

# 'Leave India to Indians'

## Naipaul was once told by mother

NEW DELHI: V.S. Naipaul, known for his timeless books and unsparing views, made his last public appearance in India in January 2015 at the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF), where he spoke at length and was even moved to tears at the overwhelming reception he got.

Recalling his maiden visit to India, the Nobel laureate had said in 2015: "I came to India first because of curiosity about my ancestral land. My publisher agreed to pay me an advance for anything I would write on India."

But after writing two celebrated books on India, 'An Area of Darkness' and 'A Wounded Civilization', his mother asked him to leave India.

"The only Hindi word my mother carried from India was 'beta' and she said 'Beta, leave India to the Indians,'" he quipped.

Naipaul took part in two sessions – 'A House for Mr Biswas', which revolved around his masterpiece by the same name, and 'The Writer and the World', in which he talked about his literary journey.

Naipaul was in conversation with Farrukh Dhondy, who asked him about his life in Trinidad, the journey as a writer, his memories of India and his writings about the country.

Dhondy asked him how come he was born in Trinidad despite his deep Indian roots. Naipaul said that it had nothing to do with him.

"It had to do with my family and my parents," he said, pointing out that there was a massive migration from India to the Caribbean islands during the middle

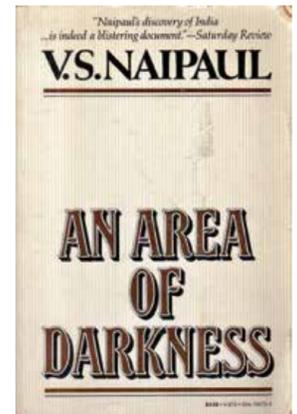
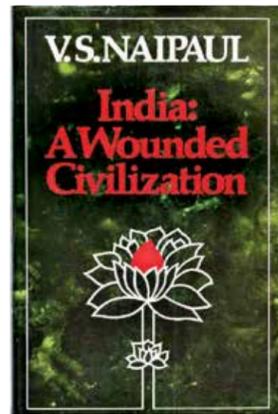
of the 19th century and that he and his relatives "had to live with the result of that migration".

When Dhondy proclaimed that the session would be like "a conversation between two old friends sitting with a glass of wine and looking at the sunset", an emotional Naipaul retracted humbly: "I do not like talking about the sunset. It can be used against me to infer that

I am in the sunset of my life. Unhappy metaphor."

His wife, Lady Nadira, sat on a chair behind him, taking notes, holding the microphone when he became too tired to hold it and prompting the words when he forgot what he was saying or ran out of steam.

Naipaul also recalled the hardships during the initial days of writing.



"I was one of those people who desperately wanted to be a writer but had nothing to write about," he said and advised young writers not to be repetitive.

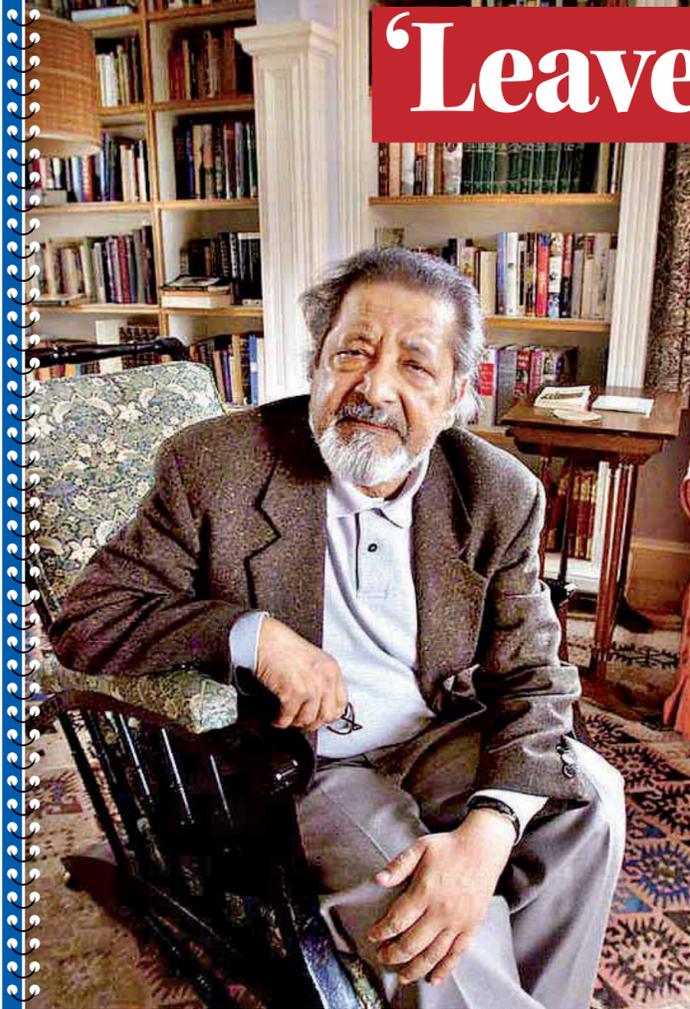
"Even Dickens went wrong when he began to repeat. An author should avoid doing that."

He recognised that during the course of his long and illustrious literary journey, there had been works that he was not very proud of.

"A writer has to make a living and has to write a book. Don't forget that."

The last words of Naipaul on stage was a reply to a question from veteran lawyer Ram Jethmalani, who asked him the reason for calling India 'An Area of Darkness' and suggested that it (India) was instead an area of light. A humble Naipaul left a witty remark to conclude the session: "Ram is a friend and he left a very friendly comment." Jethmalani was later seen kissing his hands and showing his reverence to the Nobel laureate.

Naipaul's last visit to India will also be cherished and remembered fondly by the writing fraternity for his public reunion with Paul Theroux, with whom Naipaul shared a full-blown feud. **IANS**



## Bridging Bosnia and Bengal is the mission for Dr. Subasic

ARYANI BANERJEE

Clad in a navy blue suit over a pale blue formal shirt, brown leather shoes, and looking through a pair of rimless thick-glassed spectacles, Dr Sabit Subasic – Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to India, smiles as he sits down on a beige sofa on the lounge of Taj Bengal Kolkata on a Thursday evening. It had been a very busy day – Dr Subasic visited Sister Nivedita University in the morning where he interacted with the administrative heads, faculty members, and students. Then he paid a visit to the corporate office of Techno India Group where he received a traditional welcome, and he can't stop gushing about the red tilak on his forehead and the authentic Hilsa meal he enjoyed eating with his hands.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Techno India Group and Sister Nivedita University and Sarajevo School of Science and Technology to initiate exchange programs between the two universities. He

**I look forward to more exchange programs between Sister Nivedita University and the universities of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

says this is just the beginning, as he looks forward to Techno India Group spreading its wings not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina but all over south-eastern Europe.

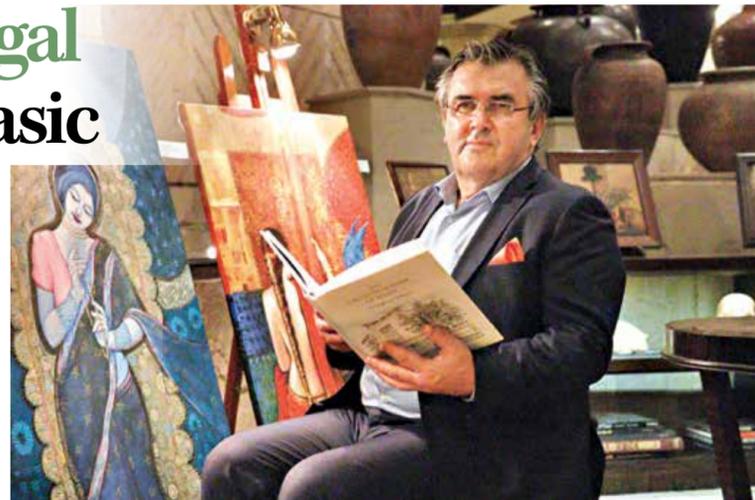
Dr Subasic looks visibly overwhelmed as he recalls meeting Satyam Roychowdhury, Managing Director of Techno India Group and Chancellor of Sister Nivedita University – "I first met Mr Roychowdhury in New Delhi when he came to my office at the embassy, and I felt an instant chemistry developing between us. We discussed the growth prospects of education, and he accepted my proposal to visit Bosnia. I'm glad I could join him and could arrange a fruitful trip for him in my coun-

try. His team has had positive discussions with the rectors of quite a few reputed state and private universities, and they will soon get into joint ventures to work for exchange programs. I've grown so fond of this man over the past few months. It was his first visit to Bosnia but it was a pleasant surprise that he already knew so much about the country."

It's been four and a half years in India since the third day of March 2014, and Dr Sabit Subasic has fallen in love with the country and its youth. "I had two other opportunities four years ago. I had to choose from the three countries. I refuted all prejudices and chose India," recalls Dr Subasic as he goes on to confess that everything about India, from cuisine to culture, has a unique charm.

"Today, if I'm given an opportunity to choose from ten countries, I'll still choose to stay in India," his voice beams with confidence.

Dr. Sabit Subasic had visited Srinagar in November 2017 to attend an interaction meeting organised by Kashmir Youth



Entrepreneur Federation, which marked the first ever visit to Kashmir by any Bosnian authority. Refusing to surrender to frequent dispute and unrest, the ambassador says there is great scope for exchange of trade, commerce and tourism between the Kashmir and Bosnia. "War should not ruin such an important state. I fell in love with the natural beauty there, and I feel Kashmir is your Switzerland." He stresses on the development of sports in India, and he

strongly believes sportspersons can become efficient ambassadors of a nation.

"India will become the youngest country in the world by 2020 with 29 years being its average age, which indicates there are talented young people in every sector. There is a saying (he quotes it in fluent Latin) which means you cannot have a healthy spirit if your body is not healthy. He talks about ace tennis player Novak Djokovic who hails from Serbia – a neigh-

bouring country of Bosnia, saying that the youth icon is a better promoter of his country than all the classical diplomats put together.

Dr Subasic flashes a wide smile, once again expressing how impressed he is by the hospitality he received at Techno India Group, and how thrilled he feels to look forward to more exchange programs between Sister Nivedita University and the universities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and of neighbouring countries.

## Forehead wrinkles may predict heart diseases



LONDON: The wrinkles on your forehead may not be just an inevitable consequence of ageing, but could also signal an early death due to cardiovascular disease (CVD), researchers have warned.

The findings showed that increased deep forehead wrinkles, more than what is typical for their age, could be linked to death atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries due to plaque build-up – a major contributor to heart attacks and other CVD events.

While the furrows in the brow are not a better method of evaluating heart risk than existing methods, such as blood pressure and lipid profiles, yet they can raise a red flag earlier, at a simple glance, the researchers said.

For the new study, the team investigated a different visible marker of age – horizontal forehead wrinkles – to see if they had any value in assessing cardiovascular risk in a group of 3,200 working adults. The results were presented at the ESC Congress 2018, the annual conference of the European Society of Cardiology in Munich. **IANS**



## Hangovers might last longer than you think

LONDON: If you think the effects of a booze session on your thoughts and performance may get over the next day, you may be wrong. It lasts longer than a day, say researchers, cautioning people to avoid activities such as driving.

The findings, published in the journal *Addiction*, showed that impairments in cognition seen when individuals are drunk are still present the day after, even when there is little or no alcohol present.

"We found that hangover impaired psychomotor speed, short and long term memory and sustained attention. Impaired performance in these abilities reflects poorer concentration and focus, decreased memory and reduced reaction time the day after an evening of heavy drinking," said lead author Craig Gunn from Britain's University of Bath.

Our review also indi-

cated limited and inconsistent research on alcohol hangover and the need for future studies in the field," Gunn added.

The research suggested that its findings have important implications when it came to activities performed when hungover, including driving.

For example, while hungover, individuals might typically wait until they believe there is no alcohol in the system before driving.

In addition, the researchers warn that although many workplaces have clear policies in place regarding alcohol intoxication at work, few cover the next day effects of alcohol. "Our findings demonstrate that hangover can have serious consequences for the performance of everyday activities such as driving and workplace skills such as concentration and memory," noted Sally Adams, Professor at the varsity. **IANS**

Connecting civilizations, fostering global harmony is Sohini's raga this year

OUR CORRESPONDENT

From performing for Danny Boyle at the *Slumdog Millionaire* premiere to rocking the Andes with the jingle of her ghungroos in Bogota, Sohini Roychowdhury has been a premier ambassador of Indian culture for the last several years.

She is not just an Indian dancer and choreographer, but the founder of Sohiniroksha World Dance and Communications (Madrid/Berlin/Kolkata) and Sohiniroksha Artes de La India in Madrid, Spain.

Connecting civilizations, creating empathy for all cultures and fostering global harmony is Sohini's Monsoon raga this year. Her art without frontiers and the One Earth Project were effectively represented in Maya's Dream, staged at the Bengal Club on August 18, that combined Indian classical forms with Spanish rhythms and Bulgarian folk. It was about idealism and the dream of a better tomorrow.

Her perception of Durga, a mother, and warrior, who forgives Mahisasura the Bull demon instead of slaying him – underlined the quality of mercy relevant in this day and age. Tchaikovsky enriched their dance number that spoke of the strength and relevance of nature in all its elements. The Taandav, from the Shiva Puranas, and the Vedic chants, combined with Gregorian, defined effectively and uniquely, the One Earth concept of Sohiniroksha's dance opera.

## Sohinimoksha's MONSOON RAGA



Flamenco Arabe, from the shores of Spain, enthralled the school children at Calcutta International School, during an interactive workshop with Maria Sanchez Sanz (Sohini's student of Bharatanatyam from Madrid), that ended with the Spanish dancer and the Indian school children dancing together.

Sohinimoksha's workshop on August 28, at the Heritage Group, Kolkata, will be a day of India and Spain. Maria Sanz will be performing Bharatanatyam to emphasize the global relevance of our classical arts. For their 'Back to The Roots' project, Dr Jorge Diaz Sanchez will be doing a creative writing workshop with the children, on the Spanish poet Lorca.

A similar program will be repeated at a school near Dakshineswar on August 31.

In September, Sohini will be conducting master classes of her unique style of Bharatanatyam and storytell-

ing in Manhattan, New York City. New York will witness the Saga of Shakti through Sohini's interpretation of this ancient philosophy in these modern times.

A visiting professor of dance at 12 Universities across the globe, and an empaneled speaker at Sangeet Natak Akademy's July 2018 Shreshtha Bharat Sanskriti Samagam in Bhubaneswar, Sohini is a winner of the "Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Samman" by The House of Lords, British Parliament; the Priyadarshini Award for Outstanding Achievement in Arts, New Delhi and has been a European Brand Ambassador for India Tourism's "Incredible India" campaign.

Sohini's dance troupe consists of her students, and dancers, from all over Europe, Latin America, USA, and India, whose performances have been garnering tumultuous audience appreciation, and rave critical reviews everywhere.



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