Aamchi Ratnas are now Mumbai Ratnas

Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Honourable Governor of Maharashtra
presenting the Mumbai Ratna Awards to
(left) Shri Praveen Kadle and (right) Shri Anand Pejawar

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Students who have been successful in various examinations in the year 2021, from Universities and recognised Boards and institutions are requested to send the details in the following proforma:

1. Name (in full):
2. Address and Telephone No.:
3. Examination passed and Board/University/Institution:
4. Class & No. of Marks obtained:
5. Any Merit Scholarship/s / Prize/s:

This should be accompanied by a photocopy of the Marksheet duly attested by school/college/institute authorities.

The last date for receiving the details is September 5th, 2021
The CSN Page

KSA-CSN Website database

So you think Bhanaps are not cut out for business? Well, you are wrong. There are hundreds of us in business already. And KSA CSN aims to encourage and help many more to venture into setting up their own businesses.

**How can you help?** Well, to begin with, give your business to a fellow Bhanap when all else is equal. Did you ask “*How do I know whether there is a Bhanap source for what I need?*” Good question. Visit www.kanarasaraswat.com/csn. This site hosts a database which already lists over a hundred Bhanap businesses and the count is growing by the day. Search the database for a Bhanap supplier of whatever you need. And be **“ONE UP FOR BHANAP”!** If you use the database and are happy about it share that with us. Send a WhatsApp message to 88795 57536. Suggestions are most welcome.

If you are a Bhanap Entrepreneur, list your business on this database. It’s very easy and free. Remember that more and more Bhanap consumers will visit this site to look for a Bhanap supplier.

If you know Bhanap Entrepreneurs who are not in this database, encourage them to list their business here.

**Together we will flourish.**

The slogan **“ONE UP FOR BHANAP”** was coined by a committed volunteer for the movement, Gopinath Mavinkurve. He was inspired by “Vocal for Local” and localized it some more! Most appropriate, don’t you think?!
Dear Friends,

A couple of weeks ago, we Indians celebrated the entry of our great country into the 75th year of Independence. It is a proud moment for all of us. India represents a civilisation of thousands of years which no other country can boast of, except China. There is enough evidence to support the progress made by the Indian civilisation in art, culture, science, music, architecture, medicine, literature, philosophical thinking, etc. I can go on enumerating the areas in which India or Bharat has made huge strides to become one of the two global majors in the world, China being the other one.

The successive violent incursions, made by various western countries from across the border from the beginning of the previous millennium slowed down this progress significantly. Despite these invasions, India was considered to be the richest country in the world up to 1700 AD with India’s GDP share of the world economy at 24.4%. Soon after, there was a steady decline with the direct and indirect rule of European colonies and the British Empire from the year 1700 onwards till 1947. This colonisation of India by different European countries, including the British Empire brought down India’s GDP share of the Global economy to just around 3% in 1947 when India gained Independence from the British Empire.

After 75 years of Independence, India’s share of global economy has reached at around 6.7%, as compared to 3% in 1947, but nowhere around 25% which was India’s global GDP share in the year 1700, when India was the richest country in the world. When India became Independent seventy-five years ago, we were labelled as an undeveloped country. Today, we are called a developing country. Many of our indices in terms of literacy, healthcare and hygiene, per capita income, agricultural and industrial labour productivity look bad when we look at the indices of many of the other countries.

The disparity in income levels has worsened a lot in these seventy-five years. While we can boast of several Indian billionaires in the latest list of Forbes Global Billionaires, we see an ever-growing number of beggars around the country. This is indeed a sad story of the post-Independence era.

We Indians are proud of our rich culture and heritage. But as we enter the seventy-fifth year of Independence, we should now start working towards making our country one of the major powerhouses on the global front in the areas of literacy, workforce productivity, healthcare, technology, science, literature to make this country a great country which is beyond petty politics. India is a large country with a lot of diversity. We should forget our differences. We should all work towards making this country once again a united country, which we all can be proud of.

Twenty-five years hence, when we enter the hundredth year of our Independence, India must emerge as a country we can be proud of once again.

Regards
Praveen P. Kadle
Our grandmother, Sita M. Hirebet, was a soft spoken, affectionate and gentle lady, who brightened our world with her ever-ready smile and her graceful melodious humming. She would hum 80’s Billboard chart melodies in her classical vibrato and astonish us! Music was definitely her passion, and her refuge during all of life’s ups and downs.

From her humble and unassuming disposition, one would never guess that she was a nationally recognized Hindustani classical singer. She was a devoted wife and loving mother, a multi-talented, nurturing home-maker, knitting cardigans that appeared machine-made in their perfection, producing intricate and delicate embroidery that would showcase at local exhibitions; she enjoyed painting (her work now carefully preserved by her daughter), and cooking from scratch those delicious, but laborious, traditional recipes, like wadiyo, recipes which she noted down in her elegant hand-writing. In fact, we still admire how she would write letters to us in that same beautiful cursive, her English echoing the literary prose she was so fond of reading.

But most of all she sang her way into people’s hearts with her music! Although she married at a young age (nearly 17), she was encouraged by her parents-in-law and husband (who often accompanied her on the tabla) to continue her musical education. Her training in Hindustani Classical vocal music began at an early age, later studying under renowned maestro Gangubai Hangal, who sang in the Kirana gharana style, handed down by the great Abdul Karim Khan. She accompanied Gangubai Hangal at various concerts and was also invited to sing live on All India Radio - Delhi, Goa, Pune, J & K, Doordarshan, and honored with medals and commendations at various music mandals. She soon began to teach as well, some of her CSB students being, Priti (nee Chandavarkar), Anjali (nee Mundkur), and Deepa (nee Mirjankar), who still remember her fondly with great respect.

When her great-grandchildren arrived, she was frail but ever ready to be with them wherever they were, she even travelled to France and Singapore to be with them. Unfortunately, she developed an aneurism in her brain, which could not be treated and while she was still cheerful and accepting of her illness, it started her downfall and she passed away before her 75th birthday, leaving all of us too early, but always lovingly remembered.
Dear Editor,

I loved reading following two articles published in August 2021 issue of KS Magazine:

1. “Social Media - Think Before You Post” by Mr. Gopinath Mavinkurve is written beautifully in simple language, without going too much into legalities. It shows the capability of the author to express in simple term and giving alternatives to the readers - how one should deal with, while posting any write up or forwarding a news item on Social Media.

2. “Down Memory Lane - School Snippets” by Mrs. Anjali Burde has given her experience in dealing with young school students - as a teacher during her career. The “out-of-box thinking” and “honesty” from children has been brought about so beautifully by the author.

Congratulations to both these authors for such lovely articles and with a request that they should keep writing regularly for our Magazine.

Best wishes,

Jairam Khambadkone

Dear Friends,

Learning of the passing of Mira Gopal Hattiangdi came as a great shock and source of sadness. I had opened the August Kanara Saraswat to find the eloquent letter from Jaishankar and Nirmala Bondal concerning this unhappy news—which was confirmed a day later in an e-mail message from Malu’s daughter Sudha Shah. The Bondal’s letter captures so much of the many public and private ways that Malu gave to her own community and a wider world. I will not rehearse those accomplishments here. I first met Malu and Gopal on April 10, 1966. I had been working on research on the history of the bhanaps for about three months when a gentleman (whose name I cannot recall) at Talmakwadi suggested I contact Dr. Gopal Hattiangdi concerning research materials and insights on the history of the Shri Chitrapur Math. My diary records that I was warmly welcomed into the Hattiangdi’s home for what was to be the first of many many visits. I was deeply impressed by Malu’s gentle beauty, charm and wit. Over the years I came to appreciate how she both supported and balanced the many strengths of Gopalmam. Every time my wife and I were in Bombay we enjoyed visiting Indra Kunj at Laburnum Road. Our last visit was in November 2011 when we were privileged to join in the conclusions of the KSA centenary. I shall always remember Malu as the always gracious, wise and lovely person I had first met just over fifty years ago. I take comfort in believing she has attained the blessings of God and Guru.

Frank F. Conlon
Professor Emeritus
University of Washington,
Seattle
(conlon@uw.edu)

Dear Editor,

I have been reading Military Musings by Maj Gen B N Rao, AVM, VSM & BAR (RETD) with interest. Being in Mumbai has a disadvantage of not being near any border. Nearest I came to rifle & 303 bullet was during our NCC training. We were taken to Ghatkopar firing range to learn rifle shooting. As Senior Under Officer of NCC, I had to keep our college NCC Cadets in control, that too, on a firing range open space. A few of us Under Officers were given extra bullets to practice. Recoil of 303 firing was very hard & I still remember that pain in my shoulder. But it was a unique experience & we all enjoyed it.

We had a few army men to train us. Our Subedar Saab was an elderly Maharashtrian on the verge of retirement. He always had a smile on his face but battle hardened steel in his voice. Some of our new NCC cadets made a mistake (should I call it blunder) of calling & addressing that veteran Subedar Saab as simply Subedar with word saab missing. Moreover their chat with him was in the usual BAMBAIYA HINDI. Our veteran of many border skirmishes was regaling those new cadets with his armed forces stories, but another army man different idea. A young soldier of Naik rank took all those new cadets to parade ground & gave a stern lecture on army decorum but at lower ranks of up to JCO. The theme was ALWAYS ADDRESS A SUBEDAR AS SUBEDAR SAAB. Closing sentence was — EVEN GENERAL SAABS address SUBEDAR as SUBEDAR SAAB. This is the tradition of the Army, & you NCC cadets are going to follow it.

Our MAJ GEN B.N RAO SAAB (or maam for us) has used his unique style of writing June 2021 edition shared wonderful camaraderie between batch mates at NDA or other army training centers. Army training is not just parade or learning martial arts, but creating that INDIAN ARMY LEADER WHO WILL BE PRIDE OF ALL INDIANS AT ALL TIME & FOR ALL TIME. JAI HIND.

Dr Ashok Dayanand Nadkarni
Kandivilli East, Mumbai
AAMCHI RATNAS ARE NOW “MUMBAI RATNAS”
BY SUNIL ULLAL

It was Monday 19th July, 2021. An unforgettable day, undoubtedly a Great day for “Mumbaikars” but the GOLDEN day for every Chitrapur Saraswat in particular and Saraswats all over in general. On this Marvelous Monday, the “Mumbai Ratna” Award (recognised by the Ministry of Human Resources & Ministry of Higher Education – Govt. of India) was presented at the historic RAJ BHAVAN situated in the successful Commercial Capital of our country, MUMBAI.

This was basically given in recognition of their service to those who have contributed consistently in maintaining and developing the Social, Cultural and Spiritual sectors of this wonderful city that is also known as the “Karmabhoomi” for giant business houses, the likes of Tatas, Birlas, Ambanis, Hiranandani, Lodhas, Adanis.

This first ever “Mumbai Ratna” Award was presented at the august hands of the Honorable Governor of Maharashtra and Goa, SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI Ji to a few selected citizen of Mumbai who have silently and dedicatedly served Humanity tirelessly and contributed immensely, in their own way, for the development and betterment of City of Mumbai and making it a much liveable place for the society by excelling in their own chosen Work fields. There are the chosen few who have gone out beyond their normal call of duty and extend all possible help & support to maintain and sustain the well-knit fabric of this wonderful City of Mumbai in order to achieve our Prime Minister’s goal of making India “Atmanirbhar.” In the words of the Hon Governor himself - As this award is given by the people, the “Mumbai Ratna” award is considered to be more important than any Padma Awards.

It was a delightful moment for all Saraswats to note that among those 31 selected elite personalities from the chosen 25 categories, there were two Chitrapur Saraswats, (Bhanaps) SHRI PRAVEEN PURUSHOTTAM KADLE and SHRI ANANDPRAasad KAMALAKAR PEJAWAR who were conferred upon with the prestigious “Mumbai Ratna Award”. The 25 categories included Industrialists, Bureaucrats, Technocrats, and Experts from Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) Industry, Law & Judiciary, Press & Journalism, Social Services, Education, Music Industry, etc.

Shri Praveen Kadle

Who does not know the humble, soft spoken, graceful and passionate PRAVEEN MAAM, our great scholar, President of Standing Committee of Chitrapur Math, President of Kanara Saraswat Association (KSA) and founder promoter of RITHWIK Foundation for Performing Arts. He is a Board Member on various Tata and non-Tata companies and contributes to many industry and economic bodies both domestic and international. He was a former MD & CEO of Tata Capital. He was known as the “Turnaround Magician” of the House of Tata’s and the Blue-Eyed boy of Mr Ratan Tata. Praveen maam is now the Chairman of TATA Autocomp Systems Ltd., and is with Tata Group for more than 30 years. Prior to joining House of Tatas, he served as the CEO and member of the Board of Garware-Wall Ropes Ltd. Praveen maam is also actively associated with various charities and sits on the board of Child Rights and You (CRY), a non-profit organisation working wholeheartedly for the upliftment of underprivileged children. He enjoys listening to Music of all kinds and loves reading. He is also a recipient of a number of prestigious awards in recognition of his outstanding work in the Finance and Auto sectors. He has been recently appointed as the Advisor to the Board of the SVC Bank Ltd. For his consistent contribution towards the Corporate Governance Praveen maam was honoured and conferred upon with the prestigious “Mumbai Ratna” Award at the function.

A strong believer of his motto of “3 Ds”- Dedication, Discipline and Determination, he has been consistent in achieving one goal after the other successfully with his defined purpose in life and also the courage of conviction to achieve the set goals.

Shri Anand Pejowar

Now let us rejoice in knowing about our young, dynamic and ambitious ANANDMAAM. With a total corporate career of 38 years, he started his career at the young age of just 18 years, as a Clerical Assistant, in Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) then moved to Banking (including a short stint in SVC Bank Ltd.) Switched over to Insurance sector when it opened up in 2001. As of date he is the President of SBI Life Insurance Company Ltd. (A leading listed Life Insurance...
Company in India). With his practical approach, adequate patience and a positive mindset, he is effectively serving the company since over past 15 years. He has been conferred upon with several prestigious national & international awards in the field of Insurance. Recently, he was also selected by the Insurance Alerts as "one of the nine most influential Insurers in Asia". Recently, the Department of Financial Services, (DFS), Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India, highly appreciated the excellent work done by his team under his leadership in creating a digital application, which at the request of DFS, is being used by organisations like LIC & some non - life insurance companies. This is helping them and their partner Banks for faster settlement of PMJJBY & PMSBY Death Claims.

Anandmaam,a strong believer of age old concept of “giving back to the society”, is also involved in a lot of philanthropic activities. This he does in memory of his late parents. He has also adopted a few schools in Mumbai, where he runs these activities, the most important one being the "Signal Shala" which is being run below the Teen Haath Naka bridge in Thane. This is the first of its kind school in India, which is recognised and run in shipping containers. This school specially caters to the roadside children, who stay below the bridges and earn a living either begging or selling small wares at the Signals. They otherwise do not get an opportunity to have quality education. He is also closely associated with the Parijnan Vidyalay at Karla and has helped in setting up a Computer Lab and a Robotic Lab in the school for the benefit of the children. Anandmaam was also honoured and conferred upon with the prestigious Award of “Mumbai Ratna,” for his extraordinary contribution in his field of Insurance.

The entire community of Chitrapur Saraswats feels immensely proud and delighted to note that our ever energetic Praveenmaam and Anandmaam were among the 31 Elite Personalities selected for this awards. Other globally renowned personalities awarded were Shri/s. Ratan Tata, Adi Godrej, Anil Agarwal (Industrialist), Shri. Niranjan Hiranandani, (Real Estate Development, Shri. Iqbal Singh Chahal, Municipal Commissioner of BMC (Public Service), Padma Shri Shri. Ujjwal Nikam, Public Prosecutor, (Law & Judiciary), Padma Shri Shri. Udit Narayan, (Music - Playback Singer), Shri. Anup Jalota,(Music - Bhajan Samrat), Mr.Rajkumar Rai, CMD of Union Bank of India, (BFSI - Banking), Shri. Navneet Munot – MD & CEO of HDFC AMC (BFSI - Mutual Fund) to name a few of them. As agreed by the Hon Governor himself, this will now be a regular feature every year.

This memorable Award Distribution programme was sponsored by Union Bank of India, ENNAR Group, FT Limited and Nana-Nani Foundations.

On behalf of every member of Saraswat Communities all over the world, KSA feels extremely proud and happy in expressing its sincere appreciation and heartiest congratulations to PRAVEEN MAAM AND ANAND MAAM for enhancing the healthy image of Chitrapur Saraswats in particular and all Saraswats in general, by being the “Mumbai Ratnas” as a result of their yeomen services for the peace and betterment of the society.

May Lord Bhavanishankara and our Guru Parampara bless our precious “Ratnas”, their supportive families with sound health and abundant happiness ... may they be blessed with more opportunities to excel in the activities they are involved in their respective fields.

![Shri Anand Pejawar](image)

**Did you know?**

Mr. Gopal S. Kolpe allowed a motor car to pass over his chest and broke an iron chain at Santacruz X’mas week!

*(Published in January 1928)*
A NEW LANDMARK IN OUR HISTORY

By H. Shankar Rau, C.I.E.

(Published in January 1940)

The event which will take place before our eyes in a little while, namely, the opening of the Kanara Saraswat Association’s new building, will be an important landmark, not only in the history of the Association, but also in the history of the community. In order to understand its significance, it is necessary to grasp two outstanding facts. In the first place, thanks to the seemingly unending exodus from the Kanaras, Bombay, which once seemed so forbidding, has now become the most important centre of our population.

In 1896, Bombay had 226 Chitrapur Saraswats, in 1912 as many as 1252; and now we are over 3000. In the second place, the Association, which was no more than a social club in 1911, has now blossomed into the most important social institution of the community. And this it has done through its invaluable monthly magazine, through the lead it has been giving in various matters concerning the welfare of the community.

That such an institution should have a habitation of its own was a question of time. At its own was a question of time. At its very start in 1911, it was content to have the use, on hire, of a room rented by Mr. B. Dattaram in Shete’s building, Lamington Road. Very soon thereafter, in the same year, it was using a room at 343, Cross Lane, Grant Road, jointly with the Kanara Saraswat Hostel, and then managed by the Late Mr. K Sanjiva Rao. In 1913-14, it rented an independent room at Andrade’s Place, Chikhalwadi. And on January 1, 1916 it moved into the hall now occupied by it in the Saraswat Co-operative Buildings, Gamdevi. It’s membership, which was 64 in the first year, is about 800 now, and includes a large body of non-resident gentlemen distributed all over the country.

The idea of a Building Fund was first mooted in 1914-15 when the Association had decided to be a tenant member of the Housing Society and had to make its contribution in that capacity. The end of 1935 saw the Fund still at Rs 2,375, but it rose to Rs 7,515 by the end of 1938, as a result of the very determined efforts made by Mr. S.R. Dongerkery, the energetic President of the jubilee year. The Reserve Fund of the Association, which was being slowly built up from the very first year, stopped at Rs 15,804 at the close of 1938, having been made up mainly of contributions from patrons and life members.

The possibility of an independent building was first considered at a Conference of Presidents etc in October 1936. In August 1937, the Managing Committee of the Association appointed a Special Committee in this behalf. In February 1938, that Committee made its report. In April 1938, a special general meeting of the Association approved the report in the main and appointed a Board to advice the Managing Committee. In July 1938, the annual general meeting appointed a Special Board with executive powers.

After considering various alternatives and after some delay necessitated by war rumours, the new Board published a detailed scheme in December 1938. The building was to be erected on the Plot 13 of the Talmakwadi Estate of the Housing Society, more or less on lines approved in April of that year. Later in response to public opinion, the Board decided to add a mezzanine floor with an internal gallery. The foundation stone was laid on April 23, 1939, by Mr S. N. Kalbag, a founder and past President, while the preliminary religious ceremonies were performed on November 22nd and 23rd.

I am glad to be able to say, firstly, that all contracts were signed in good time prior to the recent rise in prices, and, secondly, that the requisite finance through deposits, which all bear interest at 3 percent, per annum, has also been fully arranged.

Let me say how grateful we are to the Managing Committee of the Housing Society for their ungrudging co-operation at the various stages in the negotiations. They have not only sold Plot 13 to the Association, but have also placed it under a great obligation by agreeing to sell Plot 11 to it at half price on condition that it should be kept open for the common use of the Society and the Association. The open plot, small as it is, will provide much needed room for games, pandals for ceremonials etc. and will be useful to members of the Association and to tenants of the colony alike. But for this concession, the cost of land would have been higher by Rs 5700. I do not think it is incorrect to say that the Housing Society owes its origin to the revelations of the Bombay census undertaken by the Association in 1912, and I consider it is in the fitness of things that the Society should have come to the Association’s aid this year in the manner just narrated, and enabled it to have its abode in a colony which is growing fast and which will soon house a third of our entire population in Bombay and its suburbs.

It is my duty now to announce the names of the principal of donors, names which, under the arrangement approved by the Special Board, will be inscribed on a marble tablet which is to be installed in a prominent place in the building. At the top of the list is the Late Mr. D.N. Sirur, who was a patron and past President of the Association, and who, in the jubilee year, had promised a donation equivalent to the proceeds of the sale of one-fourth of the plot of land owned by him at Santacruz. In the conditions created by the war and by the levy of the immovable property tax by the Government of Bombay, the prospects of selling the land seemed rather distant, and when the position was explained to Mrs. Sundrabai Sirur, the worthy lady readily agreed to pay Rs 5,000 in full satisfaction of the earlier promise. The donation has been received, and the Board has decided to name Plot 11 as the “D.N. Sirur Square” in memory of the generous donor to whom the Association is
greatly indebted. Next on the list is a valued friend who has promised Rs 2,500, but who, despite all my entreaties, still persists in remaining anonymous. I am hoping to persuade him to lift the ban in due course, but I cannot help saying now that he did magnificent work for the institution when he was connected with its administration, and that he continues to have the true interests of the community every at heart. Third on the list is the Shamrao Vithal Cooperative Bank Ltd, our premier co-operative institution, which donated a slice of its profits regularly from year to year between 1924 and 1934. These donations total Rs 1025, and we cannot be sufficiently thankful to the Bank for the help rendered in this manner before the Association seriously thought of a building of its own. Finally, we have Mr. S.N. Kalbag, Mr S.R. Dongerkery and the speaker each of whom has given or is giving Rs 1000 to the Building Fund.

Turning next to the revenue position of the undertaking, I am glad we have secured tenants for all six tenements on the three upper floors. The new Hall has an area of 1,535 square feet against 600 square feet which is the area of the present one. In addition, we have a spacious verandah the two rooms on the ground floor, and the mezzanine floor. All these should be able to accommodate 400 to 500 persons, while the open space around should hold a somewhat a larger number.

Our architects, as you know, are Messrs Nadkarni, Talgeri & Co., who have agreed to charge us the same rate of fees as they charge to the Housing Society, namely, 2 ½ percent, but have promised to let us have half the amount back as donation. For this special kindness we are truly grateful to them. Our Contractors for the building and its sanitary installation are Messrs Ratilal & Co., who are a model of courtesy and have given no room for complaint. I should say the same of Messrs. J. D. Mody & Co., who are the contractors for the electric installation.

I have just three minutes more, and in those three minutes I intend giving you a welcome surprise. That surprise is in the form of a gracious message from our beloved Swamiji. It is in Hindi and runs thus (The message was printed in the December issue). His Holiness has also been good enough to favour us with a personal donation of Rs 101 for the Building Fund. For the prayers, good wishes and blessings conveyed in the message as also for the kindly thought which prompted the donation, we are, in all humility, duly grateful.

For my own part I wish to say just a few words in conclusion. I strongly feel that what the Math is to the community in the realm of religion, the Association is to it in the social sphere. They are the community’s two vital connecting links. And, as in the case of Math, so in that of the Association, I thank God from the bottom of my heart for allowing me to share with my colleagues in the privilege of doing our humble bit of service to it, through it, to the community.

I now request you, Mr Vice President, to be so good as to declare the new building open.
Parijnânâshram Swâmîjî’s Jnânânand âshram in Kârlâ, was built in 1986. The âshram is nestled in a valley surrounded by the Sahyâdri mountains on all sides. Devotees and volunteers used to regularly visit the âshram to have a glimpse of the Guru.

That year a few devotees including the Guru-Mâtâ and the Guru-Pitâ, Shântpâchî and Shankarnârâya Shukla mâm (fondly addressed as Shankanmâm), were residing in the divine environs of the âshram. It was a profound and long-awaited desire of mine to know more about Swâmîjî’s childhood. I seized the occasion during that visit in 1986, and I got a chance to interact with Guru-Mâtâ Shântpâchî one idle afternoon. It was then that Shântpâchî elaborated on the details of Swâmîjî’s childhood.

Shântpâchî began by telling us of her first encounter with the transcendental when she was blessed with the divine sight of The Shrîvallî Ganapati. The Lord himself inspired her to get married to Shrî Shankarnârâya Shuklamâm of Shirâlî.

The elders of both families were immediately consulted and soon the wedding bells rang. The couple settled in Shirâlî and were elated when they realised that Shântpâchî was expecting her first child. The expectant mother was treated to a life of serenity and tranquility in Shirâlî. The regular Darshana of the revered Guru – HH Shrîmad Ânandâshram Swâmîjî - witnessing the sacrosanct pûjâ of Shrî Bhavânîshankar, the consumption of the holy tîrtha, regularly attending the Dîpanamaskâra followed by the Ashthâvadhânapûjâ... indeed the sanskâra-s of the Veda-s, Mantra-s and vibrations of love, vâtsalya were steadily being absorbed by the unborn child.

It was a common practice to honour married couples after one finished partaking and participating in pious observances such as fasting and pilgrimage. Bhânâp-s from the metropolitan cities would often visit Shirâlî after completing the “Soîlâ (16) Somavâra Vrata”. Before the culmination of this particular vrata, it was a tradition to give “Vhânti” to 16 married women and honour their spouses too. As per custom, pregnant women were generally excluded from such ceremonies. Invariably, though she was expecting, Shântpâchî was invited to such celebrations, since they would always fall short of the 16th couple. As per custom, pregnant women were generally excluded from such ceremonies. Invariably, though she was expecting, Shântpâchî was invited to such celebrations, since they would always fall short of the 16th couple. Thus, even before the birth of this Yativarya, He had removed the superstitions (“moodhanambika”) from the minds of the people!!

**Divine Vision:**

Swâmîjî’s birth was a Divine event in itself. Throughout her pregnancy, Shântpâchî would have visions of snakes. These recurring visions made her a little apprehensive. She spoke to her father-in-law who not only pacified her but also assured her that it was an extremely positive omen, and that she would have the privilege of being the mother of a “Yogipurusha”. How right his predictions were!! When she went into labour, Shântpâchî was ultimately blessed with the vision of a huge golden hued, seven hooded serpent, followed by the birth of the child, on 15th June 1947.

This child was named Ravindra Shukla.

**The timing of the birth was remarkable, a rare coincidence**

- **Born in the middle of the day, exactly at 12 noon, in the middle of the month- 15th in the middle of the calendar year -June**
- Is it not something extraordinary?!!

**The connection with Lord Subrahmanya / Lord Anantheshwar:**

The few of us who were listening to her narration were spellbound. Even as a child, whenever little Ravindra visited the Shrî Anantheshwar Temple at Vittlâ for the Shashthi festival, he had the darshana of the seven hooded Nâgadevatâ. He would innocently ask the other children who had accompanied him, whether they too had seen the seven hooded Nâga, but of course they were not as fortunate as this special child who was granted the darshana by Lord Anantheshwar Himself.

Whenever Shântpâchî would bathe little Ravi, He would suddenly look so huge and would appear like Swâmî Râmdâs with a Kaupîna. He was probably hinting to Shântpâchî about his life ahead!! His childhood pranks, would baffle the neighbours as these were in line with the childhood days of Lord Krishna; he would suddenly be seen on the top of the tiled rooftops of the house giving darshana to the people around! He was the darling of all people living in the vicinity.
Meeting Ânandâshram Swâmîjî:
Ravi was a chubby, sweet child. Whenever Shankanmâm would visit the Math with little Ravi, Ânandâshram Swâmîjî with a loving, witty smile would say:
होंडी पोटली आनी मानी पोटली आपली
(“Hodi potli ânî sâni poli âyali !!”)
And after the birth of Ravindra’s younger brother Shashi, who was lean compared to Ravi, things changed a bit. Whenever Shankanmâm would take both the boys to meet Ânandâshram Swâmîjî, Swâmîjî would often say, आतं होंडी पोटली मानी पोटली आपली... ("Aatinhodipotli, sânpotli ani chirputli âyalin")
Little Ravi was a regular at the Math and would not return home without the darshana of Ânandâshram Swâmîjî. He would partake of his food only after Swâmîjî’s Bhikshâ was over and obtaining the darshana of Swâmîjî was the greatness of the God incarnate Lord Bhavânîshankar. My Guru Swâmî Parijnânâshram!!

Life in Mumbai & the school days:
Shankanmâm shifted base from Shirâlî along with the family after he was offered a job in Mumbai. By then Ravi had a little brother Shashi, and they accompanied their parents to Mumbai. Ravi got admission into Poddâr High School in Sântâcrûz.

Ravi was 10 years old when his parents were approached by the Standing Committee of the Shîr ChitrâpurMath, seeking Ravi’s horoscope as it was astrologically predicted that His future life was that of a Yogî, a Sannyâsî. Swâmîjî directed the President of the Standing Committee to meet Ravi and his parents as well.

When the day came to meet the little boy, he was at school, so a few of the Committee Members decided to personally go and meet him there. On approaching the school Head Master, they were guided to Ravi’s classroom. What greeted them was quite unexpected!

On enquiring about Ravi, the class teacher pointed to the boy who was standing on the bench, and the members had no difficulty in getting a good look at the future Swâmî! What was the reason for Ravi to be made to stand on the class bench – was it a punishment? – ‘No,’ said Shântpâchî, and added, ‘A classmate of Ravi had played some mischief in class, and the teacher had demanded the name of who was responsible for it. Ravi took the blame upon himself to protect his class mate from the punishment that was sure to follow. The teacher had then made Ravi stand on the bench.’... And that was the moment that the Standing Committee members reached Ravi’s classroom. It was easy to identify Ravi from a distance, without disturbing the class!

On inquiring about the blame that Ravi took upon himself, pat came the answer, “If the teacher had used the ruler to punish the classmate, (which was the standard punishment meted out in those days) it would have been fatal. I therefore took the blame and avoided the disaster. I could definitely bear the pain”. This attitude of patience, taking the pain with a pinch of salt, and helping out people in grief remained forever, from being Ravi to Swâmî Parijnânâshram.

The connection with the serpent God continued:
Parijnânâshram Swâmîjî used to visit an old dilapidated temple on a hilltop, near Shirâlî. After one such visit, Swâmîjî returned to Shirâlî and noticed that his sunglasses had been left behind. When He went back to retrieve them the devotees who accompanied Him were surprised to find a cobra guarding it!! As Swâmîjî approached, the cobra quickly made its exit through the gap between His feet. This unusual occurrence left an indelible mark in the hearts of the stunned onlookers. When Swâmîjî visited the farm in Bengre, the caretaker told them of a huge snake that would regularly visit his small hut and sit atop Swâmîjî’s photo, and would leave only after it paid its reverence to Swâmîjî. There were similar instances at Murdeshwar temple, Kollûr Mûkâmbikâ temple, and many more such incidents are known to have happened.

The grandeur of a Realized Master remains undiminished and untouched even when he has given up His physical coil. Swâmîjî’s Samâdhi at Kârlâ is a Sanjîvanî Samâdhi. A very recent incident proves this wonderful fact. The resident purohit at Kârlâ went inside the Garbha Graha of the Samâdhi to perform the daily pûjâ, only to find a Nâga coiled round the Linga. The devotees who had assembled for the pûjâ witnessed this awe-inspiring scene with great reverence, and the serpent soon slithered away. These extraordinary events give us veritable assurance of His eternal presence and grace which serves great solace to every Sâdhaka, every Seeker.

This is the greatness of the God incarnate Lord Bhavânîshankar my Guru Swâmî Parijnânâshram!!

My experience - The Darshana of Lord Bhavânîshankar
I took Mantra dikshâ at Shirâlî during Rathotsava, in the year 1976. As I was waiting for my turn to be called, the Lâlakî Utsava was going on in the inner parikramâ. I happened to look at Lord Bhavânîshankar and mentally said in Marâthî to him भी चालता बोलता मवामणिकं क्षेत्र जात आहें
तुला पाहायला वेश नाही” ("Mi chalatā – bōlatā Bhavâniśharkarā kaḍē jāta āhē, tūla pahāyalā vēsha nāhī”); having said that, I turned towards the door of the interview room as my turn had come to proceed for the Mantradikshâ. In those days, the interview room / Dhyâna Mandir was on a floor above the area that now houses the 3 Vigraha-s of Goddess Bhuvaneshwarī Devī, Lord Ganapati and ÂdiShankarâchârya.

Bhikshâprasâdā. Such was His devotion towards to His Guru even at a young age.

Parijnânâshram Swâmîjî used to visit an old dilapidated temple on a hilltop, near Shirâlî. After one such visit, Swâmîjî returned to Shirâlî and noticed that his sunglasses had been left behind. When He went back to retrieve them the devotees who accompanied Him were surprised to find a cobra guarding it!! As Swâmîjî approached, the cobra quickly made its exit through the gap between His feet. This unusual occurrence left an indelible mark in the hearts of the stunned onlookers. When Swâmîjî visited the farm in Bengre, the caretaker told them of a huge snake that would regularly visit his small hut and sit atop Swâmîjî’s photo, and would leave only after it paid its reverence to Swâmîjî. There were similar instances at Murdeshwar temple, Kollûr Mûkâmbikâ temple, and many more such incidents are known to have happened.
In the Dhyâna Mandir, Swâmîjî was sitting at the extreme end of the room, and as I entered and looked towards Swâmîjî, what did I see – **Lord Bhavânîshankar Himself Virâjamân!!** I walked towards the Lord, along the pathway leading to the end of the room where Swâmîjî was seated. As I walked towards the âsana kept for me in front of Swâmîjî, I could only see Lord Bhavânîshankar... upon reaching the âsana, I slowly bent down to place the “Paleru” (the plate containing coconut, fruits, flowers and Guru Kânika) on the floor. With the soft sound of the metal plate touching the ground, the Drishta of Lord Bhavânîshankar vanished and in His place was my Guru Parijnânâshram Swâmîjî, with a “Mandasmita” – a gentle smile – looking towards me. I got my Mantra and happily returned to Bengalûru after the 1976 Rathotsava.

I had never shared this experience with anyone for 2 years. In the year 1978 when Swâmîjî was observing Châturmâsa at Bengalûru Math, Question & Answer sessions were being held regularly. During one of these sessions, an elderly lady sâdhakâ asked the question: “Swâmîjî, what is the difference between Drishtânta and Sâkshâtkâra?” Swâmîjî looking at me in the audience and said to the lady, “Check with Suniti Naimpally for the answer.”

I was taken aback on hearing this statement, as I did not know what the answer was! As soon as the Question & Answer session ended, I sought permission to meet Swâmîjî and ask what answer I should give to the elderly lady.

On meeting Swâmîjî I put across my question: “Swâmîjî, I do not know the answer to the question raised by pachi, kindly enlighten me what is the difference between Sâkshâtkâra and Drashtânta”

**Swâmîjî:** The day you received Mantra japa, the Drishta – the vision – that you had of Lord Bhavânîshankar is “Sâkshâtkâra”. Whereas, “Drishtânta” is when I visited your home time and again in various forms, once as a maid servant seeking curd rice on a cold rainy day, another time when you raised your hand to hit your mischievous little son and your hand stopped from delivering the blow when you saw ME in his place: that was Drishtânta. On yet another occasion I came to your doorstep in the guise of a Sannyâsî asking for coconuts... Swâmîjî narrated the entire conversation that I had had with the Sannyâs...this is called Drishtânta...I was astonished listening to the entire explanation!! Then Swâmîjî went on to say: शाखाकार एकमता जाता आणि दृष्ट्यांत अनेकमता जाता... “Sâkshâtkâra happens only once whereas Drishtânta happens many times.”

**Lord Bhavânîshankar and My Guru, Swâmî Parijnânâshram are one!!**

With loving pranâma-s I place this small offering at the Lotus Feet of HH Sadyojât Shankarâshram Swâmîjî on the eve of the 25th year of Pattâbhisheka Jayantî.

*(Courtesy: SCM Website)*

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Malu/Mira G. Hattiangdi – a legacy of beauty, candour, charm, compassion and grace

By Ramoo Hattiangdi and Sudha Hattiangdi-Shah

Our Amma, Mira Gopal Hattiangdi used to say, “Amichi amgeley kavtuk kednahi kornu ghev naye” (one should never indulge in self-praise), so we humbly seek her pardon.

Born on 6 January 1928 in Kumta at her maternal grandfather, Dr. Mahabaleshwar Masurkar’s home, her parents, Smt. Shantabai (nee Rama) and Dr. Ganesh N. Kowshik christened her Malati, and she was endearingly called Malu by all her maternal relatives, childhood and long time friends and, most affectionately, by her husband. As a child, her granddaughter Priya was intrigued that her grandmother had two names and gleefully enjoyed teasing her by repeating, “M for Malu-Mira”.

Malati grew up in the Saraswat Cooperative Housing Society in Gamdevi, Bombay, and moved to Anandashram in 1938 with her parents and grandfather’s extended family. She was a bright student and secured a first class in the Matriculation exam. Her gentle beauty, candour, charm, compassion, elegance and wit won the hearts of everyone who had the pleasure of knowing her - including a young man named Gopal who chanced to see her at his aunt’s residence, was enamoured by her and sought her hand in marriage.

Amma and Papa so suited each other that they tied the knot on 14 December 1945 and, as was the tradition, Malati was rechristened Mira by her in-laws and joyfully welcomed into the then joint family of Shri H. Shankar Rau, at 2 Laburnum Road. Mira carried out the responsibilities of the large household in a disciplined, dedicated, loving and efficient manner and was adored by all three generations of her new family. Her mornings would begin with Aarti, at 2 Laburnum Road. Mira carried out the responsibilities of the large household in a disciplined, dedicated, loving and efficient manner and was adored by all three generations of her new family. Her mornings would begin with abhishek, floral shringaar, prayers and aarti of all the Gods, Goddesses, Gurus and Saints in our “Deva kuda”. Every sunset, the lighting of the deepa and prayers were sacrosanct.

During the month of Shravana, Amma would adorn the silver mukha of Goddess Gauri, place Her in a mantap decorated with flowers, rangoli and lights. For nearly five decades, she performed the Mangala Gauri puja every Tuesday in Shravana. Painstakingly, she would decorate both entrances to our home with exquisite, colourful, rangoli carpets that many guests thought were real and would invariably step on. In the evenings, she would look glowing, dressed in a vibrant nine yard silk sari, wearing a pearl nathu, a gajra adorning her perfectly coiffed bun and she would welcome her relatives and friends for haldi-kumkam. As one of our friends still recalls, our Amma “always looked radiant” like the Goddess Gauri herself. After the passing on of the family elders, Amma continued the tradition of the Gauri aavahan and Ganesh Chathurti pujas followed by visarjan until 2020.

While conforming to tradition, Amma was among the safest women drivers from the 1950s and she drove even whilst in the U.K. when she accompanied Papa to the U.K. and Europe for six months in 1951. Many times she would recall her amusement when those in the U.K. would be surprised to see a perfectly attired sari-clad woman driving a car with such ease! Her artistic handwriting was a treat to read when her comforting weekly letters (to Ramoo, Vidya and Priya in the U.A.E., Brussels and Riyadh, and to Sudha, Hemant, Sameer and Shaan in Canada) would reach us in the pre-email years.

Amma had the self-acquired talent of exquisite art, craft, painting, embroidery, knitting, sewing, designing and tailoring, which, without hesitation, she would share or teach others. Over the decades, countless students attended her painting classes, and as one of her students still says: “in the end it was Aunty’s touch that finished our final paintings but we took credit for doing them!”

After we grew up, Amma took, like a duck to water, to social welfare and education to help challenged and underprivileged children and women. Her lifelong honorary services have been acknowledged by the Saraswat Mahila Samaj, Balak Vridha School, Seva Sadan Society, Savera School for challenged children, The Stephen High School for the deaf and aphasic children, Women’s Home Industries, Bapnu Ghar, Maharashtra State Women’s Council, and the Nowrangay Balak Ashram in Pandharpur. At home, she taught embroidery and tailoring to women who needed help, and on Saturdays she taught children to turn recyclable materials into various crafts. There was never a minute wasted in any day of the week!

Amma translated the Saraswat culinary treatise, “Rasachandrika”, from Marathi to English with the support of other Samaj members, and the first English version was published in 1988. She was adept at cooking delicious Saraswat recipes as well as at creating continental and baked delicacies. On Friday mornings the flower seller would bring a variety of fresh flowers to our doorstep, as one of Amma’s favourite weekly activities was adorning our home with exquisite Ikebana and other floral arrangements.

For ninety-three years and more, Amma remained the same gracious, intelligent, charming, lovely person, perfectly attired, and an exemplary spiritual guide to us. She continued her daily reading of the scriptures, singing bhajans and occasionally sharing unique, personal divine experiences of past.

On the eve of her passing, she spoke with her grandson-in-law, Prashanth, in the U.S.; she had her daily, joyful hour long phone chat with Sudha until 22:00 hours; and she wished Ramoo good night before going to bed. Through the morning of June 28th, our Amma passed on peacefully in her sleep - just as she had always wished for.

Although she is being missed immensely by us all, we celebrate our dearest Amma’s life and treasure all the wonderful memories we shared together. We pray to Paramatma that she attains Sadhgathi (salvation) and rests in Prashanthi (supreme peace).
Fond Remembrance
on your 101st Birthday

Padmanabh (Maruti) Vithal Masur
25th September 1920

You will always live in the hearts of all!
Greatly missed and fondly remembered by:
Wife: Jayashree
Masurkars, Jadhavs, Padbidris, Sawants, Shindes, Naiks, Vaidyas,
Bagwes and Bhapkars
All near and dear relatives and friends.

September 2021
Dr. Mira Sudhakar Savkur (Nee Kulkarni)
07th April 1941 – 21st June 2021

It is with the heaviest of hearts that we write this obituary to our beloved Mhau, Dr. Mira Sudhakar Savkur. A vibrant and energetic personality, our Mhavu was a multi-talented perfectionist who excelled at anything she took up. Right from having a successful career - climbing to the top of her chosen field, to managing her house beautifully; from keeping in touch with every relation, every friend, everyone that she or her sisters ever connected with in their lives, to growing emotionally and spiritually as a person; from expressing herself in poetry, to being the most wonderful aunt, sister, wife and daughter, she did it all and did it in style. The eldest of 4 sisters, Mhavu was brought up in a household that always opened its doors to anyone and everyone. That trait she inherited from her Mother and Father both, in double. Not only was she actively in touch with everyone in her family and friend circle from every sphere of life, but more than that, she genuinely cared about each and every one of them. Even on her deathbed she had us call them one by one, asking about the troubles in their life, confirming that they were all ok. Not once did she speak about her condition to anyone, about the tremendous pain she was in or that her breath was becoming more and more laborious. When we asked, she would say, people have enough pain in their lives, why should I load them with mine as well.

Her poetry, which she wrote in Marathi, showed her deep connection with the Supreme. Each line in her poetry celebrated that connection with the Divine Mother that is in each one of us, and was in her far stronger than all of us. 2 weeks before her passing, she told us that she woke up feeling that she had been sleeping on the lap of the Divine Mother, and as she woke she was slowly becoming one with her.

Even as she passed from this world on 21st June 2021, into the lap and heart of her beloved Divine Mother, she had a peaceful and content look on her face.

On that day, we lost a huge piece of our lives, one that no one can ever fill. She will forever be in our thoughts and prayers and will hold a special place in our hearts.

We miss you everyday Mhavu, more than words can say.

Fondly remembered by
Hattikudur, Savkur, Kulkarni families and the numerous others whose lives she touched.

Mona Kulkarni- Savkur
A Multi-Talented Personality

Dr Sitaram and Nirmala Kulkarni had four brilliant daughters, Mira, Jyoti, Anusuya and Laxmi. Mira was the eldest of the four sisters, and, their father, Dr Sitaram Kulkarni wanted atleast one of them to become a doctor and help him with his large practice. Three of them achieved their Doctorates and one of them became a medical doctor. A child specialist, Anusuya migrated to England with her husband.

Mira joined the well-known Haffkine Institute of Training, Science & Technology and rose to become the Head of the Vaccine Department. She was very good at what she did and got the opportunity to participate in various training programmes both in India and abroad.

Mami (Nirmala Kulkarni), wanted all her children to be well versed in music and dance. As a child, Mira learnt the art of Kathak and won many prizes for her performances. She also wrote wonderful poems in highly fluent Marathi and that were very philosophical in their meaning. She was also fond of reading and knitting and was an excellent cook. Her book of poems was published and very well appreciated when she participated in several Kavya Sammelans. Mira had a flair for explain her highly philosophical topics in very simple words and was popular in our community. She was honour to be invited several times to give lectures on Hinduism at the Christian Association.

Even though Mira and Sudhakar got married very late, they had a wonderful married life filled with love and humour and complimented each other beautifully.

Mira had a great sense of humour and loved to crack jokes. She was loved by all her sisters and cousins and enjoyed hosting several lovely family gatherings at her house in Haffkine Institute. Hidden under her jovial and cryptic façade was a wonderful Bhakth. She was a great devotee of Shree Dattatreya, our family deity and our Gurus.

Even in her final illness she stayed positive and calm like a true Vaishnav. She left for her divine abode on the very auspicious day "NirjaliEkadashi" to merge with her beloved Shree Dattatreya

May GOD grant her Peace and Sadgati!

Written by Neela Balsekar, 9, Sindhula, Fourth Floor, N. Gamadia Road, Mumbai – 400 026
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“FatttyBumbbolla!” was the refrain whenever Samar walked past us. Samar was my only tubby classmate. Looking back now with my doctor’s lens, he was probably only just a little overweight. And yet, he stood out like a sore thumb, thus inviting this unique moniker.

Fast forward to decades later in my consulting room. 9-year-old Daksha’s mother blamed herself for being a bad mother. She felt that Daksha was underweight compared to her peers. However, my assessment showed that Daksha had a perfect weight for her age. For me this was a refreshing and a rather rare find. Spontaneous congratulations burst forth “She is a perfect weight. You are doing something very right”. And indeed, there is a reason for this. Childhood overweight is just so common these days, that the ones who are a normal weight start looking underweight in comparison.

My dear readers, the Covid pandemic arrived with a bang. However, there has been yet another pandemic sweeping us much more silently well before covid arrived on the scene— the childhood obesity pandemic. This 2-part article talks about the same. In the first, I shall describe the scale of the problem, the causes, and why it needs addressing. The second part will deal with solutions for the same. Kindly note, I use the words ‘obesity’ and ‘overweight’ here interchangeably for simplicity. However, in medical terms they have different connotations.

To start with, childhood obesity simply means that the child has too much weight for his/her age and ethnicity. The magnitude of the problem is such that today, one in every five children has excess weight on. And this ratio is only expected to increase, just as illustrated with Samar’s and Daksha’s stories.

Whilst this may sound simple enough, it is surprising that childhood overweight goes undetected for long in many cases. One reason for this is societal perception. The concept of ‘gubgubeet cherdoon’, i.e a chunky chubby cherub could actually be an overweight child. And the ‘sukkadpettu’ maybe a completely normal weight, a la Daksha.

The other is that though children get weighed very frequently, not all children are actually being charted on a ‘Growth Chart’. The parents keep getting reassured, “He/she is putting on weight very well”. But the weight in itself means very little, unless it is put on the Growth Chart. This is because, visual estimates can be very misleading. Take my own example. When I first met my cousin’s 1 year old, I inwardly jumped “goodness me, isn’t he looking ‘malnourished’? Does his mum not feed him?” was what I thought to myself. Seconds later, the doctor brain kicked in. I put his weight on a ‘Growth Chart’. (hyperlink to my May 2021 article) And the Growth Chart showed he was a fine little baby, and definitely NOT malnourished!

Childhood overweight happens mostly due to lifestyle reasons. These days, there is much less physical activity and a lot more sedentary activity, like school-work, home-work. Add to this mobile phones and gaming devices. Affordability of vehicles means walking for even the shortest distances is not being done these days. Add to it incorrect television advertising of unhealthy fast food, thus influencing food choices.

A minority of obese children could have hormonal disturbances that may cause the problems and not lifestyle factors. This is outside the scope of this article. In order to rule this out a trip to the Paediatrician or a Paediatric Endocrinologist may be warranted.

The ill-effects of childhood obesity are many. For brevity, they are best described in the figure below. Image source: https://www.bonejoint.net/blog/childhood-obesity-could-cause-future-joint-problems/

To illustrate the problems that childhood obesity can cause, here are a few real cases:

1) 7 year-old Devansh’s excess weight made him get Type 2 Diabetes. This is the kind of Diabetes that one would normally get after the age of 50. Like Samar, he was also getting teased and bullied at school for his excess weight.

2) 13 year-old Zach had high blood pressure that needed medicines. Tests revealed that the high blood pressure was due to excess weight.

3) 16 year-old obese Pranjali stopped having periods. She had excess hair growth especially on her face. And the hair on her head, in stark contrast, started thinning. Lot of acne and pimples too. She had PCOS (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome), a condition that can disturb periods, cause diabetes and high blood pressure and also compromise fertility in adulthood.
4) 10 year-old Mehul’s school performance dropped. He was also frequently falling asleep at school. This was because he had ‘sleep apnea’. Due to his excess weight, the fat piled up in the space around the breathing pipe too. This would cause the pipe to cave in when he slept, causing low blood oxygen levels and disturbed sleep. His parents declined further medical advice. A few years later, he started limping. The excess weight, which only increased over the years, had put too much pressure on his legs, causing a part of his hip-joint to give way.

Summing up, childhood obesity is stealthily serious condition. My intention here is not to scare you, but to lay down the facts, bare-boned and unadorned, just so the import is highlighted. In next month’s issue, I shall discuss the solutions.

Read more: https://www.pediatricendocrinologistindia.com

Emotions – A Gender Perspective

By Kanchan Kumble

“Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus” goes the old belief, signifying the differences between God’s two most wonderful creations. One of the major aspects of differentiation other than the physical anatomy and many others, is the EQ - Emotional Quotient. Women are known to be more emotional and expressive with their emotions.

Nature makes this evident right from the early stages of life. Girls even as toddlers are very sensitive, their eyes turn watery when they get a scolding or they commit a mistake, they are very enthusiastic about any celebrations in the family, boys of the same age don’t react in the same way. Teenage girls experience a rush of mixed emotions and are left confused on most occasions. Further ahead, on the day of marriage the emotions of a bride is just inexplicable. Motherhood brings a sea change in the woman and she experiences Navarasas of emotions- love, wonder, joy, peace, anxiety, anger, fear, courage and sadness. Basically a woman gets involved emotionally in all her roles and various relations. Her emotional involvement even extends to the characters of a serial or a movie. Often we would have witnessed tears rolling down her cheeks for an emotional scene and even at times scream out and alert the Hero of the movie about the villain attacking from behind. Probably, if a survey is done, it will be proved that the usage of “Emojis” on social media is more by women than men!

Men definitely are not devoid of emotions. The very reason for Lord Krishna to narrate Bhagwad Gita to Arjuna was to bring him out of the emotional turmoil. A son, a teenage boy, a husband or a father – all experience varied emotions. However, the degree of emotions is lower as compared to women and also the emotional involvement is less in men. Generally men are found to be less expressive or rather their way of expressing their emotions is different (all married women would agree to this)! Men who are very expressive with their emotions or get emotional fast, are at times ridiculed by the society.

Science has an answer to the above marked differences. Emotions are strongly connected with hormones. Hormonal changes result in huge emotional mood swings and certain emotions when experienced, release specific hormones in the body. A woman undergoes hormonal changes a lot more times in her life than a man and probably this explains her being more emotional. Not all emotions are linked to hormones. Many are situation based and circumstantial too.

Whether one should be emotional and expressive with their emotions or not, could be a topic of debate. It isn’t good to be very emotional at all times as life isn’t easy for anyone and a permanent decision based on a temporary emotion may prove wrong. At the same time not being expressive with one’s emotions can cause harm to mental health of a person. All sort of emotions – Happiness, sadness, joy, love, anger, surprise, anxiety, pride, compassion etc are important and an integral part of an individual’s life. Ideally, be it men or women, we all should learn to identify, express and harness our emotions at the right time and in the right quantum without getting carried away.

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Meera Experience

By Nirmala Dumble

Meera Mania : 17th September 1998

Chaitanya (Dr Gulvady) asks me if I want to present a program for Puja Swami’s visit to Karnataka Society in December. My age-old dream of arranging a ballet on Sant Heer is finally taking shape!

Search for ‘Meerabai’

All excited, I mention about my theme to Geeta (Nadkami). Her enthusiastic response is enough to hook me on presenting my dream!

The search begins…..

I need authentic information on Meerabai’s life. I start looking at all sources which will provide me that - books, movies, comics etc. I own one English book on Meerabai. I try the Majestic Book Depot for more. I manage to get one book in Marathi there. I contact Bharatiya Vidhyaa Bhavan and they assure me they have books on Meerabai. There are few references for authenticity. Sometime down the line I take a small bulb on one end and a switch on the other to make this ballet. Our only choice is to buy the video cassette. But I would prefer to borrow it. It strikes me to search in the Yellow Pages directory for video libraries. And find one having it. I visit Deepa (Kalbag-Koppikar – who has been a big help throughout) and we watch the movie that night. I am feeling great!

I also want to watch Gulzar’s movie ‘Meera’. The songs from this film have been my main source of inspiration to make this ballet. Our only choice is to buy the video cassette. But I would prefer to borrow it. I try a few book stores and finally find one with a small bulb on one end and a switch on the other to make this ballet. Our only choice is to buy the video cassette. But I would prefer to borrow it. It strikes me to search in the Yellow Pages directory for video libraries. And find one having it. I visit Deepa (Kalbag-Koppikar – who has been a big help throughout) and we watch the movie that night. I am feeling great!

I still want Amar Chitra Katha! (How greedy of me!) I have a futile search at Modern, Strand Nalanda book stores or at three other book shops I check. I call the publishing company. They will try to deliver, but if not I have to pick it from their Mahalaksmi office. But then their representative comes to my office with the book for me! I am so happy!

The whole concept of presenting the ballet is etched in my mind – not noted down anywhere yet. I know how I want to present, but have to check the feasibility. I still need a few references for authenticity. Sometime down the line I think to myself - if I can’t find ‘Meerabai’, will I ever find Her ‘Giridhar Gopal’?

More on Meera: 28th September ’98

A few days back Deepa had noted down all the songs from the movie “Meera” and from the music album “Chala Vaahi Des”. She had found most of the lyrics of these songs.

I am all tensed up - I have not yet written the script! On the 18th, I manage to write most of it. Time flies - it is already 22nd. I want to go to Karla Math and write the final draft of the script there! Don’t I have ‘cheenna cheenna asai’? Deepa is ready to accompany me. I start writing the final script in Karla Math but cannot complete it. Back home I sit up late into the night and yessssss! It is finally done! I want some scenes to be performed on stage and some to be presented through shadow-play.

Deepa records the songs in order of the scenes; I write the lyrics and meet Priyanka Kalbag, the singer for the ballet, on 2nd October and handover both for her to start practicing.

Kanchanpachi Honavar, Chaitanya, Anil Baindoor and I have a meeting. Chaitanya understands my concept of shadow-play and agrees that visually it will look good, but is not sure of the technical feasibility. Anil suggests having these scenes live instead of through shadow-play adding that a live performance will be more colourful and impactful with the impressive Rajasthani theme. It sounds good, but I take time to adjust to this new idea; so different from what I had visualized! Later I tell Anil how I want to present the last scene. He promptly suggests Harish Chandavar, our creative and resourceful friend. I explain my concept to Harish and he tells me that he will make a device which will serve my purpose. He actually manages to do it in a day! The ‘device’ he has developed is made of cycle spokes welded together, with a small bulb on one end and a switch on the other to operate it. What a great beginning to ‘The End’!!

I have spoken to Mrs. Kusum Ballal (my sister’s friend) to narrate the commentary. I send her the script on 15th November, but am able to explain my concept to her only on 1st December. What is one to do? We have not had proper rehearsals for me to call her all the way from Bandra. The tension of rehearsals is mounting with my lead singer having throat infection and the actor playing Meerabai having a busy schedule.

Music makes my world go round

Priyanka, the singer recovers and is able to come for rehearsals on 24th November.

With Neha Kalbag on the harmonium, we rehearse the songs on 25th. Naresh Kumtamaam who has very graciously agreed to play the flute for my dance-drama comes on 30th November. Along with Mayur Kalbag on Tabla, Priyanka and Neha we have a musical evening! What an experience that is! I wish all music lovers are around during this ‘sangeetbaithak’.

I want Premipacchi (Kerekatte) to sing two of the songs along with Priyanka. I finally meet her on 1st December and she readily agrees. She joins in the rehearsals and great music ‘mehfils’ continue.

Baayi mee vikata ghetla Shyam

I need a Krishna idol. Anil promises to get one which he had used for a movie. But, there is a delay. Everyone at home is involved in the search. My mother borrows one from a friend, but this Krishna is with a cow, whereas I want Krishna standing by Himself. Kavita Shanbhag, our friend mentions she has seen papiermache Krishna idols near Matunga station. We buy it on 9th December. The very next day, Anil gets his idol.”Mohani Moorat” I blurt as I behold the idol. This is our Krishna, everyone agrees unanimously!
Mero dard na jaane koi

Tension is mounting; rehearsals are not getting any better. It's all in bits and pieces and scattered. I am still searching for participants! I sleep this, I dream that. And I am definitely tense. I don't expect everyone to feel as passionate about the ballet as I do, but, I feel there is a lack of commitment from the participants. Do I call it off? I have nightmares about this too! But there is this small but firm voice in my heart that says it will go off well. Then there are well-wishers like Kumudpachi Hemmady who assure me that the final result will be good.

Wednesday 16th December 1998, Pujya Swamiji arrives!!

On Monday 21st December we have a rehearsal where we actually do the first and the last scene. It is on the Kanara House terrace at around 8pm. Anil and Babloo (Premal Enginier) are attending and they suggest a tune which we hum. Ankush Nadkarni, Sachin Gulvady and friends do the 'baraat' steps to our humming. What a great feeling it is to see the baraat scene taking shape so well! These boys are very enthusiastic and do a great job. And, they demand that they dance with a 'talwar' in hand, so the baraat dance scene looks authentic. I agree. It makes a big difference to the whole idea of the baraat with a folk dance horse, and the talwar swinging baraatis!

The rehearsal progresses smoothly. The last scene unfolds; it is exactly as I had dreamt it!

The participants and the onlookers are taken aback and so am I! My heart soars and I have tears in my eyes; it is actually and finally happening! This scene which I have visualized for years has taken shape! Thank God! Thank you Harish!

22nd December 1998, 6 pm

‘To start or not to start’ the play is the question! Pujya Swamiji’s presence at the pandal is delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. Due to a packed program schedule, we have to start our ballet. This being the 1st performance for the cultural evening, no further delay is allowed. So we start without Pujya Swamiji’s presence. The pandal is in darkness, all eyes on the stage, silence pervades, I had asked Deepa to record sound of birds chirping. The sounds come on as the curtain open, Meera as a child played by Medha Deolalker is on the stage -The play has started!

The ‘baraatis’ decide to enter from the entrance of the pandal, down the aisle between the audience towards the stage. That was a brainwave. The audience is thrilled and starts clapping to the catchy beat. Babloo, as one of the baraati is throwing flower petals on the audience. The scene is very enthusiastically received by the audience! The ‘baraat’ goes out of sight behind the stage. Swamiji arrives just as the baraatis disappear. He has heard the music and is curious to know what has transpired. The audience demands we restart the play so that Pujya Swamiji too gets a chance to enjoy the scene! The ‘baraat’ takes the same route. There is spontaneous clapping from every soul present there!

The baraat

The play goes on, songs, commentary, few dialogues.

The dandiya is well received. So far, so good! Oh no - The stool which ‘Sant Raidas’ had used has not been removed, Sonali Honnavar, our Meerabai trips over it. What a hard fall! She starts crying, I can hear her. But, she is back on stage composed and continues with her performance. Hats off to Sonali!!

Finally, the last scene- Kusum ends the commentary and Priyanka takes off with the last touching song “ay ree main to premdiwani”. Sonali is emoting very well. Priti Shanbhag as ‘Krishna’ takes her entry, Meerabai falls at Krishna’s feet. Sanjay Wagh, as planned, puts all the lights off. The stage and the whole pandal are in total darkness. Priyanka takes the ‘aalaap’, Premipachi continues with the chorus, everyone is quiet. Priti puts on the torch which is hanging like a pendant around her neck. The light it emits signifies Krishna’s heart. Harish lights the bulb on the device developed by him, and as instructed moves it slowly from Sonali’s heart towards the light on Krishna’s heart - Thus merging Meerabai’s Soul with The Eternal Soul of Lord Krishna! He keeps it there for a few seconds for full impact. I hear the audience collectively gasp! I instruct to bring the curtains down.

The audience is speechless for a moment, comprehending the significance of the magical moment they have witnessed, before breaking into a thunderous applause!!
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Sheela Koppikar
09th May 1951- 23rd July 2021

Sheela, a personification of love, warmth and joy right till the end,
Our deepest love to the sky we shall send.
No matter your title, wife, best friend, daughter, tai, mami, akka, vaini or mother
You were a wonderful lady like no other
You brought a special joy to everyone’s life that you touched
Your warm understanding meant ever so much.
Your small little gestures and thoughts will be forgotten never
You will always be treasured forever and ever.
With your unshaken faith in our Guru, we know you were blessed
On the auspicious day of Guru Purnima you were laid to rest.
Keep showering us with your blessings from high above
We know that we’ll always feel your love.

Lovingly remembered by:
Beloved husband and companion of 45 years: Satish
Children: Nikhil, Shilpa-Shiv Kamath [son-in-law], Misha
Arun-Sheetal Kalbag, Viju-Anil Karnad, Sameer-Vaishali Kalbag, Trupti-Niranjan Kundapur, Shreya-Milind Shenoy,
Purva-Jaidev Pandit, Shivanand-Nitu Nadkarni, Rishab and Nishad
Grandchildren: Shikhar, Shamika, Ishani, Samvit, Saumya and Mihir
Koppikars, Kamaths and Nadkarnis

With profound grief, we announce the sad demise of Ashalata Gokarn in Gamdevi,
Mumbai on 5 August 2021, wife of late Hemchandra Gokarn and daughter of late Umesh and late Vatsala Sirur; mother of Samhita Mundkur and Ameya Gokarn.

Deeply mourned by Gokarns, Mundkurs, relatives and friends.

We shall always remember
Your warmth and your welcoming smile
Your inclusiveness, your openness
A true friend to old and young alike
Your charm, your talent, your outgoing verve
The way your eyes twinkled at the sound of a bird
The way you made a tune come alive
Your awe, your wonder of nature and life
Your way with words, your turns of phrase
Your vivid recall of the smallest detail
Your conviction, your confidence
To deal with the uncertain
Your courage unwaning, your spirit unwavering
You shall live on in our memory

Samhita Mundkur
With profound grief, we inform the sad demise of

**Smt. Gauri (Vrinda) Shirali**

**On 14th August 2021**

Wife of late Shri. Gurudatt Bhavanishankar Shirali
& Loving mother to Meghana Sumanth Bijoor & Mihir Gurudatt Shirali

You’ve been the most selfless person we’ve known, and your kindness has touched several lives around you. Your shoes are too big for us to fill, but we will strive to follow your ideals, morals and values as we move forward in life. We will miss you dearly as long as we live, for you have been and always will be our pillar of strength.

Love you mummy,
Meghana & Sumanth, Mihir & Priyanka

Love you (ama)(papa)ma
Yash, Aditi, Anaya and Ayan
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 Squib, 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.
Military Musings

Military Mascots

By Maj Gen B N Rao, AVSM, VSM & Bar (Retd)

Units adopting an animal for a mascot is not an unknown phenomenon. There is generally some story about how that particular animal came to be associated with the unit. Horses, dogs and even billy goats have been adored and maintained by units. Some of the better trained mascots have even participated in parades.

I share with readers two true stories received from my military colleagues.

Corporal Wojtek: The Military Bear

In 1942, Polish soldiers serving in Iran picked up a new member for their group. There was nothing unusual in this except for the fact that the new member was a bear cub. The lost bear cub was found alone in the desert after her mother had been shot by hunters.

Luckily, the Polish soldier who adopted him ultimately joined what would become the 22nd Artillery Supply Company that allowed him to keep the bear cub. The soldier named his bear Wojtek which means Happy Warrior. The cub was like a pet dog. It was fed milk from a bottle. So wherever they went, the cub would feel like it was with its parents. The cub became very soldier friendly. Growing up with soldiers, Wojtek adopted some rather curious habits. The bear loved eating cigarettes and drank beer straight from the bottle and got a kick out of wrestling and jostling with soldiers. Wojtek spent evenings sitting around campfires with the men and around sleeping tents with the rest of the soldiers. Whenever the unit marched out on a mission, Wojtek would march alongside them.

In 1942, the Corps linked up with the British 8th Army. The problem was the British 8th Army did not permit animals in their camps. So the Polish Army formally enlisted Wojtek the bear into their ranks. Wojtek was given the rank of a Private. From that point on he was included in all official unit rosters.

The Poles’ finest hour of the war came in the incredibly bloody battle for Monte Cassino. Wojtek was more than good company during the battle. He actually hand carried boxes of ammunition from supply trucks to artillery gun positions. Some of the boxes weighed over 100 pounds.

After the battle, the official insignia of the 22nd Artillery was changed to a picture of Wojtek carrying a large calibre artillery shell; and he was promoted to Corporal. Once his unit was demobilised in Scotland, the bear was resettled in the Edinburgh zoo. There he was always visited by his old friends from the Polish Army.

Wojciech Narebski, a Polish soldier of Wojtek’s unit always remembers him with fondness. He says the bear was like an older brother to him. The bear passed away in 1963 at the age of 22. Edinburgh zoo, it is said, still has a memorial for the brave brown bear.

Pedongi – The Brave Mule

Hardly anyone outside the Army Service Corps knows this. One General Service (GS) mule named Pedongi is the proud recipient of the Vir Chakra! This true story goes something like this.

During the 1971 war, an Animal Transport (AT) convoy in J&K came under ground attack from the Pakistani Army. As per teaching, the AT drivers scattered their mules and sought cover from enemy fire, while the infantry unit accompanying the convoy counter attacked the Pakistanis.

After the attack, during regrouping, it was discovered that three mules had been captured and taken away by the Pakis; Pedongi being one of them. This usually happens whenever they get a chance. Our troops also kidnap Paki mules. Since the training of the mules is the same on both sides of the border, as is the harness and saddlery, captured mules are simply put to work without much ado. Sure enough, Pedongi was also made to haul rations, water pakhals, and other loads in Pakistan.

About a fortnight after her capture, Pedongi reported back in her unit in the Indian Army and she was carrying a Pak MMG with two boxes of belted ammunition. Judging from the way Pedongi was exhausted, it was evident that she had somehow escaped her Paki handlers and ran back almost 20 kms to her own unit on the Indian side of the border through a dangerous minefield. For this act of extreme bravery in the face of the enemy, the Divisional Commander asked the CO of the AT Battalion to initiate Pedongi’s citation for an award and made sure that she received a VirChakra.

Now what does a VirChakra mean to a mule? Well it meant that she never carried a load thereafter. She just ate and drank and was groomed and looked after all her life. She roamed around freely in the unit till she died of natural causes in 1978.

The above story is open for verification at ASC Centre and College, Bangalore, where her medal and citation is preserved to date along with Pedongi’s photograph.

Announcement

With a view to build greater connectivity between the authors of articles and the readers, we introduced the Author Details feature some time back. These details are added at the end of his/her article in the issue. We invite authors to add a few lines about themselves and their email id to their article, while mailing their articles to us. We look forward to receiving author details for our esteemed readers.

... Editorial Committee
**The Mahima of Lord Ganesha**

**BY NALINI NANDKARNI**

My cousin Vatsala held a *Vaayna/Haldi Kumkum* for her newly married French daughter-in-law, Antoinette. When Antoinette was curious about the elephant’s head, Vatsala told her the story behind it. Antoinette’s interest led to more stories from the guests.

Lord Ganapati is an important deity in the Hindu pantheon. All worship begins with Ganapati pooja for he is the *Vighneshwara* or *Vighnahartaa* - the remover of all obstacles - . Even entertainment programs start with a *Ganapati Vandanaa*.

Most of these stories hold our interest. But none can vouch for their veracity as they were handed down by word of mouth.

**Why an elephant’s head?**

Goddess Parvati once made a clay model of a little boy. Delighted with its beauty she hugged it and called it her son. Then she prayed fervently, pleading with God to breathe life into it.

And lo! God promptly granted her prayer! When life flowed into the cute little clay boy, he started prancing around; and Parvati’s joy knew no bounds. Shortly thereafter, she went in for a bath and asked him to guard the door in her absence. When Lord Shiva came home, the boy, unaware of Shiva’s identity, barred His entry into His own abode. The enraged Shiva beheaded him, in the battle that ensued. When Parvati emerged from within, she was inconsolable. Quickly, Lord Shiva promised to resurrect the boy. The first head available for the ‘transplant’ was that of a sleeping elephant; and this was soon brought and affixed to the boy’s lifeless body.

Instantly, to everyone’s great relief, the boy was revived. Thereafter, he came to be called *Gajamukha or Gajaanana – Gaja*, meaning elephant and *aanana* meaning face. Later, when he was made the Leader of Lord Shiva’s *Ganaas* (followers), he was called *Ganesha* or *Ganapati* - the Chief of the Ganaas.

**Celebrating Bhadrapad Chaturthi:**

Most festivals - like Ram Navami, Gokulaashtami, Dutta Jayanti – mark the birthday of the deity. Some are celebrated to mark the victory of Good over Evil; like Navaratri after *Mahishasura Vadh* and Divali after *Narakaasura Vadh*.

Ganesh *Jayanti* (birthday) falls in the month of *Maagh* (February/March), which few people celebrate. *Ganesh Chaturthi* is celebrated in the month of *Bhadrapad* (August/September), when an elephant-headed son was born to Shiva and Parvati - an *avataar* of the original Ganapati. People appealed to him to kill the wicked demon, Sinduraasura, for the demon was destined to die at the hands of a son born to Shiva and Parvati on *Bhadrapad Chaturthi*. When Lord Ganeshes ultimately slew the demon, the people, performed Ganapati pooja on Bhadrapad Chaturthi thus celebrating the Conquest of Evil…

**The Wisdom of Lord Ganesha:**

Lord Brahma approached Goddess Parvati, hoping she would accept his daughters Riddhi and Siddhi as brides for her sons Kartikeya and Ganesh. Parvati declared that the son to return first after going round the world would be married first. Kartikeya flew off on his *Vaahan*, the peacock, secretly sure of victory, as Ganesha’s *Vaahan*, the mouse, could hardly hope to keep up with the peacock.

Meanwhile Ganesha merely took a *pradakshina* of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati (seated side-by-side) declaring that his Parents were “his whole world.” Ganesha’s wisdom earned him the victory.

**The Curse on the Moon:**

Ganesh Chaturthi comes twelve days after *Gokulaashtami*, the birthday of Lord Krishna. Ganapati, therefore attended Lord Krishna’s *barso*, where he acquired a bloated tummy from overeating. So, he tied a snake round his stomach to hold it in. He then returned home on his *Vaahan*, the mouse on Chaturthi, four days after *Amavasya*. The crescent Moon was amused as Ganapati tripped over a stone and fell off his mouse.

Enraged by the Moon’s laughter, Ganapati cursed him. He said that anyone who ‘looked at the Moon on Bhadrapad Chaturthi’ would be accused of theft. The repentant Moon begged his pardon. Soon, Ganapati relented and added that if such a person recited the Ganapati Stotra twenty-one times – twenty one being an auspicious number for Ganapati - he would escape punishment, which would then fall on the Moon instead. People believe that this is why dark patches are visible on the Moon on a full moon (Purnima) night.

**Why Lord Ganesh favours Durvaa:**

A wicked demon called Analaasura used to breathe out fire and destroy people.

The mortals appealed to Lord Ganesh to save them from Analaasura. So Ganesh decided to fight him. During the combat they moved from the original place and reached the banks of the Narmada. Finally, Ganeshes vanquished and killed the demon. But Lord Ganeshes was hot and exhausted from the prolonged effort.

So he lay down on the banks of the Narmada. He felt totally cool and relaxed as he lay on the soothingly cool *durvaa* grass which grew there in abundance. A dip in the river completely refreshed him……Even today it is customary to offer *durvaa* to Lord Ganeshes during a pooja,

They say the pebbles on the river bed turned red- – the colour of Lord Ganeshes - after the combat. Some people, therefore, tend to worship such pebbles.

**Lord Ganeshes’s Vaahan :**

A *Gandharva* (celestial singer) named Krounch was entertaining Lord Indra in *Swarg Lok* (Heaven). When he sang a false note, the enraged Indra turned him into a mouse and hurled him into *Bhoolok* (Earth). The mouse landed in a forest where Parashar Rishi was immersed in meditation. When the bored mouse started troubling the Rishi, the latter...
asked Ganapati to rid him of the pest.

Ganapati decided to make the mouse his Vaahan to keep him from troubling others!

**The Linga at Gokarn in North Kanara:**

There is a story behind the famous Shivalinga in the Mahabaleshwara Temple at Gokarn where crowds gather at every Shivaratri for worship.

Ravana, the arrogant King of Lanka, picked up the Shivalinga from Kailash Parbat to move it to Lanka. The priests warned him that it should be carried straight to its destination. For, if Ravana placed it anywhere else, even for a split second, it would be embedded in the ground..... When Ravana reached what is now Karnataka, he felt the urgent need to answer Nature’s call.

The Gods, fearing that the linga would increase his power and cruelty, quickly sent Ganapati to the locality in the guise of a cowherd. Relieved to see him, Ravana begged him to hold the linga warning him never to place it on the ground at any cost. Ganapati made him promise to ‘hurry up’ as his cows ‘had to reach home before dark’. As soon as Ravana turned his back, Ganapati placed the linga on the ground where it got affixed.

Returning, the enraged Ravana tried his level best to dislodge the linga in vain.

Then he struck it with all his might till it chipped off, with the pieces scattering around in all directions, landing as far as Dhareshwar, Murdeshwar, Sajjeshwar and Gunavanteshwar. The Place where it was first embedded in came to be called Mahabaleshwar.

In frustration, Ravana dealt a hard blow on Ganapati’s head which sent him reeling a few steps backwards where a Ganapati temple stands today. The Ganapati idol still bears the head wounds resulting from Ravana’s assault. This was another important role played by Lord Ganesha in saving mankind from the atrocities of the wicked Ravana.

The embedded linga after the repeated assault from Ravana, acquired the shape of a cow’s ear (go-cow; karna-ear). That is how the place got its present name – Gokarn.

**Ganapati’s Skill as a Scribe:**

Ganapati, the bright littleGod, was known for his speed in taking down dictated material. Maharshi Ved Vyas therefore approached him when he wanted someone to write down the *Mahabharat* as he recited it. Ganapati agreed to do so if Vyas promised to dictate the epic non-stop. The Maharshi then put a counter condition that Ganapati should understand fully the content of what he was writing. Each having agreed to abide by the conditions set by the other, the Maharshi began to dictate the *Mahabharat*. And Ganapati started taking down the verses.

Somewhere in the middle, the quill, which Ganapati used for writing, broke. So he promptly broke one of his tusks and began writing with it. He was thus left with only one unbroken tusk, which earned him the name *Ekadanta*!

Considering all these achievements, it is easy to understand why he is considered the *Aaraadhya Daivat*.
The Power of Content (Knowledge)  
...the ‘POEM’  
By Mayur Kalbag

‘How much’ you know is not as important as ‘how well’ you know With ‘depth’ in your content, through all spheres of life you shall grow Strength of your subject will propel to ‘effectively speak’ Disclarity in your perspectives may make you diffident and weak

To build clear thoughts, a constant effort you must make Different you must be from those who pretend to know it all but are fake Depth and clarity in your content will give you confidence and grit To communicate your topics the power of content shall make you firm and fit

‘Reading and Research’; important processes these... As they help you gain knowledge, on varied topics you can speak with ease Books are not the only media, even from Mother Nature you must ‘read’ So much to learn from the mountains, rivers and even from a simple ‘seed’

Without the Power of Content your self-esteem make take a downward dive ‘Knowledge’…an important value that keeps you vibrant and ‘alive’ To the ever changing world you must be alert and aware

The more you strengthen your content, the more you shall begin to share

The power of ‘knowing’ underestimate you never must CONTENT enriches your mind, without it, the mind may begin to rust Inspire yourself and start exploring the ‘deep’ and the ‘far’ Forget you never must though to also gain knowledge of ‘WHO YOU TRULY ARE’

Something about the poem...  
The above poem is all about the role of Content in making us more effective in our pursuit toward professional success. Content basically means our Depth of Knowledge. In today’s world we cannot grow without learning new and interesting things. Acquiring academic degrees and PhDs is truly great but then after that what is important is to remember that the process of learning should not stop and must always continue. The more the knowledge the better will be our ability to handle tough and near impossible challenges. For example, when an employee joins the organization as a junior executive looking after sales and promotion it is important that he begins to

slowly and steadily start reading about the function of sales and begins to watch videos on how sales can be done in the best possible manner. If that sales executive does not enhance his knowledge about the Sales function he will end up not growing as fast and high as he could grow. Knowledge fundamentally gives us that extra and added advantage to become more efficient and productive. The power of Content truly can make us uniquely different from the others especially when there is so much competition around us. As we all want to become successful in our respective careers it is vital that we, from now onwards, begin to increase our knowledge about our specific work and products and make our CONTENT extremely strong. Let us not wait anymore. Let us get started. Let us grab a book on a subject related to our work or related to aspects of leadership and personality development and thereby begin the process of strengthening our CONTENT.

Steps to strengthen your Content-
1. Invest twenty minutes every day in reading ‘General Knowledge’ through newspapers and books. You may also acquire broader perspectives about all that is happening around the globe by exploring through the various internet search engines.

2. Once in a week, invest at least thirty minutes towards enhancing your knowledge about the specific area of work that you may be involved in. Having said that, it is important that while you read about things related to your work it is always more effective and profitable to make pertinent notes in a writing pad or underline with a pencil the things that you may have found to be interesting and useful.

3. In the course of your professional as well as social interactions try your best to extract knowledge from the people that you interact with. Remember we must, that, every interaction is an opportunity for you to learn something from and thereby enhance your knowledge.

4. YouTube, today is a great tool for learning as it can provides a fantastic Audio-visual presentation to the people who want to explore something new and learn from it. And hence when you have some free time, try to make the best use of it to watch some concise and yet interesting videos that could be related to your hobbies as well as your professional development. I remember watching an amazing video of just a duration of fifteen minutes about Innovation and Creative Thinking for New Age Leaders and I was able to extract a lot of learnings from it.

5. Finally, you could also enrol into a University for a specific Educational course that would be connected to your nature of work or to your future objectives. There are various Certification courses which you could explore for yourself and for your growth.
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Parisevanam Bhagavad Gita

Here is a chapter-by-chapter analysis of an immortal text by our erudite contributor Dr. Sudha Tinaikar. 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 7 Jnana Vignan Yoga (Part 1)

The last verse of the 6th chapter was introductory to the present one; among the yogi-s the one who contemplates upon Me becomes Me. Now who is this Me that Bhagavân is talking about? One cannot simply become another. We should understand here that whenever Bhagavân uses the word Me, it means Ishvara Brahman or the Tat-padârtha. From now onwards till the 12th chapter, Bhagavân talks about the svarûpam of Tat-padam. This shatkam is also upâsanâ pradhâdana.

“I will now describe that Ishvara who is the very cause of the entire Universe. The one who seriously contemplates upon Me and surrenders to Me will know My Svarûpam as Ishvara.”

“Arjuna, I will give you vijnâna-sahijatijnânam; assimilating which there is nothing more to be known and nothing you can experience as immediate knowledge (व्याख्यात्मकोऽनुभवम्).”

(v1,2)

Now Bhagavân wants to glorify this knowledge as the highest form of all knowledge.

“Out of thousands of people, very few desire to know Me and out of them very rare ones actually understand what I am saying.”

What is the reason for this rarity?

Brahman, the object of this knowledge is not something available for easy objectification. It is not something that anybody can either know directly, or by inference (प्राप्ति अनुभवप्राप्ति). It is entirely dependent upon the Veda-Pramâna which has to come through a Guru. What is to be known is exactly opposite in nature to what I already know. It requires lives and lives of concentrated effort on the part of a mumukshu (मुमुक्षु). (v3)

Bhagavân presents His Svarûpam in two forms. The entire manifest Universe with all its diverse names and forms is presented as His lower nature (अपराप्रकृति, also called Mâyâ. The consciousness in which the entire jagat of names and forms is situated, is presented here as His (पराप्रकृति; also called Brahman).

Whatever is available to our sense organs and mind as the jagat is a modification of Mâyâ and Brahman is the unmodifiable consciousness-principle.

“The entire Universe can be represented to be made of the five elements (space, air, fire, water and earth principles) which make up for the insentient or जडप्रकृति. The mind, intellect and the individuality are also jada, but reflect consciousness and seem to be sentient. This is my aparâ prakṛti, which is the very seed of samsara and the one which binds. It is also known by the name of Kshetra (क्षेत्र).”

“Other than this is My parâ prakṛti, the ever pure light of consciousness which supports all the jîva-s from within and without. This is also known as Kshetrajna (क्षेत्रज्ञ:).

“These two together are inseparable from each other and together are the material and intelligent cause of the entire Universe (अभिन्ननिषिद्धउपादानकारण) and into these the whole Universe resolves into an unmanifest form at the time of pralaya. (v4-6).

“Arjuna, there is nothing other than Me here. I as the very existence-consciousness pervade the entire jagat of names and forms. I am like the thread which passes through a necklace of different shapes and sizes of beads. The beads represent the manifest jagat of names and forms. The thread which is unseen, but holds all the beads connected and together is My parâ prakṛti (Brahman).”

“I the consciousness pervade everything as existence-consciousness in each and every object sentient or insentient. I am the very taste in water. I am the very light in the luminaries. I am the very Omkâra in all the Veda mantra-s. I am the quality of sound in space and I am the very human-ness in every human being.

In other words I the consciousness (Brahman) is the very warp and woof of all that is there.”

Bhagavân continues with many more examples of how the all-pervading consciousness is the very content of everything.

“I am the very guna of smell in the earth; I am the brightness in the fire; I am the life principle in every living being and I am the very discipline in a tapasvî.”

“I am the very seed of all the beings along with the power of My prakṛti forever. I am the intelligence in the intelligent people; I am the capability in the capable.”

“I am that very strength in the powerful which is of sattvic nature and does not transgress dharma. I am the sattvic desire in all beings with which the jagat is benefited.” (v8-11).

Here Bhagavân is talking about the arda-narîshvara (अर्धनारिशवर) principle explained in our scriptures with the examples of Brahmath with Brâhmishakti, Vishnu with Vaishnavi shakti, Rudra with Roudrî shakti. Consciousness principle being akartâ-abhoktâ, uses the aparâ-prakṛti which is inseparable from consciousness. At the same time, it is incapable of independent existence without the parâ-prakṛti.

This loose combination of consciousness-matter is the very cause of the jagat.

(To be continued)
In the predominantly online world today, Social Media presence by Organizations, Business entities and NGOs are undoubtedly a must for visibility— a website is not enough. A Facebook Page, an Instagram or Twitter account enable them to post their product launches, new initiatives, announcements of future events and such other ‘happening’ stuff to youngsters and young-at-heart seniors. Here, you can showcase your activities and achievements or brag about being featured in the mainstream media on such platforms!

Online visibility is not restricted to advertisements alone. FB, Google and such other platforms do offer online advertisement of products/services with a wider audience like surfers, effectively using Artificial Intelligence (AI). But what is AI? Haven’t you experienced several ads appearing on your FB timeline for Holiday resorts in Mahabaleshwar upon searching online for a “resort near Mumbai for weekend getaway”? Or been suggested to send a friend request to a mechanic you called in to repair your refrigerator last evening? Just saving his contact number in your smartphone activates the AI running in the background to trigger this wonderful suggestion! Advertisers are able to effectively target products and services to those seeking them on the internet by keeping track of their activity.

AI does wonders if you want to sell products or services by simply watching your online posts. The smart ‘cookies’ get cracking and magically prompt you to buy the product. That could be your product flashing on the screen, if you have chosen to advertise online and have selected the right settings for them! AI helps reach target customers in spite of our contracting ‘attention spans’. Fortunately for our community, there are many experts in social media, digital marketing, technology, search engine optimization (SEO) etc., who can guide you through the process. Just search the KSA-CSN page using suitable keywords – www.kanarasaraswat.com/csn.

Businesses do opt for an FB Page or a Twitter Handle for their corporate announcements. Savvy marketing personnel seeking to popularize their page or handle need to keep their space abuzz with some activity – better still, some fun activity such as contests, prizes, puzzles, talk-shows, podcasts etc. This can be done in-house or even out-sourced to smaller businesses that specialize in such activities. Just having an exclusive page does not suffice – a whole lot of activities are needed to be carried out to popularize it, so that customers are attracted and kept engaged from time to time.

While businesses can benefit from any of these options, they need to be alert towards a growing trend of consumers posting suggestions/feedback which can be viewed by all. Often suggestions posted by customers are not replied - this could severely hurt your image! It is important to post an official assurance note that someone responsible would contact the affected person and resolve issues - for each of such posts.

Although it is not prudent for consumers to take to social media before approaching the organization, customers do tend to post their complaints/grievances in public forums, especially with a view to alert their friends about their bitter experiences. Businesses need to provide the communication channel – email address, toll-free phone number etc. where complaints/feedback is welcome. In the absence of such communication details, consumers would claim that there is no redressal mechanism, due to which posting on Social media turned out to be the only option.

Businesses need to choose the best option for generating the right vibes around their product/services and create a healthy buzz with the help of the Social Media experts around us.

Gopinath Mavinkurve is currently an Export Consultant after serving in Managerial positions in reputed manufacturing organizations. He has been writing and blogging as a hobby since his college days and has successfully got some of his articles published in newspapers and magazines including Kanara Saraswat Magazine. He can be reached at g_mavinkurve@hotmail.com
My Experiences with His Holiness Swami Parijnanashram III

By Vasant M Divgi, Kumta

This is an incident with His Holiness Swami Parijnanashram III which I have with me forever. It was every Chitrapur Saraswat’s highest honor to host our Swamiji at their residence. One such opportunity came my way in 1983 and I am narrating my experience to share how that one incident changed my life.

It was an auspicious day and the Shankararayana temple in Kumta was abuzz with the hustle and bustle of temple pujaris and devotees, on the occasion of the Vanabhojana festival. All of us had worked day and night in the run up to the festival day because we were keenly anticipating the arrival of Swamiji, who was going to make the occasion more pious with His presence.

I remember like it was just yesterday, how Swamiji had arrived at the temple despite being under the weather. The pooja was extremely beautiful, with Swamiji’s presence around us. He met with everyone after the rituals and offered His gracious blessings.

As the ceremony ended, the question of where Swamiji would take up residence for the night came up. Every devotee wanted Swamiji to stay at their house but Swamiji insisted on staying at the temple premises, explaining that it was the entire Kumta CSB community that had invited Him and He would not disappoint any one person or family. After 3 days at Kumta, Swamiji returned back to Shirali.

My wife, Deepa Divgi, and I were among the many who had hoped for a chance to host our Swamiji at our home. While our wish didn’t come true on Swamiji’s visit that time, we somehow felt a positive sense of anticipation in the next few days.

Sure enough, our divine intuition materialized into reality a few days later, to our pleasant surprise and exhilaration. One of Swamiji’s close confidants, Vaknalli Mam, called me up at 10 pm one night. Both Deepa and I were surprised to receive a call at that hour, but I instantly picked up the phone. The first question that arose to my mind was whether Swamiji was with Vaknalli Mam and to our delight, he confirmed that Swamiji was indeed traveling with him. Their car stopped near our gate and we ran to welcome them, imploring Swamiji to come home.

Swamiji visited our residence frequently thereafter, till the dog was under our care. As word got around, other well-meaning families also offered to take care of the dog. But both Deepa and I had grown quite attached to the dog and wanted to complete our caregiving duties properly. Recognizing this as Swamiji saw our faces when someone asked for caregiving duties, Swamiji politely refused and allowed us to help the dog regain its health completely at our house. We were truly humbled and gratified to be given such an opportunity, and we knew that this was an experience we would never forget.

Swamiji’s grace continued to shine over me and my family in later years as well. A few years after this incredible incident, my son, Shirish, was trying to apply for engineering colleges after having passed his twelfth standard examinations with flying colors. He was trying to seek admission at the Bhatkal engineering college. I went to Lonavala to meet Swamiji and get a note of recommendation for the Bhatkal college. On putting my request forward, Swamiji said, “Don’t worry re, your son will get admission very soon,” No wonder, Shirish got a seat at the Bagalkot engineering college within a few days.

My experiences with Swamiji were truly divine and have left a permanent mark of happiness and fulfillment in my life! I am honored to have been blessed with these incidents and will always cherish the wonderful memories for ever.

A thousand Pranams to Swamiji and the Guruparampara!

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"In seva the shishya is tested"

...but that is only to motivate the devotee to correct oneself and use this lesson to move towards one’s True Self, feels Sandhya Nayel

Il Om Shri Gurubhyo Namah II Shri Bhavanishankaraya Namah II Shri Matre Namah II

We sisters were named Bhavani and Sandhya by our Parama Pujya Parijnanashram Swamiji III (Guru Swami) and all the samksara-s of devotion and deep reverence for the Guru came to us from our parents Hosangdi Uma and Rabindranath.

The hall on the third floor of Khar Math...hushed voices, me being lead into the hall, a charged atmosphere... and at the far end... our luminous Guru Swami. My mother was here to seek a cure for my ailment. Guruswami could have cured me then and there, but advised a homeopathic doctor in the vicinity to go to. That is the most vivid memory I, just a six-year-old then, have of Guru Swami. In 1987, during Navaratri, our family was blessed once again to meet Guru Swami in Shirali, just before my sister Bhavani’s alliance to Devesh Nayel (now my bhayya).

After my marriage to Shantish in 1993, I moved to Delhi. Shantish’s parents late Wg.Cdr. Mohan and Kumud Nayel were devout Vaishno Devi devotees. My kulaar Devi Mahadevi Amma, Hosangadi and now Vaishno Devi Mata, the Devi Shakti continued to bless and bind us together.

In 1997, we saw a video recording of the Pattabhishek of Pujya Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji but did not have the opportunity to have Darshan being in far-away Delhi, and the children being young. My parents from Mumbai would regularly send us audio-cassettes and recordings of bhajan-s and Ashirvachan-s of Pujya Swamiji and the children grew up listening to “Anjaneya Swami” and many more bhajan-s.

In 1999, Pujya Swamiji visited the Delhi Sabha for the first-time during Navaratri, and that was the first time we had Darshan of our Parama Pujya Swamiji. The Kavle Math Hall in Delhi was chockablock with sadhaka-s and the aura of Divinity wafting like a fragrance was unmistakable. We witnessed for the first time the Devi pujan, which Pujya Swamiji every evening, and it was a magical experience. During one of Swamiji’s Ashirvachan-s, Swamiji sang the bhajan “Anjaneya Swami” and my four-year-old Vaibhav started singing along. I had a hard time trying to keep his voice down!! There were huge queues of sadhaka-s to receive mantradeeksha during the visit, so I took an appointment for December that year and finally received deeksha in Khar Math. What a coincidence it was ... maybe Guru Swami had ordained it so!

In the year 2000 Pujya Swamiji visited Delhi Sabha for the second time, this time en route to a shivir in Kurukshetra. The Sanskrit Upasana course was taught here by Archana Savnal pachi. Subsequently, Vivek Katre maam became the Secretary of Delhi Sabha and his daughter Sangeeta Katre moved to Delhi and taught some of us Delhitles the Sanskrit ‘Aradhana’ course. It was my first and most enjoyable experience learning the Devabhasha. I consider this as my stepping-stone to Guruseva. Just as my desire to get involved in more Math activities became greater, Shantish found a job in Mumbai, where I continued my Sanskrit learning.

My first visit to Karla happened during this phase and that too is a memorable one. During the same year-2005- HH Swamiji visited Bandra Sabha and I was given the responsibility of the children’s cultural programme. Children seemed to appear out of nowhere and our group was formed as if by magic...they enacted episodes from the Guruparampara written and directed by Chandrama Bijurpachi. The children became extremely interested in the Guruparampara and had an endless list of questions. Swamiji graciously granted an interaction with the children. This sowed the seeds for Prarthana Varga. Archana Savnal pachi took this idea ahead by developing lesson plans for the children.

The Gurujyoti Yatra will be always etched in my memory... The 90 km- walk over two days from Gokarna to Shirali with the Akhandajyoti and kalasha-s with HH Swamiji leading the procession. It was the year the Prarthana curriculum was formalized and Prarthana Varga became global. I was asked to be the Secretary of the Chitrapur Prarthana Office.

As I had the support system of my parents while we were in Mumbai, I could participate actively in Math activities, even though my children were still young and in school. The annual Prarthana Janmadivas shivir-s at Khar Math, where I got an opportunity to serve all the tiny shivirarthi-s, plus the cakes for the shivir! As the years went by, Shantish and I were both involved in Math activities and we became global. I was invited to be the Secretary of Delhi Sabha, and Shantish was invited to be the Secretary of the Chitrapur Prarthana Office.

In Mumbai we looked forward to the annual plays during Dattajayanti which were scripted and directed by Sudhir Balwallymaam. Coordinating children from all Mumbai...
prophecy seems to have come true!

My akku Bhavani accompanied me for my next Seva Saptaha. It was a wonderful opportunity as Gurumata Sudha pachi and Sunita Naimpallypachi of Bengaluru were part of the Seva Dal. We would assemble after our duties in their room and listen to them narrating the Mahatmya of our Guru Swami and Swamiji. This is where I got to hear for the first time about Gurumata Sudha pachi’s prayer to the Lord to beget a child (before Swamiji’s birth) who would not only be bright, intelligent, healthy, good-looking and possess sadguna-s, but also be happy and make everyone else happy too. This was the most extraordinary prayer I could ever imagine coming from a would-be mother!

When we go through life’s ups and downs, the Gurushakti is our sole anchor. Swamiji gives a lot of importance to keeping physically fit through exercise, asana-s, pranayama, Ninaad, guided meditation, Devi-Anuṣṭhan, puṭana to gain strength of mind and mental equilibrium. Seva Saptaha at Karla, Shirali and our Samadhi Math-s helps us in so many ways to connect with the Guru Saanidhya and transform ourselves.

After performing my third Seva Saptaha with the Delhi volunteers, a lot of changes for the better took place suddenly in our lives. The children took up professional courses down south and Shantish decided to quit his media job. We decided to settle in Bengaluru where our extended family lived and because of the Math and proximity to Shirali. We drove over a period of four days and three nights across five states to reach Bengaluru by road with our two furry canine friends. It was an exciting adventure as we did not know where we would stop for the night and yet, by Gurukripa we would get good enough accommodation along with our doggo companions!

Once we settled in Bengaluru, Shantish and I were given the task of digitizing the Chitrapur Sunbeam archive for the Math. Along with Prarthana activities I also got involved in the Samvit Sudha hub along with Shobha Ulpe pachi and Trupti Bantwal pachi. I learnt a whole new set of skills in the process - from communicating with the corporate sales heads to organizing volunteers’ teams for the corporate events and keeping track of monthly hub-sales to reporting sales after each event. I even learned to make soap. It was exciting! Swamiji creates opportunities for each one of us to not only utilize whatever skill we have, but also gives us avenues to learn new ones.

In the Guruksetra, things cannot always be deciphered or explained and thus, during the 2019 Chaturmas at Mallapur we received Aadesh from HH Swamiji for Shantish and me to be part of the website team. We were summoned to Shirali to discuss the management of the website content. We were blessed to have received Saanidhya of Pujya Swamiji on multiple occasions in quick succession at Shirali, Vittla, Bengaluru and Karla.

“When the anugraha of Shiva begins to manifest, situations are created for you which compel you to grow and provide an occasion for you to express whatever you have received” – HH Shrimat Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji.

In Jan 2021, I received the Aadesh to become the Secretary of Bengaluru Sabha. I accepted it immediately, confident that this was yet another opportunity to grow.

I feel blessed to have been in seva and I owe my growth entirely to the Gurushakti.

In seva the shishya is tested through myriad circumstances to get the best out of him and make him understand his true nature in the process.

“Akhandamandalakaram vyaplam tena characharam, tapadam darshitam yena tasmai Shree Gurave namaha” To that Mahaguru, my salutations!

In this special year of Sayujyam we are blessed to have our vibrant Mathadhipati and jwalanta Guruparmpara to guide and bless us. Let us strive hard to ensure Prasannostu Guruhsadad …and make our janma sarthaka in every way!..
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Dear Papa,

You live within us forever. The values you have instilled and your memories we cherish have been guiding and inspiring us through the years and will continue to do so in times to come.

We fondly remember you and miss you.

Aruna & Bharat Raut  Suman & Nandan Nadkarni  Nutan & Shantanu Balvally
Snehal & Bhavtesh Raut  Riya & Rohan Nadkarni  Shibani Balvally
Binita & Nishant Mallapur
Harshita Raut  Devavrata Balvally
Anika & Ishani Mallapur
As we deal with the present, it’s important that we be mindful of expenses and also not lose sight of the future. So while we save money to meet immediate and short term expenses, let’s also continue to secure our long-term financial freedom.
The 71st Year, The Day Of Our Constitution was Celebrated across India
Indian Constitution is a Shining Full Moon

By Arun R Upponi

Just before writing this article, let me give my rich tribute, to my late Justice uncle, B. G. Murdeshwar who as the Secretary in the Ministry of law, had drafted some of the historic cases such as “Privy Purse”, “GolaknathVs State of Punjab”, “Keshavanand Bharati Vs Kerala State”, besides giving a ground work to our constitution with Sir B. N. Rao.

Now let us see the valid features of the constitution.

Description of the Constituent Assembly:
(Authors, Dr. Basu, Dr. Tope and Dr. Pylee, tidily illustrated the topic of Indian Constitution)

The Indian Independence Act of 1947 was a unique Act of British Parliament. It gave birth to the two independent nations of India and Pakistan and the two separate Constituent Assemblies, for each of the countries along with the independent power, to freely frame and adopt any constitution of their choice. The Indian Constitution was framed by the Indian representatives, without any outsiders’ interference. On 11th December 1946, Dr Rajendra Prasad was elected Chairman of the Constituent Assembly.

The members of this constituent Assembly were elected by the Provincial Assemblies, whose members were not elected on the basis of the adult franchise.

Drafting of the Constitution:
The lengthiest constitution drafting, containing 395 articles and 9 schedules, was prepared by a select committee, of which, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, was the Chairman. Some of the other members were also members of the Parliament - Dr Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Nehru, Munshi Ayyangar and Krishna Swami Aiyer etc. This was passed by the constituent Assembly on Nov 4, 1949, and the constitution was inaugurated, on Jan 26, 1950.

All the important constitutions of the world were deeply studied, by our founding fathers of the Constitution.

On the model of the U.S. constitution, Fundamental Rights were included. Federal system was adopted from the constitutions of U.S., Canada and Australia. Then, they imported Directive Principles, from the constitution of Ireland, while the President’s power to suspend the Fundamental Rights, in Emergency, were copied from the Weimar Constitution of Germany. The Cabinet System of the Government was borrowed from the British Constitution.

Some of the distinct features of the Constitution:

There is a single written Constitution for the whole of India. In the U.S.A and in other federations, the federating units enjoying the rights make their own individual constitutions. Directive Principles of State Policy, are not guaranteed, by the constitution. They direct the State to apply the Principles, in making laws, but are not enforceable, in any Court of Law.

Moreover, our Constitution does not recognise dual citizenship. There is only one citizenship in India. But in the U.S. the people are not only citizens of America, but are also of the States, in which they live. Our Constitution, also provides a single integrated Judiciary. The Supreme Court and the High Court are a uniform system of civil and criminal laws, in India.

Fundamental Rights:
Dr Laksi said in his books that our Constitution provides for a large number of Fundamental Rights which are guaranteed to the citizens of India. The Supreme Court and the High Courts are guardians of these Fundamental Rights.

Special Status:
Further, it is important to know that “Jammu and Kashmir”, was given a special status and was allowed to make its own state constitution, Even, other provisions of the constitution, did not directly apply to Jammu & Kashmir, but depended upon an order of the President, only in consultation with that State Government for which Provisions had to be made in Article 370.

Indian & U.S. Courts:
Lastly, our independent Judiciary has the power of “Judicial Review” like the U.S. Judiciary. The Supreme Court (SC) and the High Court (HC), interpret the constitution, which provides single Judicial System, for India.

The SC and HCS in India, administer both the Union and the State Laws. In the U.S. the Federal Courts administer the Federal Laws, while the State Courts administer the State Laws. Hence, both the Federal & State Courts are separate and independent of each other.

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Ruskin Bond is an Indian author of British descent, born (1934) to English parents who lived in pre-Independent India. He had a difficult childhood. With parents separated, he went through a series of boarding schools. As a single parent, his father took very good care of him. Ruskin never forgot the advice his father gave him “Paddle your own canoe”, and for the rest of his life he has done precisely that. Tragically losing his father when only 10, Bond went to UK briefly, but disliked the way of life there, and attitude of people there towards anyone from India. He quit Britain and cast his life boldly as a writer in a newly independent India, when few writers (even those writing in local languages) got recognition (or money). He completed a semi-autobiographical work “Room on the Roof” about an English boy Rusty, who does various jobs for a living in Dehradun, the old (sometime) British cantonment town. His vividly written work, published at age 23, earned him the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize, a major British literary award, in 1957. It was serialized a little later in the “Illustrated Weekly of India”, and as a schoolboy, I remember being enchanted by the life and times of Rusty, though I had never been to Dehradun, or seen a real English person! Cut to 2019. Browsing at our local bookstore, I heard a little girl possibly 8-9 years of age, pleading with her mother to buy her the same book, telling her “Mama, all my friends have read it, can’t you get it for me?”. I was amazed—six decades had not dimmed Bond’s writing charm and attraction!!

Living in Mussoorie and Dehradun for decades now, he has written to date more than 40 works in fiction, non-fiction, essays, anthologies and poetry on as diverse subjects as ghosts, railways, climate change, Himalayan flora and people and Life in general. He writes an uncomplicated style that is so natural to him, it disarms even the most cynical of readers. A style that comes from genuine feelings, for those who seek a change of pace or a renewal of faith in life (especially relevant in the current scenario), Bond reawakens our senses to the natural beauties, whether in Man or Animal around us. Some of his most inspired works have been triggered by the majesty of Himalayas and the common man’s interactions with that indomitable range of rock. Much like RK Narayan’s “Malgudi” in South India, Bond has mapped out and populated a unique literary landscape in the North. Throughout, he has woven characters, incidents (some historic, some imagined) and surrounding landscapes into fascinating pattern that creates word pictures in his readers’ minds. For instance, in a series of stories set in Agra, Shajahanpur, Bareilly he takes the reader for a tour of historic tombs of European traders, jewelers, soldiers and adventurers—from Italy, Portugal, England and France—who were visitors/residents at the Mughal courts, and who could not return and were buried in India. He even writes about searching for—and successfully finding—the tomb of John Lang, an English lawyer who fought court cases for Lakshmibai, the Rani of Jhansi in the 1840s! He was of course, unsuccessful, and the Rani clashed most powerful with the British in our first war of Independence, but Bond has woven a fascinating tale out of this facet of history.

Similarly, he writes with utterly familiar ease about Nature-combining a keen eye for the minutiae of trees, flowers, birds and water, and the Himalayas with their unique flora and fauna, much of it endangered.

His novellas and short stories have that amenability for being turned into visual media. “The Room On the Roof” was, some years ago, serialized by Doordarshan as ‘Ek Tha Rusty’, while “Junoon” was Shyam Benegal’s take on Bond’s novella “A Flight of Pigeons”. More recently, Vishal Bharadwaj made a film of the same name based on a Bond story “The Blue Umbrella”. Bond also made a cameo appearance in another Bharadwaj film “Saat Khoon Maaf” where he essays the role of a bishop with Priyanka Chopra (Jonas) in the title role. As a prolific writer for both adults and children, he was bestowed the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992, the Padma Shri in 1999 and the Padma Bhushan in 2014.

Turning his attention to the here and now, he turned his attention to the pandemic, he wrote” A Wonderful Life” in 2020, a pick-me-up in times when a grey and frightened world faced the despair of a pandemic, unprecedented in our civilization. In this book, he cuts through the gloom with a clear eye, seeking out the joys and positive truths that can be found in the corners of our lives. Very often, he has been asked what he likes about his life in his adopted country—India. He says “That I have been able to write for so long. I started writing at age 17, and am still writing.”

In an earlier essay “On Being an Indian” he explains his Indian identity “Race did not make me one, Religion did not make me one. But History did. And in the long run, it is History that counts” Wise words from a Master Story Teller that ring so true through Time!! And as I (and my grandchildren) pick up one of his books for a re-re-read, we realize that.
As a strategy, extended public restrictions are not optimal to fight Covid-19 because they create a ‘see-saw’ between recoveries in health and economic activity.

Rapidly scaling up vaccination, on the other hand, presents a one-shot – or two-jab – solution that can deliver both, health and economic rebound, simultaneously and faster.

But the pace of vaccinations in India has been sluggish. During India’s first Covid-19 wave, restrictions were relaxed relatively faster as daily cases declined, allowing faster mending. But this time around, governments remain wary.

Even after the second wave peaked, several states which were expected to unlock their economies, extended curbs – with conditional relaxations. These are not expected to be completely lifted anytime soon, given that the risk from infections remains. At the all-India level, daily new cases have declined to ~30,000 but there are regions where the situation remains grim. Kerala, for instance, has been recording 18,000 to 20,000 new daily cases. Maharashtra, though lower saw the daily case count at~6,000 cases (as of August 10, 2021).

Amid this, worryingly, the vaccination rate in India remains below desired levels, mainly due to lack of supplies. The result – just 8% of the total population is fully vaccinated and 29% has received at least one jab.

In the US and the UK, 50-60% of the population is fully inoculated and 60-70% has received at least one jab. As per an International Monetary Fund report, China is on track to fully vaccinate its adult population by end-2021 given its substantial production capacity.

Countries with higher vaccination coverage, i.e., those with over 40-50% of the population inoculated, are seeing a faster catch-up in economic activity. This is only logical, given that higher coverage reduces the risks associated with relaxing restrictions and social distancing. It plays a huge role in assuaging fear (of getting infected) and allows for resumption of economic activity, as has been the case in the US and UK.

This is clearly reflected in the relevant indices which measure the performance of the manufacturing and services sectors. These indices are not only steadily rising and significantly above the ‘expansion’ mark, but are also much above their long-term averages. Whereas for those countries with vaccination coverage less than 20%, economic activity is either sluggish, or a pick-up, if any, seems fragile.

Two, rapid vaccination is helping laggard sectors – mainly services – catch up faster. This is something that even policy support alone could not do till now. For instance, in the US, households are reorienting their consumption toward services, thanks to the improving healthcare situation effectively supported by rapid vaccination that has helped reduce restrictions.

Most forecasters believe a sizeable pick-up in services demand will be a lead driver of consumer spending in the second half of 2021.

Back to India, where economic recovery has been slow and uneven across sectors and geographies – the government targets to fully vaccinate the adult population by end-2021. That translates to covering half of the population – a tall order indeed, given the challenges.

One, our population is huge. And two, vaccine supplies are short.

To achieve the government’s target of fully vaccinating 100% of the adult population by December-end, the country needs to administer 8-9 million vaccine doses per day. In comparison, so far only 3.8-3.9 million vaccines per day were given in June and July on average. Though this rose to 4.7 million per day in the first 10 days of August, it remains much below the required run-rate.

The supply issue was expected to be sorted by August, as higher domestic production and imports were expected to kick-in. So far though, there is only a mild pick-up in vaccine administration but with five vaccines having received an approval for import and domestic production, things are expected to move faster.

But, once vaccine supplies and government procurement start increasing, the next big hurdle is deploying them.

At that stage, as a study by Formal et al3 suggests, some of the primary challenges that could arise include: (a) safe and secure transportation and delivery of vaccines; (b) fair vaccination allocation to priority groups; and (c) encouraging uptake of vaccines.

While the vaccination drive so far India has fairly managed the first two, it is the third that the government will have to focus on, to cover maximum ground in minimum time.

In that, vaccine hesitancy could pose a barrier. Resistance to vaccines could rise as caseloads dip. Or, there could be delays in acceptance of newer vaccines that enter the market, as the above cited study suggests.

To tackle this, the government will have to engage in clear communication to create awareness about vaccine safety, side-effects and trust, and perhaps, also provide incentives. In the US, as resistance to vaccines rose, local governments announced a number of incentives including lotteries, college scholarships (for those in the 12-18 age group), savings bonds, and cash payouts to encourage people to get inoculated.

In all, vaccination is our only safe bet. But until then, policy support will have to be deployed for segments that have been hurt the most or that suffered a second blow.

Besides ramping up healthcare infrastructure spending, it is crucial to extend income and employment support to smaller firms, the rural economy, services sector and the urban poor – the four segments most likely affected by re-imposition and extension of restrictions on economic activity.
Rising medical expenses alongside dwindling incomes would have also added to the pain.

If we are indeed on the road to the December vaccination target, economic recovery should start in the third quarter once there is better clarity and progress on vaccinations, and strengthen into the fourth quarter of this fiscal and the first quarter of the next.

Dipti Deshpande (nee Saletore) is Principal Economist at CRISIL Limited. The views expressed in this article are personal. If you have any comments on the article or wish to give me a feedback, please send an email to me at dipti.saletore@gmail.com.

(This is an updated version of the article first published in The Economic Times on June 4, 2021 and can be accessed at this link https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/the-need-for-speed-by-not-vaccinating-rapidly-india-is-delaying-a-full-throttle-recovery/articleshow/83224528.cms?from=mdr)

Footnotes
1R Agarwal and G Gopinath (May 2021). A Proposal to End Covid-19 Pandemic. IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/2021/004
2Though fears of the Delta variant are on the rise, it is reported that higher incidence of such cases is in regions where vaccination rates are low
3R Forman, S Shah, P Jeurissen, M Jit and E Mossialos (2021). COVID-19 vaccine challenges: What have we learned so far and what remains to be done? Published by Elsevier B.V.

May Fever
Smt Krishna Basrur

The garden is alight,
Every tree’s on fire,
Orange, red and golden flames
Leaping ever higher.

Oh, may this fire go on and on,
Never to be quenched.
Alas! The rains will soon be here,
The flowers dying, drenched.

Still, the years revolving go,
And the turning days
Will bring the mayflower back again,
With other countless Mays.

I may or may not see again
This ever glorious sight.
Let younger eyes and younger hearts
Thrift with this same delight.

When lovely May comes tripping back,
With the returning days,
And mischievously flicks the match,
That sets the trees ablaze.

Smt. Krishna Basrur, 95, is a former English lecturer and a consumerist who occasionally writes poems. Email: kdbasrur@gmail.com

Tribute
MALU TAYEE
- By Kalindi Muzumdar

In the early hours of 28th June ’21 my Malutayee (Smt Mira Hattiangdi) passed away. Malutayee, my sister-in-law Sharayu Kowshik and I had decided to call each other by turns and just a day before we had had a long and pleasant chat. Little did I know that it was to be the last.

Tayee was my paternal cousin and we grew up together in a large joint family in Gamdevi Housing Society. She paired with my aunt Sulochanakka, while I teamed up with her younger brother Anand.

I remember a few incidents from our childhood. One day in kindergarten, a girl admired the dress Malutayee was wearing. Promptly Tayee took it off and handed it to the delighted girl!

Tayee was always impeccably dressed, even as a child, and wanted others to be well dressed too. If she thought I was sloppy she would tweak my nose! In later years I often teased her that she helped to shape my nose!

Another time, my uncle (Tayee’s father) bought a large jigsaw puzzle for her. She would spend hours sprawled on the floor working at it with deep concentration, with strict instructions that she was not to be disturbed!

During the evacuation in World War 2, our grandfather took us all to Dharwar. We had a large courtyard which Tayee soon developed into a beautiful garden. I particularly remember a tomato plant which was her pride and joy. We would often pluck the tender tomatoes and eat them raw!

Soon after matriculation, Tayee was married and she fitted in beautifully into married life. Soon she was a loving mother to Ramoo (Ramcharan) and Sudha.

Tayee was always artistic and she developed an interest in sewing, embroidery and painting, at which she excelled. Over the years she imparted her skills to several ladies who used to visit her home.

She was associated with many organizations like Seva Sadan and Saraswat Mahila Samaj. Her contribution to the Samaj was especially long. She served as Secretary and later as President. Even in later years, she continued to encourage the Samaj and her suggestions were always appreciated.

Malutayee was also associated with the translation of Rasachandrika into English - a classic that has found its way into most Saraswat homes.

Another talent of Tayee’s was her adornment of brides on their wedding day. She was often invited to dress up brides (I was one of the beneficiaries!) and was particularly noted for weaving a “veni” of organdy leaves into their hair.

In later years Tayee became more spiritually inclined. She told me that she was only interested in reading religious books. We often had long discussions and she would urge me to be more patient with God! It was her deep faith that helped her to bear the tragic events in her life.

The end was sudden and I will always miss her, but I take comfort in the fact that my Tayee lived a full and fulfilled life and left this world peacefully.
Most people of my generation know that Kudmul Ranga Rao, the Kudmulpijja of this book, was a social reformer. Younger generations may not even have heard of him. All his personal papers including letters from great men of the times—like Gandhiji, Dr Ambedkar, Rabindranath Tagore, C.F. Andrews, Gopalkrishna Gokhale and others—were lost when his lawyer’s illiterate wife sold them off as wastepaper to the raddi-wallah.

But memories remain. Before these were also lost, Praemi Rao, his great granddaughter, collected the few remaining papers and interviewed those who had known or seen Ranga Rao or had information about him. This book is the painstakingly and lovingly researched result of her labours. The book written by her son, Pandrang Row—a copywriter and brand strategy consultant—was a revelation. Kudmulpijja, as he is called throughout the book, was South Kanara’s very own Mahatma, a man to inspire future generations of our community.

The early chapters describe Kudmulpijja’s environment and the hardships he faced. He was born in a poor household. His father Devappaya, a Chitrapur Saraswat Brahmin, worked as a clerk for Rs. 15/- a month. Bringing up a family of seven children was hard. However, food was cheap. The family did not starve, but lived in poverty.

Married at twelve to Rukminiamma, nine, he lost his father at sixteen, leaving him to bear the burden of educating his brothers and finding matches for his sisters.

As a teacher, his monthly salary was 8/-. As a popular, successful teacher, he succeeded in educating his brothers and settling his sisters. While teaching, he completed his matriculation and obtained a degree from University College, Mangalore. Looking for a more lucrative occupation he studied law and became a successful criminal lawyer. He later changed to Civil Law. He soon became known as ‘the poor man’s lawyer’ because of his extreme kindness and generosity to poor clients, whom he charged nothing! He once obtained compensation for a poor Harijan woman who had been raped and impregnated by an upper caste man.

As a pleader, travelling all over Dakshin Kanara, he saw the outcast Panchnamas, condemned by the accident of birth to live in grinding poverty at the mercy of their employers and with no hope of improvement for future generations. Scavenging, skinning of carcasses and labouring in the landlord’s rice fields were the only occupations open to them. They could neither own property nor build houses. Even their shadow was a “pollution” according to the old Hindu caste system.

Hindu widows were sadly maltreated. Their heads were shaved. They could eat only leftovers after the family had eaten. They could never remarry. Considered ‘inauspicious,’ they could not attend festive occasions like marriages. Child brides were married to old widowers as men could marry any number of times. The Devadasi system allowed unwanted girls to be sold to temples to be used for prostitution by the priests. All these abominations Ranga Rao was aware of, as also the sufferings of prisoners in jails. The yearning to fight these evils impelled him to give up his lucrative career in favour of social reform.

He knew education alone could not lift the Panchnamas or Koragas out of the degradation they were sunk in. No school would admit them. Using his own meagre resources and funds from friends and well-wishers, he set up special schools for the outcasts. Though dirt and faeces were thrown on the school and students beaten up by hired goons, nothing could stop Ranga Rao. Though two schools had to be closed, the third prospered. The teaching was so exceptional, that upper caste children were later sent to the school. He set up the Depressed Classes Mission in Kodialbail and opened special schools all over South Kanara.

He persuaded widows to wear blouses to cover themselves and actively promoted remarriage. Breaking caste barriers he permitted his daughter Radhabai to marry Dr. Subbarayan, a Mudaliar. His house was always open for the celebration of inter-caste marriages.

His campaign in South Kanara against the Devadasi system was only partially successful. The system still exists in some parts of the country.

His activities being considered contrary to Hindu tenets, he was excommunicated by the 8th guru of the Chitrapur Saraswat Community, Shri Pandurangashram Swami—and totally ostracised by Hindus. Barbers refused to shave him, ‘dhobis’ refused to wash his clothes; his wife and daughters were insulted. Nothing could shake him. He continued his work with the full support of his family and admirers. The next guru Shri Anandashram Swamiji readmitted him to the community.

Ranga Rao tackled all social evils; and most of his attempts were successful. His main achievement was the
upliftment of the depressed classes through education. Today they have become IAS officers, army officers, lawyers, professors and businessmen, all because of one man’s dedication to their cause. He promoted women’s education and widow remarriage.

In 1934, Gandhiji visiting the DCM, announced at a public meeting that he had taken inspiration from Ranga Rao’s movement to eradicate untouchability.

Reading the book, I came across the names of people I had seen when they were old and bedridden. One was Dr Benegal Raghavendra Rao - once a famous doctor working with Ranga Rao; sharing the same ideals. He established the Ishwarananda Mahila Sevashram in memory of Ranga Rao who took the name Ishwarananda when he took up sanyaas towards the end of his life. The ashram provides a home for destitute children and working girls.

Molahalli Shiva Rao whom I saw as a wizened old man was the founder of the Kanara District Central Co-op. Bank. There must be many more distinguished Saraswats who are forgotten today.

Ranga Rao too may have been forgotten but for this timely tribute of love and admiration by Praemi and Pandurang to this great man, their Kudmulpijja.

(The book is available on amazon.in)

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**Personalia**

Young Ashwin Cherkal, now in 30s born to Sri Niranjan and late Smt Chitra Cherkal, in Manjeswaram near Kasargod in Kerala, and later shifted to Mangalore in 1997. He graduated from Mangalore University and joined service in SVC Bank. His interest in History made him explore historical places and monuments and unearth some unknown and forgotten information about such places. Ashwin has now started a page under “Paaya Wata Hi Saraswatanchi” on Facebook, covering various Temples of Amchis in Karnataka giving their brief history and sharing the pictures too. He is getting good response for his good work. He also has a YouTube channel under, ‘Letz explore with Ashwin Cherkal’ where he shares his experience and information of his exploration of interesting places. He is also intending to cover Goa and other places after the covid restrictions are lifted. He deserves three cheers for creating and renewing the connect of Amchis with our historical places of our ancestors.

Krish Rao secured 99% in his Class 10 Exam, which was even more special given the challenges of this being a ‘Covid’ year. This special day was full of congratulatory calls from friends and family wishing him all the success for the future. His Principal called to personally congratulate him and mentioned it is the highest marks ever secured by any student in the schools long illustrious history. The journey to topping his School began when he was in grade 6 when he noticed a board outside his Principal’s office mentioning the names of the Schools Class 10 toppers from the earlier batches. That day he decided he wanted to get his name on that board, which led to him doubling his commitment to get full marks in every test. The results of his Class 10 are the outcome of this four-year long pursuit. These marks also helped him get into JamnabaiNarsee School’s (JNS) coveted ISC class for Grade 11 & 12. The world of Capital Markets has always fascinated him. Going forward he wants to pursue his education with a focus on Mathematics and begin his studies as a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA). This has led him to already doing Courses with the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). He aspires to eventually do his MBA with a specialization in Finance at an Ivy League college in UK or USA and work in the Investment Banking sector.

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**The Eternal Force**

No words of cheer
Nor bouquets dear
No flowers
Nor gifts
Nor cards galore.
Nevertheless, the heart beats
To a solemn rhythm
Of fulfilment of a selfless common goal
That brought happiness, peace and solace
To many a weatherworn
No medal, nor trophy, nor greeting
Can outdo the conscience roar
‘You Did It’
‘Keep on going on’
As Guidance, Support and the Eternal Force keeps inspiring
To tide my way across.

Vanita Kumta
How Far Back Could Human Memory Go?
In Remembrance of Ladli Nath Renu

BY GAYATRI MADAN DUTT

We know the famous story of the ‘Great Flood that Covered the Earth’ which is linked to Manu of the Puraanas. Other mythic motifs are the story of humanity’s ‘First Parents’ and the tale of the ‘Primordial Egg’ which broke open, and from which the sky, the earth, and the galaxies emerged. These tales are found diligently preserved in the mythologies of human groups scattered across the world. Recently, South Asia-scholar at Harvard University, Michael Witzel, used scientific estimations from genetics and archaeology, and came to the conclusion that these myths originated over 40,000 years ago.

It is staggering to think that these stories could have survived over such a span of time simply by being informally passed down from generation to generation.

There is another body of memory which has been more formally passed down over many thousands of years: the Vedas of Ancient India. As scholar Edwin Bryant has said, the Vedas have been handed down by a system of transmission which has “no known parallel anywhere else in the world”. In this system, the Vedic mantras were, and are to this day, taught and memorized word by word in a forward oration, and then, word by word in a backward reading, accompanied by determined movements of the hands which indicate tonal variation and stress on syllables, these being attempts to ensure precision of the text. There are other more complex forms of memorization such as the ‘braid recitation’ (jataapaathah) by which the words of the verse are committed to memory in the sequence 12 21 12, 23 32 23 and so on. In the ‘dense recitation’ (ghanapathaah) form, the words are memorized in the sequence 12 21 123 321 123, 23 32 234 432 234 and so on. In all, eleven forms of memorization are known. In Witzel’s words, these elaborate methods of memorization have enabled these verses to reach us with the fidelity of “tape recordings.”

Many Vedic verses, according to Witzel, are “contemporary” in their compositions; that is, they were composed almost immediately after the events which they describe, took place. We have seen how mythology could take human memory back more than 40,000 years. Readers will be surprised to know that there are Vedic verses which appear to be records of an event that took place in a far earlier epoch. If these verses were composed almost immediately during the course of that unimaginably ancient event; almost “contemporaneously”, as Witzel believes, then these compositions would take human memory even further back in time than mythology could. The event mentioned in these particular verses is the ‘taming’ of fire by early human ancestors.

Sanskrit scholar and socio-anthropologist, Ladli Nath Renu, viewing the Vedas as repositories of deep-time human memory, searched Vedic content for ancient remembrances. His studies suggest that some Vedic verses are records that our early ancestors left for us of their observations of the behaviours of water, earth, and especially wildfire, which could then be used for human benefit. As these observations proceeded, language too evolved side-by-side, growing more and more sophisticated “over four yugas” (chaturyugeshu), (possibly four language stages), across which the Vedas were painstakingly transmitted by the shishyas of the maharshis (Bhagavata Puraana 12.6.46).

In order to talk about fire, discuss its nature with their team-mates, and pass it on to posterity, human ancestors would have struggled for expression. This effort would have lifted their existing simpler language to a new and higher level of compositionality. Their language faculty would have attained the beginnings of an action called ‘connectionism’ wherein the elements of two different entities are ‘linked’ or compared, thereby creating a simile/metaphor. This is considered a unique combinatorial capacity acquired by humans which would later enable the birth of poetry. Note these possible first-era observational jottings made during the study of wildfire; also note the present tense used in most of them, which suggests that they were immediately or “contemporaneously” recorded, and also the quality of the similes used. Readers are sure to find pleasure in going through these delicately beautiful socio-anthropological translations by Renu:

... in those ancient days (poorvah), fire (agne) made its appearance (bhavasii) unannounced (atithih), getting ignited on its own (svadhaavaah)...

... the forest (vanaanaam) is the source (garbhah) ... of this (yah) fire...

... it spreads (ema) and grows vast (mahi) ... It resembles a horse (ashvah) charming (yamasaanaah) fodder with its mouth (aasaa). It darts forth (vijehamaataah) like (na) ... the horse’s tongue (jivhaam) protruded for a bite” (Rigveda 6.3.4).

... the tops of its flames (tejah) get sharpened (shisheeta) like (na) the edges (dhaaraam) of a missile (ayasah)...

... its flames (shochishaah) are resonant (raaraapeeti). They sound like the chatter of a gathering of friends (mitramahaah)...

The next verse, in past tense, appears to be the transmitted memory of that long-awaited moment when wildfire’s power was finally harnessed:

“In those ancient days (poorve), the Devas(devaasah) [those divinised early human ancestors] stretched out (chid) dry sticks (sudeetibihhi) as if as an offering (eedhire) to it (yam) [forest fire], which lapped at them with its pleasantly-flaming tongue (mandrajivham) ... That was the moment (sah hi) when the experiment of kindling fire by human effort became a fact (satyah) [or that was the moment of truth]” (Rigveda 5.25.2).
संसारु

जन्म मृत्यु एकू खेल्नु
म्होणु संसारु सोडूक जायना
निशबांतु आविलेले जाता
म्होणु थंड बैसुक जायना

वाटयांतु वावळेले ते जेवण
जेवले शिवाय पोट भरना
हातपाय धाड्डावनु केल्लेले होर्तू
जेवण तयार जायना

निशबांतु आविलेले जाता
म्होणु थंड बैसुक जायना

पाणाच्या मृत्यु आजी, समुदायाची राहतो
गाधव्यात तू, एकटा, अंदिरी भी एकटी

ब्यक्तीच्या प्रेमापायी, आले तुक्या संगे
विनवणी ऐकूली, भूसळी राहिलो - 1

लटका राग विसर ना आता, जवळ ये ना सावक्या
बाप रहुमा नाम भी, ऐकते भूपाळ्या - 2

युगान मागे युगे जाती, वाट पाहणे भी ही थकली
तुझे सुंदर रूप पाहण्या, आस मला लागली - 3

टाळ-शूंदराच्या लघुत, वारी ही नाचते
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आयुष्यात अनेक दरवळ हंस उपश्रृंखला येतात. ते केही नाकानेच नाही तर मनाची उपलब्धी करतात. त्या मागच्या अनेक आठवणाची असतात. प्रत्येक आठवणीचा गंध वेगळा तसा दरवळ ही केही. त्या दरवळचे अनेक आठवणी जायचे होतात. विस्मृती गेलेले क्षण ठपले होते. त्या आठवणीचे पदर वेगंगे कसरतात. गंध ही केही असतो. त्या पुढे भाजविला होतो. त्या आठवणीचा गंध वेगळाने हृदयात होतात. त्या आठवणीचा गंध ही वेगळा असतो. त्या इटुन जगावस्तून वाळतात. त्या आठवणीच्या गंधावर सूर्याचा झप्पक झाल्यावर वाळतात. त्या आठवणीची नाकानेच झालेली आहे आज. त्या नाकानेच झालेली आहे आज.
रण महोत्सव
शीला शिराली

रण महोत्सव वार्षिक। गुजरात में सर्वोच्च रण महोत्सव का केंद्र तालुका आस्सा। तारूं, आशिर्वाद वालों तथा समाज में परिवर्तन शिक्षा के लिए समर का जिले में समाज के लिए उद्यम दिन के आज़ादी।

अश्रीधी आणि एक निर्माता कार्यक्रम कार्यक्रम अवश्य आपने दो दिन दौरे पर भी आपकी सहभागिता में उत्साहित।

मानवीय समृद्धि के आगे आपने दो दिन दौरे पर भी आपकी सहभागिता में उत्साहित।

पर्यटकों की आपने दो दिन दौरे पर भी आपकी सहभागिता में उत्साहित।

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Here & There

Bengaluru Local Sabha for the month of July 2021

Special programmes: On 5th July, on the auspicious occasion of Yogini Ekadashi, Samaradhana of Smt Umabai Aroor pachi was observed with Shivapujana and Ashtavadhana Seva at the Math. On 20th July, on the occasion of Deva Shayani Ashadi Ekadashi, Akhanda Bhajan was held through MS Teams in which 53 sadhaka-s including 5 yuva-s rendered melodious bhajan-s. The divinity of the occasion got enhanced as the Akhanda bhajan concluded with Aarti at the Math which was performed by Shri Satyendra Sorabmam and was simultaneously showcased online by yuvati Kum Deepika Sorab for the benefit of sadhaka-s. On 24th July, on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima which also marked the prarambha of the Chaturmasa Vrata, sadhaka-s including 11 yuva-s participated in the online Samuhika Gurupujana conducted on 24th July (for all Sabha-s) and also in the Gurupujana organised on 25th July by local sabha as a part of the Sayujyam Seva.

Regular Programmes:

i. The series of talks on the Bhagavadgita by Smt. Dr. Sudha Tinaikar commenced online on Shri Chitrapur Math website from 3rd June and is held every Wednesday.

ii. Girvana Pratishtha classes, Prarthana and Sambhashana Varga classes are being conducted online.

iii. Gayatri Japa Anushthaan is being performed online every Sunday morning from 0700 hrs upto 0830 hrs.

iv. Daily morning puja-s and evening puja-s on Monday-s, Thursday-s and Friday-s were performed by Shri Satyendra Sorabmam.

v. Durga Namaskar was performed every Friday by Ved Shri Vijay Karnad Bhatmam with the assistance of Shri Satyendra Sorabmam.

Reported by Saikrupa Nalkur

Dadar Sabha Report June – August 2021

Bhajan Seva via Google Meet, Manthan via Whatsapp, and Devi Anushthaan continued as per the prescribed schedule.

On 12th June, Samaradhana of HH Shrimath Pandurangashrama Swamiji was observe. The online programme comprised narration about Swamiji’s Mahima by Sudha Bhat pachi and Sunila Rao pachi, followed by Bhajan Seva.

To celebrate the occasion of Janmadivas of ParamaPujyaParijnanashrama Swamiji III, Samuhik Gurupujan was performed via Google Meet on 13th and 15th June. On both days there were 25+ sadhaka-s participating, and 15-16 sadhaka-s performing the Gurupujan.

On 14th June, the Sayujyam team organised an Online Sadhana Panchakam to commence the special celebrations for the 75thJanmadivas year of Parama Pujya Parijnanashrama Swamiji III. Sanika Balwally recited the Sabha Prarambha Prarthana and Shri Guru Paduka Stotram, and Mohit Karkal chanted shlokas for Shri Gurupujan, as well as the Shiva Manas Puja.

Mohit Karkal and Sanika Balwally participated in the Yuvadhara Manthan on 27th June, held via MS Teams. The topic discussed was the Navaspandana video, Hanuman – An icon of devotion and surrender.

Dadar Sabha, along with Honnavar, Bankkokda, Ankgola, Mallapur and Kolkata Sabhas offered Samuhik Sayujyam Seva at the Lotus Feet of Parama Pujya Swamiji on 4th July and 11th July. This included Online Sadhana Panchakam from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and Vimarma from 4 pm to 5 pm. It was a well-attended event with 45-50 sadhaka-s participating on both days. Another aspect of the Samuhik Sayujyam Seva was the Gayatri Anushthaan, conducted by Dr. Chaitanya Gulvady on 3rd July. 30 sadhaka-s from various sabhas including Dadar, Gokarn, Honnavar, Karwar and Mallapur participated. The session was conducted via Google Meet.

On the auspicious occasion of Guru Poonima, on 24th July, a global Online Gurupujan was conducted. Sadhaka-s from all over the world, including sadhaka-s from Dadar Sabha offered Gurupujan at the Lotus Feet of Parama Pujya Swamiji and our Guruparampara. Mohit Karkal led the Gurupujan chanting.

The 1st of August saw a unique event in the form of the Virtual Yuvadhara Open Mic, where yuva-s expressed their love and gratitude towards Parama Pujya Swamiji, our Math and Guruparampara, through some beautifully worded poems and monologues. Two of our yuva-s, DivyaVinekar and Mohit Karkal co-ordinated and participated in the event.

Report compiled by Mohit Karkal

Our Institutions

Gamdevi Saraswat Mahila Samaj celebrated Ashadhi kadashi virtually on 19th July 2021 via Zoom at 4 pm. An audio program was conducted, based on our great Sant Tulsidasji’s life. It was an audio recording of a program which was held in 2002 in the presence of our Pujya Sadyojat Shankarashrama Swamiji by the artists of Saraswati Vrinda Gaan. Credits go to Mrs. Kalindi Kodial who preserved the audio for about 19 years and made it available to all for the day’s program.

Mrs. Shrikala Vinekar welcomed the members. ‘Tulsidas Charitra’ was narrated by Mrs. Kalindi Kodial in Hindi and its songs were composed by our very own Mrs. Geeta Yennemadi and were performed by the artists of ‘Saraswati Vrindagaan’. Mrs. Priya Bijur displayed a visual presentation related to the songs along with the audio. The audience were nostalgic while cherishing the memories of their friends and relatives whom they saw on screen and are no more with us.

The program concluded at 5:30pm with a vote of thanks by Mrs. Vidyalakshmi Kulkarni. Everybody appreciated the generous donations made by Mrs. Kalindi Kodial, Mrs. Maya Maskeri and Mrs. Geeta Yennemadi, for this programme.

Reported by Mrs. Vijayalaxmi S. Kapnadak

Report compiled by Mohit Karkal

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Reported by Mrs. Vijayalaxmi S. Kapnadak
Atharv Nadkarni, 8 years old, has been a very curious child from when he was a toddler. He started identifying letters and numbers when he was one and half year old. When he was around age 3, he began reading the Illustrated Oxford Dictionary. He could also do math calculations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division verbally. He spelt the longest word in the English dictionary, a 45 letter medical word. He could read Devanagari script. In addition to this, he knew all the Indian capitals and world capitals. He could tell you all the elements of the periodic table with their atomic number and symbols, Newton’s laws, Archimedes law of floatation, among others. His father states that one day when he was in Sr. Kg., he solved the Pythagoras theorem on the blackboard. He also developed his own website, www.atharvnadkarni.com when he was just 5 years old using HTML and CSS code. He could also play tunes on his keyboard without any formal training. He’s learning python, a programming language. Speaking of languages, he is currently learning Sanskrit and Portuguese. Recently, Atharv secured the second rank in the Wiz National Spelling Bee Mega Final representing his school and the state of Goa. He has been featured in leading Goan newspapers over the past few years for his exceptional abilities and interviewed by a Goan news channel (Prime TV) after he won the National Spelling Bee. Atharv’s interest in maths, computer programming is only growing. He likes to solve math and work on his laptop writing code. He likes to make videos on various topics of his interest which he writes script for, narrates and edits himself before uploading it to YouTube (www.youtube.com/athroid). He also has a blog section on his website where he writes about different topics of interest to him.

In his free time, he likes to play his Yamaha keyboard and sing songs. He says he would like to formally learn to read and write music. He is active on social media with a Facebook page (Atharv Mayur Nadkarni) an Instagram page (@atharvmn). He’s presently a student of a school in South Goa in the 3rd standard.

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**CLASSIFIEDS**

**BIRTH**

We are pleased to announce the arrival of baby boy Kiaan born to elated parents Shruti and Nakul Mallapur, proud grandparents Gayatri and Dr. Gautam Mallapur and Rajani Gulvadi on 24th July 2021.

**FOR SALE**

Available for sale 1bhk in Bavdhan, Pune. Area of flat is 575 sq ft and 100 sq ft terrace. Contact 9820248293 for further details.

**DOMESTIC TIDINGS**

**BIRTHS**

We welcome the following new arrivals:

Jul 24 : A baby boy (Kiaan) to Shruti and Nakul Mallapur at Mumbai

Aug 3 : A baby boy (Samar) to Ruchika and Sankalp Sainath Aidoor at Chicago

**OBITUARIES**

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

Jun 28 : Mira Gopal Hattiangdi (nee Malati Kowshik) (93) at Mumbai

Jun 28 : Ullal Gajanan Vittal Rao (90) at Ullal

Jul 5 : Suman Krishna Shirur (83) at Bangalore

Jul 11 : Tavanandi Ramachandra R (97) at Pune

Jul 13 : Retd. Brig. (Miss) Vijaya G Taggarsi (78) at Nerul, Navi Mumbai

Jul 19 : Muktha Balkrishna Rao (Ullal) (88) at Bangalore

Jul 19 : Arun Mangesh Shirali (74) at Udupi, Karnataka

Aug 5 : Ashalata Hemchandra Gokarn (nee Sirur) (81) at Mumbai

Aug 10 : Hattangadi Mangesh Bhat (66) of Vittla, at Mangalore

Aug 13 : Shobha Dilip Kagal (69) at Thane

**Errata:**

We regret not including in the Obituaries section of the August issue, the peaceful passing on of Smt. Mira Gopal Hattiangadi at Mumbai on June 28, 2021.
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Printer & Publisher – Devyani Bijoor on behalf of Kanara Saraswat Association
Published at Kanara Saraswat Association, Association Building, 13/1-2, Talmakiwadi, Near Talmaki Chowk, J. D. Marg, Mumbai 400007
Editor – Devyani Bijoor