



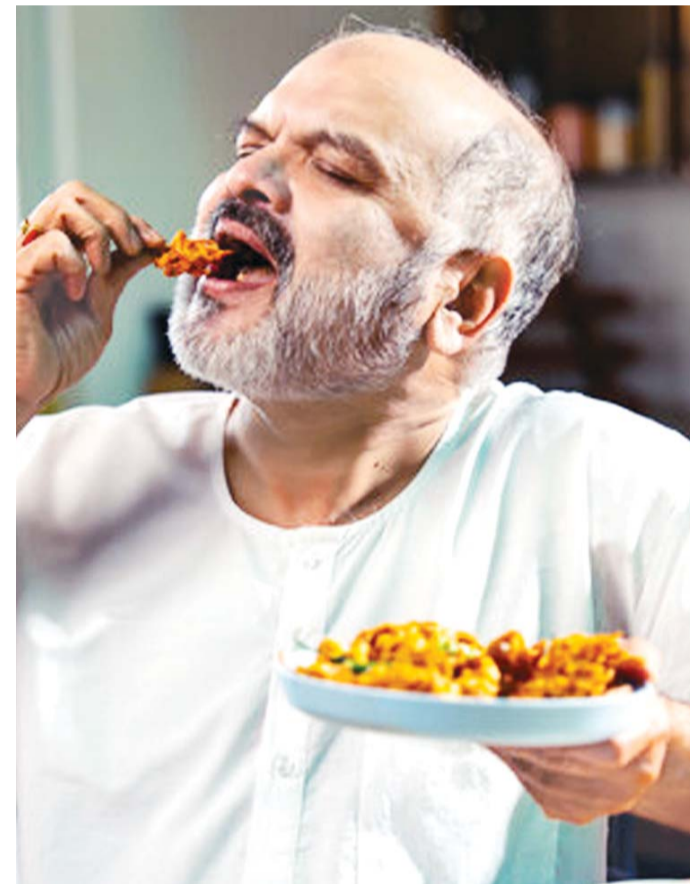
International Tea Day: Celebrating the World's Favourite Brew

International Tea Day, observed on May 21, honours one of the world's most beloved beverages and the millions of people who grow, harvest, and serve it. From morning routines to evening conversations, tea connects cultures and traditions across continents. The day highlights the importance of sustainable tea production, fair trade practices, and the livelihoods of small farmers who form the backbone of the industry. It also encourages tea lovers to explore diverse varieties, from green and black to herbal infusions, while appreciating the health benefits and comforting ritual that a simple cup of tea brings to everyday life.

#AMBITIONS

Being a grandfather is truly wonderful!

Hot foods like onion pakodas, rice cakes, tempura, soup, tofu, grilled sausage, radish cake, and more. And no one stops him (as long as he doesn't eat too much)



Breaking News: Children have finally discovered the most wonderful job in the world... being a grandfather!

A small child was asked at school to write an essay on: "My Aspirations."

He wrote -

- "I don't want to become a President,
- I don't want to become a Doctor,
- I don't want to become a Scientist,
- None of these!
- My future ambition is - to become a grandfather!"

Because being a grandfather is something truly great!

- Because my grandfather:
 - Can wake up late in the morning,
 - Can take an afternoon nap,
 - Can watch TV in the evening and sleep early,
 - No summer assignments,
 - No tuition either,
 - If there's nothing to do, he can sit under a tree and enjoy the breeze,
 - Or go to the park and play chess with someone.
- He can play video games as long as he wants, no one complains!

Coffee in the morning, Tea in the afternoon, Wine at night, living happily like a king.

Free travel on buses, And if lucky, someone even offers a seat.

High-speed trains and movies, half price!

He can eat whatever he feels like- Hot foods like onion pakodas, rice cakes, tempura, soup, tofu, grilled sausage, radish cake, and more.

Cold treats like tofu pudding, shaved ice, papaya milk, ice cream, jelly, pudding, mung bean jelly, cheese.

And no one stops him (as long as he doesn't eat too much).

He can do whatever he likes- Sing, dance, paint, play the piano or trumpet, go mountaineering, or trekking!

And if he has money in his pocket, he can even travel around the world!

Being a grandfather is truly wonderful!

Inspiration: Grandfathers themselves may not even realize how happy they really are! Heartfelt greetings to all the grandfathers and grandmothers!

Being a Grandfather is the ultimate dream job!"

The Librarian Who Risked Life To Save His Books



Timbuktu's rich history as a hub of Islamic scholarship dates back to medieval times, when traders, scholars, and students from across Africa and the Middle East flocked to study in its libraries and madrasas. Over centuries, families in the city collected tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands, of handwritten texts covering topics you wouldn't expect in the desert: mathematics, philosophy, law, medicine, poetry, and more.

• Kshema Jatuhkarna

When people picture heroes, librarians don't usually make the list, but maybe, they should. In 2012, as extremists closed in on the ancient city of Timbuktu, one librarian made a quiet, dangerous decision: the city's priceless books would not be lost on his watch. What followed was a real-life story of courage, secrecy, and determination, as centuries-old manuscripts were smuggled out under the noses of armed militants.

Timbuktu: A Legendary City of Scholarship

What most people don't know is that for centuries, Timbuktu was also one of the greatest centers of learning in the world, home to an astonishing collection of ancient manuscripts, on everything from astronomy and medicine to law, poetry, and theology.

And the reason so many of those priceless texts still exist today, despite being threatened with destruction by extremists, is because of one extraordinary man: Abdel Kader Haidara, the librarian and manuscript-guardian whose courage and ingenuity helped save hundreds of thousands of books that might otherwise have been lost forever. Timbuktu's rich history as a hub of Islamic scholarship dates

back to medieval times, when traders, scholars, and students from across Africa and the Middle East flocked to study in its libraries and madrasas. Over centuries, families in the city collected tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands, of handwritten texts covering topics you wouldn't expect in the desert: mathematics, philosophy, law, medicine, poetry, and more.

The Mamma Haidara Commemorative Library is a private manuscript library in Timbuktu, Mali. Founded by Abdel Kader Haidara in 2000 and named in honour of his father, the library preserves one of the oldest and largest private manuscript collections in Timbuktu, with about 22,000 items.

The library houses a collection founded in the 16th century by Mohamed El Mawlid. After the sack of Timbuktu by Moroccan soldiers in 1591, El Mawlid's descendants in the Haidara family kept their manuscripts in relative safety within the family home, as did other scholarly households in Timbuktu.

During the 20th century, Mamma Haidara collected other Malian manuscripts and bought manuscripts in Egypt and Sudan. He had also helped collect over 2,500 historic manuscripts for the Ahmed Baba Institute before his death. A judge, scholar, and teacher, Mamma Haidara amassed a large and historic personal collection of books and manuscripts over his lifetime. By his death in 1981, he had built cooperative relationships with

#TIMBUKTU'S ANCIENT BOOKS



Abdel Kader Haidara.

other manuscript libraries to promote the research, conservation, and exchange of manuscripts throughout Mali.

These manuscripts were precious records of Africa's intellectual and cultural heritage, so significant, in fact, that many scholars compare their importance to other globally treasured archives. But unlike many great repositories elsewhere, Timbuktu's manuscripts weren't all stored in a grand museum. Instead, they belonged to families, private libraries, and community institutions, passed down through generations.

Enter the Librarian: Abdel Kader Haidara

Imagine being the person responsible for protecting hundreds of thousands of priceless artifacts while armed extremists take over your city. That was the reality facing

Abdel Kader Haidara, a tall, thoughtful man born and raised in Timbuktu, whose life was shaped by its written history.

As the owner of the largest private manuscript collection in town and founder of the heritage organization SAVAMA (Sauvegarde et valorisation des manuscrits pour la défense de la culture islamique), Haidara was essentially the chief caretaker of one of Africa's richest cultural legacies. In April of that year, returning from a business trip, he found Timbuktu under the control of a thousand Islamic extremists.

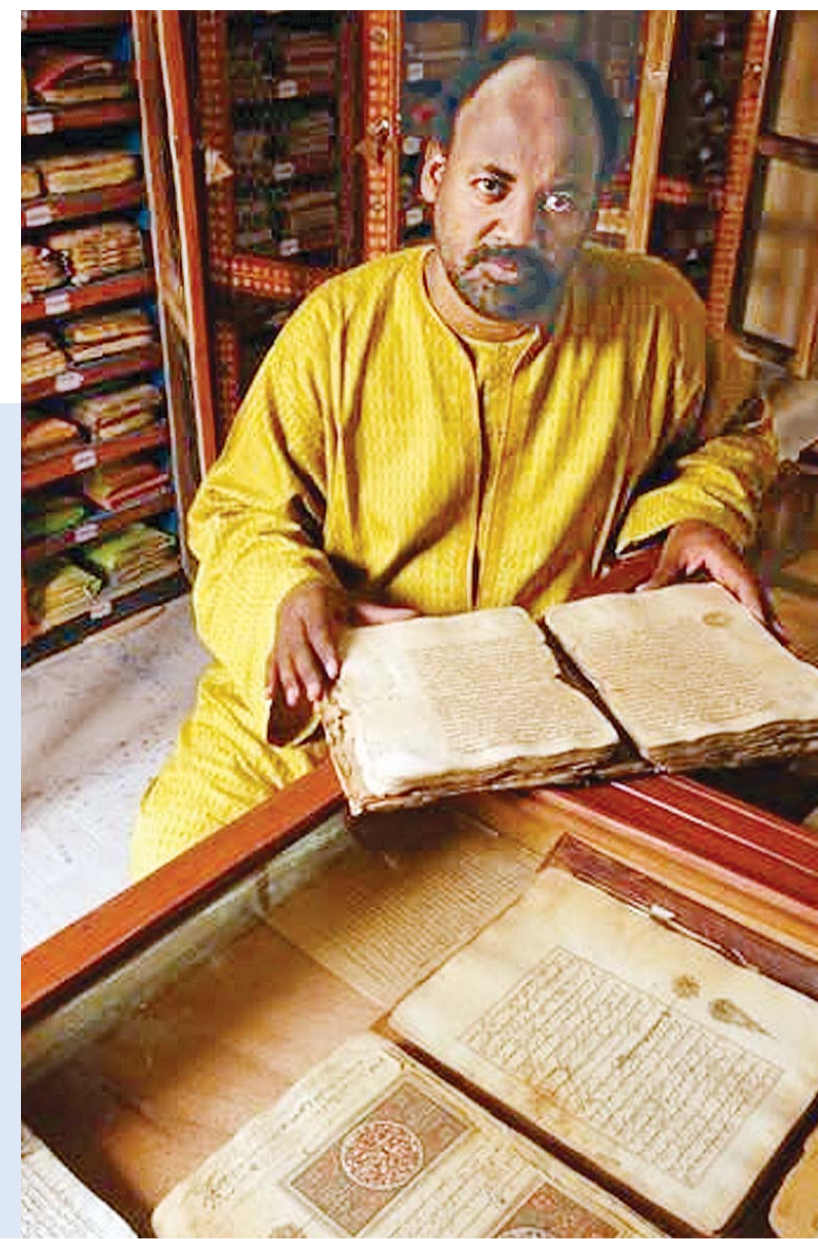
When jihadist fighters marched into Timbuktu, Haidara didn't flee immediately like many others. Instead, he stayed, quietly organizing a plan that seemed almost fantastical: evacuate the manuscripts before they could be destroyed. In 2012, together with his colleagues, he organized the rescue of more

than 350 thousand ancient manuscripts of Islamic culture from the iconoclastic violence of the fundamentalist Jihadist militias.

He began by moving the manuscripts from public libraries into the homes of families who had traditionally preserved texts. It was slow, secretive work, done under the cover of daybreak and dusk. The manuscripts were packed into metal trunks and hidden throughout the city, a risky strategy that relied on stealth and trust.

Smuggling the Manuscripts Out of Town

With the manuscripts tucked away safely in private houses, Haidara and his allies realized that they needed to move them out of Timbuktu entirely and fast. The extremists had already burned some texts and made it clear that Sharia law would not tolerate treas-



ures like these. What followed was a true logistical feat, almost unbelievable in its daring.

Teams of couriers, including Haidara's own nephew and volunteers from families with manuscript collections, began smuggling boxes of manuscripts out of the city, often by night, concealed under blankets or in metal trunks. These weren't slick covert ops: manuscripts traveled by donkey cart, on pushcarts, hidden under car seats, and even on canoes down the Niger River. Every checkpoint manned by militants was a threat; every journey could spell disaster.

The plan had three major phases

1. Move the manuscripts into safe-houses within Timbuktu. This allowed them to avoid immediate threats from fighters scanning the libraries.
2. Smuggle the manuscripts past checkpoints and across long distances to Bamako, Mali's capital. This meant navigating desert roads, rivers, and the constant danger of encounter with militants.
3. Once the north became a full war zone, traditional road travel became nearly impossible, so the rescue operation shifted to water transport down the Niger River: a slower, more circuitous but safer route to freedom. Despite all odds, this team of

librarians and volunteers pulled it off. By the end of the mission, estimates suggest that more than 350,000 ancient manuscripts, nearly the entire archive, had made it safely to Bamako, far from the grasp of jihadists. Only a few thousand were lost to burning or looting.

Heroism in the Shadows

What makes Haidara's story so remarkable isn't just the scale of the operation, it's the calm courage with which he and his allies conducted it. These were books, after all, not weapons, not treasure in the everyday sense, but ideas. They risked their lives to protect knowledge because they understood what it meant to humanity: to history, to the heritage of West Africa and the world.

As Haidara himself once implied, losing those manuscripts would have meant erasing centuries of intellectual life, a loss not just for Mali, but for all of us. Despite Haiara's efforts, in January 2013, the Al Qaeda militia set fire to the Ahmed Baba Institute in Timbuktu, which kept almost 100,000 manuscripts. Shortly after, the French army intervened in the northern of Mali to quell the conflict: the Islamists had destroyed 4,000 manuscripts, a small percentage if you consider that in total the city housed almost 400 thousand before 2012.

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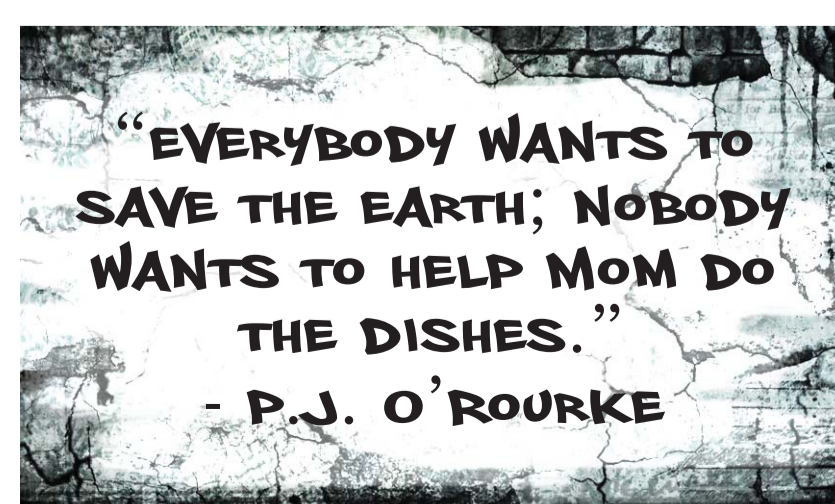
By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

THE WALL



BABY BLUES

