

NANA PATEKAR

The passing away of veteran actor Nana Patekar is a great loss for the Indian film industry. It’s even bigger and a sort of personal loss for hundreds of farmers in Maharashtra’s drought prone areas whose lives he had touched and changed.Nana with other Marathi actor founded an NGO which waged a campaign to conserve water in the drought prone areas, which in turn reduced the rural stress. In the north Kashmir, Nana Patekar touched the lives of students living on the line of control when his NGO build new school buildings for them. Imagine, he donated the money he had kept aside for a luxury car for his family to the widows and families of the farmers who had ended their lives due to crop failurs. His simplicity touched all and his love for the nation is exemplary. Not many knew that Nana had worked as an officer for the Army during the Kargil war. He had indeed volunteered and was made a part of the QRT after he requested the then defence minister George Fernandes. He spoke of its almost two decades later.

Nana’s most roles in the films were of a protagonist who worked for giving justice to common man. He made us laugh in some of the iconic films like Welcome; made us fall in love with the soldier fighting for his country. His dialogue delivery was unique. He inspired us with his strong roles in the films, on the stage and most importantly through his life. Success and money must be used to change the world and improve the lives of underprivileged and the needy people. He never let fame change him or make him arrogant and a self-seeker. Nana is among very few actors who life and works will keep inspiring us years after he has left.

Vivek Koul

Artificial Intelligence is undoubtedly one of the most extraordinary intellectual inventions of the modern technological age. Emerging from the ingenuity of computer scientists, mathematicians, engineers and technological visionaries, AI is revolutionising almost every sphere of human activity. From medicine and education to banking, transportation, communication and scientific research, its transformative potential is immense. Applications such as Gemini, ChatGPT, DeepSeek and AI-powered voice assistants have placed extraordinary computational capabilities within the palm of an ordinary individual. What once required hours of research, painstaking calculation and intellectual exertion can now be accomplished within seconds. Yet, beneath this dazzling technological convenience lies an unsettling paradox: the very technology designed to augment human intelligence may gradually diminish our willingness to think. The predicament becomes particularly conspicuous in the educational sphere. Students, who are supposed to cultivate curiosity, imagination, analytical reasoning and intellectual perseverance, are increasingly tempted to outsource these very faculties to artificial intelligence. Instead of reading a difficult chapter and

struggling to comprehend its meaning, many students simply ask an AI tool for a summary. Instead of wrestling with a mathematical problem, they seek an instantaneous solution. Instead of constructing an argument, developing an essay or formulating an original opinion, they allow a chatbot to manufacture the response. The result may appear impressive on the surface, but the intellectual process that ought to produce genuine learning is frequently absent. Education, after all, is not merely the accumulation of information. It is the gradual construction of an intellect capable of questioning, analysing, discriminating, reasoning and arriving at conclusions independently. The human mind develops strength through intellectual resistance, just as the human body develops strength through physical exertion. If every difficult mental task is continuously delegated to a machine, the mind receives little opportunity to develop its own cognitive musculature. Convenience, when pursued without restraint, can therefore become an impediment to intellectual maturity. The danger is not that AI provides answers; the greater danger is that students may cease to ask meaningful questions themselves. Genuine learning often begins with confusion. A child encounters a difficult concept, makes an unsuccessful attempt, commits an error, reflects upon it and tries

again. Through this apparently laborious process, reasoning is sharpened and understanding becomes durable. AI, by contrast, can eliminate the productive discomfort of not knowing. It can provide polished explanations before the learner has had the opportunity to struggle with the problem. Consequently, the student may possess the answer without possessing the understanding that produced it. This phenomenon can gradually erode independent reasoning. A student who habitually depends upon AI for every intellectual difficulty may become psychologically conditioned to seek external assistance rather than summon internal resources. Such dependence can create a subtle form of cognitive atrophy. The individual remains surrounded by information but becomes increasingly impoverished in independent judgement. In the long run, this could produce a generation that is technologically sophisticated yet intellectually dependent. The problem is not confined to students. Teachers, too, can become excessively reliant upon AI for lesson plans, explanations, assessments, questions and educational material. Although these tools can undoubtedly reduce administrative burdens and enhance pedagogical efficiency, excessive dependence may weaken the teacher's own creative engagement with the classroom. Teaching is not simply the transmission of informa-

tion; it involves empathy, observation, improvisation, encouragement and the ability to understand the intellectual and emotional needs of individual learners. No algorithm can completely substitute for the human relationship between teacher and student. Parents and society also have a significant responsibility in this regard. In an environment where speed and convenience are increasingly celebrated, children can easily acquire the misconception that every difficulty should have an immediate technological solution. Parents sometimes encourage this tendency unintentionally by rewarding completed assignments rather than genuine intellectual effort. What matters, however, is not merely whether a child has produced a correct answer, but whether the child has understood how and why that answer was reached. AI itself, therefore, should not be demonised. It would be both impractical and intellectually dishonest to demand that young people remain untouched by a technology that is reshaping the contemporary world. The objective should instead be to cultivate technological wisdom. AI must function as an intellectual assistant, not an intellectual substitute. A student should first attempt to solve a problem independently, formulate an argument, write an essay or analyse a subject and only thereafter use AI to identify weaknesses, clarify difficult

concepts or obtain alternative perspectives. Such an approach transforms AI from a crutch into a catalyst. Schools should consequently establish clear principles for responsible AI usage. Assignments should increasingly include oral examinations, classroom discussions, handwritten exercises, project-based learning and problem-solving activities that reveal whether students genuinely understand their work. Teachers should reward originality, reasoning and the ability to defend an argument rather than merely polished answers. Students should also be taught that using AI without understanding its output is not intelligence; it is merely technological dependence. Most importantly, children must be given opportunities to experience the satisfaction of discovering answers independently. Reading books, writing without digital assistance, solving puzzles, debating ideas, performing calculations mentally, engaging in creative activities and participating in meaningful conversations are indispensable exercises for preserving intellectual autonomy. There should be deliberate periods in education where students are encouraged to work without AI so that their natural faculties of memory, imagination, reasoning and judgement remain active. The ultimate challenge before humanity is not whether machines will become more intelligent, but whether

human beings will continue to exercise their own intelligence while machines become increasingly capable. Technology should enlarge the horizon of human potential, not shrink the domain of human effort. Artificial Intelligence can become one of the greatest educational instruments ever created if it is used judiciously; but if it becomes a substitute for thinking, it may inadvertently produce intellectually passive learners. The best solution, therefore, is neither to reject AI nor to surrender to it. We must educate children to think first, struggle first, reason first and use AI afterwards. \ Every student should be taught a simple principle: use AI to enhance your mind, not to replace it. Schools should adopt an "AI after effort" philosophy, under which students demonstrate their own reasoning before seeking technological assistance. Teachers and parents must collectively cultivate curiosity, critical thinking, creativity and intellectual independence. If this balance is maintained, Artificial Intelligence will remain what it was intended to be - powerful servant of human intellect rather than a silent architect of its decline. The future should not produce a generation incapable of thinking without machines; it should produce a generation intelligent enough to make machines work for humanity.

From Regional Talent to National Strength: J&K's GCC Opportunity

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A nation's progress becomes meaningful when its young people can see a future for themselves within it. For Jammu and Kashmir, that future must include the chance to do globally significant work from the places they call home. The J&K Global Capability Centres Summit 2026, to be held on 9–10 October at IIM Jammu, offers an occasion to turn this aspiration into a practical programme of education, investment and employment.

Organised by the Institute and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, the Summit will bring together more than 300 participants to discuss talent, technology, investment and a GCC ecosystem for the Union Territory. Its significance will rest less on the discussions than on the commitments it brings to fruition. The ambition draws strength from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047, which places skilling, innovation and entrepreneurship, and therefore young people, at the centre of India's transformation. For Jammu and Kashmir, the task is to give that vision a regional form: preparing youth for emerging industries, connecting institutions with global enterprise, and contributing more fully to the knowledge economy.

Global Capability Centres can be an important part of this endeavour. They perform specialised functions for international companies, from technology and finance to analytics and research, and their value extends beyond employment to the expertise and professional standards they cultivate. Yet when a company considers a new location, one question is decisive: can this place consistently provide people capable of high-quality work? Infrastructure, connectivity and incentives matter, but their worth depends on talent. The GCC conversation therefore belongs as much in classrooms as in boardrooms.

Here Jammu and Kashmir has a solid foundation. IIM Jammu, IIT Jammu and AIIMS Jammu bring management, technology and healthcare expertise into one Union Territory, joined by NIT Srinagar,

the Universities of Jammu and Kashmir, the Islamic University of Science and Technology, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, and a wider network of colleges, polytechnics and training institutions. The challenge is to turn this presence into shared capability: management education can strengthen organisational competence, engineering institutions deepen technical skill, and medical institutions explore healthcare technology. Together they could help the region develop specialisations suited to its strengths, though that will demand careful research and sustained engagement with industry.

That the Summit is hosted on an academic campus is therefore meaningful: it places education at the centre of economic development and recognises higher education as an active partner in nation-building. IIM Jammu's work with the Government, through Mission YUVA and the policy research of its Centre for Innovation and Transformation in Governance, shows how academic expertise can serve public priorities, and the Summit can extend that cooperation to industry. Cooperation must also anticipate the changing nature of work. As artificial intelligence reshapes business processes, education must give greater weight to analytical judgement, domain knowledge, responsible use of technology and the ability to evaluate automated outputs.

With this in view, the Summit should be judged against four outcomes. The first is a clear picture of what industry needs. Employers should say which roles they plan to fill, what skills they require, how many people they expect to hire, and what preparation turns a recruit into a productive colleague. That information should guide universities, technical institutions and skills departments, informing curriculum revision, internships, faculty development and targeted training.

Understanding needs, however, is only the beginning; the second outcome is a credible path to the first investments. A company entering an unfamiliar location may hesitate to build a large centre at once. A pilot team of 30 to 50 professionals is a more manageable start, provided suitable facilities, reliable connectivity and administrative support are in place, and

academic or incubation spaces could house such teams while permanent premises are prepared. For the region, a successful pilot would be practical proof that it can support global operations. The Summit should help identify prospective partners and set the conditions under which such teams can begin and grow, for confidence builds when a promising proposition becomes a working enterprise.

Such confidence, in turn, needs a reliable evidence base, the third outcome. Companies need credible assessments of talent, costs, connectivity and infrastructure. Jammu and Kashmir should develop an independently assessed investment profile and keep it current. The exercise would also help the administration find gaps and direct resources where they are most needed, while universities can contribute through workforce studies and employer consultations.

Evidence and intent must finally be anchored in the fourth outcome, an accountable plan for implementation. Recommendations need named owners, realistic deadlines and a clear review process. The Summit's deliberations should yield a working agenda that tracks training partnerships, pilot centres, investor facilitation and infrastructure preparation. Memoranda of understanding offer a useful framework, but their value lies in delivery. A partnership acquires substance when students receive relevant training, employers recruit, facilities open and commitments are honoured, and the quality of that follow-through will decide whether the Summit becomes a milestone.

Nowhere will that follow-through matter more than for the younger generation. A growing GCC ecosystem could open pathways to internships, industry projects, mentoring and careers in technology, finance, analytics and research. Students would experience international work practices while building the communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills employers seek. These opportunities must reach young people in smaller towns and rural communities as well, through targeted training, transparent recruitment and support for women's participation.

Professionals who have left Jammu and Kashmir may find reasons to return, while aspiring entrepreneurs, exposed to global business, may gain the confidence to start ventures of their own.

The deeper gain would be a stronger sense of possibility. A young person should be able to imagine a future as a researcher, technologist, business leader or entrepreneur, and find a credible path towards it. Education would then become a more tangible source of opportunity, and families would see their investment in learning bear fruit closer to home. The regional economy would benefit too: new professional activity creates demand for local services and supports smaller businesses, and as institutions grow closer to industry, talent, investment and innovation can reinforce one another.

This is where the GCC opportunity becomes a question of nation-building. India's development gains strength when more regions contribute to innovation, productivity and skilled employment, and Jammu and Kashmir has the institutions and the aspiration to take part. What remains is to bring them together in a coherent, sustained programme of action. The Summit will conclude within days, but the responsibility it creates will endure. Its promise must travel from the conference hall to the classroom, from the classroom to the workplace, and from institutional commitments to opportunities young people can grasp.

As an educator, I would count its finest achievement as the confidence it gives a young graduate to say: "I can build my future here." Behind those words stand years of study, a family's sacrifices and the hope of meaningful work close to home. Helping that hope become reality is a responsibility IIM Jammu shares with government and industry, and one we must carry forward with conviction. Viksit Bharat will take shape through countless such journeys, as individual capability becomes collective national strength. If this Summit helps a generation build global careers while remaining rooted in its homeland, it will have done something enduring: given young people a greater stake in their region's future and a stronger role in the making of the nation.

OPTIMISING LIFE THROUGH SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Ajit Kumar Bishnoi

We are all different and, therefore, must personalise our spiritual practices and daily routine. Only then can these be sustained. Lord Krishna has given specific instructions in this regard. The Lord states, “Yoga of one whose eating and recreation are appropriate; of one who strives appropriately in activities; of one who sleeps and stays awake as required, becomes the cause of elimination of sufferings.” (The Bhagavad-Gita, verse #6.17) Mark the last part. The elimination of sufferings must be the result, otherwise who will continue the exercise?

Going into the details of the quoted verse, Lord Krishna has instructed us to be appropriate in four parts of our daily routine. These are food, entertainment, work and sleep. Food must suit an individual. For example, an aged person must restrict oneself to what is nutritious, wholesome and easily digestible. The same goes for sleep; children need more sleep than old people. Entertainment must also be different age-wise. Younger people can have more of the physical types, like playing games, while older folks can have 'satsang' (good company), gentle walks and simple



exercises.

Intelligent practitioners of 'yoga' (connection with God) balance efforts for maintenance and spiritual progress. In younger age, it is more learning and effort for maintenance, with occasional prayers for guidance and help when troubled. Later, it must be more for spiritual upliftment. This

is when the instruction given in verse #9.22 becomes applicable, which is, “These people, who worship Me with undivided attention, meditating on Me, for those practitioners of yoga, I help in getting what one does not have and security of what one has.” In older age, more spiritual practices are required, when mainte-

nance duties become less.

Lord Krishna has, in the Gita, given many options for doing spiritual practices. One has to choose what suits them in order to be able to do them. Instructions given by the Lord will help in making choices, which is, “For a saintly person, desirous of making progress in yoga, action is known to be the means, but for one fixed in yoga, peace is known to be the only cause.” (6.3) Do these practices conveniently in order not to lose peace of mind. The idea is to get help from God; our role in life can be limited only. God must become 'karta' (doer) in our life, and we His 'nimitta' (instrument). Then success is certain. This is what I am doing. I engage my mind in God by chanting gently while looking at a photo of Lord Krishna, convinced that my Lord will accept my prayers (12.8). And God will guide me about what I must do and help where He only can help. In short, I must continue to do my minor part in life and God will take care of the major part to ensure success. The result: I am engaged appropriately by optimising my spiritual practices and also my daily routine. 'Theek chal raha hai' (Life is fruitful and beautiful).

The writer is a spiritual teacher and a columnist; Views presented are personal.

Artificial intelligence and the decline of thinking