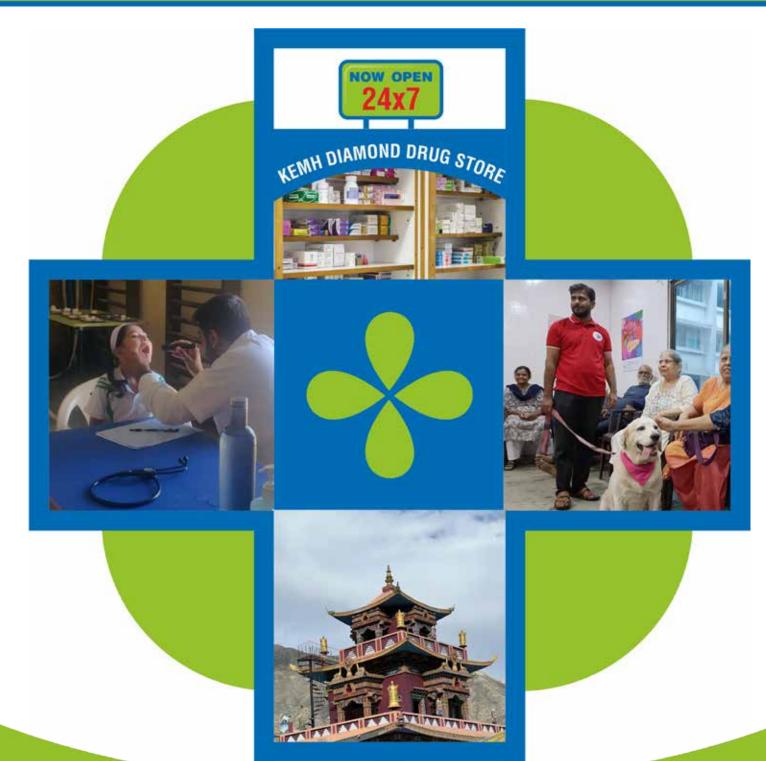
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2023 JULY







Quality and ethics in patient care



infoKEM Newsletter JULY 2023 Issue 97



Wilson Disease is a rare genetic disorder that causes copper to accumulate in the liver, brain and other vital organs. It affects approximately 1 in 30,000 people worldwide. Most people with Wilson disease are diagnosed between the ages of 5 and 35, but it can affect younger and older people, as well.

Copper is a trace metal which is present in many foods. Everyone needs small amounts of copper to remain healthy. Normally the body can get rid of any excess copper that is not required by the body. However in patients with Wilson Disease, due to their genetic defect, the body is not able to get rid of this excess copper and so it builds up in the body. Too much copper in the liver is harmful and leads to liver damage causing jaundice, swelling of feet and abdomen, anaemia, etc. Similarly excess copper in brain causes damage to brain tissue leading to slowness of movement, drooling of saliva, change in speech, difficulty in speaking, swallowing, writing, walking, doing school work, having depression, anxiety or mood swings.

As the genetic defect is present at birth, copper deposition in the body starts very early in life. However it takes a few years for copper to build up to a level where it causes significant damage and the patient starts getting problems.

Besides primarily affecting the liver and brain, Wilson Disease can also cause problems in the kidneys, bones, eyes and occasionally other organs in the body. Being a genetic disease, there could be another family member who has been diagnosed to have Wilson Disease or have signs and symptoms suggestive of it.

It is important to diagnose Wilson disease as early as possible so that treatment can be started before there is permanent brain damage and serious liver disease. Wilson disease is diagnosed based upon a detailed patient history, thorough medical evaluation, and specialised laboratory tests. Blood, urine and eye tests are usually required to make a diagnosis. Some patients require additional tests like liver biopsy, MRI brain, etc. If diagnosed early, Wilson Disease can be well treated with medications that remove copper from the body. These medications however, need to be taken life-long. If the liver disease is advanced, then a liver transplantation is required.



DR. ASHISH BAVDEKAR Acting Director & Consultant - Paediatrics





Ovarian Rejuvenation

Ovarian rejuvenation is a relatively newer procedure in ART to treat ageing ovaries in patients with premature ovarian failure. It allows the patient to use her own oocytes to conceive. Ovaries play a crucial role in IVF treatment. Good ovarian function equals more healthy eggs, more chance of good quality embryos and thereby better pregnancy rates.

The aim of ovarian rejuvenation is to reactivate the stem cells and follicles in the ovary to improve ovarian response in assisted reproduction treatments.

This therapy is carried out through bio-stimulation with plasma rich in platelets (PRP)

What is PRP?

Platelet-rich plasma is obtained from the patient's own blood. It contains high concentration of platelets and is obtained after separating the components of a blood sample by centrifugation. PRP, once activated, triggers processes that produce the release of Growth Factors (GFs).

Growth factors stimulate the body's own mechanisms for repairing damaged or deteriorated tissue. In this specific case, restoration and rejuvenation of the ovaries is brought about by PRP instillation

How is PRP prepared?

PRP preparation is done in 4 steps:

- Step 1: Taking blood from the patient
- Step 2: Separation of platelets and selection by centrifugation
- **Step 3:** Release of growth factors (GF)
- Step 4: Injection of PRP into the ovaries



Which patients are eligible for ovarian rejuvenation?

- **1.** Patients with low ovarian reserve
- 2. Poor egg quality
- 3. Premature ovarian failure
- **4.** High rates of oocyte aneuploidy



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What are the advantages of this procedure?

1. It is prepared from the patient's own blood, so no outside drug or material is injected into the body

2. It is a very simple & relatively inexpensive process.

Are there any side-effects?

No. There are no side effects related to the procedure

What precautions are necessary post procedure?

- 1. Continuation of medication
- 2. Avoid vaginal douching

What are the limitations of this procedure?

- 1. It is not a sure shot procedure. The result is variable in different patients.
- 2. It is not a permanent cure.
- 3. The beneficial effect reduces over a period of time

Recent evidence states that supplementation with PRP may restore ovarian function, enabling the reactivation of folliculogenesis process and reduction in FSH which can lead to a better IVF outcome. However, the evidence for clinical application of intraovarian PRP injection is still undergoing trials and requires further elucidation.



DR. MUGDHA PARASNIS Head of Department Tata Centre for Reproductive Health





EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Animal Assisted Therapy

An "Animal Assisted Therapy" (AAT) guest session was organised on 26th July, 2023 for the Parkinson's Disease (PD) Support Group in collaboration with the BKP- PDMDS(?? long form). The group meets every week. About twenty patients from KEM and Deenanath Mangeshkar Hospital and their caregivers attended the program, along with several hospital executives



and staff from the Psychiatry and Child Development Centre. The session was conducted by Tanushree Rakshit (Canine Behaviourist and Dog Trainer) and her team at Pro-Paws Academy.





This was a one of a kind experience for our patients and staff ,where they got to interact with two gentle, friendly and well trained therapy dogs- Momo and Hazel. AAT harnesses the healing power of animals to provide comfort, companionship and support and this is exactly what all the attendees experienced in the two hour session.

Initially, Tanushree had the patients familiarize themselves with the therapy dogs. The patients then interacted and bonded with the dogs over a few activities, which included motor skills and balance activities. By the end of the session patients experienced elevated moods, reduction in stress and a feeling of peace.







EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Magic Show for Children

The Mukul Madhav Foundation organised a Magic Show for paediatric patients in celebration of their 25th founders' day.



Retirement Function

This was held on 27th July, 2023 for Ms. Alpana Yadav (Staff Nurse Gr- I).







EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Vikhe Patil School Camp by KEM Hospital

The Health Checkup Camp at Vikhe Patil School Lohegaon, conducted by KEM hospital Pune from 3rd to 5th July 2023, proved to be a resounding success in promoting the well-being of students from Junior KG to 10th standard. Dr. Anand Kawade, a distinguished Paediatrics specialist, inaugurated the camp, lending his expertise to benefit the young attendees.

During the camp, vital health checks such as height, weight, and up-to-date age appropriate vaccinations were diligently checked. Mental health assessments were also provided for the slightly older students, ensuring comprehensive care for their overall health.

The event began on an appreciative note as the school involved the doctor in celebrating Doctor's Day, acknowledging the efforts of healthcare professionals. Across the three days, an impressive number of students were attended to, with 230 students on the first day, 596 on the second, and 378 on the third. Making a total of 1,204 students.

The camp concluded with three informative talks by the doctors. Dr. Kawade spoke about General Health, imparting valuable insights on maintaining a healthy lifestyle and building strong immunity. Dr. Himangi Lubree addressed menstrual health for girls, empowering them with essential knowledge and Dr. Rejoy Joseph's talk on hygiene for boys emphasized the significance of personal care.

The Health Check-up Camp proved to be an invaluable initiative, prioritizing the students' physical and mental well-being, and equipping them with vital health information for a brighter and healthier future.











Times WORLD

IVF Journeys: Dr. Mugdha Parasnis Explores Innovations, Emotional Support, and Lifestyle Factors in Fertility Treatment

In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) is an assisted reproductive infertility in an interview in-Mugdin with the department of the Nuglin Parading with Address some control for frequencies. The and address some control for frequencies for the and address some control of the state define into the indicession and learn more about this groundbreaking for-ulty treatment.

Can you briefly explain what IVF (In Vitre Fertilisation) in and what prempts couples or individuals to consider put

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Loadd you talk about the comprehensive unit called the Tata Same for Repredentive Health at KEM Hospital and how it energing patients with specific needs in the field of repreden-tive health?

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haring the IVF journey, anadianal challenger can arise for in-initiality and couples. Here dees your team provide constituted and psychological support. And what advice areas of the coursement and what advice advice areas of the coursement of the support of the support. And the support of the support tail role in providing crucial emotional and psychological support is course throughout these for the support of the support support is course throughout the support of the support of the support support is course throughout these for the support of the supp

that, our sectorms contrasting term pairs a diling crucical and psychological es throughout their IVF Journey. Through ing ensions, courselors guide patients a stress and emotional challenges that can roccess. They touch effective coping mecha-



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all success with screenized and couples marging the emotion and success with screenized more succession of the social and family pressure that accompany long-statements and these conserves. We employee the support is address are not alone in this provide works of encour-action of the second second second second provide the second secon PUNE

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What are sense key factors that influence the seccess rates of IVF treatments, and are there any specific litership changes or precautions individuals can take to estance the chances of seccess?

charges of precades individuals can take in anhance have an experimental experiments are influenced by any and the presence of the treatments are influenced by any and the presence of the treatments are influenced by any and the presence of the influence of the pre-intervent expectation, appendix to non-dependence of the antervent expectation, appendix to non-dependence of the antervent expectation is non-dependence of the antervent expectation is and the pre-taction of the influence of the influence of the appendix to the influence of the influence of the influence of the appendix to the influence of the influence of the influence of the appendix to the influence of the influence of the influence of the influence of the appendix to t



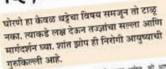
हो तो असे सा होको है। युवी अस अनेको लखने अहत सा अनेको है। तुवी से अबतर महत उस स्वत अले स अबार आते बेकोप्ता को ? ऑप्टोंबर स्वत कीतना (अराम) स सोरो सेकी स्वति हो ? ऑप्टोंबर स्वत कीतना (अराम) स सोरो सेकी प्रमा हरिक दिन्न के. सही सामो अधिक दिसून देखे. काली लोकांमाजे झोकन्द्रागः चरण्यः चयुवाणीन तन्दुला अदुवधा निर्माण ग्रीजः च अहमाजयामुळे त्यांचा स्वास जात्युरत रहेको

अस्य इत्तेल्या स्वयानामंध्य अर्थद कालेल्या क्यानामांच्या करनामुळे मोतावाचा कर्पत उराग-होते. वायुपातांचेता अत्याध्यापुर्वे क्रेविरायाल कार्यवर फ्रेस्ट विज प्रवासायले तारावड्डेवील सेने, प्रवास क्रेस्ट क्रेस्ट क्रेस्ट क्रांस्ट के बाज करतवासी क्रेस क्रांस क्रेस क्यानाने रिसाल क्रिंग केल्टि क्रेस क्रांस क्रे बाज करतवासी क्रेस क्रांस क्रेस अपने दिसकत याहन फालकावना झोन अरावे. दिसको यहन प्रात्मका हम अल. ता अपलमी रोक एकवे. (स्तेन अपिना) नमलेल्स लेकांच्या तुल्लेन 'स्तेन अपिना' असलेल्य लेकांच्या यहन अपल रोप्सचे सम्पन्न पुरुषेन बाहरे पोर्ट्सला पुरीस माले दिएन प्रात्म विद्यालय प्राप्त सामे दिएन आल्यावर डॉक्टरांच मालव घेरे

अंजिया थी लक्षणे

। होपेन घोरणे.

 होपेत अखगक स्वासोबहत्वम योकन्जस्तरकः कटणे, (पत्रे / पत्नो/ कुटुवात्रेल इतर सदर्खन असे जागपु शकते किंगा दिखन



असे कटल उसील, को आल्फाल स्वतंत्र अपितवं अस् लावनों, ता वावनों अलंग उपालवेक्सल वाप्स् बेपारांगों के उपालवेक्सल वाप्स् बेपार राजावः का आजराये नियम इतिगटनामंत्र विश्वरिक्त विश्वरित हिंका प्रतिक्रेप्तीक्कमी प्रती किंग किंका प्रतिक्रेप्तीकक्षे प्रती कटती किंका प्रतिक्रेप्तीकक्षे प्रती कटती को त्यांन हिंग्सटनामं कटलवा वाने त्यांन हैं पाएका परिवर्तन करेता त्यांन हैं पाएका परिवर्तन करेता करेते व पाएकी परिवर्तन केंसा स्वतंत्र का पाएकी तुकाल केंसा स्वतंत्र का पाएकी हानाविक्य केंद्र्या स्वतंत्र हरवाचे ठोड़े, पाल, असे करत असेल, को आपल्फाल मेट्रफा लहते, हदमाचे ठोके, घोणे, राजभा होण्डते हालेचे, घोटाचे हालवल, प्रतिमाचन पाठळे बांधे नेद

प्राण्डावया व्यमेदर्शन केले जाते. त्यात भूवस्वनसारस्य स्वर्थ्य कंत काणे, वजन कर्ष्य काण्यासठे प्रयत्न काणे, वजा समावेश होत्रे, प्राठीका पराय चांच समयमा हरत. फठन म होराय कुर्वेपर होरायचाच सला दिला जर, नज, परा ह, सिंधे बाडी राज्याकहून उपचार केले जातर, पहुंत च प्रार्थायत्वाच सार्व्यात्वा पहिलाज्यात्वा राज्यात्वा स्वार्व्यात्वा परिणामकारक उपचार पठले माणावे पारणामकारक उपका भ्रद्यत स्वता संगय 'स्वेपेक' तपडरण वापरणे, ही आहे. तुम्ही झोपताना म्हान्यवर लावलेल्य) उपकारण एका ट्यूबश्य प्रेसल्यासी इ.स. विल्लिन

। आहम्बल रोखते.

विल्सन डिसीज : लक्षणं आणि उपचार अनुवांशिक आजारांमध्ये ' विल्सन डिसीज' या आजाराचं नाव घेता येईल . या आजाराबद्दल या लेखात जाणून घेऊ . या आजाराची तीव्रता

ओळखून त्यावर वेळीच उपचार करणं आवश्यक आहे.

नसलेलं व अतिरिक्त तांवं बाहेर काढून टाकतं. वित्सन आजार असलेल्या रुग्णांमध्ये, अनुवाशिक दोषामुळे, शरीरातलं हे अतिरिक्त तांव वाहेर कादता येत नाही आणि त्यामुळे ते शरीरात साठत

राहते. जास वकृतामध्ये

प्रमाणात तांव असणं आरोग्यासाठी हानिकारक असते. या प्रकारामुळे यकृताला हानी पोहोचून कावीळ, पाय आणि ओटीपोटावर सूज येण, अशक्तपण अशा समस्या उद्भवतात. त्याचप्रमाणे मेंदूतील अतिरिक्त तांव्यामुळे मेंदूच्य ऊतीच नुकसान होतं; ज्यमुळे हालचाल मंदावणं, लाळ

गळणं, बोलण्यात बदल होणं, बोलणं, गिळणं लिहिण, चालण, शालेय काम करण्यास अडपळे रोण, नेरास्य, चिंता किंवा स्वभाव बदलण अशा समस्या उद्भवू शकतात. जन्मावेळी अनुवंशिक दोष असल्यास शरीरात तांवं जमा होण्यास सुरुवात होते. लक्षणीय नुकसान होण्याच्या पतळीपयेत तांव सावण्यास काही वर्ष लागू ज्ञकतात आणि त्यानंतर रुग्णाला आरोग्याच्या समस्या निर्माण होऊ लागतात. यात मुख्यतः

सदस्यांमध्येदेखील 'विल्सन डिसीज'चं निदान झाल्याची किंवा त्याची लक्षण असण्याची शक्यता असू ज्ञकते. या विकाराचे लवकरात लवकर निदान करणं आवश्यक आहे; जेणेकरून मेदूला होणारं नुकसान आणि यकृताचा गंभीर आजार टाळता येतो आणि त्यावर उपचारही सुरू करता येतात. विल्सन रोगाचं निदान हे रुगणाचा कौट्विक वैद्यकीय इतिहास, संपूर्ण वैद्यकीय तपासणी आणि विशेष चाचण्यांच्या आधारे केलं जात. निदान करण्यासाठी रक्त, लघवी आणि डोळ्यांच्या चाचण्या सामान्यतः आवश्यक असतात. काही वायण्या सामान्याः आवत् रुग्णांना 'लिकर बायोप्सी', 'ब्रेन एमआरआय' अशा अतिरिक्त चाचण्यांची आवश्यकताही भास् ज्ञकते. 'विल्सन डिसेज'चं वेळीच निदान झाले, तर शरीरातले तांवं काढून टाकणाऱ्या औषधांनी यावर योग्य उपचार करता येतात. मात्र, हो औषधं आयुष्यभर घ्यावी लागतात. या आजारामुळे यकृताची समस्या पुढच्या टप्प्यात गेली, तर मात्र यकृत प्रत्यारोपण करावं लागतं.

विल्सन डिसीज' हा दुसीळ अनुवंशिक विकार आहे. यामध्ये यकृत, मेद् आणि इतर महत्त्वाच्या अवयवांमध्ये 'तांब' जमा होते. जगभरातल्या तोस हजार व्यक्तींपैकी सुमारे एक व्यक्ती या 🔶 आरोग्यमंत्र विकारानं प्रभावित अस् S

शकते. 'विल्सन डिसीज' असलेल्या बहुतेकांचं वय वर्षे ५ ते ३५ या वयोगटात निदान होत. मात्र, हा विकार तरुणांसह वृद्धांच्या आरोम्पवरही परिणाम करू शकतो. तांब हा धातू अनेक खाद्यपदार्थामध्ये अवळून येतो. प्रत्येक व्यक्तीला निरोगी राहण्यासाठी काही प्रमाणात तांव्याची गरज असते. सामान्यतः आपलं शरीर आवश्यक



यकृत आणि मेंट्वर परिणाम होण्यासह मुत्रपिंड, हाड, डोळे आणि कधी-कधी इतर अवपर्वामध्येही

समस्या निर्माण होऊ शकतात. हा अनुवांशिक रोग असल्यानं कुटुंबतल्या इतर চলামাল, জানাগৰ ন্যাজ স্বায় নথ ইনলৈ বাল, বুনাত্ম হিমেটা হাঁমলে যা নাইলিয় জন্মবন্ধ কালন নিয়ান চলোল, 'सीपॅथ' उपकरणाची मदत सायवः उपकरणाचा मरत प्रत्येय अण्जिकः ये निरान सरल्वावर त्वारक संग्रेनेतुस्तर विविध उपकर सुवकाने जानत. याथे प्रधान बीमा आरल्यास जेवानतीलीत बरान

में सकारतगढ़ दाव देखन

 सम्राधी इतल्यका होके जड वाटने, पत्र कोरहा पडने एकाइत कार्य होने, पुरम्पण्ये बदल किया चिडचिडेपणा. बद्धा स्वया प्रधायवाणाः सङ्घरणामुखे 'ओएसर'या योका यहर्वते वारण्व करसन्यगांभेयती यहर्वते प्राये स्वस प्रेण्यस प्रश्वका आण् सकते. ज्यांचे काल कमी। योग्य ब्रम्याजन असे, त्यांनदी 'अलेप अजिन्द भगाज अह. त्यानहां आण्य आणव भगू शबले, आदे स्वामलेख्य/साम तनुवरी, खेठी जीवभंदेती रामिसन् ऑहलहह देखे आहे. रोपटीम्प्रेसी सा विकार होडा सबलो.

रेत्रयपेक्ष पुरुषंग्रध्ये याथे प्रचल जान रायरामा पुरुषमध्य प्रष अवन करन हिंदून के, पुरुषका मारायतामाराठन सबसे, उत्त्र राक्षराम, मधुमेर, रेवेक्टलेन कुपुमांच्या समस्म, बात्री हार्मेनल डिसाईग्रिटेक्टील से कोठ्येम जाडू राठते हा आजा ही जेखेला जबू राफो हो आजा कास घेरणे, आमुरे होन, रिप्रसा कास देश को एलकप्रायता वा खोन उपयो प्रको एलकप्रमा हावसे मेठाग एंडपर्या रक्ष्याय निर्माण मेठान एरविस्रार्थना प्रदर्भ प्रधानमान स्रार्थन रहित्य, अपनेक होना मन्त्र आ प्रधानमाने उपलब्ध कार्यनम् या आजामाने

आवश्यक ठरते. 'ऑक्ट्रक्टिज स्तीप



Dr. Sarita Verma, Dr. Ambrishkumar Mishra, Dr. Abhijeet Botre and Dr. Kannan Subramanian for their recently published article in the July issue of PubMed Indexed Indian Journal of Paediatrics. The article emphasises to closely monitor Acute lymphoblastic Leukemia patients with rapid weight gain for CNS relapse.

https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12098-023-04591-z



Dr. Sruthi V (DNB Resident, Department of Radiodiagnosis (Batch 2020-23) for receiving the Certificate of Commendation from National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences, New Delhi for OUTSTANDING RESEARCH WORK for your Thesis work.





TESTIMONIALS

11-05-2023 To The Administrator, KEM Hospital, Ref - Treatment of my dather, on smooth laddle (Age 19 900570) Pune at your Hospital from 6th to 11th May, 2013 Kind Attn: MS SHIRIN I am writing this letter to express my gratitude for the Dear Madam, care and assistance received during my father's treatment at your Haspital your destrated team of professionals ensured his comfort manyhout his story. From he time we took him into Emergency Dept. - coordinated In a super officient manner by Mr. Andeshin Baria and Mr. Andropah - the team took orea in a heatsuring manner. We know we were in capable Lands. I would like to entend my oppreciation to the Nursing statts, In ccu as well as on NH4F, who tirelessly attended to his needs. Ms. Kuti Nikalje-CRII decenves a special mention, as does no - Earnah chaidh for their commendable composition, attentiveness and protentionalism my gratitude to the boctors and specialists who areceans the entre treatment I believe that the service provided by the team reflects a custure of care 2 compassion that sets your institution apart Wishing you continued increas in providing buch healthcare to those in need-Yourd Sinceky, parket. suket laddhe

My mother was admitted at KEM Hospital on 30/06/2023 for stomach and back pain. Entire team of KEM Hospital has been very kind and caring towards my mother as well as me. All diagnoses were done thoroughly and treatment was given promptly. Special thanks and regards to all the doctors, nurse and support staff of COT for their dedication towards service. Lastly would like to thank Dr.Aarti lokhande for their guidance, attention to detail during treatment and never ending care towards. The patient without whom treatment of my mother would not be possible.

Thanks and best regards, Mr.Subodh Bakale Patient Name-Kanchan Bakale



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On Top of the World A travelogue by Rohini Sahasrabudhe

A dream of a place long imagined and cherished, stories about its unmatched beauty, pristine vistas and terrific blue skies had finally come true. How thrilling and exhilarating and totally soul satisfying it was! My 12 days of road journey enroute to Spiti in June 2023, through sometimes lush green and then remarkably stark mountainous terrain, roadside bubbly streams and snaky waterfalls and awe inspiring snow capped Himalayas was beyond imagination. The whole experience made me feel so small in front of these marvels of nature. I felt so damned lucky to have been able to take in and enjoy the sheer beauty in all its purity. Traveling towards it and being in Spiti was a revelation in more ways than one!

A bus journey over water washed narrow stony roads (if one can call them roads!) with jutting out sides of mountains above and a sheer drop on the side made it exhilarating. The fluffy white clouds in the clear azure blue sky were a warm and inviting gesture by nature to the otherwise unpopulated countryside with just a shepherd's house in the high reaches occasionally here and there.

We drove away from the once very pretty and quaint to the now horribly crowded and congested Simla towards Narkanda 8,600 ft above sea level . The drive to our cottage' guest house Agyat Nivas. our first night halt was through some edge of the seat zig –zag roads in the dark. Our wooden cabins weren't warm enough but cuddling a deliciously hot water bottle to counter the sudden drop in temperature was such a comfort!

To someone who is not a regular trekker, just as















unimaginable was me climbing up to more than 11,000 feet above sea level the next morning (albeit stopping several times)! I was not out of breath, or oxygen depleted nor experienced any muscle cramps while climbing. How could that have happened? I can only assume that though low on oxygen, the pure fresh air and cool temperatures had something to do with it! From atop Karena Peak we had the most spellbinding view of all the Himalayan ranges, and the apple orchards that the Kinnaur Range is most famous for.

Towards higher elevations we passed pictures que meadows, rivers, waterfalls, green mountains with the most amazing centuries old and still evolving rock formations. At the Batseri village in Sangla, the mighty Sutlaj gave way to its crystal clear water tributary Baspa. Surrounded by the most stunning view of the mighty snow peaked mountains and densely thick green forests the village is like a picture postcard.. We headed out to Chitkul the last Indian village at 11,320 ft on the border of India and Tibet. After the thrilling experience of how close we were to Tibet over a cup of tea at the roadside dhaba we headed to Kalpa – the old trade route to China and also known as Chini then . The stunning view of the Kinnaur Kailash, always majestically visible from everywhere, looked magnificent in its morning golden sunlit avatar . We drove towards Tabo and saw the naturally mummified and preserved body of the 11th Century monk Sangha Tenzin who was poisoned after a fatal scorpion bite.

From Tabo to Kaza and a hike to Dhankar Lake and Monastery and Pin Valley, the 6 hour drive gave us the opportunity to visit the thousand years old Tabo Monastery - the Ajanta of the Himalayas – exhibiting murals, thankas and paintings. The Dhankar Monastery – seat of the King in ancient times hangs on a cliff and overlooks the Spiti and Pin rivers. Low on oxygen and the climb made

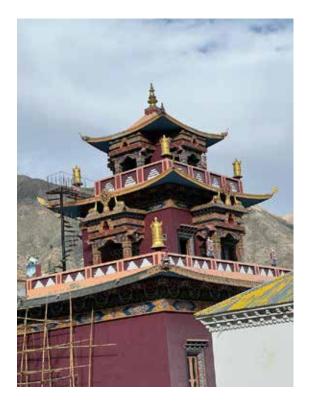


that much more exhilarating, we actually were at the site of the most photographed and picture post card anointed monument! We moved on to the Kye Monastery which houses 100 monks, atop a mountain overlooking the Spiti Valley and the highest motorable village in the world- Kibber village. We crossed The Chicham bridge, the highest one above sea level - an engineering feat of sorts for the Border Roads Organisation to reach Komic village at 4600 meters and the highest post office in the world run by India Post at Hikkim. It was fun to post a postcard to my school mate Achala who retired as DG India Post! Unfortunately the recent floods have delayed all the 'Dak' and she still has to receive my card!

We drank our hot chais at the dhaba in Losar the last village in Spiti via Kunzum Pass and were almost able to touch the snow-clad mountains at just an arm's length . Getting off the bus at the campsite we dropped our bags in our huge tents, excitement and anticipation palpable at what sight awaited us after the gradual but mid-steep hike. Finally, the Moon lake- Chandrataal- God's wondrous creation from the rivers Chandra and Bhaga . It was a truly mesmerizing sight and left us speechless! Photographs followed in a frenzy of activity. Emotionally spent, happy and Chandratal mentally tick marked, we headed back to our tents and a hot dinner around a huge and ancient wood stove.

The drive on the almost nonexistent road to Manali early next morning was rough and tough and we missed a few heartbeats. But Rohtang Pass was no longer arduous because of the engineering marvel – the Atal Tunnel. We reached the green but utterly chaotic and crowded Manali at 6 pm with the Beas River flowing close to riverside constructed houses, shops and hotels - unmindful of any safety network it was a recipe for disaster and how!









While we reached the safety of our homes the Himalayan tragedy unfolded in less than a fortnight. Nature unleashed its fury on Himachal and all the places we visited and swept away the lives and livelihoods of thousands of hill folk. In the name of development and promoting tourism the decisions taken by the powers that be have forever taken away a happy and beautiful way of life. Over the years fueled by the promotion of tourism there has been a singular lack of consideration for human safety. Rampant cutting of trees that are natural soil binders and holders on the banks of mighty rivers, inadequate efforts in the preservation of the centuries old traditional occupations and spaces acting as natural checks on disasters like the recent floods have ruined a life that might take years to rebuild! .

I was just plain lucky to be at the right place at the right time - I guess.







