

October 2020

Thinklet

Alumni issue



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Editorial Coordinator's Desk



Dr. Vibhavari Kumar

Dr. Vibhavari Kumar is currently Professor in Dept. of Fashion Communication and Chairperson, Dept. of Foundation Programme at NIFT. After having taught and free-lanced in architecture for a decade, she moved over to design teaching at NIFT where she is also researching in Human Psyche and Emotional Design.

Social empowerment is enabling a sense of autonomy and self-confidence, and acting individually and collectively to change social relationships and the institutions and discourses that exclude poor people and keep them in poverty.

Self-help groups, NGO's and individuals have played a critical role in holding the fort during the social crisis created by COVID-19. They already serve as community resources in health, farming and nutrition programmes and have generated enormous social capital which has leveraged to design effective responses to the pandemic. More often there were women communities that joined hands to produce masks and provide food to the migrant labourers and daily wage workers. Many women leaders reached out to the slums, created awareness and educated them of use of masks and proper sanitization through washing their hands frequently. They also used the artisans' work force to produce masks for personal and commercial use, thereby helping them become the bread earners for their family.

In the midst of pandemic, selected alumni were approached to be the editorial guests for the October issue. The team first met in the last week of August and has been on it's toes from deciding the theme to collating the thoughts. Several brainstorming sessions were held to weave the notions of social empowerment from various perspectives and domains: Sciences to Management and Languages to Cultural Studies. Besides alumni across disciplines, this issue also showcases a photo feature titled SociaLens by Mr. Karthik Mulakaluri. He is an award winning photographer on a mission to enable street children with a million reasons to smile.



Editorial team



Dr. Smitha Sarma Ranganathan

Dr. Smitha Sarma Ranganathan currently teaches Digital Strategy and Contemporary Marketing at S P Jain School of Global Management in Mumbai, Singapore, Dubai and Sydney. She has over 19 years of experience as an advertising and brand communication professional, is honorary marketing advisor with NABARD, Ministry of Textiles and also runs an All-Womens' social enterprise patronizing the Indian Handloom sector.

Dr. Sivaramakrishnan R. Guruvayur

Dr. Sivaramakrishnan R. Guruvayur has over 23 years of BFSI IT progressive experience predominantly in Banking Products domain, Enterprise Risk & Compliance, Data Sciences, AI & ML. He holds a Ph.D in Machine Learning/AI from JAIN (Deemed-to-be) University and is also an alumnus of BITS Pilani and IIMB.



Dr. Titus Matthew

Dr. Titus Matthew gained his Ph.D in Microbiology from JAIN (Deemed-to-be) University and is currently Principal Lecturer with College of Education, Minna, Nigeria. He has 17 years of experience lecturing in Biology and his areas of interest include teaching, mentoring youth, community development and politics.

Dr. Rajeshwari

Dr. Rajeshwari gained her M.Sc, Ph.D in Chemistry from IIT Roorkee, M.A. in Hindi from IGNOU and M.Phil, Ph.D in Hindi from JAIN (Deemed-to-be) University. Along with being a Reiki Master and Pranic Healer she has also been teaching Hindi for the last 16 years.



Dr. Vikram Rao

Dr. Vikram Rao is a professional in the IT Industry specializing in the area of 'user experience and design' and related areas having worked in design agencies, enterprising startups and large corporates. He gained his Ph.D at JAIN (Deemed-to-be) University in Cultural Studies having completed research on 'Planning and Design of Indian Urban Spaces', an 'inter-disciplinary' research study which integrates 'sociological inquiry' with the attributes of design to find answers to the urban social issue of traffic.

A chronicle of Social Empowerment in ‘Corporates’

Dr. Vikram Rao

Capitalism and the corporate world are often seen as highly self-centred in nature which pursue profits in lieu of everything else. The view is no different in India when compared to the rest of the world. In India, as per the companies rules and regulations norms (Section 135 of Companies CSR Rules 2014 and Schedule VII of Companies Act 2013), companies with a certain turn over or net value should contribute at least 2% of average net profit to Corporate Social activities. But times such as what we are now witnessing due to the Pandemic (COVID-19) needed companies to rise above and beyond mere rules and contribute to social causes aid mankind as there is so much to be still done.

As India struggles to contain the growing numbers and rise in cases, Indian companies have made themselves proud by donating generously towards relief and rescue efforts and changing the perception around capitalism and the corporate world, at least temporarily. Some of the large corporates in India like Tata Group, JSW Group, Reliance Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra, ITC Ltd., Vedanta, Hero Cycles, Bajaj Group and many others took early and bold steps of contributing to various relief funds which included the PM Cares Fund in spite of the existing dismal economic situation. What has been heartening to observe is that contributions have been in various forms

from supplying medical equipment to opening hospitals, to producing 100,000 masks a day for health workers, providing free fuel to emergency vehicles carrying the coronavirus patients and also providing free meals to the needy people.

The migrant worker community and the urban poor have been amongst the most affected due to the pandemic. There have been efforts from a few corporates to address the weaker section of society too –there are efforts by certain corporates to collaborate with district authorities to provide assistance to the district health and rural healthcare ecosystem that reaches out to the weakest sections of society. There has also been upgradation of healthcare infrastructure, initiatives for providing food and shelter, and economic aid programmes in rural areas. Many others have used their company and factory kitchens to cook and supply food to daily wage labourers.

They say that one of the best human feelings in the world is of ‘giving’. And this positive energy can be contagious. Hopefully these acts of social empowerment and contribution from corporates in India and world over will inspire many more to contribute and help mankind in any way possible to deal with this pandemic as best we can. And to help us reflect back when this over that we all did our bit!

Remembering Robert Frost - *“The woods are lovely, dark and deep. But I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep.”*

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Advancements in Artificial Intelligence have brought remarkable transformation in finance, transportation, agriculture, social media as well as critical areas such as health, education, energy and environment. Using AI, computers have been able to outperform humans in executing certain tasks in terms of speed and accuracy. The potential of AI-enabled technology can also be utilized to improve people's lives and empower the marginalized sections of society. Equal opportunity to all sections of society is what constitutes social empowerment and is essential for a nation's growth.

Globally, several initiatives backed by AI technology are already in place to tackle social and economic problems. US international institutions namely the University of Chicago created an academic program using data science and AI for addressing public issues such as unemployment and school dropouts. Likewise, University of Southern California's, Center for Artificial Intelligence is dedicated to social problem of homelessness. Stanford University researchers are making efforts to learn how to use AI for addressing global poverty by analyzing satellite images of likely poverty zones (NSTC Report, 2017). "AI for Good" is an initiative on UN platform which supports institutions employing AI to tackle some of the world's greatest economic and social challenges.

The responsibility of social empowerment in any country almost always falls on the government. For governments to make effective use of AI technology, partnerships with AI researchers and companies involved in data science and advanced technology are required. Since AI relies on data, access to datasets is essential, which is not a tough task for a government as it is the owner of repository of public data. In this context a key aspect to be taken care of is the protection of data from misuse. Responsible AI encompasses safety and security of data and cannot be compromised in the wake of severe competition among private AI players (Askill, 2019).

The data can be used to train various kinds of AI models which can be effective or supplement the government initiatives to achieve various goals like alleviating poverty, food for all, tackling illiteracy, unemployment etc. For example, AI can be used to identify poverty stricken areas by using constantly streaming satellite imagery of different areas and comparing density of light in nighttime. Areas with high density of light would be more developed than ones with lesser or zero density of light. Based on income data, number of family members, employment details and spending, AI software programs will single out the poverty-stricken families so that financial aid may be provided to them.

Education is another area of application of AI, where intelligent chatbot systems can replace teacher, an AI teacher can assess individual student learning using machine learning. Such education system has internet

Artificial Intelligence for Social Empowerment

Dr. Sivaramakrishnan R. Guruvayur

Using AI, computers have been able to outperform humans in executing certain tasks in terms of speed and accuracy

connectivity as the major prerequisite. Intelligent tutoring systems (ITS) are highly flexible in presenting material and cater to individual student needs (Beck and Stern, 1996). ITSs have been highly beneficial in increasing student motivation and learning. Making AI enabled learning systems available to students who have difficulty with traditional classroom learning or have no access to normal modes of education is required. Especially for children living in rural areas where educational infrastructure is underdeveloped, AI can be put to great social use helping uplift the less literate part of the society.



Agriculture is an occupation directly related to poverty due to low returns. AI models based on predictive analytics help identify risks and opportunities in agricultural activity. AI has helped improve agriculture by optimizing crop growth using robotics, drones and machine learning. Using crop growth data, AI can predict the time it takes for a crop to be ready for harvest thus increasing the efficiency of agriculture. Similar to crop, soil monitoring also made possible by implementing AI algorithms on soil data. Other applications include weed control, seed plantation, detecting pest infestation and cloud seeding. There is a growing perception among researchers that AI can help achieve the goal of increasing yields to meet growing food demand in the future. AI has thus enabled solutions to illiteracy and food insecurity.

Senior citizens and persons with disability are another neglected section of the society. AI has come a far way in helping senior citizens and enabling them to lead more independent and respectable lives. AI powered devices help in round the clock monitoring of health parameters and quick diagnosis, as timely detection of underlying health issues can make all the difference. Apart from clinical care, elderly often need emotional care as they are vulnerable to loneliness. Voice-enabled virtual assistants, nurses and robot caregivers can make the elderly feel active and involved, giving companionship apart from routine assistance.

AI has come to the aid for women too as safety applications recognize patterns and suggest the user the safest way to travel to a particular destination. AI-powered safety app evaluates all possible routes based on previously

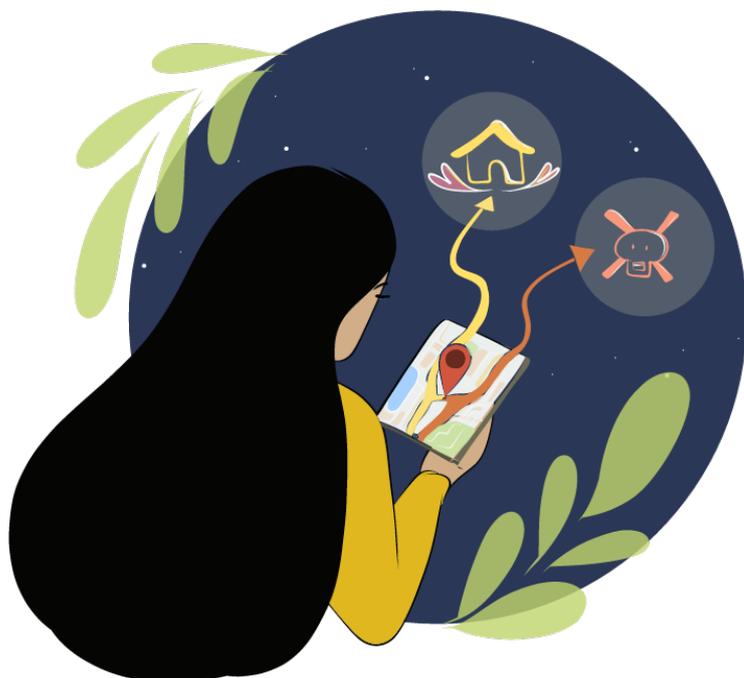


The responsibility of social empowerment in any country almost always falls on the government.



collected data. This data could be anything ranging from number of police stations, residents living in that area, or previous instances of theft or harassment.

Today top organizations like Google, IBM, Amazon, Microsoft have a dedicated arm working on AI technology. Governments all over the world are becoming inclined towards adopting AI technology for better governance and progressing society as a whole. In conjunction with artificial intelligence, the goals of social empowerment and total inclusion do not seem like a far-fetched dream.



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A Narrative of Social Empowerment in Handloom

Dr. Vibhavari Kumar

The Textile Industry is the second largest employment generating industry in the country. The handloom sector forms an integral part of this industry. It is the largest cottage industry in the country with 23.77 lakh looms. The handloom hubs of India are major exporters across the Globe. The treasures of India's crafts and textiles that once occupied a pride of place in the lives of royalty today lie lost in the annals of time. Indian weaving traditions have existed since time immemorial and have been a representation of the many unique sub-cultures within the country, be it motifs, patterns, and techniques of woven textiles.

Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) is a nodal agency constituted under "The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India" to promote exports of all handloom products fabrics to home furnishings. HEPC is striving to support and guide the Indian Handloom exporters and International buyers for trade promotion and international marketing through International Trade fairs, Buyer Seller Meets and seminars.

Handloom sector is a symbol of India's glorious cultural heritage. Based on Bal Gangadhar Tilak's ideology of Swadeshi Movement launched on 7th August 1905, this day has been chosen as 'Handloom Day'. The Ministry Of Textiles on this day honours the handloom weaving community and highlights their contribution. The key objectives through these events are to: generate awareness about the handloom industry amongst the public at large and its contribution to socio-economic development; protect India's handloom heritage and to enable the handloom weavers and workers with greater opportunities; and ensure sustainable development of the handloom sector thereby empowering handloom workers financially and instilling pride in their exquisite craftsmanship. This has also been the main event during the 6th National Handloom Day on 7th August, 2020. An awareness campaign through social media #vocal4handmade and empowerment of handloom workers (buy and wear handloom) was requested by Smt. Smriti Irani, India's Union Minister of Textiles. All the

Secretaries of the States, Textile Bodies like the Central Silk Board, National Jute Board, e-commerce entities, retail companies, designer bodies and NIFT had been requested to amplify the campaign. "My Handloom Portal", an integrated platform for all handloom stakeholders and weavers was launched as a one-stop destination to get information on all handloom schemes and maintain privacy. These steps were taken to empower the artisans and weavers through exposure about the richness and diversity of their products.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the broad outlay for a comprehensive package of ₹20 lakh crore under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan campaign to build a resilient India as the nation fights the COVID-19 pandemic with a hope to benefit even the handloom and handicraft sector.

Boycott Foreign Goods was a strategy to ensure that the Hindus and Muslims fight collectively against the colonial powers with a focused objective of protecting the handlooms. Coming to the present context, the only difference is that the rulers then were British and now they are Indians. The government campaigns of 'Make in India', 'Vocal for Local' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' is being looked as a ray of hope to the handloom artisan by awakening the country to use handloom and handmade and increase the domestic demand. These steps would promote the finesse of Indian weavers globally. It would communicate, disseminate and engage with not just the global audience but the Indian diaspora as well.





Suggestions for a Way forward:

- We must empower the artisans through promotion of handloom and handicraft products for the purpose of awards, corporate engagement programmes, and business gifting in corporate organizations.
- Government Organizations and Educational Institutions must make it mandatory to wear handloom for official functions
- Celebrities and Bollywood actors and actresses must promote handloom and handicrafts by donning them in social events and also promoting the usage in their movies.
- Several expos must be organized. During pandemic, an online exhibition would be the most beneficial, where an artisan can make his product available. Hence, the government sectors working in handloom and handicraft must help artisans to get adequately equipped and trained in operating online portals.
- Online exhibitions through Indian embassies may also be organized to make the global audience aware of the rich legacy of handlooms and to honour artisans from India.
- Encouraging designers to promote the handloom and handicraft artisans through their unique product development and showcasing them in expos and ramps.
- The textile clusters may be encouraged in making masks and other medical equipment that uses textiles such as bedsheets that contribute to the medical infrastructure.
- Lastly, up gradation of the skills and infrastructure would help them sustain themselves and make their business lucrative. The youth of each household could be trained in business and technology skills thereby making them 'Atmanirbhar' and be saved from the exploitation of middlemen. Once the business picks up it would attract their future generations to hold on to their roots and make the craft flourish.

The period of COVID-19 has been a little difficult time for these artisans. However, several NGO's and enterprises working with artisans have been raising funds and mobilising essential supplies. Dastkar has revived its Artisan Support Fund and has appealed for help. Abhihaara has requested handloom patrons to pre-book saris that can be shipped once restrictions are lifted. Cotton Rack when they announced discounts of 15 and 30 percentage to sell their existing stock, a few regular customers opted not to use the discount code and pay the full price, to help weavers. Fashion Design Council of India has announced a COVID-19 support fund to help small firms. Anita Dongre announced a medical fund of ₹1.5 crore to support the fashion house's smaller vendors, self-employed artisans, and partners. They have also been manufacturing masks for distribution to NGOs, village residents, individuals, and to hospitals on demand. Several independent designers have dwelled into manufacturing of masks and have supported the artisans. In Madhya Pradesh's Maheshwar, smaller weavers depend on master weavers for workflow and the masters commission work only on demand, they have requested the authorities to buy stocks from weavers for the State-run Mrignayanee handloom stores. On the brighter side, the lockdown has made people appreciate things that are local. Several organizations in a bid to rekindle the love for handlooms, have invited customers to post photographs of their favourite artisanal products.

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Tales of Migrant Labourers and their Empowerment

Dr. Titus Matthew

Mobility and settlement have always characterized human societies. People have always had to choose to settle in places they find contentment and satisfaction for their livelihood while others choose to migrate to other places in search of same. Food, shelter and good health are human basic necessities that must be met; therefore, man has no choice but to engage in activities that could guarantee these basics.

India like other societies have its own share of large migration of people in search of means to satisfy these needs. The greater number of those engaged in the migration being the migrant labourers. These are members of the society who are largely without formal education, some skilled, others unskilled and they move from mostly rural to urban areas in search of employment that will earn them some wages. They are usually seen moving in groups and they seek for temporary or seasonal job opportunities in the places they migrate to and live temporarily.

Migrant labourers, though often berated and neglected are the bedrock for the industrialization of all societies. They provide the much needed labour to develop cities and keep them functioning. Ironically, these are the non-salaried set of people that are dependent on daily wages, no adequate shelter for them and their children have little or no opportunities for formal education. As a consequence, their lowly state is recycled from one generation to another with only a few able to break out of such cycle.

The current pandemic of COVID-19 exposed so much about the vulnerability of migrant labourers and their neglect by government and the society in general. Hundreds of them trekked long distances back to their native homes under harsh and adverse conditions. Many were caught up by the lockdown and had to take shelter in most uncondusive places and manner. Pockets of them were seen scavenging for food.

What then should be the response of government, corporate organizations and the general society towards migrant labourers? In my view there is urgent need for the following:

- A good census of the migrant labourers to know their numbers, native places, age, sex, skills etc. this will help in proper planning.
- Draw up a National policy on Migration.
- Review of labour laws to reflect their plight and current realities.
- Ensure that such labour laws guarantee:
 - (i) A sustainable “living wage” for them.
 - (ii) Adequate shelter.
 - (iii) A programme for basic formal education for their children.

These policies and programmes should be drawn up in collaboration with all arms of government at the federal and state levels, labour leaders (including representatives of the migrant labourers), non-governmental organizations, the religious, employers of labour and community leaders.

To continue to neglect migrant workers is to abandon a large portion of the population on whose shoulders rest the comfort and wellbeing of the rest members of the population. That in itself is unfair and detrimental to the society.



Rhetoric to Reality

Dr. Smitha S Ranganathan

A hearty conversation on how socially relevant Innovations could shape the destiny for a billion hopeful Indians

Dr. Vishal Rao is the inventor of 'Aum Voice Prosthesis' a \$1 speaking device that extended the freedom of speech for throat cancer patients. More recently, his pioneering research on Plasma therapy for COVID-19, has paved the way for a new direction in management of the Pandemic. With over 13 patents filed for his innovation on medical devices, drugs, techniques and theories, his invention is a part of 100 global social innovations across the globe.

Dr. Smitha S Ranganathan collaborates with Dr. Vishal Rao as part of the Science Technology and Ethics in Medicine Council (STEM Council) committed to create and maintain standards for Ethical codes in the practice of modern medicine with the objective of fast tracking socially relevant innovations. The extract of her tête-à-tête with Dr. Rao on the possibilities of innovation for social empowerment in India is presented below -

1. How can the journey of a researcher from intention to innovation be a meaningful one?

The goal of education is knowledge, and the ultimate objective of knowledge is to be of service to mankind. To enable a researcher to do this, the foundation is to be laid with a powerful purpose or intention leading to innovation. In this journey, the researcher may want to be mindful of the company which could help him realize his ambition. Also, intention is often defined by our imagination and it is

“ We are not constrained by the discipline of rigor but by the limits of our purpose and intention to make a difference, something that is defined by our imagination.”

important that both our ambition to make a difference and imagination to achieve this are in synchrony. Balance is the key in the journey of a researcher where ambition must be matched with a strong purpose, wealth creation with value creation and passion with compassion. In today's market driven world of capitalism, the focus has gone into sustaining a problem than solving it. The way a researcher defines a problem is of utmost importance and the strength of intentions to solve problems form the cornerstone of innovation.



2. The term ‘ frugal’ and ‘ jugaad’ are often viewed with scepticism and uttered in sarcasm in India. Can you share the key milestones in your journey as a researcher and physician standing for frugal innovations that have disrupted the status quo and enabled social empowerment?

Frugality is being embraced by many corporations today and it is a clarion call today for organizations to appreciate and believe in frugal innovations. Unfortunately, the words ‘Jugaad’ and ‘frugal’ have been used interchangeably. The perfect translation for *Jugaad* is based on *Occam’s razor* problem solving principle that is, when you are faced with a complex problem, try to find a simple solution without complicating it. In India, *Jugaad* is perceived as a short cut solution that uses a pre-existing solution that has been developed by somebody else for a completely different purpose. This aspect of *Jugaad* being about repurposing an idea, product or service is what breaks the originality of innovation. However, the philosophy of *Jugaad* may help orient young minds towards lateral thinking and must be encouraged in schools and colleges. It is also important to recognize that *Jugaad is the first step for frugal innovation*. Frugality as a concept has scope to go beyond *Jugaad* to incorporate innovations. It is a new way of thinking than just repurposing of an old solution.

In my own journey I have been inspired greatly by the *Occam’s razor* approach to problem solving. To pull a leaf out of my own experience, I developed a voice prosthesis device for throat cancer patients who lose their voice box. While the prototype developed costed under \$1, I had failed to develop an inserter for the device for over 6 months. At that point of time I was deeply frustrated at



Scan this QR code to watch BBC’s coverage - A voice for a dollar: ‘Speech is a right and not a privilege’

not being able to move forward and develop a prosthetic inserter; for my vision was to come up with a device that can help manage the patient in the out patient department itself rather than moving them to the operating room. My Eureka moment arrived a few days later, when I reluctantly accompanied my wife and my 3-year old son on a shopping spree. My son was busy throwing boxes on the floor and I went picking up these boxes after him. Suddenly I noticed a tampon box lying on the floor, and at that very moment something deep struck me that the solution I have been searching for the prosthetic inserter could be like a tampon. The tampon is not a complex

“ Through my innovation of \$1 voice device, I only did my bit to expand the freedom of speech. ”

product, it is simple to use and it is so commonly used by women. It set me thinking of why the prosthetic inserter could not behave like a tampon. To my wife’s amazement I picked up six to eight boxes of tampons for my ‘R &D’ activity. I studied the insertion mechanism of the tampons for the next few days and went back to my friend who is an engineer asking him to design something with a similar mechanism. He laughed it off asking if I thought it was toy! That was when it struck me that I needed to approach a toy manufacturer indeed, as toys are designed with simple to operate mechanisms. I connected with a toy manufacturer in Channapatanna who came up with a prototype for the inserter in about two hours.

The key lesson from this is to appreciate the *power of uncommon cross domain collaboration and looking for inspiration in unusual places* while breaking away from established silos. This brings us to the *second principle in frugal innovation*, that is the power of non-domain learning. I recall the powerful words of the CEO of Rolls Royce I once met who said Knowledge is power in the 20th century, while ignorance is power in the 21st century, substantiating the need for non-domain experts for innovation. Otherwise, can you imagine a wooden toy maker and surgeon collaborating on a normal day?

3. How can we cultivate a culture for socially relevant frugal innovation in our research ecosystem?

Former Chief Justice of India Justice M N Venkatachalliah has been one of the most revered mentors and guides of mine. He once told me: we should examine India’s development beyond GDP. This limited and

“ Every successful organization today needs such a ‘Dreamer at the Top’, a possibilitarian doing the impossible against all odds. This prime mover dares the team to dive deep and soar high towards timely thought and action, but in a manner hearteningly devoid of provocation and intimidation. ”

inadequate economic parameter can even be achieved through immoral and illegal means, say by allowing pirates or criminals to run riot. The priorities of a country should go beyond the limited milestones of GDP alone, rather it must be built on the philosophies of innovations driven by freedom. This requires a mindset to question the status quo and adopt a frugal thinking mindset. Our educational institutions should enable this by emphasizing on value-based education that can help solve real world problems.

Also, in the previous decades, research has often been disassociated with innovation. A case in point is the bench to bedside progression in science that spans, on an average, 17 long years - from lab research, clinical research, and guidelines to clinical practice. In contrast, innovations in technology seem to focus on rapid innovations to solve real life problems. Hence there is a need today to create a fusion between research and innovation, call it 're-innovation' to deal with real world problems with greater agility.

4. What have been your best learnings both as a frontline COVID warrior and as key member pioneering plasma therapy for COVID-19 in India?

The current pandemic situation is nothing less than a world war, I refer to this as World war C, after the causative agent. Just as Winston Churchill famously defined Russia as "a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma," we are dealing with a similar situation. This new age war is being fought not by soldiers but by doctors, not using weapons, but by using soaps and hand sanitizers; a war that was not fought by close encounters but by social distancing. World over, countries have had to make a difficult choice between two bad options sacrificing health over economy or vice versa, and in the process some countries have lost both. *The most important lesson we learnt during this pandemic is the need for military drill for healthcare.* Akin to the police or military drill, healthcare needs to be trained on

“ The COVID-19 challenge has thrown down a gauntlet of this century – The Virathon. Unlike prior hackathons, this life hack has brought the entire innovation ecosystem to the brink of several paradigm shifts. As the Virathon continues, innovators and researchers are forced to take a big leap forward to create a hyperloop for knowledge aggregation.”



a drill that will increase our preparedness to deal with a pandemic.

The Second learning for me was the importance of staying productive during Corona through collaboration and not competition. I have been a believer in the Copyleft principle and not copyright where you share ideas to make the world a better place. *The third important learning has been in reverse mentoring,* where elder generation has been taught by youngsters, larger corporations have learnt from nimble start-ups, developed countries have looked at developing countries on how to adapt and do things better. The last but not the least reflection during these times is on the concept of conscious capitalism, of how this marks the beginning of an era where we focus on value creation and not just limited milestones of wealth creation.

5. Message for our young and aspiring researchers who come from various disciplines ranging from culture studies, management and science and technology.

Whenever you are faced with a problem be it in research or in life, the key to the solution is the opportunity that lies within that problem. So never be afraid of problems. In fact, go searching for problems and embrace them. I have been much inspired by the anecdotes in the movie Patch Adams. Like this one wherein Arthur tells Hunter, "You're focusing on the problem. If you focus on the problem, you can't see the solutions. Never focus on the problem. See

“ Innovators should compete to ensure that the world gets the absolute best. We must always 'Pay it Forward' to society, breaking free of fear, insecurity, and conformity to convention only to see the world anew each passing day. ”

what no one else sees. See what everyone chooses not to see out of fear, conformity, or laziness. See the whole world anew each day"! It is necessary for us to Zoom out a bit and understand the context while looking at a solution. For this to happen, collaboration across disciplines is the key.

Beyond the shackles of restrictions, find ways to make this world a better place before we leave it. Furthermore, never doubt that a group of thoughtful committed citizens can change this world. In Amar Bose's words, "If you think something is impossible, don't disturb the person who is doing it!"



Scan this QR code to watch this celebrated scene from Patch Adams here!

प्रतिरोध का स्वर

प्रतिरोध का स्वर

यूँ ही नहीं होता स्फुरित

किसी सुखी हृदय से

यह तो है,

पीड़ाजनित।

फूटता है, एक गर्म पानी के

सोते की तरह

जो सहते-सहते ताप

अकुलाकर, होकर बेचैन

निकल पड़ता है,

चीरकर सीना धरती का।

अहसास कराता है

सभी को

अपने होने का

और कभी पिघले लावे की तरह

जला देता है

अपनी जद में आने वालों को

फिर हो जाता है शांत

निकालकर मन की भड़ास

पर नहीं सदा के लिए

सिर्फ तब तक,

जब तक कोई

फिर से न आजमाए उसका सब्र॥

डॉ. राजेश्वरी

घर की चिड़ियाँ

घर की चिड़ियाँ

लुप्त हो गई, कहीं

नानी-दादी के

किस्सों-सी।

गोहूँ-दाल बीनती

बींदनी से बतियाने,

चिड़ियाँ अक्सर

आती थीं आँगन में उतर।

चुगती जाती थीं दोनों, दाने

सुख-दुख बँटते थे इसी बहाने।

अब तो बिकता है बाज़ारों में सब,

चीज़ों से लेकर रिशतों तक।

माँ की दाल-रोटी का रिवाज़,

अब कम-सा हो गया है।

और चिड़ियों का चबेना भी,

आधुनिकता में खो गया है।

पहले उनके और अपने

घर भी होते थे साँझे।

चिड़ियाँ चुन-चुनकर,

लाती थीं तिनके।

रोशनदान या पंखे के कोटर में,

नीड़ थे उनके बनते ।

रोशनदानों की रोशनी,

अब कहाँ?

खिड़कियों पर हैं जालियाँ,

देखो जहाँ।

पंख और पंखों का रिश्ता,

निर्बल-सा हो गया है।

साथ ही चिड़ियों का बसेरा,

महानगरों में खो गया है।

होती थी नानी-दादी,

पहले हर एक घर में।

किस्सों में उनके चिड़ियाँ,

और चिड़ियों के उनके किस्से।

अब तो हो गए हैं,

घरों के भी हिस्से।

अम्मा नहीं है आती,

अब किसी के भी हिस्से।

प्रेम तो छिपा है,

पैसों के नीचे लेकिन

संग-संग रहना

अब हुआ नामुमकिन।

संग-ए-दिल हैं सब अब,

मन तंग-सा हो गया है।

चिड़ियों का आशियाना,

वृद्धाश्रम में खो गया है॥

डॉ. राजेश्वरी

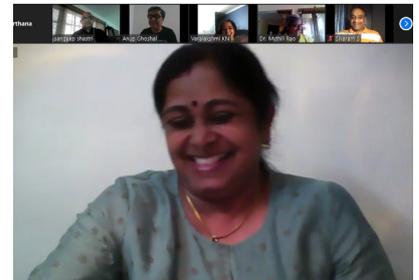
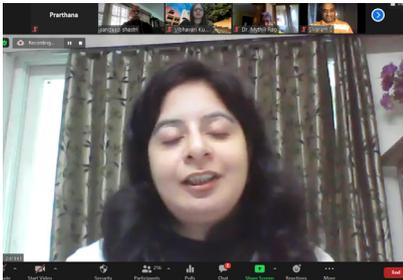
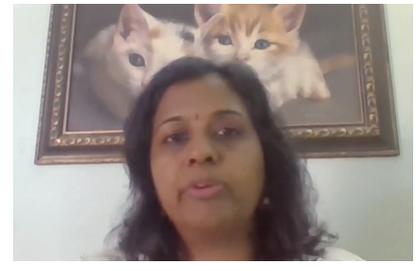
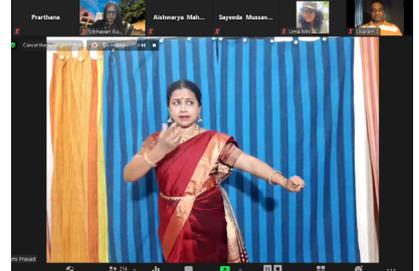
SocialLens

A photo feature by Mr. Karthik Mulakaluri

Mr. Karthik is a HR Professional with over 19 years' experience in senior management across companies like Accenture, IBM, Oracle etc. Besides being a Life Coach and a NLP Practitioner, he is an award winning photographer on a mission to enable street children with a million reasons to smile.



Glimpses of Teacher's Day celebration online



publications

Michael V L Chhandama, Ph.D scholar in Biotechnology, was selected for the first online Asia Pacific Youth Exchange (APYE) & Global Social Innovation Idea Competition co-organized by United Nations Development Programme and Asian Development Bank.

Saptadipa Paul, Ph.D scholar in Biotechnology, received Silver Award for oral presentation in International E- Conference “IECBBB-2020” on BIOTECHNOLOGY, BIOINFORMATICS & BIOMEDICINE ON 25TH August held at AIMST UNIVERSITY, MALAYSIA.

Dipti Mothay, Ph.D scholar in Biotechnology published a paper titled ‘Molecular dynamics simulation of homology modeled glomalin related soil protein (Rhizophagus irregularis) complexed with soil organic matter model’ in BIOLOGIA, a Springer Journal. The same can be accessed at <https://rdcu.be/b6UmG>

Sandesh Gawas, Ph.D scholar in Zoology, launched an online database on the Vespidae of India. Link to the website: https://www.nbair.res.in/Databases/Vespidae/vesp_index.html

Papiya Bhattacharya, Ph.D scholar in Public Policy and Governance, published in an online magazine called as Women’s Web on August 14. The same can be accessed at <https://www.womensweb.in/2020/08/navigate-challenges-autistic-teens-aug20wk2mad/>

achievements

Dr. Pavitra Kotari, alumnus in Biotechnology successfully completed her Post-Doctoral Fellowship program and has been appointed as Associate Scientist at ITC-LSTC Bangalore.

Articles for next issue should be sent by 20
October, 2020 of not more than 250 words.
Please include your name, email address and the
knowledge domain of your interest.

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Dr. Smitha Sarma Ranganathan,
Dr. Sivaramakrishnan R. Guruvayur,
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Special Thanks to...

Divya- Layout

Steven, Lipti and Shubhang - Graphics & Photographs

