



Kanara Saraswat

Vol. 91, No. 2, FEBRUARY 2010 | Rs. 20 /-

SUBIR GOKARN

New Deputy Governor at the
Reserve Bank of India





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Kanara Saraswat

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SAD DEMISE

We regret very much to announce the sad and sudden passing away of Dr. Aroon Bhavanishankar Samsi, an eminent surgeon who was very popular and helpful to one and all who approached him. His passing away on 26th December 2009, has created a great void in the community. He was a former President of Kanara Saraswat Association.

Kanara Saraswat Association in its Managing Committee meeting held on 12th January 2010, passed a resolution condoling the sad demise of Dr. Samsi.

Dr. Samsi's life sketch will be published in our next issue.

- Editorial Committee

*The fragrance always remains on the
hand that gives the rose.*

-Mahatma Gandhi

KSA's FOUNDATION DAY

Kanara Saraswat Association celebrated its 98th Foundation Day on 21st November 2009, at Smt. Indirabai Kallianpurkar Hall when 16 members of our community who have done outstanding work in different fields were honoured. A detailed report will appear in our March 2010 issue.

- Editorial Committee

- Letters, articles and poems are welcome. Letters should be brief, and articles should be about 800-1000 words. They will be edited for clarity and space.
- The selection of material for publication will be at the discretion of the Editorial Committee.
- The opinions expressed in the letters/articles are those of the authors and not necessarily those of KSA or the Editorial Committee.
- All matter meant for publication should be addressed only to the Editor c/o KSA Office / e-mail id given above.
- The deadline for letters, articles, poems, material for "Here and There", "Personalia", and other original contributions is the 12th of every month; the deadline for advertisements, classifieds and other paid insertions, is the 16th of every month. Matter received after these dates will be considered for the following month.

GOLDEN WEDDING

Muralidhar Ramchandra Haridas and Madhuri Muralidhar Haridas
(nee Madhuri Ganesh Soukur)



It is our great pleasure to ring in
Golden Wedding bells for our
parents who were married on 20th February, 1960

Our prayers to our Kuladevata, Lord
Gopalkrishna, Lord Bhavanishankar and
Sacred Guru Parampara
to bestow their blessings on them for Health,
Happiness and Long Life.

May the Golden Jubilee turn into a Diamond Jubilee and so on....

With Best Wishes from:

Aarti and Satish Udiaver
Archana and Aparna
Prashant and Nayana Haridas
Avanti

Sangeeta and Shivanand Bhatkal
Sadhvee and Soumya
Pradeep and Gayatri Haridas
Nagashree and Anushree

Relatives and friends



Prithvika Honavar represented her school Jasudben M.L. in the Mumbai Inter-School Elocution Championship 2009 and was awarded the Second Prize by actor Naseeruddin Shah. Ninety two schools participated in the Championship.



From the President's Desk

Dear Members,

All self-help gurus teach us to prioritize, to devise a list of things that demand our attention, in the correct order of importance. This helps us to lead a successful life.

Now, everyone has his/her own list of priorities in life. But there is one entity that deserves the first position on **everyone's** list of priorities. The following story will illustrate the point.

Once upon a time, there lived a King who had four wives. The first wife was the most good-looking and attractive of all. The King took great pride in taking her everywhere and impressing everyone with her beauty. His second wife was his best friend and confidante; he would share every little secret with her. The third was the object of his adoration, he would cater to her every whim and fancy and buy her anything that she desired. The fourth one, however, was most unfortunate; the King neglected her in every way – he would avoid her company, not talk to her and, in fact, not even look at her.

The King passed his life in the enjoyable company of his first three wives and finally, a time came when he lay on his death bed. Thereupon, he called his first wife and said to her, "My dear, the time has come when I shall soon depart for a destination wherefrom I shall not return. Until now, I have taken you everywhere with me, to every single place. I wish that you should accompany me on this journey as well. Will you do so, my dear?"

The queen was shocked and immediately replied, "No, my Lord! As much as I love and respect you, I cannot leave the boundaries of this palace, my home!"

The King then turned to the second queen and repeated his request. The queen answered, "My Lord, you have entrusted me with every secret that you know and I may be your closest ally, but I'm afraid I must disappoint you. I can accompany you till the cremation ground perhaps, but not beyond that."

As a last option, the King asked the third queen if she would accompany him on his last journey. She too replied that while he had fulfilled her every need, she would also be able to accompany him up to his funeral pyre, but not beyond that point.

The King was deeply pained by his wives' responses. As he lay on his bed, heartbroken, ruminating over what had happened, the fourth wife silently approached the bed and said, "My Lord, I have heard that you wish that one of us should accompany you on your last journey. All our life you have completely ignored me. But all the same, I wish to accompany you on this journey." The King begged for her forgiveness and tears of repentance and gratitude rolled down his cheeks.

All of us have these four wives. The first wife represents our material possessions – our name, fame, wealth, power etc. That which we take with

us and love to flaunt and impress people with, everywhere we go. But at the end, we have to leave all this behind us.

The second wife denotes our relatives and friends, all those whom we consider near and dear. We trust them completely (and indeed, they may justify that trust!) But alas! They too can accompany us only till the cremation ground, and not beyond that.

The third wife represents our mortal body. We spend all our life satisfying our body's material cravings and desires, but we have to part company with it too, on the funeral pyre.

That leaves our much neglected, much ignored fourth wife, whom we all know as God. The only single Person who silently stands by us and never leaves our side, in life and death. He who watches us as we spend our entire life (and lives!) attending to our material desires, our relatives and friends, and our material body, while we completely ignore Him.

Is it, therefore, time for us to update our priority list?

Shubham bhavatu

Dr. Harish Kodial

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NINETEENTH VARDHANTI CELEBRATIONS

**The Annual Vardhanti Celebrations will be held at the Math
on 6th and 7th March, 2010**

PROGRAMME

Saturday, 06th March, 2010 : Religious ceremonies including “Durga Homa” followed
9 a.m. to 12 noon by Kumarika Pooja, Aarti and Prasad.

Sunday, 07th March, 2010 : **V A R D H A N T I D A Y**
9.30 a.m. to 10.45 a.m. : Vocal by Kum. Nivedita Hattangadi
10.45 a.m. onwards : Welcome by Managing Trustee
Devotional Songs by Sachin Sashital – Disciple of
Gaan-Saraswati Kishori Amonkar

12.30 p.m. onwards : **PRASAD BHOJAN**

Tuesday, 16th March, 2010 : **GUDI PADWA**
- Vikruti Samvatsara Prarambha
5.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. : Panchang Vachan by Ved. Ulman Anand Bhat
6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. : Bhajans – “Parijnan Bhajan Mandal”

Wednesday, 24th March, 2010 : **RAM NAVAMI**
5.30 P.M. to 7.00 p.m. : Kirtan by Smt. Ashwini Bhat



Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor: The cover story, 'Dr. Samir Bangalore, Star of a New Epilepsy Programme at Sunrise Hospital, Las Vegas' (December 2009 issue), was very informative and dealt with the subject at length. Being a facilitator for Samman, a support group for people with epilepsy in Mumbai, I can very well imagine the joy of Mr. Stone who is leading a seizure-free life thanks to Dr. Samir Bangalore.

I would like to inform people that even in India, epilepsy surgery is gaining roots, for suitable candidates. The KEM Hospital in Mumbai, recently celebrated its 100 successful epilepsy surgeries by having a grand programme and inviting all operated patients. Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical

Sciences & Technology (SCIMST) in Trivandrum, has done some pioneering work in this field in India. And now, Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, also in Mumbai, has a world class epilepsy surgery programme. People with intractable (difficult to control) epilepsy can avail of these facilities.

Kavita Shanbhag, Matunga (W), Mumbai

Dear Editor: It is good to see the KS growing day by day and receiving contributions of articles and poems in various languages. Of late, it has also been getting the attention of various corporates who have been placing their advertisements in the magazine; the support lent by them to KS is really commendable. I only hope that KS will not become like a mid day newspaper which carries more advertisements than news!

Chaitanya Nadkarni, Goregaon (W), Mumbai

Courage India Cancer Foundation believes in the age-old saying "*From Nature comes the disease and Nature alone shall cure it*", and with the blessings of its guru Shri Sathya Sai Baba, is promoting awareness among people of the power of Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Naturopathy, Yoga etc in the treatment of cancer.



आख्यान क्र.: []

प्रशांती भक्तीरस

शनिवार, दि. २७ फेब्रुवारी २०१० सायं. ७ ते १०
 स्थळ : कनाटक हॉल, दि. एच. कटारीया मार्ग, माहिम, मुंबई - ४६.
 साधसंगत : पं. विश्वनाथ कान्हेरे (ऑर्गन),
 माधव पवार (पखवाज), सुभाष वनगे (दादोलीन) साई बॅकर (तबला)



स्वराधीरा भरत बलवल्ली निलाक्षी पेंडारकर नचिकेत देसाई

- प्रवेशिका -

आख्यान क्र.: []

शनिवार, दि. २७ फेब्रुवारी २०१० सायं. ७ ते १०

स्थळ : कनाटक हॉल, दि. एच. कटारीया मार्ग, माहिम, मुंबई - ४६.

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To witness this, we request you, kind readers, to be a part of our Programme of music and divine Bhajans on Saturday, 27th February, 2010, from 7.00 pm to 10.00 pm. The proceeds of the ticket sales will go towards the Foundation's dream project PRASHANTHI and for the overall betterment of cancer patients.

Our courageous children who are undergoing Nature Cure treatment for cancer, will inaugurate the Programme and present flowers to the artistes.

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DR. SUBIR GOKARN TAKES OVER AS RBI DEPUTY GOVERNOR

Dr. Subir Vasant Gokarn took over as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on November 24, 2009 for a period of three years. He will be the fourth Deputy Governor, the other three being Smt. Shyamala Gopinath, Smt. Usha Thorat and Dr. K.C. Chakrabarty. As Deputy Governor, Dr. Gokarn will look after the Monetary Policy Department, Department of Economic Analysis and Policy, Department of Statistics and Information Management, Department of Communication and Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation. Dr. Gokarn will also represent the Reserve Bank at the G-20 Deputies' Forum.

Prior to joining the Reserve Bank, Dr. Gokarn was Chief Economist of Standard & Poor's Asia-Pacific, based in New Delhi. He assumed this position in August 2007 after having been Executive Director and Chief Economist of CRISIL, in which Standard & Poor's acquired a majority stake in 2005. During his five-year tenure at CRISIL, besides his role as Chief Economist, he performed a variety of roles, including heading CRISIL's research group and membership of the board of CRISIL and a number of its subsidiary companies.

Prior to joining CRISIL in 2002, he was Chief Economist and Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI), Chair in Industrial Development at the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi (2000-2002), and Associate Professor at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai (1991-2000).

Dr. Gokarn graduated from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, with a BA (Hons) in Economics (1979) and from the Delhi School of Economics with an MA in Economics (1981). After a two-year stint with the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices, he went on to pursue a PhD in Economics at Case Western Reserve University, USA, which he received in 1989. His thesis was on the impact of capital market liberalisation on industrial performance in South Korea. In 1997, he was awarded a Fulbright Research Fellowship, on

which he spent an academic year at the Economic Growth Centre at Yale University, USA.

Industrial Economics, Monetary Economics, Corporate Finance have been Dr. Gokarn's strengths. His academic research has straddled a number of areas, including industry, infrastructure and comparative studies of the East Asian economies, besides macroeconomics. He has authored a number of published works and project reports, including two co-authored books on the East Asian growth process and a co-edited volume on the structure of Indian industry.

He has contributed a fortnightly column on current economic issues to the *Business Standard* for 13 years. He was also a member of the Board of India Today Economists during 2002-09. He has regularly participated in committees and other activities organised by industry associations, academic institutions, government agencies and civil society organisations.

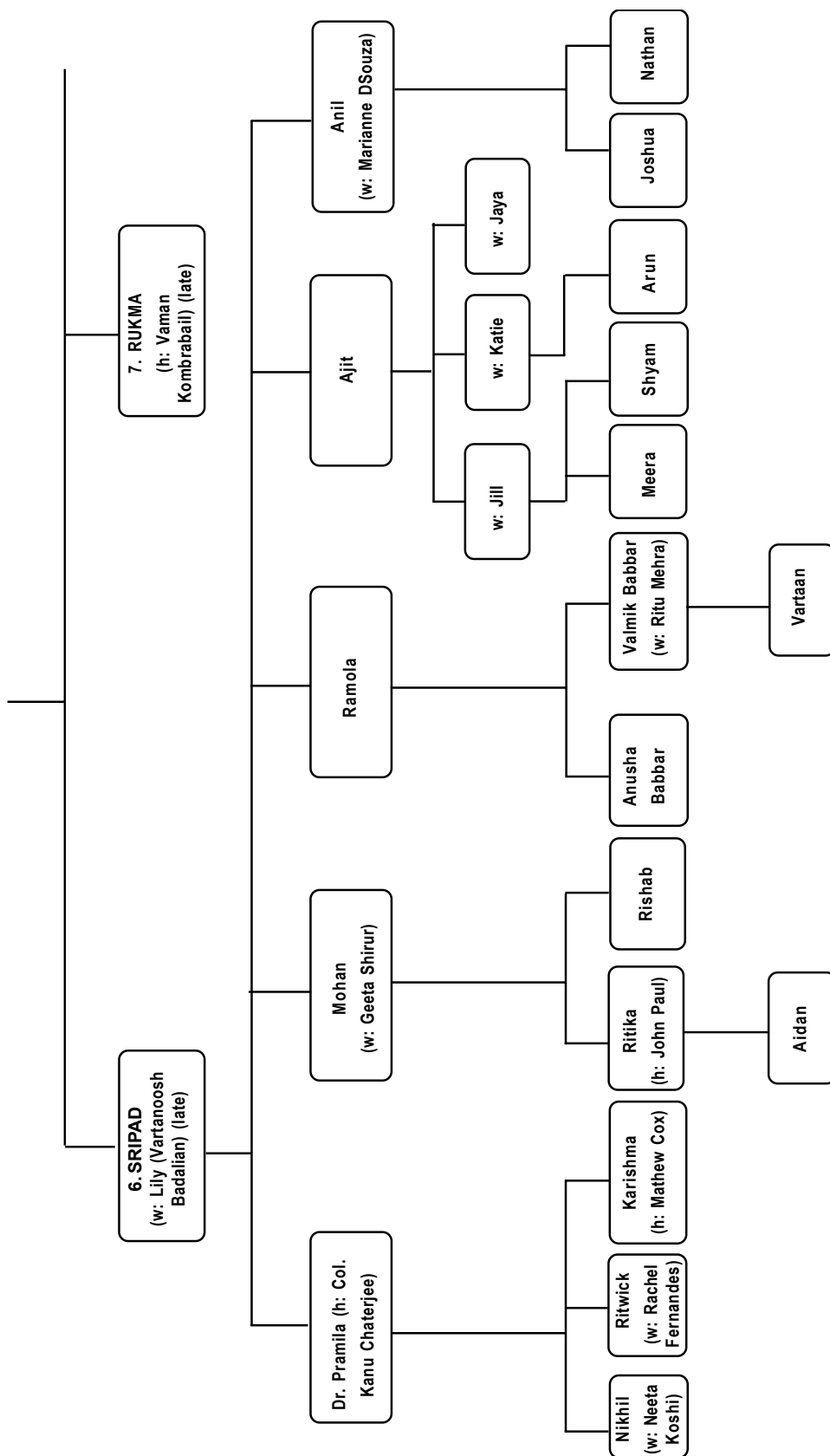
Source: Press Release, November 24, 2009, Department of Communication, Reserve Bank of India.

Dr. Subir Gokarn is the second Chitrapur Saraswat to be appointed on a prestigious post at the Reserve Bank of India, the first being Sir Benegal Rama Rau who was its fourth Governor, from July 1949 to January 1957.

Dr. Gokarn was born in October 1959 in Mumbai, to Nirmala (popularly known as Nimi) and Vasant Gokarn. His paternal grandparents were Mrs. Rama and Dr. Bhavanishankar Gokarn; on the maternal side, his grandparents were Lady Vatsala and Sir Vithal Chandavarkar.

Dr. Gokarn is married to Dr. Jyotsna Bapat who has a PhD in social anthropology from IIT, Mumbai, and is an environmental consultant. They have a daughter, Kanak.

Descendents of Nalkur Narasing Rao (Contd.)



Dr. Subir Gokarn joins the Mint Street club

As the youngest appointee after R.K Hazari (who, at 38, was the youngest deputy governor to be appointed from within the organisation), Dr. Subir Gokarn is among the few who bring with them a blend of experience from the worlds of academia, corporate and applied economics, that could redefine the way things are done at Mint Street. His experience could come in handy on the policy formulation front, courtesy the numerous studies he has done at the Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research and as Chief Economist at NCAER. These studies required a lot of application of theory in which he is known to be sound and up-to-date. Moreover, he does not get bogged down by jargon and is admired for his simplicity in style of explaining even the most complex of issues. All these would certainly make the going less cumbersome in RBI.

According to R Ravimohan, his former boss at Standard & Poor's (S&P's), Dr Gokarn's ability to draw the benefits of any macro developments to micro levels - not only at the industry level but also

at the company level, differentiated Crisil, and later S&P's, research from the rest. That said, much of his involvement in monetary economics - the area of focus at RBI - has largely been in his last assignment, at S&P.

Most of his former colleagues appreciate his ability to comprehend and assess an issue not only from the macro-economic standpoint but also from the political economy perspective. He is known for being friendly and puts people around him at ease. He is not known to be a control freak and his ability to delegate and get work done without shirking responsibility is a major plus point. Central bankers globally communicate in a style that is constructively ambiguous, leaving the interpretation of what's said to the marker. But for Dr. Gokarn, who is very lucid and clear in his communication, the transition in his communication style could be a challenge.

Excerpted from: 'Now, a good listener joins the Mint Street club' by Gayatri Nayak; *The Economic Times*, 25 November, 2009.

The Flood Gates

SADHANA S. KARNAD, RATNAGIRI

God! This incessant, unseasonal rain!
Have you opened the flood gates?
It looks as if it will clear up
And then starts all over again!

Dark clouds on Tuesday
Came down really low,
An eerie darkness descended
On all of us below...

Here I was praying
For just a little respite;
But rain came down heavier
As if out of sheer spite.

Mother Nature is losing patience
With all of her selfish kids;
Who only know how to take
Without qualms or a conscience.

Let's stop this reckless pillage,
These are warnings we must heed;
Please God, let good sense prevail
Over Man's senseless greed!

ERRATUM

In the Nalkur Family Tree published in the book 'FORMULA FOR FULFILMENT' **A Biography of N S Rao**, the name of N.S. Rao's first great grandson Aidan Paul (Mohan Rao Nalkur and Geeta's grandson, and Ritika and John Paul's son) was inadvertently missed out. The omission is regretted. The corrected Family Tree is given on the facing page (pg 10).

- Vidya Gunavanthe (Author)

The article "The King of Hearts (of Chitrapur Saraswats) – Nalkur Sripad Rao", which appeared in the January 2010 issue of KS, should have ended with the above-mentioned lines of omission in respect of the Nalkur Family Tree. The unintentional lapse is regretted.

- Editor

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SUMAN KALYANPUR RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS LATA MANGESHKAR AWARD

CHAITANYA PADUKONE

Eminent, senior playback singer Suman Kalyanpur, known for dozens of yesteryear chart-buster Hindi songs and Marathi *bhavgeet* is back with a bang in media focus. That is because the Maharashtra State Government has just conferred the prestigious **Lata Mangeshkar Award** on her.

After a brief pause, the modest Suman reacts, "It's a matter of immense joy and gives me a sense of fulfillment and achievement since I have high regards for the iconic legendary singer Latadidi. The New Year (2010) seems to be extra lucky for me, as the number '10' has always been my mascot number. As a Chitrapur Saraswat, I feel my coveted honour is a matter of pride for our enterprising community which has always distinguished itself in every field. My only major regret is that my (late) husband Ramanand is no more with us.. As my staunch supporter, he would have been so delighted with this formal accolade bestowed on me," asserts the veteran yet evergreen singer whose daughter Charul now is her constant 'emotional anchor and support'.

Unlike some playback and pop singers who make extra efforts to remain in media limelight, Suman Kalyanpur comes off as one of the few glaring exceptions. Consequently, many music lovers particularly those from the yuppie generation sometimes tend to enjoy her songs without realizing 'who' the singer is or 'presume' it to be some other 'leading singer'.

She wears a cryptic but eloquent smile that says it all. "Quite possible. Believe me, I have never felt it necessary to push myself and snatch media attention. My firm belief is that my creative musical vocal repertoire speaks for itself. Fortunately, I still have my loyal fan-following all over the world who still connect with my popular old Hindi movie songs and Marathi *bhavgeet* and *bhakti-geet* and recognize my distinctly different voice," counters Suman whose detailed 'biography' titled 'Suman Sugandh' has been very meticulously authored by the hugely popular Marathi TV show hostess-presenter Mangala

Khadilkar.

"Thanks to this beautiful biography, which is dedicated to my late husband Ramanand ("Nanda-ji") Kalyanpur, all my fans and music-lovers will be able to understand me better on a personal level, besides obtaining an

authentic update of all my film and non-film songs," insists Suman whose birthday falls on January 28th.

Incidentally, the naturally gifted and later trained singer has sung in over a dozen diverse languages right from Assamese to Punjabi and from Bengali to Kannada. From 1953 up to 1980, she has sung and recorded under the baton of all the top legendary



SUMAN'S TEN POPULAR NUMBERS

1. Ajhoona aaye baalma, saawan ('Saanjh Aur Savera')
2. Aaj kal tere mere pyaar ke ('Brahmachari')
3. Na na karte pyar tumhi se ('Jab Jab Phool Khile')
4. Chhodo chhodo meri baiyyan ('Miya Biwi Raazi')
5. Na tum hume jaano ('Baat Ek Raat Ki')
6. Dil ek mandir hai ('Dil Ek Mandir')
7. Tumne pukaara aur hum chale aaye ('Raajkumar')
8. Keshavaa Maadhava (Marathi)
9. Akash paangharooni (Marathi)
10. Rima jhima jarati shraavana (Marathi)

music composers including Shankar Jaikishan, S.D. Burman, Naushad, Kalyanji Anandji, Roshan and Laxmikant Pyarelal.

Contrary to wrong impression, she shares a warm professional and personal rapport with 'Latadidi'.

Jogging into a flashback, Suman recalls how she sang this playback number 'Kabhi aaj kabhi kal' in tandem with Lata Mangeshkar under the baton of composer Hemant Kumar for the movie 'Baat Ek Raat Ki'. "It was a memorable occasion. We (Latadidi and I) shared and still share a lively, warm camaraderie whenever we meet at social occasions like weddings," she clarifies.

Was it true that she declined several offers from leading TV channels to be one of the panel judges for popular TV music reality shows? "That's true. That's because I was not comfortable judging and eliminating the young contestants. My personal view is that all of them are so good and confident that it's rather demoralizing and disheartening for most of them to be openly eliminated, even as millions of home viewers are watching. Maybe if I am invited only as a 'guest-mentor' on a TV musical reality show without having to eliminate anyone, I may be game for the offer," smiles Suman whose stress-buster session is by way of listening to *ghazals* sung by Mehdi Hassan, Ghulam Ali, Jagjit Singh, and flute recitals by Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia. "But right from childhood my favorite instrument is the 'piano', which I love listening to," she signs off.

My little goldfish

ANIRUDH KODIAL

My little goldfish
Has a big tail.
When we give him food
He eats it without fail

He has big eyes,
Round like wheels.
He comes to the surface
For his meals.

When he's happy,
He jumps with joy.
So we do not need
Any other toy.

Whenever he is tired,
He goes down to rest.
Whatever you say,
My goldfish is the best!

Anirudh Kodial, aged 10, is a student of Std. V in St. Mary's High School, Dahanu Road.

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28 February, 2010

Smt. Jyoti S. Moodbidri
Signature of the Publisher,
Kanara Saraswat

The Tristhali Yatra - On the threshold of the Gods

JAISHANKAR BONDAL, NEW DELHI

There has perhaps been no larger gathering of the Chitrapur Saraswat community in Northern India for a specific event as that during the Tristhali Yatra organized in October 2009. The New Delhi Sabha was privileged to work for this Yatra with the blessings of and guidance from PP Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji, who also led this unique pilgrimage. Nearly 250 Yatris (the oldest aged 85 and the youngest 8) cheerfully and reverentially traversed the heartland of India, the Gangetic plains, visiting the most sacred “*sthalas*” of the Sangam at Prayag, Lord Vishwanath’s abode and other important temples in Kashi, and finally the Vishnupada Temple in Gaya.

The Tristhali Yatra has a special and historic significance in Hindu *dharma*. In undertaking this journey, we not only followed the ancient traditions of Lord Rama and the Pandavas, but also of our revered Gurus — PP Pandurangashram Swamiji in the 19th century, and PP Anandashram and Parijnanashram Swamijis (as well as PP Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji in His “*purvashram*”) in the 20th, who had visited and stayed in these *sthalas*.

Painstaking efforts for preparing detailed and separate programmes for Swamiji and the Yatris, security arrangements and logistics were made by Nitin Gokarn, IAS, who had the unique advantage of not only serving in this general area, but of having been closely associated with the administration of Kashi Vishwanath Temple, and possessing in-depth knowledge of the temples in and around Kashi. While his support made the task of the Delhi Sabha that much easier, sitting in Delhi, we had to manage everything via remote control, having no base in that area. Despite a lead time of about seven months to prepare, it entailed unparalleled attention to every possible detail that one could think of, and even then, we were constantly learning!!

On October 9, Yatris alighting from different destinations by 11 trains were received and housed at the Kriya Yoga Institute. Post familiarization and briefing, the next day, the Yatris and volunteers set off at dawn, in specified buses to the Sangam, where they witnessed a perfect sunrise on the river. What followed was even more spectacular — our

beloved Swamiji performing Ganga Poojan at the most sacred spot where the three rivers meet. The air resounded with *jaijaikars* for Poojya Swamiji, Lord Bhavanishankara and the Guru Parampara as He waved the sacred flame to Ganga Mata and performed the ceremonies. It was exceptionally calm, almost as if the three sacred rivers were waiting to receive homage from us all!! Enthusiastically, the Yatris, young and old, spontaneously joined in with great devotion to perform Ganga Snaan at nearby platforms. A brief tour on the river followed to view Akbar’s Fort by the river bank; the “Akshaya Vata,” visible above the river, and a *darshan* at the Lete Hanumanji Temple (the only horizontal statue of Lord Hanuman); local lore has it, that during high tide, the river waters invariably reach the temple to give Hanumanji a ‘*snaan*’.

Following breakfast, the Yatra resumed by road towards Kashi with halts en route at Sita Samahit Sthala (the place where Sita Mata returned unto the earth), Sitamarhi, and the Vindhyavasini Temple at Mirzapur. Delicious lunch here was preceded by melodious *bhajans* by the ladies, and a brief interaction with Swamiji and the host. Vindhyavasini is considered as one of the Shaktipeethas, and the Durga Temple is a major pilgrimage spot in the area. After *darshan* of the Devi, and a walk through a very crowded market area, the Yatris returned to Kashi the same evening.

Darshans and visits spanned the next three days in Kashi (the city of light; also called Banaras). Accommodation and food was at the Digambar Jain Dharamshala located in the heart of the (very crowded) city, but just a kilometre plus from the sanctum sanctorum of Lord Kashi Vishwanath (as well as the principal market areas — not to forget the Banaras silk sari shops, the Banarasi *paan*, and traditional milk based sweets!!)

For most Yatris (and volunteers from Delhi) this was a first visit to this ancient, bustling city with a deep historic and sacred significance in Indian civilization. With its clusters of temples, the riverfront buttressed by long stretches of well-built stairways and platforms (*ghats*), the river (and the

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city on its bank) stretches in a half moon (crescent) shape on Lord Shiva's forehead. Tradition has it that 330 million Gods are positioned in Kashi with 108 sacred places on its circumference. Lord Kashi Vishwanath in His sanctum is at the centre of this "mandala". Kashi, it is said, is the origin as well as the microcosm of the Universe; it encompasses all space within, yet it stands outside space and time; a pilgrimage to Kashi is said to have the power to destroy all sins.* No wonder then that the Yatris were excited at the prospect of seeing all the spots they had read about or seen in photographs.

For the Yatris, October 11 began with a dawn *darshan* at Kashi Vishwanath Temple. Even as the burnished golden *shikhar* of the Kashi Vishwanath shrine caught the morning sun's rays, the Yatris were already stretched out in orderly rows along the famed Vishwanath Galli (lane). Expectancy ran high and many of them broke out spontaneously into melodious *bhajans*, causing passing Kashi-ites to stop and openly compliment or remark in some awe, "Aap kaun hain? Kahaan se aye?" (Who are you? Where are you from?)

Thanks to the coordination by Nitin Gokarn, IAS, with local security agencies, including provision of local guides, the so-called "Red Zone" (high security area of the Temple) was navigated with ease; everyone had a smooth *darshan*, were able to do the *abhishek* at the sacred spot, and absorb the sanctity and ancient atmosphere of the place. Several temples were visited thereafter in succession — Annapoornadevi-ji, Bhawanishankar-ji, Saraswati-ji and Visalakshi-ji. After breakfast, the Yatris went on a boat ride along the Ganga to view the ghats and have a dip in the river. It was a hot and bright day but all the Yatris, including the seniors, were cheerful and active, eager to take in all they could, and keep pace with the rest.

Later that afternoon, the Yatris witnessed PP Swamiji performing "Rudra Abhisheka" at the Kashi Vishveshwar sanctum; an over two-hour ritual; the chanting of *mantras* and the sight of revered Swamiji sitting in deep meditation in the "garbha griha" is

something that viewers will always remember. *Prasad bhojan* was served to all; devotees also received *rudraksha malas* and other holy objects as *prasad*. It was truly a blessed afternoon for all.

That evening, in the presence of Swamiji, Nitin Gokarn, IAS, gave a lucid, illustrated talk on "Kashi and its importance to Saraswats", and answered questions from the floor which helped everyone to understand the significance of the Yatra, and the unique place of Kashi among all the *teerthas*.

On the next day, October 12, the Yatris had *darshan* at Durga Devi Temple, Sankat Vimochan Temple and Lolarka Kunda, Goswami Tulsidasji's house and a handwritten copy of Tulsi Ramayana, and later at Sri Kedareshwar Temple, one of the oldest shrines in Kashi, and Chintamani Ganesh Temple.

That afternoon, Swamiji performed *abhishek* at Sarangnath Temple, at Sarnath, about 10 kms from Kashi. One of the *lingams* here was installed by Param Guru Adi Shankaracharya, the other by Sage Sarangnath. Later, Swamiji blessed the Yatris at the temple complex with an interaction and a *bhajan*.

The evening programme was the spectacular "Ganga Aarti", witnessed from boats parked on the river bank, preceded by Swamiji performing Ganga Poojan and Aarti. The reflections of lamps lit on the Ghats dancing on the smooth waters of the Ganga was indeed a beautiful sight..

The Aarti is an amazing blend of music, movement and *mudras* performed daily at dusk by seven young men, clad in ochre and white, waving seven-tiered brass *diyas* (which must be fairly heavy!) in all four directions to the backdrop of *bhajans*. The Aarti is performed successively with *agarbattis*, camphor and *chamar* as well. The total effect of their graceful, measured movements, the music, and above all, the lights on the gently lapping water is, to say the least, mesmerizing!! It was a heartwarming experience to hear the Deepanamaskar recited from Yatri boats; the clear Sanskrit *shlokas* wafting over the waters – a true tribute to our resplendent Guru Parampara and our heritage!! As the boats

*Readers are referred to two excellent articles by Nitin Gokarn, IAS, (one, in the January 2009 issue of *Kanara Saraswat*, and the other in the Yatra Handbook brought out by the Delhi Sabha, from which I have drawn. I also acknowledge a report on the Yatra written soon after, by Vanita Kumta (of Thane Sabha) that I had the benefit of reading.

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withdrew into the darkness for the return journey, the many lamps floated by the Yatris on the gentle waves of the Ganga seemed to beckon, saying “remember this experience....come back.....come back.”

Many Yatris utilized the very early morning hours to witness the morning Aarti to Lord Vishwanath, when the deity is “woken up” with melodious *mantras*, music and floral offerings. In the dead of night, without the customary bustle and noise outside, the temple and its surroundings have a very different aura. The entire ceremony is strikingly beautiful and evocative, and difficult to put in words. Most of the Yatris witnessed this ceremony, and would understand my thoughts.

On the last day in Kashi, the Yatris went on a walking tour through the ‘*gallis*’ to the Kala Bhairav Temple, the Gokarn Partagali Math and the Kashi Math. Tradition has it that no visit to Kashi is complete and successful without paying obeisance to Kala Bhairav, whom Lord Shiva himself has appointed as the Chief Officer of Justice, and Kotwal of the city.

In the evening came the event which we were all looking forward to — the Dharma Sabha and Poojya Swamiji’s ‘Aashirvachan’ at the Shringeri Math. The lawns and the building were beautifully lit up, the specially built dais for Swamiji had the backdrop of the rising sun. Many local dignitaries and people who had helped in the Yatra had been invited for the event which commenced with *padpooja*. This was followed by Nitin Gokarn, IAS, speaking, in classic Hindi, about the history of Sri Chitrapur Math, the Saraswat community’s links with Kashi, and the current activities of the Math under the guidance of Poojya Swamiji. Thereafter, Swamiji delivered the ‘Aashirvachan’, also in Hindi. He blessed all those who had worked to organize the Yatra, and lauded its smooth progress. *Phalamantrakshat* and *prasad* distribution marked the conclusion of an epic journey. Kedar Udyavar (from the Hyderabad Sabha), speaking on behalf of the Yatris, gave a vote of thanks to all those who had helped organize the Yatra.

On 14 October, while some Yatris returned home, many proceeded by early morning buses to Gaya. It was a day journey, and return to Kashi before nightfall was planned, keeping overall security in mind. At

the Vishnupada Temple, Poojya Swamiji performed *abhishek* at the Foot Imprints of Lord Vishnu. Gaya (named after the demon Gayasura who met his end at the hands of Lord Vishnu) is believed to have the power to absolve all sins, and is a major pilgrimage centre to offer “*pindadaan*” and remember one’s ancestors. The day being Ekaadashi, Yatris had *phalahaar*, followed by an interaction with Swamiji, and a quick visit to Bodh Gaya, where Lord Buddha had gained enlightenment.

The next day, October 15, their minds and hearts heavy with spiritual experiences, sweet memories and associations, the Yatris boarded trains, homeward. Delhi Sabha Yatris had the good fortune to have the divine company of PP Swamiji for the next week (Deepavali week) as well.

Thus ended the momentous Tristhali Yatra, a once-in-a-lifetime experience for most of us. Coming from different cities, backgrounds, and having varied concerns, our common traditions and heritage joined us together for a few days on this Yatra. This was a voyage of discovery and rediscovery, of our history and our spiritual and social heritage. The successful conclusion of this rather daunting experience (for both the organizers and participants) can be attributed entirely to the blessings and guidance of our Poojya Swamiji, Lord Bhawanishankara, and the Guru Parampara. With the completion of the Yatra, the spiritual wheel turned yet another full circle, for it was our Adi Guru, PP Parijnanashram Swamiji I who had travelled from Kashi to Gokarn with the idol of Lord Bhawanishankara, his efforts catalysing the Chitrapur Saraswat community around the flag of our faith, and providing a secure mooring for our heritage.

No effort of this magnitude succeeds without all round and selfless help. This came in ample measure, thanks to the support of community stalwarts like Vinod Yennemadi, Lt Gen (Retd.) Prakash Gokarn, Mahesh Kalyanpur and others, too numerous to name, who, directly and indirectly, assisted and encouraged the Delhi Sabha in putting together the ‘nuts and bolts’ of the Yatra. Our sincere gratitude to all the volunteers from amongst the Yatri groups, who, in spite of their long and tiresome journeys to reach Prayag, cheerfully and readily assisted in the many tasks involved. This account will not be

complete if we do not salute the immense patience and forbearance shown by all the Yatris, old and young, throughout the Yatra. Generous to a fault, it was their enthusiasm and cooperation that created the ambience for its smooth progress all the way.

As we seek new horizons and ways to better our spiritual knowledge, we pray that such efforts will continue, so that we, and our succeeding generations, are always in contact with our Sadguru, and our heritage remains alive to all in the community.

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The Tristhali Yatra - On the threshold of the Gods



Pooja Swamiji performing Sangam Poojan as
Yatris on boats watch



Ganga Aarti at Dasashwamedh Ghat, Kashi



Ganga Poojan at Kashi



Sunrise on the Sangam (October 10, 2009)



Pooja Swamiji performing *poojan* at
Vishnupada Temple, Gaya

(Photographs by Kishan Kallianpur)

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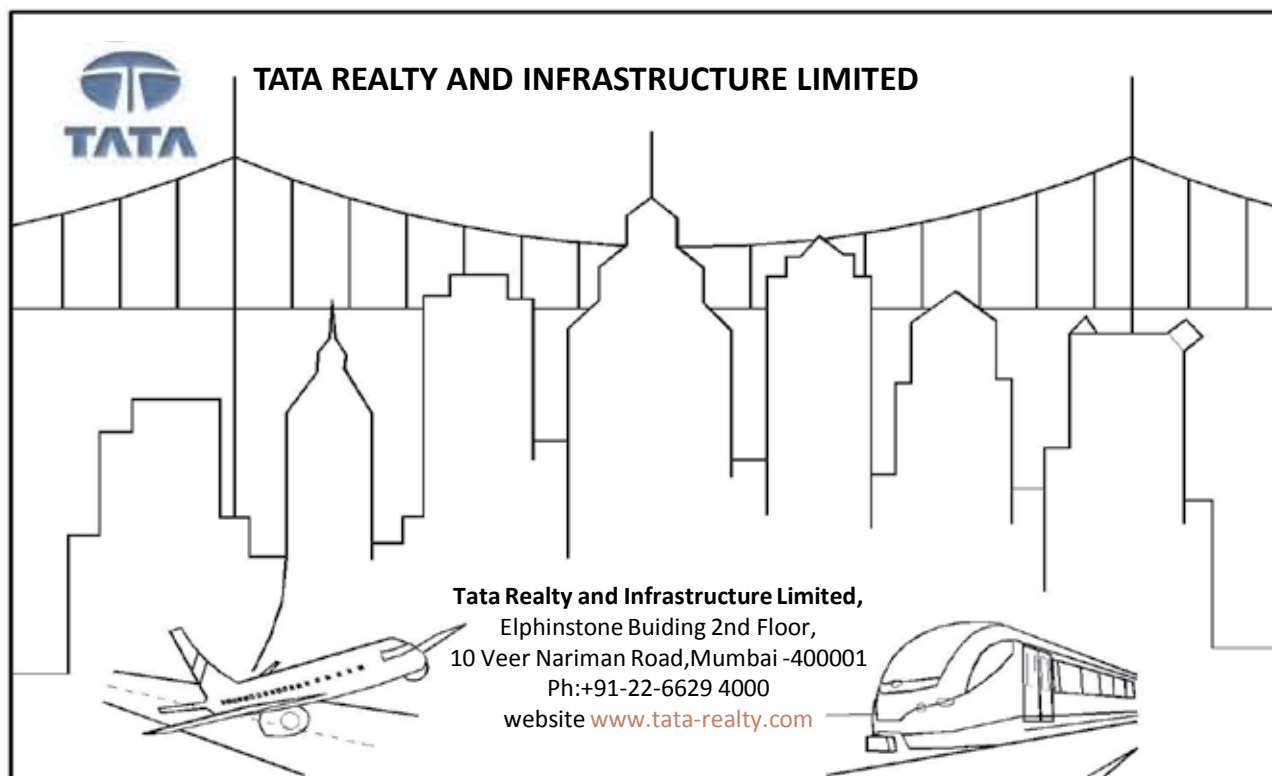
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“Hello, Hello”

KUMUD NAYEL, BANGALORE

It is an air conditioned restaurant where we are celebrating a birthday in the family.

It is cool, playing semi classical old Hindi film songs. Liveried bearers are standing at tables while families are sitting around neatly laid tables.

Our own table has a birthday cake with candles and bouquets. The Head Waiter is taking our order. The candles are lit; just as they are blown off, we all clap and sing “Happy Birthday” on different notes. We are clapping and smiling over a bite of the chocolate frost when there are buzzing sounds. Four of the smiles at our table have turned to scowls; not because they cannot bite into the frost due to their diet sheets. The cell phones tell them the bad news. Their cars parked outside have just been towed away by the traffic police!

At the table next to us, a sweet little girl is celebrating her birthday with her kiddy friends clapping and singing for her. Her Mom is jabbering away, not to the kids, but to her own friends who are on their way to the party. She is on her cell phone; they are on the road stuck in a traffic jam!

In front of us, at a small round table, there is a young couple sitting with a cute little vase of red roses between them. The liveried bearer is standing at their table poised to take their order. The boy and girl are so much in love; they are busy gazing into each other’s eyes and chattering away. Then I notice that each has a cell phone at the ear. They are busy talking, not to each other, but to their friends, miles away from them!

Amidst the noise of cutlery, music, clapping and Happy Birthday songs, I have discovered a new game to play with myself during my morning walks. I start with my game the very next morning. I count cell phones on the road as I take my morning walk. If I find ten in a row without breaking the chain, I make one point. I win the game outright within the distance between 1st Cross and Main Road beyond my house.

In the silence of the morning, I see a couple walking, busy talking. Only when they are near me,

I see the wife talking on her cell phone, belting the breakfast menu to her cook. The husband too holds his phone to his ear and belts out Sachin’s score of the previous evening to his friend who missed watching the League Match. The sweeper woman is sweeping the road with one hand and talking to the flower woman across Main Road; of course, on her cell phone which she holds in the other hand...

“Groundnuts have gone cheap,” she is telling her friend. “Oh, onions; is that so?” she continues; the flower woman has probably replied with: “Yes, but onions have gone costlier.” All this talk on their cell phones even as they make their way to 8th Cross to buying the low priced groundnuts.

I have hardly found anyone counting *japa* on their fingers or chanting *shlokas* on my morning walks. I come across BPO employees hopping into their coaches; each one is jabbering away or listening to something plugged in his/her ears.

It begins to rain. So, I sit under the shelter in the park. There are young people sitting around on benches. I close my eyes and start my yoga breathing. I can hear them talking, not to each other, but on their cell phones. After a while, there is utter silence. I finish my yoga, thinking that I am alone in the shelter. I open my eyes and find that all the youngsters have gone except one couple sitting next to each other.

“I told you, I told you, I can’t say it on the cell, didn’t I?” says the girl while the boy moves closer to her.

“Come on *yaar*, be a sport, at least say it once,” says her boy friend, pushing the cell phone into her shy hands.

I leave the shelter even as the girl is whispering the most beautiful three words into her cell phone while her charmed boy friend sitting so close to her is listening to those magical words on his cell phone.

My own cell phone is buzzing an SMS and I read the most gratifying words after a tiring walk: “Come home soon. Breakfast is ready.”



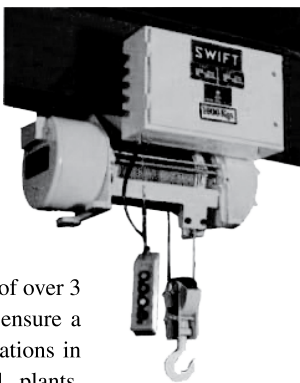
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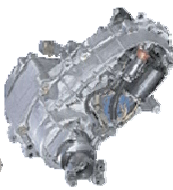
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Non-Chitrapur Saraswat Temples of Kanara Districts

Part 6 - Shree Krishna Temple and Ashtha Maths, Udupi

SATYANARAYAN PANDIT, ANDHERI, MUMBAI

“*Shree Krisnham vande Jagadgurum*” – as we remember our Sadguru PP Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji’s melodious *bhajan* and prostrate ourselves in front of Lord Krishna in all humility, we are overwhelmed by the sheer glory of the supreme. Shree Krisnha, who slayed his own wicked uncle to save humanity from cruelty; who was benevolent and gracious to lift his *sahapati*, Kuchela, from abject poverty; who tamed the mighty Kalia, who rescued Draupadi from ignominy, who engineered and masterminded the 18-day Kurukshetra war to demonstrate the triumph of good over evil; these are some of his attributes which, undoubtedly, flash before our eyes. And, finally, the Lord’s astounding “turnaround”, to give *darshan* to his ardent devotee, the poet-saint Kanakadasa.

Yes, this is Udupi, the coastal district town where a good number of our forefathers lived and prayed to Lord Krishna. Udupi is the abode of the Lord and the premier seat of ‘*dwaita*’ philosophy propounded by Swami Madhavacharya and of the eight Maths founded by him.

Location: Udupi is 60 kms north of Mangalore and 92 kms south of Shirali, on the coastal highway NH 17. Well connected by good roads and the Konkan Railway line, Udupi is easily reachable from any part of Karnataka, Mumbai/Pune and from the rest of India.

Historical background: The story dates back to the 10th century; the legend unfolds that a vessel ran into stormy weather off the Malpe seacoast, close to Udupi and sank. Swamy Madhavacharya, through his “divine vision”, realized that a beautiful idol of Balakrishna (infant Krishna) lay hidden in this vessel. Through his yogic powers, he extricated the idol and installed it in the premises of the present temple in Udupi, to be known for generations to come, as “Muddu Krishna” (Darling Krishna).

It is believed that this Shree Krishna idol belonged

to the 8th century and originated from Dwarka. This is corroborated by the ancient Gujarati pattern of sculpture of the idol. The pleasant faced “Muddu Krishna” with His benevolent smile, is indeed captivating, enchanting, lovable and adorable.

A significant aspect of the Shree Krishna Temple



is that its main entrance faces East whereas the idol of the Lord faces West. It is said that in the 16th century, during the time when Shri Vadiraja Swami was the reigning administrator of the temple, one of his ardent disciples, Kanakadasa, was denied entry into the temple in view of the prevailing tradition.

Broken-hearted, Kanakadasa went to the rear of the temple, offered prayers and started singing his own compositions. And then, an unbelievable miracle took place! The Lord relented to the devotee’s prayers. The rear walls of the temple gave way and the Lord turned (!!) to give *darshan* to the devout Kanakadasa. The wall was rebuilt with a window which is popularly known as “Kanakana kindi” (meaning Kanaka’s window).

Kshetra Mahima: The shrine (inset, top left of photo) is one of the most popular seats of the Lord in the region. Thousands of devotees throng daily to seek His blessings. There is adequate provision for

accommodation and free *prasad bhojan* is offered.

The daily rituals covering 14 *poojas* from dawn to night, initiated by Swamy Madhavacharya have come down through centuries and are observed even to this day. The *poojas* start with ‘Nirmalya Visarjane’ at dawn and end with “Shayanotsava Pooja” at night.

Paryaya: perhaps the most noteworthy feature of the shrine is the biennial cycle of “Paryaya”. During his lifetime, Swami Madhavacharya established eight Maths (Ashtha Maths) in the eight directions of the temple, to look after the daily rituals and the total administration of the shrine. As a permanent measure, each Math was headed by a close disciple of Swamiji, starting on a two-month rotation basis, during which time, the head of the reigning Math took full control of the temple administration. However, in the 16th century, during the regime of Swami Vadiraja Teertha, the head of ‘Sode’ Math (one of the eight Maths), the tenure was changed to two years and came to be known as “Paryaya”. According to temple records, the biennial Paryaya started in the year 1522-23. During the two-year period, only the Paryaya Swamiji is entitled to perform Shree Krishna Poojan.

In recent years, Paryaya Peetharohana has gained nation-wide importance and has become the most important religious and cultural event of Udupi.

Parivara Devatas: Inside the temple is the shrine dedicated to Lord Subramanya, believed to have been installed by Swami Vadiraja Teertha. Just outside the Shree Krinsha Temple, is Shree Anantheshwar shrine, considered to be more ancient than the main temple. In view of this, during the annual Maharathotsava of Shree Anantheshwar Temple, the ‘Utsav Moorti’ is seated in the “Brahma Ratha” of Shree Krishna Temple. It is believed that Swami Madhavacharya disappeared and attained “*moksha*” at the entrance of this shrine’s sanctum sanctorum. There are three other small temples in the close vicinity.

Major Events and Festivals:

1. Paryaya: Once in two years, a grand and momentous event attended by lakhs of devotees.

2. Daily special *poojas* and “Laksha Deepotsava” from Kartik Shukla Dwadashi to Pournima day; a sight to behold.

3. Maharathotsava on Makara Sankarmana day i.e. on 13th January every year and Choornotsava the next day. The event is spectacular as all the three chariots of the temple – Brahma Ratha, Garuda Ratha and Chikka (small) Ratha - are brought out with ‘Utsava Moorti’ seated in all His glory in the Brahma Ratha and ceremoniously pulled by thousands of cheering devotees along the famous “car street”, indeed a treat to watch.

4. Rathotsava and special *pooja* on Gokulashtami day, followed by “*dahi handi*” the next day.

Relics and copper plates available at the temple indicate that the shrine was a popular seat of worship with the Vijayanagar kings and maharajas of Mysore. References to their contribution towards the growth and development of the temple, are well documented.

A Message for our Younger Generation: Udupi had a sizeable population of Chitrapur Saraswats in the by-gone era and there is no doubt that our ancestors were great devotees of Lord Krishna, apart from worshipping at our own Shree Shankarnarayan Temple. Please do take some time off and visit Shree Krishna Temple whenever you happen to be in that area for a *darshan* of the Supreme and also see “Kanakana kindi” for yourselves.

Tailpiece: Remember the good, old Kannada devotional song in praise of “Udupi Muddu Krishna”? It opens with a fervent appeal to the Lord: “Shree Krishna, nee begane baro” and ends with the glorious words “Jagdoddharaka namma Udupi Shree Krishna”. This evergreen composition, so exquisitely lyrical (and in recent years, presented and popularised in dance form as well), is credited to the great poet-saint of Karnataka, Shri Vyasa Raya Swamiji, who adorned the court of the mighty and benevolent emperor Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagara Kingdom in the 16th century. The poet-saint himself was the spiritual master of the celebrated poet-saints of that era, Purandaradasa and Kanakadasa.

(Source: *Dakshina Kannadada Devalayagalu*)



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Datta Jayanti Utsav 2009, Talmakiwadi (26 November-7 December)



Palki Utsav on 1 December, 2009



Stage backdrop
- charcoal painting by
Laxman Khambadkone



Lezim during Palki Utsav

Hemotsava 2009, Dadar Sabha (7-14 December)



Children from Prarthana
Varg singing *bhajans*



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Dr. Prakash Mavinkurve receiving
a copy from Poojya Swamiji



As Sabha President, Dr. Chaitanya Gulvady
and family performing *paduka poojan*

Guru Saanidhyotsava 2009, Borivli Sabha (14-22 December)



Vaaga Vesu



"Ghar aaye baadal ban
saavan mein"



Poojya Swamiji looking appreciatively
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A date with terrorists

VIVEK HATTANGADI, AHMEDABAD

Very few Assamese are drawn to the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) these days, as they too want to live in peace. Besides they hold Maa Kamakhya Devi in great reverence and Maa is the binding force of the mainstream. Just as Vaishno Devi is to North India, Meenakshi Devi is to South India, Maa Kamakhya Devi is to East India. Although ULFA has weakened, the recent (1st week of December 2009) arrest of rebel chief Arabinda Rajkhowa, gave a fillip to the remnants of this terrorist outfit.

I had a professional commitment in Guwahati in the second week of December 2009. A road block by a handful of ULFA supporters greeted me. The 45-minute journey from the airport to the town took me four hours, a detour of over 40 km and a flight down memory lane - to the chilly winter of December 1998.

I was then the General Manager (Marketing & Sales) with Intas Pharmaceuticals. On our field staff at Guwahati was Rajan Rajkhowa, a first cousin of Arabinda Rajkhowa, then a second rung ULFA leader. Rajan had joined Intas as a medical representative. His excellent sales record and leadership qualities earned him a promotion as Field Sales Manager. He did extremely well for about a year in his new role.

But after that there were a lot of changes. Rajan frequently abstained from work without prior permission. At times, his whereabouts were not known. Discipline in his team was at the lowest ebb. Sales performance had gone down drastically. His immediate boss, Pradip Mukherjee from Kolkotta, kept complaining about him. A report then came in that Rajan had assaulted his Bengali-origin medical representative. "It appears he has joined ULFA", said Pradip Mukherjee.

Finally, on my recommendation, the HRD prepared a disciplinary case against him. Rajan Rajkhowa was called to Head Office thrice to defend himself, but did not come. Ultimately, his services were terminated.

On a Thursday morning in December 1998, I reached Guwahati to finalize a replacement for Rajan. I stayed at my usual place, Hotel Nandan.

The plan was to conduct interviews on that day, induct the successful candidate on Friday and return to Ahmedabad on Saturday evening. Everything went on as planned – till Saturday morning.

At around 8.00 am I heard sirens outside the hotel. I peeped out and saw three jeeps and a dozen people in military fatigues alighting, sten guns in hand. Some VIP, I thought. Sudden loud knocks on my door jolted me. Four people who had come in the jeeps rushed into my room pointing their sten guns at me. They asked me to raise my hands. It was a case of mistaken identity, I thought. One of them opened the window and fired a few bullets in the air with an intention to intimidate me.

Unexpectedly, the phone rang and their leader signaled his buddy to answer. He placed the receiver on my ears. It was Rajan Rajkhowa! In a threatening tone he 'commanded' me to revoke his termination or else my dead body would be flown to Ahmedabad. He then slammed down the phone. Momentarily, I panicked, but then fortunately my training under Retired Maj. Chapekar who had prepared me to join the NDA and at the NCC camps years back came in handy. I had been taught how to conquer fear and it had made me a mentally tough person. Added to this was the martial blood of Chitrapur Saraswats flowing down my veins. "Do not lose nerve or control of mind. Fear is anti-life", I told myself. When we prefer to be afraid, it is always because we wish not to be responsible for our actions. 'The only thing we have to fear is the *culture of fear* itself', I had read somewhere. The opposite of the word "fear" is the word "cooperation" and that's how I decided to deal with the situation.

I requested the leader to allow me to sit down and bring down my hands. I then initiated a conversation with him. To my surprise, he spoke chaste English. His body-language was also indicative of being a well-bred person. This gave me considerable solace. I smiled and asked him whether he had breakfast and, if not, we could have it together. He said brusquely that he had not come there for breakfast but for 'demanding justice' for Rajan. He

repeated what Rajan had told me over the phone, "If justice is not done to Rajan, your dead body will go to Ahmedabad." Nevertheless, he permitted me to speak to room service to order some tea. Room service informed me that the situation in the hotel was very tense all because of me and refused to serve me. I told their leader, who called himself Brig. Deka, the reluctance of the hotel to service my room. Brig. Deka picked up the phone and spoke to them in Assamese. Within a few minutes, the bearer came with piping-hot Assam tea.

After an hour or so, Brig. Deka asked me what my decision about Rajan was. "We have already recruited a person to replace him," was my cool answer. Brig. Deka repeated, "Either Rajan is taken back or your dead body goes to Ahmedabad." There was an uneasy quiet for the next 45 minutes. Around noon, I broke the silence and narrated to him what had led the company to take this decision. He listened to my version patiently but at the end he said that he had to follow the orders of his bosses. It was now 2.30 pm and my flight for Kolkotta would be departing soon – without me. I reconciled to the fact of staying in Guwahati for one more day. "Can we have lunch?" I asked Brig. Deka. "Yes," he said; then like a broken gramophone record repeated, "Take back Rajan or your dead body goes to Ahmedabad." I ignored his threat. We went down to the restaurant – not a soul in the lobby of the hotel. He ordered lunch for all of us. After lunch, he commanded me back to my room.

I then suggested that he should call Rajan to the hotel so we could talk. Rajan came within half an hour. I explained to Rajan and Brig. Deka that I was only a marketing person and I has no authority either to appoint or terminate any one's services, and that I could not overstep my jurisdiction as marketing head. "This prerogative is with the HRD," I told them. Brig. Deka then asked me to speak to HRD. I replied that being a Saturday, the office would be closed. I promised to explain their stand to HRD as soon as I reach Ahmedabad the next day. Rajan chortled, "Are you trying to escape without a solution?" Brig. Deka said authoritatively, "You are in our custody. Speak to HO on Monday. We shall be here sharp at 10.30 on Monday morning. Till then, our buddies will give you company." Both left

and two terrorists with sten guns were on 24-hour duty outside my room.

I was their prisoner. All my out-going telephone calls were blocked and I was in a hopeless situation. 'Will I reach Ahmedabad or will my dead body? I kept thinking. To amuse myself, I even visualized my big photograph in the Ahmedabad newspapers with the headline: 'The hero of Ahmedabad returns from Guwahati in a coffin'. I spent the next two nights praying to my Ishta Devata, Lord Ganesh, to help me out of the situation.

Come Monday morning and at 10.30 sharp, my two friends - Rajan and Brig. Deka - were back. They asked me to speak to the HR Chief. I spoke to him in Gujarati and explained the situation. In English, I told him to fax the letter annulling Rajan's termination if they valued my safety. The HR Chief told me that the needful would be done. By 12.30 the fax was received; I handed it over to Rajan. I was relieved; I and not my dead body would be flying to Ahmedabad, after all. No photographs of Vivek Hattangadi in the Ahmedabad newspapers, I chuckled.

It was only after that that I was allowed to reach my family. They were tense because I was to return home on Saturday and had not reached till Monday. I told Veena, my wife, that it was a very urgent assignment and, therefore, I had to extend my stay at Guwahati.

The next day I reached Ahmedabad. When my family came to know what had really happened, they, particularly my father, forced me to put in my papers. "I don't mind if you are without a job for a few days, or weeks or even months, but we want you alive." I was moved and succumbed to my father's pressure. I put in my papers even before I had an alternate job on hand.

After all, it was my Ishta Devata who had helped me to get me out of this terrible situation. Lord Ganesh would also guide me in my career, I told myself – and, he actually did. After a few uncomfortable months in a nondescript company, I was selected in Torrent Pharmaceuticals, an Indian MNC.

My stay at Guwahati this time, however, was rather uneventful.



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Swami Ramavallabhdas and the Krishnashtami Vrita



Shri Krishna, Avadi Math, Mallapur



**Balakrishna worshipped by Swami Ramavallabhdas
at Gosavi Math, Hattangadi**



**Avadi Mata and Kaliya-mardan Krishna given to her
by Swami Ramavallabhdas at Mallapur**



**Utsav Moorti of Gopalkrishna at Avadi
Math, Mallapur**

Swami Ramavallabhdas and the Krishnashtami Vrita

GOURANG S. KUNDAPUR

The 400th birth anniversary of Swami Ramavallabhdas, who started the Marathi *Krishnashtami Vrita bhajan sampradaya* among Konkani-speaking Chitrapur Saraswats even before we were blessed with our present Guru Parampara, will be celebrated from April 2010 at four of our temples and several community centres where this inspiring tradition endures to this day.

The 400th birth anniversary of Swami Ramavallabhdas, who started the Krishnashtami Vrita, unique among Chitrapur Saraswats, will be celebrated from April 2010 at four of our temples and several other Chitrapur Saraswat centres where this *bhajan* tradition was initiated, preceding the establishment of Shree Chitrapur Math, Shirali and our Guru Parampara.

Our beloved PP Anandashram Swamiji sang these lilting *bhajans* as a child at the *Haridas Math* opposite *Shri Chitrapur Math* before He was ordained. As *Mathadhipati*, He regularly attended the *Ashtami mhanti* on at least two days during the 15-day *Gokulashtami* celebrations.

Sant Avadibai (Laxmibai Ubhayakar) was the first to be initiated into the *Ashtami Vrita* tradition by Swami Ramavallabhdas at Mallapur in 1650 C.E., and her family has kept it alive to this day through more than ten generations at the *Avadi Math*. An associate, Sant Krishnadas initiated Sant Jogavva into the tradition and her Hemmadi family has been observing this popular *mhanti* at the *Hemapur Math* at Hemmadi near Kundapur for almost 350 years. Well-known jurist, religious scholar and social worker Kundapur Shankarnarayana Rao played a leading role in maintaining the *Vrita* tradition at once-remote Hattiangadi, also near Kundapur. The Hattiangadi/Kundapur family has been observing the *Ashtami Vrita* at the *Gosavi Math* at Hattiangadi since the mid-17th century.

The Gopalkrishna Temple at Chitrapur is called the *Haridas Math* because the *samadhis* of Sant Raghavadas and Sant Narharidas, disciples of Swami Ramavallabhdas, were housed in its premises at Shirali before PP Pandurangashram Swamiji persuaded the Haridas family to shift it to Chitrapur in 1893. The *samadhi* of Sant Avadibai's grandson is at the *Avadi Math* in Mallapur. The Dattatreya Temple at Hemmadi is also known as *Hemapur Math*;

it has the *samadhis* of Sant Krishnadas and Sant Jogavva. There are three *samadhis* at Hattiangadi. The *samadhi* of Sant Umavallabhdas, disciple of Swami Ramavallabhdas, is just outside the *garba griha* of the Shankaranarayana Temple, also called the *Gosavi Math*. The adjacent Gopalkrishna Temple has the *samadhis* of Swami Gangadhardas, an associate of Swami Ramavallabhdas, and Sant Gopaldas, a disciple of the saint from Maharashtra. (See photographs on facing page.)

The *Krishnashtami Vrita*, as meticulously written down by Swami Ramavallabhdas, consists of about 270 *bhajans* full of poetic splendour and devotion and set to melodious tunes. The *bhajans* are set to slow and fast beats and sung interspersed by Sanskrit *shlokas* to create an enlightening spiritual experience during morning, afternoon and night sessions, every day for 15 days. The celebrations begin before *Gokulashtami* with the singing of *dolara bhajans* as images of Lord Krishna are kept in a cradle for six days up to full moon day. These are followed by *gondhal bhajans* through *Janmashtami* and *Kallo* sessions for nine days, climaxed each day by unique *panja aarti* with *divtiga* (mini-torches) performed by the specially ordained *Malmudradhari*.

The *Ashtami Vrita* has since become one of the foundations for the spread of congregational singing and Hindustani music among Chitrapur Saraswats, according to Aparna Sirur in her research paper, "Traditional Music of Amchis" published by the Kanara Saraswat Association in its "Directory of Musicians". As such, the *mhanti bhajans* are sung at Chitrapur Saraswat congregations in Mumbai, Panvel, Pune, Hubli, Mangalore, Brahmavar, Puttur, Bangalore, Chennai and other places and most Chitrapur Saraswats are familiar with them. The *mhanti* was started at *Samadhi Math* in Mangalore in 1889 at the instance of PP Pandurangashram Swamiji.

Swami Ramavallabhdas was a soldier turned *sanyasi* who composed the Marathi *bhajans* based on Sant Eknath's "*Bhagvat*" after he found a copy of the book among looted articles abandoned by retreating invaders whom he helped defeat to break their siege of Devgiri Fort near Aurangabad in 1628. Curiously, Swami Ramavallabhdas is from the same *Guru Parampara* of Gaudapadacharya, Govindapadacharya and Shankaracharya as our own present illustrious line of Gurus, and has propounded the same philosophy of *Advaita* combined with *saguna-bhakti* (or *dnyanottar bhakti*). He is reported to have set most of the tunes to the *bhajans*, along with Sant Raghavdas.

A prolific writer and gifted speaker, Swami Ramavallabhdas quickly gathered a big following in Maharashtra. But even more curiously, he and his associates and disciples chose to start the *Ashtami Vrita* among Konkani-speaking Chitrapur Saraswats in North and South Kanara even as they were settling down in these river-crossed coastal districts of Karnataka after migrating from Goa in the 17th century.

According to Dr. Ramdas Thaggarse in his "Roots and Ancestry of Chitrapur Saraswats", there was a migration of Saraswats from Goa to the Kanaras, both gradually and in bursts following Muslim persecution during a major part of the 14th century and the latter half of the 15th century. During this migration, several *kuldev* temples were moved from Goa in the first part of the 16th century, including the Laxminarayan-Mahamaya Temple which was moved to Ankola, the Ganapati Temple to Aldangadi, the Laxmi-Narayan Temple to Bailur and the Anantheshwar Temple to Vokketur.

In 1560, the Portuguese destroyed the *Gaudapadacharya Math*, our *moola dharmapeeth* set up in 800 C.E. by Swami Vivarananda, *Guru-bandhu* of Adi Shankaracharya, and many *kuldev* temples in Goa, leading to the sudden exodus of Saraswats to North and South Kanara. Most of the Chitrapur Saraswats moved into areas south of the Gangavalli River, which was under the Nagar kings. They thus lost contact not only with the Gaudapadacharya Math, but even got separated from other Gaud

Saraswats who settled in areas ruled by the Sonde kings.

As they settled down in the service of the Nagar kings and as landlords, the Chitrapur Saraswats started building new temples as the centres of their religious and cultural activities in the mid-17th century. Swami Ramavallabhdas and his associates and disciples came to the Kanaras around this time and the four temples where the *Ashtami Vrita* is observed were built apparently a little before or a little later.

Many of these events would appear to have occurred during the reign of PP Pandurangashram Swamiji (1645–1675 AD) at the end of what Rajaram Rao Kundaje has termed the first phase of our *Guru Parampara* in his book on Chitrapur Saraswats reviewed in the December 2009 issue of *Kanara Saraswat*. But, as he has pointed out, there are still gaps in historical information which we hope will soon be filled with the blessings of PP Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji and our *Guru Parampara*.

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Another sister, another story

RASHMEE KARNAD-JANI, ONTARIO, CANADA

In the land where Shakti is worshipped, lives Lakshi. She was named after Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. She lives in the slum in Naigaum beside the apartments where my siblings and I were raised. Most days, she sleeps in the clinic lobby that she sweeps and keeps clean for the homeopathic doctor. Lakshi works for many homes in the building in exchange for money and food. She is treated well. She knows us all and often heralds her arrival with her voice before her physical presence.

Long years ago, Bhabhi taught her children to call her Lakshi Ajji (grandma). Until then, most people had called her by her shortened name; after all, who would dare sully the revered name of the Goddess when they hollered for a 'maid'. She is quite happy-go-lucky, sassy and filled with rhetoric even. If Lakshi likes you, it is the Naigaum equivalent of the A list. Her devil-may-care attitude and demeanour are coping strategies to survive in the harsh world she inhabits.

My brother jokes with her and gets her little treats. She banters with him too and all is well. The gifts I bring her when I return to Mumbai make her feel she is part of the family. "Didi, you have not forgotten me," she says with a smile.

From my school and college days, I remember Lakshi had four daughters. They had beautiful names: Hira (diamond), Tara (star), Mangala (the auspicious one) and Nirmala (the pure one). One day, after years of suffering, her husband died of tuberculosis, a gift of years of hard labour in the textile mills, the sad story of innumerable, nameless people in that 'city by the sea' as Rohinton Mistry calls it. Today, all that is left of the booming textile industry are the skeletons of factories and smokestacks, huge under-construction office complexes that are prime real estate, and vada-pav. There are also sepia prints of those long dead men on the walls of their family dwellings: each chawl room neater than any mansion I have seen.

Lakshi's older daughters died too, one after

another. The two younger ones eke out a living somewhere, she speaks of them sometimes. Mostly, she talks about her grandchildren. Like most grandparents everywhere, she is proud of the boys. She keeps me informed about their whereabouts and I listen as I think of all the choices that I have in my privileged life that they cannot ever imagine.

On my way to the airport, I had asked her if I could take her picture. She sat down on the very pavement that is her chatting ground. I clicked one picture. Then she asked me to take another one. She covered her head and sat up straighter to pose for the picture. She rewarded me with a serious look, no smiles for an important event such as this. "Don't worry, I am here; I will watch over your mother's place until you return," she assured me.

And I know she will. I hope to return next year for Amma's 70th birthday and if I am lucky Lakshi Ajji will still be there asking in her sing song voice: "Aalis ka Didi; kashi ahes?" (Have you returned sister; how are you?). Ironically, young and old in the neighbourhood call me 'Didi', (elder sister) following my siblings' lead. I have done nothing to receive this label of seniority any more than I deserve the choices that pave my way.

In a land that boasts Chanda Kochar, Sudha Murti, Kalpana Chawla and Bachendri Pal, lives Lakshi. Can I live with that? Can you?

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“शीतुभावजी” (सिताराम उर्फ आबा उर्फ सुबाष (म्होरक्या)

विद्या कागल (यु.एस.ए.)

सांजच्याला शितुभावजींचा फोन आला. आनी ह्यांसला म्हनले, “अरे ए, दादा. पुढच्या मैल्याला आम्ही एक दूर काढतोय अर्जेन्तीनाला, येताका तुम्ही आनी वैनी? (म्हजे मी बरका) आम्ही दोघ आमच्या घरात चीपचाप नातीशी खेळत बसलो होतो. मी म्हनले “आता ग बया! काय करायचं? हे म्हनले मी बगतो, रजा काढतो.. तू तुज बग काय ते! मी म्हनले, “माज काय घेवून बसलासा. तुमच्या मागोमाग येणार नव्हकामी? आव धरमपत्नी हाये मी तुमची...

आशी झाली बघा सुरवात...आन मी हो म्हनायाची खोटी सारा कारोभार माज्या हाती सोपिविला बगा! म्हनले, “पुढच तू बघून घे आनी भिमसेन्जीना कानी घुशिविले!”

शितुभावजी दुसऱ्या दिवसापासून कामाला लागले. ई मेल्यांवर, ई मेल्या पाठीवल्या मला. बाकी भावजी आमचे लई चांगले, मदत करायला तैयार... टिकट काढायचं शिकिवल. ते झल्यावर भावजी म्हनले, “वैनी, आता फ्रेड... म्हजे आमचा टुरवाला.. त्याची म्हने आकासवानी झाली... पैसे पाठवा.. मी भावन्जीना म्हनाले एक चेक फाडूका? तस भावजी हसले आन म्हनले, “वैनी, आवो नवा जमाना हाये, तुम्हासनी “पे पाल” कराय होवा.”... आता ग बया, “ईश्य ह्या वयात? आनी मैतर करायचा? काय खूळ लागलाय काय? आस कायच्या बाई बंगाल बोलता! मग भावजी म्हनले आव वैनी, पे पाल म्हजे कानफुतर वरून पैसे पाठवायचे!!

माझ आन कानफुतारच इतकं काही प्रेम न्हाई, पन माजा लई प्रयतन चालू आहे! आर, मी हाये बाईमाणूस त्ये भी म्हातार व्हात चाललया... पोर, बाला, नातवंड...यांनी पिलून कडलेल्या उसाच्या कांड्यावाणी नुसता चोथा उरला हाय बगा. आता कानाफुतारमुळे घरबसल्या जगाच्या चवकाश्या कराय होत.. कुणाच्या घरी काय रांधला, कोन पव्हन आलं, त्या कुठ ग्येलं, सारं घर बसल्या सामजीत.. जग कस भरभरा धावतंय पहा,

मग म्या भी गुढग्याला एक घट्ट पट्टा बांधून त्या माग धावाया नग का...

हं तर काय सांगत व्हाते... आमचा म्होरक्या... म्हंजे आपले शितूभावजी... त्येनी लई मदत केली बरका...हं... म्हनले, घाबरू नाग वैनी, मी शिकीवतो तुम्हासनी... मंग, ते तेंच्या कानफुतारवर नि मी माज्या कानफुतारावर एकमेकांशी बोलाया लागलो, असे भावजी म्हंजे लई हुशार!

पुढचे पंधरा दिवस मी आनी माझा कानाफुतर, जोरशानी कामाला लागलो. शितूभावजी जरी मदतीला असले तरी बिचारे कामाचे गडी. उगा कशापाई तरास देयाचा? दिवस जाता जाता माझा आन कानाफुतारचा मामला लई कठिन व्हत चालला व्हता. जल्ला मेल्ला कानाफुतर. माझं ऐकेना... म्हने, आजीबाई, सोडा आता न्हाई जमायचं तुम्हासनी..मी तटकन उबी हायले, म्हनले जल्ला तुज मेल्या लक्षण! मला व्हल्कत न्हासरे तू.. सोडणार न्हाई तुसनी.. अशी काय मागे लागले तेच्या! घाबरलं ते, आन म्हनल, आजे आवर गे बाय... करतो बग तुज काम! आन मग सात दिसा नंतर माझ काम झाल आन आमीभी शितुभावजींच्या गटांत घुसलो त्रेच्याच सारखा आमीभी, तेंच्या बरोबर ईमानावर, होतलमध्ये, एकत्र बुकिंग का काय त्ये केल्य... आनी मी हुश्य म्हनले.

निघन्याच्या चार दिस आगुदर शितुभावजी म्हनले. गड्या एक मिटिंग व्हाया पायजे! तशी आम्ही दोघं. मधुदादा, अन्जुवैनी आन सरुवैनी मिलूनश्यान ही ही ही बाड, बाड बाड, बाड केली. आनी गडीमानसनी ठरिवला की (?) रोजच्या रोज शिवरायाची पूजा अर्चा व्हायला हवी. मग “तीर्थ पाणी” मग प्रसाद आनी नंतर प्रदक्षिणा ती मात्र अर्धा/पावून कल्लाक! (२) हा! महत्वाची गोष्ट म्हनजे. शितुभावजीनच ऐकायचं! हुं का चू नाय पायजे.

आमी दोग बगा... म्हनजे आमचे हे... इचारू नगा अगदी, माणूस पार सुतवणी सरळ! आता राहील माज, त्ये काय खर नाय. कधी सुतासारखी सरळ तर कधी हा भला दोरखंड! बाकी तुम्हीच इचारा की शितुभावनजीना.

आमी आर्जांन्तिनाला पोहोचलो आन आली की नाय भाषेची पंचायत! पण भावजी आलं की धावून! घाबरता कशापाई! हाय न मी पुढ्यात! आन लागल की फाड फाड स्पेनिश कातराया... आमचं हे... पार थक्क झाल्ये म्हनले, आर मित्रा, लेय हुशार निघालासरे, द्येवानच पाठीवला बग तुला. आस म्हनून भीमसेनला परत कानांत घुशिवला.

पुढच्या बारा दिसात शितुभावजीनी आमची कशी तोख वेवस्ता केली म्हनून सांगू? त्ये गाईड आन भावजी दोन दोन म्होरकी आम्हासनी. शितुभावजींच त्वांड त्ये, ज्ये काय एका साकालच्यला सुरू व्हायचं त्ये रातपर्यंत चालू बरका! हं... कधी भी दुकला नाय. सारखे हसवीत राहायचे. आव, साठी उलटली मर्दाची पन उनाडकीत आपल्यात नंबर पहिला! हो, दगडाला भी बोलाया लावणा की हो. तेंच्या बरोबर फिरायचं म्हणजे चेष्टा

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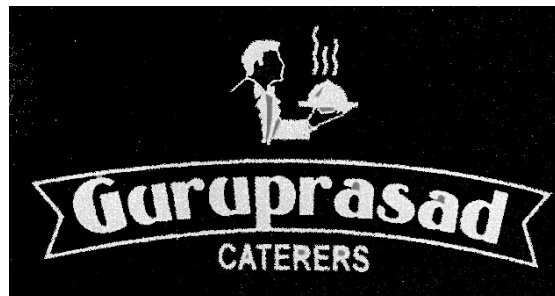
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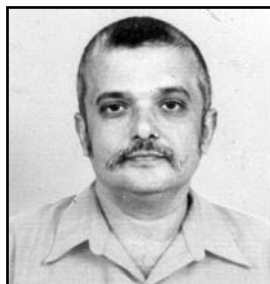


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SIXTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY

6th February, 2010



Nandan S. Trasikar

(27th August, 1951 - 6th February, 2004)

Each day of the six years that have passed,
has made us realize all the more that you are always with us
to support and guide us throughout our lives.

Fondly remembered by

Wife - Eakta, Son - Nachiket, Daughter - Manasi

Son-in-law - Ajit, Mother - Krishnabai,

Brother - Ramdas and Sisters

नाय. सकाळचा नाश्ता जाला की चालाय निघालो, दुपारच जेवण उरकला की चलाय निघलो, रातीच्याला भी प्रदक्षिणा हवी. कारण आमी आएसक्रीम खाल्लेल, पचाया हवा ना! साठी उलटून आलेली मंडळी आम्ही! रातीच्याला तर भावर्जी मस्त खुशीत असायचे चालायचे.. हे आस छाताड उघड टाकूनश्यान! गडी लई फाम ति!... थंडी न्हाई, पाऊस न्हाई वार न्हाई. फाताड फताड तंगड्या टाकीत ह्यो चालला... मग मागून आमची वरात की हो चक्क... मधुदादा तुरु तुरु चालणार, ह्यो दादा पन एकदा चालायला लागली की शर्यतीच्या घोड्यावानी लई चपल! आजीबात थाकणार नाय! मी झाप झाप चालणार. लहानपानापासून मी अशीच बगा, माजी मावशी म्हणायची, “आग, बाईमाणूस हैस तू. कस नाजूक असावं सार वागन! आशी बाप्यावानी न्हाई चालू... पन आता सवय पडलेली, अन्जुवैनी कश्या छोट्या बहुलीवानी, लागाबागा लागाबागा यायच्या (म्हंजी जरा धावतच म्हणाना). आता सरुवैनीच काय सांगणार? आहो भावूर्जीच्या अंडर तयार झालेल्या आईकनार न्हाई कुणालाबी. झोपेमध्ये देखील चालाय तैय्यार! बाकी राहिले आमचे हे! आमचे सर्वांचे “पाठीराखे” बरका? कळपातील कुनिभी पाठी राहीला नाहीना... म्हनून काळजी घेनार! बाईमाणूस पाटूच्यान गायब व्हनार न्हाई, किंवा कुटूच्याभी दुकानात घुस्नारन्हाई म्हनून डोळा ठेवून असणार. मी कोनच्याभी दुकानाची पायरी चढणार, तर “म्होर व्हा की जरा” म्हणून डीन्वीवणार. म्हणणार “आता देवळाची पायरी चढायची वय झाली तरी अजून तुमचं लक्ष संसारांतून भाहेर पडणार की न्हाई!” तर अशी ‘ही’ वरात आमची छान दिसायची.

आता आमचा म्होरक्या म्हंजी लई इनोदी गडी! तेच काय झालं त्ये ऐका. आम्ही जेव्हा इगावाझू धबधबा वगाया निगलो, त्या सकाली अंजलीवैनी आल्या त्या लई कोमेजलेल्या त्वांड घेवूनश्यान! बाह्येर पावसाची पीर पीर चाललेली. आभाल काळाकुट्ट झाला व्हता, आमी सागलेच्या सगले टराकलो! सरुवैनी सरसावून पुडे गेल्या आन अन्जालीवैनीसनी इचारलं कि बाई ग काय बिगाडला! आन्जालीवैनी हिरमुसला त्वांड करून म्हनल्या. “सकालपासुनाच्यान माज कंबरड धरल्यागत झाल्या बगा” आस म्हनताच सरुवैनीनी त्यांना दोन रिलाक्श करण्याच्या गोल्या खायासनी दिल्या मी म्हनल्या आता वाईच थांब, बर वाटल बग तुला? पन कसा काय झाला हे तुझास्नी?... आन्जालीवैनी सावकास म्हनल्या, “सकाली, सकाली मी हन्थुरावर बसून चक्रासन घालीत व्हते त्येनव्हा झाल बगा!!” सारुवानीच्या चेल्या हाईत त्या योगाच्या... तंन्हा हे ऐकताच, सरुवैनीचं दोस्कच चक्रवाल, आन त्येनी एव्हडा म्होटा आ वसला कि व्हो! म्हनल्या, “मी शीकिवीते

ती आसन जमिनीवर बसूनश्यान कराया हवी. सांगीताला व्हता न मी? हानतुरानात घालायची आसना न्हाई शिकवीत मी!... शितूभावजी कोपर्यांत उभं हाव्हून वाईच मिषकिल हाशीत मला म्हनले, “वैनी, न्हाई म्हनला. इथरुनात घालायची आसन एगलीच न्हाई का... हा हा हा हा.. हाशीत सुटला ना गडी! मी डोकी वरचा पदर ओडीत पाळले तिथून...

ह्ये सगला चालाल व्हत तेंन्हा मी माजा केमारा घेवून खचाक, खचाक फोटू काढीत व्हते. आमच्या हेंची नजर ग्येलीच कि हो माज्यावर! म्हनतात कसे, “आग, किती काढशील त्ये फोटो? बगाव त्येनव्हा तुज्या हातात तो केमारा, आमी तुजा हात कधी धरावा? त्या केमेराला गोंजारतेस. छातीशी घ्येतेस. कुर्वालतेस, आमी काय वाईट क्येल त्येव्हड सांग की जरा!... काय सांगाव तुम्हास्नी, आव पंचेचालीस वारसा झाली लगनाला पर जवानी कायम हाये तेंची. इष्काच्या दिव्याच तेल हाई आजून भरपूर! एव्हड्यात शांती, शांती आस शितूभावजीनी म्हणताच मी घाबरले की हो! आता बर, ही देशपांडेंची शांती कुटूनश्यान हिथ दिसली भावाजीना? पन नंतर समाजला त्ये आम्हास्नी सांगत व्हते.. अरे दादा, मी म्हणालो ओंम शांती... अरे गड्या काढूदेकी वैनीना फोटू! जलातुया का र! अरे दमाने घे की गड्या... आन मग कुठे हे नरम जाल्ये! आनी पुढचे धादिस माज खचाक, खचाक चालू हायल...

आराजान्तिना सारखा सुंदर देश पाहून माज्या तर डोल्याच पारण फिटलं ग बया. लई झक्कास झाली बगा दूर आमची. पन खर सांगते शेवटल्या दिसला मातुर आमचा म्होरक्या दमला. पार हवा गेल्येली गड्याची! मासाजावला शोधीत फिराया लागला. मस्तपैकी अंग रगडून घेवून पुढच्या दूरच्या तैय्यारीला लागणार व्हते जनु, पन त्यो मेला मसाजावला ऐनवेली कुठे धडपडला कुणास ठावे? बिचारें शितूभावजी... आमचा म्होरक्या व्हाटलाच्या दालनामध्ये एका सोफ्यावर चक्क उताना पडलेला! जरा वेलाने त्यांनी डोले किलकिले करून पाहिले तर आमचे हे त्यासनी म्हनले, आरे मर्दा, उठ की रे... आनी ऐक भीमसेनला! मग बग कसा माज्यावणी ताजा तवाना होशील. आस हे म्हनले मात्र...बया बया आम्ही सगल्यांनी आ वसला की हो! आर, म्हंजे दहा दिस गाणी ऐकून आमचे हे आता टवटवीत झाले व्हते!

पन काय भी म्हना, “म्होरक्या” असावा तो असा! डालासला आमच. विमान उतरल्या बरोबरमी म्हनले भावाजीना “शितूभावजी”, प्रथम आमच्या घरी या बर, मीठ मोहरीने वृष्ट काढीन... हसता कश्यापाई? मस्करी वाटे तुम्हासनी खर त्येच बोलणार मी. खोट बोलाणार्याच वाटोल व्हईल रे बाबा!

एक महान पर्वाचा अस्त

नलिनी संझगिरी

ता. ७ नोव्हेंबर २००९ रात्री ज्येष्ठ लेखिका श्रीमती सुनीता देशपांडे ह्यांचं निधन झालं व ८ नोव्हेंबर सकाळी साऱ्या मराठी वृत्तपत्रांत ती दुःखद बातमी वाऱ्यासारखी पसरली. ते मी वाचलं, मन खिन्न झालं व भूतकाळांत रेंगाळू लागलं.

खूप वर्षांमागे आम्ही दिल्लीत होतों तेव्हां पु. ल. आपल्या पारिवारासह काही एकपात्री प्रयोग करण्यास आले होते. पु. ल. म्हणजे मराठी भाषिकांचे दैवत. त्यामुळे त्यांच्या पहिल्या प्रयोगालाच अफाट गर्दी जमली होती. फक्त मराठी लोक. अर्थात् आम्ही दोघंही गेलो (असा मी असा मी) हा त्यांचा प्रयोग आम्हां सर्व श्रोत्यांना फारच आवडला. कधी संपला हेंच कळलं नाही. दुसऱ्या दिवशी ह्याच वेळी 'राजमाता जिजाबाई' हा सुनीता देशपांडे ह्यांचाही कार्यक्रम होणार अशी घोषणा झाली. दुसऱ्या दिवशीही आम्ही उत्सुकतेने गेलो. वेळेवर म्हणजे ९॥ वाजता (सकाळी) पडदा उघडला.

एका उंच आसनावर राजमाता जिजाबाई बसल्या होत्या. गोरा, उभा चेहरा, त्यावर त्याहूनही अधिक धवल चंद्रकोर माथ्याच्या मध्यभागी लावली होती. कान, नाक कर व गळा आभूषणविरहीत होता. तरीपण त्या करारी, शिस्तीत आपल्या आसनावर बसलेल्या चेहेऱ्याने आम्हांस मंत्रमुग्ध केले. पारिवारातील एका व्यक्तीने स्टेजवर येऊन त्यांची ओळख करून दिली. आणि वेळ न गमवतां त्यांनी आपली भाषण बोलण्यास सुरवात केली. ते सर्व शिवाजी राजानाच उद्देशून होतं दर सहासात ओळी झाल्या की त्या शिवबा म्हणायच्या. त्यावरून जिजाबाईंनी प्रेमानें पण शिस्तीत कसे वाढवले व संस्कार दिले हे श्रोत्यांना कळलं. श्रोते अगदी स्तब्धपणें बसले होते. ते दोन तास कसे गेलें व त्या सुनीताबाईंनी आम्हाला कसं मंत्रमुग्ध केलं हेच कळलं नाही घरी परतताना मी तोच विचार करत होते.

२५ वर्षे दिल्लीत राहिल्यावर पेन्शन घेऊन इथं मुंबईतच स्थायिक झालो. एन.सी.पी.ए. चे सभासदही झालो. तिथं एकदां सुनीताबाई व पु. ल. ह्या दोघांचाही एकाचवेळी बा. भ. बोरकर (बांकीबाब) ह्यांच्या कविता वाचण्याचा कार्यक्रम झाला. दोघंही स्टेजवर एकात ओळीत थोडंसं अंतर ठेवून बसले त्यावेळी सुनीताबाईंचा शुभ्र पेहेराव, आभूषण विरहीत तरीपण करारी व तेजस्वी चेहरा असून त्यांत काहीच बदल नव्हता ना त्यांच्यावरची माझी भक्ति कमी झाली होती. शेवटचं गाणं 'सरीसरी वर सरी'.

ही कविता म्हणण्यास आरंभ केला. तेव्हां प्रेक्षकातल्या काही श्रोत्यांनीही त्यांना साथ देण्यास सुरवात केली. आणि माझ्या डोळ्यांतूनही सरीवर सरीचे आनंदाश्रू ओघळायला लागले.

त्या आठवणींनी मी फार गोंधळले, शेवटी की मी त्यांच्यावर कांहीतरी लिहायचंय म्हणजे माझ मानसिक समाधान होईल. म्हणूनच हा लेखनप्रपंच.

३ जुलै १९२६ रोजी सुनीताबाईंचा रत्नागिरीत जन्म झाला. प्राथमिक शिक्षण घरीच झालं. रत्नागिरीच्या पटवर्धन शाळेंत त्यांनी शालान्त परीक्षा देऊन त्या मुंबईस आल्या व खालसा कॉलेजमधें दाखल झाल्या. तिथं शिकत असतानाच १९४२च्या 'चले जाव' चळवळीतही त्यांनी उडी घेतली. भूमीगत असूनही बॉम्ब तयार करणे, वार्तापत्र काढणे, कार्यकर्त्यांना शस्त्र पुरवणें अशा जबाबदाऱ्या त्यांनी धीटपणे पार पाडल्या. जरी स्वातंत्र्याच्या भोक्त्या होत्या तरीही कधीकधी सत्ताधऱ्यांवरही कोरडे ओढण्यास मार्गेपुढें पाहत नसत. खरोखरच त्या करारी व परखड होत्या.

१२ जून १९४६ रोजी त्यांचं लग्न पु. ल. शीं झालं तो प्रेमविवाह होता. दातृत्ववलेखन करणें हें दोघांचंही एक वैशिष्ट्य पण सुनीताबाई करारी, कडक शिस्तीच्या व परखड तर पु. ल. इतके माणूसप्रेमी की जरी लेखन करण्यास बसले वा कविता किंवा एकाद्या गीताला चाल लावण्यास बसले की त्यांचे कुणी तरी चाहते उगीचच गप्पा मारायला येत. तेव्हां सुनीताबाई त्या लेकांना आळा घालीत त्यामुळे पु. ल. चं व्यवस्थित चालत असे. त्यांना गीतानांही चाल लावण्यास वेळ मिळे. (सुनीताबाईनां दातृत्व व शिस्तीचा वारसा आईकडूनच मिळाला) त्यांच्या ह्या स्वभावामुळें लोकांना त्या माणूसघाण्या वाटल्या पण त्यांनी त्या गैरसमजालाही जुमानलं नाही. पु. ल. नी लिहिलेल्या पुस्तकांच्या दुसरी आवृत्ती निघाल्या तरी पु. ल. कॉपीराईट बाबतीत बेफिकीर असत. पण सुनीताबाई धडाडीनें पुढं जाऊन पैसे वसूल करीत व आपलं घर चालवण्यापुरतेच पैसे ठेवून, शेष योग्य त्या संस्थांना दान करीत. विवाहानंतर बी.ए., बी.एड.एम.एड. पर्यंतचं उच्च शिक्षण घेतलं. मग त्या ओरिएन्टल स्कूल पार्ले टिळक विद्यालय या मुंबईच्या, तसेच पुणे विद्यार्थी गृहातही अध्यापन केलं. मालेगावच्या महात्मा गांधी विद्यालयांत त्यांनी शैक्षणिक व प्रशासकीय अधीक्षक म्हणून काम केलं.

पु. ल. प्रतिष्ठानच्या माध्यमांतून त्यांनी महाराष्ट्रांतील अनेक विद्यार्थ्यांना, अनेक संस्थांना आर्थिक मदत केली. सामाजिक

कार्याबरोबरच शिक्षण संशोधन, विज्ञान अशा संस्थांना त्यांनी आर्थिक उभारी दिली. पु. लं. च निधन झालं तरीही सुनीताबाईंनी आपलं कार्य चालू ठेवलं होतं.

त्या पु. ल. प्रतिष्ठानच्या (मुक्तांगण) प्रमुख होत्या ह्या संस्थेने जे भरीव व आर्थिक योगदान कसलाही बोलबाला न करता दिलं त्याला उपमाच नाही साधी राहणी व सर्व गोष्टींकडे तटस्थपणे पाहून स्वतंत्र बुद्धीने निर्णय घेण्याची क्षमता हे त्यांचं वैशिष्ट्य होतं.

“आहे मनोहर तरी” “समांतर जीवन” (फिलिस रोज ह्यांच्या पुस्तकाचा स्वैर अनुवाद) या पुस्तकांशिवाय वसंतराव देशपांडे, कुमार गंधर्व, माधव अवचल, मल्लिकार्जुन मन्सूर इत्यादि त्यांच्या स्नेहांची सुनीताबाईंनी रेखाटलेल्या व्यक्तिचित्रांचं सम अवेश असलेले “सोयरे सकळ” हे ललित लेखन सुनीताबाईंच्या संवेदनशील आणि सूक्ष्म निरीक्षणाची साक्ष देते. “मण्यांची माळ” “मनातलं आकाश” ही त्यांची अन्य पुस्तकेही लोकप्रिय आहेत. चिंतन करणं काव्यात्मकता हें त्यांच्या लेखनाचं प्रमुख विशेष होते. त्यांचा मनस्वीपणा तर त्यांच्या सर्व लेखनांतून दिसतो. प्रिय जी.ए. हा जी. ए. कुलकर्ण्यांना लिहिलेल्या पत्रांच्या संग्रहाला अनोखी प्रसिद्धी मिळाली.

त्यांच्या धामापूराच्या आजी (ज्यांच्यावर सुनीताबाईंचं फार प्रेम होतं). घरच्यांच्या मनाविरुद्ध पु. ल. शी केलेल्या लग्नात त्यांच्या पाठीशी उभ्या राहिल्या. त्या आजीचं अतुलनीय मानसिक धैर्य, खंबीरपणा, निष्ठा ह्यांचं वर्णन करताना सुनीताबाई गदगदून बोलतात. १९४२ मधे भूमीगत असताना असगरअली (भैया) त्यांच्या आयुष्यात आला. त्यावेळी त्या अवस्थेत भैयाचा मोह आपल्याला कसा पडला. त्यातूनही दोघांनाही भावनिक व वैचारिक द्वंद्वार्शी कशी लढत घ्यावी लागली हें सांगताना त्यांचा निर्भीडपणा व स्पष्टोक्ति दिसून येते.

पु. लं. बरोबर त्यांचा भावबंध जुळून झालेला प्रेमविवाह पु. ल.च्या बालसुलभ निरागस, सरळ व निष्कपट स्वभावामुळे सर्व बाबतीत त्यांची जपणूक करणं हीच सुनीताबाईंची जीवनांतील इतिकर्तव्यता होऊन बसली. यासंबंधी त्यांनी मोकळेपणाने लिहिले आहे. पु. ल. मधील इतर गुणांपेक्षा त्यांचे लेखन व प्रतिभा उच्च कोटीची आहे हें जाणवल्याने सुनीताबाईंनी चित्रपट गायनादि क्षेत्रांच्या मोहांतून बाजूला काढून त्यांना लिहिते केले माणसं जोडणं पु. ल. नां फार आवडे. त्यामुळे पु. ल. मनमिळाऊ व सुनीता बाईंकडे वाईटपणा आला. तत्त्वनिष्ठ, शिस्तप्रिय, कणखर व करारी स्वभावामुळेही त्यांच्याबद्दल गैरसमज निर्माण झाले पण त्या सर्वांना पुरून उरल्या. हें सर्व त्यांनी लिहिलेलं “आत्म

कथन” आहे मनोहर तरी’ ह्या पुस्तकांत दिसून येतं पु. लं.च्या स्वभावदोषांची त्यांनी केलेली चिकित्सा हे चर्चेचं वादळ ठरलं.

पण हाच परखडपणा भाऊसाहेब हिरे, आचार्य अत्रे, शंकरराव देव, भाऊराव पाटील ह्यांच्यासारख्या थोर व्यक्तींच्या बाबतीतही दाखवलेला होता. आपण जगलेल्या, बरकत जाणवूनही व्यतीत केल्याबद्दल, तसंच स्वातंत्र्य मिळाल्यानंतरच्या काळात बदलत गेलेल्या जीवन मूल्यांमुळे ती उदासीनता वाढली पण सुनीताबाईंचा स्वभाव बदलला नाही.

अशा ह्या ज्येष्ठ, करारी जीवनमूल्यं जपणाऱ्या, थोर महिलेवर माझ्यासारख्या एक सामान्य व्यक्तीने लिहिणं म्हणजे काजव्याने दिव्याकडे झेप घेतल्यासारखंच नाही का तेव्हा सुनीता देशपांडे ह्यांच्या आत्म्याला माझी भावपूर्वक श्रद्धांजली.

आम्मी एक्क वृक्षाची पान्नं

(२६ जानेवारीनिमित्त एकता गीत)

(८ ते १२ वर्सांच्या चेरडवां खातीर)

आम्मी चेरडवं सान्नं

आम्मी एक्क वृक्षाचीं पान्नं

हॉ वृक्ष आमगेल् देशाचो

राबला हजार घेल्ल्यांचो

सावले मूळाक आश्रय घेतात

कोटि कोटि जानं ।।

आम्मी चेरडवं सान्नं-आम्मी एक्क वृक्षाचीं पान्नं॥धृ॥

देश आमगेल् विशाल विशाल

धा दिशांतु वाजैत् एकताल

धिन् धिन् धा त्रक तू ना । कत् तिन् धागित्रक धी ना

धा दिशांतु वाजैत् एकताल

खोल हाजो इतिहास भूगोल

ही मायभूमी पालन करता

पिकता अन्न धान्य ।।

आम्मी चेरडवं सान्नं-आम्मी एक्क वृक्षाचीं पान्नं॥धृ॥

आमगेल् देशारी - राक्ती चांदण्या चादर

सक्काळीं-सूर्य किरणां झालर

पावसा मोती-वल्ली मात्ती-दीस राक्ती

हें आकाश करता प्रसन्न ।।

आम्मी चेरडवं सान्नं-आम्मी एक्क वृक्षाचीं पान्नं॥धृ॥

हॉ बहुप्रिय आमकां भारत देश

विविध प्रांत विविध प्रदेश

अनेक भाषा अनेक वेष

अनेक जाति आनि संस्कृती

या देशाची कोरूक प्रगती

तय्यार आमगेलें सैन्य! ।।

आम्मी चेरडवं सान्नं-आम्मी एक्क वृक्षाचीं पान्नं॥धृ॥

- अरुणा राव (कुंडाजे)

बालकवृंद शिक्षण संस्थेच्या विद्यार्थ्यांनी फुलविलेली “सांस्कृतिक फुलबाग”

उदय मंकिकर

“आजचा विद्यार्थी म्हणजे उद्याचा नागरिक.” उत्तम, सुशिक्षित आणि सुसंस्कृत नागरिक घडविणे हे पालकांप्रमाणे शिक्षकांचेही कर्तव्य आहे. ह्यासाठी विद्यार्थ्यांची सर्वांगीण, म्हणजे शैक्षणिक, नैतिक, सांस्कृतिक विकास होणे आवश्यक आहे. ह्याच जबाबदारीने प्रेरित होऊन श्रीमती कमलाबाई डोंगरकेरी आणि त्यांच्या समविचारी सहकाऱ्यांनी ७० वर्षांपूर्वी “बालकवृंद शिक्षण संस्थेची” स्थापना केली आणि १२ विद्यार्थी घेऊन बालवाडी सुरू केली. आणि आज ह्या संस्थेच्या, मराठी आणि इंग्रजी माध्यम मिळून पाच शाळा आहेत. अत्यंत अभिमान वाटावा अशीच ही गोष्ट आहे. बालवाडी ते दहावीपर्यंत असलेल्या ह्या शाळांमधून १५०० हून अधिक विद्यार्थी शिक्षण घेत आहेत.

अत्यंत कार्यक्षम संचालक मंडळ, अनुभवी, प्रशिक्षित शिक्षक आणि उत्तम विद्यार्थ्यांमुळे शाळेच्या/संस्थेच्या कार्यनिष्पादनाचा आणि प्रगतीचा आलेख सतत उंचावत आहे. विद्यार्थ्यांना प्रगल्भतेकडे नेणारी संस्था म्हणून बालकवृंद शिक्षण संस्थेचा हम खास उल्लेख करावा लागेल.

नुकताच बालकवृंद शिक्षण संस्थेने ७०वा वर्धापन दिन साजरा केला. ह्या घटनेचे औचित्य साधून त्यांनी दिनांक २० डिसेंबर, २००९ ह्या दिवशी साहित्य संघ मंदिर, गिरगांव, मुंबई येथे सर्वांगसुंदर कार्यक्रम सादर केला. संस्थेच्या पाच शाळांमधील, बालवाडी ते दहावी पर्यंतच्या १५० विद्यार्थीरूपी फुलांनी सुशोभित झालेली अशीही “सांस्कृतिक फुलबाग” म्हणजेच प्रतिभासंपन्न कार्यक्रम होय.

छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज म्हणजे महाराष्ट्राचें लाडके दैवत म्हटले तर वावगे ठरणार नाही. त्यांच्या जीवनावर आधारित “शिवकल्याण राजा” हा सर्वांगसुंदर कार्यक्रम मराठी माध्यमच्या विद्यार्थ्यांनी सादर केला. शिवाजी महाराजांच्या जन्मापासून राज्याभिषेकापर्यंतचे सर्व प्रसंग विद्यार्थ्यांनी उत्कृष्ट प्रसंगावधान, मुद्राभिनय, आकर्षक पदलालित्याने नृत्याद्वारे सादर केले. त्यांच्या प्रत्येक हालचालीत व्यावसायिक सफाई होती.

महाराष्ट्र म्हणजे भारताची “सांस्कृतिक राजधानी.” अनेक सण येथे श्रद्धेने आणि भक्तीने साजरे केले जातात. होळी, गोकुळअष्टमी, गणेशचतुर्थी, नवरात्रोत्सव, नारळी पैर्णिमा, दिपावली इत्यादी. हे सर्व सण साजरे करताना त्याला उत्सवाचे स्वरूप प्राप्त होते. इंग्रजी माध्यमाच्या विद्यार्थ्यांनी हे सर्व सण “उत्सव” ह्या नृत्यनाटिकेद्वारे अप्रतिम सादर केले. आपण केवळ अभ्यासातच नव्हे तर कलाक्षेत्रातही निपुण आहोत हे त्यांनी सिद्ध करून दाखवले.

१५० विद्यार्थ्यांना घेऊन, त्यांच्याकडून व्यावसायिक दर्जाची कलाकृती सादर करणे ही साधी गोष्ट नव्हे. त्यासाठी बालकवृंद शिक्षण संस्थेच्या संचालक वर्गाला, शिक्षक वर्गाला, विद्यार्थ्यांना

आणि ही फुलबाग सुशोभित करण्यासाठी अथक परिश्रम केलेल्या नृत्य दिग्दर्शकांना दाद द्यायलाच हवी.

अपेक्षाभंग, विरोधाभास, विडंबन म्हणजे विनोद निर्मितीची हमखास साधने. “शब्दछछल” संस्थेने मध्यंतरानंतर “बेताल झालेत सूर” हा विडंबन गीतांचा नजराणा सादर केला. छळ केल्याने काहीही साध्य होत नाही. परंतु “शब्दांचा छळ” करून श्रोत्यांना विडंबनाद्वारे निर्भेळ आनंद देता येतो हे ह्या संगीत कार्यक्रमाने सिद्ध केले. श्री किशोर देशमुख आणि त्यांचे सहकारी म्हणजे एक उच्चविद्याविभूषित “संगीत कुटुंब.” आपापल्या व्यवसायाइतकेच संगीतात पारंगत. मराठीतील लोकप्रिय गाण्यांवर त्यांनी उत्कृष्ट विडंबन गीते सादर करून दीड तास रसिक श्रोत्यांना मनमुराद हसविले. एकच गीत, अंगाई, अभंगापासून कव्वाली पर्यंत कसे गाता येते ह्याचे प्रात्यक्षिक म्हणजे एक पर्वणीच होती. ह्या कार्यक्रमांमुळे रसिक प्रेक्षकांना ह्या कलाकारांच्या प्रतिभेचा साक्षात्कार झाला.

तीन तासांच्या मंत्रमुग्ध कार्यक्रमानंतर रसिक प्रेक्षक तृप्त माने परतले. ह्या उत्कृष्ट कार्यक्रमासाठी बालकवृंद शिक्षणसंस्थेला आणि सर्व संबंधितांना धन्यवाद.

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All participants of “Maharashtra Utsav” in the concluding part of the dance

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“कोणी एकु स्मार्ट चल्लो याँ रँ मुखारी. हं! तू यो” जादूगारानें एकळ्यालागणी बोट दाकयतचि म्हळ्ळें.

सगळ्यांददरारी एकी होडी लाडी धोरुनु जादूगारानें त्या चल्ल्याक कातरिनें लाडी काप्पूक सांगली. ताणें कापली. जादूगारानें दोन्नी कुडक्याची टोकं धोरुनु, गांटी बांदली. सगळ्यांकयी दाकयिली. गांटी हातांतू धोरुन लाडी वयीरीथावनू तगूथाई आपळ्ळी परत हातांतू लाडी सगळी धोरुनु दाकयिली.

अय्यो! मारलेली गांटी खंयी गेल्ली?

“तानें सम कापने आस्सूपुरां.” अशी म्हणतची दुसऱ्या चल्याक स्टेजारी आपयले. परत तशीची प्रयोग केलो आणि हासवंच्याक सांगू लागलो, “हांव ही जादू केंना शिकलों गोतस वे? सान आसतना पायजम्यालडिक-”

मुखावयली उत्रं आयकंवच्या पयलेंची मगल्या मनाची कार्यक्रमाबद्दु आशिल्लि गांटी सुटली आणि सान आसतना लाड्ये गांठ्यो सुड्डु नयी जाल्ल्यारी गांटी घट्टी जाऊन ऐनवळाक फजिती जाल्लेच्या मित्रमंडळीगळो (आणि आमगळोटी) उगडासु जावुन हासो आयलो.

मनांतु आयलें आमगलें जीवनही सूक्ष्म दोन्यांच्या गांठ्यांनी भरलेले आसता. आवसूगल्या पोंट्यांतु आस्ससरी आवसुवड्डु आशिल्ली गांटी जगांतु पदार्पण जायनापडें कापताती. चॅडगिलें जीवन नवीन गांठ्येने सुरू जाता. आवसुगली दृश्य गांटी कापनापडें मायेची अदृश्य गांटी बसता. हगुर हुगुर बाप्पुसु, भावंडं, आज्जी आज्जो सगळ्यांगल्या सुतागांठ्यो बोडसुक सुरू जाताती.

होडु जातनाची वर्गबन्धु, मित्रमंडळी, शिक्षक हांगळो सहवास मळता आणि गांठ्यो बयसुक लागताती. आनि ताव्वळीची जाई-नाका हाँ भावू रिगता. धागें वाढतवाडताचि जाळ, कोपु हाज्जो कैरुही बैसूक लागता.

प्रायेरी यॅवसरी ह्या धाग्यांची सुमारी दाटी सुतळी जाल्लेली आसता. आनी मुखारी मात्र गांटी बांदतना चिक्के विचारू कोर्का पडता. इत्याम्हळ्यारी दोंगांगलें मेळनू एक आनंदमय संपन्न जीवनाचें सोंपन साकार कोरचें आस्ता. एकमेकांगळो स्वभावु, परिस्थिती पळवुनु गांटी मारका जाता.

शॅल्लो आणि पदराक सर्वासमक्ष बांदिल्या गांठ्येचो आदर कोरका पडता, हें काम ससार नयी. कारण होकलेगल्या आणि होरेतागल्या त्या गांटीतू माई, मांवु, नणंद, देर, भाव-भईण्यो हांगळो समावेश आस्ता.

मागगीरी येताती चडवं. ती हॉड्डु जाताती. तोपर्यंत सुतळीची राजू जालेलो आस्ता. थोंड्यो निसरपासा गांठ्यो थोड्यो ब्रह्मगांठ्यो. त्यामिती थोड्यो निसोरनु गेल्लेल्यो आस्ताती, थोड्यो

नवीन नवीन बांदिल्यो आस्ताती. मस्त कैरु भरलेलो आसता. ताँ काडचो प्रयत्नु चालू आस्ता.

मायापाशाची गांटी मात्र ट्राइनागांठी गादी मजबूत जाल्लेली आस्ता. यमदूतागळो फास पण्णापडेंयी चिके राब रे सायना अशशी म्हाणूक लायता.

आतं लाड्येदिवस गॅले इलेस्टिक आयलें. त्यामिती की कल्लें विवाहा गांटी मस्तफंता घट्टी बैसना. वग्गी सड्लु जात्ता, सुड्डु वत्ता.

आर्तांतु तेंमे इलेस्टिकही ना. दोनी दिकानें वेलक्रो लांवचे. टिकलें तितले दिवस टिकलें, नई जाल्यारी सोणू दिंवचे. मुणुची करारानुसार एकदोन वर्स वड्डु राबची फॅशन यॅत आस्स.

देशभक्त, विरक्ती, सेवाभावू हांगली एकी गांटी आस्ताली. आत माआत्र तें विसोरनु ‘मगली गांटी कशशी बांधुनु घेंवचें’ याची विचारांतु आस्ताती देशभक्त.

आस्सो कसलेहि करनाति? आमगली आज्जागांटी आरे! टाळ्यांचो आवाज यॅत आस्स. कार्यक्रमु जाल्लो दिस्ता.

जात्यावरची ओवी

“पायमुळांतु पळ्ळें फूल”
 (“पायमुळांतु पळ्ळें फूल” या कोंकणी नाटकाचें शीर्षक गीत.)

पायमुळांतु पळ्ळें फूल; म्हणु निर्माल्य जाता वे?
 रूप-रंग-गंधु ताज्जो; उणे केन्नायि जाता वे?
 ॥ पायमुळांतु पळ्ळें फूलऽऽ ॥१॥
 पायमुळांतु पळ्ळें फूल, होऽऽ फुल्लाचो वे दोषु?
 हातांतुथावनु निस्सोरनु पळ्ळें, म्हणु हाताचो वे दोषु?
 फुल्लाचो हो दोषु किंवा हाताचो हो दोषु आस्सो;
 दोग्गांकयि जांवचे दुःख; उणे केन्नायि जाता वे? ॥१॥

फुल्लाक जांवचे दुःख आम्मी; कम्मी करूक पळोवचे;
 की पायमस्ते फूल, म्होणु, ताका आणि तुडोवचे?
 दुष्ट जावनु तें मस्तूचे, की प्रीतीनें पोरसूचे?
 तुडुन तुडुन मारुन घालचें; की अमृतसिंचन कोरचें? ॥२॥

पायमुळांतु पळ्ळें फूल, म्हणु निर्माल्य जाता वे?
 रूप-रंग-गंधु ताज्जो, उणे केन्नायि जाता वे?
 पायमुळांतु पळ्ळें फूलऽऽऽ

- सौ. चन्द्रमा बिजुर
 टेली २४३७८१२२

BOOK REVIEW

Title : *Swarna Smruti*
Author : Latika Nandkumar Heble
English Translation: Abhishek Heble
Pages : 103 (Marathi) + 83 (English)
Price : Rs. 250/-

'*Swarna Smruti*' or 'Golden Memories' is a happy blend of biographical glimpses of HH Shri Parijnanashram Swamiji III and His experiences as recounted to the author. Latika's initial doubts about her ability to do justice to so spiritual a subject were soon dispelled by Swamiji's promise to 'transmit thoughts' to help her whenever she needed inspiration. It was this assurance that helped her shed all hesitation.

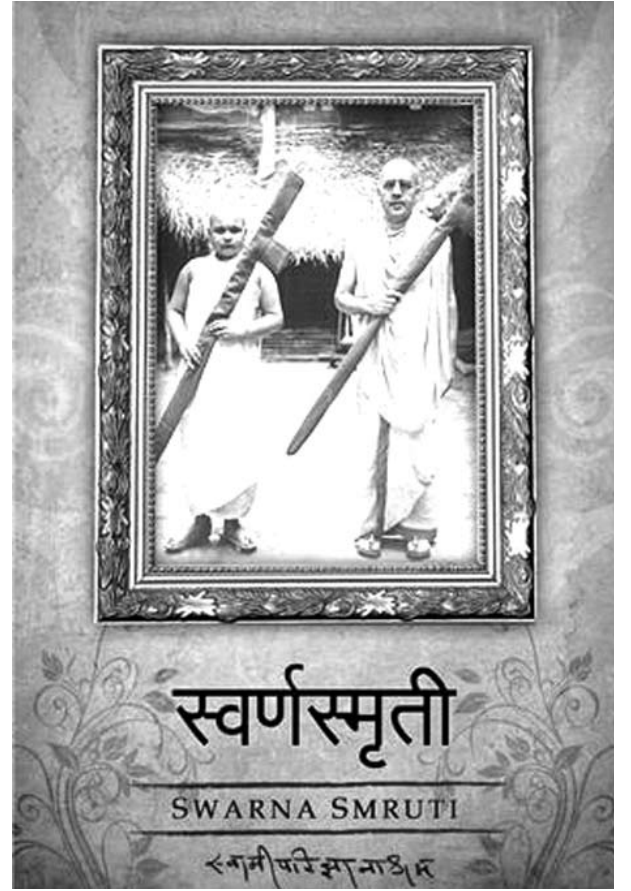
The attractive get-up and the rare photographs, combined with the author's skilful handling of the subject, make the book a collector's item.

Latika's spiritual inclinations have drawn her towards the Chitrapur Math and the Guru Parampara right from her childhood. Consequently, she has been actively involved in most programmes organized by the Math and the local Sabhas.

As a teacher of Marathi, English and Social Studies, Latika held her students enthralled with Marathi poems set to music. Her passions include music and Sanskrit.

Readers not familiar with Devanagri are fortunate that Abhishek decided to translate his mother's Marathi work into English to reach out to a wider circle of readers. Abhishek's was an understandably 'Herculean task', for he has not merely interpreted the book but taken pains to convey 'the right feeling' Latika intended to transmit. His translation is a brilliant effort.

To begin with the *Purvashram*, Ravindra was born on 15 June, 1947, when Smt Shantabai and Shri Shankarnarayan Shukla lived 'adjacent to the Shri Chitrapur Math' at Shirali. Ravindra was often seen during the afternoon and evening worship of Shri Bhavanishankar, soaking in the vibrations of the Deepanamaskar and the Ashtavadhan; He



would also patiently wait on the stairway outside Anandashram Swamiji's room with food offerings for the Guru whose inspiring personality had captured his young heart.

When the family shifted to Santacruz, Ravindra was admitted to the Podar School. A bright student, Ravi showed sparks of humour, even as a child. His mother, who yearned for a girl child, dressed her sons Ravi and Shashi in frocks, one day. When an admiring passerby asked for their names, the quick-witted Ravi unhesitatingly retorted 'Ravikala and Shashikala'!

During their visits to Shirali, in preparation for his thread ceremony, Ravi made an unreasonable demand: 'to have his feet washed in a wide metal plate'. The grandfather protested, explaining that the ceremony was meant exclusively for a Guru. Little did he foresee then what Destiny held for his Esteemed Grandchild.

After the thread ceremony, Ravindra was profoundly dedicated to the Sandhya Vandan.

During Ravindra's visit to Vajreshvari, Nityanand Swamiji, with his uncanny foresight, ordered a 'Gold Spot' and sweets exclusively for the 'young Yogi'!

1953 onwards, the Saraswat community's repeated appeals to accept a 'Shishya' put the Guru Swamiji in a dilemma. Would the impact of Western culture and education on the laity merit a new Mathadhipati? Ultimately, their sustained enthusiasm persuaded Anandashram Swamiji to initiate Ravindra Shukla, as His Successor on 1st March, 1959, in a magnificent *Shishya Sweekar* ceremony. Thousands of devotees thronged to the *pandal* at Shivaji Park in Mumbai.

The astrological chart of the Shishya Swamiji had already pointed to a Life of Renunciation; His pious upbringing further equipped Him for the investiture. Thereafter, Shri Parijnanashram Swamiji III willingly plunged into a life of pranayam, meditation and worship; acquiring training in the Vedas, Vedanta, Law and Sanskrit among a wide range of subjects.

Amidst all this, the Mahasamadhi of the Guru Swamiji in 1966 set off in the young Shishya Swamiji what He called an 'invisible explosion'. Following the *Pattabhisheka*, He handled the Math projects,

but 'His vision and progressive outlookwas not acceptable to certain sections of the community'.

Even as the controversy raged, Swamiji reinstated the Rathotsava, set up a museum and the *Anandashraya* in Shirali, and a vocational centre for the handicapped at Virar.

Latika mentions Swamiji's inroads into children's literature, under the pen-name 'Shashanshu'. Swamiji - as 'Abhinavacharya' - wrote spiritual sermons for *Ravi Kiran*. Swamiji's achievements in matters of *sadhana*, clairvoyance, and spiritual healing are best read in Latika's own words.

The controversy continued during the Mahasamadhi of Parijnanashram Swamiji. Thankfully, the clouds have been lifted by the Grace of HH Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji whose Guru Jyoti Yatra restored people's faith in a Guru Shakti whose 'Golden Memories' live on in the hearts of His devotees.

("Swarna Smruti" was released at the revered hands of HH Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji at Talmakiwadi on Datta Jayanti day, 1 December, 2009.)

Savitri Babulkar



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Personalia

Snehal Amembal, daughter of Deepak and Chitra Amembal, was awarded a Postgraduate Merit in International Employment Relations and Human Resource Management M.Sc. degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science in December 2009. She also has to her credit a postgraduate degree (MA) in Organisational Psychology from the University of Mumbai. After her MA, she was selected on campus to join Reliance Retail Ltd where she worked for a year in the HR department before pursuing further education at the LSE. An all-rounder, Snehal has a keen interest in writing poems in both English and Hindi, some of which have been published in local tabloids and university magazines, and has represented her school in hockey at district level matches.



Giving back to society is one of her passions which she pursued through volunteering for NGOs like Akanksha Foundation, Mumbai. She continues doing so now in London by volunteering her time as a teaching assistant in 'The Arbour', a local community centre and as an HR Admin. Assistant at 'Her Centre', a women's organisation dedicated to women's empowerment.

Harshal Hattayangdi, 13 years, son of Sharad and Vrinda Hattayangdi of Gamdevi, Mumbai, studying in Class VII at St. Xavier's Boys Academy, has stood 21st among 8,500 participants in the ABACUS Mental Arithmetic International Competition held in Penang, Malaysia. Harshal also stood 3rd in the state level competition and 6th in the national level competition held in 2009.



Paritosh Hattayangdi, 10 years, son of Sharad and Vrinda Hattayangdi of Gamdevi, Mumbai, studying in Class IV at St. Xavier's Boy's Academy, has successfully cleared the ABACUS Mental Arithmetic

International Competition; he was placed 1974th among 3,500 participants. The competition was held in Penang, Malaysia, on December 13, 2009. Earlier, in 2009, Paritosh stood First in both the state and national level competitions held in Kolhapur and Chennai, respectively.



Atharva Rao, 6 years, son of Sangita (nee Jothady) and Sanjay Rao (Nettar) of Borivali (East), Mumbai, has been awarded the President's Gold Medal, a certificate of merit and a cash prize of Rs.1000/- by Lalithkala Academy of Fine Arts Education, Bengaluru, in the Fourth National Level Students' Art Contest held during September 2009. The subject given was 'Rainbow'. Atharva is equally proficient in sports and takes lessons in Taekwondo too. He is a student of Cambridge School, Kandivali (E), Mumbai.

Ajaya Vaidya, son of Aniruddha and Radhika Vaidya (nee Kumta), stood third in Shivaji University in the Bachelor of Architecture examination of 2009.

Donations Received

Kanara Saraswat is grateful to the following donors:

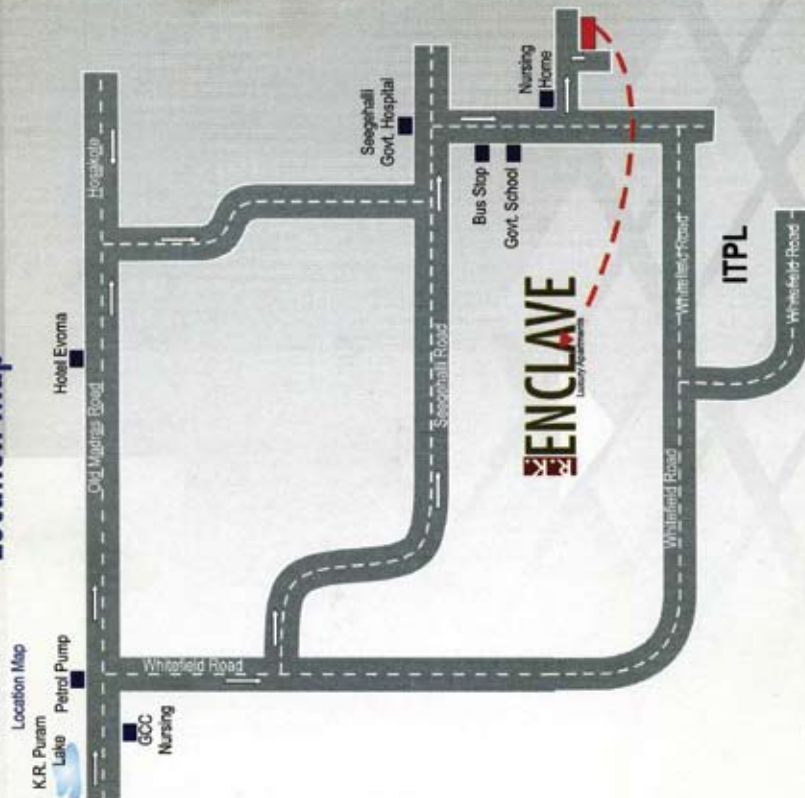
CENTENARY FUND	Rs.
Shivshankar M. Chickermane	25,000
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Sarita Bhadri	1,00,000
Pallavi Mahesh Kalambi	2,000
SCHOLARSHIP FUND	
Meenakshi K. Gangolli	1,001
(In memory of Vimalabai Appaji Hattangadi)	
Smita C. Nadkarni	1,001
(In memory of Vimalabai Appaji Hattangadi)	
MEDICAL RELIEF FUND	
Meenakshi K. Gangolli	1,001
(In memory of Vimalabai Appaji Hattangadi)	
Smita C. Nadkarni	1,001
(In memory of Vimalabai Appaji Hattangadi)	
DISTRESS RELIEF FUND	
Nachiket N. Trasikar	2,000
(In memory of father Nandan Trasikar)	

Specifications

- RCC framed structure.
- 6" thick cement hollow block for exterior walls & 4" thick cement solid block for internal walls.
- Main door teak wood frame with OST Shutter door and remaining doors m.s. steel frames with flush door shutters
- Powder Coated Aluminum windows with fly proof shutters
- Ceramic Tiles flooring
- Grey Mosac flooring for common areas like staircase, lobbies, etc.
- Granite platform with Granite sink.
- Concealed copper wiring with Anchor dyna switches and sockets.
- Ceramic tiled flooring and glazed tile dado up to 7 feet height
- Standard fittings
- 24-hours water supply from borewell with the overhead tank and sump
- Oil bound distemper paint for internal walls and emulsion for external walls and enamel paint for doors
- Individual TV and Telephone points in drawing and master bedroom.
- 5 passenger lift is provided
- Exclusive covered car parking
- Provided for each flat
- (Generator for common area, lift and 0.5KVA power for each flat)

Note: This brochure is purely conceptual and does not constitute a legal document. The architects and promoters reserve the right to change, delete or add any specification or elevation mentioned in here.

Location Map



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HERE AND THERE

Bengaluru: Over 35 people met at the Math to celebrate the first anniversary of the Sanskrit Sambhashan classes. A beautiful invocation to Goddess Saraswati, preceded a welcome speech by Sunanda Sagar who was also an able master of ceremonies. Kusuma Amladi briefly traced the journey from Day 1 to Year 1. All the items were in Sanskrit, and included a birthday song, a self-esteem building activity, *shloka* recitation, jokes, a drama 'Chaarucheshtitam' giving a glimpse of little Krishna (played by young Akshay Ullal) and his pranks, and finally, a patriotic Sanskrit song sung by all the students.

Five Yuvadhara volunteers undertook to sort and catalogue the books in the library at the Math in coordination with concerned Sabha committee members. The Yuvadhara's Guru Parampara Parayan sessions continued; another team made a presentation. Activities for presentation during PP Swamiji's forthcoming visit were discussed.

Reported by Uma Trasi and Amit Kilpady

Delhi: On 1 November 2009, ten members ran the Airtel sponsored Delhi Half Marathon, wearing "Proud to be an Amchi T-shirt".

On the 8th, 16 families participated in the Guru Poojan performed by seven Yuvas at Shri Kavle Math. In the afternoon, Nitin Gokarn, IAS, gave a talk on "Presentation Skills" organised specially for Yuvadhara and attended by most children. Children also performed Guru Poojan on December 13.

On November 28, 15 members celebrated Gita Jayanti at Shri Kavle Math with chanting of relevant *stotras* concluding with Deepanamaskar.

Reported by Mamta Savkur

Goa: Twenty five members attended a *satsang* organized by the Sabha on 13 December, 2009, at Margaon. Guru Poojan was conducted followed by chanting of *stotras* and Trishati Samuhagaan. Yuvadhara members held Anushtan and Parthana classes.

The President and the Standing Committee member of the Sabha briefed the gathering about the Vantiga collectors' meeting and the Standing Committee meeting, respectively.

Reported by Dr. Sushama Arur

Nashik: On December 6 2009, nine Sabha and three Yuvadhara members reverently performed the

Sannikarsha for the first time along with the Vakola (Mumbai) Sabha at Shree Durga Parameshwari Sanniddhi, Karla with chanting of relevant *stotras* and *shlokas*; later, they prayed before the Samadhi of PP Parijnanshrum Swamiji III.

The Punyatithis of HH Krishnashram Swamiji and HH Keshavashram Swamiji were duly observed with great devotion on 9th and 10th December, respectively.

On December 20, eight Sabha and two Yuvadhara members participated in 'vanya seva' on Borgad Hills near Nashik, where the Nashik Nature Conservation Society has planted nearly 40,000 trees. They helped Society members in "mulching" (covering the base of newly planted saplings with straw and grass to prevent evaporation of moisture) about 1500 plants.

Reported by Kishan V. Chandavarkar

Mumbai, Borivli: This report is a brief account of the visit of PP Swamiji to Borivli Sabha.

Guru Saanidhyotsava 2009 (14–22 December): On December 14, the Sabha welcomed PP Shrimat Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji with *lexim* by its Yuvadhara. Later, the traditional welcome was reverently accorded to Swamiji, including *padpooja* performed on behalf of the Sabha, Vamanashram CHS, Visawa Charitable Trust, and Chitrapur Saraswat Association, and concluding with Swamiji's *aashirvachan*. Later, 'Muktavali', a unique art exhibition put up by the Yuvadhara was inaugurated; it displayed various art forms made by devotees aged 4 to 82.

The mornings of 15th- 17th, had lucid spiritual discourses/talks by Krishnanad Mankikar, Dharma Pracharak Rajgopal Bhat and Latika Heble. Later, there were a much applauded humorous Sanskrit play (15th), which reached even those who did not know Sanskrit; lively games demonstrating how easily Sanskrit can be learned (16th), and *samuhik* Guru Poojan (17th). The splendid Palki Utsav on 18th evening saw the traditional "*vaaga vesu*", an enthusiastic *lexim* accompaniment by Yuvadhara, and devotees, young and old, including those from other Mumbai sabhas, joining the hour-long procession. *Bhajan seva* was offered on almost all evenings by individual devotees or groups.

The Yuvadhara Annual Day Programme on the 19th was a huge success - *bhajans* by Parthana class children, presentations on Srivali Trust, Srivali High School and Geervana Pratishtha, and a musical ballet on "The Earth Element" with a powerful message of conservation. At night, there was a wonderful interaction with Poojya Swamiji. On the next day,

Swamiji visited a display of art forms by Prarthana class children; and encouraged each child to explain his/her creation. The Sanskrit Mela kept everyone entertained thereafter. The evening started with Swamiji's *aashirvachan* and a Prarthana class cultural programme of beautiful dances, a Marathi skit on *Sant Janabai*, and Samvadini (a modified version of the harmonium) by talented 11-year-old Nivedita Hattangadi. Swamiji presented certificates to participants of Sanskrit Upasana sessions. The concluding Dharma Sabha on the 21st included Swamiji's *aashirvachan* and *phalamantrakshat*.

On the 22nd, Poojya Swamiji left for Shirali leaving us with memories of the beautiful experience of the Gurusaanidhyotsava.

Compiled by Borivli Yuvadhara

Mumbai, Dadar: On 27 December, 2009, 49 devotees reached Karla amid *bhajan*-singing and *jaijaikars* to perform Sannikarsha Seva with great devotion. Paying obeisance to Durga Parameshwari Mata and PP Parijnanashram Swamiji's Samadhi, they chanted relevant *stotras* and *shlokas*. Whilst chanting Navratri Nityapath, Swami Anubhavananda entered to pay His respects at the shrines and blessed the Sannikarsha Seva. Blessings from PP Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji were conveyed to the devotees. *Samuhik prarthana* and *kshamayachana* were offered at PP Parijnanashram Swamiji's Samadhi and Devi Sannidhi. Following *teerth*, the group left for Sadyojat Nagar where they had packed lunch and thence to Mumbai amidst *jaijaikars*.

Seventeen participants (eight Prarthana children, five from Prerna and Yuvadhara, and the remaining aged 40+) took part in the Bhagvad Gita competition held at Talmakiwadi. Samvit Taggarse, Stuti Nadkarni, Mitali Puthli and Srikar Gulvady bagged the prizes. All the participants were felicitated on November 25, to the accompaniment of *bhajans* by Prarthana children and chanting of Chapters 12 and 6 of the Gita; the function concluded with *aarti* and *prasad*.

Reported by Shobha Puthli

A brief report of Poojya Swamiji's visit to Dadar Sabha follows.

Hemotsava 2009 (7-14, December): The beautifully decorated Karnatak/Kanara Colony warmly received PP Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji amidst *jaijaikars* into the Sabha's specially constructed "Hemotsava" *pandal* where He was given the traditional welcome.

The backdrop was the famed Ghats of Varanasi on the banks of River Ganga, with the Kashi Vishwanath Mandir in the centre. During His *pravachan*, Swamiji elaborated on the significance of 'hema' or 'swarna' (gold) in the Utsava to an enthralled audience.

For a week, the precincts of the Colony woke up to the chants of Suprabhatam and morning *bhajans*; Yoga sessions had quite a few enthusiasts and were followed by Sadhana Panchakam. The noon pooja of Lord Bhavanishankar was witnessed with great joy, especially on the Samaradhana days of Shrimad Krishnashram Swamiji and Shrimad Keshavashram Swamiji when Poojya Swamiji performed the Pooja. There were eloquent spiritual talks by Krishnanand Mankikar and Dharma Pracharak Rajgopal Bhat, *bhajans* by individuals, Prarthana and Yuvadhara youngsters, and groups including an all-male *bhajan* group from Santacruz Sabha. Devotees in large numbers performed *padpoojas*; *samuhik* Guru Poojan by young and old was conducted on 13th evening. Later, everyone enthusiastically participated in the Palki Utsav with Yuvas making various *lezim* formations to the beat of drums as the Palki bearing the adorned portrait of PP Parijnanashram Swamiji III wound through the lanes of Matunga to the melodious *bhajans* sung by Poojya Swamiji and the devotees.

On two evenings, stellar Power Point video presentations by Yuvadhara members provided a bird's eye view of the diverse activities of Shri Chitrapur Math, Shirali. Yuvadhara also presented a Malhar vaari folk dance, a colourful patriotic Vande Mataram dance and an entertaining Konkani play. A session on 'diacritical marks' elucidated the finer nuances of our Math's initiative to systematize the pronunciation of Indian words in the English script.

On the cultural front, captivating skits and plays by Prarthana children (an Adi Shankaracharya play; a skit on the need for and benefits of Prarthana classes and another on the role of Shivaji and his successors in establishing "Hindavi Swaraj"), culminating with a grand Ganga *aarti* to the chants of Ganga Ashtakam. Sitar and vocal recitals were other enthralling items. The highlight of Geervana Pratishtha day, which included interactive games at the Sanskrit Mela with an all-sabha participation, was a Sanskrit play where four generations of Sanskrit students actively participated in fluent Sanskrit.

Three busloads of devotees went for the Vanabhojan to Karnala. Swamiji led a band of fifty Yuvas on the

strenuous rocky hike to Karnala Fort through the wooded bird sanctuary. Visits to rural based cottage industries (courtesy, Yusuf Meherally Centre), a puppet show and a live snake show kept the audience enraptured.

On 13th evening, a record audience attended Swamiji's *aashirvachan*; the Dharma Sabha culminating with *phalamantrakshat*.

A *niropa geet* sung by Yuvas bade farewell to Swamiji and the retinue as they departed for the next camp at Borivali, but not before Swamiji saw an attractive collage of pictures of His previous visits.

OUR INSTITUTIONS

The Canara Union, Bangalore: On 19 December, 2009, a hilarious Konkani skit "Pavamagharchi Pavni" (Pavam's Guest) was presented by the Natyarasik Group, at the Canara Union. The play was written by Sadhana Kamat.

Pavam's household took us on a wonderful trip down memory lane to Talmakiwadi, Udyog, Cards Game-304, Rama Gadis (male servants in Mumbai) who were more punctual than our clocks today. Also the SVC Bank, the old style of addressing husbands in "here and there" language and, of course, "Rasachandrika", the proud possession of a bride in her kitchen along with other new gadgets which had entered the market in those times. There was an important reference to our dear old *Kanara Saraswat* magazine which every Chitrapur Saraswat proudly reads. "An article in KS is like a Booker Prize winner. "An era of old times" by Sadhana Kamat via Pavam's guests!

Anuja Mudur's debut direction was well appreciated with correct placements of property, mikes, strict pauses etc with the able guidance of Anand Nagarkar. Her neat and gracious anchoring and introducing the cast on the stage at the end of the play was unique. (Normally the cast is introduced behind the curtains, the audience guessing who's who). The roles efficiently played were by Sunila Nagarkar (Pavam), Mira Naimpally (Shanta), Uttara Nadkarni (Swati), Nayantara Naimpally (Ammanakka), Anand Kilpady (Umesh), Nirad Mudur (Vasant) and Satish Murdeshwar (Doctor). Thus, the entire cast of Pavam takes the cake off the table for having us laughing

The "Saath Tera" a divine experience of Guru Saanidhya from December 7-13 shall be remembered for a long time to come.

Reported by Nirmala Dumble

Thane: The activities of the Sabha during the month of December 2009, are given below.

At **Mulund**, members marked the Punyatithis of HH Krishnashram Swamiji on the 9th and Keshavashram Swamiji the 10th with Guru Poojan. They also performed Shiv Poojan and chanted Navratri Nityapath on the 16th, and performed Devi Poojan on the 22nd.

About 35 devotees from the Sabha performed Sannikarsha at Karla Math on 20th December.

Reported by Prakash R.Hattangadi

all through the evening. Little frills of comedy came through Shanta's actions, which brought the house down. Wish we had a Shanta in every household just for fun!

Special mention is due of our teenage star, Aditya Hosangdi, for starting the evening with warm melodies of the '50s and '60s. His background score for the skit was appreciated too. Credit also goes to Archana Hosangadi, Anupama Nadkarni, Abhishek Nagarkar, Priti Jothadi and Karan Talgeri for their able support. Congratulations to all of you there for keeping the Konkani stage alive!

(Source: *Canara Union Newsletter*)

Reported by Kumud Nayel

Saraswat Cultural Forum, Pune:

ANAND BAZAR 2009

Once again it was that time

Gourmets went ballistic....

When one could with their talents shine

On seeing an array so fantastic!

Arts n Crafts and food galore

There was something for everyone

Left all attendees wanting for more!

From low calorie to very high ones!

Exquisite handcrafted jewellery

As most went fulfilled and truly fed

Attracted all in their revelry

And the evening came to an end,

While the game of 'amchigale adgatis'

All went home in creative thought

Provided for some brain tease

And a happy, heavy 'pot'!!!!

(cont. on p-66)

That “variety lends spice to life” was clearly visible in the Anand Bazar 2009 held on 20 December, 2009. Mother Annapurna has definitely bestowed her blessings on Chitrapur Saraswats - an array of delightful eatables kept all attendees on their feet and wanting for more.

Brain teasers, games, handcrafted jewellery and home décor tips provided the much deserved break between savouring the banquet spread. Organizations working for social causes were also invited to set up stalls and increase their patronage.

The evening ended on a thoughtful note..... thoughts on what could be done to make the next Anand Bazar even more successful and creative!

Reported by Gouri Gokarn

Saraswat Mahila Samaj, Gamdevi, Mumbai: Childrens’ Day was celebrated on 19 December 2009. Samaj President Vidya Kodial welcomed the guests and members and Neeta Yadery, Secretary, started the proceedings.

Pratham Kodial, Tanmay Savkur and Avnish Samsi, tiny tots aged 6 to 8 from the Gamdevi colony and surrounding areas recited our Math Prayers. To everybody’s pleasant surprise they went on to chant the ‘Suryashtakam’ loudly and enthusiastically, without faltering! A stream of small kids and teenagers then performed various items and displayed their talents. Anika Patil, a tiny budding dancer chanted a *shloka* and followed it up with the starting *namaskar* in Bharata Natyam. Arya Balwalli and Anish Bijurkar recited nursery rhymes, Shriram Baindur, very professionally played a raga and a tune on his flute. Sahil D’souza recited a poem ‘Childhood doesn’t wait’. I am sure it tugged at the heart for many a mother present there. Saanika Kodial sang the Marathi song ‘*Sasa to kasa*’, Nupur Shirur recited a Hindi poem ‘*Prakrutika sandesh*’. Anirudh Kodial played the famous patriotic song ‘*Jayostute*’ on his keyboard and then went on to give a wonderful magic show! Nivedita Hattangadi played the natyageet ‘*Yuwati mana*’ on the Samvadini, as also Raga Malkauns and another piece ‘*Uda jaa re kaaga*’.

All in all, it was a varied fare, superbly presented. Neeta Yadery’s compering was excellent; she encouraged the children and put them at ease. The chocolate given to each performer at the end of their performance made their toil sweeter, I am sure!

This was followed by the Convocation where prizes were given to students who had performed very

well in the academic field in 2008-2009. Geeta Balse proposed the vote of thanks. The programme ended with refreshments.

Forthcoming programmes:

- ♦ February 22nd: 3.30 pm. Mother’s Day – ‘My Chinese Daughter-in-law’, a talk by Shaila Nadkarni, Chief Guest: Meera Sashital.
- ♦ March 8th: 3.30 pm. Womens’ Day - Renowned artists Chetana Kadle, Asha Bhatkal and Shilpa Nadkarni share their experiences.

The PURASKAR SAMARAMBH scheduled for Wednesday, 17th March 2010, at Shrimat Anandashram Hall has been RE-SCHEDULED to Sunday, 21st March 2010, at the Smt. Indirabai Kalyanpurkar Hall at 12 noon. Lekhan Puraskar to Indu Nagarkatti and Shaila Khambadkone; Sugam Sangeet Puraskar (name to be announced).

Gents are also welcome to join.

Contributory Lunch: Rs. 110/- per head.

Last date for Registration: 14 March 2010.

- ♦ April 10th: 5 pm. Vasantik Sammelan – Sitar Recital by Anjali Gangolli and Sugam Sangeet by Dr. Leena Gangolli.
- ♦ April 21st: 3.30 pm Cooking Demonstration by culinary experts Winifred Lobo and Roopa Yennemadi Lobo.

Reported by Smita Mavinkurve

Saraswat Cup 2009

Battling the sweltering heat, the sun on their face.... all the teams had just one goal in mind.... lifting the much coveted “Saraswat Cup 2009”

This year the Annual Saraswat Cup Knock Out Cricket Tournament was played in Mumbai at The Parsee Gymkhana, Marine Drive, on 17th May, 2009. Eight Saraswat teams from all over Mumbai participated in the tournament, namely KSA XI, Santacruz XI, SVC XI, Bandra XI, Khar Danda XI, Kurla XI, GSB Wadala XI and Borivali XI. Each inning was limited to eight overs. All the matches were fun to watch as some looked like a Super Fours and Sixes tournament while the others were nail-biting finishes!

After the four initial matches, the semi finals were played between KSA XI vs GSB Wadala XI and Santacruz XI vs SVC XI. Santacruz XI and KSA XI were declared finalists, leading to the two familiar teams coming face to face once again. The toss was

won by KSA XI and they elected to bat.

It was yet another match where the teams left the audience at the edge of their seats. The match started with a great inning from openers Navin Bijur and Pankaj Murdeshwar scoring 23 and 22 runs, respectively. This partnership helped KSA XI make a commendable score of 68 in their allotted eight overs.

When it was Santacruz XI's turn to bat, veteran batsman Anand Vithalkar who has won many matches for his team, came to the rescue again, scoring a fluent 30 runs which included four blistering boundaries and took his team to a well deserved victory. The team won by eight wickets in hand and three balls to spare. (KSA XI - 68/2 in 8 overs; Santacruz XI - 71/2 in 7.3 overs).

Santacruz XI dedicated their win to Sachin Ullal, who, sadly, had passed away on the morning of the tournament, a man who had encouraged the Santacruz colony boys to play and enjoy the gentleman's game.

Bharat Nadkarni, a former opening batsman for the Mumbai Ranji Team and captain of the Mumbai University Under-22 team was the Chief Guest. He spoke about the superstitions that are followed by cricketers even to this day such as not getting out of team gear if the team is playing well. He also entertained the gathering with interesting stories of cricketing greats such as Sunil Gavaskar. Sharing the dais with Bharat Nadkarni were KSA Vice President Uday Mankikar and members of the KSA Managing Committee, Shivshankar Murdeshwar, Raja Pandit and Dilip Sashital.

Apart from the Winner and Runners Up trophies presented by the Chief Guest, individual awards were also presented: Man of the Series: Navin A. Bijur (KSA XI), Best Batsman: Navin A. Bijur (KSA XI), and Best Bowler: Nakul Sanadi (Santacruz XI)

Apart from the teams and their loyal fans, there were other people who added that extra something to the tournament with their enthusiasm and whose participation and support is much appreciated: Commentators - Pettya Maam and Raunak Kalyanpur, and Cheer Leaders - Dhanashree Mallapur, Vaishnavi Balwally, Devika, and Tejas Balwally.

Reported by Amol Pandit & Gauri Shirur

Due to space constraints, we remind contributors to limit their reports for "Here & There" to 160-180 words, and reports of special events to 400-500 words.

CLASSIFIEDS

MATRIMONIALS

Alliance invited for Chitrapur Saraswat boy B.E. (Software Engineer) 29 years 5'9" working with reputed MNC in senior position in Mumbai. Send BHP to Box No: CL 3275, Kanara Saraswat Association, Mumbai - 400 007. (R-1869)

Suitable alliance invited for Chitrapur Saraswat girl, Age- 23 years, graduate in science, employed in Vapi, Gujarat. Contact e-mail: uday.tristar@rediffmail.com Ph. No.- 0260-2453068; 09377000527, 09377001073. (CL-3276)

Suitable alliance invited for Chitrapur Saraswat girl, Age-24years, M.Com, B.Ed, employed in Vapi, Gujarat. Contact e-mail: uday.tristar@rediffmail.com Ph. No.- 0260-2453068; 09377000527, 09377001073. (CL-3276)

ENGAGEMENTS

Sthalekar - Sukhtankar: Sunil, son of Smt. Suvarna and Sharad Sthalekar of Vile Parle with Devki, daughter of Smt. Pallavi and Dattakumar Sukhtankar of Vile Parle on 25th December, 2009 at California.

Ubhayakar-Nagarkatti: Chinmay, son of Shraddha and Chaitanya Ubhayakar of Goa with Pooja, daughter of Poornima and Gurudas Nagarkatti, of Mumbai, on 11th January, 2010 at Chicalim, Goa.

BIRTHS

A son, Veer to Shoma and Chirag Shah, a grandson to Asha and Sharad Shah, Nirmala and Suresh Nilawar, great grandson to Pranjivandas Shah and Lila D. Nilawar, at London on 31st October, 2009.

November 2, 2009: A son (Shreyansh) to Rekha and Shantaprasad Herenjal, brother to Shreshtha and grandson to Geeta and Dinesh Bijoor and Shamala and late Anandkishore Herenjal, at Bangalore.

SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Udiyavar Kedarnath And Vinati (nee Thaggarse) Congratulations on completing 25 years of happy married life on 10th February 2010. May Silver turn to Gold. From relatives and friends.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Baindurs and Udyawars thank all relatives, friends and well-wishers for their gracious presence and blessings on the occasion of the wedding and reception of Manasi and Ameet on 8th December, 2009 at Mumbai. Kindly treat this as a personal acknowledgement.

Mrs. Shital Mohan Hosangadi and Mr. Giridhar R. Haridas and Mrs. Kamalalaya G. Haridas thank all friends and relatives for their gracious presence and blessings on the occasion of the wedding and reception of Aneesh and Chandrabha on 09th December 2009. Kindly treat this as a personal acknowledgement.

Smita & Sumantharao Kilpady and Neeta and Nandan Vinekar thank all relatives, friends and well wishers for their gracious presence, blessings and presents on the occasion of wedding & reception of Saneel and Nandita on 2nd and 4th December 2009 at Mumbai & Nashik respectively and request all to treat this as a personal acknowledgement.

PUROHIT

H. Prashant Bhat, B-17, Deepanjali CHS, BAF-Hira Nagar, Marve Road, Malad (West), Mumbai - 400095. Mobile No. 9820920671/9892614433.

OBITUARIES

Sad Demise: Umesh Sadashiv Kalambi, 83 years, on 20th December, 2009 at Pune. Deeply mourned by Vasanti Kalambi, Vidya, Bharat, Aseem, Amol and Neha Hemmad. and Nilima, Vivek Shantanu and Kartik Kalambi.

DOMESTIC TIDINGS

BIRTHS

We welcome the following new arrivals

- Nov 22 : A son (Sohum) to Umakanchan (nee Burde) and Chinmay Mudur at New Jersey, USA.
Dec 19 : A daughter (Antara) to Sybil (nee D'silva) and Ashwin Gulwadi at Mumbai.
Dec 2 : A son (Arush) to Priyanka and Dathaprasad G. Hattiangady at Mumbai.

MARRIAGES

We congratulate the following and wish them a happy married life

- Sept 20 : Neelesh Sumitra Kalyanpur with Trupti Uday Kalyanpur at Mumbai.
Dec 2 : Nandita Nandan Vinekar with Saneel Sumantharao Kilpady at Mumbai.
Dec 7 : Aparna Ravindra Rao Khambadkone with Nirmal Vinay Burde at Mumbai.
Dec 8 : Manasi Bhavanishankar Baindur with Ameet Gurudas Udyawar.
Dec 9 : Roopali Shyam Jhungare with Nitin Vishwanath Dhareshwar at Mumbai.
Dec 10 : Gunthala Deenanath Shet Mangalore with Anirudh Vithal Mavinkurve at Mumbai.

OBITUARIES

We convey our deepest sympathy to the relatives of the following

2009

- Oct 1 : Kaikini Arvind Shankar (53) at Mumbai.
Oct 16 : Srilata Chandrashekhar Kallianpur (nee Kombrabail) at U.S.A.
Nov 10 : Chittar Shantaram D. (93) at Andheri, Mumbai.
Nov 10 : Savur Somnath Shankar (77) at Mumbai.
Nov 13 : Bailoor Shivanand S. (78) at Pune.
Dec 1 : Sharada (nee Kamala Nadkarni) Anandrao Karpe (93) at New Delhi.
Dec 1 : Kalyanpur Vasudev Sripad (87) at Mumbai.
Dec 19 : Vasanti Murlidhar Hattangady (nee Vimal Katre) (76) at Mumbai.
Dec 26 : Samsi (Dr.) Aroon Bhavanishankar (74) at Mumbai.

2010

- Jan 16 : Sushila Venugopalrao Savnal (93) at Dadar, Mumbai.
Jan 18 : Manisha Sharad Kulkarni (nee Usha M. Gokarn) at Mumbai.
Jan 23 : Kaikini Dinkar Dattatreya (81) at Mumbai.



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