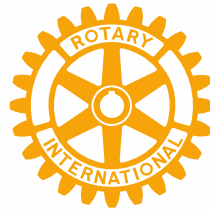




**Rotary**  
CLUB OF PANAJI



THE

# SPARK

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF PANAJI



ISSUE 8 | VOL.1 | FEBRUARY 2025

**REGULAR MEETING :**

Every Wednesday at 6:30 pm,  
5th floor, EDC House,  
Dr. Atmaram Borkar Road, Panaji - Goa

[www.rotaryclubpanaji.org](http://www.rotaryclubpanaji.org)



## PROJECT AT A GLANCE



Donation 47 bicycles on 21st February 2025



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Rtn. Dr. Raghuvir Salkar*



Dear Friends,

The month of February is Rotary's month of Peace and Conflict Prevention / Resolution.

The month started with many of our members attending the District Conference at Belagavi. It was attended by 23 of our members and spouses. To my mind, it was one of the best organized conferences in recent years, with attention to detail and superb fellowship. A resolution proposed by 44 clubs of Maharashtra to carve out a separate district for all Maharashtra clubs of the district was passed with only 13 voting against it and a large majority of clubs abstaining from voting. So, one can expect the district to be bifurcated in 2027-28.

We finally had the prize distribution function for Children's Art Competition held on 19th December. Prizes were awarded to the top 6 students from each age category as well as the special student category. We also had a dental cum eye camp at Father Agnel College of Arts and Commerce at Pilar, a project that was conceived by Rtn. Harin and well executed to perfection by Rtn. Bhalchandra.

One more cataract surgery was conducted by Dr. Shweta Khandeparkar, thanks for the grant received by our club from the Goa Hindu Association, Ponda. This was the 21st surgery in this Rotary year. We donated nearly 50 bicycles to girl students from two rural schools, thanks to Rtn. Govind for arranging CSR funds through his company.

Rtn Madhan who had earlier donated to the Polio Plus Fund and then to the Annual Giving Fund, contributed yet one more time to the Annual Giving Fund. He is now PHF+7; congratulations to him. Our honorary member Rtn Virendra donated USD 500 to our Global Grant project "E Vidya – Smart Classrooms in Goan Schools". On behalf of the Club, I sincerely thank both the Rotarians for their generosity which will go a long way in helping communities in Goa and outside.

I am very happy to inform you that our Club has so far contributed USD 9126 to Rotary Foundation India. Much more remains to be done, especially in Endowment Fund which I am trying hard to establish and which I will with your support and blessings.

With warm wishes,  
Manguirish





## RI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Rt. Stephanie A. Urchick*

This month, as we come together for the International Assembly and the Presidential Peace Conference, we celebrate The Magic of Rotary — a unique blend of global connection, vision, and action that empowers us to create lasting change.

One of the most inspiring examples is our Rotary Peace Fellowship program, a cornerstone of Rotary's mission to build a more peaceful and just world.

For more than 23 years, Rotary Peace Fellowships have been transforming communities. Our Rotary Peace Centers, hosted at leading universities around the globe, have educated over 1,800 fellows who now work in more than 140 countries. These centers cultivate expertise in fields like conflict resolution, sustainable development, and peacebuilding, preparing fellows to tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges. This program exemplifies how Rotary turns vision into action, creating a ripple effect of hope and change.

This month during the Presidential Peace Conference, we celebrate a significant milestone with the opening of our newest peace center in Istanbul. This center will focus on training leaders to address peacebuilding challenges in the Middle East and North Africa, further extending Rotary's impact. Peace fellows are dedicated champions of transformation, addressing critical issues such as refugee resettlement, youth and women's empowerment, and reconciliation in conflict zones. Many founded vital organizations or hold leadership roles in governments, non governmental organizations, and international institutions like the United Nations and World Bank.

One inspiring story is that of Ntang Julius Meleng, a 2024 Rotary Peace Fellow at Makerere University in Uganda. Through his Social Change Initiative, Julius has worked to empower young people in Cameroon to take active roles in peacebuilding and leadership.

His project provided training in conflict prevention, civic engagement, and leadership to youths and community officials in areas affected by conflict, equipping people to drive sustainable peace efforts.

Julius harnessed Rotary's global network to overcome obstacles, including limited funding and security risks, and make a meaningful impact.

The Rotary Peace Fellowship gave Julius the tools and support to turn his vision into reality. His work embodies The Magic of Rotary — the transformative power of connecting people, sharing resources, and uniting for a common purpose.

As we reflect on the achievements of our peace fellows and celebrate Rotary's enduring commitment to peace, let us also recognize the role that everyone in our network of 1.2 million members plays in creating magic through service.

Together, we can amplify our impact, inspire new generations of leaders, and build a brighter, more peaceful future.



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An advertisement for a clothing store. It features a central text block with a bold title 'M/s. SELECTION' and a list of clothing items. On either side of the text are small images of people wearing traditional Indian clothing: a woman in a saree on the left and a man in a kurta and trousers on the right.

# EDITOR'S SPACE

*Rtn. Ar. Gurprasad Mantravadi*



As February comes in we slowly start missing the cold winds and our plans of taking a trip to the snow lands slowly come to an end.

We greet the new weather with fresh thoughts of tasty fruits which mark their entry into the season with the cashew and the king of fruits, the mango.

Such a transition happens only in February and i welcome you all to a fresh new edition of our beloved spark. Great articles and fun filled activities along with the noble projects brought to life by our every enthusiastic rotarians adorn the pages ahead. Happy reading !!

**FEBRUARY IS**  
**PEACE AND CONFLICT PREVENTION/RESOLUTION MONTH**  
 "Imagine all the people living life in peace..."  
 John Lennon

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# SECRETARY'S REPORT

Dear Fellow Rotarians,

As we celebrate the vibrant festival of Holi, I extend my warmest wishes to each of you for a joyous and colorful celebration. Additionally, I wish you all a wonderful conclusion to this financial year.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Rtn. Mantravadi on the timely release of our newsletter, 'SPARK', every month.

Our appreciation also goes to our printer, 'Weldroy Fernandes', for his excellent service.

As we enter the final 100 days of this Rotary year, I am filled with a sense of pride, peace, and fulfillment. Our club has accomplished remarkable work, touching numerous hearts along the way.

*Rtn. Pankaj Saraf*



I have had the privilege of witnessing our President's tireless efforts, supported by his enthusiastic team. And, as our President would say, "The best is yet to come!"

I express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you, dear Rotarians, for your unwavering dedication and support throughout this year.

Warm regards,





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# घुस्मटमारि

Rtn. प्रदीप तळावलीकार



आजकाल घुस्मटमार हा शब्द आपल्या गोमंतकांत फारच प्रचलीत होउन राहिला आहे. मला वाटते २००४ मधे प्रथम हा शब्द गोमंतकीयांच्या कानावर पडला. म्हणजे पहा, गेली चौदा वर्षे ह्या शब्दाने आमच्या राजकीय क्षेत्रांत बरीच उलथापालथ घडवून आणलेली आहे. जशी दशरथाने रामाला चौदा वर्षे वनवासाला पाठविल्यामुळे अयोध्येच्या राजकीय क्षेत्रांत त्या काळांत उलथापालथ घडलेली होती तशी. २००४ साली झालेल्या त्या प्रसिद्ध घुस्मटमारी नंतर आता तब्बल बारा वर्षांनी पुन्हा इथल्या नेत्यांना घुस्मटमारीचा रोग जडलेला दिसून येत आहे. ह्याचे एक कारण कुप्रसिद्ध अशा आपल्या राज्य निवडणूका तर नव्हे ? कारण तेव्हांही निवडणूका होत्या आणि आताही निवडणूका होणार आहेत. तेव्हांही, घुस्मटमार ह्या शब्दाच्या त्या जनक राजाने घुस्मटमार होते म्हणून आपल्या पक्षांतून दूसऱ्या एका पक्षांत उडी घेतली होती व राज्य हासिल केले होते आणि त्यावेळच्या त्या रामाला सात वर्षे वनवासाला पाठविला होता. थोडक्यांत घुस्मटमार ह्या शब्दाचा व पौराणिक काळापासून ऐतिहासिक आणि आजच्या काळापर्यंत तसा घनिश्च संबंध असलेला आपल्याला दिसून येतो.

आपण आता जरा रामायण काळांतल्या घुस्मटमार ह्या शब्दाचा उगम पाहू. वाल्याचा वाल्मिकी झाला हें आपण सर्वांनी ऐकलेले आहे, वाचलेले आहे. वाल्याचा चाल्मिकी होण्याचे कारणच मुळी वाल्याची घुस्मटमार हे होते. वाल्या हा त्या काळांत लोकांवर दरोडा घालून प्रसंगी त्यांचा खून करून त्यांना लूटून आपल्या कुटूंबाचे पालन करत होता. हें जेव्हां त्याच्या कुटुंबाला कळले तेव्हां त्यांनी ते पाप आपल्या डोक्यावर घेण्याचे नाकारले. हेंच प्रकरण वाल्याची घुस्मटमार होण्यास कारणीभूत ठरलें. खून दरोडे आदी पापी कृत्ये वाल्याने सोडून दिली व तो वाल्मिकी नावाचा त्रिष्टी झाला. त्याने पुढे लिहीलेल्या रामायणांत तर स्वतः राम, लक्ष्मण, रावण, विभीषण, हे सर्व ह्या घुस्मटमारीच्या जंजाळांतून गेले होते. रामाचं चरित्र ज्यांनी अभ्यासलेले आहे त्यांना मी काय म्हणतो तें सहज पटेल. रामाने त्याचं संबंध आयुष्यकाळ घुस्मटमारीचा ताप धिरगंभीर पणे सहन करण्यांत

घालवला. लक्ष्मणानेही तसंच केले पण क्वचीत वेळेस त्याचा सात्वीक संताप उफाळून आलेला आपल्याला दिसून येतो. रावणाची घुस्मटमार तर ह्या जगांतली नव्हती. मंदोदरी सारखी स्वर्णसुंदरी बायको घरांत असून सुद्धा रावणाचे मन परस्त्रियेवर भाळले होते. सीता तर सहजरित्या त्याला प्राप्त होत नव्हती. कल्पना करा बिचाऱ्याची काय स्थिती झालेली असेल. घरी मंदोदरीने अबोला धरलेला आणि बाहेर सीता काही प्राप्त होईना. घुस्मटमारीचा प्रचंड आघात. विभीषण तर घुस्मटमारी सहन करण्यासाठीच जन्मला होता असें म्हटले तर तें वावगे होणार नाही. आधीं रावणापुढे काहीं बोलता येत नव्हते तर नंतर लक्ष्मणापुढे. राम ह्या घरभेद्याला आसरा देतो म्हणून लक्ष्मणाला राग यायचा. पण रामा पुढे त्याचा नाइलाज व्हायचा, म्हणजे शेवटीं घुस्मटमारच. प्रचंड घुस्मटमार. अशाच प्रकारची घुस्मटमार हल्ली आपल्या गोमंतकातल्या राजकीय पक्षांतर्गत होत असलेली आपल्याला दिसून येते आहे.

आता थोडंसं महाभारतांत डोक्यावू. आपणा सर्वांना माहित असलेल्या महाभारतात घुस्मटमारी सुरु होते ती पंडू राजा पासून. बिचारा पंडू राजा तर घुस्मटमारीचा अग्रणीच मानला जातो. तो, कुंती माद्रीकडून वंश प्राप्ती करूं शकत नव्हता. त्यामुळे कुंती त्याबाबतीत जे काही अलौकिक प्रयत्न करायची ते सर्व प्रयत्न मुकाट तोंडी त्याला पहात बसावे लागायचे. तोंड दाबून बुक्यांचा मार, दूसरे काय? काय ही भयंकर घुस्मटमारी. पंडू नंतर पंडूचे सर्वच पुतण्ये घुस्मटमारीला कमीअधिक प्रमाणांत बळी पडले होते. त्यांची घुस्मटमारी मात्र जरा वेगळ्या प्रकारा मुळे व्हायची. हा वेगळा प्रकार म्हणजे त्यांना असं वाटायचं की त्यांचा बाप धृतराष्ट्र हा पंडूचा वडिल बंधू असताना त्याच्या मुलांच्या हाती हस्तीनापुराचा राज्यकारभार का नसावा ? आणि तें त्यांच्या मनासारखें होत नसल्यामुळे त्यांचा, विशेषकरून जेष्ठ भ्राता दुर्योधन, दुशाः सन आदींचा मनातल्या मनांत घुस्मटमार व्हायचा. आणि त्यामुळेच पंडूचे पुत्र व धृतराष्ट्राचे पुत्र म्हणजे पांडव व कौरव ह्यांच्यात ते जगप्रसिद्ध युद्ध झाले होते. आणि ह्या युद्ध समयी पितामह



भिष्म,विचारवंत विदूर व राजगुरु द्रोण ह्यांचा कुणाची बाजू घ्यायची ह्या बाबतीत प्रचंड असा घुस्मटमार झाला होता. ह्या सगळ्या वृत्तांत पांडव स्त्रिया मात्र एक घाव दोन तुकडे ह्या आपल्या मताशी ठाम राहिल्यामुळे त्यांचा मात्र तसा म्हणावा असा घुस्मटमार झाला असें कोठेही आढळून आलेले नाही. नाही म्हणायला द्रौपदी स्वयंवराच्या वेळीं महारथी कर्ण जेव्हां पण जिंकण्यासाठी पुढें झाला होता त्यावेळीं द्रौपदीच्या मनाची जी काही क्षण चलबिचलता झाली होती तीला काही प्रमाणांत द्रौपदीची झालेली घुस्मटमार असें जे काही महाभारतकार म्हणतात त्यांत थोडें तथ्य असावे असें वाटते. तशीं महाभारतात अनेक व्यक्तिमत्त्वे अशीं आहेत की ज्यानी घुस्मटमार सहन केलेला होता. द्रोणाचार्य पुत्र अश्वथामा हा तर आयुष्यभर घुस्मटमार सहन करत होता आणि तो अजूनही सहन करत फिरतोय असं मानलं जातं. विदूर पुत्र विकर्ण हाही तसाच घुस्मटमार स्पेशालिस्ट होता. बलाढ्य भिमाच्या आक्रमतेपुढें त्याचे चार पंडुबंधू व शंभर कौरुबंधू तर नेहमीच घुस्मटमारीच्या सावटाखाली वावरत असायचे. खुद्द कृष्णाने देखील रणांगणावर पितामह भिष्माच्या आक्रमणाखाली दबून जावून हातात रथाचे का होईना चक्र घेउन युद्धांत उडी घेतली होती. काय करावे काय नको अशा विचारांच्या घुस्मटमारीचें ते एक उत्कृष्ट असें उदाहरण म्हणून मानले जातें.

आणि आता आपण आपल्या इथल्या राजकारणांत काय अनुभवतो ? तेच. हल्ली तर असें ऐकीवांत आहे की २००४ सालांतल्या त्या जनक राजाचा म्हणे त्याने त्यावेळीं उडी घेतलेल्या पक्षांत घुस्मटमार चालू आहे. त्या पक्षाचे हल्लीचे नेते म्हणे त्याला भिक घालीत नाही आणि त्याला कोंडाळे करणारे नविन तरूण नेते म्हणे त्याला त्याच्या गडकिल्ल्यांत जवळ जवळ कोंडून ठेवित आहेत. म्हणजे इकडे आड तिकडे विहीर अशीच काहीशी परिस्थिती आहे असं म्हणायला हरकत नाही. तशीच गत म्हणे

उत्तर गोमंतकातील काही प्रस्थापीत राजकारण्यांची झालेली आहे.झाडूवाल्या नव्या पक्षाची तर घुस्मटमार जरा आगळी वेगळी अशी आहे. पांढरी टोपी घालावी तर हातवाल्यांनी त्या टोपीची आजवर इतकी दूर्दशा करून ठेवलेली आहे की ती घालायला ते जरा कचरतात तर हातात झाडू घ्यावा म्हटला तर सत्तेत असलेल्या पक्षाच्या स्वच्छ भारत अभियानात सामील झाल्यासारखे वाटणार. मग मतदार गोंधळांत पडले तर? आणि आपल्या प्रसिद्द सिंहाची तर कमालच आहे. चार वर्षे कमळाच्या पाकळ्या खावून खावून आता म्हणे त्या सिंहाला मनुष्य प्राणी खावासा वाटतो आहे आणि म्हणून सिंहाची प्रचंड अशी घुस्मटमार झाली आहे. थोडक्यांत काय तर सगळ्यांचीच सगळ्याचबाबतीत घुस्मटमार.

प्रदीप माधव तळावलीकर  
९८२२१२१४४६

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*Best Wishes From*

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# IF I WERE GIVEN A CHANCE TO CHANGE A DAY IN THE HISTORY OF THIS PLANET

*Rtn. Ar. Gurprasad Mantravadi*



History is shaped by countless moments, both triumphant and tragic. While humanity has witnessed remarkable achievements, it has also endured catastrophic events that have altered the course of civilization forever. If I were given the power to change one day in the history of this planet, I would choose August 6, 1945 — the day the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. This singular event marked the dawn of the nuclear age and introduced a level of destruction and human suffering unprecedented in human history. The consequences of that day extended far beyond the immediate devastation, fundamentally reshaping global politics, military strategy, and humanity's relationship with technology and power.

## The Day That Changed Everything

On the morning of August 6, 1945, at precisely 8:15 a.m., a B-29 bomber named Enola Gay dropped an atomic bomb, nicknamed "Little Boy," over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. The bomb exploded approximately 600 meters above the ground, releasing an energy equivalent to 15 kilotons of TNT. In an instant, the city was engulfed in a blinding flash of light, followed by a fireball that reached temperatures of over 4,000 degrees Celsius. A massive shockwave and intense heat flattened nearly 70% of the city, reducing buildings to rubble and igniting fires that burned uncontrollably.

The human toll was staggering. An estimated 80,000 people died instantly from the blast and heat, and tens of thousands more succumbed to burns, injuries, and radiation sickness in the following days, weeks, and months. By the end of 1945, the death toll had risen to over 140,000. Those who survived suffered long-term health issues, including cancer and genetic damage caused by radiation exposure. Generations of survivors, known as hibakusha, bore both physical and emotional scars that would never fully heal.

## Why This Day Was So Detrimental

The bombing of Hiroshima, followed by the bombing of Nagasaki three days later on August 9, 1945, was justified at the time by the Allied powers as a necessary step to force Japan's surrender and bring an end to World War II. Japan did surrender on August 15, 1945, effectively

ending the war. However, the long-term consequences of using nuclear weapons have haunted humanity ever since.

## The Unleashing of Nuclear Warfare

The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked the first and only time nuclear weapons have been used in warfare. However, they set a dangerous precedent — the realization that mankind now possessed the capability to annihilate itself. The post-war period was characterized by an intense nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union, culminating in the Cold War.

The development and stockpiling of nuclear weapons created a global environment of fear and instability. The doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) meant that any large-scale conflict between nuclear-armed nations could lead to the annihilation of human civilization. This constant state of tension reshaped international relations and military strategy for decades.

## The Human Cost and Moral Dilemma

Beyond the immediate and long-term casualties, the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki raised profound moral and ethical questions about warfare and the use of weapons of mass destruction. Was it justified to target civilian populations to force a political outcome? Could the development of such destructive technology ever be morally defensible?

The survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki — the hibakusha — became living reminders of the horrors of nuclear warfare. Their suffering highlighted the indiscriminate nature of nuclear weapons and the disproportionate toll they take on innocent civilians. The psychological trauma endured by survivors extended to future generations, creating a cultural and emotional legacy of fear and grief.

## The Global Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

The success of the Manhattan Project and the dropping of the atomic bomb spurred a global arms race. The Soviet Union tested its first nuclear weapon in 1949, followed by the United Kingdom, France, and China in

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subsequent decades. By the mid-20th century, the world was armed with enough nuclear warheads to destroy the planet multiple times over.

Efforts to control nuclear weapons through treaties such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and arms reduction agreements have had limited success. The threat of nuclear conflict remains a looming shadow over global security, as geopolitical tensions continue to escalate in regions such as the Middle East, South Asia, and Eastern Europe.

### **Impact on Science and Technology**

While the atomic bomb represented a catastrophic misuse of scientific discovery, it also ushered in a new era of technological and scientific advancement. Nuclear technology led to the development of nuclear power, which today provides a significant portion of the world's energy needs. However, the dual-use nature of nuclear technology means that the same scientific principles used to generate electricity can also be used to build weapons. The ethical implications of scientific discovery have become a central concern in fields such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and environmental science. The legacy of Hiroshima serves as a stark reminder of the responsibility that comes with technological progress.

### **Why Changing This Day Would Have Benefited Humanity**

If I were given the chance to change history and prevent the bombing of Hiroshima, the trajectory of the 20th century — and possibly human civilization — would have been profoundly different.

**1.Preserving Human Life:** First and foremost, changing this day would have saved the lives of tens of thousands of innocent civilians, including women and children. The horrific suffering endured by the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki could have been avoided.

**2.Avoiding the Nuclear Arms Race:** Without the demonstration of nuclear power in warfare, the urgency to develop and stockpile nuclear weapons may have been reduced. The world might have pursued alternative paths toward conflict resolution and deterrence without relying on the threat of mutual destruction.

**3.Shaping a More Peaceful World Order:** The post-World War II order was defined by competition, militarization, and ideological conflict. A world without

nuclear weapons might have fostered greater cooperation and diplomacy between nations, potentially avoiding conflicts such as the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Cuban Missile Crisis.

**4.Advancing Science Without Fear:** Scientific progress in nuclear technology might have been directed exclusively toward peaceful applications, such as energy production and medical research. The fear of nuclear warfare has cast a long shadow over scientific progress and international collaboration.

### **The Challenges of Changing History**

Of course, changing history is never straightforward. Had the bombings not occurred, World War II might have dragged on for months or years, potentially costing even more lives through conventional warfare. Japan's surrender might have required a costly and deadly ground invasion. Moreover, the absence of a nuclear deterrent could have led to different forms of military conflict, possibly with equally devastating consequences.

However, the moral and humanitarian cost of Hiroshima remains unparalleled. The deliberate targeting of a civilian population with a weapon of mass destruction crossed an ethical line that humanity has grappled with ever since. Changing this day would not only have spared the immediate victims but might have set humanity on a more peaceful and cooperative path.

History is defined by turning points — moments when humanity stands at a crossroads. August 6, 1945, was one such moment. It marked the beginning of the nuclear age and a new era of fear and uncertainty. If I were given the power to change one day in history, I would choose to prevent the bombing of Hiroshima. In doing so, I believe humanity might have avoided the devastating legacy of nuclear weapons, fostered greater global unity, and embraced scientific progress without the constant shadow of annihilation. The past cannot be rewritten, but the lessons of Hiroshima serve as a sobering reminder of the need for peace, compassion, and the responsible use of knowledge and power.

*So if you were asked this one question, What would be your answer??*





# WEEKLY MEETINGS





# WEEKLY MEETINGS





## BOD MEETINGS



## PROJECTS AT A GLANCE



Dental And Eye Checkup Camp At Fr. Agnel High School Pillar On 11th February 2025



## PROJECTS AT A GLANCE



**Monetary Assistance To Progress High School For Participating In National Robotics Competition Held At Pune**



# GREAT INDIAN QUEENS WHO FOUGHT FOR OUR FREEDOM

*Rtn. Sandeep Prabhu*



This article is a fitting tribute to women. The International women's day is soon approaching in the coming month on the 8th of March. I was inspired to write this article on powerful women in our history when listening to Ms Shefali Vaidhya who talked on the same topic and was one of the speakers at our just concluded "Rotary International district 3170 conference" at Belgum. Since my childhood I have always revered, adored and have been very inspired by strong character women who have come into my life.

Some of the first few I would like to mention herewith, is my dear beloved Mother who was my first and primary source of inspiration, next was another of my close relative who was of my grand mothers age and whom we all called Ambatai, from the present generation is ofcourse my dearest wife who has always inspired me with her strong character, out of the box thinking and her commitment to our family even after so many years of being together and ofcourse her total commitment to her work, how can I ever forget nor have any hesitation mentioning my daughter here, the commitment and focus I have seen in her since her childhood has always amazed me, even though she being my child, I have to mention here that she too has inspired me to be very caring and compassionate to the needs of not only her's but towards every being on this planet earth. There are a few others too, the list could be rather long so have curtailed to just a few I have the very highest regards for.

Coming to the main topic I would like to list here just a few Queens/women, about whom I have read in my childhood and was impressed with their skills. They with their strong character changed the course of history which otherwise could have been different without them. I have tried to write herein a few instances from what ever memory I had, along with taking help of a few history books or notes, so as to delve deeper into their character and make it a bit more interesting for the readers. I have randomly listed them here and not in any particular order.

## **MAHARANI TRABAI BHONSLE:**

She was the daughter-in-law of Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaja, the second wife of Chatrapati Rajaram Bhonsle who was the younger stepbrother of Chatrapati Sambhaji Maharaja. Maharani Tarabai belonged to the Mohite family and was the daughter of Hambir Rao Mohite, the commander-in-chief of Marathas. Since early childhood, her father trained her in archery, sword fighting, and diplomacy. She had also witnessed some bloody battles between Marathas and the Mughals and she learnt a lot about warfare from a very early age. At the age of eight, she got married to Rajaram Bhonsle I. She became the queen of the Maratha empire in 1789 when Rajaram Bhonsle was crowned Chhatrapati of the Maratha Kingdom after the death of Chatrapati Sambhaji Maharaja. The untimely demise of Rajaram Bhonsle I, left a big void in the Maratha Empire. Taking charge of the situation, Tarabai Bhosale proclaimed her infant son Shivaji II, as the heir apparent to the throne, and she became regent of the Maratha empire. The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb thought that the Marathas were at their weakest and that he could easily defeat the Marathas. But this was not the case, she valiantly marshalled the troops and protected the Maratha throne with the help of Dhanaji Jadhav, who was the commander-in-chief of the Maratha Army.

She ruled on behalf of her minor son Shivaji II, from 1700 to 1708. She is recognized for her fierce resistance against the Mughal Empire, leading the Maratha forces in several battles against them and successfully defending Maratha territories against Mughal attempts to conquer them. Her reign is considered a crucial period in maintaining the Maratha power against the Mughals. Besides military prowess, she displayed strong administrative skills, managing the Maratha empire effectively during a critical period of uncertainty.

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## MAHARANI AHILYABAI HOLKAR:

Born in the present day Ahilyanagar district, Maharashtra to Mankoji Rao Shinde, who was the Patil of the village. At the age of 8 years she was married to Khanderao Holkar who was 10 years of age than. Malhar Rao Holkar the father of Khanderao Holkar was a commander in the Maratha Army lead by Pehwa Balaji Rao, saw Ahilya as a child and was impressed with her intellect, which culminated into the marriage with his son. Malharao Holkar was in the charge of the Malwa territory. Her husband Khanderao died in battle at a very young age and she was stopped from going sati by her Father-in-law Malhar Rao Holkar. Her Father-in-law trained her in warfare and administration and made her into an expert archer. She used to run the affairs of the Kingdom when her Father-In-Law was out to war. After the death of her Father-in-law in 1766, she made her Son Malero ruler of the Malwa territory. Malerao died within one year of being the ruler and Ahilyabai with the help and support of the Peshwa's acceded the Malwa throne. She then made her Father-in-laws adopted son Tukoji Rao Holkar the commander of the Holkar army; he would serve her for the next 28 years. She also engaged the Frenchman Chevelier Dudrenec in 1792 to help modernize her army by raising four battalions. Her legacy lies in her diplomatic and administrative skills as well as patronage of construction projects. Her reign is considered to be the zenith of the Holkar dynasty, marked by peace, stability, and progress.

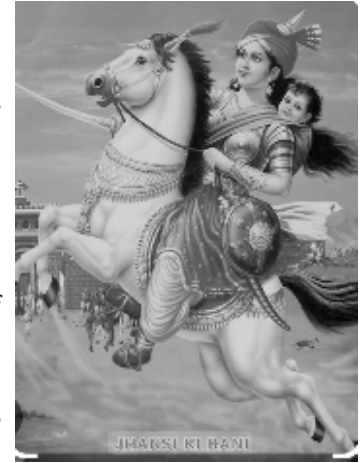


Breaking another norm of the time, Ahilyabai did not observe the custom of purdah. She was known for being accessible to all her subjects and held daily audiences where people could approach her. She established courts for justice and arbitration in citizens' disputes. Uncharacteristically for the times, Ahilyabai had her daughter married to a commoner who displayed valor on the battlefield. Maharani Ahilyabai also helped construct multiple forts, roads,

wells, and rest houses. She made Maheshwar her capital and offered employment to several craftsmen, artists, and sculptors. She patronized religious monuments, even in regions outside her domain, and helped rebuild the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, which had been razed under the orders of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in Varanasi and the Grishneshwar temple near Aurangabad. She is said to have established a textile industry in Maheshwar, which gave birth to the Maheshwari sari that are woven to this day.

## RANI LAKSHMI BAI OF JHANSI:

Born as Manikarnika Tambe on November 19, 1835 at Kashi, to Moropant Tambe a Brahmin, serving the noble Chimajiappa who was the brother of Peshwa Baji Rao II. She married the Maharaja of Jhansi, Gangadhar Rao in 1842. She became the Queen, Rani of Jhansi after the death of her Husband in the year 1853 and was the leader of the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58 when she was betrayed by the Scindia's, rulers of Gwalior.



She was brought up in the childhood before her marriage in the household of the Peshwa Baji Rao II. Lakshmi Bai had an unusual upbringing for a Brahman girl. Growing up with the boys in the Peshwa's court, she was trained in martial arts and became proficient in sword fighting and riding. On becoming the Queen ruler on death of her Husband she adopted a son since she did not have her own child. She was known for her unique perspective and her courage to fight against social norms.

The Britishers wanted to accede her Jhanshi not accepting her adopted son as heir apparent, but she resisted and joined forces with Tatyta Tope a commander of Peshwa Nana Saheb to successfully fight and repel the British attack. During the counter attack by the British she fought valiantly on horse

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back with her adopted infant son tied to her back, along with only a handful of her soldiers and died while fighting with the British. She was later acclaimed as the first women freedom fighter of India.

#### **RANI CHENNAMMA :**

Kittur Rani Chennamma was born on 23rd October 1778 in the princely state of Kittur, now located in the Belgaum district of Karnataka. Chennamma's father, the ruler of Kittur, died when she was just a child. She was married to the ruler of another kingdom, Raja Mallasarja. After the death of her father in 1816 she ascended the throne of Kittur.

In the year 1824 the British wanted to annex Kittur, but Rani Chennamma resisted fiercely. There were multiple attempts by the Britishers since her ascending the throne of Kittur. The Britishers regrouped with superior weaponry and numbers and attacked Kittur again, Rani Chennamma fought bravely but she was taken in as prisoner of war. She was captured along with her Lieutenant Sangolli Rayanna and imprisoned. Chennamma's bravery and courage in standing up to the British inspired many others to join the freedom struggle against colonial rule despite her defeat. Her legacy continued to live on, and she became a symbol of resistance against oppression and exploitation. Even in imprisonment she refused the Britishers to accept their rule, she was denied medical aid, food, water and sanitation by the Britishers and was kept in solitary confinement in the Bailhongal fort. Due to this, she ultimately died in imprisonment in the year 1829 at the age of 50.

In 1956, the government of India posthumously awarded her the title of 'Rani'. This title served as recognition of her bravery and contribution to the Indian freedom struggle.

#### **RANI ABBAKKA CHOWTA :**

One such extraordinary figure in our history is Rani Abbakka Chowta, the indomitable warrior queen of Ullal, whose courage and strategic acumen made her a formidable force against colonial powers in the 16th century. Rani Abbakka Chowta ruled over the small but strategically significant Kingdom of Ullal, located in

present-day Karnataka. Born into the illustrious Chowta dynasty, she was trained in the art of warfare and governance from a young age. Abbakka's reign began in an era marked by increasing Portuguese dominance along the Indian coastline. The Portuguese, intent on establishing their monopoly over the spice trade, sought to control Ullal due to its key position in the lucrative Arabian Sea trade routes.



Abbakka Chowta's leadership was characterized by her fierce resistance against the Portuguese incursions. Unlike many contemporary rulers who succumbed to the superior firepower of the Europeans, Abbakka employed unconventional guerrilla tactics, leveraging her knowledge of the local terrain and the loyalty of her subjects. She forged strategic alliances with neighboring kingdoms and even sought support from the formidable Sultan of Bijapur and the Zamorin of Calicut.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Abbakka's leadership was her ability to unite diverse communities under her banner. She transcended social and religious divisions, rallying the Hindus and Muslims of her region to fight against a common enemy. This unity was pivotal in sustaining prolonged resistance against the Portuguese, who were baffled by the tenacity and resilience of her forces.

Abbakka's most famous confrontation with the Portuguese occurred in 1568 when she repelled a major Portuguese assault on Ullal. The Portuguese, led by Admiral Dom Álvaro da Silveira, believed they would easily subjugate the small kingdom. However, Abbakka's forces, utilizing their intimate knowledge of the local geography and employing hit-and-run tactics, inflicted heavy casualties on the invaders. The Portuguese were forced to retreat, marking a



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significant victory for Abbakka and her people.

The legacy of Rani Abbakka Chowta extends beyond her military exploits. She stands as a symbol of resistance against colonialism and the exploitation of native lands and resources. Her story is a testament to the power of determined leadership, strategic intelligence, and the ability to inspire and unify people towards a common cause. In an era where women's roles were largely confined to the domestic sphere, Abbakka emerged as a powerful and visionary leader, challenging gender norms and societal expectations. Her story, though not as widely known as those of other Indian freedom fighters, is an integral part of India's rich historical heritage.

In today's world, where the principles of sovereignty, self-determination, and unity are more relevant than ever, Rani Abbakka Chowta's legacy serves as a guiding beacon, reminding us of the indomitable spirit that lies within us all

#### **RANI PADMINI:**

Padmini or Padmavati spent her life under the care of her father Gandharvsena and mother Champavati. Padmini had a talking parrot named "Hiramani". Her father arranged a "Swayamvara" to wed his beautiful daughter to an able King and invited all the Hindu kings and Rajputs. King Rawal Ratan Singh of Chittor hearing of Padmini's attributes went to the swayamvara regardless of having multiple wives. There he won her hand by defeating another eligible king, Malkhan Singh. He returned to Chittor with his beautiful queen Padmini.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, the Sultanate of Delhi, set up by Muslim Turkic nomadic invaders, was growing in power. The Sultans made repeated attacks on Mewar. Alauddin Khilji attacked Chittorgarh to have Maharani Padmini all for himself.

In 1302-03 CE, Chittor was under the rule of Rajput King Rawal Ratan Singh, a brave and noble warrior, and also a patron of arts. He had many skilled and talented artists in his court, one of whom was a musician named Raghav Chetan. But what people did

not know was that Raghav Chetan was also a practitioner of magic and spells. He used this hidden talent to defeat his rivals. Unfortunately, he was caught red-handed while practicing magic, which greatly displeased the king. Raghav Chetan was thus banished from the kingdom after he was publicly humiliated when forced to sit on a donkey with black paint on his face and ride around the capital. This harsh punishment earned Ratan Singh an uncompromising enemy. Sulking after his humiliation, Raghav Chetan went to Delhi with the aim of trying to incite the Sultan of Delhi, Alauddin Khilji, with a reason to attack Chittor.

The Sultan on reaching Mewar was anxious to see the beautiful queen Padmini of whose beauty he had heard a lot. As a guest to the kingdom, he asked to meet with the queen. Padmini however, suspicious of Alauddin's demand declined the request. King Ratan Singh then tried to talk his queen into agreeing for he knew of the strength and might of the Delhi Sultanate and the Khilji Dynasty. Padmini then put a history's that Alauddin should see only her reflection that too in the presence of her husband, herself accompanied by a hundred female servants.

When the sultan of Delhi saw her, he was so smitten by her beauty that he wanted Padmini for himself. He thus decided to attack Chittorgarh. He believed that if he killed the king he could have his queen.

The Rajputs fought valiantly in the battle, but lost. Alauddin Khilji, all triumphant when reached the fort was shocked. To his great dismay and disbelief all the royal women including Padmini had committed jauhar.

The women who performed jauhar perished but their memory has been kept alive till date in the bards and songs which glorify their valor. To protect their self respect and honour, they jumped into the fire pyre. To these women death by jauhar was better than the security and luxury of inglorious captivity.





## How to Stay Calm During a Stock Market Downturn: An Indian Perspective

The Indian stock market, like global markets, experiences periods of volatility. While investors celebrate bull runs, downturns can create anxiety and lead to impulsive decisions. However, history has shown that staying calm and rational during a downturn is often the best approach. Here are some key strategies to avoid panic and navigate a market slump wisely, particularly in the context of the Indian stock market.

### 1. Understand That Market Fluctuations Are Normal

Stock markets naturally go through cycles of growth and decline. In India, factors such as RBI monetary policies, inflation rates, global economic conditions, and geopolitical events play a significant role in market fluctuations. A downturn doesn't necessarily indicate a long-term collapse—it may just be a temporary correction before the next growth phase.

### 2. Avoid Emotional Decision-Making

One of the biggest mistakes investors make during a downturn is panic-selling. Selling stocks in fear can lock in losses that could have been recovered over time. Instead of reacting emotionally, analyze whether the fundamentals of your investments have changed. Remember that market corrections are common and often temporary.

### 3. Focus on Long-Term Investment Goals

The Indian stock market, represented by indices like NIFTY 50 and SENSEX, has a history of bouncing back from declines and achieving long-term growth. Investors who stay invested through downturns tend to benefit from the market's eventual recovery. If your investment horizon is long-term, short-term market declines should not cause alarm.

### 4. Diversify Your Portfolio

Diversification is key to mitigating risks. Indian investors should consider spreading investments across various asset classes, such as equity (large-cap, mid-cap, and small-cap stocks), bonds, gold, and real estate. Mutual funds, index funds, and SIPs (Systematic Investment Plans) also help in managing risk effectively.

### 5. Keep an Emergency Fund

Having a financial cushion can help you stay invested during market downturns. An emergency fund with at least six months' worth of expenses ensures you don't have to liquidate investments at a loss due to sudden financial needs.

### 6. Look for Opportunities

A market downturn can present opportunities to buy quality stocks at discounted prices. Blue-chip companies, which have strong fundamentals and a track record of resilience, often provide good buying opportunities during market corrections. Value investors in India often use downturns to accumulate shares of fundamentally strong companies.

### 7. Stay Informed, but Don't Obsess Over the News

Financial news channels and social media often amplify market panic. While staying informed is essential, avoid overreacting to daily fluctuations. Rely on credible sources like SEBI reports, RBI updates, and expert analyses rather than sensational news headlines.

### 8. Use Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs)

One of the best ways to navigate market volatility in India is through SIPs in mutual funds. SIPs allow you to invest consistently, regardless of market conditions, and benefit from rupee-cost averaging. This strategy ensures that you buy more units when

prices are low and fewer when prices are high, reducing overall investment risk.

### 9. Seek Professional Advice if Needed

If you're uncertain about your investment strategy, consulting a financial advisor can provide reassurance and guidance. Certified financial planners or SEBI-registered investment advisors (RIAs) can help tailor your portfolio according to your risk appetite and financial goals.

### 10. Avoid Borrowing to Invest

While leverage can amplify gains, it can also magnify losses during a downturn. Many investors in India borrow funds to invest in stocks or derivatives, hoping for quick profits. However, if the market declines, you could face substantial financial stress. It's advisable to invest only with surplus funds and avoid margin trading unless you fully understand the risks.

### Conclusion

The Indian stock market, like all markets, goes through cycles. While downturns can be unsettling, panicking often leads to costly mistakes. By understanding market trends, maintaining a long-term perspective, diversifying investments, and staying level-headed, you can navigate market downturns with confidence. Remember, patience and discipline are key to long-term investing success in India.



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## FUNNY BONES

### 1. Number Riddle

I am a three-digit number. My tens digit is five more than my ones digit, and my hundreds digit is eight less than my tens digit. What number am I?

**Hint:** Break down the clues step by step!

### 2. Missing Letter Puzzle

Find the missing letter that completes the pattern: B, D, F, H, ?

**Hint:** Think about the alphabet sequence!

### 3. Fruit Basket Puzzle

You have a basket with apples, oranges, and bananas. There are 18 fruits in total. If there are twice as many apples as bananas and 4 more oranges than apples, how many of each fruit are there?

**Hint:** Set up simple equations to solve it!

### 4. Matchstick Puzzle

Move just one matchstick to make this equation correct:

$$6 + 4 = 4$$

**Hint:** Think about changing a number or a symbol.

### 5. Who Am I? Puzzle

I have keys but no locks. I have space but no room. You can enter but not go outside. What am I?

**Hint:** It's something you use often!

6. I am a five-letter word. Remove my first letter, and I sound the same. Remove my last letter, and I still sound the same. Even if you remove my middle letter, I still sound the same. What am I? oo

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# PALETTE OF FLAVOURS

P.W. Mrs. Pradnya Nachinolkar



## CHICKEN CAFREAL

### Ingredients

- 1 kg chicken on the bone skinless and jointed
- 5 garlic cloves roughly chopped
- 1" ginger roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- Salt to taste
- 2 tbsp vinegar
- For the marinade;
- 100gms coriander leaves as well as stems
- 2 green chillies
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- ½" cinnamon stick
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp black peppercorn
- 5 green cardamom seeds only
- 5 cloves



### Method

1. Blend the garlic and ginger to a smooth paste in a blender with a splash of water. Marinate the chicken in this paste and set aside. Add the marinade ingredients to a blender and make a smooth paste with 20-30mls of water.
2. Add the paste to the chicken pieces and coat well. Marinate for a couple of hours or preferably overnight.
3. In a heavy bottom sauce pan heat the oil to a

medium heat. Add the marinated chicken along with any leftover marinade. Seal the chicken pieces stirring often for 5-6 minutes making sure to scrape the marinade if it sticks to the bottom of the sauce pan.

4. Now turn the heat to a low setting and simmer for 25 minutes. Stir a few times through the cooking process. Add a splash of water only if it gets too dry. This is quite a dry dish so the masala starts to coat the chicken and cling to it.

5. Season to taste and add the vinegar. Cook for a further 5-7 minutes. Turn the heat off and serve with salad and bread roll or crusty rolls to mop up the masala.

### 6. Tips for the Best Chicken Cafreal:

- ✓ For more heat, increase the number of green hilies.
- ✓ For added richness, you can add a spoonful of coconut cream toward the end.
- ✓ Let the chicken rest for a few minutes before serving to absorb all the flavors.

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