

Kanara Saraswat

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF KANARA SARASWAT ASSOCIATION

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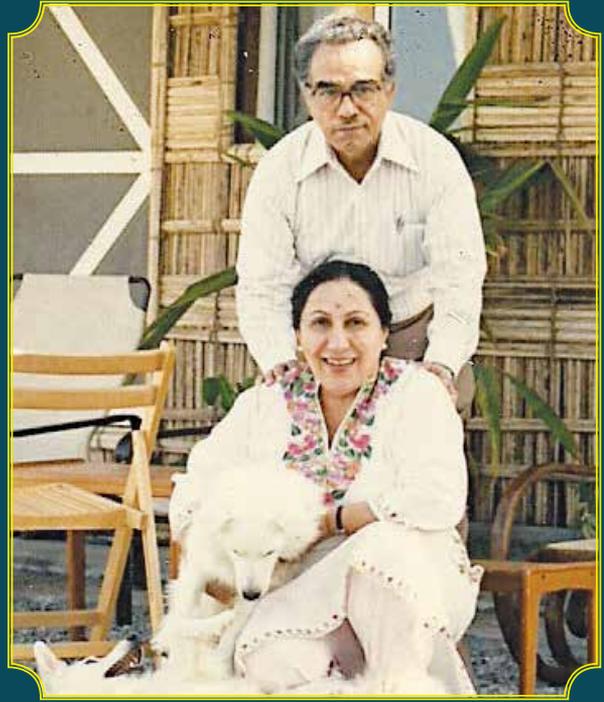
September 2020

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Remembering Nalkur Shripad Rao on his Birth Centenary



Young Shripad Rao



Sripad with Vartanoosh (Lily) at her home in Armenia



*The Golden Couple
N S Rao and Lily Rao at their
Golden wedding with their children
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Kanara Saraswat

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Kanara Saraswat Readership Survey

Dear Readers,

Kanara Saraswat Association wishes to acquire valuable inputs from our community members and enhance the contents of 'Kanara Saraswat' magazine. Your opinion and suggestions are of utmost importance to serve the purpose. We request you and members of your family to take the survey by clicking the link <https://forms.gle/vxRivCum2jSGpHCX6>.

KSA has authorised Shri Rajendra Koppikar to conduct the survey on its behalf. He can be contacted at 9004111576 to solve any query or problem faced while filling up the form. Looking forward to valuable inputs from all of you!

- Editorial Committee

INVITATION FOR YOUR LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Dear Readers,

This year the festival of Diwali will be celebrated in November. Our November issue will therefore be our Diwali issue. We request you therefore, to send us articles, poems, stories, drawings and paintings, cartoons – to be published in this issue. The only condition is to make the articles about 800 – 1000 words long. Your contributions should reach us by October 10th latest. So please put your pens to paper and your fingers on the keyboards and... let the Creativity Flow!!

- Editorial Committee

It is with a sense of loss that we announce the passing away of Shri Ratnakar Gokarn, Ex-President KSA on Sunday, 30th August, 2020. A tribute to him will appear in our next issue.

THE CSN PAGE

**KSA – CSN– July 2020 Update
(Kanara Saraswat Association – Chitrapur Saraswat Network)
www.kanarasaraswat.com/csn**

Gautam Amladi & Rajiv Kallianpur

“Networking is not collecting contacts. It is about planting relations.” – Mishaat

KSA-CSN works towards getting Bhanaps together so they can have better interpersonal relationships which will ultimately help each other grow their businesses.

CSN now has it's own webpage : www.kanarasaraswat.com/csn

This site hosts a database where Bhanaps in Business/Independent Professionals can register their businesses and post their details in the fields provided.

Please register yourself on this database and also persuade your relatives, Bhanap friends and associates who are in business/Independent Professionals to register themselves in the Database. Registration is FREE.

Activities in the months of July 2020 – An update

2 WhatsApp groups

- a) Bhanap CAs – A group exclusively for Bhanap CAs to interact on professional matters has 58 members
- b) Bhanap Professionals – A group for Bhanap Entrepreneurs and self employed professionals has around 245 members, many of whom are actively participating by posting information about their businesses on Wednes days and Saturdays, posting their product/service requirements on the group and placing order with member bhanaps including cross city exchange of business. This is a small but good beginning.
- c) 3 online events were organized during the month of July 2020
 - ✓ 12th July 2020 – Webinar on “**Business Networking**” by Rajesh Hattangadi & Gautam Amladi
 - ✓ 25th July 2020 – MULAQAT with “**Hema & Ashok Hattangady of “CONZERV” a Bhanap Super Success story**”. They were interviewed by Shri Rajiv Kallianpur.

The highlights of this event were

- 1st Mulaqat online
- Viewed by over 4000 persons worldwide
- Webinar Technical arrangements kind courtesy Shri Kishore Masurkar and his Entod team members
- Initiated by Shivanand Sanadi, MC member
- ✓ 26th July 2020 – **Online Trial Meet of ECM (Entrepreneur Club Meeting)**, conducted BY Vipul Bondal & Gautam Amladi. This meeting was conducted on the lines of the proposed ECM's to be held on normalization.

We propose to hold more such webinars/ECM's in the days ahead. Domain experts, willing to contribute their expertise for the benefit of our Bhanap entrepreneurs, may please connect with Rajiv and/or Gautam.

If you wish to contribute please send in an e-mail to rajivkallianpur@gmail.com or gautam.amladi@gmail.com.

If you wish to get to know more about CSN call up either of us: Rajiv Kallianpur (9821011667) or Gautam Amladi (9821007190) or message on WhatsApp.



From the President's Desk....

Dear Friends,

We are now entering into the sixth month of lockdown in India. The pandemic of Covid-19 is still going strong and nobody has any clue in terms of how this pandemic is going to end. Now the theory is that unless a vaccine to kill this Corona virus is developed, the menace of this Pandemic is going to continue. When the new year 2020 started in January, with political leaderships of several countries denying that the Corona virus was going to hit them and the whole world very badly, could we have imagined the human agony, economic disasters and perhaps going forward some major social disorders which would strike the world?

This raises an important question in my mind as to why we deny the reality. Why don't we accept the reality which is clearly evident? Why, the leaderships of countries, corporates, political and social organisations and we as individuals always follow the easiest strategy of 'Denial'. We as human beings are always in Denial mode. Denial as a defence strategy comes so easily to our mind when we have to face reality. Why can't we face the ground realities and find solutions to face them, even if they are difficult to accept in the first place? Why do we use Denial as an unconscious defence mechanism to deal with difficult situations?

Denial is endemic to human beings as a first defence mechanism to face difficult problems. It is a natural human tendency to devolve into denial which is closely related to the survival instinct. It comes out of fear of being wrong. Why do people practise denial? Because it is often easier, safer, more comfortable than confronting a problem. When we are in denial, we do not acknowledge the problem, do not try to face the facts of the problem but try to downplay the possible consequences. But Denial initially can be beneficial. Denial allows you to buy time to see if something can be done to reverse the trend. However, if we continue to remain in denial stage, the resultant consequences can be very negative.

In fact, there are people who tend to remain in denial stage by choice and follow the principles of denialism, an essentially irrational action that withholds the validation of a historical experience or event. It is a deliberate choice to deny the truth about something because it is too uncomfortable or difficult to accept. People who continuously believe in denying the true facts or face the reality follow the principles of denialism which can bring in self-destruction. Continuous denial is the beginning of the end.

Negationism or systematic distortion of the historical records and facts is the next step of denialism. History is replete with incidents of denialism and negationism which have had huge negative implications on mankind, economies of the world and society in general. For example, consistent denial of signs of economic depression resulted in the Great Depression of 1930s. Denial of the Holocaust by Nazis in Germany during World War II, continuous denial by Japanese of Japanese Imperialism during the first half of the 20th Century are classic examples of denialism. In literature, the consequences of historical denialism have been imaginatively depicted by George Orwell in his fiction 'Nineteen Eighty-Four'. In modern times, in the new digital world the internet and social media could be used effectively to spread the ill-effects of denialism and negationism.

I only hope that during these difficult times of Covid-19 pandemic, the political leadership, scientists, opinion makers, social media across the world do not indulge in denialism and negationism to create chaos and more damage. They all have important positive roles to play now and I trust that they behave responsibly as true and honest international citizens of this global community.

As they say - 'You can learn GREAT THINGS from your mistakes when you are not busy DENYING THEM'.

Praveen P. Kadle

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Honouring Amchi Covid Warriors

The unprecedented and unpredictable Covid-19 pandemic has affected everyone in some way or the other, in various degrees, from those being directly afflicted to those indirectly affected health wise and economically.

In this cloud of gloom, the silver lining is the heroic stories one hears of people like doctors, nurses, other healthcare workers, Police force, Municipal employees etc who have risked their lives, and even succumbed to the disease in their attempt to save others. Then there are those who toil night and day to keep the utilities going – water supply, hygiene, electricity, banks, transport, hospitality, food chains, call centres. These are people who also risk their lives in doing their work, travelling by public transport always fearing that the person close by can be a potential vector of the disease.

We as Chitrapur Saraswats have not lagged behind and KSA is proud of all these warriors who are serving humanity with dedication, discipline & determination. KSA salutes every Amchi 'Covid Warrior' and would be happy to bring to light stories of these unsung heroes. We will publish such encouraging and inspiring articles & messages in a Special KS issue (November), to express our gratitude and pride. We also appeal to our members to share their personal experiences related to the pandemic. We are confident our members will "work from home" and respond on or before 10th October, 2020.

We wish to specially honour Amchis in the Healthcare field – doctors, nurses, therapists - who work in direct contact with Covid patients, risking their own lives. We request all our readers to share such names with us (with photograph, if possible) on email or WhatsApp* with a brief description of their work, so that the same can be published in a roll of honour in the said Special issue .

We pray to Lord Bhavanishankar, the Guruparampara and Parampoojya Swamiji to bless every Chitrapur Saraswat with safe & sound Health, Peace and Cheerfulness at all times during the present critical situation.

*KSA WhatsApp number :8879557536

email: kanara_saraswat@hotmail.com / editor@kanarasaraswat.in



Kanara Saraswat Association

ANNOUNCEMENT

BASRUR SHAMALA RAO & LATE BASRUR GURUNANDAN RAO EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships shall be provided to students from the Chitrapur Saraswat community to meet expenses of educational courses. Students who fulfil the following criteria will be eligible for the scholarships.

- Applicants should have passed in the previous academic year with at least 50% marks or equivalent grades.
- Parents' Income of applicants should not be more than (a) Rs. 60,000/- p.m. for the School Scholarships and (b) Rs. 1,00,000/- p.m. for the College Scholarships.
- Applicants for the School Scholarships should be in Grades 9 to Junior College level (Grades 11 and 12) and for the College Scholarships should be admitted to any Graduate, Post-Graduate or Doctoral Research academic courses.

The quantum of grants for the academic year for the School Scholarships will be Rs. 15000/- each to two students and for the College Scholarships will be Rs. 35000/- each to two students.

Applications with details of mark sheets of previous academic year and/or qualifying/latest courses/examinations; Government/School/College issued photo identity; proof of admission to the course; proof of parents' income (IT Return or Salary certificate); and details of other financial assistance taken should be sent in sealed envelopes marked "**Basrur Scholarships**" to **The Hon. Secretary, Kanara Saraswat Association, 13/1-2, Association Building, Talmakiwadi, J. D. Marg, Mumbai-400007** or in case by e-mail, you may send the same to E Mail – **admin@kanarasaraswat.in**

The applications will be scrutinized by KSA and successful applicants will be notified. The decision of KSA will be final.

Preference will be given to applicants fulfilling the basic criteria with lower parental income.

Successful candidates will have to submit their final mark/grade sheets to KSA at the end of the academic year.

Chitrapur Heritage Foundation

711 Daylily Court, Langhorne, Pennsylvania, USA

Connecting US Amchis to Chitrapur Math

Founded in 2005, Chitrapur Heritage Foundation (CHF) is a Section 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization and donors receive the maximum charitable deduction allowed by law. The mission of CHF is to provide a vital link for amchis in the US to stay actively connected with our Chitrapur Math and our Guruparampara. Currently, CHF Chapters are located in four main regions across the United States of America. Over the past decade, amchis in the US have supported students' education and promoted sustainable development of the village of Shirali.

The activities of CHF includes:

- Facilitate the collection of annual "Vantiga" payment from every earning Saraswat in the US - "Vantiga" is used to support and maintain the upkeep of our spiritual centers in Bengaluru, Gokarn, Mallapur, Mangaluru, and Shirali
- Support education institutions administered by Math-sponsored trusts: Srivali High School, Kotekar Campus of Saraswat Education Society, and Parijnan Vidyalaya.
- Finance the post-primary education of 100 students at the Srivali High School through the "Sponsor-A-Student" Scheme
- Contribute towards the preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the Chitrapur Saraswat community in the US, by celebrating festivals like Yugadi, Ram Navami, Gokulashtami, Navratri, Diwali, monthly satsang, and Prarthana Varga for children

CHF is a philanthropic organization that provides an avenue for US-based "amchis" to support the operation and maintenance of Shri Chitrapur Math as well as support the post-primary education of students in Chitrapur, Karla, Mangalore, and Shirali, and women empowerment programs administered by Parijnan Foundation.

CHF is set up with many Corporations/Organizations such as Bristol Myers Squibb, Johnson & Johnson etc. to receive Matching Gifts. CHF has also registered with Benevity in order to make it easier to participate in workplace giving programs such as those at Apple, Google, and Microsoft.

For more information, please contact Arun Heble (arheble@yahoo.com) Tel: +1-215-666-3200 or Pramod Mavinkurve (pmkurve@gmail.com). Tel: 908-616-1497.



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Tribute To A Great Legendary Philanthropist (Late) Shri Nalkur Sripad (Sippy Rao) Remembering Shripadmam on his Birth Centenary on 20th September, 2020

UDAY MANKIKAR

We come into contact with many people in our life. But, only some remain in our hearts forever. Nalkur Sripad mam is one such person. He was a 'Karma Yogi' and a great human being. He was the only Chitrapur Saraswat who had the unique distinction of leading three premier Chitrapur Saraswat Institutions. He was the President of the Standing Committee of Shri Chitrapur Math, Chairman of SVC Bank Ltd. and President of The Kanara Saraswat Association (KSA).

Born on 20th September 1920 to Late Nalkur Narsing Rao and Smt Indira at Karkala, a small village in Udipi district, Sripad mam completed his Matriculation at the age of sixteen and left Karkala to venture out in the world to find his place. The first person he visited was his maternal uncle, Shri Taggarshe Venkatmam, in Bagalkot. Venkatmam was his maternal uncle. Sripad mam stayed there for a month and imbibed spiritual values from his uncle.

After a month, Sripad mam came to Bangalore and did some small jobs. Though he was not very happy with these he was able to earn some money which helped him to come to Mumbai. In 1937, Mistui Bussan Kaisha, a Japanese company gave Sripad mam his first job in Mumbai. He joined them as an Accounts Clerk, for a salary of Rs 45/- p.m. In 1939, the company selected him to go to Tehran, as an Accountant. In 1940, Sripad mam met Vartanoosh Badalian in Tehran, who was to be his dear wife. They had a courtship of two years.

In 1941 September, Sripad mam joined a British Company. On 30th June 1942, Vartanoosh and Sripad mam got married and Vartanoosh became Mrs. Lily Rao. Sripad mam held a couple of senior positions in that British Company. "One has to think big in order to come up in life", was his motto.

Sripad mam returned to Mumbai in 1946, after working with Bharat Carbon, as Sales Manager for one year at Karachi. In the same year, he started a company by the name 'Goodwill Pest Control'. Unfortunately, only after 3 months it ran into a financial crisis. Luckily for him, his first customer with Goodwill Pest Control, Kailashnath Singhania of J.K. Industries gave him a job in J.K. Industries. As Sripad mam had a keen interest in plants, gardening, floriculture and horticulture; he was given the job related to the gardens on the properties of J.K. Industries. He worked with J.K. Industries for eight

years. During this period Sripad mam come in contact with many merchants. While with J.K. Industries, after completing the work, Sripad mam used to work with his pest control equipments and started pest control work on a small scale at Nana Chowk.

In 1948, Sripad mam's brother Bhavanishankarmam joined him. They also took on the managing of a restaurant, Bharat Santosh Bhuvan, opposite Grant Road Railway station, between 1949 and 1951. While doing all this, Sripad mam was still working with J.K. Industries. In 1954, Sripad mam left J.K. Industries and devoted his entire attention to his Pest Control work and on 30th July 1954 along with his brothers Bhavanishankar and Narhari, Sripad mam started Pest Control (India) Pvt. Ltd. (PCI), which was the first company in India to perform basic fumigation operations, which subsequently rose to top position in the Pest Control Industry.



N S Rao with his "War Bride" Lily Rao

In 1968, Sripad mam joined SVC Board and set a record of occupying the longest term as its director. He was the Chairman of SVC Bank Ltd for three terms.

In 1969, Sripad mam became the President of The Kanara Saraswat Association (KSA) and served for two terms 1969-1970 and 1970-1971. During his tenure as the President, he introduced two important activities. Viz., Inter Community Get-together and Sangeet Sammelan. The first week-long Sangeet Sammelan was organized by Sripad mam in 1971 under the banner of KSA. He also organized various programmes for the development of our community, especially the youths.

In 1974, Sripad mam was elected as President of the Standing Committee of our Shri Chitrapur Math and continued till 1981. Sripad mam was a 'Karma Yogi. Sripad mam was well known for his generosity.

- At Karkala, he personally financed and started a school called Nalkur Narsingrao Memorial Govt. High School, named after his late father.

- Actively contributed to the growth of the Balak Vrinda Education Society and Udyog.

- Bhanap Institutions used to approach Sripad mam for donations to conduct / organize their important functions / events and Sripad mam used to oblige them. His famous answer would be "jaayad devaa."

In 2002, Sripad mam resigned from active corporate duties to concentrate more on Social and Spiritual activities.

On 25th August, 2002, Sripad mam's wife Lilypachchi passed away due to a stroke. It was a tremendous shock for Sripad mam.

Sripad mam was honoured by many, for his outstanding magnanimous work in different fields:

- ASSOCHAM Award for Rural Development in 1978.
- In 1979, he was adjudged, one of the best speakers, when he had gone as the Indian Delegate to the United National Commission for Science and Technology (UNESTO)
- National Award 1995 for In-house R & D efforts in the Agro Sector.
- Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Fair Trade Practices in 1997 at the hands of Shri K. R. Narayanan, then President of India.
- The Lifetime Achievement Award from the Bombay Rotary Club (West) on 31st May 2000
- Karjat Gaurav Award in 2001, by Karjat Farm Owner's Club.
- "Karma Yogi" Award by Bombay Sea Coast.
- Rotary Foundation Distinguished service Award for the year 1997-1998
- Citation and Meritorious Service Award from Rotary Foundation.
- Shiromani Vikas and Udyog Shree Award
- Kanara Saraswat Association's "Lekhan Puraskar"
- Sripad mam's Pest Control (India) Pvt. Ltd, has also won many awards

Apart from PCI, SVC Bank Ltd, Shri Chitrapur Math, and KSA Sripad mam also worked for various reputed Institutions, in an honorary capacity, viz., Indian Pest Control Association, World Union International (Pondicherry), Trusteeship Foundation (Bombay), All India Manufacturers Organisation (AIMA), Friends of the Trees, World Constitution and Parliament Association, etc.

The Kanara Saraswat Association (KSA), on its 98th Foundation Day, on 26th November 2009 honoured Sripad mam with "Jeevan Gaurav Puraskar" for his outstanding contribution in various fields. On this occasion, Sripad mam's biography titled "Formula for Fulfillment" written by Smt Vidya Gunavanthe was released when Sripad mam expressed his inspiring "Manogat".

I quote an excerpt from his speech -

"We all go in one direction, to one place. I am not talking of hell because nobody goes to hell. Every life is meant to be transformed into heaven. If, we try hard individually to do as much as possible to better things around us, we can really do what Aurobindo says, that is "raise the spirit to its forgotten heights". I always quote Rudyard Kipling – 'If you can fill the unforgiving minute, with sixty seconds worth of distance run- Yours is the Earth and everything that is in it. And which is more – you'll be a Man my Son!' "

Sripad mam, a great Karma Yogi, breathed his last on 8th April 2015, at the age of 95. His biography is so inspiring, that everyone should read it.

Though Sripad mam is not with us, his work which speaks volumes, will always remain as an inspiring and guiding force, not only for us, but for generations to come too.

श्रीपादमाम, २० सप्टेंबर, २०२० ही तुगेली जन्मशताब्दी . त्या निमित्ताने तुगेल्या चिरंतन स्मृतीक विनम्र अभिवादन ॐ

Source Reference for the cover article and cover pictures: 'Formula for Fulfillment' A biography of N S Rao by Vidya Gunavanthe

Letters to the Editor

Kudos to the KSA team for an excellent, vibrant, informative and inspirational "Mulaqat"! Both Hema pachi and Ashok mam shared their success story in a simple yet effective way. It was a pleasure to see the manner in which the couple complemented each other through narration of real life incidences. More grace and charm was added by Jairam mam's effective foreword and Kishore mam's profile introduction. The icing of the cake (as they say) was the beautiful moderation by Rajiv mam assisted by Shivanand mam and Sunil mam. Special kudos to Rajan mam for his active support in ensuring glitch-free Webcast! All in all a superb teamwork! Looking forward to many more Such Mulaqats!

-Ramesh Bijoor

It was really an inspiring talk by Hema and Ashok Hattangadi. Our younger generation has lot to learn from this couple while establishing a startup which is the latest trend now.

- Gouri Yennemadi

Congrats on the talk show featuring the Hattangady couple! They spoke very lucidly outlining not only their production processes, but also their business ethics (that few B-schools teach). Their success story and the detachment with which they view the chasing of the balance sheet (so to speak) shows up the unique qualities of our community as well, something that we all can take pride in. Exposure to such attitude will, I am sure, encourage a lot of young aspirants who want to make a success of the shop floor and not merely write software. Best wishes to KSA and the moderators who conducted the program.

-Jaishankar Bondal

Thank you Team KSA for an informative and interesting session. Being a management student, it added to my knowledge. I would love to share this case study with my classmates and teachers. Looking forward to more sessions like these in future.

-Shambhavi Bijoor

Medical Accessories

Few Medical accessories like wheel chair, commode chair, crutches, walker etc are available at the Health Centre for use of needy Amchis, on a returnable basis.

Those in need may kindly contact Manager KSA during office hours to confirm availability.

Hon Secretary, KSA Health Centre

THE CSN PAGE

(Kanara Saraswat Association – Chitrapur Saraswat Network)

www.kanarasaraswat.com/csn

Mangal Karnad, Co-Founder

Fablesquare Business Services LLP

DIGITAL PRESENCE AND YOUR BUSINESS

What is Digital Presence? Why does a business need it?

A digital presence is how your business appears on the Internet. It is what people find when they search for your business online and it includes:

- Your website
- Your social media accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Listings in business directories (Just dial, Sulekha etc.)
- Your office or store locations (Google Maps, etc.)
- Online reviews (Google)
- Digital ads (social ads, Google ads etc.)
- Media mentions

Why do you need digital presence?

When people have a requirement or a problem, they ‘google’ a solution; in other words, they search online. If your business has a great digital presence, your online prospects and customers will find you. If they can’t find you, it is your loss. Since they have a problem, and they look for a solution, they will find an alternative – a progressive business owner who realises this will build his or her presence online.

However, the customers who do their research would want to know:

- **Who:** Who does the business belong to? What made you reach your current position? Are you a franchise or family-owned business?
- **What:** What do you sell? What service or product you provide?
- **Where:** Where are you located? Are you an online-based business or have a brick and mortar location?
- **When:** When are you open? Are you closed on holidays?
- **Why:** Is there a larger purpose, and does it matter to your customers?

The content that you write on your website, and social media will answer all these questions. You can leverage your digital presence to inform your prospects while increasing your sales.

Create Visibility

Your visibility will depend on a robust digital presence. Which means your prospects will be able to find your business more efficiently.

The best way to make an impact is by being informative with useful, original content which will also help in better ranking on Search Engines. When they are ready to buy, they will come to you since they can recognise your business. Understanding good SEO practices can help you over the years.

Establish Your Expertise

There is sufficient research which emphasises the need for creating quality content because 70% or more of B2B buyers do 50% of their research before they reach out to a vendor. And, often they buy from companies they think are the best in the industry.

A thought-through strategy to establish your subject matter expertise with your digital assets will showcase you and your company as thought leaders in your industry. Building trust takes consistency and relevancy. Being earnest and providing value with your content will take you a few steps closer to building the trust, most needed in B2B sales.

Customer Reviews

Whether your business caters to B2B (Business to Business) or B2C (Business to Customers), you will be selling to an individual. Hence, establishing your credibility and trust is of paramount importance. You can leverage the power of your digital presence to show prospects that your business is knowledgeable, trustworthy, and beneficial to them. Asking a satisfied (if you choose, delighted) customer to provide a testimonial or a review is highly effective for two reasons:

1. The customer feels valued to provide his feedback.
2. A third-party endorsement is valued much higher than you talking about your trustworthiness.

Also, take a few minutes to respond to the review with a simple thank you.

6 Ensure Enhanced Web Experience

Attractive and eye-catching web design is as important as being focused on the user's need. Use design elements to guide the prospect through your site.

Increasingly, people search for services or products using their mobile phones. Ensure that your website automatically adjusts itself to function best on all devices, referred to as a "responsive" or "mobile-friendly" design. Also, install Google Analytics to monitor traffic to every page.

Have a Dialogue on Social Media

While the company website is the first place a prospect will gather information about your company, social media is the next where they validate their perception.

Social media is where a company can share knowledge, updates, and tips and possibly have a conversation.

Understanding your target audience plays a crucial role in identifying the social media platforms to interact with them. Based on your understanding, select the platforms where your prospects and customers spend time. However, keep aside a fraction of your marketing budget towards paid ads and don't just depend on organic social media activity.

Create & Disseminate Useful Content

Create a page where you post blogs, case studies and other resources that are useful to your customers and prospects. A great way to answer their queries is to invite comments and respond to them. Another effective way is to provide a list of frequently asked questions and answer them.

Optimise for Search Engines

Have you searched for a service or a product on Google or any other search engine? What was your experience? Did you find the search helpful? Which page (SERP) did you find the product you were looking for? Did you have to refine your search based on the response you received?

Well, the experience could be the same with your customers. Try to create content that can be an answer to someone who is looking for your specific product or service. Use keywords and phrases that your customers might use to find you online. Doing this right will surely be beneficial to you as you will start seeing enquiries coming your way over time. These are some fundamentals that need to be implemented to help the online presence of your business, but it is not exhaustive. Look at your digital presence and marketing efforts as a long-term investment.

ERRATA

This is with reference to the article **Our Close Encounter with the new dreaded "C"** by Dr. Priya Rao that appeared in the August 2020 issue. The last line on Pg 15 was erroneously printed as "On my part, being a Dentist myself, as most Healthcare workers don't work, I prefer to wear a N95 or a FFP2 mask over which a surgical mask is worn." It should be "On my part, being a Dentist myself, as most Healthcare workers do at work, I prefer to wear a N95 or a FFP2 mask over which a surgical mask is worn." We regret the error.

- Editor

ANNOUNCEMENT

In an effort to know more about the authors and to build greater connectivity between the contributors of articles and the readers, the Editorial Committee has decided to add a new feature to our articles, from this issue onwards; in that, we have printed a brief and the email id of the author at the end of his/her article.

Since we plan to make it a regular feature, we request the authors to add 2 to 3 lines about themselves and their email id to their article, when they mail their articles to us.

We are looking forward to further strengthening our bond with this new feature.

- Editorial Committee

A Milestone: Mulaqat Online

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

July 25th, 2020 will be viewed as one of the landmark days for KSA - CSN (KSA- ChitrapurSaraswat Network). It was the day when the leadership committee of KanaraSaraswat Association decided to beat all the restrictions imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic to hold its flagship event **Mulaqat online** for a global audience! Up until now Mulaqat events were held at **KSA's** Shrimad Anandashram Hall in Tardeo, Mumbai. Anyone watching or participating in the event on the 25th, however, could never have guessed it was the first time the event was being held virtually: so flawless was the conception and execution.

The Mulaqat session, ably moderated by Rajiv Kallianpur (also a successful entrepreneur), probed the journey of **Hema and Ashok Hattangady** and their experience in growing their company Conzerv exponentially, without corruption, in building a culture that has outlived the existence of the company, its HR practices, their thought leadership initiatives, missteps and learnings, becoming a case study at Harvard Business School, dealing with industrial relations, women at the workplace etc.

In January this year, Hema co-authored a book on their story called 'Lift Off-Transforming Conzerv'. Published by Westland Books, a subsidiary of Amazon, the book has received excellent reviews and is on its way to becoming a best-seller. One reader review on Amazon says: *This is among the very few books that is part-autobiography, part-inspirational, part-management book, part-field manual and still works.*

The event was an unqualified success, judging from both the quantity and quality of audience participation. Nearly 2700 'amchis' and 'non-amchis', from India, the US, UK etc., logged in on KSA's Facebookpage, youtubechannel and on the weblink to the livestream on Zoom. Feedback and questions came thick and fast on all three platforms, so much so that despite carrying on for an extra 30 minutes, there was no time to respond to everything!

Who are Ashok and Hema Hattangady?

The 'energiser' couple, as they have been called, are the CEO-CTO duo who grew a family business which started as Enercon Systems to become Conzerv, India's largest energy management company.

The company was set up by Ashok's father late Shri Hattangady Vasanth Rao, a visionary innovator and entrepreneur renowned for his many inventions in the telecom and energy metering space. Ashok and Hema then grew the business with the help of venture capital from a fund set up by T. Thomas (of HLL fame and a legend in Indian industry). In short order, Conzerv became a market leader with 38% market share in energy management products, as well as a pioneer which ventured into energy audits and consulting, clocking a compounded annual growth rate of 35% in sales and profits. In 2009 they decided to exit as part of a deliberate

strategy, to Schneider Electric, a global giant in electrical products and energy efficiency.

Excerpts:

1. More than a Commercial Enterprise

In Ashok's introduction to Conzerv, he called it 'more than just a commercial enterprise, it was a thought-leader and a **community that lives on**, even though the company ceased to exist as such 11 years ago.' The early products like voltage stabilisers, were sold through a marketing agency set up by their extended family, on an exclusive basis and under their brand name. The products were rugged, lasted forever and did exceptionally well in the market. The commercial arrangement with the agency did not last as long, and in a few years, there was a parting of ways. The Hattangadys were then discovered by T Thomas (TT) and his VC fund. At the time they had great products but no money, no sales network and worse, no brand recognition in spite of being the creators of industry-leading cutting-edge products. There were bank loans and wage bills to pay. The VC fund investment gave the company a new lease of life.

Ashok followed his father as MD but quickly grew tired of the role. He said, 'I tried it for a year, but I hated everything about it. Meanwhile, Hema had gained field experience selling our products to industries and stockists, had solutions to all the challenges I faced each day. She had taken a year off to be with our new-born son Raghav. Besides, she was an MBA trained at IIM. And more importantly, she had an intuition for the CEO stuff. You need to fit the right person to the job. And Hema was a perfect fit for the CEO role. I asked her and she said yes. I immediately discussed this with TT who apparently had always been of the same mind but wanted it to come from us. So, at the next Board Meeting, I formally requested TT. He said he agreed, but it needs to come from the family. TT placed my proposal before my dad. And when my dad said yes, TT formally accepted. There was a proper way to do things and that's how TT did them. Never rode roughshod. That's one of the many things I learned from him.'

"Together, we grew Conzerv from a hundred thousand dollars in 1997 to a 25 million USD company, exporting and private labelling to large MNCs in the US and Europe. Hema created Conserve My Campus for schoolkids to save energy at home. We also co-founded AEEE a non-profit that brought all the energy efficiency players together and continues till today."

2. The stinky toilets lesson

Hema talked of one of the key lessons she learnt in her first year as CEO. TT would inspect the workmen's toilets at each board meeting. Disgusted with how they were being maintained, he took Hema and Ashok to a Home run by the Missionaries of Charity where they found clean, non-smelly toilets maintained by 150 mentally challenged residents and just 5 Sisters.

Hema says of the whole episode, "I learnt three things:
One, that it was important to pay attention to detail at every level, visible or not.

Two, that something I had considered trivial, actually said so much about the company and its leadership,

Three, that you did not need a lot of resources to have clean toilets all the time... These residents and these humble, smiling nuns had shown me. We had landed up without notice and still found everything epic and span."

3. Culture of Conzerv

Ashok described the culture as being one where everyone felt total ownership and so it was easy to go beyond, for colleagues and customers. "We are a family" and "we felt we owned the company" was a common motif.

4. Growing the business ethically

Hema shared many stories about how the leadership team at Conzerv went out of the way to lead by example in building a clean company. It meant a shared willingness to say NO to bribes even if it meant lost orders, to look for someone 'clean' at the top if others lower down were corrupt, to hold officials in positions of power accountable for clean behaviour even if it meant complaining to their seniors at the risk of 'revenge'.

In the final analysis, Hema said, "We kept at it even if it got frustrating at times because we were supported to the hilt by the majority investor and because we knew our team stayed with us because our code of conduct mirrored their personal values."

5. The HR practice of Growing Giants

Hema was deeply influenced in college by the practice of 'growing giants' by David Ogilvy, founder of O&M, the global advertising agency. He would say, "If each of us hires people who are smaller than we are, we shall become a company of dwarfs. But if each of us hires people who are bigger than we are, we shall become a company of giants."

Conzerv made this philosophy a cornerstone of HR practices at Conzerv. They identified 'fast trackers' or people with potential. They were mentored by their immediate bosses or members of the senior team. Young new hires like those recruited from campus etc were always encouraged to lead cross functional teams or specialist missions, and to be irreverent, to question and challenge and not to kowtow to grey hair or 'seniority'. Annual awards recognised both the reporting manager and the junior with a 'growing giants' trophy and citation.

In addition to this unusual practice, Conzerv also invited children of employees to attend their meetings and give a critique of the values/behaviour they observed, and also give suggestions to tricky problems.

6. The Hattangadys, Conzerv and Harvard Business School

Hema attended a 5-day program in 2002 at HBS called 'leading change and organisational renewal'. On the last day, she had an epiphany that led to deep introspection of her own style of leadership and the urgent need for change. On her return from the program she put in motion several

initiatives that transformed performance and behaviour at the company. Years later, she was sent back to HBS for a longer program called Advanced Management Program where she shared the successful trajectory of Conzerv and the impact of the 2002 program with the professor who had taught at both the courses. Amazed at the success story and the fact that it 'checked' several boxes like woman leader, ethical business, India centred, energy efficiency, transformation and turn-around etc. the professor offered to write a case study on Conzerv. Even today the case titled 'HemaHattangady and Conzerv' is available on the HBS/HBR website as a learning tool for management institutions.

Acknowledgement

KSA is grateful to the Technical Back End Team, comprising Entod Pharmaceuticals Tech Staff and their Service Providers, for the flawless running of our maiden online Mulaqat event.

Comments

As with the earlier Mulaqats, we received many positive comments and feedback for this one. We have selected a few from other entrepreneurs who shared their learnings from this event.

From Dr. Ashwin Bellare, Founder, Genex Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd.

1. To look out for excellent, honest and credible Mentors whose experienced advice will be an asset.
2. Create an equitable working place for Management and workers where everyone is emboldened to share thoughts and ideas freely.
3. To keep customer satisfied however small the order value. This leads to customer confidence and strong loyalty.
4. To build and run the business purely based on ethics... which everyone should try to imbibe. It's the most difficult of all the takeaways.
5. Quality people, Quality Systems and zero defects is the way forward.

I think these were the major takeaways at least for me. Looking forward to more Mulaqats as we go ahead.

From CA Gautam Amladi, Partner, V J Kulkarni & Associates

"How can I help you?" This question by Hema to their aggrieved personnel in a meet, melted the tension. Highlighted the importance of "GIVING" in any relationship, including business relationships.

From Satish Kulkarni, Owner, V K Computer Services

- Believe in yourself, your intuition and vision.
- When Hema Hattangady was describing how she took the decision to sack the entire sales force of a region for malpractices, her strong belief in the Vision of the Company was evident.
- Empower your team. Create an environment where your team is fearless and believes that they can accomplish anything and everything that is expected of them.
- Focus on execution of the ideas and processes.
- Power of letting go.

· They took the decision to give their company off at the right time, to maintain growth momentum. Such dispassionate decisions at the right time are important, but unusual.

From Yash Kallianpur, Partner, Acme Synthetic Chemicals

1. Ashok maam aptly quoted Megan McArdle, "Corporate culture is built over a thousand little interactions that show, more than mere writing in manuals or speeches." This is evident from the sense of ownership each Conzerv employee has about their company and products, demonstrated by a sales employee who travelled 200km each way to solve a minor issue faced by one of their old clients with one of their earliest products, even though Conzerv had been acquired by Schneider Electric and the product was outdated.

2. The courage and tenacity to stick to values. There were two incidents which demonstrated this: (i) It was very brave of Hema pachhi to fire their regional sales managers when she found out they were taking bribes. (ii) They managed to secure a very lucrative government contract, but they dropped it when the inspector started asking bribes disguised as favours.

3. I liked it when asked what you would do differently if given the opportunity, Ashok maam said that he regretted working himself and his teams so hard and pulling multiple all-nighters. This is unusual because the common answer would have been that one should have worked even harder.

The Rising Sun Amid the Night of Death

The Passion Flower stood proudly,
Sporting its undisputed crown,
Proclaiming its glory loudly,
But alas, now it has turned brown.

The king of evil has arrived,
Its vehicles are the sense objects.
It attacks the eyes, nose and throat.
Its weapon is the breath,
And its target is Death!

Lifeless in nature and yet, the destroyer of life;
Infinitesimally small, yet, the cause of infinite strife.
What a devil it is, the king of them all,
Small in size, appearing like a ball!

It has consumed the Radiant Sun,
And has become the cause of the darkest of nights.
It has destroyed all fun,
And started the most dangerous fight.
Started has the night!
Started has the night!

The world is full of bodies dead,
The mind is full of fear,
The ground is full of blood red,
Eerie sounds does the ear hear!

Heard are the cries of separation and cries of pain,
Lacking people and vehicles are the ever busy lanes.
Empty are the ever packed planes,
And afraid is the ever excited mind.
Yet, it is the night to see!
Yes, it is the night to see!

In the Darkness only, can the light's rays be seen,
In Death only, can Life's beauty be seen,
In Change only, can the Eternal Constant be seen,
And only in the Constant shall the change end!

The night of death is the time to know,
The night of death is the time to realize,
The night of death is the time to be wise,
Towards the Truth, it is the time to finally go!

The sun has set,
The birds are back in their nest,
The ground with water is wet,
With strong winds blowing from the west.

The large trees are blown by the wind,
Only the small ones remain,
Seeking shelter is the world,
That very shelter which is hard to find.

That violent storm is the destroyer,
The night is the silent observer,
The alarm is this resilient year,
And the Almighty is our Savior!

The time to abridge has arrived,
To build up the foundation of Divinity in our life,
And slow down a bit in our rapid life,
The time to do what we love to do, the time to relish the
Constant!

Now is the time of the Blissful Day,
For the light shown by Him is shining here,
May that light show us the way,
To make this world a blissful sphere!

By Samvit Mavinkurve

Samvit has been writing poems and stories since the age of 8 years, few of which he has published and bagged prizes as well. He has also been appreciated and honoured for the second consecutive year as a 'Literary Colonel' by Story Mirror. He can be contacted at samvit21@gmail.com.

The Magnificent Mangesh Rao-s of Mangalore

BY SATYANARAYAN PANDIT

Mangalore - the charming coastal city of Karnataka invokes indelible imprints and sweet and nostalgic memories for those who hail from this city or those who lived and loved the place. It is here that a sizeable population of our community lived during the latter part of 19th century and the first half of 20th century. Mangalore was the 'gateway' for our educated youth to proceed to Chennai for higher/advanced studies or to Mumbai in search of jobs.

During that period, the city was a cradle to several illustrious and highly respected personalities. They were stalwarts in their own field and achieved pinnacle of success and glory – be it education & teaching, freedom movement, civil administration, judiciary and constitutional excellence, cottage industry and handicrafts, rural empowerment etc. Some of these unforgettable wizards are- Karnad Sadashiva Rao, Kudmul Ranga Rao, the four Benegal Brothers, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay (née Dhareshwar), Vasudev Hejmadi and the three Mangesh Rao-s (Panje, Tonse and Ugran).

This article is a humble tribute to the life and achievements of Panje Mangesh Rao. It is hoped that it will benefit our younger generation and also those who are not familiar with his life and accomplishments. Our tributes are also to the other two outstanding Mangesh Rao-s of Mangalore! All these three were teachers par excellence and let us remember them on the occasion of the 'Teachers' Day' which falls on the 5th of September.

Shri Panje Mangesh Rao (Mangeshmam hereafter):
1874- 1937

Mangeshmam was a pioneer in Kannada literary renaissance and was the first to write short stories, poems and nursery rhymes for children in Kannada. He was recognized as "Kannada Shishu Sahitya Pithamah (Father of Kannada Children's literature)". Those who have studied Kannada or are familiar with Kannada language would appreciate Mangeshmam's literary excellence, mastery over Kannada language he lived and loved and his invaluable contribution to Kannada literature for children.

Childhood :

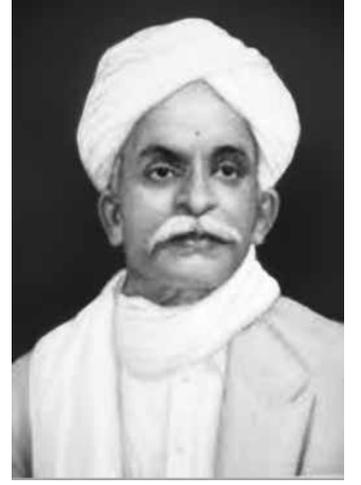
Panja is a tiny hamlet about 71 km from Bantwal and 95 km from Mangalore. The Panje Family hails from this village. Mangeshmam's parents, Ramappayya and Seethamma, moved to Bantwal and Mangeshmam was born here on 22nd Feb, 1874. With humble living conditions, very much prevalent with a bulk of our Community members those days, the family with six children had to undergo enormous financial constraints. Mangeshmam lost his father at an early age and had to take charge of family's responsibilities.

Student Days:

Mangeshmam completed his primary education in Bantwal and had to move to Mangalore for high school studies. In

view of the financial difficulties, he had to manage by having two meals at one relative's place and lodging at yet another's place. He borrowed textbooks from classmates and friends. His sharp and prodigious memory served him to record and reproduce whatever he learnt in the classroom.

His proficiency in Kannada brought him a Kannada translator's job even before he completed graduation. It is at that time, he married Girijabai and in course of time, they parented six children.



A Born Teacher:

Mangeshmam completed his B.A. Degree and a Teacher's diploma course. He began his career as a Kannada Pundit (teacher) in Government College, Mangalore. Thereafter, he was appointed Inspector of Schools in DK Dist. With this assignment, he started moving within the Dist., visiting schools even in remote villages. At some places, he had to walk down the distance or travel by bullock cart for school inspection! It is indeed laudable and praiseworthy that he rendered yeoman service to improve the palpable condition of schools and also, to enhance teachers' meager remuneration those years. During those long tours, his only companions were a cook and a "Man Friday" who carried out all other jobs. Mangesh mam is credited with the honour of introducing revised school syllabus and for improving teaching techniques.

He was transferred to Central High School, Madikeri (Kodagu Dist., erstwhile Coorg) as Head Master. Later, he became Inspector of Schools in the same Dist. His tenure of 2 years in Madikeri was very productive. The magnificent Kodagu, with its eye-catching and gorgeous natural landscape, gave a fillip to Mangeshmam's poetic ingenuity. It is here that he composed one of his famous poems—"Huttari Haadu"(Song of the Harvest), where he praises the indomitable spirit and bravery of the Kodava people and their magical land Kodagu. This song had attained glory of being classified as the National Song of Kodava Community!!

Pioneering Work in Kannada:

Mangeshmam is credited with the creation of "Navodaya" literature in Kannada. He wrote both in Kannada and Konkani. He felt the need to provide children with nursery rhymes which could stir their imagination. With this in mind, he translated

English nursery rhymes into Kannada and established himself as the “Father of Nursery rhymes”. “*Minugele, minugele nakshatra, nanagidu chodyavubalu chitra*” is one such translation from the well known “Twinkle, twinkle little star ...” and a Kannada learning child in the Primary class will proceed further only after singing “*Minugele...*”!!

He was a creator of a number of classical poems and was a new trendsetter in Kannada poetry and writings. “*Naagaraahaave, haavoluhoove*” (devoted to snake) and “*Tenkana Gaaliyaata*” (Ode to Southern Wind) are two of his compositions, which continue to regale kids in Kannada Primary class. He also helped to popularize the local Tulu (dialect in DK Dist.) legend, Koti -Chennaya.

Literary Pursuits:

Mangesh mam used to write articles of various genres, which were published in magazines. These included short stories, poems, historical novels, satires and researched articles. He also wrote essays on contemporary issues under the pseudonym—*Haratemalla*. Under the pen name ‘Kavi-Shishya’, he wrote poems which were published by Basel Mission, Mangalore, in 3 volumes – Kannada Padya Pustaka (Books of Kannada Poems). In 1921, he took the initiative to establish a Publishing House, “Bala Sahitya Mandala”, with the prime objective of encouraging authors to write books for children! Yet another Mangesh mam (Tonse), a contemporary, also took keen interest and active role in this initiative.

Mangesh mam was a member of the Board of Trustees, Kannada Dept. in Mysore and Madras Universities. He was also a member of the Executive Committee of Kannada Sahitya Parishad and had the unique distinction and honor to preside over the All India Kannada Literary Conference held at Raichur in 1934. D. V. Gundappa, a leading litterateur of the time, in his ‘thanks giving’ speech at the conclusion of the Conference, stated that “Panje Mangesh Rao expressed his desire to utter the words – Kannada- in his last breath!” Such was Mangesh mam’s love for Kannada language!!

Mangesh mam passed away in 1937, leaving behind a large number of friends and admirers, all over the fragmented Kannada speaking areas at that time and a huge void, which could never be filled. His pioneering contribution to Kannada literature is outstanding, enormous and everlasting and he will be remembered forever!

Acknowledgement: Inputs from Dr. Jyotsna Kamat’s ‘Potpourri’.

From our Archives

Shri Umanath Dongerkeri- Pioneer Of Konkani Drama

Published in July 1968

How many of the hundreds who flock to the annual Konkani Drama Festival know how a Konkani stage came into being?

About half a century ago there were enough Bhanaps in Bombay eager to show their histrionic talent. When they did try they were handicapped - they had no facility of expression in Marathi. And if they staged a play in Kannada, a language with which there were more familiar, they were not understood by the majority in the audience.

However, they refused to accept defeat. They decided, under the leadership of Shri V. B. Puthli, to stage Konkani plays and found in Shri Umanath Laxman Dongerkeri an answer to their prayers.

Umanath, who held a humble post in the Bombay Police Headquarters, wrote a play for them in less than a week. It was entitled “Vajraa Kutka”. It was not the first Konkani play to be written, but it could be said that, with its production about thirty years ago. The Konkani stage was born.

In keeping with the times, men played female roles in “Vajra Kutka”, but even those who came to criticize confessed that it was a great success.

Thus encouraged, Umanath devoted all his spare time to writing. The dramas “Vajra Kutka”, and “Supanthulo Buva”, “Bekari Rahasya”, Chalenthulo Chikkolu”, “Maya Vimochan”, “Sant Appaya”, “Vidyarjana” flowed from his pen. He also composed a number of songs, some of which have become radio hits.

Umanath, who died on April 20th 1968, will be remembered by protagonists of Konkani literature.

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Plethora

BY AISHWARYA CHANDAVARKAR

(Author's note: Philosophy, surprisingly inarguable as it is, is a topic we can't avoid in conversations around the topic. Aju usually leaves around a few snippets of philosophy now and then and this piece is a collective of sorts of all his ideas and theories strung together.)

The same food, day after day, meal after meal has the power to become supremely monotonous and lifeless. Then, what's full of life and relish? Variety of course!

The typical Indian will tell you that the best thing to choose at an Indian cuisine restaurant is the Thali. The nuanced "thali-er" will know that the Thali varies across states and even cities; there's the sweetish Gujrathi thali, the sweat-inducing Hyderabadi, and the ever-surprising Assamese. If we are to focus on good old home-cooked food, there too we have a plethora of dishes- even the wrongly-categorized-as-boring dal can be made in at least 5 vastly different ways that I know of, and mind you, I don't know a lot about it. So that's saying something about poor Dal!

Hundreds of people make a living out of writing cookbooks and cookery shows. This by itself stands testimony to the fact that humans enjoy variety.

I was around 7 or 8 years old, hanging out in the kitchen on a Saturday morning while Amma and Pappamma prepared for lunch, and I remember being mildly amused when I chanced upon an old book in one of the cupboards. On the cover was a photo of two women in sarees, in a kitchen- seemingly laughing and talking while they cooked. I'd never seen a book in the kitchen before, and it wasn't even in English. It looked like Hindi, but wasn't that either. A close enquiry revealed that this was a cookbook, in Marathi. And from this came all the food I loved to eat (sometimes not) during Chaturthi, Ashtami, or when an old uncle came to visit, or when Aju, years later, decided to tinker around and make laddoos or chakli or even measured-to-the-cup recipes of dosa. This was the much revered *Raschandrika*. Out of this also came the recipe for Aju's much loved *amtepit* that he diligently makes each year and sends to my aunts- for sambar and amti and other dishes. It's a favourite among the family members and is definitely in high demand.

It's sometimes passed down to the next generation, maybe to a newly-wed bride, a part of the life she will now set up. All of that food, but it only covered a part of the Indian cuisine, particularly *amchigela*. There's so much more types of food in the world, varying from region to culture and sometimes religion to religion, and even changing across a distance of a few hundred kilometres, or across the vast countries.

So much to eat and so little time! But if you come to think of it, food in its most basic of functions, has two tasks to perform- sustenance and resolving hunger. However monotonous the food gets, however many times in a week you've to eat dal, you live, if there's nothing else and you're hungry, you eat it. You eat it and you are healthy and get nutrition. All and any food you eat finds its way to the stomach, carries out the same functions.

In summer vacations, Aju and Pappamma would take us to Karwar, by bus. We'd be woken in our sleeper bunks by the rays of the early morning sun in our eyes, and the extremely overpowering smell of fish, salt and sand. It's funny how such a smelly fish can contain so many nutritious omegas and what-not, and because of that I was forced to eat it thrice a week- deep fried or in orange curry with rice, or in some fancy dish in a restaurant in Goa on last-minute trips. I learnt to love fish over time (the coast in me had to manifest at some time I suppose!) and had to have it every Sunday, even in Bangalore. Karwar was a fascinating break from the life we had here. Small carts sold pani-puri and Gobi manchurian and the ice-cream that came in white plastic balls with blue caps, and fried rice, all on the gangway flanking the beach. *On the beach!!* It was like a line-up on restaurants and cuisines, but tastier than I'd ever eaten (the gobi was more maida coating than gobi). Of course, this was a ritual of the evenings. We rarely visited the beach in the morning, mostly because vacation in Karwar meant sleeping till just before noon, by which time the sand would be hot enough to burn and sting your toes, but also because that's when the fishing boats went about their business and the beach transformed into an impromptu marketplace. The one time we had a picnic on the beach, I got to see all this first-hand; the blue and green nets filled with all sizes and colours of fish, long and small and round or flat. The fisherwomen would come with their plastic baskets and tubs and heckle and bargain with the men from the boat and by the time its ten o' clock the beach would be empty of its previous inhabitants – the only proof would be the fish scales and the crows picking off the fish that were rejected by buyers.

On some such mornings, the sea in the distance would be a clear blue or sometimes even green- calm and undisturbed. I would wonder where it was that the rivers that flowed into the sea were discernible. There was a temple we would sometimes visit- a Kali temple, and named after it was the Kali nadi (river) on whose banks the temple was. It was a murky brown river where the construction workers from nearby would wash their clothes. It was fascinating to see that all that dirt and dust of the city would be washed off of the water when the river joined to meet the ocean- it became a liberating clear blue, and always reminded me of the song from *Parineeta*- about how the river dreams of meeting the sea and when she does, her fluttery nature is tamed and she finds peace in being one with the ocean. So, in a way, whichever river one may travel down by, the open ocean is always the destination. Isn't that the case with all the sacred rivers too? The Yamuna, the Ganges, all flow into the Bay of Bengal, and become one entity with no bounds for far and wide.

Parallel to the Kali Nadi ran a bridge, between two small hills that led to Goa. Goa - that had so many beaches and bars and restaurants and museums and resorts and so many other places to be explored. But also, the Goa that was home to so

many places of worship-innumerable churches and temples. Whenever we drove into Goa we'd see Catholic churches, Seventh day Adventist churches, Protestant churches, all on the way to the part of Goa that housed all the Kula-devata temples. We would visit three temples in the same order-first the Mangeshi temple, (we stayed overnight in the rooms on the premises sometimes) then the Mahalakshmi and finally the Shantadurga temple. Although we go almost each year, I cannot seem to remember the way to any of them, and I would gladly blame it on the temples situated at every corner-all of them that are *kula-devatas* of some family, each of them a different name or avatar of the same 5-6 Gods or Goddesses. And in Mangeshi alone besides the main deity in the *garbhgudi*, there are three to four shrines placed behind the main building- the cool black marble flooring a relief to the blisters caused on the feet due to the skipping across the hot hard cement-bricked floor or the pokey green threadbare rubber mat.

It is then imaginable, the plethora of small shrines inside each main temple dedicated to the many many Gods and how each has a unique story behind it.

We have the Gods you know of - the holy trinity- Brahma, Vishnu & Shiva known to be the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer respectively. The Goddesses Lakshmi, Saraswati and Parvati one grants financial stability, the other knowledge, another all-round wellbeing. There is Ganesha -the remover of obstacles. There is Santoshi Ma, Sai Baba, Karthikeya, Dattatreya, and of course, the Avatars- Krishna, Ram, Balaram, Lakshman, so many more, and the eight forms of Lakshmi. Each manifestation has a story of origin that is unique. This gives rise to a whole lot of literature written over long periods of time and in different perspectives- Ramayana, Mahabharata, the Vedas and Upanishads, the Bhagvad Gita, being all of these in a nutshell. All of which are so widespread and famous across the world and its spin-offs on Draupadi and Arjun, or Karna and as you grow up you learn of other Gods who aren't mainstream too.

I grew up listening to all such stories of Markandeya, Manikant, Prahlad and Dhruv, their utter devotion and how the Gods helped them throughout their oppressed life and ultimately uplifted them to glorification.

The fact that we have so many Gods also gives rise to devotional songs, stotras, and bhajans. I remember falling asleep on so many school nights listening to Anup Jalota's bhajans on the radio that Pappamma liked to listen to.

The most fun part? The festivals! So many deities mean so many festivals and holidays from school. And we celebrated them all at home. I would help Pappamma and Aju decorate the Varamahalakshmi stand with flowers, lights and plantain leaves, sometimes even help in drawing around the stand with coloured wet chalk. Chaturthi brought an overdose of sweets and food. Navratri would mean going directly to the temple after school and I used to love sitting in a line with the other girls to have our feet washed and given money and a nice colourful yard of cloth which we would later compare and exchange among each other. Then there was Holi, which was always celebrated by playing with water balloon fights

on the road, Diwali with lighting numerous lamps around the house and switching off all other lights.

But, even though there are many Gods and Goddesses and festivals and temples, it still remains that it all draws back to the One. The one God up there that we all look to, regardless of religion, to provide us with faith and a sense that there's an entity out there that's looking out for us, that we are not alone in our struggles in life. No matter whom you worship, or how you choose to show your faith, it's all to the ultimate God. Just like how rivers merge into the great big sea, and how all the variety of food goes into one stomach and fulfils its function, all the Gods lead to the Faith we humans have within us.

In a way, we have the ancestral *rishis* and *munis* to be grateful to for keeping alive the written and oral traditions of narrating stories of these Gods, and for passing them down for so many generations.

If there weren't so many Gods, there wouldn't be chances to gather as a family so many times a year, the festivals we celebrate would be lesser, and lesser the fun. It would give us lesser of a reason to travel to different parts of the country- the cold Kedarnath, the dry rock temples of Hampi and the mountain top Vaishno Devi shrine.

Ultimately, this plethora of Gods and Goddesses alleviate the dullness and dreariness of human life and add richness and colour to our existence.

Aishwarya is pursuing her Masters in English Literature. She loves to have long conversations with her grandfather. This article is the result of one such enriching discussion she had with her grandfather.

Saraswat Colony, Santacruz Mhantyo

The world lost it's enthusiasm in the 2020 pandemic, Everything took a new avatar from office to academic.

Temples and all places of worship were kept closed, And all festivals were celebrated at home, with least involved.

In such times too, the spirit of the Saraswat colony remained unaffected,

How could our Gokulashtami mhantyo be disrupted?

The house of the Betrabet's our Krishna chose, And made arrangements of petti, taal, distant tabla and 'hallfull' of bhakt because He knows,

That for Him, the colony spirit is undying, And we know that the 'Kaaliya – Covid' He will be killing,

Such that next year in the colony hall we all will meet, To celebrate His birth, dolara, dahihandi and to sway in the *mhantyo* beat!!

“भजो राधे गोविन्द भजो राधे”

- Archana Balsawer – Hattangadi
Vile Parle (E), Mumbai

Memories... from Here to Eternity

By Uday Kerwar

Dilip Bhavanishankar Kulkarni

(25/12/1943 – 09/06/2020)

The squirrel was wary, she had been chased all over the house and though not tired was wary of the next move as I closed in. Before I could say Amma, the squirrel jumped on the table and sped to the open window. By the time I made it to the window, she had climbed the mango tree and had vanished in the dense foliage. I heard voices in the house but paid no attention, suddenly there was the telltale honking of the car and I ran out to welcome my uncle. Normally he would tousle my hair and pat my back, but today he had a serious looking guest with a twirl in his moustache!

That was my first look at Dilip Bhavanishankar Kulkarni. I was told he had come to spend some time with us as he was going to marry Kumudakka. Over next 2-3 days I found him looking up our entire compound. Now I realised why the toilet outside which had no power connection suddenly was lit up! Kumudakka was at work, Amma was busy in the kitchen, Papa was busy in his office, Chandakka was in High School and only I was free. We clicked and became friends. We started sharing Phantom comics. I had a huge stack and we would spend hours reading them.

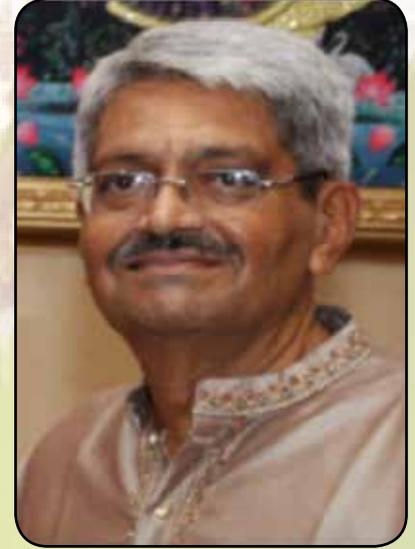
One day he took me out for a walk, I guided him close to my favorite restaurant and he obliged. We ate *idli chutney* and *tuppa dosse*. He washed it down with filter coffee while I had my Bournvita. That day he took my heart as well! To add to my happiness, we went to see the Great Grand Circus at Nehru Maidan, it was truly a great experience for me. Of course he wouldn't share the Wills Filter he smoked on our way back. We had struck a deal; he would treat me daily for all the sights I would show him. I showed him the railway station, the Sultan battery, my school and even the bank where Kumudakka worked. I even showed him my favorite comic book stall!

After few years he went to the Gulf when the boom just began. I followed some years later and during my stay there, every weekend I used to be at his place. He had taken the risk of leaving a permanent job (Crompton) in India to try his luck overseas. As a married man with two children he was game to start a new innings and his decision was vindicated when he could successfully restart his life on his terms on return to India after just over a decade overseas.

Taking a cue from his Muscat experience, he tried becoming a businessman, but in India with its various vagaries, business did not favour him as his partner backed out and he soon realised he may not be quite equipped to turn shades of grey if warranted. He re-joined his overseas employers in their Mumbai office and stayed with them till retirement.

His stint with HH Swamiji gave him great joy & satisfaction as it was something he had not even imagined. Despite being a diabetic and seriously allergic to mosquitos, he followed HH everywhere in the favoured attire mostly without footwear. His diabetes came under control as also his allergic reactions!! On his personal front, he lost his eldest son, all of 19, in a drowning accident in 1991. A few months before the Covid pandemic began, he lost his mother at 97.

Words cannot really express his strength of character and his ever smiling face. His worries were his own and he rarely shared them. His smiling disposition would charm all. Always joyful, he would use every opportunity to spread happiness, even from his hospital bed.



*You know not what you meant
To us you were always special
Cloudy or dark or any which way
Your smile brightened up the day
Warming up our hearts
Words n laughter were music
I will give anything, just anything
To have you well and standing near
Tears I have seen, shed unshed
But I do know you are happy now
And no longer in any pain...*

We'll Miss You



It is with profound grief and sorrow that we inform you of the sudden demise of our beloved Amma, **Smt. Shanta Shridhar Murdeshwar (nee Vimal Nadkarni)** on Tuesday, July 28th 2020 at 06:05 pm, at Nasik following a Cardiac Arrest. She was 90 years young.

We'll miss her terribly, but find some solace in the thought that she joined her husband, **Late Shri Shridhar Sheshgiri Murdeshwar (07/10/1921 - 03/07/2004)** in Heavenly Abode after 16 years.

Deeply mourned by -

- Dhananjay (Elder Son) and Dhanashree Murdeshwar (Nasik)
- Gautam (Younger Son) and Beena Murdeshwar (Pune)
- Neha Dhananjay (Granddaughter) and Prashant Soraiyur & Family, with Supriya Soraiyur (Great-granddaughter) (Singapore)
- Niyati Dhananjay (Granddaughter) and Gautam Basrur & Family (Mumbai)
- Prajakta Gautam (Granddaughter) and Sameer Kalbag & Family, with Aarav Kalbag (Great-grandson) Perth, (Australia)
- Rujuta Gautam (Granddaughter) and Rohan Nadkarni & Family (U.S.A)

Along With: Pandits, Kalles, Haldipurs, Kallianpurs, Nadkarnys, Kudyadis, Hoskotes, Bailoors and Wagles.



Ajit Murlidhar Gokarn

July 3, 1952 – July 19, 2020

Dear Papa,

A big heart with a pure soul, your contagious smile never grew old.

You were 68 and you left early. It was always your habit to be on time, I guess to you, respecting the host was prime.

As your family we promise you this, we will portray you to the best of our ability, spread kindness and worship humanity.

The beautiful legacy you left behind, remains forever in all our minds.

Wish you a happy journey to heaven and once we have properly represented you, we will take that bus.

We love you forever. Om Shanti.

Dear Ajit's family,

THIS IS GOD. I am writing to thank you for all that you did for making Ajit's stay such a pleasantly memorable one. He is with me now, after successfully completing his tasks on earth. I am witnessing that he has raised a wonderful and supportive family.

Gayatri, (Wife) he tells me how much he misses and loves you, Mayur (Son) and Maithili (Daughter). He is sad to leave you, but upon arrival he barely spoke to me and is busy taking pictures of heaven with his Ipad. He is watching you all share and cherish the stories of his beautiful life.

Fondly known as Ajit, Papa, Ajju, Ajit Maam, Bhayya will be forever remembered by:

Sunanda Gokarn (Mother)

Gayatri Gokarn (Wife)

Mayur Gokarn (Son), Maithili (Daughter) & Shonit Sajip (Son-In-Law)

Vijay Gokarn and Family & Uday Gokarn and Family

Prema Mavinkurve, Nandan Mavinkurve and Family, Sanjay Mavinkurve and Family,

Pavitra Manjeshwar and Family, Girish Sajip and Family

Friends and Well-Wishers

PRAKASH DEVIDAS MADIMAN

(Ex-DGM, UNION BANK OF INDIA)

25-02-1940 to 23-07-2020

Devoted son of Late Devidas and Late Sulochana Madiman of Hubli, Beloved husband of Late Aruna (nee Murdeshwar), Loving brother of Pratibha Sunil Moodbidri of Bangalore and Jyotsna Praful Bhate of Pune, Faithful friend of Arvind Diwakar of Belgaum, Doting Maamu of Shreya, Raam, Anmol and Dhruv, and the finest human being to colleagues, friends, relatives and acquaintances.



Kanchangauri Vijay Savur

10/09/1951 - 07/08/2020

My beloved wife Kanchangauri passed away on 7th August 2020 after a prolonged illness borne with great fortitude.

Deeply mourned by

Husband Vijay Shankar Savur

Son and daughter-in-law Kedar and Ankita

Son Vishal

Savurs, Sthalekars, Relatives and Friends

Bhagavad Gita

Here is a chapter-by-chapter analysis of an immortal text by our erudite contributor Dr. Sudha Tinaiker. The highlighted portions will enable you to realize that the gems of wisdom contained in this ancient treasury are an infallible guideline to living right

CHAPTER 3 Karma Yoga (Part 1)

In the second chapter Lord Krishna started his teaching with a powerful sentence "Nothing deserves grief; the wise do not grieve" नानुशोचन्तिपण्डिता. He also said that the knowledge of the Self alone eliminates all sorrow, giving an elaborate description of a स्थितप्रज्ञः. Along with this, he also introduced *karmayoga* and attitude of *karmayoga*. At the end of the chapter, Krishna asked Arjuna to take to *karma* with this attitude.

Now Arjuna finds this contradictory. "Why is my Guru asking me to take to *karma* when it is knowledge, which will ultimately liberate me?" These are sequential and to be followed in this order and there is no choice. *Karmayoga* prepares the intellect to receive the subtle knowledge of the Self and *Jnânayoga* liberates a *mumukshu* from the bondage of *samsâra*.

Arjuna expresses this confusion clearly to the Guru. "Hey Keshava, as per your own words, *Âtmajnâna* is superior to *karma*. In that case, why do you insist on me getting into this deadly *karma* of war?" "Your words confuse me, my Lord. Please tell me definitely, which of these paths should I follow?" (v 1,2).

The Lord sorts out the disciple's confusion. Krishna does not give a choice here; instead, He convinces that the two *yoga*-s are not optional, but to be followed sequentially. There are two lifestyles द्विविधानिष्ठा . The lifestyle of a *jnânayogi* is for a person who has prepared his intellect with purifying the mind from binding desires चित्तशुद्धिः and who has the capacity to focus on the subtle knowledge of the *âtma* चित्तनैश्चल्यम् . It is only *Karmayoga* that can prepare the mind of a *mumukshu*. "Thus, *karmayoga* is the निष्ठा for you Arjuna; you donot have the necessary preparation right now to go directly to *Atmajnâna*. On the other hand, *jnânayoga* is the निष्ठा for a *sâmkhya* ज्ञानयोगेनसाङ्ख्यानामकर्मयोगेनयोगिनाम् (v 3).

Now Bhagavân wants to say that, mere avoidance of action and passivity does not lead to liberation. Moreover, renouncing action and taking up to a monastic life *sanyaasa* is dangerous for an unprepared intellect. An ignorant mind suffers the *samsâra* all the more. *Sanyâsa* for such a person is a mere escape from responsibilities. Total inaction is not possible, even for a moment ,especially for an unprepared person. His restless nature प्रकृति forces him into action. In an unprepared person *sanyâsa* only leads to the restless mind constantly hankering for sense objects. Such a *sanyâsi* is a hypocrite मिथ्याचारः सउच्यते (v4,5,6).

Karmayoga is the only answer to this conflict between "to do one's duties, or renounce one's duties and take to a life of *sanyâsa*". The one who manages his senses and mind, engages in his legitimate *karma*, with the attitude of *karmayoga* इश्वरार्पणबुद्ध्याकर्म इश्वरप्रसादबुद्ध्याफलस्वीकृतिः excels even as a *sanyâsi*.(v7).

"Therefore Arjuna, do the duties नियतकर्म enjoined to you as a Kshatriya by the *Veda*-s. This is for your own good. Even the journey of life requires one to be active. Do not ever think of giving up your duties and take to a lifestyle which is not suitable for you at present". (v 8).

In the next few verses Bhagavân compares *karmayoga* to a *yagna*. Offering all one's actions to the Lord, is nothing but a *yagna*. Such a *karma* does not bind one either to the action, or its result. Bhagavân explains that the *yagna* way of life involving contribution and sharing, has been prescribed by the *Veda*-s. At the time of the creation of the Universe, *Prajâpati* (Lord Brahmâ) pronounced "May this *yagna*- way of lifestyle fulfill all your wishes and may mankind prosper." (v 9,10).

Bhagavân now talks of *karmayoga* as a *yagna*, by way of propitiating the various deities, who are responsible for maintaining harmony in the cosmic order. Here *karmayoga* is talked about as the "five great contributions" (पञ्चमहायज्ञः) . They are contribution to the a) deities, b) ancestors or manes, c) the *rishi*-s who gave us the *Veda*-s, d) other life forms around us and e) humanity (देवयज्ञः पितृयज्ञः ब्रह्मयज्ञः भूतयज्ञः मनुष्ययज्ञः) . These five forms of contributions maintain an ecological and cosmic balance among all the species. Our *Veda*-s talked about ecological balance even then!

In the next few verses the Lord says that a person who does not understand the importance of such a contribution is like a thief, who steals from the cosmos. Following the lifestyle of the "five great contributions", one gets the good fruits a million-fold by the blessings of the deities. Entire universe runs as a cyclic process with harmony among all its components. Rain, crops, food and life forms should be in an ecological balance. Any one who upsets this cycle suffers its consequences. The *karmayogi* who contributes to this cycle with an attitude of *yagna* is blessed. (v 11,12,13,14) (To be continued...)

The Gurudakshina

BY NALINI S NADKARNI, KANDIVLI, MUMBAI

Rao Saheb Shankarrao Deshpande, a resident of a small town, was a philanthropist. He built an orphanage and a free high school for needy boys, there. He engaged a dedicated teacher-Mr Sreedhar Datar, living in the neighbouring town as the headmaster. As a small flat was allotted to the headmaster on the school premises, Datar Sir joined duty immediately, taking along with him, his newly married wife, Kamala. Fourteen months later, a daughter Nandini was born to them; they were very happy.

Datar Sir taught important subjects like Science, Maths and English. He was a very good man and ever ready to give extra coaching to any student, in his spare time. Though the orphanage was not his concern, he helped its staff in many ways. So, it was ironical that a good man like him should be burdened with sorrow; because, when Nandini was five, she started getting epileptic fits, and the only doctor in that town was unable to cure her. Then, ten months later, Kamala succumbed to meningitis, leaving behind a sick six year old child in her husband's care. Sir took the calamity in his stride and hid his sorrow. Luckily, the orphanage staff helped him by taking care of Nandini when he was working.

One Angarika Chaturthi day, when Sir was collecting *durvaa* for Ganapati puja, he found a male child of about two or three years, seated near the orphanage, crying. Evidently, he was abandoned. Sir took the child to the orphanage and thereafter, those authorities took over.

He was named Ganesh by Sir, as he was found on Chaturthi day. By common consent, his surname was Datar, as Sir had found him. Ganesh was very attached to Datar Sir. When he was four or five years old he spent a lot of time at Datar Sir's house. Sir taught him to recite *shlokas*, alphabets and numbers. He also narrated many age-appropriate stories to him, with the result, that when he started attending school, he was far ahead of his class!

One day, when he was at Sir's house, Nandini got an attack of fits. Sir ran to help her. Then, realizing that Ganesh was present there, Sir told him in a loud voice, to go away. Ganesh could not understand why Sir was shouting at him, so he stood there gaping. Then, Sir bodily lifted him, placed him out of the house and closed the door. Ganesh went back to the orphanage, crying.

Years went by. Ganesh passed his SSC exam with 94% marks, topping the class. He wished to study further, but there was no college in their town, nor could he afford to pay college fees. Then, Sir remembered that Rao Saheb had given a donation to the only college in the next town. So, with Rao Saheb's help, he was able to get Ganesh admitted in that college as a free student and was also given a free hostel accommodation.

Four years passed and Ganesh with the help of a scholarship passed his B.A. examination, securing first class, topping the University list with Maths and Statistics.

His school rejoiced on reading the news. After all he was the first graduate of their school!

The next evening, when Sir was busy setting a student's question paper, Ganesh arrived, bent down and touched Sir's feet. Sir said, "Ganesh, my boy, welcome home! The first graduate of our school, and that too, a first class first degree holder! Sit down, and tell me your future plans. Are you appearing for the IAS, or any competitive exam? Will I have to salute you when you become an IAS Officer?"

"Sir, I am not appearing for any competitive exams. I'm glad to do my B.Ed, and then come back here, to teach in our school." "But why? You have the capacity to pass any exam!" "Because I have commitments here, Sir" said Ganesh. My priority is giving my *Gurudakshina* to my Guru. I also have to repay what I owe to the orphanage and to my alma mater". "To a Guru, his student's success itself is his *Gurudakshina*. As for the repayment, you can send the orphanage some money, when you start earning."

"Sir, I beg to differ, looking after my *gurukanya*, my sister Nandini, in my Guru's old age, is my *Gurudakshina* to my Guru." For a moment, Sir was taken aback, but he quickly recovered and said, "My boy, I am very grateful to you for your kind offer. Sometimes when we are young, we make rash promises, but in our old age, when we become feeble, and need money, we regret our earlier sacrifices. Your offer would be like Dronacharya asking for Ekalavya's thumb as *Gurudakshina*!"

"Sir, Drona ASKED Ekalavya for his thumb, with a SELFISH motive. He knew that Ekalavya was a better archer than Arjuna (Drona's *shishya*). So Drona made it impossible for Ekalavya to compete with anyone; but to my guru, giving "Vidya" to ANY ONE is his mission. Sir, remember, the day when I was very young and you threw me out of your house? Seeing me crying, Ramu, from the orphanage, consoled me, saying, Sir must have been upset about something, Then, when I was old enough to understand, he told me about Nandini's sickness. It was then that I took my decision. So, my offer is not a rash one."

"When you marry, your wife will certainly will not agree to look after sick relative."

"Sir, if I marry, I will marry only that woman who will accept me ALONG WITH MY SICK SISTER."

Sir embraced him and said, "How can I thank God for giving me a son like you?"

"Sir, how can I thank God, for giving a waif like me, a father like you?"

Both had tears in their eyes.

Nalini Nadkarni, 94 years, is passionate about writing stories, articles, poems in English and Konkani. Her work has been aired on AIR and has been enacted at the Konkani Sammelan (USA). She has contributed articles to the Women's Era Magazine and has been honoured by the Mahila Samaj for her literary work.

Lockdown Musings – Part 3

BY SMT SUMA KAUSHIK

Our Uttar Kannada district is an agricultural rural area and almost all residing here have a small parcel of inherited land. Probably from Grandpa!

And Grandpa must have been a tiller working for the landlord. Suddenly overnight owing to the “Land to the Tiller” policy of the government, he became owner of the land.

Here’s what happened to the land. Grandpa, who, say got 2 acres of land, had 5 children. So Papa got 16 *guntas*. Papa had 4 kids so today’s adult of around 50 got 4 *guntas*. This was barely enough to have a house and a small *thotta* around it. Today’s youth? - Technically a farmer on paper but actually a pseudo-farmer. They proudly say I have completed PUC or am a graduate with a fixed notion entrenched in his mind that agriculture is not paying. And that is true for him!

Some of the landlords’ children migrated to cities, educated themselves and their kids and were doing well for themselves until COVID. Trapped inside their homes they feel “Hey maybe I should have retained and maintained a small home in the village”.

Those landlords that stayed back still have the airs of the lord, and refrain from doing any menial work, farming or tending a cow shed. Neither do they have the skill or expertise to get themselves enough paying jobs, let alone having enough to pay the steep labour to maintain their farms. Thus they have been reduced to BPL (below poverty line) card holders. So the policy of Land To The Tiller has led the nation nowhere. The landlord and the tiller in rural areas are almost converted to BPL. And most politicians appease all these with their Re.1/- rice and what have you...

So what is the way forward?

Stop freebies. Educate the children academically, socially and morally. The concept of living BPL and constantly grabbing whatever comes free should be understood as not ok. Every individual should strive to rise above the BPL mark on his own merit and the government should encourage it. Good QUALITY education and employment savvy skills and knowledge should be given in schools.

A penalty should be imposed for owning un-utilized agricultural land or such property must be confiscated. Scores of people having land have kept it vacant and un-utilized. Many are under family disputes too. Making a forest out of it would certainly add to the national resources.

Facilitate formation of large tracts of land by congregating together as co-operatives or Agro- based companies to cultivate high yielding, good quality grains, fruits and vegetables.

Build sufficient cold storage’s and spaces and infrastructure to transport the produce to the markets.

Government should facilitate the above by way of subsidies and tax rebates

How can the common affluent city man help?

They should contribute in whatever possible way to the above in, “*tan, man and dhan*” in any field possible but in the rural area. May be in forming Cooperatives, SHGs and Agro based initiatives using their expertise and good offices.

One can already see a lot of such good work taken up by our Pujya Swamiji at Shirali.

Institutional aid should be given towards nation building rather than giving free monetary aid to individuals, which would make them “beggars for life”.

Editor’s Note: This is a four-part series written by Smt Suma Kaushik. She can be contacted at +91 9892449694.

The Divine Churning

After the Pandemic is over, after Covid is gone
After the virus is leaving, after it all
Many a heart has broken
If you could read them all
Many a heart has scattered
After it all.

Though they kept their distances
Though they wore their masks
Though they tried their very best
Yet the virus conquered them all.

There was no sure shot cure
It was just a trial and error
Plasma therapy, Remdesivir and HCQS
Flavipiravir, Dexamethasone and Oxygen
There was no vaccine to it.

They all suddenly became pious
They all turned to Nature
They all fell on their knees
And worshipped every God.

They slowly but surely adapted
They learnt to accept the unacceptable
They became patient
They became clean
They became disciplined
They gave up their wild ways
They adopted health and hygiene.

They became charitable and caring
They became loving and affectionate
They forgave and forgot
They became less judgemental
As they saw no cure at all.

There was a divine churning
Though there was no flicker of hope
They lit the lamps of love and caring
Hoping against hope.

By Vanita Kumta

Subtle Lessons

BY SAVITRI BABULKAR

Life was on at its usual rhythm. We were happily “March”ing into April. Overnight, taking us unawares, the lockdown shut our front doors and confined us to the house...

Every time a problem crops up, they say it has ‘a lesson to teach’. Sure enough, each new day of the Corona Crisis teaches us something new. We but need to scratch the surface to reach the lesson lurking underneath.....

Lesson # 1a: Thank the Lord! During the dreaded World Wars, a soldier had no choice but to march into the battlefield to be fodder to the Fury of War. Today, you and I can stay out of the Risk Zone simply by taking easy steps to remain safe.

Lesson# 1b: TV news may be scary sometimes, but it teaches us to accept Life with its ups and downs.

Lesson #2: Today, we have learnt to respect doctors and the hospital staff and be grateful to them for their incredible self-sacrifice. Doctors everywhere are the ‘soldiers’ of today, risking their lives to serve the layman and save his life. And the same goes for Bankers and now, the Postal Staff. Bless them!

Lesson # 3a: Let’s be thankful to leaders who care enough to announce tough decisions in the face of criticism. Our leaders are taking decisions for the welfare of the common man. Complaining and grumbling have not yet been proven antidotes for the Corona Virus. We are learning now to stay indoors, work online, study online, wear masks while stepping out, maintain ‘Social Distan Singh’ and generally follow instructions.

Lesson #3b: Earlier, menfolk/ parents were away at work and children, in school or college. Today we have quality time for family bonding! More importantly, living in close confines has been a training in adaptability.

Lesson # 4a: Luckily, essential goods, including medicines, are regularly available. We merely need to walk upto the gate, or a designated place, to pick up the supplies. Let us be grateful to the grocer, the *bhaji-wala*, the *fruit-wala*, the *doodh-wala*, the *anda-wala*, the shop-keeper, the chemist and others who are unhesitatingly helping us to lead a near-normal life.

PS: What other sources can’t provide, online stores do!

Lesson # 4b: Thank our stars that we can walk up and down the stairs and to and from the gate. The size of a city flat doesn’t cater to health freaks who take a walk to keep fit.

Lesson # 5a: Industrialists first devised Division of Labour. In the absence of household help, we now adopt the technique at home. Everyone willingly makes himself/herself useful, each contributing something according to his/her ability. Making oneself useful is our *raison d’etre*. After all, God has sent each one of us into this world with a special purpose. Everyone now understands and accepts his/her role.

Lesson # 5b: We are beginning to suitably appreciate the value of our household help in these ‘Bai-Gone’ days. Remember, in the by-gone days they handled these same chores in five or six houses, not one!

Lesson # 6: Sweepers collect the garbage daily and dry garbage once a week, as usual, but at the gate. Without them, it would have been impossible to maintain the cleanliness so essential for a healthy environment. God bless them!

Lesson # 7: The Lockdown prevented TV stars from reporting for work. When the serials came to a sudden standstill, we missed them miserably, at first. But, resigned to our fate, we gradually overcame the addiction to the Idiot Box. Admitted that there is no opium like an unfinished story, we’re learning that there’s *no* addiction we can’t overcome.

Lesson # 8: Crisis has sparked off Creativity. Someone said that four months after ‘doing nothing’, he’s ready to audition for the ‘Indian Idle’.

Not surprisingly, the ever-optimistic human mind, despite adversity, has turned to the lighter side of Life. WhatsApp messages prove that Laughter is *indeed* the best Medicine. One of the earliest messages spoke of Snow White being ‘left with only six dwarfs’ because ‘Sneezy was under quarantine!’ Another one, showing the outline of a man seated in meditation, bore the wise caption: ‘If you can’t go Outside, go Inside’. An inspiring message put up a board declaring ‘The World has been closed down for renovation’ but ‘You will soon be invited for the Grand Re-opening’.

Lesson # 9: Let us thank God for being born in the twentieth century. With tech-savvy children/grandchildren to guide us.

Despite being physically ‘isolated’ we have telephones, mobiles, WhatsApp, Email, Facebook, Skype, Zoom, audio, video and even how-do-you-spell it? The karaoke! ... You can even sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to family or friends who are miles away! There are a hundred communication devices that Technology Magic has conjured up.

Lesson # 10: We’re making imperceptible spiritual progress without even stepping out! What more can we ask for?

Invariably, at such times, man turns to Religion and Spirituality seeking answers to the question marks floating in his head. WhatsApp frequently caters to such needs posting pictures, audio-n-video clips—with inspirational quotes. We CSBs are fortunate to witness the poojas/rites/rituals at our Chitrapur Math in Shirali; tune in to PP Swamiji’s enlightening *Ashirvachans* to guide us; and the brilliant discourses on the Bhagwad Gita by Dr. SudhaTinaikar; and read the remarkable commentaries of Shri Rajagopal Bhatmam on the 108 names of Lord Shiva on WhatsApp.

We have thus accepted that every problem brings a lesson to be learnt'. Even children are beginning to understand this. The faster we absorb the lessons, the sooner will the crisis fade.

Meanwhile, isn't it simply delightful to hear the morning birds singing praises to the Sun in sheer rapture at the absence of traffic- vehicular and human? And spiritually inspiring music online?

What better Teacher than a Crisis? Let's hope it has effectively taught us to respect our environment and to stop abusing Nature.

PS: TV stars in a few Channels have now resumed work, despite the risk involved. Err... excuse me. It's time to rush to catch the beginning of today's TV episode.

Savitri Babulkar is a retired teacher and a freelance writer. She can be contacted at savitri.babulkar@gmail.com.

Get Well Soon! – Part 2

BY INDU GERSAPPE, BENGALURU

"Oh, the Corona Virus?"

There was a stunned silence for some time... Then slowly, the group my friends dispersed, talking in animated whispers. Soon, the room was empty. Thankfully, I burrowed down under my quilt.

Then, it struck me! What if it was really Corona Virus? I had read about it recently in the papers and learnt how contagious and dangerous the virus could be! Originating in Wuhan, a town in China, it had slowly started spreading around the world. Rumours had it that it had generated in their horrible wet markets, where they sold live animals for meat, while some said it was manufactured in laboratories and that a stray accident had unleashed it. India had not been contaminated then and it was only a couple of months later that I learnt about its frightening portents. It could turn into a pandemic, which could wipe out a large part of the World Population. A tiny germ would bring the whole World to its knees! Yet, at that moment I was blissfully unaware of its dangers.

We had called up our family doctor and he had prescribed medicines which I promptly took. Hubby was hovering around, wondering how he could help, when he suddenly perked up and announced "I am now going to call up the kids."

Again I put my foot down. "No!" I said, "We'll wait till tomorrow." Then, just to be on the safe side, I requested my husband to take his toothbrush and clothes and camp in the guest room until I was better.

That night was terrible. My head was throbbing and every bone in my body ached. I felt that my strength was slowly ebbing away. I tossed and turned in my bed, thinking to myself, I have not even made my Will! There are so many things to finish, so many things yet to do. Is it Time to go?

Morning brought no respite. The fever kept running high, my eyes were on fire and I thought my body was being pulverized. What was happening? I tried to sleep, but there were sounds in the distance. Ringing..... ringing..... ringing..... The telephone, the cellphone, the doorbell...

Hubby peeped in, as he was forbidden to step in. "How are you?" he asked and before I could inquire about breakfast, he said, "I had tea and bread." He then announced, "I am now going to call up the children!"

I was beyond redemption and meekly nodded my head. Soon enough my daughter who is a doctor called up, throwing a barrage of questions at me. "Why didn't you call up earlier? Is your throat hurting? Is there phlegm in your trachea? What about the back of your neck? How are the sinuses? Chest pain?" Not understanding all the medical terms, I kept saying "Yes!" to every query, for anyway, my entire body was hurting.

"Are you having a cough and difficulty in breathing?" she asked and when I said "No!", she heaved a big sigh of relief. Both the children gave several instructions as to what I should do, eat, drink, to take medicines and go to hospital if the problem worsened. "No hospital", I said, "and no well-meaning friends and relatives. I only need rest!"

The doorbell rang and it was Gopi, the boy who fetches milk. He smiled and asked my husband, "*Madam ko fever haikya? Careful! Hamare area me do log mar gaya. Do din fever, teesra din khatam!*" And on this cheerful note, he shouted out to me, "Get well, soon, Madam!"

Parvatibai came, as usual, giving loud instructions, also as usual. Yet, she was a comfort, helping me freshen up, feeding me and even massaging my aching back. I tried my best to dissuade her, saying it could be contagious, but she would not listen. "Don't you help me, when I fall ill", she asked me. What in the world would we do, without our domestic help?

There was a barrage of calls, the whole day long, from the kids, friends, relatives, acquaintances in India and abroad. Queries, instructions, positive quotes, and Get Well Messages! I never knew I had so many well-wishers. Hubby patiently answered all the calls, giving me inputs now and then.

My husband peeped in again in the afternoon. "More Get Well messages," he announced, "Your Facebook pages are flooded with them! Such beautiful posts! Want to see?"

I burrowed deeper into the quilt. He kept on informing me. "There are bouquets too and some Get Well gifts from your cousins. Want cake?"

Oh, why doesn't he allow me to die in peace? When he falls ill, I am commissioned to serve him, never to leave his bedside, except to run trays in and out. I fluffed pillows, smoothed sheets, rubbed Vicks on his back, put ice packs on his forehead, cooked light meals, etc.

Was it day or night? I was beyond caring. The fever and body ache made me so weak, that I felt my life was ebbing away. I somehow swallowed the soup kept at my bedside, in the Thermos, took the prescribed pills and succumbed to the numbness that overtook me. In the darkness of the night, as I battled the illness, I prayed... It is at times like these, when you stand on the threshold of an unknown future, that you come to know what really matters in life. It is not money, jewelry, property or power that matters. It is love, relationships, the bonds that we have formed in life, that are precious. Have I fulfilled my mission in life? Well, I never had a clear goal, for that matter, except to make the people around me, a little happier! If I have succeeded in making the world around me, even a little better than what it was, then I was all set for the journey. I felt a great peace settle over me, and the darkness enfolded me in her arms...

I was awakened by the morning light. I got up carefully and opened the window. It was a beautiful day. The sky was blue and the early morning rays of the sun filtered through the leaves. The birds were chirping and I saw that the tree was breaking into blossoms. A cool breeze caressed me. It was as if Mother Nature was telling me, "Get Well Soon!"

And then...I realized that I was not hurting! There was only an aftermath of pain in my back. I touched my forehead. No fever! How can it be? Am I alive or dead?

I took in a deep breath and knew that I was alive and well. Oh, the power of Prayer! The miracles of Nature which have endowed us with wonderful bodies, having such great powers of healing and restoring strength! Which virus I had battled with, I would never know. I won! I got well, after all! I was ready, now, to face the world, anew.



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The Saga Of Dhan Singh Thapa, Pvc

BY MAJ GEN B N RAO, AVSM, VSM & BAR (RETD)

I first met Mrs Shukla Thapa, wife of late Lt Col Dhan Singh Thapa, Param Vir Chakra, some years ago when I was the Resident Administrator of Punya Dham Ashram, a senior citizens' facility with all modern amenities and the best Shiva temple in Pune.

I was in my office, I remember, one morning, when someone informed me that one Mrs Thapa was visiting the Ashram and was having a cup of tea with Mrs Krishna Kashyap, the founder of Punya Dham Ashram. Mrs Kashyap was herself an army wife; her husband had been a Bengal Sapper before taking premature retirement to become a businessman and had passed away in UK.

I was intrigued to hear that Gorkha surname and I enquired if this Mrs Thapa was also an Army wife? On receiving an affirmative reply, I left my office and went to meet her. She was just getting into her car to leave when I fetched up and introduced myself to her. I asked her to pardon me for enquiring but was she the wife of Lt Col Dhan Singh Thapa, Param Vir Chakra? She smiled, happy to be so recognised, and replied that she was. I then told her that it was a great honour for the Ashram to have her visiting us and invited her to make a second visit so that I could personally give her a complete guided tour. Mrs Thapa was very happy at the invitation and promised to do so. Indeed she made more than one visit to the Ashram. Moreover, she introduced the Ashram to her husband who loved its beautiful architecture, spacious landscaping and well managed facilities.

After retirement from the army, Lt Col and Mrs Thapa had decided to shift from Lucknow and finally settle down in Pune. He was a life time director of Sahara Group and had an office in Amby Valley, I was given to understand. Col Thapa was very happy with his job and his lot in life; as he had every reason to be. Few people get the second chance that he did.

Dhan Singh Thapa was an officer of the First Battalion of the Eighth Gorkha Rifles (1/8 GR). In 1962, as a Major, he was 'D' Company Commander, in command of an isolated, but strategically important outpost at Srijap, on the Northern bank of Pangong Lake in Ladakh. On 20 October, 1962 his post was surrounded and attacked by the Chinese during that India-China Conflict. The post was subjected to intensive artillery and mortar shelling before being attacked by overwhelming odds. Waves of Chinese troops kept assaulting the post till it was finally captured.

After repulsing two waves of attackers, the post was considerably battered and the Gorkhas had suffered heavy losses. Though depleted in numbers, there was grim determination to fight on to the end under Major Dhan Singh's inspiring leadership. In the third wave the Chinese brought up a few tanks to assist the infantry. Overwhelmed by numbers,

out of ammunition, before they succumbed, the remaining Gorkhas, with Maj Thapa in the lead, pulled out their Kukris and got out of their trenches, and took the Chinese head on. Cries of 'Aiyo Gorkhali' and 'Jai Maha Kali' were heard amid the din of the battlefield. They killed several Chinese in brutal hand to hand fighting. Finally, the last round had been fired and the last man had fallen; all was still. Most of the Gorkhas had been martyred in that action, a few were wounded and taken prisoner. As is inevitable in all wars, some were missing in action believed to be killed. Major Dhan Singh Thapa was one of them.

Back in Dehra Dun, the family of Dhan Singh Thapa, which was living in fearful suspense knowing that his battalion was deployed in Ladakh, kept praying for his safety. The news of the post being over-run was a bitter blow and since Major Dhan Singh Thapa was declared missing in action, feared to be dead, Mrs Shukla Thapa went through the rituals of becoming a widow.

Major Dhan Singh Thapa was awarded India's highest gallantry award, the Param Vir Chakra, posthumously. His wife received his medal and citation on his behalf in January 1964.

It was a couple of years later when the Indians and Chinese decided to exchange prisoners-of-war that everyone was surprised to see Major Dhan Singh Thapa's name figuring in the list provided by the Chinese authorities. Apparently he had been over-powered during the fighting and though wounded, captured alive by the Chinese. Although he was treated for his injuries, he was also subjected to torture during captivity but he never buckled under it.

News of his being alive was received with great joy back home and when Major Thapa finally returned to Dehra Dun, on leave, after completion of debriefing and other repatriation formalities, Major and Mrs Thapa were quietly reunited in marriage for a second time. In due course he was also promoted to the rank of Lt Col.

Lt Col Dhan Singh Thapa liked Punya Dham Ashram so much that he had his private religious functions organised in the Ashram mandir, including a big celebration on their 50th wedding anniversary.

When Lt Col Thapa passed away in September 2005, his memorial service was held by the Amby Valley officials in the modern state-of-art, multi-purpose hall of Punya Dham Ashram; so loved by the late officer.

Lt Col Thapa is survived by his wife, two daughters and a son.

A great soldier, I found him a humble, soft spoken man who was always grateful to God for his bountiful blessings. He never boasted about his bravery but believed that ordinary

people can become extraordinary men under compelling circumstances. He loved music and dancing with his Gorkha troops; he lived for his Gorkhas. He was fiercely patriotic and a military man through and through.

Several roads have been named after Lt Col Dhan Singh Thapa, PVC in Shillong, Darjeeling and in Nepal. His life and bravery is an inspiration not only for the troops of 8 GR but also for Gentlemen Cadets of the Indian Military Academy where stories of outstanding valour and leadership are nurtured through the ages.

Indeed, the saga of Dhan Singh Thapa is legend.

Errata:

Soumya Koppikar (Personalia, August Issue):
The following addendum is being published by us as per the request by the author, who informed us that the details were missed out from her side last month:

“Soumya Koppikar is the daughter of Chitra (nee Kabad) & Durgesh Koppikar of Matunga west, Mumbai. Granddaughter of Rohini Ratnakar Koppikar”.

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The Empty Nest

Outside my window on the tall kadamba tree
I see a pair of crows who have been busy very lately
All through summer they have gathered twigs sticks and twine
And made a simple nest, to them it looks really fine.

The mother crow has laid her eggs she now stays put in the nest

Father crow zooms in and out, carrying bits of food in his mouth

He feeds mother crow who now seldom leaves the nest
After all the hard work she now needs some rest.

The eggs are hatched the chicks are out
I hear their squeaks and see tiny pink mouths
Feeding and caring are what the crows do now
The chicks are squeaking but will soon hear them caw.

Quickly they will grow and gain strength in their wings
Mother and father crow will teach them many things
Very soon they will take their first lessons in flight
And sooner than you know, they will be out of sight.

Wonder what mother crow would feel
Once the chicks have flown the nest
Will she cherish their memories?
And keep wishing that her chicks get the best.

It's the law of Nature
Just a matter of time
I find myself saying to the mother crow
Soon your nest will be empty just like mine.

By Anjali Burde

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We hereby begin an occasional series featuring couples sharing varied skills to enrich different activities of our Shri Chitrapur Math, under the Loving Guidance of H.H. Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji.

In this inaugural article, let KRISHNANAND (Kuttymam) and RUPALI HEBLEKAR tell you about the positive changes and meaningful lessons that emerge from

A Novel Classroom Called Seva

There comes a time in life when 'something changes'. Parama Pujya Swamiji's visit to Pune in 1998, (although we did not realize it then) was a turning point for us. Volunteering during the 10 days of *Navratri* and interacting with members of our local sabha was an entirely new experience for us. Participating in the *Devi Pujan* performed by Pujya Swamiji every evening was very unique indeed! By the end of Pujya Swamiji's visit, both of us were initiated into *mantradeeksha* by Pujya Swamiji. We had taken our first step in the right direction!

In 1999, both of us went to Shirali for the first time. There were fewer visitors to Shirali then, so we were fortunate to get a lot of time with Pujya Swamiji.

Pujya Swamiji's *Chaturmasya Vrata* in 2000 was in Pune. This provided us with an opportunity to be part of both planning and organizing the entire camp. The Pune Math had just come into being at the time, and hence, every little thing had to be looked into- starting from infrastructure, power and lighting, food arrangements, utensils for the kitchen and more... The entire volunteer team rose to the task, however and in the process, we learnt a lot. Unknowingly, many changes were taking place in our lives, and we realized, joyfully, that our spiritual journey had begun...

The end of that year brought the *Sanskriti Parichay Shibir*- held in Dec 2000- Jan 2001. Both of us were fortunate to be *Sanchalak*-s at the picturesque, outdoor-site at Khanapur, where the participants were accommodated in tents. Interacting with the *Sanchalak* team, managing young *shibirarthis*-s, and most importantly, frequent interactions with Pujya Swamiji opened a fresh dimension and gifted new lessons:organisation, team building, human resource management, making use of and making do with available resources - the list is endless. We made lots of mistakes, but at every step, got invaluable Guidance and Correction from Pujya Swamiji.

This led to many more *Shibirs*, in which both of us participated. These included the *Sanskriti Parichay Shibirs*, *Sanskriti Prachaar Shibirs*, *Kara Seva Shibirs*, *Shibirs* for NRI members of the society, *Shibirs* for the *Samvit Sadhaka*-s, and *Saraswat Sadhaka*-s from Rajasthan.

Pujya Swamiji gave Kutty the opportunity to be *Pramukh Sanchalak* for *Shibir*-s from 2000 to date, for which we are extremely grateful.

Samvit Sudha-a modest tailoring and embroidery unit to boost woman empowerment, was initially being managed by Yogini Pandit pacchi from Shirali. In 2004, when the Srivali School was set up, it was proposed that uniforms for the students be made at Samvit Sudha. This is when Vasanti Shirurpacchi and Rupali, both from Pune, got involved. Slowly, but steadily, more and more local women came to join this exciting enterprise offering a creative outlet plus financial independence. The number of volunteers from our *samaja* who were willing to offer *seva* in this laudable sector also increased. As a result there was a parallel rise in the number of gift-items created and greater quality-control in design and finish of every product keeping the urban buyer in mind. From 2010 till date, a dedicated team of volunteers from many *sabha*-s with Rupali as the chief coordinator, have been managing operations at Samvit Sudha, purely as *seva*. Working with the enlarged team, exchanging new ideas and finding solutions to unexpected glitches was, is and promises to be a perpetual source of joy.

Getting involved with the *PrarthanaVarga* was another opportunity for Rupali, who has been a teacher along with Kalpana Chandavarkar, from 2009.

While Rupali was fortunate enough to be part of the *SaraswatiYatra* and the *Somnath Yatra*, both of us were blessed to be a part of the *Guru Jyoti Yatra* in 2008.

Together, we have been a part of many other *Shibir*-s and volunteering teams during *Chaturmas* and other Math functions.

Being in *seva* has made a difference to both of us in many ways. As a couple, we have developed a new respect towards each other. Interaction with different types of people has taught us to respect the other person's point of view as well. Dealing with different situations has given us hands-on management lessons! We are constantly put in new situations and expected to handle them intelligently and with maturity. This results in a tremendous build-up of confidence.

In *seva*, everything has to be done with a sense of responsibility, and we have to be prepared to 'own up' to both - the good and not- so- good outcome. Taking failures in our stride, learning from those experiences and using them as stepping stones to higher goals is all a part of *seva*. We are still learning from our mistakes, and at every step, getting corrected and guided by our Guru. We are

also encouraged to explore areas hitherto unknown to us and give of our best. All achievements and success are offered to the Guru.

On the home-front, as a parent one starts perceiving many subtle differences. Children tend to respect both of you more, look towards you for guidance and are more open. A sense of discipline is created and certain limits are not crossed. As a result, we are also more open with them. The connection of the entire family with the Guru, *Guruparampara* and the Math is strengthened and we realize that we belong to Him and He is there to guide us at every step.

Time and again we realize how fortunate we are to be able to participate in so many activities and in our own small way, give back to society.

Being in *seva* has given us the confidence to stand up for our convictions. As Chitrapur Saraswats, we should get to know our 'Central Institution', The Shri Chitrapur Math, which gives us our identity and limitless opportunities for doing constructive work.

We think that the initial hesitation in many instances is a mindset that the Math and its activities are only about religious matters. It is only when we get involved do we

come to know that so many great things are happening. Involvement makes us realize the greatness of our 312 years old *Guruparampara*. A sense of belonging and pride takes over and we want to participate more and more!

We strongly urge couples, both young and young-at-heart, to get involved and experience the joy and fulfillment of *seva*. To begin with, one can start by volunteering at functions and taking responsibility for just one particular task.

Get to know the tremendous work that is being done in youth- activities, social outreach projects, rural woman-empowerment, education, everything, under the gigantic and compassionate umbrella of the Math. You can access a lot of information about this on the Shri Chitrapur Math website: www.chitrapurmath.net.

One can contribute as per one's expertise and strengths. There is lots to be done in IT, communication, management, training, projects.... the list is endless. One just needs to take the first step. The joy of doing things as a couple for a cause is boundless!

So just jump in and get involved!

(Pictures on Pg 35.)

Book Review

मानव धर्मः-प्रजा प्रभुत्वम् चेति शतकद्वयम्

Humanitarianism and Democracy

By Shri Mangesh Venkatesh Nadkarni

Reviewed by : V. Rajagopal Bhat

Published by: Manipal Universal Press,
Advanced Research Centre, Madhav Nagar,
Manipal 576104

Price: Rs.240

The above are two centuries of verses in Sanskrit by Prof. M. V. Nadkarni, an economist by profession with a deep interest in history, sociology, philosophy, ethics, religion and Gandhian studies.

Earlier, in the columns of this magazine, I had the pleasure of reviewing his three other Shatakams in Sanskrit (with English translation and notes) on Parisara Niti, Gandhi Tattva and Sanatana Dharma Tattva and his excellent book: Bhagavad-gita for Modern Reader.

Inspired by Rabindranath Tagore's exemplary ideas, the FIRST Shatakam revolves around the topic of humanitarianism.

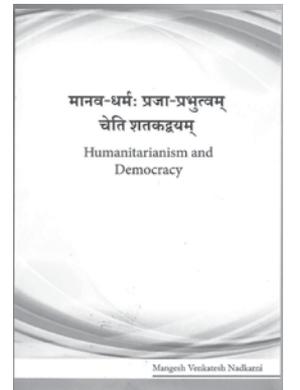
Humanitarianism is considered as the religion of being human and humane. It is not just about being philanthropic, but being kind and considerate to all human beings. Prof. Nadkarni derives inspiration from Basaveshvara

(a 12th century social reformer and philosopher) who said "good conduct is heaven and bad conduct is hell."

The SECOND Shatakam on Democracy lays emphasis on people's sovereign power and Gandhi's vision of self-government. Self-government should aim at welfare of the people with a special focus on equal access to health and education for all.

Both the Shatakams are like a treat to lovers of Sanskrit. There is ample food for thought and the flow of Sanskrit is at once spontaneous rather than laboured. Prof. Nadkarni is a rare combination: Economics and an astounding flair for composing Sanskrit poetry. Though I have met him only once in Bengaluru several years ago and that too briefly, he impressed me with his disarming humility and gentleness. Amazing scholarship sat lightly on him. We should be proud that he is a gem among the Chitrapur Saraswats.

I wish both the above Centuries a wide reception.



Parisevanam



~~~~~ Happy Memories ~~~~~



## MEERA KRISHNAN NAIR



**Date of Birth : 31 Jan 1927 Date of Death : 10 Aug 2020**

Meera Krishnan Nair (nee Manjeshwar) daughter of Justice B V Manjeshwar & Ahalya Manjeshwar, wife of Late P Krishnan Nair, Retired Welfare Commissioner & mother of Deepa Nair.

She was a shining example of single handedly overcoming insurmountable odds & becoming a role model for an entire community. A Senior Labor Officer, she had the distinction of being the first lady labor officer of many prestigious Ordnance Factories. She worked relentlessly for empowering the work force & their families, of these premier defence establishments.

A great organizer of numerous social events, she will be remembered for her prodigious memory & ability to bond with everyone.

**Kiddies' Corner**

**Krishna and Radha**



**Pratyusha Savkur, 9 years**

**Happy Independence Day**



**Ahan Mavinkurve, 10 years**

**Pear**



**Shriyans Hattangadi, 6 years**

**My Cute Panda**

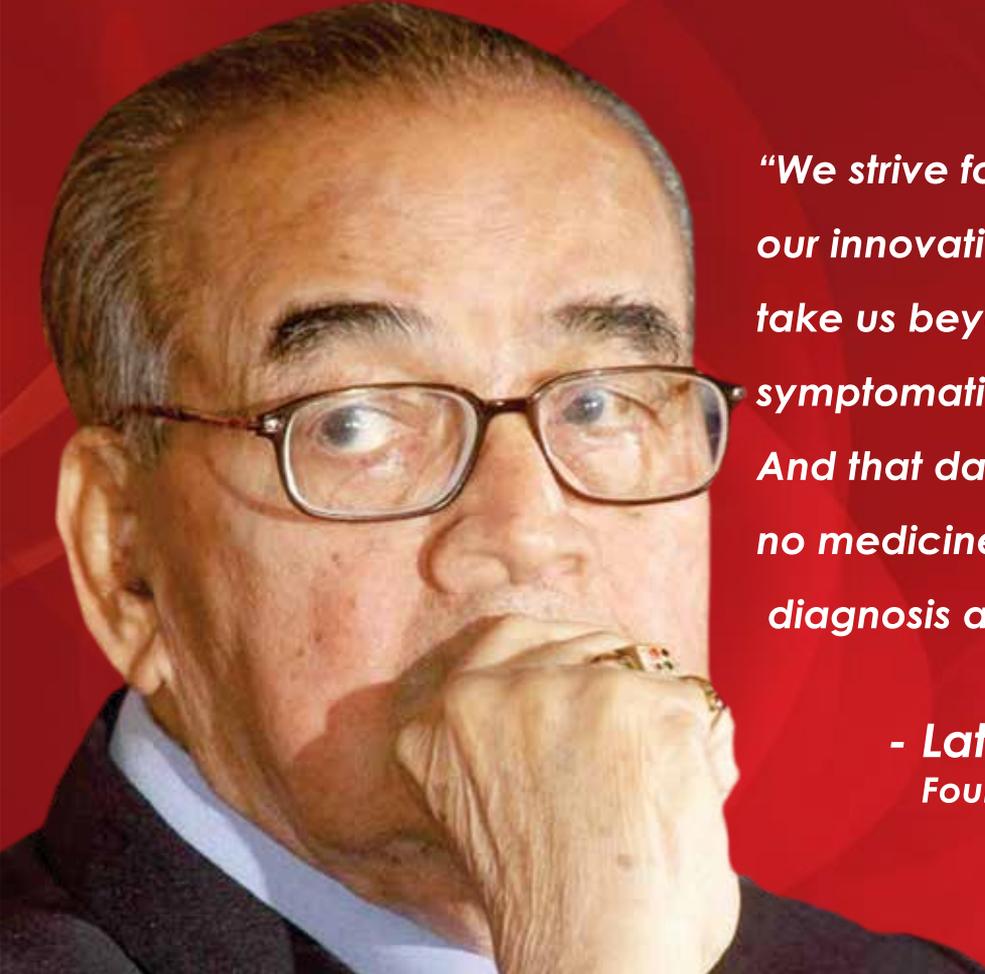


**Umika Hattangadi, 7 years**



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## Personalia

Dr. Anita Naimpally, daughter of Anand and Seema Naimpally of Bangalore has successfully completed her course- MDS (Master of Dental Surgery) in Prosthodontics & Implant Dentistry at the MS RAMAIAH University of Applied Sciences, Bangalore.

She has won 2 awards at the state and national level to her credit during her MDS course. One of the aforementioned prizes included an award at the All India level for making an artificial eye [ocular prosthesis]. Many, many Pranams to our holy Guruparampara and our most revered Guru HH Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji, whose grace and benediction made it possible. Blessings are sought from grandparents Shri Suresh Balwalli, late Smt. NainaBalwalli, and late Shri Muralidhar Naimpally and Smt. Kamalini Naimpally and all elders for her continued success and progress.



## Here and There

**Bengaluru: Special programmes:** On 5<sup>th</sup> July on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima and Chaturmasa Vrata Prarambha, Ashtavadhana Seva was performed by Ved Shri Vijay Karnad Bhatmam with assistance of Shri Dinesh Savanal mam and sadhaka-s rendered Bhashya Pathana from their respective homes. On 25<sup>th</sup> July, Nagara Panchami Pujan was performed at the *naga katte* in the Math. Yagnopaveetha Pujana-s were performed for Panchamkaari-s on this day for Rg Vedi-s on Rg Upakarma respectively. The Poojit Yagnopaveetha-s were couriered to the sadhaka-s. On 31<sup>st</sup> July, on the occasion of Varamahalakshmi, Durga namaskara was performed.

**Varga activities:** On 4<sup>th</sup> July, 24 yuvas participated in the Ashtanga Yoga session conducted by Sankalp Bailur Maam. In the Chaturmasa activities - 7 yuvas participated in Manthan via WhatsApp held on 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July and 2 yuvak-s in Sankshipt Sandhyavandhan held on 26<sup>th</sup> July. As part of the "Avakaash" series, webinars entitled "Equity and Mutual Funds" (12<sup>th</sup> July) and "Mental Well-being and Management" (19<sup>th</sup> July) were held. About 12 and 23 yuvas participated in them respectively.

**Regular activities:** Daily morning puja-s and evening puja-s on Monday-s, Thursday-s and Friday-s were

performed by *Grihastha-s*. Durga Namaskar was performed every Friday by Ved Shri Vijay Karnad Bhatmam with assistance of Shri Dinesh Savanal mam. Sadhaka-s participated in stotra pathana and the regular activities. The series of talks "The Bhagavadgita Talks - by Smt Dr Sudha Tinaikar" commenced online on Shri Chitrapur Math website from 3<sup>rd</sup> June and is held every Wednesday.

**Reported by Saikrupa Nalkur**

**Mumbai, Dadar:** Our sadhakas continued their participation in various digital activities like Manthan via WhatsApp, as well as Bhajan Seva via Google Meet by the Sadguru Bhajan Mandal, moderated by Smt. Revati Gulvadypachi and Smt. Shobha Puthli pachi. Sanskrit Sambhashana Katta Varga sessions were also restarted online, in which our sadhakas gladly participated. Our sadhakas offered Devi Anushthana from their homes as per the prescribed schedule on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July and 14<sup>th</sup> of August.

On the auspicious occasion of Guru Pournima, on 5<sup>th</sup> July, Dadaryuva-s joined those from other sabhas in India and abroad, in taking sankalpa to perform Japa Anushthana and Devi Anushthana for the duration of Chaturmasa Vrata 2020. Along with this, many of our sadhakas also began pathan/shravan of the Shri Chitrapur Guruparampara Charitra.

Janmashtami celebrations were held at Shri Dilip Puthli maam and Smt. Shobha Puthli pachi's residence at A5 Karnatak Bldgs for 8 days starting from the 4<sup>th</sup> of August, which comprised Mhantis and Bhajans by Dadar Sabha via Google Meet, culminating with the cradling ceremony.

Samaradhana of HH Shrimath Parijnanashrama Swamiji III was observed on 7<sup>th</sup> August with BhajanSeva via Google Meet and a tribute to Parama Puja Parijnanashrama Swamiji III by Smt. Shobha Puthli pachi.

With the commencement of Chaturmasa, the months of July and August took on a Shibir-esque feel, with a multitude of activities lined up for yuva-s in particular. Manthan sessions on Parama Puja Swamiji's Navasvandana videos via the specifically created WhatsApp group were conducted on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 25<sup>th</sup> July and 8<sup>th</sup> August, and Sankshipt Sandhyavandanam sessions for boys were conducted by Dr. Chaitanya Gulvady maam on 26<sup>th</sup> July and 15<sup>th</sup> August. The Samparka session scheduled on 26<sup>th</sup> July gave our sadhakas another eagerly awaited opportunity to take Parama Puja Swamiji's darshan via MS Teams, and to ask questions, if any, related to their sadhana.

Our yuva-s also benefitted from the next series of wonderfully conducted and insightful "Avakaash" sessions. These included a two part talk on "Equity and Mutual Fund Investment," by Shri Sandeep Bhat maam on 12<sup>th</sup> July and 9<sup>th</sup> August, a session on "Mental Well Being and Management," by Dr. Yamini Bellare on 19<sup>th</sup> July, and one on "Building Immunity and Improving Lung Capacity," by Dr. Urvi Mankekar on 16<sup>th</sup> August.

**Reported by Mohit Karkal**

**Mumbai, Goregaon:** Samaradhanas of Shrimat Parijnanashram Swamiji I and Shrimat Pandurangashram Swamiji were observed on 21<sup>st</sup> April and 24<sup>th</sup> May respectively

by Sadhakas at their respective homes through collective chanting of Sabha Prarambha Prarthana, Guru Paduka Stotra and Parijnanashram Trayodashi. Further, Sadhakas recited Navratra Nityapath followed by Devi Anushthan. Samuhik pathan of 40<sup>th</sup> Adhyaya of Shri Guruparampara Charitra describing the glory of Shrimat Pandurangashram Swamiji was done at the conclusion, the meet ended with Sabha Samapti Prarthana.

Janmadivas of Shrimat Parijnanashram Swamiji III was celebrated with Sadhakas actively participating in Vishesh Sadhana and a chain Pathan of Shri Guruparampara Charitra beginning on the morning of 14<sup>th</sup> June and concluding with the 70<sup>th</sup> adhyaya on 15<sup>th</sup>. Further, Sadhakas joined in for Guru Pujan performed by a few Sadhakas followed by Samuhik Pathan of the 71<sup>st</sup> Adhyaya of Guruparampara Charitra on Google Meet.

Sadhakas have been performing Sadhana Panchakam on each Sankashti at their respective residences.

The weekly Sanskrit Sambhashan varga commenced online from 24<sup>th</sup> June on Google Meet.

**Reported by Pranav R Nagarkatti**

**Mumbai, Thane:** The 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting of Shri Chitrapur Math, Mumbai (Thane) Local Sabha was held on Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020 on Google Meet. This was attended by sixty-four sadhaka-s. Shri. Dinesh Hattangadi mam was elected as the President of Thane Sabha.

Seva Saptaha was offered by Thane Sabha between 13<sup>th</sup> July and 18<sup>th</sup> July. Thirty-six sadhaka-s, including nine yuva-s, participated in this. Sadhaka-s performed Gayatri Anushthana and Sadhana Panchakam from their respective homes.

The Seva Saptaha culminated with Sannikarsha on 19<sup>th</sup> July. Fifty-four sadhaka-s participated in this. A virtual meet was hosted by Thane Sabha on Google Meet to enable the sadhaka-s to collectively offer Sannikarsha Seva.

**Reported by Savni Haldipur**

**Mallapur:** Krishna Jayant Vrita was celebrated in Avadi Math with usual dedication in a simple way because of the Covid 19 restrictions. It started on Nagar Panchami with Dolara Utsav pm 25<sup>th</sup> July and continued upto 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020. Dolara Bhajans were sung and Ashtavadhan seva was performed till Poonima on which Rig Upakarma was performed officiated by Ved Mangesh Nadkarni of Haldipur

On Shravan Krishna Pratipada, after Prayers, Kankan Bandhan to Shri Narendra Ubhayakar, Shri Malamudradhikari, Shri Nandu Bhat, the Archak etc was done. As usual Dattatray Murthy was ceremoniously brought from Datta Mandir to Shri Avadi Math. On that day onwards Bhajans composed by Shri Sant Ramavallabhdas were sung namely Navavidha Bhakti. Gondhal Bhajans were sung and days programme ended with Divti Seva and Ashtavadhan Seva.

On Gokulashtami night Shri Krishna Janmakatha was sung and Lord Krishna's Murthy was placed in the cradle. This scene enacting Vasudeva carrying Krishna to Gokula was enjoyed by the small crowd. On Ekadashi Shri Ramavallabhdas Samaradhana was celebrated. On

Dwadashi, Avadi Samaradhana was performed by honouring a Suvasini Smt Shamal Prakash Kadle. Due to Govt. restrictions Jagaran, Dahi Handi, and Palki Utsav were dropped. *Ede puja* which used to be performed in Ganapati temple has been postponed. The Vrita ended with *Ganv Jevan* on Triyodashi on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020. Datta Murthy was returned to Datta Mandir on Chaturdashi day 18<sup>th</sup> August.

**Reported by Arun Ubhayakar**

## DOMESTIC TIDINGS

### OBITUARIES

*We convey our deepest sympathy to the relatives of the following:*

- Apr 30 : Meera Manjunath Yadery (89) at Mumbai
- Jul 17 : Shrikar Dattatraya Kadle (64) at Mumbai
- Jul 23 : Shanta Shivram Shiroor (90) at Karwar
- Jul 27 : Srinivas Rao Yedery (88) at Bangalore
- Jul 28 : Shanta Shridhar Murdeshwar (90) at Nashik
- Jul 31 : Gurudutt Manel (91) at Pimpri, Pune
- Aug 02 : Shreyas Sudhir Rao Konaje (35) at Talmakiwadi, Mumbai
- Aug 10 : Maya Indukant Benegal (nee Sthalekar) 94 at Bengaluru
- Aug 18 : Kumud Yeshwant Moolky (83) at Santacruz, Mumbai
- Aug 18 : Naimpally Satish Rao (78) at Mumbai
- Aug 23 : Vasant Chandragiri at Dadar
- Aug 30 : Ratnakar N. Gokarn (86) at Talmakiwadi, Mumbai



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## होऊ कशी उतराई ?

डॉ. सुनंदा कर्नाड धारवाड

‘बाळा, होऊ कशी उतराई, तुझ्यामुळे झाले मी आई’ ही लताने म्हटलेल्या भावगीताची आठवण झाली. मातृत्वासाठी तळमळणारी आई आपल्या बाळाचे उपकार मानते. त्याला अखंड पाझरण्याच्या मायेने जपते, वाढवते आणि अमूल्य असे संस्कार करते. त्या बाळाने आपल्या आईचे, तसेच कष्ट करून पोसणाऱ्या, जन्मदात्या वडिलांचे उपकार मानावे, त्यांना आदराने, मायेने वागवावे, म्हातारपणी त्यांचा सांभाळ करावा अशी अपेक्षा असते. परंतु ‘मातृपितृऋणा’ ची जाण नसलेला ‘वंशाचा दिवा’ त्याची परतफेड करतो त्यांना मनस्ताप देऊन! त्यांना वृद्धाश्रमात डांबून!

आणखी एका ऋणाची जाण असावी ती आपलं व्यक्तीमत्व घडविणाऱ्या ज्ञान देणाऱ्या गुरूजनांची. माझ्या मनावर महत्वाचे संस्कार करणारे माझे गुरू श्री केशवराव भोळे-व्ही. शांतारामच्या ‘प्रभात’ फिल्म कंपनीत, अनेक चित्रपटांत संगीत दिग्दर्शक म्हणून नांव कमावलेली व्यक्ती! त्यांच्या सहवासांत शास्त्रीय संगीताची आवड निर्माण झाली. मराठी माध्यमांतून आलेल्या मला, इंग्रजी बोलण्याचा आत्मविश्वास, लिहिण्या-वाचण्याचा सराव झाला.त्यांनी बिंबवलेल्या सामाजिक मूल्यांचा, पुढे माझ्या शैक्षणिक व वैवाहिक जीवनांतही खूप उपयोग झाला.

आपल्या जीवनांत येणारे असंख्य अनुभव, संपर्कात आलेल्या अनेक व्यक्ती,

त्यांच्याशी जुळलेले नातेसंबंधही आपल्याला बरंच काही शिकवतात. माझ्या प्राध्यापकीय जीवनांतली काही प्राचार्य, प्रेम आणि आदर देणारे विद्यार्थी, तिथं आलेले अनुभव कधीच विसरता येत नाहीत.

ह्या सर्वांविषयी मनांत कृतज्ञतेची भावना उचंबळून येते आणि अंतःकरण सुख-दुःखाच्या अनेक आठवणींनी भारावून जातं. वाटतं, ह्या सर्व स्वकीयांच्या, गुरूजनांच्या, मित्र-मैत्रिणींच्या अव्यक्त ऋणांची कशी फेड करू, कशी उतराई होऊ मी!

‘ह्याच संदर्भात, १ सप्टेंबर २००७ रोजी प्रकाशित झालेली, आपल्या माजी राष्ट्राध्यक्ष, अब्दुल कलाम यांची कविता माझ्या वाचकांना सांगितल्याशिवाय राहवत नाही. ते म्हणतात, ‘फुला-फळांनी भरलेल्या आसमंतांत मला, अतीव आनंद देणाऱ्या रंगबिरंगी पक्ष्यांना, निःस्वार्थी प्रेम व साथ दिलेल्या प्राण्यांना, शीतल छाया देणाऱ्या हिरव्यागार वृक्षवल्लींना, मावळतीच्या सूर्याला, पूनवेच्या चंद्राला --- मी कोणते दान देऊ? त्यांनी केलेल्या उपकारांची मी परतफेड कशी करू? अशी कृतज्ञतेची भावना ते प्रकट करतात. ही जाणीव नसलेल्या मानवांनी त्यांना काय दिलं? नैसर्गिक संपत्तीची अखंड लूट, त्यातून निर्माण झालेलं सर्व प्रकारचं प्रदूषण, रोगराई, सामाजिक विषमता आणि असंतोष! ह्या संदर्भात लिहावं तेव्हा थोडंच!

### परत सानपण केदना मेळचें? (कोंकणी कविता)

विजयालक्ष्मी (चित्रा) कापनाडक

मूर्ख दित्ता साखरे कण, माक्का दी देवा सानपण ॥  
वसुधा आतं जाल्ली आज्जी, मनांतु सानपणांतु रंगली ॥  
ती उब्जली बेळगावांतु, सानपण गेल्लें धारवाडांतु ॥  
उल्लोचें अच्च कोंकणींतु, अ आ इ ई शिकली मराठींतु ॥  
मुखारी शिक्षण कन्नडांतु, ताज्जी आवडी पळळी बगलेंतु ॥  
रजा केदना येत्ता आनि केदना आज्जेगरी वत्ता ॥  
हो ची ध्यासु सदांयी मनांतु वरता ॥  
चैतन्य प्रीतीचां भाव होडू, भैणी जीवनागेलो ताक्का जोडू ॥  
भय्य ना भीती गाय्ये गोंठयांतु ॥  
हांतुळांतु निप्पून् हॉंडाक कशांतु घालचे ॥  
चांप्या झाडारी चोणू चांपे काडचे ॥  
पॅर,आंबे, राजावळे तग्गू पाडौंचे ॥  
सांगाती बैसून् तें सगळें खांवचे ॥  
हें सगळें सुख परत केदना मेळचें? ॥  
परत हें सानपण केदना मेळचें? केदना मेळचें?

### सूर्यदेव

लता कर्नाड (राव) उल्लाळ, चेन्नई

काळयाशार अंधाराला मागे रेटत  
लाल सोनेरी किरणांची उधळण करत  
पक्ष्यांना मधुर गानाची चेतना देत  
निळया डोंगराआडून लपाछपी खेळत येतो सूर्य !  
सोनेरी किरणांचा जेव्हा सडा पडतो धरतीवर  
सतेज होतात झाडांची पाने हिरवीगार  
रंगीबेरंगी फुलांच्या कळया उमलतात सुगंधाची पसरण करत  
डोकावतात मातीतून हळूच नवे कोंब सूर्य आगमनाने !  
मनाला आल्हाद देते पहाटे पक्ष्यांची मधुर किलबिल  
झाडावर धावतात खारी चपळाईने उडया मारीत  
रस्त्यावर पळतात कुत्र्यांची पिल्ले एकमेकांचा पिछा करत  
सारीजण आनंदून जातात सूर्यदर्शनाने!  
ऊन्हाळा, पावसाळा, हिवाळा ऋतुचक्राचा निर्माता सूर्य  
ऊन्हाने तापलेल्या मातीला भिजवून थंड करतो तो सूर्य  
पावसाच्या जल्लोषाने पृथ्वीला हिरवा रंग देतो तोही सूर्य  
थंडीने कुडकुडणाऱ्यांना ऊब देतो तो हाच सूर्य!  
सूर्याशिवाय जीवन नाही, ना प्राणी, ना पक्षी  
सूर्याला ना कधी विश्रांती, ना कधी कंटाळा  
असो कितीही काम, असो कितीही परिश्रम  
न चुकता दररोज उगवतो हा सूर्य!  
प्रभावी, तेजस्वी असे हा गगनराज  
उपकारक दिनमणी हा आदित्यराय  
“ॐ सूर्याय नमः” प्रतिदिनी करीते मी वंदन  
करोनी या तेजोनिधी भास्कराचे स्मरण!

## जाणीव

प्रिया बडुकुळी

आपले डोळे घट्ट मिटून माई अंगणात ठेवलेल्या आरामखुर्चीत विसावल्या. का कोण जाणे आज सकाळपासून त्यांच्या मनात अनेक प्रश्नांनी थैमान मांडले होते. अस्वस्थपणा वाढत होता. उभ्या आयुष्यात माईनी साधी माशीपण मारली नव्हती. सर्व कसे सरळ, प्रामाणिक आणि उघड व्यवहार. माईच्या तरुणपणी म्हणजे अठरा ते वीस वयात देशात घडणाऱ्या घडामोडीत म्हणजे स्वातंत्र्यकाळात घडलेल्या घटनांवर त्यांचे बारीक लक्ष असायचे. स्वातंत्र्यलढयात आपल्या प्राणांची आहूती दिलेल्या अनेक महान व्यक्तींविषयी त्यांच्या मनात आदर होता. आपण देशाच्या सेवेत स्वतःस झोकून द्यावे ह्या निर्धाराने त्या समाजसेवेत उतरल्या. कोणत्याही कार्यास त्या मागे-पुढे कचरत नसत. प्रत्येक गरजूच्यामागे त्या मदतीसाठी ठामपणे उभ्या रहात, मग ती मदत पैशाची असो वा मानसिक बळाची. आज त्यांच्या वयाच्या नव्वदाव्या वर्षी त्यांनी केलेल्या देशसेवेसाठी त्यांना सन्मानित करण्यासाठी त्यांस आमंत्रित केले होते.

बराच वेळ आपल्या मनात उफाळणाऱ्या वादळाला थोपविण्याचा प्रयत्न करित माईनी आपले डोळे उघडले. ओसरीवर कोपऱ्यात धूळ खात पडलेल्या चरख्यावर सहज त्यांची नजर गेली व स्वातंत्र्यकाळ तसेच स्वातंत्र्योत्तर काळातील अनेक प्रसंगाची आठवण जागृत झाली, आणि त्यांचे डोळे पाणावले. नाकावरील त्या जाड भिंगाच्या चष्म्याला आपल्या डाय्या हातात पकडून माईनी त्या अलगद ओघळणाऱ्या अश्रूंस आपल्या पदरामध्ये बंदिस्त केले. इतक्यात ओसरीवर खेळत असलेली त्यांची पणती देवयानीने त्यांस पाहिले व आपल्या हातातील बाहुली जमिनीवर टाकून ती भरकन् माईकडे धावली. माईच्या डोळ्यातील अश्रू पाहून ती विचारू लागली “आजी तू का रडतेस?” तिच्या त्या निष्पाप चेहऱ्याकडे पाहून माईनी वात्सल्याने तिला आपल्या जवळ घेत तिचा पापा घेतला व म्हणाल्या “बाळा, सध्या एकंदरीत परिस्थिती पहाता देवास पूसावेसे वाटते कि, विठ्ठला तू वेडा कुंभार कारण तूच घडवतोस आणि तूच तोडतोस, का बरं? किती कष्टप्रद ती स्वातंत्रप्राप्ती, किती महान ते स्वातंत्रवीर ज्यांनी आपल्या जीवाची पर्वा न करता केलेले निस्वार्थ बलीदान” देवयानी माईच्या चेहऱ्यावरील भाव समजली. परंतु त्या सहा वर्षांच्या छकुलीला माईचे भाष्य कळण्याच्या पलीकडे होते. त्या आरामखुर्चीवरून उठून ओसरीवर आल्या व त्यांच्यासोबत देवयानीसुध्दा.

ओसरीच्या भिंतीवर टांगलेले समाजसुधारक सावित्रीबाई फुलेंचे छायाचित्र पाहून त्यांचा कंठ दाटून आला व त्या देवयानीस म्हणाल्या “बाळे, ह्या कोण आहेत माहीत आहे का तुला? ह्या आहेत समाजसुधारक सावित्रीबाई फुले. काय सांगू तुला त्यांच्या कार्याबद्दल?” क्षणभर देवयानी त्या छायाचित्राकडे आपल्या निष्पाप नजरेने पाहू लागली. हे सर्व समजणे तिच्या आकलन शक्तीच्या पलीकडेचे असल्याकारणाने तिथेच तिच्यासाठी तो विषय संपला, परंतु माईमात्र त्या छायाचित्राकडे एकटक नजरेने पहात तेथेच उभ्या राहिल्या.

एकोणीसाव्या शतकातील सावित्रीबाई फुले यांनी “स्त्री शिक्षण तसेच तिचे हक्क” या साठी केलेली क्रांती याबद्दल माईच्या मनातील आदरभाव जागृत झाला. सहज एक प्रश्न माईच्या मनात आला कि जर एकोणीसाव्या व विसाव्या शतकातील म्हणजेच स्वातंत्र्यपूर्व व स्वातंत्र्योत्तर काळातील स्त्रिया शिक्षित

व परिपक्व होऊन स्वसंरक्षण करून समाजात योग्य रितीने वावरण्यास पात्र असल्यास एकविसाव्या स्वातंत्रोत्तर काळात वावरणाऱ्या उच्चशिक्षित तसेच परिपक्व स्त्रिया स्वसंरक्षण करण्यास असमर्थ का? कुठे तरी काही प्रमाणात त्या स्वतः त्यास जबाबदार असाव्यात का? या शंकेची पाल माईच्या मनात चुकचुकत होती. कदाचित स्त्रीच्या अती-व्यक्तिस्वातंत्र्याचा दुरुपयोग होत नसेल ना! अशा अनेक प्रश्नांनी माई भांबावून गेल्या. स्वातंत्र्य कोणास किती द्यावे हा जसा कौटुंबिक प्रश्न आहे तितकाच तो सामाजिकही आहे, जितका सामाजिक तितकाच नैतिक, जितका नैतिक तितकाच तो राजकीय प्रश्न होय, परंतु स्वातंत्र्याचे रक्षण म्हणजे स्वसंरक्षण होय हे प्रत्येक स्त्रीने आजुबाजुच्या परिस्थितीचे स्वतः परिक्षण करून ठरवावे व तशीच पावलं उचलावीत असे केल्यास आपोआप प्रत्येक स्त्री सावित्रीबाई होऊ शकते. हा विचार मनात येऊन क्षणभरात माई विचारांच्या वादळातून बाहेर आल्या. त्यांचे मन शांत झाले.

लगेच त्यांनी संध्याकाळी त्यांच्या सन्मानसोहळयात व्यक्त करण्यास समाजसुधारक सावित्रीबाई फुले आणि एकविसाव्या शतकातील विचारधारांतील तफावत व त्यावरील तोडगे ह्या विषयी भाषण तयार केले. दुपारच्या जेवणानंतर माईनी थोडीशी विश्रांती घेतली. देवयानीला आवर्जून त्यांनी आपल्या सन्मानसोहळयात न्यावयाचे ठरवले. बाळपणापासून तिच्या मनात देशप्रेम, स्वसंरक्षण, नैतिक मूल्ये वगैरे विषयी जागरूकता निर्माण करण्याचा मूळ हेतू होता त्यांचा.

संध्याकाळचे साडे सहा वाजले होते. पणती व पणजी दोघी अण्णांची वाट पहात थांबल्या होत्या. पंचायतीच्या कामकाजासाठी बाहेर गेलेले अण्णा परत आले. चहाचा घोट घेत घेत अण्णांनी भरभर नाश्ता संपवला. ते सर्वजण कार्यक्रममास निघाले. प्रमुख पाहुणे म्हणून माईसह त्यांचाही सत्कार होणार होता.

मान्यवरांनी प्रमुख पाहुण्या माईच्या कार्याची प्रशंसा केली. माईनी सभासदांचे तसेच तेथे उपस्थित सर्वांचे आभार मानले. माईनी भाषणास सुरुवात केली. भाषण संपताच टाळ्यांचा कडकडाट झाला. इतक्यात देवयानी सभागृहातून नाहीशी झाली. क्षणभर अण्णा माईस कसेसेच झाले. अण्णांनी सभागृहात तसे सभागृहाबाहेर आसपास शोध सुरू केला. इतक्यात सावधगिरी बाळगणारी माईची पणती देवयानी सभागृहाबाहेर खूल्या जागेत ठेवलेल्या सोफ्यावर बसून माईअण्णांची प्रतिक्रिया करत होती. तिला पाहून माईच्या जीवात जीव आला. त्या दोहोंनी तिला फटकारले. परंतु ती इवलीशी चिमुरडी माईस म्हणाली, “तूच तर तूझ्या भाषणात सर्व स्त्रियांना सावित्रीबाई फुले बनण्यास सांगितलेस, मग मी चुकीचे काय केले? मी तर आहे ना इथे, तुमची वाट पहात.”

देवयानीच्या त्या शब्दातील आत्मविश्वास तसेच नैतिक मूल्ये जपण्याची वृत्ती पाहून माईस तिचा अभिमान वाटला व क्षणभरात त्यांनी तिला आपल्या बाहुपाशात बंदिस्त करून तिचा पापा घेतला, व म्हणाल्या “अग बाळे, पण तू बाहेर जाण्याआधी आमची परवानगी घेणे महत्वाचे होते. कारण तू तर खूप लहान आहेस. तसेच आमची चिंता थोडीशी दूर झाली असती. पण लक्षात ठेव यापुढे.” यावर ती मंद स्मित करत माईना बिलगली.

## मुलांच्या शिक्षणाकरिता पालकांना वेळ नाही

ग. स. खैर

Published in October, 1965

मुले अभ्यासात मागे का पडली? घरी सोय असून मुलांना बोर्डिंगमध्ये का ठेवले? वाईट संगती लागून मुले का बिघडली?

वरील तिन्ही प्रश्नांचे उत्तर एकच आहे आणि ते पालकांना व शिक्षकांना माहित आहे. “पालकांना वेळ नाही.” या एका उत्तरात वरील तिन्ही प्रश्न निकालात निघतात. आजकाल हे पालकांचे कारण फार मोठ्या प्रमाणावत ऐकू येते. सर्वांना त्याचा परिचय आहेच.

या बाबतीत खरे खोटे काय आहे त्याची शहानिशा ज्या त्या पालकाने स्वतःच केली पाहिजे. आपल्याला वेळ नाही ही वस्तुस्थिती आहे का केवळ सबब व आत्मसमर्थन आहे? सोयीस्कर रीतीने आपण आपली फसवणूक करून तर घेत नाही ना? आत्मवंचना करून मुलांचीही वंचना तुम्ही करीत नाही ना? वरील सबब सांगणाऱ्या पालकांच्या बाबतीत शेकडा नव्वद प्रमाणात आत्मवंचनाच असण्याचा संभव आहे.

प्रत्येक पालकाने आपल्या, मनात पुढील प्रयोग करून पाहवा. नापास झालेली? बिघडलेली व बोर्डिंगमध्ये राहणारी मुले तुमच्या नजरेला नजर देऊन विचारीत आहे. ‘आई बाबा, तुम्हाला खरच वेळ नाही म्हणून आमच्या आयुष्याची माती करीत आहात काय? इतर गोष्टी करून थोडाही वेळ या तुमच्या मुलांकरीता तुम्ही देऊ शकत नाही ना? आम्ही तुमचा रोजचा कार्यक्रम पाहात आहोत.त्यात आमच्या वाटयला वेळ देता येत नाही असे तर दिसत नाही.’ या प्रश्नाला तुम्ही काय उत्तर द्याल? मुलांना ते पटेल का?

तुम्हाला असे वाटते की आपला मौल्यवान वेळ मुलांना देण्यापेक्षा नोकरी, बकिली, डॉक्टरी, व्यापार-व्यवसाय, इत्यादि उलाढालींमध्ये घालवून अधिक नावलौकिक मिळवावा. अधिक पैसा मिळवावा. तो पुढे मुलांच्या नावाने ठेवावा. मोठ्या आईबापांची मुले आणि खूप पैसा, यापेक्षा मुलांना काय पाहिजे?

मुलांना पाहिजे तुमचे प्रेम, तुमचे लक्ष, तुमचे प्रेमळ मार्गदर्शन ते तुम्ही दिले तर मुलेही आपापला पैसा मिळवतील. नावलौकिक मिळवतील. तुमच्या संचित धनापेक्षा त्यांच्या स्वावलंबनाचा आणि आत्मविश्वासाचा पैसा जास्त टिकाऊ स्वरूपाचा राहिल. उलटपक्षी पालकांच्या मार्गदर्शनाच्या अभावी बिघडलेली मुले, पालकांनी जन्मभर राबून मिळविलेला पैसा चुटकीसारखा उडवून टाकतील.

मध्यम वर्गातील आजचे आईबाप सुशिक्षित आहेत. बहुसंख्य मॅट्रिक आहेत, आणि बरेचसे पदवीधरही आहेत. त्यांनी आपल्या मुलांच्या शिक्षणाकडे लक्ष द्यायलाच पाहिजे.

अगदी प्राथमिक शिक्षणाच्या अवस्थेपासून मुलांकडे नीट लक्ष दिले तर मुले आपापल्या मार्गी लागून पुढे त्यांना थोडा वेळ मार्गदर्शनही पुरेसे होईल. मुलांचे हस्ताक्षर, शुध्दलेखन, वाचन, उजळणी, हिशेब, प्राथमिक इंग्रजी पाठांतर इत्यादि गोष्टींकडे पहिल्यापासून लक्ष दिले तर पुढच्या शिक्षणाचा पाया मजबूत होईल. मुले वरच्या वर्गात गेल्यानंतर त्यांच्या अभ्यासात तुम्ही मार्गदर्शन करू शकत नसला तरी अभ्यासाची व शाळेतील घडामोडींची विचारपूस करा. संगत कोणाची आहे ते पाहा, आणि असेच सुचेल ते करा. मुलांच्या अभ्यासात आणि शालेय जीवनात तुम्हाला गोडी आहे ते त्याला कळू द्या. त्यामुळे मुलांनाही अभ्यासात आणि शाळेत गोडी वाटू लागेल आणि मग मुले नापास झाली म्हणून व ती बिघडली म्हणून पश्चाताप करण्याची वेळ येणार नाही.

तुमची मुले मोठी झाल्यावर आपल्या मोठेपणाचे रहस्य सांगताना त्यांनी असे उद्गार काढावेत की आमच्या मातापित्यांनी आमच्या शिक्षणाकडे बारीक लक्ष दिले म्हणून आम्ही मोठे झालो.

(‘मासिक समाचार’ अ.वि.गृह-पुणे-यांच्या सौजन्याने)

## आली आली एकादशी

स्मिता बळवळळी

आली आली एकादशी

जात होतो दर्शनास दरवर्षी

खरा अर्थ भक्तीचा आता उमगला

सर्व रूपांत तू मदतीस उभा ठाकला

जेंव्हा कुलूप लागले देवालयात

आली एक गोष्ट ध्यानात

देव नसे फक्त मंदिरात

वसे तो मानवाच्या हृदयात

जाणीव झाली ह्याची आज

करू आता ह्या स्थितीवरही मात

पण मनात तू गवसशील जेंव्हा

मनातील मलीनता दूर होईल तेंव्हा

हा भक्तीचा ठेवा शोधायला मनात

पांडुरंगा तुझे आशिर्वाद देतीलच साथ

तुला स्थानापन्न करावं म्हणतो अंतरात

आषाढी एकादशी रोजच साजरी होईल मग मनात

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प्रभूतेनान्धकारेण न किंचिद् दृष्टिगोचरम् ||१||

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वन्दामहे चिदानन्दान् धर्मरक्षणतत्परान् ||३||

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भक्तवृन्दान् उपागम्य बहुसम्मानिता जनाः |

विमर्शयोगे कृत्वा तु आशीर्वाचांसि पदाय च |

भजने पूजने रक्ताः कृता भक्त्या जनाः रताः ||४||

अचला क्रियतां भक्तिः अस्माकं नित्यपाठिनाम् |

साधयितुं गुणोत्कर्षं भक्तिमार्गेण प्रस्थितान् |

सुधीन् विधीयतान् अस्मान् सेवाभावानुसरिणान् |

विवेकभक्तिवैराग्यैः धर्मदीपो विजाग्रताम् ||५||

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