

# ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE

Patriotism Redefined

## India's Cultural Ambassadors



INDIAN DIASPORA TO THE FORE

GANDHI'S LEGACY MARCHES ON

CULTURAL EMISSARIES STAND TALL

**Know India Better**

GOA

NOT JUST CHURCHES & BEACHES!

**Face to Face**

HARMOHAN SINGH BATRA

NEW VARIANT OF  
'XE' COVID  
CORONAVIRUS

"XI" WOULD HAVE  
BEEN SO PERFECT

YUP AS 'I' COMES  
BEFORE 'E',  
EXCEPT HERE,  
IT'S AFTER  
C-HINA



OFCOURSE NOT! IF  
YOU WERE,  
YOU'D BE  
'THERE',  
NOT HERE



GUESS WHAT?  
YOU CAN'T GET  
A 'WOOSTER',  
BUT ARE ELIGI-  
BLE FOR A  
BOOSTER!



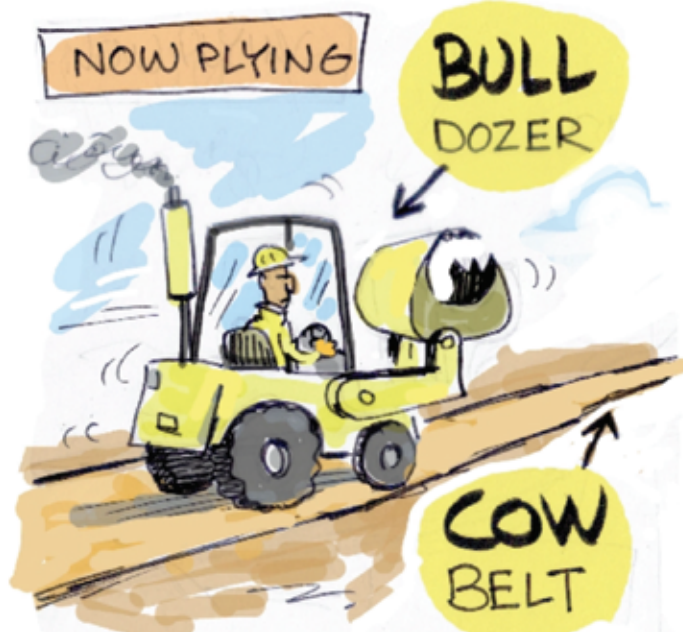
ALL NEHRU'S FAULT!



NOW FLYING

BULL  
DOZER

COW  
BELT



# CONTENTS

May 2022

Vol. 25/02

## THEME: INDIA'S CULTURAL AMBASSADORS



### Morparia's Page

India on a song and how!  
*Manu Shrivastava*

Indian diaspora to the fore  
*Nikita Shastri*

Gandhi's legacy marches on  
*Anushka Singh*

Leading by example through it all  
*Vedika Jain*

Cinema as cultural bridge  
*Kriti Kalra*

New India redefines cultural diplomacy  
*Ruchi Verma*

Cultural emissaries stand tall  
*Manu Shrivastava*

### Know India Better

Goa  
Not just churches & beaches!  
*Manjira Majumdar*

### Face to Face

Harmohan Singh Batra  
*A. Radhakrishnan*

### Features

And we were there – 1967 – 1987 - Ye lo  
bayaan hamaare  
*Shoma A. Chatterji*

Blood is thicker than water. Says who?  
*Jayabala Girish*

Invention lying in throes of neglect  
*Bharat Dogra*

Playing with public health  
*Bharat Dogra*

### Great Indians



HIRALAL SEN



NARENDRA CHANCHAL



SUBEDAR SANJIV  
KUMAR (KIRTI CHAKRA)



**Managing Editor**  
Mrs. Sucharita R. Hegde

**Editor**  
Anuradha Dhareshwar

**Design**  
Ananta Art Services

**OIOP Clubs**  
Nagesh Bangera

**Advisory Board**  
Sucharita Hegde  
Justice S. Radhakrishnan  
Venkat R. Chary

Printed & Published by  
Mrs. Sucharita R. Hegde for  
**One India One People Foundation,**  
Mahalaxmi Chambers, 4th floor,  
22, Bhulabhai Desai Road,  
Mumbai - 400 026  
Tel: 022-2353 4400  
Fax: 022-2351 7544  
e-mail: oiopfoundation@gmail.com  
oiopsub@fouressindia.com

visit us at:

**www.oneindiaonepeople.com**  
www.facebook.com/oneindiaonepeoplefoundation



## India on a song and how!

*To be politically correct is passe. India doesn't hesitate to call spade a spade now. For the first time, bold movies representative of the public's change in stance and need, are being created across India and data on similar lines generated in media platforms by independent creators, asserts **Manu Shrivastava** with a plethora of examples to prove that the narrative is changing across all spheres.*



**PM Narendra Modi with world leaders at an informal Brics meeting in China (file pic)**

**F**or India to have a phenomenal line-up of cultural ambassadors and from time immemorial is not a surprise. After all, India is the oldest existing civilisation and home to some of the most ancient structures, cities and scriptures that have stood the test of time.

This, despite the onslaught of myriad civilisations that attacked India, plundered the nation over and over again even converted its people into religions by marauders who furthered their agenda with violence.

Today, following US Secretary of State Antony Blinken saying the United States is monitoring cases of increased human rights abuses by Indian government, police and prison officials, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's repartee that human rights issues were not discussed in bilateral dialogue, hinted that "interests, lobbies and vote banks" had driven the US position, pointed to human rights violations in the US itself, and claimed that India would not be reticent about the issue.

Jaishankar also flagged the issue of a recent case, when two Indian-American Sikh men were assaulted in an

alleged hate crime in New York.

### Lobbies drive US views

He added that 'people are entitled to their views about us. But we are equally entitled to have views about their views and about the interests and lobbies and vote-banks that drive that. Whenever there is a discussion, we will not be reticent about speaking out.'

Blinken's comment is believed to be driven by the Democratic administration's need to cater to its "domestic constituency" which include a set of progressive lawmakers, Muslim groups and human rights organisations. The minister said India also had views about the human rights situation, including in the US. "We take up human rights issues when they arise in this country, especially when it pertains to our community. We had a case yesterday. That's really where we stand on that matter." And, the minister, in a clean sweep, summed up what the reality was all about.

India's view has been bolstered on global platforms since generations. Right from the time Swami Vivekananda





### **Modi is India's best brand ambassador**

delivered his ground-breaking speech in the United States to the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in which he introduced Hinduism to America and called for religious tolerance and an end to fanaticism.

Swami Vivekananda said: I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation. I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings: "As the different streams having their sources in different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee."

### **India provides safe haven**

For centuries, India has provided safe refuge to anyone who came to her shores: Right from the Parsis who arrived on the coast of Gujarat following persecution from Muslims in Persia to the Jews and minorities across the nation, including the Sentinelese tribes within her own land.

It may be recalled that despite the law being clear on the issue of the Sentinelese being left untouched by mainland and its people to help them retain their existence, it was a US-based Christian missionary John Allen Chau's illegal attempts to make contact with the world's oldest isolated tribe that led to his death.

The US-based Christian missionary group's attempts to break the law of the land across the world in general and India, in particular, was the gravest act of Human Rights violation but conveniently and predictably glossed over.

In 2021, India, the world's largest recipient of remittances, received USD 87 billion with the United States being the biggest source, accounting for over 20 per cent of these funds, according to the World Bank. India is followed by China, Mexico, the Philippines, and Egypt, said the World Bank report and, the remittances are projected to grow three per cent in 2022 to USD 89.6 billion, reflecting a drop in overall migrant stock, as a large proportion of returnees from the Arab countries await return, it said.

"Flows to India are expected to reach USD 87 billion, a gain of 4.6 per cent with the severity of COVID-19 caseloads and deaths during the second quarter (well above the global average) playing a prominent role in drawing altruistic flows (including for the purchase of oxygen tanks) to the country," the World Bank report stated. The contributions from Indians across the world to their nation of birth speak volumes of their allegiance and affinity for India.

### **Modi India's best ambassador**

Look at the overwhelming reaction when it comes to the visit of India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The number of Indians who throng in millions to reach out to hear, talk and interact with the PM says it all. Right from PM Modi's visit during President Trump's tenure to his visits to UK and China, the reactions of OCIs and NRIs were commendable.

Indians across borders continue to spread the culture and mien of India through arts, dance, literature and, more recently and visibly, engagements across Social Media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and others which have only provided opportunities for Indians to network with the India and all that's Indian.

Why, a film like *The Kashmir Files* while being played for its controversial content has gone on to bind Indians like never before. The narrative that's generated to hurt, insult and damage India's image over the years by select academia and sections of the media is now being called out, the perpetrators identified openly.

Under the guise of being politically correct, the Hindi film industry is been played openly for its pseudo-secular stance and its hatred. Little wonder then that cinematic wonders like South India's RRR engulfed the Hindi film industry which has been masquerading as the self-styled leader of cinema in India.

### **Indians bold to say truth**

For the first time, bold movies representative of the public's change in stance and need, are being created across India and data on similar lines generated in media platforms by independent creators. The means of production have now been made available to all and sundry. Anyone with a voice has the means to now amplify it.

While the harm that is being perpetrated through Social Media and by a few select motivated groups needs to be controlled, it's the ease of access and the freedom to generate, avail and process information that provides a platform to the weakest across India.

Most across the world have little by way of culture to amplify while Indians, within India and overseas, now armed with a sense of pride for their native own, are speaking out in their own tongues, relating tales of yore, of foreign oppressions and assaults...and fighting back. India is on the rise and there's little anyone can do to stop her. Not now and not for a long time, at least!

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

## Indian diaspora to the fore

*Perpetuating the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas concept, the Modi-led government has motivated the Indian community overseas to reconnect with their Indian roots. It has transformed the Indian diaspora into a 'strategic asset' and in playing the role of facilitator in globalising the Indian trade/export through their global network. The efforts are paying dividends and it is evident in the way the world eyes India today, says **Nikita Shastri**.*



**Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations in India**

It isn't without reason that Prime Minister Narendra Modi considered the Indian Diaspora as an asset at a time when few even imagined to do so. It was during his tenure as the Chief Minister of Gujarat when he organised 'Vibrant Gujarat' with the intention of harnessing the potential of Pravasi Bharatiya in the development of Gujarat and then later, as the nation's Prime Minister since 2014 when he galvanised the role of Pravasi Bharatiya to spearhead the economic development of the nation.

So, this year, when on 9 January 2022, India celebrated the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, it wasn't any mean task nor a favourable coincidence. For years, India would interact with the Indian community only on national days or key occasions while completely glossing over the problems faced by the Indian diaspora. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, as a concept was begun during the tenure of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and first launched in 2003.

### Indian PM planned way ahead

In working towards this, Narendra Modi undertook a tour of the globe during his first term as the world's largest democracy to USA, UK, Australia, Israel, Canada, Singapore; urging and motivating the Indian community overseas to reconnect with their Indian roots. He insisted they played a critical role in the development of country. The PM's interactions with members of the Indian community at New York's Madison Square Garden turned every Indian abroad into an ambassador.

It may be recalled that it was the Chinese diaspora who played a pivotal role in the 90s in the economic transformation of their nation by investing in the rural and semi-urban township. The Chinese diaspora further help in globalising the Chinese trade through its global network in a continual process of nation building. On similar lines, PM Modi is keen to transform the Indian diaspora into a 'strategic asset' and play a role of facilitator.



tor in the globalising the Indian trade/export through their global network. The aim is to bring investment across cities.

In 2021, on Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD), Modi called for the decisive role of the event in the building of Atmanirbhar Bharat too. The Indian diaspora is the largest diaspora in the world bringing in a record amount of remittance through its 18 million from across 136 countries. The diaspora fetched \$87 billion in 2021 of which the largest percentage came from Gulf countries. Compared to the world at large, Indians contribute 13 per cent of global remittances.

The remittance sent by Indians back to India adds up to a whopping 3.2 per cent of the Indian GDP. And, over the last two years, their contributions have been phenomenal. PM Modi has lauded the contribution of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas during Covid times making India stand firm and tall. Even amidst the deepening economic crisis triggered due to COVID-19, India's PM Narendra Modi successfully launched the world largest vaccination programme in the country even helped other Asian and African countries.

## Positive transformation in perception

There has also, over the last few years, been a positive transformation in the perception of the world towards India. The dominance of Indians in computer software, particularly in the Silicon Valley, has only bolstered the image of India as a technology powerhouse and a source of quality human resources. The Indian diaspora has come a long way to play a significant role in keeping India at the centre of global affairs.

The nation is all set to contribute towards global supply chains. Self-reliant India envisions India as a contributor to the world and a part of Covid crisis has shown the perils of being dependent upon foreign sources for raw materials and intermediate products. Thus, the direction of self-reliance is towards creating alternate supply chains. Also, with the focus on 'Make in India', Indian diaspora could invest in greenfield and brown-field projects, as well as, portfolio investments in India and guide policy-makers in the field of the Artificial Intelligence-driven industry which will create high-value jobs.

The Indian government has facilitated rules and regulations that have significantly improved Indian ranking in ease of doing business from 130 to 66 in 2020. Besides creating a favourable environment for businesses to invest in India, there are myriad opportunities for the diaspora to exert and impress in their areas of influence.

Where the United States is concerned, immigration from India started in the early 19th century when Indian immigrants started settling in communities along the West Coast. While they originally arrived in small numbers, with the advent of new opportunities, the population only grew in strength and numbers. Today, Indian immigrants account for approximately 6 percent of the U.S. foreign-born population, categorising as the second-largest immigrant group in the country after Mexicans and ahead of immigrants from China and the Philippines.

## US makes for case in point

According to mid-2019 United Nations Population Division estimates, the United States is the second most popular destination for Indians living abroad, after the United Arab Emirates (3.4 million). Other top destinations include Saudi Arabia (2.4 million), Pakistan (1.6 million), Oman (1.3 million), and Kuwait (1.1 million). Notable not just for their numbers, Indian immigrants when compared with both the overall U.S.-



### 'Vibrant Gujarat'

.- and foreign-born populations, are more likely to be highly educated, work in management positions, and have higher incomes. Apart from registering lower poverty rates, they are less likely to be uninsured too, thereby loading the system even lesser than other immigrants.

A case in point being: Indians have high health insurance coverage rates compared to both the overall immigrant and native-born populations. Consider this: In 2019, just 5 percent of immigrants from India were uninsured, compared to 8 percent of the native born and 20 percent of the total foreign born. Also, Indian immigrants were more likely to be covered by private health insurance than the overall foreign - and U.S. born populations.

## Meetings demands of NRI

Back in India, the Modi government brought the merger of PIO (Persons of Indian Origin) and OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India), which has been a long-standing demand of the Indian community that went on to benefit millions. OCIs were favourably treated by including them in the definition of Indian management control, in the context of sensitive industries helping create investment opportunities. On the anvil are awareness generation portals like the Global Pravasi Rishta portal, to provide a platform to connect with the diaspora. This will connect the diaspora with the Ministry of foreign affairs, Indian missions and the Indian diaspora abroad.

## Remittances remain high

India registered the perfect recovery of remittances, in the face of one of the deepest recorded global recessions, in 2021 follows the resilience of flows seen in 2020, when remittances recorded only a modest 1.7 per cent decline to USD 549 billion. In 2021, India continues to be the world's largest recipient of remittances and received USD 87, according to estimates from the World Bank's Migration and Development Brief.

There was a substantial 4.6 per cent gain in remittance inflows during 2021, as higher oil prices enabled stronger remittance payments from expatriate workers among the GCC economies, and the dramatic spread of COVID-19 only yielded additional financial support from the diaspora. India was followed by China, Mexico, the Philippines and Egypt. And, the United States was the largest source country for remittances in 2020, followed by the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland.

**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.**

### Gandhi's legacy marches on

*Pointing out how Gandhi's beliefs and principles are celebrated across the world, **Anushka Singh** makes out a case that the Indian ethos essentially is all about the Mahatma's legacy and how his philosophy has found takers across the world that included luminaries like Martin Luther King and Albert Einstein. The UN bringing out a postal stamp on Gandhi is proof of his universal appeal.*



**Modi paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150 th birth anniversary at the Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad in 2019**

If there is one person who is synonymous to India, it's Mahatma Gandhi. It won't be wrong to say that Gandhi was the most popular and significant cultural ambassador of the country. There is no country or region in the world where Gandhi's contribution to humanity is not recognised and where he is not revered.

Mahatma Gandhi's message of truth and non-violence struck many chords and his message of peace found takers across the world including Martin Luther King. His mantra not only got India her freedom but many other nations too followed suit to challenge colonial powers in play. Gandhi's contribution to mankind and to India in making the country a culture and symbol of peace and harmony is priceless.

### Early life and education

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, known to all as Mahatma Gandhi, was born on 2 October 1869 in Porbandar in Gujarat. The coastal town in the Kathiawar Peninsula was then part of the princely state of Porbandar in the Kathiawar Agency of the Indian Empire. His father Karamchand Uttamchand Gandhi was a Gujarati *bania* and worked in the Porbandar state as a dewan or chief minister. Gandhi's mother Putlibai was from Junagadh (now in Gujarat) and the couple had three more children named Laxmidas, Raliatben and Karsandas.

In 1874, Karamchand left Porbandar for the smaller state of Rajkot where he became a counsellor to the ruler. In



1876, he became dewan of Rajkot and his family then rejoined him in Rajkot. Here, Gandhi enrolled in the local school near his home for elementary education and later joined the high school in Rajkot.

In 1883, at the age of 13, Gandhi was married to 14-year-old Kasturba Kapadia who later on walked shoulder to shoulder in his fight for India's freedom. In 1887, Gandhi graduated from high school in Ahmedabad and soon after joined the Samaldas College in Bhavnagar state that he soon dropped out of to return to his family in Porbandar.

On 10 August 1888, Gandhi left Porbandar for Mumbai (then Bombay) from where he finally sailed to London on 4 September to attend University College, a constituent college of the University of London. Here, he studied law and jurisprudence and was soon called to the bar in June 1891.

## Tryst with destiny

Unable to start a successful law practice in India, Gandhi moved to South Africa in 1893 to represent an Indian merchant in a legal dispute and continued to live in that country for the next 21 years. As soon as Gandhi arrived in South Africa, he saw and experienced discrimination first hand. It was here that his journey as a social reformer began.

The 'infamous' incident at Pietermaritzburg changed Gandhi forever and helped him develop tools to face colonial forces that were perpetrating discrimination. On the night of 7 June 1893, at Pietermaritzburg railway station, M K Gandhi was evicted from a first class railway compartment and upon resistance was thrown at the platform. A plaque at the station reads 'This incident changed the course of his life. He took up the fight against racial oppression. His active non-violence started from that date'.

In the following years in South Africa, Gandhi first employed non-violent resistance in a campaign for civil rights. He helped found the Natal Indian Congress in 1894 through which he transformed the Indian community of South Africa into a unified political force.

In 1910, with the help of Hermann Kallenbach, Gandhi established Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg where he catalysed the satyagraha campaign against discrimination of Indians in Transvaal. In 1915, at the age of 45, Gandhi finally returned to India to initiate what later became India's independence struggle.

## Influencing leaders across the world

Mahatma Gandhi's life and principles influenced several leaders across the world. For example, leaders of the civil rights movement in the United States including Martin Luther King Jr., James Lawson and James Bevel, drew from his writings in their own theories about non-violence. Martin Luther King Jr. Said, "Christ gave us the goals and Mahatma Gandhi the tactics." He once wrote that Gandhi was a "guiding light" for him.

In South Africa, anti-apartheid activist and former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela was inspired by Gandhi too. Other leaders who were strongly influenced by Mahatma include Aung San Suu Kyi, Steve Biko, Vaclav Havel, etc. Nelson Mandela was a follower of Gandhi's philosophy of non-violent resistance.

World-famous physicist Albert Einstein exchanged written letters with Gandhi and called him "a role model for the generations to come". In a letter writing about him in 1931, he said: *Mahatma Gandhi's life achievement stands unique in political history. He has invented a completely new and humane means for the liberation war of an oppressed country, and practiced it with greatest energy and devotion. The moral influence he had on the consciously thinking human being of the entire civilised world will probably be much more lasting than it seems in our time with its overestimation of brutal violent forces. Because lasting will only be the work of such statesmen who wake up and strengthen the moral power of their people through their example and educational works. We may all be happy and grateful that destiny gifted us with such an enlightened contemporary, a role model for the generations to come. Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this walked the earth in flesh and blood.*

## Celebrating 150 years of Mahatma

On 2 October 2019, the Government of India announced celebrations commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi - the Father of the Nation, during the period from 2 October 2019 to 2 October 2020. It was decided to celebrate the event at both national and international levels to propagate the message of the Mahatma.

A National Committee (NC) headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was constituted that included the chief ministers of all the states of the country, representatives from across the political spectrum, Gandhians, thinkers and eminent persons from all walks of life. The Committee guided and approved policies, programmes and activities for the commemoration and supervised implementation of the decisions.

Mahatma Gandhi was a staunch believer of cleanliness and said that cleanliness is most important for physical well-being and a healthy environment. In furthering his beliefs, PM Modi inaugurated the Swachh Bharat Diwas 2019 in Ahmedabad on 2 October 2019.

He released postage stamp and silver coin to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and also distributed Swachh Bharat Puraskar to the winners. He paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad and visited Magan Niwas (Charkha Gallery) where he interacted with children.

The seed that Gandhi sowed on cleanliness grew into the Swachh Bharat Mission that united India in its pledge of cleanliness. Today, the world is a witness to India's success story of providing toilet facilities to more than 60 crore people in 60 months with the construction of more than 11 crore toilets.

Gandhi's beliefs and principles are celebrated across the world. The entire world commemorated Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary. It was a memorable event when the United Nations released a postal stamp on Gandhi.

**Anushka Singh works with DraftCraft International as a Media Researcher and writes mostly on issues affecting the Fourth Estate. She likes reading contrarian literature and analysing sources of news.**

## Leading by example through it all

**Vedika Jain** buttresses her point about how the current Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken the lead in bolstering India's presence on the world stage and how his sterling contribution as cultural ambassador is intertwined with the country's growth. From organising to executing, Modi has redefined global leadership and shaping up history, she points out.



*International Yoga Day celebrations led by PM Modi*

One of the most charismatic and popular leaders of all times, not just in India but globally, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi's every act and decision has been nothing but a step in furthering India's leadership and cultural heritage on world fora. His contributions as the nation's cultural ambassador are closely intertwined with the country's growth story in the present and with India's fight for independence about seven decades ago.

They say, a leader is one who leads by example and Narendra Modi has continued to do so since the very beginning of his tenure as the leader of the country. From projecting yoga as an Indian practice on international fora, to commemorating forgotten heroes of India's struggle for Independence and the leaders who helped build the young nation such as Sardar Patel, Netaji Bose, Bhagat Singh, Lal Bahadur Shastri, etc. in the right

light, Narendra Modi has redefined meaning of the word 'leader.'

### A born leader

Narendra Damodardas Modi was born on 17 September 1950 in a small town called Vadnagar, Mehsana district in Bombay (present-day Gujarat). His parents Damodardas Modi and Hiraben Modi had six children in all. Damodardas used to make tea at the Vadnagar Railway Station and his son would sell it to the passengers.

Being born three years after India got freedom; Narendra Modi was the first Prime Minister to be born in independent India. As a child, Modi learnt a lot through life experiences and would balance his studies and extracurricular activities to take out time and help his father at the tea stall. He was particularly fond of reading books and swimming.



Among the many personalities who inspired Modi was Swami Vivekananda whose teachings helped shape Modi's life. At an early age he decided to pursue the mission to fulfil Swami Vivekananda's dream of making India a 'jagat guru'.

A born seeker, Modi left home at the tender age of 17 to travel across India and understanding people and cultures. Soon after he joined the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in Ahmedabad and became a pracharak and got into a tough, disciplined life.

Gifted with great organisational skills, he joined politics in the late 1980s and delivered results soon after. First, he won a victory for the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation elections for the first time ever and later, in the 1995 Gujarat Assembly Elections his efforts led the winning of 121 seats in the state assembly.

## From organising to executing

In September 2001, the-then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee brought Modi from organisational politics to governance. In Gujarat, the-then Chief Minister Keshubhai Patel's ill health led the party to replace him with Narendra Modi. He was sworn in as the Chief Minister on 7 October 2001 and entered the Gujarat state legislature by winning a by-election in Rajkot-II constituency.

Narendra Modi is the longest serving Chief Minister of Gujarat till date. He led the state for 12 years and 227 days through two assembly elections. He soon entered the national arena and in September 2013 he was named the BJP candidate for PM ahead of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. During the election campaign, he used social media and technology extensively and the party made a historic and landslide victory by winning 282 seats in the Lok Sabha.

For the next general elections in 2019, Modi was again named the BJP candidate for prime minister. The BJP received 37.36 per cent of the vote and won 303 seats which was the highest vote share by a political party since the 1989 general elections in India.

## Furthering cultural diplomacy

During his tenure as the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi has taken several initiatives to further India's cultural richness and heritage across the world. He has effectively used India's culture and history to promote the country's global image and has been successful too.

There have been constant efforts to revive institutions and mechanisms that strengthen India's position in this sphere. For example, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) – an autonomous body that formulates and implements policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations; fosters cultural relations between India and other countries; promotes cultural exchange with other countries and peoples.

In April 2022, the ICCR launched an India Alumni Portal to connect with foreign students around the world who have studied in India. It must be noted that the India Alumni Portal was developed in line with PM Modi's vision to connect all foreign scholars who have studied in India as they are 'India's best ambassadors, offering invaluable soft projection across their personal and professional lives.' To engage the alumni in the best possible ways, Indian missions overseas will form alumni associations in their respective countries and celebrate an alumni day.

Under the aegis of the Modi government, ICCR has undertaken several initiatives to further cultural diplomacy. These include organising cultural festivals in India and abroad through cultural centres, offering scholarships and fellowships to encourage studies in India, empanelling yoga teachers to send them abroad to teach yoga, etc. ICCR has been offering scholarships for almost four decades to foreign students and now, through the portal, it aims to create a platform for the cultural ambassadors of India.

## Reclaiming yoga and spirituality

One of PM Modi's biggest contribution as a cultural ambassador is International Day of Yoga. On 27 September 2014, during his speech at the United Nations General Assembly, Modi put forth his suggestion for the occasion of a 'Yoga Day'. The draft resolution was endorsed by a record number of 177 member states and consequentially, the first International Day of Yoga was observed around the world on 21 June 2015.

During his speech at the UNGA, Modi said, "Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help in well-being. Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day."

In 2015, the Reserve Bank of India issued a 10-rupee commemorative coin to mark the International Day of Yoga and in 2017, UN Postal Administration issued 10 stamps on *asanas* on a single sheet to mark the International Day of Yoga.

For the first International Day of Yoga, the Ministry of AYUSH made necessary arrangements in India where 35,985 people, including the PM himself and dignitaries from 84 nations, performed 21 *asanas* for 35 minutes at Rajpath in New Delhi. This was the largest yoga class ever held with the largest number of participating nations.

## Improving ties with China

In October 2019, PM Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held their Second Informal Summit in Chennai, India. The two exchanged views on the age-old commercial linkages and people-to-people contacts between India and China in the past two millennia, including significant maritime contacts.

They agreed on establishing sister-state relations between Tamil Nadu and Fujian Province, exploring the possibility of establishing an academy to study links between Mahabali-puram and Fujian province on the lines of the experience between Ajanta and Dunhuang and conducting research on maritime links between China and India.

Vedika Jain is a legal researcher with [www.thewomansurvivor.com](http://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.

## Cinema as cultural bridge

*With more than 1,800 movies a year through major centres of film production, India's multi-billion dollar industry serves not just as a fan medium but is a global force. Pioneering film-makers like Raj Kapoor followed by many others, occupy a pride of place on the medium's desktop as great cultural ambassadors. **Kriti Kalra** asserts that cinema has played a stellar role in keeping the Indian diaspora rooted to its origins.*



**Raj Kapoor, India's first cultural ambassador from the world of cinema during his visit to Russia**

Cinema is one of the most effective ways to create change and Indian cinema, since its onset, has been a trailblazer. Among the many icons of Indian cinema, a few traversed political and geographical boundaries and popularised it across borders. With it, they ensured India's rich culture and heritage propagated in new lands too.

Cinema is not only an art, it's an important link that connects Indians the world over, especially helps the diaspora to stay connected to their origins. It was filmmaker Raj Kapoor, India's first cultural ambassador from the world of cinema, who sent ripples across the world with his contributions to cinema. His films beautifully narrated stories of the common man in India and also helped bridge gaps with other cultures. He was a showman in the truest sense of the word.

### The power of cinema

Indian cinema is a force to reckon with, it being the biggest film industry in the world. India produces more than 1,800 movies in a year through the major centres of film production that include Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Amritsar, Kochi, New Delhi, Bangalore, Bhubaneshwar-Cuttack and Guwahati.

India ranked first in terms of annual film output in 2018 and the Indian film industry is a multi-billion dollar industry. Of this, the Hindi film industry makes up for the biggest contributor with 44 per cent of the box office revenue. This is followed by Tamil and Telugu film industry that offer 13 per cent each to the box office revenue. This is then followed by other



regional film industries including Malayalam, Kannada, Bengali, Punjabi, Marathi, etc.

However, in 2021, Telugu cinema became the largest film industry of India in terms of box-office. Tollywood, as it's popularly known, churned out 180 films in 2021 generating ₹ 1070 crore (gross) in terms of revenue.

Today, Indian cinema has a global presence and being a global enterprise, Indian actors, filmmakers, etc. have a fan base spread across nations, in more than 90 countries worldwide. The revenue generated from films screened overseas is as much as 12 per cent and is only growing. Indian cinema's global presence could not have been possible without the early contributions of legendary filmmakers such as Raj Kapoor whose works had a global appeal.

## The initial years of the filmmaker

Born as Shrishti Nath Kapoor on 14 December 1924, Raj Kapoor, also known as Ranbir Raj Kapoor, was an actor, film director and producer who worked in Hindi film industry. His parents Prithviraj Kapoor and Ramsarni Devi Mehra had six children of which Raj was the eldest. The family moved from Peshawar, North-West Frontier Province to Bombay Presidency for residence and for education.

In his early years of the career, Prithviraj Kapoor moved very often from one city to another. As a result, Raj Kapoor attended different schools that included Colonel Brown

Cambridge School in Dehradun, St Xavier's Collegiate School in Calcutta and Campion School in Bombay. That went a long way in moulding his personality and understanding of cultures and people.

Interestingly, Raj Kapoor's entire family was an illustrious one. His father's younger brother Trilok Kapoor was an actor and father's cousin was film producer Surinder Kapoor whose children are producer Boney Kapoor and actors Anil Kapoor and Sanjay Kapoor. Raj Kapoor's brothers were famous Hindi film industry actors Shammi Kapoor and Shashi Kapoor. The legacy of Indian cinema's 'first family' continues with actors Rishi Kapoor, Kareena Kapoor, Karishma Kapoor, Ranbir Kapoor, etc. And, all have been India's cultural ambassadors in their own unique way.

## The evergreen works of Raj Kapoor

Raj Kapoor started his creative journey at an early age and that too with aplomb and confidence. At the young age of 24, Raj Kapoor produced, directed and acted in film *Aag* that was released in 1948. Before that, he had acted in *Neel Kamal* with Madhubala and the film was released in 1947.

With *Aag*, Raj Kapoor had established his own studio, the now world-famous R. K. Films. The film starred Nargis, Kamini Kaushal, Premnath and Raj himself. His first big success as producer, director and actor came with *Barsaat* that was released in 1949 and starred *Nargis*. The film is a classic and woos audiences worldwide, even today.

During his career, Raj Kapoor honed several talents across spheres of cinematic works. These include singer Mukesh, music composers Shanker-Jaikishan, lyricists Shailendra and Hasrat Jaipuri, etc. He had an uncanny ability to extract the best out of every artist he worked with.

Raj Kapoor made films that were ahead of their time

and often touched upon prevailing social ills of the time. In that sense, he played the role of a social reformer as well. Many of his films had an undertone of social consciousness and he used the medium of cinema very well in highlighting social changes of the time, such as declining human values, increasing consumerism, etc.

Many of his films had a patriotic storyline. The film *Jis Desh Men Ganga Behti Hai* was a celebration of a new India, a young India that had just become free. He inspired many filmmakers over the years and his films kept the patriotic fervour in Indians alive.

Influenced by Charlie Chaplin, many of his works had glimpses of the great comedian, especially in films such as *Shree 420*, *Awaara*, etc. The characters he played in these films were hugely inspired by Charlie Chaplin –cheerful and honest even in the face of adversities.

## The global appeal of his works

Almost all of Raj Kapoor's films had a global appeal and were popular with audiences across borders. His films were commercial successes in many parts of South, Central and Southeast Asia, China, the-then Soviet Union, Europe, Africa and the Middle East. The song 'Awaara hoon' became very popular not just in India but in several nations across the world.

His film *Shree 420*'s famous song *Mera Joota Hai Japani, Ye patloon Inglistani, Sar pe lal topi Roosi, Phir bhi dil hai Hindustani* was an extremely popular song. In fact, at the 2006 Frankfurt Book Fair, Indian author Mahasweta Devi used these lyrics to express her gratitude towards her motherland, India.

Raj Kapoor's films had a massive fan following in Russia, then Soviet Union. The love for his films was also a reminder of India's relations with Russia. In fact, the unparalleled popularity and love that Raj Kapoor and his films received in Russia were a testimony of Indian cinema's global presence and appeal. Many in Russia believe that it was Raj Kapoor's films that actually introduced India to the Russians. Even today, after generations, the young Russians know about Raj Kapoor and his films.

For his immense contribution to Indian cinema and for playing the role of a cultural ambassador, Raj Kapoor received numerous accolades that included many National Film Awards, Filmfare Awards, etc. in India.

The Government of India awarded him the Padma Bhushan in 1971 and Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1987. His performance in *Awaara* was ranked as one of the top ten greatest performances of all time in world cinema by Time magazine.

Often referred to as the 'Greatest Showman of Indian Cinema', Raj Kapoor lived by his motto '*The Show Must Go On*'. He dedicated his life to making films that touched people's hearts all over the world and made Indian cinema an indispensable tool of cultural diplomacy.

**Kriti Kalra is an activist and field researcher with [www.thewomansurvivor.com](http://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.**

## New India redefines cultural diplomacy

**Ruchi Verma** explains that in recent times, cultural diplomacy has become an important pillar of Indian foreign policy. PM Modi tweaked Indian diplomacy by incorporating new elements of soft power. These include Samman (dignity), Samvaad (dialogue), Samriddhi (shared prosperity), Suraksha (regional and global security), and Sanskriti evam Sabhayata (cultural and civilisational links) and all are in sync with India's larger political and economic goals.



**Dr. Moxraj (in yellow Kurta) was one of the 162 teachers sent on diplomatic missions across the world to create awareness about traditional Indian culture**

Cultural diplomacy is one of the oldest forms of diplomacy where states seek to mobilise cultural resources to gain traction or achieve foreign policy goals. It involves showcasing the country's culture through various events and activities, concerts, exhibitions, etc. It's a very important dimension of a country's soft power and India, in the last decade, has successfully wielded this dimension of diplomacy.

In fact, in the Indian context, the international reach and recognition of the country's soft power was realised long before when India's culture, art and spiritual wealth attracted seekers from around the world, for centuries. Most recently, in January 2021, India's first cultural diplomat to the US, Dr Moxraj, returned after spending three years teaching Sanskrit, Hindi and spreading traditional Indian culture along with Yoga and meditation in several American states.

The ancient Indian Vedic doctrine 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' that translates to 'The entire world is one family' was among the first steps towards what we could call now a global citizenship. Long before political boundaries were drawn demarcating nations, India was already leading the way and exercising this soft power.

And now, the new India is redefining and reorienting diplomacy by aggregating new elements of soft power that are relevant in today's world.

### Cultural richness an asset

In recent times, cultural diplomacy has become an important pillar of Indian foreign policy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweaked Indian diplomacy by incorporating new elements of soft power. The five pillars of soft power include Samman (dignity), Samvaad (dialogue), Samriddhi (shared prosperity), Suraksha (regional and global security), and Sanskriti evam Sabhayata (cultural and civilisational links). All the five elements are in consonance with India's larger political and economic goals.

Cultural diplomacy translates to 'exchange of ideas, information, values, systems, traditions, beliefs and other aspects of culture, with the intention of promoting mutual understanding' - the ultimate goal being to be able to build and maintain long-term relationships and trust.

Through ancient times, India has been a leader,



Through ancient times, India has been a leader, culturally and spiritually. It won't be wrong to say that cultural diplomacy is India's gift to the world - one among thousands other such as the concept of infinity, the numeral zero, Ayurveda, world's first university at Takshashila, etc.

## Cultural diplomats pave the way

One of the most effective ways to prevent conflict, diffuse escalation and further peace is through cultural pursuits. In India, the Ministry of External Affairs' Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), established in 1950 to strengthen cultural bonds with other nations, has been instrumental in promoting and upholding these pursuits.

The ICCR sent 162 teachers to various diplomatic missions across the world in 2018, as part of an initiative of the Modi government, to 'create awareness about traditional Indian culture.' Among these teachers was Dr Moxraj who is well versed in Vedic texts and spent three years teaching Hindi and Sanskrit along with traditional Indian culture, yoga and meditation in the US as part of this initiative.

Born in Rajasthan in 1979, Dr Moxraj has worked under three ambassadors Navtej Sarna, Harshvardhan Shringla and Taranjit Singh Sandhu. While in the US, as part of the initiative, Dr Moxraj led the International Day of Yoga celebrations in front of the US Capitol, White House and the Washington Monument.

Additionally, he taught Hindi and Sanskrit, through special classes started by the Indian embassy, to Indian Americans, US citizens and members of the diplomatic community in Washington DC, Virginia, Maryland and few other states.

A few institutions such as George Washington University and Georgetown University invited him to conduct special Hindi classes and praised the Indian government and the Indian embassy for the initiative.

## Importance of religious commonalities

In December 2021, the ICCR organised a summit where a delegation from Bhutan visited Nalanda University in Bihar. The visit underlined the importance of Nalanda as a Buddhist monastic centre of learning and one of the first residential universities in the world. In 2018, on the occasion of the completion of 50 years of diplomatic ties between India and Bhutan, the Queen Mother of Bhutan remarked that Buddhism was India's greatest gift to the Bhutanese people.

She emphasised on how following the arrival of Buddhism and great Buddhist masters from India, the teachings of Lord Buddha and Guru Padmasambhava continue to influence the lives of every Bhutanese. Guru Padmasambhava was an eight century Indian sage who is considered the founder of Tibetan Buddhism.

In 2019, to honour the birth anniversary of Guru Rinpoche (another name for Guru Padmasambhava), a statue of Buddha was gifted to Bhutan by India. PM Modi chose Bhutan for his first official state visit as PM in 2014 underlining the importance of the country in India's 'Neighbourhood-First' policy.

## COVID-19 had a few positives too

During the Covid-19 pandemic, when millions across the world were coming to terms with the lockdown woes, there was a respite for Americans who could participate in certain

initiatives launched by the Indian embassy in the US. The embassy launched 'Yog Apke Dwar', 'Yoga at Home' where Dr Moxraj conducted online yoga programme.

Not just this, Dr Moxraj also took Hindi and Indian culture to Hollywood when he conducted special classes for African-American Hollywood actress and singer Mary Milben. Milben's two videos - National Anthem of India on India's Independence Day in August and Om Jai Jagdish Hare on the occasion of Diwali - have been widely acclaimed.

Mary said, "I fell in love with India because of Dr Moxraj, not only because of the language, but also I was introduced to India, the Indian American community and India community all over the world." Dr Moxraj said, "The Vedic doctrine of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' has found its own resonance in the post-Covid-19 world."

'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', the concept that all individuals are collectively responsible towards each other and their shared future, forms the basis of UNESCO's ongoing dialogue between cultures, religions and civilisations.

## Challenges of cultural ambassadors

When the ICCR's cultural centers shut down during the pandemic, the autonomous body under the government of India decided to go online and launched several online classes in order to continue promoting India's cultural heritage. The cultural centers are located in US, Europe, Russia, China, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Guyana, South Africa, the Netherlands, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, among others.

The task of preserving and promoting culture is not an easy one. UNESCO through the World Heritage Committee and the Committee for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage is India's partner in promoting an 'international, inter-cultural dialogue and promoting in the long run international peace and security.'

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences, and culture.

India's cultural heritage is both tangible and intangible. The latter passed down from one generation to the next and includes folklore, oral traditions, performing arts, festivals, etc. It's not an easy task to preserve this heritage and even more challenging to further it. Needless to say,

Indian culture is complex especially because of the layers of influence, over centuries. Another daunting task is to ensure comprehension especially among the younger generation. It's important to present traditions and heritage to them in a manner that is easy to understand and attractive for the youth to get involved in.

**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.**

## Cultural emissaries stand tall

**Manu Shrivastava** feels there has been a tectonic shift in the very concept of Pride and National Pride where India is concerned. The narrative on Pride has, more often than not, been hugely politicised by factions in power and persistently. Referring to the contemporary scene in the light of India's iconic cultural ambassadors, she says these are the ones who have actually defined the true India.



**Swami Vivekananda is one of India's better known cultural ambassadors who introduced Hinduism to America way back in 1893**

**T**he definitions of cultural heritage and history have changed drastically over the last decade. As India enters into her 75<sup>th</sup> year of Independence, and the nation headed by its arguably most successful Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a wave of change has engulfed age-old notions, theories and systems that had been developed over seven decades. Change is, by far, the most constant thing in India today. And, that change has triggered severe polarisation across industries.

For one, there has been a tectonic shift in the very concept of Pride and National Pride where India is concerned. The narrative on Pride has, more often than not, been hugely politicised by factions in power and persistently. In the recent past, the shift in power - both politically as well as across myriad platforms associated - has led to a concurrent shift in the narrative of Pride itself. It isn't without reason that there's a drastic change in the very identity of the cultural ambassador itself.

### Among India's best - Swami Vivekananda

Among India's better known cultural ambassador is Swami Vivekananda best known in the United States for his ground-breaking speech to the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in which he introduced Hinduism to America calling for religious tolerance and an end to fanaticism.

Narendranath Dutta, who was the chief disciple of the 19<sup>th</sup> century mystic and the founder of Ramakrishna Mission Ramakrishna Parmahansa, who went on to become Swami Vivekananda was a key figure in the introduction of Vedanta and Yoga to the West and is credited with raising the profile of Hinduism to that of a world religion.

(Continue on page 28)





# GOA

## NOT JUST CHURCHES AND BEACHES!

*Manjira Majumdar reveals the transformation of Goa from what was once a hippie hunting ground with assertive Portuguese influences to a tourist paradise that assures a rocking time to its visitors. After the lull brought in by the pandemic, this picturesque state is back to its throbbing, pulsating ways. Beyond its “food and drinks” culture, it is a melting pot of sorts where the Cross and Tulsi co-exist harmoniously thanks to the seeds sown by the sons of the soil. A preview of what defines Goa beyond its usual trappings.*

*Text & photos : Manjira Majumdar*





**Vivid coloured houses in the Latin quarters**

For long, Goa to outsiders was a land of golden beaches, old churches and a typical cuisine, with definitive Portuguese influences. It is not that all these have disappeared, but today, Goa is no longer that hippie paradise that fostered a freewheeling culture.

Goa, over the years, looks more like a swanky new tourist spot, in which you can tailor make your requirements for slow relaxation combined with delectable food and drinks. There is water sport, casino, heritage walks, art camps and fashion. No one bothers you and lets you be. If you visit this lovely *state*, make it no longer than a week to spend in it, unless you are working on a creative project. Or else, you will never want to leave it.

Many young people came here once to find themselves and some never went back. That kind of life has its own undercurrents when you are out at night. You feel and sniff it in the air or even gaze at it twinkling among the fairy lights; a mirage almost among the villages.

Otherwise modern Goa is a refuge for rich Indians, who have refurbished the old villas or have built new ones in their likeness in a home-away-from home arrangement. They have

come not just from Mumbai but from as far as Delhi and Kolkata as well. The old Goa haciendas peep from behind the green foliage like those white-washed village churches and together they offer the tourist an experience like no other. The roads are well concretised now and a couple of bridges (the Atal Setu for one) are to be thrown open soon. Travel has become smoother though cars and scooters still drive at breakneck speed.

In this post pandemic era, people are still cautious to venture out and April is not a season for outdoors. Strangely this early April, a week in Goa was as pleasant as it was doable, blessed as it was with light showers towards the evening. The best time to visit Goa is from September to March but during the monsoon (June-July), it is positioned as a romantic soaked-in-green getaway, offering a number of discounts.

What is constant in Goa are the food, the drinks and the *Susegad*, derived from the Portuguese word, *sossegado*, which means a relaxed, unhurried lifestyle, but a life you live to the fullest nevertheless.

There are enough home stays, small and large hotels, cute apartments and old houses that have been converted into resorts that are let out throughout the year. Development has





***Lady of Miracles Church in Assago***

brought in its own issues and there is always a need for it being well balanced; however, the overall scene has moved away from the beaches into a more recreational inland. There is something for everyone to look forward to here.

## Colourful villas and local culture

The booming casinos bearing names such as Big Daddy and Casino Pride (floating) have a price tag and dress code to enter. Then there are heritage walks to know the local culture better. These have brought into sharp focus the lesser known nuggets of the state. The old heritage buildings, the history of its people are but some examples. Reading a bit about Goa and its people prior to visiting it opens up various avenues of interest.

Divide your days wisely. One day you may just want to saunter around the Latin quarters in Panjim, a silent witness of an era gone by. The old quaint colourful houses, with quainter nameplates, some of these dating back to the seventeenth century, offer a certain kind of inexplicable thrill. In between you can grab a buttered and warm croissant or quiche with freshly-brewed coffee. You may also want to pick up a soft white linen shirt or that wraparound skirt at the local flea market; but the local weave of the *kunbi* sari in solid colours and broad checks, is not easy to find these days. The *kunbis* were the



***Cathedral of Bom Jesus***

original tribal community of the region (weavers and farmers) and were Hindus till they converted to Christianity. The Konakni speaking Goud Saraswat Brahmins make up a sizeable portion of the population. This community is said to have migrated from Kashmir. It is the same story of five Brahmin families who came from the North of India and settled down in various parts of India, Bengal inclusive.

## The co-existence of the cross and the tulsi

The Christian homes are marked by crosses and the *tulsi* plant adorns the Hindu homes. The temples also have Christian and Buddhist architectural influences because when truce was declared that not the entire population of Hindus could be converted, by force or by will, they were allowed their places of worship. The new structures were said to incorporate certain elements of Portuguese architecture so vital was the cultural influence. The temples, therefore, are known for their vivid colours and are not necessarily white.

The temples have a *deepsthambha* in front of them, which is a clear Buddhist influence, when it reigned over Hinduism till the latter came back. The reigning deities in Goa are Lord Shiva (the Mangeshi Temple is dedicated to him)



***The Shantadurga Temple. Shantadurga is the reigning deity of Goa***

Shantadurga who holds a snake and is a synthesis between Durga and Lakshmi, and Mahalasa devi, the female avatar of Vishnu. She has four hands, carrying the *trishul*, a sword, a severed head and a drinking bowl. She stands on a man or demon lying down. Sometimes there is a tiger or a lion thereby invoking images of Durga Mata or even Ma Kali!

The Islamic influences in Goa are limited. The early Portuguese called the local Muslim Mours, perhaps from the word Moors, tracing back the old enmity that existed between the Moorish invasion of the Iberian peninsula. Now Muslims constitute about eight per cent of the population.

The churches of Goa would need a separate article as each is unique in its own way. The Cathedral of Bom Jesu in which the mortal remains of St Francis Xavier rests gives a peek into the Christian history through a light and sound presentation within its precincts. There are many other churches including the beautiful Our Lady of Miracles in Assagao that peeps through the lovely thick screen of greenery at Sunset Point, from where you can see the sun dip over the sea at Vagator.

The Basilica of Bom Jesus is a world heritage site and is the oldest church in the State, being almost five centuries old. Its baroque style main altar holds the statue of Ignatius of Loyola, who with Saint Francis Xavier founded the Jesuit order to spread



***The deepstambha in the temple premises is lit up in the evenings***





**The water tank where one bathes and washes their feet before entering the Shnataadurga temple**

Christianity, education and charity in addition to other missionary activities.

## Transitioned cuisine

Earlier one came to Goa for the xacuti, cafreal, and shrimp balchao but now you are spoilt for choices of global cuisine or as it is referred to as “transitioned” cuisine. From sushi, to the tea leaf salad to the glazed honey pork – you name it. All these dishes come in salad forms, with small bites and plenty of vegetables and fruits. The fusion fare include the dark Golbari mutton of North Kolkata fashioned into Calcutta *kati* rolls; lacy-at-the-edges *appam* and potato stew; Syrian beef melt-in-the-mouth fry, the list is endless as an array of eateries open and close with regularity. Al fresco dining is in keeping with the weather and the bounty of fish is both from the sea and rivers Zuari, Mandovi, Terekhol, Chapora etc. The main types are red snapper, sea perch, mackerel (smaller ones known as *bangda*) presented, grilled, fried and curried.

The traditional dishes are not extinct and remain perennial favourites. The usual process of cafreal preparation – chicken legs shallow fried - involves green chillies, fresh coriander leaves, onion, garlic, ginger in addition to cinnamon, pepper, chilli powder, mace, clove, lime juice/vinegar. The *xacuti* or *shagoti* (*chacuti* in Portuguese) in Konkani is prepared with chicken, lamb or beef.



**Seafood makes for a large part of Goan cuisine**

Originally, the local fishermen prepared a thick sauce that contained spices such as black pepper (*meerya*), chilli, turmeric, onion, nutmeg, cinnamon, and cloves and added this to the freshly caught fish. This was finally supplemented with lightly toasted coconut and white poppy seeds. Now this gravy extends to chicken and other meats.





**A little creek in Baga**



**A new age villa**

The *balchao* is almost like a preserve, a pickle-like blend of ingredients which are crucial to many of Portuguese Goa's meat dishes. It incorporates Goa's other passion, *feni*, a potent alcoholic brew made from either cashew nuts or palm fruit. The *feni* vinegar reduces the high effectiveness of hot dried red chillies, in the same manner the sour tamarind, another important ingredient in Goan cooking, to create that balance in flavour.

The Goud Saraswat cuisine is very unique. Coconut and spices are the main ingredients used in preparing both vegetarian and non-vegetarian curries. There are several efforts on to revive some long lost dishes. Redolent with flavours of homemade spices, it incorporates flavourful curries (ghassi) made with local fish available, seafood such as prawns, clams and mussels and all varieties of fried fish, especially bombil (Bombay Duck). The vegetarian cuisine includes a variety of coconut based curries and *saar* (soups) made of lentils or tomato and seasoned with black mustard, cumin and asafoetida in ghee. There are large cashew plantations in Goa and the nuts called as *bibbe* in local language are used to make a special side dish called *bibya upkari*.

And for desserts it is mostly the *dodol* – a soft toffee made from the palm and the *bebinca*; the many layered coconut pudding made with flour, butter, eggs, coconut and jaggery.





*The Mario Miranda Gallery at Candolim, Goa is dedicated to the art of famous cartoonist from Goa Mario Miranda*

And to wash down all these delicacies are feni, kokum juice, beer, port and full-bodied French red wines.

## Famous sons of Goa who have left an imprint

Singers and musicians Goa has plenty. The western music influences are far and wide but it is in the three artistic sons of Goa who have left their strong legacies behind. It was fun discovering this.

Mario Miranda, the self taught cartoonist who became famous for his quirky representation of Goan characters is today found in various merchandise in a couple of galleries. The black and white wall plates with his sketches of scenes of a *kunbi* wedding or the Salegaon Church make wonderful gifts. Before him, Charles Correa, the MIT trained architect and urban planner made the state famous. He used spaces and materials that were unique, based on local requirements. Correa rejected the post modernism architecture of steel and chrome and perhaps glass (sadly on the increase again) and left his imprints elsewhere as well. For example The Salt Lake, Kolkata, City Centre One.

Goa has produced great women models. The well-known fashion designer the late Wendell Rodricks gave a new twist to India fashion by marrying local influences with the broader Indian canvas and even beyond its shores – an international outlook. He gave a new lease of life to the local *kunbi* weave, known for its thickness, solid colours and checks. He revived the looms and designed lighter saris beautiful in pastel shades. But



*Moda Goa Museum by the late fashion designer and activist Wendell Rodricks was planned as India`s first costume museum housed in a 450-year-old traditional Goan villa*



***Booming casinos such as Big Daddy (floating) have a price tag and dress code to enter.***

it is the Moda Goa Museum and Research Centre, yet to open formally, which has people interested in design very excited. Located in Colvale, the Museum is an aesthetically designed Goan piece of architecture, with its typical design of bright mustard yellow and windows with bold lines.

So what is the real Goan experience you may ask? From the backpack tourism with only fish curry and rice and meals at the beach shacks, Goa alongside offers casinos and the rich nightlife, carnivals and live bands add the *joie de vivre*. Goa offers plenty of green, blue seas, white beaches and colourful houses and people.

There is water sport for the adventurous: para sailing, kayaking, scuba diving.

Goa is a whole new experience of offering the old and the new, with a lingering south European feel of romanticism. The haciendas are homesteads set on rural and agricultural land in all Spanish-speaking countries of colonial background and it is so evident here. Portugal was no less a coloniser as it was a maritime nation. So the houses with wide balconies, columns and gabled tiled roofs provide a refuge from the warm weather.



***A shop facade***





**Goa receives a large number of tourists during the annual Carnival held in February/March**

Donna Paula beach is a well-known tourist spot near Panjim, closer to the northern part of Goa. It has fort ruins on a rocky terrain adding a mysterioustouch. Wherever you go, good food to suit all pockets follows you and a great outdoor life for family and children. Goa beaches ensure you tan as you gaze where the sun meets the sea and the sea meets the shore, and nothing else matters. It is pure bliss!

Goa is not just a place. It is state of mind.

**Manjira Majumdar is an independent journalist & researcher. She combines writing with teaching journalism and is the author of three children's books.**

## Our Last Six Issues

Call: 022-23534400 / E-mail: [oiopfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:oiopfoundation@gmail.com) / Web: [www.oneindiaonepeople.com](http://www.oneindiaonepeople.com)

April 2022



March 2022



February 2022



January 2022



December 2021



November 2021



***“Typing scatters our fingers and the energy gets divided. To conserve brain energy and concentration, one should practice few pages of handwriting.”***



**Harmohan Singh Batra**

**How did you get interested in graphology, astrology, magnet therapy, etc.**

While in college, I sensed that my body was sensitive to magnets. It made me curious so I studied magnet therapy. Hungry to know more about the secrets of nature, I studied Astrology, Numerology, Palmistry, Acupressure, Colour therapy and Aura reading, Vastu, Feng - Shui, etc.

**What inspired you to analyse handwritings?**

Impressed with the results after getting my handwriting analysed, I could discern many things about myself and even rectify problem areas, merely by correcting certain size, shape and writing pattern of alphabets. It drove me to study and practice handwriting analysis.

**From whom did you learn this art and how accurate is it?**

I learned the basics from three masters, but regular practice and testimonials of my analysis by clients boosted my interest further. I delved deeper, adding new patterns for students and adults to help them improve their goals and life pattern. Accuracy depends upon the expertise and application of the knowledge along with the connectivity of cause, reasons and output.

**How has this study helped you in your life?**

Practicing the correct way of writing helped me understand my surroundings and its effect on my life. I could sort out many issues in a few weeks. I learnt to avoid confrontation and dealt with problems better.

**What is Graphology? How does it work?**

Graphology is the basics of reading thought process of the writer. It also denotes the steps he/she has passed through in life. One can

Mumbai-based **Harmohan Singh Batra** (66) is a graphologist who determines personality traits by analysing people's handwriting and suggests corrections that can improve their life pattern. His advice: Use computers only to communicate, try handwriting as a course correction in life. A man of many parts, he also dabbles in Astrology, Numerology, Palmistry, Acupressure, Colour therapy, Aura reading, Magnet therapy, Vastu, Feng Shui and other alternate therapies.

**Batra in conversation with A.Radhakrishnan.**

can clearly read the physiological, environmental, relational effect of the person and by correcting the alphabets, one can overcome all issues.

Any graph analysis is graphology. In any drawing, painting, picture, poster, design of visiting card, letter heads, the shape or size of alphabets used in it has its own effect on the users.

One can even judge the basic story about the logo of the company or about the product from the catalogue, or life pattern of the home occupiers going by the paintings on their wall.

As every sport is basically a mind game, graphology can be used to guide and enhance performance of the player.

**What are the qualifications required to be a graphologist?**

One should essentially have good ability to read any handwriting and make the right analysis.

Every person believes basically that only hard work pays and ignores that work can also be enjoyed. People generally work only on their requirements, and not on their abilities.

Graphology teaches a person to also focus on abilities and work smartly for the desired results.

**Does graphology have any real value over and above scrutinising the scribbling on a page? Does handwriting analysis lack scientific support?**

My experience and results confirm it is the best supportive science which gives maximal results, if applied correctly and regularly. If a person knows the (+ -) effects of scribbling, he will be conscious when scribbling.

Lots of data collection and compilation are required to analyse



handwriting. Those who say it is pseudo-science probably have not understood the science behind it or not applied their knowledge correctly.

**What is the difference between graphology and handwriting analysis? Handwriting v/s Typing ?**

Hand writing analysis is limited to analysis of written things with signature but graphology means analysing graph/drawing. It includes study of logos, catalogues or any printed stationery.

One should first understand the benefit of handwriting in comparison to typing. In the former, we bring together all the fingers and thumb to hold the pen and put the thoughts on paper. Hence energy is concentrated. Typing scatters our fingers and the energy gets diverted or divided. To conserve brain energy and concentration, one should practice few pages of handwriting.

**Can you tell us 10 things you can learn about yourself from your hand writing?**

By analysing handwriting, one can determine whether the person`s mind is analytical or not; whether he/she will achieve the

the set targets/goals; has the ability for multi-tasking; has love for languages, whether the person has parental support in life; whether the person is a good listener or selective listener; whether one is diplomatic or cautious; whether one speaks truth or is a pathological liar, etc.

**How can you listen when you are dealing with the written word?**

I had a student who could concentrate better when listening to the spoken words of others, even by lip reading, but his comprehension of reading his own work was poor. I deduced that his concentration was good for listening, and so made him learn by reading a little louder so that he could listen to the same. Within a fortnight, he showed improvement in studies. Knowing a little about psychology helps.

**Handwriting is known to evolve over time. Does this mean our personalities too evolve?**

Handwriting involves brain reading; so whenever there is any adverse change in our surroundings that disturbs our mind, it will



automatically change our handwriting. Each and every alphabet represents an area of someone's life. So this becomes the simplest and easiest way to regulate the disturbed life of a person. But he/she has to practice the correct way of writing till the desirable results are achieved. The changes have to be maintained to continue the improved life pattern.

**Can graphology aid medical professionals in diagnosis? Is there any evidence to show that handwriting is affected by anxiety?**

Every alphabet represents a certain area of life, including body parts. So disturbance in any alphabet if correlated will help in diagnosis. Anxiety disturbs the brain, therefore thought process and thus writing pattern, speed and size and shape of a few alphabets.

**With increased use of computers isn't there a large decrease in the quality of handwriting?**

It is not only the quality of handwriting but also the creativity of people which has degenerated with excessive use of computers. It is now just a cut- copy-paste process. However, it is heartening that even today there are people comfortable with writing and scribbling their thoughts and use the computer only to communicate.

**Can handwriting be purposefully changed?**

While analysing handwriting, we suggest corrections of certain alphabets intentionally to improve the life pattern of the person and solve the disturbing areas or patterns of life.

**How about people who write in a second language?**

One can practice analysing any language through basic graphology knowledge. Because it is only the shape, size and writing pattern one has to study. But of course one should know to read the other language.

**Is it true that a handwriting personality/ compatibility test for couples can be done using graphology?**

Yes. In fact, I would recommend it over astro calculation. Relationship between not just couples but any two human beings can be vastly improved with change of handwriting and its regular practice.

**Is there a difference between left-handed and right-handed individuals that requires you to adjust your renderings?**

Actually there is not much difference between right handed and left hand writers, except the cutting of 't' or if they underline signature. Generally one draws these lines from left to right but being left handed might lead to go from right to left. It denotes person experiencing setback(s) in many areas of his life. This can be corrected.

**With the advent of typewriters and computers is graphology a dying art?**

Even today examinations are mostly handwritten. This is the age of creativity and till people continue writing, this science will remain alive.

A. Radhakrishnan is a Pune based freelancer, poet and short story writer.

## Iron Man given credit

So, while for years, history has been according credit albeit sparingly to the Iron Man of India, the creation of the world's largest statue of Sardar Patel in Gujarat brought focus back to a leader who, most felt, had been ignored by the Congress Party since Independence. And, with it was the narrative on Sardar Patel and his contribution to India's freedom struggle and the very concept of India itself. That apart, leaders like Veer Savarkar, Bhagat Singh, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Lal Bahadur Shastri and several others, who had been relegated to mere mention in history and India's freedom heritage, were refurbished and repackaged by the new regime.

Files were reopened, films were made, campaigns were initiated and history was rewritten only to provide the much-deserved platform to the heroes of yore. That they would have to be projected as freedom fighters who didn't receive the accolades they deserved and were, concurrently, ambassadors for India, was a subjective view but one that was, after decades, voiced and acted upon.

## Distinct narrative against India

There has been a distinct narrative with regard to India in particular and Asia in general where the Western world is concerned. The prejudice that has been fanned over centuries, against India had engulfed world history and geopolitical scenarios to such an extent that the world's oldest civilisation's achievements had been completely glossed over. It was important to identify leaders and personalities from over centuries in India and provide them the deserving platform so that they play the roles of India's ambassadors instead of the paltry few weak characters who had been packaged as India's offering to its people and the world.

The prejudice towards India's systems whether they were economic or social welfare, administrative or cultural, was legendary. While the West chose to focus on India's caste system and not on its achievements, it indulged in the very racism that it claimed to identify and expose.

The issue of segregation and ostracism has no physical limits and is exercised by the powerful beyond borders and across continents. It wasn't just an all-India phenomenon as claimed and propagated over centuries. That discrimination was also not restricted to religion or groups, was a reality that was given the go-by.

## Aboriginal, native leader of their lot

Whether it was the Aboriginals in Australia that were given the short end of the stick and discriminated against by the White invaders or the plight of native American tribes in North America, hate and discrimination existed all over the world. Like Wilma Mankiller, a Native American (Cherokee Nation) activist, social worker, community developer and the first woman elected to serve as Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation who was the cultural ambassador for her lot. Wilma was heavily inspired by the social and political movements of the 1960s, and went on to become involved in the Occupation of Alcatraz.

For five years in the early 1970s, she was employed as a social worker, focusing mainly on children's issues. After returning to Oklahoma in 1976, Mankiller was hired by the



**Sardar Patel statue in Gujarat**

Cherokee Nation as an economic stimulus coordinator. Her expertise at documentation ensured she became a successful grant writer. By the early 1980s, she was directing the newly created Community Development Department of the Cherokee Nation. As Director she designed and supervised innovative community projects allowing rural citizens to identify their own challenges and, through their labour, participate in solving them.

Similarly, Australia's aboriginal inventor and writer David Unaipon features on the Australian \$50 everywhere in Australia. Unaipon began his education at the age of seven at the Point McLeay Mission School and got renowned for his intelligence. He was the first Aboriginal writer to publish in English, the author of numerous articles in newspapers and magazines, including the Sydney Daily Telegraph, retelling traditional stories and arguing for the rights of Aborigines. Some of Unaipon's traditional Aboriginal stories were published in a 1930 book, *Myths and Legends of the Australian Aboriginals*, under the name of anthropologist William Ramsay Smith. They have recently been republished in their original form, under David Unaipon's name, as *Legendary Tales of the Australian Aboriginals*.

## PM, President, Ambedkar lead

Back in India, while the world flays the largest democracy for discrimination on the grounds of caste, in history books and across media, till kingdom come, fact remains that her Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Ram Nath Kovind, both at the highest echelons of political ladder belong to the backward castes in the social strata. The President was born on 1 October 1945, in a village in the Kanpur district of Uttar Pradesh into a family of the Kori caste, known as underprivileged even among Dalits. He practised as a lawyer in the Supreme Court and served as a BJP member of the upper house of Parliament from 1994 to 2006. And then, he was also the governor of Bihar state before going on to become the President of India. Why, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi belongs to the 'Modh Ghanchi' caste of Gujarat, categorised as Other Backward Class (OBC).

Most importantly, India's Constitution itself has been penned by none-other-than Babasaheb Ambedkar, yet another Dalit. So much for discrimination and its effect in reality. While caste does remain a decisive factor in the lives of the nation's people, that most of those in the lowest strata have managed to achieve great heights and notch success that few could boast of, is a reality. Now, can there be better cultural ambassadors than these stalwarts standing tall in the Indian political hemisphere?

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



## AND WE WERE THERE – 1967 – 1987 - YE LO BAYAAN HAMAARE

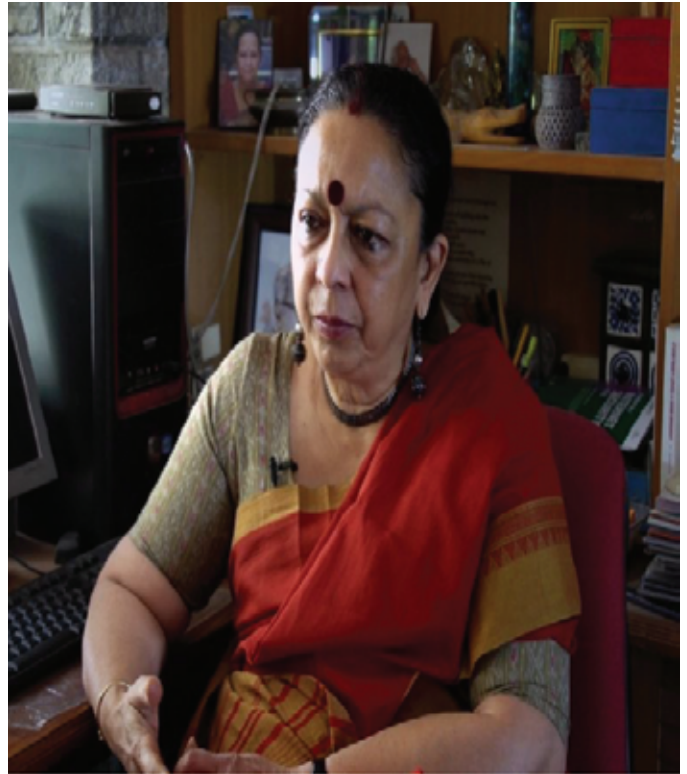


**Historian and film maker Uma Chakravarti**

**Y**e Lo Bayaan Hamaare (2021) is the intriguing name of a long documentary film directed jointly by Uma Chakravarti and Priyanka Chhabria. It was one of the biggest crowd-pullers at the recently concluded 8 th Kolkata People's Film Festival in Kolkata. The Festival is organised by the People's Film Collective, a people-supported, independent, volunteer-led festival that showcases politically committed contemporary documentary and fiction films from India and South Asia.

Uma Chakravarti is an Indian historian, academic and filmmaker, who has written extensively on Indian history involved with issues relating to gender, caste, and class. She stepped into the rather rough and challenging terrain of cinema after she retired from teaching. She has also made documentary films on women's history. Among them are *Prison Diaries*, *A Quiet Little Entry*, *Darbar-e-Watan* and *Fragments of a Past – Lucknow, 1920 – 1949*

*Ye Lo Bayaan Hamaare* can be called as an extended sequel of *Prison Diaries*, another brilliant film. *Prison Diaries* takes us on a journey into the past to offer us a close glimpse into the life, and death of the late Snehalata Reddy who was arrested soon after the Congress Government led by Indira Gandhi declared Emergency on June 25, 1975. Snehalata, who began her career as an actress, director who brought a kind of revolution on the Kannada stage and also in her films, kept a



**Nandini Reddy daughter of Snehlata Reddy**

diary when she was in prison and Chakravarti names the film after this diary. The stress of the film is on how the Emergency saga had its share of women heroes who stood up for what they believed was right. Snehalata Reddy was one of them.

The Emergency suspended all fundamental rights and imposed strict censorship on all channels of the media. Mass arrests began on the night of 25 th June 1975. Resistance to the government and to the Emergency continued to gain momentum and so did the arrests. There is a Black-and-White clip of Indira Gandhi and one can hear her voice proclaiming Emergency.

Chakravarti's latest film, the 141-minute-long documentary, *And We Were There – 1967-1977* was one of the biggest crowd-pullers at the festival. In Hindi, it is called *Yeh Lo Bayaan Hamaare*. In her own words, "This is a film about idealism, passion and jail time of young women coming of age in the late 1960s, seeking to change the world and throwing them into the rebellious movements sweeping parts of India like Bengal, Bihar, Delhi, Bombay, Hyderabad and Bangalore."

Chakravarti zeroes in on the first-person nostalgic experiences of 15 such women, some of who are no longer with us, who surrendered themselves, leaving home and hearth, to get sucked into the movement even when, towards the end, some of them realised that the movement is doomed to fail.

They mainly speak of their prison experiences where they were tortured almost to the point of death by the police and not given the constitutional right political prisoners are entitled to. The interviews began in 2010 and went on almost till 2020 and the film spans the period 1967 – 1977 passing through India Gandhi's declaration of the Emergency in 1975 and closing with the end of Emergency in 1977 with the declaration of the General Elections.

These women surprisingly, instead of harping on the inhuman torture they had to undergo never mind their age, gender, health conditions and marital status, harp on the beautiful "alternative world" they discovered within those iron bars of the jails where other women prisoners caught for theft and other minor crimes gave them solace when death is the only wish they had left.

Rajshri Dasgupta who is now a noted women activist and journalist, narrates an incident when, on a night after day-long torture in a special room created for torture, she was brought back to her cell, another inmate she does not even know the name of, placed Rajshri's head on her lap and patted her to sleep after giving her sips of water. "Till this day, I have no clue who this woman was, what her crime was and what her name is. But her putting me to sleep gave me the moral and physical strength to face the torture waiting for me the next morning." According to Uma Chakravarti, Rajshri had repeatedly said "no" to facing the camera. But when two other women namely (late) Meenakshi Sen and Krishna Bandopadhyay were being interviewed, she came forward on her own and began to speak.

The film, besides being filled with interviews with (late) Sreelatha Swaminathan, Deepa Dhanraj (filmmaker who was very young then), Jaya Mitra, Jhelum Varde, Vasanthi Raman, K. Lalitha, Vina Shatrughna, Swarna A.P., Ambika, Lalitha, Vina Shatrughna, Swarna A.P., Ambika, Mrinal Gore, Ahlya Rangnekar, also very young then, and Maya Devi from an Adivasi group who says that she joined the underground movement following her daughter when the girl was 14 and she has no regrets about her daughter being killed when she was barely 22 because, "Every dream and every movement charges a price so I consider that my daughter's life was the price." The film also uses clips of films like *Do Bigha Zamin* to focus on the exploited farmers to give justice to whom the movement took birth and flourished, Sukhdev's satiric comedy *Maa Ki Pukar*, and some clips from Anand Patwardhan's *Prisoners of Conscience* (1978) also from I.S. Johar's satiric film *Nasbandi* on Sanjay Gandhi's forced vasectomy programme which possibly led to the Emergency preceded by the collapse of the then-Congress-ruled government.

The film opens with clips from a beautiful song sequence from Bimal Roy's film *Bandini* (1963) showing a woman prisoner singing "*Ab ke baras bhejo bhaiya*" recalling her sweet memories of her brother back home as she grinds wheat on a hand-spun grinder and looks out wistfully and birds homing back too their nests on a bare tree. The lines of this song get repeated at different points of the film driving home the issue of life for any woman behind the bars of a prison cell.

Minakshi Sen, Jaya Mitra's cell-mate, speaks extensively about "*Pagolbari*" in her book *Jailer Bhitore Jail* (Jail Within the Jail, 2014) while Mitra explains the sheer irony of the term "safe custody" in her memoirs, *Hanyaman*. Both Mitra and Sen do appear in the narratives but only as inquisitive voices who coax out the life stories out of their fellow inmates. Uma's film however, does not make any mention of these books written by some of the women prisoners who have written at length on



**Film maker Deepa Dhanraj**

their radical activism for the CPI(ML) and also, about their experiences within the prison bars.

The film is intercut with newspaper clippings at every turn that mention Indira Gandhi's declaration of the Emergency in 1975, following which George Fernandes had to go into hiding, beginning with the 1966 Food Movement in Bengal, and many similar news stories that add to the background history of the Naxalite uprising, a very virulent movement that failed, according to the women interviewed, due to the wrong strategy of its leaders.

Krishna Bandopadhyay in her book writes: "So many women joined the movement, but on the party's part there was no actual directive as to what their role was expected to be. Many commented that even in the case of the men, there were no specific directives. For the sake of argument this is perfectly true, but the party leadership was male and can it be denied that their policies would automatically tend to be patriarchal?"

But you look at them today, and they maintain complete silence on their involvement in the very radical movement that shook the country in general and West Bengal in particular for a few years. This writer has personally known some of these women in different degrees of proximity but it is only through Uma's film that she discovered the scary history of these women and their sacrifice attained for an illusory future that took along with it, hundreds of lives of talented and brilliant young students who got involved in the movement.

The filmmaking itself is mind-blowing the way it juxtaposes interviews with voice-overs, newspaper clips, video clips and soulful music. It offers a glimpse into the character of the print media in those days, certainly factual and narrating the truth.

A beautiful film indeed; one for the archives and for students and researchers on the political history about a period that many Indians do not know.



**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.**



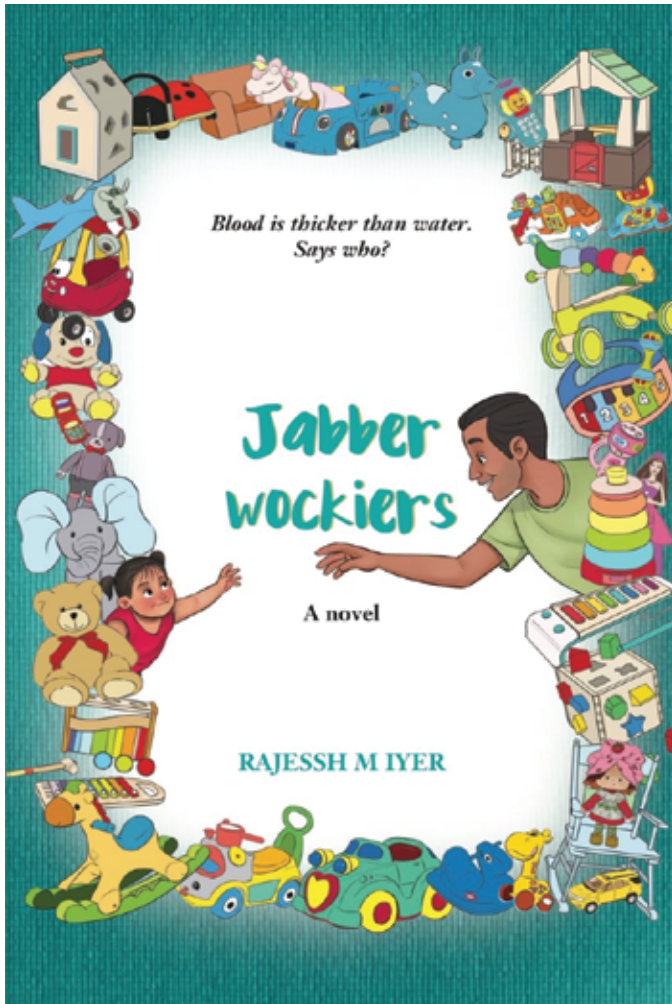


**WORLD CLASS  
QUALITY MEDICINES  
AT AFFORDABLE PRICES**

**BLUE CROSS LABORATORIES PVT LTD.**

PENINSULA CHAMBERS, LOWER PAREL, MUMBAI - 400 013,  
INDIA.

# Blood is thicker than water. Says who?



**'Jabber wockiers'**  
**Author-Rajessh M Iyer**  
**Paperback edition**  
**Published by Kriscendo Media LLP**  
**Pages 208, Price Rs 99**

price on a relationship that offered nothing in return? And is she not aware of how closely intertwined the father-daughter duo's lives are?

Sid and Samyu are inseparable, to say the least. And, one of the binding factors is the jabberwockies between them; a never-ending chain of babbles that might seem nonsensical to others, but hold deeper meanings for the two of them, perhaps even going beyond meaningful utterances.

Iyer beautifully brings forth the fact that the meaningful words that the world gives so much importance to holds no water compared to these inane words and even the unsaid messages of the hearts. As you sift through the pages, Samyu's babbles—even when done in her sleep while perhaps dreaming of playing with her father—has a genuine impact on readers. Soon, you start to understand as to why Sid responds to them. However, in this beautiful scenario lies the ugly reality of separation and an uglier custody battle.

The bitter custody battle in the courtroom also drags the reader into the gloomy predicament of what destiny holds. Like Sid, the reader knows that no matter what he does, the verdict might invariably lean towards the mother. However, again like Sid, the reader perhaps misses the larger game of life. It has its own ways of unfolding, one among them takes place in this book.

The story is an emotionally draining one. Such is its influence that it draws forth one's sensitivities to the fore, some of them even traumatic, though eventually leading to a cathartic effect. The book is a must read to fathom the prominence of relations that go beyond a lifetime. The chapter on past life regression adds value to the conviction of the probability of being linked from earlier births (if you believe in it), thereby endorsing the fact that love travels beyond time.

Jabber Wockiers by Rajessh M Iyer is a sincere portrayal of an inseparable bond between the two protagonists. The reader gets caught up in the labyrinth of intermingled emotions, compelling her to ponder over various facets of life.

**W**ords can have disastrous effects. They can push one into a bottomless chasm of nothingness. That's what we realise even as we delve into this book. The first chapter ends with words that not only hit Sid like a thunderbolt but also have a potent impact on the reader, making it difficult not to empathise with him, even to an extent that you start hoping that he does not lose the one person he cherishes the most.

The book's byline: 'Blood is thicker than water. Says who?' encapsulates the profundity of the story that revolves around Sid, Samyu and Kavita.

Their life is picture-perfect, as Sid feels on the night of his little one, Samyu's first birthday. He has no idea of what lies ahead. Kavita's sudden revelation that night reels Sid, turning his life topsy-turvy. The first thought as a reader I failed to understand as to what propelled Kavita to do what she did. Her life with Sid lacked nothing. However, above all, stands the question: how could she imperil the life of her baby Samyu? The oft-repeated saying, 'Love is blind' comes across as true, though one wonders if it cannot foresee the oh-so-obvious—and, may I add, hideous—consequences. How could she pay such a hefty



**Jayabala Girish is assistant professor at the School of Vocational Education, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Prior to this, she worked as a lecturer in a junior college of commerce for over two decades.**



## Playing with public health

**Bharat Dogra** argues that putting rice fortification on fast track is ill-advised and while it is harmful for several reasons including reduced nutrition value and incompatible logistics, it also puts the business in the hands of big businesses. His alternatives: Promote creative, sustainable, ecologically protective livelihoods in addition to well implemented nutrition programmes in villages and cities.

**T**he government has recently announced a schedule to fast-track rice fortification in India. According to it the supply of fortified rice to **ICDS** (Integrated Child Development Services), mid-day meals, other nutrition and welfare schemes as well as to the vast public distribution system (PDS) is to be completed by 2024. The capacity to achieve this target is much higher in India than in many other countries because the government controls the vast network of PDS and nutrition schemes, together reaching out to around 800 million people.

This rapid roll-over of rice fortification is likely to be harmful in many ways. Rice fortification should not be seen in isolation, but together with programmes and proposals for fortification of several other essential foods like salt, milk, edible oils and wheat, apart from the fact that fortification is also used in several other widely sold packaged food products.

That health problems can arise from excess intake of some of the micro-nutrients like iron and vitamins is well established. There cannot be a better substitute for natural foods. The process of fortification involves processing in heavy machines which can lead to some undesirable residual products finding their way into food. In the case of fortified rice if the fortified kernels do not blend optimally with normal rice, the consumer can be left confused. Fortification will also lead to promoting only a few rice varieties, giving a better price for such varieties, or root for patented/ GM varieties that will hit small rice cultivators.

While the need is to encourage smaller, village-level processing of rice and all other foods, generating local livelihoods, rice fortification will encourage centralisation and control by big businesses. It will become difficult to establish even a cottage industry in villages based on rice produced in the nearby fields as the rice grown there cannot be used without fortification.

With rice processing being passed on in the hands of bigger players, only a few rice millers at village level will survive that too after taking loans and adding new expensive machinery. Further, they will be at the mercy of those controlling fortification technology.

Staple food becomes costlier once the processing passes into the hands of big businesses. The farmers' agitation last year tried to highlight the increasing domination of big businesses and how it would adversely affect small farmers with consumer being the end sufferer.

Indigenous rice varieties are known to get better flavour with time. Older the rice, better the taste, but the shelf life of fortified rice kernels is hardly a year. Add to that the long storage periods in Food Corporation of India (FCI) warehouses and the transport to fair price shops. By the time the fortified rice from



**Indigenous rice varieties grown in India**

FCI godowns reach the consumers, the quality will take a beating.

Decentralised procurement, a significant part of the food procured in a village ending up in the same village fair price shops is the need. Mandatory food fortification will put paid to this.

Nutrition objectives can be achieved in better ways by simple and inexpensive methods. Official reviews say the need for fortification arises because present-day milling removes essential nutrients substantially. The obvious way is to move away from milling. However the biggest gains for nutrition will come from following the social agro-ecology approach in farming based on improving soil health and overall natural conditions. Soil nursed back to its health will retain the balance of micro-nutrients and the nutrition of plants grown in this soil will also improve.

Reducing inequalities and promoting creative, sustainable, ecologically protective livelihoods of people remain the best means of eliminating hunger, malnutrition and poverty, in addition to well implemented nutrition programmes in both villages and cities. Rice fortification serves as an anti-thesis.

**The writer is Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Man Over Machine (Gandhian Ideas for Our Times) and India's Quest for Sustainable Farming and Healthy Food.**

## Invention lying in throes of neglect

*It is an irony that while the country weighs in on ‘Vocal for Local’, a simple, cost-effective technology called Mangal Turbine – designed by a Bundelkhand farmer – that substantially improves lift irrigation and makes life easier for poor farmers by reducing the dependence on fossil fuels, has no takers. Creativity to what avail, asks **Bharat Dogra**.*



**Farmer-Scientist Mangal Singh**

In these times of climate change, we need technologies that can reduce fossil fuel consumption. Mangal Turbine is one such which can reduce diesel consumption with many other benefits. Unfortunately, the invention as well as the inventor remain neglected for reasons unknown.

Mangal Turbines invented by a farmer-scientist Mangal Singh of Bundelkhand way back in 80s, helps lifting of water from streams/small rivers by using the energy of flowing water in place of the present expensive diesel. The turbine can substantially reduce irrigation costs, enhance drinking water supply, decentralize energy renewal and promote rural cottage industry.

Mangal Singh a poor farmer from Bundelkhand was known for his enterprising and innovative farming methods from a very young age. Singh saw small farmers with low resources struggling to buy diesel and seeking out other possibilities of lifting water from rivers, nullahs and canals. It led to the invention of this device named after him as Mangal Turbines.



**The revolutionary turbine invented by him**

Singh first demonstrated the use of the device in 1987. Later it was patented as “Mangal Water Wheel Turbine Machine” as per Government of India gazette notification in 1998.

There are variants of the Turbine but the standard device contains a water wheel of 2 meter diameter with 12 blades radially fixed to the rim. The shaft is coupled with a suitable gear box for stepping up of rotation to 1500-1800 rpm. The output shaft of the gear box is coupled on one end with a centrifugal pump for lifting water and the other end is mounted with a suitable pulley to operate any other machine like crusher, grinder etc. By using the energy of flowing water in a stream, Mangal Turbine enables lifting of water for irrigation/drinking purposes and also produces mechanical power that can be harnessed for other purposes.

At least two former Secretaries of the Rural Development Ministry (B.K. Sinha and S.R. Sankaran) were votaries of



Mangal Singh's efforts. B.K. Saha, former Chief Secretary, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh writes about this device: "I made a detailed analysis of the economic viability of the 'Wheel' and its comparative advantage vis-a-vis alternative methods of pumping water from streams and small rivers for irrigation. The system is extremely cost-effective even after taking into consideration the cost of the Stop Dam. Where the Stop Dam is already available the system is even more cost-effective."

The device is strongly recommended wherever there is flowing water in small streams by constructing a stop dam and installing one or two water wheels as designed and developed by Mangal Singh. It saves on energy like electricity or diesel and is ecologically benign.

A report by an official committee appointed by the Rural Development Ministry of the Union Government (the Maithani Report) had highly recommended the use of Mangal Turbines which was not being done. The Maithani Report says: "It is undoubtedly unparalleled in its simplicity and utility. Its cost benefit cannot be restricted to the extent of area irrigated and increase in production and income on account of that. It has multiple and multi-dimensional benefits."

The Maithani Report says: "It is undoubtedly unparalleled in its simplicity and utility. Its cost benefit cannot be restricted to the extent of area irrigated and increase in production and income on account of that. It has multiple and multi-dimensional benefits."

It has been estimated that if one unit of Mangal Turbine runs for 11 hours in a day, it saves 44 litres of diesel in a day (on the basis of use of 4 litre diesel per hour by 25 HP diesel pump). Again assuming irrigation by MT on 190 days in a year, a single unit of MT can save 8360 litres (44x190) in a year. Over a lifetime of 15 years one unit of MT can potentially save 125400

Civil Society, a leading journal on development issues, has recognized Mangal Singh's work in its Hall of Fame Award. The Award was presented to Singh by eminent social activist Aruna Roy. Singh has worked tirelessly in adverse conditions since the last three decades under heavy financial constraints to spread awareness about his device and has experimented at various sites to improve its location-specific effectiveness. Mangal Singh, now 75, has suffered untold hardships in recent years. Installation of at least 100 by training rural youths can enhance lift irrigation in the region.

**The writer is Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Man Over Machine (Gandhian Ideas for Our Times) and India's Quest for Sustainable Farming and Healthy Food.**



## HIRALAL SEN (1866-1917)

### The real pioneer & his legacy

**A** silhouette of a once affluent Hiralal, sitting by the river, trying to drown his sorrows in alcohol.... His accidental walking into the household kitchen to discover his wife eating leftovers for dinner.

Scenes from Hiralal, a 2018 Bengali-language biopic directed by Arun Roy, of a forgotten Indian cinema luminary - Hiralal Sen, reminding one of the fragile and fickle nature of film business.

On 28 December 1895 the world's first movie Lumieres' 50-second film *The Arrival of a Train* created waves in Paris. Seventeen years later, in 1913, Dadasaheb Phalke's Raja Harishchandra opened in Bombay to create history as India's first feature film.

However, the first Indian to actually make movies was a filmmaker Bengal's Hiralal Sen, who had released a full-length feature film *Alibaba O Challish Chor* in 1903, almost a decade before Phalke. Though credited with also having made India's first advertising film and first political documentaries, little is known about this pioneer.

Born in a wealthy family in present day Bangladesh, Sen fell in love with photography during his college days in Calcutta. He became fixated with movies as the medium of the future when a certain Professor Stevenson staged a show at Star Theatre called *The Flower of Persia* in 1898. Mesmerised, he immediately made his first film *A Dancing Scene* based on that opera.

The Lumiere brothers combined film recording and projection into a single device, creating the world's first motion pictures. Learning of this innovation, the bioscope, Sen spent (then) a princely sum of Rs 5,000 to buy a cinematograph machine including projection equipment from England. He also bought the Urban Bioscope, a film projector development Company in London.

The theatre scene then was changing tides led by artiste Amarendra Dutta of Classic Theatre who asked Sen to shoot song and dance sequences with the actors of his plays.

Sen infused bioscope with theatre -- a confluence of moving images and story, a step closer to films.

Volume of work forced Sen and his brother Motilal to set up a film production company called the Royal Bioscope Company, India's first movie company. After a fall out with Dutta, he started travelling movie shows in Bengal and churned out documentaries, advertisements and films on public life, nature, political events. In 1903, he filmed the popular *Alibaba O Challish Chor*.

In 1904 Sen made a film of public rally opposing Lord Curzon's plan to divide Bengal. Widely considered India's first political documentary, he recorded the huge rally placing the camera on top of the treasury for impact.

When George V came to Delhi in 1911, he withstood competition with four of the best cameramen from England and beat them by being the first to release the Visit Film of Delhi Durbar with a wider coverage. Sen also shot India's first ever two product commercials that were way ahead of his time, 'Jabakusum hair oil' and Edward's anti-malaria drug.

Sen had his share of challenges. He lacked modern facilities and business acumen. He fell on hard times eventually leading to a fallout with his brother and causing the company to fold up. He then joined London Bioscope owned by Kumarshankar Gupta, ironically, a former employee of Royal Bioscope Company.

On October 24, 1917, a fire in a north Kolkata godown where all Sen's 40 films were stored, destroyed his life's work. Ailing from throat cancer and on the verge of insolvency, he died a broken and unhappy man, aged just 51.

His life and accomplishments largely undocumented, he only lives in a few books and notes of researchers and academics. A century later, he still awaits his rightful place in

**A. Radhakrishnan is a Pune based freelance journalist, poet and short story writer.**



## NARENDRA CHANCHAL (1940-2021)

### Messenger of Goddess Matarani

**N**arendra Chanchal was a talented Indian singer, writer and poet who specialised in religious songs, hymns and Hindi film songs.

Born in Namak Mandi, Amritsar in a religious Punjabi family, a young Chanchal would accompany his mother Kailashvati when she was often called to sing bhajans at neighbourhood functions. As child, he was playful and fickle. He later added Chanchal (*meaning fickle in Hindi*) to his name.

People's appreciation for his voice, inspired him to sing bhajans and aartis. He then chose to become a professional singer and took music lessons from Sri Prem Tikha in Amritsar.

Although his mother used to call him Mohammad Rafi, he always wanted to make a name as Narendra Chanchal. The boy with the rustic voice, who could scale high pitch, wanted to be a crowd-puller.

Clad in bright kurtas with heavy gold chains around his neck and bracelets, Chanchal glammed up to make up for the deprivations in his childhood. His voice was full-throated, impactful and off-beat. Vibrant and distinct it pierced straight into a listener's heart, making every listening experience emotional and spiritual.

Chanchal performed mostly at live events. A big name in the whole of North India including Delhi-NCR, his popular devotional songs include *Ambe Tu Hai Jagadambe Kali*, *Hanuman Chalisa*, *Sankat Mochan Naam Tiharo*, *Ram Se Bada Ram Ka Naam*, etc.

Films happened perchance. After years of struggle, Chanchal sang *Chalo Bulava Aaya Hai* for the Hindi film *Avtaar* (still played during Navratri) and *Beshak Mandir Masjid Todo* for *Bobby* for which he won the 1974 Filmfare Award for Best Male Singer. He also received the Raj Kapoor Memorial award.

Narendra Bedi's film *Benaam* followed, where he sang the title song, *Main benaam ho gaya*. Picturized on Chanchal, he became a singing star. Manoj Kumar made him sing a crucial *antara* for the song, *Mehengai maar gayi* for the film *Roti Kapda Aur Makaan*. The song however, that established him as a star devotional singer was *Tune Mujhe*

*Bulaya Sherawaliye* from the film *Asha* that he sang with his childhood icon, Mohammad Rafi. These songs spawned devotional music in films in the 1980s.

In March 2020, a YouTube video, of Chanchal at a Holi function in Delhi went viral, where he sang a bhajan on coronavirus, underlining the significance of hand hygiene.

He also did special appearances as a devotional singer for TV serials and earned an honorary citizenship of Georgia, United States.



His autobiography, 'Midnight Singer', released in 2009, chronicled his life from his early struggles to his achievements. In between, film success got to his head and he neglected the *Jagratas*. But punished by losing his voice temporarily he soon went back to where he belonged - the stage.

He described himself as a messenger of the goddess Matarani. He became synonymous with jagrans and bhajans for Mata (goddess). He celebrated New Year's Eve at Vaishno Devi by performing first at the holy cave and then at a ground in Katra. Over the years, it came to be known as Chanchal Mela and drew crowds.

Fondly referred to as Pappaji in the devotional music circuit, at many jagrans he would take over after 12 midnight. Unlike today, jagrans were secular spaces, where Sufi songs were common. Sufi concerts were unheard of in those days but singers would sing *Bulle Shah* to warm up the audience.

It was a *Kaafi* that Chanchal sang at an Army charity event which drove Raj Kapoor for the hit "Beshak Mandir Masjid Todo" in *Bobby*. It opened the doors of cinema for Chanchal.

Chanchal passed away at 80 of brain complications in New Delhi. He is survived by his wife, a daughter, two sons and grandchildren.

**A. Radhakrishnan is a Pune based freelance journalist, poet and short story writer.**

## SUBEDAR SANJIV KUMAR (KIRTI CHAKRA) (1977-2020)

He laid his life young!

**S**ubedar Sanjiv Kumar was born on 5 December 1977 at Dehra (Himachal Pradesh). After completing 12th, he joined the army and was enlisted in the Parachute Regiment on 30 August 1996. The Parachute Regiment has a known reputation for valour. During the course at The Parachute Regiment Training Centre, he excelled in sports and training. He had multiple tenures in J&K.

Pakistan keeps on sending small well trained armed personnel into J&K to carry out terror tasks, attempt to kill key personnel, damage installations and establish contact with local bodies. The security forces check such infiltration and neutralize those who have managed to sneak in. Sanjiv Kumar was part of many operations to neutralise terror groups. He had also served with the elite National Security Guard (NSG).

A movement had been noticed near the fence on 1 April 2020 through drone imagery. This was confirmed on the ground with footprints in the snow not far from the Line of Control. There was a brief exchange of fire with 8 Jat Regiment after which the terrorists fled abandoning some of their bags containing ammo. The area was quickly cordoned off. At dawn on 2 April troops from 41 and 57 Rashtriya Rifles joined the operation. Troops once again established contact with the terrorists at about 4.30pm. The terrorists returned heavy fire before slipping off from a ledge. The chase continued, with contact established twice more on April 3 and 4.

On 4 April, two squads of the 4 Para (Special Forces) with six men each were deployed for a forward staging to the nearest battalion headquarters, and from there to Rangdoori, Guguldara and Teen Behak areas of Jumgund. They needed to chopper it in as the battalion remains cut off by winter snow. The Dhruv helicopter dropped them off on a hill feature in waist deep snow. The SF troops used quadcopter drones at this point to try and pinpoint precise locations of the 5-6 terrorists.

Over the day, intermittent exchanges of fire continued. Tracking movements across two days, it became clear that the

terrorists had been cornered into a part of Kupwara's dense Zurhama forest lower down the hill feature. Final contact with the terrorists was established on Saturday evening.



Subedar Sanjiv along with Paratroopers Amit and Chhatrapal tried to close in with the terrorist location. The three men realised too late that they were on an ice cornice which is an overhanging mass of hardened snow at the edge of a mountain precipice. It broke under their weight and they fell into a frozen mountain stream, right into where the terrorists were hiding.

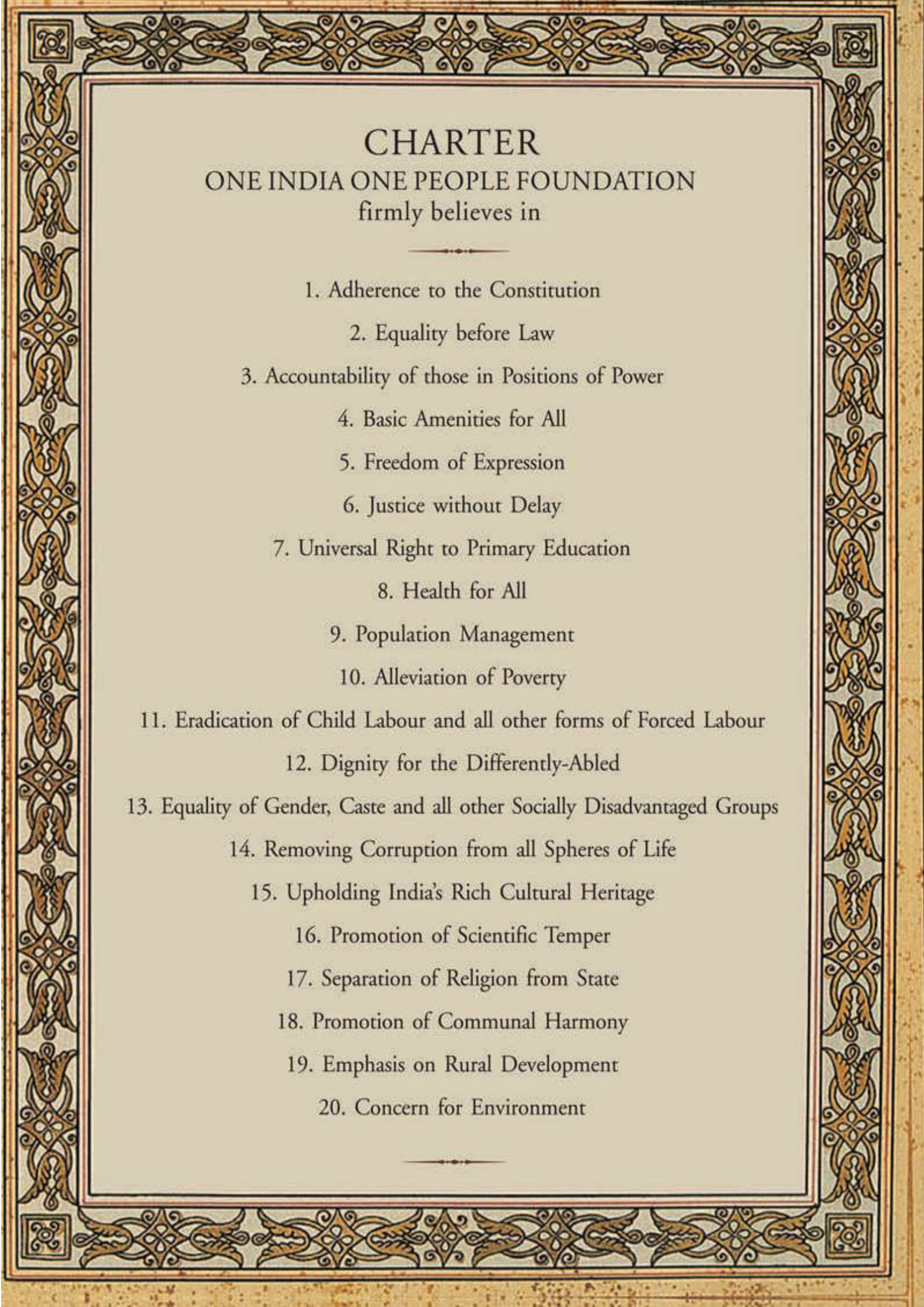
A close quarter fight followed. Paratrooper Amit sustained 15 bullet injuries while Subedar Sanjiv and Paratrooper Chhatrapal also took heavy fire. They managed to kill two of the 5 terrorists before succumbing to their injuries. The three other men, Havaldar Davender and Paratrooper Balkishan rushed downward to extract their three comrades, charging into the exchange, quickly eliminating two more terrorists. The fifth terrorist was killed by troops from 8 Jat Regiment. Only one man from the Special Forces squad survived, with injuries.

An officer said: "They fell right where the terrorists hid which led to exchanges at point blank range. Give it to the training standards of the Special Forces (SF) guys that in spite of the fall, all five terrorists were killed."

Two soldiers succumbed to their injuries a couple of days later after being airlifted to Srinagar's Army hospital. The remains of the other 3 commandos and the terrorists were found within two meters of each other. The 4 Para (Special Forces) is the Army unit that undertook the 2016 surgical strikes in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in which 38 terrorists were killed. Subedar Sanjiv Kumar sacrificed his own life to save his fellow soldiers in the highest traditions of the Indian Army and was awarded Kirti Chakra (KC).

**Brigadier Suresh Chandra Sharma (retd.).**





# 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<sup>th</sup>, 1930 – February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007)  
ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE