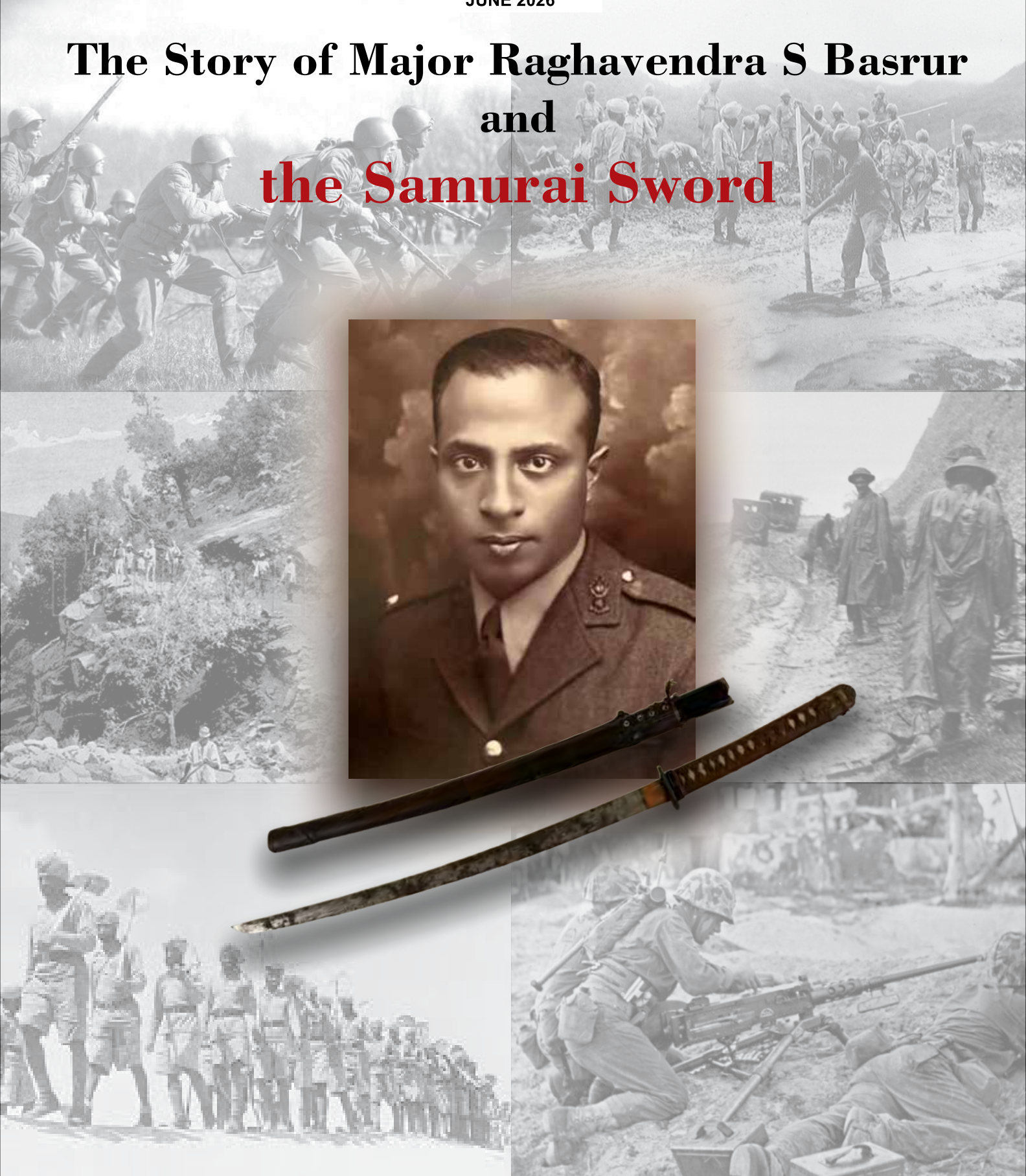


Kanara Saraswat

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE KANARA SARASWAT ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2026

The Story of Major Raghavendra S Basrur and the Samurai Sword



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Kanara Saraswat

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In this issue....

From the President's Team	5
Letters to the Editor	6
The Editor's Column	7
Our Cover:	
The story of Major Raghavendra S Basrur and the Samurai Sword ... Chitra Katre, Dhananjay 'Jai' Basrur and Meena Basrur	9
How you can become anti-fragile ... Shankar Mallapur	15
Dear Pachhi	16
Military Musings A Chronicle of NDA's First Daughters ... Maj Gen B.N.Rao, AVSM, VSM & Bar (Retd)	17
AI and Digital Marketing: A Simple Guide for our Amchi Community ... Dikshita Karopady	19
Born Free: Veteran Winners ... Bharat Savur	21
California Notebook A glimpse of what it is like to live in California Jaidev Chandavarkar	23
Earth Uncovered: The Island That Never Learned to Be Ordinary ... Bhakti Ullal	25
सरल-संस्कृतम्	28
कोंकणी क्वीज... उषा अरुर	29
कोंकणी क्वीज... उषा अरुर	30
The Andamans, as I found them ... Bhakti Ullal	35
Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana ... Anjali Burde	37
Parisevanam: What's New At Girvanapratishta? ... Archana Kumta and Sangeeta Pawar	38
KSA hosts 9th Senior Citizen PMS Get-together ... Shreekar Rao (Gersappe)	38
Here & There	39
Classifieds	42
Domestic Tidings	42

Examination Results 2026

Inviting all the successful candidates of our community to send in their examination results in the following format by 7th Sept 2026 to

admin@kanarasaraswat.in

1. Name of the Student
2. Examination passed
3. Percentage / Grade Secured
4. Name of the School / University
5. Photograph in jpeg format
6. Pdf of the passing certificate/ Marklist

KANARA SARASWAT ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The Kanara Saraswat Association has launched a Membership Drive for all Bhanaps. Our membership rates are most reasonable and offer a host of benefits:

Membership Category	Amount in Rs.
Patron	7,500
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Associate Life Members (persons belonging to communities other than Chitrapur Saraswats)	5,000
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1. Opportunity to contribute to the various objectives of the Association and serve the Community
2. Complimentary one night's stay at NHH for every three days stay
3. Free monthly magazine that helps keep in touch with the Community and read articles on varied topics of interest
4. Special rates for advertising in the Kanara Saraswat Magazine
5. Special rates for Hall Bookings

So, hurry up & fill the Membership Form and join KSA on its wonderful journey. It is an overwhelming experience to be part of our community's association, KSA.



From the President's Team

Redevelopment has emerged as a defining feature of Mumbai's continuing urban transformation. In a city constrained by limited land availability and a steadily increasing population, the need to adapt and modernise is both constant and compelling. In this context, redevelopment is no longer a matter of choice, but a necessity—driven by considerations of structural safety, sustainability, and the aspiration for improved standards of living.

A substantial number of residential buildings in Mumbai were constructed several decades ago and are now approaching, or have surpassed, their intended lifespan. This has given rise to serious concerns regarding structural stability, ageing infrastructure, and the inadequacy of existing amenities. Many such buildings were designed in an era when present-day requirements were neither anticipated nor envisaged. Redevelopment, therefore, presents a prudent and forward-looking solution by enabling the replacement of obsolete structures with modern edifices that conform to current safety regulations, engineering practices, and architectural standards. Beyond the tangible benefits, it fosters a renewed sense of assurance and confidence among residents.

Within our own community, this transformative process is gaining steady momentum. Prominent Chitrapur Saraswat cooperative housing societies, established in the early 19th century, have taken considered steps towards redevelopment. Talmaki Wadi Cooperative Housing Society, Saraswat Colony in Santacruz, and Chitrapur Society in Bandra are among those actively exploring or progressing with such initiatives. These efforts reflect a collective resolve to enhance living standards while ensuring long-term safety and sustainability for our members.

The advantages of redevelopment are most apparent in the marked improvement in the quality of life it affords. Residents are able to transition from constrained and ageing premises to well-planned, contemporary homes characterised by efficient layouts, improved ventilation, and enhanced functionality. The provision of modern amenities such as elevators, adequate parking facilities, advanced security systems, and recreational spaces contributes significantly to convenience and comfort. Furthermore, the upgradation of essential infrastructure, including plumbing, electrical systems, and fire safety measures, ensures a safer and more secure living environment. Redevelopment also tends to enhance property values, thereby providing long-term financial benefits to members.

At the same time, it is essential to acknowledge that redevelopment is a complex and multi-faceted undertaking, requiring careful planning, transparency, and unity of purpose. The selection of a reputable and competent developer, the formulation of clear and equitable agreements, and the maintenance of open and continuous communication are critical to the successful execution of any project. While differences of opinion are inevitable in cooperative institutions, they must be addressed through dialogue, mutual respect, and adherence to democratic principles. Trust, consensus, and collective responsibility remain the cornerstones of a smooth and successful redevelopment process.

From a broader perspective, redevelopment plays an integral role in the process of urban renewal. It facilitates the optimal utilisation of scarce land resources and contributes to the systematic development of the city's built environment. Improved buildings are often complemented by better supporting infrastructure, including roads, drainage systems, and utility services. In addition, redevelopment serves as a catalyst for economic activity, generating employment opportunities across construction, finance, and allied sectors. Increasingly, redevelopment projects are incorporating environmentally sustainable practices such as energy-efficient designs, water conservation measures, and the use of eco-friendly materials, thereby aligning with the larger objective of responsible urban development.

As Mumbai continues its journey of growth and transformation, redevelopment will remain central to its progress. As a community with a rich cultural heritage and strong shared values, it is incumbent upon us to embrace this change with discernment and foresight. Let redevelopment not only rebuild our physical surroundings, but also reinforce our sense of community, ensuring a secure, progressive, and sustainable future for generations to come.

Kishore G. Masurkar

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

At the outset, my daughter, Shweta and myself would like to thank the Editorial team of Kanara Saraswat for covering all the activities that we undertake at 'My Shelter for Strays' at Badlapur, in the February 2026 issue. It enabled us to reach a wide audience and evoked a generous response.

We have received financial assistance from your esteemed readers, a list of which we are sharing below. We wish to thank all of them. We would also like to inform your readers that we are in the process of applying for Section 80G which will enable donors to avail of IT exemption. We will share the details on our Instagram handle: myshelter_forstrays - we request all your readers to subscribe to the handle, and stay updated on our quest to provide medical help and care for strays.

I would also like to mention that the KSA President, Shri Kishore Masurkar saw our appeal on Instagram for an urgent need to replace our worn out five-year-old deep freezer and instantly donated Rs.31,000 towards its cost.

List of donors whom we wish to thank through your magazine:

No.	Name	Amount
1	K.V.Ubhayabharathi	50,000
2	Amitha Kodical	10,000
3	Poornima Tonse	6,000
4	Chaitanya G Kagal	10,001
5	Dinesh Ullal/Sandhya Ullal	2,000
6	Shashank Chickermane	500
7	Sudeep Ullal	10,000
8	Sanjay S Basrur	10,000
9	Dattanand Bangalorekar	25,000
10	Vrinda Nitin Ubhayakar	2,001
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13	K.S Savur	50,000
14	Vinati Kedarnath Udiyavar	10,000
15	Anita Gokarn	5,001
16	Meenakshi Shedde	10,000
17	Kishore Masurkar	31,000

Thanking you

Kishore Kumar Mangalore
7768067610/8799911975

Dear Editor,

On Sunday 19th April 2026 morning, my wife Trupti and I had the privilege of attending 9th Sr. Citizen Pacchi & Mam's Get -together successfully organized by Kanara Saraswat Association (KSA) at Shrimat Anandashram Hall, Talmakiwadi.

It was indeed most memorable event for both of us and the packed audience as well and we all thoroughly enjoyed the music, dance short drama etc. performed by various talented Amchi Artists from Dombivali, Santacruz, Vile Parle, Talmaki Wadi etc.

Among all, the notable performance was of Mrs. Surekha Kodikal from Santacruz West, a young 75-year-old, who performed a medley of Marathi Lavanis with terrific stamina and enthusiasm, defying her age.

The real icing on the cake came from a group of Amchi Pacchis from Saraswat Colony, Santacruz West led by Mrs. Madhu Bajekal. Their excellent Teamwork and impeccable co-ordination in complimenting each other in performing variety of group dances was amazing to watch. I would like to mention here the superb solo graceful dance by Mrs. Anjani Telang, who with her cute childlike looks and smile enthralled the audience, which prompted audience to demand a 'once more' from her, which she obliged.

The entire event was superbly anchored by veteran evergreen anchor, Shri. Sunil Ullal, who with his pleasant and impressive personality, encouraged all senior Amchis in the audience and various Artists to enjoy and celebrate life without fear in their twilight years. Kudos to KSA Volunteers also for assisting him and ensuring the success of this mega event.

Looking forward to attending this annual event next year.

Shivanand Hemmady
Virar (East)

Rates for Classified Advertisements in Kanara Saraswat

For the first 30 words: ₹ 700/- for KSA Members
(Minimum ₹ 735/-) and ₹ 750/- for Non-members.

For every additional word, thereafter:
₹ 25/- +GST 5% on all ads.

All remittances are to be made by D.D. or cheque,
in favour of 'Kanara Saraswat Association'
Or by NEFT

The Editor's Column

Dear Readers,

The heat is on. In more ways than one!

Yes, even as India faces sweltering heat waves interspersed with thunderstorms destroying farmers crops, the ongoing war against Iran has created huge supply constraints of petroleum products. Our country's economy seems all set to face huge challenges in the coming months.

Coming to this edition, our cover story features a painstaking compilation by the Basrur siblings on how their father, the late Major Raghavendra S. Basrur saw action in the north eastern theatre during the Second World War. After the Japanese army surrendered, Major Basrur was in charge of one of the prisoners of war camps, and was presented with a Samurai sword by one of the officers in appreciation for his role. Do read this fascinating tale.

Our own Aamchi management guru, Shankar Mallapur expounds on the term 'anti-fragile' and shares valuable tips on how one can counter it.

From this issue, we are introducing an Aamchi version of the 'Agony Aunt' column, called 'Dear Pachhi.' With Snehal Amembal handling the queries with a touch of light humour from the UK, we hope readers will send in their queries every month, to keep this column going.

Military Musings by Maj Gen B.N. Rao is on the first batch of girl cadets who were commissioned into the Indian Army, Navy and Airforce after successfully completing their three years of gruelling training.

Artificial Intelligence or AI is making the headlines quite frequently...sometimes with the rather depressing news that several jobs are at stake as these can be easily replaced by AI. But there are plenty areas where AI can be used to one's advantage. Dikshita Karopady's article provides us valuable tips on the use of AI in Digital Marketing.

Bharat Savur's Born Free column is an open letter to Rohit Sharma, former India captain in all formats, in which he requests him to drop down the batting order for the upcoming ODIs.

The California Diary by Jaidev Chandavarkar, features the unique concept of 'The One City, One Book' program in Thousand Oaks, that incidentally, finds its roots in a small village in Kerala in 2021.

The Island of Socotra which is part of Yemen, is the subject for Bhakti Ullal's monthly series, Earth Uncovered. With landscapes that look hand-painted by a surrealist artist, Socotra is an island where geography decided to have some fun.

Anjali Burde elaborates on superfoods starting with the letter 'T.' Do check out her 'arbi ki sabzi' recipe.

A prolific writer and author in her own right, this time, Usha Aroor brings us a unique quiz on the meanings of some rarely heard Aamchi words and phrases. Do try guessing the meanings...although it will be very easy to find the answers right below the options!

Bhakti Ullal's poetic travelogue is about her holiday to the Andamans, and the beautiful beaches and historical landmarks.

Many members of our community are in the late 60s and above age group. For their information, Anjali Burde has culled the benefits of the AB PM-JAY medical insurance scheme. We hope readers will find the compilation very useful.

This month in Parisevanam, Archana Kumta and Sangeeta Pawar update on Vandana and Girvanapatrika – the two exciting initiatives from the Department of Sanskrit Studies, Shri Chitrapur Math.

KSA's annual get-together of senior citizens was held on 19th April at the Shrimad Anandashram Hall in Talmakiwadi and was a roaring success. Do read the detailed report by Shreekar Rao (Gersappe).

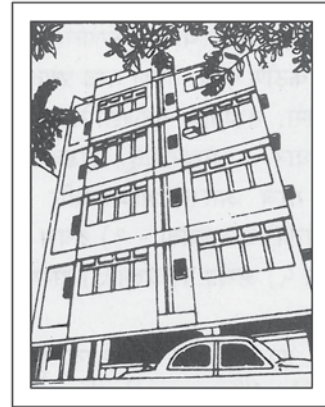
We also have the regular contributions like Sudoku, Saral Sanskritam and Girvanapatrika.

As I conclude, I would like to thank all of you, for your kind response to our report in the February issue, on the stray animals being cared for, by Shweta and her father Kishore Kumar Mangalore. They were thrilled to receive donations from across India and have thanked all the donors in a letter to the editor, which is reproduced on page 6. Happy reading!

Happy reading!

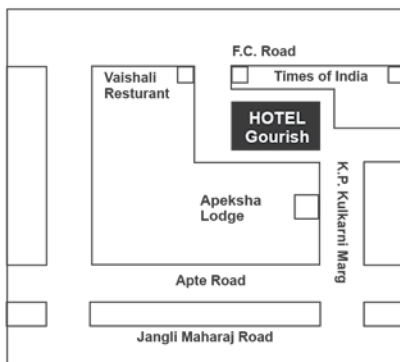
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Cover story

The story of Major Raghavendra S Basrur and the Samurai Sword

CHITRA KATRE, DHANANJAY 'JAI' BASRUR AND MEENA BASRUR

We have always known about the Samurai sword received by our father, Major Raghavendra Shankar Basrur (who we lovingly addressed as Dada) circa 1945. For his wife and his children, the (now late) Ramesh Basrur, Chitra and Dhananjay, it has been a very precious memory. But it was only recently that we lifted it carefully out of its sacred scabbard, and this act took us down memory lane and released many memories and associations with this sword.

Dada was a mechanical and electrical engineer. He graduated from the Poona Engineering College. After starting his career in teaching Applied Mechanics, he was commissioned into the Indian Army in 1941, into the Corps of the then Royal Indian Engineers, the Bengal Engineering Group (Bengal Sappers) which had its regimental headquarters at Roorkee.

By the early 1940s, the Bengal Sappers and Miners were one of the three major Indian sapper groups, providing the engineering backbone of the British Indian Army alongside the Madras and Bombay Sappers. Their soldiers were trained to build and blow bridges, cut roads out of jungle, lay and clear minefields, and improvise under fire, often fighting as infantry when needed.

In 1944, the Japanese launched a bold offensive into India aimed at capturing and laying siege to the great supply base at Imphal and its road link back to Dimapur in the Brahmaputra Valley.

Imphal sat in a bowl of mountains and jungle, with only a few twisting roads and airstrips connecting it to the outside world. As Japanese forces closed in from several directions, Indian divisions withdrew into the Imphal plain and dug in. Among them were companies of the Bengal Sappers and other Indian Engineers, whose job was to keep the lifelines open. On the approaches to Imphal they blew bridges and culverts behind the retreating columns, then threw up temporary crossings for the rearguards to escape, sometimes under direct fire.

Inside the defensive “boxes” around Imphal, engineer sections built bunkers, gun pits, wire, and minefields, often in sodden mud, while shells and mortar bombs fell around them. When Japanese troops infiltrated close to positions, sappers dropped their tools, took up rifles, and

fought as infantry to hold perimeters until regular battalions could counterattack.

Imphal was under siege for several months. (early March to late July 1944).

The whole Allied plan at Imphal rested on air supply—aircraft flew in nearly 19,000 tons of stores and over 12,000 men and evacuated around 13,000 casualties over the course of the siege. Those aircraft depended on engineer-built airstrips carved out and maintained in difficult terrain, kept serviceable despite heavy rain and bombing. The soldiers survived on air-dropped rations of lentils and tinned products.

By mid-July 1944 the Japanese offensive had been broken, largely because the defenders’ logistics and communications—roads, bridges, airfields—never collapsed, and the engineers were central to that outcome.

After the siege of Imphal, Dada found himself in the troop movement through Burma, Thailand, and Indochina, and eventually landed in what was then Malaya. He contracted malaria in this period. He occasionally talked about the tales of starvation and suffering he saw. These left a deep impact on him.

As an engineer, he was in the cohort of forward troops who moved into Malaya to take over the Japanese surrender. This involved him in the construction of bridges and pontoons to support troop movements.

The surrender of Japanese forces in SouthEast Asia was accepted by Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten at Singapore on 12 September 1945, when General Seishiro Itagaki signed on behalf of the Japanese Southern Expeditionary Forces. The surrender documents were signed by senior Japanese commanders and Allied theatre/army commanders; engineers, including Royal Indian Engineers/Indian Engineers.

An anecdote he shared was being handed rusty keys to huge warehouses which were full of opium with a then massive street value. The Japanese were apparently keen on making the local population opium-dependent. Dada was forced to function as a custodian!

Dada shared with fondness his meeting Dr. Datta Mankikar in Malaya during this period. We gather Dr. Mankikar had continued to practice as a

doctor in Malaya, while being virtually imprisoned and subject to severe rationing of supplies. When he met Dada, he apparently asked him for a toothbrush and toothpaste! He used to quip, we Bhanaps fight wars and serve people concurrently.

Dada was a keen photographer, and his constant companion was his trusted camera which he used to photograph some of his colleagues and the regions he visited in this period. The camera travelled in his haversack through the war, alongside his jacket and ration utensils!

As part of the surrender thousands of Japanese soldiers were disarmed and placed in prisoner of war camps. Dada was positioned in charge of one of these and was presented the Samurai by a Japanese officer who appreciated Dada's role. Mutual regard for each other developed despite their relative positions and this caused this amazing gift of the Samurai.

The Samurai sword, known as the katana, is more than just a weapon—it symbolises honour, strength, and tradition in Japanese culture. Crafted with precision and steeped in centuries of history, the katana represents the soul of the samurai warrior. Its sleek design and razor-sharp edge reflect the values of discipline and mastery that defined the samurai class. Beyond its function in battle, the samurai sword carries deep cultural and spiritual meaning, embodying the essence of Japan's warrior spirit. Thus, the katana was not merely a tool for combat—it was a reflection of the samurai's moral code.

Displaying a katana in a home reflects an appreciation for Japanese culture and the enduring legacy of the Samurai. Owning a katana is more than possessing a weapon—it is a connection to a centuries-old tradition of mastery and discipline. The sword's enduring appeal reflects the universal

admiration for strength, focus, and honour. The katana has captured the imagination of people worldwide, appearing in films, books, and video games. Its symbolism of honour, discipline, and artistry resonates deeply across cultures, ensuring its enduring appeal. (Source: samurai-experience.com)

Dada left the Army in 1947 after India got independence to assume a civilian position as Mechanical Cultivation Engineer in the then Bombay State and returned to a settled family life.

When we asked Dada about the Second World War, often in the presence of the Samurai, he hesitated and focused on the lessons this phase had taught him— respect and admiration for Japanese pride, discipline and integrity (there are repeated subsequent instances of these); the ability to relate to people at all levels; courage to face the uncertainties, difficulties and realities of life at each stage; the discipline to never look back; and the need to maintain a sense of humour in adversity. He practised these and encouraged us to do so. He shared his mention in despatches for service but never dwelt on these.

In pensive moments he used to say, 'In wars: lives are lost, people are martyred, and they are forgotten, but sadly wars do not cease; what is the point of all those losses.'

The Samurai therefore means a lot to us. It is more than an object or symbol. For us it is a source of memories, experiential learning, and meaningful lessons from the journey of a dearly loved one.

Information about the katana, source: <https://ourgoodbrands.com/symbolism-samurai-sword-cultural-significance/>

Dhananjay ('Jai') Basrur is married to Meena (nee Kalyanpur). They live in Auckland, New Zealand. They have two adult children. Jai founded and operates a specialist corporate finance and strategy advisory firm. He advises clients globally. He is a company director, member of advisory boards and an advisor to New Zealand Trade and Enterprise where he works with diverse businesses. His current interests include creating connections and collaborations between New Zealand and Indian businesses. He was previously a corporate finance partner with Ernst & Young. Meena is a retired teacher and now enjoys community volunteer work. Jai's email is: jai@cgb.co.nz



Ramesh



Chitra, Dhananjay and Meena with the sword

Chitrapur Heritage Foundation

711 Daylily Court, Langhorne, Pennsylvania, USA

Connecting US Amchis to Chitrapur Math

Founded in 2005, Chitrapur Heritage Foundation (CHF) is a Section 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization and donors receive the maximum charitable deduction allowed by law. The mission of CHF is to provide a vital link for amchis in the US to stay actively connected with our Chitrapur Math and our Guruparampara. Currently, CHF Chapters are located in four main regions across the United States of America. Over the past decade, amchis in the US have supported students' education and promoted sustainable development of the village of Shirali.

The activities of CHF includes:

- Facilitate the collection of annual “Vantiga” payment from every earning Saraswat in the US - “Vantiga” is used to support and maintain the upkeep of our spiritual centres in Bengaluru, Gokarn, Mallapur, Mangaluru, and Shirali.
- Support educational institutions administered by Math-sponsored trusts: Srivali High School, Kotekar Campus of Saraswat Education Society, and Parijnan Vidyalaya.
- Finance the post-primary education of 100 students at the Srivali High School through the “Sponsor-A-Student” Scheme.
- Contribute towards the preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the Chitrapur Saraswat community in the US, by celebrating festivals like Yugadi, Ram Navami, Gokulashtami, Navratri, Diwali, monthly satsang, and Prarthana Varga for children.

CHF is a philanthropic organization that provides an avenue for US-based “amchis” to support the operation and maintenance of Shri Chitrapur Math as well as support the post-primary education of students in Chitrapur, Karla, Mangalore, and Shirali, and women empowerment programs administered by Parijnan Foundation.

CHF is set up with many Corporations/Organizations such as Bristol Myers Squib, Johnson & Johnson etc. to receive Matching Gifts. CHF has also registered with Benevity in order to make it easier to participate in workplace giving programs such as those at Apple, Google, and Microsoft.

**For more information, please contact Arun Heble (arheble@yahoo.com) Tel: +1-215-666-3200
or Pramod Mavinkurve (pmkurve@gmail.com) Tel: 908-616-1497.**



VIṬṬAL CHĀTURMĀSA 2026

30th Chāturmāsa Vratam - Parābhava Saṁvatsara

By H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī, Maṭhādhipati
Of Shrī Chitrāpur Maṭh, Shirali, Uttara Kannada District, Karnataka

29-07-2026 (Wednesday): Āshādḥa Pūrṇimā
(Vyāsapūrṇimā / Gurupūrṇimā)

To

26-09-2026 (Saturday): Bhādrapada Pūrṇimā
(Sīmollaṅghana)

at Shrīmath Anantheshwar Temple

PURAPRAVESHĀ of H.H. Shrimat Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji - Tuesday, 28th July 2026 (6:30 p.m onwards)

Jai Shaṅkar, sādḥaka-s!

By the divine grace of H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī, Maṭhādhipati of Shrī Chitrāpur Maṭh, Shirālī, the divine observance of Their 30th Chāturmāsa Vratam will take place at the sacred Shrīmath Anantheshwar Temple, Viṭṭal, from 29th July 2026 to 26th September 2026.

You are cordially invited to attend all the functions with your family and friends and receive the Blessings of Shrī Bhavānīshaṅkar, Shrīmath Anantheshwar, our revered Guruparamparā and H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī.

We look forward to your enthusiastic co-operation and participation in large numbers in all the functions to make this Chāturmāsa a memorable and unforgettable event.

Convener
Bhavānīshaṅker Kaṇḍlur, Mob: 96860 50341

Shrīmath Anantheshwar Temple Managing Committee
And Committee Members

SEVĀ-S DURING CHĀTURMĀSA – 2026

SHRĪMATH ANANTHESHWAR TEMPLE, VIṬṬAL

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Follows us on



How you can become anti-fragile

SHANKAR MALLAPUR

“Anti-fragile” is a term coined by Nassim Nicholas Taleb in his brilliant book with the same title. It describes systems, things, or entities that benefit or grow stronger from stresses, shocks or disorder.

Anti-fragility goes beyond resilience or bouncing back. It extends the concept of resilient systems that resist shocks and stay the same, while anti-fragile systems improve because of them. The concept of anti-fragility applies across various fields in life, including economics, biology, medicine, and even personal development.

In the area of personal development, you can consider yourself to be anti-fragile when you learn and grow from challenges, failures, and uncertainties instead of being broken by them. This seems contrary to popular advice and belief to avoid stress.

I was a typical executive, prone to the usual stresses and strains of modern corporate life. Till a serious health scare changed my thinking.

Here are some measures I have seen colleagues adopt and I have used some of them.

Embrace Challenges and Failures

Learn from Mistakes: View failures as learning opportunities. Analyze what went wrong and use these insights to improve.

Seek Out Challenges: Regularly step out of your comfort zone to tackle new and challenging tasks. This exposes you to manageable doses of stress that can strengthen your resilience.

Build Diversity in Skills and Knowledge

Diversify Skills: Develop a wide range of skills and interests. This diversity will make you more adaptable to changes and leverage different strengths.

Celebrate Effort, Not Outcome: Focus and enjoy the process of growth rather than only the result. This will help you value the journey, including any setbacks.

Develop Physical and Mental Resilience

Exercise Regularly: Enhance your overall health and capacity to handle stress thru exercise.

Practice Meditation and Mindfulness: Improve your mental resilience, which helps you remain calm and collected under pressure.

Reflect and Adapt

Self-Reflect regularly: Take time to reflect on your experiences, what you’ve learned, and how you can apply those lessons moving forward.

Be and Stay Flexible: Be willing to change your approach based on new information or when something isn’t working. Adaptability is key to anti-fragility.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

The KS Magazine is delighted to announce two separate series for our readers.

This issue has ‘Dear Pachhi’ - our own Aamchi agony aunt, who will answer reader queries and provide advise on small but relatable situations involving family dynamics, neighbours, household tensions or modern etiquette questions. As the questions come from readers, the column will become an interactive feature that encourages people to engage with the magazine.” We invite reader queries to be answered in this column, on editor@kanarasaraswat.in.

Our second initiative, which will start from July/August, is to cover Aamchis who went abroad for studies, stayed on and built successful careers for themselves over many decades. We will start featuring all those who have continued to stay overseas for over 35 years or more. For this, we need our readers to suggest names and contact details of these enterprising Bhanaps. So please start sending in the leads to editor@kanarasaraswat.in : 1. Full Name of the Bhanap; 2. Number of decades that he or she has been staying overseas. 3. Their contact details.

We seek your active participation in ensuring the success of both these endeavours.



Dear Pachhi

The aunt you never knew you needed.

Family dilemmas, neighbourly tensions,
and the small dramas of everyday life —
Pachhi is here to help.

Dear Pachhi,

My husband's cousin has developed the habit of calling him every evening. What started as occasional chats has now become a daily routine, and the calls go on for a very long time.

It means we rarely get a quiet moment to ourselves at the end of the day. I don't want to seem unsupportive of family, but I'm starting to feel like the third wheel in my own living room.

Is there a polite way to handle this?

— Interrupted Evenings

Dear Interrupted,

Paley ma, some families show affection through food, some through advice, and some through very long phone calls.

Your husband's cousin may simply feel comfortable talking to him, which is not a bad thing. But comfort should not mean occupying every evening like a permanent guest in your home.

Start with a gentle conversation with your husband. These habits often build slowly, and people don't always notice how much space they take up.

A small boundary can help — a simple "I only have a few minutes today" or "let's catch up on the weekend" can shift the pattern without creating awkwardness.

You are not rejecting family. You are protecting time that belongs to your own household.

And if the calls continue as before, remember — phones are very clever, but they still cannot answer themselves.

Warmly,

Pachhi

Dear Pachhi,

Since moving away from home, I find it harder to stay meaningfully connected with my parents.

We speak often, but the conversations feel rushed and surface-level. I hang up feeling like I didn't really say anything important.

At the same time, I carry a quiet guilt. I know they are getting older, and I worry I'm missing time I won't get back.

How do I stay connected in a way that feels more real?

— Far but Feeling It

Dear Feeling It,

Paley ma, distance changes relationships in quiet ways.

When we live close, connection happens naturally — through small, everyday moments. When we move away, we try to fit that same connection into scheduled calls, and it can feel like it's never enough.

But connection is not measured in how much you say in one conversation. It is built over many small moments.

A quick message during the day, a photo shared without occasion, or a short call where you simply listen — these often matter more than long, pressured conversations.

And the guilt you feel is not a sign of failure. It is a sign of love.

You are balancing many responsibilities and still thinking of them. That already means something.

Be gentle with yourself. Relationships don't disappear with distance — they simply find new ways to exist.

Warmly,

Pachhi

Pachhi's Wisdom

Paley ma — love doesn't need perfect conversations, just consistent presence.

Readers may send their queries to Pachhi on editor@kanarasaraswat.in mentioning 'Dear Pachhi' in the Subject.

When They Marched In: A Chronicle of NDA's First Daughters

MAJ GEN B N RAO, AVSM, VSM & BAR (RETD)

On 30th May 2025, 17 out of 19 girl cadets who were the first to join the National Defence Academy (two were relegated and would pass out six months later) stepped on to the *antim pag* of the Quarter Deck to pass out of the NDA after successfully completing three years of gruelling training in the Academy. These 17 girls made history again when they passed out of their respective Academies (Army/Navy/Air Force) in end May 2026 as commissioned officers in the regular armed forces. These girls had scripted their names in the annals of history making their parents, Indian womankind and all of India proud of their splendid achievement.

There was a lot of buzz when the Government first decided to grant regular commission to women officers by inducting them through the NDA, thus far a male-only domain. It required a lot of preparation, revising rules and regulations, redesigning and modifying cadet accommodation for females, rewriting orders for discipline and honour code, dress regulations for the Lady Cadets and many other aspects that would affect their daily lives.

Who better than Maj Gen Sanjeev Dogra who happened to be the Deputy Commandant of NDA when the 19 girls first reported to the Academy to write about those early days.

In his view –

“They arrived not with fanfare, but with grit stitched quietly into their hearts. It was July 2022. The monsoon had just begun to sweep through Pune, soaking its ancient streets and distant hills. On a platform at Pune railway station, nineteen girls in civilian attire assembled after stepping off long-distance trains—duffle bags in hand, nerves tight, and eyes wide with the anticipation of history and life in the military.

A tall drill Ustad with a chest full of ribbons and a moustache trained by generations stood waiting. His voice, when it came, was sharp yet proud. “From this moment, you are not civilians. You represent the Indian Armed Forces. The country is watching. Walk like one, carry yourself like one.” Startled into attention, they fell in. That line would stay with them long after their boots had left Platform No. 1.

The convoy moved through a city rich in martial legacy—Shaniwar Wada and Sinhagad ever reminding everybody of its historical past. The vehicles proceeded through the rolling expanse of Pune Camp, past Savitribai Phule Pune University,

via the DRDO Necklace towards the placid waters of Khadakvasla Lake. The Tri-Shakti Gate of NDA loomed ahead. They passed through it slowly, uncertain but proud.

They were led to R(omeo) Squadron, part of which had been refurbished with care and attention to detail. Enhanced lighting, secure fencing, designated lady duty officers, and minor layout changes weren't signs of separation—they were signs of a thoughtful institution preparing its daughters for battle, not merely hosting them. Behind the scenes, months of preparation had taken place: security protocols were redefined, a new code of conduct evolved, and traditions, long steeped in a male-only legacy were revisited and modernised: without losing their essence. From day one, the message was clear: the Academy was not making exceptions. It was making history.

As they looked around, the scale of their leap became evident. Nineteen girls. Over 2200 male cadets. The odds were overwhelming. But so was the pride. What played in their minds? Perhaps uncertainty. Perhaps resolve. But definitely this: that nineteen of them would be course-mates for life, joined by the most powerful bond the Academy forges—camaraderie born out of tough training, shared fire, struggle, and purpose. They were course - mates, and that meant everything.

The first term hit like a monsoon storm; early mornings, drill square corrections, endless PT, obstacle courses, academic classes, and military routines so tightly packed that even blinking seemed a luxury. The Drill Instructors, or *Ustads*, roared louder than the skies. But beneath their thunder, they watched over the cadets like elder brothers—strict, disciplined, but fiercely protective. They were quick to punish, but quicker to acknowledge effort.

The Physical Training Instructors (PTIs) were quieter, more methodical. Their task: transform girls into soldiers—agile, strong, and enduring. The obstacle course, log races, fireman lifts, and punishing endurance runs built more than muscle. They built belief and self confidence.

And then came the academic classes—held in the imposing Sudan and Manoj Pandey Blocks. Cadets rushed in after morning drills, breathless, still catching their last sips of tea. Subjects ranged from international relations to military history, physics to geopolitics, and foundation-level knowledge of

all three services. Some cadets found themselves so exhausted that the line between blinking and dozing was often just one nod—a scene familiar to every cadet ever trained at NDA.

But the girls held their own. In classrooms, on quiz fields, in lectures by decorated officers—they asked questions, gave answers, and soaked in knowledge that would serve them far beyond the classroom.

If the classrooms sharpened their minds, it was the outdoor camps that tested their soul. Living under canvas, rationing biscuits, learning cross-country navigation, reading maps in rain-soaked darkness, leading squads through unfamiliar terrain, surviving on cold meals and camaraderie—this was where officers were made. The girls didn't just survive. They led. They developed a natural camaraderie with their male course-mates, forged through shared mud, grime, bruises, and laughs.

The Divisional Officers, who oversee the training, grooming, and overall development of cadets, played a pivotal role in this journey. Beyond their instructional responsibilities, they became mentors, moral anchors, and guiding forces. By the time a cadet completes sixth term, the Divisional Officer has already shaped their mind-sets, value systems, and leadership character with subtle precision and enduring influence.

By third term, jokes flew in the ante-rooms. By fourth term, they were picking each other up after falls, literally and figuratively. By sixth term, they no longer looked like “the first batch of girl cadets.” They looked and behaved like leaders.

Life at NDA has a rhythm. You don't control it; it shapes you. The soul of NDA lives in the scent of wet parade boots, ironed uniforms, and monsoon-washed earth. It lingers in the echo of commands at dawn and laughter at dusk. It's in the quiet pride, the shared fatigue, and the invisible thread of honour that binds every cadet, forever and always.

The cadets marched on the Khetarpal Parade Ground, and gathered in the ante-rooms for daily orders. They ran cross-country, acted in plays, won debates, and sang in cultural evenings. They excelled in obstacle races, led squads in drill, and became appointments in squadrons. They took the ethos of NDA—**service before self, integrity beyond reproach, leadership through action**—and made it their second skin. Today, they're fully integrated into squadrons, routines, punishments, privileges, and pride. They are part of the traditions now: not just recipients of it, but custodians.

When parents visited on midterms or designated days, they saw a transformation few could have

imagined. The girl who left home was gone. In her place stood a cadet—taller, steadier, sharper in salute, firmer in values. For the parents, what began in apprehension ended in admiration. Even the sceptics among veterans now salute the transformation. The system had worked. The girls had adapted. And most importantly—NDA had grown stronger.

Now, they prepare to leave for the next phase: IMA, INA, AFA. But this time, they won't be nineteen among thousands. They'll be officer cadets expected to lead, to excel, and to carry the NDA standard forward. They'll face tough competition—not only from female peers but also male counterparts across academies. They'll be tested in leadership, operations, technology, and ethics. And they'll have to lead in an environment shaped by Operation Sindoor, where the lines of warfare are blurred and expectations from every officer are sharper than ever.

In the future, they may command platoons, manage logistics in contested zones, pilot aircraft, direct satellite operations, or manage battlefield communication grids.

But wherever they go, the true compass will remain values—those etched into them at NDA. They will need to be courageous in thought and deed; ethical in command and conduct; humble in success, and resilient in setback. Technologically aware, tactically sound, and emotionally grounded. And always, deeply rooted in service before self.

They came as nineteen girls. They leave as trailblazers. And in doing so, they didn't just become part of NDA history. They made it.”

It is believed that one may leave the NDA but the NDA never leaves him. Being ex-NDA myself, I can vouch for it. The three years spent in the Academy were the best years of our lives. All of my course-mates still remember RSM A Ling of the Irish Guards yelling at us on our arrival at the Academy to forget our fathers and mothers. He promised to convert us from milkshake drinking school boys into whisky guzzling soldiers.

And the Commandant, Rear Admiral B A Samson said, the Academy would train us to be humble enough to eat with the poor and fit enough to dine with kings. To be magnanimous in victory and resilient in defeat.

I dare say they both succeeded in their promises beyond expectations. The ethos of NDA—service before self, integrity beyond reproach, leadership through action becomes the way of life for all ex-NDA officers.

AI and Digital Marketing: A Simple Guide for our Amchi Community

DIKSHITA KAROPADY

If you think of the old Mangalore stores, we grew up visiting, you'll remember how Karnad maam knew everything about you. He knew which *lonche* you preferred, how often you bought *Piyava Vodiyo*s, and even reminded you that a new stock of coconut oil has come! That personal touch made all the difference.

Today, the world has moved online, but that same “knowing the customer” is still the heart of business. This is where Artificial Intelligence, or AI, comes in. Think of AI as that smart Mangalore store owner, but working at a much larger scale, remembering thousands or even millions of customers at once.

What is Digital Marketing?

Before we understand AI's role, let's simplify digital marketing. It is simply promoting products or services using the internet—through platforms like Google, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, or websites. Instead of putting an ad in a newspaper, businesses now reach people through their phones.

But here's the challenge: there are too many people online, and each person has different preferences. This is where AI becomes powerful.

So, What Exactly Is AI & How Is It Related to Digital Marketing?

Think of AI as an extraordinarily sharp assistant who has read every book, watched every pattern, and learned from every mistake — but never sleeps, never takes a holiday, and never forgets. It doesn't feel emotions, but it is remarkably good at *predicting* them.

Imagine our Chandavar pachi's *lonche* business. *She* wants to sell her signature *lonche* online. Traditionally, she'd put up an advertisement in Kanara Saraswat and hope the right people see it.

With AI, the system studies thousands of data points: Who bought Amchi pickles before? What time of day do they shop? Do they also buy kokum or coconut oil? Are they based in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Pune or even San Jose? Let's call this data.

Based on all this data, AI places Chandavar pachi's *lonche* advertisement *only* in front of the

most likely buyers — saving money, time, and dramatically increasing the chances of a sale.

Let's understand what this means!

Understanding Chandavar pachi's Customer Preferences

AI studies what people search, click, watch, and buy. For example, if someone keeps looking at fitness videos, AI understands their interest and starts showing ads for gym memberships or healthy food. It's like our Karnad maam remembering that you always buy coconut oil at the end of each month and keeping it ready.

Personalized Recommendations

Have you noticed how Netflix or YouTube suggests content you actually like? That's AI at work. In marketing, this means showing the right product to the right person at the right time.

Saving Time and Effort

Earlier, marketing teams had to manually decide where to advertise and what to say. Now AI can do this in seconds. It can test multiple ads, understand which one works best, and automatically improve it.

Chatbots and Customer Support

When you visit a website and see a chat box answering your questions instantly, that's often AI.

Opportunities for Small Businesses & the Road Ahead

For Amchis running small businesses - be it a home food venture, a boutique, or a local service - AI opens up exciting possibilities.

Earlier, only large companies could afford advanced marketing. Today, even a small Mangalore store can:

- Reach customers beyond its locality
- Promote products on Instagram or WhatsApp
- Understand what customers want
- Automate responses and orders

For example, if someone is running a homemade pickle or idli batter business, AI tools can help identify nearby customers who are likely to buy, suggest the best time to post online, and even

create attractive content. For everyday life, AI tools like ChatGPT can help you draft a letter to your housing society, plan a week of meals around a Saraswat diet, or even summarise a long legal document- all in plain, simple language.

Our Amchi community has always prided itself on education, adaptability, and enterprise. From the administrators of the Bombay Presidency to the pioneers of Indian banking and law - we have never shied away from embracing what the times demand.

So, don't think of AI in digital marketing as a threat. It is an invitation — to do what we have always done best.

Adapt. Excel. Lead.

Dikshita Karopady is a Senior Marketing professional with over a decade of experience across Banking, Technology, and Media. Passionate about simplifying complex ideas, she enjoys bringing together technology and everyday life through relatable storytelling.

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Veteran Winners

BHARAT SAVUR

Muhammad Ali is my most-famous figure of a fighter successfully punching above his weight – literally – to win. Starting with his Olympic debut in Rome (1960) to the time he retired (1981), Ali contested in a category above his own light-heavyweight status. To successfully win the world's heavyweight title three times. George Foreman, his opponent in the famous 1974 'rumble in the jungle' in Zaire, lost his rumble then and there. Later on, he lost all that he had financially gained. Facing financial ruin, Foreman contested the heavyweight title at age 45 and won. The oldest boxer to do so.

In cricket, true to his timing, Usman Khawaja kicked back in his last Test. He lashed out at both racism and critics of his attitude to Tests by announcing his retirement this year before the final Ashes Test at Sydney. Though he did not set the stadium on fire, Khawaja walked proudly into the sunset. The English team gave him a guard of honour by lining up man to man. Australian spectators, simultaneously, gave Khawaja a standing ovation. Compensating for their countrymen's 'racist' accusation and at the same time recognizing Khawaja's contribution in always fighting for his adopted country.

With the above as background, I come to the subject of this column – Rohit Sharma. To whom I've written this open letter:

Dear Rohit,

I've tailed and tracked you ever since I first saw you bat in a Test in Australia some seasons ago. I loved what I saw. Your cover drive was copy-book perfect. It was about as good as that of Zaheer Abbas – one of the master batters of that illustrious stroke. I don't remember whether Kohli played that particular series. If he did, he could have slipped below your shadow. For your drives along the ground, especially into the covers could have graced the covers of a book dedicated to batting technique.

To come to the purpose of this letter, something went wrong when some commentator, on TV or in the press, called you 'the hit man'. Perhaps he stressed on the last syllable in your name to

describe you. Somehow, it doesn't define you. Just doesn't become you. Sure, you can hit the long ball. You're placed right up there with the select-sixer elite. Please reflect on my reasoning. Your skill is set on timing much more than it is on power alone. David Warner, your peer with his boxer-build and muscle, was a natural. Especially as opener. If I remember right, Gautam Gambhir challenged him to match his Australian sixers in India. He could not. And Warner's form declined progressively. Ultimately, he had more and more misses than hits. Eventually, he was left out.

I liked the way you led India as skipper. Choosing the bowler at the right time to the right field – and fix the player best-suited for the position was your preserve. As was your fielding whether at first slip or mid-off/mid-on. What eventually let you down was your decision to open the innings in the ODIs. And the way you've gone about it. Time after time, innings after recent innings, you look good. And then throw it away – against the run of play.

May I suggest the way out? Take a drop to number six. 'To express yourself' as you dudes describe it. India, then, could play long and strong innings with you to anchor the lower middle order. This is your best bet to retain your place in the ODI XI.

The heavens won't fall if you don't open. Doors could open instead. Just like they did for Bob Simpson. He returned from retirement to lead Australia in the Packer period. His tally of 500 plus in the 1977-78 series against India made the winning difference. Australia won 3:2 in an epic Test series.

Rohit, these are instances I've written to both inspire you and help shed your stubbornness to heed the call to your fatal, "I will play the same shot.' (The lofted six over mid-wicket and mid-on.) Age is but a number. Above all, to 'thine own self be true.'

NB: I am the script-writer of 'That's Cricket' on television; anchored by Ravi Shastri.

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CALIFORNIA NOTEBOOK

A glimpse of what it is like to live in California

JAIDEV CHANDAVARKAR

The One City One Book Program

The One City, One Book (OCOB) program in Thousand Oaks is an annual community-wide literary celebration that brings residents together through a shared reading experience. This program highlights the power of literature to connect people, ignite thought-provoking discussions, and strengthens our sense of being **ONE** community.

The unofficial motto of the program says it eloquently and succinctly: “When we open a book together, we close it in greater harmony.” The program hopes to showcase how storytelling can inspire, unite, and even enrich our collective experience. The book chosen (*this happens once a year*) is usually announced in mid-March. Then, for about six weeks, local libraries organize events that highlight themes from the book chosen. Book clubs all over the city discuss the book, and compile questions for the author to address. At the end of the six weeks, the author arrives in Thousand Oaks and addresses local residents and answers questions. One of the criteria behind book selections is to highlight the diversity of ethnicities among creative writers working in the United States; so, over the years, we have read OCOB books written by Indian American writers, (*Alka Joshi, 2024*), Mexican American writers, black writers, and white writers.

This year, the book chosen was “The Fox Wife” by Yangsze Choo. Yangsze Choo was born in the Philippines to a Malaysian family of Chinese descent. Her father was a diplomat, and so, she spent her formative years in Thailand, Germany, Japan and Singapore. Her debut novel “The Ghost Bride” was published in 2013. “The Fox Wife” is her third and latest novel and was published in 2024. A common theme that runs through her books is the magical realism that is so prominent in Asian, particularly Chinese folklore and culture.

The book blends historical fiction and a murder mystery and involves Chinese mythology about animal spirits that have the power to assume human shape. One of the central characters in the book is Snow. Snow is a fox spirit, who is seeking revenge for the killing of her baby fox, and

invokes her power of assuming a human shape to get that revenge. The story is a complicated one, but a well-told one.

In the book club that I run at the Thousand Oaks Library, we discussed the book, and while most members enjoyed the narrative flow and the author’s sheer storytelling power, they were a little lost in the meandering movements of a very convoluted story line. The majority consensus of our book discussion group was that “The Fox Wife” skillfully wove Chinese animal spirit mythology with Manchurian folklore and culture.

The One City One Book program is not unique to the United States. But the idea was born here in the US, in 1998, in Seattle, Washington. Its originator was Nancy Pearl, a librarian at the Seattle Public Library and the first book ever to be discussed city-wide was “The Sweet Hereafter” by Russell Banks. From that starting point in 1998, the program grew rapidly, and by now, in 2026, to over 400 cities in the US. It has spread internationally too – for example, the city of Dublin, Ireland, started a similar program called “One Dublin, One Book” in 2006. India, too has OCOB programs in Mumbai and Delhi.

But the most heartwarming development in India is the creation of such reading programs in small towns and villages. Did you know that the village of Perumkulam, in Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala, started a “One Village One Read” program in 2021? The total population of Perumkulam is only 19,000 people. But it was designated as a “Pusthaka Gramam” or “Book Village” because the village had 14 physical locations within a tiny village where residents could borrow books from!! It is not just urban Indians who experience the joy of reading and sharing that joy with the broader community. Hungry minds and hearts are found everywhere, and there is always scope for uplifting initiatives such as the One City One Book Program.

Email: chitransai@gmail.com



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Day 1	Arrival of all the Yatris to Nashik Holiday Home (NHH) till 12 Noon. Post Lunch Visit to Gargoti Museum, Sinnar Visit to Shree Samarth Ramdas Math, Takli 7 pm:- Godavari Aarti at Ramkund (Godavari Ghat) Visit to Shree Sharadamba Temple (Shringeri Shankarayacharya Math) and Kalaram Mandir in Panchavati. Dinner at NHH
Day 2	Morning 6 am – Departure to Trimbakeshwar, Coins Musuem (Indian Institute for Research in Numismatic Studies). Someshwar Mahadev Mandir, Balaji Devasthan and Someshwar Water Front. 11 am – Visit to Sula Wines. (Wine Tasting and Tour) Lunch at NHH Departure to Swantantrayaveer Vinayak Damodar Sawarkar, Residence (Now a Musuem) in Bhagur Followed by Visit to Artillery Centre Museum and Anna Ganpati Mandir, Devlali Dinner at NHH
Day 3	Morning 6 am – Departure to Shirdi (Saibaba Samadhi) Lunch at Shirdi. Further Proceed to Shani-Shingnapur (Famous Temple of Shanidev) Dinner also enroute to Nashik
Day 4	Morning 8 am - Breakfast at NHH. Departure to Shree Saptashrung Niwasini Devi Devasthan (Vani Devi) Onwards Departure to Saputara Hill Station. Dinner at NHH
Day 5	Breakfast at NHH. Free time. Guests to leave at their convenience Check out at 12 Noon.

The above itinerary is suggestive and subject to change to suit the needs of the group.

For further details, queries and booking contact:

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The Island That Never Learned to Be Ordinary

BHAKTI ULLAL

‘The most alien place around the Earth isn’t in space. It’s here on Earth.’

That was how a scientist once described Socotra Island—and honestly, it wasn’t an exaggeration.

Floating in the north-west Indian Ocean like a forgotten thought, Socotra belongs to Yemen but feels as if it drifted in from another planet and decided to stay. About one-third of its plant life exists nowhere else on Earth. Let that sink in. If the Earth were a museum, Socotra would be the room with the velvet rope, the warning sign, and the whispered gasp: “*You have to see this.*”

Socotra is an island where geography decided to have a little fun; the trees bleed red, flowers look like fireworks frozen mid-burst, and nature seems to have experimented freely, without checking the rulebook. It split from the ancient supercontinent Gondwana millions of years ago. While the rest of the world shuffled continents, swapped species, and held evolutionary meetings, Socotra stayed put—isolated, windswept, and stubbornly original. That long loneliness turned it into a biological time capsule, where plants and animals evolved in wonderfully strange directions.

The result? Landscapes that look hand-painted by a surrealist artist with a flair for drama. Limestone plateaus stretch like cracked porcelain. Mountains rise abruptly from the sea. Deserts meet palm-lined *wadis* (Arabic term for valleys or ravines) where freshwater flows quietly, as if in on a secret.

NASA scientists once compared satellite images of Socotra to Mars. The difference, of course, is that on Socotra, life flourishes—oddly, bravely, and beautifully.

A Landscape that defies the Imagination
If Socotra had a mascot, it would undoubtedly be the **Dragon Blood Tree**. With its mushroom-shaped crown and thick, twisting trunk, it looks like an umbrella designed by a fantasy novelist. When its bark is cut, it oozes a deep red resin—earning it the dramatic name that has inspired myths for centuries.

Local legends say this resin is the blood of

dragons slain in ancient battles. Medieval traders believed it held magical powers. In reality, it was used for medicine, dyes, varnish for violins, and even cosmetics. Today, it’s a symbol of the island itself—rare, ancient, and vulnerable.

Nearby grows another Socotran oddity: the **Desert Rose**, a bulbous plant that looks like it swallowed all the water in the desert and decided to store it for later. Its pink flowers burst unexpectedly from a swollen trunk, like a reminder that beauty often arrives where you least expect it.

And then there’s the **Cucumber Tree**, which is neither cucumber nor particularly tree-like, but smells faintly fresh when cut—nature playing a practical joke, again.

Socotra doesn’t have large predators or iconic megafauna. Instead, it specialises in small wonders. Reptiles skitter across rocks, many found nowhere else. Birds sing songs unique to the island, including the Socotra sunbird, which flashes jewel-like colours against stark landscapes.

Even the bats have an air of mystery, fluttering out at dusk over cliffs that drop dramatically into the sea. The lack of competition and predators allowed these species to evolve in peace, like artists working without deadlines.

What Socotra lacks in big animals, it makes up for in intimacy. Life here feels close, personal, and quietly miraculous.

People shaped by wind, sea, and patience
The island’s human inhabitants are as fascinating as its flora. Socotrans have lived here for thousands of years, developing a culture shaped by isolation and resilience. They speak **Soqotri**, a language older than Arabic and still largely unwritten, passed down through songs and stories.

Goat herding remains central to life, and you’ll often see herders moving slowly across plateaus, silhouetted against enormous skies. Fishing villages hug the coastline, their boats painted in bright colours that defy the muted tones of land and sea.

Hospitality here isn’t performative—it’s instinctive. A visitor is offered tea, food, and

conversation, even when resources are limited. Life on Socotra teaches you something quietly radical: survival doesn't require excess, just balance.

For months each year, fierce monsoon winds isolate Socotra completely. Ships stop arriving. Flights are grounded. The island turns inward. Supplies are rationed. Life slows.

Instead of fighting this, the people adapt. They wait. They mend nets, tell stories, repair homes, and trust that the winds will eventually calm—as they always have.

In a world obsessed with speed and instant gratification, Socotra practices something almost extinct: patience as a way of life.

A miracle worth protecting
Socotra was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008, recognised as one of the most biodiverse places on Earth. But recognition doesn't guarantee protection.

Climate change threatens rainfall patterns. Overgrazing endangers young Dragon Blood Trees that struggle to regenerate. Political instability has made conservation challenging, and tourism—while bringing awareness—must be handled with extreme care.

Socotra's magic lies in its fragility. Too much attention, handled poorly, could erase the very uniqueness that draws people to it.

Socotra isn't just an island; it's a reminder of what Earth can do when left to dream uninterrupted. A reminder that evolution isn't always efficient—it's creative. A reminder that isolation can produce not emptiness, but abundance.

Scientists study Socotra to understand resilience, adaptation, and survival in extreme environments. Artists and writers visit to remember how imagination feels. Travellers leave changed, carrying home a sense that the world is far stranger and more beautiful than they realised.

Standing beneath a Dragon Blood Tree, watching its shadow stretch across ancient stone, you may feel something unexpected—not excitement, but humility. Socotra doesn't demand your attention or seek your approval. It simply exists, confidently strange, patiently waiting.


And perhaps that's its greatest lesson.

In an age pulling everything toward sameness, Socotra poses a quiet, unsettling question: *What if being different is not a problem to solve—but a miracle to protect?*

Once Socotra takes hold of your imagination, it does not let go. It stays with you like the echo of a half-forgotten dream, a whisper that the Earth still holds secrets—and that some of them are worth pausing for.


Sudoku June-2026				Level - Medium			
	5					8	
	7			5		2	
		9	3		1	5	
1			5	7	8		4
2			4	9	6		5
		7	8		5	4	
	1			2			6
	8						5

Solution on page 42



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Superfoods –T

ANJALI BURDE

Let us see some super-foods which begin with the letter T.

Tomato- This commonly used versatile vegetable is actually an edible berry. Although native to South America tomatoes are now cultivated and consumed worldwide. Eaten raw as a salad, tomato with onions as its regular counterpart, finds its way into several Indian gravies and curries. It is also used to prepare chutneys to pair with idli-dosa and also sauces for pizzas and pasta. Tomato ketchup is a universal accompaniment. Equally popular is tomato soup.

The lycopene content gives them their bright red colour, while vitamin C and beta-carotene boost immunity, improve skin tone and elasticity. Lycopene and potassium make it heart friendly. Lutein, calcium, vitamin K help in improving eye health and strengthening bones. The water content and fibre improves gut health and promotes weight loss.

Raw as well as cooked tomatoes are healthy to eat but cooking with oils like olive oil helps in better absorption of lycopene.

Turmeric- this common spice in Indian kitchens has been used over thousands of years. Turmeric contains a potent compound curcumin that not only gives it the bright yellow colour, but also imparts medicinal powers.

An anti-inflammatory compound which neutralizes free radicals and protects the cells from damage, it is also known for its anti-microbial activity. When paired with black pepper the absorption of curcumin increases manifold. Being fat soluble, consuming it with meals containing healthy fats improves its absorption. It is also a natural remedy for reducing nerve pain and nerve damage. Small amounts of turmeric as part of our daily diet is generally safe but consuming turmeric supplements should always be in consultation with your doctor.

Turmeric also finds its way into beauty products particularly for skin-care.

Saraswat delicacies like patholi and kadamb are prepared using fresh turmeric leaves as a wrapping. When added to 'cheppi kheer' the leaves impart a distinct aroma.

Taro leaves and roots- Also known as colocassia leaves, arbi patta or alu paan the leaves and roots of the taro plant are widely consumed in all parts

of India.

Most commonly the leaves are used to prepare alu vadi or patrodho also called as patra in Gujarati, a popular snack.

The leaves are also cooked as a vegetable with peanuts and chana dal. The roots called as arbi or kachalu are used to prepare fritters, chaat or cooked with curd and spices to make a sabzi.

Taro leaves are a rich source of vitamin A, vitamin C, iron and folate. Being low in calories and high in fibre makes them ideal for a weight loss diet. The calcium content helps in maintaining good bone health.

Taro roots are also nutritious. It's high amounts of dietary fibre helps in digestion and promotes gut health. The potassium content helps in managing BP and supporting heart health. It is also a good source of Vitamin E and Vitamin B6 which are important for immunity and metabolic health. Compared to other root vegetables, taro roots contain resistant starch which is better for managing blood sugar levels.

Both the leaves and roots cause itchy skin and mouth hence they should always be cooked with tamarind or amchur to neutralize these effects.

Sharing the recipe of **arbi ki sabzi**

Ingredients- 5-6 medium sized arbi thoroughly washed

3 tbsp oil; 1 tsp red chilli powder; ½ tsp turmeric powder A generous pinch of hing; ¼ tsp ajwain

2 tsp dhania jeera powder; ½ tsp of amchur; ¾ cup thick curds; 1 tsp roasted gram (phutana dal) powder; salt to taste. Some fresh coriander for garnish

Method: Boil the arbi till tender but not mushy. Peel the skins and cut into thick roundels. Beat the curds with the roasted gram powder and add the dry spices except the hing and ajwain. Mix well and keep aside. Heat oil in a pan. Add the hing and ajwain, then add the arbi and fry lightly till they change colour and turn slightly crisp. Add the curds with the masalas and continue to fry on medium heat till the arbi pieces are well coated. Add little water, stir till the mixture boils, cover and cook for few minutes till it gets a thick gravy like consistency. Add the salt, mix well and garnish with fresh coriander. Serve hot with chapatti or phulka.

॥ सरलसंस्कृतम् ॥

45.1 Fill in the blank with the correct word given in the box below. 3rd Vibhakti is being used in the sentences which denotes instrument. Other applications are also interesting.

1. गौरी सुन्दरैः पुष्पैः मालां गुम्फितवती ।
Gauri wove the garland **with beautiful flowers**.

2. सुधीरः दुग्धेन शिवलङ्गस्य अभिषेकं करोति ।
Sudhir anointed the Shivalinga **with milk**.

3. ----- गृहस्य भित्तिः शोभते ।
The wall of the house looks beautiful **with the new painting**.

4. भगवान् विष्णुः ----- राक्षसान् संहरति ।
Lord Vishnu kills demons **with the Sudarshana chakra**.

5. ----- जीवनं न शक्यम् ।
It is not possible to live **without water**.

6. दोसा ----- खादतु ।
Eat the dosa **with chutney**.

7. जीत्वरं दलं ----- गतवान् ।
The winning team went away **with the prize**. **By reading** in the morning we understand the subject properly.

8. प्रभाते ----- वयं विषयं सुचारुं रित्या अवगच्छामः ।

9. ----- श्रवणक्षमता न्यूनीभवति ।
Noise pollution causes hearing loss.

10. ----- किं प्रयोजनम् ।
What is the point of **quarreling**?

11. गायकः ----- मनः रञ्जयति ।
The singer delights the mind **with a song**.

12. सः ----- कार्यालयं गमिष्यति ।
He will go to the office **by bus**.

सुदर्शनचक्रेण	पारितोषिकेण सह	लोकयानेन	पठनेन
ध्वनीप्रदूषणेन	उपसेचनेन सह		कलहेन
नूतनेन चित्रेण	गीतेन	जलेन विना	

Answers given on Page 42

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KONQUIZ!

USHA AROOR

Highlighted transcribed words below need refining for the nasal sound, also the dz sound for 'j' in a word like jallen

This Konkani quiz features random words and phrases, some perhaps unfamiliar to us as they have moved out of common use. I've always been interested in these and look to help to make a collection, also help with making the definitions more accurate.

I do not like tests and competitions, and so this quiz is not intended to be a test, just a guess before the answer—thus a learning quiz with a hint in the example, and the answer provided right after.

ghaisok (घाईसोक)

Makka ghaisok jallo when I heard that he was a thief

sense of sadness
great shock
feeling of guilt



Answer: (b) great shock, the extreme end of *aashcharya*

khauNtsaaNi (खौण्ट्साणी)

We've kept the *unde* (laddus) too long. There is a *khauNtsaaNi* in the taste.

staleness
bitterness
loss of taste

Answer: (a) a complex word meaning staleness with a bitter-ish aftertaste

kaLkaaⁿ kaLLi/kaLLo (काळ्कां काळ्ळी/काळ्ळो)

They told everyone the secret, *makka* *maatra* *kaLkaaⁿ kaLLi*.

told me later
kept it from me
told me only a part



Answer: (b) Very similar to and literally 'kept me in the dark'. The dark signifies many things, here ignorance. There is also a sense of complaint, otherwise the person would have said, '*Makka sangani*', didn't tell me.

somaLeⁿ (सोमाळें)

I like my bath water *somaLeⁿ* as it's summer.

warm
cold
tepid

Answer: (c) Closer to cold than hot, also used for food, beverages etc. Another word is *be(t)chak*, but this word is generally used only for water used for baths, medicines etc

ubaantri rablyaa/rablaa (उबांतरी राब्ल्या/राब्ला) *tee/toh ubaantri rablyaa/rablaa* to hear the good news.

waiting impatiently
waiting a long time
waiting with curiosity

Answer: (a) waiting on one's toes, so to speak; a person *ubaantri* is impatient, literally, standing, waiting.

maatobhaar (मातोभार)

They are doing well in life and are now very wealthy, but I wish they'd remember older times and didn't have such *maatobhaar*.

pride
happiness
conceit

Answer: (c) Literally 'a heavy head', meaning very self-regarding in a kind of superior way

paramursheⁿ jalleⁿ (परमुरशे जाल्ले)

Please forgive me, it just happened, *paramursheⁿ jalleⁿ*.

happened unexpectedly
happened inadvertently
happened very fast

Answer: (b) A formal way of pointing out that a mistake was committed unintentionally, inadvertently. Asking to be forgiven is implicit in the phrase. More simply, one would say, 'Kshama kari, tsukkun jalleⁿ.'

rubaab (रूबाब)

They never answer us properly, always look the other way, they have a lot of *rubaab*.

conceit
worries
secrecy

Answer: (a) *Rubaab* is a few degrees stronger than *ahankaar* or *garv*, and is more judgemental.

armarav (अरुमरव)

I was in bed and didn't hear the gate downstairs being opened. Was a little *armarav*.

not alert
not listening
not fully awake

Answer: (c) An unusual word for a state of sleep. (There must be other words for other states of sleep, as there are words for different kinds of pain/ache?)

nishileⁿ ingLo (नीशिलें लें इंगळों)

He just doesn't pause,
is all the time *nishileⁿ ingLo*.

in a huge hurry
unable to understand
in great anxiety



Answer: (a) *nishileⁿ* = what (s)he's worn, referring, literally, to loose clothes like a dhoti or sari; *inglo* = live coal. So the image is that of a live coal stuck in your clothes and you need to run to get it to fall off. Thus, someone in a tearing hurry to do things has *nishileⁿ inglo*. An interesting image!

lavaantaar (लावां तार)

She went into such a *laavaantaar* because we were not taking her out with us.

fuss
tantrum
sulk



Answer: (b) A tantrum which happens when something doesn't take place as expected, is delayed etc, for example, an appointment is cancelled

baNNa aiNO (बण्णा ऐणो)

We found he has no real achievements, is a *baNNa aiNo*.

impression which is misleading
a great show-off
a bad actor

Answer: (a) A *baNNa aiNo* (= brightly painted fan), is a derogatory way of referring to someone who appears to us to be something wonderful or flamboyant (hence *baNNa* = painted) which we find he/she is not.

SAD DEMISE



Sumita Amladi

18th July 1945 - 3rd April 2026

With profound grief, we inform about the sad demise of our beloved mother, Smt. Sumita Suresh Amladi, (Nee Vasudha S. Murdeshwar) who left for her heavenly abode on 3rd April 2026, after courageously battling cancer for over a decade.

From a very young age, she selflessly took on the responsibility of caring for her family and supporting the education of her younger siblings. After retiring from Reserve Bank of India in the late 90s, she devoted herself to her passion for music. Embracing changing times and technology with grace, she began recording her solo songs and sharing them with friends and family.

Her warm “good morning” messages across WhatsApp groups brought smiles to many and will be fondly remembered. Through her love for music, she inspired countless younger people to explore singing and make music a part of their lives.

You will always be deeply loved and missed, Mom.

Forever in our Hearts

Daughters

Shilpa /Manoj Ranadive

Swarupa Amladi

Grand Children

Nupura/Anirudh Mayekar

Ishaan Ranadive

Rehaan

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Geeta Tawde

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Amladis, Murdeshwars and all her relatives and friends



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The Andamans, as I found them

A personal journey through beauty, history, and the quiet lessons that stayed with me

BHAKTI ULLAL

A month later, the Andamans still return to me—not as a checklist of places visited, but as a feeling that refuses to fade.

They come back in fragments—light on water, the hush of tall trees, a song under the stars, a silence that feels older than memory. What surprises me is not that I remember the place, but *how* I remember it. Not as a catalogue of sights, not as photographs neatly stored away, but as a journey that continues to unfold somewhere within me.

It began, as most trips do, with an expectation. I thought I was travelling to islands—turquoise waters, soft beaches, perhaps a few sunsets that would sit politely in my memory. I expected beauty. What I did not expect was depth.

The first glimpse came from the aircraft window. Below me, scattered like fragments of a dream, lay islands wrapped in shifting shades of blue—turquoise dissolving into teal, then deepening into a mysterious navy. The sea did not look like a single body of water; it looked alive, layered, almost sentient. Even before landing, a subtle shift had begun.

A different rhythm of life

If you listen carefully, you'll notice something missing in the Andamans.

Noise.

In the city, silence feels like an interruption. Here, silence is the background score. Life begins early—by five in the morning, the day is already awake, washed in soft light. The islands sit geographically closer to Southeast Asia than mainland India, and though the clock follows Indian Standard Time, the sun has its own rhythm. The people have quietly adjusted their lives to it. No resistance. No complaint. Just adaptation.

And then there are the trees. Not the ornamental kind lining city roads, but ancient, towering presences—standing like silent witnesses to centuries. Especially near Radhanagar Beach, where sea, sand, and forest meet in quiet perfection. You walk from the vast openness of the ocean to the dense shade of tropical forest within minutes. It is less a beach and more an entire

ecosystem breathing together.

Beauty, with a hint of irony

Radhanagar Beach is often described as one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. That description, surprisingly, does not exaggerate.

The sand stretches endlessly, the sea changes colour with the light, and the sky participates in the transformation. But what fascinated me equally was the theatre of people. By evening, a significant number of visitors arrive not just to witness the sunset, but to stage it—props, photographers, curated poses. Nature offering effortless beauty, while we attempt to frame it into something more perfect.

And yet, even amidst all of this, the sunset wins.

Always.

Where history breathes

If the beaches show you the beauty of the Andamans, places like Cellular Jail show you, its soul.

Walking in is not like entering a monument. It feels like stepping into a memory the walls refuse to let go of. The silence here is different. It is heavier.

We often use the term 'freedom fighters,' but standing there, the phrase feels insufficient. These were individuals who endured unimaginable isolation, suffering, and loss—without recognition, without certainty of success, and without the comfort of being remembered. It reminds you that India's freedom was not the result of a handful of leaders. It was the cumulative force of countless individuals—many forgotten, many unnamed.

The light and sound show brings these stories alive, but even without it, the place speaks.

That realisation humbles you.

A night under the stars

Some experiences are not planned—they happen to you.

I happened to be in the Andamans on the Punya Tithi of Swatantra Veer Savarkar. By chance—or perhaps something more—we passed a park where a live performance was underway. Under

an open sky, artists mainly from Nagpur were singing compositions written by Savarkar himself. No grand stage, no overwhelming crowd—just music, sincerity, and a shared sense of reverence.

In that moment, the Andamans were not just a destination; they were a bridge between past and present. Savarkar, once imprisoned in the Cellular Jail, returned not as a figure in a textbook, but as a presence—through words, through song, through remembrance.

Perhaps memory does not always need validation. Sometimes, it simply needs to be felt.

A land renamed; a story reclaimed

Another layer of the journey revealed itself in names.

What was once Port Blair is now Sri Vijaypuram. Havelock, Neil and Ross have become Swaraj Dweep, Shaheed Dweep and NSCB Dweep. 21 unnamed islands were recently named in honour of Param Vir Chakra awardees—heroes whose courage defines the highest ideals of service.

These are not just administrative changes. They feel like acts of reclamation—of identity, of history, of respect. When you walk through these places knowing their names, you walk differently.

And there is a place where Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose first hoisted the Indian tricolour on December 30, 1943. Standing there, beneath the towering national flag, is not merely visual—it is deeply personal. You are aware that you are standing on land that once symbolised both oppression and assertion, both exile and resistance.

You touch the ground, and for a brief moment, history is not distant.

It is beneath your feet.

An unexpected realisation

Somewhere between the forests of Radhanagar, the silence of the Cellular Jail, and that night of music under the stars, a thought settled in. The people we call freedom fighters had a relationship with their land that is difficult to comprehend today—a depth of belonging, a fierce love, an ability to endure unimaginable hardship for something larger than themselves.

In contrast, we so often look outward—for better places, better lives, better possibilities.

But perhaps the Andamans gently remind

us: meaning is not always found elsewhere. Sometimes, it is built where you stand.

A lesson hidden in the sand

Along one beach, I found myself drawn to corals and shells scattered like tiny works of art. Naturally, I picked them up—pieces of the Andamans I could take back with me.

Until my guide gently stopped me.

“You can’t take these. Nothing can leave the islands.”

At first, it felt like a small disappointment. But then, standing there holding those fragile, beautiful fragments, a quiet realisation settled in.

Just because you admire something... does it mean you must own it?

Slowly, I walked back and placed each shell, each coral back on the sand. And in that simple act, there was an unexpected feeling—not loss, but release.

A quiet thank you. For allowing me to witness beauty. For reminding me that appreciation does not require possession. For teaching me to leave things as I found them.

In that moment, the Andamans stopped being a destination.

They became a teacher.

More than what you see

Yes, the Andamans offer everything one imagines—water sports, coral reefs, scuba diving, island hopping. These experiences add colour and excitement. But what stays is something far quieter.

The way the sunrise feels different when it arrives without the clamour of a waking city. The way the sunset lingers, as if it has nowhere else to be. The way nature exists—not as a backdrop, but as a presence. The way history lives—not in chapters, but in spaces.

I went looking for beauty. I found perspective.

I expected photographs. I returned with stories.

I thought I was visiting islands. But the Andamans, in their quiet, unassuming way, became a journey inward—one that continues long after the trip has ended.

And perhaps that is what travel, at its best, is meant to do.

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana

ANJALI BURDE

Our community has a large number of members in the 70 and above age group. For their information, we bring this detailed note on how one can benefit from the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) – Editor.

Ayushman Bharat Yojana or **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana**, a health scheme of the Government of India was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 14 April 2018 and implemented nation-wide from September 2018.

The objective of this scheme was to provide health insurance to economically weaker sections (BPL card holders). Under this, each family would be provided cashless health insurance up to Rs 5 lakh.

Its purpose was to provide individuals and their families with quality healthcare at affordable rates so that people could access and avail better healthcare without hassle.

One is required to generate the Ayushman Bharat card to access and avail healthcare services. By using AADHAAR number on PMJAY website or Ayushman App one can check eligibility, complete e-kyc and download the card for free.

Ayushman Bharat – National Health Protection Scheme, aimed to cover 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) by providing coverage for secondary and tertiary care hospitals up to a value of Rs 5 lakh per family per year.

The benefits of the scheme could be availed anywhere across the country, and the beneficiary covered under the scheme would be allowed to avail the benefits cashless from any empanelled public or private hospital across the country.

Eligibility criteria was determined based on the Socio-Economic Caste Census database and cover a target of approximately 107.4 million poor, disadvantaged rural families and the families of the urban workforce.

In a significant move, the Union Cabinet approved a major expansion of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) on September 11, 2024. Under this decision, **all senior citizens aged 70 and above** will receive health coverage, regardless of their income.

The Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Aro-

gya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) has now been significantly expanded to all senior citizens aged 70 and above, regardless of income. Approved in September 2024, it has now become the world's largest public health insurance scheme. This expansion aims to provide free health coverage of ₹5 lakh per year to 6 crore elderly citizens across 4.5 crore families.

Key Details of the Expanded Scheme:

- **Universal Coverage for 70+:** All seniors aged 70+ receive a separate health card, regardless of their socio-economic status.
- **Double Wallet Structure:** Families with members over 70 get their original ₹ 5 lakh coverage, plus an additional, exclusive top-up of ₹ 5 lakh specifically for the senior members.
- **Family coverage:** Senior citizens who are not part of an existing AB PM-JAY family coverage will be provided with a cover of up to Rs 5 lakh per year on family basis.
- **Massive Reach:** As of September 2024, the scheme has empowered over 55 crore beneficiaries, issued over 35.4 crore Ayushman cards, and empanelled over 30,000 hospitals.
- **Choice of schemes:** Senior citizens who are already benefitting from other public health insurance schemes like Central Government Health Scheme(CGHS), Ex-Servicemen Contributory Scheme(ECHS) or Ayushman Central Armed Police Force(CAPF) have the option to continue with their current scheme or opt for AB PM-JAY.
- **Eligibility with Private Insurance:** Senior citizens above 70 who are covered by private health insurance policies or the Employees State Insurance Scheme are also eligible to benefit from AB PM-JAY.
- **Focus on Access:** The initiative has also established 1.8 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs to bring primary care closer to communities.

The expansion addresses the growing need for geriatric care, as India's elderly population is projected to increase significantly by 2050.

In Maharashtra, an Integrated AB PM-JAY and Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Jan Arogya Yojana provides medical care and hospitalisation free of cost to all citizens in the state. It is effective from July 1, 2024 with expanded scope. The details of the network of over 2400 private and public hospitals in the state is available at www.jeevandayee.gov.in

What's New At Girvanapratishtha?

This fresh update from ARCHANA KUMTA and SANGEETA PAWAR tells us about two exciting initiatives of the Department of Sanskrit Studies, Shri Chitrapur Math -

VANDANA and GIRVANAPATRIKA

अज्ञानमूलहरणं जन्मकर्मनिवारणम् ।
ज्ञानवैराग्यसिद्ध्यर्थं गुरुपादोदकं पिबेत् ॥

Vandana - Over the last 22 years, Girvanapratishtha has made remarkable progress. Guided by Parama Pujya Swamiji's sankalpa, vision, direction, and blessings, the Sanskrit Department of Shri Chitrapur Math has reached an entirely new level.

The journey began with weekly Sanskrit lessons being uploaded on the Internet. These lessons were warmly received, drawing enthusiastic appreciation from eager learners all around the world. Encouraged by the overwhelming response, a structured syllabus was soon developed, laying the foundation for systematic learning.

With the success of the earlier uploaded lessons, *Aradhana*, *Sadhana* and *Dharana* classes were launched. Excited students enrolled, batches commenced, new teachers were inducted, and exams followed, one after another. Yet, after some time, it was felt that something more was needed to enrich the learning journey further..

The core team of Girvanapratishtha came together to reflect and brainstorm. During the 2019 *Chaturmasa*, a proposal was humbly placed before Parama Pujya Swamiji: to introduce a new course after *Dharana Varga*, one that would give seekers a glimpse into the vast world of Sanskrit literature. Swamiji, with His infinite compassion, immediately blessed the idea as well as the teachers who would carry it forward. It was then decided that Sheela Kalawar Pachi would design this new course, aptly named **Vandana**.

Since Sanskrit literature is as expansive as an ocean, the course had to be thoughtfully structured. Each dip into this ocean reveals priceless pearls, yet a course spanning just one- and- a- half years could only cover select treasures. Thus, it was resolved that each *kāvya* काव्य would be studied over a month or two, with carefully chosen excerpts that were both engaging and representative of the work. The pilot batch was offered to Girvanapratishtha teachers themselves, giving them both deeper insight and strengthening their own *Staravardhana* स्तरवर्धन.

Sheela Pachi, holding an M.A. in Sanskrit, graciously embraced the responsibility. Over the next several months, she identified fifteen timeless compositions by renowned *kavyah* कवयः, selecting the most captivating *adhyāyas* from each. While she focused on teaching grammar, the team invited the accomplished and versatile teacher, Krishnanand Mankikar Maam, to guide students in the *rasāsvāda* रसास्वाद—the aesthetic appreciation—of these works. He readily agreed to contribute.

The unforeseen arrival of the Covid pandemic delayed the launch of *Vandana*. But finally, on the auspicious day of the *Vardhanti* of Devi Bhuvaneshwari Sannidhi and Parijnanashram Swamiji's Paduka Sannidhi, on 30th January 2023, the course was inaugurated with Swamiji's permission and blessings in the holy presence of Shri Bhavanishankar and Devi Bhuvaneshwari at the Dhyanamandir, Shirali. On that sacred occasion, both Sheela Pachi and Krishnanand Maam delivered their first lectures through a PowerPoint presentation. The teachers present experienced a truly divine day. Twenty-five teachers have enrolled for the course.

Girvanapatrika – As the readership of the online Sanskrit lessons steadily grew, the Girvanapratishtha team felt inspired to offer even more to its audience. It was decided that readers should have access not only to learning material, but also to enriching content about Shri Chitrapur Math, our revered Guruparampara, and the messages of our beloved Swamis. Along with this, there would be articles of general interest, glimpses of Sanskrit literature, and even pieces of light-hearted entertainment. Out of this vision was born the Sanskrit e-magazine -*Gīrvāṇapatrikā*.

Gīrvāṇapatrikā is a quarterly Sanskrit e-publication, uploaded on the Math website every March, June, September, and December. Our Math is among the very few in the country to publish an entire magazine exclusively in Sanskrit. Its pages feature a delightful blend of stories, articles, *subhāshitā-s*, anecdotes, riddles, and more—contributed by the Girvanapratishtha fraternity

~~~~~Parisevanam~~~~~

of teachers, past and present students, and ardent lovers of this divine language संस्कृतानुरागिणः. The magazine plays a vital role in encouraging regular reading and writing in Sanskrit, an essential part of mastering the language. Varada Soukooor as Editor and a team of dedicated Sanskrit teachers and students comprise the Editorial team.

The inaugural issue was released on 15th June 2021 at Karla, on the auspicious occasion of Parama Pujya Parijnanashram Swamiji's Janmotsava. Since then, the magazine has consistently catered to readers of all levels—*sāmānya* सामान्य, *madhyama* मध्यम and *prauḍha* प्रौढ. It also carries the precious *Upadesha*-s of our 10th and 11th Gurus, offering timeless guidance.

Among the special features of *Gīrvāṇapatrikā* are: *Ruchira* (tasty Konkani recipes presented in Sanskrit), articles on Yoga, essays on the Upanishads, explorations of Maharshi Pāṇini's contributions, and even engaging write-ups on birds.

Through this unique initiative, Girvanapratishtha continues slowly, but steadily, the noble mission of *prasāra* प्रसार and *prachāra* प्रचार of Sanskrit—always under the guidance and with the blessings of Parama Pujya Swamiji.

जयति जयति गीर्वाणी सरस्वती सुरसवती ।
सारस्वतजनमोहिनी संस्कृतसुविलासिनी ॥

Spreading the sweetness of Devabhasha!



KSA hosts 9th Senior Citizen PMs (Pachhis & Maams) Get-together

SHREEKAR RAO (GERSAPPE)

It was a bright sunny morning on 19th April, 2026. We woke up a little earlier than usual, probably due to the excitement of attending the 9th Senior Citizen PMs Get-Together scheduled to begin at 9.30 a.m. at Shrimat Anandashram Hall, Talmakiwadi. Being a Sunday, we did not encounter much of vehicular traffic from our residence at Borivali to Tardeo, and we reached our destination well before the scheduled time.

We saw the Hall Entrance being decorated with a long, beautiful garland and several KSA volunteers enthusiastically buzzing around giving final touches to the wonderful arrangements inside.

We were greeted and warmly welcomed with smiles by the KSA volunteers and directed immediately towards the yummy breakfast prepared by Vinay and Maya Gangavali's team. The Hall started filling up in a steady flow as the expected KSA members and their families started trickling in.

The planning was meticulous with items like Dance, Music, Activities, Quiz, Games etc. It was such fun to meet other families of our own community in a cool, relaxed atmosphere. It was amazing to note that many of them had come from far-off places to take part in this enjoyable Get-Together.

The charismatic Sunil Ullal, the M.C. for that event, encouraged everyone to settle down in their chairs for the programme to begin, as he expertly guided each of the participants.

The programme began with a prayer to Lord Ganesha followed by the Sabha Prarambha prayers and a robust Shankh Vadan by Pradeep Adur and Naandi by Malan Hattangady.

Sunil taught us the 3-3-3 claps applause which was appreciated and followed by everyone after each performance. There was a beautiful display of Art by Sumati Bellare.

Thereafter I sang a song "Chaudavin ka Chand" from the film by the same name. This was followed by a song by Surekha Mavinkurve.

Next was an engaging drama enacted by Kalpana and Dileep Hemmady which was well appreciated. Rekha Rao kept the appreciative audience interested in her Samvaad performance.

Sheela Shirali defied her age by performing a dance which was well appreciated.

Pradeep Adur returned to the stage, this time melodiously playing the Harmonica, which requires a lot of lung power and breath control.

Surekha Kodikal performed another age defying dance bringing the audience to its feet.

Now, it was the turn of Shyamala Bhat to engage the audience in interesting Story-telling.

Not to be out-done, the inspiring, whistle-blowing Anuradha Kulkarni sang melodiously which was very well appreciated by the audience. This was followed by an amazing Bollywood Medley dance performed by Mangala Nadkarni.

The talented Deepak Hemmady proved why he is widely appreciated on Social Media too with his flawless performance both on Melodica and Harmonica.

Shashi Balsekar recited a wonderful poem written by him on his Silver Jubilee Wedding Anniversary.

Madhu Bajekal and her talented troupe then kept the audience spell-bound with a chosen theme of "Appreciation & Recognition of Talented Lesser Known Artistes in Bollywood".

Dilip Rao, an all-round talented gifted musician, then entertained the audience with his Harmonica, with foot-tapping popular Bollywood songs.

Geeta Balse then involved every member present with her very interesting Quiz of recognizing Bollywood songs from clues picked by Group members from a box.

Dilip Shashital's parody sung with great aplomb as a finale item kept the audience in splits of laughter.

It was agreed by all present that such an event should be organized by KSA once every year.

Sunil Ullal conducted this event with dignity and elan. In fact, it was conducted so smoothly that in his own words not a single member felt any hunger pangs though it was nearing 2 p.m. at the close of this Get-Together.

The event finally concluded with the Sabha Samapti prarthana and a healthy applause and thanks to Sunil Ullal and KSA, and its tireless volunteers for organizing such an enjoyable

event. Everyone enjoyed the sumptuous Lunch prepared by Vinay and Maya Gangavali's Guruprasad Caterers, before making their way back home with pleasant memories.



Here and There

Vasai and Virar Sabha

On Thursday 16th April 2026 Punyathithi – Samaradhana of H.H. Shrimat Parijnanashram Swamiji I was observed at the residence of Smt. Chaya and Shri. Nikhil Ubayakar at Virar (East).

Around 20 devotees from Vasai to Virar attended the Satsang which started with the Sabha Prarambh Pratharna, recitation of Navaratri Nityapaath followed by Devi Anushthana and Bhajans.

The Satsang concluded with the Deep Namaskar, Mangal Aarti, Shree Shankarnarayan Geet, Mangalpada and after Sabha Samapti Prarthana, all the devotees partook Prasad offered by the Ubhayakar family.

- Reported by Shivanand Hemmady

Bengaluru Sabha

On 1st March, Shishyaswikara Divas of H.H. Shrimat Parijnanashram Swamiji III was observed with Bhashya Pathana and Ashtavadhana.

On 14th and 15th March, a Workshop on “Discover your Personality” using the Myers-Briggs type indicator was conducted by Smt. Udyavar Lakshmi Rao for the laity.

On 19th March, Yugadi - Parabhava Samvatsara was organised by Canara Union at Shri Chitrapur Math, Bengaluru with Panchanga vachana and

panaka panwara. Flute recital by Pt. Nityanand Haldipur with Pt. Omkar Gulwady on tabla was also organised on this occasion. Shri Chitrapur Math calendars for the new samvatsara were also distributed. Guru Pujana was also performed in the Garbhagudi on this occasion.

On 16th April, Samaradhana of Parama Pujya Shrimat Parijnanashrama Swamiji-I was observed with Shri Chitrapur Guruparampara Charitra Pathana, Guru Pujana, Deepanamaskar, Bhashya Pathana Ashtavadhana seva and prasada vitaran.

On 21st April, Shri Shankara Jayanti was observed along with an address by Chief Guest Shri Mangesh Chickermane, distribution of prizes to participants and prize winners of Shri Shankara Jayanti competitions, Bhashya Pathana, Shri Shankaracharya Pujana followed by prasada vitarana.

- Reported by Saikrupa Nalkur

Andheri Sabha

Yugadi was celebrated on 19th March, 2026 at Admar Math. The programme began with Shri Satyanarayan Maha Puja, performed by Smt. Usha Pandit and Shri Satyanarayan Pandit followed by Panchang vachan by the Bhatmam from Admar Math. A short talk was rendered by Shri Rajagopal Bhat on the nutan samvatsar known as “Parabhava Samvatsara”. This event was compered by Sameer

Koppikar and was attended by around 130 sabha members and later ended with prasada bhojan.

The Samaradhana (Punyathithi) of H.H. Shrimat Parijnanashram Swamiji I, was observed online on 16th April, 2026. It was followed by the Upanyasa by Shri Rajagopal Bhat on "Guru Bhajan Stotra".

- Reported by Deepa Koppikar

Saraswat Cultural Forum, Pune

Konkani Comedy Play - RANGAGALE ANTARANGA - 23rd Nov 2025. A delightful Konkani comedy-drama set in the quirky village of Bankikodla near Gokarna, Karnataka. Written by Smt. Indira Nagarkatti, it blends childhood memories with "Amchi" humour. Catch the complete play online: <https://youtu.be/5IDSYV4JGGw>

Picnic - 25th Jan 2026: The SCF picnic at Shantivan Resort, near Khanapur, Pune was sweet, and simply unforgettable! A perfect blend of music, dance, games, and laughter made the day sparkle. What made it truly special was the enthusiastic participation of members across generations, creating a warm sense of belonging to one big family. Nearly 70 picnickers enjoyed it.

Anand Bazaar - 7th Mar 2026: The Anand Bazaar held on 7th March 2026 at UWA Hall, Pune drew an excellent response and showcased a vibrant mix of food stalls, handmade crafts, ready made items, and home produced goods. Children assisting seniors added a warm community touch. A sustainability drive encouraged reduced food waste and eco friendly practices, along with a well received collection stall for reusable clothes and electronic items. A lively turnout with more than 150 attendees.

- Reported by Sunil Mundkur

CLASSIFIEDS

ENGAGEMENT

Abhishek, son of Smt Shantala Gajanan Balwalli and Shri Gajanan Subray Balwalli with Anarghya daughter of Smt Vijaya Chaitanya Kokradi and Shri Chaitanya Krishnanand Kokradi on 19th April 2026 at Bangalore

DOMESTIC TIDINGS

Thread Ceremony

We congratulate the young batu and bless him!
May 11 : Chinmay Pavan Mallapur at Hubballi.

MARRIAGES

We congratulate the young couple and wish them happy married life!
Mar 08 : Aishwarya Jitendra Talgeri with Vipin Kumar Chikkara at Mumbai.
May 01 : Dr.Aparajita (Poorvi) Prashanth Balsavar with Naren Ananth Kulkarni at Mysore.

OBITUARIES

We convey our deepest sympathy to the relatives of the following:
Apr 25 : Girish Ganesh Burde (80) of Talmakiwadi, Mumbai at Mangaluru.
Apr 25 : Meera (nee Mukti) Gangadhar Haridas (94) at Shirali, Karnataka.
Apr 29 : Nirmala Nagesh Murdeshwar (84) at Talmakiwadi, Mumbai.
May 01 : Dr Mahesh Murlidhar Koppikar, at San Francisco, USA.

Sudoku - June 2026			Solution			Level Medium		
3	5	1	7	4	2	6	8	9
8	7	4	6	5	9	3	2	1
6	2	9	3	8	1	5	4	7
1	9	6	5	7	8	2	3	4
7	4	5	2	1	3	8	9	6
2	3	8	4	9	6	1	7	5
9	6	7	8	3	5	4	1	2
5	1	3	9	2	4	7	6	8
4	8	2	1	6	7	9	5	3

Answers to सरल संस्कृतम् -
Exercise 45.1 -

- 1. सुन्दरैः पुष्पैः 2. दुग्धेन 3. नूतनेन चित्रेण
- 4. सुदर्शनचक्रेण 5. जलेन विना 6. उपसेचनेन सह
- 7. पारितोषिकेण सह 8. पठनेन 9. ध्वनीप्रदूषणेन
- 10. कलहेन 11. गीतेन 12. लोकयानेन

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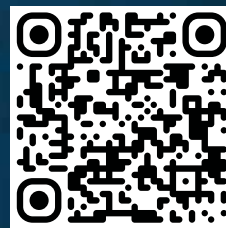
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