ONE INDIA
ONE PEOPLE

TECHNOLOGY
A double-edged weapon

REAL AND LEGAL RISKS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

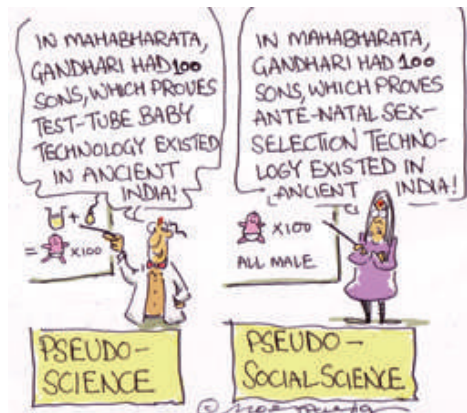TECHNOLOGY ENSURES HUMANS 'STAY CONNECTED'
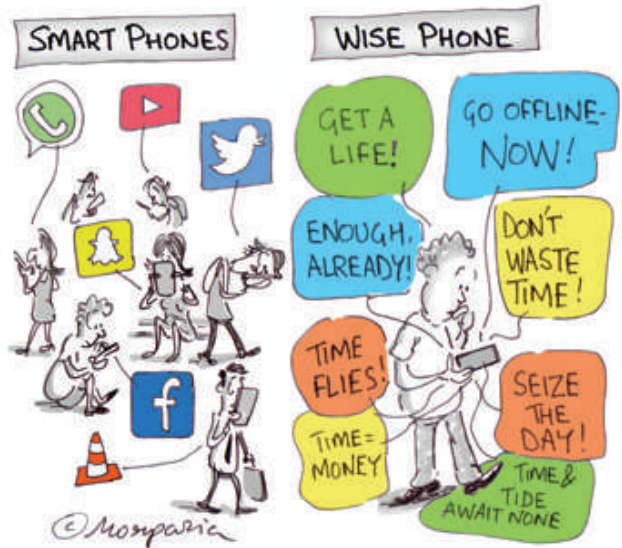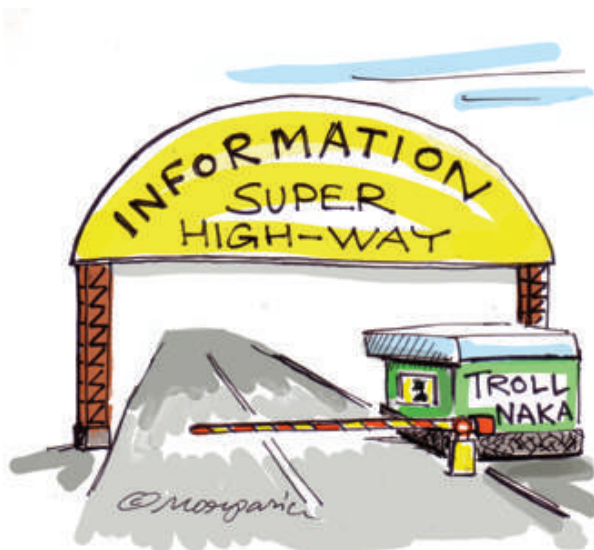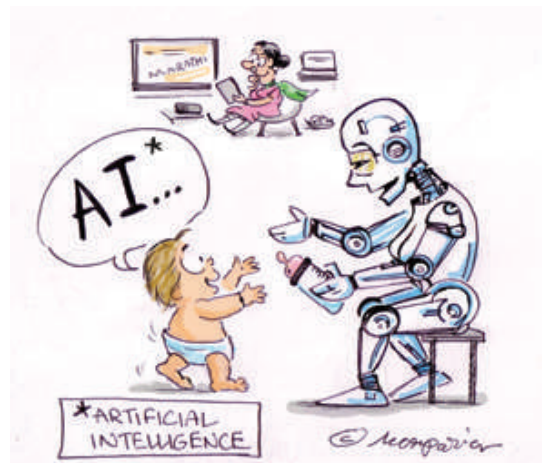
THE 'FEAR OF MISSING OUT'

KNOW INDIA BETTER
MUMBAI'S ARCHITECTURAL MARVELS

FACE TO FACE
DR. SHASHIKALA GURPUR

Great Indians : Lata Mangeshkar l Wing Commander Trevor Keelor VRC VM I PT. Birju Maharaj

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PT. BIRJU MAHARAJ

A necessary evil

While our lives are swamped by technology, given the plethora of advantages it offers, it has also become appallingly obvious that it has exceeded humanity. The social media may have taken the world by a storm but the virtual world has also exposed it to vulnerabilities that are far too many. **Anushka Singh** *dwells on new trends and fears.*

Social media trending apps

Technology is the name of the game now. And, it has pervaded every cell of humanity in a manner like never before. Right since the onslaught of social media, platforms that were meant primarily to meet 'networking' needs have found themselves in the news, sadly, for the wrong reasons.

Social media has indeed come a long way in connecting people, helping small businesses and entrepreneurs manage to contact niche customers. The entity has also helped people in obtaining the right information and at the time of need.

Yet, fact remains that social media can pose serious threats to its users and in more ways than one. Cyberbullying, fraud, impersonation, stalking, blackmailing, identity theft, trolling, pornography, harassment, violent online games, etc. are some of the risks associated with social media platforms today.

Also, like any other offence, the risks associated with the use of social media have hugely multiplied, in particular, for the marginalised and the weaker segments. In fact, most such offences and crimes are targeted towards such groups that include and is not limited to children, women, LGBTQI, disabled, marginalised groups and the elderly.

Alarmingly, the magnitude of crimes and offences emerging from the use of social media has only grown. With it in sync has been the growth of the number of existing and potential targets. Over the last ten years have emerged some of the most popular social networking and personal data- sharing services such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, Tik Tok, WhatsApp etc. With each passing day, new social media apps

and platforms emerge the world over and so do the followers thereby creating new risks for its users.

Technology, privacy and consent

With the emergence of technology and its slew of products such as applications, platforms and software, procuring consent for divulgence of personal information that may be shared or provided voluntarily by the party involved only, is mandatory. Hence, consent is mandatory while providing any application access to one's files or details, at the onset, at regular intervals following updates and on any changes being made to the programme that will need concurrent re- validation of consent. It is the norm for parties to be slack on the issue and often also arbitrarily provide consent without reading the fine print. They, nonetheless, have to provide 'consent' for the same.

As a routine consent may be procured also in passing which is constantly being reviewed again and tweaked to include audio, local languages, even mandatory scrolling till the end of the terms or consent clearances on each page before the user is able to proceed further or use the programme or platform in question. This is done to procure consent lest it violate the privacy of the user concerned. The law on privacy is a constantly evolving one and, with technology growing by leaps with every passing day, there's a virtual dash to meet demands and fulfil legal provisions.

The virtual world of human interaction

Among the myriad variables that the internet offers to improve human communication and connectivity, social media platforms, by themselves, have overwhelmingly changed the inherent variables of communication. Social media was dictating human interactions and inter- personal activities even before the Covid-19 pandemic hit in 2020. Yet, and oddly too, restrictions imposed during the lockdown generated a huge demand for platforms and technologies connecting humans. Getting techno-savvy was the easiest thing to do now.

It has been the motto for most, over the last few years, to 'Stay connected'. And, what better way to stay connected than on social media particularly through apps like Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, etc., aimed to make the task so easy. Technology has come a long way to serve human needs and has constantly developed to keep pace with the ever- changing need of the hour, the latest being to 'stay networked'.

New trends and fears

It's the Fear of Missing out (FOMO) that has, inadvertently, boosted and played a pivotal role in ensuring technology advances from a personalised DOS system to email and then Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and the range of interactive social media. Individuals, in order to supplement numbers and further viewership and, concurrently, digital footfalls and revenue, fell for it hook, line and sinker.

FOMO is entirely psychological and not tangible or real yet affects lives in the real world. It isn't of surprise to find huge revenue models thriving on FOMO to further their fiscal interests and businesses. Needless to say, ethics takes a complete backseat for industries thriving on FOMO-driven individuals who refuse to counter it with logic.

Why, the entire media industry operates on FOMO much on the lines of the Social Media industry that is known to milk the sentiment in order to boost 'viewership numbers' and 'figures' that, again and inadvertently, affect revenue models. It's, after all, all about the money.

Technology aided Covid-appropriate behaviour

From the beginning of 2020, as Covid raged across the world, and India - the world's largest democracy went into a lockdown, the concept of work and home went through a drastic transformation. In no time, work began to get fully digitised as human movement screeched to a halt leaving Indians stuck indoors to control the spread of Covid-19.

Masked and socially distanced most of the working population which could work, network and perform digitally would dress up formally, waist up more often than not, sit in front of webcams and perform their official tasks but all within the confines of home.

Across India, the concept of Work from Home spread like wildfire even faster than the rest of the world as everyone switched to digital platforms to perform to retain their jobs by working from home. Why, at that time there was no other option available. You'd either perform or then…perish.

Even education departed from stoned schools and colleges and made its way into personal spaces and homes. Children had to sit before mobile phones even rubbing their eyes to wake up and attend class before teachers too taught from within 'their' homes. Partners, friends, workplace colleagues, employees and employers created workspaces within their domestic spaces to 'work from home' and digitally in order to keep Covid-19 at bay.

Human health and digital technology

The digital health technology world has something for everyone. Mobile medical apps and software support and assist healthcare professionals, doctors, nurses, paramedics, emergency medical care providers, first responders, etc., in making decisions during health crisis and medical emergencies. Relying heavily on artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies, these applications have been a boon to the industry, revolutionising healthcare in general and human life, in particular.

And then, there are tools using digital health technology to help improve the ability of doctors and medical personnel. They go on to ensure medical care is provided accurately and on time, diagnosis is facilitated in a timely manner, overall quality of health and fitness is maintained.

Digital health technologies have been improving health care by employing software programming, information technology, sensor mechanisms, information collection and sharing, etc. The application of such technology is also wide and is in use mostly to maintaining general wellness of patients, maintaining fitness and health statistics for overall well being, etc.

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Real and legal risks of social media

Technology per se has many merits but it also has a flip side to it that is fraught with nasty risks. What is widely understood as social media is now a platform for nefarious and criminal activities. The growing numbers of cybercrimes – stalking, abuse, bullying, impersonation, data theft and what have you – reflecting in NCRB data -- is alarming. **Ruchi Verma** *argues for stricter laws and compliance to curb the menace.*

Cybercrime the greatest threat

While technology has many benefits and has helped improving life in general, there are several risks associated that go on to even jeopardise the very existence of human beings. The risks of technology, social media particularly, aren't restricted to mere privacy or data theft today. There are real and perceptible risks such as stalking, copyright violations, impersonations, frauds and other serious offences. And, with the surge in technology and its implementation in almost all aspects of human life, there is also an increased risk of the misuse of technology and social media and breaking of the laws meant to protect people.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, India recorded 50,035 cases of cybercrime in 2020 and this was an 11.8 per cent surge in such offences over the previous year. Additionally, 578 incidents of 'fake news on social media' were also reported as per the official data. It is interesting to note that the rate of cybercrime (incidents per lakh population) also increased from 3.3 per cent in 2019 to 3.7 per cent in 2020. In 2019, as per official data, India recorded 44,735 cases of cyber rime. The same statistic stood at 27,248 in 2018 according to official data.

Social media platforms not so safe

Since the onset of social media, the platforms primarily meant for 'networking' have been in the news for the wrong reasons. There is no denying that social media has come a long way in connecting people, helping small businesses and entrepreneurs reach out to the right customer base even help people in getting right information at the time of need. But, fact remains that social media can pose serious threat to its users and in more ways than one. Fraud, impersonation, stalking, blackmailing, identity theft, trolling, pornography, harassment, cyber bullying, disturbing and mind-altering games, etc. are some of the risks associated with social media platforms today.

Just like any other offence, the risks associated with the use of social media are highly increased for the marginalised and the weaker sections of the society. In fact, most such offences and crimes are particularly targeted towards such groups that includes but is not limited to children, women even the elderly.

The magnitude of crimes and offences emerging from the use of social media is alarming and so is the number of existing and potential targets. The last decade has witnessed the emergence of some of the most popular social networking and data- sharing services such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Tik Tok, etc. With each passing day, new social media apps and platforms emerge the world over and so do the followers thereby creating new risks for its users.

The magnitude of the problem

Internet penetration in India is phenomenal and unmatched and with the ease of access to internet, Indians have managed to make the most of social media as well. On an average, Indians spend about 2.25 hours on social media in one day. Not just this, the number of social media users has been growing at an exponential rate in India. In 2021, there were 448 million social media users, thanks to the deep penetration of internet connectivity across rural and urban India.

The number of internet users in India has increased at a striking rate as well. Internet users in India today have grown to a whopping 624 million which is roughly 45 per cent of the total population of India. And now, social media has become one of the most essential parts of daily internet usage in India.

The other reason for the increased use of social media is the easy access to smartphones. Smartphones today have become a necessity and a basic amenity. To add to that, falling prices of smartphones due to cut-throat competition have also led to the use of smartphones among people from all sections of the society in India – in rural and urban areas alike.

Due to the increased use of smartphones and availability of fast and cheap internet on the phones, there has been a large scale adoption of social media. So, in India today, there are more than 572 million mobile internet users of which 444 million also use social media on their phones.

Social media provides anonymity

Despite the popularity and use of social media platforms and apps, they have also led to a sharp increase in the range of cybercrimes and offences perpetrated against the weak including women and children, owing to the anonymity afforded by the virtual space. Anonymity offered by social media and the virtual world plays a big role in strengthening perpetrators. It makes it easy for the offender to identify and harass the victim without even physically facing him or her.

Today, new-age cybercrimes are being perpetrated and social media has been used excessively in such incidents. Recently, a 38-year- old advertising professional in Mumbai was arrested for stalking a colleague on social media despite her explicit and expressed unwillingness to maintain any contact with the perpetrator. The anonymity provided by the digital space has emboldened many such offenders who keep a track on their 'prey' through social media activity and digital footprints.

One of the most important aspects of cyberspace is that it is never completely disconnected from the real world. So, any or all information that one puts on social media can be and
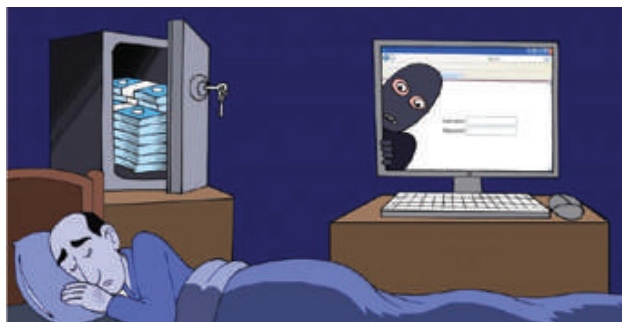
One of the main cyber-risks is to think they don't exist

is more often than not used for perpetrating offences in the real world. For example, stalking in digital space or cyber stalking may be used by an offender to commit physical stalking that may even lead to rape, murder and other more serious offences.

A more recent phenomenon that has crippled social media is trolling. Trolling typically targets women and 'weaker' segments of the society where their views and opinions are challenged and criticised en masse. Often, such criticism snowballs into threats of acid attack, rape, murder, etc. Many social media platforms in general and Twitter in particular have been a victim of this and despite guidelines and strict actions, trolling continues to affect many social media users.

Stricter laws need of the hour

While most users don't realise the risks of social media and that of putting information, photos and videos out on social media platforms, the fact remains the risks are real. In the absence of stricter laws and awareness on such issues, it will always be risky to use social media.

Most people do not understand how information they put may be misused to their detriment, that of their family members and even to the risk of their life and limb. Women and children are victimised the most for offences such as stalking, online abuse, cyber bullying, cybersex, trolling, etc.

With time, most social media platforms have brought in new user policies and security and privacy features but the risks continue to remain. It's important for the user to be aware of the risks involved in posting information and media on social media accounts.

Privacy settings may prevent access of data especially images to 'public' but may not stop a 'friend' from downloading the images or using that information to hurt the person.

Also, stalking by one's family is a lot more common than what statistics suggest. Often snubbed as a 'family matter', stalking by family continues to affect many women who wish to stay away from abusive families.

It's important for law to keep pace with newer challenges posed by social media platforms. Awareness, sensitisation and strict implementation of the law are important to prevent such offences and misuse of social media.

Ruchi Verma is a media researcher with The History and Heritage Project – A DraftCraft International Initiative to document details, analyse facts and plug lacunae generated by oversight or to further national or foreign agenda in History and Heritage Across India and Beyond Borders.

Privacy laws must keep pace with technology

Manu Shrivastava *speaks about the emergence of technology platforms and products such as applications, platforms and software and points out that the law on privacy is an ever-emerging one and, with technology growing by leaps with each passing day, it's a hurtling race to meet demands and fulfil legal provisions.*

Surveillance camera to check on employee`s activities at work

It's the Article 21 of the Indian Constitution guaranteeing the Right to Life that lends legal credence to the issue of Privacy. Privacy as laid down by law has been ensured through legal terminology and jargon associated explicitly with deeds and documents. So, it was with the emergence of private relationships drawn from contracts, express and implied, that the issue of privacy came into being.

Let's examine the issue of privacy in functions that have been integral to life and liberty over the years. Work, for once, is closely associated with a set of rules, sometimes written but mostly unwritten over the ages. That one must not discuss or divulge about trade secrets or issues internal and integral to the organisation was always an implied unwritten rule and policy that went on to become etched in print and part of an appointment letter or contract to be signed explicitly in order to bind the employee to a norm to ensure legal compliance. So, what was ethical went on to become scripted as a law by way of internal communication and deeds drafted to meet that end.

Explicit and implicit consent

Today, each time an employee is taken on board, he has to sign on the dotted line expressing his explicit consent to the terms mentioned. And the terms would inevitably include binding him to secrecy when it came to matter of the organisation and its functioning, sometimes even detailing how a transgression would lead to violation of service conditions and concurrently an annulment of service.

That said, the morality associated with employment terms and conditions has now been reduced into writing and spelt out for the purpose of brevity. These issues of privacy are ascertained and guaranteed by agreement and contract.

Also, workplace privacy related with various ways of accessing, controlling and monitoring employees' information in

a working environment entail employees typically must relinquish some of their privacy while in the workplace. Yet, how much they must do and permit being done is often a contentious issue. Also, whether it is moral, ethical and legal for employers to monitor the actions of their employees has been debated over decades.

While employers believe monitoring is necessary both to discourage illicit activity and to limit legal liability, there are distinct negative effects on emotional and physical stress including fatigue, lowered employee morale and lack of motivation within the workplace. Employers might use surveillance cameras, or may wish to record employees' activities while using company-owned computers or telephones. With the advancement of technology, rules that govern areas of privacy law are becoming hugely debatable and less important.

Privacy concerns are real

Workplace privacy of employees also involves privacy of using approved websites on firm computers without monitoring. Workplace privacy involves the employer putting in the effort to protect employee privacy from both within the firm and outside the firm. Now, all of that are tall orders that cannot be made available by law and will require personal and individual intervention to procure in a court of law. That it will directly affect one's prospects at work and employment is a given too.

Then come personal interactions like marriage. Marriage defined as a union of two souls had legal connotations by way of registration and legal responsibilities that generated from the contractual arrangement. A marriage, registered or not, is an agreement between two persons. The agreement had to be legal, with both parties of major age and gender as laid down by the personal law that governed them and their union. The consideration had to be legal. The consent procured had to be 'free' and not procured by coercion, force, fraud, misrepresentation, undue influence or mistake. There had to be a proposal and an acceptance apart from the basic ingredients of a legal contract.

Legal contract and privacy

That any or all communication in a marriage was privileged has been laid down in Section 122 of the Indian Evidence Act that reads as follows-

"Communications during marriage — No person who is or has been married, shall be compelled to disclose any communication made to him during marriage by any person to whom he is or has been married; nor shall he be permitted to disclose any such communication, unless the person who made it, or his representative in interest, consents, except in suits between married persons, or proceedings in which one married person is prosecuted for any crime committed against the other."

Marital privilege or spousal privilege seems to have originated from common law jurisprudence. The fundamental principle behind this privilege is mentioned in the case of *S. J. Choudhary vs The State,* which was decided on 26 July 1984, where Justice Khanna observed, "So much of the happiness of human life may fairly be said to depend on the inviolability of domestic confidence that the alarm and unhappiness occasioned to society by invading its sanctity and compelling the public disclosure of confidential communications between husband and wife would be a far greater evil than the disadvantage which may occasionally arise from the loss light which such revelations might throw on the questions in dispute hence all communications between them should be held privileged."

Rift in couples
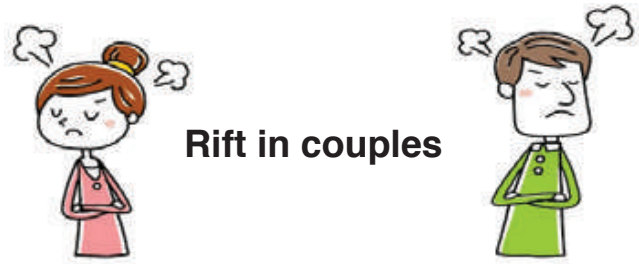
This concept is again echoed in English cases of *Pringle v Pringle* and *Mercer v State*. Thus, marital privilege exists because it is essential to preserve amity and sustain full confidence between a husband and a wife, therefore deeming the relationship of marriage as a sacrosanct institution and to some extent placing it above the concerns of justice. This underlines the issue of privacy which is upheld at all times between husband and wife, in the eyes of the law.

Law upholding privacy

Section 122 of the Indian Evidence Act protects every communication between the spouses, during the time of marriage even prevents it from being put up as evidence. There are, however, some exceptions to it, such as it not protecting the spouse if the spouse is accused of an offence against the other spouse - examples being cases of marital violence, domestic violence, cruelty or other cognisable offences committed by one against the other.

The Indian Supreme Court has also held that Section 122 will be applied to every communication made during the life of marriage and the same privilege will continue even after separation or divorce or dissolution of the marital relation, but only for the communication which was made during the existence of marriage not before or after it. It also allows the conduct influenced by the communication, or the spouse witnessing the other spouse doing a criminal act, to be admitted as evidence in the courts, i.e. an effect of the communication can be brought to court but not the communication itself. Marital privilege exists because of the relationship of marriage being considered the foundation of the society and it is vital to protect the intimate relationship of a husband and wife.

Now with the emergence of technology platforms and products such as applications, platforms and software, it's only mandatory to procure consent for divulgence of personal information that may be shared or provided voluntarily by the party involved. Which is why, consent is mandatory while providing any application access to one's files or details, at the onset, at regular intervals following updates and on any change to programme. That parties are slack on the issue and arbitrarily provide consent without reading the fine print is a norm but nonetheless have to provide 'consent' for the same.

Consent that may be procured as a routine and in passing is now also being reviewed again and tweaked to include audio, local languages, even mandatory scrolling till the end of the terms or consent clearances on each page before the user is able to proceed further, in order to procure consent lest it violate privacy concerned. The law on privacy is an ever- emerging one and, with technology growing by leaps with every passing day, it's a hurtling race to meet demands and fulfil legal provisions.

Manu Shrivastava is a journalist and lawyer with DraftCraft International and Co-Convenor of #TheWomanSurvivor, #MeTooAtHome and #MeTooBeyondBorders initiatives.

Technology ensures humans 'stay connected'

There is no limit to human interaction today, thanks to technologies and platforms. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc. are not only quick but also convenient to be in touch with near and dear ones. They have shrunk the world in the sense that they serve as conduits for socialising and enterprise, says **Nikita Shastri***.*

'Staying Connected'

The internet has changed the world in more ways than one and has also drastically modified how human connect with each other today. Technology has revolutionised communication and has helped reduce the time it takes for one to connect with another. With each passing day, new tools and technological advancements further improve how human connect with each other and that includes the time it takes to connect and the overall experience.

Interestingly, among the many variables that the internet offers to improve human communication and connectivity, it is the social media platforms that have simply changed the entire realm of communication today. Even before the Covid-19 pandemic hit human civilisation, social media was dictating human interactions and inter-personal activities. However, the restrictions imposed during the lockdown created a huge demand for platforms and technologies connecting humans.

'Staying connected' has been the motto for many in the last few years and what better way to stay connected than on social media and through apps like Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, Instagram, etc. Technology has come a long way to serve human needs and has constantly developed to keep pace with the ever-changing need of the hour, the latest being 'staying connected'.

A liveable, iconic city

The biggest advantage of modern day technology is that it has ensured and enhanced ways and means for humans to connect. There is no limit to human interaction today, thanks to these technologies and platforms. This means that one can sit in any corner of the world and get in touch with another person who has the same or similar technology or platform.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc. are not only the fastest but also some of the most convenient ways to be in touch with your loved ones. And, what more that distance is only a number when it comes to social media technologies.

Social media platforms have helped connect far- off relatives and family members, old friends who lost touch over the years, co-workers and colleagues, etc. Social media has been extensively used to strike new friendships and associations since their existence.

There are different types of connections that humans seek and that are hugely facilitated by social media technologies. Today, connectivity is crucial for not just personal relationships, professional alliances but day-to-day activities as well. One may need to stay connected to find a new job, to seek key services or benefits, for medical or legal assistance, to repair or fix things even order something as basic as food.

Small business owners, entrepreneurs, professionals and service providers who are looking to reach out and connect with the right customer base and potential clients have also been hugely benefitted with these technologies. And, non-profit organisations or socially-inclined groups and individuals wishing to raise funds for a cause have also been able to use social media very effectively.

Today, social media platforms have also realised their potential in connecting humans for all these causes and they have been able to tap on the basic human need to stay connected and to establish new connections for personal and professional use in a big way.

There is no denying that like any other technology, social media has its fair share of risks too. Cyber bullying, fraud, stalking, identity theft, fake accounts and handles, privacy violations, etc. are some of the risks associated with the use of social media. It's important to use these smartly, wisely, properly understanding the risks and pitfalls of each technology and make sure the weak and innocent are shielded at all times.

Technology helped connect during pandemic

The need for such technologies was felt the most when Covid-19 pandemic hit the world two years ago. India, like the rest of the world, went into complete and absolute lockdown for months on end. At the time, because of sudden restrictions on travel, commuting and movement of any sort, many individuals got stuck in locations away from their homes and families.

It was one of the most trying times for millions of individuals across the world. While some were stuck away from their homes and families, there were those who had no choice but to stay away from their families as they were contributing in tackling the dreadful pandemic as frontline workers or essential service providers.

Doctors, nurses, police personnel, pathology laboratory workers, pharmacy workers, postal workers, bank employees, transport workers any many other sections of people who were tirelessly working during the peak of the pandemic relied heavily on social media and similar connecting technologies to stay in touch with their loved ones.

At a time when they could not leave their workplace to go home to prevent their families from contracting the deadly virus, social media technologies came to their rescue to ensure they are at peace knowing their families are safe.

The pandemic completely redefined how humans connect – at home and at work. Many people turned to technology to continue 'interaction' with another human being especially those who were quarantined or in home isolation. As a response to the loneliness and the isolation that was created due to Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing restrictions, many used social media to feel as close to normal as possible.

During the pandemic, technologies took on new forms of significance and the scale of use. Millions of people, who had probably never used social media apps and platforms in their lives before, start to use these and rely on these heavily. So, the global public health crisis not just redefined but also hastened the use of technology across all segments. The lessons that were learned during the pandemic also helped design new solutions to connect people no matter how far they are.

The evolving technologies

Today, with just a click of a button, one is able to connect with individuals sitting thousands of miles away. Over time, as human needs have changed, technologies have evolved in a big way keeping up with these needs. So, what started with Orkut, Viber and Facebook has now evolved into many new and better platforms such as WhatsApp, Google Talk, Google Hangouts, Windows Live, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. And this evolves further with each passing day.

The present era is that of digital technology innovation and every entity that is part of this revolution is pushing for better, easier and simpler means to connect. So there are messaging apps that help you send text messages or images and videos at the touch of a button. Then there are platforms that give users the tools to showcase special moments from their lives. All one needs is a smartphone or a laptop and a good internet connection.

On the one side there are apps that will immortalise your data into the virtual world – for example, images and videos of your wedding, first solo trip, etc. Then there are features that allow one to project their 'stories' for shorter span of time. Most social media platforms have adopted this transient feature owing to its popularity and call it by different names.

The data that floats in digital space today is infinite and endless. Despite the risks, fact remains that humans have been able to make the most of social media platforms and connecting technologies today. The role of social media platforms in the lives of people, across social strata, is invaluable and irreplaceable.

Nikita Shastri is a researcher with The History and Heritage Project – a DraftCraft International Initiative to document details, analyse facts and plug lacunae generated by oversight or to further national or foreign agenda in History and Heritage Across India and Beyond Borders.

The 'fear of missing out'

Over the last two decades, technology has crept into our lives with an innocuous stealth. While this is all to the good, a new phenomenon has fast emerged where, for a number of reasons, no one wants to miss out on what's happening around them. 'Fear of Missing out (FOMO) as it is termed, is a natural fallout. **Manu Shrivastava** *explores this new trend and discusses its pros and cons.*

A fallout of digital technology is FOMO or the Fear Of Missing Out

It isn't easy to be unique. Everyone wants to be unique but doesn't want to be left out either. We tend to jump on ban wagons at every stage in our lives. Right from school where, as kids, we jump into a bus to be with our friends and enjoy the ride in unison but with the rest. So much so, that it's an activity we look forward to with eagerness without which life as a student would be incomplete. And then, there're school classes where we 'study' with the rest and then sports like Football, Cricket, etc., mostly team based and group activities. Why, even tuition classes and coaching sessions involve dealing with others.

If there's something friends have, as a trend, you must have it too and you move heaven and earth to get it. You blackmail your parents, throw a tantrum even put up your best behaviour only to get what the rest have and ensure you aren't left out. There's peer pressure and it's more than real. It's here that the Fear Of Missing Out, FOMO as is popularly known, begins to manifest itself. So, as a tolerated pattern, you've got cakes made to help you fit in; event created to generate group activities; prizes which are to be fought for by lots and careers that are commonly aspired by peer groups.

FOMO dictates life decision

And then, you grow into a teen and move to college where FOMO continues to affect you deeply in all phases of life; whether it's finding a love interest or working towards a much-sought- after career or generally earning a popularity that most seek. This goes on to grow into an integral part of your very being at work and in adult life where you seek validation from friends, colleagues, families and partners as a rule.

Over the last two decades, technology has crept into our lives with an innocuous stealth. Right from the seemingly innocent SMS that transformed into MMS and then mushroomed sporadically into Social Media with its multifarious platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok and others, technology has become an integral part of everyone's lives, whether they like it or not.

As the element of choice is conspicuous by its absence,

it's FOMO that rules the roost. Why, the number of followers play a direct role in the World Wide Web followers deciding whether you are famous or not. And, it's just by the number of followers that one's success is measured. Not whether the followers, in fact, actually act upon your works or words; it's just their presence in numbers indicated by your list of 'followers' or 'likes' to a post or view that matters.

Technology evolves with FOMO

Technology that advanced from a personalised DOS system to email and then Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and the range of interactive social media has, very strategically, utilised this very Fear Of Missing Out among individuals to supplement numbers and further viewership and, concurrently, digital footfalls and revenue.

That FOMO is entirely psychological and not tangible or real yet affects lives in the real world is deplorable. Colossal revenue models operate only on FOMO to further their fiscal interests and businesses. Ethics take a complete backseat in industries thriving on FOMO-driven individuals who refuse to counter it with logic. The entire media industry operates on FOMO and so does the Social Media industry which milks the sentiment every micro-second to boost 'viewership' and 'numbers' which again, inadvertently, affect revenue models based entirely on this.

FOMO and reality

Let us examine how FOMO affects the media and reality today as opposed to the past. In the past, each time something was said, written about or countered in the media, it were the pertinent 'experts' with years of relevant experience who would offer their inputs on the subject on platforms that were limited and hence creditable to an extent. Their views, substantiated with informed takes, would be taken with utmost seriousness by the public at large whose opinions would be formed but only on basis of 'informed views'.

Over the years and the proliferation of private television channels over and above the good old Doordarshan led to a sea of opinions and views on issues local, national and international, that lacked 'information' and bordered mostly on 'uninformed' views even off-the-cuff and, sometimes, likely to incite the public or hurt sentiments even individual interests. And, as the media went on to turn digital and news amalgamating with views to form opinions that 'mattered' even despite their dearth in credibility, FOMO turned into a virtual foe.

Everyone who wants to arrive has to either follow a leader with millions of followers or be out of the race. Now, whether those millions of followers were created by digital trickery, software intervention or an algorithm ploy didn't matter. What mattered was that the numbers were there and grew.

So, to boost numbers in this game mattered the most and players knew what it took that mattered. It could be photographs bordering on the bold even worse, comments that were politically driven, insinuating the worst even instigating just to procure a response and concurrent 'hits' to qualify as 'views' never mind the authenticity, credibility or intent. What mattered were the hits, views or friends never mind how one got them. And FOMO ensured everyone joins the bandwagon, even if it means climbing over each other's toes, shoulders even heads just to make sure that they make the mark.

FOMO is psychological yet affects lives in the real world

The right formula

Technology has tapped upon the right formula to rope in humans struck with FOMO and they're only sticking to it, never mind the outcome or risks. The risks are real and tangible. A remark or view must generate a response...any response. Nine times out of ten, it's a response that's adverse to the comment even angry or incensed but that doesn't matter.

In the eyes of the law, such a comment or remark may be struck down or pulled up by law following a complaint. But, who will complain and how often does one do it. It isn't bad enough that there aren't processes in place, effective and not just synthetic offerings by way of disclaimers and warnings, what's worse is that the entire technology is aimed to thrive on this.

In the absence of provocation, the entire industry will collapse. It's the new normal and any opposition to it is like being left out. FOMO only ensures that ethics, law and morality aside, what matters is making a mark by jumping and clinging onto the bandwagon. After all, that's the only way to move ahead in these times.

It isn't uncommon to find something absolutely ribald, provocative or inflammatory on technology platforms that provide for news, views, comments, opinions and or intellectual property to online viewers consuming the same on phones, tablets, computers, laptops and you-name-it.

Actually it's fodder for their very existence. Intellectual property is created only to titillate, derive responses, drive sentiments and then...disappear only to give way to a fresh lot of intellectual property that does the same, even better...before disappearing. FOMO drives individuals to leap into situations without any application of mind as individuals have now adopted collective minds and behave only as mobs with a mentality that completely lacks reason.

Manu Shrivastava is a journalist and lawyer with DraftCraft International and Co-Convenor of #TheWomanSurvivor, #MeTooAtHome and #MeTooBeyondBorders initiatives.

Work from Home, the in thing

Kriti Kalra *explains how the ongoing pandemic redefined the parameters of work. The digital footprints set in and even those who had never before used the mobile phone's camera or internet services were trained about the processes and joined in the world's largest exercise while working. Work from Home is now a concept that has been well and truly accepted in the last two years.*

The concept of Work from Home and Zoom meetings raged across India and the world thanks to 2020 pandemic

The very concept of Work was contrary to, as one may understand today, starkly distinct from the concept of Home. One lives at home and goes to work and that is at a workplace away from one's home. It has only been the norm to look down at any and every attempt to either bring work back home 'after work' or stay for hours longer than at one's workplace.

Why there would be domestic squabbles even ugly fights back at home with the 'working' partner staying back at work for hours longer than stipulated and concurrently spending lesser time, compromised too, with the partner or family. Issues revolving around the concept of 'work' in itself began to arise in the mid- eighties with the 'working' partner being given preferential treatment as compared to the home- bound partner - mostly being the wife back in India.

The semantics of work from home

So, the nomenclature associated with the domestic partner too changed. First with persuasive kindness and then with a fervour that bordered on anger: The term 'housewife'used without abandon at one time turned into a derogatory word that was outright politically incorrect and went on to be replaced with 'home-maker'. After all, work at home that didn't fetch any revenue directly wasn't any lesser than work at office.

And then, as nuclear families grew in sharp contrast to the dwindling numbers of joint families owing to the changing nature of socio-economics in urban settings, the concept of work too changed. Part-time jobs, working overtime even in shifts, Double Income No Kids (DINK) and variations of the 'work-home' relationship began to make their presence felt.

That went on till technology made its presence felt in human lives. And, all of a sudden, technology brought in its wake a range of activities that redefined the concept of work. Deviating from traditional modes, work began getting digitised and technology driven.

Diversified and new opportunities

Writers, for example, started to dump the humble manual typewriter and, instead, adopted electronic typewriters that provided the option of rectifying one's errors before printing. Now, when that got replaced with an even-more sophisticated option of word processing systems, the change was welcome. And then arrived the Personal Computer, higher end processing devices, laptops and MacBooks. What they did is enable the user carry his/her work with him/her wherever preferred. So now, work could be carried back at home, or in transit or while on a vacation as the devices could be charged remotely and even retain the charge to facilitate work away from power supplies.

Cut to pre-Pandemic times when the entire world was technologically savvy and were grappling with issues of ethics when it came to balancing work with personal equations back at home. Families were beginning to demand 'family time' and partners, 'us-time' even individuals 'Me-time' to break away from the technological patterns that threatened to engulf personal lives.

And then, Covid-19 struck the world. India, not to be left far behind, was hit hard and all of a sudden, life changed for one and all - the small trader, for the businessman, the entrepreneur, the home-maker, the baker and the sweeper. Sweeper, because, what had turned into a hugely physical interaction on a daily basis had changed drastically. Each time a civic sweeper completes his job after sweeping a lane clean, a supervisor would arrive and check personally. This activity would be repeated across the city but changed soon after Covid-19 arrived.

Covid-19 changed the rules

Now, a sweeper, complete with double mask and gloves takes images of the filth accumulated in his area, rolls up his sleeve to get down to work, completes his job and then takes images of the road again. And then, sends them over to his supervisor who watches it and even requests him to relay the situation at Ground Zero live on, say WhatsApp or Zoom, to substantiate the claims.

Meetings, official and otherwise, all became digitised and were relayed over mobile phones. The risk of Covid-19 only made everyone get smarter. Even those who had never before used the mobile phone's camera or internet services were trained about the processes and joined in the world's largest exercise while working outdoors.

Since the beginning of 2020, as Covid raged across the world, and the world's largest democracy went into the world's largest lockdown, the concept of work and home were again in the eye of the storm. Work found itself getting fully digitised as human movement found itself screeching to a halt and stuck indoors to control the spread of Covid-19.

So, masked and distanced socially, most of the working population which could work, network and perform digitally began to dress up formally, waist up more often than not, sit in front of webcams and perform their tasks in front of their laptops, iPads, computers, even mobiles phones but at home.

The concept of Work from Home raged across India and the world as everyone switched to digital platforms to perform and retain whatever they could of their jobs by working from home. Why, even education made its way into homes as children sat before mobile phones, rubbing their eyes to wake up and attend class before teachers too operating from within

An online yoga class

'their' homes. Partners, friends, workplace colleagues, employees and employers created workspaces within their domestic spaces to 'work from home' and digitally in order to keep Covid-19 at bay. Zoom, Google Meet and a range of remote working applications began to make their presence felt before an audience that needed to use them to work and away from workplaces but at home. There were teething issues as expected as workers would forget to mute their mics or shut off their cameras at home and, instead, relay moments of privacy much to the embarrassment of the parties involved and the world at large.

Media would be peppered with instances of directors complete with neckties and blazers, standing up in boxers and walking away from e-conferences without realising that their cameras were yet running. Wives would drop into workspaces and place loving pecks on their husband's cheeks much to his embarrassment and before a virtual audience watching the ordeal, live. And then there was worse happening owing to the very nature of work and its public nature within the privacy of one's homes.

Keeping pace with time

Technology managed to keep pace with the need of the hour and salvage situations for most. Backgrounds could be customised and changed for users to prevent them from sharing their own that may be private and trigger bouts of embarrassment or divulge unnecessary details to the world at large. You could be sitting on a makeshift table in your bedroom with your partner moving about in the background yet replace your own with a formal office backdrop ready and available through the application. Needs were met with technological advancements and in swift sync.

Work from Home has been a concept that gained mastery and proficiency over the last two years. And, even the most unlettered and technologically challenged were provided with means to combat contingencies. Solutions spread through WhatsApp and Facebook provided relief and continues to do so. Even as the world inches to meet to work again, if need be, and God Forbid, another wave arrives, working from home will now not be as hard and the transition smooth and effortless.

Kriti Kalra is an activist and field researcher with www.thewomansurvivor.com – an initiative of DraftCraft International to protect and empower women by bringing on one platform the latest on rights and issues, strategic case studies, state initiatives and informed legal opinions.

Improving health, enriching lives

Digital health technologies, apps and platforms that have flooded the healthcare sector in India and globally show how important and indispensable technology has become for personal and professional healthcare. **Vedika Jain** *informs how government's initiatives laid the roadmap in boosting the healthcare, especially in the aftermath of Covid-19.*

Digital technology is now being widely used by individuals of all age groups to maintain a healthy life style and online consultations with doctors

Digital health technology today has taken over medical healthcare in a big way, assisting healthcare professionals in providing quality healthcare to patients. Not just that, health-related technology has pervaded human existence today to an extent that almost everyone with a smartphone today is using digital health apps and other technology easily available to the common man such as smart watches, digital health instruments and monitors, etc.

In other words, digital health technology is a wide area and includes several categories ranging from wearable devices, telemedicine, telehealth, mobile health technology, health information technology (IT), etc. Digital technologies, apps and instruments are ruling the roost when it comes to technology used by individuals to stay healthy and fit. Digital health technologies, apps and platforms that have inundated the healthcare sector in India and globally indicate how important and indispensable technology has become for personal and professional healthcare. And, it's only growing by the day as new and more complicated health conditions and crisis such as the Covid-19 infection emerge everyday challenging human intelligence and existence.

Health technology for all

The digital health technology world has something for everyone. There are mobile medical apps and software that support and assist healthcare professionals, doctors, nurses, paramedics, emergency medical care providers, first responders, etc., in making decisions during health crisis and medical emergencies. These platforms rely heavily on artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies and have been a boon to the industry, revolutionising healthcare in general.

In addition to that, there are tools using digital health technology that help in improving the ability of doctors and public health experts in ensuring medical care is provided on time; a medical condition is diagnosed in a timely and accurate fashion; a disease is treated accurately and overall quality of life is delivered and maintained.

MUMBAI`S ARCHITECTURAL MARVELS

If you thought Mumbai was just a concrete jungle, perish the thought. It also has in its fold some breath-taking architectural marvels widely regarded as a heady mix of Art Deco, Gothic, Victorian, Indo-Saracenic and Contemporary styles. The diverse mix can be traced back to centuries with a spectrum of influences. Some have made it as heritage sites even as the city grows as a global trade hub. **Manu Shrivastava** *takes a long, hard look at these sites that give the city an old world charm.*

Photos (sourced from the internet)
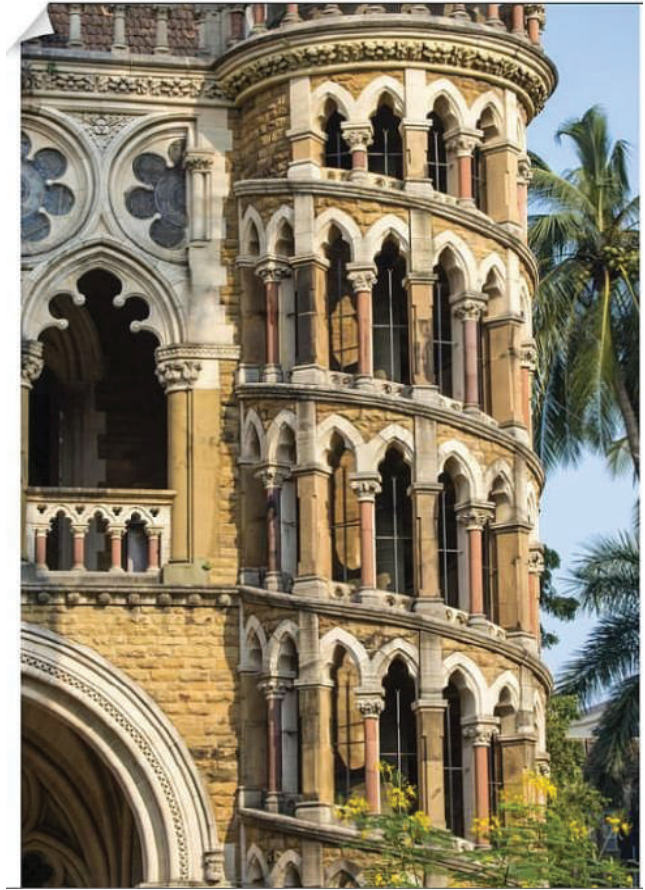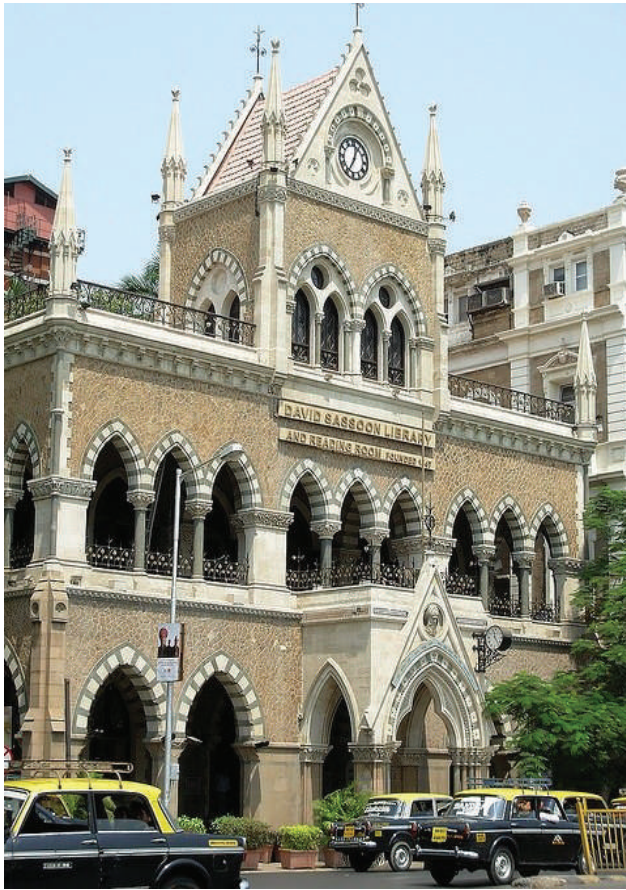
David Sasoon Library and University of Mumbai, both neo Gothic architecture

Mumbai is one of those few cities in the world that offer visitors an assortment of things to do, see and experience. If it's not the interesting lot of people pacing the city's streets, it's the magnificent architecture that attracts tourists, art lovers, photographers and filmmakers, history enthusiasts, etc., from all over the world.

Mumbai is known to have some of the most awe-inspiring architectural marvels among the urban centres in the country. The architecture is a blend of Art Deco, Gothic, Victorian, Indo-Saracenic and Contemporary architectural styles.

The exquisite structures, buildings, landmarks, historical monuments scattered through the city are a reminder of the city's rich and diverse cultural make-up and are a reflection of the myriad influences that have shaped the city's architecture through centuries.

Evolution of the city's architecture

Like any other city, Mumbai too has evolved and metamorphosed over centuries and through various influences to be what it is today. Erstwhile Bombay's success as a global trading hub had led to rapid expansion and construction activities towards the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries to meet the demands of new immigrants making a beeline to a flourishing city.

Bombay, for the first time, witnessed planned development and the city matured from a lacklustre, fortified trading port to a modern, cultured city. The first wave of construction in late 19th century witnessed a flurry of Victorian Gothic-styled public buildings such as David Sassoon Library, Bombay High Court and Mumbai University at Fort.

A second expansion in early 20th century initiated Backbay Reclamation that extended into construction of buildings in contemporary Art Deco style and the Marine Drive sea front (the Queen's Necklace) on Bombay's western coast.

It's this unique blend of architectural heritage that lures millions of tourists to Mumbai from across borders and the interest has only increased in the last decade.

The simplicity of art deco

It was the iconic Regal Cinema in Colaba that was one of the first structures to be built in Art Deco style in Mumbai. The theatre built by Framji Sidhwa happens to be India's first air-conditioned theatre and the first film to be aired here was The *Devil's Brother* in 1933.

The cinema was designed by Charles Stevens, interiors were done by Czech artist Karl Schara who brought in extensive mirror work in the building. Around the same time and later, many other similar cinemas opened in Mumbai including Plaza Central, Broadway, New Empire, Eros, Metro, Liberty, etc. Eros Cinema is a typical art deco building designed by architect Sohrabji Bhedwar. The cinema was built in 1935 partially faced with red Agra sandstone and the building painted in cream.

After Regal Cinema came a range of buildings — commercial, residential and cinema houses in Mumbai built in similar architectural style. Art Deco was one of the most fashionable design movements of modern art that manifested into architecture, decorative arts, painting and beyond.

Much later, gorgeous homes soaked in Art Deco style were built for the affluent in the Malabar and Cumbala hills

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) built in Victorian-Gothic style

areas. Other pockets in the city including Apollo Bunder, Colaba, Fort, Dadar and Mahim also witnessed construction of commercial buildings and residential structures with similar architectural elements. The sea-facing buildings lining the Gateway of India promenade in Colaba are built in Art Deco architectural style.

Deriving origin from the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs Industriels et Modernes, held in 1925 in Paris, Art Deco style is characterised by flat roofs, smooth lines, geometric shapes, streamlined forms, curvilinear balconies, modern building materials in vivid colours and bold exterior motifs or stylised ornamentation.

Art Deco defines Mumbai's skyline

One of the city's most noticed architectural styles, Art Deco can be seen in many structures and buildings across Mumbai. Other than the cinemas, most buildings along Marine Drive and on the west end of Oval Maidan display this architectural style. There are hundreds of structures imbibing the Art Deco style — Empress Court, Dhanraj Mahal, Keval Magal, Shiv Shakti Bhuvan, Rajjab Mahal, Soona Mahal, Motabhoy Mansion, Taraporewala Aquarium, New India Assurance building — to name a few.

Art Deco in India (especially in Mumbai) evolved into a unique style that was later named as Deco-Saracenic which is a combination of the Islamic and the Hindu architectural styles.

Flora Fountain

The iconic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel at Colaba, Mumbai

EROS Cinema theatre

Primary features of the Indo-Saracenic style included construction of domes, arches, spires, stained glasses and minarets - interiors with Victorian influence and exteriors with a more Indian touch.

Today, Oval Maidan and the surrounding buildings — commercial, residential and entertainment — have become the hub of Art Deco enthusiasts from all over. The ground offers a breathtaking view of Art Deco edifices that coalesce the Indian design with Art Deco imagery to create the 'Indo-Deco' style — a testimony of the confluence of Indian and European influences.

The simplicity and elegance attributed a timeless appeal to the style that spread all over the world. New York City, Miami, Istanbul, Durban and most major cities adopted Art Deco but with variations of native needs decided mainly by weather and the environment. The design elements reflected the culture of the zone depicted in representational forms. So, Bombay developed its own style…Bombay Deco!

Mumbai's structures and UNESCO heritagesites

Some of the most iconic structures in Mumbai have been constructed in Gothic Revival, also known as Victorian Gothic or Neo Gothic architecture - an architectural movement that began in the late 1740s in England and expanded soon after.

Chhatrapati Maharaj Vastu Sanghralaya (earlier known as the Prince of Wales Museum), part of the Art deco ensemble

Gothic architecture had become the most prominent architectural style in the Western world by mid-19th century. It relied heavily on the distinct features of medieval examples that include decorative patterns, finials, lancet windows and hood moulds.

The Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Bombay is a collection of 19th-century Victorian neo-Gothic public buildings and 20th-century Art Deco in Mumbai buildings in Mumbai's Fort area and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2018.

This ensemble is set around the Oval Maidan - with Victorian Gothic buildings on the east and Art Deco buildings of Backbay Reclamation and Marine Drive on the west facing the Arabian Sea. The UNESCO World Heritage Site nomination aims to safeguard a total of 94 buildings.

The distinct style of Gothic structures

Most iconic structures in South Mumbai are built in Victorian Gothic architecture. The 19th century Victorian Gothic buildings that lie to the east of the Oval Maidan including Bombay High Court and several others in the precinct such as the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) building stand tall displaying this architecture at this best.

The Brihan Municipal Corporation building also known as the BMC building that lies opposite CSMT is also built in Gothic revival style. Two designs were considered for this structure - one of the Gothic designs done by Frederick William Stevens and the other in the Indo-Saracenic design presented by Robert Fellowes Chisholm. Eventually, a blend of Venetian Gothic andcompleted in 1893.

The architecture in the fast growing port city of Bombay in the 18 th and 19 th centuries was a result of the British influence. At first it was the neoclassical style of architecture and later the Victorian Gothic style (also known as Gothic revival) that dominated the city's architecture.

The Victorian Gothic style is expressive and imbibes several unique elements such as surfaces of lives colours, beautified with carved and narrative elements, consisting of flying buttresses, lancet windows and stained glass, etc.

Just like any other art form, architecture too is influenced by local flavours. Indian architects analysed this in their own way and the result was a blended style with Gothic and contemporary elements that came to known as 'Mumbai Gothic'.

In fact, today, keeping up with the social media culture, a designated selfie zone between the BMC building and CSMT

Gateway of India

has been constructed that allows selfie obsessed visitors - local, domestic and foreign - to click photos of the structures and of themselves without worrying about the traffic. Several other buildings in the city display this architectural style and are extremely popular among tourists even locals who don't miss a chance to capture the beauty in their cameras.

Other structures and buildings with gothic architecture include Mumbai City Hall, the Fort campus of the University of Mumbai and Rajabai Tower, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, the City Civil and Sessions Court (Old Secretariat), Bombay High Court, Public Works Department Building, David Sassoon Library, Elphinstone College, Maharashtra Police Headquarters, etc.

The iconic Gateway of India

Among the most distinguished landmarks of Mumbai is the Gateway of India. Located at the tip of the reclaimed land of the Apollo Bunder, it adjoins the Mumbai Harbour and the Arabian Sea in Colaba. Symbolising elements of the British influence in India, the huge stone Arch of Triumph was originally constructed to commemorate the first-ever visit of a British Monarch to India.

Incidentally, King George V and his consort Queen Mary came ashore near here in December, 1911. While the foundations were laid in December 1913, it wasn't until 1919 that the construction of a seawall and reclamation of land from the sea kept the project from being completed.

Built of a yellow Kharodi basalt from nearby quarries across Mumbai, the central dome has a diameter of 48 ft, (14.4m); it is 83 ft (24.9m) to its apex. The Gateway of India was designed by Scotsman George Wittet who helped popularise the Indo-Saracenic style of architecture that combined Gothic-like flamboyance with Muslim-Indian architecturalfeatures.

The traditional-style triumphal arch was based on 16th century Muslim styles of Gujarat. Importantly, the last of the British troops formally to leave India passed through its archway in February, 1948. Over the years, the Gateway of India has come a symbol synonymous with India's financial capital -Mumbai.

Diagonally located behind a small park adjoining the Gateway of India is the historic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel that pre-dates the Gateway by twenty years. Indian industrialist Jamshetji Nusserwangji Tata laid the foundations of the hotel

The Bombay High Court building

back in 1898. As the story goes, Tata barred from entering the exclusive Green's Hotel because of his Indian nationality, decided to build a hotel that would far surpass the hotel from which he had been barred.

The Taj Mahal opened in 1903 and was first state-of-the-art hotel in Bombay, one of the most modern hotels in Asia with Moorish domes and with the finest European technology then available.

The fishing docks

As a coastal city, fishing is one of the most important activities in Mumbai. A trip to Mumbai is incomplete without a visit to Sassoon Docks, located at the southern tip of the city in Colaba. One of the oldest docks in Mumbai and the first wet dock constructed in the city, the zone appeals to tourists, photographers and fish-loving locals.

When built in 1875, Sassoon Docks was owned by the mercantile company David Sassoon & Co. Headed by Albert Abdullah David Sassoon who was the son of a Baghdadi Jew and the leader of the Jewish community in Bombay at the time, David Sassoon. Later in 1879, Sassoon Docks and other associated foreshore properties were purchased by the government on behalf of the Bombay Port Trust.
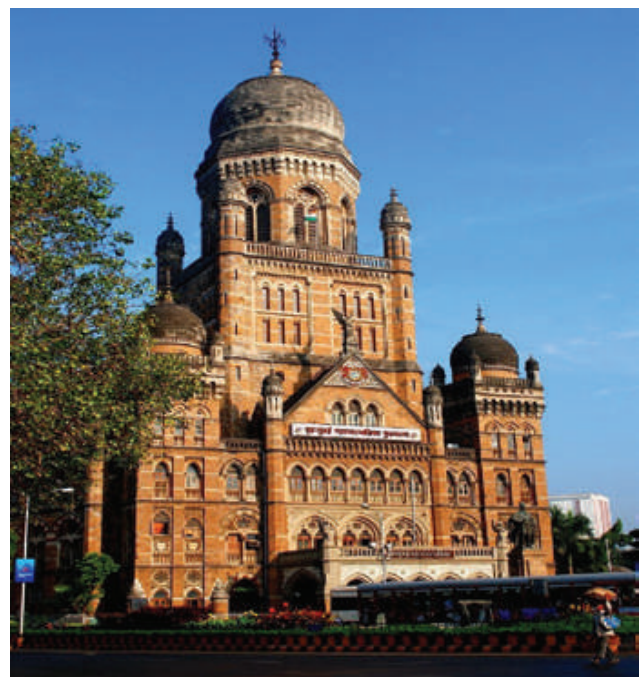
BMC Building

Sasoon Docks

Every morning, the docks teem with activity with men offloading a variety of fish and sea creatures from their boats on to the docks and women selling fresh produce in the local market that also happens to be one of the largest fish markets in the city. Sassoon Docks is one of the few docks in the city that is open to members of the public.

The forts in Mumbai

It may come as a surprise but the city of Mumbai is also home to several forts that were built by the many rulers and colonists that 'ruled' Mumbai at several times in the last few centuries.

Bandra Fort, also known as Castella de Aguada - corruption of Castelo da Aguada which in Portuguese stands for 'Fort of the Waterpoint' - is one such fort located in Bandra, Mumbai. Built by the Portuguese in 1640, this fort was a watchtower overlooking Mahim Bay. When the Portuguese ceded the seven islands of Bombay in 1661, the fort became very important strategically.

Today, Bandra Fort is frequented by locals mostly and sometimes tourists who visit to relax in the premises overlooking the Bandra- Worli Sea Link. It is also a popular destination for couples who come to spend romantic moments with their partners. The fort is also popular among Bollywood filmmakers and has featured in many films. Other forts within Mumbai and in nearby areas include Worli Fort, Sewri Fort, Sion Fort, Vasai Fort, Kolaba Fort, etc.

Bandra Fort

Other popular tourist destinations

Mumbai is full of history stored inside the little-hidden pockets and the nooks of the city. With interesting stories waiting at every corner of the urban-metropolitan, one that amazes all is a quaint locality, hidden in the posh residential area of Malabar Hills. Dubbed as Mumbai's own Varanasi, Banganga is a centuries-old ancient water reservoir, tucked away in Walkeshwar.

Despite being a stone throw away from the sea, the water flowing through the inlet is said to be fit for consumption. According to legend, when Ram, Laxman and Sita were on exile, Sita was thirsty, so Laxman shot an arrow on the ground and it resulted in water gushing through the ground.

Another popular tourist destination, the Haji Ali Dargah also known as Haji Ali is a mosque and dargah located on an islet in southern Mumbai. A monument of Pir Haji Ali Shah Bukhari, the structure is located off Worli coast and offers a

Khotachiwadi

Minara Masjid

picturesque view of the Arabian Sea especially during sunsets.

Mumbai is home to several structures and picturesque landscapes attracting both tourists and locals. Minara Masjid at Mohammed Ali Road lights up every evening rendering a special touch in the bustling zone. The mosque looks even more beautiful during Ramzan when the entire area transforms into a food court inviting food lovers from all over.

Hotel Majestic situated opposite Regal Cinema in Colaba was built by an Italian firm in 1909 and was, at one time, one of Mumbai's premier luxury hotels. Later, it was converted into a hostel and canteen for members of the legislative assembly but retained its old world charm.

A heritage village located in Girgaum, Khotachiwadi is a small enclave with old- Portuguese style architecture. Founded in the 18 th century by Pathare Prabhu, the village came into being when Prabhu sold plots of land to local East Indian families. The enclave has a distinct characteristic and is often frequented by visitors with an interest in the diverse cultural and architectural heritage of the city.
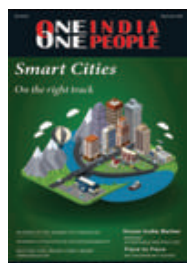
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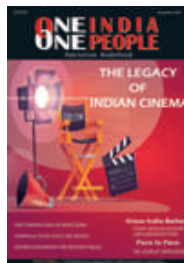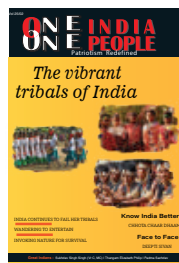
"India has a long way to go, if viewed from World Bank's rule of law index perspective."

Dr. Shashikala Gurpur

The distinguished academician-legal luminary **Dr. Shashikala Gurpur** feels the gap in quality indicators between India and advanced countries is narrowing and says India should encash on its young population with a robust policy that will enable transnational twining and joint degrees, international best practices, leading to knowledge creation and tuning the education to global requirements.

Dr. Gurpur is an Indian author, professor, researcher and distinguished academician with a PhD in International Law. Director of Symbiosis Law School,Pune and Dean of the Faculty of Law, Symbiosis International University, she is member, Bar Council of India and the 19 th Law Commission of India.

A recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship, she also taught at the National University of Cork, Ireland. Named in the list of Top 100 legal luminaries of India by LexisNexis, she is also the Kittur Rani Chennamma Award winner.

Hers is a transformative leadership, primarily based on democracy and believes nothing should be blindly accepted unless it confirms to logic and rationality.

Dr. Gurpur in conversation with **A. Radhakrishnan**.

Can you briefly introduce yourself?

Well-rounded woman law teacher and knowledge worker with professional excellence and commitment to justice, redefining possibilities for women beyond social norms and defying discrimination as well roadblocks, relying on soul power.

How did your journey begin? Who were your mentors and role models?

A science graduate, I turned to law due to family property issues and as most got resolved out of court, went on to higher studies. Invited to teach by my alma mater SDM Law College, Mangalore, I built a profile as an excellent teacher and researcher during my five year tenure.

My role models and mentors include my late parents; Dr. Rita Noronha (social worker), late Mr. Janardana (first PRO, Syndicate Bank), late Prof. Madhava Menon who invited me to join his team at NLSUI, Bangalore; former Law Minister and Parliamentarian Dr. Veerappa Moily and in last 14 years, Dr. S.B. Mujumdar, Chancellor, Symbiosis who nurtured a passion for leadership in higher education and innovation.

The spiritual life of Anandmayee Maa and the dedicated service of late Sindhutai Sapkal have also influenced me.

What are the pros and cons of academia as a career option?

Pros include a peaceful youthful life seeped in ideas and knowledge dissemination. Cons include no great pay, no pleasures, petty politics and inbreeding in some institutional eco systems, poor gender parity, managerial/leadership skill deficit.

What is the biggest challenge of the legal education industry? Has the pandemic brought in opportunities?

The biggest challenge in legal education sector (I respectfully avoid the word 'industry', as we transform people and not mass-produce goods) is quality variance, affordability, professional glass ceiling, faculty crunch, and bigger young demography with too many diversions.

The pandemic adversity has kicked in new possibilities such like online pedagogy, hybrid learning, self-learning among students, innovation in both teaching and learning, environmental concerns, stress reduction in some facets such as transport and infrastructure maintenance, future readiness and put compassion levels to test.

How can India reach a level where we become a part of the global education system?

The gap in quality indicators between India and advanced countries is narrowing. India has to encash on its young demography with a robust policy enabling transnational twining and joint degrees, international best practices, leading knowledge creation and tuning the education to global requirements.

How can the legal curriculum be made more relevant and effective in a technology-driven future?

It can be made more relevant by engaging all stakeholders of not only court-based system, but also drawing experts from various disciplines such as business, technology, media and literature; in curriculum development and review. It can be effective if related to real life, human suffering and social needs by doing systematic gap analysis and gap filling.

What is unique about Symbiosis Law School comparatively? Your futuristic vision for it?

It has an unmatched legacy. Founded by a teacher, it rests on the foundation of excellence, innovation and grand vision of whole world as one family. The human capital in the form of network and alumni, cutting edge curriculum, strictly merit-based admission, experienced faculty, quality culture, professionalism and transformation- laced ecosystem in research and learning for future-readiness, carefully nurtured global competencies, impacting nation and common people -speak for its uniqueness.

An untiring commitment to those who love us and being authentic in the brand as topmost private law school in India in last 20 years is also unique. With our top management team, we envision being among the best, not only in Asia, but the world in future.

How do you define the success of an academic institution? What makes or breaks it?

Success of an academic institution is in paying back to the society which has nurtured it, by constantly inventing ways of engaging positively. An institution is a crucible of ideas and values in practice, meeting point of thinkers where tomorrow is envisioned and rolled out. Any compromise or deviation breaks it.

Is law an ass? Should those who break law get benefit of rule of law? How can we deal with the backlog of cases?

Law is an ass if it is not rational in responding to popular aspirations or public opinion /interest. No unclean hand can avail or expect justice.

Dealing with backlog can happen with more courts in target areas, fast track courts, more judicial appointments, better technological utilisation and systematic pre- litigation solutions.

How evolved has the legal ecosystem been and why is it a popular career choice?

Legal ecosystem is the bulwark of civilisation and development. India has a long way to go, if viewed from World Bank's rule of law index perspective. With growing young demography, desperate need to respond to poor rule of law metrics, law, being a professional avenue with versatile career opportunities as demonstrated by lead law school alumni, is a popular choice.

What courses or initiatives have your created? How to foster diversity and inclusivity in your department and on campus?

We have pioneered all-round internationalisation and won FICCI's national award in 2021, competing with technology in a difficult legal arena. Our unique courses are European Legal Studies since 2009; 1 year LLM with eight specialisations and BBA LLB Hon.

Dr. Gurpur in a round table discussion on 'Delayed Justice to Prisoners in India' along with Dr. Mujumdar, Srijan Pal Singh and others on zoom

Other initiatives include focus on Climate Change Law and Policy in Jean Monet Chair we won recently from European Commission and ongoing grants in Forced Migration, 21st century teaching skills among others.

Another major initiative is the SCALSAR Centre of Excellence in advanced legal studies since 2013, championing original research, law and policy intervention across India through various projects and publications. We analyse the impact of student care and encourage, besides ensuring women leadership at all levels. Learning disability is addressed by systematic measures.

How can you be an advocate for students?

One has to take the profession as service to next generation, and hence to humanity. The quality of education, and all-round student care such as mentoring, remedial approach, therapeutic approach to transgress limits, providing best development avenues, thus transforms them into leaders and responsible citizens.

What are your achievements in the medicine field?

Good teaching is the one which inspires, stimulates thinking and challenges limits. It incorporates best practices, arouses interest and curiosity and inculcates addiction to learning.

Can you talk about any experience you've had managing conflicts between students and administrators?

I have had many experiences which are not prolonged as conflicts. It is seen as conflict by outsiders who do not know the full truth as we protect students. We believe that the students

full truth as we protect students. We believe that the students tend to believe they are absolutely right, where as they have limited experience. So, many follies need to be forgiven, kept confidential, shown light to be corrected than holding such immature past against them as they blossom in the outside world.

In the case of students who violate discipline to attract the wrath of community or law and order, reformative than retributive justice works better.

What would your message be for young aspiring lawyers? What qualities should they possess?

Never compromise truth and justice. Never stop learning. Qualities required are language skills, articulation, people skills, strategic thinking, problem solving, reading, learning, commitment to profession, responsibility to client and court, and most of all, being a justice worker.

As a member of the 19th Law Commission of India and National Judicial Academic Council how useful do you find deliberations?

During Dr. Moily's tenure, 19 th Law Commission undertook a review of impact of its work and mooted the idea of making it a statutory Commission like many other advanced nations. The deliberations were useful in reforming laws and influencing the policy discourse which in turn, enter the academic/research realm.

As member of National Judicial Academic Council, I was a regular resource person, training judges of High Courts and lower tiers on laws relating to women, children, social justice, gender training, constitutional role of judiciary and judging in comparative context, international law, media role, etc. The engagement is ongoing with some international batches of judges, state judicial academies joining the list.

Is Covid merely a conspiracy?

Winning awards has been a habit. I was a topper all through. Recognition/award is acknowledgement of your hard work and a constant reminder to keep up to standards.

I feel humbled and dedicate all these to my son Nisthula, who sacrificed his own pleasures and time; to my parents who dared to free me from conventional woman's role and limits; to friends and mentors who let me be; to Symbiosis for entrusting a leadership role in the most male-dominated arena of law.

Kittur Chennamma award (given by the Government of Karnataka in 2019, named after the valourous queen who fought the Empire) was for my contribution as advisor to Jaimala Committee report on female sex workers in 2016- 17, role in Karnataka State Women's University in Vijayapura since 2003, and other ongoing engagement in women empowerment. I also got the SILF's Legal Education Innovation Award in 2011.

Given your busy schedule, do you find time to pursue your hobbies?

I make time for reading, creative writing, nature walking, palmistry, reiki, migrant engagement, international network, yoga, gym and spiritual *sadhana*.

A.Radhakrishnan is a Pune based freelance journalist, poet and short story writer.
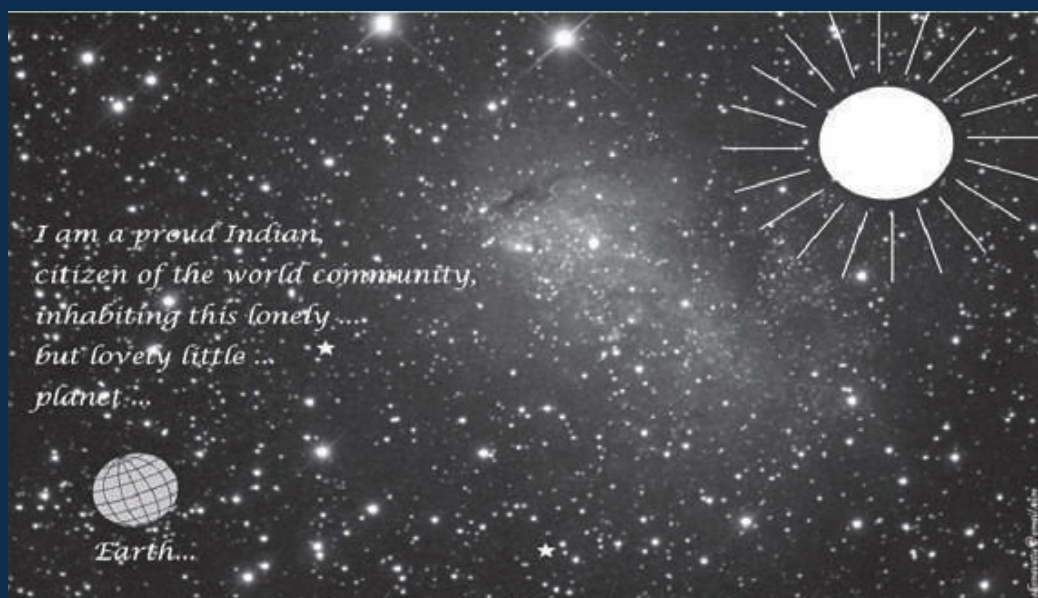
On the other spectrum are digital health technologies that are improving health care by using information technology, sensor mechanisms, etc. The application of such technology is also wide and is mainly in use for maintaining general wellness of patients, keeping them fit and healthy, maintaining vital health statistics, etc.

Individuals of all age groups are now using digital health technology to maintain a healthy lifestyle, stay fit and healthy and as an aid in treating medical conditions both acute and chronic, health crisis and mental health issues. Human have evolved with technology too and when the Covid-19 pandemic engulfed the world, it was not just frontline workers and medical personnel but even the lay person who used technology to stay safe and healthy during the public health emergency.

Benefits of health technology

There are many benefits of digital tools that are supporting and aiding healthcare today. The most important being how efficiently and effectively digital health technology helps healthcare providers such as doctors, paramedics, etc. in offering opportunities to improve outcomes of medical situations and enhance accuracy and speed of diagnosis and treatment.

They say a wrong remedy is worse than a disease. So, if there is a wrong diagnosis of a medical condition that leads to wrong treatment, there is a high chance of the patient developing more complications, side effects even the risk of losing life. So, such technology goes a long way in ensuring correct diagnosis of the disease or underlying medical condition for the right treatment.

Also, when a healthcare professional has access to more information and data about a patient's health, there are higher chances of a more accurate treatment and a holistic one. This also gives patients more control over their health and increases the chances of a swift and sustainable recovery.

Prevention is better than cure and health technologies have come a long way in empowering individuals to prevent medical conditions by providing them with knowledge, awareness and the right tools to monitor their health. This helps in prevention of many diseases, early diagnosis of those conditions that are congenital for example and better management of existing health conditions.

So, overall, digital health technology helps in improving access to healthcare, increasing the accuracy and speed of treatment, reducing inefficiencies and human generated error or discrepancies, reducing the cost of treatment and healthcare, improving the general well being and fitness of individuals, ensuring the best possible treatment and care, improving quality of life and life expectancy in general.

Tools to personalise healthcare

The biggest achievement of health technology is that it has personalised healthcare for patients and individuals. Today, at the click of a button one can find out his or her blood pressure, blood glucose levels, pulse rate and other indicators that are vital to a good health. So, an individual can track his health from the comfort of his home and at an extremely reduced cost of time and money.

The use of technologies, such as social media, smart phones, networking tools, internet applications, etc. is not onlychanging how humans are communicating with each other but also paving the way for newer and more creative ways to monitor health, ensure physical and mental well being, grant easier access to information for health management and personal care, etc.

There is a major confluence underway between the two sectors of information technology and healthcare management and their associated appendages. The improvements in technology are playing a big role in strengthening healthcare management. So much so that today doorstep healthcare services and tele services are being offered to individuals at extremely low costs.

Government initiatives boost healthcare

When the government of India launched the Digital India campaign in 2015, no one realised how far it would go in changing lives of the citizens. The healthcare sector started adopting the digital road to help tackle the ever-looming issues of quality healthcare, access to healthcare and affordability of treatments.

Through the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM), the government is striving to improve several aspects and tackle issues that have caused hindrance to providing healthcare to the citizens. So, for example, the government is working towards leveraging the existing digital infrastructure such as the frameworks related to Aadhar, UPI and the pan India coverage of internet-enabled smartphones to create a cohesive digital system that can be monitored and administered effectively and swiftly.

Telemedicine which is one of the original and primary components of digital health across nations and particularly of India's National Health Policy has also become a priority for the government. This component has been adopted across platforms and all levels of healthcare in the country but some glitches exist that will have to be tackled sooner than later.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, telemedicine played a significant role in ensuring patients are not left without consultation or treatment. The practice showed a lot of potential and promise during the last two years. It is the need of the hour and processes must be initiated to formalise telemedicine and teleconsultations.

Another important domain is digital therapeutics and diagnostics that have changed the format of health products and services lately. Digital therapeutics and diagnostics include technology that helps in understanding how diseases occur and how they progress. These also include genetic engineering and nanotechnology, molecular medicine, etc.

Tools that track health parameters in real time also contribute in a big way in healthcare management today. Another set of tools that enhance and facilitate predictive analytics are widely used for making decisions regarding healthcare more reasoned and calculated. They also ensure doctor-patient interactions are more personal and care-oriented to improve healthcare in the long run.

Vedika Jain is a legal researcher with www.thewomansurvivor.com – an initiative of DraftCraft International to protect and empower women by bringing on one platform the latest on rights and issues, strategic case studies, state initiatives and informed legal opinions.

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The Lata seldom heard – Part 1

Raju Korti *reveals the vintage Lata that the later generations may have missed out on and goes back in time to list some of the most pristine compositions sung under the baton of great composers. These are by no means exhaustive; they are just representative samples of the immortal singer's evolving journey from 1946 to 1958 and explain how she became an integral and inseparable part of India's collective psyche.*

Lata Mangeshkar made her singing debut in a studio at the age of 13

How do you encapsulate in words the persona and work of a virtuoso who held an unchallenged sway in a calling where careers are fickle enough to be made or marred in no time? Especially if it is Lata Mangeshkar who virtually saw the evolution of Indian cinema to eventually become a dominant force and become a part of India's musical consciousness spanning over seven incredible decades and swamping lives?

Reams and reams have been written about her but she never fails to expose newer vistas of her mind boggling talent that set generations aflame. Her songs with their majestic range shine like stars on the musical firmament and refuse to fade away. Each of her songs has carried the same whiff of fresh air ages after it emerged out of her god-gifted throat. It is a telling commentary about her unbelievable repertoire that her songs are the lips of an octogenarian grandma to a growing adolescent girl.

The signature mellifluosity, crystal clear and pristine voice flows serenely as radios, music players and music channels keep playing her songs day in day out. Since Lata stood before the mike at barely 12, much before India managed to

wriggle out of the British clutches, it would be worthwhile to bisect her colossal singing career into one from 1945 to 1958 and from then onwards. The Lata in this period was vintage, chaste, refined with almost a girlish inflection to it.

It is surprising that while film-producer *Shashdhar Mukherjee* rejected her for her "too thin" voice was exactly why composers of that era precisely latched on to hers. Her debut in 1946 *Paa lagoon kar jori* (Aap Ki Seva Mein) is a case in point. It became her raison d'etre. In the pantheon of Hindi film music Vasant Desai rarely got his due deployed Lata in *Chidiya bole choon choon maina bole hoon* (Jeevan Yatra- 1946) and *Piya aayega gori shudh na bisar* (Subhadra- 1946)). It brought to fore her extraordinary ability to negotiate the classical strains that came out so resonatingly in her adolescent voice.

The man who first realised the 24-carat gold in her frail throat was Ghulam Haider. In 1948, he extracted that in *Ab kaun sahara hai jab tera sahara* (Ziddi) and *Dil mera toda* (Majboor). C Ramchandra took cue and got her vocal refrain *Zulm tumhare seh na sake* (Namoona-1949). Even as Haider

and Anna Chitalkar vied to bring her to the recording studios, the next biggest thing happened with Barsaat (1948) as Shankar-Jaikishen the longest surviving composer duo took the nation on a lilting trip with *Do din ke liye mehmaan yahan* and *Unse pyaar ho gaya* (Badal-1951) and Lata literally toying with two contradictory notes.

While Barsaat put Lata's career on a high trajectory, Anil Biswas and Shyamsunder were preparing her for bigger things. *Tum hi kaho mera man kyon rahe udaas* (Girls School-1949) was the beginning of a fruitful combine with Anil Biswas that turned out to be a veritable feast with gems like *Tumhare bulane ko jee chahata hai and Zindagi ki roshani to kho gayi* (Laadli-1949) and *Beimaan tore nainwa* (Sangdil-1951). Such was Biswas' faith in Lata that he got Lata to sing as many as seven solos in Anokha Pyaar (1948) to set tone for Shankar-Jaikishen (SJ) with eight songs in Barsaat.

At this juncture, Lata who was struggling to come to grips with the rigours of life – barely in her twenties and trying to provide a protective umbrella to her equally musically inclined four siblings – had even mustered up courage to start teaching music to fellow students after which she was severely berated by her teachers. She never went back to school after that. That was just as well as she was stepping up to become a benchmark of perfection and purity unheard of in the annals of music. She more than made up for this lack of academic education by being a voracious reader. Her grasp of scriptures, art and wide spectrum of literature brought her the erudition that resonated from her articulation. She was a prima donna in the making.

What Biswas and SJ could not do with seven plus songs, composers like Khemchand Prakash and Shyamsunder did with just two songs. Remember the iconic *Aayega aanewaala* mystic that hit the pop charts from Mahal (1949) but it was *Mushkil hai bahot mushkil* that won critical acclaim. From the Punjabi Shyamsunder's host of songs *Bahare phir bhi aayengi* (Lahore-1949) stood apart. A few composers like Pandit Gobindram (Maa Ka Pyaar- 1949), Vinod (Ek Thi Ladki-1949) and Bulo C Rani (Nazaare-1949) were just the props that ensured Lata's feet were firmly planted in an industry where longevity was alien.

Even as C Ramchandra and Vasant Desai were emerging from their shadows, two more composers, Ghulam Mohammed (Shair-1949) and Husnlal Bhagatram (Saawan Bhadon-1949) had devolved upon themselves to give Lata's voice a cutting edge. Both swore by Hindustani Sangeet. The journey with Ghulam Mohammed started with *Too door hai ankhon se mere dil ko yeh gham* (Shair-1949) and *Unse hum kuch kehte kehte reh gaye* (Dil Ki Basti-1949) continued till Pakeezah (1972). Husnlal Bhagatram, much acknowledged before Shankar-Jaikishan hit the scene, was the first to realise that the Rafi-Lata combo worked wonders but Lata endears on her own with *O rooth janewale mera kasoor kya hai* (Rakhi-1949) and *Teri is do rangi duniya mein* (Saawan Bhadon-1949).

One composer, somewhat under-rated is Hansraj Behl who got to sing one of the best ditties perhaps in the realms of film music. *Haaye jiya roye* (Milan-1958) was the crowning glory that Behl composed after recording four solos in Zevraat (1950) and three in Khamosh Sipahi (1950).

Meanwhile, you couldn't have ignored the doyen of classical composers Naushad who spun one classical gem after another starting with that intensely arresting *Uthaaye jaa un ke sitam*, *Tod diya dil mera* and *Dar naa muhabbat kar le* (Andaaz-1949). Capitalizing on Lata's divine vocals he recorded seven solos in Dulari (1949) that had such surpassing melodies

like *Taqdeer jaga kar aayi hoon* and *Aye dil tujhe kasam hai*.

For those wondering why Madan Mohan (MM) hasn't figured in the scheme of things here, the simple reason is it actually calls for a separate chapter. Lata's relationship with 'bhaiyya' Madan Mohan is well-documented -- she was his favourite singer, and he probably her favourite composer. The duo aligned to create some of the most memorable hits in Hindi cinema history. His ghazals with Lata are sheer serenity. From classical to soft romantic and comic, he explored Lata's entire range as only he could.

Madan Mohan produced two polished diamonds for Lata with *Preetam meri duniya* mein and *Saanwari surat man bhaayi re piya* (Adaa-1951) and following up two years later with *Hamaare baad ab mehfil mein ye afsaane and Taare khile aayi raat* (Baaghi-1953). Lata's songs from Aankhen (1950), Aashiana and Nirmohi (1952) came as a devastating combination that had a different flavour and ethos of its own. The quality that this tandem brought from their early days continued until Madan Mohan passed away in 1975 at a relatively young age of 51. While the quality of music was moving slowly towards degeneration with cacophony beginning to set in, MM didn't succumb to the wily, commercial ways of the industry. It was also an eloquent commentary on the emerging new generation who had little patience and choice for the vintage music of the yore.

(To be concluded in the next issue)

Press of the oppressed

Shoma A. Chatterji *speaks about Khabar Lahariya, a weekly newspaper that highlights the plight of the Dalit community and became a trigger for a compelling documentary that has been short-listed for the big stage Oscars. The documentary 'Writing with Fire' shows Dalit women breaking the glass ceilings amidst survival.*

Writing with Fire – The documentary won the Special Jury Award and the Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival

The term *Khabar Lahariya* roughly translates to "news waves." It has been in existence for nearly 20 years but a few cocooned in their air-conditioned apartments or riding around in their luxury cars have heard this name or seen the paper which has now gone digital in sync with the changing times.

Suddenly, it has become infra dig to discuss this unique media outlet because a documentary made on this experiment has just been shortlisted by the Oscars committee this year. The name of the film is *Writing with Fire*, an apt name for a group of gutsy women, all Dalits, who decided to start their own newspaper.

Writing with Fire was premiered at the Sundance Film Festival where it won the Special Jury Award and the Audience Award. It is now journeying through many prestigious festivals across the map. Rintu Thomas and Sushmit Ghosh, a real-life husband and wife who live and work in Delhi, are going places with this film, a bold choice of subject for a documentary in the present times. The film focusses on chief reporter Meera Devi who could be said to be the founder of *Khabar Lahariya* and younger journalist Suneeta Prajapati, observing them at work and taking us along the journey of their reportage to take a look into lives behind the newspaper as they run around for stories.

The film follows the journey of Dalit women in the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh, who work for a weekly newspaper, *Khabar Lahariya*. It also fleshes out the back stories of the three women who are articulate and forthright in unspooling their lives. *Khabar Lahariya* (Waves of News) was founded in 2002 by Dalit women whose community members suffer extreme discrimination because they are "Dalits". The girls and the women are more open to oppression than their men. Meera Devi, married at 14, strives to rise above her status and educate herself. Meera's husband, Shivbaran, states in the film, "I never expected them to achieve anything."

"Dalithood characterises the exploitation, suppression and marginalisation of the lower castes by the social, economic, cultural and political domination of the upper caste Brahmanical order" - the way Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar defined the word "Dalit" long before we included it in our common lexicon, according to Tapan Basu. (Translating Caste. New Delhi: Katha, 2002.)

These women broke all taboos against Dalits in general and Dalit women in particular by bringing out a magazine containing every kind of news that are/were not covered by mainstream publications. This, till date, is the only paper brought out exclusively by Dalit women in this country. Suneeta

A shot from Writing with Fire

has also redefined herself, taking her childhood experience of working in an illegal mine and using her community connections to pull back the curtain on ongoing criminality.

A financial crisis at home led Shyamkali to *Khabar Lahariya* in 2010. The inhibitions within her and outside were similar, "*kyuki ghar se kabhi baahar nahi jaate the, aur yeh auraton ka kaam nahi hai. Itne purushon ke beech ek aurat!*" (I had never stepped out of the house before this. I was nervous because I was about to step into a male domain.)

A decade later, armed with a smartphone and steely determination, she is KL's only reporter from Mahoba. Her quest for truth has taken her to different places. Shyamkali is another woman who, along with her colleague, is risking her life to report the truth. The film mainly revolves around these three women who rose from the trap of their lives to take cudgels for those who are not written about by the mainstream media.

"We are beyond delighted. This is a massive moment for us and for Indian cinema... This film is about fearless Dalit women journalists who are redefining what being powerful means, quintessentially the story of the modern Indian woman," co-director Ghosh said. He said that he and Rintu got the news directly from the television screen while watching the names of the films shortlisted by Oscars 2022.

Writing with Fire recounts how the newspaper brings to the fore incidents, events, people and such stories that would not be brought across by the mainstream media and that is the very purpose of the paper as well as of the filmmakers who decided to put across their story on film.

The newspaper is bilingual – in Hindi and in English, the editorial classification is divided among – Development, Gender & Caste, Youth & Culture, Bundelkhand & Beyond and Politics.

Said Rintu Thomas in an interview, "We never imagined a Dalit woman would be actually printing, reporting, and distributing a newspaper that she co-created. We looked them up and a friend connected us. We wanted to know more. We caught them at the time when they were transitioning into this new realm of digital and understanding being in front of and behind the camera. That was an interesting dynamic for us. We were filming them as they were filming (stories). It took the director duo around three years to research the organisation, speak to the women involved and finally, get down to make the film.

Ghosh pitches in to elaborate. "When Meera goes to a Dalit village to report on what it means to be Dalit in those parts of the country, it sets up her own personal story. She talks about her children and how they are made fun of in school. So, the political and the personal always went together. We always wanted it to be layered, intersectional. When Suneeta goes to report on the murder story, you see her brand of journalism and you see the popular mainstream male-dominated brand of journalism picking up juicy bits, like vultures. But immediately after that scene, you have Suneeta talking about what it means to be a woman. So, the idea was picking stories that they have covered that represent what the newspaper does, the value systems, the journalistic ethics of the paper, and linking it to the personal narrative to each of our characters — so it was both macro and micro."

Khabar Lahariya went digital not very long ago to keep pace with the technological changes happening on the information roadway so one can just log into their website and see what they are all about. So, it now defines itself as a "Digital Rural News Network." Independent and Public-Spirited Media Foundation has provided part financial support to *Khabar Lahariya* for the purpose of reporting and publishing stories of public interest. IPSMF does not take any legal or moral responsibility whatsoever for the content published by *Khabar Lahariya* on its website or on any of its other platforms. The newspaper comprises 24 female journalists.

They have reached over 150 million views on YouTube and have started collaborating with national media groups to further expand their reach. On their watch, violent crimes are being brought to light and prosecuted, faulty roads are being fixed and rural communities are receiving electrical and plumbing connections. Some individual women's lives have also changed for the better and you can read these stories on their website or on YouTube.

Writing with Fire shows how young women journalists are learning to use a smartphone to make videos. They are willing to take every step to adapt themselves to technological changes that take place every day. The best part of their story is that through this struggle, they have learnt to balance between home and work.

Shoma A. Chatterji is a freelance journalist, film scholar and author. She has authored 17 published titles and won the National Award for Best Writing on Cinema, twice. She won the UNFPA-Laadli Media Award, 2010 for 'commitment to addressing and analysing gender issues' among many awards.

LATA MANGESHKAR (1929-2022)

The Queen of Melody

Lata Mangeshkar once remarked "I believe in one power, and that is the hand of God." For someone who held an unchallenged sway over music for over seven decades, she herself epitomised it and how.

Born Hema Mangeshkar on 28 September 1929, she went on to become the Voice of the Millennium and Queen of Melody. For someone who recorded over 5600 songs in almost every Indian language – mostly Hindi, Marathi and Bengali -- no one would have believed that a frail girl could get the kind of tonal gold out of her throat when she first set her footprint on the quick sands of film music.

Eldest among the four other siblings – Meena, Asha, Usha and Hridaynath -- in a musically inclined Brahmin family, music came to her as inheritance from father Pt. Dinanath Mangeshkar, then himself an acclaimed classical singer and theatre artist. Her application and understanding of musical notes convinced her father of her musical credentials. At 5 she started performing in Sangeet Nataks (musical dramas).

When Dinanath dies after a protracted illness in 1942, the responsibility to run the family fell on Lata who then was barely 13. Help from Master Vinayak Karnataki (actress Nanda's father) helped the family to make ends meet by offering her small roles in a movie company Navyug Chitrapat. She moved to Mumbai from Indore in 1945 and learnt classical music under the watchful tutelage of Ustad Aman Ali Khan. A song sung for 'Aap Ki Sewa Mein' (1946) and a couple of Bhajans brought her some limelight.

The first composer who saw the immense powerhouse of her talent was Ghulam Haider who prophesised that a day would come when producers and directors would fall at her feet and beg her to sing for them. He gave her, her first major break and hit with '*Dil Mera Toda, Mujhe Kahin Ka Na Chhoda*' (*Majboor* 1948). In an interview on her 84th birthday in 2013 she declared Ghulam Haider was her true Godfather.

Lata then ostensibly carried the influence of beauty queen-singer Noorjehan who later migrated to Pakistan to leave the field clear for her. She dropped her nasal tone in her voice to establish a soprano range with just the right amplitude.

She worked hard on her Urdu diction after a jibe by

became part of national consciousness. A year earlier, it was courtesy Shankar-Jaikishen that she hit pop charts with RK's *Barsaat*.

It was the beginning of a marathon and colossal career that took her from strength to strength with one coveted award after another. She worked with all first line composers like Ghulam Haider, Ghulam Mohammed, Husnlal Bhagatram, Shyamsunder Naushad, Sajjad Hussein, Hansraj Behl, Salil Choudhury, SD Burman, Madan Mohan, C Ramchandra, Anil Biswas, Khayyam, Sudhir Phadke, Shankar- Jaikishen and second line ones like Chitragupt, Sardar Malik, RD Burman, Jaidev, Hemant Kumar, Bulo C Rani, SN Tripathi, N Dutta Usha Khanna, Kalyanji-Anandji and Laxmikant-Pyarelal. The run continued until AR Rehman. The journey continued for decades until she decided to hang boots with Veer Zara in 2001. There was no frontier left for her to conquer and nothing to prove to anyone.

It is well neigh impossible to single out the gems – classical, light, bhaavgeets from her mind boggling repertoire and oeuvre -- she sang but 'Ae mere watan ke logo' a private song composed by C Ramchandra became the country's signature patriotic song. It was mainly because of her that singers got recognition to be mentioned on records. By early 60s she was a major force and that also got her into several controversies and tiffs that included her alleged "monopolising" but ended in happy patch-ups. In her sojourn she delivered packed concerts across the world. She sang with virtually every male and female singer, her duets with Mohammed Rafi a rage.

The awards that she won – prominently the Bharat Ratna (2001), Dadasaheb Phalke Award (1989), National and Filmfare awards and civilian awards from other countries are far too many to be encapsulated in words. Alongside, she did charity by setting up a hospital in Pune.

Confined to home in the last 20 years, she contracted Covid and after a 28-day battle, the Guinness record holder succumbed to it. The Government announced a two-day national morning. Her funeral was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi among of a host of who's who.

Raju Korti is a senior journalist with over four- decade experience of working in media institutions.

WING COMMANDER TREVOR JOSEPH KEELOR VRC VM (1934-2002)

Pilot hero of 1965 war

Trevor Keelor was born on 8 December 1934 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He was educated at St Francis where his father was the principal. He had a brother, Denzil Keelor who was with him all through his years from school to the Air Force. He then attended the Le Martiniere College in Lucknow. As students of Le Martiniere, the Keelor brothers were known for their exploits in sports and the boxing ring. After school, he got commissioned in the Indian Air Force (IAF) as a fighter pilot along with his brother.

He took great interest in the maintenance and upkeep of aircraft. After training, Trevor Keelor as a young Pilot Officer joined the operational unit and soon became known for his bravery and exceptional flying skills. Later he got married to Patricia Ann Keelor and the couple had a son, Basil Keelor.

On 5 February 1964, Keelor, then Flight Lieutenant, was given the task to ferry a Gnat from Poona to Palam (Delhi) in a formation of five aircraft. The last part of the flight had to be undertaken at a height of 41,000 feet. When descending from 15,000 feet he realised there was no response to the throttle movements. Undeterred, he brought all his experience into play and managed a force-landing without damage to him or the aircraft. He was awarded, "Vayu Sena Medal (VM)" for his competence, courage and devotion to duty.

There were a series of skirmishes between India and Pakistan along the J&K border between April and September 1965. As tensions with Pakistan escalated in August 1965, the IAF alerted and moved to their operational locations. The Indian Air Force sent 45 Squadron's de Havilland Vampires to support the Army but on the evening of 1 September, a Pakistani squadron of F-86 Sabres shot down three Vampires. A large part of IAF aircraft remained locked up in the East and did not take part in the operations for apprehension of Chinese intervention.

On 3 September morning, Indian radars picked up a Pakistani air patrol at Chhamb. The IAF had learnt that some Pakistani fighter planes were encircling the position of the Indian army. Consequently 23 Squadron was tasked to neutralise the threat. Squadron Leader (Sq Ldr) Jimmy Goodman flew a decoy of Mystere aircraft headed for the Chhamb sector the hotbed of battle especially for the armies. Escorting the Mysteres were 8 Gnat aircraft.

The Pakistani radar tracked the Mysteres taking the bait, directed their own fighters (Sabres and Starfighters) towards the Indian fighters. What the radar failed to track however, was a four Gnat formation trailing the Mysteres and another four Gnats behind the first Gnat formation. The second 4 aircraft Gnat formation was led by Trevor. The Gnats were not so sensitive to radars, so they remained unseen till two Sabres got caught in the formation. Unmindful of the numerical superiority of the enemy, Sq Ldr Trevor Keelor chased a Sabre jet and pressed home his attack until the enemy aircraft disintegrated in the air. This was the first victory of Air Force in the battle against Pakistani Air Force. Sq Ldr Keelor displayed courage and leadership of a high order in the best traditions of the Air Force.

This was a big morale booster for the IAF and also gave a big strategic advantage to India. Sq Ldr Trevor Keelor became an instant hero and was showered with accolades. He was given the "Vir Chakra" for his courage, professional skill and leadership. His elder brother, Denzil Keelor was also given the "Vir Chakra" for shooting down a Pakistani F 86. The two brothers were referred to as F86 slayers. Sq Ldr Trevor Keelor retired in 1968 after a glittering career. He died on 27 April 2002 leaving behind a rich legacy of service to the nation.

Brigadier Suresh Chandra Sharma (retd.)

PT. BIRJU MAHARAJ (1937-1922)

Kathak exponent par excellence

"See there's a thing with the arts: A human can ditch (you) but your art will never betray you. If you keep it with you and own it, it will leave you only at the time of your death. Don't do Kathak in haste. Items will happen, applause will come in too; instead, go steady, let the art mature."

Pandit Birju Maharaj, nee Brijmohan Nath Mishra born on 4 February 1937, was an Indian classical Kathak dancer, composer, choreographer, percussionist, singer, poet, painter and orator.

Panditji or Maharajji to his legions, was born in Handia, Allahabad district, in a Hindu Brahmin Maharaj family of Kathak dancers, of the iconic Kalka-Bindadin gharana of Lucknow. It included his two uncles, Shambhu Maharaj and Lachhu Maharaj, and his father and guru, Jagannath Maharaj or Acchan Maharaj, a court dancer in the princely State of Raigarh.

Dancing since four, his first performances were at his father's concerts, before going solo at the age of seven in West Bengal. At nine, his father died and he began training with his uncles. Becoming a dance teacher at the age of 13, at Sangeet Bharati, he went on to teach at the famous Bharatiya Kala Kendra.

Soon, he headed the Kathak Kendra, a unit of Sangeet Natak Akademi. Retiring in 1998 at 60, he opened his dance school, Kalashram, in Delhi. Students were trained in Kathak and other disciplines like vocal and instrumental music, yoga, painting, Sanskrit, dramatics, stagecraft, etc. Virtually an ocean of Kathak; his oeuvre was rare and unmatched. He interpreted it with a simple heart and took it to the world stage, inspiring young dancers.

Grasping the beauty of the katha (the internal story of the composition), he learned the nuanced rhythmic patterns, the precision of footwork and the play of the face and neck from his father; and the *bhaav ki taaleem* (tutelage of expression), and stylised fluidity of movement from his uncles, and developed a style that blended elements. He shunned commercialisation, but followed the same track devising along new things.

In the 50s and 60s, he explored new a series of group choreographies and dance-dramas bringing in elements of design, costume and choreography, rare in the predominantly solo presentation structure of Kathak. Dance was hitherto accessible to only males. Maharaj broke the mould and provided equal opportunities, without gender bias.

The world of dance was like oxygen, giving him the strength to breathe. Presentation to him was a perfect balance of skilful virtuosity, faultless rhythm and subtle expressive *abhinaya*. Each *nazar* (look), each movement had to express something.

Emphasising on finesse and the ability to dance at a slow tempo with grace, he insisted that for movement, one needed stillness.

A master story teller, delineating episodes from the Radha-Krishna legend, Maharaj expressed himself on various non-mythological and social issues. With his animated facial expressions and nimble feet movements, his style demystified abstract art into everyday moments.

With a strong grip over Thumri, Dadra, Bhajan and Ghazal forms, he danced to it. A superb percussionist, he believed that a dancer had to have adequate knowledge of music.

Among his awards and honours were the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Padma Vibushan, Kalidas Samman, Lata Mangeshkar Puraskar, Sangam Kala Award, Nritya Vilas Award, Soviet Land Nehru Award, National Nritya Shiromani Award and the Rajiv Gandhi National Award.
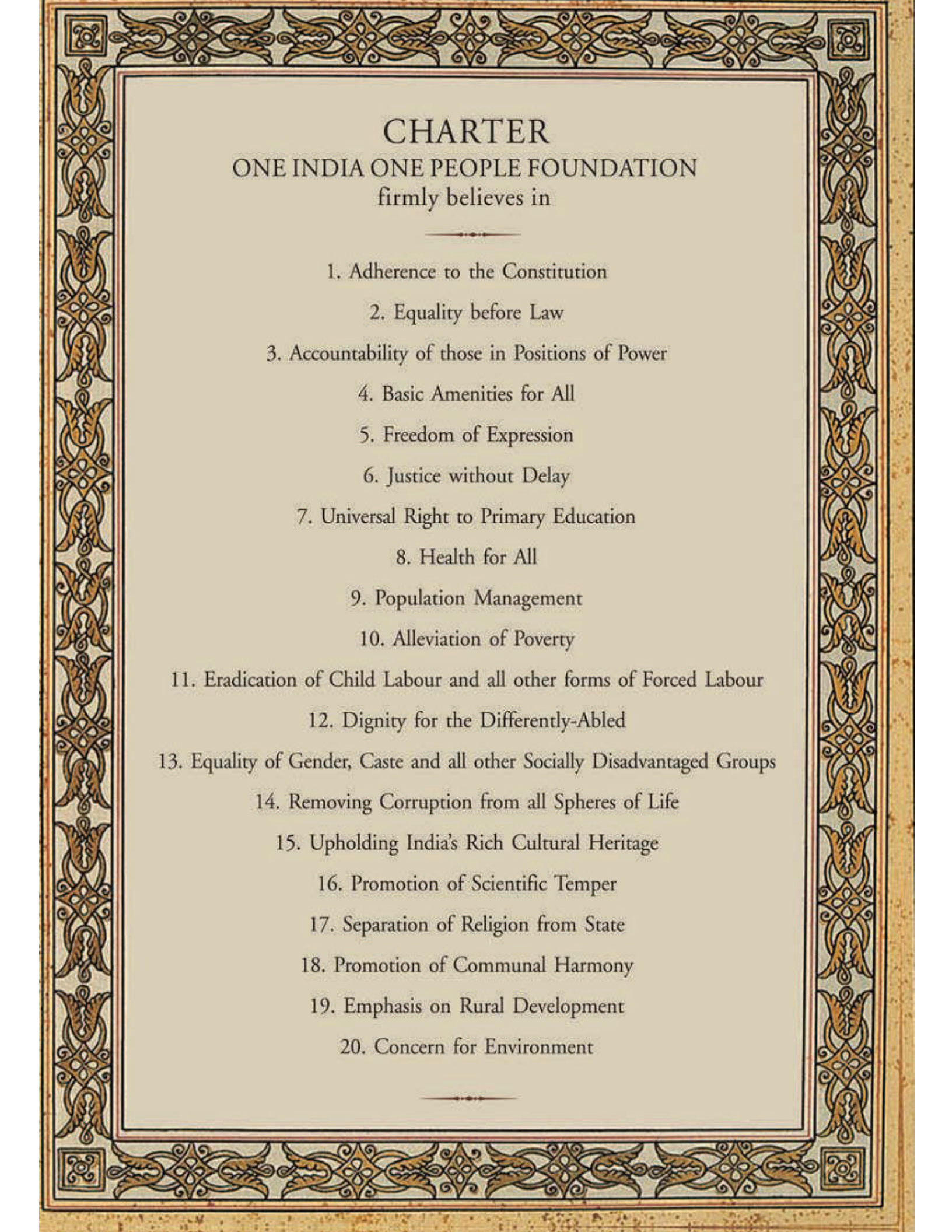
Maharaj also choreographed and composed music for many films like *Shatranj ke Khiladi, Dil To Pagal Hai, Devdas, Kalank, Umrao Jaan and Dedh Ishqiya.* He got in 2012 the National Film Award for Best Choreography for *Unnai Kaanaathu* (Vishwaroopam) and in 2016, the Filmfare Award for Best Choreography for Mohe Rang Do Laal (Bajirao Mastani).

He died in Delhi of a heart attack, aged 83. He leaves behind five children. His dance philosophy was: Nritya ko karo mat, nritya ko jiyo!

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CHARTER

ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE FOUNDATION
firmly believes in

1. Adherence to the Constitution

2. Equality before Law

3. Accountability of those in Positions of Power

4. Basic Amenities for All

5. Freedom of Expression

6. Justice without Delay

7. Universal Right to Primary Education

8. Health for All

9. Population Management

10. Alleviation of Poverty

11. Eradication of Child Labour and all other forms of Forced Labour

12. Dignity for the Differently-Abled

13. Equality of Gender, Caste and all other Socially Disadvantaged Groups

14. Removing Corruption from all Spheres of Life

15. Upholding India's Rich Cultural Heritage

16. Promotion of Scientific Temper

17. Separation of Religion from State

18. Promotion of Communal Harmony

19. Emphasis on Rural Development

20. Concern for Environment

WHO AM I?

Am I a Hindu first or an Indian first?

Am I a Muslim first or an Indian first?

Am I a Christian first or an Indian first?

Am I a Buddhist first or an Indian first?

Am I a Brahmin first or an Indian first?

Am I a Dalit first or an Indian first?

Am I a South Indian first or an Indian first?

Am I a North Indian first or an Indian first?

Am I the President of India first or an Indian first?

Am I the Prime Minister of India first or an Indian first?

Am I the Commander-in-Chief first or an Indian first?

Am I a supporter of any 'ism' first or an Indian first?

Am I a white-collar/blue collar worker first or an Indian first?

Am I a youth/senior citizen first or an Indian first?

In all cases you are Indian First, Last and Always.
Be a Proud Indian. Make this country Great, Strong and United.

Sadanand A. Shetty, Founder Editor
(October 9 th 1930 – February 23 rd 2007)
ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE