

# HARIT KHABAR

December, 2021

Ramveer Tanvar was recently mentioned in the Prime Minister's 'Mann ki Baat' program for his pond rejuvenation efforts. Read more about his work in our cover story.



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An initiative of HCL Foundation and World Comics India

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## Green Yatra towards Women Empowerment

Neelam and Laali are landless farmers who reside in the Dankaur Village of Gautam Buddha Nagar district in Uttar Pradesh. They started working in nearby farms due to food shortages during the lockdown. Since work in the village did not promise them sufficient food or decent shelter, they decided to migrate to a bigger city in search of livelihood.

As they were planning to migrate, they got to know about the ongoing afforestation campaign by Green Yatra in partnership with the HCL Foundation and they decided to join the campaign. Taking into account the negative impact that the pandemic had on women, an afforestation campaign was initiated in Amarpur, Gautam Budh Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh.



Photo: Green Yatra

and positively impacted migrant laborers in rural areas.

During the first COVID-19 lockdown, migrant laborers, especially women, faced huge challenges that adversely affected their health and livelihood.

According to a recent study conducted by the International Labor Organization, women lost more jobs as compared to men during the global pandemic.

Neelam and Lali walked 8 kilometers everyday for work. They believe that their participation in

the afforestation campaign assisted them in managing their domestic affairs more efficiently. In addition, they also got a fair opportunity to make better use of their skills through the afforestation campaign. Inspired by Laali and Neelam, other residents of Dankaur village, Kajal and Guddi joined the afforestation campaign as well.

Green Yatra aims towards raising community participation in environmental matters. It has been involved in the large-scale planning of planting trees that later resulted in developing healthy urban forests. Further, their work has also engaged

### About Green Yatra



Photo: Gulistan News

Green Yatra was established in the year 2008 with the initiative of 'Go Green Ganesha'. Through this initiative, Green Yatra led a campaign against idols made from substances like POP that pose a heavy threat to the environment. Idols made from POP and other such substances harm marine life and the Go Green Ganesha campaign advocated the use of eco-friendly idols during festivals.

After the initial success of their campaign, Green Yatra has been engaged with the issues of urban forests and rural livelihoods. Green Yatra's major objective is to provide innovative and sustainable solutions to the problems caused by climate change.

### Harit Facts

In 2018, under their 'Bag for Cause' campaign, Green Yatra organized a drive for waste management and cleanliness in Mumbai and assisted in disposing 100 tons of waste and distributed around 20,000 cloth bags.

Green Yatra believes that to keep the environment clean and healthy, festivals must be celebrated in sync with nature. Therefore, they donated more than 5000 paper bags in an awareness campaign and also encouraged people to recycle.

In 2019, Green Yatra planted 7000 trees in Mumbai's Jogeshwari using the Miyawaki plantation method. This unique effort has resulted in developing Mumbai's first Miyawaki forest spread across 20,000 square feet.

### Miyawaki jungles : a concrete solution



Urban spaces are now synonymous with 'Concrete jungles'. The term 'Concrete jungle' reflects declining green covers. Due to ever-increasing infrastructure development, concrete has replaced greenery in urban spaces.

However, it is not possible to stop these constructions. However, the negative impact it has had on urban spaces can be curbed through urban forests.

Akira Miyawaki, Japan's well-known botanist and forest specialist, devised some strategies that can be useful in the future. The forest designed by his conceptual understanding is known as Miyawaki forests wherein, small plots of land are converted into small jungles.

### What is Miyawaki?



The interesting fact about the Miyawaki methodology is that it can be followed by planting just two to four trees within a square meter of land. The method involves planting dozens of native species in a single area which eventually results in the forest becoming self-sufficient after the initial three years. It also ensures that the plant growth remains 10 times better and 30 times denser than other plantation methods.

The Miyawaki method also helps to lower the atmospheric temperature and reduce air and noise pollution. Apart from this, it attracts local insects and birds and functions as a carbon sink.

**NO CHEMICALS**

**NO COLORS**

**NAVEEN KUMAR VAISH**

### Tulsi Gowda - The Encyclopedia of forest



A native of Honnali Village in Karnataka, Tulsi Gowda has planted more than 30,000 trees in the last 60 years. She started her journey as a 12-year-old child. She was especially appreciated when she walked barefoot to the stage clad in her native costume and accessories for receiving the award from the President of India. She is also known as the 'encyclopedia of the forest'.

Tulsi Gowda began her journey as a daily wage laborer after which she was appointed as a worker in Karnataka's forest department. She is particularly interested in native species of plants and trees. She has often encouraged her community members and farmers for afforestation. She believes that we can put an end to human-animal conflicts by planting more fruit trees in forests. She raised her concern against the increased use of non-native and decorative species of plants.

Tulsi Gowda's Padma Shree award is indeed a matter of honor for those associated with the issues of environment and environmental education. In an interview with the New Indian Express, she told that in her discussion with the Prime Minister, she requested him to completely ban cutting of trees and plants.

## Community participation is Pond Man's mantra

We get you the story of Ramveer Tanwar who was recently mentioned in the Prime Minister's 'Mann Ki Baat' program for his pond rejuvenation efforts!

Hailing from Uttar Pradesh, Ramveer Tanwar is a young environmentalist and an engineer by profession, who has brought forth some interesting ideas on water conservation. As a school student in Greater Noida, he was fascinated by natural ponds and lakes in his immediate surroundings. While growing up, he realized that ponds are dying and witnessed the increasing water pollution and falling groundwater levels. The traditional water sources were polluted to the extent that it was difficult to distinguish lakes from sewage drains. The remaining water resources were encroached on for building roads and houses.



## A sea effort of cleaning ponds

Tanwar started the pond cleanliness campaign from his native village Dadha in Greater Noida. To do this, he engaged and mobilized community members in the village to join the campaign to clean ponds. Increased community participation in decision-making ensured that solid waste was not dumped into any nearby water resources.

A pit with wooden mesh was constructed to collect the household wastes from the village. Grass patches, serving as a second layer, ensured that no additional waste material flowed into the clean water bodies. People from the village volunteered to clean the pit, wooden mesh, and grass patches every week.

The floor of the ponds is generally covered with a layer of micro-waste material and require a specific way to clean it. Hence, the fisher folks based in the village were encouraged to pursue aquaculture activities where they cultivated more than 10,000 slime fishes.

Slime fish eat minute and other micro waste materials and ensure that the process of cleaning the lakes and ponds is completed. Moreover, these fishes are then sold in the market. The money obtained from the sale of slime fishes becomes an alternate source of income for the fishermen and is further used to invest in aquaculture, thus maintaining ecosystem integrity.

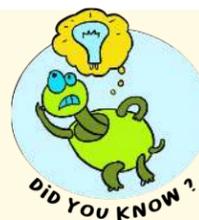
## Debate, participate @ Jal Chaupal

Since the beginning of Ramveer Tanwar's pond restoration campaign, 'Jal Chaupal' has become a platform for approaching villages on the issue of pond cleanliness and garbage disposal.

Through Jal Chaupal, villagers gather and specifically raise concerns on water conservation, strategies and future plans, etc. in the form of a village panchayat. The extensive community discussion and feedback enhances community participation which ensures cleanliness of natural water bodies. After Jal Chaupals were successfully established, the government of Uttar Pradesh recognized the efforts of Ramveer and appointed him as the district coordinator of Gautama Budhha Nagar for the 'Bhujal Sena' or 'Groundwater army' initiative.

## Harit Facts

Ramveer Tanwar's efforts on pond rejuvenation have brought over a dozen lakes back to life from the brink of disappearance. He is especially known for his significant contribution to restoring Gautam Buddh Nagar's (Noida) Kulipara Talab, Aajampur Talab and Greater Noida's Shaheed Sarovar. His next water conservation project is based in Kanpur where he aims to restore traditional water sources. While encouraging the youth to participate in community-based action, Tanwar suggests focusing on smaller water bodies.



In 2021, New Delhi's Wetland Authority implemented the suggestions made by the National Green Tribunal in 2019 to assign unique identification numbers to the 1,040 water bodies. Delhi has over 1,000 lakes and ponds and 995 have been verified on the map. A study by the Center for Science and Environment suggests that over the past few decades, increasing population and urbanization has led to a dramatic reduction of natural water bodies.

Bengaluru had 262 lakes in the 1960s, but now only 10 remain. Similarly, Ahmedabad had 137 lakes in 2001 and, by 2012, 65 of those were destroyed or encroached for building houses. In Hyderabad, 3,245 hectares of lakes are at the constant risk of disappearing. Further, water shortages have adversely affected the livelihood opportunities of various communities and encroaching lakes has deteriorated the quality of water.

Before...



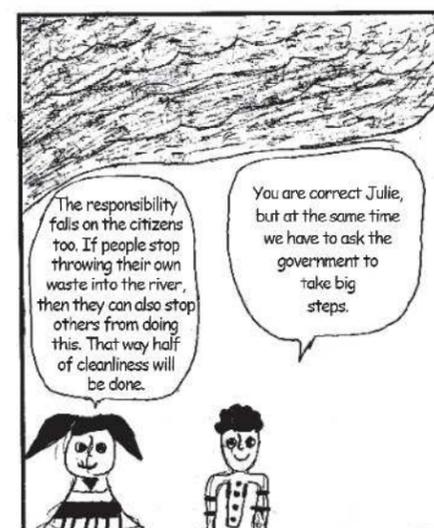
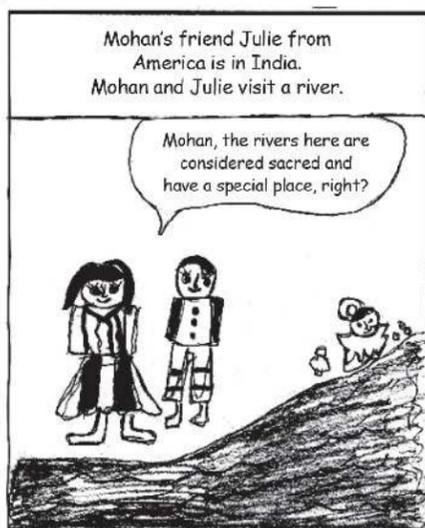
Now...



## Who is to blame ?



Raiesh



### The debate on clean energy transition

The exacerbating climate change crisis has led to a serious debate on sources of energy production, and the advocacy of using clean energy is gaining momentum. To understand what clean energy is and how traditional energy sources (fossil fuels) harm the environment, we have to contextualize the present conditions.

There are four major sources of clean energy namely, nuclear energy, hydroelectric energy, solar energy and wind energy. In the past, various concerns have been raised on the usage of nuclear and hydroelectric energy due to excessive environmental costs, however solar and wind energy are widely accepted. Solar energy only requires sunlight to produce energy, while wind energy uses windmills and channelizes wind to produce energy. Presently, India's energy needs are largely dependent on coal and this has significantly increased air pollution in our atmosphere.

Apart from producing electricity, clean energy can also be used as fuel and can cater to the transportation needs of the country. Presently, transportation in India is chiefly dependent on petrol and diesel, which increases carbon emissions. Taking this into account, various state governments are framing new policies to encourage electric transport.

### Solar energy - A Ray of Hope



Photo: ET

Solar energy is produced using the medium of solar panels which help in converting sunlight into electricity. India significantly needs to transition to solar energy and recently, Rajasthan has emerged as India's leading producer and user of solar energy. Since Rajasthan's significant landmass is covered in desert, it enjoys abundant sunlight.

Rajasthan government's initiative 'Solar Energy Policy 2019' pledged to invest 10,000 crore rupees into solar energy. Through this policy, the government also provides subsidies to industries and businesses to transition into solar energy.

### A fresh breeze of wind energy

Wind energy is a clean source of energy that neither pollutes water nor air. It uses windmills and turbines to produce energy. The turbine works as a fan and generates power.



Photo: Wikipedia

Regions with excessive and frequent winds have an advantage in installing windmills.

According to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Tamil Nadu has the highest capacity to produce wind energy in India.



### Improved Cooking Stove - Care India's clean energy initiative

Care India is an NGO based in New Delhi. This organisation primarily works with women and engages on the issues of economic and social empowerment.

It works towards the empowerment of women from lower castes and marginalized communities.

Traditional ways of cooking food that uses coal and wood are extremely harmful to women. Women have to bear the brunt of indoor pollution. Care India spreads awareness on the issue of clean energy within communities and assists in the acquisition of cooking stoves that run on clean energy.

Care India's Improved Cooking Stove or ICS harnesses solar energy in cooking and deters indoor pollution. The NGO also provides financial and technical solutions.

To transition to clean energy, the participation and support of men from the community are equally important and they play a pivotal role in the process. Care India thus prepares households to safely transition into clean energy.

### Harit Facts

In 2016 Care India was awarded the 'Most Trusted NGO' award. Care India works in 12 states and has distributed ICS in more than 25,000 households.



Care India collaborated with the HCL Foundation and encouraged the use of ICS in 2 urban slums of Gautam Budh Nagar district. The collaboration of Care India and the HCL Foundation enabled 17,500 people to efficiently utilize the clean cookstoves.

### How India produces it's energy?

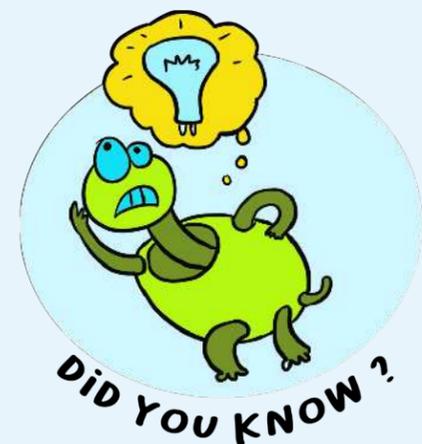
India is the third-largest carbon-emitting country in the world after China and the US. There are two main reasons for this, the first being heavy dependence on fossil fuels and the second is low production and use of clean sources of energy. Most of the electricity in India is produced using fossil fuels.

More than 70% of the electricity in India is produced using fossil fuels. Around 50% of electricity is produced from coal and the rest is produced by oil and natural gas.

Renewable energy sources in India only fulfill 20 - 25% of the electricity needs, of which, nuclear energy contributes to 1.7% of the total energy produced.

By 2030, India aims to produce at least 50% of energy using clean and renewable sources. Within renewable energy, 70% of the energy requirements can be met using solar energy and 28% using wind energy.

Source: NITI Aayog and International Energy Agency



## INVALUABLE AIR

Pratibha Tripathi





Oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, and other water bodies cover 71% of the Earth's surface. Marine biodiversity consists of various species of animals, be it the world's biggest animal or the smallest. The ocean is home to such innumerable species. According to a report presented by the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organisation, 40% of the world's population lives within a 100 km radius of the coast. About 10-12% of people depend on the ocean for their livelihood. Oceans and seas work as a carbon sink, which means they have the ability to absorb excess carbon generated due to anthropogenic uses. They further play a major role in maintaining complex ecosystems.



### The Tree Foundation



Conserving oceans and marine life is quite a difficult challenge. The Tree Foundation is an NGO started in 2002 in Chennai which works towards the issues related to marine life by creating literacy and awareness among people.

The Tree Foundation was founded by Dr. Supraja Dharini, who completed her doctorate in Indian Philosophy but a dead turtle near the seashore inspired her to work towards conserving marine lives. After its initiation, the foundation and Dr. Dharini have had an interesting journey and started with a small project to

protect the Olive Ridley Turtles.

The Tree foundation works in partnership with government organisations and communities to save marine lives. The Olive Ridley conservation project wouldn't have been a success without engaging with the traditional fishing communities.

### Hunting the haunted Ghost Net



'Ghost Net' is a popular term used for the trash and abandoned nets that were once used for fishing. These nets are dangerous for marine organisms who tend to get attracted to these nets, get trapped in them, and kill themselves. Endangered species are at an added degree of risk with such mortality-enhancing factors. Considering the risk that these nets pose to marine wildlife,

Tree Foundation and the HCL Foundation started an initiative to reduce ghost nets from the ocean. The initiative began in July and traditional fisherfolks are financially compensated for removing ghost nets from the oceans and the coasts. For removing one kilogram of ghost net, the fisherfolks get five rupees. The initiative has benefitted the fishermen community and has also become an additional source of income for some fishermen. The success of this initiative lies in the fact that there has been an increase in the population of Olive Ridley Turtles, and now approximately 8,000 of them return to the sea every year.

The Tree Foundation collaborated with the governments of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and the Indian Coast Guard. The NGO has started many awareness initiatives by conducting training for fishermen on conserving ocean resources.

### Rain grips the South Indian states

Since the past decade, it has been observed that there is a rise in the imbalance of monsoon patterns in the country. It has further caused unseasonal rains in the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka.

Moreover, cities like Bangalore and Chennai have witnessed floods causing heavy disruption and rendering thousands of people homeless.



In Andhra Pradesh alone, 34 people died of these floods and around 50 thousand people were sent to local shelter homes.

The Indian Air Force, National Disaster Response Force and state relief teams worked together and helped in rescue operations to avoid further damage of life.

### Slowly vanishing Olive Ridley Turtle

One of the endangered marine species, the Olive Ridley Turtle is facing many challenges today. The Olive Ridley Turtles arrive at India's eastern coastal shores of Odisha and Tamil Nadu from South America during their nesting and breeding season every year. The increased pollution in seas and oceans, and ingestion of plastic has led to the death of numerous Olive Ridley Turtles. Olive Ridley Turtles play a major part in maintaining the marine ecosystem. They help to keep the seagrasses healthy and have a key role in balancing the food chain inside the ocean.

To conserve and protect Olive Ridley Turtles, the fishermen community, government organisations and non-governmental organisations worked together and their continuous efforts paid off! Organisations like the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) also contributed to the protection of the Olive Ridley Turtles.

DRDO has a missile launching site in the Abdul Kalam Island at Gahirmatha coast. To protect baby turtles from going in the opposite direction, defence personnel have dimmed the bright light coming from the missile site. Forest guards have also been appointed at the coast to prevent predators like dogs, birds, and other animals from eating the baby turtles. The mortality rate of baby turtles is quite high and only 1 out of 1000 survives.

### Breeding and nesting process



Photo: The Tuttle Hub

The Olive Ridley Turtles come to the shores every year in November and December to begin their breeding process and build nests for laying eggs. For this, they make a 2-foot spherical pit in the sand and the female turtle lays approximately 100 eggs in this nest. The hatchlings approximately take 45 days to come out on the shore from their nest.

The hatchlings have to face numerous challenges on the ocean coasts. After coming out of the nest, hatchlings are attracted towards the ocean light. Sometimes, instead of going towards the ocean, baby turtles start moving in the opposite direction, towards the land. This ultimately leads to their death due to many factors.

### 'Urban heat island'

Climate change has heavily impacted the monsoon pattern in the country however, it has been experienced differently in rural and urban areas. Since 2015, major cities like Hyderabad, Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Bengaluru, Patna, etc have faced urban floods. Urban flooding is primarily caused by the effects of 'Urban heat island'.

Urban spaces lack natural habitats like lakes and forests due to which they witness higher temperatures compared to rural areas. This is known as the urban heat island effect. Factors such as high population, poor drainage system, illegal encroachment of forests and water bodies also contribute to this effect.



## Scientific experiment with leaves

Visit the nearby park in your area and perform this informative exercise to know more about the science behind 'Photosynthesis'.

You will require these items -

1. A bowl, preferably a transparent one like a glass bowl.



2. A fresh leaf from a nearby plant.

3. Water



4. A small pebble or a stone

### How to perform this exercise?

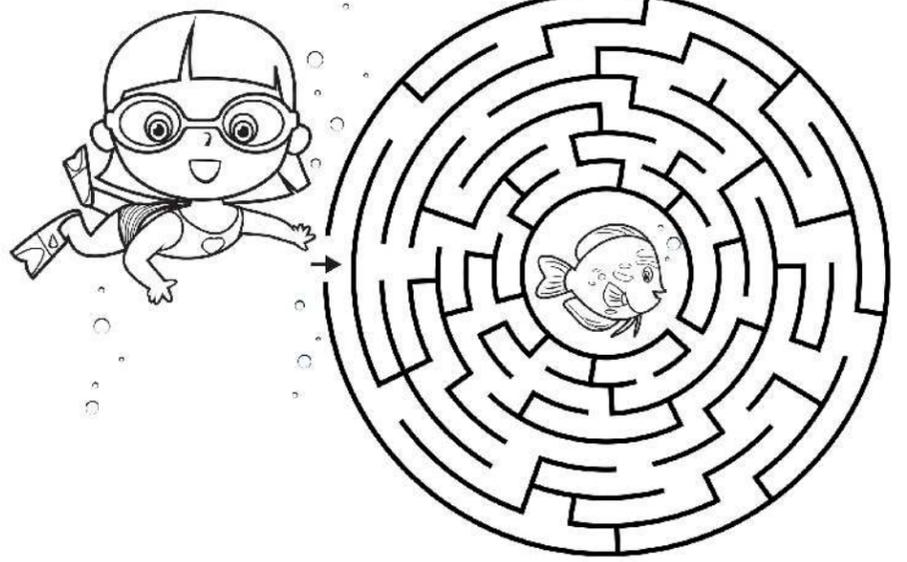
1. Place the bowl with water outside in the sunlight.
2. Immerse the leaf in the water bowl so that it reaches the surface of the bowl.
3. To prevent the leaf from floating, use a pebble to stick it to the bottom.
4. Check on the bowl after a few hours.

After a few hours, you will observe tiny bubbles around the leaf and at the periphery of the bowl. This is because of the process of Photosynthesis. In this process, sunlight is converted into usable energy by leaves. After being immersed in water, leaves release additional oxygen, and we witness this oxygen in the form of bubbles in the water.

## Spot the difference



## Help Saloni in reaching towards the fish



You can recycle plastic bottles by using them for growing herbs and shrubs at your home.

Here are some steps to perform this exercise at home:

What would you require?

1. A plastic bottle of any shape



2. Some soil



3. The stem of the plants you will plant in the bottle



Follow these simple steps to grow your plant in a plastic bottle:

1. Take a plastic bottle of 2 litres and make a hole in it. You can use plastic bottles of any size but ensure that it is not too small.
2. Now take another small plastic bottle, cut it in half and place it upside down above the first plastic bottle.
3. Put some soil in the plastic bottle.
4. Take any plant stem, preferably Tulsi or Pudina, and place these items into the holes of the first bottle. Ensure that the bottom part of the stem is inside the bottle.
5. You need to regularly water the soil. You can also sprinkle some water on the stems.
6. Now your plastic bottle is ready as a pot to grow your herbs and shrubs.

## Peepal Baba Says

Peepal Baba is on his evening walk, Rinku is playing in his garden

Wow, that's a squirrel and so many birds. And there is a butterfly and that a bug, so many animals! But how?

The more the trees, the more animals there are!

I never thought of it this way, can you tell more?

The quality of soil improves with more trees and then more birds, butterflies, bugs, earthworms, etc call trees their home!

Ohh so now I get it! The more varieties of trees I plant, the more varieties of animals I get to meet!

I am going to plant more Peepal, Neem, Sheesham, Jamun, Gulmohar and Dhak saplings. This is how a forest is created.

## A journey from Hunting to Conservation

Dr Salim Ali was the first ornithologist to conduct systematic studies of birds in India. Salim Ali was born on 12 November 1896 in Mumbai. He was orphaned at a young age and was raised by his maternal uncle. As a child, Salim Ali and his brother often indulged in hunting birds with air guns.

Once on their hunting expedition, he shot down a unique kind of sparrow. To enquire and learn more about the bird, they went to the Bombay Natural Historical Society and discovered it was a lesser-known 'yellow patch sparrow'. This experience was remorseful for him and he decided to dedicate his life to the study and advocacy of birds.

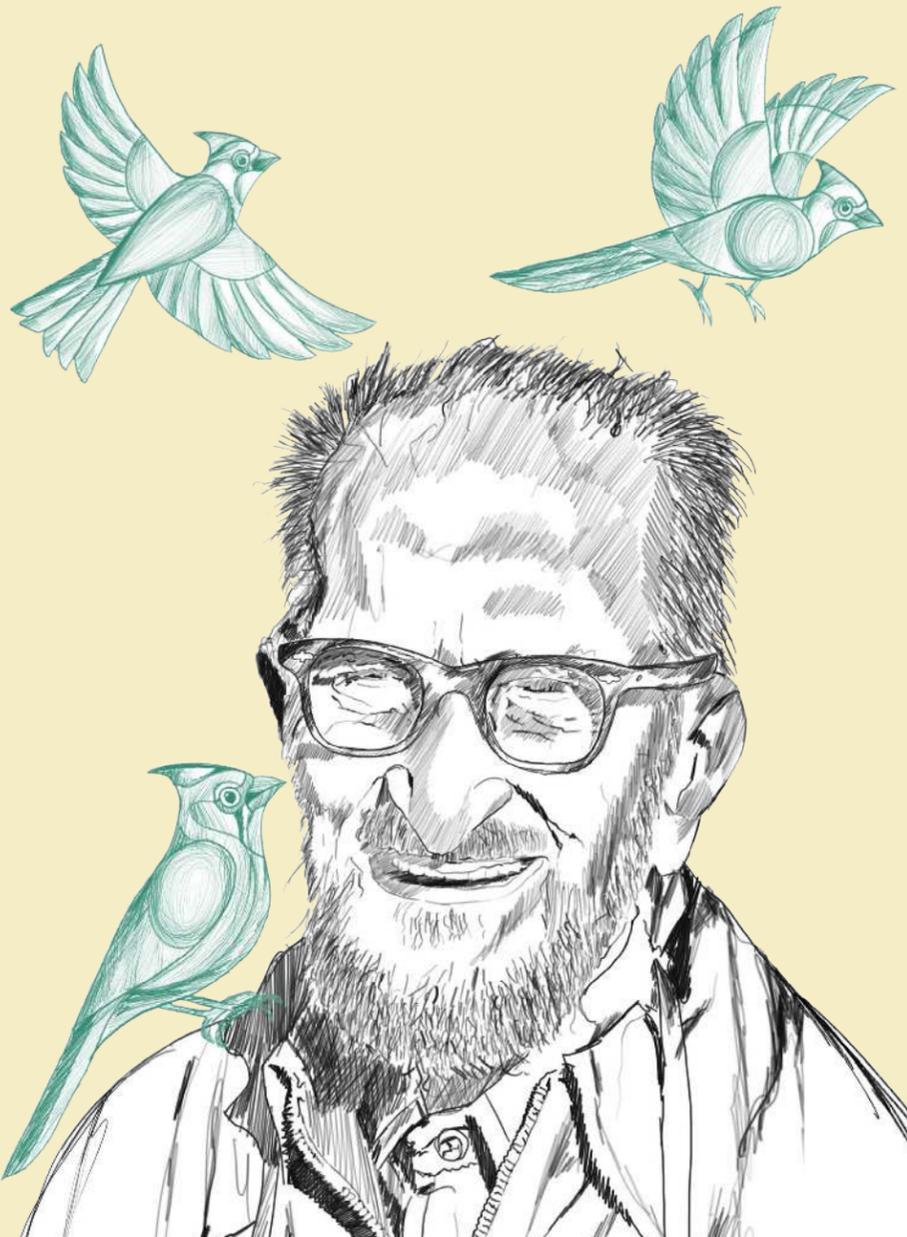
### Remembering Dr. Salim Ali on his 125th birth anniversary

In his autobiography 'The Fall of the Sparrow', he has described more such fascinating stories in detail. In post-independent India, he contributed in saving various bird species from extinction and discovered new bird species in South Asia. Dr Salim Ali was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1958 and the Padma Vibhushan in 1976 by the Government of India for his contribution to ornithology and Indian zoological sciences.

He surveyed various species of birds extensively and wrote detailed books on their habits and habitats in the undivided pre-independence British India.

Dr. Ali co-authored the 'Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan' on the study of birds of India and Pakistan with the American ornithologist Sydney Ripley. The book remains a fascinating guide for bird enthusiasts and scientists.

Dr Ali also worked as an ornithologist and environmental advisor with former Prime Ministers of India, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi.



### Green Yatra's initiative 'Green School'



Green Yatra's initiative 'Green School Program' primarily focuses on environmental issues and they use creative ways to spread awareness within school students. Green Yatra's initiative extends beyond the coursework of the school and tries to address practical problems related to the environment and helps in sensitising them.

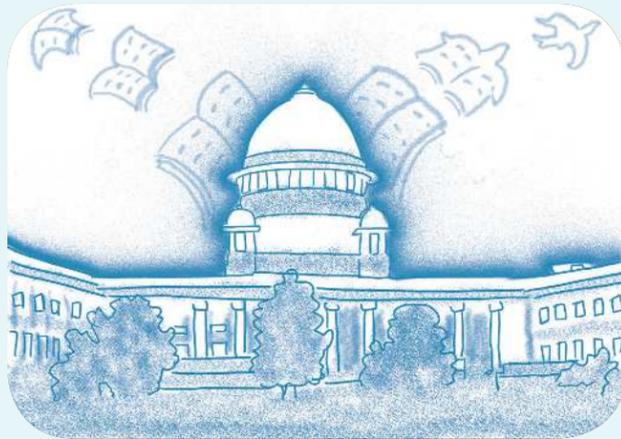
Under this initiative, tree plantation programs, cleanliness drives, workshops on recycling are organised and environment-related cinema is also screened. Their program 'Sustainable Green School Model' trains students to plant and maintain vegetation by establishing parks and herbal gardens in the backyard. With the help of this novel initiative for schools, Green Yatra has interacted and engaged with more than 50 lakh students.

### The role of Supreme Court in Environmental Education

In November 1991, advocate M.C. Mehta filed a 'Public Interest Litigation' or 'PIL' in the Supreme Court of India on the concerns of environment, pollution and community participation.

In the Indian Constitution, Article 21 ensures 'Right to Life' as a fundamental right of the citizens, but in order to ensure 'Right to Life' it is important that our environment is clean and livable. He believed that to fight pollution and conserve the environment, awareness among people on such issues is necessary.

M.C. Mehta's PIL also requested the court to make environmental education compulsory. On the issue of including environmental education in the school syllabi, the Supreme Court asked for written opinions from 28 state governments in 2003 and subsequently passed the order to make it compulsory. In 2004-05, CBSE and NCERT were ordered to submit a detailed environmental education model before the court for implementation. As a result of these events, our schools included environmental education as a compulsory subject.



### Swachh Sarvekshan Report-2021

Under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, the central government initiated the 'Swachh Sarvekshan Puraskar' in 2016. Through the award, the Government of India is trying to encourage and connect cities and states with cleanliness.

**India's Cleanest City** - Madhya Pradesh's Indore city has secured the first position in the category 'Population more than 10 lakhs'. Indore has received this award for the fifth time in a row. In this category, Surat ranked second, while Vijayawada third. Navi Mumbai and Pune ranked fourth and fifth respectively.

In the category of 'Population between 1 - 10 lakh', New Delhi Municipal Corporation has won first place, while Noida is at the fourth position.

**India's Cleanest State** - There are two different categories for India's cleanest state. The first is states with 'more than 100 urban local bodies' and the second is states with 'less than 100 urban local bodies'. Under the first category, Chattisgarh bagged the first position, while Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh were the first and second runner ups respectively. Jharkhand won India's Cleanest State award in the 'less than 100 urban local bodies' category.

#### About the publication

HCL Foundation and World Comics India's collaborative initiative 'Harit Khabar' is a monthly newspaper that aims to educate people on environmental issues and challenges and raise community participation towards the cause of the environment.

This publication has been launched to provide a platform to various partner organizations working in collaboration with the HCL Foundation's distinct flagship programme HCL Harit - The Green Initiative to showcase their work and accomplishments and also to create a network between them.

Through Harit Khabar we aim to stir meaningful debates on critical issues concerning our environment and ecosystem, accessibility to environmental education and public participation in decision-making processes in the country.

#### About HCL Foundation

HCL Technologies implements its Corporate Social Responsibility agenda through its CSR arm, the HCL Foundation. Various flagship programs and special initiatives of the Foundation endeavor to contribute toward national and international development goals, bringing about lasting positive impact on people and the planet through long-term sustainable programs.

#### About World Comics India

Advancing Grassroots Comics as an alternate tool of communication to local communities, World Comics India has been continuously working for the past 20 years. Many successful mass campaigns have also been organized using this medium of communication.

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