

Inspire...

a total awareness magazine for the 40+

Vol. 3, S. No. 63, July - September 2026



Tarun Mishra

Redeeming the Destitute

The Art & Science of Longevity

**Safeguarding
Your Legacy**

**Reminiscing
the Sparrow**

INSPIRING ICON



**General Anil
Chauhan (Retd.)**

*Former Chief of Defence
Staff (CDS)*

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE



Bui Trung Thuong

*Counsellor and Head of the Trade
Office at the Embassy of the
Socialist Republic of Vietnam*

PERSONALITY



**Dr Vijay
Pandurang
Bhatkar**

*The father of Indian
supercomputing*



national level NGO

ENLIGHTENING MASSES ABOUT EXPERIENCES AND TEACHINGS OF VETERANS

The Eminent is a national-level, non-profit, charitable, and non-governmental organisation. It is passionately focused on unlocking, celebrating, and utilising the great potential embodied by elder veterans—the visionary architects and steadfast builders of our present world.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANISATION



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A non-commercial quarterly publication for intellectuals from diverse fields, including engineering, medicine, bureaucracy, social activism, media, the arts, culture, defence, policymaking, and law, in India and abroad, and for all those devoted to celebrating the wisdom, experience, and contributions of older adults.



Patron

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“Power fades, age arrives, truth remains

Show kindness and respect to the elderly
while you are still

young.

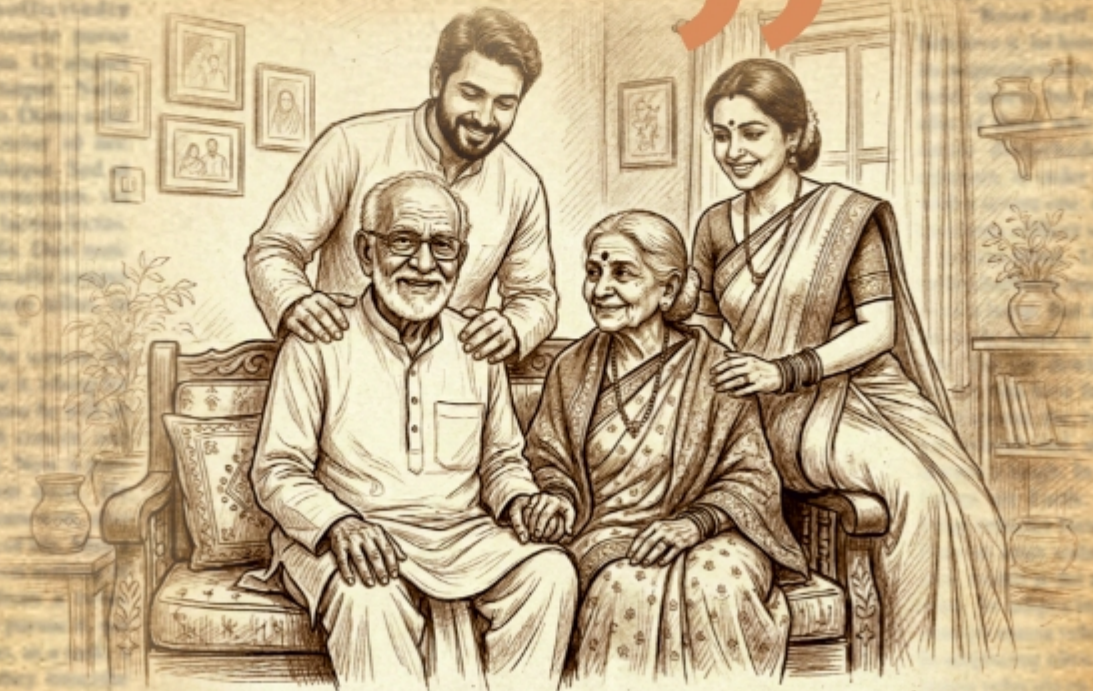
Use your strength to lift up and support
those who are

weak.

Be brave enough to admit your mistakes
whenever you are

wrong.

Live gently: one day, you'll be old, weak,
and wrong like all the rest.”





HIGH COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

Message from H.E. Jagannath Sami
Fiji High Commissioner
New Delhi



I was not surprised to receive a complimentary copy of Inspire Magazine with a pleasant note from Dr A.K. Agarwal, seeking support for the Magazine, a publication of The Eminent.

Indeed, the Fiji High Commission regularly receives complimentary magazines from a wide range of media houses in India. Most on Diplomacy and Trade.

However, this magazine is different. It acts as a bridge between the younger generation and the older generation. A rare publication gambling between financial survival and fulfilling its social responsibilities to the people of India. Hence the reason for support.

The contents of Inspire Magazine are also well thought out and balanced to attract the interest of readers of all works of life. It inspires the readers to practise spirituality in life, success stories to give confidence, and counselling senior citizens with timely advice on health, finance management and digital technology while creating awareness of green environment, free of fear and dancing with joy. It ends with inspiring thoughts from Aristotle and Swami Vivekananda.

The Eminent truly Inspired me.

Jagannath Sami
High Commissioner

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भारतीय संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ संघ Indian Federation of United Nations Associations (IFUNA) (Special Consultative Status with the ECOSOC of the United Nations) (Affiliated to the World Federation of United Nations Associations, Geneva)



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People and PM

MESSAGE

It is with great pleasure that I extend my sincere appreciation for the April-June 2026 edition of Inspire. On behalf of the Indian Federation of United Nations Associations (IFUNA), I commend your continued commitment to promoting awareness, dignity, and respect for senior citizens through this outstanding publication.

The cover story, "Digital Lifeline for Seniors," is both timely and significant. By highlighting how technology can improve the quality of life for older persons while emphasizing compassion and human connection, the magazine reflects values that closely align with the United Nations' vision of inclusive and sustainable development.

Equally inspiring are the features on spirituality, healthy ageing, financial planning, and community service. The reflections of Acharya Sudhartha Ji Maharaj, together with practical guidance on healthcare and financial security, offer readers a balanced perspective that nurtures both personal well-being and social responsibility. Human-interest stories and international perspectives further enrich the publication and demonstrate its broad social relevance.

I also appreciate the magazine's commitment to continuous improvement through reader feedback and its focus on accessibility and innovation. Such efforts strengthen Inspire as a meaningful platform for dialogue, learning, and intergenerational understanding.

IFUNA applauds The Eminent for creating a publication that celebrates the wisdom and contributions of senior citizens while encouraging society to build a culture of compassion, respect, and inclusion. Your dedication to this noble mission deserves the highest recognition.

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for the continued success of Inspire. I am confident that the magazine will continue to inspire readers and make a valuable contribution to society.

With sincere regards,

Sh. Suresh Srivastava
Secretary General

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H.E. Jagannath Sami
Fiji High Commissioner,
New Delhi

From the
Pen of
Eminent
Personalities



Lt Gen K T Parnaik
PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd.)
Governor
Arunachal Pradesh



Lok Bhavan
ITANAGAR-791111



MESSAGE

It gives me immense pleasure to read this quarterly published magazine, 'Inspire', a meaningful and enlightening awareness magazine dedicated to adults aged 40 and above. In an era of rapid social and technological change, such publications play a vital role in empowering individuals with knowledge, encouraging healthy lifestyles, and fostering a culture of lifelong learning.

'Inspire' serves as a valuable companion for its readers, helping them navigate the physical, emotional, social, and financial dimensions of life with confidence, wisdom, and optimism. By addressing issues relevant to this important phase of life, the magazine contributes significantly to building a more informed, active, and resilient society.

While the magazine offers a rich collection of thought-provoking and inspiring articles, the inclusion of a regular section on Yoga and holistic wellness would further enhance its impact. Yoga, an invaluable gift of India to the world, is a proven path to physical fitness, mental well-being, stress management, and healthy ageing. Practical guidance on simple yogic practices, breathing techniques, meditation, and healthy lifestyle habits would greatly benefit readers and support their journey towards a healthier, happier, and more fulfilling life.

I congratulate the entire editorial team of 'Inspire' for this commendable initiative and convey my best wishes for its continued success in inspiring, educating, and enriching the lives of its readers.

Lt Gen K T Parnaik,
PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd.)

H.E. Lt Gen KT Parnaik
PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd.)
Governor, Arunachal Pradesh

Sh. Suresh Srivastava
Secretary General,
Vice Chairman - WFUNA
Geneva & New York

READERS' COLUMN

Your feedback helps us grow! Whether it's a suggestion for our layout or a topic you'd like us to explore, we value the voice of our community.
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Postal Address: Inspire, 912, 9th Floor, Devika Tower, 6, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110 019

I found the article "Learn to Let Go..." published in Inspire's April-June 2026 issue extremely relevant to contemporary family life. As parents grow older, many continue to expect the same level of closeness, involvement and emotional dependence that existed when their children were younger. However, the realities of modern life often leave children occupied with demanding careers, personal responsibilities and the needs of their own families. The article addressed this delicate transition with remarkable balance, sensitivity and maturity. I particularly appreciated the thought that genuine love sometimes means allowing space, respecting independence and accepting change rather than holding on too tightly. Thought-provoking articles like these encourage readers to pause, reflect and reassess their own relationships and expectations.

- **Puran Singh, Greater Noida**

I have been a regular reader of your magazine and sincerely appreciate the manner in which it addresses health, wellness and lifestyle issues concerning senior citizens. The language is simple, engaging and easy to understand, making the magazine accessible to readers from diverse backgrounds. Online banking services, digital payment platforms and mobile applications offer



convenience, but they have also exposed older people to various forms of cyber fraud, financial scams and identity theft. A series of articles featuring practical advice from financial experts on safe banking practices, pension management, investment planning and fraud prevention would be immensely beneficial.

- **Haresh Pachichigar, Baroda**

In the backdrop of the ongoing tensions arising from the US-Iran conflict, the views expressed by Acharya Sudhanshu Ji Maharaj on "Sanatan Values for Global Harmony" deserve serious consideration by the

international community. The timeless principles of Sanatan Dharma advocate peace, coexistence, compassion and mutual respect among nations and peoples. The ancient Indian ideal of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"—the world is one family—offers a meaningful framework for resolving conflicts through understanding and cooperation. Unfortunately, these values often fail to find practical expression at the global level because powerful nations tend to prioritise strategic and geopolitical interests over dialogue and harmony.

- **Shriram Joshi, New Delhi**



from the:
Patron

I am happy to present the latest edition of Inspire magazine—focusing on themes that enrich the lives of our vibrant senior community.

The Cover Story of this issue explores the profound secrets to living a long, healthy, and fulfilling life. Featuring insightful perspectives from inspirational individuals with impressively long lives and excerpts from Dr Hideki Wada's acclaimed work, "The 80-Year-Old Wall", the story provides real-life inspiration on how to maintain a high quality of life, vitality, and emotional well-being throughout the "Golden Years".

True independence and dignity are built upon a foundation of holistic wellness. To support you in navigating your health with confidence, the magazine's healthcare sections offer specialised guidance from trusted medical experts. Complementing these clinical insights, the Yoga feature introduces gentle, accessible exercises tailored specifically for elderly wellness, flexibility, and inner peace.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our readers for your unwavering trust and encouragement. May this edition inspire you to embrace life with renewed purpose and perseverance.

Dr. AK Agarwal

NEW INCOME TAX RULES

APPROVED

April 1, 2026 - The formal transition to the updated tax compliance rules took effect, deploying the centralised, single-window online portal via NSDL/CDSL for filing Form 15H. This eliminates the need for senior citizens to submit individual physical or digital declarations across different banks to stop automated TDS on fixed deposits.

April 9, 2026 - The Reserve Bank of India released a major discussion paper "Exploring Safeguards in Digital Payments to Curb Frauds", proposing a "Trusted Person" secondary authentication system to safeguard senior citizens aged 70 and above against digital payment fraud.

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक
RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

HEALTH
OF INDIA
SUMMIT
2026
#HOIA26

Building a
Healthier India
with
AI

Throughout May 2026, major national events like HEALTHCON 2026 and the Healthcare Summit 2026 focused on how predictive AI analytics and smart wearable monitoring can shift geriatric medicine from reactive crisis management to proactive, home-based health tracking, effectively allowing senior citizens to manage chronic conditions and age safely in place.

NEWS

CORNER

Global & India
April – June 2026

May 22, 2026 - The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment successfully hosted a national workshop, on "Creating a Well-Functioning Care Economy," chaired by Union Minister Dr Virendra Kumar, where they launched the JEEVAN mobile app (Joint Elderly Empowerment & Virtual Assistance Network), featuring high-contrast, simplified layouts for senior user assistance and the SHATAYU dashboard designed to map verified district-wise geriatric caregiver metrics.



— WORLD —
Elder Abuse
AWARENESS DAY
— JUNE 15 —

June 15, 2026 - World Elder Abuse Awareness Day witnessed campaigns across the country promoting dignity, protection, and legal awareness for senior citizens.



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
yoga
Yoga for Harmony & Peace

June 21, 2026 - International Day of Yoga was celebrated across India and several countries on, with large-scale, special yoga and wellness programmes organised for senior citizens in parks, community centres, and wellness institutions, focusing on holistic wellness, preventive healthcare and healthy ageing.



INSPIRING ICON

“India Cannot Afford to Miss the Peak”

An exclusive conversation with former Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Anil Chauhan (Retd), on rebuilding national character, bridging the academia-defence divide, and navigating an era of global disruption and uncertainty.

As India marches towards the centenary of its independence in 2047, its geopolitical landscape is defined by unprecedented volatility, rapid technological shifts, and a neighbourhood in perpetual flux. Navigating this era of great disruption requires not just military muscle, but a profound realignment of national character, educational infrastructure, and strategic vision.

These insights emerge from a wide-ranging, lengthy interaction between **General Anil Chauhan (Retd)** and Inspire magazine's

patron **Dr A K Agarwal**. The former Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) who served as Director General of Military Operations during the 2019 Balakot air strikes and successfully oversaw Operation Sindoor (May 2025) as the first major tri-service combat operation under his leadership, reflects on the disruption and distractions in our environment, the critical need for “cross-fertilisation” between civilian academia and defence establishments, and the structural socio-economic disparities threatening democratic stability globally.

Drawing from his own childhood in Naxal-era Calcutta and his deep admiration for Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Gen Chauhan outlines a masterclass in leadership, longevity, and why the youth must cultivate a permanent mindset of innovation to stay ahead of the curve. Excerpts...

How did your own childhood and the environment you grew up in shape your path toward the uniform?

My upbringing was foundational. My father was a Class-1 gazetted officer—a very disciplined, serious, and simple man who

originally wanted me to become an engineer. My mother was the lively, adventurous one who balanced his seriousness.

The defining phase of my life occurred between 1968 and 1971 when my father was posted to Calcutta (Now Kolkata). It was an incredibly volatile and insecure period because the Naxalite movement was at its absolute zenith. Yet, amidst that civic turmoil, I attended a Kendriya Vidyalaya (then known as Central School) located near Fort William. Every single day, as I commuted from the civil area to school, I would pass through the fort gates and see the smartly turned-out Gurkha soldiers standing duty in their crisp uniforms. Seeing their immaculate discipline, experiencing the 1971 war firsthand as a young student, and witnessing the post-war celebration of our national heroes deeply galvanised me. Coming from a remote, resilient region like Garhwal, those combined experiences made a career in the Armed Forces my ultimate, inevitable calling.

In today's hyper-connected era, why do we observe a visible decline in patriotism?

The root cause is a culture of constant distraction. Earlier, life was simpler, television and radio were strictly limited, and the bulk of an individual's time was devoted to family interactions. People met, conversed, and bonded closely without digital distractions.

Today, the relentless onslaught of social media, multimedia platforms, and short-form digital content captures our attention 24/7. This has shifted human focus heavily inward—toward self-absorbed well-being, individualised gratification, and a transactional sense of loyalty, rather than a collective responsibility toward the nation.



Interaction between Gen Anil Chauhan (Retd), the former Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), and Inspire magazine's patron Dr A K Agarwal

When personal indulgence overrides collective consciousness, fundamental civic respect erodes. This trend cuts horizontally across all layers of society, from politicians and media outlets to law enforcers, civilians, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and students.

To counteract this, we must bring the right role models into our schools and universities to foster character and genuine nationalism. Everyone internally knows what is morally correct and what their duty is toward the nation, yet many fail to act because of a lack of self-discipline or an internal moral weakness.

How can civil society enforce a stronger internal moral compass to combat these ethical vulnerabilities?

We can look at how the Armed Forces operate under statutory frameworks like the Army, Navy, and Air Force Acts. If an individual in uniform acts improperly, the system does not wait out years of standard bureaucratic or judicial delays. The legal framework allows for immediate accountability—a swift, time-bound investigation

followed by a summary judgment or a court-martial. This swiftness creates a powerful baseline for discipline and immediate deterrence.

In civil society, however, you cannot rely entirely on external enforcement; it ultimately boils down to a personal "self-check" and self-awareness. In a highly competitive, conflict-ridden, and distraction-heavy world, individuals must consciously cultivate a higher spiritual consciousness to keep their moral compass anchored.

If we look at countries like Switzerland, Finland, Sweden, or Norway, they are often celebrated as stable models that maintain a strong framework of civilian volunteers alongside their professional defence forces. Should India train and motivate civilian volunteers in addition to professional forces?

Of course, integrating civilian volunteers is a highly valuable asset, and organisations like the National Cadet Corps (NCC) are absolutely vital for moulding our youth into disciplined citizens who understand the gravity of national defence.

However, Nordic and Alpine nations exist in entirely different



The former President Ram Nath Kovind presenting the Param Vishisht Seva Medal to Lt. General Anil Chauhan (Retd.) at the Defence Investiture Ceremony in New Delhi, November 2021.

geopolitical frameworks than ours. We live in a state of permanent flux, structural uncertainty, and regional turmoil. We share a highly hostile neighbourhood and inherit a painful history of partition that fundamentally led to deep-seated radicalisation in the society across our border.

To handle our unique internal and external challenges effectively, we have to be exceptionally strong across all dimensions—not just in terms of economic wealth, human talent, and human resources, but we must commensurately strengthen our hard military defence capabilities.

Historically, India maintained an insular outlook, but that was primarily a byproduct of our protective geography and a self-contained, prosperous culture. Because our people were content and happy within our borders, we never harboured expansionist ambitions. Yet, history teaches us a brutal lesson: defensive insularity left us vulnerable, allowing outside forces to repeatedly cross our frontiers and invade us.

Now, as a 77-year-old independent state focusing sharply on Vision 2047, we must build an aggressively resilient, strong nation. This demands a well-trained, highly disciplined, and technologically advanced armed force. If we look back at the lessons of history, it was

ultimately breakthrough technology—whether it was the introduction of gunpowder or superior warships—that completely altered military outcomes and decided the fates of empires. We must ensure India stays ahead of that technological curve.

What role does internal economic stability play in maintaining a strong democracy?

Internal security and external defence are two sides of the same coin. The path to societal radicalisation and instability in places like Pakistan stems directly from deep structural and socio-economic failures.

If you look at Europe prior to its Industrial Revolution, fundamental land reforms ensured a more equitable distribution of wealth and land. This created a genuine baseline of liberty, equality, and fraternity, which eventually evolved into the modern social welfare state. In such systems, every citizen feels they have a tangible stake in the nation's progress.

When a country lacks these foundational reforms, it devolves into a feudal state dominated by monopolies. This is exactly what happened in Pakistan, where the absence of land reforms stripped ordinary citizens of their stake in governance, allowing “snakes in the backyard” to multiply. Economic disparity creates internal strife. We have seen democratic breakdowns and widespread public unhappiness in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka due to these imbalances.

Even in advanced Western democracies, the rapid rise of tech monopolies, AI innovations,

and trillion-dollar wealth concentrations in the hands of a few individuals is creating massive disparities that threaten internal cohesion. Fortunately, India's hardworking populace and targeted social governance keep us resilient, but the citizens must continuously push for equal participation in economic progress.

How do we bridge the sharp disconnect between civilian academic institutions and practical defence planning in India?

There is a distinct gap between the academic world and practical defence management. India has roughly 1,400 universities, but only about 30 per cent to 40 per cent feature dedicated departments for Defence, Strategic Studies, or International Relations across undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Even where these departments exist, the curriculum is overwhelmingly theoretical.

Conversely, we have elite, practical training institutions like the Army War College, Naval War College, National Defence College (NDC), and various defence think tanks. We desperately need systematic cross-pollination between these two parallel universes.

What concrete steps are required to achieve this integration?

I recommend a multi-pronged institutional approach:

We must bring seasoned military veterans and strategic experts into civilian universities as visiting faculty to deliver practical, real-world lectures.

Technical universities and regular colleges must align their curricula with national security realities, advanced electronics, and defence manufacturing requirements.

Engineering students should undergo mandatory midterm internships within the defence industry, academic think tanks, or DRDO laboratories to promote continuous technological improvement.

To push this agenda, I am currently planning to establish two distinct think tanks. One will focus on defence engineering and manufacturing synergies, and the other will be the Himalayan Centre for Strategic Studies, dedicated to analysing regional dynamics with neighbours like Nepal and Bhutan.

Which world leader has influenced you the most?

From a strategic and military standpoint, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is arguably the only true scholar-warrior political-military leader modern India has produced. He was an incredible amalgamation of multiple brilliant personalities rolled into one: a stellar academician, a highly successful diplomat, a master negotiator, a sharp administrator, a former Congress President, and an audacious military commander. Consider the sheer, unmatched adventure of his life—escaping colonial surveillance, traversing the treacherous waters of the Cape of Good Hope and Madagascar in German and Japanese submarines, meeting Adolf Hitler, arriving in Singapore, and taking a defeated, surrendered group of British Indian Prisoners of War (POWs) and entirely re-motivating them into the highly disciplined Indian National Army (INA). His leadership, grit, and the unifying battle cry of “Jai Hind” completely re-engineered the psychology of India's freedom struggle. For every Indian, Netaji remains an enduring, towering blueprint of leadership.

You maintain a highly calm,

smiling, and approachable demeanour. How do you drive organisational efficiency without letting pressure get to you?

Being calm and cheerful must never be misconstrued as a lack of operational intensity or standard. Throughout my entire career, I have very seldom raised my voice. Expressing outward tension or anger simply does not work when you want to achieve high-level, complex strategic results.

My mechanism for handling pressure is rooted in deep focus. For me, meditation is not mystical; it is simply intense concentration on the mission at hand. Every morning, I spend dedicated, quiet time mapping out national security challenges, institutional objectives, and administrative tasks.

My teams always knew that I worked exceptionally hard, which naturally inspired them to elevate their own delivery. While I choose to remain calm and accessible on the surface, I maintain an unyielding internal standard of discipline. If an individual fails to perform, I do not create a public scene; I choose the right, strategic moment to accomplish his work to ensure accountability effectively. Maintaining institutional connectivity and a positive command climate is directly proportional to unlocking genuine, breakthrough creativity.

What is the blueprint for leading a purposeful life and staying mentally and physically fit for the older adults?

The elderly must consistently exercise both their body and mind. Personally, I maintain a strict routine: I wake up every day at 4:45 AM and am at my desk or active by 5:00 or 6:00 AM.

Beyond physical conditioning,

social interaction is the ultimate workout for the mind. You must regularly step outside your narrow operational field, travel, and interact with people from highly diverse disciplines. Even if you are a doctor, you should actively converse with engineers, academics, and policymakers. Throughout my career, I made it a point to break out of service-specific silos by constantly interacting with foreign ambassadors, High Commissioners, IIT researchers, and university students. Broadening your intellectual horizon keeps your mind agile and prevents cognitive stagnation.

What is your message to the youth of India?

Our youth must realise that we are living in an era of unprecedented disruption and geopolitical uncertainty. However, disruption is a double-edged sword—it is also a time of massive opportunity.

Technology, livelihoods, and global power equations are changing at a blistering pace. The youth must cultivate a permanent mindset of innovation to stay ahead of the curve. True national growth occurs when your personal ambitions and organisational goals align perfectly with the national direction. Look at the history of the United States and Japan—their explosive eras of wealth and technological creation occurred because their citizens worked tirelessly to create value inside their own countries. Go abroad to gather cutting-edge knowledge if you must, but bring that intellectual capital back home. Today, India is in an exceptionally auspicious demographic window with a strong economy and an immense youth base; we cannot afford to miss the peak now. ●



DOCTOR'S PAGE

Preserving Mind and Movement

Neurological disorders such as dementia, Parkinson's disease, and essential tremor adversely impact memory and independence of the elderly.

By Dr Khursheed Kazmi

Growing older brings wisdom and experience, but aging can also affect the brain and nervous system. Many older adults remain active and healthy for years, while others may develop neurological diseases that affect memory, movement, balance, or daily functioning.

Some of the most common neurological disorders seen in older adults are dementia, Parkinson's disease, essential tremor, stroke, and nerve-related problems. Early diagnosis and treatment can greatly improve the quality of life and help

elderly people remain independent for longer.

Dementia: More Than Just Forgetfulness

Dementia is one of the most common neurological illnesses in old age. It is not a single disease but a condition in which memory, thinking, judgment, and daily functioning gradually decline. Many people believe memory loss is a normal part of aging. Mild forgetfulness may occur with age, but dementia causes significant difficulty in daily life.

Common Symptoms

These include forgetting recent conversations or events,

repeating the same questions, frequently misplacing belongings, difficulty recognising familiar people or places, confusion about time or location, and changes in personality and behaviour.

The most common cause of dementia is Alzheimer's disease. Other causes include vascular dementia due to strokes and Parkinson-related dementia.

Effect on Family Life

Dementia affects not only the patient but also family members and caregivers. Patients may gradually need help with dressing, eating, taking medicines, or handling finances.

Treatment and Care

Although dementia may not always be curable, early treatment can slow its progression and improve the quality of life. Helpful measures include regular medical evaluations, memory-enhancing medicines, good control of blood pressure and diabetes, mental activities such as reading and solving puzzles, physical exercise, social interaction, and emotional support.

Family members should speak calmly, maintain a routine, and avoid arguing with the patient.

Parkinson's Disease: When Movement Becomes Slow

Parkinson's disease is a progressive disorder affecting movement. It occurs due to reduced dopamine production in certain parts of the brain.

The disease usually appears after the age of 60.

Common Symptoms

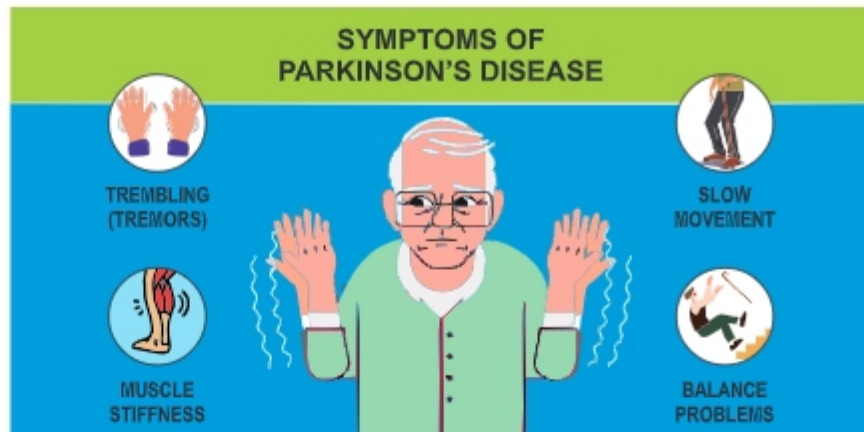
These include tremors or shaking of the hands at rest, slowness in walking and daily activities, stiffness of the arms and legs, and poor balance with frequent falls. Other symptoms may include a soft voice, small handwriting, reduced facial expressions, constipation, sleep disturbances, and depression.

Simple daily activities such as buttoning clothes, writing, or getting up from a chair may become difficult over time.

Treatment

Although Parkinson's disease cannot be completely cured, medicines can control symptoms effectively for many years. Treatment may include dopamine-related medicines, physiotherapy and exercise, speech therapy, balance training, and advanced therapies for selected patients.

Regular exercise, walking, yoga, and physiotherapy are extremely



important for maintaining mobility and confidence.

Essential Tremor: A Common Yet Ignored Condition

Essential tremor is one of the most common movement disorders in elderly people.

It causes shaking mainly during activity rather than at rest.

Common Problems

Patients may notice tremors while holding a cup, writing, eating food, using a spoon, or buttoning clothes. The hands are most commonly affected, although the head and voice may also tremble.

Unlike Parkinson's disease,

essential tremor usually becomes noticeable during action.

Impact on Daily Life

Although not life-threatening, essential tremor can affect confidence and social interactions. Many elderly people feel embarrassed while eating or writing in public.

Treatment

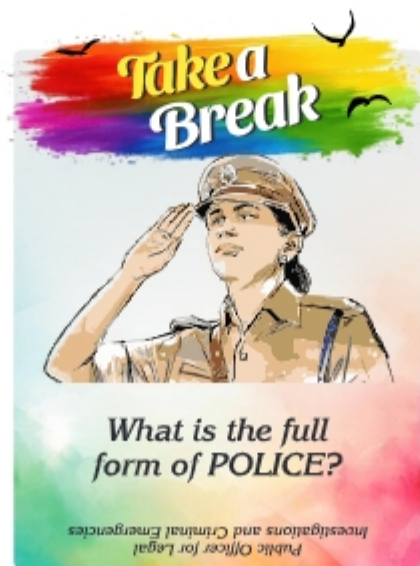
Treatment depends on the severity of symptoms and may include medicines, stress reduction, avoidance of excessive caffeine intake, occupational therapy, and advanced procedures in severe cases.

Many patients improve significantly with proper treatment.

Bottom Line

Early diagnosis, timely treatment, and compassionate care can help elderly individuals maintain dignity, autonomy, and quality of life despite neurological diseases. Mental stimulation and social engagement are also helpful in slowing the progression of the condition. Fortunately, a combination of medication, physiotherapy, exercise, and supportive care can help many patients remain active and functional for years. ●

(The author is a senior neurophysician with MBBS, MD, and DNB qualifications)





INSPIRING TALE

The Forgotten Hero of Kakori

Somewhere, in the long-forgotten silence of Shahjahanpur's dusty fields and the cold corridors of Naini Jail, the quiet flame of Thakur Roshan Singh still refuses to die.

On the freezing morning of 19 December 1927, the winter fog hung low over Naini Jail. Boots echoed in long stone corridors. Inside a narrow prison cell sat a man wrapped in silence. Thakur Roshan Singh. Prison officials arrived outside his cell. The time had come. Roshan Singh rose quietly as if preparing for prayer rather than death. No trembling hands. No restless pacing. No anger against fate. A dim lantern flickered beside him. On the rough prison wall, shadows rose and fell like ghosts of a nation still chained. Some accounts say he touched the walls of his cell gently before stepping out, as if bidding farewell not to prison, but to life itself. He carried the Bhagavad Gita in his hands as he walked through the corridor towards the

execution chamber.

The guards watching him sensed something unsettling — the Empire possessed rifles, prisons and judges, yet this unarmed man showed no trace of hesitation or fear. He seemed infinitely freer than his captors.

"Do you wish to meet anyone?" a guard asked softly.

Roshan Singh smiled.

"The whole nation will meet me one day," he replied.

As he approached the gallows, Roshan Singh raised the cry:

"Vande Mataram!"

The sound thundered through the prison walls.

Moments later, the lever was pulled.

A life ended. A legend began. The body died. The idea survived.

Outside Naini Jail, crowds gathered to receive the mortal remains of the martyr. Cries of "Roshan Singh Amar Rahe!" echoed through Allahabad. Mothers lifted their children to glimpse the martyr whose death had become a challenge to an empire.

Roshan Singh was born on 22 January 1892 in the village of Nabada in Shahjahanpur district of Uttar Pradesh, into a farming Thakur family. His childhood was not shaped by privilege, but by the harsh realities of colonial rule. British revenue officials often humiliated poor peasants during tax collection drives, and those memories stayed with the young boy like wounds that never healed.

At sixteen, when news of the 1907 unrest in Punjab spread

across northern India, Roshan Singh began questioning the moral authority of British rule. Unlike the polished leaders emerging from cities, Roshan Singh's philosophy was simple and earthy:

"Azadi bheekh mein nahi milti, lad kar leni padti hai."

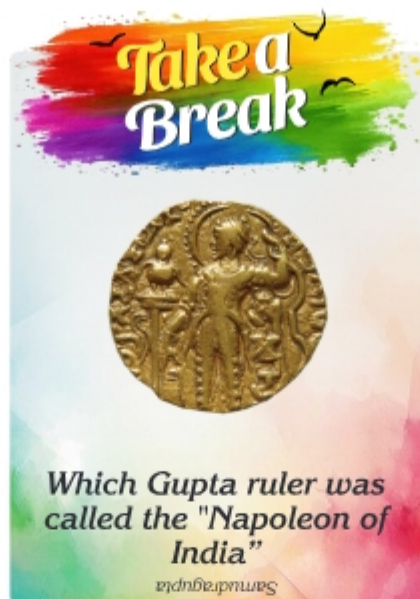
Freedom is not begged for. It is seized.

As a young man, he became associated with the Arya Samaj movement. The organisation gave him discipline, purpose, and contact with nationalist circles that were quietly spreading revolutionary ideas beneath the surface of ordinary society.

Then came 1919 when the Jallianwala Bagh massacre shattered whatever little faith remained in constitutional appeals and petitions. When unarmed Indians were gunned down in Amritsar, Roshan Singh concluded that the British Empire understood only one language — force.

The farmer's son from Shahjahanpur slowly transformed into a revolutionary. He possessed remarkable physical courage, and believed that if a person possesses strength, influence or power but remains silent before injustice, then silence itself becomes a crime. During the Non-Cooperation Movement, he became actively involved in nationalist activities and was imprisoned in the Bareilly shooting case.

By 1924, he joined the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) — the secret revolutionary organisation led by Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, Chandrashekhar Azad and others. Among the young revolutionaries, Roshan Singh occupied a unique place. He was older and quieter than many of them. The younger revolutionaries called him



"Chacha".

His house in Shahjahanpur became a shelter for fugitives, secret meetings, hidden weapons and whispered plans for freedom. He arranged funds, safehouses and arms for the movement.

Ram Prasad Bismil later described him as the backbone of the HRA.

Then history changed course on a railway track near Kakori. On 9 August 1925, revolutionaries stopped a train near Lucknow, carrying British government treasury money and seized the cash to fund the freedom struggle. The Kakori train action shook the British Empire. The colonial government responded with mass arrests.

Ironically, Roshan Singh had not directly participated in the Kakori train robbery itself. But the British wanted examples. They linked him to the larger conspiracy through revolutionary documents and through his role in earlier armed actions such as the Bamrauli Dacoity conducted in 1924 to arrange funds for revolutionary activities.

History would remember the Kakori martyrs as young men who transformed revolution into sacrifice. But among them, Thakur Roshan Singh remained uniquely tragic — a quiet, steadfast revolutionary who accepted death with astonishing serenity despite not being a central participant in the Kakori train robbery itself.

He stood tall before the colonial judges and reportedly declared: "If planning freedom is crime, I am its greatest criminal."

The courtroom fell silent. The British prosecutors demanded death.

And finally, the sentence arrived. Death for Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, Rajendra Lahiri, and Thakur Roshan Singh.

In prison, Roshan Singh grew strangely peaceful. He wrote letters filled not with bitterness, but acceptance. His final letter to his son carried neither despair nor fear.

"Don't cry that your father died. Be proud that he died for Bharat Mata."

Those who met him during his last days were astonished by his serenity. According to historical accounts, he believed death for the motherland was not a tragedy, but fulfilment. His philosophy was simple: Duty and Sacrifice without expectation, fame, reward or recognition.

Yet history moved strangely afterwards. Some names became immortal in textbooks. Others like Roshan Singh slowly faded into the margins, unsung. Yet his life carries infinite inspiration that still burns fiercely beneath the ashes of history. His greatest memorial lies elsewhere — in that final walk towards the gallows, when an ordinary man showed extraordinary courage before the mightiest empire of his age. ●

The image is striking in its simplicity. A lone figure stands before a staircase leading to an open door bathed in light. Each step bears a single word: Courage, Focus, Discipline, Growth, and Success, while above it appears the message "Beyond the Darkness." At one level, it is an inspiring visual representation of perseverance. At another, it offers a profound reflection on the human condition. For senior citizens in particular, it speaks to a journey that is seldom discussed openly yet experienced by millions: the challenge of finding purpose, resilience, and fulfilment amid the uncertainties that often accompany ageing.

Modern society devotes enormous attention to youth. Success is often associated with speed, ambition, and achievement. Yet life teaches a different lesson. The true measure of a person is not found solely in the heights they attain but in their ability to navigate transitions, setbacks, and change. In that respect, the later years of life often demand a form of leadership that is more personal, reflective, and arguably more challenging than any exercised in positions of authority.

For many, retirement marks one of the most significant transitions they will ever experience. For decades, professional responsibilities have provided structure, identity, and purpose. When those responsibilities end, the freedom can initially feel liberating. Over time, however, many discover that freedom without purpose can become unsettling. The question is no longer what must be done tomorrow but why tomorrow matters. Physical limitations may emerge, social circles may shrink, and the pace of change can seem increasingly difficult to keep up with. These experiences often

create periods of uncertainty that are rarely visible from the outside but deeply felt within.

This is the darkness symbolised in the image—not despair, but uncertainty. It is the moment when familiar reference points vanish and individuals must rediscover their direction. Yet while circumstances differ, the challenge remains the same: How does one continue moving forward when the path ahead appears unclear?

The answer begins with courage, the first step on the staircase. Courage is often linked to extraordinary acts, yet some of the most remarkable examples are found in everyday life. It takes courage to face declining health without surrendering dignity, to rebuild life after losing a spouse, or to adapt to a rapidly evolving world. Above all, it

takes courage to remain optimistic when circumstances offer no guarantees.

Closely linked to courage is focus, as adversity tends to scatter attention. One of the greatest challenges of later life is resisting the temptation to live entirely in the past. Memories are precious, but leadership requires engagement with the present. Individuals who flourish in their later years often maintain a clear sense of purpose. They understand that while careers may end, contribution does not. A retired teacher may continue shaping young minds through mentorship. Grandparents often become custodians of family values and traditions.

The next step is discipline, a quality that remains as important in old age as in youth. Physical health, emotional well-

PERSPECTIVE



Navigating the Autumn of Life

For senior citizens, the later years of life demand a form of leadership that is more challenging than any exercised in positions of authority.

By Lt Gen AB Shivane, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd.)

being, and mental vitality are not sustained by good intentions alone. They require habits, routines, and consistent effort. The discipline to stay active, maintain social connections, and care for one's health often makes the difference between merely ageing and ageing well. It transforms passive acceptance into active engagement.

Perhaps the most encouraging lesson is the word growth. There is a widespread misconception that personal growth belongs primarily to the young. In reality, growth is not a function of age; it is a function of curiosity. Some of the most inspiring people are senior citizens who continue to learn, adapt, and explore. They read widely, embrace new technologies, volunteer, and remain intellectually engaged. Their example shows that growth does not end when formal careers conclude. On the contrary, many discover new dimensions of themselves in later life.

This ongoing growth often leads to a deeper understanding of success, the final step. Earlier in life, success is commonly measured by achievement, status, and financial security. People come to recognise that relationships become more important than titles. Character becomes more enduring than reputation. Contribution becomes more fulfilling than accumulation. Looking back, individuals rarely define their lives by the positions they held, but by the people they helped and the difference they made.

Senior citizens are repositories of experience, memory, and wisdom. Having lived through periods of change and challenge, they possess insights that cannot be gained from books. Communities that ignore the wisdom of their elders deprive themselves of one of their richest

resources.

The role of senior citizens, therefore, extends far beyond their personal journeys. Through mentorship, guidance, and example, they continue to influence families, organisations, and communities. Younger generations often learn more by observing how older individuals confront adversity than from any formal lesson. The ability to endure hardship with grace, maintain hope amid uncertainty, and continue serving others is a form of leadership that transcends age and position.

Ultimately, the image of a solitary figure climbing towards the light reminds us that life remains a journey of continuous movement. The pace may slow, and the terrain may become more demanding, but the possibility of growth and fulfilment never fades. Every stage of life brings new challenges, yet each challenge also offers an opportunity to discover previously unrecognised strengths.

The autumn of life has its own unique beauty. Just as autumn trees display colours absent in spring, age often reveals qualities that are difficult to cultivate in youth: patience, perspective, wisdom, and compassion. These qualities remind us that while ageing may alter our roles, it need not diminish our capacity to inspire.

The message of "Beyond the Darkness" is therefore both simple and timeless. Darkness is not a destination. It is a passage through which every individual must pass. What determines the outcome is not adversity itself but how it is confronted. Those who move forward with courage, maintain focus, cultivate discipline, and remain committed to growth discover that even the most difficult periods hold opportunities for renewal. The

light at the end of the staircase is not merely a symbol of success. It is a reminder that hope, purpose, and fulfilment remain within reach for those willing to take the next step.

Five Golden Rules for Navigating Darkness

1. Accept Change Without Losing Hope - Accepting reality with honesty while maintaining faith in the future is the first step towards resilience.

2. Stay Connected to People and Purpose - Meaningful relationships and a sense of purpose provide strength during difficult periods. Isolation magnifies problems, while connection creates perspective and support.

3. Never Stop Learning - Curiosity keeps the mind active and the spirit engaged. Every new skill, idea, or experience reinforces the belief that growth remains possible at any age.

4. Build Resilience Through Daily Discipline - Simple habits, physical activity, intellectual engagement, healthy routines, and social interaction, create the foundation for long-term well-being.

5. Serve Something Greater Than Yourself - Whether through family, community service, mentorship, or voluntary work, contributing to others' lives transforms experience into significance and provides enduring purpose.

When darkness appears, the answer is rarely found in waiting for circumstances to improve. It is found in taking the next step, and then the one after that, guided by courage, sustained by discipline, enriched by growth, and illuminated by purpose.

**BE POSITIVE...
BE STRONG...MOVE ON.**

(The author is an NDA alumnus and former Strike Corps Commander and Director General of Mechanised Forces)

CHANGE MAKER

“Believe in making yourself a hero instead of searching for another hero”

Tarun Mishra was born in a resource-constrained village in Bihar. He was pursuing an engineering degree at IP University, Delhi when a sudden personal tragedy—his father's passing—forced him to drop out and relocate to Gujarat to shoulder the financial responsibilities of his mother and siblings.

Today, he runs 22 model shelter homes across Gujarat and Mumbai and ensures that his shelters offer more than just a roof—they provide dignity, care, and a sense of family to thousands of homeless and abandoned people. This young social entrepreneur shared his journey at length with **Vishal Duggal**.

Excerpts from the interview...



Please tell us about your childhood.

I was born in Ahmadpur, a small village in the Samastipur district of Bihar. My family later shifted to Delhi, where my father worked in a medicine shop. We lived in a small rented room with a common washroom in Pitanji, near Sarojini Nagar. My father struggled to manage rent, household expenses, and the education of the children on a very low salary.

When I was in Class 6, my father lost his job because he did not possess a pharmacist's degree. Seeing the financial crisis at home, I started selling religious books outside a Hanuman temple in Sarojini Nagar Market. On Tuesdays, I also sold prasad. Many elderly people used to sit outside the temple seeking alms. I would spend time talking to them and listening to their stories of suffering. That is where my empathy towards abandoned and homeless people began.

I also used to roam around with street children. Every day, I saw people sleeping on the roadside. One day, a man disappeared, and I found out that he had died and the municipality had taken away his body. That incident deeply affected me.

We had no electricity at home and studied under a kerosene lantern. Yet, I received a scholarship and got admission into a Navyug school. My maternal grandfather insisted that I focus on studies instead of business. I returned to Bihar, completed my 10th and 12th with first-division marks, and later shifted to Patna for higher studies. I gave tuitions to support myself, cleared the entrance examination, and got admission into the B. Tech programme at Indraprastha University in Delhi.

How did social service become part of your life?

During my college days, I faced difficulties with fees, accommodation, and food. An NGO guided me to a shelter home in



Pratap Nagar, where I could stay while continuing my studies. Although I was not an official caretaker, I became actively involved in rescue drives and shelter management.

I participated in volunteer programmes across Delhi and was even recognised by the then Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia, for championing the housing rights of the homeless. I also took part in mental health camps near Jama Masjid. At that time, I did not know this work would become my life's mission; I simply felt inner peace while helping people.

I believe nature prepares you for your destiny. Once you understand society's problems, you do not remain emotional alone—you try to become a solution-provider.

What brought you to Gujarat?

While I was in the third year of my B. Tech, my father passed away. It was a huge trauma for me because suddenly I had to support my mother, my younger brother, and my ailing sister, who needed surgery for a tumour in her throat. I had to leave my engineering studies midway.

One of my maternal uncles called

me to Gujarat. He had an FMCG distribution business, and I joined him. My life completely changed. I travelled throughout the day on a scooter, bringing orders, packing goods, preparing bills, and delivering products.

At the same time, my interest in learning new things continued. I started my own company which worked on government manpower and housekeeping tenders.

How did you start shelter homes?

My first shelter home was started in Surat. Initially, government officials hesitated because I was very young and from outside Gujarat. But after hearing about my experience and ideas, they became supportive. The project, however, could only be given to an NGO. I found a non-functional NGO through relatives and started the shelter under that banner.

I worked very hard to make the shelter functional and humane. For the first time, I managed to get undocumented children admitted to schools and helped elderly residents obtain pensions. Eventually, the Gujarat Government declared it a model shelter home. At that time, we

worked alongside UNICEF and Tata Trust initiatives.

My shelter included everyone—from children and women to elderly and disabled individuals. Gradually, people appreciated the model and requested us to operate shelters at other locations too.

Today, we run 22 shelter homes across Surat, Baroda, Ahmedabad, other parts of Gujarat, and Mumbai. All this began from zero funds, without any corporate backing or strong support system.

What is your future vision?

My dream is to build a permanent shelter of our own where we can create workshops, therapy centres, and long-term rehabilitation systems for inmates.

Shelter homes are often criticised for abuse and negligence. How do you prevent such incidents?

In today's digital world, all our shelters are monitored through CCTV cameras, and the live feed remains accessible on the phone. More importantly, I personally visit every shelter and stay there myself. Even now, while speaking to you, I am inside a shelter home.

I stay deeply connected with every resident. If even a small issue occurs, I usually get to know before the manager does. By God's grace, no major untoward incident has happened so far, though minor arguments do occur.

Is social service your full-time work?

Yes. My younger brother handles businesses related to pharmacy, government contracts, and textiles.

What does your family think about your work?

Initially, my entire family opposed the idea of a fatherless son doing social service. But I have always been stubborn and passionate about my path. Today, my mother, and other family members, feel proud of me.

Till now, I have helped nearly 450–500 people reunite with their families, some even after 15 years of separation.



Is there any incident that deeply moved you?

There are thousands of such incidents. Recently, we rescued a woman sitting alone on a mountain with barely any clothes. She had not eaten or drunk water for two days and was too traumatised to speak.

We brought her back and uploaded her video online. Around 50 million people watched it, and within a day, her family was traced in Chitrakoot. Her daughter later told us that the family had not even eaten properly for days because they were desperately searching for her. Seeing such reunions gives immense satisfaction.

Till now, I have helped nearly 450–500 people reunite with their families, some even after 15 years of separation.

People often call you the “Sonu Sood of Gujarat.” How do you react?

Sonu Sood has his own place. My own philosophy is simple: “A little time of yours.” I myself go on rescue drives, live in the shelters, eat the same food as residents, and even bathe and clean people with my own hands, despite having staff.

What message would you like to give to society?

I want to tell young people that if someone from a poor background like me can do this work, then anyone can. Believe in making yourself a hero instead of searching for another hero.

People today keep waiting for a messiah, but the motivation should be to become one. We chant the name of Shri Ram, but we rarely try to follow his conduct. God exists within all of us, but instead of becoming compassionate and responsible, people often indulge in hatred and conflict. Real devotion lies in helping humanity. ●





The Art & Science of Longevity

Inspire uncovers the secrets to a long and happy life, blending expert insights with the uplifting stories of individuals with impressively long lives from India and around the globe.

By Col. YR Dua (Retd.)

Everyone aspires to live a long life, but a long stay on Planet Earth does not simply mean surviving through decades; it needs to be accompanied by good health and a purpose-driven existence. In fact, it is the very sense of purpose that drives us to stay in control of our physical, emotional, and mental faculties.

In Indian tradition, the blessing "*Ayushman Bhava*" or "*Shatayu Bhav*" reflects far more than a wish for biological longevity. It expresses the civilisational ideal of a full, righteous, meaningful, and spiritually evolved life. In the *Atharvaveda* and *Yajurveda* traditions, prayers repeatedly invoke the aspiration: *Pashyema sharadah shatam* | *Jeevema sharadah shatam* | *Budhyema sharadah shatam* | *Rohema sharadah shatam*, which means, (May we see, live, remain aware, and flourish for a hundred autumns).

Sharadah Shatam signifies completion, the fulfilment of duties, maturity of wisdom, and harmony between body, mind, and spirit. It is viewed as a sign of divine grace, accumulated merit (*punya*), disciplined living, and alignment with dharma. Indian philosophy does not glorify long life merely for pleasure or accumulation. A long life is desirable because it gives one time to perform duties (*dharma*), pursue prosperity ethically (*artha*), experience legitimate desires (*kama*), and ultimately seek liberation (*moksha*). Thus, longevity is meaningful only when joined with purpose and righteousness.

Indian mythology mentions many long-lived sages and beings. Whilst *Markandeya* symbolises victory over death through devotion, Bhishma represents mastery over the timing of death (*Iccha mrityu*), and the

Chiranjivis (eternally living beings) symbolise the continuity of wisdom and cosmic duty.

Indian philosophy balances two seemingly opposite ideas: cherishing life, yet remaining detached from it. The body is respected as a vehicle for spiritual evolution, but life is ultimately transient. Therefore, one should strive for health and longevity whilst also cultivating an acceptance of mortality. This creates a distinctive Indian approach: live fully, ethically, and consciously, and when the time comes, depart peacefully.

Ayurveda treats longevity (*Ayush*) as one of the highest human goals. Classical Ayurveda defines life as the integration of body, senses, mind, and soul. Its objective is not merely curing disease but preserving vitality, delaying degeneration, and enabling a balanced lifespan conducive to higher living.

In this issue of Inspire, we take a close look at the secrets of a long



life, backed by expert advice and the enduring legacies and living examples of individuals with impressively long lives across India and the world whose life journeys are pleasantly inspiring and edifying, adding not just years to life—but life to years:

Sir David Attenborough: Legendary Environmentalist



One of the most inspiring centenarians currently active abroad is the legendary Sir David Attenborough. As of May 2026, he has officially entered his 101st year (born May 8, 1926), and he continues to be the world's most influential voice for nature and the environment.

Sir David's career has spanned over 70 years, beginning in the early



days of television. He joined the BBC in 1952, travelling to remote corners of the globe to bring exotic animals into the living rooms of millions. While he spent decades celebrating the beauty of Earth, his recent years have been dedicated to a more urgent mission: environmental advocacy. He shifted from being a silent observer of nature to a powerful advocate for climate action and biodiversity. In his view, "It's surely our responsibility to do everything within our power to create a planet that provides a home not just for us, but for all life on Earth".

He hasn't truly "retired," continuing to narrate groundbreaking documentaries using his iconic, soothing voice. His long and vigorous life is often attributed to a combination of mental curiosity and a mindful transition in his habits. Interestingly, in his later years, he significantly reduced his meat intake, noting that a plant-heavy diet felt more sustainable for both his body and the planet. His life is a reaffirmation that you are never too old to change your

habits, find a new mission, or use your voice for the greater good.

He often says that the secret to staying young is to never stop being "enchanted" by the world, and his mind remains sharp because he is constantly learning and travelling to witness new biological discoveries. He is a proponent of a balanced life, maintaining a disciplined routine while allowing himself the "small joys" of life, such as a glass of wine or a piece of chocolate.

His elder brother, Sir Richard

Attenborough, was a legendary British actor and Oscar-winning director, best known for his monumental film *Gandhi* and his role in *Jurassic Park*. While Sir Richard passed away on August 24, 2014, at the age of 90, his younger brother, Sir David, has reached the incredible milestone of 100 years and remains a "living legend". It is a remarkable family—while Richard dedicated his life to capturing the human spirit on film, David has spent his century capturing the spirit of the natural world.

Bhagat Singh Jhuggian:

The Sentinel of Freedom



As one of the final sentinels of India's freedom struggle, Bhagat Singh Jhuggian embodied a life of unyielding conviction that began long before the British Raj retreated.

Born in the Hoshiarpur district of Punjab, his path as a revolutionary was set at the remarkably young age of 11. In a defiant act that shamed a visiting British dignitary at his school in 1939, the young Jhuggian was expelled and blacklisted from formal education across the region. Rather than retreating, he embraced the "school of hard knocks," dedicating his entire life first to the struggle for independence, and subsequently to the rights of farmers and workers.

Until his final years, he

continued to champion the cause of social justice from his home in Ramgarh village. He maintained a sharp, critical mind to the very end, frequently expressing concern that modern political forces lacked the true, selfless legacy of the freedom movement. Visitors often noted that even when using a walker in his advanced years, he would insist on moving quickly to see his guests off—a reflection of a fierce spirit that refused to be slowed by nearly a century of life. His "blueprint" for a long life was one of constant engagement, proving that a mind occupied with the welfare of others and the future of a nation is one that remains remarkably young, leaving behind an indelible legacy.

Bhagwani Devi Dagar: The Golden Sprinter of Haryana

Symbolising the power of human endurance and structural discipline, Bhagwani Devi Dagar is a 96-year-old master from a village in Haryana. Widowed at just 30 years old, she single-handedly raised her children through decades of physically demanding agrarian labour, choosing never to remarry.

She began her competitive sports journey only after crossing her 90s, guided by her grandson, an international para-athlete. Since then, she has broken national records and sprinted across global tracks—shattering the misconception that old age equals frailty. To the sporting world, she is affectionately known as the "Queen of Athletics".

Her secret to long-lasting vitality is an absolute focus on the raw, traditional lifestyle of rural North India. She has famously relied entirely on a local farm diet, avoiding processed modern foods throughout her lifetime. Her nutritional core consists of



unrefined flatbreads, fresh greens (Sarson da Saag), and heavy portions of home-churned white butter (makkhan) and fresh milk.

Every morning, she follows an active physical training layout to keep her joints and muscles incredibly sharp. She strongly believes that active bodily

movement keeps arthritis away, often stating that if you stop moving, your muscles forget their purpose.

Bhagwani rejects the idea of a sedentary retirement, continuing to train daily and dance after every major track victory.

N S Dattatreya: The Ageless Pacesetter



At 98 years young, N S Dattatreya, a retired manager from the State Bank of Mysore, has participated in nearly 300 physical and virtual marathons and walkathons, completed well over 100 major competitive running events, and amassed an enviable collection of trophies and medals.

As a schoolboy, he was a passionate football player, instilling in him a deep sense of physical discipline. However, the

A Guide to a Long, Liberated, and Joyful Life



In his bestselling book *The 80-Year-Old Wall*, Japanese psychiatrist Dr Hideki Wada offers a refreshing philosophy for those navigating the golden decades between 60 and 80. Here are his suggestions, epitomising the art of living well.

Self-Acceptance & Freedom

- Do only what you genuinely love, and gracefully walk away from what you don't.

- Keep a polite distance from people who drain your energy or bring you down.
- Say what you want to say without over thinking how to say it.
- Give up the exhausting chase for fame or approval.
- Innocence, a little playfulness, and even a bit of laziness are the true privileges of your later years.
- Natural desires and passions are the very fuel that sustains a long, vibrant life.

A Gentle Approach to the Body

- Keep walking to keep both your body and mind active.
- Eat what you love. Being slightly overweight is perfectly fine.
- Enjoy fresh fruits, vibrant salads, and the dishes that comfort you.
- Instead of waging a constant, exhausting war against the disease, learn to live peacefully alongside it.
- Choose a family doctor early.
- You don't need an excessive amount of medication.
- Don't stress over artificially forcing your blood pressure or blood sugar down to extreme degrees.

- If you can't sleep, don't force it.
- Keep your baths brief (under 10 minutes) to avoid straining your body.
- Drink plenty of water—especially when the summer air conditioning dries you out.
- There is no need to cling to a driver's license in old age as driving can be dangerous for yourself and others.

Nurturing the Resilient Mind

- Memory loss isn't an inevitable tragedy of aging; it's often just an underused brain. The day you stop learning is the day you truly grow old.
- Break the habit of watching television continuously.
- In the grand finale of life, dementia or cognitive decline can be viewed as a form of natural grace.

Mastering the Emotional Landscape

- Solitude isn't sadness if you are spending your time happily.
- When a wave of anger hits, pause and take a deep, grounding breath.
- Accept what is, learn to be content with what you have, and face the world calmly.
- View problems with a sense of adventure, as they make life more interesting!

Connecting with the World

- Don't isolate yourself within four walls. Sitting in the warm sunlight brings happiness.
- Do good things for the people around you.
- People with cheerful personalities are always loved.
- Laugh often, because laughter brings good fortune.

demands of a hectic corporate career in banking forced him to sideline his sporting passions for decades.

After retiring in 1989, he lived a relatively quiet life until a transformative spark in January 2019, when at the ripe age of 91, he laced up his very first pair of running shoes and stepped onto a marathon starting line. Once he discovered the joy of long-distance running, there was no looking back. In his very first year of running, he participated in a staggering 90 events, mastering distances ranging from 5 km to over 20 km in a single stretch.

Representing India at the 21st Asia Masters Athletics

Championship in Malaysia, Dattatreya stunned international spectators by clinching five gold medals in various categories.

Dattatreya wants India's youth to liberate themselves from the confines of their digital screens. To practice what he preaches, Dattatreya encouraged his son, Murali, to join him. Today, the sight of the father-son duo pacing together has become a symbol of generational inspiration.

Every milestone Dattatreya crosses also holds profound emotional weight. Having tragically lost his second son to cancer, participating in landmark events like the prestigious TCS World 10K Bengaluru, which actively raises funds for cancer

research, transforms every finish line into an act of remembrance and love.

Ultimately, the journeys of these inspiring individuals beautifully mirror the ancient Indian civilisational ideal of Sharadah Shatam, flourishing for a hundred autumns in perfect harmony of body, mind, and spirit. The secret to a long and happy life lies in embracing each day with an optimistic heart, proving that we only truly grow old when we stop learning, laughing, and loving the world around us. ●

(The author is an ex-serviceman of the Indian Army with rich corporate experience)



Live a Hundred Active Years

In the Japanese culture, discovering a higher purpose in life—one's *ikigai*—and focusing on it is the armour to shield us from life's stresses.

By Dr Amitav Banerjee

Modern medicine has contributed much to healthy ageing and the reduction of many disabilities. A couple of generations ago, before the advent of the intra-ocular lens, a simple cataract operation with thick post-surgery lenses severely restricted visual functions. Nowadays, cataract surgery has become a day-care procedure, and intraocular lenses completely restore visual acuity. Similarly, rapid advances in joint replacement surgery enable many old people afflicted with osteoarthritis of knees and hips to regain full mobility and become less dependent.

As is well known, health has three dimensions: physical, mental, and social. These are not watertight compartments; each impacts the other dimensions. While advances in medicine have prolonged the period of disability-free physical health,

"Only staying active will make you want to live a hundred years." –

Japanese proverb

often the mental and, more importantly, the social dimensions lag behind. While modern medicine may make the flesh stronger, the spirit may get weaker with age—the price of socio-cultural changes.

In earlier days, the elderly were more disabled by the limitations of the flesh, while the spirit may have been willing—such as to play with the hordes of grandchildren in Indian joint families. The traditional Indian family also had positive attitudes towards the aged, and their wisdom was sought in family matters. Sharing a common "enemy," they bonded with their grandchildren. Their physical, mental, and social health thrived in such an environment.

Our society is changing fast. Higher levels of economic development and industrialisation drive the rat race not only from the time of employment, but right from school age. Both parents rush to work, while the grandchildren rush to coaching classes after school, leaving the old grandparents alone at home—or worse, left behind in their native homes while their children, along with their families, migrate to urban areas or abroad to seek greener pastures. The only human contact they may receive may be during medical and surgical check-ups, which drives many towards playing the "sick role."

Rediscovering Oneself

As we age, we should be prepared to cope with these inevitable social changes instead of bemoaning our fate, which aggravates negativity, weakening

the spirit further. Gradually rediscovering and reinventing oneself to find a purpose for living can be a turning point towards the better in the twilight years of one's life.

Japan has the highest number of centenarians in the world, with over 120,000 people aged 100 or older. They have perfected the art of staying young while growing old. According to their wisdom, one has to discover one's reason for being alive. The Japanese term for this is *ikigai*. Finding it calls for patience and perseverance, but the rewards can be health- and life-enhancing. With this discovery, you become the focus of your life and less dependent on overburdened family members for emotional and social succour.

Lessons on Longevity from Japan

Dan Buettner, a National Geographic reporter who has studied Japan and its people extensively, says that having a purpose in life is so important in their culture that there is no word for "retirement" in the Japanese language. *Ikigai* becomes more essential in the twilight years. If one finds it, there will be no place for loneliness or dependence, which will be replaced with mutual respect through interdependence with family and community.

In the Japanese script, *ikigai* has a number of connotations, distinct from its literal meaning of finding a purpose. These include combinations of "life," "to be worthwhile," "armour," "number one," and "to be the first" (conveying a leadership role), as well as "beautiful" and "elegant."

These Japanese concepts can be simplified roughly as "the happiness of always being busy." This is not only the secret of a long and happy life, but it also explains the longevity of the

Japanese—especially on the island of Okinawa, where there are around 50-60 people over the age of 100 for every one-lakh population, far more than the global average.

Researchers who studied the inhabitants of this island in the south of Japan (who live longer than people anywhere else in the world) believe that one of the keys—in addition to a prudent diet, an outdoor life with constant movement instead of a sedentary life, green tea, and bonding with family and community—is the *ikigai* which is central to their lives. Not only do these people live longer, but they also suffer from fewer chronic diseases like cancer and cardiovascular conditions. Their rate of Alzheimer's is well below the global average. Their blood reveals lower levels of free radicals, which are responsible for cellular aging. They enjoy a high level of vitality and health unthinkable for elderly people elsewhere.

How to Discover Our Ikigai

Our *ikigai* should be the reason we get up each day in the morning. The mind has tremendous power over the body and determines how quickly it ages. The secret of keeping the body young is keeping the mind active—a key feature of *ikigai*—and not giving up when we face setbacks. A positive attitude and a high level of emotional awareness can make us cope with challenges on our way to longevity.

Stoicism, or serenity in the face of adverse events, can keep one young by lowering anxiety and stress levels. Discovering a higher purpose in life—one's *ikigai*—and focusing on it is the armour to shield us from life's stresses.

The steps in discovering one's *ikigai*—the reason for being—involve identifying the intersection of four core life

pillars: what you love; what you are good at; what the world needs; and what you can get paid for. Sketch the four circles or write out responses to these prompts.

For what you love, ask what brings you pure joy and what activities do you lose track of time doing (the flow state)? For what you are good at, identify what skills you possess and what people consistently seek your advice for. For what the world needs, look at what problems you feel compelled to solve and how you can contribute to your community. For what you can get paid for, consider what services or products you can offer that will generate an income.

Identify the Intersections

Evaluate the overlaps between the four lists. Passion is the intersection of what you love and what you are good at. Profession is the intersection of what you are good at and what you can be paid for. Vocation is the intersection of what you can be paid for and what the world needs. Mission is the intersection of what the world needs and what you love.

Your *Ikigai* lives perfectly in the centre where all four of these elements merge. It may take time, so don't be discouraged if you only find two or three overlapping categories right away—small adjustments and hobbies can help bridge the gap. If Gabbar Singh of Sholay fame had visited the island of Okinawa, he would have asked his sidekick, Samba, "Aarey O Samba, ye Okinawa wale kaun sa chakki ka aata khat hai?" to which Samba may well have replied, "Atta nahi Sardar, inke lambi zindagi ka raj *ikigai* hai." ●

(The author is a renowned epidemiologist and a Professor Emeritus at DY Patil Medical College, Pune)



Safeguard Your Legacy

By taking proactive, legally sound steps to organise assets and clearly define your wishes, you can shield your loved ones from the emotional and financial drain of future litigation.

By D V Jain

As elders, taking proactive control of your financial and legal estate is the ultimate act of love and stewardship. It ensures that your assets are distributed exactly as you intend, while shielding your children from the pain of adversarial conflict. Here is a comprehensive guide on how to streamline your estate, eliminate ambiguity, and execute a legally sound estate plan.

Streamline and Document Your Assets

Unidentified or forgotten assets are prime breeding grounds for future confusion and dispute.

- Compile a comprehensive

inventory of all your holdings. This should include immovable property (land, residential houses, commercial spaces), financial assets (bank accounts, fixed deposits, mutual funds, stocks, insurance policies), and valuable movable property (jewellery, family heirlooms, art).

- Ensure that the titles to your properties are clear, updated, and registered in your name. If a property was inherited or jointly purchased, verify that all mutation records (government land transfer records) are complete and that there are no outstanding liens or encumbrances.

- Consider consolidating older accounts, closing dormant portfolios, and simplifying your financial footprint.

Utilise Nominations and Joint Holdings

Many people mistakenly believe that naming a nominee on a bank account or insurance policy is enough to permanently transfer ownership after death. In reality, under most legal jurisdictions, a nominee is merely a "trustee" or a custodian responsible for receiving the funds and holding them until the legal heirs are determined.

So, employ a two-pronged strategy:

- For bank accounts and fixed deposits, consider holding them jointly with your spouse or a trusted child with a "Survivorship" clause (such as Either or Survivor or Former or Survivor). This allows the surviving holder to operate the account seamlessly without waiting for legal clearances.

- Ensure every single financial asset has an active nomination. While a nominee may not automatically become the absolute owner over a legal heir specified in a Will, having a designated nominee allows financial institutions to release funds swiftly.

Drafting the Will

A Will is the single most powerful instrument you have to dictate the future of your estate. It supersedes standard intestate succession laws (laws that govern distribution when someone dies without a Will). To ensure your Will stands up to scrutiny and leaves no room for litigation, keep these critical drafting principles in mind:

Vague language is an open invitation for legal challenges. Avoid general phrases like "I leave my properties to my children equally." Instead, clearly identify each asset and specify exactly who receives what. If a property is to be split, define the exact shares or outline a mechanism for its sale and subsequent division of proceeds.

The Executor is the individual responsible for administrative duties, paying off outstanding debts, and distributing your assets according to your instructions. Choose someone who is financially literate, objective, and ideally younger than you. It can be a trusted family member, a professional, or a corporate executor.

If you choose to distribute your estate unequally—perhaps giving

more to a child who cared for you in your later years, or bypassing someone who is already financially independent—explicitly state your reasons within the Will.

Ensuring Legal Validity and Registration

A Will does not strictly require registration to be legally valid, but registering your Will is the single best defence against future litigation.

When a Will is challenged in court, it is usually on three grounds: that the document is a forgery, that the testator (you) lacked the mental capacity to make it, or that it was signed under coercion. Registration systematically dismantles these arguments.

The Registration Process

To register your Will, you must present the document to the local sub-registrar office along with two reliable witnesses. The registrar verifies your identity, confirms that you are executing the document voluntarily, and archives a copy in the government registry.

The Value of a Medical Certificate

If you are drafting a Will in your senior years, always attach a certificate from a registered medical practitioner stating that you are of sound mind and fully understand the implications of your decisions. Have this certificate signed on the exact same day the Will is executed.

Your two witnesses must be individuals who see you sign the document. Crucially, a witness must never be a beneficiary under the Will, nor should they be a close relative of a beneficiary.

Choosing Witnesses Wisely

Your two witnesses must be individuals who see you sign the document. Crucially, a witness must never be a beneficiary under the Will, nor should they be a close relative of a beneficiary. Choose independent, respected individuals—such as a long-time family doctor, a chartered accountant, or close neighbours.

Foster Open Family Communication

Many elders treat estate planning as a dark secret, leaving surprises to be discovered only after the funeral. This shock often triggers resentment and subsequent lawsuits.

Consider hosting a calm, transparent family discussion. You do not need to disclose every financial figure, but outlining your vision, explaining your decisions, and emphasising that your primary goal is family harmony can go a long way. When children understand your choices directly from you, they are far more likely to respect your wishes after you are gone.

Taking care of these matters today is not a reflection of mortality; it is an assertion of leadership, wisdom, and care. By leaving behind a clear, registered, and undisputed roadmap, you grant your posterity the greatest inheritance of all: a legacy of enduring family harmony. ●

(The author is a prominent chartered accountant and financial advisor)



The Wait for the House Sparrow

A poignant reminiscence of the cute little House Sparrow, which was once a common bird species in our surroundings.

By N Kalyani

One spring morning, I woke up to a persistent knock. Not on the main door, but on the window of the glazed veranda—a hard, persistent, and authoritative knock. It was a male sparrow. The windows, which were generally kept open, had been closed at night, and the curtains too had been drawn. The source of the sound led me to this window, and I discovered a male sparrow there, sitting on the grill of the window and knocking away at the glass pane.

I promptly opened the window. And the dutiful father flew in, from above my head, to the ventilator at the other end of the

house. He had to reach the nest where his chicks and their mother waited in eager anticipation. The night had passed with them being apart, and now, no delay in reaching them was acceptable. Point accepted.

Then began their day-long job, for both the father and mother, to bring morsels of food for their chicks—soft morsels that were fed into the juvenile beaks of the chicks. Watching the hordes of sparrows on our verandas and in our balconies at our homes was so common and captivating. Their food habits, too, were quite interesting to watch. Peas,

coriander leaves, and rice are their favourites. House sparrows are not quite favourably disposed to consuming hardy wheat grains; rice grains are soft and are easily consumed.

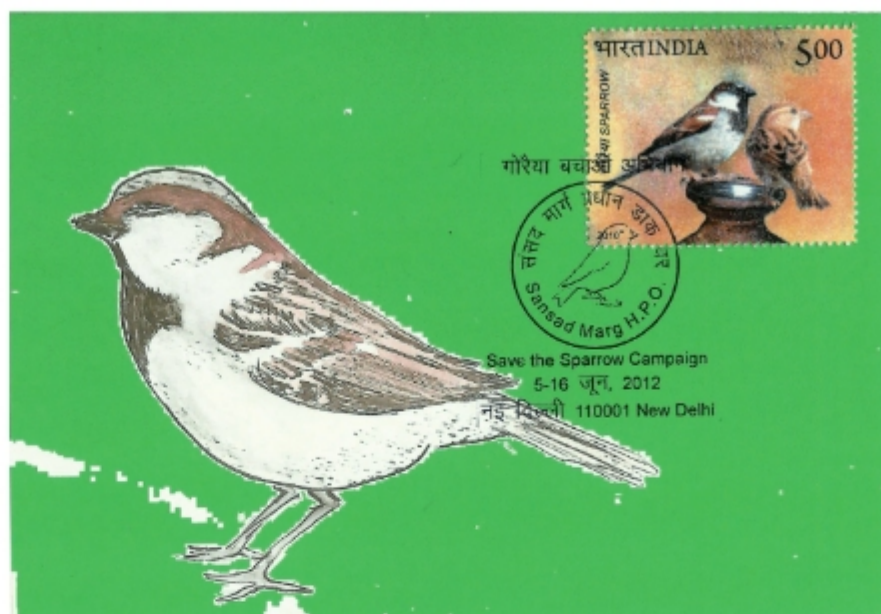
I recollect an occasion when a couple of large motichoor laddoos with cashew nuts and raisins were placed on the parapet of the balcony by my mother for our feathered friends. Yes, again, it was the house sparrows that came along. The aroma and the flavour attracted them, but they were not interested in the ghee-and-sugar-syrup-drenched boondis. They took a fancy to the cashew bits and raisins only.

Tactfully and deftly, they got the cashew bits and raisins out. A few sideways movements of their beaks into the laddoo got the boondis to fall off, thereby dislodging their preferred items. And they went peck, peck, peck. It was a fun buffet for the sparrows. A fine job the sparrows did of taking what they wanted and leaving behind what they did not.

Almost always during spring and summer, a pair of house sparrows would raise a family at our home. And there were so many of the characteristics and traits of the house sparrows that one could observe, such as the way the nest was built and how the family was raised. It was interesting to watch the dutiful father and mother, and the noisy, ravenous little chicks. While house sparrows are vegetarian in their food habits, chicks are fed worms as they are soft.

After a few days, the chicks would turn into fledglings. And the fledglings, with a few flaps of their wings, and thereafter with a few short flights from their nest, would be ready to fly out into the big, wide world. At first, they did so with a little parental supervision on a nearby tree, and then they were off on their own way. And then the little empty nest at our home would lie vacant. But the sociable house sparrows were always around in their small and large groups for us to take note of and be entertained by.

And then there were times when we would have to see the loss of an adult house sparrow or a little chick. I remember how once a little chick fell off its nest, built on the sill of the ventilator of our bedroom, onto a small table placed on the veranda. Now, this fledgling was sure not to eat anything offered by us. "My mom and dad and none else," the



Indian postage stamp

There are postage stamps on the house sparrow, there are paintings featuring the house sparrow, and there are sculptures and installations depicting the house sparrow. But where are the twittering and hopping real house sparrows?

determined and steadfast chick seemed to say. Neither the mother nor the father house sparrow, however, could locate this chick, though they did appear perturbed by the absence of one from their bunch as they anxiously flew around their nest and across the veranda many times. Starved, the chick died. It was sad to see such a turn of events.

Also, house sparrows fell victim to fans running at full speed in the summer time—the time when our windows stayed open, and these little birds would fly in and out of our bedrooms and living rooms all through the day. It would be miserable to pick up the poor injured sparrow lying dead on the floor and put it away in the garden or ground nearby.

The house sparrow was a wild bird species so common to our

surroundings, and yet it was always fascinating to watch them in their hordes. They were a lively, gregarious lot. The British sparrow specialist who authored books on the species based on his studies and research, J. Denis Summers-Smith (1920–2020), in fact, began his study of sparrows because they were so common in residential spaces and neighbourhoods. Of course, he travelled the world and studied the different sparrow species. He had travelled to India, too. House sparrows used to be so common, inhabiting as they do human habitations, that one did not have to go to a forest, a distant wildlife habitat, or a difficult terrain to study this wild avian species.

House sparrows also appear smart, what with the black bib of the slightly stocky male. The female has a leaner body. House



Watching the hordes of sparrows on our verandas and in our balconies at our homes was so common and was also so captivating. Their food habits, too, were quite interesting to watch

sparrows, chirruping and flying about our homes, have captivated us from our childhood. Which mother has not pointed to the house sparrow and its quirks to distract a child throwing tantrums to eat her/his food without further fuss? And mothers would generally meet with success.

But now, this cute little bird is hardly seen. In urban spaces, they are practically not to be found; they are nearly totally absent. And I, like many sparrow lovers, bemoan this. There are postage stamps on the house sparrow, there are paintings featuring the house sparrow, and there are sculptures and installations depicting the house sparrow. But where are the twittering and hopping real house sparrows?

Studies have been done and research is ongoing to determine the factors that have contributed to the decline and even to the total absence of the house sparrow, which is a species that

has lived in our surroundings for several thousand years. In fact, the house sparrow is an indicator species of urban settings. Their dwindling population, resulting in sudden, alarming disappearance from modern urban landscapes, shows a deterioration in the various parameters that make up the quality of the habitat—air quality, water quality, vegetation, and other parameters—that support humans inhabiting the urban ecosystem.

Electromagnetic radiation emanating from mobile towers, the use of insecticides and pesticides in gardens and farms, the cultivation of exotic (non-indigenous) crops in farms, and the growing of exotic plants and trees in gardens, a lack of nesting spaces due to the modern architecture of buildings and houses, and vehicular pollution are some of the factors that have been attributed to the dwindling sparrow populations.

There are, of course, rural areas

that still host the cute little house sparrow. And there are places with conducive micro-habitats where house sparrows can still be spotted. Sparrow lovers and nature enthusiasts have, in the past few years, been taking initiatives to bring back the house sparrow. And they are meeting with success, too. This includes measures such as installing feeders and nest boxes in the balconies and verandas of homes. Feeders contain grains that make up the diet of house sparrows. Also, nest boxes are being made innovatively using various organic items, including coconut shells.

When one visits a place where house sparrows can be seen, one obviously experiences a strong sense of nostalgia—of the good old days. These are reminiscences of the past. In the present, it is a wait for the house sparrow. ●

(The author writes on nature, environment, and wildlife in newspapers, magazines, and journals)

Interview with
Dr Vijay Pandurang Bhatkar

The Architect of India's Supercomputing Revolution

Padma Bhushan Dr Vijay Pandurang Bhatkar is one of the most distinguished scientists and IT trailblazers India has ever produced. Born in 1946 in a tiny village of 300 people near Akola, Maharashtra, he grew up in a household deeply rooted in the freedom movement and a passion for learning.



Dr Bhatkar is best known as the architect of India's national initiative in supercomputing: the PARAM 8000. He founded C-DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing), created the GIST multilingual technology that gave computers an Indian voice, and helped make over 1.5 crore citizens IT literate. He has served as Chairman of IIT Delhi, Chancellor of Nalanda University. Currently, he is a member of the NSM and Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee at C-DAC, steering India's Exascale Supercomputing Mission.

Despite his towering achievements, he remains a deeply spiritual and humble person, living a life of simplicity in Pune. He believes that both science and spirituality are attempts to understand the same Reality, and that India's finest hour is yet to come.

In an interview for Inspire Magazine, Dr Bhatkar shares insights from his momentous nation-building journey.

Excerpts...

In the mid-1980s, the United States denied India access to Cray supercomputers, citing concerns over nuclear weapons development. As a scientist, what was your immediate reaction when you learned that India had been refused this technology?

When the US refused to sell India the Cray supercomputer, it was a humiliating moment. A senior US official even remarked that if the computer was used for any other application, "then forget about the chip, even a pin will not be allowed to come to India." Then in a meeting called by Shri Rajiv Gandhi, he asked Shri KPP Nambiar, Secretary, Electronics: if we can make nuclear reactors and launch satellites, why can't we build a supercomputer? KPP Nambiar, in his typical style said, "Why not, we will build it." He then called me. I was at Kihim beach at that time. I said, "We have not seen one, but after what we did in Keltron and EC, we can always say yes. If you give me the signal and the freedom, we can build it."

Earlier, I had accepted a call at age 31 from KPP Nambiar to head R&D at KELTRON, which became the harbinger of India's electronics revolution. At KELTRON, we built 18 factories in five years, creating colour TV,



The former President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, presenting the Padma Bhushan Award to Dr Vijay Bhatkar at the Civil Investiture Ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi, on April 8, 2015.

low-power transmission, and microprocessor-based traffic systems from scratch. We were also pivotal in enabling the first colour broadcast in India during the 1982 Asiad Games. So, when the supercomputer challenge arrived, I knew we had the indigenous capability to make it happen.

You were appointed by then

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to lead India's indigenous supercomputing initiative. What clear mandate did you receive, and how did that conversation shape your approach?

Rajiv Gandhi called a meeting with Nambiar, KR Narayanan (Minister of State), and myself. He asked three questions. First: "Can it be done?" I said, "It can be

done." Second: "How much time will it take?" I replied that it took three years to get the Cray with all the licences and regulations, so it would take only as long as it takes to import a Cray computer. Third: "How much money will it take?" The Cray would have cost around Rs.37 crore, so I said we would do it for the same cost. He was surprised and said, "Really? Then we are off." That conversation gave me the freedom and the mandate. It was decided that C-DAC would be built on the C-DOT model, which was already successful.

This mandate ultimately allowed me to build the national IT framework. Based on this foundational supercomputer series, I designed the National Param Supercomputing Facility (NPSF). Decades later, that mandate continues; currently, as Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of C-DAC and a Member of the TAC of the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM), I am still helping steer India's Exascale Supercomputing adventure, providing nationwide access to High Performance Computing infrastructure on the National Knowledge Network (NKN).

Instead of trying to replicate the single-processor Cray architecture, you chose a parallel processing approach. Why was this decision the key to India's success?

I concluded that we cannot build a Cray-like computer because neither were the chips available nor was the cooling feasible. So we had to go for parallel processing, which was also the route being taken by Europe and Russia. Japan had chips, so it could have built a Cray-like computer. At that time, the highest systems we had in India were tens of megaflops, and we were trying to build gigaflops – a hundred times more powerful.

Parallel processing using off-the-shelf microprocessors was the only viable path for India under the technology denial regime.

By mastering this parallel processing approach with the PARAM 8000, we laid a sustainable architectural foundation. It directly paved the way for the development of our subsequent teraflop architecture, the PARAM 10000, and eventually the advanced PARAM Petascale supercomputing systems used across the nation today.

You founded C-DAC and built the PARAM 8000 in just three years. What were the biggest challenges you faced, especially in the early days?

The journey was not smooth. I could not recruit anyone for six months. Yet, amazingly, people joined and worked without a salary for six months – they even travelled with their own money.

The project was set up in Pune. People asked, "Why Pune?" Nambiar said, "He has taken the responsibility and if he says Pune, that is where it will be set up. If you are taking responsibility, you build it." I chose Pune because Delhi would have been too politicised and I didn't want Bangalore. Pune was a centre of learning with good education facilities and a good climate.

Beyond the bureaucratic and regional debates, a core challenge was working in an environment where we had to achieve global benchmarks from scratch. Overcoming these hurdles early on established a work culture of high execution.

In 1990, the PARAM prototype was benchmarked at Zurich and was ranked second only to American machines. What was the reaction of the international community?

We had nerve-racking

bureaucratic hurdles in taking the system to Zurich. We landed just a day before the exhibition and weren't sure we could assemble it in time. Fortunately, our engineers worked overtime and managed to get it ready. At the exhibition, the Russian and German systems did not work. All the top computer scientists – whose work I had studied – were there. I was intimidated to make a presentation to them. But when the benchmarking was done, our system worked well and was next only to the Intel system. It became clear that India had built a prototype. The next year, in 1991, the Wall Street Journal wrote an article titled "An angry India builds the supercomputer."

Later, the Russians decided to buy our supercomputer. We were supposed to buy from them, but instead, they ended up buying from us – that gave me enormous satisfaction.

Both science and spirituality are trying to understand the nature of Reality – one through experimentation and the other through experience.



PARAM 8000 was highly cost-effective. Did you set out intentionally to make it affordable, or was that a natural outcome of your design choices?

When Rajiv Gandhi asked how much money it would take, I had estimated that importing the Cray would cost around Rs.37 crore. So, I said we would do it for the same cost. The project was completed in three years without any cost or time overrun. The parallel processing approach using off-the-shelf microprocessors naturally made it more affordable than the single-processor Cray.

By designing a high-performance system at a fraction of Western costs, we proved that affordable, high-end engineering was viable.

You gave computers an Indian voice through GIST technology. What drove that vision of linguistic inclusion?

In 1990, we realised that if computers are not endowed with Indian languages, we will have to use only English. Since culture is very closely linked with language, we were worried that Indian languages would lag behind. I used to give the example of the printing press – it was initially used for the English language and contributed enormously to the spread of British power. So, I initiated a project for Indian language technology, which was not part of the original mission. I convinced the Governing Council that this was as important as the supercomputer project, if not more. We created the ISCII (Indian Script Code for Information Interchange) and developed a hardware card and chip – the Indian language chip – that could be used for any Indian language simultaneously. That became the foundation for Unicode for Asian languages. Through 10 diverse scripts, this

GIST technology dissolved the language barrier entirely, allowing the seamless integration of Indian languages into the modern IT-enabled world, making digital growth truly democratic and inclusive.

Beyond technology, you are known as a philosopher and educationist. How does your spiritual outlook inform your work as a scientist?

In 1996, I realised that whatever supercomputer you develop, in five years it will be a desktop machine – the glory is not enduring. This got me thinking about what is truly enduring in life. I was always inclined towards philosophy. I realised that from our perspective, Indian culture – our Vedic culture, our Bhagwad Gita – is enduring. Both science and spirituality are trying to understand the nature of Reality – one through experimentation and the other through experience. In our shastras, we don't distinguish between scientific knowledge and spiritual knowledge – it is all part of the whole knowledge system. The discovery of zero is a great example – it is not just a number; it is a state. And computing itself is founded on zero and one, which in Sankhya philosophy corresponds to Purush and Prakriti.

What is the legacy you are proudest of – beyond the supercomputer?

I am proud of several initiatives. Through C-DAC's Advanced Computing Training School, we created over 100,000 software professionals over two decades, seeding India's globally celebrated IT industry. Along with Vivek Sawant and Prof Ram Takwale, I designed and implemented the world's largest computer literacy programme through the Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Limited's (MKCL) IT literacy initiative,

helping over 1.5 crore Indian citizens become IT literate.

As Chairman of the National Steering Committee of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (launched to link India's higher education with national development at the village level), we have reached over 3,270 educational institutions, 17,194 villages, and over 22 lakh people. By 2047, the project envisions connecting 50,000 institutes with 2,50,000 gram panchayat villages. Its core goal is to give higher education institutions the tools to collaborate with rural India, accelerating sustainable growth and building a positive loop between society and an inclusive academic system. I also initiated the transformation of India's pilgrim places into knowledge-based pilgrim centres along with Prof Vishwanath Karad. These initiatives, I believe, will have a lasting impact on India's development.

On a personal note, I am deeply proud of my family – my wife Lalit Bhatkar, and my children Samhita, Nachiketas, and Tajasa – who have stood by me through all these national endeavours.

What is your message to young India today?

I was born in 1946 and I would like to live for 100 years – for only one thing. I am certain that by 2047 – India's 100th year of independence – the nation will be the world's number one country. No China, no Russia, no other country will be number one. We are already an advanced country in many ways. Look at how we have managed our elections compared to what happens in the US. In the next few decades, we will create wealth we have never seen before, as Swami Vivekananda predicted. My message to young people is simple: **Invest in this dream. Make it happen.** ●



YOGA



Ageing with Grace

Yoga offers a gentle, research-backed framework to navigate age-related changes with strength and resilience. It does not promise eternal youth. It promises *yauvanam*—a youthful quality of mind—at any age.

By Dr Ishwar V Basavaraddi

Ageing is inevitable. For many older adults, the years bring common changes: a loss of flexibility, slower metabolism, lack of quality in sleep, increased anxiety, depression, and low joint mobility. Modern medicine manages symptoms well but often misses a deeper need: to feel stable, engaged, and at peace in one's own body and mind. Yoga addresses this gap. For individuals aged 60 years and older, Yoga offers not a reversal

of time, but a refinement of how we live within it.

In this article I delve into a detailed, practical framework for adapted yogic practices, including *yogasana*, *pranayama*, *yoganidra*, meditation, and lifestyle modifications, grounded in classical yogic principles and practices, and supported by nearly three decades of contemporary research. The exposition also includes core principles for safe practice, a daily 40-minute routine, targeted

interventions for common age-related concerns (balance, arthritis, hypertension, cardio-respiratory disorders, digestion, and cognitive health), and the role of diet, quality of sleep, and inner dimensions. The goal is never performance; the goal is presence.

A Gentle Path to Strength, Calm, and Dignity

It is not about performing extreme postures at an advanced age; it is about sustaining *prana*—the life force—through

mindful breathing, gentle movement, and awareness. Research has shown that a regular, adapted Yoga practice can improve balance, reduce the risk of falls, lower blood pressure, relieve arthritis pain, improve cardio-respiratory efficiency, and support cognitive function in the older population.

The Yogic View of Ageing

Traditional yogic and Ayurvedic texts view ageing as a natural shift in the *gunas* (qualities of nature) and *dhatu*s (tissues). With age, *Vata dosha* tends to increase, bringing dryness, lightness, and instability. The remedy is not to resist ageing but to introduce qualities that balance *Vata*: steadiness, warmth, moisture, and grounding. Yoga brings these qualities through a combination of gentle *yogasana* to improve mobility and strength, *pranayama* to calm and regulate the nervous system, *pratyahara* and *dhyana* to quiet the senses and improve sleep, and *yoganidra* to encourage deep rest and tissue repair. This is why Yoga is often called *sukshma vyayama*—subtle exercise—because while it works on the body, its deeper effects are on the nervous system and mind.

Core Principles for Safe Practice After Age 60

Safety is more important than the shape of a posture after age 60. Two ideas from classical texts and modern practice guide safe, effective work: *sthira sukha* (steady and comfortable) and evidence from geriatric exercise physiology. Move slowly and breathe deeply; if the breath breaks, the practice is too intense. Use supports—chairs, walls, straps, blocks, or a bolster—not as crutches but as tools to make practice accessible and safe.

Avoid sharp pain and respect discomfort: a mild stretch is

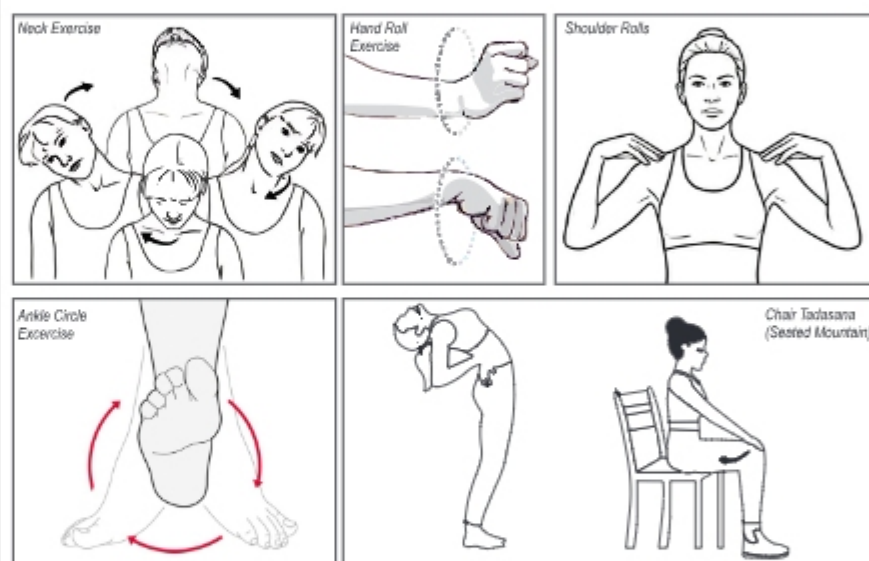
acceptable, but pain is a signal to stop or modify. Prioritise grounding and balance because falls are the leading cause of injury in older people. Practices that strengthen ankles, improve proprioception, and build core awareness should be routine. Finally, give breath and rest priority. A large part of yoga's benefit for elders comes from *pranayama* and relaxation, so do not skip *shavasana* or *yoganidra*.

The Daily 40-Minute Routine

The daily practice begins with a five-minute warm-up performed

to ease spinal stiffness; Chair Warrior II for leg strength and balance; a Gentle Standing Forward Bend to a Chair to release the hamstrings and lower back; *Supta Padangusthasana* with a strap to prevent sciatica; and *Setu Bandhasana* with a bolster to open the chest and strengthen the glutes. Postures to avoid include deep backbends, inversions, and prolonged standing balances without support.

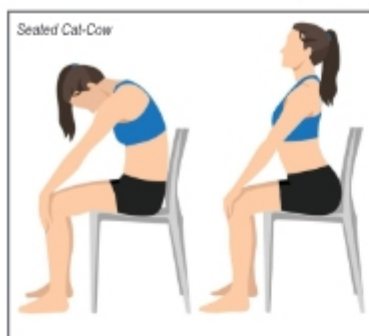
After the *asana* session, spend seven minutes on *pranayama*.



while seated on a chair or the floor, consisting of subtle joint movements (*sukshma vyayama*) like neck rotations, shoulder rolls, wrist circles, ankle rotations, and gentle spinal flexion and extension synchronised with the breath to lubricate the joints and wake up the nervous system.

This is followed by a fifteen-minute *asana* sequence focusing on grounding, hip mobility, and spinal health, where each posture is held for 3–5 breaths. The sequence includes Chair *Tadasana* (Seated Mountain) to build awareness; Seated Cat-Cow

Alternate nostril breathing (*Nadi Sodhana*) for a few rounds calms the mind and balances the brain's hemispheres. *Bhramari*, the humming bee breath, soothes anxiety and can help lower blood pressure, while a short period of diaphragmatic breathing strengthens the diaphragm and activates the vagus nerve. Finish with eight minutes of deep relaxation: *yoganidra* or an extended *shavasana* with a bolster under the knees. Guided body scanning during this time reduces cortisol and helps repair sleep architecture; for many older people, this relaxation



phase is the most transformative part of the practice.

Targeted Practices for Common Age-Related Concerns

Yoga can also target specific age-related concerns. For balance and fall prevention, simple exercises such as heel-toe walking while holding a wall, the tree pose while holding a chair, and ankle strengthening with a towel, done for ten minutes daily, improve proprioception and reduce fall risk. For arthritis and joint pain, a slow *Pawanmuktasana* series—joint-freeing movements done in a supine or seated position—helps, as does a warm oil massage before practice to ease stiffness. For hypertension and anxiety, slow *ujjaya puraka* with *bhramari rechaka*, left-nostril breathing (*candra bheda*), and *yoganidra* are soothing choices; forceful practices such as *kapalabhati* and *bhastrika* should be avoided unless supervised. To ease digestion and constipation, gentle chair twists, knees-to-chest (*pawanmuktasana*), and abdominal breathing are useful when combined with warm water and regular meal times. For cognitive health, concentration practices like *trataka* (short candle gazing) followed by silent sitting and the simple chanting of *Om* can strengthen attention and engage the vagus nerve.

Diet, Sleep, and Lifestyle: The

Unsung Part of Yoga

Asana alone is incomplete without attention to *Ahara* (diet) and *nidra* (sleep). For elders, warm, cooked, easy-to-digest food is preferable. Meals such as khichdi, cooked vegetables, and a moderate use of ghee support digestion; raw, cold, and dry foods may aggravate *Vata* and should be limited.

Prioritise sleep, aiming to sleep before 10 PM when the body performs the most repair between roughly 10 PM and 2 AM. A short session of *yoganidra* in the evening can help. Routine matters: older nervous systems respond well to rhythm, so keeping consistent wake times, meal times, and practice times supports overall health.

The Inner Dimension: Beyond the Body

Beyond the physical, yoga offers an inner resource that can transform the experience of ageing. Practices such as *svadhyaya* (studying uplifting texts), gentle *japa* (repetitive chanting), and brief periods of *mauna* (silence) reduce fear and loneliness. The Vedantic teaching that “I am not the body” becomes practical relief rather than abstract theory when lived through these practices. Yoga helps maintain a sense of self that is not defined by physical decline.

Getting Started: Practical Recommendations

For those beginning, practical steps make the path easier. Seek a teacher trained in yoga therapy or senior yoga; group classes designed for elders provide social support and safety. Start small—fifteen minutes a day is better than an occasional long session; consistency matters more than intensity. Keep a simple journal to track sleep, pain levels, and mood so you can notice subtle progress over time. Involve family where possible: a shared ten-minute breathing practice can strengthen bonds and ease caregiver stress.

Ageing with Dignity

Yoga does not promise eternal youth. It promises *yauvanam*—a youthful quality of mind—at any age. For the elderly, this means waking up without fear of the day, moving without dreading the stairs, and sleeping without battling the mind. The body is a vessel. Yoga ensures the vessel remains steady, clean, and capable of carrying consciousness with grace until the end. As the Hatha Yoga Pradipika states: “Yoga is for all, at all times, at all ages.” The only requirement is to begin, gently, and keep practicing it regularly as part of life, manifesting youthfulness and grace to live to one's full potential. ●

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Bui Trung Thuong,

Counsellor and Head of the Trade Office at the
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

**“The Upgrade to an Enhanced Comprehensive
Strategic Partnership Holds Immense
Significance for Vietnam and India”**

The civilisational ties between India and Vietnam—deeply rooted in a shared Buddhist heritage, historical cultural exchanges, and a mutual struggle for national independence—have entered a historic new era. The year 2026 marks the momentous 10th anniversary of the bilateral Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. This milestone was recently capped by the visit of the top Vietnamese leader, General Secretary and State President To Lam, to New Delhi, where leadership from both nations formally elevated their ties to an “Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership”.

The complementarity between India and Vietnam has transformed economic cooperation into a vital anchor for regional supply chain resilience. In the 2025-2026 fiscal period, India-Vietnam bilateral trade crossed USD 16 billion, representing more than a 10 per cent increase year-on-year. The relationship has traversed a vast distance from massive industrial integrations to deep cooperation in high technology, digital public infrastructure, and clean energy transitions.

To unpack the multi-faceted layers of this growing partnership, Inspire magazine spoke to Mr. Bui Trung Thuong, Counsellor and Head of the Trade Office at the Embassy of Vietnam. During this exclusive conversation, the Counsellor highlights how emerging sectors, economic synergies, and a strong social foundation can further enrich the lives of citizens and professional communities across both nations.

Excerpts from the Interview...

Could you share your perspective on the strategic significance of the elevation of the relationship between India and Vietnam to an Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership?

This is a truly historic milestone that marks a profound strategic breakthrough in our relations. The State Visit of General Secretary and President To Lam, occurring so shortly after the consolidation of Vietnam's top leadership positions, underscores the immense value and priority Vietnam places on its close friendship with India.

As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2016–2026), this upgrade to an Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership signifies that our mutual trust, strategic convergence, and substantive cooperation have reached an all-time high. Our shared outlook aligns perfectly on global and regional priorities.

This new framework charts a course where both nations will work closely together to translate political goodwill into tangible economic, security, and developmental outcomes, directly aiding Vietnam's Vision 2045 and India's Viksit Bharat 2047 development goals.

What specific sectors do you see emerging as the primary engines of India-Vietnam economic ties?

The economic complementarity between the two countries is vast and highly vibrant. We see several crucial sectors driving this growth:

- **Manufacturing and Electric Mobility:** A standout example is Vietnamese EV maker VinFast establishing an electric vehicle manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu, backed by an initial



The upgraded partnership sets a bilateral trade target of USD 25 billion by 2030.

investment commitment of USD 500 million, which is part of a planned USD 2 billion total project infrastructure. This is matched by Vingroup's plans to develop multi-sector ecosystems in India.

- **High-Tech and Digital Economy:** We are establishing frameworks to connect enterprises and start-ups in artificial intelligence, semiconductors, 6G, and digital public infrastructure. This digital expansion leverages India's IT sector and couples it with Vietnam's booming digital sector, which is targeted to contribute 30 per cent to Vietnam's GDP by 2030.

- **Traditional Pillars:** Agriculture, fisheries, and pharmaceuticals remain vital. We have seen expanded market access approvals—such as Indian grapes and pomegranates

entering Vietnam, and Vietnamese durians and pomelos entering India. Furthermore, India supplies nearly 15 per cent of Vietnam's raw pharmaceutical imports, particularly Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs).

- **Industrial Integration:** Textiles, leather, and footwear are becoming major areas for deeper industrial integration as global supply chains diversify. The upgraded partnership places greater emphasis on trade, investment, manufacturing, infrastructure, digital economy, healthcare, logistics, supply chain integration, renewable energy, and cross-border services, and sets a bilateral trade target of USD 25 billion by 2030.

The two countries have agreed to encourage high-quality, two-way investment and facilitate large-scale projects involving major



corporations from both countries. We have also agreed to expand joint oil and gas exploration and production activities, including India's participation in new offshore projects in accordance with Vietnamese and international law.

Efforts to expand the trade and commercial linkages are underway, backed by regular exchange of business delegations, participation in trade fairs and exhibitions, and business meetings. There are several Joint Working Groups (JWG) to enhance this relationship, including the JWG on Agriculture, Health, and Information Technology. In addition, the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) of 2009 is currently under review among ASEAN countries and India, with a shared commitment to complete the review by the end of 2026 to unlock fresh tariff concessions.

How do you envision seasoned, senior professionals and entrepreneurs from India contributing to, and benefiting

from, Vietnam's economic landscape?

Vietnam is entering an exciting new phase of development. Under its national development strategy for 2026–2030, Vietnam aims to achieve average annual GDP growth of 10 per cent or more while maintaining macroeconomic stability and sustainable development. By 2030, the country aspires to become a modern industrial economy with upper-middle-income status and among the world's 30 largest economies. This vision creates unprecedented opportunities for international investors, entrepreneurs, and highly experienced professionals.

This ambition creates significant opportunities for experienced Indian professionals and entrepreneurs. India's strengths in technology, pharmaceuticals, engineering, digital transformation, and advanced manufacturing can contribute meaningfully to Vietnam's growth and modernisation. At the same time, Vietnam offers Indian

businesses a dynamic and rapidly expanding market of more than 100 million people, a highly competitive manufacturing ecosystem, and strategic access to ASEAN's broader market of over 680 million consumers.

The partnership is mutually beneficial, combining India's expertise with Vietnam's growth potential to create shared prosperity and stronger regional connectivity.

What message or vision would you like to share with the readers of Inspire magazine regarding the long-term friendship between India and Vietnam?

My message to the readers of Inspire is one of deep optimism and enduring reassurance. The friendship between Vietnam and India is not merely political or transactional; it is a time-tested, resilient bond built on deep mutual respect and genuine affection.

Both societies hold a profound cultural respect for the wisdom, experience, and guidance of our elders. As we embrace a future driven by rapid digital transformation and innovation, we must continue to anchor ourselves in the values of peace, community service, and sustainable development.

Under our newly elevated Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, Vietnam and India are moving forward hand-in-hand. I am confident that the collective wisdom of our seasoned professionals and senior communities will remain the ultimate guiding light, ensuring that our partnership continues to deliver peace, stability, and prosperity for generations to come. ●



The mind completes the heavy lifting long before the hand ever stirs to act.

We do not stall by planning.

We sharpen our purpose to bypass the pitfalls of haste.

Before the first strike or stitch, we labour in the mind.

Like the carpenter with his wood or the tailor with his tape, we may measure twice to ensure we only ever need to cut once.

The blade offers no mercy once it strikes, so we verify our vision until the path is certain.

We measure twice in the stillness of thought so that we may cut once with the precision of truth.

It is better to walk with intention towards the light than to run blindly into the dark.

Japanese Proverb on the
Value of Long-Term Thinking

*The reputation of a
thousand years may be
determined by the conduct of
one hour.*

This Japanese proverb serves as a powerful reminder of the fragile nature of honour. It expresses a timeless truth: a lifetime of integrity and hard work can be defined—or even undone—by the decisions made in a fleeting hour.

While building trust may take years, even generations, destroying it can take only a moment of poor judgment or lack of principle. This is why the “conduct of one hour” is so powerful—it reveals one’s strength under pressure.

The lives of historical figures often reflect this belief. Great leaders and thinkers may spend years in preparation, yet their legacy is often sealed by a single act of courage or one grave error of judgment—moments that can alter the course of history.

The same holds true for a company’s brand or a person’s career, both of which require constant vigilance. The proverb encourages a culture of pause and reflection, where the long-term impact of a decision is weighed more carefully than immediate gains.

It carries special meaning in an era of instant digital footprints, where a single mistake can be broadcast globally within seconds.

Centuries after such proverbs were spoken, they continue to explain how honour and society are shaped and sustained. We move forward when we respect the time it takes to build a reputation and commit ourselves to the discipline required to maintain it.

NATION FIRST

PM MODI'S 7 APPEALS



Prioritize Work From Home
wherever possible



Avoid buying gold for one year



Reduce petrol & diesel consumption:
use metro/public transport



Cut down the use of cooking oil



Reduce dependence on
chemical fertilizers and **move
toward natural farming**



Use fewer foreign-branded
products and **adopt Swadeshi**



Avoid foreign travel for one year



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ENLIGHTENING MASSES ABOUT EXPERIENCES AND TEACHINGS OF VETERANS

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