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Team WFY

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By Melwyn Williams

Dear readers, Greetings!

As we welcome the month of August, it brings with it a sense of pride and unity as we celebrate the achievements and contributions of the Indian diaspora across the globe. The WFY Magazine is once again honoured to present another edition.

In this edition, we delve into the inspiring journeys of Indian diaspora members who have made significant strides in their respective domains, leaving an indelible mark on the world. From pioneering entrepreneurs to ground-breaking artists, their stories serve as a testament to the resilience and determination that define our community.

We also take a closer look at the current affairs shaping our world today, exploring the latest developments in politics, economy, culture, and technology that are impacting the lives of Indians and the diaspora alike. It is crucial for us to stay informed and engaged as our global network continues to grow and evolve.

Emmanuel Macron's visit to the Pacific Islands highlights France's ambitions in the region, offering opportunities for collaboration with India.

France's historical ties to the Pacific islands and the Indian diaspora in countries like Fiji, New Delhi, and Paris can offer the islands an alternative development model to China's predatory practises, particularly in infrastructure, healthcare, and IT. France's significant maritime domain in the Indo-Pacific, along with India's engagement, can provide an alternative development

model to China's predatory practises. India-France defence relations can also enhance regional security. Both countries can champion a non-big-power platform in the evolving geopolitical entity of the Indo-Pacific, countering China's hegemony with a sophisticated approach.

The ongoing monsoon has caused significant damage in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. However, much of this destruction has been accumulating for decades. To save Mussoorie from additional damage caused by real estate development and tourism, the NGT has ordered the Dhami government to put recommendations into action. This approach should extend to the entire region. Regulating tourist numbers, charging fees for waste management, and monitoring construction activities are essential steps. The challenge lies in prioritising the mountains' interests over other competing concerns, requiring strong political will from the central and state governments. The area's vulnerability to extreme weather events necessitates responsible planning and sustainable tourism to ensure a safe and attractive environment for travellers.

Since May 3, violence in Manipur has displaced tens of thousands. The Biren Singh administration's inability to restore law and order puts the entire Northeast at risk. A viral video of sexual violence against tribal women in Manipur sparked fears of a backlash among Meiteis in Mizoram. The Zoramthanga administration handled

the situation calmly. Meanwhile, more atrocities are emerging from numerous FIRs in Manipur. A thorough investigation is essential, and the GOI must ensure sincere prosecution. The Manipur crisis can trigger problems across the Northeast, with the refugee influx impacting land resources and interstate disputes. The GOI needs to address these issues proactively to maintain peace in the border region.

After two and a half months, a video surfaced showing a mob parading two tribal women naked in Manipur. The incident highlights the state's inaction and violence. The police took notice only after the video went viral on social media, raising questions about their response. The victims were originally under police protection but were still subjected to brutal attacks. The weaponization of ethnic divisions has worsened in the past few months, demanding immediate action from the authorities to prevent further escalation. The guilty must be punished, and the government should ensure accountability for the delay in investigation and police action. Women's safety depends on strict implementation of the law and addressing all sexual violence cases promptly.

The Manipur crisis has brought attention to the region's contested histories. While these historical narratives are fascinating, applying them to the current crisis can worsen the situation. History should not be the measuring scale to deal with today's problems and crimes, and it shall never be judged on that scale. Nostalgia for empires has led to problems in various countries, such as Brexit in the UK and cultural conflicts in the US. Balance is crucial; while nostalgia can support communities, dwelling on the past can hinder progress. Instead, focusing on the future and addressing present issues is essential for healing and peace.

Mizoram recently witnessed its largest-ever rally since its establishment in 1986, with an impressive 97,350 participants. This show of solidarity was in support of their fellow citizens in Manipur. The state's youthful

population, united by a shared language, is an advantage in times of crisis. The Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA) and social media have played vital roles in fostering a strong sense of unity, enabling rapid information dissemination, and supporting mobilisation when needed.

In these times of uncertainty, the power of community and solidarity becomes more evident than ever. As we stand united in our efforts to navigate the challenges of the present and the future, the stories of triumph and resilience showcased in this magazine serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for us all.

At WFY, we are committed to providing a platform that not only celebrates the achievements of our diaspora but also fosters meaningful conversations and connections. We invite you, our readers, to actively participate in this journey of exploration and empowerment.

We acknowledge that our community's success is built on the values of hard work, compassion, and cultural heritage. Together, we continue to build bridges of understanding and forge partnerships that enrich our lives and contribute to the progress of nations.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the contributors, writers, and team members who have made this edition possible. Your dedication to bringing these stories to life is truly commendable.

We hope you enjoy reading this August edition of WFY Magazine and that it leaves you inspired and engaged with the dynamic world of the Indian diaspora. Let us continue to celebrate our shared heritage and achievements as we look forward to the promise of a brighter future together.

Wishing you an enlightening read,

-MELWYN WILLIAMS Editor-in-Chief, The WFY Magazine









Calling Indian Diaspora writers from around the world!

Inviting you to be a part of WFY Magazine family!

Why write for WFY Magazine?

Global Reach: Your words will resonate with Indian Diaspora communities across the globe, creating connections and fostering understanding.

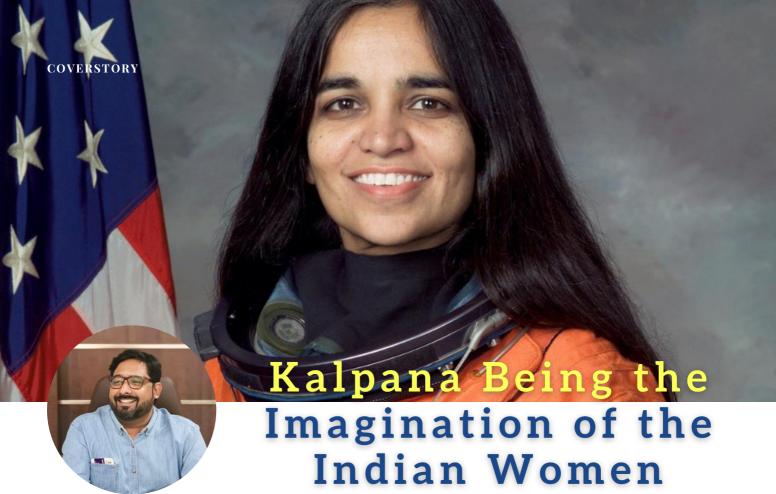
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WFY Magazine: Celebrating Indian Diaspora Lives

Contribute your unique stories and experiences to WFY Magazine and be a part of a global celebration of Indian Diaspora lives. Reach out to us on wfyeditorial@gmail.com





By Melwyn Williams

Kalpana Chawla: Inspiring Millions of Indian Women to Dream and Achieve



In history, certain individuals have shined as guiding lights, illuminating the path generations to come. In the vastness of the cosmos, there lies an extraordinary tale of a woman whose determination and brilliance transcended boundaries of Earth. Kalpana Chawla, a name etched in the annals of history, continues to millions of Indian women to reach for the stars, quite literally. Her journey from a small town in India to the

boundless expanse of space serves as a testament to the power of dreams and the strength of the human spirit. Let us embark on this cosmic odyssey and explore the life of Kalpana Chawla, a true icon and a beacon of hope for generations to come.



A Meteoric Rise: Early Life and Education

Kalpana Chawla was born on March 17, 1962, in Karnal, a modest town in the northern state of Haryana, India. Kalpana was the youngest of four children born to Banarasi Lal Chawla and Sanjyothi Chawla.

Chawla hadn't been given a name until she started school. Her parents called her Montu, but when she started school, Chawla chose her own name from a list. Kalpana is a name that means "idea" or "imagination." She was often known by the nickname 'K.C.'

From a young age, her fascination with the skies above knew no bounds. After seeing a plane for the first time when she was about three years old, Chawla became interested in flying. Stargazing and observing the celestial dance became her cherished pastimes. She expressed an interest in aviation while in school and



Chawla (center) with her classmates at Tagore Baal Niketan school in India.(Image credit: Getty)

spent days visiting her local flying club with her father. Little did she know then that these innocent curiosities would lay the foundation for her journey into the cosmos.

With unwavering support from her parents, Kalpana pursued her education with zeal. She particularly excelled in academics, mathematics and science. Kalpana Chawla finished her schooling at Tagore Baal Niketan Senior Secondary School, Karnal, India. After completing her schooling, she set her sights on engineering. Undeterred by societal norms, she Punjab Engineering enrolled at College, Chandigarh, where she earned her Bachelor of Engineering degree in Aeronautical Engineering in 1982. Kalpana's ambitions soared higher as she set her course for the United States, where she would eventually find herself amidst the stars.

Soaring to New Heights: <u>NASA</u> and Beyond

In pursuit of her dreams, Kalpana Chawla moved to the United States in 1982 to further her studies. Her relentless pursuit of excellence earned her a Master of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Texas, Arlington, in 1984. In 1986, Kalpana Chawla completed her second M.S. degree. Her insatiable thirst for knowledge and her desire to push boundaries led her to obtain a Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Colorado Boulder in 1988.

In 1994, Kalpana Chawla's life would take an awe-inspiring turn when she joined the esteemed National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) as a Research Scientist at the Ames Research Centre. Her brilliance and dedication caught the attention of the space agency, and in 1996, she was selected as an astronaut candidate, marking the beginning of her extraordinary journey into space.



Kalpana Chawla in a spacesuit before an underwater training session in 1995.(Image credit: NASA/MSFC)

Personal Life

At the age of 21, Kalpana Chawla married Jean-Pierre Harrison on December 2, 1983.

Dancing Among the Stars: Kalpana's Space Missions

Kalpana Chawla's first foray into space came in 1997, when she served as a mission specialist on the Space Shuttle Columbia. This historic mission,

STS-87, made her the first Indian-born woman to travel to space. Her passion for space exploration and her commitment to scientific research shone through as she conducted experiments that advanced our understanding of the universe.



Kalpana Chawla being assisted in her flight suit prior to launch on STS-87.(Image credit: NASA/KSC)

Chawla said after her maiden space flight, "When you look at the stars and the galaxy, you feel that you are not just from any particular piece of land but from the solar system."



Kalpana Chawla being assisted in her flight suit prior to launch on STS-87.(Image credit: NASA/KSC)

Chawla was chosen in 2000 to participate in STS-107 as a mission specialist on her second trip into orbit. The mission's launch was finally accomplished on January 16, 2003, after numerous delays.



The crew of STS-107, Space Shuttle Columbia's 28th and final mission. (Image courtesy of NASA)

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Chawla aboard the space shuttle on January 27, 2003. (Image credit: Getty)



According to NASA, the crew completed more than experiments over the course of the 16-day journey while maintaining a rigorous shift schedule to guarantee that the research never ceased. The STS-107 crew tested equipment that NASA hoped to use to reuse water on the young Space Station, International among other things. Students from elementary schools all throughout the world conducted experiments that examined how fish and insects react to space travel, and another set of experiments explored the sun.

The Spacehab research module, a sizable pressurised chamber, was specifically transported on this voyage inside the shuttle's payload bay. The Spacehab module's experiments were mostly in the fields of biology and medicine.



Chawla aboard the space shuttle on January 2 2003. (Image credit: Getty)

Chawla spent 30 days, 14 hours, and 54 minutes in space between her two missions. Her second space voyage in 2003, aboard the ill-fated STS-107

mission, would tragically be her last. Her mission aimed to unravel the mysteries of space and their impact on various aspects of life on Earth. However, fate had a different plan, and the Space Shuttle Columbia tragically disintegrated upon re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere, claiming the lives of all seven astronauts, including Kalpana Chawla.



This image of the STS-107 shuttle Columbia crew in orbit was recovered from wreckage inside an undeveloped film canister. From left (bottom row): Kalpana Chawla, Rick Husband, Laurel Clark, and Ilan Ramon. From left (top row): David Brown, William McCool, and Michael Anderson. (Image credit: NASA/JSC)

The space shuttle made its way back to the planet on the morning of February 1, 2003, with the goal of landing at Kennedy Space Centre. However, piece of briefcase-sized insulation that had come loose durina launch damaged the protection system, thermal which is the shield that shields the shuttle from heat during reentry, and hot gas began to pour into the shuttle's wing as it travelled through Earth's atmosphere.

The astronauts were tossed around as the shaky vehicle rolled and bucked. The crew perished when the ship's pressure suddenly dropped in less than a minute. Rick Husband, Laurel Clark, Ilan Ramon, David Brown, William McCool, and Michael Anderson were also on board.

Before hitting the earth, the spacecraft disintegrated over Texas and Louisiana. Following the Challenger shuttle explosion in 1986, the catastrophe was the second significant setback for the space shuttle programme.

Pieces of the Columbia Space Shuttle Disaster Discovered in Texas



A piece of debris from NASA's space shuttle Columbia has discovered in Texas, eight years after the 2003 disaster destroyed the spacecraft and killed its seven-astronaut crew during reentry. It is a round aluminum power <u>reactant storage and distribution</u> Columbia, which from tank disintegrated over Texas as it reentered Earth's atmosphere near the end of a 16-day science mission.

About 160 miles northeast of Houston, in Nacogdoches, Texas, the tank was found in an open region of Lake Nacogdoches.

In an effort to prevent a repeat of the Columbia accident, NASA and other organisations both looked into it. Examples include the 2008 NASA Columbia Crew Survival Investigation Report and the Columbia Accident Investigation Board's 2003 report.

Every year on the last Thursday of January, <u>NASA</u> commemorates the deaths of the Columbia crew, as well as the crews of the Challenger space shuttle and Apollo 1. The fatal missions are also frequently brought up when NASA staff members highlight the significance of prioritising safety in human spaceflight.

Since the Columbia catastrophe, there has not been a fatal NASA mission.

Honours and Recognition In the Realm of Space

 S.S. Kalpana Chawla: The fourteenth contracted Northrop Grumman Cygnus spacecraft mission, which delivered supplies to the International Space Station (ISS), was named the S.S. Kalpana Chawla in her honour.

- Asteroid 51826 Kalpana Chawla is one of seven asteroids named after the Columbia's crew members.
- Lunar Crater "Chawla": lunar crater was named after Kalpana Chawla, a fitting tribute to her journey as an astronaut.
- Kalpana-1 Satellite: The first satellite of the MetSat series, launched by India on September 12, 2002, was renamed "Kalpana-1" in her memory.
- Columbia Hills Peaks: Seven peaks in the Columbia Hills, explored by the NASA Mars Exploration Rover mission, were named after each of the seven astronauts lost in the Columbia shuttle disaster. One of these peaks is Chawla Hill, commemorating Kalpana's contribution to space exploration.

On Earth, Her Light Shines Bright.

- Kalpana Chawla Way, New York: 74th Street in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York City, was renamed "Kalpana Chawla Way" in honour of the astronaut.
- Kalpana Chawla Street, Tamil Nadu: A street in Rayon Sirumugai, Tamil Nagar, India, was named Nadu, Kalpana Chawla Street in her memory.
- Kalpana Chawla Award: The Government of Karnataka instituted the Kalpana Chawla Award in 2004 to recognise young women scientists.
- NASA Supercomputer Dedication: NASA dedicated a supercomputer to Kalpana Chawla, acknowledging her contributions to the space agency.
- Columbia Village Suites: One Florida Institute Technology's student apartment complexes, Columbia Village Suites, has halls named after each of the astronauts, including Chawla.

Commemorations Literature, Music, and More

"Contact Lost" bу Steve Morse: In memory of the Steve Columbia tragedy, Morse from the band Deep Purple created the song A Star in the Sky Lost." "Contact Kalpana carried the band's album Machine Head, featuring the song "Space Truckin'," with her on the mission.

• Star Trek Tribute: Novelist Peter David named the Chawla. shuttlecraft. the astronaut in his after 2007 Star Trek novel, Star Trek: The Next Generation: Before Dishonour.

Empowering Future Generations

- Kalpana Chawla Scholarship: The Kalpana Chawla ISÚ Scholarship Fund established Space International (ISU) alumni in University 2010 support Indian to women's participation international space education programmes.
- Chawla Memorial Kalpana Scholarship: The Students Association (ISA) at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) instituted the Kalpana Chawla Memorial Scholarship programme in 2005 for meritorious graduate students.
- Kalpana Chawla Outstanding Recent Alumni Award: The University of Colorado renamed the Kalpana Chawla Outstanding Recent Alumni Award in her honour.

Institutions Named in Her Memory

- Hall, Kalpana Chawla University Texas οf The University Arlington: opened a dormitory named Kalpana Chawla Hall in 2004 to honour her achievements.
 - Kalpana Chawla Planetarium, Jyotisar: The Government of Haryana established the Kalpana Chawla Planetarium in Jyotisar, Kurukshetra, as a tribute to her contribution to space exploration.
- Kalpana Chawla Technology Cell: The Indian of Technology, Institute Kharagpur, named a space cell after technology impact on recognising her field aerospace the engineering.
- Numerous educational institutions have named hostels and buildings after Kalpana Chawla, fostering a culture of aspiration and empowerment among students.

2022-033X) was launched

into space as part of the Satellogic Aleph-1 constellation, symbolising her eternal presence among the stars.

Note: The information provided here is based on the <u>Wikipedia</u> article on "Kalpana Chawla" and various other

Leaving a Celestial Legacy: Inspiring Generations

Seven asteroids were christened with the crewmember names shortly after the Columbia accident as "celestial memorial." NASA also seven hills on Mars names in honour of the lost crew to commemorate the disaster's first anniversary.



Kalpana_Chawla_Hall_Univ_Texas_Arlington

In 2010, a memorial to Kalpana Chawla was established at the University of Texas at Arlington College of Engineering. A flying suit, pictures, details about Chawla's life, and a flag flown over the Johnson Space Centre during a memorial for the Columbia astronauts were all part of the exhibit when it first opened.



Expedition 63 Commander Chris Cassidy is pictured inside the Northrop Grumman Cygnus space freighter named the S.S. Kalpana Chawla after the first female astronaut of Indian descent who also perished on the ill-fated STS-107 mission aboard Space Shuttle Columbia.

commercial cargo rocket Chawla named after launched to the International Space Station (ISS) in October Satellite "Kalpana": On April 2020. The Cygnus capsule built 1, 2022, a satellite named by Northrop Grumman was given after Kalpana Chawla (ÑuSat the name S.S. Kalpana Chawla 24 or "Kalpana," COSPAR because it is corporate policy to name each Cygnus spacecraft

COVERSTORY

after a significant figure in the history of human spaceflight.

According to a statement from Northrop Grumman, "Chawla was selected in honour of her prominent place in history as the first woman of Indian descent to go to space.

Chawla was passionate about giving young Indian girls the opportunity to study science; therefore, <u>NASA</u> invited her secondary school to participate in its Summer Space Experience

Programme when she was an astronaut. Since 1998, the school has sent two girls annually to the United Space School run by the Foundation for International Space Education in Houston, and Chawla has hosted them for an Indian dinner in her house.

In penning this cover story for WFY Magazine, and as we gaze up at the night sky, let us remember Kalpana Chawla, a trailblazer who defied gravity and the confines of society, inspiring us to reach new heights in our own lives. Her story resonates as a reminder that our dreams, like stars in the sky, know no bounds—they are limitless, waiting for us to take flight and make them a reality. And so, let us carry her legacy forward, igniting the spark of curiosity and ambition in the hearts of generations yet to come.





Kalpana Chawla Space Technology Cell, IIT, Kharagpur

Kalpana Chawla's legacy transcends the boundaries of time and space. spirit indomitable and unwavering commitment to exploration continue to inspire generations of Indian women to break free from societal norms and reach for the stars. Her journey serves as a poignant reminder that the pursuit of dreams requires courage, perseverance, and an unyielding belief in oneself. Her life story stands as a testament to the fact that gender, ethnicity, or background should never limit one's aspirations.

"The Edge of Time," a biography written by Jean-Pierre Harrison, the widower of Chawla, was released in 2011.

Her legacy lives on through various initiatives and scholarships established in her name, empowering young women in India to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Kalpana's story serves as a guiding light, urging future generations to believe in themselves, reach for the stars, and embrace the pursuit of knowledge.

In the history of humankind, especially the Indian Diaspora, Kalpana Chawla's life life constantly reminded us of the vastness of human potential. Her story reverberates through the ages, echoing a powerful message of resilience and determination. From the small town of Karnal to the infinite reaches of space, Kalpana's legacy kindles the flames of aspiration in the hearts of those who lare to dream and, most importantly, women.



Best Wishes To Indian Diaspora For Their Good Work and Future Endeavours





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Pew Survey: The World On The Edge

With China Rising

By WFY Bureau, USA

A recent survey by the Pew Research Centre reveals a significant rise in anti-China sentiments across the globe since the pandemic began. The countries that had the most rise in anti-foreign policy. China sentiment during this time were India, Brazil, and Poland. The survey indicates that perceptions of China are deteriorating abroad, mainly due to its foreign policy decisions, and there is also a lack of confidence in President Xi Jinping.

The survey found that majorities in 15 out of 24 nations hold an unfavourable opinion of China, with Japan and Australia having the highest discontent at 87%. While Brazil's negativity towards China stands at 48%, India and Poland have a higher proportion, with 67% of their populations expressing unfavourable opinions about China. Around three-quarters of respondents believe that China neglects the interests of other countries in its foreign policy, and more than half think China interferes in the affairs of other nations to a significant extent.

Among the 24 countries surveyed, only six showed more support for China than criticism. These included Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Indonesia, and two Latin American nations. India stands out as the only middle-income country where a majority holds unfavourable views of China, possibly influenced by the military conflicts along the contested border, referring to the Ladakh and Sikkim border disputes.

Interestingly, despite disapproval of China's actions, most people acknowledge its technological and military advancements. Chinese technology is considered the best in the world or above average in many countries, except in South Korea. Additionally, China's investments in developing countries in Africa and Latin America have garnered some goodwill.

The US respondents were particularly critical, with about four-fifths holding a negative view of China. The US and China have been at odds over various issues, leading to restrictions on highend chip equipment exports and a recent move by China to limit the export of crucial metals used in various industries.

China's partnership with Russia and its actions in Hong Kong, Tibet, Xinjiang, and Taiwan have also faced widespread criticism. Meanwhile, President Xi's policies have come under the contraction of the c scrutiny, and the recent removal of his handpicked foreign minister, Qin Gang, has added to the uncertainties surrounding his leadership. Despite these concerns, Xi Jinping is viewed more favourably in certain countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. In these regions, Chinese investment is perceived as beneficial to

As the world watches China's actions closely, it is evident that its foreign policy decisions are influencing global perceptions significantly. The challenge for China lies in addressing these concerns and building trust on the international stage. The global ambitions of China have been the subject of intense scrutiny and varying perceptions on the international stage. China's rise as a global power and its increasing assertiveness in various arenas have prompted both admiration and concern among nations worldwide.

On the one hand, many countries acknowledge China's remarkable economic growth and its role as a major player in the global economy. China's Belt and Road Initiative, aimed at expanding infrastructure and connectivity across Asia, Africa, and Europe, has been seen as a significant contribution to global development and trade. Moreover, China's advancements in technology and innovation have impressed many, positioning the country as a major player in the digital era. However, alongside admiration, there are growing concerns about China's global ambitions and its assertive foreign policy. The country's territorial claims in the South China Sea and its military buildup in the region have raised tensions with neighbouring countries and drawn international criticism. China's increasing military assertiveness, coupled with its maritime expansion, has fuelled apprehensions about regional stability and security.

Furthermore, China's actions in its periphery, such as its treatment of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang and Tibet, have sparked human rights concerns and drawn criticism from the international community. The lack of transparency in China's political system and restrictions on media and free speech have also fueled suspicions about the country's intentions and longterm goals. China's growing influence in global institutions and its efforts to shape international norms and rules have also drawn attention. Some view China's rise as a potential challenge to the existing international order and a shift in the balance of power. The competition for influence between China and the United States, often referred to as the "Thucydides Trap," has raised fears of potential conflict and instability. The perception of China's global ambition varies among nations and is shaped by geopolitical interests, economic ties, historical experiences, and domestic political considerations. As China continues to expand its presence on the world stage, understanding and managing the diverse perceptions of its global ambition will be crucial in shaping the future of international relations and the global order.









The OC I Knew: Musings Of An Labour Commissioner

By MP Joseph IAS(R)

'The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones.'

Shakespeare could not have been more wrong when he put those words into the mouth of Mark Antony at that famous funeral oration at Julius Ceaser's funeral.

At least in the case of Oommen Chandy, Shakespeare was wrong, way wrong. It was after Oommen Chandy – Kunju Kunju or the Little Little One, as he was known to those who were close to him and as OC to those who spoke of him from afar – died that there was this unbelievable outpouring of grief right across the Malayali world that has taken Kerala and its people completely by surprise.



What each one thought was a good deed that OC did only for them, they collectively realised at his death that he had similarly helped lakhs of others. And those lakhs poured out onto the streets in homage to thank him for the good that he had done to them individually. That was when everyone realised collectively that he had touched not just one life but the lives of lakhs and lakhs of others.

My first close contact with Oommen Chandy began when I was the Labour Commissioner of Kerala. Oommen Chandy had then already become Labour Minister of the state. At just 35, he was and still is the youngest person to hold the post of Labour Minister of the state. He then went on to become the Home Minister of Kerala.

When I met him as Labour Commissioner. he was opposition MLA. Sri. Navanar was the Marxist Chief Minister. Those were the days when the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, the CITU of the Marxist Party, was virtually ruling the state. All employers, managers, and workers had to follow the diktats of the CITU. The Chief Minister and everyone else had the same. Strikes, lockouts, and the closure of factories were the order of the day. The CITU and its leaders ruled the roost and the state by proxy.

Oommen Chandy was then also the President of many unions of the Indian National Trade Union Congress, the INTUC, which was affiliated with the Indian National Congress.

Because of the very many strikes, lockouts, and closures that had become a regular feature of the labour scene in then, Kerala Labour as Commissioner or LC as they would call me, I had a hectic time, holding conciliation talks one after the other, trying to settle disputes before they resulted in lost man days. Also, factory when or a establishment had closed down because of a strike or a lockout, I had to step in to conciliate, settle the dispute, and try to get the closed units reopened. It was a herculean task, as the workers and the unions, sensing the power they held, would often be very recalcitrant, demanding huge increases in wages. The management had to often give in or close down. Giving in meant that they had

to foot a wage bill that they could not afford. They were simply staving off the inevitable for a few months or years.



My hands as a Labour Commissioner were then always full holding talks with the unions and managements to end disputes, prevent strikes, lockouts, and closures, and if they did take place, try and quickly reopen the closed ones.

These talks would go on for hours together, starting in the morning till late evening. We would, of course, not come to any agreement in the first such sitting, and I would adjourn the talks to say a week or 10 days later. The talks would continue thus for many sittings, some taking even years, most at least a few months through many many dozen sittings.



The conciliation talks would usually be attended only by the local leaders of the trade unions. The state-level leaders would not generally participate in these meetings. Only in the when final meetings, settlement was being reached, would the big state-level leaders come in. They would come in on that last day, make and the speeches. sign Conciliation Agreement, as though they had gone through the mill and the grind of every one of those many meetings, the hours of talks and discussions, passion. and the disappointment, and often anger

that we had collectively gone through. Not to forget the hunger the workers and their families were passing through because of the strike, the lockout, or the closure.

But Oommen Chandy was different. Like the ordinary unit-level labour leader, he would come in for most of these many talks, if not for all. He would come in quietly and sit on the chair at the front right-hand side of the many rows of chairs laid out in my room.

He would come in and wish me, **'Commissioneriku** Sukam Aanoo?" which means, "I trust the Labour Commissioner is okay," and take his seat. While most other labour leaders would and come sit in these discussions as though, they ruled the establishment, if not the whole wide world, Oommen Chandy would sit awkwardly on the chair, as though the chair was too big for him, almost trying to fade away into the chair, as though he was not good enough for it.

Remember that at that time he was a sitting MLA, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, a former minister twice over, and the President of very many INTUC trade unions. But yet he would come and sit for hours together in my office and participate in the conciliation meetings. He would sit right through and leave only when the meeting ended and after exchanging a word or two with me.

If the discussions were not proceeding satisfactorily, he would take his workers and leaders out and advise them. He would, of course, advise the Employers as well. They were in as much awe of him as I was.

He would sometimes come back to my room to have a private word with me when the rest of the workers and Management representatives were outside and advise me on how to proceed.

When the time was ripe for a settlement, he would sense it and tell me to step in. He would say, for example, that I should suggest a figure for the wage increase that the Unions were demanding. Embarrassed at

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HUMAN INTERESTS & SOCIAL PURSUITS

being asked to suggest a figure myself, I would ask him how much I should suggest. He would beat about the bush for a while, all the while knowing well that I would certainly ask him that question. He, of course, had the correct answer in mind.

After dilly-dallying for some time, he would sav. 'Commissioner, oru nanooru rupa parayu,' or 'Commissioner, why don't you suggest a Rs. 400 increase.

I would be aghast! This was at a time when the Unions were demanding an increase of Rs. 4000 per month and was declaring that they would die if they had to agree on even a less. And management was steadfastly adhering to the Rs. 40 that they had agreed to as a wage increase some six months ago.

'Rs. 400, sir?' I would ask aghast, 'the Unions will not accept it. And the Management would reject it outright', I would add.

'Commissioner, athu paranju noku'..... 'Commissioner, you suggest the amount', he would add cryptically and leave the room.



He knew their pulse. At the meeting, reconvened after much further and talk discussions, Oommen Chandy would stand up and after a brief speech addressed to both the workers and Management, would say, 'at this stage, let us leave it to the Labour Commissioner for his suggestion. Let us accept his suggestion. He is a fair person. He will suggest a figure that would be fair to both us the workers and the Managements'. There would be dead silence in the room. I would look away.

Suddenly a worker from the back increase. Oommen Chandy would stand up and say, 'I endorse what Chandy Sir has said. Let us leave it to the Labour Commissioner.' Suddenly a couple of others including from the CITU and the BMS and the AITUC would stand up and endorse, 'As the MLA says' referring of course to Oommen Chandy - 'let us leave it to the impatient. 'Sir, you suggest a LC, the LC being me the Labour figure and we will agree'. Commissioner'.



Soon the topmost CITU leader would stand up and add his agreement. His party was ruling the state and he was keen on a settlement. If OC was ready to take the blame for anything going wrong with the LC's suggestion, so much the better. The strike would be settled, the unit would reopen, the CITU could claim credit and if there was any criticism, OC would be given the blame.



So it was now up to me. I had to suggest a figure. And I had to suggest Rs. 400 knowing well that both the Management and workers would be dissatisfied with the figure. But I could not suggest anything more or anything less. For then I would not have the support of Oommen Chandy. Like two negatives making a positive, I knew somewhere in my mind that OC was correct.

But I would huff and puff, I would hesitate. I would act cov. It was very important that I do not seem too much in a hurry to declare a figure for the wage

warned me of that. 'Take some time, and then suggest Rs. 400', he had added while leaving the room previously.

I would take my time. I would let the meeting drag on for a couple of hours more, late into the night. As the time passed workers would



As the time neared 11 PM, I would come out of my coyness. I would say that if all of you agree to go by my suggestion, I will suggest a figure. Both the workers and the Management would agree in unison. Then after a short speech myself, sort of evaluating the demands of both the sides, explaining what was possible and not possible, I would suggest that Rs. 400 increase that Sri. Oommen Chandy had suggested to me. Of course, in all this I would make no reference to OC nor even look at him.

Once I announced the figure, there would be a moment of stunned silence. It would be very clear that the workers were disappointed. They were expecting at least a twothousand-rupee hike. The Management would be aghast. They had been prepared only for a two-hundred-rupee increase.



But before the murmurs began, Oommen Chandy would stand up, shuffle around, look at the workers and at the Union



PRESIDENT KERALA STUDENTS UNION (KSU) 1967

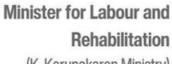
1970

FIRST ELECTED TO KERALA ASSEMBLY

FIRST TERM AS KERALA CM (2004 - 2006)

LEADER OF OPPOSITION (2006-2011)

SECOND TERM AS KERALA CM (2011-2016)



(K. Karunakaran Ministry)

(1977)

Minister for Labour and Rehabilitation

> (A.K. Antony Ministry) (1977-1978)



(1981-1982)

Minister for Finance and Law

(K. Karunakaran Ministry)

(1991-1994)





HUMAN INTERESTS & SOCIAL PURSUITS

Leaders and say, 'Commissioner parajathallee. Namukku athu ottum pora. Ennal nammal avishyapettitu Commissioner alle a thuka parajanathu. Namukku athe angu sammathikaam' or 'The figure is what the Commissioner has declared after we asked him to do so persistently. It is of course not satisfactory at all. But with our full respect to the Commissioner, let us accept the Rs. 400 hike he has declared.



Striking while the iron is hot, the CITU leader would stand up and put the blame on Oommen Chandy. 'LC sammathichu. paranju, 00 namukku onne pattu. Namukkum athu angu angeegarichu agreementil oppidam' or 'The LC declared an amount. And OC agreed to it. The hike is highly unsatisfactory. But we are now left with no choice. We left it to the LC. We are therefore forced to agree to it. Let us do so and sign the Agreement.' There would be round of applause from the workers. That signified their agreement.

It would now be the time of the Management to say how high the figure of Rs. 400 was. That they could not afford it. That it would kill the industry. However, they were left with no choice but to agree to it as they too had left it to the LC to declare a figure.

And before midnight an agreement for a wage increase of Rs. 400, a discussion that had got nowhere in the last 8 months would be signed by all the parties. That was OC. He knew the pulse of the people, the workers. He knew when to step in. He knew how to step in. He knew how to take matters forward to a positive conclusion.

-M P JOSEPH IAS (R)





By Melwyn Williams

Greece: An Enchanting Journey through Time and Beauty

Embarking on a journey to Greece is like stepping into the pages of history and mythology. From the legendary tales of Homer, Aristotle, and Sophocles to the architectural marvels of Athens and the tranquil islands dotting the Aegean Sea, Greece offers a captivating blend of ancient splendours and natural wonders. Let's dive into this travelogue as we explore the recommended destinations, the fascinating activities they offer, and the enchanting sights that await.

Athens: A Triumph of Timeless Treasures



Our odyssey begins in Athens, the cradle of Western civilization, where history unfolds at every turn. We are welcomed by the legendary Parthenon, an incredible temple dedicated to the goddess Athena, at the Acropolis of Athens, a historic citadel built on a hill. The majestic ruins and timeless architecture stir our souls, taking us

back to the glory of ancient Greece.

The National Archaeological Museum in Athens invites us to delve deeper into the past, housing an extensive collection of sculptures, artefacts, and historical treasures that illuminate the country's heritage.

Stepping into the ancient Agora of Athens, we immerse ourselves in a vibrant marketplace, surrounded by the ruins of ancient temples and historical buildings. Here, we can relive the daily lives of ancient Athenians.

At the Byzantine and Christian Museum, we discover the religious and cultural heritage of Greece, showcased through an impressive collection of icons, mosaics, and religious artefacts.

History and Significance of Greece

Greece's history is a tapestry woven with threads of myth, legend, and reality. It is the birthplace of Western civilization, where the concept of democracy took root in the city-states of ancient Athens and Sparta. The great thinkers of Greece, including Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, laid the foundations of philosophy, ethics, and political theory that still influence the modern world.

Throughout the ages, Greece has been at the crossroads of civilizations, witnessing the rise and fall of mighty empires such as the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. This rich history is evident in the numerous archaeological sites and monuments that dot the landscape, offering a glimpse into the glory and grandeur of past civilizations. The significance of Greece extends beyond its historical and philosophical contributions. It is a country of breathtaking landscapes, from the majestic mountains to the turquoise waters of the Aegean Sea. The beauty of the Greek countryside has inspired poets, artists, and writers for centuries, with its serene olive groves, vineyards, and

charming villages.

Recommended Destinations for You

Santorini: A Mesmerising Island of Legends



Leaving Athens behind, we set sail for Santorini, a dreamlike island with breathtaking beauty. The Red Beach, adorned with crimson cliffs and dark sand, captivates us with its unique allure. A boat ride to Amoudi Bay unveils the island's volcanic history and offers a picturesque view of whitewashed houses perched on the cliffs.

At the Archaeological Museum of Thera, we journey through time, discovering artefacts that unravel the island's rich history, from the Bronze Age to the Roman era.

Mykonos: Where Beauty Meets Revelry



Next on our itinerary is Mykonos, a cosmopolitan island known for its lively atmosphere and stunning beaches. The Aegean Maritime Museum beckons maritime enthusiasts with its fascinating collection of nautical artefacts and exhibits.

Paradise Beach and Super Paradise Beach offer endless hours of fun, with vibrant parties and crystal-clear waters inviting us to unwind and revel in the island's joie de vivre.

Corfu: A Haven of Art and Nature



As we sail to Corfu, we find ourselves enchanted by the serene beauty of Shilsangsa (Shilsang Temple) and immersed in the contemporary art scene at Haslla Art World.

Nordkapphallen, a cultural centre celebrating the friendship between Norway and Greece, intrigues us with its unique exhibits and cultural exchange programmes.

Zakynthos: A Tapestry of Natural Splendours



Our journey takes us to Zakynthos, a paradise for nature lovers. The breathtaking Porto Limnionas Beach, tucked away in a secluded cove, offers a slice of heaven where we can bask in the sun and swim in the crystal-clear waters.

The Byzantine Museum introduces us to the island's religious heritage with exquisite religious art and icons. Agios Dionisios Church, dedicated to the patron saint of the island, allows us to experience the spiritual side of Zakynthos. Zakynthos is famous for its unspoiled natural environment, home to the endangered species of the sea turtle Caretta Caretta which goes there during the reproduction period. The monk seal Monachus Monachus also goes to Zakynthos to give birth. It is a well-known summer resort. The harbor city of Zakynthos is the capital and major hub, centered around waterfront Solomos Square.

Thessaloniki: A Cultural Melting Pot



Stepping into Thessaloniki, we are captivated by its cultural riches. The Museum of Byzantine Culture takes us on a journey through the Byzantine Empire with its impressive collection of artefacts, icons, and mosaics.

The Arch of Galerius and Rotunda, remnants of the Roman era, stand tall as witnesses to the city's glorious past. The Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki reveals the significant history of the Jewish community in the city.

Paros: A Spiritual Haven with Pristine Beaches



Our travels bring us to Paros, where the sacred Panagia Ekatontapiliani, a Byzantine church, exudes an aura of spirituality.

Santa Maria Beach beckons us with its golden sands and crystal-clear waters, inviting us to indulge in the island's natural splendours. Kolymbithres Beach, with its sculpted rocks and picturesque setting, offers a serene spot for relaxation.

Best known for its beaches and traditional villages. Parikia, the bayside capital, is a boating and transportation hub for the Cyclades region.

It's also home to the Panagia Ekatontapiliani, a landmark Byzantine church from the 4th century A.D. The north coast's Kolimbithres is a beach where naturally sculpted rocks form swimming coves. It also has an intense nightlife which attracts young people

Naxos: A Land of Myth and Majesty



Heading to Naxos, we venture to Zas Mountain, the highest peak in the Cyclades, where we are rewarded with panoramic views and a sense of triumph.

Plaka Beach, a paradisiacal expanse of golden sand and azure waters, calls us to unwind and soak in the island's beauty. At the Archaeological Museum of Naxos, we discover ancient artefacts and relics that reveal the island's fascinating history.

Chania: Where History Unfolds by the Harbour



Chania welcomes us with its rich history and charming Venetian architecture. The War Museum of Chania offers insights into the island's military past and its role in World War II.

The Old Venetian Harbour, with its picturesque waterfront and Venetian lighthouse, invites us to stroll along the promenade, soaking in the old-world charm. Platania Beach, a tranquil hideaway, provides a serene escape where we can unwind and enjoy the natural beauty.

Chania is a city on the northwest coast of the Greek island of Crete. It's known for its 14th-century Venetian harbor, narrow streets and waterfront restaurants. At the harbor entrance is a 16th-century lighthouse with Venetian, Egyptian and Ottoman influences. Opposite, the Nautical Museum has model ships, naval objects and photographs. The former monastery of St. Francis houses the Archaeological Museum of Chania.



TRAVEL & LEISURE

Kos: A Land of Legends and Tranquility



The island of Kos reveals its intriguing history at the Tree of Hippocrates, an ancient plane tree associated with the great philosopher. The Kos Museum delves into the island's ancient past, showcasing artefacts and historical treasures. Kos itself offers a captivating blend of cultural heritage and peaceful retreats.

Nafplio: A Journey into Ancient Times



Nafplio takes us back in time with its historical sites. Tiryns, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, mesmerises us with its ancient fortress. Palamidi Castle, perched atop a hill, offers sweeping views of the city and the sea, making it a must-visit destination. The Archaeological Site of Mycenae, steeped in legends and myths, transports us to the ancient civilization of Mycenae as we explore its ancient ruins and tombs.

Olympia: Where Sporting Legends Were Born



Olympia, the birthplace of the Olympic Games, carries an aura of athletic prowess and historical significance. The Archaeological Site of Olympia takes us on a journey to the origins of the Olympics, where we stand in awe of the Temple of Zeus and the ancient stadium. Olympia, the birthplace of the Olympic Games, carries an aura of athletic prowess and historical significance. The Archaeological Site of Olympia takes us on a journey to the origins of the Olympics, where we stand in awe of the Temple of Zeus and the ancient stadium.

Delphi: A Sanctuary of Oracles and Mysteries



Delphi, nestled on the slopes of Mount Parnassus, captivates us with its mystical ambiance. The Delphi Archaeological Museum houses a remarkable collection of sculptures and artefacts from the ancient sanctuary. The Corycian Cave, a place of spiritual significance, invites us on a pilgrimage to explore its natural wonders and spiritual energy. Ieros Naos Agiou Georgiou, an ancient temple, invites us to witness the timeless allure of Greek architecture and religious devotion.

Patmos: A Spiritual and Scenic Haven



Patmos, a sacred island known as the "Jerusalem of the Aegean," offers spiritual solace and natural beauty. Psili Ammos Beach entices us with its unspoiled charm and tranquil waters, providing the perfect spot for relaxation. Strolling through Patmos, we experience the spiritual heritage at every corner, from its charming streets to the historical landmarks. Walking on Patmos is not just a physical activity but a soulful experience, connecting us to the island's spiritual significance.

Volos: Where Myth Meets Modernity



Volos, the land of the Centaurs, offers a captivating blend of mythology and modernity. The Archaeological Museum of Volos showcases artefacts from the Neolithic to the Byzantine era, revealing the city's rich history. The Entomological Museum of Volos introduces us to the fascinating world of insects, providing a unique and educational experience. Damouchari Beach, surrounded by lush greenery and crystal-clear waters, offers a delightful retreat for nature lovers and beach enthusiasts.

Spetses: A Hidden Gem of History and Natural Beauty



Spetses, a hidden gem in the Saronic Gulf, allures us with its rich history and natural beauty. The Franchthi Cave, an archaeological site, unveils the island's prehistoric past. Petrothalassa Beach, with its pristine shoreline and crystal-clear waters, is an idyllic escape for sunbathing and swimming. Vlychos Beach, accessible by boat, offers a secluded retreat for those seeking tranquility and solitude.

Kalavryta: A Mountainous Retreat with Historical Significance



Kalavryta, nestled in the scenic mountains of the Peloponnese, entices us with its natural splendour and historical significance. Agia Lavra, a significant monastery, holds a pivotal role in Greece's struggle for independence. The Folklore and Historic Museum showcases the region's traditions, culture, and historical artefacts. Ski Centre Helmos, a winter wonderland, beckons adventure enthusiasts with its ski slopes and breathtaking landscapes.

Patras: A Vibrant City of Culture and Architecture



Patras, the third-largest city in Greece, is a vibrant cultural hub with fascinating architectural landmarks. The Metropolis of Patras, a stunning cathedral, stands as the epitome of religious architecture. Agios Andreas Church, a Byzantine-style church, invites us to admire its artistic beauty and spiritual ambiance. The Rio-Antirrio Bridge, an engineering marvel, connects Patras to the Peloponnese, offering panoramic views of the Gulf of Corinth.

Kavala: A Blend of History and Scenic Splendours



Kavala, a picturesque city nestled on the slopes of Mt. Symvolo, offers a captivating blend of history and scenic beauty. The Kavala aqueduct, a remarkable engineering feat, is a testament to the city's rich history. The Castle of Kavala, perched atop a hill, presents us with panoramic views of the city and the Aegean Sea. Imaret, an Ottomanera building, offers an exquisite experience as a boutique hotel, providing a glimpse into the city's cultural heritage.

TRAVEL & LEISURE

How to Reach These Mesmerising Destinations

Greece is well connected to the world, with several international airports serving major cities like Athens and Thessaloniki. Many airlines operate regular flights to these airports from various countries, making it convenient for travellers to access the country.

Once in Greece, there are several transportation options available to explore the recommended destinations. Domestic flights, ferries, and buses connect major cities and islands, providing an efficient and scenic way to travel.

Activities to Enliven Your Greek Odyssey

The allure of Greece lies not only in its historical treasures but also in the diverse activities that await travellers.

- Hiking enthusiasts can embark on the Samariá Gorge trek in Crete, immersing themselves in the breathtaking landscapes of the National Park.
- Sailing in the Aegean Sea is a blissful experience, allowing us to discover secluded coves, hidden beaches, and picturesque islands.
- For water sports lovers, Zakynthos and Santorini offer excellent opportunities for snorkelling, scuba diving, and exploring underwater caves.
- Wine tasting tours in Nemea and Naxos unveil the country's rich winemaking heritage, offering a taste of Greece's finest vintages.

Our odyssey through Greece has been an enchanting journey through time and beauty. From the ancient splendours of Athens to the idyllic beaches of Santorini and the spiritual havens of Patmos and Delphi, each destination offers a unique and captivating experience. As we bid farewell to this timeless land of legends and mythology, we carry with us the memories of an unforgettable journey that has enriched our souls and left an indelible mark on our hearts.

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- MELWYN WILLIAMS





The essence of Kerala: A trip to Remember

It was February 2023 when one of our friends invited us to the wedding of her daughter being held in Alleppey, Kerala. We all got excited for the wedding and started planning for it. Since the wedding was to be held on Friday, we decided to plan a trip before attending the wedding itself. In this article, I will take you on a journey through this memorable trip to Kerala.

Kerala is a beautiful state located in the southwestern region of India. People visit Kerala for its palm-lined beaches, backwaters, beautiful landscapes, and rich cultural heritage. Anyone who loves nature, history, and culture is bound to be attracted to this state, which is also lovingly called "God's own Country"

We decided to start our trip from Mumbai on Saturday and reach Kochi the same day by flight. First on our itinerary was a visit to the famous Guruvayur temple, one of the most important temples in Kerala. This temple is dedicated to Lord Krishna and is believed to be over 5,000 years old. The temple is huge, and I was mesmerised by its beauty. The temple has been preserved for centuries and is adorned with intricate carvings on the walls, ornate pillars, and colourful murals. The devotees chanted "Hare Rama, Hare Krishna" inside the premises, which gave me goosebumps thinking of the amount of faith they had.

The next day, we were to proceed towards Munnar. Before starting our trip, we headed to the elephant park, which was located nearby. The elephant park is home to several elephants that are trained to perform various tasks, such as carrying logs, lifting heavy objects, and even dancing to the rhythm. The caretakers told us how four elephants were taken every morning and evening for a 'parikrama', i.e., a round of the temple with the Guruvayur statue on one of the elephants heads. Though it was a pleasure at first to watch these gentle giants, I soon realised that all of

By Kulmohan Kaur

them were either chained or had holes poked in their trunks and bodies to make them conform to the trainers and mohouts' orders. This made me lose interest quickly, and I decided to quit this place at once.

I did try to say something to my friends regarding the torture these elephants were bearing in the formative years of their lives in order to train them to do the trainers' bidding, but I couldn't bring myself to it seeing the delight on their faces and the excitement they had to try the rides on our next stop, which was a thrilling experience for them. There was also the issue of questioning the faith of the devotees who wanted the parikrama to continue. And so I just prayed for the beautiful creatures and let them qo.

Thereafter, we bought chocolates, which came in so many flavours. I had never imagined that I would find chocolates containing pulp from fruits like mango, strawberry, blueberry, fig, etc. Then there were the dark chocolates and milk chocolates, as well as the costlier ones, which were packed and not open for taste. Before I could lose myself in the heavens, I decided to buy a mix of all flavours and turned my back on the alluring call of the sweet monsters.

As we set out for Munnar, we were greeted with beautiful hills, tea plantations, and misty hills. We stopped en route at the Cheeyappara waterfall, which is a great trekking place and cascades down seven steps. It is huge, to say the least. As we drove up the winding roads, stunning scenery of green hills and valleys, with tea plantations stretching as far as the eye could see, welcomed us in Munnar.

The next evening, we attended a performance of a fusion of Indian classical dances: Kathakali, Bharatnatyam, and Mohiniyattam. The main performance was Kathakali, which is a traditional dance form of Kerala that has



beautiful costumes, colourful makeup, and intricate facial expressions. The dancers performed various stories from the life of Krishna, using their bodies and facial expressions to convey a range of emotions. This was immediately followed by a Kalariyapattu performance. Kalariyapattyu is a traditional martial art form of Kerala that is believed to have originated over 2000 years ago. The performance was a display of sword fighting, stick fighting, and other martial arts techniques performed by highly skilled artists. The performances were thrilling and kept us on the edge of our seats throughout.

One of the highlights of the trip was shopping for spices, medicines, and honey in the local markets. Kerala is known for its wide variety of spices, such as cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, and pepper, which are used in traditional cooking and Ayurvedic medicine. We visited the spice garden, where the guide showed us around and explained the uses of the various medicinal plants being grown there. We also visited a honey bee farm where various types of medicinal honey were on display and given for tasting, along with an explanation of the benefits of each of them. I bought some Ayurvedic medicines and flavouring honey, which I am using nowadays.

The next day we proceeded to Thekkady, located near the border of Tamil Nadu. Thekkady is famous for the Periyar National Park, which is home to a wide variety of animals, including elephants, tigers, leopards, and deer. We stayed at the Abhyaranya resort, which is inside the Periyar National Park. Due to a paucity of time, we could not go on a jeep safari, but we did sight a group of Nilgiri langurs, a porcupine, and a large bear from the safety of our resort itself. There were many monkeys around the resort, but they were harmless and did not show any intention to come near us. The next day we went to the hills in a jeep and enjoyed the scenic view. There we saw a herd of wild elephants, wild bison, and deer, albeit from a distance.

Within no time, or so it seemed, it was Thursday, and we set out for the beautiful Alleppey. Our host had arranged for us to stay on a houseboat that evening. The houseboat was a luxurious floating house with four rooms, all with the amenities we would need for our stay. It even had a big woofer deck, which we utilised to the max as DJs, and we danced on the top deck. As we cruised through the serene backwaters, I was mesmerised by the beauty of the landscape, with palm trees swaying in the breeze and the occasional glimpse of local life along the banks. The houses looked like they were built in the middle of backwaters but were actually surrounded by water-filled paddy fields.

The next day was the actual day of our purpose—the wedding, which was a grand affair with colourful decorations, traditional music, and delicious food. The wedding was a great way to learn about the local culture and traditions, and I felt privileged to be a part of such a joyous occasion. Since the bride was like our own daughter, we enjoyed and became a part of the occasion without even trying.

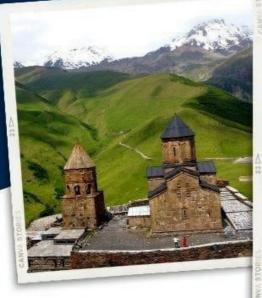
Finally, it was time to say goodbye to Kerala and head back to the airport. As I looked back on my trip, I realised how much I had learned about the rich cultural heritage of Kerala and how much I had enjoyed the natural beauty and hospitality of the people. This trip with my friends was wonderful, and it was made all the more memorable with their smiles, laughter, enjoyment, and simply being together. It brought us closer and has encouraged us to be together for many more such adventures.

-KULMOHAN KAUR

Amazing

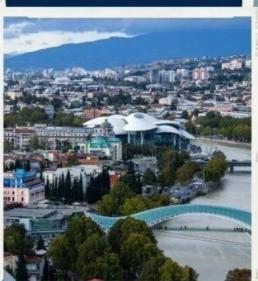
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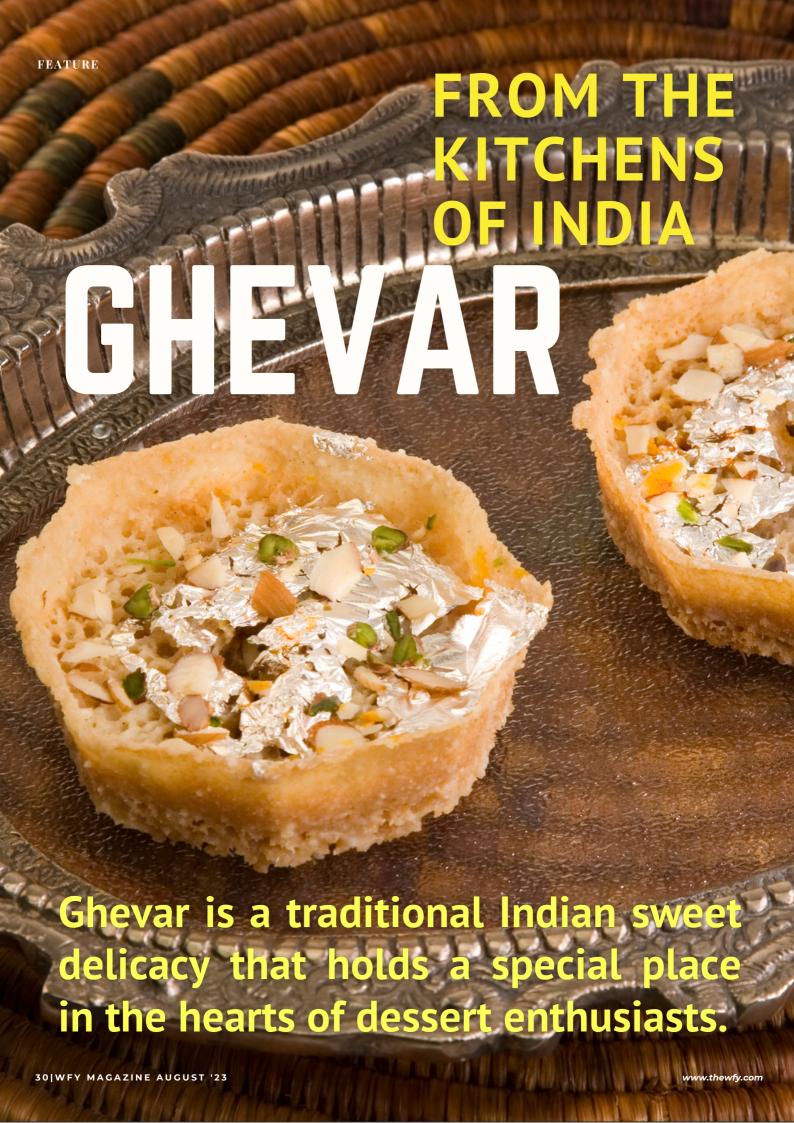
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GHEVAR

Ghevar is a traditional Indian sweet delicacy that holds a special place in the hearts of dessert enthusiasts. Its intricate design and mouthwatering taste make it a must-have during festive occasions, especially during the Teei Rakshabandhan festival. This sweet discshaped dessert is made from flour, ghee, and sugar syrup, and it is adorned with a variety of toppings like dry fruits and saffron threads. Let's dive into the recipe and create this delectable treat to indulge in the flavours of India!

INGREDIENTS

For the Ghevar:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour (maida)
- 1/4 cup ghee (clarified butter)
- 1/4 cup chilled milk
- 1/2 cup ice-cold water
- A pinch of cardamom powder
- Ice cubes for chilling the batter
- Ghee for deep frying

For the Sugar Syrup:

- 1 cup of sugar
- 1/2 cup of water
- A few strands of saffron (optional)
- 1/4 teaspoon cardamom powder
- 1 tablespoon rose water.

For Garnishing:

- Silver vark (edible silver leaf) or edible gold leaf (optional)
- Assorted dry fruits (sliced almonds, pistachios, and cashews)

INSTRUCTIONS

For the Ghevar:

- In a large mixing bowl, add allpurpose flour and ghee. Mix them well with your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
- Gradually add chilled milk and icecold water while stirring continuously to avoid lumps.
- Add a pinch of cardamom powder to the batter and mix well.
- To chill the batter further, place a few ice cubes in the batter and keep it aside for 10 minutes.

Fry the Ghevar:

- Take a deep-frying pan or kadai and add ghee for deep frying. Heat it on a low to medium flame.
- Now, take a Ghevar mould or a widemouthed steel ring and place it in the hot ghee.
- Pour a ladleful of the chilled batter into the mould carefully, allowing it to spread in a circular shape.
- Fry the Ghevar on low heat until it turns golden and crispy. Gently remove it from the mould using a skewer and drain excess ghee by placing it on a wire rack or absorbent paper.



FEATURE

Prepare the Sugar Syrup:

- In a separate saucepan, add sugar and water and bring it to a boil on medium heat.
- Once the sugar dissolves completely, add the saffron strands and cardamom powder, and continue boiling until the syrup thickens slightly.
- Turn off the heat and add rose water to the syrup, giving it a delightful aroma.

Assemble the Ghevar:

- Dip each Ghevar into the warm sugar syrup for a few seconds, ensuring it absorbs the sweetness.
- Place the soaked Ghevar on a serving plate and garnish it with silver vark or edible gold leaf (if using).
- Decorate the Ghevar with sliced almonds, pistachios, and cashews, adding a rich texture and flavour to the dessert.

Your mouth watering Ghevar is now ready to be served and enjoyed!

TIPS

- 1. The key to making perfect Ghevar lies in the temperature of the batter. Make sure to keep the batter chilled and use ice cubes to maintain its consistency during frying.
- 2. Ensure the ghee is not too hot while frying the Ghevar, as it may lead to uneven cooking and affect the crispness.
- 3. For a unique twist, drizzle some saffron-infused milk over the Ghevar before serving, enhancing its visual appeal and taste.

With this delightful Ghevar recipe, you can savour the authentic flavours of India right in your own kitchen. This rich and exquisite sweet is sure to be the star of your festive gatherings and leave your quests wanting more.

So, get ready to relish the traditional taste of Ghevar and experience the cultural richness of India through this delectable dessert!



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THE WFY INTERVIEW: LET US TALK

By WFY Bureau, UAE

Today we have with us Mr. T. N. Krishnakumar. He is one of the leading entrepreneurs based in Dubai and India.

He is well known for his humanitarian interventions among the expat community. He is an Electrical Engineering graduate and MBA with more than 34 years of experience in the field of Electrical Power industries, working with major MNCs as Global Leader and Regional Director for the Middle East Region. Krishnakumar was instrumental in repatriating hundreds of expats to India during the COVID pandemic. He leads a team in Dubai for food distribution and medical camps among the migrant workers and labour camps in various parts of the UAE. During Phase 2 of COVID, when India was in shortage of Oxygen supplies, Krishnakumar was instrumental in supplying Oxygen Cylinders, Oxygen Concentrators, and Oxymeters through NORKA to various Government Hospitals in India. Krishnakumar is an active member selected by the Government of Kerala for Loka Kerala Sabha (2022-2024). He is in receipt of many awards and recognitions, such as the Indywood Billionaires Club Award, the Icons of Arabia Leadership Award, and the Master Vision International Excellence Awards (2019 and 2021). Best Engineer in the Middle East Award by Schneider Electric, GE Best Growth Regional Award, Indo Arab Night Award, and COVID Hero Awards from Dubai Police (in 2020 and 2021). The Indian consulate general in Dubai, the Dubai Community Development Authority, the Dubai Health Authority, the COVID Samurai Award by Toshiba International, and the Media 7 Award are a few among many other recognitions.

Question: Good day, Krishnakumar. Thank you for joining us for this interview. Let's begin by discussing the incident in your life that shaped your path. Can you share more about how it impacted your journey?

Krishnakumar: Hello, and thank you for having me. Yes, there was a significant incident in my life that had a

profound impact on my future. Growing up in Thodupuza, a small town in Idukki, Kerala, I attended a local school where I excelled in academics, particularly in mathematics. It was my mathematics teacher, Mr. Mathew, who ignited my passion for the subject with his simple yet effective teaching methods. This passion for mathematics led me to pursue further studies in the field



Question: That's fascinating. So, what happened after your school years? How did you decide on your career path?

Krishnakumar: After completing my 10th grade, I enrolled in Newman College in Thodupuza, where I chose mathematics as my major subject. However, I was unsure about what to do after completing my first and second years of Pre-Degree College (PDC). It was during the second half of my second year that my friend, Chandrathil Suresh, introduced me to Engineering Entrance Examinations and encouraged me to apply for the Kerala Engineering Entrance Test. My cousin, Krishna Anand, who was studying at the College of Engineering Trivandrum, provided me with entrance coaching papers. Thanks to their support, I decided to pursue engineering instead of a career in mathematics.



Question: That was a significant turning point in your life. Could you tell us more about your journey in the field of engineering?



Krishnakumar: Absolutely. I achieved a state rank within the top 500 in the Kerala Engineering Entrance Examination, which granted me admission to the prestigious Government College of Engineering in Trivandrum. I chose Electrical Engineering as my main subject of study. Over the four years of my engineering programme, I worked hard to improve my academic performance, gradually excelling in my exams. Fortunately, I received a scholarship that relieved the financial burden of tuition fees.



Question: After completing your engineering degree, what were your next steps in shaping your career?



Krishnakumar: Following my graduation in 1988, I faced the dilemma of deciding where to start my career. I had a strong desire to work and become independent without burdening my parents. Along with my engineering college peers, I travelled to Chennai to write various admission tests for government and private organisations. Unfortunately, those attempts were met with limited success. It was during this time that my cousin, Shri Krishnamurthy, and his wife, Smt. Radha Krishnamurthy, invited me to stay with them in Pune and seek employment opportunities. With their support, I began working for a Pune-based company and eventually transitioned to a USA-based company with operations in Pune.

Question: That's quite a journey. What prompted you to pursue an MBA?

Krishnakumar: Pune is renowned for its universities and colleges, and I saw an opportunity to further enhance my qualifications. After working for a while, I made the decision to pursue an MBA. I completed my MBA programme with distinction, ranking second in my class. This achievement opened doors for me, and I was fortunate to secure a position at Larsen & Toubro (L&T) in Mumbai.

Question: L&T is a prominent organisation. Could you elaborate on your experiences there and the subsequent job offer you received?

Krishnakumar: Certainly. At L&T, I worked as a Branch Engineer in the Mumbai Central Region, and after a few years, I was promoted to the position of Branch Engineer for Kerala.



Question: That's impressive. How did your career progress after your promotion at L&T?

Krishnakumar: The promotion to Branch Engineer for Kerala was a significant milestone for me. It allowed me to work in my home state and be closer to my family, which was important to me and my parents. However, during this time, I received a job offer from a prominent business group in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. This presented a challenging decision for me—whether to continue with the job at L&T in Kerala or venture abroad and explore the world.

FEATURE

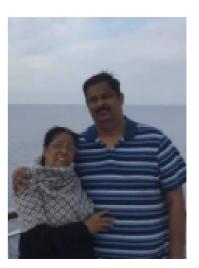
























Question: How did you make that crucial decision?

Krishnakumar: It was a challenging decision indeed. After careful consideration, my wife and I decided that it was an opportunity worth taking. We were young and eager to explore new horizons, and we believed that accepting the job abroad would provide us with valuable experiences and exposure to diverse cultures. With that, I made the difficult choice to resign from L&T and join Bahwan Engineering Company, one of the leading engineering firms in the Middle East.

Question: That's a bold move. Can you share some highlights of your career in the international arena?

Krishnakumar: Certainly. Over the past 28 years, I have had the privilege of working with several multinational companies based in the GCC region, the UAE, and Dubai. I held positions such as Global Leader and Middle East Regional Director. These roles allowed me to travel extensively and immerse myself in different cultures and nationalities. It has been a remarkable journey, and I am grateful for the opportunities that came my way.

Question: Looking back on your 35-year career, what are your reflections?

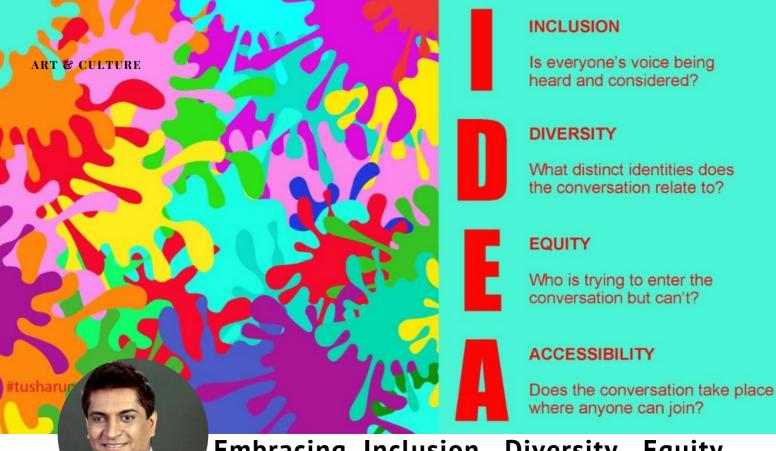
Krishnakumar: When I reflect on my career, I am deeply grateful for the support and encouragement I received from my friends. They played a significant role in my success, offering continuous support at various stages of my professional journey. Their unwavering belief in me helped me progress from one position to another and provided the opportunity to travel the world both personally and professionally. These experiences have instilled in me a deep appreciation for our Indian culture while also fostering an admiration for other cultures and their positive aspects.

Question: Thank you, Krishnakumar, for sharing your incredible journey with us. Your story is truly inspiring, and we wish you continued success in all your future endeavours.

Krishnakumar: Thank you for having me. It has been a pleasure to share my experiences, and I hope they serve as motivation for others to pursue their dreams.

-WFY BUREAU





Embracing Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA): Illuminating a Brighter Future through the Arts

By Tushar Unadkat

The world of arts has always been a captivating tapestry of human experiences, weaving together the diverse creativity and expressions of individuals from all walks of life. Yet, throughout history, certain voices have been silenced or overlooked within the arts, denying us the richness of embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). To ensure the arts remain a powerful catalyst for positive change and societal growth, we must champion these principles alongside accessibility, igniting a vibrant and inspiring future for the arts.

A Kaleidoscope of Voices

The essence of the arts lies in its ability to reflect the kaleidoscope of human existence. Beyond racial and ethnic backgrounds, DEI in the arts encompasses gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, etc. By embracing this diversity, the arts become a melting pot of stories, ideas, and experiences, fostering humanity's profound understanding and empathy. In the multitude of voices, we find our shared humanity, uniting us in a common purpose to celebrate the beauty of our differences.

Cultivating Creativity and Innovation

Artists from diverse backgrounds bring unique perspectives and fresh approaches to creativity

when they converge. This blend of diverse experiences nourishes the arts, nurturing the growth of innovative and thought-provoking works. Such collaboration spills over into other domains, inspiring novel ways of thinking and problem-solving across various industries. As we embrace DEI in the arts, we awaken the boundless potential of creativity, enriching the artistic realm and society at large.

Engaging Diverse Audiences

Inclusive arts experiences resonate deeply with audiences when they see their reflections in the creative works they encounter. Embracing DEI ensures that art is relatable and resonates with a broader audience. The convergence of diverse perspectives during art appreciation creates a tapestry of shared emotions, unifying people in their appreciation of the human experience. Through these connections, the arts forge bonds that transcend boundaries and foster a genuine sense of belonging and respect for one another.

Driving Economic Growth

The arts are not just a source of cultural enrichment; they are also drivers of economic prosperity. The creative sector generates employment opportunities, boosts tourism, and



invigorates local economies. By embracing DEI in the arts, we unlock untapped talent from diverse communities, cultivating a thriving cultural ecosystem that fuels progress and prosperity.

Reflecting the Realities of Society

The arts are a powerful mirror that reflects society's hopes, struggles, and dreams. By wholeheartedly embracing DEI, the arts can portray the multifaceted realities of diverse communities. They can serve as powerful advocates for change, spotlighting pressing social issues and challenging stereotypes. Through this collective effort, the arts become a driving force in shaping a more inclusive, compassionate, and accepting society, breaking down barriers and fostering genuine understanding among people from all walks of life.

Empowering Underrepresented Artists

Equity is the cornerstone upon which artistic potential can flourish. We must give artists from marginalized communities equal opportunities to unleash their creative prowess. By providing access to resources, mentorship, and supportive networks, we can empower underrepresented artists to reach their full potential. The arts community thrives when it embraces a wealth of diverse talents, cultivating a symphony of voices that enrich the world with profound perspectives and emotive expressions.

Inclusivity through Accessibility

In our pursuit of an inclusive arts community, accessibility plays a pivotal role. It involves breaking down physical, social, and economic barriers that hinder individuals with disabilities or challenges from fully engaging in the arts. By ensuring artistic spaces, performances, and exhibits are accessible to all, we open the doors to a broader, more diverse audience. In embracing accessibility, we affirm that the arts belong to everyone, leaving no one on the periphery of this inspiring and beautiful world.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are the lifeblood of a thriving arts community that resonates with the heart and soul of humanity. these principles unleashes Embracing potential for the arts to spark positive change, foster understanding, and ignite innovation. As we march forward, let us nurture an unwavering commitment to DEI and accessibility in the arts, for we paint a brighter future for our world through this vibrant symphony of voices. In doing so, we empower the arts to become a powerful for inspiration, unity, and transformation.

-TUSHAR UNADKAT.







By Rema Pisharody

Rain is a soft silken dream
Of our celestial solitude
A melody of hillocks and east wind,
Of sorrows and smiles..

Rain is a traveller of hope of a tree that of fondness Planted by Aphrodite To enchant lovers of all eras

Rain is like a little child of our past Playing hide and seek in angelic wings With a smile that of innocence For us to cherish for ages

Rain is an image of hidden pain
Of the unseen tears of our heart
Armed in white and pearl
To conquer our own silent battles

Rain is a poem of a summer cloud, All set in a regal palanquin Of forgotten Springs and sunshine, Of tears and heartbreaks, Of prayers and renaissance, For us to cleanse our own cluster Of perilous nightmares..

Rain is a soft velvet dream
Of our past and present
Of blossoming flowers
Of the songs of the valley
And our deep rooted faith
Carved on elements earthen
for us to dream to hope for.....

-REMA PISHARODY



ZERO



By Sarmistha Dey

I could not pass the exam... Several times while writing I thought "Hey what's next?"

So why is zero in my hand? I get stuck and think again and again, there is a lot left to write. The bell rang, I gave the papers; Even though I had written till the last page, I could not pass the exam...... The questions were easy, I did not give up and wrote - I never wanted to fail.

The answer to this is much difficult

However, I could not pass the exam. Who said I did not get a number? I got zero in my hand . I am alone ,a zero.

May be there is no one to hold my hand

Only if there is a partner beside zero then it has the price otherwise its only the pain of being alone, being a loser.

If zero got a digit beside only then zero could deserve the love of all.

But unfortunately I tried but I could not pass the exam.

- SARMISTHA DEY





By Sindhu Gatha

Swarms of ants dream of travelling through a dry-veined leaf.

Laughed at the ants when the sun had drained all the essence from the veins of the leaves.

Those wearing black coats argue with a female ant in court and tear her pride.

After all the gambling, in the final verdict, the female ant's body and clothes are the culprits.

The female ant shouted one thing loudly to the goddess of justice, who tied a black cloth around her eyes.

Take off the black cloth from your eyes and put it on so that you don't suffer my fate tomorrow....

The goddess of justice is now weighing the words of that woman...!!

- SINDHU GATHA





By Sudha Mukhopadhyay

What's it between a sapling and the tree? It's the growth, I guess, in that gentle breeze.

I am very joyful whenever the sun shines, And also when there is water in my lines, I grow up beneath the open azure skies, As I get tossed whenever the wind aligns.

I bear the good fruits of myriad tastes, And also of many shapes and shades, I shelter those who come seek my solace, And I have never ever looked for accolades.

Have seen innumerable Panchayat meetings, And many a lover coming for their greetings, Have also seen friends of painful partings, And kids trying the acts of simple readings.

Happiness lies in animals tied to my trunk, And singers' punctuation by a guitar's plunk, There is plenty of room for a pious monk, And an ambience for differences shrunk.

I rejoice the gurgling of the winding stream, And also the fluttering of birds of dream, There is so much peace in the moonbeam, And in the reflection of the sun's gleam. I help prevent land desertification, And maintain the soil stabilisation, I reduce the risk of further inundation, And thus enable great habitation.

With so much of goodness in & around me, Why do people want to cut the big tree? Is it the greed that makes them carefree, Or is it a case of simply being a dummy?

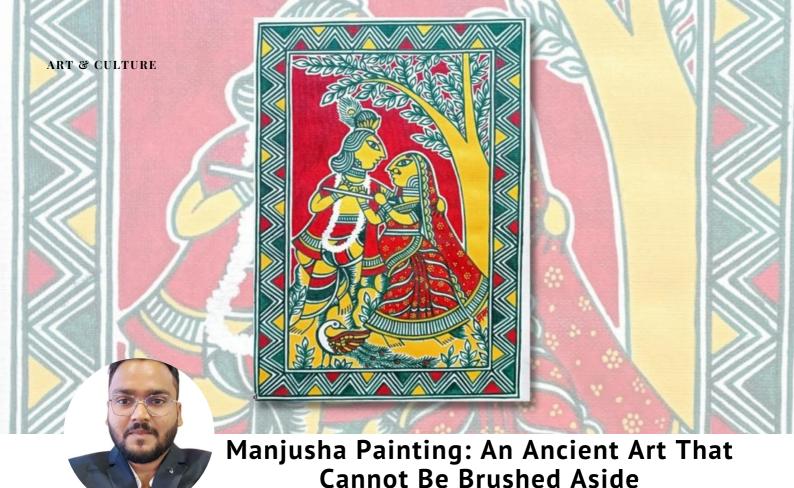
Please do not test my goodness anymore, Save yourselves by chopping me no more, I'm the last hope, you must've heard the lore, So discard your avarice and come ashore.

From now onwards, attempt to go green,
To preserve the environment make it your routine,
Plants, animals, organisms will thus be serene,
So will you humans see wonders unforseen.

What's it between a sapling and the tree? It's the growth, I guess, in that gentle breeze. Giving a sapling is the best sustainable gift.

SUDHA MUKHOPADHYAY





By Gaurav Raj

For centuries, the spiritual land of Bihar has nurtured plenty of heritage art forms that reflect the rich ancient Indian civilization, diverse culture, and regional folktales. In the blessed hands of artisans in Bihar lies the timeline of the evolution of the arts.



Besides the well-acclaimed international fame of Mithila Painting, there is one more art form that finds its way out of oblivion and comes to the fore while trying to stand as an equivalent to the former.

Manjusha art is an ancient folk art of the Anga (Ang) region of Bihar. Ang is the ancient name for Bhagalpur, the silk city of Bihar. This art form has been prevalent in the Bhagalpur district and on the shores of the Champa River for a long period of time. Manjusha art is a series of larger pictorial reflections

of the folklore of Bihula-Vishahri and deity Mansha folktales and depicts a larger cultural consciousness.

However, it is important to understand the narrative associated with this folk art before delving into its specifics. The Kumbhakar caste and the Malakar caste were the only two families to practise this art. The pots on which the Manjusha art is painted and revered during the festival were once made by the Kumbhakar caste.



The story involves Bishahari, or Mansa, the snake goddess, as well as Bihula, who protected her husband from the deity's anger and a snake bite. This story used to be told in the past. Although oral songs

are less common now, efforts are being made to bring them back. The story that serves as the inspiration for and is represented in Manjusha Art is the first narrative folk art of the region.

WG Archer's Contribution

This ART came to the fore between the years 1931 and 1948 AD. During this period, WG Archer, an ICS officer, and his wife began to study the Manjusha art. Archer realised the potential of the Manjusha art form and put together a collection following an exhibition at The India Office Library, London, UK.

The exhibit became a part of the 'Archer Collection'. During this period, Manjusha art gained international recognition. But at that time, the artisans could not prosper due to the oppressive regime of the British. Later in this period, Manjusha art seemed to be fading into the background and going into oblivion. Slowly, this ancient art form came to the verge of extinction. But time and fate had some other plans for Manjusha's art.

The Revival of Manjusha Art and the Role of Manoj Pandit



Manoj Kumar Pandit, known as Manjusha Guru in the Bhagalpur district, is transforming the ancient Manjusha art of Ang Pradesh while creating a realm equivalent to the well-known Mithila Paintings. With his consistent efforts, Manjusha blossomed as one of the most unique and influential arts in Bihar. But his journey since childhood to the moniker 'Manjusha Guru' encapsulates his early struggles and outlines a courageous path that very few wish to pursue.

Born on January 13, 1975, at Mohaddinagar, Mirjaanghat (Bhagalpur), Manoj Pandit has been practising Manjusha art since childhood, along with



his mother Nirmala Devi, a traditional Manjusha artist who used to draw Manjusha on plates and other utilitarian items. Nirmala Devi's family was affluent but went through a serious financial crisis with the deteriorating health of her husband (Narayan Pandit) and her father-in-law. To earn a livelihood, Nirmala Devi started painting home utensils. Following in her footsteps, Manoj picked up this art form at the age of eight and started doing Manjusha's myth of the elephant, scorpion, snake, boat, and other religious mythical characters. Manoj, with the help of pink, red, and green flowers, used to paint Manjusha boxes (Pitari) on weddings and during the Vishahri offerings. It is to be noted that only three colours—pink, red, and green—are used in Manjusha.

The Question of Survival

Seeing her son as a child prodigy, mother Nirmala Devi, following the forecast of an astrologer and on the appeal of Dr. Tribhuvan Poddar (a Zoology Dpt. professor at Bhagalpur University), sent Manoj to Chakravarti Devi, an established and most reputed name in the field of Manjusha art. Under her guidance, Manoj learned the nitty-gritty of Manjusha art. During her last days, Chakravarti Devi reportedly said, "Lagta hai meri maut ke saath Manjusha kala bhi khatm ho jaayegi (It seems Manjusha will also die with my death.)

Art can survive when it creates survival opportunities. Making it difficult to earn a livelihood in those days, artist Nirmala Devi had to sell her jewellery. But fate had smiled upon Manjusha's art. After earning a Master's Degree in Fine Arts from Chandigarh, Manoj went to Delhi in search of employment. And then he went to Mumbai to try his hands at acting, but his love and passion for Manjusha couldn't hold him

ART & CULTURE

much longer in the illusion of Mayanagri. He returned to his homeland and started doing Manjusha, painting the mud walls of his home. Carrying a bag filled with brushes, paints, and twigs on his shoulder, Manoj used to travel to remote areas of Bhagalpur to paint the local mythological characters like snakes, scorpions, and boats. People made fun of his art campaign and termed him 'insane'. Nevertheless, Manoj's grit and determination never let him deviate from his path. He was resolute.



In 1993, he initiated the Manjusha Vikas Yatra'. Two years later, he incepted 'Kala Sagar", a cultural foundation in Bhagalpur, in 1995. Soon, he became a mentor for many budding artists in the state. He started doing Manjusha art paintings on silk sarees, statues, canvas, and other utilitarian items. People again tried to bog him down for failing to generate economic sustainability for his family and ridicule him for his creativity.

2005, the 'giant leap' year

With the support of the state government, Manoj Pandit began mid-scale Manjusha workshops in different parts of Bihar. People started believing in him. He became an inspiration for budding artists. They started visiting him to take Manjusha lessons. The same year, 'Manjusha Mahotsav' was organised in Bhagalpur. His father, Narayan Pandit, coined the slogan 'Save Culture, Save Art'. People started recognising him as a master of Manjusha.

By the end of 2006, Manoj Pandit had become an established name in the corridors of art, especially among Manjusha artists. He gained more prestige after he presented a Manjusha painting to the Chief Minister of Bihar, Nitish Kumar, in 2006. Gradually, Manjusha flourished nationally. Lalit Kala Academy and Upendra Maharathi Shilp Anusandhan Sansthan (

UMSAS) supported Manoj Pandit in his journey. The former Director of UMSAS, Ashok Kumar Sinha, has also written about him in his book, 'Bihar Ke Kaljayee Shilpkar'.

Bihar Bhawan Art Campaign Gives Impetus to the Economic Sustainability of Artisans



India was gradually moving towards normalcy after the first wave of the pandemic. Palka Sahni, Resident Commissioner, Bihar Bhawan, spearheaded an art campaign for the pandemic-hit artisans of Bihar and provided them with economic sustainability. Catalogues were made. Hundreds of artists were contacted. Zoom meetings, WebEx, and other digital mediums were used to bring everyone together. A database was created. With the help of all the information, she incepted an art kiosk, 'Biharika, Bihar Ki Kala Dehri, at Bihar Niwas, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, that aims to bring thought-provoking installation art and the finest handicrafts and handlooms from different art clusters of Bihar to the national capital.

Taking Manjusha to a new horizon, she invited Manjusha artists from Bhagalpur to paint the walls of Biharika into a new Manjusha layout featuring Bihula-Vishahri. Artists Pawan Sagar and Aman Sagar painted the wall of Biharika.

Bihar Bhawan produced a wide range of Manjusha artists' digital catalogues, comprising the bios of the artisans and the items made by them. Manjusha paintings done on terracotta, wood, silk, and steel are now the cynosure of Biharika's shelves. The office of the Resident Commissioner regularly features distinct stories related to Manjusha art. Besides Manoj Pandit, other Manjusha artists also get similar opportunities at Biharika to promote their products.

At times, the Vikramshila Express train is used to ferry Manjusha items sent by Manoj Pandit from Bhagalpur to Bihar Bhawan. Those procured artefacts are sent to the Bihari diaspora, administrative officers, and

journalists on various festivals and religious occasions under the art amplification campaign of Bihar Bhawan, New Delhi.

Manjusha, from Bhagalpur to Delhi



Manjusha Guru and his team travel every year to New Delhi to participate in the prestigious Trade Fair organised by the ITPO. The Bihar Pavilion at the India International Trade Fair won a gold medal in 2021 for its outstanding performance. This year, the Bihar Pavilion's entry and exit gates were decorated with Manjusha art. Pawan Sagar and Aman Sagar spent six nights to complete it. Manoj also got to represent Bihar at Rajpath (now Kartavya Path) as he exhibited a 324 sq. ft. long Manjusha painting on the eve of Republic Day. The freedom struggle of freedom fighters like Tilka Manjhi, Anand Mohan Sahay, Satish Chandra Jha, Mahendra Gop, and Deepnarayan Singh was portrayed on the 156-metrelong Manjusha scroll painting.



Needs Thrust

Manoj Kumar Pandit received the Bihar Kala Puraskar in 2016, the Vishisht Kala Samman by NABARD in

2007, and the Award for Manjusha by the Department of Art, Culture, and Youth in 2008. He received the moniker 'Manjusha Guru' from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. He also secured the State Award for Manjusha Art in 2012. Manjusha Art is the fourth identity of Bhagalpur city, followed by Katarni Chawal, Jardalu Aam, and Bhagalpuri Silk. Manoj says that despite receiving a GI Tag, Manjusha has yet to be aggressively promoted in the country like other art forms and GI-tagged products. He believes that Bihar Tourism can play a pivotal role in re-branding Manjusha to newer heights and revolutionising the revival of this ancient art in India.



State awardee Manoj Pandit, once ridiculed by the elites for painting scorpions and snakes, is now providing art lessons to more than 800 students under the Kala Sagar Foundation in Bhagalpur.

Once neglected with the demeaning tag of art of smaller castes', Manjusha has now embraced students across all castes, creeds, and communities. Kala Sagar's objective is to mobilise more youth towards Manjusha art and to create an ecosystem for the economic sustainability of the artists of Bihar.

-GAURAV RAJ





ELEGANT

GOLD, SILVER, DIAMOND AND MOISSANITE

JEWELLERY











SAMYAG JAIN CONTACT NO - 9352284894



VEGANISM AND ITS RISE INTO THE MAINSTREAM

-By WFY Bureau

In recent years, a quiet revolution has been sweeping across the globe: the rise of veganism. What once started as a small movement championed by a dedicated few has now evolved into a mainstream lifestyle embraced by millions. Veganism, characterised by the avoidance of all animal products, including meat, dairy, eggs, and even honey, has transcended its niche status to become a global phenomenon. From plant-based restaurants to cruelty-free fashion, the vegan movement is reshaping consumer choices and influencing the way we perceive food, ethics, and sustainability.

The Early Roots of Veganism

The concept of veganism can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where some religious and philosophical groups advocated for compassion towards animals and abstained from consuming animal products. However, it was in the mid-20th century that veganism, as we know it today, began to take shape.

The term "vegan" was coined in 1944 by Donald Watson, a founding member of the Vegan Society in the United Kingdom.

Initially, the movement primarily focused on animal rights, with proponents advocating for a compassionate and cruelty-free lifestyle. However, over the years, the philosophy expanded to encompass environmental and health considerations, making it more appealing to a broader audience.

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL APPEAL

As concerns about the impact of meat-heavy diets on health and the environment grew, so did the appeal

of veganism. Research linking excessive meat consumption to chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers has prompted many individuals to seek alternative dietary choices. The adoption of plant-based diets was seen as a way to reduce the risk of these ailments and promote overall well-being. Additionally, the environmental impact of industrial animal agriculture, including deforestation, water pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions, has drawn attention to the unsustainable nature of conventional food systems. Veganism emerged as an eco-friendly solution, offering a pathway to reduce one's carbon footprint and contribute to a more sustainable planet.

Celebrities and Influencers Paving the Way

The rise of veganism has been bolstered by the endorsements of celebrities and social media influencers. Famous personalities from Hollywood to the sports world have publicly embraced plant-based diets, bringing the movement into the spotlight. Their advocacy has helped debunk the myth that veganism is restrictive or lacks flavour, inspiring others to make the switch. Social media platforms, especially Instagram and YouTube, have become breeding grounds for vegan influencers who share their delicious recipes, lifestyle tips, and journey towards ethical living. These digital voices have built supportive online communities, making veganism more accessible and appealing to a wider audience.

The Vegan Marketplace

As demand for plant-based products skyrocketed, the market responded accordingly. Today, the vegan marketplace is booming with an array of innovative



LIFESTYLE

plant-based alternatives to traditional animalderived products. From plant-based meats and dairy substitutes to cruelty-free cosmetics and fashion, consumers are spoilt for choice.

Major food corporations and restaurants have also jumped on the vegan bandwagon, offering plant-based menu items to cater to the growing customer base. Vegan options are now commonplace in fast-food chains and fine dining establishments alike, further normalising the movement.

Veganism in Pop Culture

The unstoppable rise of veganism is not confined to the culinary world. It has permeated pop culture in various forms, from documentaries shedding light on animal cruelty to films advocating for ethical living. Celebrities' red carpet fashion choices now often include cruelty-free and sustainable designs, elevating veganism from a dietary choice to a lifestyle statement.

Moreover, the music industry has witnessed the emergence of vegan artists who use their platform to raise awareness about animal rights and environmental issues. Veganism has become a cultural movement, influencing art, fashion, and entertainment.

THE FUTURE OF VEGANISM

As veganism continues its march towards mainstream acceptance, the movement faces both challenges and opportunities. Sceptics argue that mass adoption of plant-based diets is impractical, but proponents assert that it is a crucial step towards a more sustainable and compassionate future.

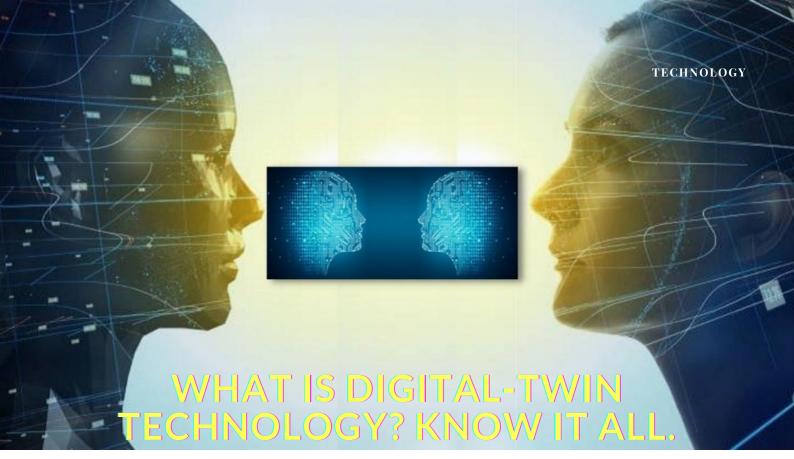
The growth of the vegan movement is not only reshaping consumer choices but also influencing policymakers, who are increasingly recognising the environmental and health benefits of plant-based diets. Initiatives such as Meatless Mondays and educational campaigns promoting plant-based nutrition in schools are gaining momentum.

The rise of veganism from a small movement to a global phenomenon is a testament to the power of collective action and changing perceptions. With health, ethics, and environmental sustainability at its core, veganism has touched the lives of millions and is shaping the way we interact with the world. As the movement continues to gain momentum, it holds the potential to bring about transformative changes in our food systems and create a more compassionate and sustainable future for all living beings on our planet.

-WFY BUREAU







-WFY Bureau, UK.

Digital-Twin Technology: An Introduction

A digital twin is essentially a virtual portrayal of a physical entity, be it an object, a person, or a process, situated within a digital realm that mirrors its real environment. These digital replicas prove instrumental in simulating real-world scenarios and their potential results, empowering organisations to arrive at more informed and improved decisions.

If presented with a replicated version of yourself—a digital doppelgänger that perfectly mirrors your physical self and surroundings—what choices would you make? Moreover, imagine this digital twin being immune to harm, pain, or humiliation. The very thought sparks an array of possibilities. Undoubtedly, having such a digital counterpart could significantly enhance decision-making with a heightened sense of assurance.

In the business world, this increased level of certainty holds immense value, and the rise of emerging digital twins has the potential to bring about such benefits.

To put it concisely, a digital twin is a virtual duplicate of a physical entity or process, enabling simulation to gain better insights into its real-world functioning. These twins are connected to real data sources, allowing them to update in real-time and accurately reflect the original version. Moreover, digital twins incorporate behavioural insights and visualisations derived from data. When interconnected within a system, they create an enterprise metaverse—an immersive digital environment that replicates and interlinks every aspect of an organisation, optimising simulations, scenario planning, and decision-making.

Digital twins come in several types. The first is the product twin, which represents a product throughout its life cycle, from initial design to full functionality, providing real-time data as if the product were in use. For instance, Google Maps is a prime example, serving

as a digital twin of the Earth's surface and using realtime traffic data to enhance your commute. Additionally, there are other types of twins, such as production plant twins, which depict entire manufacturing facilities, and procurement and supply chain twins, also known as network twins. Lastly, infrastructure twins mirror physical structures like highways, buildings, and stadiums.

Digital twins offer the possibility of achieving more agile and resilient operations. Their potential has not escaped the notice of CEOs. 70 percent of C-suite technology executives in large enterprises are already exploring and investing in digital twins.

What benefits can digital twins offer an organisation?

A significant advantage of digital twins lies in reducing time to market. They enable rapid iterations and optimisations of product designs, surpassing the speed of physical testing for each prototype. Additionally, digital twins lead to notable enhancements in product quality as they facilitate the simulation of the manufacturing process, enabling early identification of design flaws.

Lastly, by replicating a product in operation, a unified and accurate representation of the design's performance can be established, enabling real-time adjustments or redesigns. For instance, Daimler has created customer twins that enable customers to experience a "test drive" of a vehicle without physically being in the driver's seat.

In what ways can digital twins impact an organisation's efforts towards environmental sustainability?

Digital twins of products offer significant support in advancing sustainability initiatives. These replicas assist organisations in minimising material consumption during product design and enhancing product traceability to minimise environmental waste.

TECHNOLOGY

Notably, consumer electronics manufacturers have already achieved remarkable progress in sustainability by integrating digital twins, leading to a substantial reduction in scrap waste of approximately 20 percent.

What steps can an organisation take to initiate the construction of its first digital twin?

Digital maturity is crucial for organisations to adopt digital twins. This primarily entails a robust data infrastructure capable of providing dependable data from test and live environments, along with skilled personnel to develop and sustain the infrastructure. However, it's important to note that benefiting from a digital twin doesn't necessarily require a complicated or ever-changing setup. Certain companies have achieved success by creating twins for basic products, like toothbrushes, to obtain

Once the initial use case is established, organisations can gradually incorporate additional layers of information and real-time feedback to enhance the twin's capabilities further.

immediate customer feedback.

To establish and expand a digital twin, follow a three-step process:

- 1. Develop a blueprint: The blueprint outlines the types of twins the organisation aims to create, the sequence for constructing them to optimise value and reusability, the progression of their capabilities, and the ownership and governance structures.
- 2. Construct the foundational digital twin: A project team works on building the core digital twin within the next three to six months. The initial focus is on assembling the core data product, facilitating visualisations, and enabling data science experts to develop one or two primary use cases.
- 3. Enhance capabilities: After the digital twin is operational, the organisation can enhance its functionalities by incorporating additional layers of data and analytics to support new use cases. This phase often involves elevating the twins beyond mere representations of assets, individuals, or processes and leveraging AI and advanced modelling techniques to offer simulations and prescriptions.

How does the transition from a digital twin to an enterprise metaverse unfold?

To embark on the journey towards an enterprise metaverse, companies can initiate with a single digital twin designed around a specific data product.

This data product should furnish a high-quality, readily usable dataset accessible to all members of the organisation. It must serve as a singular, reusable source of truth that is continuously refined over time, forming the foundation for future use cases. Over time, the initial digital twin can progress through insights gathered from behavioural data, ultimately bestowing increasingly potent predictive capabilities.

Subsequently, the organisation can establish multiple interconnected digital twins to model intricate relationships between diverse entities. This approach can yield deeper insights into behaviours for more sophisticated use cases, thereby generating enhanced value.

For instance, the organisation could link a digital twin representing its customers with retail stores, inventory, sales, and customer process flows. By doing so, the organisation could accomplish the following:

- Simulate the end-to-end impact of business and market changes on retail stores.
- Create an authentic Omni channel experience, enabling seamless pause-and-resume customer journeys across different channels.
- Optimise store layouts in response to shifts in customer preferences.
- Evaluate various compensation and staffing models based on sales, employee performance, and local store characteristics.

Ultimately, a well-established network of digital twins allows an organisation to incorporate further technologies necessary for building an enterprise metaverse. For example, a retailer could interconnect the digital twin of its retail store with the digital twins of its warehouses, supply chain, call centre, and other components, effectively replicating every facet of the organisation.

In what ways do certain companies presently employ digital twins?

The growing interest in digital twins, coupled with the rapid advancement of supportive technologies, is driving projections of digital-twin investments exceeding \$48 billion by 2026. Notable advanced implementations are already evident:

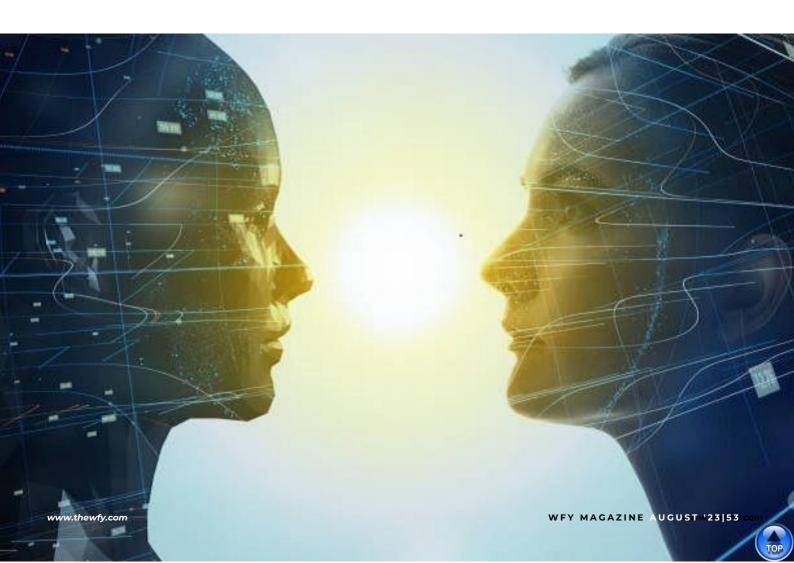
 Emirates Team New Zealand: Employing a digital twin of sailing environments, boats, and crew members, Emirates Team New Zealand can test boat designs without physical construction. This approach has enabled the champion sailing team to evaluate thousands, rather than just hundreds, of hydrofoil designs.



- Anheuser-Busch InBev: Utilising a brewing and supply chain digital twin, brewers can make adjustments based on real-time conditions and automatically compensate for production bottlenecks, such as full vats.
- SoFi Stadium: To enhance stadium management and operations, a digital twin gathers data from multiple sources, including information about the stadium's structure and real-time football data.
- Space Force: The US Space Force is developing a digital twin of space, encompassing replicas of extraterrestrial bodies and satellites.
- SpaceX: Employing a digital twin of SpaceX's Dragon capsule spacecraft, operators can monitor and adjust trajectories, loads, and propulsion systems to maximise safety and reliability during transport.

A new era of creativity and efficiency across numerous industries has been ushered in by the innovative idea of digital twins. Digital Twins enable businesses to make data-driven decisions, optimise performance, and anticipate outcomes with unheard-of accuracy by offering real-time virtual representations of actual assets, processes, and systems. We may anticipate seeing much more development as this technology develops in industries like manufacturing, healthcare, urban planning, and others. To ensure the proper and moral application of digital twins, it is crucial to address concerns about data security and privacy. The way we interact with the physical world will surely change if we embrace this disruptive technology and take advantage of its promise. This will pave the way for a future that is more sustainable, connected, and intelligent.

-WFY BUREAU, UK.





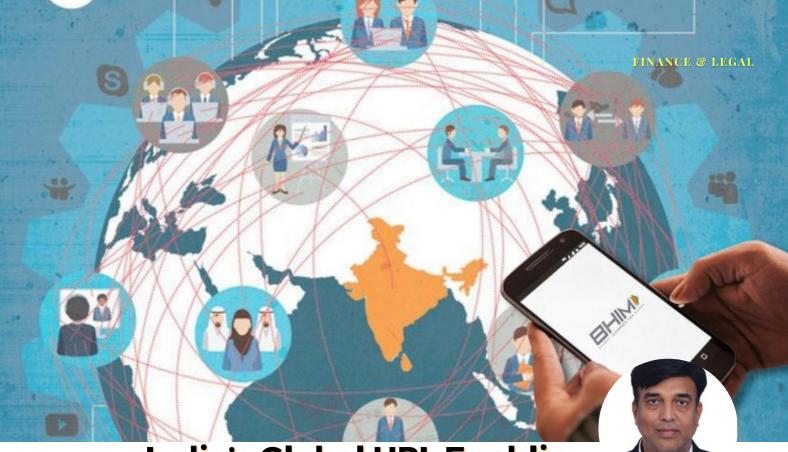
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India's Global UPI: Enabling Seamless Cross-Border Transactions In Multiple Nations

By Manoj K Sharma

The Indian government has been actively working towards making its digital payment systems global, particularly the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), to facilitate seamless cross-border transactions and lower the cost of fund transfers and remittance payments. In line with this vision, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced that India's highly successful UPI system will now be used in France, allowing Indian tourists to make users may make rupee payments via UPI at the famous Eiffel Tower.

The international expansion of India's digital payment ecosystem has reached a major turning point with the incorporation of UPI in France. UPI's adoption in foreign countries will provide India with a plethora of benefits, such as eliminating the need for forex cards and the hassle of carrying cash while travelling.

Under the UPI Global initiative, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has been actively working to enable UPI adoption in several countries across the world. Let's take a closer look at countries that have looked at India's UPI linkages with other nations:

Bhutan:

Bhutan became the first country to accept UPI transactions using the BHIM app in July 2021. NPCI International Payments Ltd. (NIPL) has collaborated with the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) of Bhutan to enable BHIM UPI QR-based payments in the country.

Nepal:

Nepal agreed to implement UPI for digital transactions in March 2022. NIPL collaborated with Gateway Payments Service Pvt. Ltd. and Manam Infotech Private Limited to bring UPI for real-time person-to-person (P2P) and merchant-payment transactions to the nation.

United Arab Emirates (UAE):

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) adopted BHIM UPI in April 2022 via NEOPAY terminals, the payment subsidiary of Mashreq Bank, across the nation. This enabled millions of Indians visiting the UAE to use BHIM UPI to conduct secure and practical payments.

Oman: Oman also incorporated the UPI payment system in October 2022. A formal agreement was signed between the NPCI and the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) to facilitate UPI transactions in the country.

Malaysia:

NIPL signed a deal with Liquid Group to enable QR-based UPI payments' acceptance in 10 countries across north and southeast Asia, including Malaysia. To provide real-time remittances to India via the UPI platform, NIPL also collaborated with Merchantrade Asia Sdn. Bhd.

United Kingdom:

In August 2022, India and the UK announced collaboration on QR code-based transactions. PayXpert, a payments solutions provider, partnered with NIPL to build a seamless payment solutions platform in the UK. The platform already supports UPI-based QR code payments, and it will afterwards add support for RuPay card payments.

India-Singapore Linkage:

A formal partnership between India's UPI and Singapore's PayNow was established in February 2023 to facilitate quicker and more affordable transfers between the two nations. Participating banks can now facilitate low-cost fund transfers between India and Singapore.

In order to increase the acceptance of Indian payment methods throughout Europe, Worldline, a leader in payment services, partnered with NIPL in October 2022. Initially targeting BENELUX (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg) and Europe Services and Europe roll out in more European countries.

In 2016, UPI was first introduced in India to allow people with the power to make instant, round-the-clock payments using a Virtual Payment Address (VPA). With this, the facility of both Person-to-Person (P2P) and Person-to-Merchant (P2M) payments were induced to offer a seamless way for users to send or receive money.

The UPI is becoming popular in nations across the world, and with more countries accepting it, Indian travellers will find it more convenient and easier to travel overseas. As more countries fall under the UPI ambit, India will be leading the way in the digital payments arena.

-MANOJ K SHARMA



Spotlight: The Spirit Of The Global Economy And Its Challenge

By WFY Bureau.

The global economy is progressing, yet uncertain times persist. The global economy shows resilience amidst challenges.

The world economy is on a steady path to recovery from the impact of the pandemic and geopolitical events like Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Positive indicators are emerging in the short term, indicating progress.

The COVID-19 health crisis has officially subsided, and supply-chain disruptions have normalised. The first-quarter economic activity demonstrated resilience despite the challenging environment, with labour markets showing surprising strength. Energy and food prices have significantly decreased from their peak during the war, resulting in a faster-than-expected easing of global inflation. The decisive actions taken by US and Swiss authorities have helped contain financial instability following the March banking turmoil.

While these signs are encouraging, several challenges still loom ahead, warranting caution and vigilance. According to our baseline forecast, global growth is projected to slow from 3.5 percent last year to 3 percent in the current year and the following year. This is a 0.2 percentage point upward revision for 2023 from our previous April projections. Inflation is also expected to decline from 8.7 percent last year to 6.8 percent this year, with a 0.2 percentage point downward revision, and further to 5.2 percent in 2024.

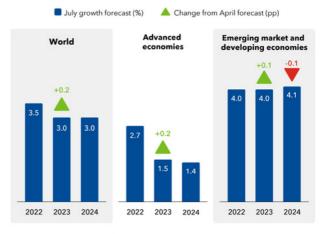
The slowdown is primarily affecting advanced economies, where growth is projected to fall from 2.7 percent in 2022 to 1.5 percent in the present year, remaining subdued at 1.4 percent in the following year. The euro area, particularly impacted by the surge in gas prices during the war, is expected to decelerate significantly.

In contrast, emerging markets and developing economies are anticipated to experience an uptick in growth, with year-on-year growth accelerating from 3.1 percent in 2022 to 4.1 percent in the current year and the subsequent year.

Growth projections

The global economic outlook for this year is slightly brighter, but growth remains weak.

(GDP, percent; year-on-year)



Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook; and IMF staff calculatuons. Note: The 3% global growth estimate for 2023 reflects upgrade from 2.8% in the April World Economic Outlook.

IMF

However, these overall figures mask considerable variations among countries, with emerging and developing Asia exhibiting strong growth at 5.3 percent in the present year. Conversely, many commodity producers are grappling with declining export revenues.

Despite the positive developments, certain risks persist, and the balance remains tilted towards the downside.

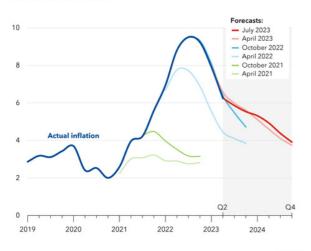
Firstly, there are indications of a loss of momentum in global economic activity. The global tightening of monetary policy has led to contractionary policy rates, affecting activity and credit growth in the non-financial sector. Households and businesses face increased interest payments, putting pressure on real estate markets. The extra savings from pandemic-related payments that earlier helped households

weather the cost-of-living crisis and tighter credit robustness of the labour market despite slowing growth. concerns about the property sector with potential implications for the global economy.

Secondly, core inflation, excluding energy and food prices, remains above the central banks' targets. It is projected to gradually decline from 6 percent this year to 4.7 percent in 2024, with a 0.4 percentage point upward revision. In advanced economies, core inflation is anticipated to remain unchanged at an annual average rate of 5.1 percent this year, falling to 3.1 percent in 2024. The fight against inflation has a long way to go.

Headline inflation

Inflation is coming down, but the pace of disinflation is slowing. (world; percent; year-on-year)



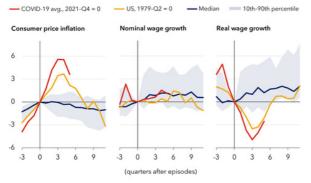
Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook; and IMF staff calculations

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Labour market dynamics and wage-profit dynamics are crucial factors influencing inflation's trajectory. While labour markets have shown strength, overall wage inflation lags behind price inflation in most countries. As a result, real wages have declined in advanced and large emerging market economies. Lower real wages contribute to reduced labour costs, which could explain the

Wage-price spiral risks?

Real wage growth recovery mostly due to declining inflation. (deviation from t=0, percentage point)



Sources: ILO, OECD, US BEA, and IMF staff calculation Sources: ILO, OECD, US BEA, and IMF staff calculations. Note: Inflation is the year-on-year percent change in the CPI, Growth is calculated year-on-year. Nominal and real wages are defined on a per worker basis. The real wage is the nominal wage divided by the CPI. The figure shows developments following episodes in which at least three of the preceding four quarters have (1) accelerating prices/ring price inflation, (2) positive nominal wage growth, (3) falling or constant real wages, and (4) a declining or flat unemployment rate. 23 such episodes are identified within a sample of 33 advanced economies. The Covid-17 episode is the average of countries in the sample starting in 2021:Q4. See October 2022 WEO Chapter 2 for details.

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conditions are being depleted in the United States. China's However, the increase in employment has surpassed the economic recovery shows signs of weakening, raising decline in labour costs, and the reasons for this phenomenon are not fully understood.

> The future trajectory of inflation depends significantly on labour market developments. If labour markets remain robust, real wages may recover, contributing to strong nominal wage growth despite declining price inflation. Average firms' robust profit margins over the past two years have supported the closing gap between real wages and price inflation, allowing for the accommodation of the rebound in real wages without triggering a wage-price spiral. Major economies' well-anchored inflation expectations and slowing economic growth should also help contain the passthrough of labour costs to prices.

> Nonetheless, labour market developments hold significant implications. If economic conditions deteriorate in the short term, firms may reduce employment sharply. Additionally, the strong recovery in employment coupled with modest increases in output suggests a decline in labour productivity, which could negatively impact medium-term growth.

> Financial conditions have eased since the March banking crisis, despite monetary policy tightening and a slowdown in bank lending. Equity market valuations, particularly in the artificial intelligence segment of the tech sector, have surged. The depreciation of the dollar has been driven by expectations of a more accommodative path for US interest rates and improved risk appetite, providing relief to emerging and developing countries. However, there remains a risk of sharp repricing should inflation surprise on the upside or global risk appetite deteriorate, leading to a flight towards dollar-safe assets, higher borrowing costs, and increased debt distress.

> Policy-wise, when inflation starts to decline, we go into the last phase of the inflationary cycle that began in 2021. While prospects for the global economy are more balanced, major economies are less likely to require additional outsized increases in policy rates. Some Latin American economies have already seen policy rates peak. However, premature easing of rates must be avoided until underlying inflation shows clear and sustained signs of cooling. Central banks should continue monitoring the financial system and be ready to use other tools to maintain financial stability.

> With fiscal support provided in numerous countries over the years, it is time to gradually rebuild fiscal buffers and ensure more sustainable debt dynamics. This will safequard financial stability and enhance the credibility of disinflation strategies. Fiscal consolidation should be mindful of private demand strength and protect the most vulnerable without resorting to generalised austerity. For instance, with energy prices returning to pre-pandemic levels, it is appropriate to phase out certain fiscal measures, such as energy subsidies.

> Fiscal space is also essential for implementing much-needed structural reforms, especially in emerging and developing economies. These reforms are critical as the prospects for medium-term growth in income per capita have diminished over the past decade. Low- and middle-income economies, in

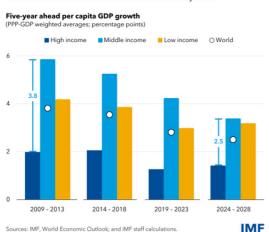


ECONOMY & BUSINESS

particular, face a sharper slowdown compared to high-income ones, impacting their ability to catch up with higher living standards. However, elevated debt levels are hindering many low-income and frontier economies from making necessary investments for faster growth, raising the risk of debt distress in various regions. While the progress towards debt resolution for Zambia is encouraging, other highly indebted countries require faster action.

Slowing convergence

The outlook for income per capita growth has dimmed most for middle- and low-income economies in recent years.



Some regions' slower growth is due to the negative policy ripple effects. Geoeconomic fragmentation is resulting in the global economy splitting into rival blocs, which disproportionately affects emerging and developing economies dependent on an integrated global economy, direct investment, and technology transfers. Additionally, insufficient progress in the climate transition exposes poorer countries to severe climate shocks and rising temperatures, despite their minimal contribution to global emissions. Multilateral collaboration is still essential in addressing these issues in order to guarantee a secure and thriving economy for everybody.

In conclusion, the global economy shows promising signs of resilience in the near term despite lingering challenges. The pandemic's grip has loosened, and supply chains are getting back on track. While advanced economies face a slowdown, emerging markets and developing economies are expected to fare better. Nonetheless, risks persist, such as the loss of momentum in economic activity, the battle against inflation, and potential financial repricing. Policymakers need to strike a delicate balance between managing monetary and fiscal policies while also fostering structural reforms to enhance growth prospects and tackle issues like debt distress and climate transition. Only through

	ons		
(Real GDP, annual percent change)	2022	PROJECTIONS	
		2023	202
World Output	3.5	3.0	3.0
Advanced Economies	2.7	1.5	1.4
United States	2.1	1.8	1.0
Euro Area	3.5	0.9	1.
Germany	1.8	-0.3	1.3
France	2.5	0.8	1.3
Italy	3.7	1.1	0.9
Spain	5.5	2.5	2.
Japan	1.0	1.4	1.0
United Kingdom	4.1	0.4	1.0
Canada	3.4	1.7	1.4
Other Advanced Economies	2.7	2.0	2.:
Emerging Market and Developing Economies	4.0	4.0	4.
Emerging and Developing Asia	4.5	5.3	5.0
China	3.0	5.2	4.
India	7.2	6.1	6.3
Emerging and Developing Europe	0.8	1.8	2.2
Russia	-2.1	1.5	1.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	3.9	1.9	2.:
Brazil	2.9	2.1	1.3
Mexico	3.0	2.6	1.!
Middle East and Central Asia	5.4	2.5	3.:
Saudi Arabia	8.7	1.9	2.
Sub-Saharan Africa	3.9	3.5	4.
Nigeria	3.3	3.2	3.0
South Africa	1.9	0.3	1.3
Memorandum			
wemorandum			

Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook Update, July 2023

Note: For India, data and forecasts are presented on a fiscal year basis, with FY 2022/2023 (starting in April 2022) shown in the 2022 column. India's growth projections are 6.6 percen in 2023 and 5.8 percent in 2024 based on calendar year.

continued cooperation and prudent policy measures can the global economy navigate its way out of the woods and towards sustained prosperity.

- WFY BUREAU



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By Saji Chacko

Harmeet Singh is known as the Iniesta of Norway. The 32-year-old Norwegian, who was born in India, is one of the most influential footballers in Scandinavia, yet his heart throbs for India. Despite playing international football for Norway from the under-12 category to the senior level, Harmeet desperately wanted to represent India, yet his dual citizenship prevented him from doing so.



Harmeet, whose parents were from Ludhiana, felt that the struggle his parents went through while transporting their lives from the quiet Ludhiana to the bustling Oslo. Even the very basics of life were a big challenge during the transition, and that is what made Harmeet mentally and physically tough.



"Life was very different when we were in Ludhiana. Things were simpler and good, but it became very tough when we landed in Oslo. Practically everything was a challenge—the language, the weather, our eating habits, you name it. I think it's the adversity that I faced in Oslo that contributed to who I am today," said Harmeet. For Harmeet's father, Onkar, life was really tough. He had to juggle between three jobs: gardening, pizza delivery, and driving a cab. Harmeet rarely saw his father but, at the same time, realised the immense

sacrifice he was making. "I rarely saw my father but realised how hard he was working to keep us. That's when it dawned on me to do something that would make my parents happy and proud of me," he said.



Harmeet decided to pursue football since he realised its popularity in Norway in particular and in Europe in general. "In India, I didn't realise the popularity of football, but in Norway and Europe, it's all about football. I also realised that the stars of the game enjoyed the popularity and glam, which prompted me to pursue a career in the sport," he said. In his father, Onkar, Harmeet found a rock-solid supporter and somebody who would do anything to fuel his son's success. Even if it meant that Onkar had to bend himself backwards. "I can't quite fathom the sacrifices made by my father. There are no words to describe it. I think I would not have been what I am today but for the self-belief and sacrifices made by my father in particular," said Harmeet.



Onkar had to dig very deep to get Harmeet fully involved in the practise sessions—his mother Nishi had no lesser role to play as she was like a conveyor when it came to making food and packing it for the family members.

Harmeet made his first breakthrough when he managed to make it among the reserves of the Norwegian under-15 team. That was a big break and something that convinced Harmeet that he had it in him to become an international player. "The fact that I could make it to the under-15 national team made me convinced that I had it in me to make it to the highest echelons. I was determined to give it my best shot and ready to work 200 percent towards achieving my goals," said Harmeet.

Soon Harmeet made the usual tough transition from juniors to seniors in a very smooth manner. Such was his talent that he got the nickname 'Norwegian Iniesta' after the famous Barcelona midfielder Anders Iniesta. And a person no less than the legendary Spanish Coach Pep Guardiola gave him something of.

More than anything, Harmeet was humbled by the tag of Norwegian Iniesta. "I am more lucky and fortunate that I got that tag from Guardiola. I don't know what made him give me that name—Iniesta was one of my idols during my formative years," said Harmeet.



On the field, Harmeet's increasing prowess ensured that, apart from playing for Norway, a lot of clubs were showing interest in him. Dutch Club Feyernood showed a lot of interest in him and eventually bought him for a record 300,000 pounds sterling in 2012. After his experience with the Dutch Club, one of the top clubs in Europe, he was delighted to play alongside some of the leading Dutch players. "To play alongside the likes of Dirk Kuyt and Robin van Persie was like living a dream. It's an experience I will never forget in my life," said Harmeet. He was hoping for at least a five-year stint.



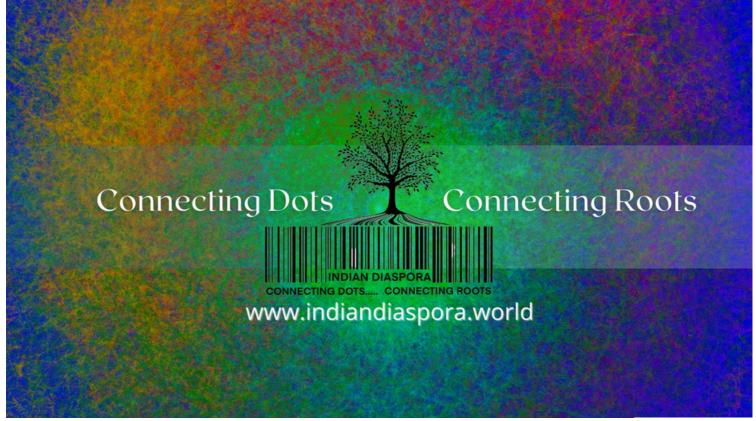
Unfortunately, due to some personal issues, Harmeet's tenure at Feyernood was cut short, and he had to leave in a couple of years. In a way, the premature move by Feyernood had a bit of an adverse impact on his international career. Thereafter, Harmeet returned to Norway, where he joined Molde Club on a free transfer. Around the same time, Spanish newspaper Bolon shortlisted him among the top 100 most talented young footballers in the world—something no Indian has achieved so far.

Around this time, Harmeet was seriously considering the idea of representing India. He contacted the AIFF, the Indian federation, but the dual citizenship clause went against him, and a disappointed Harmeet had to drop his plans for playing in Indian colours. "I must say I was very disappointed that I could never play for India, but then there are certain things over which one has no control," he said. Thereafter, Harmeet went on to play for many clubs across Europe, scoring many more goals. In fact, he is still active at the age of 32, playing for the Norwegian team Sandefjord.

What are his best memories? Without batting an eyelid, he says," It was the goal against Barcelona that he scored in 2010 that remains his top draw. "I will always feel that my goal against Barca when they were by far the best team in the world will be etched in my memory for ever. Of course, there are moments also, but that has to be the best," he signs off.

-SAJI CHACKO





Our Mission

To empower the diaspora to be a force for good through a global platform to collaborate, build community engagement and catalyse social change.

Our Vision

Make this world a better place by spreading the spirit of Indianism.

Our Focus

Let's celebrate the spirit of Indianism and rediscover our roots by rekindling the relationships. To empower the diaspora to be a force for good through a global platform to collaborate, build community engagement and catalyse social change.

We are a group of Indian origin individuals from diverse backgrounds and professions who are committed to inspiring the diaspora to be a force for good by providing a platform to collaborate, build community engagement, and catalyse social change.

Connecting Dots..... Connecting Roots

Let's make this World a better place by spreading the spirit of Indianism. Let the World take note of us as the true Human and lead by our example.

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