

# THE WIMMIAN

Volume: 3 | Issue: 2 | JUNE 2020



Tri-annual

## STORIES FROM THE PANDEMIC

### 55TH ANNUAL CONVOCATION OF IIMA

Convocation Deferred, Institute Lit Up  
LKP With Pictures Of The Graduating  
Students

### SPECIAL FEATURES

'IIM Ahmedabad  
Endowment Fund' and  
Updates from SIGs

### BATCH ACTIVITY

PGP 1968 Batch  
Connects Through  
Photo Album

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THE  
**WIMWIAN**

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alumni.iima.ac.in

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Dear Alumni,

Greetings! I trust you and your loved ones are safe and healthy in these difficult times.

As in other parts of the country and the world, the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the normal activities at the Institute as well. The PGPX programme this year had to be launched online and their classes are still being held in the same mode. The inauguration for the new batch of the doctoral programme was also organized online on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The second year MBA classes will begin on July 6<sup>th</sup> but at least for the first few weeks, the classes will be held online. The new batch of MBA will also have a delayed start. As of now, the classes are expected to begin in early August and that too online to begin with. Executive education programmes have been suspended or rescheduled if they required physical presence of participants. The campus is almost empty with all students away except those in the doctoral programme and some others. It is virtually impossible to predict how the future will unfold. But both faculty and students have to slowly get used to online teaching. We will need to continuously experiment to find new ways to make teaching sessions as engaging and meaningful as they were during the pre-Covid days.

In these challenging times, the IIMA community has made us proud by actively engaging in relief activities as well as in analytical debates around the pandemic. Faculty members have actively written about various issues around the pandemic and have contributed to better understanding of the issues. Alumni have been involved in many impact making endeavours to provide relief and support those who have been adversely affected by the pandemic. Current students have also done their bit. This issue carries some stories to capture this spirit of giving and the experiences of alumni and others in the IIMA community. We live in very uncertain times but I am sure all of you are doing your bit in dealing with the crisis, especially for those who need our help the most. We feel proud of your contributions to meet this enormous challenge.

The batch that passed out this year could not experience the warmth, ceremony and majesty of the convocation. It is not clear as of now if we will be able to celebrate their passing out in the near future. The team of Dean (AER)'s office was not even able to meet and interact with the outgoing batch but we hope to get an opportunity soon.

I am happy to report that the idea of Alumni Special Interest Groups (SIGs) is slowly taking root and many of them are organising a variety of activities to enhance the engagement with alumni. This issue reports on some of these activities.

Your Alma Mater created a benchmark by launching on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the first Endowment Fund by a management school in India. The Fund has been seeded with a commitment of INR 100 crores by Founding Alumni Members. We hope to raise INR. 1000 crores over a period of five years. Under the guidance of the IIMA Board of Governors, the endowment fund will be managed by an independent Endowment Committee consisting of initial alumni contributors and the Director and Dean (Alumni and External Relations – AER) of IIMA, in their ex-officio capacity. The setting up of the endowment would not only add significantly to its autonomy but will also enable IIMA to make a larger impact in the field of education, entrepreneurial leadership, management practice and public policy. I am really hopeful that the independent and transparent structure of the Fund will help IIMA engage more actively with its alumni and provide them with a platform to meaningfully participate in shaping the future of their alma mater.

I really hope that my next editorial would be written in more 'normal' times. Meanwhile please stay safe and healthy. Please take good care of yourself and your loved ones.

Warm regards,  
**Rakesh Basant**  
Professor of Economics  
Dean, Alumni and External Relations

# CONVOCATION



## CONVOCATION DEFERRED, INSTITUTE LIT UP LKP WITH PICTURES OF THE GRADUATING STUDENTS

The 55th Annual Convocation of the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) was scheduled for March 21, 2020. In view of the advisories issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the World Health Organization to avoid large gatherings since the eruption of the COVID-19 virus,

the institute decided to defer the Annual Convocation for this year. The decision was taken to preclude any risks to students, their extended families and friends, as well as the faculty and employees of the institute. The respective programme offices coordinated with the graduating students for the receipt of their degrees.

### Students Graduating at the 55th Annual Convocation at IIMA

MBA (Batch 18-20)	415
MBA-FABM (Batch 18-20)	45
MBA-PGPX (Batch 2019-20)	140
PhD	15
TOTAL	615
Gold Medallist at the 55th Annual Convocation (PGP 18-20)	Aaditya Agarwal Jobalia Jinesh Rajendra Kartikey Gupta
Gold Medallist at the 55th Annual Convocation (PGPX 19-20)	Ananth Krishnan

As the spirit of the IIMA community is always high and they are prepared for volatility, on March 21 2020, the institute lit up the historic red-bricked Louis Kahn Plaza with the pictures of graduating students of the PhD, MBA, MBA-FABM and MBA-PGPX programmes. It is true when it is said that the setbacks can claim convocation

ceremonies, but not the spirit of a convocation.

With immense pride, the IIMA community congratulates the Class of 2020 and wishes them a successful career ahead!

# CONVOCATION



MBA (Batch 2018-20)



MBA-PGPX (Batch 2019-20)

# CONVOCAATION





*MBA-FABM (Batch 2018-20)*



*Ph.D. Programme in Management - The students faced extenuating and exceptional circumstances, being unable to be together for a group photograph due to the pandemic.*

CONVOCATION



# OTHER COURSES OF THE INSTITUTE



*The valediction function of the Armed Forces Programme (AFP) batch of 2019-20 was also cancelled due to COVID-19.*



*The 2019 batch of Faculty Development Programme (FDP)*

# LOUIS KAHN ARCHITECTURE – IIM AHMEDABAD

## AN ALUMNUS PERSPECTIVE AFTER 30 YEARS

*Narrative shared by Mr Amit Gupta (PGP 1990), also a Current Fellow at Distinguished Career Institute, Stanford University. He can be reached at amitgupta.iim@gmail.com. He blogs on www.amitsecondchance.com.*

It is a salubrious spring morning with gorgeous blue North California skies, bright sunshine and a crisp 12 degrees Celsius. I take a deep yoga breath and imbue fresh oxygen and dollops of Vitamin D. I am standing on Palm Drive overlooking Stanford Oval, watching young men and women scurry in various directions. Some are headed towards their class in Jordan Hall, others rush to Cubberley Auditorium. Many precariously perched on bicycles and skateboards, zoom to Gates Building or the School of Medicine. Purposeful, brimming with youthful energy and completely oblivious to the ephemeral nature of the moment, without a foreboding clue of the looming shutdown.

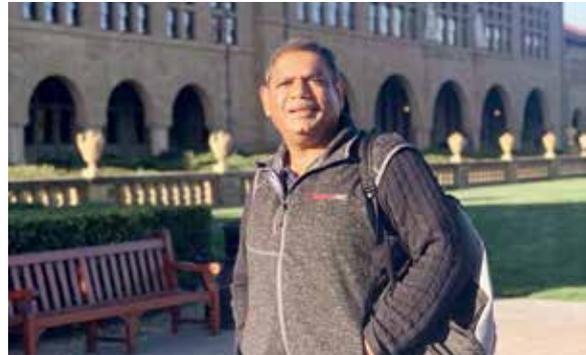
My memory flashes back 30 years to February 1990 as I walk up Stanford ramp at Vastrapur. To my college days at IIM Ahmedabad, to the times of yore, to the beautiful campus designed by American Architect Louis Isadore Kahn.

The architecture both reflected and influenced the tastes of our times. It represented our temple of learning, unfinished yet concrete, antique yet modern - an icon of high stress, enigmatic yet aesthetic.

Looking back on it with rose tinted glasses, the 'unfinished' campus look was symbolic of young student lives being shaped in the two years we spent at IIM. Akin to an artist's use of a kiln to harden ceramic objects and finish them into items of *value* (note I did not say *beauty*).

Ancient civilisations like the Romans used rounded arches extensively to span large, open areas. As an innovative variation, Gothic architecture used pointed arches for taller, more closed spaces. The arches of Louis Kahn in the campus corridors represented long tunnels - symbolizing our escape as we burrowed for two years of our lives, unsure if we would ever make it through. Almost miraculously, each one of us did - hardened, standing tall and ready to take on the world!

For the engineering students, the geometric shaped buildings were familiar and welcoming. Harvard Steps and the Stanford ramp were apt symbols of higher education,



*Relishing the quest for knowledge, Second Innings at Stanford University (Feb 2020)*

an important gradient towards a lifelong successful career.

But during the two years we spent at IIM, we had no such appreciation. More realistically, the brick walls in our dormitories were a furnace in the hot Ahmedabad weather for over 9 months of the year. That certainly served to intensify the academic pressure, so much so that the starkness of the architecture gave us plenty of ideas to bang our head against the wall in desperation and frustration. Nights seemed very short and often I would wake up perspiring profusely and hallucinating about the walls of my room closing in on me. On some days, the feeling was worse than being cloistered in a small prison cell. While we were there, we knew the architecture was distinctive but it did not appear particularly appealing.

**For me, the only exceptions were the large lush green lawns where I played a lot of frisbee, the quaint and pretty mounds of grass around the dorms and the grandeur of Louis Kahn Plaza. The majestic convocation ceremony at the pristine LKP was certainly the denouement of our two years.**

Three decades later, after a long and rewarding corporate career, I am privileged to be back to school to another great Institution - for renewing purpose and personal Renaissance.

# COVID-19 RESPONSE AT IIMA: IDEAS & ACTION

([covid19.iima.ac.in](http://covid19.iima.ac.in))

*In these challenging times, the IIMA community has made us proud by actively engaging in relief activities as well as the analytical debates around the pandemic. The details to all such activities from the IIMA community are well reflected through research articles, general articles, webinars, podcasts, media reports and glimpse to community outreach at [covid19.iima.ac.in](http://covid19.iima.ac.in)*

**F**aculty members have actively written about various issues around the pandemic and have contributed to better understanding of the issues.

The **Students Affairs Council** has been actively working with faculty and research staff of the Institute to provide food and financial support to families of children who attend classes at **Prayaas** and **SMILE** and those with whom the **Right to Education Resource Centre** engages with as part of their activities. Local IIMA community and alumni elsewhere have contributed to this endeavour. As a part of this effort, a group of faculty and research staff has also been collecting data on the changing needs of the underprivileged population.

**CIIE at IIMA** (<http://ciie.co/>) has actively participated in the **ACT Fund** (<https://actgrants.in/>) which has been created by India's start-up community to support ideas that could combat Covid-19. In addition, they have supported provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Ahmedabad Police and Municipal workers, face shields for Rajasthan Police Force and sustenance to needy families in Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Bengaluru.

The **alumni community** has also been very active. Many alums have contributed to the cause individually and have helped raise resources from other alumni and the general public. Many are also helping in several other ways including helping to shape the response to the crisis by being actively involved in making sure the country's preparedness with respect to medicine

production and availability is as best as can be under the circumstances, designing and 3D printing PPE kits, developing the public policy response for the crisis as well as for the post-covid period, etc. There have been umpteen number of such initiatives, largely proving the enormous efforts that the community has taken and is taking during this pandemic.

The **Hyderabad IIMA Alumni Chapter** organized a novel initiative to help senior alumni in the city as well as parents of all IIMA alumni who are living in Hyderabad.

Two **social organizations founded by alumni** - **Safe in India and Manzil** - are collaborating to provide relief to the marginalized. They have been feeding about 5000 people daily. ([www.safeinindia.org/blog](http://www.safeinindia.org/blog))

An **alumni initiative, Smiles for All** has partnered with KAUSHALYA Foundation to provide dry rations to the affected families which is equivalent to about 500,000 meals. (<https://bit.ly/2y9F3Oo>)

We are living in uncertain times but we are sure that each of us are doing their bit in dealing with the crisis, especially for those who need our help the most. Your alma mater is doing its best to play its role as an academic institution in such situations and also undertake social outreach to the extent it is possible. We feel proud of your contributions to meet this enormous challenge and in building a growing economy and a just society.

## Supporting Local Communities

On March 24th, 2020, the Government of India announced a nationwide lockdown as a preventive measure to contain the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. The lockdown hit those with low incomes, dependent on earnings from daily labour hardest. Recognizing this, a group of faculty, staff, students and researchers associated with a UNICEF project at the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) formed a team of volunteers to immediately assist those in need.

The team has worked with community based volunteers and organisations to try and bring some relief to those left particularly vulnerable by the lockdown. While doing so, we have also tried to systematically document and share the conditions of these households with reports to generate greater public awareness and mobilize responses from other stakeholders.

The goal has been to reach out to those falling through the cracks of government and other efforts. As of June 3rd 2020, the team has been able to reach out to over 1500 such families providing them ration and a small amount of money for sustenance primarily.

Over the months, the means of intervention have evolved, often informed by surveys and detailed conversations with volunteers. At each stage, we have tried to gather as much information as we could to re-design the efforts and be responsive to changing needs and circumstances.

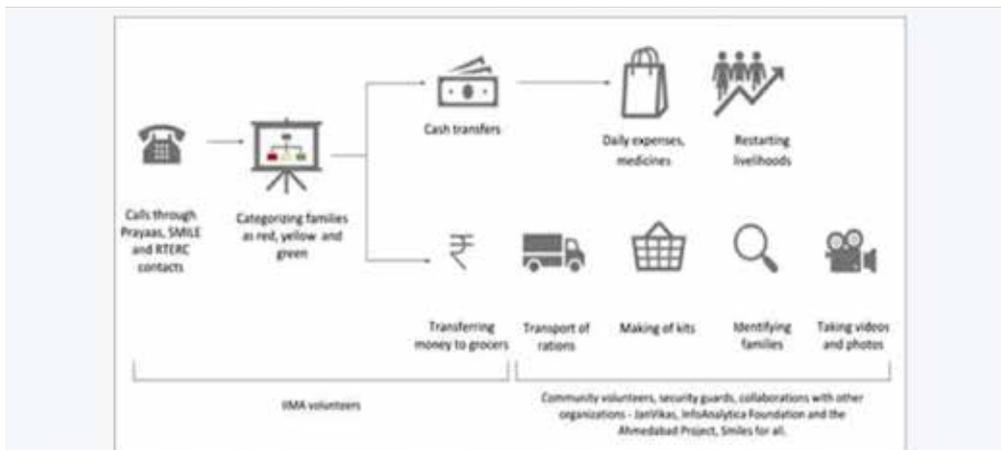


## Identifying need

"Targeting is costly. You try to target, you miss the right people often because they are the poorest of the poor", said Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee.

Community volunteers are mostly residents of the areas we have worked in and they have been helping us in coordinating the efforts on the field. It is by all means the efforts of community volunteers and trust that they have built in their communities over the years that enables us to work. While holding detailed conversations about identification, we have over the process come to primarily rely on them for identifying beneficiaries.

We hope that by creating a network of community volunteers, communities are strengthened and not dependent on external assistance. The immediate provisioning of food and money is essential but hopefully part of a larger process.



The Process: While the process has evolved, some basic elements are depicted above

<Original source to content and more details at - [covid19.iima.ac.in](https://covid19.iima.ac.in)>

## IIMA ALUMNI GIVE BACK

*Led by the 2005 batch, IIMA Alumni from Batches 1992 to 2020 come together to lend support to Community & Government during the pandemic*

A special story of how simply sharing the same hallways, living in the same dorms and the fact that at one point of time, IIM Ahmedabad was home to us all, was enough to unite people from batches across 1992 to 2020. We as IIMA Alumni, came together to do our bit in the Covid Crisis.

**Food Relief** In collaboration with KAUSHALYA Foundation, BigBasket, RazorPay and Eko financial services we provided dry ration kits to daily wage workers and migrant labourers. From April 1st to June 15th, we have collected over 3 crores, to provide over 500,000 Kgs of ration, which is equivalent to over 3 million meals. More than 31,000 families have been aided across 11 cities and we hope to get to 5 Million meals.

**Funding and Manufacturing PPE** Sharat Chandra from the 2005 batch, who founded Butterfly Fields and the class of 2005 was crowdfunded INR 28 lacs to provide funding to enable one lac face shields and over one thousand aerosol boxes were manufactured and given to various hospitals and frontline workers.

**Data Analytics** What started as just a basic model made overnight to predict the movement of the pandemic, turned out as an independent consulting unit with a comprehensive model, that regularly interfaced throughout the lockdown period with several state governments aiding in capacity planning. Working with a team of consultants from Arete Advisors, we provided valuable inputs to the government regarding capacity planning for hospitals, movement of the curve and creation of a daily dashboard. This has greatly helped senior officials across states to get accurate estimates on the covid case growth, plan capacities and institute enhanced testing.

**Creative Mass Communication** Simple yet effective communication was what we needed to educate and encourage the masses to take necessary precautions. Shri Piyush Pandey and his team, who we collaborated with, put together and executed three primary campaigns as follows,

1. Mask Force campaign with national cricketers
2. 'Setu Mera Bodyguard' campaign with Mr. Ajay Devgn
3. Campaign with Shri Amitabh Bachchan addressing the societal stigma attached with Covid

We worked closely on enabling the creatives as well as the promotion of the Aarogya Setu App. Detailed media plans and strategies were fleshed out for the promotion of the app to make it cross the 10 crore mark.

**Research for Testing and Global Best Practices** There was a growing need for research on best practices on testing, availability of tests, organisations manufacturing testing kits, quantity needed, efficacy of the test across various stages of the virus, best practices for community testing and several other pressing questions. A lot of literature research was done by the team and presented to the government to help create a deeper understanding and drive efforts accordingly

**Policy Advice** The best consulting minds of the 2005 batch stepped in to create comprehensive decks highlighting procedures for reopening of the economy, safety protocols in different sectors such as manufacturing, healthcare and travel to name a few.

This new model of volunteering and leading projects during a time of crisis and seeing them to fruition is something that shows the power and capability of our Alumni Network. Many people from the government and volunteers from outside the IIMA community have been part of these efforts as well, who have not been named, but none of the above would have been possible without their efforts.

*<Details and full article available at [wimwian.iima.ac.in](http://wimwian.iima.ac.in)>*

# HUNGRY MINDS HELPING FEED HUNGRY BELLIES

By Aaditya Agarwal (PGP 2020)

The unprecedented lockdown that continued for months in India has had many of us seeking different things, depending on our socio-economic standing - some are seeking skills to face the new realities of the brave new world, and then some are worried if they will survive long enough to see that world; the former have hungry minds, the latter hunger bellies.

Amidst the chaos of these times, a team of volunteers from IIM Ahmedabad has been assisting on the front line to help those which they call, and rightly so, “those who have fallen between the cracks of Government efforts and those of other civil societies”. It has been heartening that IIM Ahmedabad volunteers span various relationships with campus: There are the campus committees, RTERC, Prayaas, and SMILE led by PGP and PGP-FABM students, PhD Scholars, Research Associates, Academic Associates and others. They have all been working through community volunteers and have been actively involved in fund raising efforts for the work on the ground. The rest of the IIMA community has responded enthusiastically to their call for fundraising.

One such source of funds was an initiative by Aaditya Agarwal, Gold Medallist of Class of 2020. In the early days of the lockdown, he had tried to raise funds for a Delhi-based feeding initiative through individual messaging to people, but had met with limited success in terms of his fundraising targets. This was also a phase when he received a few messages from excited incoming B-School students on tips to solve case interview questions - something he had been training students for through his workshops since October 2015. He thought of using his workshops as a source of fundraising for the efforts of the IIMA community.

Aaditya received not only a green signal from the volunteer team to do a workshop in association with them but also received a lot of logistical support. The efforts resulted in a 5-hour workshop over 2-days, 30th and 31st May, conducted by Aaditya wherein he covered



many different case-solving techniques. The workshop saw the participation of 113 learning enthusiasts, with very positive feedback from the participants, and resulted in fundraise of INR 1, 19, 193. All of the funds directly went to the Prayaas’s bank account and have been mobilized to buy ration kits for those in need.

However, many of us associated with the effort feel that the real success of the workshop initiative will be when we see more such efforts materializing from others. In this world of information overload, there are enough hungry minds who want the right kind of nutrition and in this unequal world, there are more than enough hungry bellies - we can serve both together in our own small way.

*Anyone wishing for more information about the ration access initiative or wishing to collaborate with them, can get in touch with [rterc@iima.ac.in](mailto:rterc@iima.ac.in)*

# A SELF-CHALLENGING LOCKDOWN

Shared by Mr Sunil Chainani (PGP 1980)

DISTANCE CALCULATOR			
Start	End	Distance	Cumulative
KanyaKumari	Madurai	245	245
Madurai	Salem	235	480
Salem	Bangalore	202	682
Bangalore	Anantapur	214	896
Anantapur	Hyderabad	359	1255
Hyderabad	Adilabad	305	1560
Adilabad	Nagpur	196	1756
Nagpur	Sagar	388	2144
Sagar	Jhansi	202	2346
Jhansi	Gwalior	102	2448
Gwalior	Agra	120	2568
Agra	Delhi	231	2799
Delhi	Ludhiana	310	3109
Ludhiana	Pathankot	172	3281
Pathankot	Srinagar	331	3612
Srinagar	Kargil	202	3814



As my colleagues know, one of my greatest passions is sports and in particular long distance running. So the lockdown threw up a huge challenge - I love running outdoors, and so do not possess a home gym. And even though Bangalore is not as badly affected as many other cities in India, I was being careful and did not run outdoors till curbs eased in early May.

I needed to challenge myself to do something - and so in the last 2 months initiated 2 challenges to spur myself and some of my athletic friends.

## CHALLENGE 1 - LOCKDOWN 29029 CHALLENGE

The objective was to climb the height of Mount Everest (29029 feet) in your own premises. This meant climbing (and descending) 2500-3000 floors depending on the height of your floor, with only the ascents counting. In my house the height of the first level is about 11 feet so I needed to climb 2700 floors. I asked some of my athletic friends to join me, and promised that for each successful climb I would

donate a small sum to a charity which was helping feed guest workers affected by the lockdown.

We started on 13 April and set a goal of finishing by the end of the month. 15 persons registered for the challenge - some of the others who joined the challenge included seasoned climbers and a few members of the Indian Ultra marathon team.

I started slowly and managed about 1500 feet on Day 1 - climbing up and down stairs can be truly monotonous, but it helps to have a goal. We set up a Google spreadsheet to monitor each persons progress.

On Day 2, I managed 3000 feet and increased this to about 3600 feet on Day 3. This gave me the confidence that I could finish in 10 days. One of the things I realised is that the staircase is one area which is not cooled and so going up and down is a very 'sweaty' task.

With growing confidence I managed about 4000

# COVER STORY

“ We reached our destination on Day 10 (30th May) - and raised Rs 70000 which was donated to local charities. ”

feet on day 4 and about 5000 feet on Day 5 and 6 - so started day 7 at about 22000 feet with 7000 feet to go - expected to do this in 2 days as my legs were weary by then.....started early on April 19th and managed about 3000 feet before breakfast and felt I could do another 1000 feet that day - when I restarted the hope of summiting soon got me going and I so pushed myself to summit on day 7, much ahead of my expectations.

The learning - when you set yourself a goal, you can mentally push yourself to get it!!

## CHALLENGE 2 - VIRTUAL KANYAKUMARI-KARGIL RUN (3814 KM)

Over the last few years I have accompanied the Indian Ultra marathon teams as Manager/Crew member for several international events. You can imagine how tough it is for such athletes to be stuck at home for a long period!!

When things started to open up, we decided to challenge ourselves to run a cumulative distance of 3814 km within 15 days - the challenge was restricted to those who had run/been crew for the Indian teams.

We started our journey on 21st May and aimed to finish latest by 4th June - and me and a running friend promised to contribute to a charity a sum for completion on time plus a bonus for each day we finished early.

The route map is enclosed in the attached map.

27 runners participated but on any day we had between 15 and 25 runners on the road - some could not run regularly due to weather conditions or curfew. All runners were advised to take precautions - wear masks if close to other walkers/runners, washing hands etc.

The team rose to the challenge and we started



Over 20 runners contributed to this run - a true team effort. The team can now enjoy the scenery and the cool weather in Ladakh after running through the sweltering heat in Central India.

THE TOP CONTRIBUTORS WERE:		
Rank	Name	Kms
1	Pranaya	358.1
2	Manoj	307
3	Abhinav	295.03
4	Sunil Sharma	282.5
5	Vikas	260
6	Sunil Chainani	214
7	Shymala	210
8	Hemant	172.6
9	Binay	163.91
10	Vishal	148
11	Cunjan	136
12	Lillas	114
13	Naganaj Adiga	111
14	Ajit	110.8
15	Suman	109
16	Kieren	101.87
17	Satpal	101



The team effort has helped raise Rs 70000 towards charities that will support some of those affected by the affects of Covid.

with covering about 280 km on Day 1 and this built up to a peak of 480 km on Day 8. It was amazing to see the infectious energy of our runners as we pushed each other on - details were logged into a spreadsheet available to all the runners.

We reached our destination on Day 10 (30th May) - and raised Rs 70000 which was donated to local charities. I ran a total of 214 km in the 10 days and was placed 6th among the team - this is easily the maximum I have ever run in a spell of 10 days, and it is thankfully due to having a goal in mind and constant encouragement from my teammates.

During the lockdown period, I have heard many complain about losing fitness/putting on weight - but if you are determined, you can find a way to stay fit. I have, in fact, shed almost 4-5 kg and probably am at my lightest weight in the past 2 decades!!

# CROSSING BARRIERS AND BRIDGING CULTURES THROUGH TOY THEATRES

*As soon as the editorial team of The WIMWIAN called out for cover stories, there was a story we received the very same day with a message 'I am currently stranded overseas in Ethiopia and waiting for my repatriate flight back to India. I am under quarantine and my story is about how I made it productive and how we must all be optimistic.' The message was from Capt. Abhishek Pai (MDP 2011).*

*Here, Capt. Pai shares a beautiful narrative on his perspective and experience with Toy Theatres, bringing so much come alive from the world of historic puppetry art.*

**T**he Glass Half-Full Attitude with a Birds' Eye View! Nature had started her World War 3. The seriousness was hidden. Millions like myself had already made vacation plans to Europe to enjoy spring break. Madam Corona was already released. She too, was on her own world tour. Our new visitor did not go unnoticed. Her epidemic was now a pandemic. This was exactly the time her master, Mother Nature spoke to us. In her stern and chilling message she said, "You are not necessary. The air, earth, water and sky without you are fine and even better. When you come back, remember that you are my guests, not my masters." The world finally saw its doomsday.

Within hours of realization, countries were going under lockdown. Flights were cancelled overnight and millions were stranded overseas. Thank God for my good karma, I managed to get a ticket back home to India via Ethiopia – The Land of Arc of the Covenant. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how you view the world, on landing in Addis, my connecting flight to Bombay was cancelled indefinitely and my country encountered the worlds' strictest lockdown. In all situations I have always seen a glass 'half-full' never 'half-empty'.

My 'half-full glass' attitude comforted me as I sipped on a volcanic blend of coffee with a local, only to realize that coffee was first discovered here. As sunset neared, I looked out for the Banded Barbets flocking to reclaim the large, leafy tree they had abandoned a few years ago. The Wattle Ibis were back in the valley while hundreds of White winged cliff-chats creating an annoying din as I thought to myself and smiled, 'this is their world too and we will survive the war with Madam Corona. Each city will get back the soul it was born with'. When we find ourselves in crisis, our vision tends to narrow onto the challenge



and we lose the bigger picture perspective on our lives. Being a Private Pilot helps me navigate any challenge as I perceive a situation from a birds' eye view and then dive down into each area where I can be proactive and productive. How we choose to spend our time and energy will determine how smoothly and successfully we progress through this unsavory situation. And a cup of strong coffee is a bonus!

**Untouched Opportunity: Toy-Theater reaches Ethiopia!** The volcanic coffee blends gradually helped me settle down in my karmic abode. As days passed into weeks and into months, I realized the Abyssinian culture had more differences than similarities to my Hindustani culture. It is a clear known fact that commonalities unite



people better and the 'adult entertainment' spoke one language throughout our world. This led me to wonder, 'What would you do, when your one week vacation in Europe gets extended to a three months adventure in Africa?' This was the 'Eureka' moment. I decided to collaborate and showcase 'Kamasutra' theatrically through the medium of a customized Ethiopian Toy Theater that I handcrafted during my stay. The base of the orchestra is adorned with ancient linguistic Ge'ez scriptures while the proscenium and the curtain design reflects the Axumite Iconography from the innermost sanctum of the Coptic Church.

One may not speak Amharic, Hindi or English, but the silent language of sexual drama, through theater, is understood by all. Kamasutra is a universal language and is a perfect formula to bridge cultures and to collaborate adult communities together. Being a Jack of many trades, an academic, a pilot, an architectural miniaturist; I have enjoyed curating stage design the most and always wanted to dabble into 'Adult Toy

Theater'. This was an excellent Karmic opportunity. I had once again created my own space and owned it.

The project finally came to fruition at Addis's iconic Zebra Art Gallery. The proprietor is also a famed auctioneer, and helped me cross paths with Ethiopia's celebrated Iconographer Gebre Merha. His color palettes captivate ones soul like no other. The triad bonded over history, restoration, taxidermy and ebbing art forms including the glamorous world of Toy Theaters. We ended up discussing collaborative economic paradigms and liaisons with my newly owned 'White House Gallery' back home. The business alliance is not only between two art galleries or between two countries, but also between individuals who respect each other culturally expressing gratitude, thereby endorsing solidarity during this mammoth crisis. This collaboration proves to all humanity that no matter what challenges strike our race, we as evolved humans need to evoke the humility that exits deep down within us.

My suitcase is now not only filled with cherished memories and newer partnerships, but also carries with it the realization of true essence of freedom. It is this freedom that we humans have taken for granted. As I await for my departure across the pond, I am less worried about sharing a seat with Madam Corona, and more excited about sharing my blessed moments with my loved ones back home. Cheers to our new beginnings and to the expanding Toy Theater aficionados across the globe.

# VOLUNTEERING FOR THE GOI'S COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

*Akshay Ravi (PGP 2011) is a part of Areté Advisors, a boutique advisory firm with significant expertise in the Healthcare delivery sector. Joining the war against COVID-19 in the country, he volunteered to work closely with a group of like-minded individuals, with encouragement from the Secy, Electronics and IT, who heads one of the Empowered Groups formed by the MHA. During the last 10 weeks, this core team of volunteers has actively provided inputs to numerous states and Officers and helped in building a shared understanding of the pandemic status across regions and capacity requirements.*

The pandemic of COVID-19 has engulfed the entire world, posing serious challenges for the health and economic security of millions of people worldwide. Early on in March, when the total detections were relatively lower in India, the Government initiated steps to understand and manage the COVID-19 situation.

One of the steps undertaken was the creation of 11 Empowered Groups of Officers on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2020 vide the Ministry of Home Affairs Order No. 40-3/2020-DM-I(A), to synchronise efforts cutting across various Ministries/Departments. These Groups were empowered to identify problem areas and provide effective solutions, therefore delineate policy, formulate plans, strategize operations and take all necessary steps for effective and time-bound implementation of these plans, policies, strategies and decisions in their respective areas.

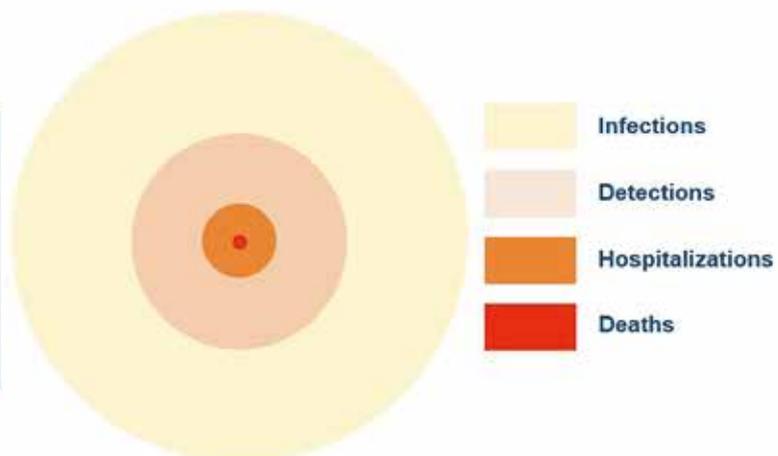
Around the first week of April, Akshay Ravi got introduced by Mr Ravishankar Iyer (PGP 2005) and

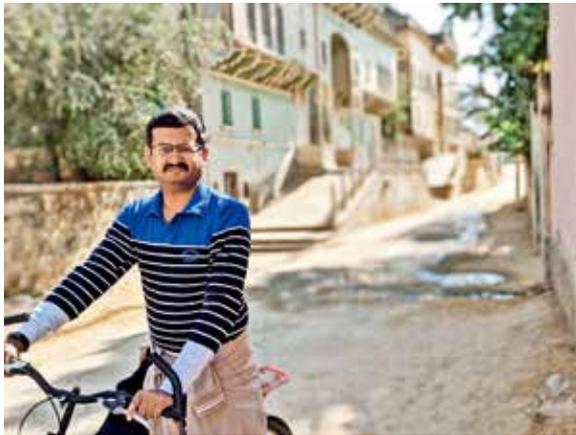
Mr Vipul Kedia (PGP 2005) to the Secy, Electronics and IT, Govt of India who heads one of the Empowered Groups.

During the last 10 weeks, the core team, which includes Akshay, has, with the encouragement and feedback of the Secy, been actively involved in providing inputs to various State Governments (4 states on a regular engagement basis) in addition to specific Officers in the Central Government. The team has also been constantly refining their work and inputs based on feedback received from several reputable epidemiologists and scientists in the country. Inputs provided have focused on:

1. Understanding infection spread within the state - estimating likely infections, the subset of detections and transmission rates
2. Modelling likely scenarios for spread within the state - projections from the Group are being actively used for policy making now in at least 3 states
3. Assessing infrastructure requirements (w.r.t.

Key Ratios	
Infection Fatality Ratio	$= \frac{\text{Deaths}}{\text{Infections}}$
Case Fatality Ratio	$= \frac{\text{Deaths}}{\text{Detections}}$
Detection Ratio	$= \frac{\text{Detections}}{\text{Infections}}$





Oxygen beds, ICU beds, Ventilators and Manpower) and thus, likely demand-supply mismatch for key urban centres/districts - 3 states, so far, have initiated ramp-up of bed capacity in line with the Group's projections

4. Optimally utilizing and scaling testing capacity - determining additional sampling needs for high contact personnel, asymptomatic suspects and high-risk population cohorts by cluster; 3 states have, so far, expanded their testing beyond the suggested symptomatic only testing regime and have been able to lower transmission rates within their state

5. Designing a revamped Monitoring metrics system to move administrations towards higher detections and lower mortality

According to him, "The experience so far has been humbling, challenging and inspirational. I have been pleasantly surprised at the quantum of effort and time put in by various senior officers in trying to understand the nuances of this problem and hence debate potential solutions and scenarios. It has been an immensely gratifying experience in building a better shared understanding of detections versus infections, the importance of monitoring and understanding COVID-19 deaths well and the perils of basing decisions on just detections. For the states which have internalized these concepts well, it has also been heartening to witness the positive impact on the ground through rapid and effective action taken on testing and creation of infrastructure.

The Covid-19 pandemic has posed to be a new challenge, with the world and India also constantly updating its understanding of how the virus behaves. In this context, factoring in the invisible, the asymptomatic, undetected spreaders and balancing the pandemic curve against a region's health infrastructure and preparedness has been a tight rope act and one of the biggest challenges facing all administrations. There is still a long way to go for the country - there are no easy answers; how we balance the economic versus health trade-offs, the societal versus individual risks, the infrastructure and manpower capacities against stress on the system will define how we come out of this pandemic."



**A**rt is something that has been close to us for years, but with various academic commitments always looming, it was difficult to accommodate this hobby in our daily lives. However, since the lockdown was announced, there was so much uncertainty and anxiety around what would happen next, art became the perfect solace for us. We have been painting now more than ever and experimenting with different media. We recently ventured into digital

art and have been completely engrossed by it. This design is our minimalistic, digital version of one of the most famous pieces of art - The Starry Night by Vincent Van Gogh. His quote – "For my part, I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of the stars makes me dream." perfectly fit how we have felt during the lockdown and motivated to create more every day. - **Shared by Arushi and Gauri from Sketchy Artists**

# SOCIAL MEDIA IN LOCKDOWN

Contributed by Ms Amrita Bhinder (MDP 2008), a columnist and social activist

They say be careful of what you ask for, lest you get it! Many of us dreamt of days when technology could do most of the heavy-lifting for us and we got more time at home instead of being out on the road wading through traffic. Somewhere most of us hoped that life would slow down for some work-life balance in this madding world. The onslaught of the Coronavirus Pandemic has turned our world upside down and we are still coming to terms with it.

Most of us had been anticipating a major shift in the way the world exists as our everyday life did seem unsustainable given our ever-increasing carbon footprint and our work-life imbalance, both of which are quite indicative of the ecological and societal disarray. Now, owing to the lockdown restrictions posed by this contagious pandemic (COVID-19), social distancing and such, for the past few months, work from home has become a reality for many of us and technology has come into play with full force - be it video calls for work, connecting with friends and family, contactless and cashless transaction, and much more. Thanks to an ever-increasing digital readiness, work and life continues as usual to the extent imaginable in times of crisis.

In the nation wide lockdown, I, too, got a sense of the 'all-important' role technology could play when I used social media platform, Twitter by flagging a delay in the supply of medicines to my neighbourhood chemist, to the Chief Minister of Haryana's Twitter account. As I'm a Type 1 Diabetic, I keep an eye out for insulin stocks and my local chemist had run out of stock as he said that his delivery was getting delayed due to the travel restrictions on cross border movement. Fearing a shortage of insulin for not only myself but also others in the neighbourhood, I felt that the authorities could issue clarifications as a matter of abundant caution, just in case some police personnel did not understand directions around 'essential' commodities. Not only did I get a response within minutes assuring that the issue would be looked into, and if need be, they also offered to provide insulin. I also got a follow-up message from a police official clarifying that they had given clear instructions to allow essential items including medicines. They told me that if I came across any more of such issues,

I could reach out. I'm happy to report that I haven't faced any shortage of medicines at our local drug store since.



Social media makes it possible for people to seek help beyond physical distances. In another such instance, I was marked on a tweet where an ambulance was required to shift a Cancer patient from Belagavi to Bengaluru. While the District Collector's permission was taken by the concerned party, it was at 1 am when this emergency arose. I tweeted to the Bengaluru Police's Twitter handle along with the city's commissioner of Police as well as the Union Health Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan. Within a few minutes, Bengaluru Police responded by marking the state's Department of Information and Public Relations COVID-19 team, which informed that it was in contact with the person and assistance would be provided. Thereafter, we were updated by the official Twitter handle @DIPR\_covid19 that the patient was en route to Bengaluru in an ambulance and if any further assistance was needed one could reach out.

Until a few weeks ago, many of us couldn't have even imagined that we would be using social media beyond updating LinkedIn or connecting with friends. For most of us, it'd be stretching our imagination to think that we'd be using social media to connect with local authorities for a real-time resolution of our issues or others'. And now during this pandemic, we are regularly seeing social media users, from friends and family to celebrities and governments, using these platforms to connect, inform and render aid to those in need.

This might be the first time any living generation has experienced a pandemic of this scale, and we still have a lot to learn. I have seen many unexpected upsides such as the I mentioned here. I have seen a change in our working environment for the better in just a matter of months. Ready or not, the Internet of Things is now a way of life for most of us across our personal and professional spheres. During these difficult times, we must resolve to help and support others, be they family members, members of our community. After all, socially distanced as we may be, we're all in this together.

# MANAGING THE POWER DISTRIBUTION THROUGH SMART METERING: AN IMPACT STORY

By Mr Anil Rawal (PGPPMP 2008), CEO, IntelliSmart Infrastructure Private Limited  
(A JV of NIIF and EESL)

**Introduction** The Power industry stands on 3 pillars - Generation, Transmission and Distribution. While each pillar ensures in maintaining the demand and supply of power, it is the distribution sector that is the paymaster to the whole power value chain. Ironically, these paymasters of Indian power sector have been bleeding due to several inefficiencies and losses (Known as Aggregate Technical and Commercial or AT&C Losses), since independence despite multitude of bail out plans over the years.

The average billing efficiency in India is approximately 80% which means that if 100 units are delivered to the end consumer only about 80 are billed finally to collect the revenue. This, when translated to absolute numbers works to be about 200 billion units not billed annually, leading to an annual revenue loss of a whopping INR about 800 to 900 billion to the DISCOMs annually. The only solution to plug this leak is implementation of Smart Electricity meters across the country.

**Smart Meters** Smart meters can take the billing efficiency to more than 99%, if implemented across all DISCOMs. With this intention, Government has set up an ambitious program of installing about 25 crore smart pre-paid meters over the next few years, which shall need an investment of about 1 lac crores, however, producing savings of about 80 to 90 thousands crores annually to the DISCOMs.

Smart meters eliminate manual errors, improve billing efficiency, and help consumers optimise their consumption. At the same time, smart meters enable DISCOMs to forecast energy demand cycles in real-time, and swiftly rebalance the grid's energy sources. These meters shall be instrumental in integrating renewable energy in the grid. With smart meters recording and anticipating fluctuations throughout the day, DISCOMs can explore the 'Time of Use (ToU) tariffs' that accurately reflect energy prices. This enables DISCOMs to shift loads from high price hours to low price hours. At the same time, consumers can

save on electricity bills by opting for more attractive Time of Use (ToU) tariffs.

Smart meters enable real-time communication between DISCOMs and consumers which means that the days of prolonged load shedding will be history. Smart meter data can ensure faster outage detection and restoration of services. Consumers get access to a prepaid billing model with smart meters. This means that they only pay for the electricity they can afford and optimise their consumption based on real-time data.

## IntelliSmart and Impact story during COVID

**19** IntelliSmart Infrastructure Private Limited or "IntelliSmart", a JV of National Investment and Infrastructure Fund(NIIF) & Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), has been established to give a fillip to this Smart Metering program of the Government of India across the nation. It will lead the implementation of Smart meters through BOOT (Build. Own. Operate. Transfer) model to expedite the deployment, so far being run by EESL on the same model.

IntelliSmart along with EESL has not only kept the smart meter implementation running on the ground in 4 states (UP, Bihar, Haryana and Delhi), maintaining more than 12 lacs meters installed so far. The teams have also maintained the consumer complaint resolution to more than 99% and also have been able to ensure high billing efficiency for the DISCOM areas where smart metering program has been implemented. In addition, IntelliSmart has supported the DISCOMs in installing New Service Connections during the lockdown. Over 5,600 such connections were done during the lockdown ensuring the operations of DISCOMs don't stop and consumers as well do not face any issues in getting an electricity connection.

Bihar is the first state in India where over 25,000 Smart prepaid meters have been installed. And during the lockdown, DISCOMs in Bihar have

Discom	City	No. of Consumers	Consumer Type	Monthly Revenue / Consumer			
				Before	After	Net Increase	Net Increase (%)
<b>NDMC</b>	<b>New Delhi</b>	<b>56000</b>	<b>D &amp; ND</b>	<b>3559</b>	<b>4134</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>16.14%</b>
UP	All DISCOM	860922	D & ND	1422	1743	321	22.57%
<b>KESCO</b>	<b>Kanpur</b>	<b>78539</b>	<b>D &amp; ND</b>	<b>1768</b>	<b>1923</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>8.81%</b>
PVVNL	Merrut	135984	D & ND	1673	2023	350	20.92%
<b>NBPDCL</b>	<b>Dalsinghsarai</b>	<b>4500</b>	<b>D &amp; ND</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>180.09%</b>
SBPDCL	Arwal	1330	D & ND	179	459	281	157.14%
<b>National Average (Wt.)</b>				<b>1,560.25</b>	<b>1,889.27</b>	<b>329.02</b>	<b>21.09%</b>
<b>EESL Charges (INR Per Meter Per Month)</b>				<b>75-95</b>			

been generating a daily revenue collection of INR 5,00,000/- (Consumers on an average are recharging their prepaid smart meters with a credit balance of Rs 20 daily). This has resulted in a significant benefit of revenue to the state DISCOMs, while other DISCOMs with conventional meters have not even been able to generate the bills. Another advantage is the immediate generation of working capital for the DISCOM, which otherwise would take months.

Sustained billing efficiency and revenue generation program during COVID has reaffirmed the importance of smart meters in being vital tools in ensuring smooth billing and collection operations. The resultant impact has been visible in states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, NDMC and Bihar, where average meter automated billing is above 96% against a 71% provisional billing in the non-smart meter areas. Smart Meters have enabled utilities to get consumption data over the air, maintain and monitor operation remotely, allowing them to better manage load forecast, while ensuring bill reads are accurately maintained and there is no revenue loss due to loss of data for installed Smart Meters.

**Business Model of IntelliSmart and Impact so far on the ground** Business model of IntelliSmart is to Invest Upfront the CAPEX on BOOT model for the smart metering program and implement in DISCOMs, thus requiring Zero CAPEX required from Utilities. IntelliSmart also operates and maintains these assets for a pre-defined period of operations before handing over the assets to DISCOMs, for no transfer charges.

IntelliSmart along with EESL has been instrumental in running the smart metering program currently in 6 states and the program has already generated significantly higher revenue per consumer to these states. The table reflecting the percentage increase in revenue from about 9% to 180% in different states is as in the above image.

**Conclusion** IntelliSmart has been successfully implementing this dream project of Government of India and has successfully been installing and maintaining more than 12 lac meters in 6 states. The team has not only continuously been on the job during this tough time of Lockdown, but also have been enabling the provisioning of the new connections. The team has also been maintaining very high standards of billing and revenue generation for the DISCOMs. We have ensured that not even single worker suffers from the COVID by ensuring the PPE kits as well as observing all critical health and safety measures.

With power being the lead indicator of growth and the country aiming to have 24x7 reliable power supply, improving the health of DISCOMs remains to be the critical most goal to be achieved. Implementation of Smart Meters is a key towards this goal and IntelliSmart is committed to this national goal and have maintained the incessant performance standards even during these tough COVID times.

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# MY LIFE AMID TWO FIGHTS!!

Narrative by Anusha Raghav (AFP 2019)

Corona has taken the world by storm, with millions still infected and thousands dead, the economies withering and the governments collapsing under the decision of whether to enforce lockdown or not. Questions being raised on the efficacy of the measures being implemented, and whether businesses and work be suspended or not. Well, the following is my story of Corona and how I am rowing pass it.

I was an AFP-19 student, and needless to say, I thoroughly enjoyed my six months at IIMA. But then, all good things do come to an end, in my case, it was my second shot at college life, with the only difference being that I was being paid this time while I did so. So, I packed up my bags rearing to reach my base as I am still serving and would be hanging my uniform on the fourth of July, this year. Driving along the highway, I raced against time intending to reach my station before the first wave of lockdown hits the country on 23 Mar 20. While I drove across the highway in my butch of a car, I managed to make good my expectations, reaching home by night on 22 Mar 20. You would naturally assume that one would be dead fatigued after driving more than 1100 km single-handedly in 2 days, but then again, I am a hodophile.

On arrival at my base, I was quarantined for 14 days along with my family. The beauty of the Defence Services is the discipline exhibited by the personnel, only amplified by the planning done for every and all contingencies. The same was observed in this battle against COVID-19, where everything was planned to the minutest detail in a meticulous and precise manner, ranging from shifts of the air warriors at work to the delivery of goods and essential items at every doorstep. While the world stood still in the wake of the novel coronavirus, and lockdowns being enforced across the country, some sectors were exempted as per the government's guidelines. Defence services were one of those who were on that list of exemptions. I have heard many people questioning, Why? At a time, when people are dying by the thousands, what is more crucial - **Work or Pandemic?**

Getting back to work, I was presented with an extremely demanding work schedule, for which I wasn't



INDIAN AIR FORCE SURYA KIRAN AEROBATICS TEAM

able to complete my pre-release formalities. Therefore, after a few initial weeks of work, I applied for two weeks of local leave, intending to finish off my pending pre-retirement formalities. But then one day, during my sabbatical, I got a call and was summoned to the office asap. No questions were asked; I wore my overalls, got ready, and reached my office within 20 minutes. I reported to my branch head, obtained a briefing from him, and resumed my duties. Information started flowing in on the conflicts taking place on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The news channels were abuzz with the same, Chinese incursions on our land and the rise of Chinese air activities along the Sino-Indian border. It was of utmost importance that the Indian Armed forces be ready 24X7, should the diplomatic talks fail.

How funny is it, that while the entire human race is fighting the battle for life against a deadly virus, all of a sudden, with precisely one call, all your priorities transform. Where, you push your own safety on a back burner and prepare for a completely different war with a completely different enemy. Where, each and every uniformed personnel continues to do her or his job while trying to keep the pandemic in cognizance. But then, how much can you thoroughly restrict it? And, how much of it is apparent?



Providing ration supply at Forward Troop Post in Siachen Glacier Photo: Ima



Logistic supply of ration and other amenities dropped by Transport aircraft amid COVID Photo: Ima



ARMAMENT DISPLAY OF A FIGHTER AIRCRAFT Photo: Ima

Let me cite some examples. Supposedly, a fighter aircraft needs to be made ready for a mission. First, you take a bomb from the storage, which is then tested for readiness. After achieving this, the bomb will be equipped onto the fighter jet, which is being prepared for the mission by another set of crew. The pilot flies the same aircraft, whose each component has been in contact by hand and sweat of numerous people. Supposedly, after the mission the fighter lands at another base, the fighter will be checked by a completely different set of crew. Even for a small mission like the one mentioned above, I can't even count the magnitude of people involved in the successful readiness of this sole aircraft. And to top it all, all these mission-critical activities must be sync to the last second to achieve the designated objectives. A single delay of even a second will endanger the whole mission.

Now imagine this, in order to maintain our forward troop post at Siachen Glacier, the ration has to be air-dropped to them. This ration, which goes from various agencies, ends up at a forward airbase via transport aircraft and then further taken ahead by helicopters. The number of people involved in this complete chain, including the flying and maintenance crew of the aircraft, just to provide a week's ration is enormous, thereby increasing the chances of corona infection manifolds.

So in both the examples mentioned above, what would you do? Would you sit on the side lines fearing this virus hoping that you retire within the next 15 days, or would you get out there and get the job done, the task that is entrusted upon you. What do you choose? **Pandemic or Work?** Well, for me, the answer is obvious.

# UNLOCKING NEW POSSIBILITIES DURING THE LOCKDOWN

*Written by Deepak Jayaraman (PGP 1999, D09). Deepak is an Executive Coach and helps successful senior executives play to their unique potential by helping them through phases of high stakes transition whether it is a career transition, a role transition in a company or a leadership transition into a new context. He also curates the Play to Potential Podcast ([www.playtopotential.com](http://www.playtopotential.com)) where he distils insights from leaders across domains around three themes (leadership, transitions and careers). This includes several IIMA alumni including Vedika Bhandarkar, Rama Bijapurkar, Prakash Iyer, Roopa Kudva, Anu Madgavkar, Falguni Nayar, and Sudhir Sitapati. Prior to setting up his practice, Deepak has had a career as a Management Consultant with KPMG (UK and India), McKinsey (US) and EgonZehnder (India).*

The last few months have been quite unprecedented for most of us. Most of us have been locked down in our respective homes and it looks like COVID-19 is not going away anytime soon. Perhaps, this shock is an opportunity for us to ask deeper questions and unlock new possibilities in our journeys. Something that was possibly hard in the hustle and bustle of a busy life. Let me share some perspectives I have gleaned from the work I do and what I have learnt at the podcast. All the names I refer to below have appeared on the Play to Potential podcast. You could go there if you wish to gather greater nuance on a topic that I discuss below.

**What are you solving for?** This is a vague question and there are different ways to frame it. I like the way Prof Stew Friedman (of Wharton) thinks about it. He speaks about us having to focus on 4 domains (Self, Work, Home and Community). He urges all of us to think about where we would like to allocate time and attention in an ideal world and look at the resonance/dissonance with the choices we have made. He then urges us to undertake experiments to move towards the ideal state. Traditional discussions around work-life often treat this as a 2 piece jigsaw puzzle (work, home) but Stew urges us to solve this as a 4 piece jigsaw. Ignoring self could lead to burnout over the long run and Ignoring the community piece could lead to a feeling of shallowness despite achieving outcomes especially during these times when the world is going through quite a bit of suffering.

**Are you planning for a 100-year life?** Lynda Gratton (of London Business School) speaks about the advancement in Healthcare (not-withstanding the current health crisis) to state that we are all likely to live much



longer and work well into our 70s. She goes on to say that the three stage life that people led earlier (study, work, retire) is unlikely to be relevant in the future. We are likely to shuffle from one state to another through our life. We might be taking a sabbatical in our 30s and studying for our PhD in our 50s. The correlation between age and stage is broken now. That requires us to do a couple of things differently. We need to be thoughtful about the pace at which we run our lives. We cannot hope to run a marathon at the pace of a 100m. Lynda suggests that we take stock of our intangible assets as a marker of progress (in addition to visible tangible assets like wealth). She speaks about taking stock of three types of intangible assets as we go through our journey - Productive Assets (skills, capabilities and relationships we have accumulated), Vitality Assets (physical,

**“ This slowdown has given us a unique opportunity to pause and steer our automobiles thoughtfully as we see the new normal take shape in front of us. ”**

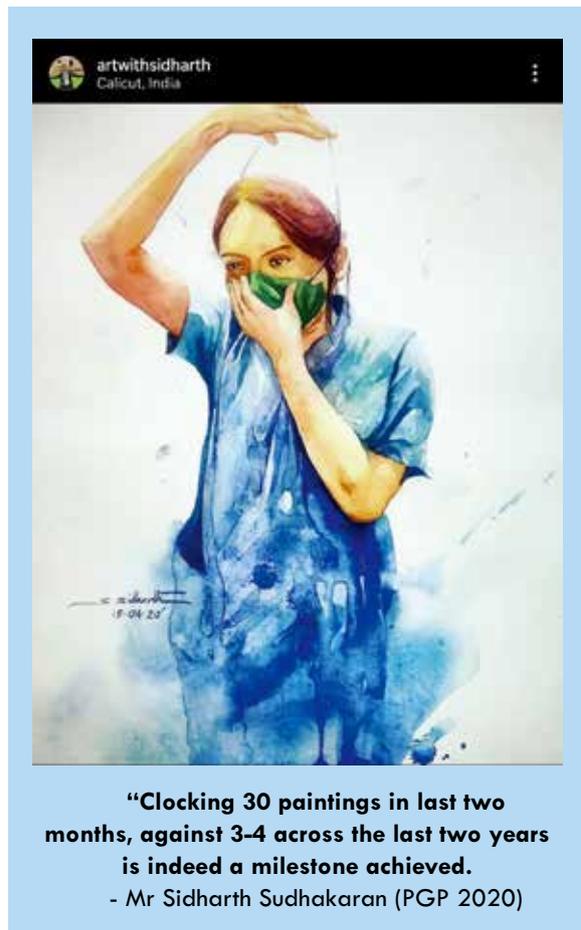
mental and spiritual health) and Transformative assets (investments for the future). While we all glorified all-nighters while in IIMA, it is critical for us to give sleep its due (Matt Walker speaks about it in his book - Why we sleep) apart from focusing on exercise and diet. Matt calls sleep the Swiss-army knife of wellness.

**Are you a prisoner of the past?** Once we approach a 10-15 year mark in our journeys, we start attaching labels to our identity. Typically these are around a certain function (Strategy/Marketing/Finance etc), or an Industry or a certain profession (Consulting/Banking etc). But sometimes, we end up caging ourselves in this identity and that comes in the way of us exploring new possibilities. Herminia Ibarra (of London Business School) speaks about the notion of Working Identity where she suggests that we undertake an experimentative approach to figuring out our next pathway where we try a portfolio of initiatives (like a VC investor placing multiple bets) and through this diversifying our networks, reflecting on the experiences and then navigating on that basis. She suggests that an “act and iterate” approach beats a “plan and implement” approach that we often adopt. She urges us to act our way into a new way of thinking than think our way into a new way of acting.

**Are you creating space to reflect?** We all are caught up with fighting the here and now. It is critical that we create the mind-space to reflect on some of the deeper questions that might help us provide navigational guidance. IIMA often equips us with the engine that helps us power our automobile through the first few years but as we navigate our careers, self-awareness is the steering wheel that helps us steer our vehicles. Rama Bijapurkar speaks about the criticality of self-awareness especially as we grapple with an abundance of choices whether it is companies grappling with choices around strategy or individuals grappling with career direction. Rich Fernandez of SIYLI speaks about the criticality of journaling in driving this and in the notion of an integrated mindfulness practice.

**Seek “outsight”** We often try to meditate our way into building self-awareness. Tasha Eurich (researcher of self-awareness) speaks about the criticality of seeking an outside-in view and she says that the inputs we receive from the outside could often be in an orthogonal plane as compared to our understanding of self, based on reflection. While we get a lot of “how to grow” feedback at work, we often do not get adequate “where to go” feedback. And this input could come not just from our colleagues at work but others around us (friends, spouse, sibling, parents et al). Roopa Kudva speaks about her transition from CRISIL to Omidyar Network and how she systematically gathered “where to go” feedback from almost 50 people before embarking on the new journey.

It is often hard to change direction when you are speeding at 60 KMPH. This slowdown has given us a unique opportunity to pause and steer our automobiles thoughtfully as we see the new normal take shape in front of us. Let us make the most of this opportunity.



# EX-IAF OFFICER TURNS A CORONA HERO

*Sqn Ldr (Dr) Sanjay Sinvhal (AFP 09) is a Short Service Commissioned (SSC) Officer who served for 11 years in IAF and then smoothly transitioned into the civvy street as a Corporate professional where he has garnered over 25 years of experience in a variety of unique job profiles with Fortune 500 companies. Still an Air warrior at heart, he has been actively working in community service. Below, is a brief of how he ensured the supply of essential goods in the housing society of 368 flats and other neighbouring societies, single-handedly. He can be reached at [sanjay.sinvhal@gmail.com](mailto:sanjay.sinvhal@gmail.com).*



Like everyone else, I too listened to the PM announcing the nationwide lockdown on the night of 24 March 2020. Once the gravity of the lockdown dawned upon me, my first reaction was to set up a support mechanism for my housing society of 368 families to ensure that we don't expose ourselves to the Covid-19 virus during our shopping trips, and get home delivery of rations. I quickly sent out an email to the society group id to suggest that I propose to set up an online Google Sheet to collate orders and then place an order with Big Bazaar for delivery to the society. Later, the items can be separated as per order. The idea was appreciated and the online Google Sheet was set up by 25 March, 2020. A WhatsApp group was also created to help



and answer queries.

With the primary goal achieved, the next challenge was to make Big Bazaar accept the Excel Sheet to deliver orders in bulk. Considering the same, I spoke to some friends who connected me to someone in Big Bazaar, who liked the idea and agreed to give it a try. In the next 2 days, Big bazaar appointed a SPOC to accept Excel on WhatsApp and deliveries started coming. The process was well organised, but for the payment, the Big Bazaar order team would call the member with bill amount and request the payment via GPay. As my society is of Retired Defence Officers, the digital payment comfort was not there. So, I started paying for all orders and



members would pay me in-cash or by bank transfer. In parallel, members were educated on digital mode of payments and slowly everyone switched to GPay and were making direct payments to Big Bazaar.

As the word spread of my tie-up, other neighbouring societies also wanted to join my group. Gradually, my WhatsApp group became full and a second group was started. With regular extensions of lockdown and an increase in the number of members, Big bazaar was unable to meet our demand at a point. So, I spoke to Big Basket through an IIM Alumni group and tried up for a similar service. Soon, we had Nature's Basket, DMart, Zorabian, ID Batter and Amul delivering to the society. I also made a similar tie-up with local vegetable shops, who would send their daily vegetable list with prices on WhatsApp and members can call to place their order for delivery to the society's gate.

Later, I tied up for Alphonso mangoes with Agriculture Dept, Govt of Maharashtra in Ratnagiri and was getting almost 70 to 100 boxes of 4 Doz mangoes every week or so. Once the rains arrived, we switched to Kesar mangoes. As Mumbai continued to be in Red Zone, I tied up with a Farmers' Association at Ahmednagar, which was a green zone, for the supply of fresh vegetables and fruits. So, now we are getting farm fresh goodies every week.



All orders are booked through online Google sheets, payment mode is UPI, GPay and Paytm. I am SPOC for all collections and payments. So far, have supplied stuff worth over Rs 15L and all services are continuing.

Further, with the house helps not allowed in the society due to Covid-19, I managed to tie up with Bosch for bulk supply of Dishwashers, and later extended to a complete range of Bosch & Siemens products. Bosch was quick to appreciate the concept and offered a very special price to me for my members which is less than online prices at Amazon and other online portals. So far, 13 Dishwashers have been booked at a specially discounted price, the supply still being the constraint.

With relaxations in the lockdown, the WhatsApp groups continue to be active and members continue to order groceries, vegetables etc. through the online sheets. I am happy to be multitasking in this role as an online grocer, a veggie vendor and a part-time working professional to do my bit for the society.

# THE SHOW MUST GO ON...

Mr Jogiraj Sikidar (MDP 2013) is a Hindustani Classical Vocalist and Founder-Director of 'Malhaar'. Malhaar Centre for Performing Arts is the hub for all forms of Indian performing arts training in the UAE. During the unprecedented time due to the novel coronavirus outbreak, he took the initiative to bring e-learning programmes on Indian performing arts for the people who are interested in the art and want to utilise their time during the lockdown to do something as productive as 'learning classical music and dance'. Here, he shares his experience with us.



**S**hipra Singh Rana is a Mumbai based entrepreneur. Jaya Chaudhry is a Delhi based media professional. Ravi Pokhriyal is a CEO of a multination company and his wife Ritu is a homemaker based in Jakarta. Ritu Dua is a homemaker in London. Debapriya Goswami Chakraborty is an architect and her son Devajyoti and daughter Diya are students based in Toronto. Mahika from Huston, Aishani from Bahrain, Manas from Bangalore are students. Amol is a 75 years old homemaker from Dubai. These people belong to different age groups, backgrounds and professions but during this COVID19 lockdown, their love for Indian classical music has brought them together. They are the new students at Malhaar Centre for Performing Arts, UAE's home-grown brand.

Malhaar being a training hub for Indian classical art forms has introduced a new learning module – learning the traditional-classical music and dance through live, e-learning sessions for both children and adults. This initiative has been taken to spread positivity and happiness among people when the entire world is going through a difficult time. The idea is to learn these beautiful Indian art forms, with the safety of being at home when people are confined within four walls due to the COVID-19 pandemic. So far, Malhaar's live e-learning programmes on Indian performing arts are proving to be a hit with the students who are keen to connect with India's cultural traditions.

**Call of life** Twelve years back, I had started an Indian musical movement in the UAE by the name of

Malhaar. It grew to become the region's first and largest Indian music ensemble. After working with the top brands of media industry in India and UAE, I decided to quit the job in 2017 and extended the scope of Malhaar to establish Malhaar Centre for Performing Arts in Dubai. Today, it is the biggest brand, along with being a hub of Indian performing arts training and collaboration centre. For me, Malhaar is not a business but a passion project to share the beauty of Indian classical performing arts with the world.

**Connecting families, connecting world** Malhaar has transcended the UAE borders and connected with people from across the world and there are more than 200 families from all over the world who are taking live e-lessons from the Malhaar gurus, being in the safety of their homes. The centre has students connecting online to learn the traditional art forms from countries like China, India, Bahrain, Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. There is no age limit for learning and our students range from 4-year-olds to 74-years-young. Everyone has embraced the technology to learn and connect with their heritage and to embrace the Indian art forms.

Braking all the physical barriers, Malhaar is providing lessons in Indian classical vocal, Hindustani and Carnatic. Under the light music genre, students are learning Ghazals, devotional music and popular Bollywood melodies. Beyond the voice classes, Malhaar also provides training in musical instruments such as Tabla, Harmonium and Piano. In Indian classical dance forms, students are learning Bharatanatyam, Kathak and Odissi.

**One giant leap: Integration of e-learning in UAE schools** Malhaar has successfully implemented the introduction of Indian classical performing arts as a core subject in several schools of Dubai at the primary level. Some of these schools include GEMS Modern Academy, Dubai; Kindergarten Starters and Amity School Dubai, where Malhaar is training more than 5,000 children via live e-lessons. This is a first-of-its-kind initiative in the world and watching this initiative come alive outside the Indian shores, is indeed a dream come true.

Under this initiative, Malhaar is providing integrated lessons in Hindustani Vocal, Tabla, Bharatanatyam and Kathak across these schools. The institute is following the curriculum of renowned examination bodies on Indian performing arts - Prayag Sangit Samiti from India and The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD), UK.

**Advantages of live e-learning** I am happy to inform you that at Malhaar, we have embedded technology

“ **The idea is to learn these beautiful Indian art forms, with the safety of being at home when people are confined within four walls due to the COVID-19 pandemic.** ”

into our teaching medium and are conducting classes very successfully for more than a month now. We are providing lessons in both Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

This has been a learning curve for us as we have discovered several advantages of e-learning. Some of the key advantages are:

- We can now monitor the quality of practice being followed at home, which is extremely crucial
- More intensive learning during classes with no other distractions as eyes are glued to the screens
- We are now providing additional study material (audio, video, soft copies) to enhance the learning process
- Parents can observe these classes and receive first-hand experience to understand the beauty of these art forms. Moreover, parents can also help the children to practice further at home.
- The best advantage is almost 100 per cent attendance. Students need not miss out any lessons in the connected world.

The integration of the live, audio-visual lessons has been working seamlessly over the last 3 months. The new mode of learning will not only enhance the knowledge process of students, but also empower them to practice at home.

I believe the above-mentioned innovative modes of learning will ensure that the students' learning is not affected during these unprecedented times. Moreover, music and dance lessons will act as a refreshing change for the students. It is such a joy to know that we have been able to continue as usual with additional and positive learning.

If you are considering to utilise this time to discover or rediscover the interest in Indian performing arts, Malhaar's flagship programme '**Listen, Learn and Perform**' has been modelled to enable a holistic view for all.

# THOSE 81 HOURS

Contributed by Dr Kalyan Bhaskar (FPM 2015)

work in Jamshedpur and my wife works in Kolkata. For working couples living in two cities/states, the lockdown presents some unique challenges. Neither of us can stay for extended duration in one place and when the unlocking started in June, we decided it would be better and safer staying together than staying alone in two cities, one of them being a hotspot.

After staying together for three months in Kolkata, we decided to start for a Jamshedpur on the morning of 12<sup>th</sup> June. I was a bit apprehensive before the travel as I had never driven even 30 km on a stretch and here I was to drive 300 kms. We packed our car with luggage and food and started in a light drizzle at 9:30 AM. The drizzle soon turned into a shower and then later in a downpour, in multiple stages throughout our journey. Anxious to reach early and not wanting to stop anywhere, we reached Baharagora, the entry point of Jharkhand state and East Singhbhum district, at 1:30 PM. We were asked some details and were told to download IGIS app, an app that would track our physical movement.

We reached our house at 3:45 PM, much relieved to have finally arrived after 3 months. Soon after, there was a twist as we got a call from ADM (Law & Order) of the district. The ADM asked us reasons for not coming for registration at Loyola School, a facility being used by the city administration to register every incoming traveller. When we replied that no one at Baharagora told us about it and we didn't find any information on it over the district website or the official twitter account of the city administration, he fell silent. Shortly after his call, we got a visit by three people from his office who asked the same questions and admonished us to get the registration done. Later in the evening, we got a call from the DC himself who advised us to go for paid quarantine at one of the hotels in the city being used as quarantine centre.

We again packed our luggage and went for the registration at Loyola next day morning. From Loyola we went to Hotel Ginger where it was one of its kind experience of checking into the hotel. All of us and our luggage were sprayed with what would have been a

disinfectant but what felt like the holy water typically sprayed after a religious Puja! We were told our rooms won't be cleaned and linen won't be changed. Food would be served in a thermocol plate and aluminium foils and will be kept in a chair placed outside our room. After the food, we had to keep the plates outside, from where it would be picked once a day. We were not allowed to step outside our rooms and couldn't ask our friends to deliver the food. Our only exposure to the outside world was through the glass window that couldn't be opened. In a sense we were locked inside that room.



Next day morning, we were surprised to get a call from the Hotel Reception. We were told that got the ADM had said that we can go home. When we had almost packed to go back home, we got another call saying that we would be tested and that we had to choose between the normal swab tests and rapid antibodies tests. In the former, the results could take between 24-48 hours while in the latter results could be available within 2-3 hours but with more chances of false positives. We decided to go for swab tests and our swab samples were collected in the afternoon by two people, not wearing full PPE and wearing only a surgical mask and hand gloves.

As hours passed by after the tests, our anxieties levels started rising. The anxieties levels of our parents started rising, albeit at twice the rate! We didn't have any updates for hours as there was no website or phone number to track updates. On 15<sup>th</sup> noon, I saw an ambulance parked in the hotel premises and that sight certainly didn't make the wait for results any easier. Hours passed by and very soon dusk had fallen, literally and metaphorically on our hopes for the day.

However in one more twist, at 6:35 PM we got a call saying the three of us have tested negative and we can go home. I don't think I can ever put in words the range of emotions that we experienced then, at the time of checkout, on our way to our house, and finally reaching our house. We are living in a historical time and when I look back at those 81 hours ever again, I can say we had our own tiny slice of that history.

# INDIAN RAILWAYS DURING COVID: COACH MAINTENANCE DEPOTS, GUWAHATI & KAMAKHYA AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE COVID CRISIS MITIGATION

By Mr Kapil Jambhulkar (PGP 2013), Director (Head of Rolling Stock) - North East Frontier Railway, Indian Railways, Govt. of India

**Prototype Development: Conversion Of Rail Coach Into Quarantine Ward** The Coach Maintenance Depot at Kamakhya was the first depot in Indian Railways to design and develop a prototype for conversion of a rail passenger non-AC coach into a quarantine ward. This coach, when converted into quarantine facility, can accommodate 9 patients and has facilities like a bathroom, mosquito nets on windows, oxygen cylinders, IV fluid bottles and paramedics' cabin.



The COVID-19 pandemic developed into a full-blown world crisis by mid of March 2020 with scenes of patients being treated on sides of streets in Italy and Spain doing the rounds on various media. This prompted the think-tank at Government to be prepared with a plan for such eventuality if the COVID cases in India shoot beyond facilities from hospitals, converted community halls, hotels, stadiums, etc. It was decided to make 5000 coaches all over the country in various depots, which shall be able to accommodate 45000 patients for quarantine. It was considered that these converted Railway coaches would offer a low-cost but effective solution to meet this huge requirement.

The depot at Kamakhya in the city of Guwahati came forward for designing and making the coach. The depot's team successfully accomplished it within two days on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The design was conceived on the basis of the actual isolation ward at Central Railway Hospital in Guwahati and accordingly, the depot developed the design of the prototype coach. This conversion was done within a span of two days during the period of lockdown Phase I. The depot staff did the conversion work and the materials required were procured from the vendors after seeking special permission from the local authorities. This was a challenge considering the strictness of the lockdown during phase I when the movement of staff and vehicles



was restricted but the depot team rose to the challenge in the difficult times to deliver the results.

This prototype was approved by the Ministry of Railways and became the benchmark for conversion all over India. Within the next 20 days, about 5000 coaches were converted. The depots at Kamakhya and Guwahati together converted 100 rail coaches within 15 days. Over the last few weeks, few State Governments have requisitioned these rail coach-converted quarantine wards from Indian Railways.

# REASSURED BY THE POWER OF GRASSROOT NETWORK

Contributed by Ms Vidya Shah (PGP 1989), CEO - EdelGive Foundation and Board Member - Edelweiss Financial Services Limited

The rapid spread of the novel coronavirus has resulted in devastating consequences for economies, business, and communities across the globe. In India particularly, it is safe to say that the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown has tested our existing systems and policies, emerging as a much larger humanitarian crisis than merely a health one.

**When I started EdelGive Foundation in 2008, we were committed to supporting organisations that were executing meaningful and need-based work. Today, 12 years later, and amid a global pandemic, being reassured by the power of our grassroots network, our goal was to make sure these organisations stayed afloat, safe, and continued relief work with minimum disruption.** In the initial stages of the lockdown, most of our NGOs were focussing their attention on awareness building within their communities. With the extension of the lockdown and the mass migration of workers back to

their villages, their difficulties started to increase. Lack of funds, access to basic technology (internet, access, mobile services etc.) salary cuts, lay-offs, inability to source basic supplies for daily sustenance emerged as challenges for them to sustain.

Through it all, the partner organisations that I am associated with, stepped up to the challenge, adapting their systems, teams, and operations with great flexibility to address the crisis through innovative ways.

The need of the hour is strengthening and building capacities of these stellar organisations and their programmes. Even as we begin to 'unlock', we are far from where we need to be to stabilise our economies and build safe communities. I believe our grassroots network has the agency to bring us there. Strengthening their ecosystem and building a sustainable environment for them to do the work they need to, will go a long way towards social change.

Partner Organisation	State	Support
Mann Deshi Foundation	Maharashtra	Using community radio station as a medium of outreach and awareness on the existing global health crisis
Kshamtalaya	Udaipur, New Delhi	Holding career workshops, and providing ration kits to marginalized daily wage and migrant communities
Medha	Lucknow	Using technology and webinars to connect with students, helping them pursue internships and jobs
Shaheen and CORO	Different parts of India	Provide mental health relief to survivors through a helpline
AALI	Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand	Provide mental health relief to survivors through a helpline and support them with Legal aid
Jan Sahas	Madhya Pradesh	Mental health and domestic violence assistance for migrant workers Released a detailed report titled the 'Voices of the Invisible Citizens' on the impact of COVID-19 on migrant workers
Vrutti	Karnataka	Creation of market linkage access for rural agricultural produce to consumers in cities
Pragati Koraput	Odisha	Creation of localised market linkage access for agricultural produce to consumers in collaboration with the district administration
Utthan	Gujarat	People-to-People solidarity model – purchasing agricultural produce from farmers to be distributed locally to ensure food security
Ibtada	Alwar, Rajasthan	Distribution of donations from 'Grain Bank' by women SHGs, to vulnerable families

# MIND ITSELF IS THE FIRST MASK OF OUR BODY

*Narrated by Mr Lokesh Punj (PGDM-SPA 1979)*

**M**id Feb, 2020 onwards, the powers that like to be seen to be protective, started building up the pressures for precautions, isolation, social distancing and information rained thru all modes of media to educate us on the grave risks, health hazards and highly contagious COVID-19 with alarming data becoming available on the number of infected and number of deaths. Risks taken by me in travelling by Delhi Metro during the last few days of active working in Feb,2020 started haunting as I knew that Chinese ladies/ tourists had also sat next to me during brief journeys. TV News, Graphs and Bar Charts on the build up and angry as well as unreasonable reactions of many on social media, TV, etc., created too much of pressure and I was told to be highly cautious for next 14 days. My whole family was anxious and looked at me as the culprit who might have brought Novel Corona home.

So much of good advice, on boosting personal immunity and on senior citizens, specially males being in very high-risk category (more so the oldies with stent/ history of heart attack, diabetes, obesity, smoking, asthma, etc.) was no less than a band of active demons finding chinks to invite Novel Corona. My family had relieved maid servants and my wife and daughter, both were under work stress while I was busy, caught in the web of interesting information and developments of Pandemic. On April 1st, not that I was fooled but I had voluntarily undertook cleaning the windows, doors and high places of the dust and dirt and by the afternoon, I was like a batsman who had scored a century without hitting boundaries and remaining not out. Worries started when I suddenly developed back pain, cough and thick mucus. So, I started with gargles and steam for quick relief but the flash backs of laces of clotted blood from my throat, a few days back, started haunting me. That fateful day, the car was driven by an experienced driver with three of us travelling, had the balloon acid trick applied to our car and I was lucky to have come out of car to avoid acidic fumes, from front taking my laptop bag with me while my two associates had come out from

back seat to check the front of car when driver was opening the bonnet, only to realise that their bag was stolen in less than a minute on a busy two way road with traffic police men some twenty metres away. My muscles in both, arms and shoulders, were stiff and slight movement caused high pain sensation as if I had a slip disc.

The day next, again I observed that in two to two and a half hours after dinner, there was interesting sensation in my arteries in the legs and I self-checked temperature ...slightly above normal. Same sensation started two hours after B.F., Lunch and Dinner, the body temperature shall move up and then come down. The situation was getting worse and on the third day, I was assessing on what to do as it seemed that my spinal cord itself was disturbed at first and the next few vertebra around shoulders that I could neither breathe in or out or turn and had to freeze my chest and then go for any action in a very slow motion to make the level of pain bearable. I shared my typical situation in very brief with a post on our batch's WhatsApp group and quick came a phone call from a batchmate with an experienced advice to go for a Muscle Relaxant Pill as ointment and pain killers shall not help. I told my wife that I will face the problem and going to hospital shall be the last option. That night, a resolve in mind and the Muscle Relaxant Pill and Ointment made me sleep well and I took bed-rest and on the next day, did not even move to the room with TV and it was the first day that I ducked the news on TV. The third day, I was back to normal wondering what had happened. I am not too sure but it seems I had broken free from the vice like grip of COVID-19. It also struck me that too much of bad news, helplessness in not being in a position to make much difference the way Pandemic was being tackled and slow build up of pressure on mind had alerted the immune system that responded. If there was slight infection, it overkilled it or it was just a muscular pain that got cured by rest and relaxation or was it my correct self-analysis that it is one's own mind that is the first mask or shield of one's body to keep it protected

and in the working order and responsive condition. If mind is occupied for too much time and for too much of its attention remains on any issue such as COVID-19, it can get overloaded with stress and get chinks that invite the attack of negativity on the body, kicking up the immune system. Good outcome is that I almost stopped listening to the news, looking at the bar charts and exponential curves and smiled only at useful information on how to keep the body's immune system in top form besides letting my mind, mind its own business! Another twin positive advantage I forced upon my body is that not only I stopped smoking since that night onwards but also had realised that a lot of repair and maintenance requirements of the body were ignored and I have slowly restarted the yoga

“ I am not too sure but it seems I had broken free from the vice like grip of COVID-19. ”

that I had given a miss after my school days ! Last of all, it is also an acknowledged fact that unsolicited friendly advice coming from a selfless batchmate build trust and confidence to strengthen mind. So, be reminded to rewind the mind in proximity of your friendly batchmates. You get your mind re-energised to take control and it acts as your first mask against any adversity in life.

## #MILLIONSMILES BY AMPLUS - PROVIDING SAFE SMILES DURING COVID

Contributed by Ms Maithily Sarkar (PGP 2015) on her experience leading the #Millionsmiles campaign for Amplus Solar, a company founded by Mr. Sanjeev Aggarwal (PGP 1995)



The COVID-19 pandemic sent shock waves to the entire world, with economies getting questioned and the normal ways of living being revised. Af-

ter 3 months of uncomfortable standstill this summer, Amplus was resuming operations with one priority: Safety. Masks were becoming an integral part of per-

sonal hygiene. A recent report cites that wearing masks can reduce the chance of transmission of contagion by almost 70%. However, masks were purchased by only the privileged, at Rs. 50 -100 apiece! To ensure community is safe, Masks needed to be available to all.

One day, Sanjeev said, "We can afford Masks; we should distribute to the ones who don't have them!" With this thought, #Millionsmiles was born, and I was given the opportunity of working on this campaign.

#MillionSmiles is a CSR campaign, where the organisation has pledged to make available one million reusable cloth masks to the front-line workers who do not have access to proper masks or simply cannot afford to purchase masks for themselves. The initiative also aims to educate the society on the importance of using the masks in preserving the safety and wellbeing of the communities

#### Creating Employment and Providing Livelihoods

The Masks are being procured from Urmul Rural Health and Development Trust, a reputed NGO focusing on the upliftment of women and children, thus creating employment for the underprivileged workers whose routine livelihoods have been struck badly by the pan-

demic. The money is helping to meet the necessities of the workers and their families.

**Distributing safe smiles to the ones in need:** The masks are then being distributed through a drive organised by the employees. The volunteers started with societies and residences in Gurgaon and the District Collector's Office. Within two weeks of the launch, more citizens volunteered and **distributed over 100,000 masks in more than 150 locations in National Capital Region alone!** The Company also distributed these masks at their solar plant sites across India.

I am confident, that with larger group of volunteers to help in distribution or contribute to the livelihoods of the artisans, the goal of 1 Million Smiles can be achieved quicker than planned. This project got me the answer to the question: 'But what can we do in a situation that has affected the whole world?' Well, we can do a million things to contribute. Small or Big.

You can also contribute to the campaign or follow #millionsmiles #amplussolar hashtags on social media for more updates.

## THE COVID-19 DIVIDE

*Mr Prahlada Rao (PGP-SPA 1985) shares his thoughtful views on the current novel coronavirus crisis through a poem. Mr Rao is currently working as Head of International Execution (Coffee) with Louis Dreyfus Company in Bangalore.*

**W**hat does the virus know about the demography of India - nothing much!

It may have thought: the population will get divided into those survived & dead

Not so simplistic - the Covid divide has been deeper & a diabolical sketch

The story of those surviving the pandemic is a mix of green & red...

While there is a stratum of the society - staying home safe & secure

Enjoying the cozy couch & re-play of Ramayan & Mahabharath

With food in time & the whole family for good company - life a little unsure

Following up the numbers adding to the infected & dead - on this Earth



There is another section of society - the poor hapless & homeless

Or with homes that are a punishment to stay & a scene of plight

Looking for the next meal - with no money in pocket & jobless

Lock down has brought down the hell for these millions - unending fright

What does the virus know about India's demographic divide?

The gulf between the haves & have-nots growing further wide!

# TECHNOLOGY IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

*Contributed by Mr Manan G Choksi (MDP 2006) He runs K-12 Schools - with over 7,300 students. Here, he shares how they dealt with the pandemic situation and started online classes with over 500+ teachers.*



**G**aining appreciation all over the city, the management of the 55-year old, Udgam School for Children has grown well to get along with the other three schools in its fold. Working hand in hand with Zebar School for Children, Bodakdev School for Children and Satellite School for Children, the management has under its supervision 600+ teachers and more than 7,300 students.

The school, equipped with the best possible technology with 100% smart classes and laptop for each teacher, invariably encouraged its teachers to make use of technology in learning,



which even after umpteen endeavours, was not strictly brought to practice. Exactly 9 years ago Smart Boards were implemented in the school, but the usage was dismal. In fact, it was time to replace the boards and at best used 25% of the time it could have. The Executive Director of the school, Mr Manan Choksi, in one of these efforts, conducted training of all the 400+ teachers and demonstrated on making effective use of PowerPoint on a smartboard as recently as September 2019. The staff, already well-adapted to the traditional teaching method seemed a bit obdurate over the modern standards. Close to 50 staff

members had more than 10 years of working with the school and were not motivated to change their way of working.

The news of the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 made Mr Manan Choksi envisage the need for dynamic teaching methods in future. On 19th March, he declared work from home to all the staff until further notice even before the lockdown was announced nationwide. The worsening situation of the virus made him recognize that the schools will not be in a working position at least till for the next few months. Most in the industry were optimistic that schools will get back to normal. But what Mr. Choksi realized that the more we give hopes of short lockdown period – the higher will be resistance to adapt to changing ways. On March 19<sup>th</sup> he announced that schools may not work till October 2020, to which most people disagreed. Estimating the loss of studies during the pandemic, the executive member group (EMG) – having 50 members who had managerial positions, conducted daily zoom meetings to get on ways of imparting education while staying home.

Amidst this all, as the news of initiation of online classes in a DPS covered the media, the administration started receiving emails from parents asking how the management is going to act in the current situation when already others have taken a step ahead with the learning.

The school, awarded with the Computer Literacy Award in 2002 by Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, is already equipped with smartboards for nine years and with teachers working with laptops from the past eleven years, yet technology remained something restricted to the back-office use.

Mr. Choksi convinced the EMG that if we do not give online education, there will be no reason for parents to pay the school fees and salaries of teachers will be impossible to pay. Moreover, the important point which concerned the school was without a routine the students may start forgetting what they have learnt and get out of the habit of studying. This gave more than enough motivation to the teachers to adapt to the new technology and method of teaching to ensure that students stay in touch with studies and do not waste this opportunity to stay indoors and study.

Knowing that convincing a select group will not be enough, Mr. Choksi, in a meeting held on 6th April 2020, asked the staff to espouse themselves with technology, and finally, the online classes were got to action through Zoom. As we know Zoom was not a

safe platform in those days. This made us encounter with one more problem, hacking. We started receiving Jihadi messages on our online zoom classes, and it made us contemplate for more secured options. Conclusively, we switched to a more secured platform, Microsoft Teams. After the successful implementation of sessions on MS Teams, we have also conducted exams online.

To overcome the constraints of online classes which is predominantly “Synchronous” education, we have also partnered with Extramarks - an online learning app and provided app access to all the 7300+ students at school’s cost. This would have videos for learning and MCQs for practice giving “Asynchronous” education a boost. Further, the management is at opinion to work with the application even after the situation rehabs to the previous working conditions. Students can then probably get their devices to schools, which can further narrow down the heavyweight they carry on their shoulders daily to school.

After May the lockdowns started lifting up and the parents had to start working. They couldn’t be with children at home for helping them with online classes. The school did a survey of parents and gave them choices of 5 time slots. Since the strength of each of the school is quite huge – the management decided to plan different sections of students according to the time convenience of parents.

As on date, the school is successfully delivering lectures and has adapted admirably to carry out its duties towards its students and staff. Rising to the occasion the parents, teachers and the students have cooperated whole heartedly in this new way of imparting education with average attendance being 95% in classes and a better assignment submission performance than normal school.

In fact, we have also written to CBSE and central government to categorize schools to impart education virtually, so that we could reach the maximum number of students pan India and educate them at a lower cost.

Having collected 80% of our first quarter fees we are able to do full salaries on time for all our staff members. We have also planned for a life insurance policy and health insurance policy for staff which was not done in the 5 decade history of the organization.

The ongoing crisis has definitely helped many schools experiment, and achieve new milestones. Udgam School - has been at the forefront of adapting and we continue to do the same even at this point.

# REBOOTING

*Ms Nalini Bikkina (FDP 2012), Director, GITAM School of Gandhian Studies, shares her experiential story from the pandemic and lockdown.*

The Campus came to a grinding halt on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 when the Government of Andhra Pradesh ordered the closure of all Higher Educational Institutions. The Corona Pandemic suddenly seemed to be real; not just news about a public health disaster in some distant country. Students left the campus gleefully. For them it was going to be a long holiday, or so they thought till about a month into the lockdown.

For the faculty and staff of GITAM, a Deemed-to-be University nestled on the southeastern coast of India, the physical closure of the campus was a forced demand on transitioning to the online mode of teaching-learning and assessment. The migration happened surprisingly quickly, thanks to our ever vigilant and pro-active President and the Chief Technology Officer who runs the three campuses of the University virtually through the Centre for Advanced Technological Solutions or CATS.

While an already slowing economy almost came to a halt in one fell swoop on the announcement of the nationwide lockdown, some rumors and certain true stories about layoffs started doing the rounds. Amidst the grim employment scenario in the country, our President promised in a town-hall meeting on Zoom that he will not lay off owing to the pandemic and would not stop payment of salaries unless the cash flow stops. He stuck to his promise thus far and a majority of our team stepped right up to the extraordinary situation and pumped in extraordinary efforts to complete teaching for the academic year, albeit online. This was an unexpected happening owing to the lethargy that many of us had to move processes online despite robust technological support and endless coaxing by the authorities. When we finally migrated to the virtual mode, it was almost overnight; thus proving that latent learning was going on and all that was required was that little nudge.

A large number of us are working almost 24/7, but then we continue to have free riders who with insurmountable audacity side step tasks citing imagined connectivity challenges and innumerable personal

pretexts that cannot be verified. While our Med School was declared a COVID hospital, we had on the one hand frontline warriors putting up a united front to face this unprecedented humanitarian challenge; we had helping hands who at great personal risk went out into the community providing rations to daily wage earners door-to-door and assisting migrant workers; we also had social media activists criticizing every act of omission and commission of the University community all the way up to the nation. While the intentional and unintentional atrocities in the country are unpardonable, India shaming happened at a feverish pace from cozy couches at home, adding insult to the predicament of those out there at ground zero. God save the world from armchair activists and self-proclaimed advocates of the subaltern who crave visibility and social media acclaim but who wouldn't shell a penny nor move a muscle to get out there and be on the frontline. While it would be highly absurd to expect everyone to be a corona frontline warrior, I am sure we can be warriors in our own way by doing our duties sincerely and supporting the organization we work for and the community we live in, in these grueling circumstances.

The corona pandemic and the consequent lockdown was a period of introspection. The phase rebooted our priorities in life. These times also sieved to us with clarity those who walk the talk from habitual hypocrites; the pandemic taught us that it is time for the human race to unite, as our destinies are intertwined despite geographical, political, racial and religious boundaries; the pandemic humbled us by proving that despite tall and arrogant claims about scientific advancement we have been hiding and running from an invisible virus which by itself is very fragile; it forced on us the revelation that while we could send a private rocket into space, people died alone as friends and family could not travel, on our very own earth. The post-corona phase if and when it comes is meant to bring in a new normal. I earnestly hope that the new normal would be the harbinger of intellectual humility, scientific modesty and economic frugality.



# I NEED A WIFE, AND I NEED AN INDIAN ONE, IF POSSIBLE!!

*Narrative shared by Ms Padma Gupta (3TP: Senior Leaders' Programme)*

Today morning I came across a beautiful piece on social media elaborating upon the virtues of the Indian housewife and how much they do and it remains largely unappreciated. And as I went through the virtues, I realised that I too wanted a wife - a housewife, preferably an Indian one! Indian, so that she can have all the virtues imbibed through years of having watched and being told, taught, groomed to be a giver of care, comfort, love and work more than you can coz then you have arrived in life as a wife!!



'tell me what to do!'... I am a worker and where will I ever say no if I am told to do something - just like the loving, good husbands!

I need the housewife who steps in and reassures my children that what if your mom won't be there - I will pick you up when you return from that school trip and do up my daughter's long hair just the way she wants, for that Birthday party. Oh! And remembers we need to get the gifts too for the birthday child!

You see it's a little complicated since I am a wife myself, a mother of two, living with my husband and parents and my lifelines of home help and driver and a gardener who intersperse my days with their contributions from time to time.

Now, why the hell would a wife want a wife! No malicious intention here but seriously a plea to have someone who cares to manage my life as a support and who better than a wife to care! At work, many days when I open my tiffin during the oft rushed lunch hours and I have either rustled a hurried meal that my Dabba shows or it's my maid's cooking, leaving much taste to desire and I look at the male colleagues dabbas that are well packed and have a meal fit for a king or as per the diet they are supposed to have - I miss not having a wife then!

Even if a housewife is not in the offering, I could do with a working wife as well but who puts me first! Who ensures there is toothpaste in the washroom when I get up from my sleep and head red-eyed to freshen up or ensures that tomatoes never run out of stock since in a North Indian house no meal is yummy without a dash of tomato! Oh and never forgets that parents need to have dates with milk along with breakfast and nachni is an important part of their cuisine!

Oh and that doesn't mean I want to not do anything or shirk my contribution! Not at all - I just need the wife to

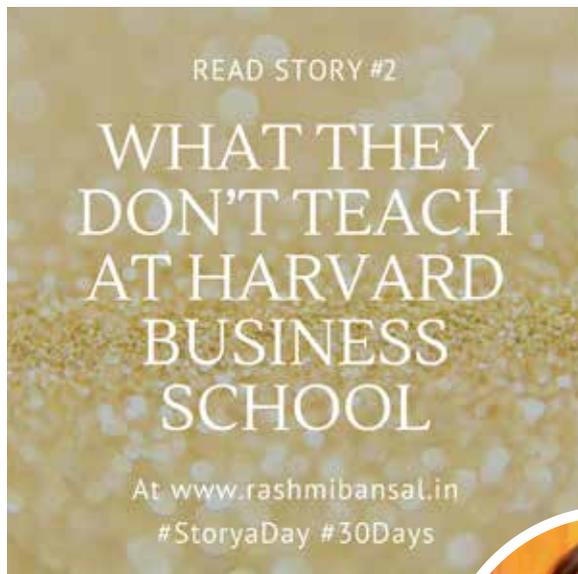
I also need the wife who can keep the 'karwa chauth' and 'Teej' fast so I can get away with full day training session of speaking non-stop with some water and cups of coffee and not guilt with a dry throat only to come back late and get disapproved glances coz I don't have the time to do add become everything traditional as I step hurriedly out of my office clothes to do the Pujal

Oh and most importantly can I have the wife who is my Ambassador too... Someone who is my excuse maker whenever I am unable to turn up or I don't want to do, talk, participate in many expectations overload! And lets me get away with a bland sentence like "You know she gets too tired with all the office pressure." or something very simplistic like "You know how these people are, Chodo!".

I honestly need just one, dutiful lovely wife who will manage the backend for me and never like a job - with love, care, affection and full ownership like all the wives I know do!

To my readers - everyone is discovering hobbies and hidden talents in this Lockdown period I am also exploring that I have this serious need in life and one wife can be the solution to many of us working professionals who are female too!!

Now, I have some of my homemaker friends who want one for themselves too!!



After 11 non-fiction books Ms Rashmi Bansal (PGP 1993) is writing fiction, inspired by lockdown. Her uplifting short stories can be read at: [rashmibansal.in](http://rashmibansal.in)



Like every other business in the world, Champak's little enterprise had been wiped out by coronavirus. Since the lockdown was put in place - over a month ago - he had been sitting at home twiddling his thumbs

The team of ustads, painstakingly groomed and trained by him was also sitting at home, watching porn on their mobile phones while claiming to watch Ramayan.

"Bhai aisi mandi to aajtak dekhi nahin..." Champak muttered to himself, while trying to swallow the nth meal of dal and rice made by his wife. She was looking increasingly harassed, day by day.

"Kya hai yeh virus... sab ko pareshaan kar rakha hai," she wailed to her sister in Jhansi, at least 3 times a day on video-call. She had eaten Champak's brains for breakfast, lunch, dinner and midnight snacks, before he agreed to get her an iPhone. Thank God, lagta hai yehi phone ab dus saal chalana padega.

That, Chanda could live with. She had never clamoured for a fancy apartment or car, content to live in a chawl in South Mumbai. The building didn't even have a lift. Champak had warned her, before marriage, that she would be well-provided for. But in his line of work, it was best to keep a low profile. So no jazz and no showing-off... simple hi rehna padega.

This suited Chanda just fine. She had grown up in a chawl herself, and enjoyed the bonhomie that came with open windows and shared toilets. They had managed to bring up 3 daughters, married them off well (the only time Champak did show off a little). And now, it was just the two of them, no health problems,



no wealth problems. Insaan ko aur kya chahiye?

"Bas ek cheez, ek cheez chahiye," Chanda burst out one morning, and dissolved into tears. "Mujhe hair-dye ka ek dabba chahiye."

As Champak looked at his wife, I mean really looked at her, and saw a middle-aged woman with crazed eyes and a swathe of safed baal, peeking out of her scalp, Like wheat standing in the fields, they were crying out to be sprayed with chemicals. Champak felt a wave of sympathy for Chanda. Yes, yes of course, it was his duty as a husband...

That's when a lightbulb went off in Champaklal's head. Business is all about demand and supply.

This was not the time to buy jewellery or mobile phones - the 2 items that used to be his bread and butter. In fact butter was the thing to procure, buyer to mil hi jayega.

Champak called his ustads on WA and conveyed the good news. There would be a strategic shift in the line of business. But modus operandi would remain the same. Night shift would be mandatory, wearing masks and gloves would not be an issue. They were already well-versed with its benefits...

Two days later, Chanda got her Most Wanted Item and was in seventh heaven. She now video-calls her sister 6 times a day, just to make her jealous.

\*\*\*

Champak's diversification strategy paid off. In fact, it even got covered in the Times of India this morning: 'A string of burglaries has been reported from kirana stores in the suburbs of Mumbai. Among the items taken were 200 packets of Maggi noodles, 100 sticks of Amul butter and 50 packs of Godrej Natural Black hair dye...'

# RESTAURANTS - HOW LONG IS THE TUNNEL

Shared and authored by Mr Raja Sekhar Reddy (PGP 1994), Founder - Squaremeal Foods Pvt Ltd.



Madiera & Mime, Powai, Mumbai

**R**eally how long is the tunnel that has the light at the end? No one knows. And anybody's guess. But everyone wants to see it sooner.

Mirchi & Mime, serving Indian fine dine cuisine and Madeira & Mime, a bar and café serving global cuisine, are five-year old restaurant brands with two outlets in Mumbai and one in Indore. With steady ratings of 4.9 on Zomato, we are loved by our patrons, most of whom are regulars, who have made it a destination restaurant. So much so that when you have visitors from abroad, they are brought here by their hosts with pride. The uniqueness of our restaurants is - all our serving staff are speech and hearing impaired (SHIs). Thus each restaurant employees 25 SHIs, (75 SHIs) in all, while the kitchen staff and managers can speak. That probably makes us the single largest majority-employer of SHIs in India.

**IN COMES COVID:** Albeit without warning. And restaurants are shut. Though the nation went into an official lockdown from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, footfalls all

through the early part of March have been under 30%.

A little about the economics. Breakeven volumes are at 80% occupancy, with high fixed costs for a dine-in restaurant. At breakeven levels, fixed costs are 60% - which comprises of 20% rent, 20% wage bill, 20% other overheads. EBITDA levels of 15% is a sound state to be in. Once lockdown was announced, the outlets are closed, all staff disbursed, several of them, who come under migrant workers have gone back to their home towns, perishable stocks destroyed (almost 90 days now).



## POST COVID CHALLENGES:

**Opening up of Restaurants:** Government of Maharashtra hasn't yet announced the opening of restaurants, while national lockdown has been lifted for restaurants. Cannot really blame them as they bear the highest positive cases; the nation is opening up not because we are ready for it, but because we don't want to destroy the economy any further. We hope that the government will give a go ahead to open up sometime in July or August which will of course be with several



*Mirchi And Mime, Powai, Mumbai*

restrictions – like 25% occupancy, distance between seats, sanitisation procedures, etc.

**Staff availability:** With most of the staff moved back to home towns, we are not sure if all of them will come back in one shot or will come in phases. And it is likely that staff will use this opportunity to look for alternate opportunities that work better for them. It's like all hands a dissolved and the deck is shuffled again – you may not get all your cards back. So training, is another challenge.

**Changed Customer buying patterns:** Typical eating out for the target segment is about 5 times a month. And now with 3 months of lock down and training to live with necessities and essentials only, customers are both scared of going out to eat, and are also accustomed to changed lifestyles. It is expected that this 5 times a month would come down to 2 or maybe 1, and that would also happen to go to less crowded and overly hygienic places.

**High fixed costs:** Rentals are the highest fixed costs for a restaurant, and we hope that landlords would offer a fully variable rent plan, which would help us to a bit. However, while the landlords/malls community comes up with such a plan, the industry would see some collateral damage. In Delhi & Bangalore, some restaurants haven't opened yet as they are lobbying for lower rentals from landlords. The current rental

models are 15% of revenue with a very high floor.

**Expectations from Government:** So far the Government has offered to ease of liquidity by offering loans and moratoriums. However, the industry is not on a liquidity crisis, it is on a temporary closure. So even if liquidity were available, the industry has suffered a loss of revenue with continuing fixed costs. That will takes a long long time before we are able to come out of the shock. So a liquidity influx will not help. A waiver is what may help, in forms of lowering of fixed costs, license fees, taxes, set-offs, etc., which may add up to the bottom line and help cover the losses quicker.

**Slowing down of economy:** And the icing on the cake is the slowdown of the economy. Businesses have lost money, working employees have lost jobs, (another 30% job loss in on the cards soon), others have lost money in investments, stocks, mutual funds, money stuck in liquidity cycles, bad debts, etc. The propensity to spend will definitely be halved and will take 2-3 quarters to reach back normal levels.

With visibility of so many challenges and not knowing where Covid would actually lead us to, it's a tough challenge even to think about restarting the business of Restaurants. It's a long road out there with no pit stops.

<Additional Sources: Articles from Curly Tales and Economic Times. Please follow the web version at [wimwian.iima.ac.in](http://wimwian.iima.ac.in) for more details>

# NIGHTMARE DURING LOCK DOWN

*Narrative shared by Mr S C Sharma (PGP 1971). With regular services shut during the lockdowns, there were many instances where people suffered, even for essential healthcare services. Mr Sharma shares below one such incident, involving his son.*

There is a famous saying from the Ramayana - 'जाके पाँव न फटी बिवाई, वो क्या जाने पीर पराई'. Meaning those who did not know the pain of cracked heels, how can they imagine or feel the problem or pain of others. Therefore, those who did not face any hardships during lockout cannot imagine the plight of those who suffered due to certain oversight of Govt decisions.

However, my aim is not to criticize any Govt decision, as taking and implementing decisions for a population of 130 crores in a vast country is a gigantic task and bound to have some problems. I only wish to highlight some shortcomings of the immediate lockdown on certain sections of people or restrictions placed on some activities, particularly the medical facilities. Everyone is well aware of the problems faced by migrant workers, but few know that even families at home bore the brunt of these decisions.

I am narrating the harrowing experience faced by my family.

During lock down, after few days almost all the hospitals stopped OPD and admissions to even emergency cases without confirmation of COVID-19 test results. The family doctors had closed their clinics and were advising over phone to treat minor problems. Unfortunately, during this period, my son suddenly developed very high fever. The fever was 104° and he was not responding to medicines. For almost two days, we struggled with sleepless nights of continuous sponging and monitoring of temperature. The entire family was worried that this may be COVID-19 infection. However, the blood test done, came positive for Dengue.

Now starts the story of our torture and harrowing experience.



*Lab technician testing for Covid-19 at Mr Sharma's home*

With reducing blood platelet count rapidly headed to 33000 in 5 days, there would have been an urgent need to hospitalize him if same would go below 25000. So, I inquired with 3 of the top hospitals in my locality for emergency admissions. All replied that they will not admit him till he is tested for the novel coronavirus. We told them that it is a confirmed case of Dengue, but they said it is the protocol which they have to follow. Alternatively, they will admit and keep him in corona ward with corona infected patients.

I wondered how and where do I get him tested? The hospital informed that they are helpless lest they will be sealed if this protocol is not followed. Desperate, I

started my inquiry with a few labs only to discover that there is a waiting period of 4-5 days. That meant that I had to wait for 6 days for getting the test results, by which time the platelet count would be at dangerously low levels. With some luck and help of a friend, I managed to arrange immediate testing and got the result next day, which as expected was negative. My family doctor advised me to wait a day more as hospitalization was risky due to low immunity and high risk of infection there. Luckily, health improved in the next 48 hours with platelet count also showing positive results. Eventually, he recovered completely without having to undergo hospitalization.

However, I shudder to think that what can happen in

the absence of non-availability of medical treatments in hospitals for other medical emergencies during the lockdown!

It seemed that authorities thought that all other diseases will vanish during corona and need not be treated. They forgot that deaths due to other diseases are also huge in number and people cannot be left helpless and unattended.

The purpose of this article is to draw attention that decisions should be taken by considering all options and covering maximum possibilities ensuring that no individual of any class or section of society is impacted adversely due to any oversight.

## COVID 19 SCORECARD - RESILIENCE: 1, PANDEMIC: 0

Shared by Mr Pramod Kunju (PGP 1999), CEO, Nakunj Inc | Board Member, National Diversity Coalition

**O**ur company, Nakunj Inc, specializes in Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence consulting. We were not impacted much by COVID-19, since most of our work was already being performed virtually. We helped our clients transition to a virtual world using our expertise as well.

What I want to focus on is my role as a Board member at National Diversity Coalition (NDC). NDC is one of the most influential advocacy organizations in the United States. Our mission statement summarizes well with what we do: 'Voice of the Voiceless'. Our advocacy efforts have helped small/diverse businesses as well as low to moderate income families.

Small businesses and families leaned on us more than ever during COVID-19. We helped a small business owner procure much needed funding through Federal loan assistance program. This business operated many salons, all of which had to be shut down. They realized that they had an inventory of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which was used

routinely in their industry. They pivoted to selling PPE online, and saved many jobs.

One of our corporate partners, T-Mobile, offered Business match-making opportunities to NDC member companies virtually - first of its kind. This enabled many struggling small and diverse businesses to engage with T-Mobile for contract opportunities, thus potentially saving their businesses.

Our virtual business mixer, featuring Erik Huberman, CEO of Hawke Media, summed up the mood of businesses across the United States. They were all resilient, weathering out the COVID-19 storm, getting ready to re-think, re-position their businesses for a better, stronger future.

I am confident that businesses in the United states, and the world over, will bounce back, and flourish in new, hitherto untested ways in the very near future. The pandemic stands no chance against the resilience of business owners world over.



# OUR JOURNEY IN HELPING KIDS TO BEAT LOCKDOWN BLUES IN A FUN WAY!

*Initiative by Mr Mahesh Sangade (PGP 2015) and his fiancé Ms Anuppama Das*

The COVID-19 pandemic has shattered the livelihoods of millions of people into a chaotic twister. As the administration, healthcare and security personnel battle on the frontlines, a lot of other sectors such as school education have been drastically impacted. The schools had to shift the entire operations online literally overnight! Apart from the mainstream challenges of systems infrastructure and upgradation of teachers for effective online engagement, another major topic of children's psychological issues has peaked recently.

The children are engaged in back to back online sessions which often lead to zoom fatigue. They are certainly missing the school environment, face to face interaction with teachers, outdoor sports and fun with friends due to extended lockdown. My fiancé Anuppama Das being in the education field for over a decade, we are extensively connected to many school students. We received a lot of calls from her ex-students about rising depression levels in kids due to these multiple factors. This was the trigger for our **initiative AmbiClass** (formerly known as Powerkid.in).

We started FREE online gratitude practise and daily fun sessions to combat the problem. With the humble beginning of sessions with two students, we now have 100+ students participating in these sessions in just one month! The age category is 8 to 22 years and we conduct activities such as meditation, knowledge sharing by students, debates, exercise, fun dance sessions and many more. The gratitude practise consists of the first step wherein children are taught about being grateful for everything they already have or accept the way they are to be at Peace with themselves. Post the same, we introduce the concept of Power in which they are guided on being happily unsatisfied and be inquisitive about their personal growth opportunities. Our Power Peace Practice has helped a lot of students and we received commendable praise from parents noticing a morale boost in their kids in these difficult times.

Moreover, we coordinated with a rural school at Ramakona in Madhya Pradesh to shift the entire teaching online. We trained with the principal and teachers with basic knowledge of online tools and



effective online engagement with students. Later, we connected to five active parents from each section and highlighted the benefit of online education in these times. We made posters of these star parents as influencers and then circulated it in the WhatsApp groups of parents for awareness. Over the period of 20 days, we helped them to get most of the students online so as to start the classes which were shut for over two months!

Apart from the above philanthropic activities, we also started a course at [www.ambiclass.com](http://www.ambiclass.com) on Managing Social Media Influence understanding that a lot of time is being spent by children on social media. In the recent era of dynamic personal, academic and professional structures, it's extremely critical to master the art of influence at a young age. We have curated the course on social influence mastery for youngsters to create their own personal brand by putting together years of experience of our facilitators. There are ample of benefits which can be reaped through this course such as improved visibility, better relationships, enhanced academic performance, financial literacy and many more. Moreover, in the process, our goal is to get the children to create the best version of themselves.

We continue to do our bit of service to the education system and stakeholders through both philanthropic and business activities. Lots more in the pipeline! In the meantime, we continue to wish health and safety for you and your family.

Be well.

# DATA MANAGEMENT FOR THE ENTIRE MUMBAI METROPOLITAN REGION

Authored by Arpita Shetty (PGP 2016), the article highlights the efforts of Mr Siddarth Raman (PGP 2016) during the pandemic in Mumbai



The containment of any pandemic begins with data, and more precisely, its collection, cleaning and analytics. Governing bodies need to have access to accurate data to undertake strategic decisions such as planning for infrastructure and personnel (incl. administrative, healthcare, security) and more.

Siddarth Raman, Class of 2016, is aiding the effort to streamline the data reporting and contact tracing efforts currently underway in Mumbai. He started when there were ~2,000 cases in Mumbai, helping the task force streamline the collection of daily incoming data from the COVID-19 diagnosis labs and recovery centres. Today, he works with two of the IAS officers in the task force, Additional Municipal Commissioner Ashwini Bhide (COVID-19 Strategy & War Room Monitoring) and Joint Municipal Commissioner Ashutosh Salil (COVID Care Centre Management), on data management for the entire Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

Siddarth quit his job as a Consultant with Bain & Company in April 2020, to explore opportunities within the social service sector. As Mumbai began to report the highest transmission rates in the country, he actively reached out to his network and signed up to

f i t @mybmc  
 #AnythingforMumbai  
**AAMCHI MUMBAI NEEDS YOUR HELP**  
 Our ward officers are working 24x7 to manage data on hundreds of COVID-19 cases everyday  
**ADOPT A WARD**  
 VOLUNTEER now to work closely with the assistant commissioners and officers  
**BE A DATA WARRIOR**  
 Help optimize, manage, and oversee critical data processes across data ingestion, cleaning, analytics, and reporting  
 Click to sign up  
 Fill in your details in the survey and we will be in touch  
[https://survey.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0vrm8irhWINK3MWV](https://survey.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0vrm8irhWINK3MWV)

volunteer with the BMC.

The core of Siddarth's work is to manage the testing data pipeline in Mumbai. The city needed a robust and scalable set of IT systems and processes to manage the large quantum of patients. The magnitude of the problem was further exacerbated by the vast number of stakeholders accessing and managing the data (incl. 24 ward teams, on-ground health teams, labs, hospitals, central epidemiology cell teams, covid care centres, COVID-19 central portal teams, etc.)

Over the last ten weeks, Siddarth has worked untiringly (*Author's note: As his wife, I can attest to multiple 2 AM nights, followed by 5 AM mornings*) to set up an accurate, and more importantly, a scalable system for near real-time reporting and

management of positive cases. A 'sole'dier at first, he has now bolstered the system with on-ground support, instituting local teams at each of the 24 wards in the metropolitan. With the aim of creating a sustainable flow, Siddarth has administered multiple trainings for several stakeholder groups, and ensured a seamless transition to the new system.

As his role has grown within the task force officers' teams, Siddarth has leveraged his network and roped in friends, acquaintances, and acquaintances of acquaintances to help him solve specific issues. This meant an undergrad duo helped develop the deduplication algorithm, a group of professional coders put it into action, and a consultant helped set up the CRM system and sign up more data volunteers for the ward-level local teams.

Today, Mumbai runs a highly complex, massive ground-level operation that allows for real-time monitoring and management of the patient through

the entire lifecycle from testing to hospitalization to quarantine to discharge.

As the number of cases surpasses 60,000, Siddarth's and his team's efforts have helped the BMC manage the positive cases and at-risk contacts, and ensure accurate data to draw the transmission curves more precisely. Ultimately, this has led to improved understanding of the pandemic, better shaping of the response strategy, and focused deployment of the monitoring and control measures, making Siddarth a Hero on the Frontline.

When reached for a comment, his wife said she was very proud of him despite being super worried about him travelling to the MCGM offices (*armed with his PPE and essential services pass of course*). She also quipped that he had been doing the dishes and clearing the cat litter as per the agreed schedule. And hence, she has deemed him a Hero in the Household as well.

## HOW I SOLD VEGETABLES DURING THE LOCKDOWN - APRIL 2020

*Shared by Sidharth Suryamurthy (PGP 2016) I got up at the sound of the alarm at 5.30 am. On the previous night, I ensured that I pack a bottle of water, a pair of gloves, hand sanitizer and the ID card. I quickly got ready, had a glass of oats and milk, wore facemask and got on the bike. I reached the Corporation office around 6.15 am. My team also reached by then. We got into our allotted vehicle, counted the number of bags, set up the announcement speaker, made note of the area to serve and then hit the road.*

**W**e were a bunch of volunteers under the Rotary India team. Our job was to sell vegetables and fruits to whoever needed it. As we moved across the town, our vehicle shamelessly disturbed the eerie silence of all the streets by the blaring speakers. Thankfully, no one threw abuse at us rather were thankful that we could come to their place. We took nearly 3 hours to sell these essentials but on a very good day, we managed to do it in 45 minutes. The key, we realized, was to hit the densest and narrowest of the residential streets.

A bustling city popularly nicknamed in the region as the (Thoonga Nagaram) - the city that never sleeps, a busy trading hub for the state of Tamil Nadu, also



known for the famous Meenakshi Amman temple was unexpectedly brought to a standstill. Like every other location, the nation-wide lockdown that started on March 24 has not been kind to the city of Madurai and nearly 17 lakh residents. COVID has been an unprecedented event that no one prepared himself/herself to tackle.

Consequently, the reaction from the people on the eve of the lockdown announcement was chaos. Vegetable market had queues that stretched for several km. The officials realized that people were panic buying vegetables or essentials in the market leading to overcrowding. Social distancing, a new concept during the initial few days, was completely ignored. Stocks were quickly depleting in every store and that led to further panic. Madurai Corporation came up with a solution and took the lead initiative to overcome this problem.

The Corporation team immediately started procuring vegetables in bulk. Overnight, there was another team that measured and packed these vegetables into bags of standard size. The assorted bag with a minimum of 14 varieties of vegetables were packed and kept ready by early morning. The Corporation's fleet of Tata Aces, originally used for the solid waste collection, was thoroughly sanitized and kept ready for distribution. The model was pretty simple. Residents need not venture out far from their house during the lockdown. The Corporation will come to each and every house and supply vegetables at the doorstep. Initially, they tried out a sample run with 10 vehicles. It was well-received and so was soon scaled up to 100 vehicles. The missing piece of the model was the workforce required to do the distribution. Here, the community stepped in and volunteered to carry out the distribution.

Various organizations came forward and offered their support. Madurai Corporation was actively seeking feedback from the residents. Soon, they introduced bag of fruits as well. Every morning, teams assembled at around 6 am. Each vehicle was assigned a team of 3 or 4 members. On an average, there were 50 bags of vegetables and 50 bags of fruits to sell (100 bags in total). A single bag costs INR 100 and packed to last for a minimum of 3 days. Each team was also assigned an area to cover but had the flexibility to go to any street. An audio clip was played on loop through the announcement system. The Corporation



team issued fresh masks and gloves every day. They also provided food and water to all the team members. Depending on the area and the response, it could take 2-3 hours to complete the sales.

The initiative was well-received. Vehicles started crawling to every street in the city. Residents were initially apprehensive of the quality of the vegetables. What we were delivering has been done with the best of intentions. So, we were able to build confidence with the residents. Word went out and soon this gained traction. The teams made sure that they returned to the same set of streets every 3-4 days to send out a reassuring message that the city is there to take care of them. We managed to get repeat customers as well.

The initiative of the Madurai Corporation effectively calmed the nerves of the people. It has been a pleasure to work with the Corporation team and offer a lending hand to this effort. I have personally seen the employees put in long hours of work to keep the operations smooth. Hats off to the efforts of the Madurai Corporation, the employees and all volunteers behind this initiative.

'We now entered the Corporation's premise, rejoiced that we are the first vehicle to complete the sales. We filled a form and settled the account. We disbursed from the area and moved on to our routine life of work from home. Until the next day.'

# 'IIM AHMEDABAD ENDOWMENT FUND' LAUNCHED

The institute announced the launch of the 'IIM Ahmedabad Endowment Fund' on June 23, 2020. With an initial commitment of Rs. 100 Cr from 10 founding alumni, the fund was launched by Mr Kumar Mangalam Birla, Chairperson, IIMA Board of Governors. The fund aims to enable IIMA to make a larger impact in the field of education, entrepreneurial leadership, management practice and public policy. The endowment also aims to raise Rs 1000 Cr over a period of five years.

IIMA is the first management school in India to come up with this first-of-its-kind fund, setting a benchmark and inspiring other institutes. "Endowment funds help ensure financial health of any institute, thereby encouraging growth and self-sufficiency. These funds will play a significant role in realizing the long-term goals of the institute and retain its autonomy," said Kumar Mangalam Birla, Chairperson, IIMA Board of Governors.

**Major contributors** The initial major contributors, who are founders of this Endowment and have committed to contribute more than ₹10 crore each, have come from across the batches of the institute. The names include **Sandeep Singhal and Kavita Iyer**, Co-Founder of WestBridge Capital and formerly co-founder of Sequoia Capital India; and trustees of SIFF respectively (1999), **Sanjeev Bikhchandani**, Founder & Executive Vice-Chairman, InfoEdge (1989); **Deep Kalra**, Founder & Group CEO, Makemytrip (1992); **Ramesh Mangaleswaran and Meenakshi Ramesh**, Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company; and Co-Founder of Citizen Matters respectively (1993); **Kuldeep Jain**, Founder, Cleanmax Enviro Energy Solutions (1999); **VT Bharadwaj**, Co-founder, A91 Partners (2001); **Peeyush Misra**, Partner, Growth Source Financial Technologies (1999) and **GV Ravishankar**, Managing Director, Sequoia Capital India (2004).

Other significant contributors who have committed to more than ₹5 crore are **Arun Duggal**, Chairman, ICRA (1974), and **SK Jain**, Co-Founder of WestBridge Capital and formerly Sequoia Capital India (2000).

"Endowments form the backbone of all great Univer-

sities around the world. Endowment is the glue that binds the University with its alumni. Greater the University, larger is the Endowment. With this initiative, the management and the alumni have sowed a seed for what will one day be a large endowment proportionate to the stature of IIM Ahmedabad," said Mr Sandeep Singhal.

**Critical funding support** Prof Errol D'Souza, Director, IIMA, said, "The endowment corpus will be very impactful as we expect it to emerge as an important source to support key strategic initiatives and innovative projects. Such a critical funding support has been missing for most Indian educational institutions and we are happy to create a benchmark."

Under the guidance of the IIMA Board of Governors, the endowment fund will be managed by an independent Endowment Committee consisting of initial alumni contributors, along with the Director and Dean - Alumni and External Relations, in their ex-officio capacity.

Prof Rakesh Basant, Dean - Alumni & External Relations, IIMA, said, "The transparent structure of the fund will help IIMA engage more actively with its alumni and they will be able to meaningfully participate in shaping the future of their alma mater. This will also help the Institute deliver greater value through contemporary, high-quality teaching and research."

**The virtual event** The fund was launched online via video conferencing and live streaming. During the launch, Prof. Vijaya Sherry Chand brought the history alive by a presentation on 'IIMA: Glimpses from the Archives'. Mr Harsha Bhogle (PGP 1985) was also a part of the launch and enlightened the attendees by a brief talk on 'IIMA - Transforming students to transform themselves', speaking on how important it is to stay ahead of the curve and imbibe technology.

With a thought of giving back to the alma mater, Mr Sanjeev Bikhchandani expressed, "Fundamentally, I believe for many of us, IIM-A was a transformational experience and if we have the ability to give back, we should, and enable others to as well."

# IIMA HEALTHCARE SIG IN THE COVID-19 BATTLE

Shared by Mr Ulhas Joshi (PGP 1977)

It is a little over a year since the launch of the IIMA Healthcare SIG. With more than a hundred active members, the SIG's four-fold-focus centres around providing inputs for policy formation, industry-academia interaction, thought leadership initiatives and healthcare entrepreneurship. Many members have been making active contributions in these areas.

But, who could have thought that this Covid-19 pandemic would trigger so many significant activities by SIG members in all the four focus areas, in such a short time period. We share with you, here, a few of the numerous contributions made by our members to help tackle problems that the world faced so unexpectedly.

**Dr. Dinesh Dua** (PGP 1979) contributed on multiple fronts in the multiple positions he holds in the healthcare industry. In his roles as Chairman of Pharmexcil & Chairman of the Lifesciences Committee at CII, his diligent interactions with ministers and bureaucrats helped resolve initial issues related to the pharma industry's supply chain, and this helped in ensuring smooth inter-state movement of RM, FG and essential services. In the matter of supply of HydroxyChloroquine and Paracetamol, he put forth to the government, both domestic and international considerations, which facilitated the critical decisions taken.

**Srinvas Lanka** (PGP 1985), senior pharma industry professional, and Director on the board of well-known pharma companies, participated in committees of various ministries, including the one that facilitated the financial package to enable self-reliance in the Indian pharma industry. He was able to identify repurposing of one drug, which is currently under testing. He proactively created a discussion platform for over 100 scientists and doctors, and their suggestions aided ministerial deliberations and decisions. He also highlighted alternate medicine route for Covid-19 for consideration by the government's AYUSH department.

**Sudarshan Jain** (PGP 1977)'s efforts during the

pandemic were visible on multiple fronts. As Secretary General of the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, he closely interacted with government and other public agencies, pharma industry associations and all other key stakeholders, in closely monitoring demand and supply of medicines, and helped ensure adequate stock of APIs, finished product formulations and channel availability. He also interacted with the International Generic and Bio-similar Medicines Association, the WHO, the Association of Affordable Medicines in the US, Medicines for Europe, and others, to understand any potential impact on supply of medicines globally. And, for about 15 essential drugs, coordination between the government bodies and members companies has helped ease medicine availability issues domestically, even as India continues to help nations in need of medicines.

**Prof Arvind Sahay** (PGP 1989) led a major study whose conclusions would have a significant impact in the government's pharmaceutical pricing policy. The study, released recently, titled "Impact of Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) 2013 and National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) 2015 on Access and Affordability of Medicines in India", IIM-A, provides key insights to assess the efficacy of price regulation on affordability and access to medicines.

Prior to this pandemic, on-line education was just an "added convenient feature of main line education". During the lockdown, the major mode of education or knowledge dissemination was the "on-line" mode. Given the Covid situation, IIMA too stepped into the virtual mode. **Prof Viswanath Pingali**, in his role as Chairperson of the PGPX program, launched the 2020-21 batch PGPX program through the online interactive video mode. Through engaging with thought leaders and industry experts in virtual mode, he sought to motivate participants and prepare them for the challenges ahead. Using the podcast route, he, along with Prof Daniel Sokol of University of Florida, interviewed Mr Vamsi Chandra Kasivajjala, Board

member at Mango Sciences, regarding new age health platforms and other healthcare related matters, in the series “Platforms for Disruption”.

**Prof Chirantan Chatterjee** was actively involved the Virtual Healthcare Research Seminar Series 2020-21 of IIMA's CMHS, of which he is Chairperson. The virtual seminar will continue for some more months. Chirantan published various articles related to the pandemic. CMHS also launched Healthcast, a new podcast on Global Health and India.

**Rajiv Sharma** (PGP 1996), Group CEO & Director-Sterling Hospitals and his team faced a challenging situation at their hospital with sudden increase in number of COVID patients. Their efforts focused on multiple fronts - segregating COVID and non-COVID cases, speedy arrangement of appropriate safety gear for healthcare providers, appropriate sanitization of facilities, training and counselling of sample collection for COVID tests, and protocol for patient care. They used the opportunity to accelerate implementation of technology (tele-health / video consultation / and, so on) across their locations and facilities.

**Dr Rohan Desai** (PGP 2010), Founder & CEO of PlexusMD developed a free on-line training program; “Certificate Course in Management of Covid-19 (CCMC) in collaboration with the Government of Gujarat. PlexusMD facilitated preparation and delivery of the modules, in English, Hindi and Gujarati, by senior doctors and nurses with first-hand Covid-19 management experience. A large number of doctors, nurses and healthcare workers enrolled and completed the course. Rohan is now all set to roll out this training program to any other government or private healthcare facility.

**Siddharth Shah** (PGP 2012), Founder & CEO of India's largest digital healthcare platform - Ascent Health and PharmEasy, used their proprietary technology for automating the Corona Virus Control Centre at the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. Among various things implemented, CovidAssistBot was their AI powered self-assessment Bot as per government guidelines. Their DocOn system was implemented to create and digitize the entire work flow for efficient monitoring and patient management for Covid patients at Mumbai's Kasturba Hospital. Also commendable was their campaign of gifting of masks to healthcare workers.

**Dr.(Maj.) Mukund Kulkarni** (SMP 2018-19) conducted many healthcare-focused activities during the lockdown, notable ones being his free tele-consultations, blood donation camps, Covid-19 testing for BOP population, and Covid-19 online and offline awareness programs.

**Mangesh Wange** (PGP 1994), CEO of Swades Foundation, engaged with the Government of Maharashtra and the district civic authorities in meeting the medical and personal protection equipments (PPE) requirements of healthcare workers and police personnel. They also provided daily essentials to the district tribals and urban migrant labour and slum dwellers. Well appreciated was their offering of cooked meals to Covid healthcare warriors at hospitals.

**Shreeya Jayaraman** (PGPX 2011) along with women from various IIMs came together to help in transporting over 400 migrants to their homes, and also provided masks, sanitizers, food and water for their journey. Their efforts had a good response.

**Sumant Bhadoria** (PGP 2009)'s company Alfatek Systems, is involved with industrial rapid prototyping services, with special emphasis on 3D-bio-printing and additive manufacturing. During the Covid pandemic, they geared up their 3D printers to manufacture face shields, and promoted open sources designs for various Covid equipments and hand sanitizers. Alfatek Systems also partnered with multiple entrepreneurs to provide PPE products at competitive prices.

During the lockdown period, **Shrihari Shiddhaye** (PGP 1992), Founder and Director of NextPlan Consulting, provided a platform for sharing thoughts related to the likely post-Covid work scenario. His well-attended healthcare focused webinars had significant inputs from pharma professionals in our SIG, like **Ashok Jain** (PGP 1980) - Executive Director of Micro Labs, **Sudarshan Jain** (PGP 1977), **Siddharth Shah** (PGP 2012), **Prof Viswanath Pingali** and others.

Apart from all that has been done till date, our SIG's healthcare focused activities and initiatives will only increase as we move into the future.

P.S. Surely many others in this SIG have also contributed in various ways during this pandemic. But we were unable to obtain their details in our search. So, our kudos to them too!

# IIMA PUBLIC POLICY SIG: AN INCEPTION, A JOURNEY, A RESOLVE

*Authored and submitted by Mr Aditya Kumar on behalf of the IIM-A Public Policy SIG. This article is an account of the new SIG's formation, its ideas and plans, its founding members' backgrounds, activities started already, those planned for the near future, and lastly a call for participation from the broader community.*



*The founding team of the IIMA Public Policy SIG at their first meeting on October 9, 2019 at Aerocity, NCR*

IIMA's vision is "to be recognized as a premier global management school operating at the frontiers of management education and practice while creating a progressive and sustainable impact on society."

One aspect of having a sustainable impact on society is to nudge policies in a way that create a more expansive horizon for all citizens: whether in

business, government, or social service. IIMA graduates have gone on to lead some of the largest business organizations in the world, many of them serve and have served at the highest echelons of public service, and quite a few have led from the front in their zeal to serve the society. Public policy is the art of crafting a future together by building upon opportunities for all the three segments.

On 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2019, twenty-two IIMA alumni across batches, ages, professions, and viewpoints gathered in a conference room in Aerocity, on the outskirts of Delhi. The group enthusiastically lit up the room with their spirited conversation and, for several hours, passionately discussed how to start and nurture a special interest group (SIG) on a topic they were interested and expert in: public policy. Like the three pillars of the society, the SIG serves to bring three IIMA communities together: the institute (and its faculty and students), its alumni, and the public policy practitioners.

The group that gathered in Aerocity was a diverse and representative sample representing over four decades of alumni. It included retired and serving career bureaucrats, lateral-hire civil servants, multilateral agency professionals, officers on special duty to Union Ministers, officials and professionals from central, state and local public agencies, representatives from the corporate world, think tanks and the civil society, consultants, and of course, the academic community. The individual political, economic, and social views ranged across the spectrum. That served to enrich the discussion on how to collectively channel this considerable wealth of human capital towards focused and impactful avenues. The institute alumni office led by Prof. Rakesh Basant, Prof. Anish Sugathan, and Anurag Choudhury pledged to provide the required institute support to the SIG.

In the eight months since then, the world has changed immeasurably, opening up vast opportunities for public systems to react to the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant economic challenges. For the nascent SIG and its members, this has meant having to sprint while still learning to walk. And the SIG is delivering. The group zoom-meets every Saturday for an hour-long virtual brainstorming session wherein individual members share their work and ideas, and then discuss what activities the group can take up both in the short and long term. The SIG WhatsApp group buzzes with new ideas and reports of activities tried and the results.

The group identified a set of quick value-adds for dealing with the crisis, including identifying model response structures and practices across a number of sectors, districts and countries. Individual members started feeding these inputs to policymakers in their networks. Through the JSW School of Public Policy

“ **Like the three pillars of the society, the SIG serves to bring three IIMA communities together: the institute (and its faculty and students), its alumni, and the public policy practitioners.** ”

that the SIG is working closely with, a set of academic student projects involving faculty and alumni are being developed. An effort was kicked off to find internship placement opportunities for IIMA students whose offers were rescinded due to Covid-19.

Simultaneously, a longer-term agenda is being put in motion. Individual members have started compiling ideas and norms for the longer-term “new normal” in their respective sectors and fields of work. Research projects are being initiated in which SIG members work with the JSW School faculty and students to come out with analytical insights that will inform policy.

The SIG is working to increase the depth and scope of its activities by creating a network of experts within and outside the alumni community who can contribute insights, knowledge and networks. The members are planning events to bring together leading experts under the aegis of the SIG.

The SIG’s pipeline of activities has been possible because of the regular commitment of all stakeholders in the initial months. The SIG has in turn provided members with a unique platform to connect, reflect, ideate, and contribute. The core purpose of the SIG has been clear since its inception: meaningfully contributing to India’s socio-economic development. The fact that the SIG can count among its members several notable alumni is very promising. We are always on the lookout for further commitment and support from the IIMA community. Come join us and make a name for IIMA in the policy and development world!

*[To join the Public Policy SIG or to offer any suggestions for the SIG, please contact the SIG Coordinators: Akhilesh Tilotia at [tilotia.akhilesh@gmail.com](mailto:tilotia.akhilesh@gmail.com) and Suhail Kassim at [suhailkassim@gmail.com](mailto:suhailkassim@gmail.com) ]*

# THE INSTITUTE'S TOP 25 WORKING PAPERS: JUNE 2020

Rank	Working Paper	File Downloads				Abstract Views			
		2019 09	3 months	12 months	Total	2019 09	3 months	12 months	Total
1	Strategies for solving wicked problems of true uncertainty: Tackling pandemics like Covid-19 (Version: April 13, 2020) <b>Ajeet N. Mathur</b>	18	34	34	34	43	86	86	86
2	Further Estimations of the Likely Total Infections and Deaths Due to COVID19 in Select Countries (Version 2 dt. April 10, 2020) <b>Sebastian Morris</b>	17	25	25	25	7	15	15	15
3	Covid-19 Crisis, Pandemic Resilience and Linkages to Land: An Exposition <b>Pranab R. Choudhury, Ranjan K. Ghosh and Sumita Sindhi</b>	14	14	14	14	11	11	11	11
4	Farmer Producer Organizations as Farmer Collectives: A Case Study from India <b>Nalini Bikkina, Rama Mohana Turaga and Vaibhav Bhamoriya</b>	12	29	76	257	46	106	276	780
5	A Framework of Project Risk Management for the Underground Corridor Construction of Metro Rail <b>Sarkar Debasis and Goutam Dutta</b>	11	19	48	296	28	67	208	995
6	Food Subsidy in India: Trends, Causes and Policy Reform Options <b>Vijay Paul Sharma</b>	9	23	80	991	156	400	1,455	11,237
6	Merger control for IRPs: Do acquisitions of distressed firms warrant competition scrutiny? <b>M.P. Ram Mohan and Vishakha Raj</b>	9	9	9	9	8	8	8	8
8	Theory of Planned Behaviour Approach to Understand the Purchasing Behaviour for Environmentally Sustainable Products <b>Bipul Kumar</b>	8	19	67	225	23	69	296	840
8	Party Autonomy in International Commercial Arbitration <b>Anurag K. Agarwal</b>	8	25	117	471	41	103	564	2,220
8	Indian Antecedents to Modern Economic Thought <b>Satish Y. Deodhar</b>	8	16	32	148	73	112	186	454
11	Climate Change in Madhya Pradesh: Indicators, Impacts and Adaptation <b>Vimal Mishra, Reepal Shah and Amit Garg</b>	7	9	37	106	26	65	311	506

12	Capital Structure and the Firm Characteristics: Evidence from an Emerging Market <i>Indra Pandey</i>	6	10	29	294	16	35	175	1,167
13	High-Value Agriculture in India: Past Trends and Future Prospects <i>Vijay Paul Sharma and Dinesh Jain</i>	5	10	31	163	54	138	498	1,648
13	A THEORY OF TAX EVASION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES <i>Errol D'Souza</i>	5	22	73	172	37	98	322	523
15	Feasibility Study of Setting up Information Technology-Enabled Services (ITES) and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Hubs in the North Eastern States of India: A Report <i>Rajanish Dass and Lethil Nangmuansang</i>	4	5	8	151	6	8	18	545
15	The Transformation of Microfinance in India: Experiences, Options and Future <i>Mankal Sriram and Rajesh Upadhyayula</i>	4	7	30	267	6	16	101	890
15	Estimating Output Gap for the Indian Economy: Comparing Results from Unobserved-Components Models and the Hodrick-Prescott Filter <i>Vineet Virmani</i>	4	5	15	98	30	37	76	293
15	The Role of the District Public Health Nurses: A Study from Gujarat <i>Sharma Bharati, Sweta Roy, Dileep Mavalankar, Pallavi Ranjan and Poonam Trivedi</i>	4	4	17	210	162	397	1,933	10,571
19	Issues in PPPs in Ports in India <i>G. Raghuram and Shukla Niraja</i>	3	5	10	35	5	8	22	97
19	Financing Infrastructure in India – Issues and the Way Forward <i>Sebastian Morris</i>	3	15	77	102	18	57	250	296
19	An Overview of the Trucking Sector in India: Significance and Structure <i>G. Raghuram</i>	3	7	17	70	7	17	50	167
19	Buy, Sell or Hold: Entity-Aware Classification of Business News <i>Ankur Sinha, Satishwar Kedas, Rishu Kumar and Pekka Malo</i>	3	6	38	38	4	10	102	104
19	Fertilizer Subsidy in India: Who are the Beneficiaries? <i>Vijay Paul Sharma and Hrima Thaker</i>	3	13	40	1,184	84	224	692	10,154
19	Education and Employment among Muslims in India: An Analysis of Patterns and Trends <i>Rakesh Basant</i>	3	5	9	156	7	17	59	664
19	Demand for Fertiliser in India: Determinants and Outlook for 2020 <i>Vijay Paul Sharma and Hrima Thaker</i>	3	3	11	215	13	28	85	958

Statistics updated 04.06.2020



## MS. SIDDHI KARNANI (PGP-FABM 2013)

**FORBES 30 UNDER 30 ASIA 2020, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
PARVATA FOODS PRIVATE LIMITED, CO-FOUNDER & DIRECTOR**

**M**s Karnani participated in the Australia Awards Women Trading Globally Program held in Melbourne and Sydney last year. Her venture, Parvata Foods is a socio-commercial enterprise that aims to improve the living standards

of farmers in the mountain-locked Indian state of Sikkim and other states in the Himalayan region. In the past, she has also been recognized with the Indian Women Achievers Award in 2018 and the National Agripreneur Award in 2017.



## MR KUNDAPUR VAMAN KAMATH (PGP 1971)

**FORMER CHIEF OF THE NEW DEVELOPMENT BANK OF BRICS  
COUNTRIES**

**V**eteran banker, Mr KV Kamath demitted office as the President of the National Development Bank led by the five BRICS member countries after completing his five year tenure on 6 July 2020. He is credited to have built the multilateral lending institution from the scratch. BRICS consists of five of

the largest emerging market economies such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Please follow Mr KV Kamath's exclusive interview with CNN on banking amid COVID-19, India-China standoff and more at CNN's official YouTube channel.

## PROF PANKAJ SETIA JOINS IS AREA

**W**e are happy to inform that Prof. Pankaj Setia has joined the Institute as Professor in the Information Systems area.

Before joining IIMA, Prof Setia was working as Associate Professor and the Executive Director of the Information Systems PhD Program at Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas. Prof Setia has received his doctoral degree in Information Technology Management from Michigan State University in 2008. He earned his Master's Degree in Information



Management from Management Development Institute, India in 2000 and earned his Bachelor of Science (Physics Honors) from University of Delhi in 1997.

Prof Setia's primary research interests include IT-enabled Organizational Capabilities, Computational Methods for Sentiment Analysis, IT Governance, Computational Methods of IT Governance, Open Source Innovations, Business Analytics and Artificial Intelligence. His office is in Wing 9D and he can be reached on [pankajsetia@iima.ac.in](mailto:pankajsetia@iima.ac.in) or 4884.

# LOCKDOWN POETRY BRINGS IIM-A CLOSER

By Aayush Gupta and Dhairya Shrivastava

“Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: It takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity” said Wordsworth.

With the world reeling under the Lockdown and the pandemic surging, the Literary Symposium Desk (LSD) - the official club for debating, quizzing and literature on IIM-A campus, doubled down on its efforts to foster togetherness in the IIM-A community with poetry throughout April.

Every year, bibliophiles and poets across the world come together to celebrate the written word during the month of April as the Global Poetry Writing Month (GloPoWriMo). In this international celebration of poetry, poets and groups of people take it upon themselves to write their hearts out in 30 poems across the 30 days of April. Eyeing opportunity amidst adversity, Team LSD formed a group for IIM-A to be a part of it - inviting willing poets from all the corners of IIM-A to share their masterstrokes. When they received more than 10 poems within a single day, they knew that WIMWI is a hidden gem and the writing bug had spread at IIM-A too.

The response of the IIM-A community was overwhelming and soon enough, they were working in tandem with other clubs on campus and in active coordination with the Alumni Office for a wider reach. As poems started flowing in, the team expanded the scope to invite poems in other languages as well – making it the only group to share poems in multiple languages as a part of GloPoWriMo. Certain “special” days were chosen during the month on which various tools and instruments of poetry were promoted and writers were encouraged to include them in their work. Some of them included, adopting a pseudonym for their poems, reinvigorating their creations using metaphors and crystallizing poems using tools which help find rhyming words.

Ms Maureen Thorson, the founder of GloPoWriMo, congratulated LSD saying “It gives me much pleasure to hear from you, and to know that you are encouraging poets on your campus and around the world this April...



I'm also so glad that I'm not alone in this, and that groups like yours are motivating and inspiring poets both close to home and far away...". She offered an exclusive poem prompt, titled “Editing the Editor”, for the IIM-A community as well.

The festival saw participation from across the community, be it students, alumni, or staff. This included student communities from PGP, PGP-FABM, PGPX, ePGP, FPM and several others. PGPX students, who had just joined as the Batch of 2020, enthusiastically participated in the celebration by contributing their poems. It was heartening to see exchange students from different countries of the world rendering in submissions and participating in GloPoWriMo. The student community was pleasantly surprised to find out that their very own beloved professors, Prof. Chitra Singla and Prof. Jeevant Rampal, masqueraded as poets in their free time. Their creations were lauded by both students and faculty.

The festival concluded with over 130 poems being shared from over 75 WIMWI poets on LSD's “High on LSD” blog. The poems spanned seven languages, including Bengali, Tamil, Marathi and Malayalam. Since, there was no restriction in terms of theme, the breadth of creativity the team saw was astounding. Poems were crafted on the current ongoing crisis, personal hardships, romanticism of nature, patriotism, philosophy, self-discovery, passion, and IIM-A among

other topics. The diverse set of collections is a testimony to the fact that IIM-A is a melting pot of people with each individual having a unique perspective and history.

The club also shared poems on their Instagram, Facebook and Twitter handles to drive greater viewership of the poems. Cumulatively, the poems were seen across 22 countries through the blog alone. Reportedly, the blog garnered appreciable admiration from over a thousand readers and writers across the world – reaching new peaks in their viewership and blog engagement. With words of appreciation pouring in from all corners of the world every other day, Team LSD is proud to have been at the steering wheel for this initiative at IIM-A. The team received several responses from the community in the appreciation of

GloPoWriMo, mentioning how it helped community members in otherwise distressing times.

Words certainly have powers; power to hurt egos, power to manipulate, power to mend hearts, power to heal soured relationships. LSD recognizes and appreciates this power and all those who wield the pen to express their emotions to make the world a better place. Through the trifecta of debating, quizzing and literature, Team LSD continues to bring the community closer – as exemplified through their Humans of IIM-A (handle name: @HumansOfIIMA) initiative on Instagram. The alumni community is encouraged to connect with them at [LiteraryDesk@iima.ac.in](mailto:LiteraryDesk@iima.ac.in) for engaging with the institute for their speaking and literary initiatives.

Happy writing!

## NIRF RANKING 2020: IIM AHMEDABAD TOPS THE CHART

Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIM-A) has topped the list of management institutes in the country, in the National Institutional Ranking Framework list of 2020. In the B-school rankings, IIM-Ahmedabad stood first, followed by IIM-Bangalore and IIM-Calcutta at the second and third spot,

respectively.

This year, the NIRF ranking 2020 was released in a virtual ceremony on June 11, 2020. It was also the first time when the NIRF rankings were released through the official twitter account of the Minister of Human Resource Development, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank.

## IN A FIRST, FDP BATCH INAUGURATED ONLINE

Prof. Errol D'Souza, Director - IIMA, inaugurated the Institute's first online Faculty Development Programme in Pedagogy and Research Methods on June 22, 2020.



# PGP 1968 BATCH CONNECTS THROUGH PHOTO ALBUM

*The PGP 1968 batch has very recently put together, for the first time ever, an “album” of photos of 49 batch-mates. The curation took under a week, and was accomplished following a difficult task of tracing, contacting and persuading. The initiative was led by four of the batch mates, with the responses stretching from New Zealand to the US.*

The Covid-19 pandemic is not going away easily or soon. In the topsy-turvy world that all of us have been sucked into, very little is clear and nothing is certain. Lockdowns, restrictions and a vague fear dominate the prevailing milieu. Most of us have stayed home-bound for the last two months or more. For the over-seventy crowd, to which everyone from the 1968 batch belongs, the end of lockdown does not mean the end of lockup. As a necessary and prudent precaution, all of us will continue to stay home for many more weeks or months.

The enforced home stays gave us extra time - lots of it. Most of us used this time to brush up on old skills, work on long pending desires, tidying up and other such things that were always put off for want of time. Reading, writing, music, old movies and long forgotten hobbies made the normal lists. Latent creativity was unleashed. And then there were those who did nothing. This group, which had mastered the art of “doing” nothing had no difficulty in putting all those extra hours to good use.

Travel was rendered impossible; and will probably remain impractical for an indefinite period into the future. That put paid to any possibility of holidays, of meeting family and friends, and of course of batch reunions. The annual reunion that we had promised ourselves a few years back suddenly became a distant dream.

Given the prevailing situation, our thoughts naturally veered towards our near and dear, batchmates included. Some of us spoke to each other. Someone posted a little status report along with his most recent (pandemic era) photograph on the batch’s WhatsApp group. A few others followed. And an idea was born. We realised that an email message – even a cryptic one – from all batchmates, accompanied by their

latest photograph would be a simple way of obtaining reassurance that everyone was well. Moreover, if we could put all these photographs together in some form of compact album and circulate it to the whole batch, it would serve a very useful purpose. It would convey the message of our well-being, help everyone see at a glance what all of us look like today, and serve as a “virtual” reunion.

This was important because, except for about 25 of us who have been attending our reunions, many have not met each other for long periods of time. There are many in our batch whom most of us have not met ever since we became alumni.

The idea was immediately put into action. Emails were sent out to 51 batchmates whose contact details were available (83 of us graduated in 1968). Within about a week, responses were received from 49 batchmates living in India, New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, UK, USA and Canada. There was much joy when the 49-photo collection was circulated.

We have great pleasure in presenting, in the following two pages, this “pandemic era” photo collection of our batch.

We have a request and an appeal. We would like to have the contact details of as many of our batchmates as possible. If anyone from the 1968 PGP batch is reading this, and does not find his picture in the collection that follows, please get in touch with T. N. Ramaswamy at [tnramaswamy@hotmail.com](mailto:tnramaswamy@hotmail.com)

We would like to conclude by extending best wishes of the season from all of us of the 1968 batch to all our fellow alumni – of the 2 batches before and the 52 batches after us – and to the faculty and staff of IIMA: Stay Safe and Stay Healthy.

# BATCH ACTIVITY

## Stalwarts of 1968 PGP Batch today

A Virtual Reunion  
of 49 from the  
1968 PGP Batch  
during the  
Covid-19  
Pandemic  
May 2020



Niranjan Acharya  
Bengaluru, India



Sunil Agarwal  
Delhi, India



Sagarmal Agarwal  
Mumbai, India



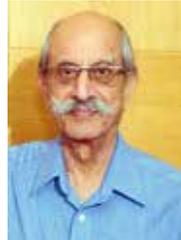
N N Agrawala  
Udaipur, India



Harmohan S Ahluwalia  
Mumbai, India



D C Anjaria  
Ahmedabad, India



Vinod Bharti  
Hyderabad, India



J C Camillus  
Pittsburgh, PA, USA



Arun Dabholkar  
Mumbai, India



Ajit Dalvi  
Atlanta, GA, USA



Pradip Desai  
Mumbai, India



Y Godiwalla  
Milwaukee, WI, USA



Dileep Gupte  
Mumbai, India



Tejpal Singh Hora  
Singapore



Bala Iyer  
Bengaluru, India



B Swaminathan Iyer  
Auckland, NZ



David Iyyunni  
Melbourne, Australia



G K Jayaram  
Bengaluru, India



Kiran Karnik  
Delhi, India



L N Krishnan  
Bengaluru, India



H Kulkarni  
Pune, India



Siddharth Kumar  
Chennai, India



Biji Kurien  
Chennai, India



Vinod Ladia  
Udaipur, India

# BATCH ACTIVITY



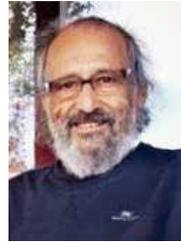
## Stalwarts of 1968 PGP Batch today



Arun Madhavan  
Bengaluru, India



S Madhavan  
Chennai, India



Shakti Maira  
Delhi, India



S Mehendale  
Mumbai, India



Ela Mehta  
Mumbai, India



Vivian Mendes  
Mumbai, India



Ravi Menon  
Calgary, AB, Canada



Ishver Naik  
Vadodara, India



M Natarajan  
Goa, India



Raj Singh Nirwan  
Jaipur, India



Jayant Oza  
Mumbai, India



Vijay Palkar  
Pune, India



Peter Pinto  
Maumee, OH, USA



T N Ramaswamy  
Thrissur, India



Seethapathy Rao  
Bengaluru, India



Sanjivan Sahni  
Delhi, India



Ravi Sarathy  
Newton, MA, USA



N Shankar  
London, UK



Z Shipchandler  
Naperville, IL, USA



Surinder Singh  
Belview, WA, USA



Indrapal Singh Syan  
Mumbai, India



V Vanikar  
Goa, India



H M Vyas  
Vadodara, India



Nayanendu Vyas  
Piscataway, NJ, USA

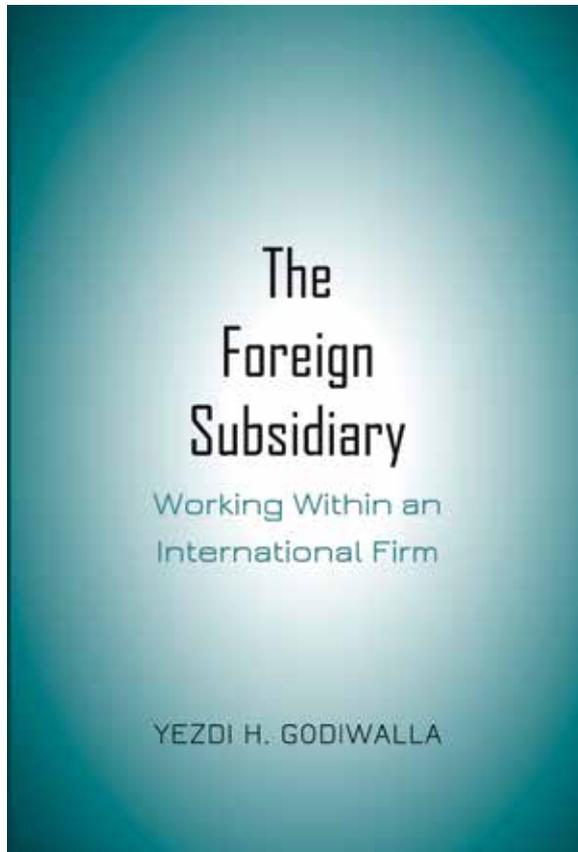


M Zanzibarwalla  
Pune, India

# THE FOREIGN SUBSIDIARY

## WORKING WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIRM

A book by Dr Yezdi H Godiwalla (PGP 1968)



**A**bout the author: Dr Yezdi H Godiwalla is Emeritus Professor of Management, College of Business and Economics, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, USA, where he was professor for 41 years. He has published/presented: four scholarly

and consulting projects. He has received awards for his teaching and research, including the 2013 “WP Roseman Excellence in Teaching Award” (University’s highest teaching award). He has BA (Honours), Ranchi University; MBA, Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad; and PhD, Oklahoma State University,



USA. He worked with Tata Steel, and, Godrej and Boyce, India.

**Synopsis:** The book explains the role of a foreign subsidiary in international management as it helps a multinational corporation (MNC) to geographically expand and grow its business volume. Growth of an MNC would come from increases in its: (1) domestic operations, and, more so, (2) international operations. The effective management of the foreign subsidiary is vital to an MNC’s long term survival, competitiveness and growth. The book is conceptual and practical in that it provides

both, theories, and, implications and recommendations for practice. It is a good testament to the tenet that the practicing manager should be as conceptually sound as the theorist should be pragmatically astute.

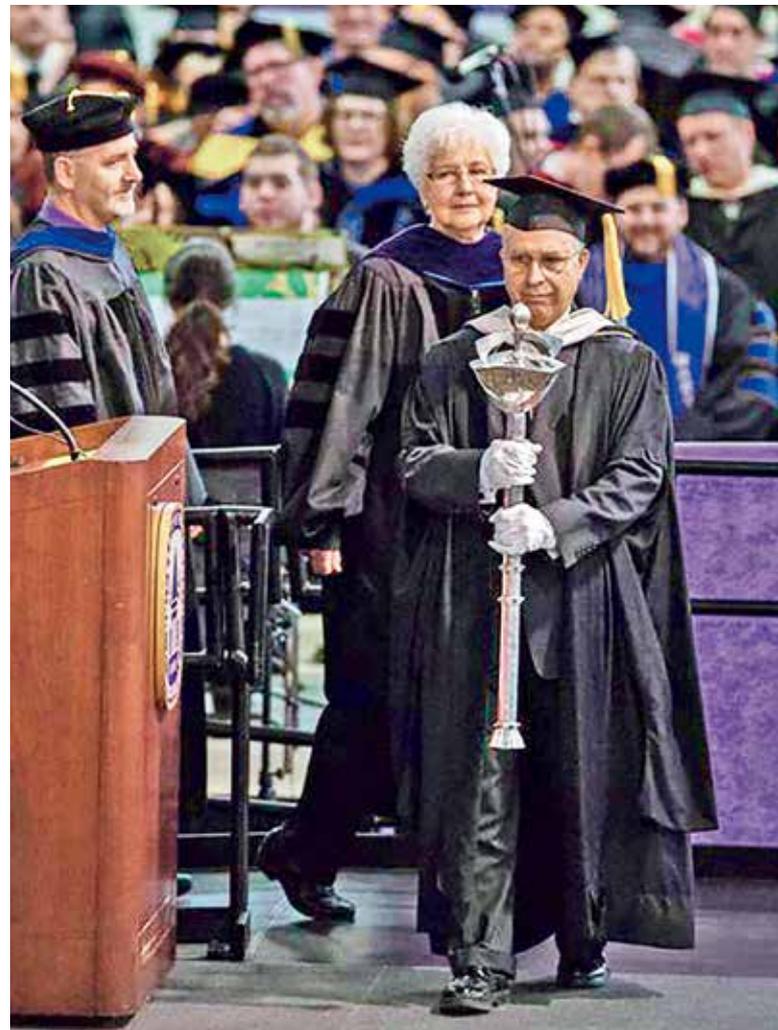
The MNC and its foreign subsidiaries, to quote the book, “will hold true to their purpose of enlarging the scope of business around the world and transferring from one country to another country: people, values, ideas and views and perspectives, knowledge, arts and know-how and skills, lifestyles and standards of living, goods and services, equipment, finance, and (engineering and organizational) technologies.” MNCs and their foreign subsidiaries are the agents of global change in that they usher in newer ways of life and uplift the plight of the lesser fortunate societies in countries across the world.

The foreign subsidiary is a vital link between: (1) the fountain source of the MNC’s headquarters (HQ) and its home country operations, and, (2) their chosen global markets and environments which they would enact as they geographically expand. Future growth in revenues and profits would come from there. They would provide a stable base for the MNC’s financial vitality.

Managing a foreign subsidiary is complex. It operates in diverse cultural and operating environments. The MNC HQ’s management of its foreign subsidiaries would have to cope with the complexities of the differences in its multiple country environments of cultures and operating conditions. Managing a foreign subsidiary, from an MNC’s HQ point of view, is complex, interesting and challenging. To quote the book about the role of the MNC’s expatriate who goes and manages a foreign subsidiary: “The expatriate who manages the foreign subsidiary is vital for managing the foreign performance of the MNCs. The expatriate will face a lot of challenges in his (or her) foreign subsidiary assignments. The MNC should train and mentor him, collaborate with him, and reward him better because he is the key to improved foreign subsidiary’s performance.”

The book has 21 chapters in these five sections:

1. Global Organizational and Foreign Subsidiary Strategies
2. HQ-Foreign Subsidiary Relationship: Constructs for Strategy, Structure, Culture, and Organizational Technologies



*Dr. Yezdi’s Mace Commencement on Dec 14 2013, for Best Teacher of the University Award*

3. Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Competitiveness
4. Training Expatriate Executives
5. Ethical and Social Responsibility Issues for the Foreign Subsidiary.

The book details are:

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Publishing date: January, 2020

Available: in both, print (hardback) and electronic forms

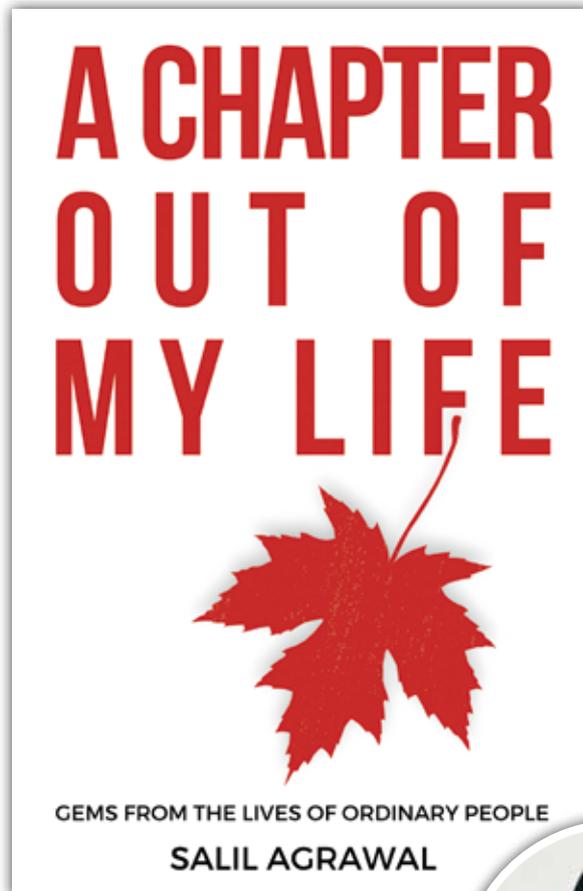
Pages: 432

Price: USD 129.95

(The book can also be purchased online at publisher’s website: [www.peterlang.com/view/title/70267?format=HC](http://www.peterlang.com/view/title/70267?format=HC))

# A CHAPTER OUT OF MY LIFE - GEMS FROM THE LIVES OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

A book by Mr Salil Agrawal (PGP 1983)



*Salil Agrawal is a mentor and a coach. He has thirty seven years of experience across industries and functional domains. He is a gold medallist in engineering and has done his MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.*

There are extraordinary people and then there are ordinary people. People like you and me. People who are accomplished in their own way and who have had interesting lives. But they are not extraordinary, they are not celebrities. Their stories do not get published even though they are very inspirational.

This book brings to you a story from the life of nineteen such wonderful people. All of them are alumni of Indian Institutes of Management. They write about an experience from their life that made a difference to them.

**T**here are extraordinary people and then there are ordinary people. People like you and me. People who are accomplished in their own way and who have had interesting lives. But they are not extraordinary, they are not celebrities. Their stories do not get published even though they are very inspirational. This book brings to you stories from the lives of 19 such wonderful people. All of them are alumni of IIM.

The book has been reviewed by two IIMA alumni, as follows, both of whom have authored a book.

**Ajay Sachdeva (PGP 1980), Author of the book - Is**



## Your Mind Really Yours?

The book - a refreshing collection of short life stories penned by nineteen IIM alumni from diverse backgrounds, age groups, professions and businesses provides for an engaging narrative. The stories covered in each of the nineteen chapters are stories of grit and passion, of the relentless pursuit of dreams waiting to unfold, of the unyielding efforts and tenacity of purpose in not giving up despite the curved balls that life invariably throws at one.

The variegated experiences that are articulated with simplicity and honesty, cover interesting real life accounts

of the dilemma in making career choices, resolution of conflicting pulls and pressures from family, society and one's own inner confusions, the struggle to keep afloat under stringent business conditions, re-directing the course of one's career when one felt some stirrings inside, nudging one to alter the path being tread and so on.

Implicit in the rendition of various life stories are pointers and valuable lessons readers may find striking a chord of resonance.

For instance, to mention only a few,

- Notwithstanding all the emphasis business schools place on effective planning and goal setting, in the arena of the experienced world, "Life is often what is happening to you whilst you were busy making other plans"
- Inner satisfaction, in contrast to success (largely defined and imposed by the external environment) is less to do with attaining specific, measurable goals but more to do with doing what you like and liking what you do with passion and joy without any need to be evaluated by others.
- In its essence, there is no such thing as 'failure' in life. Perhaps, this is at best only a mind construct and a self-imposed phenomenon. Perceived differently, failure could actually be a cue or a signal that reflects what is not working for us and what changes or adaptations we need to make to get back into achievement and growth mode – a kind of getting back on track to unleash our full potential.

A very likeable feature of this book is its tone of humility, not sermonizing in its content but one where readers are carried along as the journey of each alumnus unfolds in its narrative.

The book, which has showcased many life changing episodes of some of the writers will be an interesting read, not just for aspiring business management students but perhaps for anyone who is looking to live life in accord with their life's true callings and pursuing their dreams with unflagging zeal and enthusiasm.

**Prashant Yadav (PGP 2002), Author of the book - The Jeera Packer**

Everyone has one lesson to share. Actually, everyone has too many lessons to share. Salil's big idea in this book has been to get nineteen IIM alumni share one each from their lives.

An intriguing premise, even when it was just an electric impulse in Salil's brain circuits.

Disclaimer: I wrote one of those chapters.

These are nineteen deeply personal stories touching issues like career, fulfilment, entrepreneurship, growing up, inner struggle and life-outlook. The diversity in the contributors' profiles and topic choices gives the book a rich, lively hue. The story selection seems driven by the impact they had on the writers' lives, rather than the event being the most spectacular one in their lives.

And that gives the work, its real power. Valuable perspectives that you won't get anywhere else because these stories aren't the ones people tell you over cocktails. More like, you go on hillside vacation with the person, sit quietly by the riverside watching the sky, hearing the water and then, on the third day, he begins, "Yeah, that year, those times, this happened ..."

The first-person narration and the autobiographical nature of the stories gives it the flavor of experience sharing rather than pedantic wisdom-dispensing, making them more accessible.

It's kind of, being in the thick, feeling the uncertainties and then the reader herself arriving at the inference.

Easy reading, fast flowing stories and a writing that doesn't draw attention to itself. Salil does a great job focusing on the impact and import of the stories than burdening them with ostentatiousness. The focus on sharing a significant life experience in a digestible format shines through.

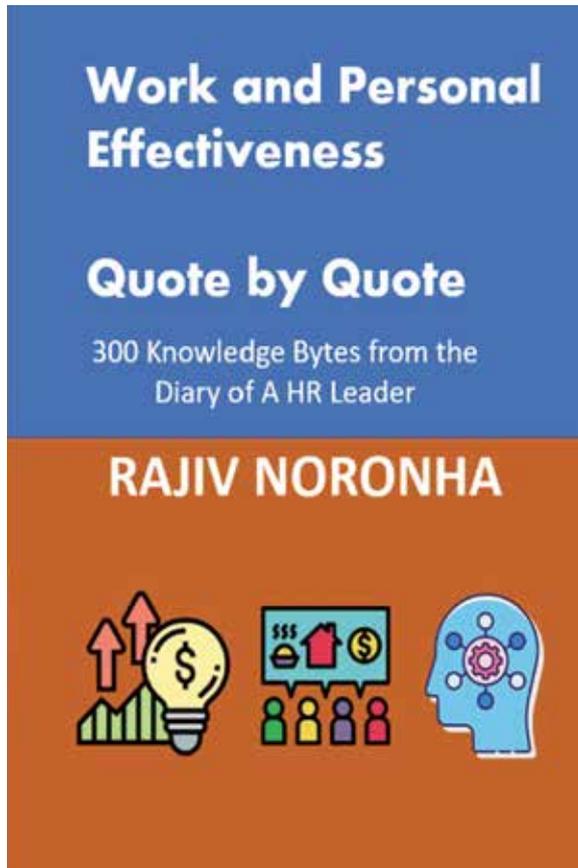
Since there are nineteen writers, the narration style and pace varies a bit from chapter to chapter. However, each story is independent and this variation only enhances the impact. More like rhythm.

A quick breezy read, would recommend it to anyone who wants a quick afternoon read or a short flight companion. Particularly useful for business management students and recent graduates - it gives a glimpse of important issues and decisions people face years, even decades out of IIMs.

A great idea, well executed. Crowdsourced wisdom could be a great source, not just for a book but for a series of them. Congratulations, Salil.

# WORK AND PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS - QUOTE BY QUOTE

Authored by Mr. Rajiv Noronha (FPM 2003). Currently, he is a Principal Consultant and HR Head (Analytics & Insights Unit) at Tata Consultancy Services.



**Synopsis:** A book that distills various challenges, issues, and dilemmas we face in our work and personal life space, as a set of learning nuggets around work and personal effectiveness. The author uses 300 originally crafted quotations along with experiential insights and graphics to create these learning nuggets that are valuable resources for leaders, managers, and other individuals seeking effectiveness in their work and personal lives.



**Distribution:** In India- Digital version: [www.amazon.in](http://www.amazon.in) and Print Version: [www.pothi.com](http://www.pothi.com), Other markets- print and digital versions through Amazon online Stores.

**REVIEW BY MS HEMA RAVICHANDAR (PGP 1983),** Strategic HR Advisor, and formerly SVP and Global Head of Human Resources for Infosys Limited.

We sit down to shape our thoughts into an article, prepare for a talk, get a message across to one of our recalcitrant team members, or even propose an

alternate point of view to the boss. And wish *and* search - for just that impactful quote or motivational message that captures our sentiments and aptly drives home the point. Sounds familiar? Well, Rajiv Noronha has heard you and with his book **“Work and Personal Effectiveness: Quote by Quote”** steps in handily to help you in your search.

Of course, the book goes well beyond that. It has a larger purpose. It guides individuals on their journeys, both professional and personal, with practical wisdom and informational nuggets. Rajiv’s keen observations on everyday work, gleaned from his experience across multiple organizations, are helpful for all professionals in their quest for self-improvement. Indeed, his knowledge, learnings, and insights are all woven together beautifully into a collection that is both easy to read and relevant.

The book has an interesting structure. It is based on the premise that people are able to relate to concepts far better if they are illustrated through bite-sized anecdotes and snippets. Rajiv has cleverly used quotations throughout the book and has bundled them into areas of **work effectiveness** and **personal effectiveness**. To create easy access to nuggets of wisdom across a range of topics, they are further mapped across themes such as Talent Acquisition, Talent Development and Performance Management, for ‘work effectiveness’ and Developing Self and Managing Relationships for ‘personal effectiveness’.

The book has valuable insights for the HR professional and also for others, especially those in a supervisory role. The **‘Manager’s hat’** with its people management challenges may initially be quite daunting for many. The book, with its distilled information and relatable examples, would be a handy aide at this time. Trainers and coaches would also find it a useful go-to in their training programs and coaching journeys. And of course, each area can be easily accessed across the collection with the quote-map tables provided.

The book combines rhyme and reason in Rajiv’s inimitable style and makes for a refreshing read and a worthy addition to the library

**REVIEW BY DR. S. JEYAVELU, FELLOW IIMA,** and Dean, VIT-AP School of Business, VIT University.

Rajiv Noronha (FPM 2003; Dorm 17 and later FPM Houses) always had a knack of getting to the essence of the matter in any conversation. I remember his sharp, insightful, and witty observations having tea at the shop

opposite the main gate of IIM A campus. Hence his book came as a matter of no surprises to me.

The book is in the form of nuggets - short insightful sentences, covering both personal and professional effectiveness categorized into various themes such as Career Management, Diversity, Leadership, Performance Management, Strategic Management, Talent Acquisition, Talent Development, Values & Ethics, Work Effectiveness, Developing Self, Managing Relationships and Personal Effectiveness.

Reading the book was like revisiting numerous conversations with colleagues, mentors, and friends. The book is packed with nuggets of wisdom that take the form of a story, poetry, or metaphor to nudge, surprise, or provoke the reader with insights.

Navigating the book took me on a self-reflective journey of my past experiences. There were moments when I encountered an all-encompassing image, distilling experience, and touching a raw nerve of doubts, idiosyncrasies, or consequences faced. The nuggets triggered refreshed memories of forgotten practices that worked, the unpalatable and unacknowledged underbelly, and aha moments of discovery of wisdom.

Listed below are six different perspectives that emerged as I read specific learning nuggets and quotes.

**Preparing oneself with essential Knowledge, Facts, and Awareness:** *Quote #112 Gather data after analyzing the need, The supply gaps you will have to feed. Clear strategic priorities will sow the seed, And take you far in the journey, indeed.*

**Concerns that are usually kept locked away, such as failures and mistakes:** *Quote #190 Banishing failure to the gallow, will ensure that reluctance will follow.*

*Quote #206 The one who realizes and sets right the mistakes  
Will be the most likely one to win at the stakes.*

**Prescriptions to the manager on managing oneself:** *Quote #180 Overcome the temptation to postpone; Successes will appear, cast in stone.*

*Quote #150 What gets focus gets attention; What gets attention gets done.*

**Performance orientation at work and our personal lives:** Quotes #190 and #206 highlight the underbelly of performance orientation. Managers tend to avoid engaging with failures and mistakes. The way failures are managed, has established relationships with creativity, risk-taking, and effectiveness.

**Mantra for any change program:** *Quote #16 Unity of Purpose, Diversity of Participation, and Commitment to Action are the Holy Trinity and Success Mantra for any change program.*

This above quote captures the wisdom of change in three variables. This is not anecdotal; these three variables are empirically proven in change management and creativity research. Many organizational failures can be traced back to the lack of these variables. This nugget provides the depth and breadth of Rajiv's experience and his integration of academic rigour with managerial practice.

**Evoking powerful imagery in the minds of the readers:** *Quote #175 Employees are not racehorses who will gallop when the reins are pulled.*

This nugget evokes an image of a horse struggling and yet running at top speed, while the rider is pulling the reins communicating STOP to the horse yet expecting it to gallop. This image highlights the struggle most leaders face in providing clear goals and necessary resources & support, and NOT hindering the output unknowingly. Easier said than done! The image of this horse will remain with me for a long time. Kudos to Rajiv for providing such powerful images for reflection throughout the book.

The most valuable aspect of this book is the integration of validated/accepted knowledge across fields, best practices from the professional manager's world, and wisdom distilled from experience. It is likely to appeal to audiences with diverse learning preferences - those fond of stories, those who prefer theory & concepts, those who look for simple rules to follow, and to those who want distilled wisdom.

Apart from being a personal companion, this book will be a great gift to your friend, colleague, mentee, or boss - a coffee table book that will remain relevant for many many years. The references are a must-read for leaders.

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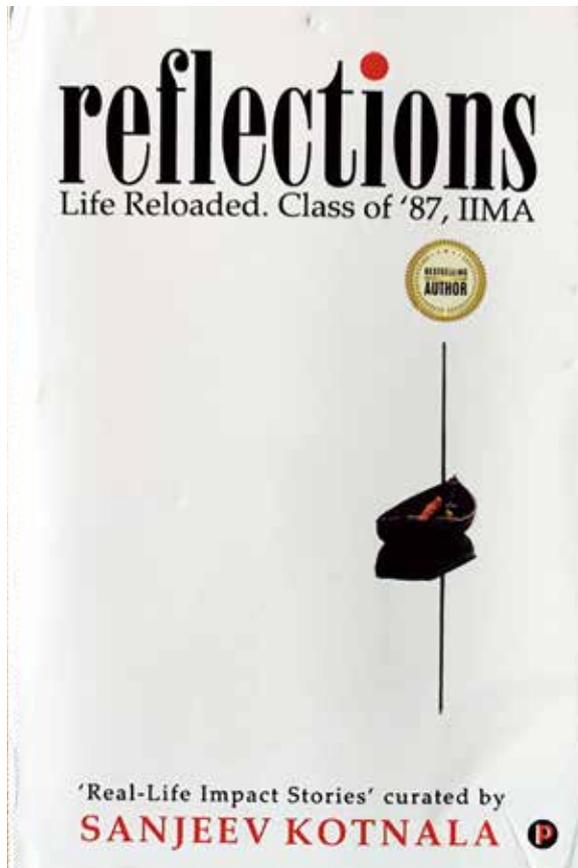
I, Victor Pereira, hereby, declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Ahmedabad,  
June 2020

**Victor Pereira**  
**Publisher, The WIMWIAN**

# REFLECTIONS: LIFE RELOADED. CLASS OF '87, IIMA

A book by Mr Sanjeev Kotnala (PGP 1987)



**R**EFLECTIONS. *Life Reloaded, Class of '87, IIM Ahmedabad* is my third book. It is a compilation of 29 impact stories from personal and professional life contributed by 18 Alumni of 1987 batch from IIM Ahmedabad.



In my corporate life in advertising and marketing, and later as a Brand-marketing consultant, trainer and facilitator, storytelling has been always been part of life. In fact, I consider life as an unpredictable journey between two points of certainty;

birth and death. Rest everything in life is probabilistic. Here, we react to the probortunity (problem and/or opportunity) based on our experiences and expectations. We decide between alternatives, the resultant experiences shape our lives and our future decision. Life is lived and managed at the same time.

When you start looking deep, you find there are only two types of experiences you learn from. Self-experience called *Aap-beethi* and other's experiences

called *Jag-beethi*. Self-experience being the better teacher. However, why should everyone need to go through all the experiences when they can learn from other's experiences. What and how we learn from experiences of self or others is based on our filters and experience.

So, when in November 2019, the batch of 1987 was getting ready for their annual (33rd) get-together, this time at Hyderabad at the end of January 2020, I propped up the idea of REFLECTIONS. Sharing of our experiences in complete honesty.

I saw my batch as an ideal ground for harvesting rich-informative, authentic real-life stories. Something that the readers will not only enjoy reading but also benefit.

The challenge was to make it happen in the next 100 odd days and release at the get-together.

It was all about execution. There were multiple challenges. To start with, find willing contributors. To push them to find time in their already busy schedule to think and evaluate the experience they could and want to share. Many of them were constrained by the confidentiality clauses in their work, and few were hesitant to write. Lives of some of the batchmates were already dissected and covered by the media. Few of the contributors were first-time authors, they needed support. As a curator, I guided them through the process without impacting the story and the learning.

The stories were not constrained by any demand or guideline for the tone and style. Each contributor was free to choose the format and treatment while writing from their heart.

The stories have a distinct individual stamp. So, story after story in Reflections does not allow the reader to settle down. The pace, subjects and reactions are all different. It is a huge plus point for the book; differential experiences need differential flow and style.

To bring some semblance of organised chaos, the stories were re-distributed under five distinct groups; Business, People, Interaction, Life and Institute.

Though I take the credit as curator of the content in REFLECTIONS, certain batchmates were fully

charged with the idea and equally passionate about the possibilities. They were the motivators and pacesetters. To name a few, Anchal Jain, Giri Giridhar, N Subramanian, S Ram Kumar, Srinivas Shastrix, S M Sundaram and S. Subramanian. They have not only contributed but also helped the project compilation on time.

There is a small regret I have with Reflections. No female batchmate has contributed any story. Hopefully, sometime in future, the error will be rectified.

Personally, I see stories as a beautiful way to share learnings. They can express the event in totality. I firmly believe that Corporates, Organisation, Brands, Teams and even Schools and colleges can use story compilations format like Reflections for shared learning from other's experiences. Frankly, I would love to be associated with such projects and curate the content. After all, I have been a storyteller all my life.

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### ALUMNI 1- BATCH 1987

ANCHAL JAIN one of the contributors, captures it in his unique style, *'Life is not a single dot. Millions of tiny ones keep joining randomly to shape stories. Stories that one doesn't even dream.. they just happen. Many such dots have actually shaped my purpose rather than me chasing them with a purpose. Beautiful stories get built when many such unrelated dots connect in unpredictable ways, making Life worth discovering.'*

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### ALUMNI 2- BATCH 1987

Ankur Mithal, another batchmate and a contributor, captures the idea in his review. *'Life is unique, and every Life has lessons which we can learn from, are truisms which we all know. Not many lives can be easily read and understood. Reflections fills this gap with stories about real people. The stories are varied in tone and setting, as are the people. I hope they are of value to many others, not merely because they are from the lives of a few people who went to IIM Ahmedabad'*.

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### ALUMNI 3- BATCH 1986 ( wrote the preface)

Prakash Iyer, the well-known Leadership Trainer, Motivational speaker and best-selling author, in the preface, says, *'Reflection is a reunion, where you and I get to eavesdrop and listen to the stories of mistakes made, battles won and lessons learned... The fact that successful people can share stories of their mistakes and failures makes Reflections a nice little read'*.

# IT'S NOT FUN IF IT'S EASY

*Ms Diya Garg (PGP 1996) is a global supply chain leader, turned entrepreneur and investor. In 2015, she decided to start her own entrepreneurial journey by joining her family firm Electroquip as the Chief Operating Officer. Here, Ms Shilpa Gupta (PGP 1996), Director - Strategy and Business Development at SageOne Investment Advisors LLP, took the initiative to bring to the IIMA community a human interest story yet again. Below is the excerpt from her talk with Ms Diya Garg:*

**D**iya and I were allocated adjoining rooms in D-11. Though very different personalities, we hit it off from day one. What I liked most about Diya was that she was a very vibrant person - full of energy, color and life. I vividly remember her red / purple jeans teamed with tops in contrasting colours, Bappi-da music playing loudly in her room and her doing the stairs 100 times a day for exercise. And she was brave - even though she majored in marketing, she took the toughest elective in Finance - Options & Futures, just for fun. And the gal cared a hoot about public opinion.

After graduating, we were both fortunate to land jobs in Mumbai - Diya in Supply Chain and I in Finance. Oh the exhilaration of new found independence, money in the bank, the revelry and the parties! It was a golden time indeed.

And then marriage, kids and the rat race happened. She moved to Hong Kong and then to Singapore and over the years though we never really lost touch, we got busy with our respective lives. And through all these years it has been an unadulterated pleasure to see her take on the corporate world with élan, working for over 17 years with leading MNCs such as Coca-Cola, Nokia, Johnson & Johnson and Levi Strauss & Co., winning awards all the way and to metamorphose into a stylish, sophisticated lady. Diya quit her corporate career at the peak when she was Senior Director (Asia, Middle East, Africa) at Levi Strauss, to do something even more challenging and meaningful. Let's hear it from the lady herself.

**So Diya, tell us a bit about yourself.** I'm a true 'Dilli' girl. Born and brought up in New Delhi, my family and some of my closest friends are still here. So it's no surprise that even after moving around for 14 years, entrepreneurship brought me back full circle. We're a close-knit family - my parents, two sisters and I. I graduated from Delhi University and IIM Ahmedabad, and currently live in



*Ms Diya Garg for Electroquip Project Security at Rashtrapati Bhavan*

Singapore with my husband, Samir, and our 2 kids.

BTW, thank you for that incredible walk down memory lane. IIMA will always be a very special part of my life. Not (only) for the jobs, the honour and the tag (that's great, all of it) but for the incredible freedom in those two years to shape my thinking, and the fantastic learning.

**What were your key learnings or takeaways working with large MNCs, starting as a trainee and then in senior leadership roles?** I have spent over 17 years in the Corporate world, starting with Coca-Cola as a management trainee in 1996. At that point, you're a veritable sponge and you must absorb - the marketplace, the company, and importantly, its culture. You will play a stellar role in shaping this in the years to come.

Thereafter, each company brought its own learning. Johnson & Johnson is an exceptional, process driven



'Jab we met' at Khan Market, Delhi. Ms Diya Garg with Ms Shilpa Gupta

organization that upholds the Credo above all. Conversely, Ibaya.com, an early stage e-tailor was all frenzy and chaos, with a 'get-the-job-done' attitude. That, in effect, was my first brush with entrepreneurship. As Head, Operations, I absolutely loved my 16 hour work engagement. The Wall Street Journal covered the ethos of Ibaya beautifully in 2000.

Furthermore, leadership for me is an art wherein one paints his/her own canvas given their vision and belief. I've managed teams of over 40 people across markets and regions, both on-site and virtual, and my key takeaway is to be 100% authentic and to walk-the-talk. This is arduous but when you're tasked with something as critical as developing organizations, you can only do it with truth.

**What was the reason behind you quitting corporate at the peak of your career and moving to your family business (an SME) in India?** There comes a time in everyone's life when you feel you have a different calling. You, yourself have gone through this - a fantastic career in finance interspersed with two best-selling books!

After 6 years in Levi Strauss, I felt I had plateaued. There was a paradigm shift in how I wanted to make an impact in the future. I needed more control on where

to spend my energies, what paths to take and what deliverables to go after. So in Oct 2014, I flew to India and had a long chat with my dad; top consideration was whether my growth aspirations would find a place in the business. He only asked me to be very sure, as I would be in an atmosphere radically different from the past 17 years with considerable time away from the kids. It was ultimately my decision, but Samir's encouragement and my dad's quiet confidence sealed it.

**That was fascinating! Tell us about your firm, Electroquip.** Electroquip specialises in end-to-end security including fire alarm, CCTV, access control and public address systems. We are, today, the top distributors for United Technologies and Bosch Security Systems in India. With over 250 successful installations, Electroquip is associated with some of the most prestigious Government and Private projects in the country.

**Given the nature of the product and a very different working environment, I am sure you would have faced several challenges along. How did you overcome them?** I am comfortable with both the product and the industry. My challenges came from elsewhere. Here is a typical 'early-days' conversation:

Dad (*mildly*) - You are heading for trouble, you know, seeing an SME through the eyes of a global MNC.

Me (*exasperated*) - How am I doing that? We have 20 days to close the year; I am taking this customer at a great profit.

Dad - Check out his last 6 months' payment record, we will get slammed on cash-flow.

Cash flow Vs. gross profits | Stability Vs. growth-at-all-costs. Those are the integral unlearnings in an SME. An experiment in 2015 with a new customer went horribly wrong, and we got our funds only after 10 months. Finally, when a couple of highly profitable distributors went belly-up, I learnt.

**Were you able to weave in any learnings from your career with MNCs into your family business?** A few, yes. I have brought in a fair degree of process into Electroquip, which is a direct offshoot from J&J. No doubt security is a high-touch business in terms of marketing and payment collection, but in some

parts process is key. Optimising the import rate, ABC classification of customers for new product launches and backorder rationalization; these are true competitive advantages.

Moreover, having been on the other side of the table for 17 years, our negotiations with UTC Global leadership are more impactful with the two of us now; my yin added to Dad's yang, in sorts.

**You have done an amazing job at Electroquip. Do share with us some high points.** Our work spans all sectors with an emphasis on e-commerce, technology and business services firms. We believe this is a high-growth area and would like to be # 1. Value housing and hospitals are also key. Secondly, our vision is to go high on green and sustainability; we target projects that emphasize this, a case in point the New Delhi district courts.

We are Class A CPWD Contractors and trusted partners in A1 high security Government sites. Our projects include Rashtrapati Bhawan, Parliament Library, Vigyan Bhawan, South Block and now, North Block. Typically these projects are not just given out to L1 (lowest cost) contractors; trust is a huge factor.

Electroquip has spent decades building up this reputation - all too often we find projects being shelved and/or re-contracted due to contractor's 'mis-judgment' of funds.

Electroquip has, till date, never left a project incomplete. Our record, over 40 years is **95% on-time, in-Budget | 100% completed**, including the crisis years of 2007 and 2017 (demonetisation, GST). However, some of these came at a huge personal cost.

**Getting back to the alma mater, share some memories of your days at IIMA** Oh, there are so many, but here is one I won't forget. I had offered to perform at Talent Nite and chose the number 'Yeh mera dil' from Don. In classic IIMA style, the crowd exploded. My sister's friend who had come from NSD, talked, and there was a long call that evening with my mum who was keen to know what's my greater purpose at IIMA.

**Where do you derive inspiration from?** I continue to get inspired by my mum - at over 70, she is physically very active and alert. She is currently supervising the construction of our new offices, wherein she goes to the site daily. Hats off!

Exercise and nature sports would be next. I love a good swim and a great walk, usually by myself. This is prime me-time: it's calming, uplifting and a chance to shed off the intense reactivity.

**What message would you like to give to current students?** 'Live life with no regrets. Go after what you truly believe in and have fun along the way'. This is what I have told my kids as well. Ishaan is now freshman at UCLA and Ananya will join him next year. I'm glad they've adopted some of this thinking, it makes life fun.

# CLIMATE CHANGE – WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT!

By Dwarkadas "Solar Suresh" (PGP 1970)

**D**warkadas "Solar Suresh" from the land of Milk and Management, takes himself very seriously. So do the brinjals in his terrace garden. By applying modern technology to traditional ecological concepts, Suresh's house in Chennai is a shining example of what individuals can do about the environment." - Chik Krishna Chidambi (PGP 1970)

The most debated topic during the last two decades is Climate Change or Global Warming or Carbon footprint. In Dec 2017, 190 countries of the UN signed an Agreement in Paris for country-specific targets that would lead to a global reduction in the carbon footprint. Protection of the environment as a concept is now coming to occupy centre-stage by socially conscious individuals and groups through talks,

videos, demonstrations and the like.

My emphasis is on individual households, smaller establishments, and what they can do to mitigate the challenges to our environment. To demonstrate this, I have initiated seven activities in my own house in Chennai where I live.

I have taken my ideas from villages. Nothing original. Very simple. No rocket science. I am neither a consultant nor a theoretician. Anyone looking at these installations in my house will realise that they can do it too.

**1. Rain Water Harvesting (RWH)** Installed 25 years ago. The objective is to save a precious natural resource, water. Water gets drained away during rainy days. Collect rain water which gathers impurities in the terrace. Filter it through a sedimentation system of pebbles, charcoal and sand in layers. The output water is potable. I collect filtered water in an open well.

There is another type of RWH – I observed rain water stagnating in two locations in my compound, breeding mosquitoes and germs. I have taken such stagnant water below the ground using a 20-foot slotted pipe to recharge ground water substantially. Only one-time cost of pipes and installation of about Rs.5,000 to 20,000 depending on the terrace size and pipes length. No daily maintenance required for both the types.

**2. Rooftop solar panels for power** Installed a 3 kw system in January 2012, 2 kw on-grid and 1 kw off-grid with battery back-up. First in India to have automated the system. Derive revenue from on-grid power by feeding excess to the grid. Use the off-grid battery supply to power residential needs during outages. My rooftop solar plant has ensured that I have had electricity 24x7 for the last 8 years, without any outages.

There are advantages to solar power - like no daily maintenance, protection against future tariff increases by government, no separate wiring, no pollution, no consumption of fossil fuels and saving foreign exchange for the country .

- 1 kw produces 4 units of electricity per day and requires 80 sq ft of shadow-free area
- 1 kw on the grid costs Rs. 60,000 in Tamil

Nadu and off-grid Rs. 100,000 with 4 batteries of 150 Ah

- The investment in my solar panels was Rs. 350,000 in 2012 and it covers 240 sq ft



**3. Domestic Bio-Gas plant** Earlier, cooking in India used home-dried cow dung for fuel, also gobar gas plants. This practice is now impractical, especially in urban India. So, I started using kitchen waste, namely cooked/uncooked food waste and fruit, vegetable peels. Starting point is cow dung. I installed 1 cubic meter capacity plant in February 2013, and use 3 to 4 kg kitchen waste per day and obtain 10 to 15 kg gas per month. It is possible to feed more and get more gas. I collect waste from neighbours and nearby vegetable stores to increase the input feed. Resultant methane gas is stored in a floating drum, from where it is piped to the kitchen for cooking purposes. While the gas is being produced, the unusable waste (slurry) is pushed out automatically. The slurry is excellent organic manure.

The main objective of bio-gas is not generating cooking gas and manure. Waste management is a big problem in cities. First, the waste has to be properly segregated. Even so, the disposal of wet kitchen waste, unless carefully done, can become a health hazard (breeds mosquitoes and germs, spreads disease and more). Use of wet kitchen waste in the areas where it is produced minimises health hazards and reduces

the costs of waste disposal and fossil fuel use. So my objective is 'health'.

There is no pressure generated in bio-gas production. Hence, domestic bio-gas plants are very safe. No possibilities of explosion. No daily maintenance. No odour, no mosquitoes, good bio-fertiliser. Cooking is slow compared with LPG. 1 cubic meter capacity costs Rs 40,000 to set up.

Note: Science is as follows - Cow dung generates bacteria. This reacts with waste and generates methane gas. The process is anaerobic methanisation.

**4. Terrace Kitchen Garden** We utilise the organic manure of our bio-gas plant to organically grow vegetables in pots on our terrace. We grow some seasonal and some perennial vegetables - tomato, lady's finger, brinjal, green chilli, capsicum, cucumber, bottle gourd, ridge gourd, spinach, radish and many



more in over 150 pots. We use only organic pesticides like Panchgavya and 3G oil made from neem leaves.

The cost may work out to Rs. 300 to 500 per pot including soil, manure, cocopeat and sand. They can be managed by daily labour or self-attended; latter is preferred.

We are yet to fine-tune the economics which may show that buying from the market may be cheaper. However, home-grown vegetables are fresh and assuredly organic. The experience of seeing vegetables grow in front of your eyes is priceless.

It is worthy to note that since March 25, 2020, we managed mostly with vegetables grown in my terrace kitchen garden.

**5. Air-to-water generator** This produces drinking water from atmospheric air. The moisture is condensed and drinking water results. We use Israeli technology developed over 60 years ago which is being adopted here only now.

I have installed a 30 litres-per-day equipment, at a cost of Rs 50,000 (one-time installation cost). This is an



appliance like an air conditioner. Works on electricity. Consumes 0.25 units of electricity per litre of water. In my house, it runs on solar power. No daily maintenance. Quality of water is very good. (Tested independently in laboratory).

### 6. Afforestation - Greening of residential areas

We live in a thickly populated urban residential locality in Chennai. By growing neem, bamboo, and almond tree widely over 30 years we have altered the landscape in our locality and created a verdant atmosphere.

**7. Solar-Powered Car** We have recently developed the prototype of a solar-powered car and have been testing its performance on Chennai roads. All electric vehicles run on a battery which has to be



charged by conventional power, consuming fossil fuels and generating carbon footprint. Foreign exchange is expended in procuring fossil fuels. Therefore, EV is not the ideal solution for intercity transport. Countries like Korea (Hyundai), Japan (Toyota), and Norway have developed trial cars powered by solar power.

The car has been developed for me by a team of cross-functional fresh engineers. Presently, we have tested the concept. It is fun to see people staring in awe at the car running on Chennai streets.

I have now developed a **Solar Charging Station**

**for EV - electric vehicles** - two and three wheelers.

These EVs are now plying in large numbers in many



states. These EVs require charging through conventional power source, meaning consumption of fossil fuels and generating pollution. Solar charging will be the answer.

**8. Waste Water Recycling** This project is pending in my house. Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) are common in industries and in large apartment complexes. Now, this affordable technology is available for using in a single residence or smaller establishments to get usable water.

**To conclude:** Do not expect the government to find solutions for you. Find your own solutions!

# BODO DA

## (IIMA, PGP BATCH 6, 1969 to 1971)

*With deep regret, we hereby inform that Mr P N Bhattacharjee (PGP 1971) has left for heavenly abode on the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020 in Pondicherry. Mr Srikrishna Kulkarni, Chairman of Board, IIM Calcutta (Son of Prof G R Kulkarni) shared with us an eulogy. He was a good friend of Late Mr P N Bhattacharjee, with many memories intact.*

“I grew up on the campus of IIM Ahmedabad. My father Prof. G. R. Kulkarni was one among the founding Faculty. From my earliest recollection, my father’s students would visit our house. From among the many, who kept in touch, Prashit Bhattacharjee maintained a very close relationship with my parents. My parents fondly called him Bhatta. For me he was Bodo-da (elder brother in his native Bengali).

Over the years he allowed me to come very close to him. He was a bachelor and it was his home in GK-1 in Delhi, later in Pondicherry and finally in Kolkata that was a sanctuary for me. In all the years that I knew him – I saw him as a man who ‘gave’. He never ‘asked’. He gave me the privilege of looking into his heart. He took the injustices of life on the chin, with a smile and minus any signs of bitterness - an incredible quality that I tried to imbibe.

It was Bodo-da who introduced me to our spiritual heritage. My most fond memory with him is the trip the two of us made to the holy shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinath in the year 2009. He wished to do this ‘jaatra’ and wanted me to make it happen. By Divine Grace, I had the good fortune to be with him on this very special trip.

I last met him in Kolkata on Feb 4th, 2020 and I last spoke with him on April 9th, 2020. I wasn’t able to be with him in his hour of need - this is a regret. He was special, very special. I will miss his cheerful face and calming personality dearly.

कूछ लोग इक रोज़ जो बिछड़ जाते हैं वो हज़ारों के आने से मिलते नहीं, उम्र भर चाहे कोई पूकारा करे उनका नाम, वो फिर नहीं आते, वो फिर नहीं आते...”

.....

**Mr Madan Mohanka (PGP 1967) expresses**

**condolences through a heartfelt message.**

“In the initial years of the growth of NTPC, Bhatta played a key role in the preparation of systems and procedures manuals on Contract Management and was credited with preparation of the contracts manual for which NTPC remembers him even till date.



I always admired his mature wisdom and honest interaction. As a person he never asked for favours. Bhatta gave up his upmarket flat in GK-1 and chose to live in Pondicherry to pursue his spiritual quest.

He was honest in his relations with friends and despite his failing health, the call of the Ashram prompted him to undertake a journey to Pondicherry.

His death has left a void which can never be filled.

When his end came none of us could be by his side.

Om Shanthi”

.....

**Heartfelt message by Mr Ashok Chand Mathur (PGP 1971)**

Many places claimed Bhatta, as Prashit Narayan Bhattacharjee was popularly known.

Tezpur in Assam where he was born claimed him as did Bengal. Greater Kailash in Delhi claimed as did Pondicherry

But Bhatta belonged to the hearts of his friends, that where he lived and still does.

# YOU ARE MISSED



His father was a Doctor in Indian National Army of Netaji and that is where he got his sense of patriotism. His was a very spiritual family; Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Vivekanand were family gurus as were Aurobindo and Mother. Many of his batchmates came to his home at Greater Kailash, Delhi and enjoyed his mother's hospitality - simple food served with a loving smile.

Bhatta was a true ascetic and never contemplated marriage.

He is survived by two brothers and three sisters. He looked after the son of the younger sister through very difficult times.

To best of my knowledge, he was probably the first one to join IIMA from Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad where he studied Petroleum Technology. After the Institute, he joined Department of Atomic Energy in the Atomic Minerals Division. He toured the Department's various sites extensively. He moved on to other public sector enterprises including Engineers India Ltd and then National Thermal Power Corporation as Manager

(Contracts). At NTPC, he added huge value by laying out manuals for contracts that conformed to World Bank Standards. He got quick promotions at NTPC but the lure of starting his own consultancy pulled him out of that enterprise. I S Mittal and Venkatraman, senior veterans of 1971 batch were two amongst his close friends.

His laugh was hearty and would pooh away all pretentious claims. He was very generous, giving and many of us owe him all sorts of debts for help rendered. He was a source of solace in a battle against cancer that one of us fought.

Towards the end of his life he spent many years near Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry in service at the Ashram.

In the last year of his life, he devoted his time to the service of Ramakrishna Mission at Kolkata. He chose to breath his last at his house near Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry.

We all miss him.

## A TRIBUTE TO T SATYANARAYANAN, OUR BATCHMATE

*Mr T Satyanarayanan of PGP 1968 batch, 74 years old, passed away in Chennai on March 31, 2020.*

**S**atyanarayanan (Sathy or Satya to his friends) was a Mechanical Engineering graduate from the College of Engineering, Guindy, Chennai (now Anna University) and was one of the first alumnus from that reputed institution to join IIMA.

Sathy chose to specialise in the area of Human Resources and started his career with Larsen and Toubro, Mumbai followed by a very impactful stint with TELCO (now Tata Motors) Pune in the same functional area. His intense experience as a very competent and successful HR professional in these 2 large organisations in the very beginning of his managerial career led Sathy to take up subsequent assignments as Corporate Head - Human Resources with Tube Investments, Chennai, Sanmar Group, Chennai and Essar Group, Mumbai. After a long and satisfying innings, as an employee of these companies, Sathy chose to become



an Independent Management Consultant and served a good mix of corporate clients in several facets of Human Resource Strategies and Practices. He was also interested in Management Education and was associated with Welingkar Institute of Management, Mumbai for several years.

As a person, Satyanarayanan was affable, pleasant and soft spoken and had a very good sense of humour. Sathy was a keen player of Bridge; he was an avid reader-both Fiction and Vedic Scriptures.

Satyanarayanan is survived by his wife Saroj, herself an accomplished writer and a National award-winning filmmaker. Sathy and Saroj were a very friendly, a lively couple and excellent hosts; it is difficult to believe that this lovely partnership is now broken.

Our heartfelt condolences to Saroj and other members of her and Sathy's families. May Sathy's gentle soul rest in eternal peace. Om Shanthi!

# REMEMBERING ANIRUDH SINGH

*Mr Anirudh Singh (PGP-SPA 1978) passed away on 2nd March 2020 in Mumbai. He was 66. He leaves behind his wife Mala and two children - Rahul (son) and Rohini (daughter). His family is based out of Mumbai.*

Anirudh spent his entire stay in D12. He was very gentle and soft spoken and an introvert who largely kept to himself. A lecturer in a Bihar college before IIMA, he became a HR professional post IIMA. Sharing a few lines that were written about him during his IIMA days:

- Comes from JP's place and rumour has it that he has connections in high places. Election results kept him awake during the night.
- So did Test Cricket, and he used to be listening to commentary by someone in ungodly hours, about a match between some teams in some far off place.
- Quiet, unassuming and dressed to kill, Anirudh exudes charm and commitment.
- It was fun having him with us. May he always hear about India's victory!

Mr Anirudh Singh was a very senior HR Professional



and strategic thinker with decades of experience in HR leadership positions. He worked in various industrial sectors such as Steel, Power, Cement, Telecom, Chemical, Engineering. In his long professional career, he managed the entire gamut of HR functions. He possessed strong leadership, inter personal skills and domain knowledge. He worked with prestigious organizations such as JSW, Idea Cellular, Aditya Birla Group, Kirloskars . In JSW, he managed the entire HR challenges of a high growth organization at global level by creating people centric global HR systems and processes. Mr Singh was very well respected by some of leading corporate leaders - Shri Kumar Mangalam Birla, Shri Sajjan Jindal, Shri Sanjay Kirloskar, to name a few. Anirudh retired in 2014 and took on the role of a Senior Partner of an HR Executive Search firm.

Many persons from our batch attended the cremation which was held in Mumbai.

May his soul rest in peace.

## AFTER A VALIANT BATTLE

Ms Kunmun Praharaj (PGP-ABM 2008) passed away on 13 June 2020. She was battling with cancer for the last 10 months. She was working as Sr. Vice President, Head Digital Banking-North, Yes Bank. In her career spanning 12 years, she also worked with Axis Bank and Fino Payment Bank. She lived a beautiful life as a loving mother to two children - Megahla (9 years) and Abhiram (2 years), a caring sister to two siblings, an amazing wife to husband Rajeev Krishnan (PGP-ABM 2008), and a friend to many.



# WILL THE FUNDRAISING NEED A NEW OUTLOOK POST COVID-19?

By Mr Ajit Motwani (Head, Development Office)

**F**undraising always needed innovation and out of the box outlook. No two donors or the initiatives could ever be served effectively with the same strategy. Any attempt to standardize the donations outreach has always resulted in mediocre outcomes.

Post Covid-19, it will just be another dimension added. This pandemic could possibly result in even higher funding opportunities with a much larger population being sensitized towards seeing merit in contributing to the varied causes/charities close to their hearts.

Most recently, the IIMA's Golden Jubilee batch of PGP 1970 is creating history by becoming the first Golden jubilee batch to make a meaningful financial contribution to Alma Mater. They are close to INR 2 Crore mark and continue to donate during the current pandemic. The energy and drive to contribute in many of the senior batches is tremendous for specific causes dear to them.

Fundraising must also address the priorities and expectations of the new generation of donors with rising concerns for transparency and ethical reporting. The donors seeking regular reporting with independently audited inputs are a new normal.

New generation donors do not hesitate to make large contributions to the Institutions/organizations/entities when they are certain that the funds will be used as originally envisaged and in a timely manner. This must be backed by credibility and track record of the recipients. We are seeing an increasing trend of donors not directly connected in the past to recipient institutions/organizations willing to experiment donating significantly based on the initiative and

overall perception of credibility, transparency, and impact their donation is likely to make. Corporate donations through the CSR route have also contributed much to this new trend.

In the short run familiarity and networking factors play a critical role in fundraising. However, in the long run, our ability to demonstrate transparent and impactful usage of these donations become the predominant factor in donors choosing the institutions/initiatives they are willing to support.



Fundraising is seldom a stand-alone initiative, it's part of the credible, transparent, and impactful ecosystem at the recipient institution. To facilitate fundraising, we need to be always mindful of donors' priorities as well as concerns. Credible ecosystems are built over many years, if not generations. That's one of the important factors in a very large corpus generated by premier institutions that have been around for decades and centuries. While building the impressive track record takes time, losing out on this critical advantage can be rather quick.

Donations irrespective of the size are very valuable. These are a reflection of the affection and respect an institution enjoys with the donors. It is important that all donations are respected similarly, and usage reporting is equally sincere.

As public institutions strive for greater autonomy, they would need larger donations in their journey towards excellence and growth. This is feasible with the foundation of a credible institutional ecosystem built on core values of transparency and ethics, supported by efficiency and impact.

# Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad

## GIFT to IIMA FORM

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone : \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email : \_\_\_\_\_

For IIMA Alumni: Diploma/Certificate \_\_\_\_\_ Programme \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

### Gift Utilization Purpose/Gift Programme/General Donation to IIMA:

I would like to gift undermentioned amount to IIMA for the purpose as above:

Currency: INR/US\$/Euro €/Pound£/ Singapore SGD/others \_\_\_\_\_

Amount : \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose Cheque No. \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_ to be used by the Institute.

### Ways to remit funds to IIMA in different geographical regions:

FOR DONORS IN INDIA :	
<p><b>Through Cheque:</b> Cheque payable to "Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad" <b>Mailing Address:</b> Development Office, RJM Auditorium 1st Floor, IIM Ahmedabad, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad-380 015. <b>Email:</b> dean-aer@iima.ac.in and dohead@iima.ac.in</p> <p><b>Donation can also be made online through website :</b> <a href="https://web.iima.ac.in/institute/giving-to-iima-donations/giving-online.html">https://web.iima.ac.in/institute/giving-to-iima-donations/giving-online.html</a></p>	<p><b>Online Transfer :</b> <b>Account Holder:</b> INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AHMEDABAD Current Account Number: 10307641013 <b>Bank's Name &amp; Address:</b> State Bank Of India; IIM Branch, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad – 380 015, India <b>Branch Code:</b> 2653   <b>Swift No.:</b> SBININBB412 <b>MICR Code:</b> 380002019   <b>IFSC Code:</b> SBIN0002653 <b>PAN of IIMA:</b> AAAT11247F <b>Please inform through email to</b> dean-aer@iima.ac.in and dohead@iima.ac.in mentioning the purpose of the donation, PAN information, full name with mailing address and If possible, do attach a screen shot of the transfer.</p>
• Contributions to IIMA are 100% exempt under section 80G of Income Tax Rules, Government of India.	

FOR DONORS IN UNITED STATES & CANADA :	
<p><b>Through Cheque:</b> The cheques should be drawn in favour of "IIM-A Alumni Association" with a covering letter clearly specifying the purpose of the donation, the full name and the address of the donor: <b>Mailing Address: Tejesh Contractor, 44 Kennedy Ct; Princeton, NJ 08540; USA Winter Park, FL 32792</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please inform Tejesh Contractor through email <a href="mailto:tejeshc@yahoo.com">tejeshc@yahoo.com</a> with copy to dean-aer@iima.ac.in and dohead@iima.ac.in mentioning the purpose of the donation, full name and mailing address and If possible, do attach a screen shot of the transfer.</li><li>• The contributions would be to 501 c (3) USA (Tax ID No.: 22-3749107) Charity for tax purposes.</li></ul>	<p><b>FOR DONORS ELSEWHERE IN WORLD:</b> To IIMA Foreign Currency Account: <b>Online payment should be made in favour of:</b> <b>Account Holder:</b> INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AHMEDABAD – F.C.Account <b>Current Account Number:</b> 10307641080 <b>Bank's Name &amp; Address:</b> State Bank Of India, IIM Branch, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad – 380 015, India <b>Branch Code:</b> 2653   <b>Swift No.:</b> SBININBB412 <b>MICR Code:</b> 380002019   <b>IFSC Code:</b> SBIN0002653 <b>PAN of IIMA:</b> AAAT11247F</p>
<p><b>FOR DONORS IN UK:</b> To avail of the tax benefits under Gift Aid, donations through cheque should be sent to <b>IIMA Alumni London Ltd</b>, which is a registered charity with UK charities commission # 1117664 &amp; HMRC <b>Tax id:</b> XT3019021. <a href="https://www.gov.uk/donating-to-charity/gift-aid">https://www.gov.uk/donating-to-charity/gift-aid</a> <b>Online payment should be made in favour of:</b> ICICI Bank UK Plc 45 South Road, Southall UB1 1SWA <b>Current Account Number:</b> 76231759   <b>Bank Sort Code is:</b> 30-01-28 Donors will be required to send in a Gift Aid declaration for tax incentives to be claimed.</p> <p><b>After online payment please inform:</b> Vikas Nanda: <a href="mailto:svnanda@gmail.com">svnanda@gmail.com</a> and Swastik Nigam: <a href="mailto:n.swastik@gmail.com">n.swastik@gmail.com</a> and dean-aer@iima.ac.in &amp; dohead@iima.ac.in</p>	

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**“THIS IS WHAT STAYING IN ‘TOUCH’ WITH CAMPUS LOOKS LIKE!”**  
- HANDCRAFTED CLAY MINIATURE BY MS RUCHI AGGARWAL (PGP 2018)

