propelled many more socially relevant films in the years to come. Aamir Khan and Prakash Jha are at the forefront of this new wave of cinema, if we may term it thus. While Khan took up social issues like dyslexia among the young in his *Taare Zameen Par* (2007) and a black comedy on the opportunists of our times in *Peepli Live* (2010), Jha took



more than a look at the bigger social problems confronting the nation.

While his *Rajneeti* (2010) was a take on the murky-getting-murkier political scene in the country, his latest *Aarakshan* (2011) takes a look at the reservation issue that had clearly divided the nation for decades and continues to do so. The latter also looks at the general rot of the education system at the grassroots.

The education system was also at the receiving end of Raju Hirani's classic *3 Idiots* (2009), which was a comic take on the methods not only adopted since long by our policy makers and teaching fraternity, but their sheer rigidity at accepting any change. The recent rise in the case of students' suicide across the country, forced as they are by the almost-crazy percentage system and over-ambitious parents perhaps prompted this movie and eventually contributed to its immense success.

Social relevance seems to be a catch-phrase in the new India, if the recent anti-corruption



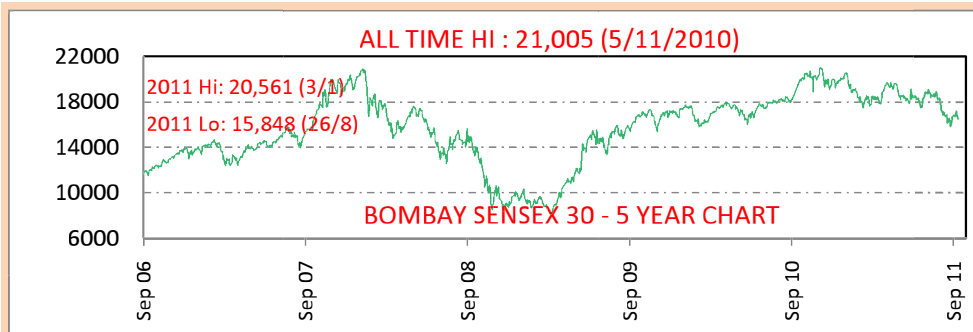
movement is anything to go by. It's definitely making its impact on the Hindi film world. More filmmakers are jumping into the bandwagon and making movies of social relevance. Jha is himself said to be basing his next movie on the public movement that swept India. Even though these movies are on social subjects and are meant to be wake-up calls, what actually needs to be analysed in detail is if these films do actually make a positive impact on the society or remain mere commentaries.

Most controversial movies of the decade

Gangajal (2003)
Black Friday (2004)
Girlfriend (2004)
Water (2005)
Parzania (2005)
Fanna (2006)
Jodha Akhbar (2008)
My name is Khan (2010)
Rajneeti (2010)
Peepli Live (2010)

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30 September 2011



Source: chart & following table: Bloomberg

| | | Pts Chg | % Chg | 2011/12 | 5 Yr | 5 Yr | 5 Yr |
|--------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|-------|
| CLOSE: 30 Sep 2011 | Index | Day | YTD | PER | PER Hi | PER Lo | Avg |
| SENSEX 30 | 16,454 | -244 | -18.6% | 13.7x | 25.0x | 8.1x | 18.4x |
| NIFTY 50 | 4,943 | -18 | -18.2% | 13.5x | N/A | N/A | 17.0x |

BOMBAY

INR ₹ /US\$ Rs48.97

INR ₹ /GB£ Rs76.45

INR ₹ /EUR Rs66.45

The SENSEX closed 1.5% lower as persistent worries over Greece's sovereign debt problem continues to rattle global markets. Losses were mainly seen in metals, auto and banking stocks. The undertone is nervous.

LONDON / NEW YORK

All GDRs/ADRs in our table show losses, with many down 30-40%. AIM shows only 1 winner in our table, with I Energizer up an enviable 31%.

ECONOMIC NEWS

⇒ India's monsoon season has ended "normal" (96% - 104% of 50-year average) and should provide very valuable support to economic growth. Despite this we now lower our GDP forecast to 31 March 2011 to 7.4% from 7.8% earlier. This is because of further economic slowdown expected from interest rate hikes in 2010 and 2011 made to tame stubbornly high inflation. WPI inflation in August was 9.78%, the highest in over a year and is the highest among BRIC countries. Earlier this month the RBI raised interest rates for the 12th time - this time by 0.25% to take the rises since 2010 to 350 bps and to take interest rates (repo rate) now to 8.25%. We think other factors to cause a slowdown in economic growth are the effect of a deteriorating global economy which will hit Indian exports and a slowdown in capital inflows which has weakened the Indian currency. The recent drop in the Rupee will add to inflation as India imports about 80% of her oil needs. Interest rates normally have a lagged effect of 2-3 quarters to slow down the economy. The Government's forecast is 8.4% GDP growth to March 2011, which we consider too optimistic. The IMF recently cut its growth forecast for India to 7.8% for 2011 from 8.2%. Before the financial crisis economic growth in India topped 9% for 3 consecutive years.

⇒ The IMF has lowered its GDP forecast for developing Asia in 2011 to 8.2% and to 8.0% for 2012 vs 8.4% for both years made in June. The developing Asia group consists of China, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam and about 20 other smaller economies. The IMF forecast of economic growth in the four newly industrialised Asian economies - Taiwan, S. Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong - was reduced to 4.7% for 2011 and 4.5% in 2012 from 8.4% in 2010.

⇒ India's SENSEX ended the September quarter down 12.8%-its biggest fall in nearly 3 years since dropping 25% in the October - December quarter in 2008.

Q3 2011 YTD PERFORMANCE OF ASIAN/WESTERN MARKETS:

⇒ Sri Lanka is the only market in our table to show a gain, albeit only +2%. All BRIC markets are down, with Brazil down 23%. Most Asian markets are down in double-digits. High inflation and recurring interest rates hikes have slowed Asian economies. India is down for the 3rd consecutive quarter this year. US's Dow Jones IA is down only 4%, despite economic woes in the U.S. European sovereign debt worries weigh on the UK market, as nervousness over Greece persist. Gloomy end to Q3 for shares worldwide.

| INDEX PERFORMANCE (source: Thomson Reuters) | Index at 30.9.11 | 2011 %Chg | 2010 %Chg |
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| ASIA PACIFIC: | | | |
| AUSTRALIA 200 INDEX | 4,008 | -16 | -1 |
| CHINA SHANGHAI COMP | 2,359 | -16 | -16 |
| CHINA SHENZHEN COMP | 1,005 | -22 | +5 |
| HONG KONG HANG SENG | 17,592 | -22 | +5 |
| INDIA NIFTY 50 | 4,943 | -18 | +17 |
| INDIA SENSEX 30 | 16,454 | -19 | +17 |
| INDONESIA JAKARTA COMP | 3,549 | -4 | +46 |
| JAPAN NIKKEI 225 | 8,700 | -15 | -3 |
| MALAYSIA K.L. COMP. | 1,387 | -9 | +19 |
| PAKISTAN KSE 100 | 11,762 | -3 | +28 |
| PHILIPPINES PSEi | 4,000 | -8 | +39 |
| SINGAPORE STI | 2,675 | -15 | +11 |
| SRI LANKA ALL SHARE | 6,783 | +2 | +95 |
| STH. KOREA KOSPI | 1,770 | -14 | +22 |
| TAIWAN TAIEX | 7,225 | -20 | +9 |
| THAILAND SET INDEX | 916 | -10 | +41 |
| VIETNAM STOCK INDEX | 427 | -12 | -3 |
| WESTERN: | | | |
| UK FTSE 100 | 5,128 | -12 | +9 |
| US D.J. IND | 10,193 | -4 | +11 |
| USA NASDAQ | 2,415 | -6 | +17 |
| BRAZIL BOVESPA | 52,324 | -23 | +1 |
| RUSSIA MICEX 10 | 3,152 | -16 | +25 |

**SELECTED SHARE PRICES****GDR OFFER PRICES (US\$) LONDON – 30 Sep 2011 : 1630 GMT**

| Company | Day's Price | YTD % Change | Company | Day's Price | YTD % Change |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| L&T | \$27.37 | - 38% | SBI | \$ 84.50 | - 35% |
| M&M | \$16.57 | - 6% | Suzlon Energy | \$ 2.99 | - 41% |
| Ranbaxy | \$10.60 | - 25% | Tata Power | \$ N/A | |
| Rel. Inds | \$32.74 | - 31% | Tata Steel | \$ 8.46 | - 43% |

Source : Thomson Reuters

ADR OFFER PRICES (US\$) NEW YORK – 30 Sep 2011 : 2100 GMT

| Company | Day's Price | YTD % Change | Company | Day's Price | YTD % Change |
|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Dr.Reddy | \$ 29.78 | - 18% | Patni | \$11.65 | - 45% |
| HDFC Bank | \$ 29.15 | - 8% | Sterlite | \$ 9.21 | - 41% |
| ICICI Bank | \$ 34.71 | - 27% | Tata Com (ex VSNL) | \$ 7.33 | - 34% |
| Infosys | \$ 50.98 | - 32% | Tata Motor | \$15.37 | - 45% |
| MTNL | \$ 1.25 | - 48% | WIPRO | \$ 9.23 | - 38% |

Source : Thomson Reuters

AIM (LONDON): in GB p unless stated otherwise – 30 Sep 2011 : 1630 GMT

| Company | Day's Price | YTD % Change | Company | Day's Price | YTD % Change |
|---------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Caparo (now Mytrah) | 97 | - 14% | Jubilant Energy | 39 | - 42% |
| DQE | 57 | - 53% | Kolar Gold | 19 | - 43% |
| Eros | 214 | - 5% | OPG Power | 58 | - 26% |
| Greenko | 160 | - 19% | Photon Kaathas | 48p | - 12% |
| HIRCO | 64 | - 5% | SKIL Ports | 158 | - 35% |
| IEnergizer | 233 | + 31% | Trinity Cap. | 22 | - 3% |
| Indus Gas | 618 | - 1% | Unitech | 26 | - 19% |
| Ishaan | 47 | - 27% | W. Pioneer | 13 | - 50% |

Source : Thomson Reuters

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SAVING LEOPARDS IS HER AIM

Meghna Agarwal talk to wildlife biologist Vidya Athreya who has been working on leopards since two decades

‘A leopard can’t change his spots?’ The idiom may also become extinct as the animal in it faces the danger of, in the coming decades. If we see the figures, the Maharashtra state alone has lost at least 78 leopards since 2010. The latest leopard deaths were reported from Sawli, Durgapur, Korambi Bhuj and Ashtabuja in Chandrapur district, Dhundi near Pusad in Yavatmal and two near Nashik.

On December 18, 2010, a leopard attacked three farmers in a village near Gurgaon, Haryana. Panicky villagers hammered it with iron rods and lathis. On January 9, 2011, in Karad, Maharashtra, a leopard was spotted atop a house. When a crowd of people gathered, the leopard hid into an empty building. Instead of trapping it inside, the mob stoned it. The angered cat charged out and injured six people. The leopard was shot by a police official.

A few days later, on January 13, 2011, a leopard was spotted in a forest plantation, about 5 km from Bhubaneswar. Before the forest officials could arrive, a mob beat it to death, reportedly instigated by a local television reporter who wanted dramatic visuals. A number of leopards accused of attacking people in Haryana, Maharashtra and Orissa, have been killed by hysteric mobs in recent times.

Experts say leopards, which has been listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA) 1972 are dying at an alarming rate. In 2009, 48 leopards died in Maharashtra alone while in 2010-11, the number has risen to 76.

Shy creatures

We have all heard the above gruesome tales of leopards attacking people or stealing their live-stock, and many of us live in dread of these beautiful animals, without ever realizing that they are actually rather shy creatures.

Leopard is the smallest of the four ‘big cats’ in the genus Panthera, the other three being the tiger, lion and jaguar. Its range of distribution has decreased radically because of hunting and loss of habitat. Because of its declining range and population, it is listed as a ‘Near Threatened’ species by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). Leopard is a shy animal. “Just because it has big teeth and long whiskers and is ferocious to look at doesn’t make it dangerous. It is more scared than the humans when it is caged.

“There are currently about 14 thousand leopards left in India. The number may vanish soon if human attacks keep on increasing and secondly, if leopard poaching continues for the Chinese market,” said Vidya Athreya, a leading wildlife biologist of the country who has been actively working for leopard preservation since two decades. “Tiger bones are considered as an aphrodisiac and since tiger has become rare, leopard is poached in its place for its bones and sent to the Chinese market. Government has made lots of laws against poaching but I am doubtful about the extent of its implementation and effective-

ness,” Athreya said.

“The problem is that these animals (leopards), fortunately or unfortunately, are very adaptable and they can even hide behind a patch of grass. Everybody thinks that wildlife should only live in the forests. But nobody seems to have told this to the wildlife! Wildlife does not see the boundaries we humans create. Leopards can’t tell where the forest ends and where the village or city starts,” she says.

The first reaction when a leopard is seen in an inhabited area is to catch it and put it in the jungle. The animal goes through the stress and a stressed animal is left in completely new surroundings. “The human behaviour also changes in stress; after all it is only an animal. How do we expect a stressed animal to react!” Vidya says.

Homing tendency

But leopards have a very strong homing tendency and they instinctively try to return to the area that they had been moved from. Many of the times the relocated animal tends to travel all the distance back to its original habitat.

A leopard caught 120 km away and released inside the Nagarhole National Park in Karnataka in 1990 had immediately moved out of the park. Another leopard captured in Gujarat and translocated 30 km away was fitted with a radio collar. It was found to imme-



diately return to its earlier territory. A Yawal leopard had moved nearly 90 km in the direction of Junnar from the site of her release inside the Yawal Wildlife Sanctuary before she was captured the second time.

“We did not know that relocation increases the problem instead of diminishing it and a majority of man-leopard conflict cases may have been culminated as a result of relocation. The trapped animal is left here and there and then the vicious cycle starts. Many a time small cubs are separated and relocated even before they learn to hunt. When such a hungry cub sees a child playing, it finds him as an easy prey and attacks,” Vidya said.

According to the recently issued guidelines of Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) it has been confirmed that relocation is not a solution to the man-leopard conflict and leopards are going through crisis of adaptation.

“99% of times leopards are not harming anybody. But no-one mentions that, even once because of relocation or other reasons if they attack, then everybody says leopards are dangerous,” she added. Leopards by nature live in human dominated landscape. “In the 1883 Nasik gazetteer it is mentioned that leopards come to the villages to catch dogs. Even in the ancient time of Shivaji, leopards used to come to the villages in the night,” she added.

The foremost learning is that it is not the absence of prey inside the forests, but the abundance of prey in the towns that encourages

leopards to live alongside humans.

Even hyenas and foxes and wolves live close to human settlement and come to the villages at night time. Hyenas resemble dogs so much that it is difficult to differentiate at night time. But poor leopards, because of their spots easily stand out.

Garbage problems

Leopards like to eat dogs and they come to the villages in search of dogs as their prey. With the growing population, the filth and garbage heaps in the villages are just growing bigger which attracts stray dogs. And if we provide them abundant prey – like poorly protected domestic animals - there is bound to be conflict. “It is futile to manage leopards without first cleaning up the garbage and thereby controlling the numbers of stray dogs and pigs who live off the garbage. So the only solution to reduce this man-leopard conflict is to secure the livestock by caging them at night or building cowsheds,” Vidya says.

Vidya Athreya who has been working on leopards since two decades now says, “I was living in Junnar, in Pune district from 2001-03 when 50 people were attacked by leopards. It happened when leopards that had not hurt anyone were preemptively captured and relocated. Because I was living there I could not remain untouched by it. Nobody was doing anything about it, and that’s when I decided to take it up.”

There happen to be no specific leopard reserves in India. Reserves are mostly for tigers and tigers kill leopards. So leopards stay on the fringes of jungles or in the hilly areas,” says

Athreya who has been a researcher from the Wildlife Institute of India in 1995.

She has started projectwaghoba for leopard preservation in the year 2007. Work has been done mainly in Maharashtra. “You need lot of money to do pure ecological work on such a species,” Vidya said. The project is basically to ensure that loss of any sort to the leopards is minimized. Their work involves understanding the behavior of the animals by monitoring them, training people living close to leopard habitats on how to prevent and manage any confrontation. “The research on leopards will be finishing in December this year. We have made a movie in the rural language to make the villagers understand how to maintain cleanliness. Moreover, a book has been written by a farmer which tries to talk about complex relationship between humans and large wild cats,” she added. The information on leopards will be disseminated in the western India in the coming years.

The long term solution is to decrease the high density of interface between the villagers and leopards. And for that we need proper garbage management in order to reduce the filth. “It’s not possible in India to reduce the garbage overnight,” Vidya says. If villages are clean then a less number of leopards will frequent human inhabited area.

“But amongst all this the positive thing is that leopard breeding rate is high. And India is the only country which is so tolerant to wildlife,” Vidya says. Here, the population density is 340 people per sq km. Despite such heavy population density, we have the highest number of wildlife available.



The leopard when it was found trapped in the well. It was collared as part of the research project by the team (below). On the right is lead researcher, Vidya Athreya (Photo Courtesy: Project Waghoba)

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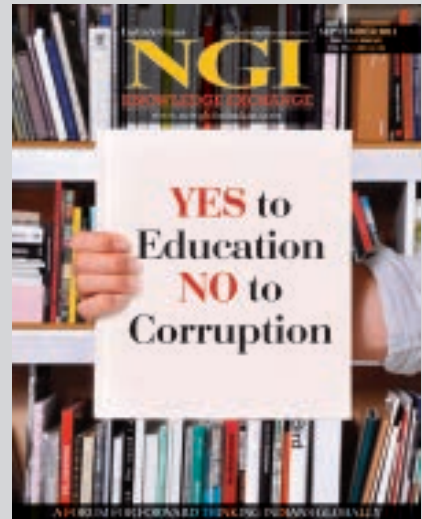
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Can You Handle Crime?

Are you equipped to handle crime? Asks **Noel Keymer**. Take this quiz and find out, and remember... the wrong answers may not only cost you your money... but your life!



1. Walking home after work, someone asks you for directions. You:

- Tell them how to get there.
- Say "Sorry" and walk on. It's too dangerous to talk to a stranger.
- Offer to show them the place.

2. You normally carry your daily belongings in a:

- A hand held bag.
- A shoulder bag, which you tuck under the arm.
- A shoulder bag which you wear across the body or on the back

3. Your philosophy when it comes to protecting yourself against crime is:

- One can never be safe enough
- Common sense and logic can keep you quite safe.
- Bad things never happen to good people like me.

4. On your way to a party, you realize your are lost. You:

- Continue driving, knowing sooner or later you'll hit something familiar.
- You've forgotten your mobile, so you pull into a day and night Petrol pump and phone the host for directions.
- Pull into a day and night petrol pump and ask the staff for instructions.

5. At least one of your friends or relatives has been the victim of urban city crime?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

6. A policeman wants to use your window to keep watch on some Gangsters/suspicious people, you:

- Ask for his I.D, phone his police station for verification, and then let him in.
- Let him in. This is your big chance to fight crime.
- Refuse to let him in. How can you be sure he's telling the truth.

7. It's late at night, your driving home and realize you need cash. There are 3 ATM's. You choose the one that is located:

- Inside a bank, on a relatively deserted street.
- Outside a bank on a fairly busy street.
- Outside a bank on a fairly lonely street.

8. A smiling salesperson asks you to let him in to demonstrate a product. You:

- Let him/her in.
- Tell them to come some other time. You are busy now.
- Tell them you are not interested, and refuse to let them in.

9. While driving late at night, a car bumps you from behind. When you look back the driver gestures you to turn into a side street. You:

- Pullover and examine the damage done to your car
- Gesture the driver to follow you to a well populated, well lighted area and then get out.
- Write down his registration number and drive off.

If there is any damage, you can always trace him

10. While shopping at night, you park your car in an unattended parking lot at:

- The extreme end where there are only a few cars
- Near the entrance
- Near the entrance, but in a well lit up area

Scoring:

- a- 2 b-3 c- 1
- a- 1 b-2 c- 3
- a- 3 b-2 c- 1
- a- 3 b-2 c- 1
- a- 3 b-1 c- 0
- a- 2 b-1 c- 3
- a-1 b-2 c-3
- a-3 b-2 c-1
- a-1 b-2 c-2
- a-3 -b-1 c-2

Score Interpretation:

24 to 30 points:

You are a worry wart. You seem to worry constantly about bad things happening to you.

The remedy: Work towards making yourself realize that you are in charge of your own well being. If you feel someone is following you on the street, then don't panic and make a beeline for home. Instead, indulge in some window shopping, or step into a store and browse around. In most cases the stalker (if there ever was one) will pass on.

15 to 23 points:

You seem pretty level headed. You know that wonderful as the world is, it can also be dangerous. You follow your instincts and never ignore that inner alarm, or sixth sense. You seem the type of person who can take care of themselves.

19 to 14 points:

Sure, its great to feel invulnerable, but you seem to be taking crime too lightly and possess a "Nothing's going to happen to me" attitude. The sooner you wake up to the reality that crime can happen to you, the better.

What the experts say:

* Many crimes begin with someone just asking for directions.

* Never let a stranger into your home, even if he is in uniform.

* Never let salespeople into your house since there is no way to check their credibility.

NGI NEWSMAKERS

ANANTHA P. CHANDRAKASAN

Indian American to lead MIT's largest academic department

Indian American Anantha P. Chandrakasan has been named the new leader of the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) largest academic department.

Chandrakasan, the Joseph F. and Nancy P. Keithley Professor of Electrical Engineering, has been named the next head of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS), Cambridge, Massachusetts-based MIT. Chandrakasan earned his BS (1989), MS (1990) and PhD (1994) in electrical engineering and computer sciences from the University of California at Berkeley; he joined the MIT faculty in 1994. Chandrakasan and his students have won a range of prizes and awards, and he has been honored with the Semiconductor Industry Association University Researcher Award (2009), and election as a Fellow of the IEEE.

DR INDARJIT SINGH

A first turbaned Sikh in British Parliament

Dr Indarjit Singh, the director of a charity linking several Sikh organisations in the UK, has become the "first turbaned Sikh" member of the British Parliament.

"I am delighted to be the first turbaned Sikh in Parliament. It is an honour for the whole Sikh community," said Singh, the director of the Network of Sikh Organisations (NSO). Recommended by the House of Lords Appointments Commission, the 79-year-old Singh will enter the House and sit as an independent. "It gives me a new opportunity to do what I have always tried to do, to work with people of all beliefs to increase tolerance and understanding and work for greater social and political justice in society," said Singh, who was appointed OBE in 1996 and CBE in 2009.

DEVEN SHARMA

S&P chief Deven Sharma quits

The Jharkhand-born Indian-American analyst who shook the world economy with an unprecedented downgrade of US credit rating earlier this month is stepping down as President of Standard & Poor (S&P).

Deven Sharma, who has been S&P president since August 2007, and was little known outside financial circles before his epic call on August 5, is leaving on September 12 to take up new challenges, the rating agency's parent company McGraw-Hill said Monday. Douglas Peterson, the current chief operating officer at Citibank, will replace Sharma.

SANJAY ARORA

NRI Sanjay Arora's bags another International Honor

US based Filmmaker Sanjay Arora's film 'Butterfly Wings' has been 'Officially Selected' at the West Virginia Filmmaker Festival 2011 to be held from September 29 to October 2, 2011 in West Virginia, USA. Mr. Arora, is born in India, based in the US, an Engineer by education and a New York Film Academy graduate. In spite of being in US, his heart always kept him alive in India. He chooses to direct his one film in India on a subject not many can reach and connect with especially when one does not have the experience of the feelings. Simply upon hearing a story of someone Sanjay was so touched by that experience that he dedicated his few months and moved to India and filmed 'Butterfly Wings'.

DR.DATTATREYUDU NORI

Dr. Dattatreyudu Nori NRI doctor from Andhra treats Mrs Sonia Gandhi

Dr.Dattatreyudu Nori NRI doctor from Andhra has treated Mrs Sonia Gandhi. Dr Dattatreyudu Nori, is a non-resident Indian from Andhra Pradesh and a renowned oncologist in the US, is reportedly leading a team of doctors who treated Congress president and UPA (United Progressive Alliance) chairperson Sonia Gandhi at New York's Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Centre (MSKCC). Sonia Gandhi has undergone a surgery for cervical cancer at MSKCC. According to reports, the surgery was successful and Gandhi is now back to India.

Mritujay Kumar profiles achievers from the NRI and PIO Community.



Why **Raja** is in Congressional Race

A son of Indian immigrants to the U.S. wants to create jobs and boost the tottering American economy, says Tausif Malik



Raja Krishnamoorthi

The Indian-American Democratic Congressional candidate for the 8th District of Illinois, Raja Krishnamoorthi, is running for the House because Washington has failed to address the most important issue facing the United States; creating jobs and economic growth.

Raja, a son of Indian immigrants to the U.S., was raised in Peoria, where he attended public schools and graduated as a valedictorian of his high school class. Raja earned his bachelor's degree summa-cum-laude in mechanical engineering from Princeton University in 1995 and graduated with honours from Harvard Law School in 2000. He brings to the table a vast array of economic experience, both in the public and private sector. Most significantly, he served as Illinois Deputy Treasurer and is currently the President of Sivananthan Laboratories, a Boonville-based business dedicated to research, development, and commercialization of cutting-edge products and technologies in national security and renewable energy. As Deputy Treasurer for Illinois where he helped revamp the state's unclaimed property system by increasing the amount of returned property while cutting the programme's costs. He also helped to run the technology venture capital fund, which has helped create hundreds of well-paying jobs in Illinois.

He plans to use his previous economic experience as a Special Assistant Attorney General and also as a member of the Illinois Housing Development Authority where he was Chairman of the Audit Committee to enact constructive legislation that will ensure economic growth and produce wealth for the middle class. As he puts it, "Washington is broken. It's the economy and the middle class that suf-

fer as a result. I bring to the table a wealth of economic experience and a pragmatic, mid-western approach to problem solving. I'm running for Congress to create jobs, ensure economic prosperity and opportunity for the middle class, in order to restore greatness to the American economy."

Raja is gravely concerned about the state of the economy, and Congress' inability to do anything about the situation. He says, "The recent downgrade of U.S. debt ratings followed by very dramatic market swings provided ample evidence that Washington is broken, and Congress is a dysfunctional three-ring circus. I was outraged when Congress couldn't get its act together to avoid a debt crisis, and because of it millions of middle-class Americans saw their savings further dwindle when the markets crashed in reaction to the antics in Washington." Since Congress's performance is so pathetic, Raja thinks it's time to shake things up by tying Congressional pay to results. If Congress makes good policy and Americans do well, then Congress will do well. Otherwise, if Americans suffer, then so should their representatives.

The same approach to solving the internal problems of Congress is also vital to renewing the American economy. Raja believes that America must invest in its workers, infrastructure, and education system if its economy is to remain great through the 21st century. As Deputy Treasurer and in the private sector, he has learnt firsthand the importance of investing in technology. By investing in worker training programmes and encouraging research and development, the government can help to foster new jobs in new industries. He also supports large-scale energy-efficiency projects which will create jobs in construction and manufac-

"I bring to the table a wealth of economic experience and a pragmatic, mid-western approach to problem solving"

turing, and make America's buildings more energy efficient, saving consumers' money and reducing pollution. With a record of innovation and creative problem-solving, Raja is committed to getting Congress to focus on the issues that matter to most Americans; creating jobs, ensuring prosperity for the middle class, and restoring economic greatness to the American economy.

In 2010, Raja ran for the Democratic nomination for Illinois State Comptroller, earning enthusiastic endorsements from the Chicago Tribune and Chicago Sun-Times for his focus on bringing greater transparency and fiscal discipline to government finances. He missed winning the nomination by approximately one percent. He served as issues director for Barack Obama's successful U.S. Senate campaign in 2004 and as an advisor to his successful presidential campaign in 2008.

As a resident of Hoffman Estates, Raja served on the Village's Comprehensive Planning Advisory Commission. Raja is married to Priya, a doctor at St. Alexius Hospital in Hoffman Estates. They have two sons: Six-year-old Vijay attends Winston Churchill Elementary School, and Vikram, who is two.



ALL ROADS LEAD TO INDIA

Awditi Bhaduri draws a parallel between medical tourism and global sporting bodies' increasing interests in India, where a couple of events heralds a promising future that aims to marry shrewd business with physical prowess

The prince of modern football Lionel Messi came to play at Kolkata in early September while seven-time Formula One champion Michael Schumacher will be seen in action at India's first F1 Grand Prix at Greater Noida in end-October. Suddenly it seems all roads lead to India, at least as far as international sports is concerned. However, it was not that renowned international sportspersons have not visited or displayed their skills in India before, but these two events can mark a new beginning for international sports in India. While previously most of those events were exhibitionist or organized by professional groups, it was for the first time that FIFA, world football's governing body, had decided to stage an interna-

tional friendly involving Argentina and Venezuela in India.

The India Grand Prix is also an FIA (the parent body of world motorsport) recognized calendar event this year which straight away puts the nation as the venue of one of the world's most followed international sport. We have the privilege of watching all-time greats like Pele, Maradona, Oliver Khan, Romario, Lewis Hamilton, Martina Hingis et. all coming to the country sometime or the other. But a little statistics will put the importance of these two events in perspective to all other earlier such visits of the sporting greats. The international friendly between Argentina and Venezuela was watched on TV by 154 countries, while Formula One has a total global TV audience of more than 500 million. So these

two events stand apart from all other previous big sporting meets and at the same time can well make or mar India's image.

Why is suddenly India coming into limelight?

It's not that India's performance in the world sporting arena has been so remarkable that everybody is taking notice of the nation. Except cricket, which is not a global sport), India does not figure anywhere among the top 10 or even 20 nations in majority of sporting disciplines. But still there has been a great interest among most world sports' governing bodies to come to India. The reason: easy lucre eclipses love for spread of sports far and wide.

India is no longer the land of rope tricks

and snake charmers. It's now a country with a population of 1.21 billion, and its economy is the 10th largest in the world by nominal GDP, and is the fourth largest by purchasing power parity, says an International Monetary Fund (IMF) report.

No doubt it's difficult to ignore such a huge market. At the same time, India's democracy has stood the test of time and its economy showed remarkable stability when big brothers like the USA, the UK or Germany was hit badly during the global recession in 2008-09. If India was once a tempting land with her abundance of natural resources, it is now an attractive market for multi-national companies.

At a time when the car market all over Europe has reached a saturation level, car sell is on the rise in India and China. It's no wonder that F1 is visiting India.

So, it's time to move on from an age of colonialism to neo-colonialism, where a country maintains control over a foreign land by having a say in its market operation. And sports provide a wonderful tool to do that.

How should India respond?

Indian market had been thrown open after the government adopted the economic liberalization policy in the 90s. This opened doors for all global brands to enter, and while most of them have set up shop in India, a lot more are lined up. It thus provides India in a strange situation. On one hand, India should be proud that more and more global companies are showing keen interest to invest in the country, but at the same time it calls for added responsibility. So long as we are not being able to take advantage of such moves by global big brothers, there is little to gain for us in the years to come.

Indian sporting scenario

Indian sports suffer from a number of ills. To begin with, funds and infra-structure top the list. India should try to channelize some of the funds that will come from such global sporting events visiting India for development of indigenous and raw talents. Already global football giants like Liverpool and Real Madrid are planning to set up football academies in the country. This should provide a wonderful opportunity for proper and systemic growth of Indian youngsters. But at the same time effort should be made to build proper grounds and stadiums in different parts of the country, and make those accessible to youngsters. It is nice to find a proper motorsport track of international standard has come up at Greater Noida for the India GP. Earlier, there were only two such proper tracks — in Chennai and Coimbatore — in India. There are needs for more such in the years to come.

At the same time with more and more foreign teams of various disciplines visiting India, it should also be a learning experience for our



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sporting fraternity to know how to groom and nurture talents along with organizing and preparing for sporting events of highest level. The government has also an important role to play here. It should also facilitate such events rather than putting up bottlenecks like tax, visa problems etc. But unfortunately till now, most of such big events have faced several state interventions which could harm prospects of more such events coming to the country in near future.

Healthy cooperation

We have to remember that there should be a healthy cooperation between the sporting fraternity and the government for both to gain. We have the case study of the United Arab Emirates and Singapore before us. Both their governments are quite open to staging big international events. But sadly enough there has been little development in their own backyards. In spite of the world's best sportspeople visiting the countries regularly with some of

them even making their base there, there has been no noticeable development as far as their sporting achievements are concerned on the global arena. At the same time the government also stands to gain a lot from all such events. All hotels in Noida and New Delhi have already been booked for the India GP weekend (October 28 to 30). It was reported that hotel rooms of Rs 7,000-8,000 are booked for as high as Rs 28,000 to 30,000. Just as medical tourism is the new buzzword in world tourism, there's a vast untapped market for sports tourism too. Any sporting event carries with it a huge number of fans and followers who are ready to transcend every border to cheer their teams. They not only return with happy memories of the game, but also great experience of the countries. Proper and better way to trap them can uplift the image of India in front of the world. FIFA president Sepp Blatter has aptly described India as a 'sleeping giant'. It's time to rise from the slumber, and take the world in our stride.

All Set to Flaunt



Archana captures the inauguration of new JJS office at GoldSouk by their sensational brand ambassador Sonal Chauhan and throws light on upcoming December show.

Jaipur Jewellery Show is the Second Largest Jewellery Show/ Jewellery Exhibition in India. Jaipur Jewellery Show Rajasthan has always been identified as a mosaic of unsurpassed beauty. Its golden sands, imposing forts, grand palaces, placid lakes, teeming wildlife and colorful and friendly people have always mesmerized visitors from all over the globe. Rajasthan has lured millions of foreign tourists due to its varied facets and it is natural that the tourists return with the contemporary crafts and arts, which are most intricately designed here, as souvenirs. Jaipur or the Pink City, as is known, is famous as the hub of colored gemstones especially meenakari and kundan work. Keeping all these in view the Jaipur Jewellery Show came into existence in the year 2003 for the benefit of the gems and jewellery trade of this region, which has now developed into the second largest show of this category in India and the largest in Northern India.

The new office of Jaipur Jewellery Show was inaugurated at GoldSouk by actress Sonal Chauhan. In her first public appearance as the Brand Ambassador of JJS, the young filmstar added glamour to the event which was attended by the top jewellers of the city.

Sonal Chauhan has recently been chosen to represent JJS, one of the largest jewellery shows in the country, as its brand ambassador. The vivacious actress reflects the young, innovative, trendsetting outlook of the show, and will add a dash of youthful glamour to its events and promotions.

Sporting a stunning Kundan-meena necklace, Sonal cut the red ribbon to inaugurate the plush 2,400 sq ft office at GoldSouk. "Moving the JJS office to GoldSouk was not just natural, but much awaited" said JJS Secretary, Rajiv Jain, "since GoldSouk is fast turning into the new gem & jewellery hub of Jaipur. As the show has grown rapidly over the last few years, the organizing committee saw the need to move to a large, modern facility closer to the heart of the jewellery industry."

What began as an ambitious project initiated by visionary jeweller Rashmikant Durlabhji to empower Jaipur's jewellery market, now has a life of its own, says JJS Co-convenor, Mr Dinesh Khatoria. He announced that JJS will be bigger and more professional this time, and expressed hope that some more exhibitors from the 100 odd applications still in the waiting list would be accommodated.

Talking about the new brand ambassador,



JJS

Spokesperson Mr.

Ajay Kala explained that JJS has grown into one of the most prominent jewellery events in the country. It is the second largest B2B + B2C jewellery exposition in the country, and hosted over 25,000 unique visitors last December. This was achieved by bringing together gem & jewellery manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers, and talented jewellery designers under one roof to create unmatched value for businesses as well as consumers.

If the ravishing new brand ambassador is any indication, the 9th edition of JJS which begins 23rd December, 2011 promises to be more exciting and glamorous than ever.

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FAIRY TALES



Photo: Arpan Kalita

*Mela dilon ka aata hai ek baar,
Aake chala jata hai...*
I am fond of fairs, amusement parks,
circus and more which thrills me.
O! I wanted to buy this *charkhi*...
Then gave it a second thought
to better click it.
So, tried my creative hands,
and preserved it forever...

NOT A BABY SHOWER

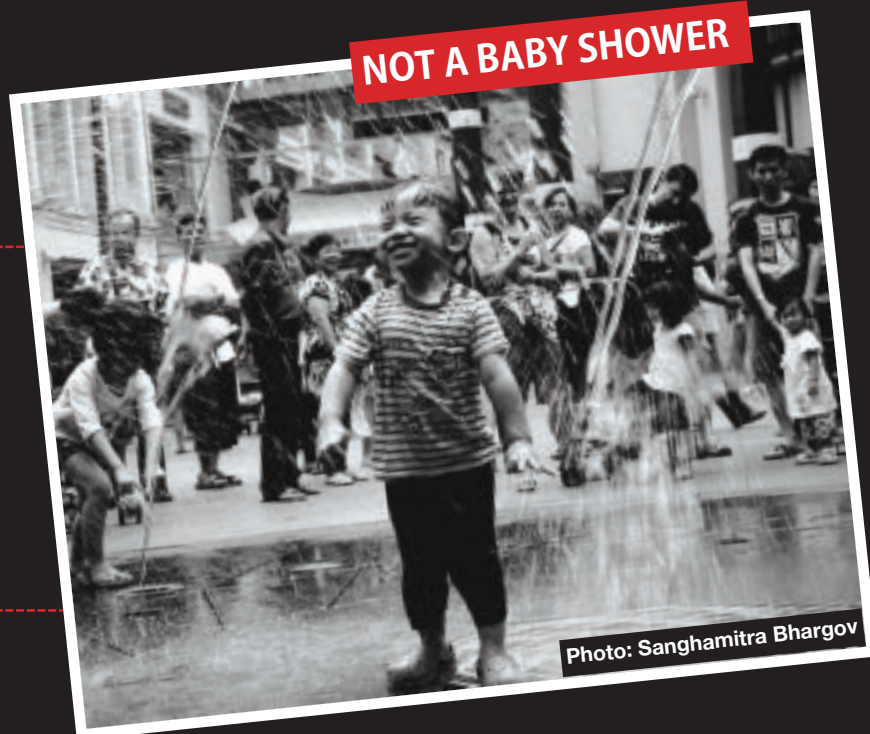


Photo: Sanghamitra Bhargov

Location- Guwahati
Time - 3 pm
Reason- Monsoon Festival
Okay, I arrived on time.
Suddenly, Mom shouted...
Ankur, come out now,
else you will get sick.
But Ankur denied, he was
dancing on tunes of music and fountain.
And I clicked my picture perfect :)

LIGHTEN OUR DARKNESS



Photo: Arpan Kalita

Last Diwali,
While decorating our home.
Me: What are you doing didi?
Sis : Can't you see, I am
lightening diyas?
Me: Why is it needed?
Sis: Just to Welcome Goddess
Laxmi :)
Me: Then, if she comes here.
we will get financial blessing.
Sis: Hehe, you are still a kid.
But, yes you are right to some
extent :P

MOHE RANG DE



Photo: Arup Jyoti Kalita

Last year, I can remember all the fun,
During Sindur Khela,
Still I can recoll everything..
Escaping myself and my camera from
vermilion.
(Sindur Khela is an event of Dashami
of married women where they pray to
the goddess with vermilion, betel leaf,
sweets and smearing each other with
sindur to bid farewell to the Devi.)

Text: Mritunjay Kumar

I will bounce back, says Remo

The Indian Fusion artist and playback singer in a candid interview with **Meghna Agarwal** shares his optimism.

Luís Remo de Maria Bernardo Fernandes, more popularly known as Remo Fernandes, the pop/rock/Indian fusion artist and playback singer from Goa, who swayed the nation with his hummable numbers such as Pyarr to Hona Hi Taa...., A R Rahman's Humma Humma....and O Meri Munnni, munnni munnni baby.....says lot of industry people think that he is finished but he is not. He is still up and active in the music industry.

"It hurts me to say that a lot of industry people think that I am finished. One of my contemporary singers had spread this rumor that Remo is finished, but I am not," Remo Fernandes said.

Remo's personal life has gone through a rough patch in recent times. "I and my wife divorced 3 years back," he said. Remo's two sons are musically inclined but are not in the music industry. "They do create compositions of their own," Remo said about his two sons who have chosen fields other than music as their career.

Since his band met a tragic death in a road accident in the year 2000, he has been low key on the music scene to which he reverts, "I plan to release one new album before the end of this year." Remo is currently recording an album of songs which he had composed during his high school days.

Remo, a native of Goa, has got the chance to do his first Goan film only recently. "I

have done music for a Goan film 'O Maria' in December 2010 for the first time. I asked the director as to why didn't he offer me a Goan film all these years and he said that he thought I'll be too pricey," muses Remo.

Remo keeps himself occupied with stage shows in and outside India, "I perform outside India at least 3-4 times in the year. I have performed in Dubai, Egypt and Europe. I have performed with Jethro Tull (English singer) in Dubai. In Europe the people are very interested in knowing the different cultures. Even if they do not understand the language or even do not know the artist's name, they'll go and listen," Remo said.

"My first Konkani album (which includes a song with Alish Chinai) was released in

Luis Remo de Maria Bernardo Fernandes

Japan. Imagine Japanese listening to a Konkani song! They have no connection with the Konkani language but still they may enjoy the music that is different to their own," he added.

Music reflects people's culture, its richness, their past. "I myself have been interested in all kinds of music. "I would love to listen to hear to an African rhythm. I would be so interested in listening to sitar and tabla which I don't play," he says. Remo's favourite music instruments happen to be guitar and flute which he calls as husband and wife.

Only the big cities earlier enjoyed the pop and Indo-western songs. But slowly the other smaller cities are also picking up the trend. "Different trends come and go in music. Right now it is the rock trend that has come into Bollywood," Remo said.

The 1953 born artist became popular largely with the growing, English educated, Indian middle class. A popular stage performer, he has also taken part in many music festivals around the world. He writes and sings his songs in five different languages, English, Hindi, French, Portuguese, and Konkani.

Remo recalls the period of late 80s and early 90s, which he calls the glorious years of Indian pop when lot of independent artists like Lucky Ali and me and bands like Euphoria and Silk Route were making their own music and releasing it. "But most of them went into full time Bollywood for fame and

money," he said.

Remo seems to dislike the importance Bollywood is given in India. "There is nothing except and beyond Bollywood for us. Bollywood is a dragon who is eating up all the art forms. Once I was performing for an international games meet in India, and next to the PM, instead of any sportsperson, the guest of honor was Amitabh Bachchan. Similarly for a music awards function (organized by an Indian organization) at Albert Hall, England, all Bollywood stars were present who had nothing to do with music," he added.

"The attention to Bollywood stars is too much. From diamonds to VIP briefs, they are advertising for anything and everything," Remo added.

Remo's musical work is a fusion of many different cultures and styles he's been exposed to as a child in Goa and in his later travels around the world. Writing and singing songs in English made his success more distinctive in the context of the Bollywood dominated, Hindi language based, disco music scene that was popular in the 80s and 90s.

A strong believer in the idiom that God helps those who help themselves says, "I am a self made man. My father taught me the first chord of music. Music companies said no to me because I composed in English. They said it will not work in India. But I believed that they were wrong because my songs maybe in the English language but they were after all about India," he said.

Remo at that time bought a cassette recorder from his savings and recorded a cassette of his compositions. He made 1000 copies of the same and went to Mumbai and distributed 5 cassettes each to all the shops. The same year Shyam Benegal (movie: Trikaal) and Gul Anand (movie: Jalwa) separately came to Goa and picked up his cassette from the shops. And Remo ended up working for both of them.

After a lifetime in the music, Remo still doesn't feel that he is a good teacher of music. "Just because you are a good artist doesn't mean you are a good teacher as well. Teaching is a different art altogether. Though it has become common that every artist ends up opening an institute," he said.

Remo who has made his own mark in life dreams of becoming a music director in the near future. "I see myself as a music director but not in the mainstream Bollywood, maybe off-stream and regional cinema," he ends.

Most popular songs of Remo

O meri munnii (Album)
Signal (Bhagam Bhag)
Pyar to hona hi tha
(Pyar To Hona Hi Tha)
Aflatoon (Aflatoon)
O mariya (Dil Hi Dil Mein)





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Anirban Banerjee

My father believed that once we act after contemplation, there should be no room for dithering. Any action whose course is frequently altered will lead to confusion.

Decisive Action drives progress

Procrastination leads to paralysis in decision making. Downfall is a result of inability to act decisively at the right hour. My father used to say words have no meaning unless translated in to action and actions are of no use if they are not on time. Action has to be planned, analyzed and thought through. They need to be aligned to definite objective and implemented at right time. My father believed that once we act after contemplation, there should be no room for dithering. Any action whose course is frequently altered will lead to confusion. Most managers actually spend a lot of time in “doing” things rather than acting decisively. Most managers feel that decision is something that the upper echelons of the organizational alone are responsible for. This only leads to erosion of stakes amongst the team mates and more importantly a breakdown of ‘DNA of action process’ chain. Managers look at daily activity or tasks as uneventful. By overlooking small mistakes or underrating the importance of such works, people lose a sense of urgency. Its outcome is mediocrity and a feeling of disengagement. My father felt that small actions are equally critical to the ‘DNA of action process’ chain and the key to the overall success of initiative.

Managers get incapacitated when this critical link breaks down and they fail to take decisive action. Managers acting decisively will be seen as more action oriented leaders rather than adopting a top down approach. Decisiveness requires a lot of work - analyzing options, contingency plan and calculating gains. Decisive action calls for optimal utilization of four other factors namely time, data, people and outcome. To act decisively managers

will need to be more hands on the process, significantly enhance ability to understand and analysis before taking a decision. Most critical decision needs a leader with high morale and ability to be with the team through the rough patches.

Decisive decision also calls for earning respect from the team and involving them in getting inputs for taking such action. Action requires courage, will to do service and the ability lead the team. Decisive action takers are leaders who help to nurture talent and help the organization to maneuver through difficult times. Decisive action is the key to endurance. Some decisions go down as commonplace as some actions as turning points in history, as they go beyond the call of duty as are reflective of highest level of involvement.

My father was a great admirer of Field Marshal SHFJ Manekshaw, one of India’s greatest military commanders, who led India to victory in the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War. His leadership was always an embodiment of decisive action at every step. My father, who served in the Indian Air Force, always liked decisive action and initiated me into the same. It’s important to remember action is more powerful than words. We need to demonstrate our intent through our actions.

(The author can be reached at knowledgecell@gmail.com)



Late R.N. Banerjee

By Sabbir Hussain





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WRITE TO US

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“Education in India a way forward” by Mr.M.kumar is a praiseworthy one. It is full of information but analytical blend is absent. Following points like Impact of private participation in Indian primary as well as secondary education, Quality of Technical education in privately run Institutions; impact of proposed entry of foreign universities in Indian education system could be incorporated. I think these issues are burning and needs to be addressed to frame a comprehensive education policy.

Dr. P.P.Sengupta, Professor, Dept of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology, Durgapur.

Editorial article “Jyotirgamayo” by Kanchan Banerjee had touched my heart. According to Vivekananda “ Education is the manifestation of Perfection already in man”, but we forget his sayings in this era of commercialisation of education in India. Education should be such which can create an atmosphere where people live with rich inner world, in harmony with others and with an acceptable level of morality. India in the ancient time showed the way of that educational system, but rampant commercialisation of education & establishing institutions without adequate infrastructure had jeopardised the whole system. This article is really an eye-opener.

Dr. Saibal Bhattacharya, Renowned Orthopaedic Surgeon, Kolkata.

Foundation of CDPS is a remarkable event in the field of Bengal's intellectual arena. In west there is a rich history of policy research institutes in formulating Government policies, but in India it is rare. I hope CDPS will work without any political inclination and add constructively for “Resurgent Bengal”.

*Mr. Anirban Ghosh
Managing Director of INFOSOL
(First Generation Entrepreneur)*

“The Boom of online Education” by Prof. V.N.Rajasekhran is indeed a contemporary article. Some of the top notch educational institutions like IITs & IIMs are using this methods. E-Books, online libraries etc have revolutionised the sphere of education. But we must not forget about the presence of different online universities (specially based in

USA & Canada) those are luring students to offer degrees which are not acceptable by Government organizations/ big multinational companies. There must be a monitoring system to avoid this type of activities.

*Mr.Aloke Mandal, IT Professional,
Pinnacle InfoTech (P) Ltd.*

To me, NGI is more than just a knowledge exchange magazine. It is Development Journalism at its best. I have been following the magazine and its content over the past few months and each time it is surely proving that it is improving itself to justify its reader's taste buds! At a time when it is always so challenging to find time to read anything apart from browsing the daily News paper for a few minutes, this magazine in all its sleekness have successfully tried and tasted me as I look forward to the next issue in earnest. In this fast paced chattering of the media jungle, where ratings does not last more than an instant, I can safely term NGI as providing one potential forum to connect a certain thinking segment of readers which can only increase with time as it serves the need of the hour for any Global citizen of the world. Just to wish more out of the NGI is, firstly to resist haste, as a few print errors have been noticed(Sept issue-pg no.) and secondly, could do with a little more of publicity for itself.

*Anuradha Deb, Associate Professor
Whistling Woods International*

I want to thank NGI (author), for a very good write-up and very nice reproductions of my paintings (since I'm not very lucky when people publish my colours - with you I'm happily surprised).

Aparna Caur, New Delhi

I have been through the magazine for the 1st time. The content part is excellent of NGI Sept. A very good depth on the content. This issue has covered all the aspects of anti-corruption movement and also taken care of literature, Industries, Education, Entertainment, Arts etc. A very good knowledge sharing magazine. While it's an International Magazine so it's an advice to work out more on the graphical representation of the magazine as well to play more with the fonts and designs.

Anuj Jain, Mumbai



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