

STUDENTS CAUGHT IN A VICIOUS CIRCLE

"VIRUS HAS AFFECTED US PHYSICALLY, TAKEN AWAY FROM REGULAR ONLINE CLASSES" | P4

'VACCINATION, VIGILANCE ONLY WAY TO BEAT PANDEMIC'

EXTREME EFFECTS DESPITE RAPID TESTING AND EXTENSIVE VACCINATION DRIVES | P9

PARA ATHLETES ARE SUPER-ABLED: SACHIN ROCKY RANA

"WHAT I LEARNED WAS THESE ATHLETES WERE SUPER-ABLED" | P11

AMITY SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION



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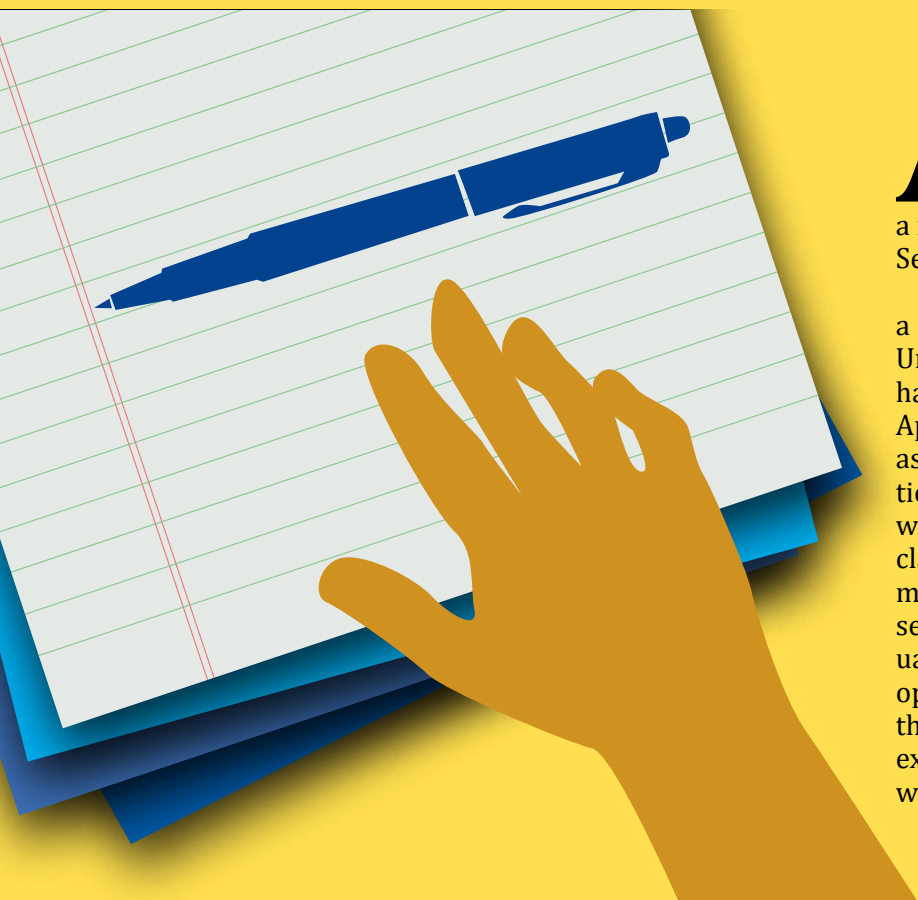
STUDENTS ON TENTERHOOKS AS COVID WAVE 2 ENGULFS NATION

Drishti Vanaik

Anxiety, fear and concern run high among students of class 10 and in particular class 12 with the postponement of board examinations, second year in a row as the pandemic peaked to new heights in Season 2.

Apoorva, a class 12 student, who aspires to be a civil servant, was hoping to get to a top Delhi University College but the exam postponement has given him sleepless nights. Many others like Apoorva say their dreams have been shattered as they don't know when the board examinations will be held, the time for preparations they will get and how it will be conducted. Another class 12 student Shambhavi Singh says, "Exams may happen later, but this deferment will have a serious effect on our graduation and post-graduation" while her batchmate Shravya Srivastava opines, "Universities like DU takes admission on the basis of percentage secured in 12th & if the exams happen to take place in an online mode, it will affect our results."

Continued on P3



PATRON Prof (Dr.) Sunil Dhaneshwar, *Pro Vice-Chancellor* | **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** Prof (Dr.) Sanjay M Johri, *Director*
ASSOCIATE EDITORS Sangeeta Pandey & Mohit Sharma | **DESIGN EDITOR** Shirish Sharma
STUDENT EDITORIAL COORDINATORS Sanjana Saxena, Rahul Mohanto, Riddhi Bhargava

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Editor's Desk

As schools and colleges began to open February-March a sense of exhilaration prevailed as vaccination was on and the virus toll had hit an all time low. However, this relief was short-lived as by March end, the second Covid wave surged its ugly head wreaking havoc across the country with record infections and deaths.



Once again schools and colleges closed while offices and banks also limited their working hours with minimum staff. Weekend lockdown followed by extended lockdown became the norm and 'staying home' was no longer an option but a necessity to keep the virus at bay.

This is how the batch of 2020-the Covid-19 generation-faced disruption at the institutional education with unprecedented pandemic, which this time hit the younger population (people below 45 years) with more severity including the faculties thus leading to loss of life.

Though one cannot deny the new mutant being deadlier; we too must be blamed for our casual behavior of not wearing mask and maintaining social distancing, which played a key role in making the virus spread menacingly.

Students lamented by the time they could set their foot on campus and had seen the virtual tour of the campus/ institution, they had to go back indoors to online classes. "The online mode of education came along with its own advantages and disadvantages. Whereas on the one hand just logging in and then sitting back and relaxing seemed a pretty easy and comfortable option, on the other hand, the substantial and fundamental nature of education rapidly declined. No more, education was taken seriously", says Drishti, a first-year undergrad student.

Vaishali Gautam on the other hand feels that the 'new normal' seems to prevail forever with the virus rearing its head again and again. "The online education can be effective if we can include just one thing and that's discipline. With no other option available, it will be a smart choice to become disciplined and adapt to the new normal. This said one this is for sure that online system in no way can be equated with offline classes and campus education," she says and adds further that the impact on education due to this pandemic is huge and long lasting.

Students concern and anxiety is justified, however, there are some youngsters who have made it a point not to take the online education seriously. If you just login and prefer to listen to music and relax, you are wasting money and cheating your parents hard earned money. In the end such students will lose while only those who are pro-active and disciplined will make the most of the situation. As it happens in the physical teaching, you can't help with back-benchers but those in front row should try and take best out of their teachers at least until this deadly Covid wave subsides and campuses re-open.

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri

'Journey from trainee to senior sub-editor...& many more miles to go'

It almost feels like yesterday when I was in the AB6 seminar hall and clicking silly pictures with my batch-mates on my farewell in 2017. I cannot believe it's already been four years since I graduated.



However, I do acknowledge that I was privileged to be coming out from the Amity School of Communication with not only a degree in my hand but a job as well. It was just three days after the Concluding Ceremony that I joined a news agency and since then I've worked with CNN-News 18 and have recently moved to India TV as Sr Sub Editor.

In these years, I had my days when I was a laughingstock but who doesn't? However, I chose to focus on times when my stories became a talking point.

ALUMNI CORNER

Starting as a trainee, to now training some people has been a huge stretch for me to cover, but the transition has been fulfilling, to say the least. It is only now that I realize, you cannot stick to your own pattern, especially in an industry like ours. I have been covering Entertainment and Lifestyle beats all this time and there hasn't been a single day when I could attempt a shortcut. Sounds ridiculous but practically it's not possible!

If you're intending to build a career in the media industry, love and passion for this profession are a primary requisite just like any other. It would seem very difficult if you don't. There will be people who will pull you down, but if you sail through them, all you've is work that you're personally proud of. Also, don't forget to make the most of your college life because when you meet someone from your alma mater outside the college, you should have some episodes to give them a high five and laugh about.

*Vaishali Jain (BJMC- 2015-2017)
Sr. Sub Editor India TV*

Students on tenterhooks as Covid wave 2 engulfs nation

Continued from P1

Since the whole academic year 2020-2021 was in an online mode, Namita another student says, "We were distressed as we could not build a strong academic base and now with the current state of affairs, the future looks even more bleak."

Meanwhile, there are few students for whom this postponement has come as a relief. For Nishchay Srivastava it has certainly provided a re-

Exams are terrifying, undoubtedly. Everyone has a different view on such a critical decision. But it's up to the students to decide whether they will do hard work to make their career successful or just relax, until they jeopardise their own future

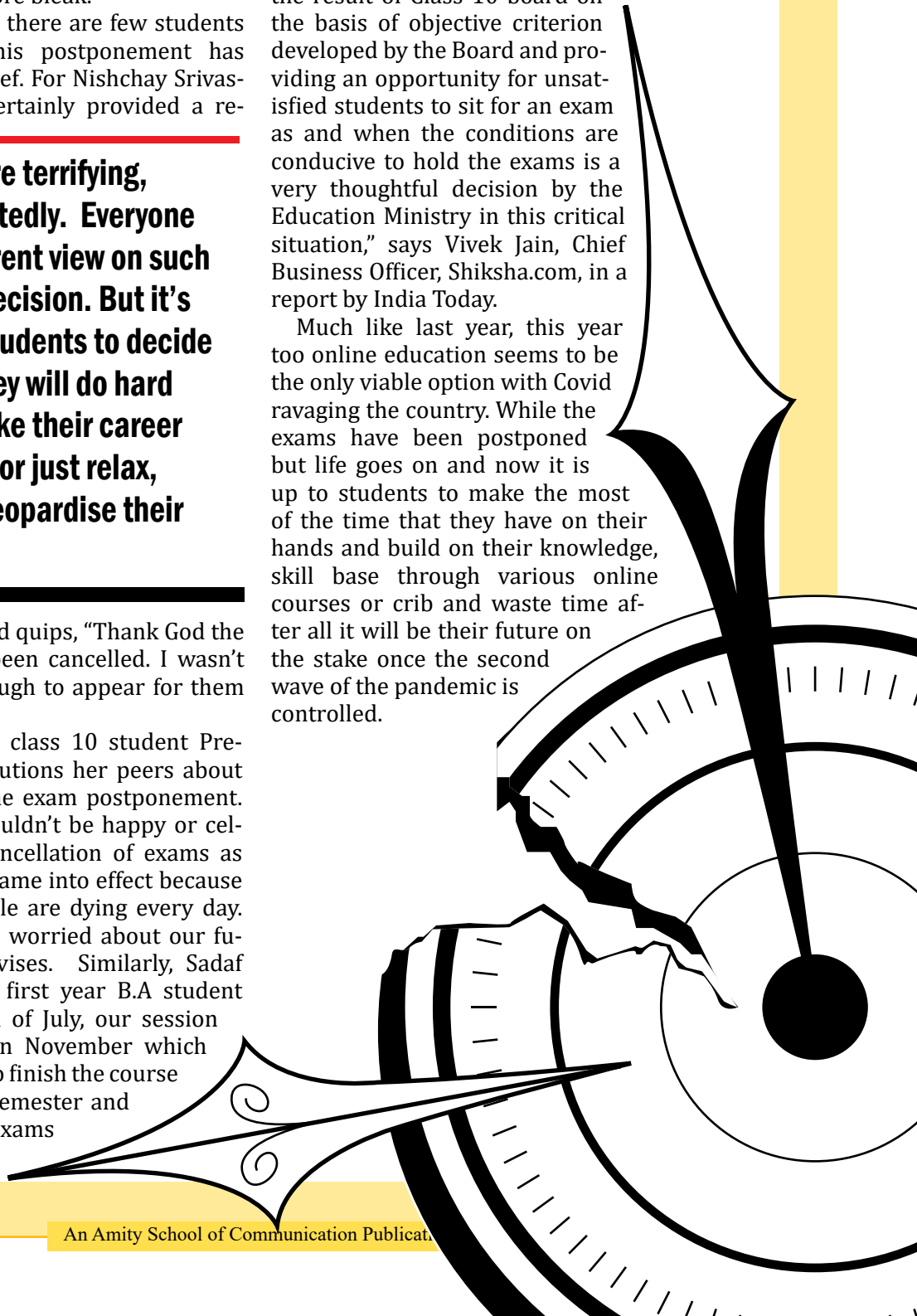
spite as the lad quips, "Thank God the exams have been cancelled. I wasn't prepared enough to appear for them anyways".

However, a class 10 student Pre-rna Tiwari cautions her peers about celebrating the exam postponement. "Students shouldn't be happy or celebrate the cancellation of exams as the decision came into effect because lakhs of people are dying every day. We should be worried about our future," she advises. Similarly, Sadaf Chaudhary, a first year B.A student says, "Instead of July, our session commenced in November which led teachers to finish the course in a shorter semester and even the exams

were conducted online which resulted in disappointing results."

Experts, meanwhile, support the Board's decision. "Postponement of the CBSE board exam for class 12 and cancellation of the board exam for class 10 is the need of the hour considering the rapid surge in Covid -19 cases across the country. Preparing the result of Class 10 board on the basis of objective criterion developed by the Board and providing an opportunity for unsatisfied students to sit for an exam as and when the conditions are conducive to hold the exams is a very thoughtful decision by the Education Ministry in this critical situation," says Vivek Jain, Chief Business Officer, Shiksha.com, in a report by India Today.

Much like last year, this year too online education seems to be the only viable option with Covid ravaging the country. While the exams have been postponed but life goes on and now it is up to students to make the most of the time that they have on their hands and build on their knowledge, skill base through various online courses or crib and waste time after all it will be their future on the stake once the second wave of the pandemic is controlled.



Students caught in a vicious circle

Bhargavi Singh

With the second wave of the pandemic engulfing the nation, it is the youth, particularly, students who are facing a peculiar situation regarding academics, exams, Covid patients at home and of course family responsibilities.

These disruptions have adversely affected students as an overwhelming majority say, "The virus has affected us physically, taken us away from the regular online classes and tension runs high that we will lose grades," says Anamika, an UG Student.

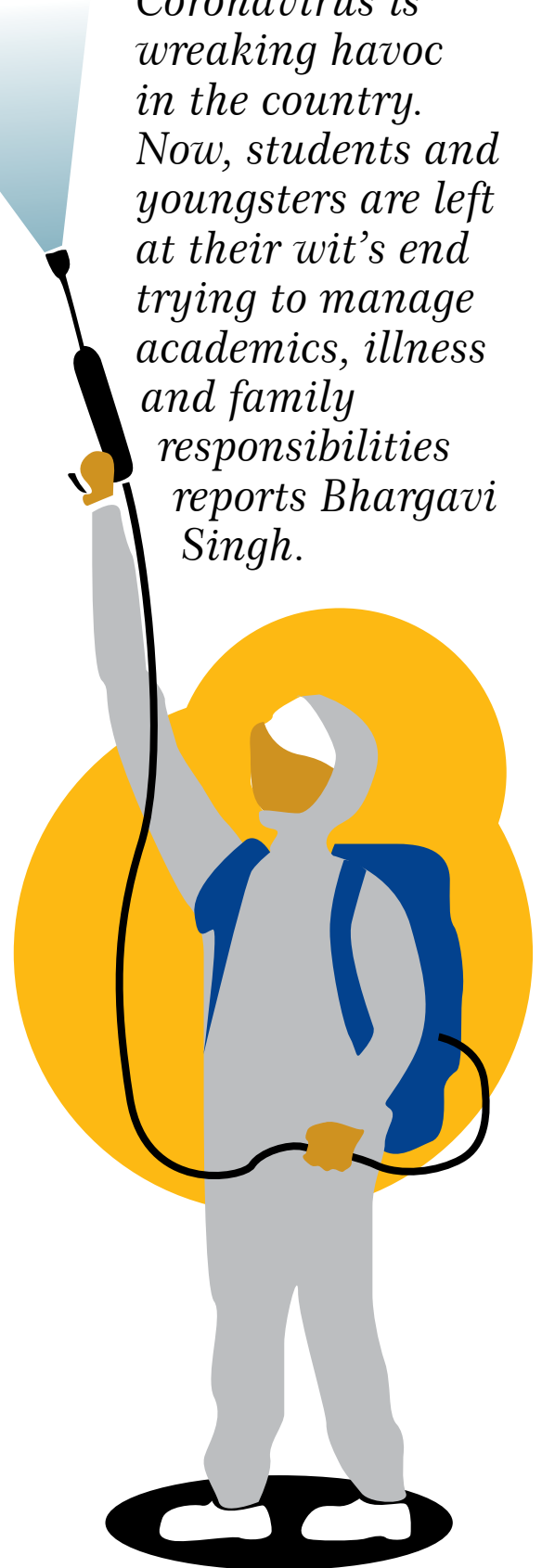
Dr Tanu Singhal, an expert of infectious disease, while asserting that the youth in the first wave were largely asymptomatic, says: "This time children and young adults are definitely getting affected and even losing the battle against this deadly disease."

College students seem to be in a grim place as more families contract the virus thus the responsibility of taking care of elders is falling on college students. A lot of them right now are juggling between taking care of themselves, elders in their family who are vulnerable and managing studies.

Rubaid, a first-year student, whose whole family tested positive shares his experience: "It was a very scary time for us when my 71-year-old grandfather's Oxygen saturation level dropped to 81 percent. After contacting many people, we finally could arrange an oxygen cylinder for him. Apart from physical exhaustion students are going through a lot of mental trauma too. Manan, another first-year students, whose RTPCR report even though came negative showed all the Covid symptoms and thus took protocol medication. "During my recovery period it was very hard for me to focus on my studies and complete my assignments as I felt drained, and it took a toll on my mental health too. I was disturbed about missing out on my studies," he recounts.

Not just the ones who fell sick, students in general are finding it hard to cope with everything that is going around them. Some are disturbed by the news of loss of a loved one and others by the uncertainty of the future. Constantly stressed and not being able to concentrate on studies, the trauma and phobia has drained the students. "These are challenging times wherein carrying on with our daily routines seems like the biggest task. While we wait for the situation to get better, all we can do is take care of ourselves," advises another UG student.

UK variant of the Coronavirus is wreaking havoc in the country. Now, students and youngsters are left at their wit's end trying to manage academics, illness and family responsibilities reports Bhargavi Singh.



Pandemic season 2 jabs country's work force again

Rinil Srivastava

Covid surge, mini lockdowns, job loss, salary cuts, WFH have become a part of life of professionals and those working in both government and private sector since last year. It seems the situation has only gotten worse during season 2 of the pandemic.

One of the first concerns is having enough finances to manage one's family and then taking care of medical expenses etc. Hence many employees are walking a double-edged

This corona period has been extremely difficult as on one hand I am unable to leave my work place , my parents need me as well but it has been unprecedented time to manage both.

Prabal Saxena

sword of working to ensure financial stability while staying away from their family. Software professional Prabal Saxena, who works in a company in NCR, says: "This corona period has been extremely difficult as on the one hand I am unable to leave my workplace while on the other hand my parents need me in my hometown. My family is mostly concerned about my health and vice versa and I am really helpless to do anything."

For police officer Shiva Singh it's ground duty all the way and what's more it came with a 20% pay cut.

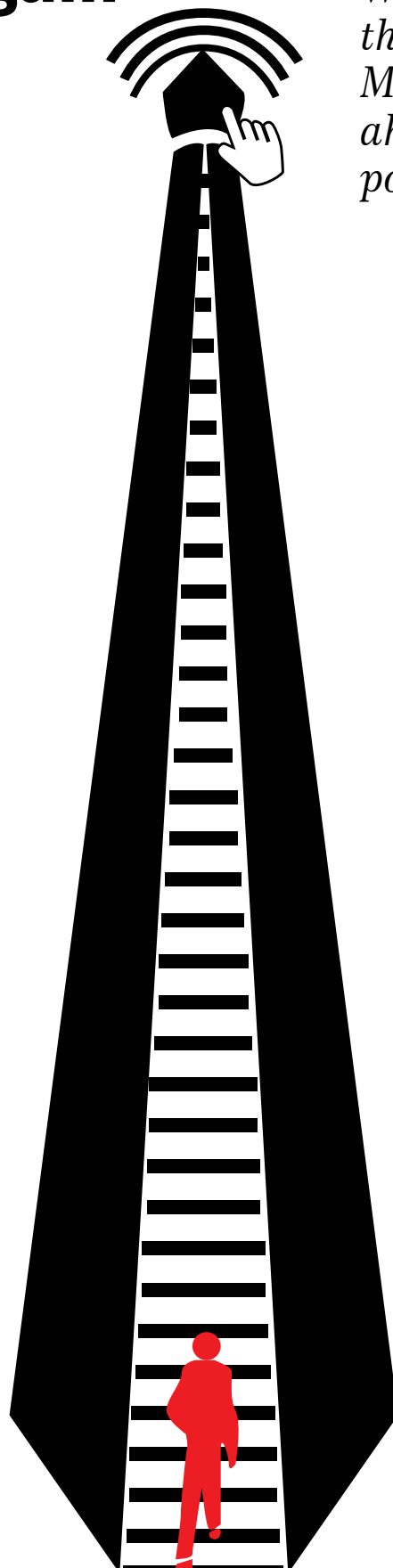
With experts predicting the Covid peak in May, it's testing times ahead for the working population.

Singh laments, "As a police officer I have to be active all the time. While people are staying home, policemen are manning the city enforcing the Covid rules. The rigorous duty hours leave us with very little time to spend with our family. We often isolate ourselves for 10 to 14 days to keep our family and friends safe. Despite all these hardships, we got a 20% salary cut, which only added to my financial crisis, however, I would do it all over again for the sake of my country."

For another government sector employee Parul Kashyap the WFH (work from home) mode added to her workload as earlier she had fixed office hours from 9 am to 5 pm but in the online she had to be toes throughout the day. "Covid changed my life. Earlier my schedule was like 9 to 5 but pandemic made me WFH. Though I stayed with my family, but the increased workload only made it very difficult for me. I have to be in a meeting for straight 12 to 14 hours, which just zapped my energy. However, there was no cut in my salary and I'm hoping we can get out of this situation soon," she adds.

While for Shalaj Chitranshi, the WFH mode came as a boon. "I actually experienced a better work-life balance as I could step away from work to enjoy a meal with my family or friends and spend quality time with them while working from home."

With experts predicting the peak of pandemic season 2 in May, it's certainly testing times ahead for the work force of the country.



WHEELS OF (MIS)FORTUNE

Lensman: Trilochan S Kalra

If you are visiting Lucknow, the 'City of Nawabs', and you did not take a "Tonga ride" then you have missed a unique experience. Tongas (horse carts) have been the main attractions on the streets of Lucknow since ancient times & one likes to ride and visit to see historical 'Bara Imambara,' 'Chhota Imambara,' 'Ghantaghar' and the famous Picture Gallery situated in old Lucknow—the hub of city's 'nawabi' culture.

In Gulabo-Sitabo movie, towards the end there is a scene in which Amitabh Bachchan is seen sitting in a tonga, and in the adjacent tonga, Tonga wallah Juman Khan is seen. The condition of Juman, and many others like him, whose income depended on these tongas, has been sorry to say the least. They have been facing financial crisis for the last several years thanks to the universal accessibility of battery, petrol, diesel or gas powered vehicles, which hit their livelihood hard. Secondly, the people of Lucknow and even tourists have now turned to more rapid means of transport rather than tongas.

The government too has hardly done anything to save the existence of these royal ride, which signifies the rich cultural heritage of the 'City of Nawabs.'





‘YOGA SE HOGA’

Anushka Bhakta

Pranayam, Anulom Vilom and other breathing exercises promulgated by yoga along with ayurvedic concoctions like ‘kadha’ have become the mainstay of people battling Covid second wave this year.

Expressions reporter spoke to Kolkata-based yoga guru Debyan Bhakta, who has been practicing this art for the last 10 years to gain further insight on the issue. Initially Bhakta started doing yoga to cure his ailing digestive system, but later, as he delved deeper into the art, he discovered the elements of yoga beyond curative purpose. He says, “The change, most prominent one, is my life energy, my vital energy force, which I can feel inside

me is remarkable. Besides my psychological strength has also remarkably increased after practicing yoga.”

While discussing the current pandemic, Bhakta advises people to start doing yoga daily to not only combat depression and anxiety but also strengthen one’s immune system. “Our breath, body and emotion are connected. Therefore, controlling your breath and understanding your trauma, (there is a scientific way of doing it) and by diving deep into the scientific method of yoga will have positive effect on one’s body, mind and soul,” he says.

Elaborating further about this ancient art form, Bhakta says: “Yoga stretches beyond any ‘asanas’, it is a philosophy that is to be understood and felt. One major element of yoga is the practice of meditation—it is a form through which one connects with self and develops skills to manage the negativity.”

The easiest way to meditate as suggested by him is by creating a picture be it a living being or any non-living being, visualize the image and try to hold the mind to it (one can play soothing music as well). “This will help calm the mind, which in turn will have a positive effect on the body as well. This is very important considering the deadly second wave of the pandemic we are facing now,” he advises before signing off.

The practice of meditation is bound to relieve us from our negative thoughts and emotions. Further, as we step into the second wave of the virus Yoga might be a great alternative to the silent suffering in the upcoming lockdown that we might face as a nation

'Vaccination, vigilance only way to beat pandemic'

Rahul Mohanto

India reported over 3.52 lakh fresh COVID-19 cases per day in the last week April, breaking another austere record as the country's COVID tally stood over 2.88 crore cases. This second wave of COVID seems more intense and a spine-chilling tale. With the surge in the cases, high-risk states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh are already experiencing the extreme effects of the second wave despite the rapid testing and the extensive vaccination drives.

This unexpected ascent in the numbers of COVID-19 cases throughout the nation has become a matter of grave concern. In this context, Pramod Kumar Rajput, Senior Vice President & Vertical Head at Cadila Pharmaceuticals Limited expressed that two components should be mulled over in the second wave. Initially, individuals ought to be more cautious and vigilant. Secondly, now everyone, especially young people should also take precautions as this virus is becoming more prone to catch all age groups. He would like to send out the message to people to be safe, wear masks, use sanitizer, maintain social distancing and follow all precautionary guidelines strictly.

While everyone around the

world is grappling with this lethal virus, it is pivotal to follow some key health measures that can help increase our immunity. On these lines, Dr. Neepa Choksi, Productivity and Purpose Coach, suggests some ways to be mentally and physically fit. These include staying hydrated,

“Despite the government tackling the pandemic, it is also equally important for individuals to be more careful and follow Covid protocols to prevent infection

- Pramod Kumar Rajput

eating healthy protein-rich foods, doing yoga and avoiding junk food for a while. “It is a great time to look within yourself, start exploring your new talents, and spend time with loved ones,” she advises with a smile.

Recently there have been many discussions related to the new symptoms and effectiveness of the vaccine to

which Priyal Bhargava, a final year MBBS student, says: “We all were familiar with the classical symptoms of COVID that were cough, cold, fever, dry cough and breathlessness, and loss of taste, but with the new mutants strains coming up, we have new symptoms like pink eyes, gastro-intestinal irritation in the form of abdominal cramps, vomiting, muscles aches, hearing impairment, sore throat, headache, skin rashes, discoloration of finger and mental confusion.”

Hence Bhargava advises people to get vaccinated as it is the only way to beat this pandemic. “There is nothing to worry about post-vaccination symptoms like fever or weakness,” she says and pointed out that many health workers were getting re-infected even after taking two shots of the vaccine. “Well, the vaccine is not a guarantee that you will not get affected but it will arm your immune system with anti-bodies to combat the virus and thus prevent deaths,” she advises.

2.88
crores cases
(April 2021)



Boosting immunity the desi way

Vaishali Gautam

“If you don’t have a potent weapon to combat the enemy, a strong and effective shield is the best bet to protect yourself” and this statement aptly explains how people in India have changed their lifestyle to enhance their immunity.

As India scrambles to fight the second surge of Covid-19 with unprecedented crisis and literally crumbling health infrastructure, Ayurveda yet again emerged as the hero, not just in India but globally. Various concoctions like ‘kadha’ containing ingredients like lemon, turmeric, ginger, cardamom, basil, cumin seeds, has become a part of our everyday lives.

Besides one particular ingredient ‘Giloy’ gained tremendous popularity during the pandemic. This is because Giloy is considered the “ultimate immunity booster”. It is full of antioxidants, which help in detoxification and improving immunity.

All the companies dealing in ayurvedic products like immunity boosting juices, tablets, etc. have witnessed a remarkable rise in demand during the pandemic. Even the government under the guidance of ‘Ministry of Ayush’ has made many efforts to spread awareness about Ayurveda and its potential to help us survive the pandemic.

Even some allopathic doctors recommend hot milk with half a teaspoon of turmeric powder once or twice a day, while application of sesame oil or ghee in both the nostrils in morning and evening is done by many people to boost the body’s immune system, minimize effects of the virus and hasten recovery from the disease.

Similarly, the demand and consumption of coconut water skyrocketed as it has potassium more than four bananas. Dubbed as “Mother Nature’s sports drink” it is low in calories, naturally free of fat and cholesterol, and super hydrating.

You will hardly find an Indian house not using turmeric, cumin, coriander and garlic in cooking, besides taking 10 gm of Chyavanprash in the morning. Jaggery, fresh lemon juice is also used commonly in the fight against Covid-19.

The Ministry of Ayush protocol has outlined measures to build a robust immune system, and suggested people to consume warm water, practice yogasana, pranayama and meditation for 30 minutes every day.

As a strong immunity is said to be “our saviour” against the virus people started digging deep into the Indian ancient traditions to look for herb, berry, seed, grain, or spice and based on their research made full use of these to boost their immune system when the pandemic hit the world early last year.

We all know that vaccines also work on the concept of immunization. This is the reason why people, who have been vaccinated, even after getting infected are generally getting mild symptoms, because the vaccine has passively increased the ability of their immune system to fight the virus.

Whether we accept it or not, our ancestors were way more scientific than us. These ancient practices are a proof of that. Ayurveda is a treasure to India left by our ancestors. India has already gifted the world the practice of yoga, now ayurveda is also becoming widespread globally.

■ **Emphasizing on the global recognition of Ayurveda during pandemic, PM Narendra Modi dedicated two future ready ayurveda institutes to the nation on 5th Ayurveda Day last year.**

■ **‘Giloy’ will be planted as part of the Uttar Pradesh government’s annual plantation drive in July this year.**

Para athletes are super-abled: Sachin Rocky Rana

Riddhi Bhargava

“Where there is a will, there is a way” is well proven by Sachin Rocky Rana, a Bronze Medalist of Para National Table Tennis Championship 2021. On 22nd March, the tournament was held at Abhay Prashal Indoor Stadium, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, where he won 5 set matches but lost semi-final against candidate of Maharashtra. Sachin Rocky Rana, “What I learned was that these athletes were not disabled, they were super-abled. The Olympics is where heroes are made. The Paralympics is where heroes come.”

On 25th March 2013, an accident shook Sachin's life completely where he lost his right hand (till the elbow), but still the hope to revive made him unstoppable. This incident took place just when in few days he had his trial for Kolkata Knight Riders, IPL team. “I was on the hospital bed and people used to visit with sympathy. Things really affected me and when my mates arrived at ICU and I became very emotional asking only those to stay who were not willing to shed tears on my condition. I remember my mother giving me hope and strong warning by saying that it was the accident and it's over, let bygone be bygone and do not behave like a victim, and this statement by her gave me a boost of energy”, recalls Sachin.

Sachin was born in Palampur, Himachal Pradesh. With a strong army background, he was passionate to represent the country in sports. His passion was cricket and he played U-16 Vijay Merchant Trophy organized by BCCI in 1998. He was moving ahead when



a knee ligament injury parted him away from sports. His father guided him to try other career options with the mantra that “life must go on”.

He later joined Ichcha Export house where he used to carry samples for them, but his destiny had something else in store. Sachin soon got fascinated with the BPO industry and to reach here he overcame his language barrier and worked at Concentrix for 12yrs in Delhi. The major reason to join was the company's cricket team and also his

new love for table tennis was ignited here. His passion for sports was still alive but somewhere he was missing his dream to win a title for country.

India made its Summer Paralympic début at the 1968 Games, competed again in 1972, and then was absent until the 1984 Games. The country has participated in every edition of the Summer Games since then. It has never participated in the Winter Paralympic Games



Campus visit, offline classes still a distant dream for univ freshers

Saumya Agrawal

Sachin's friends were a big source of motivation in achieving his dream. He recalls, "There were two of my colleagues who always motivate me to go for my dreams. Satmeet guided me as mentor and Hemant showed confidence in me. I finally decided to quit my job and follow my passion towards Table Tennis. I felt that if I am passionate about certain thing why shouldn't I take it up as a profession. I did not have a coach, I learned while playing with people, some tips from YouTube and use to practice for 6 to 7 hours. Then the pandemic happened, and I moved to Himachal Pradesh, here I helped in motivating people around me and launched my YouTube channel and #Sachin Rocky Rana."

At Himachal, he got a chance to practice in Dharamshala where he was coached on basic techniques by Rakesh Jasal. The Para National Table Tennis Championship tournament was only 20 days away and finally in March 2021 Sachin attempted his first national tournament and bagged bronze medal for his state. On being asked about the help from state sports authority and other officials he says, "It is very difficult for a Para athlete to seek support and honestly I got none. I would like to mention that after my win, Delhi officials approached me and ask to declare this victory from their state end and then they would give me Rs 40,000. But since I did not want this, so I simply refused. I was honored in various schools of Himachal and local MLA invited me after the victory but there was no support for the play".

Recounting his journey Sachin says, "I have been through a lot and learned things step by step. Self-motivation and focus helped me achieve my goal but the most important thing was the feeling that I had of not accepting sympathy and giving more love than ever I had, which has made a better person and today."

As exciting as it sounds, moving to another city, meeting new people, adjusting in a whole new different environment is quite intimidating for almost every student. But when a pandemic is added to the mix everything goes for a toss.

In a telephonic conversation with few undergraduate and postgraduate first year students from different universities around the country, we got a lot of mixed responses, majority of which reflects the

The pandemic didn't allow me to hug my college friends I made online. Neither I was allowed to move around every part of my college nor I was permitted to stay back after examinations got over

Anushka Bhakta | MEDIA STUDENT

difficulties faced due to this unprecedented situation and online classes.

Tarushi Goel, a fresher at OP Jindal Global University, thought of dropping this year but changed her mind after some heavy brainstorming. "I haven't been to my college even once till now. It's strange but at the same time is quite exciting

to meet a whole bunch of new people online and being good friends with them even without meeting them in person".

Prishita Agrawal, a PGDM fresher at FOSTIIMA, recently went to college for her second semester examinations. "After surviving two whole semesters online, I finally went to college for examination, but it was way too different than what I expected it to be. I couldn't hug my college friends and had to leave the campus soon after giving the exams."

Anushka Bhakta, a media student at Amity University, talks about the lack of field exposure due to pandemic regulations. "Online classes have been very hectic since a year now. Though we are building a good base on the theoretical aspect but at the same time, we are lacking the field exposure, which is essential for any media student."

Meanwhile, Harshit Bansal, a language student, found it difficult to cope with online classes. "I didn't have a laptop, neither I knew how to operate it well. Installing different software to attend online classes and to cope up with assignments was more of a difficult task than actual studying", he shares.

Pandemic is giving hard time to freshers who expected a fresher's party, sharing room with hosteller friends, interacting with teachers in offline classes and getting field exposure—all of which has gone for a toss. While some students appreciated the fact that they got to interact with other students online, others are facing a big time FOMO (Fear of missing out).