

March, 2023

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Global Indian Diaspora Magazine

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Ambedkar Now More  
Than Ever Before*

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*A Malayali's Tongue-in-  
Cheek Take On The Climate*

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

*Unlocking The  
Secrets Of Color  
Psychology*

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*The Blended Learning: All  
You Need To Know About  
New Age Education*

### ECONOMY & BUSINESS

*Lithium Jackpot:  
India Is Jubilant  
With Its Rare  
Mineral Wealth*

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## IN THIS ISSUE

### EDITORIAL

**LET'S TALK! - THE SPECIAL FORGOTTEN  
POWER OF BEING PRESENT**

5 -Melwyn Williams

### COVERSTORY

**WHY INDIA NEEDS AMBEDKAR NOW  
MORE THAN EVER BEFORE?**

8 -Melwyn Williams

### HUMAN INTERESTS & SOCIAL PURSUITS

**A MALAYALI'S TONGUE-IN-CHEEK  
TAKE ON THE CLIMATE**

16 -M P Joseph

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

**UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF  
COLOR PSYCHOLOGY.**

19 -Tushar Unadkat

### TRAVEL & LEISURE

**BEAUTIFUL KOCHI:  
THE QUEEN OF ARABIA SEA.**

22 - Sandhya Naren

### TECHNOLOGY

**CHAT GPT VS. GOOGLE BARD:  
YOU SEE WHICH IS BETTER?**

26 - WFY Bureau

### ACADEMICS

**THE BLENDED LEARNING: ALL YOU NEED  
TO KNOW ABOUT NEW AGE EDUCATION.**

36 - Prof. Ujjwal K Chowdhury

### ECONOMY & BUSINESS

**LITHIUM JACKPOT: INDIA  
IS JUBILANT WITH ITS  
RARE MINERAL WEALTH.**

-Leon Jose Vithayathil 39

### FINANCE & LEGAL

**FLIRTING AND SEXUAL  
HARASSMENT: HOW TO  
KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS?**

-WFY Bureau 41

### SPORTS

**THE RISING STAR OF NEW  
ZEALAND CRICKET WITH  
INDIAN ROOTS.**

-Saji Chacko 44

### ART & CULTURE

**RAIN OR TWO DROPS OF  
TEARS**

-Sarmistha Dey 31

**THERE IS ONE EARTH IN  
OUR HEART**

-Rema Pisharody 32

### GOD MA

-Sudha Mukhopadhyay 33

### THE WHISPERING CLOUDS

-Dr. Sudha K K 34

### FEATURED

**FROM THE KITCHENS  
OF INDIA - JALEBI**

29

### Team WFY

Editor-in-Chief: Melwyn Williams

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# From The Editor's Desk



**By Melwyn Williams**  
*Editorial March*

## LET'S TALK! - THE SPECIAL FORGOTTEN POWER OF BEING PRESENT

In today's world, we are constantly connected through our phones and other digital devices. We can access information, entertainment, and communicate with people from all over the world at the touch of a button. However, this constant engagement with technology comes at a cost. We are becoming more disconnected from our surroundings and the people around us.

Many of us are guilty of being too engrossed in our phones, neglecting our relationships, and ignoring the world around us. We've all seen groups of people sitting together, each lost in their own digital world, failing to engage with each other in a meaningful way. We've all had conversations with someone who keeps checking their phone or scrolling through social media while we're talking.

The world dynamics have changed, and technology has given us the ability to connect with people and ideas in new and exciting ways. However, it's also causing us to disconnect from the world around us. We're losing our interpersonal skills, and the art of conversation is slowly dying. It's important to recognise the power of being present in the moment.

When we're focused on our phones, we're missing out on the world around us. We're not engaging with the people in our lives or building new relationships. We're not learning new things or experiencing new perspectives.

So, let's talk! Let's put down our phones and engage with the world around us. Here are a few prompts to help you break the routine:

1. Have a phone-free meal: Put away your phone and have a conversation with the people you're sharing a meal with. Talk about your day, your goals, and your dreams.
2. Take a walk without your phone: Instead of scrolling through social media on your phone, take a walk outside and observe the world around you. Pay attention to the sights, sounds, and smells of your environment.
3. Make eye contact. When you're talking to someone, make eye contact with them. It shows that you're engaged and interested in what they have to say.
4. Put your phone away before bed: Instead of scrolling through social media before bed, read a book or have a conversation with your partner. This will help you relax and sleep better.

By putting down our phones and engaging with the world around us, we're opening ourselves up to new opportunities and experiences. We're building stronger connections with the people in our lives and learning from those around us. We're gaining a greater appreciation for the world we live in and becoming better equipped to navigate its complexities.

**In a world that's increasingly connected through technology, let's not forget the power of being present and engaged in the world around us.**

It's no secret that the rise of digital devices has caused people to become more self-centered. Social media has created a platform for people to showcase their lives for others to compare and envy. The constant pressure to look perfect, have the best experiences, and maintain an online presence can be overwhelming, causing people to become more self-absorbed.

This self-centeredness has seeped into all aspects of our lives, from the way we communicate to the way we approach problem-solving. Instead of working together and collaborating, people are more focused on their own goals and



achievements. This has led to a lack of empathy and a decrease in social skills.

If we want to overcome the negative effects of self-centeredness, we need to start by recognising the importance of connection and community. We need to break out of our digital bubbles and engage with the people and the world around us. This means actively seeking out opportunities to connect with others, such as joining community groups or volunteering for local organizations.

It also means developing and practicing skills that promote empathy and collaboration, such as active listening, problem-solving, and conflict resolution. These skills can be learned and developed through education and training programmes and can help us build stronger relationships with those around us.

Let's be more mindful of our technology use. This doesn't mean we have to give up our phones or social media, but rather, we need to use them in a more intentional way. We should set boundaries for our screen time and prioritise face-to-face interactions over virtual ones.

The rise of digital technology has caused people to become more self-centered and disconnected from the world around them. However, by recognizing the importance of connection and community, developing empathy and collaboration skills, and being more mindful of our technology use, we can overcome the negative effects of self-centeredness and build a more empathetic and connected world. So let's talk, engage with the people around us, and work together to make the world a better place.

Till we meet here again,  
Ciao

-MELWYN WILLIAMS  
Editor-in-Chief  
The WFY Magazine



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# Why India Needs Ambedkar Now More Than Ever Before?

By Melwyn Williams

The importance of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, or B.R. Ambedkar, popularly known as Babasaheb, cannot be overstated in the tumultuous times that India is currently experiencing, with a slew of socioeconomic and political challenges. Dr. Ambedkar was a social reformer and visionary who fought tirelessly for the rights of society's marginalised groups, including Dalits, women, and minorities. His contribution to Indian politics, society, and law is priceless, and his legacy continues to inspire and guide the country to this day.

## Why is he so relevant even today?

Dr. Ambedkar's unwavering dedication to social justice and equality makes him relevant today, even after 67 years of him passing away. His life's work was devoted to the upliftment of Dalits and other underprivileged people, since he was a fervent supporter of their rights. He anticipated the difficulties India will confront in the future with ideas and a vision that were ahead of their time. He saw the necessity for a fair and just society where everyone had access to resources and equal chances. His contributions to the formulation of the Indian Constitution, which codified the values of liberty, equality, and fraternity, still serve as a guide for the democratic ideals of the nation.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was one of the most influential leaders of

modern India. He was a jurist, economist, and social reformer who fought for the rights of Dalits, the so-called "untouchables" of Indian society. He was also a key architect of the Indian Constitution, which he helped in drafting and which is seen as one of the most progressive constitutions in the world.

Today, his ideas and vision remain as relevant and necessary as ever before. India faces numerous challenges and social problems, including caste-based discrimination, poverty, inequality, and political polarization. In this context, Ambedkar's legacy offers important lessons and solutions for India's present and future.

First and foremost, Ambedkar's struggle for the rights of Dalits continues to be of crucial importance. Despite the constitutional guarantees of



PM, Shri Narendra Modi at Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar Memorial, in London on November 14, 2015

equality and the legal abolition of untouchability, Dalits still face discrimination and violence in many parts of India. Ambedkar's emphasis on education, political representation, and economic empowerment remains as relevant today as it was in his time. The Dalit community needs more access to education and job opportunities, as well as more political representation at all levels of government.

Moreover, Ambedkar's views on social justice and democracy are also highly relevant in today's India. He believed that the fundamental basis of social justice is the equal distribution

## COVERSTORY

of power, resources, and opportunities. This means that India must work to reduce economic inequality and provide equal access to education and healthcare for all. In addition, Ambedkar was a strong advocate of participatory democracy and believed that people's participation in decision-making was crucial for ensuring social justice and equality.

Furthermore, Ambedkar's ideas on constitutionalism and the rule of law are also highly relevant today.

He believed that the Constitution was not just a legal document but a moral and political one that represented the aspirations and values of the Indian people. He believed in the separation of powers, judicial independence, and the protection of individual rights and freedoms.

Furthermore, Ambedkar's ideas on constitutionalism and the rule of law are also highly relevant today. He believed that the Constitution was not just a legal document but a moral and political one that represented the aspirations and values of the Indian people. He believed in the separation of powers, judicial independence, and the protection of individual rights and freedoms. In an era of increasing political polarisation and attacks on democratic institutions, Ambedkar's views on constitutionalism and the rule of law offer important safeguards against authoritarianism and tyranny.

### Why do we need him now more than ever before?

India is currently dealing with several socioeconomic and political issues, including gender discrimination, growing inequality, communalism, and casteism. The COVID-19 epidemic has highlighted societal divisions to a greater extent, disproportionately affecting underprivileged communities. Dr. Ambedkar's idea of a fair and just society is more pertinent than ever in this situation. His concepts of political representation for underprivileged people, education, and social and economic empowerment can serve as a guide for tackling the existing problems.

There are several reasons why India needs B.R. Ambedkar now more than ever before. Here are some of the key reasons:

- **Persistent social inequality:** Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, India continues to face persistent social inequality. The caste system remains a significant barrier to social mobility and access to opportunities. Ambedkar's ideas and vision for social justice and equality are as relevant today as they were in the past.
- **Political polarization:** India is currently experiencing political polarization, with growing sectarianism and communalism. Ambedkar's emphasis on the principles of constitutionalism and the rule of law are important safeguards against authoritarianism and tyranny.

- **Attacks on democratic institutions:** In recent years, India has seen attacks on democratic institutions such as the judiciary, the press, and civil society organizations. Ambedkar's contributions to India's democracy and his emphasis on the importance of independent institutions offer important solutions to these challenges.
- **Economic challenges:** India is facing significant economic challenges, including high levels of inequality, poverty, and unemployment. Ambedkar's ideas on economic reforms and growth, including his emphasis on land reform, the promotion of small-scale industries, and the protection of workers' rights, are highly relevant today.
- **Social and cultural change:** India is currently undergoing significant social and cultural change, with changing attitudes towards gender, sexuality, and religion. Ambedkar's vision of a just and equal society, based on the principles of social justice and individual freedom, is highly relevant in this context.

### Ambedkar in Indian Politics: Why the politics in India needs him today?

The impact of Dr. Ambedkar on Indian politics cannot be overemphasized. He was a gifted speaker, a prolific writer, and an outstanding politician. His support for the political representation of oppressed groups like Dalits and other backward classes has played a significant role in establishing India's democratic system. Caste-based politics have been more prevalent recently as political parties vie for the support of Dalits and other underprivileged groups.

December 6, 1956, marked the passing of one of the most significant figures in Indian history, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. Known as the "Father of the Indian Constitution," Ambedkar's contributions to the country's social and political landscape are immeasurable. But perhaps his most enduring legacy is his advocacy of scientific rationality as a tool for fighting discrimination and inequality, which remains a critical aspect of Dalit politics to this day.

Dalit politics in India has undergone multiple twists and turns in the face of majoritarian politics, particularly as per common perception the Hindutva forces continue to gain ground in the country. In this context, Dalit leaders are forced to rethink the symbols and principles representing their collective bargaining presence in the democratic polity.

While the call to reject Hinduism and convert to Buddhism is still prevalent, some Dalit leaders, such as Jignesh Mevani, advocate for basic rights such as the right to own land. However, the two aspects of Dalit politics remain cardinal: their fight against culturally enforced discrimination and economic inequality. Starting with Ambedkar, Dalit leaders over the years have emphasised scientific rationality as a weapon to





Dr. Ambedkar with Dalai lama at Ashok Buddha Vihar, Delhi



*B.R. Ambedkar*

## COVERSTORY

fight authoritarianism and dogmas.

Ambedkar's trust in Buddhism (as an alternative to Hinduism) and his confidence in reason stemmed from his love of inquiry, which disproves the infallibility doctrine. In "Buddha or Karl Marx," one of his last speeches, Dr. Ambedkar includes the following in his summary of the essential teachings of the Buddha: "Nothing is infallible." Nothing is forever binding. "Everything is subject to inquiry and examination."

Ambedkar believed that the utility of the scientific spirit was essential for liberation and protection from ideological manipulation, which had served as tools of casteist subjugation for centuries. Throughout Ambedkar's writings and actions, there is one common thread: socio-economic progress in India required a cultural revolution, one that would not only destroy the culture of the past but also build something of value in its place.

Scientific reason was given a lot of weight by Ambedkar as the new benchmark for a "continuous revision and revolution of old values." His top objective was creating a new, egalitarian, free, open, non-hierarchical India rather than making Hinduism or Hindu civilization "shine forth."

Ambedkar believed that a casteless society was necessary for modern India, which was in stark contrast to Gandhi's views. He would construct a theoretical assault on Vedic Hinduism's "chaturvarna" system using the principles of natural science. Ambedkar became the most passionate supporter of a de-sacralized perspective of the natural world since Hinduism defends caste system as being in accordance with the order of nature itself.

Ambedkar thought that the only way for Indian society to develop a defence against the arbitrary use of power was to foster critical and logical thought. In addition to cultural equality.

Rising casteism and communalism, as well as economic inequality and political corruption, are just a few of the problems that plague Indian politics even today. Given these difficulties, the vision and philosophy of B.R. Ambedkar are more important than ever.

In India, Ambedkar's hope for a society that is just, equitable, and democratic and that is devoid of caste, creed, or religious prejudice still exists only as a distant ideal. Casteism is still a problem in the nation, as seen in its politics, economy, and education, among other areas of daily life.

The situation of Dalits and other oppressed populations has received little attention from the upper-caste elite-dominated political establishment. Inequalities in society and the economy have continued as a result of this.

Ambedkar's focus on the value of constitutional democracy as a way of achieving social justice and equality is still very pertinent today. A framework for a diverse and inclusive society is provided by the Indian Constitution, whose writing he was a key contributor to. Yet, political apathy and disregard for the weaker members of society have hampered its implementation. Ambedkar's vision can aid in bridging the gap between the ideals of democracy and their actualization on the ground by emphasising the value of constitutional rights and freedoms.

In the contemporary climate, where obtaining a high-quality education is still a privilege for a select few, his emphasis on using knowledge to empower underprivileged groups in society is also extremely pertinent.

In the face of escalating intolerance and communalism, Ambedkar's vision of an India devoid of social and economic inequality can serve as a ray of hope. Ambedkar's vision can aid in bridging the differences dividing the nation by

promoting a community built on the tenets of liberty, equality, and brotherhood..

The politics in India today are in dire need of Ambedkar's vision and philosophy. His call for an inclusive, just, and democratic society based on rational thinking, education, and social and economic equality can provide a way out of the current impasse. By drawing on his legacy, India can emerge as a truly democratic and pluralistic society that is free from discrimination and inequalities.

Here are a few references that support the assertion that India needs Ambedkar's politics today:

According to historian Sujatha Gidla's book "Ambedkar's World: The Creation of Babasaheb and the Dalit Struggle," Ambedkar's views are more pertinent than ever. "Ambedkar's ideals on social justice, democracy, and the role of the state in fostering an equal society are more important now than ever before," the author claims.

In a 2018 article for The Wire, journalist Siddharth Varadarajan argues that Ambedkar's vision of a casteless society is essential to overcoming India's social divisions. He writes, "Ambedkar's call for a caste-free society is more important than ever today. It is only by embracing Ambedkar's radical vision of a casteless society that India can truly overcome its social divisions."

In an article for The Hindu, political scientist Yogendra Yadav argues that Ambedkar's emphasis on the importance of constitutional values is crucial in today's political climate. He writes, "Ambedkar's emphasis on constitutional values is crucial in today's context, when these values are being challenged by powerful sections of society." His insistence that the Constitution be seen as a living document that must evolve with the times is particularly relevant.

In a 2018 article for The Economic Times, commentator R Jagannathan argues that



Ambedkar's emphasis on meritocracy is needed to address India's economic inequality. "Ambedkar's notions of meritocracy, which he regarded to be the only way to confront India's economic disparity, are more important than ever in a society where crony capitalism and corruption are common," He writes.

In a 2019 article for The Indian Express, scholar Anand Teltumbde argues that Ambedkar's ideas on federalism and decentralization are crucial in today's political climate. "Ambedkar's stance on federalism and decentralisation is more pertinent than ever in a country where the centralization of power is endangering the basic fabric of democracy," he writes further.

These are just a few examples of the many references that support the idea that Ambedkar's politics are needed in India today.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in India has been trying to win over the Dalit vote and shed its image as an upper-caste party by appropriating the legacy of BR Ambedkar. It has built several memorials and cultural centres in his name, such as the BR Ambedkar International Centre in Delhi, the Dr. Ambedkar National Memorial in New Delhi, the Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar Memorial and Cultural Centre in Lucknow, and the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Memorial in Mumbai.

The appointment of President Ram Nath Kovind, who is from the SC community, was also seen as an attempt to appeal to Dalit voters. Now, the current President of India, Draupadi Murmu as well. However, the RSS and BJP's attempts to represent Ambedkar as a pro-Hindutva icon have been criticized, as Ambedkar was a critic of both Hinduism and Islam and was a vehement opponent of the Congress and Indian Communists. Ambedkar's views on the RSS and its leaders like V.D. Savarkar and K.B. Hedgewar were also critical, as evidenced by his writings in the

Janata newspaper and other publications. While the RSS and its affiliates have tried to selectively focus on aspects of Ambedkar's work and thoughts that align with their ideology, his decision to renounce Hinduism has been subverted to suit their own agenda.

The Congress Party has traditionally been associated with Dalit politics in India. In fact, it was during Congress' rule that the Constitution was written and adopted, which included many provisions aimed at improving the social and economic conditions of Dalits. The party has also had prominent Dalit leaders, including Jagjivan Ram, who served as a minister in several Congress governments.

However, in recent years, the Congress Party's approach to Dalit politics has come under criticism. Some have accused the party of taking the Dalit vote for granted and not doing enough to address the issues facing the community. Others have pointed out that many Congress leaders are themselves from upper-caste backgrounds, which has led to allegations of tokenism and insincerity in the party's efforts to reach out to Dalit voters.

In terms of specific policies, the Congress party promises to implement the recommendations of the Sachar Committee and the Ranganath Misra Commission, which were set up to study the social and economic conditions of religious minorities and Dalits, respectively. The party also promises to strengthen the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, which provides legal protection to Dalits and other marginalized communities against caste-based violence and discrimination. These promises need to be revisited soon.

Overall, the Congress party's stance on Dalit politics in India is complex and has evolved over time. While the party has a strong historical association with the Dalit movement, it has also faced criticism for not doing enough to address the issues facing the community. At

the same time, the party has been critical of the BJP's attempts to appropriate the legacy of Ambedkar and has promised to implement policies aimed at improving the social and economic conditions of Dalits in India.

Many political parties in India, including the Bahujan Samaj Party, associate themselves with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's legacy. Ambedkar was a visionary leader who played a crucial role in the Indian independence movement and dedicated his life to fighting for the rights of oppressed communities, particularly the Dalits.

However, different political parties may have varying interpretations of Ambedkar's ideas and may use his name and legacy to further their own agendas. Other parties may invoke Ambedkar's name for political gain without necessarily being committed to his vision.

It's important to remember that Dr. Ambedkar's ideas were complex and nuanced and cannot be reduced to a single political platform or ideology.

### **Why is Ambedkar the key to overcoming India's social divisions?**

India is a diverse country with numerous social, cultural, and linguistic differences. However, these differences have also led to social divisions such as casteism, communalism, and regionalism. Dr. Ambedkar recognised the importance of bridging these divisions, and his vision of the social and economic empowerment of marginalised communities can be key to achieving this goal. His emphasis on education, employment, and political representation can provide a framework for addressing the social divisions that continue to plague Indian society.

B.R. Ambedkar was one of the most influential figures in India's history, and his vision and ideals remain highly relevant today. One of the most pressing issues facing modern India is the deep-rooted social divisions that continue to plague the country. These

## COVERSTORY

divisions are based on caste, religion, language, and other factors, and they have been a source of conflict and tension for centuries.

Ambedkar believed that the key to overcoming these divisions was to promote equality, social justice, and rational thinking. He saw the caste system as one of the main barriers to achieving this goal, and he worked tirelessly to abolish this system and promote equality among all people.

One of Ambedkar's key ideas was the need to embrace modernity and reject traditionalism. He believed that traditional Indian culture and values were deeply rooted in the caste system and other forms of discrimination and oppression. Instead, he advocated for a more rational and scientific approach to social and political issues.

Another important aspect of Ambedkar's vision was the promotion of education and knowledge. He believed that education was the key to social and economic progress, and he worked tirelessly to promote education among marginalised communities, particularly Dalits.

Ambedkar also emphasised the importance of political participation and democracy. He believed that political power was essential to achieving social justice and equality, and he worked to promote the rights and representation of marginalised communities in the political sphere.

Overall, Ambedkar's vision is the key to overcoming India's social divisions because it provides a framework for promoting equality, social justice, and rational thinking. By rejecting traditionalism and embracing modernity, promoting education and knowledge, and emphasising political participation and democracy, Ambedkar's vision offers a roadmap for building a more just and equitable society in India and beyond.

### Why B. R. Ambedkar's Vision Is Key to Empowering the Indian Diaspora?

The Indian diaspora is spread across the world and includes a

diverse range of communities. However, despite their successes, many members of the Indian diaspora continue to face discrimination and marginalization in their adopted countries. Dr. Ambedkar's vision of social and economic empowerment can be critical in empowering the Indian diaspora. His emphasis on education, employment, and political representation can provide a roadmap for addressing the challenges faced by the Indian diaspora.

The diaspora can draw inspiration from Ambedkar's advocacy for education and his emphasis on meritocracy, which can enable individuals to overcome barriers and succeed on their own merit. The Indian diaspora has excelled in fields such as technology, finance, and medicine, and Ambedkar's vision of an egalitarian society that values and rewards hard work and talent can provide a framework for further success and progress.

Furthermore, Ambedkar's vision of a casteless society and his rejection of the rigid caste system can help the diaspora navigate and challenge discrimination that exists within their communities. Ambedkar's emphasis on individual rights and freedoms can also provide a template for advocating for the rights of minority groups and marginalized communities in the diaspora.



### Know B. R. Ambedkar: his life, milestones, and achievements.

**Name:** Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

**Date of Birth:** April 14, 1891

**Date of Death:** 6 December 1956



Respected people's pay finale tribute to Dr. B abasaheb\_Ambedkar\_in\_Delhi

### Educated at:

- University of Mumbai
- Columbia University
- London School of Economics and Political Science
- Elphinstone College
- Government Law College, Mumbai



Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar as a young student

### Member of Political party:

- Scheduled Castes Federation (1942–1956)
- Independent Labour Party (1936–1942)
- Republican Party of India (1956)



Rajagriha, Bombay, February 1934. (L to R) Y ashwant, BR Ambedkar, Ramabai, Laxmibai, M ukundrao, and Bobby

**Father:** Ramji Maloji Sakpal

**Mother:** Bhimabai Ramji Sakpal

**Child:** Yashwant Ambedkar



**Spouse:**

- Ramabai Ambedkar (1906–1935)
- Dr Savita Ambedkar (1948–1956)



Dr.\_Babasaheb\_Ambedkar\_with\_wife\_Ramabai\_Ambedkar



Dr.\_B.R.\_Ambedkar\_with\_wife\_Dr.\_Savita\_Ambedkar\_in\_1948

**Award:** Bharat Ratna

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was born in 1891 in Mhow, a small town in Madhya Pradesh, to a family of the Mahar caste, which was considered to be one of the lowest castes in Hindu society. Despite facing immense discrimination and prejudice due to his caste, Ambedkar was determined to rise above it and dedicated his life to fighting for the rights of marginalised communities.

Ambedkar's journey was marked by several milestones and achievements. He was the first person from his community to receive higher education, completing his studies in economics and law at universities in India and England. He played a pivotal role in the drafting of the Indian Constitution, which was adopted on January 26, 1950. His contributions to the framing of the Constitution, including the inclusion of provisions for the reservation of seats in government and educational institutions for Dalits and other

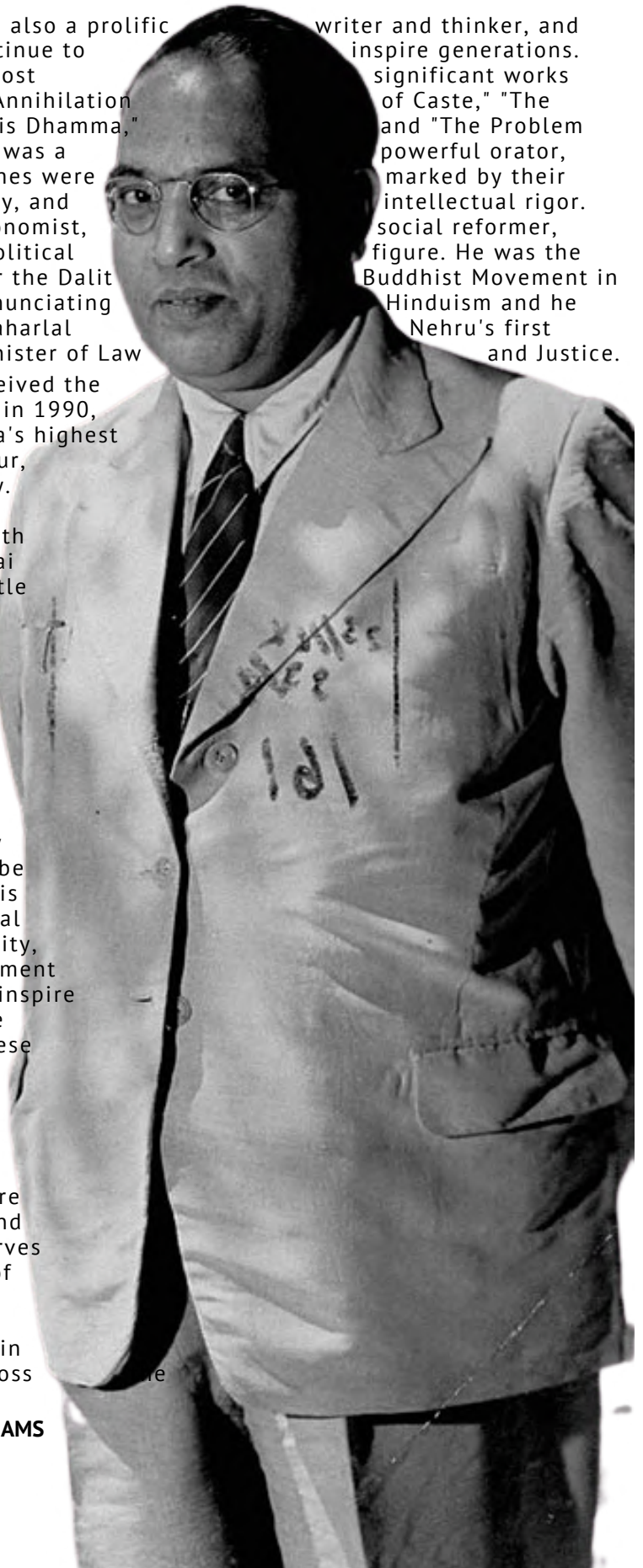
backward classes, have been critical in ensuring their political representation.

Ambedkar was also a prolific writer and thinker, and his works continue to inspire generations. Some of his most significant works include "The Annihilation of Caste," "The Buddha and His Dhamma," and "The Problem of Rupee." He was a powerful orator, and his speeches were marked by their intellectual rigor. He was an economist, lawyer, and political figure. He was the inspiration for the Dalit Buddhist Movement in India after renouncing Hinduism and he served in Jawaharlal Nehru's first cabinet as Minister of Law and Justice.

Ambedkar received the Bharat Ratna in 1990, which is India's highest civilian honour, posthumously. His admirers salute him with the phrase "Jai Bhim." The title Babasaheb, means "Respected Father," it is also used to address him.

The relevance of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in contemporary India cannot be overstated. His vision of social justice, equality, and empowerment continues to inspire and guide the country in these challenging times. His contributions to Indian politics, law, and society are invaluable, and his legacy serves as a beacon of hope for marginalised communities in India and across the world.

**-MELWYN WILLIAMS**







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# CLIMATE CHANGE

## A Malayali's Tongue-in-Cheek Take On The Climate

*A Malayali Keralite's Tongue-in-Cheek Take on The Climate, it is a Changing.*



**By M P Joseph**  
**IAS (Fmr)**

I would think that climate has always been a changing.

I remember that long ago, as a young boy, about 7 or 8 years old – and I am quite into my dotage now, so you will know how long ago that was – my grandmother was always complaining that the climate was a changing. She was then in her dotage too and would step out on to the courtyard in front of our house and look up the sky and exclaim for all who loved to hear – and I would always hear her, she was my pet grandmother and I was her pet grandchild – that the climate was not what it used to be, certainly not what it used to be in her childhood, that it was getting so hot now, when it should be raining, that the monsoons should have started a week ago, and look there was not a sky in the cloud. Oops, oops. She would correct herself, there is not a cloud in the sky.

The following year, her compliant would be, “look the climate is all a changing, it is raining way too much these days, it has been raining now for a week nonstop. Really things are not what they used to be.”

But, is that not what life is all about? Things are never the same, are they? They keep a changing. We change, habits change, technology changes, the world changes, climates change. I tend to believe that climate has always changed. And will always change. We can't pin down climate and say, don't change.

Climate changes have always affected people. It has destroyed cities but built new ones. Muziris in the central coast of Kerala was once a flourishing centre of world trade, exporting spices to Europe and Rome and importing gold coins from there. Until one year, it rained and rained and rained and rained some more, and rained again, until a flood in the Periyar river washed away Muziris, never to be seen again, only heard.

But that same flood opened up an outlet to the sea some few miles to the south of Muziris and the city of today's Cochin or Kochi took shape. Cochin became the new trading centre for the flourishing spice trade. That flood also opened up the backwaters of Kerala, which is today a rousing tourist attraction and known across the world.

As those reverend nuns ask in The Sound of Music, 'how do you solve a problem like climate change? And as they with unerring clairvoyance, asked themselves some eighty years ago, 'how do you catch a cloud and pin it down?'


We really can't, can we? Climate change is a fact of life. We cannot stop that change. We cannot catch climate and pin it down to what it was yesterday or today.

The world has passed through ice ages and some warm climes. And the world will continue to do so. We, homo sapiens adapt to such changes. We cannot prevent nature from having its way and prevent climate from a changing, can we?

Kerala is particularly sensitive to climate change, as it has a very long and fragile coastline. I am from Kochi – once upon a time, Cochin; see even the names of places change – and they say that the city may go under water if the temperatures and therefore the sea continues to rise. It also has 44 rivers and quite a number of streams, rivulets, backwaters and a long long seacoast.

The state is then having to pay heavily for its fragility. We cannot build any new building from 50 to 100 metres of water bodies. Decision makers in Delhi – where the only water body you can see is the dried-up Jamuna – and many





of whom have no idea what the sea looks like - for landlocked as Indraprastha is, many there have never ever seen the sea - have passed laws to that effect. So no buildings near the sea or river or rivulets, or streams or tanks, or lakes or any other sort of water bodies. And Kerala is full of these water bodies.

Thus, most buildings we build here could technically be violative of the law. So that law of the land can come in one day and decree that these buildings are to be broken down.

Kerala also has a very fragile environmentally sensitive areas up in the hills and mountains of the western ghats. We in Kerala also cannot build anything in the hills and mountains that we have here aplenty, because these are or could be part of the environmentally sensitive areas of the western ghats. Various Committees and Reports of some very important environmentalists have seen to that.

And then we have a very high percentage of our land declared as Forests. And now we are told that there has to be a Buffer Zone around our forest, all of one kilometer in depth where there can be no construction.

Effectively then to protect the climate of the world, it seems that it is this little state of Kerala that would have to pay the price. It is no matter that over half a millennium ago, seven barren islands were given to some prince in Europe as dowry, and they built up a huge huge city there, all near water bodies. Thus, Bombay and later Mumbai was built up close to the sea and near and across water bodies and grew up to be the commercial capital of the country. But that is okay. If you trampled upon the environment 500 years ago, you are excused.

Similarly the banks of the Jamuna was trampled upon to become Indraprastha and then Delhi say some 5000 years ago. But that trampling of the environment does not count, because it was done 5 millennia ago. But if you build something near the sea in Kerala, or up in our mountains or within the one-kilometer Buffer Zone around forests here, then you are to be punished.

Kerala is being punished for being the last to join the bandwagon. With a population that burgeoned a couple of decades ago, such expansion of human habitat nearby water bodies, forests, and up the hills and mountains was inevitable. But Kerala has to pay the price for the being the last to do so.

If only we had trampled upon the environment some 500 years ago as Bombay did; or some 5000 years ago, as Delhi did, it would have been okay. But no, we cannot do so now, not now. For the climate is a changing, and Kerala has to be a paying for it.

**-M P JOSEPH IAS (Fmr)**





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# Unlocking The Secrets Of Color Psychology

*INFLUENCE, INTERPRETATION, AND IMPORTANCE OF COLOR PSYCHOLOGY*

**By Tushar Unadkat**

## **Influence of Color Psychology**

In this modern world, there is a creative use of Color psychology. However, remember that stereotypical hypotheses based on color psychology might pound borders of culture, generation, or gender.

Special effects of colors appear across several cultures. Warm colors like red, yellow, and orange evoke higher arousal emotions, such as love, passion, and anger. Cool colors, like blue, green, and purple, are linked to calmness, sadness, and indifference. Colors can trigger these arousal states and emotions.

## **Cross-cultural language of Color**

For instance, YELLOW illustrates imperial power in Asian cultures and is associated with death and mourning in Latin America. Similarly, heterosexual men might find RED attractive, and women might thus think red is a beauty booster. Again, however, this significance of red might be invalid in all circumstances or for homosexual people. For example, while brides walk down the aisle in a WHITE dress at Christian weddings, in Hinduism (India), the Color white is reserved primarily for funerals and widows.

## **Interpretation of Color Psychology**

It is an indisputable fact that color psychology influences human behavior and judgments. For example, Color even evokes or repels taste buds, thus affecting the taste of food. It analyses which colors evoke feelings and why we prefer one Color over another. With universal meaning, the perceptions of color change depending on personal experience, culture, and era. With the rise of digital marketing, color psychology has become a powerful non-verbal communication tool and an essential mechanism for the advertising industry.

## **Importance of Color Branding**

Colors are the most vital means used in marketing and branding. They create the personality of a product and impact

how consumers perceive it. Consequently, colors affect the sales of any product or service. For branding, colors are one of the most integral elements of the business identity. The research titled Impact of Color on Marketing reveals that colors increase or decrease appetite, enhance mood, calm customers, and reduce the perception of waiting time, among others. The study also found that Color influences nearly 90 percent of snap judgments about products.

## **CHROMOTHERAPY**

When colors strongly impact our perception, here is how to evoke our senses with Chromotherapy (or color therapy) in our immediate environment and healthier habitation.

Apply Chromotherapy to our immediate surroundings to help retain tranquillity and focus on healthy habitation. At the same time, developing and defining the color scheme in our living space can bolster our aura. No wreckage is necessary!

Chromotherapy is a complementary remedy that utilizes Color and light to treat physical or mental health concerns by balancing the body's energy centers (AKA: chakras). Ancient Egyptians used sun-activated solarium rooms constructed with colored glass for therapeutic pursuits. The ancient Egyptians, Romans, Greeks, and other primary cultures made significant medical usefulness of light. The Egyptians are said to have built temples where color healing took place. Sunlight shone through colored gems, such as rubies and sapphires, on people seeking recovery. Use Chromotherapy in a fusion concept in day-to-day living space and add coherence to life.

## **Code of Colors**

In physics, the three primary colors are red, green, and blue. The secondary colors are color combinations created by an equal mixture of two primary colors. So, red and yellow make orange, red and blue make purple, and blue and yellow make green. The Tertiary colors are a mix of primary and secondary colors. Six Tertiary Colors are Red-Orange, Yellow-Orange,

Yellow-Green, Blue-Green, Blue-Violet, and Red-Violet, which are formed by mixing a primary with a secondary.

Besides numeric HTML color codes, Color Harmony 2 is an invaluable book for anyone working with Color. It is a guide to creative color combinations by Bride M. Whelan. In expansion, books on the psychology of Color show how artists employ it to portray desired emotions in specific spaces.

Experts in color research and fashion merchandising, advertising, and marketing, graphic and interior design, and industrial design make selections and reach a consensus on which colors will be flourishing and fashionable in the upcoming years.

**RED** symbolizes passion, danger, or power, and **PINK** signifies innocence, femininity, and beauty. We often see **BLUE** in hospitals as it evokes calmness, peace, relaxation, self-expression, intuition, honesty, truth, and creativity. Yet, at the same time, **WHITE** represents light, goodness, innocence, purity, peace, safety, and cleanliness. Experts recommend these colors in cases of insomnia, stress, anxiety, over-excitement, or anger.

One of my favorite colors is **YELLOW**, which elevates uplifting and cleansing energy. The Color of the Sun also signifies self-confidence, self-control, self-respect, the ability to rationalize and reason, and contentment. It is mentally stimulating and recommended for depression, despair, and fatigue. It decreases negativity too. According to color healing therapy, **ORANGE** is one of the best colors for hospitals, particularly for children's rooms.

The color **PURPLE** symbolizes spirituality and creativity and inspires us to reveal our innermost thoughts, enlightening us with the wisdom of who we are and encouraging spiritual development. It is usually associated with royalty and luxury, and its mystery and magic spark imaginative fantasies.

**BROWN** spurs earthy, sturdy, rustic feelings, and **GREEN** gives a natural, stable, prosperous feeling.

**BLACK** symbolically or figuratively illustrates the dark. It is the absence or complete absorption of visible light, an achromatic color without hue, like white and grey. Usually, Black & White describes opposites, such as negative and positive, night and day, and the Dark Ages versus the Enlightenment. Judges and magistrates wear Black because it symbolizes solemnity and authority. In addition, wearing black at a funeral indicates that you are mourning the loss of someone and is considered a sign of respect for the deceased.

**GOLD** is the Color of success and affluence and is commonly associated with Champions. This Color harnesses masculine energy and the Sun's power with its strong, warm undertones.

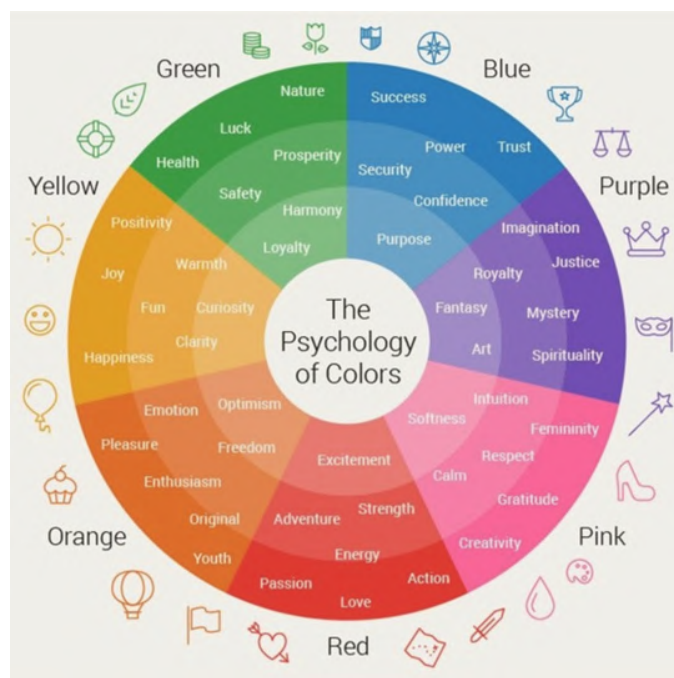
**SILVER** is a gentler color than gold, representing feminine energy and the sensitivity of the moon. It is the Color of grace and elegance. The cooler undertones of silver blend well with lighter shades and serve as a highlight that adds a touch of sophistication. It also works well with darker colors and gives products a modern, hi-tech look.

**BRONZE** is a mixture of copper and tin. It belongs to the family of browns, and it is a color associated with experience and earthiness. Like the psychology of brown, the Color exudes the aura of nature and ideas of maturation, strength, and security. It symbolizes earthly riches and comfort that musters a personal response in the consumer.

A color circle or a wheel is an organization of color hues around a process, showing the relationships between primary, secondary, tertiary, and other color combinations.

Intuitively, you can go for colors that look good together. But for those who do not want to go beyond instinct, several predefined color scheme standards can help us choose appealing color combinations. These combinations fall into two categories: harmonious (analogous) schemes based on adjacent colors and contrasting (complimentary), derived from opposite wheel segments.

Armed with the knowledge of making emotional interpretations with Color, we define the color palettes for our home or workspace. Unfortunately, Color palettes might be one of the most underutilized sections of our lives. It can be the distinction between immersing our guests in a magical



THE COLOR WHEEL

world of visual communications or feeling like missing a layer of emotion. Designating a color palette is the magic work of an art director – to identify a design style for the required mood in any given room.

Another crucial expertise is understanding lighting, which creates various hues and highlights in every element around us. Light affects our spirits by soft-soaping our hormones. For instance, sunlight exposure can boost serotonin levels, a hormone that aids in regulating our mood. Light also affects our circadian rhythms, which are the internal clocks that tell us when to sleep and wake up.

### Revitalize your personal space with a splash of color psychology, and senses!

These techniques can quickly recharge our living space. Below are essential design secrets that suggest positive changes. This exercise will keep you active and create harmony in your personal space.

1. Identify an area in your home where you spend most of your time.
2. Incorporate soothing shades using fabrics to play with colors and add texture.
3. Introduce scent to involve our sense of smell by lighting perfumed candles or simply having potpourri in a bowl that evokes happy memories.
4. Caring for plants is an act of compassion; the more empathy we have, the better off we are. So, think beyond the windowsill and sneak in some greenery wherever you can.
5. With exposure to sunlight, our body produces vitamin D naturally. So, a splash of the Sun is a great idea, wherever possible.
6. Place photos that inspire you, whether family, friends, or simply images of nature. But be mindful of clutter. Less is always more!
7. Work with layers of lights to create a mood that makes you feel like being on vacation.
8. Creating a good rhythm with our furniture is equally important as it defines our guests' proximity and energies.
9. Placing a bowl/basket of fruit or a jar of your favorite cookies can add joy to our senses of taste.
10. Lastly, ambient music helps to soothe our bodies and relax.

Apply all five senses to your personal space: touch, sight, hearing, smell, and taste. The sensing organs associated with each sense send information to the brain to help us understand and perceive the world around us. It is about engaging our five senses to feel loved and love others.

Practicing some Chromotherapy (color therapy) combined with the five senses will help you stay healthful at home.

**-TUSHAR UNADKAT**





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# BEAUTIFUL KOCHI: THE QUEEN OF ARABIA SEA

By Sandhya Naren

## *The town that truly represents India*

India is a land of rich cultural heritage which is reflected in its diverse geography, Art, literature, languages, ethnicities, food etc. There are a few places where you can see multiple types of cultures that co-exist. A small yet historically significant town named Mattancherry and the adjacent locality of Fort-Kochi, located in the state of Kerala remain as the finest example of this. They are the most sought-after twin-town attraction of foreigners.

Mattancherry is a town that represents a sample of the Indian subcontinent itself, as it has the unique identity of having localities from across India-from more than 20 states -who live with harmony, with keeping their own customs, traditions and lifestyles. Fort Cochin and Mattancherry are the focus of interest, where the city's extraordinary history of foreign influence and settlement is reflected in a variety of architectural styles.

This is an ideal destination for any tourist who wants to see the rich Indian culture & heritage. Located in the city of Kochi which is the queen of Arabian Sea and in the district of Ernakulam, Mattancherry and nearby town Fort Kochi would give a pleasant tour with lots and lots to see.

Following are the major attractions of Mattancherry:

**People migrated from various states, speaking various languages-** Migrants from various parts of India who speak their own mother tongue, staying in close-by houses is a wonderful sight. The town always welcomed and embraced various cultures, helping them to nourish and grow in its land.



**Existence of Jews & Jewish Synagogue-** Mattancherry is the only place in Asia where Jews are living as a community. Even though the number of Jews is shrinking every year (hardly 20 as of today), you can see the wonderful monuments of Jewish settlements there. Their houses are built in European architecture. Queen Elizabeth had visited the synagogue in 1996.



**Soothing backwaters & sea** –The beauty of Mattancherry can be fully seen with its surrounding backwaters. The town is connected to the city of Kochi not only through road but also by water. There is a boat jetty which has regularly traveling boats which take passengers to the city & back. Boating would give a refreshing voyage, enjoying the beauty of Arabian Sea and experiencing the cool breeze.



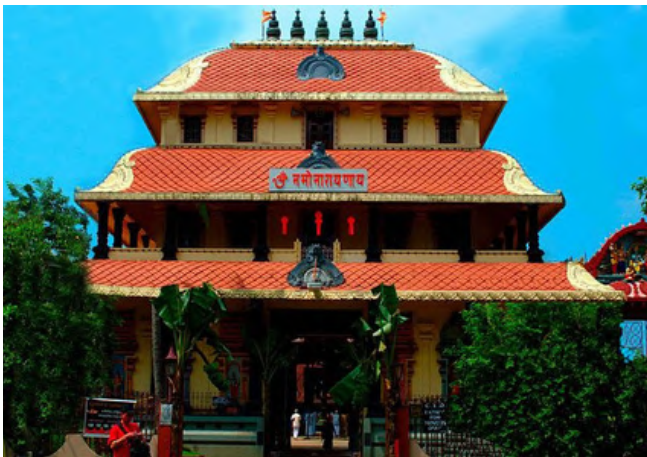
## TRAVEL & LEISURE



**Trade hub-** Mattancherry had been the trade hub of not just Kochi but the entire nation for centuries with the production and commerce of spices like elaichi, pepper & turmeric. You may know that it is for these exotic spices, Portuguese and British came to our land. Even now, it is the prominent center from where spices are exported within the country and abroad.



**Cochin Thirumala Devaswom Temple-** CTD temple, also known as Gosripuram Sri Venkatachalapathy temple is an important place of worship of Hindus from all over the world. The deity is of Lord Venkatachalapathy is known as the Avatar or manifestation of Lord Mahavishnu, one of the Trimurthy (The Holy Trinity), and is believed as Swayambhu (self-manifested, self-emanated or born of itself). It also has the biggest temple-bell in Asia.



**Jew street & Jew town-** Once you enter Jew street, the commercial complex which houses all the businesses, you feel that you are in a totally different world. Each little shop would show you unique items of antique value, in the form of furniture, ornaments, dresses etc.



**Mattancherry palace-** Mattancherry palace was built by the Portuguese in 1555 AD and then the Dutch had renovated the same. It has a wonderful art gallery which showcases the best paintings of Hindu mythology. The interior of the palace is decorated beautifully with royal possessions like headgear, weapons, palanquins and royal furniture, royal dresses etc.



Unlike any other tourist destinations, here you need not enter into any particular building or to a particular sight to enjoy- the entry in this town and a walk in the streets watching the people engaged in their daily life itself will give you an unusual experience, as you can see variances in one fold.

### Fort Kochi

Fort Kochi, the town close to Mattancherry, is waiting with a lot more surprises for you. Walking through Fort Cochin will transport you back to the last years of the 15th century. You can see the Portuguese, Dutch, British touches all around. Fort Cochin probably has the best-preserved history of colonial times. The ideal way to bring it alive is to take a walk down its old colonial roads, with its tree-lined avenues and charming little lands beside the seashores.

From the year 2012, Fort Kochi hosts The Kochi Muziris Biennale, a biennial international contemporary art exhibition that runs for four months. Cochin Carnival is a very popular and grandeur Parade-show held on every year New Year eve, that 31st December.

Following are the major attractions of Fort Kochi:

**Chinese Fishing Net-** These are fixed land installations for an unusual form of fishing - shore operated lift nets. Their size and elegant construction is very photogenic and the slow rhythm of their operation is quite mesmerizing. It is believed that Chinese travelers during the reign of Kubla Khan had introduced this art of Chinese fishing to Cochin.





**Indo Portuguese museum-** The Indo-Portuguese Museum situated in Fort Kochi throws light on the strong Portuguese influence in both the art and the architecture of the region. The museum today is an important center to understand the Indo-Portuguese Christian Art heritage, which is still surviving. The museum is divided into five main sections, according to the nature of items displayed in each section. They are - Altar, Treasure, Procession, Civil Life and Cathedral.



**Fort Kochi Beach-** The main attraction of Fort Kochi beach is the historic fort that is the best example of indo-European architecture. It is the fishing village that became the first European township in India. This offers the ideal ambiance to relax and to let your thoughts soar to new heights of creativity.



**Santa Cruz Basilica** - Santa Cruz Basilica, a Roman Catholic Cathedral located at K.B Jacob road in Fort Kochi, is one of the finest and impressive churches in Kerala. It is a place of devotion as well as a center of historic significance, gifted with architectural and artistic grandeur and colors of the ancient style. This magnificent church is a must see destination for tourists who come to Kochi.



**Bishop's House-** Built by the Portuguese in A.D.1506 as residence of the Portuguese governor, Bishop House is the oldest Catholic Dioceses in India located near the Parade ground, Fort Kochi. A prominent heritage of Fort Kochi, it is characterized by large arches that have a circular garden path winding up to the main entrance.



**St. Francis CSI Church/Vasco-Da-Gama church-** Originally built in 1503, is the oldest European church in India and has great historical significance as a mute witness to the European colonial struggle in the subcontinent. The Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama, died in Kochi in 1524 when he was on his third visit to India. The gravestone of Vasco da Gama can still be seen here.

#### To shop

- Jew Street hosts the tourists with a handful of shopping items, like handicrafts, antique furniture and other equipment, dresses, ornaments, books etc.
- There are shops nearby Fort Kochi beach as well as in Palace Road which sell similar items.
- You can take home the most delicious & fresh spices from Spice center in Palace Road, Mattancherry.

#### To eat

Fort Kochi seashore will give you the true memory of real, traditional seafood. Cuisines of localities, like Konkani's and Gujarathi's which are sweet & spicy available in local shops & bakeries.

#### To reach

The city of Kochi has an airport and is well connected by Air, Rail, Road and Water ways from all the parts of the world.

**-SANDHYA NAREN**



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# CHAT GPT VS. GOOGLE BARD: YOU SEE WHICH IS BETTER?

-WFY BUREAU

## Chat GPT vs. Google Bard: A Comprehensive Comparison

Artificial intelligence has been a hot topic in recent years, and the development of natural language processing (NLP) models has brought about significant improvements in chatbots and conversational agents. Chat GPT and Google Bard are two such models that have gained widespread attention in the field of NLP. In this article, we will provide a detailed comparison of these two models, including their scope, prospects, and other dimensions.

### Chat GPT

Chat GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) is a language model developed by OpenAI. It is based on the transformer architecture and was trained on a massive amount of text data to learn the nuances of the English language. Chat GPT is capable of generating coherent and contextually relevant responses to text inputs, making it a powerful tool for chatbots and conversational agents.

<https://openai.com/blog/>

### Scope

Chat GPT has a broad scope and can be used in various NLP applications. It can be used to generate human-like text, summarize documents, answer questions, and even write articles. It has been used in a range of applications, including virtual assistants, chatbots, and customer service.

### Prospects

Chat GPT has a promising future in the field of NLP, and its potential applications are vast. It can be used to improve the accuracy and efficiency of chatbots and conversational agents and can even be used in content creation. Chat GPT can generate text that is virtually indistinguishable from human-written text, making it a valuable tool for content marketers.

<https://www.analyticsinsight.net/top-10-nlp-tools-machine-learning-2021/>

While it is impossible to predict the future of Chat GPT with certainty, it is clear that the potential for continued

advancements in natural language processing and artificial intelligence is significant. With continued research and development, it is possible that Chat GPT and other language generation models may acquire increasingly sophisticated writing skills and other forms of intelligence. However, it is important to consider the ethical implications of such advancements, and to approach the development and use of these models with caution and care. As AI continues to evolve, it will be important to ensure that it is developed in a responsible and ethical manner, with an eye towards the potential benefits and risks of this powerful technology.

### Other Dimensions

One of the key strengths of Chat GPT is its ability to generate coherent and contextually relevant responses to text inputs. It can understand the context of a conversation and generate responses that are relevant to the conversation topic. Chat GPT also has a high degree of flexibility, which means that it can be easily fine-tuned for specific applications.

### Google Bard

Google Bard is a language model developed by Google that is similar to Chat GPT. Like Chat GPT, Google Bard is based on the transformer architecture and was trained on a massive amount of text data to learn the nuances of the English language. Google Bard is also capable of generating coherent and contextually relevant responses to text inputs, making it a powerful tool for chatbots and conversational agents. <https://ai.googleblog.com/>

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### Comparison of Chat GPT and Google Bard

Now that we have examined the scope and prospects of both Chat GPT and Google Bard, let us examine some of the other dimensions of these two models and compare them.

### Performance

In terms of performance, both Chat GPT and Google Bard are state-of-the-art language models that are capable of generating high-quality text. However, there are some differences in their performance. Chat GPT has been shown to be better at generating longer pieces of text, while Google Bard has been shown to be better at generating shorter responses. Additionally, Chat GPT has been shown to be better at generating text that is more diverse and creative, while Google Bard has been shown to be better at generating text that is more consistent with the input.

While the Chat GPT Chrome extension doesn't directly impact the source or quality of the training data used to train the model, it can be a useful tool for refining the model's output. The extension allows users to generate text in real-time, and provides an interface for users to provide feedback on the generated text. This feedback can be used to improve the model's performance over time. Additionally, the extension may allow users to provide more specific prompts or questions to the model, which can help to further refine the generated text. Overall, the Chat GPT Chrome extension may have some indirect influence on the model's performance and accuracy through user feedback and input.

### Training Data

Both Chat GPT and Google Bard were trained on large amounts of text data to learn the nuances of the English language. However, there are some differences in the training data used by these models. Chat GPT was trained on a diverse set of text data, including books, articles, and web pages, while Google Bard was trained on a narrower set of data, primarily focused on web pages and news articles. This could potentially impact the performance of the models in different ways.

"It's important to note that the main difference between Chat GPT and Google Bard is the source of their training data. While Chat GPT was trained on a diverse set of text data including books, articles, and web pages, its sources end with 2021 data. In contrast, Google Bard continually draws information from the internet, so it has access to the latest information. This difference could impact the performance of the models, as Google Bard may be more up-to-date with current events and trends, while Chat GPT may be limited to newer research and information."

Another key difference between Chat GPT and Google Bard is the underlying natural language models they use. While Chat GPT uses an older GPT-3 language model, Google Bard uses Google's internal LaMDA (Language Model for Dialogue Applications). Additionally, as previously mentioned, Google Bard draws information from the internet, giving it access to more recent data to base its responses on, whereas ChatGPT is mainly trained on data that was available prior to 2021. These differences in the underlying models and data sources could influence the accuracy and relevance of the generated text.

### Ease of Use

Both Chat GPT and Google Bard are relatively easy to use and can be fine-tuned for specific applications with relatively little effort. However, there are some differences in the ease of use of these models. Chat GPT is an open-source model that is available to anyone, while Google Bard is a proprietary model that is only available through Google's API. This means that using Google Bard may require a greater degree of technical expertise and investment.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2022/02/15/ai-trends-to-watch-in-2022/?sh=52e25a1a3257>

### Conclusion

Chat GPT and Google Bard are both powerful language models that have significant potential for a range of NLP applications. Both models are capable of generating coherent and contextually relevant responses to text inputs, and can be fine-tuned for specific applications with relative ease. However, there are some differences between these two models in terms of their performance, training data, and ease of use. Ultimately, the choice between these two models will depend on the specific needs and requirements of the application in question.

When it comes to choosing between Chat GPT and Google Bard, there is no clear winner - it ultimately depends on the specific use case and the user's preferences. If real-time conversation is a priority, Google Bard's ability to draw from the internet for more recent data may be an advantage. On the other hand, if a user is more concerned with accuracy and precision in generating text, Chat GPT's more extensive training on older data may be more appealing. Additionally, the user's technical expertise and available resources may also be a factor in the decision, as Google Bard requires access to Google Cloud and its associated resources. Ultimately, the choice between the two will depend on the user's individual needs and priorities.



-WFY BUREAU



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FEATURE

FROM THE  
KITCHENS  
OF INDIA

# JALEBI

## JALEBI

Here's a detailed recipe for making Jalebi.

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp besan (gram flour)
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 cup plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup warm water
- 1 tsp saffron strands
- 1/2 tsp cardamom powder
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 tsp lemon juice
- Oil for frying

### Instructions:

- In a mixing bowl, add all-purpose flour, besan, baking powder, and cardamom powder. Mix well.
- In a separate bowl, add warm water and saffron strands. Mix and let it sit for a few minutes to infuse the color.
- Add the saffron-infused water and yogurt to the flour mixture. Mix well to form a smooth batter. The batter should be thick, but pourable.
- Cover the bowl with a cloth and let the batter rest for at least 12 hours at room temperature. The batter will ferment and become slightly sour.
- After 12 hours, the batter would have risen and doubled in volume.
- In a saucepan, add sugar and water. Place it on medium heat and stir until the sugar has dissolved.
- Add lemon juice to the sugar syrup and let it simmer for 5-7 minutes until it reaches a one-string consistency. Turn off the heat and keep the syrup warm.
- In a deep-frying pan, heat oil on medium-high heat. The oil should be hot, but not smoking.
- Take a Jalebi bottle or a piping bag with a small round tip. Fill the bag with the Jalebi batter.
- Squeeze the batter in a circular motion to form spirals. Fry the Jalebis until golden brown and crisp on both sides.
- Remove the Jalebis from the oil using a slotted spoon and immediately dunk them in the warm sugar syrup.
- Let the Jalebis soak in the syrup for 2-3 minutes until they absorb the syrup and become soft.
- Remove the Jalebis from the syrup and transfer them to a serving plate.
- Serve the Jalebis hot, garnished with some chopped nuts, if desired.

**Your delicious Jalebis are now ready to be enjoyed!**

Here are some tips that can help you make the perfect Jalebis:

- The consistency of the Jalebi batter is crucial. It should be thick enough to stick to the piping bag, but not too thick that it won't flow through the nozzle. If the batter is too thick, add a little water to thin it down.
- It's important to let the batter ferment for at least 12 hours. This will give the Jalebis a slightly sour taste and make them crispier. If the weather is cold, you can keep the batter in a warm place like the oven or microwave.
- When frying the Jalebis, make sure the oil is hot enough. If the oil is not hot enough, the Jalebis will absorb too much oil and become soggy. If the oil is too hot, the Jalebis will cook too quickly and not absorb enough syrup.
- To get the perfect spiral shape, start piping the batter from the center and work your way outwards in a circular motion. Don't make the Jalebis too big or too small, aim for a medium-sized spiral.
- Dunk the Jalebis in the syrup immediately after frying. This will help them absorb the syrup and become soft and juicy. Make sure the syrup is warm, not hot or cold.
- If you want to store the Jalebis for later, don't soak them in the syrup for too long as they may become too soft. Store them in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 days.

***By following these tips, you can make the perfect Jalebis that are crispy on the outside, juicy on the inside, and bursting with flavor.***





## Rain Or Two Drops Of Tears

**A Poem by Sarmistha Dey**

You asked me for a wet evening.  
I came to you as rain.  
If you want a bunch of sunshine,  
I was smiling in your flower garden in the morning light.  
You wanted a drop of love, I poured my whole heart into you!  
You told me to fly like the storm of tomorrow.  
I became the southern wind in the veins of your atrium  
You told me to make the flower bloom on a rock  
I worshiped the rock as God.  
You asked for some affection,  
I touched your forehead and painted with a kiss.  
You wanted me to be a stormy sea,  
I became a wave in your heart.  
You said to decorate your sky with dreams,  
I spread rainbow colors all over your body.  
One by one, when I arranged  
all the thoughts in two eyes,  
you looked into my eyes ,  
said in the language of the eyes, say something once!  
With the blink of an eye ,  
the question was asked silently when I am not with you  
Will you shed two drops of tears for me??

**-SARMISTHA DEY**





# There Is One Earth In Our Heart



**A Poem by  
Rema Pisharody**

There hides one earth in our heart  
A garden of blossoming flowers  
A Season of spring and a summer  
Of light fire and shadows  
A rain that fills soil in fragrance  
Of flowers and a meditating winter

It is a mystery not known  
How far our thoughts travel  
To reach upon the axis,  
in magnetic tranquil rhythm  
To methodically bring forward,  
to shape to reshape our fate,  
Certain yet uncertain an element  
Hides beneath our footprints!  
Deep down grows, a tender sapling  
To a tree of sweetness  
Entrapped at times in war zones  
Of hatred and hell, we fall  
Like a blistered green branch.  
Afar a riddle, a river,  
Rolls down from the hillock  
To a valley of unseen treasures,  
The echo is our own smitten voice

The whispering wind of the woods  
Sets its boundaries,  
When turns wild, listen to its roar  
While the trembling sky falls  
In tears of the rain clouds  
Earth breaks like our heart,  
However, solid crux of destiny  
Holds a long day's pain  
There hides, a mystic dream  
To flourish, to blossom  
Again..

**-REMA PISHARODY**





**A Short Story by  
Sudha Mukhopadhyay**

# GOD MA

"Ma, today our teacher told us that God is everywhere ...is it true? Then why can't I see him? And is God a girl or a boy?" asked little Asha, happily sitting on her mother's lap.

Her mother put her arms around her and told her "Yes, what your teacher told you is right, God is everywhere. God can be seen in goodness. When someone is good to you or helps you or smiles at you, that person is God. God takes care of children because God loves children."

"Then ma, are you God, because you take care of me?"

As her mother was about to reply, there was a knock on their old broken wooden door that squeaked every time it was opened and closed.

Asha ran to open the door and came back telling her ma that it was Gauri and ran out with her as she usually did at noon after lunch. This was her play time after getting back from school.

Gauri kept pace with Asha as they ran into the nearby woods with gaudy abandon.

They frolicked, plucked tender leaves from the ground, popped in a few fallen tamarind fruits and talked about the dog that was following them. A little further away, under a gulmohar tree, Asha saw an old woman she had never seen before. The old lady had no teeth, was blind in one eye, had just an old

tattered saree wrapped around and seemed to be unaware of her surroundings. Asha and Gauri sat beside her. They sat there for a while without speaking a word. Then suddenly Asha got up, moved around here and there and collected a few gulmohar flowers that were strewn all around, placed them on the old lady's lap and asked "Do you like flowers? These are for you."

The bright red and yellow flowers brought a smile on the old lady's face. She admired them for a while, smelled them, put them back on her lap and then she placed her hands on the heads of both the girls and blessed them.

Both Asha and Gauri then casually walked away.

Later when Asha returned home she told her Ma, "I am very happy today. I met an old lady who was sitting all alone, and you know what? We sat beside her for some time. Then I gathered gulmohar flowers and gave them to her. She then placed her hand on my head and blessed me. She blessed Gauri too."

"Really, who was she, was anyone there with her, did you ask her for her name?" her ma wanted to know.

"No, but I liked her smile although she had no teeth and her cheeks had gone in. I think she too was God."

**-SUDHA MUKHOPADHYAY**





# The Whispering Clouds

**A Poem by  
Sudha K K**

Listlessly moving whispering clouds  
Conversing with her in solitude, aloud...  
Sans words or syntax of language...  
Like an opened bottle of champagne.

Didn't you tell me your day out...?  
Did you feel as left out...?  
Did you get a real glance...?  
Of your conceived semblance...?

Where did we bid 'so long'  
When we met last, like this along...  
Were your scribblings sombre...?  
On the walls of your confined chamber?

Why don't you fly towards me...  
With wings of a sweet reverie...  
May you swing in my hands...  
As light and soft as your hair strands...

May you not feel pressed...  
For pleasing anyone around...  
Nor may you be stressed...  
To be someone as they sound

Be you, and by yourself...  
Not losing, never, your 'self'  
Make a life of your choice...  
Not losing the sheen of your joys.

May you be called a rebel...  
For the world lets you not ravel.  
Come to Life from existence...  
Defying every resistance.

**-SUDHA K K**





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


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**BLENDED  
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# The Blended Learning: All You Need To Know About New Age Education. Part I



by **Prof. Ujjwal  
K Chowdhury**

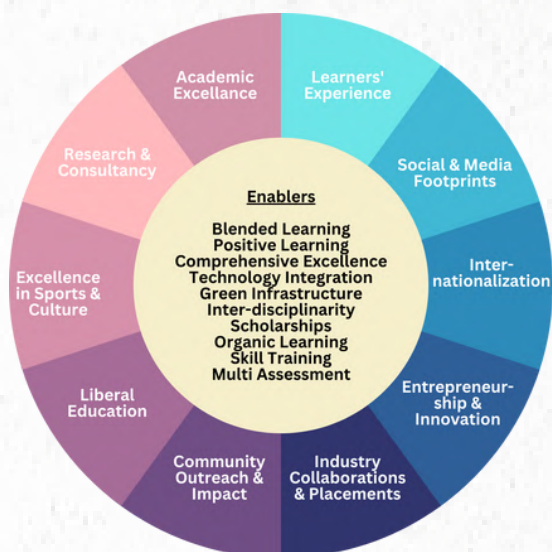
## 10Square: Evolving a Model for Post-Pandemic University Education:

Education in general, and higher education in particular (graduation, post-graduation, research), have gone through an unforeseen disruption during the COVID pandemic world-over. Just in India, UNESCO had estimated in November 2020 that as many as 52% of the 283 million formal learners across all levels of education did not have one bit of any education since the onset of the pandemic, and the remaining 48% had varying degrees of the same. The situation surely is far better today, but there are several long-term impacts that the pandemic has brought in to higher education. The story in Bangladesh shall not be any different.

While most of what are noted here were already there before the pandemic, and were in discussion, circulation and also in practice at times and in some places since the onset of this century, their essentiality has grown by leaps and bounds today. We look at ten enablers of higher education, and how they lead to ten areas of outcomes, and these all can and should be quantifiable and measurable as well. The common belief is that which cannot be measured, cannot often be seen, and cannot be claimed to make a great practice.

## ENABLERS: Blended Learning:

Education managed through a learning management system (customized and proprietary one like Amizone of Amity or BLC of Daffodil or a subscribed LMS like Canvas or Blackboard) is a must today. In the true blue approach of flipped classroom, all proprietary learning resources (those made by the mentors themselves including their own videos, podcasts, online courses, case-studies and presentations) and aggregated learning resources (taken from open digital sources, MOOCs, pdfs etc) need to be uploaded on the LMS by the mentors well ahead of the actual session (digital or physical). This is done for advance learning asynchronously at each learner's own pace, place and time. Then, when the learners meet synchronously in a physical or digital class, there can be quiz, polemics, doubt clearing, newer cases, et al. Further, the post-session learning can move to the laboratory, studio, and online to take it forward through practical and value-added learning. In effect, from pre-session, during-session to post-session, the digital and the physical, the synchronous and the asynchronous, the conceptual and the practical: all stages and phases of learning are becoming seamlessly blended.



**10Square:**  
Evolving a Model for Post-Pandemic University Education:



**Positive Leadership:**

Practicing Positive Leadership and Positive Leadership: Strategies for Extraordinary Performance, both by Kim S. Cameron, outline positive leadership norms and practices. Modern higher education must ensure quality and qualified manpower through a positive leadership which can be institutionalized with the following steps, among others.

Key Result Areas (KRAs) of each functionary in the system must be well-defined at every level, and no senior must digress the line of reporting. Appraisal of any mentor or support staff must be done based on a well-documented transparent set of matrices, and from four angles: senior, self, peers and junior (including the learners).

A senior must appreciate a colleague in public, and may reprimand, if needed, only in person. There should be an Appreciation Board in each department & functional area; Best Employee of the Month, Outstanding Mentor of the Month, Star Learner of the Month in each department, along with celebration of birthdays of staff members collectively (a card, a chocolate box & a book from the top management).

The leader must lead by example (e.g., before asking someone to prepare an online course, let the senior do that). Promote self-determination in your juniors by showing them how it's done. Explain the rationale, rather than asking to implement by diktat. Speaking less, leadership must practice active listening. Ensure psychological safety: no fear of being put down for speaking up or sharing ideas. Make learning & productively expressing the usual norm through online courses, workshops, writing (journal, mainstream, social media), debates, public talks, and panel discussions within and beyond the campus.

Positive leadership can evolve when we have a clear-cut communication method and line of authority. People often leave their managers, not the organizations they work for. "People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. And what you do simply proves what you believe." Create a Purpose for the organization (salary & designation, though important, cannot be the only purposes).

Path, in positive leadership, focuses on having clarity on goals, resources, roles, timelines, and strategies. Path defines the 'how' in granular detail. Progress through appreciation, celebration of success, and providing feedback & support to team leading to success are positive elements of progress. Self-awareness comes through leadership asking for feedback on major issues.

Positive leadership calls for relational transparency (having a clear leadership philosophy; purpose bigger than the individual or the Chair: living by its spirit). Also, there has to be a balanced processing (using active listening in meetings or when team members come to put forth an issue, responding to the ground reality, connecting it to the Mission & Vision).

Ethical behaviour (following through on what you say you will do) and Trustworthiness (treating others with respect and keeping your word) are also hallmarks of positive leadership, apart from supportiveness (giving appreciation and support to followers) and empowerment (giving your followers freedom and choice).

Set high expectations and live up to them: Big Goals for the organization and for each team-member, and for self (by each leader). Make sure you deliver on the commitments you make or explain why there is partial failure. Try to resolve the inevitable conflicts that will arise in the workplace quickly and effectively. Firmly discourage small talk, personality-focused talk. Ordinary persons talk about people, good persons talk about events, and great persons focus on ideas.

Positive leadership may lead to be a Great Place to Work, formally. This will help the institute to get a snapshot of Trust levels between employees and the organization, to compare the given workplace culture with competitors and the best in the trade, to show commitment to employees

about improving workplace culture, to get insights on how your employees perceive your people practices. These will help to project your employer brand internally and externally, attract and retain talent, and is surely an opportunity to earn national & global recognition.

**Comprehensive Excellence**

We often misjudge our learners by judging their academic brilliance through written examinations, once mid-term and once at the end of the course, and looking at their knowledge quotient largely. Excellence can only be evolved if we look at a learner comprehensively: knowledge component through written assessment, comprehension through applications, leadership through initiatives, teamwork through other activities, compassion through community outreach, digital abilities, use of libraries and learning resources, physical abilities through games and sports, aesthetics through cultural activities, creativity and problem-solving through suitable tasks given, emotional quotient and collaborative acumen through group tasks and peer-learning, and a genuine interest in one niche area through organic learning along with project-based education. Each of these components must have some contribution to the final assessment and score to illustrate the level of learning and excellence of a learner, and not just marks of written examination. The comprehensive credits, scores and grades given based on evidences in hand can only lead to the path of comprehensive excellence of a learner. The comprehensive score and grade should be the cardinal one for life, for employment reference and for transcription.

Final Grade & Score of a Learner to be determined comprehensively considering the follows:

1. Academics (Midterm & Final Exams, Quiz, Assignments): 50%
2. Social Work outside Campus: 5%
3. Leadership, Teamwork, Art of Living (including Clubs): 10%
4. Library & Research: 10%
5. Project-based Organic Learning: 10%
6. Sports & Healthcare: 5%
7. Employability 360, Presentations & Digital Skills: 10%

Since there shall be UGC norms that need to be followed, we can have two scores, one academic (100%) as done now, and another comprehensive (100%) by doubling the scores of sections B to G.

**Technology Integration:**

Today, post-pandemic, technology integration is absolutely essential in higher education. This is useful to have an online dossier of all outcomes of a learner, preserving all learning resources of every mentor, and have blended learning not just for theory or concepts, but taken forward even in the practical area with virtual studios and laboratories. The resources and outcomes may be on the cloud as well.

Technology integration also refers to introducing all fourth industrial revolution emerging technologies (4IRTech) in any and every domain of learning, technologies like Artificial Intelligence-Machine Learning, internet of things, cyber security, block-chain, additive technologies, virtual, augmented and mixed reality, big data, Metaverse, internet of things, et al. The use of these may vary from engineering to literature, but the fundamentals of these and their usage must be known to any higher education learner.

Technology integration also means having a Smart Campus, that which ensures smart learning, smart governance, smart healthcare, smart green life, smart networking, and smart campus management. This is not only about having digital network and its bandwidth, but also having artificial intelligence and machine learning integrated with the available digital systems to predict impending scenarios, possible cases of crises, if at all, and their responses.

*Part I ends....*

**-Prof. UJJWAL K CHOWDHURY**



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## Lithium Jackpot: India Is Jubilant With Its Rare Mineral Wealth

*Jammu & Kashmir Lithium reserves has given wings for India's Electric Vehicle Dreams.*

Recent discovery of 5.9 million tonnes of Lithium reserves by the Geographical Survey of India in the Reasi district of Jammu & Kashmir has given wings for India's electric vehicle dreams. If we manage to utilize this natural resource into battery grade Lithium will be an upgrade for the Indian economy.

Lithium is found concentrated along with other minerals in the form of oxides and carbonates. Lithium-ion batteries processed from raw Lithium are used in electric vehicles, wind turbines and solar panels. On the grounds it's crucial to turn India into a green economy.

Currently India does not have an advanced infrastructure to manufacture Lithium-ion batteries to a large extent. India depends on imports from China, Argentina and Australia. China manufactures more than 70% of the global Lithium-ion batteries and out of top 10 manufacturers 6 are from China. This shows the monopoly of China in the business market.

By 2030, Government of India expects the sales of electric vehicles to be 30% for private automobiles, 70% for the commercial vehicles and 80% of the 2 and 3 wheelers. The Government records states the sales of electric vehicles has witnessed a rise during the last few years. While sales during 2020-21 was only 48,179, the figures increased to 2,37,811 in 2021-22 to 4,42,901 in 2022-23 (till December 9 2022).

Experts say domestic manufacturing can reduce the electric vehicle rate from 10% - 20% and rapidly increase the sales of electric vehicles in India. This will

hugely reduce the Indian dependency in import of oil and gas for the fuel needs. Import and export ratio can be balanced to decrease the inflation rate and increase the forex reserves of India to a large extent.

Usage of electric vehicles will have a great environmental impact, as India is one of the most polluted countries of the world. Following Bangladesh, Kuwait, Chad and UAE while considering the average AQI 2022. Indian cities New Delhi, Ghaziabad, Begusarai, Noida, Faridabad, Sahasra and Patna come under the top ten most polluted cities of the world. The other three cities include Kashgar - China, Lahore-Pakistan and Birganj -Nepal. Till date the Government of India has not been able to keep a check on pollution even after imposing strong measures.

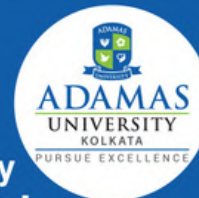
Some reports state that these natural reserves were found in 1999, but it took 2 decades to move from the preliminary survey & research stage to the excavation stage. The authorities have not responded about this slow development process. Other Lithium reserves have also been found in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh.

If we are able to develop advanced extraction and manufacturing infrastructure for the Lithium ion batteries, India could become the top global manufacturer of Lithium ion batteries even exceeding China on sales. This will have great economic as well as environmental advantages for India.

**-LEON JOSE VITHAYATHIL**



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# Flirting And Sexual Harassment: How To Know The Warning Signs?

By WFY Bureau

Flirting and sexual harassment are two distinct behaviours that are often confused or mistaken for one another. While flirting is a playful and light-hearted way of expressing interest in someone, sexual harassment is a serious form of misconduct that can have significant emotional, psychological, and professional consequences for its victims. Understanding the key differences between flirting and sexual harassment is essential for creating safe, respectful, and healthy social and professional environments.

Flirting is a social behaviour that involves expressing interest in someone in a light-hearted and playful manner. It can involve exchanging compliments, making suggestive comments, or engaging in physical touch, such as light teasing or playful gestures. Flirting is meant to be enjoyable and fun for both parties involved, and it should never involve making someone feel uncomfortable or pressured.

Sexual harassment, on the other hand, is a form of misconduct that involves unwanted and unwarranted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical touch. Unlike flirting, sexual harassment is not meant to be enjoyable or playful, and it can cause significant emotional, psychological, and professional harm to its victims.

One of the key differences between flirting and sexual harassment is the intent behind the behaviour. Flirting is meant to be playful and light-hearted, while sexual harassment is intended to intimidate, coerce, or make someone feel uncomfortable. Additionally, sexual harassment is often motivated by a power imbalance, such as a boss harassing an employee, or a senior colleague harassing a junior colleague.

Another key difference between flirting and sexual harassment is the impact that the behaviour has on the recipient. Flirting should never make someone feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, or threatened, while sexual harassment can have a profound and lasting impact on its victims, including feelings of shame, anxiety, and depression.

To differentiate between flirting and sexual harassment, it is important to pay attention to the context in which the behaviour is taking place. Flirting that is appropriate in a social setting, such as a bar or a party, may not be appropriate in a professional setting, such as a workplace.

It is important to pay attention to the power dynamics between the individuals involved. If the behaviour involves a power imbalance, such as a boss harassing an employee, it is more likely to be considered sexual harassment.

It is also important to consider the frequency and persistence of the behaviour. A one-time compliment or playful comment is generally not considered sexual harassment, but repeated and persistent behaviour that makes someone feel uncomfortable or threatened can cross the line into harassment.

Finally, it is important to pay attention to the nonverbal cues and body language of the individuals involved. If someone is uncomfortable with the behaviour, they may display cues such as avoidance, discomfort, or anxiety. On the other hand, if someone is enjoying the flirting, they may display cues such as engagement, laughter, or reciprocation.

**Here are some additional ways to differentiate between flirting and sexual harassment:**



**Consent:** Flirting should only occur between two individuals who are both comfortable with and willing to engage in the behaviour. Sexual harassment, on the other hand, involves behaviour that is unwanted and unwarranted, and often takes place without the consent of the recipient.

**Communication:** Flirting is often characterized by clear and open communication, while sexual harassment often involves secretive or covert behaviour.

**Relationships:** Flirting may occur between individuals who are in a romantic or sexual relationship, while sexual harassment is typically not associated with any type of relationship.

**Repetition:** Flirting is usually a one-time or occasional behaviour, while sexual harassment often involves repeated and persistent behaviour.

**Threats or coercion:** Flirting is never associated with threats or coercion, while sexual harassment often involves the use of threats or coercion to intimidate or pressure the recipient into compliance.

**Physical touch:** While flirting may involve physical touch, such as a light touch or playful gesture, sexual harassment often involves unwanted and unwarranted physical touch, such as unwanted physical contact or gestures.

**Professionalism:** Flirting is not appropriate in professional settings, such as the workplace, while sexual harassment is illegal and can result in serious consequences in such settings.

**Respect:** Flirting should always involve mutual respect, while sexual harassment is a violation of the recipient's right to respect and dignity.

By considering these factors, you can better identify when behaviour may cross the line into sexual harassment and take appropriate action to address it. Remember, it is always important to prioritize the comfort and well-being of others and to maintain a respectful and professional demeanour in all social and professional interactions.

Sexual harassment is illegal in many countries and is considered a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights. There are a number of legal aspects to consider when it comes to sexual harassment, including:

**Definitions:** The definition of sexual harassment can vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but it typically involves unwanted and unwarranted

sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or physical touch that creates a hostile or intimidating work environment.

**Employer responsibility:** Employers are responsible for providing a safe and respectful work environment, free from sexual harassment. They may be held liable for failing to address or prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

**Employee rights:** Employees have the right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment, and they may be able to file a complaint or take legal action if they experience harassment in the workplace.

**Legal remedies:** Victims of sexual harassment may be eligible for a range of legal remedies, including damages for emotional distress, lost wages, and other economic losses, as well as injunctions to stop the harassment.

**Statutes of limitations:** There may be time limits on when a complaint or legal action can be filed, so it is important to take action as soon as possible if you experience sexual harassment.

**International law:** There are international treaties and conventions that prohibit sexual harassment, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Labour Organization's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination in the Workplace.

It is important to note that the specific laws and regulations regarding sexual harassment can vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. If you believe you have been the victim of sexual harassment, it is advisable to seek legal advice to understand your rights and options.

Flirting and sexual harassment are two distinct behaviours that are often mistaken for one another. To differentiate between the two, it is important to pay attention to the intent behind the behaviour, the impact it has on the recipient, the context in which it is taking place, the power dynamic between the individuals involved, the frequency and persistence of the behaviour, and the nonverbal cues and body language of the individuals involved.

By understanding the key differences between flirting and sexual harassment, we can create safe, respectful, and healthy social and professional environments that promote positive and enjoyable human interaction.

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## The Rising Star Of New Zealand Cricket With Indian Roots

**By Saji Chacko**

Inderbir Sodhi, better known as "Ish," is one of the leading leg spinners in the world. The burly 30-year-old leggie is an integral part of the New Zealand side across all formats. What's more interesting is that Ludhiana-born Ish's parents emigrated to New Zealand when he was four years old. Known more for his exploits in the white ball version of the game, Ish made headlines when he claimed five wickets—his first haul in Test cricket—in the opening Test against Pakistan in Karachi in December 2022.

Ish's father, Rajbir Singh Sodhi, was a successful doctor who wanted to try his luck abroad. He chose New Zealand because one of his uncles was already settled in Auckland, and that prompted him to emigrate to the Antipodes. Recalling his shift from the pacy city of Ludhiana to the more languid and tranquil city of Auckland, Ish initially felt that he had been transported to another world. "Once we landed and settled down, the quieter environment of Auckland was something of a shocker." We could barely hear the high-pitched sounds we were so accustomed to (in Ludhiana) and instead were met by silence for most of the time. The transition was too much of a contrast for me. "My mother, Simran, a school teacher, played a big role in helping me to settle down," he said.

The young Ish was very good in his studies, and initially his plan was to become a doctor. "I was very interested in becoming a doctor because I was good at studies and no one in my family was a doctor." All that changed one day when I went and casually bowled at a local club in Auckland. "It was as if I were pulled into the game—something inexplicable and difficult for me to explain," he said.

The next thing Ish was doing was frequenting Parnell Cricket Club in Auckland as and when he could muster time between his studies. What started as a "fling" soon turned into an obsession as he became more and more involved in cricket. He also became very interested in following the exploits of leading New Zealand and Indian cricketers.



Ish had to make a difficult decision when he was 18 years old. His grades were very good, and things looked set for a doctor's career, but then there was a blip. His leg spin was gaining prowess, and soon he was touted as one of the finest young prospects. Ish's predicament was that becoming a doctor had become secondary to cricket. But the challenge was how to break the news to his father.









"It was one of the toughest decisions of my life." I remember that I could not sleep a wink at night the day before I was to break the news to my father. I was confident about my future as a cricketer, but I was not sure how he would react. "Thankfully, I was able to convince him, and he relented after some initial hesitation," added Ish.

Once the monkey was off his back, a liberated Ish then went about leaving his stamp on the game in a planned manner. He joined Dipak Patel's spin academy in Napier and was taught the nuances of spin bowling by Dipak, another PIO who played a major role in New Zealand reaching the semi-finals of the 1992 World Cup. "It was Dipak sir who taught me the finer points of leg spin bowling; also, he stressed the need to have variations and mix things up." "I am eternally grateful to him for this," said Ish.

Ish was soon in the thick of things, honing his leg spin skills and making waves at the national level, taking a series of five wicket hauls. He caught the eye of the national team and was soon playing for New Zealand in One Dayers. He made his international debut when he played in the ODI against Zimbabwe in August 2014.

#### **Dream moment**

His dream moment came in 2016, when he made his debut when New Zealand hosted the test series against India. There was a twist to his celebrations when, by pure bad luck, his father, Rajbir, was touring Brisbane (Australia) when the happy moment came. So it was left to his mother, Simrat Sodhi, to handle the congratulations, which were pouring in by the minute. "I will never forget that moment—my mother, a school teacher, doing her best to handle the heavy outpour of felicitations. "It was a very amusing yet touching scene, and I must admit that I was very proud of myself," said Ish.

Ish recalled another incident that still gives him goose bumps. In 2012, India toured New Zealand for a Test series, and that was the first time he got to see Sachin and David, his idols, in flesh and blood. "I was on the moon when I got the call to bowl at the nets for the visiting Indian team. I had read and watched Sachin and Dravid bat. "Now, I was there bowling up to them, those memories will be etched in my memory forever," he said.

Ish, whose idol is the legendary Anil Kumble, feels that cricket gave him the platform and purpose to not only become a good player but also a good human being. "Sports teach one to be humble and grounded no matter what one's achievements are," he signs off.

**-SAJI CHACKO**



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