

INDIA PERSPECTIVES

Volume 34 | Issue 03 | 2020

INNOVATIVE PREVENTION

The five alternative medicine systems from India

I FOR INDIA

How self-reliance is the fast-track to economic revival

EATING RIGHT

Understanding the traditional concepts behind seasonal cuisine



INDIA SALUTES ITS CORONA WARRIORS

Country pays tribute to those at the frontline of the war against COVID-19



30/31 JULY, 2020

EID AL ADHA

One of the biggest festivals of the Islamic calendar, Eid Al Adha is celebrated by the Muslim community across the country. The holy festival of sacrifice, that falls on the 10th day of the *Dhu al-Hijjah* as per the Islamic lunar calendar, is observed by offering prayers and distributing celebratory meals and delicious sweets to friends, family and the needy as a mark of humility and sacrifice as per God's command.

WHERE: Across India

15 AUGUST, 2020



INDEPENDENCE DAY

The culmination of India's freedom struggle was achieved with Independence on August 15, 1947. Each year on this day, the entire country revels in the sacrifice of freedom fighters who laid down their lives in the effort to obtain liberation. The festival is marked by the Prime Minister's address from the ramparts of the Red Fort in New Delhi, India's capital.

WHERE: Across India

3 AUGUST, 2020

RAKSHA BANDHAN

Celebrated on a full moon day, the ancient Hindu festival of *Raksha Bandhan* or *Rakhi* is observed to mark the special bond between a brother and sister. The festival, celebrated across Indian and Nepal has vibrant, regional variations but signifies a brother's pledge to protect his sister(s), which is solidified by latter tying a sacred and ceremonious thread on the former's wrist in exchange for gifts and sweets.

WHERE: Across India





17 AUGUST, 2020

PARSI NEW YEAR

Also called as *Pateti*, the *Parsi* or Zoroastrian New Year is celebrated with pomp and fervour, especially in around Mumbai. To mark new beginnings, houses are beautifully decorated with flowers and paintings, delicacies are distributed and prayers are ceremoniously offered across fire temples.

WHERE: Mumbai, Maharashtra



22 AUGUST, 2020

GANESH CHATURTHI

Ganesh Chaturthi is one of the largest celebrations of the birth Lord Ganesha, a revered deity across India. Clay idols, decorated with flowers are carried in vibrant and jovial stately processions before being ceremoniously immersed in rivers, sacred lakes or the sea. Thousands flock to bid adieu to the elephant-faced god across all major cities in India.

WHERE: Across North and South India

22

AUGUST - 2 SEPTEMBER, 2020

ONAM

The biggest harvest festival of the state of Kerala, Onam marks the celebratory return of the mythical king, Mahabali. Celebrated for 10-days, the festival is known for flower carpets called *Pookkalam*, traditional snake boat races called *Vallam Kali*, and scrumptious feasts called *Sadhya*. Particular highlights include the iconic Nehru Trophy Boat Race (*Vallam Kali*) and stately processions of elephants decorated with flowers and ornaments, in honour of King Mahabali's annual return.

WHERE: Across Kerala



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India Perspectives is published in Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Pashto, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Sinhala, Spanish, Tamil, Chinese and Japanese.

The digital *India Perspectives* is published by Anurag Srivastava, Joint Secretary (XP) and Official Spokesperson, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Room No. 152, 'A' Wing, Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi - 110001, India. It is published on behalf of the MEA by Maxposure Media Group India Pvt. Ltd. (MMGIPL), #TheAddress, Plot No 62, Okhla Phase-3, New Delhi-110020, India. The digital *India Perspectives* is published six times a year. All rights reserved. The writing, artwork and/or photography contained herein may be used or reproduced with an acknowledgement to *India Perspectives*. MEA and MMGIPL does not assume responsibility for loss or damage of unsolicited products, manuscripts, photographs, artwork, transparencies or other materials. The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the MEA or MMGIPL.

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FOREWORD

As we deal with the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, our response to this situation has been marked not only by our strong determination and resolve but also by looking for creative and innovative ways of doing things.

With this Issue of the India Perspectives magazine, we bring to you the recent developments on the diplomatic front that have enabled not just India, but countries across the world to adopt new ways of conducting leaders' meetings and global summits. We look at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recently concluded virtual summit with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison that bring out how India has embraced new methods to continue the momentum of diplomatic engagements.

We then analyse how the Vande Bharat Mission has brought thousands of Indians safely back to their homeland in a mammoth effort through air, land and sea routes. We also travel across the country to understand how the nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of COVID-19 allowed nature to heal and thrive with minimal human interactions and significantly lower levels of pollution.

We further look at how PM Modi's vision is being realised through pioneering reforms and policies aimed towards reviving the economy post-COVID-19 and setting it on a higher growth trajectory. We then revisit the traditional systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Naturopathy, Siddha etc to understand their approach and their emergence as effective systems of alternative medicine to fight the Novel Coronavirus by boosting immunity.

Indian cuisine has traditionally been centred around a balanced diet as per seasonal variations. We explore the age-old recipes made up of everyday ingredients to beat the summer heat. We also present to you simple and traditional ways to make healthier culinary choices in contemporary times.

We partake in several concerts and conventions that have embraced the digital approach in these times to connect to a large audience and helping them overcoming boredom while spreading the message of peace and hope through melodies.

For our photo feature section, we journey across the country in awe of the valiant efforts of Indian frontline warriors and pay homage to their exemplary service to fight COVID-19. We also look at how the hospitality industry has reinvented itself and joined the fight against pandemic by aiding government efforts to contain the contagious disease.

Finally, we look at the changes made to the selection process of the Padma Awards in recent years through a participative exercise to make it a more inclusive process which is bringing recognition and laurels to unsung heroes who have, through their deeds, dedicated themselves towards the betterment of society. We also pay our tribute to legendary personalities of Indian cinema and their contributions that will continue to reverberate across the celluloid for decades to come.

Happy reading!



Anurag Srivastava



A BRAND NEW Normal

Following the global pandemic of Novel Coronavirus, India has been at the forefront of digital conferences both within and outside the country. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country is leading and adapting to the new way of reaching out to people, turning the adversity into an opportunity

BY AKSHAT JAIN

As the world changes rapidly around us, the diplomacy at the highest end and the way it is conducted is evolving as well. Events are unfolding around the world every minute and the flow of

information is constant, regardless of time zones and lockdowns enforced by countries to fight the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Ensuring swift, effective and sustained channels of communication becomes even more critical in the



Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi (C), External Affairs Minister of India Dr S Jaishankar (far left) and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval (far right) at the India-Australia Leaders' Virtual Summit in New Delhi on June 04



The ambassadors and high commissioners of Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Senegal, Trinidad and Tobago, Mauritius, Australia, Cote d'Ivoire and Rwanda present their credentials to the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, through video conference

world of global diplomacy, especially during times like these.

As countries around the world continue being in lockdowns and social distancing becoming the new norm, diplomatic visits too have come to a halt. But diplomacy hasn't. Under the aegis of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is turning this adversity into an opportunity, by conducting routine diplomatic engagements online and reaching out to nations and leaders, particularly as the situation demands better coordination among world leaders to work out an effective global response to the unprecedented spread of the pandemic. With positive

diplomatic outreach becoming more important than ever at this point, virtual meetings and online summits have emerged as the new tool for communication.

VIRTUAL DIPLOMACY, REAL RESULTS

In the last two months, the Indian government has led and been part of multiple virtual conferences and summits during these tough times. India took the lead in getting South Asian leaders to meet through a video conference to explore cooperation in combating the corona crisis and galvanise SAARC (South Asian

INDIA, WITH THE RIGHT BLEND OF THE PHYSICAL AND THE VIRTUAL CAN EMERGE AS THE GLOBAL NERVE CENTRE OF COMPLEX MODERN MULTINATIONAL SUPPLY CHAINS IN THE POST COVID-19 WORLD. LET US RISE TO THAT OCCASION AND SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

PARTNERSHIP

Safe & secure

As a secure and safe option to various video conferencing apps, the National Informatics Centre (NIC), Government of India, has launched an application named “Vidyo” where all recorded videos of conferences are saved on government servers and can be accessed only by authorised personnel. Most of the Union ministries are already using this app which has close to 80,000 downloads across mobile platforms and 140,000 downloads for the desktop version as of June 2020.

Association for Regional Cooperation) member nations into action. New Delhi also pressed for a G20 video meeting which was convened on March 26. Since then the UNSC, EU and NATO have all adapted and connected through video conferencing.

On May 4, PM Modi took part in the Non-Aligned Movement’s (NAM) online summit, along with 30 other heads of states and governments, the President of the United Nations and the Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO). In his first address to the grouping since assuming office in 2014, PM Modi reiterated the importance of reforms aimed towards inclusive global engagements and the need for a united front against the

global pandemic of COVID-19.

On June 04, PM Modi held the first-ever bilateral ‘virtual summit’ when he met his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison through video conference, making it their fourth meeting in the last eighteen months.

India and Australia announced that they shall be raising their diplomatic relations further by elevating the bilateral Strategic Partnership concluded in 2009, to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) and promoting “2+2” engagements at the defence and foreign ministry level. Apart from this, there were a host of other declarations and MOUs being agreed upon for infrastructure, water management,

PM Modi participating in the G20 Virtual Summit to discuss the global response to COVID-19 on March 26





supply chain management, cyberspace and agriculture. A new joint fund was also set up which would enable Indian and Australian researchers to develop an antiviral drug for COVID-19.

Another important aspect of the meeting was the arrangement for increased Maritime Security coordination between the two countries. PM Modi stressed on the importance of the Indo-Pacific region's security as a worldwide concern with PM Morrison acknowledging a growing role for India

to ensure harmony and prosperity in the region.

Not just the Prime Minister, India's External Affairs Minister, Dr S Jaishankar also participated in a virtual foreign ministers' meeting for BRICS and a virtual meeting of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) foreign ministers through a video conference.

The fourth edition of the India-Africa summit, which was to be held in India this September, is also now likely to be held virtually.

Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi virtually addressing the 25th Foundation Day of the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences at Bengaluru

Not only on the global platform, the use of video conferences has been a tool that has been used extensively by the Indian government on the domestic front as well

New Delhi is also planning to hold the first-ever bilateral virtual summit between PM Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison

Apart from high-level diplomatic engagements, communication with Indian missions across the world is also being conducted through digital means. The MEA has been regularly engaging with Indian ambassadors in various regions and sub-regions in recent days. On April 23, 2020, EAM Dr S Jaishankar tweeted “The changing world of corona era diplomacy. Strong friendships thrive even virtually”, referring to his regular virtual conversations with Indian ambassadors

abroad as well as with other foreign ministers across the globe. The EAM has held detailed virtual discussions with his counterparts from several countries. He recently held talks with his South Korean counterpart Kang Kyung-wha and with the foreign minister of the United Kingdom, Dominic Raab.

THE DIGITAL ERA

Of course with virtual conferences a new set of challenges will come in place for the leaders around the world. For example, face-to-face meetings, gaining trust of the other side and reading between the lines are some of the key components of diplomacy which will be replaced with video conferencing.



Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi with the Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison at the India-Australia Leaders' Virtual Summit, in New Delhi on June 04



Left to right: External Affairs Minister of India Dr S Jaishankar and Secretary (East) Vijay Thakur Singh(right) hold a virtual meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, Kang, Kyung-wha

The Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr Harsh Vardhan attends a virtual meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Health Ministers



But despite this, the benefits of the virtual diplomacy far outweigh its costs. As economies shrink and the world battles with recession and austerity, virtual conferences and summits are going to be not only time efficient but also a cost efficient way of diplomacy.

In order to develop a comprehensive video conferencing solution for India and to push the Digital India reforms, the government launched an innovation challenge last month. According to the National Policy on Software Products, this innovation is aimed at developing an Indian tool for video conferencing to enhance local expertise.

Applications were received till April 30 and the winner firm will receive a contract for the product to be used by the Government of India for a period of four years.

As India takes to the virtual space to conduct business, the government is taking strong cyber security measures not only when it comes to official government and public sector dealings but also for private citizens.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has set out detailed instructions for citizens using various conferencing apps and about the challenges of data security as well as standard operating practices.

In the current volatile situation, international virtual summits and conferences have successfully bridged the communication gap between the countries.

For the foreseeable future, as nations around the globe struggle with the unprecedented challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic and worldwide travel restrictions continue to be in place, it may be necessary for diplomacy to be conducted largely through virtual means, and this may become the new way of diplomacy going forward.



Akshat Jain is a writer, columnist, novelist, blogger, and a research scholar at IIT Delhi. He has authored books, numerous articles and white papers on different ideas and genres. His most recent book - My Illusion my Mistake has been dedicated to the forty families of Pulwama attack.

Welcome back!

Even as the country battled to tackle the spread of COVID-19, the government of India was busy planning the Vande Bharat mission, one of the biggest repatriation exercises the world has ever seen, during the ongoing pandemic. On May 7, the first phase of the exercise was flagged off from Abu Dhabi. Former Ambassador **Anil Wadhwa** takes stock of the mission's progress so far, by land, air and sea routes



To contain the outbreak and spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of India was forced to declare a complete lockdown in India beginning March 24. The normal functioning of the government, industry, commercial establishments

and public utilities like trains and buses as well as airline operations were all severely disrupted. For a country of 1.3 billion, this presented a crisis without precedent. India also has a 30 million strong diaspora who live, work and study abroad, in addition to the large number of Indians who are travelling abroad on

A man gestures to his father upon his arrival at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport from Bangladesh under the Vande Bharat mission repatriation initiative, on May 18



work or vacation. As airlines came to a grinding halt and countries, including India, shut their borders, many Indian nationals and members of the diaspora were stranded in foreign lands. This posed a challenge for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), which was tasked with the responsibility, along with other ministries of the government such as Civil Aviation, and Home Affairs, to arrange safe passage for Indian nationals back to the country. At the same time, the government assistance was required for the evacuation of 60,000 foreigners from 70 countries back to their homeland and the whole process, which involved coordination of gargantuan proportions, had to

be efficient and smooth, keeping the requirements of safety and health at the forefront at all times.

Much of this responsibility devolved on the MEA, which responded with alacrity, setting up a COVID-19 cell manned by over 100 personnel and officers for this mammoth effort. Officers at the level of Additional Secretaries were made in charge of liaising with designated state governments with a concentration of diaspora abroad on quarantine and other repatriation efforts. Prime Minister Narendra Modi engaged with the Chief Ministers of states on the modalities of the repatriation, and External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar personally

Members of the Indian diaspora following social-distancing norms as they complete pre-boarding formalities for their flight from Dushanbe, Tajikistan, under the Vande Bharat mission

India is also facilitating the travel of foreign nationals on outbound flights under the Vande Bharat mission to countries like UK, US and Germany

PARTNERSHIP



Right: Passengers before boarding the 14th flight from Doha under the Vande Bharat mission to Srinagar and Amritsar

Bottom: Indian nationals before boarding a special bus service to Assam, India, marking the start of the Bhutan chapter of the Vande Bharat mission

reviewed arrangements to speed up and streamline repatriation efforts. Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla held video conferences with Chief Secretaries of a number of states as part of efforts to ensure proper coordination of the operation. Heads of Indian diplomatic Missions abroad had coordinated these efforts personally with local governments.

Evacuations of some vulnerable groups of stranded Indians from Wuhan in China, Iran and Japan were carried out in early February itself, at the beginning of the pandemic, but it was with the start of the Vande Bharat mission (VBM) on 7 March that a massive programme was launched to repatriate Indian nationals stranded across the globe. Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has

called VBM “the mission of hope, help and happiness”. As of June 25, over 513,047 Indian nationals in close to 100 countries across the world have already registered to get home to India. Most of them are students, professionals, and short-term visa holders such as tourists. Indian nationals specially from the countries of the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) who benefitted from visa amnesties have also registered. The government has given priority to those with compelling reasons to return, such as job loss, short term visa expiry, medical emergencies, death of a family member back home, students, pregnant women, and senior citizens.

The first phase of the mission started off with joint operations by Air India, Air India Express, Alliance

The Indian Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates abroad have set up multiple channels to communicate with stranded Indian nationals in the countries they cover

Air along with the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy through operation Samudra Setu. Given the strict restrictions in place, the limited facilities at the airports, and the social distancing norms, the first phase saw a modest 64 flights and sorties by naval ships that brought back over 16,000 Indians mainly from the GCC, South East Asia, UK and USA. Many flights landed at designated airports in the states given the landing restrictions. The MEA coordinated not only with the Indian diplomatic missions abroad but also the state governments to ensure that the operation was conducted in a smooth manner.

The second phase of the Vande Bharat mission began on May 16. During this phase, in addition to earlier destinations,

flights were operated from the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries, Europe, Russia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. The MEA has coordinated with Air India and many foreign airlines, to bring stranded Indians back via aviation hubs of Addis Ababa, Amsterdam, London, Frankfurt, and New York. Several flights from other countries, flying in to evacuate their nationals have also ferried some stranded Indians. Flights have brought back Indians from even far-flung places in South America such as Argentina, Peru and Guatemala.

During the course of the second phase, India also allowed stranded and distressed Indian nationals to travel to India by nonscheduled commercial flights and also private and chartered flights cleared by the Ministry of

Crunching Numbers

- Over the three phases, close to 364,209 Indians have returned with 875 flights scheduled under the VBM
- Starting May 7, the first phase of the Vande Bharat mission continued till May 16 with 64 flights from as many as 12 countries across the world.
- The second phase, that began from May 16 was extended to June 13 to cover upto 47 countries.
- The third phase of the mission is currently underway to bring back Indian nationals from various countries.
- The fourth phase of the Vande Bharat mission is set to commence from 3rd July and will target countries with large number of stranded Indians
- The operations of chartered flights to bring back seafarers and crew members from ships have steadily increased. As of June 25, around 130,061 people have come back using chartered flights.
- Another facet of the repatriation exercise was Operation Samudra Setu, under which the Indian Navy would be bringing back Indian nationals from Maldives, Sri Lanka and Iran



Left to right: The INS Jalashwa ready to take 700 stranded Indians from Colombo, back to their homeland; The medical crew await the arrival of Indian nationals to board INS Jalashwa under operation Samudra Setu at Colombo, Sri Lanka

Heads of Indian diplomatic Missions abroad have coordinated repatriation efforts personally with local governments

Civil Aviation, and ships permitted by the Ministry of Shipping. More than 84,000 Indian nationals have returned through land-border immigration checkpoints from Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan. The Indian Navy also made more sorties to bring back returnees from Iran, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. As part of the second phase, India also facilitated the travel of foreign nationals on outbound flights under VBM to countries like UK, US and Germany. India has also allowed certain categories of Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) card holders to avail of the repatriation flights.

Since domestic flights resumed on May 25, passengers can also arrive at Delhi airport instead of their final destination in India, and after the 14-day quarantine period, can travel to their hometowns.

The third phase of the VBM also began from June 12 and is currently underway. Under this phase, there has been a significant increase in the number of private airlines and flights. The numbers of repatriations being made has also gone up, with India making a more efficient use of quarantine capacity.

The Indian Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates abroad have had a very central role to play in mission Vande Bharat. They have set up dedicated, multiple help lines, and have been active on social media



Clockwise from left: Children from the Indian diaspora before their flight under the VBM from Doha, Qatar; Women pose before boarding the 19th flight from Qatar to India under the VBM; Members from the Indian embassy greeting children before their flight from Colombo, Sri Lanka



Clockwise from top: Indian volunteers assisting with the registration and screening of Indian nationals for the Vande Bharat mission in Maldives; The Air India crew preparing to depart to India from USA under the VBM; External Affairs Minister of India Dr S Jaishankar reviewing preparations for the VBM through a virtual meeting with the Heads of Indian Missions abroad

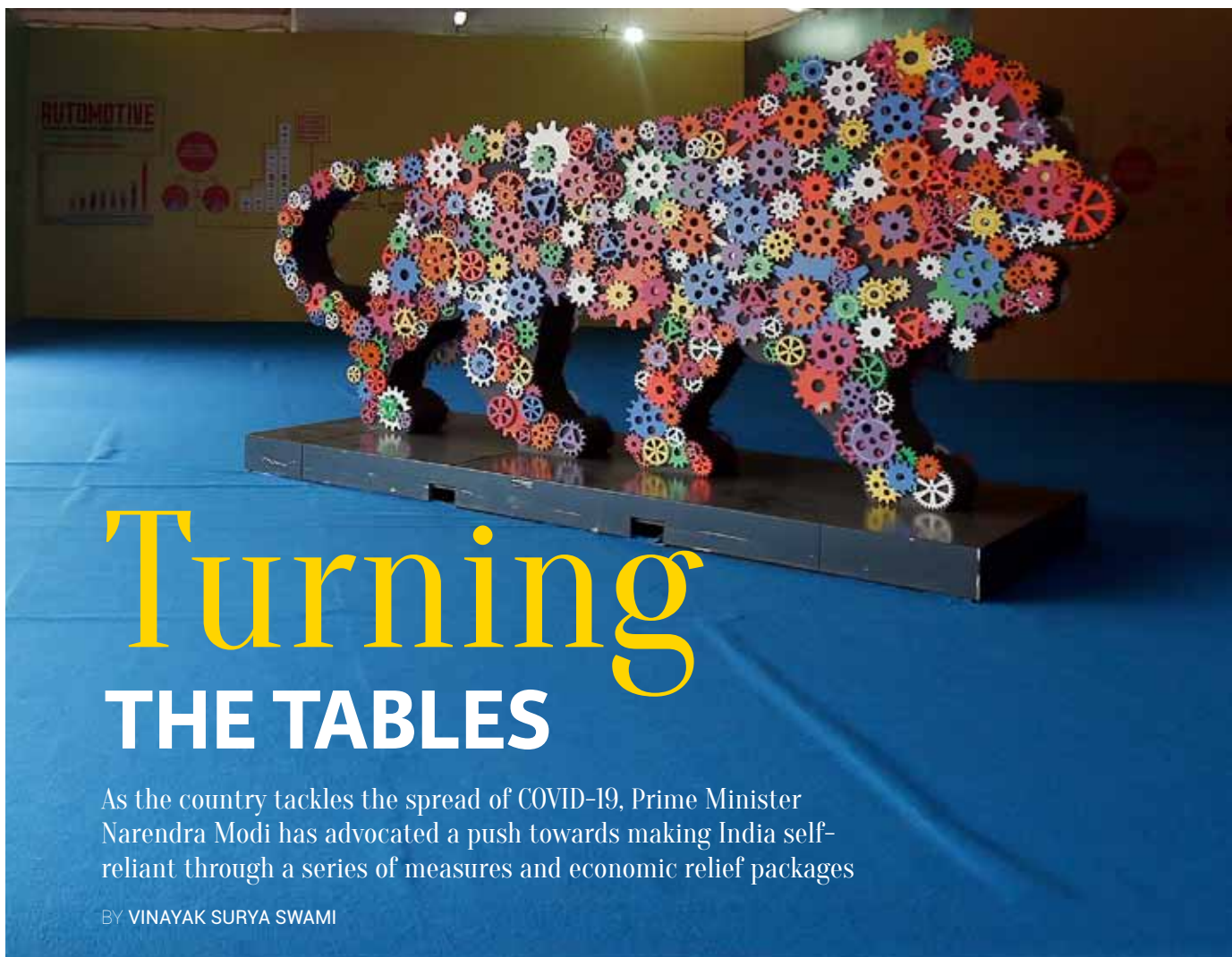
platforms in order to communicate with stranded Indian nationals in the countries they cover. The Indian embassies across the world have contributed significantly to provide accommodation and food to stranded Indian nationals. Indian missions have also liaised with local governments to help Indian nationals extend their short duration visas to avoid illegal stay in the countries where they are stranded. They have been responsible to ensure that the standard operation

procedures devised by Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Civil Aviation are adhered to and communicated to returning passengers. Many Indian nationals have reported and commended the presence of Indian Ambassadors, Consul Generals and senior officials at airports to see off departing flights and ensure smooth operations.

India has conducted several large-scale evacuations in recent times. This includes the airlift from Kuwait, operation Rahat from Yemen as well as the repatriation missions from Iraq and Libya. However, once the VBM and operation Samudra Setu are completed, India's COVID-19 evacuation would have been the biggest, the most extensive, and a very successful mission, in contemporary history.



Ambassador Anil Wadhwa has served as Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, and as the Indian ambassador to Poland, Oman, Thailand and Italy. He has also been posted to Indian missions in Hong Kong, China and Switzerland and worked for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague.



Turning THE TABLES

As the country tackles the spread of COVID-19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has advocated a push towards making India self-reliant through a series of measures and economic relief packages

BY VINAYAK SURYA SWAMI

With the advent of the Novel Coronavirus pandemic, a new world economic order is emerging and nations are just coming to terms with it. Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi has been quick in this realisation and has accordingly altered existing policies and introduced several multi-sectoral initiatives to further the vision of a thriving economy for India. Reaffirming his belief, in a recent address, he said, “Howsoever big the crisis might be, India is determined to

turn it into an opportunity.” He then called upon the nation for its support in this regard by making India “*Aatma Nirbhar*” or Self Reliant. PM Modi also announced a relief package of INR 20 Trillion (equivalent to 10 per cent of India’s GDP) that will steer the country onto the path of rapid development and growth, and create a robust local supply chain.

India’s plan for self-reliance is intended to be a two pronged approach. The first step will be the undertaking of interim measures such as liquidity infusion and direct cash transfers to migrant workers and daily-

First launched in 2014, the ‘Make in India’ initiative is now the foremost tool to revive the Indian economy

wage earners. The second facet would be long-term reforms in growth-critical sectors that will make them globally competitive and attractive.

According to the Prime Minister's vision, a self-reliant India will stand on five pillars: 'economy', that introduces quantum jump; 'infrastructure' in tune with the new India, a 'system' based on 21st century technology; India's 'vibrant demography'; and 'demand', which will utilise our requirement and supply chain to full capacity.

STARTING RIGHT

PM Modi's vision of a capable, efficient and self-reliant nation, has quickly been realised and introduced as the Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Self-reliant India) initiative. Some immediate reforms are now being factored into policy making decisions to bolster domestic capabilities and upscale production.

The Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (ANBA) is focussed towards building entire value chains for domestic products that will enable local

Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the launch of the *Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan* through video-conferencing, in New Delhi on June 20

“WE NEED TO CONCENTRATE ON EACH SECTOR INDIVIDUALLY, PROMOTE AND BOOST EACH AND EVERY PRODUCT AND SERVICE AND WORK IN A HOLISTIC MANNER. IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE EVERY SECTOR SELF-RELIANT”

Narendra Modi

Prime Minister of India
(At the launch of the auction for 41 coal blocks)



Immediate effect

To boost domestic production, the government has imposed an import ban on radial and pneumatic tyres used in two and four wheelers.

Global tenders of upto INR 2 billion will be restricted to boost production through MSMEs.

INR 20 billion for fishermen through *Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana* (PMMSY).

The Garib Kalyan Rojgar Yojana (PMGKRY), an INR 50 billion scheme to create jobs for the thousands of migrant workers affected due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Restrictions on import of incense sticks, bamboo products and odoriferous preparations.

An import ban on specific lists of weapons/platforms to be notified on year-wise timelines to boost indigenisation and domestic production.

The imposition of an anti-dumping duty on specific steel products to ensure cheap imports do not disrupt domestic production

manufacturers to thrive and reduce the need for imports. The Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has already identified key sectors followed by measures to boost competitiveness, simplify procedures and encourage direct investments.

HOLISTIC APPROACH

The ANBA has identified the MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) sector, with its significant contributions to the GDP, exports and employment ratio as the core area for economic revival and competence.

As a start, a more inclusive definition has been announced to bring a larger group of small-scale industries under the purview of the beneficial reforms and extend the

cover for existing businesses allowing them to grow under the same canopy.

Over 500 million entities will be empowered to restart operations and get back on their feet with momentous reforms for the MSME sector. These include the introduction of collateral free loans (total of INR 3,000 billion), INR 200 Billion in subordinate loans for reviving businesses and a significant infusion of almost INR 500 billion in the sector through several new funds being set up.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

With an aim to boost domestic production and expand quality exports, the MEIS (Merchandise Exports from India) scheme is poised to be replaced by the Remission of

PM Modi delivering the inaugural address at the 125th Annual Session of Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) through video conference, in New Delhi on June 2





With reforms and new initiatives announced as part of the ANBA, farmers across the country can enjoy direct benefits of their hard labour while simultaneously securing their futures with modernisation through technology

Duties and Taxes on Exports scheme (RDTEP), to offset infrastructural inefficiencies and costs associated with exporting goods produced in India. The government aims to extend these benefits to entities with a capability of generating employment in the country as well.

The export sector and domestic production will also benefit from the proposed reenvisioning of the existing costs associated with manufacturing. The lowered taxes on exporting goods across borders in addition to the imposition of anti-dumping duties on imports will provide a level playing field to domestic manufacturers. A reform aimed towards increasing production potential locally and to ease the process of exports while simultaneously reducing the dependence on foreign products.

THE NEW VISION

The start-up segment of the Indian space sector has been added as a direct beneficiary for the use of facilities and premier infrastructure of the ISRO

(Indian Space Research Organisation), India's state-run space agency. The move has come as an addition to ISRO's 'technology transfer' initiative that provides new-age tech to private and state-run entities towards the betterment of Indian industry.

The defense industry will also benefit from the freeing-up of the space sector. When it comes to innovative advances towards new-age technology, the pandemic, and the new reforms, will act as a catalyst for development. Moreover, this move will also allow for an opportunity for DSRO (Defence Space Research Organisation), India's new defence oriented space agency, to become a nodal authority for positive outreach with space start-ups.

The government has also drawn up a new policy for privatisation of Public Sector Enterprise (PSEs) to boost public-private partnerships, which will soon be notified to the concerned sectors.

I for India

The five-I formula for making India self-reliant

- Intent
- Inclusion
- Investment
- Infrastructure
- Innovation

ASTOIC DEFENCE

In a major highlight, the ANBA has also been extended to India's defence sector. The FDI (foreign direct investment) cap has been raised to 74% from the existing 49%. This will enable domestic manufacturers to source and utilise critical technologies that will help in the much needed modernisation and revamp of the production process.

The OFB (Ordinance Factory Board), a 200-year-old organisation will undergo corporatisation to make manufacturing autonomous, boost efficiency and increase accountability. In this reconstruction, one or multiple corporations will be added into the 41 factories currently falling under the OFB.

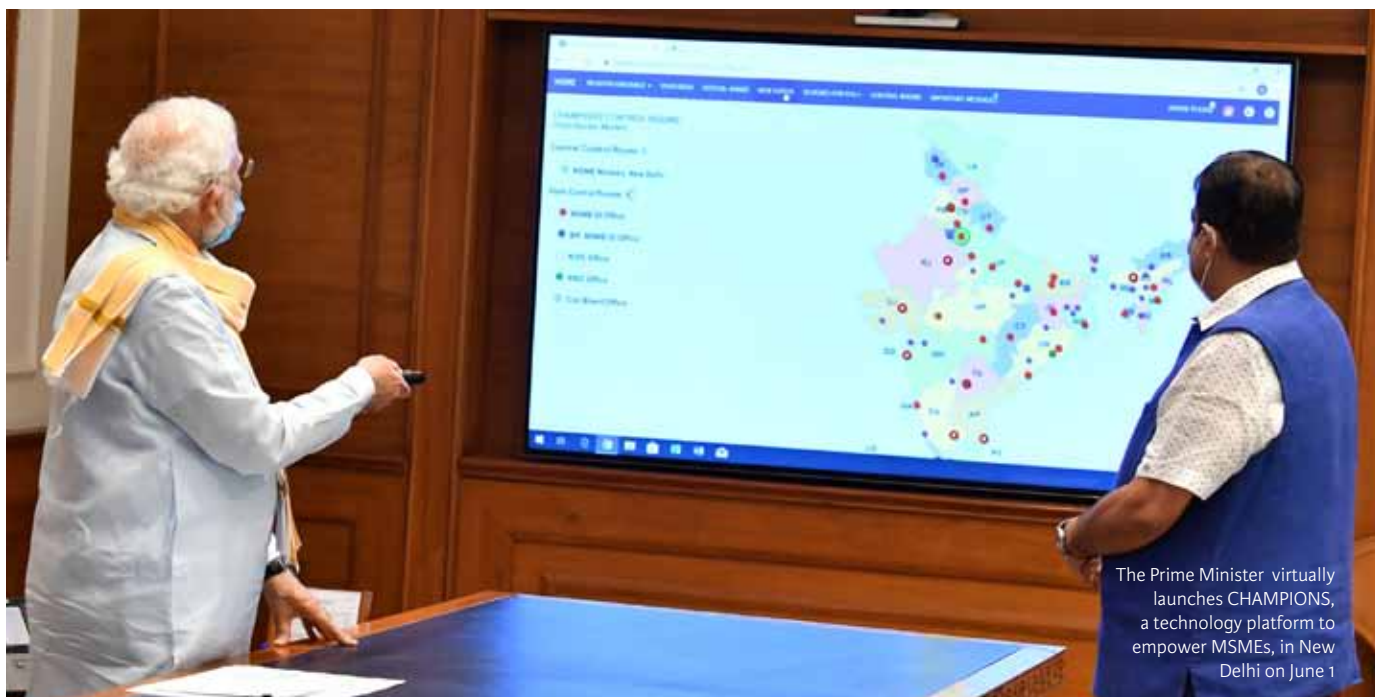
BACK TO BASICS

Special attention has been paid to the agriculture sector with its position as India's largest livelihood provider and a

significant contributor to the country's GDP. In a first, the sector has been considered at par with the industries in India, and the government, under the ANBA has announced a stream of pioneering reforms aimed towards empowering farmers across India.

Going forward, there will be minimal hindrance arising from trade and licensing agreements, thereby allowing farmers to easily accomplish business transcending state lines.

Millions of farmers will directly benefit from the INR 300 billion additional emergency working capital to stabilise production in these testing times. With a INR 100 billion capital infusion, Mirco Food Enterprises will now be provided technological benefits in clusters (mango in UP, saffron in J&K, bamboo shoots in the Northeast, chilli in Andhra Pradesh etc.) to standardised quality and production as per FASSAI



The Prime Minister virtually launches CHAMPIONS, a technology platform to empower MSMEs, in New Delhi on June 1



Schemes like Digital India have laid the groundwork due to which families across rural India are able to receive government benefits under the ANBA directly in their bank accounts

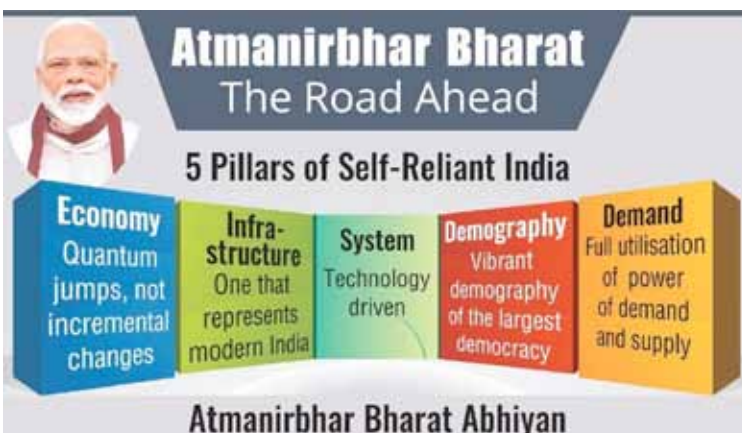
norms. The products will then be marketed to promote an increase in demand.

The list of reforms are also aimed towards utilising the surplus of agricultural commodities with amendments to the Essential Commodities Act, made to ensure adequate supply in times of scarcity. These amendments, by utilising the surplus and by

providing a subsidy for the transport to deficient markets will create a secure supply/demand chain and protect the interest of Indian farmers.

PM Modi had very recently quoted Swami Vivekananda and urged Indians to use indigenous products and to promote Indian products in global markets, furthering his idea of 'Vocal for Local'.

India needs to simultaneously boost authentic exports in order to carve a niche out for itself in the emerging world order. An effort which will not only fast track our journey to become a USD 5 trillion economy, but will also ensure that Indian interests are safeguarded in the years to come.



Vinayak Surya Swami is a Delhi-based journalist. He holds a degree in mechanical engineering and has worked as an apprentice Shipbuilder with the Indian Navy. A part-time writer since his teenage years, he switched to journalism to pursue his prurience for writing and travel.

Pause for effect

A resurgence of natural habitats has been noticed across India's mountainous regions as pollution levels dropped significantly following a nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This small window of non-interference has shed new light on how our relationship with nature can be made more inclusive in future

BY VINAYAK SURYA SWAMI



Wild animals, including elephants at the Rajaji National Park, have felt more comfortable in their natural surroundings without constant human intervention

With the Coronavirus spreading at an alarming rate across the world, many countries adopted systematic lockdowns to slow the rate of infection. Billions of people were confined to the safety of their homes and travel was severely curtailed to check the virus' transmission.

Industries, businesses and even small-scale construction units were halted as the world slowly came to terms with the pandemic. Although

these policy decisions were a necessary measure for the well-being of humanity, there was one aspect that had not been focussed on as much – the impact lockdowns would have on the environment.

Human involvement has, over many millennia, degraded our environment. During the pandemic, with lockdowns and restricted movement of man and machinery in most parts of the world, resulting in an unprecedented withdrawal of human interference, nature started healing itself.

A picturesque sunset at Tirthan Valley. Tirthan valley, a conservation hotspot at the Great Himalayan National Park, saw an unprecedented growth in the naturally occurring flora and fauna during the lockdown



“ON WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY, WE REITERATE OUR PLEDGE TO PRESERVE OUR PLANET’S RICH BIODIVERSITY. LET US COLLECTIVELY DO WHATEVER POSSIBLE TO ENSURE THE FLORA AND FAUNA WITH WHOM WE SHARE THE EARTH THRIVE. MAY WE LEAVE AN EVEN BETTER PLANET FOR THE COMING GENERATIONS.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

PROGRESS

UNDENIABLE SIGNS

In India, this impact has been most prominent in the Himalayan region. Very recently, news feeds were flooded with photographs showing the massive Dhauladhar range of the Himalayas visible from Jalandhar, Punjab, situated over 200 km away. In a similar event, residents of Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh woke up to a clear view of snow-capped Himalayan mountains, which many had never seen before. Experts say this was only possible due

to the reduced vehicular and industrial emissions over two months.

Mother nature's self healing properties were visible in some of the largest Indian rivers, which showed a dramatic, almost miraculous drop in toxicity. The Yamuna and Ganga rivers, known as lifelines of the fertile plains of northern India had nominal impurities and toxins after the initial month-long lockdown. In a report published by Uttarakhand Pollution Control Board recently, it was noted

With nonexistent tourist traffic in India's many national parks, wildlife has thrived. Seen here is a tiger roaming freely at the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra



The reduced levels of air and noise pollution during the fight against COVID-19 have allowed exotic and migratory birds to return to what was originally part of their natural habitats



Top: The Dhauladhar range of mountains visible from Jalandhar, Punjab, on April 3, 2020

Bottom: A shepherd's hut is illuminated by the clear rays of the sun, on the meadows of Uttarakhand. Lowered levels of pollution in the plains has proven to immensely beneficial to the sensitive ecosystems of the Himalayas



Breathing easy

Air Quality Index (AQI) readings across major cities in India (June 8)

- **New Delhi**
81 (Satisfactory)
- **Mumbai, Maharashtra**
48 (Good)
- **Kolkata, West Bengal**
38 (Good)
- **Jaipur, Rajasthan**
63 (Satisfactory)
- **Chandigarh**
31 (Good)
- **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**
54 (Satisfactory)
- **Guwahati, Assam**
38 (Good)
- **Bengaluru, Karnataka**
46 (Good)
- **Hyderabad, Telangana**
45 (Good)
- **Amritsar, Punjab**
50 (Satisfactory)

AQI readings represent an average understanding of the Air Quality. 0-50 represents good quality while readings above 300 signify hazardous air quality.

app.cpcbccr.com



Even as the adverse aspects of the Coronavirus have been felt by humans, the crisis has come as reminder for us to rethink our relationship with nature

The crystal clear waters of the Tehri Lake in Uttarakhand.

Due to the restrictions imposed on travel, Tehri, a popular summer tourist destination, has seen negligible influx and very low levels of pollution

that the level of Coliform (a type of pathogen) in River Ganga in and around Rishikesh had dropped from 70/100ml (Apr 2019) to 40/100ml (Apr 2020), whereas the dissolved oxygen levels had risen by almost 20% (Apr 2019-Apr 2020).

There has also been significant reduction in man-animal conflicts across the state of Uttarakhand as traffic on roads was well below average. Since lockdowns have also significantly reduced noise pollution, wild animals have been seen venturing

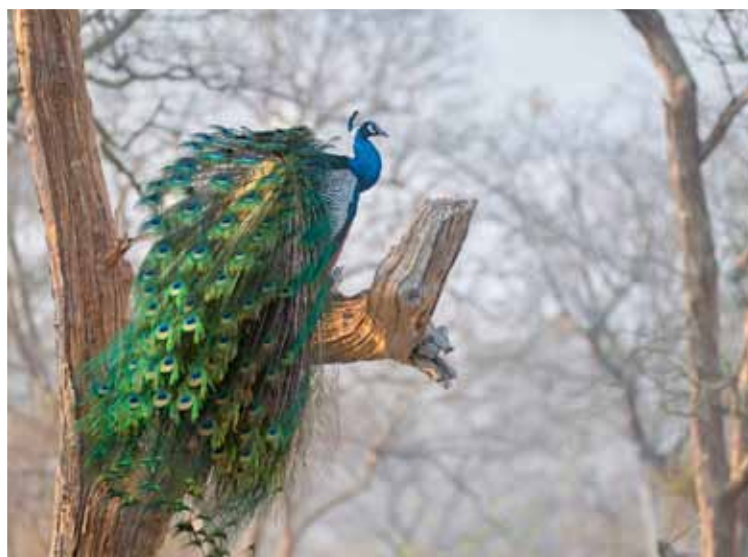
close to inhabited cities like Shimla and Manali in Himachal Pradesh. "Since the relative absence of humans and related activities, wild animals have started to perceive larger areas as deserted and therefore safe for them," says Parag Madhukar Dhakate, chief conservator of forests (CCF) western circle Kumaon, Uttarakhand.

In one such instance, a pair of snow leopards were spotted with camera traps at the Nanda Devi National Park in Uttarakhand. The sighting of the pair together points towards the comfort

with which these endangered animals are moving about the park.

Anil Thakur, the Director of the Great Himalayan National Park (also classified as a world heritage site by UNESCO) explains that even when the almost 1100 sq km area saw around 2000 visitors during the summer months (May-July), the decrease in human footprints enabled wildlife to venture into the open and access more area. “It was definitely beneficial for the park’s flora and fauna. Human activity, be it vehicular or otherwise, threatens wildlife, however inadvertently. Once the park opens again, we will follow guidelines and try to educate our visitors about the relationship we share with nature. The pandemic has reaffirmed that nature is and always has been, supreme,” he said.

Moreover, bird sightings have nearly doubled with many endangered and rare species of birds spotted easily across Himachal Pradesh. “The reduced levels of air and noise pollution have allowed these birds to return to what was originally part of their natural habitats,” say ornithologists. Infact, enthusiasts and bird watchers from Shimla, the capital of Himachal Pradesh, have been able to spot upto



Left to right: Villagers across the state of Himachal Pradesh have worked tirelessly with local authorities to restore their natural surroundings; sightings of birds have become a common phenomenon during the lockdown across the country

PROGRESS



40 different species of birds from the safety of their rooftops!

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Such has been the change in the environment and the scale of natural reclamation, that experts are now looking to it for policy decisions. The drastic reductions in AQI (Air Quality Index) levels has allowed many metropolitan cities like New Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata in achieving their targets of yearly pollution reduction within just two months. “It’s not just humans who have benefited from the cleaner air, animals and plant life is also booming due to the same. It is now our biggest challenge to continue this healing process for mother nature,” says Dhakate.

Even as the adverse aspects of the Coronavirus have been felt by humans, the crisis has come as reminder for us to rethink our relationship with

Top: The lack of vehicular traffic and absence of industrial activity has helped rejuvenate water bodies across India. The clear water of the holy Guru Dongmar lake in Sikkim is a prime example

Bottom: The ecosystem at the iconic Valley of Flowers in Uttarakhand is returning to its former glory following the decline in tourist influx and efforts of local authorities





The iconic Taj Mahal reflected on the surface of the Yamuna river in Agra. Due to the restrictions in lockdowns, Indian rivers have seen a dramatic drop in external pollutants

nature. Going forward, there is scope of improvement when it comes to making more inclusive policy decisions that do not threaten natural ecosystems at the cost of widespread development.

An avid naturalist, Upasana Patial, the chief conservator of forests and wildlife (CCF WL) in Himachal Pradesh's northern regions has noted a significant decline in the number of forest fires this year which she says maybe attributed to limited human activity following the nationwide lockdown. Coupled with good rainfall and lower temperatures, the decrease in fires is quite miraculous. "The forest department in tandem with the administration tries to keep human-wildlife conflict to a minimum. With the lockdown in effect, we were able to significantly reverse the negative biological impact on the environment while simultaneously studying the flora

and fauna which would otherwise be impacted due to forest fires, vehicular traffic and heavy tourist influx," explains Patial.

Many environmentalists believe that the lockdown boosted the sensitive ecosystems naturally and that a 30-day period restricting human interactions, can be allowed each year in order to reset the biological impact in these areas. We should not resort to going back the way we were, but instead, should learn from this experience and allow nature to thrive as we progress.



Vinayak Surya Swami is a Delhi-based journalist. He holds a degree in mechanical engineering and has worked as an apprentice Shipbuilder with the Indian Navy. A part-time writer since his teenage years, he switched to journalism to pursue his prurience for writing and travel.



Ayurvedic medicines are naturally prepared through a carefully monitored process. These traditional methods preserve curative properties of the ingredients over long periods of time as well

THE NATURAL doctrine

India is one the few countries where multiple recognised systems of traditional medicine are practiced. These alternative systems are strongly connected with nature-based remedies and thanks to government support, these ancient philosophies are thriving. **Dr Sanjeev Rastogi** explains how alternative and natural systems may be a viable solution for a healthier lifestyle

The ongoing global pandemic has exposed the world for all its strengths and weaknesses in a single stroke and has brought into focus the importance of enhancing the body's natural defence system. With the support of the government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, traditional practices of medicine, especially Ayurveda, are seeing a new growth in popularity and relevance. The government has announced innovative clinical drug trials to evaluate the safe and effective use of selected Ayurvedic medicines in the treatment of COVID-19, making this one of the first examples when modern and traditional medical experts are working simultaneously to find a cure. The Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) has also released a series of advisories for the general public on the use of several well-known Ayurvedic formulations to improve the immune system in the fight against COVID-19. Thus, stressing on the tried and

tested 'prevention is better than cure' paradigm, which happens to hold relevance even centuries after it was first incorporated. In contagious diseases, prevention becomes of crucial importance. The measures we are currently following in the context of the ongoing pandemic have their inspirations from traditional Ayurvedic concepts of contagious disease prevention mentioned in ancient Indian texts like *Sushruta Samhita*.

The traditional Ayurvedic practice of *shirodhara*, that involves a constant stream of warm essential oils applied to the forehead is known to promote blood circulation, reduce stress, restore damaged nerves and boost cognitive functions



Experts today say the key to a healthier lifestyle does not solely lie in herbs, drugs or vaccines but, within our awareness towards our selves and our efforts in keeping ourselves healthy

CULTURE AND LIFESTYLE



Top: Students of the PNNM Ayurveda Medical College in Palakkad Kerala. The college offers extensive six-year courses in Ayurvedic medicine

Bottom: Students of Ayurvedic medicine learn the practical aspects of making medicinal mixes



Siddha sensibilities

Practiced largely across Southern India, the *Siddha* system is one of the earliest traditional medicine systems in the world.

According to the doctrines that have been preserved and passed down through the generations, practitioners (called *siddhars*) stress on holistic treatment of both the spiritual and physical self.

Siddha medicine is claimed to revitalise and rejuvenate dysfunctional organs that cause a disease. *Kayakarpam* (a special combination of medicine and lifestyle), *varmam* therapy (based on activating pressure points, *vaasi* (Pranayama) and *muppu*, a special salt (made from three regional rock salts and minerals) are the specialities of this system of medicine.



THE AYURVEDIC ASSIST

Another ancient science, Ayurveda, explores the concept of disease prevention by promoting a novel concept of '*prakriti vighat*'. This refers to averting the environment and lending it unfavorable to the growth of microbes, in reference to microbial infections and infestations. Due to the ubiquitous presence of

microbes all around us, there is a continuous search by the microbes for suitable hosts that may allow the pathogens access and to flourish by providing them entry and substrates to feed upon. Ayurvedic herbal recommendations of *mulethi* (liquorice), *giloy* (*Tinospora Cordifolia*; often referred to as the eternal source of life due to its immense



Top: The ancient science of *Siddha* medicine is preserved through palm leaflets over the centuries. *Siddha* practitioner Dr Gueta Monan Achari making an inventory of the medicinal leaves and herbs

Bottom: Hakim Sharfuddin Quadri (standing), a veteran Unani practitioner, at his pharmacy in Kolkata, West Bengal



Understanding Unani

One of the greatest scholars of Unani medicine, Ibn-e-Sina, defines the ancient avenue as “A science in which we learn various states of body in health and when not in health and the means by which health is likely to be lost and when lost, is likely to be restored”

Traditionally practiced in Southern Asiatic regions as well as the Middle-East, Unani stresses greatly on the temperament (*miza*) of the patients and therefore considers them in relation to the environment and the stress it exerts.

Unani physicians hold the digestive capabilities and diet in utmost import. The medication is of varying potency and in accordance with temperament, causative humour, faculty of organ involved, and severity of the disease.



Healing homeopathy

One of the nationally recognised systems of medicine in India, Homeopathy, is largely based on the principle of *Similia Similibus Curentur* (Latin), which means let similar things take care of similar things.

Homeopathic physicians follow this concept and the medications prescribed produce similar effects that counteract the symptoms of a disease. It is also commonly used for long-term afflictions as homeopathic medicines often use potent ingredients in minimal quantities for prolonged symptomatic relief. Its strength also lies in its effectiveness on certain clinical conditions for which there is less treatment in other medical systems and is often recognised as a standalone treatment for ailments like hormonal disorders, pain and palliative diseases.



medicinal and immunity-boosting properties), and *ashwagandha* (Indian ginseng or winter cherry) set an apt example in the case. These herbs act optimally at multiple levels; preventing the entry of the virus by blocking the receptors and also by halting its proliferation by inhibiting the enzymes needed for it.

In an advisory released early in 2020, the ministry of AYUSH recommended some Ayurvedic medicines as “prophylactic measures/ immunomodulatory drugs as per the Ayurvedic practices” to treat COVID-19 patients. While the ministry proposed consultations with Ayurveda practitioners, the medicines, AYUSH said, can help to “strengthen the immune system”. Gujarat and Kerala have administered alternative medicines to infected patients and have claimed encouraging results. Kerala has also set up Ayur Raksha clinics at district

levels to provide preventive medicines, improve immunity and provide other health support.

MENTAL STRENGTH

The COVID-19 pandemic has not just affected us physically but has also led to high levels of psychological distress leading to depression, stress, and severe anxiety. It is a well-known fact that increased anxiety leads to decreased immunity in our body, making it susceptible to various disease, including an increased risk of viral respiratory tract infection, which is a symptom of COVID-19 as well. Yoga, especially the deep-breathing exercises, are said to increase lung capacity and thus keep respiratory ailments at bay. Speaking during the sixth International Day of Yoga on June 21, 2020, PM Modi, said that as the coronavirus specifically attacks the

Homeopathic medicines are known to improve immunity with regular use. Nahar Singh, a hotelier and Homeopathic practitioner from the Deogarh Mahal Palace in rural Rajasthan, distributing homeopathic medicines to the staff as well as people from nearby villages



Prime Minister Narendra Modi (C) along with Shiripad Naik, Minister of State in the Ministry of AYUSH (extreme left), release commemorative postage stamps of master healers, at the Vigyan Bhawan on August 30, 2019 in New Delhi; **Bottom:** A man receiving steam therapy, which is a Naturopathy treatment



respiratory system, *pranayama* or breathing exercise, can help in strengthening the respiratory system. Ayurveda, yoga and naturopathy are said to alleviate stress and calm the mind as well.

HOMOEOPATHY & UNANI

In its COVID-19 advice, the Ministry of AYUSH elaborates on cures from Homeopathy and Unani as well. In the case of Homeopathy, the ministry release mentions a medicine that can be taken as prophylactic

dose against coronavirus infections, which has also been advised for prevention of other influenza-like illness. Talking about Unani medicines, AYUSH recommends the use of certain herbs and oils for “symptomatic management of Corona Virus infection”.

As the COVID-19 pandemic rages, more people are turning towards a natural way of living, of using ancient knowledge to stay healthy, and this may be the ‘new normal’ in the post-Covid world. This is the time to discover more about the true potential of these traditional practices and the time for India to demonstrate the potential of AYUSH systems in addressing this global health crisis to the world.



Dr Sanjeev Rastogi, MD, PhD is known for his research in the field of Ayurveda. He has published over 100 research papers on the subject and is the chief editor of the Annals of Ayurvedic Medicine, a research journal enlisted by the UGC, India.



Neutralising Naturopathy

Naturopathy is a system of lifestyle medicine that works in modulating the factors that improve the body’s innate healing properties i.e. immunity.

Naturopathy is one of the few systems of medicine that adheres to a non-alignment with drugs. It advocates the strengthening the entire body naturally to remove the causes of an ailment. Naturopathy is known to help patients suffering from chronic ailments in comparatively less time than any other forms of medicine. Some of the widely used Naturopathy treatments include mud therapy, spinal therapy, steam therapy, magnet therapy, Acupuncture and reflexology.

A healthy resolution

With facemasks and social distancing norms in effect, people around the world came up with innovative solutions to celebrate the sixth International Day of Yoga (IDY) on June 21 and promote the benefits of the ancient science in the fight against COVID-19



Enthusiasts at a Yoga Day camp at Mount Tahtali in Antalya, Turkey

Sand artist Sudarshan Patnaik adding finishing touches to his sculpture with the theme of IDY 2020, in Puri, Odisha



People perform yoga on IDY 2020 at the Lodhi Gardens in New Delhi



YOGA

Enthusiasts practice yoga at the Shahrak Haji Nabi hilltop during IDY 2020 in Kabul, Afghanistan





Members of the Bangladesh police attend a yoga session in Dhaka, Bangladesh



People perform yoga while wearing face masks and maintaining social distancing on IDY in New Delhi, India

YOGA

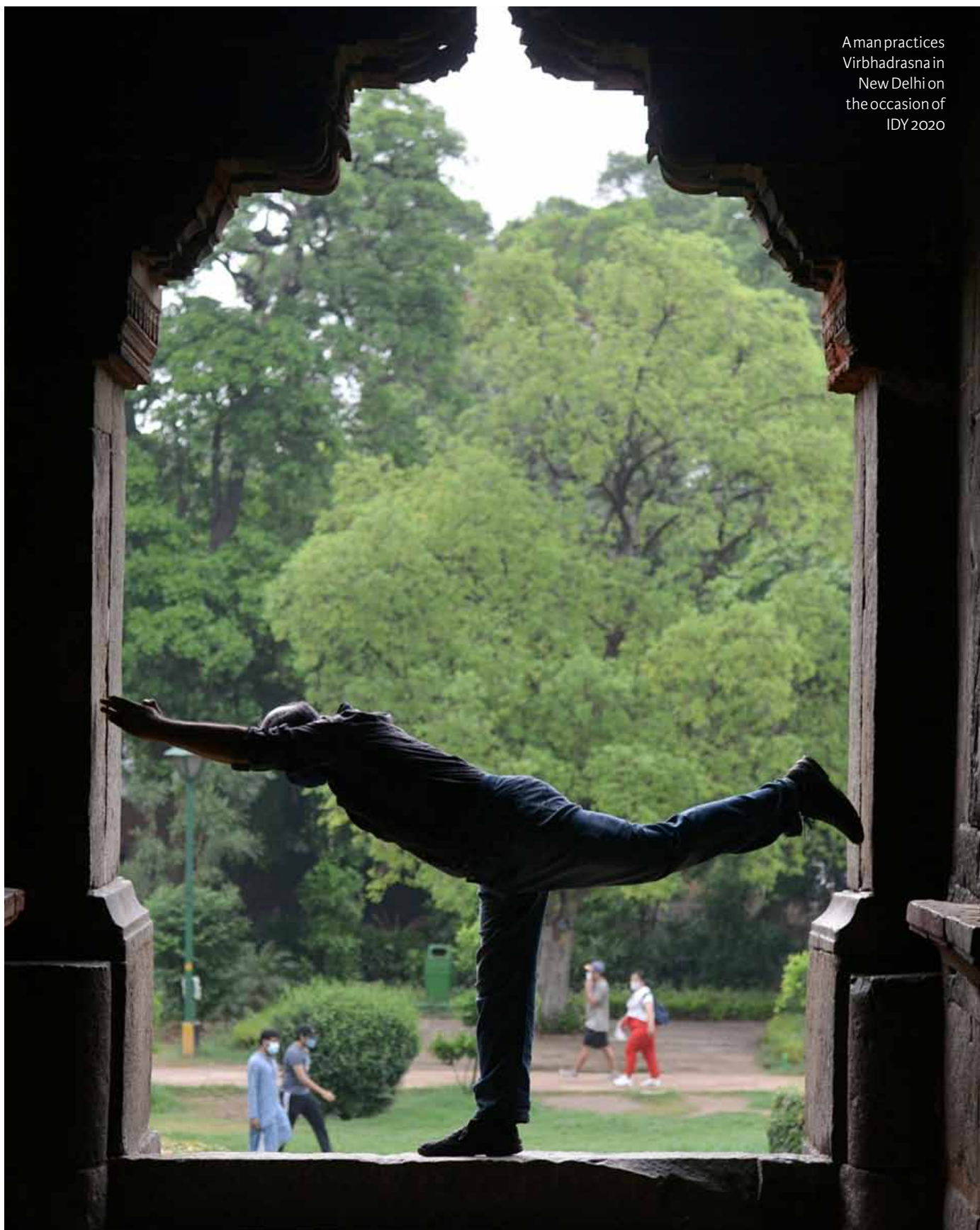


Participants during an International Yoga Day event at the Atomium in Brussels, Belgium



Anganwadi (rural child care) workers practice Surya Namaskar with facemasks as a preventive measure against COVID-19, on IDY 2020 in Bewar, Rajasthan

Aman practices
Virbhadrasna in
New Delhi on
the occasion of
IDY 2020





Left to right: *Aam panna* (a drink made from raw mangoes), *Shikanji*, the Indian version of the lemonade and the zesty *Jaljeera* made with assorted spices and mint are among the popular traditional summer coolers

THE COOL(ING) meal

Summer can be very debilitating. When the temperature begins to rise, it's important to keep our body cool from inside. Author **Kavita Devgan** explains how traditional Indian preparations from across the country can actually help in regulating body temperatures to beat the summer heat

An ice-cream or an iced drink is what most will turn to during summer to beat the heat. But are these food items a healthy solution in lowering our body temperature? Their initial cooling effect is quickly replaced by heat that the metabolic functions generate to digest them. Instead, have a banana or a watermelon, which, according to traditional Indian dietary practices, reduce our body temperature while digestion and interestingly,

offer a healthier alternative to iced concoctions. Traditional Indian food and eating habits are to a large extent based on the ancient philosophy of Ayurveda; and it says that *doshas* or life forces control how the human body functions. *Pitta* is the life force controlling digestion and metabolism, and in summer, eating food that is tougher to digest disrupts *pitta dosha*. According to the norms of traditional Indian cuisine, in summers, it's advisable to consume foods richer in alkaline elements and those

Left to right: Seasonal vegetables like bottle and bitter gourd contain very high water content and are therefore beneficial in summers. Seen here is a traditional north Indian preparation of *Lauki* (bottle gourd) curry; Throughout India, bitter gourd or *Karela* is often deep fried and enjoyed as a crunchy albeit healthy snack



The concept of cooling foods in India is not so much about foods served cold as it is about foods with heating and cooling properties

packed with water, to fight the acute dehydration while simultaneously providing healthier solutions to beat the summer heat.

SUBTLE SWEETENERS

Gulkand (a preserve made from rose petals) may have come to India from ancient Persia, today it's an intrinsic part of our traditional eating habits. As it possesses coolant-like properties, it is considered to be an ideal ingredient

to beat the summer heat. Made with fragrant rose petals and sugar, *Gulkand* not just keeps the body cool, it also helps alleviate heat-related problems like fatigue, aches and pains. It's a great digestive tonic too and helps with digestion by reducing stomach heat and acidity. It also helps in the detoxification of the body, besides helping reduce excessive perspiration and foul body odour, both common problems during summers.

BANANA GULKAND SHAKE

Blend 1 banana, 1 tbsp *gulkand*, 1 tsp sugar and 2 cups milk to a smooth puree. Top with ice cubes and garnish with rose petals.

The chilled drink, loaded with antioxidants and rich in potassium goes a long way in keeping us healthy and cool



Gulkand, a sweet preserve of rose petals popular in India, helps maintain a lower body temperature



Watermelon juice, with high water content and several nutrients is the perfect and healthy summer beverage

VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

Most vegetables keep body temperatures low, but some vegetables are more effective as they are water-rich. Vegetables like cucumber, radish, lettuce, bottle gourd and spinach are ideal for summer and can be easily incorporated in meals. Cucumber is a versatile vegetable and it can be used to toss up a salad or infused into drinking water. Fruits too pacify the *pitta* and summer yields like coconut, dates, lime, mango, melons, sweet orange and sweet pineapple should be included in a regular meal plan. Have

watermelon in the morning to prevent and cure heat stroke. The Indian *bael*, known as the stone apple, can also cure a heat stroke and can prevent adverse effects of the dehydration. It is usually enjoyed as sherbet or warm tea infused with dried slices of *bael*. The same results can be achieved with *aam panna*, a drink made with steamed unripe mango pulp or a glass of *kokum* (*Garcinia indica*) juice. The latter, a native fruit of the Deccan plateau, makes for an effective summer beverage when served chilled with natural sugar. However, as fruits digest

Summer coolers

Green moong (gram) sprouts

This lentil is an effective cooling food. Try a cool potato salad (*chaat*) mixed with a handful of sprouts and a few slices of cucumber. It's a perfect summer snack.

Kokum (*Garcinia indica*)

Used extensively in Gujarat and the Konkan region. It has great cooling benefits. Through the summer months, it can be used as a substitute for tamarind in your food.

Fresh coconut water

Loaded with essential minerals which keep the body hydrated and maintain its electrolyte balance.

Bitter gourd (*karela*)

This removes excess heat from the body, even if you eat a hot dish made with bitter gourd.

Bottle gourd

This gourd contains almost 96% water, is inherently cooling and is loaded with potassium that helps keep the blood pressure down and electrolyte balance maintained. It prevents fatigue and keeps the body cool and refreshed.

CUISINE



at a different rate than other foods, Ayurveda states that they should be eaten alone, and not combined with other foods so as not to hinder the digestive process. The best time to have a fruit or a fruit juice is before a meal, a few hours after a meal, or as a late morning or early afternoon snack.

INDULGE IN FISH

In non-vegetarian ingredients it is advisable to consume more fish compared to other meats. Fish is a cooling food that helps counteract the heat lingering in our system, and helps bring about an equilibrium on a hot summer day. While cooking any dish, include cooling spices like fresh

Power foods to raise the body's temperature

Foods that contain more fat, protein, and carbohydrates often heat the body during digestion.

Ginger - due to the compounds gingerol and shogaol

Brown rice - due to complex carbohydrate

Peanuts - due to their ability to increase blood circulation and speed up sluggish metabolisms

Chicken - Due to high protein content that takes considerably more time to get digested than other ingredients

Onion, garlic, spinach, beans, potatoes, broccoli are also said to have a strong *taasir* that produces heat in the body.

Top: Spiced buttermilk, a light and frothy drink is enjoyed across the country during summer

Bottom: Garcinia indica or *kokum*, is widely used in India for its many benefits like regulation of blood sugar, reduction of triglyceride levels and keeping the body cool

FUELING SUCCESS

If you haven't eaten for three-four hours, your blood glucose levels would probably be dipping, so eating even a small amount of nutrient-rich food will give your brain and your body the required boost.



Right: The perfect substitute for a summer snack, a healthy and cool salad made with fresh coriander leaves and cucumber

Bottom: Stone Apple or Indian bael has been traditionally used for its medicinal properties, especially known to prevent ailments caused due to high temperatures



TIPS FOR THE FAMOUS JALJEERA

In a bowl mix 2 tbsp dry roasted and ground cumin seeds, 2 tbsp mint leaves paste, 1/2 tsp cilantro leaves paste, 1 tbsp dried mango powder, 1/2 tsp rock salt, 2 tbsp lemon juice and a pinch of sugar, then add 5 cups cold water and garnish with mint leaves.

ginger (dry ginger increases the body heat), marjoram, cilantro, lemon balm, peppermint, and white peppercorn.

DRINK RIGHT

Make sure you are drinking 7-8 glasses of water every day, and never go out in heat without having a glass of water. *Matke ka pani* (water from an earthen pot) is a good idea as soil adds essential minerals and helps remove the impurities, besides keeping the

water cool. You could even use a copper *matka*, as that too keeps the water at room temperature and helps detox your body. *Jaljeera* (a drink infused with the goodness of cumin seeds) made with lots of mint leaves is also very effective as a summer-drink.

Since traditional Indian cuisine incorporates several Ayurvedic principles, numerous summer-special dishes are naturally cooling. Combined with other tenants of the ancient science, like eating the last meal of the day during sundown, avoiding oily and spicy food items and also caffeine, can not only help us deal with summer but also keep us healthy.



Kavita Devgan is a nutritionist, weight management consultant and health writer based in Delhi. She has written several books highlighting simple dietary life hacks that can lead to a healthy, more holistic lifestyle. Her recent book Fix it with Food talks extensively about the benefits of super foods.

A woman watches India's cricket team captain Virat Kohli on her computer screen as he speaks during the 'I For India' virtual concert to raise funds for Corona warriors, live on Facebook on May 3



PLAYING THROUGH THE

pandemic

Though many battles have been won with the right strategy and courage, the perennial conflict between hope and disappointment has often found solace in a much subtler salve - that of music. Even with the current crisis resulting from the spread of COVID-19, musicians from across the country have taken to digital platforms to present their melodious craft

BY ISHITA GOEL

This year on June 21, two major events, the International Day of Yoga (IDY) and the World Music Day, saw millions participate in a virtual celebration. As IDY 2020 was observed with the theme *Ghar Ghar se Yoga* (yoga from home), music lovers across the world rejoiced with the power of virtual music as several concerts were broadcast live. In India, it all started with the 'Janta Curfew Online Festival' on March 22, which was organised by Anil Srinivasan, a Chennai-based pianist. Srinivasan called for dancers, musicians, poets, performers, writers and other artistes to "engage audiences creatively".

As the world struggles with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the global music industry, like many others, faces a huge crisis. But, it seems music is set to conquer the challenges soon. The

INR 15 billion Indian music industry largely depends on films for its revenue. With shootings postponed and events cancelled, the industry has gravitated towards online events, virtual concerts and live streams. These are slowly becoming the new normal for musicians and music connoisseurs.

CONCERTS GO ONLINE

Another move towards online concerts came on the first day of the nationwide lockdown on March 25, when *sitar* player Shubhendra Rao with his wife, cellist Saskia Rao de Haas, decided to serenade listeners with *Bhimpalasi*, an apt afternoon *raga* (classical Indian music), from their home in Delhi. Anyone who tuned into their Facebook page at the designated time could listen to the soothing notes.

Many organisations are assisting artistes to adapt to these times by

Left to right: Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan speaking during the '1 For India' online concert as a fan watches; Viewers tune into the concert featuring a performance by singer/actor Ayushmann Khurrana. International and Bollywood stars took part in a four-hour online concert on May 3 to raise funds for the battle against coronavirus in India



MUSIC



Sitar Maestro Shubhendra Rao spearheaded virtual performances with an online rendition of *raag Bhimpalasi*



Taga Ram Bheel from Jaisalmer with the *Algoza*, a traditional wind instrument from Rajasthan. Taga Ram Bheel partnered with the Anahad foundation and performed several live shows for a virtual audience

providing opportunities for online and virtual shows. The efforts made by Anahad foundation under the *Chaukhat ki Goonj* initiative have helped numerous folk musicians by connecting them to people online and allowing them to sponsor live 30-min performances. With over INR 3.5 million raised so far to provide monetary support to 1183 folk artistes across 45 locations spanning 9 states, the initiative has provided immediate relief while simultaneously raising awareness for folk music through virtual shows.

Indian musical legends like *Rajasthani* folk singer Mame Khan and rock band *Parikrama* have also participated in shows that were streamed to thousands across the country.

On April 22, Ricky Kej, a Grammy-award winning Indian composer and producer, held an online concert, which was watched by an estimated 89 million viewers from around the world. “A lot of people reached out to me stating that they were extremely inspired by the music and the overall message of my concert. As an artist, it is very fulfilling when the audience is so receptive. A digital concert with a huge audience such as this is a new experience but I am very happy with the way it all turned out.

Similarly, a folk music tradition from South India called *Parai*, performed with the upbeat sound of drums found an increasingly large audience during the months following the COVID-19 outbreak. Chennai’s Sumanasa Foundation has even managed to raise close to INR 4 million with online events showcasing artistic traditions falling outside the contemporary outlook.

I FOR INDIA

In light of the pandemic, music festivals and large-scale events took the hardest hit “Businesses have gone from running very well to shutting down completely,” says Nikhil Chinappa, co-founder of VH1 Supersonic, one of the largest music festivals in the country. There is now a more permanent shift towards digital events and virtual concerts with listeners adapting to the new norms and live streaming.

Not just listeners, but the artistes are embracing this change as well, DJs are more aware of digital renditions to a live performance and musicians performing live are also becoming adept at gauging audience reactions through online streams.

On May 3, the Indian entertainment industry and Facebook also joined hands

to organise what was perhaps one of the most impactful digital concerts, ‘I for India’. Some of the leading artistes and personalities from India and overseas became a part of this virtual concert entertaining the audience to raise funds for Corona warriors. The four hour concert managed to raise almost 30 million at the end of its four-hour duration.

It is not just contemporary stars who have gone virtual. The Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth (SPIC MACAY) has also followed suit with the fest *Anubhav* from June 1. The week-long online programme for a young audience included numerous workshops in music, dance, and crafts followed by inclusive sessions of yoga-inspired calming therapy and cultural performances.

A woman tunes in to the ‘I for India’ concert that saw multiple collaborations like Indian rapper Badshah with singer Payal Dev releasing their new track, *Toxic*, online



The dynamic music industry is all set to roll its wheels towards the online space and experiment with technology to give the best experience to listeners and music-lovers

SPIC MACAY's events are usually held in collaboration with leading educational institutions of the country and have kept music alive during these tough times.

India's first female professional tabla player, Anuradha Pal also joined hands with folk musicians like Taufiq Qureshi, Shubhendra and Saskia Rao, Pt. Satish Vyas and Anup Jalota for a collaborative music festival called *Kala ke Sangh*, hosted on Facebook and Instagram.

VIRTUALLY IMMERSIVE

As live streams gain more and more followers, a whole new business space seems to be burgeoning. Creative companies like Digital Jalebi are filling this newly-formed chasm with interactive technological media like

augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), animation, 3D modelling, etc, via which they design an engaging musical experience. Unlimited users can log into the concert or session at the designated time and enjoy it. "We want to transfer in-person events into virtual and immersive ones that let you have the feel of a real-life concert at home. If people can warm up to home theatres, why not technology that lets you have the best of music whilst sitting in your living room?" asks Fawaz Syed, co-founder of Digital Jalebi.

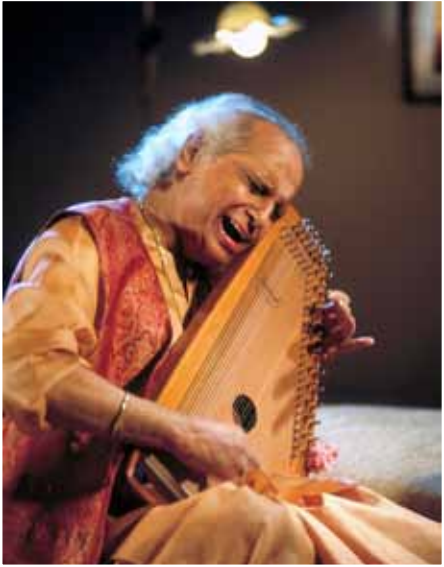
Several folk musicians from Rajasthan also engaged with local NGOs to showcase their traditional craft through online workshops featuring puppeteers and *Chakri* dancers. These artistes and their craft has undergone a renaissance as the number of people familiar with folk music has risen exponentially, given the rise in digital broadcasts.

Kej explains, "Challenges such as the current pandemic force us to be more creative and innovative when it comes to redefining the boundaries of our craft. Although it will be hard to replicate the feel and energy of a live concert online, but the arenas always have physical limitations. With virtual concerts, the whole world is our playground."

Interestingly, not all these digital concerts are free of cost. "Artistes and event managers have been looking for alternative avenues to keep the industry afloat during these uncertain times. That's why we created a platform that allows organisers to publish, ticket and manage

Virtual concerts through digital imaging have opened up new realms of production like AR (augmented reality) and 3D modelling, which allows for a more immersive experience





Legendary Indian masters like Pt. Jasraj and Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasiya have joined the digital bandwagon with SPIC MACAY's Anubhav convention



digital events,” said Sooraj JS, business development manager of Paytm, the ticketing partner for several online events.

Going forward, there will definitely be a shift towards more intimate experiences specifically designed for much smaller gatherings. As the restrictions are lifted, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s call for ‘Vocal for Local’ will resonate across the music industry as well, with local artists seeing a rise in small, expertly curated events. This will also generate interest amongst Indian youth to learn more about folk music. With the digital collaborations, many contemporary artists are already creating interesting fusions with old-school folk musicians

MUSIC WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

There is little doubt that real-life events are restricted by physical boundaries; however, virtual concerts are breaking barriers with artistes from different

countries collaborating with each other to host musical sessions that share the heritage of nations with the world. When the ‘new normal’ finally sets in, India’s traditional music and its practitioners hope to ride to digital wave and raise awareness for the country’s indigenous music. They strongly believe that more people would now be interested in following Indian music, be it classical, folk or contemporary.

As we wait to see what the future holds, the dynamic music industry is all set to roll its wheels into the online space and experiment with technology to give the best experience to listeners and music-lovers.



Ishita Goel is a New Delhi-based journalist. After a brief stint with the Indian Express, she has been actively writing on disciplines across Indian heritage and current affairs

The use of natural spaces in meditation has been proven to yield major health benefits both physically and spiritually



MIND OVER Matter

Understanding the nuances of the food we eat and how we eat it impacts the end results it has on our body. DJ-turned-restaurateur **Gurmeet Arora** explains how mindful eating is not just a philosophy – It’s a practice that can help us make healthier life choices and lead better lives

Most of us often don't recall everything we have eaten in our last meal. Not just that even while having a meal, most of the time, we do not enjoy the complete process of consuming it. According to a study conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, an international consortium, the average Indian spends only one hour and 27 minutes a day on eating, whereas countries like France spend more than 2 hours on meals per day on an average, proving that Indians rush through their food. Most of us multi-task while eating. Because we're working, driving, reading, watching television, or fiddling with an electronic device, we're not fully aware of what we're eating. This mindless eating

— a lack of awareness of the food we're consuming — slows down the body's metabolism, adds to obesity and leads to severe health issues.

WHAT IS MINDFUL EATING

Mindful eating can be described as maintaining an in-the-moment awareness of the food being consumed. The way we treat our food determines how it will impact us. While the ideal mindful-eating food choices are focussed on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, seeds, nuts, and vegetable oils, one can be mindful about eating unhealthy food as well. By truly

Choosing simpler foods that are easier to digest and makes us feel lighter and helps us to gain control over our cravings

Apart from cleansing the atmosphere and lowering the temperature, greenery around our living spaces can boost productivity and increase learning capabilities



Top: The innovative use of digital technology in agricultural practices has helped farmers innovate ancient and organic practices while catering to popular demand

Bottom: Terrace farming using only organic practices in eastern Sikkim is a perfect example of producing only what is necessary and conserving the soil

paying attention to the food being eaten and how it's affecting the body may reduce the urge to indulge in unhealthy food items.

HOW IT HELPS

Our lifestyle and the food we eat are very closely related. Our day-to-day routines need to change first if we are to make any dietary changes. What we expend and intake has to be considered when making a change in our eating habits.

One aspect which has changed for the better is the switch to

healthier cooking oils to cut down on the trans-fats that we intake (which are harder to digest). Across a rapidly increasing number of kitchens, cooking is now done using lighter oils like Olive and Canola.

Experts say not only can mindful eating improve one's physical well-being and help in maintaining a healthy weight, it can also show a marked improvement in one's mental well-being.

When it comes to traditional food and ancestral practices, we have been 'eating from the plate' rather than 'for the scale'. A simple explanation of this concept is that the plate of food that we eat, even when it may contain dramatically different preparations, has always been constructed keeping balance in mind. The mix of dishes in





Fresh fruit juices, smoothies from seasonal vegetables and locally grown produce like wild berries are a good and immensely healthy snacking alternative

a traditional Indian *thali* can vary across regions but the balance remains intact, be it Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam or Kerala. Our flavours are widespread and so is our balanced diet. This concept has now made its way to contemporary kitchens as well. The idea of watching the plate and not the scale is based on understanding what our body requires.

Mindful eating helps you to make healthier food choices. Only if one is aware and conscious about the ingredients used, the quantity and the time of the meal, will they understand why it produces the desired effects when ingested.

HOW TO PRACTICE IT

Mindfulness takes time to be ingrained as an everyday routine. But many people find that by eating this way, even for just a few meals a week, you can become more attuned to your body. By being attentive to even one meal a day, you can change your dietary habits for the better and enjoy the improved mental and physical well-being that comes with a healthier diet.

But mindfulness is also about the greater good of mankind. In today's age, as we enjoy the luxury of copious food, wastage has become unavoidable. From

In the times to come, mindful practices of eating, working and exercising will be a robust solution for our survival

The basic three



KNOWING YOUR FOOD

More often than not, we tend to forget what has gone into our plate of food. It is important to know and therefore, feel the food we consume. Simply being more aware of what constitutes as our daily meal can go a long way in helping us make more informed culinary decisions and create a balanced diet



A NEW WORK ROUTINE

In today's day and age when time is one of the most important commodities and in short supply, it is important to care for our mental well-being. On very productive days, it is equally important to enjoy a good night's rest to maintain a healthy work-life balance.



ENJOY THE LITTLE THINGS

A major part of mindful living is to realise when to multi-task and when not to. We often accomplish exercise and daily routines as a task. It is necessary to allow enough time to 'play' – be it meditation, listening to soothing music or reading our favourite book.

WELLNESS



Many times, a simple home cooked meal, like the *bhakar pithla* (a dry chickpea porridge) can prove to be a wholesome and delicious treat



Simple dishes made from rice flour like *noolputtu* and *ney pathiri* are popular across southern India due to their benefits

large-scale cultivation, to wasting energy in transporting food items across longer distances and storing them for longer periods of time to large meal portions, food is wasted all around us. Mindfulness of how food is grown, transported, cooked and served can reduce this wastage as well. Mindfulness teaches us to be respectful of food.

I can only think of a *modus operandi* our ancestors used. It was an adaptation to simplicity. Choose simpler foods, easier to digest and lighter to feel. This will empower us to gain control over our cravings and the food choices we make. Once this control is achieved, it will be the beginning of our mindful eating habits.

ADAPTING TO THE TIMES

The idea is to bring back simplicity. Today's fitness has become

Right: The idea promoting zero wastage – ‘Root to stem’ focusses on utilising the complete benefits so as to not miss out on the nutritional aspects of parts that are often discarded

Bottom: Unprocessed foods like whole grains and sprouts are making a comeback. Due to the lack of processing, the nutrients in the grains are delivered whole, without being denatured and adulterated



complicated, just like our food. This has to do with our urgency of losing weight, a desperation to become slim by all means.

Lifestyle changes will need to be incorporated to focus on achieving a healthier, more aware and holistic routine, an eco-system of our own that caters to the needs of our mind, body and soul, and for the benefit of ourselves and society; one that does not endorse over-indulgence. A system that is robust, dependable and durable. Start by taking a few deep breaths before eating a meal or snack to think about what you're about to

put into your body. Recognise when your body is hungry. Don't wait till you are ravenous. Contemplate if you are eating in response to hunger signals or in response to an emotional signal? Similarly, are you eating food that is nutritionally healthy or just emotionally comforting? Even if you have to eat at your work desk, you can take a few moments to focus all your attention on your food, rather than multitasking..

Think of mindful eating like exercise: every little bit counts. The more you can do to slow down, focus solely on the process of eating, and listen to your body, the greater satisfaction you'll experience from your food and the greater control you'll have over your diet and nutrition habits.



Gurmeet Arora, a DJ turned entrepreneur, is helping people across India eat mindfully & intelligently and is the owner of the standalone establishments such as Yazu, Doppio, Tryst and Flax It Up-Healthy living. His mission is to spread awareness about clean and healthy eating which he believes, is the answer to a balanced & happy life.



THE LEGACY OF A trailblazer

Associated with some of the most unconventional roles essayed with remarkable ease, Irrfan Khan rose to fame not only for his ability to deliver stunning performances but his humble demeanor. As untimely death cut short his meteoric rise, we rewind and relook at the Padma Shri recipient actor's career

BY AARTI KAPUR SINGH

Irrfan (the actor dropped his surname as a mark of foregoing religion and lineage), widely recognised as the 'common man's star' he passed away in April, 2020, having battled cancer for almost two years

DoB: January 7, 1967; DoD: April 29, 2020

Everyone knew Irrfan Khan was suffering from a rare variant of cancer, but when he sent out a video message to help promote his last film, *Angrezi Medium*, his fans hoped he would be back to blaze up the silver screen again. But when news of his death came during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was more than just a bolt from the blue. It was as if a wave of collective and simmering grief took over. There was no show, no public mourning, but, the void was certainly palpable. In life, and in death, Irrfan defined dignity. No one knew that it was to be his last appearance on screen, but everyone bowed their head in sombre acceptance.

TRENDSSETTER FOREVER

When his contemporaries in Indian cinema were busy pandering to the whims of the box office and counting millions, Sahibzaade Irfan Ali Khan (his real name) chose to play unconventional and challenging roles in India and abroad. The films he was associated with in Hollywood -- Michael Winterbottom's *A Mighty Heart* (2007), based on the murder of the *Wall Street Journal's* South Asia correspondent Daniel Pearl, in which he starred with Angelina Jolie; Mira Nair's *The Namesake* (2006) and then in 2008 Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* -- catapulted him beyond the Hindi film industry and made sure he was as feted in the festival circuit as well as he was recognised

Left to right: Versatility was Irrfan's trademark skill. The actor as a middle-aged accountant in *The Lunchbox* (2013); a young customs officer in *The Shadows of Time* (2004); a Sikh man living in Punjab post the Partition in *Qissa* (2014) and a wealthy inventor in *The Puzzle* (2018)



“HE STOOD OUT FOR HIS GENEROSITY AS AN ARTIST, WHICH MADE IT A PLEASURE TO WORK IN ANY SCENE WITH HIM. I REMEMBER THE INTENSITY OF HIS COMMITMENT, AND EQUALLY HIS SMILE.”

Actor Angelina Jolie

(in an earlier interview to BBC). She was his co-star in the film *A Mighty Heart*

Not just Hindi Cinema

Irrfan Khan was revered as a brilliant actor not just in India, but across the world for his many performances over the years

- **The Warrior (2001)**: Directed by filmmaker Asif Kapadia
- **The Namesake (2006)**: In a leading role with Indian actress Tabu
- **The Darjeeling Limited (2007)**: Co-starring Owen Wilson, Adrien Brody, Jason Schwartzman
- **Slumdog Millionaire (2008)**: The multi-award winning film directed by Danny Boyle starring Dev Patel and Freida Pinto
- **New York, I Love You (2009)**: Directed by Mira Nair and co-starring Natalie Portman.
- **The Amazing Spider-Man (2012)**: Along with Andrew Garfield and Emma Stone
- **Life of Pi (2012)**: As the defacto narrator of Pi's story
- **Jurassic World (2015)**: With Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard
- **Inferno (2016)**: With Tom Hanks in this Dan Brown adaptation
- **Puzzle (2018)**: With Kelly Macdonald

Irrfan Khan posing with children under the *Paathshala* initiative that supports the education of underprivileged children

in the world of commercial cinema. Well-known to both Indian and international audiences, he had been protean on-screen, playing a variety of characters with finesse, be it a police inspector in *Slumdog Millionaire*, scientist Rajit Ratha in *The Amazing Spider-Man* or the grown up Pi Patel in *Life of Pi*.

He received the Padma Shri in 2011, India's fourth-highest civilian award. In truth, few actors can claim to have mastered multiple genres as well as Irrfan did. In an obituary, BBC hailed him as "the most successful Indian actor to perform in a Hollywood film."

A veteran of nearly 80 films, not many know that he almost gave up acting in his 30s - after an unrewarding decade in TV soaps. His ultimate aim was to make his mother, who passed away just about a week before he did, happy. "I often

imagined giving my mother this big suitcase crammed with currency notes - like gangsters do. It shouldn't be a surprise I opted for dubious means," the actor had laughed in an earlier interview.

After completing his training from National School of Drama in 1987, Khan moved to Mumbai, where he acted in various TV serials. This stint on television and sporadic appearances on stage kept him above water during his struggling days. It was at drama school that he also met his future wife - writer Sutapa Sikdar. "He was always focused. I remember when he would come home, he would head straight to the bedroom, sit on the floor, and read books. The rest of us would be hanging around gossiping," she recalls.

Known for his amazing versatility there is not a role that Irrfan could not play with style. But he never





Clockwise from left:
A mural of the late actor painted by his fans in Mumbai in May, 2020; Irrfan and Kelly Macdonald from *The Puzzle* enjoy a light moment with the crew of *The Hollywood Reporter*; The actor with English superstar Sir Patrick Stewart during the 2017 Dubai International Film Festival

distinguished between commercial and parallel cinema. Maybe a reason why despite having tasted success in Bollywood, he kept venturing to Hollywood for challenging projects.

A LEAGUE OF HIS OWN

Irrfan was pining to be on the big screen. His big break was a rather small role - almost a cameo - in Mira Nair's acclaimed *Salaam Bombay* in 1988. After a decade of hundreds of uninspiring roles and numerous unsuccessful movies, things changed when London-based Asif Kapadia offered him the lead in *The Warrior*, which was shot in Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan. In 2001 the movie was screened and appreciated in several film festivals, making Irrfan Khan a known face, the world over.

THE FINALITY

According to Irrfan, he wanted to do films that leave a longer impact,

which spoke to him and which kept coming back even after the end scene. He said he preferred movies that built a longer relationship with the audience. The brilliant actor had once said, "I am content and happy as a soul who's in search of excellence and, who still hasn't made peace with his existence and the mystery of life". It was probably this very idea that constantly motivated Irrfan to outperform himself with every role. His brilliance had no parallel in contemporary Indian cinema. Irrfan's untimely demise has left a large void and true lovers of cinema are bound to miss the cinematic genius of the actor's mastercraft forever.



Aarti is an independent writer with close to two decades' experience in various media. After securing a doctorate in film studies, she is now indulging in her passion to discover the world. She writes on food, luxury, films, travel, wellness and celebrities.



LARGER THAN life

With mesmerising performances, meaningful characters, unforgettable charm and a penchant for speaking his mind, Rishi Kapoor was one of the icons of Hindi cinema. **Aarti Kapur Singh** looks back at the man and his illustrious career

Rishi Kapoor had once described himself as a “hyphen between a famous father, and a famous son”.

Debuting on the silver screen at the age of two in one of his grandfather, Prithviraj Kapoor’s plays, all baby *Chintu* (Kapoor’s pet name) had to do was sleep on a cot. Later, as a toddler, Kapoor made an appearance in the song “*Pyar Hua Ikrar Hua*” from his father Raj Kapoor’s 1955 film *Shree 420*. But even then, the young Kapoor was not interested in joining the film

The enigmatic Rishi Kapoor, who passed away in April after a two-year long battle with cancer

DoB: September 4, 1952; DoD: April 30, 2020

industry. “Despite the family legacy, and very much like my father in his early years, I didn’t grow up yearning to join the family business,” he wrote in his biography *Khullam Khulla: Rishi Kapoor Uncensored*. When Kapoor was 16 years old, his father cast him in the movie *Mera Naam Joker* and he started enjoying the process of film-making. No wonder, he got the National Award (for best child artist) for his role.

He became a youth icon overnight with his debut film, *Bobby* (1970). Before the movie came out, heroes in their mid-thirties would play romantic leads. *Bobby* told the story of teenage love. And Kapoor, with his boyish charm, fitted the role perfectly. Interestingly, though he was the director’s son and a National

Award-winning actor, the movie was anchored around its female lead, Bobby! “For my father, the story came first. Then, family,” Kapoor often said.

Within a couple of years, he was the poster boy for romance. In a tribute to the actor in the *Time* magazine, actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas, says: “From his first leading role in 1973’s *Bobby*, he was the keeper of our hearts, ushering in a new era of romance in Hindi movies. He was a hero who could feel without being maudlin. He was mischievous, rebellious, passionate—and he made falling in love seem so easy.” Kapoor’s romance, as Priyanka says, “had all the passion of a Shakespearean hero with a generous dollop of innocence added in.”

Tribute to the silver screen

Some of the most famous and iconic roles played by Rishi Kapoor

- ***Bobby* (1973):** As Raja, the son of a rich Hindu businessman who falls in love with a catholic girl.
- ***Amar Akbar Anthony* (1977):** As Akbar, one of three brothers who were separated as children.
- ***Aap Ke Deewane* (1980):** As Ram, a young man disguised as an aged tutor.
- ***Do Dooni Chaar* (2010):** As Santosh Duggal who is intent on raising his family’s standard of living.
- ***Agneepath* (2012):** As Rauf Lala, an eccentric and dangerous kingpin in the Bombay underworld.
- ***Kapoor and Sons* (2016):** As Amarjeet Kapoor, an ailing grandfather who wants to reunite his family.
- ***Mulk* (2018):** As Murad Ali Mohammed, a man wrongfully accused of having ties with extremist groups.
- ***102 not out* (2018):** As Babulal, the 75-year-old son living with his 102-year-old father



Left to right: Actors Vinod Khanna, Rishi Kapoor and Amitabh Bachchan in still from the iconic hit *Amar Akbar Anthony* (1977)

PERSONALITY

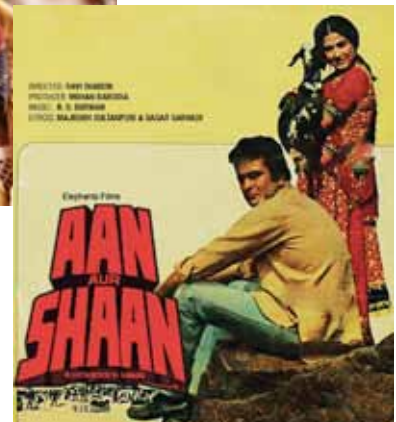
Rishi Kapoor had one of the longest careers in Bollywood as a romantic lead from the 1970s to the late 1990s. “There is an image of me from the 1970s or ‘80s as a romantic star, a jersey-clad, tune-humming, careless casanova, with a guitar in one hand and a girl in another,” Kapoor wrote in his book. Indian cinemas of the ‘70s and ‘80s, when Kapoor reigned, was all about youthful love, peppy music and dance, flamboyant style and zest for life. And the actor represented all that and more. Film journalist Dinesh Raheja described

him as a “male kitsch fashion plate of the ‘70s”.

THE SECOND INNINGS

As the times changed, people’s choices altered, and Kapoor faded from the screen; his last success being *Chandni*, (1989), when he was already in his late-30s. And just when audiences had forgotten him, he returned with *Luck by Chance* (2009) as boastful film producer Rommy Rolly and wooed the nation with his witty deliveries. The next year he was back again in Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra’s *Delhi 6* with

Rishi Kapoor, over the last decade has appeared in many versatile roles and characters ranging from a middle-aged family man to a fierce underworld kingpin



Rishi Kapoor may have been known for his blunt candour on Twitter, but he was affably warm and hospitable as well



Right: Rishi Kapoor with wife Neetu Kapoor and son Ranbir Kapoor

Above: The actor releasing his autobiography at the Jaipur Literature Festival in 2017

Abhishek Bachchan and Sonam Kapoor. The audience couldn't get enough of this new Rishi Kapoor: mature, powerful and varied in his choices of roles. "I am having more fun now than in the first 25 years of my career. I used to be the leading man, singing songs and wooing leading ladies, dancing and running around trees. Now I am enjoying myself. I am experimenting with roles and discovering the actor within me," he had said in an interview in 2012. Films like *Do Dooni Chaar*, *Housefull 2*, *Shuddh Desi Romance*, *102 Not Out* (reuniting with his old mate Amitabh Bachchan), *Kapoor and Sons* and *Mulk* followed, winning him fans and accolades. During this

time, he debuted on social media, a space he ruled with his mix of funny, charming, controversial and honest posts – a lot like himself – entertaining his followers. He was an entertainer till his last leg, as even the doctors treating him would say. Kapoor was an actor who reinvented the wheel several times in his career, experimenting and winning, proving that good actors just become better as they age!



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THE BATTLE FOR humanity

With the number of cases infected with COVID-19 rising, the medical and essential services across the country have come under immense strain. Here are a few glimpses from across India portraying how a grateful nation has been appreciating its frontline warriors in the fight against the pandemic since March 2020



A candle light display at the Red Fort organised by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) ahead of the World Heritage Day on April 18, in solidarity with medical personnel fighting the COVID-19 pandemic



Top: People from all walks of life gather in Puri to sing “*Bande Utkala Janani*,” Odisha’s unofficial state song to motivate coronavirus warriors on May 30, 2020



Bottom: Medical professionals assemble as an IAF chopper approaches to shower flower petals over the Patna AIIMS on May 3, to thank them for their fight against coronavirus at the frontlines

SNAPSHOTS



Top: The representatives of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force paying homage to martyrs at the National Police Memorial, as part of the 'Armed Forces Salute Corona Warriors' initiative, in New Delhi on May 3

Bottom: Army personnel salute doctors and medical staff in Amritsar, Punjab for their services during the pandemic on May 3

Indian Army bands played jovial tunes, several aircraft of the Indian Air Force conducted fly-pasts over prominent locations and several ships of the Indian Navy were illuminated as part of the 'India Salutes Corona Warriors' campaign



An Army band plays to thank medical staff for their services during the coronavirus pandemic in New Delhi on May 3

SNAPSHOTS

Top: Artists paint a mural dedicated to police forces to thank them for braving immense risks during the nationwide lockdown in Mumbai, Maharashtra

Bottom: Women in New Delhi making noise with household utensils in response to an appeal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to mark solidarity with health officials and essential workers on March 22





Top: A motorist drives past a wall mural painted to thank frontline workers fighting against the spread of COVID-19 in Mumbai



Bottom: Doctors and medical staff dance as an Army band plays at a quarantine centre to pay tribute to those involved in the fight against COVID-19 in Amritsar, Punjab

SNAPSHOTS

Indians have showed solidarity with its frontline Corona warriors on multiple occasions – be it with sound of claps on March 22, by lighting lamps and candles on April 5 or the armed forces saluting them on May 3



Police personnel perform motivational songs to motivate Coronavirus warriors in Bhubaneswar, Odisha on May 30



Bottom: Responding to the call by PM Modi, people switch off lights of their homes and light up lamps, candles, mobile flashlights to display the nation's collective spirit to defeat Coronavirus during the nationwide lockdown on April 5

Bottom: Crew of INS Jalashwa of the Indian Navy spell 'Thank You' for the efforts of India's frontline corona warriors as part of the 'Armed Forces Salute Corona Warriors' initiative on May 3



SNAPSHOTS

Three aircraft of the Indian Air Force fly over the India Gate to express gratitude towards all frontline workers, including medical professionals, police and sanitation workers for their contribution in the fight against COVID-19 on May 3





Top: An Indian Navy helicopter drops rose petals on INHS Asvini (Indian Naval Hospital Ship) staff to pay tribute to frontline medical workers

Bottom: A member of the Military Nursing Services salutes a senior before getting felicitated for her services during a thanksgiving ceremony at Army Base Hospital, New Delhi



THE MUCH NEEDED check-in

Even as travel stays restricted due to the COVID-19 lockdown, the hospitality industry has been on the frontline of the war against the pandemic, be it doubling up as quarantine facilities or providing meals to the needy. **Aarti Kapur Singh** and **Devashish Vaid** take stock of the new role of hotels



Overseas medical students of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, leaving a hotel in Srinagar after 14 days of mandatory quarantine on their return journey to the country

The Novel Coronavirus has highlighted how caring for others is all that matters. While travel, tourism and hospitality sector took the first and perhaps the hardest hit of the pandemic's economic impact, even the deadly virus couldn't keep the industry's spirits down. Several hotels - both chains and standalone properties - have proven to be critical support for guests and emergency service providers, highlighting that quality service and comfort of guests always remains at the very core of hospitality.

SWITCHING FUCTIONALITIES

Many hotels are supporting the fight against COVID-19 by turning the properties into quarantine facilities in addition to accommodating



Image: theleela.com

stranded travellers. Some hotels have even converted rooms into isolated workstations for individuals and corporates. Nearly 50,000 hotel rooms across the country belonging to chains such as ITC, Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), the Lalit,



Image: cntraveller.in

Top: The kitchen and hospitality staff of the Leela hotels loading hygienically prepared food for frontline workers

Bottom: Kitchen staff at the Oberoi group of hotels packing meals for frontline corona warriors

Dhabas to the rescue

Dhabas or roadside eateries are known for their authentic Indian flavours with the perfect *desi* ambience. Especially on a highway, *Dhabas* remain an oasis for the journey-worn travellers.

GS Chani, cultural activist and theatre-person says, “The very origin of *dhabas* was perhaps in the crisis of India’s partition before the country’s independence in 1947. That was the first time people, especially in the Punjab and other parts of north India understood, realised and empathised with the pain of hunger. It is not surprising at all for me that even during this crisis, the *dhaba* owners have opened their homes and hearths to those in need.”

But in the times of the pandemic that had many scrambling for shelter, the *dhabas* across highways of India became more than just roadside pit stops. They were veritable shelters for numerous migrant labourers and those with vehicular transport traversing the long journey home.

Several eateries on the Chandigarh-Delhi Highway served free meals to travellers heading home and even provided night shelter to many.

Lemon Tree, Sarovar Group, Radisson Hotels, InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) and many others have been set aside for quarantining suspected patients, asymptomatic travellers, or for accommodating medical staff battling the COVID-19 outbreak. As India launched the Vande Bharat Mission, a repatriation exercise to bring back nationals stuck across the world, several hotels were chosen to offer facilities for quarantining these travellers. In Delhi, properties included the Taj Palace Hotel, Shangri-La’s Eros Hotel, Le Meridien in addition to Hotel chains such as Lemon Tree, Accor and Radisson Hotels that have been offering quarantining services for asymptomatic people during the lockdown. IHCL’s budget chain Ginger hotels in locations

such as Bhubaneswar, Faridabad and Bengaluru are providing rooms for quarantining people. Ginger hotels in Mumbai and Noida have been turned into isolation centres for medical workers. Vice-president of the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) Gurbaxish Kohli, said: “The hospitality industry and its entrepreneurs have opened their doors to support the people and the central, state and local authorities to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Hotel chains have also been providing meals to those who are battling the pandemic at the frontline - medical staff, police personnel, government officials and many others.

Hotels have also been instructed to assist hospitals with the increase in



A police personnel walks out through the main gate of Surya Hotel in New Delhi on June 16, 2020, following Delhi’s High Court ruling to allow the use of Hotel Surya as a treatment centre for COVID-19 patients

We are all hoping for a way towards building ourselves back. Till then, it is the hospitality industry, working round the clock, that is being the unsung warrior



A hotel staffer cleans a room for people who need to undergo 14 days quarantine after returning to the state, as a preventive measure against COVID-19, in Siliguri, West Bengal

influx of the patients. Recently, The Taj Mansingh hotel, was instructed to assist the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in New Delhi with the treatment of COVID-19 patients. The hotel will have the responsibility of providing rooms and food to the patients and will also be in charge of the housekeeping duties.

Speaking about the community service, Vijay Dewan, MD, AS Park Hotels, said, “In Kolkata, we are working with the state government and have assigned 20 rooms for health practitioners and medical staff battling the COVID-19 outbreak. Some of our hotels are operational and we are ensuring our best to do whatever we can to keep everyone safe.”

Shwetank Singh, VP, Development and Asset Management, InterGlobe

Hotels said, “In New Delhi, we are providing full support and assistance to the government in its efforts to control the outbreak. At present, we have reserved 149 rooms across three dedicated floors for guests who have been instructed by authorities to undergo self-quarantine after returning from international destinations. We are also coordinating with the concerned embassies and have offered our services to international travellers who are stranded in India.”

Speaking about the initiatives undertaken by the Sarovar Group, Ajay Bakaya, MD, Sarovar Hotels & Resorts, says, “We started the ‘Thinking Of You and Caring For You’ initiative with an aim to contribute to those who are distressed. In Bhavnagar, Gujarat, we are

SUCCESS



Top: Police personnel clap to keep spirits high as people leave for their homes after completing 14-days of quarantine at a hotel during the nationwide lockdown

Bottom: Hospitality staff from the Roseate group getting ready to distribute hygienically prepared meals to people in need with the help of security personnel in New Delhi

In the times of the pandemic and nationwide lockdown, eateries across highways of India have been providing shelter and food to weary travellers heading home

distributing cooked packed food among the needy. In Chandigarh we are distributing food through the Deputy Commissioner's office. In Mumbai we are collaborating with the local authorities to prepare and distribute packed meals. Our hotels in Rajkot, Haridwar, Amritsar and Pune are also serving cooked food to daily wagers, policemen, and employees at hospitals."

Kush Kapoor, CEO – Roseate Hotels & Resorts adds, "It is also imperative as a leading luxury brand, being a part of the ecosystem to offer assistance to one another in demanding times like these. We support the move and are also actively doing community work in enabling food distribution safely and hygienically."

ADVERSE IMPACT

The pandemic has severely affected the hospitality industry. With global travel severely curtailed, hotel occupancies have diminished and cash flows have become a major



Top: Indian police personnel wear facemasks as a preventive measure against the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak outside a hotel in Amritsar, Punjab

Bottom: Frontline medical workers test people for COVID-19 at the Olive Hotel in New Delhi



will focus heavily on local and domestic market to start with. The hospitality and tourism segment are expected to see an upsurge in demand from domestic travellers post the containment of virus.” Dewan added. “To reinforce greater care and ensuring a safe environment for our guests, we successfully launched a program with enhanced standard operating procedures to leave no stone unturned when it comes to touchless guest stay, dining or delivery services.” adds Kapoor. Until the hotels resume their normal day-to-day operations, the use of properties as quarantine facilities and shelters for medical staff is greatly helping the authorities in the efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 in India.

challenge for the industry. Most hotel chains are looking forward to the return of normalcy. Industry reports predict an 80 per cent fall in revenue compared to 2019. The sector is still coming to terms with low room demand and uncertain future bookings as the hotels are unable to secure any future business.

BOUNCING BACK

Given the government initiatives to promote domestic and local products and services, even hoteliers are pinning their hopes on domestic travel. “We



Devashish is an avid traveler and a storyteller who loves sharing snippets, flavours and sights from his journeys, undertaken mostly by road. His idea of travel revolves around first hand experiences with people and the real flavour of a destination.

OF, BY AND FOR the people

For several decades, the Padma Awards, India's highest civilian honours, have been recognising deserving men and women. Three years ago, the government tweaked the nomination process for the awards, encouraging citizens of the country to nominate unsung heroes who have dedicated themselves in service of the society

BY SHRABASTI MALIK

For residents of Bolpur, a city on the outskirts of Kolkata in West Bengal, Dr Sushovan Banerjee is known as the “*ek takar daktar*” (one rupee doctor). For the past 47 years, he has been treating patients for a nominal fee of INR 1! Similarly inspiring is the story of Dr Tsering Landol. Hailed as the first gynaecologist of Ladakh, she is credited with providing expert medical care for one-fifth of the region's deliveries and improving the healthcare system of Leh's SN Memorial Hospital, the medical

institution she was associated with for over two decades till 2003, when her official service matured. But, she continues to conduct weekly voluntary clinics at the Ladakh Heart Foundation.

These are just two of the 141 individuals, who were conferred with the Padma Awards, one of India's highest civilian honours for exceptional and distinguished service, presented by the Indian governments, in 2020.

The awards (in order) - Padma Vibhushan (for exceptional and distinguished service), Padma Bhushan (distinguished service of higher

Left to right: President Ram Nath Kovind presenting the Padma Shri award (2019) to Jagdish Prasad Pareek, from Sikar, Rajasthan for his dedicated efforts towards organic farming, animal husbandry, and rainwater harvesting; The President presenting the Padma Shri award to Dr S Jaishankar (now the External Affairs Minister of India) at the Civil Investiture Ceremony, March 11, 2019 for his distinguished service



order) and Padma Shri (distinguished service) - are announced on Republic Day (January 26), every year and are bestowed upon a few months later at the Civil Investiture Ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. This year, the government had also held a quiz based on the lives of India's heroes with which came the opportunity to witness the Padma Awards ceremony in New Delhi. The ceremony however, was deferred to April 3 and has now been postponed in light of the Coronavirus outbreak in the country.

NOMINATION PROCEDURE

The Padma Awards were instituted by the Government of India in 1954 along with the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honour. Since then till about three years ago, the recommendations were made by

“**THE NEW STATISTIC REVEALS THE FAITH OF EVERY ONE OF US AND TELLS US THAT THE PADMA AWARDS HAVE NOW BECOME THE PEOPLES' AWARDS**”

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

the Padma Awards Committee, which was annually constituted by the Prime Minister. Now, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the nomination process has been opened up to the public and even invites self-nominations. This paradigm-shifting decision was declared by PM Modi in his official tweet dated August 17, 2017: “Remember how Padma Awards were given earlier? We brought in a ‘small’ change – people can recommend names for awards, unlike the past.”



Padma Vibhushan

(For exceptional and distinguished service)

- 1) **Sushma Swaraj**
(Posthumous), Delhi (Public Affairs)
- 3) **Arun Jaitley** (Posthumous),
Delhi (Public Affairs)
- 3) **MC Mary Kom**, Manipur
(Sports)
- 4) **Vishveshateertha Swamiji**
Sri Pejavara Adhokhaja
Matha Udupi (Posthumous),
Karnataka (Others-
Spiritualism)
- 5) **George Fernandes**
(Posthumous), Bihar (Public
Affairs)
- 6) **Chhannulal Mishra**, Uttar
Pradesh (Art)
- 7) **Sir Anerood Jugnauth** GCSK,
Mauritius (Public Affairs)

Padma Shri (Distinguished service)

Guru Shashadhar Acharya , Jharkhand (Art)	Dr Raman Gangakhedkar , Maharashtra (Science and Engineering)	MK Kunjol , Kerala (Social Work)	Radhammohan and Sabarmatee (Duo)*, Odisha (Others-Agriculture)
Dr Yogi Aeron , Uttarakhand (Medicine)	Barry Gardiner , the UK (Public Affairs)	Manmohan Mahapatra (Posthumous), Odish (Art)	Batakrushna Sahoo , Odisha (Others-Animal Husbandry)
Jai Prakash Agarwal , Delhi (Trade and Industry)	Chewang Motup Goba , Ladakh (Trade and Industry)	Ustad Anwar Khan Mangniyar , Rajasthan (Art)	Trinity Saioo , Meghalaya (Others-Agriculture)
Jagdish Lal Ahuja , Punjab (Social Work)	Bharat Goenka , Karanataka (Trade and Industry)	Kattungal Subramaniam Manilal , Kerala (Science and Engineering)	Adnan Sami , Maharashtra (Art)
Kazi Masum Akhtar , West Bengal (Literature and Education)	Yadla Gopalrao , Andhra Pradesh (Art)	Munna Master , Rajasthan (Art)	Vijay Sankeshwar , Karnataka (Trade and Industry)
Gloria Arieira , Brazil (Literature and Education)	Mitrabhanu Gountia , Odisha (Art)	Prof. Abhiraj Rajendra Mishra , Himachal Pradesh (Literature and Education)	Dr Kushal Konwar Sarma , Assam (Medicine)
Khan Zaheer Khan Bakhtiyarkhan , Maharashtra (Sports)	Tulasi Gowda , Karnataka (Social Work)	Binapani Mohanty , Odisha (Literature)	Sayed Mehboob Shah Qadri , Maharashtra (Social Work)
Dr Padmavathy Bandopadhyay , Uttar Pradesh (Medicine)	Sujoy K Guha , Bihar (Science and Engineering)	Dr Arunoday Mondal , West Bengal (Medicine)	Mohammed Sharif , Uttar Pradesh (Social Work)
Dr Sushovan Banerjee , West Bengal (Medicine)	Harekala Hajabba , Karnataka (Social Work)	Dr Prithwindra Mukherjee , France (Literature and Education)	Shyam Sunder Sharma , Bihar (Art)
Dr Digambar Behera , Chandigarh (Medicine)	Enamul Haque , Bangladesh (Others-Archaeology)	Sathyanarayan Mundayoor , Arunachal Pradesh (Social Work)	Dr Gurdip Singh , Guujarat (Medicine)
Dr Damayanti Beshra , Odisha (Literature and Education)	Madhu Mansuri Hasmukh , Jharkhand (Art)	Manilal Nag , West Bengal (Art)	Ramjee Singh , Bihar (Social Work)
Pawar Popatrao Bhaguji , Maharashtra (Social Work)	Abdul Jabbar (Posthumous), Madhya Pradesh (Social Work)	N Chandrasekharan Nair , Kerala (Literature and Education)	Vashishtha Narayan Singh (Posthumous), Bihar (Science and Engineering)
Himmata Ram Bhambhu , Rajasthan (Social Work)	Bimal Kumar Jain , Bihar (Social Work)	Dr Tetsu Nakamura (Posthumous), Afghanistan (Social Work)	Daya Prakash Sinha , Uttar Pradesh (Art)
Sanjeev Bikhchandani , Uttar Pradesh (Trade and Industry)	Meenakshi Jain , Delhi (Literature and Education)	Shiv Datt Nirmohi , Jammu & Kashmir (Literature and Education)	Dr Sandra Desa Souza , Maharashtra (Medicine)
Gafurbhai M Bilakhia , Gujarat (Trade and Industry)	Nemnath Jain , Madhya Pradesh (Trade and Industry)	Pu Lalbiakthanga Pachuau , Mizoram (Literature and Education-Journalism)	Vijayasarithi Sribhashyam , Telangana (Literature and Education)
Bob Blackman , UK (Public Affairs)	Shanti Jain , Bihar (Art)	Moozhikkal Pankajakshi , Kerala (Art)	Kalee Shabi Mahaboob and Sheik Mahaboob Subani (Duo)*, Tamil Nadu (Art)
Indira PP Bora , Assa, (Art)	Sudhir Jain , Gujarat (Science and Engineering)	Dr Prasanta Kumar Pattanaik , the US (Literature and Education)	Javed Ahmad Tak , Jammu & Kashmir (Social Work)
Madan Singh Chauhan , Chhattisgarh (Art)	Benichandra Jamatia , Tripura (Literature and Education)	Jogendra Nath Phukan , Assam (Literature and Education)	Pradeep Thalappil , Tamil Nadu (Science and Engineering)
Usha Chaumar , Rajasthan (Social Work)	KV Sampath Kumar and Vidushi Jayalakshmi KS (Duo)*, Karnataka (Literature and Education-Journalism)	Rahibai Soma Popere , Maharashtra (Others-Agriculture)	Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi , Arunachal Pradesh (Literature and Education)
Lil Bahadur Chettri , Assam (Literature and Education)	Karan Johar , Maharashtra (Art)	Yogesh Praveen , Uttar Pradesh (Literature and Education)	Robert Thurman , the US (Literature and Education)
Lalitha and Saroja Chidambaram (Duo)*, Tamil Nadu (Art)	Dr Leela Joshi , Madhya Pradesh (Medicine)	Jitu Rai , Uttar Pradesh (Sports)	Agus Indra Udayana , Indonesia (Social Work)
Dr Vajira Chitrasena , Sri Lanka (Art)	Sarita Joshi , Maharashtra (Art)	Tarundeep Rai , Sikkim (Sports)	Harish Chandra Verma , Uttar Pradesh (Science and Engineering)
Dr Purushottam Dadheech , Madhya Pradesh (Art)	C Kamlova , Mizoram (Literature and Education)	S Ramakrishnan , Tamil Nadu (Social Work)	Sundaram Verma , Rajasthan (Social Work)
Utsav Charan Das , Odisha (Art)	Dr Ravi Kannan R , Assam (Medicine)	Rani Rampal , Haryana (Sports)	Dr Romesh Tekchand Wadhvani , the US (Trade and Industry)
Prof. Indra Dassanayake (Posthumous), Sri Lanka (Literature and Education)	Ekta Kapoor , Maharashtra (Art)	Kangana Ranaut , Maharashtra (Art)	Suresh Wadkar , Maharashtra (Art)
HM Desai , Gujarat (Literature and Education)	Yazdi Naoshirwan Karanjia , Gujarat (Art)	Dalavai Chalapathi Rao , Andhra Pradesh (Art) Andhra Pradesh	Prem Watsa , Canada (Trade and Industry)
Manohar Devadoss , Tamil Nadu (Art)	Narayan J Joshi Karayal , Gujarat (Literature and Education)	Shahbuddin Rathod , Gujarat (Literature and Education)	
Oinam Bemben Devi , Manipur (Sports)	Dr Narindar Nath Khanna , Uttar Pradesh (Medicine)	Kalyan Singh Rawat , Uttarakhand (Social Work)	
Lia Diskin , Brazil (Social Work)	Naveen Khanna , Delhi (Science and Engineering)	Chintala Venkat Reddy , Telangana (Others-Agriculture)	
MP Ganesh , Karnataka (Sports)	SP Kothari , the US (Literature and Education)	Dr Shanti Roy , Bihar (Medicine)	
Dr Bangalore Gangadhar , Karataka (Medicine)	VK Munusamy Krishnapakthar , Puducherry (Art)		

Note: *In duo case, the award is considered as one

Such has been the overwhelming response that in his monthly address to the nation on January this year, the Prime Minister had mentioned that over 46,000 nominations were received for 2020, which is more than 20 times the number received in 2014. “The entire process [of the Padma Awards] is now completed online. Earlier, the decision was taken by a

select few. Now, it’s completely people driven,” he had said.

UNSUNG HEROES

One of the biggest successes of opening the nomination process to the people is the due recognition received by a number of unsung heroes, who have silently dedicated their lives to the betterment of society. According

to the Prime Minister, many of this years’ Padma awardees are those who have risen from the bottom of the pyramid through dint of their hard work. “They have overcome limitations of resources and a terrible atmosphere of despair around them and forged ahead,” he had pointed out. In 2020, the awards recognised the efforts of Moozhikkal Pankajakshi from Kerala,



Padma Bhushan

(Distinguished service of higher order)

- 1) **Krishnammal Jagannathan**, Tamil Nadu (Social Work)
- 2) **Balkrishna Doshi**, Gujarat (Others-Architecture)
- 3) **Anand Mahindra**, Maharashtra (Trade and Industry)
- 4) **M Mumtaz Ali (Sri M)**, Kerala (Others-Spiritualism)
- 5) **Neelakanta Ramakrishna Madhava Menon** (Posthumous), Kerala (Public Affairs)
- 6) **Venu Srinivasan**, Tamil Nadu (Trade and Industry)
- 7) **Manoj Das**, Puducherry (Literature and Education)
- 8) **Prof. Jagdish Sheth**, USA (Literature and Education)
- 9) **Anil Prakash Joshi**, Uttarakhand (Social Work)
- 10) **Syed Muazzem Ali** (Posthumous), Bangladesh (Public Affairs)
- 11) **Dr Tsering Landoi**, Ladakh (Medicine)
- 12) **Ajoy Chakravorty**, West Bengal (Art)
- 13) **Manohar Gopalkrishna Prabhu Parrikar** (Posthumous), Goa (Public Affairs)
- 14) **SC Jamir**, Nagaland (Public Affairs)
- 15) **Muzaffar Hussain Baig**, Jammu & Kashmir (Public Affairs)
- 16) **PV Sindhu**, Telangana (Sports)

Jagdish Lal Ahuja from Punjab and Usha Chaumar of Rajasthan, to name a few. Pankajakshi is said to be one of the last practitioners of *nokkuvidya pavaka*, a dying art of Kerala's traditional puppet theatre. Lovingly called *langar baba*, 84-year-old Ahuja was a self-made millionaire, who sold everything and has dedicated his life to serving free food to the poor for the last two decades. From a manual scavenger to president of Sulabh International, Chaumar's story is one of grit, resilience and empowerment. Their efforts have all been recognised with a Padma Shri. There are countless more like these three.

Along with such silent harbingers of change, a few distinguished personalities who have been honoured with the award include the likes of former External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj (posthumous - Padma Vibhushan), boxing legend MC Mary Kom (Padma Vibhushan), classical vocalist Ajoy Chakravorty (Padma Bhushan) and Bollywood director Karan Johar (Padma Shri).



A graduate of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, she has worked with MYCityLinks, a Bhubaneswar-based tabloid and The Pioneer newspaper. She enjoys music, is a bibliophile and loves to write about her travels, on music and any subject that intrigues her.

INDIAN IMPRESSIONS

Know India a little more with these interesting facts



External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar launching India's priorities for its candidature for the UNSC (2021-22) on June 5, 2020

INDIA AT UNSC FOR THE 8TH TIME

After a thumping victory with 184 votes cast in its favour against a total of 192, India was elected to a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the eighth time. The term (2021-22) will see India hold the rotational presidency of the 15-member assembly in August 2021. India's candidature was endorsed unopposed by all member states of the Asia-Pacific region. The UNSC has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

SHOPS WITHOUT KEEPERS

Across India's Northeast, an age-old custom has become a pioneer when it comes to effective social distancing – shops without keepers! In the mountainous regions of Northeast India, sometimes transportation becomes very expensive. To avoid unnecessary costs, farmers in Mizoram started leaving fresh agricultural produce along with a price list and soon enough, these unmanned shops became a trend propagated by trust. The owners would collect the day's earnings in full, each evening. The trend has spread to other states in the region as well!



A man leaves payment at one of the keeper-less shops in Mizoram

Image: newsw.in

GUJARAT'S LION NUMBERS GROW

In a major highlight of the full-moon measure (a precursor to the Lion Census 2020 which has been postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic), a 29 per cent increase has been noted in the population of tigers in Gujarat. The number of Asiatic lions have risen from a mere 177 in 1968 to over 670 in the recent count. A recent outbreak of Canine Distemper Virus (CDV), which had wiped out almost 90 per cent of the lion population in Africa, has also been successfully contained in Gujarat. The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, had himself intervened to bring a large number of vaccines from the US for the treatment of CDV.





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04 Step

Click on "Register Grievances" link to fill details of your grievances.

05 Step

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