



Superhuman Day 2025

celebrated on September 7, Superhuman Day honours individuals who push beyond ordinary limits, inspiring others with resilience, determination, and extraordinary spirit. From athletes overcoming physical challenges to everyday heroes breaking barriers in science, arts, and society, the day is a reminder that 'superhuman' strength often comes from within. It encourages people to recognize their own potential, celebrate perseverance, and admire those who redefine boundaries of human ability. Observed worldwide, the day promotes positivity, empowerment, and a deeper appreciation for human courage and innovation that make ordinary lives truly extraordinary.

#INDIAN

Dungarees Dongri

The Global Fashion Staple with Indian Roots!



Today, dungarees, also known as overalls in some parts of the world, are a symbol of rugged workwear, retro fashion, and youthful rebellion. From fashion

runways in Paris to casual wardrobes in New York, they've become a timeless garment embraced by many cultures. But few realize that the name 'dungarees,' and perhaps the fabric itself, originated in India.

Origin in Dongri, India

The word *dungaree* is believed to have originated from Dongri, a dock-side village near Mumbai (formerly Bombay), India. During the British colonial era, this area was known for producing a coarse, durable cotton cloth. The fabric made in Dongri was called 'dungrī' by the locals, and it was used primarily for work wear by laborers due to its

toughness and affordability. When British merchants began trading with India in the 17th century, they exported this practical fabric back to Europe. Over time, 'dungrī' was anglicized to 'dungaree,' and the term cotton cloth. The fabric started to refer not just to the cloth, but also to garments made from it, particularly the functional, bibbed overalls we know today.

From Indian Workwear to Global Icon

Initially, dungarees were used as workwear in industrial settings, worn by miners, railroad workers, farmers, and mechanics due to their hard-wearing nature. The garment offered comfort, protection, and functionality, with large pockets and sturdy seams. In the United States, dungarees became synonymous with denim overalls, especially during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Brands like Levi's and OshKosh B'gosh popularized

them among American workers and, later, children's clothing lines. By the 20th century, dungarees had shed their purely utilitarian image and entered the realm of mainstream fashion. In the 1960s and 70s, they were embraced by counterculture youth movements as a symbol of rebellion and individuality. In the decades since, they've evolved into a fashionable, gender-neutral item worn across age groups and cultures.

India's Quiet Contribution to Global Fashion

The story of dungarees highlights a broader truth often overlooked: India's deep and lasting influence on global textile history. From muslin and calico to khadi and dungaree, Indian fabrics and weaving traditions have traveled across oceans, shaped economies, and

defined styles. In today's globalized fashion industry, where the origins of trends and textiles are often forgotten, it's worth remembering that what we wear often carries the legacy of places like Dongri, small, local communities whose craftsmanship changed the course of fashion history.



Myra Sethi

I've read all these dramatic texts/ watched all these dramatic movies about kids moving to middle school or city in general) for the first time, saying goodbye to their old friends, being overwhelmed by new

rules, teachers and classmates, and basically feeling like they don't belong anymore. I mean, I can sympathise with these people, but I can't quite understand how it feels.

Since I'm an Army brat, I've been to a lot of different places, lived in different conditions, and studied in different schools. In fact, my current (and probably last) school is the ninth school I have studied in. My time in these schools generally lasted between six months and two years (though, one of them lasted four years). All my life I've been trained to hop from one place to the next and I don't particularly remember missing any of my old schools.

Until... We left for Ladakh right after my sixth-grade exams in Delhi were over. I had lived in Jammu before and also lived in a hill station in Tamil Nadu, but neither of them had quite prepared me for those huge Himalayan mountains with whom we now lived. It was literally a whole new world, with an unusually blue day sky and amazingly black night sky, dotted with a million stars as I'd only seen in movies. The ground was almost never flat, the roads were never straight, and there wasn't much vegetation. It was an awesome place, even if we

had to eat an unusual amount of canned food and cup noodles before the cargo mountain passes opened in April.

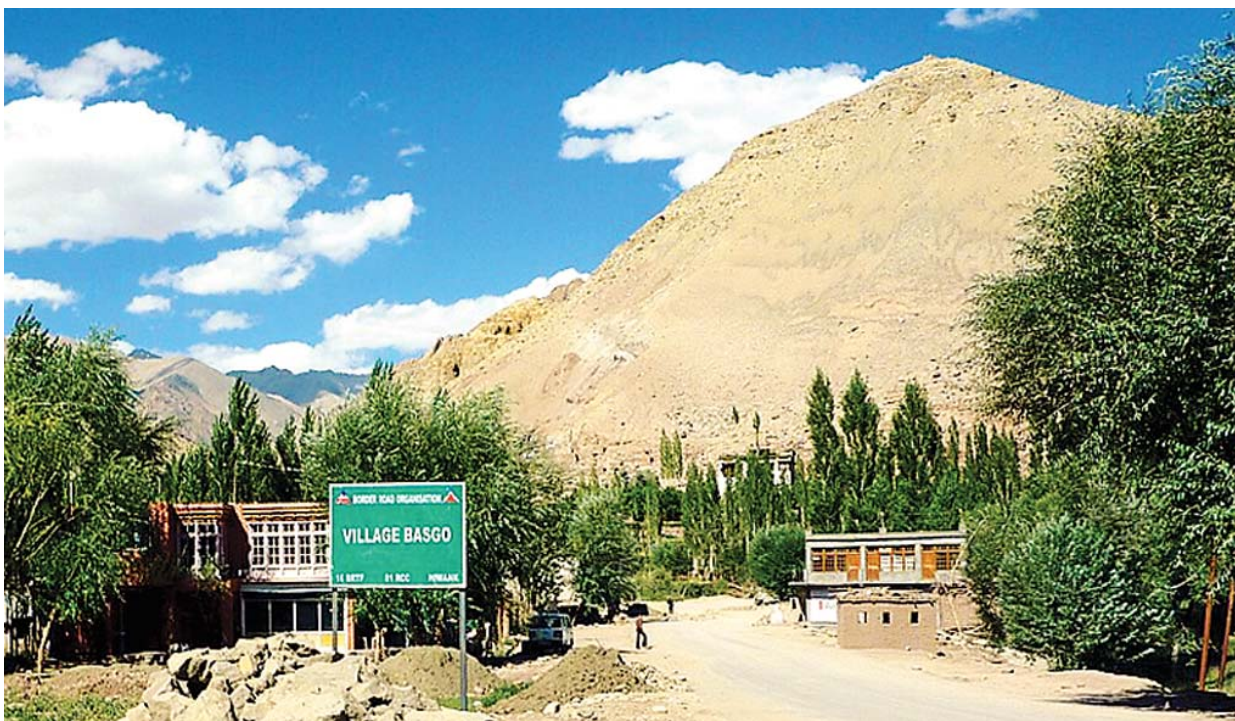
Our cantonment was located on the riverbank of Indus, in Nimu which was forty kilometres away from the main city Leh. And Leh was the only place in Ladakh which had reputed schools like Delhi Public School and Army Public School. If we were to enroll in any of those, we would have to travel for one hour to reach school and another hour to come back.

Instead, my sister and I, along with a fellow preschooler, were enrolled at the nearest local school called 'Government High School.' It was around fifteen minutes away in a village called Basgo. My parents weren't sure about this decision at first, but later, they just rolled with it. And I'm pretty thankful that they did. So, the first fascinating fact about this school was that it had around 39 students. I mean, not 39 students per class, 39 students in the entire school. The number of students per class ranged from 0 (third and fourth grade) to 10 (ninth and tenth grade). I was a seventh-grader, and I had three classmates, all of whom became my friends.

The school ground was about as big as two Olympic-sized badminton courts, which easily accommodated the entire school for assemblies. There was only a ground floor and we only had as many classrooms as we needed. We also had an awesome science lab and a big beefy library. Nursery, KG, and prep had a common (and arguably, the best) classroom and were taught pretty much the same things.

One memorable thing about those classrooms, though, was that

#FREE BIRD



we were the ones who cleaned them. Since there were four of us, two of us had to fill a tin of water and splash it all over the dusty wood before the other two swept the floor. Even in school and cultural events, it was the teachers and students who did the cooking, cleaning, and setting up. When I told my parents this, they were a bit baffled at first, but then they decided that it was a good learning experience (suuurrreeee...).

The house system in this school was a little different. First of all, there were three instead of four, and the colour of the Indian tricolour, saffron, white and green. In that order, they were named after the three main rivers that flowed through Ladakh, that is, Zaskar, Indus and Shyok. The houses just seemed like a formality, though, because we had no inter-house competitions, no reason for rivalry.

The village kids were cool too. They generally talked in Ladakhi with each other, but used Hindi (which they claimed to have learnt only because of watching TV) in my presence. They didn't know much English, so, I got a lot of attention that one time, I ever slipped my tongue and called my sister an idiot. Overall, they were all really nice and genuine people and I haven't

met many of those since then. There were also these two shaggy-haired Himalayan stray dogs who wandered around the school grounds. Since I'm an animal person, I befriended them on the very first day and called them Tommy and Olive. I shared my cold food with them on most days and they were cool. Sometimes, I even attended class while petting a dog beside me, because the school was pretty lenient that way.

We didn't even need to be in the classroom to study. Sometimes, we just sat under the apple tree in the middle of the school grounds and

studied there. Sometimes, we studied under the three House flags, sometimes, the Science lab/Library room, and sometimes, in the forest (which I'll come to later). Basically, it didn't matter much where we studied.

The studies themselves were also quite different here. One noticeable detail was the importance of practical work. Our Science teacher often brought chapter-related things like different soil types, rocks, leaves, roots etc. to show us and explain their differences. This was also the first school in which I had access to a Science lab, and I got to do a bunch of things for the first time like using a microscope and making a simple battery-and-bulb circuit. That was the kind of Science (and education in general) I had always dreamed of.

Our school activities were also pretty cool. Instead of making pointless project reports and Power Point presentations like we have to do nowadays, each student was given a square-metre plot of land in the school bordered with stones. All we had to do was make the best garden possible before winter. I chose to grow a few cool flowers (the names of which I no longer remember) and cabbages (to attract white cabbage butterflies). I had never had as



much fun in a school project as I did then, and I probably never will.

(And no, I didn't win the competition because I was competing with people who grew plants for a living.)

Instead of Formative Assessments or Periodic Tests, what we had there were called 'Unitary Tests,' and they were worth six marks. Since most of you haven't given a six-marks test before, you probably don't know how gamble-y they can feel. If you mess up a question in an eighty mark test, you can make up to it by rocking your other questions. Not for a six mark test though, you either know a question or you don't. It's an all-or-nothing situation. My sister and I topped the school in the end, so I'm not exactly complaining.

I also got to learn a new language that I'd never even heard of, Bodhi aka Ladakhi. This was the first time I had to learn a whole new script. It was also the only subject I had no hope of topping in. Still, it was a cool language. I also have this weird habit of subconsciously morphing my vocabulary and accent depending on who I'm interacting with the most often. Since I heard my friends talking to each other in Ladakhi quite often, I ended up picking up some of their slangs which would've been mildly embarrassing to utter once I was back on the lower altitude.

The lunch breaks were one hour long, which was absolutely wonderful. Since it was a government school, we didn't have separate timetables for separate days. Sure, it meant that we had to study all the subjects every day... but guess what? We even had a Games period in that timetable. You read that right folks, Games for the whole school, every

single day! We had our Games period in this stunning forest that they called the 'Baugh.' There was a little volleyball court in the middle, but apart from that, it was pretty big. The trees were really tall and wide apart so it was almost impossible to get lost. In the lunch break, I often went deep inside the woods (Don't judge me, I'm still an introvert who needs alone time), sat on some dry leaves and stayed there till I heard the bell. Sometimes, the dogs accompanied me, but usually I was all alone except a bunch of ravens. I almost had a functional survival base (complete with hidden food) there by the time the session ended.

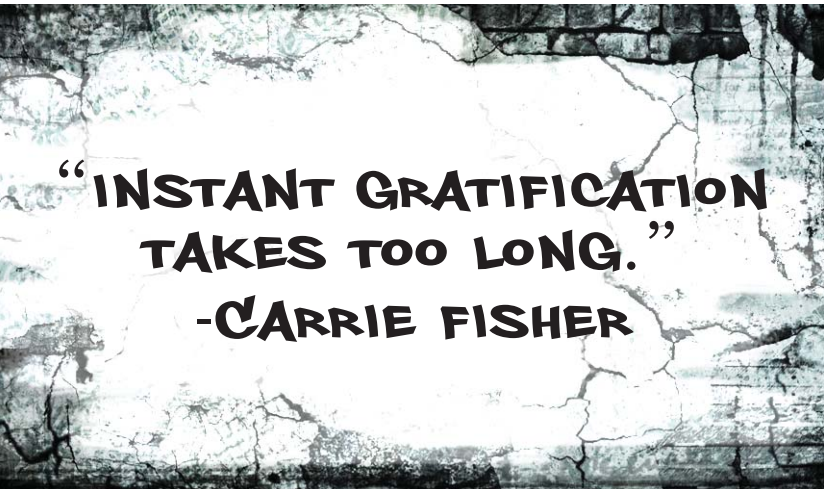
Speaking of sessions, the working months of this school were different from its lower altitude counterparts, the reason being insanely cold winters. As a result, sessions officially ended in October, began literally a few days later and had a winter break mid-November, before restarting school in April. Of course, since Army families were not allowed to stay in Ladakh during 40 degree winters, we moved back to Delhi right after finishing school. Since there was such a time rift between the two education systems, I got a free ginormous six-month break from seventh to eighth grade. What an amazing stroke of luck that was!

Overall, I'm really glad I got to attend that school, or even live in Ladakh in general, because it was one of the best places my dad's job has ever gotten us into. And I'll never forget the friends I made there either, whether it be the students, the teachers or the dogs.

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



THE WALL

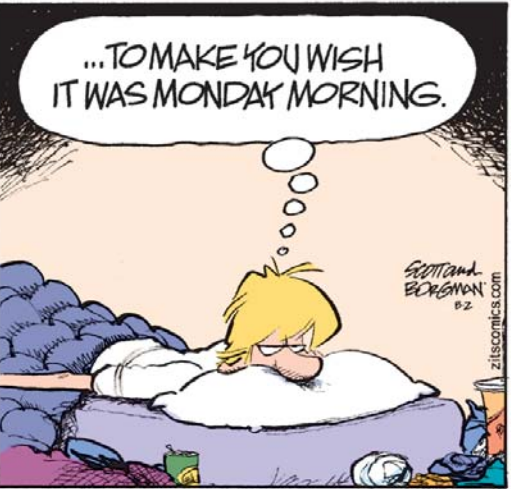


BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

#MITAOLI

You've Got To See Chausath Yogini Temple

The Chausath Yogini Temple, constructed in the 11th century near Gwalior in M.P., is one of the few remaining Yogini Temples still in good condition



In ancient times, the Yogini Temples of India celebrated the feminine. They were built in a circular style, adorned with exquisite feminine figures, and roofless, open to the natural world. This was a time when female temple dancers, bejeweled and sensuous, danced and sang in the temples, and were bound to the deity, not to any one man.

The Chausath Yogini Temple of Mitaoli was one such temple. Constructed in the 11th century, near Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, it is one of the few remaining Yogini Temples still in good condition. Built on a hillock, it commands an impressive vista. The circular wall has 64 ('chausath' means 64) chambers that once held statues of female forms. In the center is an open courtyard with a pavilion for public rituals, including dancing. The chambers hold Shiva Lingams.

The temple is in a Seismic Zone 3, and has withstood the many earthquakes over the centuries without any damage, probably owing to its circular structure. This feature may



have been one of the reasons that the Indian Parliament House in Delhi, built by the British in the 1920s, was inspired by the Chausath Yogini Temple of Mitaoli and also built in a circular style. The architectural similarities between the buildings are well noted.

According to Indian mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik, this is ironic as the British suppressed goddess worship in India, and saw temple dancers as prostitutes, not believing they could have agency over their lives or bodies. They ushered in an era of patriarchal puritanism that reduced women's rights and delegitimized the feminine hold over temple rituals and temple wealth, already eroded by centuries of Mughal rule.

A Yogini is a female practitioner of Yoga, and they represent universal, divine energy that exists in all things. They are the embodiment of spiritual grace and harmony. The Yogini Temples, like the one at Mitaoli, were built by ancient architects who 'imagined the temple as the reclining body of a languid woman. Temples were an architectural celebration of sensuality and fertility,' according to Pattanaik.

Many visitors feel an aura of mystery at this Yogini Temple, and the others that have survived. There is very little known about them, so much has been lost to time. The Yogini Temple in Orissa still has the feminine figures intact, which gives us a better idea of how the Chausath Yogini Temple of Mitaoli may have looked. The Chausath Yogini Temple of Mitaoli has been declared an ancient historical monument by the Archaeological Survey of India.

