

Kanara Saraswat

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE KANARA SARASWAT ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY, 2026

The Mangalore's 'My Shelter for Strays' at Badlapur



Shyamala



Shweta



Kishore Kumar



Shyam (helper)

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Kanara Saraswat

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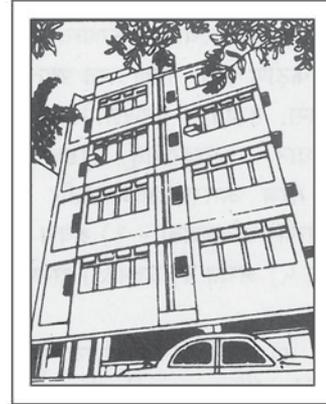
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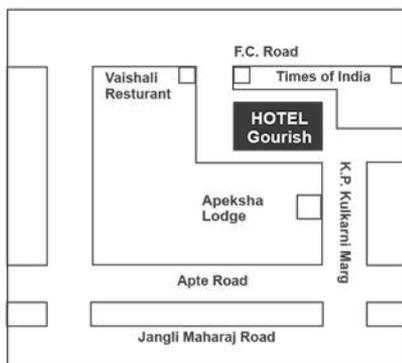
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From the President's Team

The recently held Saraswat Sammelan at Jodhpur on 20th & 21st December, 2025, marked a momentous chapter in the collective journey of the Saraswat community. Far beyond a conventional gathering, the Sammelan stood as a powerful symbol of cultural unity, spiritual continuity, and social harmony. Saraswats from across the country—stretching from Kashmir in the north to Kerala in the south—came together on a common platform, reaffirming their shared roots and collective aspirations.

One of the most significant aspects of the Sammelan was the august presence and blessings of Param Pujya Shrimat Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji and HH Shrimath Samyamindra Thirtha Swamiji of Kashi Math. Their gracious participation elevated the spiritual stature of the Sammelan and infused the proceedings with a deep sense of reverence and purpose. Through their guidance, discourses, and blessings, the Swamijis reminded the gathering of the timeless values of dharma, discipline, and service that have shaped the Saraswat way of life for centuries.

The Sammelan was a commendable initiative aimed at uniting Saraswats from Kashmir to Kerala, reflecting the vast geographical spread of the community. Despite regional differences in language, cuisine, and customs, the Sammelan beautifully demonstrated that the Saraswat identity is anchored in shared cultural roots, spiritual traditions, and a collective sense of belonging. Delegates and participants from various parts of the country actively engaged in discussions, cultural exchanges, and informal interactions, enriching the event with diverse perspectives and experiences.

Cultural programs formed a vibrant and engaging part of the Sammelan. Traditional music, devotional performances, and presentations on Saraswat history and heritage highlighted the richness of the community's legacy. These programs not only entertained but also educated, especially the younger generation, about the depth and diversity of Saraswat traditions. The Sammelan thus served as a bridge between generations, ensuring that age-old values and customs continue to inspire contemporary life.

Equally important was the atmosphere of camaraderie and mutual respect that prevailed throughout the event. The Sammelan provided a rare opportunity for Saraswats from different regions to meet, interact, and build lasting connections. Such interactions strengthened social bonds and encouraged collaboration in cultural, educational, and social initiatives for the future.

In his Ashirvachan, our Param Pujya Swamiji, Shrimat Sadyojat Shankarashram highlighted the timeless strength of Saraswat unity. He emphasized that while Saraswats may be geographically dispersed and linguistically diverse, their spiritual foundation, values, and traditions remain one and indivisible. Swamiji reminded the gathering that the Saraswat identity has endured for centuries, precisely because it has remained rooted in dharma, learning, discipline, and adaptability. He called upon the community to preserve these core values while responding thoughtfully to the challenges of modern times.

The choice of Jodhpur as the venue added a unique dimension to the Sammelan. The city's rich cultural heritage and historic grandeur provided a fitting backdrop for an event dedicated to preserving and celebrating tradition. The warm hospitality and meticulous organization further contributed to the success of the Sammelan.

In conclusion, the Saraswat Sammelan at Jodhpur was a great and visionary attempt to foster unity, pride, and continuity within the Saraswat community. Blessed by revered spiritual leaders and enriched by the participation of Saraswats from across India, the Sammelan reaffirmed a collective commitment to uphold cultural values while embracing the future with confidence. It will be remembered as an inspiring milestone in the ongoing journey of Saraswat unity and cultural resurgence.

Kishore G. Masurkar



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**'MULAKAT' with Shri Vinay Tonse
in conversation with Shri Rajiv Kallianpur – Co-Initiator
KSA-CSN**



**on Sunday 22nd February 2026 @ 5 PM
Venue – Shrimat Anandashram Hall, Ground Floor, KSA Building,
Talmakiwadi, Tardeo, Mumbai.**

Shri Vinay Tonse retired as Managing Director, SBI on 30th November 2025.

Please attend in large numbers.

KSA MC and KSA-CSN Task Force

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am extremely grateful to you and your team for a well written article. Thank you very much for the mighty effort.

Gratefully yours

J. Dayanand, Pondicherry

Dear Editor,

I was thrilled to see a Cover story on Dayanand Mam Jamalabad, who is 92 years old and is an extraordinarily intelligent individual.

Dayanand Mam is related to us from my wife's side and we had visited him and his late wife, in 1999 in Pondicherry. Both of them were IAS Officers, but decided to serve Aurobindo Ashram Pondicherry, from their young age.

We learnt much more about Dayanand Mam after reading this article in the magazine - than we knew him before. Thank you very much for such an educative write up.

Jairam Khambadkone, Mumbai

Dear Editor,

The January issue was a delightful read! First of all I would like to wish everyone a happy new year! The curator and film journalist Meenakshi Shedde's piece on her mother and elders made great reading! The focus on the Benegal family was insightful what with the auteur filmmakers Gurudutt Padukone and Shyam Benegal hailing from the same family! The California cops article was very good ! Overall a good start to 2026!

Sandeep Hattangady

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The Editor's Column

Dear Readers,

Our cover this February features the Mangalore family, which chose to get into animal welfare and started a shelter for strays which is located in Badlapur. Do read this inspiring tale of a committed family that has shunned creature comforts and chosen to serve animals in a difficult environment.

In his Military Musings column, Maj Gen B.N. Rao brings us an unknown author's story about a brave South Vietnamese Air Force Officer, Buang-Ly, who escaped the marauding North Vietnamese forces alongwith his family consisting his wife and five kids in a two seater Cessna 0-1 Bird Dog aircraft.

Jaidev Chandavarkar describes the festive atmosphere that prevails in California during the last quarter of the calendar year – from Halloween to Christmas.

The Earth Uncovered Series by Bhakti Ullal is about the legendary Magnetic Hill in Ladakh. Contrary to popular perception, the Magnetic Hill does not break the laws of Physics, but it does something far interesting. Quite a fascinating read!

Dr. Chaitanya Gulvady, Dharmapracharaka, Shri Chitrapur Math reports in detail about the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Health Camp that was conducted at Shirali under the aegis of the Shri Chitrapur Math Charitable Trust.

Part 2 of the Poornima Tithis that include Ashwin, Kartik, Margashirsha, Pausha, Magha and Phalgun are elaborated upon by Anjali Burde in her ongoing series.

Tanuja Nadkarni, resident of Shirali since 2011, writes about how a work visit by road took an adventurous turn while returning from CMC Vellore to Chitrapur, and her refreshing interlude in Konkani enroute.

Growing stress and mental health concerns demand a great need for finding solutions. Vidya Gunavanthe interviews Malavika Karnad Amladi, a practicing psychologist on this issue and possible solutions.

Anjali Burde's Superfoods juggernaut has now reached the letters N and O of the English alphabet. Do look up her recipe for a nutritious Oats Dosa.

In this month's Parisevanam, Divya Ramdeo and Shashank Udyawer report on the International Saraswat Brahmin Mahasammelana 2025 that was held in Jodhpur, Rajasthan during December, 2025.

As part of its ongoing series, KSA CSN's Mulakat will feature Vinay Tonse who recently retired as the MD of SBI, being interviewed by Rajiv Kallianpur at 5 pm on Sunday, 22nd February, 2026 in the Shrimad Anandashram Hall, Talmakiwadi, Mumbai. We invite our readers to attend in large numbers.

Ramkishore M. Mankekar

Kishore, Shyamala and Shweta's 'My Shelter for Strays'

RAMKISHORE M. MANKEKAR

After getting off the Central Railway local at Badlapur, I hop into an autorickshaw that takes me on a 10 kilometre ride to 'My Shelter for Strays' – which houses mainly distressed dogs that have been rescued.

Kishore Kumar Mangalore, his wife, late Shyamala Rao (who passed away in May, 2025) and their daughter Shweta Rao have been running this not-for-profit initiative for the last 15 years.

Before we get into our main story, let's briefly go down memory lane to trace the beginnings of this noble venture.

Kishore Kumar, son of late Dr. Bhaskar Rao Mangalore, was born and brought up in Coimbatore and took up employment across South Indian cities and finally settled down in Mumbai.

He got married to Shyamala in 1993, and on settling in Mumbai in 2004 from Bengaluru, they took up a flat in Mira Road, a distant suburb. Their daughter Shweta was born in 1995.

In 2008, they were staying in a row house at Mira Road and Shyamala used to bring home slum children and teach them to read and write. Kishore, Shyamala's mother, Suman Trikannad and young Shweta would also chip in for teaching the basics to them. But later on, they developed an abiding interest and great satisfaction, in rescuing animals and tending to them. Hence, they moved from the field of human welfare to animal welfare, when they shifted to Naigaon from Mira Road.

Shyamala loved tending stray dogs, especially the ones she would see abandoned on the roads. Whenever she saw any maggot infested puppies or dogs lying by the roadside after being injured by speeding vehicles, she would bring them home and provide the necessary medication and care. Slowly, the headcount of such animals started going up and there was no place left in their house.

So, they decided to rent a godown at Naigaon in 2010. But over the years, they found the rent to be too high. Their only source of funding the medication and post-operative care for the dogs was Kishore's salary, and some casual donations by well-wishers. His entire salary would come and disappear month after month, and so they decided to look for alternate accommodation for the ailing dogs.

In 2012, they shifted to a farmhouse at Chon enrout to the Barvi Dam, with around 75

dogs. Kishore who was working with Siemens at Kharghar in Navi Mumbai, would attend office every day, overcoming all the challenges that came with the relocation.

During the rains, mud and slush would make it very difficult for any vehicle to enter the farmhouse. Added to these obstacles were irregular electricity and drinking water problems. After struggling for nine years, Kishore got to know that nearer to Badlapur, there was a better farmhouse with the availability of water and a little less of power problems. He got introduced to the owner, CA Rajendra Deshpande, resident of Kalyan. He had built the farmhouse for his parents who had been staying there for almost 30 years. After they passed away, it was lying idle and all the furniture, doors, windows, taps etc., were stolen. All that had remained was just the shell of a house.

Kishore and Shyamala met Rajendra Deshpande and explained to him the welfare measures they were undertaking for stray dogs. Being an animal lover himself, Deshpande was impressed with the activities and told Kishore that he would let them use the place without charging any rent.

Kishore, Shyamala and Shweta shifted to this farmhouse in 2021, gradually rebuilt the place and went about creating the infrastructure for housing and taking care of the strays. Initially they were focusing on treatment of the rescued dogs by taking them all the way to Kalyan and back. Over time, they realized that sterilization of street dogs was the most practical solution to prevent an increase in their population.

Later, they approached M/s. GreatWhite Electricals, a world class electrical solutions company. As part of their CSR, this company runs the Zara Animal Project – a non-profit initiative dedicated to the sterilization and welfare of stray animals. Since the Vangani to Kalyan stretch did not have any sterilization facilities, they readily agreed to fund the dog sterilization expenses, with a small portion from the 'feeders.'

The term 'Feeders' is used for all those people who regularly feed stray dogs in a particular locality on a daily basis. Slowly, through word of mouth in the Vangani, Ambarnath, Badlapur, Kalyan and Dombivli areas, the feeders got to know of this sterilization initiative and started contacting the Mangalore family members. In 2021, impressed

by the welfare activities for strays, Dr. Asha and Dr. Navin Vasani of the Bombay Medical Union donated a CNG powered Maruti Eeco van to be used as an ambulance.

Kishore and Shyamala also created an airconditioned Operation Theatre in which the dogs would be sterilized. Since 2023, Vet Dr. Shivkumar Gupta has been coming once every week from Andheri, and he sterilizes around 30 dogs per visit.

Shyamala was all along suffering from various ailments and she passed away of severe complications in May, 2025.

Kishore was juggling between a full-time job to provide funds to keep the Shelter going until he retired in 2024, and all this while, Shyamala would be driving the ambulance on call and picking up the strays, taking them for surgery to Kalyan and back.

Shweta who was studying to be a Vet, gave it up as she found her passion in managing the Shelter on a full-time basis.

There are certain procedures followed at the Shelter. Whenever they get a call from the feeders, requesting for a sterilization procedure, Kishore and Shweta reach there with their ambulance. They take photos and videos with the feeder, the locality and the dog and bring it to the Shelter. Post recovery from sterilization, the dog is vaccinated with anti-rabies etc., and dropped back in the locality with the feeder. Even this process is meticulously recorded.

Do bear in mind that the vaccination costs are met by the Shelter!

Most of the time, it so happens that the feeders express their inability to contribute for the sterilization and then Kishore and Shweta have to go out of pocket – not just with the sterilization, but also the post-operative medication.

The dogs are given general anesthesia, sterilized and within 30 minutes, they are transferred into a separate enclosure, where Shweta gives them their daily dose of antibiotics and applies creams to the sutures for faster healing. It takes about seven to ten days for each dog to be completely healed.

The Shelter which has an Instagram handle, also gets calls from people to come and pick up strays injured by speeding vehicles or those badly hurt by stone pelting. In such cases, they are picked up and brought by ambulance, and taken care of until they recover. Obviously, all the expenses have to be fully paid by Kishore and Shweta.

Their support staff comprises Shyam, a young boy who grew up being taught by Shyamala at Mira Road and has chosen to stay in Badlapur as the Shelter's Man Friday.

Also on hand is a Nepali couple with their three growing children, and three locals from Badlapur who assist in the cleaning of the premises etc.

Till date, the Shelter has successfully completed over **3000** sterilizations in the last four years and is currently meeting its monthly target of **120 dogs**.

During the last 15 years, Kishore, Shyamala and Shweta have rescued and rehabilitated over a lakh of strays. Those dogs that are permanently left disabled/handicapped are retained in the Shelter and taken care of, till their last.

The Shelter also rehabilitates abandoned breed pets who are left on the streets due to their illness. Kishore and Shweta transform them first and find suitable families for them.

For the 350 dogs, presently in the Shelter, the daily requirement is 60 kgs each, of rice and chicken waste bought from suppliers in Badlapur.

Supplements, Liver tonics, multivitamins, Vitamin C, Surgical equipment, Drapes, Sutures costs are borne by Kishore and Shweta.

Shweta uses Instagram to reach out to prospective donors to meet the cost of surgeries for dogs with fractured legs or those requiring amputations. But it is a tough task.... the fund raising appeals are for Rs. 25,000 but the donations add up to only Rs. 2000... so they perforce go out of pocket.

The owners of Pet Cure and Care Surgical Centre, Dr. Dharmaraj Raibole and his wife Dr. Siddhi Raibole have been kind enough to conduct operations on a credit basis. As a result, Rs. 2 lakhs payment to them, is pending.

Despite bad connectivity, the mobile phone is their only lifeline. No TV, no movie theatres, no time to watch. Only one person – either Kishore or Shweta can travel out of Badlapur - that too, for a same day return, as they have to personally stand and supervise the meals for the animals.

To retain the staff, they have to be pampered with three meals a day on the house.

At the Shelter, saving the animal's life is a priority...funds are secondary.

The Rotary Club has donated a CBC machine – Shweta does the blood tests, and she knows how to interpret the readings – accordingly she gives them an IV drip, antibiotics, increase platelets etc.,

to make the animal operation ready. 63-year-old Kishore drives the ambulance, so there's some savings in salaries there.

A typical day for Kishore and Shweta begins at 8 am with breakfast and then, giving medications starts from 10 am to 1 pm. Meal time for the dogs goes on from 1 pm until 2.30 pm. Kishore and Shweta have their lunch at 3 pm. From 4 pm onwards again, the emergency cases have to be cared for... dressings to be removed and done afresh until 6.30 pm. The night dose of medications – saline etc., is from 7 pm onwards

How the Maths stacks up at My Shelter for Strays

1. There's an outstanding amount of Rs. 2 lakhs, to the Pet Cure and Care Surgical Centre in Kalyan. The Vets have been extending credit facilities considering the good work being done.

2. Wholesale Medicine supplier's Rs. 70k per month bill. Rs. 34k is pending. Again, the credit facility is due to the tremendous love and care given to the animals.

3. Ongoing costs of Rs.64k for rice per month on upfront payment. No credit facility.

4. Ongoing costs for procuring Chicken waste per month is Rs.60k. There's a pending amount of two months, Rs. 1.20 lakhs to be paid.

5. Firewood procurement at Rs.14k per month. No credit facility.

Over all operational costs including staff salaries and meals for six persons is Rs. 2 lakhs per month.

Bank account details for donations: A/c Name: People for Jivdaya. Bank Name: HDFC Bank Ltd. SB A/c No. 50200060222003. IFSC Code: HDFC0002503.

until dinner time, which is from 10.30 – 11pm. Later, the animals are covered with blankets as being in a non-populated farm area, the winters are severe. It is dinner time for Kishore and Shweta only around midnight!

Shweta strongly feels that we have no right to put to sleep any animal. She adds that sometimes miracles happen and donors who remain anonymous come forward and do not bother to see the work done with the money they donated.

Shweta would like more and more people to subscribe to their instagram account: **mysheelter_forstrays**



Basanti the donkey was a badly malnourished filly, when she was rescued from a drunkard over three years ago. She has also nicely settled in the Shelter along with the 350 dogs and 13 cats.



Rohan the partially blind pig was saved from a gutter as a piglet, where it was lying after being attacked by dogs. Seven years later, he has grown in size and roams around freely with all the animals at the Shelter.

In conclusion, the editorial team wishes Kishore and Shweta all the very best in their noble endeavours and hopes that many from amongst our readers from India and abroad will send in their donations for a worthy cause.

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Shyamala and Shweta Rao

Aamchi Florence Nightingales for Strays

Shyamala Rao Mangalore (nee Sushma, daughter of Manohar Rao and Suman Trikannad of Bengaluru) first started taking care of strays in 2008, with an unwanted pup adopted from their neighbours.



Later, Shyamala would bring the badly injured strays' home and nurse them back to health. The number of dogs continued to grow. She would be so involved in the care and welfare of the dogs, that her meal times became very irregular and that took a toll on her health. She would go driving the Ambulance van at all odd hours to pick up and nurse the strays that had been knocked down by speeding cars or trains.

Kishore Kumar Mangalore and Shyamala's daughter Shweta Rao, grew up in an atmosphere surrounded by dogs that were recouping from their injuries. That made her resolve to assist her mother in her noble endeavours.

On completion of her NEET exam, she enrolled for a degree in Veterinary Sciences and had successfully completed four years. But she discontinued it and began passionately managing the Shelter, full-time, to take care of the 150 plus stray dogs under their care at that time.

Later, she did an intensive two-week course at Ooty as a Vet Assistant and over the years, picked up adequate knowledge and hands-on experience. In the doctor's absence, she can do blood tests on the CBC machine, diagnose the ailment based on the report, medicate and stabilize the animal until it's taken to the hospital for further treatment. She can provide IV treatment and do the dressings on wounds as good as a qualified Vet does. Today, there are over 350 dogs at the Shelter.

Shweta wants to obtain an 80G certification for the NGO, so that more and more corporate entities will be encouraged to donate for the worthy cause of strays. But she's so busy handling the animals in the Shelter, and unable to find the time for the paperwork. If any of our readers are willing to help her get the 80G, please contact her on 9359259447 or her father, Kishore Kumar Mangalore on 7768067610. But do keep in mind that connectivity is very poor at the Shelter, so better to send messages on WhatsApp.

Shweta's Wish List for the Shelter, as and when funds are adequate:

- 1. Solar Power installation due to frequent outages. Approx. cost Rs. 5 to 6 lakhs.**
- 2. Acquire a second ambulance to start spot treatment facilities with a driver, a doctor and a handler, to treat animals on the streets, with funding for their respective salaries. Currently there is no such facility available between Vangani to Kalyan.**

**We invite and encourage articles in Konkani for the Devanagari pages.
Do send in your contributions.**

A Command Decision

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

All over the world, be it the Army, Navy or Air Force, officers in command at times have to face situations where they have to take a hard decision; a decision which may prove detrimental to his career; a decision where he was damned if he did and damned if he didn't. It takes great moral courage to take that decision because what may seem right to the officer in command at that moment may not appear so to higher authorities who review the facts after the crisis.

This is one such story worth sharing. I received it from Cmde Chaitanya Shiror, IN (Retd) though the original author is unknown, and is reproduced as received.

On the morning of April 29th, 1975, Major Buang-Ly knew his country only had hours to live. The South Vietnamese Air Force officer was stationed on Con Son Island, a small outpost, fifty miles off the Southern coast. The island served primarily as a prison camp, but it also had a small airfield – and on that airfield sat a two-seater Cessna 0-1 Bird Dog, a light observation plane built for reconnaissance: not escape.

Buang-Ly looked at his wife. He looked at his five children, the youngest fourteen months old, the oldest just six. North Vietnamese forces were closing in. The prison guards were abandoning their posts. If they stayed there would be no mercy for a military officer and his family. He made his decision.

The Bird Dog was designed to carry a pilot and one observer. Buang-Ly helped his wife and all five children squeeze into the back seat and the small storage area behind it. He hot-wired the engine. As the tiny plane lifted off and banked towards the open sea, enemy ground fire zipped past them. He had no radio and he had no destination. He had only the hope that somewhere out there, the American fleet was still operating.

For thirty minutes, Buang-Ly flew East over the South China Sea. Then he spotted them; dozens of helicopters, all flying in the same direction. He followed. The helicopters led him to the USS Midway.

The aircraft carrier was in the middle of Operation Frequent Wind, the largest helicopter evacuation in American history. More than 7000

Americans and at-risk South Vietnamese were being airlifted from Saigon to the ships of Task Force 76. The Midway's flight deck was chaos. Helicopters landing, refugees pouring out, aircraft being pushed aside to make room for more.

At one point, the ship's air boss counted 26 Huey helicopters circling the carrier; not one of them with working radio contact.

And then the spotters noticed something different. A fixed wing aircraft. A tiny Cessna with South Vietnamese markings circling overhead with its landing lights on.

Capt. Lawrence Chambers had been in command of the Midway barely five weeks. He was the first African American to command a US Navy aircraft carrier. A graduate of the US Naval Academy who had risen through the ranks at a time when such advancement was far from guaranteed. Now he faced a decision that could end his career.

The Admiral on board the Midway told Chambers to order the Cessna to ditch in the ocean. Rescue boats could pick up the survivors. Chamber understood immediately why that wouldn't work. The Bird Dog had fixed landing gear. The moment it hit the water it would flip. With a plane packed full of small children, ditching meant drowning. The ship was a hundred nautical miles from the coast – too far for the Cessna to return even if it had anywhere safe to land.

As the small plane continued circling Buang-Ly tried to communicate the only way he could. He wrote a message on a scrap of paper and dropped it during allow ass on the deck. The wind blew it into the sea. He tried again and again. Three notes disappeared into the water. On the fourth attempt dropped a leather pistol holster with the message tucked inside. This time a crewman grabbed it. The note was scribbled on a navigational chart. The spelling was imperfect. The writing was hurried but the meaning was unmistakable. "Can you move your helicopters on the other side so I can land on your runway? I can fly for one hour more. We have enough time to move. Please rescue me. Major Buang, wife and 5 child." The message was rushed to the bridge. Chambers read it. He picked up the phone to call his Air Boss, Commander Vern Jumper. "Vern" he said "give

me a ready deck.” Jumper’s response, Chambers later recalled, contained words he wouldn’t want to print. It didn’t matter. Chambers called for volunteers –every available sailor, irrespective of rank or duty to the flight deck immediately. What followed was controlled pandemonium. Arresting wires were tripped from the deck - at the Bird Dog’s slow landing speed, they would trip the plane and send it cartwheeling. Helicopters that could be moved were shoved aside. And the helicopters that couldn’t be moved? Chambers ordered them to be pushed over the side.

The sailors of Midway pushed four UH-1 Huey helicopters and one CH-47 Chinook into the South China Sea.10 million dollars’ worth of military hardware tumbling into the waves. Chambers didn’t watch. He already knew the Admiral was threatening to put him in jail. “I was scared to death” he admitted years later. But he also knew what would happen if he followed the order to let the plane ditch. “When a man has the courage to put his family on a plane and make a daring escape like that, you have to have the heart to let him in.” Meanwhile the ship’s engineer reported a problem. Half the Midway’s boilers had been taken off line for maintenance. They didn’t have enough steam to make twenty-five knots Chambers needed to generate proper headwind for the landing. Chambers told him to shift the Hotel electrical load to the emergency diesel generators and make it happen.

The old carrier groaned as she picked up speed turning into the wind. The ceiling was 500 feet. Visibility dropped to five miles. A light rain began to fall. Warnings about a dangerous downdraft behind a steaming carrier were broadcast blind in both Vietnamese and English, hoping the pilot would somehow hear them even though he had no radio.

Buang-Ly lined up for his approach. He had never landed on an aircraft carrier before. The runway was 1001 feet long. Enormous for a carrier, impossibly small for what he was attempting. The down draft behind the ship could slam his overloaded plane into the deck or flip it into the sea. He only had one chance. He looked at his family. “When I looked at my family” he said later, “my gut told me that I could do it.” He pushed the throttle forward and commenced his descent. The Bird Dog crossed the ramp, bounced once on the deck, touched down on the exact spot where the arresting wires would normally have been and rolled forward.

The flight deck crew sprinted towards the plane, ready to grab it before IT went over the angled deck. They didn’t need to. Buang-Ly brought the Cessna to a stop, with room to spare. The crew erupted in cheers.

And then something unexpected happened. Major Buang-Ly and his wife jumped out of the cockpit, pulled the backseat forward and out tumbled child after child. The deck crew had expected two passengers. They watched in amazement as five small children came out of a plane built for one.

Capt Chambers came down from the bridge. He walked up to the exhausted pilot, this man who had risked everything on an impossible gamble and did something that no regulation authorized but every sailor understood. He pulled the gold wings from his own uniform and pinned it on Buang-Ly’s chest. “I promoted him to Naval Aviator right on the spot” Chambers said. The crew of the Midway adopted the family. They collected thousands of dollars to help the family start their new life in America. The Buang family became seven of the 130,000 Vietnamese refugees who eventually settled in the United States. All seven are now naturalized American citizens.

Capt. Lawrence Chambers was never court-martialed. He was promoted to Rear Admiral and retired in 1984 as the first African American Naval Academy Graduate to reach flag rank. Today, ninety six years old, he still speaks about that day with the same conviction. “You have to have the courage to do the thing which you think is right regardless of the outcome” he said at a recent commemoration. “That’s the only thing you can live with.” Major Buang-Ly now ninety-five lives in Florida. The Bird Dog he flew that day hangs from the ceiling of the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, still bearing its South Vietnamese markings. Beside it, in a display case, is the crumpled note he dropped onto the deck of the Midway.

Fifty years later, both men, the pilot who refused to let his family die and the Captain who refused to let them drown – are still there to tell the story. Some moments become symbols larger than themselves. This was one of them. Not just an escape but a testament to what becomes possible when desperate courage meets uncommon decency. A father who would not give up. A Captain who would not look away. And a flight deck cleared for landing.

KSA-CSN is an enabler to Create networks that help Chitrapur Saraswats PROSPER MATERIALLY.

The Managing Committee and KSA-CSN Task Force is happy to inform that we have organised ECM's in Physical mode in Mumbai (Dec/Jan 2026) and Bengaluru in January 2026.

Entrepreneur Club Meetings help Bhanap Entrepreneurs interact, exchange information about one's business goals and aspirations, bond better and find means to feasibly share required connects.

We share positive feedback from attendees of the physical Meets and pics:

1) Meet at residence of Gautam Amladi @ Goregaon East on 27th December 2025

Dhanyavad, for arranging a lovely 'in-person' CSN meet. it was a good, informal get-together for all the entrepreneurs... I do hope and look forward to many more entrepreneurs coming under the CSN umbrella.

2) Meet at Residence of Ajit Kaikini, Bengaluru on 18.Jan.26

Many thanks to Ajit Kaikini for hosting yesterday's Bhanap Meetup at his home with awesome bonus of valuable feedback and energy snacks.

It was wonderful to hear about each one's stories of struggle, hard work, current wishes and future dreams.

Thank you to everyone for your precious time and company.

3) Meet at residence of Rishikesh Aroor (Yuva Volunteer) @ Jogeshwari, Mumbai on 18.Jan.26

Today's ECM was a very interactive meeting where each one has contributed not only introducing their own business but with various suggestions and ideas by which we can help each other's businesses and networking.

This will definitely help members getting new business and helping hand in their current business activities.

A big Thank you to Aroor's for hosting the meeting in a organised way. Food was delicious and enjoyed. Look forward to many more such meetings in future.

We solicit and invite

a) More participation by Bhanap Entrepreneurs

b) Hosts for future meets

Have your thoughts on this ?. Please connect with Gautam Amladi (9821007190), Sadanand Savanal (8806369612). We can take it way ahead together. Look forward.



Meet at residence of Gautam Amladi



Meet at Residence of Ajit Kaikini



Meet at residence of Rishikesh Aroor (Yuva Volunteer)

KSA MC and KSA-CSN Task Force

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An in-depth report by Yuva-s **DIVYA RAMDEO** and **SHASHANK UDYAWER**
on

The International Saraswat Brahmin Mahasammelana 2025

In the heart of the Sun City, amidst the timeless hues of Jodhpur, the Sāraswat Bhavan transformed into a sanctum of devotion. What unfolded over a few magical days was not merely a camp; it was a profound spiritual confluence where wisdom flowed, and devotees were gently introduced to



Upāsana- Mahāpūjā-s, Shri Guru Pādūkā Pūjana, Tīrtha Vitarāṇa, Āshīrvachana-s by H.H. Swāmījī, Interactions with H.H. Swāmījī, Shri Devī Anushthāna-s, Vimarsha – every activity filling them with awe and devotion towards H.H. Swāmījī and the impeccable traditions of Shri Chitrapur Math.

In His Āshīrvachana Pujya Swāmījī explained how daily japa, bhajana,

stotrapathana, Shri Devī Anushthāna, Sanskrit Sambhāshana, Prāṇāyāma, Nināda, exercise and Vimarsha are not isolated rituals, but living practices meant to be woven into everyday life.

He further explained the shloka recited during Shri Shiva Pūjana while offering bhasma:

“ अग्नि हो त्र स मु द्भू तं
विरजाहोमपावितम्।

गृहाण भस्म हे स्वामिन् भक्तानां भूतिदायक॥”

The youth of Jodhpur had a deeply enriching interaction with H.H. Swāmījī. Questions ranged from the meaning and significance of bhajana-s, the concept of *Ishta*



Devatā , *Ishta* Mantra Japa, Gāyatrī Japa, etc. The youngsters also shared their learnings from the Shri Devī Anushthāna session. Swāmījī emphasized the importance of daily Japa along with Pūrvāṅga.

On December 19th, the International Sāraswat Brāhmin Mahāsammelana (ISBM) 2025 commenced at the Mārwar International Centre, Jodhpur. The inauguration featured Dīpa Prajwālana, Gaṇesha Vandana, welcome addresses and felicitations. The women volunteers coordinating sāfā, shrīphal and mementos were impeccably dressed and managed the proceedings with grace.

20th December:

The arrival of H.H. Shrimath Saṁyamīndra Tīrtha Swāmījī marked a moment of divinity and grandeur. Pujya Swāmījī was welcomed with Pūrṇa Kumbha. In His Āshīrvachana, H.H. Shrimath Saṁyamīndra



Tīrtha Swāmījī addressed the gathering saying that all Sāraswata-s, spanning from Kashmīr to Kanyākumārī, are the children of Mā Saraswatī, bound not only by geography but by shared values. His emphasis on unity, Gāyatrī Upāsana, and Sandhyāvandanam resonated deeply with the audience.

The day continued with insightful sessions on yoga, government policies, temple and Math administration, challenges faced by Kashmīrī Paṇḍit-s, entrepreneurship, Saraswatī Civilization, woman empowerment, cultural heritage, and speeches by the scholars of different fields and industries.

The Saṁvit Sudhā stall and Shri Chitrāpur Math Publication stall received a good response from the general public who gathered for the Sannelana. Many visitors expressed keen interest in learning about our

~~~~~Parisevanam~~~~~



Math and meeting our H.H. Swāmījī in person.

21st December:

The final day of ISBM 2025 began with the screening of the Shri Chitrāpur Math documentary.



Welcomed with Pūrṇa Kumbha, the arrival of H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī was met with immense joy and devotion.

Dīpa Prajwālana by H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt

Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī



H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī blessed the gathering with His Āshīrvachana and quoted the shloka:

यदेव विद्यया करोति, श्रद्धयोपनिषदा, तदेव वीर्यवत्तरं भवति

H.H. Swāmījī explained how every action can be made Vīryavattara, infused with greater strength.

After H.H. Swāmījī's departure from the event, felicitations and expressions of gratitude were extended to all departments, staff, and volunteers whose dedication made the Sammelana a success.

In the evening, H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī guided the sādha-s on the importance of Gāyatrī Japa and also highlighted the role of regulated breath. The significance of Āchamana, Prāṇāyāma and Prokshaṇa was explained.

H.H. Swāmījī described antaramukhatā as the Parama Lakshya of Sāraswata-s. He also emphasized on the importance of learning Sanskrit.

The Āshīrvachana was followed by the bhajana "Shrī Jagadambe Saraswatī", after which Swāmījī gently guided everyone into silent meditation.

The gathered audience was deeply touched by our H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī's Āshīrvachana. Many showed reverence to our Chitrāpur sādha-s, who were dressed in muṇḍu/dhotī and aṅgavastra, by touching their feet and expressing gratitude and respect for our Chitrāpur Math and our beloved Guru.

H.H. Shrīmat Sadyojāt Shaṅkarāshram Swāmījī also visited the exhibition at the Sammelana, which offered a vibrant glimpse into the enterprise and creativity of the Sāraswata community. Stalls represented a wide range of sectors, including automobiles, Āyurveda and wellness, robotics and automation, textiles and yarns, education, real estate, minerals, home solutions, handicrafts, food, jewellery, and women-led initiatives.

ISBM 2025 stood out for its strong commitment to sustainability. Single-use plastic was minimized, water was served in copper vessels, and continuous announcements encouraged food conservation and discipline.

As the camp concluded, everyone carried with them a saṅkalpa to stay connected, continue learning online, and live by the values imparted by our Guru.

What everyone received during these days was not just knowledge, but vibrant inspiration that will continue to guide us on our spiritual path.

॥ Om Namaḥ Pārvatī Pataye Hara Hara Mahādeva ॥

(Photo credits : Kartik Bohra and Media Team ISBM)

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In Loving Memory Of

SHRI RAMDAS UBHAYKAR

MARCH 31, 1937 - DECEMBER 21, 2025

With profound sorrow, we announce the passing of our beloved Pappa, Shri. Ramdas Ubhaykar, who attained the heavenly abode on December 21st, 2025.

Born into a humble farmer's family, he came to Mumbai from Mallapur with determination and dreams, where he pursued his education and earned his B.Com and LLB degrees.

A deeply social person with an infectious zest for life, he lived a truly rich and fulfilling life.

Our Pappa was known for his generous heart and helping nature, always extending support to everyone he could. He touched countless lives through his kindness, wisdom, and warmth, and his presence brought comfort and strength to all who knew him.

In keeping with his values and compassion, his last wish was to donate his entire body. As he always said, "Nothing in this world should go waste." Honouring his wish, his body was donated to Symbiosis Medical College for Women, Lavale, Pune, so that it may serve the noble purpose of education and healing.

He will be fondly remembered and deeply missed by his family, friends, and all those whose lives he enriched.

May his soul attain the lotus feet of Lord Krishna !

Jyotsna Ramdas Ubhaykar
Yatin Ramdas Ubhaykar
Pareeja Yatin Ubhaykar
Supriya Yatin Ubhaykar

Madhuri Vinod Kavugoli
Vinod Anand Kavugoli
Daaysha Vinod Kavugoli
Nushka Vinod Kavugoli

Ashok Dhanuka
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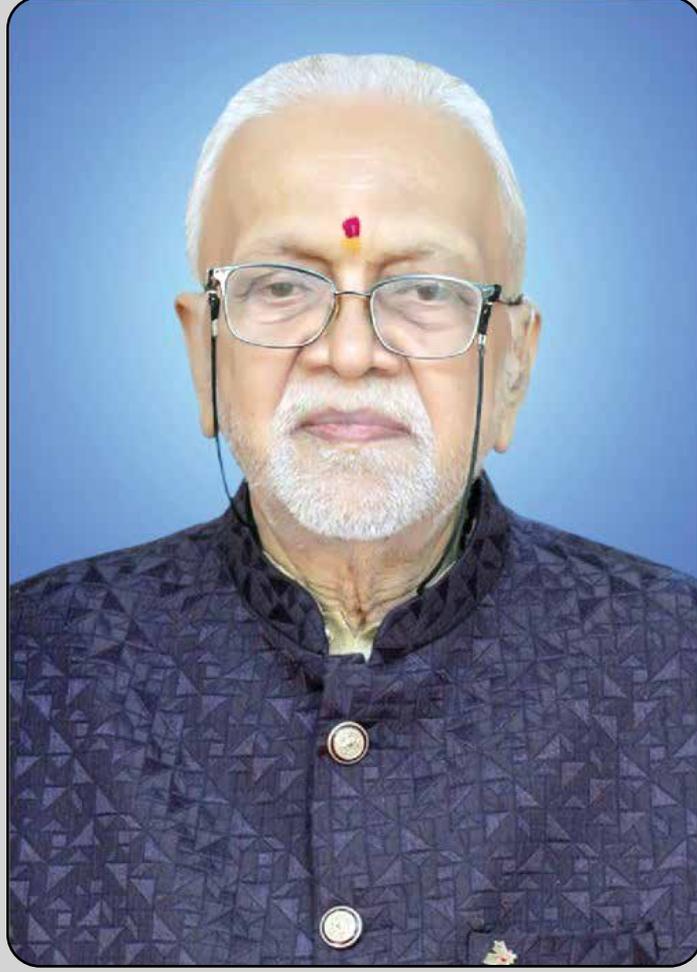
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MURALIDHAR ANANTHBHAT KALLIANPUR

MARCH 02, 1934 - FEBRUARY 11, 2025

It's been a YEAR since you merged into Divinity.
Your absence is felt every day. You are and will be Always Remembered

In memoriam

Vijayanand, Shirali & Lakshmi Kallianpur
Nandita, Gautam, Amogh, Paridnya Amladi
Geeta Amladi

Friends and Relatives

Chitrapur Heritage Foundation

711 Daylily Court, Langhorne, Pennsylvania, USA

Connecting US Amchis to Chitrapur Math

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

The activities of CHF includes:

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

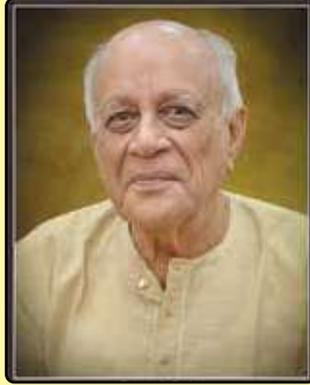
CHF is a philanthropic organization that provides an avenue for US-based “amchis” to support the operation and maintenance of Shri Chitrapur Math as well as support the post-primary education of students in Chitrapur, Karla, Mangalore, and Shirali, and women empowerment programs administered by Parijnan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

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

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

In loving memory of Rajaram Anand Bantval

May 12, 1926 December 29, 2025



Rajaram Anand Bantval, son of Bantval Sharada and Anand Bhat, beloved husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, and great-grandfather, passed away peacefully in the early hours of December 29, 2025.

Born on May 12, 1926, in Bantwal in the Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka, Rajaram, affectionately known as Raja, lived a long and remarkable life filled with warmth, generosity, and love. Those who knew him will forever remember his kindness, his gentle humour, and above all, his unwavering ethical values and profound sense of duty.

Alert, sharp, and intellectually curious until the very end, Raja possessed a brilliant and disciplined mind. At the age of fifteen, he moved to Bombay to live with his father and pursue higher studies. He worked diligently through college, earning an M.Sc. in Physics, and later securing a top rank in the newly established Management program at the Jannalal Bajaj Institute. His professional journey began with the Finance Department of the Maharashtra State Government, followed by a long and respected tenure at SICOM.

Even after retirement, Raja continued to serve others with the same dedication that defined his life. He became a steadfast advocate for the restoration of pension benefits for his former colleagues, many of whom had been deprived of what they were owed. His tireless efforts, which often involved personally visiting offices well into his nineties, resulted in numerous colleagues finally receiving their rightful dues. His persistence, integrity, and compassion left an indelible mark on all who benefited from his advocacy.

Raja's greatest joy, however, was his family, especially his grandchildren.

His eldest granddaughter, Sneha, fondly remembers how he tutored her through her schoolwork, often more nervous than she was on examination days. His youngest grandson, Advait, cherishes the memory of learning Sudoku and crossword puzzles at his grandfather's side. His youngest granddaughter, Niyati, treasures the vivid stories he shared about his childhood in Bantwal and his early years in Bombay, stories that brought history, family, and place alive in her imagination.

Raja is survived by his eldest son Uday and his wife Sheetal (nee Dhareshwar); his second son Arun and his wife Gayathri (nee Betrabet); and his youngest daughter Anupama and her husband Gautam Karekatte. He leaves behind his grandchildren Sneha and her husband Rohit Bijur, Siddharth and his wife Gourobi (nee Chakravorty), Rahul, Advait, and Niyati; and his great-grandchildren Rishabh and Aarav.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Nalini R. Bantval, who passed away on February 28, 2024.

Raja will be deeply missed, lovingly remembered, and forever held in the hearts of all who knew him. His life was a testament to integrity, perseverance, and boundless love, a legacy that will continue to guide and inspire his family for generations.



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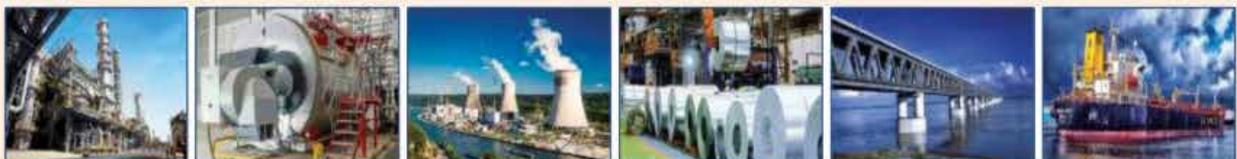
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Benegal Maya Rao – A centenary tribute

(8th January 1926 – 10th August 2020)

Our Amma, Benegal Maya Rao (née Durga Sthalekar), was a larger-than-life presence who filled our life and hearts with love, strength and kindness. Her values shaped who we are today, and her memory remains a constant source of comfort and inspiration to us. She was loved, admired and respected by all who crossed her path.



She spent her childhood in Ahmedabad. She was four when the historic Dandi or Salt March took place in 1930. She was too young to participate, but the stories she heard left a lasting impact. She was only eleven in 1937 when she started attending meetings in the Congress House to listen to Gandhiji speak. She would spin the charkha along with many others and sit on the sandy banks of the Sabarmati River to listen to Gandhiji's speeches and to sing bhajans. Often at 5 a.m., she would participate in 'prabhat pheris' led by Gandhiji or his followers around the Bhadra area of Ahmedabad, chanting or singing hymns and bhajans. Her childhood had not been easy. She had lost both her parents by the time she was in her mid-teens, which made her self-reliant and resilient. Her sensibilities and beliefs registered subliminally within all four of her daughters. Many families wanted sons more than daughters and in Delhi in the '60s and '70s, this was openly espoused. When my mother was asked if she regretted not having sons,

she would say, 'All my girls have been bold and clever. I had no sons. My daughters have been as good as or better than sons can be.'

Amma was a gentle, loving and noble soul with a ready smile and a kind word for anyone she met. She was a mentor to many young aamchi ladies and helped them settle down when they first moved to New Delhi. Even today she is remembered fondly by them.

It is difficult to imagine how our Amma managed to bring up four daughters during challenging times and on the single salary of our father, Benegal Indukanth Rao. Both Amma and Annu made several sacrifices in their lives to see that all of us studied in excellent schools which laid the foundation for our future. We were always well-cared for, happy and carefree.

Amma was a cook par excellence. She taught all of us cooking. We still use her wise tips and hints to repair a dish or embellish it. Many of our friends had her recipes in their cookbooks as Maya's khadis/chaklis/malpuris or some such mouthwatering delicacies. In a minute, she could resize recipes for a crowd of a hundred at a Konkani Association picnic or a large family dinner, rather like AI does for us today.

She was a great seamstress and a wizard at knitting and crochet.

She could speak, read, and write in Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati and was fluent in Kannada. She could even read a bit of Urdu and remembered her French from her school days well into her late eighties.

She was very devout, with an unshakeable belief in God and the Guru Parampara.

She lovingly nursed Annu through his illness till he passed away in 1983. Even though she was just 57 when we lost Annu, she was stoic and strong, hiding her grief for the sake of the family. She became a great source of support for us, even helping to raise two grandchildren so her daughter could continue her full-time job.

When Amma was unable to live independently and had to move in with us, she settled in quickly. It was remarkable how she made her peace with what must have been exceedingly difficult for a fiercely independent and competent soul. She never complained about anything. Instead, she would constantly thank us for being there for her. To visitors who asked how she was, she would cheerfully smile and say (in Hindi), "khana, peena, sona, yehi hamara kaam hai!" (all I do is eat, drink and sleep!).

In her later years when she was housebound, she would teach her caregivers sewing and rangoli designs. 'Thank you for your service' was always on her lips for the least little thing her carers did for her. Even today they remember her with love and gratitude.

We are all deeply grateful for her immense wisdom, unwavering support and timely counsel. We miss her deeply and remember her fondly on this occasion of her 100th birthday.

From

Daughters: Nayan, Maitreyi, Suman, Hema

Sons in law: Arun, Shivanand, Sunil, Ashok

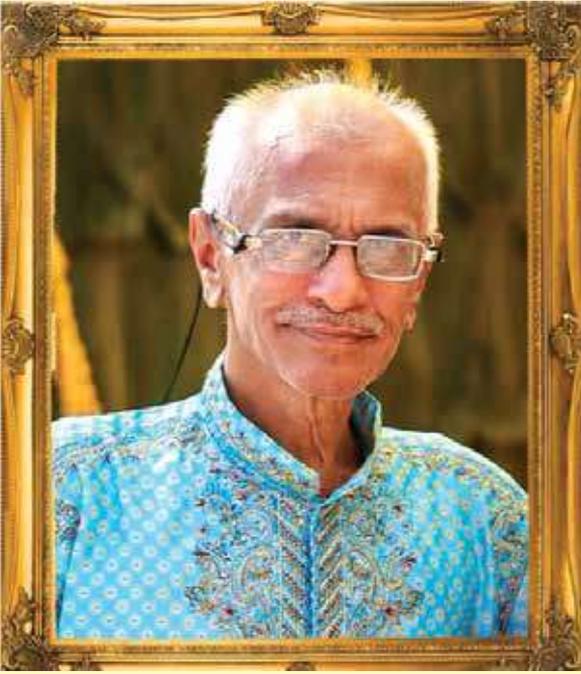
Grandchildren: Archana, Amrita, Shantanu, Mohit, Raghav, Ananya

Great grandchildren: Sufana, Muhsin, Neel

Sad Demise

Mr. Krishnanand Rajaram Honavar

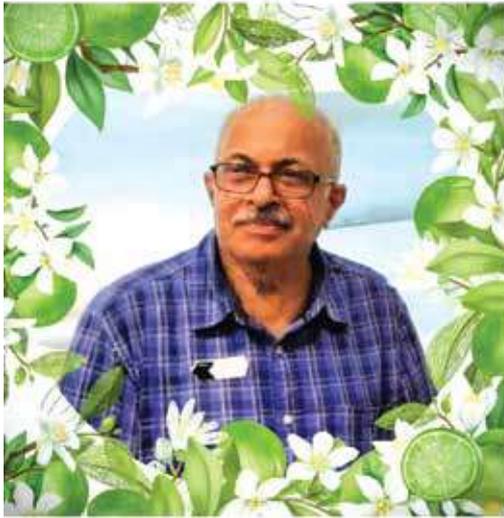
(5th May 1952 – 16th December 2025)



We are deeply saddened by the sudden passing of our dear Krishnanand Bappa. Please pray for us as the family mourns this irreparable loss of a sweetheart of a person, one of the kindest souls, an avid carrom and table tennis player, family's trusted person who fixed things in a jiffy. This loss leaves a great void in our lives.

Forever in our thoughts

Honavar-s, Deshmukh-s, Rao-s.
Nadkarni-wwws from Haldipur.



SUBHASH SHRIPAD MALLAPUR
(23-05-1947) - (02-01-2026)

A BELOVED SOUL, CALM, QUIET, HUMBLE
WHO TOUCHED MANY LIVES
FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS
GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

GREATLY LOVED, DEEPLY MISSED BY

VIJAYA (WIFE)

NIVEDITA (DAUGHTER)

AJAY (SON IN LAW) KHOT

ROHAN (SON)

SAILI (DAUGHTER IN LAW)

GRANDSONS: ANIRUDH KHOT

AVIK MALLAPUR

RELATIVES: MALLAPUR, VINEKAR,

KOPPIKAR, IRDE, YEDERI,

BASRUR, CHICKERMANE,

KHAMBHOTKONE (RAO),

KUMTA, KHOT, KURRAY

AND FRIENDS

CALIFORNIA NOTEBOOK

A glimpse of what it is like to live in California

JAIDEV CHANDAVARKAR

It is the season

All of us wait for the last quarter of the calendar year, when the festive season begins to make its appearance in our neighborhood.

The festive season starts with Halloween, celebrated annually on October 31st. It is a holiday with ancient Celtic roots, marking the end of summer and harvest, and the time when the boundary between the living and the dead blurred, leading to traditions like wearing costumes to ward off ghosts and lighting bonfires. Later, the Christian holiday of All Saints' Day or All Hallows' Day on November 1 merged with the Celtic tradition, making the evening before All Hallows Eve, which was then shortened to Halloween. Today, it's a secular event filled with activities for children like trick-or-treating and carving pumpkins and with spooky themes.

Enthusiasts who wait for the festive season put up their decorations at least two or three weeks prior to the actual day. For example, our neighbor, who lives just two houses to our left, has the most colorful display in our entire neighborhood. It is artistically done, with just enough color to make you stop and gaze, but not so much color that you find it garish and loud.

Our neighbor begins the process in mid-October and prepares for Halloween. His front yard slowly accumulates ogres, demons and skeletons. Orange and purple bulbs create a spooky atmosphere of lurking demonic forces, that may grab you by the throat.

But our neighbor is not the first in our neighborhood to switch on the festive lights. It is our home - a Hindu home surrounded by Christian and Jewish homes - that is the very first in the calendar year to turn on decorative lights, for Ganesh Chaturthi. This year, Ganesh Chaturthi fell on Tuesday, August 26th, and that was the day, our home was lit up with a string of multicolored bulbs.

But I must commend our neighbor. When he starts, in mid-October, roughly two months after Ganesh Chaturthi, he does it with style and elegance and sheer size. For more than a week, his home is the only one announcing the arrival of Halloween. Then, a slow trickle of homes begins, and more homes put out their decorations.

Once Halloween is over, and the month of November begins, our neighbor switches gears

rapidly, preparing for Christmas two months away. The orange and purple bulbs are replaced by green, red and white bulbs. The demons and ogres on his front yard are replaced by tranquil statues of Mother Mary and the nativity scene of the birth of Christ in a manger. Reindeers make their cheerful appearance. Santa Claus erupts one evening, larger than life, all lit up, casting a happy glow on the home and the neighborhood. Fairies and benevolent spirits begin to populate his front yard. The photograph of his home is shown below. It was taken a few days before Christmas. The mood is infectious. Very soon, other homes up and down our street begin to turn on their evening decoration lights. Some have light effects of icicles shimmering, creating an illusion of falling snow.

This year, our next-door neighbor stopped by with a plate of home-baked cookies. He was doing his round of visiting neighbors and offering cookies that his wife had baked. All in the spirit of the festive season. I still remember, several years ago,



an 88-year-old neighbor who lived across the street from us took his walker loaded with poinsettia plants and stopped by every home close to his and gave each home his gift. We watched him walk away slowly, bending over his walker, wheeling it to the next home. It was the first time he had done it in the decades we have lived on this street. It felt like a farewell. He died early the next year, about a month after Christmas.

Yes, it is the season. A season of hope and goodwill for all people.

I will be back next month, with more snippets of life from California!

Email: chitransai@gmail.com

Pranked by the Earth

BHAKTI ULLAL

Turn off your engine, let go and watch your car roll uphill...

It sounds like a prank, a traveller's exaggeration, or the opening line of a fantasy novel. Yet on a quiet stretch of road in Ladakh, on the Leh-Kargil Highway, thousands of people look keenly at their vehicles, hold their breath, ready to witness something that seems to ignore the rules of science learned in school. The car moves. Forward. Uphill. No engine. No push. No tricks—at least none that are immediately visible.

This is the legendary Magnetic Hill of Ladakh, often loosely and poetically referred to as the 'magnetic lake' of the region. It is not a lake in the conventional sense, but a pool of wonder nonetheless—one that collects disbelief, curiosity, laughter, arguments, and awe in equal measure.

The first thing Magnetic Hill does is unsettle you. You arrive expecting drama, perhaps sparks of a science-fiction spectacle, a grand monument. Instead, you find a simple road, flanked by barren mountains in shades of rust, sand and ash. And an almost unsettling silence. The air is thin; the sky hangs low and impossibly blue. The landscape looks to have been stripped down to its most honest elements. Nothing in this place feels exaggerated—until your car starts to move.

Drivers stop exactly where a small sign suggests. Engines are turned off. Brakes are released. And then, against every childhood lesson about slopes and motion, vehicles begin to roll forward—towards what clearly looks like an incline, as if the road itself has decided to play a joke.

The road does not rush. It does not show off. It simply smiles and lets you draw your own conclusions.

The locals have seen this wonder countless times; what delights them is not the moving car, but the moving faces—the expressions of disbelief that pass like weather across visiting travellers, arriving in waves and leaving behind quiet laughter.

The earliest and most irresistible explanation is also the most dramatic. The hill, people say, is magnetic. Powerfully so. Powerful enough to pull cars uphill. Powerful enough, some insist, to force aircraft to avoid flying overhead. Legends

speaking of older travellers with compasses spinning aimlessly, needles refusing to point north, as if the Earth itself has momentarily lost its sense of direction.

Locals share the tale with gentle amusement, while tourists repeat it with increasing enthusiasm. The story grows with every retelling, acquiring layers of mystery and awe. A hidden force beneath the earth. A Himalayan secret quietly bending the rules of the universe. In a land already steeped in myth, monasteries, and meditation, the idea does not feel out of place at all.

Science arrives quietly and without ceremony. Physicists explain that the Magnetic Hill is not magnetic at all. No hidden iron mountain lurks beneath the surface. No secret force is pulling your car forward. What you are experiencing is a beautifully precise optical illusion.

The surrounding terrain is arranged in such a way that your eyes misjudge the slope. The mountains tilt gently, the horizon line is distorted, and the stark landscape devoid of trees, buildings, or familiar reference points confuses your sense of level. What appears to be an uphill stretch is, in fact, a gentle downhill slope. Gravity is behaving impeccably. It is your perception that slips.

And knowing this does not completely dissolve the wonder. The car still moves, your brain still protests, and the land still feels mischievous.

Part of the illusion's power lies in Ladakh itself. A cold desert, a place of vast empty spaces and sharp contrasts. The land offers very little visual clutter and no clues to anchor perception. No signboards are competing for attention, no crowds, no noise. When something unusual happens here, it feels amplified. The stillness gives the moment room to reverberate.

At nearly fourteen thousand feet above sea level, even your body is slightly out of its comfort zone. Oxygen is scarce. Thoughts slow down. Sensations feel sharper. In such conditions, the mind is especially vulnerable to suggestion—and particularly receptive to wonder.

In this environment, the brain fills in the gaps with confidence—and gets it wrong. The result is not just a visual trick, but a full-bodied experience. You don't just see the car move uphill. You *feel* it.

Magnetic Hill does not stand in isolation. It sits near the ancient flow of the Indus River, one of the cradles of human civilisation. Nearby, monasteries perch on cliffs with impossible grace, their prayer flags fluttering as if stitching the sky to the earth. The landscape carries a sense of timelessness, as though modern confusion is merely a passing phase.

The landscape has a way of slowing you down. Silence stretches wide. Thoughts echo longer. In such a setting, a road that refuses to behave feels less like a gimmick and more like an invitation—to pause, to question, to look again.

Similar 'gravity hills' exist in other parts of the world, from Australia to the United States. Yet Ladakh's version feels different. Perhaps it is the altitude. Perhaps it is the stark beauty. Or perhaps it is the quiet confidence with which the land lets you be wrong.

Here, the illusion is not rushed. It does not scream for attention. It waits patiently, knowing curiosity will always arrive on its own.

What makes Magnetic Hill unforgettable is not the movement of the car, but the movement of thought it provokes. A thrill for some, a humbling

experience for others. Always quietly amusing, a confirmation that certainty is often overrated.

The hill asks a simple question: how much of what we 'know' is shaped by habit rather than truth? How often do we confuse appearance with reality? How easily do our senses, so trusted, so celebrated, mislead us?

Eventually, you drive away. The road behaves normally again. Gravity returns to its dependable self. Life resumes its predictable rhythm. But something lingers. Something subtle has shifted.

You may find yourself questioning slopes, horizons, and assumptions. You may smile the next time you feel certain of something. You may remember that even in a world measured, mapped, and explained, there is still room for playful mystery.

Magnetic Hill does not break the laws of physics. It does something far more interesting. It prompts us to consider that reality depends on where we stand, how we look, and how quickly we assume we understand. It reminds us that the world is not obligated to make sense at first glance—and that sometimes, the most powerful force on Earth is not magnetism or gravity, but wonder itself.

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HPV Health Camp held in Shirali

DR CHAITANYA GULVADY
DHARMAPRACHAKA,SHRI CHITRAPUR MATH

Cervical cancer cases amongst women have been rising all over the country. The high reproductivity rate, early age marriages, hygiene related issues, migrant labour, especially among rural women, have all contributed to this. The presence of the Human Papilloma Virus or HPV, which is transmitted through sexual contact, increases the tendency to develop Cervical Cancer. Early detection of the HPV Virus through Self-Test Kits and subsequent treatment, can prevent the onset of Cervical cancer, as evident in the West, where it has dropped drastically due to early screening and treatment for HPV.

Dr Madhur Amembal, retired Medical Administrator of KEM Hospital, Pune met with Parama Pujya Shrimat Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji during His camp at Karla. He proposed conducting a camp for HPV Screening in Shirali for rural women, spearheaded by IShare, an NGO from Pune headed by a band of committed Doctors, experienced in conducting health checkups / Cancer / Renal screening camps, especially in rural communities. Self-Test Kits would be provided at concessional rates by the reputed Pune based GenePath Labs and the samples would be tested by them. Parama Pujya Swamiji immediately consented to the proposal and gave His blessings.

Conducted under the aegis of the Shri Chitrapur Math Charitable Trust, which would bear the entire cost of the Shivar and the Kits, a Logistics team was formed under Dr Madhur Amembal, comprising Dr Chaitanya Gulvady, Dr Sunayna Padbidri - Gynaecologist, Honavar, Smt. Sheela Kumble who headed the Parimochana project and Shri Kishore Kumble, General Manager, Shri Chitrapur Math.

Ladies of the Parimochana project and from local community, between the ages of 30 to 60 years were invited to this Mahila Swasthya Shivar, to be conducted on Sunday, the 14th of December'2025 in the premises of the Shrivalli School in Shirali, between 9.30 am to 5pm.

However, since this checkup was a Self-Test of their reproductive organs, to be carried out by the women themselves, who were shy, mostly illiterate and from a rural agricultural community, it was necessary for them to be briefed and reassured

about the Testing and the benefits. Hence, an Awareness Lecture by Dr Sunayna Padbidri was conducted in the Parijnanashram Sabhagriha on 24th November'25 for all the ladies. Dr Sunayna speaking in chaste Kannada with a simple but powerful Power Point presentation, explained to them, the purpose, the procedures involved in the testing and its benefits. A large number of ladies from Parimochana Project and the local community attended the lecture.

The School Principal Smt. Mamata Devadiga also supported the camp with the support and cooperation of the teachers. The Shrivalli School Assembly Hall was the venue for the Shivar. Adequate publicity was given to the Shivar by the Math Management and Circulars were sent to ladies in Shirali whilst Smt. Sheela Kumble contacted all the eligible women of the Parimochana Project. Separate enclosures were created in the Assembly Hall, for the testing process so that the women could undergo the testing in absolute privacy.

The Logistics team headed by Dr Madhur Amembal and the volunteers from IShare & GenePath Labs arrived with an abundant stock of the Self Test HPV Kits. Banners and Posters of the organisations involved were displayed in the Shrivalli School Assembly Hall. Volunteers from the Math and local community, were invited to participate and support the Shivar.

The Math Management arranged snacks and soft drinks for the ladies attending the Shivar. IShare also deployed some volunteers from The Family Planning Associations of Honavar, Kumta and Bhatkal to support the registration and checkup process.

On the day of the Mahila Swasthya Shivar, a slow stream of mildly apprehensive women entered the Hall and soon the Assembly Hall was crowded. The Shivar commenced with the traditional Sabha Prarambha Prarthana and the Lamp Lighting Ceremony to the chants of 'Deepo Jyotir Parabrahma....' After a brief welcome address by Smt. Sheela Kumble, Dr Sunayna Padbidri once again explained to the assembled ladies in chaste Kannada, the need for this Preventive Cervical Cancer HPV check up, the procedure for the Self Test and the benefits of the same.

Soon the ladies queued up for registration which was followed by handing over of the Self Test Kits. After their tests were done, the Samples were handed over to the team of volunteers who stored the samples at required temperature in the special Kits.

At the end of the day, 251 ladies had undergone the testing. It was a very satisfying experience for all the team members and the volunteers. The team was deeply grateful to Parama Pujya Swamiji for His blessings and support throughout the Shivar. The HPV Test samples were carried to the GenePath Labs, Pune for testing and the Results arrived after two weeks. Out of 251, around ten women had tested Positive whilst all the rest were Negative.

With the support of the Math, the HPV Positive women would be contacted and counselled by Dr Sunayna Padbidri and referred to the Gynaecology Department of the Kasturba Hospital, Manipal. They will also be provided logistical and financial support by the Math as required. The rest of the women who tested Negative are being

contacted by Smt. Sheela Kumble and informed about their results, and the need to undergo this check-up after five years.

It was the vision, love and concern for the devotees in the local communities, of the Guru Shakti which enabled the success of the Mahila Swasthya HPV Shivar for women in and around Shirali. We are indebted to Dr Madhur Amembal who initiated this. Also, to the Shri Chitrapur Math Charitable Trust for the logistical support and bearing the entire cost of the Shivar. Deep gratitude to IShare and GenePath Labs, Family Planning Associations of Honavar, Kumta and Bhatkal and their employees for supporting this project. We greatly appreciate all the support and cooperation given by the Shrivalli School and the teachers. Lastly a big thanks to all the volunteers from Shirali who assisted in the successful conduct of the camp. This will go a long way in creating awareness, improving the health of the local women and reducing the incidence of Cervical Cancer mortalities.



Volunteer Meeting being addressed by Dr Sunayna Padbidri. Seated left to right GenePath Lab volunteers, Smt. Sheela Kumble, Dr Madhur Amembal, Smt. Mamata Devadiga



Eager women queueing up for Registration



Women waiting for HPV testing in front of enclosed cabins

योजन-क्रीडा

देवता-वाहनयोः योजनं करोतु -



(उत्तराणि एकादशपृष्ठे दत्तानि)

प्रतिध्वनिः

- क्षमा फ्रान्सिस्, मुम्बई

एकः बालकः एकदा तस्य जनकेन सह पर्वतारोहणं कर्तुं गतवान् । तदा अकस्मात् बालकस्य पादः अस्खलत् सः अपतत् च । सः उच्चैः "आ s s s" इति आक्रोशत् । कियत् आश्चर्यम् । सः झटिति पर्वतात् "आsss" इति ध्वनिं श्रुतवान् । सः अत्यन्तं कुतूहलेन उच्चैः आक्रोशत् " त्वं कः?"

सः झटिति उत्तरं श्रुतवान् " त्वं कः"?

बालकः अकुप्यत्, उच्चैः आक्रोशत् च " त्वं भीरुः " इति । पुनः सः शब्दौ श्रुतवान्, " त्वं भीरुः" इति । बालकः आश्चर्येण जनकस्य मुखम् अपश्यत् अपृच्छत् च " किं भवति अत्र ? " इति । " पुत्र! अवधेयम् " इति उक्त्वा जनकः अपि उच्चैः आक्रोशत् " अहं त्वां प्रशंसामि " इति । स्वरूपेण सः पर्वतात् उत्तरं श्रुतवान् "अहं त्वां प्रशंसामि " इति । जनकः पुनः उच्चैः अवदत् " त्वं विस्मयकारकः " इति । पुनः स्वरूपेण उत्तरं श्रुतवान् " त्वं विस्मयकारकः " इति । बालकस्य आश्चर्यं द्विगुणितम् अभवत् तथापि सः अवगन्तुं न शक्तवान् । जनकः स्नेहेन बालकम् आलिङ्ग्य स्पर्शिकरणम् अकरोत् - , " जनाः तं " प्रतिध्वनिः" इति वदन्ति । किन्तु एकं सत्यम् अपि वदामि, शृणु - जीवनम् अपि प्रतिध्वनिः इव । त्वं यत् ददासि तत् प्राप्यसि । जीवनं तु मनुष्यस्य कर्मणः दर्पणः इव । त्वं यदि स्नेहम् इच्छसि तर्हि अधिकं स्नेहं देहि । यदि दयाम् इच्छसि तर्हि अधिकां दयां दर्शय । यदि सहानुभूतिम् आदरं च इच्छसि तर्हि अधिकां सहानुभूतिम् आदरं च दर्शयितुं प्रयत्नं कुरु ।

एवं तव जीवने प्रतिध्वन्याः चयनं सावधानेन कुरु । "

॥ सरलसंस्कृतम् ॥

41.1 Fill in the blank with the correct word given in the box below. 6th Vibhakti is being used in the sentences which denotes possession and relationship.

1. तस्याः केशाः कियत् दीर्घाः।

Her hair is so long!

2. एतस्याः बालिकायाः नाम शिवानी ।

This girl's name is Shivani.

3. ----- गृहं दूरम् अस्ति ।

The house of **those two girls** is far.

4. ----- उपरि कथितं पातयतु।

Pour sambar over these two idlis.

5. एतानि करवस्त्राणि ----- समीपे स्थापयतु ।

Keep these napkins near **those plates**.

6. ----- वर्णः शोभते ।

The colour of **these curtains** looks beautiful.

7. ----- मूल्यम् अधिकं मन्ये ।

I feel the price of **these sarees** is high.

8. ----- भर्जकानि करोतु ।

Make fritters (bhajjis) of **those capsicums**.

9. ----- अद्य जन्मदिनम् अस्ति ।

Today is **that girl's** birthday.

10. ----- मध्ये गौरी सुन्दरतमा अस्ति ।

Among those women Gouri is most beautiful.

11. ----- कङ्कणं सुन्दरम् अस्ति ।

This woman's bangle is beautiful.

12. ----- अधः पुष्पाणि पतन्ति ।

The flowers fall under **that creeper**.

एतासां जवनिकानां

तासां स्थालिकानां

एतयोः इण्डल्योः

तयोः बालिकयोः

तासां महामरीचिकानां

तस्याः बालिकायाः

तासां महिलानां

एतस्याः महिलायाः

एतासां शाटिकानां

तस्याः लतायाः

Answers given on Page 36

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Poornima tithi (Part 2)

ANJALI BURDE

Ashwin poornima: Popularly known as Kojagiri poornima or Sharad poornima, it is believed that Goddess Lakshmi descends on Earth on this full moon night and blesses all those who stay awake. On this night it is a tradition to prepare rice kheer or saffron infused milk and place it in the moonlight. The kheer or milk is consumed the next morning by which time it has been rejuvenated overnight by the divine rays of the moon and turned into an elixir that promotes good health and well-being. It is also a night for family and social bonding when relatives, neighbours and friends stay awake and invoke the blessings of Maa Lakshmi for bestowing wealth and prosperity.

This day also marks the birthday of Maharishi Valmiki and is celebrated as Valmiki Jayanti.

Kartik poornima: This poornima is associated with many mythological events. On this day Lord Shiva vanquished the demon Tripurasur hence it is also called Tripurari poornima. It also marks the appearance of Lord Vishnu in the Matsya avatar, the first of his dashta avatars or incarnations.

The birth of Kartikeya, son of Lord Shiva and Devi Parvati is also celebrated on this day.

It is also the birthday of Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism and is celebrated as Guru Purab by the Sikh community.

It is also called Dev Diwali in some regions and is celebrated by lighting lamps in the evening.

Margashirsha poornima: This poornima celebrates the birth of Lord Dattatreya hence is also called Datta Jayanti. It is also called Agahan poornima and is considered to be the best day to perform 'daan' towards the poor and needy.

This poornima symbolizes spiritual bliss and satisfaction hence is also called Anand poornima.

Actions like charity, worship and fasting yield 32 times more benefits than usual, hence this day is also called "battisi poornima" in some regions.

Pausha poornima: It is considered to be an auspicious day to worship and seek the blessings of the Sun and Moon Gods.

Kumbh Melas traditionally begin on this tithi. The devout take a dip in the holy rivers on this day.

This day is also called Shakhambhari poornima. It honours the Goddess Shakhambhari considered

to be the goddess of nourishment. She is the manifestation of Mahadevi who appeared to save the world from hunger and famine brought on by a drought caused by a demon called Durgama. Worship of Devi Shakhambhari ensures that there is never a shortage of food and water and that the evil are always punished for their sins.

Magha poornima: This day is considered auspicious to bathe in the holy rivers perform prayers, austerities and charity. During the Kumbh Mela this is the final day of the holy snan and at other times the devout flock on this day at the Kumbh venues namely Nashik, Prayagraj, Varanasi, Haridwar and Ujjain to take a holy dip in the rivers for spiritual cleansing.

Performing yagna at Prayagraj on this day is considered highly auspicious as Lord Brahma himself had performed a yagna on the ghats of Triveni Sangam on Magha Poornima.

At Pushkhar in Rajasthan where the only temple dedicated to Lord Brahma is located, people gather for a holy dip in the Pushkhar Lake. The annual Camel Fair is also held here on this day.

Phalguna poornima: This day is also known as Vasant Poornima as it occurs in the Vasant Hritu or the spring season, it marks the last full moon of the Hindu calendar year. It is very popularly celebrated as Holika dahan the evening prior to Holi, the festival of colours.

As the legend goes, Pralhad defied his father the demon Hiranyakashyap by becoming an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu. This angered him and he tried to kill Pralhad in many ways. His sister Holika then suggested that she would sit with Pralhad on a burning pyre as she had a boon that fire could not harm her. However Pralhad was saved by Lord Vishnu and Holika was burnt to ashes.

Eventually Lord Vishnu took the Narasimha avatar and vanquished the demon Hiranyakashyap. So on this day Lord Narasimha is also worshipped.

Hence this poornima is celebrated by lighting bonfires at night under the full moon signifying the burning of all evil things and the victory of good over evil.

Amchigel vay?

TANUJA NADKARNI

There could not be a sweeter sounding question than this – at 10.30 pm in a dark street with a small cluster of houses on either side, in the middle of nowhere – the face peering in thru the car window was completely covered by a monkey cap and I could only see the eyes.

This was 24th December 2022 and my car driver had finally acknowledged that he did not know the road... and well, we may be (a little) lost somewhere between Davangere and Mavingundi. (Mavingundi being a well-known junction beyond which both of us knew the road to Chitrapur perfectly well.

How did I get into such a situation you may ask – with Google maps and all, can one still get lost?

My journey had begun on 22nd – a work visit to CMC Vellore which I just could not postpone. The holiday rush meant that no tickets were available on any mode of transport – and the travel from Chitrapur to Vellore was not an easy one – a 3 hour journey to Mangalore airport, a hopping flight via Hyderabad to Chennai and then, a 3 hour road trip to Vellore kind of zigzagging across the southern part of the country. The actual distance to Vellore was just 690 Kms and Vivek and I had driven just a couple of years back on that route. So I took a decision to hire a vehicle and go.

On all our earlier trips, I would spend quite some time mapping out the route, writing down the names of the villages enroute and finding out the road conditions before the trip. This time I left it to the driver. A mistake I regretted after we were about 6 hours into the journey – making a slow progress on the worst stretch of road ever. He had selected the route via Chitradurga, because that was shorter than the others. Anyways, after an hour of a bumpy ride, the rest of the road was good and we made good time reaching Vellore by around 8 pm.

The next day was spent at CMC Vellore, the place of work. Just as I was wrapping up in the evening, a message was sent by one of the senior person requesting whether I could meet him the following morning. That meant I could not leave for the return trip at 6 am as planned. Leaving at 10 am would still be ok I thought, and agreed for a 9 am meeting.

As luck would have it, by the time I left it was almost 12 noon. The previous night I had spent some time mapping out the return trip and checking the road conditions, so I instructed the driver to go via Davangere. It was slightly longer by about 15 kms but the road condition was reported to be good.

A bumper to bumper traffic jam on the NICE road skirting Bangalore meant that it was almost 9 pm by the time we reached Davangere. A quick halt for dinner and soon we reached the junction where we had to leave the broad National highway with well-placed signages and enter the crisscrossing network of the State highways with barely visible milestones. The roads were narrow but well maintained and almost clear of any traffic.

The driver mentioned that he had never driven this stretch before, but was sure he could figure out the way. I had my navigation map on, but kept losing mobile signal and by the time the screen refreshed, I realised we had missed a turning. Now, one of the most challenging things to do is to convince a driver to retrace the way and take the route that I had mapped. He was sure he was on the right track. We actually went back and forth, with me trying to tell him to look for the road to Tawargi and then Hirekerur. These were the names of the villages I had marked on the map. Then for a brief period like the moon appearing from behind the clouds, my mobile signal caught on and I could see the map. I asked the driver to slow down and turn into what looked like a narrower road. He did it with the utmost reluctance, mumbling that we should have gone via the Chitradurga road. He just did not trust my navigation skills. And there was no one around to stop and ask for directions.

A few minutes later we saw a scattering of a few houses on either side, but the little village seemed to be already asleep. That's when I spotted, just outside one of the houses, the man in a Monkey cap patting a small baby to sleep on his shoulder while a small kid walked next to him. It looked as if he had just stepped out to soothe the baby to sleep. "Stop and ask him" I told the driver. Seeing the car stop in front of his house, the man walked towards us and the driver asked him, "Is this the way to Tawargi?" He peered suspiciously into the

M for Mental Health

BY VIDYA GUNAVANTHE

With growing stress and mental health concerns in society today, there's a growing need for finding solutions to such concerns. Malavika Karnad Amladi is a practicing psychologist from Mumbai. Here she answers a few frequently asked questions on mental health.

Why do you think people are giving more importance to mental health issues today than ever before?

I think mental health issues have always been a matter of great importance. However, with the advent of social media platforms, we can now spread the awareness a lot more than ever before. People are much more comfortable talking about their mental health concerns due to this awareness and some sense of support and solidarity in openly having these conversations.

Do you think therapy is most relevant today especially on account of exam pressures in the field of education, peer pressure in the workplace, etc.?

Yes, definitely! Therapy is and will always be relevant, and more so now with our current fast-paced lifestyles and increasing stress levels.

How does therapy help today's youngsters?

Our mind and body are interconnected. Just as we take care of our physical health by visiting the doctor or exercising, eating healthy, etc., seeking therapy is one of the ways we can take care of our emotional / mental well-being.

Yes, therapy is not magic; while it won't "solve" your problems, you learn to cope with your situations better. With therapy, you learn to deal with your overall lifestyle feeling more equipped and aware of your thoughts and feelings.

How long would therapy be required to prove effective?

Unfortunately, there is no fixed answer to this. Everyone's therapeutic journey is subjective. It depends on many factors and the nature of the concerns.

car, and started explaining what sounded like multiple route options to the driver in Kannada... toll road, good road, longer/shorter route with the driver asking him some more questions. Finally, he asked the driver –Where in Tawargi do you want to go to? That's when I interrupted and said, “Nammage Chitrapur Hoga beku - We want to go to Chitrapur” This time he peered again into the car and asked me, “Amchigele Vay?” (Are you an Amchigele?)

There could not be a sweeter sounding question than this! He immediately switched to Konkani and explained the route to me – it was the exact same route that I had mapped and we had indeed taken the correct turn on the state highway. I thanked him and by now the driver had begun to believe that I had mapped the route correctly. The rest of the trip was smooth- the road was a delight and no traffic at all. It was indeed a relief to turn in thru the welcoming entrance to Chitrapur and then reach farm!

Now, sitting in the comfort of my home and writing this down, I must confess that I was anxious when we were seemingly lost in the pitch dark countryside! And it was indeed a relief to meet someone who could speak Konkani and direct us correctly!

Tanuja Nadkarni lives in Chitrapur since 2011, where she and her late husband Vivek Nadkarni had moved from Mumbai. She manages her Organic farm, 'Huli Devana'. She writes a blog about her farming and other experiences on www.ourfarmatchitrapur.blogspot.in.

Answers to सरल संस्कृतम् – Exercise 41.1 -

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. तस्याः | 2. एतस्याः बालिकायाः |
| 3. तयोः बालिकयोः | 4. एतयोः इण्डल्योः |
| 5. तासां स्थालिकानां | 6. एतासां जवनिकानां |
| 7. एतासां शाटिकानां | 8. तासां महामरीचिकानां |
| 9. तस्याः बालिकायाः | 10. तासां महिलानां |
| 11. एतस्याः महिलायाः | 12. तस्याः लतायाः |

Superfoods – N & O

ANJALI BURDE

Nuts - Nuts are an excellent source of plant-based protein. They are rich in unsaturated fats and hence are considered to be heart-friendly food. The presence of nutrients like vitamin E and B-group, minerals like magnesium, selenium and zinc increases their nutritional value but being calorie dense, one needs to eat them in moderation. In this series on super-foods the nutritional benefits of some of the nuts like almonds, cashews and hazelnuts have already been covered, others will follow as per the alphabetical order.

Neeps - This is a Scottish name for turnips which are called shalgam or shaljam in local languages. Turnips are root vegetables shaped like beets but creamy white in colour with a pinkish purple top. Although a root vegetable, unlike carrots and beets it belongs to the family of cruciferous vegetables like cabbage and broccoli.

Turnips provide plenty of nutrients but are low in calories. Being rich in fibre they are helpful in relieving constipation. They contain a good amount of potassium and hence are helpful in lowering blood pressure. The presence of a compound called sulforaphane provides protection against certain cancers. Turnips can be eaten raw or in cooked form. Mild roasting brings out the zesty flavours as well as enhances its nutritional properties. Turnips are a good substitute for potatoes and can be added to soups and stews. Tender turnips can be eaten raw as a salad.

In North Indian states, a seasonal pickle is prepared using turnips, carrot and cauliflower as these are available in plenty during winter.

Superfoods - O

Oranges - Oranges are popular fruits we know for their vitamin C content. Orange juice is an integral part of a Continental breakfast menu. Due to the high vitamin C content oranges help in boosting immunity and help in absorption of iron by the body. Being low in calories and rich in fibre oranges are very popular with weight watchers, however in order to get the most from the fibre content one needs to eat the fruit instead of juicing it.

Oranges also contain flavonoids which have anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial properties. The presence of potassium promotes heart, muscle and bone health. Hence

oranges should be regularly eaten when they are in season.

The outer skin or peel of oranges is aromatic and flavourful. Grated peel or zest as it is called is added to salads, soups as well as desserts.

In South India orange peels are used to prepare a flavourful and tangy rasam.

Oats - are a nutrient dense grain rich in soluble fibre, slow-digesting carbs, essential minerals like potassium, magnesium, iron and phosphorus. It also contains compounds called beta-glucans that promote heart health, lower cholesterol and prevent sugar spikes. Oats also contain a good amount of protein.

Oats are generally consumed in the form of a porridge topped with fruits or nuts. It is also the main ingredient in muesli a Swiss breakfast dish where rolled oats are soaked overnight in some fresh fruit juice, nuts and fruits. Muesli is a popular breakfast with weight watchers and for those who don't have time for an elaborate meal.

Oats are generally consumed as rolled oats or quick cooking oats which can be added to trail mixes, granola bars, muffins and cakes and even to soups. These days, oats are also added to idli and dosa batters to increase their nutritional profile. Oats flour can be added to wheat flour to make healthier chapatti and roti.

Oats dosa is a healthier version of the traditional dosa where rice can be easily substituted with oats.

Ingredients: ½ cup udad dal soaked for 4 hours with ½ tsp of methi seeds

1 cup oats flour 2 tbsp rawa salt to taste

Oil for cooking the dosas

Method: Grind the soaked dal to a fine paste. Add in the oats flour, rawa and salt. Mix well, add water to get the right consistency of the batter and keep aside for at least an hour. Heat a dosa tawa and prepare the dosas. Serve with chutney of your choice.

Note: This batter does not require overnight fermentation. If you don't have oats flour, you can grind rolled oats to a powder. The oats should be slightly warmed for easy grinding.

Here & There

Bengaluru Local Sabha

On 1st December, Gita Jayanti was observed with Sampurna Gita Pathana by sadhakas and Shrimad Bhagavadgita Pujana. Later, Local Sabha President, Shri Chaitanya Shiroor welcomed the gathering and a talk by Chief Guest - Shri Anantakrishna Hirebet. Prizes were distributed to the winners and participants of Abhiviyakti and Shrimad Bhagavadgita recitation competitions. This event was followed by recitation of Bhashya Pathana, Shiva Pujana by gruhasthas, and prasad vitarana.

On 11th December, Samaradhana of Parama Puja Shrimat Krishnashram Swamiji was observed.

On 13th December, Samaradhana of Parama Puja Shrimat Keshavashram Swamiji was observed.

On 4th January, Vardhanti of Nagadevata, Annamma, Chamunda and Marikamba Sannidhis were observed with Vishsha samaradhana puja at the sannidhis, mangalarati and santarpan seva.

Reported by Saikrupa Nalkur

SARASWAT MAHILA SAMAJ, GAMDEVI, MUMBAI

Annual Cooking Event at Saraswat Mahila Samaj : On 13th December 2025, Saraswat Mahila Samaj celebrated its Annual Cooking Event named "Sip Sip Hurray with Bite sized Bliss"

An interesting competition was kept for presetting "Mocktails", Starters" with games, quiz and course food.

Nandita Sirur welcomed the audience, the participants and the two judges, Sharayu Kowshik and Dhanashree Mallapur, both of them are good cooks and having a penchant for making various cuisines.

While the judges were occupied with the tasting, Nandita conducted some lovely games as different vegetables, especially of amchis - "magge", "ghosale", "kadgi-phanas", "bimbul". Audience had to write down maximum number of dishes they could prepare with these vegetables and the one with max number was the winner.

Similarly, Leena Kotwal too had brought a sensory game of tasting a starter which she had made with almost 14 ingredients and each one she had given to all who were present who had to taste and write what ingredients were made. The max correct answers given the prize.

Thereafter the judges were ready with their results and announced the winners.

Starter 1st Prize: Nivedita Bellare; Starter 2nd Prize: Nanda Bellare; Mocktails: 1st Prize: Swati Amladi; Mocktails 2nd Prize: Geeta Balse.

DOMESTIC TIDINGS

BIRTH

We welcome the new arrival:

Dec 17 : Baby boy Aatreya, to Pracheeti (nee Nadkarni) and Ashwin Damble at Mumbai.

MARRIAGE

We congratulate the following couple and wish them a very happy married life!

Dec 15 : Anju Ashok Maskeri with Berwin Rajinder Dhanjal at Mumbai.

OBITUARIES

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

2025

Nov 15 : Sumant Atmaram Gulvadi (74) at Chennai

Dec 13 : Kuldeep Ramachandra Kadle (48) at Belgaum.

Dec 16 : Krishnanand Rajaram Honavar (73) at Mumbai.

Dec 18 : Krishnanand Sthalekar of Mumbai at Bengaluru.

Dec 29 : Sharad Atmaram Haldipur (82) at Mumbai.

2026

Jan 2 : Subhash Shripad Mallapur (78) at Pune.

Jan 03 : Sanjay Ganesh Upponi at Gamdevi, Mumbai.

Jan 05 : Mohini Tombat at Mumbai.

The judges thanked the Saraswat Mahila Samaj for giving them this opportunity. All participants were also given some token prizes for their willing participation and efforts.

Nivi Nadkarni proposed the vote of thanks and congratulated the winners and all the participants. She thanked our young brigade of our Managing Committee members who put in great efforts in this event - Roopa Lobo, Leena Kotwal, Nandita Sirur and Bhakti Ullal in organising and conducting the various games which the audience thoroughly enjoyed. Special thanks to Roopa Lobo for taking charge of photography and videography.

Then Nivi mentioned the donations made by Smt. Kalindi H. Kodial: Rs.1 lakh for Medical Relief Fund corpus in memory of Dr. Harish Kodial. The interest to be used for aid. Rs.1 lakh to the Education Fund in memory of Smt. Meenaxi Nagesh Bijur on her birth centenary. Additional non corpus donation of Rs.2.50 lakhs was given to current year disbursement. Saraswat Mahila Samaj is very grateful for this magnanimous donation and for also sponsoring snacks for all. After this everyone tasted the mocktails and starters prepared by the participants.

Reported by Geeta Suresh Balse

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