

MAKING THE BEST OUT OF CORONACATION

HAPPY OR NOT, OUR LIFE IS GOING TO BE LIKE A
HALT ON A RAILWAY STATION | P8

WORLD OF BOOKS

HAVE YOU EVER READ A BOOK? HAVE
YOU EVER THOUGHT WHY IS IT SAID THAT
BOOKS ARE THE BEST FRIENDS? | P9

DREAMS HAVE NO EXPIRY DATE: LATIKA CHAKRAVORTY

A STORY OF 89-YEAR-OLD WOMAN
ENTREPRENEUR | P11

AMITY SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION

Expressions



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May 2020

MIGRANTS BRAVE ODDS TO REACH HOME

Sanjay M Johri

They are informal workers and backbone of the big urban economy including real estate construction sites, delivery service, restaurants, hair-saloons, plumbers, automobile mechanics and daily wage labourers working in factories. However, ever since the nationwide lockdown, announced by PM Modi on March 25, these labourers have been at the receiving end. With no shelter and food, they prefer to walk to reach their villages.

Escaping poverty, many years ago they had left their villages in search of a job and preferred to live in squalid housing in congested urban areas in different states across the country, but the lockdowns made them refugees in their 'adopted cities' as workplaces were shut and the country came to a grinding halt.

If you switch on to your TV screens, you will see migrants carrying their paltry belongings, hold-



Photo: Trilochan S Kalra

ing hands of their little children or carrying them on their shoulders and some even tagging their pet animals while braving the relentless summer heat—all in a bid to reach their villages. It's a heart wrenching sight to see their hunger-stricken gaze full of fatigue. Yes this is the state of migrants whose continuous movement on the highways is a common picture.

"Do you think we have any option but to return home because ultimately during tough times only family comes to help and you get solace there, said Rajiv, a migrant, who was trekking from Nasik, while speaking to a TV Journalist. "At least I will get food and the comfort of family in my village home", he said.

Continued on P3

PATRON Prof (Dr.) Sunil Dhaneshwar, *Pro Vice-Chancellor* | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Prof (Dr.) Sanjay M Johri, Director
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STUDENT EDITORIAL COORDINATORS Adeeba Lari, Triyanshi Parihar

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Editor's Desk

As we enter into the 5th edition, Expressions wishes Happy Eid to everyone, a fes-



tival which will be celebrated this year with a difference. Amid Covid-19 pandemic and continued lockdown we all remain confined to our homes and both 'Eid' and the famed 'Bada-Mangal' of Lucknow, which is observed during the summer months, is being celebrated differently. Corona and the resultant lockdowns have made us realize the sanctity of offering prayers and celebrating festivities within the four walls of our homes with grace. Adeeba Lari and Akarsh Bajpai write about the observance of Ramzan month and Bada Mangal in this issue.

Easing of restrictions in Lockdown post May 17 and return of life is beautifully captured by ace photographer Mr. Trilochan S. Kalra.

It feels good to see the government easing restrictions and restoring economic activities gradually amidst lockdown 4.0 that will continue till May 31. But the grim news is that Corona cases are rapidly rising with an average 5,500 odd cases being reported everyday across India. We need to be cautious in following the health protocols and guidelines at workplaces and hope the curve flattens soon.

So it was apt to include an exclusive interview of Covid-19 patient by Yashita Arora in this issue to gain insights on how to survive the virus.

And in between all this, we lost two top Bollywood stars. Nitin pays tribute to Irrfan Khan profiling the great actor.

Happy Reading
Cheers!

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri

Mentor-mentee program, a cornerstone in my growth

Hi amigos, I'm Sneha and here is my story of a beautiful journey at Amity School of Communication (ASCO), Lucknow. Back in 2015, when I enrolled for masters in mass communication, I was asked during the orientation to give a short speech on 'time'. Standing in front of the Pro VC sir and lots of faculty and students of different departments, I confidently spoke on how we can make optimum utilization of our time at Amity with its endless resources to build our career. I never knew that each word I spoke on that day would actually change my entire life.

At ASCO I learned to be assertive and also got hands-on experience at organising and conducting various events that are held from time to time. One thing though, the mentor-mentee programme, which initially I thought was not very useful turned out to be the backbone of my professional and personal growth. Deadlines for projects, pressure of semester exams, NTCC projects, research, panel discussions and seminars—everything was important to polish our skills in a very short period of time.

My journey at ASCO was fortunately filled with more of highs than lows. Getting Internship with brand like Bharti Airtel was 'a dream come true'. But the turning point was when Amity offered me my first student fellowship that too with an International Social Business and allowed me to closely monitor their work culture and build contacts with people from France, Spain and Australia.

Till the time I gave my first interview, without any work experience, my resume was already filled with internships and fellowship with big brands that resulted in me being asked to handle a team of more than 60 employees in my very first job.



That is my journey from a master's degree in hand, gold medal in academics and a joining letter from a reputed company within two years. From a student to straight away being addressed as 'ma'am' by employees who were much more elder and experienced than me, from leaning to training new employees, from following rules to making company's policies and from being a member to leading a team, this is how responsible, sincere and career oriented I became.

Today when my boss or my fellow colleagues appreciates my work or my presentation skills, I always give full credit to my institution as I know, I was not even 10% of what I'm today before I stepped in ASCO. Throughout those two years, I just had one goal in mind—to utilize my time at ASCO in the best possible way. My husband (who also did his Masters from ASCO) and I still feel that our university helped us become what we are today.

My journey cannot be summed up without thanking my mentor Prof (Dr.) Sanjay M. Johri for always guiding and motivating me even today.

ALUMNI CORNER

SCORCHING HEAT, BATTLING HUNGER

Continued from P1

The Central Government's move to respond to the plight of Indian migrant workers stranded abroad is a welcome step as hundreds of them are being brought back to the country in special flights but you can't be so apathetic to the plight of migrant population at home.

"Wanting to go home in a crisis is natural. If Indian students, tourists, pilgrims stranded overseas want to return; so do labourers in big cities. They want to go home to their villages. We can't be sending planes to bring home one lot, but leave the other to walk back home," comments Shekhar Gupta, founder and editor of The Print.

1000 state roadways buses were pressed into service in this massive exercise since March 25 as there has been no clarity on the extended lockdown entering into phase 4.0 beyond May 17

Clearly, a lockdown to stave off a pandemic turned into a humanitarian crisis and perhaps both the respective state governments and Center appeared to have bungled in not anticipating this exodus.

A recent study published in Economic and Political Weekly said "The imposition of the lockdown as a measure to contain the exponential progression of the COVID-19 pandemic has actually hit the unskilled and semi-skilled migrant labourer the most. In the last few weeks, we have all been witness to harrowing, nerve-wrenching and bone-chilling images of the exodus of these marginal and "invisible" drivers of the informal economy of urban India."

The Hindi belt is the main source

of migrants. According to the census, four states, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh account for 50 percent of India's total inter-state migrants. On the other side, Maharashtra, Delhi, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana house 50% of the country's inter-state migrants.

These shares are much higher than the share of these states in India's total population. Interestingly, Uttar Pradesh figures in both lists – while there are people who leave it in search of livelihoods, there are also those who head for UP in search of livelihood.

Delhi and Mumbai are widely considered migrant magnets and the Census figure bears that out. According to it, migrants from other states in Delhi and Mumbai numbered 9.9 million, or almost a third of the combined population of 29.2 million in these two metropolises.

The big question today is whether these unskilled and semi-skilled migrant labourers who are returning home today would go back to their respective work-places, as there are not too many options of earning livelihood in villages and they would always be under pressure to earn.

It also come as a big opportunity for the states, if they can hold back these migrants in their native districts by offering the kind of skilled and unskilled labor work where they can earn substantial money to run their families.

In Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Aditya Nath has embarked upon a mammoth exercise to bring back over one million migrants stranded in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Punjab, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand.



Nearly 1000 state roadways buses were pressed into service in this massive exercise since March 25 as there has been no clarity on the extended lockdown entering into phase 4.0 beyond May 17. Till date around 3.50 lakh migrants have returned to the state. Several special trains have already started bringing back these migrants with state government setting up shelters and Quarantine Centers to house them.

Once back in their home state, the people who have no symptoms of Covid-19 will be held in quarantine in government facilities for a fortnight until it is deemed safe for them to return to their families.

Interestingly Yogi government is now formulating a policy to provide employment to some 20 lakh migrant workers. "A policy is being framed to provide jobs to 20 lakh migrant workers through labour reforms in their villages and towns. Directions have been given to officials to prepare data from quarantine centers regarding skills of workers. With jobs guaranteeing a minimum salary of Rs 15,000 and fixed working hours will provide much needed security to the migrant labourers", says a top government official. He further said that with these slew of measures, the UP government hopes that these migrants would not return to big magnet cities and will prefer to stay back in their native state.

LESS IS MORE THIS RAMADAN

Adeeba Lari

Ramadan is believed to be the holiest month of the year within Islam, and the month in which the Quran was revealed to the prophet Muhammad.



There is something about quietness that resonates well with the feeling of Ramadan. Be it the silence on the table as one opens their iftaar after a day of rigorous fasting or the serenity that finds space between a person and his prayers, my grandmother always said that you are lucky if you have a quiet Ramadan, free from the voices of 'shaitaan' (demons) within.

With Ramadan beginning right before our summer break, we expected it to be a quiet affair but definitely not in 'quarantine', courtesy Covid-19. While pre-Corona, due to hectic schedules, one hardly got time to introspect about the

Festivity Lockdown

meaning behind fasting during this holy month, but this Ramadan proved different as for once, we were provided with the gift of time.

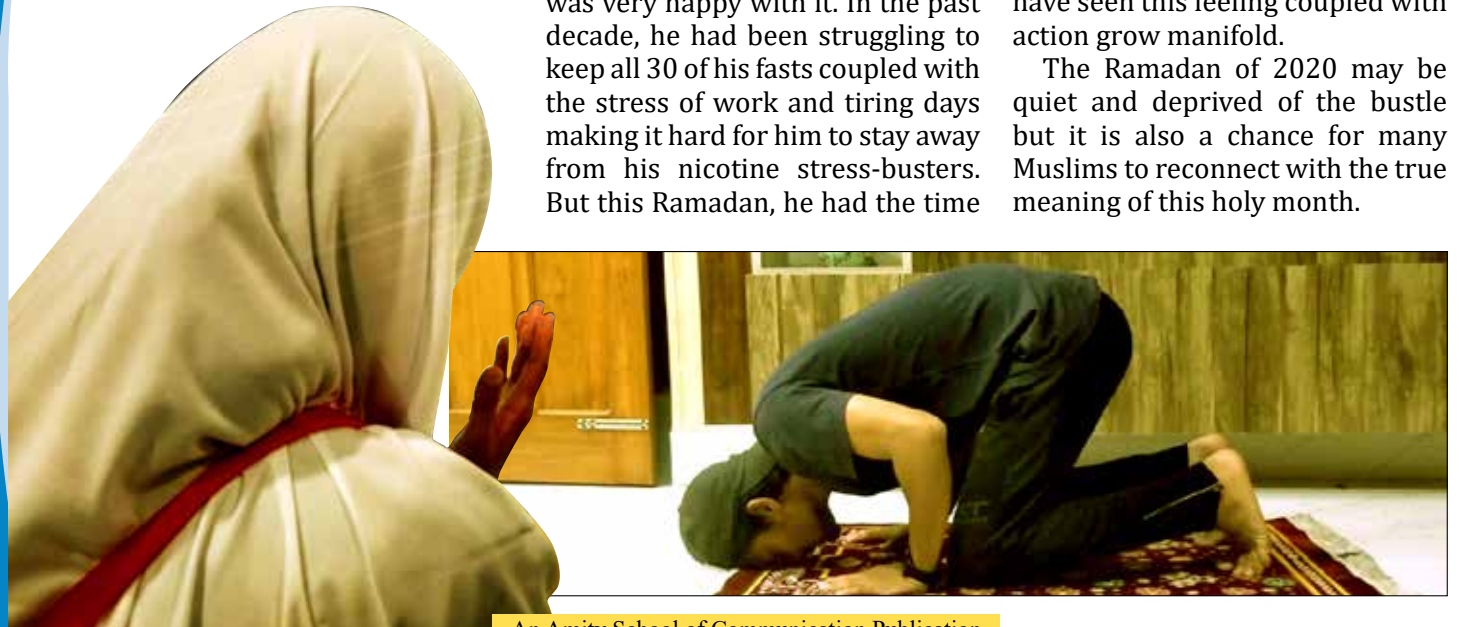
The ongoing lockdown had ensured enough time for one to reflect within ourselves. My father was very happy with it. In the past decade, he had been struggling to keep all 30 of his fasts coupled with the stress of work and tiring days making it hard for him to stay away from his nicotine stress-busters. But this Ramadan, he had the time

to sit and finally read the Quran all day and he is sleeping better already. Many people like him, previously burdened by their inescapable obligations are grateful for the extra time they have been yearning for to pray and feel the real essence of Ramadan.

The younger generation, however, is a bit bitter as now there are no scope for midnight kebab runs to Aminabad or endless strings of iftaar parties. However, freedom from taxing school work is certainly welcome and has given the youngsters a chance to find their mode of spiritual connection.

Another aspect of Ramadan that has been redeemed is the focus on 'less is more'. Previously the iftaar tables of many would-be loaded with food that would often go to waste and moreover contrast the true meaning of Ramadan. With this lockdown and availability of only the necessary grocery products, the iftaar tables are less crowded and hearts more grateful. Ramadan also demands attention to the less fortunate section of the society and Muslims tend to donate huge amounts to charity throughout the month. These lockdowns have seen this feeling coupled with action grow manifold.

The Ramadan of 2020 may be quiet and deprived of the bustle but it is also a chance for many Muslims to reconnect with the true meaning of this holy month.



BADA MANGAL

CORONA DAMPENS FESTIVITIES, NOT SPIRIT

According to the historian Yogesh Praveen, the tradition of celebrating 'Bada Mangal' with pooja of Lord Hanuman and carnivals was started under the rule of Awadh nawab Shuja-ud-Daulah when her Hindu wife's wish of having a son was fulfilled.

Aakarsh Bajpai

Even before Bada Mangal would begin, tents would mushroom all over the city and on the first Tuesday of Jyestha month, as per the Hindu calendar, the fest would begin spanning over several weeks.

Smells of mouth watering puri, chola, pulao, kaddu-aloo sabzi, matar-paneer would waft throughout the lanes and bylanes mixed with the intense smell of burning incense put before a picture of Lord Hanuman at every stall accompanied with bhajans blaring on loudspeakers. The Tuesdays of 'Jyestha' month would be special as no one would go hungry due to the myriad of stalls set up on the occasion that would distribute delicacies of all kinds including cool aam paanas, cold drinks and even ice creams!

Alas this year, it was not so. The lockdowns due to Covid 19 pandemic saw the streets bereft of people leave alone the grand celebrations as Lucknow falls under the red zone. The temples and mosques are shut and section-144 has been imposed till May 31.

In past years, the one-month-long festival boosted life into the city. Long queues in front of the famous Hanuman Setu and New Hanuman temple in Aliganj was a common scene.

Even the 300-year-old tradition of organising carnival at Aliganj Hanuman temple was broken this year. On the first Tuesday, several cars whizzed past the Hanuman Setu where people could be seen trying to get a glimpse of the deity but in vain as the curtains were drawn.

In keeping with the true spirit of giving, several people helped the NGOs and even government bodies provide food to the poor and needy. "After all, Bada Mangal is about sharing

Festivity IN Lockdown

with others and in this time it is all the more essential to do our bit," said Ashwini Kumar, an NGO owner who has been instrumental in providing food to the needy since the lockdowns began.

With the government extending the lockdown till May 31, Corona has definitely dampened the festivities but not the spirit as a devout quipped, "If god wills then next year we will celebrate in a big way with this pandemic behind us".

File photographs 2019



LIFE LIMPING BACK TO **NORMALCY**



LOCKDOWN
4.0



Lensman: Trilochan S Kalra





With restrictions easing in Lockdown 4.0, life is gradually resuming a semblance of normalcy. Traffic can now be seen on roads, which otherwise wore a deserted look since the last two months. Construction sites, shops are also opening much to the relief of people.

With easing of restrictions barring hot-spots, which continue to be under strict lockdown, rest of the areas can see vehicles plying on roads. All government offices, banks, petrol pumps and shops are opening in phases although with limited staff under new health protocols enforced at all the places. Several saloons were also seen open while restaurants and some hotels started home delivery.

Meanwhile, Lucknowites are eager to get a taste of the street food, which still seems a distant dream as government has allowed only licensed shops to open. With this lockdown slated to get over by May 31, many households are eagerly waiting to get their house helps back. Maids, gardeners, washermen/women- all of whom were rendered jobless—will gradually resume their chores and start earning much to the relief of their employers. However, will life completely go back to normalcy only time will tell?



Staying connected through the SOCIAL MEDIA

Sanjana Saxena

On March 25, around 1.37 billion people went into nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of lethal Corona Virus, which has taken thousands of lives all around the globe. Social distancing became the new buzzword characterized by 'no hugging or touching'.

The country already had 70% active social media users before entering the lockdown phase and now even the elderly have joined the bandwagon. Senior citizens are actively making video calls taking the center stage by effectively using applications like Zoom, Houseparty, Hangout Meet etc. On average, we are now spending almost five hours on social media daily as compared to 2.4 hours in 2019.

As a result right from checking up on our friends whom we cannot meet, catching up on trends, latest news and any sort of connection with the outer world is now maintained through social media platforms. With 346.2 million Facebook users and 80,590,000 Instagram users, our country was almost topping the charts with maximum users. Other platforms like Twitter, Snapchat, Telegram etc. are also popular among youth. Now, that the virus has influenced our social lives, it is social media and virtual world that is helping us meet our need to stay connected.

With shopping, work-meetings, education (online lectures), communication and entertainment- all being taken care of by the online platforms, our social life is ceasing to exist and becoming a slave of technology. Getting out of this lockdown life and state of mind looks challenging because it has successfully influenced our social habits- now fuelled by the fear of virus transmission, that would make us think umpteen times before greeting people even after the lockdown is lifted.

For the moment, the flat screens of our mobiles, i-pads, television seems to be the only source of infotainment and connection with the outer world. The virus is here to stay, as the WHO has repeatedly pointed out. Till the pandemic ends or a cure is found, our social lives characterized by warm hugs, shared meals and outings with family and friends, is a distant dream.

MAKING THE BEST OUT OF CORONACATION

Triyanshi Parihar

Happy or not, our life is going to be like a halt on a railway station for an uncertain while. Our houses may suffocate us like cages but let's not forget the privilege of having a roof over our head. The four walls of our room are going to captivate us like prisoners, but we need to spend this time learning like our nation's father Gandhi Ji did during his imprisonment. Our frequent runs to the refrigerator just out of boredom must look like our only exercise of the day; we can utilize this time to inculcate discipline in our lives through practicing meditation, a workout regime or an indoor sport in coronacation. Coronacation is a popularly used term these days for the unwanted change from our daily life due to lock down in the wake of COVID-19.

The sluggish and dull feeling that "we are very quick to tag as "depression" in this quarantine is actually feeling anxious, which is very normal during such unusual times." says Dr. Pragyan Dangwal (Sr. Faculty and psychologist, Amity Institute of Behavioral and Allied Sciences). "Many people are likely to feel so because there is a massive uncertainty about the future in our minds right now. To get out of this rut, people are advised to distract their minds by indulging in family time, hobbies and maintaining a gratitude journal"

"To overcome the haze of where to start, I personally prefer to countdown from 5 & then forcing myself to get up and get going with my work or chores. It's a really good hack that works every time by tricking your brain to start afresh" says Ridhi (a graduation student). "I came across this trick on a Life Coach's video on YouTube. These days, we should draw inspiration from wherever we can. It's all about seeing the light at the end of the tunnel."

Amidst all what is going around in the world due to Corona Virus, it is highly important to remain sane. To remain stable, we must focus on what brings us joy, keeps us occupied and feels rewarding at the same time. Few such activities are: Cooking, redecorating your living space, working on an art piece, reading/ studying, exercising or completing tasks that you were putting off during the hustle of life. Let's not sulk this time away because "maybe coronacation is a sign of Mother Nature for humans to pause, repent, reflect and restart the grind" says Dr. Neerja Pandey (Sr. Faculty and psychologist, Amity Institute of Behavioral and Allied Sciences).



DIVE INTO THE FASCINATING WORLD OF BOOKS

Kanika Singh

Have you ever read a book? Have you ever thought why is it said that books are the best friends? All of us have read books either to climb the academic ladder or to set foot into a new world like the one created by JK Rowling in the Harry Potter series or Dan Brown's fascinating glimpse into the religious history. From learning alphabets to reading paperbacks, we owe immensely to books for enriching our lives.

There is no denying the fact that virtual media has got its stronghold on youngsters who feel reading a book is a mind tiring exercise while logging on to the internet is an easy and better option to stay informed. Divyanshi, a student who is aspiring to crack competitive examination, quips, "At times it becomes very difficult to cope with the stress, however, thanks to all my favourite novels I am able to regain my mental peace. Delving into the fantasy world of these books provides a perfect getaway from the reality and allows me time to regroup."

She usually prefer reading fictions as, "they are great stress busters. They help me feel really good. I start imagining myself as one of the characters of that book". Similarly for Jaya, a medical student fiction (books) gives wings to her imagination.

Other than the bibliophiles, there are budding readers who find it difficult to make books a part of their daily routine.

At times it becomes very difficult to cope with the stress, however, thanks to all my favourite novels I am able to regain my mental peace. Delving into the fantasy world of these books provides a perfect getaway from the reality and allows me time to regroup.

Divyanshi | STUDENT

The way to begin is always from the scratch. Loving and reading books is not an inborn gift; one has to sow the seeds and nurture them over time to enjoy fruits of persistence. Non-readers presumably see reading books as a redundant habit but all it takes is a little obstinacy and turning a few pages in the initial days. Once the love for reading is kindled then there is no going back. One may start with fiction as it involves characters which shuttles the reader into a world of artistry and imagination and gradually shift to the non-fiction books that informs, persuades, entertains, explains and warns you. Once a per-

son has read a small pile of books, reading will become ingrained and devoting a few hours to books will become a part and parcel of routine.

So what are you waiting for, go ahead and dive into the world of books and let your imagination run loose.

Loving and reading books is not an inborn gift; one has to sow the seeds and nurture them over time to enjoy fruits of persistence.



COMMON MAN'S ACTOR, IRRFAN GONE TOO SOON

Nitin Kumar

A man who could not afford to watch 'Jurassic' when it was released in the 1990's was cast in the latest series of the same magnum opus 'Jurassic World' in 2015. Now, this is a testimony of the man who literally carved a niche all on his own both in the national and international film circuit.

Irrfan Khan, who became to be identified with the 'common man' due to his nuanced performances right from 'Namesake' to 'The Lunchbox' and even his last film 'Angrezi Medium', left his family and



fans in shock as he passed away on April 29, 2020 after a prolonged battle with cancer.

Born as 'Sahabzade' in the western desert state of Rajasthan, Irrfan had a multifaceted personality. He challenged the formulaic rules of 'star system' in Hindi cinema and stood apart from others by doing roles that the common man could identify with.

Irrfan started his career from a minor role in 'Salaam Bombay (1988)' and later appeared in mov-

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ies of renowned filmmakers across the globe. Graduated from NSD, he worked as an AC repairman and later in numerous TV serials for a decade. As he confessed during an interview with a TV channel once that at one point he lost all hope to be an actor. However, the 2001 release 'The Warrior' proved to be a turning point in his international film career, as Irrfan got the tag of a seasoned actor in world cinema and the movie went on to win the 'Best British Film' at BAFTA.

His film graph only went up from there as he made a mark in the 2002 'Haasil' proved to be a turning point in Bollywood as his performance in the negative character stole the limelight from all the stalwarts in the movie. Khan never looked back. While talking about his most challenging roles, Irrfan said 'In Treatment' series and 'Paan Singh Tomar' brought out the best in him. For 'Paan Singh' he won the National Award for Best Actor. He called himself a 'crafted actor' not 'god-gifted', who achieved perfection by working vigorously. Portraying dynamic roles with ease and his spontaneous realistic act defined his acting trajectory.

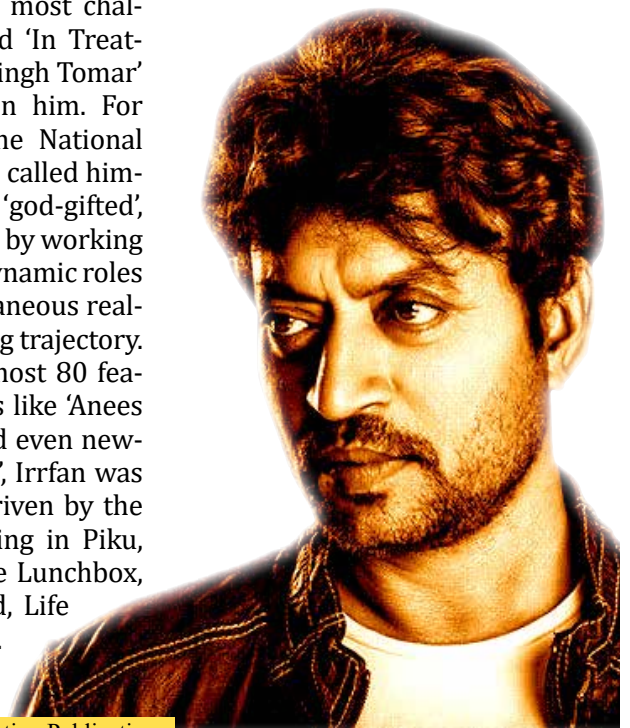
Having worked in almost 80 feature films with directors like 'Anees Bazmee' to 'Ang Lee' and even newcomer like 'Ritesh Batra', Irrfan was a risk-taker who was driven by the script. His nuanced acting in Piku, Talvar, Haasil, Qissa, The Lunchbox, Maqbool, Jurassic World, Life of Pi show his versatility.

The last few years,

saw Khan's health deteriorating, however, undeterred he came back to India after recovering from treatment in England. His last film 'Angrezi Medium' is a testimony to his zest for life as unable to join the other cast for the movie's promotion; he made an audio clip talking about the experience of coping with life's difficult trajectories.

Khan said his two children as his harshest critics and his beloved wife Sutapa Sikdar as the reason to live life. Khan was a man of mood who changed from 'Irfan to Irrfan' because he liked the sound of the extra "r" in his name, astonished all just as he did with his sudden demise.

Irrfan was a true star, a generous man and a 'warrior' who will be sorely missed.



DREAMS have no expiry date: Latika Chakravorty

Rahul Mohanto

This is not a modern fairy tale but a story of 89-year-old woman who never allowed age to hinder her golden dreams of becoming an entrepreneur. Meet Latika Chakravorty, who has started an online business venture to sell handmade potli bags (bale bags) decorated beautifully. Her work is not just appreciated in India but also abroad as she is getting orders from Germany, New Zealand and Oman!

Born in Dhubri, Assam, Latika was married to Krishna Lal Chakravorty, who was in a transferable job due to which the couple got a lot of opportunity to travel in the country.

Being fond of sarees, Latika over the years built an amazing collection. However, with time as the sarees became old, instead of throwing them away she started making decoration pieces and potli bags. Seeing her fondness for sewing, her husband had gifted her sewing machine and even today Latika proudly uses her gift to churn out unique creations. From sewing clothes with intricate designs to making dolls and finally her unique potli bags, the lady drew admiration from family and friends who started requesting her to also make something for them.

Thus began Latika's journey. During a candid conversation, Latika recalls the hard days of partition when



she used to sew clothes for her kids. Later when her three children grew up, she started making dolls. Around 4-5 years ago, her daughter-in-law asked her to knit a potli bag to match with her suit and it was then that the octogenarian realized her natural talent for making fancy bags and this is how her new journey towards entrepreneurship started.

Ever since then, Latika has been churning out potli bags by the dozen and started gifting them for birthdays and other special occasions garnering lots of love and praise. And later her grandson Joy felt she should have an online presence. He created a website and later her other two grandchildren Priyanka and Srijit joined hands to start spreading the word via Twitter, FB, and Instagram.

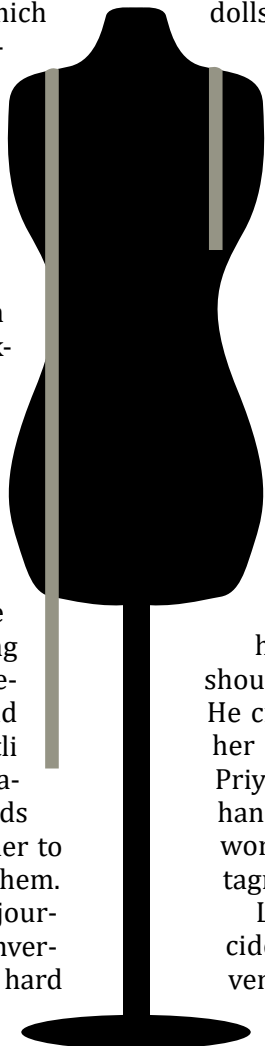
Latika's whole family decided to support her in this venture. Her daughter-in-law Sumita helped her create

Success comes from loving what you do, otherwise, you would be just carrying the dead weight of the burden of a job.

bags while her son handles the orders and business on her website.

While remembering her husband who passed away 38 years ago, Latika says, "Every time I look at my sewing machine, I feel that my husband is around me. His gift spurred me to pursue my dreams." When asked how she felt about her success, Latika smiles and says, "Success comes from loving what you do, otherwise, you would be just carrying the dead weight of the burden of a job."

As I hug Latika, she smiles and I beam proudly at my 'Super Granny.' She has taught us an important thing: 'Dreams have no expiry date'. She proves that white hair often covers the head, but the heart that holds it is ever young.



'Social distancing, timely treatment ONLY WAY TO BEAT THE VIRUS'

Living with the Covid 19 pandemic is the new norm. Even as the virus continues wreaking havoc across the globe, governments are gradually easing restrictions. Naturally, the question that is gripping everyone's mind is how to survive this pandemic? There is no one better than Covid survivors who can give insights on how to beat the virus successfully. **Yashita Arora** speaks to one such survivor during a telephonic interview. Excerpts:

☑ **When did you learn about being infected with Corona virus?**

I was pursuing masters in economics in London. In March when the pandemic had affected Britain, I decided to return to my family in Mumbai. On March 17, I landed in Mumbai and was checked at the airport where the authorities let me go after a thermal scanning check. However, as per the protocol, I quarantined myself in a guest house arranged by my parents. I was feeling fine but on day 2, I started feeling fatigue and nauseous accompanied by body pain and finally fever. On day 4 (March 21), I collapsed at 2 am. When I regained consciousness, I called my family who consulted a physician that suggested me to get tested for Corona virus. I had no respiratory issues or cough, so it was a bolt from the blue when my report came positive.

☑ **How did you cope up with the news and what about your family?**

I was shocked. I had got the news when I was already under

treatment in a Covid-designated hospital. Later, the BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation) officials questioned me about my travel history and people whom I had got in touch with. My family members were also tested but thankfully their reports were negative.

☑ **What was your experience in the hospital and how did you handle the stress?**

I was hospitalized for 19 days. For the first few days I was anxious and kept on reassuring myself that being young I would survive. I remember feeling dizzy due to which I couldn't walk but the nurses would help me. Later my symptoms subsided and I was moved to a different ward. Emotions ran high among Covid patients as many would cry and hope to recover soon. I must thank the doctors, nurses and the staff who were constantly on their toes taking care of us all. The food was good and we were always given warm water. Visi-

tors were not allowed but we had access to our phones, so I kept in touch with my family and even struck up friendship with other

Emotions ran high among Covid patients as many would cry and hope to recover soon. I must thank the doctors, nurses and the staff who were constantly on their toes taking care of us all

patients. It's important not to get depressed instead be optimistic that's what helped me. Finally, I was discharged after being tested negative.

☑ **What is your advice to people?**

Until a cure is found, Corona is here to stay. Maintain social distancing and don't panic if you feel the symptoms. Immediately report to the concerned officials as timely treatment is the only way out.

**Interview with
COVID SURVIVOR**