

Reject negative forces: PM to TN voters

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■
MADURAI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday exhorted the electorate of Tamil Nadu to reject the forces of negativity and not to be carried away by those who sow the seeds of suspicion and doubts in the minds of the people.

Addressing a rally of BJP workers from ten Lok Sabha constituencies in Southern Tamil Nadu at Madurai on Sunday, the Prime Minister paid rich tributes and homages to former Chief Minister late J Jayalalitha with whom he had enjoyed a good rapport. Those who expected some hints from the Prime Minister about the possible alliance partners of the BJP in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections were in for disappointment as he chose not to mention anything about the election. Modi chose to limit his speech to the achievements made by the NDA Government during the last four and half years and abstained from attacking any of his rivals.

He said Tamil Nadu has been benefited by the Swachh Bharat scheme he had launched in 2014. "We had constructed nine crore toilets out of which 47 lakh were built in Tamil Nadu. Our mission is to have at least one medical college in every three Lok Sabha constituencies," said Modi.

The Prime Minister had some good news for the people in southern Tamil Nadu. "Chennai will be soon con-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being garlanded by Tamil Nadu BJP unit president Tamilisai Soundararajan and others at BJP rally in Madurai on Sunday

necting to Madurai with the high speed Train-18, designed and built at Perambur near Chennai. Many countries have shown keen interest in buying such trains from India. Tamil Nadu stands to benefit from the mass production of Train 18 as thousands of jobs would be generated as India goes ahead with the project," said the Prime Minister.

He said a ₹25,100 crore project is on the anvil to connect the nation with the holy city of Rameswaram and Dhanushkodi, the land's end by rail and road.

"The Government has sanctioned the proposal to build new rail bridge connect-

ing Rameswaram with the hinterland. This will bring back the old days when we had rail connectivity between Chennai and Dhanushkodi," the Prime Minister added.

The only political point he mentioned was about the Maha Ghatbandhan (though he did not name it or the main players) which was on the anvil. "People who were looting the county have come together to remove the security guard so that the crimes committed by them would not come to light. But so long as the security guard is there, they won't succeed in their mission. All those who were part of the looting and corrupt practices would be

brought before the court of justice to stand trial," said Modi. There were nearly 50,000 people who had gathered to listen to the Prime Minister despite the scorching sunlight. "We are disappointed because the Prime Minister did not give any hint about electoral alliances," said one of the party leaders. Earlier, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Thoppur in the district. The new AIIMS featuring a 750 bed super speciality hospital, a medical college with 100 MBBS seats and a nursing college with 60 seats will cater

to the needs of the people in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu, said the Prime Minister in his brief speech after the laying of the foundation stone.

Modi also inaugurated on Sunday the super speciality blocks built at the medical colleges at Thanjavur, Tirunelveli and Madurai under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSY).

He also inaugurated 12 post office based passport seva kendras across the region as part of the Union Government's plans to bring governance to the doorsteps of the people in the region.

Modi slams Cong, Left parties

Abuse me but don't mislead farmers, youth of the country

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tore into the Opposition, especially the Congress and the Communists, whom he described as bereft of any ideas or programmes for the progress of the country.

"They have only one agenda and that is to abuse Narendra Modi from the moment they wake up in the morning till they go to bed in the night. Let them do so. Let them abuse me, but they should not spread falsehoods on farmers, youth and the poor people of the country," said Modi while addressing the Bharatiya Yuva Marcha rally held at Thrissur in Kerala on Sunday.

He lambasted the Congress for lowering the prestige of Indian Constitution and democracy. "Recently we saw a Congress leader addressing a press meet held at London to question the Electronic Voting Machines and the Election Commission of India. The questioned the ethos of Indian democracy. Is this how they respect the democracy?" asked the Prime Minister.

Modi pointed out that the Congress and the Communists blame all institutions in the country. "They have zero



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates Mounded Storage Vessel at LPG Bottling Plant in Kochi on Sunday

regards for the Country's Constitution. They accuse the Armed Forces, Election Commission, judiciary, CBI, Enforcement Directorate, CVC and all other institutions. For them all these institutions are wrong and they are the only right people," Modi said.

The Prime Minister came down heavily on the Communists for their stance on Sabarimala Temple. "The Communist Government is showing disrespect to Sabarimala Temple. They are undermining and destroying the culture and civilisation of Kerala which had stood the test of time for thousands of years. The Congress is also not behind them in this endeavour," the PM added.

ing the country's strategic programmes. The Congress leaders who had to settle personal scores between themselves used India's space programme for their personal interests.

"A brilliant scientist like Nambi Narayanan who played a crucial role in India's space programme was made a scapegoat by the Congress and Communist leaders. We, the NDA Government, helped him to resuscitate his reputation by honouring him with Padma award," said Modi.

The Prime Minister listed the achievements made by the NDA Government during the last four and half years. "You elected me as the chowkidaar of the country because of my promise that I'll never allow anyone to loot the country. Let them keep on abusing me, but I'll never fail you," said Modi. He also charged that the Congress leaders were still in the hangover of the internal emergency.

Priyanka inducted in Cong because Rahul flopped: UP Minister

Mathura: Priyanka Gandhi was made party's general secretary because Congress president Rahul Gandhi "flopped" in politics, UP Power Minister Srikant Sharma said on Sunday.

Cabinet Minister asserted that induction of the party president's sister would not be able to revive the Congress' electoral fortunes.

"Had Rahul not flopped, where was the need for bringing Priyanka?" Sharma asked in reply to a reporter's question on Priyanka Gandhi's possible impact in the ensuing Lok Sabha elections. Priyanka Gandhi is not a new face in the Congress, she has been canvassing for the party in Amethi

and Rae Bareilly since 1998, the minister pointed out.

"Her induction in the party would not make any impact in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections," he said. Sharma said the elimination of Congress from SP-BSP alliance is a testimony to the fact that the party is at the lowest step in the state politics.



Devotees and members of Hindu Jagran Manch (HJM) participate in a march 'Walk for Ayyappa' in relation to violence faced by devotees at Sabarimala's Ayyappa temple in Kolkata on Sunday

Thane man with link to 'ISIS-inspired' group held by Maha ATS

Mumbai: The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) has arrested a man in connection with an alleged ISIS-inspired group that wanted to carry out mass attacks at big events using poisonous chemicals, police said on Sunday.

The arrest was made on Saturday from Mumbai in neighbouring Thane district and a laptop, tablet computer, hard disk, pen drives, router, mobile phones and diaries were seized from his residence, an ATS official said.

The ATS had earlier arrested eight people, and detained a minor, from Aurangabad and Thane after several teams carried out searches through

Gorakhpur's Cong unit wants Priyanka to fight LS poll from here

PTI ■ GORAKHPUR

The Gorakhpur's Congress unit on Sunday raised a demand for fielding Priyanka Gandhi from here, depicting her as a modern "Jhansi ki Rani".

The district unit of the party raised the demand in two posters that came up in the stronghold of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who represented Gorakhpur between 1998 and 2017 in the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th Lok Sabha.

In the first poster, the Congress party workers demanded that Priyanka Gandhi be made the Congress candidate for Gorakhpur for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.



People near the accident site where a pick up van was hit by a train, at Tilapara of Chirang, on Sunday

Men have key role in fight for gender equality: SC judge

Gandhinagar: Men have a key role to play in the fight for gender equality, Supreme Court Judge DY Chandrachud on Sunday said as he called for the need to de-construct the stereotype of gender roles.

Justice Chandrachud, who was part of the five-judge bench that allowed women of all ages to enter the Sabarimala temple in Kerala, said violence and discrimination faced by females were compounded by people's "insensitivity to women's rights and issues".

He was addressing graduating students at the convocation ceremony of the Gujarat National Law University here in the presence of his colleague from the Supreme Court, Justice AK Sikri.

Women have to deal with shocking gender wage gaps, forms of violence and harassments, forced adherence to feminine, impossible standards of beauty, compounded by what I think might be the worst of all - insensitivity to women's rights and issues," Chandrachud said.

"The fight for gender equality cannot be fought by women alone. Men have a key role to play in demanding and supporting this societal shift by being a part of conversation and of the movement," he added.

J&K BJP in favour of reservation for people living along Int'l Border

Jammu: The BJP's Jammu & Kashmir unit on Sunday advocated reservation for the people living along the International Border (IB) and accused the PDP of creating hurdles during the coalition Government's rule in fulfilling various promises made by the saffron party to the public.

Thanking Governor Satya Pal Malik for providing quota to the Pahari community, BJP's State chief spokesperson Sunil Sethi said the administration would do justice to the people living in pitiable conditions along the IB by providing reservation to them in line and on par with the residents of the Line of Actual Control.

"This will ensure upliftment of these ignored masses," he said. Sethi said his party had promised the residents of areas adjoining the IB that they will be given justice by way of reservation in education and jobs as is available to the resident of Line of Actual Control.

Statue of Unity: Crocodiles to be relocated for tourist safety

Ahmedabad: Crocodiles from two ponds near the Statue of Unity in Gujarat's Narmada district are being relocated for the safety of tourists visiting the Sardar Patel memorial, officials said on Sunday while dismissing reports that the move is linked to seaplane service.

As many 20 cages have been set up along the banks of the two ponds, officially known as Dyke 3 and 4, to trap the crocodiles, an official informed.

These dykes are artificial water bodies created to stabilise the water released from the Sardar Sarovar Dam before it reaches the entry point of the main Narmada canal, the official explained. Aradhana Sahu, Conservator of Forests, (Vadodra Wildlife Circle) said that 12 crocodiles have been caught so far, though she added there was no specific target for the number of these reptiles that need to be captured.

GUJARAT WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD
SECTOR-10/A, GANDHINAGAR

BRIEF SHORT NOTICE INVITING ONLINE TENDER FOR FIXING RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF C.I. SLUICE VALVES WITH ISI MARK FOR THE YEAR 2019

GWSSB invites online tender through e-tendering for Manufacture, Supply & Delivery of C.I. Sluice valves (50 to 1200mm Dia.) with ISI Mark from Approved Vendors of GWSSB Only. Interested bidder who wish to participate in above tender may view the detailed tender notice & download the Tender documents at free of cost from website. <https://www.nprocure.com>

The last date of submission of online tender is 7-2-2019.
No/INF/VPN/2019/G/2727

GUJARAT WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD
SECTOR-10/A, GANDHINAGAR

BRIEF SHORT NOTICE INVITING ON LINE TENDER FOR FIXING RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF C.I. AIR VALVES FOR THE YEAR 2019

GWSSB invites online tender through e-tendering for Manufacture, Supply & Delivery of C.I. Air Valves (15 to 200mm Dia.) from Approved Vendors of GWSSB Only. Interested bidder who wish to participate in above tender may view the detailed tender notice & download the Tender documents at free of cost from website. <https://www.nprocure.com>

The last date of submission of online tender is 7-2-2019.
No/INF/VPN/2019/G/2726

Trend Slazer

'Clothes should be gender-neutral'

Actress **SONAM KAPOOR** says that clothes should be gender neutral. During the launch of designer Kunal Rawal's flagship store recently, Sonam, who was present along with father-actor Anil Kapoor, talked about the importance of gender neutrality in fashion. She said: "I truly believe in gender fluidity. I think clothes should be gender neutral. For me, it is very exciting to wear clothes people perceive as menswear and when I see men wear clothes, which people perceive as womenswear, I think it is very cool. It is edgy and not in your face and for me, it is more rebellious than louder." The actress's forthcoming film *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga* is slated to release on February 1.



'Doing comedy made me earn respectable position in the industry but being an actor, it is very important to play versatile roles. I don't want myself to get slotted under one category. It could be challenging to convince people now that I can do more than comedy.'

—Shreyas Talpade

Actress **NIMRAT KAUR**, who is returning as Tasneem Qureshi in the final season of Hollywood series *Homeland*, says she had a blast playing a negative character for the first time in her career. She said, "It was amazing. I had a wonderful time working with the team. The writers were brilliant. I really had an incredible time playing a negative role for the first time. It was very exciting and a lot of fun for me." Nimrat was a part of the fourth season of the American spy thriller.



Actress **ANNE HATHAWAY**, who worked in the two *The Princess Diaries* films, has confirmed that she wants to do a third installment of the romantic comedy film franchise and so did her co-star Julie Andrews. As for how far the new project is in development, the Academy Award-winning actress said a script is ready for it. "There is a script for the third movie," she said during an appearance on *Watch What Happens Live* with her *Serenity* co-star Matthew McConaughey. "I want to do it, Julie wants to do it, and even Debra Martin-Chase (producer) wants to do it," she said.



WORD POWER

On the third day of the Jaipur Literature Festival, authors initiated a dialogue about how global best-selling writers are increasingly looking to get published in India

India's vibrant publishing market is attracting major international bestselling authors, who say that there is a great potential for their books to find a good readership in India.

Once a book becomes successful in the country where it is first published, international rights for the books are acquired by leading publishing houses in other countries. India, being the second largest publishing market in the world, is one hot spot where perhaps every successful author wants to be published.

Former British politician and bestselling novelist Jeffrey Archer, for instance, finds more readers in India than anywhere else in the world. In pure statistical terms, his books also sell more in India than anywhere else.

What message does it send to award-winning or bestselling authors from other countries? That the market is ripe for harvest.

"I think there is a lot of potential here; I know some great writers from India, they write from their heart. I also think it is a great place to publish and I can only see more and more authors coming here," Australian author Markus Zusak of *The Book Thief* fame said on the sidelines of the festival.

Scottish novelist, playwright and short story writer Irvine Welsh echoed similar sentiments, stating that people in India are reading "a lot of books."

He said that festivals like the

REPRESENTING WOMEN TAKING CHARGE OF THEIR OWN LIVES, OXFORD DICTIONARY ANNOUNCED *NARI SHAKTI* AS THE HINDI WORD OF THE YEAR 2018. IT HAS ATTRACTED A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION AND REFLECTS ETHOS, MOOD AND PREOCCUPATIONS OF THE PAST YEAR



JLF also provide a platform for authors like him to find new readers. "I think there is a great potential, he said.

Pulitzer Prize winning author Andrew Sean Greer, who is on a marathon book tour of India, attending lit fests in Chennai and Kolkata before coming to Jaipur, said that he is excited about the new readers his book "Less" is finding in India.

"In the United States, we don't have a culture of reading many books from outside. We do not import much whereas I find it to be very different here," Greer said.

He said winning an award like the Pulitzer does contribute to international recognition, but maintained that it is ultimately up to the readers, and the reading culture at large.

"When I come to festivals like this in India, the one thing that surprises me most is people here read and come. I am saying this because people have asked me questions about my

'gay' protagonist, which means they have read my book.

"Otherwise, they say that I have not read your book, or have read only half. There is genuine interest among readers and I think right now it's the place where every writer wants to be," Greer added.

Greer also said that while India is a "fascinating market" for international authors, Indian authors should also be published in other countries.

A slew of international authors, including the recipients of major literary awards and those who are a sensation in themselves like Archer, have gathered here to participate in the JLF.

In addition, Oxford Dictionary announced that *Nari Shakti* as its Hindi Word of the Year for 2018 at the festival.

"The Hindi Word of the Year is a word or expression that has attracted a great deal of attention and reflects the ethos, mood or preoccupations of the past year," a spokesperson from the Oxford Dictionary said.

Derived from Sanskrit, *Nari* means 'woman' and *Shakti* means 'power.' "Today the term is used to symbolise women taking charge of their own lives," the statement added.

The Hindi Word of the Year was chosen by the Oxford Dictionaries team in India with the help of an advisory panel of language experts including Ashok Kumar Sharma, Kritika Agrawal and Namita Gokhale among others.

—IANS

The highest honour

As some colossal contributions get recognised with the Padma awards, **SHANKAR MAHADEVAN** and **MANOJ BAJPAYEE** talk about setting new goals

EHSAAAN AND LOY EQUIVALENTS OF AWARD: SHANKAR



Singer-composer Shankar Mahadevan feels "humbled and honoured" on being chosen for the Padma Shri. He also considers his musical partners Ehsaan Noorani and Loy Mendonsa as equal recipients of the country's fourth-highest civilian honour.

"It's an honour to be recognised by the government of India. It is the fourth-highest civilian honour in the country. I don't know if I am worthy of this but I definitely feel happy," said Shankar.

"A lot of my music has been created with my two partners — Ehsaan and Loy so, I would consider them as equal recipients of the award," added the National award winner.

The trio have given many hits for films like *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag*, *Kal Ho Naa Ho*, *Dil Chahta Hai* and *Lakshya*.

Getting Padma Shri means that "I have to work harder. There's more melodious music coming up."

"We are doing very good films. We are doing *Chhapaak* with (filmmaker) Meghna Gulzar, *Saaho*, *The Zoya Factor* and *Panga*," said the singer, who is currently being lauded for his work in *Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi*.

"I am glad that people are recognising that work and people are also liking the movie. I really hope it does well. Kangana (Ranaut) is fabulous in the film. It's a very important movie for the next generation to know about such an important character," he said about the film.

Teaching music to underprivileged children also keeps him busy. "Life is good," he concluded.

FEELING ECSTATIC: MANOJ BAJPAYEE



Actor Manoj Bajpayee is feeling "ecstatic" as his work has been recognised by the "highest office." He says getting a Padma Shri is an honour for "your journey and conviction."

"It's a huge honour for any professional because it's not an honour for just one particular film or performance. It's an honour for your journey, for your conviction and

belief that you had," Manoj said. "Also, for the government it's a way of recognising contribution that one has made to cinema. So yes, I am feeling very happy about it. My family, friends and fans have been sending messages to me. I am feeling ecstatic that my work has been recognised by the highest office," he added.

Since his debut in Bollywood in mid-1990s, the National Award-winner has acted in mainstream as well as indie films. Last year, the *Bandit Queen* actor featured in seven films like *Aiyaary*, *Baaghi 2*, *Missing*, *Satyameva Jayate*, *Gali Guleyan*, *Love Sonia* and *Bhonsle*.

"I have always been very careful with my career. I don't need to be extra careful (after this recognition). I am known for the work that I do. So, the similar pattern will go on... choosing the films which matter to me... which are coming from my own conviction and belief," said Manoj.

"People who have been watching my performances, my films, have been a big support. If they are proud of my filmography and work, I am proud of what I have done," he added. He will be next seen in *Sonchiriya*, which will hit the screens on March 1. The film is set in the 1970s, and focusses on a small town ruled by dacoits.

POSTHUMOUS AWARDEES BHUPEN HAZARIKA AND KADER KHAN



Recognising the colossal contribution of Northeast's multi-faceted cultural icon Bhupen Hazarika, he was picked posthumously to be conferred the Bharat Ratna, while late Bollywood actor Kader Khan has been named for the Padma Shri honour by the government.

"The songs and music of Bhupen Hazarika are admired by people across generations. From them radiates the message of justice, harmony and brotherhood. He popularised India's musical traditions globally. Happy that the Bharat Ratna has been conferred on Bhupen da," tweeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

With a magnificent oeuvre as a poet, music composer, singer, actor, journalist, author and filmmaker, Hazarika continues to be regarded as a cultural philosopher.

The other posthumous award in this year's list is for Kader Khan, who died in December last year after prolonged illness in Canada. He has been recognised for his immense contribution to the world of films as a writer and actor par excellence. He was 81. —IANS

INDIA'S OSCAR JOURNEY

With more than 45 submissions over the years, only six films have been successful in securing the Academy Award nominations



India shares quite a tumultuous relationship with the Academy Awards. The country has submitted over 45 films for nomination in the past, only a fraction of which have been successful in securing so. With 2018 film, *Period. End of Sentence* being nominated in the Best Documentary Short Subject category this year, here's a look at the other Indian films that have had the privilege of an Oscar nomination.

MOTHER INDIA (1957)
Mehboob Khan's *Mother India* starring Nargis and Sunil Dutt is a poignant film that narrates the hardships endured by a destitute village woman named Radha, and how she meanders through them and the rigmarole of dreary life, with the utmost adherence to morals. The film presents a moving picture of the

rough times that an average Indian woman goes through, and very movingly gives the message of significance of compassion, values and integrity. The film lost by one vote.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH FACES (1978)
Nominated for an Academy Award for Documentary short subject, Vidhu Vinod Chopra's *An Encounter With Faces* is a heartwarming attempt in capturing the plight, perspectives and dimensions of delinquent children of Mumbai. Emotionally rousing, the film looks at their position — socially and culturally in the Indian societal fabric.

SALAAM BOMBAY (1988)
Arguably one of the finest films produced by India, Mira Nair's *Salaam Bombay!* is a class apart in master storytelling.

Movingly strung together by master director and raconteur Nair, the film presents a bleak picture of the gaps prevalent in erstwhile Indian society.

LAGAAN (2001)
Intriguing, absorbing and genuine, Ashutosh Gowariker's magnum opus *Lagaan* is often looked at as a benchmark of excellence in Indian films. Set in pre-independent India, the film looks at the injustice of British colonialism meted on Indians through arbitrary taxes and how these Indians stake their rightful claim to their motherland through a game of cricket. Powered with inspired performances from Aamir Khan, Gracy Singh, Rachel Shelley and Paul Blackthorne, *Lagaan* invokes a sense of belonging, patriotism and love in the hearts of the audience.

LITTLE TERRORIST (2005)
Nominated for the 2005 Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film, Ashvin Kumar's *Little Terrorist* is a film about a Muslim boy from Pakistan who mistakenly crosses the border to India and finds an unexpected friend and ally in a Hindu Brahmin boy, Bhola. A story of acceptance, the film seeks to present a picture of the various prejudices we have as a society and how there exist a few good people that overlook these societal differences and espouse for a society of unity, love, happiness and inclusion.

WATER (2007)
An Indo-Canadian film, Deepa Mehta's *Water* is the last installment of her 'Elements' trilogy that focusses on the stark misogyny, patriarchy and socio-cultural deprivation faced by widows in

India. Blunt, rustic and brutally honest, the films tells the story of a poverty-stricken widow as she fights convention and society to escape from the dogmas of India's patriarchal, anti-feminist set-up.

PERIOD. END OF SENTENCE (2018)
Nominated in the Documentary Short Subject, Rayka Zehtabchi's *Period. End of Sentence* looks at the story of real life Pad-Man Arunachalam Muruganathan's journey of fighting against the social stigma that surrounds menstruation and the plight of Indian women. Succinctly put and powerfully told, the film is a projection of the current behavioural tendencies of the Indian social psyche, and challenges to change it. (The Oscars will be telecast on Star Movies and Star Movies Select HD at 6.30 pm on February 25.)

RESTRICT SCREEN TIME

With addiction and cyberbullying at the top of the list, there are multiple pros and cons of growing up amid a plethora of devices and the internet, says MEENAL ARORA

Parenting in the digital age has a whole new meaning as the psychological development of children is highly impacted by digital media. Today, digital exposure has a huge part to play in the physical and mental growth and development of children. Growing up in this era has benefits like making information to entertainment available on our fingertips. However, this is only one side of the coin. With addiction and cyberbullying at the top of the list, there are multiple negative aspects of growing up amidst a plethora of devices and the internet.

The question that most parents have is whether they should be worried?

Effect of excess exposure to digital media

Numerous parents who watch their children become accustomed to spending hours on their computers or tablets are concerned about their well-being and with good reason. This worry is not baseless as too much use of digital devices has been proven to negatively impact the physical as well as mental health of children. In fact, the National Health Service (NHS) of UK recently reported that 11 to 19-year-olds with mental disorders are more likely to be regular social media users. Further, it is common knowledge that too much digital exposure cuts down the time spent on healthy outdoor play. This leads to problems such as laziness, obesity and even depression. Moreover, too much digital media eventually has an impact of the eyes. The negative impact, therefore, is significant. However, the situation does not need to become this dire or worrisome.

The Center for Communication and Development Studies recently found that 25 per cent of all Indian children have access to smartphones and 18 per cent use smartphones solely as educational tools. With the inter-



net providing a wealth of knowledge to young ones, digital media can be used as a smart tool to bolster knowledge and increase exposure to a massive amount of useful information. Furthermore, exposure to media can polish the reading, writing and critical thinking skills of children. It can teach them how to form opinions and then express these opinions confidently among their peers.

Technology in the classroom: Enhancing education in the digital age

As the advantages of exposing children to digital media become apparent, schools have started equipping themselves with digital devices that

enhance the process of teaching. Leading schools in India are now offering technology-aided learning, which includes interactive white-boards, robotic learning systems, online learning platforms, e-books and much more. The younger generation is much more comfortable reading and learning digital text than printed text, which is why schools are employing digital media, accepting it as a friend and not a foe.

Moreover, as the job landscape is pervaded by technology, jobs across all industries are becoming tech-centric to a certain degree. In such a scenario, it is essential for students to be aware of leading technologies such as data analytics,

WITH INTERNET PROVIDING A WEALTH OF FACTS TO YOUNG ONES, DIGITAL MEDIA CAN BE USED AS A SMART TOOL TO BOLSTER KNOWLEDGE AND INCREASE EXPOSURE TO A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF USEFUL INFORMATION

artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. Since these skills are much better grasped through practical and not just theoretical teaching methods, it is of utmost importance to introduce digital technology from children from an early age.

Interaction not isolation, learning not addiction

Technology is all around us and our children are going to be influenced by it, one way or another. The key is for parents and educators to encourage healthy internet and digital media practices. Parents must regulate screen time for children and place some degree of parental controls on the content that children have access to. Furthermore, children should be

made completely aware about the repercussions of excessive digital media usage. They must also create a safe space wherein children can freely talk about their experience with digital media.

By having conversations and building confidence in children, parents can make sure that digital media is used as a means of interaction and not isolation. That the wealth of knowledge on the internet only leads to learning and not addiction. With healthy regulation in place, parenting in the digital age can be much more efficient and much less daunting. With family movie nights, multi-player online gaming and many other ways to bond as a family, it can in fact make parenting much more fun.



MANTRA FOR PEACE, PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY

We can't have value-based economics or principled politics without working in accordance with ancient spiritual wisdom, says RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI



We all wish to live in a peaceful and harmonious society. However, one in which every individual or group is self-centred — is not a society in the true sense of the word, for it lacks enduring unity of minds or commonality of abiding interests of its people. Thus, it falls short of an important cohesive force or uniting factor that should give to it solidarity and integrity. Even if the groups constituting it, have some common set of customs and social norms, these groups or individuals often break these when their self-interests clash with those of others. Such a society is, at best, a loosely-knit network of communities, classes, institutions or nations, each one of which thrives by manipulating the others for its own growth. And, a logical consequence of this is that, when a situation arises for a group to choose between what is of benefit to all and what is of greater well-being to that group, it opts for the latter, thus unleashing the forces of disruption, conflict and split.

In such a weak-kneed society, pressures exerted by each ego-centric cultural, religious, ethnic, caste or political group would naturally create social, political and economic tensions. These would further affect law and order as well as stability. It would be a set-back to united efforts to attain set goals. Thus, these would work as obstacles and cause stagnation, disturbance, deadlock and at times, even destruction. The individuals and groups, in such a society, may, in common parlance, be known as civilised and they may, in their daily life, show manners and etiquette but, obsessed by their narrow interests, they can go to any length and adopt any means to achieve their coveted goals even though these are detrimental to other sections of society or humankind as a whole.

For example, a self-centred individual, who has high influence in power circles, may get a piece of prime land or a flat allotted to him by manipulating or using political pressure even though more than a hundred persons, equally entitled, may have been waiting ahead of him in the queue, for years. Similarly, a self-centred community may demand certain advantages or benefits from some political party or a powerful politician, promising, in turn, voting en bloc for that party or politician and paying no heed to the fact that these demands are unreasonable and may cause communal disharmony. Thus, the fact that a person or a community is civilised, according to common usage of the word, is no guarantee for stability and progress if the people are not prepared to make even a little sacrifice for the common good of all, in which their own well-being also is assured. So, the mantra for peace, progress and prosperity of all is to tune our mind to the wisdom, summed up in the famous Sanskrit slogan: "Sarvay bhavantu sukhina, sarvay santu niramaya..." which means "Let all be happy and prosperous and let all be healthy". Unless and until this forms the basis of our politics, economics and business or industrial management, conflict, confrontation, tension and turmoil will always remain. But the question is how can we cultivate this attitude? For this, the second mantra is "Vasudhaiv kutumbakam" which means that the whole world is our family.

Without working in accordance with this ancient spiritual wisdom, neither can we have principled politics nor can we have value-based economics and neither can we have peace or make progress which would give us real happiness. In short, without following these two precepts or mantras we cannot have a value-based society.

Raising a child independently even if one has support from the family is a challenge that requires a lot of mental toughness and positive attitude towards life. Few of the biggest roadblocks are financial strangulation, loneliness, unwanted questions from the so-called society and emotional stress. The situation is just like a coin which has two disparate faces — one, the parent feels quite confident while raising their child on their own, making choices and living a life on his/her own terms. Whereas the other side brings excruciating pain of loneliness, dejection, anxiety and uncertainty.

There are different reasons why a person becomes a single-parent. They may choose this lifestyle. The challenges faced by him/her vary according to their circumstances. Here are few good practices which can be helpful if you are a single-parent.

BE FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT

This is one topic which appears in almost every relationship with or without a spouse. It's better to have your own source of income irrespective of your family background, alimony or anything else. Being financially independent gives you and your child the freedom to live life your way. Nowadays, there are lots of options as a career to choose like being a blogger, teacher, freelance from home and what not.

DEALING WITH EMOTIONAL STRESS

All human beings need support — whether it's someone to watch the kids while you run out to do errands or simply someone to talk to when you feel

Stronger than ever

Being a single parent comes with a few roadblocks like financial strangulation, loneliness, unwanted questions from the so-called society and emotional stress, says VIVEK SHARMA



overwhelmed. The absence of such person abruptly or unwillingly creates a lot of trouble. You can ask friends and family members for help or could join a single-parent support group, or, if finances allow, hire a trusted sitter to help out with the kids or someone to assist with housework.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Come out of your comfort zone. We have a tendency of not meeting people, crying in loneliness and pretending to be happy in front of others. Just be yourself, no need to punish yourself for something which was beyond your control. Look at things the way they are. Do not procrastinate or blow-up things out of proportion as it doesn't lead anyone anywhere. Life is like a big hard disk which captures every single event that happens in our lives. The only way to move on in life is to create more pleasant events rather than focusing on forgetting pre-recorded ones.

MANAGING QUESTIONS ASKED TO THE CHILD

Sometimes, we can't choose people around us, but we can certainly choose whom to associate with and to avoid. People who can't break you will try to influence your child negatively by asking uncomfortable questions. The best way to handle this is to tell the truth to your child. Questions will come up about the changes in your family, or about the absence of one parent. Answer your child's questions in an open, honest and age-appropriate way. Make sure that your child gets the help and support he/she needs to deal with difficult emotions.

“ If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything. —Mark Twain ”

FISH OIL MAY NOT IMPROVE ASTHMA

Fish oil supplements, once touted as the natural substance that could alleviate many of your chronic ailments, may not prove to be helpful to obese adolescents and young adults with uncontrolled asthma, new research suggests.



The study, published in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, showed that four grams of fish oil a day for six months did not improve asthma control, as measured by a standard asthma control questionnaire, breathing tests, urgent care visits and severe asthma exacerbations.

"We don't know why asthma control in obese patients is more difficult, but there is growing evidence that obesity causes systemic inflammation," said lead author Jason E. Lang, Associate Professor at the Duke University in the US. "Because the omega-3 fatty acids in fish oil have anti-inflammatory properties, we wanted to test whether fish oil would have therapeutic benefits for these patients," Lang added.

PREGNANCY CAN RAISE RISK OF HEART DISEASE

Women who have given birth have a higher chance of developing heart disease and strokes than those who are childless, a new study says.



Previous studies have shown that women usually show changes in vascular properties, blood volume and heart rates during pregnancy. However, the impact of pregnancy on subsequent heart disease has been debated.

In the new study, a team from the Huazhong University of Science and Technology in China, reviewed 10 studies. It involved nearly three million women worldwide, with more than 150,000 diagnosed with heart disease or strokes during the following six to 52 years. The findings, published in the European Society of Cardiology journal, showed that giving birth has a 14 per cent higher risk of heart disease and strokes.

In addition, there was a significant association between the number of pregnancies and the risk of cardiovascular disease.

BRAIN CHEMICAL BEHIND FATTY FOOD CRAVING

Do you feel the urge to binge on golden hot chips, cheesy pizza, crispy chicken, heartwarming hamburgers, all when on a diet? Researchers have identified new brain circuits that may act as a brake on binge eating and junk food craving.



In the study, led by a team from the University of Texas at Galveston on rats who had spent a month eating a low-fat diet, the team successfully inhibited the fatty food seeking behaviours.

"Craving for foods high in fat, this includes many junk foods — is an important part of obesity and binge eating," said Jonathan Hommel, Assistant Professor at the University of Texas in the US.

"When trying to lose weight people often strive to avoid fatty foods, which ironically increases motivation and craving for these foods and can lead to overeating. Even worse, the longer someone abstains from fatty foods, the greater the cravings," Hommel added. Several studies have demonstrated that denying certain foods causes increased craving and motivation for that food. However, the brain mechanisms that lead to this type of overeating are not known.

MEMORY LOSS IN ALZHEIMER'S CAN BE RESTORED

Researchers have developed a novel approach that may one day make it possible to reverse memory loss, caused by Alzheimer's disease.



The team, led by University at Buffalo scientists, found that by focusing on gene changes caused by influences other than DNA sequences, called epigenetics, it was possible to reverse memory decline in an animal model of Alzheimer's.

"We have not only identified the epigenetic factors that contribute to the memory loss, but we also found ways to temporarily reverse them in an animal model of Alzheimer's," said Zhen Yan, Professor at University at Buffalo in the US.

The research was conducted on mouse models carrying gene mutations for familial Alzheimer's, where more than one member of a family has the disease and on post-mortem brain tissues from Alzheimer's patients. It is caused from both genetic and environmental risk factors, such as ageing.

OPTIMISM MAY LOWER DIABETES RISK

While it is known that a positive personality can help one succeed in life, a new study suggests that traits such as optimism may actually help reduce the risk of developing Type-2 diabetes.



The study examined whether personality traits, including optimism, negativity, and hostility, were associated with the risk of developing Type-2 diabetes in postmenopausal women.

Depression and cynicism were found to be associated with an increased risk of diabetes. In addition, high levels of hostility were associated with high fasting glucose levels, insulin resistance, and prevalent diabetes. For the study, published in the journal Menopause, researchers followed 139,924 postmenopausal women amongst which 19,240 cases of Type-2 diabetes were identified. Compared with women who were least optimistic, women who were the most optimistic had a 12 per cent lower risk of incident diabetes, results showed.

