



FiRESiDE

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Cover

Bhigwan, 100 km from Pune on the Solapur road, comes alive with visitors from Europe and Central Asia. Escaping icy winters, these migratory birds wing their way across thousands of miles to reach here.

Here, flamingos from Siberia present a graceful ballet of movement, colour and the serenity of flight.

Photo by Yusuf Khan



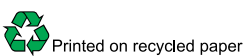
BACK COVER

**Stories
from my summer
camp**

Comment

🗨️ He uses statistics as a drunken man uses a lamp post – more for support than illumination 🗨️

– Andrew Lang



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Slice of life

In a world of copyrights, BBC can also be about biriyani or baking ■ A museum that highlights souvenirs from faded love affairs ■ and a poster on the imaginary dividing line between being literate and illiterate

Fume extraction system commissioned at Tata Steel

Environmental safeguards at Jamshedpur: clean air system from Thermax Enviro, and (inset) fumes before installation



Air in the vicinity of Tata Steel in Jamshedpur has become cleaner, thanks to a Fume Extraction System installed by Thermax Enviro. Inaugurated by Tata Steel's MD, T.V. Narendran in February 2015, it is the first in the country for hot metal pooling in a steel unit.

The Jamshedpur works has three pooling pits which generate extensive fumes when hot metal is dumped. It was decided to install a fume extraction system at one of the pits

to capture and clean the fumes. The system is designed to achieve stack emission of 10 mg/Nm³, even though approved norms are 50 mg/Nm³. The collected dust goes through a conveyor to a silo which stores it for up to two days. A valve and a chute then dispose of the dust into dumping trucks.

The system has also made life easier for employees working at ground level by capturing particulate matter and cleaning the air.

Heating division supplies a boiler to the Congo Republic

Thermax has commissioned a cogeneration boiler for Congolaise Industrielle DES BP in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Africa. The boiler has been ordered by Olam International Ltd., the Singapore based parent company. Thermax had earlier supplied boilers to the company's facilities in Nigeria and Vietnam.

The 35 TPH boiler (35 kg/cm², 380 °C

superheat) is equipped with an air cooled reciprocating grate and uses wood chips as fuel.

The Heating SBU engineered, supplied, installed and commissioned the entire project on a turnkey basis – boiler with balance of plant (BOP) including systems for pressure reducing and desuperheating, fuel and ash handling; water treatment plant, turbine BOP, and cooling tower.

WHAT'S
NEW?

DRC is a land locked country which makes safe, timely and proper project execution a major challenge. Meticulous planning, coordination and communication between the customer and the Heating team ensured the successful implementation.

Over the past two decades, Thermax has supplied about 2000 heating systems to African countries for operation in industries such as food processing, tea, edible oil, breweries, chemical, paper & packaging, textile & garments, wood processing and hospitality.



Co-generation boiler at Congo: meticulous project execution

Air Cooled Condensers from Thermax SPX Energy Technologies



Thermax SPX Energy Technologies Ltd. (TSETS), the joint venture company has commissioned two Air Cooled Condensers (ACCs) at J.K. Cements, Mangrol in Rajasthan. The units are installed for the captive power plant and waste heat recovery boiler.

ACCs directly condense exhaust steam from the steam turbine and return condensate to the boiler without water loss – efficiently deploying energy and water resources. They are used in electrical power plants and waste-to-energy plants.

An ACC is made of modules arranged in parallel rows. Being a closed loop system, they eliminate the use of additional water in the condensing cycle, benefiting power plants in water scarce areas and doing away with the need for water treatment plants. The condensers have excellent corrosion and freeze resistance, consume low power, are reliable and need low maintenance.

TSETS supplied 6-cell ACCs for the company's 25MW power plant and 4 cell ACCs for its 10MW boiler. This was part of a turnkey job including boiler, water treatment, ESP, coal ash handling and balance of plant that Thermax bagged. J.K. Cement lauded the company for the overall performance of the ACC and vacuum levels it achieved during start up and continuous operation since then. Site managers, Aneesh S. and T.S. Ramchandrarao were responsible for the successful commissioning.

Earlier in 2012, TSETS commissioned its first 10-cell ACC to India Cements for their 50 MW power plant.

An ACC at JK Cements: customer praise for overall performance

Thermax sets up shop in Indonesia; a new facility to come up



Artist's view of the planned facility: Powering Thermax's South East Asia operations.

Thermax inaugurated the office of its new subsidiary company, PT Thermax International Indonesia, on November '14. Cutting a ceremonial cake in Jakarta, M.S. Unnikrishnan and Hemant Mohgaonkar interacted with employees and briefed them about future plans for the newly formed company.

Indonesia and Thailand are important markets in Thermax's strategy for more

significant market share in South East Asia, SAARC, Middle-East and Africa. For overseeing this project, Thermax has formed a new International Business Group. Teams for Jakarta and Bangkok are being put together.

Thermax's South East Asia operations will be powered by a new manufacturing facility, expected to be ready in the next 18 months.

Thermeon wins customers on road shows

Thermeon with customers: safety, reliability and performance



The Heating SBU of Thermax organised a series of road shows to promote Thermeon, its boiler for micro, small and medium industries. Teaming with the channel management group and channel associates, the road show showcasing the small capacity boiler impressed existing customers and those from competition.

Introduced in mid 2014, Thermeon is the first compact and safe solid fuel fired heating system in the Indian market for ranges from

500 kg per hour to 1500 kg per hour.

On February 16, the truck mounted Thermeon was flagged off by Unny in the presence of Hemant and the Heating team. The road shows in Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala have generated a favourable buzz among clients, who appreciate the product's blend of safety, performance, reliability, ease of operation and affordability.

Bioenergen: for energy from canteen waste in colleges and companies

The TCS development centre at Hyderabad will use a Bioenergen from Thermax to generate energy from waste. The system (three ton per day capacity) is to convert biodegradable kitchen waste from its food court to biogas, which is channelled back for cooking. Thermax is also supplying a 2 x 700 KLD plant to treat the company's sewage water. The project is under execution.

Bioenergen has been jointly developed by Thermax's Research Technology Innovation Centre and Water and Wastewater

Solutions, in partnership with BARC's nuclear agriculture and biotechnology division. Besides producing LPG equivalent biogas for cooking, the system generates power for street lighting and organic manure for gardening and landscaping.

Pune's engineering and management institute, MIT is another customer that uses Bioenergen for its daily kitchen waste of 500 kg. It has reduced its expenses for collection, conveyance and disposal of solid waste.



Bioenergen: cooking gas, power and manure.

Strengthening bridges with Thermax's Construction chemicals

Thermax's Construction chemicals are now used in national highway projects. Along the NH9 Pune-Solapur expressway project, they are curing cracks and honeycombs (hollow cavities left in a concrete mass) on three flyovers.

Pune Solapur Expressways Pvt. Ltd., a joint venture of Tata Infrastructure and Autostrade, Italy, approached Thermax for a turnkey solution that included consultancy, product recommendation and implementation.

The Chemical division team used low viscous epoxy (adhesive) injections to seal



Expressway work in progress: turnkey solution

the cracks and a very strong epoxy mortar to repair the honeycomb areas. The repair work was completed on time and the bridges have been opened for traffic.

Thermax Construction Chemical division, in technical collaboration with Tecnochem Italiana S.p.A, of Italy offers the entire spectrum of construction chemicals – solutions for repairs and rehabilitations, industrial floorings, water proofing, admixtures, grouts, sealants, surface treatments, adhesives and cement grinding aids.



The argument that 'it is the government's job' cannot be conveniently used to deny our own individual responsibility.



During the 2014 Football World Cup in Brazil, though Japan lost, Japanese spectators made news when they voluntarily cleaned up the stadium after the matches - collecting tissues, bottles, plastic cups and confetti in bins. People from around the world watched in awe as the Japanese cleared away the litter.

Japan is known for recycling 77% of its waste. It has been written that the country has few waste bins on the roads; only signs telling people not to litter. After due segregation of waste at their homes, the Japanese dispose it of, for recycling and processing. They don't treat the world outside as their dumping yard.

My column is not about Japan or about waste management. I thought the example of Japan is apt as there is an admirable balance in the way responsibilities are shared by both the government and citizens. Though Japan's government provides facilities, its people have a certain regard for public space and pride for their country.

I think this distinction is important as we live in a time when there is a re-evaluation of accepted behaviour and ways of doing things. In a society like ours, traditionally, there is a tendency to look to the government for almost everything. Be it garbage disposal, prevention of traffic accidents, ensuring women's safety or regulating pollution, we expect the government to fix everything in our lives, take care of minor to major irritants that we face everyday.

Ever since our economy opened up in the early 1990s, there has been a rethinking on what the government should and should not be doing. Increased private sector participation, the efforts to involve civil society and the corporate sector in developmental work are all signs of change. Some of them have worked, some haven't.

One cannot wish away the role of the government. It has to enforce the rule of law, uphold the sanctity of the constitution, be a vigilant and fair regulator of economic affairs, safeguard public welfare in the critical areas of education, health and sanitation. However, the argument that 'it is the government's job' cannot be conveniently used to deny our own individual responsibility. As responsible citizens, how can we actively help the government to implement many of its schemes that can have a positive impact?

Take the case of garbage that is piling up in our towns. While its disposal is certainly that of the municipality, as citizens do we minimise the waste that we generate, especially the plastic and electronic waste that pose serious environment hazards? Garbage collection and disposal would be a lot easier and cleaner if we as citizens do our bit to avoid littering, reduce our per capita waste and segregate it for recycling before disposal.

At one of our IITs, some innovative students threw 100 rupee notes on the ground. As soon as students saw these valuable "pieces of paper" they immediately picked them up - only to realise it was April Fool's Day. The incident showed that if it is money, we bother to bend and pick it up, but if it is litter, we are quite happy leaving it untouched. Swachh Bharat is a national campaign. We can choose to be cynical, saying it is just another slogan like 'Garibi Hatao' or 'India Shining'. Or, we can genuinely start doing our bit, to make it a success, making our roads and lives cleaner and better.

Consider the traffic on our roads and the horrific accidents we see almost every day. There are far too many vehicles, our law enforcement is lax, and we lack efficient public transport systems. Yet, don't we also add to the chaos on our

roads? We jump traffic lights, happily ride on the wrong side of the road, or give our helmets to the pillion riders for safekeeping – you name it and we practise every form of traffic violation. No wonder Pune has one of the highest incidents of two-wheeler accidents in the world.

As employees of an energy-environment company, can all of us adopt safe and sustainable practices, at home and on the road? Operating two sets of practices – one at home and the other at the office, is not what is expected. Our lives should reflect these relevant concerns.

Perhaps the worst manifestation of our lack of concern and apathy is in the way women feel unsafe in our country. As the media has pointed out, the system has always been slow to act even after the nation-wide public protests over the rape and death of the young woman in Delhi in 2012. Equally shocking is the public apathy when women are harassed or children molested in full glare of the public. I find it most shocking when groups of people watch an outrage happening, without reacting and offering immediate help.

Like many others, I too was troubled by the recent BBC documentary that was banned. The documentary and the reactions to it showed us the warped mindset of some men in responsible positions. If many of our teachers, parents and so-called educated people think regressively about the way women should dress and behave, won't they propagate them to the next generation? Won't children grow up thinking that women should not dress in a particular way, should not be seen after dark with a man, other than her father or brother; or else men have every right to molest or rape them? That would be highly unfortunate.

It is heartening to see some initiatives happening in our own Pune. For

example, SEMAA (Stop Exploitation Molestation Abuse and Assault) is an initiative in response to the anxieties about safety of women and the new law against sexual harassment at the work place. Led by Pradeep Bhargava, Anu Aga and Vandana Chavan, the initiative is working on various fronts to make workplaces safer for women – making both men and women aware of what sexual harassment entails, strengthening our women and helping them become assertive, forming the mandatory internal complaints committee, training them to deal with complaints and so on.

Another excellent initiative adopted by our own Municipal Commissioner in Pune is the Pune Action Task Force – he has invited corporates, NGOs and civil society to partner with the PMC to improve the quality of education in our municipal schools, bring in digital literacy both at schools and within our city, as well as to create Swachh schools and ultimately, Swachh Pune. With participation of people, this could turn out to be an excellent initiative, bringing together citizens and the local government.

Let me present a story that illustrates well our powers as citizens to make things happen. A disciple went to his Guru and asked him whether the bird in his hand is alive or dead. The master told him, "It depends on you. If I say it is alive, you can tighten your fist and kill it, or if I say it is dead, you can open your hand and let it fly away."

Effective governance starts with a responsible society; gains momentum and achieves results when a purposeful government works together with a sensitive and demanding public. Being responsible for oneself and others could be the first step from each of us to make that happen.

Warm regards,

Meher Pudumjee

EXPRESSIONS

I find it most shocking when groups of people watch an outrage happening, without reacting and offering immediate help.



'It is committed teams performance. We have to

Rabi Pillai, Head of the Service Business (Cooling & Heating), in conversation with A.M. Roshan about the need for senior managers to face the reality of today's work place and create the right ambience for teams to perform.

UP CLOSE

As I walk to the cabin of Rabindranath Pillai (Rabi as friends and colleagues know him), at the Energy House, the work stations of the Services SBU (Cooling & Heating) that he heads are humming with morning activity. This group supporting the two product groups reflects Thermax's first decisive step to provide a sharpened focus to its service offerings.

As we do a quick check of his career details, I realise that in his 24-year old career with Thermax, Rabi has worked at eight locations with 16 bosses involving 12 role changes. That's some career mobility for a man who, before he left for his first job, never stayed in a hostel or moved out of his home town, Trivandrum (now Thiruvananthapuram), where he did his schooling, early college and engineering studies.

After completing his B.Tech (Mech) from the College of Engineering, Trivandrum in 1990, he briefly worked for a Murugappa Group company in Baroda. Joining Thermax as a graduate trainee in 1991, he was in Chennai for the compulsory one-year service training. Shifting to the sales function, he worked in the Process Heat Division from 1992-94. The next four years, he was first at Bangalore, and later at Hyderabad as Area Sales Manager in charge of Andhra Pradesh. From 1998-2001, Rabi was Thermax's Country Manager in Saudi Arabia. Back in India, he was the Zonal Manager in charge of the heating business in Andhra and Karnataka, and also headed a pilot project to integrate the company's product businesses for the Channel Management group. He also headed the sales function for both Heating and Cooling Businesses for a brief while.

From 2007, Rabi was the Corporate Regional Manager in charge of the company's southern operations. In 2010, he was asked to take over as the PU (Performance Unit) head of the beleaguered Standard

Plant Group (SPG) of Water business. He remembers many well wishers advising him not to take up the offer as there were multiple challenges. But he went ahead and turned around the loss-making unit to double digit profit. "Movement helps both the individual and the organisation", says Rabi.

In 2013 October, he moved into his current position as the SBU Head of C&H Services and as Director of Rifax- Hans Richter GmbH, the German company that Thermax acquired in 2012. Seeing a strategic fit for its steam accessories business, Thermax had bought this ailing company and under Rabi's care, Rifax turned around, becoming profitable in 2014-15.

Rabi considers both field and headquarter experience valuable in his growth as a business leader in Thermax. "My years in sales & service taught me the importance of being in touch with the customer, that it is important to talk to him constantly." However, he points out, an understanding of behind-the-scene processes, the kind that HQ provides, also brings maturity to our customer conversations.

He considers his SPG experience crucial as "everything was going downhill" when he joined there in 2010 – messed up deliveries and customer complaints to low employee morale. The turnaround involved rigorous product standardisation, expanding the vendor base to avoid bottlenecks, inventory reduction, cost optimisation and creation of a project execution team. The restructuring of sales, proposals & execution teams brought in clarity and focus among the employees. "The practical experience of being part of the senior management team during the turnaround of both SPG and Rifax helped me understand the finer nuances of business. It has been an invaluable learning for me."

that are behind inspiring drop the superman myth.

What was his biggest takeaway from the turnaround? That the fault is not with individuals; and to bounce back to the performance mode, we must trust and empower teams of people, build their confidence. “It is committed teams that are behind inspiring performance. We have to drop the superman myth.”

He says it is indeed true that people often leave bosses and not organisations. “We cannot blame it on HR and go on as usual. It is the responsibility of senior managers to create the right ambience.” Rabi feels that at the heart of breakdowns in trust between people is the failure to appreciate the changed reality of today’s workplace. “At 21 people can vote and choose their partners. If we don’t tune in and listen to them, the young can also exercise their choice to decide their next organisation.” The difficulty of retaining talent is immense now and he feels that senior managers should connect with young people.

Coming back to the business aspects of the Service SBU, I ask him about its present state. “We are growing with a current global customer base of around 15, 000. We offer spares, services & retrofit solutions through our engineers and Channel associates.” Allied to the major product businesses of the company, the Services team already has a presence in several geographies and plans to expand its footprint in South East Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Rabi believes that among the several businesses under the service umbrella, the steam engineering portfolio, with Rifax technology, offers good avenues of growth. “Our branded service offerings, O&M, energy audits and utility consultancy services also offer ways to go forward,” he adds.

Rabi echoes the views of several

veterans interviewed in *Fireside* about the dwindling time people spend in bonding with one another: “We should revive those informal evening open sessions where colleagues discussed issues and addressed concerns.” He wonders whether, in our exclusive focus on profitability, we are getting too transactional. Once we ensure customer satisfaction and enjoy the work that we do, he is confident that “profit is a question of managing the cost.”

What about life beyond Thermax? Rabi says he has “always found sustenance from friends. I am not a very religious person.” He likes to listen to old film songs and play an occasional game of badminton or squash. Sundays are for spending time with family – wife Ariya and daughters, Mrinalini and Devyani. He tells me about his wish to go on a family holiday. “I haven’t had one for quite some time,” he says, more as a reminder to himself.



“We have to tune in and connect with young people”

Chinchwad factory wins award from Institution of Engineers



Thermax team receiving the award: recognition of safe practices

Chinchwad factory has won the Safety Innovation Award 2014 from the Institution of Engineers, India (IEI) for safety management, fire engineering and disaster mitigation. The award, given annually to industry, is in recognition of safe practices implemented at Thermax.

The Thermax team – Vinod Patil, Sachin Gardi, and Ramakant Wadule – received the award at New Delhi from Shankar Aggarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India.

ROUND UP



OHSAS certification for Enviro Division

Enviro (air pollution control) division has received the OHSAS 18001:2007 (occupational health and safety management system standard) certification from the DNV Business Assurance Management system.

The certification, valid till December 2017, is an international standard to control OH&S aspects, ensure legal compliance and continually improve performance in the organisation. It covers engineering, procurement, erection and commissioning of air pollution control equipment. Its benefits include legal compliance, improved risk management, reduced operating costs and improved stakeholder relationships – all resulting in customer satisfaction.

Thermax participates in Myanmar trade and investment show



Myanmar's Minister of Industries at the Thermax stall: enquiries from industries

Thermax participated in the FICCI - India-Myanmar Trade and Investment show at Yangon, Myanmar in September 2014. At the event, channel management group (CMG) and our new dealer, Han Sein Thant Co. Ltd, organised a customer meet and presented the energy environment offerings from Thermax.

Myanmar's Minister of Industries and the Indian Ambassador to Myanmar visited the Thermax stall. Customer engagements organised at the venue brought in enquiries from distillery, plywood, furniture and paper industries.

Tapping new markets with reliable products



'Project Reach' at an exhibition: standard products for SMEs

CMG continued with its programme of reaching out to customers to develop markets across India and neighbouring countries. Through a series of exhibitions, seminars, customer meets and product launches under the initiative 'Project Reach', CMG focused on small and medium enterprises, potential sectors for Thermax's standard range of products. The initiative had the valuable support of

channel partners and the company's SBUs.

The programme targeted industries such as leather, food processing, hospitality, dairy, rice, engineering, tea and textiles. At the events, a range of heating equipment, water and wastewater treatment systems, specialty chemicals and solar solutions were showcased.

Photo News



Anu Aga receiving the Bharat Asmita Lifetime Achievement Award 2015 from Dr. R. A. Mashelkar. The award was instituted by MAEER's MIT Group of Institutions, Pune.

Thermax support for a national event on non-destructive evaluation



Thermax team at the event: sharing expertise

Thermax was one of the sponsors of Non- Destructive Evaluation - 2014 (NDE), a national seminar and exhibition in Pune. At the event, where many technical papers from Indian and international authors were presented, Gautam Kulkarni and Avinash Gulabrao from B&H QAC participated.

Nearly 600 delegates participated in the event organised by the Society for Non-destructive testing. 55 exhibitors from across the globe displayed their inventions, products and services. Several Pune corporate majors participated in the event.

Thermax Inc. at the International Water Conference



Thermax team at the conference: major industry event

Thermax Inc. (the US based subsidiary) team attended the International Water Conference (IWC) at San Antonio, Texas. A major industry event, IWC brings together industries and relevant technologies in the areas of treatment, use and reuse of water.

From Thermax, Gordon Waugh, Cindy Gresham, Ajit Dighe and Vivek Naik attended the conference.

Fire safety awareness programme at Thermax Schools



Children at the programme: quick evacuation

A fire safety awareness programme was organised at five Thermax managed schools in Pune. Conducted by the company's safety department, the programme was designed to make children aware of the need for quick evacuation of school buildings in case of fire or other emergencies.

During the fire drill at Anantrao Pawar Memorial English Medium School, Dopodi,

the entire school with 318 students, 27 staff and some parents present at that time were evacuated in just 2 minutes 39 seconds.

The safety team used drums to guide children to assemble without panic. Kailash Vishwakarma, safety coordinator from Power division conducted this training. Kailash says, "The idea was to focus on young minds to create awareness and to educate them on the importance of safety".

School children **say hello** to **solar energy**



*At
Thermax's
Solar
installation:
renewable
energy in
daily life*

Students from the Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj School, Bhosari visited Thermax energy house to get a first-hand experience of solar installations.

For the 43 children and their two teachers, the solar based cooking system installed in the office cafeteria was of special interest. Rahul Deshmane and Sarika Pillai from the

Solar team demonstrated how cooking is done with steam from the parabolic troughs. The children also visited the roof top solar photovoltaic panels and learnt how solar energy is being converted to electricity. Says Sampada Kulkarni, one of the teachers and a Thermax-TFI fellow, "Visits like these help children learn about the role that renewable energy can play in our daily lives."

Meeran Borwankar at Thermax's **Sakhi forum**



*Ms. Borwankar
chatting over
tea: becoming
change agents in
society*

In September 2014, Dr. Meeran Borwankar, then Additional Director General, Maharashtra State Prisons shared her experience with Sakhi – the forum for women in Thermax. She spoke about her personal experiences on how woman can break boundaries and play

the role of change agents in society.

Dr. Borwankar urged her listeners to live life without regrets and on their own terms. Her passionate belief in an alert mind, a fit body and sound common sense resonated with all women employees at Thermax.

Thermax congratulates **internal facilitators**



Teach a class: empowering employees

The internal facilitators for training programmes of Thermax were complimented in November 2014 at a programme organised during Parichay – the company orientation programme.

The ceremony was in recognition of their efforts in training, teaching and empowering

employees. Besides technical and behavioral training, through ‘Teach a Class’ sessions they also shared their knowledge on specific areas like health & fitness, personality development and dance. Sixty facilitators were awarded certificates and gift coupons by Unny.



Export Excellence Award for Thermax

Shyam Bbutada (2nd from left) and Ashish Vaishnav (far right) at the award function: focus on export markets

Thermax won the runner up trophy under the ‘best focus market exporter’ category in the Indian Exporters’ excellence Awards 2015. Ashish Vaishnav and Shyam Bhutada, SBUS Heads received the award on behalf of Thermax from Nirmla Sitharaman, Union Minister of State for Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

The company did an export business of Rs. 1101 crore during FY 2013-14, which

accounted for 26% of the total sales in over 70 countries. Some of the key export markets are China, South East Asia, Africa, Europe and USA.

Companies that received export awards in different categories include TVS Motor Welspun Global brands TCS, Garware-Wall Ropes and Vedanta – Sesa Sterlite.

RTIC takes a break



Fun and team building: eventful retreat

It was time for a much awaited winter break from their work and the RTIC team chose the Kundalika camp. The day started early with a four- hour drive to the camping site and Antakshari kept everyone pepped up.

After reaching the site, the fun began with

various team building games – kayaking, zip line and treasure hunt. As the sun went down, the team had a bonfire party till mid-night. The singers in the group made it a memorable night with evergreen songs. The next day's river rafting at Kundalika brought a perfect end to a short but eventful break.



On the road : Pune to Kanyakumari

Abhijeet Chougule and Yashavant Joshi from RTIC went on a motorbike trip to the southern tip of the country. For the two biking enthusiasts, the trip – from Pune to Kanyakumari and back – covered a total distance of 3380 km.

The bikers travelled through the picturesque route of Pune – Dharwad- Bangalore – Madurai – Kanyakumari and on return took the Kochi- Manipal –



Yashwant (L) and Abhijeet: 3380 km on bikes

Ichchalkaranji- Pune route. They covered an average distance of 475 kms per day. On their safe return, the duo were welcomed by the RTIC team and presented with certificates for their zeal for adventure. Both Abhijeet and Yashavant are soon planning an expedition up North.

Jagdish Lomte features in the CIO Power List



Jagdish Lomte, Thermax's Vice President (IT) and CIO, was honoured with an award as part of 'The CIO Power List 2015'.

Instituted by Core Media Group, the selection was "based on a wide range of data collected on enterprise CIOs across multiple channels." The list included Information and

Communication Technology icons drawn from diverse sectors including automobile, infrastructure and pharmaceuticals.

Jagdish received the Engineering Icon award at a ceremony held at the Westin Hotel, Pune on 19th March, 2015.

Congratulations, Jagdish and the BTG team.

Thermax teams run marathons



For the 9th consecutive year, Thermax employees and their spouses participated in the Mumbai Marathon. 50 enthusiasts took part in the Half Marathon and Dream Run to create awareness in the field of education. The team ran to highlight the work done by Thermax's

NGO partner, Akanksha Foundation. Over Rs. 8 lakh was raised for the NGO.

Thermax team also participated in the Runathon of Hope 2015 organised by Rotary club. Around 116 employees participated in the event which took place in Pimpri – Chinchwad.

*At the marathon:
spreading
awareness about
education*

The Seven year walk :

On the trail with Paul Salopek



Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and National Geographic Fellow Paul Salopek is retracing on foot our ancestors' migration out of Africa and across the globe. His 21,000-mile odyssey began in Ethiopia in 2013 and will end seven years later at the tip of South America.

Paul Salopek's Out of Eden world walk is an exercise in slow journalism. Moving at the slow beat of his footsteps, Paul is engaging with the major stories of our time—from climate change to technological innovation, from mass migration to cultural survival—by walking alongside the people who inhabit them every day. As he traverses the globe, he is revealing the texture of the lives of people he encounters: the nomads, villagers, traders, farmers, and fishermen who never make the news.

National Geographic is funding Paul's storytelling from the trail—despatches of varied lengths posted on its website.

Extracts from Paul's blogs, from the last two years on the walk



On a clear day on flat ground—in a landscape, say, like the bone-yellow floor of the Great Rift Valley of northern Ethiopia that surrounds me now—it is possible to see 60 miles. This is a three-day walking radius. For the next seven years of my life, as I retrace, on foot, the pathways of the first anatomically modern humans who rambled out Africa, this distance will represent for me, as it was for our ancestors, my tangible universe, my limiting horizon.

I'll be cheating a bit, of course: The communications kit I'm lugging on my back to share this journey will fling open digital infinities that our nomadic forebears could scarcely imagine. Yet the experience of pacing off the continents, one yard at a time through 2020, will still expose, I believe, an inescapable biological reality. We're built to walk. We've been wired by natural selection to absorb meaning from our days at the loose-limbed gait of three miles an hour. And whether we count ourselves cursed or lucky to be standing on the Earth at this frenetic moment in our history—I, for one, would choose no other time to be alive—reasonable arguments abound to slow down. To pause in our tracks, the way a local Afar pastoralist named Idoli Mohamed does, arms folded akimbo atop hand-greased acacia sticks. To watch. To listen. To glance over our shoulders, seeking older compass bearings. Those first bands of Homo sapiens who blazed the trail to our becoming a



*Paul Salopek and
his Ethiopian guide,
Ahmed Alema Hesan*



A footwear by the brand name, Necessity

Footwear is a hallmark of modern identity. How best to glimpse an individual's core values at the start of the 21st century? Look down at their feet—not into their eyes.

In the affluent global north, where fashion caters to every whim and vanity, shoes announce their wearer's class, hipness, career choice, sexual availability, even politics. It is disorienting, then, to be walking through a place where millions upon millions of women, men, and children slip on identical-style footwear every morning: the cheap, democratic, versatile, plastic sandal of Ethiopia. Poverty drives demand. The only brand is necessity.

planetary species have valuable lessons to impart. They were, after all, consummate survivors. This is the premise of the Out of Eden walk.

The template for my long trek—the first global human dispersal out of Africa—is fairly well plotted by science.

Fossils and DNA markers found in modern populations suggest that people began trickling north of our archaeological “Eden” in Africa's Rift Valley sometime between 50,000 and 70,000 years ago. Pushed by population pressure or lured on by favorable climate shifts, some early wayfarers plodded west into Europe and probably wiped out the Neanderthals. Others turned right into Eurasia. That will be my route. From the Middle East I'll follow the ghostly tracks of ancient migrations through Central Asia to China, then angle northward into Arctic Siberia, from where I'll take passage by ship to Alaska. Finally, I'll hike down the length of the Americas to Tierra del Fuego, the gale-whipped tip of South America where we at last ran out of continents, and where a callow 23-year-old named Charles Darwin began igniting this entire chain of rediscovery in the 1830s.

Electronic Oasis / January 28, 2013

The immense saltscapes that straddle the borders of Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Eritrea weren't even mapped until the 1920s. For centuries, the martial Afar pastoralists who ruled the area resisted all incursions by the outside world. Today, though, they embrace the information revolution with a vengeance. “It has given them power,” says Mulukan Ayalu, 23, an Ethiopian government technician who maintains the tiny power plant at Dalifagi. “They can call different goat traders. They can choose their selling prices.”

The diesel generators of Dalifagi chug out a 220-volt current for six hours a day. In the process, they've transformed an end-of-the-road outpost that was pristine desert just 20 years ago into the latest hub of the information revolution—a magnet for Afar pastoralists who walk from miles around, desperate to slake their cell phone addiction with a battery charge.

As well master of the electronic oasis, Ayalu recharges nomad cell phones for a few cents. On Mondays—market day—trail-worn Afar pastoralists line up at his office door with the folds of their sarong-like shirts laden with dead cell phones of faraway neighbors. Customers who drop off their phones for recharging are given a handmade token. The numbers now rise into the hundreds. ...



The Seven year walk : On the trail with Paul Salopek



At night, when the power is on, the residents of Dalifagi engage in a new cultural practice ... When two Afars meet in the desert, they often conduct a dagu, a formal exchange of news with a lengthy call-and-response greeting. “Now we dagu, dagu, dagu all the time on the phone,” Ahmed Alema Hessian says.

The electronic waterhole at Dalifagi is the real story in sub-Saharan Africa. Nine hundred million people. A headlong sprint into the digital age that leaps over a century of analog technology. Exploding aspirations. Consequences unknown.

In Ethiopia, the government is aggressively expanding its state-run mobile network. Last year, cell use ballooned by an astonishing 30 percent, to more than 17 million subscribers. “Twenty years from now? There will be a different Afar people,” said Haji Boddaya Qibad, a local political leader of the nomads. “Life won’t be camels and sheep anymore.”

The Things They Leave Behind / March 10, 2013

...After weeks of roaming on foot through the immaculate deserts of the poor—a nomad wilderness where every article of trash, every tin can, every plastic bottle is picked up, recycled for some secondary purpose—we have entered a new layer of Rift Valley archaeology, one that stretches 150 miles or more into Djibouti, all the way to the Red Sea. It is a debris field of 21st-century wanderers, exiles, penitents, orphans. Somewhere ahead the border crossing forms a funnel, a bottleneck, for migrant workers from all over the African Horn. They, too, are walkers. They walk to Yemen. To Saudi Arabia. To Dubai. Not to hunt oryx with stone-tipped projectiles, as did the early Homo sapiens who walked out of Africa. And not merely for a ludicrous idea, as we do today. But to rent out their muscles, their bodies, for a crust of bread.

They are Oromos from the south of Ethiopia and Tigreyans from the highlands. They are refugees fleeing the ruinscape of Somalia. A few are deserters from the Eritrean army. Young men. A few hardy women. They have to be strong. Because the desert crossing is harsh, pitiless. Some die here of thirst. At the Red Sea, scores drown every year taking passage in rickety



**I ask you
to pause with me**

“...The rigors of walking 10 or 20 miles a day along meandering mountain ranges and coasts, through the cycles of cities and seasons to come—all while preserving the quiet that incubates words—will occasionally require slowing down further. So I ask you pause with me along the path. Anticipation. Waiting. A tolerance for silences. In our frantic, interconnected world, these human traits, like red hair, are vanishing from the gene pool.”

open boats. Yet still they come. One hundred thousand people a year, at least, evacuate the continent this way. They trek mostly at night, guided by smugglers. This barren, godless plain crawls with an army of walkers after dark. Under starlight, the out-of-Africa migration continues.

West Bank Hopscotch / May 1, 2014

Bassam Almohor, my new walking guide, leads the way into the West Bank.

The West Bank is a shard of a future homeland—the core a possible nation—for the world’s Palestinians. It slopes under the sun, in chalky ridges and tan valleys, like the pleats of a rumpled skirt, down to the muddy currents of the biblical Jordan River. It is a small enclave of dusty olive groves and minarets that could fit twice inside the area of the Hawaiian Islands. It is an island itself—walled off, fenced, an Arab atoll occupied since 1967 by the Israeli army. Yet more than 2.5 million people live there. They are packed into ancient towns pooled in the valley bottoms. (These are Palestinian.) Or, they peer through razor wire from American-style tract homes that crown many hilltops. (These settlements, erected by nationalist and ultra-religious Israelis, are deemed illegal by most of the world.) The two communities—the people of the valleys and the people of the hills—fear each other. They inhabit opposing universes that happen to overlap exactly within the West Bank. They are hostile. They rarely communicate. They are married by grievance.



In the barren hills above Jericho, Ibrahim Musa Salim mans the world’s loneliest juice stand. Photograph by Paul Salopek

Aftertaste / July 26, 2014

We’re cooking: cutting up zucchinis, rolling dough, stirring pots of boiling yoghurt. We are with the women of Bait al Karama. They are teaching us about the flavors of remembrance—about its frailty, its persistence, its loss.

What is Bait al Karama?

It is a cooperative, the “House of Dignity”: dozens of women gather each month in a stone house in Nablus, a trading center founded by the Roman emperor Vespasian around the time of Christ, and famed outside of Arab-Israeli conflict for its olive-oil soap, its baked sweets, its still-vibrant medieval souk. The women teach cooking classes. They are writing a local cookbook. They are reviving their traditional Nablusi recipes, with all the original ingredients. This afternoon, three members, Ohood Bedawi, Beesan Ramadan, and Fatima Kadoumy, are busy making shish barak, a meat dumpling stew.

“It comes originally from Lebanon, some say Syria,” explains Kadoumy, the coop founder, solemn and soft-spoken in her black hijab.

“When we talk about Palestinian cooking, we talk about the influences from the outside,” she says. “Our history is mixed into our food. It is the food of a crossroads. It contains migrations. It is about colonialism, conquest. Our sumac [a tart, lemony spice] is a Roman ingredient. Our sweets, called canafe, are Turkish, from the Ottomans. Our bulgur grain is Mediterranean, much older here than rice. Only the akub, a thorny wild artichoke, is native to our hills. Today we are losing the habit of cooking these things. Now we eat the Kentucky Fried Chicken.”

The Seven year walk : On the trail with Paul Salopek



So we pitch in, Bassam Almohor and I. We do our part. We have stopped walking. We lay aside the GPS. We pick up a spoon. We pick up a paring knife. We report for duty on the front lines of cultural preservation.

Everyone likes to eat. In peace or war, the ultimate refuge—the sanctuary of all that is humane—lies distilled within the warmth of the kitchen. Watching the women of Nablus move briskly, efficiently, purposefully about their tasks, chatting, often joking (about men, politics, life), I am reminded of all the meals that admitted me briefly into the conflicted lives of Israelis and Palestinians.

In the tiny village of Deir es-Sudan, in the West Bank: Bassam and I slogged in, exhausted, at sunset, not knowing a soul. We camped on the concrete floor of a half-built clinic. The shopkeepers next door brought us a large platter of treats—eggs, olives, French fries, yoghurt, fresh bread. They waved away our weak, startled thanks. “The innermost chamber of my home”—one benefactor said—“is yours.”

A side trip to Tel Aviv: My Israeli walking partner, Yuval Ben-Ami, threw together, in a bowl, whatever resided at that time in his refrigerator. What was it? Even he didn’t know—a concoction of cooked beans, of greens, of rice, of mystery sauces. It was like his living space, a bohemian apartment, packed with books, musical instruments, clothes, art. ...His leftover stew was reflection of his restless nomad mind.

On a kibbutz north of Haifa: Dark Georgian wine drunk from a ram’s horn, courtesy of cousins David and Moshe Beery. They emigrated from Tbilisi as children. They have grown up in uncertainty. They have known war and death. Now, they are building hotels. “To live in this place, you got to pay the rent, so to speak, my friend,” says David, ruefully. “But hey— isn’t this meal beautiful?”

A house in Ramallah, in the West bank: Bassam’s wife, Haya, served a simple, perfect meal of pickles, hummus, sausage, and vermillion tomatoes. The house vibrated with the energy of two small children. The couple lives under Israeli occupation. The daily restrictions on travel, the military raids, the roadblocks, the loss of scarce jobs to political maneuvers by the Palestinian Authority and Israel—all these humiliations are forgotten over the clean taste of olive oil. Bassam looks giddily at his son, Adam, eating. A tightness around his mouth relaxes. A certain loneliness that accompanies him everywhere, even while walking together, dissolves.

I Bucket of Wheat = I Candy Bar / December 4, 2014

The scene is a rock-walled bakkal. What is a bakkal?

It is a mom-and-pop shop. Only more.



In Turkey, it is the cheap, multi-hued soccer balls that hang in bulging net bags outside the doorway that readily identify a bakkal. We have been walking hundreds of miles across Anatolia using these bright navigational beacons. Why? Because a bakkal is an oasis. It offers cherry juice and bottles of potable water. A bakkal promises a spot of shade under the burning sun. The man or woman behind the counter dispenses travel directions—both physical and spiritual. Often, a glass of tea is offered. At minimum, there is a stool to sit on, to catch your breath, to rest.

But the bakkal in Yelkovan Koyü—a rural outpost

*Ancient economy: unprocessed carbohydrates for processed ones.
Children barter grain for candy in rural Anatolia.
Photograph by Paul Salopek*

forgotten by time—does not display any colorful soccer balls. . . Village children appear in the store doorway, bent under heavy buckets of bulgur wheat or barley. They place the buckets on a battery-powered scale. Omar Karadoğan squints at the weight. He scribbles figures on a scrap of paper. Then, he sweeps a hand over his manufactured wares: a regal gesture. The grain is used for barter.

“We are poor here,” Karadoğan acknowledges. He is a kind man. He himself is poor. “Not everybody has money in their pockets all the time,” he says. “I buy the grain and resell it in Kâhta for a small profit.”

In exchange, the Kurdish farmers in the village obtain soap or salt. Batteries or cigarettes. Notebooks and other schools supplies. There is a brisk trade in candy—in sweets.

The children want a sugar high. It is strangely compelling to watch, this gritty swap. An economic system from the Stone Age endures along the migration pathway of the first ancestors out of Africa. Even Mustafa Filiz, my urbane walking guide, is mesmerized.

“Walking shows me”—Filiz says, shaking his head in wonder, as we head out the store with our cash-bought junk food—“that I don’t know my own country.

Walks and police stops / January 11, 2015

When you jaywalk across the globe, you must expect to be stopped by police. It is that simple. Such is the car-conquered planet we live on.

All motorized societies classify walkers as suspicious beings. People who walk defy traffic controls. They bypass checkpoints. They do not submit passively to the prisons called paved roads. Walkers, more to the point, do not own cars. This is utterly heretical, subversive or at least worthy of contempt: This single fact places most walkers in the underclass of the poor, the marginalized, drifters, potential anarchists, troublemakers, crazies, figures of suspect loyalties. Why are they walking? Don’t they pay taxes? Are they carrying a bomb?

So far, I have trekked more than 4,000 miles through the deserts of the Horn of Africa, the conflict zones of the Middle East and the pistachio orchards of Asia Minor. Local security forces—police, militia, soldiers, plainclothes intelligence officers, immigration officials—have detained me 42 times. This is an average of one stop about every 100 miles.

Goodbye to Anatolia / February 23, 2015

Near the Posof border, Turkey

“Tell me again,” says the puzzled voice on the cellphone. “You want to bring a donkey into Georgia?”

“No—a cargo mule.”

“A mule?”

It is Nika Zurashvili.

Nika—an employee of a friend of an acquaintance of a colleague, Nika has been saddled with a delicate and unusual job: to facilitate the immigration of one she-mule, Kirkatir, from Turkey into the Republic of Georgia. Nika is a lawyer. He is a seasoned logistician. A troubleshooter. A problem solver. “I will call you back,” he tells me gamely. And a few days later he does. On a snowy roadside in the Caucasus Mountains, in Turkey, my phone rings. Nika sighs. He has tried everything. He has badgered the authorities. He has sweet-talked politicians. But there are laws. Veterinary restrictions. Quarantines. “I am very sorry,” he says. “Crossing the animal will not be possible.”

And so I must give away my mule.



Shadowed by memories. Walking through the Lesser Caucasus mountains of Anatolia, Turkey, en route to Georgia. Photo by Murat Yazar.

Kirkatir: a faithful animal spirit, steady, uncomplaining, solemn, a bucktoothed stoic with a weakness for packaged cookies. True, she is no longer a young mule. Her rubbery lips are slack and wrinkled. Her hooves ring slowly along the stone trails. But she is wise. She suffers no foolishness. And like a born traveler, she knows all the tricks of the open road. She shades up immediately under the hot sun. She obeys the cardinal rule of long-distance walking: lay in a fat reserve. (Rain or shine, she eats tirelessly, constantly, one might even say neurotically:

I have seen her dig down to the dead winter grass beneath a foot of snow.)

She has been my mute companion across the immense breadth of Turkey. A world-weary being, born from the history-trampled red dust of Asia Minor. ... Every dawn for five months — in mosques, or in stone huts, or camped under pistachio trees — I have enacted a ritual: I have peered sleepily about for Kirkatir. Seeing her pegged to the rolling landscape, I can relax. She keeps me anchored to Anatolia.

Yet nobody wants her!

Miles slip by. Days pass into weeks. The Georgian border looms. I ask ethnic Kurds. I ask ethnic Turks and Azeris. “We don’t use mules here anymore,” the villagers say, shrugging. Rural people drive tractors now. Their labor saving devices burn diesel, not hay. Today’s farmers have no need for farm animals.

“We must find the right person,” Murat Yazar, my Kurdish walking guide, says, worried. “We cannot just release her. She will be eaten by wolves.”

So we wander the crags of northeastern Turkey, chanting out our single ware: Would you like a good mule? Do you need a loyal mule?

Outside Posof, a creaky old man falls in beside us. He is friendly. Curious. Poor. Dressed entirely in black like a crow. Murat tells him the story: Our mule has completed a mule pilgrimage of 700 miles or more across Anatolia, all the way from Mersin, from the steamy Mediterranean, where I bought her from a woodcutter named Ahmed. He was an Alevi, a member of an often suppressed minority Islamic sect known for its tolerance, for its openness, for its communal lifestyle.

“I will take your mule,” the old man declares. “And I promise I will take care of her well.”

Murat and I stop. We look at each other, giddy. We are out breath from the climb. The old man informs us that he too is Alevi. And that his name too is Ahmed. And on this naked hilltop with Kirkatir, from where all of Turkey unfurls westward behind us, we begin to laugh. A circle is closed.

{Courtesy: National Geographic website.
Join Paul Salopek on the rest of his walk at
<http://outofedenwalk.nationalgeographic.com/archive/>}

NEBOSH certificate for Nibin

Nibin from Enviro division is now internationally certified in oil and gas operational safety. The certification comes from the national Examination Board in occupational safety and health (NEBOSH), UK.

Nibin, who has completed his post graduation in fire and safety from Cochin University, has been with Enviro since 2009. He enjoys reading and fitness workouts.



Nibin



Vivek presents at international energy conferences



Vivek

Vivek Taneja from Power division has recently participated in the Myanmar Green Energy Summit and Indonesia Electricity and Power Conference at Jakarta. He highlighted the need for a planned approach towards utility and distributed generation mix, and how companies like Thermax can help them during this transition.

Vivek, who joined Thermax in 2005, worked earlier with Suzlon and Jost's Engineering. He likes photography, travelling and reading.



Khushru completes MBA in Marketing

Khushru Battiwalla completed MBA in Marketing with a first class from Sahyadri Institute of Management Studies, Pune. A sports lover Khushru has played state level cricket at D Y Patil College, Pune. He is also an active participant at the all-India Parsi Cricket Tournament.

Son of Rumi and Bakhtawar Battiwalla from OTC, Corporate office, Khushru works with Uttam Energy Systems since July 2014.



Khushru

LIMELIGHT



Jigar

Jigar Vyas clears level - II for coating inspector programme

Jigar Vyas has cleared the coating inspector programme level II conducted by the National Association of Corrosion Engineers (NACE) in November 2014. Jigar is also qualified to be a lead auditor for QMS, ISO 14001. Earlier, he had cleared level II for Non Destructive testing.

Jigar joined Thermax in February 2010 and works with B&H, Savli plant. He loves travelling and cricket.



Shalmalee Marathe retains interdepartmental badminton title



Sbalmalee

Shalmalee Marathe was the winner at the interdepartmental badminton tournament organised by ThyssenKrupp Industries. This is the second consecutive year she has won the title. This year, around 15 teams participated in the tournament under five major categories. Shalmalee teamed up with her father who works for ThyssenKrupp. She has been playing badminton since 6th standard and is also professionally trained.

Shalmalee works with the Enviro division and has been with Thermax since January 2012. She likes to dance and play cricket.



Bhaskar participates in the Mongolian engineering trade fair



Bbaskar

Bhaskar Roy Choudhury was a participant at the trade fair organised by SME Product Service and Technology, an engineering forum under the Mongolian Government. At the fair, he shared with the delegates the capabilities of Thermax in waste heat recovery and other areas of service business.

An Associate member of the Engineering Committee of Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), he was selected as a delegate by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India.

Bhaskar joined Thermax in August 2013 and works with C&H services, Kolkata. He loves to play chess and attend technical exhibitions.

Rohit Gokhale is Treasurer, Pune Chapter of ICSI

Rohit Gokhale from the Power Division has been elected member of the Managing Committee of the Pune chapter of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI). Held every four years, the election brings up seven members for the Pune committee which is part of the Western India Regional Council of ICJI.

At the first meeting of the newly constituted committee, Rohit was also elected Treasurer of the Pune chapter, one of the oldest among the ICSI chapters.

Working with the Commercial Department of Power Division, Rohit joined Thermax in April 2014, after earlier stints with Videocon and Legasis. He has done his graduation in Law and Commerce, Masters in Economics and is an Associate Member of Institute of Company Secretaries of India.



Bhushan, a certified information security manager

Bhushan Deo from Business Technology Group (BTG) is now a certified information security manager (CISM). Awarded by the information systems audit and control association, USA, CISM is a certification for professionals, responsible for managing, developing, and supervising information security systems.

Bhushan has been with BTG since 2004. A Tabla Visharad (B.A.) from Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalay, he likes to spend time with his family, and listen to Indian classical music.



Chirag clears higher welding inspection exam

Chirag Sandhane from Savli plant cleared the certified scheme for welding inspection exam (CSWIP 3.1) from TWI Certification Ltd., UK. He already gained NDT level-II certification in 2010.

Chirag, who joined Thermax in August 2008 has a BE Mechanical degree from the University of Pune and Diploma in mechanical engineering from MSBTE, Mumbai. He likes playing cricket and badminton.



Rohit



Bhushan



Chirag



Some years ago while window shopping in Hongkong, I took a fancy to a fishing rod.

The salesman was demonstrating it to a buyer. It was a long rod collapsed to about two and half feet with a reel of nylon thread, wound nicely on a wheel with a cute handle and lock. The demo was so good that I also bought one. Brought it home and showed it off with a repetition of the demo I had seen in the shop. I wasn't sure when and where I would go fishing. It was kept away with the air rifle acquired long ago, after seeing children shooting balloons at the Juhu beach!

Recently, I saw an ad for a fishing camp and enrolled myself for the Sunday outing. Six of us in proper fishing gear (boot, jacket, cap,

water bottle, etc.) set out in a van in the morning. We drove about 65 kilometres outside Pune and were taken to a spot on the banks of the River Bhima. All of us had hi-tech fishing rods. The professional fishing instructor took us aside, showed us how to tie the hook on to the line, how to load the lead bead for weight, how to lock and unlock the line. He had brought a brown paste in a plastic bag to be rolled into tiny balls with one's fingers and stuck to the hook and that was the bait. He explained it was a mix of atta and prawn paste. After the briefing, we were shown a point along the river bank where we could drop the hook and catch fish! All of us followed the instructions and stood there in the sun, holding our rods with hooks dipped in water.



Nothing much happened for the next 45 minutes. In between, many of us had to reload the bait as some smart fish had bitten off the bait without getting hooked! The instructor kept moving from one participant to the other, helping and correcting them. Then, the moment finally arrived when one from our group got a small fish. Our instructor clicked pictures of the guy holding the fishing rod with this little fish dangling on his hook.

I got bored after an hour. Walking upstream along the river bank for about 200 metres, saw a bridge over the river. There was an old man, half naked, sitting on the bridge. I noticed him dropping a hook into the river, holding the other end of the line in his hand and pulling out a fish almost every five minutes. He took out five decent-sized fish in the next half an hour and dropped them into the water in an old broken bucket kept near him. I wished my fishing attire, boots, cap and fishing rod would vanish without a trace! If only I could strike up a conversation with this Master and figure out his secret...

Then he smiled, a smile I can't describe. In return, mine was a painful one. He asked me what I was doing there. When I told him I was learning to fish, he laughed, exposing his tobacco-stained teeth. I sat down with him. He examined my fishing rod, the hook and the bait. He removed the shiny big hook from my line, tied a rusted small one instead; threw away the brown paste I had carried and pushed in a bit of an earthworm on to my hook. Removing the line from my fishing rod he asked me to hold the end in my hand. He showed me a point close to us, under the bridge, and told me to drop my line there. Within a few minutes, I caught my first fish. The Master then asked another guy who came there to fetch some earth worms. He

wanted fifty rupees and I offered to pay that. He turned to the wet mud nearby, dug the soil with a small stick and got us a handful of earthworms. In the next 45 minutes, after catching five fish, I stood tall on the bridge and shouted out to my group. Three of them came over and did what I was doing. They had realised that something was happening here that they were missing.

I asked the Master what the secret was. He explained we were at a point where, because of the bridge, there was a concrete barrier in the river. Fish swimming upstream in the breeding season were temporarily blocked by the barrier. Hungry during the breeding time, the fish fell for any bait – except our brown paste! He told us earthworms are the best.

This was a lot of learning for one day.

It was also a day when a girl in our group – one of the three who came over – surprised me. She released the fish she caught, removing it so gently from the hook without hurting and leaving it back into the river. Curious, I asked her why and she said she is vegetarian, doesn't eat fish but loves fishing.

I like fish and was looking forward to a dinner with the fresh catch. The old man, the Master, gifted me his broken bucket with his catch. Mine also had been put into it. I got the bucket carried to our van and gave half the catch to an unfortunate fisherman in our group who said his wife would be waiting in the kitchen with her fish fry masala ready.

Back home, as I cleaned and marinated the fish from the expedition, I narrated the day's adventure to the captive audience at home. Then, I went and slept as I couldn't think of eating that fish. I don't know why!



– **Anoop Kumar**
formerly with
Thermax HR



The journey continues

Walking along the dingy, damp and dirty lanes, I wave off the swirl of mosquitoes with one bare hand and carefully balance the summer assignment sheets to be distributed, in the other.

I smile at my students' excited prattle. As always, they decide the order in which 'Didi' should visit their respective homes. The kids lead the way, and I follow them through the maze of narrow lanes, jumping over the stagnant puddle, disregarding the stench – as they do.

This reality does not shock me anymore.

However, I wonder for the umpteenth time about the sheer daily struggle of the community dwellers and my belief – that quality education is the only way out of this vicious trap – is strengthened.

It is now almost a year ago, on May 2nd last year my Teach for India (TFI) fellowship commenced. No amount of theory, data or erstwhile perception about the educational inequity in India could ever match my encounter with the stark reality that this journey – from Thermax offices to the municipal school class room – has offered.

I remember the long, intense and experiential training designed by TFI, to sensitise us about the current scenario and the high expectation from us as teachers to make the difference. Thus, equipped, I enter my classroom in a municipal school – full of twinkling eyes.

Does it surprise me that these 3rd std. 'English medium' kids have never been addressed in English ; does it bother me that most of them can't read simple words like 'cat', 'bat'; or that they have had no teacher for the last two years and so they can't even read or write Hindi/ Marathi; that the kids range from 7 years to 12 years of age and some continue to walk on the benches refusing to sit down in one place despite being told several times? Am I kidding myself that these kids need to pass the expected NCERT- 3rd std. level by the year end?

This was expected, I console myself despite a wee bit of nervousness.

What concerns me in the first week however, is their irregular attendance. Most of the girls accompany their mothers as housemaids and are frequently on leave. Boys, on their part, come up every time with new excuses to justify their absence. At times, they come to the school with deep cuts, gashes and wounds from street fights and they use foul language in the class.

I decide on community visits, as my first week's priority.

The parents are not comfortable listening to me about attendance, I can make out from the wary look on their weary faces. They are unapologetic about their neglect of girls at home and ask me bluntly why a girl needs education at all. They live in one- room shanties, where an adult has to bend to stand

up and curl to sleep. Each house has an average of four children with an age gap of barely one year between them. A fifth time mother-to-be, almost half my age laments about having only daughters. She bluntly tells me that my student, her eldest daughter needs to help her with household chores and baby sit at home.

It is futile to preach or lecture at this stage.

However, on attendance, what works instantly for me is the information that uniform, shoes and books will be distributed only to the students who are regular to school.

'Didi', someone nudges me out of my reverie, the kids have come to see me off. They hold my hands, their faces flushed in the summer heat and most of them barefoot.

There is so much to be done for them even beyond the school. Each child has a grim story...single parent, step-parent, domestic violence, physical abuse, the burden of shouldering early responsibilities – the list is endless. Am I doing enough?

Meanwhile, Himanshu arranges the remaining assignment sheets for me. I always learn something about life simply by observing this silent worker. He lost his father early and lives with his grandfather now. His mother and three sisters live in a remote village in UP. Though he must be missing the love of his parents, he never lets it show on his face. He seems determined to make it big one day. Himanshu is the class topper, always focused on the work at hand – drawing, preparing a speech for Republic day or solving math problems. He wakes up at 4.00 a.m., without an alarm. He makes breakfast and tea on the stove, careful not to wake up his Dadaji, who works late nights as a watchman and again as a casual labourer during the day. Himanshu walks 6 kms to reach school, reaches by 6.45, 15 minutes ahead of school time and is never absent. Besides regular study, he does numerous household chores. I cannot help but admire him. But I can see that hardship has robbed the spirit of gay abandon and childhood from Himanshu.

We wave goodbyes, with a promise to speak English with each other, practise the values learnt in the class, read the story books, learn the tables...and...before I complete they all say "Yes Didi yes we will do everything" . Experienced now, I know who among them will not do the work at all and I make mental

note to call their parents every week.

After many weeks, another day. Parents have begun to develop trust. It may be due to the praise from the Municipal Corporator for the brilliant English plays the kids staged, the interest shown by children, their own realisation and desire to educate their child, or my persistence. Today, they welcome me to their homes, overwhelming me with love, respect and hospitality. Now I have the comfort to tell them that they have enough kids and emphasize the importance of family planning. We talk on the need to educate the girl child and her right to receive equal opportunities. We discuss about opening bank accounts for the child's education, so as to ensure higher studies beyond the free and compulsory education, which is only till the 8th standard. Some of the parents promise to do everything possible, to give higher education to their kids.

When I look back on the year past, there is the 10% who have not shown tangible academic progress. Is it my failure as a teacher? They would be my top concern for the coming year. Then there are the ones who have made progress to the middle level.

But it is comforting to know that there are many who have taken to their heart the quest for learning. These children have the spark and are hard working as well. They are adaptive, humble and resourceful despite adversity. They are well behaved and have internalised healthy values. They often bring accolades to the class; through their stage performances and participation in inter school competitions. Their English proficiency is on par with their counterparts in the better run private schools. With equal opportunity, they can pursue their dreams and come up in the big world outside the classroom.

As I pen these reflections, I miss the early morning gifts of bougainvillea flowers and the fragrant Prajakta flowers, lovingly picked up by my kids, as they walk the long distance to reach the school. For them, as well as for people like me, it is a long journey ahead.

Is it destiny or what we choose? Or both? I know that it is wise to accept what life brings us. If we keep an open mind, and adapt as we go along, I feel that change cannot make us uneasy for long. We might even learn to look for a new day, different from the same old days that we spent all those years.



– **Sujata Deshpande**
Teach for India
fellow 2014



**No
Comment**

The real BBC has no comments

Two food outlets in the Indian city of Mumbai have gone to court for the right to use the acronym BBC. The Borivali Biryani Centre says it is the “original BBC” and that the Bombay Baking Company stole the acronym. Both eateries answer the telephone with the greeting: “Hello BBC, what’s your order?”

A spokesman for the biryani centre said he did not care the acronym was used by a top global broadcaster: “That may be abroad - but in India we are the BBC.” The bakery, which is located in the plush JW Marriott hotel, did not want to be drawn into the issue.

The popular biryani restaurant says it has been registered as Borivali Biryani Centre (BBC) for more than a decade. It wants \$100,000 in damages. The bakery says it does not see what the fuss is about.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) press office in London said it would not be commenting on the case.

India has many other examples of BBC copycats – there are English coaching classes and at least one local brick company is called BBC.

– From the BBC

A Museum for failed love

The Museum of Broken Relationships in Croatia displays unique exhibits donated to illustrate what happens when a love affair ends.

One woman gave the axe she used to chop up all her lover’s furniture after she was dumped for another woman. A landmine victim donated his artificial leg as a tribute to the hospital romance he shared with a nurse before the couple drifted apart. There

is an unopened Champagne bottle bought for a first anniversary that never happened.

More than 300 items were donated to the museum by people from various countries. Artists Olinka Vistica and Drazen Grubisic, from Croatia, opened the museum when their own romance broke up and they decided to exhibit the remains.

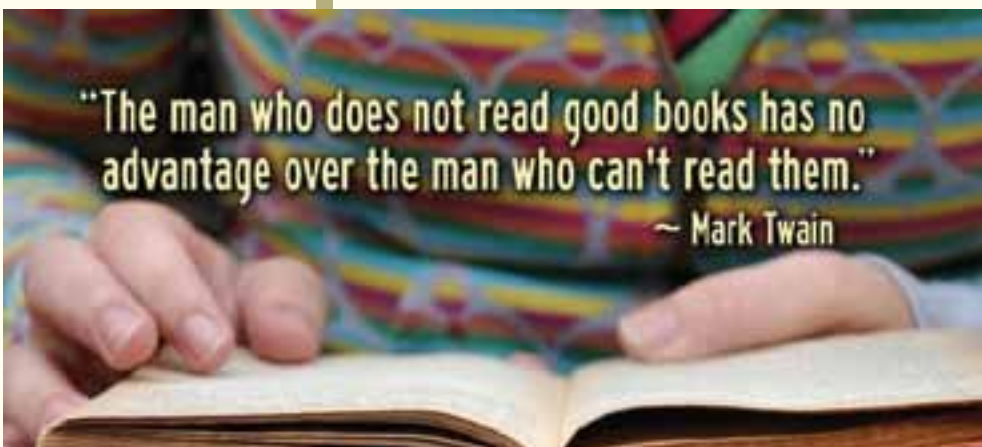
Besides looking at remnants of other people’s shattered lives, a newly and unhappily single person can also donate his or her gifts and love letters to help heal their own wounds.

Nice sentiment, but burning all the letters and gifts in a bonfire and dancing around it by moonlight would probably be even more therapeutic.

– From *Brinkmag.org*
and *vagabondish.com*

SLICE
OF LIFE

And this poster



Cricket fever, 10th year running

The 10th year of Thermax Premier League, the interdepartmental cricket tournament, received an overwhelming response from across the company. Crickotenia Dus ka Dum 2014 saw participation from 59 teams and 650 players, the highest ever. A warm sporting spirit and a festive atmosphere prevailed throughout the event held on weekends in December-January '15.

Desi Girls and B&H Energy House Superkings won the tournament among the women's and men's teams, with Sushil Malusare and Suraj Bhise winning the prizes for the best batsman and bowler, respectively. Prajakta Joshi and Afroz Shaikh were selected the best all-rounders.



Stories from my summer camp

At the Bhatena Summer Camp this year, the older Thermax children learnt tricks of survival at an adventure camp in Durshet forest and Vananchal near Baroda; they went rappelling and hill biking to Panchgani; enjoyed a class on photography. They appreciated a career counselling session and a night safari in the Pench Tiger reserve.

The younger ones built working models of an electric car, burglar alarm and boat; iced and

decorated cupcakes; quilled and folded cards; trekked up the Purandar fort.

Children were enthralled by a glass-blowing demonstration, folk dances, shadow puppetry and bullock cart rides at the day-long visit to Dakshinachitra, near Chennai.

Thanks to these camps organised by HR, the children have enough stories to share now that school has reopened.

