

SquarePetals

Global Webzine

FEATURE

Sanskrit Samvad

The Gurukul
Learning System
of India

DEFENCE

The Battle of Haldi Ghati

SOCIETY

Why Prosperity
Feels Increasingly
Expensive in
Modern India

Wisdom – From
Bhagvad Gita

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Unleashing
the Hero within

POETRY

You live in
my writing

Cage of
Lonliness

FLAVOR SPECIAL

Papad
Biryani

COVER STORY

Sarah Ezekiel

*a multi talented actress
and model from Nigeria.*



From The Desk of Editor-in-Chief

Hello dear readers

This edition of SquarePetals is a celebration of talent, tradition, and thought-provoking reflection—bringing together voices that inspire, challenge, and delight.

We open with our Cover Story on Sarah Ezekiel, a multi-talented actress and model from Nigeria whose journey embodies creativity, resilience, and global artistry. Her story sets the tone for an edition that bridges cultures and perspectives.

In our Feature, “Sanskrit Samvad”, we revisit the Gurukul Learning System of India, exploring how ancient wisdom continues to shape modern education. History comes alive in the Defence section with “The Battle of Haldi Ghati”, a timeless tale of valor and sacrifice.

Turning to society, “Why Prosperity Feels Increasingly Expensive in Modern India” examines the paradox of growth and affordability, while “Wisdom from the Bhagavad Gita” offers timeless guidance for navigating life’s complexities.

Personal empowerment shines through “Unleashing the Hero Within”, reminding us that courage and transformation begin from within. Poetry enriches this edition with “You Live in My Writing” and “Cage of Loneliness”, heartfelt verses that capture emotion in its purest form.

And to add flavor to thought, “Papad Biryani” in our Flavor Special section brings culinary creativity to the table, proving that culture is savored not only in words but also in taste.

Together, these contributions form a tapestry of heritage, wisdom, creativity, and resilience. This edition is not just about reading—it is about experiencing the many dimensions of human spirit.

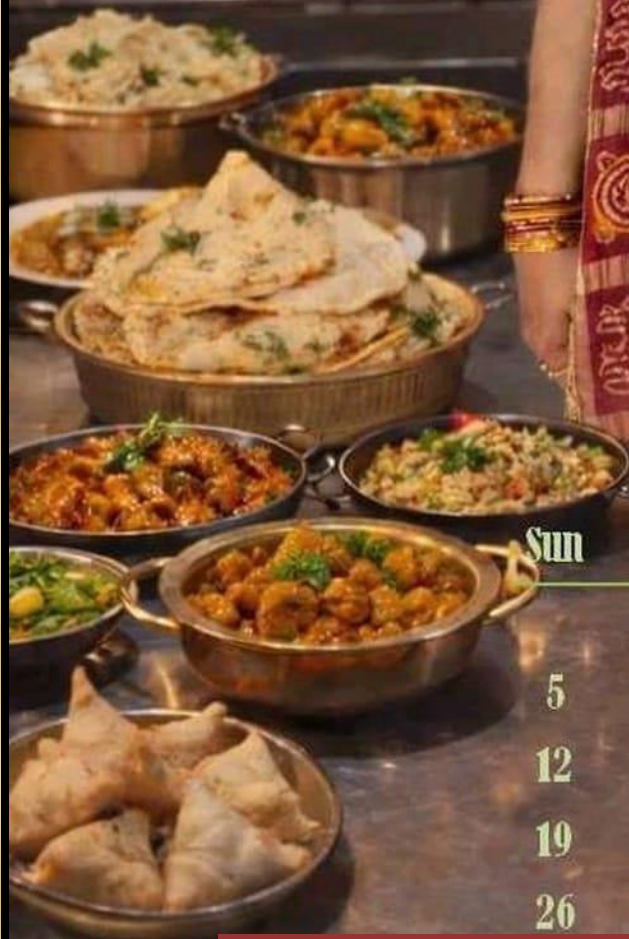


Dr. Sansriti Johri
Editor-in-Chief – SquarePetals Global Webzine

Falguni Ashwin Somaiya

Award Winner Chef
Author & Mentor

*Great food is not made
by recipes, but by care*



July 2026

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INSPIRING MINDS. SHAPING TOMORROW.



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Dr. Sansriti Johri is an award-winning author and entrepreneur with a distinguished career in public service. A passionate advocate of human rights and social justice, she leads with integrity, compassion and purpose.



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Dr. Shashwat Johri is a dynamic leader, author and changemaker. His achievements reflect his dedication to creativity, excellence and inspiring young minds worldwide.



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- 👑 Former Miss Teen India – United Nations
- 📖 Dr. Sunehri Johri is a passionate writer and youth advocate committed to positive change, leadership and the empowerment of the next generation.



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FLAVOR SPECIAL

Papad Biryani

SquarePetals Podcasts Presents

Sunehri Baatein

Episode 1

Host: Dr. Sunehri Johri

Guest: Sonal Shah
Singer, Surmani Awardee

..Podcast..

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Sunehri Batein ✨ Ft. Sonal Shah Sufi Singer, hosted by Dr. Sunehri Johri

The Podcast is now available.

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YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/3zgSzsYTloY?si=Vv5ljAfRoygXjp4z>

FACE OF NOLLYWOOD

Cover Story



Sarah Ezekiel

Meet Sarah Ezekiel a multi talented actress and model from Nigeria.

She hails from Bauchi state, Nigeria. She has featured in Orange TV Africa Productions.

My Child, Tears of an Orphan, Debacle, Too young to love and Silver Lining.

All these movies are on Orange TV Africa YouTube channel and Butterfly Cinema TV.

Take your time to watch these movies.

Sarah likes acting, traveling and meeting people.

Her naturalism places her above her counterparts in the industry. She is unique, creative and adaptable in playing different kinds of roles. She is the current face of Nollywood. Watch out for more entertaining movies featuring this dynamic actress.



Featuring

Sheri Garba of Gujarat



Sheri Garba (sheri meaning *street* or *lane*) is the authentic, soul-stirring foundation of Navratri in Gujarat. Long before massive club grounds, commercial ticket passes, and high-decibel sound systems emerged, Garba was born in the narrow neighborhood lanes (*pols*) and residential courtyards across Gujarati towns and villages.

What Makes Sheri Garba So Special?

First Prize Winner: Nupur Garba Group



Second Prize Winner: Sahiyar Garba Vrund



- **Community Core:** It brings together families, neighbors, and children right outside their homes. There are no entry fees or VIP passes—everyone in the neighborhood participates.
- **The Sacred Garbo:** At the center of the dancing circle sits a decorated shrine housing the **Garbo**—a perforated earthen pot containing a lighted lamp (*deepak*). It symbolizes the womb, life, and the omnipresent light of Goddess Amba.
- **Traditional Music:** Instead of modern DJ tracks, Sheri Garba relies on authentic *dholak*, rhythmic clapping (*taali*), and live folk singers performing devotional hymns.
- **Heritage & Attire:** Dancers wear traditional *Chaniya Choli* (for women) and *Kediyu* or *Dhoti-Kurta* (for men), adorned with intricate mirror work and traditional silver jewelry.

While commercial Garba events cater to huge crowds and modern spectacle, **Sheri Garba remains the living cultural heartbeat** of Navratri—preserving devotion, warmth, and centuries of tradition.

Sheri Garba is tradition in Gujarat. Women join in to sing and dance, worshipping Goddess Durga. There is an amazing atmosphere around, the

magic of beauty, decor, religion and divinity, along with cheerful fun moments and togetherness...

The Chief Guest for the evening was Dr. Sansriti Johri. The event was organized by Ms. Shuchita Shah, Dynamic Diamond Group. Ms. Mitali Shah & Ms. Jigna Vyas officiated as Judges for the wonderful Sheri Garba competition.



Third Prize Winner: Maa Sakti Garba

The Symbol: The word Garba comes from the Sanskrit word Garbha (womb).

The Ritual: Dancers move in concentric circles around a central Garbo (a perforated earthen lamp) or an idol of Amba.

The circular movement symbolizes the cycle of life, time, and eternity, with the unchanging Divine light at the core.

Style: Emphasizes hand gestures, rhythmic clapping (ek taali, do taali, teen taali), and graceful body sways.

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WISDOM

If you truly want to understand me, I will hand you the Gita.

When your heart begins to break... read the second chapter. You will realize that what is breaking is not you.

When you don't feel like doing your work... read the third chapter. You will understand that running away from work is like running away from life.

When your mind repeatedly wanders... read the sixth chapter. You will find the path to meditation.

When fear comes into your life... read the fourth chapter. Knowledge dispels darkness just as sunrise dispels night.
When success makes you arrogant... read chapters ten and eleven. You will realize that your ego is smaller than a speck of dust in front of that vastness.

When you cannot understand who I am... read chapter seven. You will begin to know yourself beyond the body.

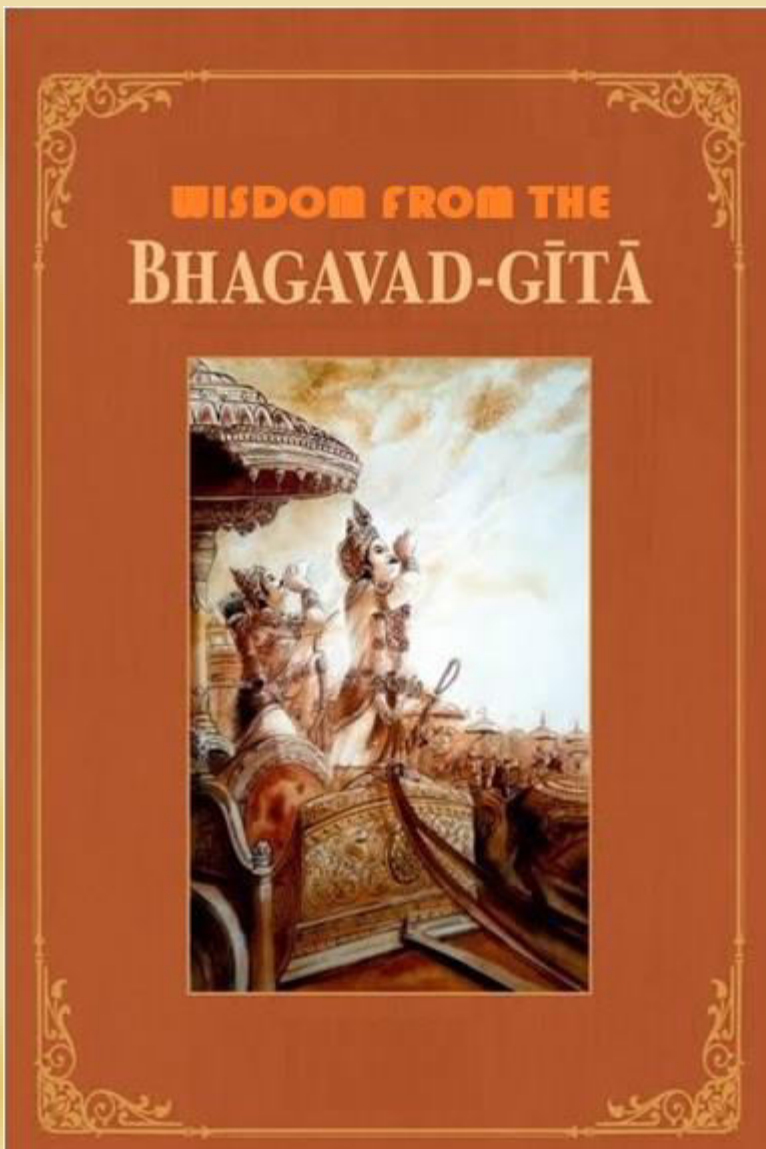
When love is lost... read chapter twelfth. You will discover the true meaning of devotion.

When you cannot decide what is right... read chapter eighteen. I will be waiting for you there.

When you get caught up in work (the hustle and bustle of life),
Remember:
Yoga: Karmasu Kaushalam.
Yoga is to perform actions with excellence (skill).

When you lose...
Remember:
You have control only over your actions, not over their results.

When the fear of death haunts you...
Remember: The soul is never born, never dies.
When the whole world seems against you...
Remember:
One awakened person is more powerful than a thousand sleeping ones.





I will not return... Because I have not gone anywhere. I am present in every moment, When you choose truth without fear... I am present in every decision, Where righteousness triumphs over convenience.

I am present in every work that is done with wisdom and selflessness. I am present in every heart where love still lives.

If you ever feel that darkness has descended upon the world... then do not seek a new religion. Don't look for a new God.

Don't look for a new miracle. Open the Gita.

Maybe...

You'll hear your own voice, not mine.

And the day you hear your own voice,

Understand—it has conquered the Kurukshetra of your life.

Then you won't need any baba, any religious guru, or any mediator.

Because the Gita's purpose isn't to make you a follower, but to make you the charioteer of your own life.

Your charioteer is the one who beats within you.

— Krishna

Dr. Virendra Johri
Concept and Production Chief
Inspired by Shree Bhagvad Gita



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THE PERFECT DESIGN: SCIENCE OF SANSKRIT SOUNDS

Sanskrit sound system is based on the physiological structure of the vocal tract.

कंठ्य (Throat)	तालव्य (Palate)	मूर्धन्य (Retroflex)	दन्त्य (Dental)	ओष्ठ्य (Labial)
क ख ग य ड	च छ ज झ ञ	ट ठ ड़ ढ ण	त थ द ध न	प फ ब भ म

This systematic arrangement trains the entire vocal apparatus, improves neuromuscular control, and harmonizes body and speech.

WHAT RESEARCH SAYS

- Improved memory and attention
- Enhanced brain connectivity
- Greater gray matter density in key brain regions
- Improved mood and emotional balance
- Better verbal fluency and comprehension
- Better academic performance
- Lower cortisol (stress hormone)
- Slower cognitive aging

WAYS TO EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF SANSKRIT

- | Chant Mantras Daily | Recite Shlokas and Stotras | Speak Sanskrit Regularly | Learn Sanskrit Shastra | Combine with Yoga & Pranayama |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| Calms the mind and balances emotions. | Improves memory, focus, and positivity. | Trains the brain for clarity and precision. | Enhances wisdom, logic, and perception. | Multiplies the benefits for body, mind & spirit. |

**SANSKRIT IS NOT JUST A LANGUAGE.
IT IS A COMPLETE NEUROSCIENCE AND WELLNESS SYSTEM.
SPEAK SANSKRIT. TRANSFORM YOURSELF.**

Sanskrit Samvad:

The word Dharma itself is formed from the root धृञ्, which essentially means “that which sustains.”

The answer is the unwavering commitment of a single scholar. Even if the scholar is not a Brahmin, he may still rise to the top position in Samvadah due to his merit — though he might face karmic dilemmas in the long run.

What decides true merit?

First and foremost: Total commitment and the will to dedicate his entire life to Sanskrit.

Secondarily: Good knowledge of Sanskrit, Hindi, and English, along with being tech-savvy enough to create posts and manage Samvadah's activities.

What will he gain? Immense Punya by dedicating his whole life to Sanskrit — and thus live a life truly worth living.

But is it ultimately worth it for him? Honestly, no — not in the ideal sense. The primary dharma of a Brahmin is to teach and perform yajñas. The propagation of Sanskrit is merely a natural byproduct of teaching shastric knowledge.

Therefore, the best path is for him to teach students and have them carry out much of the work. This is beneficial for the teacher, the students, and the entire audience of Samvadah.

What should he teach? Two things are enough:

He should be known as a true Arya — one who knows Sanskrit and has studied the Mahabharata directly in Sanskrit, not through translations. Nothing more is required.

Knowing Sanskrit is meaningless if one does not know Dharma. Sanskrit is the instrument to gain shastric knowledge and become an Arya.

In essence, the scholar should teach Sanskrit, instead teach the Mahabharata through Sanskrit, while simultaneously managing the activities of Samvadah himself or through his students. If the work grows too big for one person, he can invite another committed scholar to share the responsibilities (for example, one managing Samvadah and another managing Ramdootah).

Very few people will be qualified enough for this. But if anyone has the commitment to live such a life, he can gradually become qualified through practice and fulfil his Dharma.

If you feel inspired to commit your whole life to this cause, please leave a comment or write to us at samvadah@proton.me.

“Celebrating Sanskrit”

[Linktr.ee/samvadah](https://linktr.ee/samvadah)



जयतु संस्कृतं वदतु संस्कृतं



॥ ध्रुवा संस्कृतं ॥

देववाणी संस्कृत हमारी भाषाओं के जननी
संस्कृत भारतीय संस्कृति का मूल

हम क्या प्रदान करते हैं?

- *संस्कृत साहित्य: वेद, उपनिषद, पुराण, काव्य, नाटक और संस्कृत ग्रंथों का अध्ययन
- *सभी कक्षाओं के लिए क्लासेस: स्कूल, कॉलेज तथा सभी आयु वर्ग के विद्यार्थियों के लिए संस्कृत शिक्षण।
- *संस्कृत श्लोक: श्लोकों का सही उच्चारण, अर्थ और भाव सहित अध्ययन।

विशेषताएँ

- *भारतीय संस्कृति और परंपराओं का गहन अध्ययन
- *साहित्य एवं व्याकरण की विस्तृत समझ
- *व्याकरण की बारीकियों पर विशेष ध्यान
- *संस्कृत के माध्यम से वैदिक और वैश्विक ज्ञान से जुड़ाव

मोड

- *ऑनलाइन: कहीं से भी, कभी भी सीखें।
- *ऑफलाइन: सामने-सामने मार्गदर्शन के साथ प्रभावी शिक्षण।

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Why Prosperity Feels Increasingly Expensive in Modern India

“The middle class is often celebrated as the backbone of the nation. Yet increasingly, it feels like the backbone is carrying more weight than ever before.”



The salary arrives with reassuring punctuality. For a brief moment, optimism returns. The bank balance looks healthy. The future appears manageable. Life seems to be moving in the right direction.

Then the month begins.

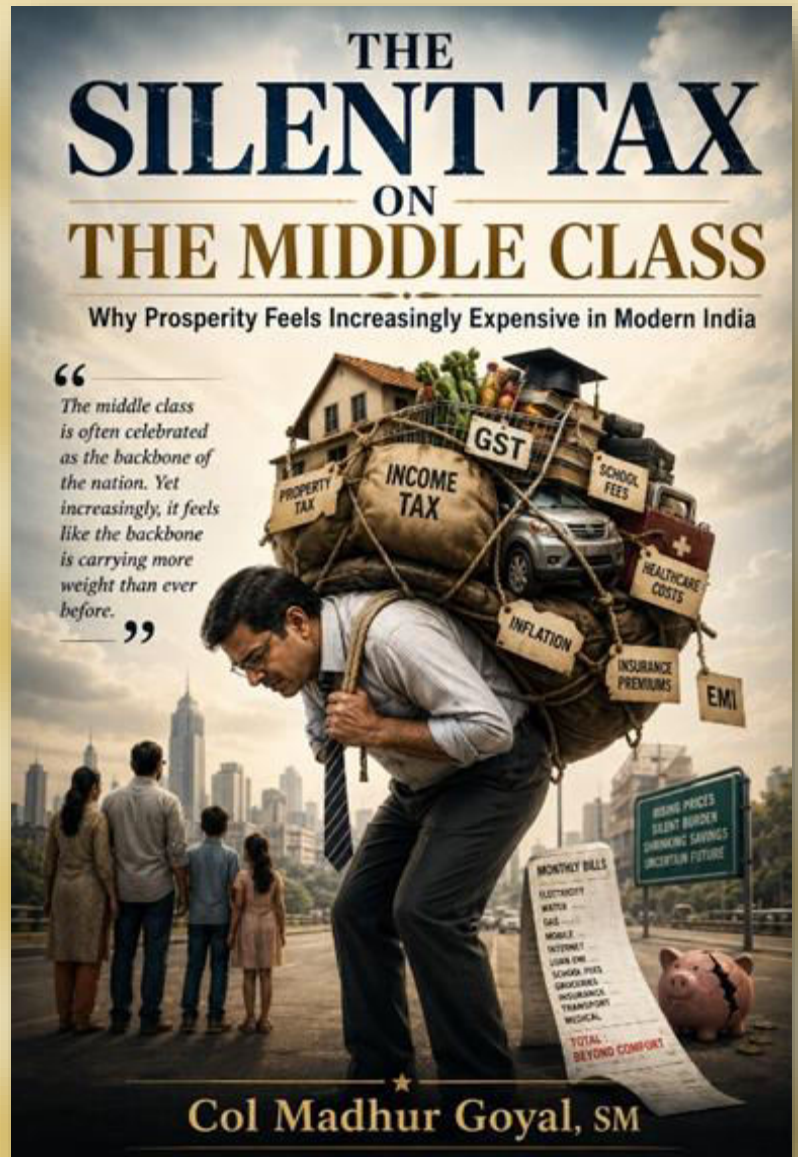
Income tax has already taken its share. The home loan installment quietly leaves the account. School fees arrive with military precision. Fuel prices rise again. Insurance premiums become due. Electricity bills appear. Medical expenses emerge unexpectedly. Groceries cost slightly more than they did last month. A family outing, once considered a simple pleasure, now requires financial planning. By the end of the month, a troubling question begins to surface.

“If the economy is growing, why does prosperity feel increasingly expensive?”

This question is not born out of pessimism. Nor is it political. It is deeply personal. It is the question being asked by millions of middle-class families who find themselves earning more than their parents ever did, yet often feeling less financially secure.

India today stands among the world's largest economies. New highways stretch across the landscape. Airports rival international standards. Digital payments have transformed commerce. The nation speaks confidently of becoming a global economic powerhouse. Yet inside countless homes, another conversation is taking place.

Parents worry about education costs. Young professionals worry about housing.



Families worry about healthcare. Retirees worry about savings. And almost everyone worries about whether tomorrow will be more expensive than today. The contradiction is striking. The nation feels wealthier. The citizen feels squeezed. Somewhere between these two realities lies what might be called the silent tax on the middle class. Not a tax legislated by Parliament. Not a tax printed in a budget document. But a cumulative burden created by direct taxation, indirect taxation, inflation, rising aspirations, increasing compliance costs, and the growing expense of maintaining what was once considered an ordinary standard of living.

The Invisible Workhorse

The middle class occupies a curious position in every society. The poor attract welfare programs. The wealthy attract investment opportunities. The middle class attracts bills.

It is the segment that pays taxes, purchases homes, funds education, supports financial markets, drives consumer demand, and finances much of the nation's economic activity. If the economy were a grand orchestra, the middle class would be the percussion section which is rarely noticed, yet essential to maintaining rhythm.

Without it, growth slows. Consumption weakens. Confidence evaporates. Yet despite its importance, the middle class often finds itself caught in a peculiar economic paradox. It is considered prosperous enough to receive limited assistance, yet not prosperous enough to escape financial anxiety. It is expected to save, invest, insure itself, educate its children, support ageing parents, prepare for retirement, and simultaneously contribute significantly to government revenues. The result is a life lived under constant financial calculation.

Every purchase becomes a decision. Every aspiration acquires a price tag. Every dream arrives with an EMI.

Beyond Income Tax: The Many Journeys of a Rupee

Most discussions about taxation begin and end with income tax. Yet the modern middle-class citizen experiences something far more extensive. A rupee earned is often taxed before it reaches the bank account. The same rupee is taxed again when spent. And sometimes taxed again when invested, transferred, inherited, or converted into assets. Consider a simple day in urban India. The citizen drives to work.

Fuel contains taxes. He purchases coffee. GST applies. He pays a mobile bill. Taxes apply. He books travel. Taxes apply. He buys insurance. Taxes apply. He dines at a restaurant. Taxes apply. He purchases a vehicle. Taxes apply. He buys a home. Stamp duties, registration fees, and various charges appear. Individually, none of these taxes appears unreasonable. Collectively, however, they create a persistent sense that income is being stretched thinner at every stage of its journey.

The issue is not taxation itself. Every civilized society requires revenue. Roads must be built. Defence must be funded. Infrastructure must be maintained. Public institutions must function. The real issue is cumulative burden. A burden that is often difficult to quantify but impossible to ignore.

THE STORY OF INDIAN WARFARE - June 18, 1576: The Pass of Blood - The Battle of Haldighati

This is a serialization of the book 'India's Battlefields from Kurukshetra to Balakot' by international award-winning author Ajay Singh. The book (and the series) covers the major battles fought on India's battlefields.



Highlights:

- ✚ June 18, 2026, marks the 450th anniversary of the Battle of Haldighati, in which Maharana Pratap of Mewar fiercely resisted the Mughal expansion under Emperor Akbar.
- ✚ Despite being outnumbered, Rana Pratap's strategic use of the terrain and the bravery of his Rajput, Afghan, and Bhil warriors made it a legendary struggle.
- ✚ While tactically a Mughal victory, it failed to subdue Mewar, solidifying Rana Pratap's legacy as an unbowed symbol of Indian resistance.

Few battles have captured the collective imagination of Indians as much as Haldighati. Though nowhere near the scale of the titanic struggles at Panipat, Talikota, Plassey or Tarain, it still had a lasting impact and stands out as a tale of Indian valour in the face of overwhelming odds.

Akbar, the grandson of Babur, had expanded the Mughal Empire from Kandahar to Bengal and up to Gujarat in the South. Most rulers had either acceded to his sovereignty or had been won over by marriages. Yet Mewar, the strongest Rajput kingdom, refused to submit to his authority and held on steadfastly.

Akbar launched a campaign to subjugate Mewar by force, and in 1567, he marched out at the head of a large army to capture Chittor, its capital. The Rana of Mewar, Raja Uday Singh, was urged to leave the besieged fort and take refuge in the hills of southern Rajasthan. After a five-month-long siege, Chittor finally fell on February 25, 1568, and its defenders were killed virtually to a man.

Akbar also ordered the slaughter of over 20,000 innocent civilians of the fort in an orgy of vengeance that went on for a week after its capture. This remains a lasting blot on his legacy.

The loss of their capital did not curb the zeal of the Mewar rulers. Rather, it inflamed it. Uday Singh founded the new city of Udaipur and established his capital in Gogunda, in the Aravalli Hills. With his death in 1572, his son, Rana Pratap, took over the mantle, and the struggle continued.

Akbar tried to make peace with the recalcitrant ruler of Mewar, even sending his emissaries to Rana Pratap in an effort to win him over. But Rana Pratap refused to acquiesce unless his capital, Chittor, was handed back to him. Finally, in the spring of 1576, Akbar dispatched a large army under the command of his own brother-in-law, Man Singh—himself a Kachwaha Rajput - Rajput—to bring the rebellious Rana to his knees.

Man Singh's army had around 5,000 of his own Kachwaha Rajputs and around 5,000 Mughal and Afghan troops, along with 100 elephants.

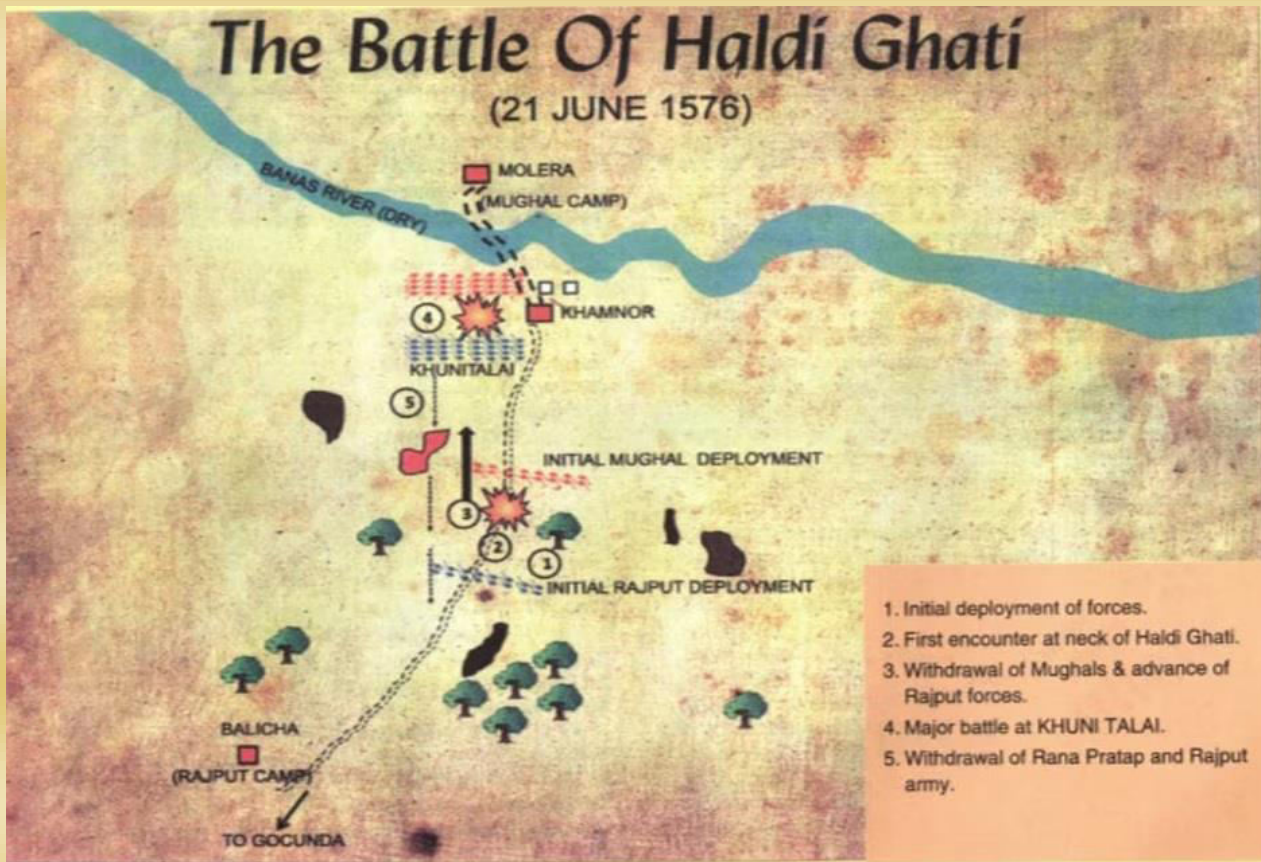
No cannon or heavy cavalry were carried because of the problems of transporting them across that difficult terrain.

Rana Pratap received news of Man Singh's move and moved out of his Capital, Gogunda, to take up positions at Haldighati. The narrow, two kilometer long pass, permitting only one horseman to pass through at a time, and its forested hills made it a strong defensive feature.

The soil and crumbly rocks around it were pale yellow, perhaps due to high sulphur content, giving it its name – Haldighati. The yellow soil around the pass would soon be stained red with blood, earning it another name, Khooni Ghati or the Pass of Blood.

Rana Pratap had a force of around 3,000 Sisodiya Rajput warriors and a contingent of 500 Afghan horsemen under Hakim Khan Suri. Around 1,000 Bhils, local tribesmen who knew the area intimately and were skilled archers, also join him. Though outnumbered by around 1:2.5, the Rana was in a strong defensive position. The rugged terrain of Haldighati nullified the numerical superiority of the Mughal forces.

Man Singh's forces reached the vicinity in mid-June and camped on the flat ground short of the pass near Khamnor village and the Banas River.



He did not attack, but waited for Rana Pratap to make the next move. For a week or so, the two armies remained static in their positions, raiding and skirmishing without decisive combat.

Finally, on June 18, 1576, Rana Pratap left his positions at Haldighati and advanced to engage the Mughal forces.

It is not clear why Rana Pratap chose to leave his strong defensive positions for an open ground where the Mughals would be at an advantage. Some say it was intended to be just a raid that went awry. Others say the Rajput concept of a "fair fight" led them out, prompted by calls of cowardice from their Rajput kinsmen on the other side.

Whatever the reason, the Rajput army moved out to the sound of drums, ranbankuras and war cries and arrayed themselves at the mouth of the pass in the traditional order of Haraval (Vanguard), Chandawal (Rear Guard), Vam Parswa and Dakshin Parshwa (Left and Right Wings). Rana Pratap himself was in the centre, in his distinctive white tunic atop his war horse Chetak, who would himself acquire a kind of immortality in the lore of Indian warfare.

The Mughals arrayed themselves similarly. But Man Singh's numerical advantage enabled him to maintain a reserve (Iltimish) of around 1,000 cavalry.

The Rajputs attacked first at around 8 a.m. from the left flank as around 1,000 Rajput and Afghan horsemen slammed through the Mughal vanguard and hit its right flank. On the right, a similar attack was launched with equal ferocity. The combined weight of the attacks on both flanks forced the Mughals to give way, and the troops began breaking ranks. It was only the Sayyids of Barhi on the right flank who held on and prevented a complete breakthrough.

With his formation about to break, Man Singh launched his Iltimish of 1,000 cavalry to stabilise the situation.

As the cavalry moved forward, amidst the troops running in panic, Mihtar Khan, the Commander of the reserves, shouted out, "The Emperor is coming. Akbar Badshah himself is coming." The pronouncement did the trick. The ranks stopped their withdrawal and beefed up with the timely arrival of their cavalry, held their positions, preventing any further breakthrough by the Rajputs.

It was now around 11 a.m., and the Rajputs had been fighting for over three hours. Exhaustion and heat were taking their toll, and slowly the Mughals-or more appropriately, Man Singh's Kachwaha Rajputs – were gaining the upper hand.

Rana Pratap had only one reserve, the small pool of elephants, which he launched to charge the Mughal lines. The Mughals countered by bringing up their own elephants. Elephants of both sides clashed on the battlefield, cheered on by their respective soldiers.

In an epic clash, Lona, the Rajput war elephant, clashed with Gujmukut, the Mughal champion, goring each other with their tusks until Lona succumbed to his wounds and was captured. One by one, Rana Pratap's elephants were killed or captured and he lost his final card.

With the situation becoming critical, Rana Pratap launched a final attack directed at Man Singh himself. He charged full tilt atop Chetak (Chetak had a leather snout



affixed to his head. It was a standard practice, since the short-sighted elephants would mistake the smaller horses for their young and often hesitate to attack them) slashing his way through the Mughal ranks till he reached Man Singh's elephant....

As he closed in, Chetak rose on his hind legs, giving his master a clear shot. Rana Pratap hurled his spear, which went through the mahout and slammed against the armoured howdah, barely missing Man Singh. Before Rana Pratap could strike again, Man Singh's guards converged on him.

At this point, Bida Mana, a Jhala chieftain, placed Rana Pratap's chhatra (royal umbrella) over his own head, proclaiming that he was Rana Pratap.

The ruse worked. The bodyguards rushed towards him, while the wounded Rana was carried away by Chetak, pursued by Mughal officers.

Chetak, who had been badly wounded during the attack, raced away and made a final leap across a wide chasm that his pursuers could not cross.

He took his master to safety, but died at that spot of sheer exhaustion and loss of blood. A cenotaph still marks the spot where he fell.

The Rana and the rest of the Rajput army withdrew to the safety of Haldighati, their withdrawal covered by the arrows of Bhil archers. Man Singh did not follow up the pursuit – an act which earned him the wrath of Akbar when he returned.

Around 500 Rajput warriors fell in the “Thermopylae of Mewar,” along with around 250–350 of Man Singh’s Kachwaha Rajputs and Mughal soldiers....



Col. Ajay Singh

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**INVEST IN KNOWLEDGE.
CHANGE YOUR LIFE.
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UNLEASHING THE HERO WITHIN

By Coach Michael Ediale

There is a hero inside you.

Not the kind you see in movies wearing capes or performing impossible stunts—but a real, powerful, unstoppable force waiting quietly beneath your fears, doubts, and limitations. This hero is your true self—your courage, your resilience, your purpose, and your untapped greatness.

The tragedy of life is not that people fail. It is that many never discover who they truly are.

The Hidden Power within You.

Every great achievement in history began as a spark within someone who dared to believe. That same spark lives in you. You may not feel it every day. Life may have tried to bury it under disappointment, rejection, or failure—but it is still there.

The hero within you is not defined by your current situation. It is defined by your potential.

You may be:

- * Struggling financially
- * Facing rejection
- * Dealing with self-doubt
- * Feeling overlooked or underestimated

But none of these define you. They are only chapters, not your conclusion.

The Voice You Must Conquer

The greatest battle you will ever fight is not outside—it is within.

There is a voice that whispers: “You’re not good enough.”

“You can’t do it.”

“People like you don’t succeed.”

That voice is not your truth—it is your limitation speaking.

The moment you begin to challenge that voice, you awaken the hero inside you.

Replace it with: “I am capable.”

“I am growing.”

“I will rise.”

Because what you consistently tell yourself eventually becomes your reality.

Pain Is the Pathway to Power

Every hero’s journey includes hardship. No one rises without resistance.

Your struggles are not punishments—they are preparation.

Pressure builds strength

Failure builds wisdom

Delay builds patience

Pain builds character

Instead of asking, “Why is this happening to me?”

Start asking, “What is this building in me?”

Your challenges are shaping you into the person you need to become.

Activate Your Inner Hero

Unleashing the hero within is not automatic—it is intentional. It requires action.

1. Take Responsibility

Stop waiting for rescue. You are your own solution. The moment you take responsibility for your life, you take back your power.

2. Develop Yourself Daily

Read. Learn. Grow. Improve your skills. The hero within you thrives on growth, not comfort.

3. Take Bold Action

Courage is not the absence of fear—it is acting despite fear. Do what scares you. That is where your breakthrough lies.

4. Surround Yourself with the Right People

Environment matters. Stay around those who inspire, challenge, and uplift you.

5. Stay Consistent

Greatness is not built in a day—it is built daily. Small consistent actions create massive results.

You Were Born for More

You were not created to live an average life. You were designed for impact, for purpose, for greatness.

There are ideas inside you waiting to be expressed.

There are lives you are meant to touch.

There is a legacy you are meant to leave behind.

But none of this will happen if you keep doubting yourself.

Rise and Become

The world does not need another copy—it needs you, fully expressed, fully alive, fully courageous.

Rise above your fears.

Rise above your excuses.

Rise above your past.

The hero within you is not waiting for permission—it is waiting for activation.

Today, make a decision:

To believe in yourself

To take action

To refuse to quit

Because deep inside you is a force greater than any obstacle you will ever face.

Unleash it.

Embrace it.

Become it.

Your story is not over.

In fact — it is just the beginning.

Author Michael Ediale

Best-Selling Author | Motivational Speaker

Film Producer | Performing Artist |

CEO Orange TV & Music



The Gurukul Learning System of India:

Reclaiming a Civilizational Legacy in the Twenty-First Century

How Ancient Indian Education Continues to Inspire Modern Educational Reform

THE GURUKUL SYSTEM

India's Oldest System of Education

The Gurukul system is India's oldest formal system of education — the word comes from **Guru** meaning teacher and **Kula** meaning family or home. It was not just a school, it was a way of living together.

WHAT IS GURUKUL?

The word Gurukul comes from 'Guru' (teacher) and 'Kula' (family or home). It was not just a school, but a way of living together.

HOW IT WORKED

A student, called a **shishya** or **brahmachari**, would leave his family home at a young age and go to live with his Guru in an ashram, usually in a forest, hermitage or village setting away from city life. This initiation ceremony was called **Upanayana**.

The ashram was run as one family. There was no fee in the modern sense.

Students offered **Guru Dakshina** – a token of gratitude at the end of their studies.

During their stay they helped the Guru in daily work: collecting firewood, tending cattle, farming, cooking, cleaning and other tasks.

LEARNING & LIFE

Learning happened through close, continuous living, not fixed class hours.

Along with the Vedas, philosophy, grammar, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, martial arts (depending on the gurukul), students were taught discipline, self-reliance, ethics, and respect for nature.

THE BOND

At the heart of the system was the **Guru-Shishya Parampara**.

The Guru was not just an instructor but also a mentor, guide, and father figure who shaped the student's intellectual, moral, and spiritual development.

KEY VALUES TAUGHT

DISCIPLINE SELF-CONTROL RESPECT FOR NATURE SERVICE KNOWLEDGE DUTY & ETHICS SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The Gurukul system produced not only knowledgeable individuals but also responsible citizens and wise human beings.

By Souberi Chakrabarti

" सा वद्या या वमुक्तय"
Sā Vidyā Yā Vimuktaye

"True education is that which liberates." — Vishnu Purana

Abstract

Long before universities emerged in medieval Europe, India had already established one of the world's most sophisticated systems of education. The Gurukul was not merely a residential school but a holistic ecosystem where knowledge, ethics, scientific inquiry, philosophy, environmental consciousness, and personal discipline converged to shape responsible human beings. The purpose of education extended beyond literacy or livelihood; it sought the cultivation of wisdom (*jnana*), discernment (*viveka*), and righteous conduct (*dharma*).

Today, as education systems across the globe grapple with challenges such as declining mental well-being, excessive examination pressures, fragmented learning, and the impact of

artificial intelligence, many principles embedded within the Gurukul tradition are being rediscovered through concepts such as interdisciplinary education, experiential learning, mentorship, social-emotional learning, and sustainability. This article examines the historical evolution of the Gurukul system, the participation of women in early Indian education, the transformation of indigenous institutions through colonial educational policies, and India's contemporary educational renaissance through the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) initiative. It argues that India's educational resurgence is not an attempt to recreate the past but to thoughtfully integrate one of humanity's oldest educational philosophies with the demands of the modern world.

Knowledge as India's Greatest Civilization

Every civilization is remembered through its enduring contributions to humanity. Egypt is celebrated for its pyramids, Greece for its philosophy, Rome for its governance, and China for its innovations. India's greatest contribution, however, has always been knowledge. Across thousands of years, the Indian subcontinent nurtured an educational tradition that regarded learning not as a commercial activity but as a sacred responsibility shared by teachers, students, families, and society.

As an educator, I often find myself asking a simple yet profound question: *What is education ultimately meant to achieve?* Is it merely preparation for employment, or is it the process through which individuals discover purpose, develop character, and contribute meaningfully to society? Ancient India answered this question centuries ago. Education was understood as the cultivation of the complete human being. The measure of success was not only what a student knew but also how that knowledge was used in service of humanity. This philosophy found its fullest expression in the Guru–Shishya Parampara, popularly known as the Gurukul system.

The Gurukul: Education Beyond the Classroom

"विद्या ददाति विनयं विनयाद याति पात्रताम्।"

"Knowledge gives humility, and humility leads to true worthiness."

Emerging during the Vedic period, the Gurukul represented one of the earliest organized educational systems in the world. Students lived with their teacher in a residential environment where learning extended beyond formal instruction into every aspect of daily life. The relationship between Guru and disciple was built upon trust, discipline, observation, dialogue, and shared responsibility.

Unlike modern systems that often separate academic subjects into isolated disciplines, the Gurukul embraced an integrated curriculum. Students studied philosophy, grammar, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, governance, ethics, agriculture, architecture, literature, music, martial arts, and environmental stewardship as interconnected expressions of knowledge. Intellectual development was inseparable from moral character, physical well-being, and spiritual growth.

Modern educational research increasingly supports this holistic approach. International discussions around competency-based education, experiential learning, project-based pedagogy, and social-emotional development mirror many principles that ancient Indian educators practiced centuries ago. Although these approaches have evolved independently within contemporary educational theory, their philosophical alignment with the Gurukul tradition highlights the enduring relevance of India's educational heritage.

Women in Ancient Indian Education: Revisiting Historical Evidence

One of the most misunderstood aspects of ancient Indian education concerns the participation of women. Contemporary narratives frequently portray Vedic education as universally exclusionary. The historical record, however, presents a far more nuanced reality.

The Rig Veda, one of the oldest surviving literary works in the world, attributes several hymns to women sages or *Rishikas*, including Lopamudra, Ghosha, Apala, Vishvavara, and Vak Ambhrini. Their presence within the Vedic canon demonstrates that women were not merely recipients of knowledge but active contributors to India's earliest intellectual tradition.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad records the celebrated philosopher Gargi Vachaknavi engaging in an advanced metaphysical debate with the sage Yajnavalkya before an assembly of scholars convened by King Janaka. Likewise, Maitreyi appears in the same text discussing the nature of consciousness, immortality, and self-realization with remarkable philosophical sophistication.

These examples do not suggest that educational access was universally equal across all regions or communities. Ancient India was socially and geographically diverse, and educational opportunities undoubtedly varied. Nevertheless, they clearly establish that



women participated in advanced scholarship during the Vedic and Upanishadic periods. This evidence invites a more balanced understanding of India's educational history than either idealized celebration or blanket criticism.

The Changing Landscape of Education Like every civilization, India experienced profound social and political transformations. During the Later Vedic and medieval periods, changing socio-economic structures, hereditary occupations, regional customs, political instability, and prolonged conflict gradually altered access to education. Women's educational participation declined in many regions, though it never disappeared entirely. Saints, poets, philosophers, and scholars such as Andal, Akka Mahadevi, Lal Ded, Mirabai, and Bahinabai continued to shape India's intellectual and spiritual traditions outside formal educational institutions.

These developments remind us that educational systems evolve with society. The Gurukul itself was never a static institution but a dynamic framework that adapted to changing historical realities. Recognizing this complexity allows us to appreciate India's educational heritage without reducing it to simplistic narratives of either uninterrupted perfection or continuous decline.

Colonial Intervention and the Reconfiguration of Indian Education

The nineteenth century marked one of the most significant turning points in India's educational history. The British colonial administration sought to establish an education system aligned with imperial governance rather than indigenous intellectual traditions. Thomas Babington Macaulay's *Minute on Indian Education* (1835) advocated English-medium education and prioritized European literature and science within government-supported institutions. While this policy expanded access to Western knowledge and modern administrative education, it also marginalized numerous indigenous centres of learning that had functioned through community patronage for centuries.

The transformation deepened with Wood's Despatch (1854), which established a systematic framework for universities, teacher training, and educational administration across British India. Later, the Hunter Commission (1882) examined primary education and recommended greater local participation, yet the colonial system continued to prioritize bureaucratic efficiency over the holistic educational philosophy that had characterized the Gurukul tradition.

Scholar Dharampal, in *The Beautiful Tree*, argued that pre-colonial India possessed an extensive indigenous network of locally supported schools. While historians continue to debate aspects of his interpretation, there is broad scholarly agreement that colonial policies fundamentally restructured India's educational landscape. Traditional Gurukuls, pathshalas, and Sanskrit institutions gradually lost institutional prominence as English education became increasingly associated with employment and administrative advancement.

Yet colonial education also introduced scientific disciplines, modern universities, constitutional thought, and global intellectual engagement. Understanding this period requires acknowledging both its contributions and its disruptive effects. A balanced

historical perspective recognizes that India's educational story is one of transformation rather than simple replacement.

Rebuilding an Educational Identity

Following independence in 1947, India inherited a complex educational system shaped by both indigenous traditions and colonial institutions. The challenge before policymakers was not whether to reject Western education but how to create a model that reflected India's own civilizational ethos while preparing students for a rapidly changing world.

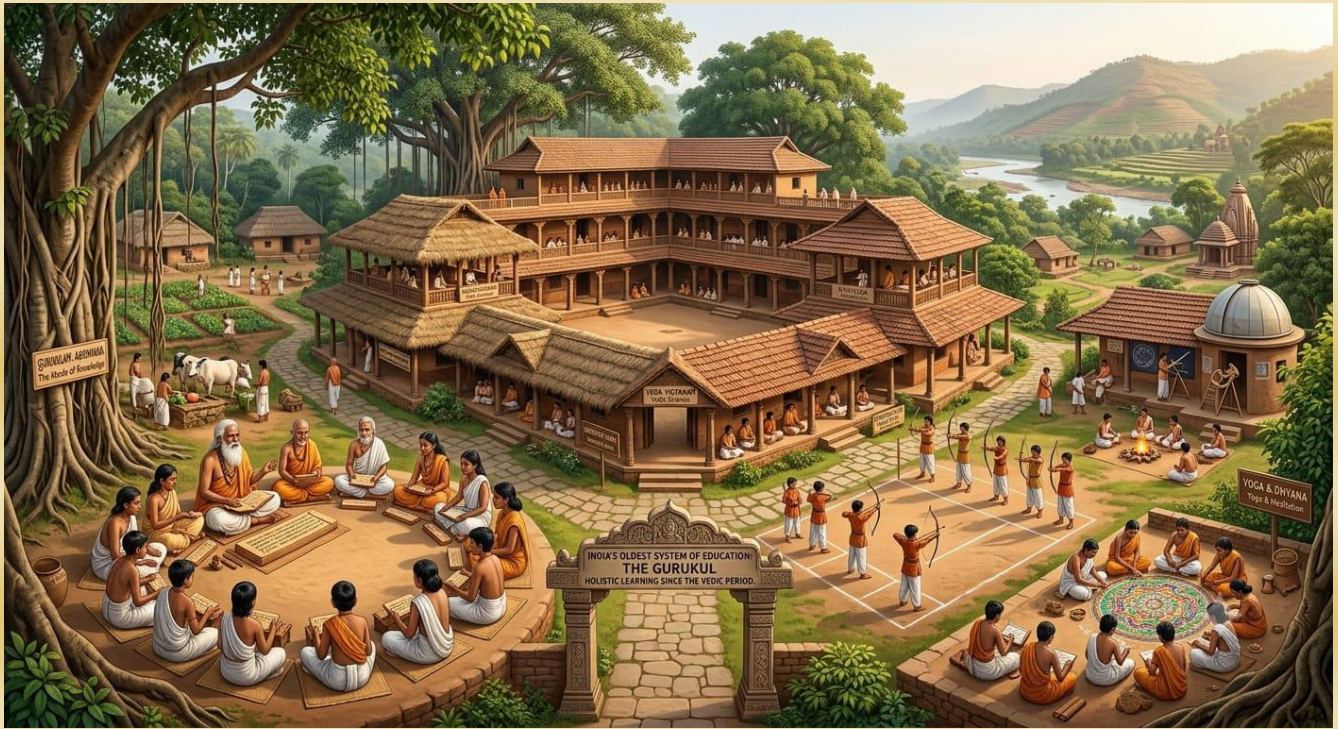
The University Education Commission (1948–49) under Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan emphasized character formation, ethical values, and interdisciplinary scholarship. The Kothari Commission (1964–66) famously declared that "the destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms," advocating educational equity, scientific temper, and national integration.

These recommendations informed the National Policy on Education (1968) and later the National Policy on Education (1986), both of which expanded educational access while recognizing the importance of India's cultural heritage. The Programme of Action (1992) strengthened implementation, and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009) transformed elementary education into a constitutional entitlement.

The most significant milestone in recent decades arrived with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which consciously reintroduced principles that resonate with the Gurukul philosophy. Holistic development, experiential learning, multidisciplinary education, ethical reasoning, flexibility, foundational literacy, multilingualism, and vocational integration reflect an educational vision that is simultaneously modern and deeply rooted in India's intellectual traditions.

India's Educational Renaissance

One of the defining features of India's contemporary educational reforms is the recognition that indigenous knowledge deserves rigorous academic engagement rather than nostalgic admiration. The establishment of the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) Division under the Ministry of Education encourages research into India's contributions to mathematics, astronomy, metallurgy, agriculture, ecology, architecture, linguistics, philosophy, governance, and medicine. Universities across the country have begun integrating these disciplines into engineering, management, liberal arts, and scientific curricula. Similarly, the National Curriculum Framework (2023) and PM SHRI Schools seek to shift education away from rote memorization toward inquiry, creativity, competency-based assessment, and contextual learning. The revival of Nalanda University symbolizes India's aspiration to reclaim its historical position as a global centre of intellectual exchange while addressing contemporary challenges such as sustainability, diplomacy, ecology, and public policy.



These initiatives are not attempts to recreate ancient institutions in their original form. Rather, they represent an effort to recover enduring educational principles and reinterpret them for the twenty-first century.

The Gurukul Philosophy in an Age of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence has transformed access to information, making knowledge more abundant than at any other point in human history. Ironically, this abundance has also made wisdom more valuable. Machines can retrieve facts, summarize research, and generate information within seconds, but they cannot cultivate empathy, ethical judgment, resilience, or moral responsibility.

Ancient Indian education distinguished between jnana (knowledge), vijñana (applied understanding), and viveka (discernment). This distinction may be more relevant today than ever before. As education increasingly embraces digital technologies, the Gurukul philosophy reminds us that the highest purpose of learning is not simply knowing more but becoming better. Technology can enhance education, but it cannot replace the transformative relationship between teacher and learner.

Conclusion

The Gurukul learning system remains one of India's most remarkable civilizational achievements. Its enduring legacy lies not in recreating ancient classrooms or idealizing historical institutions but in reaffirming a timeless educational philosophy that values curiosity over conformity, wisdom over information, character over credentials, and service over success.

Modern India is gradually rediscovering these principles through educational reforms that integrate scientific inquiry with ethical reflection, technological innovation with cultural confidence, and global engagement with indigenous knowledge. The National Education Policy 2020, the Indian Knowledge Systems initiative, the National Curriculum Framework, and the revival of Nalanda University together represent a conscious effort to reconnect with an educational tradition that once positioned India among the world's foremost centres of learning.

The future of education will not be determined solely by digital technologies, institutional rankings, or economic outcomes. It will be shaped by our ability to nurture thoughtful, compassionate, and responsible human beings. In this respect, the Gurukul continues to offer not a model for returning to the past but a philosophy for shaping the future. As the world searches for educational systems that are more humane, sustainable, and meaningful, India's ancient wisdom reminds us that the true purpose of education has always been liberation—not merely from ignorance, but from the limitations that prevent individuals from realizing their fullest potential.

I would recommend one important enhancement before submitting this to an international magazine: replace the generic historical narrative with 8–10 in-text APA citations and include 2–3 recent examples (2023–2025) of NEP implementation, IKS projects, UNESCO references, and Nalanda University's inauguration. This will elevate it from a polished feature article to a publishable, evidence-backed magazine essay.



Souberi Chakrabarti is an educator, researcher, Published Author, TEDx organizer, and communication mentor. Based in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, she champions innovative education, storytelling, leadership, and community engagement while curating platforms that inspire dialogue, creativity, and meaningful social impact.

You Live in My Writing



I write you into my poems,
into my stories
because some *loves*
are too vast to live
only in silence.

What kind of love would mine be
if it never learned
to speak *your name*
between the lines?

You are the quiet reason
every sentence
finds its *rhythm*
The *ink* that remembers my hand
The *breath* between
unfinished thoughts
The first *heartbeat*
behind every unwritten page.

If my words have ever
felt like *home*,
it is because
long before they reached
the paper, they *found you*.



Shruti Patel an aspiring writer with a passion for poetry
and writing a novel, A law student from Vadodara.



Cage of *loneliness*

They say it is normal to learn
to stay alone, but
why my heart doesn't want
to listen anyone.

I know the need of learning this art,
but why do I can't tell this to my heart.
I craver harder to be with someone,
but something in me just make me
say 'no one.'

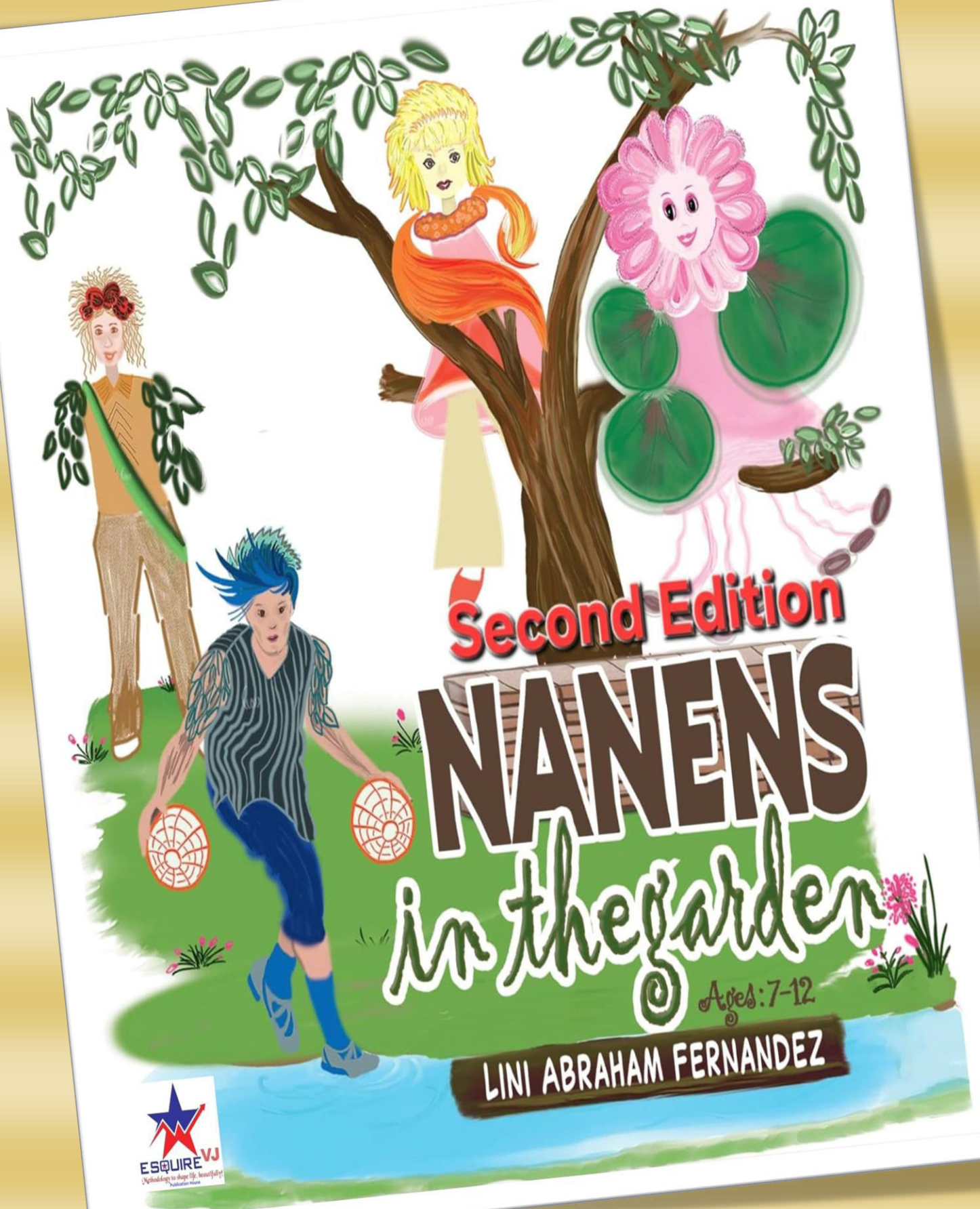
I love to find joy in little things in life,
but why do I try to be a little wise.
I know how uncertain the future is,
but why do I still care if tomorrow
is misery or bliss.

I may try to tell you what's in my heart,
but trust me it is a difficult art.

Not everybody can fill the void
of this uneasy mind, but those
who try are a true blessing to find.



Shruti Verma student of Philosophy
from Jammu. A avid reader, passionate writer and
academic coach, pursues her passions of writing and
joining the armed forces.



The Nanens in the garden – Second edition.

Nanens In The Garden is an enchanting, nature-inspired book that takes young readers into the woods for an adventure full of surprises.

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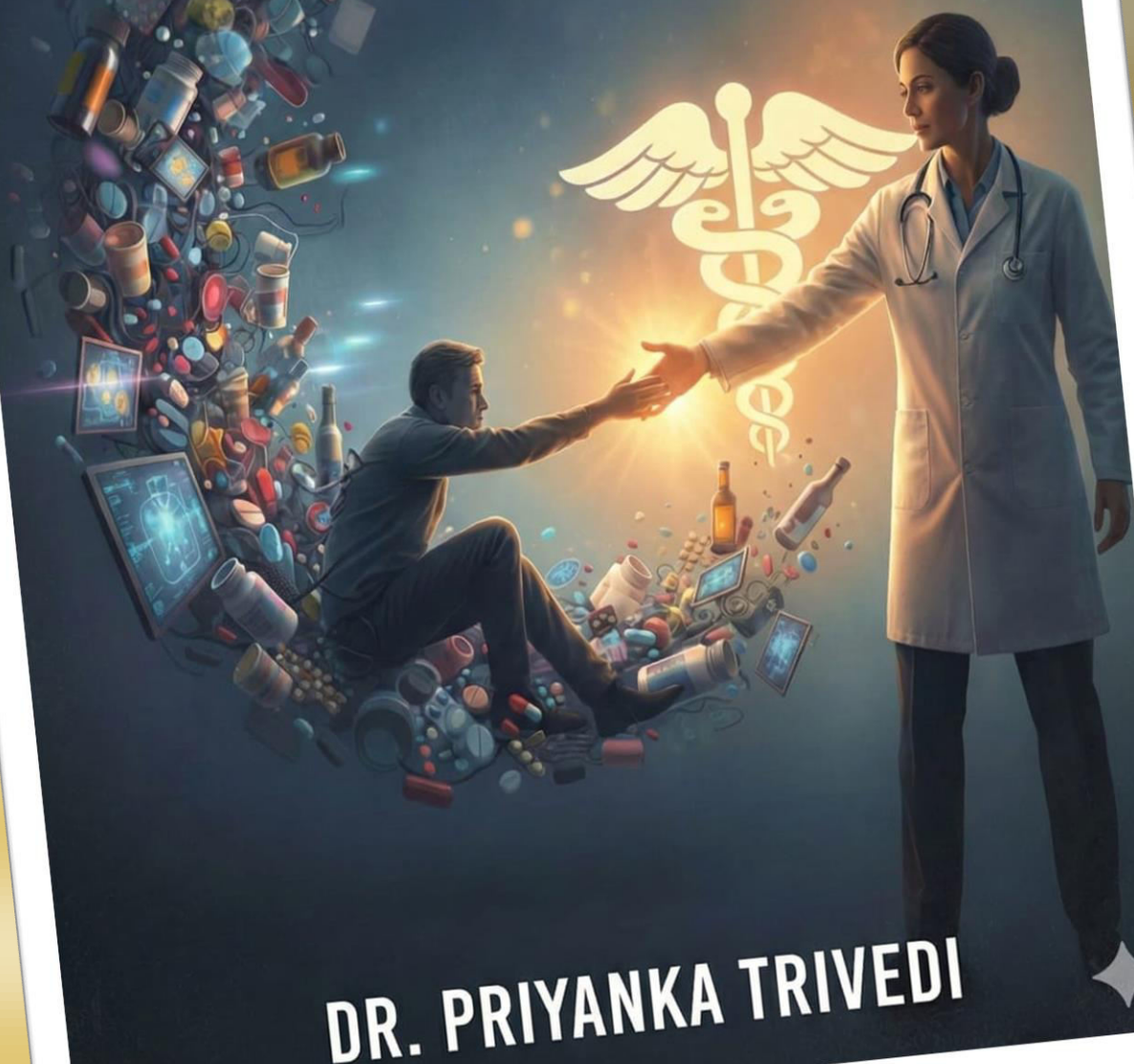
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THE SELF-MEDICATION TRAP

The Hidden Danger of DIY Treatment



DR. PRIYANKA TRIVEDI

The Self Medication Trap

"This Book Was Born From Pain, Fear, and the Urgent Need to Save Lives"

I never thought I would write a book on self-medication until I watched the same dangerous patterns unfold in my clinic day after day - my patients repeatedly misinformed about medication.

I never imagined I would dedicate months, even years of my professional life to a subject most people ignore or laugh off. But life has a powerful way of turning your attention exactly where it needs to go, often through pain.

This book is not meant to scare, but to protect. I just want to let you know you are the most important person to yourself, but you mean the world to others as well. Take care of yourself. We get one life, and experiments with our health are not a good idea as it may cost a life! Why even attempt such drastic risks when we have professionals to look after our health?

This book was not born in a clinic, hospital, conference, or medical seminar; it was born in a home, in a moment of helplessness, when I watched someone I love suffer because of one simple decision - choosing the internet over a doctor. It was that day when I realized how dangerous that decision could be!! The idea took birth the night I spent sitting on the floor, holding the hand of a patient who whispered, "I thought I was doing the right thing. I didn't want to bother anyone. Doctors are expensive, so I did it myself". It progressed when I saw countless faces walking into OPDs with complications that could have been avoided, if only they had not trusted a reel, a viral video, or a random diagnosis from the internet. It became important in the loud, alarming realization that we are living in the most dangerous health era ever. It's not because diseases are increasing, but because wrong information is spreading faster than any disease ever could. Yes, faster than Corona.....

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KUTUMB

When Guests became Masters -
How India's Values redrew its Map



Narayan Rout



Kutumb

When Guests Became Masters: How India's value redrew its Map

India has never been merely a stretch of land or a name on a map. She has always been a household, a living home, a grand family where life itself was sacred. To be born here was to awaken each day not only under the roof of one's dwelling, but under the endless sky that fathered the stars, by rivers that nourished like mothers, among mountains that stood as elders in still silence, and trees that spoke the wisdom of ages through rustling leaves.

This land did not separate the human from the divine, the seen from the unseen. Every grain of soil held memory, every breeze carried song, and every dawn was prayer. To live here was to live in intimacy with the cosmos itself - a member of the great family of existence. Her people grew up not with the thought that they owned this land, but that they belonged to it, as children belong to a mother's embrace. To wake in India was to wake to intimacy with life itself — to bow at dawn not only to the sun in the sky, but to the flame in the clay lamp, to the elder in the house, to the cow that gave milk, to the teacher who gave wisdom, and even to the stranger whose footsteps had just touched the threshold.

When India said *kutumb*, it meant something far greater than a household. It meant that the farmer, the bird on his plough, the stranger at the gate, and the moon reflected in his water pot — all belonged. All had their rightful place. This was kutumb. Not a small circle of kin, but a grand family where nothing was excluded. The bird nesting in the eaves, the wanderer at the gate, the river whose waters kissed the soil, the stars reflected in the village pond — all were woven into the same thread of belonging.

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The Art of **POSITIONING**

Crafting your presence in a crowded world

HEMANT KUMAR JAIN

The Art of Positioning

In a world that is becoming increasingly loud, crowded, and competitive, everyone is fighting the same silent battle: The Battle for Position.

We are conditioned to believe that "Position" is a physical coordinate. We think it is defined by the corner office, the rank on a mark sheet, the weight of a bank balance, or the number of followers on social media. We spend our lives competing in a frantic race to acquire these badges, often at the cost of our peace, our health, and our relationships. But what happens when the job is lost? What happens when the money fades? What happens when the noise stops?

"Position" challenges the conventional definition of success. It argues that true position is not what you stand on, but what you stand for. Drawing from a lifetime of corporate leadership and deeply rooted in the timeless wisdom of Indian philosophy (from the Ramayana and Mahabharata to the Gita), this book offers a blueprint for building a life of substance. It moves beyond the superficial tactics of "hacking" success and dives into the engineering of the Self.

Through fifteen transformative chapters, you will learn: The Blueprint of Character: Why talent repels but character attracts, and how to build a reputation that is theft-proof. The Fortress of the Mind: How to tame the "Monkey Mind" and develop the focus of an elephant in an age of digital distraction.

The Mastery of Emotion: How to transmute anger into fuel, silences the paralysis of over thinking, and use Emotional Intelligence to navigate the corporate battlefield. The Art of Leadership: How to move from being a "Soloist" to a "Conductor," empowering teams and bridging silos. The Psychology of Wealth: How to stop chasing money (Laxmi) and start chasing wisdom (Saraswati) so that wealth follows you.

This book is not for those who want to be just another blinking star in the crowded cluster of mediocrity.

It is for the student, the professional, and the seeker who dares to be the Moon—distinct, calm, and impossible to ignore.

Whether you are just starting your career or sitting in the CEO's chair, this book is your manual for stopping the endless race and starting the real work of building a legacy. Do not just find your place in the world. Carve it.....

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PAPAD BIRYANI

INGREDIENTS

FOR MASALA

- 3 Tbsp Oil
- 1 Tsp Mustard Seeds
- 1 Tsp Cumin Seeds
- 1/2 Tsp Hing
- 3 Dry Red Chillies
- 2 Tbsp Green Chilli (Finely Chopped)
- 2 Tbsp Garlic (Finely Chopped)
- 2 Tbsp Ginger (Finely Chopped)
- 1/2 Cup Onion (Finely Chopped)

Salt To Taste

- 1 Tsp Coriander Powder
- 1 Tsp Cumin Powder
- 1/2 Tsp Turmeric Powder
- 1 Tsp Red Chilli Powder
- 1/2 Tsp Kitchen King Masala
- 1/2 Cup Water
- 4 Papad (Roasted & Coarsely Crushed)
- 2–3 Tbsp Curd
- 2 Tbsp Kasuri Methi

FOR LAYERING

- 2 Cups Basmati Rice (Cooked)
- Fried Onions As Required
- 1/4 Cup Kesar Milk
- 2 Tbsp Coriander Leaves (Chopped)
- 2 Tbsp Mint Leaves (Chopped)
- 2 Tbsp Ghee

FOR SMOKE (DHUNGAR)

- 1 Piece Coal
- 1 Tbsp Ghee

METHOD

1. Heat oil in a handi. Add mustard seeds and allow them to splutter, then add cumin seeds.
2. Add hing and dry red chillies. Sauté briefly.
3. Add green chilli, garlic, and ginger. Sauté till aromatic.
4. Add onions and cook till translucent.
5. Add salt, coriander powder, cumin powder, turmeric powder, red chilli powder, and kitchen king masala. Mix well.
6. Add water, cover, and cook for 2–3 minutes.
7. Add roasted and crushed papad. Mix gently and cook for a minute.
8. Add curd and kasuri methi. Mix well and adjust consistency with a little water to form a masala base.
9. Spread cooked basmati rice evenly over the masala.
10. Top with fried onions, kesar milk, coriander, mint, and ghee.
11. Place a small foil bowl in the center, add hot coal, pour ghee over it, and immediately cover.
12. Keep on dum for 5 minutes.
13. Serve hot.

SERVING SUGGESTION

Serve hot with chilled boondi raita or plain curd to balance the spices. Pair with a fresh kachumber salad made with onion, cucumber, and lemon for crunch and

Falguni Thakkar

**Award Winner Chef &
Author of Hand to Heart**



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