RAJYOGI NIKUNJ JI: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE FORGET WHO WE REALLY ARE

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PRAVASI INDIANS

The India Connection

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COVER STORY

INDIA'S BALANCING ACT

NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE

REIMAGINING THE PAST FOR A NEW AGE

GLOBAL INDIA
INDIA'S HELPING HAND

DIASPORA
BETWEEN TWO HOMES

आस्था
देवी से क्या माँगें?

संवाद
मतभेद से मनभेद तक

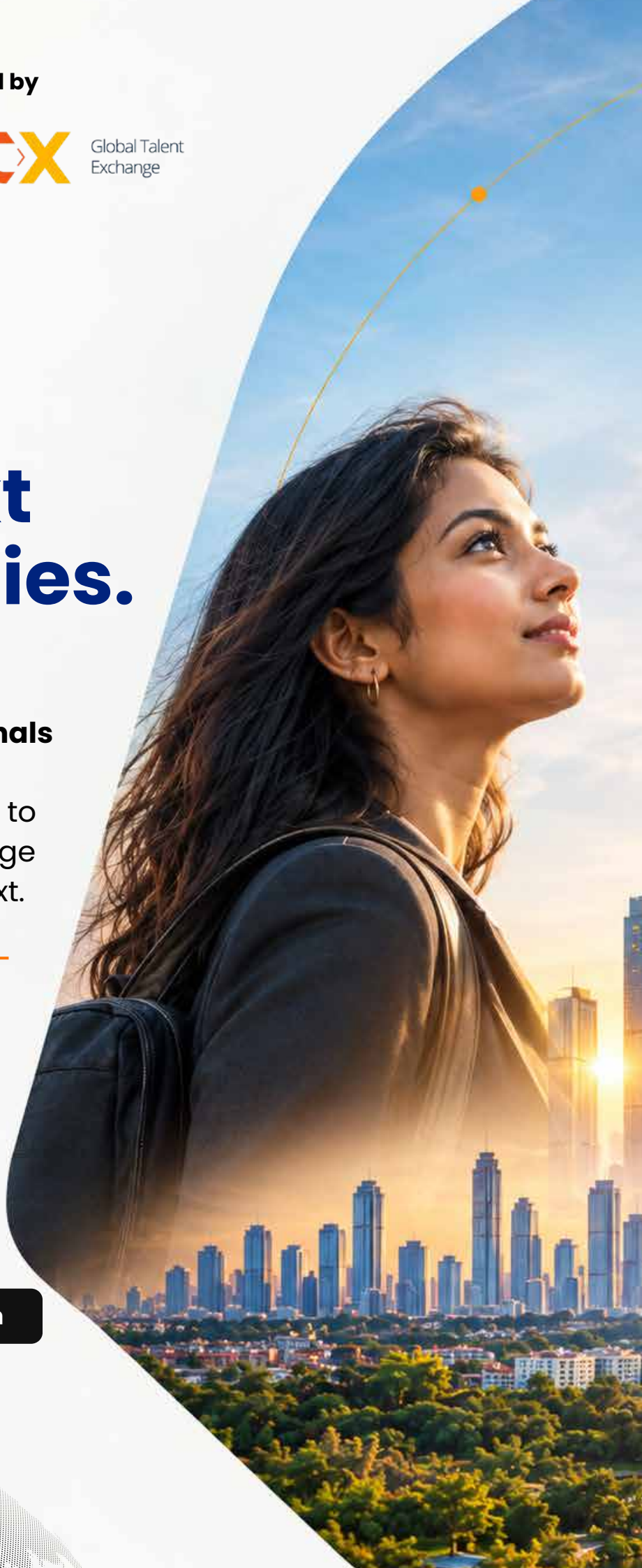
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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



A Nation, A World, A Search for Meaning

Dear Readers,

As we roll out the November 2026 edition of ***PRAVASI INDIANS***, we underline the fact that we are living in an era of extraordinary contradictions. Never before has the world been so interconnected, yet societies often seem more fragmented. Information travels at the speed of light, but wisdom remains elusive. Nations compete and collaborate simultaneously. Individuals seek prosperity yet continue searching for meaning. The stories in this issue reflect these contradictions and invite us to look beyond headlines towards the deeper forces shaping our lives and identities.

Our **Cover Story** by our Bengaluru-based South India Bureau Chief **B SHEKHAR** examines India's place in a rapidly changing global economy. As the world navigates uncertainty and shifting alliances, India is emerging as a nation determined to chart its own course. The story explores how resilience, strategic autonomy and expanding partnerships are helping India strengthen its position in an increasingly complex world.

Yet a nation's influence is measured not only by economic strength. In our **Global India** feature, former diplomat **SUCHITRA DURAI** highlights another dimension of India's growing presence: its willingness to stand with communities in distress, whether responding to natural disasters, humanitarian crises or emergencies across continents.

Questions of identity also run through several stories in this issue. For millions of overseas Indians, the idea of 'home' transcends geography. Our **Diaspora** feature by **KRITIKA SINHA** reflects on belonging, memory and cultural continuity across generations and borders. Similarly, our **History** feature by **ZEYAUR RAHMAN**, author of *A River Remembers*, reminds us that India's journey to complete sovereignty extended well beyond 15 August 1947, encouraging a deeper understanding of the nation's past.

This search for identity is equally evident in the world of literature. **UDAY KUMAR VARMA** pens a piece on **NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE**, exploring a celebrated literary voice whose engagement with myths, classical texts and forgotten fragments demonstrates how the past continues to illuminate the present. In our **Book Review** section, **DR. VED MITRA SHUKLA** examines a powerful novel that mirrors India's own journey through social change.

Beyond public life and historical narratives, this issue also turns inward. Our **Spirituality** feature by **RAJYOGI NIKUNJ JI** asks an enduring question: Who are we beyond the physical self? The **Hindi** section has stories by उदय कुमार वर्मा and सरिता शांडिल्य that explore faith, attachment, family relationships and the importance of dialogue in an increasingly divided world.

We are also delighted to present the next instalment of our serial on the legendary Mohammed Rafi by **DR. VENKATESH GANAPATHY**, whose account reminds us that true greatness is measured not only by talent but also by humility, kindness and character.

As always, we conclude with our popular **Horoscope** section in Hindi by आचार्य दिनायक , offering readers an opportunity for reflection and self-discovery rather than mere prediction.

At *PRAVASI INDIANS*, our endeavour remains unchanged: to bring together stories that inform, inspire and provoke meaningful thought. We hope this issue encourages you to engage not only with the world around you, but also with the questions that reside within.

Happy Reading, *PRAVASI INDIANS*!

Rashmi
CEO and Publisher

We would love to hear from you. We also invite diaspora members to write for us and share their experiences
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MOHAMMED RAFI

DR. VENKATESH GANAPATHY of ICFAI Business School writes a serial on Mohammed Rafi and says generations of listeners continue to celebrate his extraordinary voice and his character but those who worked with him often spoke first about the man behind the microphone, saying "In an industry driven by ambition, competition and commercial success, Rafi earned a reputation for something far rarer: kindness. Whether helping struggling composers, resolving disagreements with grace, or refusing money he believed he had not rightfully earned, he quietly upheld values that transcended fame." Decades after his passing, these stories continue to reveal why Mohammed Rafi remains not just one of Indian cinema's greatest singers, but one of its most admired human beings.

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A well-acclaimed spiritual educator and columnist **RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI**, who has written 10,000+ articles/columns till date across India, Nepal, USA, UK, Australia, South Africa, Canada & Mauritius, asks, "Who are we really? Is there a deeper reality that lies beyond the body?" In an age dominated by material pursuits and endless distractions, this timeless question has become more relevant than ever. The relationship between the soul and the body not only helps us understand the meaning of life and death, but also provides the key to inner peace, purpose and lasting happiness.

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KRITIKA SINHA, a creative person who sees life as a canvas and lives each day to learn something new, and loves sharing her experiences to motivate others and move forward in life, says, "There comes a moment in the life of almost every overseas Indian when a simple question becomes difficult to answer: *where is home?* Is it the India of cherished memories, family traditions and childhood stories, or the country where careers were built, children were raised and new dreams took flight."

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An Associate Professor of English at University of Delhi, **DR. VED MITRA SHUKLA** reviews Kavery Nambisan's novel *Rising Sons,* which mirrors India's own journey from colonial rule to nationhood. Through the fortunes and failures of one family, she explores the enduring impact of caste, the search for identity, and the challenges of social transformation, offering readers both an intimate human drama and a compelling portrait of a nation in transition.

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UDAY KUMAR VARMA, a Harvard-educated bureaucrat with four decades of public service at the highest levels of government, reflects on the Nobel Prize-winning Canadian poet and classicist who has built a remarkable literary career by proving that 'ancient myths, lost fragments and old stories can still reveal profound truths about modern life'.

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A former Indian Ambassador to Thailand and High Commissioner to Kenya, **SUCHITRA DURAI** says when disaster strikes – be it earthquake in Nepal, a tsunami in the Indian Ocean, a water crisis in the Maldives, devastating floods in Myanmar, or medical emergencies in Africa – India is increasingly among the first to respond.

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HISTORY



From curating the Substack series *Past Imperfect* on historical anomalies to contributing essays on sociopolitical themes across print and digital platforms, **ZEYAUR RAHMAN,** who recently penned the novel *A River Remembers,* says "Every Indian grew up learning that colonial rule ended on 15 August 1947." Yet India's decolonisation continued for another fourteen years. Even after the Union Jack was lowered, scattered European enclaves survived. French and Portuguese flags continued to fly over pockets of Indian territory and India's journey from colony to fully sovereign nation did not end at midnight on Independence Day.

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राशिफल

इंसान हमेशा से ही भविष्य को लेकर उत्सुक रहा है। **आचार्य दिनायक** कहते हैं, "ज्योतिष का आकर्षण केवल भविष्य बताने तक ही सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि यह हमें खुद को और गहराई से समझने में भी मदद करता है।" जन्म के समय ग्रहों की स्थिति के आधार पर तैयार की गई 'जन्म कुंडली', किसी व्यक्ति के जीवन को आकार देने वाली प्रवृत्तियों, अवसरों और चुनौतियों के बारे में जानकारी देती है। ज्योतिष भाग्य को पहले से तय मान लेने के बजाय, हमें चिंतन करने, जागरूक होने और सोच-समझकर कदम उठाने के लिए प्रेरित करता है। इससे हमें जीवन के सफर को अधिक स्पष्टता, आत्मविश्वास और उद्देश्य के साथ आगे बढ़ाने में मदद मिलती है।

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आस्था

हार्वर्ड से शिक्षित, पूर्व आई.ए.एस. अधिकारी, **उदय कुमार वर्मा**, जो सरकार के सर्वोच्च स्तरों पर कार्यरत रहे और जिन्हें मीडिया, मनोरंजन, कॉर्पोरेट मामलों, प्रशासनिक कानून तथा औद्योगिक और श्रम सुधारों का व्यापक अनुभव है, अपने लेख में कहते हैं हर साल नवरात्रि के दिनों में करोड़ों श्रद्धालु देवी के चरणों में अपनी-अपनी इच्छापूर्ति — सुख, समृद्धि, सफलता और संकटों से मुक्ति — के लिए कोसों से पैदल चल कर आते हैं। पर क्या कभी हमने यह सोचा है कि हमारी अधिकांश प्रार्थनाओं के मूल में क्या है? दुर्गा सप्तशती की कथा हमें बताती है कि मनुष्य के दुःख का सबसे बड़ा कारण अभाव नहीं, बल्कि मोह है। राजा सुरथ और समाधि वैश्य के प्रसंग के माध्यम से यह प्रश्न उठता है कि देवी की आराधना का उद्देश्य केवल इच्छापूर्ति है या फिर उस मोह से मुक्ति, जो हमारे जीवन के अधिकांश संघर्षों का मूल कारण है।

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संवाद



गजल पर PhD, एक जानी-मानी लेखिका, **सरिता शांडिल्य**, जिन्होंने गजल पर PhD की है और साथ ही दो उपन्यास *एक थी वैदेही* और *अच्छा फिर कभी* भी लिख चुकी हैं, अपने लेख में कहती हैं कि कैसे पुरानी पीढ़ी परंपराओं और स्थापित मान्यताओं को बचाए रखना चाहती है और नई पीढ़ी अपने जीवन को संवारने का अधिकार खुद रखना चाहती है। इसी खींचतान में अनेक परिवारों में पैदा हुई दूरियां समय के साथ भी नहीं भर पाती। "लोग क्या कहेंगे" इतना प्रभावशाली हो चुका है कि कई बार तो यह व्यक्तित्व को बदल देता है और रिश्तों के बीच दीवार खड़ी कर देता है। लेखिका 'एक बेटे का अपने पिता के नाम एक खुला पत्र' प्रस्तुत करती है, जिसमें शिकायत नहीं संवाद की इच्छा है। खिलाफत नहीं, बल्कि रिश्तों में जड़ता का अफसोस है। नाराज़गी से अधिक अपनापन और टूट रहे रिश्तों को जोड़ने की इच्छा है।

INDIA'S BALANCING ACT

The world economy is entering a new and uncertain phase. Wars are disrupting energy supplies, geopolitical rivalries are reshaping trade routes, and nations are increasingly being asked to choose sides. In this environment, India has charted a different course. Rather than aligning itself with competing blocs, it has focused on strengthening economic resilience, expanding trade partnerships and preserving strategic autonomy. The results are beginning to show. With growth projected at 7 per cent in 2026, record exports and an expanding global footprint, India is demonstrating that it is possible to remain open to the world while protecting national interests. The challenge now is turning that momentum into lasting influence.



BY B SHEKHAR

The author, based in Bengaluru, is our South India Bureau Chief.

Navigating a Divided World

The global economy is no longer shaped solely by market forces. Increasingly, geopolitics is driving economic decisions.

From the continuing conflict in the Middle East to the growing competition between major powers, businesses and governments alike are reassessing old assumptions. Supply chains that were once built around efficiency and cost are now being redesigned around security, resilience and political trust.

For many countries, the pressure to align with one bloc or another has intensified. India, however, has chosen a different path.

New Delhi's strategy is based on what policymakers describe as strategic autonomy: maintaining relationships with multiple partners without becoming excessively dependent on any single country or alliance. It is a balancing act that seeks to maximise economic opportunities while preserving policy independence.

The approach has been tested repeatedly over the past few years. Yet India's economic performance suggests that it is paying dividends.

At a time when many economies are struggling with slowing growth, inflationary pressures and geopolitical disruptions, India continues to be among the world's fastest-growing major economies. Strong domestic demand, a dynamic services sector and increasing export competitiveness have helped cushion external shocks.

But economic growth alone does not explain India's resilience.

The bigger story is how India is systematically building safeguards against an increasingly fragmented world.

Trade Diplomacy as Economic Insurance

One of India's most important responses to global uncertainty has been an aggressive expansion of its trade partnerships.

In an era when supply chains can be disrupted overnight by sanctions, conflicts or diplomatic disputes, relying on a limited number of markets has become a risk. India's answer has been diversification.

The country has accelerated negotiations for free trade agreements and economic partnerships across multiple regions. The objective is straightforward: widen market access for Indian goods, reduce dependence on a few destinations and create new opportunities for exporters.

The European Union agreement represents a major milestone in this strategy. Europe remains one of India's largest trading partners, and enhanced market access will provide Indian companies with opportunities in a vast and affluent consumer market.

The United States remains equally important. Bilateral trade has continued to expand despite global uncertainty, underlining the depth of economic ties between the world's largest and oldest democracies.

Meanwhile, agreements with countries in Asia-Pacific, the United Kingdom and other regions are helping India create a broader network of economic partnerships.







The cumulative effect is significant. India's export ecosystem is becoming less dependent on any single geography. In today's volatile world, diversification itself has become a form of economic insurance.

The Manufacturing Moment

Trade agreements alone cannot drive prosperity. A country must have competitive products and industries capable of meeting global demand.

This is where India's manufacturing sector has begun to show encouraging progress.

For years, the narrative around India centred on services, software and outsourcing. Those strengths remain important, but manufacturing is increasingly emerging as a new growth engine.

Electronics offers the clearest example.

Global companies looking to diversify supply chains have expanded their presence in India, transforming the country into a major production hub. Smartphones, consumer electronics and related components are becoming important export categories.

The rapid rise of mobile-phone manufacturing illustrates how dramatically the landscape has changed. A decade ago, India was overwhelmingly dependent on imported handsets. Today, the vast majority of mobile phones sold in the country are manufactured domestically.

The shift reflects a broader trend known as "friend-shoring", in which companies locate production in countries regarded as stable, reliable and strategically aligned.

India has been one of the biggest beneficiaries of this transition.

Yet the next challenge may be even more important than the first.

Success cannot depend on a handful of products or a small number of multinational companies. Sustained manufacturing growth will require deeper domestic supply chains, stronger component ecosystems, greater investment in research and development and a move towards higher-value production.

The real prize is not assembling products. It is becoming indispensable to global value chains.

Energy: India's Greatest Vulnerability

Despite its economic strengths, India faces a significant structural challenge: energy dependence.

As geopolitical tensions reshape trade routes and supply chains, India is pursuing a model that combines economic openness with strategic autonomy.

As one of the world's largest importers of crude oil, India remains vulnerable to disruptions in global energy markets. Any major conflict affecting supply routes or producing regions inevitably impacts inflation, trade balances and economic stability.

The Middle East conflict has once again highlighted these risks.

India's response, however, demonstrates the practicality of its strategic-autonomy approach.

Rather than relying excessively on a single supplier, India has diversified its sources of crude oil. Imports now come from a much wider group of countries, reducing vulnerability to specific geo-



political flashpoints.

The country's willingness to continue purchasing discounted Russian crude while simultaneously deepening energy ties with the United States reflects a pragmatic approach rooted in national interest.

Equally important are domestic safeguards.

Strategic petroleum reserves provide a cushion against short-term disruptions, while substantial foreign-exchange reserves offer policymakers greater flexibility in managing external shocks.

These measures do not eliminate risk. They simply make India better prepared to manage it.

In a world where energy has become a geopolitical weapon, resilience matters as much as access.

Technology, Innovation and National Power

Economic strength in the twenty-first century depends increasingly on technological capability.

India's steadily improving innovation rankings reflect meaningful progress in areas such as digital infrastructure, start-up activity and technological entrepreneurship.

The country's digital public infrastructure, including payment systems and digital-service platforms, is increasingly being studied by governments around the world.

At the same time, India's start-up ecosystem has emerged as one of the largest globally, creating new opportunities in fintech, health technology, artificial intelligence and advanced manufacturing.

Yet challenges remain.

Research-and-development spending still lags behind leading innovation economies. Private-sector investment in advanced technologies needs to deepen. Universities, industry and government institutions must collaborate more effectively if India is to compete at the technological frontier.

The lesson from global economic history is clear: nations that innovate successfully shape the future rather than merely adapt to it.

For India, innovation is no longer simply an economic priority. It has become a strategic necessity.

Defence and the Economics of Security

The distinction between economics and national security is becoming increasingly blurred.

Defence manufacturing provides a striking example.

India's defence exports have grown significantly, while domestic production has expanded rapidly. What was once seen primarily as a security requirement is increasingly becoming an industrial and technological opportunity.

The benefits extend beyond military capability.

Defence production creates skilled jobs, encourages technological innovation and supports a network of domestic suppliers. It also reduces external dependence in an era when geopolitical tensions can disrupt access to critical technologies.

The goal is not isolation.

Rather, it is to ensure that India has the capacity to meet key national-security requirements while participating more actively in global defence supply chains.

As the world becomes more unpredictable, self-reliance and global integration are no longer competing objectives. Increasingly, they are complementary ones.

Trust: The New Global Currency

Perhaps the most valuable economic



asset today is trust.

Investors want predictable regulations. Businesses want reliable partners. Manufacturers want dependable supply chains. Consumers want confidence in quality and delivery.

Trust influences where factories are built, where capital is invested and where long-term partnerships are formed.

India has made considerable progress in strengthening this trust.

Large inflows of foreign investment, growing manufacturing commitments and rising export volumes indicate that international businesses increasingly view India as a credible long-term destination.

But trust must be constantly earned.

Efficient dispute resolution, policy consistency, infrastructure improvements and administrative reforms remain essential. Investors evaluate not only opportunities but also execution.

The next phase of India's growth story will depend as much on institutional reliability as on economic potential.

The Challenges Ahead

While the broader trajectory is positive, significant challenges remain.

Energy dependence continues to expose the economy to external shocks.

Export growth still shows concentration in certain sectors and markets.

From record exports and expanding trade agreements to growing manufacturing strength, India is building resilience in an increasingly fragmented world.

Infrastructure gaps, although narrowing, have not disappeared.

Investment levels need to remain strong if manufacturing ambitions are to be realised.

Perhaps most importantly, India must ensure that growth generates large-scale employment opportunities and rising incomes.

Economic resilience is not simply about surviving global disruptions. It is about improving living standards and expanding opportunities for citizens.

The success of India's strategy will ultimately be judged by that measure.

A Model for an Uncertain World

India's response to global fragmentation can be summed up in three words: autonomy, resilience and engagement.

Rather than retreating from globalisation, India is seeking to reshape its relationship with it. The country is expanding trade partnerships without becoming overly dependent on any one market. It is strengthening domestic manufacturing while remaining open to foreign investment. It is diversifying energy sources while maintaining freedom of choice in foreign policy.

This strategy is not without risks. Balancing multiple relationships in a polarised world requires careful diplomacy and consistent policy execution.

Yet the results so far are encouraging.

Record exports, expanding manufacturing capabilities, rising innovation and sustained economic growth suggest that India is finding a workable path through an increasingly complex international landscape.

For overseas Indians watching from across the world, this transformation is particularly significant. It reflects a country that is growing not just in size, but in confidence. A nation that is learning to navigate competing pressures without compromising its interests.

In a fractured world, resilience may prove to be the most valuable competitive advantage of all.

And India is determined to build it.

MOHAMMED RAFI

THE WEALTH HE NEVER MEASURED IN MONEY

Legends are usually remembered for their achievements. Mohammed Rafi is remembered equally for his character. Generations of listeners continue to celebrate his extraordinary voice, but those who worked with him often spoke first about the man behind the microphone. In an industry driven by ambition, competition and commercial success, Rafi earned a reputation for something far rarer: kindness. Whether helping struggling composers, resolving disagreements with grace, or refusing money he believed he had not rightfully earned, he quietly upheld values that transcended fame. Decades after his passing, these stories continue to reveal why Mohammed Rafi remains not just one of Indian cinema's greatest singers, but one of its most admired human beings.



BY DR. VENKATESH GANAPATHY

Author is a Faculty Member, ICFAI Business School, Bangalore.

The Singer Who Put Music Before Money

Success often changes the relationship between an artist and the world around him. As fame grows, so do expectations, appearance fees and professional distance. Mohammed Rafi chose a different path.

By the 1960s, he had become one of the most sought-after playback singers in Hindi cinema. His voice dominated radio programmes, film soundtracks and public imagination. Yet many struggling composers discovered that Rafi's fee depended less on his market value and more on their circumstances.

Unlike many stories associated with stardom, these acts of generosity were never publicised by Rafi himself. They survived through the memories of people whose careers he quietly supported.



For struggling composers, Mohammed Rafi's fee was often determined not by his fame, but by their ability to pay.

One of the best-known examples concerns composer Nissar Bazmi during the production of *Khoj* (1953). Working with a modest budget, Bazmi reportedly hesitated to approach Rafi, fearing that the young singer's growing popularity had made him unaffordable. Understanding the situation, Rafi recorded *Chanda Ka Dil Toot Gaya* and is widely believed to have accepted a token payment of just one rupee.

Whether literal or symbolic, the story captures a truth repeatedly affirmed by those who knew him: helping good music mattered more to Rafi than maximising his earnings.

Similar accounts emerged across the decades. Composer Pandit Shivram, working on *Oonchi Haveli* (1955), reportedly benefited from Rafi's willingness to drastically reduce his fee. Years later, another struggling composer associated with *Thokar* (1974) would encounter the same generosity when Rafi reportedly agreed to sing without insisting on payment.

More important than the financial concession itself was the confidence his presence inspired. The presence of



a Rafi song instantly enhanced a film's credibility. Distributors took notice, producers felt reassured and audiences listened with interest. His voice often gave small films and little-known composers visibility they would otherwise have struggled to obtain.

Composer duo Sonik–Omi experienced this when Rafi sang *Dono Ne Kiya Tha Pyar Magar* for Mahua (1969), a song that remains among the highlights of their career. Likewise, composer Iqbal Qureshi benefited enormously from Rafi's support through memorable songs such as *Subah Na Aayi Shaam Na Aayi* from *Cha Cha Cha* (1964).

Young composers remembered something even more remarkable. Rafi treated a newcomer's first recording with the same seriousness that he brought to the compositions of giants such as Naushad or S.D. Burman. He rehearsed with equal dedication, respected the same discipline and approached every song with complete sincerity.

For him, there were no 'small' assignments. There was only music.

A Gentleman in an Industry of Giants

The Hindi film industry has always been filled with towering personalities.

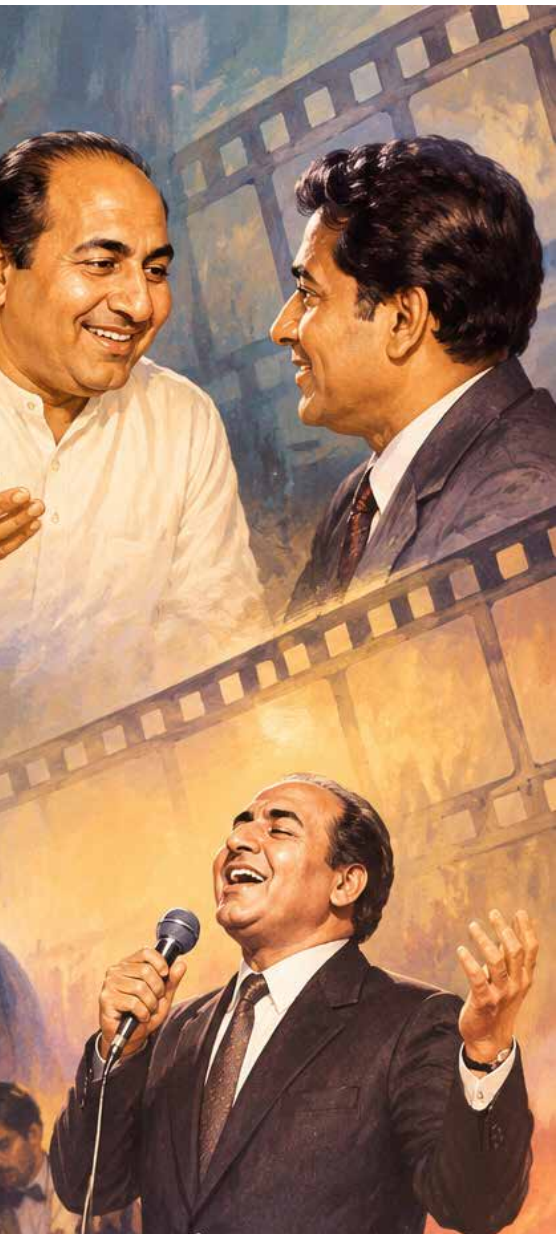
Great creativity often comes with strong opinions, and disagreements are inevitable in a world shaped by artistic passion, commercial pressure and demanding schedules. Rafi was no exception. What distinguished him was the way he responded to conflict.

Perhaps the most discussed example involves composer O.P. Nayyar. Together, they created some of the defining songs of the 1950s and early 1960s. Their collaboration produced music marked by rhythm, energy and youthful exuberance.

Industry accounts suggest that their relationship cooled after Rafi arrived late for a recording session because an earlier commitment had run longer than expected. Nayyar, known for his insistence on punctuality, reportedly reacted strongly and chose to discontinue the partnership.

Yet what followed proved far more significant than the disagreement itself.

Rather than allowing pride to stand



in the way, Rafi reportedly visited Nayyar personally to restore the relationship. Friends later recalled that the meeting ended not in bitterness but in mutual respect and warmth.

The episode reveals an important truth about Rafi's personality. Being right was never as important to him as preserving relationships.

A similar spirit marked his interactions throughout the industry. Professional differences occasionally arose, including periods of distance with producer-director B.R. Chopra. Yet colleagues consistently remembered Rafi as someone who carried no grudges.

As film music evolved during the late 1960s and early 1970s, changing audience tastes naturally altered the equations between actors, composers and playback singers. New combinations emerged. Different voices became identified with different stars. Rafi accepted these shifts with remarkable dignity.

He never publicly criticised fellow singers and rarely spoke negatively about anyone.

Whether sharing space with Manna Dey, Mukesh, Talat Mahmood or Kishore Kumar, he maintained cordial relationships grounded in mutual respect.

In an industry where controversies often outlive accomplishments, Rafi's memory survives for exactly the opposite reason.

The ₹16,000 He Refused to Keep

Among the many stories associated with Mohammed Rafi, few illustrate his personal ethics more clearly than the famous 16,000 episode.

The incident occurred during the making of *Deedar-E-Yaar,* a film produced by and starring Jeetendra. Production delays meant that years passed between some of the recordings. During that period, playback singers' fees increased significantly.

Whether recording for musical legends or complete newcomers, Rafi approached every song with the same sincerity and commitment.

According to accounts from the industry, Rafi had originally recorded a song for the film and accepted his agreed remuneration of 4,000. By the time he later recorded the duet *Mere Dildaar Ka Baankpan, Allah Allah* with Kishore Kumar, prevailing rates had risen sharply and both singers were reportedly paid ₹20,000.

Soon afterwards, Rafi realised that the amount exceeded what he felt entitled to receive.

Most people would have considered the payment justified. Rafi did not.

He reportedly contacted Jeetendra and insisted on returning the difference of 16,000 because he believed he had already agreed to a fee when the project began.

Whether every detail survives exactly as it happened matters less than what the story represents.

Those who knew Rafi found the anecdote entirely believable because it reflected the principles they had witnessed throughout his life. For him, honour was never negotiable. Agreements mattered. Trust mattered. One's word mattered.

Ironically, Deedar-E-Yaar did not achieve the success its makers had hoped for. Yet the story of the returned money endured because it symbolised something that colleagues valued even more than hit songs.

It symbolised integrity.

Conclusion

Mohammed Rafi's place in Indian music history is secure because of the thousands of unforgettable songs he left behind. But statistics alone cannot explain the affection he still inspires decades later.

That affection comes from stories such as these.

A singer who reportedly accepted one rupee when a composer could afford no more.

A superstar who preferred reconciliation over resentment.

An artist who believed that money earned without moral justification was money he could not keep.

Together, these anecdotes reveal a man whose greatness extended well beyond the recording studio. At a time when fame is often measured by visibility and success by wealth, Mohammed Rafi demonstrated another path. He showed that humility can coexist with excellence, kindness with achievement and integrity with stardom.

Perhaps that is why, even today, people speak of Mohammed Rafi not only as a legendary singer, but as one of the finest gentlemen Hindi cinema has ever known.

TO BE CONCLUDED...

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE FORGET WHO WE REALLY ARE

Who are we, really? Are we merely physical beings defined by our appearance, achievements, and possessions, or is there a deeper reality that lies beyond the body? In an age dominated by material pursuits and endless distractions, this timeless question has become more relevant than ever. Understanding the nature of the soul and its relationship with the body not only helps us make sense of life and death but also provides the key to inner peace, purpose, and lasting happiness.



BY RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI
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Writer is a spiritual educator and popular columnist, who has written 10,000+ articles/columns till date across India, Nepal, USA, UK, Australia, South Africa, Canada & Mauritius.

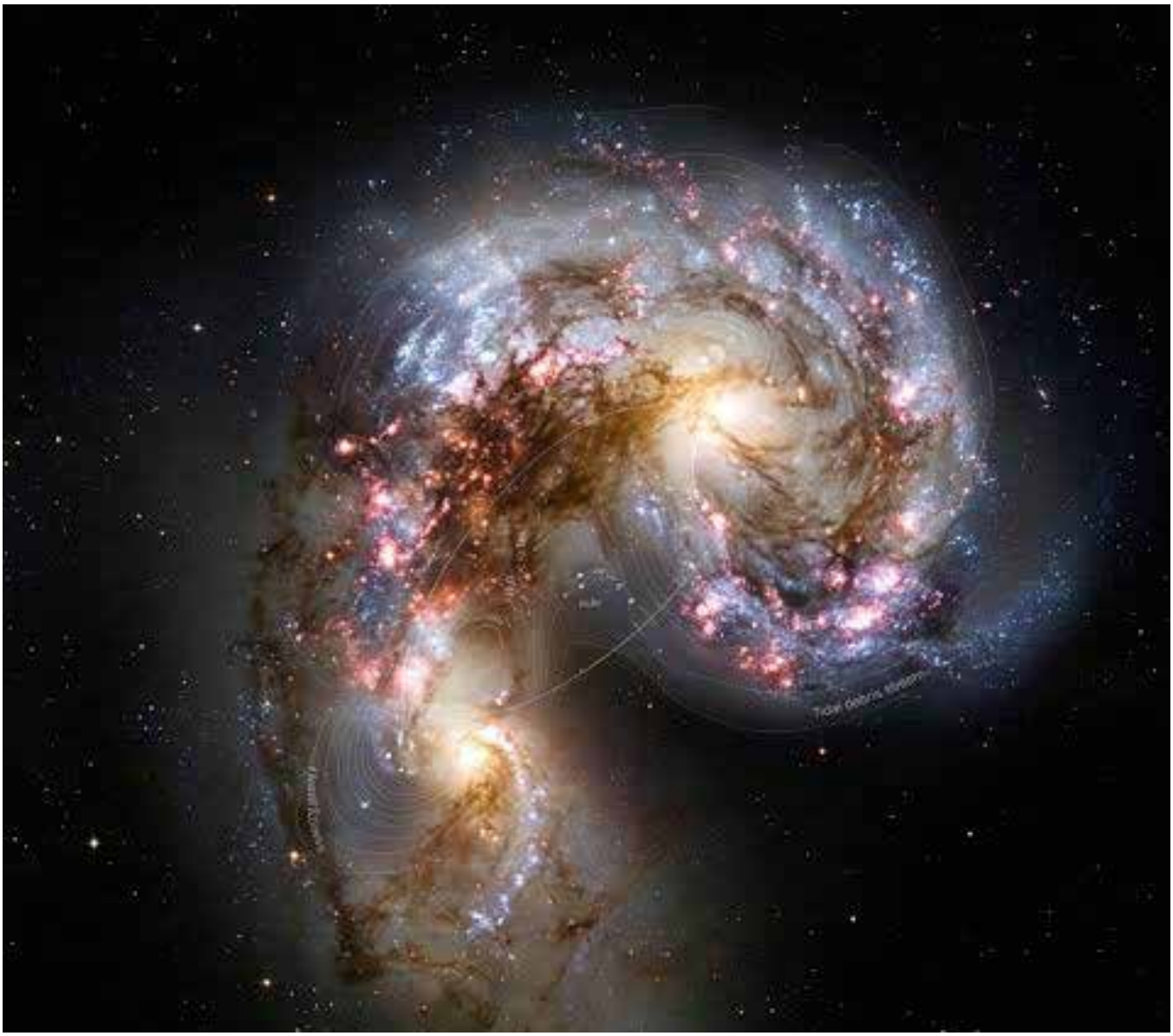
We often use the phrase "till the last breath" in our daily lives, equating life with the act of breathing. Yet, in doing so, we tend to overlook a profound truth: the body remains alive only as long as the soul resides within it. The presence of the soul sustains the body's vital functions, enabling it to breathe, think, feel, and act, even when a person is fast asleep and unaware of these processes.

In the truest sense, it is the soul that operates through the body. The body and its organs are merely instruments through which the soul expresses itself. It is not the mouth that speaks independently, but the soul that speaks through the mouth. Likewise, the soul sees through the eyes, hears through the ears, feels through the skin, and acts through the limbs. These functions are carried out through the five senses, which receive and transmit information via the body's organs and the brain.



When the soul departs from the body, the event is called death. Expressions such as "the light has gone out" or "the soul has left" reflect this understanding. Once the soul leaves, the body gradually begins to decompose, eventually losing the vitality that once animated it. This reality has given rise to various customs and rituals for the disposal of the dead across different cultures.

The body, therefore, derives its significance from the presence of the soul. Just as an electrical appliance becomes useless without the flow of electricity,



the body cannot function without the life-giving presence of the soul. In the drama of worldly existence, the soul and the body work together, but it is the soul that gives meaning and purpose to the body's actions.

Despite this, many people identify themselves almost entirely with their physical form and pay little attention to the immortal entity that resides within. This lack of awareness gives rise to body-consciousness, a state in which life is viewed solely through a material lens. Consequently, people spend much of their lives striving to improve their physical circumstances without fully understanding why individuals experience vastly different conditions from birth itself.

Human suffering, natural disasters, violence, terrorism, war, illness, and untimely death often leave us bewildered and fearful. Yet many of these fears are rooted in a limited understanding of our true identity. When physical existence is regarded as the ultimate reality, people inevitably adopt values and priorities based on appearances, possessions, and worldly achievements. Such a perspective often leads to misguided actions, disappointment, and suffering.

The body may be visible, but it is the soul that gives life meaning, purpose, and direction. Understanding this timeless truth can transform the way we view ourselves and the world around us.

In today's fast-paced and highly interconnected world, this identification with the body has become even stronger. Social media, consumer culture, and the global economy frequently encourage people to measure their worth through appearance, status, wealth, and success. Constant comparison with



others can lead to feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, and dissatisfaction. The growing emphasis on external achievements has fostered a culture that often values image over essence.

Yet the fundamental truth remains unchanged. Beyond the body exists the soul, the deeper self that shapes our thoughts, emotions, values, and choices. Lasting peace and contentment cannot be found in material possessions alone; they arise from understanding who we truly are beyond the physical form. For this reason, knowledge of the soul is essential.

Understanding the nature of the soul and its relationship with the body can transform one's outlook on life. Such spiritual awareness enables us to face challenges with greater resilience, wisdom, and inner strength. It helps us detach from unnecessary external pressures and develop a more balanced and meaningful way of living.

This is where self-awareness and meditation assume great importance. Meditation helps us move beyond body-consciousness and reconnect with our true spiritual identity. Through regular practice, we gradually realize that our value does not depend on our appearance, possessions, or social standing, but on the quality of our thoughts, character, and actions. Meditation calms the mind, reduces stress, and cultivates inner stability, enabling us to focus on what truly matters.

Many ancient spiritual traditions have emphasized the importance of self-knowledge. Such knowledge is not merely intellectual; it is experiential. When we genuinely realize that we are souls rather than merely physical bodies, our understanding of life undergoes a profound change. We begin to see others as spiritual beings as well, fostering greater compassion, empathy, respect, and love in our relationships.

The purpose of life, therefore, is not simply to accumulate wealth, pursue status, or chase temporary achievements. It is to understand the eternal nature of the soul and nurture its highest qualities. When we remain connected with our true self, we make wiser decisions, experience deeper fulfilment, and become less affected by the inevitable ups and downs of the external world.

In an age obsessed with appearance, status, and material success, the greatest journey remains the one within, the journey of discovering our true spiritual identity.

Instead of constantly running after worldly success, let us pause and turn inward. Let us reflect on the deeper purpose of our existence and seek to understand the spiritual reality that lies beyond the physical realm. In doing so, we may discover a lasting source of peace, happiness, and meaning that no external circumstance can take away. ■

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BETWEEN TWO HOMES

There comes a moment in the life of almost every overseas Indian when a simple question becomes unexpectedly difficult to answer: *Where is home?* Is it the India of cherished memories, family traditions and childhood stories, or the country where careers were built, children were raised and new dreams took flight? As identities stretch across continents and generations, home becomes less about an address and more about the people, memories and experiences we carry within us. This is a story about living between worlds and discovering that the heart is capable of belonging to both.



BY KRITIKA SINHA

Author is a creative person who sees life as a canvas and lives each day to learn something new, and loves sharing her experiences to motivate others and move forward in life.

"Where is home?"

It is a question I have been asked many times over the years, usually during casual conversations. Yet each time, I find myself pausing for a little longer before answering.

There was a time when the answer came effortlessly.

Home was India.

It was the place where I grew up, where every road held a memory and every festival brought together family, friends and neighbours. It was the aroma of food drifting from the kitchen, the chaos of family gatherings, summer vacations spent at grandparents' homes and endless conversations that stretched late into the night.

Then life happened.

Like millions of Indians across the world, I packed my dreams into a suitcase and moved abroad. What was initially meant to be a new opportunity gradually became a new chapter of life.

And somewhere between adjusting to a different culture, building a career, creating friendships and raising a family, I realised something unexpected.

India was still home.

But so was the country where I now lived.

For many of us in the Indian diaspora, this is perhaps one of the most complicated and beautiful realities of our lives. We do not lose one home and find another. Instead, our hearts learn to accommodate both.

Every time I fly back to India, I am reminded how deeply our roots remain embedded within us.

The moment I step out of the airport, something shifts.

The familiar sounds. The constant movement. The effortless mix of languages. The unmistakable energy that belongs only to India.

There is comfort in hearing people speak your mother tongue without thinking about it. There is comfort in eating food that instantly transports you back to childhood. There is comfort in sitting with family members who know your story without needing an explanation.

For a few weeks, it feels as if time has stood still.

Yet something interesting happens when it is time to return.

Years ago, leaving India felt heartbreaking.

Today, returning to England also feels like going home.

My daily routine is here. My friends are here. My work is here. My family's life is here.

The country that once felt unfamiliar has become woven into my own story.

This is a feeling many overseas Indians quietly understand.

We exist between two worlds.

Not because we are divided.

But because we belong to both.

Perhaps the greatest reminder of this came not from my own experiences, but from my son.

One day I was speaking to him in Hindi when he interrupted and said, "Mum, please talk in English."

I looked at him, slightly surprised.

"Why?" I asked.

His answer was simple.

"Because we live in England."

There was no rejection of India in those words. No reluctance to embrace his roots. He was simply expressing the



reality of the world he knows.

And in that moment I realised something important.

My relationship with India is built on memories.

His relationship with India is being built through stories.

I remember school days in India, neighbourhood friendships, crowded festivals and family traditions that shaped my childhood.

He experiences India differently.

For him, India is summer holidays, grandparents, cousins, family weddings, favourite foods and stories that begin with "When I was your age..."

His strongest memories are being created elsewhere.

And that is perfectly natural.

As diaspora parents, we sometimes worry about whether our children will remain connected to their Indian heritage. We want them to speak our languages, appreciate our traditions and

Can a person belong to two countries at once? For millions of overseas Indians, home is no longer a single place, but a lifelong connection between roots and new beginnings.

understand where their family came from.

But over time I have realised that preserving culture does not mean recreating our own childhoods.

Our children do not need to become copies of us.

They simply need the opportunity to understand all the parts that make them who they are.

They can be fully rooted in the country where they are growing up while remaining connected to India.

The two identities do not cancel one another out.

If anything, they enrich each other.

This, perhaps, is the modern story of the Indian diaspora.

Whether we live in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, the United States, the Gulf or elsewhere, we carry fragments of India with us every day.

Sometimes those connections are obvious.

They live in Diwali celebrations organised thousands of miles away from India. They live in community gatherings, cricket tournaments, cultural programmes and weekend language classes.



As first-generation immigrants hold on to memories of India, their children are creating new identities abroad. How do families balance heritage, culture and belonging across generations?



Sometimes the connection is much smaller.

For me, it often arrives through music.

Late at night, when the house is quiet, I ask Alexa to play old Hindi songs.

Within seconds, memories begin resurfacing.

A melody from the 1980s.

A favourite song from the 1990s.

A tune that instantly transports me back to another chapter of life.

Suddenly, geographical distance feels irrelevant.

For a few moments, India feels very close.

Every diaspora Indian has their own version of this experience.

A family recipe.

The smell of masala chai.

A childhood photograph.







From old Hindi songs and family traditions to raising children between cultures, a deeply personal reflection on what it means to carry India in your heart wherever life takes you.

A festival ritual passed down through generations.

A phone call from home.

These small things become emotional bridges between countries.

They remind us that while we may have left India physically, parts of India continue to travel with us.

Over the years, I have also come to appreciate how migration has transformed the meaning of home itself.

Home is no longer a single address.

It is not defined by geography alone.

It exists wherever our memories, relationships and sense of belonging reside.

Home can be the city where you were born.

Home can be the country where you built your future.

Home can be your parents' house in India and the home where your own children are growing up abroad.

For millions of overseas Indians, this duality has become a source of strength rather than confusion.

We understand different cultures.

We navigate different worlds.

We build bridges between societies.

We introduce our children to India and introduce our international friends to India at the same time.

We carry traditions across borders while embracing new experiences.

In doing so, we become living connections between the country we came from and the country we now call our own.

Perhaps that is why I no longer struggle to answer the question, "Where is home?"

The answer is still India.

But it is also here.

Home is no longer one place.

It is a collection of people, memories, traditions and experiences that span continents.

And if there is one thing the Indian diaspora teaches us, it is that belonging to more than one place is not a loss.

It is a privilege.

Because having two homes does not mean your heart is divided.

It simply means your heart has grown. ■

RISING ABOVE BOUNDARIES

In *Rising Sons*, Kavery Nambisan crafts an expansive family saga that mirrors India's own journey from colonial rule to nationhood. Through the fortunes and failures of one family, she explores the enduring impact of caste, the search for identity, and the challenges of social transformation, offering readers both an intimate human drama and a compelling portrait of a nation in transition.



BY DR. VED MITRA SHUKLA

Though an Associate Professor of English at Rajdhani College, University of Delhi, the author is equally proficient in English and Hindi.

Rising Sons: A Saga of Family, Identity and Nation-Building is among the most distinguished voices in contemporary Indian English fiction. Her novels explore diverse facets of Indian society, including rural life, gender concerns, medicine, politics, and the predicaments of ordinary people. Through memorable characters and socially grounded narratives, she captures the complexities of a changing India. Her notable works include *The Scent of Pepper* (1996), *Mango-Coloured Fish* (1998), *On Wings of Butterflies* (2002), *The Hills of Angheri* (2005), *The Story That Must Not Be Told* (2010), and *A Town Like Ours* (2014). Her latest novel, *Rising Sons* (2025), further consolidates her reputation as a novelist deeply engaged with India's social and historical realities. Beyond fiction, Nambisan has also written memoirs, children's literature, short stories, and critical essays. Her memoir collection *A Luxury Called Health* (2021) draws extensively on her experiences as a medical pr*actitioner.*

Rising Sons is an ambitious family saga that traces the evolution of Indian society and politics from the pre-Independence era to the decades following Independence. Through the fortunes of a single family, Nambisan examines wider questions of caste, identity, social mobility, nationalism, and modernity. At the centre of the narrative stands Devaraya, whose personal struggle with caste identity becomes a powerful metaphor for the contradictions embedded in Indian society.

Devaraya's life is shaped by his attempt to escape the stigma of his lower-caste origins. His journey from marginalisation to social respectability forms one of the novel's central conflicts. However, this transformation comes at a cost, and the concealment of his past eventually destabilises both his personal life and family. His sons, Nanju and Anna, respond differently to this legacy. Nanju embodies the tragic consequences of social exclusion and fractured identity, while Anna represents a generation inspired by nationalist ideals and the dream of building a new India. Equally significant is Chinni, the adopted daughter, whose independent spirit and refusal to conform challenge conventional gender roles. Together, these characters enable Nambisan to weave a compelling narrative about family relationships, social change, and the making of a nation.

The title *Rising Sons* operates on multiple levels. It refers not only to the rise of Devaraya's children but also to the transformation of a village, a community, and a nation in transition. In this sense, the novel is both a family chronicle and a social history.

Most of the narrative unfolds in Kesarugattu, a fictional village near Mysore in Karnataka. Yet the story extends beyond the village to Delhi, the centre of political power in newly independent India. This geographical movement mirrors the family's own journey from local concerns to national engagement. Kesarugattu emerges as far more than a backdrop. It functions as a living, dynamic presence that reflects

More than a family saga, Rising Sons is a compelling chronicle of India's journey from caste-bound traditions to the promises and complexities of modern nationhood.

the tensions, aspirations, conflicts, and harmonies of Indian society itself. The village becomes a microcosm of the nation, enabling Nambisan to connect individual destinies with broader historical developments.

Structurally, the novel is divided into four parts: *Mud and Water*, *Thrice Born*, *Khadi Cool*, and *Goldfish in a Pond*. These sections chart the grad-

ual transformation of both the family and the nation. In the opening section, Nambisan carefully establishes the social landscape of Kesarugattu while introducing the principal characters. Readers encounter Devaraya's hidden past and learn how caste discrimination forced him to abandon his original identity and reinvent himself as a Brahmin. Ironically, after rising within the social hierarchy, he begins to replicate the very structures of exclusion that once oppressed him. This irony lends considerable depth and complexity to his character. The first section also introduces a rich cast of supporting characters, including Gowru, Bhagya, Dharmajan, Chinni, Nanju, Anna, and Bhavani, each of whom contributes to the layered social tapestry of the novel.

The second section marks a dramatic turning point. Devaraya's concealed caste identity is exposed, leading to public humiliation, social ostracism, and financial decline. Through these events, Nambisan demonstrates how caste functions not merely as a social institution but as a force that profoundly shapes personal identity and psychological well-being. Nanju's inability to cope with the resulting loss of status highlights the destructive consequences of a hierarchical social order. Meanwhile, Anna moves in a different direction, becoming involved in nationalist politics and anti-colonial activism. As personal tragedy intersects with political awakening, the family narrative broadens into a larger story about India's struggle for freedom.

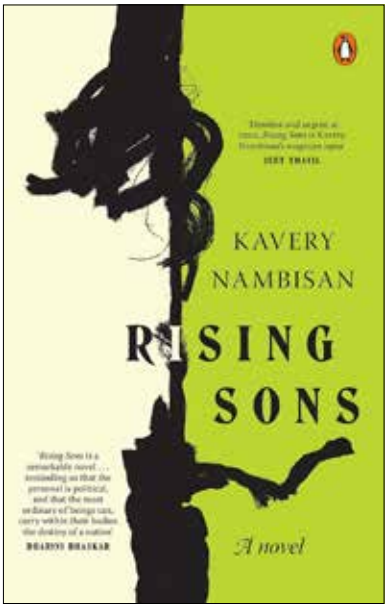
In the third section, Anna's political aspirations carry him from village activism to the national stage. His participation in the freedom movement, imprisonment, and eventual emergence as a significant political figure parallel India's own march towards Independence. Chinni's role also becomes increasingly important. Intelligent, outspoken, and socially conscious, she advocates women's education and freedom while maintaining strong ties to her family. Through her character, Nambisan foregrounds the often-overlooked contribution of women to social reform and national awakening. The growing influence of print media further enriches the narrative, illustrating how political ideas gradually penetrated rural India and reshaped public consciousness.

The final section explores the opportunities and challenges of post-Independence India. Anna becomes actively involved in nation-building, yet he remains troubled by the gap between the ideals of the freedom struggle and the realities of political life after Independence. Chinni continues her commitment to social reform, suggesting that the struggle for equality and justice remains unfinished. Through these parallel journeys, Nambisan underscores a fundamental truth: political freedom alone cannot eradicate deeply rooted social inequalities. The novel ends on a note of continuity and return, bringing the family back to its roots even as India moves towards an uncertain yet hopeful future.

What makes *Rising Sons* particularly remarkable is its ability to integrate the personal with the political. The novel examines the transition from tradition to modernity, from caste-based identity to a more inclusive humanism, and from private struggles to collective national aspirations. Nambisan transforms the fictional village of Kesarugattu into a miniature India where caste, class, gender, religion, and politics intersect in complex ways.

Through the fictional village of Kesarugattu, Kavery Nambisan creates a microcosm of India, where personal destinies intertwine with social change, political awakening, and the struggle for identity.

The novel's greatest achievement lies in its nuanced treatment of caste. Rather than presenting caste merely as a social backdrop, Nambisan portrays it as a powerful force shaping emotions, relationships, ambitions, and self-perception. Through the story of one family and one village, she illuminates the broader historical processes that shaped modern India. Rich in historical detail, social insight, and emotional depth, *Rising Sons* stands as an important literary exploration of a nation negotiating the difficult path from inherited hierarchies towards freedom, equality, and a more humane social order. ■



RISING SONS



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ANNE CARSON

REIMAGINING THE PAST FOR A NEW AGE

The Nobel Prize-winning Canadian poet and classicist has built a remarkable literary career by proving that ancient myths, lost fragments and old stories can still reveal profound truths about modern life.



BY UDAY K. VARMA

Author, a Harvard-educated civil servant with forty years of public service at the highest levels of government, has extensive knowledge, experience and expertise in the fields of media and entertainment, corporate affairs, administrative law and industrial and labour reforms.

When the Nobel Prize in Literature is awarded, it often introduces readers around the world to voices they may not yet have encountered. Such is the case with Anne Carson, the Canadian poet, essayist, translator and scholar whose work has long enjoyed admiration in literary circles but remains a fascinating discovery for many general readers. Her Nobel recognition honours a writer who has consistently challenged conventional ideas about literature and shown that stories written thousands of years ago can still speak directly to contemporary life.

Some writers tell stories.

Others interpret history.

A few bridge the gap between scholarship and creativity.

Anne Carson does all three simultaneously.

For more than four decades, she has occupied a unique place in world literature. Trained in classical Greek language and literature, Carson has devoted much of her life to studying ancient texts. Yet unlike many scholars who remain confined to academia, she has transformed her knowledge into works of remarkable imagination and emotional depth. Her writing moves effortlessly between poetry and prose, myth and memory, philosophy and autobiography. Readers are often unsure whether to place her books on a poetry shelf, a fiction shelf or a philosophy shelf. Carson herself appears largely unconcerned by such classifications.

That refusal to fit neatly into literary categories is precisely what makes her work so distinctive.

The Nobel Committee described her achievement as a "bold and inventive oeuvre" that creates new forms of contemporary literature through an ongoing dialogue with classical traditions. While such descriptions may sound academic, the underlying idea is refreshingly simple: Carson takes stories that have survived for centuries and reveals their relevance to modern emotions and experiences.

Her work reminds us that human beings have changed far less than we often imagine.

The settings may be different.

The technology may be different.

But love, grief, longing, jealousy, desire and loss remain remarkably constant across the centuries.

Ancient Myths, Modern Emotions

One of Carson's most celebrated works is *Autobiography of Red*, a book that demonstrates her extraordinary ability to reinvent ancient material. Drawing



inspiration from fragments of an ancient Greek poem, Carson retells the story of Geryon, a mythological red-winged monster traditionally defeated by the hero Heracles.

Under Carson's pen, however, the monster becomes far more than a figure from mythology.

Geryon emerges as a young man

struggling with identity, love and heartbreak.

The result is a work that resists categorisation. It is neither a conventional novel nor a traditional poem. Instead, it exists somewhere between the two, allowing narrative, imagery and reflection to flow together naturally. What might have remained an obscure classical myth becomes a moving contemporary story about vulnerability and emotional growth.

This ability to discover modern humanity within ancient narratives is one of Carson's greatest strengths. She treats myths not as relics of a distant civilisation but as living stories capable of revealing enduring truths about human experience.

Finding Meaning in Fragments

Perhaps even more remarkable is Carson's fascination with what survives incompletely.

In an age obsessed with certainty and completeness, she has repeatedly explored the power of absence.

This is particularly evident in her celebrated translation of the ancient Greek poet Sappho, published as *If Not, Winter*. Much of Sappho's work has survived only in fragments. In some cases, entire sections have been lost, leaving behind only isolated words and phrases.

Many translators attempt to smooth over these gaps.

Carson does the opposite.

She preserves them.

The missing portions remain visible on the page, becoming part of the reading experience itself. Rather than pretending completeness exists where it does not, Carson invites readers to embrace uncertainty and imagine what has been lost.

In doing so, she offers a subtle lesson about memory and history.

After all, much of our own lives survive as fragments.

We remember moments, conversations and emotions, but rarely entire experiences in their complete form.

The spaces between memories are often as meaningful as the memories themselves.

A Personal Literature of Loss

This exploration of fragments reaches one of its most moving expressions in *Nox,* Carson's deeply personal response to the death of her brother. Neither memoir nor conventional poetry collection, the work combines personal memories, family photographs, translations and reflections to create an unconventional meditation on grief.

The book unfolds much like memory itself.

Images appear unexpectedly.

Thoughts drift between past and present.

Questions remain unanswered.

The result is profoundly human.

What makes Carson especially remarkable is her ability to balance intellectual sophistication with emotional accessibility. Her works engage with classical literature and philosophical ideas, yet they are never solely exercises in scholarship. Beneath the references and literary experimentation lies a persistent concern with deeply familiar human experiences.

Her writing is thoughtful without becoming detached.

Personal without becoming self-indulgent.

Anne Carson has spent decades building bridges between ancient Greek literature and contemporary human experience.



Serious without losing its sense of humour.

An Indian Connection

Indian readers may find surprising points of connection with Carson's approach to literature.

The article rightly notes similarities with figures such as A. K. Ramanujan, Arun Kolatkar and Girish Karnad, all of whom engaged creatively with inherited traditions while speaking to contemporary realities.

Her Nobel Prize honours a writer who refuses to recognise boundaries between poetry, prose, translation and scholarship.

Among them, Ramanujan perhaps offers the closest parallel.

Like Carson, he was simultaneously a poet, translator and scholar. His work demonstrated how folklore, myth, memory and modernity could coexist within a single creative vision. Neither writer treats tradition as something fixed and untouchable. Instead, both approach inherited narratives as living material capable of ongoing reinterpretation.

This insight resonates strongly in cultures such as India, where ancient texts and stories continue to influence contemporary life.

Indeed, Carson's work reminds us that cultural traditions are not museums.

They are conversations.

And each generation participates in renewing them.

Expanding the Possibilities of Literature

What ultimately distinguishes Carson is not merely her subject matter but her willingness to challenge assump-







Like A. K. Ramanujan and Girish Karnad, Carson demonstrates how inherited traditions can be reinterpreted for a new generation.



tions about literary form itself.

She moves freely between genres.

Poetry becomes narrative.

Scholarship becomes memoir.

Translation becomes creative interpretation.

Ancient texts converse with present-day concerns.

Many of her books require patience and active participation from readers. She rarely explains everything. Meanings emerge gradually, often through association rather than direct statement. Yet this openness is part of their appeal.

Readers become collaborators.

They are invited to make connections, fill gaps and engage with uncertainty.

In a world increasingly dominated by quick answers and simplified narratives, Carson's work offers something different: the pleasure of thoughtful complexity.

A Nobel for the Curious Reader

Anne Carson's Nobel Prize is significant not simply because it honours an individual writer. It also recognises a way of thinking about literature that values experimentation, curiosity and conversation across centuries.

She is the third Canadian-born writer to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature, following Saul Bellow and Alice Munro. Yet her importance extends beyond literary distinctions and national achievements. Her work reminds readers that old stories need not become old-fashioned and that the past remains an active participant in contemporary culture.

At a time when societies across the world are debating questions of tity, memory and cultural inheritance, Carson's writing feels particularly relevant. She demonstrates that tradition is not something preserved behind glass. It is something we continually reinterpret, question and renew.

That may be her most enduring contribution.

Some writers give us memorable books.

Anne Carson invites us to rethink what a book can be.

INDIA'S HELPING HAND

When disaster strikes, the first few hours often determine how many lives can be saved. Whether it is an earthquake in Nepal, a tsunami in the Indian Ocean, a water crisis in the Maldives, devastating floods in Myanmar, or medical emergencies in Africa, one country is increasingly among the first to respond: India. Over the past two decades, India has quietly built an impressive record of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, transforming itself from a recipient of international aid into a nation that delivers hope, expertise and lifesaving support across continents. Today, India's role as a dependable first responder has become one of the most visible expressions of its growing global influence and its commitment to being a force for good in an interconnected world.



BY SUCHITRA DURAI

A former Indian Ambassador to Thailand and High Commissioner to Kenya, author has help several senior positions in the Ministry of External Affairs.

When a giant wall of water crashed onto Chennai's Marina Beach on the morning of 26 December 2004, few could have imagined the scale of the catastrophe that was unfolding across the Indian Ocean. Families enjoying a holiday morning were swept away. Fishermen disappeared into the raging waters. Children playing cricket on the beach vanished within moments.

Across the Bay of Bengal, similar scenes of devastation were playing out in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Thousands of kilometres away, coastal communities in Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia were also being engulfed by one of the deadliest natural disasters in modern history. The Indian Ocean tsunami would eventually claim nearly a quarter of a million lives across 14 countries and displace millions more.

For India, the tsunami was more than a humanitarian tragedy. It became a defining moment in the country's evolution as a regional and global force for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Even while grappling with widespread destruction at home, India swiftly mobilised resources to assist neighbouring nations. It was a remarkable demonstration of capability, compassion and leadership. More importantly, it marked the beginning of India's emergence as a trusted first responder in times of crisis.

A Defining Moment

The scale of India's response to the tsunami was unprecedented.

Five major relief operations were launched simultaneously. While rescue and rehabilitation efforts were underway in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India also extended urgent assistance to Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Indonesia. More than 20,000 personnel from the armed forces and Coast Guard, supported by dozens of ships, aircraft and helicopters, participated in a massive relief effort that stretched across the region.

The success of these operations fundamentally altered global perceptions of India's capabilities.

The experience also prompted important institutional reforms. In the aftermath of the tsunami, India enacted the Disaster Management Act, 2005, creating a comprehensive framework for disaster preparedness, mitigation and response. The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), now rec-



ognised as one of the world's most capable disaster-response organisations, emerged from these reforms.

The tsunami's legacy extended beyond disaster management. It also brought together Australia, India, Japan and the United States in a coordinated humanitarian effort, laying the foundations for what would eventually evolve into the Quad.

From National Capability to Regional Leadership

Over the next two decades, India steadily built a reputation for responding rapidly and effectively to emergencies beyond its borders.

One of the most notable examples came in December 2014 when the Maldives faced an unprecedented water crisis following the breakdown of its only desalination plant. As drinking water supplies dwindled, India responded immediately.

Under Operation Neer, Indian Air Force aircraft and Indian Navy ships transported more than 1,500 tonnes of drinking water to the island nation. India became the first country to come to the Maldives' assistance, demonstrating the value of proximity, preparedness and goodwill.

From the tsunami-ravaged shores of the Indian Ocean to earthquake-hit nations across continents, India has emerged as a trusted first responder when the world needs help most.

The operation also revealed an often-overlooked aspect of humanitarian assistance: logistics. With such large quantities of bottled water required at very short notice, India's response depended on coordinated action across multiple government agencies. Even Indian Railways contributed through supplies of Rail Neer, illustrating how humanitarian missions often become whole-of-government efforts.

Standing With Nepal

When a devastating earthquake struck Nepal in April 2015, India once again demonstrated the importance of rapid action.

Within hours, Operation Maitri was underway.

Rescue teams, relief supplies, medical personnel and aircraft were dispatched to assist Nepal's recovery efforts. Thousands of stranded people, including foreign nationals, were evacuated while field hospitals provided emergency medical care. India's support did not end once the immediate crisis



subsided. The country later committed a major reconstruction and rehabilitation package worth approximately USD 2 billion to help Nepal rebuild damaged infrastructure and communities.

The operation highlighted an important principle that increasingly defines India's humanitarian engagement: assistance does not end with rescue. Long-term recovery and rebuilding are equally important.

Extending a Hand Beyond the Neighbourhood

India's first-responder role has steadily expanded beyond South Asia.

In 2023, following devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, India launched Operation Dost, dispatching search-and-rescue teams, medical specialists, dog squads and humanitarian supplies to support relief efforts. The speed of the response earned international appreciation and reinforced India's reputation as a dependable partner during emergencies.

Once a recipient of international aid, India today delivers rescue, relief and hope across borders, redefining its role on the global stage.

Similarly, India has provided humanitarian support to countries affected by natural disasters in Africa, including Mozambique and Malawi, further demonstrating that its commitment to disaster relief extends far beyond its immediate region.

Recent operations in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Venezuela have reflected the increasing sophistication and reach of India's humanitarian capabilities. These missions have involved not only relief supplies but also engineering units, field hospitals, specialised rescue teams and technical experts capable of assisting recovery efforts in highly challenging environments.

Whether through disaster relief, medical missions or vaccine diplomacy, India's humanitarian outreach has become one of its most powerful expressions of global leadership.





Compassion During a Global Pandemic

Perhaps no crisis tested the international community more than the Covid-19 pandemic.

At a time when many nations were focused inward, India launched the Vaccine Maitri initiative, supplying hundreds of millions of vaccine doses to countries across the world, including support for United Nations entities. Alongside vaccines, India provided medicines, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment to countries struggling to manage the public-health emergency.

For many developing nations, particularly in the Global South, India's assistance was not merely symbolic. It was lifesaving.

The initiative demonstrated that humanitarian leadership in the twenty-first century extends beyond natural disasters to encompass health security, medical cooperation and global resilience.

A New Dimension of India's Soft Power

Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief have become one of the most visible expressions of India's soft power.

Unlike traditional diplomacy, which often relies on negotiations and agreements, humanitarian diplomacy speaks through action. It builds trust, goodwill and credibility. Nations remember who arrived first when disaster struck, who provided assistance without conditions and who stood by them during their most difficult moments.

This reputation has become an increasingly valuable asset for India.

Today, humanitarian assistance forms an important pillar of initiatives such as SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), India's Indo-Pacific vision and the broader MAHASAGAR framework. Together, these initiatives reflect a strategic belief that security, development and humanitarian cooperation are interconnected.

Building Resilience for the Future

India's contribution extends beyond emergency response.

Recognising that prevention is as important as relief, India has been actively involved in efforts to strengthen global disaster resilience. The country played a key role in advancing tsunami-warning mechanisms and has championed the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), a global initiative headquartered in New Delhi. The coalition works with countries around the world, including vulnerable island nations, to ensure that critical infrastructure can better withstand natural disasters and climate-related risks.

As climate change increases the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such initiatives will become even more significant.

The challenge is no longer simply responding to disasters. It is helping societies prepare for themselves.

A Force for Global Good

The story of India's rise as a humanitarian responder is, at its heart, a story of national transformation.

Just a few decades ago, India was often seen primarily as a recipient of international assistance during times of crisis. Today, it is increasingly among the first nations to provide support when emergencies occur elsewhere.

From the tsunami-hit shores of the Indian Ocean to earthquake-stricken communities in Nepal, Türkiye and Syria; from delivering clean water to the Maldives to sharing vaccines during a global pandemic, India has consistently demonstrated that compassion can be a powerful instrument of international engagement.

For overseas Indians watching their homeland's growing influence on the world stage, this evolution is a source of pride. It reflects an India that leads not merely through economic growth, technological innovation or military strength, but through empathy, responsibility and a willingness to help others in moments of need.

In an increasingly uncertain world, that may be India's most enduring contribution of all: the assurance that when disaster strikes, help is already on its way.

CROWDED ENTRY AND LINGERING EXIT OF EUROPE FROM INDIA

Every Indian grows up learning that colonial rule ended on 15 August 1947. Yet the story of European India was far more complex. Long before the British established their dominance, Portuguese, Dutch, French, Danish and even Austrian traders had carved out footholds across the subcontinent's thriving commercial networks. And long after the Union Jack was lowered, French and Portuguese flags continued to fly over pockets of Indian territory. Few realise that India's journey from colony to fully sovereign nation did not end at midnight on Independence Day. It continued for another fourteen years, as the country absorbed scattered European enclaves that had survived centuries of trade, rivalry and empire. Their story reveals a forgotten India, one where multiple European powers competed for influence and where the modern map we take for granted was anything but inevitable.



BY ZEYAUR RAHMAN

From curating the Substack series *Past Imperfect* on historical anomalies to contributing essays on socio political themes across print and digital platforms, the author has recently added fiction to his repertoire with the novel A *River Remembers.*

More Crowded India Than We Remember

When India became independent in 1947, the British Empire formally came to an end. Yet not every European flag disappeared from Indian soil.

That fact often surprises modern Indians because we tend to imagine colonial India as a story involving only Britain. School textbooks focus, understandably, on the East India Company, the British Raj and the freedom struggle. But the reality was far more complex.

For centuries, the Indian subcontinent was a vibrant commercial world connected to global trade routes stretching from Europe and Africa to Southeast Asia and China. It was a landscape of powerful kingdoms, thriving ports and prosperous markets. European merchants entered this world not as conquerors armed with a grand imperial blueprint, but as traders searching for spices, textiles and commercial opportunities.

Their goals were modest at first. A warehouse. A trading post. A fortified settlement. A favourable treaty.

Yet because several European powers pursued the same objectives, India gradually became home to a remarkable collection of competing colonial outposts.

Portuguese, Dutch, British, French and Danish settlements appeared along the coastline and river systems of the subcontinent. For brief periods, even Austrian and Swedish trading ventures attempted to secure a place in the lucrative Indian Ocean economy.

Far from being a single colonial enterprise, European involvement in India resembled a crowded marketplace of competing ambitions.



India's decolonisation did not end in 1947. The final European colonial enclave disappeared only in 1961.



The Port Cities That Drew Europe to India

Western India offered some of the earliest examples of this colonial overlap.

Surat, one of Mughal India's most prosperous ports, attracted merchants from across the world. Portuguese influence was already deeply established when Dutch traders arrived in the early seventeenth century. They were soon followed by the English East India Company, all seeking access to the same thriving commercial networks.

The story of Mumbai provides another fascinating example.

What we now know as India's financial capital once consisted of seven separate islands. Known to the Portuguese as *Bom Bahia* or "Good Bay", the territory entered British possession in 1661 as part of the marriage arrangement between Portugal's Catherine of Braganza and England's Charles II. The British Crown later transferred the islands to the East India Company for a nominal annual payment.

At the time, nobody could have imagined that these islands would evolve into one of the world's great cities.

The River That Hosted Empires

Perhaps nowhere was the European presence more concentrated than along Bengal's Hooghly River.

Travelling downstream in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would have been an extraordinary experience. Within a relatively small stretch of river stood settlements belonging to multiple European powers.

Bandel reflected the Portuguese presence.

Chinsurah served as the Dutch headquarters in Bengal.

Chandernagore flew the French flag.

Across the river stood Danish Serampore, known then as Frederiksnagore.

These were not isolated colonial enclaves cut off from Indian society. They were thriving Indian towns shaped by local commerce, culture and people. European administrators, churches and fortifications formed one layer of life, but beneath them remained overwhelmingly Indian communities conducting business, raising families and maintaining local traditions.

In many ways, European powers adapted themselves to India as much as they attempted to change India.

The Hooghly was in fact more crowded than what we assume it to be. Some names sound almost invented.

The Habsburg monarchy of Austria entered the Indian Ocean trade through the short-lived Ostend Company in the 1720s, establishing a tiny enclave at Bankibazar in Bengal—defended by a garrison numbering just fourteen men. The Swedish East India Company also tried its luck at Porto Novo in 1733. While brief footnotes, these ventures proved how intense the European scramble for Indian commerce truly was.

Beyond the British Raj, Portuguese, Dutch, French and Danish settlements once dotted the Indian landscape.

When Britain Absorbed the Others

The crowded colonial landscape could not survive indefinitely.

As British influence expanded



across the subcontinent, rival European powers gradually lost ground. Some territories were conquered. Others were purchased. Several simply became economically unsustainable.

The Danish experience illustrates this process particularly well.

After more than two centuries in Tranquebar and nearly a century in Serampore, Denmark eventually sold its Indian possessions to Britain in 1845. The colonies had failed to generate the commercial success their founders had hoped for, making continued administration difficult to justify.

Slowly, the patchwork of European territories was consolidated into a single British-controlled dominion.

This created a powerful illusion.

By the late nineteenth century, the British Empire appeared so dominant that many assumed colonial India had always been destined to take this form. Yet Britain's Indian empire was partly built upon territories previously occupied by other European powers.

The map had simplified, but history had not.

Independence Was Not the End

The most surprising chapter comes after 1947.

When India became independent, the British became the first major European colonial power to leave completely. Others remained.

France retained control of several scattered territories including Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahé, Yanam and Chandernagore. These settlements existed as small fragments of an older world, surrounded on all sides by a newly independent India.

The modern map of India emerged through centuries of trade, rivalry, negotiation and integration, not through a single event.

In Chandernagore, residents were eventually asked whether they wished to remain under French rule or join India. They overwhelmingly chose integration. The territory formally became part of India in the early 1950s, while the remaining French settlements passed into Indian administration in 1954 largely through negotiation.

Portugal proved far more reluctant.

The Last Colonial Flag

Portuguese links with India stretched back to the early sixteenth century, giving Lisbon a much longer association with the subcontinent than most European rivals.

Goa had been conquered in 1510 and evolved into the centre of Portugal's eastern empire. Daman and Diu formed additional Portuguese possessions, while Dadra and Nagar Haveli entered Portuguese control through separate historical arrangements.

Unlike France, Portugal showed little willingness to surrender these territories.

Even after local resistance movements weakened Portuguese authority in Dadra and Nagar Haveli in 1954, Lisbon continued to insist that Goa, Daman and Diu were integral parts of Portugal itself rather than colonies.

The standoff lasted for years.

Finally, in December 1961, India launched military action to bring the remaining Portuguese territories under its control. The operation ended centuries of Portuguese rule and completed the process of removing European colonial authority from the subcontinent.

Fourteen years after independence, the last major European colonial flag was lowered from Indian soil.

The Maps We Inherit

Looking at a modern map, India's borders appear stable and inevitable.

History suggests otherwise.

For centuries, the subcontinent was a complex mosaic of kingdoms, trading centres, colonial enclaves and overlapping spheres of influence. Its transformation into the modern nation-state we recognise today was neither simple nor inevitable. It emerged through centuries of political negotiation, commercial rivalry, conquest and integration.

The story of the Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, French, Austrian and Swedish ventures reminds us that India's encounter with Europe was never a single story. It was a collection of intertwined stories involving trade, ambition, adaptation and power.

Most of those empires have disappeared.

Some survive only in fading colonial buildings, forgotten records and place names.

Yet they leave behind an important lesson: the maps we inherit often appear permanent, but history shows that they are products of constant change. India's freedom, too, was not a single moment in August 1947. It was a longer and more complicated process, one that continued until the last European enclave became part of the nation it had always geographically belonged to. ■

BEYOND THE HORIZON

Human beings have always been fascinated by what lies ahead. Yet the enduring appeal of astrology lies not merely in predicting the future, but in understanding ourselves more deeply. The Janam Kundli, prepared from the planetary positions at the moment of birth, offers insights into the tendencies, opportunities and challenges that may shape an individual's life. Rather than viewing destiny as fixed, astrology invites reflection, awareness and conscious action, helping us approach life's journey with greater clarity, confidence and purpose.



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With over fifteen years of dedicated practice, the author brings a profound engagement with classical astrology. Their interpretations are not only rooted in tradition but also marked by thoughtfulness, balance, and insight — offering readers guidance that is both timeless and deeply relevant.

नवंबर-2026 मासिक राशिफल

मेष (Aries)

नवंबर आपके लिए नई दिशा बनाने वाला महीना रहेगा।
करियर/व्यवसाय: महीने की शुरुआत में पुराने कामों और रुकी हुई योजनाओं पर दोबारा ध्यान देना पड़ सकता है। 13 नवंबर के बाद निर्णय लेने और बातचीत में स्पष्टता बढ़ेगी। नौकरी में जिम्मेदारी बढ़ सकती है। व्यवसाय में पुराने संपर्कों से लाभ मिलने के संकेत हैं।
12 नवंबर के बाद मंगल का सिंह में जाना आपको अधिक सक्रिय बनाएगा। नए प्रोजेक्ट, मार्केटिंग, सेल्स और नेतृत्व से जुड़े कामों में ऊर्जा बढ़ेगी।
धन: आमदनी के नए रास्ते खुल सकते हैं, लेकिन अचानक खर्च भी हो सकता है। निवेश में जल्दबाजी न करें। महीने के दूसरे भाग में आर्थिक स्थिति अधिक व्यवस्थित हो सकती है।
प्रेम/विवाह: परिवार और जीवनसाथी के साथ बातचीत महत्वपूर्ण रहेगी। छोटी बात को विवाद न बनने दें। अविवाहित लोगों के लिए परिचय या रिश्ता आने की संभावना बन सकती है।
परिवार: परिवार में किसी महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय पर चर्चा हो सकती है। पिता या वरिष्ठ व्यक्ति से सलाह लाभदायक रहेगी।
स्वास्थ्य: थकान, तनाव और नींद की अनियमितता से बचें। नियमित दिनचर्या आपके लिए महत्वपूर्ण रहेगी।
शुभ रंग: लाल
शुभ दिन: मंगलवार
शुभ अंक: 9

वृषभ (Taurus)

नवंबर में आपका ध्यान करियर, धन और परिवार की स्थिरता पर रहेगा।
करियर: महीने की शुरुआत में कार्यक्षेत्र में कुछ भ्रम या देरी हो सकती है। 13 नवंबर के बाद परिस्थितियां अधिक स्पष्ट होंगी। नौकरी बदलने की सोच रहे लोगों को विकल्प मिल सकते हैं। व्यवसाय में बड़े लोगों या पुराने संपर्कों से सहायता मिल सकती है।
धन: आर्थिक स्थिति धीरे-धीरे मजबूत हो सकती है। संपत्ति, घर, वाहन या परिवार से जुड़े खर्च संभव हैं। किसी को बड़ी रकम उधार देने से पहले सोचें।
प्रेम: दांपत्य जीवन में संवाद आवश्यक रहेगा। पुराने मतभेद बातचीत से दूर हो सकते हैं।
यात्रा: महीने के दूसरे हिस्से में लंबी यात्रा या विदेश संबंधी योजना बन सकती है।
परिवार: घर में कोई शुभ कार्यक्रम या महत्वपूर्ण चर्चा हो सकती है।
शुभ रंग: सफेद
शुभ दिन: शुक्रवार
शुभ अंक: 6

मिथुन (Gemini)

नवंबर आपके लिए communication और career का महत्वपूर्ण महीना है।
करियर: 13 नवंबर के बाद बुध मार्गी होने से रुके हुए काम आगे बढ़ सकते हैं। इंटरव्यू, दस्तावेज, आवेदन, सरकारी काम और व्यावसायिक बातचीत में सुधार हो सकता है। सेल्स, मीडिया, शिक्षा, कानून, सलाहकारी और communication से जुड़े लोगों के लिए महीना उपयोगी रह सकता है।
धन: आमदनी के साथ-साथ खर्च भी रहेगा। एक से अधिक income source बनाने की सोच सफल हो सकती है, लेकिन पहले योजना बनाएं।
प्रेम: पुरानी गलतफहमियां दूर हो सकती हैं। दांपत्य जीवन में खुलकर बातचीत करना लाभदायक रहेगा।
शिक्षा: विद्यार्थियों के लिए महीने का दूसरा भाग अधिक अनुकूल रहेगा।
सावधानी: कागजात पढ़े बिना हस्ताक्षर न करें।
शुभ रंग: हरा
शुभ दिन: बुधवार
शुभ अंक: 5

कर्क (Cancer)

नवंबर 2026 में आपके लिए career और public image महत्वपूर्ण विषय रहेंगे।
करियर: गुरु के सिंह में प्रवेश के बाद धन और परिवार से जुड़े विषयों पर सकारात्मक ध्यान जा सकता है। कार्यक्षेत्र में आपकी जिम्मेदारी बढ़ सकती है। सरकारी क्षेत्र, management, education, counselling और public dealing से जुड़े लोगों को नए अवसर मिल सकते हैं।
धन: धन संचय की संभावना बढ़ेगी। परिवार से आर्थिक सहायता या किसी पुराने financial matter के समाधान के संकेत हो सकते हैं।
प्रेम/विवाह: जीवनसाथी के साथ भविष्य की योजनाओं पर चर्चा होगी। अविवाहित लोगों के लिए गंभीर रिश्ता सामने आ सकता है।
परिवार: परिवार की प्रतिष्ठा और सामाजिक स्थिति में सुधार के अवसर मिल सकते हैं।
25 नवंबर के आसपास केतु के नक्षत्र परिवर्तन को कुछ वैदिक ज्योतिष स्रोत कर्क राशि के लिए career clarity और अवसरों से जोड़ते हैं; व्यक्तिगत कुंडली के अनुसार परिणाम अलग हो सकते हैं।
शुभ रंग: सफेद
शुभ दिन: सोमवार
शुभ अंक: 2

सिंह (Leo)

नवंबर की प्रमुख राशियों में सिंह राशि भी शामिल है। गुरु 31 अक्टूबर 2026 को सिंह राशि में प्रवेश कर चुका होगा, इसलिए नवंबर आपके लिए गुरु गोचर का नया चरण लेकर आएगा।
करियर: नई जिम्मेदारी, पद परिवर्तन या नया काम सामने आ सकता है। leadership role में रहने वाले लोगों के लिए समय महत्वपूर्ण रहेगा। 12 नवंबर के बाद मंगल भी सिंह में आने से आपकी energy और initiative बढ़ सकता है।
धन: आमदनी के नए अवसर बन सकते हैं। हालांकि उत्साह में बड़ी financial commitment करने से बचें।
प्रेम: आकर्षण और confidence बढ़ेगा। अविवाहित लोगों के लिए नया relationship शुरू होने की संभावना हो

सकती है।
सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठा: आपकी पहचान और public image पर सकारात्मक ध्यान जाएगा। किसी संस्था, संगठन या professional circle में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका मिल सकती है।
सावधानी: अत्यधिक confidence से बचें। वरिष्ठों से बहस न करें।
शुभ रंग: सुनहरा/पीला
शुभ दिन: रविवार
शुभ अंक: 1



कन्या (Virgo)
करियर: नवंबर का पहला हिस्सा थोड़ा धीमा महसूस हो सकता है, लेकिन 13–14 नवंबर के बाद स्थितियां सुधरेंगी। पुराने pending projects पूरे होने लगेंगे। नौकरी में स्थान परिवर्तन या नई जिम्मेदारी की संभावना बन सकती है।
धन: अनावश्यक खर्चों पर नियंत्रण जरूरी है। विदेश, यात्रा, शिक्षा या professional development पर खर्च हो सकता है।
प्रेम: भावनात्मक संवेदनशीलता बढ़ सकती है। साथी की बात को समझने की कोशिश करें।
परिवार: घर में किसी पुराने विषय को लेकर चर्चा हो सकती है, लेकिन महीने के अंत तक स्थिति बेहतर हो सकती है।
मानसिक शांति: ध्यान, योग और सुबह की routine आपके लिए विशेष रूप से उपयोगी रह सकती है।
शुभ रंग: हरा
शुभ दिन: बुधवार
शुभ अंक: 5



तुला (Libra)
करियर: नवंबर में professional networking महत्वपूर्ण रहेगी। नए contacts भविष्य में फायदा दे सकते हैं। 14 नवंबर के बाद शुक्र मार्गी होने से personal confidence और relationships में सुधार महसूस हो सकता है। शुक्र 6 नवंबर को कन्या में जाता है और 14 नवंबर को मार्गी होता है।
धन: आमदनी सामान्य से बेहतर हो सकती है, लेकिन lifestyle expenses भी बढ़ सकते हैं।
प्रेम: रिश्तों में clarity आएगी। पुराने misunderstanding समाप्त करने का अच्छा समय है।
व्यवसाय: Partnership में काम करने वालों को terms और responsibilities स्पष्ट रखनी चाहिए।
सावधानी: बिना पूरी जानकारी किसी financial agreement पर सहमति न दें।
शुभ रंग: क्रीम/सफेद
शुभ दिन: शुक्रवार
शुभ अंक: 6



वृश्चिक (Scorpio)
करियर: आपके लिए नवंबर career transformation का महीना हो सकता है। नई जिम्मेदारी, नया project या नया professional direction सामने आ सकता है। 12 नवंबर के बाद मंगल का प्रभाव आपको अधिक सक्रिय बनाएगा।
धन: अचानक लाभ के अवसर बन सकते हैं, लेकिन speculative investment में सावधानी रखें।
प्रेम: रिश्तों में intensity रहेगी। married couples के लिए communication महत्वपूर्ण रहेगा।
प्रतिष्ठा: आपके काम की recognition बढ़ सकती है। वरिष्ठ व्यक्ति आपके प्रयासों को notice कर सकते हैं। 25 नवंबर के आसपास केतु के नक्षत्र परिवर्तन को कुछ ज्योतिषीय स्रोत वृश्चिक के लिए career और financial opportunities से जोड़ते हैं।
शुभ रंग: लाल
शुभ दिन: मंगलवार
शुभ अंक: 9

नवंबर 2026 के प्रमुख वैदिक गोचर

ग्रह	नवंबर 2026 की स्थिति/घटना
गुरु	31 अक्टूबर से सिंह में
शनि	मीन में, वक्री
मंगल	12 नवंबर से सिंह
बुध	13 नवंबर को मार्गी
शुक्र	14 नवंबर को मार्गी
राहु	नवंबर में कुंभ
केतु	नवंबर में सिंह



धनु (Sagittarius)
करियर: नवंबर में विदेश, दूरस्थ स्थान, education और professional expansion से जुड़े अवसर सामने आ सकते हैं। नौकरी में बदलाव सोच रहे हैं तो options की तुलना करके निर्णय लें।
धन: आमदनी ठीक रहेगी, लेकिन यात्रा और घर से जुड़े खर्च बढ़ सकते हैं।
प्रेम: रिश्तों में honesty जरूरी होगी। शादीशुदा लोगों को एक-दूसरे के career decisions में सहयोग करना चाहिए।
विदेश: Foreign travel, immigration या overseas work/study से जुड़ी planning में progress हो सकती है, हालांकि actual परिणाम आपकी व्यक्तिगत कुंडली और संबंधित प्रक्रिया पर निर्भर होंगे।
स्वास्थ्य: अधिक काम और कम आराम से बचें।
शुभ रंग: पीला
शुभ दिन: गुरुवार
शुभ अंक: 3



मकर (Capricorn)
मकर राशि के लिए अक्टूबर मेहनत और जिम्मेदारी का महीना रहेगा। शुरुआत थोड़ी धीमी हो सकती है लेकिन महीने के दूसरे हिस्से में परिस्थितियाँ आपके पक्ष में आने लगेंगी।
नौकरी में position मजबूत होगी। पुराना पैसा वापस मिल सकता है।
दांपत्य जीवन में patience रखें। परिवार में किसी बड़े व्यक्ति की सलाह लाभ देगी।
अत्यधिक तनाव से बचें।
उपाय: शनिवार को जरूरतमंद व्यक्ति को काले तिल या भोजन का दान करें।
शुभ दिन: शनिवार
शुभ अंक: 8



कुंभ (Aquarius)
अक्टूबर आपके लिए नई दिशा और नई शुरुआत लेकर आ सकता है। जो लोग लंबे समय से बदलाव चाहते थे, उन्हें अवसर मिल सकता है।
नौकरी बदलने या नया काम शुरू करने के योग हैं।
आय बढ़ सकती है, लेकिन खर्च भी साथ-साथ रहेंगे।
पुराने रिश्ते में सुधार हो सकता है। हर बात हर व्यक्ति से share न करें।
उपाय: शनिवार को पीपल के वृक्ष के नीचे सरसों के तेल का दीपक जलाएँ।
शुभ दिन: शनिवार
शुभ अंक: 8



(Pisces)
करियर: शनि के मीन राशि में होने के कारण आपके लिए जिम्मेदारी और discipline महत्वपूर्ण रहेगा। नवंबर में मेहनत का परिणाम धीरे-धीरे दिखाई दे सकता है। शुरुआत में delay हो सकता है लेकिन 13 नवंबर के बाद communication-related matters बेहतर हो सकते हैं।
धन: Income बनी रह सकती है, लेकिन savings पर ध्यान देना जरूरी होगा। अचानक खर्चों के लिए reserve रखें।
प्रेम/विवाह: रिश्ते में maturity बढ़ेगी। जो लोग शादी के लिए प्रयास कर रहे हैं, उनके लिए परिवार के स्तर पर बातचीत आगे बढ़ सकती है।
परिवार: परिवार में आपकी भूमिका महत्वपूर्ण रहेगी।
स्वास्थ्य: नींद, तनाव और नियमित भोजन पर ध्यान दें।
शुभ रंग: पीला
शुभ दिन: गुरुवार
शुभ अंक: 3

देवी से क्या माँगें?

हर साल नवरात्रि के दिनों में करोड़ों श्रद्धालु देवी के चरणों में अपनी-अपनी कामनाएँ लेकर उपस्थित होते हैं। कोई सुख माँगता है, कोई समृद्धि, कोई सफलता और कोई संकटों से मुक्ति। पर क्या कभी हमने यह सोचा है कि हमारी अधिकांश प्रार्थनाओं के मूल में क्या है? दुर्गा सप्तशती की कथा हमें बताती है कि मनुष्य के दुःख का सबसे बड़ा कारण अभाव नहीं, बल्कि मोह है। राजा सुरथ और समाधि वैश्य के प्रसंग के माध्यम से यह प्रश्न उठता है कि देवी की आराधना का उद्देश्य केवल इच्छापूर्ति है या फिर उस मोह से मुक्ति, जो हमारे जीवन के अधिकांश संघर्षों का मूल कारण है।



उदय कुमार वर्मा

लेखक, जो हार्वर्ड से शिक्षित एक आई.ए.एस. अधिकारी हैं और जिन्होंने सरकार के सर्वोच्च स्तरों पर तक जनसेवा की है, उनके पास मीडिया और मनोरंजन, कॉर्पोरेट मामलों, प्रशासनिक कानून, तथा औद्योगिक और श्रम सुधारों के क्षेत्रों में व्यापक ज्ञान और अनुभव है।



नवरात्रि का पर्व अपने अंतिम चरण होते हुए पिछले हफ्ते सम्पन्न हो गया। नौ दिनों तक हम सबने अपनी श्रद्धा, आस्था और सामर्थ्य के अनुसार देवी की आराधना की है। इन दिनों मंदिरों में, घरों में और मन के भीतर एक ही भाव बार-बार उठता है, "माँ, हमें यह दे दो, हमारी यह इच्छा पूरी कर दो।"

शायद ही कोई ऐसा साधक हो जो देवी के सम्मुख बिल्कुल निष्काम होकर बैठता हो। मनुष्य की प्रकृति ही कुछ ऐसी है कि उसकी प्रार्थनाएँ प्रायः किसी न किसी कामना से जुड़ी होती हैं। कोई स्वास्थ्य चाहता है, कोई सफलता; कोई संतान का सुख, तो कोई धन-समृद्धि। यह स्वाभाविक भी है। किन्तु कभी-कभी हमारी कामनाएँ केवल अपनी उन्नति तक सीमित नहीं रहतीं। वे दूसरों की असफलता, ईर्ष्या और प्रतिस्पर्धा से भी प्रेरित होने लगती हैं।

प्रश्न यह है कि ऐसा क्यों होता है?
नवरात्रि के दौरान सबसे अधिक पाठ किए जाने वाले ग्रंथों में से एक दुर्गा सप्तशती इस प्रश्न का अत्यंत गहन उत्तर देती है। सप्तश्लोकी दुर्गा का

पहला ही श्लोक कहता है

ज्ञानिनामपि चेतांसि देवी भगवती हि सा।
बलादाकृष्य मोहाय महामाया प्रयच्छति॥

अर्थात् देवी महामाया ज्ञानियों के चित्त को भी बलपूर्वक आकर्षित कर मोह में डाल सकती हैं।

यह श्लोक मानव स्वभाव के एक बड़े सत्य की ओर संकेत करता है। हम सामान्यतः यह मानते हैं कि ज्ञान प्राप्त होते ही व्यक्ति सभी भ्रमों से मुक्त हो जाता है। परन्तु शास्त्र बताते हैं कि केवल ज्ञान पर्याप्त नहीं है। मनुष्य का सबसे बड़ा संघर्ष अज्ञान से नहीं, बल्कि मोह से होता है।

मोह: दुःख का अदृश्य कारण

हम जानते हैं कि ईर्ष्या अनुचित है, लोभ विनाशकारी है और अहंकार पतन का कारण बनता है। फिर भी हम इनसे मुक्त नहीं हो पाते। इसका कारण है मोह।

मोह केवल किसी व्यक्ति या वस्तु के प्रति आकर्षण का नाम नहीं है। वह हमारे भीतर अनेक रूपों में उपस्थित रहता है। कभी वह रुतबे और नाम-शोहरत के चक्कर में पड़ जाता है, तो कभी धन, तो कभी संबंधों और अपने विचारों के प्रति।

जब मोह हमारी बुद्धि पर आवरण डाल देता है, तो हम अपने स्वार्थ को न्याय और अपनी हठधर्मिता को सिद्धांत समझने लगते हैं। सही और ग़लत का भेद धुँधला पड़ने लगता है। यही कारण है कि देवी की उपासना केवल इच्छाओं की पूर्ति का माध्यम नहीं, बल्कि चित्त को निर्मल करने की साधना भी मानी गई है।

राजा सुरथ और समाधि वैश्य की कथा

दुर्गा सप्तशती केवल महिषासुर-वध अथवा शुम्भ-निशुम्भ के पराभव की कथा नहीं है बल्कि उसके भीतर मानव मन की भी एक अद्भुत कथा छिपी है।

राजा सुरथ अपना राज्य खो चुके थे। जिन लोगों पर उन्होंने विश्वास किया, उन्हीं ने उन्हें पराजित कर सत्ता से वंचित कर दिया। दूसरी ओर समाधि नामक वैश्य को उसके परिवारजनों ने ही संपत्ति से वंचित कर घर से निकाल दिया था। दोनों दुखी थे, पीड़ित थे और वन में भटकते हुए मेधा ऋषि के आश्रम पहुँचे।

परन्तु आश्चर्य की बात यह थी कि इतनी पीड़ा सहने के बावजूद उनका मोह समाप्त नहीं हुआ था।

राजा का मन अब भी अपने राज्य के लिए व्याकुल था तो कभी परिवारजनों के लिए जिन्होंने उसे घर से निकाल दिया था। वे स्वयं भी यह समझ नहीं पा रहे थे कि जिसने दुःख दिया, उसके प्रति यह आकर्षण क्यों बना हुआ है।

मेधा ऋषि ने उन्हें देवी की महिमा सुनाई और मोह के स्वरूप को समझाया। इसके बाद दोनों ने तपस्या की और देवी को प्रसन्न किया।

यहीं से कथा एक अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण मोड़ लेती है।



दुर्गा सप्तशती का संदेश स्पष्ट है: मनुष्य का सबसे बड़ा शत्रु बाहरी परिस्थितियाँ नहीं, बल्कि भीतर का मोह है।

राजा सुरथ ने खोया हुआ राज्य माँगा, जबकि समाधि वैश्य ने मोह से मुक्ति का ज्ञान। देवी के समक्ष मनुष्य क्या माँगता है, यही उसकी साधना का स्तर निर्धारित करता है।

सच्ची भक्ति शायद इच्छाओं की पूर्ति में नहीं, बल्कि उस विश्वास में है जहाँ साधक कह सके: 'महादेवि, जो मेरे लिए उचित हो, वही कीजिए।'

हम माँगते क्या हैं?

सामान्यतः यह अपेक्षा की जा सकती थी कि इतना ज्ञान प्राप्त करने के बाद दोनों देवी से मोह-मुक्ति का वरदान माँगेंगे। लेकिन ऐसा हुआ नहीं।

राजा सुरथ ने अपना खोया हुआ राज्य वापस माँगा। जबकि समाधि वैश्य ने ऐसा ज्ञान माँगा जो उसे सांसारिक मोह से मुक्त कर दे।

एक ही साधना, एक ही गुरु, एक ही देवी, किन्तु दो भिन्न याचनाएँ।

यह प्रसंग हमें अपने भीतर झाँकने के लिए बाध्य करता है। हममें से अधिकांश लोग देवी के सम्मुख सुरथ की तरह जाते हैं। हम खोई हुई उपलब्धियाँ, रुका हुआ वैभव, सम्मान, सफलता और इच्छाओं की पूर्ति चाहते हैं। समाधि वैश्य की तरह मोह से मुक्ति माँगने वाले साधक बहुत कम होते हैं।

वरदान या समर्पण?

देवी के स्वरूप का वर्णन करते हुए शास्त्र उन्हें अज्ञेया, अनंता, अलक्ष्या, अजा, एका और नैका कहकर संबोधित करते हैं। अर्थात् वे ऐसी सत्ता हैं जिन्हें पूरी तरह जाना नहीं जा सकता, जिनका अंत मापा नहीं जा सकता, जिन्हें सीमाओं में बाँधा नहीं जा सकता।

ऐसी अनंत शक्ति के समक्ष खड़ा मनुष्य क्या माँगे?

धन?
यश?
सत्ता?
सौन्दर्य?

ये सब मिल भी जाएँ पर ये स्थायी नहीं हैं।

फिर भी हम इन्हीं को पाने के लिए प्रार्थना करते हैं, क्योंकि हमारी दृष्टि अभी भी सीमित है। हम वही देख पाते हैं जो हमारे सामने है। दूर तक देखने की क्षमता विरले लोगों को ही प्राप्त होती है।

शायद इसी कारण सच्ची भक्ति का अगला चरण याचना से आगे बढ़कर समर्पण का होता है।

नवरात्रि का वास्तविक संदेश

नवरात्रि का महत्व केवल व्रत, पूजा और उत्सव में नहीं है। उसका वास्तविक उद्देश्य भीतर के महिषासुर, शुम्भ और निशुम्भ को पहचानना है। वे केवल पुराणों के पात्र नहीं हैं। वे हमारे भीतर बसे अहंकार, ईर्ष्या, लोभ और मोह के रूप हैं।

जब तक ये पराजित नहीं होते, तब तक बाहरी उपलब्धियाँ भी मनुष्य को संतुष्ट नहीं कर पातीं।

शायद इसी भावना से यह प्रार्थना की गई है-

मत्समः पातकी नास्ति पापघ्नी त्वत्समा न हि।
एवं ज्ञात्वा महादेवि यथायोग्यं तथा कुरु॥

अर्थात्, "हे महादेवि! मुझ जैसा पापी कोई नहीं और आपके समान पापों का हरण करने वाली भी कोई नहीं। इसलिए जो आपको मेरे लिए उचित लगे, वही कीजिए।"

यह निराश व्यक्ति की प्रार्थना नहीं है बल्कि यह पूर्ण विश्वास की प्रार्थना है।

यह उस भक्त का निवेदन है जो मानता है कि देवी की दृष्टि उसकी अपनी दृष्टि से कहीं अधिक व्यापक है, और जो उसके लिए सर्वोत्तम होगा, वही उसे प्राप्त होगा।

नवरात्रि की साधना यदि हमारे भीतर यह विश्वास जगा सके कि माँगने से अधिक महत्त्व समर्पण का है, तो समझना चाहिए कि हमारी आराधना सार्थक हुई। क्योंकि अंततः देवी से सबसे बड़ा वरदान शायद कोई वस्तु नहीं, बल्कि मोह से मुक्त होकर सत्य को देखने की दृष्टि है।

मतभेद से मनभेद तक

“लोग क्या कहेंगे” हमारे समाज का शायद सबसे प्रभावशाली वाक्य है. कई बार यह वाक्य व्यक्तित्व को बदलने में सक्षम भूमिका निभाता है. यही वाक्य सपनों, निर्णयों और रिश्तो के बीच अंजानी दीवार खड़ी कर देता है. पुरानी पीढ़ी परंपराओं और स्थापित मान्यताएं को बचाए रखना चाहती है, जबकि नई पीढ़ी अपने जीवन को संवारने का अधिकार खुद रखना चाहती है. झगड़ा इस बात का इस गली मेरे साथ आओ, उस गली नया रास्ता ना बनाओ. इसी खींचतान में अनेक परिवारों में पैदा हुई दूरियां समय के साथ भर नहीं पातीं. प्रस्तुत है एक बेटे का, अपने पिता के नाम एक खुला पत्र, जिसमें शिकायत नहीं संवाद की इच्छा है. खिलाफत नहीं बल्कि रिश्तों में जड़ता का अफसोस है. नाराजगी से अधिक अपनापन और टूट रहे रिश्तों को जोड़ने की इच्छा है।



सरिता शांडिल्य

गजल पर PhD, लेखिका, एक जानी मानी लेखिका हैं, जिनके दो उपन्यास *एक थी वैदेही* और *अच्छा फिर कभी* छप चुके हैं और तीसरा *एफबी पर मिलेंगे* आने वाला है।

Dear Global Diaspora,

I am still alive, let us talk.

मेरी जिंदगी की शुरुआत एक वाक्य से होती है, ‘लोग क्या कहेंगे’. लोग तो हमेशा कुछ ना कुछ कहते ही रहते हैं. लोग कभी खुश नहीं होते. यह बात ग्लोबली सत्य है. मुझे याद है जब मैं हाई स्कूल में थी. उम्र का वह दौर था जब बचपन धीरे-धीरे पीछे छूट रहा था और दुनिया को देखने का नजरिया बदलने लगा था. एहसास होने लगा था की जिंदगी केवल अपनी इच्छा से नहीं चलती बल्कि उस पर परिवार, समाज और सदियों से स्थापित तमाम मान्यताओं का भी असर होता है. ‘लोग क्या कहेंगे’ की समझ आने लगी थी या फिर परिवार ने समझा दी थी।

लेकिन अपनी बात कहना भी बात जरूरी था।

इसलिए मैंने डायरी लिखना शुरू कर दिया।

डायरी की सबसे बड़ी खूबी है कि वह आपको जज नहीं करती, कोई सवाल नहीं करती, बस सुनती है और सिर्फ वही सुनती है जो आप कहते हैं. डायरी अंकुश नहीं लगाती।

धीरे-धीरे डायरी के पन्ने खुद को लिखी चिट्ठियों में बदल गए. ऐसी चिट्ठियां जिन्हें कभी पोस्ट नहीं किया जाना था, लेकिन मेरे लिए उनका बहुत गहरा अर्थ था. उन चिट्ठियों में मेरी खुशियां थी, मेरी तकलीफें थीं, मेरे सपने थे और मेरी उलझने भी थीं।

मेरे लिए यह चिट्ठियां Fifty Shades of Emotions थे। डायरी और चिट्ठियां एक ऐसी मित्र थीं, जिन्होंने कभी मेरा साथ नहीं छोड़ा. कोई प्रतिक्रिया नहीं दी. बाकी सब जगह तो प्रतिक्रियाएं ही प्रतिक्रियाएं थी। समय के साथ वही मेरी सबसे भरोसेमंद दोस्त बन गईं।

आज भी जब पुराने पन्ने पलटती हूं, तो उसमें अपने जीवन के कई चेहरे दिखाई देते हैं। इन चिट्ठियों में मैंने खुद को पहचाना है, दोस्तों को समझा है और समय को पढ़ना सीखा है।

मगर चिट्ठियां और डायरी मैंने हर रोज़ लिखीं. ख़ुद को लिखीं. धूप हो या छांव हो, सफलता हो

जीवन में सफलता मिल सकती है, लेकिन अपनों की स्वीकृति के बिना कई उपलब्धियाँ अधूरी-सी लगती हैं।

या असफलता हो, पुरस्कार मिले या आलोचना हो, मैंने लिखना नहीं छोड़ा. हंसी में उदासी में, बस लिखती ही रही. चिट्ठियां जिन्हें आजकल मैसेजेस कहा जाता है, मेरे लिए हमेशा जीने का सहारा थीं. ईमानदारी से, बिना किसी छल के मेरा संबल थीं. आज भी यह डायरियां cum चिट्ठियां बहुत मददगार हैं।

During the high school period my soul was pure but injured. Today I don't claim to be that pure as injuries have taught me to heal. SCARS ARE STILL PROMINENT. This injured soul was writing. कई चिट्ठियां लाई हूँ, आपके लिए. लेकिन ऐसी ही पुरानी चिट्ठियों में से एक, आज आपके साथ साझा कर रही हूं।

Dear papa,

Time has passed, but it seems you haven't forgiven me till date.

Seven years ago, I had made certain decisions that were extremely necessary for my life and career. I know you still disagree with them but I wish you could understand why they matter to me so much. How to explain that it was quite essential for my life and career.

Life has been kind to me in many ways. I have had professional success, financial stability and respect. Still there is a corner of my life that is empty that none of these achievements have been able to fill.

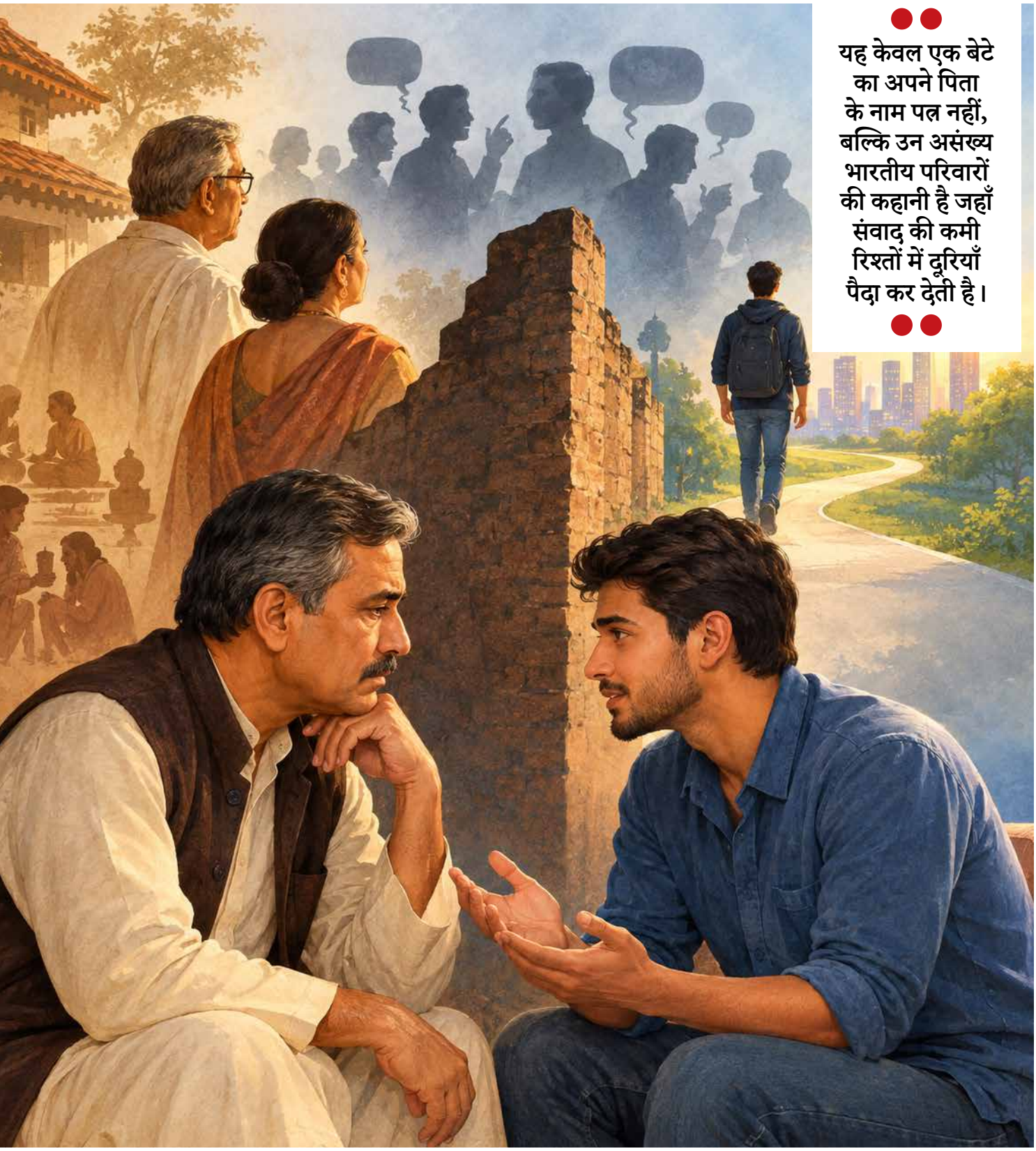
The distance between my father and his son.

Papa, I miss you!

You wanted me to settle in the family business. I understand why. It was your dream and your vision as per family tradition for my future but I chose a different path.

I had worked hard in my studies and earned the opportunity to build a career in a multinational company. It was not a rejection of your dreams, it was just an attempt to follow my own dreams.

My temperament was different, my aspirations were different.



यह केवल एक बेटे का अपने पिता के नाम पत्र नहीं, बल्कि उन असंख्य भारतीय परिवारों की कहानी है जहाँ संवाद की कमी रिश्तों में दूरियाँ पैदा कर देती है।

I hope you will understand.

Then came my second decision.

I married a girl of my choice.

Yes, she belongs to a different caste.

I know you believe that I hurt the traditions of our family but Papa, if two people have to spend their entire lives together, should they not have the right to choose each other?

I am happy with her.

We have built a good life together.

What hurts me most is that you continue to hold her responsible for the decisions that were entirely mine. She has never stood between me and my family.

In fact, she still hopes that one day she will share a warm relationship with



you and Maa.

Please tell me what is her fault?

There was an opinion difference between us. But it doesn't mean that we are at logger heads forever.

Time has changed. But our relationship should be strong enough to survive these changes.

My intention was never to hurt you. I simply wanted the freedom to shape my life. यह हक है ना मेरा!

I want you and Maa to visit us someday. Come and see the life we have built. Please understand what I was trying to achieve. See for yourself that happiness and family values can coexist. It was just a phase of generation gap.

I love you.

I love Maa.

And despite everything, I still hope that one day we will sit together as a family.

मतभेद स्वाभाविक हैं, लेकिन जब संवाद रुक जाता है तो वे धीरे-धीरे मनभेद में बदल जाते हैं।

Yours lovingly

Your son

Next issue of Indian Diaspora and you get another letter. Only I have tried to hide the identities of people as that will create chaos, otherwise everything is truthful and authentic. I hope you also write a letter/ message to me. Good Luck.

संवाद की ज़रूरत

यह केवल एक पिता और बेटे की कहानी नहीं है।

यह उन असंख्य भारतीय और प्रवासी परिवारों की कहानी है जहाँ नई पीढ़ी अपने सपनों के साथ आगे बढ़ना चाहती है, जबकि पुरानी पीढ़ी अपनी परंपराओं और मान्यताओं को बचाए रखना चाहती है।

समस्या मतभेद नहीं है।

मतभेद तो हर रिश्ते में होते हैं।

समस्या तब शुरू होती है जब संवाद बंद हो जाता है।

जब नाराज़गी बातचीत की जगह ले लेती है।

जब अहंकार अपनत्व से बड़ा हो जाता है।

और जब प्रेम मौजूद होने के बावजूद लोग उसे अभिव्यक्त करना छोड़ देते हैं।

परिवारों की खूबसूरती इस बात में नहीं है कि वे हमेशा एक जैसी सोच रखते हैं। उनकी खूबसूरती इस बात में है कि वे अलग-अलग सोच के बावजूद साथ बने रहते हैं।

कभी-कभी रिश्तों को बचाने के लिए सही होने से अधिक ज़रूरी होता है, पहला कदम उठाना।

एक फ़ोन कॉल।

एक मुलाक़ात।

या फिर एक चिट्ठी।

शायद ऐसी ही कोई चिट्ठी। ■



The majestic Khajuraho Dance Festival

In Madhya Pradesh, culture is not confined to museums or monuments. It is performed, celebrated and lived. And the most rewarding way to experience the State's great festivals - occasions that give you the opportunity to hear the strains of a raga on a winter evening, ghungroos ringing against the silhouette of ancient temples, or smelling the aroma of a local kitchen preparing recipes that have travelled through generations.

Music, Melodies and Magic!

Music afficionados are awed by the Tansen Samaroh in Gwalior in December, held in honour of the legendary musician Tansen. It brings leading exponents of Indian classical music to a historic city whose relationship with music runs deep. To hear melodious ragas in the precincts of Tansen's resting place. Here, at the foot of the majestic Gwalior Fort, you get a rare feel of classical music in a setting intimately connected with its history.


A Tansen Samaroh peformance



Recitation at Lokrang


A poised Cheetah at Kuno


Jet-skiing at Hanuwantiya

The Joy of Folk Colours!

Around Republic Day, Bhopal witnesses Lokrang, a celebration that brings folk and tribal traditions into the spotlight. This is culture in its most exuberant form: dancers in traditional attire, musicians playing instruments rooted in regional communities, craftspeople demonstrating inherited skills and food introducing visitors to flavours rarely encountered on conventional restaurant menus. For the traveller, Lokrang offers a window into the extraordinary cultural diversity that exists within Madhya Pradesh.

Dance brings Temples alive!

At the annual Khajuraho Dance Festival, some of India's finest classical dancers perform Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Odissi, Kuchipudi and other classical traditions in an especially evocative setting of UNESCO World Heritage temples. Look closely at its sculptures during a day time temple walk and you encounter mmusicians and dancers immortalised in stone; return in the evening for the festival and those artistic traditions seem to spring back to life.

A Celebration of Water!

With the arrival of autumn, Madhya Pradesh comes alive with festivals, music, folklore, traditions and immersive cultural experiences. Thoughtfully designed Tent Cities presents travellers a unique blend of premium comfort, nature and local culture. While Gandhi Sagar offers lakeside walks, bird watching and folk performances, Hanuwantiya's Jal Mahotsav combines water-based adventure, music and relaxation along the serene Indira Sagar reservoir. Chanderi celebrates its rich handloom heritage and artisan traditions, while the Kuno Forest Festival brings together wildlife, conservation and community through safaris, craft demonstrations and storytelling.

What's more, the festivals suggest a fascinating new way of travelling through Madhya Pradesh: not simply by destination, but by calendar. Come for Tansen and discover Gwalior. Let Lokrang introduce you to Bhopal. Follow classical dance to Khajuraho and add Panna to the journey. Travel west for Bhagoriya and encounter a Madhya Pradesh far removed from conventional tourist circuits. Because sometimes the finest souvenir from a journey is not something you bring home. It is a sound, a colour, a performance or a fleeting moment that could only have been experienced in the heart of India.


A colourful Bhagoriya celebration

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