

AKHBAAR

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**From 36 all out to
the GABBA Breach**
Sports

**Online Teaching
and Learning**
Education

**The show must go
on**
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FROM THE EDITORS

Anxiety. Anguish. Ambiguity. These are the buzzwords for 2021, where we watched as dystopian fiction came true. This pandemic has driven home how unpredictable our future is. Even as we are confined in our homes, the world thrives and stories abound. From the personal experiences of our writers to the awe-inspiring people, the stories collected here show how varying lives can be. How often people can face challenges, rise beyond imagination, or fall below the nadir. And success is about how stubborn you are on "not giving up."

College is the trailer to the movie of your life. We get a chance to define ourselves, our choices, and step towards the future we desire. With Akhbar, we take that chance to write, inform, and be heard.



Shraddha Gupta



Rashi Jain

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COVER STORY

The Covid Factor



As the second wave of the pandemic sweeps the country infecting millions and killing hundreds of thousands, the new variants of the virus surfacing on regular intervals poses serious threats for the days to come

By The Akhbaar Editorial Team

Devastated families, orphaned children, and an air of desperation. The battle against coronavirus is no less than the Second World War, and the enemy remains invisible. While we were grasping at straws to brave the first wave of the pandemic, a new wave came as a crushing blow.

The first wave of Coronavirus in India was mild, as compared to the 2nd wave, and the healthcare system was able to cater to its needs while lockdown kept the people in check. The second wave struck as people became lax and did not follow the safety precautions. The magnitude of persons infected by the virus and struggling for hospital beds escalated and another lockdown had to be imposed.

With lack of hospital beds, ventilators and the limited reach of hospitals in remote areas, Medical infrastructure in India has always been considered a system failure. However, the medical infrastructure has been substantially ramped up for covid management since the first wave.

The Centre has decided to prepare a three tier delivery system for Covid 19 with Dedicated Covid hospitals (DCHs) and Covid centres. The hospitals have been divided into three categories to simplify the treatment of Covid-19 patients: Covid Care Centers, which treat very mild, or suspected cases; Covid Health Centers, which treat relatively serious patients; and Dedicated Covid Hospitals, which provide comprehensive care to severe and critical patients.

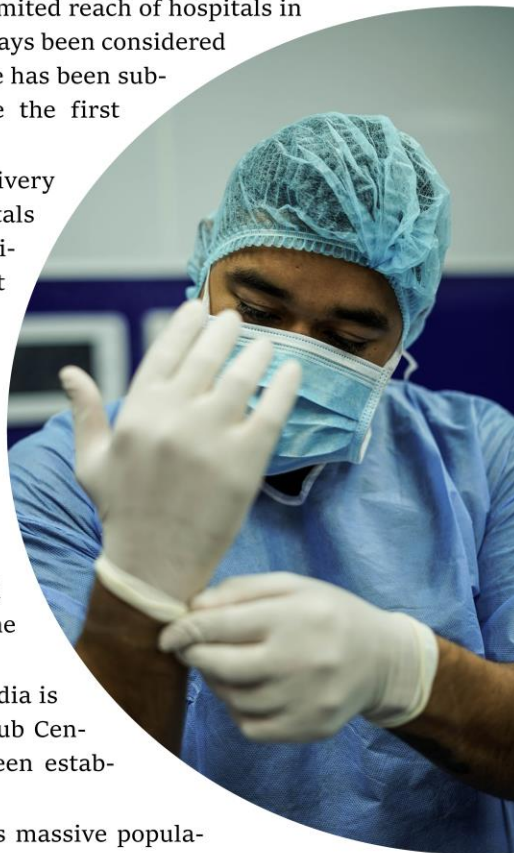
The whole country faces a scarcity of hospital beds, people are forced to share hospital beds. Even in the national capital. To meet the requirement, the government acquired new hospital beds. As of 2nd May, there were 15,000 beds in Delhi and later, the centre added 4000 more.

The government's focus on prioritizing rural India is evident. 25,743 Primary Health Centers, 1, 58,417 Sub Centers, and 5,624 Community Health Centers have been established for effective healthcare facilities in villages.

India's major problem is its population. With India's massive population, the health facilities keep falling short. 7, 13,986 beds are available in government hospitals in India which amounts to 0.55 beds per 1000 population.

There have been major reformations in production of masks, ventilators and oxygen supplies. Earlier domestic production capacity was 6000-7,000 PPE kits per day which has now increased to 2 lakh per day. India is trying its level best to increase the amount of ventilators. An order has been placed for 40,000 ventilators from domestic companies like Bharat Electronics limited and AgVa Healthcare. Other than these, foreign companies like Hamilton Medical and Dräger have also been asked to fulfil the required ventilator numbers.

The second wave's issues aren't only restricted to dealing with the massive number of illnesses and infrastructure shortcomings, but also dealing with the newer, more infectious variants and a broader range of symptoms.



New symptoms of the second wave

Study says, the B.1.617 variant, first discovered in India, is formally classed as a "variant of concern" by the World Health Organization, which outlines the variant and its three ancestral variations that differ significantly in the virus's membrane protein (M), the envelope protein (E), and the spike protein (S) the three proteins that make up the coronavirus. One of the main reasons for these new Covid-19 symptoms. This new variant is now being intensively monitored by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Even if new COVID strains are associated with new symptoms, the previous symptoms persist. Fever, body aches, loss of smell or taste, pain or dryness in the throat, runny nose, and cough are all symptoms of COVID infection. On the other hand, solitary symptoms which are present, one at a time can be perplexing. Diarrhea, for example, may be mistaken for a stomach infection, although it is now a symptom of COVID. Other new symptoms are- Vomiting, Conjunctivitis, Restlessness, Body pain, Nausea, and Headache.





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GASPING DIFFERENCE

The director of ICMR, Dr Balram Bhargava, said that the second wave appears to be “less severe” in terms of death based on national data thus far. The death rate is slightly lower by 1.2 percent as compared to the first wave.

However, given the increased number of infections, the number of deaths is substantially larger in absolute numbers. Covid claimed the

lives of 2,000 persons in India on April 20, the largest number of deaths in a single day.

The number of infected children is also greater in the second wave compared to the first one. If we compare the symptoms, a greater proportion of children are experiencing breathlessness in the second wave. There is a slight increase in the number of people under 20 years getting infected

in the second wave but this is only a very small percentage. Like the first wave, the greatest risk of mortality due to covid is to people above 60 years.

There are many facets like proliferation, concentration, variants, adoptive measures, etc. which differ in both waves.

• COVID-19 SPREAD, CONCENTRATION

The first wave of Covid-19 was more wide-spread in geographical reach with hotspots spread all over the country. The second wave is more infectious but has been limited to fewer hotspots.

• CENTRALIZED/ DECENTRALISED APPROACH

In the first wave, the Union government took a centralized approach in handling covid crises with country wide lockdowns. In the second wave, the state was passed down the powers to contain the infection at ground level.

• NEW DOMESTIC VARIANTS

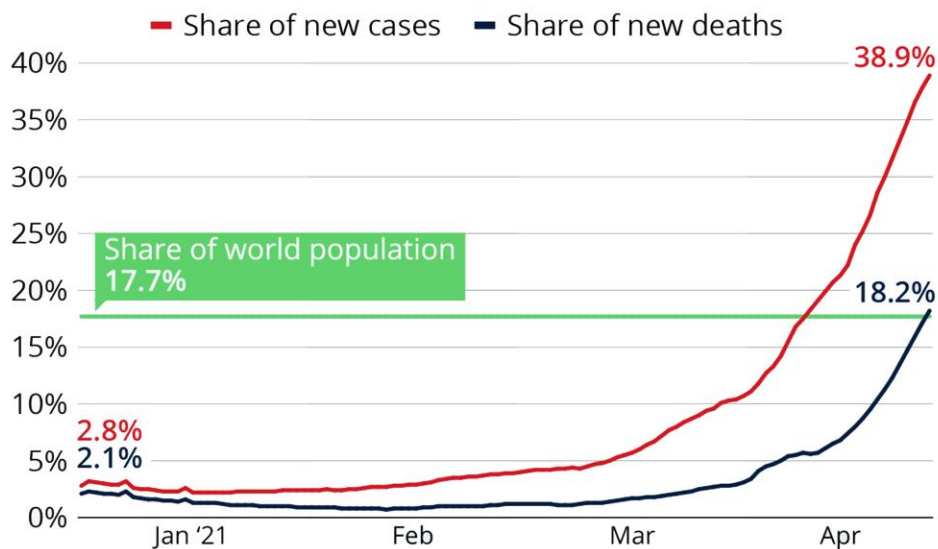
Local variations did not play a significant part in the initial wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in India. But many experts believe that the current surge in Covid-19 cases is being pushed by domestic mutant variants of SARS-CoV-2.

• YOUNGER PEOPLE MORE AT RISK?

Although older people are more vulnerable to infections, younger ones are more mobile due to their greater engagement in economic activities which has made them more exposed to viruses.

India Emerges as the World's COVID-19 Hotspot

India's share of global new COVID-19 cases and deaths (seven-day average)



Testing capacity

At present there are 2,520 COVID-19 government and private molecular testing labs. According to Dr Balram Bhargava, India is conducting 18-20 lakh tests per day for the detection of COVID-19 in people.

As the number of cases are increasing, testing centres are unable to meet the influx. Some of the reasons for this shortcoming are - lack of manpower, infection among staff and high rate of pending cases of covid-19. According to Delhi government data, daily tests fell from 75,037 on 23 April to 57,690 on 26 April. "We have enough kits, enough machines but where is the manpower to collect samples and work these machines. Updating the data is also a cumbersome process that takes time and labs are now forced to take a few samples because we face action if data is not updated in 24 hours", said Dr. Gauri Agarwal of Gene strings Diagnostic Centre Private Limited Delhi.

A test result, on average, used to be generated within 24-48 hours. A month ago, that period extended up to four days in some states. On 24 May, Karnataka state authorities imposed a fine of Rs 200/- for each delayed test result on labs. The results began to get delayed for more than 48 hours on May 8. Due to the delay in obtaining test results, the contact transmission of the virus is not contained.

Government's plan and budget for health

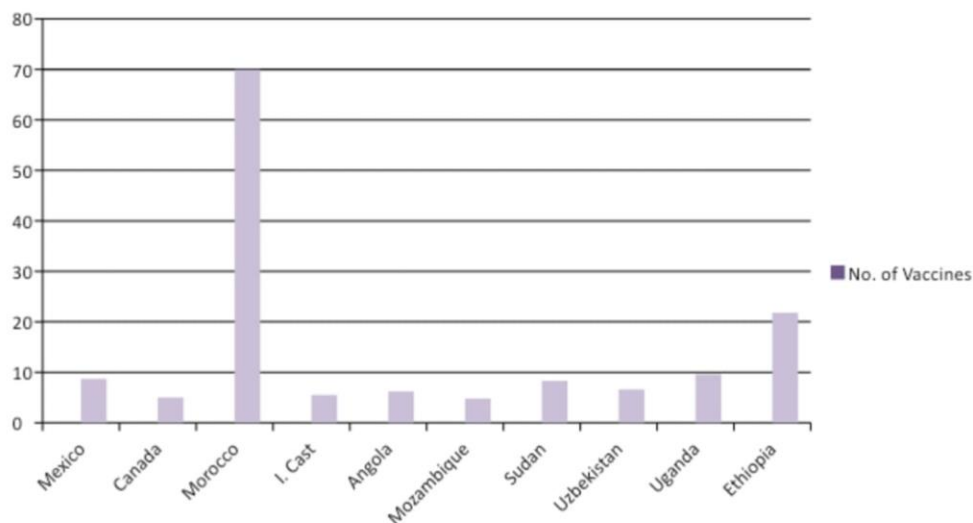
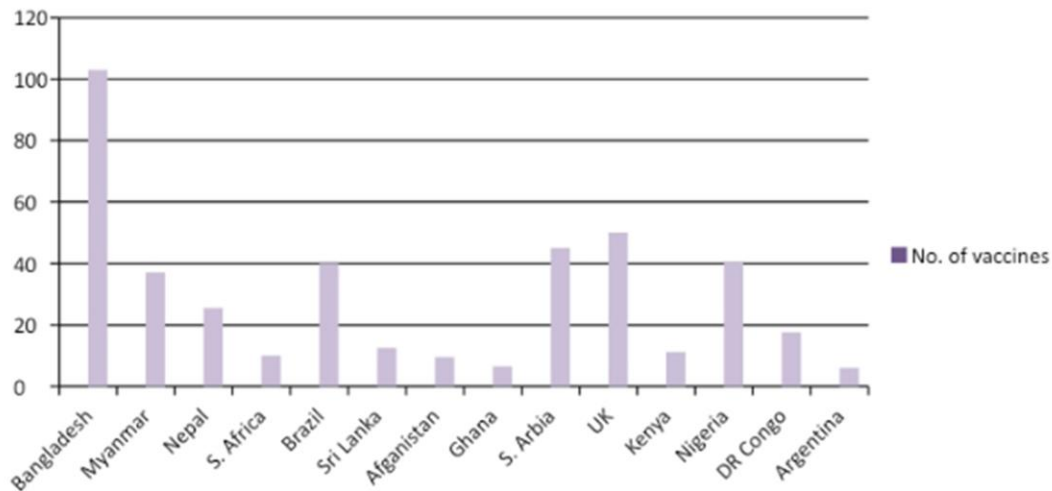
The government has proposed an outlay of INR 2, 23,846 crore for health, an increase of 137 per cent from the previous year, with INR 35,000 crore earmarked for COVID-19 vaccine in the coming fiscal quarter. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been allocated INR 71,269 crore in FY 2021-22, an increase of 10 per cent over previous year.

The government is also planning to set up oxygen plants in the country with INR 201.58 crore allocated for 162 PSA oxygen plants. However, on 18 April, the health ministry announced that only 33 of these had been set up.

The Centre also hopes that widespread vaccination will reduce the risk of infections. The vaccination process is being made as flexible as possible to boost nation-wide inoculation. India aims to inoculate the maximum population, starting with people who are above 18 years of age. 20 crore doses of vaccines have been administered till now but only 5.9% of the total population has been fully vaccinated.

Nations unite against the virus

As the whole world felt the heat of the infection, many countries extended helping hands to each other, India being one of them. India supplied over 6.8 million vaccine doses to over 40+ countries. The largest quantity of vaccines was supplied to Bangladesh with 10.3 million vials. The largest shipment of relief material such as ventilators, oxygen cylinders, vaccines, etc. was received from the US, followed by UAE, UK, Russia and France.



THE BATTLE AHEAD

Life since March 2020 has been a roller coaster ride with the arrival of coronavirus, resulting in lockdowns followed by various unlocks and vaccines. We as a nation caused the second wave with a lack of administration, careless attitude of people and politicians. Continuing like this, we would be responsible for a new wave too. Though cases are now decreasing, a third wave would not be unlikely with a more lethal and powerful viral mutant. The third wave will hit us, but with precautions taken beforehand, we can avoid the damage it might cause.

The last two waves have taught us many lessons, but most importantly, we need to accept and follow the new normal, that is, wearing masks, sanitizing our hands, maintaining social distance, and staying in our homes or quarantine whether we like it or not. We need to follow these precautionary practices, even if we are vaccinated.

This unprecedented pandemic battle could go on for years with innumerable covid waves, mutants, several new symptoms, and infections. But as said by Ralph Blum, "Nothing is predestined. The obstacles of your past can become the gateways that lead to new beginnings." Thus, there is a way ahead for us as a united nation by following mask literacy, social distancing, and sanitizing, which when put together will result in us emerging victorious.



Indian Army Fights the Covid War

Armed forces prove their mettle once again as they help India fight against the dreaded second wave of the pandemic

By Sejal Jain



www.indiatoday.in

A more selfless job than serving the nation cannot be imagined. Living a life completely dedicated to others is by no means easy. The country's peace can be attributed to the army, their sacrifices, their bravery, and their love for the country.

Presently, as the country faces one of the worst healthcare crises in decades, the armed forces have been proactive at the forefront of fighting COVID-19 and providing assistance in various key areas across the country and beyond. From the evacuation of citizens stranded in foreign countries to setting up quarantine facilities and distributing essential items, the army has led many critical tasks.

With fully vaccinated personnel, it is aiding the civil administration in setting up a new Covid dedicated facility in a short time and has opened some of its hospitals for civilians. The army's Medical Corps have given trained medical staff to civil administration to help in the Covid fight. When the virus was spreading slowly last year, special military medical teams were sent to neighboring nations in order to help establish Covid-testing facilities.

In the war against COVID, the Indian army has contributed at every level ensuring the availability of masks, sanitizers, PPE kits, medical equipment, and hospitals in the country. Many humanitarian rescue operations have been conducted by them.

The next problem for India will be a shortage of trained medical staff - doctors, nurses, and paramedics. A large number of medical trainees are in the final stages of completing their courses in colleges, and therefore the military can be tasked with bringing them to the forefront with concentrated and rigorous final grooming, in a matter of weeks.

The Indian Army has taken COVID-19 very seriously and the military stations and all its sub-units have taken major steps focused on precaution and cure. At a time when the government is struggling to satisfy the challenge created by the double variant of the relentless Covid-19 virus, all three branches of the armed forces - the army, the navy, and the air force - are engaged in a concerted effort to provide medical facilities to the people. Our Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi also praised their efforts during these tough times.



While military health resources are fully committed to helping civil administration, there are other assets left untapped. The army has experts in fields like engineering, infrastructure, and logistics. The community of retired military veterans is a large, disciplined pool and may be encouraged to pitch in the effort. They can be pulled for the tasks of coordination, logistics management, and direct medical assistance within the case of trained personnel among other measures.



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We have seen people showering their love and respect towards the soldiers on Republic Day or Independence Day but they deserve this respect and treatment throughout the year. There is not one day that they don't contribute to the country. Every Indian is pleased with the strength and valor of our soldiers. They are getting stronger day by day. Thus, we can say that the army is well prepared for any unwanted situation in the future and has the potential to combat it.

I have always admired the way Indian Army handles any administrative challenges better than any civilian setup in India. Indian Army has taken the COVID-19 very seriously and in the military stations and all other and sub-units have taken major steps focused on precaution and cure. Even in these tough times, they are giving their all in order to help the country in any way possible.



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Civil Societies Respond when Systems Collapse

Different sectors of society transform into covid care centres when the healthcare system fell insufficient

By Shalu Kumari

Generosity and humanity seem to be prevalent when the country is hitting the zenith of positive cases. The Swami Narayan temple in Vadodara has been converted into a COVID-19 facility, equipped with 500 beds, oxygen facilities like liquid oxygen tanks, oxygen lines, and ventilators. The Puri Jagannath temple has converted its Nilachal Bhakta Nivas into a care centre equipped with 120 beds. The Jahangirpura mosque in Vadodara has been converted to a hospital equipped with 50 beds.



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In Ghaziabad, a group from a Sikh temple has helped more than 7000 patients with small quantities of oxygen and is actively extending their help to the people. Since India is witnessing an acute shortage of oxygen, Sikh youths from a Delhi locality are providing 'Oxygen Langar' in cars to help patients battling with their lungs. This conveys the message that places of worship can also be converted into a place where one can worship God, by extending the hands of humanity. These places are providing their full-fledged support to curb the pandemic.



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As India witnesses a massive surge in infected cases, railway coaches and stadiums are also lending a helping hand to patients. Across the country around 5000 railway coaches have been converted into isolation wards, well equipped with charging points, mosquito nets, and space for paramedics. With a medical store, consultation rooms, pantry, and ICU beds, they are being used as a hospital on wheels. The Northern Railways have set up more than 500 isolation coaches at nine railway stations to treat patients with mild symptoms of COVID-19. At Nandurbar District in Maharashtra, 21 coaches have been deployed under Western Railways for COVID-19 care. The Madhya Pradesh government has requested Indian Railways to deploy 20 COVID-19 care coaches at Habibganj Railway station and 20 more at Bhopal Station. These coaches have been functional and handed over to the State Government since 25th April.

Howrah multi-purpose Dumurjala Stadium in West Bengal, Sarusajai Stadium in Assam, and the Gachibowli Stadium have been transformed into quarantine centres and camps. The Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium was one of the first stadiums to be converted into a COVID-19 quarantine centre.

The country is witnessing the sword of the infectious virus perilously hanging over our heads, but the nation is coming together in unprecedented ways to fight it.



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The time is dark but after every dark night, a new morning always follows. Nature itself reveals the lesson of positivity, so let's imbibe this positivity and stay strong against this pandemic. We can bring an end to this deadly virus if we reduce its proliferation - this can only be possible by adhering to the rules and precautions made for our safety. Staying safe is the only option!

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Unfolding Economy

Five major economic implications that the world is going to see in this covid era

By Kunal Maheshwari



The Coronavirus pandemic is unlike any economic challenge that the planet has faced in the past. All our textbook understandings on how to spur economic progress in the face of a downturn are rendered useless as lockdowns have decreased or intermittently paused economic activity across the globe.

While the jury remains out on how many fiscal quarters it will take before recovery is visible, what's widely accepted is that the pandemic will cause a paradigm shift in how we live and the way we work. Moreover, governments and central banks worldwide are quite proactive in doing what they can to support businesses and revive employment with fiscal and monetary stimuli. Intrinsically one can expect that the economic effects of the pandemic will linger on for an extended time even after it subsides.

The coronavirus pandemic will have long-term positive consequences which will change the face of the global economy.

Towards a more digital economy

Demonetisation was the shock that pushed India into the digital era as people adopted online payment methods with the absence or short supply of money. Now, Covid-19 is the shock that's forcing everyone to adopt a digital medium in everything — from window shopping to seeking online consultations with a doctor.

India's total e-commerce shopper base, at 30% of its internet users, is low in comparison with 78% in China and over 70% within the US. In a 53-page report on 'India's Digital Economy during a Post-Covid-19 World', Morgan Stanley had estimated that India's internet buyers will jump to 590 million from 190 million in 2020. The typical spend per online shopper is additionally projected to just about double to \$318.

Global supply chains to be redrawn

China has been the factory of the planet for quite a while now and as a result, it's become the pillar of worldwide supply chains for everything from chips to drug APIs. People worldwide have realised that it would not be an intelligent idea to put all the eggs in one basket. This gives countries like India an opportunity to see more foreign businesses that will generate large scale employment.

Policy reforms

The coronavirus pandemic has led India to initiate reforms that were stuck in the bureaucratic procedure for many years. The government has liberalised the coal sector and altered certain labour laws that were said to have been hindering businesses. Moreover, the government has also announced Agri market reforms that will allow farmers to sell their produce to whomever they choose.

Liquidity rush in capital markets

Central banks around the world have cut interest rates and introduced borrowing programmes to inject cash into the capital markets. The Reserve Bank of India came out with an idea in March to provide Rs 3.74 lakh crore of liquidity to the financial markets. While banks haven't been lending money off the bat, their cash reserves, including low-interest rates, will mean that individuals and businesses are going to be afforded an enormous breadth in borrowing once the economy picks up.



Changing nature of jobs

The coronavirus pandemic has led tons of companies into rethinking office spaces and on-site work. Tech bigwigs like Facebook, Google, and Twitter have already made announcements that, in the future, they will allow their employees to choose from where they want to work. It's only a matter of time before a lot more companies imitate them as they determine that spending on office spaces can be cut and productivity is often measured better in terms of timesheets. More people are leaning towards the gig economy as it offers more flexibility to earn money and follow passions.

Every great global depression within the past century has been followed by a period of boom. The 20th and 21st century has seen exponential GDP growth despite the Great Depression of the 1930s, the recession after World War II, oil shocks of the 70s, and the recession that followed the Lehman Brothers collapse. There's no reason why the world's economy wouldn't recover stronger this time around.

Economic crises often cause creative destruction — a churning where inefficient systems and businesses are weeded out and new contenders emerge. Aside from all the primary order economic impacts listed above, the coronavirus pandemic will also make our healthcare systems stronger and may compel us to reconsider our relationship with the environment. These potential changes could go an extended way in helping the planet leap towards equitable and sustainable development.

Back to work

Employment sector gets rejuvenated as people find employment again after covid recession

By Samad Haider Khan

Around 12.2 crore people lost their jobs after the coronavirus pandemic, resulting in a hike in India's unemployment rate. From March 2020, India's overall employment rate decreased from 39.8% to 27.2 %. By July 2020, it became obvious that India was facing a financial crisis. Even people who had managed to secure jobs were uncertain about their futures.



The pandemic served as a real blow to one sector in particular i.e. the informal sector. 80 % of informal workers lost jobs during the pandemic. Among these were daily wage workers, street vendors, small enterprises, and retailers. Around 1 crore migrant workers went back to their native states during the COVID-19 pandemic, but most of them started to return to their places of livelihood from December 2020. For retailers, the majority of their revenue relied on face-to-face interaction with customers, which was not possible under the initial preventative restriction. However, after eight long months of lockdown and a financial crisis, people hoped for a positive push in jobs.

Employment generation in India rebounded sharply with 1.2 crore people getting employed in January 2021, reducing the country's unemployment rate from 9.1% in December 2020 to 6.5% in February 2021.

According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, this is the biggest addition to the workforce in a single month, more than double the average addition of five lakhs in a month before the lockdown. This has increased the number of employed people from 388.8 million in December 2020 to 400.7 million in February 2021, the highest since the lockdown began last year, increasing the employment rate. Employment rate in India is still lower than what it was before the lockdown. But the real challenge is the unwillingness of the working age group i.e. from age 14-60, to seek employment.

The recovery is still incomplete, but India has made good progress since February. The Indian Government has recognized a total of 41,061 startups and 4.7 lakh employees. Owing to these startups, India became the 3rd largest startup ecosystem in the world, in December 2020.



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The recovery is still incomplete, but India has made good progress since February. The Indian Government has recognized a total of 41,061 startups and 4.7 lakh employees. Owing to these startups, India became the 3rd largest startup ecosystem in the world, in December 2020.

Additionally, the government also publishes a weekly newspaper titled Employment News which comes out every Saturday evening and gives detailed information about vacancies for government jobs across the country. Along with the list of vacancies, it also has updates for various government exams.

The Government of India has also implemented the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005, which guarantees 100 days of employment to an unemployed person in a year. It has been implemented in 200 hundred districts and further will be expanded to 600 hundred more districts. A person working under this scheme is guaranteed a sum of Rs 150 per day. Apart from employment secu-



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India is still working and coping up with the ongoing situation. The employment sectors and the economic rates are rising with constant growth. The government is also trying to provide as much support to the unemployed and financially backward people as possible.



Virtual-Mates: Technology & Social Media

Technology and social media see us through these tough times

By Ravi Vishwakarma

Hundreds of thousands of people are losing their lives due to this pandemic. But they say that even the darkest of storms have a silver lining. In these tough times, technology, social media, OTT platforms, media pages, etc. played a very crucial role. From hailing donations to vaccine bookings, technology and social media proved their worth to the world.

Technology as a Game Changer

In February 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that “it did not expect a vaccine for SARS-CoV-2 to become available in less than 18 months”. Even after such strong statements, many nations were able to develop vaccines in less than a year. Hence, the contribution of technology in developing vaccines cannot be overlooked. Russia, China, and the UK were among the first countries to

develop and approve emergency usage of vaccines. These countries are widely known for their developments in the technology sector around the world. Without high-tech machinery, developing a vaccine would have taken at least a couple of years. The countries with superior technology fought against the deadly virus rapidly and with comparative ease.

Social Media Saving Lives

People are helping each other by sharing their experiences of the pandemic through social media. They are using their WhatsApp status, Facebook posts, and Instagram stories to share information, create awareness and help the needy. From street vendors to Bollywood celebrities, everyone is contributing at their level. Bollywood celebrity Sonu Sood can



be taken as a reference in how social media accounts can help people. Using his Twitter account, he is continuously delivering medicines, beds, and other necessities to those in need.

OTT platforms have also played a major role to divert the minds of the people. With their movies and series, they entertained the people stuck at home. Apart from them, the social media apps also delivered entertainment and bought moments of laughter and cheer to the public. There are videos available on the internet where patients and doctors can be seen grooving on music which encourages the people and strengthens their belief that the virus is not unconquerable.

Though it sounds too good to be true, people are also giving up their beds for others. An 85-year old elderly man of Maharashtra, Narayan Dabhalkar, gave up his bed so that a young man's life could be saved.

Towards a Digital Future

The future of the world is digital. The way companies like Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Netflix, Hotstar, Google Pay, Paytm, Instagram, etc. are dominating the market is exceptional. Interestingly the advertisement percentage on social media and the internet has increased over the years. A survey conducted by satista.com shows that in 2015, YouTube



generated an estimated revenue of 5.2 billion U.S dollars through advertising. The amount increased to 19.7 billion dollars in 2020.

Technology also proved itself in the educational sector. Students would have lost one year of their studies without apps like Zoom and Google Classroom.

Along with helping people, there were also cases of online frauds registered. An increase of 37% in the cybercrime rate in the first quarter of 2020 as compared to the previous quarter of 2019 was recorded. There were cases where female patients whose contact details were displayed on social media to raise help started to receive abusive and disrespectful texts instead from anonymous accounts. The usage of the dark web to commit a crime is also a threat to the nation.

These crimes do not take away from the merits of technology. It is our sensitivity as humans which directs its use. Social media has served as a medium to bring millions of people together and the advancement of technology has helped cure many diseases over the last century. Technology is a double-edged sword, to what purpose depends on the person wielding it.



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Digital Adoption

How digital interfaces like BigBasket and video conferencing become people's lifelines

By Tejshri Rajetri

The enforcement of strict restrictions during the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic in March this year brought the lives of millions of people to a complete standstill. Several state governments imposed complete lockdowns and a variety of challenges arose as the people were denied market access to get their basic necessities- especially in urban areas where lockdowns are exercised strictly. Thanks to the availability of some websites and mobile applications, people were able to fulfill their basic necessities to sustain lives under extended lockdowns.

Digital interfaces like Ondoor, Bigbasket, Grofers, JioMart, Amazon, etc. helped in supplying food and dairy products to the people. These allowed customers to place their orders quickly without going into crowded spaces.

The online medicine market is also growing with apps like Medlife, MedPlus, pharmEasy, etc. Telehealth technology lets patients connect to clinics or doctors remotely and obtain professional health-related education.

Nowadays, the biggest requirements in India are hospital beds and medical oxygen. Reflecting this demand, a Pune-based company called DesignTech developed an app to guide people on how to set up oxygen cylinders in their homes. 'Find a Bed' is another website, developed and run by 20,000+ students across 160 cities to help patients search for available hospital beds. Many other organisations and individuals are providing required services through websites and mobile apps.

Providing information and creating awareness

Many digital platforms helped in dispensing information during the pandemic. The government of India developed 'Aarogya Setu' - a mobile app that maintains covid-19 tracking records, statistics, syndromic mapping, self-assessment, and information about vaccination centres, vaccine registration, and other covid-19 related information.

Television also helped in spreading precautionary awareness about the virus. The news channels, TV shows, advertisements ask citizens to wear masks properly, use sanitizer, wash hands from time to time, maintain social distance and stay at home contribute to this effort. The telecom services also created a 30-second message on following the safety norms and getting vaccinated.

Sustaining the flow of economy

Work from home (WFH) is a common term these days. During the lockdown, the IT industry sustained the flow of the economy by providing jobs, promoting WFH, and ensuring the income source for the working class. There are various jobs that can be done from home like web developer, freelance writer, social media manager, translator, medical transcriptionist, etc. Banking apps also facilitated economic growth with increased online transactions.

Judiciary also plays a role in economic prosperity, thus virtual courts have been established. These courts enable adjudication of cases on virtual platforms and function 24×7.

India witnessed a remarkable journey with the development of technology but yet to be examined under the crucial stage of global pandemic



Connecting people

This situation demands developing robust health and immunity. Social media users with trending exercise and yoga posts are fostering fitness-conscious behavior. Apps like Home workout, Zumba dance, Aerobics, etc. made it possible to continue guided workouts at home.

Technology has brought families together virtually. The society went through a lot during the lockdown, not just physically but emotionally. Families and friends can see each other through video conferencing and share their emotions while maintaining social distance. In this way, technology helped us stay connected with our kith and kin and kept supporting those in need.

Online teaching & learning: the way forward

By Ujjwal Rai and Garima Bhilware

Education is basic and important part of every student's life which cannot be compromised with under any circumstance. The way to get and to provide education has changed from offline to online in the last one year with the Covid-19 pandemic wreaking havoc in various parts of the world. But the most amazing thing is that even in this difficult time, we are managing everything related to our studies. We, humans know how to handle every situation even in the most difficult times. At present when virus like Covid-19 has spread everywhere and it has become compulsory to stay at home, we are managing each and everything that can be possible being at our homes. We are trying to manage education, students can't go to school and colleges but they are not sitting idle at home. They are being taught via various online platforms and modes as per their access and availability. And online classes are the only option left to continue the studies.

We know that online classes cannot completely make up for the physical classes but in this tough time when it is needed, students should take advantage of this time to enhance their knowledge. They can utilize this time in many ways as they can use their time in extra activities, hobbies or whatever they like to do. If we compare online classes with offline classes where we only have to take classes from home while sitting at our comfort place, we can observe that students have more time than before. In physical classes students had to go school/ colleges for which they had to get up early and then to get ready for it and to reach there also. After returning they used to get tired and had to manage their timing for



Suryansh Giri

studying, sleeping and many more. But now they can utilize their morning time in exercise and also proper time for sleep and studies as well as for other activities.

Yes, it is important for students to engage with physical activities which are needed but as per today's time, the health is more important. It is good that students and teachers are still involved in the process of learning and teaching. Teachers are giving their best to provide the education that should be provided in physical classes. They are trying to make the classes interesting by their efforts.

Talking about the experiences of online studying, one of the students said, "Overall it's been a good experience with the way suddenly everything came from offline to online classes without falling behind the schedule. Professors are very approachable and eager to help us. It's very surprising to see how quickly we adapted to this new situation."

Some students also said that it is easy to take online

classes at home, as in physical classes they need to escape school/college for some reasons but they don't face these problems. Some said the online education helped them to be independent as in online classes they are not that much forced to do work but even they are doing which is improving some qualities. If there is negativity everywhere than we should try to take positive aspects from this negativity.





Be kind to the Mind



Being 'labeled' as a COVID-19 family has been devastating.

'Transmitting COVID-19', 'spreading the virus' or 'infecting others' implies intentional transmission and assigns blame. To reduce stigma, use words like "acquired or contracted" instead.



Neighbours took photos and videos when healthcare professionals visited us. We are not criminals!

I'm proud of my wife and all healthcare workers who work tirelessly during this crisis to keep us well and safe! They need our support, not stigma.



I see suffering all around me.



To stay safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19, follow preventive measures from WHO (www.who.int) and Ministry of Health, Government of India (www.mohfw.gov.in).

I am Appu!

My wife, a healthcare worker, contracted COVID-19 and is now recovering at home. Here's my COVID story and a public appeal!



I was laid off from work. My family has become the target of verbal, physical and emotional abuse.

It's not a crime to be a COVID-19 patient. Don't call people with COVID-19 "cases, suspect, victims or spreaders". Instead, offer help and be kind to them.



I'm tired of being shooed away by everyone, everywhere: shopkeepers, landlord, neighbours, employers.

Stigma and discrimination can lead to further spread of COVID-19 and more deaths as people will hide their illness.

But a good neighbour, a doctor, told me "for most people, this is a disease they can overcome"



Limit consumption of COVID-19 news and information



Take precautions to stay safe



Talk to people you trust

Self-care tips during COVID-19



Remember, you are not alone in this



Eat and sleep well. Stay active at home

Live, don't leave



Say no to suicide
#WorldMentalHealthDay

NOAH'S ARK

Staying Sane

Taking care of our mental health in these bleak circumstances

By Anjali Tiwari

Think of a computer program running without a CPU. Will it work properly? Like a computer has a central processing unit, our body has our brain as a central nervous system. The slightest pressure on it will cause the whole body to malfunction. In today's world, mental health is a most important issue which needs to be addressed responsibly and carefully. The advent of coronavirus makes this issue more critical.

Mental health is our emotional, psychological, and social well-being affecting how we think, feel, and react. It helps in finding out how we deal with stress, relate to others, and make choices and decisions. From childhood to old age, mental health is important at all stages of life.

What are the early symptoms, and why is it important to take them seriously?



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Rimsha Rais

Locked up in their homes for more than a year due to the pandemic forces people to overthink and feel stressed. The deaths and proliferation of covid cases put them in a state of anxiety and tension about their future. People are unable to do things that make them happy. They are not allowed to hang out with their friends or family, are unable to leave their homes to explore, and cannot pursue their out-of-home hobbies. These important and necessary restrictions make them irritated, sad and bored leading to loneliness and mood swings that turn into mental illness.

Experiencing one or more of the following feelings or behavior can be the first warning sign of a problem:

- Eating and/or sleeping disorders
- Isolation from people and day to day activities
- Feeling weak and numb
- Hopelessness
- Drug abuse
- Feeling confused and
- Unnecessary fights
- Overthinking
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true (hallucinations)
- Thinking of self-harm
- Inability to perform daily tasks

These problems can turn very severe if not handled properly. It is essential to take care of oneself and not ignore any of the above warning signs.

How Quarantine and Covid affect the Mental Health of Different Age-groups

CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS

Children staying home, away from school and friends, can have many questions about the outbreak and expect their parents to provide an answer. They are confused and don't know how to respond. They are more likely to experience anxiety, sadness, social isolation, and stress that can have lasting effects on their mental health. Some common changes in children's behavior can be excessive crying and irritation, increased intensity of sadness, depression or worry, difficulties with focusing, or loss of interest in activities they enjoyed before.

Parents can help and reassure them that they are safe at home and encourage them to stay active with healthy physical and mental exercises. A home schedule that helps them keep up with their studies can be introduced. Showing stress or anxiety in front of them should be avoided as children are perceptive.

ADULTS, LONELY ELDERS, AND THE DISABLED

Physical isolation at home among family members puts the elderly and disabled people at a serious mental health risk, causing anxiety, depression, and a traumatic situation. Some elderly people depend on younger family members for their daily needs, and self-isolation can critically damage a family system. People living in nursing homes or admitted in hospitals can face extreme mental health issues.

Younger people should regularly check on their elders living far away as COVID-19 can result in increased stress, anxiety, and depression in old people already dealing with mental health issues. Family members may notice changes in their behavior such as irritation and shouting, altered sleeping and eating habits, and emotional outbursts.



Survansh Giri

“What mental health needs is more , more condor and more unashamed conversation.”

-Glenn Close

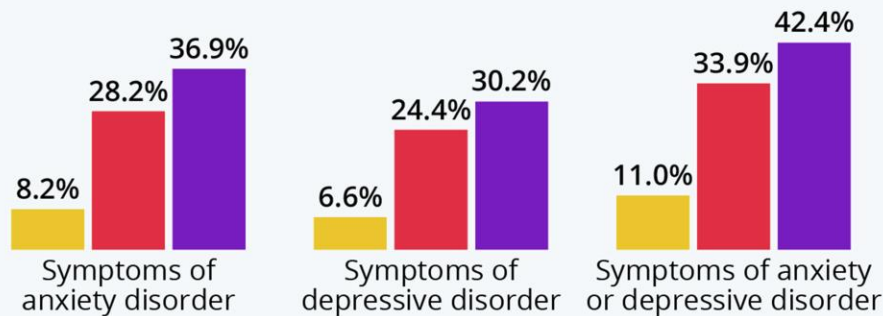
We did a small survey!

A small survey was conducted on people of the age group 18-35 who are bound to go out, work, or study more. A set of questions were asked to them to be answered based on the moods or feelings they have been experiencing for one week. The questions in the survey were about the sleeping pattern, anxiety, genital symptoms, weight loss, feelings of guilt, and depressed mood.

Pandemic Causes Spike in Anxiety & Depression

Indian adults showing symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder*

■ January-June 2019 ■ May 14-19, 2020 ■ December 9-21, 2020



Though feelings of guilt are moderate, it shows that isolation led people to introspect and think about their conduct towards others. Depressed mood in the ongoing situations was also moderate and it was recorded that some people were experiencing a severe disturbance in their sleeping cycle. Many of them sleep during the day and are awake at night. Although most of the recordings were moderate, severe marking in even one parameter cannot be ignored.

Don't be afraid to seek help

Taking help from a psychotherapist or a counselor will help a person in dealing with their problems. Getting professional help for treating your mental health is not shameful and doing so will never bring regret.

Mental health is very important for everyone as we all are doing many things to develop our personality and to achieve something in our life but now a days each of us has busy schedule therefore sometimes we are frustrated due to lots of burden and pressure .we all neglected our mental health which causes a lots of harms to us like we faced depression and many other harmful disorders. Therefore to overcome with issue we should have a clear picture of understanding the thing , have a clear thought in mind , having a truthful knowledge and one more thing that is the ability to present anything or to talk about anything in front of everyone without any kind of hesitation.

Mental health needed more knowledge , accuracy and more boldness because it develops the personality of the individual and take away him from all kind of mental disorders.

Unsung Warriors of Bhopal: working silently, bringing smiles

Several NGOs become saviors to people affected by the ongoing Covid Crisis to cope with stressful situations

By Yashaswi Agrawal



Yashaswi Agrawal

Serving the needy can be considered as the noblest of work, and most of the non-government organizations (NGOs) do exactly that to elevate the lives of those living on the margins of the society with their altruistic services available 24x7. These organizations not only stand for social reforms but have also proved themselves instrumental in the current Covid-19 crisis by supplying food, shelter, and medicinal facilities to the people. They became a savior for people in their time of helplessness.

We came to know in one of the interviews held with Mrs. Rashmi Agarwal, president of Sanskar Sudha foundation, that she, along with her team is providing food to thousands of people every day, especially to those who are home quarantined and are living in the slum areas.

In addition to working on the field, the team has been utilizing social media by motivating



Yashaswi Agrawal

people for following social distance, maintaining hygiene, eating nutritious food to boost immunity, and spreading awareness regarding the importance of mental health. The entire team is focused on conducting live sessions every weekend on Facebook and Instagram and telling people the advantage and importance of including yoga and meditation in their daily routine. Another interview held with Mr. Arun Malviya, founder of SKG Helping Hands, told us about their digital contribution to the pandemic.



Yashaswi Agrawal

A special Corona Warrior team has been allotted for maintaining the records of the availability of beds, medication, oxygen, and ambulance. Through social media handles, the daily updates of the available beds are being posted by more than 40 people. A helpline desk is working for people 24*7. A special creative team has been appointed to make positive content and spread good vibes in this present-day scenario.

They have also shared many critical experiences with us. Some of them were grisly. There was a time when no beds were available to patients, along with the lack of oxygen, medicines, and other facilities. NGOs nationwide contributed and started converting big halls and grounds into COVID-19 care centers. Virtual platforms to collect charity funds and donations, for the benefit of the Covid patients were also set up.

Another group called the Bhopal City Life worked to provide food for the caretakers of the patients waiting outside the hospitals unable to procure food because of lockdown.



These people said that the happiest moment was when they saved a life. That feeling is priceless. In this ghastly situation, they recommend we all try to stay positive and focus on our health. A good phase comes after every bad one and this too shall pass.

Explore the happiness within you

In today's world people hanker after money and all the materialistic possession in the pursuit of happiness; but the real bliss come with acts of kindness and generosity

By Pragya Pandey



Yashwanti Tekam

It's for the 'happiness' that people do various kinds of things, as different people have different notions regarding happiness. We can get happiness may be by helping someone, loving, or by doing some work. Some people get it through money and in the pursuit of making money they forget the main reason for doing it that is happiness their enjoyment. But at that time making money becomes the priority for them. Have you ever thought about why and for what we're doing everything? We are making money for our loved ones to give them happiness. After all we do anything or everything to make our life happy. Do you know? Happiness is Infinite. It has no limitations.

The real happiness lies within us. There are people who have all the luxury items and wealth worth millions but still they are looking for more and not satisfied with what they have. On the other hand there are innumerable people living in the countryside in the small huts in jungles and on the hills, sustaining their lives with basic necessities of life yet are more content and at peace mentally. As humans our endeavours should be to unleash that blissful feeling hidden inside us through connecting with the nature and engaging with some acts of kindness and generosity.

To experience that inner happiness, we could try doing some of the following.

- **SELF HAPPINESS** - First of all you should be happy. Find what is that which makes you feel happy. Do that work which gives you that self happiness.
- **GIVE** - Whatever you want, start giving it to others like if you want someone to love you start giving love to others after some time, you'll see they'll automatically start loving you.
- **FORGIVE** - When one forgive oneself, then only he is capable of forgiving others. Learn to forgive yourself and so you'll be able to forgive others also.
- **NON-JUDGEMENT** - You should never judge any person. You never have the authority to judge anybody.
- **ACCEPTANCE** - It's very important to "Accept Everyone the way they are"
It means "No Expectation" from anybody.
- **UNCONDITIONAL LOVE**- Love unconditionally to everyone the way they are. "The cause of all sufferings is the lack of unconditional love".
- **ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE** - You must always be thankful for whatever you have in your life. You must have the attitude of gratitude towards every person or thing in your life which is



Yashwanti Tekam

Create the life you want to live because you are the creator of your own destiny.

This matters a lot how you perceive things around you. You should always try to perceive everything in a positive way. Whenever you say emotionally or with true feelings materializes, so be careful about negative words and thoughts. One must be aware about his thinking, thoughts- positive or negative and behaviour. If you are aware you'll be able to perceive anything around you in a positive way. In life remember only the happy moments. Try to emphasize on only them. Do not provide space for unhappy thoughts. Bury the sorrow and never look back from there



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Shikha Yadav

Yoga and meditation for a balanced life

Enrich your body, mind and spirit with the tested ancient wisdom passed on to us by our sages

By Shikha yadav

‘Yogasthah kuru karmani’, a very popular Sanskrit verse which means whatever you do in your day-to-day life, do it with the state of mind that one experiences while practicing yoga.

The word 'yoga', which is a modern translation of the word 'yog', means to unite. It means the union of the soul with the supreme entity and the divine pleasure for which human birth is destined, according to the Vedas. It is not necessary that for practicing meditation you need to sit at one place in a particular posture, closing your eyes and chanting mantras. This could be a part of it but not the procedure itself. Anything, while doing it, if you feel immense pleasure, satisfaction and don't regret the seconds you have deployed, then actually you were meditating at that moment.

Meditation means to employ your spirit to the task which you are performing in such a way that you connect with the process and feel it as a part of you. Father of Yog, Maharishi Patanjali devised the Ashtang yog, the eight- fold path of salvation through which we can actually know ourselves, who we are? Yam, Niyam, Asana, Pratyahar, Pranayam, Dhyan, Dharna and Samadhi, these are the eight stages of Ashtanga Yog. The origin of yog and meditation can be cited from here itself.

While the other six stages of Ashtang yog require strict discipline and need constant effort to achieve mastery. 'Asana' and 'Dhyan' are comparatively easier. As a result the latter have become more popular among the masses.

YOGASANAS

Relaxative and Beginner Level

⇒ Shavasana



⇒ Trikonasana



⇒ Veerbhadarasana



Photo credit:Yashwani Tekam

Asana' refers to the various yogic postures and poses which a yogi performs to keep the body physically fit, both internally and externally. Whereas 'Dhyan' particularly focuses on mental health and keeps us emotionally and psychologically sound.

Nobody had ever thought that we would witness a pandemic during our lifetime. That too, the type of pandemic, which has not only cut off our social lives, boycotted us from the outer world, but also has forced us to live in anxiety and fear every moment. To curb the spread of the coronavirus outbreak, the government is trying its level best by imposing lockdown and certain restrictions to break the chain. But still, we are amidst the second wave, already receiving the alarm of the third wave which is expected to cause greater havoc than ever before.

We can't be regular to gyms, parks, and sports complexes anymore which has affected the health of those who had inculcated this in their routine.

This Covid wave has brought one more wave which has virtualized everything from education, professional workspaces and celebrations to everything in between. Many gymnasiums and health clubs have too virtualized the workout sessions on platforms like Zoom, ensuring safety of its members by connecting online.

But this can't be considered an effective solution in the long run. They may be able to keep you physically fine, but cannot lower the stress and anxiety seeded by the feeling of missing out on the social environment that we had before.

This is where yoga and meditation come into play. Yoga not only keeps your body toned like exercise does, but also increases your efficiency to do any movement. At the same time, it also increases your flexibility and carves you into your best shape. The healing that various postures of yoga do for you internally can't be even compared with any other type of workout. The best thing with yoga is after doing it you will feel energized which is completely contrasting what you feel after any other workout. You may feel restless, tired, stressed muscles and sometimes even giving you an uneasy breathing that may make you feel gasping for air after an intensive workout.

On the contrary, after yogic exercises, you will feel that the parts of your body are activated, and your mind is in peace. This boosts your self-image and confidence. Yoga creates balance in your body. And you feel elevated physically, socially, emotionally, mentally, and psychologically.

If you have never tried yoga before, now is the best time to do it. Here's an excellent guide to get you started.

All the asanas are categorized into three categories: sitting, standing, and lying.

You can follow a book, a YouTube channel, or refer to a website for getting these types of poses. Start by practicing for 30 minutes a day, doing it for 10 minutes at a time. You can slowly extend the limit depending upon your ease of doing the poses.

Hatha yoga practices are best suited for beginners. These practices also can have different variations which can make one perfect in the final poses. Some of these practices include Tadasana, Trikonasana, Ardha Kati Chakrasana and Veerbhadrāsana. Of all of these, Yog Nidra is the most beneficial during these times. Considered as one of the most profound and powerful techniques in Yogic traditions, Yog Nidra is immensely beneficial in overcoming stress and anxiety.

Balasana (Child's pose) which stimulates the nervous system and re-energizes our bodies; Viparita Karani (legs up the wall pose) for improved blood circulation and relaxing mind; Shavasana (corpse pose) for meditation and relaxing the body are some of the poses with which you can start with.

For those of you who are experienced, why not take this time to teach your friends and family? There are a variety of online video communication services that will allow you to connect from the comfort of your home.

⇒ Ardhakatichakrasana



Photo credit: Yashwanti Tekam

**“ In Bhramhpnishad,
To sit in a comfortable
postion or posture for
everlasting period
is called asana. ”**





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Kitchen Gardening: A Tool for Self-care

With continuous lockdowns in place in various parts of the country for last more than a year, the practice of developing kitchen gardens at households has really picked up among the people especially those in the urban areas

By Srishti Jain

The old saying "Gardening is cheaper than therapy and you get tomatoes" is proving to be true at this time of the covid-19 pandemic. Gardening can be done at home in times of social distancing and the joy from the beauty of the garden gives great satisfaction and stress relief, as proven scientifically.

Gardening is an activity that enables you to embrace nature within the comfort of your home. When the Covid-19 pandemic broke out, people realized that it would take more than just a few weeks to remedy the situation. This meant that they had to find means to cope up with being locked in their homes.

People decided to brush their old interests or take up new ones such as cooking, reading,

or taking up something new such as gardening.

Gardening is known to be a stress busting activity with many personal benefits. It can be a great family-inclusive activity to adopt during this time.

As people are making their workspace at home, backyard gardening has increased. People are also initiating online challenges on WhatsApp, Instagram, and other social media platforms inviting people to grow microgreens in their homes. Many seed sellers are claiming increasing demand for seed orders that cannot be completed.

A Pune-based Nursery named 'nursery live' also saw their sales double in the last year, with their vegetable seeds pack especially in huge demand. "We're seeing a definite spike in seeds that are continuing to rise this year," says Satender Kumar, co-founder of Nursery life.

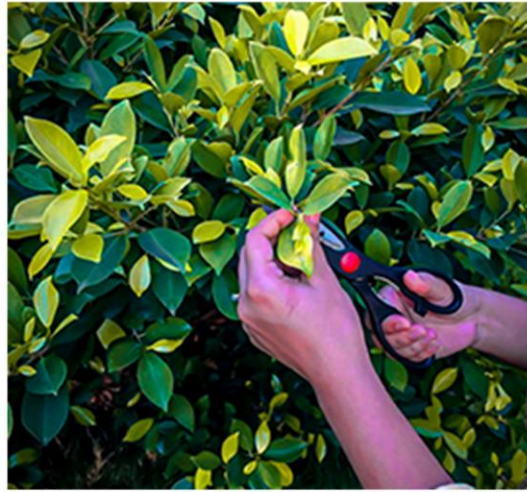
Baker creek seeds based in the US had to shut down its website three times due to the high demand.

While several Garden centers and retail are closed, one can still shop online or find treasures from the kitchen.

It's also a great way to introduce the little ones to gardening by allowing them to prepare their growing areas and sow seeds. Gardening is a way to have fun while learning. Hands-on activities like gardening will encourage children to engage in areas that affect their learning. It can be helpful for pre-schoolers and elementary school children in reinforcing skills like measurement, addition, subtraction, counting, category sorting, and color recognition. Gardening also helps to build motor skills and a more caring attitude towards nature and life. Building their own garden and watching it grow also instills a sense of achievement in children.

Apart from filling our vegetable baskets and vases, plants also have therapeutic effects. It is a popular form of therapy practiced in various regions worldwide. According to scientists in Japanese, inhaling scents released by plants such as lavender can alter gene activity and reduce any stress or depression. Gardening helps us to focus better, keeps us busy and conscientious.

Evidence suggests that spending time in a green environment helps reduce stress, improves mood, and adds to overall personality development.



Sejal Jain

“Phychologists who have studied the effects of gardening on people’s wellbeing have found that it can help boost your mood and calm worries.”

A resident of Noida - Rajora, who spends an average of four hours in her kitchen garden every day, said "All my three children are in Mumbai presently and we keep seeing news of how badly Maharashtra is impacted by Coronavirus. My kitchen garden helps me stay distracted and occupied."

It is a perfect way to keep one's mind and body occupied which helps in dealing with depression. Growing a vegetable garden can help parents and children cope with the boredom of being cooped up in their homes.

Being among plants and flowers enables us to live in the present moment and looking after them gives us a sense of responsibility. Let's interact with nature and be motivated by it. Find your space on your terrace, balcony, or backyard and take inspiration from the universe's master garden: MOTHER NATURE.

Two recipes to cull your hunger

A slice of magic with health benefits to match

By Deepanshi Bijole



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Do you need some lunch ideas?

We understand!

Getting fresh, nutritious meals on the table is one of the most difficult tasks of the day. Take a peek at these two healthy whole-food dishes for a quick lunch or breakfast!

Eat something healthy and delicious!

Kasuri Methi and sweet corn are ingredients that have many health benefits while also delighting your flavor palate.

Kasuri Methi regulates glucose in the human metabolism system. The use of Kasuri Methi in curries, dals, and stews regularly will aid in the treatment of type 2 Diabetes. Because of the fiber content, it facilitates the better functioning of insulin in diabetics.

Corn has a number of health advantages. It helps in digestion due to its high fiber content. It also contains crucial B vitamins that are essential for overall wellness and has critical minerals like zinc, magnesium, iron, copper, and manganese. Corn is rich in antioxidant carotenoids which improve ocular health.

Vegan corn fritters/corn pakodas

Nothing beats a batch of old-fashioned fritters on a rainy day! Why not replace the traditional vegetables with sweet corn instead?

INSTRUCTIONS:

Step 1: Prepare the sweet corns

Take frozen sweet corn kernels and soak them in a bowl of water to make sweet corn pakoras. Rinse them with regular water for a minute and then drain them. Fill a pan halfway with water and set it over medium heat. Cook the sweet corn in the water until it is soft and tender. Drain any remaining water and pat them dry.

Step 2: Mix the sweet corn kernels

Make sure the kernels don't have any moisture. Then, using a blender, coarsely mix them together. Blend until all the kernels are thoroughly crushed. Now move the sweet corn to a big mixing bowl.

Step 3: Combine the remaining ingredients in the mixing bowl.

Now add the chopped onion, thinly sliced green chilies, and chopped curry leaves to the bowl and combine them thoroughly with the corn paste. Apply the gram flour and stir it into the mixture. Repeat the same with rice flour. Season it with red chili powder, salt, and Garam masala to taste. The mixture should resemble dough rather than batter. To achieve a balanced consistency, add more Besan and rice flour to the mixture.

Step 4: Heat the oil for deep frying.

Now, in a deep pan or kadhai, put the sunflower oil on medium heat. Corn Pakoras can also be fried in olive oil. When the oil is hot enough, use a small spoon to drop small parts of the corn mixture into it.

Final step: The Corn Pakoda Is Done!

Cook until they are tender and golden brown. Remove them with a mesh skimmer and use tissue



istockphoto.com

paper to absorb any excess oil. Enjoy the corn pakoras with chutney and a beverage like tea or coffee, hot or cold.

Ingredients for Corn Pakodas, for 4 servings:

- * 2 cups of frozen sweet corn kernels
- * 1/2 teaspoon Garlic paste
- * 1/2 teaspoon Ginger paste
- * 3 tablespoon Gram flour (Besan)
- * 3 tablespoon Rice flour
- * 1/2 teaspoon Garam masala
- * 1 small thinly sliced onion
- * 2 green chili
- * 1/2 teaspoon red chili powder
- * 1 cup sunflower oil
- * 2 sprigs of curry leaves
- * Salt as required
- * Turmeric powder as required

‘The Future of Fashion is Circular’

A regenerative system of circular fashion where clothes of today will be the resources of tomorrow

By Poonam Jangir and Rashi Jain



Every fiber of our clothing is woven meticulously, arranged, and stitched to form a whole out of various fractional cutouts. We dress with the same vigor, every item of our outfit serving a purpose, be it a power-up professional suit, cozy lounge-wear, or glamorous party garb. A piece of cloth that is designed and handled carefully to be worn with pride is sadly not given a proper send-off. As much as 84% of the world's clothing is dumped in trash cans, finding its way to landfills or incinerators.

Nature has forced masks upon our faces. Is it a health precaution or a haven to bury our guilt-ridden faces for its vile treatment? The pandemic has driven many people to consider their reckless treatment of the environment.

The bright clothes may protect you from the heat, however not the earth. Here falls our need for sustainability - buying, investing, utilizing & disposing of clothing made from green fabrics and organic dyes with care for the planet and for the animals which inhabit it. Sustainable fashion is responsible fashion.

The ripples of plastic pollutants from the textile industry are as vast as to be ranked the second largest in the world, contributing half a million tons of micro plastics annually in the aquatic realm. Every year, it consumes a billion gallons of water, which could satisfy the consumption needs of five million people!



Yet, the problem arises when this used water is discharged out, unfiltered of malevolent chemicals which web out across the food chain and cause severe health complications in organisms.

Fashion doesn't singly diffuse delightful fragrances, but it also disperses 10% of the world's carbon emissions into the atmosphere. This is more than the combined carbon emissions from both international flights and marine shipping! Biodegradable clothing in landfills decomposes to release methane whereas plastic-based synthetics span over more than 200 years to decom-

“What do your clothes say? Resting in landfills, not at peace.”

Pollution in such epic proportions spawns from fast fashion. With the influence of social media, trends haven't remained seasonal. A new trend surfaces over 11-14 times a year, fostering cheap clothes with decreased durability. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, where 50 billion garments were manufactured in 2000, now, nearly 20 years later, the amount has increased twofold. People buy more and discard more.

Fast fashion has sky-rocketed the demands, stacking up modern slavery masked as unjust labor. According to estimates by the International Labor Organi-



zation, 170 million children worldwide are still forced into labor.

“Fast fashion is not free. Someone somewhere is paying”

**-Lucy Siegle,
British fashion
journalist.**

Instead of choosing to throw out our clothes in a unidirectional tangent of planet-harm, we can choose to enter the loop, the loop of sustainability following the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.



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REDUCE

We never stop wanting, because as humans, it is in our nature to be so. We are hard-wired to crave for more so that we can strive and achieve better. But tuning this craving towards clothing is hurting so many lives. The sugar rush we get by buying clothes on sale and special offers is fleeting and leaves a bitter taste in our mouths. We need to remember that a large number of clothes, or things, will never give us a fulfilled life. We need to cut back on essentials, asking ourselves - 'Do I need this?'

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Your wardrobe is assorted with textures of tranquil silk, rich leather, gleaming sequins, dabs, lavish velvet, and the go-to denim, mirroring your culture and style. Before stocking up on it- rethink. Is it worth having a garment that takes away much more beauty than it gives you? A glance at label credentials could save you from guilt-free shopping. Many brands are willing to tell you about the sourcing of their products if you just ask them. E-commerce gives you that power.

Fashion is fleeting but style is forever

Styling essentials can transform your cramped closet into a capsule closet.

•Minimal is the magic

Minimal clothing gives symmetry of focus, contrast, and color to your overall attire. A crisp black, white, or a simple graphic tee paired with daily denim can showcase your persona at casual hangouts, cafes, or get-togethers without looking over or under-dressed.

•Layering

If repetition drives you to flashbacks, fast forward to layering. Your basic t-shirts, tops, or even a statement black dress layered with a shrug or coat, a trench may be, can zhuzh up a date night look. Layering also camouflages the tiny holes or stains that compelled you into ghosting your garments.

•Timeless in Trend

Certain textures, fabrics, prints, or colors such as stripes or plaid, denim or cotton, polka dots or animal print, and classic solid colors are timeless. Such clothes have endured the test of both time and trend.

These statement apparels serve you the safest choice and save you from the dilemma of fidgeting through your wardrobe.

•Mask-In in Silence

Masks have not only become the new essential but convey a style statement with matching outfits. They are generating opportunities in income, employment, and style and have been photographed as a political canvas on the red carpet.



REUSE

Instead of throwing away clothes that don't fit anymore, we can donate or exchange them with family and friends. The worn-out clothes which rip or tug can be repurposed through light tailoring or DIYs. With the use of minimal tools, basic skills, and technology at aid, you can transform your clothes by doing it your way.

Legacy of old hand-me-downs passed to newborns or brides reflects not just sentiments, but sustainability. To make the planet feasible enough to thrive in, we need to pass this heritage of sustainability and clothes to Gen Z and Gen Alpha. After all, there is no Planet B.

Wearing vintage clothes can be a major style statement. As Jessica Alba said, "When you wear vintage, you never have to worry about showing up in the same dress as someone else."

Clothing libraries can be issued on a wide scale where clothes can be rented. This alleviates the worry of repeating an outfit before the same people.

RECYCLE

Recycling products is what connects the loop of sustainability. It is working with the discarded materials, refashioning them to form new designs. But with companies outsourcing raw materials, having too many checkpoints in the supply chain, and the race after money, less than 15% of our clothing is recycled. Recycling products efficiently could be an economic boon to brands since they have fewer inputs. Recently, many international brands are working towards completely pivoting to sustainability. Indian brands like Hoomanwear, Pomogrenade, Maati, PANI Swimwear, No Nasties, Increscent, and others market ethical clothing.

The journey of the fashion industry becoming completely sustainable is a long one. But with 66% of global consumers willing to spend on sustainable brands, our blue ball has a greener hope yet.

Swap your clothes with Sustainable Alternatives



Switching to organic alternatives of silk, leather, sequins and even denim will satisfy the fashionista within you without immersion.

•Ahimsa or Peace Silk

Inspired by the Gandhian non-violence policy, this organic and peaceful alternative is ethical, saving lives in quantity without questioning the quality. Here, silk cocoons are harvested only after they have hatched. Since organic sericulture demands zero synthetics, it negates groundwater pollution and heals local biodiversity.

•Leather

Linked with ethical concerns, leather leads to an environmental impact by leaking carcinogenic chemicals into water supplies consumed for tanning. The organic alternatives to leather are crafted from pineapple leaves and mushrooms. These are devoid of toxic chemicals and are completely biodegradable.

•Sequins

Your disco favorites are seen dancing in landfills at the end of their lives. The alternative to these virgin plastics of varying sizes is produced by 20% recycled PET (Polyethylene terephthalate), reducing energy requirements during manufacturing and toxic pollutants from incineration.

•Denim

The jeans you put on to get a water bottle exhausts 7000 times the amount of water in that bottle. By replacing the common synthetic and petrol-based elastomers with plant-based yarns like organic cotton wrapped around a rubber core, blue jeans become greener.

All these practices increase the life of the material, take away from the trash count and preserve the ecosystem.

We need to achieve commonality in the understanding of sustainability because only all hands on deck will complete the circle.



IPL 2021: An incomplete dose of excitement and joy

The 14th edition of one of the world's most extravagant cricketing leagues in its halfway journey brought colors of joy in people's lives amid depressing times

By Mauli Saxena

Indian Premier League has, undoubtedly, become the most popular cricket league in the world. Till 2007 the Australian cricket team dominated the world of cricket winning 3 World Cups consecutively. The primary factor for their dominance was their match-ready bench. In cricket, it is often said that a team is only as good as its bench players. India's lacking domestic culture prevented that depth till 2007. The success of the IPL gave the country's team that much-needed depth. Players like Rohit Sharma, Suresh Raina, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Jasprit Bumrah, Navdeep Saini, Deepak Chahar, and many more gave incredible performances in the IPL and later wore the blue jerseys.

The main aim of the IPL is to provide the Indian team with the depth they need. The players now play the same international fast bowlers which they later face in the international arena, which prepares them for the match and helps to identify differences between class players.

The IPL is a life-changing tournament for many young athletes. In IPL 2021, the youngsters have played very well. Rishabh Pant, Sanju Samson, Harshal Patel, and Nitish Rana were undeniably the best. Apart from them, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Chetan Sakaria, Devdutt Padikkal, Harpreet Brar, Avesh Khan, Shahrulkh Khan also catch the eye. These young players ensure the bright future of Indian cricket.

RUTURAJ DASHRAT GAIKWAD

The 24-year-old athlete became a key player for the Chennai Super Kings right off the bat. His opening partnership with Faf du Plessis helped the team make their comeback. Even though he failed three times initially, he proved his worth in the Mumbai match against the Kolkata Knight Riders by scoring 64 runs in just 42 balls. Gaikwad was also awarded player of the match against Sunrisers Hyderabad for scoring 75 runs in 44 deliveries. The player was bought by the Chennai Super Kings in 2019.



AVESH KHAN

Born in Madhya Pradesh, AVESH KHAN was one of the most consistent players of the Delhi Capitals. Khan took wickets in every match he played in the tournament. He was the second-highest wicket-taker of the season and took 14 wickets in 8 matches. Since Kagiso Rabada was on the stand this year, he was even named as the leading strike bowler for the Delhi Capitals. Khan knows how to control the flow of runs.

SHAHIRUKH KHAN

Named after the Bollywood celebrity, Shahirukh Khan was bought by the Punjab Kings in the IPL auction. Albeit facing only 82 balls, he managed to prove his ability in a very short time. Playing significant innings under pressure and smashing the bowlers with ease, he displayed his potential to play at any number under any circumstances.



CHETAN SAKARIYA

Sakariya's hard work is finally paying off. The Gujarat boy was crazy about cricket, but his father told him that it was a rich man's game, yet he continued to play. When he played for the Cooch Behar Trophy, he took 18 wickets in 6 matches and impressed Glenn McGrath in the trial. In his debut year for the Ranji Trophy, he took 29 wickets in the season. Sakariya was spotted by the IPL talent scouts in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy where he took 12 wickets in 5 matches. He picked the important wickets of Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul, and Jhye Richardson in his debut match against Punjab Kings. Sakariya is a promising talent.



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DEVDUTT PADIKKAL

He was one of the shining stars of IPL 2021. Padikkal is the first player in cricket history to score three fifties in his very first four matches. The youngster of Royal Challengers Bangalore also scored the maiden IPL century against Rajasthan Royals. He remained unbeaten on 101 in the match and his team won by 10 wickets.

In these difficult times, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) conducted the IPL and all the players were in a bio bubble, but things were not in their hands. After a few players and supporting staff tested positive, the BCCI immediately postponed the IPL. IPL 2021 might have been suspended, but the three-and-a-half week of IPL has managed to entertain all cricket fans.



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“As our captain says, face every situation with a smile. I stayed positive and didn't think much about the future.”

Ruturaj Gaikwad

From 36-all out to the GABBA Breach

A series that saw the changed face of Indian cricket, when the new cricketing stars emerged and the poster boys changed

By Varul Chaturvadi



From 1983 and 2011 world cups to the 2001 Kolkata test match and many more, the excitement of cricket has been on continuous rise among the people of India.

Cricket has always been a major source of exultation for the people of India. Even after so many convincing victories over the years, many of the people tagged India's win against Australia in the 2020-2021 Border - Gavaskar test series as the greatest ever victory for any country in the history of Cricket. The main reason for this was the performances of the players other than the present poster boys. This series unveiled some new poster boys of Indian cricket.

Let's revisit the historic series which people even found worthy of a web series. From the "Adelaide Nightmare" to the "Gabba Breach" the journey was full of motivation with hundreds of obstacles. The biggest obstacle was the injuries, 8 first lineup players were either injured or unavailable, but that is what sets the bars high for this series.

The early predictions by every cricket expert were Australia defeats India convincingly by 4-0 because of India's poor record in SENA (South Africa, England, New Zealand, and Australia) countries and with Captain Virat Kohli flying back home after the first match due to paternity leave.

Although India defeated Australia in the 2018 test series, which was the first time any Asian team conquered Australia on their home soil, the team of 2018 had their key players who were now missing from this team.

The first test was played in Adelaide. India batted well in the first innings with quick fifties of Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane posting a decent total of 244 in the first innings.

Indian bowlers In Australia's first innings, mainly Ravichandran Ashwin bowled out Australian batsmen very cheaply at 191. Tim Paine (71) was the top scorer from the Australian side.

India was looking for the prime contenders after the first two days to win the test match, but what happened on the third day was quite unpredictable. India was bowled out for just 36 runs and Australia defeated India by 8 wickets. Everyone around the world started bashing the team and their decisions and 4-0 was a sad reality for Indians. India's prime fast bowler Mohammed Shami got injured with a bouncer and he was ruled out from the Series and Virat Kohli left too. Now fighting back required a strong will as '36' was haunting the team.

The second test was played in Melbourne which is called the Boxing Day test match. Indian bowlers didn't disappoint again and bowled Australian batsmen out for 195 which was their second consecutive less than 200 score.

Marnus Labuschagne again was the only player who could score some runs for Australia. Everyone was scared about India's batting, but what happened was one of the finest comebacks of Indian cricket, carried on the shoulders of a selfless captain Ajinkya Rahane. Ajinkya Rahane scored a commendable century and locked the mouths of every person questioning India and their caliber. Indian bowling in the 2nd innings again dismissed Australia for 200.

Jasprit Burmah took 7 wickets in the match and India won the match by 8 wickets.

After the Adelaide nightmare and Melbourne Magic, the third test was played in Sydney. India dropped Wriddhiman Saha and brought Rishabh Pant for the first time in this series, which later turned out to be their best decision.

The first inning of the Sydney Test match saw two exceptional performances from Steve Smith 131 taking Australia's score 338 (1st, 300 scores in this series), and Ravindra Jadeja from India takes 4 wickets dismissing



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Steve Smith on a direct hit and scoring some crucial runs for the team along with Pujara's half-century.

Day 4 of the test was not a good day for cricket as many Australian spectators started racially abusing Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah regarding which the Indian team complained. India was given a target of 407 runs in the fourth innings, which India managed to draw with the help of some fantastic knocks and a gritty partnership at the end. Rohit Sharma and Cheteshwara Pujara scored a skillful 50 along with Rishabh pant scoring an aggressive 97.

There were more than 50 overs to be played when Hanuma Vihari and Ravichandran Ashwin came to bat and the bowlers in the opposition were looking fierce but the grit of Ashwin & Vihari turned the tables on the Indian side.

The odds were against them both being injured. Vihari playing with an injured leg while Ashwin plays with an injured back handling bouncers from the Aussies and the crowd abusing them. But what they (Indians) had was immense determination, courage, and a sense of responsibility for millions of Indians.

They added 62 runs off 256 balls for the sixth wicket, batting close to four hours, and denied Australia a win that would hurt them for a long time. For the first time, India batted for more than 100 overs after 2002.

The Sydney saga was unexpected and the whole country was in joy.

The Series was 1-1 with the last test to be played at "The Gabba" or "Fortress" of the Aussies. Fortress because it was a place where Australia never lost a test match since 1988.



It looked like an impossible mission, without Kohli, Jadeja, Shami, Vihari and now Bumrah was ruled out from the fourth test too.

Till now India had used their 20 players which were the highest by any team (in an away series) in the history of test cricket. The bowling comparison of both the teams in the fourth test was 1033 wickets of Australia vs 11 wickets of India. Shardul Thakur, Washington Sundar, and T Natrajan made their debuts in the final test.



Australia in their first innings made their highest score in this series 369 with the help of an impressive century by M Labuschagne. The debutantes Natrajan and Thakur took three wickets each. India in their first inning was struggling for 188-6 and the dreams of winning the series here looked bleak, but just when the dreams were looking shattered, 2 youngsters Thakur and Sundar stepped up keeping the hopes alive by scoring quickly half-centuries and vanishing Australia's chances of an easy win.

Australia in their second innings looked out of sorts. M. Siraj took 5 wickets and S. Thakur 4. The historical test series, which started from The Adelaide "Nightmare" for India was to be decided on the last day on a fifth-day pitch with India needing 328 runs to win and Australia 10 wickets.

After R. Sharma's quick dismissal, Shubhman Gill and C. Pujara took the charge. They not only built a partnership but also didn't let a wicket fall, irritating the Kangaroos. Shubhman Gill made an exciting 91 showing his future glimpses and on the other side, Pujara played like a soldier taking every blow on his body, helmet, thigh, and shoulders.

After Gill's wicket, it was Rishab Pant on the other hand, who was accompanying Pujara very well.

During the third session, India needed 145 runs. Rishabh Pant was batting maturely and was also scoring important runs. Pant scored some brilliant sixes off Nathan Lyon and the margin came to 63 to win off 13 overs.

Pant and Washington Sundar registered a gritty partnership and took India closer to the line.

In the end, it was the fearless R. Pant factor that took the game away from the Australian side and single-handedly won the game for India scoring an unbeaten 89 off 138 balls at fortress Gabba.

India defeated Australia by 3 wickets and breached the Gabbatoir. A series that had every piece of motivation one needs in life. India later went down and out and made an unpredictable comeback.



India's belief won them the series. Every person on the team contributed to the historic series win. The four Emerging 'S' - Shubhman, Shardul, Siraj, Sundar proved to be stunning for India and surprising for Australia.

The team led by Ajinkya Rahane registered their names in the history books being the only team able to beat Australia at Gabba breaching the Fortress.

The Border Gavaskar trophy was regained by India there.

This series is felicitated by ICC and fans with 70 thousand votes

As the Greatest ever series played in the history of test cricket

It will be remembered for years.

This series not only helped India to enter into the World Test Championship Final but also proved to be a historic step of India's coming domination in the world cricket.

**“Never ever underestimate
the Indian’s”**

- Justin Langer, Australia head coach

The Show Must Go on

In times of uncertainty, celebrities continue to fill the world with happiness and entertainment

By Simran Sinha

Gone are the days when going to the theatre to watch a movie was a major weekend plan. Everyone used to be so thrilled to watch movies on the big screen with something to munch on - combined with strangers in the room with whom we shared the same emotions - gave us the best cinematic experience. Even when the pandemic hit the globe, the entertainment industry never failed to charm us. The 66th Filmfare awards were the perfect celebration to welcome the new era of the industry.

The industry tapped its well of creativity by switching its streaming strategies to OTT platforms and by changing their conventional method of promotion to online advertisements and online meet & greets. Iconic movies like Thappad, Gunjan Saxena, Dil Bechara, and more were released in abundance.

The year 2020 was a shocker for all of us, especially with a lot of revelations in the industry regarding nepotism, narcotics, and most importantly what goes on behind that lavishing red carpet. A great loss was suffered by losing some of the most precious gems; Su-shant Singh Rajput, Irrfan Khan, S. P. Balasubrahmanyam, Rishi Kapoor, Saroj Khan, and others, leaving a permanent void in the Indian entertainment industry.



With the 66th Filmfare Awards came the time to honor and remember those who have left us, appreciate those who are with us, and celebrate a new era with actors, hardworking crews, and the entire industry. After a year full of highs and lows, Bollywood is still a glam town.

The award ceremony was a restricted gathering that took place in the Goregaon Film City in Mumbai. While quite a lot of celebrities skipped the event due to COVID-19, those who graced the ceremony brought in all the glitz and glamour. Rajkumar Rao and Riteish Deshmukh hosted this spectacular event with the likes of Nora Fatehi, Taapsee Pannu, and Ayushmann Khurrana, and in attendance.

Following tradition, the ceremony witnessed some incredibly special performances, while industry superstars were awarded for their best performances in different categories. Talking about winners, Anubhav Sinha's movie, Thappad starring Taapsee Pannu, went home with a total of seven awards! This was followed by Gulabo Sitabo, who won six. The ceremony concluded with the late actor Irrfan Khan being awarded the Best Actor for his moving performance in Angrezi Medium, along with the award for Lifetime Achievement. His awards were collected by his son, Babil Khan, and there was a visible sense of sadness, as well as pride within the gathering when the late actor's name was announced.

The event was filmed on 27th March, and on 11th April, it was broadcasted on Colors TV. It was also streamed on Filmfare's official Facebook page. The 66th Filmfare Awards ceremony was a star-studded night with extremely special and emotional moments. With this new era of entertainment, we can only hope that the industry keeps on uplifting society with its creative touch.

“We can't become what we need to be by remaining where we are.”
Oprah Winfrey

The Indian entertainment industry will continue to grow in all aspects, leaving no stone unturned in catering to our needs with the best quality content and a lot of hard work.



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