

#BEAT THE HEAT

Greening the Heat: A Summer Call to Plant and Protect

This 'Plant Something Day,' turn up the shade and turn down the heat by planting resilient greens that thrive in the Indian summer.



As India sizzles under the intense heat of summer, with mercury levels often soaring beyond 45°C in many parts of the country, the idea of stepping outdoors may seem unappealing. But what if we told you that one small step taken in this heat could cool not just your surroundings, but the planet too?

Plant Something Day, observed annually on May 19, is more than just a reminder to get our hands dirty, it's a call to action. And in the Indian context, this day could not have come at a better time. With rising tempera-



tures, depleting green cover, and increasing pollution, planting something today is a timely investment in a cooler, greener tomorrow.

Why Plant Now?

Indian summers, though harsh, are also ideal for kickstarting plant growth, especially if you choose heat-resilient native species. Trees and plants act as natural air conditioners. A single healthy tree can transpire up to 400 litres of water per day, significantly cooling the air around it. In urban jungles,

where concrete traps heat, greenery offers much-needed respite. Moreover, planting in early summer ensures that saplings get established before the monsoon. Once rains arrive, these young plants receive a natural boost in growth, making May a strategic month to begin greening efforts.

Start Small, Think Big

You don't need a sprawling garden or farmland to participate in Plant Something Day. A small balcony, a sunny window sill, or even a roadside patch will do. Opt for low-maintenance, hardy plants that thrive in Indian summers—think neem, tulsi, aloe vera, hibiscus, curry leaf, lemongrass, or money plant. These are

not only resilient but also medicinal or functional in daily life. Community spaces such as schools, RWAs, and temples can also be excellent sites for mass plantation drives. Involving children and elders in planting activities helps instill a lifelong love for nature while fostering a sense of shared responsibility.

A Social and Environmental Movement

Across India, many citizen-led initiatives are already making a mark. Take the example of the 'Miyawaki forests' being developed in several Indian cities, where tiny plots of urban land are transformed

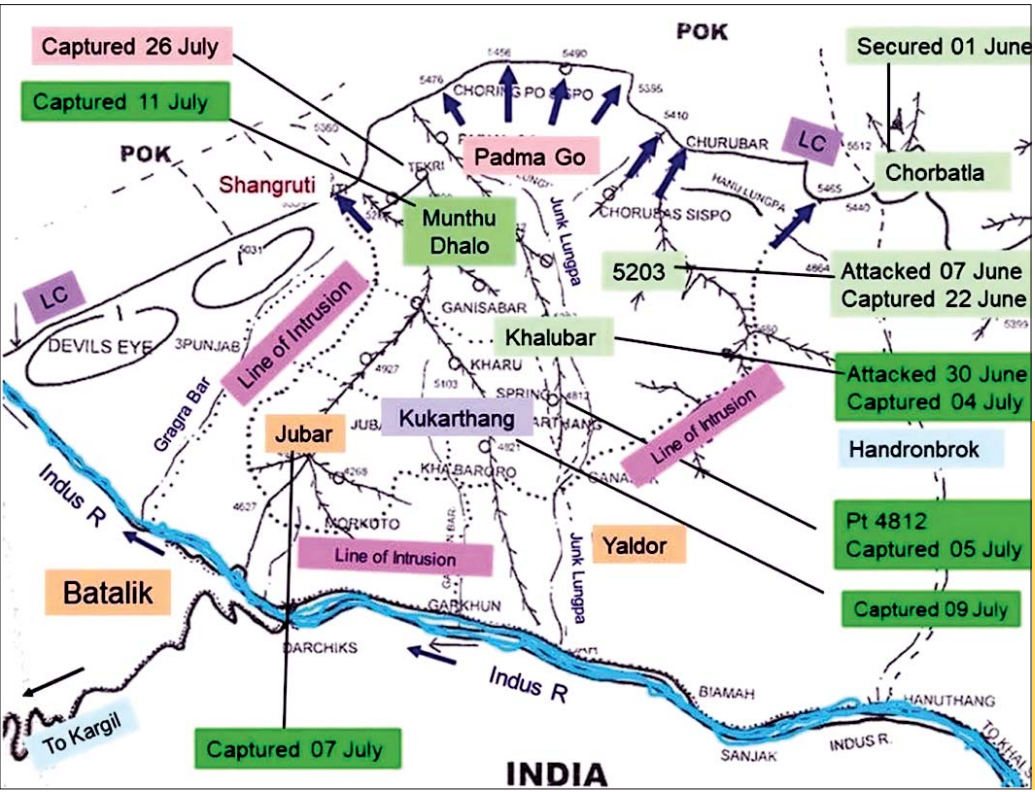
into dense, native forests. Or the women in Rajasthan's arid zones who plant trees to combat desertification. Every sapling planted is a statement of resistance against climate change, deforestation, and urban apathy.

Be a Part of the Green Revolution

This Plant Something Day, go beyond symbolic gestures. Commit to nurturing what you plant. Use recycled containers, compost your kitchen waste, and conserve water through drip irrigation or mulching. Share your planting story on social media

and inspire others to do the same. Let's make the harsh Indian summer a season of green beginnings. After all, planting a seed is not just about growing a plant, it's about sowing hope. So, this May 19, step out, dig in, and root for a better future.

Tip: Don't forget to water your saplings in the early morning or late evening to protect them from heat stress!



Anusha Mishra

India and Pakistan witnessed one of the most tragic transfers of population in the year 1947. The dispute between these two nations was born out of the territorial divide that took place during Partition. Since then, the illegal occupation of Indian territory by Pakistan has seen more than seven decades of bloodshed. The history of violence and political unrest in the state of Jammu and Kashmir has claimed a number of lives. Since Independence, Indian and Pakistan have fought four wars, 1947-48, 1965, 1971 and 1999, and in addition, Pakistan has waged a proxy war in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The Kargil War of 1999 came as a betrayal by Pakistan after nearly a decade of peace and cordiality. And in an attempt to occupy Kashmir by strength, armed personnel of Pakistan's army infiltrated the Line of Control (LoC) in May 1999. The first information of the intrusion was given by a local shepherd in the Kargil Sector on 03 May, 1999. It was a breach of the Tashkent Agreement signed by India and Pakistan in 1966. Despite India's belief in a peaceful resolution of conflict, India had to choose the route of fighting a full-fledged war in 1999. To protect the territorial integrity of India, Indian Army soon launched Operation Vijay in response to enemy aggression.

The War lasted for a span of approximately two months in which the Tri-Services emerged victorious on 26 July 1999. But, as it is often said that the Wars come at a cost, the Kargil War didn't just come as an economic drain to India, it also cost us a number of lives of our gallant Indian soldiers. This was the war in which India lost the largest number of its young commanding officers. The battles fought during the

OPERATIONS IN BATALIK SUB-SECTOR

In the Batalik Sub-Sector, the LoC cuts across the Indus River between Batalik and Marol. The soldiers of Pakistan's Northern Light Infantry (NLI) had penetrated around 8 to 10 kms from the LoC to an unheld area in the East of Batalik and West of the Chorbati La. Headquarters of 70 Infantry Brigade under Brigadier Devinder Singh was inducted into the Kargil Sector on 08 May, 1999 to take charge of Batalik Sub-Sector and ensure that the enemy did not extend the intrusion to dominate the Leh- Batalik-Kargil Road. Four ridgelines namely Jubar, Kukarhang, Khalubar and Point 5203, Churubur Po (Southwards along Chorbati La watershed), varying in heights from 15,000 feet to 16,800 feet, were occupied by Pakistani soldiers. The slopes were extremely steep with sharp spined and jagged peaks. On 09 May, 12 JAK LI was inducted into the Sector to recapture Point 5203. On 20 June, 12 JAK LI, along with a Company of 5 PARA and two Companies of Ladakh Scouts, recaptured Point 5203. Following the recapture of Point 5203 in the Batalik Sector, the next objective was Khalubar. 1/11 GORKHA RIFLES was deployed to recapture Khalubar Top on 02 July, 1999. With just a handful of soldiers, 1/11 GORKHA RIFLES captured the Khalubar Top.

Kargil war are examples of High-Altitude warfare in which Indian soldiers set a new benchmark as regards valor and sacrifice. It has been twenty-five years since the war, and over the years, sense of both pride and pain has intertwined itself beautifully to remember Kargil War as a victory that defied all odds.



105mm IFG gun crews, prepare for another round of shelling at the Batalik Sector at Kargil in 1999.

The Battle Of Khalubar Top

Through the months of May and June, the Battalion participated in operations aimed at the degradation of the enemy's defences at Jubar and Churubur Sispo and some notable successes had been achieved. 1/11 GORKHA RIFLES, less two Companies, moved forward from their firm base at Yaldor to a forward assembly area at the foot of Point 4812 during the day on 02 July, 1999. On the night of 02-03 July, 1999, the Gorkhas began the gruelling seven hour climb up the precipitous slopes of the Khalubar mountain. 'B' Company under Major C Correya and 'C' Company under Major Ajai Tomar defied the enemy's murderous fire and trudged uphill.



#KARGIL



Officers & Jawans of the 1/11 GORKHA RIFLES with captured weapons of the Pakistan Army after the capture of Jubar Top.

THE BATTLE TO SECURE KHALUBAR TOP

Among the battles which were fought in Batalik Sector during Op Vijay, the recapture of Khalubar Top remains one of the key victories in the Sub-Sector. The Khalubar Ridgeline dominates the Batalik Area. The Jubar Complex is to its left and Point 5203 to its right in the Chorbati La Area, close to the LOC. The highest feature is Point 5287 (approximately 16,000 feet), with Point 4812 in its vicinity towards the South. The enemy had occupied Kalubhar Ridgeline and it was important to evict the enemy to reclaim the lost territory. This ridgeline dominated the area up to Junk Lungpa in the East, Gragrio Nala in the West, the Kukarhang feature to its South West and Munthu Dhalo, the administrative base of the enemy, to its North West.



The Route to Khalubar Top.

The enemy's induction route and supply lines passed through Munthu Dhalo. Hence, Khalubar was the hub of the enemy defences in the Batalik Sector. Accordingly, HQ 70 Infantry Brigade made plans for its early capture by launching simultaneous attacks from Junk Lungpa at several positions on this long ridgeline. In the north, Ladakh Scouts under Lieutenant Colonel Chandio, Wing Commander, Indus Wing, were tasked to capture Point 5000, Stangba and Padma Go. In the centre, 22 GRENADIERS was given the task of establishing lodgements astride Point 5287, to be subsequently enlarged by 1/11 GORKHA RIFLES. The idea was

the reserve Battalion commanded by Colonel Lalit Rai, just had a major success having completed a professionally rewarding field tenure, including a stint in Kashmir Valley (where Lieutenant Puneet Nath Dutt had been posthumously awarded the Ashok Chakra and an eventful tenure at Siachen Glacier). 1/11 GORKHA RIFLES was in the process of moving from Ladakh to a peace station when the call came for duty in Operation Vijay. The Gorkhas were inducted into the Batalik Sub-Sector on 09 May, 1999 and took part in the initial operations of 70 Infantry Brigade to contain the Pakistani intruders by securing the Yaldor axis. The

Honouring a Legacy: Malcolm X Day



bserved on May 19, Malcolm X Day commemorates the life and legacy of Malcolm X, a powerful voice for Black empowerment and civil rights in America. Born Malcolm Little in 1925, he rose from hardship to become a revolutionary leader who challenged racial injustice with boldness and intellect. Known for his advocacy for Black pride, self-determination, and human rights, Malcolm X's influence extends far beyond borders. On this day, communities reflect on his contributions, his transformation, and the ongoing struggle for equality. His legacy remains a symbol of resistance, awakening, and the relentless fight for justice.



#FACT-CHECKING

Not the Last Word

From WhatsApp forwards to political claims, AI chatbots can assist, but not replace, real fact-checking. Here's why Indian users need to tread with caution.

In a digital age overflowing with information, and misinformation, AI chatbots have become our go-to virtual assistants. From answering school queries to breaking down government schemes, they've entered our chats, classrooms, and even courtrooms. But one thing, they shouldn't be trusted with blindly. Fact-checking. With the rise of generative AI tools like ChatGPT, Bard, and Gemini, many users assume that these bots can settle factual disputes just as well as a trained journalist or researcher. That's a dangerous myth, especially in a country like India, where misinformation spreads like wildfire across platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook. Here's a closer look at why AI chatbots, no matter how smart they sound, should not be treated as reliable fact-checkers.



1. They Don't Access Real-Time Information

AI chatbots operate based on the data they were trained on, which usually comes with a cutoff date. For example, an AI tool trained on data only up to 2023 won't know about events that occurred after that point, like a new government policy, a recent election outcome, or an emerging

scam. So, if you ask, 'Did the RBI recently ban 2,000 notes again?' you might get an outdated or speculative response if the chatbot hasn't been updated. In contrast, fact-checking agencies and journalists actively track and verify real-time developments using official sources.

2. AI May 'Hallucinate' Facts

In AI terminology, 'hallucination' means when the system confidently provides an answer that sounds right but is entirely made up. For instance, if you ask an AI chatbot about a new medical study or Supreme Court verdict, it might invent fake citations or misquote a judgment just to fulfill

the request. This issue becomes dangerous when users rely on these outputs in sensitive contexts, such as news reporting, political debates, or legal arguments. In India, where misinformation has even led to mob violence, these hallucinations can have very real consequences.

3. Lack of Source Transparency

Unlike fact-checking websites like Alt News, BOOM Live, or Factly, which provide links, screenshots, and source details, most AI chatbots do not offer source citations by default. You're left taking their word at face value. For Indian users trying to

verify claims about a political leader's statement or a viral video clip, this becomes problematic. You can't cross-verify what the chatbot is telling you, especially when it comes to regional languages and local content, which AI often struggles with.

4. AI Can't Interpret Cultural and Contextual Nuances

India's diverse linguistic and socio-political landscape poses a unique challenge to AI. Chatbots often misinterpret cultural references, idioms, or even sarcasm in regional content. A statement in Hindi or Tamil may be translated literally, stripped of its local nuance. Imagine fact-

checking a satirical meme from Kerala or a political jibe in Bhojpuri. AI may miss the context entirely, leading to flawed conclusions. Real human fact-checkers, familiar with local culture and languages, can better understand what's true, what's a joke, and what's manipulative.

5. They Can Be Manipulated or Biased

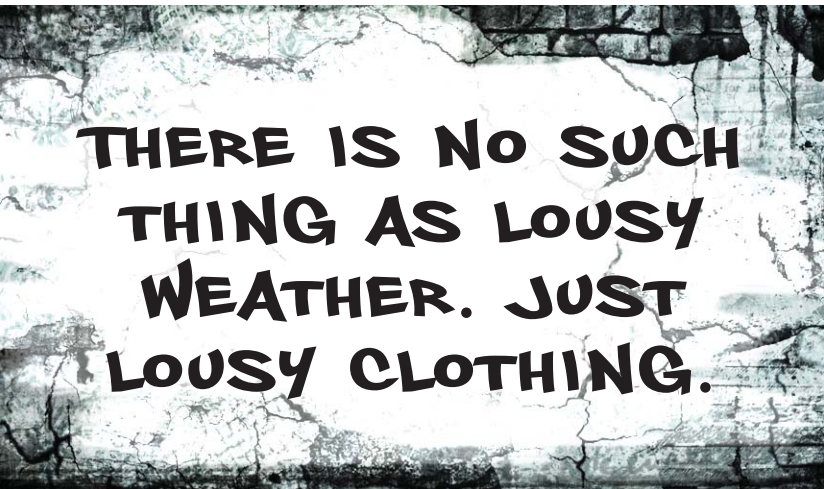
AI models are only as good as the data they are trained on. If that data includes biased, incorrect, or skewed content, the outputs can reflect those same issues. Worse, if an AI model is fine-tuned to favour certain narratives, whether political, social, or religious, it may subtly push misleading information. In India's polarised media climate, this risk is even greater. Fact-checking must remain neutral, transparent, and evidence-driven, qualities that AI chatbots cannot guarantee.



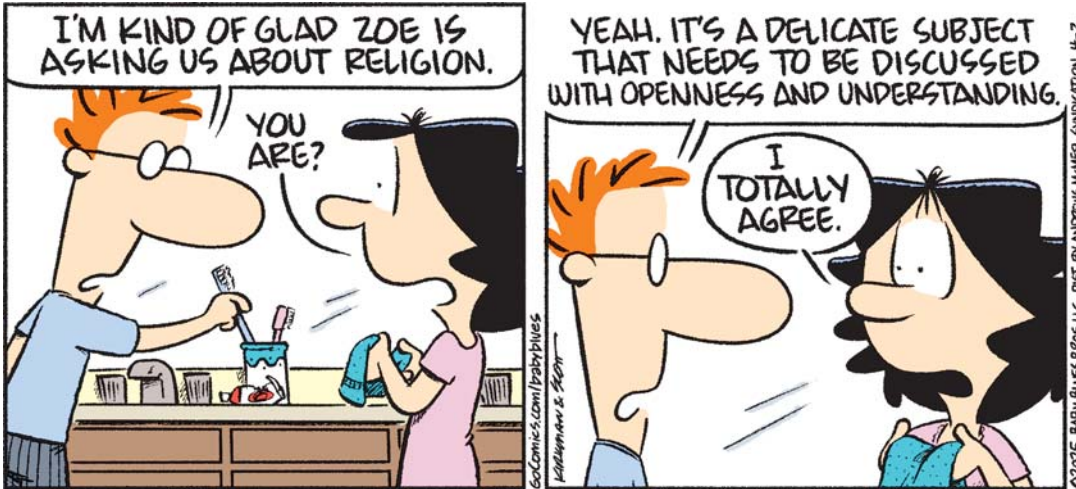
So, What Should You Do Instead?

- Use Reputable Indian Fact-Checking Sites:** Refer to platforms like Alt News, Factly, Newschecker, and BOOM, which are certified by the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN).
- Verify Before Sharing:** That viral video of a politician slapping a voter or a supposed government 'ban' might be clipped, edited, or simply false. Always verify with official sources or trusted journalists.
- Understand the Role of AI:** Use AI chatbots for basic information, grammar help, or summarising complex topics. Don't rely on them as truth-verifyers.
- Ask for Sources:** If using an AI chatbot, ask it to cite sources, but still double-check them manually. AI chatbots are brilliant tools, but they're still tools. They don't have judgment, ethics, or the ability to distinguish between propaganda and truth. In India, where information can be weaponised during elections or communal events, placing blind trust in AI outputs can be more harmful than helpful. So, the next time someone forwards a 'breaking news' alert on your family WhatsApp group, don't turn to an AI chatbot for the truth. Turn to verified facts, and maybe, just maybe, that one friend who always asks: 'Source, please?'

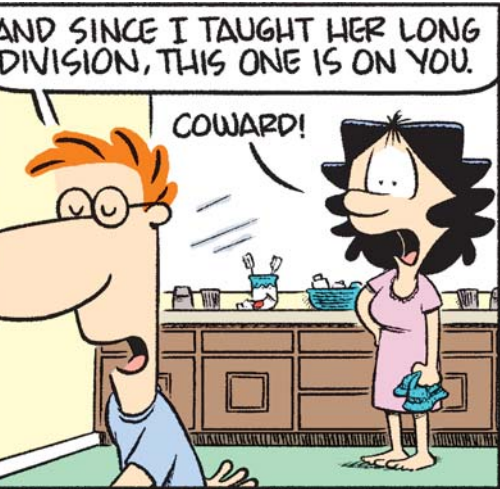
THE WALL



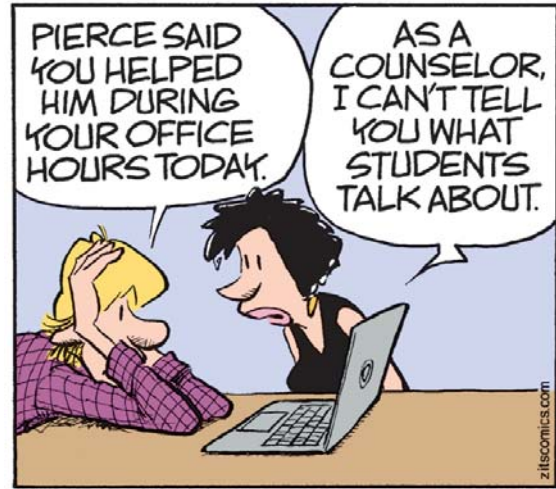
BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

