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Vol. VII Issue 9

September, 2019

## STOP MENTAL HEALTH FROM BECOMING AN EPIDEMIC



Sketch: Arvind Passey

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## Mass media and mental health

**M**ewspapers, television, internet, and even the radio not only influence views about issues but a report published on researchgate.net shows that “negative media reports contribute to negative attitudes toward people with mental illnesses, and that corrective information may be effective in mitigating the effect of these negative reports”. Placement of a story, the tilt used to create a headline, the choice of page or time-slot, and the way the journalist allows his or her bias to seep in goes on to influence the mental state of readers, viewers, or audiences. The truth is that even blogs and YouTube videos have an almost similar influence. People allow these stories to go beyond the words that surround them and become truths that have the potential to destroy sane thoughts. One differing opinion is that the real villain isn't the stories and the way they are projected but the happenings themselves.

Let us pause and just look at the kind of happenings that a reader of a newspaper is exposed to in a single day. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2019, I was astounded to read about the way an American newspaper talked about the killing of Abu Bakr-Baghdadi and twisted the headline to soften his role as an ISIS terrorist. One jumped straight from this form of terrorism to another deadly enemy that we know as pollution and the difficulties in the way of becoming really green. In between truckers getting killed in road accidents and adverts that confirm the presence of corruption in the Indian social matrix, a reader has hardly any choice but to get repeatedly struck by illegal actions and unlawful behavior. On the date mentioned, a business got duped by three men posing as cops, students created a ruckus in JNU campus, a hospital sweeper killed a 15-year old boy with a surgical knife, a domestic help jumped from the third floor and died, a blast happened in Sopore, Imran Khan called for jihad against India, three people die in floods triggered by heavy rains in Nagaland, Maoist violence continues, airline employees fail in alcohol test, over 40 skulls found at altar in Mexico... and an iconic bridge near JLN stadium is ‘slowly getting stolen’. An entire bridge! How can a mind cope with this barrage of information that is bent upon hurting its sensibilities in multiple ways?

I firmly believe that newspapers and other media communicating platforms must go deeper into this issue of the way news can affect the mental health of a nation. After all, we are living in times when news is what we are all being exposed to... if it isn't the mainstream media then we have access to umpteen apps where news and views get their space. It isn't just media organisations who need to do some brain-storming but even all related government agencies and all those connected to the online flow of news-n-views, including app promoters and developers, who need to come together and find out what actually qualifies as news. Do we need to tweak headlines and inject a positive note to even news of killings? I am no expert but I guess it is the psychologists who will know better. All that I know and am convinced about is that the way news is being communicated today is definitely adding to the numbers affected by mental inconsistencies.

We need to remember that the mental health of a nation needs to be taken care of if prosperity is what the decision-makers want. If news and views are creating darkness within us, we need to do something about it as not everyone can deal with the onslaught of negativity as effectively as a few others may do. Wishing the country a happy mind!

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FEBRUARY 2020

## Engineering Ranking 2020

Last Date of Survey Submission: January 15, 2020

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**SAT SUKRIT MEDIA PVT. LTD.**  
Registered Office  
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119-A, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Somdutt Chambers-1,  
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Phone: 011-45604578

**Advertisement / Circulation / Subscription Enquiries**  
119-A, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Somdutt Chambers-1, Bhikaji Cama Place,  
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Printed and Published by Shiv Shankar Sharma  
on behalf of SAT SUKRIT MEDIA PVT. LTD.  
Printed at All Time Offset Printers, F-406, Sector-63,  
Noida-201301 and published from Flat No. 103, UGF,  
Plot No. G-84, Sector-7, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077

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## ISRF 2020

### Key Highlights

- Top 100 Schools in India (Private)
- Top 25 Schools in Zones (Private)
- Top 50 Boarding Schools in India (Private)

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- Last date of survey submission  
**December 30, 2019**
- Issue date of ISRF  
**January 30, 2020**

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# CRITICALITY OF EDUCATION

Dr. B B Das



**Dr. B B Das**

Technology & Management Consultant

**This national concern calls for widespread participation and in depth deliberation to revamp the entire education system which can evolve changes encompassing all three levels, i.e., primary, secondary and higher.**

# T

he deeper analysis of our education system for bringing in desired changes invariably draws our attention towards the higher education system. It may not be possible to bring in the expected changes in our higher education, without considering improvements in primary and secondary education. Moreover these three levels of education are interlinked. The Primary and secondary education builds the foundation for students to pursue higher education. Thereafter, higher education opens multiple opportunities for a student to choose suitable options which can fulfil life aspirations. When the gateway is open for wide ranging prospects, why restrict career options for a job only?

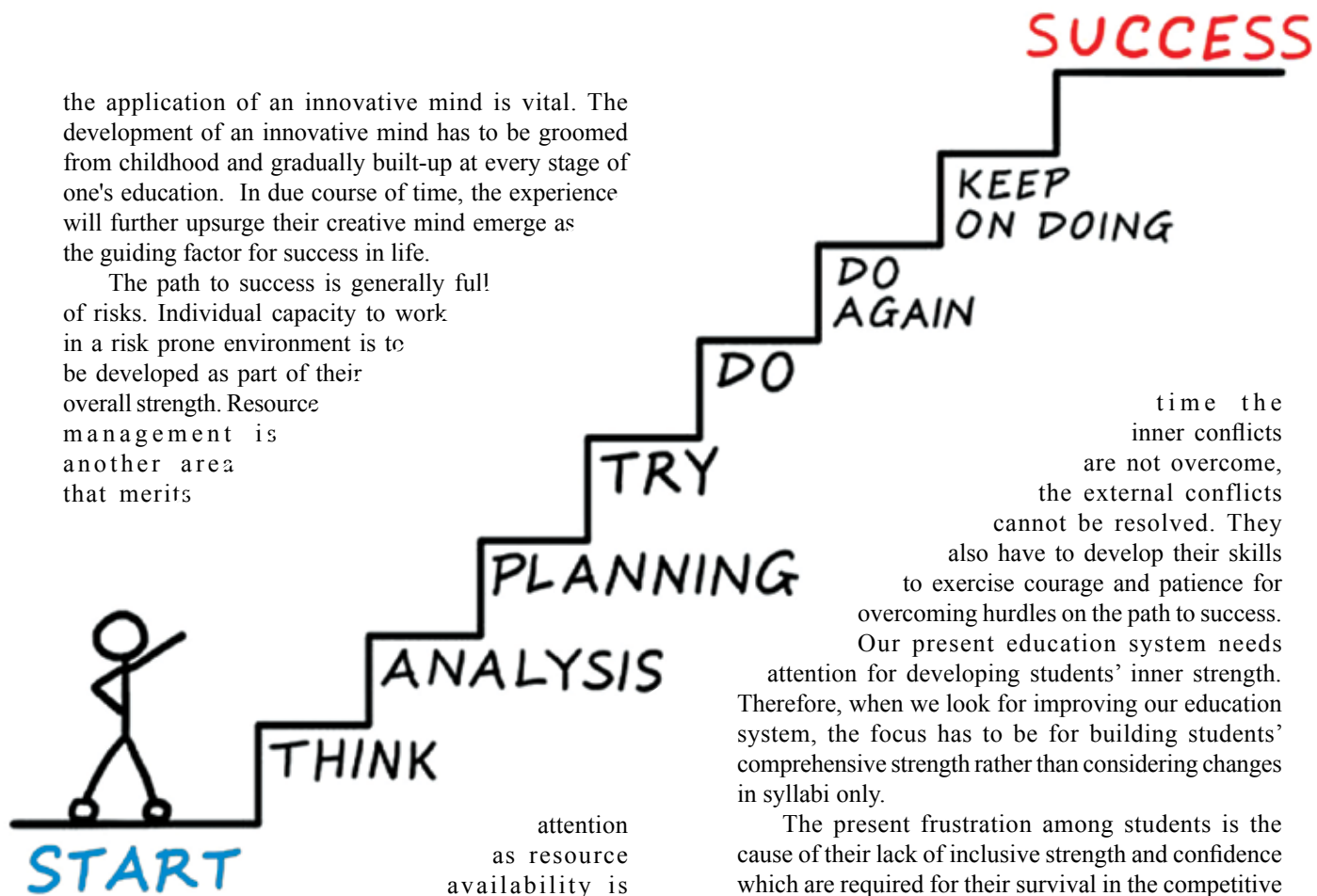
Human aspirations in the absence of values may not be of much help for better career-building. Values get embedded during all three phases of education. These values are Sanskar-based, infused by parents, teachers and the society. The basic purpose of the education system is to develop values, character, and overall personality of students, which can empower them to emerge as responsible citizen. Knowledge acquisition is possible at any stage of life, but rejuvenation of values and character demands determined persuasion. Without values and good character, simply knowledge only may not lead to success in life.

The world today is propelled by the dynamism of science and technology. The rapid advancements in these fields have resulted in faster redundancy. What is recent today will be replaced by new and more advanced concepts and technology tomorrow. This dynamic environment demands more flexibility in our approach for acquiring new knowledge as a continuous process of learning. At the same time, educational institutions have to provide advanced infrastructural facilities and highly experienced faculty members to accelerate the process of learning.

The recent trend in obtaining high marks and higher grading in examinations may not fulfil success in life unless students are able to handle impending problems and challenges effectively. For problem solving,

the application of an innovative mind is vital. The development of an innovative mind has to be groomed from childhood and gradually built-up at every stage of one's education. In due course of time, the experience will further upsurge their creative mind emerge as the guiding factor for success in life.

The path to success is generally full of risks. Individual capacity to work in a risk prone environment is to be developed as part of their overall strength. Resource management is another area that merits



attention as resource availability is the main constraint in achieving objectives.

Life is full of activities, interlinked and interdependent.

These activities are to be completed successfully for achieving one's goal. Many critical paths have to be crossed on the way to reach the end result. Success in life mostly depends on planning ability and decision-making capability.

Individual limitations can be overcome by working together with people for accomplishment of tasks. Therefore, an understanding of people's behaviour, their capability and utilisation of their capacity through the art of motivation and effective communication are essential for successful career building.

These qualities are to be honed from the beginning so that by the time a student passes higher education phase, he or she is prepared to continue in the career path with confidence and determination.

Are we preparing our students to manage challenges and resolve problems with decision-making capability? Are they competent for handling risks in life? They attain communication skills and to read, write and speak without much emphasis on developing listening ability. Do they know how to communicate to resolve conflicts? Till such

time the inner conflicts are not overcome, the external conflicts cannot be resolved. They also have to develop their skills to exercise courage and patience for overcoming hurdles on the path to success.

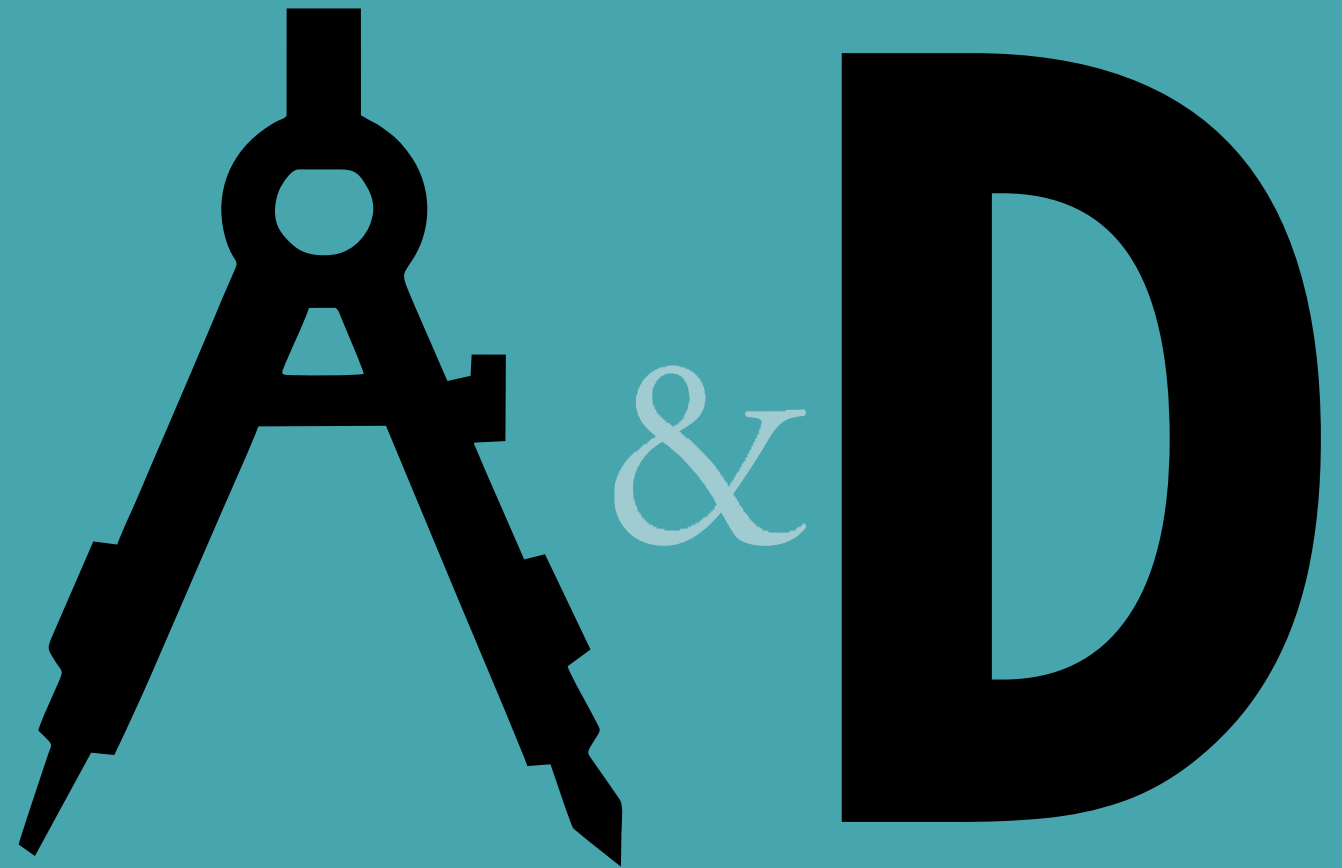
Our present education system needs attention for developing students' inner strength. Therefore, when we look for improving our education system, the focus has to be for building students' comprehensive strength rather than considering changes in syllabi only.

The present frustration among students is the cause of their lack of inclusive strength and confidence which are required for their survival in the competitive world. They are unable to perceive a panoramic view of opportunities that are available, but look for a pre-determined options without evaluating other choices.

They lack exposure to visualize available prospects in their own country and therefore look for greener pastures elsewhere. Once they land in other countries, they prefer to remain there permanently. Has our education system failed to inspire their love for the motherland, and dedication for bringing in the desired transformation?

"Janani Janmabhoomischa Swargadpi Gariyasi." No country can be more attractive than the motherland. Have we gone wrong in cultivating this patriotic feeling in the minds of our students? Have we failed in providing befitting opportunities for them to prosper in their own country?

This national concern calls for widespread participation and in-depth deliberations to revamp the entire education system which can evolve changes encompassing all three levels, i.e., primary, secondary and higher. Emphasis should be on building a strong nation where people have self-confidence to handle personal and national problems in a cohesive and determined manner. ■



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# IS IT AN OVER-KILL ON SKILLS?



Prof. MJ Xavier  
Former Director – IIM Ranchi  
& Member - FWA

**T**

here are two recent news items that are of great interest to educationists. The first one is about a Skills University that the Delhi Government is planning to set-up to offer job-oriented courses in various disciplines. The university is expected to have a capacity of 50,000 students and collaborations with other countries, industry associations and companies. There will also be a faculty internship to bridge the academia- industry skills gap. This article discusses the compulsory internship for faculty of Loyola Institute of Business Administration, Chennai and 'Project Abhigat', of the University of Petroleum and Energy Studies (UPES) in Dehradun. Does this point to a new paradigm in education or is it a fad?

## Knowledge and Skill Gaps in Education

Some thinkers also talk about building wonderment in children about nature and the universe so that they also learn to be humble and appreciate/worship the creator. If we had approached education in such a holistic fashion we would not have landed in the present day crisis.

*The other reason why Knowledge is losing its sheen is that it is theoretical whereas skills are practical.*

*For example, you can know all the rules of cricket, know all the statistics, but this only makes you knowledgeable about this sport; it does not make you any good at it. Unless you have the skills, you cannot play cricket. To gain skills one needs to practice.*

Unfortunately the Universities of today are reduced to simply imparting knowledge. The problem is that knowledge without inquisitiveness or imagination is dead. Knowledge renewal and regeneration is a lifelong process that cannot be left entirely to Universities. Our methods of assessment have completely destroyed the initiative and interest in our students. The net result is that they are neither fit for a job nor for life. This has led to several gaps, such the knowledge – skill gap and education to employability gap.

Our education system has to undergo a lot of reforms if we have to address these gaps. One problem lies with the way our Universities are run. These are typically faculty governed Institutions that try to perpetuate their personal interests more than that of the students. The reason why Universities remained insulated was to give them the independence to

critically question anything without fear or prejudice and come up with new knowledge. This worked with subjects like philosophy, sociology and even psychology. Universities came up with fundamental discoveries in basic sciences and abstract subjects.

However with applied sciences like engineering, medicine and management, the model has not performed as well. The seclusion has proved very costly for Universities. Industry is advancing faster than the Universities, resulting in a knowledge gap. There is a big disconnect between academic research and innovations by the industries. One can also say that while industries are operating on 4G models, academia is stuck with 2G curriculum. Hence we need a reverse knowledge flow, if we are to bridge this knowledge gap. That can happen only if the University boundaries become porous.



## Delhi to get its first skill varsity: Kejriwal

**CREATING JOBS: Plan Gets Cabinet Approval**

<p><b>DELHI SKILL AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP UNIVERSITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Gets cabinet approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; If approved by LG, Bill to be placed during the winter session of assembly</li> </ul>		<p><b>ADMINISTRATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Delhi Institute of Tool Engineering at Okhla to be the headquarters</li> <li>&gt; Existing ITIs and World Skill Centre to be merged with the university</li> <li>&gt; 50,000 students to be enrolled</li> <li>&gt; Students can enrol after classes X, XII, graduation</li> <li>&gt; To offer courses up to MPhil/PhD</li> <li>&gt; Collaboration with foreign university</li> <li>&gt; Industry partnerships to be an important aspect</li> <li>&gt; Courses, design and fee to be decided by the expert committee</li> </ul>
<p><b>OBJECTIVES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; To provide employment to youths</li> <li>&gt; Enhance skills as per market need</li> <li>&gt; Focus on skill development from school-level</li> </ul>			



## The Concept of a Skills University

The moot question is whether we should transform our existing universities or build new universities to face this challenge. Several efforts are underway to reform the existing universities. They have started adding industry representatives in their Boards that make syllabus revisions. Those with long years of Industry experience are appointed to teach in the Universities. They are called Professors of Practice. Institutions are now encouraging Industry internship for their faculty with a view to upgrade the practical knowledge of their teachers. Most Universities have added soft skills courses to their curriculum. Job oriented certificate courses are introduced in many colleges for an extra fee. However, the basic character of these Institutions remain the same.

It is easy to build new ones rather than tinkering with existing Universities. In this context, the initiative by the Delhi Government to set up a Skills University should be



appreciated. Since they have no baggage they can straight away engage in collaborative research with Industry and co-teach courses along with practitioners. They could straight away recognize degrees and certificates from non-formal education systems (open schools and open universities). They also help us remove the stigma of ITI and polytechnics which offer certificates and diplomas. In this new University, Certificate and Diploma holders can continue their higher studies on their chosen vocational mode and get a degree or even work for a PhD.

The National Skill Qualification Framework has established standards for transfer of credit from non-formal education to vocational and formal education.

**There is a big disconnect between academic research and Innovations by the industries. While industries are operating on 4G models, academia is stuck with 2G curriculum.**

The Government of India did formulate a National Skill Qualification Framework way back in 2013, though it has not found widespread application. This was done to promote lifelong learning and skill development.

It envisages multiple entry and exit between vocational education, skill training, general education, technical education and job markets.

One of the key needs for NSQF as given in the report is “the credit accumulation and transfer system that will be integrated in the NSQF will allow people to move between education, vocational training and work at different stages in their lives according to their

needs and convenience. It will be possible for a student to leave education domain, get some practical experience in industry and return to studies to gain qualifications to progress higher in his chosen Career”.

One should be able to get on to the education mode whenever it is needed and go back to work after acquiring additional competencies. Education can be delivered on-line, off-line or in the blended mode. Education will get customized to individual needs and will offer a life-long learning opportunity. This will be a great boon for school drop-outs and those who are not endowed with deep-pockets or a deep intellect.

## Why skill-based Education?

The three major things that education is supposed to impart are knowledge, skills and values. Knowledge was given the highest importance in the past as the teachers in the Universities were the repositories of knowledge. It gave them a competitive advantage. With the commoditization of knowledge, skills are gaining importance. In today’s context one can Google and get answers to any questions. There are YouTube videos on every subject that one could conceive of. We do not have to rely on experts in Universities to gain new knowledge.

The other reason why knowledge is losing its sheen is that it is theoretical whereas skills are practical. For example, you can know all the rules of cricket, know all the statistics, but this only makes you knowledgeable about this sport; it does not make you any good at it. Unless you have the skills, you cannot play cricket.

To gain skills one needs to practice. Unfortunately, we produce automobile engineers who cannot fix cars. We have B Com graduates who cannot write a cheque. The disconnect between knowledge and skills is pronounced in engineering and management fields. Medical education is different. You cannot set up a medical college that does not have a hospital attached to it. The Professors are all practicing doctors.

Moreover the premium is on skills because the recruiters expect the graduates to perform from day one. Many leading organizations have stopped looking at degrees. Instead they look at the skills that one brings to the table. Proliferation of universities of varying quality of standards has made it difficult for educators to find the right kind of graduates. The rapid technological advances require that corporations recruit employees with right competencies and skills.

There was a time we had the dichotomy of thinkers vs doers. Doers were considered inferior and the thinkers got a larger share of the pie. These days the doers are getting their due recognition. We cannot be a country of

only thinkers. We have produced too many engineers and computer scientists. That is probably another reason for unemployment of engineers in India. We have not given them skills to do anything on their own. Otherwise they would have all become entrepreneurs. Countries like Germany and Israel give more importance to vocational education that help them produce outstanding technocrats and entrepreneurs.

Apart from technical skills, we need to impart soft skills such as Critical-thinking, Creativity, Team work, Collaboration, Problem-solving, Communication, Leadership, Initiative and Social skills. To succeed in today’s world everyone will also need computer literacy, media literacy and techno-literacy. Skills are the most valued asset that every individual must possess.



## Conclusion

In conclusion, our society has changed a lot. Though knowledge and skill are the two sides of the same coin, it is advantage for skills now. It is a good move by the Delhi Government to think of a Skills University. We hope more skill universities spring up in India. At the same time, we cannot ignore the importance of values. Currently we are experiencing an ethics deficit in the country. We should start value education right from school days. Students should also be given lessons on environmental sensitivity and social concern. Though we may give a greater focus on skills, we should impart holistic education that makes them thirsty for knowledge, learn the right skills and imbibe good values that make them good citizens. ■



Arvind Passey

# STOP MENTAL HEALTH FROM BECOMING AN EPIDEMIC

## A SHORT CONVERSATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

**T**he biggest and the most formidable asset for any country is neither its geography nor its history. No, it isn't GDP as well. The history, geography, economics, politics, and everything else that matters remains at best a sub-set of people who reside in a country. It is people who build and maintain this corpus of power. Quite obviously, their mental health is what can undo every good work that everyone from politicians to bureaucrats and from professionals to its skilled workforce painstakingly construct. The unskilled and those who stay at home and do what must be done are equally vital when any discussion on mental health is approached. In short, the attack of mental oscillations includes everyone with no barriers to age, gender, beliefs and economic status.

William Styron, author of 'Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness' writes that 'the pain of severe depression is quite unimaginable to those who have not suffered it, and it kills in many instances because its anguish can no longer be borne. The prevention of many suicides will continue to be hindered until there is a general awareness of the nature of this pain.' What is playing with the mind are undefined chunks of 'emotional abuse, the insults, insinuations, criticism, and accusations slowly eat away at the victim's self-esteem until he or she is incapable of judging a situation realistically', to quote Beverly Engel, and the final outcome is that the victim generally begin to blame themselves for what the world perceives as abuse.



Sumedha Jaggi

Since graduating with a Masters in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from University College London (UCL), Sumedha has been working with Mercer Mettl in the field of Psychometrics and Behavioral Assessments. She designs, develops and delivers behavioral competency-based assessment solutions for corporate hiring and L&D. Outside of work, Sumedha remains closely involved with non-profits geared towards education and mental health, and in her free time, she enjoys experimenting with different fitness routines.

## Mental Health and Well Being at Work

In every organisation, there exist implicit 'display rules' regarding what is considered appropriate behavioural conduct. These rules are generally reinforced through socialization, becoming a part of the professional ethos over time. However, over the course of a work day, employees feel many different emotions, some of which may conflict with display rules. Take, for instance, working with a demanding or an angry client, or getting into an argument with a co-worker. Such situations force us to engage in 'emotional labour,' a phenomenon that entails faking emotions that are not felt, or suppressing those which are.

Literature shows that employees who engage in emotional labour are likely to experience burnout. 'Burnout' is an occupational phenomenon that is defined as, "a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed" (ICD-11). It is characterized by three dimensions- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion, increased mental distance from one's job, and reduced professional efficacy.

The growing knowledge on burnout and its impact on mental health and well being enables organizations to identify and reduce workplace stressors. To begin with, organisations should set clear role-based expectations and ensure easy access to resources required to meet those expectations. Organizations should also encourage social support within teams in a bid to create a healthy work atmosphere. Lastly, managers should be aware of the signs and symptoms of burnout and immediately ensure interventions are sought (e.g. personal counselling and training) for those who may need them.

## Statistics say it all

Studies point out that serious mental disorder doesn't differentiate much between the urban and rural divide and isn't ever bothered about age, gender or economic differences. One WHO study reports 'at least 6.5 percent of the Indian population' being more than threatened. The appalling part of this study is that it reported an extreme shortage of mental health workers and the ratio was as low as 'one in 100,000 people' in 2014. As a result of this, we in India we have a high suicide rate that is 10.9 for every 100,000 and a majority of these are reported from the less than 44 years of age group.

A report published in IndianPsychiatry.org mentions nearly 50 million Indian children suffering from mental disorders and this is just one part of the entire statistical data. The same report states that major illnesses affecting both kids and adults, include depressive disorders, agoraphobia, disabilities affecting intellectual status, autism spectrum disorders, psychotic disorders, anxiety disorders, depression, schizophrenia, substance abuse, and seizure disorders.

An article published in Economic Times mentions that '42.5% of the employees in the private sector of corporate India suffer from depression or some form anxiety disorder. That's almost every second person. Studies indicate that

## Its ok to not be okay

According to WHO, about 450 million people worldwide suffering from mental or behavioral disorder. Shocking as it may sound but 1 person commits suicide every 40 seconds. These numbers are scary but the talk about mental health is still a taboo among the masses.

There is now a more than ever need to incorporate mental fitness in our daily routine. While Yoga and meditation are being promoted and can be helpful, one must understand that only when one opens up and talks about these issues with their friends, family or goes ahead to seek medical advice will alternatives like yoga serve as a viable catalyst.

Understand this. Its ok to not be okay. Talk it out. It helps.



**Dr. Aakanksha Mehrotra**

Aakanksha is a public health professional who loves to learn new things via reading & travel. Strongly believes that meeting new people provides the best education.



**Shivani Kherra Khanna**

Shivani Kherra Khanna is a founding member and the Chief Marketing Officer at MeeHappy Wellness. MeeHappy offers employee wellness programs that focus on holistic wellness with a special emphasis on mental health.

## Women and mental health

Today's educated, urban woman wants it all! The number of opportunities created by economic liberalization and coupled with the desire to contribute equally towards the financial security of her family is making the woman of today go all out. She is establishing herself at the work front and is, at the same time managing the disproportionately large share of the responsibility of the house and kids. While women are breaking grounds by handling both fronts pretty well, the truth is that domestic and office work does take a toll on them – not just physically, but more so mentally.

Add to these issues specific to women like gender inequality, bullying, undue expectations from family, inability to question some set patriarchal norms, no discourse to help and so on, women are twice as likely as men to develop common mental disorders like anxiety and depression and research substantiates the same. A study by Lancet\* puts suicide as the number one cause for death in women and teenage girls in India, surpassing maternal mortality.

two-thirds of people who have suffered from depression face prejudice at work or while applying for new jobs. The World Health Organization estimates that India will suffer economic losses amounting to a staggering 1.03 trillion dollars from mental health conditions between 2012 and 2030.'

If you think that our politicians are not aware of this, think again. Ram Nath Kovind, the President of India has talked about the 'mental health epidemic' and said that 'our National Mental Health Survey, 2016 found that close to 14 percent of India's population required

active mental health interventions. About two percent suffered from severe mental disorders'. However, there is still a severe lack of nationwide data which means that mental health issues need to be taken on a war footing. This is the only way work on viable solutions will be possible. It is obvious that solutions include the availability of medications as well as professionals trained to address these issues.

What is more serious is that studies point out the use of damning terminology like 'stigma', 'retard', and 'mad' and the overwhelming dominance of an unfounded prejudice among nearly 71 percent of Indians. One of the contributing factors could be a woeful absence of professionals to deal with mental health issues. A report published in one of the dailies says that 'mental health workforce in India (per 100,000 population) include psychiatrists (0.3), nurses (0.12), psychologists (0.07) and social workers (0.07)'.



**Rimli Bhattacharya**

Rimli Bhattacharya is a gold medalist in Mechanical Engineering from National Institute of Technology, and also holds an MBA in supply chain management. Her essay on mental illness in the anthology “Book of Light” published by Speaking Tiger Publications caught much attention in literary circles. Her writings have appeared in several magazines. She is also a trained classical dancer (Kathak & Odissi forms).

## Mental health and suicides

So often we get to hear stories of suicides committed by young students of the prestigious IIT's. While getting an admission in one of those premier institutions is a herculean feat achieved by only a handful then the eternal question arises – What made them take their life in spite of such a promising future ahead?

Time we acknowledge the importance of proper mental health among students. The research data reveals that students in these eminent institutes top the list when it comes to mental ill health. The constant need for good performance, tough syllabus, and parental expectations attributes largely to the mental maladies like depression, bipolar, schizophrenia, anxiety, obsession and suicidal tendencies in the young adults. The students are like pressure cookers without a safety valve.

We must realize that it's a crime to keep high aspirations on a student to constantly excel in studies. We fail to realize the amount of stress we as adults are exerting on them. Introduction of mental health literacy courses among students and teachers both in the schools and colleges must be made mandatory. Rope in professional counselors for better advice. This will help in changing attitude towards studies and also in seeking help. Remember good performance among students is directly proportional to good mental health. This is only possible once we make studies a fun filled activity rather than a stressful affair.

### What do these statistics mean?

Imagine 57 million individuals in India going about their daily work without even knowing how to deal with their ‘depression’. They do not know if it is some maverick biochemical imbalance causing their trauma or if it is related to their income not matching

their ambitions or just the fact that one of their loved ones is being missed. This is reason enough to believe that trained psychiatric staff is the need of the hour as most of these cases need customized solutions and answers.



**Roohi Kapoor**

Roohi is a Counselor at Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre. She holds a Masters in Applied Psychology from Tata Institute of Social Sciences. She enjoys painting and music.

## Why hide subliminal voices?

Mental health doesn't denote the absence of mental illness. Being mentally healthy simply means having positive characteristics to navigate all ups and downs in life. We all face disappointments, sadness, and anxiety at some point in life... and tend to ignore the emotional signs and messages that say that something is wrong. We then go ahead to bottle these vital issues in the hope that not talking or thinking about them will make them disappear. When a person runs a fever, he immediately takes medicine and proper rest and doesn't push away corrective action in the assumption that fever unattended is fever gone. Similarly, seeking help for mental health issues is important. There is a need to set up counseling centers at schools, colleges and workplaces. A comfortable place free from biases provides support to grow as an individual and talk about mental health issues openly. This will help in catering to the developmental and emotional needs of students and also provide emotional support to employees at the workplace leading to resilience and consequently, healthier professionals and individuals.

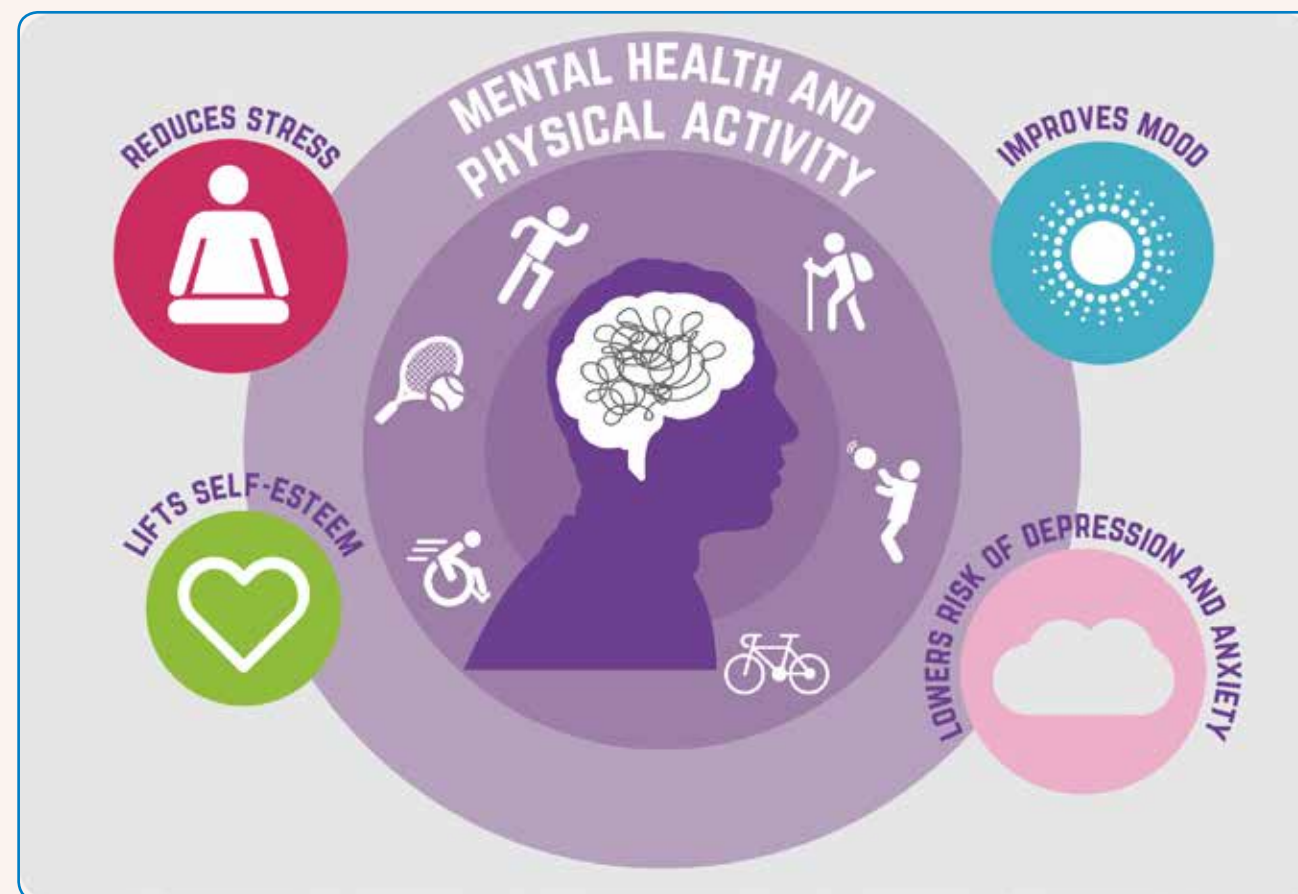
Another shocking revelation that stats point out is that by 2020 around 70 percent of the world's population aged sixty and above will be living in developing countries and 14.2 percent of them in India. This brings in issues related to loneliness and the utter lack of professional care for the elderly.

We've already been reading about farmer suicides in the country and this is yet another serious issue related to mental health. More than 36,000 farmer suicides happened between 2014 and 2016. Talking of suicides, one must mention that the rate is fairly high even amongst students in India and this crisis is projected to become the biggest in the world by 2025. Are we prepared for all these issues?

All these add up to a sheer loss of productive involvement and if we are planning to be a force in the economic strata we must understand that mental health conditions are the second biggest cause of absences from work and a study pointed out that in the UK this led to a loss of 15.4 million work days annually. By the way, if figures from other countries matter, the estimated cost to the global economy due to depression and anxiety is US\$ 1 trillion

## Mental health in India - websites

- [https://www.nhp.gov.in/world-mental-health-day\\_pg](https://www.nhp.gov.in/world-mental-health-day_pg)
- <https://indspireme.in/2018/06/07/mental-health-websites-india-online-portals-resources-counselling/>
- [https://services.india.gov.in/service/listing?cat\\_id=50&ln=en](https://services.india.gov.in/service/listing?cat_id=50&ln=en)
- <https://www.india.gov.in/information-about-national-mental-health-programme>
- <https://hetv.org/india/health-medical-web-sites.htm>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5479084/>
- <https://mohfw.gov.in/about-us/departments/departments-health-and-family-welfare/mental-health-division>
- <http://www.indiahealthcaretourism.com/>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry\\_of\\_Health\\_and\\_Family\\_Welfare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Health_and_Family_Welfare)
- <http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/content/447691/draft-rules-and-regulations-under-mental-healthcare-act-2017/>
- <http://icallhelpline.org/ten-mental-health-apps-and-resources-to-help-you-de-stress/>
- <https://www.whiteswanfoundation.org/>
- <https://www.who.int/features/2015/mental-health-care-india/en/>
- <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/health/here-are-the-top-10-things-we-should-do-to-improve-our-mental-health-61729>
- <http://www.amritahospitals.org/MediaGalleries/Mental-health-problems-on-the-rise-among-Indian-ad>
- <http://www.amritahospitals.org/MediaGalleries/Mental-health-problems-on-the-rise-among-Indian-ad>
- <https://happyaging.in/tag/mental-health/>
- <https://www.thebetterindia.com/139913/depression-websites-connect-talk-help/>
- <https://www.indianweb2.com/2013/07/10/30-health-wellness-websites-india/>
- <http://healthyindiachronicle.in/national-health-portal-transforming-health-sector/>
- [http://ihbas.delhigovt.nic.in/wps/wcm/connect/DOIT\\_IHBAS1/ihbas/home](http://ihbas.delhigovt.nic.in/wps/wcm/connect/DOIT_IHBAS1/ihbas/home)



per year in lost productivity. The answer to every issue dealing with mental health lies in not just changes in laws and regulations but also in the way each of us responds to those around us who have been touched by any of the issues mentioned.

There are a number of people who believe that it is the therapist who matters but then there are others who may try to discover any of the myriad other solutions. I know of people who find solace and comfort in long heart-to-heart conversations and all they need is a listener. This may sound a bit frivolous but if going out to have a pint or two of a tippler soothes the brain, go for it.

### Make sense out of the chaos

Glenn Close writes that mental health needs 'more sunlight, more candor, and more unashamed conversation'. The truth is

that simply because a lot of people do not understand the right perspective, the journey within tends to get murkier until only darkness prevails. It is thus paramount that people talk about their feelings to make them less upsetting and less scary. Let me add here that the hashtag with two simple sounding words #MeToo were as much about a form of protest as they were about dealing with a continually overwhelming struggle to persist and survive.

All those in the throes of debilitating mental health terror must stand up and assert their needs, diffuse arguments and conflicts, and protect themselves as well as others from behavior that hurts and traumatizes. This is done better if one is surrounded by others who have equipped themselves with a better understanding of the issues that are at play. Yes, reading helps. So does the right consultation. I have known a lot of people who were living with guilt, besieged by hostile behavior, subjected

to unhealthy criticism, and were drowning in low self-esteem. These are the ones who need to feel good every day and must be slowly brought back to a position where they are able to bounce out of their universe of negativity. Friends and family of those who have problems dealing with mental issues must proactively learn to be great listeners, be ready to assess the worsening situation and intervene with compassion. Someone rightly remarked that when voices in the head become your enemy, the pain that emanates can lead to anger, misery, and sometimes, even suicidal tendencies. We are talking of people who need to exchange the voices in their head with real-time conversations with real people. Conversations directed towards them are one form of comfort that such people seek without actually asking or demanding them. Such friendly interventions happen spontaneously when people are well-read. So yes, reading helps.

### Reading helps

One of the correct things to do, besides consulting a professional and besides browsing the net to read up on relevant issues bordering mental health and how to cope with it, is to read books. Reading clarifies and removes cobwebs of misunderstood notions and helps a person deal with issues in a pragmatic way. Those who suffer need people around them who are well read. A few books recommended by some of the experts that I talked to are listed here:

**‘Side Effects of Living: An Anthology of Voices on Mental Health’** by Jhilmil Breckenridge and Namarita Kathait.

**Someone rightly remarked that when voices in the head become your enemy, the pain that emanates can lead to anger, misery, and sometimes, even suicidal tendencies.**

**Reading clarifies and removes cobwebs of misunderstood notions and helps a person deal with issues in a pragmatic way.**

**‘ABC of Mental Health’** by Rachana Awatramani.

**‘Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy’** by David D Burns.

**‘Understanding Mental Illness’** by Atul Kakar, Nundy M Chir, and Samiran

**‘Think Like a Monk’** by Jay Shetty.

**‘I Hate You – Don’t Leave Me: Understanding the Borderline Personality’** by Jerold J Kreisman and Hal Straus.

**‘Stop Walking On Eggshells: Taking Your Life Back When Someone You Care About Has Borderline Personality Disorder’** by Kreger Randy and Paul T Mason.

**‘Mindfulness for Borderline Personality Disorder: Relieve Your Suffering Using the Core Skill of Dialectical Behavior Therapy’** by Blaise Aguirre.

**‘Let Him Not Sink - The First Steps to Mental Health: A Manual for Adults Who Work Closely with Children and Adolescents’** by Samir Parikh and Kamna Chhibber.

**‘Shhh! Don’t Talk about Mental Health: Why Being Quiet Is No Longer an Option’** by Arjun Gupta.

### There is hope even when the brain says NO

There is no standard normal. There can be as many ‘normal’ as there are people on this planet. Same is the case with brains that have decided to not to remain normal. What this means is that there are no set answers or solutions to mental health that needs intervention. Only one thing is certain... there is hope even when the brain says NO. ■

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# SEEKING JOBS ABROAD

IS IT AS LUCRATIVE AS IT SOUNDS?

## Alok Khullar

The author is Sr GM - R&D/QA with Aditya Birla Chemicals (Thailand) Ltd. He has been a Research Fellow with DRDO and now lives in Muang Rayong, Thailand.

# H

aving stayed outside India for more than 11 years now, I find this question to be quite valid and believe it requires serious introspection. The right way to do this is to invoke Maslow. Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a theory in human psychology, talks about never-ending and never satisfying the needs of human beings.

The motivation that triggers one's mind to explore jobs outside native Country at early stage of career, and the trigger to look back in the past to review the decision of working as an expat and analyzing one's own decision of having settled abroad, can be better understood when one develops an insight about human needs and psychology. Remember, our needs constantly keep changing with time. Hence, the definition of job "lucrative" also keeps changing with our own evolutionary stage, needs, and experiences.

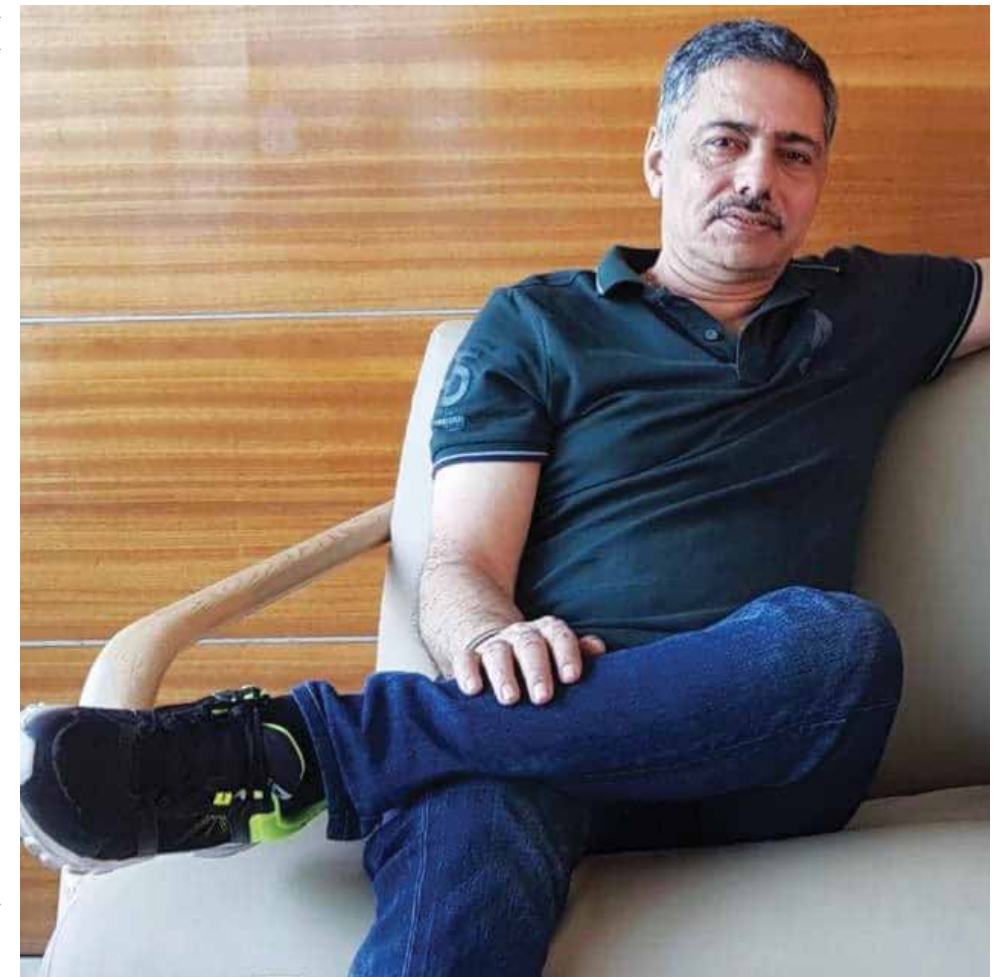
## Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

While in the early-career phase, an individual is happy to get a higher cash component and a better quality of life, it is the later career phase needs that require an up-gradation and are linked to self-esteem, family etc. We need to foresee and anticipate factors such as the education of kids, medical needs and exigencies for self and/or elderly parents (if they accompany you), social security and other related expenses. One has to keep in mind, while your income is in dollars and pounds while abroad, your expenses too happen in the same currency.

**Defining a foreign job** as being "lucrative" or not also depends upon an individual's age-group, potential with respect to individuals skillset and qualification, financial status before movement abroad, marital status, life stage at the time of movement abroad (number of productive years left), number of dependents and their age (expenses on kid's education, health), loans and liabilities on immovable assets in-home country, selection of foreign country for settlement (developed, underdeveloped, cost of living, individual's nature of spending, the span of stay and decision to stay abroad permanently or time-bound, and the way the local laws treat of you in a foreign nation (e.g. allowed to purchase land for housing, retirement benefits etc).

Moving out when one is young is always a better option. Seeking jobs abroad after completing education in the same country can lead to a more likelihood of finding higher-paid assignments. Unlike India, in most of the western countries, remunerations are not just linked to the degrees but also to one's skills, the productive quotient of a person, and the nature of the profession.

Be aware as some countries that offer **social security** to their nationals do not have the same offer extended to expats in the later phases of their life. Added to this is the higher cost of living that takes a toll on all savings, remunerations, and benefits earned at a young age. These are facets that must not be forgotten by anyone who is planning to go abroad to settle there as a professional.



To judge the degree of "lucrative" of a job, a job seeker needs to take a holistic view of their own and their spouse's net earnings abroad. Preferably, it should not lead to an **opportunity-lost situation for their life partner**. In some countries while spouses may be professionally qualified, local regulations may not legally allow them to work or apply for his or

her own work permit. In most cases, overall compensation is deemed non-profitable if your partner is not able to exploit his/her professional qualification.

If a job seeker working in an MNC based in the home country but decides to join the foreign division of the company, a detailed review of expat policy is highly recommended. This is more important if the cost of living in the home country is lower than it is in the country of posting abroad. If the company decides to send you back to the home country in the later phase of your professional career, your compensation may get hit badly due to the lower cost of living in the home country. Problems get exaggerated as with years of stay in a foreign country and with the high-paying lucrative fiscal package, you and your family to adapt to the improved lifestyle of foreign land... and then getting a lower relocation compensation offer for settling in the home country creates a larger dilemma and unrest for self and family. Thus the entire perspective of moving abroad for a lucrative package and a better quality of life gets a hit.

**Some tips to be noted:**

1. Look before you leap
2. While hiring, “cost to company (CTC)” which includes perks and long term benefits is critical for the hiring company, but for an individual, cash in hand is what really matters.
3. It is preferable make a move in the early phase of one’s professional life.
4. Prefer countries that allow permanent residency to you preferably within few years of living there or at least after a few years of service.
5. Some benefits in the pay package, like kid’s education allowances, are mostly applicable for



6. Medical insurance costs abroad are quite high for expats, which are either not covered by employers or are not sufficient in certain illnesses. Must watch out for Medclaim policies before moving abroad, not forgetting your dependent parents.

7. Check regulatory requirements of the country (abroad) for buying land or owning a home, as rentals take a heavy toll and drain off hard-earned savings.
8. Understand the income tax regulations and annual deductions while accepting any foreign assignment.
9. If you are looking for a permanent job in a foreign land after landing abroad (as a student or probable employee), do exploratory work for a set time frame, as extended experimentation can be an expensive affair. Remember, a decision to make no decision is also a decision. If a decision

proves wrong in the future, don’t worry, it will certainly leave you enriched with learnings and experience.

**Avoid these pitfalls:**

1. A fair assessment of your own potential irrespective of your parents’ or guardians’ capabilities to support your foreign stay is a must. This is essential as exigencies can happen any time anywhere.
2. Mental preparedness to take challenges head-on is very important for your successful stint in a foreign job. Not being mentally prepared for a major change in your life and lifestyle can be an obstacle that you need to be aware of.
3. An early decision to plan length of stay in a foreign land certainly pays in the long run and helps in avoiding shocks in life. If you fly out with indecision resident in your mind, you may be facing issues that you may not have anticipated. Therefore, anticipate and plan a 360 degree counter to all probabilities.

Students who plan to make their careers in a foreign land and are in constant search of lucrative careers must not get into the trap of short-term assignments abroad as they may not get translated into a long span of their productive life. A decision to move back to the native country with a permanent job may be a better option in certain cases. This situation is quite common with research scholars. Remember, a bird in hand is better than two in the bushes. A delay in getting permanent positions or multiple short-term assignments in a foreign land may spoil your chances of being eligible for permanent positions in your home country. ■





# SCIENCE OF WATER MONUMENTS

**Vikramjit Singh Rooprai**  
Author, Educator, Heritage Activist  
Founder: Heritageshaala and The Heritage Photography Club



**W**ater is the most important element besides Air that is required for life forms to exist. Humans got blessed with better intelligence than many other species, their early task was to ensure an adequate supply of water for their daily routines. When civilizations got established, tanks, lakes, and ponds became prominent. With time, humans developed the concept of wells and later stepwells. Sluice dams were built along large natural & artificial lakes. Palaces were constructed on the banks of lakes/ponds, a few even in the middle of water. From small bridges over tiny canals to 38 Km. long Lake Pontchartrain Causeway, we have taken a giant leap in constructing Water Monuments. These buildings are not only engineering marvels, but also a good channel to understand many concepts of science. For example, I have always wondered, how were the medieval masons able to find the exact spot to dig a well, so they can find fresh potable water underground. During my research on Delhi's stepwells, I also found that there are few



common features among all stepwells in this region. One being, that except two (one circular and one square), all other stepwells (Baolis) are rectangular with a well at one end, connected to the tank via a small window. The well penetrates the underground confined aquifers (water table) and the tank can at most pierce the unconfined aquifer (underground rainwater channels). Water was filled in the tank from the well. Water in tank was

one dried well, many wells in the nearby area automatically get their water back.

With time, engineers developed the concept of Persian wheel, where an animal was tied to a long shaft and a simple gear-pulley arrangement, which would fetch water from well round the clock, without much human intervention.

I also learned that every waterbody in India had some unwritten codes of conduct. For example, time around noon was reserved for women and the evenings for men to bathe and wash. They would not interfere with either's timeslot to respect their privacy. There were rooms built in many baolis, where people could come and sit

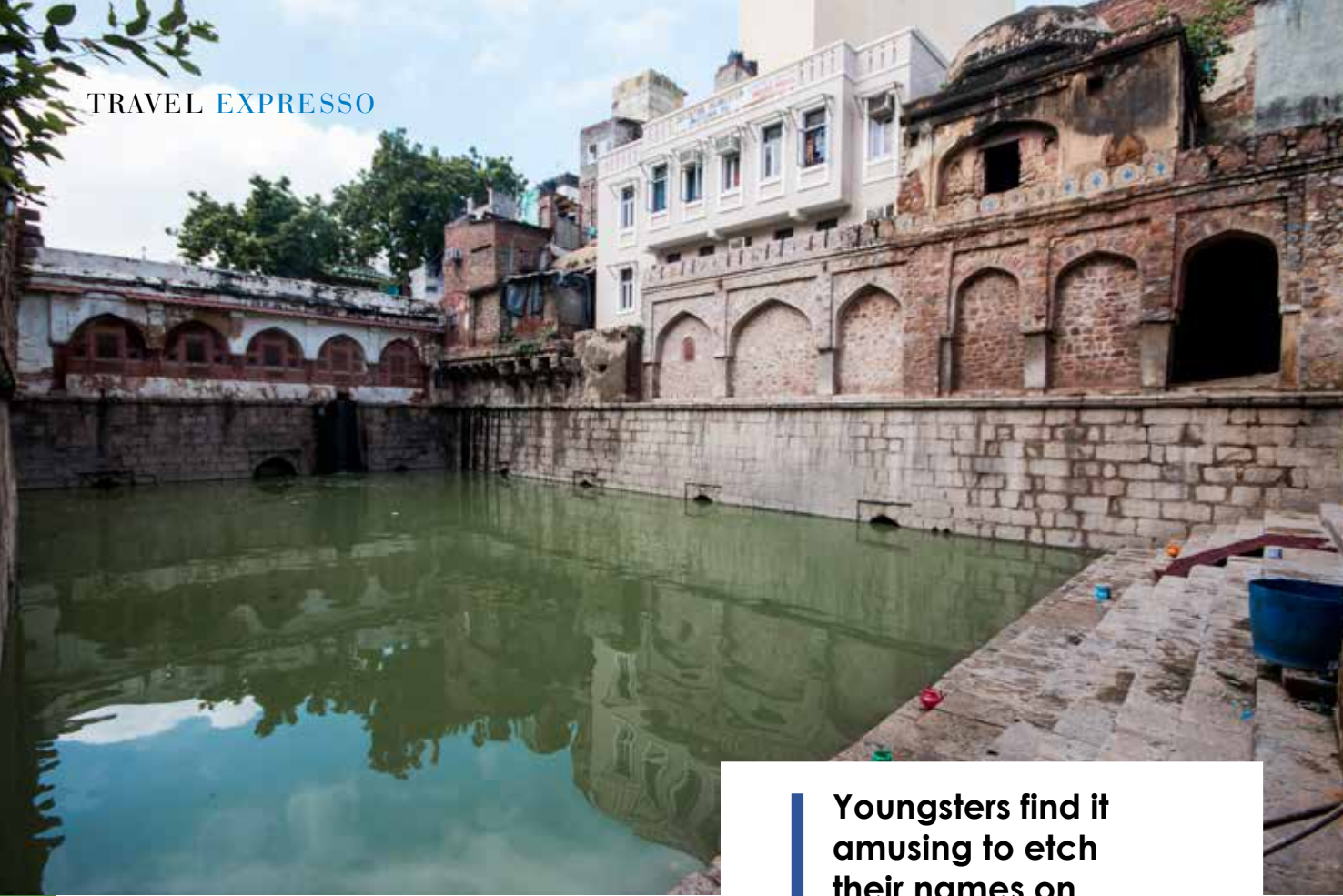


used for bathing and washing, and the water in well was used for drinking. The surface area of the well was always kept smaller than that of tank. This exerted more pressure on water in the well, thus pushing it into the well, but not vice-versa. All wells and stepwells connect with each other through underground water channels. Hence, if we recharge

in summers. Also, these baolis were oriented from North to South, so that sunlight falls on the tank for the least amount of time, as sun moves from East to West.

Even the sluice dams were brilliant masterpieces of engineering. Most dams from the Medieval era were multi-storeyed. There were arched tunnels, through which water could flow. These tunnels would often be made at different height levels, to manage varying water levels. Every tunnel was equipped with a huge wooden gate to control the flow of water.

One may wonder, how were medieval engineers able to



Youngsters find it amusing to etch their names on historic structures. They feel that if we scratch our name on the building, it will become immortal in time.

construct palaces in the middle of the water. How would they have drained a certain portion of large lake to construct a building, without any modern equipment? Monuments on the bank of a water body are still easier than ones in the middle. For example, Taj Mahal uses a series of hollow shafts (wells) to hold its heavy base over soft ground next to river Yamuna in Agra. We know that the main component of the mortar used in construction was lime. Stones of lime were submerged in water for very long time. The building constructed with such a mortar will gain strength when kept moist. Golden Temple of Amritsar was built on dry land and the holy pond was filled around it later. But constructing a building in the middle of a deep natural lake must have been a challenge for medieval engineers and architects.

Bridges were constructed, where armies along with elephants and horses could easily cross rivers. Looking at them, one can easily understand, how powerful a true arch can be, which was used to

construct the base of the bridge. If the size and shape of the keystone are calculated properly, this small piece of rock can hold the strongest load-bearing structure.

One can go on and on about how these buildings were constructed and how they introduced unique architectural elements. But the fact is, that with time, we have forgotten our rich heritage. With the introduction of modern means, the utility of old water structures was reduced

to none. Instead of phasing out our water monuments, we just ignored them and left them to the hands of time. Water in and around these structures started developing unhealthy microorganisms and soon became health hazards.

Not only for water monuments, but this situation also holds true for almost every monument on the face of earth. With time, humans evolve to better technology and advanced lifestyle. We just leave our

“Can we revive our stepwells and wells?” The answer is quite complicated. While technically it is possible to revive ancient and medieval water bodies, they will be useful and healthy only if we utilize the water properly. And even to reach that stage, we will have to make some drastic changes in our lifestyle. Water bodies are recharged with rainwater, and we require catchment area around the waterbody, from where rainwater can



past behind and move forward. In many cases, these old structures cause trouble, when they become dilapidated.

Youngsters find it amusing to etch their names on historic structures. They feel that if we scratch our name on the building, it will become immortal in time. Well yes, it will be immortal. People will remember them always. But as vandals and destroyers of heritage.

I am often posed with a question:

seep into underground. With our huge concrete jungles, that seems to be mission impossible. Even if one is prepared to construct rainwater harvesting pits, with which the underground water channels are recharged, we have another problem standing in front of us. In many metro cities of India, the industrial waste and sewage have penetrated the groundwater channels. The problem is no longer about saving a heritage. The bigger challenge is



to save water. More importantly, we need to save our groundwater, as it affects the crops and drinking water, thus pushing harmful elements into our food chain.

Our ancient and medieval monuments are important as they give us an important message: “how to protect and efficiently utilize natural resources”. Our monuments are also important because they tell us about the evolution of mankind. From art

to architecture and from the necessity to luxury, every element of our existence came out of our past.

Let us take a pledge that instead of ignoring our monuments, we will start visiting them and studying the science behind them. Maybe, we can reverse a portion of damage that we have done to our nature, by taking examples from our past. ■



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# LET US KNOW THE REAL TRAVEL ENTHUSIAST

Arvind Passey

**B**etween seeing and seeing again lies an entire universe of change. Changes happen faster than one blinks an eye. What this means is that one visit is never going to be enough. Not ten. Not even a hundred visits. There will always be some new addition or some perceptive insight that wasn't there in past visits... there have been times when walking up to a location from a different direction makes it appear completely new. Those who travel a lot will know why they may never say no to going to any place more than once.



Between seeing and seeing again lies an entire universe of change. Changes happen faster than one blinks an eye. What this means is that one visit is never going to be enough. Not ten. Not even a hundred visits. There will always be some new addition or some perceptive insight that wasn't there in past visits...

Obviously then, it isn't necessary to adopt vastly different travel plans every time. It sounds somewhat funny when I hear a lot of people say: 'Oh! I have visited this place. Must go somewhere else now.' And then they pack their bags for a fifteen days trip to Europe... or to Greece or Turkey or Thailand or wherever else they think they have not visited yet and where their budget can take them to. This attitude is, at best, defining some sort of restlessness or a wish to show that they are one-up on other not-so-lucky people in their circle of friends and relatives, and has nothing to do with a person being a travel enthusiast. Years back I

was sitting with a doctor friend working with Air India and noticed that he was talking about Paris and London like someone who knew the cities as well as someone who has stayed there for long. He knew every street name and never once in his conversation with that Londoner friend of his did he appear to falter. In fact, there were times when he managed to surprise that expat with bits like: 'Well, this road opens to the left of the South gate of this museum where not many tourists go... but they miss out on clicking a picture with the grilled gate there that was installed a hundred years ago.' His friend was making his notes while talking to him.

Later, when we were alone, he revealed to me that he has never been to London. 'But,' he said, 'that doesn't mean I cannot read maps thoroughly and go through travelogues and articles. Well, they are just visitors but I am a reader.' This was, as I have already mentioned, before googling for facts became a common pastime. What the incident does tell me is that visiting with the mind closed cannot possibly be better than reading books or browsing the net or hearing podcasts or even watching travel programs on the television. Will Rogers, an American political sage, once wrote: 'There are three kinds of men. The ones that learn



by reading. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence to find out for themselves.' We see so many people rushing out to 'visit' places today without having explored the other options of reading, hearing, browsing, and watching that when they come back full of horror stories one can only remember Will Rogers and the electric fence in his quote.

Let me take the example of the monuments that are in Delhi. People hop from the Red Fort to Qutub Minar to Purana Quila to Ugrasen Baoli to the ruins in Mehrauli and lament later, 'Well, when you've seen one, you've seen them all.' These are the kind of people who are forever

ticking a check-list in their hands, clicking selfies with crumbling fortifications, intricate arches, and domes and then sharing them all on the social media and then restlessly asking, 'Any other places to visit here?' They can call themselves tourists or travelers or whatever term they come across, to me they are just people who must read more.

Talking of reading, there is a set of books that I would recommend to anyone if they need to really understand this city.

These books are 'City of my heart' (Rana Safvi), 'Top 10 Baolis' (Vikramjit Singh Rooprai), 'Delhi by heart' (Raza Rumi), 'City of Djinn's' (William Dalrymple), 'Delhi – pages from a forgotten history' (Arthur Dudley), 'Delhi – 14 historic walks' (Swapna Liddle), and 'Delhi – a thousand years of building' (Lucy Peck) and a lot more no doubt, but the point that I am making is that reading takes a person a step towards being more than just a visitor. These books will also take you to read more and a 'visit' will then magically transform into making one

an informed travel enthusiast and not just someone who bumbles into a monument and wonders what he or she is doing there staring at things that appear similar to so many others spread all over.

Exploring a city becomes so much more meaningful when one comes across forgotten stories and facts that are linked. An evolved traveler hardly ever says that he seen it all because there will always be so many more things still waiting to be discovered. So yes, even so far as Delhi is concerned, there is so much remaining to be explored. Only when this realization hits will one be really #GoingPlaces. ■



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to the holistic development of every student.

### Accreditation

The University is recognised by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and has the approval of the AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education). It is also the member of Association of Indian Universities (AIU) apart from

being a member of the Commonwealth Universities and Institution's Innovation Council (Ministry of HRD Initiative) has recognised REVA as an Innovation Cell.

REVA is a BSCIC certified university, which is a recognition received for its high-quality management system. The University is a QS rated GOLD Band University and is also a NIRF ranked University and positioned 3rd in Karnataka by K-SURF for its

contribution towards higher education.

The University currently offers 28 Undergraduate Programmes, 22 full-time Postgraduate Programmes, 2 part-time Postgraduate Programmes, 18 Ph.D. Programmes and several Certificate/Diploma and Postgraduate Diploma Programmes in Engineering, Architecture, Science and Technology, Commerce, Management Studies Law, Arts & Humanities, and Performing





The campus offers well equipped studios, exhibition spaces and modern laboratories in the school. **Girls and boys hostel, health center, Gymnastics, Food court, sports ground, well equipped acoustically treated auditorium of 1500 capacity and a Rangasthala of 1000 capacity makes the students enthusiastic to participate in extracurricular activities in the campus.**

Arts. The programmes offered by REVA University are well planned and designed based on in-depth analysis and research with emphasis on knowledge assimilation, practical applications, hands-on training, global and industrial relevance, and social significance.

### **Sustainable Infrastructure**

REVA University has all the required amenities and boasts of a state-of-the-art campus, a haven in itself for students. The campus offers well equipped studios, exhibition spaces

and modern laboratories in the school. Girls and boys hostel, health center, Gymnastics, Food court, sports ground, well equipped acoustically treated auditorium of 1500 capacity and a Rangasthala of 1000 capacity makes the students enthusiastic to participate in extracurricular activities in the campus. The beautiful hanging bridge inside one of the buildings of REVA is a treat to the eye. Students get to actively involve in design of spaces inside the campus, thus making student spaces sensitive to needs of learners. The infrastructure at REVA addresses the various inclusive needs of students. Physical, emotional, cognitive,

social and emotional needs of the students are addressed through various committees. The entire campus has CCTV surveillance to ensure the safety of the students. REVA has smart classrooms that are completely digitalised with projectors, Moodle and Lecture Capturing System to preserve paper. Notes and assignments are distributed amongst students through Moodle. Lecture Capturing System is used to capture lectures of faculty members that can be used by the students to learn and relearn. REVA University has digital studios for documenting and reporting. REVA has an efficient ERP system in place, which sends SMS alerts regarding the attendance of students and other important notifications to their parents. Being an exponent of a greener world, REVA has digitalised majority of the processes.

The ever-evolving collection of books, journals, and digital content in the library and the latest IT infrastructure ensure that students can access relevant information at their disposal to explore their subjects thoroughly. REVA University has well-equipped laboratories that aid students in learning and enhancing research skills. The custom-built teaching facilities and classrooms, the indoor and outdoor sports facilities, fitness centre, the multi-cuisine food court, lung spaces, and campus stores provide students with a promising learning environment.

The biodiversity in the campus in terms of both flora and fauna is worth mentioning. There is a diverse variety of plants and trees on the campus. Solar panels are installed on the rooftop of the buildings. Solar power is utilised to generate electricity in the campus. Wet waste is added into the organic

waste converter and the manure produced is used within the campus.

REVA understands the importance of fitness and sports for a healthy future generation. Hence, it provides excellent infrastructure facilities for both indoor and outdoor sports. When it comes to hostels, REVA University created an environment that offers a home away from home to the students. There is a departmental store, a bookstore and a cafeteria within the campus so that the students do not have to leave the campus often to fulfil their requirements.

REVA provides a multi-cultural environment because of its international student community. The University respects all cultures and communities by celebrating several festivals throughout the year. In the University campus, several cultural events are organised to keep the students close to their roots.

The University provides infrastructural

support for differently abled students by creating a safe, secure and enriching environment for them. The University has lifts, wheelchairs, and buggy that helps for in-campus mobility. REVA has a counselling centre for students with special needs. The University has also introduced refreshable Braille displays and electro-mechanical reading support for the visually impaired students.

### A Robust Curriculum

REVA University has definite and well thought out procedures to design a new programme curriculum or to revise and amend the existing curriculum. Within the framework of the University, every School has a Board of Studies (BoS). Academic Council and BoS members ensure that



**Jagruti is the brainchild of Dr. P. Shyama Raju, Honourable Chancellor of REVA University and close to everyone's heart at REVA. In 2018, RELA (REVA Electoral Literacy Association), which was an organised effort to spread awareness on the civic responsibility towards voting among citizens to induce their democratic sensibility.**

the curriculum of each programme is relevant to the local/national/regional/global educational and employment requirements.

REVA University embraces Outcome Based Education (OBE) in the curriculum. RULO: REVA University Unique Learning Offerings (RULO) provides value-based education to the students through Environmental Studies, NSS, NCC and YOGA. RULO inculcate awareness in the minds of students about the needs of the society that help them to have a broader outlook on life and lead to the holistic development of students.

University has encouraged each School to start Research Centres to widen the horizons of higher education. Students from across the globe enrol to various programmes at REVA University during each academic cycle. To make the admission process transparent, it is mandatory to ensure that REVA EET for Engineering students, REVA MAT for Management Students and REVA CLAT for Legal Studies students are conducted every year, apart from enrolling students from CET/COMEDK/PGCET/CLAT/NATA and other admission tests conducted by respective entrance examination cells.

Apart from this the REVA UIIC (University Industry Interaction Centre) and REVA Nest work hand in hand with all the Schools to ensure that students are supported in all industry related aspects. The Technology Business Incubator established at REVA University campus aims to build the entrepreneurial eco system by

empowering and nurturing student start-ups and incubating innovative technology based start-ups.

### Beyond Traditional Classroom Teaching

REVA University exhilarates students to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities that help in overall personality development. At REVA, students are encouraged to participate in dance, music, art, crafts, sports, and yoga that help them to develop creative and leadership skills. REVA students showcase their talent in various sports tournaments conducted at University, state and national levels.

REVA empowers students to participate in activities and interactions that will allow them to know the particulars of various industries. Seminars, industry visits, invited talks from professionals, international symposiums, internships, and live projects along with school-specific conferences conducted at the University support the students to get insights on their respective field of study.

REVA University pushes its students to engage in various co-curricular activities organised on the campus to generate smart student communities. Participation with different clubs and societies are the perfect way for the students to get involved, grow the network, and have fun during the study at the university. With many clubs such as Literary Club, Sports Club, Science Club, Eco Club, Dance and Drama Club, Quiz Club, students are left with a diverse choice.

REVA University organises Social Outreach Programmes at regular intervals. The main aim of these social outreach programmes is to motivate budding engineers to innovate and develop products that can prove beneficial to society. From trips to old age homes to planting trees, these social



outreach programs strive to resolve pressing social problems of the society and provide students with a platform to go beyond books and get a more experiential exposure.

Jagruti is the brainchild of Dr. P. Shyama Raju, Honourable Chancellor of REVA University and close to everyone's heart at REVA. In 2018, RELA (REVA Electoral Literacy Association), which was an organised effort to spread awareness on the civic responsibility towards voting among citizens to induce their democratic sensibility. Thus, Jagruti was born and the focus of the voting campaign was Byatarayanapura constituency in Bengaluru. RELA, as an effort became highly successful in creating voting awareness amongst the public.

The Government of Karnataka recognised the combined endeavour of the voting campaign on International Voter's Day. The Governor of Karnataka along with the dignitaries of the State Election Commission felicitated Dr. P. Shyama Raju, the Chancellor of REVA University for leading the social awakening voting campaign through Jagruti.

This year, REVA University initiated Jagruti towards global warming- an effort to create awareness about the consequences of global warming. Through the revolutionary model of JAGRUTI-towards Global Warming, REVA University shares its beliefs to align the Edupreneurs' community and ecosystem to focus on this alarming issue. This initiative is proposed by the University to encourage the participation of masses, explicitly through the students and staff from other educational institutions.

REVA University has been creating awareness of Global Warming in small ways within the campus. With the student size of more than 14,000 on the campus, each student has pledged to take this campaign forward. Along with this, the faculty and other staff members of the University also work to build awareness or Jagruti amongst the youth about Global Warming.

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# LIFE BEYOND DEATH

Death is a liberating force; it comes in everyone's life but once! It is real and tangible. It is truly secular and has an impeccable record of being just and fair to the poor and the rich alike. It does not discriminate ever among its clients on the basis of color, creed, sex, nationality, time and space. It never fails to deliver nor does it delay. It comes, comes and ever comes! What a commitment and perseverance! Is it not a classic example of zero tolerance and discipline? Death has willy-nilly been there ever since life began and it will be there as long as life remains. What an eternal hope death inspires! It's nothing but a promise to co-exist with life. Today, change being the buzzword, death alone refuses to change its course and stands firm.

It is an irony that we humans show ignorance of death until it arrives. How can we display such a laid back approach towards it? Some of us have even the pluck to reject its very existence, as if death were only a virtual reality? Many even threaten death as seems evident from the following lines of a famous Metaphysical Poet:

*One short sleep past, we wake eternally,  
And death shall be no more, Death thou shalt die.*

It is important to accept the simple truth about life and death in the same breath. Life is real and

so is death. Why are we so obsessed with life? Why do we eulogize Life and demonize Death? Why is life often depicted as joyful, though, in reality it is an unending saga of suffering till death liberates one? It is this human suffering that also constitutes the gospel truth of Gautama Buddha's philosophy. Let us be fair to death, shedding all our prejudices against it. Or death will continue to torment us every time a loved one passes away.

However, the best way to deal with death would be to get ready for it. We can take life as a rare opportunity for leaving an indelible imprint behind that even death cannot obliterate. It must gladden our heart that every religion talks of 'Life beyond Death'. Every soul is endowed with the power and prowess to transcend death. Death could be the beginning of a new life, provided we make our living sublime. When you live a meaningful life you will be leaving a legacy, making death rather subservient to Life.

**The holy Quran proclaims:**

But whoever comes to Him as a believer having done righteous deeds- for those will be the highest degrees { in position} Text- 75, Surah 20- Ta Ha.

**The writer is a Social Scientist & an Education Consultant.**

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