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Editor-in-Chief: Melwyn Williams

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Happy New Year



By Melwyn Williams

IT IS THAT UPLIFTING TIME OF YEAR NOW ONCE AGAIN!

It's that time of year once more! Everyone is looking forward to the New Year and thanking God for another 365 days.

As we all set our sights on the New Year, I've always thought December to be a fantastic blend of winter's icy embrace on one side and year-end festivities on the other. And in such conditions, who wouldn't secretly wish for an old man dressed in red and white, riding a reindeer-drawn chariot, to sprinkle some magic? In fact, most of the offices turn a sea of red, with Santa Claus making a cameo and distributing chocolates and goodies. This week, my colleagues and other teams enjoyed nice and cheery celebrations, and I am sure many of you have arranged lunch or dinner get-togethers...

This time of year is full of hope and enthusiasm, generating ideas about New Year's goals and resolutions.

As December 31st approaches and the clock approaches midnight, I'm already picturing the delights that 2024 will bring. It's as if you're staring at a blank canvas, anxious to pick up a brush and paint it with more significant life events. This time period not only provides an opportunity to embrace the coming year but also to apply the lessons learned in 2023.

After the flurry of the holiday season has subsided, the final days of 2023 will be among the quietest of the year for many of us. Our ability to grow and evolve as individuals and leaders can benefit from the opportunity to reflect on the past and imagine how we want to affect the future. I urge you to set aside a few hours between now and January 1st to accomplish precisely that.

After the flurry of the holiday season has subsided, the final days of 2023 will be among the quietest of the year for many of us. Our ability to grow and evolve as individuals and leaders can benefit from the opportunity to reflect on the past and imagine how we want to affect the future. I urge you to set aside a few hours between now and January 1st to accomplish precisely that.

But among the jubilation and economic highs, let's not overlook the serious crisis the globe is going through post-Covid. Despite the world normalising—hotels and airlines

are crowded and airports all over the world are hitting new footfall records—economic concerns are genuine and political ones more than ever.

China, the world's largest manufacturer, is slowing down, producing 2-3 products for every family in the majority of countries. And China's problems have disturbed supply networks more than the opportunities it has offered other countries. High inflation, low growth, and geopolitical tensions caused by war will continue to buffet the world for some time. The concept of a greener future with lower carbon emissions is not currently feasible and will take years to achieve.

As we come to the end of 2023, here's hope that 2024 will be a year of resilience and joy for all of us.

At WFY, we wanted to use the end of the year to reflect on what we all lived through and push ourselves—and you—to think about how it may inform the years ahead.

Let us examine the conflicts fought this year. The war on terror has indelibly shaped the lens through which the young, in particular, view their government's decisions. It's all warmongering, from Gaza to Ukraine and all the way around the world.

Did you notice that the internet became less entertaining this year? Why did it feel like the internet died this year for someone like me?

The extreme weather this year and whether the signal Mother Nature has been transmitting was finally received.

I believe everyone will agree that 2023 was a mixed bag. Not quite the rollercoaster ride that 2022 was, but certainly a mixed bag. One of the positive developments is that we have declared the pandemic mostly over, and we are now returning to some degree of normalcy. The war between Russia and Ukraine continues, and Hamas terrorists attacked Israel, leading to a war that's still ongoing today; anti-Semitism has risen in record numbers around the world, leaving many of my people feeling scared and alone; multiple mass shootings occurred throughout the year, leaving many dead who shouldn't have died; the prices of gas and food have risen like crazy, which has made



affording necessities more difficult than it already was; and more.

On a personal level, 2023 was also a mixed bag. On the other side, work was horrible this year, with many difficulties showing up throughout the year that caused my co-workers and I to work long hours and try to find solutions to cope with it. We're still dealing with issues, both old and new.

So, yeah, it's a mixed bag. But at least I can close the year claiming that there was more good than bad, at least on a personal level.

So, what's next for 2024? So, I'm hoping to write, edit, and publish more stories, as well as finish my book.

I desire to embark on an extensive two-week vacation during which I do nothing but laze around and boo my brains out. I'm looking forward to visiting some of my favourite places and possibly capturing some of them on camera. Travel to unknown places with friends and loved ones.

We have scheduled the release of our India edition, **WORLD FOR YOU INDIA**, for 2024. I also hope the elections in India bring good results in favour of the nation, and the Indian Diaspora may get their due—dual citizenship in India—as they have stepped up their campaign big time.

I'm sure you have fantastic plans for a new beginning, and I wish you all the best, but here's a small suggestion: Try your hardest to eliminate plastic from your life and protect nature in any way you can. As the saying goes, "there is no planet B," so let us try to protect what we have for free. I know it'll be difficult, but let's give it a shot.

As the year comes to a close, all you need is a few quiet hours and some key discovery questions.

Consider the following as you honour who you are by exploring what has been:

- What was your most prudent decision this year?
- What surprised you the most about 2023?
- What was a meaningful risk you took? What made it valuable?
- What do you need to forgive yourself for in 2023?

Consider the following as you look ahead to 2024:

- What three things do you want to do every day?
- Who are the people you want to spend quality time with?
- What is your secret wish for the year 2024?
- What advice do you have for yourself in order to have a successful year ahead?

New Year's resolutions are ineffective. Intentional, deliberate action does.

Here are my top ten, plus two extras!

- **Secure Our Own place:** My wife and I have taken our time to discuss and agree on the fundamentals of living and being happy, which is exciting. We've found the perfect understanding of happiness!
- **To be consistent:** This resolution entails putting organisation and effort into elements of my life, such as writing, making films, and activism. While everyday writing may not be practicable, maintaining a consistent schedule is vital.
- **Continue Reading:** Set aside time to read more books to help you grow as a writer and rediscover the joy of leisure reading. Furthermore, we all know that in order to become a better writer, activist, filmmaker, and human, you must be an avid reader!
- **Travel more:** After seeing many places in 2023, the goal is to travel even further! Currently, we have planned our next summer excursion up in the mountains.

- **Take more reasonable risks:** I intend to be more audacious with calculated risks, such as investing in my business and launching new ideas, as I move beyond a conservative approach.
- **Complete my pending screenwriting:** A huge and mountainous task lies ahead.
- **Launch a podcast or YouTube channel:** My goal is to share Indian Diaspora experiences and build a community that can help the huge Indian Diaspora population spread across the globe.
- **Limit the use of social media:** Recognising the possible obstacle of excessive social media consumption, I plan to reduce it, allowing me to concentrate more on my creative endeavours.
- **Be more mindful and deliberate in all relationships:** Recognising the value of staying in touch with friends and family and making a concerted effort to check in more frequently.

BONUS:

- **Launch a Community Film Club/Arts Education Outreach:** Building on my love of films, art, and culture, I plan to establish an organisation and arts education programme to highlight the value of the arts in the community. The organisation, Bhartiya Kalakaar Sangh, has already been registered for this purpose.
- **Explore More of the Arts:** Diversifying our art consumption by studying diverse forms, attending plays, visiting art museums, and experiencing new art forms to get a fresh appreciation for creativity.

These are only a handful of the great plans I have for 2024!

The start of a new year is always an exciting time as we prepare to say goodbye to the old and welcome in the new with friends, family, and a mind full of great ideas and exciting goals to accomplish!

Happy reading, happy holidays, and a fantastic new year ahead!

Namaste

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



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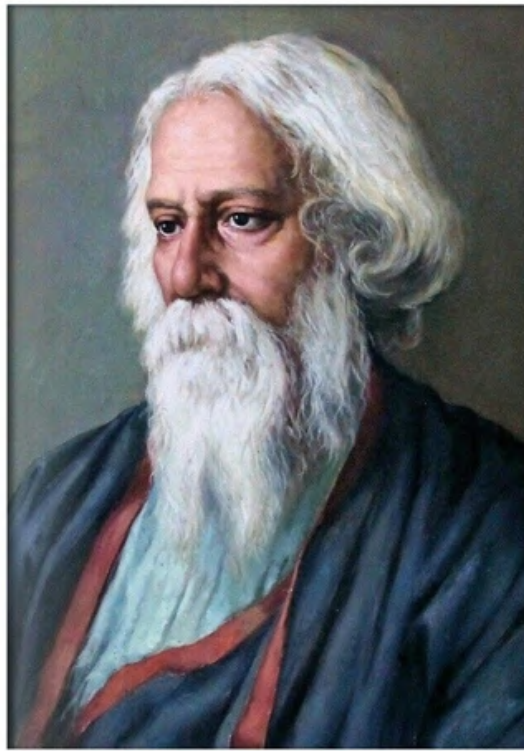
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Rabindranath Tagore: Unbelievably Influencing The Generation Now And Always

By Melwyn Williams

Rabindranath Tagore's legacy as a literary genius, poet, philosopher, and cultural symbol is eternal and profound, crossing boundaries and generations. His work continues to inspire and shape the literary and cultural landscapes of the world.

lasting and profound influence on generations in India and around the world. Here are some major points demonstrating his influence:

- **Bengali Literature:** Tagore made incalculable contributions to Bengali literature. His works radically altered the Bengali literary scene and continue to influence authors and poets to this day.
- **National Anthem:** He wrote both India's ("Jana Gana Mana") and Bangladesh's ("Amar Shonar Bangla") national anthems, solidifying his position as a patriotic and unifying figure in the subcontinent.
- **Tagore's writings** have a global impact, touching on universal topics such as love, nature, and spirituality. His poetry has been translated into various languages and is ageless.
- **Tagore's music, art, and philosophical views** have left an indelible effect on culture, in addition to his literary contributions. His impact on education extends to the foundation of the Visva-Bharati University in Shantiniketan, which emphasises holistic learning and creativity.

“Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been
broken
up into fragments by narrow
domestic walls;
Where words come out from the
depths of truth;
Where tireless striving
stretches its arms towards
perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason
has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead
habit;
Where the mind is led forward
by thee into ever widening
thought and action-
into that heaven of freedom,
my father,
let my country awake.”

- Rabindranath Tagore

In all likelihood, he was a superhero. He was a poet, writer, essayist, playwright, composer, painter, and trailblazing educator all at once. Rabindranath Tagore has had a



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- Tagore's insights into civilization's challenges, societal issues, and human ideals are still relevant today. His ability to address modern issues guarantees that he remains relevant across generations.
- Tagore's iconic status encouraged the Swadeshi movement in India, which benefited indigenous brands. His cultural impact extends beyond his creative achievements.
- Rabindranath Tagore is a towering figure in the worlds of literature and philosophy whose influence spans time and geography. Tagore, who was born in Calcutta in 1861, was a cultural icon whose works continue to reverberate strongly in the modern world.
- Tagore's work is extremely relevant today because of the breadth of his thoughts as well as the depth of his work. Tagore's words provide a beacon of hope and understanding in a world contending with challenges of identity, nationalism, and cultural conflicts. His vision of a society in which humanity surpasses geographic and cultural boundaries speaks directly to the concerns of the twenty-first century.
- Tagore's impact on the Indian diaspora is especially notable. For millions of people, he is a symbol of their cultural heritage, a link to their ancestors, and an inspiration for artistic and philosophical endeavours. People around the world still admire his songs and poems, which blend Indian culture with universal themes.
- Tagore's humanity is perhaps the most outstanding feature of his legacy. His faith in the unity of all creation, the interdependence of all beings, and his advocacy for a society free of oppression and division ring loudly in a world still grappling with the complexity of cohabitation and mutual respect.
- As we consider Tagore's legacy, it becomes evident that his ageless vision of a happy world, profound grasp of human emotions, and persistent commitment to the ideals of freedom, peace, and unity make him relevant in today's world. Rabindranath Tagore is a timeless voice, not only for India or the East but for all humanity.

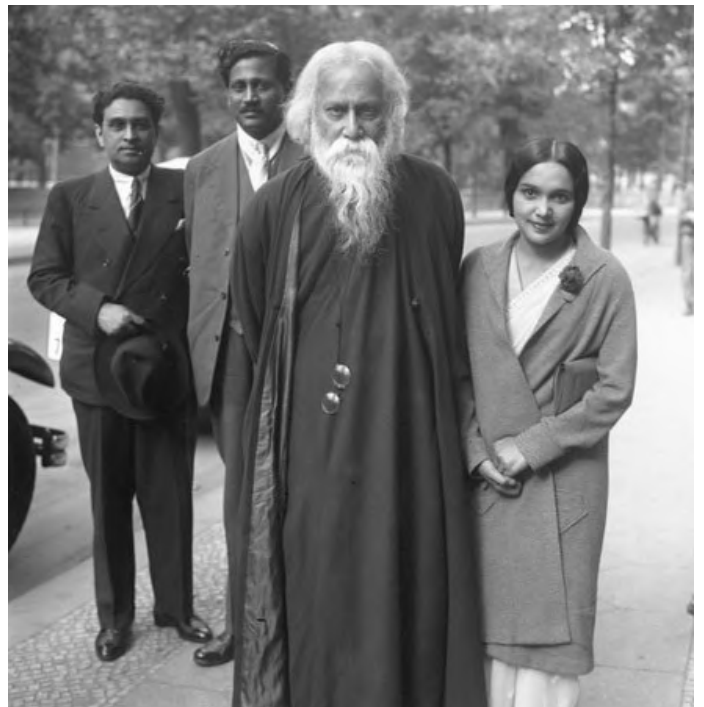
Rabindranath Tagore's Formative Years: A Foundation for Genius

Rabindranath Tagore's journey to becoming a global literary giant began in 19th-century Calcutta, a bustling cultural centre. Tagore was born on May 7, 1861, into the legendary Tagore family, which was known for its deep influence on Bengali culture and intellectual life. His upbringing was rich in arts, literature, and music.

Tagore showed an early interest in the arts. At a young age, Tagore started composing poems, demonstrating a great aptitude that his family's support encouraged. His early paintings exhibited the depth and sensitivity that would become characteristics of his later work. However, Tagore's education extended beyond the confines



of his family estate. He travelled extensively, first with his father across India and then to England. These journeys greatly enlarged his perspective, exposing him to a variety of civilizations, philosophies, and literary traditions. The synthesis of Eastern and Western philosophy became an important characteristic of his work, allowing him to use his art to establish bridges between disparate worlds.



Tagore laid the groundwork for a lifetime of artistic and intellectual discovery during these formative years. His one-of-a-kind childhood, enriched by numerous influences, turned him into a global citizen and a champion of universal human ideals. This period laid the groundwork for his tremendous contributions to writing, music, and ideas, which would leave an indelible impression on the world.

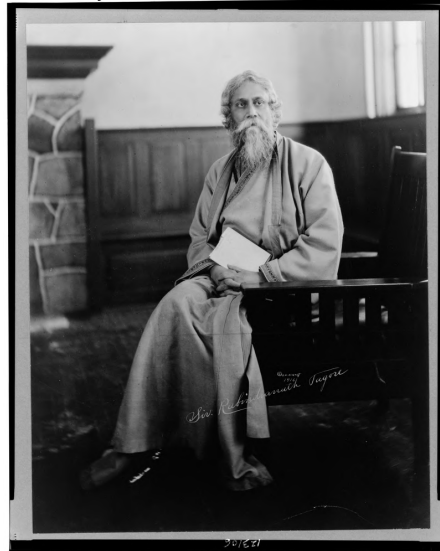
Rabindranath Tagore, often known as **Rabi**, was the thirteenth child. His mother died when he was a toddler, and at the age of eleven, he travelled across India with his father. Throughout his voyage, he was able to read the writings of notable writers, including the classical Sanskrit poet Kalidasa. He returned home and wrote a lengthy poem in the Maithili manner.

Tagore's father sent him to Britain in 1878 at the age of seventeen to pursue formal education, hoping he would become a lawyer. He grew up in Brighton, East Sussex, before attending University College London for a short time. Tagore began studying Shakespeare's writings during this period. Although he returned to Bengal two years later without a degree, Tagore received encouragement to develop his own creative work by combining parts of Bengali and European traditions. In 1882, he received widespread praise for his poem collection, "**Nirjharer Swapnabhanga**."

Rabindranath Tagore, the son of **Sarada Devi** and **Debendranath Tagore**, a prominent religious reformer, had a key influence in transforming Bengali literature and music. Debendranath Tagore, a Brahmo Samaj leader, ensured that Rabindranath grew up in an environment where philosophical debates and cultural activities were the norm. He also brought India's rich cultural history to the Western world and was the first non-European recipient of the Nobel Prize.

The Nobel Prize was awarded to A Literary Titan, the first non-European recipient.

Tagore became the first non-European to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913. He received the award following the publication of his outstanding book of poems, *Geetanjali*.



According to the Nobel Committee's announcement, Tagore was honoured for his **profoundly sensitive, fresh, and beautiful verse, by which, with consummate skill, he has made his poetic thought, expressed in his own English words, a part of Western literature.**

Regrettably, thieves stole the prize from Visva-Bharati University's security vault in 2004. Later, the Swedish Academy gave Visva-Bharati University two replicas of the prize, one made of gold and the other of bronze.

Tagore's literary canvas was expansive, spanning a wide range of genres. "*Gora*," "*Ghare-Baire*" (The Home and the World), and "*Chokher Bali*" are comprehensive studies of complicated social and philosophical subjects that exhibit his tremendous humanity and understanding of human connections. His poetry, which is frequently linked with the environment, expresses a profound ecological conscience and a sense of oneness with the natural world. Tagore's writing, with its lyrical beauty and philosophical depth, continues

to inspire and connect across cultures, making him not only an Indian national treasure but a global literary genius. His literary achievements are more than just a reflection of his creativity; they are a legacy that continues to enlighten and connect hearts around the world.

Tagore's Nationalism Vision: A Thought Leader Beyond His Time

Rabindranath Tagore's take on nationalism distinguished him from his contemporaries. While deeply committed to India's freedom struggle, Tagore held a complex understanding of nationalism. He warned against its tendency to breed division and parochialism, instead arguing for global humanism. In contrast to leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, his scepticism of strong nationalism arose from a conviction in global interconnectivity and humanity's unity. Tagore championed the idea of a society where humanity transcended political and geographic divisions in his articles, lectures, and literary works, a vision that is as pertinent today as it was in his time.

Tagore was an active member of the nationalist movement and had a close relationship with Mahatma Gandhi. He was extensively involved in numerous fields of art, literature, and music, and he even moved into painting in his sixties, exhibiting his talent as a recognised contemporary artist in India.

Among Tagore's fascinating facts is the theft of his Nobel Prize in 2004 and its replacement by the Nobel Foundation. His esteem spread beyond India, with important figures such as **WB Yeats** and **Andre Gide** praising his work.

Tagore was well-known for his respect for Mahatma Gandhi, both as a political leader and as a person. Tagore was the one who coined and popularised the title 'Mahatma' for Gandhi. Despite this, they maintained opposing viewpoints on science,



COVERSTORY

nationalism, and social and economic growth.

It's worth noting the kind of interaction Tagore had with Mahatma Gandhi. Tagore liked Gandhi but disagreed with him on some matters. Tagore admired Mahatma Gandhi immensely and expressed his admiration for his leadership time and again, but sharply differed with him when Gandhi was departing from adequate reasoning.

According to a recent post on Scroll.in, Gandhi blamed the 1934 Nepal-Bihar earthquake on the practice of untouchability among Biharis. The quake, according to Gandhi, was "a divine chastisement for the great sin we have committed against those whom we call **Harijans**."

Though Tagore was opposed to untouchability, he thought Gandhi's reasoning was unreasonable. Tagore sent a rebuttal on rationalist lines to **Gandhi's journal, Harijan**, with a request for its publication. The letter expressed '**painful surprise**' at '**this kind of unscientific view of things**'. It was simply inaccurate, **Gurudev** argued, to **associate ethical principles with cosmic phenomena**.

Gandhi believed that man's values were somehow connected to catastrophes such as droughts, floods, and earthquakes, despite their seemingly physical origins.

Tagore's Educational Odyssey: Visva-Bharati University's Vision

Tagore was interested in societal development in addition to his literary endeavours. While managing his family's properties, he gained a better grasp of human nature and pursued his interest in social reform. Inspired by Upanishadic ideas, he entered the field of education and established Shantiniketan, an experimental school.

The creation of Visva-Bharati University by Rabindranath Tagore was a groundbreaking breakthrough in educational reform, expressing his vision of

an education system that blended Indian and Western concepts. Tagore believed in building an environment that valued creativity and free thought, going beyond traditional educational conventions. Visva-Bharati was more than a university; it was a community where global cultures collided and learning went beyond textbooks. Tagore hoped to produce global citizens through this unusual educational experiment, a vision that continues to influence educational philosophies around the world.

Beyond the Written Word: Rabindranath Tagore's Artistic Spectrum

Rabindranath Tagore's artistic path included substantial contributions to music and painting in addition to literature. Rabindra Sangeet, his musical legacy includes over 2,000 songs that merge classical Indian music with his creative genius, resonating powerfully in Bengal and beyond. These works, revered for their emotional depth and cultural diversity, remain an important element of Bengali identity. Later in life, Tagore's move into painting displayed yet another aspect of his creative energy, showing abstract patterns and bright colours. Tagore's artistic flexibility solidifies his standing as a multidimensional genius.

Tragedy and Philosophical Evolution in Tagore's Personal Odyssey

The tragedies of Rabindranath Tagore's personal life profoundly influenced his philosophical worldview. The unexpected deaths of his wife, children, and other close family members lace his writings with a deep feeling of empathy and contemplation. These events influenced his perspective, prompting him to delve further into the mysteries of life, death, and the human condition. Tagore's philosophical journey, reflected in his wide body of work, depicts a soul dealing with the fundamental problems of existence, eventually finding consolation and understanding in the interconnectedness of all

beings. Tagore had a vibrant personal life in addition to his literary successes. In 1883, he married Mrinalini Devi and had five children. Unfortunately, his wife died in 1902, and he never remarried. Even during his marriage, people say he longed for personal company. "If you and I could be comrades in all our work and all our thoughts, it would be splendid," he reportedly wrote to his wife in a letter, "but we cannot attain all that we desire."

Gurudev, on the other hand, had a special rapport with his elder brother Jyotirindranath's wife, Kadambari, who shared his love of reading. His sister-in-law tragically committed suicide at the age of 25 for unclear reasons, exactly four months after Tagore's wedding. Both before and after her death, he devoted poetry and books to her.

During his vacation to Argentina in 1924–1925, he also had an intellectual contact with Victoria Ocampo, who was the publisher of the literary magazine 'Sur'. Tagore died on August 7, 1941, at the age of eighty-one.

Tagore's Legacy on the International Stage

Rabindranath Tagore's global influence is unsurpassed, demonstrating his international appeal. Tagore, who received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 for his work "Gitanjali," became the voice of India's spiritual history, transcending cultural and national barriers. His poetry and philosophical works struck a global chord, establishing him as India's literary and cultural ambassador. This global recognition emphasised the universality of his ideas, firmly establishing him as a figure of enormous impact in international literature and philosophy. . Although he penned his poems in Bengali at first, English translations of several of his works were highly popular in the West, promoting the message of spiritual peace and harmony. His celebrity status led to invitations to give lectures and embark on

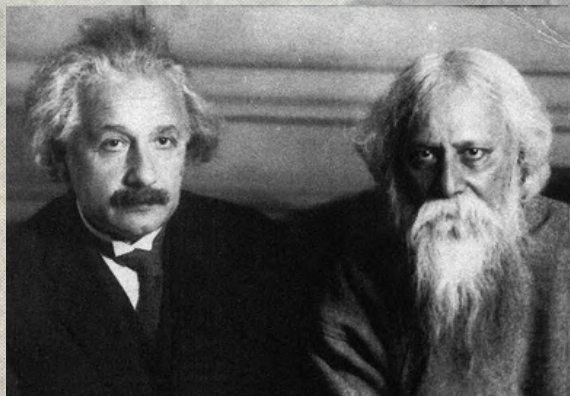


continent-spanning friendship tours. In 1915, the British government knighted Tagore, but he resigned within a few years to protest their policy in India.

Only a few people realise that **Sri Lanka's national anthem is based on a Bengali song penned by Tagore in 1938.** The Sinhalese translation of the song became their national anthem in 1951.

Ananda Samarakoon, a Tagore student at Visva-Bharati University, translated the lyrics of **Nama Nama Sri Lanka Mata** from Bengali to Sinhalese, making Tagore the only person to have written the national anthems of three countries.

Einstein's and Tagore's friendship



Albert Einstein and Tagore both loved music. Tagore and Albert Einstein met four times between 1930 and 1931, and they marked their conversations with curiosity about each other's contributions, pursuit of truth, and love of music.

According to the New York Times, Tagore wrote of Einstein after their first meeting: "There was nothing stiff about him—there was no cerebral aloofness. He appeared to be a man who appreciated human relationships, and he showed genuine concern and empathy towards me."

Tagore displayed an unshakable commitment to his artistic endeavours, personal growth, and the pursuit of India's liberation throughout his life, and his contributions have left an everlasting effect on Indian literature, music, and cultural legacy.

Tagore's Importance in the Modern World

Rabindranath Tagore's ideas on universalism, peace, and unity have significant relevance in an era fraught with global challenges. His advocacy for a world beyond political and cultural barriers resonates strongly today as societies grapple with issues of identity, conflict, and cooperation. Tagore's vision, deeply rooted

in humanism and a profound understanding of the interconnectedness of all life, offers insightful perspectives on addressing contemporary global issues.

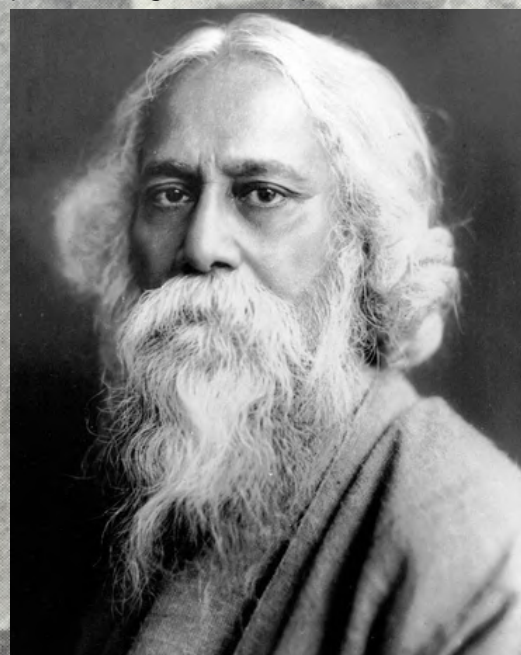
Rabindranath Tagore: An Indian Diaspora Cultural Icon

Rabindranath Tagore's works have been a cornerstone in maintaining cultural ties for the Indian diaspora, providing a sense of identity and belonging. His poetry, music, and literature resonate with themes of home, nostalgia, and universal values, providing emotional anchorage and a cultural connection for Indians abroad.

Tagore's longevity and influence

Rabindranath Tagore's legacy lives on in literature, education, music, and cultural dialogues around the world. His literary works continue to inspire writers and thinkers, while his educational philosophy at Visva-Bharati University remains a model for holistic and inclusive learning. Tagore's music, particularly Rabindra Sangeet, remains integral to Bengali culture and beyond.

Rabindranath Tagore, a Nobel laureate and cultural icon, continues to inspire and connect people around the world with his literary brilliance, profound educational philosophy, and rich musical legacy. Tagore's works, deeply rooted in Indian culture yet transcending geographical boundaries, offer a timeless perspective on life, making him an enduring symbol of cultural pride and global unity.



-MELWYN WILLIAMS





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To Accept Or Not To Accept: The Perennial Dilemma Of The Indian Citizen



By Adv. Shaju Francis

For a large number of Indian citizens working abroad, the initial teething troubles of settling down in a new country, quite distinct from one's own, are only among the first of the myriad challenges that he or she has to put up with. Culture, weather, food habits, social and societal interminglings, language, customs, traditions, practices, etc. are some of the myriad challenges that a desi finds himself caught up in, leading to a situation where he or she is even constrained to question his or her wisdom in having moved out of his or her country in the first place.

However, ploughing through the aforementioned challenges with his or her steely resolve, he or she ultimately manages to blend into the societal framework, and in a matter of some time stretching to approximately over 5 (five) years, while being comfortably ensconced in their own cocoon, they are faced with the next big question as to whether they should accept the citizenship of the country they are now part of (excluding, of course, the Gulf regions).

The answer to this query requires a lot of introspection. For some, accepting citizenship of their country of employment and residence is quite painstaking, as they know that accepting citizenship of another country and, consequently, losing out on Indian citizenship is not all that easy to come to terms with.

For starters, unknown and unintended to most is the fact that upon voluntary acceptance of a citizenship of another country, their citizenship of India ceases automatically under Section 9 of the Citizenship Act, as there is, till date, no provision of a dual citizenship for an Indian, meaning he/she cannot be an Indian citizen along with being the citizen of another country. To make matters worse, immediately thereupon, a host of challenges spring up along with this automatic cessation of his or her Indian citizenship, like seeking a visa to visit his or her own country and dealing with immoveable properties involved in agricultural and plantation activities.

Fortunately, some of these problems faced by our former Indian citizens with respect to visas for travel in and out of India have been resolved through the introduction of the concept of the Overseas Citizen of India under Section 7A of

the Citizenship Act, where certain categories of such persons of Indian ethnicity are allowed to register with the Central Government in India so as to obtain an OCI card. The said card helps such people with, inter alia, multiple entry visas into and out of India and non-reporting to the office of the FRRO (Foreigners Regional Registration Office). However, Section 7B of the Citizenship Act lists out all the said activities that such persons holding an OCI card cannot do and are proscribed from, which proscription includes being deprived of the right to vote and the right to deal in immoveable properties in India, related to agriculture and plantations, apart from being barred from holding a public office in India.

While the bar on such persons from holding public office in India is understandable and is also in sync with requirements in other developed Western economies too, what is beyond one's comprehension is such former citizens being deprived of the continuance of their Indian citizenship, including the right to vote, which is a very basic rights, considering that by accepting citizenship of a foreign county, the said person does not cut himself away from India and to mistakenly assume that he/she does so, would only be unnatural, considering that such persons have families and properties here in India, apart from being a large part of the Indian diaspora who travel to India and remit moneys to India on a regular basis and these two acts should by itself, be a cause célèbre for just by these very actions of theirs, they contribute to, inter alia, invaluablely enriching the Indian economy, adding the much needed push to help grow the Indian GDP and being responsible for making India to be the largest growing economy in the world.

It is in keeping with the said spirit, WFY has, while interacting with the lawmakers in India, organized a conclave on the said subject, on the afternoon of the 16th of January at the Constitution Club at New Delhi, India, under the topic "KEEP THE DOOR OPEN" campaign, to impress upon the Indian law makers, at the Centre, to discuss, in Parliament, so as to make an appropriate provision in the law, where the equally invaluable contribution of such global Indians and their meteoric roles in



WORLD POLITICS

galvanizing world trade and economies is not sacrificed at the altar of a foreign citizenship, nor the intended benefits accruing upon conferment of their continued citizenship of India, not lost out on skewered and myopic thinking of erstwhile law makers who were never faced with such a crying and dire situation of ever so willing Indians and a Government seemingly unwilling to accommodate them into the folds of mother India.

The Indian Diaspora Global is organising a consultation conference with the two major stakeholders in Indian democracy

National Democratic & Indian National Developmental Alliance

In line with the
“KEEP THE DOOR OPEN”
Campaign

We are seeking 'Dual Citizenship' for the Indian Diaspora spread across the globe.

Connecting dots... Connecting Roots...
Let us not close the doors when our children leave for work or in search of a better life.
Instead, let us keep it open for them to come back anytime.
Let's make this campaign successful and bring our brothers and sisters back home.

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Contributions and sponsorships for the said cause are more than welcome and can be sent at or on <https://indiandiaspora.world/index.php/who-we-are/dual-citizenship-campaign/>.



It is in understanding and empathising with this peculiar situation that the former Indian citizen finds himself/ herself in, that WFY is now taking upon itself to espouse the cause of such former Indian citizens who have involuntarily 'lost' out on their continuance of Indian citizenship for no fault of their own and who certainly cannot be faulted for venturing out to find greener pastures and consequently, the automatic cessation of his/her Indian citizenship, merely upon their accepting of a foreign citizenship, is too harsh a 'punishment' to be meted out with, apart from such a 'punishment' being extremely disproportionate, reprehensible, insensitive and incorporated without application of mind, in view of the fact that these persons continue to contribute to the Indian economy in myriad ways, in addition to being proud Indians.

Speakers who are listed to participate include:

1. **P. Wilson:** Member of Rajya Sabha from Tamil Nadu as a member of DMK and a senior advocate
2. **Dr. Lauro Pfoze:** Member of Lok Sabha from Outer Manipur (Naga People's Front)
3. **Giridhar Yadav:** Member of Lok Sabha from Banka(Bihar), member of Janta Dal (United)
4. **Naresh Bansal:** Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha from Uttarakhand (former General Secretary (Organisation) of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Uttarakhand)
5. **Tirath Singh Rawat:** Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, and former Chief Minister of Uttarakhand.
6. **A Narayanaswami:** Member of the Lok Sabha from (current Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment of India)
7. **Dushyant Gautam:** Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, and National General Secretary of the Bhartiya Janata Party (Haryana)
8. **D. Raja:** Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (CPI) (Tamil Nadu).
9. **Sitaram Yechuri:** Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, and Indian Marxist politician; the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist); and a member of the Politburo of the CPI (West Bengal).
10. **Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav:** Member of Parliament in Rajya Sabha and Secretary-General of the Samajwadi Party (Uttar Pradesh)

The said conference shall be moderated by a senior journalist, **Shri. Vinay Kumar**. The programme shall be screened live for all, especially the target former Indian citizens who form the global Indian diaspora.

- ADV. SHAJU FRANCIS

SEEKING 'DUAL CITIZENSHIP' IN INDIA FOR THE INDIAN DIASPORA SPREAD ACROSS THE GLOBE.

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Life Goals: How To Be In Focus?

By Priyanka Sharma

It is said that we're all born to do something in our lives; all of us can't do it all the same, but all of us have a motive in our lives that we all dream of fulfilling.

But unfortunately, there are several things that distract us from the original purpose of our lives. The distractions can be of different types; they're not just the materialistic things around you but also the relationships and people that you're surrounded by.

Today, people's preoccupation with others' opinions distracts them from fulfilling their true motives, leading them to prioritise satisfying others' desires and discussions.

Today, all we think about doing is making up for people we do not even know about, even if they're strangers. Taking an example: we're just sitting somewhere alone with a bunch of strangers around, but even if they are just strangers to us, all we'll think is: is that person looking at me? Am I sitting the right way or not? Is there anything wrong with me? We almost always end up thinking about what others will say or think when they see this.

Because of all of this social anxiety, we tend to distract ourselves from the wants or desires we have dreamed of.

The people must overcome this in order to fulfil all their desires and have dreams about the future.

The generation we are in is all about our peers. We look for new friends, we socialise, and whenever there are plans to hang out, we just get into it. Those plans are never-ending; they don't stop. Someday there's a plan to party for someone's birthday, the day after there's a plan

for an outing, and the cycle continues, but in between all of this, we forget about what we've missed that required our attention to make things that have been planned for the future a success.

All this is what I've experienced, and it's all a part of the generation that I live in or am a part of. No doubt this generation is the most intellectual one and is excelling in all ways possible, but as we all know, there's always a setback to something that shines.

A live example of sacrificing one's own dreams for the sake of family members. The father might not feel that this particular career is right for my child, even though it is the thing that the child has been most passionate about.

There are multiple things that our parents won't agree to; it might be due to the gender gap or even because of the risk to your future and career.

It is important that the parents ask their child what his desires are from life rather than just pressuring the child with all the expectations that the parents couldn't fulfil.

Being distracted or driven away from the desires of your life or the thing that is considered the only outcome of your life is a whole lot of reason to get into the stuff that the parents don't approve of.

The parents need to understand that if they just let their child decide for himself what he needs from his life, it will eventually make the life of the parents easier, as the child will definitely find a way to work things out for him.

But pressuring the child won't help!!!!!!



It is a saying that in order to achieve the goals that you desire, you need to sacrifice the things that come in the way of them, and that is what this generation needs to keep in mind.

These distractions will always look tempting; they can be anything, even the minute thing that you would not have even thought of: hanging out with friends, giving all your time to your partners, wasting time scrolling social media, and a lot more.

I'll again say that all of these findings are based on me and all that I have observed in my surroundings; these couldn't be neglected.

One more thing that is to be kept in mind is that we all know that we aren't machines; we just can't focus on one thing for 24 hours. That's a fact, which is why what we should prefer doing at that time is that we should look for jobs that are part-time, which will also help us to be financially independent and not dependent on our parents.

Being financially independent would also convince the parents that yes, at least the child is earning; he might not be earning much, but while figuring out the future, the child is on his own and is taking things by himself.

We've also seen that the students think that if studying isn't their interest or they don't want to pursue studying as a career, then they're just wasting time studying. We have even observed this in students who have just passed high school.

Following your dreams doesn't mean you do not need to complete your education. Education is an important thing, and at least being a graduate is important so that you can say that yes, I am an educated person and I'm not pursuing my career in studies.

Rather than saying that I don't have a career in studies, I won't do it, and I'll just be doing what I feel is my choice of interest.

If you're educated enough, then you can obviously think of doing anything that is not related to your career in studies.

But being educated, earning for yourself, and then following your dreams as a career is a lot better than just putting all your parents' money into something that might not even work for you in the future. You know you should always have a plan B; your plan A is always considered your dreams, but if that doesn't work out for you even after all the hustle, then you'll have your education to just do it for your living.

Which is why it is important to be educated first.

Demanding the freedom to choose everything in your life from your parents will only come if you already have something in your life, but if you're just a person who has figured it all out and is still dependent on his parents for everything, you won't really convince the parents to give you even the slightest freedom.

- PRIYANKA SHARMA





2024 New Trends:

All You Need To Know For A Healthy Life

By WFY Bureau

The health and wellness scene is likely to evolve with new trends and products by 2024. Here are some major observations and trends to look out for this year:

- **Wellness Products:** Experts have recommended a variety of wellness products and initiatives for the year 2024. These include mindfulness and stress-reduction tools like Ten Percent Happier.
- **Fitness:** Fitness remains a priority in 2024, with new workout trends and technologies emerging.
- **Mental Wellness:** Mental health remains a priority, with innovative approaches to improving mental well-being being a part of wellness.
- **Skincare:** Experts predict that skincare will make a significant impact in 2024, fueled by emerging workout trends and technologies.
- **Nutrition:** Members of the Forbes Health Advisory Board foresee nutrition trends, recommending an emphasis on food choices and their impact on overall wellness.
- **Holistic Approaches:** In 2024, wellness is likely to include holistic practices such as Ayurveda and biohacking.
- **Health Tech:** Health tech innovations are expected to increase usage and impact the wellness sector.
- **Market Growth:** Experts project rapid growth in the wellness market, reflecting a sustained global focus on health and well-being.
- **Unique Trends:** Specific trends such as "*dry January*" and "*cosy cardio*" are also gaining attention in the wellness
- **Empowerment:** Consumers desire empowerment in their wellness decisions, especially regarding plant-based and probiotic goods.

What might the next 12 months possibly have in store for us if 2023 was all about probiotics and ChatGPT-guided fitness plans? So, we examined some data-driven forecasts to bring you the top wellness and fitness trends for 2024.

WHAT WILL FITNESS AND HEALTH LOOK LIKE IN 2024?

People will increasingly celebrate unprocessed food.

My bet is that "ultra-processed" will be the food phrase of the year as everyone who cares about what they eat realises that they need to reduce their use of foods that are industrially produced, employ industrially extracted components, and are designed to replace real foods while also being "addictive." Many studies have linked these foods to obesity-related chronic disorders (heart disease, type 2 diabetes, etc.) and overall mortality. One research trial backs up the addiction concept by showing that those who eat ultra-processed diets consume many more calories than those who eat moderately processed diets. It would not surprise me if non-ultra-processed products were potentially marketed as such.

Rodents Will Inspire the Next Bro-Science Fad

We shall learn about an epochal breakthrough in the quest for immortality sometime in 2024. There will be a chemical that, when given in adequate quantities to particular transgenic mice, extends life by a statistically significant amount when extended from rodent years to human years. Human experiments will be organised; venture cash will flow as freely as red wine; and incredibly long podcasts will be recorded. Obscure plants containing chemicals vaguely similar to the breakthrough will flood the Internet. The projected value of the worldwide wellness market is \$6.6 trillion. The United States' life expectancy will continue its decade-long slide.



Adults will have unstructured play.

Everyone suffers from loneliness. We are in desperate need of personal connection and interaction. We're running out of reasons to get outside. Physically, we are all withering and calcifying. Stay with me; PvP zones are the obvious response. What exactly is a PvP zone, you ask? In open-world video games, PvP zones are specified regions where players can directly interact with—OK, attack—one another. Obviously, I do not want there to be physical violence. A space for adults to participate in rather unconstrained play, on the other hand? We require it today more than ever. I see you shaking your head, but it just goes to show how desperately you need to interact with your fellow humans in a PvP zone. You might think I'm joking, but I'm dead serious. The most important characteristic of the PvP zone is that it is unstructured, a place where no one loses and talent is irrelevant. Nobody would deny that many of us think far too much these days. Perhaps the solution to all of our woes is to just designate a section of our parks where it is acceptable to approach someone you don't know and yell "Tag, you are it" before running away. Zones for PvP. It could, should, and, in my opinion, will happen.

Badminton is emerging.

When it comes to racquet sports, an old face is making a comeback on the main court. Badminton, which originated in China over 2,000 years ago, is the sport in which you hit a shuttlecock rather than a ball (if you're unfamiliar with the sport). It peaked in popularity in the West a century ago, and while it has been in the Olympics for a long time, it appears to be making a comeback now that we're back in the 20s.

The popularity of badminton stems from its simple regulations and faster, more physically demanding pace than tennis. It also happens to be the first alphabetical option on your Polar Sports profiles. According to Pinterest, badminton will be a new fitness fad in 2024, with an 80% increase in searches for badminton rackets and outfits in the last year.

A greater emphasis on preventive solutions will allow us to spend less money on healthcare.

Sick care will be reimaged through a combination of sustainable lifestyle adjustments and personalised solutions. In the future decades, I believe that health-care spending will change from reactive to proactive. More exercise and nutritious eating should be the first line of defence. Building on that foundation, health monitors, preventative diagnostics, and coaching and care platforms can ultimately save the US healthcare system trillions of dollars.

We will balance medical advances with common-sense solutions.

We've reached a stage where I believe we'll need to rethink how we think about health and wellbeing in a variety of ways. On the one hand, we will have to deal with the environment we have created. There is a growing recognition that having phones with you at all times is having a negative impact on the mental health of teenagers and young people. And for the rest of us, ignoring green space, parks, walking neighbourhoods, and so much more in our daily lives is setting us up for failure. On the other hand, the potential of medical breakthroughs such as GLP-1 medicines opens up much-needed opportunities for genuine change. The first true medicine for obesity will require us to reconsider how we see health, both personally and medically. My goal is that we will find ourselves grappling with the nuance in the centre, figuring out how to use

medical discoveries while also paving the way for long-term sustainability by making our environment more inviting to healthier behaviours.

Research on strategies to expedite recovery.

Many healing treatments have gained popularity in recent years. It's become a crucial element of the training process for athletes of all levels, from foam rolling to massage guns. Cold water exposure, particularly through ice baths or similar sorts of chilly immersion after training, has gained significantly in popularity.

In 2024, we expect to gain a better understanding of cold water immersion, including its benefits such as relieving muscle soreness. For example, building on their pilot study from 2022, researchers in the United Kingdom will perform the largest, randomised, controlled experiment on the subject to examine if cold water exposure helps treat anxiety disorders and depression.

Experiencing international flavours.

I hope that the desire for home cooks to experiment with more global flavours and ingredients from many international cuisines continues. According to my social media feeds, 2023 was the year of the chilli crisp.

Mushrooms that have medicinal properties

This is a current trend that I believe will gain mainstream attention in 2024. It appears like mushroom coffee is here to stay, which is a great way to get your fungus dose, but I also hope that the hoopla pushes people to cook with more various species of mushrooms.

Aside from the standard buttons and bellas, variations like chanterelle, shiitake, and enoki are very common in most large grocery stores these days. Most medicinal mushrooms are adaptogenic, which means they help the body cope with stress, something I believe many of us might benefit from.

The "Not Too Sweet" era will continue to gain traction.

Growing up in an Asian-American home, the best compliment someone could pay for a dessert was "it's not too sweet." This intolerance to cloying sweetness, which I developed at a young age, has caught on with the general public. From the long-overdue realignment of the soda industry towards sparkling water as the hero, to the continued rise in popularity of Asian food with its greater emphasis on savoury over sweet, to the all-too-common experience of asking your server for a wine recommendation that's "on the drier side," sweetness is marginalised. However, while sugar has been demonised for decades for its nutritional value, consumers are now limiting their sugar intake for reasons other than health. Even those who aren't adamant about avoiding sugar are cutting back because they want to be able to taste their food rather than having their taste buds swamped in a flood of sweetness.

With rising scepticism about the healthfulness of artificial sweeteners and a general preference for more natural foods, diets in 2024 and beyond may not only continue to reduce sugar levels, but whatever small amounts of sugar they do consume will come from natural sources rather than synthetic ones.

We'll stop complicating the concept of living well.

People will want stability and simplicity in their health and exercise routines as their lives become more chaotic and tumultuous. There will always be individuals who are onto the newest craze or bro-science gimmick, but it appears that more and more people are growing tired of this. There is already a lot of noise in the world, and one's approach to health and



HEALTH & WELLNESS

fitness should not add to it.

I believe it will increasingly be back to basics—not only because they work but also because they are less exhausting. Out with the social media hype speeches from \$8,000 cold plunges at five a.m., and in with a morning cup of coffee or tea, a book, and 30 to 60 minutes of regular activity. The former is appealing. The latter is the road to true health and happiness.

Take a break.

Expect to leave in 2024 and get some rest. The holiday trend is centred on helping Gen Z and Millennials rest and recover better. Whether you've been dealing with stress, burnout, or sleeplessness, taking some time away from work and everything else to learn how to prioritise sleep hygiene is the kind of break you'll undoubtedly benefit from for the rest of the year (excuse the pun).

You wouldn't be the only one attempting to slow down instead of running about at an exhaustingly touristy event. Searches for all things slow life on Pinterest increased by 60%, while interest in digital detox challenges rose by 80%, and searches for anything linked to ASMR sleep saw a 165% increase. So, next year, feel free to have a couple more early evenings and languid mornings in bed.

We're going to start Biohacking our 'Beach Vacations'

You could go to a sterile clinic for a lifespan boost with vitamin IV drips and stem cell therapy, but resorts are now collaborating with longevity centres to offer onsite treatments. Guests at resorts can receive a poolside NAD+ IV drip. The Regenerative Wellness Clinic offers live blood analysis to customers. Many also provide thorough diagnostic testing to guests, which can help determine biohack treatments like localised cryotherapy.

Dance workouts for Gen Z

On the other end of the age spectrum, #DanceFitness will have around a billion TikTok views in 2023. You'll understand why Gen Z can't get enough of sweating it out to music once you've seen (or participated in) one of the app's many dancing challenges. It's comparable to how aerobic dance exercises like Zumba were fitness crazes in past generations. Except that you may now record and share it online, expanding your sense of digital community.

Staying healthy (working out regularly, eating well, etc.) is one of Gen Z's top goals, according to recent Instagram research. Group fitness classes are also popular with this demographic, demonstrating that in-person exercise experiences are important to those who grew up on the internet. With more gyms offering dancing classes, it's a logical fit for people looking for motivational music, guided workouts, and the chance to meet a new exercise partner or two.

Fitness on all levels

Next year, we will encourage you to explore the connection between your mind and body in relation to your mental health. Instead, you will have the opportunity to focus on improving your overall fitness, including both your mental and physical health. Instead, it will concentrate on your whole health, emphasising the interdependence of your mental and physical health and how they can only be described in relation to one another.

This all-encompassing approach to wellness will result in more attentive options at the gym, such as meditation sessions and even counselling. As a result, mental health services and apps will begin to encourage and provide physical fitness workouts. The aim is to cultivate a healthy, balanced, and resilient body and mind.

Low-intensity workouts will see (yet another) renaissance

People have realised that shorter workouts can still be beneficial (see exercise snacks!) and that high-intensity workouts do not have to be lengthy. What follows will be a flood of lower-intensity workouts taking a lap in the spotlight. People are walking more, doing lower-intensity steady-state training (Zone 2 and otherwise), and wanting to feel better rather than merely be fitter. As millennials' life responsibilities increase with age, the wear and tear that hard workouts have on the body will become more apparent for

this generation of people born during the wellness boom. Furthermore, people are beginning to comprehend more of the science underpinning the benefits of low-intensity steady-state exercise, particularly for the heart. The "soft life" approach will manifest itself in the gym.

AI for fitness personalisation.

Where would you be in 2023 if you hadn't used ChatGPT? After years of anticipation, AI in the fitness field suddenly became a reality. With the rise in popularity of wearable technology over the last decade, you can now use your data to personalise every aspect of your approach to exercise and health. It is empowering to not only monitor but also optimise your health in whichever way works for you, from utilising AI to adapt your dietary plans to experimenting with it as a running coach. AI can provide you with data like heart rate variability (HRV), cardiac load, energy consumption, and the quality and quantity of sleep you get each night. With new capabilities such as skin temperature and daytime alertness added in recent months, you'll be able to acquire an even deeper picture of your fitness and wellness in 2024, providing you with more insights that AI can enhance.

Concentrate on mental health recovery.

Many people have become more aware of the exhausting effects of a mind and body in constant activity in the years since the outbreak. Finding ways to take a mental break during meetings, workdays, weekends, and other times has become more important, complementing physical recuperation requirements.

Meditation, writing, setting boundaries, spending time in nature, and checking in with a mental health practitioner are all ways to include more of these recovery moments in your life.

More knowledge, tools, leadership involvement, and continuing discussion are helping to incorporate mental health into our daily lives. Individuals are more willing and open to assisting themselves (and their communities) in achieving mental health. It is now, and will continue to be, increasingly common to open up and share ideas about our inner experiences.

Increasing understanding of the connection between community and mental health

We are seeing a greater awareness of how the groups we belong to and how we interact in those communities affect our mental health. Mental health is not necessarily personal; it is also community-based. To improve our individual mentalities, there is a greater need to positively impact our local (and worldwide) communities.

Consider the following: Where do I go to work? Who do I collaborate with? What is our common goal and impact? What organisations do I belong to, and how do they affect the world in a positive or negative way? How are we assisting one another?

Staying informed about these trends is crucial for making informed decisions about your health and fitness in 2024.

Stay Healthy!

Stay Blessed!





2024 TRAVEL FOCUS: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

By WFY Bureau

The post-pandemic travel boom seems to be tapering off as 2024 draws near, as rising costs and the cost of living issue continue to eat into consumers' discretionary income.

That being said, despite the effects of inflation on living standards, it is observed that a large number of online travel agents (OTAs) have seen an increase in bookings. This is partly because of the market. The rapid expansion of low-cost carriers keeps vacations seeming inexpensive overall.

Additionally, businesses are figuring out how to adjust to these demands so that travel stays reasonably priced. Certain airlines have made the change to pay 50% up front and the remaining 50% two weeks ahead of time.

Trends in Travel and Leisure for 2024:

- **Niche tourist segments:** In 2024, it's anticipated that niche tourist markets, including wellness and ecological travel, will grow in popularity. Experiences that complement personal beliefs and wellbeing are becoming more and more sought-after by travelers .
- **AI and technology:** These two factors will keep reshaping the tourism sector. Anticipate technological advancements in booking platforms, tailored suggestions, and improved travel experiences .
- **Wellness Travel:** In 2024, travelers will prioritize their own health and self-care. There will be demand for locations that provide spa treatments, outdoor recreation, and wellness retreats
- **Local and Authentic Experiences:** Travelers looking to forge closer ties with the local food and culture will continue to favor authentic, off-the-beaten-path experiences. Inclination toward culture In addition to museums, historical sites, and cultural events- travelers are beginning to believe that sampling the food of a foreign nation is a fantastic way to learn about a new place. The international food tourism industry was valued at US \$1,116.7 billion in 2019 and is expected to grow to over \$1,796.5 billion by 2027. This booming interest in food tourism was recently seen on a social media platform when a viral video detailing a Roman gelato food tour amassed 19.1 million views. Travel inspired by trying specific foods has even become its own kind of travel show.





TRAVEL & LEISURE

- **Customization:** As tourists look for distinctive itineraries and individualized services, tailored travel experiences will be in demand. Travelers or Tourists anticipate a personalized touch, but most of the time they don't receive it. It's reasonable to argue that in the travel sector, one size no longer fits all. There is still a noticeable gap between what customers demand and what they get. Travelers seek specialized experiences that provide them with unique and life-changing moments. However, many travelers find that the outdated, compartmentalized systems still cause a great deal of friction in the vacation booking process. Nevertheless, there are several pioneers in seamless travel technology, and it is anticipated that the travel sector will consolidate, uniting airlines and online travel agencies. The customized travel and experiences sector is expected to grow at a rate of over four times during the next ten years, reaching around half a trillion dollars in value by 2030, making the prize itself extremely valuable.
- **Adventure and Exploration:** For individuals looking for heart-pounding experiences, adventure travel and visiting less-frequented locations will continue to be appealing
- **Safety and Health Measures:** Following the pandemic, tourists will continue to place a high value on safety and health measures, seeking out locations and lodgings that put their health first.
- **One very joyous and large family vacation:** When baby boomers began taking their families on post-retirement travels nine years ago, multigenerational family vacations became a popular travel trend. However, this type of holiday went out of style as travel was curtailed owing to the epidemic on a global scale, but multigenerational vacations are once again becoming more popular. As the tourism industry recovers from the pandemic, families are especially keen to reunite and create enduring experiences with one another. Traveling with many generations has grown in popularity this year and is expected to continue in 2024.
- **Travel Trends for Business Will Rewrite Expectations In many respects:** business travel has changed during the last few years. Products and initiatives have been launched to adapt to the evolving needs of passengers. The traveler type, duration of stay, occasion of travel, destination, and other factors underwent notable changes in the industry. Furthermore, as time goes on, the sector is adapting to changes in the where, how, and why of conducting business while traveling. The travelers or tourists are combining business and pleasure travel since it's been a true pleasure. **Bleisure** travel is, as the name implies, the blending of leisure and business travel. It could be planning a trip that combines work and personal time or scheduling get-togethers with loved ones either before or after work. It could be spending a few days at the beach following a conference or taking a weekend trip to a city just before a significant meeting. Given the rising cost of living and the resulting inflationary pressures on travel, it may not be surprising that luxury travel is on the rise. Bleisure travel offers the chance to extend stays for work-related purposes by adding extra leisure time.

Pack your bags. Get set and go!
Happy Travelling!

- WFY BUREAU



FROM THE KITCHENS OF INDIA

SANDESH

Sandesh is a popular traditional Bengali dessert that has a special position in Bengal's culinary culture, which is located in Eastern India. This delightful candy is made mostly of chhana (curdled milk) and sugar, with flavour and texture variations.



Sandesh

During ancient times, the Indian subcontinent popularized milk-based sweets, and Sandesh's origins can be traced back to this period. However, it wasn't until the 16th century, during the time of the Bengal Sultanate, that Sandesh rose to prominence as one of Bengal's most popular sweets. It gradually became a necessary sweet offering at festivals, festivities, and religious rites, as well as an integral aspect of Bengali cuisine.

Sandesh was traditionally made with only chhana and sugar, but over time, various flavours and ingredients were added, broadening its range and appeal. There are several different types of Sandesh available nowadays, including Nolen Gur Sandesh (made with date palm jaggery), Pista Sandesh (with pistachios), Kesar Sandesh (saffron-flavoured), and many more.

Cultural Importance: Sandesh has enormous cultural importance among Bengalis. It is a symbol of love, affection, and sharing one's delight with others. In Bengali literature, poetry, and songs, Bengalis frequently mention Sandesh as a metaphor for sweetness, gentleness, and the essence of Bengali hospitality.

1. People frequently used the sweet to transport messages between individuals, which is why it gained its name "Sandesh." Some believe that the sweet gained its name because people frequently used it to transport messages between individuals.
2. Sandesh is extremely adaptable and can be fashioned into a variety of shapes, ranging from basic round balls to elaborate designs created with moulds. Sandesh's shape is termed "moulding."
3. Kolkata (previously Calcutta) is famous for its delectable Sandesh. Sweet shops in Kolkata, such as K.C. Das, Bhim Nag, and Ganguram, have become famous for their ability to create delectable Sandesh.
4. Sandesh is not just popular in Bengal but also throughout India, particularly in areas with a large Bengali population.
5. Sandesh has evolved to suit the modern palate as the times have changed. Chocolate sandesh, mango sandesh, and even fusion combinations like paan (betel leaf) sandesh have become popular.

Sandesh is still revered by Bengalis as a symbol of their rich culinary heritage, and it has a global following for its delicate texture, exquisite flavours, and perfect balance of sweetness.

Here's how to prepare Sandesh, a popular Bengali dessert, the traditional way:

Ingredients:

- 2 litres of full-fat milk
- 1 lemon
- 1 cup powdered sugar; a few saffron strands (optional)
- 1 tablespoon pistachios, chopped (for garnish)
- 1 tablespoon chopped almonds (optional)



Step-by-step instructions:

1. Begin by making the chhana (curdled milk). Pour the milk into a big pot and bring to a boil over medium heat. To keep the milk from sticking to the bottom of the pan, stir it occasionally.
2. While heating the milk, squeeze and filter the lemon. Set aside the lemon juice.
3. When the milk reaches a boil, remove it from the heat and set it aside for a minute. Then, while constantly whisking the milk, gradually add the lemon juice, a little at a time. The lemon juice's acidity will curdle the milk and separate the whey.
4. Once the milk has completely curdled and the whey has separated, strain the mixture through a fine sieve or muslin cloth. Set aside the whey to be used in other dishes, such as making dough.
5. Rinse the chhana under cold running water to remove any lemon juice sourness. Gather the cloth's corners and squeeze lightly to eliminate extra water.
6. Hang the chhana bundle for 30 minutes to absorb any remaining moisture. This produces a soft, crumbly chhana.
7. After 30 minutes, transfer the chhana to a clean, dry surface and knead it with your palm's heel until it is smooth, creamy, and lump-free. This stage is critical for achieving the desired texture for Sandesh.
8. Transfer the kneaded chhana to a heavy-bottomed pan. Cook for about 5 minutes on low heat, stirring often.
9. Mix the powdered sugar until it is completely incorporated. Cook and stir for another 10–15 minutes, or until the mixture begins to leave the sides of the pan and forms a hard mass.
10. At this point, add a few strands of saffron soaked in a tablespoon of heated milk to improve the flavour and give the Sandesh a beautiful yellow colour. Combine this with the chhana mixture.
11. Remove from the fire and set aside for a few minutes to cool until the mixture is cold enough to touch.
12. Grease your palms with ghee or butter and scoop out a tiny amount of the hot Sandesh mixture. Make little, spherical Sandesh balls by rolling them between your palms. Moulds can also be used to form the Sandesh into various designs.
13. Decorate the Sandesh balls with chopped pistachios and almonds, carefully pressing them on top.
14. Refrigerate the Sandesh for about 1-2 hours to set and harden up.

The Sandesh is ready to serve once it has cooled and set. Enjoy this scrumptious Bengali sweet as a pleasant treat or on special occasions with friends and family!

Enjoy your delicious homemade Sandesh!

- WFY BUREAU





The WFY Interview: Let Us Talk!

Welcome To The Fascinating World Of Rudraksha

By WFY Bureau

Namaste!

Today we have with us Mr. Mukund Khatiwada. He is one of the leading entrepreneurs based in the USA and Nepal.

Good day, Mr. Khatiwada. Thank you for joining us for this interview. Let's begin by discussing your early life and how it shaped your path. Can you share more about how it impacted your journey?



Mukunda: I was born into a poor family in 1973. We were a family of four. My elder sister, me, and my parents.

In 1971, there were only 4 shops in front of the Pashupati Nath Temple that sold flowers, pooja material, and rudraksha. My late father, Mr. Balaram Khatiwada, used to bring rudraksha and other mala from Banaras and sell them in Kathmandu. Those days, there was no direct link

from Dingla (Bhojpur) to Kathmandu, so I used to buy Nepali rudraksha from Banaras, India.

He used to open the shop as early as 3 o'clock am to late at 9 p.m., and my mother, Late Laxmi Khatiwada, gave equal effort to run the small shop. My parents' main objective was to give us a good education.

Me and my sister graduated from a reputed university (name of the university), and we made our parents proud. After graduation, I searched for a job but was not able to get one, and I thought of starting many new businesses because my parents were old and I do not want to run the same business as it requires 18 hours of continuous effort.

After graduation, my mother encouraged me to learn computers; it was around 1997. NIIT from India has opened a branch in Kathmandu to study software engineering, and furthermore, I pursued e-commerce.

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

Mukunda: After graduating from NIIT and having knowledge of e-commerce, I decided to launch a web site on Rudraksha.

Around 1998, the Pashupati Nath Temple Development Trust decided to demolish all houses and shops near the temple, including our shop. We became jobless. That year was very difficult for me as my mother expired and my father decided not to do any work. Due to their hard work, they managed to build a house that was safe. Now all responsibility came to me, including my wife and son.

I always had knowledge of Rudraksha, and I just mixed with new technology and brought new products to market. I decided to launch a web site, www.neparudraksha.com.

**Nepa
Rudraksha**



Back then, the website used to be static; if someone wanted to buy, he or she needed to email me, and I needed to answer. Getting money from customers was also challenging. Getting money from India was difficult; my customer needs to go to SBI and make a demand draft, which was a very lengthy process, and very few businesses I use get their money from the website.

Then I started selling to various shops in Varanasi, Haridwar, etc., including major web sites in India. My popularity increased day by day due to the best quality Rudraksha at a reasonable price, and I became one of the leading Rudraksha business houses. Now, in the world of Rudraksha, **Nepa Rudraksha** can proudly say that it is one of the biggest Rudraksha collectors of Nepali Rudraksha.

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

Mukunda: 99% of my customers are Indian, no matter where they live. Our record shows we have managed to supply **153** countries to date. Our popularity is increasing day by day. In the last **25** years, we have managed to open branches in the **USA** and **Nepal** and are planning to open physical stores in **India** too.

The small shop, which was opened in 1971, became one of the most trusted Rudraksha brands until now. I am sure this legacy will flow further with the effort and hard work of my children.

I've spent my entire life researching the benefits of numerous types of Rudraksha beads. Our family is well-known for its extensive knowledge of ancient scriptures as well as its recent scientific study of Rudraksha. We not only comprehend the chemical compositions, energy-matter dynamics, and biological importance of Rudraksha seeds, but we also decode the sophisticated mathematics linked with the astrological setting, which strongly supports the use of Rudraksha as life-changing beads. We also provide experienced and honest guidance and have assisted thousands of people all over the world in overcoming adversity and living a happy and meaningful life.

Question: That's quite a journey. Tell us more about your current life. What keeps you busy—your family and other engagements?

Mukunda: By the grace of God, both of my children were able to study at prestigious schools and colleges in the USA. My son, Sukritya Khatiwada, has already joined my business after graduation. Due to his knowledge of both modern and Vedic education, he is able to incorporate the modern system into our religious practice. His popularity is enhancing in the Rudraksha field.

Question: Looking back on your long and fruitful life journey, what are your reflections?

Mukunda: My journey in the field of Rudraksha has been nothing short of magical, and it continues to be. It gives me great pride to carry my family's legacy forward and continue to raise global awareness of this sacred bead.

Through this journey, one of the main things I have learned is the importance of perseverance and self-belief. When we started as a small shop in the temple premises, the only thing that kept us driven was our goal to reach the lives of devotees throughout the world. This goal guided me to create the first ever online platform for Nepali Rudraksha.

Similarly, even today, when I think of the challenges that we have overcome to establish Nepa Rudraksha as the world's largest and most trusted source for Rudraksha, I believe that nothing is impossible. The only thing that



FEATURE

limits one's potential is their vision for what they want to be in life.

With the blessing of my Rudraksha and Lord Shiva, I have accomplished what seemed impossible, but I am only getting started. I hope to someday see Nepa Rudraksha's Rudraksha pendant with every Hindu in the entire world. I believe it's possible and would be a great blessing to humanity.

Question: *We are so pleased to know about your success story. I'm sure many will be thrilled and inspired by it. Now, can you please help us understand more about Rudraksha?*

Mukunda: Sure, I'll tell you more about the world of Rudraksha and its importance and relevance. Across the globe, many Bollywood and Hollywood celebrities, business owners, and sports personalities choose to procure Rudraksha combinations from us, seeking divine support for their successful careers.



We humans are considered one of the most exceptional species in the galaxy. Each individual, regardless of gender or age, possesses tremendous potential to thrive in all aspects of life. All we require are limitless ambitions, persistent efforts, and abundant blessings. However, we often limit our ambitions, shorten our efforts, and hesitate to seek blessings. Consequently, despite having access to modern facilities, true happiness remains an elusive dream for most people. It is crucial to recognise that abundance, growth, harmony, and happiness stem from spiritual equilibrium. Conversely, their absence indicates an imbalance of

karma. The divine vibrations emitted by different mukhi Rudraksha beads empower, balance, and enable individuals to discover their unlimited potential, attracting the eternal blessings of Lord Shiva.

Various research studies have illustrated the merits of Rudraksha, confirming its possession of powerful electromagnetic, paramagnetic, and inductive properties. Rudraksha beads are renowned for their healing powers.

Each Rudraksha possesses unique vibrations and can be used for specific purposes. It would be inappropriate to simply purchase any Rudraksha without understanding its significance, as wearing the wrong type could create chaos in one's life. To derive maximum benefits from a Rudraksha bead, it is essential that someone knowledgeable about its vibrations prescribe it, ensuring compatibility with the wearer's own vibrations to achieve desired outcomes.



At www.neparudraksha.com, we are a trusted source of authentic Rudraksha beads, ranging from 1 to 14 mukhi. Rudraksha Foundation's products have won the confidence of individuals in over 20 countries. Rudraksha beads are seeds from the 'Elaeocarpus Ganitrus' tree, found in several South Asian countries, including India and Nepal. In Hindu mythology, Rudraksha enjoys great prominence, with Lord Shiva, the most revered Hindu God, depicted wearing a Rudraksha bead rosary on his head, arms, and hands. The term Rudraksha originates from 'Rudra' (a popular name for Shiva) and 'Aksha,' meaning tears. Hence, Rudraksha translates to 'Tears of Shiva.'



The number of faces a Rudraksha bead can have varies from a single face to up to 21 faces. The greater the number of faces, the more powerful, rare, and valuable the Rudraksha. Each face holds specific significance and exerts a direct influence on the wearer's life path, health, and wealth. Few individuals truly understand the immense power of a Rudraksha bead. Our organisation, Nepa Rudraksha, is dedicated to spreading awareness about the spiritual and material benefits it offers, including prosperity, supreme success, harmonious relationships, and a blissful existence.



"The Siddha Mala has the capacity to pacify all known and unknown Doshas in one's birth chart. Additionally, every horoscope contains certain sensitive points, both positive and negative, which can be activated by transiting planets or Mahadashas, resulting in favourable or unfavourable incidents in one's life. The Siddha Mala, blessed by the deities it represents, appeases these sensitive points and planets in the wearer's birth chart, mitigating adversities and enhancing privileges. Therefore, it is highly recommended for every individual to wear Rudraksha beads to enrich their lives."

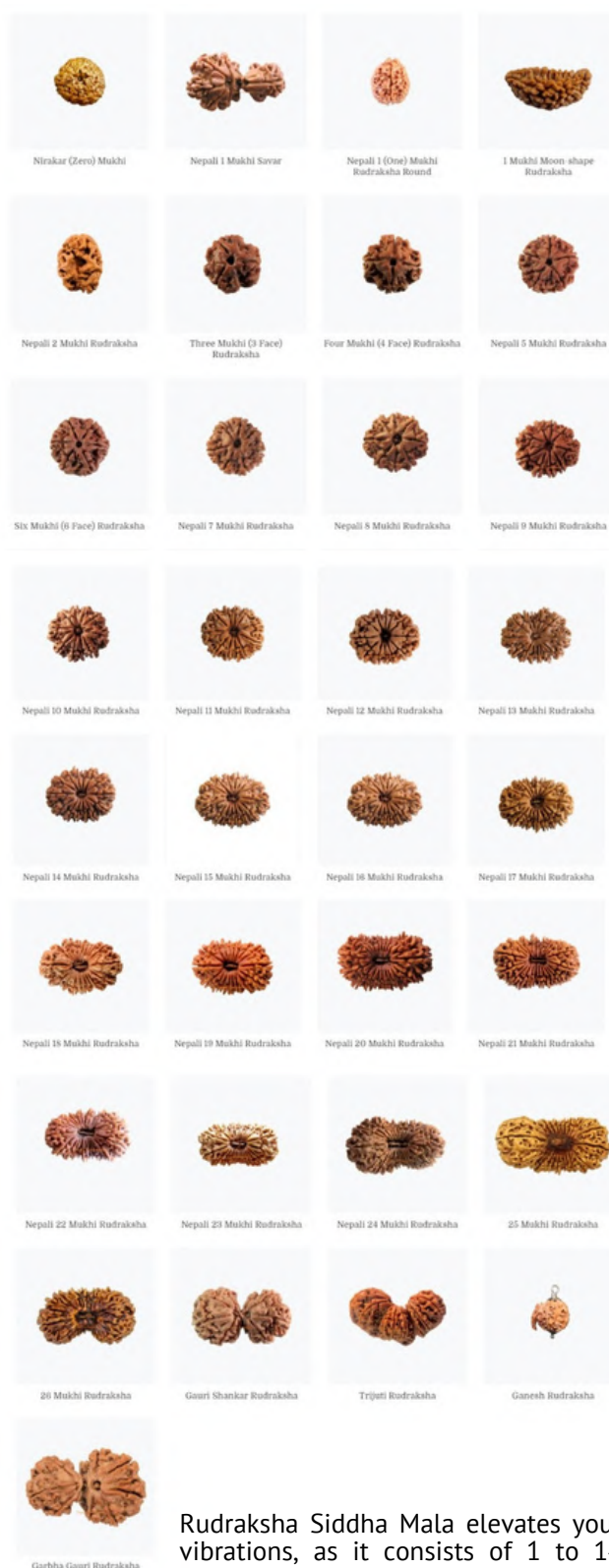
We offer numerous other combinations, each with its own benefits, ranging from career success to relationships and health. Our organisation has received several prestigious awards and achievements.

Those interested in consulting with me or purchasing the Siddha Mala or any other combinations of authentic Rudraksha beads may visit www.neparudraksha.com. The Siddha Mala, consisting of Rudraksha beads from 1 to 14 mukhi, along with a Gaurishankar and a Ganesh Rudraksha arranged in a specific order and style, is considered unique. Only a fortunate few in this world are destined to wear this mala, not just due to its high price tag but also because of the scarcity of genuine Rudraksha beads.

The Rudraksha beads of different mukhi in a Siddha Mala represent all the deities and all nine planets, empowering the wearer both spiritually and materially,

The Siddha Mala aids in balancing the five elements and purifying the seven chakras in the body, ensuring good health for the wearer. It also aligns subtle energies, thoughts, emotions, and consciousness, which are the primary drivers of success in the material realm. The Rudraksha beads within the Siddha Mala harmonise these forces and align individual consciousness with the creative cosmic fields. This leads to granting opportunities and facilitating unparalleled achievements. Consequently, a person's efforts yield results greater than anticipated, and their genuine dreams manifest sooner rather than later.

We assist our clients in selecting specific Rudraksha combinations based on their birth charts, studying planetary positions, transits, and Mahadashas. Our advisory services extend to our esteemed clientele. Our website offers access to 100% authentic Rudraksha beads at reasonable prices. The Siddha Mala remains one of our most expensive yet best-selling products.



Rudraksha Siddha Mala elevates your vibrations, as it consists of 1 to 14 Mukhi Rudraksha beads, along with a Gaurishankar and a Ganesh Rudraksha.

Question: Thank you, Mr. Khatiwada, for sharing your incredible journey and such valuable information regarding the incredible world of Rudraksha with us. Your story is truly inspiring, and we wish you continued success in all your future endeavours.

Mukunda: 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.

- WFF BUREAU





By Krishna D

Is There Any Similarity Between Georgian Khachapuri And Indian Puri?

"Georgia is a fertile country. Their Bread is as good as any in the World; their Fruit is delicious. Neither is there any part of Europe that produces fairer Pears and Apples, nor does any part of Asia bring forth more delicious Pomegranates."

The Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and the East-Indies (1686)

As already mentioned by Sir John Chardin, Georgia is a beautiful country located between Eastern Europe and Western Asia. It is bordered by the Black Sea in the west, by Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan in the south and Russia in the north.

There is a legend that the Georgians often share about the creation of their country. Interestingly, the legend involves food. The legend claims that when God was distributing pieces of land to all the inhabitants of the earth, the people of Georgia were late to reach as they were too busy eating and drinking. Finally, when they reached, they were disheartened to know that all the pieces of land have already been distributed. Finally, God gave them the piece of land that he had reserved for himself and undoubtedly it was the most beautiful part of Earth.

People of Georgia take pride in the fact that the country has been a production site of wine since 6,000 BC. Georgia is believed to be one of the earliest known countries in the world to be involved in the art of winemaking. Georgia is known for its rich culinary tradition which has been influenced by the best techniques and traditions of Europe and the East.

Perhaps the most iconic and most common dish of Georgia is a cheese bread called 'Khachapuri'. The center of the bread is filled with a mixture of cheese, eggs, and other ingredients like the kidney beans. It is the most popular food in Georgia, both in restaurants and also as street food. It can be called as Georgia's national dish. 27th of February is celebrated as National Khachapuri Day to celebrate Georgia's signature dish and also to promote its acknowledgment internationally.

The Khachapuri is served hot from the oven, otherwise it loses the taste of its unique cheese mixture just like the Indian 'Puri'. The name connects two different cultures. The word 'Khacha' in Georgian means 'Cheese' and 'Puri' is an Indian word which means 'Bread'. Puri is a very popular Indian flat bread made of wheat flour. It is immensely popular as a breakfast dish. The dough is rolled into discs and deep fried in oil.



Well, Khachapuris come in different shapes. The most popular is the boat-shaped bread with cheese, butter, and an egg yolk in the middle. The shape resembles the shape of a boat. It is known as the Adjarian khachapuri. The Imeruli Khachapuri looks like a pizza and has cheese filling inside it. Another favourite Georgian bread is the Lobiani, which derives its name from 'Lobio' or the Kidney Beans. This is similar to Kachapuri where the filling is made of kidney beans making it a much healthier version.

Today, Georgia is one of the most visited countries in the South Caucasus. The country's rich culture, delicious cuisine and astonishingly diverse landscape make it an ideal destination for tourists.

- KRISHNA D



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RAY OF HOPE



By Rema Pisharody

A tiny droplet of mist
on a green leaf
Hope and despair of a dream
The lost alphabets of childhood
Wanderers of the sky,
Clouds climb a hill of east
Inscribes a message
For those who left halfway
To a summit heartbroken
Lakes still in deep thoughts
Rivulets and streams stop a while
Take turns to shape a pebble
A hamlet in despair
Flags and battles anoint earth
In red blood
Messengers of innocence,
Children flee from their once safe homelands
Rain perhaps a dream in furnaces of Thar
Wind plays rock and raps
Aletheia in cross roads in search of truth
Tired yet forges a pact with forests and seasons

What hides beneath a word?,
A raindrop, a river, storm or an ocean
Or a dividing wall?
It is destiny
Unable to write it down
It hurts not one, but many
Feathers weigh down scales,
Mirrors reflect not full truth
Smile, one herb to cover a pain
For ages a perfect concealer,
Not fully, that is the truth!
Fossils of eras find not a teardrop
Dried beneath the eyes of a sea
It burns in brine not of pain
Forgotten fragrances of calamus
Cyperus, myrrh, balsam...
Curtains roll down from cuneiforms
To a mantle of fast tracks
In which speed a wave crashes on shore
Entrap heartbeats
In each footstep, an earth cries
For freedom,
Sun sets in ocean
For an east dawn to rise again
In sacred sanctums
Conquerors and fugitives
Set ablaze peace..
For a while mob roars
For whom, for what, do not know...

For ages, our memory is short on good,
Do we remember setbacks more?
Unable to define,
Like the magic cube of Hermann
Trials and errors fill the frames
Days fall, life on earth too
How long it takes to heal
The inner hidden wounds,
Do not know....
Some days it bursts open
Forgetting the voice of the mind
To hold back..
Heart such a delicate crystal
Slips and breaks as splinters..
Winter builds a bridge of mist
To cross over a fate
Of summer fire and rains
Step by step it is a journey
With no itinerary
Like of the planets of the sky
Selfless, a voyage of hope

Fire of earth an orange lea
To cleanse the surface
For roots to grow
In tender ray of dawn
A mild touch
To cover artfully the broken words
Winter spreads arctic mist
On dreams and rhymes
Amidst of gaffes and chaos
Singers find a lost note, a last leaf
Of carnivals and hope
To bring down rain from clouds
To ignite a lamp in raag deepak
Life a dream, a flower in unlocked eyes
Flames in subtle form frame a ray
To see from within...

-REMA PISHARODY

- REMA PISHARODY





Does Silence Speak?

By Sarmistha Dey

Not much that I asked for -to converse with you almost in silence
-that is really enough.

Oh it was just a cloud - how can I ask for rain right away, it won't happen,
if you don't understand the value of the silence between the cloud and the rain,
if you don't realize the relative importance of this waiting,
you can't get anything like that in life.

Spring will not come again even if you longed to listen to
cuckoo 's call

-you need to pass a whole winter for it;
Is there any hidden purpose or secret in crossing it?
Nothing enjoyable?
Is it just a pain?

It must be remembered that flowers bloom even in winters- Jasmine also has a secret
- one has to penetrate the fog and discover the joy;
It is normal to feel a little constricted by the cold;
but the shivering cannot stop me from finding the secret of jasmine.

Arrangements have to be made to light the fire to welcome the spring.

When there is no hope, patience -longing become lame -paralyzed,
when there is no value for silence, the possibility of false words prevails ,
there must be a gap before proper creation

- a time lapse is necessary, there is a more or less eternal range of pursuit of silence
before an omnipresent creation - I am well within that range now...





Border Flowers



By Sindhu Gatha

Tied up the boundary of the countries
and wall the minds

Flowers blooming on the border
They have a question,
for whom to flower?

East or West?
South or North?
Left or right?
For sunrise or sunset?
White or black?
To create or destroy?

Is there a place to wash the blood stains
that splashes on the chest?

Ears that only hear the sound of shock

To be shot,
burned and became charcoal tomorrow....

A patch of grudge lies
through the scorched leaf veins
It tastes like tears

All the flowers in the border are red in colour

- SINDHU GATHA





Of Bothers And Betrayals

By
Kulmohan Kaur

Lest you bother, my heart
I'll let you know
They're worthless
If they don't care for you

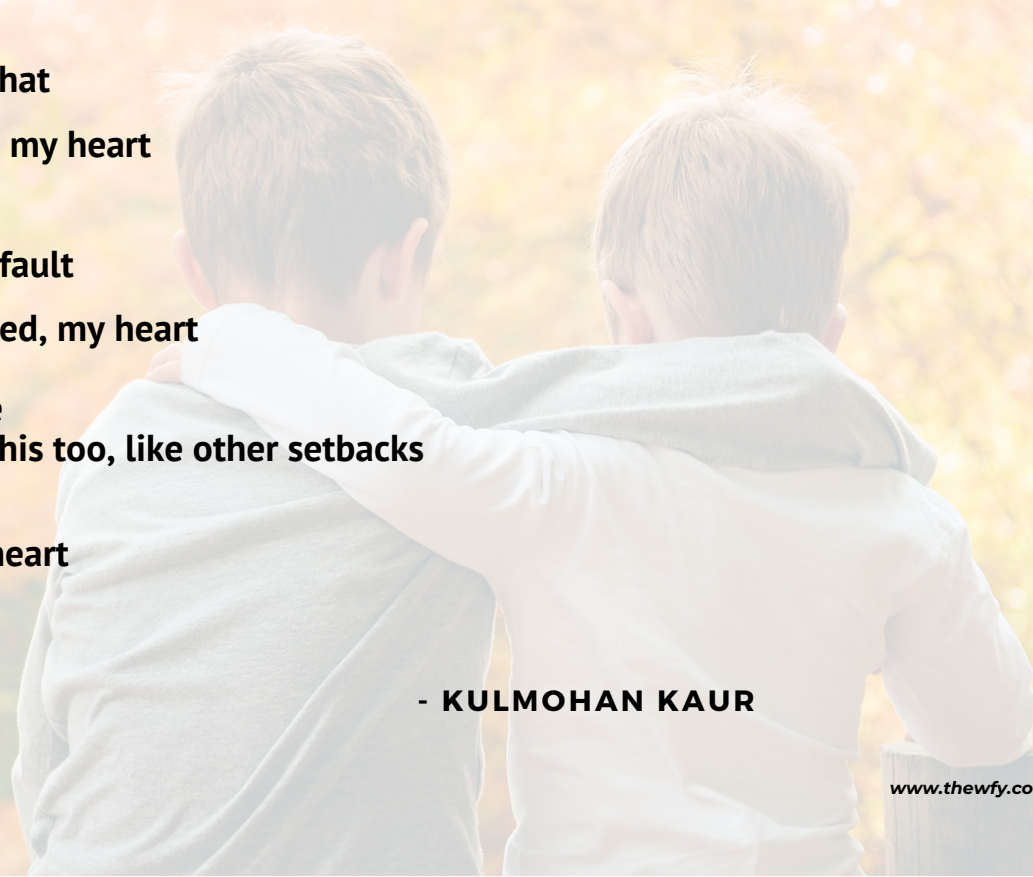
Lest you are sad, my heart
I'll just say
Don't be
You're better than that

Lest you miss them, my heart
It's alright
You loved and lost
And that's not your fault

Lest you feel betrayed, my heart
You sure were
But if you persevere
You'll get through this too, like other setbacks

Be strong, be brave
And you'll see, my heart
You're the one
Who emerges
The winner

- KULMOHAN KAUR



Chennai Diary - Cyclone Michaung December 2023- Poetically Speaking



By
**Sudha
Mukhopadhyay**

It was the Cyclone Michaung we were told,
That was going to make it to our threshold,
We were hence in a spot of the blindfold,
About the extent of calamity it would unfold.

We stocked up our groceries just for the need,
And even made sure the taps had no leak,
Drinking water was stored up for about a week,
And we hooked on to news for any kind of lead.

As the lanes, streets and roads started to swell,
Power supply as expected bid us a farewell,
Realisation dawned that it was a relentless spell,
And my entire city drowned in a huge waterwell.

It was dark and cloudy and rained very hard,
The high speed winds kept us on a guard,
Social networking was what we had to discard,
And book reading became the need of my squad.

Myriad trees and homes were badly affected,
Even as people's lives were completely disrupted,
Helping hands of neighbours thankfully sprouted,
And it proved that humanity has always existed.

The Cyclone almost hit us while doing its duty,
But were somewhat saved as it changed its trajectory,
It was our neighbouring state that bore its fury,
And yet we were left low & wet in this calamity.

Oh what a terrible havoc it created overall...
May God save us and shower grace upon us all.

PS: Great work by Tamil Nadu government in such testing times; thanks to all the administrative people who worked and are still working relentlessly to ensure our safety. We humans are an indomitable force and we have proved it time and again in every calamity.

-SUDHA MUKHOPADHYAY





Master Now: The Art Of Fantastic Communication, Growth, And Success

By **Kulmohan Kaur**

A Comprehensive Guide to Enhancing Your Interpersonal Skills

Communication is the cornerstone of human interaction, serving as the glue that binds individuals together in personal and professional spheres. The ability to convey thoughts, ideas, and emotions effectively is a skill that transcends boundaries and plays a pivotal role in the success of relationships, both in the workplace and at home. In this article, we will delve into the intricacies of communication skills, exploring the nuances of verbal and non-verbal communication, the impact of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) concepts like deletion, distortion, and generalization, and providing practical tips to enhance communication in both work environments and personal relationships.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication: A Balancing Act

Communication can be broadly categorized into verbal and non-verbal forms. Verbal communication involves the use of words, whether spoken or written, to convey messages. Non-verbal communication, on the other hand, includes gestures, body language, facial expressions, and other non-verbal cues that accompany verbal messages. Both are crucial for effective communication.

Research indicates that verbal communication only constitutes a small portion of the overall message conveyed. According to Albert Mehrabian's communication model, non-verbal cues account for a 55%, tone of voice contributes 38%, and words account for only 7% of the message. We need to pay attention to the non-verbal signals we send during our interactions.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) concepts—deletion, distortion, and generalization—play a crucial role in understanding how individuals process and communicate information. An individual applies these filters to the events around him to make his version of the truth.

1.Deletion: Deletion occurs when certain information is omitted during communication. People often filter and selectively attend to aspects of a message that align with their beliefs or interests, ignoring or deleting information that does not support their preconceptions. Recognizing deletion in communication helps in ensuring that essential details are not overlooked.

2.Distortion: Distortion involves altering the meaning of information based on one's perceptions and beliefs. Individuals may distort messages to fit their existing mental models, leading to misunderstandings. Being aware of distortion helps in clarifying and aligning perspectives during communication.

3.Generalization: Generalization involves forming broad conclusions based on limited information or experiences. Individuals tend to generalize information to create mental shortcuts, which can lead to stereotyping. Recognizing generalizations in communication allows for a more nuanced understanding of the message and helps in avoiding misconceptions.

People use the above filters according to their experiences, upbringing, etc. That is the reason we say that each person's truth is different than what the truth actually is.



Improving Communication in the Workplace

Effective communication in the workplace is vital for fostering collaboration, boosting morale, and achieving organizational goals. Here are ten ways to enhance communication in a professional setting:

1. **Active Listening:** Actively listening to colleagues promotes understanding and builds trust. Avoid interrupting, paraphrase to confirm understanding, and ask clarifying questions to demonstrate engagement.
2. **Clear and Concise Messaging:** Communicate ideas in a straightforward manner, avoiding jargon and unnecessary complexity. Clarity reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings and ensures that everyone is on the same page.
3. **Feedback Culture:** Foster an environment where feedback is welcomed and constructive criticism is viewed as an opportunity for growth. Encourage open dialogue to address concerns and provide suggestions for improvement.
4. **Use of Technology:** Leverage communication tools and platforms to streamline information sharing. However, be mindful of the potential for misinterpretation in digital communication and use face-to-face interactions when necessary.
5. **Emotional Intelligence:** Cultivate emotional intelligence to understand and manage emotions in oneself and others. This skill enhances interpersonal relationships and facilitates effective communication, particularly in challenging situations.
6. **Adaptability:** Recognize and adapt communication styles based on the preferences and needs of your audience. Flexibility in communication promotes a more inclusive and collaborative work environment.
7. **Conflict Resolution:** Develop skills in resolving conflicts professionally and diplomatically. Addressing conflicts promptly and constructively prevents issues from escalating and negatively impacting team dynamics.
8. **Team-building Activities:** Engage in team-building exercises to foster camaraderie and strengthen interpersonal relationships. A cohesive team is more likely to communicate effectively and work collaboratively.
9. **Leadership Communication:** Leaders should lead by example, demonstrating transparent and consistent communication. Clear communication from leadership sets the tone for the entire organization.
10. **Cultural Sensitivity:** In diverse workplaces, be mindful of cultural differences in communication styles. Understanding and respecting diverse perspectives contributes to a harmonious and effective work environment.

Improving Communication in Personal Relationships

Effective communication is equally crucial in personal relationships, forming the foundation for healthy connections and understanding. Here are ten ways to enhance communication with loved ones:

1. **Expressing Feelings Openly:** Create a safe space for open and honest expression of emotions. Encourage your loved ones to share their feelings without judgment.
2. **Non-Verbal Affirmation:** Express love and affection through non-verbal cues such as hugs, kisses, and gestures. Non-verbal communication strengthens emotional bonds and reinforces positive feelings.
3. **Quality Time:** Dedicate quality time to spend with loved ones without distractions. Meaningful conversations often arise when individuals are fully present and engaged in the moment.
4. **Empathy:** Practice empathy by actively seeking to understand the perspective of your loved ones. Empathetic listening fosters deeper connections and demonstrates genuine care.
5. **Conflict Resolution Skills:** Learn and apply effective conflict resolution techniques. Avoiding blame and focusing on solutions promotes healthier relationships and prevents prolonged misunderstandings.
6. **Mindful Communication:** Be mindful of your words and tone to avoid unintentional hurtful remarks. Mindful communication promotes a positive atmosphere and reduces the risk of miscommunication.
7. **Appreciation and Gratitude:** Regularly express appreciation and gratitude for the positive aspects of your relationships. Acknowledging and valuing each other strengthens the emotional bond.
8. **Active Participation in Conversations:** Engage actively in conversations, showing genuine interest in the thoughts and opinions of your loved ones. Active participation fosters a sense of being heard and understood.
9. **Shared Goals and Values:** Establish shared goals and values within your relationships. Aligning on fundamental aspects strengthens the foundation of your connection and provides a common purpose.
10. **Continuous Learning:** Relationships evolve, and so should communication. Continuously learn and adapt to the changing needs and dynamics of your relationships. Stay open to growth and development together.

Mastering the art of communication is an ongoing journey that requires self-awareness, adaptability, and a genuine desire to connect with others. Whether in the workplace or personal relationships, effective communication lays the groundwork for understanding, collaboration, and mutual growth. By incorporating NLP concepts, understanding the balance between verbal and non-verbal communication, and implementing practical strategies, individuals can navigate the complexities of communication with finesse. The result is not only enhanced relationships but also a more harmonious and productive environment, both at work and at home.

-KULMOHAN KAUR





Contagion, COVID, And Communications: Know It All Now



By
Sukanti Ghosh

A retrospective of the Corona Times and the fear of a new wave

"Soon after her return from a business trip to Hong Kong, Beth Emhoff dies from the flu or some other type of infection. Her young son died later the same day. Her husband, Mitch, however, seems immune. Thus begins the spread of a deadly infection. For doctors and administrators at the U.S. Centres for Disease Control, several days pass before anyone realises the extent or gravity of this new infection. They must first identify the type of virus in question and then find a means of combating it, a process that will likely take several months. As the contagion spreads to millions of people worldwide, societal order begins to break down as people panic."

If the excerpt above sounds familiar, it isn't because it is the story of the COVID-19 nightmare that we have all been living for the past two and a half years. It is a summary of the plot of a 2011 [Steven Soderbergh](#) movie, *Contagion*, starring Matt Damon, Marion Cotillard, Kate Winslet, [Gwyneth Paltrow](#), Lawrence Fishburne, and Jude Law. The similarities, however, are startling. "In a flashback to the [spillover event](#), a [bulldozer](#) from Emhoff's company clears a rainforest in [China](#), disturbing bats. A bat seeks shelter on a pig farm and infects a pig by dropping a contaminated piece of banana. The pig is then slaughtered and prepared by a chef in a Macau casino, who, without washing his hands, transmits the virus to Beth via a handshake."

To say that the world as we knew it has literally turned on its head since November 2019 wouldn't be too much of an exaggeration, especially if you were to transport yourself into the future and look back at the years' that we have all been living through recently. The rapid spread of an invisible foe has left a trail of death and destruction in its wake. Global, regional, and domestic trade and commerce were slowing down to a glacial pace as country after country chose to hunker down, close their borders, and restrict the movement of their own people in the hope of reducing transmissions. The immense pressure on establishment structures to cope with growing food, energy, and supply chain shortages and national healthcare systems being overwhelmed as countries tried, and in most cases failed, to keep up with unimaginable patient volumes. Chaos has reigned supreme. And, through this period, first imperceptibly and then, almost intentionally, the world order has changed as countries and regions have chosen to look inward and prioritise the needs of their own people over others, re-shore and nearshore critical global supply chains, and stand up and count those that have stood beside them in their deepest times of distress.

So, what has been the role of communications through all this, and what does it mean for the industry as a whole going forward? Well, here are a couple of thoughts for you to consider:



- Communications have been central to managing almost all aspects of this pandemic. From the burdensome task of the WHO, CDC and country leaders having to tell people that the virus was upon us and that it was prudent to hunker down in the face of the period of upcoming uncertainty; to people turning to instant messaging platforms and other forms of social media to search for and notify others of the need for blood, oxygen, medicines and hospital beds; to governments creating and rolling out apps that would allow us to register for critical vaccines, and also allowed them to 'track and trace' people who were possibly spreaders themselves or had recently attended allegedly super-spreader events; and, some of the world's leading healthcare institutions and leading global academic medical colleges creating and socializing content via the internet on global protocols and best practices in combating this disease and treating patients at home. Governments will continue to rely on communications to calibrate the dropping of our national and individual safeguards and then, perhaps, remind us every year that there is an inoculation that needs to be taken as the pandemic hopefully recedes and gives way to a series of regional, country, and later community-specific hotspots.
- Communications have been the lifeblood that has kept us afloat. If asked to name three industries that have proven their credentials and value to society beyond doubt over the past two and a half years, there are many who will no doubt say, 'e-commerce, electronic communications platforms (Zoom, MS Teams, Webex, BlueJeans), and OTT'. While I admit that the leading e-commerce platforms and their global supply chains have allowed people to continue to have food on their tables, toiletries in their bathrooms, and the luxuries that they choose to enjoy in their homes, I believe that e-commerce, seen in isolation, would need to yield its pride of place to the increasingly omnipotent power of digital commerce, which is increasingly central to multiple facets of our daily lives. Equally, there is no denying the significant contribution of online communication platforms like Zoom, MS Teams, Webex, BlueJeans, and Moodle and the role that they have played in allowing us to continue to carry on with our professional and personal lives at work or at school without having to ever travel to meet with our colleagues, peers, clients, teachers, or would-be customers. And yes, OTT and other Internet-based entertainment and communications platforms have kept us abreast of the latest developments across matters of global and national interest, the lives of our favourite actors, and the evolution of countless stories across soap operas, movies, and quiz shows. I, for one, do not see all of these developments or the benefits they have provided melting away as soon as we all start to look at the pandemic in our rearview mirrors.
- Communications have collapsed in time and distance. If the pandemic has been devastating on co-located communities, it has also been heart-wrenchingly cruel for those of us, like me, who, on account of their personal or professional choices, have found themselves living overseas, more often than not, far away from their families. WhatsApp, Messenger, and other internet-based communications platforms have been invaluable and hugely empowering for people who have desperately tried to stay abreast of the wellbeing of their loved ones living in another country during these times. Gone are the days when you needed to stand in long lines to make an international call or wait till a particular hour when the call rates were lower. Today, you can call as often as you like, whenever you like, on video or audio, and even go so far as to order food online for your children in Paris while you are in the United States, and even track the progress of the deliveryman dropping off the parcel of food in real-time at no extra cost. We cannot overstate the power and liberation we feel when we can do something so fundamental to our lives with just a few clicks on our phones. Equally, countless experiences such as these have removed all doubt around the power and omniscience of digital platforms and media, and more and more governments, companies, news organisations, and nonprofit foundations will embrace the concept of data being the new oil. Shouldn't you?
- From the point of view of a lifelong student of communications, the intervening period between November 2019 and March 2022 has taught us many life lessons. Primary among these is the fact that life—and communications—don't stop in the face of economic crises, wars, or a global pandemic. If anything, they intensify. You need to find ways to drink from the firehose, adapt your perspectives, adopt new habits and a plethora of tools, and continue doing what you do best. And, while communications is in many ways the lifeblood that keeps things moving, a lot of benefits that have accrued from effective communications to the global economy and people at large haven't been the work-product of a body of outstanding communications professionals with job titles that clearly identify them as communications, crisis, or PR managers sitting in a corner office. In many cases, the solutions have emerged organically out of good old common sense, subject matter expertise, the lack of any other option, or a combination of all of these, and someone who had the vision and foresight to piece this all together. Therefore, it is critical today, perhaps more than ever before, to approach the discipline of communications with open eyes and a broad appreciation of the various factors at work. And to understand and appreciate that our role as professionals is often closer to that of effective 'play makers' than players ourselves. Others can appropriate our skills in our profession. We are in a profession where we need to harness the wealth of knowledge and resources we see around us and use them to advance our goals or the goals of our clients.
- From a global practitioner's point of view, there are few things that create greater opportunities for consulting firms than fear and doubt. The fact that governments around the world have created a series of new tariff and non-tariff barriers to protect their economies and their people from the vagaries of the external world, are urging corporations to re-shore or near-shore their operations to mitigate supply chain risk and create new jobs, and are willing to enter into a flurry of bilateral agreements or initiate significant policy changes to cement new relationships or jumpstart domestic economic growth can only augur well for the global communications and public affairs industry. The coming decade will also see significant investments going into areas like healthcare, insurance, education, infrastructure, manufacturing, supply chain strengthening, and digital commerce as the global economy tries to learn from its mistakes and be better prepared for the eventuality of the world facing another horror like COVID-19.

As global communications professionals, we can choose to look upon the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic in two ways: feeling sorry for ourselves and bemoaning the loss of several productive years of our lives in the short term, or learning from our experiences and finding niches where it makes sense to play the long game and sufficiently differentiate ourselves from others. I choose to do the latter.

-SUKANTI GHOSH





The Education Trends Of 2024: Know It All Now

By WFY Bureau

As we approach the close of yet another exciting year in international education, let us take a moment to review the preceding few months and consider the themes and occurrences that have had the biggest impact on teachers, agents, students, and other stakeholders. We are confident that these trends will continue into 2024 and impact how our readers see recruitment tactics, institutional branding, business plans, and assistance for international students.

A vibrant, dynamic learning atmosphere is created when the distinctions between real-world and virtual classrooms are blurred. This is the reality of hybrid learning, a cutting-edge strategy that will completely transform education by 2024.

Scholars anticipate that several tendencies will influence the educational scene in 2024:

- **Teacher Retention and Handling Burnout:** In order to keep seasoned educators on staff and to protect their wellbeing, addressing teacher retention and burnout will take precedence.
- **Artificial Intelligence and Online Learning:** The combination of AI and online learning technologies will keep being important in education, improving individualised learning opportunities.
- **Non-standard Education Models:** More adaptable and personalised learning pathways will be made possible by a move away from standard educational models.
- **Cost-Effective Education:** As costs rise to a tipping point, creative solutions to lower the cost of higher education will be required.
- **Student Empowerment:** By choosing their own curricula and institutional regulations, students will have more control over their education.
- **Phygital Learning:** The merging of digital and physical learning, or phygital learning, will transform teaching approaches.
- **Hybrid Employment Applications:** With an emphasis on the value of digital skills, more students will apply for totally remote and hybrid employment roles.

- **Emphasis on Student Mental Health:** The wellbeing and mental health of students will receive more attention.
- **EdTech Evolution:** As educational technology advances, it will change how students interact with the material.
- **Global Trends:** Worldwide, educators are observing trends such as cohort-based learning, blended learning, lifelong learning, soft skill development, and the integration of technology in the classroom.

These patterns show how education is continuing to change as a result of new technology, shifting demands from students, and an emphasis on enhancing the whole educational experience.

Highlights on how the education sector will enjoy technology-driven growth in 2024 The education sector is experiencing disruption. 2023 brought about numerous ups and downs. Technology was widely accepted and utilized in various industries, especially in the educational field, bringing about significant changes. In 2024, there's a good likelihood that these changes will pick up speed at all of the schools, colleges, and institutions. 2024 will contribute to the acceleration of the use of online learning environments. There will also be some significant adjustments made to the degrees that different universities provide. Consequently, universities will change conventional approaches to education and embrace online learning with hope.

Global trends in education that will persist through 2024:

An increasing number of instructors and agents started utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) in 2023, a concept that was previously predominantly discussed as a futuristic potential in novels and periodicals.

Students anticipate quicker responses.

This year, as educators committed themselves more to broadening their student marketplaces, competition grew



in more nations. As it did, it was evident that many students would select the option that provided them with quicker acceptance and processing of their visa application, for example, when presented with two offers that were identical. When these same students searched the web for information on their own, they likewise anticipated that institutional websites would provide answers and information right away.

The cost of studying overseas is rising.

Many people found it difficult to pay the growing expenses of living and attending school in popular places in 2023. There was a widespread affordability crisis.

- In Australia, the cost of living increased by 9% during the September 2023 quarter compared to the corresponding period in 2022. Why the rental cost increase in Canada in 2023 was the quickest in more than 40 years.
- In the US, 67% of respondents to a September 2023 survey stated that their living expenses are greater than their income, up from 58% in 2022.
- In the UK, almost half of consumers surveyed in the autumn stated that their cost of living went up in comparison to the previous month.

THE FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The Use of Generative AI in Assessment

In the typical educational setting, assessments were once considered as memory tests. Students were frequently evaluated based on their ability to recall material, reducing exams to simple memory tests. This approach, while widely used for many years, disregarded the development and assessment of practical skills, which is an essential component of learning.

The year 2024 brings with it a new player on the educational scene: generative artificial intelligence. This cutting-edge technology will completely transform student assessments, shifting them from rote memorization to skill-based evaluation. Imagine a classroom where assignments involve more than just writing down answers; instead, students communicate with a smart artificial intelligence (AI) bot that analyses and assesses their knowledge and abilities in real time. This is how generative AI assessments can change a situation.

AI-Powered Question Bank

Revolutionization Imagine working as a subject-matter expert at a busy university. Putting together a question bank that is customised to each subject's exam syllabus takes up all of your days. Imagine yourself poring over piles of textbooks, straining your brain to make sure every question is pertinent to the subject, degree of difficulty, and learning

objectives. For many educators, this is the reality—a difficult and time-consuming task. However, what if we could transform this entire procedure? 2024 will be a landmark year for educational technology as generative artificial intelligence (AI) becomes a game-changing tool for question bank management. Let's examine a situation in which this technology is the main focus.

Online video learning for niche education

As of now, video education is the most intelligent way to integrate technology into the classroom. By watching relevant films and engaging in debates with one another, students can visually learn and fully grasp the material through highly effective video classes or videos that display the teachings.

The Benefits of Educational Technology:

1. **Economical:** Because there won't be any infrastructure costs, online learning will also prove to be economical. For instance, an applicant enrolls in a full-time offline MBA programme and must pay USD \$50,000. Enrolling in the online course allows completion for as little as \$10,000 USD or \$15,000 USD. In addition to saving money, guest lecturers can share their expertise with inquisitive young minds without having to travel to the college or institution. Therefore, you won't have to burn a hole in your pocketbook thanks to technology.
2. **Adaptable learning:** Fewer students will be able to visit the school to attend in-person classes as a result of hybrid learning. The management can accommodate more pupils in a class. The management can accommodate more pupils in a class by utilizing technology, eliminating all obstacles related to traditional classroom settings and allowing for flexible learning.
3. **Time adaptability:** The online tests are administered remotely, allowing students to take them from anywhere in the world, regardless of their time zone. Therefore, this removes the location barriers.

It is about time we started incorporating even more technology into the classroom and the idea of learning to make education even more effective and convenient, as our education only continues to expand and advance with ever-greater advancements. In addition to increasing the number of students who are eager to learn new things, the digitization of education will also provide the educational system with a feeling of efficiency and flexibility. Education in 2024 will focus more on critical thinking, creative analysis, and cutting-edge technologies than on increasing students' memorization skills.

-WFY BUREAU





By

Know How Public Relations Can Skyrocket Your Brand Value

In the age of digital predominance, public relations professionals use social media as a dynamic tool for interacting with target audiences, coordinating interactive campaigns, creating communities, and fostering positive brand emotion.

In the marathon of brand development, public relations is the durable stride that ends in long-lasting impressions, building out a distinct and everlasting market niche. As industry leaders confirm, practice patience, be consistent, and focus on developing true relationships. With a carefully developed PR strategy, your business will be able to realise its full potential and transcend current market dynamics.

-MANOJ SHARMA





Startling ESG Insight On Sustainable Investing: Know It All

By Rekha Sharma

Sustainable Investing in India: An ESG Insight

Sustainability is no longer just a buzzword. It's a crucial aspect that businesses must focus on to ensure their operations are eco-friendly and socially responsible. In essence, ESG serves as a global benchmark for investors assessing a company's sustainability performance beyond financial metrics. Companies are now required to disclose their measurable impact on the environment, society, and governance resulting from their daily operations.

Effective ESG statistics help stakeholders (customers, investors, regulators, suppliers, and local communities) understand how your company navigates risks and seizes opportunities. ESG's three pillars—Environment, Social, and Governance—underscore a company's dedication to sustainable practices, ethical conduct, and responsible governance. However, these aspects vary based on industry, scale, location, processes, and the specific context in which the company operates.

Environmental

It's time for companies to step up and take responsibility for their impact on the environment. By focusing on sustainability, they not only contribute to a better future but also enhance their reputation as socially responsible businesses. Environmental factors encompass diverse elements related to the environment, such as carbon emissions, energy usage, water and waste management, pollution, toxic emissions, climate change risks, adaptation measures, and biodiversity impact.

By measuring and optimizing energy use, companies can reduce their carbon footprint and transition to more sustainable energy sources. Efficient water management not only promotes sustainability but also prevents negative impacts on natural waterways. Managing emissions responsibly is crucial to minimize adverse effects on the environment and communities. Developing strategies to mitigate climate change risks is essential to optimize business models for the effects of climate change. Finally, minimizing the impact of operations on natural habitats

through responsible conservation efforts is crucial to protect ecosystems and promote biodiversity.

Social

ESG's social parameters are critical for businesses to prioritize. They promote social equity, good relationships with communities, employees' and customers' well-being, and respect for human rights and labor practices. Companies must also prioritize employee diversity and inclusion, customer privacy, product safety and quality, and employee and community safety and well-being. By prioritizing these, companies can enhance their reputation, build stronger relationships with stakeholders, and create a more sustainable and responsible operation. Neglecting these parameters can have severe negative consequences for the company and society. So, businesses need to implement these policies and procedures to create a positive impact on society while also enhancing their reputation.

Governance

In governance, it is crucial to evaluate a company's Board of Directors' diversity, composition, and structure to determine its effectiveness. The board must have a mix of independent and non-independent directors, ensuring a balance between the company's and its stakeholders' interests. Similarly, executive compensation and incentives are critical indicators of a company's governance. The company's leadership should be incentivized to prioritize the long-term sustainability of the business and create value for its stakeholders. Therefore, the compensation structure should align with the company's performance and the interests of its shareholders, ensuring that executives' interests match the company's long-term goals. By adopting an ESG approach, companies can build sustainable businesses that create value for all stakeholders while contributing to a better world.

Regulatory Landscape of ESG in India

India has always been dedicated to promoting sustainable



ESG



development. Recently, SEBI has taken significant steps to strengthen ESG reporting and governance practices, highlighting India's commitment to sustainability. By requiring the top 1000 listed companies to disclose comprehensive information on ESG parameters through the annual BRSR report, SEBI is taking a proactive approach towards improving the country's investment landscape and enabling investors to make informed decisions.

As a responsible investment destination, India prioritizes sustainability, social welfare, and good governance. By investing in ESG-compliant companies in India, investors can align their financial goals with their values while contributing to a sustainable future. India's innovative solutions are suitable for the planet and society and offer tremendous business opportunities. With businesses becoming more accountable for their environmental and social impact, India's focus on ESG regulation is positioning it as a leader in sustainable investing.

Embracing ESG principles can be a remarkable opportunity for Indian companies to position themselves as responsible and ethical businesses with a positive and sustainable impact on society and the environment. By building a corporate culture that values ESG, companies contribute to the country's development and showcase India's commitment to sustainable development in the global market. Investing in ESG-compliant companies in India is an excellent way to align with your financial goals while making a positive contribution to society and the environment.

ESG Implications for Companies Outside the Top 1000 Listed Companies

ESG is not a mere trend but a crucial shift towards greater corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability. For Indian companies, embracing ESG is not just a matter of compliance but also an opportunity to enhance the overall business value. ESG enables businesses to create long-term value for stakeholders, safeguard the environment, promote social development, and ensure fair governance.

To effectively compete in the global marketplace, India's economy must continue to attract foreign investment. However, international investors demand transparency, accountability, and responsible business practices. By prioritizing ESG, companies can meet these demands and become more resilient to the challenges and risks of operating in the contemporary world.

Furthermore, businesses can strengthen their brand image by positioning themselves as ethical and socially responsible. This can foster a new wave of innovation and creativity among employees. By making meaningful contributions to society, these organizations can create a new brand of Indian enterprise defined by sustainability and social consciousness.

Concluding Thoughts

Adopting ESG principles is essential for Indian companies to compete successfully in the global marketplace, regardless of whether they are among the top 1000 listed companies. It provides a tangible competitive advantage by contributing to the nation's sustainable development, building a trusted brand, and improving the bottom line. By prioritizing ESG, Indian companies can lead the way toward a brighter and more sustainable future for all.

-REKHA SHARMA



Is India A Tempting Destination To Do Business Now?

By WFY Bureau

India is the fastest-growing economy among G20 economies.

India's economic trajectory through 2024 tells a fascinating story, establishing the country as the fastest-growing G20 economy. Forecasts predict that GDP growth will reach 6.5 percent for fiscal years 2024–25 and rise to 7 percent in 2026. S&P Global expects that India will surpass China's growth forecast, and even the International Monetary Fund (IMF) anticipates that India will surpass Japan and Germany as the world's third-largest economies by 2027, with a GDP over US\$5 trillion.

With a market value of US\$3.989 trillion this year, India's stock market has risen to become the seventh largest in the world. At the end of November, India's Nifty 50 index (up 16 percent) surpassed Hong Kong's Hang Seng index (US\$3.984 trillion). Analysts predict that in 2024, banking, healthcare, and energy will outperform, while consumer goods, utilities, and chemicals will lag behind.

India has now reached the S-curve's key phase, which is marked by a dramatic increase in urbanisation, industrialization, household income, and energy consumption. This period often lasts several decades and is characterised by tremendous expansion in these areas.

Factors influencing India's positive economic forecast for 2024

- **Stable economic fundamentals:** India's GDP of US\$3.75 trillion places it as the world's fifth-largest economy. The Reserve Bank of India's forecast of reaching \$5 trillion by 2027 reflects a continuing, increasing trend. According to S&P Global Ratings, India's economic development prospects would remain strong in the medium term, with GDP predicted to expand by 6 to 7.1 percent over the fiscal years 2024–2026.
- **A thriving industrial manufacturing industry:** The industrial manufacturing sector has grown significantly, drawing major global manufacturing and technological titans. Manufacturing has been revitalised by state industrial policies and incentives, along with successful production-linked incentive (PLI) systems, with noteworthy success stories like Apple and Foxconn.
- **Infrastructure and connectivity:** The government's commitment to infrastructure development, which includes large expenditures in logistics and construction, positions India as a crucial player in global supply chains. Strategic attempts to cut logistical costs and focus on regional connectivity help to ensure long-term economic prosperity.
- **Expansion beyond China:** India's manufacturing programmes dovetail with the 'China Plus One' strategy, drawing investments from corporations looking to expand beyond China. Leading international corporations have established local subsidiaries and contracted electronics manufacturing services to Indian enterprises.
- **Ease of doing business:** Reforms to the bureaucracy, such as digitising regulatory processes, contribute to a business-friendly climate.
- **Resilient trade and services export industries:** Despite difficulties attracting foreign direct investment in the face of global uncertainty, India's commerce and services export sectors remain solid. By the end of 2023–24, it is predicted that service exports will surpass \$400 billion, showcasing the country's resilience in the face of geopolitical shocks. India is also pursuing full free trade agreements with key markets such as the United Kingdom, Australia, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the European Union.
- **Positive growth sectors:** digitalization, sustainable production and infrastructure, trade facilitation, expanding manufacturing capacity, semiconductors and technology R&D, and financial sector growth are key growth areas for India in 2024.
- **Young demographic advantage:** India's position as the world's most populated country, with a median age of 28.2 years, contributes to the country's economic vigour. Domestic demand recovery, particularly in private consumption and household expenditure, supports corporate development ambitions.
- **Rise of non-metropolitan hubs:** The availability of talent and connectivity to metropolitan majors has resulted in the rise of Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities in India (as defined by population parameters), allowing service



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and manufacturing multinational corporations to establish themselves in more cost-effective locations. This has had a good impact on the regional economy.

- India ranks 16th on the FDI Confidence Index for 2023 and is the world's fourth-largest retail market. Discretionary spending power is increasing, with India's average per capita income above US\$2000 and expected to hit US\$12,000 by 2047. The large middle-class and underserved consumer base in non-metropolitan cities piques the interest of several international retail conglomerates looking to expand into new markets. Branded products, such as fashion, cosmetics, jewellery, footwear, timepieces, food and beverage (F&B), and furniture, are growing in popularity and becoming necessary lifestyle items for both business and pleasure.
- Emerging sectors and dedication to sustainability: India's emphasis on emerging industries such as healthcare, fintech, renewable energy, electric vehicles, information technology, and semiconductor manufacturing is in line with global trends. A commitment to decarbonisation and attaining 500 GW of renewable capacity by 2030 demonstrates a forward-thinking strategy.
- Corporate sustainability and ESG issues: Sustainability and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors are gaining traction in the corporate sector, and they help to promote responsible and ethical business practices. Green technology skills are becoming increasingly important, producing jobs and promoting growth in the green business. Currently, 'Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting by Listed Businesses' (BRSR) applies to India's top 1000 listed businesses (by market value). Also, the BRSR Core requires the top 150 listed companies in India to provide assurances on 49 core indicators that are important to the business. This applies to the fiscal years 2023–24 and 2024–25.
- Policy emphasis on education reforms and skilling efforts tackles the changing nature of occupations, preparing the huge youthful demographic cohort for future problems.
- State stability and investment opportunities: While the 2024 federal elections introduce uncertainty, states with non-renewable local governments, such as Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra, present appealing investment opportunities.

- Hot sectors for India in 2024: Emerging industries such as battery energy storage, green hydrogen, biotechnology, clean mobility, food processing, AVGC (animation, visual effects, gaming, comics), and semiconductor chip manufacturing are encouraging foreign companies to consult local experts to assess whether their business lines align with promoted economic activity in state industrial policies and thus tap key fiscal incentives. Given India's aim to decarbonise and reach 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030, associated sectors would seek foreign investments and expertise. Healthcare and insurance, fintech, renewable energy and climate tech, electric vehicles and automobiles, IT and services, real estate and infrastructure, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), logistics, R&D, global capability centres, and artificial intelligence (AI) are among the key industries enticing foreign investors in India in 2024.

Several sources anticipate that the world economy will undergo numerous key developments in 2024:

- India's Economic Outlook: According to the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham), India will continue to be the fastest-growing major economy in 2024, with GDP growth of 7.6% or higher. This puts India in an advantageous economic position on the world stage.
- Areas to Watch: According to experts, various areas in India are worth considering for investment in 2024. These sectors, which include GDP growth, good corporate profitability, and promising sectors, are likely to contribute to robust economic expansion.
- Global Economic Trends: The forecast for 2024 is mixed on a global basis. While there is hope, there are concerns about future geopolitical tensions and the status of key economies such as the United States and China, which could lead to a further slowing of the global economy.
- Economic Transition: Analysts predict that 2024 will be a transitional year, with adjustments and alterations in the economic landscape. These transformations may have an impact on numerous aspects of the Indian and global economies.
- Positive Outlook: Experts predict that the Indian economy will experience robust growth of over 7% in 2024, which is expected to continue into fiscal year 2025.

Despite India's bright spot in the global economy, with excellent GDP growth estimates for 2024, analysts project that global economic concerns and changes will impact the commercial and economic landscape in the following year. To make educated judgements, investors and businesses should keep a careful eye on these trends and developments.

-WFY BUREAU





Revealing The Best Legal Trends That Will Dominate In 2024

By WFY Bureau

Let us examine the legal trends that will shape the coming year, such as the emergence of generative artificial intelligence, the acceptance of alternative legal costs, the investigation of untapped markets, and much more.

The legal industry is changing at a dizzying rate. This fiercely competitive and intricate industry faces a plethora of obstacles, including the rising cost of living, the growing need for specialised knowledge, the growth and disruption of alternative legal service providers (ALSPs), changing client expectations, the expansion and contraction of practice areas, and a host of other issues. However, the industry will change, grow, and eventually overcome those obstacles. Over the past few years, legal companies and attorneys have demonstrated an unexpected degree of adaptability, sincere resilience, and a general willingness to change. Legal companies and attorneys are expected to advance even further in 2024 by embracing cutting-edge technology, adopting creative payment methods, breaking into new markets, and more.

Key legal developments to look forward to in 2024:

- **Acceptance of substitute legal expenses:** Although the billable hour has long been the standard billing technique, clients are raising concerns about the model, claiming it generates perverse incentives, leads to duplicate billing, fosters inefficiencies, and offers a poor return on investment. Calling time on the billable hour: A recent LexisNexis report examined how clients are using alternative fee arrangements (AFAs). Numerous ALSPs and platform law firms have embraced AFAs. The most common option is flat fees, when clients and firms agree on prices in advance of projects; other alternatives include blended rates, capped fees, fixed fees by phase, and so on. Since AFAs reduce expenses and more accurately represent the work completed, clients frequently embrace them.
- **Handling the drop in income:** According to the LexisNexis GLP Index, demand for legal services will increase in 2024 by +2% over 2023. Perhaps that is a trend in the right direction. However, 2023 saw 6% growth, indicating a sharp slowdown in the sector's growth. Experts widely recognise the causes of decreased growth. Geopolitical unrest, the macroeconomic climate, the pandemic aftermath, and increased regulatory complexity have caused the professional services sector to suffer.

- **Smaller legal companies seek more organic growth:** It's difficult to expand a legal practice. But expansion will be extremely challenging in an uncertain economic climate, when new competitors could disrupt the legal market and income could decline. Still, legal companies have high growth aspirations, as evidenced by the most recent Lexis Nexis study. Moreover, the emphasis is on the organic, as opposed to past years. The report demonstrated that small businesses prefer to grow organically—that is, by expanding their marketing and business development departments—as opposed to using more conventional strategies. Survey participants observed that comprehensive approaches to advertising tactics have proven to be effective, with social media, public relations, and the internet all focused on offering education.
- **The Ascension of Generative Artificial Intelligence:** ChatGPT, DALL•E, Jasper, Soundraw, and other generative artificial intelligence (AI) systems were the topic of 2023. Not just in the legal area, but throughout the economy and around the world. A recent LexisNexis report, *Generative AI and the Future of the Legal Profession*, sought to better comprehend the sector's existing awareness and deployment of AI. And, while current use appeared to be low, with just over a third (36%) of respondents indicating that they use the technology, anticipated use appeared to be massive. To find solutions, lawyers are increasingly turning to generative AI. They are utilising technology to create briefs, documents, and content. They are using AI to generate ideas, improve processes, and streamline operations. They draft, negotiate, and analyse contracts. Lawyers are employing reliable legal AI systems to significantly accelerate and improve their legal research. They are also employing AI in everyday jobs, such as the most fundamental types of communication. In short, AI will begin to transform the legal profession in 2023 and will become even more prevalent in 2024. The technology has an air of inevitability about it, and lawyers who do not use it or who do not embrace the benefits it provides will eventually fall behind.

Customer service may not be as important to retention as solutions are. More than ever, clients are expecting faster turnaround times, innovative billing models, improved communication channels, and much more. The firm acquires clients, but smaller businesses can only expand by exceeding their expectations.

Therefore, in 2024, discovering organic approaches to draw in and keep customers will probably be very popular.





By Saji Chacko

Rachin Ravindra Is The New Kid On The Block

Rachin Ravindra is one of the young sensations of international cricket. The 24-year-old Kiwi batsman of Indian origin showcased his talent in the ICC World Cup in India (in November) when he slammed three centuries and, more importantly, ensured New Zealand entered the semi-finals of the World Cup.

For someone who had made it to the New Zealand side following the injuries to Kane Williamson, Rachin was super quick to prove his credentials. He did the 'unthinkable' when he scored a century against defending champion England in his opening match of the tournament. Not only that, he emerged as the highest scorer as a debutant when he scored 575 runs, which is a record.

Rachin's Indian roots become very obvious when he speaks. Though there is a tinge of the Kiwi accent, there is a strong Indian accent, which clearly shows his South Indian roots.

Rachin's father, Ravi Krishnamurthy, was born in Bengaluru. A software engineer, he was also a very avid cricket fan who closely followed the exploits of Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid.

"It was my father who initiated and developed my love for cricket and cricketers. He was following the fortunes of the Indian team wherever they went, and soon his love for the game transcended over to me," said Rachin.

In fact, Ravi, who shifted to New Zealand in 1997, was very particular about the idea that his son Rachin should become a cricket player. "At home, our discussion would invariably be about whom and when India would play next. And then the conversation would veer towards how nice it would have been had I or my father been playing for India," Ravin said.

Once Rachin was born in Wellington, his father, Ravi, wanted him to be a cricketer who would don the Kiwi All Blacks. Such was his mission and passion that he would end up driving a nine-year-old Rachin more than 70 to 100km per day in order to attend cricket coaching.

"Those early days were quite tough. Initially, I was reluctant to go to such lengths—leave home early for school, then return and leave for cricket practice. This involved a lot of

travel and, needless to say, took a hell lot out of me," said Rachin.



If Rachin had doubts, Father Ravi was quite clear about his son's future. He kept prodding and pushing Rachin further and further in order to pursue his dreams.

Slowly but surely, Rachin increased his pace and made his presence felt in the Kiwi junior squad with a string of good performances. His batting prowess soon made him famous, as he was one of the most prolific scorers in the Plunkett Shield, the domestic circuit of New Zealand cricket. Apart from that, Rachin used to travel every year to Bangalore to play club cricket. "That was an experience I would eagerly await. My parents hail from this city, and I am very comfortable with the people and cuisine," he said.





From a very young age, Rachin admired Sachin Tendulkar. "I used to adore him—for just about everything. The way he batted and the way he conducted himself on and off the field. He was the epitome of what a cricketer should be. I wanted to be like him in terms of a batsman," revealed Rachin.

Rachin made his debut for New Zealand A against Pakistan A in October 2018. "That was a landmark in my career. I could feel the pressure and was not able to give my best in that match," said Rachin.

Soon, the International Cricket Council (ICC) acknowledged him as one of the finest young talents.



Rachin's big moment came when he was chosen to play for New Zealand in their away series against India in 2021. Although he did not score any tall runs or play any spectacular innings, he will be best remembered for his 91-ball knock of 18 runs, which helped the Kiwis avoid a defeat in the Kanpur Test match. "I had dreamt of scoring big in the series against India, but the best that I came up with was a 91-ball 18 runs. I was batting at No. 8, and India was poised to post a win. I batted with a lot of grit, which enabled my team to latch on to a draw. I will not forget that innings for the rest of my life," he said.

Thereafter, he played a couple of series for New Zealand but came on his own in the one-dayers with his big hitting and attacking style of batting. "I think I don't have the patience for tests, as I am an attacking batsman. ODI's is tailor-made for my style of batting, and I knew I would be a success in the white ball format," he added.



Rachin experienced his moment of glory at the ICC World Cup, held in India earlier this year. Rachin was included in the First 15 and was not supposed to play an active role in New Zealand's campaign.

But Lady Luck shined on him when former captain Kane Williamson was injured for New Zealand's initial five games, giving him a chance to prove himself.

He did just that in his debut ODI World Cup match against England. This match was played at the Narendra Modi Stadium, the world's largest cricket stadium. Batting at No. 4, he had a dream debut when he scored a strokeful 123 runs. In the process, he became one of the 15 players in the world to score a century on his World Cup debut. Then, he scored a couple of centuries more to cement himself as New Zealand's Mr. Dependable.

Rachin, whose parents came to India during the World Cup, feels he has a lot more to offer. "I feel that I can be among the best batters in the world in the coming years. I just have to keep my focus going."

-SAJI CHACKO





By Tushar Unadkat

The N-word In B-town: The Latest You Need To Know

What is it all about the N-word in B-town?

Nepotism in Bollywood has been a subject of much debate and discussion within the film industry and the public. The term "**nepotism**" refers to the practice of favoring relatives or close friends, especially in the context of job appointments or business opportunities. In the context of Bollywood, it often involves the promotion and preference given to individuals with familial connections in the film industry.

One of the key criticisms of Bollywood is that it tends to be dominated by a few powerful film families, where talent and opportunities are perceived to be inherited rather than earned on merit. The argument against nepotism suggests that talented outsiders face more significant challenges in breaking into the industry than those with familial connections. This trend has led to concerns about fairness, equal opportunity, and the stifling of fresh talent.

Several star kids, or individuals with family ties to the film industry, have been launched in leading roles, sometimes overshadowing the efforts of aspiring actors who do not have similar connections. This equation has led to a perception that the industry is more focused on promoting insiders than recognizing and nurturing raw talent from diverse backgrounds.

However, industry defenders argue that while nepotism exists, it is not the only factor influencing success. They contend that talent, hard work, and audience acceptance ultimately determine an actor's or filmmaker's success. Additionally, they argue that

family connections can provide opportunities but cannot guarantee a sustained career in the highly competitive and unpredictable world of Bollywood.

One of the most prominent instances that brought the issue of nepotism in Bollywood into the limelight is the controversy between Kangana Ranaut and Karan Johar. The controversy unfolded during an episode of Karan Johar's talk show, "Koffee with Karan," where Kangana Ranaut accused him of being the "flagbearer of nepotism" in the industry.

Kangana, known for her outspoken nature, expressed her views on how nepotism affects outsiders in the film industry. She pointed out that star kids often have a smoother entry into Bollywood, while those without connections face more significant hurdles. Kangana's statements ignited a heated debate on social media and within the industry.

Karan Johar, in response, defended himself and his position in the industry. He argued that while he has launched Star Kids, he has also given opportunities to talented individuals without industry connections. The exchange became a focal point for discussions about the prevalence of nepotism and the challenges faced by those who do not have familial ties in Bollywood.

The debate around nepotism gained widespread attention in 2017 following the passing of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. His death led to discussions about mental health in the industry and fueled conversations about the challenges faced by outsiders



trying to make their mark in Bollywood.

Responding to the criticism, some industry insiders have called for a more inclusive and merit-based approach to casting and filmmaking. The rise of independent cinema and the success of actors and filmmakers without established Bollywood connections also highlight a shifting landscape within the industry.

This controversy led to a wider conversation about power dynamics, privilege, and the need for a level playing field within the film industry. It prompted other actors and filmmakers to share their perspectives on nepotism and the struggles faced by outsiders. The incident also sparked discussions about the impact of favoritism on mental health and the overall well-being of individuals trying to establish themselves in the industry.

While the Kangana Ranaut and Karan Johar controversy brought attention to the issue, it did not mark the end of discussions around nepotism in Bollywood. The industry has since witnessed a continued dialogue on the need for inclusivity, equal opportunities, and the recognition of talent over lineage. This controversy remains significant in the ongoing narrative about nepotism and its implications for the Indian film industry.

Overall, nepotism in Bollywood remains a complex and contentious issue, reflecting broader concerns about representation, inclusivity, and the balance between lineage and talent in the entertainment business. The ongoing dialogue surrounding nepotism indicates a growing awareness of the need for change and a more diverse and equitable film industry.

-TUSHAR UNADKAT



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

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