

ADVENTURE

VOLUME 11 / ISSUE 4 / OCTOBER 2021

INSIDE CAMPUS

Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

THEATRE

Theatre Thrives in
New Formats

TRAVEL

Exploring India's
Wild Grounds

REARVIEW

Occam's
Razor





| **WORLD ELEPHANT DAY**

It is indeed heartening that India has made its mark in the 2021 Olympic Games. It is a matter of great pride that the country is on the challenging path of holistic development. If we are to increase our participation and achieve milestones in international sport, a concerted effort from the government and bureaucracy in terms of identifying, training and sponsoring talent is imperative. World-class sporting facilities and coaches and intense training must be made available to the Indian hinterlands, for it is from here that raw talent is often found to emerge. But with little support, this talent rarely sees the light of day.

In this issue of Aventure, we bring you an overview of the performance and achievement of the Indian contingent at the Olympic Games. While sport is as much about competition, it is also about sportsmanship. This edition of the Games, stood out for the many instances of companionship and compassion displayed by participants, who perhaps had come with the sole desire to win. Yet, when it came to supporting or helping a fellow sportsman, the medal blurred while true sportsmanship shone above all else. The Sports section, gives you a glimpse into such humane moments.

While the sporting world has given us many icons worthy of emulation, a disturbing trend in Indian cinema urged us to raise our concerns in the Film Review section. Violence in cinema seems to be a trend that is picking up, bringing blood, gore and torture into our living rooms and within reach of children. Cinema makers are pushing the boundaries in depicting violence, which a certain section of the audience is lapping up. Glorifying the villain, the serial killer, the rapist, while aestheticizing murder, suicide and torture: what kind of vicarious pleasure are we seeking and satisfying, as a society?

Our editorial focus has always been on stories of courage and innovation. The concluding piece of the Atmanirbhar series, in this issue, essays how a group of women from remote Palaguttupalle village stood up to the pandemic that followed a severe drought leading to the loss of agricultural livelihood. They emerged as economically independent and reliant, scripting a life-transforming journey.

In a bid to prevent the use of animal hide in musical instruments, read about an innovator, who is pioneering vegan, hide-free instruments. Art and creativity have a way of reinventing and reengineering genres to suit the time and space. We look at how theatre is transforming, yet thriving. The Book Review section brings to you four books that made a mark in 2021 to add to your bucket list.

Health is becoming a growing concern day after day. Read the Health section for credible inputs from medical practitioners on the environmental and genetic factors that are primary causes for cancer.

We wind up the issue, with food for thought: Rearview talks about the 'Occam's Razor' principle as a viable solution for leading a life imbued with minimalism and simplicity.

Read and enjoy. Do not forget to drop a few lines to tell us what you think.

Happy Reading!
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Education and Entrepreneurship



While sculpting oneself to adapt to an ever-changing environment is a demanding undertaking, the contrary may be rather frightening. Many of us shun transformation and succumb to the tedium caused by a static life, while forgetting that life is about flow, new destinations and new perspectives, and we must embrace its complexities and become a part of it if we aspire

to reach lofty heights.

Similarly, at JAIN, we function with the belief that the goal of education is not just to provide students with credentials, but also to provide them with the ability to form perspectives, think effectively and anticipate the future before it occurs. In a nutshell, we train students to think and behave entrepreneurially, take calculated risks and generate new possibilities.

The extraordinary possibility for every one of us to be a leader is one of the most exciting features of today's highly competitive world. Each of us possesses the tools necessary to innovate, inspire and cooperate in ways that past generations could not have dreamed. This endows every one of us with enormous potential to create the world we desire—if we utilise these tools wisely.

While the primary duty of education hubs remain unchanged, there are several other vital goals that must undoubtedly evolve and adapt with the passage of time. To function efficiently,

every aspect of an educational institution must undergo certain transformations. It encompasses all facets, from the administrative structure to academics. On the other hand, changes have their own subtle repercussions. Any change in education, its methodologies and institutions has far-reaching effects for the future.


So, these reforms must be meticulously developed to eliminate jeopardising the institution's essential ideals. As a result, changes to academic approaches and institutions cannot be underestimated. At JAIN, we have introduced the skill of 'management and enterprise' to every stream

by fusing entrepreneurship with education. We collaborate with our students to establish long-term, financially robust company structures and support them until they gain the confidence to operate independently.

In today's globally interconnected, technologically driven and transparent environment, leadership looks very different and businesses seek to produce more than simply higher

share prices and are confronted with a broader range of issues than ever before. To overcome these hurdles, entrepreneurship and education should be seamlessly integrated to produce a balanced system of education that serves the human community. Additionally, leadership must now be won and refreshed on a daily basis; it is no longer handed-down through self-perpetuating hierarchies.

DR. CHENRAJ ROYCHAND
CHANCELLOR



**THE EXTRAORDINARY
POSSIBILITY FOR EVERY ONE
OF US TO BE A LEADER IS
ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING
FEATURES OF TODAY'S
HIGHLY COMPETITIVE
WORLD.**

Jubilation Alongside Caution



The opening up of educational institutions has left all stakeholders heaving a sigh of relief. It is only gratifying and fortunate that the environment has become safe and conducive enough to welcome students back to the campus. We at Jain are very excited to have our students and staff back to enliven the bare and desolate corridors with their laughter,

enthusiasm and energy. Along with the JAIN members of the staff and management, I am pleased and enthusiastic to once again enjoy their company and be a part of their evolution. As I walk around the portals of our campuses, there is a palpable festive fervour. Abundance of warmth and goodwill seems to flow out of classrooms.

However, to throw caution to the wind at this juncture would be disastrous. We are still at a tipping point, unsure which way we are headed. A cautious approach is the need of the hour. At JAIN, we are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that our staff and students are continually reminded of maintaining the latest protocols of health and safety. We are leveraging the blended education model for the forthcoming semester. Needless to say, technology has shown the way during the bleak months of the past. Hence, we shall continue to harness technology as an integral medium of instruction and examination. Learning through technology is being duly

complemented with classroom, field and laboratory exercises to fill the lacuna of the online classroom.

The transition from online to offline can be a little tricky too. We may take a little time to wean from our laid-back attitude and slack discipline. Physical presence certainly demands a greater degree of mental presence and decorum, which our students and members of faculty will not have difficulty in reclaiming. To reestablish a robust intellectual and cultural environment in the campus, I can assure, the management and teaching staff are leaving no stone unturned. We are making all efforts to help students reintegrate and socialise seamlessly. We are taking particular care to support our international student community to return comfortably to the city and the campus after a long hiatus.

A CAUTIOUS APPROACH IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR. AT JAIN, WE ARE LEAVING NO STONE UNTURNED TO ENSURE THAT ARE STAFF AND STUDENTS ARE CONTINUALLY REMINDED OUR MAINTAINING THE LATEST PROTOCOLS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY.

Congratulations are in order to the entire community of JAIN institutions for helping the institution tide over the repercussions of the pandemic. The JAIN community has emerged stronger and more dedicated than ever to the cause of teaching and learning.

A rather strong jolt to our routine and complacency, I hope has piqued our habitual ways and sense of entitlement. Let us tread mindfully – mindful of comforts and luxuries handed down to us or even earned; and, mindful of the need to nurture a spiritual dimension to our selves.

DR. N SUNDARARAJAN
PRO-CHANCELLOR

Services Sector – A Bourgeoning Opportunity



According to a Deloitte report the Indian Services Sector accounts for a whopping 66 per cent of India's GDP, beating the manufacturing and the agriculture sectors. The report also states that the sector is growing at a phenomenal rate. With agriculture, which once was the mainstay of the economy, sliding drastically, the dependency on agriculture

skills, particularly in communication and information technology, has immense potential to fill the gap not just in the Indian economy but also in the international economy.

A PWC report states that the human resource in the services sector is lacking in cognitive skills such as critical thinking, decision making, problem solving, empathy, leadership among others. In addition to technical excellence, HEIs must work towards equipping their student community with these 'life skills'. No matter the extent of knowledge an employee possesses, without the vital emotional he will

for employment has fallen. With automation, the human resource requirement in the manufacturing industry has also fallen. Thus, the rising unemployment. Despite the increasing role of the services sector, only 28 per cent of human resource is employed in this sector. While this may pose a huge challenge to the future economic growth of the country in terms of paucity of labour, it also serves a huge opportunity for the youth of the nation. What bearing does this statistical data have on institutions of higher education? What is its significance?

HIEs HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO PROVIDE THE MARKET WITH SKILLED PERSONNEL IN THE AREAS OF TOURISM, FINANCIAL SERVICES, LEGAL SERVICES, COMMUNICATION SERVICES WHICH FORM THE LARGER SERVICES SECTOR.

fail to scale up to the demands of changing work environments that are today at once global and local, technical and intuitive, process-driven and inventive and a host of other paradoxes and conundrums. If the services sector is to achieve sustainable growth for the long haul, and retain its lead in the global economy, then HIEs must evolve out-of-the-box strategies to build an education system that taps into opportunities while making students future-ready.

The significance is immense. Higher Education Institutions (HIEs) are poised to play the vital role of bridging this gap between industry demand and human resources availability. HIEs have the potential to provide the market with skilled personnel in the areas of tourism, financial services, legal services, communication services among others which form the larger services sector. The services sector in India is stated to be the fastest growing in the world. It has been found that the existing employees in the services sector lack key technical and non-technical skills required for efficient discharge of duties. Which means, in the coming decades, we need a large knowledgeable and skilled talent pool. This is a global trend. Hence, India with its strategic

The JAIN curriculum and pedagogy is cognizant of these requirements and is dedicated to empower its student community. As always, we are committed to scaling ourselves to provide the requirements of the youth of the country as well as of the market.

DR. RAJ SINGH
VICE CHANCELLOR



INSIDE

Campus

COVID-19 CRUSADERS

C OVID 19 pandemic has affected mankind globally. The only way to combat is to follow COVID protocols, to keep the pandemic at bay.

Vaccination being a critical component to combat the virus, the NSS wing of Jain (Deemed-to-be University) organised a free one-day vaccination drive in association with BBMP (The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) on 10 August 2021 in one of its campuses in Bengaluru for all its staff members, students and non-teaching staff members, as well as their dependents. With 150 individuals vaccinated during this campaign, they expressed their appreciation for the free camp arranged using a token system for creative skill development and urged NSS volunteers



to host such health-related activities in the future. To raise awareness about Covid 19, Jain (Deemed-to-be University), in collaboration with the Bangalore Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology, hosted a National Level Online Webinar on "Awareness on Correct Masking and Vaccination Against Covid".

The National Level webinar was developed to support the role of an individual during covid vaccination and correct mask usage. Dr. Shanthala, Obstetrician

and Gynaecologist with over 25 years of experience across charitable, private and government sectors in India and abroad the resource person for the webinar, shared many valuable inputs. Some of the topics included in the webinar were:

- Understanding mask usage and vaccination importance.
- Declaration from central government regarding mask usage and vaccination How and why.
- Individual's role, and challenges during covid.
- No vaccine is 100 per cent effective and necessary period of gap between vaccinations.
- Masks protect people with compromised immune systems.

"This event was an excellent learning opportunity for all NSS volunteers it provided us the opportunity to encounter our role, and its challenges during COVID. Everyone in attendance actively engaged in making this webinar a success. It was a pleasant experience for both NSS volunteers and other attendees," expressed a NSS volunteer.

Jain (Deemed-to-be University's), School of Sciences, Block II, Department of Life Science and Student Welfare Cell took the initiative to raise awareness about the COVID-19 issue. As exceptional



efforts are taken internationally to battle the outbreak's aggressive spread, public knowledge of the disease has a significant impact on people's adherence to preventative measures. This awareness campaign intended to educate the public in a scientific and straightforward manner, assisting them in comprehending the issue and stopping the spread of the virus.

In order to increase awareness, the team created several innovative posters and films and shared them on social media platforms. The posters aimed to disseminate information about a variety of topics, including the various types of masks available and how they aid in preventing virus spread, the various types of vaccines available globally, how they work and their efficacy, the available treatments, vaccine myths vs. reality, mucormycosis (black fungus) and Tremella fuciformis (white fungus) and how they spread and what they look like. It was ensured that all material was scientifically correct and that all disease-related misconceptions were refuted.

The content was developed in three languages to ensure that our message was understood by the widest possible audience. All the information shared on various social media sites, created a positive mood by discussing effective treatments, stress management, and how to develop mental and physical strength, all of which aid in the healing process. The team was quite enthusiastic and hoped to assist in the fight against the virus and restore normalcy as quickly as possible.

THE NATION AT 75

YOUTH VOICES

A PANEL DISCUSSION

To commemorate India's 75th Independence Day, a panel discussion titled 'The State of the Nation at 75' was organised by the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CRSSE) Jain (Deemed-to-be University), to better understand the voices of young, bright minds that will tomorrow run the country.

Dr. Priyanka Mathur, Associate Professor at CRSSE and Webinar Coordinator, commenced the session by welcoming the audience emphasising the significance of youth empowerment via agency, voice and involvement. Following the introductory speech, Dr. Raj Singh, Vice Chancellor, Jain (Deemed-to-be University), delivered an energising keynote address underlining the importance of youth in the country's future as well as the need for maintaining a positive perspective in all aspects of life. Next speaker at the session was the Panel's Chairperson, Dr. Mythili P Rao, Dean of Languages and Research Coordinator at Jain (Deemed-to-be University), who enthralled the audience with her lyrical introduction.

Mr. Mohammed Shafiulla R, Bachelor of Arts student, shed light on the Indian demographic's subcultures and diversity. He stressed the critical nature of a more welcoming and accommodating governing approach to all communities and their people. Shafi also discussed false information, misunderstanding and the havoc created by rumour, as well as other aspects of our society and country that require reformation. He was referring especially to the 'post-truth' society in which we now inhabit.

Mr. Chirag G Pradeep, a Biotechnology Master's student at Jain (Deemed-to-be University), expressed the importance of youth in creating the future in India, since they are the majority age group. He emphasised the need of each individual's contribution to reforms via active participation.

Ms. Arishmita Aditya, alumni of Jain, deftly wove together theoretical frameworks of the nation-state, citing Benedict Anderson, and casting doubt on the ideological framework within which we

currently operate. She also discussed the unpleasant yet serious consequences of misinformation and deception by social media and its influence.

Mr. Punith Raj K N, founder-CEO of an EdTech business called SeminarRoom and a Ph. D. Research Scholar at Jain University, was the final speaker at the webinar. He highlighted the contradiction between the western notion of a country and the universal understanding of humanity, emphasising the importance of harmony with one another regardless of normative nationality. Mr. Punith further emphasised the holy motherland-Bharat philosophy, as well as the concept of all things and people being ours.

The conference was then adjourned after each panelist was asked to identify two points that, in their opinion, were critical improvements that needed to be made in order for the nation to have a brighter future. Experts also addressed audience questions.



PERSONAL FINANCE MANAGEMENT

A NATIONAL WEBINAR

Faculty Research Cell – Samshodhana in collaboration with Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) conducted a National Webinar on “Strategy For Managing Personal Finance Including Mutual Funds”, which witnessed the participation of more than 450 students and faculty members.

A faculty member of the School of Commerce, on behalf of the Faculty research cell Samshodhana, Jain (Deemed – to – be university), offered a warm welcome to the patrons and principal officers which included Dr. Raj Singh – Vice Chancellor, Jain (Deemed to be University), Dr. Easwaran Iyer – Pro Vice Chancellor, Jain (Deemed to be University), Dr. Dinesh Nilkant – Director, School of Commerce, JAIN (Deemed to be University) and inaugurated the session quoting Peter Lynch - In the long run, it's not just how much money you make that will determine your future prosperity. It's how much of that money you put to work by saving it and investing it.

Sharing brief insights about Jain (Deemed-to-be-University), School of Commerce and Faculty Research Cell Samshodhana, she also introduced Dr. Dinesh Nilkant, Director, CMS Business School and Dean of Management Jain (Deemed-to-be University). Apprising his strategic planning, vision, risk taking ability, leadership, continuous communication, learning from experience, managing across and up, collaboration and sharing experiences, the faculty highlighted a few remarkable achievements of Dr. Dinesh Nilkant towards

Jain (Deemed-to-be-University) and thanked him for giving the opportunity to conduct this webinar.

Following that, Ms. Ranjani Agadi Kori, the Guest of Honour, was introduced. Ms. Ranjani Agadi Kori provided the audience with insightful information about millennials as high-risk investors, as well as how to conduct analysis prior to investing, the SEBI framework, guidelines, and structure, helpline centres, and grievance cell, among other technical aspects of SEBI.

After expressing gratitude to Ms. Ranjani Agadi Kori for providing knowledgeable inputs to the participants, Mr. Nitin Joshi, Vice President NSDL, was introduced and welcomed him to address the gathering. Mr. Nitin Joshi, Vice President NSDL, provided valuable insights on risk mitigation, retirement planning, identifying safe investments, NPS, governance structure, and authority to choose investment schemes, as well as briefing on exclusive tax benefits.

Another key note speaker, Mr. Surya Kant Sharma – Senior Consultant – AMFI (Former, DGM SEBI) gave valuable inputs on the topic.

Mr. Surya Kant Sharma shared exclusive insights on how to create financial security, income-saving techniques, and encouraged all participants to plan ahead and invest in various investment schemes such as insurance, mutual funds, gold, SIP, equity & debt funds, and retirement plans. Following the guest lecture sessions, a Q&A session along with key note speakers, students, and faculty members was held, and the webinar concluded with a vote of thanks.



SIHI KAH KATHANA

Swatantrya Amruta Mahotsav Bharata @75 was conducted by the NSS wing of JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) in collaboration with Kalagangotri, which is a non-government organisation dedicated to the promotion of live theatre, offering acting courses in Bengaluru



The event began with a rendition of the State Anthem 'Jaya bhārata jananiya tanujaate' by the student's of Performing Arts Department, followed by the lighting of the lamp. The programme was inaugurated by Sri. Pratap Lingaiah, State NSS Officer, NSS Cell, Government of Karnataka, in the presence of Dr. N.V.H Krishnan, Registrar, Jain (Deemed-to-be University), Prof. Sridhara Murthy, Director, Academics and Planning, Jain (Deemed-to-be University), and Dr. Rajani Jairam, Dean, Students' Welfare, JAIN (Deemed-The gathering was addressed by Dr. Rajani Jairam. Dr R Sreenivasaiah, NSS Program Officer at Jain (Deemed-to-be University), presented the introductory thoughts, emphasising the significance of such events, while Sri Pratap Lingaiah acknowledged and appreciated the University's efforts in terms of social service offered by academics and students.

The event, which followed the Covid 19 protocol, involved all NSS faculty coordinators from across campuses, as well as around 120 students. The Kalagangotri team presented a play



titled 'Sihi Kahi Kathana' shortly after the inauguration. Written by Srivatsa K. L. and directed by Dr. B.V. Rajaram, the play explored the beneficial and bitter consequences of post-Independence society.

While digitalization has raised people's living standards, corruption, bribery, and



theft have been the unfavourable aspects of post-Independence society. The performance illustrated how literacy has led in children moving to distant countries in pursuit of better opportunities, leaving their elderly parents behind. The drama concluded with a hopeful message delivered by Mahatma Gandhi, who instilled confidence in the populace's ability to overcome adversity.

Following that, a music ensemble performed patriotic songs. The day's second event was a presentation on Malnutrition and Gender Inequality by Dr. Na Someshwar of the DD Chandana 'Thatt anta Heli' fame. He educated the audience on the nutritional worth of food, as well as what and how food should be consumed for or own well-being. The session concluded with a quiz on Gender Inequality hosted by him.

75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Jain (Deemed-to-be University) in conjunction with its core departments, commemorated 75 years of India's Independence themed "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" in accordance with notifications issued by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. A Government of India initiative, the event celebrated the magnificent history of its people, culture and achievements. Numerous events were held across many departments of JAIN to pay tribute and respect to freedom warriors, debate the path of struggle for liberation as proposed by diverse schools of thought, and in particular, understand and appreciate the contributions of Mahatma Gandhi. The day was celebrated with tremendous zeal and patriotic fervour at various campuses by staff and students.

The event, conducted in consonance with Covid guidelines. Began with NCC cadets walking in procession and the dean of the Internal Quality Assessment Cell, Dr. Asha Rajiv and Dr. Varalakshmi hoisting the flag at the premises, which was aired live online for attendees. The event drew a total of over 350 students, including faculty members. However, several online events were conducted to disseminate cultural components such as music, dance etc.

NCC Celebrations

NCC Cadets commemorated the day with an online and offline programme. The programme began with flag hoisting and rendition of the national anthem, followed by cultural events.



After the rifle drill, chief guests were escorted by the cadets. Professor Harold Patrick, the guest of honour, was escorted by the pilots and he along with the NCC chief hoisted the flag. NCC Cadets delivered the introductory address, performed the invocation song and welcome dance. Major Dr. Rekha Sinha addressed the gathering, underlining the significance of 'Azadi Ka

Amrit Mahotsav.' A brief film about the history of Independence Day was shown, followed by a monologue interview conducted by the cadets including some of India's women celebrities, with Cadet Sibani M serving as the interviewer. This was followed by a synchronized dance performance.

Songs celebrating the Jawaans of the country and paid rich tribute to them.

Kannada Vedike students connected contemporary scientific discoveries to our country's old beliefs and customs.

Col. Prabodh Bharadwaj spoke to students and instructors on the critical role educational institutions play in both education and mental power, therefore paving the path for us to achieve our own goals.

Symposium

A symposium, with a panel of speakers drawn from the teaching and non-teaching communities, according to their respective disciplines was also held on the occasion. Debates and discussions revolved around India's freedom struggle and post-colonial achievements during the last 75 years. The discussion also focused on future challenges and opportunities that the nation's young, in particular, will confront.

The highlights of the speech by the Chief Guests included:

- Relevance of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, marking the 75th Independence Day of India.
- The theme of the day – SANGAM, the Confluence.
- India – As a confluence of cultures.
- Democracy and its power to build our nation.
- India commemorating its 75th anniversary of independence, despite the fact that the country faces numerous challenges.

- A nation and its people's ability to overcome challenges and look forward to a better tomorrow.
- Distinct characteristics of each state and region.
- Importance of independence and the why in which we should celebrate it.
- Sacrifices and struggles of our freedom fighters.
- Our contribution to nation building.
- 200 years of struggle faced by our nation under British rule.
- Pride in our country's independence.

- Role of youth in building the future of this nation.
- Patriotism as a unified fervour and sentiment that transcends political, geographical, religious and other boundaries.

The session began with an informative address by the dean of student welfare, followed by an introduction of the speaker by faculty members. The webinar was an excellent learning experience for all attendees, as it exposed them to new dimensions of patriotism.

Fit India Campaign

Fit India Campaign was organised at another Jain (Deemed-to-be University) campus as part of the celebrations. Students were advised to walk 10,000 steps and upload their photographs. This event was held to raise awareness about the health benefits of walking. The Campaign saw an overwhelming



Quiz

To commemorate the occasion, Dekho Apna Desh Webinar Quiz- Episode 1 was held. Students actively participated in this Webinar Quiz and received E-certificates.

The Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is an intensive, country wide campaign which focuses on citizen participation, to be converted into a 'Janandolan', where small changes, at the local level, will add up to significant national gains. Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has often shared his vision of building a new, Aatma Nirbhar Bharat by the year 2022. It is important that the young minds are exposed to the rich and diverse heritage of the country to create a grand Indian narrative in their minds. This would help them take pride in being Indian with a responsibility to take forward to a vibrant and modern nation.



Webinar - Swarajya@75

A virtual webinar titled "Swarajya@75" was held in collaboration with *Disha Bharat* for students, research scholars and academic members of the Faculty of Engineering and Technology. The webinar emphasised the role of patriotism and attempted to instill an appreciation for the glory of the past, the reality of the present and the youth's responsibility in constructing the nation's future.

Some of the topics discussed were:

- Ways of inspiring the youth to understand the glories of the past, realities of the present and their role in building the future of this nation.
- Contributions of some freedom fighters.

response and it was discovered that most of the students were health conscious and worked out regularly.





Tourism is a dynamic and competitive sector that demands adaptation to changing customer interests and wishes, since tourism businesses place a premium on customer satisfaction and security. With the Covid-19 pandemic, one of the world's greatest economic sectors, employing more than 75 million people, has suffered immensely. Nevertheless, in the recent months it is gradually but surely ramping up its efforts to become more viable and robust. As the world continues to open up and look forward, World Tourism Day was observed to raise awareness about the value of

tourism and its influence on society. Additionally, the day is also observed with an objective of preserving and promoting culture and tradition around the world.

To commemorate World Tourism Day, BMS-THM (Bachelor of Management Studies - Tourism and Hospitality Management), JAIN's (Deemed-to-be University) School of Commerce hosted a virtual fest on September 27, 2021. A

series of competitions were held prior to the culminating event during which accomplished faculty members, guests and other dignitaries educated and interacted with the audience.

Dr. Sunitha Badhawar, Head, THSC India was the chief guest for the event and Dr. Shradha Kanwar, CLO - INurture for India and Dr. Jayaseelan, Academic Head, INurture-MLI and Dr. Arcot Purna Prasad were special invitees for the function.

Organised by Dr. G. Saravana Kumar, Associate Professor and Mentor, BMS-THM

programme, and co-ordinated by Dr. Alok Kumar, Professor and Dr. Sadanandam, Asst. Professor, the event commenced with a prayer song by Prof. Prathiba and was followed by a flute performance by Ms. Deepti, a BMS student, and a Bharathanatyam performance by Ms. Naga Sindhu, a professional dancer who has choreographed sequences in Kannada and Telugu movies. Ms. Asmi Aqib, a third-year BMS-THM student, served as the event's host and introduced the chief guests and the special invitees as well as provided an overview of the significance of World Tourism Day.

Dr. Shradha began her speech by emphasising the importance of students being able to apply their learning in the workplace. She went on to say that tourism is an interesting industry and she being a travel enthusiast is always looking forward to travel to various interesting destinations and that travelling allows us to learn a great deal about ourselves.

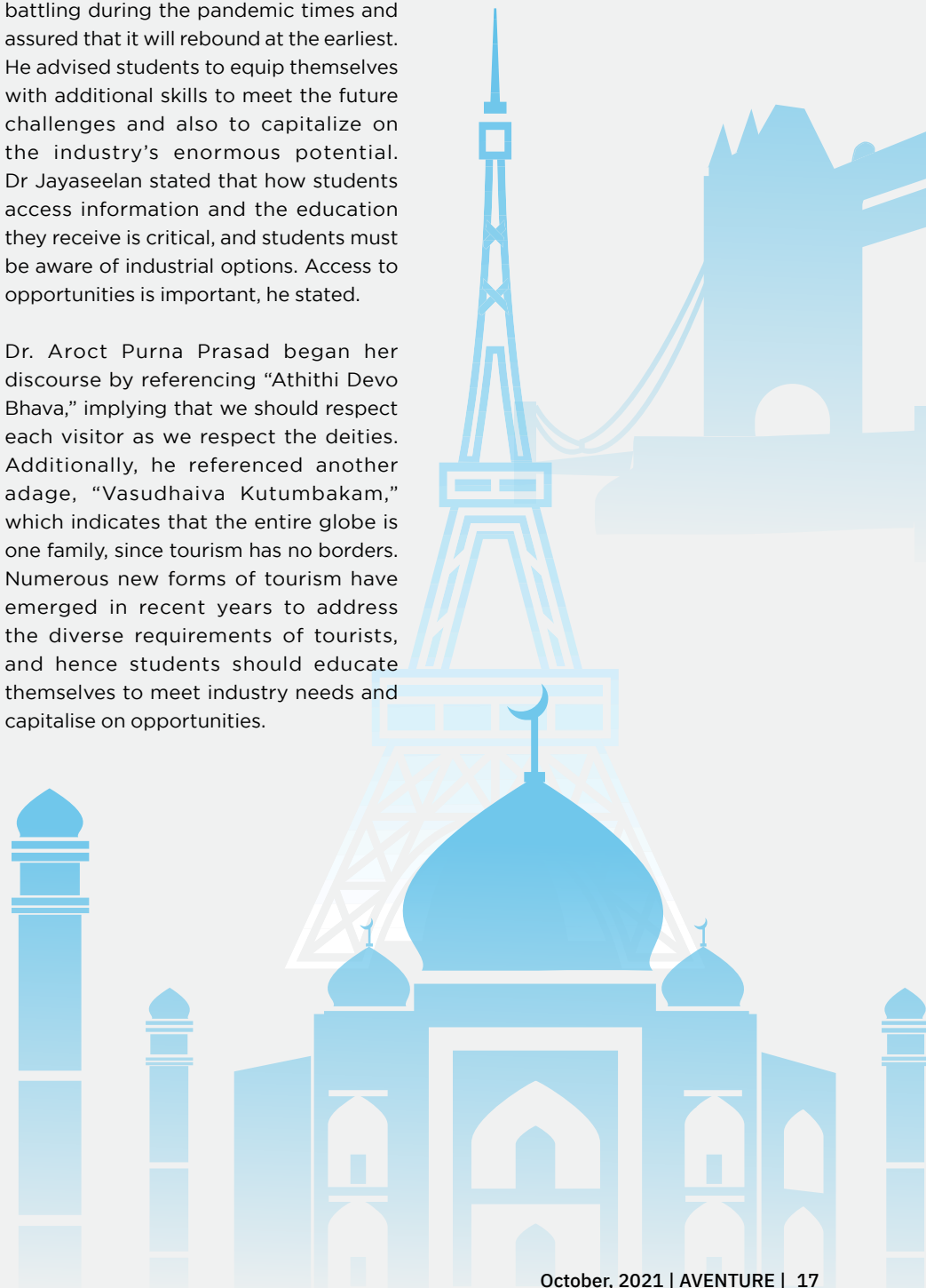
She emphasised the rise of tourism and the importance placed on sustainability. She noted that while the topic of this year's Tourism Day is inclusive growth, ethical tourism marketing by all stakeholders is also critical.

Dr. Sunitha Badhwar, Head – Standards, Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council (THSC), India, expressed her gratitude to Jain University for inviting her to the event and expressed her joy at being the chief guest. She began by praising the students' outstanding cultural performances and applauding the staff and students for their cooperation in arranging this event online. She presented a PowerPoint presentation on the THSC skill development programmes offered to students, which also mentioned the fact that THSC was established in 2014 and is affiliated with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. She also mentioned about 80 skill-based courses which were broadly classified into subsections including hotels, quick service restaurants, tours and travel, facility management and adventure travel. Additionally, she answered students' queries about the programmes available.

Dr Jayaseelan, Academic Head, INurture Education who spoke next, praised the team of THM faculty organisers for taking the initiative to host a two-week celebration of global tourism day, replete with activities. He expressed gratitude to Dr. Sunitha for attending the program as the chief guest and sharing vital information about skill development courses for students. He emphasized the value of education along with subject-based learning. He also talked about the several issues that the tourism sector is battling during the pandemic times and assured that it will rebound at the earliest. He advised students to equip themselves with additional skills to meet the future challenges and also to capitalize on the industry's enormous potential. Dr Jayaseelan stated that how students access information and the education they receive is critical, and students must be aware of industrial options. Access to opportunities is important, he stated.

Dr. Aroct Purna Prasad began her discourse by referencing "Athithi Devo Bhava," implying that we should respect each visitor as we respect the deities. Additionally, he referenced another adage, "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," which indicates that the entire globe is one family, since tourism has no borders. Numerous new forms of tourism have emerged in recent years to address the diverse requirements of tourists, and hence students should educate themselves to meet industry needs and capitalise on opportunities.

Dr G.Saravana Kumar, Associate Professor, delivered a video presentation on global tourism. Dr Alok expressed gratitude to INurture for sponsoring and helping with the design of the flyer and certificate for the students and thanked the award sponsors, Arun Excello, Hosanna Tours and Travels, and British Bakes, Nagercoil. He appreciated all the student performers for their outstanding performance and proposed the vote of thanks.



STOCK MARKET INVESTMENT

National Level FDP in Finance

India continues to be a country with an abysmally low degree of “financial knowledge” across all investor groups.

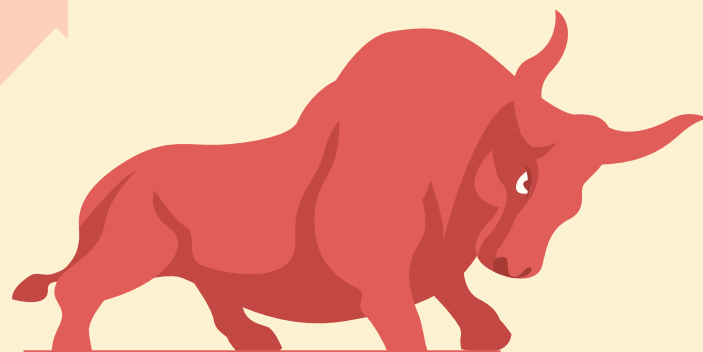
Experts believe that the basis of financial understanding should be set early in an investor’s life in order to rectify this scenario.

As a result, SEBI’s primary duty is to safeguard investors’ interests in the securities market. Its efforts are directed on educating people on the fundamental idea that “an educated investor is a protected investor.” Investor education is a critical tool for equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to make smart and responsible investment decisions. As such, SEBI’s Investor Awareness Programs seek to provide participants with a greater understanding

of the securities markets, enabling them to manage their money more effectively.

A five-day online national level Faculty Development Programme in Finance was organized by Faculty Research Cell Samshodhana, School of Commerce, Jain (Deemed-to-be University), Bengaluru. The FDP was open for faculty members of academic institutions, corporates, international delegates, research scholars and post graduate students.

Dr. Riya Singh, Assistant Professor, School of Commerce, kickstarted the proceedings of the first day with an introduction and welcome remark. Resource person of the day Mr. Amit Gupta, Managing Director, I Capital Academy and Corporate Advisory LLP, SEBI Empanelled Securities Markets Trainer, NISM Empanelled CPE Trainer spoke about ‘Buying and Selling Shares in Stock Exchange’. He stressed on the importance of pre-trade preparation,



INSIDE CAMPUS

due diligence required prior to investing, particularly for new investors in the stock market, analysing the stock with the nine-step process of choosing value stocks. He also mentioned that prior to investing, a company must be reviewed, the model of the company and its growth must be understood and the target company has to be compared to its competitors to determine the target company's worth and that it is important for investors to visit the broker's office for trading and further discussed about the different modes of trading, steps while placing order through phone or through broker of online by website/app.

Day 2 included an introduction to SEBI's mission and role, a discussion of the various risks faced by investors and how they can be mitigated, the various modes of capital issuance from the share market, including initial public offerings (IPOs), follow-on public offerings (FPOs), bonus issues and qualified institutional placements (QIPs), a proactive approach before investing in the share market, the procedure for investors to apply for shares, the shareholders' rights, and recent investor protection measures implemented by SEBI.

Day 3 was filled with sessions relating to mutual fund investing. The speaker discussed how investors invest in asset management companies, the structure and operation of mutual funds, the returns generated by mutual funds to investors and the benefits of investing in mutual funds. He further mentioned about mutual fund classifications based on investment objective, investment style and other factors, mutual fund investment procedures, mutual fund investment modes, investing in gold exchange traded funds, international funds and their benefits, tax benefits and risk management.

Day 4 was a tutorial on how to invest in initial public offers with discussions on primary and secondary markets, investing in an initial public offering (IPO) and the IPO terms and policies, shareholder rights, how to apply for a public offering online or offline, and price discovery for shares in a public offering for bulk issue.



The fifth day focused on the impact of corporate actions - dividends, bonus, splits, and buyback. An overview, dividend - critical dates, impact of bonus issue/stock split/dividend on share price, benefits of bonus issue/stock split/dividend on share price and the three reasons for the company to buy back stock was briefly discussed and it was noted that the complaints levelled with buy backs. Dispute resolution in the event of non-receipt of bonus shares/dividend, a sample of RTA information on a company's website and a sample of investor complaints contact information in a listed company was debated as well.

The sessions conducted over five days provided participants with an insight into stock exchange trading and regulations and procedures for investing in mutual funds and other trading instruments, as well as managing their savings.

The FDP received positive feedback from all participants and facilitated faculty members and researchers to comprehend strategies to understand the stock market and SEBI, placing orders, factors and metrics of due diligence, investing in mutual funds (SIP, FPO, IPO), bonus shares, centralised e-KYC, SEBI helpdesk.



AVLOKAN

2021 Redefining Social Responsibility with Ethical Leadership

A nine-day International Research Summit on 'Redefining Social Responsibility with Ethical Leadership' was organized by AVLOKAN Vidhyanidhi – Faculty Research & Development Cell, Center for Management Studies, Jain (Deemed-to-be University).

DAY 1

Dr. Rogers M Smith discussed the history of business in America and the evolution of CSR principles with the aid of case studies. He explained how the definition of a "corporation" has evolved in America since the 18 Century – the connotation ranging from public good to the importance of profit.

The speaker while addressing the day's topic, 'Redefining Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethical Leadership', illustrated how the concept of CSR was different in the past. Dr. Smith quoted an example of his family business and outlined the four primary CSR principles practiced by his grandfather. He emphasised a watershed moment in CSR history by referencing the highly influential

ideas of Milton Friedman. According to Milton, for organisations to flourish in increasingly competitive marketplaces, the primary CSR objective should be to provide a high rate of return to its investors. To demonstrate the severity of Milton's views, he demonstrated how the number of drug distributors in America had decreased from 500 to just three big companies.

He lauded the efforts made by large, recognised businesses to redefine CSR as more than a fair return to investors; it is also a fair return to employees, consumers and communities, in contrast to traditional beliefs. Mr. Smith signed off by stating that he continues to believe in the J M Smith Code of CSR.

Dr. Chenraj Roychand, Chancellor, JAIN said that the world is made up of 3 per cent dreamers, 22 per cent intellectual forces and 75 per cent skilled forces, and explained the significance of each and the roles they perform. While he believes "solopreneurship" is the future of individual financial sustainability, he also voiced concern about the growing

economic inequity, implying that solopreneurship may indeed be beneficial in the future.

He urged businessmen to embrace technology and digitization as well as leverage the vast amounts of information that is readily available. On a motivating note, he emphasised the need to develop basic yet revolutionary ideas for which a vision and strategy are critical. He stated the need to transform knowledge into ability, action and approach. By citing real-world instances, he demonstrated that those with less traditional academic backgrounds but with basic knowledge or exceptional skills and a clear vision have achieved success and that he is a believer in optimising and commercialising ideas and information.

Numerous prominent individuals were mentioned in his speech, including Dhirubhai Ambani, Henry J. Kaiser, Dale Carnegie, among others. His numerous "From Nothing to Something" tales were both inspirational and thought-provoking and throughout the discussion, Mr. Chenraj reaffirmed his confidence in solopreneurship and emphasised its future relevance.

DAY 2

Mr. Arup Chatterjee, Principal Financial Sector Specialist, Asian Development Bank (Metro Manila, National Capital Region, Philippines), and Dr. Raj Singh, Vice Chancellor of Jain (Deemed-to-be) University, Vice Co-Chair ASSOCHAM, Bengaluru, served as the guest speakers on Day 2 of the summit.

INSIDE CAMPUS

Interesting sessions on “Women Need to Be Put Ahead of Men in Order to Do Business with Heart and Soul” and “Teaching - The Learning Process in Education and Social Responsibility” were the highlights of the day.

Discussions revolved around prospects for women in the business sector and the efficacy of the Project Centric Learning idea in the present online education environment. These presentations were followed by an interactive Q&A session, which educated participants on the obstacles women face in the business sphere.

DAY 3

Day 3 of Avlokan saw guest speaker, Prof. Muhammed Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and founder of Grameen Bank, share his professional journey as he transitioned from teaching economics at a university to becoming a banker and then successfully becoming a social entrepreneur.

The steady flow of questions during the Q&A session proved that the audience undoubtedly benefited from the real-life lessons offered by industry experts.

Mr. P K Gupta, the succeeding speaker, shared his views on “Emerging Technology Trends In Industries – Research And Career Opportunities In The Data Era”. He discussed numerous subtopics such as industry revolutions, artificial intelligence, digital twins and cyber threat facts in 2021.

DAY 4

The fourth day of the International Research Summit featured two sessions by distinguished speakers, Dr. Dinesh Nilkant and Ms. Amita Paul, on the topics of “Role of Social Responsibility in Networking” and “Should You Focus on Your Strengths or Improve Your Weak Points,” respectively, under the broad subject of “Role of Social Responsibility in Networking.”

Dr. Dinesh Nilkant, Director, Center for Management Studies, Jain (Deemed-to-be University), educated the audience on the importance of networking and personal accountability mentioned that an exchange of ideas leaves a significant

and lasting impact. He gave insight into the ‘giver and taker approaches’ and pointed out that holistic and sustainable success can be reached through a strong and varied network, which finally leads to high net worth and valuable skill-sets and talent pool.

Ms. Amita Paul, Product Manager-LinkedIn, Advisor, United States, delivered the keynote presentation for the second panel discussion. Mr. Tom Rath’s quote, “You cannot be everything you want to be, but you can be a whole lot more of who you already are” set the tone for his presentation, which gave leads to the audience on how to identify personal flaws and weaknesses and suggestions on how to overcome them and enhance performance and achieve success.

DAY 5

The 6th of August, day 5 of the summit, had Mrs. Nidhi Vadhera, Sales Coach and Business Consultant, present a lecture on “The inverted funnel”. India’s first female author on sales and a business consultant, her illustrious career path in sales includes insights into the history of sales from past decades, connection building, pitches that included human components, enriching knowledge about company development, and the role of artificial intelligence in digital sales. During her presentation, she deconstructed the notion of sales and inspired students to pursue a career in sales.

Prof. V. Ranganathan, a former RBI official and professor at IIM, Bangalore talked about ‘Redefining Social Responsibility and Ethics’. He enlightened the audience on how ethics, morals and principles play an important role in real lives, and further explained various philosophical perspectives on ethics and morals, highlighting his views using many Sanskrit terms such as ‘Atmavatheva paranampi pashyatha’ - which means ‘see others as you do’. Further he talked on the inefficiencies in the economy and how social responsibility plays an essential part in rectifying them.

DAY 6, 7 and 8

Research paper presentations were delivered on 7th, 8th and 9th of August, on various tracks. On the first day General

management and Case Study tracks were conducted, followed by Marketing, Finance and Human Resource Tracks on the following two days.

DAY 9


Dr. Philip Kotler, widely known as the “Father of Modern Marketing” and S. C. Johnson’s distinguished Professor of International Marketing at the J. L. Kellogg School of Management in the United States of America, was the day’s Chief Guest. With his extensive knowledge in marketing and economics, he addressed the audience on the subject of “Marketing Evolution”. In his keynote address, he discussed how the principles of marketing evolved through time, outlining the key concepts of modern marketing and defining what constitutes effective marketing through examples, including customer journey marketing, touchpoint marketing, personal marketing, content marketing, influencer marketing, lean marketing, social marketing, social entrepreneur marketing and design and service-dominant logic.

Dr. Kotler devoted an entire section to praising Paul Polman and Hubert Joly for their environmentally and ethically conscientious approach, while he also discussed the future of marketing. Finally, he stated, “If you want to succeed in business, you must be a lifelong student; you must observe the world and determine its direction. Avoid moving too quickly (ahead of it), but also avoid moving too slowly (and being overlooked).” Dr. Kotler praised the Indian custom of welcoming individuals with folded hands and urged the rest of the globe to emulate it, particularly during the Covid-19 era.

The session was then followed by a panel discussion comprising of eminent and renowned speakers from all around the globe. Dr. John Lipinski - Professor, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA, Mariana Guedea - CEO, Meraki Organization Nicaragua, Sasha E. Butler - CEO, CGALE Maryland, United States and Dr. Vinod Dumblekar - Founder & CEO, Mantis, New Delhi, India.

EUREKA

Entrepreneurial Summit



Innovation and entrepreneurship are the propellers that drive the globe forward. Great ideas culminate in endeavours that pave the path for innovation. Instituted to foster the spirit of entrepreneurship and business acumen, Eureka was an effort towards educating and inspiring entrepreneurs of this generation with the help of experienced professionals from the fields of Finance, Marketing & Human Resource. Aimed at providing deeper business insight to budding entrepreneurs from across India, Eureka was a virtual summit that witnessed a participation of more than 800 people from across the country.

BBA World of Work -
Entrepreneurship, Center for
Management Studies, Jain

(Deemed-to-be University) organized this one-day Entrepreneurial Summit “EUREKA” on Providing Business Insights to Budding Entrepreneurs’, which was indeed, the most awaited event for BBA WOW- CMS.

The first session focused on human resources, and Mr. Ranjeet Rajpurohit, Director, Career Tree an HR Professional and entrepreneur, talked about “Concepts for Meaningful Outcomes.” He began by discussing some of the criteria for starting a firm and placed a premium on ‘Business Ethics’, which is unquestionably one of the cornerstones of a solid company foundation. It reveals a great deal about an individual’s entrepreneurial personality and how to imbue business with beliefs, values and ideals. Besides, he talked about how failures shape a person.

“When you discuss your failures, you gain insight on HOW to resolve such issues and deal with uncertain situations. When this is the subject of your talk, LEARNING occurs, which is just what you want. Failures occur only when chances are taken, and if you do not take risks, you will never discover what possibilities exist on the other side, you will never innovate, and you will never stay updated in your business,” said the speaker.

Ms. Erum Zahera, Marketing & Communications Lead, Nykaa Fashion, shared experiences about her career and journey from studying at medical university and then quitting it to pursue B.Sc. and then attaining success as a Marketing Head, Consultant and Influencer.

She shared her views on a very interesting topic, “Branding in Digital Age - Opportunities in Data Era” and spoke at length about Brand Resonance and the six brand building blocks quoting the

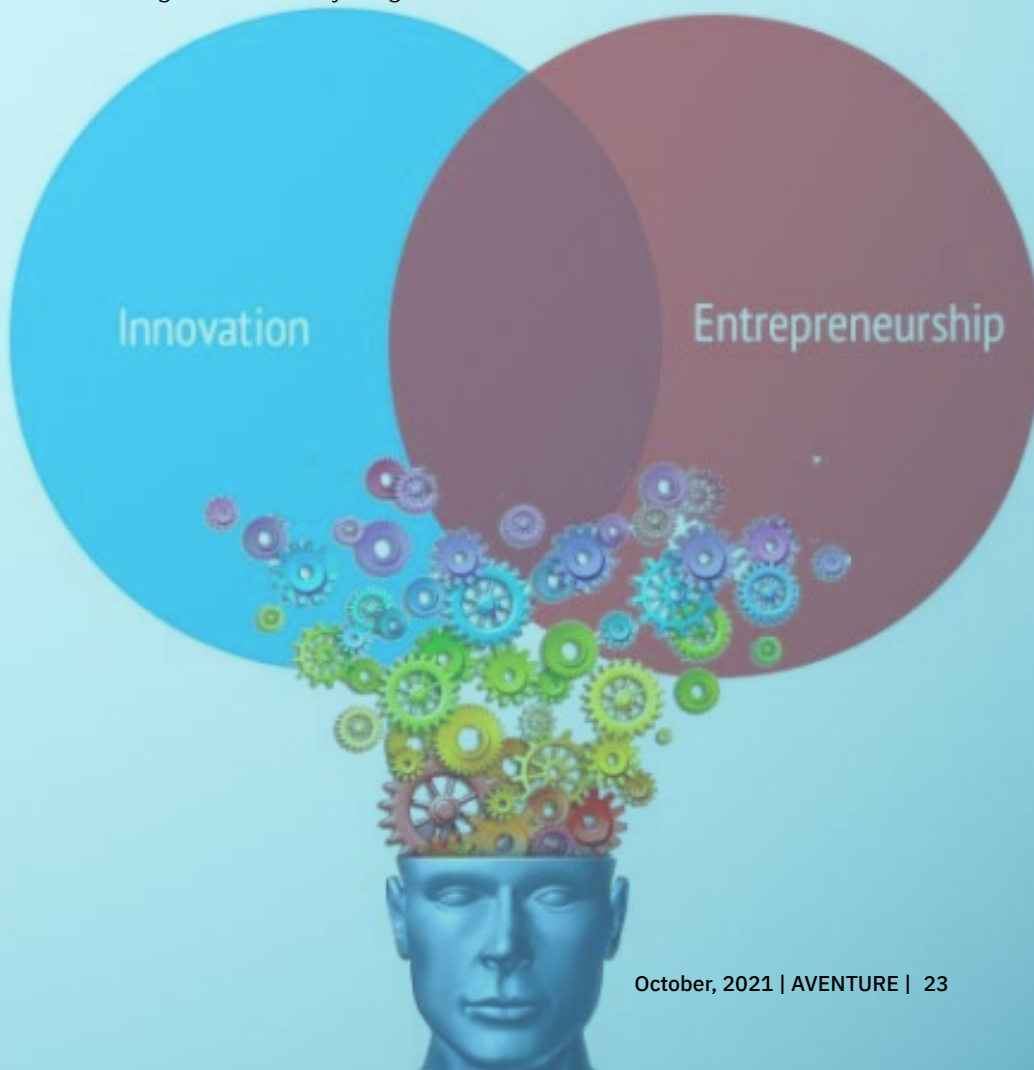
Starbucks Brand Resonance Pyramid. She made a few comments on the critical nature of developing positive relationships with the company’s many publics through favourable publicity, the development of a positive corporate image, and the management of adverse rumours, stories and events. She stressed on how influencer marketing reinforces a brand’s reputation and fosters credibility and concluded the session with a thought-provoking question, “Are you ready to seize the digital world?”

Mr. Manav Gadiya, Managing Director of Phoolchand Jewelers, who addressed the third session began by quoting, “Achievements provide days of glory, but failure provides decades of enlightenment,” and educated the audience on the importance of identifying errors and improving there upon.

He illustrated this with his personal shortcomings and how they taught him

to view himself and the world around differently. As one who believes in constantly altering one’s own perspective for the better, he spoke about the need to focus on strengths rather than flaws. He highlighted several critical factors for aspiring entrepreneurs: education, the capacity to overcome obstacles, talent and a good mindset. The session concluded with advice on how to achieve financial independence in order to maximise income and savings.

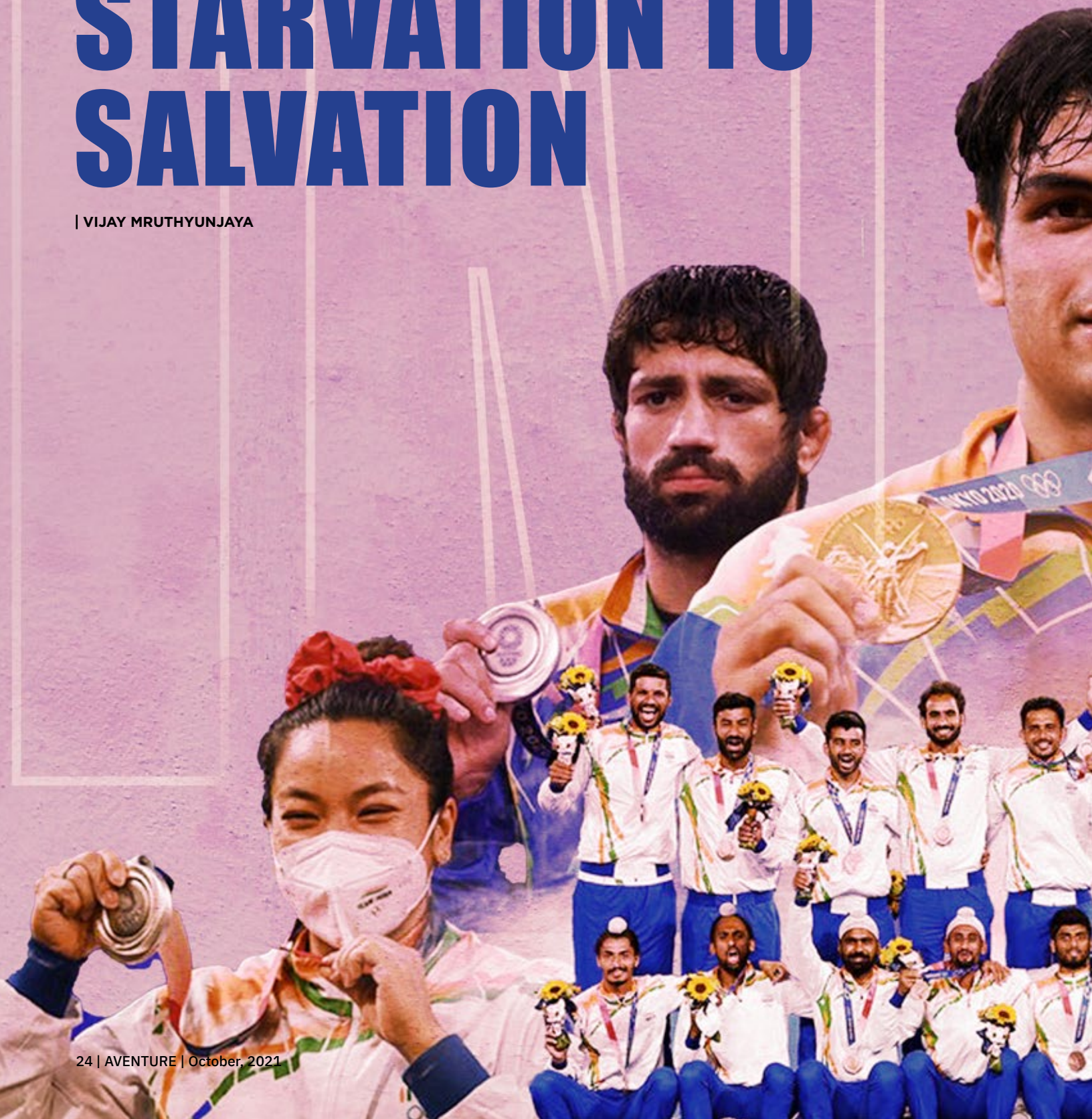
Mr. Jay Jain, Head of Devanshi Investment, addressed the last session, which focused on how entrepreneurs are capable of adding value to the society. He stated, “If someone offers a ten, you as an entrepreneur must give a hundred. It’s about appreciating worth, contentment and simplicity.”



CENTRE PIECE

INDIA @ OLYMPICS STARVATION TO SALVATION

| VIJAY MRUTHYUNJAYA





Months have passed by but India still seems to be in the firm grip of Olympic euphoria, in the Olympic bubble if you like; and why not? After all, it is India's greatest Olympic achievement since it first took part in this quadrennial event as a colonial nation way back in 1920 at Antwerp, Belgium.

Seven medals in all, including a first (gold) in athletics, had the second most populous nation in patriotic palpitation, singing and dancing with abundant joy. Till then, once every four years, sporting starvation at the Olympic Games was the cause of much heartburn.

But 2021 is the year of nirvana, so to say. A billion prayers seem to have led to sporting salvation as India steadfastly won medals in Tokyo and returned with its richest haul – one gold, two silver and four bronze, including one in men's hockey, the national sport, in which India had in the past won 11 medals in 12 Olympics, including eight gold, six of them in succession from 1928 Amsterdam to 1956 Melbourne, but none since the 1980 Moscow gold.

Till Tokyo, India's best was six medals at the 2012 London Olympics (see box for more details). This should have heralded a new dawn on the Indian sporting horizon. But that was not to be as four years later, at the Rio Olympics, it was a familiar tale of failures as India managed just two medals.

Tokyo heralded a new dawn -- India with 126 competitors (70 men, 56 women), its biggest contingent in the history of the games, who participated in a record 69 events in 18 sports, including fencing for the first time.

Ironically, Kiren Rijiju was the sports minister when the first batch of the Indian contingent left for Tokyo in

the third week of July and by the time it returned in the first week of August, Anurag Thakur had taken over the post.

Let's leave politics aside as it's time for celebrations; time to look at the future with renewed hope and optimism. 'Forget the bleak past, Forge a bright future', should be the mantra.

Tokyo, however, was not all about thrilling victories, historic firsts and record-breaking feats. There were many heartbreaking stories, mind-numbing near-misses and incredible tales of human endurance as well.

badminton claiming a bronze after a bruising defeat in the semi-finals, thus becoming the first Indian woman double Olympic medalist.

Lovlina Boroghain (bronze in boxing) and Bajrang Punia (bronze in wrestling) too successfully scripted fairy tale finishes while the men's hockey team rose from the pits, after a humiliating defeat in the opening match against the Netherlands (1-5), to a place on the podium to end decades of shame and sorrow.

The women's hockey team could not match the performance of their male



Neeraj Chopra's was a historic achievement in winning India's maiden athletic medal – a gold in men's javelin throw, Mirabhai Chanu ended years of tears and pain claiming a silver in weightlifting while Ravi Kumar Dahiya was a personification of perseverance as he turned a certain defeat in an earlier round into a silver medal in wrestling.

P V Sindhu could not turn her Rio silver into gold at Tokyo but battled for women power in Indian

counterparts and lost the bronze medal match. But by reaching their maiden semi-finals since the sport's debut in 1980 and after years of underperformance they were able to walk away with their heads held high amidst patriotic fervor and chants of 'Chak De India'.

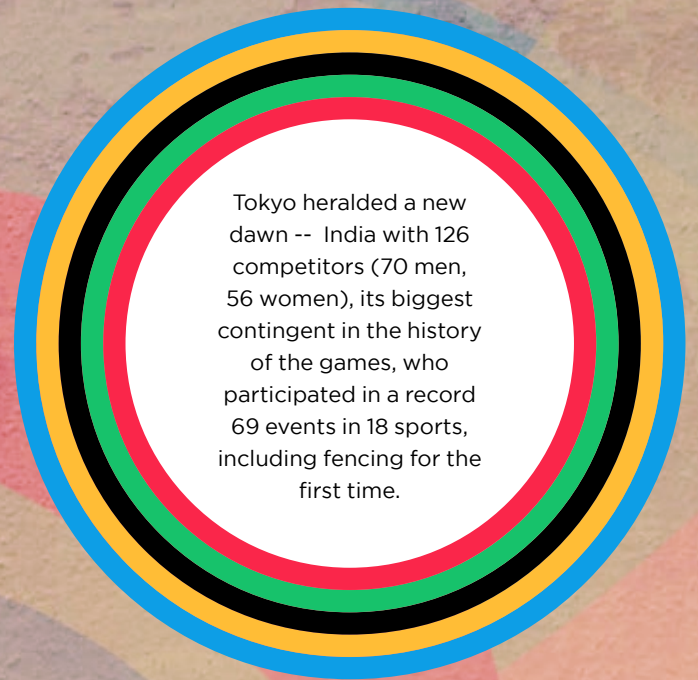
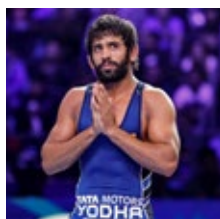
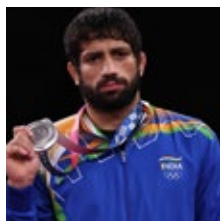
There were some heartburning disappointments too. The shooting and the archery teams in particular promised too much but delivered too little – nil, in fact, as only one shooter (Saurabh Chaudhary, 10m air pistol)

in a squad of 15 could reach the medal round, while none of the archers, including multiple-time world champion Deepika Kumar, lived up to minimal expectations (a bronze, at least).

There were other heart-touching and gut-wrenching performances too, with Aditi Ashok's being the harshest and the most humbling as the Bangalore golfer and a JAIN alumnus was in second place right till the end before slipping to fourth after a rain delay and missing the bronze by a single shot (details in accompanying story).

The other high points were provided by Kamalpreet Kaur, who qualified for women's discuss final and finished overall sixth (64m in qualifying and 63.70m in the final), the men's 4x400m relay team (Mohammed Anas, Nirmal Tom, Rajiv Arokia, Amoj Jacob), which failed to qualify for the medal round, but still put up a credible performance setting a new Asian record of 3:00:25 and Bhavani Devi, who won her first round match (15-3 against Ben Azizi of Tunisia) after becoming the first Indian to take part in the fencing event at the Olympics.

Two other Bangaloreans and JAIN alumni fulfilled their Olympic dream as well - Srihari Nataraj (details in accompanying story) in swimming and Niranjana Mukundan (details in accompanying story) in Paralympics - to make the 2021 Tokyo Olympics a truly memorable one for India and Indian sports.



Tokyo heralded a new dawn -- India with 126 competitors (70 men, 56 women), its biggest contingent in the history of the games, who participated in a record 69 events in 18 sports, including fencing for the first time.

ADITI ASHOK

Aditi Ashok was not like any other child growing up in Bangalore. To begin with, she had no interest in cricket, followed neither Bollywood nor Sandalwood. And, more importantly, her parents did not force her into any sport or fretted over her academic pursuits.

Aditi chalked out her own course. It all began when she was five. "We used to go for breakfast on weekends to a restaurant overlooking the driving range at the Karnataka Golf Association (in Bangalore)," recalled Aditi during a chat with veteran golf writer Randell Mell after a practice round at the LPGA International.

"I remember asking my dad - What is that? What are they doing? And my dad said - Do you want to give it a try?"

The rest, as they say, is history. Interestingly, it was not her parents who dragged her to the golf course, but it was the other way round.

Today, Aditi is the first Indian woman professional golfer, and is well on course to achieving greater glory with her heroics at the Tokyo Olympics, having given her that extra spring to soar even higher.

At Tokyo, Aditi, who traces her roots to Jamkhandi in Bagalkot district of North Karnataka, was ranked a lowly 200. But through sheer guts and gumption, the 23-year old stayed at the top of the leaderboard right till the end.

Going into the fourth and final round, Aditi was second and well on course

for a medal as she reached the green with two shots. But she missed a 12-foot putt as the dimpled ball came to the cusp of the hole but careened off much to the agony of more than a billion hearts back in India.

With her back to the wall, the cool and composed Aditi attempted a 30-foot birdie to force a playoff for the bronze medal. But she missed it by a whisker and settled for the fourth place by a solitary shot.

It was as heartbreaking as P T Usha's 100th of a second miss in the 400m hurdles at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

Aditi has already taken part in three more events since flying out of Tokyo while the rest of the Indian Olympic contingent returned home to a rousing welcome. Felicitation functions are still continuing and so are the celebrations, but for Aditi it is back to business.

Excerpts from her interactions with the media soon after finishing fourth in Tokyo:

How was your week in Tokyo?

It was a good week. I was excited about playing at the biggest world stage - the Olympics. I was in the top three for the first three days, I wanted to finish in the top three, but the fourth position is still good so I am happy.

I haven't had a coach for the last five years. Being able to manage on my own and competing with the best, shows that I know what I am doing and I have got it under control. It is gratifying to play with the best players in the world.

If given a chance to replay the final round, how differently will you approach it?

If I can wish for anything, it would be for different drives on the final day because that was one part of my game that didn't work, and I had few birdie opportunities because of the bad drives. As far as decision-making, I don't think I would have done anything differently. I did the best with what I had.

The pressure will build following the Tokyo performance. How might it affect you?

Not really. I still have personal goals to achieve, be it with my physical fitness or with my golf or my driving. I also have a good feel of where my game is and I know what needs to be worked on to compete on the LPGA tour. But I guess it does bring in a lot more expectations ahead of the Paris Olympics in 2024. I have to find a way to deal with the growing pressure and expectations.

How important is your parents' support and encouragement?

I would not be here if not for them (father Ashok and mother Maheshwari). They have sacrificed a lot for me. To have my mom inside the ropes as my caddie in Tokyo was the icing on the cake. I wasn't as experienced then (2016, when her Dad Ashok was her caddie at the Rio Olympics) as I am now. The more you play, the better you get.



I was excited about playing at the biggest world stage - the Olympics. I was in the top three for the first three days. Although I wanted to finish in the top three, I landed the fourth position, which is still good and so I am happy.

Golf Professional
Since 2016.

Tokyo Olympics
4th (67, 66, 68, 68, 269, -15, just one shot behind bronze medal winner).

Highest Honour
Arjuna award (2020). Ladies European Tour Rookie of the Year (2016).

Professional Victories
5 (Ladies European Tour 3. Others 2).

She is the only Indian golfer to have played at the Asian Youth Games (2013), Youth Olympic Games (2014) and Asian Games (2014), apart from the Olympic Games (2016, 2021).

She is a three-time National Junior Champion (2014, 2013, 2012) and a two-time National Amateur Champion (2014, 2011).

College
Jain (Deemed-to-be University), Bangalore.

SRIHARI NATARAJ



To comprehend Srihari Nataraj's achievement, one has to first understand the importance of the Olympic Games. The quadrennial extravaganza is not just another World Cup or a continental event in any other sport. It is the biggest and one of the oldest and most prestigious sporting spectacles on Planet Earth.

To take part in Olympics is in itself a dream which only the best in their fields may fulfill once-in-a-lifetime, after years of blood, sweat and tears. Olympics are to every athlete what Mount Everest is to the climbers.

By participating in the Tokyo Olympics, Srihari has climbed the sporting equivalent of Mount Everest. That he did not win a medal is secondary. In fact, Srihari is only the second Indian swimmer, after his friend and city mate Sajan Prakash, to qualify for the Olympics

by achieving the strict and brutal qualifying standards.

Srihari was not a born athlete or a natural talent. He took to swimming by chance and not by choice; and he left the rest to destiny. And destiny has been kind and rewarding to this sportsman who pursues his dream with single-minded devotion.

It all started when his mother Kalyani accompanied his elder brother Balaji to a swimming pool as per the family doctor's instructions to cure his respiratory problems. Srihari tagged along.

As Balaji took to the water, Srihari followed suit and soon both were not only competing against each other, but with other swimmers in the neighbourhood. A pastime and remedy (aqua therapy) for a minor ailment became a passion in no time. The brothers grew on to become

national level swimmers and later champions.

Today, Balaji is a software engineer in Singapore while Srihari is aspiring for greater glory in the pool with this Olympic achievement serving as a stepping stone.

As a teenager, the tall and lathesome Srihari became the poster boy of Indian swimming and soon many started calling him a 'medal machine' as he unfailingly fished out a medal every time he jumped into the pool in any competition.

A little later, Srihari began breaking national records as if they were some cheap crockery. The year 2018 proved a turning point for the youngster as he set a dozen new national marks and capped a superb run winning all four gold medals at stake at the 2019 South Asian Games in Kathmandu.

His National coach and chief mentor Pradeep Kumar summed up Srihari aptly when he likened him to a rough diamond waiting to be polished. "He is a tremendous talent. How do you feel when you see a rough diamond and see how much polish can be done on it. It feels like that," he said.

And Srihari lived up to his mentor's words and eventually was booked a ticket to the Tokyo Olympics. But it was only after many near misses and sacrifices due to the Covid-19 protocols and restrictions.

He finally fulfilled his dream achieving the 'A' cut of 53.77 seconds in a time trial in Rome with barely a month to go for the Tokyo Olympics.

Excerpts from an Interview

His Olympic experience

It was a dream-come-true. I have been working on achieving this since I was

a little boy. I made the most of it in every sense of the word, be it in the pool, outside the swimming centre, in the athletes' village, everywhere and every moment of it.

My aim was to qualify for the semi-finals at least. But the conditions were much tougher than I had expected. I could barely walk after the event. I'm really disappointed that I could not even clock my best time. (He clocked 54.31 seconds in the 100m backstroke heat which was .4 seconds off his best time).

Off the pool, I mingled with other Indian athletes and made some good friends. I also watched tennis and basketball. I got an opportunity to meet Novak Djokovic and took a picture with him. It was fun.



His immediate future plans:

Frankly, I don't plan long-term. I take small steps and focus on the immediate task at hand. I take one event at a time. I have resumed training after the Tokyo meet and right now I'm preparing for the forthcoming national championships. I will review my performance at the nationals and then turn my attention to next year's Asian Games to be held in China.

About 2024 Paris Olympics

It's on the radar too but first I want to test myself at the nationals and the Asian Games and then start planning for Paris.

A normal day

Usually I get up by 6am and I'm at the pool by 7. I train till 11.30am. Then I hit the gym before returning home for lunch and a break. I'm in the pool again from 4pm to 6pm and then a warm down session. I chill for a couple of hours, watch TV or a movie or read a book before retiring for the day.

Other sports

I play almost all other sports whenever I get time. Sports is in my DNA. I come from a family of sportspersons. My mom was a national level volleyball player, my father played cricket and three of my uncles are Ranji Trophy players and so was one of my cousins (A Vijay). So, sports comes naturally to us.

Academic pursuits

I'm in the final year of B.A (Economics) at Jain College. The best part of being in Jain is that the institution supports me to the hilt. I don't have to bother much about attendance or assignments. The teachers help me prepare for the exams at my convenience and in between major swimming events. That takes a big burden off me and helps me focus on swimming.

I like economics, so, may be, I will pursue a career in the subject.

Sports is in my DNA. I come from a family of sportspersons. My mom was a national level volleyball player, my father played cricket and three of my uncles are Ranji Trophy players and so was one of my cousins (A Vijay). So, sports comes naturally to us.

At Tokyo Olympics

Finished fourth in 100m backstroke heats in 54.31 seconds and was ranked 27th overall.

Major Honour

Ekalavya Award, 2020
National record in the men's 100 m backstroke at SetteColli Trophy Meet, Rome, 2021 First Indian to reach the finals of the 2018 Youth Olympics
Competed in World championships (Korea), Commonwealth Games (Gold Coast), Asian Games (Jakarta) and Buenos Aires Youth Olympic Games.

Major Achievement

Four gold medals (50m, 100m and 200m backstroke and 4x100m medley relay) at the 2019 South Asian Games in Kathmandu.

School

Jain Heritage School, Bangalore

College

Jain (Deemed-to-be University), Bangalore.

NIRANJAN MUKUNDAN



Niranjan Mukundan is a living testament of human will, power, perseverance, grit and determination. His is an extraordinary saga which has the potential to become the mother of all biopics, top any 'Believe It Or

Not' listicle and the ultimate 'Dream Come True' story!

Life has always been tough for Niranjan. He was born with a condition called Spina Bifida, a physical deformity that involves the

incomplete development of the spinal cord, and clubbed feet, a debilitating and rare condition affecting one in ten lakh children.

Hailing from a middle-class family in Bangalore (his father R Mukundan is an independent consultant and his mother M Lakshmi a corporate employee) the youngster underwent more number of surgeries than his age till he turned 10 - 16 in all, 10 major and six minor.

His deformity did not drive the family to despondency or depression. They remained positive and through sheer will power and patience helped their son turn a major physical disadvantage into a miracle of unbelievable magnitude and achieve unprecedented sporting success.

As a para swimmer, Niranjan has won more than 50 medals in national and international events in a cross section of disciplines, including his favourite 50m butterfly stroke and water polo.

By qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics, Niranjan, a man who swam in the rough seas and against torrential currents right through his life, has achieved a life-long dream.

Niranjan has completed his B.Com degree at Jain (Deemed-to-be University) and also done a course in sports management. He aspires to become a Chartered Accountant.

Excerpts from an interview before he left for Tokyo in the last week of August:

About his early days

Early days were very painful; even today, thinking of those days makes me cringe. The pain in the back was unbearable and I could barely

stand, let alone walk or run. And it was getting worse by the day. A doctor suggested aqua therapy to strengthen my legs and my parents; having exhausted all other treatments, decided to give it a try. They took me to a pool in Jayanagar and everything changed from there. From not being able to stand on my own, I soon found myself swimming like a fish. It was unbelievable! Some coaches, particularly chief coach John Christopher, who saw me beat regular swimmers were stunned. It was coach Christopher who spoke to my parents and encouraged them to let me pursue swimming and began to guide me.

The early obstacles

Too many to name. But coach Christopher was persistent and always positive about my future. Three months later, I took part in my first state-level championship and finished last. I was very disappointed and disillusioned and thought of giving up swimming. But my coach was adamant that I continue. "If you swim so well in the open category, just imagine how good

you can be in the para category," he said. That's how I became a para swimmer.

About his chances in Tokyo

I put in everything to make the Olympic qualifying mark. It has given me a lot of confidence. Right now I'm very optimistic. 50m butterfly is my favourite discipline and I'm ranked 10th in the world. I have to just keep improving. I have been training hard since the last few months despite the Covid restrictions. I'm sure all my hard work will not go waste.

I missed the 2016 Rio Olympics due to some technicalities. This time I'm on the right track and I hope it will lead to a place on the podium.

But I'm sad at the same time because my grandmother is not with us anymore to see me swim at the Olympics. She was my pillar of strength as she looked after me through my illness and during my formative years as both my parents used to go to work. Unfortunately, we lost her recently due to Covid.

His message to young and upcoming para athletes

My philosophy is very simple: Don't seek sympathy but demand opportunities. There are many talented para athletes in the rural areas. They need encouragement not only from their parents but also from the government.

As a para swimmer, Niranjana has won more than 50 medals in national and international events in a cross section of disciplines, including his favourite 50m butterfly stroke and water polo.

At Tokyo Olympics

Finished sixth (33.82 seconds) in his heat in the 50m butterfly S7 section.

Major Honours

Karnataka Rajyotsava Award (2015), National Award, 2015 (best sportsman with disability), Ekalavya Award (2016).

Major Achievement

Junior World Champion (2015, won 10 medals, 7 gold and 3 silver, at Stadskanaal, Netherlands).

College

Jain (Deemed-to-be University).



SLEUTHING WITH WORDS



When you look at Manjiri Prabhu's career graph, your idea of a creative person is only reaffirmed. A creative mind is constantly breaking boundaries and is constantly exploring channels to express itself in newer ways. And that is why, a woman who started as a director of television programs and short films for children, became a celebrated and award-winning author and also founder of a literary fest and a fest for spiritual awakening.

Hailing from a family that owned a film production company, she naturally veered towards a Doctorate in Communication Science. Her doctoral thesis was published as a book, 'Roles: Reel and Real Women in Hindi Cinema' and it still remains a rare reference book for students and lovers of Hindi cinema. After working for a while for the family owned film production company, she joined Maharashtra state-owned children's television institute where she wrote, produced and directed over

200 infotainment programs for children and several short films on a range of subjects. Her unpublished psychological thriller novel was adapted into a Hindi feature film by NFDC, titled 'Kuchh Dil Ne Kaha'.

Even as a child she had been writing novels in long hand, complete with hand drawn illustrations coloured in felt pens. It was with Rupa Publications that she got her first break when the publishing house had just launched its Mystery Series. Manjiri's novel Cosmic Clues, with a female protagonist as a sleuth was selected as a 'Killer Book' by the Mystery Booksellers of America. Her second in the series 'Astral Alibi' was honoured as 'Notable Mystery Book' by the Kirayama Prize, 2007. There was no turning back after that. She went on to author 18 novels in the thriller-mystery genre for children.

Among women, she has been acknowledged as a pioneer writer of the

mystery fiction genre in India, and she has a diverse global fan following. She is also the first female mystery author to be published outside India and has earned the sobriquet 'Indian Agatha Christie'. And much recently, none other than Dr. Shashi Tharoor hailed her a 'match for Dan Brown', which indeed is enough testimony of her credentials as a mystery fiction writer!

Manjiri has been invited to speak at reputed International Literature Festivals like Bouchercon, Cheltenham Litfest, the Agatha Christie Festival, UK and International Women Fiction Writers, Matera, Italy. This experience culminated in the inception of the Pune International Literary Festival (PIFL) in 2013. As the Founder/Director, with this festival Prabhu launched Pune city on to the international map of Literature and Arts festivals. It is ranked among the top eight literature festivals of India and observing the tremendous footfall at the festival and

the quality of the sessions at the festival, over the past few years Salzburg Global has been partnering with PIFL.

A firm believer that literature heals, Manjiri thinks that it is a prerequisite for a peaceful society. Recently she also founded the International Festival of Spiritual India (For Humanity and Wisdom). This unique, free festival assists people discover, from the depths of their own being, a sense of purpose and direction for their lives.

She has been awarded 'Inspirational Women of Maharashtra -Excellence in the field of Writing' (2017) and 'Most Admired Leader of Maharashtra' by ERTC Global Herald (2017). Also awarded the Rex Karmaveer Gold Medal Award (2016) instituted by iCONGO and the UN.

An animal welfare activist, she has been rescuing and adopting stray dogs for over 35 years now.

HERE IS AN EXCERPT FROM ALAHAM ANIL KUMAR'S CONVERSATION WITH DR. MANJARI PRABHU.

Your unique style and approach as a suspense genre writer has won you followers internationally. Please comment.

I have always written from my heart, whichever genre I chose. So, in that sense, I think my 'voice' is unique to my writing. I have some international following because I write stories set in different locales, brining in the unique flavour of those cultural-political spaces. I do not flash the 'India badge' (read - write about the underbelly of India) and I do highlight universal emotions in complex plots that traverse across the world. That perhaps explains the international appeal for my works.

Besides, I completely believe in 'showing and not telling', so you will always find the story being narrated from a character's view point, and not of the writer. Also, for some reason, I have shied away from blood and gore, so my darkest of dark mysteries still retain an inherent coziness which may appeal to many people.

My all-time favorite authors are Enid Blyton, Agatha Christie, Wilkie Collins, Daphne Du Maurier and Victoria Holt, as I grew up reading them.

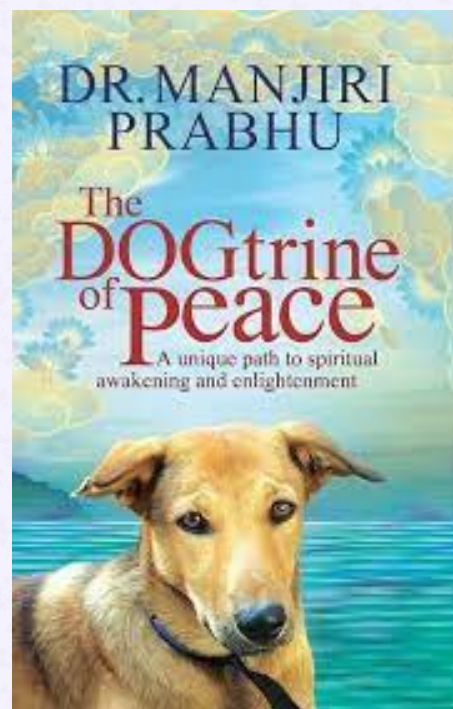
Everybody is attempting to write children's books today. How is your treatment different?

I always wanted to be a children's writer because I grew up reading Enid Blyton books. Pure fun, adventure and mystery and the feel-good end which tells you that all's well that ends well. I wanted to create this same feeling in the minds

of children by writing my own mystery novels for them. And that is why my focus is not so much on education as it is on entertainment. By offering fun, mystery stories that take children on exciting trips of imagination, I would like to show them that reading is fun - wholesome, addictive, adventurous and educative.

What does it feel to be called 'Desi Agatha Christie' and to be compared to Dan Brown by none other than Shashi Tharoor?

I feel humbled and think it is a huge responsibility bestowed on me. I am grateful for this honour, of course, especially being compared to Christie - my own idol; it's like a dream come true. Also being considered equal to a contemporary like Dan Brown who has world-acclaim is definitely fulfilling and gratifying. But a keen reader would notice that my writing style is very distinct and unique and does not follow either Christie or Brown's style, so in that sense, I am unable to find any parallels with them. Yes, if I try to imagine what readers might find, are the intricacies, the detailing and the twists and double twists, selection, descriptions and use of locations, the climaxes and characterization. These could be some of the things that appear similar in our books.



The DOGtrine of Peace: Is this similar to dog therapy/a theory of spirituality? Tell us about the genesis of this philosophy the book DOGtrine of Peace?

Writing has been my professional passion and I am a writer by birth - not by choice, not by chance, not by force - so all my other books are the outcome of my professional work, but the DOGtrine of Peace is my personal mission. I believe that LOVE and COMPASSION is the core emotion and solution for every problem in the world. It is the path we must all tread to bring about peace within ourselves and in society. And for me, being in the company of pure, selfless, divine souls like dogs is the perfect answer to help bring out these emotions that are inherent (but neglected) in human beings.

It is not dog therapy per se, but definitely a philosophy which is a blueprint for spirituality in our day-to-day existence, opening a path to a greater and evolved self.

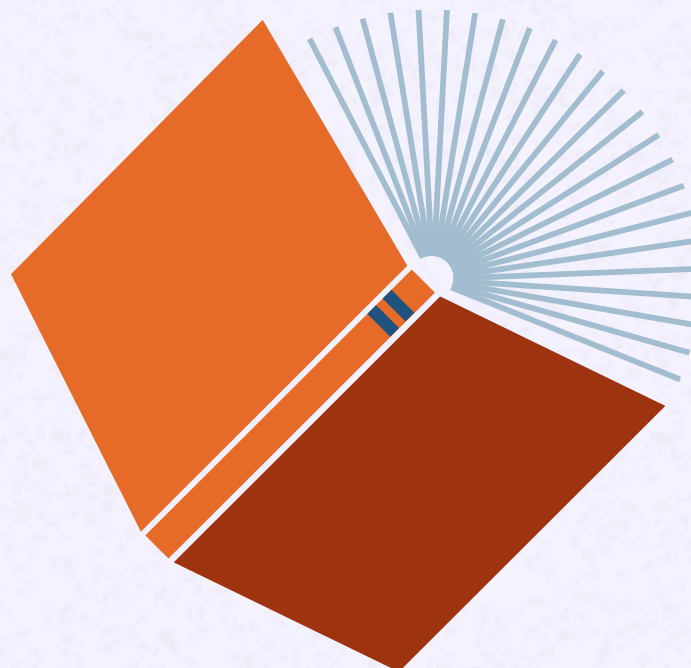
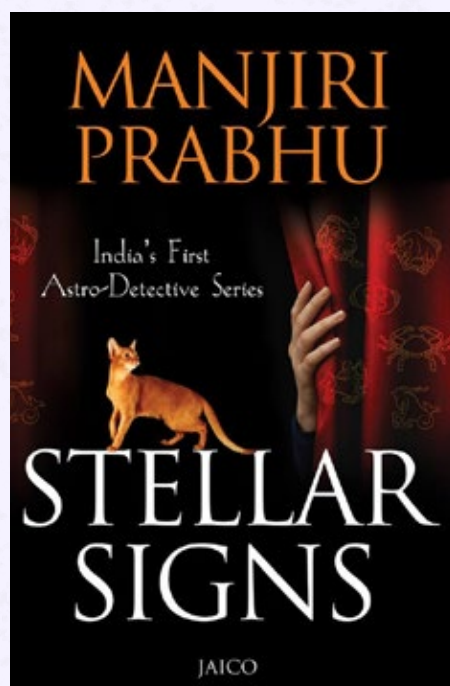
It is a unique and novel path to attain peace and spiritual enlightenment through service to dogs, street dogs and pets alike.

Which of your books is close to your heart? Why?

Each of my books is like a piece of my heart outside my body...I know it sounds extreme, but what I mean is that that is the kind of bond I share with my books. I have a soul connection with them. That is why choosing a single novel is very difficult – each one has been a fulfilling journey of research, hard work, creativity and complete satisfaction.

Nearly a decade since Pune International Literary Festival (PILF) was founded. As an organizer of lit fests myself, I have had many challenges. People are dismissive of fests for various reasons... everything besides lit is discussed, organisers promote certain authors etc.. Not to forget the politics that operates at multiple levels. What's has been your experience?

PILF is different in many ways. Firstly, I did not start it as a professional organizer or an event manager. PILF was a natural transition for me from being a writer, to an organizer. I am not a very outgoing person, which is a necessity for a festival director. I started it because I saw a huge void for a festival of this kind in Pune. Pune being called the 'Oxford of the East', had a long tradition of literary activities and movements, but all in Marathi.



There was nothing truly English, truly International, though it deserved one. So, I decided to take the plunge and started PILF. When I was a new writer, I was not invited to festivals and I have known the kind of politics and commercialization that goes into most festivals. So, I have kept PILF free from that. I call it a 'festival with heart'. We have a balance of established and upcoming writers/authors. We have a wide array of topics for sessions. PILF is completely free for audiences. We encourage audience-writer interaction. We are far from political agendas. We treat all authors with the same respect and hospitality. We try to see that there is some 'takeaway' in every session for the audience. We decide a social theme for every festival, base a few sessions on it and have a social pavilion of posters. We have an exhibition on a celebrated author and a children's stream called Treasure Island.


We have literally carved out each PILF as uniquely as possible right from the first edition, making it a special hub of creative, inspiring energy. Authors are mostly loners working in isolation on their laptops. All they hear from their readers is through mails and social media. Readers on the other hand mostly meet their

favourite author through their writing. But meeting face-to-face as humans is a different experience which both long for. PILF gives both that most essential platform.

Tell us about your engagement with filmmaking.

I grew up watching Hindi movies and I had a huge fascination for filmmaking. As children, my sisters, brother and I would invent games wherein one would be a Director, another a Cameraman and so on. We even wrote scripts and composed songs as children. So, filmmaking is something I grew up with. It was a natural choice for me to choose it as a career.

But in my heart, I guess I will always be a writer first, because that is the foundation of good filmmaking too. Filmmaking for me is an extension of writing – both involve structured writing, visualization, gripping drama and implementation. In writing, the medium is the written word and imagining and recreating reality into visuals on paper. In filmmaking, it is picturizing that written word, giving it a face and projecting that imagination-on-paper onto a screen. Both give me immense satisfaction.



Stitching a Success Story

| USHA PRASAD

Facing the storms of life with fortitude and courage, a group of nine women from E. Paalaguttapalle, a small village in Chittoor District in Andhra Pradesh, have scripted a success story by manufacturing cloth bags on a large scale to sustain their livelihood.

The women, in the age group of 23 to 40, have turned around their lives by running a full-fledged enterprise all on their own and are catering to orders from India and several countries such as US, UK, Canada, Germany, Dubai, Singapore and Hongkong.

The residents of Paalaguttapalle -- a Panchayat with seven Dalit hamlets of approximately 75 households -- are mostly landless agricultural labourers whose basic skills are in agriculture and animal husbandry.

The severe drought that ravaged regions of Rayalseema from 2010 to 2015 put the region in a state of emergency. Due to the failed rains and ground water depletion, agriculture became sustainable for the inhabitants of Paalaguttapalle. They were thrust into starvation, unable to provide two square meals a day for their family.

A Messiah

Aparna Krishnan, a software engineer by profession and a resident of Paalaguttapalle, came forward to assist the village women who were struggling to make ends meet. She began talking to them to help find a solutions to their problems; and indeed she did discover one, that would make the ladies earn a livelihood and become self-reliant. During her conversations, she learnt that the only skill, other than farming, that the ladies in the region possessed was sewing. She encouraged a couple of them to start stitching and they hit on the idea of making eco-friendly, pure cotton cloth bags. Aparna took on the responsibility of marketing the bags on social media. It began with two women, who had received sewing machines from a government scheme, and then a couple of more women joined them and decided to learn stitching to start a team of four.

As they began exploring ways and means to generate money with Aparna's assistance, Annapurna, who had a sewing machine said, "While talking with Aparna, I realised that I could put to use my sewing skills to fulfil my dream of earning a living. After some discussion, we finalised on the idea of cloth bags."

Aparna assisted them initially in procuring cotton bales from Madurai, Tamil Nadu, by investing Rs. 5,000 and marketing the bags via social media platforms. Aparna's buddy placed the initial order for 100 bags. News about the high quality of the bags travelled quickly and soon orders began pouring in. With the other two women joining in, the four women bought sewing machines and become proficient in stitching the bags and taught more and more interested women the skill. From this organic, indigenous setup, more and more women gained the confidence that they too could earn their own living.

For the women of this backward, off-the-map hamlet, the poor transport facility was never a deterrent to dream big. Their sheer hard work and commitment to quality has seen them sail through the hardships.



Mastering the Business-Cycle

The women quickly learnt and became adept in inventory management, procurement of raw materials, unloading goods, packing and dispatching the finished products. They developed a model of allocating tasks and sharing revenue. They are now capable of managing the manufacturing process, end to end and with utmost responsibly and dedication too.

From four women who founded this business in 2016, the team has now expanded to a nine-member staff. "They produce high-quality bags. They are self-taught to make various sorts of bags

and have reached this far through their tenacity and determination," Aparna applauds.

The women create tote bags, vegetable bags with compartments, drawstring

bags, backpacks, sling bags, gusset bags, laptop bags, saree bags, pouches, wedding giveaways, customised bags with logos, bags with kalamkari work, conference bags, and jewellery pouches that are purchased by jewellers in Dubai, Singapore and Hong Kong.

The compartmentalised vegetable bags for separating the veggies are extremely popular. With the assistance of a few volunteers, the ladies receive orders via social media.

While pure cotton is produced in Madurai, the kalamkari is sourced in the adjacent town of Nadiri. The pricing for the bags range from as little as Rs. 40 a piece for tiny pouches to as much as Rs. 450 for a large veggie bag, depending on the size

of the bag. With no major promotions or advertisements, the Paalaguttapalle bags have seen takers from within and outside the country by just word of mouth publicity.

The superior craftsmanship of these bags has been lauded by everybody, and they have also found buyers at numerous conferences and events. With a futuristic vision, along with bags, the ladies have begun to make pickle ready-made blouses, pillow covers, curtains and bespoke blankets, as well as other items like masks, scrunchies and headbands. They are now aspiring to enter the soap and masala powder manufacturing sectors as well.

As wedding and event orders for bags began to pour in, the ladies realised the need for upskilling and wanted to learn screen printing to manufacture bags with contemporary designs. Through social networking, the women connected with a screen-printer in Chennai who was more than happy to be their guide. Vignesh, a volunteer, taught the ladies the skill and helped in procuring and setting the screen-printing equipment in the rural community, Arun helped them with design needs.

“Learning screen printing was fun. We enjoyed making customised bags with colourful designs and logos. The customers are happy with our work. We

are always eager to hone our skills,” says a determined Roopa.

The collective's workshop and store is a 10'x10' space in Aparna's home. The women cut and create the parts in the room and then sew them together in their houses. The next day, when they reconvene in the room, they inspect the product for quality and correct mistakes if any. Subsequently, they pack and organise the bags before heading to the local Pakala post office to mail the items to the specified location. They drive to Tirupati, the closest town, to portion out larger orders.





Local to Global

Their first big order for 1,500 bags came from the Organic World Congress, held in Noida in 2017. They generated a revenue of Rs. 5 lakh. With only manual sewing machines and a short deadline, the women worked day and night to complete the order.

In February 2018, they turned a profit of Rs 25,000 at a handloom expo in Goa, which they attended unprepared with very little stock. Soon, the beautiful bags, made with love, dedication and sincerity by the Paalaguttapalle women, reached different countries across the globe.

While saree vendors in Malaysia buy the saree bags, jewellery shops in Dubai go for the jewellery pouches. "These customers genuinely understand the story and the whole effort of the women," adds Aparna.

Farsighted and Prudent

The ladies have been able to better plan their future since they undertook this project. Some of the ladies were even able to get loans to help them start their own businesses or buy a house for themselves. The ideal outcome, they assert, is that they are no longer reliant on their spouses.

Roopa, one of the group members, began by preparing pickles. Aparna stepped into assist Roopa, by marketing the pickles on social media. Slowly, with the help of her sister-in-law Anitha, she learned how to sew bags and purchased a machine.

"The journey has been exciting. We can speak only Telugu and we have never stepped out of the village. Now we can speak confidently and travel to attend events. Our earnings have helped clear our

loans as well," says Roopa, with aplomb. Their husbands too are very proud of them and also pitch in when big orders come in. The women take home around Rs. 4000 to 5000 every month. More orders bring extra money, which we save for a rainy day or invest in gold.

These ambitious women have even received awards and Anitha has confidently addressed large audiences narrating their success story. In the last five years, they have never been without work. At the same time, they are not overwhelmed by the success and accolades they have received.

"Their success story has encouraged others from the neighbouring villages to join the team. When they get huge orders, they too are roped in," says Aparna. Though faced with the most difficult situations, they braved the odds

to emerge successful in their business. "It is their willpower and commitment to their goals that has brought them success," Aparna asserts.

Today, these women have made significant strides in establishing themselves as self-sufficient entrepreneurs. They are able to live comfortably and have established a presence on the global arena. Always willing to learn anything new, these women are content to live in their hamlet and have no desire to leave. This approach validates the fact that when rural women are given a responsibility and a measure of assistance, they are capable of doing wonders. Without the assistance of any NGO, or government or financial institution, the women have built up their own working capital through their own earnings. Kudos to these self-reliant women who have upheld the true spirit of Atmanirbhar Bharath!

MUSIC CONNOISSEUR, SOUL-KEEPER, INNOVATOR, CREATIVE GENIUS & HUMANIST PAR EXCELLANCE

Aparna Shivapura in conversation with
Dr. Varadarangan, who has made an
unusual contribution to the Classical
Carnatic Music world.

A big title, you think? Small compared to his creation, his contributions to Carnatic Classical Music, which will last through time. Small in comparison to an extraordinary feat, which has disrupted protocols and brought in meaningful transformation, at the very root of its existence.

Dr. Varadarangan, a physicist by profession, an engineer by qualification and a renowned musician and musicologist holds the rare distinction of creating the first ever hide-free, vegan musical instrument in the country, and perhaps in the world. In November 2015, he launched the first synthetic Mridangam, SRI MRIDANGAM. The cause is path-breaking, bringing a whole new school of thought in humanitarianism that is set to change the course for future generation of music instruments.



First time, Hide-Free & Synthetic

Dr. Varadarangan's synthetic creations which include the SRI MRIDANGAM, TABLA, KHOL, MADDALE and DHOLAK are paving the way for a cruelty-free world, while ensuring the quality of musical sounds are not compromised, and if only, enhanced. Dr. Varadarangan has been conscious and unwilling to accept that young cows, goats and bulls are slaughtered, the hide, then used to build on the membranes of the musical instruments.

"It is unacceptable to my moralistic sense and ethical frame and I decided to seriously do something about it. I knew even when I began in 2015 that this path would not be an easy one and will take time to be accepted. But I am extremely motivated, encouraged by the positive changes, the acceptance and the increasing demand for my instruments. This in itself, indicates that more musicians are able to empathize with the condition and the pre-requisites to make instruments using traditional protocols. This is a change, a transformation for a tangible purpose," says the passionate musicologist.

Synthetic & Musically Apt

A vegan himself, Dr. Varadarangan set on an extensive and in-depth research to build an instrument, which would be disruptive in the space, years later. It took him over five years to build the instrument from scratch. Instead of giving up music, as his moral quotient was averse to the thought of slaughter, he pioneered and changed the course in building musical instruments.

The SRI MRIDANGAM, his first creation, is a synthetic fibre glass shell mridangam, with polyester films and rubber material used for the drum-heads. He has come up with a mathematical model to stabilise the sounds, with aesthetically done synthetic strips for alignment on the sides.

"Although the acoustic principle is the same, the change is in the material and the process of creation. The rubbery material

bonds to the polyester film through a chemical process, without the use of adhesives. Interestingly, more than seven decades ago, Dr. C V Raman had outlined in his research, that the mridanga nada (the sound produced by the mridanga) produces harmonic overtones with integer ratio to the fundamentals. To hear these tones, as established by the great scientist, was in itself a great motivation for me," says, Dr. Varadarangan,



Even when he had made the decision to venture into an unknown territory, he knew there would be resistance, obstacles and challenges. One of the principle concerns he had was in the reproduction of the sound, similar to the original. It took him five years to achieve superior sound, and to-date, he works on improvising the sounds.

His research journey is inspiring in itself. He first extensively studied the production and creation of western musical instruments, as they are hide-free. He recalls trying out several materials, to experiment and seek which one would bring the perfect sounds. He finally settled for polyester films which bonded with rubber – the equipment, the process, the methodology was back-breaking!

"This was also a personal exploration. This is not just an activity of building an instrument. It took five and more years of unshakeable concentration, sacrifices and support of the family, and a deeply internal journey to understand the concepts and make it perfect. "The deeper you go, there is that much more to dive into and the learning is continuous," he says.

Awareness and Acceptance

Since the launch and commercialization of the instruments, from unawareness, obliviousness and ignorance, the entire musical fraternity has moved towards awareness, conscious changes to choices and greater acceptance of this innovation. He launched the SRI MRIDANGAM for three types of users – the male pitch (2 ft.), the female pitch (22 inches) and for children (18 inches). Since then, there are other instruments too in the offerings.

"There is a great demand outside the country for these instruments. They have been exported to over 20 countries. It is personally heartening for me to know that the concept, the creation has crossed the Indian shores, because this means there is a global acceptance of this instrument, and thereby, also the cause, which is at the heart of my creation," says Dr. Varadarangan.

The instruments are now used in recitals, performances, concerts, personal use and more. More than 1000 musicians have personally bought these instruments. To-date, he has not received any negative feedback from the fraternity on the sound quality.

Living Your Dream

The vision was to build the whole series of Indian Percussion instruments, using synthetic materials. The objective was to also ensure that there is absolutely no deterioration or compromise on the tonal quality, as they are engineered using a different fabric. A vision combined with ingenuity and acuity, has seen the light of the day.

The instruments are humane, have greater longevity, resistant to weather changes and perfectly, in-tune.

The world continues on its axis without missing a beat, perhaps due to the gravity of such great acts of humanity!



Medley

| ARAVINDA ANANTARAM

I spent a long time trying to choose four books. At first I thought I would go with one fiction, one non-fiction, one translation and one debut author. Then as I looked through books released, I saw that Kazuo Ishiguro had a new book, and Chimamanda Adiche had published her *Notes on Grief*. There were so many authors, so many books... So I decided to start instead with genres I enjoy.

Crime fiction has been a source of comfort in the last year, and that's how I found *Who is Maud Dixon?*

I also like contemporary non-fiction and while reading Salman Rushdie's *Languages of Truth*, his observation on how we are reading more non-fiction these days and even our fiction writers are only telling stories they know, too loosely based on familiar lives driven close to home. Our fiction has lost its ability to push the boundaries of the craft. It's also what makes a lot of fiction very dull, especially in Indian English writing. So I thought I should look

at fiction. Marina Lewycka is one of my favourite authors and seeing she had a book out this year, I chose her. The third book, *The Illuminated* came about because I write a column on tea for the Mint Lounge and this started when Anindita Ghose was its editor. She brought her first novel out this year so I thought the experience of reading a novel by a person known rather than unknown was interesting, for me at least. And last, I looked up to see if Alexander McCall Smith had been busy. Of all the authors I have read, I think he is the most prolific. And sure enough he had one book out this year, and set in a tea estate.

So you see, the choice of books was entirely personal. I have - rather than write a formal review, which I don't know how to do - tried to offer a context to the author/ book so that readers can make a more informed decision to read a recommendation or not.

Who is Maud Dixon?

By Alexandra Andrews

There is something supremely satisfying about reading crime fiction, and over the years this genre has given us iconic characters, whether Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys or Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Poirot or Lisbeth Salander and Cormoran Strike in recent years, not to forget Feluda, Inspector Brunetti and Mma Ramotswe. The appeal, I think, is in how these detectives use superior intelligence to crack the clues and solve the crimes committed, and also somewhere in that they fall on the side of the good, fighting as they the unsavoury sorts. It also helps that they neatly tie up loose ends for us, so we leave the book without any nagging unanswered questions.

While looking for new additions to this genre I came upon *Who is Maud Dixon?* by a debut author, Alexandra Andrews. Happily, descriptions of the book ranged from “literary thriller” to “dark comedy”.

It's a book to reckon with for a few reasons, mainly that Andrews takes crime but ignores the rules of the genre as she plots it. For one, there are no good guys vs bad guys here; neither does it begin with a crime followed by a detective chasing the criminal.

The book is set in the world of publishing, where Florence Darrow is an ambitious editorial assistant, Helen Wilcox is a reclusive writer looking for an assistant, and Maud Dixon is the pseudonym of a best-selling author, real identity unknown.

Florence becomes Helen's assistant and they travel to Morocco for the latter's research. Saying anything more would give it away but both Florence and Helen seem flawed, which makes the book a real page turner since you can't tell which one of them is so flawed as to commit murder. It leaves you wondering about how wide the grey area is that separates good from evil.

The book may not hold universal appeal but that Andrews is attempting something different with a classic genre, and works it remarkably well, makes it a worthy read.

The Good, the Bad and the Little Bit Stupid

By Marina Lewycka

In the genre of literary fiction, I do think comic fiction is a bit underrated. Which is a pity because some of the best examples of the craft of writing are demonstrated in these books. Comic fiction is not about laugh out loud humour; as Howard Jacobson, master of this genre, says, “If you're going to be a great comic writer, not a

humorist, you've got to take it into the throat of grief.” And that's the thing — great comic fiction is a fine balance between absurd and ridiculous. For reasons unknown, there seem to be fewer women comic writers and among them, Marina Lewycka is perhaps the best known. From her outstanding *The Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian*, she has steadily produced a set of books, each a comic masterpiece. *The Good, the Bad, and the Little Bit Stupid* is her sixth novel.

In this novel, Brexit, immigrants, parents and children, husbands and wives, men and lovers, and a phone call announcing the transfer of 7 million pounds to a bank account all come together in a story that shows us the good, the bad and the absurdities of our times. Like a true comic novel, it is set in an ordinary family in an ordinary neighbourhood in Sheffield. George and Rosie Pantis — despite the unfortunate surname — are a middle-aged (more senior than middle aged) couple with a grown-up-and-moved-out-of-the-house son and daughter. The story begins when George gets a call from the Kosovan State Lottery saying he has won, what if he converts



equals 7,300,321.33 GBP. His son, Sensible Sid (real name Poseidon Pantis) tries to explain to George about how scams work and why George should safeguard his account and that 'password' is not a suitable password but events have already been set in motion and we get a ringside view to how it plays out.

For those new to the genre, allow at least 25 pages before you give up. It grows on you and before you know it, you will be drawn right in.

The Illuminated By Anindita Ghose

Another debut author in this list, I picked this book because it's someone I have worked with and it's a different experience reading something written by an author who is real, and not just someone, somewhere far away.

The Illuminated has the friction of a mother-daughter relationship as the fulcrum but its not about difficult relationships alone, that would dismiss the entire efforts of the author. Let me begin with the title, which extends from the book's motif of moon phases, making it also inherently feminine in some ways. The chapters alternate to turn the focus on the mother, Shashi, and the daughter, Tara, as they come to terms with the death of the one man, they both loved dearly, Robi Mallick, a celebrated architect and Shashi's husband and Tara's father. There is a son as well but he appears in the beginning but steps aside early on as the women take over the story.

By using two generations to offer their views, the author allows us to feel equally sympathetic towards both characters and their struggles with grief in a world that's changing. Through the book, Ghose also makes a political statement with her creation, MSS, a right-wing organisation

that is taking over the country, and pronouncing itself the keepers of culture. Somewhere, she cocks a snook at these same right wingers in making Tara a Sanskrit scholar, taking classical Sanskrit literature, a claim of rightwing culture and handing it over to the urban, independent and slightly angry young woman.

Ghose writes with deft confidence, in a strong voice that emerges without losing on plot or craft. The end is unexpected, unrealistic in a novel otherwise rooted in realism. But this too is appealing, because the solutions to the problems that besiege our society today are perhaps to be found in the radical and unexpected, and via women.

The Pavilion in the Clouds By Alexander McCall Smith

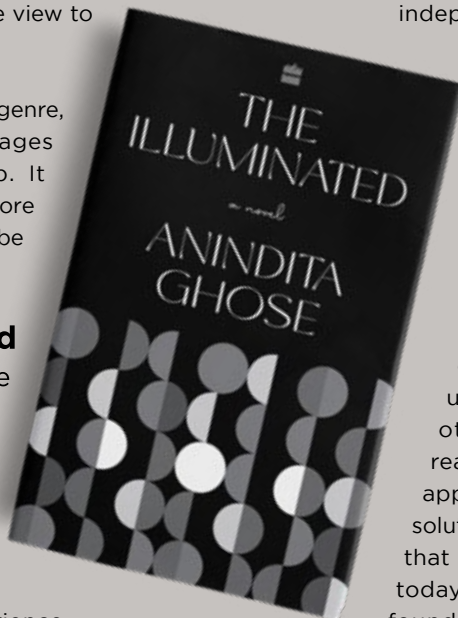
The prolific Scottish author and creator of *The No.1 Ladies Detective Agency*, *44, Scotland Street* and the *Isabel Dalhousie* series brought a standalone book this year, *The Pavilion in the Clouds*.

A great tea lover, McCall Smith, I remember reading, travels with his own teapot lest his tea is brewed in one that also has been used for coffee. His love for Assam tea is well known now, so seeing that this novel was set in a tea estate in Sri Lanka in the 1930s, was reason enough to embark on a reading. The colonial tea industry changed plenty for the beverage, taking it from craft to commodity, making it ubiquitous and variously, a catalyst for change. But what it also did was create a real human rights problem in the countries where the plantation tea

gardens came into being. Indentured labour and their working conditions continue to remain a problem in these countries, 100 years later.

Being familiar with the tea industry, what, I think McCall Smith does in *The Pavilion in the Clouds* is, in his own gentle way, tell another side of the story and also offer something of an apology. It's not overt and yet, I sensed it all the way through.

The story begins in 1938, in Ceylon, in the tea country of Nuwara Eliya and the estate, Pitlochry. The family is Henry Ferguson, the Scottish planter, his wife Virginia and their daughter Bella. The story takes place in two parts, in Pitlochry when Bella is still a child, and in England in 1952 when Bella is an adult and in university. The book is about Bella making sense of events that took place in Part 1 and coming to terms with it in Part 2. But for us, it's a window to a time when the British knew that the time had come for them to leave. We often hear of it as a collective event but at the individual level, this was often hard. Many had been born here or spent way too long in the colonies and yet 'home' as Virginia also says, was not here in the lands where they ruled as master. Their lack of belonging anywhere and their eventual exit from the colonies is not often talked about and what better way than a story that tells it.



THEATRE THRIVES IN NEW FORMATS

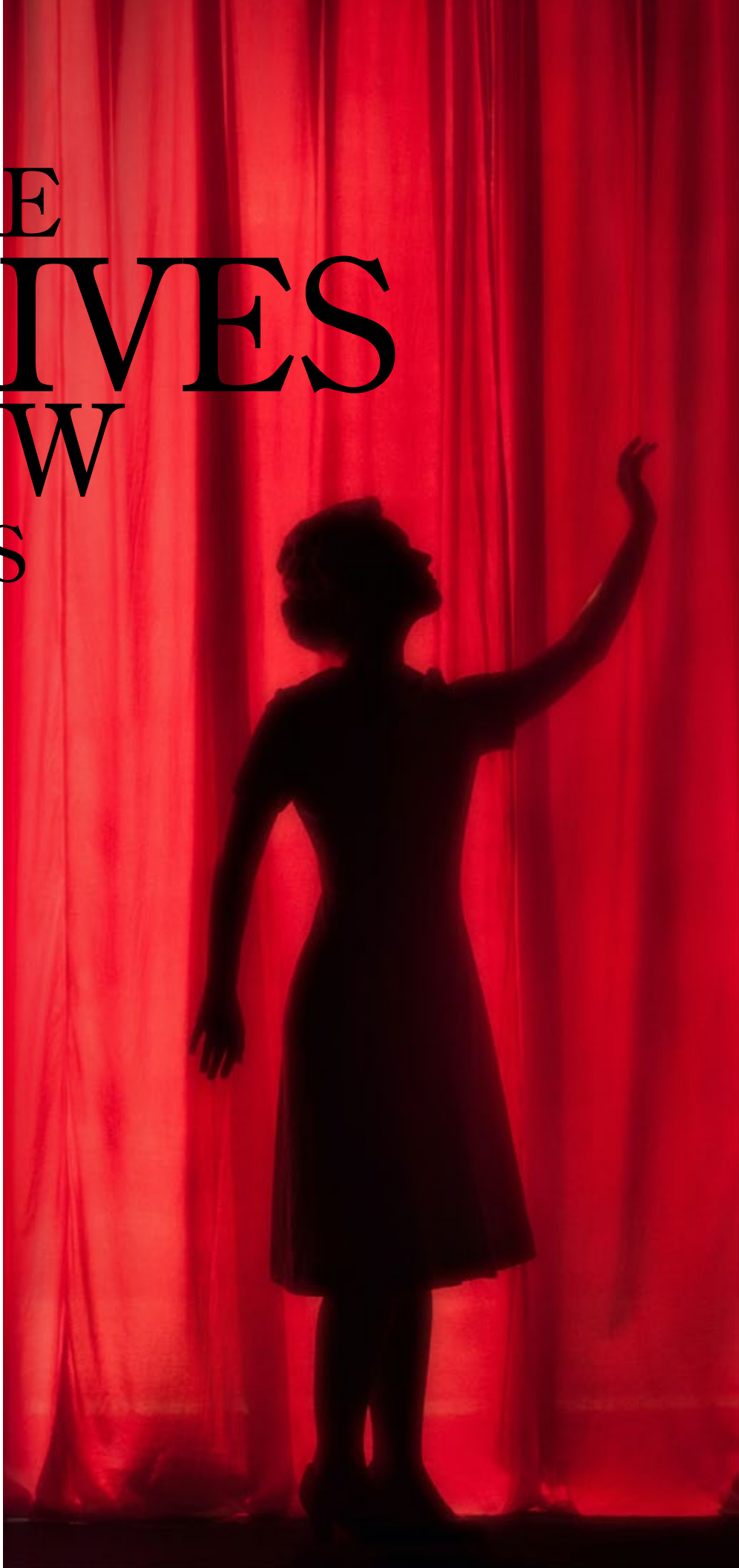
| SRIDHAR PRASAD

Going virtual has become a boon for a 'regressing' Bengaluru theatre scene since the lockdowns. Groups cancelled 'sure-hit' shows when the pandemic made a 'dramatic' entry in March 2020.

Troupes are still recovering from Covid rules, amidst brief respites between lockdowns, and audiences are gradually warming up to step out to view plays.

Add to this, the government's policy of 9 PM lockdown and 50 per cent occupancy. Since, most shows happen in the evening it becomes difficult for people to reach home before 9 PM curfew.

During the lockdown, theatre groups with large social media footprint, survived through online workshops and ticketed shows (pay per view basis). However, dozens of theatre groups haven't staged a show since March 2020.





Three-hour plays have almost disappeared. People are now comfortable with the 90-minute or 60-minute show formats. Among the groups that have managed to be active in Bengaluru are *Vijayanagara Bimba*, *WeMove*, *Sanchaya*, and *Prakasam*.

That said, not everything about theatre in Bengaluru is gloomy. Amateur theatre is adapting to modern scripts and younger playwrights are staging plays. Fresh adaptations are now cornering plays that have been done to death.

In response to the question whether theatre is being overshadowed by cinema, P D Sathish Chandra of *Prakasam* group, gives his view succinctly with a metaphor: "Theatre is more fluid and alive. Cinema is a readymade product which is available without human touch. It's like drinking tea at home (made by you to your taste) and going out to drink tea made by a vending machine."

While there is widespread talk that theatre artists are getting a break in cinema, courtesy Covid restrictions and the OTT success, cinema has always found some of the best talent from theatre. Satish Chandra, substantiates: "When it comes to talent hunt, it is an accepted norm for the cinema industry to look at theatre. Earlier, all stars were from theatre (including Dr. Rajkumar). Younger directors like Mansore, Pawan Kumar, Rishab Shetty who were

and still are theatre practitioners proved to the rest of the film industry what a goldmine of talent theatre is. Whenever tinsel town needs 'real actors' it looks at theatre." This is not true of just the Kannada film industry.

"Theatre is among the oldest performing arts. It has assumed different forms, survived the tyranny of establishment -- kings and governments. It has been the voice of the voiceless. Pandemic or not, it is here to stay. Only the format keeps changing," says Satish Chandra.

Scene in Bengaluru

English and Kannada theatre in Bengaluru is drawing its themes from several live and burning issues in today's society. Theatre is far quicker to respond and engage with such issues than films.

"Themes today address fresh issues like the Covid crisis, war and LGBTQ rights. Comedies are also being performed to lighten the mood of audience as most of the news on TV and newspapers is macabre," observes Ganesh Prasad R, a budding and independent theatre practitioner.

Asked for his opinion on the question 'whither theatre from here?' Ganesh Prasad says: "Many groups like *WeMove*, *Rangashankara*, *Abhinaya Taranga*, *Vijayanagara Bimba*, *Natana*, and *Kalagangotri* have already made a comeback with new vigour. Theatre in Bengaluru and the rest of the country for that matter has proven to be very resilient," he adds.

Despite the pandemic there have been many teams wanting to perform. There are several theatre schools that have rendered their courses online and people, including engineers and doctors are taking to theatre schooling at an accelerated pace. There have been brief pauses in theatre activity during lockdowns and strictures, but theatre in India is still alive and kicking.

Classes and rehearsals that happen online may not seem exciting but when actual shows are recorded and made

available online, the performers enjoy the experiences and learn from them.

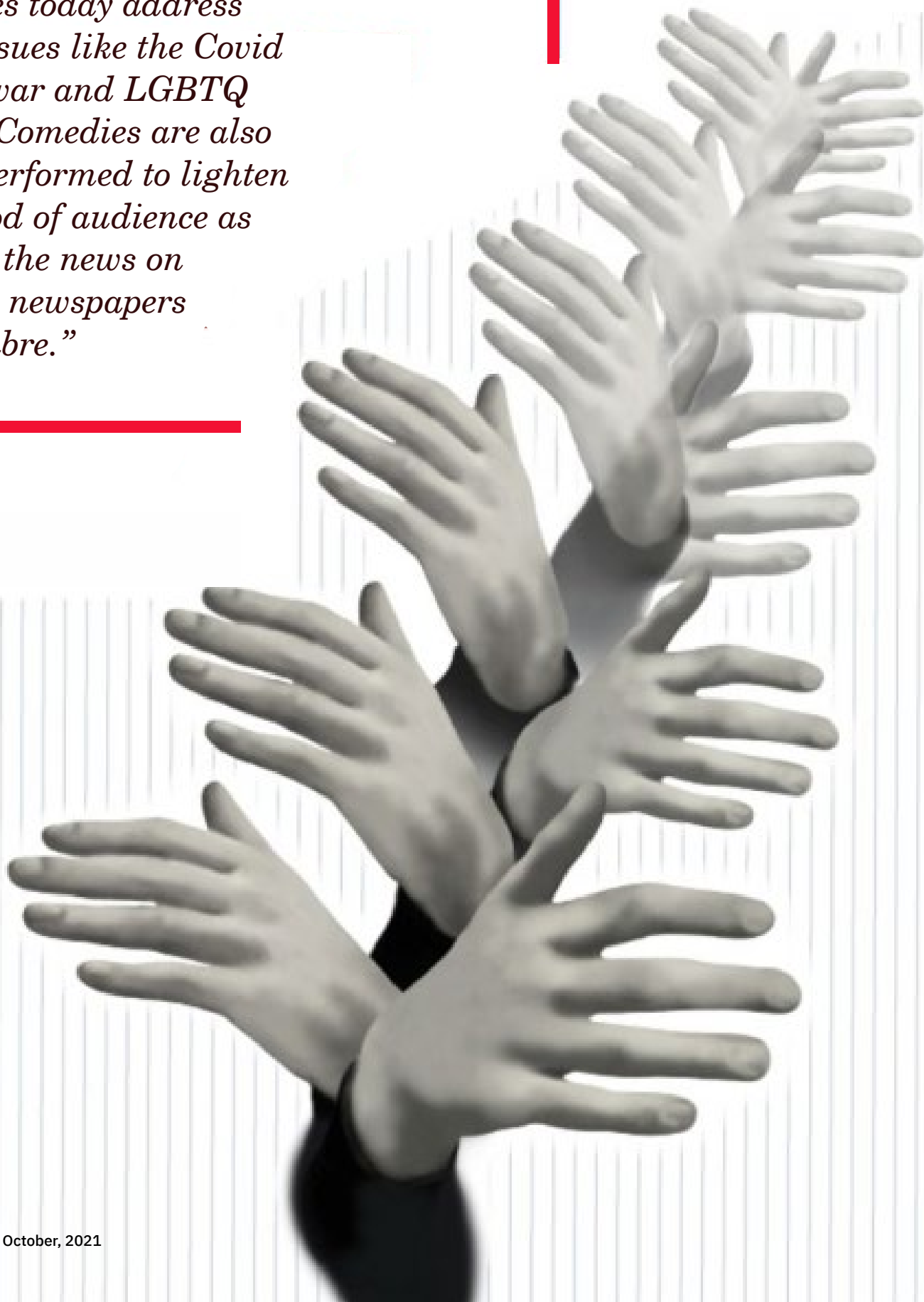
Ironically, Covid-19 has come as a blessing in disguise for theatre in India. Now the online shows are paid for and viewed by global audiences. People across the world are subscribing to online drama courses being hosted out of Bengaluru by groups like *Vijayanagara Bimba*, which is run by Dr. Sushma B V. The key here is that theatre groups, whether they are English or Kannada production units, need to adapt to technology at a rapid pace to take their performances to worldwide audiences.

Theatre activity which had almost come to a standstill early this year (2021), was revived by the government's relaxation of rules allowing 50 per cent occupancy. Troupes resumed rehearsals and began to stage smaller plays. Most of these plays ran to full house (50 per cent occupancy). This encouraged troupes to produce and stage more plays. Smaller plays with lesser number of characters and a 60-minute duration have now become the norm. Groups are now making up for lost time by producing smaller, but a greater number of plays, a month.

Today theatre viewership has experienced a paradigm shift. It has expanded from a few people who attend plays in auditoriums to a larger viewer base comprising of people from all walks of life and all ages, because performances are available for viewing on a handphone.



“Themes today address fresh issues like the Covid crisis, war and LGBTQ rights. Comedies are also being performed to lighten the mood of audience as most of the news on TV and newspapers is macabre.”



It would not be an exaggeration to state that with the adoption of technology, theatre in India has come of age. Now watching theatre has become a lot more convenient because plays can be watched anytime at any place and again and again (pay per view) if so desired.

This does not mean that auditorium shows are obsolete. Like in everything else (work from home and office alternatively) theatre, performers and audiences have adapted to a 'hybrid' format wherein people attend shows in auditoriums when they can, and watch shows on their mobiles when they cannot.

Given that millions are getting their Covid-19 vaccinations each day in the country, people are now not hesitant to go out of the house to a theatre to watch shows by following Covid prevention protocols like mask wearing, sanitisation and social distancing. The gist of the matter is people are venturing out of their houses to watch plays just like in the pre-pandemic days. For theatre buffs and artists, it is business as usual.

Even the themes that are being addressed by younger playwrights, artists and directors have seen a visible shift to suit modern tastes. Sensitive issues like terrorism, transgenders, status of women and other gender disparities, differences between the rich and the poor and untouchability are some of the current themes. "Productions are being made with a larger canvas these days," says Dr. Sushma of *Vijayanagara Bimba* theatre school.

Asked whether theatre is aping cinema these days in its choice of themes and production, Dr. Sushma has an interesting answer: "Comparing theatre to cinema is like comparing a rose to a cauliflower. Theatre can afford to be creatively fickle and change forms frequently. Cliches' and formulas reign in cinema production. Because of the massive cost involved

in production, cinema cannot afford to stray from accepted hit formulas. Theatre is flexible and can change themes and methods as society changes". Besides in theatre, with every staging a play evolves along with the characters. The Ingenuity of the cast to 'improvise' makes theatre extremely dynamic and in this sense, film is static.

Asked about the future of theatre in the country, Dr. Sushma says that theatre has the capability to survive, sustain and outlast any crisis and theatre activity can continue for perpetuity even when cinema goes bust and suffers gargantuan losses. This is because theatre is intimate and smaller in production and lesser investment is needed. In theatre, performers connect with audiences directly and closely. It has a personal touch whereas cinema seems glamorous and out of reach of the common man. "Theatre is reality; Cinema is fantasy," says Dr. Sushma crisply, as she sums up the difference.



Thanks to the adoption of technology, producers, directors and script writers are experimenting with newer forms. The reduced cost of online productions which is also called 'playback theatre' have emerged as dark horses during the pandemic.

"Many new forms and genres that were not considered theatre at all have been

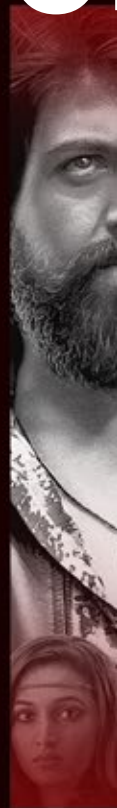
given rebirth as theatre forms. Stand-up comedy, spontaneous theatre, book reading, and street plays have come to be accepted as the new genres of theatre especially in Kannada and other languages. Though Kannada theatre is yet to become what might be called profitable, in terms of regular income from activities like acting, directing, playwriting, art and music direction etc. monetarily speaking, it is moving in the right direction after migrating to online forums," Dr. Sushma adds.

Another interesting development is that professionals in other fields like software engineering are taking up theatre for a livelihood. Bored out of their skulls in their own professions and having created a corpus for their retirement, those willing to take up creative pursuits like theatre are becoming increasingly common. "Consequently, the entry of those working in corporates into theatre has made theatre very professional," notes Dr. Sushma.

Many theatre artists, over the years, have got a break in cinema says Dr. Sushma. Well-trained in character analysis, such artists can thrive on the big screen. Their schooling and theory make them better actors and they make their mark in cinema. But their first love remains theatre and they continue to act in plays. Some noted examples are, C R Simha, Ratna Patak Shah, Naseeruddin Shah, Shabana Azmi, Deepti Naval, Amol Palekar, Farooq Sheikh and scores of others across vernacular theatre.

People as diligent as Ganesh Prasad are considering theatre as a true place of learning to perform better than before. For many desperate people wanting to be back on stage and involve themselves in theatre again; now is the time to be back (taking all the necessary precautions). "Theatre is your life in front of you and the only barrier is yourself," states Ganesh Prasad.

GLORIFYING VIO



| SHWETHA HC

When it comes to violence in action, science fiction and fantasy films, I am everything but straight-laced. The antagonist should be punched occasionally for being the villain that he is, and the hero should not be prevented from occasionally expressing his machismo with his fists. But that's it!. One action sequence in the whole movie should satisfy the action thirst of the movie goers. But when violent scenes are used in movies to make up for weak storylines or to make a narrative "grim" or "black," I find it distressing.

Without an iota of doubt, India is one of the most passionate nations for movie-making and viewing in the world. Every genre whether romance, action, thriller, drama or erotic comedy, is watched and cherished with zeal. However, if there is one genre

that has its own set of following and certainly has produced some commercial blockbusters, it is the genre of violence.

Images of crime are quite prevalent in our current cinema landscape, and the power of such cinema gets under our skin and enthralls us. While the global movie industry has a long tradition of depicting violence, Indian cinema has done little to skirt around the issue.

Indian cinema has often boasted of films like *Sholay*, *Om*, *Satya*, *Dayaawaan*, *Ghajini*, *Vastav*, *Bahubali*, *KGF*, *Uggramm*, *Gangs of Wasseyapur*, *Bandit Queen*, *Dushman*, *Rakth Charitra* and many more, in which violence has not only been a central theme, but has also been lauded. Fighting and assassination are frequently portrayed as a practical

LENCE IN INDIAN



and quick response to crises without regard to repercussions, particularly when it involves heroes fighting villains.

The viewer's experience with cinematic violence like rape and retribution, homicide and serial killing, torture and terrorism - is explored in scenes of violence and has influenced the lifestyle of a few people. The irony is that viewers fail to recognise that such cinematic depictions of violence are normally far-fetched and overdone.

The majority believe that they watch films and television programmes for entertainment purposes. However, in the greater scheme of things, they are unaware that several moments convey subliminal messages of violence. In several of these films, the protagonist's violence is regarded as a sign

of strength and courage, worthy of admiration and a character who refuses to engage in violence is often stereotyped and dismissed as weak and effeminate.

Due to their widespread appeal, violence and crime have long captivated filmmakers worldwide. For people of all ages, the primary source of exposure to violence is cinema. Cinema experts have asserted that love, law-breaking and lust have dominated 75 per cent of commercial films produced worldwide since the invention of cinema in the late 19 Century. While for the most part, the viewer's interest remains just recreational, for some, it grows into a mania and, even further, into imitation, and there have been a few films through the decades that have inspired real-world violence.

POLICE VIOLENCE

Until around two decades ago, Indian films portrayed police officers as someone who entered the scene after the destruction was caused, but the depiction has shifted dramatically in recent years, most notably in the last decade. While in the past, the real police force took offense for depictions of cops as scruffy, slovenly and imbecilic, today's police do not have to deal with that kind of prejudice. Our television screens are clogged with images of heroic police officers. We have rightist and democratic officers; heroic cops who will work outside the system when the situation requires and will never confront a problem because they are always correct; and they will never have to work against the system because the system is always correct.

The representation of police officers in the propagation of criminal justice shows the difference between reality and fiction. Whether in comedies like *Dishoom* or dramas like *Simmba* and *Dabbang* or high octane action flicks like *Force* and *Batlaa House* or female-centric *Mardaani* and *Jai Gangajal* and the endless *Singam* series, cops are positioned primarily as the heroes of the narrative. As viewers, we are socially conditioned and encouraged to see the acts of the cops on a positive note, even as they violate constitutional rights, ethical standards and strain the bounds of acceptability.

Beating someone black and blue inside or outside of a police station in the films has become an unwritten order. If it is portrayed as, such a society can exist in our films so readily, it may also be thought of existing in real life. In our society, where the audience is

easily persuaded by their favourite star on the big screen, films depicting police violence must be given a reconsideration.

Portrayal of violence is not just limited to the plot but many images, themes, titles and taglines upholding violence, bloodshed and killings are used to promote the film and to pull crowds. For example, a decade ago released *Rakht Charitra* has a blood-y title which loosely translates to History of Blood. The 2019 released blockbuster *Master* starring Vijay and Vijay Sethupathi, has the two actors shouting at each other with their faces dripping in blood. *KGF*, a country wide blockbuster, was high on dark action and violence, which turned out to be a crowd puller. Prabhas's new pan-Indian film *Salaar*, which is awaiting release, comes with the tagline 'The most violent men... called one man... the most violent'.

Rakht Charitra (History of Blood)

Ram Gopal Varma's directorial - a crime flick garnered overwhelmingly excellent reviews. While the violent trailers' brutality dissuaded many spectators, it was also an attraction for action lovers.

Circa 2010 - when the movie was all set to release, the director took pride in revealing to the media that his upcoming film *Rakht Charitra* would be the most violent film ever seen on Indian screen.

"*Rakht Charitra* will be definitely the most violent film ever... but every violent act in it comes from a very deeply and intensely

felt emotion," Varma, wrote on his microblogging site.

The film, which lived up to its title, welcomes the audience with an unsettling violent tone as an introductory scene and churns bloodshed, heavy actions and killings in every frame and sequence resulting in a brutally intense storyline.

Har pal, har roz khoon bahega yahan ... aur tab tak behta rahega ... jab tak yeh zameen inke rakht se laal nahi ho jaati. (Blood will flow here every moment, everyday and it will flow until this land doesn't turn red from their blood.) This line had the maximum number of whistles and applauds from the audience. This kind of behaviour reflects the audiences' mindset and makes one wonder if the society influences film makers to create such movies or if films are influencing the society. The presence of prominent actors like Surya, Vivek Oberoi, Shatrughan Sinha, Kota Srinivasa Rao and Radhika Apte in the film raises the question whether renowned actors should shoulder the responsibility of selecting violent sequences in a more accountable and communally conscious manner.

While for the most part, the viewer's interest remains just recreational, for some, it grows into a mania and, even further, into imitation, and there have been a few films through the decades that have inspired real-world violence.

The blood-soaked movie is set in the disputed region of Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh, where the seeds of conflict between the two communities are first sown. As the movie progresses, the audiences experience the gruesome, harrowing degradation of the human mind and body to find themselves absolutely astonished by the overwhelming intensity of the film. Despite its simplicity, *Rakht Charitra* which is about the retribution between two extended families has such an effect that you can connect to the hatred, sorrow, and vengeance that drive the tale.

GANGS OF वासेपुर (WASSEYPUR)

From the initial flashes of the five hour magnum opus, divided into two parts, Anurag Kashyap's directorial, Gangs of Wasseypur is fiery, brutal and blasphemous. The plot revolves around the lives of three generations of vicious gangsters, cruel backstabbers and powerful con artists and exposes the rivalry between the Khan family and corrupt politician Ramadhir Singh, who is the antagonist. Singh's ambition to hold on to the power makes him ruthlessly kill his former muscle man – the Khan patriarch, which starts the revenge war. All told through the eyes of Nasir (Piyush Mishra), the story begins in the British colonial era just before independence and moves forward.

The dialogue: Kabhi Chahne se hum zindagi dete hai aur kabhi bhoool se. Lekin maut hamesha hamari khud ki chuk se hoti hai. (Sometimes we give life by desire and sometimes by mistake. But death is always our own fault.), is enough to give you a sneak peek into the heavy-duty violence induced in the movie. The movie is a depiction or rather demonstrates how violence monopolises and conquers life.

The directors' attempt at trying to make the audience forcibly comprehend violence becomes evident while the vehemence unfolds in a chain-like fashion throughout the narrative. Violence

forms the storyline in the movie with each subplot depicting one act of violence. Being the only storyline in the tale, it undermines the actual content/plot of the story. Although the film's relentless brutality threatens to reduce it to a series of murders in pursuit of a narrative, it also presents a message about democracy, corruption, political decadence and the immorality of the human spirit. The grimy and deprived state of Jharkand in eastern India, becomes the backdrop to depict violence in a romanticised manner, and this was a value addition to the film's realistic and distinctively unglamorous setting.

When the movie was all set to release in theatres in 2012, filmmaker Anurag Kashyap made tall claims about not holding back when it came to presenting violence in a raw and realistic manner. The director further revealed that he was unhappy over the censor board's decision of having a beheading scene removed from his film, but he had to abide. Additionally, the director stated that his picture was intended for adults, not for vulnerable minds, and that he did not wish to be sarcastic when depicting violence in his film, which leads me to wonder if a filmmaker can properly scrutinize violence without glorifying it. Shouldn't a director bear an obligation to society while

presenting inhuman scenes on screen?

With both content generation and consumption growing at an exceptional speed, and the necessity for the industry to widen its horizons film makers have preferred violence, which is apparently the biggest form of entertainment today. Acceptance of violence in films has generally been taken for granted.

Indian film is one of the world's largest industries, but it frequently fails to live up to the fraction of duty it bears to society. While large numbers and box office domination are normally used to define success, the ramifications are sometimes overlooked. Despite violence having existed long before movies, it is possible that its glorification is a risk factor. Crafting a piece of entertainment featuring excessive action and violence might be a topic debated for the real-world consequences. It may intend to showcase the filmmakers' creativity and unbridled enthusiasm, yet glorifying violence is by every word, socially irresponsible and the effects are more detrimental than amusing, as rightly said by Oscar Wilde "Life imitates art far more than art imitates life".



PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS IN MANUFACTURING

| USHA PRASAD

Everything today in the digital world, is driven by data. Data has been critical in factories as it enables the development of the greatest possible product for the client and in order to maintain a competitive edge and enhance decision-making, many businesses are focusing their efforts on utilising predictive analytics to make key business decisions.

This predicament has been precipitated by the emergence



of intelligent machines and artificial intelligence (AI). Today's machines are more intelligent and capable of analysing the data supplied to them. And, here's where the role of predictive analytics also comes into the fray. Predictive Analytics enables transparency, benchmarking, and intelligence. It provides manufacturing operations with the ability to extract valuable insight from complex and diverse data. Predictive analytics has

evolved over the last several years from an unusual method used in a few sectors to a competitive differentiator with a constantly increasing variety of applications. Predictive analytics usage is accelerating as a result of three converging trends: the Big Data phenomenon, ever-improving data analysis tools, and a constant stream of verified success in new applications.

With the data analytics space becoming very strong, there is an increased use of embedded analytics, and customers want to have analytics happening on the cloud, as well as on the device. In some cases, data analytics can be integrated with simulation. This helps to take the insight from the data, and build better and smarter products using simulation. Here is where predictive analytics plays a key role. With this, you are driving more efficiency into your products and business. This is happening across industry verticals, such as automotive, industrial automation, insurance, healthcare, retail, banking, etc. which use predictive techniques, to make several important decisions. Some companies have also gone ahead in having a digital twin

What is Predictive Analytics?

It is a form of machine learning that uses historical data to make predictions about future outcomes. The adoption of real-time data helps companies to be more productive, optimise performance and supply chains, ensure quality, and reduce costs.

Whether it is digitization, automation, business intelligence, predictive analytics, or to some extent AI & ML – the adoption is happening at a lightning speed across verticals. IT Leaders, however, concur that adoption of these technologies are playing a big role in deriving a better RoI. Even investment managers in the wealth management industry are leveraging predictive analytics for asset risk or even to generate investment ideas.

Benefits of Predictive Maintenance

Predictive Maintenance offers a host of benefits to manufacturers. With data

becoming an increasingly important asset of modern manufacturing businesses, manufacturers are relying more on predictive analytics to achieve their goals and deliver customers. It helps in getting actionable insights in real time.

"In the face of growing competition and to stay agile and meet customer's demands on time in the current landscape, the manufacturing sector is fraught with challenges in upgrading and modernising their infrastructure. As IT heads, we must focus on leveraging AI/ML, Cloud, and predictive maintenance from an industry 4.0 standpoint," informs a CIO from a cement manufacturing company.

Preventing Downtime

Sudden failure of machinery and equipment is a constant source of consternation for manufacturers. Businesses suffer significant losses as a result of downtime caused by unexpected breakdowns. While malfunctions might be difficult to detect at times, it is important for manufacturers to avoid them and maintain the seamless operation of all automated machinery, which if left unchecked, might result in significant production downtime.

How can predictive analytics assist manufacturers at these instances? It enables easy access to past machine performance, correlates insights, and generates reliable projections of when a machine is likely to fail. Manufacturers may design their maintenance cycles with this vital information in mind, ensuring that all predicted failure scenarios are treated properly. The timely warnings assist in conducting preventative maintenance inspections to avert failures. With data becoming an increasingly important asset of modern manufacturing businesses, manufacturers are relying more on predictive analytics to achieve their goals and deliver customer satisfaction.

To plan and define the industry's future, one must boost flexibility and efficiency while also optimising holistically, increasing quality, and making the product or solution future-proof and data-driven. The performance of the product may be enhanced, predictive maintenance can be enabled, and the remaining usable life of the product can be

prolonged. Additionally, you must have a digital window into the operation of your asset, utilising real-time physics and machine learning. Predictive analytics enables forecasting future outcomes using past data in conjunction with statistical modelling, data mining, and machine learning approaches (ML). Furthermore, businesses use predictive analytics to uncover trends in this data in order to identify dangers and opportunities.

Meanwhile, engineers are developing products that are more cognitive and efficient. They are concentrating their efforts on predictive maintenance in order to increase the product's reliability, which enables to plan maintenance cycles far in advance. With the increasing number of sensors on goods, predictive maintenance is a primary emphasis for businesses looking to use sensor data, which some refer this to sensor analytics.

Dynamic alignment and attention is required in order to build goods and solutions, which is said to address

“Predictive analytics helps enterprises take data-driven decisions to drive growth. In the manufacturing sector, insights from predictive analytics guide decision-makers anticipate specific future events. Predictive models use historical data to identify patterns for opportunities and risks within a given set of operations,” says another IT leader.

any contamination in the manufacturing process, enable characterisation, and offer control as well. Additionally, there is advanced node uncertainty. There may be decomposition over time without being aware of the by-products, or products may be rearranged over time, and so on. Predictive analytical techniques and methods need to be carefully selected and thoroughly studied. No ‘one technique’ can do it for all! Aligning the supply chain is important to make good products. We need to have new approaches. There has to be real-time process monitoring

that needs predictive analytics and has an immediate implementation of the learnings.

Data capture, and having access to that data is extremely critical, as well. This requires significant investment, along with collaboration. We also need real-time process control and need to move on to analytical results and real-time monitoring. AI and integrated data sharing are also required. Data should be all-inclusive, instantaneous, predictive, encrypted, and secure.

Predictive Analytics ensures:

- Operational efficiency in the manufacturing process
- Transparency into the entire supply chain
- Quality assessment process
- Cost savings
- Customer satisfaction



Digital Twin to Predict Machine Downtime

Digital Twin is a technique used in predictive analytics to assist in sorting through the data. A Digital Twin is just a digital representation of physical things - a virtual representation of any process or product development that acts as the actual object's or process's real-time digital twin.

Digital twins being the outcome of continual progress in the design and engineering operations is associated with the manufacturing of products. In essence, it is a cloud-based virtual picture - a representation of something genuine that has been designed to behave realistically. Simply said, the Digital Twin automates Predictive Maintenance, which is then monitored remotely from a cloud-based site. While failure prediction is a critical component of how the Digital Twin works, it also aids with maintenance-related concerns by forecasting the behaviour of the equipment, which must be addressed digitally in the absence of a physical prototype.

The entire process of creating a Digital Twin involves automating a manual task, gathering data in real time, and feeding it back into the virtual duplicate of the item. It is critical to highlight that the Digital Twin integrates Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and the Internet of Things efficiently (IoT) and is important to bear in mind that digital twins might be challenging to implement across the product lifecycle. Frequently, there are many digital twins, versions, or perspectives that do not communicate with one another. Additionally, you must integrate the digital twin technology into an existing environment.

People frequently mix up predictive analytics with machine learning, despite the fact that the two are rather distinct fields. Predictive models such as decision trees, regression, and neural networks are all used, while tera bytes (TBs) of data are being generated as a



result of digitization and automation. While a manufacturing facility has the capability of generating upto 2,200 TB of data in a single month, one must collect, interpret, and utilise this data using predictive analytics. Maximum value from this data can be acquired, if these steps are in place and actual and virtual worlds can be connected in order for them to feed off one another.

In conclusion, predictive analytics makes use of statistics and modeling techniques to determine the future performance of any product, process, or solution. Predictive models can also help make weather forecasts,, translate voice-to-text messages, take customer service decisions, develop investment portfolios, and even video games.



LIFESTYLE *and* CANCER PREVALENCE

| BY PRASANNA S. HARIHAR

This article is not about conventional cancer prevention guidelines asking readers to abstain from alcohol and tobacco usage; to eat healthy, practice safe sex, ensure regular medical check-ups and screening tests, to get vaccinated, to enhance physical activity, etc. The aim of this article is to raise awareness that genetics and environment are indirect risk factors for cancer.

At the cancer care centre reception area, a display read: "There is a 'can' in cancer because we CAN beat it!" Personally, a challenging time, as I sat there anxiously awaiting my parent's surgery update, even as my aunt was undergoing a chemotherapy session. Beside me sat a lady, equally dishevelled – this disease renders the kith-and-kin to grope around in dark unknown territory, dabble the financial implications, emotional distress, and other factors that precipitate for both patient and caregivers, to desperately aspire for better days.

"Sir, how have you been coping with the situation at home?" she asked.

"I'm taking one day at a time since any form of planning is in vain," I answered.

"Where do you think we went wrong? Has the air that we breathe and the food we intake become so excruciatingly toxic? Isn't it unnerving that the numbers of cancer affected are multiplying exponentially?" she asked in grave concern.

"Genes, I believe have a major role to play. Either, the inherited genes are damaged, and/or the polluted environment poses significant risk factors that influence a gene damage to cause mutation is what I've heard in general," was my response.

The ensuing days it prompted me to research a little more and speak to a few medical professionals to gain clarity on this subject. India reported close to 14 lakh cancer cases towards the end of 2020, which is slated to grow at approximately 15 per cent to 15.7 lakhs by 2025. Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) accounted for 63 per cent of all deaths in India, of which, quite alarmingly Cancer alone contributed close to 9 per cent.

My daughter is a recent medical graduate who is currently working at a fairly large general hospital. She planned for me to sit down with a group of her doctor friends at the cafeteria to facilitate peer group viewpoints on certain aspects of this topic.

Dr. Prakruthi set the context to her colleagues: "I have always been alarmed at the increase in inflow of cancer diagnosed patients at the hospital. Of course, we have the gene mutations of p53, BRCA 1 and 2, etc. but could it be that the environment has some effect? Our lifestyle habits have changed, smoking and alcohol consumption has become a 'fad' even though its detrimental effects are well known. We are exposed to pollution more than before. Sexually transmitted diseases lead to cervical cancer (HPV), liver cancer (Hep C), and so on. I think it's crucial we understand how to reduce the influence of external factors to minimise our risk of developing cancer."

Dr. Kumar started out that our genes are the primary factors that shape our health disposition. He said, "Genes play a role in making a person more susceptible or less susceptible to certain diseases."

This implies that an individual is pre-disposed to various disease conditions. Dominant and recessive

genes throw a lot of light on how certain traits are exhibited or not exhibited, and the same holds good for certain health conditions too.

I explained to Dr. Kumar the scenario at the cancer centre and my little chat with the lady. He explained his interest in breast cancer and ensuing research: "The proteins BRCA 1 and 2 are accepted gene testing methods. These proteins are critical to fight breast cancer since they are tumour-suppressor genes. When they work normally, they initiate and manage the growth and division of breast, ovary and other types of cells; however, an uncontrolled cell-growth is an indication of prevalence of cancer. A positive test result is indicative of a gene mutation in one of them to indicate a higher risk to develop breast or ovarian cancer as opposed to someone without mutation."

With regards to the increased incidence of prostate cancer in men, Dr.

Kumar quipped: "PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) is a protein made by the prostate gland cells and a screening test for prevalence of prostate cancer in men. Elevated PSA levels may indicate a higher risk, and further tests have to be conducted to confirm." He pointed out that, "Early screening and advancements in genomics, proteomics, bioinformatics, etc. have reduced the risk since they can now catch it sooner, before it plays havoc in the person's system."



At this point I submitted that there could be several extrinsic factors like lifestyle and environment that influence an individual's health. I stated that I have read


many articles that discuss the detrimental impact of the toxic environment that we live in or are continuously exposed to at work where we spend long hours. Toxic environmental substances that we are exposed to are instrumental in causing a chemical change at the cell-level, and with long term exposure, at the genetic level.

The young doctors in the group helped me to size this problem and get a better picture. Dr. Rohit stated: "The food that we consume today has significantly-reduced nutritional value, more so the junk fast-food. Our fast-paced life headlined as 'perennial paucity of time' has everyone scrambling from pillar to post. I don't have time for home cooking and if I cook a healthy meal at home, it is only because it is my hobby. Food discipline in both quality, quantity and timings has gone kaput and has left a lot to be desired."

Another young lady, Dr. Roshni commented: "the way we consume the food we eat has a role to play. The usage of aluminium foil to wrap and pack fast-food while still hot, packing hot food in low-grade plastic containers and hot liquid food into very thin bags, frozen food that is thawed and then microwave-heated are ubiquitous practices today. In our country,

these are recent happenings accentuated by swift-delivery mechanisms which makes it a larger threat due to inconsiderate usage and lack of awareness."





At which point Dr. Pillai added: “We were discussing with our consultants the case of a patient in his late 60s who was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease high concentrations of aluminium were found in his brain tissue.” Certain scientific studies have concluded that altered living conditions associated with society’s industrialized approach to all aspects have made it a modern disease.

The janitor stepped in and sprayed a blue-liquid to clean our table, to disinfect and deoderise. Dr. Kruthi was quick to point out: “Look. cleaning agents are used in almost all walks of life, more so in these Covid times. The ramifications include the usage, which on its own is a threat to safety from long-term exposure. Besides inconsiderate mixing with other agents results in chemical reactions, and any inhalation of those fumes can be hazardous to humans in the long run.” We all thanked Covid pandemic which has necessitated wearing of masks which may help reduce inhalation under such circumstances.

"Carcinogenic substances are in plenty due to increased microwave heating and reheating practices. Increased and abundant usage of deodorants, aerosol sprays, preservatives in packaged food, cosmetics, and many more such examples expose us to bodily harm, may be not in 1-2 instances but from extended long-term exposure," explained, Dr. Desmukh who opined that social pressure to smell and look good have a role to play.

I stated that common man is aware that smoking and chewing tobacco are known devils and are causing cancer of the mouth, lung, larynx, pharynx, etc. Dr. Rohan qualified the same when he remarked: "A cause for concern is the fact that the consumption of tobacco and a few of its' other avatars that claim they are tobacco-free, are now pervasive with increased access to remote areas. Due to escalated glamour quotient from celebrity endorsements, its repercussions on a denser population that is both gullible and illiterate make it a larger threat to our society."

Consumption of alcohol and its ill-effects are now known better due to awareness campaigns. A few doctors hid their snigger when they commented that it contributes heavily to the government coffers, but finally opined that alcohol consumption targets the liver and in the long-term causes cirrhosis and related ailments that can render the immune system vulnerable.

Occupational hazard involving work environment and working conditions is a huge risk factor. Working extensively with asbestos, traffic manning by cops with excessive exposure to vehicle exhaust fumes, cleaning clogged drains and under improper conditions by janitorial personnel, exposure to ionizing radiation and benzene compounds make it a scary proposition. @BCYN department. A lady doctor posted in the Dr. Sneha added: "the

HEALTH & FITNESS

Dr. Sneha, from the OBGYN department added, “The usage of unhygienic sanitary methods, indiscriminate usage of birth-control pills to postpone pregnancy and extend the child-bearing age are not in themselves conclusive as cancer-causing but should alert an individual to discern and make the right choices.”

No two individuals will respond in the same manner to the same environmental stimulus. A screening schedule and proactive health check-up are not to be ignored; certain disease conditions become complicated due to delayed intervention.

The few external factors discussed above from excessive and continued exposure with lack of screening and pro-active measures make them an indirect cause to this dreaded disease. These factors lead to cardio-vascular or nervous or renal or excretory system abnormalities giving rise to a compromised immune-structure to cause the ageing human body be more susceptible to risk factors.

The current Covid-induced pandemic is a case-in-point. Many covid positive patients have reported increased susceptibility to various other diseases from lower immunity levels. Few other cases has reported that cancer patients as well as people with chronic illnesses postponed their treatment leading to further complications. My aunt, that I so passionately addressed at the start of this article, lost her battle last year during the Covid lockdown period. Reduced mobility resulted in a fast deterioration of her health and the disease made a rapid spread to all her internal organs at a pace that made any delayed medical intervention a futile exercise.

Whether it is internal or external, it is the gene and modification referred to as gene mutation that causes increased risk of cancer incidences. With our population here in India growing at an alarming pace, the absolute numbers will numb the brains and render the society motionless. Tell-tale signs are evident in this part of the world and our country has the dubious



distinction as the ‘diabetes capital of the world / the cardio-vascular hotbed’ and so on to make cancer management even more challenging.

Cancer incidences have grown too, the proof is in the pudding. More and more cancer hospitals are popping up, somewhere within each family a member has been diagnosed, and within distant but known circles a death has resulted from cancer. An optimistic view is we each know a cancer survivor amidst us. Sanity should prevail above stupidity to alert us that the perpetrator is indeed a known enemy.

It is one thing to win over cancer with so many efficacious treatment options due to scientific advancements, but it's another thing to pro-actively manage the self while being aware of a plethora of influencers. Taking quick course-corrections to the diet, exercise regimen, and lifestyle changes in order to ward-off the dreaded 6-letter word is a prudent decision. How many of us can bring about

a change in the way we understand the ill-effects of the external stimuli to lessen their consumption in quantity as well as frequency? How many of us can be the evangelists to assume courage and call ‘a spade a spade’ to manage narratives within our circle of influence? How can we endeavour to the good cause of education through awareness campaigns at our own individual levels to make the “CAN” in the opening paragraph a reality?

Dr. Anil Kumar as head of the department at a leading Bangalore-city teaching hospital commented: “Lifestyle measures have a definite role in cancer prevention. Many cancers are treatable, and a positive attitude too helps in defeating cancer.”

Michael Douglas the popular Hollywood star remarked, “Cancer didn’t bring me to my knees, it brought me TO MY FEET.” Time is of essence, and we need to think on our feet to collaborate and embark on a few lifestyle changes now rather than regret later.

SPORTSMANSHIP, ABOVE ALL

| VIJAY MRUTHYUNJAYA

The Tokyo Olympic Games yielded many world records despite the ominous shadow of a pandemic hanging precariously above. There were many incredible acts of human endurance and endeavour as numerous records were set, unprecedented feats achieved and unbelievable heights attained. More heart-warming, and keeping with the Olympic ethos and tradition, were the many glorious acts of true sportsmanship on display.

Yes, there were many golden and multiple-golden moments, like, for example, Elaine Thompson-Herah making Olympic history with an individual golden double in athletics, or Emma McKeon grabbing quadruple gold apart from three bronze in swimming – seven in total, the same as India. The barrage of The medals, prompted a critic to jocularly comment that McKeon should take part not as an individual but as an institution or a nation at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Jokes apart, for every success story, historic achievement or epic feat, there were equally splendid moments of sacrifice, selflessness, poise, integrity and general goodwill - to put it in one word - acts of true sporting spirit.

The first such act was highlighted and celebrated at the world level exactly 56 years ago, coincidentally in Tokyo itself, and a year later deservedly recognised and duly rewarded.

This inspiring story stirs fresh emotions even after five decades. Swedish

yachtsmen Lars Gunnar Käll and Stig Lennart Käll were competing in the third race of the Flying Dutchmen event when they noticed their Australian rivals John Dawe and Ian Winter had capsized. Rather than pushing for Olympic gold and glory, the Käll brothers abandoned their race and rescued the stranded pair by pulling them into their vessel and to safety.

The story was first published by the Japanese media and it triggered an avalanche of appreciation messages and the brother's room at the Olympic Village was flooded with gifts. A year later, they became the first recipients of the Fair Play Trophy, an honour awarded by UNESCO's newly created International Fair Play Committee (CIFP).

The 1964 Tokyo Games and every edition since, including the one just concluded in the same city, has gone down in folklore for acts of sporting spirit. As if in keeping with this glorious trend, a dozen or more soul stirring moments were witnessed during the Tokyo 2020 Games, but two in particular stood out for the camaraderie displayed by two pairs of equally talented and compassionate athletes and their common goal, to uphold fair play and ethical behaviour at the most tempting and testing of times.





The first happened far from the glare of the arch lights as the rest of the world was focused on the blue ribbon event of any Olympics – the 100 m dash for men on the 10th day of the Games. As the eight best sprinters in the world were preparing to vie for the ‘Fastest Man on the Planet’ title, Qatar’s Mutaz Barshim and Italy’s Gianmarco Tamberi were involved in a painstaking and protracted tussle for the high jump gold.

Barshim and Tamberi had earlier cleared 2.37 m along with Maksim Nedasekau of Belarus. The bar was then set to a new Olympic mark of 2.39 m, but none of the three could clear it. Nedasekau had to settle for a bronze on countback while Barshim and Tamberi, both clearly exhausted, mentally and physically, were to proceed for a proposed ‘jump-off’ for the gold medal. As officials were looking up the rule books and discussing the next step, Barshim asked an official, ‘Can we have two golds?’ The official said, ‘Yes.’, and the rest is another extraordinary chapter in the annals of Olympic history.

Tamberi jumped into Barshim’s arms, as the two good friends and great rivals since the last 10 years, became co-champions. Tamberi’s joy knew no bounds as he rolled on the track ecstatically.

A few minutes later, another Italian, Marcell Jacobs made history as he blazed across the 100 m stretch to win the gold in a national and European record of 9.80 seconds. The sight of Jacobs running into the waiting arms of Tamberi, himself draped in the Italian tricolor, is a lasting image of the Tokyo Games. That Italy had won a double gold in less than half an hour was overshadowed as human spirit triumphed over sporting fame.

The second was equally dramatic and tearful. Botswana’s Nijel Amos and US’ Isaiah Jewett got tangled up during the 800 m semi-final and crashed to the track as did their long-cherished Olympic dreams. Both were in visible pain, but instead of blaming or cursing each other, the athletes helped each other and in a touching sign of camaraderie, embraced each other, and embarked on the arduous task of completing the race. They eventually did, breaking the pain barrier and walking to the finish line together.

A similar act of sacrifice and selflessness had won US’ Abbey D’Agostino and Nikki Hamblin of New Zealand the World Fair Play Award at the 2016 Rio Olympics. The two had collided during the women’s 5,000 m qualifying run and Agostino tore her ACL and meniscus. Hamblin, instead

of continuing to the finish, stayed back to help Agostino. Their compassion for each other was described as a ‘shared act of fair play, mutual respect, and inspiration to all athletes’ by the Fair Play committee.

These rare acts have inspired millions of youngsters across various sports and the International Fair Play Committee has been recognising and rewarding them since the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

There are now three fair play trophies: – to an athlete or team for an act of fair play; to an individual for displaying fair-play throughout his/her career; and, to an individual or organisation for the promotion of fair play.

Sergey Bubka (athletics), Kipchoge Keino (athletics), Emil Zatopek (athletics), László Papp (boxing), Miguel Indurain (cycling), Sir Bobby Charlton (football), Wayne Gretzky (ice-hockey), Stefan Edberg, Pete Sampras (both tennis) and L’Equipe (newspaper) to name a few are among the winners.

It is indeed paradoxical that some of the greatest names in their respective sport are missing from the above list – Carl Lewis (athletics), Michael Jordan (basketball), Muhammad Ali (boxing), Don Bradman (cricket), Michael Schumacher (Formula 1), Pele (football) and Rod Laver (tennis) - to name a few.



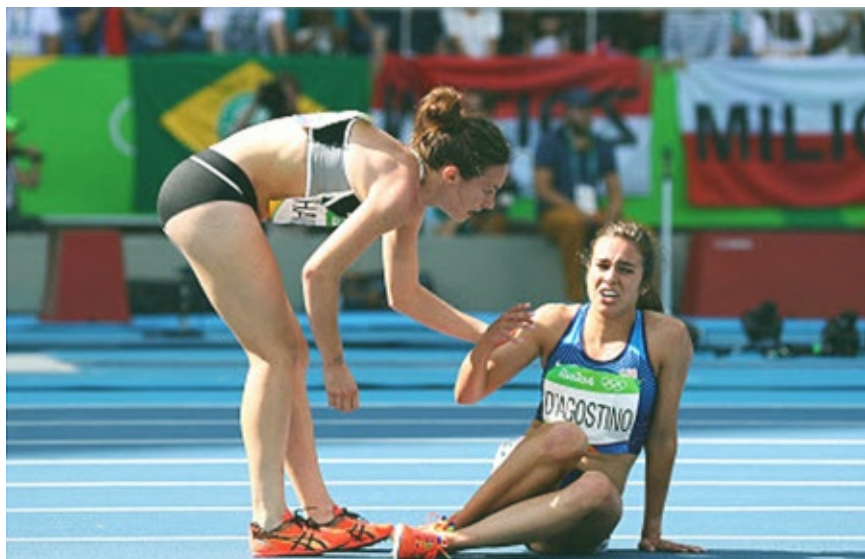
Every sport, at some point in time, has witnessed acts of true sportsmanship. And with each such incident getting highlighted and highly rewarded, it is catching the imagination of the younger generation. The sanctity of sports, its ethics and integrity are safeguarded by such acts of humaneness amidst competitive spirit of the highest order, particularly at a time when sports of all disciplines and at all levels are at their lowest ebb due to a toxic combination of ABCD (Accusations of Bribery, Corruption and Drugs).

There is not a single sport or association/federation untainted by ABCD. Even the most sacred, the Olympic Games (both Summer and Winter) and the most popular, World Cup (football and to some extent cricket), are in a quagmire of their own making, while Russia, a sporting Hercules, is serving a lengthy ban for 'institutionalized doping'.



At the Tokyo Olympics, the Russians (most of them not part of the old system) had to participate under the International Olympic Flag due to the ban and at the medal ceremony neither was the Russian flag raised nor the anthem played. In the process, Yelena Isinbayeva, the habitual record-breaker in women's pole vault, who stayed clear of drugs all through her career, missed out on a fortune, both in terms of Olympic records and a slot among the pantheons of Olympic greats.

The more we explore this ugly underbelly of the Olympics, and sports in general, the dirtier and stinkier it can get. But infinite gratitude is in order to some fearless and, at times, faceless athletes (and some officials) for preserving the sanctity of sports and restoring, time and again, the humane spirit.



Vishy, The Legend

Some sportspersons are, in fact, better known for their spirit rather than their sporting achievements. The one that readily comes to mind is our own Gundappa Rangnatha Viswanath, the man rated higher, by many of the old school in particular, for his unmatched sporting spirit rather than his sublime late and square cuts.

The 1980 Golden Jubilee Test in Bombay is talked about even today not for Ian Botham's superlative performance (the England all-rounder single-handedly won it with a century and 13 wickets) but for the original Little Master's sportsmanship, many connoisseurs called it grace under pressure.

Vishy, as he is popularly known, re-called England's Bob Taylor to bat again, even after he was adjudged out caught behind by Kirmani of Kapil Dev, while England were down to their knees at 85 for six. Taylor and Ian Botham went on to add a match-winning partnership.

I have picked Vishy sir's brain on this issue many times over the past few decades and every time his answer has been the same: "I really don't know. It (sporting spirit, sportsmanship, fair play and walking away without waiting for the umpire's decision) just came naturally to me. I did not cultivate it or knowingly nurse it. Perhaps, it was the way I was."

He added, without regret or malice, "It's usually said that it all evens out, the bad decisions and the good ones. But it never happened to me. In Test cricket, I was wrongly dismissed nine times, and not even once the other way. I never complained, it just happened, there is nothing more to it."

"What about recalling Taylor," is usually the parting question, but the reply to this as well has remained typically the same - simple and straightforward: "If it were to happen again, I would do the same thing."

Surely, there is something to learn here for every young sportsperson anywhere in the world!



EXPLORING INDIA'S WILD GROUNDS



| SHWETHA H C

India's huge green cover, home to some of the world's densest forests, still accounts for over 20 per cent of the country's total area (about 64 million hectares). Numerous wildlife sanctuaries around the country were previously the hunting grounds of the royals and elite, and with the government placing a higher premium on wildlife conservation and shouldering the responsibility for animal preservation, today, more than 50 sanctuaries have been designated as animal reserves.

According to a research, India is one of 17 biologically diverse countries that collectively account for 60 to 70 per cent of the world's biodiversity. India's national parks and wildlife reserves are habitat to about 400 mammalian species and over 1300 avian species. Over 100 National Parks, dozens of bio-reserves, and over 400 sanctuaries are located in these wooded hinterlands, spanning an area of 40,564.00 kms, approximately 1.23 per cent of the country's geographical area (National Wildlife Database, December, 2019).

These wildlife reserves are home to several rare and distinctive species of animals, including the Indian Sloth Bear, Chausinga (four-horned antelope) and Barasinga (swamp deer). Interestingly, India is the only country that is home to both tigers and lions. Besides, it has the world's largest deer and tiger populations.

From the Indian Ocean to the Himalayas, India boasts an extensive network of national parks. If you're keen to spot wild Bengal tigers or Asian elephants, Asian feral dogs or other wildlife that are rarely spotted outside zoological parks, then read on. Here are a few exceptional wildlife viewing sites in India where you can experience unique flora and fauna and soak in stunning vistas.

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

Endless expanses of wetlands, grassy meadows and enigmatic thick woodlands immerse visitors in a lush green fantasy, grazed and populated by an abundance of animal species. That's Kaziranga for you. Rhinos, poached for their highly prized horns, are now safe in Kaziranga National Park. Deemed a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it was established largely for the sake of Rhino conservation, which were probably only a dozen at the time of the inception of the park. While the park was growing to be a habitat for two-thirds of the globe's giant one-horned rhinoceroses, it was also identified by BirdLife International as an Important Bird Area for the protection of avian species.

Kaziranga, which gradually expanded to three times its original area in the late 1990s, is currently Asia's greatest rhino

sanctuary and acts as a reservoir for establishing more reserves, which is crucial for the survival of one horned rhinoceros. Furthermore, this National Park was established as a forest preserve with the primary goal of preventing the extinction of the larger one-horned rhinoceros. This magnificent national park, located at the south of the Lower Himalayas in Assam's Golaghat and Nagaon districts, covers an area of around 430 square kms. Due to the park's high biodiversity quotient and visibility of animals, it has been designated an ecological hotspot.

Kaziranga also supports significant breeding populations of animal species, half of which are listed as endangered by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources).

Species at Kaziranga

Rhinoceros, elephants, tigers, gaur, and sambar, eastern swamp deer, Bengal fox, hispid hare, gray and Indian mongoose, Chinese pangolin, sloth bear, and Indian pangolins, Asiatic water buffalo, civets, golden jackal, birds like black-necked stork, white-fronted goose, greater adjutant, ferruginous duck, lesser adjutant and Asian openbill stork

Kaziranga National Park is well linked by air, train and road to India's urban areas. The closest airport is located in the town of Jorhat, about 97 kms from the park. The nearest railway station is Furkating, about 80 kms from the park. Buses ply on the roads leading to the Park

**IDEAL TIME
TO VISIT**

BETWEEN
NOVEMBER AND
APRIL

GIR NATIONAL FOREST

Gujarat's cultural and historical richness demonstrates the state's range of tourism attractions, one of which is the region's wilderness, sure to leave you with everlasting memories. If you're seeking for the Asiatic lion's golden mane or want to have a mesmerizing experience of staring into the eyes of the majestic species or simply want to bask in sights of the abundant flora and fauna, Sasan Gir is the place to go. Frequently referred to as Girvan Forest, it is India's biggest dry deciduous forest and is home to the world's largest population of Asiatic lions. While the Sanctuary is characterised by steep peaks, solitary hills, highlands, and basins, the woods support about 2,500 distinct fauna species, including roughly 40 different species of animals, over 300 species of birds, over 40 species of reptiles, and over 2,000 species of insects.

One of India's largest national parks, the Gir Forest National Park covers an area of 1,411 square kms of which 260 square kms of land is secured as a national park, with 1,151 square kms of the total area being designated as a wildlife sanctuary. While the safari experience at Gir is an exceptional opportunity to view a lion in its native habitat, the harmonious cohabitation of people of the Maldhari community and lions exemplifies nature's beauty and harmony.

India's lion population was facing the danger of extinction due to uncontrolled killing. Due to the fact that they were designated as critically endangered in 2000, conservation efforts became crucial, and as a consequence of the efforts of the government's and numerous other animal conservation organisations, Asiatic lion numbers have rebounded significantly.

**IDEAL TIME
TO VISIT**

**BETWEEN
DECEMBER TO
MARCH**



Species at Gir

Lions, Indian leopards, Indian cobras, four-horned antelope, striped hyenas, rusty spotted cat, barking deer, Indian mongoose, golden jackals, blackbucks, Indian palm civets, monitor lizard, chital, pangolin, marsh crocodile, pythons. Great hornbill, ruddy sheilduck, endangered bonelli's eagle, rufous treepe, brown fish owl, crested hawk-eagle, pygmy woodpecker, white-browed wagtail vultures, Indian pitta, demoiselle crane, glossy ibis, painted stork, pied kingfisher.

The Keshod airport is the closest to Gir, located around 70 kms away. Apart from that, two other airports are located in Rajkot and Mumbai. There are frequent rail connections to some of the state's most notable locations to Sasan Gir. Gir National Park is accessible to many major cities in Gujarat by frequent buses.

JIM CORBETT NATIONAL FOREST

The Jim Corbett National Park, a component of the larger Corbett Tiger Reserve, is one of India's oldest and well-known wildlife sanctuaries. Known as the 'father' of India's wildlife sanctuaries, Corbett National Park is renowned for its big cats and elephants. India's first National Park, owes its name and existence to the life of an exceptional man – a hunter turned photographer and environmentalist Colonel Edward James Corbett, or Carpet saab as he was affectionately called by the Kumaonis.

Positioned along the Ramganga River at the foot of the Kumaon Hills, this famous National Park is in close proximity to Nainital and a popular location for those wanting to get a glimpse of tigers. Jim's 'Maneaters of Kumaon', along with other sagas, tales and stories from the historical period, makes the narrative of the national park an enthralling listen and read.

Nestled amidst the foothills of the Himalayas in the northern state of Uttarakhand, Corbett Tiger Reserve is home to more than 200 Bengal tigers. It is also claimed to be an excellent birding location, with more than 600 resident and migratory bird species. Corbett is an ultimate animal kingdom, a picture-perfect home for wild animals and a thrilling wildlife attraction that is beautifully filled by lush green hills, forests, waterways and grasslands.

With five distinct safari zones, designated as the park's buffer or core zone, visitors may engage in wildlife safaris and see the fascinating behaviour of the animals up close. It is one of the few national parks in India that allows overnight visits to the core zone. The wildlife sanctuary, not limited to animal safaris, also offers adventure activities for visitors including river rafting, angling, rock climbing bridge slithering and rappelling.

Species at Jim Corbett

Rhesus Macaque, Langur, Sambar, Barking Deer, Nilgai, Himalayan Palm Civet Osprey, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Wild Boar, Indian Gray Mongoose, Common Otter, Asian Elephants, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Jackal and Leopard. Red Jungle fowl, Peacock, Black Francolin, Partridge, Oriental Pied Hornbill, Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo, Kaleej pheasant, Maroon Oriole Spangled Drongo, Dollarbird Dove, Woodpecker, Drongo, Duck, Teal, white-crested Laughingthrush, cormorant, Orange-bellied Leafbird, Stork and Seagull are some of the bird species one could find.

This tiny city is well connected to India's main cities by air, road and rail networks. The nearest domestic airport is approximately 50 kms away in Phoolbagh, Pantnagar. The park is located around 15 kms from Ramnagar railway station. Ramnagar has an excellent road network that links various cities, and is located around 260 kms from India's capital Delhi.

IDEAL TIME TO VISIT

BETWEEN
NOVEMBER
TO JUNE



RANTHAMBORE NATIONAL FOREST

For those of you who are adamant on wanting to spot a tiger, Ranthambore is the destination. Observed as one of India's finest wildlife reserves, it is best defined as a tiger-friendly region that proudly protects the country's most famous tigers, identifiable by distinctive markings on their bodies and controlling territory.

Known for its breathtaking backdrop, Ranthambore National Park in India is home to a diverse range of animals, with big cats constituting the majority of the population. Located at the confluence of the Aravalli and Vindhya mountain ranges, this world famous tiger reserve is a classic location for tiger sightings, with camera-friendly tigers. Once the headquarters of royals, Ranthambore Tiger Reserve bears the marks of history in every nook and corner. Within the tiger reserve are the remnants of the 10 Century Ranthambore Fort, which rises on a 700-foot-tall hill. The woodlands around the fort were formerly the exclusive hunting grounds of the maharajas of Jaipur.

Semi-evergreen vegetation may be found in a few valleys and along the streams, as the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve's flora is composed of meadows and thick forest. The major forest type of the reserve is a tropical dry deciduous forest, which is famous for trees like the 'Flame of Forest' (which can endure lengthy droughts) and the Banyan.

**IDEAL TIME
TO VISIT**
BETWEEN
APRIL TO
JUNE

Species at Ranthambore: Tigers, leopard, sloth bear, sambar, nilgai or blue bull, chitals, Indian gazelle, spotted deer, langur and monkeys. Others mammals include jungle cat, striped hyena, jackal, ratel, chowsingha (four-horned antelope), wild boar, pangolin and mongoose, marsh or mugger crocodile. Asian openhill, treepies, lapwings, pheasant-tailed jacana, stork, babblers, woodpeckers, painted stork, black-headed ibis, white-browed wagtail are a few of the bird species that can be found.

The nearest airport to Ranthambore is Jaipur, which is about 180 kms from the reserve region. The National Park is located around 11 kms from Sawai Madhopur railway station, which is on the Delhi-Mumbai trunk line. It is also well-connected to the rest of the country by road.

NAGARAHOLE NATIONAL FOREST

Parks in southern India, such as the Rajiv Gandhi (Nagarahole) National Park in Karnataka, have a relatively long history of human involvement. Nonetheless, the historical elements of human landscape connections within and surrounding parks are frequently overlooked in modern management techniques. This national park, derives its name from the serpent-like Kabini River, the park's primary and significant river, which divides it from Bandipur National Park to the south. Derived from Kannada words – nagara (snakes) and hole (streams), it also refers to the numerous streams that meander through the park's 643 square kms of woodland. It is also known as the Rajiv Gandhi National Park.

Once an exclusive hunting reserve for the erstwhile rulers of the Kingdom of Mysore – the royals of the Wodeyar dynasty, the area was designated a tiger reserve in 1999 due to its dense forest cover, tiny streams, highlands, basins and cascades.

Densely forested with significant predators and carnivores, Nagarahole provides the greatest wildering experience for wildlife enthusiasts, who may witness incredible numbers of tigers, leopards and wild dogs. With many tigers, Indian bison and elephants, the reserve has a good

tiger-predator ratio. With an abundance of biodiversity like in Bandipur National Park, Wayanad National Park, Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary and Mudumalai National Park, as well as various points of interest such as Kabini River and Iruppu Falls within close proximity to Nagarahole, this place attracts a large number of wildlife enthusiasts and adventure enthusiasts.

IDEAL TIME TO VISIT

BETWEEN
NOVEMBER TO
FEBRUARY

Species at Nagarahole

Golden jackals, Bengal tiger, grey mongoose, jungle cat, slender Loris, common langur, civet cat, sloth bears and Indian bison or gaur, giant flying squirrel, porcupine, jackal, mouse-deer, hare and pangolin. This park is recognized as an important bird area, conserving over 270 species of birds. The critically endangered oriental white-backed vulture, blue-bearded bee-eater, greater spotted eagle, closely endangered species like darters and the Nilgiri wood-pigeon, scarlet minivet and Malabar whistling thrush, herons and ducks.

The roadways connect the park to the towns of Madikeri (90 kms) and Mysore (120 kms). Mysore, being the closest well-connected railway junction and Bangalore the closest international airport (220 km), the National Park is well connected to Karnataka's neighbouring regions too.



National Parks of North India

Corbett National Park, Dachigam National Park, Great Himalayan National Park, Valley of Flowers, Sariska Tiger Reserve, Wild Ass Wildlife Sanctuary, etc.

National Parks of South India

Ranganathittu Wildlife Sanctuary, Nagarhole National Park, **Bandipur Tiger Reserve**, Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, **Silent Valley National Park**, Eravikulam National Park, Periyar Tiger Reserve, etc.

National Parks of West India

Desert National Park, Marine National Park, Blackbuck (Velavadar) National Park, Gir National Park, etc.

National Parks of East India

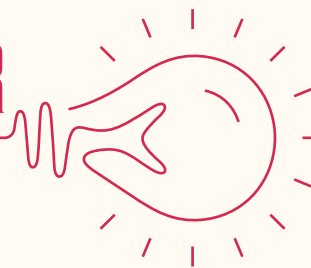
Kaziranga National Park, Manas Tiger Reserve, Buxa Tiger Reserve, Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary, Sundarbans Tiger Reserve, Simlipal Tiger Reserve, Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary, etc.

National Parks of Central India

Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Kanha Tiger Reserve, Pench Tiger Reserve, Bori Wildlife Sanctuary and many other national parks.

OCCAM'S RAZOR

| PRASANNA S. HARIHAR



A recent newspaper article about a strategy to tackle the pandemic, in which the interviewee made a mention of Occam's Razor got me started with ripples of thoughts!

Razors are a man's best friend! My fixation on sharp razors for a clean and smooth shave despite sporting a permanent goatee, is a gene that I probably inherited from my father. Or could it be my grandfather?! Y-chromosome has played its role in three generations!

Occam's Razor conjured up in my mind the launch of a new brand of shaving system, imported from an advanced country to offer a smooth shave. My mind traversed Google land before it settled down on an immensely popular principle.

The principle involved in Occam's Razor is attributed to a 14 Century theologian and logician, William of Ockham who gave the world a rule: "Entities must not be multiplied without necessity." His original line in Latin when translated reads thus: "Plurality must never be posited without necessity."

Occam's Razor is used as a heuristic, a 'rule of thumb' to guide scientists in shaping theoretical models. Biologists, to study evolutionary change, medical professionals, to carry out diagnosis – all are benefitted by the sharpness in this razor. But the irony is that the common man, when he does a root-cause-analysis of simple matters, tends to over-engineer the problem and the solution to put forth multiple theories to support the hypothesis.

This principle has its application in almost all fields but finds a firm foothold in the field of medicine. The principle suggests that the simplest explanation is the most likely; the simplest answer – that is, the answer that requires the fewest assumptions – is generally the correct one. A non-medical instance would be

a flat tire that should be attributed to a nail rather than miscreants slashing the tire, while a medical one would be a bad headache caused by dehydration rather than the likelihood of cancer.

Juxtapose this with the situation in vogue, where the healthcare system subjects patients to a plethora of tests and a quagmire of diagnosis, an antithesis to the principle under discussion. The healthcare system's rhetoric is the attempt to annihilate the extremity of a disease condition before it is too late to treat.

“LIFE IS REALLY SIMPLE, BUT WE INSIST ON MAKING IT COMPLICATED!”

While both appear right, a humble ask is that let sanity prevail and lead us through a middle-path. Like any popular principle, it comes with many contrasting schools of thought – no need to deduce without examining various factors in detail.

The stand-out feature of this principle is there are a number of unsupported assumptions in any explanation; the good news is: this principle when invoked reduces the likelihood of being wrong. Occam's razor is also known as the law of economy or the law of parsimony. The "razor" refers to the 'shaving away' of extraneous material and assumptions.

It is at this point, after a little research that I concluded that all razors are not necessarily razors. Just like all elephants are not always elephants – the allusion of course is to the metaphorical idiom

'Elephant in the room'. For instance, a mountain is made out of a molehill in one's imagination. But when discussed and examined, the mountain, erected overzealously, may well collapse to reveal the tiny molehill.

Let me provide an example from my long career in the IT (Information Technology) industry working for MNCs. At an overseas data centre that we maintained for our client, the power went off at exactly at the same time every day causing a major disruption in the services. The client was very upset, and we as the services partner, did an extensive root-cause analysis but in vain. Then it occurred that we should study the CCTV recording; what was discovered threw us all out of our wits. A janitor, was seen pulling out the plug charging the data centre equipment from the wall outlet, to plug-in her vacuum cleaner! This caused a minor malfunction in the adjacent power outlet which caused the power outage. This entire process took almost a week since the experts believed in evaluating all IT protocols, while overlooking a very common human mistake.

With a newfound concept to drive my actions in my daily life, I conclude there is no need to go for an overkill of simple problems for plausible solutions. I admonished my spouse when she complained that the maid-servant had turned lackadaisical in her work ethic when I quipped: "ask her to get her eyes tested at the earliest." It turned out to be the best antidote and the work quality improved by leaps and bounds.

Off to our daily chores with a light mind and a lighter heart, may there be a razor-sharp focus in our thinking and endeavours. A simple and minimalist approach at most times can return a bountiful of benefits. What causes us human beings to make solutions available at eye-level to be escalated with massive over-kill approaches? Do we need a gun to kill a cockroach at home? Why not assume that a simple thought can lead to a ground-breaking new business model? I can't agree more to this adage from Confucius: "Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated!" Do we apply the principles of Occam's Razor?

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