

NATION 5
NEHRU-GANDHI FAMILY
HAS 'BRAND EQUITY'

MONEY 10
COFFEE DAY ENTERPRISES' SAYS
DEBT TO FALL TO RS 1,000 CR

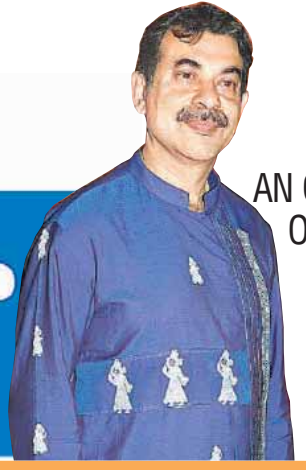
SPORT 16
FORTUNE FAVOURS
THE BOLD

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sunday pioneer



AN OFFICER
OF MANY
FIRSTS

9

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Restrictions eased in Kashmir

NEW DELHI: Restrictions have been eased and over 50,000 landline phone connections have been restored in parts of the Kashmir Valley, nearly two weeks after severe restrictions were imposed in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of the government's big move to end special status to the state. The Jammu and Kashmir police said the prohibitory orders, banning large gatherings, have been relaxed in parts of the valley for the time being. Heavy security, however, continue to be in place. In Jammu region, mobile internet connections were restored in five districts.

Jammu and Kashmir has been under an unprecedented security cover and prohibitory orders banning large gatherings since August 4 - a day before the government announced that it was ending special status for the state and said it will bifurcate it into two union territories.

I-T Dept tracking unaccounted DeMo cash

NEW DELHI: In a bid to seize illegal cash, the Income Tax Department has issued a 17-point checklist to tax commissioners across the country to track those who deposited unaccounted cash during demonetisation.

In a directive to the Principal Chief Commissioners of Income Tax and Principal Director Generals of Income Tax, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said that in continuation of the handling of cases related to demonetisation, a verification checklist of cash deposits has been prepared to assist the assessing officers so that deviant cases can be taken up for further study. The CBDT move is aimed at spreading the department's net wide and deep to catch those who deposited unaccounted cash during demonetisation.

Polavaram reverse tendering starts

VIJAYAWADA: The AP government has issued a notification inviting fresh tenders for Polavaram project works worth Rs 4,900 crore on Saturday. The project includes head works worth Rs 1,800 crore and hydel project works worth Rs 3,100 crore.

The benchmark prices are equivalent to the Transstroy Company rates in 2014, quoted for 14% less and the addition of standard service rates.

Full report in Page 4

TODAY

ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Shrivana & Krishna Paksha
Panchangam
Tithi: Tritiya 01:13 am (Next Day)
Nakshatram: Purva Bhadrapada 04:55 pm
Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)
Rahukalam: 05:02 pm - 06:36 pm
Yamagandam: 12:19 pm - 01:54 pm
Varjyam: 03:41 am - 05:28 am
Gulika: 03:28 pm - 05:02 pm
Good Time: (to start any important work)
Amritakalam: 07:55 am - 09:43 am
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:54 am - 12:45 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Isolated Thunderstorms
Temp: 32/24
Humidity: 76%
Sunrise: 05:59
Sunset: 06:40
Current Weather Conditions
Updated August 17, 2019 5:00 PM

Pak-China bid to internationalise J&K broken 'piece by piece' at UN

PNS ■ UNITED NATIONS

The rare closed-door consultations on Kashmir by the UN Security Council ended without any outcome or statement from the powerful 15-nation UN organ, dealing a huge snub to Pakistan and its all-weather ally China to internationalise the issue, which an overwhelming majority stressed is a bilateral matter between New Delhi and Islamabad. The informal consultations, requested for by China, lasted over an hour on Friday after which Beijing's Ambassador to the UN Zhang Jun and Pakistan's UN envoy Maleha Lodhi made remarks to the media at the UN Security Council stakeout one by one. The two left without taking any question from the reporters.

Sources familiar with the consultations told news agency Press Trust of India that China was pushing for an outcome or a press statement to be delivered after the consultations by Poland, the President of the Security Council for the month of August. The UK also sided with China in calling for a statement to the press.



"Pakistan raising Kashmir at the UN doesn't have any traction. This time also it did not get any traction at all. There was no outcome, no statement from Poland, as UNSC President, after the consultations," the sources added. Majority of the 15 members said there should not be any statement or outcome

issued after the consultations and their will prevailed, leaving China to come out and make a statement in its national capacity followed by Pakistan.

Continued on Page 2

India isolates Pakistan in diplomatic war

NEW DELHI: On Friday morning, India secured a major diplomatic victory at the UN by reiterating its unequivocal position on Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan being the cradle of terror. By restating its position on how Pakistan remains a rogue state indulging in unabashed state sponsored terror through proxies, India once again notched up major brownie points with the world community at large. Pakistan's isolation is complete and Imran Khan's last minute attempt to speak to Donald Trump also appears to have failed. The most important part is that the UN Security Council acknowledged India's measures to bring normalcy and development to Kashmir and wants all countries to follow suit. India's diplomatic encirclement of Pakistan has been a success with the primacy of its position over Jammu and Kashmir being undisputed and unchallenged. Barring China, the world has accepted India's position including the Arab world, formerly sponsors and supporters of Pakistan. But it is clear that even they are fed up.

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statement in its national capacity followed by Pakistan.

Continued on Page 2

Arun Jaitley on life support; leaders throng AIIMS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Several politicians including Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Union minister Piyush Goyal, and Congress leaders Abhishek Singhvi and Jyotiraditya Scindia visited AIIMS here on Saturday to enquire about the health condition of former finance minister Arun Jaitley, who has been put on life support system, sources said. Others who visited the All India Institute of Medical Sciences to enquire about his health are Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, BJP's Satish Upadhyay and Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh



Dhanoa, the sources said. The 66-year-old leader has been put on life support system and a multidisciplinary team of doctors is monitoring his condition, they said. BSP chief and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Mayawati also visited the hospital.

"I visited AIIMS today to enquire about the health condition of former finance minister and defence minister, and senior BJP leader Shri Arun Jaitley. I met his family and consoled them and prayed to the almighty that he recovers soon," Mayawati tweeted at 01.06 pm on Saturday. Vardhan had said on Friday, "Doctors at AIIMS are doing the best they can."



Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao during his inspection of Yadadri temple works on Saturday. Minister Jagadeesh Reddy, special officer Kishan Rao also seen

Slow pace of Yadadri temple works irks CM KCR

● Engineering head replaced, new official to take charge tomorrow

PNS ■ YADADRI

Deeply disturbed at the slow pace of Yadadri temple development works, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao on Saturday blasted the officials concerned and demanded to

know whether they needed "another five years" to complete the project. KCR breathed fire at the engineering staff in particular and decided then and there to replace the engineering head of the Yadagirigutta Temple Development Authority

with "a more efficient officer". Official sources later said, the official, Executive Engineer Vasanth Kumar, will be replaced by Chief Engineer Mohan Naik with effect from Monday.

Continued on Page 2

Ravindra Jadeja gets Arjuna

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 12-member selection committee picked 19 sportspersons for the Arjuna Award, including the likes of cricketers Ravindra Jadeja and Poonam Yadav, track and field stars Tejinder Pal Singh Toor, Mohammed Anas and Swapna Barman, footballer Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, hockey player Chinglensana Singh Kangujam and shooter

Anjum Moudgil. Jadeja has been an integral part of India's Test and ODI teams in the past few years. He is one of the key members of the Indian team that rose to world number one in Tests. Rio Paralympics silver medalist Deepa Malik was on Saturday nominated for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, the country's highest sporting honour, joining Asian and Commonwealth Games champion wrestler Bajrang Punia.

Major fire breaks out in AIIMS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A fire broke out on two floors of a building in the AIIMS hospital here, leading to panic among the people in the premier medical institution, officials said on Saturday.

No casualties have been reported so far.

The fire in the PC building, which does not have patients and mainly comprises doctors' rooms, but is situated near the emergency block, has now been brought under control.

'The great Gold bull run has begun'

● May cross Rs 40,000 per 10 gram by Diwali

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Amid global growth concerns and heightened trade tensions between the US and China, gold prices might cross the Rs 40,000 mark by Diwali, analysts have said.



Typically, the demand for gold reflects the expectations about the future, the prices of the precious metal tend to rise amid uncertain economic situations or political upheaval. Currently the October contract of gold was priced at Rs 37,995 per 10 gram on the Multi-Commodity Exchange (MCX). "Demand for the precious metal may slow down

slightly owing to some easing in trade tension between US and China, but over the trend is negative. We see gold prices around Rs 39,000 to 40,000 per 10 gram by Diwali," said Anuj Gupta of Angel Brooking.

Gupta explained that the gold prices were surging primarily owing to the decline in global growth rate. Experts globally are also

suggesting investments in gold and other precious metals amid these uncertain times as an insurance against economic uncertainty. "We now recommend all investors have a full allocation to precious metal investments in their portfolio," said a Gohring and Rozenzweig report.

"We believe the bear market in gold has run its course and a new bull market has begun." Lower interest rate by central banks and the ongoing trade dispute between the two biggest economies, the US and China, were supporting the gain in gold prices.

Onions supply to city disrupted, prices shoot

● Heavy rains in Maha have damaged large quantities of the crop

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Onion is back at doing what it does best - reduce you to tears even as you pay through your nose. Prices of the commodity in the twin cities have shot up after imports from Maharashtra were affected badly on accounting of heavy rains there. Wholesale prices of onions have risen to Rs 2,500 a quintal, from about Rs 1,600-Rs 1,800 till about two weeks ago. The higher costs

are bound to have an even bigger impact on prices down the retail chain.

Of the total onion imports, 90 per cent are sourced from Maharashtra. Traders in the city said that large quantities of onion crop have been destroyed in Maharashtra because of heavy rains. This has affected exports from the neighbouring state to many places, including the twin cities.

Continued on Page 2



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ART FOR THE SOUL

A software engineer from Bengaluru, a chemistry graduate from Nashik who worked for LIC and a tailor from Patiala, all have one thing in common — are all artists par excellence having won many awards. SHALINI SAKSENA spends time with them to bring you a report

Best foot forward

SACHIN SANGHE, CHALK-LEAD SCULPTOR, BENGALURU

It all started when his teachers would make him write on the blackboard. His handwriting was good so he was made to write news headlines and notes that the teachers wanted to be written on the board. Besides having a good handwriting, it was the fact that it was legible, clear and in a straight line that introduced him to play with chalk. Meet Sachin Sanghe, a techie who hails from Mudigere, 80 km from Bengaluru, who is mesmerising people with his miniature pieces of art carved out of chalk and pencil lead.

He tells you that even as a child, he used to carve out just anything and everything on the pieces of chalk with the help of a compass that was always in his Geometry box.

“Drawing and craving things out of chalk was something that I loved and it was more of a hobby and I carved things till I was in school. I was good in sports as well. But my passion lay in engineering and hence pursued it. My hobby turned into full-time passion and somewhat of a profession only after I completed my engineering and was working with HCL. It was then that I decided to take up where I had left off to pass time when I was in Chennai,” Sanghe says who has presented his work to Prime Minister Narendra Modi — art pieces of chalk with the PM in various yoga poses and one with his mother.

The reason why he has not turned his hobby into a career path is because there are still some risks involved. He tells you that he would have made it his profession if what he does was a recognised and established art form. “Another obstacle is that I need a team. I alone can’t do much to make enough money. But this doesn’t mean that I am not looking at ways to turn it into a full-time career,” Sanghe explains who had tried to get his work registered with Guinness World Record. Sadly, he couldn’t find a category under which he could put his work.

“I explored the possibility but found that the categories were tallest, shortest and



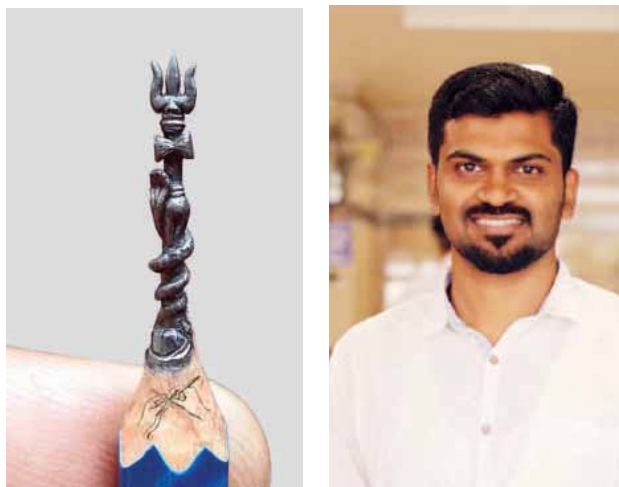
Chalk sculpture of Ma Durga made from three pieces of chalk; Lead sculpture of various Lord Shiva symbols, Sachin Sanghe

biggest. It was all related to magnitude. There was no place under which I could place my work. I got dejected and gave up,” Sanghe says and tells you that the chalk that he uses for his pieces are dust-free.

The more elaborate pieces are also made from three-four piece of chalk — three to four inches in height. The only difference is that he attaches the other pieces with glue to bigger pieces of art. But he explains that in photos it looks bigger than they really are. The actual height of the art pieces are not more than a couple of inches. The tools that he uses are also not expensive.

“People ask me if the tools that I use are expensive or special. The truth is that my most trusted tool is a dissection knife that you find in the surgical box that one buys when you are in school. It was a knife that I used to dissect cockroaches with back in school. Another tool that I regularly use which I accidentally found was left behind by a senior in my room. It is a tool that dentists use — an excavator. I also use the blade from the sharpener. Then there is the screwdriver that one uses to open hard to reach places. Basically, small tools,” Sanghe says and tells you even though the art pieces that he carves are miniatures, there isn’t much strain on the eyes since he doesn’t spend more than four hours at one sitting.

“I don’t use any lens under



which I sit and carve these figures. Right now, my eye sight is good. Also, even though a figure may take up to 20 hours, I don’t sit for more than three-four hours at a stretch. Also I work only over the weekends. Since the rest of the days, I am working full-time with Cisco Systems.

His work with pencil lead is something that Sanghe started in 2013. He tells you that there are certain advantages and disadvantages of working with pencil lead sculpting. “The advantage is that there is no dust while carving. Chalk is brittle, lead is not. The disadvantage is that the lead is thin as compared to chalk. Because lead is so thin, I use surgical scalpel to carve figures. For example, if one were to carve something on lead and the same on chalk, one might need to look at the art piece more closely to figure out what it is as lead is small in comparison

to chalk. While, I don’t need to draw what I want to carve in a paper, I do keep a picture for reference since the lead sculpting is in 3-D,” Sanghe says who uses 6B or 8B pencil. To carve letters, he uses carpenter pencil.

To buy a lead or chalk figurine, Sanghe tells you that usually people contact him via social media. “Nowhere have I mentioned that I am in the profession of selling my art. People who are interested contact me through Instagram or Facebook. The cost also depends on the piece that they want, but it varies between ₹4,000 to ₹12,000. A lot of people want a Lord Ganesh or even Lord Krishna. The complexities happen when people want a portrait. The face has to look like the person. A wrong cut and the face changes. So I need to be more careful. One has to be very patient,” Sanghe says.

‘Creativity can’t be taught’

ANANT KHAIRNAR, COTTON SCULPTOR, NASHIK

Soul within human body with connection to the super soul, creates cotton sculpture. Human body is medium of creativity — Anant Khairnar

Born in 1966, in a small town Jawhar, (Palghar district of Maharashtra), Anant Khairnar even as a child was interested in drawing and painting. He used to gather just any material lying around to create art. However, it was not till he was in college, while pursuing his bachelor’s degree in Science from Pune University that his full potential was realised.

“It was in 1987, last year of college, when there was a lot of discussion to create something new, never seen before idol for Ganesh Festival. Since I always thought of myself as an artist rather than a Science student, I was asked to give my suggestions. After much deliberation that took me three-four days, I suggested that we should create an idol of Lord Ganesh using cotton wool. This proved to be a turning point in my life,” the 52-year-old cotton sculptor says who worked in the private sector for three years before he spent his next 28 years working for LIC.

Creativity, spirituality, sensibility and captivity are the qualities of the soul within he tells you. “I am a God gifted artist. But all through my career I never gave up my passion to create. Art can be taught, but creativity is inborn. Nature has bestowed me with this unique art. I never worked under any master to learn the art. My knowledge comes from within. A divine power always directs me whenever I hit a roadblock,” Khairnar says.

To begin with he would need a base (like a wooden structure and paper) before he would start making a cotton sculpture. But, three decades down, with the technique that Khairnar has perfected, the entire sculpture that he makes today are made from a special grade of surgical gauge.

“When I made the first cotton sculpture I used cotton wool. I also needed to create a rough body before I could give the idol the final look. But with time, I have perfected my art form. Today, I don’t need a base. As long as I have a reference picture in front me, I am good to go. Also, cotton wool has been replaced with a special kind of gauge. There were two steps involved while making these sculptures. First, involves using a special combination of chemicals. Second, at the same time, pieces of surgical gauge are used to give shape to the sculpture. These chemicals play a vital role in my sculptures. They not only give shape but have sticking quality as well. The good part is that they are not volatile, hence they evaporate quickly. But weather plays spoilsport. Sometimes, I have



Anant Khairnar adds finishing touches to the Swami Vivekananda sculpture

Nature has bestowed me with this unique art. I never worked under any master to learn this art form. My knowledge of cotton sculpting comes from within. A divine power directs me whenever I hit a roadblock

to wait for up to a day for the liquid to dry,” Khairnar explains who has taken up his passion full-time, now that he has retired.

Over the years, Khairnar has won many awards. Limca Book of Records — 1997; Guinness Book of World Records — 1999; Outstanding Young Indian Award —

1999; Adarsh Nagrik Puraskar, Jalgaon — 2000; Thane Gaurav Award, Thane — 2009 and Samaj Seva puskar, Chennai — 2015 to name a few.

His sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi which is seven-and-a-half feet tall has won him an award. He also made a sculpture of Shri Ram (12 feet tall for the Khumbh Mela) which posed some challenge to begin with due to its height. But he overcame that. “Today, going big and tall is no longer a challenge for Khairnar who charges ₹15,000 per foot for his work.”

Though, there are a few Indian clients as well, most of his clients are foreigners. “Over the years, people have come to know about me and my work. I have a website where I share my work from time to time. I get orders as well. Since my art form is unique, only my family is involved. My son is pursuing his MS in the US. He also looks after the marketing side of my work. I see to the creative side. It takes around a month-and-a-half to create one piece because I spend only four hours a day. Making these sculptures need a lot of patience,” Khairnar says who is now busy giving finishing the few orders that he has of Lord Ganesh idols for Ganesh Chaturthi.

ARUN KUMAR BAJAJ, SEWING MACHINE PAINTER, PATIALA

A visit to darzi gali in Patiala will throw up a surprise. Not because there are so many tailors but because there is a man who creates beautiful works of art using thread. He makes paintings using his trusted sewing machine. Yes, you read that right. Meet the self-proclaimed Needle Man from Patiala— Arun Kumar Bajaj.

The 36-year-old artist who is a tailor by profession tells you that he hated painting in his father’s tailor shop. “I was 12 when my father said that I should accompany him to the shop and learn the trade. I hated it. At that age I wanted to go something different, something unique. I learnt embroidery. I have made so many clothes for celebrity singers over the years. All the embroidery on their clothes was done by me. Back then, I was still exploring other avenues when my father passed away in 2000. I had to shoulder the responsibility. I was only a teenager. But, I didn’t shirk from what I had to do,” Bajaj recounts.

It was fated that Bajaj got the recogni-

Needle man paints gossamer dreams

tion that was due to him. When he was around 20, he dreamt that he was painting a portrait of Guru Nanakji using a sewing machine. The dream was so real that Bajaj could clearly see the completed painting in front of his eyes. When he got up he was surprised that there was no such painting in front of him. But it got him thinking — was it possible to make a painting using different threads and a sewing machine?

“When I woke up, I thought to myself can I realise my dream? Or is it just something that my subconscious mind had thrown up since I wanted to be different from others and do things that nobody had done before. I thought about it and decided to give it a try. I went to my shop. I had a portrait of Guru Nanakji; I traced that on a piece of paper and then on a piece of cloth. I bought different coloured threads and began. It took me a week to complete it. Due to God’s grace my first attempt was



Arun Kumar Bajaj putting together a thread painting, Lord Krishna painting that has won two awards

a success. From there, there was no turning back” Bajaj recalls who has painted over

2,000 paintings. Each more beautiful and brilliant than the last.

The beauty of these portraits lie in the shading that Bajaj has incorporated. To achieve this was no mean task. “Unlike a painting when one can give shading by painting over it, giving shading using threads was a challenge. Nobody had done this kind of work before me. I didn’t have a template that I could follow. It took many trials and errors before I perfected the art of shading. Take for example the painting of a tiger that took me over two years to complete. The moss on the cave floor has so many shades that had to be incorporated to give the painting a feel that it has been made using paints and not thread,” Bajaj explains and says that usually a small portrait takes up 10-15 days to make. However, a big one may take as long as six months.

The six feet by four feet Lord Krishna portrait was made in three years using 28.36 lakh m long thread has won him the India

Book of Records on February 4, 2015 and the Unique World Records on September 24, 2016. His other popular works include a portrait of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Jesus Christ and even that of Prime Minister Narendra Modi whom he presented the painting in person.

He tells you that his recently finished thread painting of Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s darbar (4x2 feet) fetched him ₹11 lakh. Most of his thread paintings are in the range of ₹60,000 to ₹4 lakh. The first thread painting that he sold was that of an old man, he tells you and adds that he has already applied for Guinness World Record. “Almost all the formalities are over. I have submitted all the paperwork that is required. Now, they have to cross-check and see that the sewing machine that I use is not computer operated. I hope that I will get this coveted record this year,” Bajaj says.

AN OFFICER OF MANY FIRSTS

In a bare-all interview, Jayesh Ranjan, the Principal Secretary of Industries, Telangana, talks to Naveena Ghanate about his career, wife, daughter and everything in between

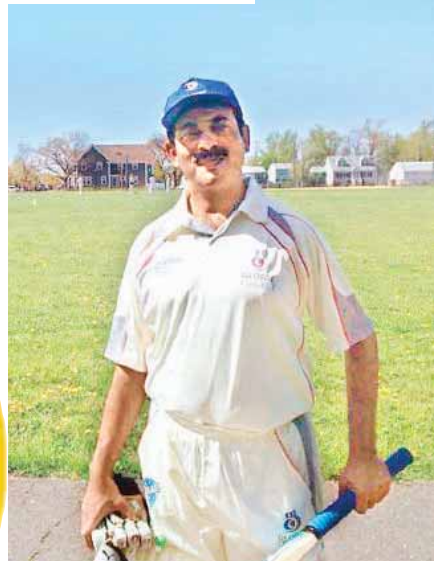


AS A PARENT...

Since I am an only child and appreciated the fact of being one, I got complete attention of parents. Not that they pamper me and I know that they are extremely attached to me and have the sense of protection, bonding is very strong. I felt that I wasn't deprived in anyway. So we also decided to have one child and are very happy that it is a girl. My parents have been very non-intrusive to me. They never put any clauses. I want to emulate the same for my daughter. I took a late decision that studying in US is a possibility. Now it is very common to go to the US. Children are already talking if they have to pursue an undergrad abroad. There may be many occasions where she will need to make decisions.



CRICKETER JAYESH



MAY WRITE A BOOK...

Self goals are to remain illness free and prolong whatever good that is happening for the last few years. Professionally, whatever assignments and job demands, I want to continue to do well. My daughter will soon be at a stage where she needs to decide about her career. Being available for her in a non-intrusive way is another thing I look forward to. I have also started dabbling in social development. Because of the experience I have gained talking to rich people, I feel I can do a lot of social development. I am associated with a few charities and infact was present in Hyderabad when the first night shelter started. I may write a book someday, but I speak and lecture often. I have spoken about 50 times on my work in Chittoor which is also a Ted talk.



NEAR ESCAPE FROM BEING KIDNAPPED

going inside, there was a power cut and 2-3 scooters crossed us. When I reached, the school principal who invited me, said, "The news is not good, please go away immediately". Later I got to know that a teacher was in contact with Annalu and knew that they were

hiding in the hillocks. The school headmaster asked this particular teacher to go to nearest place to get petrolmax lanterns and he came across me. He reversed and went back before we came and informed the headmaster about the Annalu. It was a spilt-second thing, but I could have been kidnapped. I remember one

incident where a tribal woman was beaten up badly by the Greyhound battalion, under the pretext that she was an informer. I took her in my own gypsy to the hospital. There were times when someone would suddenly come to my office, leave some paper with important information and rush off.

Omnipresent administrator

Not confined to his role as principal secretary of industries, Jayesh Ranjan comes across as someone who is omnipresent. You could find him at a serious industry event, an erudite literary fest or sports championship or even a fashion show. The Pioneer got hold of him at a Hyderabad Open Badminton Championship in Gachibowli stadium for a freewheeling interview. A topper of Civil Service Exam 1992 batch, recalls that he was pitted against Zombies when preparing for IAS. While his stint as Kadapa collector gave him satisfaction, he terms his transfer to HUDA as a funny incident. While one sees Jayesh as a person connecting well with urban folks, he reminisces that he always loved rural postings. Young Jayesh who couldn't get hold of the career initially but became an IAS effortlessly, says that 'having such easy passage, I always remain grounded with no sense of entitlement..'

as a single child...

My personality has been defined by a very important factor that 'I am a single child'. Single children develop lots of inner resources because with siblings you would have shared activities. I was good in studies, played 4-5 types of sports and read a lot. Both my parents are professionals and there was no pressure to study or pursue a particular career.

I grew up in Lucknow and studied in Taluqdar school, equivalent to HPS. Unlike conventional homes, where parents raise a fit if their child picked social sciences, my father was very happy that I picked it. I did my graduation from Lucknow University and Masters in Psychology in Delhi University.

Pitted against Zombies...

Initially, at my first Civils attempt, the paper got leaked and was cancelled. Later, I took the exam again and when the results were out in 1992, I had to take a 2-hour cycle ride, auto rickshaw and then a bus to check my result at Press Information Bureau in Esplanade. When I reached, there was already someone checking the results and since it was all in a string, I began to check it from the last page. The more pages I flipped, the more sure I was that I had missed the bus. Thereafter, I started searching for my friends Aditya Bihari and Nilesh Hundekar's names. I couldn't find their names or mine, but, when I saw my name on the top of the first page, I felt very excited. It is something that I did not imagine and to recollect that moment makes me emotional.

In Delhi I had seen people struggle a lot and look like zombies in state of daze. I was scared when I was preparing that I am pitted against all the zombies. Apart from studying a lot at night and beyond, I was normal.

Dad wanted IFS, I picked IAS for Mom

Uttar Pradesh being my home state was going through a bad turmoil when I got selected especially - the Babri Masjid and Mandal Commission issue. My father who was very confident that I would get through wanted me to opt for foreign services, because being a journalist he saw politicians and bureaucracy. He felt that I would just not be able to fit.

While my dad wanted me to pick IFS, my mother wouldn't be happy to see her son go away. So I picked IAS and opted out of home state. For last 26 years I have been working in AP and now in Telangana. Many batchmates of mine have all worked in Delhi but I am one of those exceptions who has never gone to Delhi.

The going has been so good for me. In erstwhile AP and now in TS, I always got long postings that I really enjoyed doing. The present assignment I am in is crossing 4 years. A bigger credit goes to K T Rama Rao garu. Typically ministers are important as they give sense of responsibility to investors. The team that I have, we have been able to execute his promises and words.

First father-son duo to study in IIM Calcutta

I was selected for Dartmouth University, but my mother was hesitant to send me abroad, after seeing that her cousin who went to the US for his studies ended up settling there. I wrote my MBA entrance exams and got into IIM Calcutta like my father. We became the first father-son duo to go to the same college.

During my summer internship at ICICI Limited, there were a few things that disturbed me, like when I noticed that if one person stays back, everyone else stayed back, so that the said person doesn't get extra attention. And my project was diagnosis of poor performance of the company wherein I had to talk to lot of employees. I realised it is kind of rat race which was very unhealthy and put me off. This caused me anxiety as I gave up my PhD at Dartmouth and did not intend to make a career. I wanted to be a faculty member or academician. But it was long drawn thing as I saw professors around me not really progressing.

Bowler like Malinga...

I play five sports - cricket, hockey, volleyball, football and badminton. I played for my school and was part of league cricket in Lucknow representing the state. I am a bowler and I generate good pace. The speed I generate scares people. People say my action is like Malinga, but my way of bowling developed 20 years before the Sri Lankan cricketer started his career.

I couldn't further pursue the passion for the sport mainly due to competition as there were elite players at that time. I still often play at Secunderabad Club.

A night owl...

To be a Jack of all trades, delegation of work is important. I built a good team around me and maintain a supportive supervision. This gets a lot of things done quickly by encouraging them.

I clear files and reply to work e-mails

after 11 pm, when all the four women (mother, wife, daughter and mother-in-law) are fast asleep. It is a lively place with so many women at home and post 11 pm my work clock ticks and it typically takes about 2 hours. Even before becoming an IAS officer, I was a night owl. Now, I wake up at 5:45 am and go for a walk to KBR park for an hour. After coming back I rest for two hours. That way I get 6 hours of sleep and I do it in two spells.

A movie buff and a bookworm

Socialising is an important part of life as work alone is not life. Doing things outside of work will help push your abilities. It adds to

calmness and serenity and keeps you happy. I love reading books and borrow from libraries. When the British Council asked me to take part in the Hyderabad Literary Fest, I said I would like to borrow books from them.

I also watch a lot of movies and this gave me an opportunity to become the president of a movie club. I developed a taste for cultural art events in my early childhood.

First IAS to remove red beacon from car...

When I became a district collector, the first thing that I did was remove the red beacon from my car. Now it is a law, but when I was the Kadapa collector, I removed it.

Kadapa was witnessing factions and the SP suggested that I keep it. In Kadapa, we had a Praja Vani on Monday and I remember there were many days when the last person left only at 1.30 am. I was in Kadapa for 3 years. It is not that I have solved all issues, but the very fact that I talked to them and explained all possibilities, brought more people's problems out. After IAS selections, I spent time in Mussorie, and until now, one strong value that is guiding me is that I am in this position not as matter of right or entitlement. It is turn of the dice and god has been with me.

Funny incident with YS Jagan

Almost one year nine months, into the YSR regime, I was Kadapa collector when a funny incident happened. Present CM Y S Jagan one day called me up seeking a sanction of borewell in some village and informed me of transferring me to Hyderabad to HUDA.

I protested strongly, because I had no clue of urban areas as I was always posted in rural areas. After a month or so, local news came, about the collector being changed and one day it came in a big Telugu daily. Next day early in morning at 6 am, YSR who was in Delhi then to meet PM wanted to speak to me.

He tells me, "I was told that some news item which came in Eenadu upset you. Then he said, 'answer one question. Who runs the government? Eenadu or I?'" I said 'you'. He then said that there was no such issue and you will continue as collector. Exactly one month later, there were 30 transfers and I was posted to HUDA (laughs). By then I had done 3 years, so I had no regrets. I have been in Hyderabad for the last 12 years.

Egalitarian views of father...

My mother told me clearly that irrespective of being an IAS, if you take even a rupee of dowry or gifts (lena dena), your father and I will not attend your wedding.

My father was a very educated man and was in the first batch of IIM Calcutta, but for some reason his corporate career didn't work out. He was frequently seen as a person siding with workers rather than with the corporates. Business environment in 60s-70s was different wherein the management was elite and my father tried to bridge the gap. So he was not liked by the management and was pushed out. My mother is a doctor - a gynaecologist. Both my mother and father imbued and lived very strong values. There was no concept of having a lavish lifestyle. At no point of time did they have the feeling of being superior, and everyone is the same. Egalitarianism and helping others, these values became very important for me.



worked near Rampachodavaram, in my second posting where there were PWG activities. Just before I went about 7 IAS officers were kidnapped. While I didn't want an escort as it attracted unnecessary attention, I promised officials that I will keep my schedule a secret. My driver also wouldn't know where to head. But this one time, I was invited to a school function and the word had spread. As we were

the pioneer agenda

wanted to just surround myself with people who I think are better than I am, whether they're actors or directors or producers, so that I could learn from them
— Mila Kunis



FROM THE INSIDE

Krishna, the nation builder

Krishna has played a significant role in shaping India, besides his other roles as emotional and spiritual guide



Love be the game changer

A child must be guided with love, which in turn, will tempt him to make efforts to prove himself right



With online revenues expected to hit ₹11,900 cr by 2023 and targets touching 10 million users by the end of this financial year, the fantasy gaming industry is witnessing a boom in India. But how does the format work and what are the challenges faced? Industry insider SUMESH MENON demystifies the trend

Fantasies brim right through us when one talks of thrilling games. The rush of adrenaline drives us to believe in the virtual world and offers a much-needed break to de-stress ourselves. Fantasy sports has been popular amongst the Indian audience for quite a while now. The popular platforms such as FanMojo, MPL, Dream11 amongst others are capturing the imagination of people across the urban and rural belt of our country, with men below 30 years age bracket forming the core of the player base.

Surveys reveal that up to 85 per cent of the users from significant cities play fantasy sports one to three times a week. Predictably, cricket remains the front runner in India with 90 per cent of the users playing a fantasy version of the sport, followed by 45 per cent playing kabaddi and another 30 per cent on football.

A GROWING TREND

Indian fantasy sports platforms have over 80 million registered users and are expected to hit 100 million by the end of 2020. The number of fantasy sports platforms has also grown from 10 to over 70 in the last two to three years. The advent and rising popularity of sports premier leagues in the field of cricket, kabaddi, football, hockey, table tennis, etc. has not only increased the popularity of sports but also has given fantasy sports players more chances to engage with their customer base.

Various fantasy game platforms have hosted plenty number of games in the past few years across multiple sports categories. Indian Federation of Sports Gaming (IFSG) is a self-regulating body for Indian fantasy sports providers who help regulate the players in the industry. Daily fantasy sports is a vast and well-regulated market in more prominent countries and continents like the USA and Europe.

With the introduction of IPL in the country, the fantasy gaming industry also witnessed a boom in the sector. Along with the ICC World Cup stepping in right after the IPL, the statistics have hitched exponentially for fantasy sports. Guests selecting their own players, based upon the current match scenario seemed to intrigue the audience and hence a significant contributing factor in making the concept a success.

Acknowledging the advancement in the game sector, one can witness the continual growth of overall sports as well. The sports that were less prominent earlier caught fame and recognition after the concept of fantasy sports was brought into the light. For instance, women teams in sports were usually not given much attention or credit; however, after the debut of fantasy gaming, people started getting aware of various games as well as players, irrespective of the gender or how prevalent the sport was formerly considered in the society.

HOW DOES IT WORK

A fantasy sports venture allows its users to handpick their players, use their skill to play games, compete and win prize money. Most platforms cover popular sports in India — cricket, kabaddi and football. To get going, users have to select a match they wish to participate in and then make a team of their choice by selecting 11 players playing the game. As the live game progresses, players from the team are awarded points, and user team with the highest points wins the respective cash prize assigned against the match. Users can participate with entry fees as small as ₹27 and increase their stake to as high as ₹5,000 per game.

The platform is generally focused on the simplicity of the user experience while playing a game and has many built-in features to support the quick creation of the user team. To ease the addition of money, the platforms offer leading payment options from net banking, UPI, wallets, credit and debit card. Like any other fantasy sports player, the platform makes money in the form of commission earned on the capital invested in the game, so more the investment, higher is the commission revenue earned.

For those looking to crack the game, each platform indicates certain patterns than a gamer learns to master and use to his advantage over time. For instance, one important tip that most of

FanMojo users follow is making the team once toss for the match is done and the playing 11 from both the sides is declared. FanMojo shares a list on its platform as to which players are playing for them (the users) to make a more informed choice while building a team.

GAMING VERSUS BETTING

Since this form of sport is a fairly new phenomenon, there exist misconceptions about the gaming concepts — one of them being that fantasy gaming is fancy betting. But is it really? Is it betting and is there any defined term of the bet being "too much"? Well, fantasy gaming is primarily a game of skill, which allows users to apply their knowledge of the game, players, teams, weather conditions, to judge and pick their best playing 11 players while making the team. This skill allows a more informed player to win more often than not moving the fantasy sports towards a game of skill and not a game of chance where users despite their experience and knowledge will have equal chances of winning.

Betting, on the other hand, is done on the game of chance only — how many runs in an over will a batsman score, how many wickets will go in this over... This is just pure guesswork, and users with limited knowledge can guess correctly as well. The bids placed in fantasy sports are reasonable and reassuringly legal. The players are picked based upon their values, where the international bids hike comparatively higher than the bids for national ones. However, the game makes it a point to prove itself as a sport and not an immeasurable, untamed and illegal bet.

Besides providing entertainment, fantasy leagues over time have enabled players to participate in the game, where they can make active decisions. With the advent of fantasy sports, non-cricket sports now get the opportunity to grow in prevalence and drive engagement for their teams. Among all the

emerging games, kabaddi has gained significant traction over the past couple of years as these sports are associated with fantasy league platforms, which further engages the audience and maintains a grip on them.

INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

Fantasy industry as a whole faces a lot of challenges in terms of setting clear regulations and support system for the industry. The industry is a part of IFSG — which is a federation for fantasy sports players in India. IFSG is helping the industry set up regulations to be followed as a standard practice.

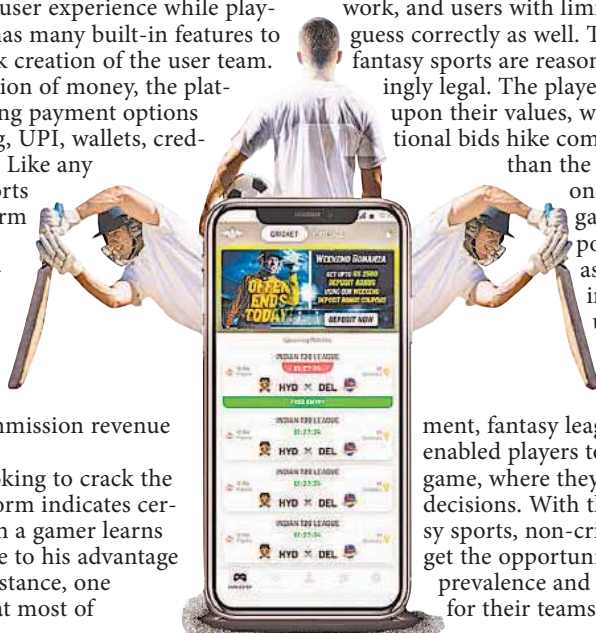
As smooth as the process sounds, it isn't really a cakewalk. The challenges associated with fantasy gaming include various prospects, one of which being dealing with the Tech Bots. The Tech Bots represent the advancement in technology and aid the industry to experiment, innovate and create better applications. However, when one develops fantasy gaming portals, the Tech Bots take their time to learn the game and the in-built strategies etc. It takes Artificial Intelligence quite a significant deal of mental aptitude and development to imbibe the aspects of fantasy gaming and its entire process.

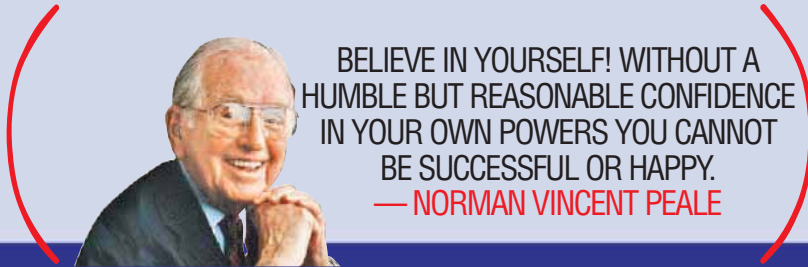
Another challenge standing in the way of success for fantasy game development seems to be the extensive data and information of the players involved in the fantasy game. Data integration and filtration have to be dealt with carefully before the fantasy sport goes live or hits a success mark in the industry. These struggles have to be taken care of to maintain the CAC (customer acquisition) to LTV (lifetime value) ratio. Fantasy sports category allows less room for innovation in the basic product structure due to legal restrictions of the industry. Therefore the fantasy sports platforms are presenting new endeavours with every passing day to smoothen the process for end users, ensuring their comfort.

Fantasy sports remain a highly regulated body, which is changing the entire game of the sports sector. It is growing into a big industry with online gaming revenue expected to be ₹11,900 cr by 2023, further targeting 10 million users by the end of this financial year. Opening the doors to various possibilities, fantasy gaming is taking the market by storm.

— The author is an industry insider and co-founder, U2opia Global

INDIAN FANTASY SPORTS PLATFORMS HAVE OVER 80 MILLION REGISTERED USERS AND ARE EXPECTED TO HIT 100 MILLION BY THE END OF 2020. THE NUMBER OF FANTASY SPORTS PLATFORMS HAS ALSO GROWN FROM 10 TO OVER 70 IN THE LAST TWO TO THREE YEARS





KRISHNA, THE NATION BUILDER

Shri Krishna scores over other great personalities in history because of his power to influence the thought process and lives of the Indians even to this day, writes DR. ASHA GOSWAMI



Shri Krishna has played a significant role as the builder of Indian nation, along with his other roles — as an emotional guide and spiritual preacher (vide Gita) — the threefold characteristics that are upheld as traits of the great men of world history. In this role, he excels the other great men of history because of his power to influence the thought process and lives of the Indians — a power he continues to wield even today and perhaps in the ages to come. The sole reason behind this is that he inspires the various aspects of life for an individual. As goes the saying: "In Krishna breathes the soul of India." It is he who represents the heart and soul of people, as he encompasses the multifarious phases of the nation's history and culture. It would be no exaggeration to say that he is a cherished leader of Indian nation, one who shaped its destiny. For, he was the chief of Yadavas; the great hero of Mahabharata war; the god incarnated teacher of Arjuna. As

many great men of the world history, he is assigned with large number of victories in battles. It is said that there was no limit to his strength, power and energy. Born in the pastoral Yadava clan, he started very young when he displayed his great youthful energy through his various adventures, including slaying deadly enemies (like Kansa and his associates, who are referred to as demons); Putana and others, who were sent to kill him and his people. The role he played at Vrindavana and Mathura as well as at Dwarka only establishes his influence over people. By killing his maternal uncle, Kansa, he brought peace not only to his clan, the Yadavas, but also the people of the surrounding regions such as Gokula, Vraja and Vrindavana. Further, by defeating Jarasandha when he attacked Mathura along with his ally Kalayavan, a Greek king, he succeeded in restoring peace in the area. He followed this by shifting his people from Mathura to a new king-

IN KRISHNA BREATHES THE SOUL OF INDIA. HE REPRESENTS THE HEART AND SOUL OF PEOPLE, AS HE ENCOMPASSES THE MULTIFARIOUS PHASES OF THE NATION'S HISTORY AND CULTURE

dom of Dwarka which he had established in far off place in the sea. According to Krishna saga, India during his times, was divided into small kingdoms and their rulers and kings often aligned with one or against someone. Such conditions provided Krishna with the ample opportunity to exert himself as a Nation-builder by proving his superiority by siding with the worthy neighbouring kings. It is also said that during Krishna's times, the Aryans had entered his territory near Yamuna-valley. He made peace with them and later, at Dwarka by encouraging Arjuna to abduct Subhadra, Krishna cunningly forged an alliance between the two mighty clans of the era — the Yadavas and the Pandavas. This move ultimately proved beneficial for the country that emerged as one strong nation under the rule of the Pandavas. As a preacher of Gita, Krishna further played the role of an unrefuted leader as he not only addressed the despondency of Arjuna,

urging him to discharge his duty as a Kshatriya king, but also became instrumental in the Pandavas winning the battle of Mahabharata. This restored peace in major parts of India under the rule of Yudhishtira at Hastinapore. Krishna then went on to build his own kingdom of Dwarka as safe and free from the opponents. Dwarka *nagri*, established by Krishna, was said to be surrounded by sea on all sides. Its location proved almost insurmountable to the enemy kings, with whom he had to fight. These kings included Bana, Shalva, Naraka, who were said to be the rulers of Shontipura, Kashi and Assam, respectively. Further, by overpowering these hostile kings, he spread peace in those regions and also brought them in alliance either with the Yadavas or the Pandavas. For instance, by killing Bana and Naraka who were rulers of the far-off regions, he succeeded winning over large number of kings and princes to his side whose daughters or sisters numbering sixteen thousand one hundred had been kidnapped and held captive by the evil king, Naraka. Among his several feats, which provide evidence to his strong Nation-building trait, one is the importation of the heavenly plant called *Parijat* from king Indra's kingdom (which sounds like some foreign land) to Dwarka. The second refers to a peculiar type of dance mixed with water sports which was enunciated by Krishna at Dwarka for the recreation of his people. He had accomplished the feat with the help of divine women known as *Apasaras* (which again sounds like artistes from a foreign land). And finally, his role in the famous Syamantak-Gem episode wherein he succeeded in setting right the vile conspiracy prevailing in his own people for the possession of the precious gem. Finally, recapitulating Krishna's role as nation-builder, let us recount that he has discharged this role throughout his life within his all *leelas* at Vrindavana. Mathura-Dwarka whereby at each step, he ushered in a new era with a new scenario. The killing of Kansa and his associates to restore peace at Mathura and in the region. Next, his encounters at Dwarka and at Hastinapore during the Mahabharata war, too reveal his many-sided involvement for the preservation of the countrymen by destroying all those who stood against his mission. All his feats establish him as a wise man, a sharp statesman and good administrator — all qualities of a true leader. The writer is a noted Indologist and authority on Krishnaitic Studies



The quest for justice



Justice delayed is justice denied, goes the popular saying. But the question is why is justice delayed? As the Chief Justice of India expresses concern that over the 1,000 cases that are pending for 50 years in courts across the country and over two lakh for 25 years, it certainly needs to be figured why. Statistics are rather mindboggling. There are over 90 lakh civil cases and 2.1 crore criminal cases that are waiting justice in India. Details, if sought may prove to be revealing, because as per the Chief Justice, the total pendency in criminal cases at the summoning stage is more than one crore. The responsibility for summoning lies solely with the executive. That there is "a growing trend of belligerent and reckless behaviour on the part of some individuals and groups" in the society, is the unfortunate side of this story. There is a need to think seriously about what is to be done. The public faith and confidence in the institution is still intact, as evident from the promptness with which people seek legal recourse when they are dissatisfied with the executive action. What is worrying is that executive intransigence and callousness coupled with delay in judicial redressal may someday leave people in a state of hopelessness. That certainly would be a severe blow to a democratic state. It is the balance of power between the executive, legislature and judiciary and an independent fourth state that keeps a democracy ticking. And with judiciary being the final arbiter, the populace has a belief that in the end truth does prevail. Lately, there have been disturbing portends as attempts to discredit institutions on which public faith rests are on the rise. How do we face this challenge? Some of the suggestions made by the Chief Justice himself would certainly help. But there is a need to do more. There are certain weaknesses in the legal system that must be addressed. It must be realised that the executive ego is a major reason for creating litigious people. If the executive decisions are reason driven rather than ego driven, things would be much smoother. To curb such tendencies on the part of the executive, the law of Torts needs to be strengthened. It is ironic that the executive fights the public with public fund, whereas the public is forced to pay from their hard earned money. If the executive is made to understand that in case their actions do not stand the scrutiny of law, they may be made liable for the costs that have been incurred on the part of the system and the victim, who is litigant. When the point of law gets adjudicated, there is hardly any need to drag the matter further. Maximum number of pendency in the civil matters are due to this tendency to drag and delay matters. From one court to another, from single bench to double bench to a larger bench and so on. Yes, it is a legal right to seek such redressals. Only, if the executive is found deliberately delaying the matter, the order as to costs in case of the litigant getting matter adjudicated in his or her favour must be given and liability must be fixed. Feeding personal ego at public cost is just not fair. Pathak is a professor of management, writer, and an acclaimed public speaker. He can be reached at ppathak.ism@gmail.com

Happiness in digital world

We must learn to have control over the digital media rather than allowing it to control us, says DR AWDHESH SINGH, as he suggests tips to counter stress



If numbers are to be believed, almost 3 billion people in the world today have the access of internet and more than 2 billion people use Facebook alone. The rise of digital world has helped people to instantly connect with any person in the world and you can access all types of information from across the world using Google and watch the lessons on virtually any topic from the experts by tuning on to their YouTube Channel. There is no need today to stand in queue to buy tickets, pay your bills, or transfer money as you can do everything online by a click of button on your mobile phone. We have become so used to, rather addicted to, social media that the first thing we do when we get up in the morning is to check the messages or notification on our mobile phone. We are more concerned today about the Facebook likes and comments on our posts by our virtual friends than being liked by our friends, parents, siblings or children. However, despite the digitisation of the

world, this generation seems to be less happier, satisfied or social than the previous ones. The internet may have made things easier in terms of access but hasn't necessarily created better relationships. The digital world comes with its own set of problems and we still don't know how to handle it. No sooner you post your views on the social media platform, particularly on political or religious matters, you are trolled ruthlessly. You can be branded anti-national for just having a difference of opinion. Young people are unable to focus on their studies because of the constant beep of the notifications on their mobile phones. Billions of people are wasting hours in the virtual world, rather than focussing on the real. The personal life of billions of people is now open to the world and privacy is virtually dead. It is, however, futile to blame the digital world alone for our unhappiness. The internet, social media, or mobile phones are just tools and we carry the responsibility of using

them to make our life better. We can indeed make their best use and achieve happiness in the modern digital world, if only we follow some steps. For one, we must learn to have control over the digital media rather than allowing it to control us. It is important to manage time intelligently in the digital world. The first step thus is to turn off the notifications from your apps so that they stop disturbing you. You can see them when you are free or you wish to divert your mind. It is better to avoid posting your opinions on controversial issues like politics, religion, reservation which almost always invite counter-opinions and hate mails. You must avoid displaying your personal life and affection to your loved ones on social platform. What is sacred must be kept secret to maintain its sanctity. One must be careful while making friends on social media platforms. It is better to carefully go through the profile before accepting a friend request. If you don't agree with someone's views, it is better to unfriend them rather than bearing their hate messages on your feed. You must also not hesitate to block and report the hate mongers, professional trolls and IT cell members, if they try to harass you. We must avoid learning from the Facebook and WhatsApp University where most news and information is either fake or unreliable. It is better to always check the veracity of the claim before trusting it. You must also avoid spreading fake news and hate messages by sharing or forwarding the same. Digital world and social media is there to stay. It is better to accept them as conveniences and use them intelligently to make our life happier. We must never lose touch with the real world and real people because the virtual world can never substitute the living. Singh is the author of 31 ways of Happiness

Faith does more than heal

While hope generated by material gains is lost easily, faith makes one mentally stable over a period of time, says AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

It is a known fact that faith heals. Even scientists accept that faith does wonders. Whenever they cannot explain how a patient suffering from a serious disease got cured, they give credit to faith. Yes, faith is a reality in our lives and it does much more than heal. I am a beneficiary of faith as it strengthened in me over the years. Faith gave me hope. The feelings of helplessness and sadness slowly left me. I am sure everyone has experienced such a feeling when something good happened to them, even if momentarily. This could be due to some material gain. Faith does much more; it gives a lasting feeling. Hope generated due to material gains is lost as easily as it comes when there is some setback. Faith is not that fickle; it makes one mentally stable over a period of time. Because faith is reinforced with each new realisation/experience. Earlier, I used to get depressed when some sickness struck me or my near and dear one. Now I pray to God for guidance and help. And guidance and help arrives. No longer is there a dark feeling of something sinister waiting to happen. I am engaged in positive acts with hope that things will work out. When I compare my present attitude to when I was not so faithful, I am amazed by the change. Now, God — the omniscient is in the picture. Not only does God give the right intuitions but He helps also by arranging help, which arrives mysteriously. No longer can I treat it as mere coincidence, because that cannot happen every time. Painful mood swings ail a modern man, who expects quick solutions. One is given to extreme emotions. And it hurts. It is no wonder that Lord Krishna has spoken about equanimity so extensively in the Geeta. God wants us to develop this quality, and it can be



done with the help of faith in a very lasting manner. Gone will be the days of extreme emotions or severe ups and downs in the mood. Certainly, there would be changes in the mood because we are human, but such variations would be small and tolerable. Peace will come gradually. And this peace can not come without God consciousness. How can we be assured of our future unless God is involved? Can we ensure our future happenings? No we cannot; we are too small to do that. Faith will help. This is not all; faith propels us towards goodness. This is natural. Those linked with God are dominated by the mode of goodness. Faith helps them to overcome the two lower modes of passion and darkness. Remember, these three modes are always vying with one another for supremacy inside us. Under the influence of the mode of goodness one is attracted to acts in goodness like eating foods in goodness, seeing what is good like natural scenery, hearing what is beneficial, etc. Similarly,

one will be naturally inclined to follow *dharma*; faith has that power. Not only that, one will be dutiful because *dharma* and dutifulness go together. One will be mindful of what his or her duties are. One will have duties uppermost in his or her mind while deciding on choice of activities. Such following of *dharma* and being dutiful brings enormous rewards in one's life. Faith makes one feel fortunate. Gone will be the days when one felt that he or she was not so lucky. God gets into the act and things begin to pan out differently. Faith helps secrete the right chemicals in our brains. After all, our moods are mostly controlled by the chemicals that we are producing in ourselves. I can go on because the advantages which accrue to a faithful person are endless. We just need to get started on the spiritual journey. No one can then detract us from that path. Bishnoi is a spiritual writer and can be reached at spiritual@ajitbishnoi.com

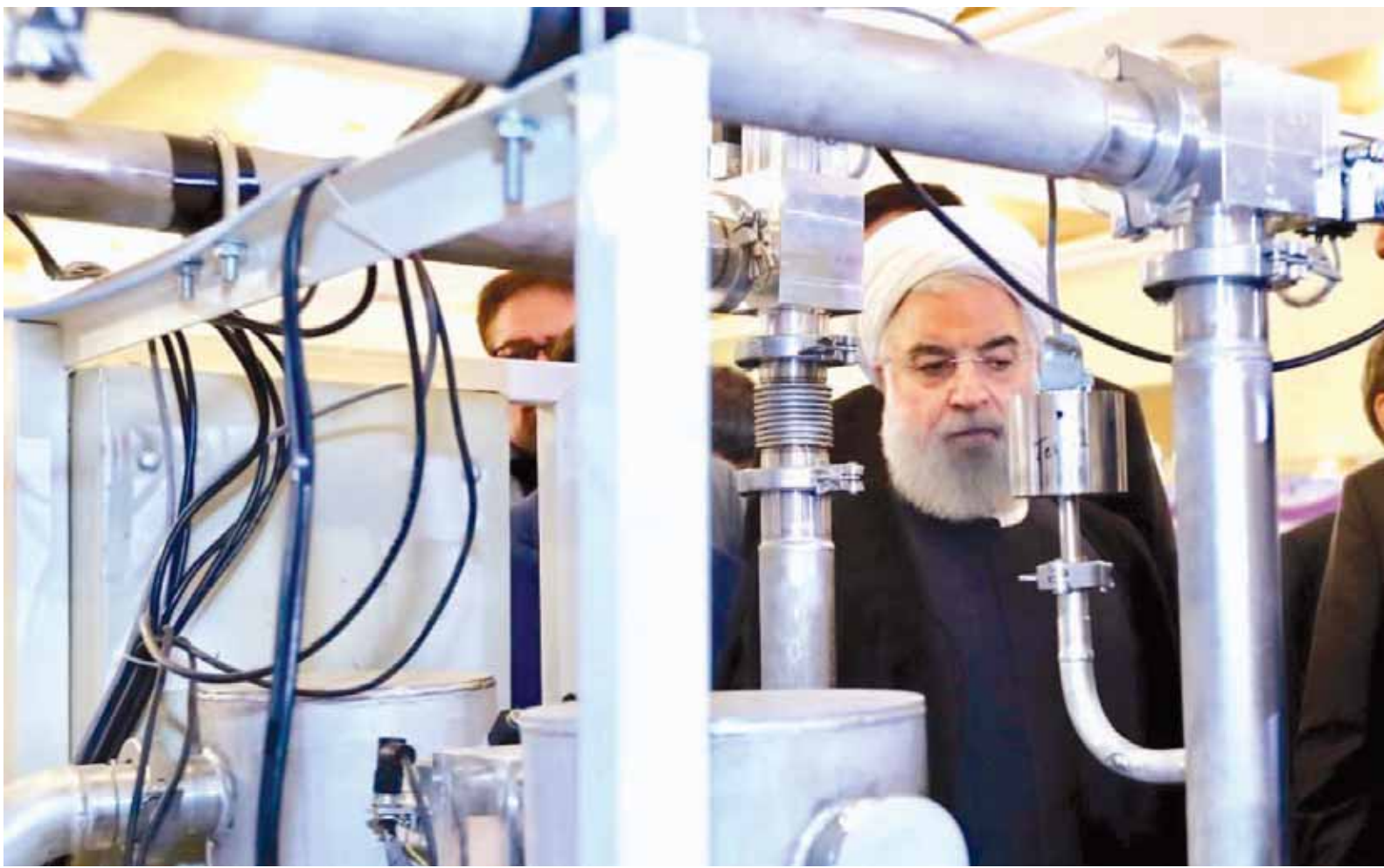
Iran nuclear quandary: Who's superior?

Nuclear power makes or mars humanity, but they are a kosher instrument of both wartime and peace-time deterrence. Still, the nuke related kill potential and aggressive Joe behaviour is here to stay! Iran intends to utilise its nuke kill potential with an objective to mitigate the Occident, particularly the United States, at the Strait of Hormuz.

An instance has been the catching of the British oil tanker, Impera. The downing of each other's drones and the ugly transactional quid pro quo has become part of the tertiary diplomacy, along with the primal sphere of nuclear diplomacy. The moment of sending packing away the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) by US President Donald Trump has been analysed by a section of international relations observers and experts as being indicative of moving out of the disarmament and the non-proliferation regime in the larger construct in West Asia, without ruling out nations of the order of Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Though the US has moved out of the JCPOA, the other nations remain part of the multilateral treaty and the JCPOA remains in force despite the tertiary deliberations on the entire Iranian narrative. Dan Smith writes in Inter Press Service, "This makes it clear that, rather than an evidence-based technical objection to the agreement or its implementation, the US decision to withdraw from the JCPOA was a political measure aimed against Iran. The time-limited nature of the JCPOA is by no means unique — the major US-Russian strategic arms control agreement, for example, expires in 2021. It is normal in such cases to find an appropriate opportunity to discuss extending the agreement."

In a manner, the global security architecture remains undone as the US has shayed out of the entire JCPOA and raises questions and pertinent posers concerning the nom de plume of multilateral diplo-



macy but still such hiccups are part of international negotiations, but definitely it's here that multilateralism takes a grave beating. International institutions such as the United Nations Security Council promulgated the UNSC resolution in order to sustain and sublimate the idiom of nuclear disarmament, but the infringement of the multilateral treaty makes the institutional understanding, largely peripheral and questionable.

The political story arrives in the text with President Ronald Reagan terming the Iranian nation as the "indomitable satan", which had to be collectively resisted at any cost after the Iran hostage crisis as before the American Embassy was run down by the local protesters, the United States was an able supporter of

the Shah of Iran. It was the Iran hostage crisis which initiated the "vile context" of the relationship between Washington and Tehran which was further buttressed by the American support to dictator Saddam Hussein in Iraq in the near neighborhood of Iran.

Tehran has made it pretty clear that if the Americans want the way of diplomacy, then sanctions have to be lifted over Iran, and Javad Zarif has contended that the US sanctions pinpoint towards a grandiloquent "failure" of multilateralism and the larger tenet of the praxis of diplomacy.

Still, it needs to be reiterated that the "political" complex will always catch on with the leaders, heads of states and their respective populations once the dice of international politics has been rolled

in the dark and light coloured strategic squares.

Bloomberg reports about the Iran's nuclear programme. It contends, "Iran's nuclear capabilities have been the subject of global hand-wringing for more than two decades. While Iran's leaders long insisting the country was not building nuclear weapons, its enrichment of uranium and history of deception created deep mistrust." It's not exactly a quest for security but it's a historical security dilemma which the region suffers from. The US and Tehran have been talking for long years and Iran and the great powers at the high table intended to settle the dispute between the West and the rest by entering into a much expected nuclear deal with a civilisationally high brow Iran.

It can be safely surmised that Iran has been foretold and warned that to prevent its economy from getting strangled, it needs to cap its nuclear programme. But, once the die has been cast by President Trump moving out from the JCPOA, the call becomes one associated with the tenets and the calling of real politique with Israel's Primer Benjamin drawing the "thin red line" for Iran's nuclear heft and experiments at one of the United Nations General Assembly session a few years back which kicked off a kind of cold war between Tel Aviv and Tehran then.

Ahmadinejad who was on the verge of declaring a battle with Tel Aviv at the slightest hint of a provocation. But, with the ushering in of Hassan Rouhani, the developments and the exchanges began to call off tense vibes, between Tehran and Washington and went beyond the "satanic discourse" between both the nations.

Iran was also quick to challenge the European nations in May 2019 and went ahead with its uranium enrichment. Iran apparently draws its lessons from national pride and nations in the region such as Saudi Arabia, and Israel have contended that the empowering of Tehran, which is primarily theocratic, is despicable which engages Tehran with Saudi Arabia in a perennial tiff to lead the larger and the global Islamic world. The

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Tehran has made it pretty clear that if the Americans want the way of diplomacy, then sanctions have to be lifted over Iran, and Javad Zarif has contended that the US sanctions pinpoint towards a grandiloquent "failure" of multilateralism and the larger tenet of the praxis of diplomacy



MANAN DWIVEDI

PERSPECTIVE

Hope for dyslexic kids: Need to widen DALI's ambit

Until two years ago, the odds were stacked against Srinivasa. His parents scolded and nagged him for his failure to cope with the stress in class, and for his inability to read and write in English and in his mother tongue Kannada. As his classmates laughed at his mistakes, he kept away from them. Teachers felt he was being deliberately obtuse.

But today the 11-year-old, Srinivasa, happily attends his school, can read and write, but of course with the help of special educators in school.

Using DALI (Dyslexia Assessment for Languages of India), a screening and assessment tool in four Indian regional languages, teachers and psychologists assessed Srinivasa's sound awareness, skill acquisition capability in reading, writing and numbers, communication, motor coordination, behaviour and memory.

Pinpointing his areas of difficulty, the test helped them realise the child was not thick-headed.

Experts say early diagnosis of dyslexia — Srinivasa's disability — can go a long way in helping children with specific learning disability, which is neurobiological in origin. The inability to achieve adequate reading skills despite normal intelligence, equal opportunity and adequate classroom instruction is termed as dyslexia. It has a biological basis and occurs because of differences in brain wiring.

"If not addressed, we stand

to lose out on a significant chunk of the literate population from future productive workforce of the country. In fact, in the absence of tests in different languages and writing systems, dyslexia assessment is often restricted to English, leading to inappropriate and incorrect assessment of the child," pointed out Professor Nandini Chatterjee Singh, who along with her team, developed the tool under a project supported by the Government's Department of Science and Technology

DALI is the only standardised test currently available in India in four languages to detect the learning disorder in which people find it difficult to spell and process verbal and written instructions.

Developed and tested at the country's only neuroscience and research institute National Brain Research Centre, Haryana, an autonomous body funded by the Department of Biotechnology in 2015, DALI is now seen as a new hope for children who speak in regional languages, besides English.

Professor Singh said, "DALI has been standardised and validated across nearly 4,000 children from Class I to V in various schools. It is currently available in Hindi, Marathi, Kannada and English and work is underway to extend it to Tamil, Telugu and Bengali. Importantly, it is not curriculum based, thus facilitating its use across the country in bilingual children." The tool was standardised

and validated in various schools at five centres namely Orkids Centre for Learning Disabilities, Delhi; Centre of Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences, University of Allahabad, Allahabad; Maharashtra Dyslexia Association, Mumbai; Dr. Shanta Vaidya Memorial Foundation, Pune; and All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore.

While DALI has not gained ground in India as the Government is yet to notify it for use across schools in the country as a part of a national policy, this multi-lingual screening and assessment tool has already generated a lot of interest among neighbouring countries like Nepal, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, to name a few.

In fact, realising its potential, the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) has decided to scale it up further. UNESCO-MGIEP brought Professor Singh on its board to take it further to neighbouring countries, like Afghanistan and Bangladesh where awareness about the dyslexia is even lower, although the problem is prevalent.

Professor Singh, now working on DALI extension at UNESCO-MGIEP, said, "I have already conducted two awareness programmes in Nepal and Bangladesh, and more are being planned." On its part, UNESCO-MGIEP has been holding many

such workshops in Delhi and in different parts of the country to reach out to children with learning disability. "UNESCO-MGIEP aims to extend the DALI test to all other regional languages in India and the Asia Pacific region for early detection and diagnosis of learning difficulties," said an official from the UN body.

The research is clear that approximately 10 per cent of the global population has dyslexia. Although there is no definitive study, around 10-15 per cent Indian children are afflicted with dyslexia that is equal to nearly 35 million children.

Various Delhi schools private and those run by the State Government have found DALI useful in screening such problems. "They have approached us for extending the test to higher education classes because teachers have been identifying children who are not able to read even in the eighth or even higher classes. The State Government wants to know how many kids have learning disability and how many have not been taught by the teachers," said Professor Singh.

Psychologist and special-needs (children) educator Geet Oberoi has been using DALI in her Orkid centres across the country. "I find it very useful. However, since so far, the tool is validated just for Class III to V. We are waiting for the tools for higher classes. It may happen within next six months."

Other Indian assessments for learning disabilities include DST (Dyslexia Screening Test) and Bangalore-based National Institute of Mental Health and Allied Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) Index for SLD and Behavior Checklist for Screening the Learning Disabled developed by Swarup and Mehta (1991), abbreviated as "NIMHANS battery".

Presently, the "NIMHANS battery" is the only test notified by the Government for screening and certifying children with dyslexia. This "battery", consisting mostly of Western and English language-based tests, was developed over three decades ago. Developed as part of a small sample for a PhD thesis at Bangalore and never developed or tested further, it is the only tool accepted for certifying dyslexia as a disability.

However, Professor Singh argued the NIMHANS battery is not for non-English speakers. It is also curriculum based, and results are often subjective.

Since the Government has not notified DALI, psychologists cannot use it for issuing disability certificates under the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, which brought dyslexia under the umbrella of disability.

It is now time to audit the NIMHANS battery or look for other tools. A senior NIMHANS' psychologist agreed. On the condition of anonymity, she said the NIMHANS battery was devel-

oped keeping in mind needs at that time.

"However, a large number of children who come to us for screening, we are able to get the answer for the question through the NIMHANS battery. The problem comes when it's about the higher-class kids where we too are in a fix as to how to decide their learning disability," said Professor Singh.

She felt that it was high time that NIMHANS battery, which is just for English language, test is relooked and modified with the changing needs and increasing awareness about the condition.

Centre of Excellence in Mental Health, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital Delhi, has already started a project comparing the two tools: DALI and NIMHANS Battery. Professor Smita N Deshpande, heading the project, said, "We need to help these children in every possible way. To that end, we are now trying to compare DALI and NIMHANS battery as part of a larger scientific project as well as extending DALI for adults, because children with such disabilities have a special quota in college admissions as well as in Government jobs."

Due to lack of awareness, their department has been facing demands for dyslexia certification for people as old as 22-23 years. "Moreover," she said, "Children with dyslexia see the world differently and this has valuable implications for the future of human development. We must help them at

the earliest."

When contacted, KVS Rao, a senior official from the Union Social Welfare Ministry said it is the prerogative of the Union Health Ministry as to which tool should be notified. "We are just an implementing body," he pointed out.

The Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS), currently excluded from certifying childhood disability although its psychiatrists are trained and willing to do so, has already written to the Ministry about these lacunae, said an office bearer of the IPS.

Geet pointed out, "Children in India receive education at school in at least two languages. It is necessary that the assessment of dyslexia be carried out in all languages that the child is exposed to. In India, the diagnosis of dyslexia has been incomplete because of the absence of standardised, validated assessment tools in regional Indian languages." She stressed on early identification of child's learning disability.

Talking about DALI's scientific standing, Professor Singh explains that DALI has around fifteen questions which the teachers, who have taught the child for at least six months, need to fill in. A teacher needs about six months to know what type of problem a child is going through.

"Suppose the child has appeared in Class IV, the teacher will try to assess him to see why the kid has not been able to do his homework. 'Has the teacher not taught him



ARCHANA JYOTI

properly or the child is having some problem' can be identified. Once the problem has been identified, the psychologist can draw up an individual action plan," she explained.

"We would like DALI for other languages also," HB Singh, a senior official in the Department of Science and Technology which funded the project, said, adding, "and we could potentially have new testing formats, like online questionnaires, to popularise this."

Given that appropriate dyslexia assessment and early remediation is the right of every child, it is important that such initiatives be undertaken as part of the Government policy. Only then can we bring back the smiles on faces of kids like Srinivasa, who have all rights to feel good about themselves.

(The writer is Special Correspondent, The Pioneer)

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

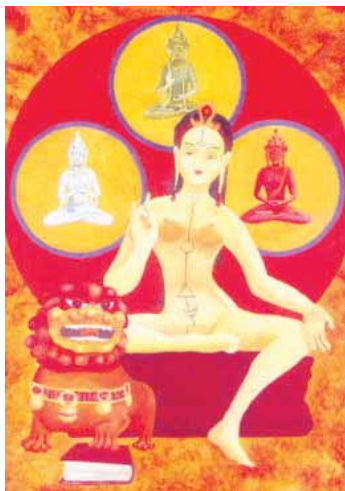
MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

Happiness and prosperity will be knocking your doors this week. A piece of good news is on the cards, and you will have reasons to feel good. You will have sense of contentment at the material and spiritual world. The card indicates that you will be full of energy and enjoy good health. Settlement in a new house, cooperation from the young ones and encouragement from the spouse is likely. There will be a healthy environment at workplace. Your colleague or a close friend will need your attention. By the end of the week, you may ponder over your accomplishments and bring improvement in your schedule. Some of you may travel a long distance. Singles, you need to be clear about what you want from a relationship before moving ahead.

Lucky number: 11
Lucky colour: White
Lucky day: Monday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Your fear and doubts are your worst enemies. Get rid of them. It is imperative you stay positive. Health issues may bother. Take it one moment at a time. Think positively, advocate for yourself, ask questions and educate yourself. On the career front, with your determination and will power, you will achieve which seems unattainable. A creative spark will inspire. You will be overwhelmed with an overseas opportunity. Projects that you are about to launch are likely to do well. Relationship wise, you need to bring stability in your family life by spending more time together. Those in a committed relationship, are likely to enjoy a happy, generous, fair and balanced relationship. Singles, meeting someone who is positive, kind, and generous is on the cards.

Lucky number: 20
Lucky colour: Indigo
Lucky day: Tuesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

Your emotions will be the gateway to your spiritual life. You will enjoy the fruits of inheritance. Those facing health issues must address symptoms at an early stage. Listen to your inner voice and body and try to bring about a balance between the two. For those of you who are planning to start a new venture, this is not the right time. You may not get the support of your seniors and colleagues. You may feel cheated at work. On the personal level, be a pillar of strength for someone you love as he or she needs you. Those who are in a committed relationship, you will need to take action to make sure that it lasts long. If required, talk to your partner about how you are feeling. Singles, be very clear about what you are looking for in a relationship.

Lucky number: 13
Lucky colour: Blue
Lucky day: Thursday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week you will be outgoing and energetic. Take time out to pamper yourself and visit a spa or a salon to feel good about yourself. You will have the drive and determination to move towards your goals. Don't try to force things, as it might backfire on you. On the career front, avoid getting into arguments that might make the environment tense. Secret motives and information will cause worry. You need to go deep into the matter and look for your anxieties, fears, and psychic blocks. Keep an eye on your subordinates. On the relationship front, avoid heated arguments. While taking decisions, you need to be grounded and firm. Your partner may be very demanding. You are likely to be very emotional and critical this may affect your relationship.

Lucky number: 9
Lucky colour: Orange
Lucky day: Saturday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

You will experience immense energy and vitality this week. People will be attracted to your charisma. Take out time for sports and adventure activities, spas and sauna baths. A strict health regime like diet, exercise, and vitamins/minerals would ensure good health. A brief vacation to enjoy the energy is indicated. Career-wise, short trips and travels may open avenues for your professional growth. Those preparing for an interview or competitive exam, stars are favourable. Patience and persistence will help resolve business related issues. You are likely to face some challenges in relationship. Accusation and misunderstandings between the married couples are likely. Singles, this is not the right time to get into a relationship.

Lucky number: 12
Lucky colour: Golden
Lucky day: Sunday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week you will live life on your own terms and conditions without any compromise on health issues. You are likely to take time out from your busy schedule, and map out what needs to be done to improve your health. You need to be little flexible and sensitive in your approach. A logical approach to analyse your plan for a health, through discipline may be helpful. Professionally, you will find stability. This is the right time to put your ideas into action. Your efforts will be rewarded. Be careful of an unexpected rival attack. On the personal front, you need to analyse your existing relations and spend quality time with your near and dear ones. Those who are committed, will face some hurdles in the relationship. You are likely to go far for a love interest.

Lucky number: 6
Lucky colour: Pink
Lucky day: Friday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

Patience and mental strength will help you lead a healthy life. You need to stay positive and send out good vibes to people around you. Share your motivation and inspiration with others and you might heal them. Those who are dealing with a bad habit, like alcohol and gambling, this is the right time to correct it. Careerwise, uncertainties and confusions will dominate and make your goals unclear. Colleagues and peers might try to limit your capabilities. Stay positive and be confident and you will overcome all opposition. On the relationship front, your partner and you are likely to feel inspired and motivated. Try to express your feelings romantically. Singles, a new beginning may come your way. Use your creative energy in a productive manner.

Lucky number: 22
Lucky colour: Red
Lucky day: Wednesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Your determination will pay off on the health front. A disciplined approach to physical well-being and adequate sleep will boost your energy. A prevailing tension related to a health issue will be resolved. Those having sleepless nights need to relax as there is nothing serious. This is the time to use the energy to reinforce and enhance your habits. Careerwise, you are likely to make a comeback on academic front. Financially, it is a smooth sail. This is a period of increased studying, learning, and research for a masters degree. A prestigious position at work is being recommended for you as you continue to give excellent performance. Conflicts, difference of opinions are foreseen in relationship area. Your relations with you partner may be affected. You may try to avoid each other.

Lucky number: 3
Lucky colour: Peach
Lucky day: Wednesday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week you will prove to the best of your capabilities and genius and creativity will be your forte. You will multi task with efficiency. You are versatile and your expertise will be acknowledged by the others. You will be busy this week. You may have to take important decisions related to your professional and personal life. This decision will have you charged. This is the right time to invest money in business expansion. The money will not be a limitation for you. Mid week, a new job opportunity will come your way. You will get a tempting job offer with a higher salary and perks. By the end of the week, you will be high on emotions, and hence, making you almost a home bird. It is recommended to invest time in artistic pursuits.

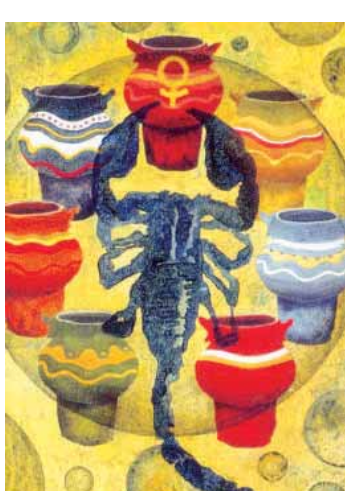
Lucky number: 19
Lucky colour: Sky Blue
Lucky day: Friday



CANCER June 21-July 22

You will be surrounded by healing and rejuvenating energy. This purity of this energy will enhance your creativity. Positive thoughts will come easily to you. Ensure you continue with your health regime. Those facing health issues are likely to recover, but it is still advisable to consult a doctor. On the career front, you are creative, original, and free from restrictions imposed by ideas and criticisms. How you speak your mind is as important as what you say. For some of you promotion, salary hike or desirable transfer is on the cards. This is a very eventful week in all aspects. In relationship, be very clear about your boundaries and preferences, and be honest with yourself about the possibilities. Whatever the final decision, stick to it.

Lucky number: 18
Lucky colour: Green
Lucky day: Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Sentiments and emotions rule your heart and mind this week. You might find your thoughts to be in conflict with your personality. Use every opportunity to resolve any conflict through negotiation — be it over issues or with important people in your life. You are likely to help or make amends with your family. Irrespective of negotiation, try to maintain balance. Spend time alone to re-evaluate your life and situations basis the fourfold process that is experienced at the levels of consciousness, mental, emotional, spiritual and physical. Surrender yourself to higher wisdom, conquer material temptation and be prepared to give up something in order to gain something better. Your patience and endurance will be put to test.

Lucky number: 21
Lucky colour: Magenta
Lucky day: Wednesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week your search for a mentor in life who opens the pathways to wisdom and insight for others comes to end. This person will provide you with the comfort and help, you require. You are likely to experience mental grief or agony. You will put your family in greater focus than usual and condition all around won't be at their best. Trust yourself and follow a tradition. The dreams of the past will sink in and new ones will arise. Stay calm and quiet and allow things to take their own course without intervention or control. You may change your residence or take a journey to distant lands. Help from a male friend or relative is indicated. You will experience high energy and vitality in your daily life. Religion and traditions will be become a priority and enlighten you spiritually.

Lucky number: 10
Lucky colour: Brown
Lucky day: Tuesday

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Let love play the game changer

The other day an old man worried about his bullish grandson came asking: "What is in store of his destiny? He is 9 years old. Has no interest in studies. He doesn't listen to his elders. No amount of reprimand or even beating has any effect on him. He has become defiant. When his parents show displeasure towards his unseemly conduct, he himself picks up a stick and hands over to his father and says: 'You want to beat me, please do? We tried to put him in boarding, but he refused to go. We are at a loss how to reform him. Please suggest some remedial measure that may help bring him around?'"

At the outset, let me assure you that if handled with prudence and patience, this boy will change with time. His astrological chart suggests as much the possibility of change towards better as it reflects his present undesirable behaviour. But remember, he doesn't seem to be the type who would respond to commandments. If things are forced upon him, he will become a habitual defiant, which is already in evidence. So, the first thing that needs to be immediately done is to stop coercive practice — beating him or shouting at him. Instead,

engage with him with a sense of love. Over a period of time, as he realises that coercive methods have become a matter of past, he will begin to respond.

Remember, every child is born unique, displaying varying mind traits. Try to figure out the trends of his mind and psyche, and accordingly innovate ways and means to deal with him. In this context, I recall a story shared by someone as to how he and his younger sibling were handled differently by their grandfather. Their grandfather, a teacher by profession, took them under his charge when he found them wanting in studies. He enforced strict discipline on them. Later, the old man realised that his method was not working on the elder one. So, apparently in a state of desperation, he told them to do whatever they liked. "You will yourself bear the consequences. I am not going to waste my energy over you," he said.

Thereafter, he stopped overseeing his studies, but ensured that he was on the study table in time. Following which, the elder one began working upon himself. Eventually, he performed very well in the final examination. The elder one used to wonder, why the two



brothers were handled differently. He later realised that his grandfather being a teacher could figure out the mind and psyche of the two brothers and accordingly conducted them.

The same way, your grandchild is unique and has to be dealt differently. The usual way a child is handled in Indian families won't work on him. He has to be led with a force of love, which in turn, will tempt him to begin making efforts to prove himself in his own right. Before suggesting a suitable remedial measure let me first run through the astrological pointers to the child's mind traits.

Born with Sagittarius *lagna*, having Rahu there itself makes him inherently erratic. Moon being the 8th lord makes him habitually suspicious of other's intent. Moon, the mind-signifier occupying the fiery sign Aries, makes him impulsive, aggressive, domineering, intolerant, and impatient. He won't take kindly to commandments, as he doesn't like to play second fiddle to any. Acting on instinctive prompting, he will like to go about unrestrained. If that would not be enough, Mars, the lord of the Moon sign, is debilitated and in opposition to expansive Jupiter and mischievous Neptune. That makes him all the more

fiery, rebellious and defiant. If subjected to continued strain, he may develop inferiority complex. Mercury placed adverse to Uranus makes him eccentric. Venus being combust speaks of a strong urge for love, which he would be missing. But the good thing is that there is change of signs between Moon and Mars, which carries the possibility of a definite change in his behavioural pattern with time, if tended with a force of love.

Remember, planets are not doers. They are indicative of how one's thought process works, and which can be very well redirected through conscious efforts. The best remedy for a child is to introduce him to an active game or a sporting event, which he likes, under the guidance of a proven coach. Let the coach turn his eccentricity into a passion towards becoming the lead person in the game, where after this approach will help him in his studies also.

The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Write to him at G-102, Bharat Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110 025
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Fortune favours the bold

Smith's 92 despite double blow help Aus score 250 in response to England's 258



Steve Smith receives treatment on the field of play after he was hit by Jofra Archer's bouncer during 2nd session of 4th day at Lord's Test on Saturday

AFP ■ LONDON

Australia batsman Steve Smith just missed his third Ashes hundred in as many innings after returning following a sickening blow to the neck from a Jofra Archer bouncer on the fourth day of the second Test against England at Lord's on Saturday.

Smith's 92 was the centrepiece of Australia's 250 all out in reply to England's first innings 258.

The star batsman had made 80 when he was felled by a bouncer from World Cup-winner Archer, making his Test debut, timed at 92.4 mph.

The ball struck him on the side of the neck and head.

Smith, fell face forward onto the ground. He was wearing a helmet with-

out the additional neck protection that was introduced following the death of Phillip Hughes after his former Australia team-mate was hit by a bouncer in a 2014 domestic Sheffield Shield match in Sydney.

Smith, who had marked his comeback Test following a 12-month ball-tampering ban, with innings of 144 and 142 in Australia's 251-run win in the series opener at Edgbaston last week, received several minutes of on-field treatment involving both teams' medical staff.

He got to his feet but eventually retired hurt, with Smith receiving a generous round of applause as he walked back into the pavilion.

Archer had previously struck Smith, then on 70, on his unprotected

SMITH'S 92 WAS THE CENTREPIECE OF AUSTRALIA'S 250 IN REPLY TO ENGLAND'S FIRST INNINGS 258. THE STAR BATSMAN HAD MADE 80 WHEN HE WAS FELLED BY A BOUNCER FROM ARCHER, MAKING HIS TEST DEBUT, TIMED AT 92.4 MPH. THE BALL STRUCK HIM ON THE SIDE OF THE NECK AND HEAD

forearm with another bouncer during a fiery eight-over spell that cost 31 runs.

And it was that injury, not the blow to the neck, which an Australia team spokesman said prevented Smith from fielding at the start of England's second innings.

"Steve Smith is off the field because of his sore left forearm and has been taken for a precautionary X-ray of that arm after being struck there during his innings," the spokesman said.

Earlier, Smith resumed his innings as soon as he could when Peter Siddell's exit left Australia 218-7.

From the second and third balls he faced on his return after 46 minutes off the field, Smith hit two fours off Chris Woakes — a slammed shot over mid-on followed by a backfoot drive

through the covers.

But on 92, facing his ninth ball, Smith shouldered arms to a Woakes delivery that nipped back and was plumb lbw to leave Australia 234-8.

In total, he faced 161 balls including 14 fours.

Smith turned towards the pavilion, signalling that he was reviewing umpire Chris Gaffaney's decision almost as an after-thought before replays confirmed his dismissal.

This series, the first of the ICC's new World Test Championship, has seen the introduction of concussion protocols designed to allow injured batsmen to be replaced by a substitute — previously restricted to fielding duty alone.

SMITH ASSESSED ON PITCH

But the Australia spokesman insisted Smith's health had not been put at undue risk by letting him resume his innings.

"Steve was hit on the neck below the left ear," the spokesman said.

"He was assessed lying on the pitch at the instructions of team doctor Richard Saw.

"Dr Saw made the precautionary decision to remove Steve from the field of play to have him further assessed under Cricket Australia's head impact protocol.

"Steve then passed his assessments and will now be monitored on an ongoing basis, as is routine."

Stuart Broad, leading the attack in the absence of the injured James Anderson, England's all-time leading wicket-taker, took 4-65 in 27.3 overs and Woakes 3-61 in 19.

Archer finished with figures of 2-59 in 29.

Australia had resumed on Saturday on 80-4 with Smith 12 not out and Matthew Wade, who also made a hundred at Edgbaston, unbeaten on nought.

Broad soon had Wade caught low down by Rory Burns at third slip for an innings of six that took 45 balls.

Smith, amid some typically extravagant 'leaves', completed his fifty when he lofted spinner Jack Leach over long-on for four.



Virat Kohli chats with coach Ravi Shastri during India's practice session

Will continue to experiment & look to build legacy: Shastri

PTI ■ COOLIDGE

"I had the belief that this team could leave a legacy very few teams have left behind in years to come, not just for the moment they are playing but at the end of it all... The kind of legacy other teams going down decades would want to try and emulate.

"That is the desire, we are on track. There is always room for improvement. And with youth coming in through the ranks, I think it's very exciting time," he said.

"It's been superbly consistent if you look at the performance over the last two-three years. But like I said that is the bar they have set and now it's up to them to raise the bar," Shastri assessed the team's performance in the last two years.

He stressed on the improvements the current setup has made in fielding.

"One thing that is most important is that over the last four-five years the biggest improvement is fielding and the endeavour is to make this the best fielding side in the world.

"So it is a clear dictat to whoever wants to play for this team the standards of that particular player's fielding will have to be of the highest level, especially in white ball cricket."

"Collectively, looking at the coaches, the players, the team management the endeavour is to keep this consistency going and try and take it to another level."

SL set up final day thriller



Dimuth Karunaratne and Lahiru Thirimane chats in between Sri Lanka's 2nd innings

AFP ■ GALLE

Sri Lanka's batters set the stage on Saturday for a thrilling final day, reaching 133 without loss at stumps on day four as they chased 268 to beat New Zealand in the first Test in Galle.

Openers Dimuth Karunaratne and Lahiru Thirimane were involved in a record opening stand of 133 runs and benefited from some sloppy fielding by the tourists. It leaves

Sri Lanka needing a further 135 runs to record their first win in the World Test Championship.

Karunaratne was unbeaten on 71 off 168 balls with two boundaries while Thirimane was on 57 having faced 132 deliveries and hit four fours. They were in no mood to withdraw to the dressing room but bad light ended play 34 minutes before schedule.

Batting fourth in Galle is not the prettiest thing for batsmen

and the highest successful run chase here is 99. But this track held together and there weren't any demons for batsmen making life difficult.

Both openers were slow off the blocks with the first boundary coming in the 22nd over. Karunaratne was the first to reach half-century with a cut shot off William Somerville. It was the Sri Lankan skipper's 23rd Test fifty.

Thirimane reached his sixth half-century with a flick for four off Ajaz Patel. After a series of low scores, he was under pressure to post a decent figure and the half-century will have saved his place for the next Test in Colombo.

The duo went onto establish the highest partnership by a Sri Lankan opening pair in the fourth innings. It is also the highest partnership by a Sri Lankan pair for the first wicket against New Zealand.

Earlier, resuming from the overnight score of 195 for seven, New Zealand posted 285 with Watling top scoring with 77 runs. He was well supported by the tail with William Somerville hitting his highest score in first class cricket — 40 not out.

Lasith Embuldeniya finished with four wickets while Dhananjaya de Silva claimed three.

Domingo named new B'desh coach

AFP ■ DHAKA

The Bangladesh Cricket Board on Saturday named South Africa's Russell Domingo as the new head coach of the national team, replacing Englishman Steve Rhodes.

The 44-year-old has agreed to a two-year term with the BCB and is expected to arrive in Dhaka on Wednesday to take charge.

"He has a wealth of experience and we have been very impressed with his passion and coaching philosophy," BCB president Nazmul Hassan said.

Bangladesh were struggling to appoint a head coach ahead of hosting Afghanistan for a one Test series in early September and a tri-nation tournament with the visitors and Zimbabwe.

Hassan said Domingo chose other candidates because of his availability.

"We also sought a full-time coach... (Domingo) said he was very keen to work with the boys and didn't want any holiday breaks. These



Domingo, the lone candidate to face an interview for the post when he arrived in Dhaka on August 7, said he was eagerly looking ahead to his new challenge.

Tamim rested for Afghan series



Tamim Iqbal celebrates after scoring hundred

AFP ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh Cricket Board decided to rest out-of-form opener Tamim Iqbal for next month's one-off Test against Afghanistan following a request from the player, an official said on Saturday.

Afghanistan arrive later in August for their maiden Test against Bangladesh in Chittagong from September 5.

Chief selector Minhajul Abedin said Tamim would also be rested during a tri-nation Twenty20 tournament from September 13 which will also involve Zimbabwe.

Abedin said the board had accepted Tamim's request for a break. "He will now rest both in the

match against Afghanistan and also the tri-nation tournament," he said.

MORTAZA RETIREMENT?

Bangladesh one-day international cricket skipper Mashrafe Mortaza has asked for two months to confirm his retirement plans.

He was expected to confirm his retirement thoughts after the recent World Cup where he claimed just one wicket in eight matches.

The 35-year-old seamer missed the latest Sri Lanka tour due to hamstring injury and is facing a long absence from international cricket as Bangladesh are not scheduled to play any ODIs until June next year.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) last week said they were planning to host a one-off ODI sometime in September against Zimbabwe to organise a farewell for Mashrafe.

But the plan has been shelved following Mashrafe's meeting on Saturday with board officials.

"He sought two months to make his final decision and we said that is fine," BCB president Nazmul Hassan told reporters.

The veteran who made his Bangladesh debut in 2001 kept playing 50-over ODIs and has already retired from Tests (in 2009) and T20s (in 2017).

Barty close to No 1 rank

AFP ■ CINCINNATI

Ashleigh Barty edged closer to a return to the top WTA ranking on Friday, reaching the WTA semi-finals as current number one Naomi Osaka retired with a knee injury.

Barty, the Australian top seed, engineered her second comeback in as many days, overwhelming Maria Sakkari 5-7, 6-2, 6-0.

But the US Open alarm bells were ringing for Osaka less than two weeks before the start of her title defense at Flushing Meadows after a left knee injury saw her retire against Sofia Kenin — sending the American into the semis with a 6-4, 1-6, 2-0 victory.

Men's top seed Novak Djokovic also had the trainer on during his 7-6 (7/2), 6-1 victory over Lucas Pouille, but he took discomfort in his right elbow wouldn't linger.

The 16-time Grand Slam champion will next face Daniil Medvedev, who beat Russian



Ashleigh Barty acknowledges crowd gesture at the end of her match

AFP

compatriot Andy Rublev, conquerer this week of Roger Federer, 6-2, 6-3.

Osaka's left knee trouble was more of a concern, the

Japanese star admitting it put a cloud over her upcoming US Open title defense.

"Last year I won the US Open and this year I'm trying to

play the US Open," she said.

"I don't even really think about winning the tournament. I just want to have the chance to play it now.

"If there is a 1 percent chance of me not playing it, that's what's concerning me."

Osaka had won the second set to level the match when she first complained of apparent knee pain and after one game of the third set called for the physio.

With the knee heavily taped Osaka played one more game before packing it in and sending Kenin to the semis.

"This is not the way I wanted to win," said Kenin, who will next play fellow American Madison Keys, a 6-2, 6-3 winner over Venus Williams.

French Open champion Barty will play for a place in the

final against Russian veteran Svetlana Kuznetsova, who beat third seed Karolina Pliskova 3-6, 7-6 (7/2), 6-3 to end the Czech's chances of claiming the number one ranking next week.

NO 1 NOT FOCUS

Barty said a potential return to number one wouldn't be her focus this weekend.

"I'm in the semis for the first time here," she said. "I'm not thinking of the ranking at all.

Elsewhere in the men's draw, France's Richard Gasquet earned his first Masters 1000 quarter-final victory in six years, defeating Roberto Bautista Agut 7-6 (7/2), 3-6, 6-2.

Gasquet won his last contest at this level in Miami in 2013 and had since lost seven Masters quarter-finals.

He will play for a place in the final against 16th seed David Goffin, who advanced in a walkover against Japanese qualifier Yoshihito Nishioka, who could not take the court due to illness.

Doubles done for Murray

AFP ■ CINCINNATI

After flirting for a few months with doubles as he recovers from January hip surgery, Andy Murray on Friday said that his days in that specialty are over.

Murray and Feliciano Lopez lost in the Cincinnati Masters men's doubles quarter-finals, going down in what for the 32-year-old Scot was an uncomfortable confrontation with his elder brother Jamie — who combined with fellow Brit Ken Skupski for a 6-7 (5/7), 7-5, 10-4 defeat of Murray and Lopez.

Three-time Grand Slam champion Murray, who won Queen's Club in June with Lopez said that he has decided to dump doubles in hopes of returning to singles.

He accepted a wild card into the singles draw at next



"I realized that if I want to get back to singles at the highest as quickly as possible, I need to avoid doubles.

"Doubles was slowing down everything. Now that my doubles is done, the focus will be totally on singles, which should help in the long run."

Andy Murray shakes hand with his brother Jamie after the end of doubles match week's ATP tournament in Winston-Salem, but he will not play singles at the US Open.

Murray said that after playing doubles last week in Montreal and here in the US, he's keen to return to his former life as a top singles player.