



World Pneumonia Day

First established in 2009, World Pneumonia Day was founded by The Global Coalition Against Child Pneumonia. Pneumonia acts as the single largest infectious killer of both children and adults with at least 2.5 million people each year succumbing to it. In fact, pneumonia is the world's leading killer of children under the age of five years old. World Pneumonia Day offers the opportunity for people to get educated, raise awareness and fight for the needs of the children who are getting ill and dying from a preventable disease.

#CELEBRATION

50 YEARS OF RAMBAGH PALACE

Rambagh Palace in Jaipur recently celebrated its 50-year legacy with a grand event. The evening featured a regal welcome, a high-tea hosted by HSBC India, and a cultural showcase highlighting Rajasthan's rich heritage. A fashion show displayed designs by renowned Indian designers. The event also showcased Rambagh's culinary excellence with a lavish seven-course dinner, making it a night of glamour, culture, and gastronomy.



Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, MD & CEO IHCL, Maharaj Vijit Singh, Maharaj Jai Singh, Mr. Hitenra Dave, CEO HSBC India.



Tusharika Singh
Freelance writer and city blogger

The iconic Rambagh Palace, Jaipur recently recognised as the Number One hotel in the world by TripAdvisor, celebrated 50 glorious years of its custodianship by The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL).

A royal arrival replete with vintage cars, rose petal showers and ceremonial welcome rituals set the stage for a truly immersive evening. A special welcome high-tea for key patrons, hosted by Hitenra Dave, CEO, HSBC India was held at the historic Suvarna Mahal, once a grand dining hall with its walls covered in damask, high ceilings replete with Italian frescos, Victorian chandeliers, gilded mirrors and Florentine frescos.

The evening began with a mega cultural showcase by Meha Jha of the acclaimed Mudra Academy with over 70 talented performing artists and dancers at the iconic Chandni Chowk. A confluence of music, dance and tradition, the artists showcased the rich heritage and culture of Rajasthan through Kalbela folk dance, classical Kathak dance from the famed Jaipur Gharana, Nagada performance, among various other genres. The finale brought all dancers and artists together from all the varied genres, creating an extraordinary cultural spectacle that was lauded by all guests.

At the front lawns of the palace, against the resplendent facade, an exquisite fashion showcase was presented, continuing the Rambagh's timeless tradition of spot-lighting glamour and glory at all its sparkling soirees. The spectacular show was curated



Shilpi Chamber Choir Performs at the Rambagh Palace, Jaipur (1).



Shifting homes is more than just shifting luggage and furniture. It is also about moving from your own haven into an uncharted territory and creating a new life.

From a house to a home



#SHIFTING!!



Shailaza Singh
Published author, poet and a YouTuber

Why aren't you writing?" asked my editor. "You were supposed to submit an article a few days back. What happened?"

I shrugged my shoulders. "I have just shifted homes. I have still not been able to arrange my house!"

"Shifted homes? You told me that you had hired movers and packers for the job? Haven't they done it?"

I gave up. How do I tell people that movers and packers are more or less like an avalanche descending on your home? That they simply carry cartons and dump everything that they can find in a room in a carton and truck it to your new home and dump the carton there? How do I tell them that that shifting homes is not just about shifting the beds, tables and sofas? It is also about undoing everything in a home, rubbing everything that you have written in an entire exercise book and then getting a new exercise book and writing it all over again?

Moving homes

I am not new to shifting homes. I am an army officer's daughter. I have constantly shifted homes, shifted schools, left old friends, made new ones. So, going to a new place, settling down, meeting new people, making new friends; I have been there and done that.

Army life

But then, may be that was a different era. I remember whenever my father used to get his posting orders, the first person who used to get the most hassled was my mom. "What? Another posting? We just came here last to last year!" was her typical response. We children had mixed feelings. On one hand we were sad to say good bye to our friends (even making friends in a new school takes time. The first three months you test the waters, the next three months you start trusting each other. It is in the second year that you actually become good friends and by that time it is time to say goodbye) but on the other hand there was this excitement about going to a new place, meeting new people. The best part of the shifting out was that mostly the teachers in the new school won't know anything about you, so have a chance to create a fresh impression unlike those students who study in the same school year after year and their teachers and peers never let them grow out of their initial image.

To get back to the posting matters, after the news of the posting,



my mother used to get busy getting the steel and iron trunks repainted and ready for the packing. The process used to last for at least a couple of months. We used to get jawns from the unit (we used to call them bhajya). They were my mother's most trusted team. The instructions were clear. They used to start with the drawing rooms, then the bedrooms and the kitchen was packed at last. Everyday we used to come back from school to a flurry of activity in the house. Someone wrapping crystal ware in old newspapers (there wasn't a bubble wrap then), someone folding the quilts or packing up the chairs or other furniture. But they were never in a hurry. Even if they were, they had no choice but to work as per my mother's dictates.

Everyone in my father's regiment used to know about the posting. As children, my brother and I also made it a point to inform everyone because that meant getting boxes of delicious lunches, dinners and breakfasts cooked by wives of my father's colleagues (aunts and uncles). On the last day, when we would board the train, my father's colleagues and junior officers would come to the railway station to see us off armed with bouquets, lunch boxes and goodies. We would happily enjoy these scrumptious meals

Untangle tangle

So, after a whirlwind packing marathon where the movers and packers simply dumped everything including my very life in boxes and carried them to my new home, I found myself staring at the empty walls, almirahs and the furniture had gone. Why is it so easy to undo something or pack a house? It hardly takes a day but when you want to set up a home, it takes months and years. Looking at the bare walls my daughter remarked, "This entire year that we lived here seems like a dream. Who would ever know that we once lived in this house?"

More than the shifting out, I was dreading the shifting into the new home. When I reached the house, the movers and packers had dumped those boxes in every available space in the rooms, the hallway and even the balconies. Though they had unpacked the sofa and the fridge, it was virtually impossible to sit on the sofa or open the fridge because there was a barricade of boxes between us and those two. Moving from one room to another was like moving through a very complicated obstacle course. Move a box here, shift this rack there, place your foot here and then jump there. I won-

dered if I would ever be able to arrange everything. When my dad visited my house, he looked around and sighed, "It will take you some time. I will come back then." I pulled out a stool from the deluge and requested him to sit. But he declined and said, "No, let me come back once you are settled."

Peekabo

Shifting homes is almost like peeking into yourself. Maybe it is lot like spring cleaning or detoxing or unwittingly participating in a massive search drive. When you open a carton, it is like entering the pensieve (a magical device used to dive into memories) in a Harry Potter movie. Every object brings back a memory like my old clothes bring back memories of a slimmer me or my mother's old medals or trophies or photographs which make me realize how time has flown by. Sometimes, you enter the land of lost things. You find things, gadgets and even clothes that you had given up for lost in the past. There is also the issue of decluttering. Things which you had forgotten about, could do without and yet you hoard them because of some sentimental value. In this aspect, I asked my new maid to help. She is a no-nonsense person who believes in throwing everything that you don't need. When I would linger over an item, she would say, "Kya karna hai iska, bekar hai. Fek do. Ab uska koi kaam nahin. Aur aa jayenge." (What do you

want to do with this? Throw it. It is useless. You will get more). We first unpacked the kitchen because I could no longer handle the acidity of the tiffins or Swiggy and Zomato. Simple rice and dal became the meal of the day and in a cluttered home that meal was heaven!

Unpacking life

In the army, unpacking was a breeze. We had people unpacking and arranging things for us. More than that, most of the times, the houses we shifted into had huge outhouses and garages where we could store the unopened trunks, boxes and more. In a flat, it is quite different. There are no places to dump what you don't need. One can either keep or throw or give it away because there is a dearth of storage. I thought of looking up decluttering specialists. Maybe they could help me to deal with the clutter. But when I checked out the website, the cost of the whole affair was Rs. 14000! I dropped the idea and realized that I could gift my self that money if I could declutter and arrange my new home at the same time!

Slowly but steadily, the jungle of cartons is clearing and I can finally get a glimpse of the order in the chaos. Converting a home into a house is easy but it does take long to convert a house into a home. I am getting there... step by step!

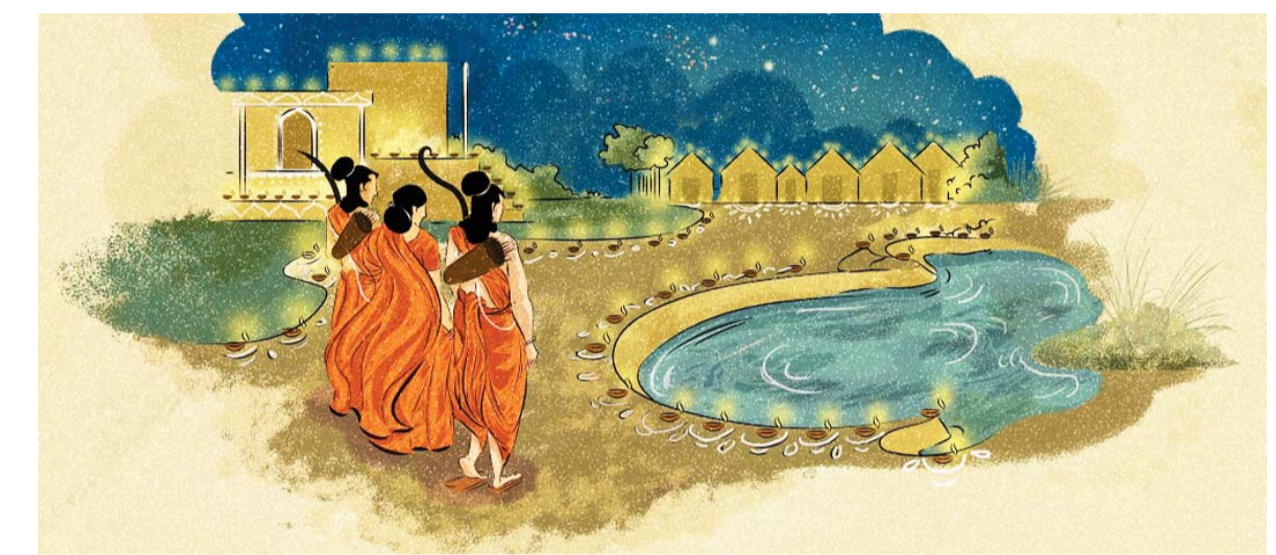
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#CULTURE

The Many Legends Of Diwali

Some of the festival's most commonly narrated stories



As you might expect of a holiday steeped in over 2,500 years of history, the legends and stories associated with Diwali are vast and varied. Today Diwali is celebrated as the largest festival of the year in India and has also spread by way of the Indian diaspora to be celebrated in countries across the globe.

Something that is not commonly known overseas about Diwali, though, is that this is not just a Hindu holiday, but is also observed within Jainism and Sikhism, two of the other major religions in India.

While the precise historical origins of Diwali are difficult to trace, some of the festival's most commonly narrated stories, arising from the deep mythology of the Indian subcontinent, may help shed light on the rich internal diversity nature of the festival.

Diwali in Ramayana

The Return of Lord Rama and his Wife

The most prominent legend associated with Diwali is that of Rama's return to Ayodhya according to the Ramayana. As legend has it, Rama was exiled from the kingdom of Ayodhya for 14 years, along with his brother Lakshman and wife Sita. The three lived happily together in the forest along a riverbank until one day Sita was kidnapped by the demon king Ravana.

Rama searched the land for some time in pursuit of Sita until he finally found her, defeating Ravana and bringing her back to his side. Rama and his companions then returned to Ayodhya to reclaim the throne which was rightfully his and were greeted joyously by all.

Diwali celebrates the return of Rama to Ayodhya as a narrative of the victory of good over evil, and the day of the festival is said to coincide with Rama's triumphant return after defeating the demon king Ravana.

The Rebirth of Lakshmi

Lakshmi, the goddess of fortune, is the most prominent goddess associated with Diwali, and thus her story is one that has particular significance to the festival. As the story goes, through a display of arrogance, the god Indra once provoked



holds that Narakasura was blessed by Brahma with the power that he could only die by the hand of his mother, whom Narakasura believed would never kill him due to her deep love for him. His mother, however, was born again as Krishna's wife Satyabhama, who, upon seeing Narakasura wound her husband Krishna in battle, delivered the fatal blow. In dying, Narakasura requested that no one mourn his death, and instead celebrate with life and color, as we see take place every year during the Diwali festival.

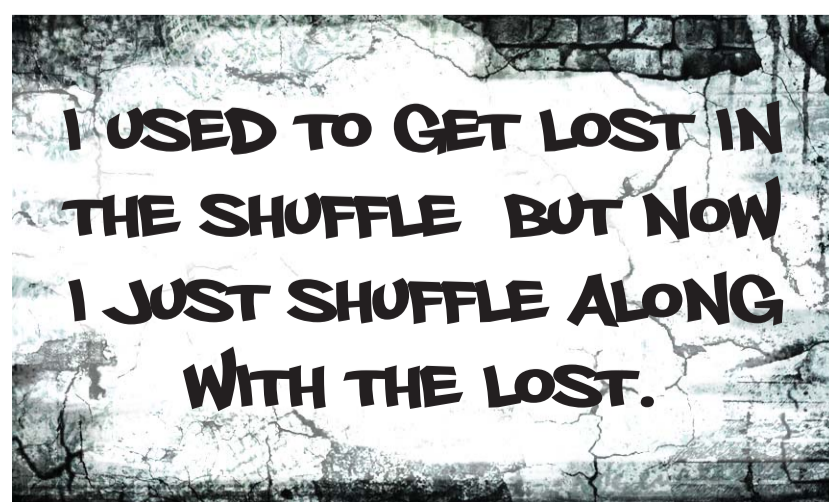
The Legend of King Bali

The fourth day of Diwali, Bali Pratipada, is celebrated in honor of the beloved King Bali's return to earth.

Legend holds that the powerful King Bali, who ruled over the netherworld, earth, and heavens, became so feared by the gods that they sent Vishnu to dispose of him. Vishnu took the form of a dwarf and appear before Bali, beseeching that he be granted control of all the land which he could cover in 3 paces. Because of the dwarf's small stature, Bali granted this request unhesitatingly, and it was then that Vishnu grew to enormous proportions, covered all Bali's kingdom in two paces, and with the third pace stomped him down into the netherworld.

Because of his noble nature, however, Vishnu granted Bali the right to return to earth for one day each year, and it is thus that Bali is celebrated during Diwali alongside other legendary figures.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman