



## UNITED NATIONS PENSIONERS' ASSOCIATION INDIA

# UNPAI bulletin

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### Recreation

### JAMALI KAMALI

What a name? It sounds like someone, may be a drunkard, had twisted its name. It is a recreational place near Qutab Minar in Mehrauli, to commemorate the services of an old Vazir during the Mughal period. The place is full of spacious farms and there are several tourist/picnic spots over a wide area.

This place was selected by our friends in the UNPAI executive for a get-together and/or pool a dish picnic on 19 February. The place is very refreshing, away from city's humdrum. But all this only after one had located the place and entered the gardens. The zig zag entrance allowed entry to one person at a time. Once inside the area, members enjoyed the pollution-free surroundings. We could feel the Spring by watching greenery and trees and bushes over a wide area landscaped for a quiet and calm evening.

Those who attended had to walk quite a distance, parking their cars somewhere. Walking was made worse because members had to load themselves with chairs and other make-shift seating arrangement plus food that had to be carried to participate in the pool-a-dish picnic. Around 30 members, including spouses assembled and enjoyed games and savored the food which was pooled together. All very well.

But, and it is a big but. The location described in the invitation letter was puzzling. Nonetheless, the ingenuity of members enabled them to locate the place and why not, our Secretary, S.R. Murthy was there to receive and direct members to the spot selected for the get-together. But until Murthy was spotted it was quite an enigma. There must be a regular gate for entry as we spotted a number of cars moving about which couldn't have come thru the zig-zag entrance we had to take.

We followed the way it was described in the UNPAI's circular and we had to follow through a virtual slum-like passage. True, it was by the side of the main highway and we passed thru the so-called Flower Bazar, a whole-sale market where you can buy flowers of all varieties in bulk. While no one bought any flowers on this occasion members enjoyed the fragrance oozing out of the stock of fresh 'chamelis' (jasmine) and roses.

The organizers were sorry for the inconvenience caused. Their honest apology dissolved all the bother and discomfort. On the whole it was a good get-together of those who braved to reach the place.

## UNPAI

An Association in Defence of UN Pensioners' Rights and for the Welfare of Members and in the Service of the Society.

## Our Problems & Suggested Solutions

A special feature of the UNPAI's AGB meeting held on 12 March was that the retired Director of UN Information Centre, BHAI CHAND PATEL was present as Special Invitee. He released UNPAI's booklet "Frequently Faced Problems By UN Retirees In India & Suggested Solutions". The problems generally are those that are faced by spouses of retirees in India, some of whom are not so well read and are not conversant with dealing with UN Pension Fund.

In a written statement the UN Resident Rep highly lauded the initiative of the UNPAI's President, Mr. Jagdish Aggarwal and his executive members in bringing out this booklet for the benefit of UN retirees and their spouses in India.



*Bhai Chand Patel (Centre) at the Meeting*

BHAI CHAND PATEL endorsed what the UN Resident Rep. had stated. He said the questions raised and solutions offered in the booklet hold good not only for UN retirees in India but even those who are in other developing countries.

BHAI CHAND PATEL said he was aware of "the camaraderie" among retirees long after they had left the UN. He felt this was a "heartening" feature. During his long career he noted that UN Pensioners' Association in India "among the most proactive associations in the world."

## ABOUT OURSELVES

### Hello Friends

Do you know that we the elderlies are known as WOOFs! Nothing wrong in that, in fact it is quite complementary. The woofs are WELL-OFF OLDER FOLKS!

### Recession

Recently, our colleague, Dr. Purohit (FAO) wrote a book entitled THE GREAT RECESSION 2007-2010, a copy of which he has very kindly forwarded to each and every UNPAI member. We highly appreciate this gesture.

It is a scholarly effort to guide policy makers and researchers to fight recession being currently faced by some European countries. And, you never know what is in store for us in India. The book should prove quite helpful.

We suggest that the UNPAI executive invite him some time to address a gathering of our members so that we can profit from his experience. Dr. Purohit can provide some practical tips on how members can protect their hard earned pension from being diluted by the inflationary forces.

### Colours for Health

Our member, Kulu Singh of UNICEF has all along advocated colour therapy for our well being.

While age is telling on her and for health reasons she is tied up in her home. She has led us to believe that drinking water from coloured bottles rejuvenates the body. She has kept several bottles of different colours for drinking water. She points out that such bottles should preferably be kept in the open under the sun before moving them in the 'fridge.

She tells us that God has created several fruits and vegetables in different colours for this specific reason. Eating coloured fruits such as apples, carrots, cauliflower, beans and other dark coloured food items lowers the risk of death from all causes, including heart disease and cancer.

Further on, she adds the colour of our nails shows the sign of skin cancer. Our nails change their colour - black, brown. Purple marks under the nails could be a sign of melanoma, a form of skin disease. Blue signifies a lack of oxygen in the blood. Grey implies the onset of glaucoma or arthritis. Pink is the colour of good health. Good Luck!

## **Ayurvedic Treatment**

This follows a news item that we published in our last Bulletin. Van Breda has since agreed to consider settlement of our bills under homeopathy and ayurvedic treatment.

Our colleague Adimoolam Iyer (UNICEF) was suffering from low back pain. He was not satisfied with allopathic treatment. He wanted to try ayurveda. He consulted a specialist from a government recognized ayurvedic institution, which is a teaching and research institution of repute and followed their treatment – massage therapy with medicated oils. His bills with English translation were submitted and have since been passed for payment by Van Breda.

There is growing interest in ancient healing systems in India and abroad, and Ayurveda is coming back in a big way. Westerners are rediscovering and are expected to follow Ayurveda.

Recently naturalists from India and abroad met at Rishikesh for a 5-day international conference (17-21 Feb.). The general consensus appeared to be that while allopathic scores in trauma care and in life threatening crisis but is of little help in teaching people to live healthy and avoid life threatening crises.

## **Staff Relocation**

UN staff relocation, especially affecting female staff has a harrowing effect on the spouse and children. Maie Ayoub von Kohl who retired as the Principal Advisor on Gender Rights & Civic Engagement in New York narrates that it was quite hectic for her but for her husband it was "significantly tougher"

She adds: "We've had five relocations, and for him, it was a challenge every time. It meant starting again practically from zero in terms of his profession, in countries where he was allowed to work." UN staff on transfer can walk into any station and enter the office - there he or she finds continuity - the same type of programmes, and there would be some people with whom he or she may have had official dealings in the past. But the partner who follows finds it very different.

## **Emergency in Japan**

On 11 March Japan suffered a massive earthquake (at 8.9 on the Richter Scale) that was the worst earthquake in Japan's recorded history. Worse still, the earthquake was followed by tsunami that was even more devastating. This took a toll of over 10,000 and millions of people were uprooted and went without power and water for a number of days. The tsunami obliterated several villages along the coast line. At the time of going to the Press it was feared that some nuclear plants in Japan had exploded and caused further damage. There were reports of radiation leakage. People were advised to remain indoors to escape from exposure.

As the nuclear crisis assumed dangerous dimensions GOI ordered food originating from Japan be tested for radiation.

Our colleague, Ravi Malik (UN) is settled in Japan after retirement. We hope he and his family are safe.

What has happened in Japan reminds us of:

Life is short

We truly don't know

What each day will bring

&

Let's live each day like it's our last

One day it will be right!

## **Crisis in New Zealand**

Earlier, on February 22, atleast 100 people were killed and 300 went missing as a 6.3 earthquake rocked parts of New Zealand. The quake caused 30 million tonnes of ice to break off the Tasman Glacier.

## **At the AGB Meeting**

V. Muthuswami (UNICEF) who is based in Chennai specially came to Delhi to attend the AG Body meeting on 12 March. He wanted to meet old friends. He was impressed at the decorum and the way UNPAI meeting was conducted. At the meeting he explained to

members the basis and reasons which led him and his other friends to take up with the UN Pension Fund the restoration of full pension on behalf of those who had availed of the 'lump sum'. Muthuswami and another friend from ILO had gone to USA to prevail upon the judges to reconsider the decision of the Pension Fund but they would not yield. Subsequently, they had filed an appeal to the Tribunal requesting review of the judgment but failed to obtain a favourable decision.

#### **Adjustment of Pension on 1 April.**

**It is learnt that the US cost of living index for the year ending 2010 was less than the required 2 per cent threshold, as such, those on dollar track will not be eligible for any upward adjustment of pension this year. Good Luck next year!**

#### **Ravi (Ravinder) Malik (UN)**

Remember Ravi (Rabinder) Malik who during 1960s & 1970s worked for WHO, and later UNDP. From UNDP he was assigned to Indonesia and on to the UN University in Tokyo.

In all, he enjoyed a 40-year long, distinguished career with the United Nations, including 20 years with the United Nations University (UNU) in Tokyo.

After retirement he did his PhD and has since been teaching courses on International Relations and United Nations at a number of Japanese and American Universities. He is currently teaching a course at Keio University on "Contemporary Global Issues and the Role of United Nations". Dr. Malik has been an adviser on two occasions on the "Ship for World Youth Program", which is sponsored by the Government of Japan, with the objective to promote multicultural exchange among the youth of the world.

Dr. Malik presently represents in Japan an Indian research institution called TERI which deals with issues of energy and environment and global sustainable development.

Recently he was on vacation in Delhi and met his old friend, M R Sasan (WHO) on the eve of UNPA's Pool-A-Dish picnic on 19 Feb. It was good that he came to the picnic and met some old colleagues and made new friends.

#### **31 May - No Tobacco Day**

While appealing to our members to pay heed to WHO's message on this Day, we recall a story. In Brazil a UN woman staffer read the book **THE EASY WAY TO STOP SMOKING** by Allen Carr and stopped smoking. She took up the challenge of quitting smoking and came away knowing the joy of freedom from an unhealthy habit. Good!

While on this subject we recall that **Mark Twain**, an ardent smoker, once remarked : **"If smoking is not allowed in heaven, I shall not go."**

#### **Spirituality**

People on a spiritual path spend a lot of time meditating and reading spiritual books. Some people have no clear mission in their lives. They want to escape from boredom and, at the same time, they feel that this helps reduce suffering in their current life circumstances.

Our colleague, **Rambhaj Madan** (WHO), who is a yoga guru, believes that his purpose of being spiritual is "self-improvement, both internal and external".

Whether or not we pray or believe in the efficacy of prayers, it is interesting to note that the US Army has been conducting a survey among soldiers to assess their well-being. It is believed that "spiritual fitness has a positive impact on quality of life, on coping and on mental health".

Another colleague, **M.L. Srivastava** (UN) has shared with us his experiences in spirituality.

In nutshell, he said spirituality teaches us :

To Be Happy With What We Are!

And, be content with whatever we are,

And, treat others with equal respect, however they are,

This is what God expects of us.

Let's not feel conceited with our own idea of beauty nor feel wretched with what we think is ugly.

For every individual, the world is transitional and not perpetual.

Ultimately, the body, however beautiful or not, it will simply turn to dust.

## How to stay young and happy

**Nirmal Sippy** has suggested the following:

Keep only cheerful friends; Keep Learning; Enjoy the simple things; Laugh often, long and loud. Cherish your health; and Forget the numbers like age, weight and height. Let the doctors worry about these.

### Good lessons to remain healthy

Another colleague, **Krishan Talwar** exhorts us about the ideals of life. He suggests:

- 1) Never give up (he wants us to learn from ants who never give up, come what may); and
- 2) Look ahead and stay positive and do all we can to achieve our goal and do something wonderful.

And now a few tips from **Hans Raj** (UNDP) :

Forgive quickly, Love Truly, Laugh Uncontrollably, and never regret anything.

### A.B.L. Srivastava

Our colleague, A.B.L. Srivastava, even after retirement continues to be on the UNESCO panel of 12 members who are responsible for developing International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). The panel helps classify educational programmes and qualifications of various countries into different levels and types of education to help in their comparison across countries of the world.

The panel members have been deliberating for long. Their last meeting was held in February in Germany which helped in finalization of the ISCED document which will be presented at UNESCO General Conference later this year for approval before it becomes applicable in all the countries. ISCED would help in collection of data on education in census and surveys and comparison of educational qualifications of different countries.

Our friend, Rama Moorthy Kanchi V. has pointed out that we have not reported his whereabouts correctly. His address is:

Country Villa, C 19, Eagleton Golf Village, Bangalore/Mysore Highway, Bidadi Industrial Area, Pin 362109. His telephones are; 91-80-27278207; 91-9986633549; 91-9440409544.

## Died:

Gerry Pinto (UNICEF) died in New Delhi on 3 February. He was 64 years old. His funeral Mass was held on 5 February at the Sacred Heart Cathedral followed by burial at Nicholson Cemetery in Kashmiri Gate.

Several UNICEF retirees offered their condolences and joined the last rites. UNPAI was represented by its Vice President.

We regret to announce the death of **Dr. Kalyan Bagchi** (WHO) on 10 January. An eminent writer of medical books, he was well known in his profession.

## Chawlas

Both Mr. and Mrs. Chawla (WHO) settled in USA are very popular among the UNPAI. During 1980s and 1990s they used to actively participate in our activities. They keep us informed of our colleagues in USA.

Mr. Chawla has conveyed in an email about the death of Mr. Vasdev of WFP. Some years back Mr. Vasdev was our annual paying member but since he left India to settle in USA he discontinued his membership. Chawla sahib informs that Mr. Vasdev died a few months back. He was around 92/93.



**Jasbir Batra (WHO).** After retirement he and his wife are settled in USA. See how well, they are enjoying life there! Good Luck!

## UN NEWS

### SCORE

Here we are not referring to the World Cup Score that people in the Asian countries were chatting about during March. The score that we are talking about is what ILO has launched to help workers in small and medium sized enterprises. Yes, SCORE is an ILO program which stands for Sustainability through Competitive and Responsible Enterprise. ILO is now actively pursuing SCORE in India and other Asian countries. This highlights that improving the productivity of a business is not solely a matter of new technologies or revolutionary production methods. It can be better accomplished with the full and comprehensive participation of the workforce, both men and women and through dialogue between the management and workers.

### Social Dialogue

Dialogue between the workers and the management is very important. This provides for smoother communication and ensures better understanding of the company's targets by the workers; at the same time the management understands the needs of the workers. This is particularly relevant for enterprises that face internal problems relating to quality, productivity, pollution and waste, workplace health and safety, or human resources management.

ILO's programme for prevention and elimination of bonded labour is being funded by the Government of Netherlands. This covers several Asian countries, including India. Selected districts in the States of Andhra and Tamil Nadu are being covered.

### Year of Sciences

Marie Curie got her Nobel Prize in 1911. UNESCO has announced that the current year (2011) being the centenary of Curie's prize is to be known as the Int'l Year of Chemistry (IYC). The idea is to increase public appreciation of chemistry and to generate enthusiasm for the creative future of chemistry.

India's Prime Minister, Dr. Man Mohan Singh has declared 2010-2020 India's Decade of Innovation. It is recalled 2009 was Homi Bhabha's Centenary of the Indian Science Congress to be the Year of Science.

### Int'l Year of Forests

The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests to raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

**Forests for People** is the theme of the Year. It highlights the dynamic relationship between forests and the people who depend on them.

### Science City

Entertainment Capital of Punjab

An international level Science City for entertainment and unique learning experience having magnificent facilities has been set up at Jullundur on Kapurthala Road. The facilities include a Space Theatre, Earthquake Simulator, Dinosaur Park, Boating, Energy Park, Health Gallery, Fun Science Gallery, etc.

### Toilets - Villagers prefer under-the-sky

An earlier WHO/UNICEF report put the number of Indians defecating in the open at 665 million. In certain rural areas where government agencies build toilets people are loath to use them because of mismanagement. Shallow pits and poor drainage means the waste simply back flushes and in the monsoon the toilets are overflowing with filth. It is a serious health hazard, as such, in such conditions villagers prefer open, under the sky arrangement.

By and large, urban Indians, living in slums and villagers as well, seek out a fancy mobile in preference to a basic toilet within their houses. In India there are far more mobile phones than toilets. By the 2010 year-end India had nearly a thousand million mobile phones.

The mobile phone has been the single biggest improvement in the lives of the poor over the last few decades.

### Hand Washing

In our last issue we had reported about the Global Hand Washing project. This has evinced a good deal of interest among our members. A colleague writes:

With the change of weather a number of people get afflicted with cold and flu. If you

shake hands with somebody with cold, wash your hands with some hand sanitizer.

He writes that the hands are the conveyors of cold viruses, and our nose and eyes are major portals of entry into our body. As such we are advised to keep our hands off our face.

A medical Journal ANESTHESIA & ANALGESIA reports that the hands of anaesthesia providers contribute to disease transmission during operations.

### **Ever More Mouths to Feed**

The world's population is heading towards 7 billion thanks to 267 babies born every minute of which India's contribution is 51. And, within India UP's share is 11 babies per minute. And, those interested in global statistics, please note that 16,000 babies are born each hour or 384,000 babies born each day.

The fast production is responsible for the rising population. Thus, the world's population is expected 7 billion around mid 2012. Another estimate is that this figure might happen around October or November this year. And, the 7th billion child may be born in Uttar Pradesh.

But, when did we touch 6 billion mark. There is no agreement on when exactly the six billion mark was crossed. While the UN said its calculations showed that the six billion figure was reached on October 12, 1999, the US Census Bureau said it was reached on July 22, 1999.

### **Appointments**

Kiran Mehra -Kerpelman, an American National, is the new Director of UN Information Centre. She joined on 1 Feb. Earlier she was with ILO. Navi Pillay is now the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

### **Int'l Women's Day**

8 March is the Int'l Women's Day. This year there was special significance attached to the Day. This was the hundredth year of the declaration and observation of the first International Women's Day.

During the early years of twentieth century women all over Europe were protesting against oppressive working conditions, poor pay and inequality. Women were denied voting rights in several countries. Women wanted equal pay for equal labour.

The women's movement in India has been markedly different from the struggle that marked the western

women. In urban India women enjoy equal rights and hold public office but there are social evils like child marriage, dowry deaths, and inheritance rights. Major decisions of their life are still taken by men in the family like father, brothers, etc.

The United Nations designated 1975 as Int'l Women's Year and the same year it gave official sanction to the IWD and began sponsoring International events honouring women. Now it is observed in over a hundred countries and several governments make it an official holiday. Small gifts are presented by men to women – mothers, wives, sisters, daughters and yes friends too.

The United Nations theme for 2011 is "Equal access to education, training and science and technology: **Pathway to decent work for women.**" Various events took place throughout the month to mark the economic, political and social achievements of women.

India's national carrier, Air India marked the Int'l Women's Day by operating more than ten flights with an all-women crew.

A new agency **UN Women** has come up to propagate and to bring women at par with men. **UN Women** brings together four UN Agencies. They are :

- The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW);
- The Int'l Research and Training Institute for Advancement of Women (INSTRAW);
- The Office of Special Adviser on Gender Issues & Advancement of Women (OSAGI), and
- United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

On the 100th anniversary of IWD, the UN WOMEN launched a new regional programme to address the needs of widows in India and other neighboring countries.

### **India's Right to Education**

UNESCO, in its report entitled "Education for All Global Minority" ranks India with another 28 countries which will not be able to achieve universal primary education by 2015 despite government's efforts to launch Education for All. The main drawback is the non-availability of trained teachers, school buildings and facilities for effective training like desks, black boards, etc.

## Hard Facts

Forty-six per cent of Indians are malnourished, admits the Central Health Ministry, making the country even worse than the sub-Saharan Africa, where malnourishment teeters around 35 per cent.

29 per cent of India's children are anaemic, and two million die before the age of five thanks to malnourishment and thereby low resistance to infection.

The United Nations Millennium Development Goal seeks to eliminate malnourishment by 2015 given the direction the country is moving in, but the dream is unlikely to be achieved. One thing is sure, though, when it comes to nourishment, nightmares come in many different forms.

India is the world's largest country of illiterates, school drop-outs, of high child and maternal mortality rates, and malnutrition.

## ILO's TREE Programme

ILO founded in 1919 has now launched a Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) programme which ensures a platform that assists those working in largely informal economies to build the skills and abilities needed to generate additional income. By linking training directly to community determined economic opportunities, TREE programmes ensures that skills delivered are relevant. In communities where formal training institutions do not exist, for example in remote rural areas, arrangements are made to bring in teachers and equipment to deliver local training.

## Animal-assisted Therapy

Animal-assisted therapy is becoming increasingly popular, especially for those who are living alone, away from their children. One enjoys being around pet animals, the body produces endorphins that encourage antibody production, which in turn, speeds up healing. It improves concentration, develops communication and social skills in maladjusted individuals.

An NGO in Bangalore is propagating pet therapy. A school for children with mild depression and learning disabilities rely on animal assisted therapy. This is indeed very encouraging.

A Michigan State University, in a study reports that dog owners are more likely to attain the recommended fitness levels than people without a pet.

## Additions/Alterations to the Address List 2011

### Corrections

- 61 Chaudhry Sheila Rani shifted. New address not known
- 100 Gupta D.P. shifted. New address not known
- 119 Jagasia N.K.  
Tel. : 29225756, Mob. : 9811712399
- 226 Pinto Mr. G.J. Delete
- 311 Srivastava A.B.L. Change Tel. 4324561

### Spouses List

- 33 Ranotra Sandura shifted. New address not known

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

During the next three months the following members will be celebrating their happy birthdays. Three cheers to all!

(Figures denote the date during the month)

### April

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 M.P. Singh      | 15 R. V. Narasimhan |
| 1 Sahib Singh     | 15 I.J. Saluja      |
| 1 R.P. Aggarwal   | 15 Rekha Kochar     |
| 5 A.S. Chatwal    | 18 V.K. Hemrajani   |
| 7 M.L. Dewan      | 18 Kamala Rana      |
| 8 G. Hariharan    | 18 V.J. Bhatnagar   |
| 9 A.S. Rana       | 22 S.S. Raman       |
| 10 N. Raman       | 23 P.J. Nair        |
| 11 A.N. Sachdeva  | 23 Mrs. V. Peris    |
| 13 K.P.S. Bali    | 25 B.N. Agrawal     |
| 15 Manmohan Singh | 25 R.C. Dore        |

### June

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 15 S.K. Malhotra     | 1 Ms. I Ahluwalia   |
| 15 K.K. Bajaj        | 1 Muthu Subramanian |
| 17 K.G. Ramachandran | 3 J.P. Aggarwal     |
| 18 J.K. Batra        | 3 S.K. Bhalla       |
| 20 V. Guru Murthy    | 6 Vasantha          |
| 20 Gian Mohindra     | Krishnaswamy        |
| 21 J.S. Brar         | 7 L.S. Rawat        |
| 21 K. Raghavan       | 8 S.K. Seth         |
| 25 S.C. Rishi        | 9 R. Rajagopalan    |
| 25 Rajpal            | 9 Surinder Kalia    |
| 25 R. Sankaran       | 11 K.C. Katyal      |
| 26 K. Jagadeesan     | 15 Karam Chand      |
|                      | 15 R.K. Katyal      |
|                      | 15 S.B. Singh       |
|                      | 16 Vinod Gupta      |
|                      | 19 S.K. Marwah      |
|                      | 20 S. Ramamurty     |
|                      | 21 R.C. Sharma      |
|                      | 25 R.K. Jaiswar     |
|                      | 27 B.K. Mahajan     |
|                      | 30 K.K. Khosla      |

### May

- 1 Rambhaji Madan
- 4 Hans Raj
- 4 C.C. Chandhi
- 8 R.C. Ghei
- 12 B.V. Rangan
- 14 S.S. Rajan

## FOR THOSE YOUNG AT HEART!

**Reader's Digest Reports :** We are lucky to have smart children/grand children

Good that our children/grand children are enjoying the benefits of the latest advances in technology that we during the 1930s or 1940s didn't even dream of.

Taking advantage of these modern inventions and advances our children/grand children's IQ is far better than what we claimed in those days. According to a survey adult IQ scores have been rising by three points each decade. People are apparently getting smarter.

Scientists call it the FLYNN EFFECT. We are told that an adult born in the 1930s with an average IQ, i.e. 100 may well have children with IQs of 109, and grand children with IQs OF 118. In other words, today's typical 21-year old with an IQ of 100 would have grand parents whose IQ would be around 80. Surely, the children of today are far brighter than their parents, thanks to better use of logic and hypothesis.

A baby born today isn't any different from those born several decades back. The difference is because of changed environment and modern day inventions and facilities that present-day borns are enjoying like Video games, internet role-playing and television shows. Considered bad by some of us (oldies) but, experts believe, as a result, children are increasingly becoming more intellectually demanding, like making snap decisions in a video game or following the complex multilayered plots of a crime show on TV.

**You Become Great by Doing Small Things in a Great Way – Anonymous.**

Many people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be. - Abraham Lincoln, former US President. Elaborating this, a colleague suggests:

The happiest people in the world are not always those who have the best of everything. They are those who make the most of everything that comes their way and find contentment in what they have.

Everytime you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing. – Mother Teresa

## Music

The soothing effect of soft music on the senses has been well-researched. Music therapists use different kinds of music to heal and provide relief. Music alters brain waves and trains the mind to function differently under various circumstances. Sharper beats improve concentration while slower beats calm the mind.

## Conscious Breathing

Experts claim that a person breathes 15 times a minute or about 20,000 times a day. We are advised to practice slow breathing consciously. If we can make it 12 or 10 times a minute we would feel the difference in our health.

Yes, it is important that if we breathe consciously then it has multiple health benefits. Conscious breathing improves immunity levels dramatically. Besides, it has a calming effect and purifies our mind and senses.

**What is conscious breathing?** This is how our yoga 'guru' **Rambhaj Madan** explains: First, let's relax our abdominal muscles. With this, the diaphragm moves down and allows air into the lungs. Then, expand the chest muscles, allowing the rib cage to move upwards. This step fills the middle part of the lungs with air. Now, let us move our collar bones upward and relax our shoulders to fill air in the upper part of the lungs. When we exhale, then we repeat and follow these steps downwards. Further, conscious breathing improves learning ability, mental clarity, intelligence, vitality and energy.

Likewise, there are benefits arising out of **conscious eating**. Experts tell us that we must stop whatever we are doing and devote full attention to eating. We are told that almost all health problems can be solved by eating consciously. Let's eat smaller portions and be conscious of our body.

## Rupee vs Dollar - Are we in for any surprise?

During the past few months the rupee has hovered around 44/45 per US dollar. Later, a currency strategist believes, the rupee might weaken to what it was some 2-3 years back, i.e. around 47-plus as the dollar is expected to rise globally. This may be our wishful thinking. Let's keep our fingers crossed!

### **Mark this recipe.**

Half a kilo of ghee (or butter) along with three kilos of milk and half a kilo of almonds prolongs youthful virility. It is recommended by a Haryanvi farmer, **94-year old, who is said to be the "oldest father in the world"**. He says you breed what you eat.

While you take your own decision about consuming ghee or butter but what we want to share here is the use of black pepper which some call as the **KING OF SPICES**. In medieval times, pepper corns were the measure of a man's wealth and status. The rich used to keep their pepper in locked chests, bringing it out for lavish banquets, using it to pay taxes, dowries and even bribes. Well, this is past. Now it is commonly used in our kitchen preparations. Black pepper is now used to treat stomach aches, digestive problems and fever.

A PTI report emanating from Aizawl on 20 February mentions that a Mizo man, belonging to a sect which permits polygamy has 39 wives and has fathered 94 children, and in turn has 33 grand children. They all live in one grand four stored house with 100 rooms and share a common kitchen.

### **Another Milestone - Grandpa at 29**

You just read about a Haryanvi farmer who became "the oldest father" at 94. Here is another story which is poles apart. The media has reported an English man at 29 is due to become a grandpa. Yes, at 29 he would be the youngest granddad in Britain.

Studying at the same school, a couple decided to marry. The boy was at 14 when he became a father. Now, at 29 he is due to create a record to become Britain's youngest grandfather. The man's daughter, 14 became pregnant by her 15-year old boy friend and is expected to give birth in August.

### **A-I Lovers Party**

A Chennai-based artist, a failure in his love life, has started an All-India Lovers' Party to help settle disputes between lovers and their opposing families. It is also planning to contest elections.

The party's electoral motive is not just about lovers. It has vowed to strive for an honest government that would eradicate poverty, violence against women and such like issues.

### **Laugh Aloud**

Early morning we see in our park several oldies doing ha-ha-ho-ho-hee. Said to be part of laughter yoga but they appear to be just fake laughter. Whatever, it is said that the body can't tell between real and pretend laughter. Therefore, unlike fake drugs, humour – spontaneous or spurious – has health benefits. And, if it restores health, sure it has wealth benefits too.

### **Retirement Age? Why age limit?**

In UK some employers retire their staff at 65. The average exit age from the labor market is 61 in Greece, 62 in Germany and 59.4 in France. And, Japan has no retirement age!

There is general belief that there is no need to force people out of employment if they were still fit to work. About two-thirds of employers in the UK no longer use fixed retirement age.

Some Governments across Europe have lifted retirement age (even beyond 65) as part of austerity packages to cut record budget deficits. UK employers are being barred from issuing compulsory notifications for retirement unless and until some disciplinary action against an employee is warranted.

It is acknowledged that older workers play an incredibly important role in the workplace. A mandatory retirement age is considered an outdated form.

### **Apple A Day ....**

We know that further on this will read: ... "keeps the doctor away"

Yes, consuming apples helps keep healthy, and, as far as possible, curtail our visiting the doctor.

The anti-oxidants in the apple juice keep away ageing. A recent study reveals that those who regularly ate apples were 20 per cent less likely to suffer heart attacks and strokes.

## **National Shrine**

One of the oldest churches in the country, the St. Thomas Mount Church in what was once Madras (now Chennai) has been accorded the status of National Shrine of India. It is a great honour, and the decision about this historic church was taken at the Bishops' meet in January last. The church has several paintings and ancient artefacts, including a rare picture of Mother Mary with Baby Jesus that dates back to the first century AD. The church compound houses a 160-year old Banyan tree which attracts tourists.

## **Giving Pledges**

Two American billionaires, well known for their philanthropy, were in India during March as part of a global road show at pursuing some of their counterparts in India to part with some of their wealth to philanthropy.

One of them Bill Gates, a well known figure in India since he has been here a number of times and has already contributed generously towards alleviating poverty in slum areas and provided ample funds for training of young boys and girls from the vulnerable areas for gainful employment. The other, Warren Buffett, who is the third richest man in the world is has come for the first time and was accompanied by Bill Gates.

They both have far reaching plans and have announced liberal funds towards rehabilitation of the homeless and for providing them training facilities.

Another well known American, David Rockefeller has been to India with family and has gone round the country during February. Ninety Six Years Old, David Rockefeller is the head of the biggest American business dynasty.

## **Centenarian Studying For PhD**

Age is no bar to learning. A 100-year old from Assam has signed up for a PhD at Gauhati University. He is India's oldest student, he was inspired by his son who earned his doctorate degree at age 55. Let's wish him well so that he completes his mission.

## **Hello! Grand Parents!**

How do you fare in the estimation of your grand children?

Extracted below are some thoughts that a gathering of small children shared with their colleagues.

- (i) Usually grand mothers are fat but not too fat to tie our shoes.
- (ii) Its funny when they bend over, you hear gas leaks and they blame our dog.
- (iii) They kiss us even when we have acted bad. Indeed, they are welcome!

## **Live Till 100**

A recent study by the Portland State University believes sleep is the major factor in rejuvenating the body and activating the immune system. The study recommends ten hours sleep for all octogenarians (80 and above). This should help them live till 100.

The role of diet in keeping the heart healthy has been documented even in the Bhagvad Gita which says : Eat only such foods in the quantity as are conducive to long life, providing energy, strength, good health and increase well being and pleasure – foods which are tasty, stamina-giving and above all which the heart approves of.

## **Elderlies**

The elderlies are increasing in number and are about to exceed one-fourth (25%) of the total population in India. Engineering students from colleges/institutions are working on some of the user-friendly products like special beds for those suffering from urinary incontinence, walking aids, communication devices, and multipurpose walker and alarm system to ensure security and safety of those living alone. Once these designs are studied/experimented and duly modified these would be mass produced to be cost effective.

## **Oldest Olds (Languishing in Rural Areas)**

India has an 80-plus population of more than 90 lakh, out of which over one fourth live in urban areas (Census 2001). Among those in rural areas, a majority of them are illiterates. This has a bearing on their economic activities. The worst part is that 57 per cent of the oldest olds are widows/widowers. Poverty and loneliness further add to their problems.

With increasing age, the needs of the elderly, especially health needs, often puts pressure on their source of finances. A well-known NGO Helpage has represented to the Government to provide free treatment for those senior citizens who don't pay any income tax.



Resident Coordinator  
India



It is heartening to see that the camaraderie of those who have worked at the United Nations continues well beyond retirement. The UN Pensioner's Association of India has taken tremendous initiative to look after retirees, and is certainly among the most pro-active associations in the world. Your thoughtfulness in preparing such booklets will be extremely useful to the UN retirees and their families. In true UN spirit, I see that you are carrying forward the values of the UN and continue to remain an integral part of the UN family.

I congratulate you on this initiative and wish you all the best in your interactions with the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund in resolving speedily frequently faced problems by UN Retirees in India.

Wish you all the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Coeur-Bizot'.

Patrice Coeur-Bizot  
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