



BEST OF NTMN – VOLUME 3

[News That Matters Not](#) was one of the premier satirical websites in India between 2009 and 2015. The website was one of the earliest to make a mark in its field in India, winning its young team two international awards for its impactful content.

NTMN was known for its witty takes on the politics of the day, social issues, the media, youth, everyday life, and popular culture. **Here, we present some of the best stories published by the website in its heydays.**

This e-book celebrates the legacy of some of the sharpest satire published on the Indian web before comic videos went viral and fake news became evil.

Stories in this volume cover these topics:

COLLEGE LIFE

LOVE & DATING

MAD ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

POPULAR CULTURE (cinema, sports, media, celebrities)

This volume has stories written by:

**Anubhav Parsheera, Bijender Sheoran, Dharna Chauhan, Jay Shah,
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Vinay Saxena, and Vishal Dayama.**

Other volumes:

[Best of NTMN – Volume 1](#)

[Best of NTMN – Volume 2](#)

Other Works: [Staff Picks - 1](#) | [Staff Picks – 2](#) | [Visuals](#)

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COLLEGE LIFE

Guest speaker forgets promise of "keeping lecture interactive"

TANAY SUKUMAR, October 31, 2015 | *College Life*

At least thirty students fell asleep and four others made paper aeroplanes when a guest speaker at a college fest forgot his promise of “keeping the lecture interactive”.

“Two minutes into the lecture, we found out that the man had prepared a PowerPoint presentation. There was no way it could be interactive, and so, I slept,” said one of the students who actually thinks she knows why she went for the session.

“The speaker introduced himself and bravely said he had not planned for the session,” said another student, who had to attend because he was a friend of the event organiser. “Then he said the session would be interactive. But the next moment, he showed us a presentation with 30 slides on the big screen.”

He spoke for the next one hour using the presentation, without being interrupted by sleeping students, we were told.

Sources say some first-year kids had actually believed the speaker and were impressed when he said he had not planned for the session.

The lecture that the students were attending was not titled “How to be successful on Tinder”, probably a reason why the students fell asleep. The actual title is either unknown or incomprehensible, say students who made an attempt to attend.

The event organiser, a final-year student of the college, had promised students that the lecture would be about how to attract audiences.

"Porn ban taught me more about computer hacks than four years of engineering"

SHUBHAM AGARWAL, August 7, 2015 | *College Life*

Context: On August 2, 2015, the government of India [banned access](#) to at least 857 pornographic websites. A backlash, and a popular hashtag #pornban followed on the social media. The ban was partially [revoked](#) later.

Hardik Marwah of Yet Another College of Engineering (YACE) has admitted that he learned more about computer hacks in two days of porn ban than in four years of studying computer science engineering.

The ban on porn sites by the government had left him “high” and “dry”. Instead of giving in to despair, Hardik decided to take matters in his own hand so that he could take his thing in his own hands.

Some of his friends we talked to said it was possibly “the first time” his Google search history showed links not to porn sites but to hacking forums.

NTMN had a brief chat with this self-made man.

NTMN: How did you discover about the ban?

Hardik: Well, it was August 2 when as usual I woke up late to avoid eye contact with my parents, waiting for them to leave for office, and soon after

they left, I sprung from my bed to exercise my nether regions. But for some reason, I could not connect to my favourite porn sites.

I thought it might be a technical glitch because that is what I understood after four years of studying computer science. When something doesn't seem alright, it is probably a glitch.

So, I waited, and in the meantime, logged into 9Gag only to find that even its video section wouldn't load. It took me some time to realise that it was an iniquitous act of ban on porn that was the reason for this blackout.

NTMN: What did you do next?

Hardik: I cried hysterically of course. My life was taken away from me... but then I recalled that I am an engineer, not a good one but I still am an engineer. I took to Google, learned all about bypassing restrictions using proxy sites, hidden ISP address and even how information flows over the internet.

Finally, when I was able to log in to the porn website, it was a satisfaction I had never felt before. I feel that now I can even crack the Google interview.

NTMN: What message do you wish to give to others facing a similar situation?

Hardik: I have learnt that you value something only when it is taken away from you. Have faith and no ban can stop you from accessing your destiny. No one can stop you from watching porn. Not the government, not the society, not your parents, and not even your erectile dysfunction.

Although the government has clarified that only those sites containing child porn and revenge porn will be blocked, sources say that this ban was just a ploy to increase tourism to Khajuraho and promote the *Kamasutra*.

Mother under the impression that son doesn't smoke or drink in college

PRATUL BAGRI, June 30, 2015 | *College Life*

Standing firmly behind her wrong beliefs, a professional mother is under the illusion that her son doesn't smoke or drink in college.

Projecting her laughable views about her own son towards the reporter, Mrs. Dipti Kumar said that her son would “never ever” touch cigarettes and alcohol.

Unable to accept that her son is the biggest charsi on the campus, Mrs. Kumar trusts her son's ability to keep his debauchery hidden from her. “My son is a saint,” said the ill-informed mother. “He even keeps a matchbox with him all the time for emergency *poojas*.”

Good grades = Good morals

Deepak Kumar, the son, whose daily breakfast include *choti* gold flake and leftover Old Monk from night before, is quite proud of misleading his family. “Like any other family, my mother equates good morals to good grades,” said Deepak.

“As long as I maintain my GPA, I am a pandit,” he says.

Deepak is also a proud owner of new respiratory and liver diseases. He is quite pleased to achieve all this at such a young age.

In divine enlightenment during viva, engineering student realises he was being taught magic all along

APOORVA TAPAS, October 15, 2012 | *College Life*

When Harsh Suryavanshi asked his roommate the “how” question, he received the timeless response: “Abbey yede, bas likhne ka, sochne ka nahi! Khush rahega!” So, if no one knows the “how” behind things we study, isn’t it magic we’re being taught?

Until last week, Harsh Suryavanshi was just another engineering student straight out of a Chetan Bhagat novel – avid procrastinator, desperate girlfriend-seeker and occasional alcohol consumer, harbouring a secret passion of becoming a writer or a rock musician. It is with these clichés that Harsh walked in for his final-year viva examination, only to have his world changed by an epiphany: he was actually being taught magic for the last four years!

As he sat there fending off vague questions with vaguer answers about principles and theorems by famous dead people, it dawned on him that the understanding of the principles had died with their creators. Who actually knew exactly how anything works? Books? Teachers? Seniors? Well, certainly not him.

Suddenly he found himself in the midst of a mystical civilisation. Our forefathers discovered the secrets of the universe and passed them on through scriptures. Their instructions were followed and a great dynasty was raised – bridges, gears, amplifiers, processors...the Internet! All of it still works...but somewhere along the line, the “how” part was lost. If no one knows the how, did that not essentially render these creations *magical*?

Harsh was possessed by this revelation. A few formulae muttered, complex algorithms copied and voilà, a brand new creation, which worked just fine...but nobody knew how.

He began going back in time, through the ancient journals his seniors had left him: same diagrams, same flowcharts, same typos. Books too – local authors, foreign authors, Wikipedia... they were all identical; basically just quoting each other. Everyone knew the scriptures by heart, but nobody had the slightest idea as to how it all works.

Harsh was convinced there was a secret magical energy that keeps everything running. He confided in his roommate and asked him the “how” question, only to receive the timeless response such a question provokes: “*Abbey yede, bas likhne ka, sochne ka nahi! Khush rahega!*”

Harsh was in anguish. So much angst and so many feelings, but nobody to listen. There was only one solution – blog about it. And it is this post that has taken the nation by storm.

Hours within publishing it, the post has gone viral. It has stirred an awakening among the youth, who have always suspected something amiss, and have finally found a name for it. Harsh has become an icon, a true philosopher, heralding the new age of magic. He has gathered an immense following that even include some faculty members and noted academicians who have finally come out of the closet and confessed what they had always suspected – it’s all magic.

The Government too, is overjoyed with this development. A former Minister for Magic has even liked Harsh’s Facebook page to show his approval. A hunt for “Muggles” or endangered species of scientists and authentic engineers has begun all over the country. Many are said to be locked up in secret

government facilities for military research and certain elite institutes of Science. They choose to remain underground.

As this idea spreads, engineering infrastructure around the country is beginning to weaken and shake as if doubting its fundamentals...literally. However, the nation is not alarmed as it may just be a manifestation of magic.

Student found with working brain even after four years of engineering, scientists call it a miracle

RISHI AYYER, December 27, 2011 | *College Life*

Miracles are not accepted by Science. However, of late, scientists all over the world are baffled, and (secretly, of course) excited at the prospect of a miracle occurring right before their eyes. Says one scientist from CERN, “Christians believe Jesus was born and walked this earth. Hindus believe Rama fought an epic battle with Ravana. But we have seen nothing of the sort, and we have no reason to believe any of that. However, what you are about to see is nothing short of a miracle. This, though, cannot be explained. It is said even Stephen Hawking is confounded.”

It all started when Ricky Bhattacharjee, a mechanical engineering student from Yet Another College of Engineering (YACE), got placed in NASA as technical analyst for a secret mission to the Sun. However, **after doing his brain scan, NASA doctors say they recorded activity from Ricky’s brain.**

Neurologist Dr. Fisher said: “Yes, I was the first one to notice the activity. It is unheard of. Brain activity in an Indian Engineer after four years of study...We thought there was some error in the machine, so we ran the scan again. But we saw the same waves again: his brain was working.”

Ricky was then subjected to 12 hours of cross-examination to check if he had been planted there by enemy scientists or terrorists or aliens. But they couldn't find any flaw in his story. Dr. Armstrong, an astronaut at NASA, said: “I believe this is the first time in history that any of this has happened. Usually engineers from India come with the standard set of brain patterns with differential equations, finite element methods and a lack of social skills. This was different.”

Ricky will visit an engineering conference in France next week to deliver a talk on how he managed to retain his brain activity despite his education in India. A leaked copy of the speech says: “...the education system in India is designed to damp the brain activity of lakhs of students every year. With the 40–45 courses that an average Indian engineer takes for his degree, the text books are filled with material that slowly but surely destroys all grey cell activity. I was one of the lucky few who never studied from books. As professors never come to class themselves, we can't study from notes, like in the IITs and NITs. That is why they don't lose brain activity either. I studied from the notes of a friend in IIT Bombay. Hence my miracle.”

That may be so, but scientists are still trying to figure out what content in these books damps the brain activity. If they find the source, they might be able to reverse it and create books that would exponentially increase brain activity. Until then, the case of Ricky will be treated with reverence and amazement, and nothing but Divine Intervention can explain why he did not pick up his books like all the other students in his class.

LOVE AND DATING

Tinder crush turns out to be technical glitch, man's self-esteem shattered

ANUBHAV PARSHEERA, September 6, 2015 | *Love and Dating*

Tinder, the popular dating application and one of the more trusted platforms for men who wish to be rejected by women in a discreet and relatively less humiliating manner, finds itself in the midst of controversy in India.

A resident of New Delhi's Karol Bagh, who does not wish to be identified as Shailender Singh, has claimed that Tinder has caused him immense distress in the past few weeks.

"I had just returned from office that fateful night," he described how it began. "Since it was already past 10 pm, I realized there was no point going out of the house for my evening stroll because there would be very few women outside.

"So I did what any self-respecting man would do: I opened Tinder and was stunned at what I found. I had got a match. I didn't know how to react because I had no frame of reference in my life to put this into context."

Male friends shocked

Not knowing how to react to the match, the man called up his male friends who said this sort of incident was unheard of and was an anomaly. After looking up the meaning of 'anomaly', he contacted Tinder, which claimed this might be a technical glitch and that they were willing to compensate Singh for the sudden and false increase in self-esteem it caused.

Singh has claimed that he was unaware that Tinder had this feature. He had assumed it was a handy tool designed for the busy modern man to look at women while staying at home. When asked if he was aware of the left swipe feature, he scratched his patchy beard and replied, “*Hain?*”

For now, Singh has decided to not take legal action and is recovering towards his original self-respect level of zero.

Peace talks cancelled by boyfriend as girl violates ceasefire

PRATUL BAGRI, August 23, 2015 | *Love and Dating*

Keeping up with this regular dance-and-song routine, latest attempts at peace talks by a boyfriend were cancelled on the account of ceasefire violation.

The girl has been guilty of crossing the line-of-control of personal boundaries several times, and intruding on her boyfriend’s personal space, the boy said.

This time, shots were fired when she started complaining about the boyfriend to her male best-friend-forever. The BFF was invited before the talks by the girl, but the boyfriend has made it clear that peace talks cannot happen if any third party is involved.

“Best-friend-forever is a separatist”

The boyfriend has insisted that talks can never happen if she talks to her male best friend before talking to him.

“He is a separatist. He wants to separate us,” the boy said. “I have made it clear time and again that these talks can never happen in an environment full of jealousy. There should be no third party involved. Her male BFF does not have any stake in our relationship.”

Although the boyfriend had always maintained this position, it was the first time that a strong reiteration made it crystal clear where he stood.

The boyfriend issued a stern warning to the girl, that if she continued to talk to separatists the peace talks would not be held. The girl meanwhile said that she cannot “take dictation from anyone” on this issue.

Sources have confirmed that further bedroom cricket matches between the couple have been cancelled.

In unusual market trend, rakhi sales shoot up as Valentine’s Day approaches

TARIKA JAIN, February 13, 2013 | *Love and Dating*

Shopkeepers across the nation have been left dumbfounded this Valentine’s season. Never before in the history of this day has such a phenomenon been noted: an increasing demand for rakhis by girls all over the country.

There have been various speculations to understand the reason behind this strange occurrence. Experts from economics, psychology and sociology are debating over the causes behind this phenomenon.

“Valentine’s Day is overrated. What girls don’t usually see is that it is making them dependent upon the guy’s whims and fancies. This is my way of supporting feminism. No, this has nothing to do with the fact that I have been single all my life,” says a rather flustered Shweta, while 23-year-old Kriti says, “All my friends are doing it. It’s the trend of the day. It’s so cool!”

“The thing is, Valentine’s Day is a Western conspiracy to exploit the Indian markets. They have commodified love and are shamelessly selling it in the stores! The Rakhi symbolizes everything opposite to this,” explains Akanksha.

Heart-broken guys have taken to social media to express their despair. Valentine’s Day for many is that day of the year when they feel empowered enough to ask out the girl they like. But now with the terror of girls taking up their master weapon for a second time in the year, many guys feel scared of stepping outside their homes.

Certain pro-Hindutva groups called this a “much awaited enlightening” of Indian youth. They have expressed hope for a “more pure future” that would be “in concurrence with our glorious past and traditions”.

Even arranged marriages can end up with couples falling in love, says survey

TANAY SUKUMAR, January 30, 2011 | *Love and Dating*

In a huge blow to khap panchayats, a survey has found that even arranged marriages can end up in couples falling in love someday.

The survey claimed that 96% of people who dropped tears at their spouses' deaths in 2010 had their marriages arranged by family. It appears that somehow, love happens even in arranged marriages, the survey said.

"It appears from the survey that love and marriage take place in both arranged marriages and love marriages. Just the order is opposite," says the agency that carried out the survey.

Conservative India has slammed the idea as a fluke with claims that weeping at the spouse's death is a custom and not an indicator of love and attachment.

"Love is an outright outlaw activity," said the sarpanch of a Haryana village in response. He claimed to be a social reformer. "That people should be married off by family, is a custom, because a woman in our India is not a family's permanent property, and a man needs to have children. Where does love come into the picture?"

The sarpanch himself is proudly accused of killing his own daughter for falling in love with a boy in the neighbouring village. About loving his own wife, he says, "No comments."

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneur abandons his startup; joins Infosys to do something different

VISHAL DAYAMA, July 5, 2015 | *Entrepreneurship*

In a historic moment, 22-year-old Amit Kumar, founder of Zulabo app, has quit his own startup to join Infosys.

“I wanted to do something different and Zulabo wasn’t quite that. So, I decided to choose the path not taken,” Amit Kumar said as he resigned from the board of directors yesterday, and accepted his own resignation.

“Of course, that meant joining a huge company which hires engineers like no other,” Amit said. “Infosys has been a pioneer in this field and hence my obvious choice.”

Infosys has welcomed Amit’s step and said this will stop engineers from thinking about any “shitty” startups. The company also said that it will be an inspiration for others to join Infosys like obedient, uncreative engineers.

Entrepreneur sends khaali katora to venture capitalists as his sales pitch

PRATUL BAGRI, September 25, 2015 | *Entrepreneurship*

Cutting through the bullshit and getting straight to the point, a self-proclaimed local entrepreneur is sending *khaali katoras* (empty bowls) to venture capitalists as his sales pitch.

He sends a note inside the bowl: “*Do din se Facebook post boost nahi kara sahib.* (Sir, haven’t boosted my Facebook post for two days.)”

Saying that this is the best presentation he has ever made as it conveys his vision thoroughly, Rajdeep called it a “three-dimensional minimalist PPT deck that accurately informs the VCs what is required from them”.

“Look, investing is a gamble. One can never be sure of returns, if any,” said Rajdeep.

“You can wear a suit and a tie, take the investor to a nice restaurant, whisper sweet nothings in his ear, hoping maybe the guy will let you go to the third base.”

He said further: “I have tried all of this, *lekin aajkal bahot nakhre ho gaye hain saalon ke* (but these idiots throw many tantrums these days). At the end of the day, there is no definitive proof that an idea will see the returns or not. That is why I have stopped trying to convince them. I know my idea is great and I just need money. Hence, I am now sending empty *katoras* to venture capitalists.”

He added: “*Bhai trust karo aur bhiksha de do.* (Dude, trust me and pay up.) I think it is a bold move and conveys the type of person I am.”

Guy marrying in hope that dowry will raise enough funds to kickstart his startup

PRATUL BAGRI, August 11, 2015 | *Entrepreneurship*

Calling it a new radical method of fundraising, Prashant Joshi, a self-proclaimed entrepreneur, is pinning his start-up ambitions on the dowry he will extort from his lucky wife.

Saying that he doesn't "need no venture capitalist", Joshi said he was really looking forward to emotionally blackmailing dowry from his beautiful life partner-to-be.

"The dowry concept will pivot and will take a new direction," he said in a viral Facebook post. "It will no longer be a curse but an extorted angel investment."

Family members and marketers have called this move a stroke of genius. "I think we have just found a new market," said a marketing man who markets for a living.

"There is a huge untapped potential here, this can radically change how bachelors raise funds for their startups, and this will soon expand to married men too. Just get a divorce and marry again," said the marketing man who repeatedly said he is an IIM alumnus.

When we met Joshi, he was updating the PPT deck he will pitch to the potential in-laws regarding the daughter transaction.

Innovative Business Plan: Beggar plans to produce babies to beg more, earn more

TANAY SUKUMAR, October 16, 2011 | *Entrepreneurship*

A beggar who has profitably used the red traffic light signal near Connaught Place to earn a lot of revenue has announced bigger plans ahead. He has come up with a business model to produce babies that would grow up and earn more by begging more.

The man calls it a “nature-funded entrepreneurship venture”, expected to start giving good returns as soon as a baby is born.

Thirty-year-old Shashwat Kumar, a post-graduate from Institute of Planned Management in India, has presented his B-Plan in the Annual All-Asia Entrepreneurship Awards. Kumar has been a beggar ever since the free laptop he got from his alma mater crashed, and he was unable to post his résumé on job websites.

Shashwat presented his B-Plan as a one-man team. He said in his presentation, “Nowadays, being a beggar is becoming a difficult task, as people are not ready to give alms. However, my research over the past few months shows that sending a woman with a baby makes some hearts melt. I have decided to exploit this human behaviour.”

Kumar presented some statistics of money earned in six conditions: (1) a man begging, (2) a woman begging, (3) a woman begging with a child in her lap, (4) a child begging, (5) a child begging while faking disabilities, (6) a woman begging with a disabled child in the lap. **While the average income in the first case was a rupee a day, it soared to Rs 175 a day in the sixth case.**

Some excerpts from Shashwat Kumar's path-breaking Business Model titled "Producing a Begging Baby: Playing With Human Sympathy Profitably":

Mission. To give the family a new earning member, without bothering about the nation's population and the newborn's future.

Product Description. *Homo sapiens*, child (hereby referred to as "product")

Market Analysis. There are too many beggars who market their frail looks and tears and fake disabilities for a sustainable living by using human psychology. However, the earnings are known to increase greatly by the presence of a child.

Market Growth. The revenue-earning ability of the product (i.e. child) will decline as its age increases. However, my B-Plan suggests two remedial measures: (1) *Another baby may be produced around this very time.* This will not only maximise revenue, but will also cover up the declining marketability of the earlier product. (2) *The earlier product may be married and encouraged to produce more similar products to maximise revenue.*

Risks. (1) *The diversion of the product towards education and Steve Jobs-like ambitious ventures.* This risk may be eliminated by not providing any exposure to education. (2) *The death of a child in a road accident while begging.* It is not a risk as such; another baby can be produced in time.

Additional Benefits. (1) *The baby gets injured, ill, or becomes disabled.* The chances of this are endless, since the child is not to be provided good food for the money he earns. It works as a reward, as people get more sympathised to such kids and are likely to give more money. (2) *Pickpocketing.* If the child can be taught pickpocketing, it gives an extra source of revenue.

Strategy. (1) *Being Health-conscious:* Not feeding children much makes them more marketable, (2) *Other women:* Using several other women beggars to carry the same child in the lap by turns, while the mother gets a commission from

those other women. This increases the possibility of earnings. (3) *Extra earnings during winter*: Using naked children in winter-time can be profitably used to play with people's sympathy.

Personnel/Resources Required. Initially, a begging man needs a begging woman – and vice-versa – to kickstart the project. Since the venture is nature-funded, nothing more is required. Well-planned setups can afford a psychological consultant. A begging bowl. Clothes torn skilfully. Travelling funds to transport to tourist places for more earnings. Foul-smelling deodorants to enhance foul smell.

Break-even point. Using the product's marketability skilfully at congested traffic lights can allow profits as soon as within six months.

Although Shashwat Kumar's Business Plan could not grab any of the top three positions at the award function, his business plan has suddenly become popular among beggars on Indian streets. "I heard of this business plan on television yesterday at our underground bungalow," we overheard a begging mafia agent saying to another in the capital.

POPULAR CULTURE

- Cinema -

"Can forgive Salman for killing people as long as he fulfils my entertainment quota," Bhai fans admit

PRATUL BAGRI, July 17, 2015 | *Cinema*

Salman Khan fans of the #BhaiRoxx fame have admitted that they can look over the superstar for allegedly killing a man and maiming four while driving drunk – as long as bhai meets their amusement needs.

Celebrating Eid by watching *Bajrangi Bhaijaan*, starring a criminal who used his influence to strong-arm his driver and evade the justice system, bhai fans have admitted that they just love such ostentatious display of money and power.

"I don't know the man bhai killed, he bears no relation to me and provides no value in my life, but, I do know Salman," said Ahmed, a hardcore fan.

"Salman enriches my life by providing me with low brow movies," he said further. "His womanizer charms and alcoholic character is very endearing to me. Frankly, to me, his charisma is greater than his heinous crimes. He can drive over innocent people, evade the justice system and force his lowly servant – his driver – to take the fall, as long as he provides me with two hours of amusement every other week."

"Celebrities should not pay for their crimes."

Shruti, a bhai fangirl, simply does not understand the logic behind punishing celebrities for their crimes.

“Why does the Constitution want celebrities to pay for their acts like normal people do?” she wondered. “They provide value to such a large audience and frankly their talent will be wasted behind the bars. What good are they there?”

Her friend Rahul chipped in: “Let’s say, celebrities should be given leeway for 10 unintentional killings and five culpable homicides with intention to kill – after that they can be tried. I don’t think they need to be tried for the small ones like illegal use of arms and poaching. Is it the stupid Black Buck that provides me with such amazing movies? No, it’s Salman.”

Salman fans all over the world have flocked in masses to watch *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* to help fill up his coffers.

Maids patent their names, fearing Bollywood item numbers may use them next

KUMAR PRATIK, December 22, 2011 | *Cinema*

Item numbers have, of late, taken the country by storm and caused a domino effect in the society. NTMN took charge to explore the phenomenon, and it led to some startling discoveries.

Maids become possessive of their names

Several maids are increasingly filing for patents for their names, fearing that the next Bollywood item number will use them. Sex workers and C-grade actresses have also been offended, and have said they should get some screen time as these songs are inspired by them. “I am proud that Katrina used my name for herself,”

admitted Sheila, who is a housemaid in a locality of Indore. “But then, I also want some benefits out of this.”

Munni, a leading sex worker in the suburbs of Mumbai, said: “*Haan haan, main badnaam hun. Isme itna excited hone ki kya zarurat hai?* Business has definitely boosted after the song, but I was not given any due credit. I hate plagiarists, I really do. Do you have the slightest idea how weird it is to call people on their cell-phones and hear their caller-tune as *Munni badnaam hui darling tere liye?*”

Munni is adamant that she will charge the next filmmaker who uses her name in an item song a royalty of at least Rs 5 crore annually.

Item numbers as a dance form

Leading dance schools are also declaring item numbers a recognised dance-form in their syllabi. At Munni-Sheila Adventures Limited in Pune, students can sign up for an item number course for a very nominal fee. The pre-requisites, according to the institute’s website, are ‘hot-bod, preferably 38-24-38’ and ‘a no-objection-certificate from parents’. Students not fulfilling the figure criterion can sign up for a gymnasium combo offer.

The institute’s Mumbai branch has also roped in Rajinikanth’s housemaid as a guest teacher. Bollywood historians believe that she invented item numbers when shivered so violently at the mention of Rajinikanth’s name that it became a new dance form in itself.

Filmmaker struggles to write logical script after he decided to drop item song from movie

PRIYANKA MEHTA, February 21, 2013 | *Cinema*

A popular Bollywood director has apparently taken up the daring job of working on a commercial “masala” movie that will surprisingly not have (wait for it) even a single item song.

He confirmed this yesterday: “Though this film’s purpose will be to entertain, it will have a coherent and intelligible plotline, and will employ no item songs. We are being really careful about how to build up the action, because now the viewer has learned to gauge and predict exactly when an item song will make an appearance. We must not lead them on, but at the same time maintain their interest.”

This move was inspired by the idea that item songs may actually be demeaning towards women, the director’s friends said. Without an item song, the movie will require a detailed and logical script – something that remains unexplored.

“It will be difficult,” the filmmaker said. “We will have to actually frame and detail a plot. Our audiences are not really used to this kind of thought-provoking progression in films. Logical twists and turns might befuddle them. So we have to be really careful about how we go about it.”

Some moviegoers we talked to – unlike what one would expect – are happy about this decision. A 20-year-old engineering student was more concerned for the filmmaker himself: “We’re at a stage in moviemaking where even serious genres like crime utilise item songs. How will this movie be able to survive if it markets itself as entertainment but then shows no item songs?” It was just a coincidence that this engineering student was male.

Will the film survive without an item song? Single-screen theatres are apprehensive. One theatre owner said: “Movies must have something tasteful for viewers to work at the box office. We are doing very well nowadays since most movies either have inane action or – the other side of the spectrum – item songs. Let’s hope that this movie has senseless action scenes or at least some slapstick comedic lines.”

Some renowned film critics are wondering if the filmmaker will now think of another method to put in what they call “soft porn”. “Item songs are increasingly becoming a medium for soft porn, encouraging viewers to become voyeurs,” a leading reviewer said. “This is what rakes in so many eyeballs. With the absence of such songs, we can’t help thinking whether they’ve developed some other method to relay the same...stuff.”

- Media -

Mysterious panellist speaks for nine straight seconds uninterrupted on Arnab’s show

JAY SHAH, May 15, 2014 | *Media*

Arnab Goswami was left puzzled last night as a panellist on his prime time debate show spoke for nine seconds uninterrupted. Officials from the Limca Book of Records are reviewing the footage of the incident and are expected to make a formal announcement soon.

Who is this mysterious man who can silence Arnab Goswami?

Viewers report that Arnab kept looking anxiously towards his watch as the precious seconds ticked by, but he just couldn't find the words to stop the panellist.

The panellist seemed all set to continue speaking for several more seconds when he made a grammatical error. The anchor swiftly acted and started repeatedly bellowing the words "One Minute". He then proceeded to systematically disparage the panellist until he was rendered completely speechless. Arnab Goswami then discreetly wiped the sweat from his brow.

Goswami to scale up hostility and arrogance to avoid a repeat

The event left viewers stunned and confused. Goswami's channel hastily published an apology to viewers for this unprecedented slip-up. The channel promised that Arnab would turn up his hostility and arrogance to the maximum level so that such a situation doesn't present itself again. The channel said future panellists would be summarily ignored after a sharp four and three-quarter seconds of speaking at a stretch.

Insider sources said the channel had to respond immediately because the real cause of concern was that the panellist was actually making sense while he was speaking.

Excited TV reporter falls into borewell while covering news about a child who fell in it

TANAY SUKUMAR, June 8, 2010 | *Media*

A news channel reporter has not yet been rescued after he fell inside a borewell in the village of Anarkali, 10 km from Agra. The incident happened when the reporter, Vinod Singh, was covering a story about a five-year-old girl, Princess, who had fallen into the same borewell earlier in the day.

It has been 40 hours since the girl fell into the borewell. Singh's channel has put a digital timer on its screen to show that how long it has been since the reporter fell. The channel, however, still maintains the headline as, "*Princess ko bachaana hai*" (Save Princess).

Television footage shows Singh reporting in an excited and enthusiastic manner. He repeatedly bent down to peep inside the large hole drilled to reach the girl. His left foot slipped during one such attempt, when the newsroom anchor apparently shouted his name loudly because his voice could not be heard properly.

There were unconfirmed reports that some army personnel, who were called to rescue the girl, have been bribed by the television channel to rescue the reporter before the girl. According to sources, this was done so that the rescued reporter could cover the news of the child being rescued, since the channel has no substitute reporters to cover this whole incident.

The last time a similar event happened in Madhya Pradesh, a toilet break at the exact moment had apparently caused the channel's photographer to miss the videos of the child being rescued. The channel is eager not to miss it this time.

Our source with the channel said on condition of anonymity: “The CEO wants an alive Vinod Singh to cover the rescue of the girl, whether live or dead. However, efforts are being made to select an insane, noisy and excitable correspondent to be sent to Agra as soon as possible.”

The incident has not discouraged reporters from other channels, and the place is now intolerably noisy, with each reporter trying to put forth his noisiest voice and the most fake sympathy for the parents of the girl. The parents of the girl are asking the state government to pay compensation and a place in Bollywood for Princess if she is taken out safely.

- Cricket -

Duckworth and Lewis admit they never intended to provide fair results in cricket matches

TANAY SUKUMAR, May 5, 2010 | *Cricket*

Frank Duckworth and Tony Lewis have admitted in an interview to a UK magazine that they never actually intended to provide proper results in cricket matches disrupted by rain.

The two British statisticians are known for the famous Duckworth-Lewis method (D/L Method), which is used to decide the result of rain-interrupted cricket matches. The two have confessed they have been fooling the cricketing world for the last two decades.

“The idea behind our method is simple,” Lewis said. “Those who know cricket don’t know maths. And those who know maths have nothing to do with cricket.

We took advantage of this idea and had this comic thought of fooling the world by mixing maths with cricket.”

“Yeah, we are cheats but we don’t take responsibility of sending various teams out of World Cups due to rain,” Duckworth told the magazine. “We never actually intended to give fair results to cricket matches. We just wanted to be on the TV news channels every time a team lost because of our method.”

Sachin Tendulkar to donate half of his runs to lesser batsmen and charity

TANAY SUKUMAR, December 20, 2010 | *Cricket*

Indian batting star Sachin Tendulkar has announced that he would soon be giving away (“donating”) half of his runs to lesser batsmen and to charity. Tendulkar made the decision after reaching his 50th Test century.

Tendulkar said he was donating his runs because a lot of energy was spent in hundreds of television debates and marketplace discussions over who is the greatest batsman in the world.

“Most people who discuss the greatest batsman ever, have no idea of cricket at all, so they have only statistics and primary-level math at their defence,” the Little Master told reporters. “If I have fewer runs to my name, I would no longer be considered ‘great’ by them, so no discussions. Some runs will also go to charity, since there are fans to whom my runs matter more than a good state of life. It would be great to see how they use my runs to improve their lives.”

Sachin, being the God of cricket, is confident he will be able to manage the transfer of runs from his account to the accounts of other cricketers.

Saddened by Sachin's retirement, 50-over Cricket also calls it quits

MAYANK LODHA, December 25, 2012 | *Cricket*

Following the ODI retirement of Sachin Tendulkar, the sport of Cricket has also decided to end its foray in the 50-over format with immediate effect.

“I have decided to retire from the one-day format as now it serves no real purpose, given that Tendulkar will not be playing,” Cricket said in a statement. “However, I will continue playing Tests to prepare for the all-important IPL.”

Cricket said the decision was made under no pressure whatsoever. The full statement reads:

I began my journey in the 1970s, the same era when He was born. Back then, people like Sunil Gavaskar, Ravi Shastri and Geoffrey Boycott used to bore crowds and put people to sleep by playing over after over, and I wondered what my purpose was. It was only when He started playing that I discovered myself. And then, I even got people playing me in coloured uniforms, even though I never liked the Australian Yellow or the ridiculously red West Indian uniform.

But soon, I was the in-thing and life was exciting, thanks to Him and His exploits on the field. As against *paan*-chewing office babus and enthusiastic young boys, even girls now came in throngs to watch me. How I blushed when they said they were “Cricket” lovers. Sigh, those were the days.

Like He did to millions in His country, He filled me also with great joy when he went berserk against the yellow yellow dirty fellow Australians in Sharjah. He also chose to save His best for my premier tournament, the World Cup. I will never forget the pride and gratitude I felt when everyone dedicated India’s victory in my 2011 World Cup to Him. Whom will India now dedicate its rare victories to, now that he is gone? Who will they play World Cups for?

Since yesterday, I am having bad dreams where Ravindra Jadeja and Piyush Chawla’s performances are being applauded and cheered. Moreover, I also heard that Raju from Faridabad, Pappu from Bhopal and even Rosy from Mumbai will never watch me again. I will be played in empty stadiums and they will have no option but to show players scratching their crotches, as there will be no advertisements. Only DD-1 will telecast my matches because no one watches it anyway. No, I would rather face an honourable death of my own choosing than be insulted like that.

I would like to give my best to my older cousin, Test Cricket and my foster brother, the IPL, who will be lucky to be graced by His presence while I rot alone. Shahid Afridi has suggested that the first retirement is no fun, and that I should take at least 17 retirements before ending my career. But no, I shall come back only when God’s own son, Arjun Tendulkar, decides to choose me as a career.

Thank you for all the good times, God.

Sincerely, ODI Cricket.

Rains declared a natural disaster in South Africa after World Cup loss

KUMAR PRATIK, March 24, 2015 | *Cricket*

After yet another loss in the knockout stage of the Cricket World Cup, the South African government has moved swiftly to declare rains a natural disaster.

“People affected by rains, showers and drizzles will now be able to claim miniature World Cup toys as government compensation,” said a government release. Intelligence agencies are reportedly having urgent discussions on whether to declare Frank Duckworth and Tony Lewis a terrorist outfit.

Policymakers believe that declaring rains a natural disaster will help the country prepare better for future World Cups with disaster management techniques against rain, such as raincoats, umbrellas and indoor stadiums. Waterproof helmets were mooted by a journalist as a tongue-in-cheek comment but he was not taken kindly by the government spokesperson.

Choking declared as national disease; Klusener vindicated

South Africa has also declared choking as the national disease after Dale Steyn was diagnosed with it today evening. Victim Zero of the disease, Lance Klusener, is said to have jumped at the declaration, and was heard saying in a celebratory tone at a bar: “I told you so, but you thought I was mad! Who is mad now?”

The government believes the country might just be able to come up with a cure in time for the next World Cup.

(Concept: Pratul Bagri)

On a Time Machine with IPL, to the year 2084

TANAY SUKUMAR, and ANKUR NIGAM, January 9, 2011 | *Cricket*

(This story is set in the future.)

December 23, 2084

“Batsmen will decide which bowlers they want to play.”

“Fielding restrictions will be decided by the highest bidder during the IPL auction.”

“Cheerleaders will be tested and then selected by Boney Tiwari, grandson of late Congressman N D Tiwari.”

These are the new additions to Indian Premier League (IPL), as its 150th edition goes underway today. It has been a remarkable journey that began with the ambitious Lalit Modi in 2008, with just eight teams, eight cities, eight million missing dollars, played once a year for 50 days, which has now become the greatest sporting event ever.

In 2084, with seventy-six teams from nations like Lesotho, Guatemala, Burkina Faso, Montenegro, Somalia, we realise the mammoth development in cricket. In affectionate remembrance of Vijay Mallya, the beautiful trophy is

now replaced by a 1-day-and-11-nights free stay with the top 500 Kingfisher swimsuit suitless models.

The IPL's increasing worth over the years has allowed India to remain poor and miserable even at the approaching end of the 21st century (but the idea of "poor" and "rich" has changed, thanks to the Watching Cricket As A Profession Act, 2055).

We take a look at the glowing history of IPL and how it has changed the world since it began with ancient cheerleaders in full clothes:

2008: The first season of IPL played, within merely 40-odd days and among eight teams. Cynics frowned at the unprecedented human-trafficking of cricketers for big money. They also felt the T20 style would corrupt cricket. But Modi took it upon himself to prove that it was not the cricket going corrupt.

2019: The number of teams increased to have a team from each Indian state. The debut of the practice of awarding ten free hits to the team owned by the sexier Bollywood celebrity. Ravi Shastri suspended from commentary after he says during a match, "I think the first and last twenty overs will be extremely crucial for each team."

2028: BCCI announces that it is the new ICC and IPL is the new World Cup, which had already died a shameful death after Bermuda Triangle beat Pakistan Non-State Actors XI in the 2027 final. International cricket becomes outlaw.

2038: BCCI bribes NASA to slow down the earth's motion by half, so that more days could be accommodated in a year, and more hours in a day. By this time, cricket had become the life in India, instead of a sport. People were leaving jobs everywhere, and legalised betting had become the new agriculture.

2040: Telecast rights of IPL given to a new channel. It marks the dawn of an era in which cricket is being shown in between commercials. In a landmark Bill passed in the Parliament, cricketers are now allowed to wear their ad costumes on the field for live shooting, and cheerleaders are allowed to drop their clothes on every boundary hit. The dancing position of cheerleaders is set to the 30-yard circle mark, to make the battle more even between the batsman and the bowler. Billy Bowden comes out of retirement to be able to dance again at square leg.

The telecast remained a problem till 2055. The advertisements meant all that was being played was never being shown to TV viewers. Meanwhile, 2046 was the first time non-Indian teams featured in IPL. The 2040s also saw the practice of every IPL closing ceremony being immediately followed by an IPL inauguration ceremony.

2055: The telecast problem is solved as the government comes out with a social welfare scheme through an Act of Parliament which allows every Indian a bonanza prize of Rs 17 lakh cash for watching an IPL match on the ground. Number of teams becomes 47, and the game is played 400 days a year.

Cricket thus changed the life of millions of deprived Indians.

The 2070s: Over the seventies, cricket changed another important thing. Hindus and Muslims were no more the common religions. Zanzibar Zombies and Ohio Omelettes were. Atheism and agnosticism were obliterated, as everyone followed one team or the other.

IPL, today: India which was already a cricketing powerhouse by 2010, has now, in 2084, become the Big Brother of George Orwell's 1984 fame. Cricket is now the best medicine, and we're on a permanent dose of that medicine.

As two teams clash on the ground of Mahanagar Palika Shiksha Niketan, Kanpur Dehat, tonight, somewhere in a remote town named [Modinagar](#), an old

man (God hasn't called him yet after seeing how he cheated the cheaters of BCCI) is watching all this with a wry smile on his face. When the 76 teams will battle it out over the next week in 967 matches in this edition, no one will take notice which team wins. For, what is to be celebrated is the victory of India's first, second and third love — cricket, cheerleaders, and corruption (not necessarily in the same order), as all 20th century and early 21st century professions find themselves non-existent now.

I wish to play World Cup 2031: Tendulkar

TANAY SUKUMAR, November 28, 2009 | *Cricket*

(This story is set in the future.)

Trivia: *This is the first story ever published by News That Matters Not. It was published on the author's personal blog on Nov 28, 2009, and a week later, was migrated to what became one of the premier news satire websites during 2010–2014.*

Context: *Indian cricket star Sachin Tendulkar had not retired when this piece was written. (He retired from international cricket in 2012.) The interview in this piece is set in the year 2029, assuming Tendulkar has still not retired.*

Sachin Tendulkar in an exclusive chat with NTMN on completing 40 years in cricket

November 15, 2029, Mumbai.

Recently knighted Sir Sachin Tendulkar, not only India's best batsman but also of world cricket (and now universal cricket), has completed his 40 years in

cricket today. Unlike what happened on the 20th and 30th anniversary celebrations, Tendulkar has not been able to give any interviews to the media on this accomplishment due to the tight cricketing schedule, but News That Matters Not, managed to have a chat with the “Endless Master” (formerly the “Little Master”) during the tea-time on Day Four of the ongoing Test between the ICC-Earth XI and the ICC-Moon XI.

NTMN: Sachin, many many congratulations on behalf of the NTMN team and the whole of India on completing four long decades in cricket.

Sir Sachin Tendulkar: Thanks a lot. But please make it fast, I need to take the field after tea, just 5 minutes.

NTMN: Okay, don't worry sir. But how does it feel to have been playing a sport for such a long time? How has the tag of “Endless Master” replacing “Little Master” affected you personally?

ST: Oh it's been a great journey. The word Master is overwhelming, but I feel Little was a more lovely adjective.

NTMN: But you aren't little anymore! I see you turning 56 this April, and you are by far the oldest playing cricketer in the...

ST: But I am enjoying my game, and I love the idea of playing for my country. I believe I still have a lot of cricket left in me.

NTMN: Do you see yourself playing in World Cup 2031 in Antarctica?

ST: Oh why not? Moreover, it will be great to have such a big cricket event in Antarctica, now that they have such a large cricket-loving population there.... it will certainly be a relief to play in 15 degree temperatures, now that it's gone to 55-60 degrees everywhere else!

NTMN: What do you have to say about the change in the game over the last 40 years?

ST: The game has obviously undergone huge changes... we have just 1 day gaps in between consecutive Tests, and playing 15-match T20 series in 6 days... it's really testing. The robot umpires ICC introduced have been giving correct lbw decisions for 5 years now... the One1 format has made the game shorter than ever.

NTMN: How do you maintain such high levels of fitness... playing at the age of 56 is really amazing!

ST: Oh yes. You get used to it... there have been serious injuries no doubt but I always remained focussed... the basketball elbow injury that kept me out for 5 years really made me tense, but I was happy to be back on the field for the 2023 World Cup.

NTMN: I see you are in a hurry... but don't worry they can put up a substitute fielder instead of you. Let's talk about family and friends... how do you look at their role behind such a long career? Your son plays with you in the national team...

ST: Family has played a huge part. Anjali keeps me motivated... good to see my son as part of the Indian team and to share the dressing room with him.

NTMN: What do you say about Vinod Kambli's latest comment about you as a friend in the 18th season of *Sach Ka Saamna*?

ST: Vinod is a very dear friend... but I can't really help him play anymore, he is nearing the age of 60, isn't he...

NTMN: 49682 Test runs, over 60000 ODI runs, 195 international centuries.... where do you see yourself end up with when you retire? And is there anything you haven't accomplished yet as a player?

ST: I have a lot of cricket left ... let's see where I end up with! My wish remains to win the World Cup for India... it was sad I wasn't on the Indian team that won the Cup in 2019 due to injury, but I surely want to play in 2031.

NTMN: What after cricket, ... after retirement? Your former teammates Dravid, MS Dhoni, Pragyan Ojha, Munaf Patel, to name a few – are commentators now after long illustrious careers.

ST: No commentating for me... a TV channel CEO told me my voice is not loud enough for effective commentating (*laughs loudly*).

NTMN: The most memorable moment in these 40 years?

ST: Getting the 100th Test century, being on the spaceship to the Moon for the first-ever cricket match there, and launching my ice statue in Madame Lissaud's.

NTMN: Once again, congratulations for this feat. May the Indians see more of the Endless Master in the years to come. You may go and play now. All the best.

ST: Thanks a lot.

- Other Celebrities -

Govt plans to provide one free Chetan Bhagat book to every family to raise literacy rates

TANAY SUKUMAR, BIJENDER SHEORAN and SASWATA DE, August 9, 2012 |
Other Celebrities

Along with [mobile phones](#) to every poor family, the government will also distribute free Chetan Bhagat novels

The government will soon distribute one Chetan Bhagat novel free-of-cost to every family, in a desperate bid to increase literacy rates in India. The Rs-1,200-crore scheme will help the bestselling author reach all towns and villages of the country.

The government believes that this scheme may actually work, mainly because a survey indicates that it is because of Chetan Bhagat's novels that most engineering students today think they are well-versed in English. The announcement is likely to be made by Prime Minister this Independence Day.

The Chetan Bhagat scheme ("Education 2020 Yojana") is expected to give basic English education to readers who have been unable to move beyond the English alphabet and some basic words. A PMO insider said that other books like *English for Nursery Kids*, *Learn English in 30 Days*, and *Rapidex English Tutor* were also considered, before they settled down with Chetan Bhagat's novels.

Reportedly, what worked in Bhagat's favour was that his books would look more interesting to the readers. "The reader will have IIT dreams from a very early stage, and this will help us create engineers out of even just-literate people," a source said.

Critics are not amused. An English professor from Delhi University said:
“What after people have mastered all the 370 words used repetitively in the CB novels...each word being of length up to but not exceeding five letters? Is that level of education sufficient to, say, compose a 140-character-pun on Twitter? If not, what is the use of such education?”

Young writer following the Chetan Bhagat model loses all female friends

TANAY SUKUMAR, January 7, 2011 | *Other Celebrities*

A young writer has lost all his female friends after he tried to emulate Chetan Bhagat while writing a light campus novel presenting girls, love and relationships in bad light.

At bookstores as well, Saurav Ahluwalia’s novel *Hey, I Love You ‘Coz You Are Damn Hot* is getting no buyers, as its copies are easily lost in the crowd of other similarly-named novels. Ahluwalia, 21, is a student of IIT Kanpur and is doing a B. Tech. in English Grammar Engineering. The 278-page novel, his first, was published two months ago.

“I seriously didn’t expect this kind of response,” he said. “I dream of becoming a successful writer, but this one has backfired. I don’t know why, but my female friends are suddenly upset with me. It took me three years, eleven girlfriends and close observation of dozens of girls to be able to write this, but it seems to have paid off nothing! Even copying Chetan Bhagat’s whole paragraphs in a chapter seems to have not worked.”

The book's first edition was published with the label "No. 1 Bestseller" on its cover. Ahluwalia considers Bhagat, a bestselling author, his idol, and following his example, he had joined IIT only to be able to become a writer.

"Even bloggers are more popular than Saurav Ahluwalia," said a bookstore owner. "Such books don't sell at our store much. If someone picks them up, it's only teenagers who read specific paragraphs in groups. Yesterday only, a schoolboy came and asked for a copy of *Hey I Love You...* and took out a chapter, which his friends read and giggled out a lot."

A female friend of the author talked to us, saying she thought him to be a clean person, but the way he described several erotic scenes in the novel show how dirty he is. She felt disgusted, she said.

Chetan Bhagat himself, who reads books by the new young authors to take inspiration for his later books with filmy content, said about Ahluwalia, "He is just another guy who didn't realise that shit makes its presence felt only once. After that it goes down the pipe and in the drain. I was the shit who people read first. So these guys better sell their stories to me, and I'll write them."