



Expressions

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How Covid blurred lines between... **MAN & MACHINE**

Sanjana Saxena

Given the nature of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the revolution in the world of (Artificial Intelligence) AI and machines has laid the foundation of new business models and helped organizations across myriad fields survive in these hard times.

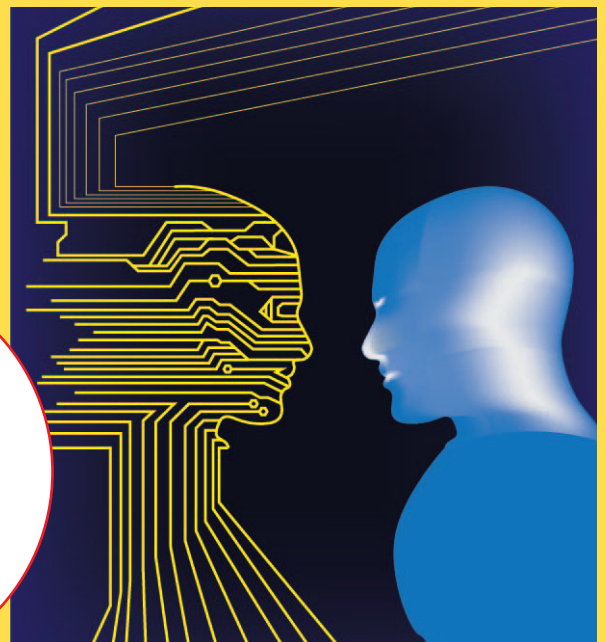
Not only that, a rise in the usage of machines and robots as a tool to combat the omnipresent fear of infectious contamination has also been witnessed. This has drastically changed the face of human society. Albeit measures like imposing lockdowns, social distancing norms, provision of quarantine, and isolation among others, are helping human beings remain safe, they seem to be blurring the lines between men and machines.

Divyanshi Ranjan, an engineering student residing in Delhi says, "Emerging technology and advancement of AI world are the dire needs of the world today. But ever since the COVID-19 pandemic began, human beings themselves seem to be slowly evolving into conscious biological machines. It seems as if we have been instructed to complete certain functions within a day before we sign off. There is a set sequence of tasks that we cross off the list every day, recharge ourselves through food or nap and get back to the same drill without much choice."

Continued on P3

**The list of
victims of the
global pandemic
may include human
expression, human
choice and being
human**

(Source: Orfonline.org)



**While it is true that relationships
continue to be strained even in
2021, we need to pull through and
tease apart the difference between
being alone and feeling lonely**

Editor's Desk

Have students gone into a shell?

Health crisis apart one has reasons to believe that students apparently have gone into a shell of their comfort zone to an extent they don't want to wake up early, get ready to reach campus and attend classes. Rather they prefer to remain muted and off the screen just in the name of attending classes.



This is at least evident from a survey the universities have done where they found that more than 55 percent students are still interested to continue with online mode of teaching.

We have only 45 percent perhaps 'serious and meritorious' ones who believe they have been deprived of classroom teaching (2020 Admissions) and now are trying to utilise their Second Year for offline classes. "A teacher-student relationship can be best established in a classroom only. The real-time interaction between us and teachers in the class cannot happen in an online mode", they feel.

Interestingly, some of the students who want to study on-campus have a common query: "Is it possible to come for 2-3 days and rest of the time attend classes from home." When asked the reason for this query, pat came the answer: "Sir all five days becomes too tiring!"

Yes, the worst thing the pandemic has impacted is making students lethargic in the online mode as they take it as a burden to wake up early dress well, reach institutions and attend their regular classes.

However, fed up with online they admit that classroom teaching is always preferred over virtual classes as young minds learn much more with daily interactions with teachers and peers improving their skills to deal with and teach them how to live in a society.

"In the situation of a global health crisis, the virtual system of learning has proved its merits but, we are done with it and need to shift to on-campus learning," said a student from Mumbai who wants to travel and attend classes.

Education is not limited to the syllabus only; it also includes discipline, manners, morals and interaction with other students and teachers. These traits are difficult to inject through online teaching.

Let us hope those who are serious towards their education & career return to campus and learn what they can not in the online mode. Authorities will have to give them option in the wake of the unpredictable pandemic situation.

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri

'Journey of this travel vlogger began from ASCO'



I have always been a creative person for as long I can remember. Even as a child, my favourite things to do in school were art, craft, reading, writing, etc. I always knew I wanted to make my career in a field where I can get my creative juices flowing, which is why I chose to do Journalism and Mass Communication as my UG course.

Being at Amity School of Communication, or ASCO as we lovingly called it, I was introduced to a whole new world. It was a place where I did not just learn from my teachers, but also took inspiration from my peers. Everyone here was talented and creative in their own ways. Under the guidance of our Director Prof. (Dr.) Sanjay M Johri, faculty members, and with

ALUMNI CORNER

help from my peers, I learned so many new skills, which I got to explore. My favourite moment at ASCO definitely has to be the time when I won the first prize in the creative writing competition, "Abhirachna" that filled me with immense zeal and motivation.

I had never even thought of 'Travel Vlogging' as a career option before I joined this institute, but the skillset and confidence I gained here, definitely helped me in taking my love for travelling and making it my career path. I have a YouTube channel by the name "Nimisha Raizada" that currently has more than 12,300 subscribers and a collective of more than 1.6 million views. I also do content writing as a freelancer on the side and I am currently working on a project with a Financial Consultancy. I also worked at 'Repertwahr Festival', one of the best Performing Arts festivals in India, for a year.

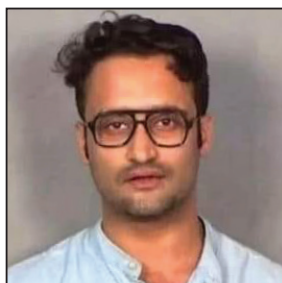
If I had to give one piece of advice to my juniors, it would be to learn as much as you can while you are here. At least the subjects where you get to learn new skills like graphic designing, animation, photography, videography, and video editing. It might seem tough at first, but nothing matches the feeling of satisfaction you get when you finally get that design right, or that edit perfect, or when you do something, you didn't think you were capable of. Let me tell you, through first-hand experience, you ARE capable of doing anything you set your mind to.

Nimisha Raizada, BJMC-Batch 2015-2018

ALUMNI CONNECT

‘Don’t measure success in material terms’

Making a mark in the critically and commercially successful web series ‘Scam 1992’ as the man who gave critical inputs to journalist Sucheta Dalal that led to the downfall of Big Bull Harshad Mehta, Amity alumnus **Raghav Raj Kakkar** believes he still has a long way to go.



“Don’t measure success in terms of the materialistic stuff that you collect along the way, but it is more about how happy and content you are with what you’re doing”, said Kakkar, an actor and upcoming writer during an interaction with students of ‘Amity School of Communication’ (ASCO) at an Alumni Connect event.

Raghav, an ASCO alumnus, considered himself new to the entertainment industry & he called Mumbai ‘a school that rigidly tests a person’s patience, perseverance and dedication.’ Raghav has marked his presence and talent in movies like ‘Purani Jeans’, ‘Indoo Ki Jawani’ and famous series like ‘Scam 1992’ and ‘InMates’. Apart from acting, he has added yet another feather in his hat by writing a forthcoming film titled ‘Faraaz’ which is being directed by Hansal Mehta and is set to release soon.

While sharing about his experience in the entertainment industry, he said that it was not all about glamour but a place where only talent mattered. He further stated the significance of characterization in the film industry, which is the “success mantra” for establishing oneself as a great actor. He also shared about his experience of playing the character of ‘Karamchand’ in Scam 1992 and how he prepared to play the role as he was not from a commerce background and hence knew nothing about the financial markets, which was incidentally the character’s demand.

Another great advice from Raghav to all the students who aspire to work for cinema, was to join a film school and not be in rush to enter the industry. He stressed on the importance of getting a wider perspective of seeing things and learning from professionals.

Further Raghav added that there are ample of opportunities for people of different interests and skillsets in the field of production like writing, editing, and camera handling, among others, so one should never limit himself/herself to one specific area.

Answering a question asked by a student during the session, Raghav also shared his candid thoughts on the controversial topic of ‘nepotism’, saying that it was present in every industry. “At the end of the day, it is your work alone that will bring you the appreciation and respect you desire,” he said as a matter of fact.

How Covid blurred lines between man & machine

Continued from P1

The biggest difference between a man and a machine is of emotions and building relationships. The pandemic, much like any other element of our lives, has impacted it. “It is quite alienating to walk through a crowd of people in masks and guessing their expressions from a distance. Being social animals, we thrive on our connections with other people. The pandemic, however, has curtailed the way we interact with other people, which is a rather essential driving force for the social beings”, expressed Sakshi Agrawal, a fashion designing student residing in Jaipur.

On loneliness stemming from isolation, Aditi Shukla from Lucknow says, “Staying connected in a world that has necessitated people to stay distant from one another is a puzzler. Largely virtual life has changed the status quo of friendships and relationships, with almost no heart-to-heart conversation or satisfaction.”

Online mode and WFH format have also made a noticeable mark on human behaviour. Rakesh Srivastava, a software developer residing in Lucknow opines, “I have been working from home since 2020. Doing overtime is neither unlikely nor an optional affair anymore. In the beginning, there were days where it was very tedious to pull through but with time, I find myself becoming neutral about the prevailing working condition, which is almost the same for everyone today.”

The fear of the virus and measures to tackle it have together changed the face of the modern world as we know it. Besides timely guidelines regarding safety measures, we also need to put into place some measures and actions that go beyond the outbreak of the virus. Post-pandemic, we will probably walk into a whole new generation that will think, act and live differently from the pre-pandemic beings. Despite the hefty loss of several lives, mankind has to pass and survive the COVID-19 storm, holding on to the distinction between social beings and machines.

IN CONVERSATION: MR BALAKRISHNA, Editor, Fact-Check, India Today

‘Fact-checkers is new career option for budding journalists’

Harshita Srivastava & Sanjana Saxena

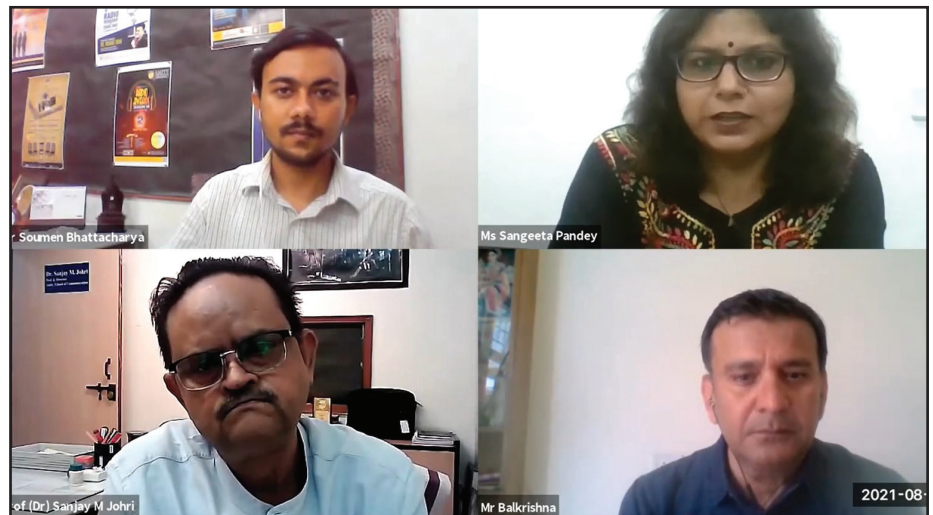
All of us have been witnessing a flood of fake news, especially amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the repercussions of which are known by all. Addressing the same issues in a session with Amity School of Communication (ASCO), Mr Balakrishna, Editor, Fact-Check, India Today Group, talked about ‘Fact-Checking-a handy tool and a viable career option for budding journalists.’

“Fact-checking is a rather new, but promising concept, which is in its budding stage in our country

“ From forwarded messages received on WhatsApp to any piece of information, having a curious mind and getting hands on already available search tools on internet, can give the needed head start to set the foot in this field, which is bound to grow and is here to stay in the era of social media

and can become a career for budding journalists, although it cannot be just a stand-alone option rather it will be required skill set for reporters in coming days,” said Mr Balakrishna.

He further added that the job of a fact-checker is to check whether or not a piece of information is fac-



tually correct, using internet and advanced search tools. For students willing to pursue this career option, his advice is to start practising by observing things around them. “From forwarded messages received on WhatsApp to any piece of information, having a curious mind and getting hands on already available search tools on internet, can give the needed head start to set the foot in this field, which is bound to grow and is here to stay in the era of social media,” he elaborated.

Recalling when he was unacquainted with the concept of fact-checking, Balakrishna, who started his career as a reporter, said with the right tools and eye for detailing it became his forte.

He shared several interesting cases through videos for clear depiction of the comprehensive work and scrutiny that the job entails. A recent fake news that Mr Balakrishna and his team unearthed was of an Olympic-2020 themed pin with “Swayam Sewak” inscription for sale on eBay, falsely being shared as a medal to be distributed to the Tokyo Olympic 2020 volunteers by Neti-

zens and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president Dr Narendra Dhruv Batra himself. All it took was reverse-searching with relevant keywords and a keen eye to crack the case wide open for the truth.

Sharing a fake viral video news that showed Taliban capturing the Presidential Palace in Afghanistan, which Mr Balakrishna found suspicious as there was no such news on any media platform. His team got cracking on checking facts and soon discovered it to be an old video from a Syrian Civil war that was being shared with this false news. Balakrishna thoroughly interpreted the difference between investigative journalism, where the journalist can rely on the sources of information, and Fact-Checking, where real evidence is collected by researching through the Open Source Internet and other agencies working in this field.

Upon queries raised by students, he highlighted the responsibility of a fact-checker to ensure that unethical invasion into privacy of others or biasness should not creep in while doing the job.

People throw Covid protocols out even as third wave looms large

Drishti Vanaik

One look at popular tourist spots or for that matter our very own local markets, the pandemic seems like to be a thing of the past as people with utter disregard for Covid-19 protocols can be seen everywhere.

Now, with the Covid third wave hitting the Southern and Eastern parts of the country and experts predicting a full sweep by October, the casual public behaviour is only extending a full invitation to the pandemic.

Expressions Reporter spoke to store managers at Malls and road-side shopkeepers to get their take on the situation.

"More than a thousand visitors come daily, some careful, some extremely inattentive to the safety measures. The staff has to constantly remind them to wear masks and maintain social distancing," mentions Satyendra Kumar, Manager of Westside Store, Wave Mall Lucknow.

Similarly jam-packed roads of the city are just as intimidating. Markets like Kapoor Thala and the small shops on Ring-Road are flooded with customers showing utter

disregard for Covid protocols. Mahesh Narayan, a modest owner of a bangle-shop in Kapoor Thala market says, "I can see so many people coming at once. The lanes are occupied by vehicles. People are enjoying Gol-Gappe and Tikki, no mask, no sanitizer, nothing."

For restaurants, a takeaway policy has been made available but the situation isn't still fully optimal. Shubh Kumar, a working member at Kitchen Restaurant, mentions, "From Monday to Friday people come for dine-ins with their families. While it is our only source of profit as we receive more customers this way. It's at the same time our own loss because the third wave can come anytime, and the crowd does not seem to act appropriately".

Commenting on the situation Dr. Shikha Gupta adds, "It has been heavily predicted that the third wave may affect children more, in states like Bengaluru, a handful have already been exposed. Parents must start taking precautions to protect their children and themselves too. Vaccination is going on, but self-protection is much needed". In contrast, a recent article by the Times of India states that the areas or cities, which were heavily

Photo courtesy: Drishti Vanaik

“It has been heavily predicted that the third wave may attack children more, in states like Bengaluru, a handful have already been exposed. Parents must start taking precautions to protect their children and themselves too. Vaccination is going on, but self-protection is much needed

Dr. Shikha Gupta

More than a thousand visitors come daily, some careful, some extremely inattentive to the safety measures

**Satyendra Kumar | MANAGER
OF WESTSIDE STORE, WAVE MALL,
LUCKNOW**



impacted by the second wave, may not experience an equally fierce and enormous third wave, as per the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

While the reports do not yet indicate the arrival of an extreme third wave, lifting lockdown restrictions and the recklessness of people at large is a matter of utmost concern. Instead of waiting for the COVID cases to spike again; rigorously following the safety protocols and not letting the guard down is the need of the hour.

MAKING CAREER OUT OF TRAVELLING

A woman with long, dark, curly hair, wearing a green patterned top and blue jeans, stands in front of the Chamundi Hill temple tower. The tower is a tall, ornate structure made of yellow stone, with many small carvings and a pointed top. The sky is blue with some clouds. The woman is smiling and looking towards the camera. A small grey box with the text 'CHAMUNDI HILL' is overlaid on the image.

CHAMUNDI HILL

Travelling is something that almost everyone enjoys, albeit in small doses: Weekends trips, one-day trips, short vacations. I, however, love it so much that I decided to make my career out of travelling.

However, let me be frank; making travel videos is not a piece of cake. It might look flashy and enjoyable, and it is for the most part, but it is also so much more than that. What you see in the final product are the edited moments, the most beautiful shots and highlights of the adventure.

What you don't see is the amount of work that goes into creating this content. Hours of shooting, hours of editing, and the constant dilemma of having to decide between living in the moment or capturing it. No matter what form of travel content you want to choose: Writing, photography or videography, they all come with their fair share of work.

However, it is not all bad. I wouldn't still be doing it if it was. The best part is that you get to travel, have new adventures and meet new people. In fact, I have tried so many new things and visited so many unique places, that I wouldn't normally have, just because I thought they would generate good content.

Of course, the pandemic has not been kind to the travel industry at all. I haven't gone anywhere since 2020 and had to diversify the content on my channel as a result. However, that will not stop me from chasing my dreams as I will travel again.

I look forward to the day when I will get out of my house again, with a suitcase and camera in hand, ready to be off on yet another adventure.

*Some Shots from Alumni
Ms. Nimisha Raizada*



OOTY



MYSORE PALACE



MANIPAL



MYSORE PALACE



SHUKA VANA BIRD
PARK

Dating apps, a boon for lonely youngsters

Saumya Agrawal

Undoubtedly, the Coronavirus has taken a major toll on numerous businesses and dating applications are no exception. Dating apps have been one of the most popular trends in recent times. Even before Covid, these apps were a success as they helped users find a suitable date. Similar to OTT platforms and other online businesses, the lockdown, social distancing measures, and stay-at-home directives by the Government have set a trend of online dating, causing a surge in the use of Dating Apps.

Aryan Roy, a 28-year-old entrepreneur from Bangalore, shared his reason to download Bumble for the first time.

"As an extrovert and active person, I found it distressing to be confined to home for more than a year now. I like meeting and talking to new people, hearing their stories. Now, Bumble is where I go when I feel like going out," he said.

Dating apps also held online events such as concerts, speed dating, and counselling sessions to combat feelings of loneliness. "Dating apps are really important in these difficult times as finding a date/partner opens up a person and helps him/her tackle loneliness and depression", said Pratham, a final year B. Tech (CSE) student from VIT

Pandemic fallout



Photo courtesy: Saumya Agrawal

Dating apps like Bumble, Match, Hinge offered free video calling facilities while apps like HER, Coffee Meets Bagel recommended their users to use video calling platforms like Zoom for communication.

Vellore.

Another major step taken by dating apps was that they ensured

to communicate about

health and safety measures during this pandemic. Grindr told users that "Right Now" can wait to disrupt the usual emphasis on quick hook-ups. These apps added features to support virtual dating. Instead of meeting people physically, apps like Bumble, Match, Hinge, etc. offered free video calling

I believe that I will be using the pandemic-driven trend of video calling to know more about my date post-pandemic as well

Katyayani | STUDENT DELHI UNIVERSITY

facilities. Whereas apps like HER, Coffee Meets Bagel, etc. recommended their users to use video calling platforms like Zoom for communication.

Katyayani, a final year student of B.A. (English Honours) at Delhi University, opines, "Finding a date is tough and it has become even more tougher during these difficult times. Therefore, the importance of a dating app increases drastically. Moreover, additional facilities by these apps makes finding a date quite quick and helps people to deal with loneliness and isolation by talking to someone with whom they feel a special connection." She adds, "I believe that I will be using the pandemic-driven trend of video calling to know more about my date post-pandemic as well."

Taking all these views into account, it is rightly found that dating apps especially during the pandemic, have gained a place in many people's lives. People now really enjoy spending time on these apps while finding their dates as a result of which they get peace and happiness.

Isolation and loneliness are the major reasons for dating apps to witness an increase in the number of users

Lko girl thrashing cab driver incident raises pseudo-feminism issue again

Vaishali Gautam

Photo courtesy: Vaishali Gautam

Feminism is a movement that started way back to empower women and eradicate gender inequality. However, it often receives the blow of cases where a woman is perceived to be at fault, igniting a fire of bashing the age-old movement. The viral video of a Lucknow girl thrashing a cab driver is one such incident that restarted a debate on righteousness of feminism.

The incident took place on the eve of 30th July at Awadh Crossing, Lucknow. A video footage of cab



“The true essence and purpose of Feminism was never what some people perceive in the present time. We should know that Feminism being portrayed incorrectly by some people does not mean we should discard the whole movement

Deepika

driver Sahadat Ali got viral where a girl named Priyadarshini Narayan Yadav was seen slapping him repeatedly and causing damage to his property. Priyadarshini accused him of jumping the red light and trying to hit her.

Three youths: Shahadat (cab driver), and his two friends Inayat Ali and Dawood Ali; were booked

for breach of peace. Soon after the incident, #ArrestLucknowGirl started trending on social media platforms. A case was later lodged against the girl, with a promise of fair investigation made by police. This led to a battle among the Netizens on Feminism.

During a discourse on the topic, a 22-year-old college student Deepika opines, “I feel feminism is being more misused in the present time. It has actually lost the real essence of the purpose with which it was started. We often hear cases like the Lucknow Girl case and Zomato Delivery boy case, which makes a mockery out of the whole movement.”

Aprajita, a Master’s student said, “We often fail to address the concerns of the male community. Like it’s so deeply rooted in our minds that if there is an issue which involves both the genders, we’ll consider the male wrong by default. It is high time we balance feminism with humanism and bid gender bias adieu”. On the flip side, another college student Swati added, “The

condition of women in our country is a long-debated issue as they still cannot go anywhere alone without a sense of fear. On one hand, it is wrong to paint all men in the same color through counter-productive mentality of ‘All men are the same’, it is also wrong to discard the movement that has and is still helping women stand next to men in our patriarchal society.”

There is no denying the fact that women still need equal treatment in many aspects. Simultaneously, we must address the issue of pseudo-feminism while not confusing it with Feminism. Like Shreya Mishra, a working woman rightly said, “Because of a certain section of women playing the undue victim card, help is not reaching the ones who genuinely need it. We must make sure that neither all cases should be generalized nor we should discard Feminism”. It is high time we stop jumping the bandwagon of making feminists a laughing stock on the basis of any unfortunate incident where woman is perceived to be at fault.

Family get-togethers, virtual meets mark Friendship Day

Anjali Singh

Photo courtesy: Anjali Singh

Friendship is a special bond that brings abundant joy and hope in everyone's life. How can one forget the iconic friendship? Krishna-Sudama, the bond that stated the caste, color, creed, status have no value in the face of an eternal connection. Their friendship tie is an immortal and perfect example of friendship.

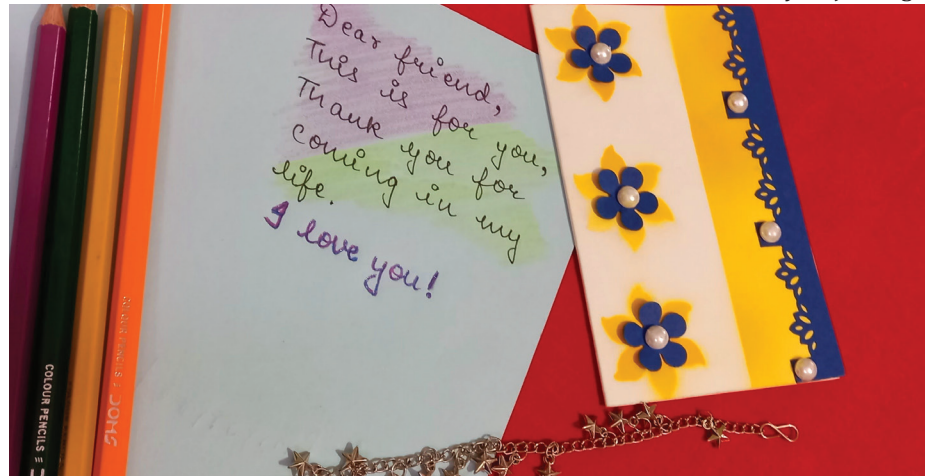
Friendship Day is marked as a special day on the first Sunday of August every year to celebrate such bonds and to cherish those who stay through the ups and downs. This year, friendship day was celebrated on 1st August while our country was still trying to avert the possible third wave of COVID-19.

Going down memory lane, Amrita, a housewife emotionally recalls about friendship day celebration during her college life; how she used to plan and visit specific places and

Silver lining

go for friendship bands' shopping. "It has been long since I met my friends. The fear of COVID-19 virus still out on the loose left me reminiscing about the good times at my home. Thankfully, technology has kept us all connected through social media. But, the virtual wishes I got from my mates had me wishing to meet-up," she added.

For a lot of us, the list of friends is not limited to batch mates – Parents, grandparents, teachers, siblings, and those who are close to our hearts are all our friends.



Sharing greeting cards and tying the friendship band on the wrist of our friends is usually associated with the day. Ravi Singh, a class 9 student, believes that although Covid-19 trapped us all inside our homes, the will to make our friends feel special remained intact. "Given the pandemic, I could not get any gifts for my parents, so I made handmade card for them. I also pinged my school friends on phone and thanked them for helping me out and listening to my never-ending lame jokes", he recounted.

The hurdles that parents go through to provide a good life to their children are beyond imagination. "Thanking lifetime friends-parents is a way of showing our respect, care, and love for them", said Sagar Chaudhary, a college-going student. Another college student Vartika Sharma organized a surprise party for her parents and grandmother at home on friendship day. "The real gems that are rare to find are those who accompany you in the highs and lows of your life, helping you make the right deci-

sions. I have a grandma-cum- bestie who is a blessing for me. She has a solution for any problem that comes my way", she said.

There is no need for a day to mark the presence of friendship, but it is a great way to remember friends.

It has been long since I met my friends. The fear of COVID-19 virus still out on the loose left me reminiscing about the good times at my home. Thankfully, technology has kept us all connected through social media

Amrita | HOUSEWIFE

Though unwanted situations, one thing became clear that distance cannot affect the bond of friendship. The meaning of friendship in the pandemic symbolizes the pure and unbreakable ties bundled with great memories. No matter how far apart or close you physically are, true friends are always close to your heart.

In 1958, Paraguay was the first country to celebrate the International Friendship Day. Though the International Friendship Month is February, we celebrate first Sunday of August as Friendship Day.

Golden bird India now awaits freedom from *chalta hai* attitude

Riddhi Bhargava

Khoob ladi mardani, woh to Jhansi wali rani thi is not just a phrase, freedom fighters believed in the thought of freedom and had the courage to fight for it. Today when the whole world is celebrating 75 years of independence. Some people believe that the free golden bird for which our martyrs fought is still locked inside a cage.

The fight for freedom started 200 years back but the freedom attained is far from what we fought for. Sharing their stories people who lived through these 75 free years explain their reasons.

Bishan Kumar born in the year of independence shares his heartfelt journey. Talking about the values and pride, justice and freedom, with a pinch of free speech. He said, "I was born in 1947 when we all were declared independent. My family settled in Haryana and being zamindars, my family members had a lot of land. Above everything anyone got, power and rights that the citizens gained were of immense importance.

75 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

People took pride in the law and in turn the law knew that with grace

comes responsibility. Press was free, no space for agendas and sensationalism. Today everything is changed. People can be seen losing faith in the valuable gains from independence- be it elders, youngers, or anyone and everything is viewed from a 'chalta hai' attitude."

Meanwhile, Vijay Narayan, 85, recalls the horror of partition, "I used to live in Lahore but during the partition we had to travel back to India. The movies today that represent partition is just 20% of what exactly happened. People were slaughtered, women treated like mere objects. I will not mention more but that is the biggest reason I fear our golden bird, which was a symbol of our mother nation, is still in the cage. Today women might have grown but their position in our patriarchy remains the same as there are still people who look down their noses at them." The gender bias truly is a heart-rending reality even today, which has repercussions for both men and women.

As Vijay Narayan sums it up aptly 'If we are ready to change then it's all that matters. Only compassion, understanding and humanity can free the golden bird from its chains after all this is what our freedom fighters fought for."

India's Super Seven keep the 'josh' high at Tokyo Olympics

Rinil Srivastava

Established in 1896, the motto of Olympics is "Citius, Altius, Fortius – Communiter," which translates to "faster, higher, stronger, and together" which was truly reflected in India's magnificent performance at Tokyo Olympics.

Olympic Game is an athletic festival held every four years to cultivate human beings, through sport, and contribute to world peace. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the games had to be postponed for the first time in the history. Considering the devastating impact of the pandemic, Olympic games became more challenging than ever. However, India's performance at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games stood out from the country's 120-year history of competition.

India began with a bang as Mirabai Chanu kicked off the competition, winning a silver medal in the women's 49 kg weightlifting division. Later, PV Sindhu became the first Indian woman and the second Indian athlete to win two individual Olympic medals. Following

India finishes at 48th rank in Tokyo Olympics, making it the best performance in over four decades

that, Lovlina Borgohain became the third Indian Pugilist to secure a podium place and later Ravi Kumar Dahiya and Wrestler Bajrang Punia, won a Silver and a Bronze medal respectively.

"I adore and have so much respect for the time when our National Anthem was performed at the podium after 13 years," said Lavanya Bhaskar, a housewife and sports lover based in Lucknow. "One of the amazing things about this Olympics is that the achievements from both male and female athletes have unlocked some really tough doors. If any woman from any part of India is denied participation in the sports again, she would have convincing grounds as to why she should be allowed," she added.

"The josh" among the Indians reached its peak when Indian men's hockey team beat Germany to claim the bronze medal after a wait of over 41 long years. ►

"It was a stupendous achievement for India to win a bronze medal in men's hockey after 41 long years, and it took great strength to fight courageously to beat Australia and win everyone's heart in women's hockey. The much awaited shift of focus of Indians from other Sports towards the national game Hockey due to Tokyo Olympic warmed my heart," exclaims Saanchi Srivastava, a high school student residing in Varanasi.

Seeing herculean effort & determination of Neeraj Chopra, who, after Abhinav Bindra, became India's second individual Olympic champion winning a historic gold in men's javelin throw and left everyone with goosebumps. Jaswinder Singh, a CA aspirant from Lucknow, expresses joy at the champions' medal haul. "The amazing performance

The much awaited shift of focus of Indians from other sports towards national game Hockey due to Tokyo Olympic warmed my heart

Saanchi Srivastava | STUDENT

and grit of each and every person at the Olympics has left an unforgettable impression in the hearts of everyone alike. Be it Gold, Silver or Bronze, it is not just a medal, but a feeling. What can be more beautiful than bringing in seven medals home and that too in the month of August, adding to the glory of the Independence Day," he says with beaming pride.

In the Tokyo Olympics, India performed admirably at 48th position, making it the best performance of the country in over four decades. And finally, an honourable mention for those who came very close to winning a medal. Athletes like Aditi Ashok, Bhavani Devi, and others who worked hard and competed bravely.

It's back to Ganjing with weekend lockdown ending

Bhargavi Singh

From housing some of the most luxurious brands to small street vendors who sell mouthwatering delicacies at dream prices, Hazratganj has it all covered. A shoppers' heaven- Hazratganj, used to bustle with crowds on weekends pre-covid. The local vendors suffered an ample amount of loss in their businesses due to the weekend lockdowns imposed to curb the COVID-19 spread.

However, much to the relief of both shoppers and shopkeepers, the State Government eased the weekend lockdown in the month of August by allowing the city to reopen on Saturday and then later Sunday.

The first Saturday, since the partial weekend reopening, saw happy faces all around with city-folks avidly exploring their favorite lanes once again. Kamran Khan, who runs a garment stall in the famous Love Lane shared his thoughts, "The past few months have been tough. Most rush had always been on the weekends and holidays but due to the weekend lockdown, my business had slowed down. Even on weekdays we had to close early because of the night curfew, but I'm very happy that we are slowly opening again and god-willingly things will go back to the normal soon." Sharing his experience of the first Saturday after the relaxation, he added, "There was a little more rush today as compared to most of the weekdays but we are expecting more people to come in the coming evenings as that is when most people are likely to come for shopping."

Shrianshi Sonker, a college student shopping with her friends around the corner said, "We are really glad to get some relaxation from the weekend lockdowns as it was hard for us to come on weekdays due to our classes and now that we are finally here, we



Photo courtesy: Bhargavi Singh

'A shoppers' heaven'- Hazratganj used to be bustling with crowds on weekends pre-covid. Much to the relief of both shoppers and shopkeepers, the State Government eased the weekend lockdown in the month of August by allowing the city to reopen on Saturdays

plan on looking through all the stalls and have a fun day together."

Manoj Verma, a street vendor who runs a shikanji (lemonade) stand shared how he was relieved with lifting of weekend lockdowns. "My business is seasonal and my sales are the most during summers and humid monsoon days because that is the time when people come to quench their thirst at my stall. The second wave and weekend lockdown have been really hard for me. A few of these big shop owners from Love Lane started selling online when the market was closed and business was slow, but I did not have the resources. I'm really thankful that we are getting back to normal and I hope I can sell some shikanjis before the chilly winds arrive."

While everyone is daily gearing up to get back to the normal routine, the looming fear of a possible third wave floats overhead. We can only hope for adherence to strict safety protocols and covid-appropriate behavior to have better days ahead.