

Black & Gold

The Bombay Gymkhana Magazine

May 2023 Volume 13 Issue 1



What being World No. 1 feels like
Squash Doubles Pro Champion
Manek Mathur



Dazzling BG
Shobhaa De

An **Indian** Summer





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Message to our members



My dear fellow members,

Our fine dining restaurant, the 'Pavilion', has received an overwhelmingly positive response. With the trials over, it is now fully functional and open to members' guests, as well. Everyone who has patronised it has expressed their appreciation of both the cuisine and the ambience. Our decision to go with Mr Irfan Pabaney's advice to run it in-house, rather than outsource it, has paid off. I can't recollect when was the last time that the Gymkhana ran any of its catering outlets on its own. All the credit for the success of this venture must go to him.

The renovation & refurbishment of The Palm Court has been completed. With the polishing of the ceiling and floor, new lights and furniture, the place looks stunningly transformed. It has always been a preferred venue for our senior members – quiet, serene and detached from the hustle and bustle of the ground floor. Its comfort and charm would be enhanced, once the monsoons arrive.

One of our Guest Players, Naishaa Kaur Bhatoye from the Badminton section, won the Singles Gold at the U-17 France Open 2023 held at Aire-sur-la-Lys, France. We have provided her support in her coaching and training for the last few years and are proud of her achievement. We wish her the very best for her future endeavours.

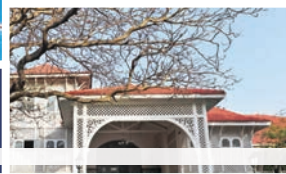
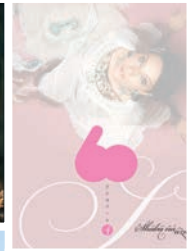
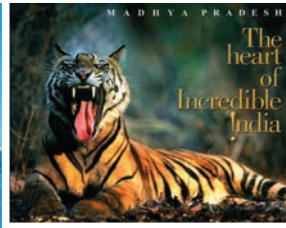
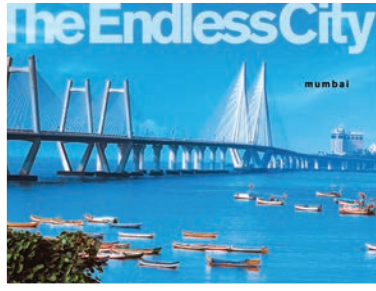
We hosted two tournaments, The G.D. Birla Badminton Tournament and The Ashok Kapur Memorial Bridge Tournament last month. Both events, though diametrically opposite in nature, attracted huge participation and were conducted very successfully.

There is a 'Staff Day' function that has been established as an annual feature to be held on every Labour Day, i.e., 1st May. On this day, we host our staff and their families for an evening of enjoyment and entertainment. Variety programs and shows are arranged for them, followed by dinner. This occasion awards us the opportunity to meet and know their families, as also convey our sense of care for their well-being.

Wish you all a Happy Maharashtra Day.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aga Hussain', written in a cursive style.

Aga Hussain
President



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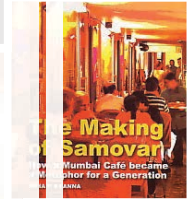
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Continuing our series on the behind-the-scenes bolsters of BG.



Our Reception staff are often the first to welcome you at the club. With their warm and welcoming smiles, they set the mood for all who enter BG.

Questions with...

Jagdish Patil, Supervisor, Reception



Jagdish Patil

1. How long have you worked at BG?

I have worked here for 13 years. I joined BG in April 2010 as a telephone operator on a contract basis. From May 2022 onwards, I came onto BG payroll.

2. What do you like best about the job?

The best part I like about my job is interacting with members and their guests.

3. When you think of Bombay Gymkhana, what is the first thing that comes to your mind?

The first thought that comes to my mind is the spacious ground where all the sporting activities take place. Also, the fact that the first Test Cricket match between India and England was played on this ground.

4. What makes working at BG different from other places?

Working at BG is so much better because of all the wonderful members and colleagues. I also love the atmosphere of this club, which is truly remarkable.

5. Would you like to share a funny incident that took place at your job?

Once, a new staff member who had joined the Reception happened to look a lot like my colleague Mr Nasir. When one of our members came to the Reception, he shook hands with the new staff member and remarked, 'Nasir, you have gotten a nice haircut'. We all laughed and had to inform him that he was not Mr Nasir with a new haircut but a new staff member. **BG**

BG Badminton stars shine at the Masters National Badminton Championship



Ayaz Bilawala of the BG Badminton Sub-Committee writes on the National-level Baddy tournament in sunny Goa where fellow BG members did us proud.



▲ BG team in Goa: (L-R) Shailesh Daga, Marker Rajan Samant, BG VP Naheed Divecha, Ayaz Bilawala

This year, the 45th Masters National Badminton Championship was held in Goa from 20th to 27th March. From our Gymkhana, the following players participated: Ayaz Bilawala (50+ Men's Doubles), Shailesh Daga (50+ Men's Doubles), Naheed Divecha (50+ Women's Singles, Women's Doubles & Mixed Doubles), Naval Kumar (55+ Men's Doubles) and Gautam Ashra (65+ Men's Doubles).

Our Vice President, Naheed Divecha, a Triple Crown winner at the recently concluded Maharashtra State Veterans Badminton Championship put her best foot forward in the Mixed Doubles 50+ category, partnering with Ashutosh Pednekar (Goa), and pulled out

a scintillating win to reach the podium and bag the first prize. The duo beat Kiran Makode (Nagpur) and his partner from Madhya Pradesh in two straight games. Naheed Divecha also progressed and won a bronze medal in the 50+ Women's Singles and 50+ Women's Doubles, thereby ensuring her entry for the World Veterans Badminton Championship to be held in South Korea in September 2023.

In the Men's 50+ Doubles category, our celebrated pair of Ayaz Bilawala and Shailesh Daga, who have in the past won 7 Maharashtra State Veterans Doubles Championship, had to qualify for the main draw of the tournament. In the Quarter Final, they met ex-international



▲ BG VP Naheed Divecha (extreme right) with partner Captain Ashutosh Pednekar won the Mixed Doubles 50+ category



▲ The BG trio will now play in the BWF World Veterans Championships in South Korea this year

player Shrikant Bakshi (Haryana) and M Dhyani and got passed in three hard-fought games, 20/22, 21/4 and 21/17. In the Semi-Finals, their opponents were from CAG – Rajeev Sharma and Bijoy Barman, who did not much trouble the BG pair who cantered through two straight games. Reaching the finals of the National Championship for the first time, the BG pair got into their groove right from the start, not giving their opponents from West Bengal – Sanjay Ray and Hirak Sengupta – any time to settle down. They ended up bringing home their first national title in two straight games, 21/9 & 21/16.

Naval Kumar played with S Ayyappan (Maharashtra) and lost in three hard-fought

games in the pre-Quarter Finals. Gautam Ashra in the 65+ Men's Doubles category played with his partner from Pune and lost in the second round in straight games.

All in all, our Bombay Gymkhana pair of Ayaz Bilawala and Shailesh Daga (50+ Men's Doubles) and our Vice President Naheed Divecha now find themselves with the elite and have a wonderful opportunity to represent our nation in the upcoming World Veterans Badminton Championship to be held in South Korea.

We wish them all the best and hope that they bring glory and honour to our country. **BG**



▲ BG VP Naheed Divecha came third in the Women's Doubles 50+ category with partner Dr Wrishalee Patil



▲ Shailesh Daga and Ayaz Bilawala won the Men's Doubles 50+ category

Kicking it real



BG Kids Football Premier League 2023 was back with great gusto.

The club hosted the third edition of the BG Kids Football Premier League on 15th & 17th March 2023. The league saw participation from four age groups – the Under 7 years, Under 9 years, Under 11 years and Under 13 years. Each group had two teams from our club as well as teams from Rustomjee Cambridge International School Thane, an NGO team from J J Hospital and a team called the Scorpions, comprising American School of Bombay kids. The tournament was played in great spirit. Besides the winning team, all participants were presented with medals. **BG**



▲ BG U-7 footballers



▲ Football Hon Secy Rahul Raichand (l) with Suzan Irani (fifth from left) who presented the medals to the BG team



▲ BG U-7 kids in action



▲ Crucial toss



▲ BG U-13 team strategy talk



▲ The U-11 and U-13 pitch





FINALS AT **NOROOZ CUP**

The BG Football team played fiercely in the inaugural Norooz Cup.

The Bombay Gym football team had an incredible run at the inaugural Norooz Cup. This cup was founded by Shervin Sooren for the Culture House of Iran. The event was organised to celebrate the ancient Iranian New Year, which is traditionally called Noruz. Given the magnanimity of the Persian advent, the Norooz Cup was hosted in Cusrow Baug Colony.

The tournament had 32 teams playing in a league-cum-knockout format. The final was between Bombay Gymkhana and the Mumbai Football Association – a team which was made up of some of the best players from the city. Bombay Gym lost a very close Final, with a score of 3-2. **BG**



▲ His Excellency Abolfazl M Alikhani, Consul General of IR of Iran, presenting the trophy to the Bombay Gym team



▲ The BG Football team

BRIDGE REVOLUTION AT BG



BG member **Sudhir Sood** applauds the back-in-action Bridge Room at the club.



▲ Keep your cards close



▲ The now jostling for elbow room Bridge Room

Bombay Gymkhana never really fostered a card playing culture as have so many other city clubs. Field games and racket sports ruled the roost for decades but then it all changed. The Bridge Room was set up some 10 years back; however, for a long time, it remained underutilised, receiving patronage from only a few diehard enthusiasts. All this, till one day our own Dr Subbarao taught the rudiments of Bridge to a few enthusiasts who wished to learn the game.

Then COVID happened, and the world took a break for two years. On return to normalcy, our member and protégé of Dr Subbarao, Anjali Sinha, aided by our in-house maestros Rajesh and Anant Somani, started bridge classes for a group of beginners. The numbers skyrocketed and BG soon engaged the services of Arvind Paranjpe to conduct bridge coaching for the beginners. We now have a full

house of 50 enthusiastic beginners who have completed two months of coaching. BG hosts a keenly contested pairs tournament every week and it's only a matter of time before our batch of beginners join the mainstream players.

As the perceived competence grows, occasional disputes add spice to the staid atmosphere. Coach Arvind opines, "Good students, [I] enjoy teaching them. Sometimes the atmosphere becomes heated, but the game is like that." Happily, there are always knowledgeable players around to adjudicate – Kishen Narsi, the Somanis or Arvind himself. And new friendships are forged, old friendships renewed and a great time (not to mention *chai* and mountains of Melba toast) had by all.

Bridge at BG is here to stay. **BG**

Thoughts from our recent inductees to the game

"Happy to see life in the card room once again."

Brigette Fernandes

"So very different, and of course much more interesting than the basic Bridge we played as children!"

Niloufer Vazifdar

"So many of us are indebted to our first teacher – Dr Dhananjay Subbarao."

From all his students of the past five years

"Made so many new friends even when going down. 3 doubled."

Yasmin and Aman Assur

"Very interesting learning experience and lots of fun learning together with so many people."

Anjali Sinha

"Learning and playing bridge have always been on my bucket list. I am so grateful to Bombay Gym for starting the classes in August. I am now addicted to the game."

Asha Sood

Ashok Kapur Memorial Bridge Tournament 2023

BG member **Anant Somani** recaps the friendly but competitive bridge tourney held in honour of past BG President Ashok Kapur.



The late Ashok Kapur



(L-R) Capt. Ashok Batra, Anant Somani, Madhu Kapur, Vir Gogia, Shiv Gogia, Marianne Karmarkar



BG President Aga Hussain speaks a few words about Ashok Kapur

The Ashok Kapur Memorial Invitational Mixed/Ladies Pairs Bridge Tournament was held at Bombay Gymkhana on 23rd April.

The late Ashok Kapur had been the past president of the Club. He had captained the BG Hockey team during his heydays. He was also an avid Badminton player. Being ambidextrous, no one could catch him off guard on his backhand. He was also an avid Bridge player and always supported the sport.

His wife Madhu Kapur sponsored the event in his memory. We had a full house with 40 pairs participating. The top three pairs won a prize. There were also five prizes for people ranked on birthdays of the Kapur family. Besides this,

there were also two lucky draw prizes. This made the event even more exciting and gave everyone a chance to win a prize, irrespective of their rank.

The winners of the event were Adi Kalyaniwala with Vasanti Shah. The runners-up was claimed by Anant Somani with Marianne Karmarkar.

Everyone appreciated the friendly manner in which the tournament was conducted. It was very competitive but played with great sporting spirit. To top it all, there was a generous spread during lunch and during the prize-giving ceremony. The catering department really outdid themselves. **BG**



All fun and games



(L-R) Captain Ashok Batra, Vasanti Shah, Adi Kalyaniwala, Shiv Gogia (back), Vir Gogia and Madhu Kapur

Building champions one at a time at BG

BG VP Naheed Divecha lauds baddy champ Naishaa Kaur Bhatoye who won the U-17 France Open 2023 and is raking in medals on the national and international front.



▲ Naishaa at the European baddy circuit



▲ Naishaa winning the MSSA tournament with BG members BG VP Naheed Divecha, Badminton Sub-Committee member Ayaz Bilawala and Pradeep Harlalka



A spunky little 14-year-old who graces our Badminton courts most days (to play with members as well as to train with the help of our markers) when not travelling for tournaments has been making big waves over the last few weeks in three gruelling back-to-back tournaments.

Naishaa Kaur Bhatoye played her first international tournament at the FZ FORZA Alpes International tournament in Voiron, France, in the U-19 segment, from 6th to 9th April. The tournament is a Junior International Series BWF graded tournament. Visa finally in hand after two rejections (all thanks to Gopi Sir), Naishaa made her first international journey to Voiron, France, for an initial few days of training.

The only Indian in the main draw, winning two rounds easily, her pre-quarters was set against seed No. 8, where Naishaa fought a really good fight, winning in the third game at 21-14, 17-21, 21-19. It was a crucial match for Naishaa; all members were watching and cheering her on through the live-streamed video. Her quarter-finals seemed easier, with Naishaa defeating a local player with scores under 10.

Playing her semi-finals against BWF No. 5 and seed No. 1 in the tournament from Thailand, Naishaa had a great experience and went down fighting, at 21- 11, 21-15.

Entering the semi-finals of your first international U-19 tournament in freezing cold weather, when you are all of 14 years old is no mean feat. Naishaa's semi-finals entry allowed her to jump in the BWF Junior Rankings to 65 from the previous 99. Naishaa thanked BG and its members in every one of her post game social media posts.

From those climatic conditions, after arriving from France at midday, Naishaa left the same night to head straight to Bahadurgarh in Haryana for the Yonex-Sunrise All India Senior Ranking Badminton Tournament. She had to qualify for the main draw from 344 qualifying entries for this event. Winning her four qualifying rounds, Naishaa qualified for the main draw and played till she met Tanya Hemanth, a senior player who had recently won the Iran Fajr International Challenge 2023.

A third tournament took her back to France the next day, to play the BWF France Open tournament in Aire-sur-la-Lys, which Naishaa dominated all through in the U-17 Girls category, being the only Indian to participate here. She won six rounds to reach the Finals against the 4th seeded Laena Laurent of France, who she beat 21-15, 21-18, never dropping a single game throughout the tournament. Most of the players of the said tournament whom Naishaa met are already in the top 25 in world rankings.

We now have a 14-year-old as an U-17 France Open 2023 Gold Medallist in our midst!

The members at the Badminton courts are eagerly awaiting Naishaa's return to celebrate and acknowledge her huge achievements and support her to go still further. **BG**



Our BG logo shone proudly on the jersey of a victorious Naishaa.

Naishaa uses the BG courts to polish up her game. BG has supported the baddy star by helping her prepare and play for the France tournament.

BG's own internationally ranked martial arts champ

BG member **Behram Kapadia** tells *B&G* about his recent experience participating at the 2023 US Open & Junior International Cup for Karate, where he secured the third position.



▲ Behram Kapadia with Team India

Our team of 16 students, participated in the US Open & Junior International Cup held in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA from 6th to 9th April, 2023. The championship is an annual event which hosts the best Karate athletes in the world, including Olympic medallists and various world champions.

This year, the championship hosted 1,200 participants across 42 nations. The Indian contingent performed exceptionally well with a total medal tally of 26 medals across the two championships. I was able to secure the bronze medal in the 18–34 Male Advanced Kumite event, facing opponents from USA, Egypt and Nepal.

It was a remarkable experience, and a good sign for our team and the sport in India. **BG**



▲ Bronze medallist Behram Kapadia



Celebrating MANEK MATHUR'S SPORTING LEGACY



▲ Special cake designed for the occasion (see pic, mag cover)

BG's very own **Manek Mathur**, the World No. 1 in Squash Doubles Pro, was felicitated at a special event at the club to honour his sporting legacy. BG VP **Naheed Divecha** shares a few words on the stalwart's achievements and the felicitation event.



▲ Manek Mathur (last row, centre) with BG Squash Juniors at a special coaching clinic, along with BG Markers

The squash courts of Bombay Gymkhana have never seen such a buzz of Squash stalwarts – old and young, as they did on the evening of 5th April for the felicitation ceremony of Manek Mathur.

There would be very very few Bombay Gymmers who wouldn't know why we felicitated Manek, for he has been a friendly, feisty fixture at the club ever since he was a tot, and most of us have followed his rise in the Squash world which peaked with him becoming the **WORLD NO. 1 SQUASH DOUBLES PRO!**

The SDA – which is the Squash Doubles Association Pro Tour – labels him as one of the most dominant and influential professional doubles players of the past decade, while an article in *Dateline* in February calls him the most charismatic, entertaining and successful player on the pro doubles tour over the past dozen

years and one of the greatest left-wall players in the history of hardball doubles Squash.

After leaving Mumbai, Manek first made his big impact on the US Squash scene as a college Squash star at Trinity College where he contributed to the Bantams record 11-year national title streak with four titles from 2006 to 2009 while serving as team co-captain and the No. 3 player in his senior year. After graduating, Manek became a Squash professional at the



▲ Manek Mathur (r) answers questions posed by Ashish Kamat (c), Squash Hon Secy, as BG VP Naheed Divecha looks on

Field Club of Greenwich, which is one of US's epicentres of Squash doubles. He eventually moved to Manhattan to become the head Squash pro at the Racquet and Tennis club from 2017 to 2021.

During these years, Manek amassed an incredible 36 SDA titles, which is the fifth most of all time. Some of the factors that contribute to his incredible collection of successful tournaments: his extraordinary touch making him a threat to hit any shot from any area of the court, his imagination in his shot selection, his incredible court coverage that makes it impossible to hit a winner against him and makes it dangerous to play the ball anywhere within his swinging range and his scorching drives. His overheads are wicked; his impressive wingspan and his jumping ability are his big weapons on court.

The description of Manek's legacy that makes us even more proud are the ones that talk about his personality – his incredible on-court presence, the way he supports and inspires his partners, the way the galleries of audience respond and react to his fearless salvos – all qualities that will endure long after his last winning game, which was last month.

Another feather in his cap is his ability to let go and take the bitter sweet decision of retiring at the very top of his game; it is something sportsmen and women find very very hard to do – unable to accept the fact that the body does age and has limitations.



▲ Manek Mathur with proud parents Kapil and Arati Mathur

Manek started the evening with a 45-minute session of a coaching clinic with our Squash Juniors from the coaching scheme, playing with each group spread over four courts.

After an introduction of his journey by the VP, he shared his experiences both at Bombay Gym growing up, and during his best playing years with the houseful crowd eagerly listening to him answering all of Ashish Kamat's questions. The audience was filled with his admirers, some of whom like Aadit Zaveri and Sahil Vora came up and spoke about his incredible achievements. The most heart-warming speech came from marker Devdas, who on behalf of all the markers spoke about how proud and happy they all were about his success, and reminisced about his childhood days as they remembered him.

Squash Hon. Secretary Sumeet Rewari presented Manek with a plaque on behalf of a very proud Bombay Gymkhana family, and Manek spoke very fondly about the very encouraging and supportive Bombay Gym community that had spurred him to enjoy and pursue the game to this level.

The evening brought back all the Squash pros like Vaman Apte, Zarir Aibara, Rishad Pundole, Jehangir Surty, Aditya Maheshwari, Amey Merchant to our courts, making the entire evening nothing short of great bonhomie amongst all our members. We thank the Squash section, the Social Activities Committee and the Sports Revival Committee for putting together a great celebration for the Gymkhana. **BG**



▲ The Squash pros in one frame: (l-r) Sumer Shankardass, Rajendra Arora, Vivek Wadhwa, Dinesh Advani Hon. Treasurer, Manek Mathur, Vaman Apte, Suvir Khullar

Behind the lens of Hollywood

BG member **Nasreen Contractor** reviews *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid, which was April's BG Book Club pick.



▲ Discussing Evelyn's story of ambition, friendships and forbidden love

We selected this book for our Book Club as it is very popular and has been on the list of must reads for several months. It is a complex story about the life of a fictional character Evelyn Hugo, an Oscar Award-winning actress and an icon of old Hollywood, whose career spanned from 1955 to the late 1980s.

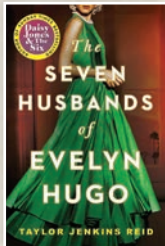
Evelyn Hugo tells her story in a final interview at age 79 to an unknown journalist Monique Grant. Monique works for the magazine *Vivaant*. She meets Evelyn on a work assignment but soon finds out that she has been specifically chosen by Evelyn for the job, who wants her to write her story, not for the magazine, but independently. Monique finds herself in a bind as she has to betray her boss who sent her to Evelyn in the first place. But as she is drawn into Evelyn's life story, she takes the plunge and negotiates a deal with both the magazine and Evelyn. Evelyn wants to share all her secrets as she is suffering from the final stages of breast cancer and is soon to die.

And thus begins Evelyn's story – of how she fled to Los Angeles in the 1950s to have an acting career, how she met each of her seven husbands, what led to the divorces and scandals, her side of the truth about each incident and the reality

which is unknown to the public. Beautiful, ambitious and savvy, Evelyn spends her life presenting a false persona to the public. She hides her bisexual identity and the story of her love affair with fellow actress Celia St. James. As Evelyn shares her story of ambition, friendships and forbidden love, it also becomes clear as to why she chose Monique to tell all

her truths...which is the twist that gets revealed at the end of the novel.

Was Evelyn mean and calculating? Did she use people? Taylor Jenkins Reid's character, Evelyn is flawed, complicated, courageous and determined. And it's these flaws and complexities which make her human. Through her life story, Evelyn provides rare insights into her true motivations. Unlikeable or likeable, Evelyn is a fierce protector of her loved ones as exemplified by her devotion to Celia, her friend, Harry and her daughter Connor, above all else. In her last act of telling the real story of her life, she finally casts off her public persona and reveals her true self.



▲ The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo

From a broader perspective, one can say that the novel spotlights the struggles of gay and bisexual Hollywood stars from the 1920s through the gay rights movements of the 1960s and into the 21st century. It highlights the necessity of the so-called lavender marriages – heterosexual marriages that hid the queer identity of one or both parties.

A story of the incompatibility of ambition and true love and society's double standards, do read *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* before its screen adaptation is out. **BG**

COLOURFUL CANVAS

BG member Ava Davar reviews her fun time learning and drawing at the Storyboard Book Club.



▲ The kids at the Storyboard session, with some avant garde self-portraits

On the 8th of April, in the cosy Bombay Gymkhana children's library, the monthly session of the children's book club was taking place. Led by the amazing Priya Aga, it was attended by Aeva, Tavishi, Purushottam, Gayaatri, Trisha, Aman, Jahan, Farhan, Ananya, Aleesha and me.

The book under discussion was *Amrita Shergil: The Immortal Girl* by Alka Pande. Amrita Shergil was an artist born on 30th January 1913 in Budapest, Hungary, and died on 5th December 1941 in Lahore, Pakistan. Even though she lived such a short life, her contribution to the art world

was humongous. The impact of her work was so great that the Government of India declared her works National Art Treasures.

We started off by discussing a little bit about the artist and getting to know her and her paintings. We also compared her art throughout her life. After a lot of discussing and answering questions, we were given two worksheets and asked to draw a self-portrait. However, some participants chose to draw portraits of others. During the process, we got to chatting and it was nice to get to know the others around me. The second worksheet helped us compare Amrita's paintings while she was in Europe and in India.

The hour-long session ended with photos and French fries. Yum!

This is a great way to spend a Saturday morning and it's really nice of Bombay Gymkhana to organise these sessions to get youngsters reading. I'm looking forward to the next one!

Note: Next month's book will be *The Butterfly Lion* by Michael Morpurgo. **BG**



▲ Learning art appreciation

A ZESTFUL LIFE

BG invited bestselling author and columnist (also, a BG member!), the inimitable **Shobhaa De** to speak on her latest oeuvre, *Insatiable: My Hunger for Life*.

The incomparable Shobhaa De was in conversation with author and journalist Gauri Singh on Wednesday, 5th April, on her latest book *Insatiable: My Hunger for Life*, spanning food, family and friendships. The Dining Hall was filled with an engaged audience who eagerly followed the vibrant flow of conversation and had



▲ Event poster announcing the specially curated talk



▲ Shobhaa De (r) in conversation with Gauri Singh (l)

many questions to ask. The evening ended with Shobhaa De signing the copies for enthusiastic readers who couldn't wait to go home and begin reading the book. **BG**



▲ Shaan Khanna of the Social Activities Committee (SAC) introduces the panellists at the beginning of the session



Shobhaa De (r) shares some laughs and words of wisdom



➤ BG VP Naheed Divecha (r) felicitates Shobhaa De



▲ Inking a copy of her latest book



▲ The packed Dining Hall was all ears to discover more of Shobhaa De's frank and reflective life stories



◀ SAC's Anita Mansukhani ensuring the smooth flow of the event



▲ Copies of Shobhaa De's *Insatiable: My Hunger for Life* on display at BG

Accumulation, preservation and transmission of wealth

BG invited wealth experts **Ajay Bhide** from Sundaram Alternate Assets and **Namita Agarwal** from Emkay Wealth Management to speak on wealth creation and transmission.

The early Saturday evening of 22nd April had many members mingling and some even meeting each other after years, over tea/coffee and refreshments. Ajay Bhide from Sundaram Alternate Assets Ltd. started off the evening with a discussion on high yielding debt instruments and the new emerging corporate credit opportunities available today.

Whilst this was a discussion more for advanced investors, the next segment dealt with more personal wealth topics like the common tips and legal challenges of writing wills, succession laws in India, protecting assets for future generations and transition

of wealth between countries for NRI children – sound and useful advice to our members imparted by Namita Agarwal from Emkay Wealth Management, a leader in the financial services sector actively creating wealth for their clients for over two decades. Namita stressed on the need for estate planning to safeguard the family's future, stating that "one's wealth should be the launch pad for the next generation rather than a centre of dispute."

Members appreciated the advice and went away with new learnings. BG is happy to continue bringing more such talks of value to our members. **BG**



▲ Ajay Bhide speaks on wealth-creating assets



▲ Namita Agarwal provides tips for protecting wealth for future generations

Image credits: Nihar Kukarni

Easter Poolside Carnival

A splashing fun time by the BG Pool.



▲ Jumping for joy

On Sunday, 9th April, BG threw a smashing fiesta for Easter, by the Poolside. The Pool area had two huge inflatable slides to amp up the water games for kids and the kids at heart. There was also yoga through storytelling, a treasure hunt and egg painting for kids. A live food counter kept everyone fuelled through the carnival. **BG**



▲ Keeping it cool



▲ Kids enact some storytelling activities



▲ Sliding into summer fun



▲ Yoga through storytelling

Easter Brunch

Delicious Easter food by Indigo Café.

BG arranged for a special Easter brunch on the afternoon of Sunday, 9th April. The food, by Indigo Café, included such delicacies as Togarashi Chicken and Gochujang Cream Tapas and four different types of Easter Roasts (Chicken, Buff, Ham and Sri Lankan Sea Bass). Live music by Roney Gomes at the Gym's Inn Bar made the festivities merrier. **BG**



▲ Asparagus and Oyster Mushroom Bruschetta



▲ Easter Roast with a side of Mashed Potatoes



▲ Rich stew to keep you warm

Sunday Brunch at The Pavilion

An afternoon of fine dining.

For the late night revellers who partied hard the night before, a sit-down brunch in a fine dining space feels quite pampering. To cater to this need, BG hosted a special brunch menu at The Pavilion. Members got to enjoy delicious helpings of salads and buttery bread. **BG**



▲ Buffet spread



▲ Salads in all their glory



▲ Saxophony serenading

Ramzaan Food Festival

From 16th to 22nd April, BG hosted a mouth-watering Ramzaan Food Festival. The specially curated menu was available during lunch and dinner hours. Here are some tantalizing pics of the savoury delights... **BG**



▲ Green Paneer Tikka



▲ Tawa Bheja Masala with Khamiri Naan



▲ Tawa Masala Pulav

Image credits: Nihar Kulkarni

New Moon Sound Meditation

Sound vibrational therapy for achieving a state of calmness.



▲ Sound healing



▲ Attendees get into a relaxing pose



▲ Welcoming positivity

On Wednesday, April 19th, BG organised a sound meditation program in collaboration with Aikyam Wellness in the Dining Hall. Members were invited to come wearing comfortable clothing to help the session be more effective. During the session, attendees were asked to arrange themselves in various poses as the organisers played on specific instruments to generate music, tones and vibrations. **BG**

Housie revelry

Some family friendly fun and rivalry to beat summer days.

BG hosted housie fun for members on Sunday, 16th April with sweet delights and gift hampers which were up for grabs. The place was packed to the rafters as usual as attendees poured over their tickets and prayed for some luck in between chit chats. **BG**



▲ Housefull fun



▲ A lucky winner



▲ Tempting gifts for the winners

The high octane Bar Night

BG member Neil White gives the low-down on the energy-filled Bar Night with DJ Suketu.

What an adrenaline rush! The BG Bar Night featuring the legendary DJ Suketu on 21st April came alive as he belted out his favourite hits. The full house added to the vibe of the night, while the dance floor reflected the eclectic moves of the crowd as the people enjoyed the beats. One could feel the energy and vibrancy of the night simply being there.

Members and their guests packed the dance floor all night long. The food was delectable and added the right touch to round off this high octane Bar Night. What a night to remember, BG! **BG**



▲ DJ Suketu spins out his popular hits



▲ Full house vibes

Image credits: Nilbar Kulkarni



▲ Vibrant night



▲ Pulsing with energy



▲ DJ Suketu with Hon Secy Bar & Entertainment Dr Monika Doshi

Image credits: Neil White



Feature

Summer COOLERS



Chef Irfan Pabaney shares recipes for summer drinks to help you beat the heat.

POMEGRANATE KIWI PUNCH



Ingredients:

- Fresh Pomegranate Arils – 1 Cup
- Fresh Kiwi, Peeled and Sliced – Half
- Fresh Mint Leaves – Handful
- Lime Juice – 20 ml
- Grenadine Syrup – 10 ml

Instructions:

1. In a blender, blend the fresh pomegranate arils and sliced kiwi until smooth.
2. Strain the mixture through a fine mesh strainer to remove any solids.
3. In a large pitcher, combine the strained pomegranate kiwi juice, mint leaves, lime juice and grenadine syrup.
4. Stir well to combine all the ingredients.
5. Add chilled sparkling water to the pitcher and give it another gentle stir.
6. Fill serving glasses with ice cubes.
7. Pour the pomegranate kiwi punch over the ice in each glass.
8. Garnish with extra mint leaves, if desired.
9. Serve and enjoy your refreshing Pomegranate Kiwi Punch!

ORANGE, GINGER MINT COOLER

Ingredients:

- Fresh Orange Juice – 120 ml
- Ginger – 3 to 4 slices
- Mint Leaves – handful
- Lime Juice – 15 ml
- Soda – 120 ml

Instructions:

1. In a blender, combine the fresh orange juice, ginger slices and mint leaves. Blend on high setting until the mixture is smooth.
2. Strain the mixture through a fine mesh strainer to remove any solids.
3. Pour the strained mixture into a tall glass filled with ice.
4. Add 15 ml of fresh lime juice to the glass and stir well.
5. Top off the glass with 120 ml of soda.
6. Garnish with additional mint leaves and a slice of fresh orange, if desired.
7. Serve and enjoy your refreshing Orange Ginger Mint Cooler!



CUCUMBER ELDERFLOWER

Ingredients:

- Fresh Cucumber Chunks – 3 to 4
- Elderflower Syrup – 15 ml
- Lime Juice – 15 ml
- Sugar Syrup – 10 ml
- Ice – as needed

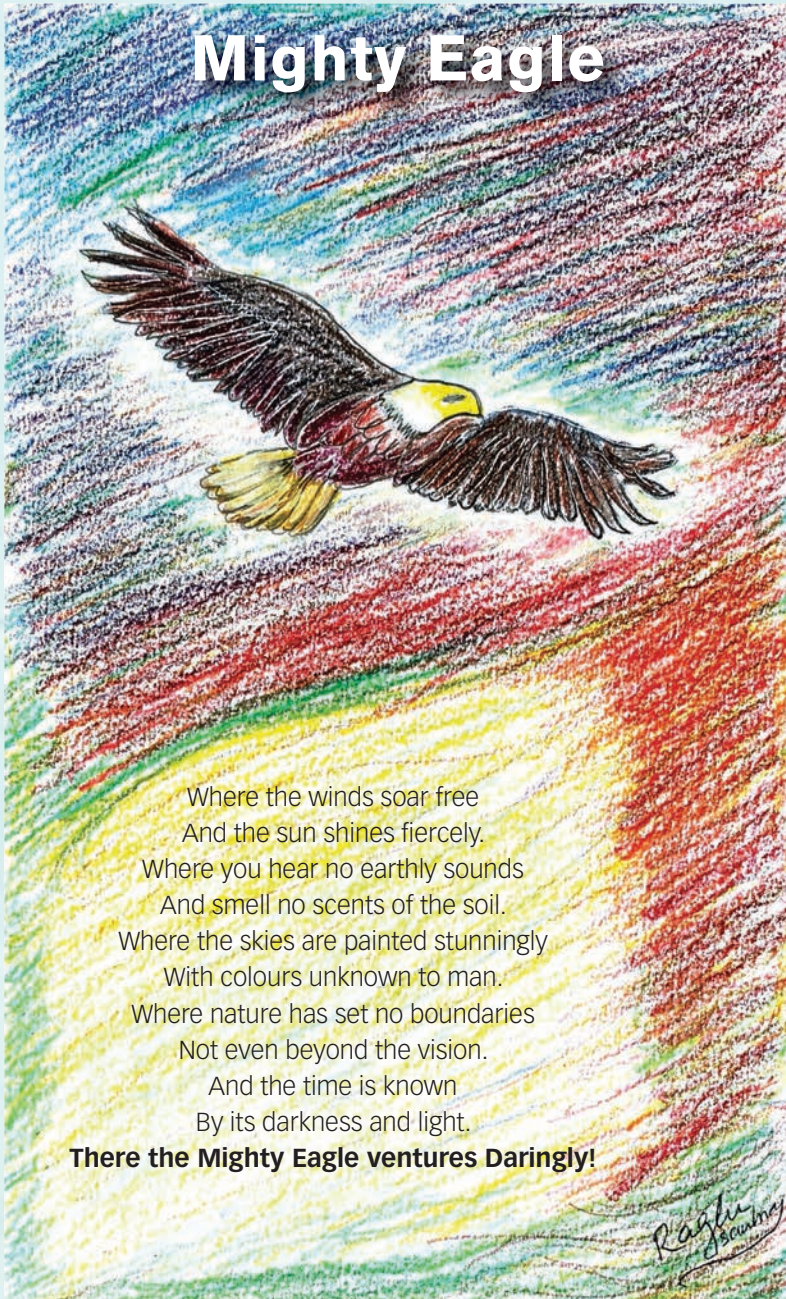
Instructions:

1. In a cocktail shaker, muddle the cucumber chunks until they break down into smaller pieces.
2. Add ice to the shaker.
3. Pour in the elderflower syrup, lime juice, and sugar syrup.
4. Shake the mixture vigorously for about 10-15 seconds.
5. Strain the mixture into a chilled glass filled with ice.
6. Garnish with a slice of cucumber, if desired.
7. Serve and enjoy your refreshing Cucumber Elderflower mocktail!



Inspired by nature

BG member **Raghu Sawhney** shares two poems (along with his original sketch and photo) inspired by the freedom he experienced while observing his natural surroundings.



Mighty Eagle

Where the winds soar free
And the sun shines fiercely.
Where you hear no earthly sounds
And smell no scents of the soil.
Where the skies are painted stunningly
With colours unknown to man.
Where nature has set no boundaries
Not even beyond the vision.
And the time is known
By its darkness and light.

There the Mighty Eagle ventures Daringly!

Raghu Sawhney

Desires

I want to drift in the gusty wind
Like a leaf
And be swept away to an unknown place.

I want to feel the scorching sun
Like the sand
And remain warm under the chilly night.

I want to swim in the blue ocean
Like a dolphin
And explore its deep unknown treasures.

I want to float to the mountain
Like the cloud
And merge with the flakes of snow.

I want to fall from the sky
Like the rain
And rest in the place where I belong.

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit must appear once in:

SUDOKU

	1	6						2
				6		8		
	8		1			3		6
5	4	2			3			
				1				
			2			5	4	9
6		1			8		7	
		4		9				
9						6	2	

- each of the vertical columns
- each of the horizontal rows
- each of the boxes



CRISS WORD

Ten five-letter words cross and interlock to complete these criss words. Some of the letters have already been filled in. Can you fill in the rest? Clues are given.

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Aspirations | 6. Animal's nose |
| 2. Theme | 7. Recorded |
| 3. Remedies | 8. Himalayan country |
| 4. Fathers | 9. Weaving machines |
| 5. Avowed | 10. Low monotonous sound |

SCRAMBLE

Solve the four anagrams and move one letter to each square to form four ordinary words

Now arrange the letters marked with an asterisk (*) to form the answer to the riddle or to fill in the missing words as indicated:

_____ is doing the right things without being told. - Elbert Hubbard (10) **BG**

VWAEI

	*	*		*
--	---	---	--	---

DVVII

	*		*	
--	---	--	---	--

CHWITT

*		*	*		
---	--	---	---	--	--

EENUNV

	*		*		
--	---	--	---	--	--

(all solutions on page 31)



Celebrating Mothers

On Sunday, May 14, we celebrate **Mother's Day**. We share a list of Indian movies depicting the different sides of motherhood.

"Every manifestation of power in the universe is 'Mother'. She is life, She is intelligence, She is Love. She is in the universe yet separate from it." With these words, Swami Vivekananda urged awakened minds to realize and surrender to the vastness of motherhood. Cinema in India has time after time attempted to capture the different facets of motherhood in larger-than-life dramatic tales. We bring together some important Indian films that have portrayed the idea of a mother through strong and vibrant characters.

Kannathil Muthamittal (2002)

Released in 2002, this Tamil film by master filmmaker Mani Ratnam tells the story of Amudha, a nine-year-old girl, who, on learning that she was adopted, sets out to find her biological mother and to know why she abandoned her. Indira and Thiruchelvan, Amudha's adoptive parents join her quest to find her real mother. Set against the backdrop of the Sri Lankan Civil War, *Kannathil Muthamittal* sketches a powerful drama to show the longing and deep affection a woman develops for a child irrespective of whether she is the birth mother.



Zakhm (1998)

A film by popular Bollywood director Mahesh Bhatt, *Zakhm* won Ajay Devgn his career's first National Award. Set against the painful communal conflicts that prevailed in Mumbai around the early nineties, the film tells the story of two brothers who through their personal and political motives struggle to understand the sacrifices of their mother who is breathing her last breath after being set on fire by a mob in the raging Hindu-Muslim riots. Mahesh Bhatt craftfully narrates a non-linear tale of a woman who throughout her life longs for the love of her husband which is denied to her due to religious boundaries that absurdly separates humans from each other.





Kya Kehna (2000)

A Kundan Shah directorial, *Kya Kehna* is a sincere attempt at portraying the taboo of premarital pregnancy while beautifully presenting a family drama. When a vibrant young girl Priya falls for a rich and playful brat Rahul, their romance leads to Priya getting pregnant and Rahul showing his disinterest in any form of commitment with her. The film progresses to Priya owning up to her part of the responsibility while deciding to give birth to her child against all societal odds.

Badhaai Ho (2018)

Directed by Amit Ravindernath Sharma, *Badhaai Ho* is a comical take on the idea of unwanted pregnancy and narrates the role of a mother in welcoming her child against all odds and conventionality. *Badhaai Ho* tells the story of a young 26-year-old Nakul who is shocked to learn about the pregnancy of his mother who is in her 50s. *Badhaai Ho* sensitively narrates the mild ordeals of a family welcoming a new child into the family. It is a laughter riot and refreshingly original in style and presentation.



English Vinglish (2012)

The penultimate performance by Sridevi before her unfortunate demise, *English Vinglish* marked a commanding comeback from the legendary actress which won her the IIFA and *Stardust* awards for Best Actress. Directed by Gauri Shinde, the film humorously brings to fore the ignorance and ungratefulness of kids and the husband towards the mother of the family who is content with her passion for cooking and keeping her family happy. Shashi, a middle aged Indian housewife, who on a family trip to the United States has to overcome her insecurity of communicating in the English language while finding her true confidence and ascertaining her vital role in the family.



BOOK CLUB
BOOKS
by
SALMAN RUSHDIE

Share a book/books you have read
written by Salman Rushdie

Monday, 8th May 2023, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm, Library

BOOK CLUB FOR CHILDREN
(AGE 8 - 10 YEARS)
THE BUTTERFLY LION
BY
MICHAEL MORPURGO

The book club will be facilitated by Priya Aga, an educator and avid reader who loves learning and likes to make reading fun for children. The book is available in the children's library.

Saturday, 13th May 2023, 11 am - 12 noon

Venue: The Storyboard (Lower Verandah)

Register at
Email: library@bombaygymkhana.com
Tel: 4322429

FILM
THE HOWARDS OF VIRGINIA

Dir: Frank Lloyd, Cast: Cary Grant, Martha Scott, Cedric Hardwicke, Richard Gaines and Alan Marshal

Just prior to the American War of Independence, aristocratic Virginia's Jane Peyton marries unsophisticated rustic farmer and surveyor Matt Howard who takes her to his Shenandoah Valley plantation and later goes to war

Friday, 26th May 2023, 5:30 pm onwards at the Library

Register at
Email: library@bombaygymkhana.com
Telephone no- 43223420

SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU

3	1	6	8	5	7	4	9	2
2	9	5	3	6	4	8	1	7
4	8	7	1	2	9	3	5	6
5	4	2	9	8	3	7	6	1
7	6	9	4	1	5	2	8	3
1	3	8	2	7	6	5	4	9
6	2	1	5	3	8	9	7	4
8	7	4	6	9	2	1	3	5
9	5	3	7	4	1	6	2	8

CRISS WORD



SCRAMBLE

Words: Waive, vivid, twitch, uneven

Answer: Initiative is doing the right things without being told. - Elbert Hubbard

(puzzles on page 28)

In Memoriam

The Bombay Gymkhana deeply regrets
the sad demise of:

— — — — —
Monica Bhavnani
(March 15, 2023)

— — — — —
Sharad Somani
(October 1, 2022)

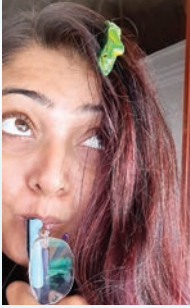
— — — — —
Our heartfelt condolences
to the bereaved.

ADD SOME BG COLOUR TO YOUR INBOX!

Black & Gold is now available via email. To receive the electronic version of Bombay Gymkhana's monthly magazine, simply send an email to relations@bombaygymkhana.com. You can also download it from the BG App. So, check out the latest BG happenings on the 'go'.

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY?

An Indian Summer



Vignettes, gleanings (and the occasional whining) from the Gym life.

Gauri Singh



↑ With THE De



April-May is all about sunshine, plenty of it, and with such intensity many want to flee to cooler climes. But ever since education opened up possibilities of curriculums other than just the national, schools don't all shut in April... in fact many of us will be in the city (and, therefore, at BG!) much of May, in tune with kids' schedules. So, here's to an exciting Indian Summer 2023 at the club!

Speaking of excitement in summer, April itself was quite up there. I had the singular pleasure of being in conversation with the svelte, rather marvellous Shobhaa De, on her latest book *Insatiable: My Hunger for Life* (see coverage this issue), and have to confess

I thoroughly enjoyed our chat in the massive BG Dining Hall.

Shobhaa was frank and forthcoming as she always is, never missing a beat as she tackled the vastness of her canvas, both written and beyond, and the full-house audience appeared clearly delighted to listen in, as to come up and say so later, post event. For those of you who missed the event, there are glimpses up on the BG Insta page.

Then, of course, there were summer's Significant Moments – and here I need to highlight bonds formed specifically at the Gym. I have written on these over the years, going so far as to extol a work colleague's words to me very long ago (he too is a Gym member), when he told me to ignore a trouble-maker colleague because she wasn't part of our 'real life': *'It's not as if you'll be bumping into her at the Gym...!'* In one seeming carelessly worded comment, demarcating what was most important – *Gym bonding over and above other connects*. And how true that still is, all these years later!



↑ Prongs Lighthouse

So, summer's Significant Moments included a visit to the historic Prongs Lighthouse (full marks if you knew it as Mumbai's Southernmost Tip), courtesy an invite by Navy Commodore Sanjay D' Cunha, a BG member I happened to

befriend in BG's swim class – his wife Genevieve is my college classmate, small world!

The Lighthouse can only be accessed at low tide if you walk (and you need to return before the sea closes in) – and only once a year as it is in a restricted zone, controlled by the Navy. What joy to assemble at dawn, still talking BG language *outside* BG!

There were other BG members invited, among them fellow swim buddies Anuja and Viraj Savant (see pic). Hurrah moment to have finally reached Prongs after a long walk over *verry* slippery slime-caressed rockway! Gracias Sanjay for increasing my knowledge of this special city of ours.

The pool isn't the only place for forming bonds at BG – there is one group that does this beautifully, and these days has closed ranks with a familiarity I recognise only too well – as one existing also amongst the insular, close-knit Rugby brotherhood.



↑ Bootcamp buddies with the happy groom



↑ Bootcamp crew celebrating significant moments

'*Bootcamp is a CULT,*' emphasized the enterprising Shaan Khanna of our Social Activities Committee who organised the De talk, to universal agreement. And one of the cheerleaders of said cult got married recently to his long-time love. Tarun Gupta wed Sangeeta Chakravorty abroad, then marked that milestone with a glorious celebration in India. I would know, I was present, along with the entire BG Bootcamp fraternity to witness that very special Significant Moment! Indeed, BG Bootcamp has moved to encompass and fill space beyond our tumbling green lawns – well outside BG and well inside each other's lives. I know I speak for all of Bootcamp when I say: Tarun and Sangeeta – Joyous Congratulations to you both!



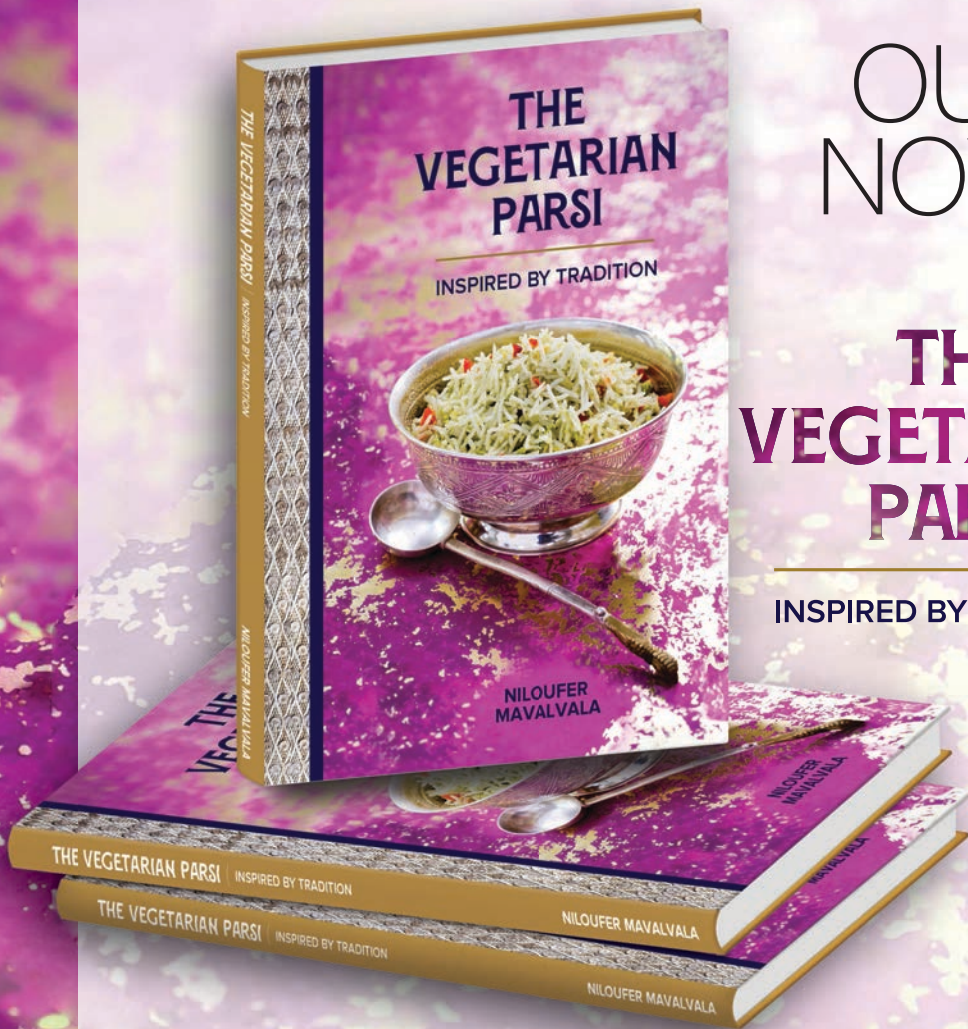
↑ Tarun weds Sangeeta

I have given two examples but there are plenty more. Such is the comfort of BG bonding. Such is the power of its presence. Blinding, like the summer sun (which I channelled in my getups, all April through). Until next time, wish you a very Indian Summer. **BG**

OUT
NOW!

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