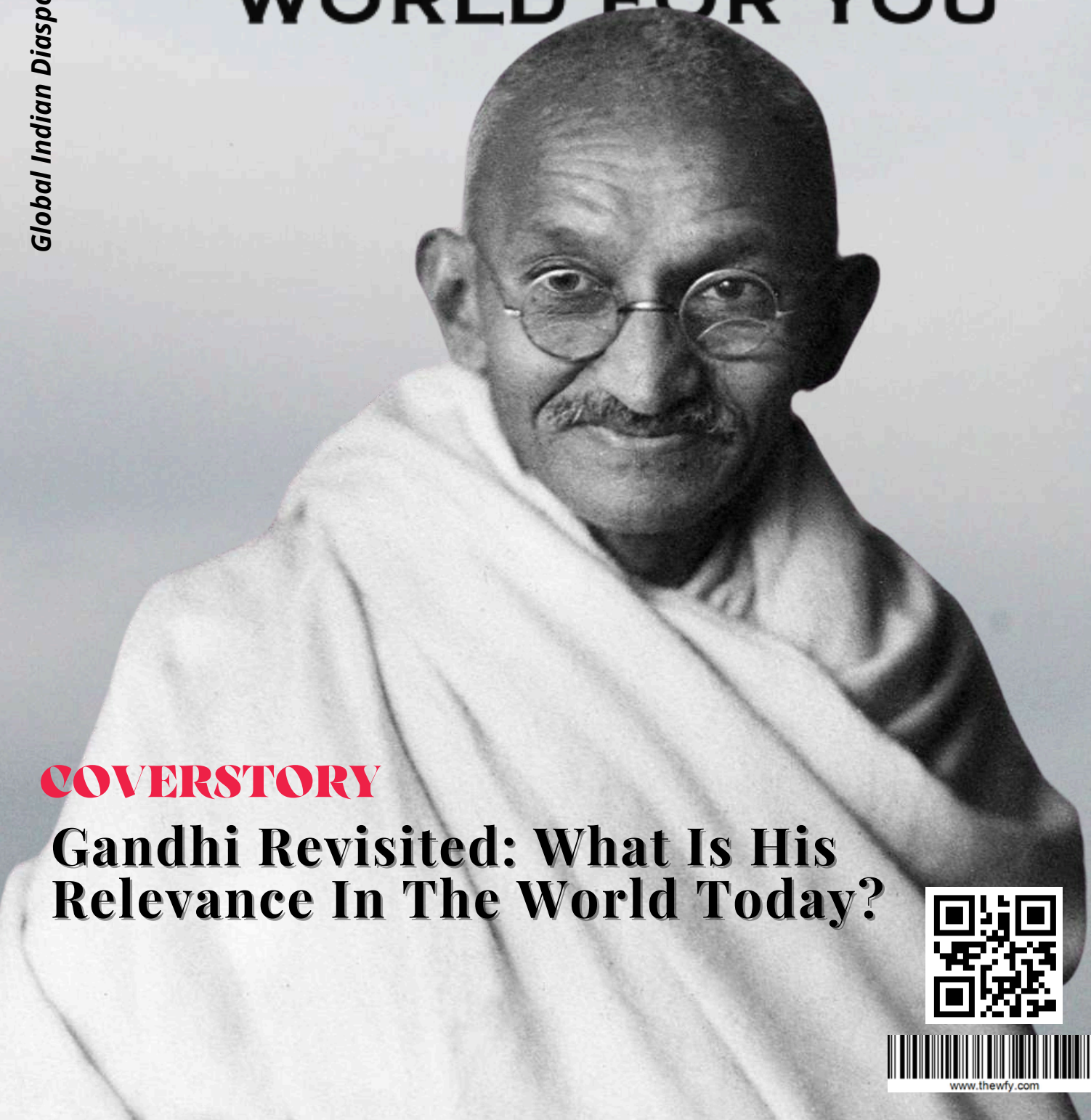


October, 2024

# WIFY

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Global Indian Diaspora Magazine



## COVERSTORY

### Gandhi Revisited: What Is His Relevance In The World Today?





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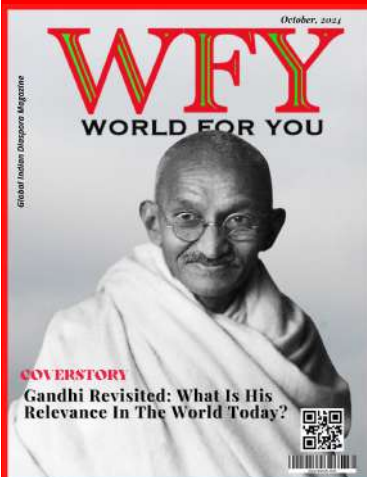
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# Hello October



# Invoking October's Spirit For A Better World



*From the Editor's Desk*

*Dear Readers,*

As we enter the lively month of October, filled with the essence of celebration, reflection, and transformation, I encourage you to embark on a stimulating journey through this edition of 'The WFY.'

The cover story, "Gandhi Revisited: What Is His Relevance In The World Today?" invites readers to engage in a thoughtful exploration of enduring principles in the face of contemporary issues. In light of the current global unrest and the rise of conflicts, it is imperative that we turn our attention to the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi regarding nonviolence and civil disobedience. This is not simply a reflection on the past; rather, it serves as a vital reminder for all of us to adopt peace as a formidable instrument for transformation. We are also celebrating Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on the 2nd of October.

This month, we explore World Politics, featuring contributions from Tushar Unadkat and Leon Jose, who offer a thoughtful analysis of current immigration trends and the evolving diplomatic dynamics among India's neighbouring nations. In light of our community's rich history of migration and adaptation, these explorations hold significant relevance, prompting us to reflect on our shared responsibilities in an ever more interconnected world.

In the Health & Wellness section, we address the widespread distractions posed by social media. Kulmohan Kaur's article on its side effects highlights the crucial mental health implications of our digital lives, serving as an important reminder for readers to reflect on this pressing issue. In conjunction with Selvan Durairaj's insightful guide on conquering personal fears, our aim is to equip you with resources that foster resilience and enhance well-being.

In this edition, Kavya Patel presents an insightful exploration of the emerging trend—"Dry Tipping: The New Trend On The Spring Break Cards." This piece encourages us to consider the impact of such responsible and helpful innovations on our leisure experiences. Moreover, the WFY Bureau's investigation into community living underscores the significant influence of shared experiences and connections, emphasising the fundamental nature of belonging and fighting loneliness, particularly for the Indian diaspora.

The featured section embodies the core values of peace and community, reflecting a commitment to these ideals. On this International Day of Nonviolence, Tushar Unadkat's thought-provoking article on Gandhi's legacy urges us to consider the importance of a global ceasefire—an aspiration that resonates deeply in these challenging times. For those seeking culinary adventures, our feature on Inji Puli transports you to the heart of India and its kitchens, where flavours intertwine with rich stories of heritage and tradition.

Our publication remains a vibrant platform for art and culture, featuring evocative poems by Rema Pisharody and Briji K T that explore the complex tapestry of human emotions, alongside Kavya Patel's thrilling update on an Indian film garnering attention at the UK's Oscar entry. This highlights the diverse and vibrant essence of Indian creativity that knows no boundaries.

In our exploration of Economy & Business, Sunita Krishnan's analysis of the Hilsa fish ban underscores the profound connections between our cultural practices and commercial activities. The WFY Bureau delves into the fascinating possibilities within technology and science, focussing on the discovery of new planets and the quest for extraterrestrial life. This exploration serves as a testament to our unquenchable curiosity as a species.

In conclusion, the Travel & Leisure section presents Sudha Mukhopadhyay's captivating account of Bhutan, showcasing a nation that elegantly balances tradition and sustainability.

As the editor overseeing our publication, I kindly urge you to continue your support for 'The WFY.' Your support—whether through donations, subscriptions, or advertisements—plays a crucial role in our commitment to nurturing a dynamic community dialogue within the Indian diaspora. We invite you to contribute your perspectives to the magazine; your insights have the power to spark meaningful discussions.

As we move forward, let us honour our rich heritage while also engaging with the challenges and opportunities that the present day brings. Our community stands firm in its commitment to resilience, creativity, and a collective vision for the future.

May this month bring you abundant inspiration and meaningful connections.

Warmest Regards,

**Namaste**

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



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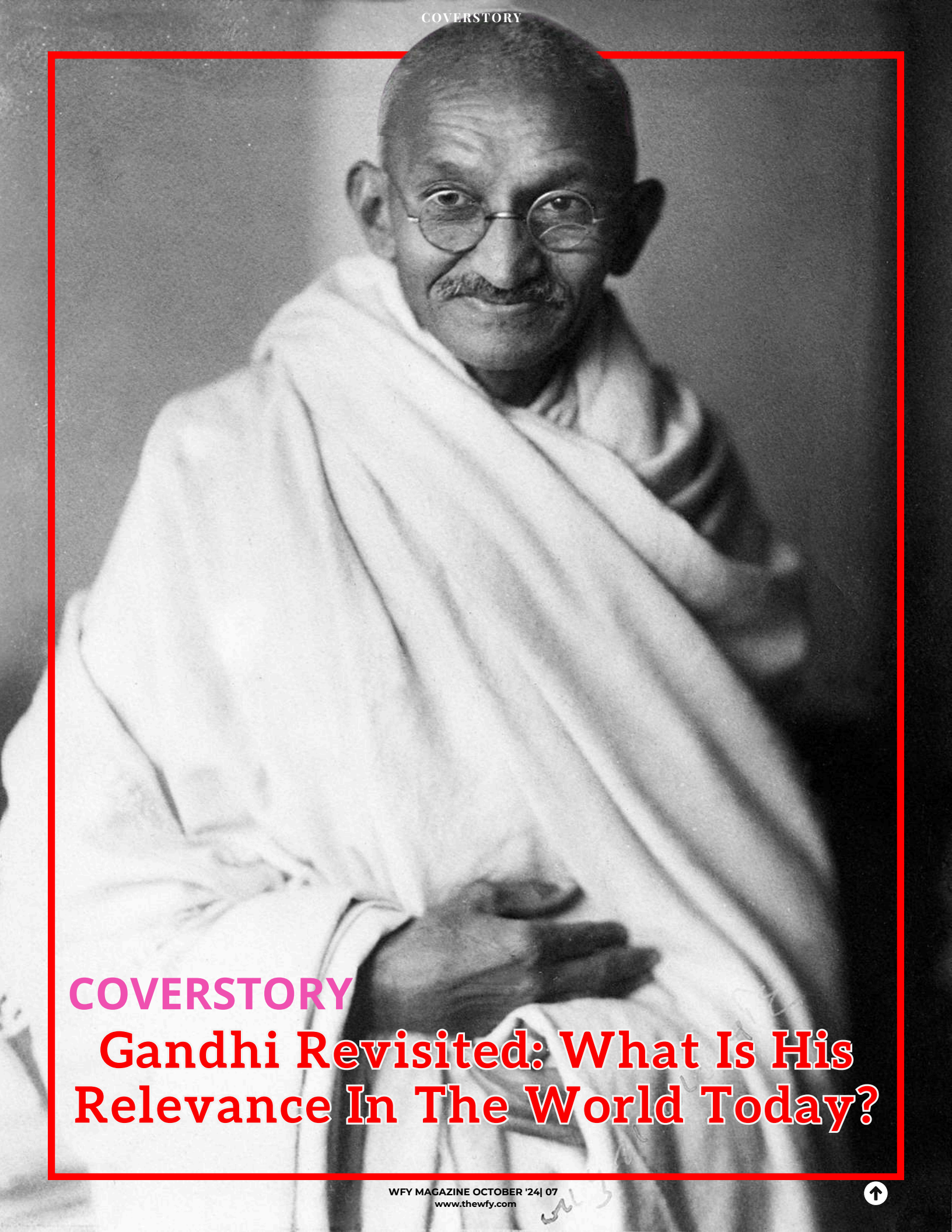
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**COVERSTORY**

**Gandhi Revisited: What Is His  
Relevance In The World Today?**



By Melwyn Williams

As October unfolds, the nation reflects on the profound wisdom of Mahatma Gandhi, a figure whose legacy continues to inspire generations. Known as the Father of the Nation, Gandhi's emergence on the Indian political scene ignited a wave of enthusiasm, drawing countless followers to his revolutionary ideas, now celebrated as Gandhian philosophy. His remarkable personality captivated millions, not just in India but across the globe, establishing him as a symbol of hope and compassion in a world often marred by conflict.

His importance and significance stem from breaking the ceiling for Indians and their stereotypes on film.

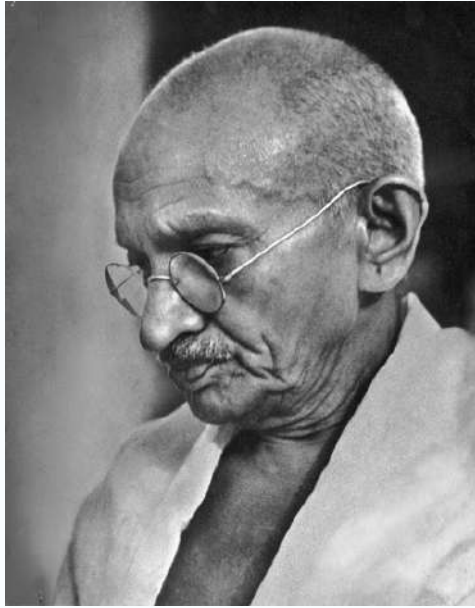
Gandhi's unwavering commitment to non-violence and universal goodwill has made him a timeless advocate for peace. His methods of conflict resolution, rooted in compassion, transformed a nation shackled by colonial rule into a resilient force for independence. The allure of his non-violent approach remains a captivating phenomenon, inspiring leaders worldwide to embrace peace as a means of resolving conflicts.

In a world rife with chaos, Gandhi's declaration, "I am a man of peace," invites us to delve deeper into his character. He understood that true peace is not merely the absence of conflict but a complex interplay of justice and harmony. His journey illustrates the delicate balance between pursuing peace and standing firm on one's principles, showcasing a leader who was both compassionate and resolute.

Gandhi's legacy extends beyond political reform; he was a social visionary who fought against untouchability and championed Hindu-Muslim unity. His iconic hymns, such as 'Ram Dhun' and 'Ishwar Allah Tera Naam,' continue to resonate, fostering harmony among diverse communities. For Gandhi, peace was a pathway to enhancing humanity's well-being, not an end in itself.

His profound belief that "truthfulness is more important than peacefulness" challenges us to reflect on our methods in the pursuit of noble goals. Even in the face of adversity, Gandhi's teachings remind us of the importance of integrity and the dignity of all individuals. His message of universal brotherhood and peaceful coexistence remains relevant, urging us to navigate the complexities of modern conflicts with grace and wisdom.

We must reaffirm our commitment to peace and mutual tolerance as we honour Gandhi's legacy. In a world where the peace crisis looms large, his timeless wisdom serves as a guiding light, encouraging us to embrace Gandhism's ideals in our daily lives. Let us celebrate the enduring significance of Mahatma Gandhi, a true beacon of truth and non-violence, as we strive for a more harmonious world.



### Exploring Gandhi's Enduring Legacy in the Modern World

In an age where the past often fades into obscurity, the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi continue to resonate with profound relevance. Celebrated annually on his birthday, Gandhi's legacy transcends mere ritual, serving as a reminder of his pivotal role in India's struggle for independence. Yet, as the nation grapples with violent communal strife and stark economic disparities—where over 30% of the population lives in poverty amidst the wealth of the elite—questions arise about the future of his vision for universal upliftment.

Gandhi was not just a leader but a master strategist who advocated for peace and unity through nonviolent means. His philosophy of ahimsa (non-violence) and commitment to democratic principles laid the groundwork for a society that respects the rights of all, regardless of race or religion. This vision remains a guiding light for the twenty-first century, urging individuals to embrace non-violence as a means of navigating today's complex political landscape.

The influence of Gandhi's teachings extends far beyond India, inspiring global figures like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Barack Obama, and Aung San Suu Kyi. Each has drawn from his principles to advocate for justice and equality in their respective struggles. King's peaceful resistance against racial segregation echoes Gandhi's Salt March, while Suu Kyi's journey highlights the courage necessary for reconciliation and peace.

Gandhi's insights into the moral fabric of society are particularly poignant today. He warned against the seven social sins—politics without principles, wealth without work, commerce without morality, education without character, pleasure without conscience, science without humanity, and worship without sacrifice. These reflections serve as a clarion call for individuals to uphold values that foster a just and compassionate world.

As we delve into Gandhi's remarkable journey, we uncover a tapestry of faith, action, and connection with the masses. His legacy is not that of a saint but of a relatable figure whose teachings on non-violence and social change remain vital in our contemporary landscape. In a

world yearning for leaders with the courage to confront societal injustices, Gandhi's principles ignite the passion of many, urging a collective commitment to the greater good. The enduring legacy of Gandhi invites us to reflect on our own roles in shaping a more equitable society. His teachings remind us that non-violence and unwavering conviction pave the path to justice as we navigate the challenges of the modern world.

### Gandhi: A Timeless Icon of Relevance

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of Satyagraha has sparked a peaceful revolution that transcends borders, inspiring countless individuals and organisations worldwide. His unwavering commitment to non-violence and non-cooperation resonates deeply within movements led by figures such as Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Aung San Suu Kyi, each embodying the spirit of Gandhi in their quests for justice and democracy.

In Indonesia, Gedong Bagus Oka has played a crucial role in promoting Gandhi's teachings, founding the Gandhi Ashram in Bali—a sanctuary that continues to inspire those seeking a life of peace and reflection. This ashram serves as a beacon for individuals yearning for a deeper connection with nature and a commitment to mindful living.

Across the picturesque landscapes of southern France, the Community of the Ark, established by Lanza del Vasto, presents a compelling model of nonviolent social order. This haven attracts a new generation eager to escape the violence of modern life, while similar sanctuaries are emerging in Switzerland, Germany, and the USA.

Charles Walker, a revolutionary born in 1920, dedicated his life to Gandhi's principles, influencing peace movements globally through his writings and leadership in organisations like the World Peace Brigade. Meanwhile, Satish Kumar's journey through major world capitals in 1962 aimed to spread Gandhian philosophy, igniting a spark of peace during turbulent times.

In England, the innovative 'Small School' promotes holistic education, while eco-warrior Marie Thogar champions environmental causes through her involvement in significant movements like Chipko and Silent Valley. Her work, along with that of Prof. Adolfo De Obieta, the "Gandhi of Argentina," and Srimati Kamala, a dedicated advocate in Washington, D.C., underscores the global reach of Gandhi's ideals.

The collaboration of Mary King, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Dr. Yung Sik exemplifies the timeless commitment to Gandhi's principles of peace and justice. As we navigate a world fraught with violence, Gandhi's teachings emerge as a guiding light, urging us to envision a harmonious future where non-violence reigns supreme.

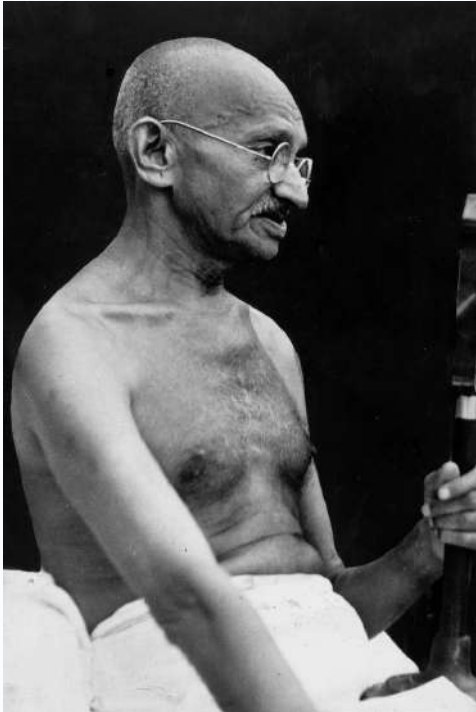
### Gandhi's Legacy Endures

Gandhi's life story is a tapestry woven with threads of faith, philosophy, and activism, beginning with his deep devotion to Rama, encapsulated in the mantra 'Ramanama'. His unwavering commitment to the Ramayana shaped the three significant phases of his life: the beginning, the journey, and the conclusion. Upon returning to India from South Africa, Gandhi encountered a politically fragmented landscape, divided between 'moderates' and 'extremists'. In this context, he ingeniously developed 'Satyagraha', a revolutionary philosophy that harmonised love, extremism,





sacrifice, and the elevated ideals of Shri Aurobindo, redefining resistance and moral courage.



Gandhi's enduring spirit is echoed in the village of Vatva in Dehgam Taluka, where communities unite in peaceful protests against injustice, embodying the principles he championed. This spirit of activism is mirrored globally, as Brazil's Gujarat Sarvodaya Mandal stands against a controversial salt sales ban, while the Innus in Canada successfully challenge military exercises through their own Satyagraha. These movements highlight the resilience of communities fighting for their rights and the environment.

As the world witnesses a resurgence of Gandhian principles, women and Dalits are increasingly rising against injustice through nonviolent means. The dawn of a new Gandhian era is upon us, marked by a powerful wave of resistance against the looming forces of destruction. Gandhi's vision of 'Swaraj' intertwines self-governance with a commitment to sacrifice and spirituality, urging us to reflect on our consumer-driven culture.

In an age where self-interest dominates, humanity stands at a pivotal juncture. The alarming release of toxic substances into our environment raises critical questions about our future and the legacy we wish to leave. Imagine a future where the voice of a new Gandhi resonates with environmental urgency, inspiring us to confront the challenges of our time and guiding us toward a more sustainable and compassionate world.

### The Relevance of Gandhi

The assassination of Mahatma Gandhi remains a defining moment in history, resonating across the globe and inspiring movements dedicated to peace and justice. Today, a new generation of students in the United States is embracing Gandhi's teachings, exploring his messages of truth, love, and nonviolence through school projects and papers. This revival of interest highlights the relevance of Gandhi's philosophy in a world often marred by conflict and division.

In Michigan, Rajmohan Gandhi, the grandson of the Mahatma, recently shared insights on the legacies of both his grandfather and Martin Luther King Jr., further igniting discussions on nonviolence. Meanwhile, Illinois made headlines as the governor commuted the death sentences of all 167 individuals on death row, a significant step towards justice and humanity. In Washington, Sister Carole Bialock, a 73-year-old Roman Catholic nun, led a powerful anti-war demonstration, embodying the spirit of nonviolent protest that both Gandhi and King championed.

Environmental activism also echoes Gandhi's principles, as demonstrated by John Quigley, a dedicated teacher in California who chained himself to a 400-year-old oak tree to protest its removal by developers. His actions reflect the ongoing struggle to protect our planet, a cause Gandhi fervently supported.

In the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, established in memory of Dr. King, a permanent exhibit is dedicated to Gandhi. This exhibit celebrates Gandhi's philosophy, a cornerstone of the nonviolent movement.

In Pennsylvania, a school board's decision to honour Bayard Rustin by naming a new high school after him showcases the enduring impact of pacifism. Rustin, a key figure in the civil rights movement and mentor to Dr. King, continues to inspire with his commitment to peace.

South Africa, where Gandhi founded the historic Phoenix Settlement, has recognised Gandhi's influence internationally by designating it as a national heritage site.

However, not all responses to Gandhi's legacy are respectful. A British company recently released a football T-shirt featuring Gandhi's image, raising eyebrows and sparking discussions about the appropriateness of using his likeness in commercial contexts. This juxtaposition of sports and philosophy serves as a reminder of Gandhi's enduring commitment to peace, equality, and healthy competition.

As we reflect on these developments, it is clear that Gandhi's teachings continue to inspire movements for justice and peace, reminding us of the power of resilience and unity in the face of adversity.

### Gandhi's Impact And Significance In Resolving Conflicts

In an era marked by conflict and division, Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of peace stands as a guiding light, offering profound insights into resolving ideological clashes, religious extremism, and economic disparities. His teachings inspire a quest for harmony, emphasising the transformative power of nonviolence and understanding in our pursuit of a just society.

At the heart of Gandhi's vision lies a comprehensive strategy to combat structural violence, advocating for principles such as **Satyagraha** (truth-force), **Sarvodaya** (welfare for all), and **Swaraj** (self-rule). His ideas on decentralisation of power and wealth, alongside the concepts of trusteeship and communal unity, resonate deeply in today's quest for economic equality and social harmony. Gandhi's philosophy transcends social, religious, and political boundaries, presenting a bold vision for the future. His transformative solutions address pressing issues like educational reform, social

disturbances, and economic challenges, while the **Eleven Vows (Ekadasha Vrata)** promote communal harmony and uplift marginalised communities. From advocating for women's empowerment to emphasising village sanitation and sustainable development, Gandhi's principles remain relevant in our modern context.

**Central to his teachings are profound moral values:** truthfulness, non-violence, love, self-control, forgiveness, and compassion. Gandhi believed that conflicts reflect deeper moral decay and advocated for a political landscape intertwined with ethics. His call for embodying these values in our actions aims to inspire a collective movement towards peace and understanding.

One of Gandhi's groundbreaking contributions is **Satyagraha**, a moral alternative to conflict that seeks to transform adversaries through self-suffering. This philosophy, celebrated by thinkers and social workers alike, highlights the innate goodness within humanity and fosters meaningful connections through goodwill and understanding.

In a world yearning for harmony, Gandhi's principles of Human Welfare challenge conventional notions of economic growth, urging a shift towards a more idealistic humanism that prioritises the essence of thriving. His advocacy for "**Sarva Dharma Sambhav**" promotes respect for all faiths, emphasising the importance of peaceful dialogue in scientific and technological advancement.

Gandhi's vision extends to complete disarmament and the transformative role of education in fostering peaceful coexistence. Imagine an educational curriculum that ignites creativity and awareness, preparing future generations for collaboration and innovation.

Ultimately, Gandhi's philosophy emerges from a deep understanding of human psychology and social realities, offering a roadmap for navigating the complexities of our world. As we embrace his teachings, we can cultivate a more harmonious future, grounded in the values of peace, compassion, and mutual respect.

### Why Does Gandhi Still Matter?

Decades after his death, Mahatma Gandhi's teachings continue to resonate powerfully across India, captivating both left- and right-wing extremists. The shocking destruction of a mosque in Ayodhya in 1992 by Hindu extremists sparked violent riots, forever altering the nation's social landscape. Amidst this turmoil, a group of dedicated Gandhians, led by Sushila Nayar—an intimate collaborator of Gandhi—sought to uphold his principles in the face of chaos.

Fast forward to the present, and the Maoist left, known as Naxalites, has emerged as a significant internal security threat. Their resurgence, particularly in central and eastern India, can be traced back to the 1980s under the leadership of Kondapalli Seetaramaiah, who transformed from a humble schoolteacher into a revolutionary figure, orchestrating daring attacks that reshaped the political landscape.

In striking contrast to Gandhi's agrarian roots, contemporary Indian politicians have pivoted towards an urban-industrial agenda, sidelining agriculture and education. This shift raises critical questions about the legacy of a leader who championed the nation's foundational



values. Yet Gandhi's influence persists through global figures like Martin Luther King Jr. and Aung San Suu Kyi, who embody his principles of peace and justice.

The Gandhian spirit thrives in grassroots movements advocating for environmental sustainability and social justice. A coalition of diverse professionals is uniting to promote primary education and transparency in governance, showcasing the relevance of Gandhi's philosophies in modern activism. As India and China navigate evolving economic landscapes, a dialogue on environmental sustainability emerges, echoing Gandhi's belief in truth and interfaith understanding.

In a world often divided by conflict, Gandhi's flexible interpretation of Hinduism stands in stark contrast to contemporary fundamentalism. His commitment to peace and dialogue serves as a beacon of hope, emphasising compassion in adversity. A recent study by Freedom House highlights the effectiveness of nonviolent civic resistance, challenging traditional activism methods, and underscoring Gandhi's enduring relevance.

This exploration of Gandhi's legacy reveals a visionary leader whose spirit was vibrant and joyful. A memorable encounter in London in 1931, where he expressed gratitude to the British monarch, showcases his wit and humility, reminding us of the profound insights he offered on food, intimacy, and human connection. As we reflect on his teachings, we celebrate the timeless significance of Gandhi's ideals in shaping a more just and compassionate world.

#### What do Gandhi and Gandhism Mean?

In an era where conflict often overshadows compassion, Gandhism emerges as a beacon of hope, rooted in the timeless principles of truth and non-violence. This powerful philosophy, centred around Ahimsa, or non-violence, encapsulates the essence of humanity's quest for peace and understanding. Gandhi's extraordinary journey and his unwavering commitment to these ideals have solidified his status as a timeless icon, inspiring generations across the globe.

At the core of Gandhism lies the principle of Ahimsa, a magnificent force that resonates through the ages as a fundamental tenet of human existence. It serves as a guiding light, illuminating the path toward truth and moral superiority. Gandhi's profound love for truth not only shaped his actions but also offers a compass for those seeking enlightenment and authenticity in their lives.

As we explore the remarkable achievements inspired by Gandhi's philosophy, we uncover the global movements that have drawn strength from his teachings. The Gandhian approach remains ever-relevant, urging us to engage with it honestly and sincerely, free from bias. This exploration is crucial for unlocking new pathways to resolution in a world rife with challenges. Gandhism stands out as a transformative ideology, emphasising justice and integrity through the principles of truth and non-violence. To fully appreciate its significance, one must approach it with an open heart and mind, recognising its potential to address contemporary issues.

**The essence of Ahimsa:** celebrating its resilience and the profound impact of non-violence. This philosophy advocates for peaceful dispute resolution and unwavering determination to

achieve collective goals. Ahimsa fosters collaboration on a grand scale, promoting the idea that success is a harmonious victory for all involved.

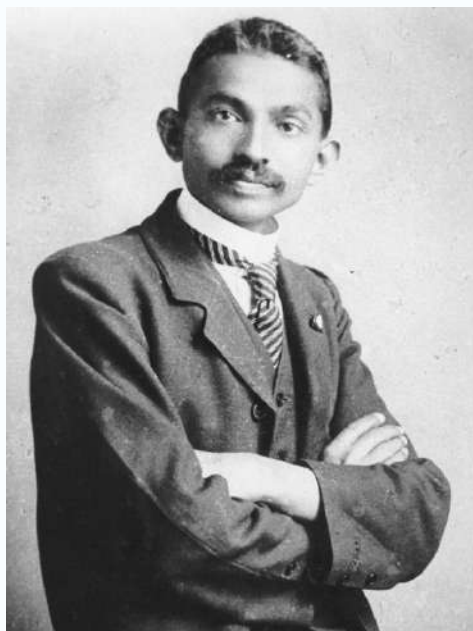
Ultimately, Gandhism embodies a holistic approach, striving for universal truth and well-being for everyone. Discover the profound legacy of Gandhi, whose commitment to non-violence continues to inspire a world yearning for harmony and peace. As we refine and thoughtfully apply these principles, the enduring relevance of Gandhism shines brightly, offering hope and guidance for future generations.

#### Comprehending Gandhi

In the rich tapestry of history, few figures stand as prominently as Mahatma Gandhi, a man whose life was a remarkable journey of contradictions and evolution. Far from being a saint by birth, Gandhi sculpted his identity through relentless austerity and discipline, as vividly chronicled in his autobiography, "**My Experiments with Truth.**" This narrative serves as a powerful testament to his resilience and adaptability, revealing a multifaceted individual who was a cunning politician, a conservative revolutionary, a deeply spiritual being, and a champion of democracy.

Gandhi's legacy is not merely one of political activism; it is a profound exploration of morality and the human spirit. He engaged in meaningful dialogues with those who held opposing views, demonstrating that understanding and compassion can bridge even the widest divides. His insights resonate today, offering solutions to the pressing challenges of our time.

At the heart of Gandhi's philosophy was a **relentless battle against evil, both personally and publicly.** He believed that true strength lies not in retaliation but in an unwavering commitment to goodness. His transformative approach encouraged individuals to confront evil with patience and compassion, advocating for a life of love and understanding amidst adversity. Gandhi envisioned a world where violence would fade, and peace would reign, a vision echoed in the teachings of other great leaders, including the Prophet Muhammad, who emphasised the need for justice alongside compassion.



**Gandhi's philosophy of Satyagraha, often misunderstood as passive resistance, was a powerful tool against injustice.** It sought to awaken the conscience of oppressors, inviting them to experience the suffering of their victims. His teachings on non-violence and the transformative power of love continue to inspire movements for justice and equality around the globe.

Despite his mistakes, Gandhi's profound impact has garnered admiration from notable figures, including Lord Mountbatten and Sir Richard Attenborough. His life serves as a beacon of hope, illuminating the path toward a more compassionate and just world. In a time when the lines between right and wrong often blur, Gandhi's unwavering commitment to peace and moral fortitude remains a timeless call to action for all of humanity.

#### Gandhi's Relevance Is Both Eternal And Universal.

Mahatma Gandhi's enduring message of peace, non-violence, and social justice continues to resonate across the globe, transcending time and borders. His principles serve as a guiding light, inspiring generations to embrace integrity and compassion in their daily lives. At the core of Gandhi's philosophy lies the unwavering commitment to truth and nonviolence, urging individuals to foster harmonious relationships among diverse communities and transform animosity into love.

In today's competitive political world, where ambition often overshadows altruism, Gandhi's call for positive human relations is more relevant than ever. His vision of empowerment emphasises the importance of collective well-being and active participation in creating a united global community. Through **self-discipline, satyagraha, and nonviolence**, he mobilised the masses to pursue their aspirations, advocating for a society where, "**Sarvodaya**"—universal upliftment, guides every action.

Gandhi's profound understanding of the human spirit captivated his followers, addressing the complexities of motivation, emotion, and loyalty. He envisioned a world where humanity transcends primal instincts, embracing creativity and striving for a higher purpose. His philosophy intertwines the essence of humanity, societal fabric, and environmental balance, promoting interdependence and a harmonious existence that benefits all.

As we reflect on the trajectory of virtues over the past century, we witness a compelling narrative of decline. Yet, in a world yearning for harmony, the revival of Gandhian ideals emerges as a beacon of hope. Not only is it necessary to embrace these timeless principles, but they also serve as the foundation for building a united and peaceful society. Gandhi's legacy invites us to reconsider our roles in the intricate web of life, urging a collective commitment to love and ethical living for a brighter future.

**-MELWYN WILLIAMS**





# ANATOMY OF MODERN IMMIGRATION: NAVIGATING NEW HORIZONS

By Tushar Unadkat

**I**mmigrating to a new country is not just a change of location but a truly transformative experience. It offers numerous benefits but presents significant challenges and potential side effects, shaping the lives of those undertaking it.

## Cultural Shock

Adapting to a new culture, language, customs, and social norms can be overwhelming. Many immigrants experience confusion, disorientation, or isolation as they adjust to their new environment.

## Homesickness

It's essential to recognize that the longing for familiar surroundings, family, and friends is a common experience among immigrants. This sense of homesickness can lead to feelings of sadness, loneliness, and even depression, but knowing that others share these feelings can provide comfort.

## Language Barriers

When an immigrant's native language differs from the official language of their new country, communication challenges can arise. These barriers can affect their ability to work, socialize, and access essential services.

## Economic Challenges

Finding employment, understanding the local job market, or dealing with differences in qualifications and work experience recognition can be daunting for immigrants. These economic challenges often add stress to the transition process.

## Legal and Bureaucratic Hurdles

Navigating the legal requirements for residency, work permits, or citizenship can take time and effort. Dealing with unfamiliar laws and regulations adds another layer of difficulty.

## Social Integration

Building a social network in a new country can be challenging. Immigrants may struggle to form friendships, connect with local communities, or feel accepted.

## Health Concerns

Accessing healthcare, understanding the local healthcare system, and dealing with mental health issues exacerbated by stress and isolation are common concerns for immigrants.

## Identity Crisis

Immigrants may face an identity crisis as they attempt to reconcile their original cultural identity with their new environment. This struggle can lead to confusion or a sense of not fully belonging to either culture.

## Discrimination and Prejudice

Encountering discrimination, racism, or xenophobia is, unfortunately, a reality for many immigrants. These negative experiences can significantly impact their mental and emotional well-being.

## Impact on Family Dynamics

Immigration can strain family relationships, especially when some members remain in their home country. Changes in roles and responsibilities within the family can lead to stress or conflict.

## Educational and Career Adjustments

Adapting to different educational systems or retraining for new careers can be time-consuming and frustrating, especially when previous qualifications are not recognized.

## Adapting to Climate and Environment

Moving to a country with a different climate or environment can impact physical health and well-being. Adjusting to extreme weather conditions, pollution levels, or shifts from urban to rural settings can be particularly challenging.

Despite these challenges, many immigrants successfully adapt and thrive in their new countries with time, support, and resilience. It is crucial to view these difficulties as opportunities for personal growth and development. This perspective offers hope and optimism for those facing similar transitions, encouraging them to persevere.

## General Immigration Trends

### Eastern to Western Migration

Historically, there has been a significant flow of people from Eastern countries (Asia, the Middle East, and parts of Africa) to Western countries (North America, Western Europe, and Australia). Better economic opportunities, political stability, and educational prospects in the West drive this trend. Countries like the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Germany, and Australia are popular destinations for immigrants from China, India, the Philippines, Vietnam, Pakistan, and other Eastern countries.

### Western to Eastern Migration

While there is also a flow of Westerners to Eastern countries, it tends to be smaller. Specific factors such as business opportunities, expat assignments, retirement, or cultural experiences often drive it. Popular destinations for Western expats include Japan, South Korea, China, Singapore, the UAE, and Thailand. This migration is usually temporary, with many expats eventually returning to their home countries.

### Ratio Estimates

The migration flow from East to West is generally much larger than the reverse. For instance, the number of immigrants from Asia to North America and Europe significantly exceeds that of Westerners moving to Asia or the Middle East.

In summary, immigration patterns today reflect a complex interplay of challenges and opportunities, with the flow from East to West continuing to outpace the reverse. Despite the difficulties, immigrants' resilience and adaptability contribute to their new homes' rich cultural and economic fabric.

- TUSHAR UNADKAT



**I**ndia, as a rising global power, has significantly expanded its diplomatic, economic, and strategic footprint over the past few decades. As one of the world's fastest-growing major economies and a prominent voice in international forums like the G20, BRICS and the United Nations, India has positioned itself as a key player in global geopolitics. Its growing economic and strategic alliances have strengthened its influence, particularly in South Asia, where it has traditionally been the dominant regional power. However, India faces increasing competition from China, whose Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), high interest investment projects and aggressive diplomacy have made deep inroads into many of India's neighbouring countries.

#### Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's political landscape has seen critical shifts that impact India's strategic interests. Traditionally, the island nation balanced its relations between India and China, but the recent election of Anura Kumara Dissanayake signals a possible shift toward greater alignment with China. Dissanayake's left-wing government may continue the trend of relying on Chinese investments, especially given Sri Lanka's significant debt from previous projects under the pro-China Rajapaksa administration, where China's growing presence poses a direct challenge to India's security and economic interests.

Rajapaksa's government had favoured Chinese infrastructure investments, leading to the controversial leasing of Hambantota Port to China for 99 years due to inability to repay loans. This has raised alarms in New Delhi, as India considers Sri Lanka part of its strategic backyard. The new government has already stated they don't want to be a sandwich in between India and China diplomatically.

#### Bangladesh

Bangladesh has historically been a close ally of India, especially under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who fostered strong ties through trade, security cooperation, and connectivity initiatives. However, the current political unrest, marked by widespread protests, has led to the formation of a caretaker government under Muhammad Yunus, who is known for his criticisms towards India and pro-China & pro-Pakistan views. The involvement of Jamaat-e-Islami, a radical group critical of India's interests, has been pivotal in mobilizing protests against Hasina's administration. If Yousef's government shifts Bangladesh's foreign policy closer to China and Pakistan, India could face significant challenges in maintaining its influence. Such a pivot would undermine India's strategic interests, particularly in combating cross-border terrorism and fostering regional trade. China has already invested heavily in Bangladesh through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and a government aligned with Beijing could further deepen these ties, diminishing India's foothold in the region.

#### Nepal

Nepal has long presented both opportunities and challenges for India. Traditionally, the Nepali Congress Party has maintained strong ties with India, emphasizing cooperation in trade and infrastructure development. But whenever communist parties come in power, they shift the political landscape towards closer ties with China. The current prime minister KP Sharma Oli is also following the same footsteps.



# India's Diplomatic Challenges Amid Political Shifts in Neighbouring Countries

By Leon Jose Vidayathil



These leftist factions have embraced Chinese investments and projects under the BRI, complicating India's diplomatic efforts. Cross-border issues. This is raising concerns about India's influence in its northern neighbour. Nepal has accused India of imposing an undeclared blockade in 2015 which resulted in fuel shortage.

#### Maldives

The Maldives has witnessed significant political changes that create new diplomatic challenges for India. The election of Mohamed Muizzu, who has a pro-China stance, poses a considerable concern for New Delhi. His administration's first actions, including the request to remove Indian military troops stationed in the Maldives, reflect a desire to distance the nation from India and strengthen ties with China.

Under the previous government led by Ibrahim Solih, an "India First" policy emphasized strong bilateral ties, especially in economic cooperation and maritime security. However, Muizzu's approach signals a shift back towards China, particularly through infrastructure investments and development projects. Additionally, anti-Indian sentiments, fuelled by perceptions of competition over tourism between Lakshadweep and the Maldives, complicate diplomatic relations.

#### Conclusion

The political shifts in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and the Maldives present significant diplomatic challenges for India. The rise of pro-China governments threatens India's traditional influence in South Asia. To navigate these complex landscapes, India must enhance economic, cultural, and security ties with its neighbours while addressing their domestic political concerns. India should develop good relationships with all major political parties of the neighbouring countries. Indian foreign minister Jaishankar's visit to all three presidential candidates of Sri Lanka during the campaign must be seen in this context. Over dependence on a single political party or a political leader will lead to a diplomatic disaster for India.

Strengthening regional cooperation through initiative with local interests—such as infrastructure development, trade partnerships, and cultural exchanges—will be critical. Additionally, India must be vigilant in countering Chinese influence, as Beijing continues to expand its presence in the Indian Ocean and beyond. Balancing these strategic interests while fostering strong relationships will be essential for India's foreign policy in the coming years.

-LEON JOSE VITHAYATHIL





By  
Krishnakumar T N

## Dual Citizenship And India: Know It All Now

**I**ndia's stance on dual citizenship has long been a topic of debate, particularly in light of the country's increasing global presence and the migration of its talented citizens. As one of the few nations that doesn't allow dual citizenship, India faces a unique challenge in retaining its connection with its diaspora.

The reasons behind India's current policy are complex and rooted in historical and security concerns. However, it's crucial to consider the potential drawbacks of this approach, especially in terms of human capital. Many highly skilled Indians are choosing to pursue permanent residency in countries like the United States, Canada, Australia, and various European nations, leading to a significant brain drain.

However, the potential benefits of dual citizenship for Indians looking to explore opportunities abroad are significant. It could provide greater flexibility for those seeking to work, study, or settle in other countries while maintaining strong ties to their homeland.

This demographic shift raises an important question: Is India inadvertently losing some of its best and brightest minds due to its strict citizenship policies? The answer, unfortunately, seems to be yes. By not offering the option of dual citizenship, India risks weakening its ties with accomplished individuals who could contribute significantly to the country's growth and development.

It's time for India to seriously consider implementing dual citizenship, particularly for prominent Indians who have established themselves in other countries. This could include successful professionals, entrepreneurs, scientists, and artists who have made a mark on the global stage. By allowing these individuals to maintain their Indian citizenship alongside their adopted country's, India could foster stronger connections and potentially benefit from their expertise and resources.

Dual citizenship could serve as a bridge, enabling talented Indians abroad to maintain a formal link with their homeland. This connection could facilitate knowledge transfer, investment, and cultural exchange, ultimately contributing to India's progress on various fronts.

While the implementation of dual citizenship would require careful consideration and robust safeguards, the potential benefits are substantial. It could help India tap into its vast pool of global talent, encourage more engagement from its diaspora, and potentially reverse some aspects of the brain drain phenomenon.

Rather than focusing solely on changing citizenship policies, India should prioritize addressing the root causes that drive its citizens to seek opportunities elsewhere. Improving infrastructure and enhancing facilities within the country should be at the forefront of these efforts.

By creating a more comfortable and appealing environment, India can encourage its diaspora to return and contribute to the nation's growth. This approach goes beyond mere procedural changes and aims to make India a more attractive place for its citizens to live and work.

Ultimately, the goal should be to create conditions that not only retain talent but also entice those who have left to return. By focusing on comprehensive development, India can address the dual citizenship issue while simultaneously enhancing the quality of life for all its citizens.

As India continues to emerge as a global power, it's crucial to adapt policies that align with this new reality. Embracing dual citizenship could be a strategic move, allowing India to maintain its connections with its talented citizens worldwide and harness their potential for the nation's growth and development.

-KRISHNAKUMAR T N



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# The Distractions of Social Media and Their Side Effects

By Kulmohan Kaur



**L**n today's world, social media has become an integral part of our everyday routine. Whether it's browsing Instagram, messaging on WhatsApp, or reacting to posts on Facebook, we often find ourselves constantly connected. While these platforms offer unparalleled convenience and connection, there's a downside too. Social media tends to capture our attention in numerous ways, pulling us away from real-life engagements. And unfortunately, these distractions aren't without consequences.

Let's explore how social media is affecting our mental health, productivity, and relationships, as well as some strategies to reduce these distractions.

## Why Can't We Resist Social Media?

Have you ever found yourself reaching for your phone almost without thinking? That's because social media platforms are cleverly designed to keep you engaged for as long as possible. Features like notifications, likes, and infinite scrolling create a loop that's hard to break. Every time you get a notification or someone interacts with your post, your brain releases a feel-good chemical, dopamine. It's that little rush that makes you want to check again and again.

Then there's the fear of missing out—commonly called FOMO. We worry about not being in the loop when it comes to the latest trends, events, or what our friends are up to. This constant drive to stay updated makes it easy to lose track of time while scrolling.

## How It Impacts Mental Health

Now, let's talk about how social media can creep into our minds and affect our mental well-being. Many people don't realize that spending too much time on these platforms can lead to feelings of anxiety, low self-worth, or even depression.

### 1. Endless Comparisons:

On social media, you're often seeing a curated version of people's lives—just the highlights, the best moments. When you compare that to your everyday life, it's easy to feel like you're falling short. Constantly seeing these "perfect" lives can make you feel less confident and anxious about your own accomplishments.

### 2. Sleep Disruption:

Late-night scrolling has become a habit for many of us. However, that blue light from your phone disrupts your sleep patterns, making it harder to fall asleep. Over time, poor sleep quality can lead to irritability, stress, and even worsen your mental health.

### 3. FOMO Strikes Again:

When you see others hanging out, going on trips, or attending events that you weren't part of, the fear of missing out kicks in. This pressure to stay involved and constantly in the know can lead to feelings of isolation or anxiety.

## A Hit to Productivity

Social media is also a major culprit when it comes to reduced productivity. Whether you're at work, studying, or trying to focus on a project, a quick glance at your phone can easily spiral into a long distraction.

### 1. Interruptions Break Focus:

Every ping and notification takes your attention away from what you're doing. Even if you just check your phone for a second, it breaks your focus. Studies show that once interrupted, it can take over 20 minutes to regain full concentration.

### 2. The Myth of Multitasking:

Many of us believe we can juggle work and social media without a hitch. But research proves that switching between tasks actually makes us less efficient. You end up doing both things poorly because your brain is constantly shifting gears.

### 3. Procrastination's Best Friend:

Ever noticed that when you're avoiding something difficult, you turn to social media? It's a quick escape, but it often turns into hours wasted. Procrastination becomes easier when you have an endless stream of entertainment just a tap away.

## The Strain on Personal Relationships

Though social media is meant to connect us, it can sometimes create distance in real-life relationships. When you're more focused on your screen than the people around you, those relationships can suffer.

### 1. Less Meaningful Conversations:

Have you noticed that when friends or family gather, everyone's often looking at their phones? While social media connects us to others, it can disconnect us from those right in front of us. Over time, this habit weakens our relationships as we miss out on real conversations and bonding moments.

### 2. Jealousy and Tension:

Social media can also bring up feelings of jealousy in relationships. For example, seeing your partner interact with others online, liking posts or commenting, can sometimes stir unnecessary insecurity and lead to misunderstandings.

### 3. Unrealistic Expectations:

Seeing other people's seemingly "perfect" relationships or lifestyles online can create unrealistic expectations in our own lives. We might feel our relationships or achievements are falling short, which can cause dissatisfaction and even strain real-life connections.

## Shrinking Attention Spans and Memory Problems

The constant flow of short, fast content on platforms like TikTok and Instagram can also affect how well we focus. As we get used to quick

bits of entertainment, our ability to concentrate on longer, more complex tasks diminishes.

### 1. Attention Span Shrinks:

Because social media offers quick dopamine hits, we get used to rapid consumption of content. This rewires our brains to prefer short bursts of information, making it harder to sit through a book or a long article.

### 2. Memory Takes a Hit:

When we quickly scroll through vast amounts of information without engaging deeply, we tend to forget most of it. This weakens our ability to retain information in other areas of life as well.

## How to Take Control of Social Media Distractions

The good news is, while social media has its downsides, we don't have to let it control our lives. Here are some ways to reduce its distracting effects:

### 1. Set Time Limits:

Be mindful of how much time you spend online. Set daily limits or use built-in app tracking tools on your phone to reduce your time on social media. Even cutting back by 30 minutes can make a big difference.

### 2. Use Social Media Mindfully:

Before opening an app, ask yourself why you're doing it. Are you just bored, or is there a real reason to check it? Being mindful can help you avoid mindless scrolling and make your social media use more intentional.

### 3. Turn Off Non-Essential Notifications:

Reducing the number of notifications can dramatically cut down on distractions. You don't need to know about every like or comment instantly. This helps you stay more focused on the task at hand.

### 4. Take Breaks:

Digital detoxes, even for just a few hours a day, can be incredibly refreshing. Spend that time doing something offline, like reading, going for a walk, or spending quality time with loved ones.

## Final Thoughts

Social media, when used wisely, can enhance our lives in many ways. But without boundaries, it can also become a source of distraction and stress. By setting limits, practicing mindful usage, and taking breaks, we can regain control and enjoy the benefits without letting social media take over our lives. Remember, life's best moments often happen offline.

- KULMOHAN KAUR



# Ways To Overcome Your Greatest Fear: A Guide



By Selvan Durairaj

**W**hat do you fear the most?

Imagine the possibilities that would unfold if you could finally conquer that fear, leaving it behind for good.

In this article, I'm excited to share with you five powerful tactics that will empower you to overcome any fears that may be holding you back. Heights, spiders, tight spaces, and oddly-shaped clouds—these are the things that can send shivers down your spine and haunt your dreams.

**These five strategies are timeless and effective.**

**All set for those five strategies?** Let's examine them.

## 1. EXPOSURE THERAPY

At the heart of confronting any fear lies a fascinating concept from psychology called exposure therapy.

Exposure therapy is precisely what the name implies. Imagine facing something that sends shivers down your spine. You start by dipping your toes in, experiencing it in tiny increments. As you build your confidence, you dive deeper, gradually increasing your exposure. Before long, what once frightened you becomes normal, and you become desensitised to it.

If heights make you uneasy, then beginning your journey at the summit of the Eiffel Tower might not be the best idea. Starting on a second-floor balcony is a great way to ease into the experience. Gradually working your way up will help you build confidence until you feel completely at ease standing at the top of the building.

Exposure therapy is effective due to the way our minds naturally form associations. Many of us find that our deepest fears often stem from past traumatic events or a series of experiences that have shaped us.

Among my two readers who harbour a fear of driving, one experienced a car accident in her youth, while the other has absorbed her father's anxious belief that driving too fast would lead to her demise.

Since then, these associations have held sway over both men. Exposure therapy allows us to reframe our fears by connecting them with more positive and constructive beliefs.

Surviving a fall from a second-floor balcony proves that height doesn't always spell disaster. For my two readers, I decided on a leisurely drive through a retirement community, aiming to soften their connection between driving and terrifying accidents.

However, this is where we encounter an issue with exposure therapy; they remained fearful even when going 20 miles per hour.

Exposure therapy can be a powerful tool for reshaping our relationship with fear. However, it's important to acknowledge that this process can be quite daunting. By facing the fears we've long avoided, we inevitably encounter stress and anxiety, making the journey both challenging and transformative.

Some individuals find that incorporating visualisation techniques can make exposure therapy feel more approachable. It's common for

psychologists to help their patients visualise their greatest fears and develop mental strategies to confront them.

Some individuals take it a step further by crafting virtual reality simulations of the daunting activity, allowing them to mentally gear up for the actual experience.

*A least explored method is my next strategy: orthogonal exposure.*

## 2. ORTHOGONAL EXPOSURE

Orthogonal exposure is all about taking a step back from the overwhelming task at hand and engaging in an activity that, while different, is still closely related. It's a refreshing way to recharge your mind and gain new perspectives.

It's fascinating how this can resonate deeply with people's fears. A friend shared an inspiring story about how he conquered his fear of heights. He took the plunge by learning to ski, standing confidently at the edge of a steep slope and gazing down the mountain. It was a transformative experience for him, turning fear into exhilaration.

When we engage in activities that are connected yet distinct from our actual fears, we open up new avenues for forming positive associations and boosting our self-confidence.

*Take a moment to reflect on a fear that you hold close. What do you think would be your initial step in exposure therapy? When it comes to confronting your fear, what might orthogonal exposure entail?*

## 3. ELEVATION TRAINING

Eliud Kipchoge stands out as the greatest marathon runner in history. Throughout his impressive 20-year career, he has achieved an astonishing victory rate, winning more than 70% of the races he has participated in.

Notably, he stands out as the only person to have completed a marathon in under two hours.

Kipchoge's training stands out for its unique setting—he trains in the breathtaking mountains of Western Kenya, reaching an impressive altitude of 8,000 feet above sea level.

This altitude can be downright debilitating for folks like us. While we would find ourselves breathless after just a few laps, Kipchoge views this as just another day at the office. He effortlessly outshines his rivals upon returning to sea level in vibrant cities like Berlin, London, and Tokyo.

Altitude training is a well-known concept in the sports world, and interestingly, it can also be applied to overcoming fears.

When you confront an activity that intimidates you and then push its boundaries by increasing its difficulty or complexity, you'll find that going back to the original task feels significantly easier in comparison. It's a fascinating way to build confidence and resilience!

*At least, that's the idea.*

Fear can be quite a complex emotion. Facing fear exists in a unique balance, much like the Goldilocks zone. When the task at hand seems too simple, you're unlikely to see any advancement. When an activity seems overwhelmingly difficult,

it's easy to feel a surge of panic, which can lead to an increase in fear and anxiety. It's important to recognise this cycle and find ways to manage it.

The aim here is to discover something that sits right at the edge of possibility, perfectly balanced in that sweet spot. It strikes a perfect balance—challenging enough to keep you engaged, yet accessible enough to not feel overwhelming.

I brought the two guys to the racetrack and rented some of the quickest streetcars available. Imagine the thrill of pushing the limits and reaching speeds over 120 miles per hour—more than double what most of us experience on the highway. It's a true test of speed and adrenaline! And one of them truly made it happen.

Additionally, he mentioned that he enjoyed the experience.

## 4. INFUSE SOME FUN

Will Smith once shared a powerful insight:

**“The best things in life are on the other side of our fears.”**

-WILL SMITH

When fear looms large, remember that immense joy is often just beyond it, waiting to be discovered. This brings up a crucial point for you and any fears you may be facing: What are some ways to turn it into a fun experience? Experiencing joy in activities that once filled you with fear is a transformative moment. It's in those instances that you start to dismantle the fears that have haunted you for so long.

Do you feel a bit anxious about dating? So, how can you add some excitement to it? How about transforming it into a fun little challenge for yourself? How about planning a fun double date with a friend you really enjoy hanging out with? It could be a great way to mix things up and create some memorable moments together!

Do you feel uncertain about your body image, and are you hesitant to step into the gym? What are some ways to add a little excitement to the mix? Is it possible to challenge yourself by placing bets on the amount of weight you can lift? Opt for a workout that allows you to express yourself freely and comfortably. Why not take the plunge and sign up for a pole dancing class?

Revisit the fear you've been dealing with.

1. What types of altitude training can you explore?
2. How can you turn the entire experience into something enjoyable?

## 5. THE JOURNEY OF IDENTITY FORMATION

At this stage, we delve into the fifth and most profound strategy for overcoming fear—identity formation. Previously, I touched on the idea that our minds function as incredible association machines. The culmination of all those connections ultimately shapes an individual's identity. Expressions such as **“I am a writer,”** **“I enjoy long hikes,”** and **“I have a fear of driving”** all stem from the connections we make.





Your natural tendency is to want to repeat something that makes you happy. It's interesting how certain experiences can shape our perceptions. When we develop negative associations with something, it often leads us to steer clear of it time and again.

Your identity begins to take shape through the activities you engage in on a regular basis and those you choose to avoid.

My two friends' lack of driving skills partially shaped their identities before spending the weekend with me.

I provided them with an experience that would transform the way they see things. I arranged for a sports car for each of them to cruise down the city and its outskirts.

As we took turns, the atmosphere buzzed with excitement. People waved enthusiastically, snapped pictures, and called out to us, creating a lively scene all around. The very thing that had once loomed over them, casting a shadow of intimidation throughout their lives, was now transforming into a source of social reward and validation.

They can no longer claim, "I've never enjoyed driving," because now they have experienced it.

They will never be able to claim, "I have no good memories in a car," because they certainly do.

They can no longer claim, "I've never been on a road trip," since I opted not to purchase return tickets for our weekend in Las Vegas. In Los Angeles, driving is the only way to make your way back home.

And they certainly did.

The journey began as the two men left the city outskirts, their excitement palpable as they set their sights on the highway. They traversed many miles on state highways, navigating through quaint towns, majestic mountains, busy motorways, and heavy traffic. They switched off driving, enjoyed some breaks along the way, and I never once had to take the wheel myself.

Every fear can be overcome. Choosing wisely, staying persistent, and employing a bit of strategy can make all the difference.

However, I haven't yet shared with you what might be the most critical point...

**Bonus: Team Up with a Friend!**

*That approach is known as friendship.*

It seems my two friends found companionship in one another. They supported and held each other accountable, while I kept them on track.

An ally is the best tool for overcoming fear. An ally is someone who can help you confront your most dreaded challenges. Who will be there to support you when you begin to stumble? Who is there to offer support when you're looking for that little boost?

The commitment that emerges from facing your fears alongside a friend is often overlooked.

Two of my friends decided to make a commitment to one another. Neither of them wanted to be the one to walk away. By being there for one another, they fuelled each other's motivation.

*There's no such thing as a half-hearted fear. It's time to fully commit.*

Establishing personal stakes and consequences is essential for growth. Surrounding yourself with allies and support networks can provide the accountability you need to stay on track.

Next, you begin to increase your exposure step by step. Take some time to elevate your mindset and celebrate every little win along the way.

This past weekend with the two friends turned out to be a real success, and while the road trip home was definitely a highlight, it wasn't the only reason for the triumph. We achieved something remarkable, and it was all thanks to our teamwork. We crafted joyful moments together and revealed the endless possibilities that lay ahead.

*Fostering those positive connections is truly important. Creating unforgettable moments. Transforming the boundaries of possibility.*

**- SELVAN DURAIRAJ**



# DRY TIPPING: THE NEW TREND ON THE SPRING BREAK CARDS



By Kavya Patel

**“Dry tipping”** is a travel trend where people skip the alcohol-focused activities and choose non-alcoholic drinks while enjoying their vacations. There are a few reasons people might choose dry tipping. It can be about wellness, enhancing both emotional and physical health, feeling like they've had enough to drink, or even following religious beliefs.

Some travellers might go for non-alcoholic beer or wine so they can savour the flavour of their favourite drinks without any of the downsides. Mocktails are definitely a big hit in this trend. Is Spring Break becoming more and more like "dry tripping"? *There's a new trend happening! More Gen Zers are looking to try "dry tripping" this spring break. And nope, it's not about psychedelics.*

Satish Patel hits up bars with his friends for three nights straight while he's on holiday. "There's no hangover, so we can stay out at the bars as late as we want," said the 24-year-old from New Jersey. Just like a lot of Gen Z travellers, he skips the alcohol while on the road, and even his friends who enjoy a drink respect his decisions. "He mentioned that they end up not drinking as much," he added.

For a long time, a lot of folks have centred their holidays around having fun and enjoying the nightlife. Therefore, the practice of "dry tripping," or travelling without alcohol, is on the verge of gaining popularity and revolutionising our understanding of travel.

"I'm not trying to get everyone around me to stop drinking because I know that's just not realistic," says 26-year-old Anuradha Kapur, a healthcare professional. Every person has their own unique relationship with alcohol. "But it's really rewarding for me," she added. "I am capable of thoroughly enjoying myself in a stunning location without the need for alcohol."

## Making the most of vacation

It seems like younger generations today aren't as into alcohol as those who came before them. Interestingly, over half of American legal drinking-aged Gen Zs—about 54%—haven't touched alcohol in the last six months, as reported by International Wine and Spirit Research (IWSR).

When it comes to travel, you know, Gen Zs and even Millennials often find dry tripping to be a pretty natural and appealing choice. When you think about it, skipping alcohol on your vacation can really pay off in a bunch of ways—for your body, your mood, and even your wallet. Being sober means you'll probably sleep better, making those early mornings feel a lot easier. Additionally, you'll find it easier to join in on enjoyable activities, and eating out won't break the bank. *"Travelling without alcohol means no hangovers, and I think that's something we can all agree on," says Kanika Suri.*

Travelling can really wear you out, you know? "From long-distance drives to the dreaded jet lag," Suri points out—and let's be honest, drinking can definitely make it worse. Suri mentioned that if you take alcohol out of the picture, you'll naturally start to feel better. She mentioned that with more people becoming health-conscious and social norms shifting, dry tripping is not just altering travel habits but also influencing dating and how folks attend social gatherings like weddings.

She mentioned that, besides the physical perks, there are also some mental benefits to giving up alcohol. Suri mentioned that since alcohol is a depressant, people tend to have a better time on their holiday without it. "According to the National Institute of Health, the more alcohol someone drinks and the more often they drink it, the higher the chances are that they might experience temporary anxiety and depressive symptoms."

Just like how hotel gyms attract people looking to stay fit while away from home, travellers are really focused on keeping their alcohol intake low as they explore new places. Hey there! Meet Rishabh Gupta, your go-to wellness travel advisor and hospitality consultant. Gupta mentioned that this change really shakes up our usual "five-o'clock-somewhere" vibe when it comes to holidays. He also noted that "sober curiosity" and alcohol alternatives are more than just passing trends. "They're not going anywhere," he said. According to Gupta, social media is really helping more people talk about and accept it. He pointed out that Instagram is a place where people are open and honest about their adventures. He mentioned that the way we think about self-care and mental health is also playing a role in this change. "It seems like folks are beginning to see that drinking alcohol might be causing more harm than good," he mentioned.

## Businesses are starting to get it.

Airlines and hotels are making some cool changes, adding non-alcoholic mocktails and beer options to their menus. When businesses start to offer non-alcoholic options, it makes booze-free travel a lot easier for everyone. "Gen Z is drinking less compared to previous generations, so places like hotels, bars, and restaurants are really tuning in to what they want," Gupta mentioned.

Delta, JetBlue, and Alaska Airlines are all about those non-alcoholic options, bringing you mocktails and non-alcoholic beer whether you're in the air or relaxing in their lounges. Delta passengers can enjoy some fun mocktails, such as the "Citrus Fizz" or the "Pomegranate Lemon Cooler." Plus, Alaska Airlines has got you covered with Best Day Brewing, a craft non-alcoholic beer available on every flight. JetBlue also serves Athletic Brewing non-alcoholic beer on all of its domestic flights!

Gupta mentioned that cruises are coming up soon. Virgin Voyages has updated its mocktail menu, with the goal of being "the best cruise line for non-drinkers." Disney Cruise Line is getting into the mocktail game by partnering with Free Spirits, a non-alcoholic cocktail company. Hotels are also getting on board. Hotels are serving up some tasty mocktails, adaptogen drinks, teas, and serotonin sodas.

Gupta mentioned that Hilton has some excellent mocktails made with Lyre's non-alcoholic spirits, and Marriott has also stepped up by adding non-alcoholic drink options to its lounges and bars. He mentioned that hotel beverage directors truly understand the changes taking place. They offer non-alcoholic cocktails on both the bar and restaurant menus, and the hotel's beverage director needs to stay sober.

## The UK is really leading the way.

Gupta mentioned that when you combine Gen Z's disinterest in drinking with their tendency to spend on experiences instead of material goods, it creates a solid market for non-alcoholic choices in travel.

He mentioned that the UK is really honing in on this change, with travel agencies like We Love Lucid popping up, all geared towards alcohol-free tourism.

*"The US is definitely getting on board, but the UK is where Dry January began, and a lot of nonalcoholic drinks have popped up," he said.*

Dr. Neerav Bansal suggests that leaving alcohol behind during a vacation can really enhance the experience, making it more meaningful and fulfilling. He mentioned that both preclinical and clinical studies indicate that alcohol doesn't really offer any benefits for the body.

- KAVYA PATEL



# Life In The Community And The Value Of Living

By WFY Bureau

## Exploring the joys of community living

With the cost of living on the rise and loneliness emerging as a pressing global issue, the allure of intentional communities is capturing the hearts and minds of many. Join us as we connect with co-living members to delve into the advantages and challenges of this modern lifestyle choice.

Embracing life with new faces? Is there anything more frustrating than constantly finding the bathroom occupied, dishes piling up in the kitchen, and the sound of loud music seeping through the walls when all you crave is a peaceful night's sleep? It's the little things that can really disrupt our daily rhythm.

Perhaps we should explore a different path. With housing and rental prices soaring and the World Health Organisation highlighting loneliness as a pressing global health issue, communal living is stepping into the spotlight. More and more, we're seeing a rise in community-led living arrangements that foster connection and support.

Creating a shared living space with others can bring more benefits than drawbacks.

### Is society truly prepared for what lies ahead?

Yamuna Singh, is a vibrant 30-year-old food writer calling the bustling city of London her home. In 2020, after a transformative breakup, she found herself on the lookout for a fresh start. While scrolling through social media, she stumbled upon a charming warehouse—an old industrial gem—that had just become available. In the vibrant neighbourhood of Hackney Wick, Singh reveals that there are nearly 100 unique warehouse communities, each contributing to the area's eclectic charm. Yet the one she inhabits stands apart from the rest. "Our setup has a unique twist," she shares.

We make it a priority to hold our house meetings regularly, ensuring that any concerns about chores are addressed promptly, preventing any negativity from building up. Yamuna Singh shares a vibrant home with six other individuals, all in their late 20s and early 30s, creating a dynamic living environment filled with youthful energy and camaraderie. Each week, they contribute £25 into a communal bank account, ensuring that the essentials for household needs, from cooking supplies to cleaning products, are well taken care of, along with delightful dinners for everyone. Each evening, a designated chef takes charge in the kitchen.

In the lively atmosphere of a shared group chat, friends effortlessly coordinate their dinner plans, confirming their attendance, requesting a late plate to savour upon their return, or announcing the arrival of a special guest. It's all about connection and making sure everyone feels included in the evening's festivities.

In every home, there are those essential tasks that keep everything running smoothly, and then there are the gatherings that bring everyone together to discuss the heart of the household. "Finding a half-hour window when everyone can gather often requires several WhatsApp polls," Singh shares. "We make an effort to hold these meetings regularly, ensuring that if anyone has concerns about their chores or any topics they wish to discuss, they can do so openly before any issues arise."

One of the greatest joys of communal living, she shares, is the constant presence of others around you. The housemates share a bond that resembles a close-knit family. "I've never experienced those feelings towards my housemates in the past." In the vibrant city of London, she notes, the housing crisis presents quite the challenge when it comes to finding a place to call home. "Navigating life here is becoming quite the challenge. It feels as though we've managed to slip through a small crack in the system, finding our way to something better."

Of course, there are some downsides to consider as well. Singh is dedicated to carving out those precious moments for herself amidst her busy schedule. "It's hard for me to pull myself away from a lively gathering around a big table," she shares. Even if you choose to skip the festivities, the buzz of celebration will still find its way to you. The home features two showers and two toilets, allowing housemates to share these amenities with ease. However, the single washing machine leaves a bit to be desired.

Residents of the communal warehouse often find themselves calling it home for several years, embracing the unique lifestyle it offers. Some communal living spaces are designed for a more permanent lifestyle, offering a sense of belonging and community that feels like home. At 36, Henna Zutshi embraces a vibrant life alongside her husband and their adorable three-year-old daughter, all nestled within a charming co-house community in the picturesque city of Madison, Wisconsin.

My husband was the one who purchased our very first home together. "He began to take notice after we had been together for about eight months," Zutshi shares. "I had heard of co-housing before, and I thought to myself, this is really intriguing." Staying together might just lead to a delightful connection that I could truly embrace. And just like that, everything has beautifully aligned for us.

Discover the charm of the OYM co-housing estate, featuring two stylish apartment blocks complemented by a selection of inviting single-family homes. Every unit boasts its own cosy bedroom, private bathroom, and fully equipped kitchen, perfect for a comfortable living experience. This charming community is home to approximately 100 residents, showcasing a delightful mix of families with children and vibrant single seniors, each contributing to the unique tapestry of life here. "In essence, our co-house operates as a condominium association—that's the legal framework that defines it," Zutshi shares. "Owning our home comes with its perks, but we also embrace the monthly condo fee that contributes to the vibrant community spaces we enjoy and provides essential insurance coverage for our property."

Embrace the art of co-living with these essential tips for a harmonious shared space. First, establish a routine of house meetings to openly discuss any concerns that may arise.

Remember, a successful co-living experience requires everyone to pitch in, so be ready to roll up your sleeves and contribute. Lastly, don't forget the importance of personal space; carve out some time for yourself away from your housemates to recharge and maintain balance.

uncertainty and apprehension to determine whether it is time to depart and embark on a new journey or whether there are viable alternatives to preserving the relationship.

Every few weeks, residents come together to enjoy delightful meals, creating a sense of community. The calendar is also sprinkled with social events, including a charming monthly sing-along and lively parties that bring everyone closer. Every two weeks, members gather for an engaging meeting, complemented by board and committee sessions that keep the momentum going. "I'm fully immersed in my career," Zutshi shares. "It seems there's a vibrant community of retirees engaging in various activities together, and I can't help but feel like I'm missing out on all the delightful regular happenings they share." Every resident is encouraged to dedicate four hours of their time each month to contribute to our vibrant community.

"One of the things I truly cherish is the wonderful community of parents we have," Zutshi shares. "Embracing motherhood has allowed me to truly rely on the wisdom of fellow parents for guidance." After a long day at work, she cherishes the simple joy of stepping into her backyard, where her daughter can play with other kids, bringing a refreshing end to her day. Friends and company are always just a heartbeat away, ready to brighten your day.

Life isn't always a smooth journey. The co-house community recently gathered for an engaging meeting focused on participation. "So many of us who are deeply involved often sense that we are giving our all." "And yet, you notice some individuals who seem to be effortlessly gliding through life," Zutshi observes. "Yet, so much of the effort remains unseen." Her husband has faced some challenges after proposing fresh ideas, encountering a bit of pushback along the way.

Intentional communities are vibrant spaces where individuals come together with shared values and goals, creating a unique lifestyle that fosters connection and collaboration. These communities often prioritise sustainability, cooperation, and a sense of belonging, making them an appealing choice for those seeking a more meaningful way of living. Embracing the principles of communal.

In the Western world, communal living has blossomed into a vibrant tapestry of diverse setups, each emerging for its own unique reasons. Notably, in the UK, the COVID-19 pandemic sparked a newfound interest in these shared living arrangements, highlighting the appeal of community and connection during challenging times. Members of a thriving communal-living centre share how their unique arrangement is serving as a safeguard against the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis.

"It can be quite perplexing," shares Aradhya Patel, a member of the board for the community-living organisation Dine as One, who has a passion for "intentional communities"—spaces where, by academic standards, five or more unrelated individuals choose to live together harmoniously. In the world of co-housing, individuals enjoy the luxury of their own self-contained homes while also having access to inviting communal spaces. This vibrant community thrives on self-



management, creating a unique atmosphere. On the other hand, housing co-ops offer shared ownership, but they may lack the intentional community feel that many seek.

Explore the exciting and emerging world of co-living, a fresh approach to modern living that's capturing the attention of many. In this innovative space, a company has designed a building that features self-contained apartments and studios, complemented by inviting common areas. However, it's important to note that these spaces do not fall under the category of intentional communities. In today's UK, communes are a delightful rarity, offering a unique glimpse into a lifestyle that feels both nostalgic and refreshingly unconventional. What sets a commune apart from other community types is its unique approach to income sharing, fostering a sense of togetherness and collaboration among its members. Your income combines into a shared fund, allowing you to indulge in experiences and purchases as a collective.

Have you ever wondered about the dynamics of those cosy house shares, where residents become more like close friends or even family? It's a unique lifestyle that fosters deep connections and shared experiences. These groups can certainly be seen as intentional communities, albeit with a more organic and less structured vibe, thanks to their smaller membership.

Studies reveal that individuals residing in intentional communities experience a quality of life that rivals that of the happiest people in our society.

As the housing market faces increasing pressure, a growing number of individuals are embracing the charm and camaraderie of communal living. Many individuals are on a quest for a more eco-friendly lifestyle, driven by a desire to embrace sustainability. In our modern world, where family ties often stretch across vast distances from their hometown roots, the allure of social connection has never been more appealing. Research reveals that individuals residing in intentional communities enjoy a quality of life that rivals the happiest people in society.

Could this lifestyle be the perfect fit for everyone? "There are certainly some compromises," shares Singh. "Navigating the intricacies of community life can often feel like a daunting task. There are moments when things don't go as planned, leaving individuals feeling disheartened and frustrated."

Creating a new co-housing community can present its own unique set of challenges. Finding the perfect piece of land can be quite the challenge, especially with the financial risks involved and the cautious approach banks take when it comes to lending. In today's world, we often find ourselves navigating a framework filled with specific beliefs about what constitutes

a fulfilling life and an ideal home. "Communal living doesn't quite align with those preconceived notions," Singh shares. "In our modern world, there's a prevailing belief that privacy is a virtue, and that the act of ownership brings a sense of fulfilment." According to her, the idea of sharing your living space lacks that aspirational quality. "Envisioning the perfect home often conjures images of a spacious house that you can call your own."

In the vibrant city of London, Yamuna Singh recently captivated her followers with two Instagram videos showcasing her chic living setup. The response was overwhelming, with numerous admirers reaching out to enquire about the possibility of moving in! "I felt a wave of guilt wash over me as we decided not to welcome any new roommates," she shares. "There's an undeniable craving for more spaces that inspire and uplift, yet it often falls on us to curate those experiences ourselves."

- WFY BUREAU



# Revealing The World Of The Chatty And Friendly: Extrovert?

By Ridhima Kapoor



**I** am sociable, extroverted, and amiable. However, the term 'extrovert' does not resonate with me.

Forming friendships and engaging in communication brings me satisfaction; nonetheless, my candidness may serve as a superficial facade concealing uneasiness.

Approximately a decade ago, I completed the Big Five personality assessment, renowned for its candidness. I found it amusing to discover that I placed in the 91st percentile for neuroticism.

Upon sharing the ranking, my friend Sarah promptly replied, "Darling, I adore you, but that is not news."

My extroversion score was also below average. I achieved a ranking in the 97th percentile. It reminded me of high school, when my English instructor, who had a penchant for pop psychology, required our class to do a Myers-Briggs personality inventory exam. My scores were unclear in three of the four categories; nonetheless, I was indisputably an extrovert.

I have been a "people person" since before I could articulate words. Once I started speaking, I never stopped. Forming friendships and engaging in communication have consistently been among the most genuine pleasures of my existence. However, my candour was really a superficial facade concealing profound unease and dread. At times, the presence of others served as the sole diversion from the incessant turmoil in my mind.

I felt justified in identifying as an extrovert, despite not consistently aligning with others' perceptions of the term. I have consistently had to reconcile my worried disposition with my extroverted nature. Individuals who observed my humour at a gathering or my social interactions on the inaugural day of summer camp were perplexed when I experienced a panic attack. Individuals who mocked me for my numerous anxieties and neuroses were astonished when I effortlessly delivered a speech before an audience or remained composed during a crisis.

During the period I completed the Big Five test, introverts were experiencing a surge in popularity throughout pop culture. Susan Cain's 2012 publication, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*, which numerous individuals have characterised as "life-changing," achieved immediate bestseller status.

In *Quiet*, Cain fervently contends that introverts are misinterpreted and undervalued, drawing from her own experiences as well as those of numerous others. Cain substantiates her tales with numerous research indicating that an introverted disposition appears to be innate, and that many children who are sensitive to stimuli develop into quietly influential thinkers and artists. Cain asserts that introverts are frequently urged to alter their nature to conform to the "Extrovert Ideal," which she characterises as the pervasive view in Western society that the ideal individual is sociable, dominant, and at ease in the limelight.

*Quiet* assisted introverts in discovering their voices, and numerous individuals expressed their discontent towards people like me. Numerous publications criticised the annoyance and rudeness of extroverts. One of the most significant ironies of the social media era is that one of the most despised demographics consists of those who are sociable.

This, maybe predictably, induced a degree of anxiety in me. Did being an extrovert imply that I was noisy, annoying, intrusive, and inherently poor company? That there was no possibility for alteration on my part? I have accepted my extroverted nature, although being disdained for one's true self is never pleasant.

Cain may be correct that Western society frequently favours extroverts. A 2019 study conducted at the University of Toronto indicated that extroverts possess a "minor, enduring advantage" in professional settings. The psychiatric literature has a bias against introversion, with a longstanding history of employing "introversion" as a criterion for numerous mental illnesses, particularly personality disorders. In the 2013 edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, which proposes a novel framework for diagnosing and treating personality disorders, "extroversion" is regarded as an indicator of a healthy, normative personality.

Cain states that "the quintessential extrovert" favours action over reflection, risk-taking over caution, and assurance over doubt.

Extroversion and introversion appear to exist on a continuum, much like various aspects of life.

I believed that did not accurately represent me. I am beset by uncertainty and enjoy reflection. Engagement in risk-taking behaviour? I have no affinity for rollercoasters.

Critical reviews of the book assert that Cain categorises an excessive number of qualities as "introversion." I concur that introverts do not only possess traits such as sensitivity, risk aversion, or cerebral tendencies; I have observed these descriptors on my own academic evaluations, alongside "talks too much."

Extroversion and introversion appear to exist on a continuum, much like various aspects of life. What about "ambiverts," those who do not conform to either extreme? Recent research indicates that a significant portion of the population, potentially exceeding fifty percent, belongs to this third category. Certain experts contend that ambiverts, rather than extroverts, possess the most significant advantage in contemporary culture.

What is the definition of extroversion and introversion?

"It is the source of your energy."

I have encountered this specific description from acquaintances who expressed frustration with the popular cultural discourse about introversion and extroversion. They would assert that it was not a matter of being silent or boisterous. Those constituted stereotypes. Ultimately, introverts rejuvenate by engaging in solitary activities.

Extroverts rejuvenate by engaging with others.

A message from a sister or an embrace from a long-time acquaintance invigorates me. I journeyed solo for my birthday, and although I enjoyed exploring the area independently, I longed for companionship to discuss my experiences and observations.

However, it has required considerable time to arrive at those definitions. Carl Jung, the prominent psychologist and psychiatrist of the early 20th century, was the pioneer in delineating introversion and extroversion; yet, his classifications diverged significantly from contemporary interpretations.

In his book *Psychological Types*, Jung characterised introversion as "a shift of interest from the object to the subject, and one's own psychological practices." "The subject" was used to refer to oneself. Extroversion, or "extraversion," as he articulated, was defined as "a transfer of interest from subject to object."

Anastacia Favela, a therapist with a master's degree in Jungian studies from the University of Essex, states that "the object" can refer to other individuals as well as "situations and experiences." "He perceived the extrovert as an individual who engages with the external world as it beckons him to be, whereas the introvert attunes to their inner self."

This paradigm posits that introverts tend to exhibit independence, obstinacy, and nonconformity, whereas extroverts are more inclined to be followers, preoccupied with the perceptions of their peers.

Jung classified as an introvert and had a rather patronising view of extroverts in *Psychological Types*: "If he is not excessively meddlesome, overly assertive, or superficial, he can be a notably beneficial member of the community." The discussion on "irritating extroverts" appears to be over a century old.

Jung's contributions established the groundwork for another renowned personality model. Merve Emre's book *The Personality Brokers* details how magazine columnist Katharine Cooks Briggs authored an article titled *Meet Yourself* in 1926, which served as a precursor to personality testing based on *Psychological Types*. Briggs, alongside her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers, developed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) test.

The MBTI facilitated the dissemination of the concepts of "introversion" and "extroversion" to a broader audience. It is commonly considered pseudoscientific; yet, psychologists Randy Stein and Alexander B. Swan have characterised it as "existing in a parallel universe to social and personality psychology." Although Jung appreciated his interactions with Briggs, he likely disagreed with her and her supporters' interpretation of his terminology. In a subsequent interview, he expressed dissatisfaction with his life's work, referred to as *The Houston Films*, stating that "people... seize upon a word, and then everything is organised to conform to that word." Pure extraversion and pure introversion do not exist. They merely serve as phrases to denote a specific inclination or tendency.

Jung and Briggs were not the final authorities on the subject. Numerous specialists assert that in the early 20th century, certain American and British psychologists dismissed the techniques of Freud and Jung in favour of more empirical approaches.

In the 1940s, British-American psychologist Raymond Cattell employed statistical analysis to categorise 16 personality qualities, one of which he designated as "extraversion." Ten years later, Hans Eysenck, a German-British psychologist, deduced from brain wave investigations that extroverts generally exhibited low arousal levels, necessitating external stimulation,



whereas introverts, possessing high arousal levels, did not require such stimulation. Subsequent to Eysenck, the Five Factor Model of Personality, commonly referred to as the Big Five, emerged. The Big Five Personality Inventory assesses individuals on openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism; it indicated that my neuroticism scores were exceedingly high. In this context, extraversion correlates with exuberance, vitality, and impulsiveness. The research conducted by Cattell and Eysenck has faced criticism for relying on personality evaluations and questionnaires, which are widely regarded as unreliable. The Big Five paradigm remains utilised in academia; however, it is contentious. Numerous academics have criticised the definition of its criteria, particularly regarding extroversion. Some research utilising the Big Five framework conflates the term "extroversion" with "positivity," which this study indicates may result in erroneous preconceptions that sociable individuals are less prone to depression or anxiety. Moreover, the ambiguous and evolving definitions of introversion and extroversion are compounded by the scarcity of foundational studies on personality that account for trauma, personal history, or cultural variances—an outcome that may be expected given that Cattell and Eysenck collaborated with white supremacists and endorsed eugenics. These studies also failed to consider disability and neurodivergence. Individuals with ADHD are more inclined to want external stimulation, irrespective of their tendency towards extroversion or introversion.

Thus, it is intricate. The modern interpretation of "the source of your energy" appears to be a diluted amalgamation of Jungian concepts and other studies from the United States and Britain. Certain characteristics can indeed be classified as "introversion" and "extroversion." However, these ideas are not as rigorously delineated as many presume. The introvert-extrovert dichotomy may not be as scientifically grounded as I previously believed. Almost everyone subscribes to beliefs lacking concrete evidence, particularly when such beliefs serve their interests. Many find it beneficial to identify as an introvert. Possessing extroverted traits has proven advantageous in numerous respects. Did the label itself provide assistance?

"The concept of 'introversion and extroversion' is merely a model," asserts Flux, who subscribes to statistician George Box's maxim: "All models are [false], some models are useful." The key question may be how we utilise this paradigm. For example, to what extent would a modern therapist consider a client's introversion or extroversion? What is the answer? Insufficient quantity. "When a client identifies as an 'introvert' or an "

extrovert,'" states Jane Brundy, a professional mental health counsellor in Ohio. "I perceive that as insight into their self-perception and their desired external perception." She elucidates that identifying with such titles can facilitate our self-explanation to others. She asserts, "I consistently perceive that individuals regard themselves as awkward when they are merely exhibiting human behaviour."

I have been aware for years that my anxiety presents itself in a distinctly extroverted manner. In moments of anxiety, I did not retreat. I externalised my anxiousness by monopolising conversations, impulsively speaking, and excessively disclosing personal information. I readily characterise myself as an "anxious extrovert." The possession of a label enabled me to articulate my identity. Katherine Briggs stated in *The Personality Brokers*, "Each individual is born either an extrovert or an introvert and retains this disposition throughout their life." Numerous studies on twins have demonstrated a genetic correlation to temperament, suggesting that this assertion is likely partially accurate.

Research indicates that features can evolve over time, and individuals may exhibit varying degrees of introversion depending on certain circumstances. Some individuals report an increase in introversion following the outbreak. During my residence in urban areas of the United States, I became increasingly reserved and somewhat timid; the cacophony and vibrancy of city life encouraged a yearning for seclusion and apprehension regarding interactions with others. During my temporary relocation to Canada, I discovered a renewed inclination to smile at strangers and engage in conversation with everyone who was willing to converse with me. Upon initiating my research on introversion and extroversion, I classified myself as a "natural extrovert." I now question the veracity of the statement. Even if the statement is true, how does it benefit me? It may be more appropriate for me to define myself as "extroverted" rather than "an extrovert." It constitutes but one aspect of my character.

*I may be somewhat less worried than I was a decade ago. Last month, I reattempted a Big Five personality assessment. My extroversion score remains unchanged; I continue to rank in the high 90s. I was pleasantly surprised to discover that I am currently in the 71st percentile for neuroticism. That is indeed news.*

- RIDHIMA KAPOOR



# International Day of Nonviolence: Gandhi's

## Legacy and the Call for Global Ceasefires



By Tushar Unadkat

On October 2nd, the world observes the International Day of Nonviolence, a day chosen to commemorate the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, whose legacy of peaceful resistance transformed the course of history. Designated by the United Nations in 2007, this day serves as a reminder of the immense power of nonviolence and its potential to resolve conflicts, uphold justice, and create lasting peace. Gandhi's philosophy, rooted in ahimsa (nonviolence) and satyagraha (truth force), continues to resonate in a world plagued by war and violence.

As we reflect on Gandhi's teachings today, the global landscape reminds us how urgently these principles are needed. From Europe to the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, multiple conflicts are ravaging communities, displacing millions, and perpetuating cycles of violence. On this day of nonviolence, we must urgently and passionately call for immediate ceasefires, as every moment of delay adds to the suffering, and renew our commitment to resolving disputes through dialogue, diplomacy, and peaceful action.

### The Global Need for Ceasefires

As we mark the International Day of Nonviolence, we must focus on the conflicts currently inflicting untold human suffering. The following seven global warfare situations underscore the urgent need for ceasefires, reminding us of Gandhi's enduring message that nonviolence is the only path to true and lasting peace.

#### The Ukraine Conflict

The war in Ukraine, ignited by Russia's invasion in 2022, has devastated the country and created one of Europe's most significant humanitarian crises. The ongoing conflict has killed thousands, displaced millions, and reduced critical infrastructure to rubble. As the conflict intensifies, it is the responsibility of the international community to push for a ceasefire and negotiate peace. Gandhi's conviction about nonviolence is a potent reminder that dialogue, diplomacy, and non-violent resistance are the only paths to ending suffering and fostering rebuilding.

#### Yemen Civil War

Since 2014, a brutal civil war has trapped Yemen, causing immense suffering for civilians. Millions face famine, disease, and death as ceasefires have repeatedly failed to bring about lasting peace. Gandhi's teachings emphasize the importance of breaking the cycle of violence and achieving lasting peace through continuous, non-violent actions. International actors must prioritize humanitarian aid, mediate peace talks, and push for a ceasefire to save Yemen's most vulnerable populations.

#### Israel-Palestine Conflict

The Israel-Palestine conflict has spanned decades, with intermittent violence causing devastation on both sides. The repeated flare-ups of hostilities, particularly in Gaza, underscore the need for a durable ceasefire and peaceful negotiations. Gandhi's vision of non-violent resistance provides a model for how both Israelis and Palestinians might seek justice and coexistence without resorting to further bloodshed. True peace will require both sides to embrace dialogue and empathy rather than continued violence.

#### Ethiopia's Tigray Conflict

Ethiopia's Tigray region has been gripped by conflict since 2020, with government forces clashing with the Tigray People's Liberation

Front (TPLF). Sporadic violence continues despite reaching some ceasefire agreements, and the humanitarian crisis worsens. Gandhi's philosophy reminds us that lasting peace requires addressing the root causes of conflict rather than relying on military force. The international community must support peace efforts in Ethiopia to prevent further escalation and stabilize the Horn of Africa.

#### Syria's Ongoing Civil War

The civil war in Syria, ongoing since 2011, remains a significant source of instability in the Middle East. Despite a reduction in large-scale military operations, sporadic violence continues, and the humanitarian crisis persists. The conflict has displaced millions and led to the widespread destruction of cities. Gandhi's message of nonviolence is particularly relevant here: no amount of military might bring true peace. A ceasefire and negotiations are the only way to rebuild a war-torn nation.

#### Sudan Conflict

In 2023, Sudan plunged into violent conflict between the Sudanese military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), leading to mass displacement and a deteriorating humanitarian situation. Efforts at peace have failed mainly, with the civilian population bearing the brunt of the violence. Gandhi's principle of ahimsa calls for an immediate ceasefire and a non-violent approach to resolving power struggles. Peaceful mediation between the warring factions is essential to prevent further chaos and stabilize Sudan.

#### Myanmar's Civil Conflict

Since the 2021 military coup, Myanmar has faced ongoing violence as ethnic armed groups and pro-democracy forces clash with the military junta. The conflict has resulted in widespread displacement and human rights abuses, with no clear path to peace in sight. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violent resistance provides a robust framework for the pro-democracy movement to push for change without resorting to armed struggle. International actors must go for a ceasefire and support Myanmar's transition to peace and democracy.

#### Nonviolence as the Path Forward

The persistent violence in these conflict zones is a stark reminder that war and destruction can never bring about true peace. Gandhi's legacy teaches us that the power of nonviolence lies in its ability to break the cycle of hatred, revenge, and oppression. Ceasefires are not just temporary pauses in fighting—they are the essential first step toward meaningful negotiations and the creation of a hopeful and optimistic vision of lasting peace.

As we commemorate the International Day of Nonviolence, we must recognize that nonviolence is not a passive strategy but an active and courageous form of resistance. In every Ukraine, Yemen, or Myanmar conflict, peace begins with recognizing our shared humanity and a commitment to resolving differences through dialogue, empathy, and understanding. This recognition should empower and motivate us to take action, as it is through these qualities that we can truly understand and address the root causes of conflicts.

#### Conclusion: Honoring Gandhi's Legacy in a Troubled World

Mahatma Gandhi's life and teachings serve as a beacon of hope in a world where violence is often the default response to conflict. Global leaders, activists, citizens, and international organizations are marking the International Day of Nonviolence, reminding us that ceasefires are more than temporary relief from violence—they are opportunities to pursue lasting peace.

Gandhi's legacy calls on us to reject violence in all forms and embrace the challenging but necessary work of building a more peaceful world. As we look to Ukraine, Yemen, Ethiopia, and other war-torn regions, let us honor Gandhi's vision by advocating for nonviolence, pushing for ceasefires, and committing to the complex but transformative process of peacebuilding.

- TUSHAR UNADKAT





FROM THE KITCHENS OF INDIA

# INJI PULI





# The Best From The Kitchens of India: Inji Puli.

**Inji Puli** is a traditional Kerala dish, often served as a side with rice. It is a delicious and tangy ginger pickle that combines the sharpness of ginger, the sweetness of jaggery, and the sourness from tamarind. It is a beloved dish among Malayalees, often accompanying festive meals or special occasions. Here's a detailed and authentic recipe for Inji Puli.

## INGREDIENTS

### For the Inji Puli:

- **Fresh Ginger:** 200 grams (about 1 cup), finely chopped
- **Tamarind:** 1 small lemon-sized ball (or about 2 tablespoons of tamarind paste)
- **Jaggery:** 100 grams (or about ½ cup, grated or chopped)
- **Mustard Seeds:** 1 teaspoon
- **Fenugreek Seeds:** ½ teaspoon
- **Dried Red Chilies:** 3-4 (adjust according to spice preference)
- **Turmeric Powder:** ½ teaspoon
- **Salt:** to taste
- **Oil:** 2 tablespoons (preferably coconut oil)
- **Curry Leaves:** A sprig (optional but recommended)

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Prepare the Tamarind Paste:

1. **Soak Tamarind:** Soak the tamarind in ½ cup warm water for about 10-15 minutes.
2. **Extract the Juice:** Mash it with your fingers, strain, and keep the tamarind water aside.

### Cook the Ginger:

1. **Heat Oil:** In a thick-bottomed pan, heat the coconut oil over medium heat.
2. **Tempering:** Once the oil is hot, add mustard seeds. Allow them to splutter, then add fenugreek seeds and dried red chilies. Sauté for a few seconds until the fenugreek turns golden brown.
3. **Add Curry Leaves:** If using, add the curry leaves now and sauté for a few more seconds to release their aroma.
4. **Sauté Ginger:** Add the finely chopped ginger and sauté on medium heat for about 5-7 minutes until it softens and releases its fragrance. Stir occasionally.

### Make the Sauce:

1. **Combine Tamarind and Spice:** Pour in the strained tamarind water and mix well. Then, add turmeric powder and salt. Allow this mixture to simmer for 2-3 minutes.
2. **Add Jaggery:** Add the jaggery and stir until it completely dissolves. Continue to cook the mixture for another 5-10 minutes until it thickens to a sauce-like consistency. You want it to be slightly thick but still pourable.
3. **Check Seasoning:** Taste and adjust salt or jaggery as needed. You want a balance of sweetness and tanginess.

### Final Touch:

**Let it Cool and then Store:** Remove the pan from heat and let it cool completely. Inji puli can be stored in a glass jar and kept refrigerated for several weeks.

### Serving Suggestions

- Serve Inji Puli as a side dish with steamed rice and other vegetables.
- It can also be used as a condiment with dosa or idli.
- Perfect for accompanying rice dishes like Kerala Sadya during festivals or special occasions.

### Tips

- **Adjusting Spice Levels:** If you prefer a spicier kick, you can add more dried red chilies during the tempering phase.
- **Storage:** If stored properly, Inji Puli can last for a month in the refrigerator due to the preservative nature of jaggery and tamarind.
- **Variations:** While the traditional version includes ginger, some variations may incorporate green chilies for added heat or different spices for unique flavours.

Enjoy your homemade **Inji Puli** – *a delightful and flavourful addition to any meal!*



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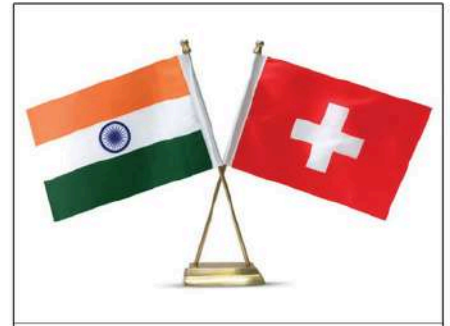


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# DELIVERANCE

Fewer by fewer thoughts leaving the once heavy life  
 Coming out of a circled loop breaking a flower shaped season  
 Saving a moment from the dawn for peace amidst of chaos  
 Mind struggles to empty the unsettling inner conflicts  
 Everything looks simple yet turns as an unresolved task  
 For reasons not known shadows cast a spell of past  
 From the dominions of error codes and sweep to challenge  
 Navigating the flow to a sanctum of prayers  
 Conscience calms the elements of annoying outer clusters  
 Gentle, the verse of the universe, unaffected by clamour heavy.  
 Yet there these pigments and splinters of snoops  
 Spattered around the atrium of earth  
 When this will be over the question is unresolved  
 Escapades or silence served not the sense of logic  
 There no flag to hold in hand to embellish the feel of freedom  
 May be a midnight dream it is of bloodsheds and escapades  
 Of dissonance and differences in terrains of pride  
 Purple the line of a verse blooms along the earthen landscape  
 Perhaps, a place where the soul balances the unresolved elements



- REMA PISHARODY



# REMINISCENCE

A journey begins, at times, under the wrong sign board,  
 A choice is inevitable in front of many paths,  
 Winding roads or long stretches to a far away land,  
 Incarnating several 'births' and 'deaths'.!  
 Listen to the cry in the wilderness  
 The feeble wailing of abandoned offsprings of virtues,  
 You left them in the midway,  
 Where ego stung you with venomous fangs,  
 They cling to enlighten you but in vain.  
 You loved none.. but you ...and became blind,  
 Blind to the extent that you shut your eyes  
 In broad day light,  
 Adament was your statement of darkness, The choice you owned deliberately,  
 As you failed to watch that the sun rose on the other side.!  
 Tired of walking vicy, you stared at the end of the road and halted,  
 When broad streches lay illuminated by wisdom.  
 Listen to the cry in the wilderness,  
 The feeble wailing of your brain child,  
 Incused you for a life time and beyond,  
 Reminiscent about the reality and brutal truth,  
 Destiny pulls lots and hand over the dreaded chit,  
 You may never know the inscriptions on the death warrant.!!



-BRIJI K T





By Kavya Patel

# Amazing Indian Film Is The UK's Oscar Entry This Year

**UK** has submitted a Hindi-language film featuring an Indian cast for the Oscars 2025, which is quite remarkable.

Directed by British-Indian filmmaker Sandhya Suri, this crime thriller explores the narrative of a newly widowed woman who finds herself entangled in the investigation surrounding the murder of a young girl.

The British Academy's entry of a Hindi-language film featuring an Indian cast into the Oscars' international feature film category has elicited responses, including from Indian parliamentarian Shashi Tharoor.

'Santosh' is a notable crime thriller directed by British-Indian filmmaker Sandhya Suri, who hails from England. The narrative centres on a recently widowed woman, portrayed by actress Shahana Goswami, who finds herself entangled in the inquiry surrounding the murder of a young girl.

The majority of the film's scenes were captured in and around Lucknow, India. It will be in competition with Kiran Rao's 'Laapataa Ladies', which represents India at the Oscars.

For a film to qualify as an international feature film at the Oscars, it must be a feature-length motion picture (exceeding 40 minutes) produced outside the United States and contain predominantly (over 50 percent) non-English dialogue. The film selected from the country must have its initial release in the country of origin.

Senior Congress leader and MP Shashi Tharoor described the UK's submission of a Hindi film set in India as "utterly astonishing" in a statement on 'X'.

Filmmakers have expressed their support for Suri, who is recognised for her earlier documentaries 'I for India' (2005) and 'Around India with a Movie Camera' (2018), in addition to the Toronto-winning and BAFTA-nominated fiction short 'The Field' (2018).

The film left a significant impression on me during my viewing at the Toronto International Film Festival 2024. The intensity of emotions that Santosh evoked in me left me unable to recover for hours. I express genuine happiness for director Sandhya Suri and her team.

In May, 'Santosh' made its debut at the 77th Cannes Film Festival, featured in the 'Un Certain Regard' section.

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences is set to reveal its 2025 Oscar shortlist, which will include contenders for the best international feature category, on 17 December. The announcement of Oscar nominations is scheduled for January 2025.

Each country is permitted to submit only one film for consideration as the official selection. Historically, three films originating from the UK have received nominations for the Oscar. This year marked a significant achievement for the country, as Jonathan Glazer's Holocaust drama 'The Zone of Interest' secured the Oscar for best international feature film, representing a notable milestone in its cinematic history.

- KAVYA PATEL



# Hilsa: Business And Diplomacy Of The Fishy Ban Now



By Sunita Krishnan



**A** culinary crisis has resulted from the recent temporary ban on the export of a specific fish, which former Prime Minister Hasina had previously used as a diplomatic tool.

## The Implications of the Hilsa Ban on India-Bangladesh Relations

The national fish of Bangladesh is hilsa. It is known by its native name, ilish, and is considered the queen of fish. It is a staple of the cuisines of Bangladesh and West Bengal, the Indian state that borders Bangladesh.

In a strategic move that highlights the intersection of diplomacy and natural resources, former Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leveraged the significance of fish, abundant in the Bay of Bengal and local rivers, to strengthen relations with India. This approach underscores the potential of utilising regional assets to enhance bilateral ties and foster cooperation between neighbouring nations.

However, the decision by Bangladesh's interim administration to temporarily forbid fish shipments to India in September created a kind of gastronomic crisis just before India's Durga Puja celebration. The preparation of Hilsa fish in mustard sauce stands out as a cherished culinary tradition during the festival, captivating many palates with its rich flavors and cultural significance. Analysts interpret this action as a diplomatic warning against New Delhi for its support of Hasina, who fled to India after her ousting in late August.

Dhaka has emphasized that the recent ban aims to reduce the domestic costs of freshwater fish, especially considering this year's reduced harvest. In a surprising turn of events, the decision was reversed in just a fortnight. The fish at the heart of this discussion raises intriguing questions about its significance beyond being a mere culinary delight.

Hilsa, a prized fish, has become the focal point of a diplomatic dispute between India and Bangladesh. This delicacy, cherished for its unique flavour and cultural significance, has sparked tensions that extend beyond culinary preferences, highlighting the complexities of international relations in the region.

Bangladesh is a dominant player in the global seafood market, exporting an impressive 70 percent of the world's hilsa. This significant contribution highlights the country's pivotal role in the international trade of this highly sought-after fish. The prized catch is becoming increasingly rare and costly, driven by factors such as overfishing, heightened demand, and

environmental challenges including climate change.

This year, fishermen are facing significant challenges in securing sufficient catches of hilsa, largely attributed to adverse sea conditions. The fish is becoming more scarce as a result of exports, since most Bangladeshis cannot buy it due to its expensive price. A 1.5 kilogramme hilsa fish cost roughly \$15 (1,800 Bangladeshi taka) in local markets in 2024, up from approximately \$10.9 (1,300 taka) the previous year.

Hilsa, which produces between 550,000 and 600,000 metric tonnes annually, accounts for roughly 12% of Bangladesh's total fish production, directly employing 500,000 people as fishermen and providing jobs for another two million people in allied businesses. Bhapa ilish (steamed hilsa), ilish polao (pilaf rice with hilsa), and shorshe ilish (hilsa in mustard sauce) are among the popular staples of the region's cuisine.

## Has Bangladesh implemented a prohibition on hilsa exports to India?

In a significant move this September, Dhaka has implemented an export ban on hilsa, with a particular focus on restricting shipments to India. As the Durga Puja festival approaches in October, a notable surge in demand is anticipated across the border, reflecting the seasonal trends that characterise this vibrant time of year. Fisheries officials have articulated that the implementation of the ban is essential for prioritising domestic supply while also addressing the concerning decline in the Hilsa population.

"It is imperative that we prioritise local access to ilish, ensuring that our own citizens have the opportunity to purchase this beloved fish before considering exports." In a significant move, an official from the Bangladesh Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has announced that the Ministry of Commerce has been directed to halt all ilish exports to India during the Durga Puja festivities. The official, who prefers to remain anonymous, emphasises the importance of this decision in the context of the upcoming celebrations.

In a surprising turn of events, the Commerce Ministry has lifted its previous ban, granting approval for a substantial 3,000-tonne shipment to India just weeks after the initial decision.

In a significant development for the seafood export sector, the ministry has announced approval for the export of 3,000 tonnes of hilsa fish to India. This decision comes in response to appeals from exporters and is timed to coincide with the upcoming Durga Puja celebrations, highlighting the importance of meeting specific conditions set forth by the authorities. In a significant market shift, Hilsa prices in India have surged dramatically following a reduction of 1,000 metric tonnes in exports from Dhaka. This

development is poised to impact both consumers and businesses in the seafood sector, highlighting the intricate dynamics of supply and demand in the region. The government's efforts to reduce prices in Bangladesh have not yielded the desired results.

A group of fishermen engaged in the smuggling of hilsa to India has contributed further to the soaring prices. An expert from India characterised the recent brief ban as "a firm departure" from Hasina's longstanding tradition of utilising fish as a symbol of goodwill and friendship between Dhaka and New Delhi.

Hasina initially leveraged fish as a strategic diplomatic instrument upon assuming office in 1996. In a notable gesture, she presented Hilsa to Jyoti Basu, the then-Chief Minister of West Bengal, just prior to a significant agreement concerning water sharing—a pivotal matter in the relationship between the neighbouring regions. In a notable diplomatic gesture in 2016, the former Prime Minister of Bangladesh dispatched a consignment of hilsa fish to Mamata Banerjee, the Chief Minister of West Bengal, a region that shares its borders with Bangladesh. One year later, the esteemed former President Pranab Mukherjee, a notable figure in Bengali leadership, received hilsa as a symbol of camaraderie.

Experts suggest that the interim government may take a different approach from Hasina's pro-India foreign policy, indicating potential shifts in India-Bangladesh relations. An trade analyst in Kolkata, expressed his concerns over the interim government's recent decision, stating that it "compromises the goodwill" between the two nations.

## Is there a precedent for such a ban? Yes.

In 2012, Bangladesh implemented a ban on hilsa exports to India, a decision stemming from ongoing disputes regarding a water-sharing agreement between the two nations. In January 2018, the decision was ultimately reversed, reflecting a strategic move aimed at fostering goodwill.

Over the years, Hasina's administration has consistently navigated around the established ban by strategically "gifting" hundreds of tonnes of fish in anticipation of Durga Puja celebrations.

In a strategic move to safeguard its prized hilsa fish, Bangladesh periodically enforces local bans on fishing during critical breeding seasons. This initiative underscores the country's commitment to sustainable fishing practices and the preservation of its aquatic resources. Enforcement of the primary ban spans a duration of 22 days in October, a practice that has been in place since 2007. The implementation of this restriction during the hilsa spawning season allows for a crucial period of undisturbed reproduction, ensuring the sustainability of this vital fish species.





Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh: Day 1

This situation presents significant economic hurdles for fishermen, a considerable number of whom depend on hilsa as a primary source of income.

In the past, Hasina has used various gifts as instruments of diplomacy.

In a gesture of goodwill, Hasina has presented locally crafted sarees and fresh mangoes to leaders from neighbouring countries. In a notable gesture of goodwill in 2021, Hasina is said to have dispatched an impressive 2,600 kilogrammes of Haribhanga mangoes to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

In a significant move, Bangladesh has encountered a setback in the timely delivery of COVID-19 vaccine doses from India, prompting a response that underscores the complexities of international health logistics.

The relationship between India and Bangladesh has encountered significant challenges in recent times. Various factors have contributed to the strain, including political disagreements, border management issues, and differing perspectives on regional security. These complexities highlight the need for diplomatic engagement and collaboration to address the underlying concerns and foster a more stable partnership moving forward.

India maintained its support for Hasina throughout her 15-year tenure, a period characterised by allegations of human rights violations, electoral irregularities, and a significant suppression of opposition parties, according to various rights organisations.

New Delhi maintained a notable silence regarding a recent government crackdown that resulted in the deaths of over 300 protesters just prior to her departure from Bangladesh. The recent visit of Hasina to India has sparked discontent within the interim government, which has formally requested her extradition. However, it appears that New Delhi is not inclined to comply with this demand.



In Bangladesh, there is a sentiment that New Delhi has supported Prime Minister Hasina, which has aided her in maintaining an assertive governance style.

During her 15-year tenure, Hasina has cultivated strong relationships with India, especially through various security cooperation agreements. However, these initiatives have drawn criticism from opposition parties and critics, who argue that they disproportionately favour New Delhi.

Furthermore, the trade agreements established by the Hasina administration with Indian corporations have faced criticism, as detractors allege that these arrangements primarily serve the interests of Indian businesses.

The ongoing dispute over the Teesta River continues to be a significant issue between Bangladesh and India, with both nations heavily dependent on its water resources for agricultural purposes. Bangladesh has consistently advocated for a more equitable distribution of the river's flow, contending that the existing framework, predominantly managed by India, leads to significant water shortages in the dry season.

The unexpected surge of water during intense rainfall events has played a significant role in triggering flash floods across Bangladesh, notably in August of this year.

In a notable shift from previous practices, officials at Bangladesh's Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre informed Al Jazeera that India failed to provide a warning to its neighbouring country regarding the release of water last month. The Ministry of External Affairs in India has refuted the recent reports, labelling them as "factually not correct."

In a notable stance, West Bengal, a state in India, has firmly opposed modifications to the current river-sharing agreement, emphasising the importance of its agricultural requirements.

The relationship between India and Hasina's Awami League dates back to the 1970s, a pivotal era when the party was engaged in its struggle for liberation from Pakistan. New Delhi has strategically fostered strong relationships with the secular Awami League, while perceiving the opposition parties, Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Jamaat-e-Islami, as being lenient towards Pakistan.

The two nations have expressed their positions regarding the ongoing diplomatic tensions, highlighting their respective concerns and responses to the situation.

Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, currently serving as interim leader, has advocated for a fundamental reset in relations. Earlier this month, he expressed concerns regarding Hasina's directives emanating from her location in India,

suggesting that her ongoing involvement in Bangladeshi politics might heighten existing tensions.

Earlier this month, the Fish Importers Association of India reached out to Dhaka with a formal request to permit the export of fish, particularly in light of the upcoming festival.

The future of India-Bangladesh relations appears to be a subject of significant interest and speculation. As both nations navigate their diplomatic landscape, the potential for collaboration and mutual growth remains a focal point for analysts and policymakers alike. Observers are keenly watching how economic partnerships, cultural exchanges, and geopolitical strategies will shape the trajectory of this bilateral relationship in the coming years.

Yusuf, a researcher from Bangladesh, highlights a significant shift in diplomatic relations, noting that "the resentment that was building in common people is reflecting in a more formal diplomatic channel." He emphasises that, until now, the relationship had primarily been cordial at the highest levels of government.

He emphasises the potential for a mutually beneficial relationship between India and Bangladesh, highlighting the necessity for equity and progress on key issues as foundational elements for success.

"Should the government neglect these issues and fail to sustain a balanced relationship with New Delhi, it risks being viewed in a manner akin to Sheikh Hasina's administration," he remarked.

Rahul, a representative from the Banga Economic Forum, asserts that the two nations possess significant potential for enhancing their relationship, driven by a "natural" interdependence that currently exists between them.

"Bangladesh and India share a unique relationship, characterised by their extensive border and a wealth of common resources. From the trade of everyday essentials to deep-rooted familial ties, the two nations are interconnected in numerous ways," Rahul stated.

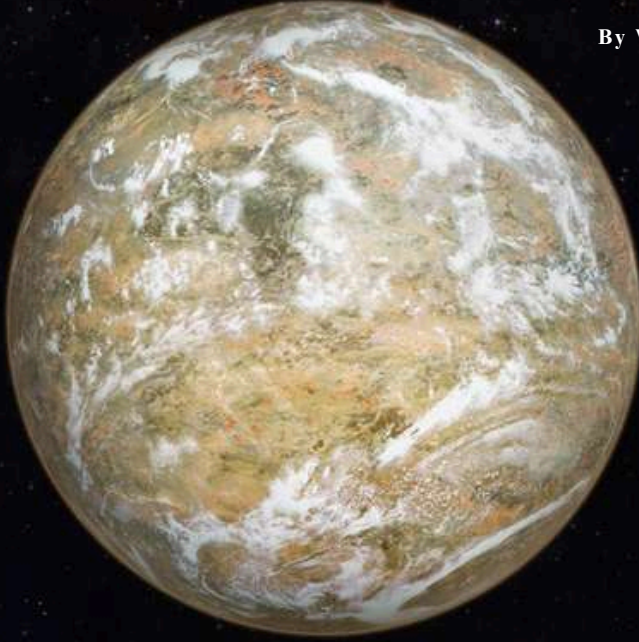
He emphasised that the geographic reality is undeniable, regardless of any political changes, highlighting the importance of a functional relationship between India and Bangladesh.

- SUNITA KRISHNAN



# New Planet And Search For Extra Terrestrial Life

By WFY Bureau



Gliese 12 b



Earth

## **E**xciting news from the world of science!

Researchers have discovered a planet that could potentially support life, and it's the same size as Earth. This discovery opens up fascinating possibilities for our understanding of the universe and the search for extraterrestrial life.

Gliese 12b is an intriguing exoplanet that orbits a cool red dwarf star, situated a mere 40 light-years from our own solar system.

Exciting news has emerged from the scientific community as two teams of researchers have identified a theoretically habitable planet. This intriguing world is smaller than Earth yet larger than Venus, and it orbits a small star located approximately 40 light-years from our own solar system.

Meet Gliese 12b, an intriguing exoplanet that dances around a cool red dwarf star in the constellation Pisces. This star is approximately 27% the size of our sun and boasts about 60% of its temperature. These fascinating details come from two studies that were recently published in *The Astrophysical Journal Letters* and *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*.

Despite its star being significantly smaller than our sun, Gliese 12b remains in the habitable zone. This is the perfect distance from a star where liquid water can thrive, even though the planet wraps up its orbit in just 12.8 days.

Assuming the exoplanet lacks an atmosphere, researchers have estimated its surface temperature to be approximately 107 degrees Fahrenheit (42 degrees Celsius).

"We've discovered the closest transiting temperate Earth-sized planet known so far," shared Masayuki Kuzuhara, a project assistant professor at the Astrobiology Centre in Tokyo and co-leader of one of the research teams alongside Akihiko

Fukui, a project assistant professor at the University of Tokyo, in a recent statement.

After identifying temperate Earth-size planets, scientists will dive into analysing their atmospheres to uncover the elements they contain and, most importantly, to find out if water exists to support life.

"We've discovered only a few exoplanets that stand out as promising candidates for that." "And this is our nearest, so that's quite a major discovery," said Larissa Palethorpe, a doctoral student at the University of Edinburgh and University College London, who co-led the other study, during an interview with CNN on Friday.

### Exploring the Mysteries of Gliese 12b

Scientists have turned to the wealth of publicly available data gathered by NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) to identify Gliese 12b. This remarkable telescope diligently observes tens of thousands of stars each month, monitoring their brightness fluctuations, which can indicate the presence of orbiting exoplanets.

Astronomers have a bit of an advantage when it comes to spotting exoplanets that orbit red dwarf stars. The smaller size of these stars creates a more noticeable dimming effect during each transit, making the search a little easier and more efficient.

Currently, scientists are grappling with the mysteries of this planet's atmosphere. They're uncertain about its composition, whether it even exists, and the possibility of water being present. However, Palethorpe mentioned that they aren't anticipating any discoveries of water in that environment.

"If there's no water, it's a clear sign that a runaway greenhouse effect has already taken hold on this planet, making it resemble Venus," she remarked. "Imagine if there were water, making it more similar to our own experience..." There are certain signatures that can indicate the

progression of the runaway greenhouse effect, suggesting that a planet might be losing its water resources.

As we move forward in our exploration of exoplanets, the next exciting step involves utilising the James Webb Space Telescope for a detailed spectroscopy analysis of their atmospheres. This cutting-edge technology promises to unveil new insights into these distant worlds. This technique concentrates on gathering the starlight that penetrates an exoplanet's atmosphere, enabling us to pinpoint the wavelengths that particular molecules absorb, thus revealing their presence within the atmosphere.

In addition to revealing fascinating details about the exoplanet, Palethorpe mentioned that researchers are optimistic this study will enhance our understanding of Earth as well.

"This planet offers valuable insights into the conditions that allowed Earth to remain habitable while Venus did not..." "It can reveal the pathways to habitability that planets follow as they evolve," she explained.

While this exoplanet shows promise for human habitability and is considered relatively close to our solar system in the vastness of space, the reality is that a visit there is not on the horizon anytime soon.

"It's not reachable; it's 12 parsecs away," Palethorpe explained, noting that even with our fastest spacecraft, it would take approximately 225,000 years to reach Gliese 12b.



-WFY BUREAU





# The Best Of Bhutan: A Unique World Of Happiness



By  
Sudha  
Mukhopadhyay



*An Amazing Spring Trip To Bhutan: The Land Of Happiness And Zero Carbon Emission*



**B**hutan is primarily a Buddhist kingdom sitting in the lap of the mighty Himalayas. It is a landlocked country situated between China and India. The capital and largest city is Thimpu. One of the main attractions for tourists is the country's culture and traditions. Bhutanese tradition is deeply steeped in its Buddhist heritage.

With a dual purpose in mind, which is to escape the scorching heat of Chennai's summer and to see a beautiful country with cool weather conditions, my husband and I travelled to Bhutan in April/ May this year. We went through a travel agent and were very well taken care of. It was spring time in that country and there were flowers of various hues all around. We even got to see the beautiful purple Hyacinth tree for the first time, ever.

Bhutan has many fortresses with each fortress being primarily divided into two sections, one being the place of worship where tourists are allowed entry and the other being the administrative section where entry for tourists is restricted. The former part of fortresses is considered as Monastery, presided over by the Buddha as the worshipful deity. And each of these monasteries can best be described as prayer halls that are tranquil, peaceful, quiet, serene and full of positive vibes. A mere sight of these monasteries can bring peace to one's soul.

We spent the first 2 nights in Thimpu, followed by two nights in Punakha and finally 3 nights in Paro.

**THIMPU**

**Folk Heritage Museum**

Our first place of visit in Thimpu was the Folk Heritage Museum. Also known as Pheichey Toenkhyim by the locals in Bhutan, the National Folk Museum was established to preserve and showcase Bhutan's folk culture. Took its shape in the year 2001 as an initiative by the Queen Mother of Bhutan, to connect visitors with Bhutanese rural culture and traditions through antique exhibits, educational programs, demonstrations as well as documentation. The Museum itself is situated in a 150-year-old establishment that perfectly enshrines the cultural essence of Bhutan.

**King's Memorial Chorten**



Next was the King's Memorial Chorten. Chorten in Bhutanese means Buddhist shrine/stupa. The word "Chorten" literally translates to "Seat of Faith". This Chorten is devoted to World Peace. It started gaining popularity amongst the locals when various major Buddhist religious festivals started taking place here and it is one of the best places to see in Thimphu. A place for amazing pics for Instagram and other social networking sites. They also have a special stone bench where one can sit and click pics of oneself with the Chorten as a powerful backdrop. It is so popular that we had to wait for our turn to occupy the bench for the photographs. It actually reminded me of that famous bench at the Taj Mahal, Agra.

**Buddha Dordenma statue**



The Great Buddha Dordenma is a gigantic Shakyamuni Buddha statue in the mountains of Bhutan celebrating the 60th anniversary of fourth king Jigme Singye Wangchuck. The statue houses over one hundred thousand smaller Buddha statues, each of which, like the Great Buddha Dordenma itself, are made of bronze and gilded in gold. What an amazing sight it presents.

**Trashichho dzong fortress**



This Buddhist monastery is on the northern edge of the city of Thimpu, on the western bank of the Wang Chu (river). It has traditionally been the seat of the Druk Desi or "Deb Raja", the head of Bhutan's civil government, an office which has been combined with the kingship since the creation of the monarchy in 1907, and is summer

capital of the country. It stands in a huge complex in all its glory beside the impressive King's palace and lawns. This is where I found many beautiful Maple trees in full bloom. And again, I got to see a Maple tree for the first time, ever. Happiness.

**Takin national park**

This is a wildlife reserve dedicated to Takin which is the national animal of Bhutan. According to legend, a Tibetan saint by the name Drukpa Kunley, popularly called by the epithet "The Divine Madman" is credited with creating the Takin with unique features. Drukpa Kunley, who was not only a religious preacher but also a proficient tantric, was requested by the people of Bhutan during one of his religious lectures to conjure a miracle before them. The saint agreed to do so provided he was fed for lunch, a whole cow and a whole goat. Once served, he devoured the food of both animals and left out the bones. He then took out the head of the goat and fixed it to the skeleton of the cow and uttered abracadabra and the magic worked. With a snap, he created a live animal, which had the head of the goat and the body of the cow. The animal sprang up and moved on to the meadows to graze. The animal was then given the name dong gyem tsey (takin). Since then this animal has been a common sight in the hills of Bhutan. Because of this magical creation with high religious connotation, the animal has been adopted as the national animal of Bhutan.



There is a coffee shop in this park which serves coffee to the visitors at a very nominal price. And what was impressive was the fact that they make coffee out of coffee beans grown in the southern foothills of their own country. It is a freshly roasted blend, smooth and balanced and full of aroma. Never knew that Bhutan had its own coffee plantation.



**Sangaygang valley view point**

Bhutan, to say the least, has amazing valleys. We drove down to the famous Sangaygang view point to enjoy one of the most magnificent views of Thimphu valley. It was absolutely mesmerising to just stand at a high point and admire this beauty of nature – the great Sangaygang valley. This was followed by a visit to Zilukha Nunnery (for the female monks), the only such monastery in Thimphu. It houses about 60 nuns in its premises. We found a few dogs, stray dogs I guess, but well-fed by the nuns here, and these dogs looked more like bears with their fluffy outer layers!!! *From Thimpu, we then drove down to Punakha which is at a distance of about 75 kms.*

**Dochula Pass**

Our first stop during our drive from Thimpu to Punakha was the amazing Dochula Pass. It is a mountain pass sitting in the midst of breathtaking snow covered Himalayas where 108 beautiful memorial Chortens or Stupas known as "Druk Wangyal Chortens" have been built. One can see many prayer flags along the roadside. This sight is very enchanting, to say the least. Here too they have a very nice coffee shop with scenic views all around. We enjoyed hot samosas and pakodas along with coffee/tea in this coffee shop which is situated in the midst of beautiful floral trees.

**Punakha**

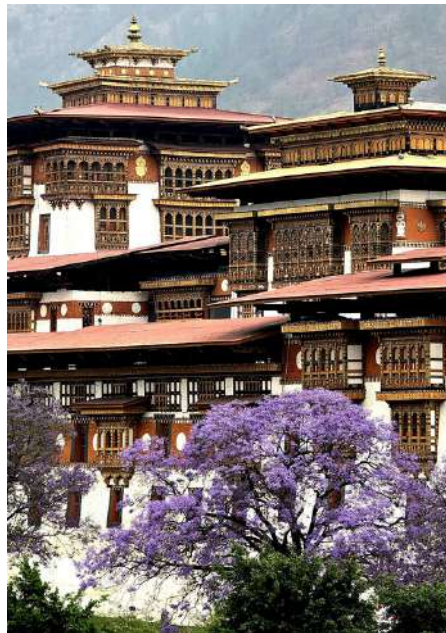
Our first stop in Punakha was the Suspension bridge. The suspension bridge is a pedestrian bridge that crosses over the Po Chhu River in Punakha. The bridge is made of steel cables and wooden planks and is suspended high above the river below. The bridge spans a distance of approximately 160 meters and is about 1.2 meters wide.



Walking across the suspension bridge is an exhilarating experience, as you feel the bridge sway slightly under your feet with each step you take. I was not sure if I wanted to experience the walk on the swaying bridge, but our tour guide insisted that there was no cause for worry and with his encouragement I could reach the other end. My heart was filled with happiness and was in awe of the crystal clear water running underneath surrounded by breathtaking views of the mountains and valleys.

**Punakha Dzong (Fortress/Monastery)**

Considered "The palace of great happiness or bliss" Punakha Dzong is the administrative centre of Punakha district. It is the second oldest and second-largest Dzong in Bhutan and one of its most majestic structures. The Dzong is located between the Pho Chhu (Male) and Mo Chhu (Female) river in the



Punakha-valley. In view of the healthy climate in the region, Punakha is the winter capital of Bhutan. Here too we got to see the beautiful, purple hyacinth trees.

**Paro**

Our next city was Paro. The distance from Punakha to Paro is about 125 Kms, a 4hr drive via Dochula, following the way back up the dramatic Wang Chhu and Paro Chhu river valleys, before crossing through Paro Town towards the north end of the valley.

**Ta Dzong**

We visited the Ta Dzong, originally built as Watchtower, which now houses National Museum. The extensive collection includes antique thangka paintings, textiles, weapons and armour, household objects and a rich assortment of natural and historic artifacts. Taking photographs was not allowed here.

**Tiger's Nest**

The next day, after breakfast we went up to

the base camp of Taktshang Monastery. It is one of the most famous of Bhutan's monasteries, perched on the side of a cliff 900m above the Paro valley floor. Legends say that Guru Rinpoche arrived here on the back of a tigress and meditated at this monastery and hence it is called 'Tiger's Nest'. Since it involved a trek up and down the mountain, that could take about 6 hrs to complete, we decided to skip the trek, and were glad to have done so.

**Drukgyel Dzong**

We then drove to Drukgyel Dzong, an old fortress (which is being restored) where Bhutanese warriors fought Tibetan invaders centuries ago. The snowy dome of sacred Chomolhari, "mountain of goddess" can be seen in all her glory from the approach road to this Dzong. This place again, is ideal for Insta pics. We took many pics unable to stop ourselves.

**Shopping**

Paro is a shopper's paradise. It is a wonderful place to shop for wall paintings, Buddhist statues, decorative items, as well as bamboo and paper products and what have you. From traditional clothing that blends fashion with tradition to designed handicrafts, each item carries the spirit of Bhutan. So, when you embark on a shopping spree in Bhutan, you're not just buying souvenirs, you're immersing yourself in a vibrant culture that will stay with you long after you've left this enchanting kingdom.

**Some general, unwritten rules to be observed while visiting a Monastery in Bhutan:**

- Wear comfortable shoes as you may be standing or walking for long periods.
- Dress modestly out of respect for the religious setting and sacred nature.
- Avoid loud conversations to maintain the peaceful atmosphere and decorum.
- Do not touch the religious artefacts.
- Keep the area clean.

**Cultural scene**

As far as the cultural scene is concerned, dance, dramas and masked dances such as the Cham dance are common traditional features at festivals in Bhutan. We were entertained with one such amazing masked dance on an evening prior to our departure for India. Please insert pic no.9 here

**Food**

And yes, rice (red rice), buckwheat, and maize, are the staples of Bhutanese cuisine. The local diet also includes pork, beef, yak meat, chicken, and lamb. Soups and stews of meat and dried vegetables spiced with chillies and cheese are also very popular.

**Sport**

Talking about Bhutan's national and most popular sport – it is archery. This sport continues to enjoy mass appeal, is encouraged at all levels and competitions are held regularly in most villages. The joy of seeing an arrow leaving the bow and hitting the target, some 100 metres away, is unparalleled.

Feel glad that we could do Bhutan the way we did, as it was in my bucket list for long. I now have beautiful memories of my visit and would highly recommend the readers to experience Bhutan, the land of valleys, mountains, rivers, flora, culture, heritage, peace, zero carbon emission, courteous & friendly people.... the number one happiest country in the world, the land of the Buddha. The country, as beautiful as heaven itself.

-SUDHA MUKHOPADHYAY



# Fearless Prisha Swims English Channel Solo For A Better World

By Wynona Melwyn

**B**ritish Indian teenager Prisha Tapre has made waves by swimming solo across the English Channel, all in the name of charity. This inspiring young athlete has not only showcased her incredible swimming skills but has also raised awareness and funds for a noble cause, proving that age is just a number when it comes to making a difference.

In a remarkable feat of endurance, 16-year-old Prisha Tapre, a British Indian teen hailing from Watford in Hertfordshire, has etched her name in history as one of the youngest swimmers to conquer the English Channel. On September 4, she conquered the formidable 21-mile swim from Dover to Cap Gris Nez in France, finishing the gruelling journey in an impressive 11 hours and 48 minutes. Prisha's remarkable achievement, driven by her determination to shatter limits while supporting charitable causes, stands as a testament to resilience, community support, and the unifying power of athletics across different cultures.

## The Swim and the Challenge

For Prisha, this swim marked the pinnacle of four years of rigorous training that started when she was merely 12 years old. Driven by inspiring family discussions about the Channel and fuelled by a desire to push her limits, she embarked on a daring quest to master one of the most bustling and unpredictable waterways on the planet. The English Channel, renowned for its swift currents, frigid waters, and capricious weather, presents a formidable test even for the most seasoned swimmers.

"The initial two hours presented a challenging and shadowy experience; that segment of the swim proved to be the toughest," Prisha reflected. As the first light of dawn emerged, a sense of relief washed over me, signalling that I had navigated the toughest part of the journey. The water settled, and the conditions exceeded all expectations.

Prisha's swim showcased a remarkable blend of physical endurance and mental fortitude, pushing her limits in a true display of athletic prowess. "Swimming is a game of the mind as much as it is of the body," she mused, channelling the wisdom of her Watford Swimming Club coach. As time passes, one finds themselves slipping into a tranquil meditative state. The sharp stings from the jellyfish were a vivid reminder of my vitality, propelling me to push my limits and forge ahead.

## A Journey of Inspiration

Prisha's remarkable journey across the Channel goes beyond just a personal milestone, showcasing her determination and spirit in the face of challenges. Representing a vibrant blend of cultures, she stands out as a member of a dynamic cohort of young athletes from diverse backgrounds who are making significant waves in the competitive sports arena. "I aimed to demonstrate my ability to achieve something truly remarkable," she expressed. "My goal is to

motivate young girls, especially those from Asian backgrounds, to challenge and overcome the stereotypes often linked to sports such as swimming." Visibility is key as we confront these challenges head-on.

In a sport where representation often falls short, Prisha is determined to make waves. Her journey in swimming is not just about personal achievement; it's a beacon of inspiration for young women everywhere, urging them to dive into the pool and embrace the sport. Through her exemplary leadership, she aims to break down obstacles for future generations, not just in swimming but in all aspects of life.

Juggling academics and the demands of competitive swimming can be a challenging feat. Athletes often find themselves navigating the rigorous schedules of both their studies and training sessions, striving for excellence in the pool while maintaining their grades. The discipline required in sports often translates into effective time management skills, allowing these student-athletes to thrive in both arenas. With determination and focus, they prove that it is possible to excel.



Prisha's achievement stands out, especially when you take into account her ability to juggle intense training alongside her GCSE exam preparations. Her weekends were often dominated by gruelling swim sessions, with some pushing the limits to an impressive ten hours. In the serene embrace of nearby lakes, she discovered her sanctuary, a tranquil retreat from the relentless pressures of school. This calming environment became her go-to training ground, where she could focus and recharge.



"Swimming provided a refreshing escape for me," Prisha revealed. It was a sanctuary, a moment of tranquillity amidst the chaos of exams, friendships, and the whirlwind of school life. This experience provided a much-needed respite, a chance to recharge and refocus. The lake transformed into a sanctuary for me, a vital retreat that I believe everyone should have in their lives.

## Rallying Support for a Cause

Prisha's swim transcended personal achievement, embodying a spirit of charitable endeavour that inspired all who witnessed it. In an inspiring display of generosity and commitment, she successfully raised over £3,700 for Akshaya Patra UK, an organisation tirelessly working to fight childhood hunger across India and the UK. "I aimed to champion a cause that embodies the duality of my heritage—British and Indian," Prisha shared. "Akshaya Patra struck a chord with me as it addresses the pressing issue of child poverty in various regions."

Hailing from the UK with roots in Maharashtra, India, Prisha embodies a deep commitment to the cause that resonates with her heritage. "The plight of children facing poverty, whether in England or India, is a pressing issue that tugs at the heartstrings. For many, the uncertainty of having a meal at the end of the day is a harsh reality."

## The Importance of the English Channel

The English Channel stands out as a formidable challenge, celebrated for both its demanding physical trials and its deep-rooted historical and geographical importance. The English Channel, at its most slender stretch, measures around 21 miles between Dover and Cap Gris Nez. This remarkable body of water has long served as a boundary, shaping the historical narrative of the British Isles. The Channel has been a pivotal player in the story of the United Kingdom, serving not only as a barrier against invasions but also as a vital strategic asset during times of conflict.

Prisha's crossing marks yet another chapter in the rich legacy of adventurers and athletes who have bravely faced the challenges posed by the channel. Her remarkable achievement now stands alongside the legendary feats of Captain Matthew Webb, who made history as the first individual to swim the Channel unaided in 1875, and Thomas Gregory, who etched his name in the record books as the youngest swimmer at just 11 years old. As the Channel Swimming Association establishes age limits for attempts at 16, Prisha's swim stands as a testament to the unwavering determination and aspirations of today's young athletes.

The connection to the Indian Diaspora in the UK is a fascinating narrative that intertwines culture, community, and heritage. This vibrant relationship showcases the resilience and achievements of individuals who have made significant contributions to both their homeland



and their adopted country. As we delve into this dynamic bond, we uncover stories of triumph, unity, and the enduring spirit of a community that continues to thrive across borders.

Prisha's remarkable achievement stands out as a beacon of success within the vibrant Indian diaspora in Britain, showcasing the potential and talent that thrives in this community. The contributions of British Indians to the cultural and athletic scene in the UK have been significant throughout history. Prisha's recent achievements serve as a testament to the vibrant and diverse community that continues to influence and enrich British life.

The diaspora, which boasts a remarkable population of over 1.8 million individuals in the UK, has encountered various hurdles in their quest for full integration into the sporting landscape. Yet, tales like Prisha's are transforming this narrative, showcasing how individuals from immigrant backgrounds are pushing the limits of what can be achieved.

In a remarkable display of determination, Prisha has tackled a formidable challenge, successfully raising funds for a significant cause. Her inspiring journey serves as a beacon of motivation for others, particularly those from ethnic minority backgrounds, encouraging them to pursue their dreams despite any hurdles they may face.

#### The Next Chapter Awaits

As the new school term begins, Prisha has shifted her focus to her studies, yet her unwavering passion for swimming continues to shine brightly. With her eyes firmly fixed on the horizon, she is now gearing up for even more formidable challenges, contemplating the exhilarating prospect of a 24-hour swim. "This is just the beginning," she declared with a confident smile. "While the future may be uncertain, my determination to keep pushing forward remains unwavering." As the competition heats up, the hurdles ahead are set to become even more formidable.

Prisha's journey is just beginning, and she stands as a shining example in the athletic arena, embodying determination, cultural pride, and the unwavering resilience of the human spirit.

- WYNONA M



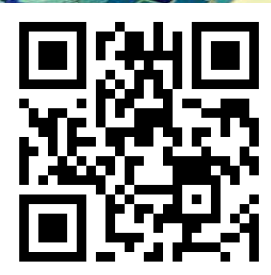
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#### Our Mission

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

#### Our Vision

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

#### Our Focus

Let's celebrate the spirit of Indianism and rediscover our roots by rekindling the relationships.

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

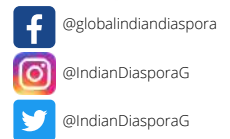
**We are a group of Indian origin individuals from diverse backgrounds and professions who are committed to inspiring the diaspora to be a force for good by providing a platform to collaborate, build community engagement, and catalyse social change.**

#### Connecting Dots..... Connecting Roots

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

Our Team, our members shall be committed to building stronger communities with a culture of giving and inspiring social change. We endeavor to engage culturally with the help of Indian wisdom passed on to us by our ancestors.

By sharing insight, hosting events and connecting people, Indian Diaspora aims to bring together the professionally, geographically and religiously diverse people of Indian origin toward collective action worldwide.



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