

## National Cereal Day: A Crunchy Celebration Of A Breakfast Classic

National Cereal Day (7 March) celebrates one of the most loved and convenient breakfast staples across generations. From comforting childhood favourites to high-fibre, protein-rich bowls, cereals have evolved to suit changing tastes and health needs. Easy to prepare and endlessly customisable with fruits, nuts or milk alternatives, cereal remains a go-to choice for busy mornings. The day also highlights mindful choices, reading labels, watching sugar content and opting for whole grains. Whether enjoyed for breakfast, as a snack or even dessert, cereal continues to hold a special place on our tables.



## #IDENTITY

# Who Am I?

I built bungalows, raised farmhouses, invested in ventures big and small, yet now, I find myself bound within four simple walls



After retirement, with no job, no routine, and a quiet house echoing with silence... I finally began to discover my true self.

Who am I?

I built bungalows, raised farmhouses, invested in ventures big and small, yet now, I find myself bound within four simple walls.

From bicycle to moped, bike to car, I chased speed and style - but now, I walk slowly, alone, inside my room.

Nature smiled and asked, "Who are you, dear friend?" And I replied, "I am... just me."

I've seen states, countries, continents, but today, my journeys stretch only from the drawing room to the kitchen.

I learned about cultures and traditions, but now, I simply long to understand my own family.

Nature smiled again, "Who are you, dear friend?" And I said, "I am... just me."

Once I celebrated birthdays, engagements, weddings in grand style - but today, look forward to having slept well and feel hungry.

Nature asked once more, "Who are you, dear friend?" And I answered, "I am... just me."

Gold, silver, diamonds, pearls - sleep quietly in lockers.

Suits and blazers - hang untouched in wardrobes.

But now, I live in soft cotton, simple and free.

I once mastered English, French, Hindi, but now, I find comfort in talking in my mother tongue.

I travelled endlessly for work, and now, I reflect on those profits and losses - measured in memories.

I ran businesses, built many connections, but now, my dearest companion is the kind neighbour next door.

I once followed every rule, strived in education - but now I finally see what truly matters.

After all of life's highs and lows, in a quiet moment, my soul whispered back to me.

Enough now... Get ready, O Traveller... It's time to prepare for the final journey...

Nature smiled gently, "Who are you, dear friend?" And I replied: "O Nature, You are me... And I am you. Once I soared in the skies, Now I touch the earth with grace. Forgive me... Give me one more chance to live... Not as a money-making machine, But as a true human being - With values, With family, With love."

To all 'Seniors' out there; wishing you love, strength, and peace.



Members of the Sikh community pray at a gurdwara in Rosario de la Frontera, in the Argentine province of Salta.



Sikh women cook food at the Gurudwara Nanaksar in Rosario de la Frontera, in the Argentine province of Salta.

# Argentina Turned Out To Be A Nightmare

● Bulbul Joshi

In August 1912, Spanish co-workers attacked Sikh laborers working for the Argentine Hardwoods and Lands Company in Jujuy; one worker was shot, and the community faced ongoing hostility. Despite some possessing letters of recommendation from British officials in Punjab, Indian immigrants encountered discriminatory immigration policies designed to limit their entry. The story of this unhappy immigration saga begins much before in history. Immigration does happen to look for better life opportunities, that is true, but these Punjabi labourers were half hoodwinked, and half victims of Argentina's after thought. But Sikhs are a hardy and hard-working people, this is one of the best examples of their resilience, and commitment to life with hard work thrown in.

In the early 1900s, Argentina was among the wealthiest countries in the western hemisphere. Its economy was booming and, fuelled by foreign investment, its vast, fertile lands had made it a major exporter of livestock and agricultural produce. New industries sprang up, creating a demand for labour that European migrants alone could not meet.

Noticing how Indian workers were employed across the Caribbean, the authorities in Buenos Aires approached their representative in India to explore the possibility of encouraging migration from the subcontinent.

In a letter dated February 13, 1911, the Argentine consul in

## #OUT OF HOMELAND



Vaisakhi in Salta, Argentina.



Sikhs in Argentina.

Calcutta wrote to Foreign Secretary Henry McMahon, requesting that Argentina be added to the list of countries Indians were permitted to emigrate to.

Promoting his country as a promising destination, the consul wrote, "It is because, with the aid of a kindly climate, and a fertile soil, the seed sown in our fields by the labourer gives a return of a thousand to one, and because domestic happiness and prosperity flourish under the aegis of an honest, wise and progressive government, which requires from its immigrants nothing except honesty and diligence."

With the letter, the consul enclosed a pamphlet outlining the 'laws and decrees' applicable to immigrants and investors.

The response in Calcutta was one of surprise. An internal memo noted that under the Indian

Emigration Act of 1908, the very law cited by the diplomat, a colonial committee was needed to assess a destination's annual labour demand and the facilities it offered.

"But the Committee considered the case of British colonies only," the memo observed, adding that "it might be questioned by some whether the settlement of Indians in a foreign country is equally desirable." To deal with this unusual case, the memo said, approval from the Secretary of State in London would also be necessary.

The memo went further: "It may be added that the Government of India do not regard with favour any proposals for the extension of emigration to foreign countries. The objection is not so much on the score of obtaining good laws as of getting them well administered in the interests of the Indian immigrant." Suriname, where 'coolies' were said to be treated well, was listed as the only 'foreign' country suitable for Indian migration.

Calcutta informed the consul that the matter would have to be taken up between the British and Argentine governments, though this was hardly the end of the issue.

**Dashed dreams**

Despite official discouragement, word spread in Punjab of the abundant opportunities supposedly awaiting agricultural and industrial labourers in Argentina. Much like in the 21st century, families sold land and pooled resources to send young men on the long journey to South America.

But these emigrants arrived with little idea of the difficulties ahead. Whatever enthusiasm the consul in Calcutta had expressed,

Argentina was neither ready nor particularly willing to receive Indian workers.

Soon, British authorities began receiving reports of Sikhs ending up destitute in the country. Many turned up at the British consulate seeking help with employment, shelter or a passage back home.

One such group approached the consul in June 1912. "It is worthy of note that these men became reduced to destitution in consequence of the refusal of the Argentine government to recognise their claims to free board and travel accorded in the country to all labourers in search of work," the consul wrote to the Indian foreign department. "The men appealed to the Consulate, but the difficulty of grappling with a large body of men branded as undesirable by the withdrawal of advantages offered in such alluring terms to all working hands irrespective of creed or nationality may be readily imagined."

The consulate, with support from the Salvation Army, created an Indian Relief Fund for these migrants who found themselves shunned by the authorities. In this instance, the consul secured jobs for the group with an Anglo-German sugar cultivation firm, later reporting satisfactory accounts of their conduct. Hearing of another group of 60 Sikhs on their way to Argentina, he prepared to find them work as well, but urged the Indian government to discourage any further migration.

Those who did manage to navigate Argentina's discriminatory bureaucracy faced hostility from some European settlers. In August 1912, Sikh labourers working for the Argentine Hardwoods and Lands

Company in Jujuy were attacked by Spanish co-workers. One Sikh was shot but survived. The attackers were arrested, and assurances given to the British consul, but racism remained a persistent challenge for Asians in the country.

**Land of fortune**

As complaints multiplied, the foreign department in India asked Punjab's authorities why Argentina had suddenly become a popular destination. In response, Punjab officials blamed a letter, purportedly written by one Carlos Pellegrini in Buenos Aires and published in 'The Tribune'. The letter laid out, in 'great detail', the supposed advantages of migration and encouraged Indians to come.

"Indians should come to Argentine Republic," Pellegrini wrote. "It is of no use of clerks who have been accustomed to comforts. Argentine Republic is known as peons' paradise. It is the farm labourers, agriculturalists and ordinary labourers that Argentina wants." He claimed the country could easily absorb another 100 million people and that there "would be plenty of land and food for all."

He insisted migrants could safely buy land and make a fortune. He also suggested there were many South Asians already in the country: "There is a considerable number of Cingalese jewellers here, who are doing good business. There are also a few Indian bazaars (opened by Sindhis of Hyderabad, Sind). These men, like the Marwarees, are very rich and doing good business in their own way by selling goods from three to four times their cost price including the duty and freight." A memo from a bureaucrat in the

In a letter dated February 13, 1911, the Argentine consul in Calcutta wrote to Foreign Secretary Henry McMahon, requesting that Argentina be added to the list of countries Indians were permitted to emigrate to. Promoting his country as a promising destination, the consul wrote, "It is because, with the aid of a kindly climate, and a fertile soil, the seed sown in our fields by the labourer gives a return of a thousand to one, and because domestic happiness and prosperity flourish under the aegis of an honest, wise and progressive government, which requires from its immigrants nothing except honesty and diligence."

"...from enquiries (they) appear to be going at their own risk on the advice of their friends who have already gone; they usually have a sum of money considerably in excess of the about required for their passage tickets and are willing to risk being prevented from landing in Buenos Aires."

Further investigation revealed that a recruiter from Lahore named Wali Mohammed as helping arrange the passage of the migrants. Many of them carried recommendation letters from British officials in Punjab, stating that they would make 'useful workers.' These officials said that they issued such letters only after checking with the Argentine consul in Calcutta, who, consistent with his earlier approach, assured them that Indian workers would be welcomed.

The Punjab authorities eventually stopped issuing these letters and tried to discourage further migration, but many men persisted. Some even attempted to reach Buenos Aires via Hong Kong and Shanghai. Argentina, however, remained unwelcoming.

Over the next few years, as grim reports returned to Punjab and disappointed migrants found their way home, the country lost its allure. Those who stayed behind eventually assimilated into Argentine society while preserving their religious traditions. Today, the Sikh community in the country numbers around 300 and maintains a gurdwara in the province of Salta. Argentina's political instability and uneven economic fortunes have kept it from becoming a major destination for Indians seeking better prospects.

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Sikh workers in Argentina.

## #TRADITIONS

# Some Weird Traditions

The Strange Side of History: Odd Facts You Probably Didn't Learn in School

History isn't just about wars, treaties, and royal successions, it's also filled with strange customs, bizarre traditions, and little-known facts that reveal just how different (and sometimes downright wild) life used to be. From the macabre to the artistic to the extravagant, here's a look at some of the most unusual and captivating historical facts you may have never heard before.

### 1. Victorian-Era Post-Mortem Photography: Smiling with the Dead

In the 17th through 19th centuries, especially during the Victorian era, it was common practice to take photographs with deceased loved ones. Known as post-mortem photography, these images were a way to memorialize the dead during a time when death was both more visible and more frequent due to disease and limited medical care.

The deceased were often posed to appear alive, sometimes seated with family members or propped up with the help of stands and wires. Eyes were painted onto closed eyelids, and in some cases, families dressed them in their best clothes. Though it may seem eerie today, these photos were cherished keepsakes, reminders of loved ones lost too soon.

### 2. Fox-Tossing: Europe's Forgotten Blood Sport

In 17th and 18th century Europe, the aristocracy indulged in a strange and brutal sport known as fox-tossing. In this event, live foxes (and occasionally other animals) were released into an enclosed arena, and participants, usually in pairs, would use slings to launch the animals into the air.

The goal was to toss the fox as high as possible, often resulting in injuries or death to the animals. Royal courts in Germany and Austria hosted lavish fox-tossing tournaments, turning cruelty into entertain-



ment. Today, the sport is rightfully condemned, but it stands as a reminder of how much our understanding of animal rights has evolved.

### 3. Execution by Elephant: Justice in Asia's Past

In parts of South and Southeast Asia, particularly in India and Sri Lanka, elephants were once used as instruments of execution. These highly intelligent animals were trained to crush, dismember, or otherwise kill prisoners in public displays of power and justice.

Known as 'Gunga Rao' executions in some regions, these acts were not only a form of punishment but also a demonstration of the ruler's control over both man and beast. Sometimes, the executions were quick; other times, they were drawn out for maximum fear and spectacle. The practice lasted for centuries before colonial influence brought it to an end in the 19th century.

### 4. Augustus: The Richest Man in History

When it comes to wealth, few in modern times can hold a candle to Gaius Octavius, better known

as Augustus Caesar, the first Emperor of Rome. At the height of his power, Augustus controlled an empire that made up 20-25% of the world's GDP, and much of that wealth was personally attributed to him.

According to some economic historians, his net worth in today's terms would exceed \$4 trillion, making him arguably the wealthiest human to have ever lived. His fortune came not from personal business ventures, but from owning vast portions of Roman land and directly controlling the state's wealth.

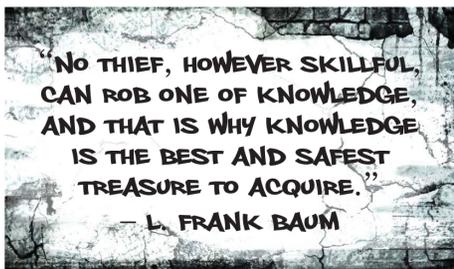
### 5. When the Olympics Had Art Competitions

Today the Olympic Games are all about physical prowess, but from 1912 to 1948, they also included competitions in the Fine Arts. That's right, painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, and music were once Olympic events. The idea came from Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics, who believed in celebrating both body and mind. Medals were awarded for works that were inspired by sport, and some entries were judged alongside athletic events. Ultimately, the art contests were dropped due to concerns over professionalism and judging criteria, but for nearly four decades, artists stood on the same podiums as athletes.

### History's Bizarre but True Moments

From photographing the dead to launching foxes into the air, from artistic Olympians to elephant-led executions, history is full of stories that defy belief, but are 100% real. These strange facts remind us that the past wasn't just different, it was often far more peculiar than we imagine. And sometimes, the oddest corners of history are the ones that teach us the most about human nature, culture, and change.

## THE WALL



## BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

## ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

