

#REJECTIONS TO REVOLUTION

The Rise of Jack Ma and Alibaba

Failure is not the opposite of success, it is often the foundation of it



Born into a modest family in China, Jack Ma did not begin life with privilege or promise. His early years were marked by struggle, and his path to success was anything but smooth. Academically, he faced repeated setbacks, failing his university entrance exams not once, but twice. Where many would have given up, he persisted, eventually earning admission, though his challenges were far from over. After graduating, Ma entered the job market with hope, only to face rejection after rejection. He applied to around 30 different jobs and was turned down by every single one. Even positions that seemed within reach, like becoming a police officer or working at a fast-food chain, slipped through his fingers. In one widely cited example, when a global fast-food chain opened in his city, nearly everyone who applied was hired, except him. His ambitions to study abroad also met disappointment. He applied to Harvard University multiple times and was rejected on each occasion. By most conventional standards, his record looked like a series of failures. But Jack Ma's story did not end there, it began there. He ventured into entrepreneurship, starting his first company, which failed. Undeterred, he launched a second venture, only to see it collapse as well. At one point,



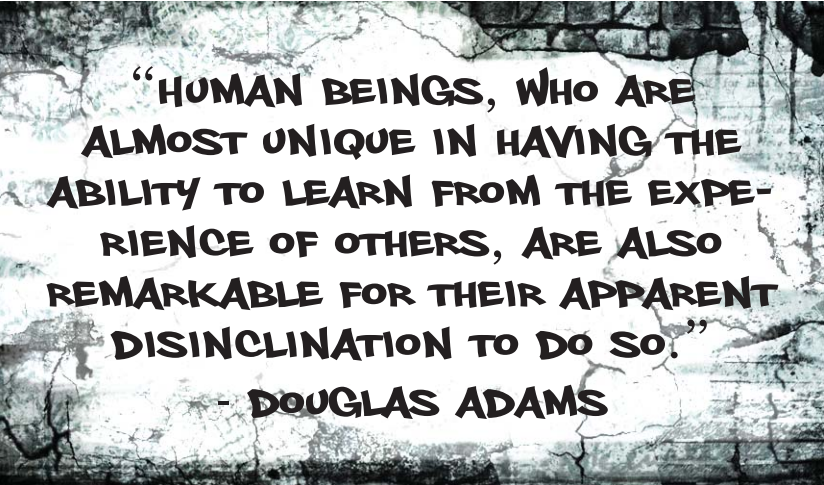
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The important question pending, had to be asked, what do you now do for a living, since displaying snakes is outlawed. It was a tough one I know. The living conditions were telling their own miserable tale. They are not included in any kind of government relief programs, as they are not educated or organised. "Our samaj vyavastha is in shambles, so how can we go to sarkari offices to fight for our rights, which also have to be paid for by greasing hands, which we are incapable of, since we don't have the money or the clout for it."

Earlier, we used to earn money on Shivratni or Navganchmi, when people look for sapers to do their pooja. Nowadays, we do this pooja as ordained by our Guru, by ourselves every year, without any monetary help from other people." The worst that has happened to them is the loss of dignity. If caught with a snake in a public place, they will be fined, although the sum may look a puny amount to us, for them, it's the difference between a dal with the roti or none. The fine is two hundred and fifty one rupees each time. "We are not thieves. My great grand-father, Ruga Nath ji, was appointed by Maharaja Mansingh ji as a Saper for the Amer Fort. I have photo of his to show you. You see, we are respectable people, but our poverty has closed all doors for



THE WALL



The Kalbelia Is No More Respectable...

The Saper is no more respectable, even to himself. He either hides away from official eyes or takes on another kind of job. They now dance, for the tourists or at public functions, like 'Gulabo.' Some are good at it, some not, but their self pride does take a beating, as some Kalbelias tell. "We have to shift from our traditional jobs to do this, but we make sure our women are not touched by people." This sentence alone can break any sensitive human being's heart and I hope the pseudo do-gooders to our civilized, new existence have their eyes open to this slaughter that has successfully taken place.

#GONE TO 'GREEN'

"Snake charmers," a chromolithograph by Alfred Brehm

The early 20th century proved something of a golden age for snake charmers. Governments promoted the practice to draw tourism, and snake charmers were often sent overseas to perform at cultural festivals and for private patrons. In addition, the charmers provided a valuable source of snake venom for creating antivenins. Today, cultural changes are threatening the profession of the snake charmer in India. One reason for this is the rise of cable television; nature documentaries have extinguished much of the fear and revulsion once felt towards the animals and thus demystified the snake charmer. In addition, many people have less spare time than they once did, especially children, who, in previous decades, could watch a

charmer all day with no commitments to school. Animal-rights groups have also made an impact by deerring what they deem to be the abuse of a number of endangered species. Another factor is urbanisation and deforestation, which have made the snakes, upon which the charmers rely, increasingly rare. This has in turn given rise to the single most important reason snake charming is declining, at least in India: It is no longer legal. India passed the Wildlife Protection Act in 1972. The law originally aimed at preventing the export of snakeskin, introducing a seven-year prison term for owning or selling of the creatures. Beginning in the late 1990s, however, animal-rights groups convinced the government to enforce the law with

Myths

Several myths are prevalent about snakes, their behavior, dietary habits, habitats, etc. among the tribal, rural and even in urban masses of Rajasthan. Tribal people relate the snakes so much with themselves that they consider some snakes good and some snakes bad. For example, Pityas mucosus is the totemic snake of the Bhurias which is a clan of the tribe Bhil. Similarly, Python molurus is considered an esteemed serpent by the Bhils. Similarly, another snake species, Xenochrophis piscator, locally called as Dindu, is considered as ancestor of the Dindor clans of Bhil; hence their name Dindor, i.e. off-springs of Dindu. Bhil and Garasia tribes also conserve the snake Python molurus as they think that killing of the snake will cause drought in that year. Indian Python (Python molurus) likes proximity of water, so Bhil and Garasia tribals protect the species believing that it brings rain. Moreover, statues of cobra

are also worshiped by the tribals and non-tribals and victims of snake bites are brought to these places where Bhopas (local healers) treat the patients. A snake temple, locally known as Gataodi ka Devra situated in remote areas of Rajasthan, is used as lie detector. There are several primary beliefs/practices associated with snake bite incidences. There are some sacred places in the remote areas of Rajasthan, locally known as Devra. Some Devras are especially dedicated to treat snake bite patients. The important among them are Gogaji, Tejaji (mostly situated in the western part of the Rajasthan) and Devnarayanji (situated in the central Rajasthan). In most instances, snake doctoring practices/lore are highly guarded secrets, due to the belief that loss of secrecy, and of medicine results in the loss of potency of medicine. Moreover, this secrecy also protects and elevates the status of the practitioners.

money from the various medicines he can make out of this venom. The snakes captured by the sapers are always, as a kind of religious duty released in the wild once their venom storing glands are about to

fill up again. There is a very practical reason too for the sapers to let the snakes go, he is able to extract the precious venom from the snake only if there is one living. Never is it in his interest, neither religiously nor practically, to kill the dreaded reptile. While performing this very useful function for society and for snakes, the only concessions that the sapers seeks from authority is that the snake charmer be regulated and that he be permitted to display the collection of snakes in his 'custody' to the public at large to earn a livelihood, and some respect as the tamer of the untamable. He asks for the two indulgences only to eke out a living.

But the busybodies, the animal rights activists, will have none of it. The moment they hear of a snake-charmer at work in his tradition, they are up in arms. All hell breaks loose and the Forest Department is wily nilly made to intervene and penalise the delinquent, earning some publicity, and, questionably, some piety. They are blind to any rational and humanitarian arguments that, if translated into positive action, they could provide succour to both the hunted and the hunter, the prey and the predator and help preserve the traditions of the sapers as well, the ancient and venerable folklore that is peculiarly Indian and once upon a time defined India, the land of the snake-charmer. With the now lost snake



charmer, some of India's mystery is also lost to the world. No more are we a land of the rope trick, the madari, or the snake charmer. These professional animal trainers can no more educate our children about these beings of the earth; they are no more accessible to the close viewing of our growing children to learn any kind of coexistence, healthcare, or respect about this slaughter that has successfully taken place. They would again argue that the thing to do is to re-educate these poor people to fit into other jobs. To what end one may ask. To help protect the snake? But when was it in danger? Not while the snake charmer needed it alive to milk some venom from to help cure some hapless fellow bitten by one. Nor when the people revere it like a God to be left to go away when seen. Possibly not even then, when a couple of them are seen at close quarters within the safe company of a Kalbelia, demystifying some of the fears of common public. Concluded.

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#SMARTPHONES

No Dependency!!

Viral Video claims Rajasthan villagers smashed Smartphones, switched back to Keypad phones



A viral video circulating on social media claims to show a group of villagers in Rajasthan smashing their smartphones with bricks and stones in a symbolic rejection of what they described as growing smartphone addiction. The footage shows dozens of shattered mobile phones scattered across the ground, with smoke appearing to rise from some of the damaged devices. According to posts accompanying the video, villagers gathered in an open area before collectively destroying their smartphones and pledging to return to basic keypad phones for everyday communication.

Supporters of the reported move have described it as a bold stand against excessive screen time, arguing that smartphones have become an unhealthy dependency that affects productivity, family relationships, and mental well-being. Others, however, have questioned the practicality of abandoning smartphones in an increasingly digital world, where mobile devices are widely used for banking, education, healthcare, government services, online payments, and access to essential information. The video has triggered widespread debate online, with users divided over whether the reported action represents a meaningful protest against digital addiction or an unrealistic response to a complex social issue. However, the claims surrounding the video remain unverified. The exact location, date, and circumstances of the incident have not been independently confirmed, and there is currently no official statement establishing that the event took place as described. As a result, the authority of the video's accompanying narrative remains uncertain. The viral claims nevertheless echo earlier controversies in Rajasthan over mobile phone use. In 2025, a panchayat decision in Jalore district drew national attention after restricting the use of camera-enabled smartphones by daughters-in-law and young women across 15 villages, citing the need to preserve traditional social values. The move was widely criticized by activists and observers as discriminatory and regressive, raising concerns about its impact on women's empowerment, digital inclusion, and individual freedoms. The latest viral video has once again brought the broader conversation about technology, digital dependence, and community-led restrictions into the spotlight. While concerns about excessive smartphone use continue to grow worldwide, experts generally advocate balanced digital habits and responsible technology use rather than abandoning smartphones altogether. Until the video's claims are independently verified, it should be viewed as an unconfirmed social media report rather than a panning narrative remains



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By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

BABY BLUES



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

