

VIPRANUDI

English Journal from the house of AKBMS



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Swami Ramanand Tirtha

(3 October 1903 – 22 January 1972) was an Indian politician, freedom fighter, educator and social activist who led the Hyderabad liberation struggle during the reign of Osman Ali Khan, the last Nizam of Hyderabad State.



Swami Ramanand Tirtha was the principal leader of the Hyderabad State Congress. Before taking Sanyas, his purvashrama name was Vyenkatesh Bhagvanrao Khedgikar. He was given the name "Swami Ramanand Tirtha" by his guru Lucknow-based Hon'ble Swami Rama Tirth, who initiated him into Sanyas. Despite taking Sanyas, Swami Ramananda continued to work with the members of the Khedgikar family on his paternal side. His younger brother Bhimrao Bhagavanrao Khedgikar was a renowned educator who settled in the town of Ambajogai, Maharashtra on Swamiji's suggestion and worked with Swami Ramananda to help establish the Shri Yogeshwari Shikshan Sanstha. Since Swami Ramananda had no next of kin, members of his family have continued working towards preserving Swami Ramananda Tirth's legacy of providing education to rural and underprivileged communities as members of the Swami Ramananda Tirth Trust and the Swami Ramananda Tirth Rural Institute. In 1950, Swami Ramananda Tirth founded the Nanded Education Society, which today is the parent organization of three institutions, namely, People's High School Nanded, People's College Nanded and Science College Nanded. In honor of his contributions, the Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University (SRTMU) in Nanded, Maharashtra, India, was established in 1994, named after him.

Swami Ramanand Tirtha was a multifaceted Leader. He successfully carried out several responsibilities and in each of them, he excelled...

As a Freedom Fighter, he played a pivotal role in Hyderabad's integration with India.

As a visionary leader, he headed the Hyderabad State Congress during the freedom struggle.

As an educator, he championed the cause of providing quality education for socially deprived classes of society.

As a social activist, he fought for social justice and equality.

As an advocate, he spoke for the rights of the underprivileged.

As a politician, he served as a Member of Parliament (MP) for two terms (1952-1962).

As a nation-builder, he contributed significantly to India's post-independence development.

His legacy continues to inspire people in the fields of social welfare and education. He has left a respectable legacy behind- Educational institutions are named after him – Like, Swami Ramanand Teerth Mahavidyalaya.

Swami Ramanand Tirtha fought the Osman Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VII and the Nizam of Hyderabad after the Hyderabad State Congress was established in 1938. He participated in satyagrahas and was imprisoned for 111 days by Osman Ali Khan. Swami Ramanand Tirtha is credited for having created a revolutionary movement to integrate Hyderabad State with the Indian Union in 1948. Dr. P.V.Narasimha Rao, former Prime Minister of India started "Swami Ramananda Teerth Memorial" in Hyderabad. Swamiji's mortal remains are resting here in the premises at Brahmanvada, Begumpet, Hyderabad.



Akhila Karnataka Brahmana Mahasabha ®

Gayathri Bhavana, No.3070, 14th Cross,
9th Main, Banashankari 2nd Stage,
Bengaluru-5600070
Phone: +91-80-26771695 / 26770066
E-Mail : info@akbms.com
Website : www.akbms.com

President : Ashok Haranahalli
General Secretary : S.Sridharamurthy
Treasurer : Venkatesh S.Naik

VIPRANUDI

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: Sudhir S Mysore
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Presidential Message

Ashok Haranahalli
President - AKBMS

Dear Friends

My salutations to Viprabhandhavas...

It has just been a couple of months since the Hindu New Year Yugadi! Wishing all Vipras a very happy Hindu New Year.

There is a saying in Kannada Yuga Yugadi Kaledaru, Yugadi marali barutide. With every year, comes new hope, new opportunities, new thinking and time to reflect on our past and move forward. Along with this, it is time to think about our Nation too. There comes a question as to who should lead the country. We do realise that Country and Culture are mutually dependent.

Sanathana Dharma is like a beacon, lighting our path into righteousness. Of late we find people making irresponsible statements about our sacred Dharma. Such people and incidents such as these should be strictly opposed and brought to book. This election is the right time to present our opinion and hence it becomes very important to participate in this election and cast our precious vote and thereby decide the future of this great country.

After the successful program of Abhijaathe 24, our Vipra women have been constantly conducting various events and programs and have kept the spirit of oneness alive. As like every year, the day after the Yugaadi festival, a program to welcome the New Year with laughter and positivity.

A program on humour and comedy in memory of our first founder President Master Hirannaiah, was held in Bangalore on the day after Yugadi. Smt. SudhaBaragur, Y. V. Gundurao, and Sri Achyutha Rao Padaki held the audience in splits with their quick humour and daily facts of life. Sri. Ramanath anchored the entire program with his style of humour. Sri M. S. Narasimhamurthy was awarded with the title of Hasya Sahitya Vibhushana on this day.

Coming back to the elections this year, we have 3 representatives from the Brahmin community who are contesting for elections this time. Sri. VishweshwaraKaggeri, Sri. Prahalad Joshi and Sri. Tejasvi Surya have been doing yeoman services to our nation and are eligible in every way to be elected from their areas. It is also very important that these leaders win this election otherwise there is a risk of not getting this opportunity in the future. For our community to grow and make its presence felt and uphold Sanathana Dharma, this election is going to be very important for us.

We the important voters must remember to keep aside our internal conflicts and stand as one big community and elect these leaders. It is in the interest of our country and our culture that these representatives take India forward and contribute significantly to building one India and One nation. I on behalf of all, make a humble request to vote for such worthy individuals and build a society that stands on a strong culture and belief system.

Ashok Haranahalli
Yours Truly

Ashok Haranahalli



From the Editor's desk

Satyesh N. Bellur
Editor-in-chief

Dear Readers...

Welcome to our Twenty-Seventh edition of Vipranudi – the English journal from the house of AKBMS.

We are happy to inform you that two new columns are being started from this edition:

- Joy of Living – by Dr. A. Gayathri Devi. The title itself is interesting. All of us are striving hard to live a life of joy, right? Every human being since the dawn of civilization has led his life with the fond hope that it will lead him towards greater happiness. In this quest for joyful living every one of us from almost womb to tomb think, act, and pursue various activities and associate with different people that we feel are conducive to making us happy. But still, many of us find this happiness elusive. How to circumvent this feeling of drudgery and achieve a sense of joy? The columnist would be sharing her own life experiences and other illustrations to help the readers find that elusive “joy” and live a life of fulfillment.

- Success Stories - Ordinary people who made it BIG... As the title suggests it is all about people around us who have been successful in their chosen field. We want to provide space to recognise them and say – “You guys have done us proud!”. The very first personality profile has been rendered by Ms. Varsha Avadhany. We request all of you to send us articles profiling people that you know, people with whom you have interacted and whose stories you want others to read...

There is a Guest Article from Sri. T.V.Nataraj Pandit from Mysuru. He has a

special interest in historical temples and has been working towards their conservation. In association with 'Hassan District Historical Monuments Conservation Forum' he has so far helped conserve 8 temples. In this article, he writes about how they have resurrected the Sri Rama Temple in Haravu. A must-read. We congratulate Sri. Natraj Pandit for all the good work that he is doing and wish him the very best in all his future endeavours.

By the time this edition gets into your hands, the general elections would be over and the results must have been declared. I pray that we will have a decisive leader, who is a great visionary, a true nationalist, one who will respect values of the Sanathana Dharma that are universal in its intent, a non-corrupt to the core and one who is capable of taking India from strength to strength in the next five years. Fingers crossed...

I thank all my columnists and editorial colleagues for their continued patronage. Till we meet again in our next edition, I wish you all a blissful time ahead.



Satyesh Bellur

Satyesh N. Bellur

Answers to Puzzles – What am I?

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| 1. Plates & Cutlery | 2. Money |
| 3. Candle | 4. Water |
| 5. Remark | |



May - 2024

VIPRANUDI

AKBMS – News & Events



Savithri Ramesh

Lead members of the AKBMS Women's wing.
Contact: 9900788954; saviramesh14@gmail.com

We have great pleasure in bringing this report highlighting some recent activities of AKBMS held during April - May 2024, to your perusal:

Events and Programs of AKBMS :

1. In memory of our first founder President Master Hirannaiah, a program on humour Haasyotsava was held in Bengaluru. Sri. M. S. Narasimha Murthy was honoured with the title of "Haasya Sahitya Vibhushana" on this occasion. Smt. Sudha Baragur, Sri Y. V. Gundurao, and Sri Achyuthrao Padaki kept the audience in splits through their humour and comedy in real life.
2. Cricketer Javagal Srinath was given an Honorary doctorate at a function by the Mysore Vishwa Vidyalaya on March 3rd, 2024 in recognition of his contribution that was par excellence to the world of cricket.
3. International Women's Day was celebrated at Koppala by Akhila Karnataka Brahmana Mahasabha. Discussion panels on Women and Health, Women and education, and various such topics were discussed.

Significant events in May...

- 1653 - The world-famous historical building and the Taj Mahal, one of the world's wonders, was completed after 22 years of continuous work on May 9th
- 1889 – An international federation of socialist groups and trade unions designated May 1st as a day in support of workers, in commemoration of the Haymarket Riot in Chicago. Thus came May day.
- 1913 – The first Indian feature film Raja Harischandra was released on 3rd May
- 1960 – Maharashtra and Gujarat became separate states on 1st May 1960
- 1974 – India became nuclear power country with its first underground atomic bomb test in Pokhran, Rajasthan. Trial named – Smiling Buddha

(Compiled by Sudhir S Mysore)



Guest Column

T.V.Nataraj Pandith

Writer, Works towards conservation of Historical Temples
Contact: 9964536150; tvnatarajpandith@gmail.com

"Sri Rama Temple - Haravu

Haravu is a village in Pandavapura taluk of Mandya district. This village has a history of thousands of years. The grand Sri Rama temple, constructed by the second king of the Vijayanagara Empire, Veerabakkanna, in 1369 AD, stands witness to this history. Built with massive stone pillars in a large expanse, the entrance gate of this temple itself is about six feet tall.

As one passes through this gate, they are greeted by a sprawling courtyard, a sight filling their heart and mind. Supported by 42 giant pillars, its upper part has 6 chiseled corners while the lower part is a square. Some pillars have carvings for the placing of lamps.



Navaranga : As we walk through the entrance facing the assembly hall, we see the Navaranga structure supported by 68 pillars. The outer wall of Pradaskhinapath around the sanctum sanctorum, houses artistic stone sculptures. The northern side, of the outer wall has a sculpture of a serpent. Further, on either side at the entrance door of the sanctum

sanctorum, there are statues of Jaya and Vijaya, each four feet tall.



The main deity of Lord Rama has gone missing at some point in history – reasons unknown. Therefore at a later date, fearing that the temple may continue to become deity-less, it was decided to install idols of Lord Lakshminarayana, Goddess Devi, and Bhudevi in its place. Historical inscriptions and public belief affirm that the temple was originally dedicated to Lord Ramachandra

Pran



sanctum

sanctorum, there is an aesthetically pleasing and captivating sculpture of Pranala, adorned with a lion-faced style opening at its base, to collect the holy water after every abhisheka given to the deity. This style of pranala indicates that the temple was erected by the king himself.

Garuda Stambha : Located in front of the temple is a Garuda Stambha, approximately 30 feet tall. At the base of this is a sculpted figure of Garuda facing towards the temple with folded hands. The pillar is adorned with artistic stone sculptures: a conch towards the east, a lion towards the north, and figures of the guardians towards the south. Near the pillar, there is a small water pit called "Okuli Gundi".

Specialty of the Temple - Mustika : As a tribute to the sculptor's artistic expertise, there is a commemorative sculpture of Mustika (fist) in the temple. One can hold this in a fist to admire and appreciate its craftsmanship. This is surrounded by beautifully carved small pillars. At its top, there are statues of the eight directional guardians carved while inside of it holds two movable lemon-sized saligrama stones. Above the Mustika, there is a depiction of a serpent.

Due to complete neglect at one point in time, this temple had fallen into a dilapidated condition. However, from the sudden realization and efforts of the enthusiastic youth in the Haravu village to renovate and conserve this heritage site, restoration work of the same began officially on October 28, 1996, and the temple was restored almost to its original state of glory. Following the restoration, a medicinal garden was cultivated around the temple premises, with wire fencing all around for its protection. The temple now shines like a new bride.

Gopal Madhusudhan, a member of the Vidhana Parishad who visited the temple, was impressed by the style of construction and the progress of developmental activities. He extended support from the legislators' fund.

Lord Sri Ramachandra along with his Parivara (family) was reinstalled and consecrated. Post this, the revived temple looks beautiful. People putting in efforts and working towards the conservation and protection of temples and other ancient monuments are many and come from diverse backgrounds. It is through these continuous efforts and enthusiasm of everyone involved that this temple has regained its former glory. Notable contributors to this endeavour include Tailuru Venkatakrishna, Haravu Devegowda and his team, several officials of the Government and many villagers around Haravu. All of these men deserve accolades for the excellent work accomplished.

For more information about the temple, one can contact 9481675575.

How to reach Haravu :

If you travel via the K.R.S. road from Mysuru, Haravu is just 27 km away. It is 12 km from Srirangapatna and 7 km from Pandavapura. Also, it is 7 km from K.R.S.

The next time you are in Mysuru, make it a point to visit Haravu. You will be a witness to a temple that has been restored from ruins. Needless to say, you will receive abundant blessings from Lord Rama.

Editorial Note

Sri. T.V. Natraj Pandith is a native of Mysuru. He is an amateur writer and a retired state government employee. He served as an Audit Officer (RTD Audit Officer) in the Karnataka State Audit and Accounts Department. He has a special interest in historical temples and has been working towards their conservation. In association with 'Hassan District Historical Monuments Conservation Forum' he has so far helped conserve 8 temples.



Guest Column

Guru Prasad Bhat

Telecom Industry Veteran, Author
Contact: 9819324363;
gurubhat@hotmail.com

Alexander the Great's encounter with Kashmir Brahmins!

It was the year 326 BC, which means Alexander's encounter with Kashmiri Brahmins occurred some 2,350 years ago! It was so long ago, yet this historical event has been vividly recorded in history books, but hidden away from Indians. Why? you will soon know!

When Alexander arrived in the region where the Brahmins resided (likely somewhere in larger Kashmir and beyond), they penned a letter to him. They conveyed, "O king, what prompts your presence in the domain of sages? If you pursue riches, your discernment is in doubt, for we possess no material wealth. Our true riches lie in विज्ञानग्रहण (Vijnanagrahan, knowledge) and सहिष्णुता (sahishnuta, patience), which cannot be stolen but acquired through learning. Here, amidst a community of ascetics, you will find no monetary gain, but परंविज्ञानात् (para-vijnanaat, beyond humanknowledge). Should you choose to remain, sustenance will be found solely in the seeds of herbs, as it is for us!"

Sekandar (Alexander) observed their frail and poorly provisioned bodies, yet recognized the abundance of wisdom within their souls. He inquired, "Why do you lack food and clothing?" The Kashmiri Brahmins responded, "O King, we have little need for such provisions. A person enters this world naked and departs likewise; therefore, fussing over attire is futile. Every corner harbors fear, despair, and dread. The earth serves as our bed, the sky as our canopy, as we await death's

arrival, only to be reborn again and again. An ambitious individual may labor for gains unworthy of the effort expended, only to depart while their wealth and possessions remain behind, for their inheritors to quarrel over. It is one's virtuous deeds (Karma) that endure beyond life, while both fame and glory return to dust."



Sekandar was impressed and the subsequent conversations between them opened his eyes.

Sekandar : "What do you need that I can provide? I will not hesitate to give you my wealth, or to undergo suffering for you."

Brahmins : "Great king, close the door of death and old age for us."

Sekandar, hearing their answer an absolute reality stuck with him as he quipped: "But death and old age cannot be undone! There is no pleading with death: no matter how one hangs back from this sharp-clawed dragon, even if one is made of iron, one cannot

escape him. And no matter how long our youth lasts, we cannot evade old age.....!"

Brahmins : "O wise and puissant king, since you know that there is no recourse against death and that there is no disaster worse than old age, why do you long for the world in this way, why do you breathe in the scent of this poisonous flower so eagerly? All you will receive is suffering, while your enemies will inherit the wealth you acquire; to make oneself suffer for another's profit is the act of an ignorant man or a fool. White hairs are a message from death, and what makes you hope that you can stay in the world forever?"

Intrigued, Alexander enquired more:"Who is the king of our souls? Who always accompanies us toward evil?"

Brahmins : "Greed is the king, the ground of vengeance and the place of sin."

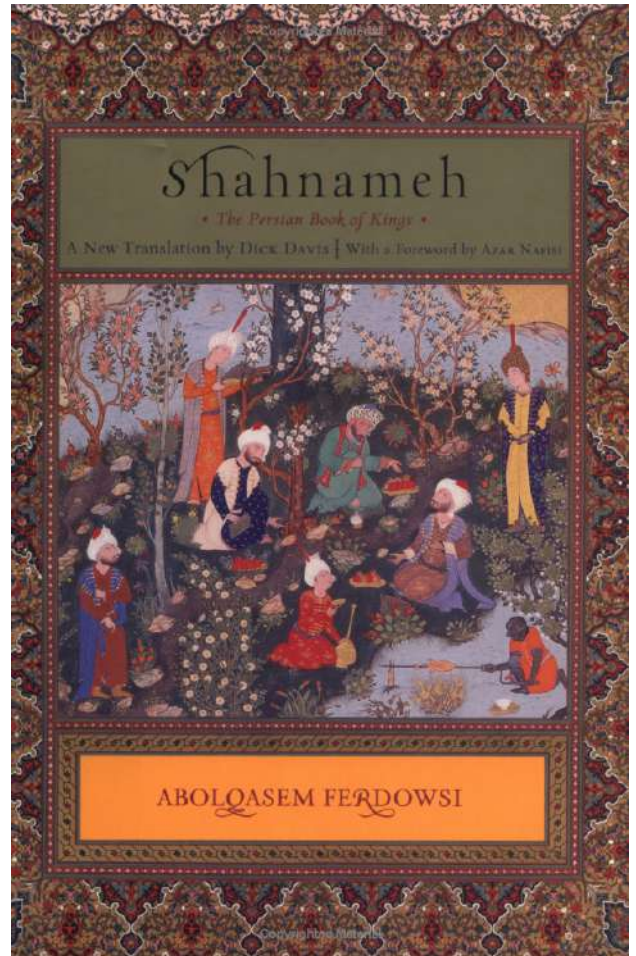
Sekandar : "What is the reality of this thing that makes us weep with longing?"

Brahmins : "Greed and need are two demons, wretched and malevolent; one is drylipped from longing, the other passes sleepless nights from excess. Time passing hunts down both, and blessed is the man whose mind accepts wisdom."

When Sekandar heard these words, **his face turned pale as fenugreek**; his cheeks became **sallow**, his eyes filled with **tears** and **furrows** filled his once-smiling face.

Sekandar offered them many gifts, but they did not accept anything from him, viewing gold as no more valuable than soil beneath their feet. Sekandar did not harm that place in Kashmir and departed towards the west, deeply pondering the true purpose of life.

(Source: Extracts from Shahnameh of Ferdowsi, based on an earlier Persian source and later translated by Dick Davis. Page: 503-505; Digitized version available at <https://archive.org>).



The myth of Alexander's 'glorious' victory against India :

The famous Greek historian, Plutarch tells us "As for the Macedonians, however, their struggle with Porus blunted their courage and stayed their further advance into India. For having had all they could do to repulse an enemy who mustered only twenty thousand infantry and two thousand horses, they violently opposed Alexander when he insisted on crossing the river Ganges also, the width of which, as they learned, was thirty-two

furlongs, its depth a hundred fathoms, while its banks on the further side were covered with multitudes of men-at-arms and horsemen and elephants. For they were told that the kings of the Ganderites and Praesii were awaiting them with eighty thousand horsemen, two hundred thousand footmen, eight thousand chariots, and six thousand war elephants." The true fact that the West tries to hide from us is that it was a Greek tragedy in India!

Conclusion :

I would like to deduce that it is highly probable that the ascetics and sagely Brahmins of Kashmir were influenced by or practitioners of Jainism or Buddhism, and may have forsaken their क्षत्रधर्म (the duty of the warrior spirit, to protect their land and people from invaders). On the other hand, there were a few Vedic schools such as the Kathas and Kapisthalas (referred to in Greek sources as Kathaioi) further to the river Beas, who took up arms against Alexander and fought valiantly. In this hard battle 17,000 Brahmins were slaughtered by Alexander and 70,000 captured. It appears that Alexander

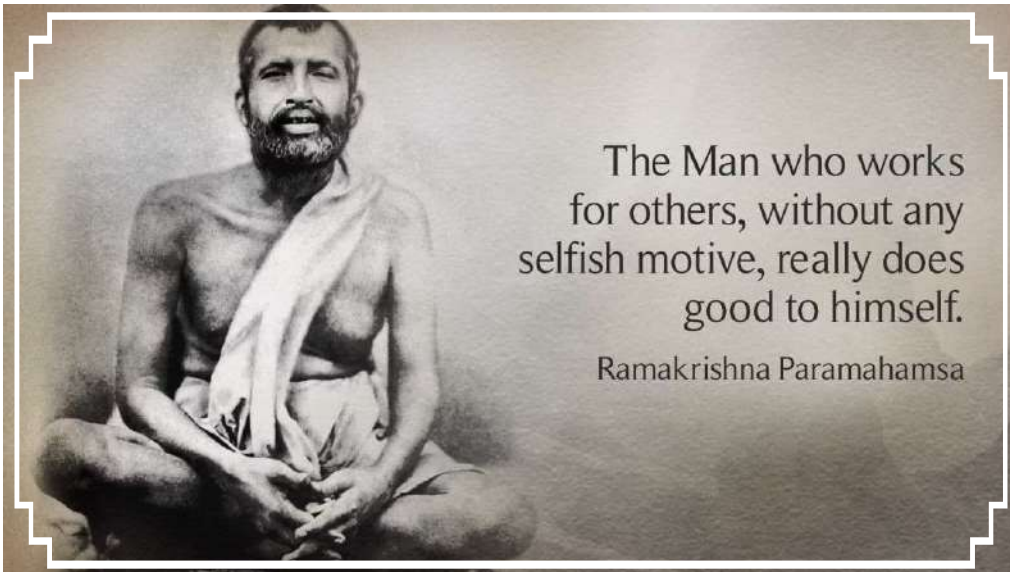
slaughtered those who had taken up arms to resist his invasion but spared those who had not.

The intrigue lies in the fact that one group of Brahmins abandoned their duty of क्षत्रधर्म and managed to survive, while the other group proudly exhibited their क्षत्रधर्म by valiantly opposing Sekandar's invasion, only to perish with swords in hand and pride held high!

The Brahmins declared the few kings and chieftains who submitted to Alexander without resistance as traitors. They not only participated in the war but also encouraged all people to resist the foreign invasion as part of their dharma (religion).

I would like to believe that my Saraswat Brahmin ancestors from Kashmir preferred to belong to the latter, who faithfully followed their KshatraDharma, even if it cost them their lives! They repelled Alexander the Great from invading Bharat. That is a fact.

The time has come to retell our history.



The Man who works
for others, without any
selfish motive, really does
good to himself.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa



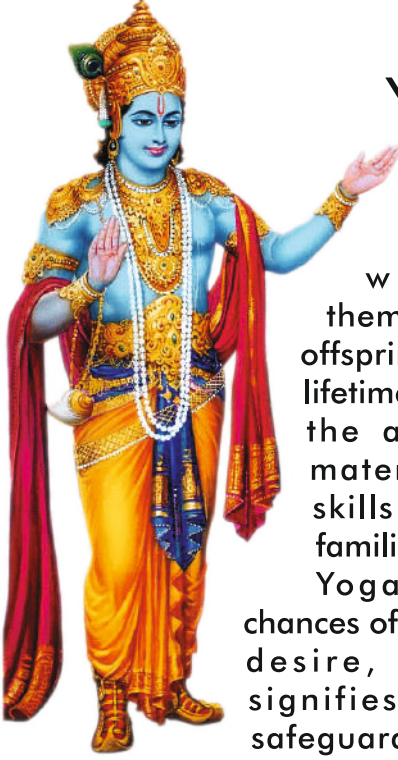
Thus Spake Lord Krishna

Mrs. Veena Prahlad

Eternal student, Gitaadhyayee
Contact: 9900100776
veena.tejaswinip@gmail.com



Yoga Kshema



All beings naturally seek the well-being of themselves and their offspring. Much of our lifetime is dedicated to the accumulation of material wealth and skills to support our families. In this context, Yoga refers to our chances of attaining what we desire, while Kshema signifies our ability to safeguard what we have acquired. Although this pursuit may seem logical to most, the Bhagavad Gita presents a unique perspective.

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥

traigunya-viṣhayā vedā nistrai-guṇyo bhavārjuna
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho niryoga-kṣhema
ātmavān (Gita 2.45)

Leading into his concept of performing duties with detachment, in this shloka, Krishna advises Arjuna to transcend personal preferences, accept the world as it is, and embrace living in the present without anxieties about the future or dwelling on past consequences. Niryogakshema implies not fixating on the gains derived from performing

duties. It is important not to misinterpret Krishna's words as advocating for inaction or disinterest in action; rather, his guidance emphasizes focusing on the execution of duty itself. The outcome of a well-executed task tends to be favourable. Even if the outcome appears unfavourable, it will not disturb the individual as they remain unattached to the results of their actions, equipped to navigate any situation with equanimity.

This concept is evident in the second line of the frequently quoted shloka.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

karmany-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo
'stvakarmaṇi (Gita 2.47)

Krishna asserts that while we have control over how we perform tasks, we do not have control over the outcomes. He advises against becoming the cause of specific results, warning that when humans act with desired outcomes in mind, they form attachments to those results. Consequently, when the anticipated results fail to materialize, sadness, jealousy, and anger may arise, hindering personal growth. Such expectations bind us to our actions and the world. However, if our focus shifts towards the quality of execution of our tasks, rather than the outcomes, detachment from results is

achievable. Thus, we can liberate ourselves from worldly entanglements by performing each action with interest and enthusiasm but without attachment.

If we are detached from the consequences, how can we be sure that our yogakshema will be taken care of?

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

ananyāśh chintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣhām nityābhiyuktānām yoga-kṣhemam
vahāmyaham (Gita9.22)

Krishna assures that he will shoulder the responsibility of yogakshema for those who are steadfast in their focus on attaining Him (i.e., achieving self-realization)

In the world we currently inhabit, the pursuit of self-realization and relinquishing attachment to the outcomes of our actions may seem unattainable. Today's interpretation of living in the present often equates to living irresponsibly.

In the Aadipurana, a Jain philosophical text authored by the Kannada literary figure Pampa, there is a significant episode known as Nilanjana's Nrutya (dance). Liberation is the goal of Jain philosophy, as depicted in the Aadipurana. This episode occurs within the narrative of King Adideva. As Adideva's time for renunciation, or parinishkramaNa, draws near, Indra, the king of the heavens, arranges a celebratory event. Nilanjana, a skilled dancer, performs at this function, captivating the attendees with her artistry. However, during her performance, Nilanjana's time of death arrives, and she passes away. Indra, aware of this, promptly creates another Nilanjana, seamlessly continuing the dance. While the other spectators remain unaware of

the substitution, Adideva, who has reached a stage of life where he realizes the emptiness of worldly pleasures and seeks lasting peace (the essence of parinishkramaNa), discerns the change. At that moment, he comprehends the transient nature of existence, renouncing all luxuries and embracing the life of an ascetic to pursue liberation for the remainder of his days.

The story underscores that our life journey leads finally towards the goal of lasting peace, liberation, or Moksha. At present, we may prioritize amassing wealth and pursuing a luxurious lifestyle. However, like Adideva, we will inevitably reach a juncture where we recognize that life transcends material possessions and desires. It is then that we perceive the world's transient nature. Every situation we encounter is fleeting, bound by time, and shaped by our interconnected actions and their consequences. It appears as a grand theatrical production orchestrated by a mysterious director. Hence, there is no need for concern about our yogakshema; it is already being taken care of.

Let us fulfil our responsibilities and commitments with enthusiasm and joy, free from worry, knowing that the divine plan for us surpasses any plan we could conceive for ourselves. Let us be nishchinta (without worry) our Yogakshema is in very capable hands.





My Quest for Spiritual Well-being

Satyesh N. Bellur

Poet, Thinker, Motivational Speaker & Management Guru

Contact: 9845187797; satyesh.bellur@gmail.com

Maaya – our eternal companion!

Wise men always advise – “When you know that you have a bad HABIT, you need to get out of it fully. If you try to compromise and just omit the letter H from that, A BIT will still remain. You remove the letter A from it, the entire BIT still won't leave you. Remove the letter B, IT still exists!” How true is this when it comes to Maaya – the spectacle upon which this world exists?

Let us do some practical analysis of Maaya. Is Maaya good for us? Many would say, No. They opine that Maaya is the one that stands between you and higher ideals like salvation. Then the next question that arises is – Is Maaya real or is it an illusion? In a flash comes the reply “It is an illusion. That which is not there... That which is not true...” If this is true (and hopefully not an illusion!!), then has anyone succeeded in absolving from Maya entirely? There is no definitive answer to this. No one has proclaimed that he or she has been rid of Maaya fully. The final question that comes to us now is – “Then what exactly is this Maaya and how does it become a part of our being, our existence”? Let us explore...

The seed that germinates eventually becomes the very basis upon which the tree has come up. When it sprouts, when it grows into a plant and later into a tree, this seed is not visible anywhere. But when the fruits show up, there are a million seeds in them all. The seed that vanished temporarily has come back again in full force now! Can we say that the seed has left the tree at any time during its life? It has shown up sometimes and some other

times, it has remained under covers but is always there. If a tree feels that it can live or survive or grow or procreate without a seed, then it will sound like the person who says that he or she can exist without Maaya!

Maaya therefore is the seed of human life. It can be best understood as “a desire” that first surfaces. A desire leads to another, then another and before we realise it, we are all a bunch of desires and nothing more. Time might erase all our previous vasana and wisdom might drive us towards the almighty, but desire will linger. It might be latent sometimes, but it is always there. At the first given opportunity, it sprouts and then it is once again overpowering.

ವಾಸನೆಗಳೆಲ್ಲವನು ಕಾಲ ಮರೆಸಿರಲೇನು ? |
ವಾಸುವಿನ ಎಡೆ ವಿರತಿ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ದರೇನು ? ||
ಆಸೆಯೊಂದನು ಹೇಗೂ ಜೀವಂತವಿರಿಸುತ್ತ |
ಶಾಸಿಸುವಳೋ ಮಾಯೆ - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

(ವಾಸನೆ = ಹಿಂದಿನ ಸ್ಮರಣೆಯಿಂದ ಉಂಟಾಗುವ ತಿಳಿವಳಿಕೆ;
ವಾಸು = ಆತ್ಮ, ವಿಷ್ಣು; ಶಾಸಿಸು = ದಂಡಿಸು)

As long as we equate Maaya to the divine force or divine illusion or vidhi (fate) or purva karma (past sins), etc we are always at a loss for words to define and understand it. The minute we say that Maaya is nothing but our desires, we are at ease. We know that we cannot live without desires. We know that while some of the desires have made us fall, some others have made us grow. We know that we can suppress some of the desires but some

of them keep surfacing every now and then to torment us. "All that I want in life is to die peacefully, without suffering and without being a burden to anyone else" is such a beautiful thought. It is such a nice boon to ask for. But think! It is a desire too...

Nothing in this world emanates without a desire. So is it wise to accept them, manage and move on or is it better to try and avoid them entirely? Your answer will drive your way forward in handling Maaya.

ಕಹಿಯ ಔಷಧಿಯನ್ನು ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆ ಕೊಡುವಾಗ |
ಸಿಹಿ ಸಕ್ಕರೆಯನದಕೆ ಲೇಪಿಸುವ ತೆರದಿ ||
ವಿಹಿತವಾಗಿರಬೇಕು ಚಣಚಣದ ಬದುಕಿನೊಳು |
ಸಹವಾಸ ಮಾಯೆಯದು - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

When a child is crying to take a bitter medicine, the smart mother would smear it with a little sugar and give it. That is the right thing to do. On the contrary, if the mother tries to force the child to take it, then the chances are that half of them would be spilled (or spitted) out. When the tree knows that it cannot

live without the seed, it will make it its life's eternal companion and stop grumbling about it. Why should the humans be different when it comes to Maaya?

Spirituality is all about understanding the essence of any principle and practice and imbibing that essence beyond its limits into our daily life till the final realisation occurs. Against this backdrop, Maaya has to be understood on a much deeper plane. It is to be used for our well-being rather than abused for our own destruction. One way of handling Maaya is to consider it as an eternal companion and make good of it. We need to realise this and enjoy all those small little things that the almighty in all of his kindness has granted us. A desire is one of them!

ॐ

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत्
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

Riddles

(You will find the answers in the editorial section)

- People buy me to eat, but never eat me. What am I?
- People make me, save me, change me, raise me. What am I?
- My life can be measured in hours, I serve by being devoured. Thin, I am quick. Fat, I am slow. Wind is my foe. What am I?
- Always in you, Sometimes on you; If I surround you, I can kill you. What am I?
- What can be heard and caught but never seen?

(Compiled by Sudhir S Mysore)



Mind over Matter

Anitha Nadig

Mind Coach and Emotional Wellness Counsellor
Contact: 8277130366 | anitha@mindsakhya.com

Mental Health & Insurance Coverage



Mental health in India is still a taboo subject. The stigma attached contributes a lot to people not being willing to take professional help. Other reasons for not getting treated for mental illness are lack of awareness, lack of knowledge on whom to contact or lack of mental health professionals in that region. Some people are aware of mental illness and willing to take help. They may not take the treatment/therapy or continue with it because of lack of affordability.

This article is about understanding whether there is health insurance coverage for mental health, what is covered and how one can avail of this benefit.

As per the statistics, the Indian population in 2023 was 1.486 billion and 60-70 million among them had mental illness. The common causes for not taking timely treatment were the stigma attached to mental illness and the financial constraints.

“Catastrophic Health Expenditure and Poverty Impact Due to Mental Illness in India” a study published (2023) in the Journal of Health Management, emphasises the financial impact of mental healthcare and the need for financial

risk protection for households with members suffering from mental illness. According to this survey. Mental health expenses are categorised as direct & indirect. Direct are the expenses of medicines, hospitalisation, treatment and therapy costs. Indirect expenses include commute or travel to the mental health centre, expenses of food, loss of productivity and loss of wages due to leaves. This survey mentions that the average monthly out-of-pocket expense (patient had to pay from the pocket, not from the insurance) in 2023 ranged from Rs. 2000 to Rs.5000 in India.

The survey also says that around 21% of Indian households were impoverished by healthcare payments due to mental health issues. Interestingly, other statistics around the age group of people with mental illness state that around 37% of mentally ill people are in the age range of 36 to 59 & 34% in between 15 to 35. That means, mental illness affects the prime age of a person and affects their earnings and the capacity to earn.

By 2023, IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory & Development Authority of India) had enforced insurance coverage for mental illness to all the insurance providers in India. Though the Mental Health Act came in 2017 and was enforced in 2018, it was not well adopted by the insurance companies. The Pandemic forced insurance companies to bring this clause of mental health coverage into action.

According to this act, all insurance companies must give coverage for mental illness. Most of the health insurance policies now cover mental illness ranging from hospitalisation to therapy, depending on the

policy type. Points which help to be aware of the coverage and claims are as below:

- * Mental health coverage includes consultations, hospitalisation, therapy, procedures and surgeries depending on the type of policy.
- * All health insurance should have cover for mental illness. Coverage depends on the plan and the premium.
- * Like coverage for physical illness, mental illness also has a pre-existing waiting period. Details will be mentioned in the policy.
- * There is no standard list of mental illnesses that need to be covered by the insurance provider. Mental Health Act guidelines are broader in nature and each policy/provider would have mentioned the disorder and the kind of coverage (hospitalisation only, therapy included, specific names of the disorder and so on).
- * Common mental disorders covered by few insurance providers are
 - * Bipolar Disorder
 - * Acute Depression
 - * Schizophrenia
 - * Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
 - * Anxiety Disorders
 - * Hyperactivity/Attention Disorders
 - * Mood Disorders
 - * Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- * A few policies mention a broader term psychological disorder. One needs to call the insurance company to know the exact illnesses covered.
- * Therapy and counselling charges are covered mostly in policies having OPD coverage or pure OPD policies

- * Therapy/Counselling charges have a cap like Rs.10,000 or 20,000 per year based on the sum assured

Some policies call out what is not supported. Dementia, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's are on that list. You need to read the policy carefully to understand what is covered, and what is not covered. Call the agent to clarify your doubts and queries before buying the policy or during the claim.

Some of the daycare procedures or therapy/counselling sessions may not have cashless facilities. These can be claimed through reimbursements by submitting proper documents to the insurance provider. Check with your insurance provider and understand the scope of coverage and documents required. Talk to your doctor/therapist and inform them of the documents required for the reimbursement. This would enable you to avail the mental health coverage your health insurance policy offers you.

Most of the policies have hospitalisation coverage with specific illnesses mentioned above. However, very few policies cover therapy. United Health & Star Insurance OPD plans to cover the therapy charges. Aditya Birla is said to have therapy covered through their counsellors. One needs to call up the insurance providers and confirm before buying the insurance.

India has begun a new journey in mental health and insurance. It is a long way to ensure that people get timely treatment for mental illness. Insurance can play a major role in this direction. Being aware that there is insurance coverage for mental illness, how one can avail and spreading this awareness to the needy can be a small contribution from us for a larger cause.



Performing Arts...

Dr. S.N. Susheela

Prof of Music and Director of Department of Yoga,
Bangalore University.
Contact: 6361223590; susheelasn1961@gmail.com



Depiction of spirituality in Sree. PurandaraDasa's rare compositions... (Part-3)

"ಸಂಗೀತಮ್ಬುಲಲಕ್ಷ್ಯಪ್ರಧಾನಮ್" is a very popular aphorism since many decades. During ancient and medieval periods, the art of dance, drama, and music combined were called "ಸಮಷ್ಟಿಕಲೆ". Indeed, all these three art forms are beneficial only when they are performed on stage. There are two wings in Performing Arts viz. Lakshya (Practical performance) and Lakshana (theoretical study).

To demonstrate the Uniqueness of these arts and also for Entertainment and realize the value of Spirituality, one has to be a good student, a good Performer, a good listener, and a good teacher. While speaking about Indian culture it is apt to use the term "ಗುರು" "ಆಚಾರ್ಯ" instead of a teacher. A guru not only imparts knowledge but also uplifts spiritual awareness in his "ಶಿಷ್ಯ". Now, going back to Sri Purandara Dasa, his contribution to both the art of Music and spreading spiritual thoughts through his compositions is immeasurable. My favorite devaranama of PurandaraDasa, ಸಂಸಾರವೆಂಬಭಾಗ್ಯವಿರಲಿ is completely filled with high philosophical thoughts. This is quite a rare composition. It has Pallavi followed by 3 Charanas.

It can be said that he composed this unique Song during the evening of his life. A Matured blend of Maatu and Dhatu (ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಸಂಗೀತಭಾವ) can be seen here. This Composition has Kaarunya Bhava with which he has let his inner desire of being amidst the group of Krishna be depicted. To Portray the

Karuna bhava with divinity the raga Chosen is also a very rare Raga Called "ಮಾರುವಧನ್ಯಾಸಿ" in which very few compositions are composed by the later composers. This is set to Khanda Chapu Tala which has 5 beats:

ಸಂಸಾರವೆಂಬಭಾಗ್ಯವಿರಲಿ |
ಕಂಸಾರಿನೆನೆವೆಂಬಸೌಭಾಗ್ಯವಿರಲಿ ||
ತಂದನೀನೇಕೃಷ್ಣತಾಯಿಇಂದಿರದೇವಿ |
ಪೊಂದಿದಅಣ್ಣನುವನಜಸಂಭವನು ||
ಇಂದುಮುಖಿಸರಸ್ವತಿದೇವಿಯೇಅತ್ತಿಗಯು |
ಎಂದೆಂದಿಗೂವಾಯುದೇವರೇಗುರುವೂ ||
ಭಾರತಿದೇವಿಯೇಗುರುಪತ್ತಿಯುಎನಗೆ |
ಗರುಡಶೇಷಾದಿಗಳೇಗುರುಪುತ್ರರು ||
ಹರಿದಾಸಎಂಬುವರೇಇಷ್ಟಬಾಂಧವರೆನೆಗೆ |
ಹರಿಭಜನೆನಡೆಯುತಿಹಸ್ಥಳವೇಮಂದಿರವು ||
ಸರ್ವಾಭಿಮಾನವನುತ್ಯಜಿಸುವುದೇಸುಸ್ಥಾನ |
ಹರಿಯನಾಮಾಮೃತವೆಆಮೃತಪಾನ ||
ವರಪುರಂದರವಿಠಲನಿನ್ನಪಾದಧ್ಯಾನ |
ಕರುಣಿಸಿಅನವರತಕರಪಿಡಿದುಕಾಯೋ ||

In this song, the language used is self-expressive. It reaches the hearts straight away without even an iota of confusion. He has chosen the colloquial Kannada language and has succeeded in conveying the spiritual message, which can easily be understood by even a normal human being. Let me now try to analyze the literary flow of this song. In the Pallavi, he establishes his strong desire to live amidst the rich family of all deities. Kamsari is quite a tricky word that matches with the first line opening word as far as Adiprasa is concerned. Here the word, Kamsari Should be

understood as Sri Krishna's enemy, Kamsa. In the first charana, he elaborately quotes each deity in "ತಾರತಮ್ಯಪದ್ಧತಿ" which all the Hari Dasas made it mandatory. He calls Krishna, his Protective father and appeals to enjoy the ವಾತ್ಸಲ್ಯ of Mahalakshmi in the form of Mother. He further agrees to the fact that Sri Saraswathi is his Sister-in-law as she happens to be the sister of Krishna. He acknowledges ವಾಯುದೇವ as his Guru. In the next Charana, he shows his fidelity to Bharathi as his guru patni. He praises Garuda and Shesha as sons of his guru. The following 2 lines have been incredibly coined to let out the impression that all the Haridasas are his dear relatives. He further stamps the fact that the Serene place of Hari Bhajan is equal to a temple. In the third and concluding Charana, he goes back to relate it with the Pallavi. Here he suggests that the best bathing can be fulfilled by omitting the ego and the real nectar is Sri Hari's name itself. Among Nava Vidha Bhakti, we can trace the impact of Smarana in this line. ಮಾನಸಪೂಜೆ is given utmost importance by him.

He concludes the composition by Portraying ಶರಣಾಗತಭಾವ by pleading with Sri Vittala to grace him with the notion of granting the boon of eternal stay at His lotus feet. This Composition depicts the advanced and matured state of Sri PurandaraDasa's vertical growth of the intellectual and spiritual entity. The unique concept of considering oneself as a member of all his ishtadaivas is very well depicted here. As in other compositions, he suggests that one should gradually shred away all worldly connections and dip into the eternal feeling of belonging with the Creator and His family. A noble thought of high spirituality can be felt if one sings with a good blend of Raaga Bhava and Sahitya Bhava.

I wind up my article here with the idea of analyzing one of Purandara Dasa's songs which sounds like a folk song influenced by his contemporary, Sri. Kanakadasa in my next article...

(To be Continued...)

Quotable Quotes from Veer Savarkar



Untouchability is the curse that has shadowed and darkened the history of our nation. Rightly so, nothing can justify the practice of untouchability

One country, one God, one caste, one mind, brothers, all of us without difference, without doubt

Calmness in preparation but boldness in execution—this should be the watchword during moments of crisis



Crime Prevention - A Criminologist's Perspective

Varsha Avadhany

Risk Culture & Security Expert

Contact : varsha.avadhany@gmail.com



FACES OF VIOLENCE... IS IT NEW OR OLD IN A NEW FORM?

On Mar 1st, while enjoying a wonderful meal, suddenly there was a loud noise and smoke of dust followed by extreme fear. This is the face of extreme violence becoming the normality of life in urban settings, be it in Paris, New York, Sydney, Tokyo, Shanghai, or Bangalore.

So, what has increased?

- * Wars and conflicts: Geopolitical negotiation capabilities are probably at their lowest after the world wars. Political leadership is tilting to the center right or extreme right, leading to either stated disagreements or understated disagreements. Thus, the clouds of war and conflicts are on the rise.
 - * Civil wars and coups: The African continent isn't new to violent clashes between citizenry and government forces. However, over the last decade or so, some of these nations decided to shake away from the old norms and form the path of economic development and peace. What has emerged in the last year is that the old ways are back to haunt them, with the military junta taking over in coup attacks, deepening the civil wars, and furthering famine and deaths of the vulnerable, like women and children. This is happening in Sudan and a few other countries in Africa.
 - * Cyber warfare: This might seem like a new
- age war. A deep introspection makes us realize the idea of reputational damage, thus eradicating people from active societal roles, is the cause of this. The advancement of technology has increased the 'Ease of Criminal activity'. The hydras of it have increased, and many anonymous faces with no direct link to the victim are emerging. The thrill of achieving is instantaneous, fuelling the violent urges.
 - * Mass violent crimes: Less said is better, they say, which is what is being witnessed, with the bad guys speaking less but acting more in the form of extreme violence. They are people belonging to any terror or political outfit; they are just sociological misfits trying to gain attention for themselves either through a mass shooting or mass stabbing act.
 - * Public violence: There is a rise in vigilante justice, and thus morality has become a subjective scale. The need for instantaneous justice has led to a rise in mob lynching cases and also caste/ethnicity/sectarian-based homicide incidents.
 - * Disruptive protests: Protest is the age-old weapon of inducing violent streaks among the citizenry. For a few decades, the political brass called for non-violent protests. That practice is on the decline,

and the return of violent, vandalism-based protests is on the rise.

- * **Workplace abuse:** The decline in leadership values in the workplace has led to a workplace culture vacuum. The cascading impact of that is 'Great resignation', a reluctant workforce lowering productivity and quality of products, a workforce preferring anonymous or meta-avatars at the workplace, and a silos culture leading to turf wars. Thus, leading to undercurrent harassment and bias (intentional or unintentional) based workplace practices.
- * **Family unit disintegration:** There was thought during the Pandemic that being forced to live together would ensure better communication and reduce friction and misunderstanding. On the contrary, the Pandemic was the perfect trigger for inducing suppressed emotions into violent bursts, leading to a rise in domestic violence cases even among partners not in marital relationships. The family courts across the globe are facing a deluge of divorce settlements to attend to.

Why this rise?

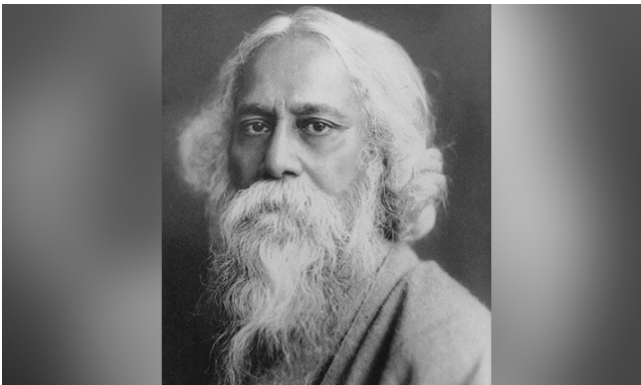
- Individualism leading to protectionism ideologies

- Confusion over conservation, sustainable growth, and development
- Technology invasion at a supersonic pace leading to addictive lifestyles
- Low threshold of emotional bearings
- Rise of materialistic gains as opposed to relationship gains
- Dependence on substances to overcome emotional vacuum
- Low belief in and investment in traditional institutions of marriage, childbearing/nurturing, and care for the elderly

The question one can ask is whether these are new problems or if they existed within our sociological constructs and just manifested as the triggers of the Pandemic hit us. Are we encouraging a society of 'Don't Trust', 'Look out for suspicious people and things'? Well, the buzzword is 'See something, say something', certainly not meant for positive acts!

A few friends of mine in Europe tell me, "We live with the highest terror threat levels. We teach our kids to survive through bomb attacks and wars... that is normal!"

Quotable Quotes from Rabindranath Tagore



I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy

You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water

The water in a vessel is sparkling; the water in the sea is dark. The small truth has words which are clear; the great truth has great silence



P G Diwakar

ISRO Chair Professor,
National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru
Contact: 96767 09898; diwaa6@gmail.com

3: SPACEUSE – Imaging from Earth Observation Satellites

1. Imaging from Space

In our previous article, we discussed more on Upagrahas and the kind of orbits from where we operate to provide useful data and information to the nation. We discussed on variety of satellites that can be flown to far-off orbits and make them function the way we want. Of course, it all depends on the type of satellites and the purpose for which they are launched before we discuss on their use to the common human on the ground. Unlike the communication and GPS-based satellite services, the earth observation satellites provide valuable data by making use of sun illumination of the earth (passive remote sensing/ optical imaging) or using their own source of energy for imaging (active remote sensing). Imaging from space using very high-resolution cameras that allow looking down into one's house garden or the structure of one's roof or even detecting cars and auto rikshaws on the roads always creates great enthusiasm for the capabilities from space. Today's world has gotten used to open sky policies wherein imaging from space, at very high resolutions, can be done on any part of the globe for strategic or commercial purposes.

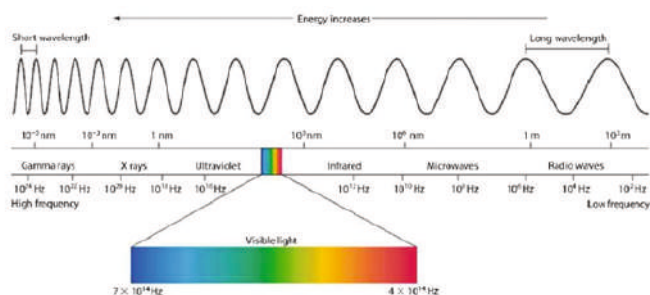
I plan to take you through the fundamentals of satellite-based imaging, in this article, particularly considering the optical

region of the electromagnetic spectrum (EMS). I am sure that these terminologies may be very familiar to many of you and for some, it may be somewhat worrisome! I would like to explain them here. Can we answer one question? Our eyes can see the objects that are illuminated by some source of light, while the same during darkness are not visible, Why? That is because our eyes are made to detect only visible parts of the spectrum and without illumination, it's all dark. However, in nature, certain types of bats, snakes, mosquitoes and beetle species use part of the infrared spectrum for vision/ detection! So, nature has given different kinds of sensory organs to every living creature for its own subsistence. We can expand this topic further and it can become even more interesting. But my limited focus here is to discuss on imaging from space and hence I will be taking you through what is EMS and how it can be of use for space-based imaging.

2. Electromagnetic Spectrum (EMS)

As we have seen above, light illuminates an object that can be seen by the human eye. Basically, the reflected energy from the object is reaching our eyes and creating a picture on our retina. This is nothing but a practical example of how EMS is helping humans in the visualization of objects. So, EMS is as simple as a range of varieties of electromagnetic radiation that are present in nature. Radiation

is the energy that travels and spans across wider areas as it moves. The EMS is of a wide range that consists of Gamma rays, X-rays, Ultraviolet rays, Visible, Infrared, Microwave and Radio waves.



These radiations are also described as a stream of mass-less particles, viz., photons, that travel in a wave-like form at the speed of light, while each photon has its own energy. Depending on the amount of energy, they get categorised into Gamma rays, X-rays and so on up to Radio waves, as mentioned above. Electromagnetic Spectrum (EMS) is a part of the natural environment of the earth and the space around it. EMS cannot be depleted as it is available in infinite abundance in nature. For imaging from space, the following parts of EMS are commonly used, viz., Visible, Infrared, and Microwave regions, however, our focus for the present shall be on the visible range of the spectrum. The visible portion of the EMS is viewable by human eyes as our optical range is only the visible spectrum. We remember the Prism experiment, taught to us in schools, that breaks the white light into Rainbow colors. While Imaging from space in the visible spectrum cameras use specific ranges of Red, Green, and Blue, in addition to imaging in the Infrared region. This is also popularly known as multispectral imaging from space. Effectively, multiple cameras and detectors are used onboard a spacecraft for imaging.

3. Satellite Image data

Earth Observation Spacecrafts carry out imaging of the ground features, using the onboard camera systems to provide high-quality digital images. The imaging is done by multiple camera systems and the acquired images are transmitted to the ground station for analysis. For the visible region, separate cameras are used in the Red, Green and Blue parts of the EMS and for Infrared also separate cameras for Near IR, Far IR, Shortwave Middle Infrared and Thermal IR bands are used. What is measured by these cameras is the reflected energy, due to sun illumination, from various features on the ground. It is a well-known fact that different types of ground features behave differently in each of these imaging bands, thus helping in better possibilities to map them accurately. For example, one can differentiate several crop types, forest types, rock types, lakes& ponds, man-made features, and many others. The differentiation between one object to another is purely due to different reflectance properties exhibited by each of the objects.

As explained earlier, reflected energy from the ground reaches the satellite imaging points where the optics and the detectors get on with the job of generating high-quality pictures. The energy received at the satellite point gets converted to digital numbers (say 0 to 255: minimum reflectance takes values closer to zero and maximum reflectance towards 255). Each spectral band, imaged in the visible and infrared region, goes through a conversion to generate unique digital numbers for each of the reflecting pixels and hence forms images that are used for varieties of applications.



(This is an image of Vidhana Soudha and surroundings taken from our CARTOSAT 3 satellite (the best resolution satellite of India so far) that is presently flying at around 505 km above the earth and providing excellent images of the earth.)

This article also adds to the foundation of space-based applications. I am spending more time on the foundation so that each of the applications that we discuss later will be easily understood and appreciated.

||Shri Shankaralinga Vijayatell



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The Selfless Warriors of Shivaji

Guru Prasad Bhat

Telecom Industry Veteran, Author
Contact: 9819324363;
gurubhat@hotmail.com



7. Swamy Samartha Ramadas -The Spiritual Guru of Shivaji (Part-2)



In Part 1 of the article on Swamy Shri Samartha Ramadas, we delved into his life and significant contributions to realizing Shivaji Maharaj's dream of establishing a sovereign state called Hindavi Swarajya. We also briefly

mentioned that Shri Samartha and his wandering ascetic disciples spread across the territories of the Mughals and Adil Shahi with two primary objectives. The first was to connect with the distressed masses, engage with them, restore faith in Dharma, and thereby boost the people's confidence. The second objective was to act as the eyes and ears of Shivaji in enemy territories, gathering intelligence and serving as unofficial but reliable informants for the cause of Swarajya.

Shri Samartha Ramadas served as the spiritual guru and political mentor of Shivaji Maharaj, and they held each other in the highest regard as master and disciple. While wandering throughout Bharat to restore and strengthen Hindu Dharma, Shri Samartha used to gather firsthand information about conspiracies being plotted against Shivaji.

During Shivaji's struggles to establish a sovereign state centered on the principles of Dharma, justice, and the welfare of the people, Shri Samartha provided timely intelligence reports through encoded poems and letters.

Approximately fifty such letters have been preserved by an institution called 'Shri Samartha Ramadas Sansthan' and the 'Vagdevata Mandir' at Sajjangadh. One such poem, penned by Shri Samartha, significantly aided Shivaji in his preparations for the Battle of Pratapgadh. Shri Samartha composed a small poem-like letter for Shivaji Maharaj, consisting of four stanzas that, on the surface, may appear to be conveying a spiritual lesson. However, upon closer examination, this letter reveals a hidden warning message, as well as subtle insights into political strategies, along with profound secret knowledge and deeper thoughts for Shivaji to contemplate.

The clandestine encrypted verses penned by Sri Samartha :

While on a spiritual tour of northern Karnataka, Shri Samartha received information that the Adil Shahi, having lost vast lands and forts to Shivaji Maharaj, was in the advanced stages of plotting a major conspiracy to attack him. They were assembling one of the largest armies of that

time, led by their capable military general, Afzal Khan, who had accepted the royal challenge to either capture Shivaji alive or kill him in battle. Afzal had deceptively killed Shivaji's elder brother Shambuji in a battle a few years earlier, even though both were on the same side.

Afzal had gathered a well-armed force of 30,000 soldiers, equipped with destructive weapons, explosives, elephants, camels, and numerous oxen and cattle to transport supplies to the battlefield. All adversaries of Shivaji like the Moghuls, Portuguese, British, Dutch, Nijamshahi, Janjira's Siddi Johar, Golkonda Qutb Shahi, innumerable titular kings and Maratha sardars generously lent their men and war material support to the Bijapuri General.

The royal astrologer's prophecy or perhaps a premonition of an uncertain outcome in this unequal war, Afzal Khan went so far as to kill and bury all sixty-three of his wives near Afzalpura in Kalburgi district, now known as 'SathKhabar.' The sixty-fourth begum who tried to escape was chased and killed some distance away and buried there itself. This act exemplified his cruelty.

Alarmed by the gravity of this news, Shri Samartha hurriedly composed a Marathi poem and dispatched one of his disciples on horseback with orders to rush to Shivaji Maharaj and personally deliver the letter to him and no one else. He instructed the messenger to convey that Shri Samartha had directed him to read the letter immediately.

During that time, Shivaji's first wife, Saibai, was seriously unwell and was not responding to any treatments. Sambhaji, his two-year-old toddler, also required a lot of attention. Shivaji Maharaj was deeply concerned and

dedicatedly cared for his ailing wife by her bedside.

The poem read as follows:

विवेकेकरावेकार्यसाधन।
जाणारनरतनूहेजाणोन।
पूढीलभविष्यार्थीमन।
रहाटोंचिनये॥१॥

चालूनयेअसन्मार्गी।
सत्यताबाणल्याआंगी।
रघुवीरकृपातेप्रसंगी।
दासमहात्म्यवाढवी॥२॥

रजनीनाथआणिदिनकर।
नित्यकरितीसंचार।
घालितातीयेरझार।
लाविलेभ्रमणजगदिशे॥३॥

आदिमायामूळभवानी।
हेसकलब्रम्हांडाचीस्वामिनी।
येकान्तीविवेककरोनि।
इष्टयोजनाकरावी॥४॥

The gist of this poem is loosely as below :

- (1) Emphasize the need for careful planning and concentration, as false hopes about one's destiny could lead to dire consequences, indicating that Shivaji may not get a second chance.
- (2) Promote the importance of truth and justice, drawing inspiration from Lord Sri Rama's devotees who find success through His blessings.

- (3) Stress the need for constant vigilance, day and night, in harmony, comparing it to the roles of the sun and the moon.
- (4) Go into a deep meditation before Goddess Bhavani, the protector of the universe, to develop appropriate strategies as needed.

Upon his initial reading of the poem, it seemed to be a mundane religious sermon from an ascetic. However, Shivaji, an experienced warrior leader, upon closer examination, quickly recognized that the poem contained concealed messages. Reading it a second time, he became deeply alarmed. Immediately, he summoned his ministers and the war council for an urgent closed-door meeting, sharing the intelligence information provided by a reliable source.

The first letter of each line read as follows :

वि-जा-पु-र-चा
 स-र-दा-र
 नि-घा-ला
 आ-हे, ये-इ

This means, "The Sardar from Bijapur has started and will come (for you)".

This crucial advanced intelligence input gave Shivaji Maharaj the necessary three months of lead time to formulate strategies to counter Afzal Khan's impending threat. He also activated his official spy network led by Bahirji Naik and ordered them to keep him updated on day-to-day developments.

Tragically, during this period, Saibai passed away. Despite the personal loss, Shivaji had little or no time to mourn the death of his beloved wife. Within two months of this unfortunate event, the Battle of Pratapgadh unfolded. Shivaji, a diminutive five-foot-tall

figure, faced Afzal, a giant of a man at nearly seven feet in height! When they both met at the appointed time in a lavishly decorated tent at the foothills of Pratapgad fort, feigning a formal royal embracing ritual, Afzal Khan attempted to stab him in the back, but Shivaji managed to wriggle out of his tight hold over his neck and slayed Afzal Khan with his famed WaghNakhi (Tiger Claw), pulling out his entrails. Soon, SambhajiKavaji beheaded the fleeing Afzal. A massive battle ensued. Despite having only three thousand soldiers at his disposal, Shivaji's army routed the bewildered army of the Adil Shahi, which numbered thirty thousand. The battle was won by Shivaji's soldiers within a few hours. Shivaji's men collected a vast array of arms, ammunition, and war resources left behind by the surrendered enemy army, significantly fortifying Swarajya's military strength. Shivaji's name and fame spread throughout Bharat.

This remarkable victory should be primarily credited to the timely intelligence gathered by Shri Samartha Ramadas Swamy and his devoted disciples.

Editor's Note

- AKBMS members and their families can submit their articles under any of the sections for publication: Poetry of the Month; Essay of the Month; Guest-Column. Please e-mail your articles to:
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 gayathridevi2007@gmail.com
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Short Story

B.R. Bhimachar

Author, (Retired) Professor of English.

Contact: 9741419764

(At 100 years, he is the youngest writer we have...!)



High Ideals!

The place is so dirty and filthy. You must be extra careful while treading your steps. Otherwise, you will end up planting your feet on somebody's excreta.

Ramesh's daily work is in such an abominable slum. Being a Doctor, he has established a Public Services Trust through which he daily visits the slum and treats patients there. If the illness is serious, he would then shift the patient to the local Government-run hospital and get them treated there.

After obtaining his M.D., he could have sought a lucrative offer in a private Hospital. But his innate humane nature and an urge to serve the underprivileged kept him here – far from fame and lots of money.

However, in recent times, he has gotten frustrated by the never-ending problems of these people. He finds it unhygienic to work in a place where filth is all around and at all times. He starts looking around and soon finds

a lucrative job in a multi-specialty hospital in the capital.

He is now sitting in the aircraft leaving behind his city and the slum where he worked for many years. It is twilight and the sky is lit with rainbow colours. He peeps out of the window and takes one final look at his city. Wow! It is looking enchanting. Right there, next to that high-raised building is the slum which was his place of work all these years. From this height, even the slum is looking so beautiful. The garbage and the filth are all there when you look at the place from the ground. But when you elevate your vision and ideals and look at the same things, they look beautiful. He was immersed in his own thoughts.

As soon as he got off the plane, he tore his appointment letter, bought a ticket and got into another plane. This plane was moving exactly in the opposite direction from where the previous one was coming...

(The story is a translation of the original in Kannada from the book "Putapaaka" written by Satyesh N. Bellur)



Joy of Living

Dr. A. Gayathri Devi

(Retired) Professor of English
Contact: 9886428812
gayathridevi2007@gmail.com



LIFE IS LEAD BUT ONCE...

Every human being since the dawn of civilization has led his life with the fond hope that it will lead him toward greater happiness. In this quest for joyful living every one of us from almost womb to tomb think, act, and pursue various activities and associate with different people that we feel are conducive to making us happy. But still, many of us find this happiness elusive.

**Is life drudgery? A burden?
Is there no way of achieving the
JOY OF LIVING?**

We tend to blame the environment or people around us for our miseries. Do we need to change them or do we need to change ourselves? and if so, HOW?

In a way, we are all inhibited by a self-created "**Psychic prison**".

How does one avoid "**Egocentric behavior**"?

we need to adopt approaches that will make us more convivial and comfortable in our activities during the day, both at home, workplace and amongst friends.

Most of us have problems at home, workplace, with friends, and with relatives. We

silently suffer presuming they are inevitable and insurmountable. But life is precious and cannot be frittered away, bogged down by these issues. One needs to identify the problem areas, set right the priorities in life and adopt approaches to manage the problems to savour the "**JOY OF LIVING**". One needs to have an attitudinal change to promote convivial environments in work, friendship, and personal relationships, which finally culminates in the "**JOY OF LIVING**".

Every one of us today is immersed in our hectic schedules each day. At the end of the day, one often finds that time has just flown by and one more day has slipped by. We all seem to be in our little world oblivious of how we affect others' lives and how in turn they react to us. In this endless marathon, we often find that we have become more of a mechanical robot which is pursuing a set of tasks that need to be done because one has bound oneself to a set of life patterns. The pressure of work, the tensions of the modern day, and the various problems being faced by all of us make it extremely difficult to end the day happily. Most of us find it difficult, dissatisfying, dissipating and enervating in our environment.

But Why?

Is it that we have lost the ability to lead a happy life?

it is time that each one of us looked at our lifestyles and tried to frankly answer this question:

Am I enjoying my Life? We may put up a brave front and a smiling face before outsiders. **But what is the answer in private?**

The question that looms large before us is... Does it mean that we are all a bunch of unhappy people on this Mother Earth? If so, should we resign to our fate? Is there something wrong with our environment? Or is there a need to change ourselves? Is there a need to change our attitude toward the world? If so, should we not equip ourselves with a changed and a better attitude to adapt ourselves to the World around us?

LIFE IS LEAD BUT ONCE.

God has brought us forth onto this planet as the most advanced living creature with all the intelligence at our command. We are the Crown of Creation. The world is before us and the challenges of life are staring at us. The time ticks on..... The clock never turns back.....

As the famous poet Andrew Marvell puts it **"But at my back I always hear Time's winged chariot hurrying near"**.... Remember, the years roll by never to return. We all lead our lives but only once. We only have a certain number of years ahead of us. It is in our hands to spend the time the way we like. We may be watching TV operas, playing Tennis, chit-chatting, playing Golf..... Could be anything. It's your life, your time, and you are the master of how you would like to spend your time but never forget... "Time once spent will never return "

"How dull it is to pause, to make an end
"Let us "drink life to the lees, " says Lord Tennyson in Ulysses.

So we must use our life effectively and carefully so that one does not repent for having indulged in activities that do not bring us happiness or satisfaction.

At any given point in time, we can choose only one option. Hence we must accept this reality that whatever life we lead, or the types of people we choose to interact with, habits that we cultivate, we do it consciously and the time we spend doing it never returns but is available **ONLY ONCE**. This important understanding of the concept of time applicability in one's life is crucial in paving the way to practice the **JOY OF LIVING**.

We live only once. So use the time carefully, effectively and judiciously.

As Robert Frost puts it in the poem "The Road Not Taken"

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,

And sorry I could not travel to both

And be one traveller..... and that has made all the difference"

* Please await the next articles in this series to fathom the secrets of moving towards JOY OF LIVING.





Whip of Humour

N. Ramanath

Writer, Humourist, Book Publisher
Contact: 9448050463 | anakuramanath@gmail.com

Kuppan, the opportunist

Kuppan, with his two wives and four children, had vanished from his dilapidated house during the last elections. Kuppan was a handyman for the dwellers of our apartment. His two wives served as maids in our flats. His four children were our private 'swiggy boys', ready to run to the stores to get our stuff at the drop of a hat. This time too, he vanished with his coterie on the 20th of April, six days before the first polling date.

Forty-eight days after the vanishing act, there was a spurt of activity before Kuppan's house. Three huge trucks were parked in the street and a dozen coolies were shifting heavy items into Kuppan's compound. Some people were erecting a makeshift roof before his house.

Unable to contain my curiosity, I trudged along to his house and accosted him at the entrance to his ramshackle abode.

"Where had you been?" I blurted out.

"On an all-expenses paid holiday." He was evasive.

"What did you do?"

"This and that" he stuck to his evasiveness.

"Ok. You had taken ten thousand from me and vanished. Now you seem to be back as a rich man. How did you find the Midas touch?"

"Here is your ten thousand," said Kuppan, proffering twenty crisp five hundred rupee

notes, "A few days in the slums brought me riches."

This stumped me. I sought an explanation.

"Here, look for yourself," he said, laying down twenty Aadhar cards, "This is the secret of my success."

"I see!" I blurted out. Actually, I was not seeing anything at all.

"My two children turned nineteen and eighteen this year. My wives and I make a total of five legitimate voters. These Aadhar cards converted five voters into twenty and hence we were able to earn plenty."

"But... How?"

"Ask the leaders. They are real magicians who can produce Aadhar cards out of thin air. I became Kuppan, Selvan, Gumaran and Ismail in the blink of an eye. The other four voters too acquired four more identities each."

"Where did you live?"

"Various slums. On the 25th & 26th we were in Banashankari, Bangalore; on 6 & 7 May we were in Balgam. We shifted to places of election one day before the polls and vacated on the evening after casting our votes. A total of six destinations; how I wish the elections were held at more places and for a longer period" Kuppan said, with a glint of mischief in his eyes.

"But you have to live in that area to vote. You must have residence proof" I protested.

"Aadhar cards are proof enough. We did live at the address mentioned in those cards on the day before and on the day of the elections at those constituencies. That is how we were able to gather so much. Rowdies representing various parties came to the places where we were assigned to stay and distributed so many valuable items. We had such a wonderful time. We ate, drank and danced to our heart's content!" He was definitely making me jealous.

"I am still confused. The slums will be usually chock-a-block with people. There will not be any vacant huts. How did you manage to find some for your family?"

"Elementary, sir. Do you remember that I was out of station for a week in March?"

"Yes. 'To escape the scorching heat' was your reason for it."

"That was a lie. I visited the party offices in the area and successfully erected my huts in those slums."

"What items do you have in those trucks?" I was unable to appreciate his foresightedness. At the same time, I was dying to see his treasures.

"Look for yourself," he said. Both of us walked briskly toward the trucks. There were, in all, twelve washing machines, twelve grinders and twelve dishwashers. "Look at these too," he said, fishing twelve pairs of earrings from a carton box. I was aghast.

"Twelve pairs?" I cried in disbelief.

"Yes. Six each for my two wives; at one pair per person per constituency" he explained.

Kuppan decided to rub more salt into my wounds. He dug deep into a rucksack and

came up with a bundle, brandishing a few bundles of currency.

"Seven and a half lakh rupees in hard cash! The ruling party gave 10k; the opposition gave 15k. Others gave trifling amounts which were spent then and there. At 25k per head per constituency, it was quite a tidy sum."

"Good for you. What would you do with those washing machines and others?"

"I will sell those. I have already notified so on social media and people are already queuing up" he said, pointing to the milling crowd which had materialised in a jiffy.

"Kuppan, you have been an honest man" I began.

"And look at where my honesty kept me. I will continue to be honest. This is a once in a five-year whim" he said.

"A total of 36 items plus the earrings... You will have a tidy sum by the end of the day. What do you plan to do with so much money?"

"There will be some bye-elections too. I wish to make more money in the succeeding days. I have identified certain families to do as I did this time who are ready to divide their spoils with me."

"And then?"

"As you know, my son is a top-class rogue."

"So?"

"I will sponsor his candidature for the post of Corporator."

Admiring his ambitious nature, envying his bigamy and cursing my inability to cash in on such opportunities, I haplessly walked back to my abode.



Success Stories

- Ordinary people who made it BIG...

Varsha Avadhany

Risk Culture & Security Expert

Contact : varsha.avadhany@gmail.com



Beacon to Good Health – Dr. Ananth Raman N

Sitting in his breezy well-lit clinic and speaking with the radiant and ever-smiling Dr. Ananth Raman one can truly feel that a Vaidya's (doctor) goal is to cure patients by giving them a pep talk accompanied by medicines and not just medical treatment. It is never easy to trace the journey over half a century of practice in Ayurveda, however, his life's journey is a glimpse into why Ayurveda stood the test of time... A practice that took its birth in Rig Veda has its relevance in the 21st century's fast-paced tech-driven lifestyle too.



While talking about his birth, he had an interesting story to narrate. He was born in Chamarajpuram, Mysore on 10th Oct 1950, which in Kannada is 'Hattu, Hattu, Savira Obainooravattu'. A literal translation of Hattu is 'Climb / Growth'. The first Hattu is for 'Self Growth', the second Hattu is for 'Others growth', Ivattu is split into two parts 'I' and 'Vattu' meaning suppress, thus arriving at Suppress the 'I' in your dealings/relationships. Thus, he describes his life ideology that he

practices which he says is also Ayurveda, professing growth of the individual through societal growth without suppressing anybody... "Sarve Sukhino Bhavantu".

Eldest son of illustrious journalist father G.A. Narashima Murthy known for his writing prowess as well as entrepreneurial skill, Dr. Ananth Raman's independent streak, proving one's worth comes from this upbringing. A Basavangudi brought up boy he studied at National College and then appeared for the medical exams and got admission in the MBBS course at Davangere Medical College in 1968. However, the discourse at home on roots in Veda and Ayurveda made him choose Ayurveda studies graduating in 1973 as a topper of the class and completing his M.D. in Ayurveda in 1978. His pursuit was the continuation of a traditional way of living through Yoga and Ayurveda and to propagate a natural way of lifestyle leading to happiness and well-being.

Having graduated in Ayurveda at the insistence of his father he decided to set up his private practice, rather than join in Govt and private institutions. The ideology is 'Good work, will earn you goodwill and thus will bring happiness and wealth'. He describes his 50-year journey in practice as a carrier of Ayurvedic principles. He has written 14 books, and given enumerable lectures on Natural Vedic living. He believes that Ayurveda has to reach the common man and thus gave plenty of Radio and TV interviews. In his career, he has

trained 156 full-fledged Ayurvedic doctors who not only practice in Karnataka, but beyond the state and even abroad. Thus, his aim of spreading the ancient medicinal practice has taken wing.

He has been a family doctor for many generations - from grandfather to father to so... Thus, treating not only the present-day condition of the patient but with the genetic traits of the family. He has become a trusted member of many families, just a call away. From treating simple colds and coughs of infants to rectal ulcers of seniors, malignant cancerous tumours, avoiding appendicitis surgeries, and of course fertility treatment of couples... As one of his patients said in good faith "If he just touches you, if you just see him, your problem will be solved." This is what Ayurveda promotes - a good health practitioner works on the mental/ emotional health of the patient first for a successful physical treatment to follow.

On Ayurveda practice, he can go hours at length describing its principles. Some of them are

1. Ayurveda is time tested practice of 1000s of years
2. It has stood the test of time as it is like a sponge absorbing the goodness of other practices and enhancing itself
3. It has not stagnated itself but has always welcomed new studies without compromising the original principles of natural and sustainable lifestyle

This has led to the World Health Organization (WHO) giving recognition to this practice and promoting research globally to authenticate the practice. For today's health systems to work what is needed is integration and inclusion of best practices across all

sectors. For example, it is best to promote Ayurvedic dietary suggestions for disease management through other forms of medicine. Similarly, other systems have their best practices. It is essential to break down the silos and work together. He also ends by saying it is a 'Dream approach', hoping one day it will see the light of day.

As a recognition of his contribution to Ayurveda Dr. Anantraman has received innumerable awards. Some of the notable ones are from the Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Vaidya Sahiti, Baidyanath Ayurvedic Bhavan, Doctor's Day Award, JSS College, and Uttaradi Mutta. He also is a recipient of the Kempegowda Award by Bangalore Corporation.

On today's sociological constructs and the rise in diseases and mental health issues, Dr. Ananth Raman believes that there are unnecessary stressors which is avoidable, along with a comparative mindset for materialistic gains rather than spiritual gains leading to loss of respect for relationships. On the Brahmanical mindset, he says the essentiality is to forego egos and work together. He thinks divisive strategies are what is causing the depletion of the Brahmin ideologies today.

Today, he happily leads a life of joy still actively healing people, being a proud grandfather, a father to high achieving Doctor son Dr. Karthik and Engineer daughter Ranjitha, and a companion in his wife Shyla, who has stood with him through trying times of the past. Not to forget a devoted brother and uncle to his siblings, nieces and nephews.

Our conversation ended with him narrating his motto of life 'KEEP SMILING... KEEP WORKING'- His secret recipe for a healthy life!!



Dr. Anita R Bijoor

Professor and Head – Department of Biochemistry,
St. John's Medical College
Contact: 9880302622; anita.bijoor@gmail.com

It's Wisdom and not Age!

It's when love stories make you laugh rather than cry,
It's when your anger is replaced with quiet tears.
It's when your expectations fall far behind your needs,
It's when you realise that you are someone's necessity and not love,
It's when you can seal all your hurt tightly behind your lips,
It's when you can ignore pretensions and save others from embarrassment,
It's when you can boldly start loving yourself more
It's when you can turn away from loneliness
And start enjoying being alone
It's when you stop believing in what you see in the mirror
And start believing in what's in your heart
That's when you realise that you have become- WISE and not OLD!





Sri. H.N.Hiriyanna Swamy,

Vice President of AKBMS and one of its founding members,
left for heavenly abode on 20th May 2024.

Our respectful homage to the departed soul. His significant and invaluable contributions to the community at large and to AKBMS in particular, will always be remembered and cherished by one and all.

We convey our sincere condolences to the bereaved family.

May his soul rest in peace...

To,

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