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Gaurav Bhatia,
MD, Sotheby's India,
with wife, Pratima, at
their Mumbai home

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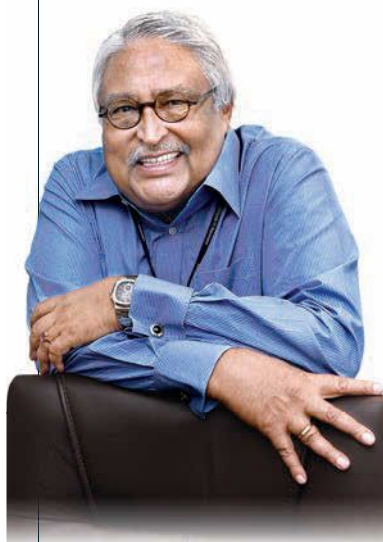
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Letter from the Editor

A FORTNIGHT AGO, my elder brother Mammen Mathew delivered the introductory speech at the birth centenary celebration of our uncle, P.C. Cherian. One among the many memories that he shared was about him accompanying uncle to what was then Hornby Road, now Dadabhai Naoroji Road. At dusk, the road would be taken over by vendors of smuggled goods. If somebody wanted something special, that is where you went. And, I don't mean fancy stuff, but even something as simple as a classy diary!

As **THE WEEK** brings out the annual luxury special, I am amazed at how far India has come. What used to be luxury goods are now freely available in stores countrywide. And, this transparency has almost wiped out the trade in contraband in those sectors. The wide penetration of luxury goods has only fattened the government's coffers, I am sure.

But, something that confuses me is the standardisation debate. Not so long ago, the understanding was that individual processes were producing a wide range in quality. So, the pundits said that there should be a standardisation in production, which in turn would lead to a standardisation in quality. Today, anything standardised is seen as run-of-the-mill. And, the customised is seen as being exclusive. To me, this is much like Kekule's snake swallowing its tail. German designer Karl Lagerfeld said trendy is the last stop before tacky. The trick is to know when to get off the train, I guess.

THE WEEK's theme for this issue is 'Sophisticated Simplicity'. The phrase does sound like an oxymoron. Sophistication does denote a certain complexity and to hitch it to simplicity

seems odd. I am recovering from an eye surgery and most of my reading is done on my two portable iOS devices. There can be no greater example for sophisticated simplicity than these devices. They are complex inside, no doubt. But, quite simple on the outside.

Simplicity itself is a collective choice, I feel. When I think about my father and his friends, I remember them dressed only in whites or ivories. Irrespective of financial status, this simplicity united them. I am compelled to juxtapose this image with that of sapeurs from the Congos. Living in impoverished and conflict-ridden circumstances, these men turn the streets of Kinshasa and Brazzaville into a fashion runway when they step out. These otherwise simple men turn into dandies wearing three-piece suits, pocket squares, hats and natty shoes. It is a bit of a competition.

But, why sapeurs? Journalists say that this provides them with a welcome change from an otherwise pedestrian and dangerous life. So, perhaps, sophisticated simplicity can bloom only in peace and tranquillity. Like those gardens in Japanese Buddhist temples.

I'll stop with a joke that is doing the rounds in the newsroom. Desk jockeys are an irreverent lot and they say that sophisticated simplicity is trending in India because no one has money post-demonetisation. Actually, as a history student I agree that political decisions do influence fashion and decor. During WWII, fabric was in short supply, so hemlines rose and embellishments almost disappeared from women's clothing.

Sometimes you choose your style, sometimes you have it forced upon you!

Philip Mathew,

Philip Mathew

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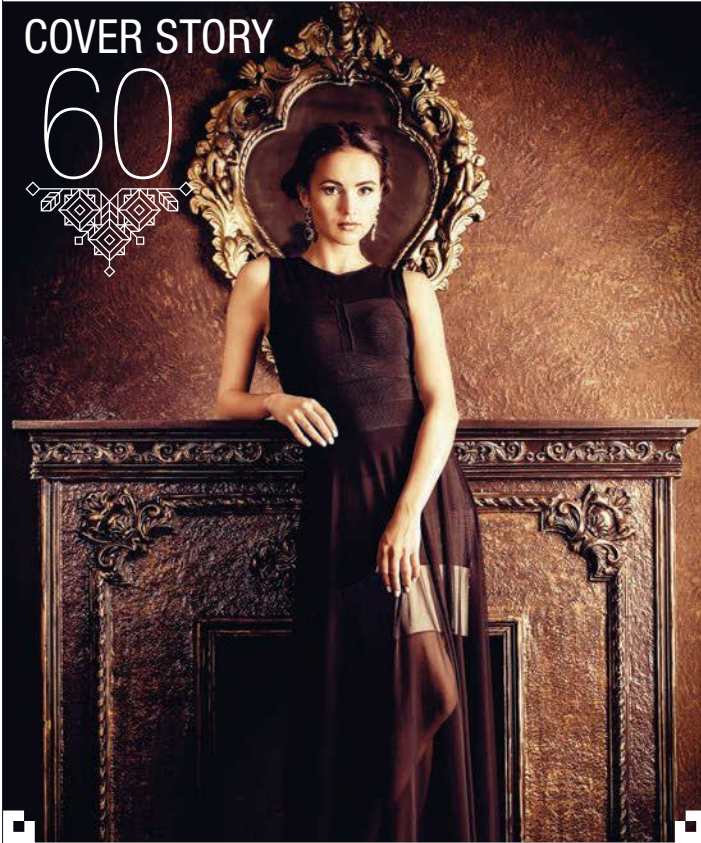
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CONTENTS

FOR THE WEEK MARCH 13-MARCH 19

COVER STORY

60



SUAVE AND SENSIBLE

Luxury Special 2017: Gone are the days of opulence and outlandish display of wealth. What the new-age luxury spender seeks is simple, ethical and creative experiences, be it in travel, fashion, homes or dining. THE WEEK looks at the growing trend of self-enrichment in luxury

COLUMNS

16 **Power point**
Sachidananda Murthy

20 **Candid talk**
Vinod Rai

40 **Mani-festo**
Mani Shankar Aiyar

99 **Track change**
Ashwini Nachappa

108 **Schizo-nation**
Anuja Chauhan

112 **Everyone is a camera**
Bose Krishnamachari

116 **Last word**
Nandita Das



22 **Current events:**
Blinded by police pellets during last summer's uprising, hundreds of Kashmiri youth struggle to get back to life

26 **Parliament:**
The existential crisis faced by the Parliament building

34 **Aadhaar:** Aadhaar promises to make things easier, but for a price

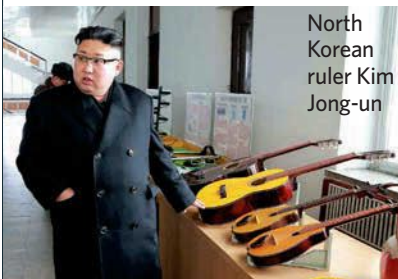
46 **Terror:** Pakistan seems to have given a silent burial to its investigation into the 26/11 Mumbai attacks



NEXT WEEK

Free Health Supplement
Dealing with sports and workout-related injuries

COVER DESIGN: **BINESH SREEDHARAN**
COVER PHOTO: **SANJOY GHOSH**



North Korean ruler Kim Jong-un

52 **INSIDE NORTH KOREA**
More than poverty, the urge for freedom is what drives the new-age North Korean defectors



96 **DAWN TO DUSK**
Meet Pranav Dhanawade, 16, who scored 1,009 runs and broke a world record



103 **@LEISURE:**
From vodka momos to momo burgers, the classic plain dumpling has many avatars

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LETTERS



GUESSING GAME

AKHILESH AND Dimple Yadav may have the charisma but I am not sure if it will translate into votes (UPwardly mobile', March 5). The BJP is in a very strong position in Uttar Pradesh. To defeat it comprehensively is not easy.

I feel all the parties in UP are insecure at the moment.

The problem in the Samajwadi Party is that there are too many rebels. Differences between Akhilesh and his family members have been reported on several occasions.

The last minute alliance with the Congress added to the confusion in the minds of Akhilesh's supporters. It is all a guessing game now as to who will win the elections in UP. Akshay Nanda, Delhi.

THE MADE-FOR-EACH-OTHER personae of Akhilesh and Dimple provide a perfect amalgam of grit and grace in India's political firmament. If the SP-Congress

alliance in UP provides rich dividends, the stock of Akhilesh and Dimple would register a quantum jump in national politics.

With a bit too much of chivalrous patronage, Dimple gets more prominence in your cover story than the man who really matters.

Raveendranath A.,
On email.

DYNASTIES AND family politics are the bane of India's democracy. THE WEEK should not become an upholder of such unhealthy growth of dynasties in India. It pains me to see you give prominence to people like Akhilesh, Dimple and V.K. Sasikala. T.K.S. Nair,
On email.

IT SHOULD NOT surprise anyone if Akhilesh retains power in UP. People are going to vote for his work. A powerful Akhilesh in UP will encourage the educated and talented people across the country to jump into the political bandwagon—of one that opposes the BJP. The defeat of the BJP in UP will be a prelude to what will happen in 2019.

Ramesh Kotian,
Udupi, Karnataka.

YOUR COVER STORY on Mr and Mrs Yadav looked like paid news. There is nothing so great about Mr and Mrs Yadav. For them, what mattered, always, was the interest of their family rather than the interest of the public. People have not forgotten

the power tussle in the SP a few months ago. In 2013, Akhilesh and his government ignored the plight of the riot-affected people in Muzaffarnagar.

Giving undue coverage to people without any credibility at the grass roots makes one think that you only publish news opposite to the truth. R.L. Mauryan,
On email.

IT WILL be difficult for the SP to tackle a strong BJP and emerge as winner. It will be better for the people in UP if the BJP comes to power in the state. For them, the SP and the Bahujan Samaj Party are tried and tested formulae. It is time they went for a change. And I think they will this time. P.K. Kishore,
On email.

AKHILESH IS SURE to retain the post of the CM, should the SP be voted back to power. As he is largely seen as a clean leader and a performer, there is no reason why Akhilesh cannot play a major role in national politics if he is able to further increase his party's tally in the assembly elections. C.V. Aravind,
On email.

Real winners

VINOD RAI is right when he says that we ought to have given more importance to the Indian blind cricket team which won the world cup ('Sightless supermen', March 5). They definitely put more effort than Virat Kohli's

men to win the tournament. The commitment of these blind players to the game of cricket has few parallels. I am sure Kohli's men will get inspired by their effort.

Prahlad Gopal,
On email.

Ignore the media

I DOUBT if Donald Trump is facing as much resistance as is made out to be by the media ('Not my president', March 5). Americans have every right to choose their leader, and they did just that. Our dislike of Trump doesn't necessarily make him a weak and unpopular leader. Trump, on his part, should not give too much importance to journalists and news channels. He should realise that he is the president of the most powerful country in the world.

P.K. Tripathy,
On email.

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

The controversial dismissals of Virat Kohli and David Warner through the Decision Review System in the second Test between India and Australia has once again put the spotlight on the referral system.

Write an Open Letter in 200-250 words to the ICC on the need to reassess the Decision Review System, and stand a chance to win an Amazon gift voucher worth Rs 500. Send your entries to youzone@theweek. in with OPEN LETTER as the subject..

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LETTERS

Uphold dignity

SANJAYA BARU'S Last Word (February 26) was interesting. Our parliamentarians exchange unparliamentary words in Parliament, whereas they are expected to interact in a decent and sober manner.

Winston Churchill, the former prime minister of Great Britain, described a politician thus: 'A politician needs the ability to foretell what is going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month and

next year. And to have the ability afterwards to explain why it didn't happen.' This is more true in the case of Indian politicians who often indulge in false promises which they never intend to fulfil. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, 'The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.' But this seems to be a distant dream. **Surinder Pal,**
On email.

PRIZE-WINNING LETTER

Open Letter to Reliance Chairman Mukesh Ambani on the Jio tariff plan from April 1

Dear Mukeshji,
To say that Reliance Jio has taken the world of communication by storm would be an understatement. By offering a whole gamut of free services, albeit for a pre-notified length of time, you set the cat among the pigeons and created ripples in the market, leaving your rivals reeling under the impact and buckling under, unable to offer competitive pricing. And now, having captured a sizeable portion of the market, you have priced some of your products, effective from April 1. You announced that the tariff would be much lower than what is prevalent in the market, which, in simple parlance, means that the undercutting will continue and the pressure on the other providers will be maintained. It goes without saying

that unless they too scale down their rates, they might well be forced out of the market and Jio, true to its name, will be in a position to rule the waves. This are happy tidings for all users as they would stand to benefit from the price war and can choose the provider who is able to provide a slew of services for the least price. A conglomerate like yours can easily withstand the rigours of the marketplace and this places you at a distinct advantage as compared to your rivals. Jio has revolutionised the communications industry and I am certain that with your business acumen you might well be having several more aces up your sleeve. So, good luck and godspeed. Jio aur jeete raho. **Vijayalakshmi Aravind,**
Bengaluru.

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APERITIF



THE LAST PORT OF CALL || A Navy personnel and his wife pose for pictures on the flight deck of INS Viraat, anchored in the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai. On March 6, the world's oldest aircraft carrier in service was decommissioned. It had served the British Royal Navy for 25 years and the Indian Navy for close to 30 years.

PHOTO BY AMEY MANSABDAR

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Rahul Gandhi is my boss. He is the vice president of the party. He is above me and Priyanka Gandhi. Everything in Uttar Pradesh happened under his supervision. Alliance and distribution of the work, both.
GHULAM NABI AZAD—Congress leader

I read today someone wants to make Delhi into London. I wish them well but let them make the city what it was 20 years ago, before they decide to make it London.
P. CHIDAMBARAM—Former Union finance minister, on Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's statement

Why still single, they ask? Why not, I answer. I am secure in my choice and in being so I can respect and appreciate another's choice... whatever it may be. After all, singles or doubles, we play to win.
SUSHMITA SEN—Actor



The growth and prosperity of the BJP from two seats to where it reached, if not wholly and solely, has been mostly because of Advani's contribution and leadership.

SHATRUGHAN SINHA—BJP leader

Couldn't he get a girl to marry? And if not, then there are so many poor people. He could have adopted two or four. It looks as if he is mocking the poor.

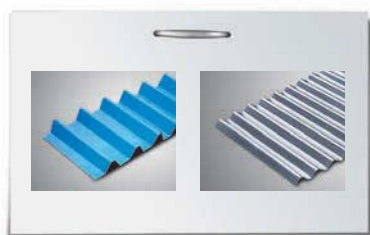
ABU AZMI—Samajwadi Party leader, after film director Karan Johar became a single parent to twins through surrogacy

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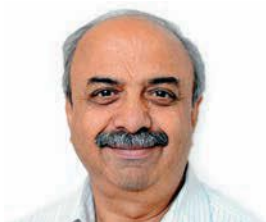
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power point • **Sachidananda Murthy**

The Aadhaar ace

P rime Minister Narendra Modi is convinced that the linking of government benefits to Aadhaar holders is the only way ahead. Take the recent controversy about schoolchildren being denied their daily food because they lacked the unique, biometrics-based, identity number. The government has clarified that food can be served based on alternate identification which satisfies school officials. But, young scholars must get their retina and fingerprint scans done. Same goes for beneficiaries of schemes under the integrated child development scheme, where also Aadhaar-less children were denied benefits.

Modi and his team think the battle is almost won. The government insists that 112 crore out of a population of 125 crore have already enrolled and linked their identity number for bank accounts, LPG connections, ration food, fertiliser subsidies, scholarship schemes, wages under NREGA, pensions and other entitlements.

Modi has asked Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad to go into overdrive to ensure last mile connectivity. According to the prime minister, there has been a saving of ₹49,000 crore, as Aadhaar has eliminated bogus beneficiaries.

But, critics are bracing for a big fight in the Supreme Court on the constitutional fairness of Aadhaar, saying the extensive collection and indiscriminate use of biometric and other personal data is a serious assault on privacy. As private

telecom operators are using Aadhaar as the basis for providing SIM cards, the activists say this is nothing but humungous identity theft. While individual citizens give their Aadhaar details for availing services in public and private sector, the critics are also sceptical of the government's ability to keep the data safe from foreign governments and commercial predators.

The Unique Identification Authority of India is on an explanation spree that biometric data is safe in its servers and only confirms matching of details of individu-

als without revealing the retina image or fingerprints stored. But, the ultimate test is in the apex court. The court has been hearing challenges to Aadhaar ever since technology czar Nandan Nilekani was invited by prime minister Manmohan

Singh in 2009 to develop the unique identity number.

After facing political challenges from the P. Chidambaram-headed home ministry, which felt its National Population Register was a safer and better identification system, Nilekani had pushed hard for boosting the registration. The Supreme Court had not been happy that the scheme lacked legislative backing and said only Parliament can provide legal safeguards. The law became a reality. An initially sceptical Modi embraced Aadhaar with the zeal of a new convert.

Far from the legal battles, the government has assured that no school kid will go hungry. But, it also warns the kid to promptly get an Aadhaar card.

sachi@theweek.in



BHASKARAN

WORD PLAY

Diplomat George W. Ball said nostalgia was a seductive liar. Two parts: the seduction and the lie. **Fauxtalgia** deals with the lie. A portmanteau of faux and nostalgia, the word is defined as "faking old things in an attempt to recapture the feeling of times gone past, especially of technology that has passed".

Examples abound. Digitally adding the crackle of vinyl and the hiss of tapes to a current sound track is one. Fauxtalgia apps are a must for cell-phone photographers. With over four million downloads, Hipstamatic is, perhaps, the most popular example. In India, Paper Boat drinks are liquid fauxtalgia. You know it's not the real thing, but, still,... the seduction.

Why does **nostalgia marketing** work? Because we are anxious about today and tomorrow. Yesterday is predictable. So, we want the old to be the new.

MILESTONES

► **Steep decline:** Brazil's economy contracted by 3.6 per cent in 2016, signalling that the country has been in recession for two years. Around 1.3 crore people are unemployed now.

► **Twin eyes:** The EU's Copernicus environmental monitoring programme received a boost with the launch of Sentinel-2B satellite. It joins Sentinel-2A, already in orbit. The duo will fly on the same path, but 180 degrees apart, and provide a complete map of the earth every five days.

► **Zoo poachers:** A four-year-old rhino was shot dead in Thoiry zoo, near Paris. The poachers then sliced off its horn with a chainsaw. The incident is considered to be the first of its kind in Europe.

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APERITIF party snacks

AGE OF ANXIETY

Age is just a number, but not if your political future depends on it. With the BJP denying tickets to people above 75, former Karnataka chief minister B.S. Yeddyurappa, who will lead the party in the 2018 assembly elections, seems to be jittery. He would complete 75 years next February.

This year, on February 27, he had a low-key birthday celebration, apparently because there was a drought in the state. Moreover, some of Yeddyurappa's followers were asked to correctly mention his age—74—when they insisted on having banners, posters and advertisements to greet him.



ILLUSTRATIONS: JAIRAJ T.G.

Bother tongue

The BJP government in Assam wants to reintroduce Sanskrit in schools, up to the eighth class. However, the Congress has objected, saying the government is furthering RSS's agenda. It said introduction of Sanskrit would overburden the students. Interestingly, it was Education Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, a Congress leader till 2015, who came up with the idea. "He was like this earlier also," said a senior Congress leader. "But, we did not know then."

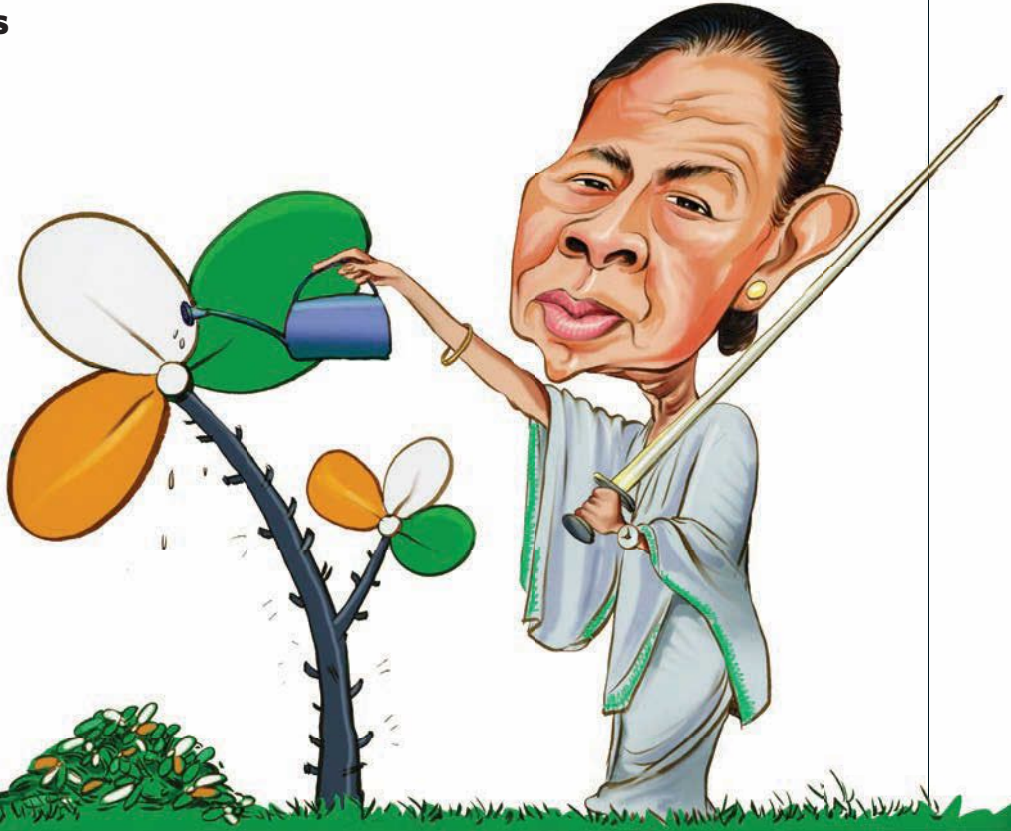


Home guard

After activist Teesta Setalvad's file went missing from the well-guarded corridors of the Union home ministry last year, the ministry isn't taking any chances. It has brought in an official, who earlier handled important departments in the defence ministry, to take charge of the daily functioning of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act division, which deals with foreign-funded NGOs.

Trinamoolah leaders

Trinamool Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee has asked her district leaders not to construct party offices without prior permission from the state leadership. Moreover, when she came to know about her party's multiple bank accounts, the Bengal chief minister told her leaders to close all except one. The Enforcement Directorate had recently sought information related to the party's bank accounts, and this seems to be the reason for Banerjee's decision. "Coming to power for the first time, the leaders went berserk and were in a mood to enjoy," said a Trinamool leader. "Now, Didi wants to put a cap on it."



Summer bummer

Chief Justice J.S. Khehar has ensured that the Supreme Court's summer vacation—May 11 to July 2—will be an unusually busy time. He has listed many hearings during the period, including the petition challenging triple talaq, the matter regarding guidelines for regulating WhatsApp, and a case pertaining to illegal migration into Assam. Apparently, several senior lawyers have had to cancel their vacation plans to cope with the workload.

Powerless minister

Piyush Goyal seems to have an "on and off" relationship with power. Recently, while the Union power minister was speaking at a news conference in Varanasi, the lights went out, which prompted him to attack Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav for poor electricity supply. This was, interestingly, the second time this had happened to Goyal. Last May, the lights had gone out at a news conference while he was making a presentation on how to reduce power cuts.

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The Editor,
The Week,
Manorama Buildings,
P.B. No. 4278, Kochi,
682036, Kerala, India.
They must include the
name, address and
telephone number
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0484-4447888

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Office**
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candid talk • Vinod Rai

Hold the corporator accountable

An election which was being watched with great expectancy and interest has just been completed. I am not so concerned with the party which will be catapulted to power. My concern is more with the expectations of the people from the elected corporators. I am referring to the elections to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation.

Why this great interest in the corporation election? The warring factions of saffron or blue or pink aside, the corporator is the one who is the closest to any household. He is the one who is meant to monitor civic amenities in his ward. He becomes a functionary of the civic general body which takes all major decisions regarding the administration of the corporation.

They are inducted into committees which oversee specific functions such as finances, primary health, education, environment, public works, drainage, mosquito menace and solid waste disposal. Each of these functions directly impacts the day-to-day life of the common man. The BMC's budget is larger than certain state budgets. It is thus only natural that the citizen expects them to provide good governance and transparent administration.

By the 74th amendment to the Indian Constitution, urban local bodies such as corporations enjoy a great degree of fiscal autonomy and get to deal directly with the state government and not through the director of municipal administration as do municipalities. These corporations are divided into wards and each ward has a corporator representing it. In large corporations such as the BMC, each corporator has

access to ₹1 crore in the form of an infrastructure fund and a discretionary fund of ₹60 lakh.

The moot question is: does the corporator ever take any of these responsibilities seriously and does he have any accountability? Does he ever feel that he has been elected to ensure the welfare of the citizens? Amenities in corporations, all over the country, have become pathetic. Footpaths have been taken over by encroachers or by residents themselves. Drains are clogged more often than not. Before every monsoon, money appears to have been spent for desilting of drains, but waterlogging continues.

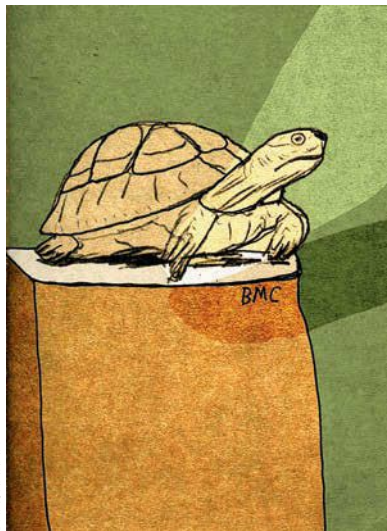
The biggest failure of the urban local bodies has been in garbage removal and treatment. The philosophy behind the 74th amendment was public participation in issues which were essential for citizens. It was expected that there would be better vigilance on budgeting, planning and

execution of schemes, and that high priority projects would be taken up at the earliest. The elected persons were expected to be able to reflect the societal requirements better. As such, elected corporators have a social obligation which they have volunteered to fulfil by virtue of their desire to stand for election.

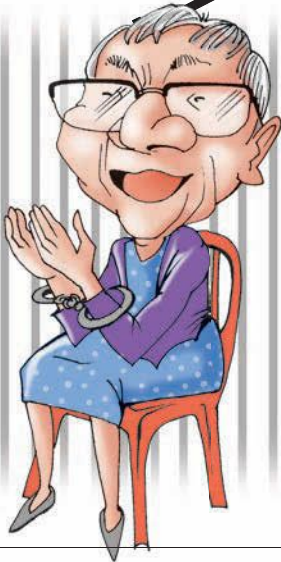
My concern is with the role that the elected persons discharge and to what extent they can be held accountable. If there are encroachments on footpaths or garbage disposal is not taking place, it is incumbent upon the corporator to pull up the official machinery and be accountable to the people. Does this happen and to what extent is the corporator able to stem the rot in the official machinery? The moot question is: does he make the machinery more effective and accountable or does he get submerged in the self-serving bureaucracy that plagues our municipal set-up?

Democracy is a great gift. Participative governance is the most effective form of ensuring that the priority of society gets addressed first, and that public money is expended most efficiently. Not many citizens in other countries have this wonderful opportunity. We are blessed to have it and it is fervently hoped that Mumbai corporators, whose average age is around 45, will stand up to the challenge and deliver an administration which addresses people's priorities and is responsive to their needs.

The BMC must become a model for other municipal administrations. **Former comptroller and auditor general, Rai is head of the Supreme Court-appointed BCCI's Committee of Administrators.**



BHASKARAN



JAILED JOY

This 99-year-old Dutch woman would probably be the cutest 'prisoner' in cuffs. Grandma Annie was 'arrested' after she told her niece that getting arrested was one of the items on her bucket list. Her niece then got in touch with the local police. Happy to help, the cops came home and took Annie into custody. Photos of Annie the granny, handcuffed and grinning from ear to ear, have gone viral on social media.



LOVE IN THE TIME OF LIME

Pick-up lines can be cheesy at times. Michael Nguyen of Georgia, United States, therefore, went sublime while asking out his classmate, Natalie Salguero. "He passed me a lime that had his number written on it," said Salguero. "I looked at him in confusion.... He then told me, 'It's my pick-up lime,' which led to me and everyone in the class laughing their asses off." It, however, ended on a sour note for Nguyen, who got friend-zoned by Salguero.

THEIR TRUE COLOURS

Two little boys in Kentucky, US, decided to get the same haircut to look alike and confuse their teacher. They thought it would be "hilarious". The only problem—one of them was white and the other was black.

Though the ploy failed, it was an inadvertent example of racial harmony that had the internet gushing over them. "If this isn't proof that hate and prejudice is something that is taught I don't know what is," said the mother of one of the children. "The only difference Jax sees in the two of them is their hair."



WINNING AT THEIR 'OWN' RISK

Usually, an own goal is a cardinal sin. A hockey team in Russia, however, scored a multitude of sins, just to avoid playing the reigning champions in the next round. The game was goalless with 22 minutes to go, when Vodnik player Oleg Pivovarov netted three own goals. He went on to score eight more self goals. The opposition, not to be outdone, joined in the "fun" with nine own goals. Unsurprisingly, both teams are facing disciplinary action.

CURRENT EVENTS

New beginnings:
Insha Mushtaq Lone
with her mother
before leaving for
school on March 2

Insha! Allah!

Blinded by police pellets
during last summer's uprising,
hundreds of Kashmiri youth
struggle to get back to life

BY TARIQ BHAT

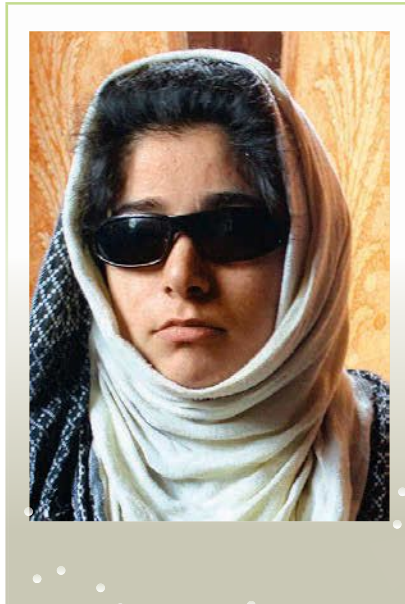


On March 2, a day after schools reopened in Kashmir, 15-year-old Insha Mushtaq Lone packed her school bag and walked to the bus stop accompanied by her cousin Bisma. Insha was eager to meet her friends after nearly eight months when schools remained shut in Kashmir owing to unrest and a harsh winter. Last year, she became the face of Kashmir's pellet horror; she was blinded in both eyes after being hit by pellets when she peered through a small window on the ground floor of her home in Sedwo in Shopian district. She was one among hundreds of youths blinded when security forces fired hundreds of thousands of lead-coated metal ball pellets to quell a summer uprising sparked off by the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Muzaffar Wani in Kokernag, Anantnag, on July 8.

Insha's face became a symbol for human rights activists across the globe against the use of pellets in Kashmir. Her eyes were operated upon six times in Srinagar and Delhi, but her sight could not be restored.

On March 1, Insha begged her parents to take her to school, but they refused. "We tried to make her understand that she would find it difficult, but she insisted," said her father, Mushtaq Lone. He then asked the school authorities if Insha could attend classes. They agreed and Insha was thrilled.

As she walked out of her home with her parents, holding her school bag, her relatives and neighbours were in tears. She walked towards the



I want to ask Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti why she ruined our lives. I wasn't even protesting.

Shabrooz Mir, class XI student

school bus holding Bisma's hand, and was greeted cheerily by the bus driver and her friends.

Like Insha, class XI student Shabrooz Mir, too, is a victim of pelleting. Injured in October 2016, she is yet to come to terms with her grim situation. After staying indoors for most of winter, she ventured into the courtyard of her home in Rahmoo in Pulwama district only last month when the weather improved. "But she stumbled and hurt herself," said her mother, Rafiq.

Upon my arrival at their house, her brother, Khursheed Mir, escorted her from elsewhere in the house to a ground floor room. She pulled her *pheran* (a woollen cloak traditionally worn in Kashmir) over her knees and placed her hands on them. "I was at home alone when I heard police firing and I was terrified," said Shabrooz. "I rushed to my neighbour's house and was hit by a burst of pellets on the way. I want to ask Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti why she ruined our lives. I wasn't even protesting," she said, her voice choking.

Many other students who met the same fate managed to appear for their annual exams with the aid of a helper, but Shabrooz could not. "When I try to read, it hurts," she says. Like most pellet victims, she wears goggles to shield her eyes from dust, wind and smoke. She is blind in her right eye as the retina and optic nerve have been damaged beyond repair. She has some vision in her left eye, which will soon be operated upon for the third time. "If the next surgery is successful, I will get back to studying," says Shabrooz, whose friends visit her regularly.



I only see a blurred image when I look at a book or newspaper

Ifra Shakoora, class VII student

CURRENT EVENTS

Rafiq said her daughter did well at school and lent a helping hand at home. She would often hang clothes out to dry in the courtyard. "Now, she needs help with everything," she said. "Even when she takes a bath." Khursheed helps her comb her hair.

Shabrooz's neighbour, class VII student Ifra Shakoor, too, was hit by pellets the same day. Sitting alone in the courtyard of her home, Ifra seemed lost in thought. Her grandfather Abdul Aziz Dar called out to her and Ifra stood up and took a few steps in his direction, straining her neck forward and darting her eyes from side to side to see the strangers accompanying him.

One lens of her glasses is thicker than the other. Pointing towards Dar and her stepfather Abdul Gani, Ifra said she hated her family. Dar said her behaviour changed after she became visually impaired; doctors attribute it to post traumatic stress disorder.

Ifra, too, couldn't appear for her annual exams. "I only see a blurred image when I look at a book or newspaper," said Ifra, who was injured when she went looking for her younger brother, Yasir Shakoor, during the protests. "I heard cries and rushed outside to look for him. Some boys were fleeing and I thought Yasir was among them. Then, I heard a bang and was hit by pellets." They tore through the retina and optic nerve of her right eye, rendering it blind; she has regained some vision in her left eye after two surgeries.

When she was 10 years old, Ifra's father was killed in a militant ambush. Dar then persuaded



her mother to remarry. "I have a pacemaker," said Dar. "How long will I live for, and who will take care of Ifra after my death?" Most of his earnings were spent on her treatment.

Across the road from where Ifra was hit, class XII student Zahoor Ahmed Dar, too, suffered the same fate. Zahoor's right eye is blind; he has undergone three surgeries in his left eye which has less than 40 per cent vision. A fourth surgery is due soon. He was keen on appearing for his annual exams after the government announced a reduction in syllabus in the aftermath of the uprising, but was unable to do so. "At the moment, I cannot read," said Zahoor. "If I try to, my eyes feel strained and well up with tears. I cannot see with my right eye and the left one hurts if I strain it. Hence, I could not prepare for the exams." If the fourth surgery is successful, Zahoor said he would go back to school. His father, Muhammad Sultan, was hopeful. "As of now, someone is always around to assist him," said Muhammad. "We hope he gets enough vision to be independent."

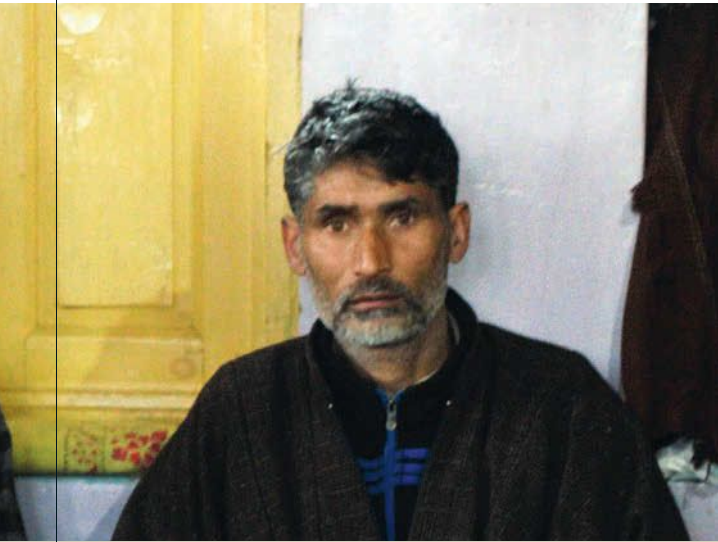
Said Ghulam Qadir, a neighbour who was visiting Zahoor: "In 2015, I voted for the Peoples Democratic Party because, in 2010, the National Conference killed people like animals. The PDP, however, has not only killed our children but also blinded them, which is probably worse than death."

Some of those injured by pellets have been fortunate to be treated at speciality eye hospitals. Sheikh Muneer, a teenager from Baramulla,



I don't need any mercy or help. I will work harder than before. My job is my passion and I will not trade it for anything. Allah will help me.

Zuhaib Maqbool,
photojournalist



Pelleted into darkness: Zahoor Ahmed Dar with his father Muhammad Sultan

regained partial vision in one eye after three surgeries at a hospital in Hyderabad. The other eye has double vision. He cannot see clearly but manages without support. He used to drive and work at his uncle's shop, but not anymore. His mother, Misra Akhtar, was content that Muneer had regained some vision. "We had lost all hope until we went to Hyderabad," she said. "He is under treatment and we hope his vision further improves."



Danish Rajab Jhat, a teenager blinded in both eyes

Doctors at the Shri Maharaja Hari Singh Hospital in Srinagar were so horrified by Danish's condition that they were initially reluctant to treat him.

At Rainawari, in downtown Srinagar, another teenager's family was raising money to travel to Hyderabad for surgery. Danish Rajab Jhat was blinded in both eyes. His neighbour Imtiyaz Ahmed, who, along with some others, took Danish to hospital when he was injured, said that doctors at the Shri Maharaja Hari Singh Hospital in Srinagar were so horrified by his condition that they were initially reluctant to treat him. Then, a doctor began removing the pellets lodged in his right eye. According to Imtiyaz, more than 84 pellets were removed from his body. Danish was operated upon twice at the hospital and was then taken to Hyderabad for further eye surgery. All that, however, did not help restore his sight.

The day I went to his house, Danish had gone out to condole the death of a friend's father accompanied by another friend, who held his hand and guided him through the small iron gate of his house as he returned. He took a few steps inside and then scraped his right hand along the outer wall of the kitchen to the foyer. Removing his shoes, he entered a small sitting room where Zuhaib Maqbool, a photojournalist and Danish's friend and neighbour, was also present. In August last year, Zuhaib was hit by pellets while he was covering a protest in downtown Srinagar. Zuhaib was blinded in his left eye. Danish is annoyed by the presence of unfamiliar visitors. "Why do you bring people here?" he asks Zuhaib with a smile.

Danish was hit by pellets on July 17, nine days after Wani's death, when he went to buy groceries after the day's curfew was lifted. "He was returning home when a police vehicle chasing some protesters fired a volley of pellets in his direction," said his father, Muhammad Rajab.

Sitting cross-legged, Danish said he was now learning to use a mobile phone unassisted. A voluntary help group trains him in various skills. Like Danish, Zuhaib, too, is keen on resuming work and overcoming his problems. "I don't need any mercy or help," said Zuhaib. "I will work harder than before. My job is my passion and I will not trade it for anything. Allah will help me."

Recently, pellet victims staged a protest in Srinagar, demanding government aid. Shortly afterwards, a 5 per cent increase in job quota for the disabled was announced, but it is unclear if that includes the 'legally blind': those who cannot see beyond 20 feet. Doctors in Kashmir, too, have urged the government to come to their aid, emphasising that pellet victims are at risk of developing psychiatric disorders due to acute stress and trauma. ♦



The Parliament building is facing an existential crisis. And the speaker has suggested a new building across the Rajpath

BY SONI MISHRA

In 1928, a year after the Parliament House was inaugurated, Sir Edwin Lutyens, the architect of India's capital city, envisioned a new building that would be its mirror image. It was to be constructed at a stone's throw from the original structure (designed by his partner Sir Herbert Baker) and would house the Parliament Secretariat.

Almost 90 years later, Lutyens's proposal is being talked about again, as the Parliament House is facing an existential crisis. There are questions about the iconic structure being able to carry on and there is talk of the need for a new Parliament building. The reasons being mentioned range from wear and tear and the difficulties of functioning out of a heritage building, to the impending revision of the strength of the Lok Sabha in 2026.

In fact, Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra

Mahajan wrote to Union Urban Development Minister M. Venkaiah Naidu last year proposing a new Parliament complex. In its response, the Centre has said it concurs with her.

She wrote about the Parliament building suffering from "over-utilisation". "At the time of commissioning of this building, the number of staff, security personnel, media visitors and parliamentary activities were limited. Over the years, the parliamentary activities and number of people working here and visitors have increased manifold."

"On account of ageing of the Parliament House Building and expansion in activities, staff etc, the building has shown signs of distress and over-utilisation," Mahajan wrote. The annexe and the library building, which were meant to provide the much needed office space, have not been sufficient.

Also, it being a heritage Grade-I building, there are severe limitations on repairs, alterations and modifications to the building. A senior official associated with maintenance of the building said it was extremely difficult to make functional changes, leave alone renovation. "There is very little time available for repair work or restoration. Only four to five months are available to carry out any work," said the official. There is a heritage committee in Parliament and its permission has to be sought for every change, big and small.

Safety is also an issue. It first came into focus in 2009, when a part of the ceiling fell in room number 27, which was the office of the then petroleum minister Murli Deora. Another problem is that cooking is not permitted in the complex. The canteens in the building serve food that is cooked in the adjacent library building.

One of the sites proposed by

Mahajan for a new Parliament House is the same spot where Lutyens wanted the mirror image of the historic structure to be built. The site, which is across the Rajpath from the current complex, has two plots of four hectares each. These plots at present house the defence and Delhi Police security barracks.

Another site being considered is the area that houses the Parliament reception, air conditioning plant, sub-station, temporary barracks for Parliament Duty Group personnel, and car park. Hinting at an inclination for the former, Mahajan said in her letter, "This area is a suitably large area and would enable a free design of a new Parliament House Building." She has also suggested that a tunnel under the Rajpath can connect the two buildings.

An alternative being discussed is that the Rajya Sabha could be shifted to what is now the Lok Sabha, and the Central Hall could be converted into Lok Sabha. But then the question is where the joint sittings of the Parliament would be held.

Former Lok Sabha Secretary General P.D.T. Achary said that the structure of the Parliament was "quite solid", but it would not be able to meet the growing demands of Indian democracy. "The present strength of the Lok Sabha is based on the 1971 census. If the numbers are revised based on the census of 2021, the number of MPs will go up [by at least 100]," he said.

In the discussions held in the speaker's office, options considered included a building that is on the lines of the European Parliament, a modern building that is eco-friendly and relies on technology, but retains the heritage of the country in its architectural design.

So what happens to the present Parliament building? One suggestion is that it can be converted into a museum, and that some offices can continue to operate from there.

Former speaker Meira Kumar had also mooted the idea for a new

Parliament building. She had said that the present building was "weeping" from overuse and structural deterioration. But she ran into opposition from the Left parties, which said it would impose unnecessary expenditure on the public exchequer.

The budget committee of Parliament, including deputy speaker of the Lok Sabha M. Thambidurai, public accounts committee chairman K.V. Thomas and estimates committee chairman Murli Manohar Joshi, has also suggested that a new Parliament building is needed.

"The new building has to be built keeping in mind the requirements of the next 100 years. It is now for the Lok Sabha speaker and the prime minister to start proper consultations," said Thomas.

Noted conservation architect A.J.K. Menon said the need for more space was genuine. However, he said, it must be ensured that the building, which has a huge symbolic value, remained functional in some way.

However, there are others who advocate finding out ways of working from the present building. "The Parliament building represents our democratic ethos. There is no need for another building," said Janata Dal (united) leader K.C. Tyagi. He said if the British parliamentarians could function out of Westminster, despite its cramped environs, so could the Indian MPs out of Sansad Bhawan.

The urban development ministry feels the issue would need a discussion amongst all the stakeholders, including the Rajya Sabha, the Lok Sabha, the parliamentary affairs ministry and the prime minister's office.

Left leader M.B. Rajesh said the priority should be how to strengthen Parliament as an institution rather than talking about the need for a new building. "The prime minister bypasses Parliament sessions. Crucial decisions are not announced in Parliament. More than the leakages and wear and tear, the threat to Parliament comes from this approach of the government," he said. ♦

House boast

Diameter 170.69m

Circumference 536.33m

Area 6 acres

Colonnade 144 sandstone pillars, each 8.23m high

Dome 29.9m across, 36m high

Central Hall is used for joint sittings of the two houses

On the three axes from Central Hall are the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha and the Library Hall

Surrounding this is the four-storeyed circular structure that accommodates offices, parliamentary committees and the ministry of parliamentary affairs

The first ever session in the building was held in a tent in 1927, after a portion of the ceiling collapsed

It is believed Sir Herbert Baker drew inspiration from the 800-year-old Chausath Yogini Ekattarso Mahadeva Temple in Morena, Madhya Pradesh, while designing the Parliament House

The building is said to have problems such as structural issues, space crunch, "over-utilisation" and limitations on repairs and alterations because of the heritage tag

RESEARCH: KARTHIK RAVINDRANATH; GRAPHICS: SUMESH CN

AADHAAR

Identity crisis

Aadhaar promises to make things easier, but for a price

BY VANDANA

Suman Sharma was aghast at what she saw on the laptop screen of a local mobile connection vendor. She was asked to give her fingerprint and Aadhaar number for authentication to get a Reliance Jio connection. The moment the fingerprint was scanned, all her details, information she had thought was confidential, were on the screen. She could not help wondering what if they misused the data. Reliance could probably add all her call and data history and create a database of its own, she thought. "And who knows, tomorrow they might share it with their subsidiary company, say Reliance Retail, to create a more specific profile," said the professor at a private business school in Delhi.

Sharma's concern is not misplaced considering the bitter experience Delhiite Suresh Nair recently had. After hunting for a house for long, Nair and his wife chose one at Lajpat Nagar. The house was big, semi-furnished and in a good neighbourhood. Though the Nairs agreed on the ₹25,000-a-month rent, the landlord asked for their Aadhaar numbers and told them he would let them know in two days. Later, he told them the house was not available. He had found out from an online database that the Nairs' annual family income was less than ₹10 lakh, and he did not consider them eligible for the posh locality.

Yes, there are databases that can read out people's profiles like horoscopes. And, Aadhaar has made their job a lot easier. Ongrid, one such database, culls information from different sources and puts them together on the site. Peeyush Peshwani, founder of Ongrid, argued that Aadhaar-holders could delete the data anytime they wanted. But that is hardly a justification for collecting private information.

Ajay Bhushan Pandey, chief executive officer of the Unique Identification Authority of India, which administers Aadhaar, said the law was that Aadhaar number can be used only for the purpose for which it was taken. "Fingerprint is encrypted, so it is not available with anyone. The law says that the data should not be shared with anyone else. Sharing it is a criminal offence and strong

provisions have been built in the Aadhaar Act to tackle that," he said.

There are, however, many concerns about UIDAI's information security policy. "As a central repository, have they built in enough safeguards so that the data cannot be misused? One does not know whether they have conducted any investigation on these authentication agencies. There has not been any CAG audit on Aadhaar and the way it is being run. There are many missing links," said Ramanjit Singh Chima, global policy director at Access Now, an organisation that defends digital rights of individuals.

Pandey ruled out any misuse of Aadhaar saying that consent was built in and, for any usage, one had to first get the Aadhaar-holder to agree.

"Nothing can be done without Aadhaar-holder's consent," he said.

The problem is, meaningful consent is often a myth, and in most cases, individuals do not know what they are getting into. There is a high chance that the poor and gullible would not even know how their data is going to be used. "Consent has largely been left to the service provider," said Apar Gupta, a technology lawyer. "The A.P. Shah Committee on privacy laws has specific recommendation on

how consent has to be taken. The Aadhaar Act has completely ignored it."

With the government now seeding Aadhaar into a host of services from banks and pensions to MGNREGA payments, the problem gets all the more worse. Some activists believe that it is akin to tracking individuals. Activist Usha Ramanathan, a well-known critic of the Aadhaar project, said it would be dangerous because it could become agenda-driven. "They might even get to know about voter behaviour and target their programmes accordingly," she said.

While Aadhaar being opened to the private sector has been questioned since the beginning, what is more discomfiting are the applications

Total Aadhaars issued
110 crore

Total Aadhaar
authentications
300 crore

Aadhaar-linked bank
accounts
40 crore

Interview/ *Ajay Bhushan Pandey, CEO of UIDAI*

We are planning an auditing system for Aadhaar partners

BY VANDANA

From the beginning, there has been a debate on mandatory vs voluntary in the Aadhaar programme.

The ministry of rural development issued an order a few days back saying that every worker would be required to give Aadhaar. But there are conditionalities that (even) if the person does not have Aadhaar, he should not be denied benefits. Rather, he will be assisted to enrol for Aadhaar. Till he gets Aadhaar number, his benefits will continue to be given with the previous identification method. The idea is that Aadhaar should not become a means of exclusion, which some people did fear in the beginning. Aadhaar law has made it very clear that you cannot exclude somebody just because he does not have Aadhaar.

Aadhaar is now being linked with the cashless movement.

More than 40 crore people have linked their bank accounts to Aadhaar. These people can receive payments in their accounts and can even make payments. In AEPS (Aadhaar-enabled payment system), there is no need to remember your pin or having a point of sale device. The merchant just needs to have a smartphone and a biometric device. In the BHIM app also you can transfer fund to any Aadhaar number. AEPS has been functional for the past three years and primarily used in micro ATMs. Business correspondents would use a fingerprint scanner and you could access banking services in rural areas. We were getting 4 to 5 lakh transactions a day. In Andhra Pradesh, fair price shopkeeper became the business correspondent. After seeing its success, we thought, why not do it for all merchants. We did some innovation on the form factor and that is how Aadhaar pay came into being.

Who will bear the cost of the biometric scanner?

Currently it costs ₹2,000, but as the volume increases, the cost will come down. We are also working on another possibility which might come in the next few months. A biometric scanner could be built in the phone itself. The merchants will have to be incentivised for having this kind

of a system. Right now, it is the merchant who is spending on biometric scanner and broadband. What we are recommending is, in Aadhaar pay the merchant will be using his own system, so he should be incentivised. In the case of micro ATMs, banks are bearing the cost. In this case now, banks do not have to bear the cost of setting up infrastructure. So, they should incentivise the merchant. The digital payments committee has also recommended the same thing.

There are privacy concerns about the Aadhaar database.

Whoever uses Aadhaar will get some information, but the question is, is private information going somewhere? Similar concerns were expressed when we were doing enrolments for Aadhaar. During the enrolment itself, the data was encrypted and it never went to the hands of private fellows. Similarly, all your biometrics are encrypted. So, that fear is not justified. People talk about telcos, banks and merchants having your data. Merchants will get

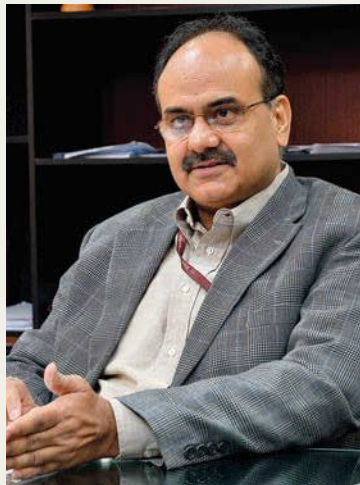
only your transaction details. They will have the information that they were taking in your earlier KYC plus your Aadhaar number and no other information.

There are various reports suggesting that Aadhaar data might be shared among private players.

It has been provided in the law that Aadhaar number has to be used only for the purpose for which it was taken. The law says that it should not be shared with anyone else. If they share, it is a criminal offence. Strong provisions have been built in the Aadhaar Act. There are penal provisions amounting to three years jail. In comparison with any other law, Aadhaar law has more privacy features built in.

What are the checks and balances for authentication partners?

They don't get access to biometrics. It is encrypted from the beginning. We sign an agreement with them citing all the provisions of law. We are also thinking of having a system through which they will have to go through some audit, proving that they have followed all processes. They can get audited by an approved set of auditors. In some cases where we feel necessary, we will go and audit them. ♦





SANJAY AHLAWAT

AADHAAR



FEEBLE FORT



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aadhaar-related demographic information is shared only by following the procedures laid down in the Aadhaar Act, 2016
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any violation is punishable under Section 38 and Chapter VII of the Aadhaar Act
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Customers, however, are in the dark about the safeguards taken to prevent any data misuse ● There has not been a CAG audit on Aadhaar and the way it is being run
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Telecom service providers and financial services providers widely use Aadhaar-linked authentication to verify customer credentials, but there is no way the customer can ensure the data he provides remain private 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● With the government pushing for a digitised economy and linking Aadhaar to everything from bank accounts to MGNREGA payments, any breach of data security could be detrimental
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Last month, UIDAI reportedly lodged a complaint against Axis Bank, Suvidhaa Infoserve and eMudhra for attempting unauthorised authentication by using stored Aadhaar information

that are getting built on Aadhaar. IndiaStack, a paperless service delivery system formed by the think tank iSPIRT, offers a host of such applications. A spokesperson for iSPIRT said it was a wrong notion that large amounts of personal data was exposed. "It is the same amount as provided when you provide a photocopy of identity documents to a service provider," he said. He said the responsibility to protect this data lay with the service provider, and was governed by the agreement between the service provider and the customer. The catch here is, there is no way for the customer to ensure that his data is private.

Also, there is an inherent case of conflict of interest between IndiaStack and the Aadhaar programme. Nandan Nilekani, who was the first chairman of UIDAI, is part of the core team that built IndiaStack. Pramod Varma and Sanjay Jain, who were associated with Aadhaar, are also part of the team.

Another worrying feature of Aadhaar is the use of biometrics itself. Because the government is pushing for cashless transactions through Aadhaar, the security concerns raised on biometrics become all the more important. "Biometrics is inherently a very insecure system," said J.T. D'Souza, a security expert. "Your fingerprints and iris can be spoofed very easily. Unlike a card which you can block if it is stolen, you cannot do anything if your iris or fingerprint is spoofed."

Pandey, however, said there was a strong case for Aadhaar-linked financial transactions because it would bring down verification costs. "Authentication has a cost which I am told comes to a couple of hundred rupees. E-KYC [verifying customer credentials through Aadhaar] makes the process very simple and convenient from a people's point of view," he said.

Verification cost matters, especially for small accounts and small loans. "We have been able to do small loans in a matter of minutes, thanks to Aadhaar and e-sign. We do not need to physically verify that person," said Rohan Angrish, chief technology officer of the lender Capital Float. He, however, agreed that there should be stronger norms on consent. "There is some work going on, on developing informed consent," he said.

A lot of privacy is already compromised thanks to the social networking sites and search engines. But they at least give an option not to disclose or share the data. Aadhaar, on the other hand, is mandatory. And, as industrialist Mukesh Ambani said "data is the new oil". Aadhaar, it seems, will keep many engines running. ♦

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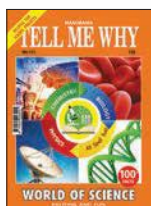
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TW/352/GTWO/19-03-2017



President, next

Sumitra Mahajan, M.M. Joshi, Venkaiah Naidu, Draupadi Murmu and T.C. Gehlot are the hot favourites

BY PRATUL SHARMA

The results of the assembly elections in five states will arrive on March 11. And they will initiate hectic parleys and calculations to choose India's 14th president. To send its nominee to the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the BJP needs to score a comprehensive victory in Uttar Pradesh, and do well in other states.

By zeroing in on a retirement home for President Pranab Mukherjee, whose tenure gets over in July, the government has signalled that it is keen on sending someone from its own ideological family to occupy the top constitutional office. Mukherjee won the election in July 2012 by getting 7,13,763 votes, more than double the number his rival, former Lok Sabha speaker P.A. Sangma, polled.

"Things will be clear after the

[assembly poll] results in five states, especially Uttar Pradesh," a Union minister told THE WEEK. According to the minister, it was too early to predict the outcome of the presidential election, as the BJP is still more than 70,000 votes short of majority.

The president is chosen by an electoral college of MPs and legislators in states. The election is held in accordance with the system of proportional representation, in which

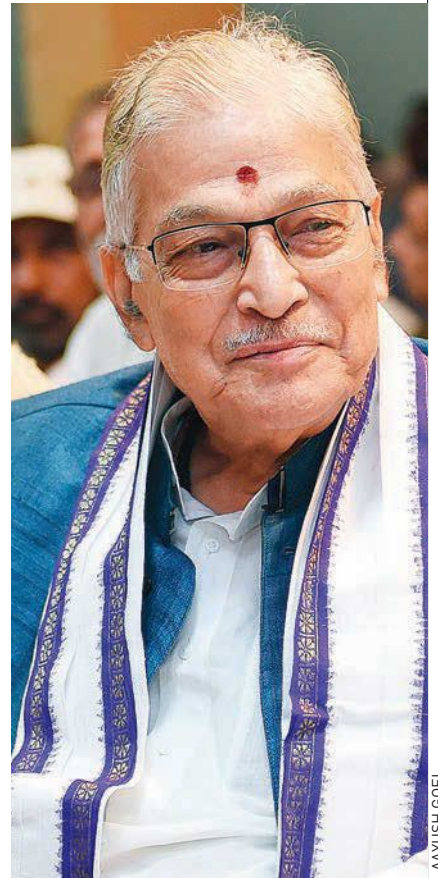


AAYUSH GOEL



PTI

On his way out: Pranab Mukherjee in the Mughal Gardens at the Rashtrapati Bhavan



AAYUSH GOEL

The big contenders: Sumitra Mahajan (left) and Murli Manohar Joshi

population figures and the number of assembly seats of states play a role in determining the value of each vote of the electoral college (see graphics). In Uttar Pradesh, for instance, 403 MLAs have a combined 83,824 votes.

"After the results are declared, the people of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Goa would have spoken and given a clear mandate to the BJP," said Meenakshi Lekhi, MP and BJP spokesperson. "The party is confident of getting its candidate elected as the next president."

Irrespective of the poll results, efforts are on to challenge the BJP's presidential nominee. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has met several opposition leaders to explore the possibility of fielding a joint candidate. "Nitishji met Left leaders Sitaram Yechury and D. Raja,

Nationalist Congress Party leader Praful Patel and [Biju Janata Dal leader and Odisha Chief Minister] Naveen Patnaik to field a non-BJP candidate in the presidential poll," K.C. Tyagi, Janata Dal (United) spokesman, told THE WEEK. "Even if the BJP gets the numbers, we would oppose it."

Sources said that other opposition parties such as the Trinamool Congress, the Samajwadi Party and the Aam Aadmi Party are likely to support the plan to field a joint candidate against the BJP nominee.

The BJP has been holding talks with not only its allies, but also regional parties that have a good number of votes. Top BJP leaders said they were hopeful of getting the numbers even if UP does not provide it with enough MLAs.

"One thing is clear: the next presi-

dent will be from our ideological family, someone with an RSS background," said a BJP MP. According to the MP, the final call on the candidate will be taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Apparently, Modi would prefer a "political person" who would not overshadow him in public appeal. Loyalty would be a guiding factor. Some of the names doing the rounds are Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan, Lok Sabha member and former HRD minister Murli Manohar Joshi, Urban Development Minister Venkaiah Naidu, tribal leader and Jharkhand Governor Draupadi Murmu, and dalit leader and Social Welfare Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot.

The buzz is that Mahajan, 73, has emerged as the frontrunner because

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

of her contribution in removing hurdles for the BJP in the Lok Sabha. An eight-time MP, Mahajan has a clean record and is close to the RSS. Though some opposition parties have expressed their concern over her perceived pro-government stance, she has had a controversy-free stint.

Naidu, who was parliamentary affairs minister, has been the government's point man in holding talks with other parties. He has been effusive in praising Modi and vigorous in defending him. Though he no longer holds the parliamentary affairs portfolio, he is often involved in parleys with the opposition and in firefighting on behalf of the government. At 67, he is senior to Modi by just a year.

Naidu was earlier considered close to veteran party leader L.K. Advani, but he shifted his loyalty to Modi. Some of his party colleagues may oppose his nomination. There are suggestions that he be considered for vice president.

A section of the RSS is backing Joshi, 83. "But the question is whether Modi would agree," said an RSS leader. Before the Lok Sabha elections in 2014, Joshi had vacated the Varanasi Lok Sabha seat for Modi. He was not as vocal as Advani and Sushma Swaraj had been in opposing Modi's elevation as the BJP's prime minister candidate in 2013.

A Brahmin, Joshi is seen as the face of the upper caste, the BJP's core vote base. During his tenure as HRD minister in the Vajpayee government, he had pushed the RSS agenda by introducing a "nationalistic" perspective into the curriculum, which the opposition had decried as saffronisation.

That Joshi received the Padma Vibhushan this year is being viewed as the BJP's compensation for not considering him as the party's presidential candidate. His poor health has also been cited as a factor that could mar his chances. The same could work against both Advani and Swaraj.

At 89, Advani remains active and is not keen on retiring. But the fact that he had voiced his opposition to



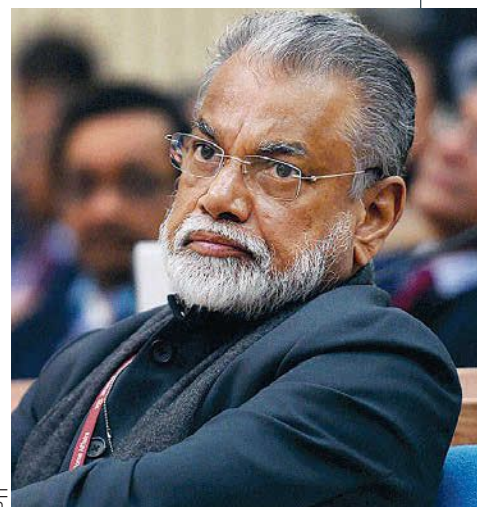
AAYUSH GOEL

Modi and Amit Shah taking control of the BJP could work against him. The BJP's defeat in the Bihar assembly elections in 2015 had Advani, Joshi and former Union minister Yashwant Sinha questioning the manner in which the party was being run.

Swaraj has all the qualifications required to become president, but the fact she had voiced her opposition to Modi earlier has dimmed her chances. As external affairs minister, she has been one of the better performers in the Modi cabinet, even as she let him hog the limelight abroad. While her interactions on social media have earned her praise, the possibility that she could take the focus away from Modi if she becomes president is considered a disadvantage.

Gehlot and Murmu are being considered with an eye on sending out a message to dalits and tribals before the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Both the leaders have been doing their work and keeping a low profile, which suits Modi's style of functioning.

In the past three years, Modi has made it evident that he is politically farsighted. His government has been reaching out to parties outside the National Democratic Alliance, even those who are constituents of the



Congress-led United Progressive Alliance. That NCP chief Sharad Pawar received the Padma Vibhushan this year suggests that he may play ball if the BJP asks for his support in the presidential election.

The Modi government's support to Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Reddy had helped it win a crucial ally during the demonetisation drive. Apparently, the gamble the BJP took in Tamil Nadu by supporting former chief minister O. Panneerselvam in the power struggle that followed AIADMK chief Jayalalithaa's death was based on the



Outsider and insiders: (Clockwise from left) Former ISRO chairman K. Radhakrishnan; Union Minister Venkaiah Naidu; Jharkhand Governor Draupadi Murmu; Union Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot

Electoral college and votes

MLAs (elected): 4,120

Value of one MLA's vote: Population of the state or Union territory (1971 census) divided by Number of MLAs x 1,000.

Value of one MLA's vote in UP: $83,849,905 / 403 \times 1,000 = 208$

Value of one MLA's vote in the four states, where results are awaited—Punjab: 116, Uttarakhand: 64, Goa: 20, Manipur: 18

Value of MLA vote for state
So, for UP

Value of one MLA's vote x Number of seats
 $208 \times 403 = 83,824$

Sum of the value of MLA votes of all states and Union territories

5,49,474

MPs (elected)

776 (Lok Sabha 543, Rajya Sabha 233)

Value of one MP's vote

Sum of MLA vote values of all states and Union territories (5,49,474) divided by Number of elected MPs (776) = 708

Total value of votes of Parliament

Number of elected MPs (776) x Value of one MP's vote (708) = 5,49,408

Votes for presidential electors

4,120 MLAs with 5,49,474 votes
776 MPs with 5,49,408 votes

Total number of votes in electoral college

10,98,882

FOR MAJORITY

5,49,441

calculation that he would support its presidential candidate. Though the BJP lost that gamble, it has not burnt its bridges with AIADMK general secretary Sasikala.

Patnaik's Biju Janata Dal has not been actively supporting the non-NDA group inside Parliament. In fact, it has backed the Modi government on key issues such as demonetisation, which signals that the relationship between the two parties remains cordial. But the question is whether Patnaik would continue to support the BJP, which has emerged as the BJD's main opposition after the recent municipal polls in Odisha.

In Maharashtra, the BJP has kept its recalcitrant ally, the Shiv Sena, on its side by announcing that it would not contest the mayoral poll in Mumbai, clearing the decks for the Sena candidate. The Shiv Sena's support in the presidential election would be crucial for the BJP.

The Vajpayee government had proposed A.P.J. Abdul Kalam for president in 2002, as it did not have the support to ensure the victory of a candidate on its own. Kalam was subsequently elected president with the support of the Congress.

If the BJP fails to get the numbers this time around, it would mean a repeat of 2002. It is in this background that the names of nonpolitical persons such as E. Sreedharan, former managing director of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd, and K. Radhakrishnan, former chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation, are being discussed. Radhakrishnan has shared the dais with RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat several times and is associated with Vijnana Bharati, an RSS-backed organisation that promotes science.

For the moment, though, the BJP is eagerly awaiting the results of the UP elections. "We are totally focusing on it," said Anil Baluni, BJP spokesperson. "Only after the results are announced would the party focus on any other issue, including presidential election." ♦

ANDHRA PRADESH

Bitter half

Two decades after N.T. Rama Rao's death, his widow seeks to take revenge on people who wronged him

BY LALITA IYER

When Lakshmi Parvathi joined the YSR Congress in 2014, she had only one thing on her mind: take Telugu Desam leader Chandrababu Naidu to task. Author-turned-politician, Lakshmi Parvathi is the second wife of N.T. Rama Rao, actor and politician, who founded the Telugu Desam Party in 1982. "Chandrababu Naidu did something against NTR and I have to prove it," she said. "It is a fight for principles and the only reason why I joined the YSR Congress. I wanted a dais. I feel that Jaganmohan Reddy [party chief] and I are in a similar quandary."

It is a known fact that Lakshmi Parvathi is not on good terms with NTR's children from his first marriage. Recently, when his eldest son, Nandamuri Balakrishna, announced a film on his father, Lakshmi Parvathi wanted to know how he planned to portray the turbulent events of 1995 when NTR's second son, Harikrishna, and sons-in-law Chandrababu Naidu and Daggubati Venkateswara Rao staged a coup to dislodge him from the post of chief minister and TDP chief. She threatened to go to court if Naidu was portrayed as hero in the film. "I will not keep quiet if historical facts are twisted in the biopic," she said.

Two marble lions stand guard outside Lakshmi Parvathi's bungalow at Film Nagar in Hyderabad. She salvaged the marble statues from NTR's house on Road 13 in Banjara Hills after it was razed in 2012 by NTR's children. "They

meant so much to him," she said. A three-storey apartment complex has come up in its place. Lakshmi Parvathi has built a museum with NTR memorabilia, including his film costumes and jewellery, right opposite the complex.

The house was registered in the name of NTR's youngest daughter Uma Maheshwari, who lived in the US. After NTR's death in 1996, Lakshmi Parvathi continued to live in the house. However, in 2011 she was forcibly evicted. "The family members do not know the facts. They seem to think that it is still owned by Uma Maheshwari," said Lakshmi Parvathi. "One day, my husband called her up and said that he wanted to keep the house and that he would compensate her in cash. She agreed and decided to build a house in the US and NTR paid her in three instalments and got this house transferred to his name. So, legally it should go to his wife." While Lakshmi Parvathi claims to have no interest in money or property, she said she will fight to keep NTR's legacy alive.

A former Sanskrit lecturer from Guntur, Lakshmi Parvathi met NTR in the late 80s and they kept in touch. Later, she volunteered to write his biography. Soon, they fell in love. They would talk for hours on the phone. "That was the time V.P. Singh was the prime minister and NTR managed to get me a phone connection at Narsaraopet in one week. One fine day, NTR showed me a phone bill and said 'see, I am paying a huge phone bill after falling in love with you'," she said with a smile. The bill was a whopping three and a half



RAMACHANDER PENTUKER

lakh rupees for one and a half years. "There was so much to talk about, to discuss. We would talk about everything," said Lakshmi Parvathi.

In 1993, when NTR suffered a paralytic stroke, Lakshmi Parvathi took care of him even when his children apparently didn't. She sought



Chandrababu Naidu did something against NTR and I have to prove it. It is a fight for principles and the only reason why I joined the YSR Congress. I wanted a dais. I feel that Jaganmohan Reddy and I are in a similar quandary.

Lakshmi Parvathi

felt safer in my life. Darkness simply lifted away from my soul. After his death, unfortunately, it keeps showing its dark face," she said.

Lakshmi Parvathi grew up idolising NTR. "I was fascinated with NTR since childhood," she said. "I would watch his films and drool over his good looks. I even wrote a poem when I was in 9th class and it was all about love. I was invited to TANA [Telugu Association of North America] conference in 1985 and that is where I met P. Upendra, who was then in the Telugu Desam Party. I told him how much I adored NTR and asked him if he could arrange a meeting for me. Well, Upendra remembered and I received an award from NTR at the Andhra Pradesh Bhavan in Delhi. Just thinking of meeting my idol was enough to send me into a tizzy. After receiving the award, I touched his feet and tears rolled down my face. NTR placed his hands on my shoulders and wiped off my tears."

Years later, Lakshmi Parvathi met NTR again during a TDP meeting. "He recognised me and called me by my name," she said. "I asked him for an appointment, he said we could meet the next day. I told him that I wanted to write his biography and he was impressed with my literary abilities and he readily agreed. Whenever I visited Hyderabad during the weekend, I met him at his Abids residence and we would talk over lunch. His family was around him and they knew I was a big fan. NTR told everyone that I was a lecturer and was writing his biography."

NTR invited her to spend more time with him and eventually they started living together. NTR's wife

had died of cancer and he needed a companion. "I too had a lot of problems and so it was easy to share it with one another," said Lakshmi Parvathi, who had separated from her husband, artiste Veeragandham Subba Rao, by then.

One fine day NTR asked her to marry him. "I was shocked at one level and thrilled at another. I was in a quandary for I was not sure if the Hindu dharma allowed a second marriage," said Lakshmi Parvathi. "So I told NTR that I needed time. He was really impressed and touched that I would take so much of trouble."

They got married secretly in February 1992, after Lakshmi Parvathi's divorce came through. However, he died a lonely man. He never quite recovered from the shock of the betrayal. He died in January 1996, after a massive cardiac arrest. Eight years after his death, the two-volume biography was published. "After NTR's death, I stopped writing poetry," said Lakshmi Parvathi, who has written several books, including one on Buddhism.

NTR was a foodie and the story about him eating half a kilo of chicken every morning is legendary. Lakshmi Parvathi was never interested in cooking, but she learnt it for him. "I was interested in reading and philosophy, but because NTR loved his food, I learnt it especially for him," she said. A vegetarian, Lakshmi Parvathi cooked traditional chicken curry the way NTR liked it. Now, she has lost interest in cooking again, she said. Her only agenda now is to create trouble for Naidu and make him pay for betraying the man who relied on him. ♦

strength from him. "Cloudy, dark and muggy days depress me. Once aaina [NTR] and I were sitting on the terrace of our home and I was dull. So he asked me what was wrong. When I told him about my mood he said 'arrey yaar main hoon naa' and then gathered me in a tight hug. I had never



mani-festo ■ **Mani Shankar Aiyar**

The Bogotá manual

I write this from Cartagena de Indias in Colombia. Spanish conquistadores named this Caribbean, coastal fortress thus because they thought they were in India. The time has come to pay back the compliment. For President Juan Manuel Santos has engaged in a peace process to end an armed insurrection that holds lessons for us in India to end unrest in Kashmir.

La Violencia started in 1948, after the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitan, a popular socialist leader. As violence spread to the countryside, the US decided that it was a communist movement and joined the Colombian government in vicious anti-communist repression. This led to the emergence of FARC—Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)—in 1964. FARC has spearheaded the 50-year insurrection in Colombia. Numerous other narco-paramilitaries and criminal bands have also been in the field—sometimes working alongside FARC; sometimes working in competition. Over two lakh lives have been lost, three-quarters being civilians. And, five million internally displaced.

The lesson for us from this tragedy is the one taught by Mahatma Gandhi (assassinated in the same year as Gaitan): when injustice, or even the perception of injustice (as in Kashmir), is widespread, armed repression only leads to more violence. The answer lies in addressing the root causes of discontent through dialogue, and not in hoping that state military action will end insurgency.

Till about the end of the 1980s, the Colombian government was sure that the only way of dealing with FARC was to give it no quarter. No dialogue, just the gun. But, as in Kashmir, repeated armed operations only led to the resurgence and expansion of the rebellion. Injustice continued; so, the revolution, too, continued.

In the early 1990s, the Colombian government began showing some imagination. They conceded that in return for laying down arms, space would be created for former rebels to pursue their aims through parliamentary participation. Later in the decade, a demilitarized zone was created where the rebels could safely regroup, while talks started.

While this did lead (as in Kashmir) to some rebel factions surrendering arms to enter the democratic political process, FARC remained unconvinced as no agenda was set to address their larger issues. The lesson for us in India is that peace cannot be assured through amnesty. There

has to be a structured peace process that addresses all issues of concern, set up through a long, agonizing, and, preferably, secret series of “talks about talks”.

This is precisely what the Santos government started doing from 2010, after the previous government’s attempts to “implacably punish” terror ran aground. “Secret approaches with FARC in search of a peace process” were backed by the policy commitment made at the highest level that “the door of dialogue is not closed with lock and key”.

Persistence paid off and the two sides announced in September 2012 a “general agreement” setting out a roadmap for formal peace talks covering six broad areas, based on the fundamental condition that “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”. The “themes” of the dialogue ranged from massive rural reform to the future political participation of FARC in parliament. (I was reminded of Rajiv Gandhi’s similar approach to the 1986 Mizoram peace accord that brought in Laldenga, the leader of the 20-year-old armed insurrection, as the chief minister of the state.)

Notwithstanding continued violence on both sides and numerous political crises that almost derailed the process, relentless perseverance with the talks for four long years resulted in a peace agreement that won Santos the Nobel Peace Prize in 2016. Such are the rewards of “uninterrupted and unintermittible” dialogue. Narendra Modi, please note.

Aiyar, a former Union minister, is an MP and a social commentator.



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TAMIL NADU



R.G. SASTHAA

Groundswell again

How one village in Tamil Nadu could be a roadblock to Modi's dream of self-sufficiency in oil and gas production

BY LAKSHMI SUBRAMANIAN/Neduvasal, Pudukkottai

The sun spat fire, creating a mirage on the state highway. The 40km stretch—from the drought-hit city of Pudukkottai to the nondescript village of Neduvasal—had parched fields on both sides. However, as we approached the village, at the tail end of the Cauvery basin, there was greenery in abundance. There was also dissent. Black flags fluttered on

small houses and speakers blared warnings of reckless oil and gas exploration. The barbs were directed at the Union government. Men and women, young and old, raised their fists and shouted slogans. “This is our motherland,” said Selvamani Ramanathan, a 49-year-old farmer. “We will not allow it to get spoiled. We will fight till our last breath. Let Prime Minister Narendra Modi come and talk to us. We voted for him believing he would do good for us. But he is trying to usurp our livelihood.” The widowed mother owns four



To foil the oil: Villagers protest the hydrocarbon exploration project in Neduvasal

st oil wells

acres of cultivable land, in which she has grown about 400 eucalyptus trees, groundnuts and black gram.

Next to her sat Subramanian Govintha Thevar, who is considered a hero by his fellow villagers. He has been fighting Oil and Natural Gas Corporation for the past four years. It all began in 2013, when he saw four officials measuring his land. "I asked them who they were and what they wanted," he said. "They did not tell me anything and left the place. But, a few months later, another team, accompanied by the village officer and two other state government officers, came to me, saying that an oil company wanted my land to extract kerosene [petroleum]. They asked me to give four

acres of my land, gave me a paper and asked me to sign it and mention the survey numbers. I refused, saying this was the only livelihood for me and 10 others in my family."

The company, however, persisted. Officials met him every three months, trying to convince him. He said they even tried to trick him, saying other farmers, who owned the surrounding land, had caved in. But Subramanian remained stubborn, even when he was called to the company's branch office in Pudukottai and allegedly threatened. "They said the land will be given back to me after extraction, in three to four years," he said. Last year, the company offered him ₹85,000 per acre, annually. He declined, saying he had to repay a ₹4 lakh loan he had taken for digging a borewell and a loan of ₹4.5 lakh he had taken for the treatment of his wife's breast cancer. On February 15, when he heard that the Centre had decided to go ahead with the extraction, he gathered some villagers and petitioned the collector. It soon became a massive protest.

A kilometre from Subramanian's farm, in Nallandarkollai village, at least half of a nine-acre plot, owned by Kuzhandhai Velar, has become barren. A 15-foot pipe stood on the land, and black oil spillage surrounded it. A few meters away, a small tank was brimming with what seemed like crude oil. "We gave them six acres on lease in 2006," said Kuzhandhai's son, Karuppaiah. "My father signed it. We do not know the name of the oil company. We have been getting ₹16,000 per acre every six months as per the lease. But, we did not get the last due. They left this place last year saying there is no kerosene here, promising to clear the debris. We are still waiting. They dug the land continuously, using huge machines, for at least six months before erecting that pipe. One part of our land was closed off with thorns." Since then, they have been growing paddy on the remaining land. This year, said Karuppaiah, the yield was close to 54,000 kilos. "I sold one bag—60 kilos—for ₹1,400 this January," he said. "I feel if we hadn't lent the six acres to them, the yield would have been three or four times more."

The father-son duo now has no option but to wait. "It [the land] has become infertile," said Rasaiah Ramasamy, who comes to protest daily in a shed next to the land. "See the debris and the oil. We can't even smoke standing next to this tank. It will burn within seconds."

Thousands of students and activists have joined the protests—in and around Neduvasal—and have been educating the farmers about the hazards of hydrocarbon extraction. "We work in the hot sun

TAMIL NADU

in the oil fields,” said Vinoth, who has a diploma in mechanical engineering and works for an oil company in Dubai. “Gulf countries can afford to do this because there are no agricultural fields. But, hydrocarbon extraction from our fields will only make these 80 villages a desert.” He had come home on a visit, but has decided to stay back until the government withdraws the project.

While independent companies had, in the past decade, started exploration projects in Neduvasal, the pressure on the farmers mounted after the village was made a part of the Central government’s Discovered Small Fields (DSF) policy (which allows companies to own an oilfield without discovering it). With India importing 80 per cent of its crude oil, Prime Minister Modi had launched the policy on May 25, 2016, with the aim of reducing oil imports by 10 per cent by 2022.

On February 15, the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons announced that 134 bids had been received for contracts in 34 areas throughout India, and that 22 companies had been shortlisted for contracts in 31 areas. Of these, 15 companies were new entrants in the sector.

“These blocks, being small, and discovery of hydrocarbon having been made, are relatively less risky, offering a great opportunity to new entrants in the upstream hydrocarbon sector, hitherto seen as the preserve of only large players,” it said. “It is expected that in-place locked hydrocarbons volume of 40 million metric tonnes of oil and 22 billion cubic metres of gas will be monetised over a period of 15 years. The production from these contract areas will supplement domestic production.”

It also said that “the estimated indicative gross revenue over economic life would be ₹46,400 crore, of which royalty collection and the government’s revenue share is expected to be around ₹5,000 crore and ₹9,300 crore, respectively. The investments into the awarded blocks are expected

★ Companies had, over the past decade, started hydrocarbon exploration projects in and around Neduvasal

★ The projects led to agricultural land losing fertility, which sparked protests in Neduvasal and many other villages

★ Pressure mounted on farmers in Neduvasal after the village was made part of the Discovered Small Fields (DSF) policy on May 25, 2016

★ Under the DSF policy, 22 companies had been shortlisted for contracts in 31 areas

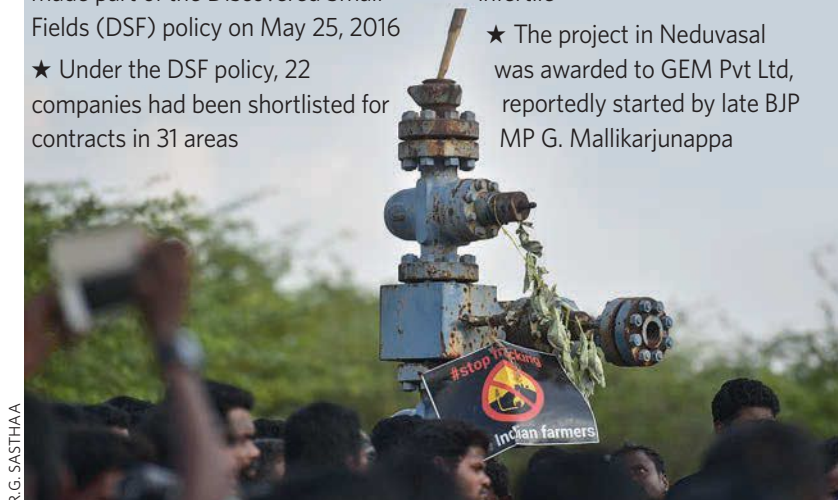
Greasy affair

★ 40 million metric tonnes of oil and 22 billion cubic metres of gas were to be monetised

★ The investments are expected to generate more than 37,500 jobs

★ The exploration projects, including those under the DSF policy, would lead to digging of 700 oil wells in the Cauvery basin, which could result in 21,000 acres of land turning infertile

★ The project in Neduvasal was awarded to GEM Pvt Ltd, reportedly started by late BJP MP G. Mallikarjunappa



R.G. SASTHAA

to generate more than 37,500 jobs.” The Central government is anticipating the cumulative peak production from all awarded fields to be around 15,000 barrels of oil a day and two million metric standard cubic metres of gas per day. “The Neduvasal and Karaikal [Puducherry] projects are expected to generate gross revenue of ₹300 crore, and state government will get ₹40 crore as royalty,” said the petroleum ministry.

Sources in the DGH and ONGC said that the exploration projects, including those under the DSF policy, would lead to digging of at least 700 oil wells in the Cauvery basin in Tamil Nadu, because of which at least 14,000 acres of cultivable land will come under the project. G. Sundararajan of Poovulagin Nanbargal, an NGO that deals with environmental issues, said “at least 21,000 acres will turn infertile if this

project is executed as per plans”.

“We are not against development, but agriculture is our livelihood,” said Malarmani Renganathan, 52. “If we have our fertile land, we can create jobs and earn more than ₹40 crore.” She is one among many women in Neduvasal who turn up at the protest site every day after finishing their household duties. In fact, the women here seem more determined to derail the projects.

When awarding the contracts, neither the petroleum ministry nor the prime minister’s office would have imagined such staunch opposition from a small village in Tamil Nadu. Incidentally, the project in Neduvasal, which is in 10 square kilometres, was awarded to Gem Laboratories Private Limited, a company reportedly started by late BJP MP G. Mallikarjunappa. ♦



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TERROR



Justice, delayed and denied

Pakistan seems to have given a silent burial to its investigation into the 26/11 Mumbai attacks

BY NAMRATA BIJI AHUJA

It was a regular workday in February 2016, but not so for Rajiv Mehrishi. The Union home secretary was at his office in North Block, going through and replying to queries from Pakistan on the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks. Pak authorities were carrying out their own investigations into the attacks, and they wanted India to provide them information.

The feeling in New Delhi was that it had waited long enough for Islamabad to bring the Pakistan-

based culprits to book. India had replied promptly to the first list of 30 questions Pakistan had sent in 2009. In 2013, it twice allowed teams comprising members of the judicial commission of Pakistan to meet and cross-examine key witnesses. Despite all this, Islamabad continued to drag its feet.

When Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, India set about the task of driving Pakistan into a corner in the terror issue with renewed vigour. With Ajit Doval as national security adviser, New Delhi decided that it would not allow Islamabad to continue its delaying tactics. So Mehrishi, who had

Protecting the accused: A Pakistani police officer escorting Hafiz Saeed out of the Jamaat-ud-Dawa headquarters in Lahore

taken charge only a few months earlier, dealt with the queries quickly, providing additional evidence against the accused in Pakistan.

"It has been more than a year since all the information sought by Pakistan were provided," said a senior home ministry official. "But we have not heard from them since."

What is now being heard, though, are the fresh noises Islamabad is making about seeking the deposition of 24 Indian witnesses. India, on its part, has been insistent that Pakistan put Jamaat-ud-Dawa chief and Lashkar-e-Taiba cofounder Hafiz Saeed and LeT operational commander Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi on trial in the light of the evidence it has already provided.

The result is a stalemate, with war of words replacing action. "We have not received any written request from Pakistan seeking deposition of Indian witnesses," said the home ministry official. "There has been no action from their side for all these months."

For its part, Pakistan does not seem to be interested in proceeding with the case. "Just because India wants us to take action against certain people, it does not mean that we should act against our own people," retired lieutenant colonel Bashir Wali Mohmand, former director-general of the Pak intelligence bureau, told THE WEEK from Islamabad. "On the other hand, it is a fact that we never blamed India openly. It was only when we caught a serving Navy official spying in Balochistan that we approached the United Nations. India's interference in KPK (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Balochistan is a major issue for us. I am also sure that India is using Afghans [against Pakistan]. I am a son of that soil and I know it. But, is India investigating all these issues?"

According to Wali Mohmand, India was lucky "that we have a mild government which allowed the Indian prime minister to lash out against Pakistan during his visit to Kabul and then land in Islamabad without visa and passport". He was referring to Modi's sudden stopover in Islamabad, where he was welcomed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in December 2015.

For Wali Mohmand and others who are part of the Pakistani establishment, the Mumbai attacks trial is not a priority. He said Saeed and the JuD were

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2009 JAN 7

Pakistani authorities concede that Ajmal Kasab, the only assailant caught alive, was Pakistani

2009 FEB 12

Pakistan's interior minister Rehman Malik admits that part of the conspiracy happened in Pakistan and lodges an FIR against three persons under Anti-Terrorism Act

2009 FEB

India gives a dossier of additional evidence to the Pakistan high commission in Delhi in response to Pakistan's queries

2009 NOV

Mumbai Police say Pakistan not cooperating. Pakistan produces its dossier that has new information about specific individuals, planning and training

2009 DEC

Under US and UN pressure, Pakistan arrests members of Jamaat-ud-Dawa and puts its chief Hafiz Saeed under house arrest. Saeed is freed after a few days

2012 NOV

Ajmal Kasab executed

2015 AUG

Former chief of Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency says 26/11 attacks were planned and launched from Pakistan

2016 FEB

India replies to second list of questions

2017 MARCH

After discussions reach a stalemate, India demands that Pakistan re-investigate the case and put Hafiz Saeed on trial

India has charge-sheeted **35 PERSONS** based in Pakistan for aiding and abetting the **26/11 ATTACKERS**

The charge sheet lists **25 COUNTS** of crime, including waging war against India

The charge sheet said the attacks took place after precise planning, and training in Pakistan between **DEC 2007** and **NOV 2008**

TERROR

engaged in social work in Pakistan, helping people affected by earthquakes and other calamities. "Let there be an FIR against him first," he said. "Why should we arrest him? Let's stop playing games first, and start by being honest and truthful."

M.L. Kumawat, who was special secretary (internal security) in the home ministry at the time of the 26/11 attacks, said he was sceptical about the trial in Pakistan moving forward. "The fresh noise from Pakistan is a giveaway of the fact that it does not want to act," he said. "The culprits may never be brought to book. The tactics being employed by that country in allowing Saeed to roam freely and change the name of his organisation show the intricate relationship between state and non-state actors in Pakistan. When Pakistan is using these non-state actors against India, how will it act against them?"

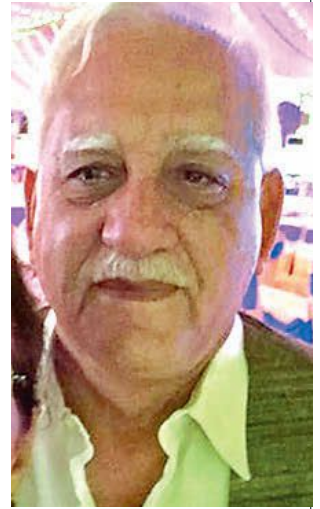
Kumawat was in North Block when terrorists began laying siege to Mumbai. Madhukar Gupta, then home secretary, was away in Murree in Pakistan holding talks with his Pak counterpart. In Gupta's absence, it was Kumawat who coordinated the initial response of commandos of the National Security Guard as they rushed to Mumbai.

That is all water under the bridge now. But Mehrishi continues to bear the burden of an unaccomplished task: punishing those who were behind the attacks. At North Block, the morale is down as New Delhi seems to have exhausted all diplomatic and legal options. "There is no extradition treaty with Pakistan," said Kumawat. "There are 35 wanted in the case and they are in Pakistan. Anyone who knows how Pakistan and the ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence] work would



Just because India wants us to take action against certain people, it does not mean that we should act against our own people.

Bashir Wali Mohmand, former director-general of the Pak intelligence bureau



understand that the case has got a silent burial." Unless, of course, he said, there was a political decision to the contrary.

But those who are part of the Pak establishment give no indication of any such political decision. "I would say there is a trust problem," said Wali Mohmand. "Whether it is Mumbai or Pathankot, whatever happens in India is blamed on Pakistan and the ISI. Every time, Pakistan has agreed to carry out an inquiry. It is time India came forth on its own activities against Pakistan."

According to him, it was "silly" on the part of the Pak government to put Saeed under house arrest in January. "If this government is strong, it should not take pressure from the US or India. I believe it [putting Saeed under house arrest] was done in the larger interest and not to demonstrate any intent related to the Mumbai case. If he has done anything wrong, let the law take its own course," said Wali Mohmand.

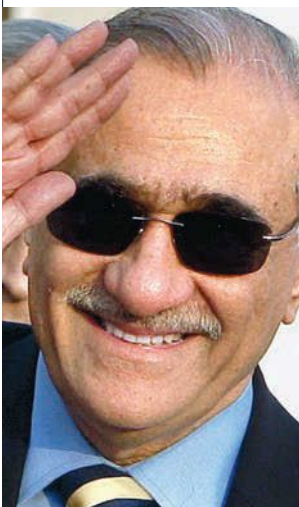
But Mahmud Ali Durrani, former Pak national security adviser, said Saeed had lost his utility and must be punished. "Pakistan should take action against him. The 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai were carried out by a group based in Pakistan," he said. Durrani, however, insisted that the Pakistani government and the ISI had no knowledge about the group's plans.

Security experts in Delhi said Durrani's admission had little value, as it was becoming clear that the trial had come to a standstill. With Pakistan freeing Saeed, and its interior ministry keeping mum on the case, North Block seems to be struggling to break the deadlock. ♦



Pakistan should take action against Saeed. The 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai were carried out by a group based in Pakistan.

Mahmud Ali Durrani, former Pak national security adviser





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- Low interest start-up loans (with interest subsidy) and flexible repayment schedule to be provided to the women entrepreneurs trained by CEDOK or recognised training institutions
- Exclusive Entrepreneurship Development Programmes for women entrepreneurs
- Attractive package of incentives offered in New Industrial Policy 2014-19 to women entrepreneurs over and above the normal package to provide a level playing field





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From the house of THE WEEK/ Malayala Manorama

THE HOMES MAGAZINE FOR MODERN LIVING
Livingetc
INDIA EDITION


NORTH KOREA

Behind the bamboo curtain

More than poverty, it is the realisation of having been kept in the dark their entire lives that drives most new-age North Koreans

BY SUN HEIDI





As I was taken from one propaganda site to another in Pyongyang, what struck me most were the things that were missing. Traffic was minimal, and the distinct noise usually attributed to similar-sized cities, was not there. There were no street vendors, not many open stores or cafes on sidewalks. And, the people I met were always busy, either hurrying past on foot or squeezed into old Russian style trams. In fact, all that I could see were the things they wanted me to see: mostly huge anonymous buildings, dotted by the portraits of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il.

Such was the image of the North

Korean capital back in 2013 when I was allowed to visit for a few days. I, however, never managed to get the complete picture as I was chaperoned by our tour guide during the day and was safely ensconced in the hotel room at night.

I have learned that since then the number of cars has increased, although reliable statistics are hard to come by. And just as I was delighted to enjoy a slice of Italian pizza on the last night of my stay, today, there are several restaurants in Pyongyang that offer western delicacies. There are malls that cater to those with just the right party credentials. As North Korean expert Andrei Lankov says, it is a form of capitalism adjacent to

Clearing hurdles: Female students of the Pyongyang International Football Academy at a training session. Despite the traditional bias against them, North Korean women are part of most activities in the state

NORTH KOREA

a Victorian economy. It is capitalism with no social guarantees. It is merciless and efficient.

The number of markets has doubled. The real estate market is booming. A good apartment in Pyongyang will set you back by at least \$1,00,000. If you are looking for something exclusive, be prepared to pay the double of that. All this, in fact, is a tribute to the entrepreneurs who successfully run these enterprises, the bourgeois of the once communist state. While political performance was the key in the past, in the new system, economic performance is rewarded.

Even though Kim Jong-un's regime claims to be communist, it no longer conforms to the classical definitions of communism. The great famine of the 1990s not only sent hundreds of thousands of innocent North Koreans prematurely into their graves, but it also shook the foundations of the ideological principles that prevented North Korea from developing a market economy. Now, market economy has become the sole route to survival. The great famine, therefore, represents an important turning point in the history of North Korea, reshaping the way of thinking for future generations.



AP

Some of the young defectors I recently met said they belonged to this new generation, “the generation of the market”. And, they were quite blunt about the fact that it wasn't poverty that made them flee. “In North Korea, I lived in a big house. In Seoul, I live in a tiny flat,” they would say, underscoring the point that it was an entirely different trade-off that had made them defect from a relatively good life.

The quiet influx of television sets, radios, USB sticks, DVDs and such consumer goods has been a soothing way to keep Pyongyang's rising middle class content. Making sure that the elite can enjoy certain privileges has always been an effective way of keeping people in line. However, in North Korea, it might have had just the opposite effect.

Young defectors said it was the initial innocent addiction to South Korean soap operas and the habit of secretly tun-



GETTY IMAGES

Balancing act: A bartender at work in Pyongyang; (left) Foreign diplomats plant trees next to a high-rise in the city

ing in to radio programmes from the South that turned them against the regime. It was the life-changing realisation of having been kept in the dark their entire lives. There were parents who knew they could no longer raise their children with the prospect of them growing up in this anachronistic backyard of the world. “We got a radio only in 1999. We didn't even know it was 1999 as North Korea is run by its own calendar,” said a defector.

These young defectors were different from the ones I have encountered before. I have interviewed defectors behind closed curtains in the comfort of darkness in some of China's unremarkable border regions. I have also spent time with defectors in Seoul, seeing how they struggled to adapt to a world which has accelerated at least half a century ahead. As these people contemplated an unknown future in South Korea, there were always the stories of struggle and constant hunger, which was an inseparable, pathological part of them. These were

Red alert

With very few reliable data available, assessing the size and nature of North Korea's economy is a guessing game. According to a recent study by the Korea Development Institute, a South Korean think tank, nearly 93 per cent of North Korean households have no access to electricity and they rely on firewood or coal. The \$25 billion North Korean economy is largely reliant on mining, metallurgy, textiles and fisheries for the bulk of its revenue. China and South Korea are the largest trading partners, together accounting for more than 90 per cent of the total trade. Although North Korea remains a centrally planned economy, Kim Jong-un has tacitly introduced market reforms in the country.

the stereotypical defectors we were familiar with. And these people, nearly two-thirds of them women, would get baffled when I asked them a casual, but inconsiderate question: When you were a kid, what was your dream? I didn't have any dream, they would answer, and look at me profoundly confused, and I would bite my tongue.

But now, we have a new generation of defectors who shed a different kind of light on North Korea. It is not that the stories of a few privileged kids negate the consistent reports on human rights abuse, the recurring food shortages, the prevalent malnutrition and the occasional devastating floods. But they show that Kim Jong-un is fighting another battle, one that takes place within his own ranks.

And it presents the young dictator, who enjoys basketball and Hollywood movies, a severe dilemma. On the one hand, he needs to ensure that future generations of North Koreans are content. In his speeches, he now mentions the youth frequently. In fact, Kim Jong-un now makes more references to the youth than to his

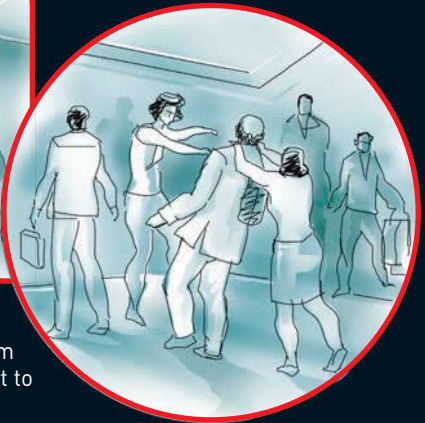
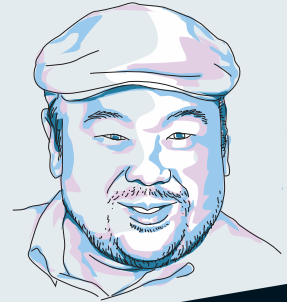
Unfair treatment

Women are expected to participate fully in the labour force in North Korea, especially because of labour shortage. However, there is no equality between men and women workers. Women workers are mostly engaged in low-paying light industries. And, in offices, they are mostly engaged in secretarial jobs. The North Korean society remains highly patriarchal. Women, for instance, are expected to handle all household work. They are discouraged from visiting other houses on January 1 as they are considered to be an ill omen. If the first customer of the day is a woman, it is considered to be bad luck for a shop.

Death of a 'brother'

Kim Jong-nam, half-brother of Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un, was murdered in Malaysia, sparking a cold war between the two countries

The eldest son of former North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, Jong-nam was exiled by his father in 2003



The attack

- On February 13, Kim Jong-nam was at the Kuala Lumpur airport to catch a flight to Macau
- A CCTV footage revealed two women approaching him from opposite directions
- One woman grabs him from behind, and the other seems to rub or spray something on his face. Then they scamper away
- Kim seeks help from security and is led to the airport's medical centre
- An ambulance is called and Kim dies en route to hospital

The probe

- Two days later, Malaysian police arrested two suspects
- One detainee said that she was paid to do it and thought it was a prank
- Traces of VX, a toxic nerve agent, were found during the postmortem
- VX can be fatal through skin contact or inhalation
- South Korean officials insist that the murder was ordered by Kim Jong-un

The spat

- North Korea had opposed an autopsy, but Malaysia ignored it
- The incident led to the collapse of a cordial association between the two countries
- Malaysia later expelled the North Korean ambassador
- The Koreans then banned Malaysians from leaving North Korea until the matter is resolved

NORTH KOREA

Battle of nerves



BY FRED KAPLAN

For all the storm and turmoil that have kept this president in a near-constant state of agitation, Donald Trump has not yet faced any crises (other than those of his own making) or made a

single decision on foreign policy. This may be about to change, after North Korea tested four ballistic missiles on March 6, once again flouting UN Security Council resolutions that ban such tests and elevating the threat to South Korea and Japan.

Even before the latest missile tests, the US National Security Council had embarked on a policy review, examining options such as patient containment and preemptive strikes. And though the senior members of Trump's national security team have little or no experience in Asia Pacific issues, a few midlevel officials with deep expertise have survived the post-Obama purges and departures.

Still, as Trump recently discovered when he looked at health care for more than a minute, this stuff about nukes and North Korea is complicated. Bombing North Korea's nuclear facilities and missile sites might be tempting, except for three things: Some of these facilities are buried underground or inside mountains; the location of others is a mystery; and any such strike would be an act of war, possibly prompting a wave of attacks on US bases and allies in the region. The retaliation wouldn't necessarily be with nukes—North Korea has thousands of artillery rockets, some loaded with chemical warheads, many within range of the American garrison in Seoul, just 60km from the border.

During the presidential campaign, Trump said he would solve the problem of North Korea by pressuring China to get rid of Kim Jong-un, or at least get him to disarm. Though China's leaders are growing increasingly impatient with Kim's antics, they don't want to oust him from power (which is what forcibly removing his nukes would require) for three reasons. First, China would face a humanitarian crisis in its scantily populated northwest region, as millions of North Koreans flee the ensuing anarchy. Second, China values North Korea as a buffer between American allies and its own border. Third, compelling US air and naval forces to maintain a presence in northeast Asia limits their firepower in the South China Sea and Taiwan straits, where China's vital interests reside.

President Bill Clinton did put a halt to North Korea's

Shooting match: Kim Jong-un inspecting a multiple-rocket launching drill

REUTERS



nuclear programme with the Agreed Framework, signed in 1994, and shortly before he left office came close to wrapping up an accord to bar ballistic missiles. When George W. Bush was elected president, his vice president Dick Cheney thought the Pyongyang regime—then led by Kim Jong-un's father, Kim Jong-il, who had inherited the throne from his father, Kim Il-sung—would crumble after witnessing America's swift defeat of Saddam Hussein's army in Iraq. Yet, Kim Jong-il held firm.

When Kim Il-sung first set out to build a nuclear programme in the 1980s or early 90s, he may have been looking primarily for a bargaining chip—leverage to acquire economic aid, energy assistance and diplomatic recognition. The first two Kims had a pattern of negotiating—there was a way to get them to an agreement—and a few of Clinton's aides decoded the pattern. But the current leader, far more paranoid and sadistic than his predecessors, may be beyond suasion or influence. The old methods probably won't work.

Some hold out the prospect of a negotiated freeze on North Korea's nuclear programme. On the one hand, it's a bit late: Pyongyang already has the material for at least a dozen nuclear bombs. On the other hand, there is no evidence that they have shaped and reduced this material in a package that could fit on the tip of a missile. So if a deal included a freeze on missiles, and could be verified, it might be worth a try. But there are no signs right now that Kim Jong-un would be open to such a deal. His grandfather fashioned a strategic posture that he likened to "a shrimp among whales"—a tiny, impoverished country that gains power, and maintains independence, by playing its larger neighbours off one another. The approach has borne fruit, and still does; why should he give up anything?

Kaplan is an American author and journalist



GETTY IMAGES

father and grandfather, to whom he owes his position as the supreme leader of North Korea. However, Kim also knows that with economic

growth comes the demand for merchandise associated with a higher standard of living. The porous border with China has for years allowed people with just the right money and contacts to buy themselves a cellphone or get their hands on some of the hugely popular South Korean entertainment material. While such indulgences can invite harsh penalties, those responsible for enforcing the rules, too, are often guilty of the same crimes. So they tend to look away, and let the perpetrators get away with a warning.

Kim Jong-un is aware of the threat and he is exploring options to defeat this soft infiltration. But nuclear weapons and missile systems are not going to help.

Rush hour: A busy metro station in Pyongyang

So border controls have been tightened. Jammers have been set up to block cellphones that can connect to Chinese networks, there are regular house searches in the border regions, fencing is beefed up and families of the defectors are punished severely. Such measures have ensured that the numbers of defectors have plummeted to just a third of the 2,000-3,000 annually, which was the case earlier.

Kim Jong-un is also using his propaganda apparatus to appeal to his people not to make the “fateful mistake” of defection. In his new year’s address to the nation, Kim Jong-un uncharacteristically mentioned that he felt heavy-hearted thinking of what needed to be done to serve the North Korean people better. He even said he was feeling distressed about his “shortcomings”.

Now it remains to be seen how truthful his sentiments are. ♦

Stale tale

As with everything else, entertainment, too, is state controlled in North Korea. There are four television channels, all owned by the state. Even the most popular one, Korean Central Television, has little variety in programmes. Movies and shows are repeated regularly. All programmes are mandated to reflect state values like loyalty to the leader and the party. Movies also follow this pattern. According to available estimates, around five films are made annually in the country. The army has a film production unit, which focuses on making war films. It also provides soldiers as extras. Because of the restrictive and repetitive nature of the fare on offer, most North Koreans opt to watch soaps and movies from South Korea, despite the threat of harsh penalties.

A full-page photograph showing a leopard with a distinctive spotted coat walking down a weathered stone wall. In the foreground, a man with dark, curly hair and a beard, wearing a black long-sleeved shirt, is looking down at the leopard. His right arm is extended towards the animal. To the right, another person is partially visible, wearing a black shirt with the number '16' in white. The background consists of dense green foliage and trees. The overall scene suggests a close encounter between humans and a wild animal in a semi-urban or rural setting.

Spotted in town

A leopard has a day out in Kannur

BY KARTHIK RAVINDRANATH

There is never a dull day in Kannur, say the people of this north Kerala town. Even so, March 5 turned out to be more eventful than anyone had imagined.

Around 3pm on that Sunday someone spotted a leopard in a busy area near the Thayatheru lower primary school. As people screamed in panic and excitement the leopard ran through the bylanes of residential areas, mauled people who happened to be in its way and hid in a thicket near a railway overbridge. One of its victims, K.K. Nabith, 44, was seriously injured.

As the news spread, hundreds crowded the place. Many of them feared that the roar of any passing train would frighten the leopard into charging wildly out of the thicket and attacking more people. Among them was 23-year-old Navaneet Krishnan, a volunteer for Malabar Awareness and Rescue Centre for wildlife. Navaneet and his friends Mufeed and Sandeep—they help the forest department rescue wild animals spotted in inhabited places—approached the spot cautiously. They surveyed the thicket from a distance but could not see the animal. Just as their back was turned, the leopard charged and mauled Mufeed.

“I was barely two metres from the leopard and have survived to tell the tale,” said Navaneet. “It is unreal. As a volunteer I have dealt with less dangerous animals but this is my first experience with a leopard. I think it is an experience for life.”

Leopard in town came as a surprise to forest officers. “When information reached us that a leopard had entered Kannur town, at first we didn’t believe it because there is no forest within 40km of Kannur,” said Shrawan Kumar Verma, chief conservator of forests. “But when the caller said a person was injured, the Rapid Response Team rushed to the spot.”

The police and forest officers struggled to disperse the crowd, which was trying to get a glimpse of the animal and take photographs and even selfies. “But other than this, the behaviour of the crowd was exemplary,” said Verma. Within a few hours Dr Arun Zachariah, forest veterinary officer, Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, arrived with a tranquilliser gun. “I was called in around 5pm and started the operation about three hours later,” he said.



Man vs wild: The tranquillised leopard being taken away by forest officers; (facing page) in attack mode

By then, the residents got some fishermen to throw nylon fishing nets on the thicket. When the team led by Zachariah was ready, the net was raised a little and they drove a jeep into the thicket. The area had been lit up by the fire force and, using search lights, the tranquilliser team spotted the leopard and fired the dart.

As it fell, the vet examined it—he declared that it was a male, about six or seven years old, healthy and without external injuries.

But how could the leopard reach the heart of the town? One good guess is that it came on a truck from Karnataka, as a stowaway. Zachariah said instances of leopards reaching cities were not unheard of. “Leopards are a highly versatile species. It is an edge [edge of the forest] species unlike the tiger, which is a core [deep forest] species. Leopards move with river ecosystems and this brings them close to man and eventually they are spotted,” he said. Such visitations, he said, would happen again.

District forest officer Sunil Pamidi told THE WEEK that the leopard was taken to the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary in Thiruvananthapuram. It had a vet for company during the journey.

One good guess is that the leopard came on a truck from Karnataka, as a stowaway.



Shooting a leopard, a photo-feature of award-winning pictures from THE WEEK archives.
<https://goo.gl/Vkf41c>

LUXURY

**ROOM WITH A VIEW:**

Amrut Mahal—a dining experience in a heritage building by the lake—at The Leela Palace Udaipur



SUBTLE *DOES* IT

Luxury living in India is undergoing a transformation—no more outlandish displays, just understated elegance

BY NEHA S. BAJPAI



he lore of the 'Little Black Dress' dates back to 1926 when Gabrielle 'Coco' Chanel redefined elegance with a short, simple, no-frills number in black. Shorn of any ornamentation, the dress reinstated

black as the colour of sophistication and not of mourning.

In the post-World War Parisian society, Chanel's creation ushered in a chic simplicity. It offered a liberation of sorts for fashionable ladies fretting over the trailing flounces of silk skirts and stiff satin gowns. The most defining moment for the 'LBD' came when Audrey Hepburn patronised the style in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. From Jacqueline Kennedy to Princess Diana to Jennifer Aniston, a little black dress has been a wardrobe staple for



women from all walks of life for over nine decades now.

Chanel would have approved of today's trends. Far from the fussy, overblown bling of the 1990s, luxury living today is all about sophisticated simplicity. The lust for labels is gradually giving way to the love for local. Ethical, culturally rich experiences in food, travel and hospitality are defining the new norms for luxury across the globe. "Instead of prizing logos, consumers are moving towards products which are unique and personalised, like Burberry's 'The Rucksack' that includes your initials on the bag or British jewellery brand Loquet's lockets that can be filled with tiny gems and personal items," says Diana Verde Nieto, founder of Positive Luxury, a London-based company that is helping brands like Dior, Fendi and Dom Pérignon to have a positive impact on society and environment. "Nowadays people want inclusive exclusivity. They want to feel that they belong to a community and/or a movement, yet they want their experience with the brands to be exclusive."

For the longest time, luxury exemplified everything from high comfort to rarity to extravagance and more. However, for people who have been there and done that, luxury now is a way to self-enrichment and sensory satisfaction. It is not about

how much you spend on an experience but what you actually learn from it. "Most of my clients want to reconnect with nature during their vacations," says Quentin Desurmont, founder of Traveller Made, a Paris-based group of travel designers from 55 countries. "They like visiting destinations like New Zealand and experiencing an encounter with the Maori warriors in a sacred reserve. The vibrant, perceived violence reminds us that communicating with

the tribes in ancient times was a very delicate and dangerous mission. The tour ends with a warm welcome by Maori families, followed by an explanation of their ancestral rituals."

Though at a nascent stage, luxury living in India, too, is undergoing a transformation. From an increased interest in knowing stories behind product creation to giving up traditional indulgences for immersive experiences, the rich and the famous are gradually opening up to niche brands. "Looking for authentic indigenous travel experiences, more travellers are now staying at inde-

pendent, local hotels," says Saurabh Rai, executive vice president (South Asia, Middle East, Africa and Australasia), Preferred Hotels & Resorts. "These independent hotels deliver the authenticity of a destination, featuring the unique characteristics of specific cultures within their own brand of hospitality that allows discerning travellers to 'live like the

**Ethical, culturally
rich experiences
in food, travel and
hospitality are
defining the new
norms for luxury.**





WATCH OUT: (Anticlockwise from above) Omega Globemaster Annual Calendar; the Good Earth Husn-e-Taairaat collection in collaboration with designer Rohit Bal; expedition cruises to the Arctic are on many a traveller's list today



locals'. So they get a true sense of their destination, even if they don't get the chance to explore outside, which can be the case on many business trips."

Over the last two years, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has reported a growing demand for experiential travel from its high-profile guests. "Emotional travel experiences are becoming the hallmark of luxury hospitality space. A major reason for our guests appreciating The Leela experience is the way in which we introduce them to the destination and showcase bespoke experiences that are not

ordinarily available," says its president Rajiv Kaul.

From culinary sojourns to spiritual journeys to local sights and culture trips, The Leela has experts to help guests make the most of each destination. "We also make the hotel's environment and its landscaped green spaces central to the guest experience of India. We plan to continue to surprise and delight our discerning guests with touches that reveal the multi-layered richness of India," says Kaul.

Pegged at around \$15 billion, the luxury market in India is largely driven by millennials who dig deep into brand stories and value enrichment over materialism any day. "Millennials are a coveted demographic for luxury brands. An increasingly aspirational lifestyle, digital awareness and greater purchasing power drive the majority of youth across the globe to acquire their luxury preferences. They command luxury as a way of living, but avoid anything that is too pompous or over the top," says Dinaz Madhukar, senior vice president, DLF Luxury Retail & Hospitality. "Brands that convey their heritage, ethos and contemporary relevance are more successful and preferred by this lot. Brands see smaller, fewer purchases converting into larger, significant buys over the period. We have also observed a significant increase in the number of millennials at the DLF Emporio in the recent past. They focus more on trend as their luxury purchases are fostered by social media and are not confined to a particular brand."

Epitomising a new vocabulary for luxury, which is Indian and sustainable yet global in its appeal, Good Earth has been selling emotionally satisfying and superlative retail experiences to its clients for more than two decades. "For us, luxury is thoughtful design and refined artisanal skills coupled with an enchanting retail experience," says Anita Lal, creative director, Good Earth. "We have seen that the millennial returns to Good Earth for curated gift offerings for every occasion. Keeping this in mind, we will be introducing more options for occasional gifting this year. Our 'Husn-e-Taairaat' collection was a collaboration with designer Rohit Bal to bring a special home and apparel capsule collection. The collection was interesting for young, urban millennials looking to add a piece of the Rohit Bal signature to their arsenal of style, in the easy-to-enjoy Good Earth aesthetic of everyday luxury."

So, go for the slow, steady and the stunning. Let your luxuries be a secret self-discovery this year. ■

LUXURY/PANELLISTS



Top of the line

Luxury connoisseurs who helped us cherry-pick the best from six categories

VIVEK NAIR, chairman and MD, Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts is a consummate hotelier with over three decades in luxury hospitality. He is well-known for advocating for India as a top tourist destination of the world. When not travelling to Dubai, London, Paris or New York, he is mostly at home with his family and friends, enjoying a rare glass of vintage wine.



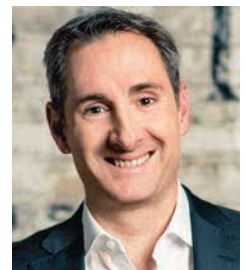
GAURAV BHATIA, MD, Sotheby's, India, inherited an impeccable taste in fashion, food and art from his grandmother, who was called the 'Rose of Awadh'. From old Jamini Roy sketches to a 150-year-old hand-knotted Isfahan carpet, the champagne expert's most precious collectibles exude timeless elegance and class.



KALYANI CHAWLA, vice president, marketing and communications, Christian Dior Couture, India, is known for her razor-sharp insights on style and aesthetics. When not shuttling between Mumbai, Paris and New York, Kalyani plays the gracious hostess, throwing lavish dos at her stunning home in New Delhi.



STÉPHANE DE MEURVILLE, managing director of Moët Hennessy, India, is a man of many passions—fitness, food, music, interiors and more. A huge Roger Federer fan, he has been with Moët Hennessy for over 20 years and moved from Canada to India just last year.



PAVAN SHETTY, director, Porsche India: From selling newspaper subscriptions to being Lamborghini's first hire in India, Shetty's journey to the top has been nothing less than a fast and furious adventure. An avid traveller, Shetty has a weakness for hotels in the hills and customised stays.



ALESSANDRO MAFFI, managing director, Van Cleef & Arpels, Middle East and India, has been a key narrator of the maison's extraordinary craftsmanship seen in high jewellery and complicated timepieces. He is a keen follower of trends in art and fashion.



REMY JULIA, head of watches for Christie's in Middle East, India and Africa: One of the most sought-after watch specialists at Christie's, Julia has been in the business of luxury brand management for over a decade now.



LUXURY/BRANDS

GUEST COLUMN/ GAUTAM SINHA

Scarcity is luxury



achieving sophisticated simplicity is easier said than done. We, as Indians, have always had this fear of going simple without losing the essence of who, what or where we are from, especially when you come from a land so rich in its culture, traditions and colour. It

is an art to find that balance. I think more than anything it is the part of creating something that you truly believe in. If you are true to yourself and believe in your vision, people gravitate towards that energy.

At Nappa Dori, I have always believed in creating things that are not too in your face, but at the same time leave an emotional connect with our clients. It is on those emotions that you can build a relationship, which is more important than selling a product.

I have a golden rule at our studio: make things that transcend time; products that age and build character just like their owners. We don't do seasonal products, we do things that would be classics in time. I am not a believer in fast fashion, that you need to churn out hundreds of designs every single minute to stay relevant in this day and age. Scarcity is luxury as well. People need to realise that. It is not finding the same thing in every single place; it is about finding the one special thing which is truly luxurious.

I feel the world is at a very peculiar place in terms of luxury, where there is a movement towards small homegrown, handmade, handcrafted products, taking pride in where you are from and belong to. People want to live healthier; words like vegan, gluten free, organic are more common now than ever. All these things are indicators of how and what 'we' as new-age shoppers are inclined towards, and that reflects in every industry. The quicker you are to adapt to this, the better it is for your business. Knowing your end customer is not about just knowing their age or where they live, but also what they like, especially in India, which has the youngest consumer base—more than 70 per cent of the population is under 35 years of age.

Building brand loyalty is super important in this day and age. It is the time of instant gratification; you could be the 'in thing' one day and be completely



irrelevant the very next day, especially with the global scenario and how the country went through demonetisation that made people extremely cautious about what they spent on. Brands like us need to give something more to the customers than just a lavish product; they need to feel invested in the product and the story it carries and the experience they have from the time of entering the store to the time they make the purchase.

It is important for brands to stop building their strategy based on trends, like what happened with 'Indian kitsch'. I hate the word kitsch or quirky; they make my blood boil. Brands have tried building their entire business models on these lines. We have tried staying far away from being described as such; what we do is a lot more refined and is rooted in rich craft and a sense of nostalgia. There is a sense of connect that one feels when one picks up a product from our brand. I strongly believe it is important for brands to know their DNA and to build on that. You don't need to be everything to everyone. Be that 'one thing' that everyone wants. That's where lies the difference in creating something truly luxurious. It is not the price that defines it; it is the desire to acquire it.



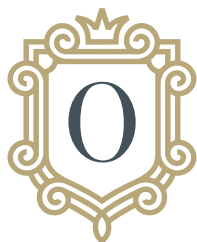
Sinha is founder, Nappa Dori.



Savouring traditions

Simple, regional delicacies with rich histories are the flavour of the season

BY NEHA S. BAJPAI



One of the fascinating culinary chronicles from the Mughal dynasty is woven around the emperor Humayun, who invited the Shah of Persia for a banquet meal of 33 Indian dishes prepared by his favourite cooks.

While the guests were thoroughly impressed with the lavish spread, there was one simple vegetarian dish they couldn't stop talking about—the Dal Khushka. A spiced version of the toor dal, smoked with clove and served with basmati and a dash of desi ghee, Dal Khushka got the Persians hooked on to this extraordinarily fragrant dish. "Apparently, the Shah of Persia was willing to give away his army and even his son for that recipe of Dal Khushka," says Gautam Anand, vice president, pre-opening services, ITC Hotels.

Inspired by many such stories from the royal kitchens of India, Gautam and his team of chefs at the ITC Hotels introduced Royal Vega in Chennai three years ago. At a time when the luxury dining scene in India was bustling with international brands and foreign cuisines, ITC took a bold step and launched an entirely vegetarian restaurant in a five-star setting.



Right from Dal Khushka to Surkh Paneer to Chandragupta Malpua, Royal Vega is all about the food of the kings, minus the meat and the terrifying calories. "Eating fresh is the principal philosophy behind this restaurant. We offer seasonal menus (Ritu Khasa), assorted thali (Ranjit Khasa) and à la carte (Arzoo Jo Mehmaan). Everything on the menu is cooked organically, ensuring the right balance between goodness and flavour," says chef Varun Mohan of ITC Grand Chola, Chennai.

Creating luxurious dining experiences for vegetarians has always been a daunting task for chefs across the globe. However, the rise of veganism and a new-found passion for ethically sourced produce have led restaurants to think beyond mock meats, tofu, paneer and salad greens for vegetarian diners. Yearning for familiar flavours and comfort food with minimal calories, today's seasoned foodie is most happy to spend a



So if a non vegetarian decides to spend anything between ₹6,000 and ₹15,000 on a meal at Royal Vega, the restaurant ensures he doesn't miss his steaks, pork or chops.

Dipping into memories and food journals, top chefs across India are going back to basics. While curating some food festivals for the Oberoi hotels, Jalali

followed fifth generation khansamas from Old Delhi and Rampur to document more than 40 recipes from the region. “Nobody wants to take the pain of cooking things in the old style and making traditional dishes these days. So the restaurants are doing it for people who want to relive their childhood memories,” says Jalali, who recently opened the Masala Trail, a vegetarian restaurant in Delhi that serves regional street food from across India.

According to Jalali, there is a lot that remains unexplored in the Indian vegetarian cuisine. “The problem is that we don’t have anything documented from the ancient Indian kitchens. Emperor Aurangzeb was a vegetarian and we discovered a fabulous kebab recipe from his time. Made with dalia and masoor dal, Burgul ke Kebab has been one of our treasured discoveries,” he says.

From diet-conscious, organic menus to the rise of regional recipes, a culinary renaissance is brewing in five-star kitchens. Cuisines from Mysore, Uttarakhand and the northeast are finding favour with young diners. At the Taj Mahal Hotel in New Delhi, chef Arun Sundararaj has been working around the Travancore cuisine, tweaking and adapting it for the north Indian palate. “The vegetarian space is always interesting because nature has given us so much to experiment with. At Varq, we have been using spinach in different forms. We have taken cues from the food of traditional Tamil brahmins and given each ingredient a lot of respect,” he says.

Not usually thought of as an obvious vegetarian option, Japanese food, too, is seeing a lot of innovation in India. At the Wasabi by Morimoto, chef Sundararaj does a lot of tofu variants for his vegetarian guests. “We create veg stuff which is similar to scallops in shape, texture and flavour. A lot of guests have started opting for the veg menu at our res-

Dipping into
memories and food
 journals, top chefs
 across India are going
 back to **basics**.





TRACING TASTE: (Anticlockwise from above)

Crispy garlic shoot tempura roll at Wasabi, the Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi; Anahita Dhondy is reviving forgotten Parsi recipes at SodaBottleOpenerWala in Mumbai; Seabuckthorn paired with black pepper mousse served at Masque in Mumbai



taurant,” he says.

Going by the popularity of its iconic restaurant, Jamavar, in India, The Leela introduced its first international outpost in London in December. Led by executive chef Rohit Ghai, who has headlined several Indian Michelin-starred kitchens in the past, Jamavar London offers creative small plates inspired by the street food markets in north and south India. “Chef Ghai has created small plates, keeping the sophisticated palate of London diners in mind,” says Samyukta Nair, head, design and operations of The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts. “Also, his deep dive into the culinary wealth of The Leela while in India has led to certain signature dishes [which are also the most popular] like Lobster Neeruli and Sindhi Gosht. So, Jamavar London reflects the essence of its siblings. Vegetarian dishes like Dal Chawal aur Achar, Jamavar Dal and Gucchi Mutter are also hugely popular among our guests.”

In an attempt to make Parsi cuisine a hit among youngsters, 25-year-old Anahita Dhondy has been travelling to small towns in Gujarat and Maharashtra hunting for forgotten Bawa recipes. “This is more like a community initiative for me. We present regional food in a friendly form. It is not just about collecting

recipes but reworking them,” says Dhondy, who is the chef manager at SodaBottleOpenerWala in Mumbai. “I recently learnt the recipe for Malido, which is like the kadha parshad offered at gurdwaras. Made with aata, besan and suji, Malido is a specialty of the priestly families in Udvada, a tiny town in Gujarat. We don’t make such things at home anymore and I want to make it accessible to the younger generation through my culinary skills.”

According to food critic and blogger Maneesh Srivastava, the experimentation is not just limited to cuisines; the cooking techniques and ingredients are also going through a new wave of innovation. “There was a time when all the top chefs were importing ingredients and kitchen supplies at an unimaginable cost, but now everything is being sourced through farms across India.” Right from creamy Burrata from Bengaluru to tuna from Andaman and salmon from Kolkata, chefs now travel to local farms to get fresh ingredients at their convenience. “A lot of Indian diners are now conscious of their responsibility towards local produce and the goodness of Indian grains, so it is a win-win situation for everyone,” says Srivastava.

Inspired by celebrity chef Dan Barber who runs a restaurant out of a barn in New York, Prateek Sadhu scoured the subcontinent for 18 months, looking for reliable ingredients to be used at his newly opened restaurant, Masque, in Mumbai. “I wanted to touch the lives of farmers in some way. We wanted the freshest, flavourful ingredients for our restaurant. So now, the cheese comes from a small town in Andhra, the olive oil from Rajasthan, asparagus from Pune and chocolate from Puducherry,” he says.

Looking for the best seabuckthorn, Sadhu went around Ladakh for a week and got back home with 60kg of those berries. His team conducted more than 50 trials and finally got the perfect pairing for the berries. “We combined it with orange, honey and lime juice to do lollies. It was sweet, tart and peppery. We paired it with a black-pepper mousse served with black pepper emulsion,” he says.

Sadhu’s next stop is going to be the northeast. “I want to learn the fermenting and preservation techniques from there. They use these unique wild leaves as a substitute for salt for preservation. There is so much you can do with the huge variety of chillies. I have a lot to do,” he says.

A typical experience at Masque is all about slow food and leisure dining. The restaurant only does tasting menus priced between ₹4,000 and ₹6,000. “Initially, it was a bit hard to sell the concept to our guests,” says Sadhu, “but we have seen a tremendous response over the past few months.” ■

TOP PICKS



DINING



GAGGAN, Bangkok: Third time winner of 'Asia's 50 Best Restaurant' award, this restaurant helmed by Kolkata-born chef Gaggan Anand has put Indian cuisine on the world map like never before. The fun menu, elaborated with emoji, serves up arresting combinations (think charcoal coated vada pavs and egg bhurji soufflé) plated in the most artistic ways.

NUSR-ET, Four Seasons Resort in Dubai at Jumeirah Beach, for a dining experience unlike any other and for being a master creation of the renowned Chef Nusret Gökçe.

JOËL ROBUCHON in Paris, a 2-star Michelin restaurant known for its unique dining concepts.

EL BULLI, Spain: While naysayers have written molecular gastronomy off, Chef Ferran Adrià's creative quest is still at the top of the game. The meditative attention to detail, simplicity of presentation as well as the fabulous location made El Bulli a mecca of creativity and inspired innovation.



NOMA in Denmark stood out year after year for its fabulous reinvention of Nordic cuisine for the global gourmand. Food lovers across the world are waiting in anticipation for this legend's return in mid-2017.



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LUXURY/FASHION & ACCESSORIES

No frills attached

Luxury wear is all about minimalism and functionality now

BY NEHA S. BAJPAI



Street-style, easy luxury is going to be the buzzword in runway shows this year. Until a few years ago, designers would dictate the right length of a skirt or the perfect pair of shoes to go with a gown; however, fashion is getting more democratic now. So much

so that one could sport a shiny pair of sneakers with a glamorous, lacy dress and no one would care.

Right from Alexander Wang to Louis Vuitton and Oscar de la Renta, everyone is embracing simpler themes with functional designs for their collections. Running high on retro vibes, most fashion houses are going for arty pop, metallic colours, pleats, polka dots, sheer fabrics and ruffles. While pink, yellow and silver would be high on popularity, pale blue, beige and other soft colours will also have their moment this year. "Be it parties or picnics, people want to look cool in everyday wear now. So you could pair a bomber jacket with a dress and slip-ons and it would be perfectly in sync with the trend these days," says Priya Sachdev, director of TSG International, which retails upcoming brands through its online portal Rock N Shop. "Bags with personalised stickers or cartoon tags are also high on demand. Today's luxury is all about casual cool."



In resonance with the millennials, fashion is getting less finicky and less cumbersome. "Most of our online shoppers are youngsters who want to look stylish and fashionable, but they don't want to spend too much on the big luxury brands. So, we showcase a good mix of Indian and international designers on Rock N Shop," says Sachdev. "The average value of an order at our portal is anything between ₹25,000 and ₹80,000. Besides Hemant and Nandita, Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna, we have Katherine Kwei, Barbara Bonner, Oscar de la Renta, Dion Lee and Edie Parker."

Going by the huge popularity of athleisure last year, fashion houses like Chanel, Dior, Gucci, Balenciaga



TIMELY PIECES: (Anticlockwise from above) A Hublot Classic Fusion Berluti Scritto Platinum; a Classique Hora Mundi by Breguet; a model sports a Ritu Kumar creation. People prefer simpler prints and light fabrics that are elegant, says Kumar



and Stella McCartney are now rolling out seductive luxury sportswear lines. “One has to take this category seriously. You not only have the big luxury brands jumping on the bandwagon but also have traditional sportswear brands like Nike and Adidas collaborating with brands like Stella McCartney and Balmain,” says Sachdev. “They are presenting the best of both worlds—fashion and fitness—through an innovative product range endorsed by the likes of Beyonce and Kanye West.”

The sway towards relaxed luxury wear is encouraging even traditional brands like Corneliani to experiment with newer fabrics and pragmatic designs.

“Fusion wear is the new approach to bridge the gap between the world of business wear and luxury casual garments. Fabrics that are super soft and extremely breathable will be high on demand,” says Prem Dewan, retail head, OSL Luxury Collections Pvt Ltd-Corneliani. “At Corneliani, we would continue to offer de-structured and multifunctional fabrics, creating ultralight and extraordinarily elastic garments that are both practical as well as attractive.”

Minimalism is a prominent theme for the Indian ethnic wear, too. Florals and tiny intricate detailing will be a crowd favourite this year. With young brides getting more experimental, one would see a lot of crop tops and off-shoulder tops paired with saris and lehengas. “People no longer find extensive gold detailing appealing and prefer simpler prints and light fabrics that are classic and elegant. Comfort and simplicity are preferred over flair,” says designer Ritu Kumar.

While most luxury brands in India reeled under the demonetisation drive and the new PAN card rule that forced buyers to furnish their bank account details for any transaction over ₹2 lakh, women’s accessories, jewellery, watches and fragrances turned out to be the saviours for the market last year. “The luxury watch business took a hit of almost 40 per cent in the first quarter of 2016. However, by April, most wealthy customers had warmed up to the idea of swiping credit cards along with PAN details,” says Anil Madan, director, Johnson Watch Company. “There was a lull in sales post the demonetisation drive but now the market is heading towards stabilisation. People are going for sophisticated designs and elegant timepieces; they don’t want to be seen as pompous anymore.”

Subtlety is the order of the day even for luxury watch brands like Hublot, which has always been known for its big, bold and funky design. Last year, the brand collaborated with the Parisian luxury leather brand Berluti to present the Classic Fusion Berluti timepiece. Available in a black and brown version, the watches are limited to 500 and 250 pieces, respectively, and priced at ₹20 lakh (approx).

The future of luxury is going to be dominated by visionary brands which can exploit the power of the internet, says Diana Verde Nieto, founder of Positive Luxury. “Mobile messaging apps like Snapchat have been embraced by brands wanting to please young luxury consumers hungry for access to catwalk shows, ad campaign stars and limited edition products,” she says. “Brands are tapping into the ability of services like WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger to create exclusive customer relationships. Millennials have an appetite for luxury, but the way they buy is changing, and technology is going to play a significant role here.” ■

TOP PICKS

FASHION
& ACCESSORIES**VAN CLEEF & ARPELS
LADY ARPELS BALLERINE
ENCHANTÉE D'ORIENT WATCH:**

Following in the footsteps of the ballerinas and fairies, the timepiece perpetuates the tradition of fluid movement, lightness and refinement. The time on the dial is displayed by the movement of the ballerina's tutu dress. The timepiece is limited to just 22 pieces.

HERMES TIES: The legendary silk ties from Hermes define meticulous craftsmanship and luxurious materials. At least a dozen designers work on the pattern and colour, and once the look is finalised, they hand-stencil it onto silk.

BRIONI SUITS: A favourite of Donald Trump and James Bond, the Brioni suits are made of the super-luxurious Vanquish II fabric, produced by UK-based Dormeuil. They make just 100 of these handmade suits a year and the suit's stitching is made of white gold.

LEIBER PRECIOUS ROSE

BAG: Designed in the shape of a rose, this bag is priced at \$92,000 and is made of 1,169 sapphires and diamonds. There is just one unique piece available in the world.

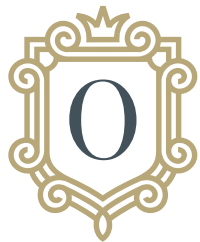
**A VINTAGE ROLEX DAYTONA REF 6263:**

Touted as the most desired Paul Newman Daytona, the Reference 6263 with its panda dial commands the top tier at auctions. Reportedly, there are less than 20 black dial screw-down Paul Newmans available in the market. So when they come up for sale, they do extremely well.

LUXURY/FASHION

GUEST COLUMN/ **RAGHAVENDRA RATHORE**

The eternal romance of bandhgala



Originating from the unstructured angarkha outfits during the British Raj days, bandhgala was created to give a structured look with due importance to the pants because of its short jacket style appearance. A bandhgala has now become a must-have in every man's wardrobe. The fact that it can be worn on any occasion makes it a wardrobe intrinsic. The ultimate benefit of owning a bandhgala is that it can flatter any body type and promises a royal look.

Best worn with yellow buttons and a customised pocket scarf, the bandhgala jacket is the epitome of Asian style. It has managed to position itself as an ultimate formal attire and equally an informal casual jacket that can be paired with denims.

With our constant endeavour to reinvent our patented bandhgala year after year, it has now become one of the most versatile outfits in the world that can be worn from Mumbai to Manhattan. Behind the journey of the bandhgala and its inclusion in the 'Hall of Fame' of fashion as the Nehru jacket is an interesting lore. The 'Prince Coat', as it was known before Nehru's legacy, has evolved steeply from its patriarch, the angarkha. Inspired by the Persian culture, angarkha set the stage for wardrobe of many royal states; but with British imposition, the need of formalising this style was replaced by a formal and tapered version—achkan.

With changing time, the idea of wearing an achkan as formals was soon replaced by British fashion influences of western jackets or suits during leisure events or gatherings because of its comfort. The successor—bandhgala—was more comfortable and easily manageable. It became effortlessly acceptable, as it synthesised charmingly with the British code of clothing yet maintained the Indian charm.



Still struggling to coin a name for this remarkable outfit post war, people finally named bandhgala after Nehru, following the first Indian prime minister's visibility in the newsreels which were played across Europe and the Americas. The Nehru jacket had arrived on the global scene, with chock-full recognition as an iconic Indian silhouette.

With a little help from James Bond, the bandhgala was further cemented in the minds of millions globally as the 'it' clothing from India—Sean Connery wore a Nehru jacket as Dr No's captured guest.

On the political canvas, politicians, too, patronised the look, which quickly trickled down to the grassroots. The entry of polyester in 1960s and 1970s helped every man own a bandhgala. However, to maintain its originality, our label, for which the bandhgala is a trademark product, set a mandate to preserve the original patterns by copywriting them and ensuring to preserve the heritage of the classic pattern, and thus holding onto a piece of history.

What really defines the ultimate Nehru style bandhgala is that it must be handmade, the cut and the fit must be prepared on the client's body to mould the shape of the chest as was the original pattern, and lastly the technique of factoring comfort between the shoulders and the chest area must be complied with. This is the key that gives the jacket its tenacity and the distinct masculine look.

So, stepping away from the rarity of products being associated with personalities, surely the bandhgala Nehru jacket makes an exception in more ways than one—synonymous with aristocracy, classic dressing, the brand that we are at Raghavendra Rathore, and above all, synonymous with India.



Rathore is a fashion designer.

LUXURY/HOMES



Watch this space

Local, handmade products are giving Indian homes a strong sense of identity

BY NEHA S. BAJPAI



JANAK BHAT

COMFORT ZONE: Gauri Narang at her Colaba home in Mumbai. The Narangs' love for travel is reflected in their vast repertoire of collectibles from the world over



e calls it '15,556'. An exquisite exhibition of 26 chairs, tables, benches, screens and lighting, '15,556' encapsulates architect Rooshad Shroff's research on design over the last five years. "The name of the exhibition denotes the number of man-

hours that went into the making of this collection. It is an acknowledgment of the time and skill involved in creating these handcrafted products," says Shroff, who has been pushing traditional craftsmen to create unexpected contemporary objects with an Indian soul.

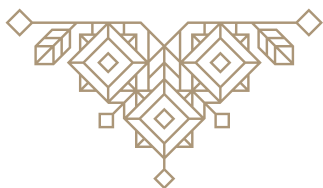
One of the highlights of his recently concluded exhibition in Delhi were wooden chairs embroidered with zardozi and French knots, a technique that Shroff has patented. "In India, we have the luxury of having an abundance of craft at our disposal. However, it is treated more like a souvenir and has not been elevated to a new level," says Shroff. "With the embroidered chairs [₹2.4 lakh], we have pushed the extremes for the craftsmen. The precision and expertise of the carpenters, too, was challenged. We also pushed geometric boundaries with marble carvings by making monolithic chunks of marble and creating bulbs out of them."

There was a time when Indians obsessed over importing furniture from Italy, rugs from Istanbul and antiques from Paris. Those with deep pockets hardly considered the Indian design labels to do up homes. However, with the growing desire to have something simple, elegant and exclusive, visionary homeowners are now turning to Indian designers with a strong sense of identity. "There was a period when plastic and fabrication techniques were huge, but now people are giving preference to natural, handmade products. Although 90 per cent of my clients are French, I hope, over time, Indians would appreciate the craft and its slow production," says Shroff, who worked with architectural firms such as REX, New York, and Zaha Hadid Architects, London, before starting his own firm in Mumbai in 2011.

Encouraged by young, urban consumers who are willing to experiment with some edgy furniture designs, Gunjan Gupta presented the 'Kissa Kursi



Bulbs carved out of monolithic chunks of marble—a Rooshad Shroff creation.



Ka—a chairy tale' at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale. Over the past decade, she has played around with the idea of sculptural chairs through various mediums. From the 'Aloo Bori' sofa set to the Gadda Chair to the Dining Throne, Gunjan's creations for the biennale traces the evolution of the chair in India. "Most people are done with elaborate interiors these days. They have an intelligent understanding of space and want statement pieces that define

their personality. The combination of old and new works best for my clients. For instance, the Bori sofa is a textured installation of jute sacks filled with foam potatoes that are deceptively comfortable. People want an element of Indianness, which is not ethnic," says Gunjan, who is widely popular for her seats and tables, consoles and coffee tables.

Mumbai-based Gauri and Mikhil Narang wanted their home to be a reflection of their lives, childhood, individuality and togetherness. So when they actually got down to doing up their ancestral home in Colaba, each corner was carefully developed to suit their lifestyle. "Mikhil wanted a home that reminded him of his life in Paris. So, we began with that thought and just kept developing further. With a combination of great craftsmanship, Victorian mouldings, old Burma teak and brass hardware, we were able to achieve what we wanted," says Gauri, managing director, iPurple.

The Narangs' love for travel, too, is reflected in their vast repertoire of collectibles from the world over. "We bought art from emerging artists in Baroda, furniture including gull-wing chairs and our bed from local designers in Shanghai. Books, candles and table lamps [came] from Paris and Noritake tableware from Sri Lanka. We bought an antique finish bar from an Indian online store along with cushions and some artefacts from local boutiques in Mumbai. There is also a lot of good local talent doing custom-made and exclusive work that isn't expensive yet gives your home its own individuality," says Gauri, who also developed her own colour scheme for certain rooms in the house.

At the Bombay Atelier, the Indian context is seen in a bright metal Namaste chair (₹16,000) with the traditional palm-together greeting and an Agarbatti table (₹60,000) with metal feet that resemble incense sticks. "I think when someone buys a Bombay Atelier piece, they buy into an ideology, a culture. So now we have people who accept we have a limited range of pieces with a thought process and system behind them," says Farzin Adenwalla, founder, Bombay Atelier.

While the shift towards high-end homegrown design is at a nascent stage right now, most entrepreneurs feel the tastes of their Indian clients are at par with international connoisseurs. "Spaces are getting more interesting now," says Vikram Goyal, founder of Viya Home. "My clients here appreciate very abstract, contemporary work, which is bought by western designers, too. They want anything but the ordinary. Their appreciation for design is new but encouraging." ■

TOP PICKS



HOMES

VIYA HOME: Vikram and Divya Goyal's Viya Home is what the contemporary Indian fairy tale is made of. It is Indian and international. Always hearkening a period in design history, say, Art Deco, or giving African culture a nod with his Africa tables, or the Persepolis Wall Sconce, Viya has incredible furniture and objet d'art. The Stalactite Console is museum-worthy and can double as a slick bar, provided it's only Dom Pérignon you serve out of it.

PERIOD FURNITURE BY MAHENDRA DOSHI AND PHILLIPS ANTIQUES:

Mahendra Doshi and Phillips Antiques are the doyens of vintage colonial furniture in India. Chiki Doshi from The House of Mahendra Doshi has an impeccable eye trained under his uncle Mahendra Doshi himself. As for Phillips Antiques, Farooq Issa needs little introduction with his beautiful flagship store right in the heart of Apollo Bunder. With an Aladdin's cave full of treasure, you can spot an antique Kerala Day Bed or Pierre Jeanneret Chandigarh Chairs.

CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ART:

Contemporary Indian art is at the top of its game. Artists like Abir Karmakar, Aditi Singh, Avinash Veerarghavan, Dia Mehta Bhupal, Goutam Ghosh, Nandini Valli Muthiah, Neha Choksi, Raqs Media Collective, Rohini Devasher, Sahej Rahal, Sarnath Banerjee, Sandeep Mukherjee, Shilpa Gupta and Zakir Hussain are the new talents to look out for. The masters of the future are being created now.



MANAV PARHAWK

STAND APART: Viya Home's Stalactite Console



JEAN-BAPTISTE CARPEAUX'S LE CHINOIS OR BUST OF A CHINESE MAN:

The terracotta bust, a 1920–1939 cast of an 1872 design, is based on a much larger Carpeaux sculpture with figures representing the four continents and is now in the collection of the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

NORITAKE CROCKERY: Noritake, originating in a village of the same name near Nagoya in Japan, has been a favourite with homes, hotel chains and airlines for its delicate designs and durable quality for over 100 years now. Its diverse product range and technologically superior projects have a worldwide appeal.

LUXURY/HOMES



INTERVIEW/ GAURAV BHATIA, MANAGING DIRECTOR, SOTHEBY'S INDIA

Choosing art is like choosing a life partner

BY NEHA S. BAJPAI



What does luxury mean to you?

I believe in slow luxury—artisanal, discreet and evocative—backed by extraordinary craftsmanship and cutting-edge innovation. Art is the ultimate luxury. It is rare, a unique expression of an artist and is the

highest form of human endeavour.

That makes art luxury.

Your home is a reflection of your personal style—elegant and discreet. What draws you to a particular work of art? Is it the artist or his style or the theme?

Our home is the story of our lives, our travels, our memories, our passions, our children. It captures so many journeys and such rich ones. It is self-designed and evolved over the years.

I react organically to art—sometimes spontaneously, sometimes after deliberation. Choosing art is in many ways like choosing a life partner—it is about an instant connect, a chemistry, what appeals to you. Then you look at character and depth—how relevant is it and what conversation is it making [and] can you grow old with it?

You were just 13 when you bought your first antique

bookcase. Over the years, you have collected hundreds of antiques and artefacts from across the world. How do you designate the ideal space for each of them?

As children, we were privileged to be exposed to beautiful things. My parents would always drag my sister and me to galleries and antique shops. It was a natural osmosis. Whether they bought anything or not, I always took back a story.

Around my thirteenth birthday, I was on one of my parents' hunting trips at the cavernous godown of the stalwart Mahendra Doshi. Among all the exquisite old furniture, I fell in love with a dusty rosewood Dutch colonial bookshelf and spontaneously asked for it as my birthday present. My parents were pleasantly surprised. From then on, for every birthday, my mother tried to encourage me to buy a work of art or furniture. She realised it was a win-win for her and gave her the excuse to collect even more. The story has a sad ending. My mother kept all the pieces, and still has them in her

beautiful home. I got jilted!

What is the most precious work of art in your living room?

A painting by our older son, Abeer, made when he was five. The work is so strong it defines our dining

Our home is
the story of
our lives,
our travels,
our memories,
our passions,
our children.



SANJOY GHOSH

space. In competition, our younger son, Adhiraj, keeps dotting the house with his works of art every week, hoping we will frame one of them one day. I have to get around to doing that. Children are the best artists. **From cutting-edge contemporary art to 100-year-old rugs to Tanjores and Kalighat Pats, there is perfect harmony between diverse artistic statements at your home. How do you strike this balance?**

Our home is a slow collection built over 20 years with details even we forget.

It is self-designed, a mix of spontaneous, studied, curious, playful and accidental.

It is our passion of collecting and the inherent beauty in each object that perhaps creates what is quite an interesting juxtaposition. It is like being in a room with many beautiful and intelligent people. The conversation is bound to be invigorating!

You come from a family of art collectors. What were your most important take-aways from the previous generations?

Have a deep reverence for art, always be curious and encourage the future generation to collect. Art opens your mind in a way little else can.

Which are your go-to brands for home accessories and interiors in India?

India is an explosion of art and design that straddles its rich past and present beautifully. We collect art from galleries across India, from contemporary art to antique decorative and even folk art.

Our furniture is largely from The House of Mahendra Doshi and Phillips Antiques, dotted with new and exciting designers like Verner Panton, Marc Newson, Philippe Starck, Viya Home and Le Mill among others. ■

LUXURY/ CARS

GUEST COLUMN/ **SIMON KIDSTON**

Vintage vrooms



luxury is such an overused word in the modern era that it has almost lost any real meaning. Everywhere you look, brand names are being diluted to package and sell indifferent goods to naive consumers. Do you think the newly affluent youths paying

hundreds of dollars for a branded tee know about the heritage of the label or if any real craftsmanship went into making what they are buying? Is the object of such materialism automatically a luxury? I don't think so.

The best definition I have heard is that luxury starts where necessity stops. It is a combination of quality, exclusivity and integrity of purpose. Great patrons of the arts understand this, so do true collectors and a few engaged and interested consumers. None better epitomise this connoisseurship of beauty and luxury than the colourful maharajahs who once ruled India. The maharajahs' largesse and imagination were brought vividly to life for me when I was invited by the venerable house of Cartier to serve as chief judge at their Travel with Style Concours d'Elegance for classic cars in Hyderabad. Curator Prince Manvendra Singh Barwani had, thanks to his personal connections to the noble families of India, prised from their palace garages a dazzling selection of 60 rare motor cars and 30 motorcycles.

As any gallery or museum owner knows, context is everything when displaying a great work of art, and too many European exhibitions are rendered soulless by cavernous exhibition halls that, the following week, would be hosting insurance conventions or caravan fairs. Luckily, Cartier has friends in high places, and they don't come much higher than HH Princess Esra of Hyderabad, whose family home Falaknuma Palace provided the historic setting for the concours. It makes Donald Trump's new resi-



GIACOMO PRETZEL

dence look distinctly bijou.

Anyone looking for an antidote to modern, disposable consumerism should try to get on the VIP guest list for Cartier's next Travel with Style event. And nobody travelled with greater style than the first owners who commissioned the mechanical marvels laid out on the palace lawns for us to judge. The oldest were centenarians, the youngest from the Swinging Sixties, but all displayed inventiveness, design flair and, in some cases, luxury that 21st century oligarchs couldn't begin to fathom. How about the 'Throne Car'? It is a Rolls-Royce, of course, built just before World War I for the Nizam of Hyderabad. As the name suggests, it is meant to carry just one person at wave-to-your-subjects parade pace, which explains why it has barely covered 500 miles.

My favourite car though illustrated timeless Indian 'can do' attitude and craftsmanship even more than the skills of the British luxury carmaker who built it for an elegant Indian couple in 1948. Discovered decades later as a rusting hulk under a hedge in Assam, it changed hands for a few hundred dollars before its new owner embarked on a restoration to end all restorations. The result? A gleaming green Bristol 400 coupe that looked better than the day the first owners took delivery, rebuilt in just eight months or less time than it takes to make a baby. Its commercial value? The same as a new Porsche 911. Which do you think epitomises intrinsic value, cultural enrichment and true luxury? I will let you guess: it is the one which makes a much better dinner party story.



Kidston collects classic cars.



“त्वदीय पाद पंकजम् नमामि देवि नर्मदे”

नर्मदा सेवा यात्रा

प्रारम्भ - 11 दिसम्बर, 2016 | समापन - 11 मई, 2017
अमरकंटक में नर्मदा के दक्षिण तट से... | अमरकंटक में नर्मदा के उत्तर तट पर।



शिवराज सिंह चौहान
मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश

समाज और सरकार का सामूहिक संकल्प

- 16 जिलों के 1100 गाँवों में 3350 किलोमीटर की यात्रा।
- नर्मदा तटों पर एक किलोमीटर के दायरे में व्यापक वृक्षारोपण।
- अपने खेतों पर वृक्ष लगाने वाले किसानों को दी जायेगी 3 वर्ष तक 20 हजार रुपये प्रति हैक्टेयर की दर से सहायता।
- नर्मदा के दोनों तटों पर पांच किलोमीटर की सीमा तक नहीं होंगी शराब की दुकानें।
- नर्मदा तटों पर स्थित समस्त नगरों में सीवेज ट्रीटमेंट प्लांट हेतु 1500 करोड़ की राशि स्वीकृत।
- नर्मदा तटों के दोनों तरफ 1 किलोमीटर की सीमा में स्थित सभी ग्राम होंगे ओडीएफ।
- नर्मदा सेवा कार्यों को स्थायित्व देने के लिए प्रत्येक ग्राम पंचायत में नर्मदा सेवा समिति का गठन।

मध्यप्रदेश की
जीवनदायिनी
माँ नर्मदा की सेवा को
उमड़ा जनसैलाब



विश्व का सबसे बड़ा नदी संरक्षण अभियान

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LUXURY/TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY



Go with the slow

Travellers today take their own time soaking in the beauty and culture of secluded destinations

BY NEHA S. BAJPAI



Small and slow is good. A laid-back vacation at a two-room villa and winery in New Zealand. Long, blissful rail travels through Japan's scenic delights. Rediscovering Asia of yesteryear on a serene boat ride through the Chindwin in Myanmar. This

year, luxury travel is going to be all about precious, rare and soul-touching experiences far from the madding crowds.

Moving away from marble suites and gold interiors, the rich and the famous are craving to tap into native cultures and enriching interactions with the locals in the boonies. "The three key trends observed by our travel designers this year include 'intimacy and privacy', 'slow travel' and 'feel the universe'. In this era of accelerated life, communication and action, the ultra-wealthy need a really relaxing holiday," says Quentin Desurmont, founder of Traveller Made, a Paris-based group of travel designers from 270 agencies spanning across 55 countries.

Catering to the fantasies of over 2,00,000 families worldwide with a net worth of \$30 million, Traveller Made has been busy creating dream holidays in private luxury villas, in chalets and on islands

across the globe. "Wealthy travellers are desperate to reduce their pace of life and take time to get bored delectably. From rail rides on luxury trains like the Grand Hibernian in Ireland to exploring the Moroccan desert, slow travel is getting vast and varied. "For instance, you can stay in a tented desert camp in Morocco and reduce the pace of your journey by taking an airline, then an eight-seater turboprop, followed by a four-wheel drive and finally a camel ride that takes you to the beautiful camp nestled between sand dunes at sunset," explains Desurmont, whose tailor-made travel designs cost anything between €50,000 and €150,000. "It can go up to nearly a million euros, and sometimes a lot more."

Desurmont's team recently produced a high-definition travel experience covering a two-week-long journey of one of his clients through Indonesia. "He became the producer and hero of his own adventure movie. The crew included a director and scientific experts who captured the eight family members diving and climbing volcanoes, with drones supported by jets, helicopters and yachts. It cost him €980,000," he says.

Yearning to reconnect with nature and feel far more than a tourist at culturally vibrant destina-



tions, most travellers are pushing themselves out of their comfort zone for authentic experiences. “Our guests are not looking for city-life or city-lights, but something very private, secluded and luxurious,” says Aditya Tyagi, founder, Luxe Escape. “They don’t want branded hotels but something small and boutique where they get personal attention. We recently had eight couples travelling to Mongolia to experience the nomadic life. They stayed in traditional Mongolian homes called Yurt. Nothing fancy but an exceptional travel experience.”

While experiential travellers are exploring Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Ecuador, Myanmar, Cuba, Iceland and Fiji, adventurers are aiming for the Poles. “This is an extension of the trend to experiment. Our partners have organised expedition cruise—en petit comité—by the Arctic or Antarctic, where a turbopropeller plane takes you to the Poles in solid camps,” says Desurmont.

In November, Saurabh Pandey, vice president of a Delhi-based health care firm, travelled to Kakslauttanen, an enchanting Arctic resort. “It was my birthday week and I wanted to celebrate it gaz-

ROYAL SPREAD: The Leela Palace Udaipur. Pippa Middleton was here a few years ago, and cooked a couple of traditional dishes along with the executive chef



ing at the Northern Lights. So I flew to Helsinki and from there to Ivalo. We then took a two-hour-long drive to reach this resort in the middle of the forest. We stayed in a glass igloo offering the most stunning, panoramic view of the Northern Lights. Our little abode was fitted with a small shower cabin and we were spoilt with a two-course meal, which is a luxury at the Poles,” says Pandey, who paid around €700 a night for this extraordinary experience.

While outbound travel has always been on the top of the list for luxury travellers in India, this year, a lot of high-profile families are exploring smaller destinations with bespoke stays within the country. “Our hotels in Rajasthan, especially Devigarh, are doing exceptionally well. Smaller destinations like Mihirgarh, which are a little away from the bigger

towns, give our guest the chance to explore the wilderness and enjoy fine gastronomic experiences in the middle of nowhere. Mihirgarh and Rohet boast the best stables of the Marwari breed of horses in the country. Our itineraries are tailor-made to suit the guests, keeping riding ability and duration in mind," says Yeishan Goel, CEO, Privy, a bespoke ensemble of independent luxury boutique hotels in India.

One of the best-kept secrets at The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts was the visit of Pippa Middleton a few years ago. A self-confessed curry lover, Pippa ate her way through Rajasthan, feasting on meals exploding with spices. At The Leela Palace Udaipur, Pippa, along with the executive chef, cooked a couple of traditional recipes—laal maas, zafrani pulao, makki ki roti and chilgoza methi palak. Totally bowled over by the 'savoir-faire', she documented her culinary experience in Waitrose magazine.

"The Leela's culinary journeys have been very well received by guests from around the world," says Rashmi Vasisht, director, public relations and corporate communications, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts. "From exploring the culinary history and local culture through curated epicurean encounters to delighting in customised and memorable bespoke dining, we have created a series of exquisite experiences tailored to each property and destination. Additionally, guests enjoy fresh, locally sourced produce whenever possible, literally offering them a taste of the location."

The ITC Hotels offers its guests a cumulative experience of the destination through its various properties and their signature styles. Right from the restaurants to the room amenities, each hotel encap-



CHILLED OUT: Saurabh Pandey travelled to Kakslauttanen, an enchanting Arctic resort, for his birthday last November; (inset) the glass igloo where he stayed



A lot of high-profile families are exploring smaller destinations with bespoke stays within the country.



ulates the best from the city. The 'Food Sherpa Trails' and the 'Local love' menu, for instance, give the guests an opportunity to absorb the most intricate details of a city. "The team at ITC Hotels endeavours to present a true experience of India," says Nakul Anand, executive director, ITC Ltd. "The Namaste that we chose as a symbol of our brand experience, over 40 years ago, is a commitment to showcase the diversity of our great nation—whether it is in the sheer architecture of the building, our philosophy of service, our researched showcase of Indian cuisine or the attire that our associates adorn. All this put together, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It is true luxury, rooted in India. That is what sets us apart as a collection of luxury hotels, as opposed to a chain. If I had to sum it up—nobody gives you India like we do." ■

TOP PICKS



HOTELS

THE LEELA PALACE NEW DELHI:

Built in the shape of a butterfly, the hotel is a modern palace inspired by the fabled history of Lutyens Delhi. It houses legendary international restaurants—Le Cirque and Megu—and combines world-class services with the warmth and grace of Indian hospitality.



SHANGRI-LA, Paris, which was originally a mansion, built in 1896 by Napoleon Bonaparte's grandnephew, has been converted into a stunning hotel that faces the Eiffel Tower.

HÔTEL RITZ PARIS: After four years of refurbishment, Hôtel Ritz Paris finally reopened its hallowed doors on Place Vendôme in the fall of 2016, making it the most anticipated opening in hotel history. The hotel still boasts the legendary Hemingway Bar, where the likes of Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway and Gary Cooper drank. It is also home to the world's first Chanel spa, a wonderful ode to Coco Chanel, who lived at the hotel from 1937 till her death in 1971.

SAMODE PALACE, Rajasthan: The Samode Palace is a lesson in restraint, a reverence to history with soulful service. An hour outside Jaipur, this 17th century fort, a fine example of Indo-Saracenic architecture—a mix of Indian and Mughal styles—is possibly the most magnificent palace of its period with its untouched ancient murals and uneven walls.

ST MORITZ, New Zealand: The décor is understated yet luxurious. The views are out-of-the-world and the staff goes the extra mile to ensure that you are taken care of. It is a welcoming place with wooded and warm interiors. The Victorian ambience of the place can make a poet out of anyone.



TOP PICKS



DESTINATIONS

GOLD COAST IN AUSTRALIA for its pristine sand, epic surf breaks, breathtaking environment and iconic resorts.

ZANZIBAR: It has got a superb beach, far from the daily buzz. One can unwind and enjoy the best tropical fruits and grilled fish all day.

A boat trip between **CORSICA AND SARDINIA:** It offers a mix between traditions of France and Italy, bespoke luxurious stays in well-known ports such as Porto Cervo and fabulous scenery.

NEW YORK: The city has a fabled energy that draws people in. You are never alone in NYC. Foody's paradise and fashionista's delight, the city does rub off its arrogance on everyone.

ANTARCTICA AND THE SOUTH POLE for its unimaginable natural beauty and incomparable colonies of penguins and seabirds, sea lions and sea elephants.

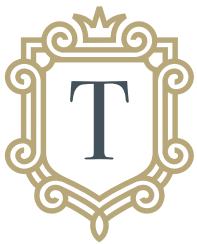


LUXURY/TRAVEL



GUEST COLUMN/ MINI MATHUR

Trip of a lifetime



There was a cliché doing the rounds some years ago that money can't buy you happiness. It's a lie. It can, if you know how to spend it on the right experiences. I am lucky enough to have travelled quite a fair bit already.

First, as a child raised in Africa, then as a travel show host and later as a travel addict married to one. From camping, diving, kayaking and rafting to cruising across the Mediterranean and shopping in the spiffy streets of Paris, let's just say I have had my phases. Then I had my kids, which meant our days of adventure were over at least for a while. A few years of luxuriating in hotels with hot tubs, room service with nanny on hire and I was itching for a 'real' holiday. I didn't want my kids associating holidays only with villas, private pools, manicured gardens that had a sanitised, 'pretend play' quality to it. Holidays and travel experiences are meant for a real connect with nature and culture, for coming back with memories of how we felt instead of where we went and for catching up on the stuff you miss out on in everyday life.

You don't need Gstaad when you have Gulmarg, and you don't need the Alps when you have the Himalayas. There is so much beauty and luxury to be beheld within India, and most of us tend to leave that for 'later' because it ain't going anywhere! And so we went off to the mountains in Uttarakhand to show our kids the difference between hills and mountains! Though we were heading to Soulitute in the Himalayas, located in Ramgarh at an altitude of 7,200 feet, we decided to head to the riverside property first.

My discovery of Soulitute by the Riverside, located in a small hamlet called Chanfi next to the bank of the River Kalsa, has been nothing short of life-changing. A short 45-minute drive from Kathgodam

Soulitude by the
Riverside is
located in **Chanfi**
next to the bank
of the **River Kalsa**.

followed by a 30-minute hike over streams got us to a quaint suspension bridge built by the British in 1910, and we gaped open-mouthed at an oasis in a forest. Nestled deep into a valley that gives privacy a new meaning, this stunning, rustic style organic farm was like a pitcher plant that swallows you up whole. It took us several hours just to absorb the fact that we were going to enjoy the sound of this glacial stream that flowed alongside the seven rooms, that transforms itself into a brilliant emerald pool with its own gushing waterfall. A central living room in glass that overlooked the river, riverside shacks, a village-style open *dhaba* with tea on the boil on a

wood-fire, a dining room with copper *thalis* and completely rustic but luxurious bedrooms with sit-outs!

I rarely connect so deeply with a place but Soulitute had a beautiful balance between buff naked nature and of amenities that you can't do without if you are a day over 25. Basically, we were going to live in the middle of an organic farm that grew its own vegetables, fruits, dals and herbs, had its own cow for dairy—a true farm-to-mouth experience!

Over the next four days, we sipped fresh buttermilk with mint plucked straight from the ground and wood-smoked *adrak* chai that smelt like the earth and a bit of heaven. The kids went fishing (for tadpoles), picked strawberries and apricots (and ate them standing right there), cooked fresh carrots and beans on a solar cooker with the help of the farm cook Kamal *bhaiyya*, swam in the waterfall, climbed rocks... we hardly saw them!

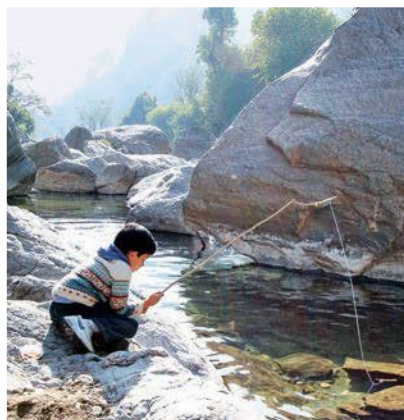
Of course, there was WiFi, but who would be silly enough to waste a minute on communication with the outside world! My phone had a super holiday in the bedside drawer, too. We watched exquisite birds, read books that had been waiting for us and more importantly talked! And then there was the short trek to Parital (the abode of the fairies)—a stunning, secret, deep, natural rock pool with its own ancient



myths, which could only be accessed through the gates of Soulitude. Parital incidentally is visible only on Google Earth or to the guests at this paradise. (I am a sucker for these type of facts.)

For culinary enthusiasts like me, no place passes muster if the cooking is not spectacular. But Soulitude sure had superb cooks. The recipes they churned out despite even the most basic ingredients being hauled across streams were unbelievable. I learnt how to pickle fresh mountain chillies, make kumaoni aloo and a mean malai baingan on the *chulha* at the *dhaba*, which is the soul of the property. It felt like I was a child back at my *nani's* home. And yet not. What a stunning ropewalk between a cultured home and palpable luxury without the fuss that modern luxury brings.

Soulitude by the Riverside is where I now go every year to clean the pores of my senses, to dapple in that sunshine, to inhale the pine, to watch my kids climb trees, pick fruits and soak their feet in a river—stuff they should have been doing everyday if I had my way. They often recall simple moments from this vacation that are far more wondrous in their minds than spectacles of comfort money can always buy, anytime.



HOOKED ON TO NATURE:

(Clockwise from left) Mathur's son, Vivaan, fishing, probably for tadpoles; a quaint suspension bridge; Mathur with daughter, Sairah



◆ Mathur is an actor and TV anchor.

Coast control

With the threat of another seaborne terror attack looming large, the Intelligence Bureau plans to intensify its vigil at sea

BY NAMRATA BIJI AHUJA

There they were again. After all, they had tasted blood during the 26/11 Mumbai terror strike. Stealthily crawling into Indian waters in a fishing trawler laden with the ambition to strike again were four gun-wielding terrorists trying to do a Kasab re-run. In the wee hours of December 31, 2014, the vast stretch of the Arabian Sea had become restless. Taking advantage of the rough weather and strong winds, an explosives laden Pakistani trawler crept into Indian waters. The success of Ajmal Kasab and his accomplices breaching India's coastline and gunning down 166 people was too tempting and the Pakistani handlers had decided to launch the terrorists from the coasts of Ketu Bunder near Karachi towards the Gujarat coast on a suicide mission.

"As Pakistan has tasted success of a seaborne Mumbai terror attack, they can strike again," says Arun Choudhry, former special director in the Intelligence Bureau. Perhaps, it is this realisation that has prompted the Modi government to make the central intelligence agencies shift gears in securing the country's 7,500km-long coastline covering nine states. From a conservative maritime intelligence policy, for the first time the Intelligence Bureau is giving a renewed impetus to coastal security.

Handling landport and seaport intelligence units was just one of the many tasks of the sleuths looking after coastal security. Now for the first time, IB has created a desk under a joint director level officer to exclusively handle maritime intel-

ligence along the entire coastline, as well as hone the spying capacity of the agency at sea. The IB plans to have more eyes on the sea by training its spies in collecting counterterrorism intelligence, gathering inputs that could indicate trends in activities of terror groups using sea routes and ensuring that nothing misses their eye as far as activities on the coastline is concerned. All this information would flow to the headquarters in New Delhi and shared seamlessly with other agencies.

The subtle shift has come at a time when China is struggling for primacy in the South China Sea and the country's intelligence brass is foreseeing many such jostling at sea in a geography which is primarily maritime.

"While all the agencies have their own domain, and coastal security, industrial and port security are part of different agencies, it is difficult for any one agency to function alone. From Gujarat to Kochi, the regulation of boats, their licences and checking are the responsibility of the state governments. In a good season of fishing, it is difficult to monitor all the boats, and various agencies are at work gathering intelligence about possible threats and suspicious activities at sea, including those from external sources," says former IB chief A.S. Dulat, who has also served as chief of R&AW, the country's external spy agency. Today, the R&AW is keeping a close watch on small islands in the Arabian Sea where militant groups are trying to forge links with locals. The R&AW bases in Mauritius and Male regularly share inputs with the domestic agencies back home.

"So while the Indian Navy is the

India's geo-strategic position with a 7,516km-long coastline and the strategic relevance of Indian Ocean demand attention of the intelligence agencies

Troubled waters:

Coast Guard intercepting a Pakistani boat off Gujarat coast

lead intelligence agency for high seas followed by the Indian Coast Guard which secures the territorial waters from the coast up to the point from where the Navy takes over, the IB still have enough room to test its spying skills," says Dulat.

Multiple eyes at sea seems to be the new mantra of the Modi government in the face of growing intelligence alerts about Pakistani terror groups planning Mumbai-style attacks in the hinterland and eyeing suicide missions on Naval assets and warships. Then there are the missiles and their island bases that need to be secured, says Choudhry.

But the IB's plans have temporarily run into rough weather. The IB had brought Harmeet Singh, a 1992 batch IPS officer with 15 years of spying experience behind him, to take over as the new joint director (coastal security) in Delhi. Singh, who belongs to the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, was heading the State Intelligence



Since the 26/11 attacks, steps have been taken to strengthen the three-tier security in India's maritime zones—the Navy protects the outermost tier from the coast, the Coast Guard protects the intermediate layer, and the marine police secure the innermost tier, from the coast up to 12 nautical miles

Joint Operation Centres (JOCs) and radar stations monitor maritime activity in the near-seas

Fishermen are registered and given ID cards; they are considered the “eyes and ears” of coastal security

With neighbouring countries sparring over control of seas and maritime threats challenging national security, the Intelligence Bureau is giving coastal intelligence greater push

COASTAL CHALLENGES

Safeguarding atomic power plants, oil platforms, military bases and industrial centres

Thwarting organised gangs and smuggling of arms, explosives and narcotics

Stopping infiltration of migrants and refugees from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh

IB's coastal desk will have a joint director and other officials who will focus on gathering coastal intelligence and liaison between agencies

Bureau in Jammu and Kashmir during the violent protest days in the valley. After being in Delhi for a few days, he was suddenly repatriated to his parent cadre in Assam. The officers within the agency are surprised because many do not remember the last time an officer was repatriated to his cadre.

The IB, however, is keen to take its plan forward and may give the charge to another officer. “After 26/11 we realised that a multi-agency cen-

tre needs to be reactivated and the intelligence inputs should be shared vertically and across the board horizontally. Similarly we are realising today that all agencies need to share information and continue to build their assets,” says former IB chief Rajiv Mathur.

The New Year chase of the fishing trawler serves as an example of a multi-intelligence operation. A third agency, the National Technical Research Organisation, helped pick

up the conversation of the terrorists which supplemented the efforts of the Indian Coast Guard to intercept the boat. However, before the trawler could be captured, the crew blew up the boat. With the explosion, the suicide mission was over, thankfully without any damage. The vessel sank and along with it the clues of the terrorists and their mission. But by then, many officers in various intelligence and security agencies had burnt the midnight oil. ♦

SPACE

Our own space

From geo-tagging places to mapping archaeological sites, India learns to use satellite data

BY REKHA DIXIT

Scientists at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) are running the final checks on an ambitious project, with which India's space programme will expand from one of national development to that of regional development. The South Asian Satellite is getting ready for a launch, sometime at the end of March.

The satellite was what Prime Minister Narendra Modi magnanimously promised to member nations of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation in 2015. India is the only spacefaring nation in the bloc. Modi's promise has finally shaped up as a satellite of the 2K class (which has a weight of around 2,000 kilos) that could become the provider for a host of communication applications within individual countries as well as between them.

The vehicle aboard which this ambition will soar itself is an important one, the Geosynchronous Space Launch Vehicle Mark II, a heavy duty rocket. Every launch of a GSLV Mark II is crucial, given that a rocket of this class will be deployed for Chandrayaan-2. Unlike the success rate of ISRO's old reliable Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, the GSLV's track record is not that stel-

lar. However, in its Mark II version, the vehicle, which has a cryogenic engine developed along with Russia, has been declared a motorable car.

But let's get back to the satellite first. What exactly is it going to do? M. Annadurai, director of ISRO's satellite centre at Bengaluru, where the satellite is being given the finishing touches, says that it is a "communication satellite". This means that the satellite could be used in areas like tele-education, tele-medicine, e-governance, disaster management and even direct-to-home television. "Our role at ISRO is to provide the network, and to maintain the health of the system. It will be up to individual countries to develop programmes which can make use of this network." Indeed, the possibilities are as endless as people's imagination—a hotline between two or more countries, direct television transmission, for instance.

So far, agreements on orbital frequency coordination have already been signed with Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives. Pakistan, in 2016, conveyed that it would not participate in the project, after which the SAARC Satellite was renamed the South Asian Satellite. India is still working on agreements with Bangladesh and Afghanistan. But what if these agreements are not inked by the time of the launch?



ISRO's satellite constellation:

Two scientific satellites: Mars Orbiter Mission and Astrosat, India's first multi-wavelength space observatory launched in 2015.

Seven navigation satellites together called NAVIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation).

15 remote sensing and earth observation satellites.

14 communication satellites.

GRAPHICS: SYAM KRISHNAN

Four years ago, 18 government ministries and departments were using the ISRO services, today, there are 80. Much of this happened after ISRO was told to have a meeting with various government agencies.

M. Annadurai, director, ISRO's satellite centre, Bengaluru

ISRO scientists say that shouldn't be an issue. They can, with minor technical adjustments, sync the satellite to future requirements. In fact, even if Pakistan has a change of heart, it can be accommodated at a later date. India is bearing the entire cost of designing, launching and maintenance of the satellite. The cost of just launching

What next?

Launches to look out for

South Asian Satellite aboard GSLV II in March end.

It was proposed by PM Modi as a gift to India's neighbours. India is the only spacefaring nation in SAARC. It could become the provider for a host of communication applications within individual countries as well as between them.

Test flight of the four-tonner GSLV III in April end.

Second moon mission: Team Indus lunar rover aboard a PSLV rocket in 2017 end. Team Indus, a startup, is taking part in the Google Lunar-X Prize. The aim of the \$30 million competition is to challenge and inspire people to develop low-cost methods of space exploration.

First mission to study the sun: Aditya, India's mission to study the sun, in 2018-19.

Chandrayaan 2, a rover mission to the moon aboard GSLV II, in the first quarter of 2018

These rockets are required as India upscales its space ambitions.

India is already thinking of another mission to Mars and a maiden one to Venus. A human space flight is also somewhere in the bucket list. With so many launches, ISRO itself has a minor constellation of its own satellites operating in various space orbits around the earth. And what exactly do they do? Fifteen of them are remote sensing satellites, which make earth observations. Fourteen are communication satellites, which are also used by private operators for television networks. Seven satellites form NAVIC, providing an indigenous navigation network. This is mainly for the Navy, so that it doesn't have to rely on foreign navigation systems like GPS or Galileo, whose services can be withdrawn in times of hostilities. Only two satellites are scientific ones, the Mars Orbiter Mission, orbiting the red planet and, Astrosat, a space observatory.

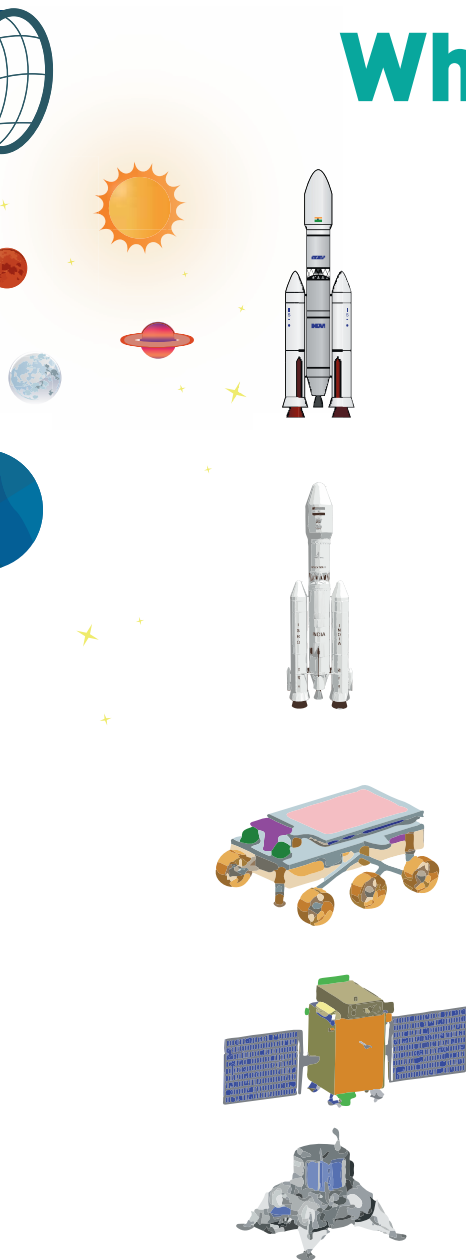
India's space direction has largely been of national development, says Annadurai. Some agencies like the Met department and agriculture, forestry and fishing ministries have been using satellite data for long. The big boost has come just a couple of years ago, with Modi's push for a digital India. "Four years ago, 18 government ministries and departments were using the ISRO services, today, there are 80. Much of this happened after ISRO was told to have a meeting with various government agencies, explaining to them how satellite information could be used," Annadurai elaborates.

Among the new uses is monitoring unmanned level crossings by the Indian Railways. The postal department has launched another interesting project of geo-tagging places in India. "As postmen go to various parts to deliver mail, they also geo-tag the area, thus creating an extensive database," said the ISRO scientist. The Archaeological Survey of India is using satellite information to map boundaries of heritage sites. ♦

a GSLV II is around ₹230 crore. The satellite should have a functional life of around 12 years.

Low cost launches of smaller satellites have become ISRO's USP. Most of them have been aboard PSLVs (One launch costs ₹100 crore and India has begun offsetting the expenses by taking in passengers from other

countries.) PSLV, however, cannot take satellites heavier than 1,800 kilos, which is why ISRO needs reliable heavier vehicles. GSLV II will be able to take satellites of up to 2,500 kilos. And the GSLV III, a test flight of which is scheduled in April, will have a four-tonne capacity, making it the heaviest launch vehicle from ISRO.



Distress call

Cut-throat competition and diminishing profits trigger a consolidation wave in the telecom industry

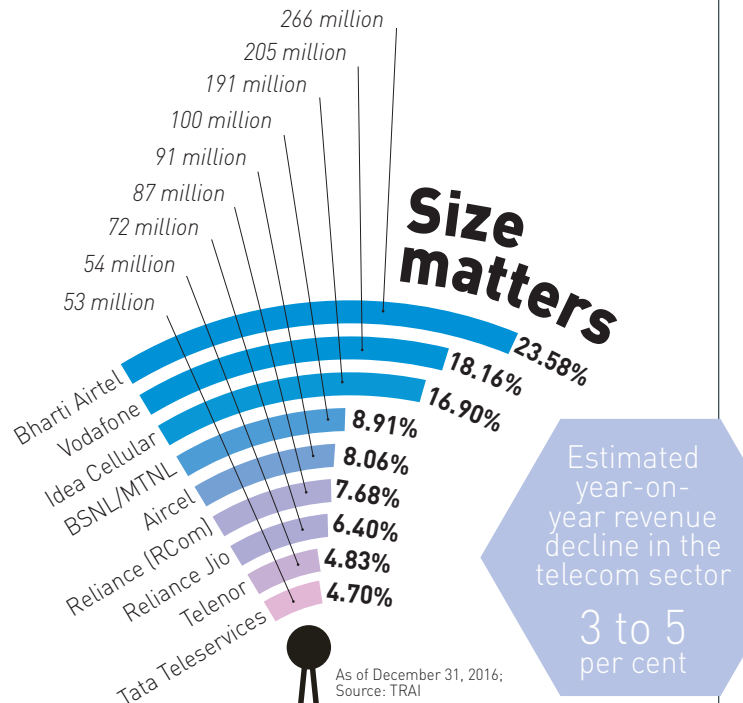
BY NACHIKET KELKAR

Though among the fastest growing in the world, Indian telecom market is a crowded place with a dozen players engaged in cut-throat competition. But that is all set to change, with a wave of consolidation under way. Thanks to the aggressive entry of Reliance Jio promising lifelong free calls, and the huge expenses needed for expansion and new spectrum, smaller companies are increasingly finding it difficult to survive. Bigger companies, on the other hand, are scouting for opportunities to buy rivals and fill their network gaps, in a bid to strengthen their defence against Jio.

On February 23, India's largest telecom company, Bharti Airtel, said it was acquiring Telenor India, the local arm of Norway's Telenor Group, operating in seven circles. Sigve Brekke, CEO of Telenor Group, was quite blunt on the company's decision to leave India, which once seemed a promising market. "Finding a long-term solution to our India business has been a priority for us, and we are pleased with our agreement with Airtel," he said. "The decision to exit India has not been taken lightly. After thorough consideration, it is our view that the significant investments needed to secure Telenor India's future business on a standalone basis will not give an acceptable level of return."

Airtel will acquire Telenor's operations in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh (East), Uttar Pradesh (West) and Assam, including all assets and customers. This will add some five crore customers and 43.4 MHz spectrum in the 1,800 MHz band to the Airtel network.

This is crucial for Airtel to compete with Jio, which has already crossed a base of 100 million customers (according to its chairman Mukesh Ambani) and is looking to attract more customers with its Prime membership from April 1. Also, Vodafone India, Airtel's closest competitor, is having merger talks with Aditya Birla Group's Idea Cellular. If they merge, the combined entity will eclipse Airtel as the largest telecom compa-



■ Airtel will acquire Telenor's operations in seven circles, including all assets and customers. This will add some five crore customers and 43.4 MHz spectrum in the 1,800 MHz band to the Airtel network.

■ Vodafone India and Idea Cellular have initiated merger talks. A combined entity will be the largest telecom company in India.

■ Reliance Communications has been planning a merger with Airtel. It has also been talking to Tata Teleservices for a possible tie-up

ny in India, with a combined revenue of ₹78,000 crore.

Vodafone and Idea said the talks were in the preliminary stage and is based on equal rights for the two companies in the combined entity. Vodafone had earlier planned an initial public offering to raise ₹16,500 crore. But, it has been put on the back burner, and if the merger goes through, Vodafone might even get a backdoor entry to the stock exchanges because Idea is already listed.

In September 2016, Reliance Communications, owned by Anil Ambani, said it would merge with Airtel. It has also been talking to Tata Teleservices for a possible tie-up.

Consolidation in the telecom market was long overdue. "Collective debt of the telecom industry is about ₹4.5 lakh crore. Servicing both the principal and interest is becoming a challenge. Unlike

China, we are a private sector-led country for telecom. Fresh capital

is only going to come in when the future outlook is good. It has to generate enough reasonable profits. So I think consolidation is good," said Hemant Joshi, partner, Deloitte Haskins & Sells.

Collective debt of the telecom industry

₹4.5 lakh crore

The intense competition and the aggressive pricing strategies to counter Jio's offers have put pressure on the balance sheets of all players. Bharti Airtel's net profit more than halved in the third quarter and revenue declined 3 per cent year-on-year. Idea Cellular and Reliance Communications reported a loss in the same period.

"The quarter has seen turbulence due to the continued predatory pricing by a new operator. The present termination costs at 14 paise, which are well below cost, have resulted in a tsunami of minutes terminating into our network. This has led to an unprecedented year-on-year revenue decline for the industry, pressure on margins and a serious impact on the financial health of the sector," said Gopal Vittal, MD and CEO (India and South Asia), Bharti Airtel.

The industry is staring at a 3 to 5 per cent year-on-year revenue decline in the financial year. "It was always going to be a challenge for so many players to compete in this industry. Globally, too, it is like a 2 to 4 player industry. Post Reliance Jio, the path to profitability is becoming more

Friends in need:

Sunil Bharti Mittal, chairman of Bharti Airtel, with Sigve Brekke, CEO of Telenor Group



and more rocky, especially for the smaller players. Companies like Telenor were losing money even before Jio launched. But as a result of Jio, even the little flicker of hope that the situation will improve vanished. So, there is a rush to consolidate, rather than keep on investing and losing money," said Ajay Srinivasan, director at CRISIL Research.

The competitive intensity in the market, however, is unlikely to abate even after consolidation. Other companies will be keenly watching how many of Jio's 100 million subscribers will stay on once the paid plans kick in in April. If Jio continues to attract customers, it will lead to a price war, putting pressure on earnings even as companies will have to continue investing in infrastructure. Airtel has already announced scrapping of roaming charges from April 1.

The companies are also trying to balance debt by selling non-core assets. In December 2016, Reliance Communications signed binding agreements with Canada's Brookfield Infrastructure to sell its telecom tower business for ₹11,000 crore. Bharti Airtel has been in talks to sell a stake in its tower business, Bharti Infratel.

Amid such aggression and earnings woes, India Ratings & Research has downgraded its outlook on the sector for 2017-18 fiscal year to "negative" from "stable-to-negative". "The negative outlook reflects expectation of longer and deeper-than-expected deterioration in the credit profile of telcos following the free services extended by Reliance Jio," said Tanu Sharma, Ashoo Mishra and Salil Garg, analysts at India Ratings. "The existing telcos would lose market share to Jio and suffer from poor profitability while their debt burden will increase due to spectrum and network related capex." ♦

DAWN TO DUSK

Batman begins

The innings of 1,009 runs was only the start of Pranav Dhanawade's journey

BY ANURADHA VARANASI

On January 5 last year, Pranav Dhanawade, 16, broke bowlers' spirits and a world record en route to a mammoth score of 1,009 runs (in 327 balls) in a local school match. He was playing for K.C. Gandhi School and was taking on Arya Gurukul School. The previ-

ous best was 628 runs, scored by Arthur Collins, an English school-boy, in 1899. Dhanawade became a sensation overnight, making headlines and trending on social media. A prodigy had been discovered, they said. Journalists lined up outside his home in Kalyan, Maharashtra, eager to get a quote from the son of an auto-rickshaw driver.

A year later, he says his life has

completely changed. "Previously, no one recognised me," he says. "I was just another face in the crowd. Now, when I walk down the street, or even while travelling, people instantly recognise me and ask if I'm that boy who scored 1,009 runs. Journalists had travelled all the way from England to interview me in my house. Many sponsors came forward to help me with my studies and cricket. On the



flipside, I now face a lot more sledging from the opposition during matches.”

Dhanawade lives with his parents in Kalyan's Kadam Chawl, which has now become a landmark in Thane district. His mother, Mohini, runs a small catering business and, because of her busy schedule, rarely gets to see him play—last she saw her son play was three years ago in Pune.

For a couple of months after he broke the record, Dhanawade's days were packed with interviews and felicitations. And, because of the tight schedule, he raced through books at the last moment for his class ten board exams and scored 61 per cent. He is now studying commerce at Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College in Ghatkopar, Mumbai.

“I feel like I am constantly being watched by journalists,” he says. “They are in regular touch with my coach to know what progress I have been making. My father has told me to be a lot more focused because of this.” However, he insists that he doesn't feel any pressure to perform.

Dhanawade is an early riser, and wakes up at 4am on most days. Four times a week, from Tuesday to Friday, he has cricket practice with his college team in a maidan in Matunga from 7am to 9.30am. In the evening, he has another practice session from 4 to 7 in Kalyan's Subhash Maidan. He also practises in Kalina, home to the Mumbai Cricket Club, thrice a week from 9.30am to 1.30am.

He catches up with classes in-between practice sessions.

A day after his record-breaking innings, the Mumbai Cricket Association awarded him with a monthly scholarship of ₹10,000. Sports goods manufacturer SS Cricket sponsored his cricket equip-

ment. Apparently, early last year, Meerut-based SF Cricket, the company whose bat Dhanawade used to get the record, said it would introduce a new range of bats in his name.

But, though he has proper equipment, the facilities in Kalyan are subpar, says his father, Prashant, and coach Mubin Shaikh. This has held back many other talented young boys, they say. “Last year, the politicians promised us that they would build a ground with adequate infrastructure for young cricketers in Kalyan,” says Prashant. “However, that plan is yet to materialise and they have yet to acquire the land.” He says the ground where Dhanawade practises is not safe, as cars and other vehicles drive through it. The ground is uneven and there is no place for cricketers to keep their belongings safely. In December, some policemen allegedly misbehaved with Dhanawade and his father because a practice session was not wrapped up before Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar was due to land there on a helicopter. The minister later said that he was sorry if the allegations were true and that he would take it up with the chief minister.

Daily shots: Dhanawade en route to practice in a local train; (below) with his coach Mubin Shaikh



PHOTOS: JANAK BHAT



DAWN TO DUSK



JANAK BHAT

The father and son were disappointed when Dhanawade did not make it to the Under-19 Mumbai team in April last year. "It was a major challenge for me as the Under-19 probables matches are highly competitive," says Dhanawade. "I was extremely disappointed with my poor performance."

After this rude wake-up call, Dhanawade underwent intensive training at Just Cricket Academy in Bengaluru for a month, to improve his batting technique. The cost of training and accommodation—₹2,500 a day—was borne by a sponsor.

Soon after, Dhanawade went on his first foreign trip—to London—with the Worli Cricket Club. "In England, I managed to score 72 and 58 in the first two matches," he says. "It was a good experience playing in a new country as I learned how to acclimatise myself to a different environment and weather conditions during matches."

He played in two more tournaments in London, and the exposure, he says, improved his technique. Despite that, he was unable to qual-

ify for the second Under-19 selection tournament, which was held in October. "I feel he should have been selected because he has good stamina and the ability to score runs," says Prashant. "We were very disappointed after that. I don't understand why he wasn't given that opportunity as he has been given a scholarship by MCA." He has been playing for the MIG club in local competitions, but the transition to the big stage would not be easy. Chandrakant Pandit, coach of the Mumbai Ranji team, in fact said he hadn't even heard of Dhanawade.

Dhanawade says his dream is to be part of the Mumbai Ranji team and the national team. Shaikh, who has been training him for about 10 years, says the next two years are vital for him.

"Last year, during the Under-19 selection rounds, he did not score any runs," says Shaikh. "He can't be selected based only on his reputation. He needs to perform time and again to prove himself. However, in the past two months or so, his performance has improved tremen-

Family time: Dhanawade and his father, Prashant, outside their Kalyan home. Prashant, an auto-rickshaw driver, has been a pillar of strength for the teen

dously. I am very happy to see how he has evolved as a cricketer. In fact, I am a lot more happy now than when he scored 1,009 runs because he has a far better understanding of cricket and has also improved his wicketkeeping." So, does he believe his pupil will make it to the Indian team? "If I was asked this question six to eight months ago, my answer would have been no," he says. "After seeing how well he has been playing recently, I do believe that he has the potential. For him, sky is the limit."

Former India A batsman Amol Muzumdar told THE WEEK: "Any kid who has scored 1,000 runs has a lot of potential. However, in Mumbai, the competition is cut-throat. Personally, I would like to wish him all the best. If he is aiming to play higher, he should grab all the opportunities that come his way." ♦



track change • Ashwini Nachappa

The imperative for legislating sports

I can vividly recall our struggle as athletes in the substandard conditions and miraculously making it to wherever we could. We did so in the face of the frigid and uncompromising apathy of those at the helm of governing sport. I am amazed that despite all these man-made hurdles, we saw the rise of a few great champions. We can put it down to the good karma of these individuals!

Winds of change have started to blow, though thanks to individual efforts. But the system largely remains the same. We lose thousands of potential athletes who never even consider pursuing sports. It is here that our real failure lies. If we had a thriving system, we would have easily had talent mushrooming across the country. Cricket is one sport that has bucked the trend. And, it is thanks to a vibrant and active, though corrupt, federation—the BCCI—which has made it happen.

Interestingly, hockey had a bigger following in the 50s and 60s. Unfortunately, it lost its way because of poor governance. In Coorg, from where I hail, hockey is still alive and thriving because of a self-governing system that engages most to take to the sport. Every year, we run the world's largest hockey tournament where more than 200 'families' take part. What happens beyond this grassroots movement is a sad story of ineptitude shared by most sporting disciplines.

As India integrates into the world economy and the in-

ternet brings the world to our homes in real time, sport is getting to be not just a 'good to have' but a 'need to have'. And so, governance of sports bodies has come into sharp focus, especially after the Commonwealth Games fiasco for which Suresh Kalmadi and Lalit Bhanot were jailed. As a result, a sports code was mooted in 2012. Along with Justice Mudgal and other sportspersons, I had the privilege of working on it.

The sports bill, as it came to be known, was never passed because the BCCI sees itself above any legislation. Its flawed logic was built around the notion that since it is not funded by the government, it was not imperative for the BCCI to be bound by any legislation that curbed its freedom. It required the Mudgal and Lodha committees to lay bare the intricate network of corruption of those in power. Thanks to the Supreme Court's ruling, the gates have opened for a much-needed reform that will rein in unscrupulous and selfish individuals running our sport. As I write this, there is a team that is fine-tuning the existing draft bill and, given the serious intent shown by this government, it augurs

well for sports.

Good governance is as much about integrity and managerial skills as it is about executing a programme of technical excellence. Today, both are missing from most of our sports federations and other bodies. Can an inspiring sports law reform give a big fillip to sports in general? I believe it can.

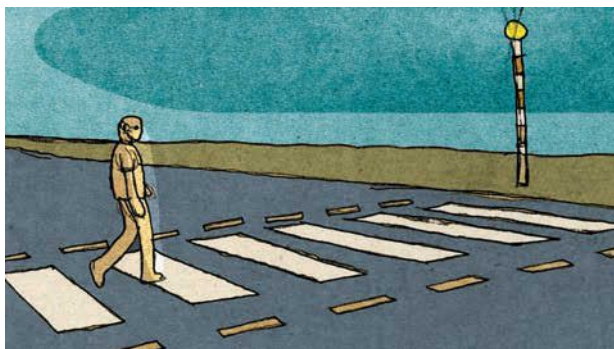
Most federations at the national and state levels are run by individuals who have been at it for decades without showing any results. We are woefully behind in terms of knowledge of performance and quality of training across most disciplines. What sports legislation can do is provide an opportunity for younger people with passion and managerial skills to come in with fresh energy and new thinking. It will also ensure transparency in the way these organisations are managed. But having said that, it is easy to find a way around any legislation. We are pretty good at it!

While legislation is a must, we should also have people with integrity and the right intent to nurture and develop our country's unimaginable potential. A law is only as good

as the people who use it.

What we really need is a national nodal organisation, strengthened by the sports law that will coordinate our sporting transformation. In my next column, I will outline my vision for such an organisation.

Ashwini Nachappa is a former athlete.



BHASKARAN

SPORTS

The equaliser!

An aggressive Kohli leads a victorious fightback to level the series 1-1

BY NEERU BHATIA/Bengaluru

As India scripted a spirited comeback to win the second Test against Australia in Bengaluru by 75 runs, the spotlight wasn't on K.L. Rahul, the man of the match, or on Ravichandran Ashwin, who got his 25th five-wicket haul in Tests. It was on the Decision Review System and the two captains—Virat Kohli and Steven Smith.

The two teams were a study in contrast after the match. India, high on intent and full of aggression on field,

left the Chinnaswamy Stadium soon after the post-match news conference. At the hotel, the staff lined up to welcome the victors, and it was time for celebration. The Aussies, on the other hand, stayed back in the dressing room, long after the sun had set, thinking of the match, about letting India in, and about provoking Kohli. As part of their blueprint for the India tour, the last was a strict no-no.

After the win, Kohli tore into Smith, accusing him of cheating—the latter had tried to consult his dressing room on whether to go for a review after he was adjudged leg before wicket in the

second innings. As per ICC rules, this is not allowed. Though Smith said he shouldn't have done it and that it was "brain fade", Kohli shot back, saying the Aussies had attempted the same twice before. "We had observed that, and we told the match referee and the umpire that it had been happening for the last three days and it had to stop," said Kohli. "There is a line you don't cross on a cricket field. Sledging and playing on the opponent's mind are different. I don't want to mention the word, but it falls in that bracket. I would never do something like this on the cricket field." Kohli had not only regained his roar, but also succeeded in pushing Australia onto the back foot.

The DRS controversy has become the flashpoint between the two teams. Cricket Australia swung into rear-guard action, backing Smith, while coach Darren Lehmann dismissed the allegations. The Board of Control for Cricket in India, led by Vinod Rai, chairman of the Committee of Administrators, backed Kohli's claims. Match referee Chris Broad had allegedly assured the Australian team management that it would be a "non-issue". This, reportedly, compelled BCCI CEO Rahul Johri to write to the International Cricket Council, asking it to take note of the matter.

India found its mojo on day two of the Test. After falling cheaply on the first day, the team fought hard, hung on and contained the Australian batsmen in their first innings. Kohli



Comeback trail: Virat Kohli and teammates celebrate the dismissal of Mitchell Marsh

had urged his teammates to show intent, and it started to seep through on day two. By day three, the Indian batsmen, led by Rahul's positive 51, had regained their confidence. Cheteshwar Pujara scored a controlled 92 and Ajinkya Rahane got a fighting 52—the two added a crucial 118 runs for the fifth wicket.

Kohli had also insisted on team unity, in both good and bad times, and the team stuck together. It was not easy. The players had gone through many Test series and their toughest challenge had arrived at the fag end of the season. "Yes, the last seven to eight days have been challenging," said Kohli. "But, I said only one thing—we will win together and lose together."

After the Pune Test, in which India fell to spin, the batting department had a detailed discussion on how to tackle the spinners. "The batting group got together and we had a chat on how our approach had been," said batting coach Sanjay Bangar. "We looked to the past to see how we negotiated spin and the areas we could have adapted better in the first three innings. It was a good chat and we came out with solutions. The batsmen really applied themselves, used their feet well and were trying to get to the pitch of the ball as much as they could. They were also playing on the back foot. All in all, they put up a better show than what they had in the first three innings."

Rahane, who had been under pressure for his poor show against spin in the Pune Test, had a special chat with his coach, former Indian opener Pravin Amre. After the Bengaluru win, a relieved Amre praised Rahane's skill and ability to adapt. "In the first innings, I thought he was in control, [right] before he played the wrong shot [and got stumped]," said Amre. "He was aware this match was crucial for him and his team. We spoke about Ajinkya trusting his defence. On such wickets, batting for 150 balls to get 50 is critical. There is a thin line between being aggressive and being too aggressive. He backed his sweep



REUTERS

shot and managed Nathan Lyon very well. On wickets like these, you need very high levels of concentration. Every run is gold; personal milestones are not important. He always had the skill to handle spin. The key was footwork."

The target of 188 set for Australia was challenging on a dry, spinning pitch. The bowlers were quick off the blocks, bowling a precise length and tight lines. The medium pacer duo of Ishant Sharma and Umesh Yadav struck at the Aussie top order, paving the way for spinners Ravindra Jadeja and Ashwin to get in on the action. Jadeja was miserly—he bowled 8 overs, including 5 maidens, and picked up 1 wicket. He gave way only 3 runs. At the other end, Ashwin exploited the pitch and bowled a dream spell. In 12.4 overs, he conceded 41 runs and took six wickets. India's fielding, which was wanting in Pune, shone through in Bengaluru. But, it was the bowlers, said Kohli, who set the game up for India on day two. "In the first session on day two, we gave away only 45-odd runs and picked up two wickets when they could have taken the game away from us—they were 40 without loss [overnight]," said Kohli. "I think that was probably the momentum change that we needed, and throughout the day we didn't give more than 200 runs, and we picked up six wickets."

Out, no doubt: Kohli speaks to the umpire as Smith (far right) walks off after his dismissal

The DRS has been an important factor throughout the series. While India, a new user of the system, has fared poorly with its reviews, Australia has been judicious. Before the DRS was introduced, said Kohli, the benefit of the doubt, in case of dismissals, went to the batsman. That does not seem to be the case now, he said. Kohli's success rate with the DRS has been poor and India has taken reviews as a knee-jerk reaction. On day two in Bengaluru, Ashwin reviewed two decisions within six overs. Both reviews were unsuccessful. In the first innings, Kohli had asked for a review, when he was clearly out, and it predictably backfired. "We have not been that consistent with taking the right DRS calls, and I think we need to get better with that," said Kohli. "But, we take our decisions on the field ourselves. We don't ask for confirmation upstairs, so I think that's one thing that's pretty consistent with us."

The on-field acrimony notwithstanding, Bengaluru gave Kohli his sweet sixteen—his 16th win as Test captain, that is. And, he ranks this win as his best. "This was the sweetest victory for us," he said. ♦



forecast ■ By K.K. Vamanan Nampoothiri

MARCH 14 - 20

Aries

March 22-April 20

Some of you will make it big in politics this week. Do not rub family elders the wrong way for you will benefit from their advice. The unemployed will find new vistas for jobs. You might inherit a legacy. Those looking for domestic help will be lucky. Be careful while at the wheel this week.

Lucky day—Monday: gift from loved one



Taurus

April 21-May 21

It will be love at first sight for some. There are several occasions to participate in feasts this week. Politicians contesting polls will win. Do not be disheartened by colleagues' criticism. Instead, make a conscious attempt to change the way they regard you. Couples will spend more time with children.

Lucky day—Friday: surprise in store



Gemini

May 22-June 21

Partnership businesses will be successful this week. You will acquire trendy jewellery. Air travel is in the cards for some. You will enjoy good health. You may inherit real estate. Army officers have a memorable week. There will be indirect gains through enemies. You will be in the pink of health this week.

Lucky day—Monday: cousin comes calling



Cancer

June 22-July 23

Spare some time for reading this week. Artists and writers will be at their creative best. Your diplomatic nature will help you climb the career ladder. You will be adored for your solicitous nature. Husbands prove to be the good luck charm of their wives. A chance meeting with an old pal is predicted.

Lucky day—Tuesday: success



Leo

July 24-August 23

Gizmo-freaks will splurge. In the event of an illness, you will recover quickly. Make use of your hidden talents. The friendships you forge this week will last a lifetime. Gains likely through your adversaries. Consult experts before buying a vehicle or property. Architects will do well. Farmers will gain.

Lucky day—Monday: party time

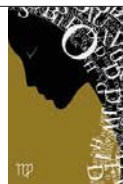


Virgo

August 24-September 23

Foodies will get to try some exotic sweets. Some of you will get entangled in an affair. You will take part in renovating a place of worship. Postpone plans of going abroad and concentrate on your present work. Journalists will bring out a sensational story. Sons would make fathers proud. Make wise use of your contacts.

Lucky day—Tuesday: good for speculation



Libra

September 24-October 23

Government servants should get along with their superiors. Take things as they come as you have the potential to excel. Your life partner will bring you happiness and prosperity. Some of you will ponder over the mysteries of life. Those ill should not delay seeking medical help. A quick marriage is in the cards.

Lucky day—Monday: new friends



Scorpio

October 24-November 22

Doctors, nurses and paramedics can look forward to a lucrative career. Avoid a hasty marriage. Take care of your parents and spend some time with children this week. Avoid worrying about what will be. Opportunities aplenty for movie actors to display their versatility. MBA students will do well.

Lucky day—Sunday: success in exams



Sagittarius

November 23-December 22

A favourable week for librarians, lawyers, publishers, musicians and choreographers. A smooth flow of income predicted for dairy farm owners. You might get a faithful domestic help. An unexpected job-related trip is likely. Politicians will do well. You will be in the pink of health.

Lucky day—Sunday: new ventures



Capricorn

December 23-January 20

Domestic life will be peaceful this week. Those unmarried can start surfing matrimonial columns and websites now. Think twice before spending money. Some of you will pursue a career in the armed forces. A promotion at work is likely. Stay away from explosives. Make use of your contacts this week.

Lucky day—Tuesday: victory over enemies



Aquarius

January 21-February 19

Some of you might settle for a compromise in a law suit. Your gift of the gab will attract members of the opposite sex. Avoid tiffs with subordinates this week. Some of you may marry a foreigner. Stay off the road this week. Students should pay more attention to their studies. You inherit a legacy.

Lucky day—Thursday: gains via partner



Pisces

February 20-March 21

A sudden increase in power and prestige is predicted. Parents need your care and attention. Time for real estate brokers to take their business forward. You will be energetic through the week. Some may acquire a pricey dress or jewellery. A distant relative may come calling. Entrepreneurs will do well.

Lucky day—Tuesday: the Midas touch



FOOD

Momos get the twist

From vodka momos to momo burgers, the classic plain dumpling has now many avatars

BY DHRITI GANDHI RANJAN



Perfect blend:
Momo burger was
introduced by Wow! Momo

It is probably one of the biggest makeovers in the culinary scene. Thanks to its long journey from Tibetan towns and the hills of the northeast to the bustling metros, the good old plain momo is no longer plain, and what has come out is an array of new flavours. While the original momos constituted cabbage, carrot, beans, coriander and ginger, newer varieties have Szechwan chicken, noodles, minced fish, prawn and potato. The current favourite is Tandoori momos.

“A trip to Amar Colony is incomplete without relishing a plate of veg tandoori momos at Hunger Strike,” says Delhiite Vani Kumar. Amar Colony market, in fact, is a momo town which is frequented by momo lovers from across India where exquisite varieties such as paneer momos, Mongolian momos and Afghani momos give a twist to the classic recipe.

While the Chinese flavours have a crunchiness covering—honey and sesame seeds are added to the surface—the hard-hitting one is the vodka momo. Achin Kheterpal, owner of Queen’s Boulevard in Amar Colony, introduced it. “Clients liked our vodka butter chicken. So we thought why not present momos into a different avatar by adding vodka. This was on a trial basis, but to our surprise, it has become our USP,” he says. Vodka is kneaded in the dough and added to the filling along with vegetables or chicken. The dish is accompanied by a rich sauce.

The great momo makeover, however, was not sudden. “It is the inherent lack of spiciness that has led to such innovations, besides the people’s need to eat fried food,” says celebrity chef Ranveer Brar of GourmaRT Kitchen, Mumbai. Chefs and food experts attribute the innovations in momo recipes to its growing popularity. Says chef Jinli Ma of Ano Tai, Jaypee Vasant Continental, Delhi: “We adopted a few innovations by offering saucy momos by adding tomatoes and mayonnaise or combining Mexican and Indian flavours to cater to the evolving taste buds.”

People’s eating preferences are a major contributor to the variety in momos. “Some people refrain from eating onion and garlic, while others prefer a palate of vegetables. Eateries as well as local vendors have come up with a variety of options so that they could reach out to one and all,” says chef Prashantha of Fatty Bao, Bengaluru.

The experiments are still on. Wow! Momo, a pan-India chain, has introduced momo burg-



PHOTOS: AAYUSH GOEL

Tasty grab:

Amar Colony in Delhi is a favourite destination of momo lovers

er—two pieces of fried momos inside the bun served with red sauce, coriander sauce and mayonnaise. It also offers au gratin momo, which is a classic momo in four layers. The first layer is the pan-fried one; above it is au gratin sauce; then barbecue noodles; and on top is cheddar cheese that comes garnished with oregano flakes. “We do a lot of research and development before coming up with new flavours. Our chocolate momo is an example. Not many people know that it is a combination of vermicelli and milk chocolate. After frying it, it is garnished with chocolate sauce, choco flakes and hot chocolate fudge,” says Himmat Singh Chandhok of Wow! Momo.

Keeping the health conscious in mind, several eateries are adding nutritious elements, fruits and vegetables to momos. Pineapple momos are a hit in Mumbai. Wheat momos and boiled vegetables momos have been gaining popularity across India. Says chef Nishant Choubey of The Roseate, Delhi: “People have



become health conscious and restaurants have moulded them accordingly. Now momos are kneaded with lighter flour and their ingredients are also healthy as compared to the ones sold in Tibet comprising fatty meat in the form of lamb or chicken, capsicum, carrot, garlic and soya sauce. Besides this, new flavours such as paneer, cheese, khoya, pork as well as soupy formats have also gained popularity. Healthier options have emerged so people now enjoy momos as meals rather than a snack.”

Healthy recipes such as asparagus momos, black bean momos cooked in soya sauce, tofu momos and shitake momos (a variety of mushroom) have many takers. Crystal momos are a new favourite in which a variety of flours are kneaded together. In fact they are the lightest momos and even the stuffing is visible. Wheat and buckwheat momos have also become popular. “We have often seen people craving for momos while fasting. We introduced

buckwheat momos so that even during fasting, people could enjoy momos. We add broccoli, almond, cashew nut and water chestnut along with potato to fill the momos for the fasters,” says chef Ghyanisham of Kylin Premiere, Delhi.

Surprisingly, the popular momo varieties in Punjab are not as spicy as the traditional Punjabi food. The new flavours come in the form of mixed vegetables (carrot, broccoli and cottage cheese), paneer, potato, cheese and corn, minced mutton, broccoli and onion, and mushroom and malai (made like malai kofta). These are made with limited spices but served with a spicy sauce. “Though people’s choices have evolved, we tend to remain subtle in adding spices in the filling,” says Sukhpreet Singh of Dumpling Hood, a popular chain in Chandigarh and Patiala. “We add an element of spice in the chutney that comes in the form of mixed vegetable sauce and also neutralise it with something creamy such as mayonnaise.” ♦

People’s eating preferences are a major contributor to the variety in momos.

BOOKS

Close to home

Like her previous books, Manju Kapur's latest one, too, focuses on the larger-than-life Indian family

BY MANDIRA NAYAR

Parakeets fly screeching across the evening sky drowning out conversation. The house looms large—red sandstone, endless corridors and green shutters draped with layers of history—right across from the only political address that mattered for years, the Congress party office. Manju Kapur, chronicler of middle-class India, sits in one of the rooms, filled with books, scribbling each day a story of everyday ordinariness. “I dislike not being able to write,” she says, as she settles down in a chair. “So, I try and make a routine of it.” Her new book, *Brothers*, is out. Like everything else Kapur has written, this one, too, took years to complete. And, for this one, too, she goes back to the family. “In *Brothers*, I thought what would make a brother kill a brother,” she says.

The book is about Himmat Gaina and his younger brother, Mangal. Himmat is a charismatic and successful politician. Mangal grows up in the shadow of his brother, whom he idolises. He even marries the woman his brother chooses for him. At the beginning of the book, Mangal has shot Himmat, who lies in the ICU, because he believes his wife, Tapti, is having

an affair with him. The story uncannily echoes the Pramod Mahajan saga. Ask Kapur if she was inspired by the event and she laughs. “Things that happen around you are triggers,” she says. “Pramod Mahajan was an extreme case. I did not want the story to echo that in any way. I did not set the story in Maharashtra. I set it in Rajasthan. I didn’t try and find out about that family. I did my own research. I put them in a village.”

Quiet and gentle, Kapur’s books explore the larger-than-life Indian family, often through the eyes of women. It is their world—complicated, nuanced and difficult—that she brings alive to perfection. Capturing the mundaneness of ordinary life isn’t easy. No other writer brings out the inner working of the Indian middle-class family—the tension, duty, obligations as well as rivalry and love—the way Kapur does. Her books are meant to be read slowly, savoured and re-read years later. “I would like my books to last,” she says. “If I feel it is dead, it doesn’t carry conviction, or you don’t empathise with the person, that is a really big sin. Or you don’t care what is happening to this person. At that point, I will backtrack and rewrite those strands, filling in more and more till I feel that it is working.”

An English professor, Kapur spent years “dealing with second-hand stuff”. Till she finally started to write. “I guess I wanted to do my own,” she says. “I think age had to do a lot with it. I was in my 40s. What would I be when I die? You kind of want to be more substantial.”

By the time her first book, *Difficult Daughters*, got published, she was almost 50. The book set her firmly on the map of the first flush of Indian writers. “Even then, I felt maybe it was a fluke, so also with my second one. I started to call myself a writer after my third book,” she says. “Writing has always been very hard. Always. I thought it would get easier, but it hasn’t.”

Poetry came first, then came plays. “What do you do with a play?” she asks, laughing. Hers are still there somewhere stacked away. “After four years of doing this kind of stuff, novels seemed to be the way to go,” she says. So, does she have any favourites? “I like *A Married Woman*. I feel that it has done badly because it is the ‘runt of the litter’ kind of thing.”

Unlike other writers, Kapur is not on Twitter or Facebook. She isn’t a recluse, but she values her privacy and guards it fiercely. “I have nothing to say that I haven’t said in my books,” says Kapur. So, is she working on a new book? “I am always working on a new novel,” she laughs. “It goes with the turf.” ♦



Finding her own voice: An English professor, Manju Kapur was tired of “dealing with second-hand stuff” and so she started writing

ARVIND JAIN



The master's piece: K.C.S. Paniker; (left) Conolly Canal, one of his early watercolours

COURTESY: CHOLAMANDAL ARTISTS' VILLAGE

A doyen's remembrance

BY LAKSHMI SUBRAMANIAN

Maybe it is a trite thing to ask what is a picture. But to the picture maker it is of import. What he paints and how, are no doubt important, but there is a kind of self-consciousness in an artist that makes him ask what it is that he has created..." reads the first few lines of the book *Paniker*. Published by Art World Gallery, it traces the journey of legendary painter K.C.S. Paniker through his many phases right from his early watercolours to his words and symbols series.

Kovalezhi Cheerampathoor Sankaran Paniker, a doyen among south Indian painters, dazzled the art world with his brush strokes and conceived the Cholamandal Artists' Village in Chennai.

The book, conceived and compiled by his son and famous sculptor S. Nandagopal, features all 106 of Paniker's paintings along with scholarly articles by renowned art critics such as Josef James and Rebecca Brown. Photographs of Paniker's paintings in a museum in Thiruvananthapuram, clicked by Michael Lockwood, are also included. The book is a wonderful guide to anyone interested in contemporary Indian art.

One of the articles in the book is by the art historian and Austrian-British publisher Ludwig Goldscheider, who writes about Paniker's early years. It also reproduces his handwritten letters

to Paniker. In a letter dated November 19, 1954, Goldscheider writes, "It is easy to start brilliantly and then not to know how to go on. Your painting began modestly and honestly, and then—I can see that—you worked hard forming your own style. This is of course [more] difficult for an eastern painter than for any European. You are one of the very few Indian painters who went through the ordeal of western teaching and came out unbroken."

The book opens with a photograph of the painting *Fruit Seller*, which is vibrant with colours, lines, figures and calligraphy. Paniker's early watercolour work *Conolly Canal* reveals his technique of capturing landscapes. James in his essay talks of how Paniker, while painting people, could convey feelings through absolute colours. James says Paniker made each one of his works a wonderful poetic statement.

James writes in the chapter *Chitram Ezhuthu*: "What more suitable medium can one invent for making pictures than the written word?" He explains how employing writing to make a direct visual impact will make the difference. Brown's essay examines Paniker's works through his interest in folk art and highlights his efforts in establishing the Cholamandal Artists' Village.

The book also gives the reader glimpses of Paniker's dynamic persona, and his letters show his deep love for art. In one of his letters, dated February 20, 1966, to Krishna Rao, the then principal of the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Chennai, he says, "The best things in life, the things men go into raptures about, are only the small parts of dreams some have dared to dream." ♦



Paniker
Compiled by
S. Nandagopal
Published by
Art World
Gallery
Price ₹1,800;
Pages 163



schizo-nation • Anuja Chauhan

Foul intellectual smells

Man, Ramjas College *tohep ho gaya*. Seriously. Back in the day when I was a grubby undergrad at Delhi University, doing Economics honours from Miranda House, the holy troika of Stephens, Hindu and LSR ruled the roost. Ramjas was not considered particularly happening—it placed lower on the social/merit rankings than even Hansraj (which at least has Shah Rukh Khan as its claim to fame) and Kirori Mal (which has hidden behind Amitabh Bachchan since the fifties.) In DU, Ramjas was known basically for cat-calling loudly in Haryanvi from the windows of the U-specials and for the fabulousness of its break-dancing team.

But look at Ramjas, now! What an image revamp. It's become a bastion of free-thinking, a cauldron of student unrest and it was breaking news on national television for six nights straight. I must say I'm very impressed! I mean, just compare it to stuffy old St Stephen's College, which was most recently in the news for wanting to withdraw from DU, in a move reminiscent of Britain's withdrawal from the EU. Ramjas comes out sounding far sexier, far more outward looking, and far more engaged with the issues that plague student life in India.

(Hmmm, it seems to me that Ramjas is Kangana Ranaut and Stephen's is Karan Johar. But let's not digress.)

Just when Ramjas thought it has the cool, liberal space all taped up, along came Gurmehar

Kaur, a first year English honours student from Lady Shri Ram college, who blew the brains of the right-wingers by holding up a placard reading 'Pakistan did not kill my (*fauji* martyr) father, war did.'

This poetic, lyrical, typically English honours statement was way too nuanced for anybody to grasp, because that's what we mourn every day in India, isn't it (amongst other things)—the death of nuance—and so naturally, the internet exploded. She was called a traitor and a Paki lover and trolled off the internet.

Enter the LSR English department, which proved braver than Ramjas by putting out a statement applauding their student for responding 'sensitively, creatively and bravely to events in her immediate context rather than seek the safe refuge of silence.' The department said it felt that 'it is the bounden duty of educational institutions to nurture sensitive, responsive and critical thinking students without the fear of violent

retaliation.' And that it was 'proud that Gurmehar has fulfilled her duty as a young citizen of this country.'

Kudos to the ladies at Lady Shri Ram for sticking their neck out. Most other colleges wouldn't have.

But what are we coming to, as a civilised society, when a kid can't just say what she thinks without everybody coming down on her like a tonne of bricks? Why don't our so-called intelligentsia and social commentators and politicians get a life? What price Beti Padhao, Beti Bachao now? Or are we planning to only *bachao* and *padhao* girls who toe the line, never backtalk and have no opinions?

The point I'm trying to make is that being engaged with the wider world is not just a cool trend. It's also important. This notion, which reared its ugly head last year too, that students 'studying on tax-payers' money' should only focus on studenting, is stupid. Young people are our fountainhead. Our freshness. They need to explore, to push, to challenge the status quo. Otherwise they're no better than all of us old farts. And farts cause global warming.

Talking of farting, a SpiceJet flight from Bengaluru to Delhi was diverted to Hyderabad because a foul smell emanating from the forward lavatory paralysed all action in the cockpit and made it impossible to continue flying. Imagine what the pilot must have said as he requested an emergency landing! No, I am not making this up. Why would I?

Chauhan is a best-selling author and advertiser.

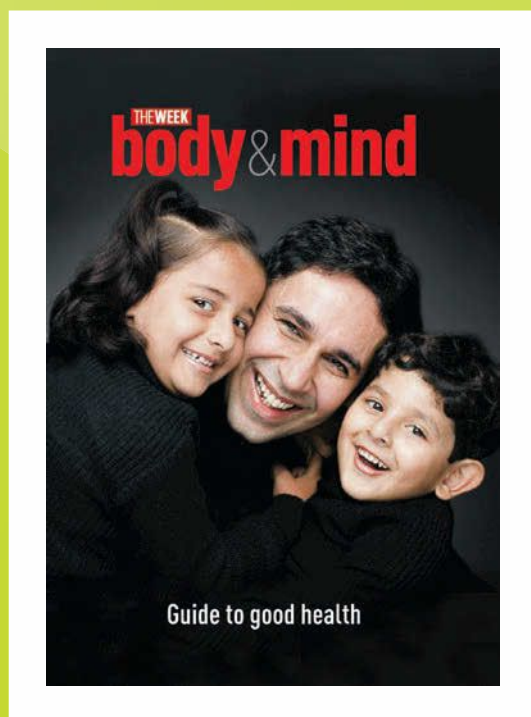


BHASKARAN

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TELEVISION

Discovering India

For chef Jethwa, to get to the stories of food in India was fascinating and important

BY PRIYANKA BHADANI

A splash, and a grab! Whether in a narrow stream in the countryside or on a seashore, the sight of catching fish with bare hands is common in India. Chef Kiran Jethwa, however, was quite intrigued by the sight. “The way fishermen catch fish in Kochi was an interesting discovery—the way they dive into the water without any diving equipment, no goggles, nothing else, and to see them catching fish with bare hands—was crazy, yet fascinating,” said the third generation Kenyan restaurateur-chef born in Nairobi to an Indian origin father and an English mother.

Jethwa was talking about his discoveries in India for his upcoming show, *Spirited Traveller*, on Fox Life. There have been quite a few! “Fox Life wanted to come up with a new show that explores the most authentic and exotic beverages and cuisines from across India. When they asked me to get involved, I thought it’s a fantastic idea,” said Jethwa, who loves coastal recipes; seafood to be precise. “Seafood is my biggest passion. The coastal regions that we covered really well were Goa and Kochi. Kolkata is also very close to coastal with a variety of fish but it’s not coastal,” said Jethwa matter-of-factly. Though he was surprised with the fish he discovered at all these places, especially in Goa. “I went to the fish

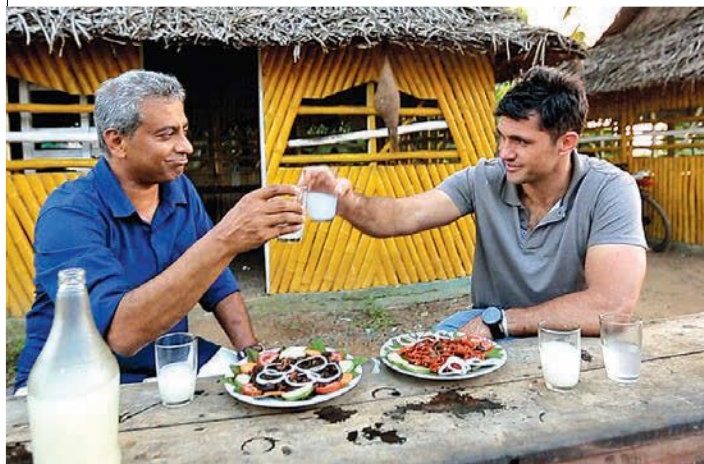
market in Goa and I was the happiest man in the world. The way Goans prepare their fish is a real highlight for me,” said Jethwa, who has always been interested in telling stories from around the world through food.

Food, beverage and culture go together for Jethwa. “They are entwined. One can’t be separated from another. And together, they make a wonderful story,” he said. The show, he said, was a slightly different approach to understand the Indian culture. “The whole shoot for me was a journey of discovery. It was the first time for me to go around India. I went to a lot of places for the first time and when you do that it’s an interesting experience. The whole of India is a fascinating place, full of incredible people, colourful stories and a lot more,” said Jethwa.

For Jethwa, to get to the stories of food in India through the Indians was not just fascinating, but also important to understand his lineage. “My father’s side of the family is from India and to come to a country to which I belong, from where my heritage is, and explore it, is of course fascinating,” said Jethwa, “Indian food has been a massive part of my life since the time I was very young. My father ate only Indian food at home. Before my mother married him, she learned to cook all the Indian cuisines, particularly Gujarati. She also learned the language. It’s been a part of me for a long time and I love it.”

By now, you know that Jethwa’s family has been really into food, but establishing it further, he said, “I come from a house where food was everything.” Like most Indians, Jethwa’s father, too, had a rule—whoever came to the house had to be fed properly. No one left hungry, ever! “My mother was always cooking and I was always around the kitchen helping. From a very young age, I had a love for food, love for eating particularly,” said Jethwa before pausing to add that he was a fat child. You wouldn’t want to believe him with the fit physique he maintains now. The numerous food shows on TV do not bother Jethwa. “There are some very good food shows and then there are some bad ones. But if you continuously uncover content that is interesting and with a novel idea, it keeps going,” said Jethwa. “I don’t think people are going to get bored with watching food ever. Food is a part of our life, or rather food is life. It’s a challenge to look at it from different angles and present interestingly,” said Jethwa. Besides being busy with his shows and running restaurants, he has also collaborated with World Food Programme to look at how more school children in Kenya can be fed. ♦

Taste to the full: Chef Kiran Jethwa (right) in Kochi





everyone is a camera • **Bose Krishnamachari**

Silk Road to artistic collaboration

An old friend Mami Kataoka, who is curator at the Mori Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, and has been appointed curator of next Biennale of Sydney, invited me to speak at the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art (CIMAM) conference in Tokyo in November 2015. This was a bit surprising because I am known as an artist-curator and for my work at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, which is neither a museum nor has a collection of modern art. Yet, I was keen to attend as it was an opportunity to survey the art scene in Japan and meet colleagues and professionals from around the world.

After my presentation to the 320 museum directors, curators' committees and other delegates, I was approached by Suzhen Hsieh, an artistic director from Taiwan, who is now based in Yinchuan, a region in north-west China. Hsieh was very impressed by our work in Kerala and she invited me to visit their new museum development in Yinchuan. About a fortnight after our first meeting, I received a reminder of her invitation to visit the Museum of

Contemporary Art Yinchuan. I gladly accepted this, as it was a part of China I was very keen to visit.

The region is home today to many indigenous Muslim minorities, particularly the Hui, of whom there is a population of around one crore in Greater China. Located along the ancient Silk Road, the area has a long history of cultural exchange with different parts of Asia.

When I finally visited Yinchuan, I realised that Hsieh and Liu Wenjin, who was director of MOCA, had invited me in order to have a discussion about the potential of starting a new biennale in Yinchuan, centred on the new MOCA Yinchuan.

Situated among the expansive green fields, distant mountains, the Yellow River and wetlands that surround the fast growing city of Yinchuan, this museum is the first contemporary art institution to appear in northwest China. The slick, fluid exterior of this sprawling 15,000sqm complex was designed by the Chinese firm We Architects Anonymous.

Its positioning in the capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region provided an anchor for a large development project that includes

a school, a theme park and an artist residency programme. Interestingly, and perhaps a model for us to learn from in India, the museum is owned and operated by the Ningxia Minsheng Group, which has planned to invest \$5 billion in the project over the coming decade.

I began working on the Yinchuan Biennale in December 2015, conducting research around the world. Eventually I invited an extraordinary and original group of 73 Chinese and foreign artists to participate in the biennale. This included major ones like Anish Kapoor and Yoko Ono, and also the young and emerging, like Alaa Al Qedra from the UAE. Thus, the first Yinchuan Biennale was born. Titled *For an Image, Faster than Light*, it opened on September 9, 2016 and ran for 101 days till December 18.

Logistically, this was no small feat. The immense challenges of staging an inaugural biennale at a venue determinedly outside China's major cities presented complications at all stages—from funding to installation, shipping, invitations and promotion. Among the most successful presentations at the biennale were the six artists-in-residence, which included Valsan Kolleri, Cristiana de Marchi, Alke Reeh, Mohammed Kazem and Benitha Perciyal.

The first Yinchuan Biennale is only an early step. The real challenge now for the Yinchuan Museum is to continue with the work that was commenced and for all of us to build more cultural and artistic bridges between the two great civilisations of China and India.

editor@theweek.in

Reflecting reality: An installation at the 2016 Yinchuan biennale



CINEMA

Interview/ Alankrita Shrivastava, filmmaker

Censorship of films in a democracy makes no sense



BY SHALINI SINGH

Alankrita Shrivastava's film *Lipstick Under My Burkha*, which explores the sexuality of women in small-town India, was denied certification by the censor board. The filmmaker speaks from the US about the female gaze and freedom of expression. Excerpts:

What do you make of the remarks of the censor board?

Clearly the CBFC (Central Board of Film Certification) has a serious problem with gender equality. They are ill-equipped to judge a film. They are archaic, regressive and illogical. Shouldn't they view cinema keeping the context of world cinema in mind? Shouldn't they have some idea about the politics of representation, the gaze, gender politics in culture, expression of alternative narratives? Mainstream popular culture is their

only reference point. Anything not in keeping with the dominant paradigm scares them, and they choose to silence it.

The way the CBFC is functioning is a gross violation of women's right to freedom of expression. That is wrong and not in keeping with what the Constitution promises—gender equality and freedom of expression. It's not fair that sexual content created for the purpose of male titillation is acceptable but women expressing desire for agency over their lives and bodies is not acceptable. All kinds of stories and narratives must be allowed. Why should the CBFC systematically be perpetuating patriarchy and muzzling alternative points of view? Is the purpose of the CBFC to perpetuate status quo? This is 2017. But it functions like it exists in the dark ages. There should be no censorship. Let the adult audience that

is mature enough to vote be able to choose the kind of films they want to watch.

How do you plan to take the film to the audiences now?

I'm determined to overturn this CBFC decision and release it in theatres. To take the route of direct to digital is one thing. But to be forced to take that route is another. It is like telling women, you have to study at home, not going to the city school where boys can freely study. That is wrong. If a girl chooses to be home-schooled knowing she has the option to study in the city school, it is different. The CBFC cannot take away our right to release the film theatrically. It's unfair and sexist.

Do you feel there is a tightening on freedom of expression in India?

More than a "tightening", this is the moment where we have been jolted into seeing that we as filmmakers are unable to enjoy the freedom guaranteed to us. Perhaps earlier we were just taking it for granted that there is censorship in India. So we were just self-censoring our work. Now with the advance of digital technology and all kinds of content being available it is hard to pretend that our wings are not being clipped. It is becoming obvious that as filmmakers we do not enjoy the freedom of expression available to filmmakers in other democratic countries. Censorship of films in a democracy makes no sense. Perhaps that moment has come when we need to question the relevance of this concept. Censorship that is being used to push a particular kind of narrative is unacceptable. While the dominant male gaze is being systematically perpetuated, the female gaze is being systematically stifled. This is blatant discrimination against female voices in popular culture. It cannot be allowed in a country that promises gender equality and freedom of expression to all citizens.

What's next after *Lipstick Under My Burkha*?

I'm writing a couple of films. Both are 'lady oriented'. ♦



THREE CHEERS

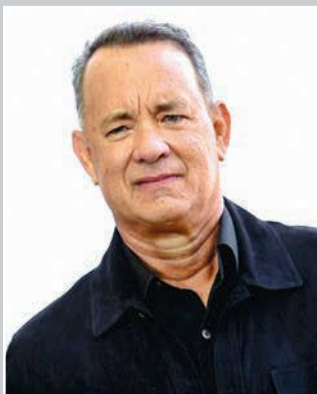
THE WEEK was conferred the Magazine of the Year award for the second time by the Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) for its outstanding contribution to the profession, industry and society. Deputy news editor Mathew T. George received the award at the 11th global communication conclave organised by the PRCI in Bengaluru on March 4. The chief guest at the event was H. Anjaneya, Karnataka social welfare minister. The magazine first received the award in 2013.

BREAKING NEWS

If all goes well, Steven Spielberg will direct **Meryl Streep** and **Tom Hanks** in a thriller about *The Washington Post's* role in publishing the leaked Pentagon Papers. Hanks will probably play *Post* editor Ben Bradlee while Streep will essay the role of publisher Kay Graham. The film is based on a script titled *The Post* by Liz Hannah. No matter how the film turns out, one can expect powerhouse performances by two of the most celebrated actors of Hollywood.



AFP

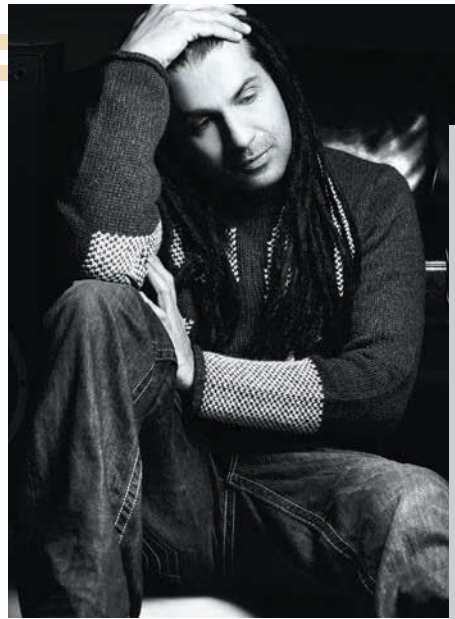


AFP

COMEBACK QUEEN

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has won the award for best actress for her role in *Sarabjit* at the International Film Festival and Awards of Australia. Bachchan played Dalbir Kaur in the film, a woman fighting to bring her brother home from a jail in Pakistan. Although she made her comeback with the film *Jazbaa*, it was her de-glam role in *Sarabjit* that brought her back into the limelight. *Sarabjit* was also nominated in 2016 as one of the 336 feature films which were eligible for best picture at the Oscars. It, however, failed to make it to the final list.





GUESS WHO'S BACK

British-Asian singer **Steven Kapur**, or Apache Indian, most remembered for his Indian-British reggae of the 1990s, is back with a music album. "The album is called *In JA* [In Jamaica]," he says, "and it celebrates 25 years of being signed up with Bob Marley's record label, a part of the Universal Group. This one is a collaborative effort with producers in America such as Jim Beanz and Charlie Hype." His most famous hits include *Arranged Marriage*, *Don Raja*, *Raggamuffin Girl* and *Boom Shack-A-Lak*.

**CONTRIBUTORS: GURVISHA AHUJA
AND DHRITI GANDHI
COMPILED BY ANJULY MATHAI**



FASHIONABLY ON TIME

Bollywood actors are notorious for arriving 'fashionably late', but **Ranbir Kapoor's** punctuality at the TAG Heuer English Premier League event came as a breath of fresh air. Kapoor, looking cool in a sporty avatar, arrived 15 minutes early and sent the crowd into a tizzy when he, along with English Premier League legend **Alan Shearer**, talked about their passion for football. The duo also engaged in a friendly football challenge as the onlookers cheered them on.



last word • Nandita Das

The power of the written word

It has been close to eight years since I began writing in THE WEEK. Month after month, writing the column was the only regularity in my life. The deadline always came too soon and every time I would promise myself not to write at the 11th hour. But I always did, including this one! Except for one short hiatus I took in late 2010 when my son was born, I was disciplined and relentless.

Now no more deadlines, no dilemmas about what to write and no distractions from what I have now dived into. Yet, I am sad to let it go. It has not only been cathartic for me, but also helped me think, feel and express in ways I hadn't before. I remember the day when I was first approached to write. I had only written the odd blog and my first film, *Firaaq*. They didn't qualify me to become a columnist overnight, a person who must have the habit of systematically writing.

The bug of trying out new things and getting an opportunity to share was tempting. My random musings had found a method. Many concerns, questions, frustrations and inspirations found a voice, a channel. My faith in the redemptive power of sharing stories was strengthened, and I also realised the contemplative power of writing.

Often I sat down to write a fun piece, though invariably there was something more pressing, more

urgent, that I wanted to share. And before I knew it, something serious would slip into the column, nudging my funny bone to the next, which just never happened. Writing has been a mirror to my instincts—all that disturbed and anguished me but also that filled me with joy and wonder. I was happy to bare myself. For that, I often got trolled and, at times, got stopped on the street with a big smile.

I am grateful to the editor for giving me the brief, "You can write anything under the sun", and I heeded to it fully! From exploring the complexity of the human mind to politics of our times, I had a free hand. I used the opportunity to voice the concerns of the underprivileged and the marginalised. I reminisced the time I participated, 25 years ago, in a march by farmers and tribals who were protesting against the Narmada dam. I often wrote about the multiple struggles of women, the desire to reclaim words like secularism, the dilemma of being a true liberal and the

responsibility of raising a boy in an acutely patriarchal society.

I shared the journey of writing *Between the Lines*, a play that explores the not-so-subtle gender inequalities in the educated class; what it was to unlearn learning; how by default I became the face of 'Dark is Beautiful' campaign and why the red carpet was the least interesting part of being on the jury at the Cannes Film Festival. All this and more were streams of consciousness meandering through my thoughts, feelings and questions. I have mused about the need to go beyond the simple binaries of identity and tried to understand the rise of Trump and the Modi phenomenon. Writing forced me to look at data to back my intuitions and test my positions on subjects that piqued my interest.

As I turn this last page on the Last Word, I begin a new journey. It will be cameras and lights, sounds and performances, all in the service of telling a story that I so believe must be told. The power of the written word remains as the film I am directing is about the life and works of one of the subcontinent's greatest short-story writers, Sadaat Hasan Manto.

A continuum of sorts. The medium will change but neither the intent nor the desire to share will be any different. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." And this will be my last word!

editor@theweek.in



JAIRAJ T.G.

ACHIEVE TO INSPIRE...



Winners of Vodafone Sirmur Cup, Maharaja Sawai Bhawani Singh Cup,
Maharaja Jiwaji Scindia Gold Cup & RMRM Gold Vase Polo Cup.

**KUCH KAR AISA
DUNIYA BANNA CHAHE
TERE JAISA.**



OMEGA

"...and OMEGA is the watch
that went to the Moon."



GEORGE CLOONEY'S CHOICE

#moonwatch

THE WEEK

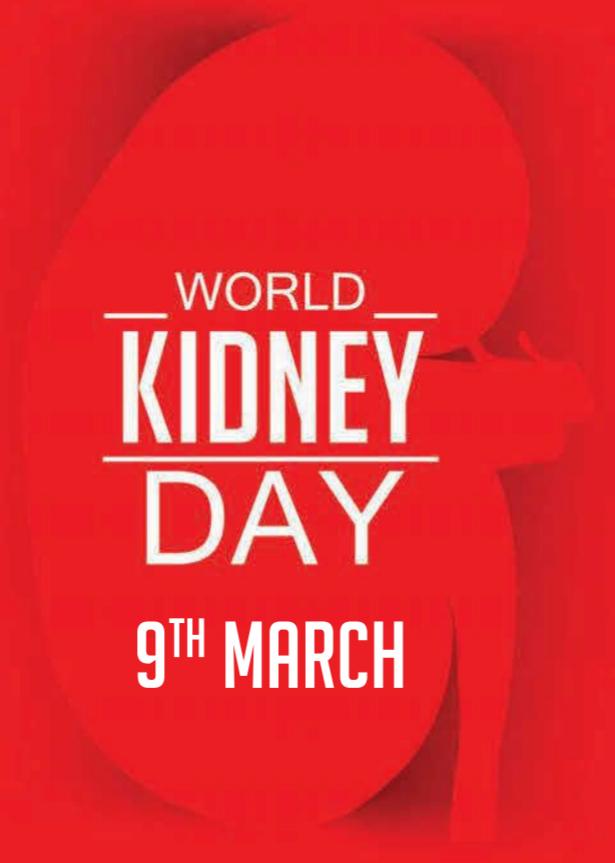
Plus

MARCH 19, 2017

FOR SELECT METROS ONLY

WORLD KIDNEY DAY

.....
KNOW ABOUT KIDNEY DISEASES AND ORGAN DONATION



WORLD
KIDNEY
DAY
9TH MARCH

HOW TO KEEP KIDNEY HEALTHY?

1. Keep fit and active - "On the move for kidney health"

Keeping fit helps to reduce your blood pressure and therefore reduces the risk of Chronic Kidney Disease.

2. Keep regular control of your blood sugar level
It is important for people with diabetes to have regular tests to check their kidney functions. Kidney damage from diabetes can be reduced or prevented if detected early.

3. Monitor your blood pressure regularly
It is also the most common cause of kidney damage.

4. Eat healthy and keep your weight in check

- This can help prevent diabetes, heart disease and other conditions associated with Chronic

Kidney Disease.

- Reduce your salt intake - Limit the amount of processed and restaurant food and do not add salt to food.

5. Maintain a healthy fluid intake –

We should consume 1.5 to 2 litres of water per day daily to maintain good health. Consuming plenty of fluid helps the kidneys clear sodium, urea and toxins from the body

6. Do not smoke

7. Do not take over-the-counter pills on a regular basis

Common drugs such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen are known to cause kidney damage and disease if taken regularly.

THEWEEK

Plus INSIDE



4. Chronic Kidney Disease
6. Dialysis of Transplantation?
8. Organ Donation : Hope of Life
10. The Art of Giving
12. Facts about Organ Donation
13. Planning for Kidney Transplantation

14. Nutrition after Kidney Transplantation

16. Post-Transplant Infections

18. Take care of your new Kidney

Disclaimer: The information contained in this booklet is not to be used for treatment purpose or for diagnosis of health problems or as a substitute to expert medical advice. Please consult your doctor for any health related problems or queries that you may have. The views, opinions, ideas expressed herein are solely those of the author/s. Although great care has been taken in compiling and checking the information, Authors/The Week magazine is not responsible or liable in anyway for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies in or otherwise howsoever for any consequences arising there from.

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CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE (CKD) IS A CONDITION CHARACTERIZED BY A GRADUAL LOSS OF KIDNEY FUNCTION OVER TIME



Dr Vijay Kher
Chairman
Department of Nephrology and
Renal Transplant
Fortis Escorts,
New Delhi

We have two kidneys, each the size of a fist located under the rib cage, on either sides of the spine. They filter the blood, produce urine which contains the waste products and balance the internal environment of the body. In addition they produce hormones that help maintain blood pressure, red cells, hemoglobin and keeps the bones healthy.

What is chronic kidney disease?

Chronic kidney disease is a slow process in which the kidneys are damaged due to various diseases. As the kidneys get damaged they lose their ability to excrete waste products from the blood and more than 50% of the kidney may be destroyed before the symptoms appear.

What are the diseases which place you at risk for chronic kidney disease?

Chronic Kidney disease is most often caused by diabetes or high blood pressure. Diabetes and high blood pressure damage the blood vessels in the kidneys, so the kidneys are not able to filter the blood as well as they used to. Other risk factors for kidney disease are cardiovascular (heart) disease and a family history of kidney failure. If you have any of these risk factors, you should get tested for kidney disease.

Common signs & symptoms of CKD are:

- Swelling over feet & face
- High blood pressure
- Anemia
- Bone pains / aches
- Weakness, lethargy etc.
- Protein in urine
- Blood or red blood cells in urine

There may be subtle or no symptoms till the patient has advanced kidney failure thus regular check-ups especially in those with family history of kidney disease is essential.

People at high risk of CKD are:

- Age above 50 years
- Diabetes mellitus
- Hypertension
- Family history of kidney disease
- Those who smoke

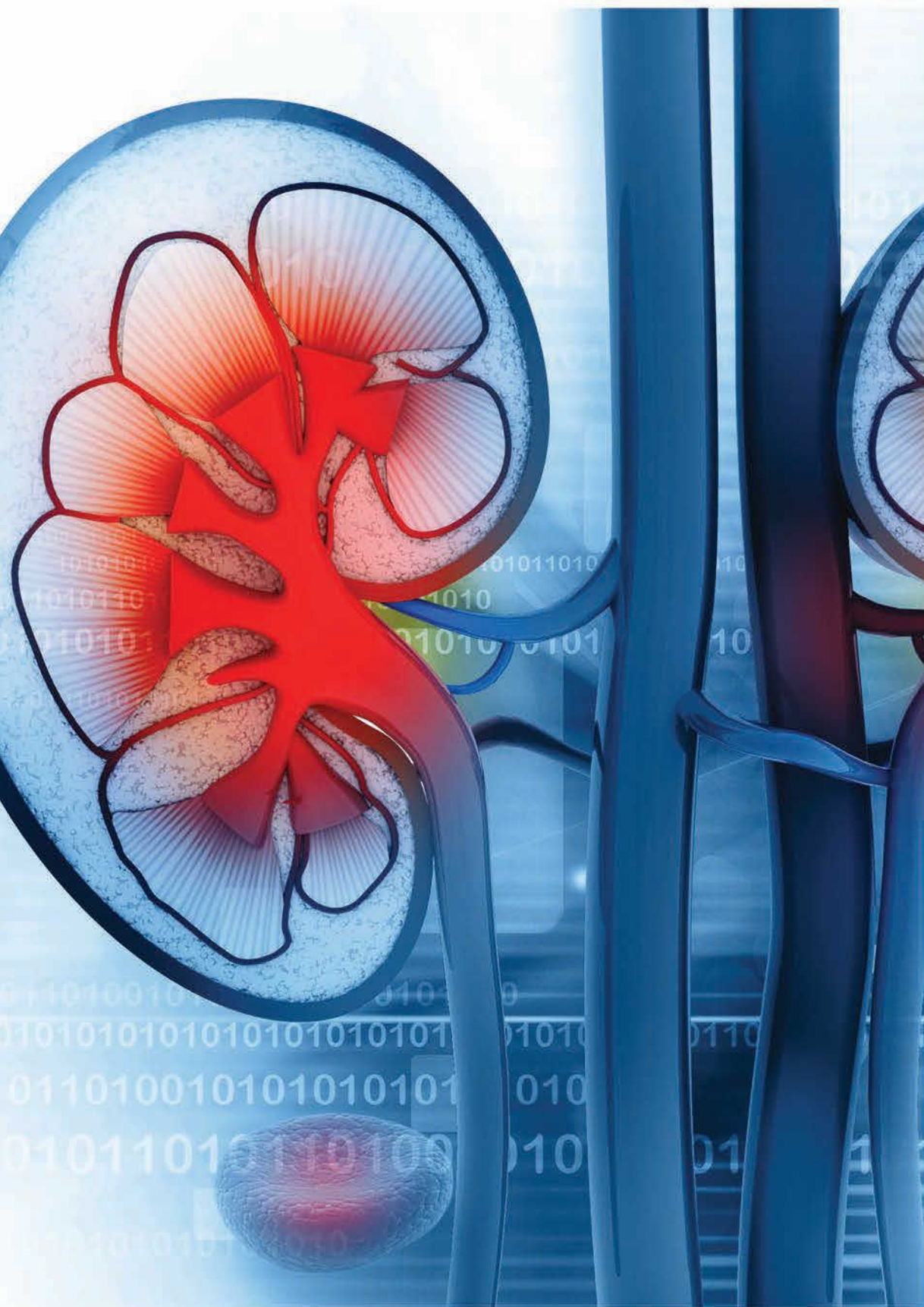
If you are a diabetic especially with family history of diabetic kidney disease or high blood pressure then you are at very high risk of developing CKD due to diabetes. If you are in the above category you must come for a check up:

- 1) If you are a diabetic keep your blood sugar strictly under control (with diet/exercise/medications if needed)
- 2) Check urine for albumin by doing spot urine albumin to creatinine ratio. (Albumin in urine is a marker of kidney disease).
- 3) If you have high blood pressure keep it under strict target range. Monitor blood pressure and keep it below 140/90 mmHg if no albumin in the urine & 130/80 mmHg if albumin is present in the urine.
- 4) Stay fit, exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight by eating a healthy diet
- 5) Become a non-smoker

Steps to control Diabetes

1. Check control of diabetes by monitoring HbA1c every 3 months and target it to less than 7 %.
2. Keep blood pressure < 130/80 mmHg
3. Look for microalbumin in the urine.
4. Microalbumin is an early sign of kidney disease in diabetes or hypertension. The monitoring must start 5 years after onset of type I diabetes and at time of diagnosis in type II diabetes.

If one monitors & keeps HbA1c to less than 7 %, B.P. < 130/80 mmHg and monitor for microalbumin every 3-6 months and use specific drugs to control B.P. & microalbuminuria, one should be able to prevent or delay the development of CKD.



DIALYSIS OR TRANSPLANTATION?

DIALYSIS AND KIDNEY TRANSPLANTATION ARE TREATMENTS FOR SEVERE KIDNEY FAILURE. THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF DIALYSIS: HEMODIALYSIS AND PERITONEAL DIALYSIS.



Dr Gokulnath
Director
Nephrology Services
Apollo Hospitals
Bangalore

When the kidneys are no longer working effectively; waste products and water accumulate in the blood. Dialysis and kidney transplantation are treatments for severe kidney failure, also called end stage renal failure. When kidneys stop functioning you have to choose between the three available treatment options:

1) Kidney transplantation- A kidney transplant is a surgery in which diseased kidney is removed and a healthy kidney from a suitable donor is surgically placed. The healthy new kidney can then do the job of the diseased kidneys. The healthy kidney is ob-



tained from a live donor or a deceased donor depending upon the availability. Live donor is usually the blood relative of the patient.

2) Peritoneal dialysis– in this procedure tubes are placed surgically into the abdomen and a special fluid called dialysate is released through the tube. The fluid collects the waste products from the blood across the abdominal membrane and then the fluid is drained back through the tubes. Once the tubes are in place the procedure can be done at home.

3) Hemodialysis– in this procedure blood is passed through an external machine which filters and cleanses the blood. This procedure needs a special set up, a dialysis technician and a nurse.



Dialysis is usually done in sessions which range in frequency from 2 to 3 days per week. Options of continuous dialysis are there but are a bit cumbersome. Kidney transplantation can completely take over the function of the failing kidneys.

DIALYSIS

Advantages

- 1) It may be less costly than transplantation
- 2) Peritoneal dialysis can be performed at home even in night while you are asleep though hemodialysis need to be done in dialysis centers
- 3) No risk of major surgery like in transplantation

Disadvantages

- 1) There are many stringent dietary restrictions
- 2) Patient on hemodialysis has to make frequent visits to the dialysis center which disrupts routine life & restricts movement.
- 3) There is a risk of certain complications are associated with hemodialysis like fluctuations in blood pressure, infection etc.

TRANSPLANTATION

In general, transplantation is considered the best modality of treatment however it has its own shortcomings. Following are the advantages and disadvantages of transplantation.

Advantages

- 1) A successful transplantation offers better quality of life than dialysis.
- 2) There is no need for the patient to visit the dialysis centers frequently and spending hours for dialysis
- 3) Patients get rid of the burden of stringent dietary restrictions that he/she has to follow during dialysis

Disadvantages

- 1) A kidney transplant is major surgery
- 2) It can be difficult to find a donor kidney and may take long time till you get a suitable donor.
- 3) People with certain medical conditions can't have a kidney transplant
- 4) After surgery, you need to take antirejection medicines every day for the rest of your life. These medications are associated with many side effects
- 5) There are chances of rejection of the graft which will results in permanent loss of its function.

Which treatment is right for me?

You along with your doctor and family members will have to discuss and decide on the treatment. Though transplantation seems to be a better option, but it is dependent on the availability of the donor. You may have to wait for long. Till that time you will be put on dialysis depending upon your health. However the new regulations regarding transplantation have brought in a positive change in this situation.

What's new in the field of kidney transplantation?

Now with improved knowledge on immunology and availability of potent drugs, transplants across blood groups as well as with sensitized recipients are possible. More centers are now taking up such transplants which until recently was thought to be impossible & unimaginable. With all these happenings patients with end stage renal disease can certainly hope for a brighter future.

ORGAN DONATION HOPE OF LIFE

ORGAN DONATION IS WHEN A PERSON ALLOWS TO BE REMOVED, LEGALLY, EITHER BY CONSENT WHILE THE DONOR IS ALIVE OR AFTER DEATH WITH THE ASSENT OF THE NEXT OF KIN. ORGAN DONATION IS FAST BECOMING AN IMPORTANT BIOETHICAL ISSUE FROM A SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE



Dr Shishir Gang
Chairman
Department of Nephrology
Muljibhai Patel Urological Hospital
Nadiad

Each year, hundreds of people die in India while waiting for an organ transplant. There is a shortage of organs, and the gap between the number of organs donated and the number of people waiting for a transplant is getting wider. With the growing ageing population and increase on number of organ failure cases, the need for organ transplant is expected to rise steeply.

In India, fatalities due to road traffic accidents are high. However, only a small number of people that die due to these circumstances are able to donate their organs. Following death of a willing donor, there is a small window of time, in which the organ needs to be transplanted. Therefore despite the availability of willing donor very few actually lead to organ donation. Usually, organs come from people who are certified as dead while on a ventilator in a hospital intensive care unit, which can be as a result of a hemorrhage, major accident like a car crash or stroke.

Key Reasons for Shortage of Organ donors in India

1. Ignorance and Lack of Knowledge about Organ Donation

There is a lack of awareness about organ donation in India, and recent polls and surveys reveal that people would be willing to donate their organ if they had received more information.

2. Registering One's Wish to Donate

A major reason for the shortage of organs is that many people have not recorded their wish about organ donation or discussed it with their families.

3. Misconceptions

Myths and misconceptions about organ donation discourage potential donors from making the decision to donate organs or tissue after death.

ORGAN DONATION IN INDIA

- Almost 1.5 lakh people in India need a kidney; however, only 3000 of them receive one.
- Only 1 out of 30 people who need a kidney receive one.
- 90% of people in the waiting list die without getting an organ.
- India's annual liver transplant requirement is 25,000, but we manage only about 800.
- 70% liver transplants are taken care of by a live donor, but 30% are dependent on cadaver donations.

Source: Times of India, DNA India

THE ART OF GIVING

KIDNEY DONATION IS A NOBLE ACT IN WHICH THE DONOR CHOOSES TO DONATE HIS KIDNEY TO HELP SOMEONE IN NEED. THERE ARE INSTANCES WHEN FEW INDIVIDUALS LOSE THEIR KIDNEY DUE TO SOME AILMENTS AND KIDNEY IS TRANSMITTED TO THE PATIENT'S BODY AS A REPLACEMENT FOR THE FAILED KIDNEY.



Dr. Sanjay Kumar Agarwal
Professor & Head
Department of Nephrology
AIIMS, New Delhi

Permanent and advanced organ failure is becoming an important medical problem in any country, including India. The best treatment in such situation is replacement of failed organ by transplant.

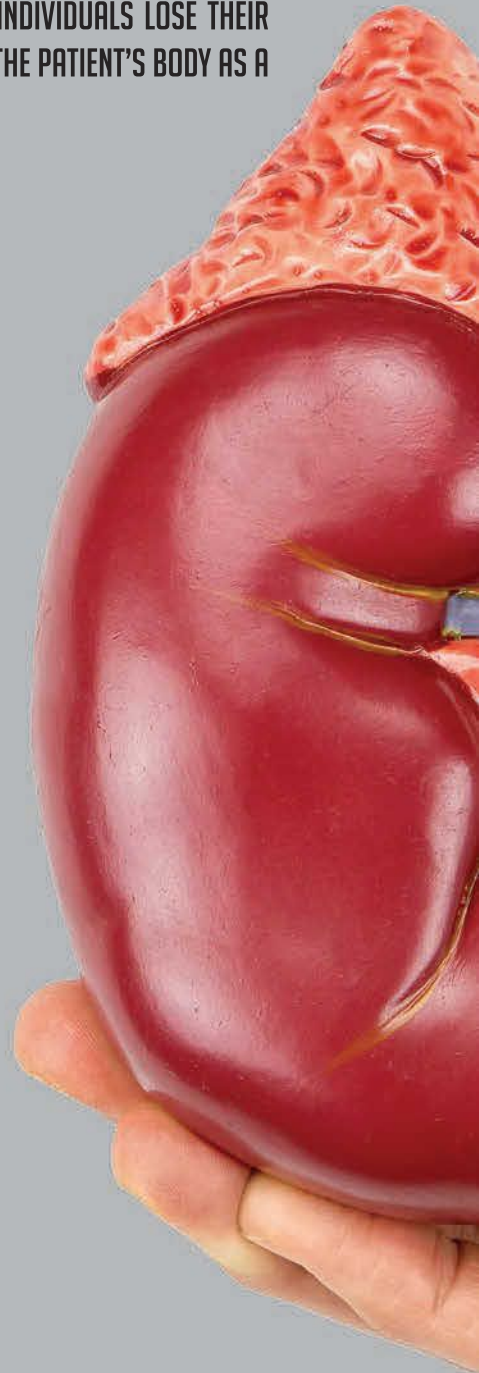
In India, approximately 3-4 lakh patients at any time need kidney transplant for end stage kidney failure. However, currently only 7000-7500 kidney transplants are being done in India annually. For kidney transplant, a kidney needs to be donated.

Who can be a donor?

One kidney can be donated by a healthy person during life as there are two kidneys, or kidneys can be taken from a brain dead person, in which case both the kidneys can be used. Kidney donation during life can be done by a person who has two normal and equal functioning kidneys, does not have risk to major surgery and does not have an infection which can be passed on to patient. Donor should preferably be genetically related for better transplant results. However, transplant law in India provides opportunities to genetically unrelated person also to donate.

For kidney donation at the time of brain death, so called deceased donation, first degree family members should agree for donation. If the person has already pledged for organ donation during life, deceased donation becomes much more easy. During deceased donation, many other organs and tissues can also be donated.

Choosing to donate a kidney during life by an individual, or agreeing to donate kidneys of brain dead relatives is a voluntary act. There are mixed feelings about kidney donation but it has become need of the hour for saving life of many patients.



Are there any health risks associated with being a donor?

Obviously, there are no risk for deceased donation. For kidney donation during life, there is minor risk of major surgery. Otherwise, if the living donor is found normal after detail investigations, risk of complications during life because of donation itself is practically negligible.

Will giving a kidney affect donor lifestyle?

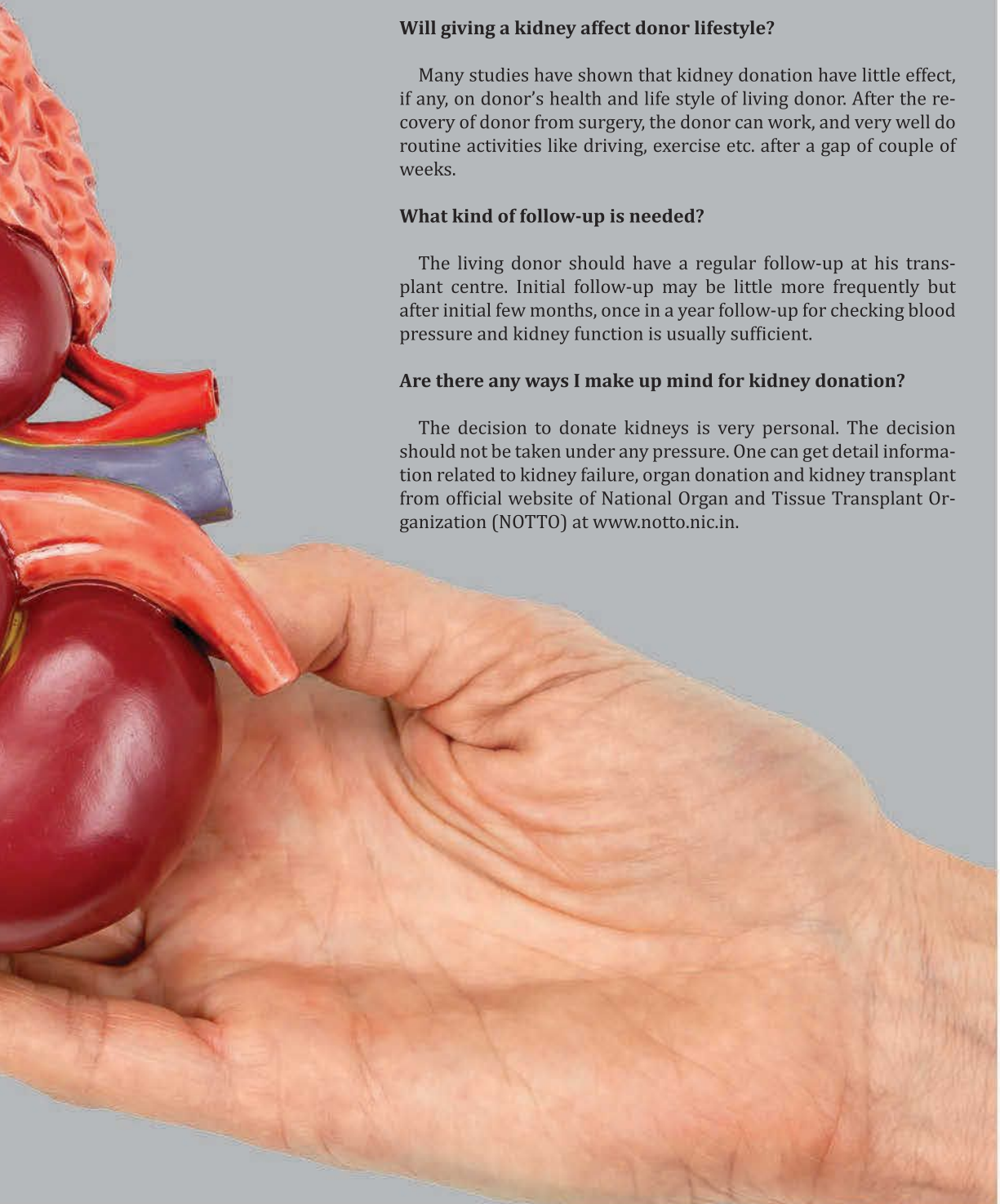
Many studies have shown that kidney donation have little effect, if any, on donor's health and life style of living donor. After the recovery of donor from surgery, the donor can work, and very well do routine activities like driving, exercise etc. after a gap of couple of weeks.

What kind of follow-up is needed?

The living donor should have a regular follow-up at his transplant centre. Initial follow-up may be little more frequently but after initial few months, once in a year follow-up for checking blood pressure and kidney function is usually sufficient.

Are there any ways I make up mind for kidney donation?

The decision to donate kidneys is very personal. The decision should not be taken under any pressure. One can get detail information related to kidney failure, organ donation and kidney transplant from official website of National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO) at www.notto.nic.in.



FACTS ABOUT ORGAN DONATION

WHEN YOU CONSIDER WHETHER TO BE AN ORGAN DONOR, IT'S VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION AFTER CONSULTING YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS.



Dr. Bhupendra Gandhi
Director
Department Of Nephrology
Jaslok Hospital & Research center
Mumbai

Here are some facts that will encourage you to give the Gift of Life:

FACT #1:

If you are sick or injured and admitted to a hospital, the FIRST PRIORITY for physicians and hospital is to SAVE YOUR LIFE, regardless of whether or not you have registered to be an organ donor.

FACT#2:

Someone who is declared brain dead is clinically dead. Brain death is different from coma or persistent vegetative state – from above two conditions, you can recover.

Brain death occurs when a person has an irreversible, catastrophic brain injury, which causes total cessation of all brain function. Laws strictly prohibit doctors who have declared a patient brain dead from participating in the recovery and transplantation of donated organs

Until organs are recovered for transplant, mechanical support (a ventilator) continued to keep the organs viable till removal.

FACT#3:

Everyone waiting for a transplant is treated fairly.

A local or national system matches donated organs to people on the waiting list based on a number of factors like blood group, age of the donor and recipient, time on waiting list and time on dialysis, medical conditions of recipient.. The race, ethnicity, gender or social status of the donor or potential recipients IS NEVER taken into account.

FACT#4:

Don't assume you are not healthy enough to donate.



If you have illness such as diabetes, high blood pressure or even cancer, medical condition at the time of death will determine whether you can act as a donor or not.

Don't rule yourself out prematurely: Whatever your medical history may be, you should still enroll to become an organ donor.

FACT#5:

There is no added cost to the donor's family or estate for organ donation.

Once patient is declared brain dead, all additional cost will be charged to local organizing committee, hospital and transplant recipient. Funeral costs remain the family's responsibility.

FACT#6:

Donation does not disfigure donor's body.

Throughout the entire donation process, the donor's body is treated with care, respect, and dignity. Donated organs are removed surgically in a meticulously controlled operating room environment.

FACT#8:

All major religions approve of organ donation.

Leaders of all major religions consider organ donation to be the final act of love and generosity toward others, one of the noblest acts of charity.

PLANNING FOR KIDNEY TRANSPLANTATION

PATIENT NEEDS TO UNDERGO VARIOUS TESTS TO PLAN AND EVALUATE ELIGIBILITY FOR KIDNEY TRANSPLANTATION. THE DECISION DEPENDS ON THE TEST RESULTS AND AVAILABILITY OF THE DONOR.



Dr D. S. Ray
Senior Consultant Nephrologist
Rabindra Nath Tagor Institute
of Cardiac Science,
Kolkata

Who needs kidney transplantation?

Normally kidneys filter the blood and remove waste products from the blood. In chronic kidney disease kidneys start losing their capacity to filter the blood and gradually almost all the functional capacity is lost. This is known as “End Stage Renal Failure”. For the person to survive it is necessary to substitute kidney function by either Dialysis or Transplantation.

Types of kidney transplantation

The recipient can get the kidney from a living individual or a deceased person. The donor can also be in blood relation to the recipient. Accordingly the transplantation is classified as:

1. Live donor Kidney transplantation (Both related and altruistic)
2. Deceased donor Kidney transplantation

A kidney from a living donor is usually preferred as they function better and normally start functioning immediately.

When can I decide whether to go for transplantation?

As the kidney function starts deteriorating your doctor will talk to you about the option of kidney transplantation. You will need to undergo various tests that will evaluate your eligibility for kidney transplantation. The decision depends on the test results, availability of the graft, and finally your decision to go for transplantation after knowing all the pros and cons.

What happens once a decision is taken to undergo transplantation?

Once you decide to undergo transplantation your



doctor will send you to the transplant centers. If you already have a donor (e.g. relative) it becomes easy. Otherwise you will have to wait till the time you get suitable donor. It may take a considerable time to find a donor and till that time dialysis is the option.

Is transplantation a permanent solution?

Each treatment modality for chronic kidney disease has its own pros and cons. Transplantation if feasible is the best treatment modality since it provides a better quality of life, a longer life and on a longer run, it is more cost-effective than dialysis. Post-transplantation, patient receives immunosuppressive medication that he/she usually has to continue lifelong.

These medications prevent the reaction by patients' immune system to the foreign organ placed in his/her body. These medications may be associated with various side effects which are usually manageable.

NUTRITION AFTER KIDNEY TRANSPLANTATION

WHILE RENAL FAILURE MIGHT HAVE CAUSED YOU TO EXPERIENCE MANY LIMITATIONS ON THE TYPES OF FOODS YOU COULD EAT BEFORE YOUR TRANSPLANT, SEVERAL OF THESE DIETARY RESTRICTIONS MIGHT NOT APPLY AFTER TRANSPLANT SURGERY.



Dr(Prof.) Sandeep Guleria
Senior Consultant Surgeon
Indraprastha Apollo hospital
Delhi

What changes will occur in my diet after transplantation?

Patients with renal failure have restrictions on the types of foods they can consume before transplant. Many of these dietary restrictions may not apply after transplant surgery. To eat a healthy diet is still a need in post-transplant period to avoid excessive weight gain. The information below describes some of the dietary guidelines a dietitian may recommend for kidney transplant recipient.

Post-Transplant Diet Restrictions

In general, the strict diet limitation patients may face pre-transplant do not apply post-transplant. Following transplantation, patients should limit the amount of fat and cholesterol in their diet because anti-rejection medications and the liberalized diet can cause elevated cholesterol and fat levels. Patients also need to be careful of weight gain that may occur from anti-rejection medications (prednisolone) which causes dramatic increase in appetite.

What do I need to do?

Healthful food – Diet should include a variety of foods, such as:

- Fruits, and other potassium containing foods
- Vegetables
- Whole grain cereals and breads
- Low-fat milk and dairy products or other source of calcium and phosphorous.

- Lean meats, fish and poultry or other sources of protein

Use of sodium (salt), sugar and fat – Use of salt may be restricted to help limit fluid retention and to control blood pressure of blood sugar. A low-fat, low-sugar, diet will help control weight and blood sugar.

To help extend life of a transplanted kidney, follow these guidelines:

- Limit your sodium (salty foods) to help limit fluid retention, saturated fat (butter, ghee) and cholesterol intake to control Blood pressure, weight and blood sugar.
- Monitor your weight on daily basis and eat well-balanced diet with selections from all food groups.
- Avoid sugary snacks such as biscuits between meals. If you feel hungry eat fresh peeled fruit or vegetables.
- Do not eat cheese made from unpasteurized milk and avoid cheese with mould.
- Take 1000-1500 mg of calcium daily to keep your bones Healthy.
- Additionally regular exercise (30 min at least three times a week) will help control your weight.
- Try to drink about three to four litres (9-12 glasses) of fluid every day. This is good for your kidney and helps remove waste products from body. Always drink boiled or bottled water.

DO's

- Use Iona salt instead of normal salt (potassium needs to be monitored)
- Drink lemon water (no salt/no sugar), butter milk (thin lassi without salt and sugar)
- Cooking oil options should be – peanut oil, sun flower oil, corn oil, mustard oil, til oil. Use 4 -5 tsp of cooking oil per day.
- Eat whole dal like sabut chana, sabut moog, sabut masoor, rajma, etc.
- Use toned milk and prepare curd and paneer from toned milk. Milk and milk products contain good amount of calcium which is necessary to strengthen the bones which may get weaker by long term steroid intake.
- Low sodium foods that can be taken when blood pressure persists : Chiwra, onion, bottle gourd (ghia), karela, brinjal(baigan), beans, ladyfinger (bhindi), methi dana, anar, tomato, orange, amla, guava, papaya.

DON'T'S

- Do not sprinkle extra salt on food, salad etc.
- Avoid papad, pickle, chips, salted biscuits etc.
- Avoid aerated drinks (Soft drinks).
- Avoid all types of sauces like tomato, chutney, vinegar.
- Avoid butter, ghee, coconut oil, cream.
- Eat egg white and remove the yellow yolk (help decrease cholesterol intake).
- Avoid mango/chiku/banana/grapes/dates (khajur).
- Avoid oily food like vada, papad, dosa.

POST-TRANSPLANT INFECTIONS

INFECTIONS ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF HOSPITALIZATION IN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS. THE INCREASED RISK OF INFECTIONS ARISES BECAUSE OF ANTIREJECTION MEDICATIONS GIVEN TO PATIENT TO SUPPRESS IMMUNITY AND INCREASE ADAPTABILITY OF TRANSPLANTED ORGAN.



Dr. Vivek Pathak

Consultant - Department of Nephrology
Kovai medical Center and Hospital
Coimbatore

Why am I at risk for getting infections?

Kidney transplant recipients require antirejection medications to suppress immunity so that the graft is not rejected by immune reaction. As these medications suppress the immunity the transplant patient is exposed to a high chance of getting infection. Chances of infection vary depending upon the treatment regimen used. Sometimes more intense therapy is needed to protect the graft. This creates higher chances of patient getting infection.

Why should I worry about infections?

Though you may have experienced infections quite a few times till now, the difference now is that the immune system is suppressed by the antirejection drugs.

The body's immune system will not be to fight off common infections, thereby making even commonly occurring infections hazardous.

Moreover, because of reduced immunity they are prone to unusual infections, not commonly seen in normal individuals.

Also certain infections (e.g. cytomegalovirus) are found to be associated with increased chances of graft rejection.

How can I reduce the risk of infection?

Following are some tips for reducing chances of infection:

1. Hand washing – a simple task that has a very high importance in post-transplant patients. Use warm water and soap, and scrub vigorously for 1 minute.
2. Avoid contact with those who have got obvious infections like common cold, flu, etc. Do not share utensils with others.
3. Observe maximum sanitation at places you spend most of your time.
4. If you have pets make sure they are healthy, it is always better to avoid close contact.
5. If prescribed, take the anti-infective medicines regularly.

How would I know I have got infection?

Some common signs of infection include

1. Increase in body temperature (fever – temperature above 100° F)
2. Change in wound appearance, discharge, pain, swelling
3. Painful or burning sensation during/after urination.
4. Flu like symptoms like body ache, cough, excessive watery secretion from eyes, nose.

If you find any of the signs or any other symptoms suggestive of infection immediately contact doctor.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR NEW KIDNEY

WHEN YOU CONSIDER WHETHER TO BE AN ORGAN DONOR, IT'S VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION AFTER CONSULTING YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS.



Dr. Georgy K. Nainan
Sr. Consultant Nephrologist
Lakeshore Hospital
Kochi

Kidney transplantation is the most appropriate therapy for patients with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). A healthy kidney from a donor is transplanted into the lower abdomen on to the blood vessels going to the leg. The new kidney takes up the function immediately in many patients. In the rest, normal kidney function is achieved within few days to weeks. Kidney function continues to increase for the next three months.

CKD is increasing in India due to the diverse problems like longevity of Diabetics, Infection, excess use of medications like painkillers and infection. It is logical to plan electively transplantation when Creatinine reaches 5 mg % (normal creatinine 1.4 mg %).

Successful kidney transplantation offers all the functions of the native kidney and avoids restrictions to patient from going to the hospital for dialysis, more medications and from intercurrent infections. Despite good dialysis, level of waste materials remains elevated than normal and over many years, produce uremic complications in various systems of the body

Never miss Medications : Transplanted kidney is perceived by the recipient as a foreign body and will try to reject the kidney. The immune system develops antibodies against the graft and excess production leads to rejection of kidney. Regular immune suppressives prevent this process of rejection. To a great extent, severe rejection can be treated with the appropriate medications, plasma exchange etc., Therefore it is very important that the transplanted patient takes all the recommended medications and not to miss them. Blood levels of the medications may be checked periodically and dose readjusted. They are prone for respiratory infection and urinary infection. Awareness, early detection, doing cultures and treatment with appropriate antibiotics is very important in preventing the progression of the infection leading to hospitalisation and ICU treatment.

Regular Medical Check-up : Recipient has to undergo

periodical evaluation, initially once a week and monthly by third month. It is important to detect early any variation in the renal function and to treat them appropriately.

Eat a Healthy Diet : After transplantation most of the restrictions which were imposed their during dialysis will be removed. They can have near normal diet. Need to maintain appropriate sanitary precautions to avoid infection is stressed. Periodic evaluation of Cholesterol, Uric acid and potassium are needed to adjust the diet.

Exercise and Routine Activities : By three months post transplantation, one could resume their work. Many unfortunate patients may loose their job and they need to rehabilitated. Avoid as much contact with public to avoid infection. Rehabilitation will keep them engaged, earn some money to defray treatment expenses. Walking 4 kms in one hour is a good exercise. Alternatively one can do swimming cycling etc., It is better to avoid strenuous exercise.

How does one feel after transplantation : It will take a short time for you to start your routine life, come out of the stress of transplantation to feel normal. Family support is very important. Joining a post transplant (whatsapp/ email) group, annual family get-togethers, reading educational material from internet will also be helpful.

Family and Sexual Life : Sexual life may be started after three months of transplantation. Many men have fathered children. Pregnancy can be considered after one year, provided the graft is stable. Immunosuppressive medications may have to be altered or dose reduction should be done under medical supervision before pregnancy is planned. Many people have adopted children.

Kidney donation from deceased person : Availability of the donor is the biggest problem in our country. Live related donors are preferred, but non availability is an issue. Brain death (Deceased Donor) is a condition where there is no brain function, on life - line and is equal to death. Many diseased donors can donate organs especially kidney to the patients in the waiting list. KNOS (Kerala Network of Organ Sharing) has provided more than 440 Kidneys from deceased persons. We have participated in 70 cases with 90% success @ 3 years. Similar Govt and NGOs are necessary for coordinating, executing the distribution of the donor organs in a programmed way based on priority and with transparency. A successful kidney transplantation offers better quality of life, avoids dialysis and its long-term complications.



LIFE AFTER KIDNEY TRANSPLANT

TAKE MEDICATION AS DIRECTED

QUIT SMOKING

AVOIDANCE OF ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

HEALTHY BALANCE DIET

WEIGHT LOSS AND EXERCISE

AVOIDANCE OF INFECTION



Pledge Your Organs



PLEDGE TO DONATE YOUR ORGANS

.....
ONE ORGAN DONOR CAN SAVE UP TO 8 LIVES AND ENHANCE THE LIVES OF
MANY OTHERS THROUGH TISSUE DONATION