

A forum to encourage independent thinking

# THE THINK Club

**Eleventh Year**

Published Quarterly

Volume 12.2 Spring 2007 \$100 Life Membership

---



India  
Rising!

---

## Book Reviews

**Planet India  
In Spite of the Gods**

---

**Point-Counterpoint: Is India A Superpower?**

**Humor: Déjà Vu**

**Depression in Men**

**The Game of Kings**

**No One Likes War**

**Ray the Ancient Runner**

**From the Publisher's Desk**

## Letters

I read with great interest your article, "Morality vs. Religion" in the Winter 2007 issue of *The Think Club*. I've been reading much lately about religion, faith, history and spirituality... and found several articles in the recent issue to be good reading. I've heard of Richard Dawkins, but haven't yet read any of his books or articles. Thanks for your good work with *The Think Club*.

**Name Withheld  
Upon Request**

As usual, I enjoyed Musafir's humor, "My Wayward Friend" in the January issue of *The Think Club*. ... I always look forward to reading "Point-Counterpoint" and "Mental Exercise."

**Steve Elliott  
Indianapolis, IN**

I wholeheartedly agree with Melissa Huffman ("Growing Old Gracefully," *The Think Club*, Winter 2007). Certainly "we should be secure with growing older and all of the wonderful changes that go along with it." Not growing old gracefully is rotten. Let us have the wisdom to understand the facts of life.

**Linda Cobb  
Lake Orion, MI**

### *Thinking Wildly* (Useless Knowledge)

The study of lightning is called *keraunopathology*. Fear of lightning and thunder is called *astraphobia*.

A survey disclosed that 12 percent of Americans believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife.

Renaissance artist Michelangelo's last name was Buonarroti, which is obviously never used.

Ants stretch when they wake up. They also appear to yawn before taking up the tasks of the day.

The first toilet ever seen on TV was on the comedy series *Leave It to Beaver*.

Nearly one million women in the United States take their rifles and go hunting annually. Hopefully, they aren't hunting for a date.

Natural blonds have more hairs on their heads than redheads. A blond has about 120,000 strands of hair, a redhead has about 80,000. Brunettes are somewhere in between the two.

After the decaffeinating process, processing companies no longer throw the caffeine away; they sell it to pharmaceutical companies.

The plastic things on the end of shoelaces are called aglets.

The ridges on the sides of coins are called reeding or milling.

The ZIP in Zip-code stands for "Zoning Improvement Plan."

#### Copyright © 2000

*The THINK Club* © retains copyright of this magazine, except articles that were submitted by freelance writers. Please do not reprint any part of this magazine without permission. Freelance writers retain full copyrights to their work. The officers of *The THINK Club* © do not necessarily share the opinions or views expressed in printed articles and accept no responsibility for advertisers.

## Turning Sixty

By Musafir

Turning 60 was not as intimidating as I had thought it to be. It was a milestone, but the first one when I did not have to think about career advancement, higher education and how to maintain a youthful look. I did not have to worry about growing up or handling a mid-life crisis. I was already grown beyond any more possibilities or prospects and was already well past my mid-life.

I did not have to worry about molding myself to the expectations of my elders as most of them were already in their heavenly abodes. People younger than me know that they can't teach new tricks to an old dog. It was a peaceful transition in a way that for the first time in my life I understood my wife and children and they did understand me. We are no more strangers to each other. So, I find myself hanging in a state of equilibrium.



Many around me try to console me by saying "Today's sixty is yesterday's fifty." But I don't need that consolation. Being sixty doesn't bother me as turning 50 did. I know that, from here onwards,

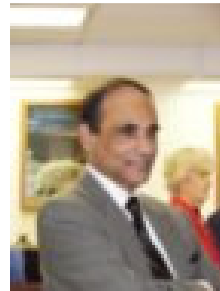
I'll be living on borrowed time and anything that I'll achieve will be icing on the cake and a piece of conversation (appreciation) for my loved ones. The beauty of turning sixty is that you stop feeling your age. I feel that I am on cruise control. There is no need to press on the pedal (gas) anymore.

I am no longer scared or excited by new scientific research and their dramatic conclusions. I know "what goes around comes around." I have been fooled enough since they told us that the use of cell phones caused brain tumor. Butter was bad, then it was better than margarine. We don't need a scientific study of scientific studies to decide why sensational research is later found to be untrue. We need to use our common sense more often.

I am pleasantly surprised that many people now address me as 'sir.' I remember when my father turned

60, I thought that he had the wisdom of Socrates. Remember what Socrates said, "Know Thyself." From ancient Greece comes this reminder that introspection, paying attention to the heart of things, comes first. Before we can know the world around us, and make reasonable decisions about our roles and goals, it seems we must first come to grips with who we are and what we value.

At 60, I feel that I need to recognize my true friends and make sure that they know how important they are to me. I have a large number of acquaintances and relatives, but only a few true and close friends. Those friends have made a huge impact on how I live my life and some of the decisions that I have made over the years. They need to be recognized as the truly vital part of whom I am today and I plan to do that.



I am proud to be 60 inasmuch as I have survived adversities, rejections, several epidemics and pandemics, recessions, jealousies, blames, discouragements and life threatening situations. At 60 I hardly dwell on those unkind experiences. What I remember most are my accomplishments, advancements, love, blessings

and the echoes of joy bells of days gone by. I hope that I'll continue to feel happy with my life, and myself. I want to see that my family and friends continued to bring me joy and completeness, and that I have shared more of myself with them. And mostly I hope that at the sunset of life I go with the feeling that "I also served" (with apology to John Milton)! Just thinking!



## Is India a Big League Player?

Compiled from Various Sources

India is considered to be a superpower or an emerging superpower by many. But is India a big league player like the U.S. and China? While China's ambition is to showcase its influence by hosting the 2008 Olympics and beating the rest of the world in number of medals, India cannot even beat Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in cricket which is played only in two other major countries of the world, England and Australia.

While China benchmarks itself against countries like the United States, Russia, Japan and the European Union, India has yet not asserted itself as a regional superpower against Pakistan. According to a study that measures the status of various countries, India belongs to the class of countries that are always emerging but never quite arriving. The leadership in India does not have a long-term grand strategy that will guide the nation into the future. In reality, the leadership in India remains stuck in the daily political survival and the pressures of the impending challenges at hand.

There is a view that much emphasis is put on the limited economic success, which India has had till now, to project India as a great emerging power. Experts believe this success is permanently hostage to the large number of internal and external security challenges that confront India today. According to a recent article in the Wall Street Journal, India's present rate of economic growth is in danger due to three reasons. 1) Due to the rise of rupee against the US dollar and increasing salaries in IT sectors and call centers in India, the companies soon may find the Philippines, Vietnam, and other Eastern European countries more lucrative for such businesses. 2) Since the Indian economy is much dependant on outsourcing, the current slowdown in the US economic growth may erode the growth in India. 3) Since India's foreign exchange is tied to the US dollar, a decline in the value of the US dollar will adversely affect India's reserve, especially considering India's total dependence on outside countries for energy.

India is home to one in six members of the human race, which contains a third of the world's poorest people. Amidst all the buzz about the vibrant, new India getting ready for take-off, the old India is still aground. 300 million Indians live on less than \$1 a day, compared to only 85 million in China, which has

a bigger population. Forty-five per cent of Indian children under the age of five are malnourished. Less than a third of India's homes have a toilet. Less than half of its 500,000 villages are connected to the electricity grid. Despite the explosion of consumerism and capitalism in India's booming cities, more than half of all Indians still live in rural areas. Farmers are committing suicide because they can't compete in a global market.

Among the numerous viewpoints regarding India's potential to make it to the big league, one of the most important opinions held by many analysts is that India has even failed to decisively counter the challenge of terrorism directed towards it from its neighbor, which is one-eighth its size.

Experts opine that the defeat and humiliation at the hands of the Chinese in 1962 has been largely overlooked in the planning of future strategies. According to them, there is a lot of hype about India's emergence as a great power. But as we take credit for limited successes against a small adversary, there is little or no public knowledge of a well laid out doctrine regarding future engagement with a superior power like China.

Analysts believe that the Chinese leadership has repeatedly reiterated that they have no ambitions in South Asia. But the manner in which it has acted – by passing crucial defense technology and weapons to Pakistan, increasing its strategic influence in the Indian Ocean - over the years clearly indicates that its long-term objective was, and continues to remain, the strategic encirclement of India.

With these facts in minds, experts say, there is a lot that needs to be done before India becomes an influential player in global affairs. And India can learn a great deal from its past too. As V S Naipaul stated, in his book *India - A Wounded Civilization*: "No civilization was so little equipped to cope with the outside world; no country was so easily raided and plundered, and learned so little from its disasters." It is time now for India to evolve and articulate a grand strategy, which would secure it as a real superpower.

Sources:  
Foreign Affairs, NDTV News, Wall Street Journal.

# Humor

## Déjà vu

By Musafir

The marriage season is dawning upon us again. Once again we'll be attending weddings and giving gifts to the newlyweds. As I was searching through the recycled gifts to be used again during the upcoming marriages, I came across these "Thank You" notes. Enjoy:

### **Dear Uncle, Aunty, Y2K, Cursor and Portal,**

I don't know you and I am pretty sure that you hardly care to know us. Regardless, you came to our marriage reception this year in June. I am the one who was wearing an Indian jacket and a turban trying to emulate our Maharaja culture although Gandhi thought that simply wrapping a loin cloth was a better representation of our true culture. My wife was in an Indian dress similar to one that adorned *Aishwarya Rai* (a self-proclaimed Hollywood diva). We have decided not to wear those fancy dresses again and are planning to donate those to the Wapakoneta Elementary school in Ohio for display during their annual diversity week. Last but not the least, both Sweetie and I would like to thank you for the silk painting depicting the Mogul-era art. Our parents have them by dime and dozen dumped in their basement. We are sure you do too. Thanks again for such a thoughtful gift.

**-Tridashvritam (Tish) and Sweetie**

### **Dear Vrindavanbihari Uncle and Kanakkamini Auntie,**

We are back from our honeymoon and just finished sorting through our wedding gifts. Cranky and I are thrilled to find a thirty-one dollar check slipped in an envelope gracing the names of your three children and you. We are glad that all five of you could attend our wedding reception and were able to enjoy the open bar, sumptuous dinner, rich dessert and all the music and dance that cost our parents \$95 per person. I am sure that it was a good deal for you to have an evening worth \$475 (not counting the floral arrangements, videography and photography) for a price of \$31. But who is counting? After all, it is only the feeling that counts. Looking at the positive, it was very gracious of you to show up with your entire clan despite a \$3 per gallon gas. Nonetheless, we are pretty sure that your generous gift of \$31 will go a long way in planning our future. Maybe, we can put the check (hopefully it won't bounce) in a CD bearing 2.3% interest and leave it there to grow for posterity (not considering a 6% inflation rate). After all, we Americans bought Manhattan from the Indians for a mere \$10. Today, its worth is in trillions of dollars. Thanks again!

**Sincerely,  
Gigabyte (Gig) and Cranky (Crank)**

### **Dear V-van and K-kan,**

Thanks for coming to our wedding and giving us the strange gift, a wooden, pregnant elephant with a perforated tummy. We especially appreciate the greeting card and the pre-printed thoughtful message on it. You, probably, forgot to hide Mr. & Mrs. Fakirdas's name that still shows in the corner of the card. Our eyes are sharper than yours since we are still young. We do, however, worry about your driving skills and general health. The card was presented to aunty and you several years ago on your twenty-fifth marriage anniversary by the above mentioned uncle and aunty. God bless them too and kudos to you for saving a tree! This will certainly make Al Gore proud. The message on the card is appropriate for us too, especially the line that reads, "Hope another twenty-five years of bliss." Yes, this is quite optimistic considering that the first marriage of an average American lasts only three years. Thanks and have a great life.

**Sincerely,  
Sidhhikame (Sid) and Kalabhramam (Kelly)**

### **Dear Mrs. and Mr. Shrivastavamah,**

Yes, eighteen months have passed since you attended our wedding and gave us the recycled crystal bowl. We are sorry for not acknowledging your gift on time, but as you always repeat, "Better late than never." We really appreciate your crystal bowl. This must be a popular item in your community since we got fifty of them. But your particular bowl is very special since it is the same bowl that our parents presented to you on your twenty-fifth marriage anniversary years ago (you forgot to remove sticker from the bottom of the bowl). We have no doubt that you have similar bowls in abundance in your basement and they must be coming handy for gift giving. Nonetheless, it was very thoughtful of you to have returned the same bowl to us. We plan to leave that bowl with our parents for the sentiment attached to it. May be, they can give that to you again on your fiftieth anniversary, if you survive that long, albeit it will be a true miracle considering your present state of health. No matter what, we want you to survive that long for the sake of the bowl.

**-Tribhuvansamharini (Tom) and Goodnight**

# A Native Returns to the Future

By Srinivasa Bhat

India is not the same India anymore that Srinivasa Bhat knew 34 years ago. Most of the people older than him (except his mother) who adored him have left for their heavenly abode and the younger generation, alien to him is living in a global world enjoying the fruits of an unprecedented economic boom not known to the Indians a generation ago. Is this for better or worse? Is everyone in India enjoying the bliss of a shared economy or only a chosen few? Srinivasa, who is on an assignment in Pune, India sends us a very pragmatic and poignant account of his personal experiences. We are publishing his anecdotes and observations for your reading pleasure.

## First Impressions

I have almost come to the end of my second week here in my new job. So far so good! I haven't had any TV, newspapers, or soda for the last ten days. People here work harder than the U.S. office workers. A normal work week is 45 hours. Most come to work at 9:00 AM and stay as late as 6:30 PM. Many managers work from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM. On some days, I stayed until 10:30 PM.

Throughout the workday, we have several meetings, hiring interviews. There is very little B.S. and everyone respects one another's privacy. All subordinates address me as sir, even though I insist that they call me as Srinivasa, they persist in addressing me more formally. The organizational hierarchy is well in place – all young employees – about 20 percent women. They are all highly educated, well mannered, obedient worker bees. I usually skip breakfast and evening snacks. Last night we all ate at a posh Chinese restaurant called "The Mainland China." The food was great and the environment was very ethnic and beautifully decorated. The "India Poised" theme is everywhere. Amitabh Bachchan and the Times Of India are promoting a big media blitz together called "This is the Year of India."

The sad thing is that in spite of the building boom, the construction industry workers are underfed, homeless slum dwellers. It is heartbreaking to see their children in torn clothes playing in the construction site. I don't think the government cares much for the welfare of less fortunate, who have no one to fight for them in the government. Everybody is preoccupied with their own interests and welfare.

I don't think, we want to buy any property here. Mom will not be happy to see the surrounding areas of the big buildings covered with dust and dirt. Roads are very bad and the environment is much polluted. India is still a good place to visit only. It is fascinating to see two sides of this great country. It is truly an adventure to work here and almost impossible to live here ignoring the plight of the other segment of population.

## Experience at Budhani Wafers

When we were previously living at Pune, we would frequently visit a place called Budhani Wafers on M G Road. This place featured a frying a huge frying pan, about 15 feet in diameter. As many as 20 cooks would be assembled around the frying pan. Another 20 people were slicing potatoes to various thicknesses. Many customers would sit around the place and eat chips. I wanted to visit this place and bring back old memories. Yesterday morning I finally did visit the place and Mr. Budhani himself was in the front desk. When I told him why I was there, he gave me a

quick tour of the place. To my shock, the whole place is fully computerized with latest automated equipment to slice, fry, pack and stack the potatoes. All of the machinery is stainless steel and prepares the right kind of chips (about 20 varieties) and packs them based on customer orders. Now, with just few workers in the place, it looks like a retail shop. The problem with the old system, explained Mr. Budhani, is that it was not fast enough to meet with the demand and the quality of the chips is better now because of the computer controls. Market share has increased substantially due to global demand, the only way they could stay in business was by automating everything. This is a microcosm of the India. Amazing, but I couldn't decide if this was good, bad, or just sad.

Last night I went to see the movie, *GURU*, at the multiplex. An excellent movie and great environment, all for the price of a ticket, Rs. 180. Aishwarya Ray and Abhishek Bachchan. In the beginning they played the National Anthem and everyone respectfully stood up. Pin drop silence!! A good feeling.

## Life in Pune

The area where I live around Deepak's apartment (they call it flat) is an interesting place. An upscale neighborhood, located near Acharya Rajneesh's Ashram, visitors from all around the world come here for yoga, meditation, and other spiritual activities (discourses, bhajans, studies etc.). The pleasant Zen Lake, used to be a dirty pond. Acharya Rajaneesh's disciples volunteered to turn it into a beautiful lake and a garden with Ayurvedic medicinal plants and other herbal therapeutic plants. Life doesn't get going here until after 11:00 AM, I can't even get a cup of coffee in the morning.

The diversity of the population and the interactions of the people is quite amusing. For example on Sunday night uncle Kamat his wife, and I were eating dinner at an ethnic Udipi restaurant called Madhuban. We ordered as an appetizer, masala papad. A young couple from some European country, perhaps Germany, were staring at our plate for a while. Finally the husband (I suppose) came to us and asked about our food. As we described the ingredients, uncle Kamat's wife offered a piece of papad to taste. They liked it and ordered the same, including the main course of chapatti, playa, shrikhanda, etc.). Later the wife returned to thank us for helping them discover a delicious choice. This hotel is a frequent hang out for foreign visitors, reasonably priced, scrumptious food and courteous service. The owner is a Shetty from our district in Karnataka.

There are several hukka bars in this neighborhood. There is a world famous sandals store offering many attractive colors, varieties of material, and price ranges, very appealing to foreign tourists. This side walk shop, always crowded, Also sells varieties of colored robes for ashram visitors.

Restaurants stay open until late and people of all ages hang out near the hotels. Panwalas, fruit, ice cream vendors, pizza parlors, café coffee day, of every variety is available. The omnipresent music sometimes gets loud with the honking of horns can get annoying. Still people mind their business and hang out.

**Continued on Page 9**



## Book Review

### Planet India

**Author: Mira Kamdar**

**Published by Scribner in 2007 paperback**



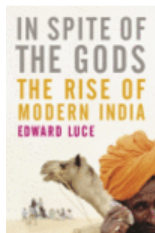
Kamdar writes about India's vitality, democracy and the challenges that it faces in becoming a superpower. According to him, India is in the midst of redefining itself and our world. Today, India is being heard in board rooms and on Capitol Hill. Through brilliant writing and illuminating analysis, Mira Kamdar explores India's astonishing transformation from a developing country into a global powerhouse. She takes us inside India, reporting on the people, companies, and policies defining the new India and revealing how it will profoundly affect our future -- financially, culturally, politically.

No matter how much the progress, India must improve the lives of its poor masses who live on less than two dollars per day, to find the sustainable energy to fuel its explosive economic growth, and to navigate international and domestic politics to ensure India's security and its status as a global power. India is the world in microcosm: the challenges it faces are universal -- from combating terrorism, poverty, and disease to protecting the environment and creating jobs. The urgency of these challenges for India is spurring innovative solutions, which will take it to the top of the new world order. If India succeeds, it will not only save itself, it will save us all. If it fails, we will all suffer. As goes India, so goes the world.

### In Spite of the Gods – The Strange Rise of Modern India

**Author: Edward Luce**

**First published by Doubleday in 2007**



China and India are destined to be world's economic powers along with the U.S. The Indian economy has been emerging as a major force since 1991. It was in that year when India was facing default on its loan payment. It was marred by Nehru-era socialism. Fortunately, the leaders of India woke up and embraced free

economy (to some extent). This has worked in the favor of India giving rise to consumerism and prosperity for its highly educated and technically savvy population. From his vantage point as the (now former) Financial Times's South Asia bureau chief, Luce describes lopsided features of a nuclear power still burdened by mass poverty and illiteracy, which he links in part to government control of the economy, an overwhelmingly rural landscape, and deep-seated institutional corruption. According to Luce, only 35 million Indians pay taxes and only one million people out of 1.1 billion are employed in the IT industry.

While describing religion's complex role in Indian society, Luce emphasizes an extremely heterogeneous country with a growing consumerist culture, a geographically uneven labor force and an enduring caste system. This lively account includes a sharp assessment of U.S. promotion of India as a countervailing force to China in a three-power 'triangular dance,' and generally sets a high standard for breadth, clarity and discernment in wrestling with the global implications of New India.

Sent your comments to:

**The THINK Club,  
P.O. Box 451,  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0451**

Or email to:

[TheThinkClub@AOL.com](mailto:TheThinkClub@AOL.com)

#### To Our Contributors:

Original articles should be submitted for publication to *The THINK Club*, P.O. Box 451, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0451. Our email address is:

**TheThinkClub@AOL.com**

Articles should not exceed 1,200 words. Longer articles, if accepted, may be published in installments. Whenever possible, send all articles on floppy disc in *Word for Windows*. Discs will be returned to the contributors.

## Key Facts: India Rising

*With more than one billion people, India is the world's second most populous country and its largest democracy.*

The majority of people live in rural areas and millions face extreme poverty. But urbanization is gathering pace and the economy is growing rapidly.

### THE COUNTRY

Covering more than 1.2 million square miles (excluding Indian-administered Kashmir), India is among the world's biggest countries. It is also one of the most diverse. Apart from Hindi and English, there are 16 official languages. Major religions include Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism.

India was ruled by the British from the early 19th Century until 1947. It won its independence at the same time as the partition and creation of Pakistan. The two countries have since fought three wars – two of which were over the territory of Kashmir. It is now in a process of rapid economic development, but it faces complex and enduring internal problems, such as those involving the caste system. India's massive overpopulation, poverty and environmental problems, as well as widespread corruption, are major challenges.

It is currently governed by a coalition government led by the Congress Party under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who came to power in 2004.

### THE ECONOMY

India has become a world economic power, with growth over the past three years averaging 8% – a rate approaching that of its booming neighbor, China. Based on purchasing power parity, it is now the world's fourth largest economy.

Since India began to open up to the outside world in the late 1980s, it has become increasingly attractive to foreign investors. Its low costs and huge, English-speaking, workforce have made it popular with multinationals for work including manufacturing and call centers.

The success of high tech industries in particular has seen large numbers of overseas Indians return, in what has been described as a "brain gain." They are part of a growing middle class, which is seen as a potentially vast domestic market. Critics say the benefits of this growth have not reached the poor quickly enough, with millions remaining in abject poverty. Income per head is just \$720 a year. Bureaucratic red tape and infrastructure problems are continuing issues.

### POPULATION

India is expected to overtake China to become the world's most populous country within the next 25 years. Its population has grown from 357 million in 1950, to 1.1 billion today. By 2030 it is expected to be home to 1.6 billion people, compared with China's 1.4 billion.



Much of the population growth is due to India's high birth rate, but life expectancy is also increasing. In 2000, a minority of the population was over 60, but by 2050 retired people will form a significant part of society. This raises questions about how they will be supported, as fewer than 10% have pensions. More than 65% of people live in rural areas, but migration to the cities is accelerating.

### LIVING STANDARDS

Despite its burgeoning economy, the gap between rich and poor in India is vast.

### WEALTH DISTRIBUTION IN INDIA

**Top 1%:** 16% of wealth

**Bottom 50%:** 8% of wealth

**Bottom 10%:** 0.2% of wealth Source:

University of Western Ontario, 2006

**People Employed in IT Field:** 1 million

**People who pay taxes:** 34 million

About 35% of people live on less than \$1 a day. Poverty is at its worst in rural areas and is often accompanied by high levels of illiteracy and poor health. Nationally, almost half of children suffer from malnourishment, although infant mortality rates have declined. Almost 60% of people in towns and 20% in rural areas do not have access to proper sanitation.

Despite such problems, India has seen overall poverty decline – a shift which has been accompanied by more general improvements to living standards. Life expectancy rose from 59 to 63 between 1990 and 2004. Adult literacy rose from 50% to 61% over the same period. It is suggested that continued economic growth will drive up living standards for the population as a whole.

### CULTURE

India is a nation of prolific film watchers and makers. About four billion trips are made to the cinema each year – many more than in any other country. More than 900 movies are made a year – significantly more than the U.S. The majority of these come from Bollywood, the Bombay-based film industry which enjoys huge audiences across Asia and beyond.

The country's influence extends worldwide in many other areas. Acclaimed authors Arundhati Roy, Vikram Seth and Salman Rushdie were all born in India. It is often said that Indian food has replaced fish and chips as the UK's national dish and its sportsmen and women have achieved success in fields as diverse as cricket and hockey.



## Continued from Page 6

In spite of the small nuisances like dusty polluted air, pot holed roads, and traffic jammed streets, life goes on. An American visitor to John Deere used the word, "fascinating" to describe India. I think he was being a bit politically correct.

So far Pune has been interesting to visit, but living here is an adventure. Perhaps in seven to eight years, the infrastructure, air quality and social services will improve enough to allow for the care of poor children and homeless people. India is poised to change, hopefully sooner rather than later. Land here is like gold, four to five crores (\$1,000,000) for an acre of agricultural land. High rise buildings spring up like mushrooms. The infrastructure is over burdened, and people somehow manage! Fascinating indeed!

### This is funny ?

I just thought I would share a conversation I had yesterday with a potential candidate for the job of Lead Engineer in our group.

Me: Mr. X, tell me about yourself.

Candidate: Sir, My name is Mr. X and I am from Nasik, Maharashtra. My father is Mr. Y, who is a professor at Nasik College, my mother is Mrs. Z, who is a doctor....

Me: I don't need to know about your mother and father. Tell me about *you*.

Candidate: Sir, I will get to that, but I need to tell you about my older brother, who is a school principal ... who won rajya prashasti for his contribution to Marathi language ....

Me: Please tell me about *you*. I am not interested in your family history.

Candidate: How can that be, sir. Without my family, I am nothing. Because my parents, brother and sister helped me, I am an engineer now.

Me: OK, now you can start with your background.

Candidate: Sir, can I say one thing about my wife?

Me: OK, go ahead.

Candidate: Sir, she is a classical singer. She is trained by the great Bhimasena Joshi. She performs in concert at Dooradarshan.

Me: OK, I am very glad that you have such a great family. Now, can we talk about you?

Candidate: Sorry sir, I thought my family background would help you to make your decision about my suitability for your job. I have support from all of them to work for John Deere. I studied ... I worked ....

My point here is that, in India, whether in marriage or job interview, a person is judged by not only his or her background, but the whole family and support structure and value system he carries with him or her. This not an isolated instance, but quite typical of most every interview.

We, in America are more individualistic. But, here in India everyone is an undivided entity from the family. Which is better? I can't say. But I can still remember the candidate's face glowing with pride, while he was explaining his background to me. A great experience indeed!

### Interviews, a Family Affair

Today I interviewed 23 recruits for engineers / software professionals in our department. Most of them had Masters degrees, a few of them Ph.D.'s. Minimum education is graduate level. Most of them have five to ten years experience with a salary level of five to six lakhs per year. The interesting part is that no women professionals are available for hire as they get very high preference by global companies (diversity at work force) as soon as they graduate. Upon changing jobs a 30% raise

is common, some as much as 100% based on their background. There is a severe shortage of graduate IT professionals and engineers. There is zero unemployment among qualified engineers from reputed universities. MBAs and Ph.D.'s are hired even before they receive their degrees. Tomorrow we will be interviewing more people.

It's interesting to note that most of the banks in India have doubled their market capitalization in just the last year! Getting loans, credit cards, and debit cards is very easy.

### Medical Treatment

I ate lunch yesterday with some of our management team, Head of Engineering Services, Head of John Deere's India Tech Center, Head of HR and couple others who came from the U.S. and settled here. I mentioned to them that I have been experiencing some pain in my lower abdomen since last two weeks. They suggested that I should visit a physician in Ruby Hall Clinic, which is supposed to be the best in this area. So this morning I visited Dr. K. B. Grant (MD, FCPS) at Ruby Hall Clinic. The entire O.P.D. (Out Patient Dept) is named after him and he may be around (80) years old. His wife is his accountant. After waiting for about (15) minutes, I went in. The accountant told me that it would cost Rs. 150 (\$3) for me. John Deere employees are given special preference and charged about twice than other patients. Normal fee is Rs. 75.

He performed a quick check up and took an X-ray, sample of blood and urine and send me to ultrasound area. There I was asked to pay Rs 600 (\$12) and asked to drink a bottle of water. After waiting for about an hour (to fill the bladder), they did ultrasound. The way the collect blood is funny ( a nurse sucks through a tube which has a collector tube in the end which is pierced in the middle finger area) and few drops of blood were spread ed over a glass piece for conducting a few tests. Urine was collected in a small glass bottle in the general urinals area. After Ultrasound the technician asked me to empty the bladder and one more Ultrasound was done. in the meanwhile the technician had a phone call and came back after about 20 minutes. By his time the doctor had gone for a meeting. so the nurse asked me to come back at 2:00 PM. She said there was no kidney stones, so I didn't have to worry.

Each of my colleagues had experienced food poisoning. Especially John Paulson had several occurrences. He was admitted to hospital several times. Ravi's wife, who was a physician in the U.S. had given him specific instructions and medicine for each type of food problems.

After everybody explained their experiences, I asked if any one died due to food poison. To my relief the answer was a solid NO. It was very comfortable to know this info.

The doctor gave me some tablets (GAS-X etc.) and gave me a clean bill of health.

John Deere employees are given special preference here as they more. Their ID card is marked USG to identify them.

Two sad events: one of my employee's sister-in-law in Bombay passed away with Dengue fever. Another employee's husband was seriously injured in a scooter accident.

The hospitals are not clean they don't change sheets after each check up on the bed, they don't make a good record of tests. This is supposed to be the best hospital in Pune!

The general condition of equipment are also not very good. I think people take chance with their health.

### Continued on Page 11

## India Has Always Been a Superpower

By Musafir

People do ask, “When will India become a superpower?” This is a ridiculous question because India has always been a superpower. I don’t understand why India should even be looked down upon as an *emerging* superpower. The definition of a superpower is as follows:

“A superpower is a state with a leading position in the international system and the ability to influence events and project power on a worldwide scale.”

In that respect India has always been known as the repository of information since time immemorial. The greatest invention of all time, the number zero was invented after all by Aryabhata. India has produced mathematicians like Ramanujan, great poets like Rabindranath Tagore, people who have made a difference to the world of cinema like Satyajit Ray.

Indian spirituality is the most ancient and most widespread in the world. It is true that India did not colonize any country nor has it waged a military war, but India has been spreading the teachings of Buddha, Mahavira and Vedanta all over the world before any other superpower started exerting its military might on other nations. Talking of military might, India is a nuclear power and possesses one of the largest military forces in the world. It is in India’s character not to intimidate the weak.

India has always been recognized as an intellectual nation. Today, India is the leader in information technology. India has an army of software engineers running wild in the silicon valley. The wars in the coming years will not be fought on the battlefields and over the mountains but in the air-conditioned comforts of control rooms. India with its immense intellectual property is poised to win that war.

Quoting Edward Luce, the author of *In Spite of the God*, “There is an essence to India that other countries do not have, which tells you that behind the diversity of life there is a spiritual reality called unity. The human race today is in a global crisis that only India can solve by showing the way to super consciousness.”

We should not forget that India is more than a country. It is a civilization. India has always been a moral superpower, it is a political superpower, the world’s largest democracy, and is now an economic superpower. I know the world is nervous about India’s progress. Any great change in history causes resentment and breeds fear and causes anxiety. The change that India is going through will bring a different kind of supremacy – moral and intellectual which is different from military and imperialistic supremacy that the world has yet to experience.

## India Is Not a Superpower – Yet

By Bala Prasad

The notion that India is a superpower is nothing short of preposterous. Small areas of superstructures, housing call centers, nuclear power, or software development programs for developed countries is not sufficient qualification for status of a superpower.

India is certainly in an economic boom – built on very weak foundation. Highways, modern bridges, world-class airports, reliable power, and clean water are in desperately short supply. The euphemism is 200 million rich and one third of the population strong. But the middle class should be looked at more closely as to what it represents. Does two meals a day make one middle class or a television and a cell phone make one rich? But more importantly, what about the other 700 million people? What about the people who cannot afford even one meal a day? What about the children who must work for the necessity of survival?

There might come a time for India to be called a superpower, but that time is not today. The basic infrastructure on which this super-structure is to be built is not there. While it is difficult to comment on every little problem that is plaguing the country, the major problems are staggering.

Lack of dependable power and transportation are major stumbling blocks. Full production capability cannot be reached because of persistent power shortages, and whatever is being produced cannot reach its destination for weeks. Up to 40% of farm produce is lost as it rots in the field or in transit thus contributing to price increases.

Delayed decision-making and rampant political corruption is another wild card. So many levels of bureaucracy are involved that the wheels of power move ever so slowly. And (according to some watchdog groups) almost every level of bureaucracy has to be “greased,” be it a clerk, a district officer, or a minister. Twenty-five percent of all allotted funds for public projects go to bribes, by whatever name is called. It is estimated that the trucking industry alone pays out about five billion dollars a year in bribe money. This not only delays but also raises the cost of infrastructure projects.

Eventually, India might reach that rarified level. But the road is long and tortuous, and people who believe we are their now should get their head out of the sand.

## Continued from Page 9

I received three managers from Waterloo Engine Works on Monday. This is the first time they came to India and they were totally shocked to see the mass of people, traffic, road conditions, road side beggars etc.,. The first hour with them was spent on explaining the reason for this chaotic situation. They were stunned to see the way people drive and the varieties of vehicles on the road. They said they never imagined anything close to what they saw here as soon as they arrived. I took them out to a restaurant called Flags for dinner, which was supposed to be an international cuisine place. Unfortunately the air conditioner was not operating and the place was not clean. But this was a recommended hotel by John Deere. We ordered some Indian and Mexican food, but it was too spicy even for me. Then they started asking a lot of questions about India, it's geography, political situation, religion, etc., I spent about two hours after dinner with them and explained what is happening in India now and our history, culture, religion etc.,.

During the next day meeting, Dennis (Group Manager) thanked me for my effort in making their stay more comfortable here and suggested that we should prepare a brochure to prepare the visitors from USA, prior to their visit to face the situation in India. I mentioned to him that even for me, it takes a while before I get used to this situation and promised that for him his next trip would be more pleasant. He appreciated the talents we have here and educational caliber of the people. But he still could not understand the reason for this chaotic situation, even with all the resources here. Our political system, our lethargy towards social problems, general self centeredness of the people, ignoring (give up on) the social problems; all these are hard to explain. I couldn't answer their questions about the responsibilities of the government, especially towards the under privileged, less fortunate, people. But at the end of our discussion, they were more comfortable with the life in India, I hope.

### A Waiter's Story

I visit a place called Madhuban for breakfast and lunch in the weekends. I came to know a waiter, who is from our hometown in Karnataka. This morning, I was talking to him about his salary, family, his life in Pune etc. These are the highlights of our conversation. He is the eldest son in a family of 5. Three girls and two boys. His parents are farmers. His sisters are attending school. His brother is working as a server in another restaurant. He gets Rs. 4500 (\$100) per month. He can't afford to visit his parents every year as it costs about Rs. 1600 (\$35) for the bus. He visits them once in two years. He works from 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM everyday, 7 days a week with some breaks for breakfast, lunch and dinner. He has no vacations other than Deepavali, Republic Day, and Independence Day. He can't afford to marry as he can't afford to rent a house in Pune. He doesn't have a phone so he can hardly talk to his family. His sisters will be ready for wedding in 5 to 6 years. He was duped by an agent who promised to get him a job in Dubai, took some money and never got back with him. He has no medical or other benefits. He always smiles.

Now, tell me. Don't we all worry for small things? Compared to his situation, we should not even mention about Stress, Worry, or Pain.

I used to give him a tips of Rs. 5 earlier. I raised it to Rs. 10.

He is a lucky one, because he has a job. I see so many women and children lying under the trees, on the footpath with bare minimum dirty cloth. What may be in their mind?

We need to think of these souls, before we start worrying about any thing.

We are so fortunate to have a roof, great food and above all a caring family and friends.

Our perspective on life changes when we look and interact with these poor souls!

So, don't worry, have fun and help others as much as possible. I have decided to give 15% of my income here to help, whomever I come across in my daily life. It is a small gesture, which may make me feel not so guilty!

### Home Cooking

This has been an interesting week. Started having home cooked meals from the cook Sham (brother of Karan, our flat's care taker). North Indian style, but better than hotel food. He will prepare dinner everyday and lunch and dinner in the weekend.

Watched a movie, Black Friday, an investigative report on Mumabi bombings of 2003. Excellent in all respects. I thought it was a very balanced, unbiased report. Technically also it is very well done. Please make a note to watch this if you get it there.

There was a report in Sunday Times about the new expectations and behavior styles of NRIs coming to India for a visit. They don't look for toilet papers, Coke, Pizza etc., but they are more into nostalgic things like ethnic food, art collections, books etc. Also they are more proud and positive about their country and less critical of infrastructure, beggars, and other stereo typical stuff. I can identify my behavior with this report, truly, I regret my previous trips' comments and criticisms of Indian roads, cleanliness, etc., with my friends and relatives here, because every country has its own problems, but India is changing for good. We have malnourished people here, but in America, obesity is also equally a serious problem.

While I was eating my breakfast today, the guy who was sitting in the next table asked for my newspaper. I was a little hesitant, but then I remembered the topic we discussed in our staff meeting on Wednesday about conserving energy and recycling papers. Then I happily gave my newspaper to him requesting him to return it after he read. He did, and I am glad that I contributed something for the cause of recycling.

While I was crossing the street today, I was waiting for the road to clear, but then a foreigner (European) just walked across the busy street as though there was no traffic. I realized that the vehicles slowed down and let the person to cross safely (may be, they honk, some time, but who cares?). The lesson I learned here is that, pedestrians and vehicle drivers know how to live in harmony, all it takes is a little tolerance, and watchful eyes and presence of mind. Sudha Murthy mentioned in one of her books that the intimacy of people is inversely proportional to their wealth (the more wealthy one gets the less intimate and tolerant you are). I thought it is true in every aspect of our lives, especially while traveling in a train, bus, car, and plane, the communication level diminishes with the cost of travel.

## No One Likes War

By Robert Bickmeyer

Those who contend we should not have invaded Iraq speak with much sense. No one likes war.

The same sense prevailed when we peacefully remained neutral during World War II. We were in the midst of peace talks with Japanese emissaries in Washington, D.C. when their navy made the dastardly sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. We had sensibly remained at peace while Adolf Hitler's armies conquered one country after another in Europe, but Germany declared war on us immediately after Pearl Harbor. We were then forced, against our will and good senses, to defeat Japan, Germany and Italy, the third Axis power.

Less than a decade later Communist North Korea invaded South Korea. The United Nations, born only five years earlier, called the invasion a violation of international peace and asked its member nations to give military aid to South Korea. The U.S., at the behest of the UN, provided 90 percent of the UN forces. Thus, 54,000 Americans made the supreme sacrifice to free a nation.

Fifty years after the end of the war a retired South Korean general was in the U.S. giving medals and certificates of appreciation to American veterans of the Korean War. Why? South Korea was a free nation with a thriving economy while North Korea was economically dead and unable to feed its people. The Bush administration had compassionately donated 110,000 tons of food to them in 2003, 55,000 in 2004 and over 50,000 in 2005.

If we had used "good sense" and remained neutral during the Korean War, the people of South Korea would today be enslaved by communism, economically dead and hungry.

The Vietnam War began in 1957 when Communist North Vietnam began attacking South Vietnam. It was written that initially, "These forces consisted of Guerillas and terrorists commonly called the Viet Cong." In 1961 our president, John F. Kennedy, said, "Let the world know that we'll bear any burden and pay any price for freedom," as he dispatched more troops to Vietnam. U.S. participation in the war became one of the most divisive foreign policy issues in our history. Some Americans believed that it was a civil war in which we should not become involved. This made sense to many. Consequently, our generals were not permitted to fight a winning war. President Nixon withdrew our troops in 1973 and the war ended in a communist victory in 1975 after they had killed millions. Thus, because of the demonstrating anti-war peaceniks who pressured our politicians to keep our generals on a short leash, 51,000 Americans died in vain.

In 1990 Saddam Hussein's Iraqi army overran and occupied Kuwait and threatened to do the same to Saudi Arabia. Under our Commander-in-Chief, George H. W. Bush, the Iraqi army was "run" (I believe some actually ran) out of Kuwait and back to Baghdad. Bush listened to those who had

the "sense" not to continue the war and follow them for a complete victory that would include the capture of Hussein.

After the horrific collapse of the World Trade Center on September 9, 2001, and the continued threats of Hussein to use weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), our Commander-in-Chief, George W. Bush, ordered the invasion of Iraq. Bush, Bill and Hillary Clinton, every Democratic presidential candidate, British intelligence and the UN believed Hussein possessed WMDs. None were found, but we captured Hussein and the Iraqi people danced in the streets and thanked President Bush. The Iraqi government tried, convicted and executed Hussein. As in Vietnam, some believe it makes good sense to retreat from Iraq as they are engaged in a civil war in which we should not become involved. This makes sense because no one likes war. Tom Brokaw made sense when he appeared on "Larry King Live" and solemnly said, "There should be no wars. There must be a better way." King solemnly agreed, but neither of them offered a better way.

No one likes war, of course, but some times war is necessary and those who oppose it are doling out NONsense.

Peaceful talks are impossible with dastardly evil men like Tojo Hideki, Adolf Hitler, Slobodan Milosevic, Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein and terrorist groups like the Taliban, al Qaida, Hamas and Hezbollah. These evildoers seethe with hatred, greed or power. When they kill innocent people, they can only be stopped with bullets and bombs. Unfortunately, there is no other way.

### To Our Advertisers

The Think Club © publishes 3,000 copies quarterly, targeted at informed and educated readers in Michigan. A few hundred copies also go to out-of-state libraries and universities. If you want to your message to reach this group of people, send your check or money order, payable to The Think Club, P.O. Box 451, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0451 or call: (248) 651-3106 for more information.

Advertisement rates are as follows: Full page \$400, half page \$200, quarter page \$120. The above rates are for full year (four issues). (Single issue rates - full page \$100, half page \$50, quarter page \$30).

## The Game of Kings

By David Beagan

The game of chess is thought to have its ancient origins in sixth century India. Interestingly, India has just crowned one of its own, Viswanathan Anand, as the number one rated player in the world. Far removed from that lofty realm, my thoughts turn to my own memories of playing chess many years ago.

Bob James was someone that I knew for a short time. As a young man I hung around with a group of guys and played chess, sometimes at the Wayne chess club. Bob seemed just a bit better player than the rest of us, or maybe it was just that he was a little more confident. I was always interested in computers and had purchased a program on my TRS-80 computer that would play chess. One day Bob was at my house and I asked if he would like to play the computer. He self-assuredly took on the machine, confidence that was not unfounded, because back then around 1979, computers were not all that good at chess. Nevertheless as Bob boldly battled the machine, he made one false move and he was checkmated. He had overlooked a simple checkmate. With a bit of smugness, I told him we could take back the computer's move and his move and let the game continue. My computer had done something that I hadn't been able to, beat Bob James.

Since then, the computers have gotten steadily better. In 1989, world champion Garry Kasparov took on the chess computer, Deep Thought, in a two game match and won easily. Then in 1996 he took on Deep Blue, a descendant of Deep Thought. And something unprecedented happened. Kasparov lost the first game – the first time a reigning world champion had lost to a computer under tournament conditions. Kasparov bounced back to win the match.

In yet another rematch in 1997, going into the final game the score was tied 2½ to 2½ each side having won a game. Kasparov was able to build up advantageous positions against the computer in three of the games but the it was able to defend the inferior positions tenaciously – typical of computer play. Many people think that a computer would never lose because it can analyze every move but this is not true. To evaluate each possible move in a position, every response to each of those moves, and so on to the end, would require the examination of an incredibly huge number of positions. There are too many positions for even the fastest computer to evaluate in any reasonable time. However, with smart search strategies and fast computer hardware, computers are able to punish mistakes and oversights immediately while avoiding obvious mistakes. Their calculating ability also allows them to defend tenaciously in inferior positions. These abilities

allow the computer to put strong psychological pressure on a human opponent: a human's fear of making a mistake and frustration over the difficulty in finishing off the computer in an advantageous position. The computer can be beat, but only by the execution of a long sequence of highly accurate moves – one slip up throws away the possibility for a win.

This was the challenge a beleaguered Garry Kasparov faced in game six of the 1997 match. On move 7, Kasparov succumbed playing a move known to be inferior. After 19 moves it was over, a computer had beaten the world chess champion. It could be argued that Garry was the better player at that time, nevertheless, demonstrating superiority in a match was too tough a challenge.

Since that time, the best that the elite human players have been able to achieve against the top chess programs is a drawn match. It is now generally accepted that computers have passed humans in the game of chess. In fact a newcomer has come onto the computer chess scene, Rybka. This program has proven that it is superior to all previous and current computer chess engines. The best human players would scarcely hope for a few draws in a match of ten games.

Previous chess computers had increased their chess ability through advancements in computer hardware, allowing them to evaluate more positions within a given time. However, Rybka, uses more chess knowledge in evaluating its positions, enabling it to beat machines that have more brute-force analysis capabilities. Developing a program like this is not easy, but the creator of Rybka is both a computer programmer and international master a distinctly rare combination of skills.

In years past, it was feared that computers would ruin the game of chess, no one would want to play if the outcome could be reduced to mere calculation. However, the computer seems to have played a role in making the game more popular worldwide than it has ever been.

Those in the field of artificial intelligence speculate whether a chess playing computer constitutes an intelligent entity. One school of thought advocates that anything that can exhibit intelligent behavior (behavior that would be considered intelligent if exhibited by a human) must be considered intelligent. While another school of thought contends that the computer is merely shuffling bits of information about and could hardly be considered intelligent thinking. It is fascinating to contemplate what might be next in this field of machine intelligence.

# Depression in Men

By Niru Prasad

Our life is full of good times and bad times, happiness and sorrow. If we are feeling “down” or “under the weather” for more than a few weeks, or are having difficulty functioning in our daily lives, we might be experiencing a serious illness called clinical depression. The good news is that clinical depression (which is a chemical imbalance in the body) is highly treatable if the diagnosis is made early enough.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, about six million American men suffer from depression every year, however men are far less likely than women to seek help not only for mental health problems but also for depression in particular. Researchers, clinicians, and psychologists are investigating the fact that traditional signs of depression (sadness, worthlessness, excessive guilt) may not represent many men’s experiences of a depressive period. It is possible that men may instead experience their depression in terms of increased fatigue, irritability, anger, hostility and abusive behavior, sleeplessness, and lack of interest in work.

Untreated depression in males can result in personal, family, and financial problems. According to NIMH, the suicide rate is higher in depressed men than in women of all ages.

### **Signs of depression in males include**

- Feeling depressed, irritable, or exhibiting angry behavior every day.
- Losing interest in pleasurable activities.
- Acting reckless, engaging in violent behaviors, talking about separation or divorce.
- Eating disorders.
- Abusing Alcohol or drugs.

While depression also hits women of all ages, they usually cry, talk more, and confide in others about their problems. In contrast, men keep their feelings to themselves. In fact, it is estimated that one million more men suffer from depression, however, instead of recognizing this fact they indulge in alcohol or drugs, gambling, etc. Or they might become workaholics to hide their feelings. Depression in males has been linked to poverty, loss of job or spouse, or even medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, etc.

### **New trends in treatment modalities of clinical depression**

For decades, scientists believed the main cause of depression was due to low levels of neurotransmitting

serotonin and norepinephrine in the brain. Hence, certain medications like Zoloft and Prozac, which are the most commonly prescribed antidepressants, help to boost the serotonin level in the brain as neurotransmitters, hence elevating the mood.

Newer research, however, focuses on nerve cells because hyperactive stress responses, brought on by genetic predisposition, prolonged exposure to stress. A single traumatic event can cause permanent damage to the nerve cells leading to serious consequences. These discoveries have opened up broad new possibilities for treatments. Scientists are developing medications that block the production of excess stress chemicals aiming to reduce damage to otherwise healthy nerve cells. They are also looking at hormonal therapy for treatment of major and minor depression.

Canadian scientists have had success with deep brain stimulation – a procedure where thin electrodes are implanted in mood regulating part of the brain. Researchers at NIMH are experimenting with the intravenous injection of “ketamine,” an animal tranquilizer, for quick and long-lasting treatment of depression in human beings. However, due to hallucinogenic effect of the drug, these are only experimental. The most effective remedy for treatment of depression is still a combination of psychotherapy, psychological help, and medication.

### **General treatment for depression in males of all ages**

1. Remain active: exercise, do yoga, meditate.
2. Eat a well-balanced diet.
3. Avoid alcohol and drugs.
4. Do not bottle up your emotions; share your feelings with others.
5. Relax.
6. Get periodic health check-ups with your physician.
7. Share your sad feelings with family and friends.
8. Ask for psychological help and seek counseling if symptoms persist.

Lastly, remember the fact that it is your responsibility to be at the top of your game. Taking care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally will definitely help you lead a happy life without depression.

## Continued from Page 16

### Ray the Ancient Runner

without disrupting the makeshift domestic tranquility. He was left to his wit and craftiness to squeeze in the training he desired and needed and weekend races were entirely excluded. He ultimately violated the truce, committed the unforgivable, was attacked and dragged into open warfare.

When Ray would appear in his running gear his wife would immediately leave the house and instruct Ray to “watch the baby.” In this manner Ray was contained and unable to run. He ultimately had a brilliant idea and plan that would allow him to watch the baby, get in a good 10 mile workout, without alerting his wife that he was indulging in the forbidden activity. Unfortunately for Ray this was the year before baby joggers. If so simple and effective a device had been available Ray’s marriage and a considerable portion of Ray’s scalp would have been spared.

His plan was sheer genius and the product of his brilliant mind. Ray would appear in running attire and loudly announce his desire for a “quick 10 mile workout.” His wife would react predictably by grabbing the car keys, informing Ray that he was to care for the baby, and leave the house to complete some unnamed mission. Ray knew at this point he had a one-two hour window during which his wife would be gone and he was left to his own devices. With his wife safely over the horizon he would spring into action. He would open the nursery window, pull the crib over to the window, and position his stopwatch next to the sleeping child. His brainstorm would then work thusly: Ray had a reliable one-mile loop around the neighborhood. He could run the measured mile, stick his head in the open nursery room window, check his lap time and the condition of the baby in one quick easy motion. He could then run the second lap of his ten lap workout assured that the baby was asleep and safe.

The scheme worked perfectly. His wife was happy, the baby was happy and Ray was happy. Ray had a quick 10-mile workout, the baby had a nice nap with lots of fresh air provided by the open nursery window and when Ray’s wife arrived home she was pleased that Ray had done his domestic duty. All this was accomplished in one hour.

The running group was very pleased with Ray and the arrangement. It was the subject of much discussion during our lunchtime runs. One day however as they say, “the best laid plans of mice and men...,” this arrangement came apart and poor Ray suffered horribly. Ray appeared one Monday at noon for the group run with a terrible laceration on his head. His head looked a little lopsided with the hair shaved in one hemisphere, the scalp discolored by bruising and antisepsis, and a nasty looking laceration that had been closed with innumerable stitches. Our group run started in silence as Ray began his tale of running, intrigue, miscalculation, disaster and assassination.

He had arisen on Saturday, donned his running garb and announced his plan to run a quick 10-mile workout. His wife left the house immediately. Ray then opened the window, positioned the sleeping infant and stopwatch next to the window and started his workout. The first mile went well. Ray stuck his head in the window, the baby was sleeping soundly and he had completed the first mile at a respectable six minutes. The second mile ended the same, head in the window, check the baby, check the watch, everything fine, fast and according to plan. Thus ended mile four, mile five, mile six and mile seven. Disaster struck, literally, at the end of mile eight. Ray rounded the last corner and approached the

house hoping to be holding the six-minute-mile pace he needed to complete his workout in exactly one hour. One hour worked perfectly, he would complete his run, shower, and relax and await the arrival of his wife. Today would be strenuous, his wife had arrived home early!

Ray rounded the last corner but didn’t notice that his wife’s car had beaten him to the house. He was totally unaware of the catastrophe that was about to come crashing down upon him. He ran to the awaiting window, thrust his head in and to his horror the baby was gone! He didn’t have long to worry about the disappearance of the infant because at that moment his wife concealed from view behind the curtain hit him over the head with a large china lamp (the lamp had been a wedding gift). The ambush was complete and devastating. Ray was rendered unconscious and considerably bloodied by the bludgeoning. Nothing bleeds more profusely than a scalp wound. Ray was collected by ambulance dazed and covered in blood. This was the end of the arrangement, the truce, the new wife and the marriage. Ray could once again join the group and run his weekend races whenever and however he chose. It was agreeable to all concerned, Ray was free, his wife was relieved of patrolling Rays running addiction and the group had Ray back a little tattered, but on the mend.

---

---

## Answers to Mental Exercise

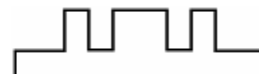
**Hairy Logic.** The traveler chooses the messy shop. Since each barber must cut the hair of the barber in the other shop, the messy shop’s barber gives the best haircut. Also, the messy shop gets lots of business, with no time to even clean the hair off the floor.

**Tertiary Fraction.**  $5832/17496 = 1/3$

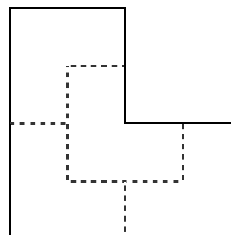
**Switches and Bulbs.** Turn on switches 1 and 2 for several minutes, then turn switch 2 off. Turn on switch 3 and go check the room. Two of the bulbs will be warm, the warm one that is lit goes with switch 1, the warm one that is unlit goes with switch 2. Of the two cool bulbs, the lit one goes with switch 3 the unlit with switch 4.

**Anagramed States.** The letters of North Carolina and South Dakota rearrange to form South Carolina and North Dakota.

**Secret Code.** Each symbol is composed of two copies of a letter of the English alphabet laid on their sides and stuck together. The next symbol in the series would be base on F and look like this:



**Puzzling Inheritance.** The land can be divided like this:



**Twin Paradox.** The girls are part of a set of triplets.



## Ray the Ancient Runner

By Bill Phyllis

In 1975 while a post-doctoral student at the Ohio State University I ran with a remarkable group every noon. My first day at Ohio State I wandered over to the gymnasium and signed up for a faculty locker. I was thrilled to have been awarded a “faculty” locker. The following day I took my running gear to the gymnasium, stashed it in my locker and dressed for a run. It was then that I met the group of runners that I would run with, agonize with, race with and grow to love over the next year.

I stepped out of the gym door and immediately encountered a group of about ten to twelve runners preparing for a run. Several were pushing against the building to stretch their calf muscles. To a non-runner this always appears to be an exercise in futile building movement. We were sometimes greeted with questions such as, “Has that building moved any since you have been pushing it?” We were always happy to reply, “Sure, it was about a half mile down the street when we started.” There was an immediate recognition between the group of runners and me. They looked like runners and I looked like a runner. This was before the running boom was in full bloom (Frank Shorter initiated the running boom with his marathon Olympic gold medal). We didn’t appear normal, dressed differently and recognized each other as runners. I was immediately invited to join them and from that day and for the next twelve months I ran ten to fifteen miles at lunchtime with them. This group ran everyday regardless of weather. When it rained we ran, if it snowed, we ran, in the midst of an absolute gale, we ran. There was no weather nasty enough to discourage the group. We would begin our run on the Ohio State campus on the Olentangy River and run to the Scioto River and then along the Scioto before retracing our path back to campus.

One of the runners was Ray. He was very tall, I assume about 6’5”, gray haired and had a prominent mustache. Ray raced all over Ohio and was the terror of his age group and the open divisions of most foot races within 100 miles of Columbus, Ohio. He was a Ph.D. research physicist and a man of rare intelligence and wit. Actually he was just flat-out funny and always had us laughing during our runs.

Once as a group we decided to run the Atlanta Marathon. We boarded a Delta flight from Columbus to Atlanta dressed in our race attire, ran the race and then went directly from the finish line back to the airport for the flight home. When we arrived at the airport we were informed that we had a very limited time to board and if we didn’t “run” we would miss our flight. We attempted to jog to the gate but had cooled off following the marathon and our muscles were tied in knots. The sight of ten middle-aged men hobbling to the gate in running attire with our numbers still pinned to our shirts was so pitiful we even laughed at our own decrepitude. The

traditional post-race meal was generally beef stew. Our timing had been so tight that we didn’t have time to partake of the post-race meal but one of the members of our group had the foresight to get ten cans of Dinty Moore beef stew. He passed these cans to us after we were airborne, we popped off the zip tops and ate our stew with plastic forks. All of us but Ray, he dumped his stew in an airsickness bag and hailed the stewardess to fetch the bag.

When the stewardess arrived the bag containing the unwanted stew was passed to the aisle for retrieval. She reached gingerly for the bag with a facial expression that indicated she was being handed something very unsavory. A millisecond after she had pinched the top of the bag between her index finger and thumb Ray stopped her and asked her to return the bag. Then to her dismay and disgust he opened the bag, retrieved a big chunk of beef and with great gusto popped it into his mouth. Once he had consumed this tidbit he resealed the bag and returned it to the very distressed stewardess. We all enjoyed this scene, much in keeping with the demeanor of a group of 16-year-olds trapped in 35-60 year old bodies.

I have digressed, this story is about Ray and his new bride. Ray seemed old to me. I was young (33), relatively speaking, which made Ray seem old. In retrospect Ray couldn’t have been more than 45-50 years old. He just looked old, his gray hair and gray mustache added years to his actual age. Ray had a very young girlfriend that we all admired silently and from afar. She was a most appealing young woman, beautiful face, lovely figure and in her early 20s. She was also pregnant. Shortly there was an appropriate marriage eternally linking the ancient Ray with this dewy-eyed mother-to-be.

I’m not sure what it is about woman-kind (that is non-running woman-kind) but there is a very radical alteration of their personalities after the final “I do” is pronounced. I once dated a young woman named Renee’ and she told all her friends that once we were married I would cease all the running-cycling-skiing nonsense that had infected me. It would be easier for me to stop breathing for a week or so than discontinue my running. Ray’s new wife inherited this defective anti-running gene (it must be on the X chromosome). She was a changed woman and was determined to end Ray’s 25 year running career and reform him into the perfect house-husband. It was the old immovable object and the irresistible force. Running was in every fiber of Ray’s body but his wife was determined to purge Ray of this running demon.

In time the baby arrived and an uneasy truce was established. Ray would run on his own time, on his lunch period, or whenever he could squeeze in a run on the weekend

**Continued on Page 15**

# Mental Exercise

By David Beagan

## Hairy Logic

A traveler arrives in a new town needing a haircut. The town has two barbershops. Being very particular about his hair, the traveler investigates both shops. The first barbershop is very clean and the barber has a very nice haircut. The second shop is messy with lots of hair on the floor and the barber has an uneven haircut. Which shop does the traveler choose for his haircut?

## Tertiary Fraction

The digits 1, 2, 3, and 6 can be arranged as a fraction that equals one-third:

$$\frac{12}{36} = \frac{1}{3}$$

Can you arrange the digits from one through nine: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 to similarly equal a fraction of one-third?

## Switches and Bulbs

You are in a room with three switches. In another room that you cannot see, are three bulbs each of which can be turned on or off by each of the switches. The task is to figure out which switch controls which bulb by flipping switches and only checking the room with the bulbs once.

What if there are four switches and four bulbs, can the task still be accomplished by checking the room with the bulbs just once?

## Anagrammed States

Take all of the letters use to spell out the names of two different states and rearrange these letters to spell out the names of two other states. It is easy once you hit on the right strategy.

## Secret Code

What could these strange symbols be, some secret code? Actually they are a series of five symbols starting at the top and going down. What is the sixth symbol? It is quite simple once you look at it the right way.



*The THINK Club* is published quarterly by The THINK Club Publications, a forum to encourage independent thinking among fellow human beings.

Publisher: **Bala Prasad**

Managing Editor: **Anil Shrivastava "Musafir"**

Consulting Editor: **David Beagan**

Address: **The THINK Club**

**PO Box 451**

**Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0451**

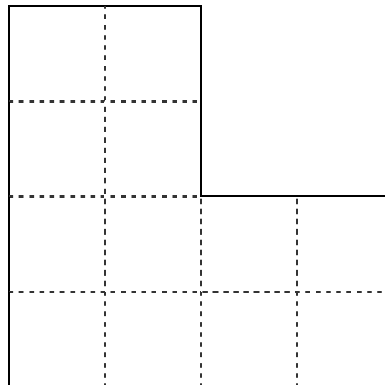
Phone: **248-651-3106** Fax: **240-266-7432**

email: [TheThinkClub@AOL.com](mailto:TheThinkClub@AOL.com)

Visit us: [www.thethinkclub.com](http://www.thethinkclub.com)

## Puzzling Inheritance

Four heirs have inherited a parcel of land that is twelve acres in size. The will stipulates that the land must be divided evenly into four similarly shaped parcels. How can the surveyor divide this land into four identically shaped areas.?



## Twin Paradox

Two girls are born to the same mother on the same day of the same year. Yet the girls are not twins. How is this possible?

## The Language of Non-Verbal Communication!

By Bala Prasad

Imagine that you see two people taking. One is sitting with arms crossed. The other is tapping one foot very fast. How would you interpret their non-verbal cues? You may have heard that actions speak louder than words. What does that mean? It means that what you do may matter more than what you say. It also means that how you say something may matter more than what you say. What you do, and how you say something, is non-verbal language. It is a way of communicating that has nothing to do with the words you speak. Studies reveal that non-verbal communication conveys 93 percent of what you mean to say. In other words, when your expression says one thing and your words another, people believe the body language.

We often show our feelings and attitudes through non-verbal cues. Some people believe that non-verbal cues are more reliable than the spoken word as a way of interpreting someone's true feelings or intentions. Certainly, these non-verbal cues help us get the right meaning. For example, body posture and walk tell us a lot about a person. Standing straight shows confidence. Slouching shows insecurity. It also shows disrespect – as if you don't care. Crossing your arms over your chest shows you have a closed mind – that you are uninterested in the opinion of others. It can be viewed as a confrontational stance – as if you are telling the other person, "I don't believe a word you say." It can also mean that you are protecting yourself. Arms at your side show openness. Walking is body posture in motion. Your walk should be different at home than at work. At work, you should walk quickly – like you are ready and eager to work. At home, your walk should be relaxed, maybe even slower. You should not be in a hurry.

Tone of voice tells us a lot about a person's attitude toward the listener, as well as the person's attitude toward a particular subject. For example, your tone of voice can relay that you are bored, or unimpressed. It can also relay skepticism. On the other hand, your tone of voice can express enthusiasm, or excitement. Tone shows feelings, and it should be constantly changing. We all adopt different tones for different contexts.

Maintaining one's physical distance from another person also tells us something about that person. There is an invisible line that surrounds each of us. We allow people we care about to cross that line, and get closer to us. But strangers, or people we are skeptical about, are seldom allowed to cross that line. They get too close for comfort. At work, we probably would not allow too many people to infiltrate our invisible line. In our personal lives, of course, we enjoy hugs and kisses from those we love.

Hand gestures are also symbols. A handshake, in and of itself, is a well-known greeting. Even if we were among people who spoke a foreign language, a simple handshake would make us feel welcome, and at home. A firm handshake reflects confidence, and sincerity. A flimsier handshake might suggest nervousness. But either way, a handshake says hello.

Body gestures are also indicators. Shrugging your shoulders tells people you don't know, or you don't care. Children often shrug their shoulders when parents ask them a question they don't want to answer. Even without saying a word, parents would know that the child who shrugs his shoulders might be embarrassed or ashamed about something. Of course, children who roll their eyes at their parents are also conveying a message without saying a word! Tapping a foot shows impatience. A hand on your hips shows

frustration. And, of course, a single nod of the head shows agreement, without ever having to speak a word.

Eye contact is an extremely important type of non-verbal language. When we look another person in the eye, we are telling them to trust us, no matter what we say. Sales people have probably perfected the art of looking people in the eye. It also shows you are interested in the other person. Looking someone in the eye and nodding during conversations tells the other person you want to hear what they have to say. If you can't look somebody in the eye, they will question your motives. They might think you don't care about what they are saying, or that you have something to hide.

Although you might not think of it, appearance also tells others things about yourself. For example, if you wear dirty, sloppy clothes, that may reflect that you don't care – that you have little interest in yourself or the person with whom you are speaking. Employers may not think you will be a good worker. If you wear certain types of clothes, or certain types of jewelry, that may help you identify with certain groups of people, who share your cultural or socio-economic background. Think about how people dress at work. Lawyers wear suits. Doctors wear white coats. These indicators tell us who they are before they speak their first word. I have always believed that you can tell a lot about a person by how polished his shoes are!

A good role model for non-verbal communication is former President Bill Clinton. In his presidential debates, he would often shake his head at his opponent to convey skepticism. Or, he would signal attentive listening by putting his finger on his chin and nodding his head. This body language would also convey Clinton's willingness to consider the ideas he was hearing about. Clinton's hand gestures also conveyed what he was thinking – holding his two hands apart conveyed to the audience that he was serious about the issue he was discussing. Holding his two hands together, almost as in prayer, conveyed is thoughtfulness – or in some instances, his repentance.

Next time you are in a gathering with other people, watch their non-verbal cues. And watch your own non-verbal cues as well. Do your cues say what you mean to say? Non-verbal language can easily become a habit for us – so let's make sure we are not giving the wrong impression by it!

Sincerely,

*Bala Prasad*

# OUR 3 FAVORITE BOOKS

## Special Offer for Think Club Members



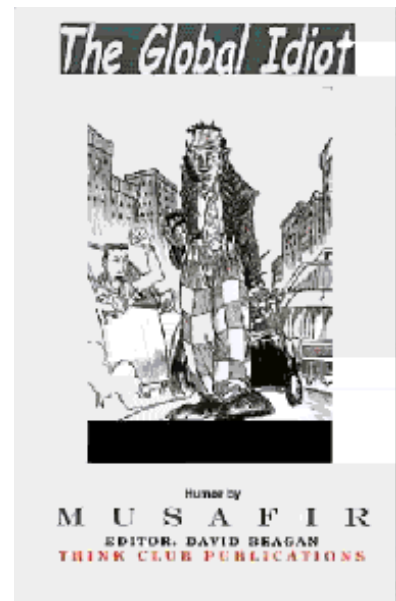
### How to Keep Your Child Safe And Healthy Niru Prasad, MD

Price \$14.95 You pay \$10 US

### The Global Idiot Humor by Musafir

Makes you think and laugh at  
the same time

Price \$12.95 You pay \$7 US



Coming soon

### Women Are Angels Musafir's Reflections

Write to [TheThinkClub@AOL.com](mailto:TheThinkClub@AOL.com)

**You Can Be a Published  
Author**

**GET**

**PUBLISHED**

**NOW**

**Think Club Publications**

Write to: [TheThinkClub@AOL.com](mailto:TheThinkClub@AOL.com)

Visit us at [\*http://www.thethinkclub.com/\*](http://www.thethinkclub.com/)

---

***The THINK Club***

**P.O. Box 451**

**Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0451**