He ran out of the exam hall when he was in third grade, terribly scared at the idea of having to face the exam paper. Studies never fascinated him; he rather preferred to stick to the job which his forefathers were engaged in: washing clothes and pressing them. “Kitabi khayalat mujhe kabhi hajam hi nahi huye, [I was never into books] I always wanted to see people wearing creaseless, well pressed, clean clothes and I believed nobody enjoys pressing clothes as much as I do. No matter how many clothes are to be pressed, I don’t get tired” says Sanjay Kahulewalla, who owns a small laundry service near St. Carmel High School, Bandra. Sanjay came from Uttar Pradesh to Mumbai ten years back when he was thirteen, as he wanted to provide his spotless service to busy Mumbaikers and get good money, he landed up in Bandra. Having stayed in this suburb and worked relentlessly helped him earn a house and some money to send back home in UP.

Sanjay got married a year back, and now continues to live an ordinary life. “I get to press around 150-200 clothes everyday, so I earn around Rs.300 - 350 per day. Usmein kat jaata hai.” he says moving his heavy iron swiftly but neatly, over the collar of a white cotton shirt. He is an ardent fan of Amitabh Bachchan and never fails to catch at least a movie, a week which features AB. “usually I press around 150 clothes but whenever I watch Amitabh’s picture, I get thrilled, so much so that, I can press 200 clothes in a flash” says this lanky, dark cestrivila with a twinkle in his eyes. Himesh Reshmiya’s numbers he loves and he savours panipuri on Juhu beach as he shares a plate or two with his wife.

So does the city of dreams compel him to dream? If yes, then what are his dreams? “I believe in work, dreams are of no use, at the end of the day they remain dreams nothing more” philosophises Sanjay, in the same breath he adds “but I certainly want few wishes of mine to turn true- I want to see my kids educated and turn into badda saabs one day” he believes in God and the Almighty has been kind to him for he got an opportunity to work in Kuwait. He agrees that would be an easy route to earn big money. “sabhi to Kuwait ja raha hoon, [I am going to Kuwait] I will do the same job there, but I will come back to this city, as the city has given me a lot” he sighs.

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