



# BFMC Times

The Weekly News Magazine of Benjamin Franklin Memorial Club

## Silver Jubilee Edition



January 19, 2018

Volume III, Issue 54

10 pages

# BFMC Times turns 25!

- BNS (Jun 19, 0:30 a.m.)  
It was past midnight. I was playing this new computer game called Solitaire, on this new Computer at my office, which had a new Operating System called Windows 3.1.

I was experiencing a whole new way of working with computers, something that would change my life at work forever.

So, what was I doing at office at that ungodly hour? Well, I was also just starting on something that would change my life on a personal front.

For, in the background, was that rhythmic sound of a dot matrix printer grinding away at producing the first ever

copies of BFMC Times, which was composed on another DOS based computer — the latest thing that we were doing at my alter Alma Mater, the Benjamin Franklin Memorial Club.

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Ok, ok ... it may not have been exactly what happened past midnight that day, when the date was June 19, 1993. It wasn't as if my first child was born and I was marking the date and time of a significant event in my life time. In fact, the only way I can reckon that date is because we have an old copy of BFMC Times dated 26th June 1993, which says "Vol. I, No. 2!"

But, in hindsight, it was a significant moment in my life time. And I have definite memories of spending time at office beyond midnight playing computer games while the weekly newsletter was getting printed. As I write this, I can't believe it's been 25 years to the exact moment when it happened!

So, Dear Readers, here's the surprise that we promised for a Terrific Tuesday. We present to you the Silver Jubilee edition of BFMC Times, a 10 page special issue that capsules significant moments of a quarter century of your beloved newsletter. Enjoy!

- Ben S Narahari Nath  
(Publisher)



## Rivals and Usurpers

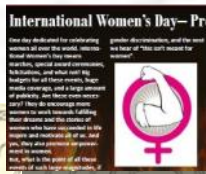
- BNS (Dec 31)

While BFMC Times will have a special place in the annals of the club, along with the controversial claim that it is "owned" by a select few, that has not been always the case.

There was a time when a former editor of BFMC Times, the late Ben Kishore Raja, came up with a rival newsletter called "As We Like It".

Yet another time, yet another former editor, Ben Durga Prasad, usurped all authority on the newsletter and released an "international" edition from Sydney.

And recently, when the publisher suggested a pink & flowery background for the International Women's day special, it was shot down by the guest editor, our fire-brand EVP, Ben Krishnaveni, who opted for more fiery colors.



**Back On The Wheels**  
- DATED 29-05-1994.  
Some good news - The club is not dead as rumour mills working overtime would like you to believe. What if the Governing board has not met atleast once in the last one month, the General Secretary's whereabouts are not known, the treasurer is not yet apprised of his responsibilities, the EVP is not yet active, the AVP is trying his best to be inactive, the President is still trying to figure out which post he can handle better, there is a heavy backlog of minutes & financial reports, there is no circulation of magazines, BFMFC TIMES is closed, membership is dwindling, building fund activity side-lined and gypsy days are here again!

## Times and the Toons

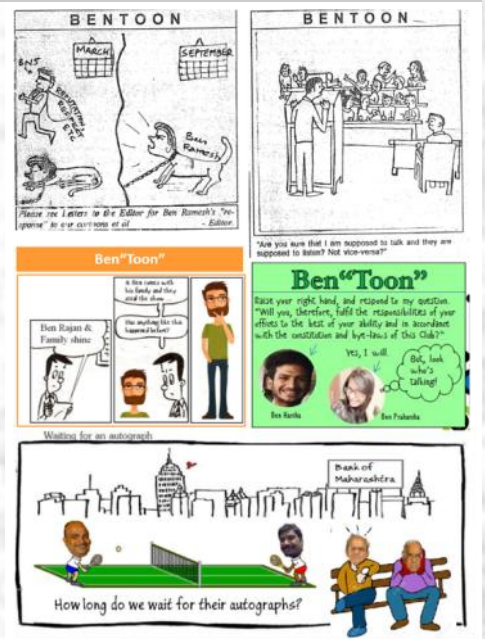
- BNS (Jun 18)

When we browse thru an old issue, the most eye-catching thing is usually the cartoon.

Hand drawn in the early issues, and Googled-copypasted in recent times, the cartoons have captured some small incidents in the club for posterity. And a good laugh.

Caricatures depicted have been explicit with names for active members, like Ben Ramesh of the old, or the current crop of GB team. With seniors, all one got to see was small bespectacled men with cartoon bodies.

Sometimes with a beard!



## Pachhees Saal se...

Remember the cult Hyderabad film Angrez? The lovable anti Hero Ismail Bhai- everything about him was Hyderabad and his famous line "pachhees saal se Charminar pe baitha hoon... Maakirkiri... Mereko eech bolthe re? Those lines still ring in my ear!

Well, I remember the days when I was involved with BFMC Times in its first avatar... Writing for the English newsletter was a challenge, always speaking in the chaste Dakkini - a mix of Telugu, Urdu and Hyderabad... "Arre karlenge ustaad, kitha der hota... apan hai na..." nonchalant, an air of confidence to pull off anything with ease, and of course with perfection. BFMC taught me lots of things... I was never outspoken till I became a Ben, and then I never stopped speaking.

### Editorial: Ben Venkat Parthasarathy

And BFMC Times taught me many more things... I was never much of a writer. But I started writing more and more and was soon writing columns in the National Newspaper I worked with. Today, as we are recollect the journey of 25 years, (from the time it began) not much has changed. Even today when my dear publisher Ben Sunil says... "Front page mey likhne ko kuch bhi nahi hai... kya karenge?" I repeat my old lines... "Arre kar lenge ustaad, kitha der hota... apan hai na..." However, the Apan most times is Sunil, who pulls out a rabbit from the hat at the last minute. Some things need to change, though... How long will I say "pachhees saal se BFMC Times ka Editor jaisa baitha hoon... mere ko eech bolthe re...?" Koi sunnra... Are the young Bens listening?

## Benignly Yours



Dear Bens,

First of all, you will notice I am addressing you and not Dear Editor. This is because I got to know through my sources—not the Editor—that BFMC Times was planning to put special edition of BFMC Times. Why they didn't ask D. Appa Rao for contribution, I want to know.

Before that, Dear Editorial Team and Publisher, congratulations on the self-congratulations. Also on 25th year of BFMC Times.

You might be thinking, this grouchy old man is cranky because Editorial Team didn't put bottu and invite him to write one article for special issue. That is not true. I just want to question what criteria they used to invite.

If you see, others writing in this issue are: Publisher himself. Editor himself. That Meme Saab who is also Tireless Big Contributor every week. Unscramble and Crossword contributors. Unscramble and Crossword solvers. Everybody is there because they are regular contributors, it seems. Then what I am? 12th man or what? Even 12th man makes regular appearances in field, even for one-off special Afghanistan Test.

Big big this Editor talks about fairness. Where is fairness in this, I say?

I have taken all kinds of criticism in my stride. Someone accuses me of trying to be like that J. Mathrubootham fellow. I ignored. Same person said I was Khushwant Singh or what? I raise tough questions means I am seen as taunting.

Still, that and all is okay. I am happy to be anonymous Voice of Conscience in BFMC Times. But you only tell me, anonymous means ignoring-a? Then why? Why Dear Editor didn't invite me?

Anyways, Dear Bens, congratulations on enduring, I mean, enjoying 25 years of BFMC Times! Congratulations to you also, BFMC Times Team!

I may be sharp-tongued with you sometimes, but I am like fresh avakaya made with Guntur chillies. I will make you sweat but only to cool you down.

- Ben. D Appa Rao

*This space was originally planned for "Publisher Reminisces", but we had to accommodate this uninvited contribution.*  
- Publisher.

## Spurring on the Bens with UnScramble and Crossword

We believe that a newsletter should bring in a sense of camaraderie among its audience.

Unlike most newsletters, which often go in a one way street, BFMC Times has been able to generate reasonably good feedback.

And, we think that the UnScramble and Crossword columns is one of the triggers for the feedback. For one

thing, they have instigated a sense of competition among the Ben readers. (Remember Ben DP staying up late to upstage Ben Narayan & Mouli? And that cartoon?) For another, it creates a sense of connection between those who crack it ahead of others who too are attempting, and others who may be just watching. That spurs a stream of communication within the group.

Well, these columns give the needed spark to the newsletter. What if some UnScramble puzzles have been repeated (with due acknowledgement), or if a final answer is repeated with a differently composed puzzle? What if the Crossword is cryptic clues based sometimes and picture based some other times?

They spur us on, nevertheless.



**Crossword of Inventors & Discoverers**

The clues depict significant inventions or discoveries, or something associated with them, and the answers are the names of people famously credited with them.

ACROSS		DOWN	
3. (8)	8. (7)	1. (8,8)	2. (6,4,6)
12. (5,7)	15. (6)	5. (6,4)	6. (7,6)
17. (7)	18. (10)	9. (5,4)	13. (6,6)
22. (4,7)	23. (8)	14. (4)	21. (6)

**Answers to Crossword of Comic Characters at April**

Across: 1 Fred Flintstone, 3 Green Lantern, 4 Batman, Spiderman, 7 Beetle Bailey, 9 Popeye, 11 Ironman, 13 Vin and Hobbes, 19 Wonder woman, 20 Mandrake, Flash, 23 Asterix.  
Down: 2 Dennis the Menace, 5 Mickey Mouse, 8 Tim Winsie The Pooh, 12 Charlie Brown, 13 Superman, 14 and Jerry, 16 Phantom, 17 Hell Boy, 18 Donald Duck, Wolverine, 21 Hulk.

**UNSCRAMBLE**

LECTAS    THANES    DABARO    BREBRU

Now arranged the circled letters to form the Answer as suggested by the given question.

The first of our kind who makes maps?

Answers to UNSCRAMBLE given on 17-07-93: ADJOIN, ESKIMO, GLANCE, RECOUP.  
Another enlightening issue of the Bens? DEEPIKA.

**UNSCRAMBLE**

LECTAS    THANES    DABARO    BREBRU

The first of our kind who makes maps?

**UnScramble**

L A D Y E D    I T H E R E  
P A S T A R    T H I N K G

Padmavathi can't hold a candle to this hand-crafted beauty now lost in the mists of history.

**An Editor Reminisces...**

## Fun Unintended



**Ben Durga Prasad**

When I heard about this special commemorative issue of BFMC Times, I was excited. We did it. After 25 years, the creation is alive and kicking. What's more, it kicked the goal of 50th revival issue a couple of weeks ago. And it did it in style, playing a pivotal role in the Club's revival - again.

Thinking back on how it all began, I guess, it was coming together of a few things. Firstly, the club was on a high after Yuv-Tal'92. It was a happening place, including so much going on every week in the regular meetings, not to mention the fact that these meetings were happening at all - that too, regularly! Whether it was a "hurriedly convened press conference" from a member or a play of words on a member's woes ("No Luck Now" - Ben Sivaram was unable to make it to IIM Lucknow due to date clash), the editorial team was there ready to spin.

Then there was technology rising. I had just bought a new personal

computer and with the then limited computing power, the best I could do was type documents. That put an end to the hand written (yes!) era of Benjamin, much to the relief of the members. So the news would get collated through word of mouth by self-appointed reporters of BNS (Benjamin News Service), typed by the editor and shipped - quite literally - to our publisher, Ben Naraharinath. He would then weave his magic and produce the work of art that we all now come to know as the BFMC Times.

Finally, that not being a social media era, someone had to take on the mantle of the Circulation Manager. Ben Anand accomplished this role superbly, as he did all of his other roles at the club. Every Sunday morning, he would compete with the regular newspaper wallahs in delivering the Times, and legend has it that he wouldn't leave the members' houses until he collected the required two ru-

pees per issue.

Not only the members but their families used to look forward to arrival of this well-educated emissary of the club. That of course raised the profile of the club itself and what we did there, and in a lot of ways made us the newsmakers. Occasionally, we caused trouble as in the case of Ben B.S.Kiran, whom we sighted as having met an accident in an article aptly titled, "Alarming Rise in Accidents". The trouble part was that he chose to underplay the cited accident and never mentioned it to his parents until they saw it in print!

It did not occur to me that I was the first editor of the Times until I was asked to reflect on being one. I think it is a privilege and an honor. It was one of the most memorable periods of my life. I even contemplated changing my career aspirations so I could stay in town to continue as the editor. I also considered taking up writing as a career in earnest. Fortunately, I did

He was the EVP of the 1993 Governing Board, the self-styled "Dream Team".

It is very likely that BFMC Times was his idea originally. To this day, the newsletter mimics his outlook in life: A Cheerful demeanor, a Passion for things, and a Sense of Wry Humour.

He was "on the ground" for only a few weeks that was during the early days of BFMC Times. But, though out of town, indeed out of the country, he has been regularly involved with the magazine. In fact, he has even released an international issue or two of BFMC Times from his domicile down under.

If there is poll for the best EVP of all time, or the best Editor of all time, he will be the guy to beat.

Thanks, Ben DP!

neither. We had fun.

**An Editor Reminisces...**

## Fun and rollicking ride...



**Ben Venkatesh Parthasarathy**

1993, I was working as an Advertisement Executive in Eenadu and typically like most sales jobs, early in one's career, I had loads of free time on the field.

It was a usual practice to drop in with lunch box at Sphinx Solutions - Sunil's office in Bharani Complex on Minister Road, Secunderabad. There used to be lot of fun and banter and I whiled away my time there with my pranks, not just in the afternoons but also in the evenings after office hours.

BFMC then, was at its peak with over 25 members attending regular meetings. 6 years after becoming a Ben, I was not a regular but an occasional 'visitor' to the club. It was a rainy afternoon in the last week of June and Ben Sunil had just launched the BFMC Times with Ben Durga Prasad as the Editor, the first issue was very impressive (wish we had a copy of that).

I got interested and started writing columns for the weekly. I started

getting more involved in the club. When Durga Prasad left for greener pastures and I was elected the EVP, I also took over the mantle of the Editor of this weekly. The evenings at Sphinx started getting more interesting than before.

The literary activities were not the only ones being reported in the then "unofficial weekly news magazine", we had loads of news about Bens - their career moves, their personal achievements and of course loads of gossip. I remember, we even created an advertisement of the local tiffin centre with a tacky caption - "Eating Yesterday's food today". Then there were news items announcing the 'arrival' of a landline phone at a Ben's house and the acquisition of a new two wheeler too. We left no stone unturned in keeping the Governing Board on tenterhooks through syndicated columns by the 'rebel' members who started a BWG (on the lines of the outlawed organization called Bens War

Group). With passage of time BFMC Times went dormant and got revived quite a few times in 1995, 1997 and again in 2004-05. The present avatar is the longest run and we hope to sustain it this way, with renewed vigor and maybe some of the young members taking more responsibility from the old.

From being printed on a dot matrix printer over 4 pages and distributed physically to the homes of the members on Sunday morning for a price of Rs. 1.00, to being digitally designed in eye-catching multi-colored layouts and distributed through WhatsApp on Sunday mornings and by email, BFMC Times has come a long way in 25 years.

As we celebrate the Silver Jubilee of our favorite newsletter, I reflect upon the time I took over from Ben DP as Editor and was too possessive to give up my role. I still continue to have the same passion, with a dedicated team that puts utmost effort in delivering it with-

100 words are highly insufficient when it comes to describing Ben Venkat, the Editor.

But here goes.

Raw. He doesn't hold back, for the most part, going in with the presumption that debate and argument can be engaged in and progress still achieved. It's probably one of the few times that presumption has a positive connotation.

Responsible. He doesn't pass the buck even if others screw up on his watch. Because it's on his watch that something not right has happened.

Talking of watches, I think by now we all know that we can set our watches by him.

Thanks, Ben Venkat!

out fail week after week. It's been one hell of a fun and rollicking ride.

## An Editor Reminisces...

Dear Bens, I am not Idly, Medu Wada or Pongal. I am not a staple diet Chow – Chow Bath or Thayar Sadam. I am special – I reach you once in a week, I am BIRIYANI. Let me declare that I don't carry Non – Veg. Don't Laugh – OK...for your satisfaction I will call myself Pulao.

On completion of 25 Years, I would like to talk to you about "Main Aisa Kyoon Hoon?". People have told me that I am caustic at times, I am bitter at times, I am sweet at times and at times I am sour. I have never come across somebody telling me that I taste bad, it is just that they did not like that taste on that day.

For all practical reasons I am flavoured rice, then what makes me special? It is the Aroma and savoury taste that makes me special. I get the Aroma from the Satires I present which are similar to the use of Nutmeg, my complaints are like the Bay Leaf you use, My analysis and presentation of facts and updates get it's quality from

the Black Pepper they use. My Bentoons are the Raai, Methi and Kalonji; at times I am notty, cute and sweet – this is because they make me with well fried Onions but at times this also hurts because they add the pungent taste of Ginger and Garlic Paste.



The Information I present is the Best Basmati Chawal along with preferences choice of Vegetables. Once the Publisher designs the recipe, "Dum" becomes the duty of the Editor – who relentlessly subjects his contributors to pressure of deadlines.

Usually, the most time taking ingredient that cooks at the last is either Unscramble or the Cross-

word off late cooking Interview of the week is also becoming tough. I always felt I was missing something, so then came this BenD Appa Rao as Cinnamon in my taste palette – he is sweet but also can give a burn.

Now that I am being made and served to you by 7 AM on any given Sunday (sounds like title of a Hollywood Flick – aint it?), I ask you a question. How many of you chew Bay Leaf in Biriyani – which is a complaint in me, How many of you bite a Nutmeg – which is satire in me, how many of you crush a black pepper just like that – which are the to the face opinions in me? Or a cinnamon – which is again a burning analysis from me.

None of us do – just the same way – I want you to relish their aroma and enjoy the Basmati Chawal blended with choice of Vegetables – because that is what matters at the end of the day. All others are a paraphernalia - *Kaupeena Sam-rakshanaartham Patatoopam*

## Savouring the spice!



### Ben Sairam Chavali

One of the champions of BFMC revival in 2017, is also the catalyst for the revival of BFMC Times. Hard hitting, clear in thought and expression, minces no words, courts controversy and a self styled 'Universal Fault Finder'. He started with his popular UFF columns and then moved on to serious stuff.

A specialist of sorts, the Editor assigns high profile interviews to the one and only Sairam Chavali, the best interviewer we have in the team. He also keeps the team in splits with his memes and one liners. Can write on any topic, just give him time!

Thanks, Ben Sairam.

By the way, I come alone so don't expect raitha and mirchi ka salaam but at times I come in during the week like an online order from SWIGGY – just like this edition.

## Our other Editors

### Ben Narayan Devanathan



A master at word play, a creative genius, an original *light-le-maam* Hyderabad, Ben Narayan has been an integral part of the BFMC Times team forever.

You may know him associated with UnScramble & Crossword, both as a creator and a solver. But, he can also present a paper on the "Taxonomy of Bens", or a Stardust style "Hello, Darlings" gossip, and leave you in splits.

### Late Ben Kishore Raja

The first editor during the second innings of BFMC Times, Ben Kishore was a rebel of sorts. In the first run, he penned articles representing a rebel outfit BWG (Bens Group) to pick on the Governing Board. And, also started his own newsletter "As We Like It".

### Ben Dinesh

For a significant period in the late 1990s, BFMC Times was under the stewardship of Ben Dinesh who along with Ben Sairam released a few issues.

### Ben Krishnaveni

Our current EVP has also donned the hat of Editor for BFMC Times, notably the International Women's day issue.



## BFMC Times Quiz

If you have read this Silver Jubilee issue from start to end, this quiz should be a cake-walk. Have a crack at it.

1. Who was ranked no. 1 when computer rankings were first introduced in BFMC Times?
2. What is the date of the oldest issue of BFMC Times that is currently available with our team?
3. What was the date when Bens had a reunion before it's revival on June 4, 2017?
4. According to BFMC Times, at whose residence did Bens have the pot luck dinner in 1995?
5. What does UFF, the title of a series of articles by Ben Sairam, stand for?
6. What publishing tool or word processor was used for the first ever issue of BFMC Times?
7. Which Ben had trouble with his parents because BFMC Times reported a small accident that he had?
8. Who was the first editor when BFMC Times began its second run in 1995?
9. How much did each issue of BFMC Times cost in 1993?
10. From which city was an international edition of BFMC Times published?
11. Who along with Ben Krishnaveni created the International Women's day 2017 issue ?
12. What was the date of the first issue of BFMC Times in it's current run?
13. What was the date of the last issue of BFMC Times, before the 12½ year hiatus it had?
14. Who was depicted in the first ever cartoon in BFMC Times?
15. Where was the "Sphinx" office located where BFMC Times was first published?



# “Text”ing Times

The first 5 issues of BFMC Times should be part of the club’s folklore.

Though we ventured to bring out this newsletter using Computers, it was the period when the world was still transitioning from text based computing to graphical user interface (GUI) computing. What we had at our disposal was largely the former, and it meant we needed to spend significant amount of time and effort to publish the newsletter.

We used “Wordstar”, a DOS based word processor software that was very popular those days. It’s text based user interface meant that we had only 1 font at our disposal. Of course, that font came in 3 main variations: Narrow (which we used for running text), Normal (for general story headlines) and Wide (for Mast Head, and “screaming” headlines).

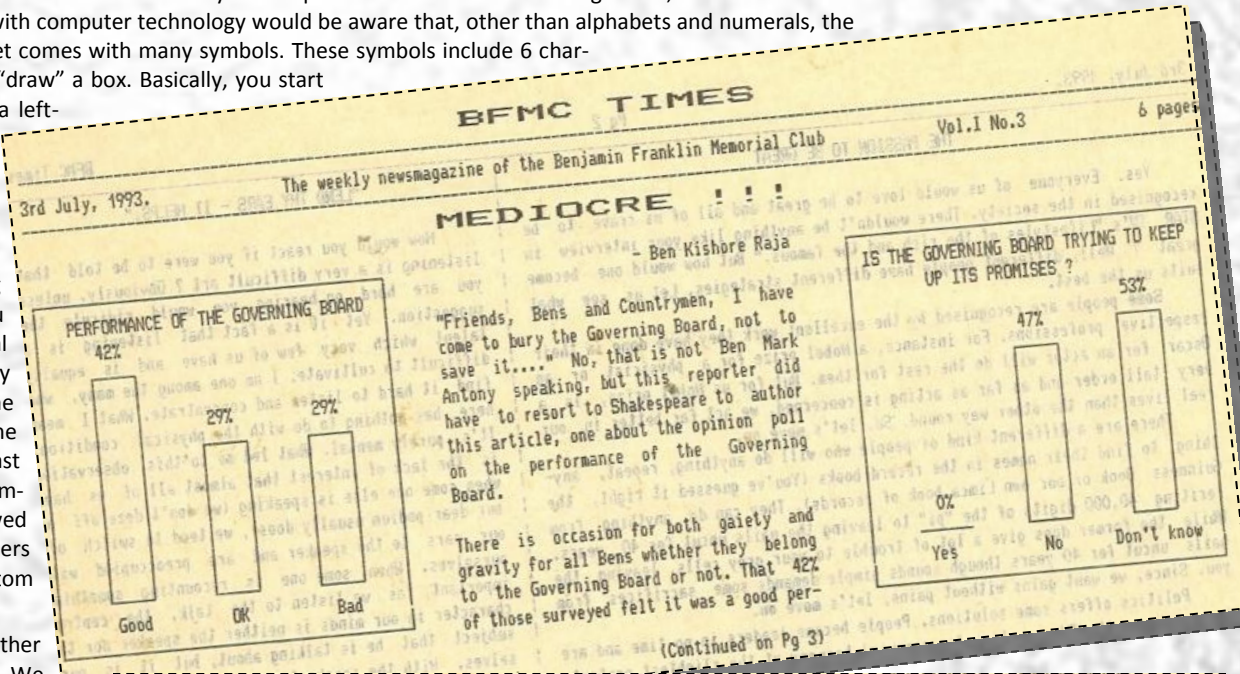
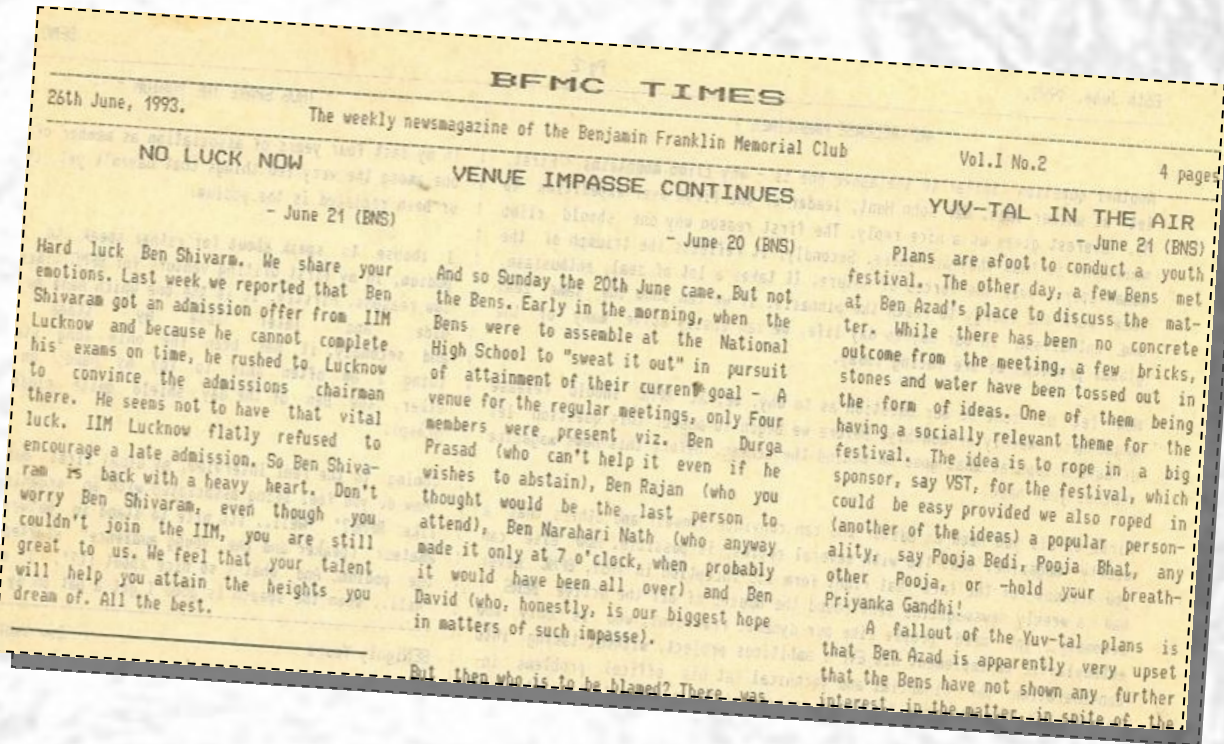
Graphics were out of question. Or, that’s what everybody thought. But, we were Bens. We were innovative!

So, when we had to publish the results of a survey on the performance of the Governing Board, we used extended ASCII characters to create bar graphs. Those familiar with computer technology would be aware that, other than alphabets and numerals, the extended ASCII character set comes with many symbols. These symbols include 6 characters that can be used to “draw” a box. Basically, you start by typing on the first line a left-

top-corner character (┌), followed by horizontal-line characters (─), followed by a right-top-corner character (┐). The next few lines, depending on the height of the bar you want, you’d type 2 vertical characters (│) with as many spaces in between as the horizontal characters in the first line. Finally, in the last line, you’d type a left-bottom-corner character (└), followed by horizontal-line characters (─), followed by a right-bottom-corner character (┘).

Printing, of course, was another tedious exercise in itself. We used a dot matrix printer which would print character by character, line by line. 40 copies of 4 pages each would take anywhere upto 4 hours, considering the inevitable problems in a mechanical system.

All this also meant certain costing went into it, and each issue came to about 1 Re. each.



COSTING OF BFMC TIMES		HOW DO WE BREAK EVEN ???	
Each issue of BFMC times consists of 40 copies. Each copy requires 2 sheets of Computer Stationery.		refill costs about Rs. 40/-.	
For 10 issues we require about 1000 (i.e., 40x2x10 plus likely wastage & other losses) sheets of Computer Stationery.		Cost of 1000 sheets stationery	..... = Rs. 200/-
		Printer Refill charges (for 5 refills)	..... = Rs. 200/-
		TOTAL (for every 10 issues)	..... = Rs. 400/-
Printer Ribbon refilling is required once every 400 pages of printing. Or, in other words, once every 200 sheets. Each		Each issue costs (Rs. 400:40)	..... = Rs. 40/-
		Each copy costs (Rs. 40:40)	..... = Re. 1/-

# The Second Innings ...

When BFMC Times was first launched it had a fairly successful run of about 5 months, being released every Sunday during the period. Then came a gap of almost a year and a half when there was no newsletter published.

This gap also coincided with a drop in active membership at the club and, consequently, a drop in any significant activity.

Then, two months into 1995, a new Governing Board took over the reigns of the club under the able presidency of Ben Venkat triggering another era of vibrancy with several programmes, from competitions to guest lectures to panel discussions to pot-luck dinners.

This run of BFMC Times which,

## BFMC TIMES

12th March, 1995      The unofficial magazine of the Benjamin Franklin Memorial Club      Vol. II, No. 1.

### NEW GOVERNING BOARD TAKES OVER

Mar 11 (BNS)

The new Governing Board headed by Ben Venkatesh took charge on February 26, 1995 in a simple Installation Nite function held at National High School R.K.Nagar.

The function also had Ben Janardhan as the Chief Guest who gave an excellent speech, which unfortunately could not be covered as this reporter was not present at the time.

True to tradition, the meet- THE NEW BOARD

### Bens to conduct competitions for National High School

Mar 11 (BNS)

The Bens are all set to conduct competitions to students of National High School, R.K.Nagar as part of the celebration of the Benjamin Franklin Memorial Club.

for Monday the 13th March, 1995. We wish all the best for the two Bens organising the competitions, Bens Kishore &

## BFMC TIMES

# Special Supplement

### The Pot-Luck Dinner

Page 5      May 21

## A GREAT EVENING

Dark clouds gathered in the sky. And dark clouds were beginning to form in the hearts of the few Bens present at Ben BT Sharma's residence. The time, 8.00 p.m. And only Bens Murali Mohan, Vijaya Kumar and Yours truly with wife present. It threatened to be a washout. Literally.

8.40 p.m. and no less than a gathering of 40 assemble on the terrace. It's what I call the cinema culture. The theaters are generally empty even half-an-hour before the show. And in no time the auditoriums get packed to capacity. So, the mists are cleared- though the skies refuse to budge- and the stage is set for a grand evening show.

Fittingly enough, the compere for the day is the indomitable Ben Vijaya Kumar (Did I hear someone say "Fitting is right!"?) He does carry out his role with aplomb, notwithstanding asides from those present, including the (self-defined) "wife of the great Vijaya Kumar". It would be no exaggeration to say that Ben Vijaya Kumar was the "life and soul" of the party.

The evening takes off with the self-introductions of all those present. The highlights: "The young and dynamic" intro of Ben Shiv. The long and winding intro of Ben Murali Mohan encompassing the intros of even his family members; and the uncharacteristically "brief" intro of Ben Sharat.

And then began the high-point-for-some-low-point-for-some part of the evening: There was the cultural session where some Bens sang to their hearts' content and some to others' hearts' contempt. The ups: Pleasant surprises that Ben Sharada can sing and Ben Kiran & gang can cook up parodies. The downs: The same old Bens singing the same old songs.

One hour into the evening, when the sunshine is at its best (in the hearts, of course), and down comes the rain playing spoilsport. Well, it takes more than a downpour to 'dampen' the Bens' spirits. A few moments later you wouldn't have believed that the gathering did not actually descend through the roof in one body. You could say that the only difference was that the roof which was below now had gone above. And the show continues as if nothing had happened.

Ever experienced the feeling of your fate being sealed in a box. Well, if you were present on this evening, you couldn't have missed it. One 'dabba' containing chits of 'commandments', and you could never guess when your name would be called to perform. Or else! And we got see some great performances. Ben Sethuraman as the hungry monkey, injudiciously wasted an opportunity to pounce on the food, yet 'monkeying' around he did, admirably. Mrs. Vijaya Kumar, in her song-and-dance sequence, charmed the crowd with her song part and with a suggestion to imagine the dance part. Ben Sunitha as the ANR of Premnagar would have put any drunkard to shame. The clever Ben Kishore (Sr.) gave us two anecdotes which made us forget what he was actually supposed to do in the first place. And then, we had the inimitable Ben Ramakanth who took a few uncertain steps as Dr. SD Sharma and collapsed, or, in other words, his was a performance which fell flat.

There were other performances too, notable among them being the song "Chiku Biku Chiku Biku Railey" by Ben Narayan as Saigal would have done it.

At the conclusion, since old habits die hard, some of the members carry out a poll for the 'Ben of the day'-with the award finally going to Murali Mohan but not to Ben Vijaya Kumar gave a good run for his money. Ask PG Wodehouse and will tell you, food always put one in good moods. And the dinner that followed proved to be most fruitful for the Bens.

A session on "What it means to be an entrepreneur" is proposed and okayed for 4th June. An amount to the tune of Rs. 3,000 is all set to be ours from the funds of the now inactive Jaycees club of Malkajgiri. And finally, BFMC Times collects the highest ever subscriptions at one time in its history (robbing us of one reason to crib!).

When the evening ended at about 11.30, there were a few who were very thankful to the rain Gods. They could go home and say that they were late because they were stranded in the rain! That apart, there was only one thought in everyone present: "That is what I'd call a great evening!"

A DREAM COLLECTION

It was not necessarily the biggest gathering of the Bens. But it was surely the most representative. At the pot-luck we had members from every era. In fact, at least one Ben among those present was an 'active member' in every single year of the club's 27 year history.

## BFMC TIMES

June 6 (BNS)

### BFMC Conducts Two Great Programmes

The last two Sundays saw feverish activity among the Bens as they conducted the Guest Lecture by Dr. Rao and the Panel Discussion.

ready seems to be keeping its promise and we hope to see great days ahead.

## THE TIMES ARE BACK

It was just like any other Sunday Evening. When, after an enjoyable afternoon at the National High School, the Bens gather at the "Good Luck" Restaurant at the R.K. Nagar Bus Stop. The only difference was that this time only 3 Bens were found sipping their favourite Irani Chai. What nobody in the restaurant, or for that matter nobody among the Bens not present, could have guessed is that a high level secret meeting was being conducted. And the result is the successful outcome of the meeting, which is right now in your hands.

Yes, BFMC TIMES is back! The team comprising of Bens Narahari Nath, Kiran & Kishore have decided to pool together their wits and efforts to bring you BFMC TIMES week after week. We hope we have your support and encouragement and are sure that you will carry forward to those heady days when Bens BFMC Times is at the helm of affairs for our club.

28th May, 1995      Rs. 2.50      The unofficial magazine

### Our Guest Editor Ben Narayan

In a record of sorts, Ben Narayan offered to be the Guest Editor on Friday Evening and has brought out this issue which sure makes great reading.

### Ben Anand to Resign?

In the first of the first of this year, a "Transactional Analysis" is an important tool to use in the corporate world. A panel discussion on this topic is being conducted by Ben Anand.

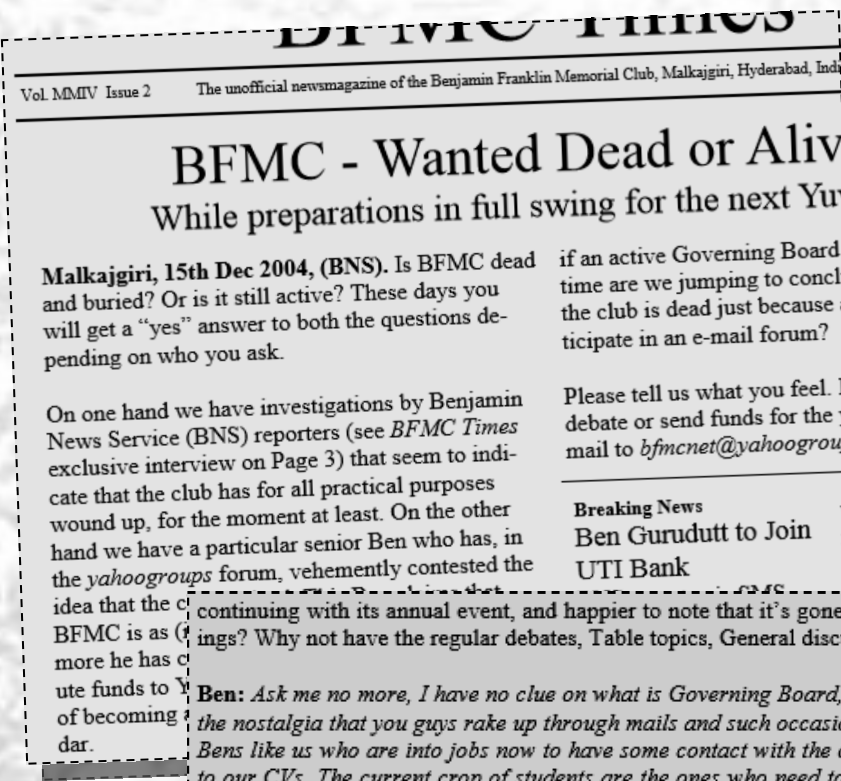
though intermittent, spilled over into the late 1990s, saw more than one editor. Including the late Ben Kishore Raja, Ben D Narayan, Ben Sairam, Ben Dinesh and Ben Venkat himself. Unfortunately, we cannot lay our hands on most issues from this innings, especially those of the later years.

## When we went down fighting in 2004 ...



After the fairly glorious decade of the 1990s, the club saw a downside with meetings being rarely held and not much other activities either. However, the flagship event of the club, YuvTal would spuriously crop up once in a while, thanks mainly to Ben Ravi Chander and a couple of erstwhile active Bens like Sairam, Kamal & Venkat.

We have no real official record of whatever little happened in the club in the 2000s. But, in December 2004, a few Bens, notably Bens Anand, Venkat, Sunil, Durgaprasad & Narayan attempted to resuscitate a dying organization thru some "on-line" meetings and the release of at least two issues of BFMC Times (volumes MMIV Issue 1 and Issue 2). These issues capture the spirit of Bens who went down fighting, so to say.



With that the BNS reporter left with faint memories of the dusty benches of Zilla Parishad and the vociferously fought GDs and with the optimistic hope of getting the elusive name and phone number of the present President or any of the governing body members.

### BFMC Times Investigation News from Chicago - BFMC is long dead and buried!

There have been lots of questions on what is happening at BFMC. So BNS went on a fact finding mission, two Sunday afternoons at the various prospective venues and all that it found was deserted classrooms at RK Nagar National High School, Malkajgiri Zilla Parishad and Uttam Nagar Welfare Association School.

Then came the news from one of the active Bens of 2001-03 that BFMC hardly meets, if it does its at Irani cafes discussing cricket and movies, we were also told that Ben Frank's Youth festival is likely in Jan 2005, excited that all is not lost and that BFMC is still alive and kicking. BNS sought to find out who its last President was, who the active members are... Alas! nothing was forthcoming, that's when this reporter came across one of the more active Bens who had more information on Bens, BFMC and its activities... the setting was Chicago Cafe, Begumpet...

**BNS:** So what's news from BFMC?  
*Our Ben put it simply – What BFMC are you talking about, it's been long dead and buried, there is no one interested.*

**BNS:** Then do you guys meet regularly, is there any contact with Bens of the last active period... are you aware of bfmnet?

**Ben:** *There is this yahoo groups we interact through bens@yahoo groups.com, we are not aware of the bfmnet@yahoo groups.com anyway we will try to be in touch more regularly now.*

**BNS:** Tell us more about the last visible meetings of the club, are there any records, minutes, financial accounts?

**Ben:** *Well, the last 'proper' meeting was held over a year back, there are no active members, we do not have any minutes so there is no question of financial records either.*

**BNS:** What is this we hear of the Yuv Tal, tell us more – we are interested in any activity that promotes BFMC

**Ben:** *Well Yuv-Tal is being held in Vijayawada in January 1<sup>st</sup> week and Hyderabad on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>, there had been plans to have Yuv-tal in Vizag and Tirupati also, but its going to be only these 2 cities.*

**BNS:** Well, it gives us pleasure to know that BFMC is still continuing with its annual event, and happier to note that it's gone beyond Hyderabad too... then why not the weekly Sunday meetings? Why not have the regular debates, Table topics, General discussions and Minutes... where is the Governing board?

**Ben:** *Ask me no more, I have no clue on what is Governing Board, or who it comprises, if there is anything that is left of BFMC it is the nostalgia that you guys rake up through mails and such occasional meetings. Regarding Yuv Tal, well its an annual occasion for Bens like us who are into jobs now to have some contact with the club and its members and add an 'Event management' experience to our CVs. The current crop of students are the ones who need to take the club ahead... and may be with support from past Presidents and Bens with literary bent.*

Twelve & a half years later, we thrive again!

BFMC TIMES

June 25, 2017 Complimentary Copy The weekly newsmagazine of the Benjamin Franklin Memorial Club Vol III No 1 4 pages

June 25, 2017 We started from where we left, over a Decade ago... And in B&W

A MEMORABLE REUNION

BNS (Jun 25) 37 Ben Sunil then addressed the house... The event kicked off with the master of ceremonies, the well paid Ben Ayush...



The group for the intra-club competitions...

BFMC: Ctrl+Alt+Del & Restart



BNS (Jun 25) In the year 1949 eleven young people 8 men and 3 women... Ben G Sentharaman, the former BFMC Secretary...

When we didn't have any news... We CREATED NEWS! The Election Announcement on October 1st and Year-end Intra Club Competitions were Created in the newsroom before they became reality!

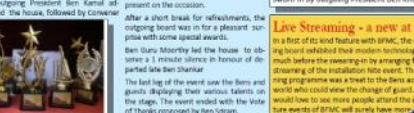
Elections in the first week of November



Intra-Club Competitions on Christmas Weekend... The outgoing program of the BFMC...

New Governing Board Sworn In

Installation Nite 2018 should go down as one of the best organized events in our history... Ben Sunil then addressed the house...



The array of innovative trophies...

Glittering, Merry & Conversational

Glittering, merry and conversational... The President, Ben Harshav...

Ben of the Year

From here, Ben LRC in his distinguished style... Ben LRC in his distinguished style, took the stage...

Tentative Programme

Table with columns for Date, Time, and Event details.

Who'll foot the bill?

It is unclear for whom the BFMC... The BFMC members are expected to foot the bill...

We also reported Big News and in Style. Our Coverage of the Intra Club competitions, Installation Nite and Charter Nite were truly professional and quite special!

Most Promising Ben of the Year

Ben Vihayar, the MVP, receiving the Ben of the Year award... Ben Vihayar, the MVP, receiving the Ben of the Year award...

CHARTER NITE POSTPONED!

Weekday schedule has Bens fuming... The governing board Ben Sunil, Sarvam and Venkat met on a weekday evening...

BIG decision Today?

The Governing Board in a Press Release said that 'to put an end to rumours and controversies'... The Governing Board in a Press Release said that 'to put an end to rumours and controversies'...

Logo ka kaam hai...

Charter Ben Sarvam Kumar made his debut appearance at Spillover meeting venue... The original logo was set by the cat among the pigeons...

A Fitting Finale to the Revival Year

ENJANIM Franklin Memorial Club's reunion on May 17, 2017 was just the beginning... The three day event had very good participation from all the junior Bens and quite a few not-so-senior Bens and guests...

A Colourful palette: Made more colourful with our stream of contributors in Bens Guru Moorthy, Dr Gita Sharma, Bijoy Parthasarathy, Gp Capt Krishna Mohan, Anand Varanasi, Durga Prasad, David Damara, Kiran Biligiri, Pooja, Tushar and more...

The journey of BFMC that began in 1969 and stuttered in 2004-05, to remain dormant for over a decade, truly had a wonderful revival in the year 2017 that had a fitting finale with the Intra-club competitions.

We Courted Controversy too!

Ben Shankar Passes away... Ben Shankar, both employed in the IT sector, was the first of his kind...

Ben Shankar Passes away

Ben Shankar, both employed in the IT sector, was the first of his kind... Ben Shankar, both employed in the IT sector, was the first of his kind...

Bens bid tearful adieu

Bens gathered at the India Shrine... Bens gathered at the India Shrine in Houston to bid tearful adieu to Ben Shankar...

The Special Edition

Nov 21, 2017 Our beloved Ben Shankar Krishnamoorthy passed away early morning. As messages started pouring in from across the World, the Editor came out with a special Edition in the evening, compiling inputs from all Bens. Truly a fitting tribute to the affable and meticulous friend.

When he wrote to us...

Random Musings - Ben Shankar... When he wrote to us... Random Musings - Ben Shankar...

When he wrote to us...

When he wrote to us... When he wrote to us... When he wrote to us...

An Exclusive Women's Day Special by the Young lady Bens Krishnaveni & Praharsha

International Women's Day - Press for Progress. One day dedicated for celebrating women all over the world...

When he wrote to us... Random Musings - Ben Shankar. When he wrote to us... Random Musings - Ben Shankar...

When he wrote to us... When he wrote to us... When he wrote to us...

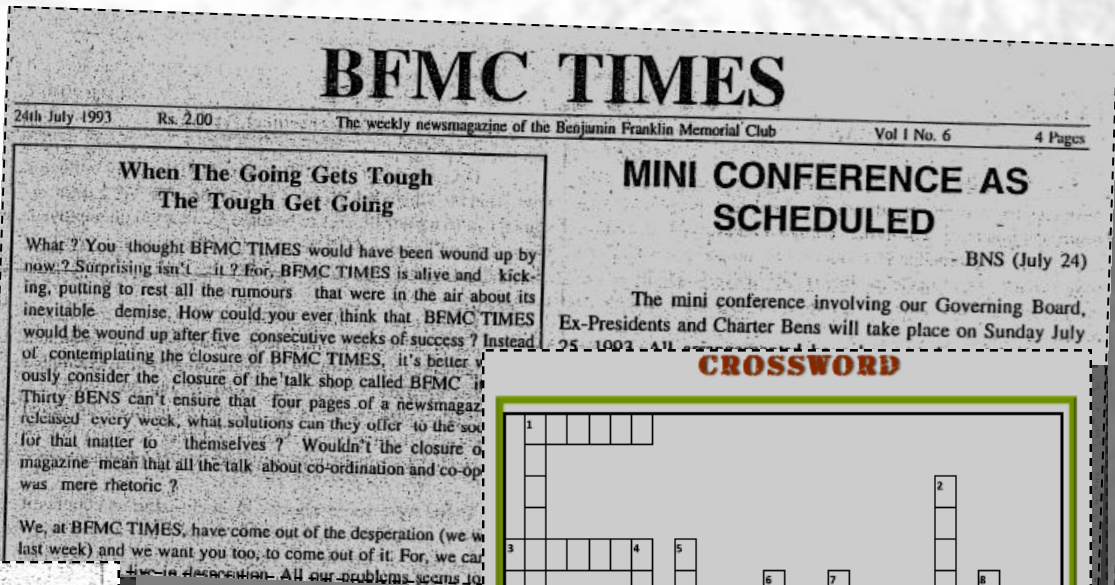
# The Many Firsts ...

How different is BFMC Times from what it was when first published? Well, not much different to a certain extent. The structure has broadly been the same: "News" on Page 1, Editorial, Letters to Editor, UnScramble Page 2, Interview Page 3, and Regular meeting report Page 4.

But over time, the newsletter has had added elements and improvements. Here we capture such key moments in our History.

## Desktop Publishing

After 5 weeks of "text" based publishing, we switched to GUI software Coreldraw with the issue of 24th July 1993. (Subsequently, we used other tools like MS-Word and, currently, we



BENTHOON



use MS-Publisher.) With that issue we also moved to Laser Printing and Photocopying.

## Cartoon

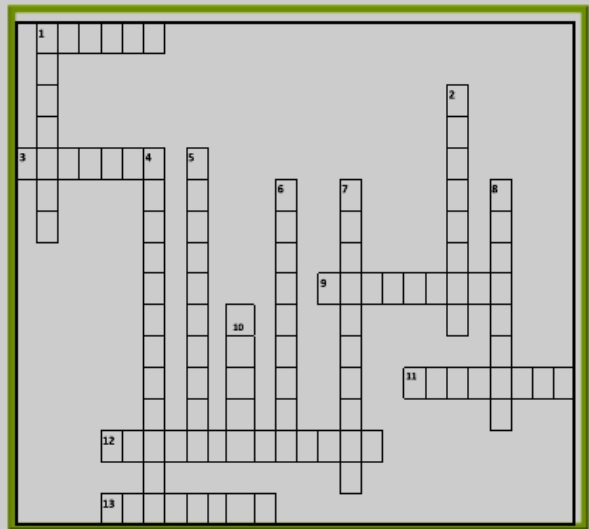
Photocopying meant that making copies became easier, and so that issue of 24th July 1993, also carried the first cartoon created by Ben Venkat. Later on, we maintained a mystery on the creator of cartoons, but you now know who was behind, at least, some of them.

## Crossword

The Crossword is a fairly recent introduction, the first one appearing in the issue dated November 5, 2017.

## Ranking System

The Bens Ranking system was one innovation that triggered a sense of competition in the Bens when it was introduced on August 8, 1993. And it continues to do so even today. So much so, that there have been allegations, as much in 1993 as in 2018, that



### Across

- Search the search engine? Almost. And why. Sounds like it anyway, if you want to bamboozle a batsman with it. (6)
- His name was always the first in the batting order, but this name was always in the middle. (7)
- Sounds like the slippers both brothers deserved to be beaten with, according to some. (9)
- The glue is, go on, say it, somewhere in there, what stitched together the most fearsome batting order and bowling line-up for the Windies. (3, 5)
- Height-challenged bronze medallist (male)? More like a possible fielder during a Power Play. (5,8)
- Ravi Shastri left a red mark on his kingdom. (5,3)

### Down

- Vamos, Guru! Or this tall bowling stalwart will do it. (7)
- Bald lead? Not only is there no hair on it, there is no life in this delivery. (4,4)
- He's the highest wicket taker in his country's premier domestic championship, but he never played for his country. (8,4)
- Daft dot to make if you're arguing for this close-in fielder. (5,5)
- A one-season wonder who was the first overseas player to play for the White Rose club in English County cricket. (9)
- Jam hit rail! This Hyderabad knows there are better ways to set world records. (7,3)
- A helping of Tilakaratne ice-cream? That's certainly not in the textbook. (8)
- He literally swept India out of the 1987 World Cup. (5)

## A RANKING SYSTEM FOR THE BENS

-BNS (Aug 7)  
In yet another move to give novelty, BFMC times, this week onwards shall rank the Bens based on their performances/contributions in literary sessions at the regular meetings.  
And not lagging behind when it comes to state-of-the-art technology, we will actually be evaluating the Bens with the help of the omnipresent Computer. So, these rankings will be published every week under a heading which would specify that they are the "latest computer rankings".  
As for the ranking system,

every week the last four regular meetings will be taken as the basis. Points will be awarded to each Ben as per the ranking system given below:  
Invocation - 1 point;  
Noble Thought - 2 points; Chairperson/Evaluator for at least one session - 2 points; Individual Speech - 2 points; Ben of the Day - 3 points; In the literary sessions, for individual events the top five performers get 5, 4, 3, 2 & 1 points respectively; for team events members of the top 3 teams get 3, 2 & 1 points respectively.  
All points thus earned shall add up to a Ben's tally and the one with the highest points

garnered in the last four meetings shall be ranked *Numero uno*. In case of a tie at any position, your date of induction in the club will come into play. The more "senior" you are, the lower you will be ranked!  
This ranking system also means that being good at literary events isn't enough to be ranked high. What one needs is a little initiative to "contribute" to the literary sessions and, more importantly, to be "present" at a regular meeting where the points can be scored.  
So, all the best Bens, it is upto you to strive to appear in the privileged list.

### THE LATEST COMPUTER RANKINGS

1. Ben Sridhar	16 pts.
2. Ben Gurudutt	15 pts.
3. Ben Srikanth	13 pts.
4. Ben Ramesh	12 pts.
5. Ben Prakash	11 pts.
6. Ben Badri	10 pts.
7. Ben Venkat	9 pts.
8. Ben Hussain	-8 pts.
9. Ben TD Prasad	8 pts.
10. Ben Sunil	8 pts.
11. Ben Sai Kiran	7 pts.
12. Ben Kishore	7 pts.
13. Ben Shivram	5 pts.
14. Ben Anand	5 pts.
15. Ben Rajan	5 pts.

meeting agendas are often "doctored" to favor certain individuals.

## Ben D Appa Rao

The latest to join the list of regular columns is "Benignly Yours", penned by a mysterious Ben D Appa Rao. First appearing on May 6, 2018, he (presuming he is a he) seems to have ruffled a few feathers with satire and sarcasm expressed in his trademark English language. His initial writings looked *Tinglish* (Tamilnadu English) but they are now more *Anglish* (Andhra English).



## Publisher's choice — Gems from the past

We were 25 years younger. With more hair on our heads, but less care inside our heads.

There was impishness in things that we did. Like what we said in our newsletter.

For example, when there was criticism that it was becoming a gossip magazine, we decided to introduce a "Gossip" column in the **BFMC Times dated 10th Oct, 1993**. With a note that went: *So we have come out with an ingenious plan. Whenever we feel that some items are gossip, we will actually publish them under this column. You will have to note that all other news has to be considered as "serious" ones, whether you like it or not.*

Another time there was this reporter who covered that year's Installation Nite in **BFMC Times dated 12th March, 1995**. The report concludes with: *The function also had Ben Janardhan as the Chief Guest who gave an excellent speech, which unfortunately could not be covered as this reporter was not present at the time.*

Alternatively, we expressed ourselves eloquently whether we were frustrated with the daily rut we were in, or we were in awe of a metropolitan city. Read alongside those gems from Bens.

### Article by Ben Ramesh Parthasarathy, BFMC Times dated 3rd July, 1993

#### Grrr !!!

*[At last, he is breaking his silence. In the history of his association with BFMC, Ben Ramesh has for the first time come out with an article (which he handed over personally, to the editor). What's so fussy about it, you may think. No Editor, so far, has been able to extract an article from Ben Ramesh. So, its an accomplishment of sorts to the present editor. Now read on..]*

#### THINGS TO DO TODAY

Name : P.RAMESH Date xx xx

1. Grrr!!! Get annoyed with the person who is trying to wake me up.
2. Wake up, to the harsh realities of life, viz., shit-house occupied, etc.
3. Join the "Que" for a cup of "Fresh laxative" (Coffee) being supplied daily free of cost and labour.
4. "Contribute" "Generously" to the 'Malkajgiri sewerage board'.
5. "Peeping time", the newspaper has just arrived and "three" people to compete with father, brother (younger), brother (elder) !
6. "Argument time", All family members are welcome.
7. "Home is burning, Ramesh is listening" - to the Vividh Bharathi.
8. "Time to show", my multi-faceted personality on 'popular command', i.e. to become a driver/dhobi/plumber/etc.
9. "Bucket and Bathroom wait for

none." Hurry up it's time for the "Soapy opera"!!

10. "Sherlock Holmes Time !" the saga of seemingly unending search for the missing "U wear" begins ... and ends just in time.
11. OOPS! It's time to think 'about' time and look "Bravely" "Straight" into the clock and then say "Oh god ! I am already late."
12. Gulp the food and 'flush' it down the throat with a glass of buttermilk and then say "It's tasty mom." public relations you see ! After all "Ne eat to live and not live to eat."
13. Enter the office with a sense of guilt (real) and also with a sense of pride (false) and justify the delay (to ones own self) saying "better late than never." !
14. Sit in the chair, yawn ! And then have a "fresh" look at the "previous" day's official 'things to do today' invariably, left unaccomplished.)
15. Get disgusted :

[a] with one's own self for what (ever) I have to do.

[b] with "prospective" customer for postponing his purchase.

[c] with the 'new' customer for the delay in his payment.

[d] with the 'old' customer for being a "pain in the .. neck" nagging us with problems.

[e] with the "motor bike" for the heavy "kicking" involved to make

it start and the "voracious" appetite it has for petrol).

[f] with the Hydera'BAD' roads.

[g] with "Mr. Charles Babbage" for inventing the Computer.

16. "Hanging Time" RIPP OFF one's formal wear on reaching home and " let them hang themselves" on the nearest, visible hook or its substitute (dining chair, nail, etc.) and get "informal" in a T shirt and enjoy the cup of "tea".
17. "Decision Time" decide to postpone (again) the "decision time" to same time tomorrow.
18. Now that a major "decision" has been taken, the rest of the evening will be spent decisively in the company of friends.
19. Have the "last (to have) supper" at about 11 p.m.
20. A Fantastic Sleep begins..., and ends "five" minutes later, because I have invariably, forgotten to keep the vehicle inside, shut the bathroom door, etc., and the responsible members of the family woke me up to remind me of my responsibility.
21. Get annoyed with the scheme of things and go to sleep peacefully!!!
22. Grrr!!! Get annoyed with the person.. .. OOPS! that's the first on the list of "THINGS TO DO TODAY" tomorrow...

*[Ben Ramesh, when reports last came in, was a marketing executive with Guru Computers.]*

### Article by Ben Durga Prasad, BFMC Times dated 10th October, 1993

#### SALAAM BOMBAY

The place: Bombay's palatial Victoria Terminus (VT). The time: 5:00 pm. Adhunik-Bharatiya-Naris with their pallus tucked at their waists prepare themselves for the "battle". Their faces tense. Their senses alert. Here comes the war machine... Aakramann!! Before you can comprehend what's happening, the ground is cleared and a fresh batch of "soldiers" are ready for the onslaught.

Welcome! To the cosmopolitan, commercial capital of India. With one at every 54 seconds, suburban trains just give a bird's-eye-view of the breathtaking speed of Bombay - the city always on the move. The place is amply portrayed in the train compartments where people sing bhajans, play cards, solve crosswords, do make-up or take a. few all the more precious naps.

A tourist visiting Bombay is not as much enthused by the Gateway of India as he is overawed by the Taj Continental which overshadows the legacy of the British Raj. Raj. Bombay (also called "Mumbai" has one of the most beautiful drives in the world. - Marine Drive: With the sea on one side and sky-scrapers on the other, the drive s when lit up, at night deserves being called "The Queens Necklace". On one end of the drive you have Chowpatty beach and on the other end is Nariman point, the nerve centre of all business activities in Bombay. Move a little sideways and you come to Fashion Street, Churchgate. That's Asiatic , all all-in-one store. But that's not for buying books. You can get on the footpath for Rs. 30/- (only, but you can bargain) what you will get at Rs. 180/- in the store. Let's move on.

Heard of "Juhu"? A place where you can expect a "Metro" quality of life. A

life that's precisely why many of the Bollywood stars are placed here. By the way, the talk of the town is a cover page "blow-up" by an upcoming actress. Come to Bandra's Linking Road and you can find the maximum number of "Mini" people. You can see for yourself how fast the population bomb is ticking if you can crawl inch by inch along the maddening crowds at Dadar. But don't stay too long. Or you will be a victim of an explosion of another kind.

If you have a flair for superlatives, Bombay has its own two - Dharavi and Kamatiputra, the. Former is Asia's largest slum and the later, Asia's largest red-light area.

Space is the only problem in Bombay. Even in the case of Ganesh Pandal, advertisers cram as many hoardings as possible so that devotees can have a "darshan" of their products! Getting a flat is not much of a problem if you can

shelve out just 95 lakhs for a 3 bedroom flat at Bandra. You can get one for only 3 lakhs, at Nala Sapora. But be ready to get sandwiched when you travel 50 kms to and fro!

Among the other activities is the beating up of journalists if their write against the "supremo". Communal clashes and riots coupled with bomb blasts are new avocations for the dons of the underworld.

Whether one is a "posh" resident of Juhu or an "unposh" pollution accosted resident of Ghatkopar, all reach the waters of the Arabian sea after a hectic week to watch the glorious sunset in the Western Horizon. They all wait impatiently for the grand finale. But alas! The unpredictable rain plays spoilsport. Everyone is disappointed but not so much that it will affect the pace next morning.

Life moves on...