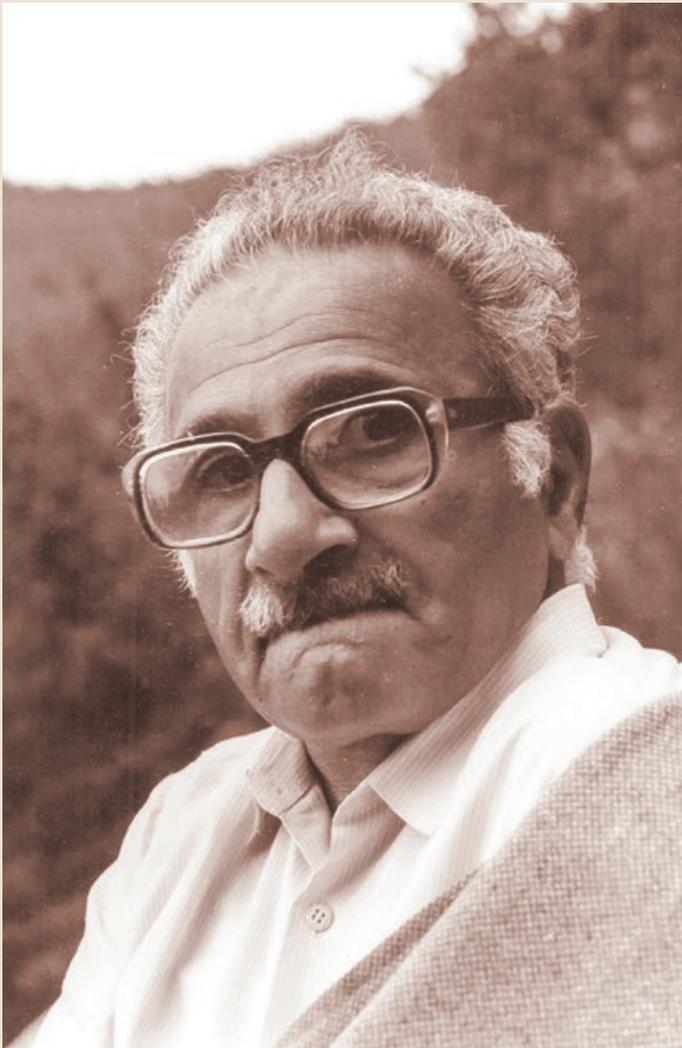


“I knew ‘Him’ too....”

A series of tributes to Sh. Lavkumar Khachar

Listening to the sounds of a flowing stream, chirping of birds, the whistling wind; walking and walking and more walking and enjoying the Himalayas while doing so; camping in tents amidst nature in its pristine conditions; crossing rivers, climbing mountains, sitting in silence out in the open under the canopy of stars; meeting local families and learning from them - conservation of the environment at a grassroots level; respect for nature - even landslides; making puddings with the help of flowing streams.....this is what ‘Mama’ or Rajkumar Lavkumar Khachar of Jasdan meant to me!

‘Sir’ to hundreds of Rajkumar College boys, he was an icon for ornithologists and environmentalists. He nurtured many a young hearts to care for trees, birds, forests and of course nature in general! Senior politicians consulted him on conservation and natural resource balancing, industrialists engaged him to be helped with an antidote for the unavoidable effluents, schools sought his help for nature-based activities for their students, which he aptly obliged through his nature camps in Manali and other places in Gujarat. ‘Simple



living- high thinking’ is what comprised the life of this man.

Five decades later, and still just my *Mama* – he came to help me in my married home! The much sought after landscape designer helped me plan the gardens of ‘Deo Bagh’ - today Gwalior’s number one hotel. “This peaceful setting, your hundred year plus heritage trees will work their magic! So let’s just add to the charm and weave the garden around what you already have”, he said to me and set off to plan the ‘Nau Bagh’ within this very ancient ‘Char Bagh’, where important Mughals were known to have camped. He worked tirelessly, silently, steadily to get it going- using local trees, plants and a sturdy variety of lawn, which we are so thankful for. “Shrubbery must be kept for the birds to nest- you can’t have everything squeaky clean like Switzerland”, is what I often heard him say. “Keep the dry leaves off the walkways but retain them in the soil beds - they make excellent manure in due course of time”, he would point out. Deo Bagh today boasts of 30 species of birds in the heart of the chaotic city!

For ‘Flameback’, my younger sister Ambika Raje Ghorpade’s resort at Mudigere in Karnataka, he toured the Western Ghats with his student and confidante Girish Adesara to acquaint themselves on the local flora and fauna and carefully selected the plantations for the boutique resort. Several other cousins and friends will remember him for a creeper here and a shrub there.

With my father, H R Patankar, a former Chief Secretary to the Government of Gujarat, known to have spearheaded Gujarat’s industrialization, he spent many evenings discussing the pros and cons of several coming up industries, power plants, dams etc. These were enlightening discussions and a huge learning process for our tender minds and we are forever grateful to him for this opportunity.

His note left for me, with my mother in law, late Lady Jadhav while I was away on Thursday, 22nd July, 2010

“Uma,

It is always great to see younger people wanting to plan for the future even as they strive to preserve the past. The task you have taken on is daunting to the extreme and though the mists are clearing, you have a distance to travel. Restricting my observations to the landscaping, I have provided the very basics.....

Affy,

Mama”

Uma Devi Jadhav

Jadhav Kothi, Opp. Janak Tal, Bahodapur,
Agra-Mumbai Highway, Gwalior- 474012



News on Wings

VOTE FOR ROBIN

Britain a country without any official national bird witnessed a nationwide poll for finding the bird to be recognized as national bird. Maximum number of vote came to European Robin

(*Erithacus rubecula*), a territorial woodland bird commonly found in Britain. The ballot 'National bird vote' organized by birder David Lindo, came with participation of 2,24,000 voters, which in fact made the site crash twice during online poll. The Robin got significant margin of 34% votes, followed by Barn Owl and Blackbird with 12% and 11% votes respectively.

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/jun/10/robin-wins-vote-uk-national-bird-britain>



Sketch : Jagdish Thakor

BIRD PHOTO ID

'Merlin bird photo ID' a website created by Cornell University and Visipedia research project using artificial intelligence techniques can help bird watchers identify birds captured in photos. The user need to upload photo on website, enter details about the location photograph was taken and date details; the site provides tools like draw line and points to be placed over the bird features like eyes, beak, tail etc. The website will suggest the names with other images stored in database. Currently the website is meant for birds found in North American continent.

Source: <http://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/photo-id/>



Merlin Bird ID
From the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

OWLS AND WIND FARMS

Scientist from University of Cambridge and American experts has been able to design efficient wind turbines derived from Owl's feather. They have created coating for turbine blades that can control the flow of air quietly. Owls feathers are nature marvel, the efficient design of wings create less sound during flight for prey.

Examining the owl's wing three prominent features was revealed: a downy covering, flexible comb of bristles on the leading edge and a porous fringe on the trailing edge.

Professor Peake said: "No other bird has this sort of intricate wing structure. Much of the noise caused by a wing, whether it's attached to a bird, plane or fan - originates at the trailing edge where the air passing over the wing surface is turbulent. The structure of an owl's wing serves to reduce noise by smoothing the passage of air as it passes over the wing - scattering the sound so their prey can't hear them coming."

Interesting results came when tested live, whereby, the noise was reduced to 10 decibels and turbines moved more faster than previous design giving more electric outcome.

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3133987/Owls-silent-swoop-key-quieter-wind-farms-Analysis-feathers-engineers-design-surfaces-control-flow-air.html>



Source : Internet

Compiled by **Anuj Raina** - G-7, Shivani Apts., Opp. AMA, Ambawadi, Ahmedabad-380015. anzraina@gmail.com

Erratum: Flamingo XIII (1-2): page 14. Photo appearing under Tickell's Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus affinis*) is of Hume's Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus humei*) and should be considered under that species.



'Lakes of Saurashtra' is a last page diagram in the book 'Birds of Saurashtra', one of the ornithological classics and is authored by Late R. S. Dharmakumarsinhji of Bhavnagar State. Curiously year of publication is nowhere mentioned in the book. In the forward Major General H. Williams mentions, "There are far too few ornithologists in India. Of some who can claim high distinction in this field of activity Raol Shri Dharmakumarsinhji finds an assured place. I believe, this is the first authoritative record of birds of Saurashtra."



“

When someone asks me “Do you believe in God?” my stock answer is, “Does it really matter whether I do or do not?” And, what of Life after Death? This again is something rather facile to be concerned about; my contemplation of the biological training is that Life is the manifestation made possible when and as long as there is protoplasmic organisation and when this organisation disintegrates, the manifestation fades away like a flame when the combustible material is burnt up. To conclude then, it is not the After Life that I am concerned about, it is whatever is left of the present.... the discomforts, the pains, and, above all the remaining moments of bliss which I can extract. And, what of God? My energy will merge into His Cosmic Presence of wide near empty spaces and whirling universes of myriad stars blazing in all their magnificence, themselves as insignificant as indeed I am during the brief period of my Life which should be more important for me and not the presumed afterlife.

- Lavkumar Khachar

”