

Black & Gold

The Bombay Gymkhana Magazine

July 2026 Volume 16 Issue 3



Message to our Members



Dear Bombay Gymkhana Family,
Happy Founders' Day!

We come together to celebrate our Founders' Day and mark a truly remarkable milestone—151 glorious years of Bombay Gymkhana.

As custodians of this extraordinary legacy, our responsibility is clear: to honour our past without becoming captive to it. The next chapter of our journey must be shaped by imagination, inclusivity, sustainability, and a renewed commitment to nurturing future sportspersons, future leaders, and a stronger community.

This milestone is not only an occasion for reflection but also an opportunity for renewal. As we celebrate our proud history, we must look ahead with the same courage, vision, and pioneering spirit that defined our beginnings.

Bombay Gymkhana is not merely celebrating 151 years of excellence.

It is preparing for the next 150 years. Thank you, and I wish you all a wonderful Founders' Day and a year ahead filled with health, happiness, and success.

Sanjiv Saran Mehra

President, Bombay Gymkhana

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All contributions to *Black & Gold* should be original and accompanied by your name, membership number and contact details. Material submitted is liable to be edited as may be determined by the Editorial Board.

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Toasts & Roasts

I know this is a great occasion. Wow, it's already 151 years
You guys are quite a sensation – let's drink to that...Cheers!
But I wonder why I am not all that shook up. I should actually feel great,
Of these 151 years, my friends, I've been a member for 50 to date.
So, what's the big deal I was around one-third of the time,
Though my contribution is sadly not quite worth a dime!
Sure, I wasn't around when we began,
But there were a lot of lovely things in my time already in the pan,
Which I sorely miss, and maybe we should think of restarting...
Things like the Pentathlon, Hockey and our wonderful Parking.
One-hundred and fifty-one years – now that's a mighty run!
We've aged like fine old whisky... or maybe like some Old Monk rum.
We've seen members come and members go,
some loud, some calm, some quirky,
And every year we promise fitness – yet the bar remains by far the most jerky.
We've attended so many anniversaries, to which we have grooved,
And the food and fare have put us in an 'oh no...not again' mood
But jokes aside, we're proud today of all we've built and done.
Here's to the next 151 – may they be just as much fun!

- Vijay Runganadhan

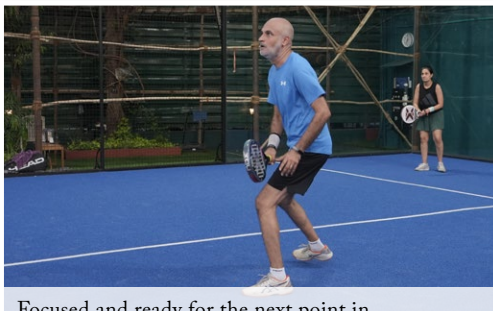
Well-matched!

Highlights from the Bombay Gymkhana Couples Padel Tournament, which brought players together for a spirited evening



A memorable group photograph from the Bombay Gymkhana Couples Padel Tournament

Bombay Gymkhana hosted a lively Couples Padel Tournament at the club's Padel courts, with 10 husband-and-wife teams competing in an engaging Americano format designed to maximise playtime and keep the action flowing.



Focused and ready for the next point in the championship.

Played across two pools, the tournament featured several closely-fought matches before the top teams advanced to the knockout stage. Combining friendly rivalry with sportsmanship and camaraderie, the event showcased the

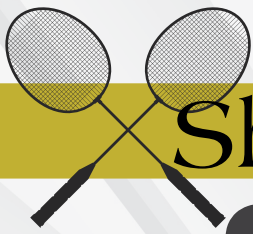


Players battle it out in an intense rally, displaying teamwork

growing popularity of Padel among members.

After an exciting evening, Padel Addicts — Hrushikesh and Rashi Mehta — emerged as champions, while GG Maliks — Gurangad and Gaurika Rai — finished runners-up.

Members look forward to many more such events at the club. **BG**



Shuttle

SUCCESS

Bombay Gymkhana players delivered an impressive performance at the 32nd GD Birla Interclub Veterans Badminton Tournament



Winning impressively

Bombay Gymkhana recently co-hosted the 32nd GD Birla Interclub Veterans Badminton Tournament, which attracted over 450 entries from across Maharashtra. The club's B team — Gautam Ashra, Jatin Aggarwal, Naheed Divecha, Rustom Mody, Dr Amit Dhurandar and Rajiv Mehra — enjoyed an impressive run, surpassing the A team to reach the semi-finals.

Shailesh Daga and Naheed Divecha won the mixed doubles title, defeating a strong pair from Catholic Gymkhana. Daga also finished runners-up in the +110 men's doubles with Dr Gautam Laud. Divecha added another title in the women's doubles alongside former

national champion Aparna Popat.

Among other big wins, PJ Hinduja Gymkhana won the Elite Team Championship, VS Tigers from Vanita Samaj celebrated their maiden plate trophy, and Willingdon Gymkhana took the men's singles and professional doubles.



Shailesh Daga and Naheed Divecha

Bombay Gymkhana President Sanjiv Saran Mehra joined Greater Mumbai Badminton Association President Pradeep Iyengar at the closing ceremony. Continued support from the Birla family has helped make the tournament one of the most prestigious events on the veterans Badminton calendar. **BG**

SmashHit!

From a lively player auction to the thrilling finals, the Tennis & Padel League 2026 brought together 140 participants aged 12 to 80-plus



Main cup winners Smashers at BGTPL 2026

The Bombay Gymkhana Tennis & Padel League 2026 was successfully conducted from 9 to 12 April, following an exciting player auction held on 29 March, where team owners strategically bid to assemble their squads for the tournament. The auction generated tremendous enthusiasm among participants and set the stage for a highly competitive and entertaining league.

Four Days of Fierce Competition

Six teams — Deuces, Smashers, Top Spinners, Aces, Slammers and Warriors — competed over four days of intense Tennis and Padel action, showcasing

exceptional skill, determination and sportsmanship. The league witnessed several closely fought encounters, with players demonstrating remarkable teamwork and competitive spirit, while members and spectators enjoyed a vibrant atmosphere throughout the event.

Plate winners Deuces at BGTPL 2026





Young stars swing hard at BGTPL 2026

Eyes locked, paddle up! BGTPL 2026 is on fire



Crowning the Champions

The tournament culminated in thrilling finals across the three divisions. In the Bowl category, Warriors emerged champions with an impressive score of 67 points, overcoming Slammers, who finished runners-up with 41 points. The Plate competition saw Deuces deliver a strong and consistent performance to secure the title with 64 points, while Aces finished runners-up with 49 points.

The premier Cup division produced some of the most exciting contests of the tournament, with Smashers claiming the championship after amassing 68 points, ahead of Top Spinners, who put up a commendable effort to finish runners-up with 50 points.

More than a Tournament

The Tennis & Padel League 2026 was a resounding success, blending competitive excellence with camaraderie and member participation. From the excitement of the player auction to the crowning of the champions, the event highlighted the growing popularity of both sports at Bombay Gymkhana and reinforced the club's commitment to fostering sporting excellence and community engagement. **BG**

Team vibes and big smiles at BGTPL 2026



Proud champions of Bombay Gymkhana Queen's Cup 2026 - BG Nice & Easy



THE CROWN Stays Home!

Atiriya Narayan brings highlights from the second annual Bombay Gymkhana Queen's Cup, a spirited all-women's Football tournament

On 29 and 30 May, Bombay Gymkhana hosted the second annual Bombay Gymkhana Queen's Cup, a 6-a-side women's Football tournament featuring some of the top teams from across Mumbai. Building on the success of last year's inaugural tournament, this year's edition saw five BG teams compete for the title, highlighting the club's growing strength in women's football and reinforcing its long-standing commitment to the game. The

event was once again brought to life by an all-women organising team, led by Zainab Ayaz alongside Kyra Aggarwal, Zarastyn Mistry, Sarah Arora and Deniese Pereira.

After a competitive group stage, the knockout rounds delivered the drama. In the semi-finals, BG Nice & Easy and Mumbai Dynamos A could not be separated over regulation time, finishing 0-0 before BG Nice & Easy



BG's Deniese Pereira goes all out, leaping high to win the ball in the air with a powerful header.

held their nerve to win 4-3 in a tense penalty shootout, with keeper Pooja Rajput making two crucial saves and also stepping up to convert her own penalty. In the other semi-final, BG Surf & Turf edged Mumbai Dynamos B 2-1, with a sharp interplay between Hansika Vasu, Aanya Vora, Gabrielle Soans and Anaya Shah proving the difference. BG Wildcats, BG's academy side, also made their presence felt, with the youngsters competing with plenty of grit and heart throughout. Mumbai Dynamos A took third place with a win over Mumbai Dynamos B.

This set up an all-BG final between Nice & Easy and Surf & Turf. In a closely fought decider, BG Nice & Easy came out on top, winning 3-1 to be crowned champions of the 2026 Queen's Cup. Goals from Sarah Arora and Hiba Faquih put Nice & Easy in control, before Tanvi Savarkar sealed it with the final goal.



Eva Mishra (Mumbai Dynamos) wins the juggling competition with an impressive tally of over 300 keep-ups

Individual honours were presented to the tournament's standout players: Pooja Rajput (Best Keeper), Aanya Vora (Top Scorer) and Zarastyn Mistry (Best Defender). The awards were presented by BG President Sanjiv Saran Mehra, Rahul Raichand and Kishan Narsi.

Adding to the weekend's energy was a juggling competition powered by the tournament sponsor Sansaar - A D'Decor Brand. Eva Mishra from Mumbai Dynamos took the title with an impressive tally of over 300 keep-ups.



Runners-up - BG Surf & Turf

The Queen's Cup once again showcased the depth and spirit of women's football in Mumbai and reflected the efforts of Football Secretary Vineet Gangwani and his team. With this title, the Bombay Gymkhana Sharks complete a remarkable treble, following the Independence Day Cup and Blitz 2026. A perfect end to the season! **BG**



SHOW STOPPER!

In conversation with Bombay Gymkhana's Niharika Singhania, 19, who will represent India in Showjumping at the Asian Games in Japan

You have enjoyed success on the international circuit, including a gold-medal-winning performance in Belgium. What have been the defining moments so far?

There hasn't been one defining moment. Most progress comes from the quiet work done every day. The toughest moments are often those of self-doubt, and what gets me through is trusting my horse and trusting what I know we are capable of.

Bombay Gymkhana has a rich sporting legacy. How has being associated with the club contributed to your growth as an athlete?

Bombay Gymkhana's sporting legacy is inspiring. Being associated with a club that values excellence and sportsmanship is something I'm proud of and motivates me to keep striving for higher standards.

Congratulations! What does this milestone mean to you?

Thank you. My first reaction was a mix of excitement, gratitude and disbelief. You work towards something for so long that when it finally happens, it almost doesn't feel real at first. The Asian Games has been the major goal for years, and there have been plenty of challenges along the way, so being selected felt incredibly special. More than celebrating the achievement itself, it made me think about all the horses and people, especially my coaches, who helped me get here. It made me look back on the whole journey and everything that had to happen for me to get to where I am today.

Showjumping is often described as a sport built on trust between rider and horse. What lessons has it taught you both in and out of the arena?

Trust is everything in Showjumping, and that's what makes the sport so special. Every horse is different, and I've learned that you have to understand them on their terms. Building that partnership has taught me patience, empathy, and most importantly, what a privilege it is once they allow you to know them.

As you prepare for the Asian Games, what are your goals, and what message would you like to share with young Bombay Gymkhana members?

My focus is on keeping both myself and my horses healthy and performing at our best before Japan. For young athletes, the message is simple: progress and success come from hard work, patience, and consistency. Stay true to the process, and the results will always follow. **BG**

Mastering CPR

Niloufer N Vazifdar shares key takeaways from a practical session on CPR and emergency response by Jaslok Hospital's **Dr Pinank Pandya**



In a heart attack there is hope. The artery to the heart is blocked but usually the person is breathing and responsive. In a heart failure or heart arrest, the person is dead. There is no hope. YOU are his only hope. If you don't perform cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on him within 10 minutes, he will stay dead for sure.

Therefore, it is so important that we all know how to react, how to try to revive him. The CPR session conducted by Dr Pinank Pandya, Chief Intensivist, Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre, on 10 June, was on how to recognise a heart arrest and how to respond.

Along with hands-on practice on a dummy, he also demonstrated the use of the automated external defibrillator (AED) which we see on the wall near our club bell.

I have attended many such sessions, and I have learnt something new each time. I feel it is imperative we ALL learn this technique and that we then refresh our memory periodically. With that in mind, I do hope our Gymkhana will repeat this session, both for those who missed it and for those who need to revise. I also urge holding a similar session for the staff who are present throughout the premises and who can be our first responders.

Club member Avan Mehta added, "Dr Pandya walked us step-by-step through hands-on CPR, using clear demonstrations that cut through the panic most of us feel at the thought of an emergency. The AED demo was a highlight. He also showed us the Heimlich manoeuvre with the same calm, precise guidance. He answered every question patiently, never making anyone feel hesitant to ask 'basic' doubts. Even on a serious topic, his subtle humour kept the room engaged and comfortable. We left not just informed, but empowered." **BG**

Monsoon Shield



Members gained practical insights into preventing and managing seasonal illnesses at an informative talk by Jaslok Hospital's **Dr Mala Kaneria**

Continuing the momentum of Bombay Gymkhana's health awareness initiative, members gathered on 17 June for an engaging session on monsoon infections by Dr Mala Kaneria, Consultant, Infectious Diseases, Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre. The talk focused on common seasonal illnesses, preventive measures and practical ways to safeguard families during the rains.

Drawing on her clinical experience and Mumbai's unique monsoon challenges, including flooding, waterlogging and sanitation stress, Dr Kaneria stressed the importance of recognising symptoms early and taking timely action. She also shared simple yet effective ways to stay healthy during the season.

Member **Sunil Choudhary** found the session particularly valuable. "I appreciated Dr Kaneria's clarity and

practical approach. Her emphasis on preventive habits and timely intervention was useful not only in everyday life but also when travelling," he noted.

Meena Deshpande highlighted several takeaways from the session, including avoiding stagnant water around house plants, washing hands before meals, eating freshly cooked food and seeking medical advice if fever persists beyond two or three days. She also underscored the importance of consulting a doctor immediately in case of bleeding or breathing difficulties rather than resorting to self-medication.

Siddika Chinwala found the session enlightening, pointing out that "monsoon-related ailments could be avoided by staying hydrated, observing basic hygiene discipline and avoiding wading in flooded areas." **BG**

Healing with Humour

Malika D'Cunha captures highlights from the engaging session featuring neurosurgeon and author **Dr Mazda Turel**



The Meet the Author event, held almost monthly by the BG Library, invited Dr Mazda Turel, an accomplished neurosurgeon, to talk about his recently launched book, *Bheja Fry*, on 2 June. The author was in conversation with Tinaz Nooshian, former Editor-in-Chief of *Mid-Day*.

The event had the audience listening intently to his interesting anecdotes, revealing his grounded attitude and the human being beneath the medical practitioner.

It was an interesting evening, with a smattering of readings from his book, anecdotes from his everyday life as a doctor, interactions with people and his philosophy of life as he tackles life-and-death situations daily. He spoke of the gratitude he feels and receives when his patients leave with a smile or just want to hold his hand, probably flirting too, and of the trust and faith they place in him. He also spoke of a surgery that did not go the expected way and

of coping with the loss and grief of a patient who turned the corner, yet succumbed.

His years of medical practice have been replete with personal learning too. Human beings tend to love themselves more during an illness and having a sense of humour is a survival tool. All these have been chronicled in his book. My favourite chapter was 'The Flirt'. The stories from the book were hilarious, yet carried a serious undertone.

The author spoke of the anxiety patients feel before a diagnosis and surgery. However, doctors too feel anxiety, so how does one deal with that? He replied that a short prayer helps calm him, sometimes even during procedures — a prayer that includes his patients too. Every evening, he critically reviews his day's work, examining every minute detail.

With a twinkle in his eye, he talked about 'schadenfreude', the good feeling when a patient comes to him on a rebound, the difference between the brain and the mind — he is a '*dimaag ka doctor*', not a '*mann ka doctor*' — and his writing, through which he wishes to make unhappy people less unhappy for some time at least. **BG**



Meet the Author

Art of Flourishing

Reena Agrawal brings insights from a thought-provoking evening with author **Akhil Gupta**



“Money cannot equate happiness. Wisdom is wider than the sky and deeper than the ocean,” remarked Akhil Gupta, author of *To Flourish Is To Love, Learn, Play: A Simple Formula for a Happier and More Meaningful Life*. At the Meet the Author event at Bombay Gymkhana held on 20 May, he was introduced by his friend, Prem Kamath. Aably led by Anjali Raina, the evening was set to be an interesting one.

Despite having had an enviable corporate career, Gupta sensed something missing in his life until he realised that a loving mindset was all that one needed to flourish - a means to happiness. He has never been happier, for, as he says, it is between stimulus and response that the space to live consciously exists. And he is living in that space today.

A good mix of *gyan*, karma and *bhakti*, transforming pride into humility and gratitude, and fear into curiosity, are among the many mantras he elucidates.

Several questions came from across the room - where does discarding ego and becoming detached fit in? How do you explain happiness to the poor? How do defined goals and purpose in life help in finding happiness? Do I follow my passion and deny making money or climb the corporate ladder? Ask yourself what matters in life, said the author. Do your duty which will help you find purpose and motivation in life. Keep being curious.

What advice do you give those who believe differently? The author sagely said, “If you want to relate to someone find out why and what they believe in.”

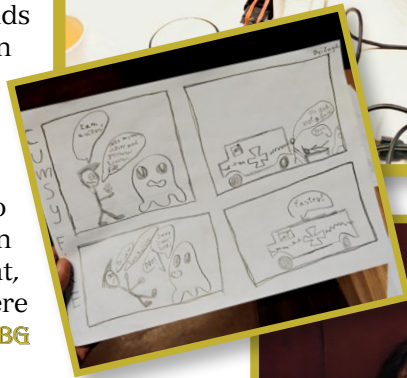
Why are we running to look for happiness outside when the fragrance is within us!

Read the book to know more. It is available in the BG Library. **BG**

Squiggles to Stories

Shaila Mallik captures the fun and creativity of a cartooning workshop with illustrator **Abhijeet Kini**

A Saturday morning in the summer holidays sounded a perfect day to create cartoons at the cartooning basics workshop with award-winning illustrator and popular comics creator Abhijeet Kini. Children learnt how to create their own comic book characters – a line here to make a nose, a curl there for a mouth! A frowning face, an angry face, a laughing face, Kini took the kids through creating basic faces and then an attempt to make a little comic strip of their own. All of them were totally thrilled to find the creativity within themselves, and of course in awe of what Kini himself managed to do with a few squiggles! The energy in the room was wonderful – excitement, fascination, delight and wonder. Here are some glimpses of the morning... **B&G**



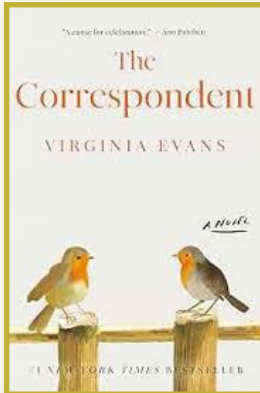
Writefully Yours

Nive Raitz von Frenzt recounts a lively discussion on *The Correspondent*, a novel whose characters come alive through letters

Knowing the meaty discussions that were in store, Bombay Gymkhana Book Club members turned up in strength on 8 June, to talk about a novel narrated entirely through letters.

At 73, Sybil Van Antwerp is a feisty protagonist, her strong character clearly delineating members into a pro camp, and those who felt she was rather self-centred and entitled, a cloak of self-defence perhaps? Adopted as a baby by affluent parents, she focuses on her legal career at the expense of her marriage to Daan. Their relationship does not survive the death of their eight-year-old son Gilbert, for which Sybil continues to blame herself.

So much can be said in such few words, as Sybil's relationships with her children, her best friend and sister-in-law, Rosalie, her brother Felix, Harry the troubled teenager, her neighbour Theodore, and Texan Mick who is wooing her, come alive through the gently humorous letters she sends and receives. Hope is a guiding light on Sybil's outlook on life, leading members to share their own experiences that the singular feelings



handwritten letters evoke. The mystery recipient of her unsent letters is Gilbert, killed in a decades-old tragic accident.

Members were treated to an excerpt on Audible, Sybil's and Rosalie's voices distinctly emerging. Apparently, it takes longer to listen than read; interestingly, the Goodfellows Foundation

volunteers read aloud to sight-impaired people – what a great service!

Is letter writing cathartic? Does one's profession mould one's character? Is it ethical to persuade someone (even if they are your mother) to take a DNA test to try and trace their birth family? These, and many other questions, contributed to the quality discussion members have become accustomed to.

Virginia Evans went on to win the prestigious Women's Prize for Fiction 2026 a few days later. **BG**



Musical Showdown!

From evergreen melodies to friendly rivalry, Antakshari Night struck all the right notes

Bombay Gymkhana's recent 'Antakshari with a Twist' brought together nine teams for an evening of music, nostalgia and spirited rivalry. Across eight lively rounds, participants tested their knowledge of Hindi film songs in a contest that kept everyone engaged. Team Udaan emerged champions,

while Team Don claimed the runners-up spot after a closely-fought finish. More than the results, it was the timeless melodies and shared nostalgia that made the evening special, as favourite songs and laughter created an atmosphere of warmth and celebration. **B&G**



Rhythm REMEMBERED

Memories, music and a touch of Elvis came together as **Mehmood Curmally** celebrated the enduring legacy of Rhythm House, writes **Reena Agrawal**



The June edition of BG Conversations saw members coming together to not just listen to Mehmood Curmally's foray into music but to collectively lay closure to an iconic landmark -- Rhythm House. It was with a heavy heart that music lovers and patrons across the world had bid farewell to this music store almost a decade ago, and as Curmally shared, it still hurts.

Fortunately, a week before its doors shut, Aliya Curmally decided to document Rhythm House which was screened at the start of the evening. A nostalgic and emotional film not just for the Curmallys along with their long-serving and dedicated staff, but also for many in the audience. The spontaneous standing ovation was a salute and a mark of gratitude to all those who brought music into our lives over the years.

Curmally traced the history of Rhythm House from its beginning in 1938-39 to being registered as RH in 1947... From his grandmother shelling out a handsome sum to her son's friend, to start a 'record *ki dukaan*' (which eventually the Curmallys joined) to selling and setting up jukeboxes in palaces, importing records, manufacturing

them, the cassette boom, demo records, listening pods and selling of theatre tickets which became good advertising for them and the digital revolution to which the store finally succumbed.

The ever-popular triangular listening booths were witness to not just music but graffiti, women being proposed to and in one case a triple *talaq* being served within its walls, among many other interesting stories of young couples who came to 'listen' to music in these booths!

Curmally's training at the HMV store in London renewed his passion for music. It became his way of life and today pulses through his veins, often taking on the avatar of Elvis Presley, complete with the high quiff pompadour reminiscent of the singer himself.

Though members may have heard him sing several times, that evening was special. It was an ode to Rhythm House as the audience joined Curmally in singing 'Can't Help Falling in Love'.

Yes, a love so warmly cherished in all our hearts today. **BG**

Magic Mix

SHAWN MIXWEL Bar Nite



DJ Shawn Mixwel transformed Bombay Gymkhana into a vibrant hub of music and lights on 12 June. From peppy favourites to crowd-pleasing hits, Mixwel's infectious beats and effortless charisma created an electric atmosphere, bringing together members of all ages in a celebration of music and dance. As the night rolled into dawn, one thing was certain—it was a Friday night to remember! *BG*



A Bell, a Flag & 151 Years of Memory

From this year's Founders' Day celebrations to memories spanning decades, Bombay Gymkhana's oldest living former President, **Dr Khalid A-H Ansari**, recounts the moments that define the club

Members of our club turned up in large numbers to mark its 151st birthday. In the air was that particular mystical warmth that only comes when old friends and old traditions meet on familiar ground.

It was the day our 'Gym' celebrated a century and a half of sporting excellence, camaraderie and service to Mumbai ever since it was founded on 19 June 1875 at the southern end of historic Azad Maidan, venue of stirring political rallies during our freedom struggle.



With the passage of time, the institution has evolved from a colonial-era sports club (and 'watering hole' of the white and brown 'sahibs') into one of India's most respected sporting and social landmarks, and nursery of national and international sportspersons.

The Navy Band commenced proceedings with a rousing parade, as a curtain-raiser to the morning's centrepiece: the Bombay Light Horse Bell Ringing Ceremony.

President Sanjiv Saran Mehra did the honours along with Managing Committee members, and I had the privilege of joining in the 'ringing of the bell' as Chief Guest, only because I'm the club's oldest living President (as I'm told), a fact that still catches me slightly 'off-side' each time it's mentioned.

Echoing through Time

There's something mystical about that bell. Located as it is, in prime position in the lobby veranda facing the sprawling green, it doesn't just make a sonorous sound; it seems to echo back through the decades, all the way to 19 June 1875, and pulling every generation since into the same moment. Ringing it is a humbling thing.

(As narrated by yours truly at the ceremony: when we were young and fancy-free, cricketing legend - the puckish 'Tiger' Pataudi - and golfing great Raj Kumar Pitamber (they were my colleagues in the Gym's Balloting Committee when I was club Vice-President) – would often feel tempted irresistibly, when exiting the club's then pub (the Gym's Inn) after a few 'thirst quenchers' to ring the bell – but never mustered enough sass to do so for fear of consequences!)

Raising the Flag

To return to the ceremony, the unfurling of the 151st year flag followed — a simple act per se, but one that symbolises a great deal: a century and a half of Cricket and conversation, of friendships made

over the years, of the club weathering changing times while holding firmly to what it has always stood for: fair play, fellowship, and a quiet sense of duty. In the Balloting Committee we considered ourselves 'custodians' of the future of the club.

Few institutions in India can claim a history as rich and enduring as Bombay Gymkhana. Nestled in the heart of South Mumbai, overlooking the historic Azad Maidan, the club has witnessed the transformation of Bombay into modern-day Mumbai while remaining true to its founding purpose: fostering excellence in sport and bringing people together through shared passions.

A Sporting Legacy

Bombay Gymkhana occupies a unique place in India's sporting history. Its grounds hosted the first Test match ever played on Indian soil in December 1933, where the legendary Lala Amarnath scored a memorable century against England. Over the decades, generations of cricketers, Rugby players, footballers, swimmers, Tennis players and athletes have competed on its historic fields and courts, helping shape India's sporting culture.

In 1976, (the club's centenary when ACB Millar was President and I, Vice-President), a memorable Cricket match was held (organised by me, incidentally), at our historic ground between a Bombay Gymkhana XI (captained by Amarnath) and my magazine's Invitation SPORTSWEEK XI, led by the equally illustrious former India captain Vijay Merchant. The inimitable AFST (Bobby) Talyarkhan wielded the microphone solo – as was his wont.

Yet Bombay Gymkhana's story extends far beyond sport. The club's heritage buildings, traditions and vibrant membership reflect the spirit of a city that values both history and progress. What began as an exclusive institution has grown into a diverse and dynamic community that welcomes members from all walks of life, united by a shared appreciation of sportsmanship, friendship and civic responsibility.

The 151st Founders' Day provided an opportunity not only to celebrate past achievements but also to recognise the many members, employees, administrators and sportspersons whose dedication has sustained the Gymkhana through changing times. Their commitment ensures that the values of fair play, excellence and community remain as relevant today as they were in 1875.

The Spirit Endures

What struck me most, watching the crowd, was the mix — members some of who have been walking these grounds for 50 years and more, standing alongside ones who joined only recently, all equally at home. That, perhaps, is the real achievement of an institution like ours. Not the trophies or the records, though we have plenty of both, but this — the sense that everyone belongs, regardless of when they arrived.

By the time the morning wound down, one thing was clear: a club isn't kept alive by its buildings or its by-laws. It survives because people carry it forward — its stories, its values, its quirks and all — and hand it on to the next lot. Founders' Day reminds us why, 151 years on, the Bombay Gymkhana still means as much as it does to all of us who call it home.

As Bombay Gymkhana enters its 152nd year, it continues to stand as a symbol of continuity in a rapidly changing city and society — a place where history is honoured, sporting dreams are nurtured and lifelong friendships are forged.

On this special occasion, we salute the generations who built this remarkable institution and look forward to the chapters yet to be written. May Bombay Gymkhana continue to inspire, serve and thrive for many more years to come.

(With inputs from the Internet. Photographs: Zeynasan Ansari)

Milestone Moment

Chief Guest Dr Khalid A-H Ansari along with President Sanjiv Saran Mehra and the Managing Committee members participated in the time-honoured Bell Ringing ceremony.



Feasting & Friendship

The annual Founders' Day lunch brought members together over great food and conversation



Full House!



The bumper Housie drew a record turnout of nearly 180 members and their families. The event was filled with excitement, friendly competition and attractive prizes, with a surprise gift hamper for every attendee, generously sponsored by Dabur.



151st Founders' Day

Rockin' Bar Nite

The Dining Hall turned into a kaleidoscope of movement and colour as DJ Suketu, joined by DJ Mulanomixx, ignited the dance floor with a mesmerising mix of Bollywood hits. A night of unbridled energy. **BG**



Sweet 16!

As *Black & Gold* marks its 16th anniversary, those who have shaped the club magazine reflect on its evolution and impact

Sixteen years ago, Bombay Gymkhana embarked on an ambitious publishing journey. What began in July 2010 as a vision for a high-quality club magazine has since evolved into something far more significant: a living archive of the institution's people, milestones, achievements and shared memories.

The Beginning of Something Special

The idea was born during the presidency of Ashok Rao, who felt the club deserved something better than the publication that existed at the time. "We had a sort of pamphlet coming out that was simply not up to the mark while costing us good money," he recalls. "Then we found that we could actually do a class magazine that was also profitable."

One of the earliest decisions was choosing a name. Several options were discussed before one stood out: *Black & Gold*. For Rao, the connection was immediately obvious. "Black and gold are the club colours and the initials BG are also those of Bombay Gymkhana," he smiles.

The project rolled out under the convenorship of Zia Mehta. "One of my most cherished memories from those early days was being entrusted with the responsibility of launching and steering the Gymkhana's magazine," she shares. "It was both an honour and a challenge."

Professional expertise was brought in, a dedicated editorial subcommittee was assembled and contributors were encouraged to lend their voices. The result was a publication that steadily expanded its reach and relevance.

Looking back, Mehta believes the magazine has grown far beyond its original incarnation. "Its pages today tell a story of milestones, sporting achievements, social and cultural events," she says.



More than Words on a Page

Over the years, *Black & Gold* has become much more than a record of club happenings. Its pages document sporting triumphs, social gatherings, cultural events and personalities who have enriched Bombay Gymkhana's story. New voices have found a platform, friendships have been forged and members living far from Mumbai have remained connected to the life of the club.



Ashok Rao

No one captures the human side of that journey quite like convenor Roger C. B. Pereira. Reflecting on his first term in 2016, he recalls a particularly difficult personal period.

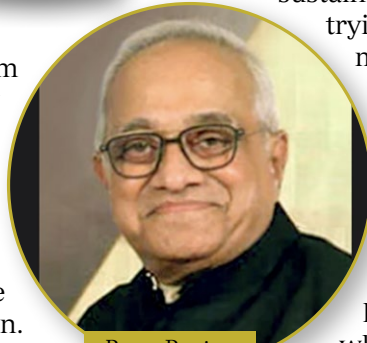
"My first term in 2016 was a total disaster. I was in hospital for six weeks. Then I was in a wheelchair for three weeks. Then my dear wife was in hospital. Then she passed on. I was a mess! But the magazine was not impacted. Thanks to two ladies who were worth my 'overweight' in GOLD! Anaita Vazifdar and Sunita Rajwade. Gosh! That was sheer teamwork! God bless them!"

For Pereira, the success of the magazine has always been rooted in the people behind it. He fondly remembers encouraging young contributors, including Kaveri Shah, who continued contributing while

studying in England as the magazine's self-styled "foreign correspondent", and Malika D'Cunha, another young talent whose dedication left a lasting impression.

"According to me, this is the only way we can develop our future 'Reena Agrawals'. Gosh! Reena represents the GOLD of *Black & Gold*! 100 carats if that's possible!"

Pereira believes the magazine's role has steadily expanded. Beyond reporting events, it reflects the full life of the institution and the people who sustain it. "We've been trying to increasingly mirror and record our multitude of activities to enhance both the body and soul, every month. And not just our members but also our staff who contribute meaningfully 24x7 to give our institution its heart and soul – from the Reception right through to the Security guys – the full circle!"



Roger Pereira

A Keeper of Memories

That idea of the magazine as both chronicler and community builder resonates strongly with former convenor Gauri Sinh, who took charge during the challenging post-pandemic period. "My strongest memories of working on *Black & Gold* are those of absolute



Zia Mehta

B&G Anniversary Special

camaraderie and a deep sense of sharing amongst the editorial team," she recalls. At a time when much of the world was emerging from isolation, editorial meetings became about more than producing a magazine. They became opportunities for connection, conversation and healing.

One edition in particular remains etched in her memory. An early post-pandemic issue juxtaposed images of a silent, empty club during Covid with vibrant photographs of members returning for Holi celebrations and sporting activities.

For Sinh, it symbolised a return not merely to club life, but to life itself.

Sinh believes *Black & Gold* fulfils a role that goes beyond reporting events. "Any club magazine serves a dual purpose – not just to inform or entertain its members, but also to document history and, in doing so, create legacy," she says. During the final phases of the pandemic, she adds, the magazine became "the glue binding a community together", helping members keep the faith and look forward to brighter days.

Looking Ahead

Former convenor Mila Kahlon recalls the joy of discovering the stories behind members' achievements and passions.



Gauri Sinh



Mila Kahlon

One initiative she remembers fondly was publishing artwork created by a member's child, a reminder that the magazine belongs to every generation of the Gymkhana family. "The club is a remarkable microcosm of people, experiences and ideas," Kahlon says. "There will always be new stories waiting to be told."

As *Black & Gold* enters its seventeenth year, its purpose remains remarkably consistent with the vision of its founders. It celebrates achievement, preserves memory and strengthens community. It records not only what happens within the club's walls but also the people who bring those moments to life.

Perhaps Pereira captures that spirit best when he reflects on the future: "We have subtly introduced and encouraged our youth, our concern for the Environment and Sustainability, our members who add value and their respective value systems to our city and society. Personally, I'd like this trend to be enhanced and encouraged. And creative members like Sunita Rajwade and author/member Aarti Kelshikar to blossom and bloom via the pages of our legacy. And beyond the realms of our Gymkhana!"

And perhaps the magazine's enduring strength lies in the simple belief expressed by Sinh: "STRONGER TOGETHER!" **BG**

Cocolaove

For World Chocolate Day (7 July), we invited **Purvi Sheth** to explore India's evolving chocolate culture and revisit a cherished family recipe

chocolate makers is quietly redefining what Indian chocolate can be.

Brands such as Entisi, Paul and Mike, Manam, Mason & Co., Soklet and Pascati are leading this movement. They are not just making chocolate; they are celebrating the ingredient itself. Many work directly with cacao growers in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, creating a genuine bean-to-bar ecosystem and bringing a level of care and craftsmanship that feels both global and distinctly Indian.

Chocolate Day makes me smile

Perhaps it's because chocolate is one of those rare foods that carries memories with it. For many of us, it reminds us of childhood rewards, festive gifting, late-night cravings, or the joy of sneaking a piece while baking a cake. As someone who loves cooking and baking, I've always found chocolate fascinating—not just for its taste, but for its ability to tell stories through flavour, texture and craftsmanship. I recently read a recipe that used chocolate in a tomato pasta sauce!

Over the last few years, I've noticed something interesting happening in India's chocolate landscape. Beyond the familiar bars we all grew up with, a new generation of homegrown

What excites me most is the experimentation. We are seeing single-origin chocolates, coffee-infused bars, tropical fruits, spices, jaggery and



regional Indian flavours finding their way into beautifully crafted products. Much like the artisanal bread, coffee and cheese, and Indian wine movements before them, chocolate makers are encouraging us to become more curious consumers.

I also see gifting culture, e-commerce and exposure to global food trends fuelling this growth. Beautiful packaging certainly catches the eye, but what keeps people coming back is the quality and the story behind the product.

The result is a richer and more sophisticated chocolate culture. Chocolate in India is no longer just about indulgence or nostalgia; it is increasingly about provenance, craftsmanship and discovery. And for those of us who love food, that's a delicious trend worth celebrating!

And because it's Chocolate Day, I can't resist sharing one of my favourite family recipes—my mother's traditional chocolate cream cake. It is wonderfully simple, requires no fancy ingredients, and somehow turns out perfectly every single time.

Chocolate Cream Cake

Ingredients

- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup almond flour
- 1 cup cream (my mother always used homemade cream, but packaged cream works beautifully too)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup medium to dark cocoa powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt



Method

Beat the eggs and sugar together until pale, light and fluffy. Gradually add the cocoa powder and continue beating until well combined. Add the cream, vanilla, almond flour, baking powder and salt, and mix until smooth. Don't beat the cream, or it will change form. Pour the batter into a greased cake tin and bake for 20–25 minutes at 250°C. That's it.

You can dress it up with a rich chocolate ganache, or simply enjoy it as it is. Personally, I love it both ways. The cake is soft, spongy and incredibly moist—the kind of cake that feels less like a dessert and more like comfort. The kind that reminds you why some family recipes never need improving.

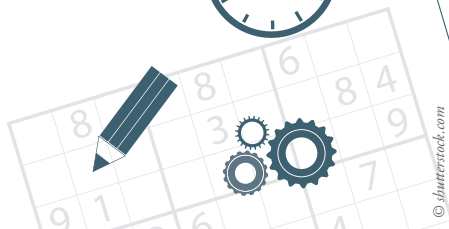
(Purvi Sheth is the Founder and Chief Happiness Cook of The Happy Kitchen and an HR strategy consultant.) **BG**

SUDOKU

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit must appear once in:

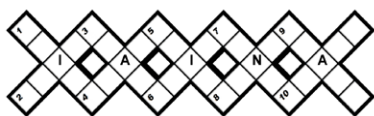
- each of the vertical columns
- each of the horizontal rows
- each of the boxes

7		1	5	3	
5			2		9
			8	4	
	8		5		7
3		1		9	
	4	6			
1		4			8
6	2		3		5



CRISSWORD

Ten five-letter words cross and interlock to complete these crisswords. Some of the letters have already been filled in. Can you fill in the rest? Clues are given.



- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1 Throw angrily | 6 Glib or smooth |
| 2 Bird sound | 7 Monarchs |
| 3 Stage productions | 8 Midday meal |
| 4 Bestow | 9 Accumulate |
| 5 Severe test | 10 Disreputable |

SCRAMBLE

Solve the four anagrams and move one letter to each square to form four ordinary words

Arrange the letters marked with an asterisk (*) to form the answer to the riddle or to fill in the missing words, as indicated:

KNAEO

*	*		*	
---	---	--	---	--

DMIIT

*	*		*	
---	---	--	---	--

CANTLE


*		*	*		
---	--	---	---	--	--

ERUBMP

*		*	*		
---	--	---	---	--	--

Pity and friendship are two passions
 ____ with each other. -- Oliver Goldsmith(12) **BG**

(All solutions on page 35)



Bombay Gymkhana
presents

DEEP DIVE

THE BG LIBFEST 2026

Let the Library take you on 5 days of a different diving experience - through culture, crime and the world of imagination. Immerse yourself in drama, depth and the dark side. Come. You might be pleasantly surprised.

Wednesday, July 15th
KHATIJABAI OF KARMALI TERRACE
A play by QTP

Friday, July 17th
QUIZ NIGHT AT THE BAR!
Gym's Inn

Thursday, July 16th
FILM NIGHT

Saturday, July 18th
WHEN IT ALL BEGAN
The Mumbai Crime Story
Author & former DGP Rakesh Maria

Sunday, July 19th
THE SINGING & RINGING TREE
A puppet show & puppet making for the family
with Charu Prasad

Come...immerse yourself
Further details to follow



A TRIBUTE

Krishna Salian, who joined Bombay Gymkhana as a waiter in 1992 and served the club with dedication for over 34 years, passed away on 8 June 2026, shortly after his retirement. He is survived by his wife and son. The Gymkhana extends its heartfelt condolences to his family.

NEW SAUNA FACILITY

A new sauna has been installed and commissioned at GDR (in the place where the small steam room existed). The facility is available for use by members. The rules with regard to the sauna are placed outside the facility.

In Memoriam

The Bombay Gymkhana deeply regrets the sad demise of:



Soli Ardeshir Modi
10 April 2026

Jagdish Chandra Anand
8 April 2026

Shyama Prasad Mookerjee
26 February 2025



SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU

4	5	1	6	3	8	2	6	7
6	8	2	5	7	4	3	9	1
3	9	7	1	6	4	8	5	2
5	4	2	1	7	9	3	2	8
3	6	9	8	6	1	7	4	5
8	2	8	3	6	2	9	1	5
1	7	4	3	7	2	9	8	6
7	1	7	8	4	1	3	7	9
2	3	2	9	5	3	7	1	4
8	7	6	9	1	4	5	3	2

— CRISS WORD —



— SCRAMBLE —

Goldsmith
each other - Oliver
pas-sions incompatible
Pity and friendship are two
Answer
Oakern, timid, lancet, bump

Words

GET YOUR DIGITAL COPY!

To receive the electronic version of *Black & Gold*, send an email to agm.relationship@bombaygymkhana.com. You can also download it from the BG App.

Hope Springs ETERNAL



With delayed showers and looming water cuts, it's time for Mumbai to relearn the art of conservation, says **Sunita Rajwade**

Founders' Day is over, the activities during Founders' Week are over, the holidays are over, and it seems so is the summer! Finally, towards the last week of the month, it did rain in different parts of Mumbai. Not with the usual aplomb of thunder and lightning but with a bit of a whimper. Who should we blame? El Nino? Climate change? Or the more relatable indiscriminate construction of buildings and deliberate desecration of nature? It doesn't really matter because the bottom line is: this year the rains are going to be whimsical.

Even if it does rain, it will have to be in copious amounts to cover the shortfall that we are already facing. From the war in the Middle East, the conversation has now shifted to the imminent water shortage, which seems increasingly likely with the rain clouds disappearing faster than they gather. So even if the reservoirs overflow (doubtful), we will have to use it judiciously.

For some of us, it will be adapting to a new concept – saving. For some, it will take us to a time in the past, when we had to watch every drop. I remember one childhood summer holiday we had planned to see the Ajanta Caves in Aurangabad. We were really excited because it was going to be our first road trip. But it had to be cancelled because

the aunt we were planning to stay with told us that her family's bath routine had changed from showers and bucket baths to standing on the terrace and rubbing their bodies with a damp washcloth to remove the accumulated sweat and grime! Yuck! I'm sure my aunt made this up, but it was enough to make us cancel our trip.

Things may not get so bad, but for sure, we will have to go into saving mode. We will have to save water because we are facing a water cut. We will have to skip long showers and use water carefully while brushing teeth and washing hands. Watering the plants will mean using carefully measured mugs, or, better still, shifting to growing succulents. Washing cars will be a luxury, and swimming will be something that we once did to beat the heat.

So July seems to be a month of adjustments. Of limping back to life as it was before the Middle East crisis and learning to manage with less water. But Mumbai's monsoons, which have been known to be erratic for the past decade, have a way of popping up when you least expect them. We can always hope that suddenly the clouds will gather, the skies will darken, and we will have a downpour that will fill up the lakes in one month instead of the normal four. **BG**