



VIPRANUDI

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Mahesh Das, aka - Raja Birbal

(1528 – 16th February 1586) was a advisor and main commander of army in the court of the Mughal emperor, Akbar



Birbal was born as Mahesh Das in 1528, to a Saraswat Hindu Bhatt Brahmin family in Kalpi, Uttar Pradesh. His father was Ganga Das and mother was Anabha Davito. He was the third son of a family that had a previous association with poetry and literature. Educated in Hindi, Sanskrit and Persian, Birbal wrote prose, specialised in music and poetry in the Braj Language. He initially served at the Rajput court of Raja Ram Chandra of Rewa, under the name "Brahma Kavi". Birbal's economic and social status improved after marrying a woman of a wealthy family, contrary to the notion that he was on poor economic terms before his appointment at Mughal emperor's imperial court. The details and year of his first meeting with Akbar and his employment at the court is estimated to be between 1556 and 1562. He became the "Kavi Priya" of the emperor within a few years of his appointment. Akbar bestowed upon him the name 'Birbal' with the title "Raja", by which he was known from then on. He is mostly known for the folk tales which focus on his wit. After he was appointed by Akbar as a poet and singer, he had an extremely close association with the emperor and was a member of his group of most important courtiers called the Navaratnas (nine jewels). In 1586, Birbal led an army to crush an unrest in the north-western India where he was killed along with many troops in an ambush by the rebel tribe.

The name Birbal comes from Bir Bar or Vir Var which means hasir javab or quick thinker. Akbar gave titles to his subjects according to their traditions and expertise. The name could have been taken from a character in the folk tale Vetal Panchvinshati. This featured a courtier called Vir Var who showed great loyalty to his king and was witty and wise.

There are innumerable stories that reflect Birbal's wit and wisdom. Many of them might have been simply credited to him. However, these stories have made us laugh, look at life in a different perspective and conveyed to children, valuable morals. One such story :The thief who robbed the merchant...

One day, a rich merchant went to Birbal and complained to him that his house was robbed. He also told him that he suspects one of his servants to have robbed the house. Birbal went to the merchant's house, rounded up all the servants and asked them who robbed the house. As expected, the robber did not come forward to confess his crime. Birbal had come up with a way to find the culprit. Birbal then handed a stick to each servant and told them that the robber's stick will grow 2 inches longer the next morning. That way, they will be able to identify who robbed the merchant. The next morning, Birbal asked the servants for the sticks and pointed out the culprit to the merchant. The robber had reduced the length of the stick by 2 inches anticipating the stick to grow by the next morning. That's how Birbal figured who the robber was. That is Birbal for you !



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-English Journal from the house of AKBMS

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Presidential Message

Ashok Haranahalli

President - AKBMS

Dear Friends

Namaskaram to all my Vipra friends.

Happy Dussehra and Diwali to all VipraBandhavas of the State. Over the past one and a half years, I have had the opportunity to see and listen to various office bearers and activists about their working practices. Thus, when observing various organizations, it was seen that a few organizations tried beyond their power and failed to see growth, and it was amazing to see some organizations grow enormously. When we reflect on the reason for the development of organizations that are successful or have made great strides, it stands out that having a common objective and the spirit of selfless service involving everyone is the reason for success. All the organizations where members have unanimously joined hands and progressed together with this spirit, have seen success.

This point can be made more convincing with an apt example. Once the organs of the body asked each other as to which organ is the greatest among all of us. The legs said without me no daily work can be performed, hence I am great, similarly, the hand declared its importance, the eyes pronounced its significance, and the brain declared itself to be crucial as it enabled all the organs to be able to reason out this matter today....and similarly all parts of the body declared their significance. Finally, they discussed that the stomach was not performing any activity and lazing about. Hence the organs concluded they should hate the stomach henceforth. Somehow the stomach got to know about this matter and wanted to teach them a lesson, so the stomach stopped participating in the process of digesting the food. Knowing this the other organs of the body plotted as well. Thus, when all the organs of the body ceased their work, the whole body which they had taken refuge in,

became weaker day by day. The situation of our organizations is also similar, when we have the attitude that we are the best or that we are inevitable, then it keeps us away from the door of victory step by step. But on the whole, the point I had set out to make, is that the more selfless involvement in organizations, the more we see progress along with the prosperity of the communities which depend on these organizations.

Congratulations once again to all the office bearers of Davanagere for successfully organizing the meeting of Executive Committee members at Davanagere last month. In other news, at the beginning of 2024 that is on the 6th and 7th of January, a State level MahilaSamavesha is organized on the premises of Shankara Mutt, Bengaluru. I request all VipraBandhavas of the state to actively participate in this convention and make it a success.

Similarly, the auspicious time is approaching for the enthronement of Sri Rama at the banks of Sarayu in Ayodhya. The countdown has begun in Ayodhya to get ready for the shrine, which has been awaited by Bharatiyas for many years. Sri Rama is the feeling of the mind of crores of devotees as the dignity of the nation. On account of unveiling the temple of the Purushottama and re-consecration of Sri Ramachandra Murthy, the Akhila Karnataka Brahmana Mahasabha has begun the Shathakoti SriRama TharakaJapa on 24.10.2023 Tuesday, on the Vijayadashami day and decided to offer this on the day of temple resurrection in Ayodhya - for the sake of public welfare and the well-being of the State. In this regard, I request you all to actively participate in ShathakotiJapaYajna and Sri RamaTharakaMahayaga which will be held across the State as part of the re-establishment of Lord Rama's shrine in Ayodhya on 22-01-2024. See you again in the next issue with more details.

Ashok Haranahalli
Yours Truly

Ashok Haranahalli



From the Editor's desk..✍

Satyesh N. Bellur
Editor-in-chief

Dear Readers...

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

This is the month of November when all of us celebrate Kannada Rajyotsava. It is our pride and is also our state festival. Several people celebrate this festival in different ways. There are cultural programs where artists are invited to perform. For many of the artists, this is a time when they can interact with people and also earn some money. There are lectures delivered by eminent personalities. There are many carnivals too and the entire month is a witness to one or the other Kannada-related activity in one or the other place in the state. As a writer, I too get invitations to go and deliver lectures. This is a good time for me to meet new people and share my knowledge about our language, its culture and roots. Amidst all of this gaiety, I think that one of the alternative ways that this celebration can also be made meaningful is for the people to indulge in the following:

ನಾಡಹಬ್ಬವು ಎನುತ ಒಂದು ತಿಂಗಳು ಪೂರ |
ಹಾದಿಬೀದಿಯೊಳೆನಿತು ಗಾನ ಕುಣಿತಗಳು ||
ಬೀದಿಗಳಿಯದೆ ಎರಡು ಪುಸ್ತಕವ ಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೆ |
ಓದಿದರೆ ಸಾಕಯ್ಯ - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

Literature is the root upon which everything else blossoms. The richer the literature, the richer the culture. From that perspective, I feel that buying one or two Kannada books and reading them during this month of celebrations could also be a way forward. Point to ponder!

From this edition, we are starting another column titled "The selfless warriors of Shivaji". This aims to provide lesser-known stories about all those personalities that made Shivaji, a Chatrapathi. This is being authored by Guru Prasad Bhat, who is a "Shivaji Bhakt" and has spent a lot of his time studying Shivaji in-depth.

Guruprasad Bhat is a Telecom Engineer by training and a Sales Management Executive by profession. With nearly four decades of industry experience, he has a deep passion for working with telecom startups. Currently, he holds the position of Country Head at an American telecom company in India. Guru is a staunch devotee of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and has explored most forts and places with historical connections to Shivaji. This is nothing short of an annual pilgrimage for him. He has also authored two meticulously researched books in Kannada, dedicated to his beloved deity, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Both are set to be published shortly. Guru resides in Udupi with his wife, Suparna. They are proud parents of two daughters, both of whom have completed their

master's degrees in engineering in the USA. Their elder daughter, Aparna, is happily married and settled in the United States, while their younger daughter, Shivani, works for a multinational corporation in Bengaluru. I wholeheartedly welcome Guru Prasad Bhat into our Journal team of writers and am confident that our readers will find his column providing many insights into the life of Shivaji Maharaj.

On behalf of my columnists and editorial colleagues, I take pride in wishing all of you a very Happy and Meaningful Kannada Rajyotsava celebrations. Jai Karnataka Mathe!

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 - A Banana; 2-Coca Cola; 3- The Letter E; 4- A Pea; 5- Your Voice

Significant events in November...

- 1895 – X-Rays (aka Roentgen Rays) were discovered by Wilhelp Roentgen on 8th Nov.
- 1920 – The Indian Red Cross society was established on 5th Nov.
- 1973 – The name of Mysore state was changed to Karnataka on 1st Nov.
- 1993 – European Union came into existence on 1st Nov.
- 2016 – PM Narendra Modi announced demonetization of 500 & 1000 rupee Notes on 8th Nov.

(Compiled by Sudhir S Mysore)



AKBMS – News & Events

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We have great pleasure in bringing this report highlighting some recent activities of AKBMS held during September / October 2023, to your perusal:

Events and Programs of AKBMS :

1. Sri Rama TarakaJapaYagya an initiative by AKBMS was flagged off to commemorate the opening of the Sri Rama temple at Ayodhya. 100 crores Japa of SRI RAMA JAYARAMA JAYA JAYA RAMA will be chanted by all Hindus and a grand Yaga is planned in Karnataka on the day of the opening of the temple at Ayodhya. This initiative has been gaining great momentum across the state and people have been participating in this JapaYagya with great devotion and commitment.
2. On October 10th, 2023, a historic conference of Brahmin Business people was conducted successfully in Bangalore. Hundreds of Business houses and upcoming Entrepreneurs participated in this path-breaking initiative. Spearheaded by Sri. P.C. Rao and Smt. RoopaShastri this program gave an insight into the success stories of big business enterprises. Successful and dynamic Vipras in the world of Business shared their thoughts and views of Business with Brahmins.
3. A similar program was initiated by Vipras of Kalburgi, bringing together all the

business people from that area to discuss the various aspects of Vipra youth and Business.

4. Akhila Karnataka Brahmana Mahasabha has planned a State level Women's Conference on Jan 6th and 7th 2024. This conference will have talk shows, BhajaneGoshti, cultural events, a special space for the young generation of Vipra women, market space, and many more such programs. The objective of this conference is to uphold our Brahmin tradition, unify our community, and attract the younger generation to our initiatives.
5. A free medical camp on dermatology was held on 9th October at Gayathri Bhavan, Bangalore. This Program was organised by Vice President Sri. Muralidhar and Convenor for Medical Services Sri. Venkatesh Dwarakanath.

Talakayalabetta Brahmana Mahasabha, Felicitation Ceremony by Gayathri Mahila Sanga





TIMELESS TRADITIONS...

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Significance of Daana (charity/donation)

Shree gurubhyo namah.

Hindu dharma has given a lot of significance to daana or (charity) donation. Most of our Puranas, itihisas, and many shastras say that giving daana or charity ensures that the person doing so gets a lot of merit through which he can lead a good and comfortable life.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad lists 3 characteristics of a good person:

तदेतच्चर्यं शिक्षेद् दमं दानं दयामिति – the Upanishad asks us to learn three fundamental traits: Dama (self-restraint), daana (Charity) and daya (compassion).

There is an interesting anecdote about the above verse. As the story goes, devas, asuras, and manavas approached Brahma and requested him to bless them to attain the supreme knowledge – Brahma Gnana. Brahma blessed all the three and asked them to perform “da”:

1. Devas were advised to follow “dama” – self-control as they were always involved in enjoyment / bhoga.
2. As Asuras had a cruel mindset, they were asked to perform “daya” or kindness.
3. Manavas were asked to follow “daana” as they were always greedy or had the habit of wanting. It is interesting to note that manavas have the inherent qualities of both devas and asuras in terms of wanting

to enjoy (especially what others possess) and being cruel in trying to get what they want.

The best form of charity is when the giver exceeds his capacity while giving –e.g.,

1. A person serving food to an unexpected guest at home fully knowing that his family will not have anything to eat after the charity. This is called Uttama daana.
2. A person earns Rs. 1 lakh. He gives 25% as charity. Though he can give more, he is practical and tries to save for the future. This is Madhyama Daana.
3. A person earning Rs 5lakhs per month gives Rs5000 as a charity, though completely aware that he is capable of giving more. This is Adhama daana.

तैत्तिरीय उपनिषद् says श्रद्धया देयम् । अश्रद्धयाऽदेयम् ।
श्रिया देयम् । हिया देयम् । भिया देयम् । संविदा देयम् ।

श्रद्धया देयम् – whatever charity we do should be with utmost sincerity, with no malicious intent. The main motive of charity is to ensure that the giver gets the benefit. However, giving charity, to receive something in return, is not charity. Also, the giver should not exhibit his wealth.

अश्रद्धयाऽदेयम् – All of us know that giving charity needs magnanimity. Hence, the

moment a thought arises that a certain person deserves charity, we have to complete the karma of giving immediately. Further, the verse says that giving for the sake of giving is of no use – neither to the giver nor the receiver.

श्रिया देयम् – whatever charity is given has to be done with utmost happiness. The giver should thank his pr rabdha that he got an opportunity to give charity. The verse means that the giver should not be unhappy with his act of charity.

ह्रिया देयम् – once the act of charity is complete, the giver should not compare what he has given with others or even with himself over the past charity he has done. In fact, if required, he can feel remorse that he is unable to give more.

भिया देयम् – since charity is a karmic activity with supreme results, we have to be careful of the negative results if the act of daana is not in the prescribed method and is contaminated by either insincerity, pride, or highhandedness. More than benefiting the giver, it will surely prove otherwise. Hence when the verse says “give with fear” it means that the giver should be afraid of the negative results if daana is not given properly.

संविदा देयम् – The act of giving should be preceded by a resolution to give. Such resolution makes the mind determined in the act and prevents last-minute reversal of attitude due to attachment in the article proposed to be given away. And once we resolve to give, it should be implemented immediately, for, the mind is fickle.

As always, the nature or प्रकृति of charity is divided as सात्त्विक दान, राजसिक दान and तामसिक दान. The magnum-opus of Hindu Dharma –

Srimadbhagavadgita lists out the significance of daana, the rights, and wrongs of daana in adhyaya 17 – verses 20 to 22

Verse 20: दातव्यमितियद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे । देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥ charity should be given to a worthy person as it is our right to give with expecting anything in return, at the proper place and time. This is called सात्त्विक दान. The giver does charity with his hard-earned money and is considered the highest form of daana. This daana can grant salvation.

Verse 21: यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः । दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तद्दानं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥ known as राजसिक दान, charity is done in order to get something in return of the daana and this charity is done in the mode of passion. E.g., a daana done to attain higher places like swarga, etc., also, it is very likely that the giver has got wealth from questionable sources and is giving away this.

Verse 22: अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते । असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ –lowest form and considered most impure and called तामसिक दान. The giver gives charity to exhibit his social status and in addition, the charity is given to undeserving people or people who already have sufficient. In addition, the giver treats the receiver inhumanely while giving charity. Further, this charity is given at the wrong place and wrong time to unworthy persons, without showing respect, or with contempt.

Our shastras list out various daana a person can perform - अन्न-दान, सुवर्ण-दान, भू-दान, गो-दान, विद्या-दान, दीप-दान, आज्य-दान, वस्त्र-दान, सालिग्राम-दान, नेत्र-दान. Whatever may the daana a person does, the best act of charity is when it is done without expecting anything in return.



Thus Spake Lord Krishna

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The Sutra and Sutradara

In a well-appointed hallway, a magnificent tapestry adorned the wall. This exquisite masterpiece depicted a serene landscape, complete with animals, trees, meadows, charming homes, and industrious farmers tending to their fields. However, what captured the imagination of one young girl was a slender thread that dangled from the tapestry's bottom edge. Intrigued, she couldn't resist giving it a gentle tug. As she strolled around the hallway, clutching the thread in her hand, the tapestry began to gradually unravel. The idyllic scene soon disappeared, leaving behind nothing more than a heap of thread. It became evident that the beauty of the scene depended on the unassuming thread. This simple thread, without the artist's skill, would be of little use. The world, much like this tapestry, is undeniably beautiful, but it would not exist without a creator.

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय |

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव || 7.7 ||

mattaḥ parataram nānyat kiñchid asti dhanañjaya
mayi sarvam idam protam sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva
(Gita 7.7)

The 7th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita is titled Jnana Vignaana Yoga. Jnana represents knowledge, which is an understanding of the observable universe, the 'how' of everything. In contrast, Vignaana explores the 'why' of existence. In this chapter, Bhagavanta reveals Himself, providing insight into why the world exists. The tapestry of our world is woven from the desire of the Paramatma to manifest himself as many. Not only did the Paramatma create this world, but He also entered it to infuse life into its very essence.

In the shloka, Bhagavanta proclaims that nothing exists apart from Him in this world. There is nothing above Him. Everything that we perceive is supported by Him, much like a string holds a string of beads. Although we often perceive the world as an independent entity, it is He who sustains its existence.

Another interpretation of the pearls/beads and string analogy reveals that the beads are, in fact, knots on the string, emphasizing that everything we perceive as the world is essentially composed of Paramatma. In this view, there is nothing else but Him. Just as in the tapestry, it is not the pearls or the beautiful scene but the thread that forms the essence of creation.

This shloka in the Bhagavad Gita is a powerful declaration of the existence of Paramatma/God and His exclusive presence. However, this assertion is not unique to



the Bhagavad Gita. In the Nasadiya Sukta of the Rig Veda, the oldest of the Vedas, it is stated that the entire creation emerged from a single source. The Upanishads further clarify this concept, explaining that

the One desired to become Many, resulting in the creation of the world. Therefore, there is only one fundamental entity that exists, though it remains beyond the reach of our senses.

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः |

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः || 3.42 ||

indriyāṇi parāṇyāhur indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ
manasas tu parā buddhir yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ
(3.42)

Lord Krishna emphasizes the hierarchy of existence, explaining that the mind transcends the senses because it processes the information gathered by the senses. The intellect surpasses the mind as it guides our decisions based on the usefulness of this information. At the pinnacle of this

hierarchy is the Atma, the soul, which serves as the life force for the senses, mind, and intellect. Without the Atma, they would be lifeless, much like electrical appliances without electricity.

Since we are essentially the Atma within and not the physical body, we possess the capacity to experience the Paramatma. To achieve this, we need not rely on our senses, mind, or intellect. When we realize that we are the thread, not the pearls, nor the beautiful scene, we free ourselves from a narrow self-concept and become aware of the divine essence within us.

In the Mahabharata, Krishna is said to be the sutradaara. Sutradaara in Sanskrit plays is the central character like the director of a play. As Krishna directs how the Mahabharata war unfolds so does the Paramatma directs how the world and its creatures act. In the Sanskrit plays the sutradaara is also involved in the play, he is not sitting away aloof from the goings on in the play. Similarly, the Paramatma is also in the play. He is not only in the play, but also in the characters, the stage, the props, the audience, the air in the theatre, the theatre itself, and everything else there is. He is and only He is, nothing else.

सूत्रे मणिगणा इव

Quotable Quotes from Adi Shankaracharya

"The world is the great gymnasium where we come to make ourselves strong"

"That man has reached immortality who is disturbed by nothing material"

"When an idea exclusively occupies the mind, it is transformed into an actual physical or mental state"





My Quest for Spiritual Well-being

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Imagine that you are in your office and having a fierce debate over an important aspect of business. You have your strong views and so also your colleague. There seems to be no way a compromise is possible. Both of you are on your own ego trips. Continuing the argument to its next phase of rebuke and retort is the easiest thing to do. That might be detrimental to the business, but who cares? Alternatively at that stage, if you can suppress your ego and surrender your argument in the interest of a larger cause, that might be best for all. However, it is the toughest and most difficult thing to do.

“Surrender” is the toughest and probably the last option that people choose. But those who understand its power to usher in a blissful co-existence with the surrounding would probably be destined to live happily and with contentment thereafter.

Ishwara Pranidhaana is the last of the Yama-Niyamas. Ishwara represents the omnipotent and the omnipresent. Pranidhaana has several meanings, but the one most popularly attributed is “total surrender”. Hence this Niyama calls for total surrender of thee to the Lord. To the almighty! It is one way of acknowledging the fact that there is another super power that is responsible for our very existence and sustenance and we should surrender our entire ego, all our expectations at its golden feet! It is the toughest thing, as discussed earlier, to achieve and probably is also the last option that we ever exercise, if at we do exercise it!

The questions that logically come up are – Does the Lord want us to surrender to him unequivocally? Does such surrender somehow make us escape from our god given duties and responsibilities and get into a life devoid of “purusha prayatna”? I don't think so. The right way to understand this word “surrender” in the context of Ishwara Pranidhaana is to realise that after we have done everything that we can, then we need to leave the results at his mercy. We need to accept whatever comes our way as this depends on a lot of Karmic philosophies of life that we never will be able to fathom. People who follow this Niyama are contented and live without any conflicts.

ನನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಸಾಧನೆಯ ಮೂಲಕೃತಿ ನೀನೇನೆ |
 ನೀನಿಲ್ಲದಿರೆ ಶಿವನೆ, ನನ್ನದೇನಿಲ್ಲ ||
 ನಾನು ನನದೆಂಬುವುದು ನಿನ್ನದೇ ಕಾರುಣ್ಯ |
 ಎನ್ನುವುದೆ ಸದ್ಗತಿಯು - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

However, spirituality is all about understanding the essence of any practice and imbibing that essence beyond its limits into our daily life till the final realisation occurs. In this backdrop, there is another meaning of "Pranidhaana", which is dhyana or focus. I like this meaning the most. It is telling us that we need to meditate upon the Lord, not as a last option but as the only option and from the very beginning. We need to put in our "purusha prayatna" to the core, while at all times, meditating upon

the Lord's true nature and glory and earnestly pleading for his grace and kindness to bless us with optimum results.

ಎಡೆಬಿಡದೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತ ನಿನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಕೆಲಸಗಳ |
 ಬಿಡುವು ದೊರೆತಂತೆಲ್ಲ ಧ್ಯಾನದೊಳಗಿರಲು ||
 ನಡುರಾತ್ರಿ ನಿದ್ರಿಸಿರೆ ನಿನ್ನರಿವಿಗಿಲ್ಲದೆಯೆ |
 ಒದಗುವುದು ಹರನೊಲುಮೆ - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

Being one with the Omnipotent at all times is Ishwara Pranidhaana at its very best!

ॐ

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

Puzzles – What am I ?

(You will find the answers in the editorial section – From the Editor's Desk)

1. I'm yellow on the outside, white inside, and very appealing. What am I?
2. Half a circle full a circle half a circle A. Half a circle full a circle right angle A. What am I?
3. I'm the end of life, but also start of earth. I'm able to enter heaven but also there in the midst of hell. What am I?
4. A seed with three letters in my name. Take away two and I still sound the same. What am I?
5. I'm an instrument through which sounds are made, and yet, not something that can be played. What am I?

(Compiled by Sudhir S Mysore)



Real Lessons in HISTORY

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India During the 16th, 17th, and 18th Centuries

Any textbook we pick up today tells us that the middle ages were the pinnacle of growth in European trade. Our textbooks are, however, remarkably mum about the circumstances in Europe—especially England—just before this 'expansion.' Not just that. Condemnations like 'the Western countries expanded their trade and technology like never before but countries like India lost that golden opportunity' have become statements in vogue. Therefore it is now useful and appropriate to record history as it was.

Francis Bacon, while explaining the impact of science and technology on civilization, named the printing press, gunpowder, and magnets among others. He and the people afterward forgot to mention that all these three were innovations by the Chinese and not by the Europeans.

No one questioned how in an 'uncivilised' country innumerable such inventions could take place, hundreds of years before progress in the West. Instead, wherever imperialism swept, it was well publicised that 'your country never possessed any science or technology' – a myth that was far from the truth. The hundred-

foot-tall Kailaseshvara Temple at Ellora, built in the seventh century CE, is bigger than the Parthenon, which is said to be the largest structure in ancient Greece.

Historical records show that as long back as 1600 BCE, Indian medical practitioners could attach artificial organs (plastic surgery, rhinoplasty). It was in the 18th century CE, after the British officers and travelers reported the skillful attaching of artificial noses in India that surgeons in England started incorporating the same technique.

India's trade and prosperity were so broadly known in Europe that after the 15th century CE, all major European nations were engaged in finding the nearest sea route to India. (It is interesting to note that even after the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama found a new route to India, England required another hundred years to trace the same route; even that became possible only after Francis Drake stole the navigation maps from others.)

The degree to which farming had advanced in India by the early years of the



nineteenth century is noted by people like Alexander Walker and other British officers. John Augustus Voelcker, the chemist appointed to improve Indian farming, reported in 1889 that the practices of Indian farmers were better and more scientific than those of the English.¹

Achievements of the 'Under-developed' World. A minuscule 'under-developed' country like Korea had, as long ago as 1400 CE, the world's most advanced planetariums. The even more 'backward' Benin town in Africa was as well organised as Amsterdam according to the 1668 records of travel historian Olfert Dapper. Trade routes were set up to Madagascar on Africa's east coast and to other places, about four hundred to five hundred years before the Portuguese undertook their sea voyage. In the first century BCE, the science of metallurgy was so advanced in a place called Meroë in Africa that there were mountains of metallurgical remains on its outskirts, according to contemporary chronicles. The citizens of Meroë imported cotton clothes from India and silk from China; moreover, they were also producing rough clothes from wooden bark. Prior to 1750 CE, English clothes sent to be sold there were rejected with the remark: Your clothes are of low quality. Learn to produce clothes like those from India.

There are documents available that show Aztecs, Inca, Maya, and other Latin American communities achieved considerable progress in fabrics, pottery, and other industries, even before they came into contact with the Europeans.

Although these communities were extremely skilled, they did not expand them in the directions the Europeans did – this is a key point to be noted. The primary reason is their contrasting view of life. Europeans like Alan Watts and the Indians who imitated them without understanding their depth (or knowingly ignored them), theorised that India remained undeveloped in technology due to its philosophical outlook on life. This wrong notion is yet to be erased.

¹ See the Alexander Walker Report on agriculture in eighteenth century India (Dharampal's Collected Writings) and Voelcker's Report on the Improvement of Indian Agriculture.

To be continued...

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Surthkal Brahmana Mahasabha



Mind over Matter

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Neurodivergence & Academic Performance



There is a well-known saying that 'Teachers can open the door, but you must enter it yourself'. With more research into neurodiversity*, it is discovered that not everyone's brain is developed the same way. It is very similar to we not having the same eyes as our siblings, the same nose as our dad's, or the same ability to run like that of an athlete. But we are all unique in our own ways and have our own strengths.

'Rakshith is thirteen years old and is studying in 8th grade. He is very active and social in school and his neighbourhood. He is labelled as a talkative boy in his surroundings. After his mid-term exams, his parents were called for a parent-teacher meeting. Rakshith has got very low grades in maths and average in other subjects. Both teachers and parents concluded that the COVID times had hit him badly and lost some learning on maths due to online classes. Also, his talkative nature is distracting him from studies and being strict and getting a tutor should help him in improving his learning.'

'Srishti and Drishti are eleven years old and twins. Both of them put their parents on task by being very naughty. Getting them ready, and making them do their homework is a mammoth task for their parents. They dread school holidays as they get them exhausted. Both Srishti and Drishti have a resistance to writing. Both parents and teachers attribute it to their naughtiness. They say that they don't sit and focus on writing because they are always distracted by one or other things. Srishti takes a longer time to finish her homework if her

mother sits with her and assists. However, it is very difficult for the parents to make Drishti complete even half of her homework. This issue reflects in exams too.'

It is a common challenge for most parents to get their kids to focus on their studies, make them finish their homework and ensure they give their best effort for the exams. We may think that the kids are either lazy or not being serious and hence the poor or average academic results. While this can be a possibility, the way the kid's brain is developed or wired may not support them to learn certain subjects on par with other kids.

As per a study, about 1 in 5 to 6 children are neurodivergent. The variations in brain development in neurodivergent kids lead to conditions like Learning Disorder, Autism and Attention Deficit and Hyperactive Disorder.

'After a year, even with Rakshith's parents assisting him in his studies and homework and getting a home tutor for maths, there was a very slight improvement in his performance in maths but not significant. His parents became anxious and alert as he was about to enter 10th grade, which had a board exam. School authorities suggested that they seek professional help and hence they consulted a counsellor.'

'Srishti and Drishti's mother happened to attend a neurodiversity session from her office which led her to think about her daughter's writing challenge. She discussed it with her husband and they decided to consult a psychologist to rule out any learning disorder with their daughters.'

A recent study in the US states that there are 4 million kids with Learning Disabilities(LD) in the USA. 18% of them drop out of school or college due to a lack of intervention at the early stage. The good news is that LD can be diagnosed at an early stage. There are special educators outside school for kids with LD to support them in their learning.

'Rakshith's parents met a counsellor who guided them to a clinical psychologist to get a psychometric test done to rule out LD. The test confirmed that Rakshith had Dyscalculia, a type of LD where the brain does not support learning maths. Their psychologist also briefed and counselled the parents about an option to drop maths as a subject and take an alternate subject where Rakshith has the ability to learn. This information reduced Rakshith's parents' worries a bit.'

'Srishti and Drishti's parents consulted a clinical psychologist and briefed her about their daughter's challenge with writing. The psychologist gave a psychometric test for both the kids. The result showed that Sritшти had moderate challenges in writing while Drishti had severe challenges in writing, that is Dysgraphia(an inability or difficulty to write due to a neurological condition). The good part was that both didn't have any issues with reading or comprehending and understanding the subjects. Psychologists advised parents to talk to the school to seek support to enable the kids in their writing. She also mentioned that the government has rules that schools should provide a scribe for the exam(a person to write while the kid with dysgraphia states the answers in the exam) or give extra time for the kid to write.'

The government has come up with policies to enable and support children with learning disabilities. According to this policy, education boards should accommodate and enable kids with learning disabilities in their learning journey. Exemptions and opting for a scribe or

a reader involves a process, which may differ in each education board.

'Rakshith's parents produced an LD certificate to the school and requested for change in subject. School authorities contacted the board and provided alternate subject options. Rakshith selected environmental science instead of maths.'

'The board suggested the school give extra time for Srishti in exams while for Drishti, a scribe was given in exams.'

Here is an example of relaxation from an educational board for reference. It may vary slightly from board to board. Many schools may not be aware of these relaxations and parents may have to request and insist school authorities to enquire and enable the students with LD.

1. 'Scribe for writing' or 'extra time for writing' to students with writing issues (Dyscalculia). The board or the examination centre usually provides the scribe but parents can also apply for the scribe. Remuneration for the scribe may be given by the board.
2. Students with reading disabilities(dyslexia) can opt for a reader. A reader is a person who just reads and does not explain.
3. If the kid has difficulties with languages, the board offers one compulsory language as against two. Students can opt for another subject with options provided by the board and drop one language.

LD comes with different severity. Based on the psychometric test results, the clinical psychologist suggests, if the kid needs relaxation or a special educator.

The process involved in opting for the relaxations may include but is not limited to these steps.

1. Psychometric test for the student to assess

the LD. This has to be done by an RCI-licensed clinical psychologist. Clinical psychologists provide a certificate that is accepted by the board or the government.

Usually, schools may suggest some counselling centres or hospitals from where they accept the certificate. If the school does not have this reference, one may go to a clinical psychologist with an RCI license.

2. Parents need to submit this certificate to school authorities. School authorities will in turn submit this to the board and get approval.

In some boards, it may be required to get the signature of a government authority from the education department. Schools should be able to help the parents with the process.

3. The whole process may take from 3-6 months. It is better if the parent starts the process as early as in the end of the 8th

grade or the beginning of the 9th grade to finish the process before the 10th grade starts. This avoids the stress and burden for both the parent and the kid when the kid enters the academic year for the board exam.

There are kids with learning disabilities with above-average intelligence. LD does not mean low intelligence. It just means that the kid has different strengths. Parents can explore the strengths of their kids and enable their learning journey and career in their areas of interest and strengths. Taking a career aptitude test in 8th grade or 9th grade gives enough time for kids and parents to understand the natural abilities of the kid and plan their next course of action for the kid's further studies.

Marks and academic performance increase the opportunities for further studies and career opportunities. But life skills help the kid to tread through life's problems and have a happy and successful life.

Quotable Quotes from Swami Vivekananda



"The world is the great gymnasium where we come to make ourselves strong"

"That man has reached immortality who is disturbed by nothing material"

"When an idea exclusively occupies the mind, it is transformed into an actual physical or mental state"



Performing Arts...

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Sri Vyasarayaru (1460 AD -1539 AD)



Vrindavana of Sree Vyasarayaru

Being a great philosopher, polemicist, commentator, and composer, Srivyasaraya has occupied an important place in the Vaishnava tradition. He was born to Ballanasumathi and akkamma at Bannur near Mysore.

There is an interesting anecdote regarding his birth. It is believed that his parents went to Kashi and his father suddenly expired. His wife, when approached SriBrahmanyaTeertha to seek permission to do SATI, the great saint blessed her to live happily with her husband. Realizing the fact, the saint becomes instrumental in giving life to the body, and the saint requests for the future child to be given to

him. After their son Yatiraja was born, they with the highest respect submitted him to the lotus feet of Sree Brahmanyateertha. This incident was written by SomanathaKavi, a contemporary poet in his book "Sree Vyasaraya Charitram".

An astonishing reference to Sri Vyasaraya is the fact that Portuguese travelers Fernaonunes and Domingos have given wonderful observations regarding Sri Vyasaraya. Coming back to Sri Vyasaraya's life history, it is said that he was given Gayathri mantropadesha at the age of 5. Sri Brahmanyatheertha, his guru sent him to Mulabaagilu, a small village at Kolar near Bengaluru. Sripadaraja who was the peetadhipathi accepted him as his student and for 12 years Sri Vyasaraya learnt many shastras and became a great scholar with immense enthusiasm to spread Dwaita philosophy. In his compositions, he has depicted his total respect towards his guru who made him an extraordinary scholar. It is believed that he spent the next 12 years at Tirumala and became the kulaguru for Narasimha Nayaka and his son, Tammaraya. His travel history never ends here.

At the request of Narasanayaka, he then moved toward the Vijayanagara Empire when the Dynasty was at its peak. Due to his fame, he was very aptly called the Guardian Angel of the Vijayanagara Empire. Being an ardent believer of Vaishnavism he installed 732 Hanuman idols at various locations. Among

them, Yantroddaraka Hanumantha sloka, which is considered as most powerful. Not only an intellectual, he also proved to be the great guru of Karnataka Sangita Pitamaha, Sri Purandaradasa, SriKanakadasa, SriVadiraja, and Sri Vijayindrateertha, who have contributed immensely to the field of philosophy and music.

Sri Vyasaraaya was donated to a few provinces by the king. Sri Vyasaraaya built many tanks keeping social welfare in mind. This proves that he was a strong follower of Sanatana Dharma. It is also noteworthy that Srikrishna Devaraya built Vishwasavana University and made Sri Vyasaraaya the chancellor who imparted the knowledge of ancient Hindu traditions. Further, Sri krishnadevaraya describes this great saint as Nigamagamanirnoti.....

Several later musicologists have discussed Sri Vyasaraaya. Great texts like Abhinaya Bharata Muni's Sangeeta Agama, and Tulajarajendrabhupala's Sangeeta Saaramruta throw much light on Sri Vyasaraaya's contribution to shastra and music too.

SriVyasaraaya is said to have written great works which include Nyayamruta, Tatparyachandrika, and Tatvaparakashika which consists of sutras and meemamse, which he penned at Sree Rangam city. He is the

author of the commentary, Khandanatraya i.e., Upadikhandana, Mayavadakhandana, and Prapanchamityatvanukhandana upholding the essence and importance of Dwaita philosophy. As far as his contribution to Karnataka music is concerned he is believed to have composed many devaranamas. Unfortunately, only three of his compositions are available in "Krishna nee begane baro" a universally acclaimed composition is one among them. His Ankita was "Sree Krishna".

Before ending this article, it is just to mention the various slokas he composed which can be sung as a musical composition. Sree Krishna Mangalashtaka, Sreenivasa sloka, Shivastuti, Prameyaraagamalika, Granthamalika sloka, Pancharatna slokain which he has given importance to Adwaita and Vishistadwaita philosophy too as he had thoroughly studied about all the three prominent philosophical schools. Through his magnetic personality, he spread the Dwaita philosophy throughout the country. He attained mukthi after ordaining Sree Sreenivasa Theertha as his successor. Sree VyasaraayasVrindavana is situated at Navavrindavana, a holy place which is attracting thousands of devotees.

In my next article, I shall try to elaborate on Sri Vyasaraaya's contribution to the South Indian music system.



Though shall not steal nor kill;
Not speak a lie;
Be angry with no one,
Nor scorn another man;
Nor glory in thyself;

Nor others hold you to blame
This is your inward purity;
This is your outward purity;
This is the way to win our Lord:

**Kudalasangama
Basavanna**



Crime Prevention - A Criminologist's Perspective

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INDIVIDUALISM... GEOPOLITICS AND TERRORISM

Recently, I was observing a conversation between a Team lead and the CEO of the company. The team lead was expressing his unhappiness over heightened feelings of 'I... What is it in for me?' of the team members. The reactive response of the CEO was "Just do your job... don't bother about others'. A perplexed Team lead left the call, as to what his role was... 'Wasn't it about building a team... Working together for a goal'.

Extrapolating this to geopolitical happenings, Political brass is skewing toward, how I secure my position in my country, yet proclaim myself a global alliance leader... That is operate from a space of individualism, and expect the global team to play on those individual terms. This week was a demonstration of this strategy 'The US and UK solo showed visible support to Israel in self-defence... Parallely China forwarded its BRI agenda with a show of strength by hosting 130 countries'. The citizenry is watching this show of strength with hope for peace and stability.

The post-pandemic era has opened a plethora of mental/emotional health issues. A lot of it is born from a feeling of 'Are you listening to me?... Am I important?' Observational study of dynamics / conservations from Global geopolitical to Country to Organizational to Family is the undercurrent running predominantly. One can question how is that terror groups are successful in their recruitment. Their strategy is

'Lone Wolf Terrorism'... That is because they cash in on the individualism trend in the below manner

1. Feed into the individualist vulnerabilities/needs
2. Allegiance to a cause rather than a system/organization
3. Tools and materials to operate as an individual
4. Individual decision to initiate and execute a project
5. Elimination of ego clashes
6. Content glorifying the cause fighters

As a Human threat assessment professional, I often get asked why is that we miss the germination of such individuals and prevent an attack. Listing the below shortcomings

1. Reverse engineering an attack, when the Modus Operandi is rarely repetitive
2. Deciphering a non-existent system of Terror groups/organizations
3. Deciphering the systems of recruitment
4. Type-casting groups/sects as possible breeding grounds, against vulnerable individuals

5. Silos and protocols preventing sharing and delaying decision making
6. Ego clashes among the geopolitical leaders and organizational heads

Examining the cultural evolution in the Start-Up ecosystems which seemed to capitalize on the individual ambitions

1. Organization to Enterprise
2. Common values rather than common goals
3. Intrapreneurship rather than collective vision
4. Self-achieving rather than control-driven
5. Gigwork rather than team assignments

6. Progress and profits rather than productivity

As Human Threat Professionals, Crime Prevention becomes very tedious. It is an uphill task against breaking silos... Building collaborative platforms... Building a culture of safety... Building systems for secure community... Training individuals to identify threats, inform and participate in the elimination of the threats... In a way, we are working against the flow striving to restore the community setting and collective security!!!

The answer to a safe and secure society is a blend of ensuring individual interests, however within the bounds of larger good... Policies, procedures, laws, and regulations are not meant to bind individuals but are meant as a moral compass, very essential for 'Human Growth'.

IIShri Shankaralinga Vijayatell



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Analytics Playground

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Unveiling the Magic of Data Science - Discovering Insights to Make Better Decisions!

Part 6: Unveiling Insights: The Art of Data Analysis

(Sharanya and Rihaan continue on their journey of understanding Data Science...)

Sharanya : Rihaan, come along now. Wear this sweater.

Rihaan : But why? It's warm inside. Are we going out?

Sharanya : Yes, you know that when we go out, especially in winter, it's better to be covered up well.

Rihaan : This can be called as identifying patterns! We go out and catch a cold during the winter months! When we observe this, we take precautions!

Sharanya : True that!

Rihaan's dad Vineeth joins in the conversation.

Vineeth : Tell me what is the most important thing to do with the data?

Rihaan : Clean it! Just like we clean the vegetables before using them.

Vineeth : Yes, just as we wash and remove all impurities, data should be cleansed too.

Rihaan : We then start to chop and cook.

Vineeth : Not really. We arrange all ingredients in an orderly manner. Keep the handy. Similarly, we start sorting and arranging data.

Rihaan : Just like mommy sorts out laundry after washing, you sort your documents before filing.

Vineeth : Exactly! This can be termed as bringing order to chaos.

Data, often sprawling and unstructured, requires organization to be effectively analyzed. Sorting involves arranging data in a systematic order, be it numerical, chronological, or based on specific criteria. This process not only aids in easier accessibility but also lays the groundwork for further analysis. Categorizing data involves grouping similar data points based on shared characteristics, allowing for a more refined understanding of the information at hand.

Sharanya : This also helps in identifying Trends and Patterns and can be termed as Deciphering the Story Within.

Trends and patterns are the narratives hidden within the data. Trends represent long-term directional shifts in the data, providing valuable insights into the overall movement or change. Patterns, on the other hand, depict repeated structures or sequences within the dataset, such as seasonal fluctuations, periodic occurrences, or other recurrent behaviors. Identifying these trends and patterns is crucial in uncovering correlations,

making predictions, and understanding underlying mechanisms within the data.

Vineeth : In the realm of data analysis, trends and patterns serve as critical elements that offer a deeper understanding of the information concealed within datasets. Trends encapsulate the overarching direction or movement over an extended period, unveiling shifts or changes in data. These long-term changes provide invaluable insights into the trajectory of phenomena, be it upward, downward, or relatively stable.

Sharanya : For instance, in financial markets, an upward trend in stock prices over several months signifies a bullish market, indicating potential profitability and investor confidence. Conversely, a downward trend may point to a bearish market, signaling potential losses and declining investor sentiment.

Vineeth : On the other hand, patterns within data represent recurrent structures or sequences, shedding light on repeated behaviors or occurrences. These patterns can take various forms, such as seasonal fluctuations, cyclic trends, or periodic events. An example of a seasonal pattern is seen in retail sales, where certain products experience predictable increases in demand during specific times like the holiday season or back-to-school periods. Identifying and understanding these patterns can aid businesses in managing inventory, adjusting marketing strategies, and optimizing sales.

Sharanya : Rihaan, you heard the explanation. Can you give some examples now?

Rihaan : Yes, I have observed and experienced seasonal patterns throughout the year. How the weather changes from summer to fall, leading to cooler temperatures, falling leaves, and the transition to winter with snow and colder days. I eagerly anticipate activities specific to each season, like building snowmen in winter or playing with colorful leaves in autumn.

Vineeth : Anything else?

Rihaan: My daily routines such as waking up, having breakfast, going to school, participating in after-school activities, and winding down for bed.

Sharanya : This pattern provides a sense of structure and predictability in your life, fostering a sense of security and comfort, doesn't it?

Rihaan : It does! I have also perceived trends in my growth and development. I have grown taller, lost my milk teeth and I can solve puzzles much faster and easily.

Sharanya : That's like a good boy! Now drink up the milk and wear warm clothing. Let's go out and play with others in the park.

Overall, the identification and comprehension of trends and patterns within data facilitate informed actions and strategies based on data-driven insights.

(To be continued...)



Kalaburgi



The Selfless Warriors of Shivaji

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1. Understanding Shivaji ...

Shivaji!

Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj !

The very mention of this name invokes a multitude of emotions simultaneously in the hearts of Bharatiya, stirring a deep sense of connection and pride.

Who is Shivaji?

What were his notable achievements?

By whom was he molded into such a distinguished personality?

Why does he remain relevant even in the present day?"

Let us start by addressing this seemingly simple yet complex question with a quote from Swami Vivekananda:

"Is there a greater hero, a greater saint, a greater bhakta, and a greater king than Shivaji? Shivaji was the very embodiment of a born ruler of men as typified in our great Epics. He was the type of the real son of India representing the true consciousness of the nation. It was he who showed what the future of India is going to be sooner or later, a group of independent units under one umbrella as it were, under one supreme imperial suzerainty."

Who is Shivaji?

Shivaji Maharaj, the second son of Shahaji Maharaj and Jijabai, was born in February 1630 on the Shivneri mountain fort in Junnar, located approximately sixty miles from Pune city. He was named after the patron deity 'Shivai Devi,' to whom Jijabai fervently prayed for a warrior son akin to Shiva or a daughter

like Durga. Her earnest hope was that this child would liberate Devabhoomi from the clutches of the Mlechhas.

At the tender age of fourteen, Shivaji assembled a group of twelve to fifteen impoverished local peasant Mavle friends at the Raireshwara Temple atop the Rairi hill fort. There, in front of the Shivalinga, he led them in taking the oath of Hindavi Swarajya and vowed to remain unwavering in their commitment to The Almighty Shiva. Traveling 51 miles from Pune to the Raireshwara Fort, which was then under the control of Bijapur Sultan, they brazenly ignored the watchful eyes of enemy soldiers, shouting the war cry 'HarHarMahadev!'

This news quickly spread throughout the Pune, Supe, and Junnar provinces, and hundreds of young men flocked to Lal Mahal, Shivaji's residence, to pledge their allegiance to Swarajya in the presence of their beloved Raje. In no time, he had handpicked an army of more than a thousand men, each of whom served Swarajya faithfully until their end.

From conquering Toranagadh, his first fort at the tender age of fifteen in 1645, Shivaji's remarkable journey spanned three decades, culminating in his grand coronation as the Chatrapati of Hindavi Swarajya in June 1674, a title not held by any Hindu Samrat for five centuries. Until his passing in 1680 at the age of fifty, Shivaji remained steadfast in fulfilling Jijabai's dream of liberating her beloved motherland from the clutches of unscrupulous invaders.

Incidentally, 2023 marks the glorious

350th year since Shivaji Maharaj's coronation on June 3, 1674. The foundations of Shivaji's Hindavi Swarajya were built upon principles of justice and the welfare of the people. While many historians refer to it as The Maratha Empire, the Chatrapati himself referred to it as Hindavi Swarajya and no other name. A patriotic organization has encouraged people to celebrate this historic event for an entire year, culminating on the next Vijayadashami day.

Shivaji's father, Shahaji, held an independent jagir encompassing the provinces of Junnar and Supe in his personal capacity and held the title of Raja. Shahaji also served as the self-appointed regent of Murtaza-III, a young king, who was the sole surviving male from the Ahmednagar Nijamshahi dynasty. This dynasty had faced a brutal massacre by the Mughals in 1633, including the unborn heirs.

Remarkably, Child Murtaza-III survived this massacre, and Shahaji anointed him as the new Nijamshahi, making a solemn promise to his mother to safeguard the boy king's life, even at the risk of his own. Shahaji, demonstrating his leadership, began expanding the boundaries of his kingdom. Anticipating danger shortly, both the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan and the Bijapur Sultan Mohammad Adil Shah joined forces, combining their military might to defeat Shahaji and extinguish his dream of establishing an independent Hindu kingdom, separate from the dominant Muslim conquerors in India.

In a compromise to ensure Murtaza-III's safety, Shahaji agreed to serve Adil Shahi from Bengaluru and pledged never to return to Maharashtra. The Mughals took the boy-king as a prisoner, as a precaution against any future rebellion for freedom led by Shahaji. The Mughals and Adil Shahi absorbed the remnants of the Ahmednagar Nijamshahi kingdom, but they permitted Shahaji to maintain ownership of his Junnar and Supe jagirs as an independent state.

Hence, we can assert that Shivaji Maharaj

was born in an independent state, free from the rule of any contemporary Muslim ruler. This fact had a significant psychological influence on Shivaji, instilling in him the belief that he was born in an independent land, to liberate his motherland from the clutches of cruel Mlechhas.

By whom was he molded into such a distinguished personality?

To better understand the factors that shaped Shivaji into a great leader, we can identify six main pillars:



1. His Father, Shahaji Maharaj
2. His Mother, Jijabai
3. His Teacher, DadojiKondadev
4. Shivaji's childhood friends, later became devoted followers with a single purpose - to fulfill the oath of Hindavi Swarajya. Each of them was a remarkable leader in their own right.
5. His Dharmic Guru and guide, Shri Samartha Ramadasa Swamy
6. His Maratha Army started as a small group of twenty-five 'soldiers' but eventually grew into a formidable force of over two hundred thousand, possessing expertise in all aspects of warfare.

Interestingly, the Indian Army still maintains a Maratha Regiment that holds deep reverence for Shivaji Maharaj, and their battle cry remains 'Har Har Mahadev!'

In the upcoming articles, we will explore how his parents and hundreds of other Brahmin noblemen influenced the young Shivaji, transforming him from a five-foot-tall boy into a great leader with a larger-than-life persona, earning respect, fear, and worldwide recognition during his lifetime.

(To be continued...)



Wit & Wisdom

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GLIMPSES TO THE WESTERN PHILOSOPHERS



The very word Philosopher comes from the Greek word Philosophy meaning lover of wisdom. The coining of the term is attributed to Pythagoras. Philosophy encourages systematic inquiry into fundamental questions of right and wrong, truth and falsehood.

Philosophy begins in wonder. The person who looks at the World in awe and ventures to understand the mystery of the world is a Philosopher. They seek enlightenment about the enigma of the creation of the World. But one thing is for sure.... Their amazing calibre and sense of repartee is a veritable source of Wisdom. Here are a few such anecdotes to savour.

SPINOZA :

Spinoza who was a Dutch Philosopher, was a foremost exponent of 17th century Rationalism. Spinoza 's most famous idea was that God is not the creator of the World but that the World is a part of God, Which is often considered Pantheism.

To Spinoza, the body mattered very little. Once an eminent Councillor of State went to see him and found the philosopher in a dirty attire. After reproaching, the councillor offered him a clean one. But Spinoza politely replied " It is unreasonable to wrap up things of little value in a precious cover "

Years later when Spinoza was indigent, a rich friend of his wanted to give him around 400 pounds. Spinoza politely declined and said " Nature is content with little and when she is satisfied, so am I "

VOLTAIRE :

Voltaire was a French Enlightenment writer, the Father of the French Revolution and famous for his series of essays on the English Government and society, which is considered a monumental work in French Literature.

When Rousseau, the Genevan philosopher sent to Voltaire his " Discourse on the Origin of Inequality " with its arguments against civilization, and for a return to the natural condition as seen in savages and animals, Voltaire replied " I have received sir, your new book against human species and thank you for it. No one has ever been so witty as you are in trying to turn us into brutes; to read your books makes one long to go on all fours. As, however, it is now some sixty years since I gave up the practice, I feel that it is unfortunately impossible for me to resume it "

Voltaire commented On Rousseau's " Social Contract " But he defended him when the book was burnt by the Swiss authorities. Voltaire thundered " I do not agree with a word that you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it "

When Rousseau was fleeing from his enemies, Voltaire sent him a cordial invitation to come and stay with him.

Benjamin Franklin brought his grandson to Voltaire to get his blessings. Voltaire blessed keeping his hand on the youth's head and asked him to dedicate himself to " God and liberty "

Voltaire shared his pain and told Benjamin that he was not as nimble as he would like to be. " I feel like a statue with feet of clay "

Benjamin Franklin replied, " Yes, But with a golden heart ".

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

Emerson became most widely known as the Man of Letters in America. His friends found him incurably and unreasonably optimistic. He always professed that all is good in this World. Emerson used to preach to a washer Woman who attended his discourses regularly. Someone asked her what was the benefit of attending Emerson's lectures. She replied "He has made me feel that I am worth something, not a useless creature as others say " That was Emerson's greatness and his humanity.

One day, while walking through his garden with a friend, he handed the young man, a plum. " Take this," he said, "At its best, it is a fruit of Paradise "These words were symbolical of Emerson's attitude not only towards the humblest of fruits but also towards the humblest of men. At his best, he is the Child of Paradise

There was no hatred, rancour, or disdain in Emerson's speech. He was full of forgiveness and love towards others.

When he lost his son, someone remarked the loss of Emerson to his lack of " Faith ". Emerson was cool and calm and merely replied "Neither my friend nor can I understand the ways of life and faith and death "

BERTRAND RUSSELL.

Bertrand Russell was a British Philosopher, social critic and academician. Generations of readers have benefited from his popular writings on a variety of topics both on humanities and Natural sciences.

Describing himself, rather whimsically, he said "My intelligence, as it is, has been steadily dwindling since the age of 20. When I was young, I liked Mathematics. When it became difficult, I took to Philosophy. And when Philosophy became difficult, I took to Politics. Since then I have concentrated on detective stories ".

He quipped once " Science is what you know. Philosophy is what you don't know " Regarding the purpose or design in evolution, Russell made the observation "Though the transition from amoeba to the philosopher represented progress from the point of view of the Philosopher, it was not known whether the amoeba felt the same ".

Asked for the secret of his health when he was an Octogenarian Russell said " I am convinced that survival is easier for those who can enjoy life, and that a man who has sufficient vitality to reach old age cannot be happy unless he is active."

These short anecdotes only give us a taste of the rich past of the illuminated, mature minds. Thus we observe that Philosophy is nothing but the love of wisdom. Thus philosophers not only have subtle thoughts but love wisdom to live according to dictates.

Short Story

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(At 98 years, he is the youngest writer we have...!)



Peace of Mind?



One night, I broke into the house of the corrupt officer who had forcibly extracted a bribe from me. I intended to rob him of all his ill-earned money. The house was empty when I entered it. I looked around. It was a mansion, a palace! There were fabulous furniture and artifacts all around. There was one room which was bigger than my entire house. This must be his bedroom, I thought. I noticed a large locker made of heavy metal standing in one of the

corners. It must be stacked with piles of money that he forcibly took from scores of innocent and helpless people like me...

A magic happened. As soon as I touched the locker door, it opened. Indeed, ill-earned money is never safe!

I was taking out bundles of money and putting them in my bag. It was then that I suddenly saw his face from within the locker. It was sullen and looked depressed as though sleep had been deprived for years. His face had wrinkles of fear and shame writ large. His lifeless eyes were pleading with me not to rob him of the wealth that was his meager life and beyond.

I took back every bundle of money from my bag, threw them over his lifeless face and returned home.

From that night onwards I began to enjoy sound and undisturbed sleep. Is this called "Peace of Mind"?

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

While speaking to his pet child :

You are my most likable kid. You are as cute as the loveliest external hard disc. Your cheeks are as smooth as the face of the computer monitor, your voice is as cute as that emitted by the best of sound from the best of drivers, and your flitting from place to place reminds me of a truant system that opens many files at once. Child, I will be the best firewall in the world and protect you against the worst Trojans.

While describing his pet dog :

He is as active as the latest laser printer. His bark is as delightful as the music emitted while the Microsoft Windows comes to life. He is as vigilant as the latest virus scanner. His teeth are as sharp as the cost of the latest system. I am sure that he will serve our family longer than any software will ever serve our system. I am certain that even the brightness and contrast adjustment button on our monitor will serve us for a lesser duration than this pet dog. This pet will be on my lap whenever my laptop is not being used. Thus he is the live and lively laptop of the family.

While blaming others :

Let me print out my thoughts using the best printer. I refuse to be treated as the software personnel while on the verge of accepting the pink slip. Your thoughts are filled with the scariest spy wares on the net. Your influence is quite virus-like. You have the flimsiest capacity and you are as outdated as a 386 computer. You do not have the Drive to get things done. You do not have sufficient Voice to reach out to the audience. You are as useless as the earliest large floppies. Learn to be as smart as the latest smartphones. Otherwise, you will be treated as the first-ever computer and consigned to the software museum pronto.

Offering apology :

I am as sorry as the latest internet connection provider. I never realized that my backup would be as bad as a UPS working on a weak battery. I never envisaged that a time would come when my resources would be as weak as the single phase current dished out by the State Department. I request you to treat this as a small scratch on my otherwise clean CD track record. I will soon recover all my working files and present myself in a manner befitting the best YouTube presentation ever produced. I beseech you to ignore this current affair.

When severing relations :

I have no wish to have you on my computer anymore. I am taking you out of all my files including those in the recycle bin and the temporary internet folders. You will never be included in my system files again. You are, for all intents and purposes, simply and absolutely Control, Alt, Deleted.

**Quotable Quotes from
N R Narayana Murthy**

"Growth is painful. Change is painful. But, nothing is as painful as staying stuck where you do not belong"

"A great leader also has the ability to make people an inch taller in his presence"

"I have always looked at my competencies before accepting any responsibility"





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