

VIPRANUDI

English Journal from the house of AKBMS



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Rukmini Devi Arundale

(29 February 1904 – 24 February 1986) was an Indian theosophist, dancer and choreographer of the Indian classical dance form of Bharatanatyam and an activist for animal welfare.



Rukmini Devi was born in a Brahmin family in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. Her father, Neelakanta Shastri, was an engineer in the Public Works Department and was a scholar. Her mother Seshammal was a music enthusiast. Deeply influenced by the Theosophical Movement, Neelakanta Shastri was an ardent follower of Dr. Annie Besant. When he moved to Chennai after retirement, the young Rukmini was exposed to not just theosophical thought, but also to new ideas on culture, theatre, music, and dance. Her meeting with the prominent British theosophist Dr. George Arundale – a close associate of Annie Besant and later the principal of the Central Hindu College in Varanasi, led to her building a lasting bond with him. They married in 1920 when she turned 16 and he was 26 years her senior at 42, much to the shock of the then conservative society.

In 1928, the famous Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova visited Bombay and the Arundale couple went to her performance, and later happened to travel on the same ship as her, to Australia where she was to perform next. Over the course of the journey their friendship grew, and soon Rukmini Devi started learning dance from one of Anna's leading solo dancers, Cleo Nordi. It was later, at the behest of Anna, that Rukmini Devi turned her attention to discovering traditional Indian dance forms which had fallen to disrepute, and dedicated the rest of her life to their revival.

Rukmini Devi was the first woman in Indian history to be nominated as a member of the Rajya Sabha. She was featured in India Today's list of "100 People Who Shaped India". She was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1956 and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship in 1967...

Originally known as sadhir in Tamil, the Indian classical dance form of Bharatanatyam owes its current name, to E Krishna Iyer and Rukmini Devi Arundale. She has been instrumental in modifying mainly the Pandanallur style of Bharatanatyam and bringing it to the global attention and removing the extraneous sringaar and erotic elements from the dance, which were the legacy of its Devadasi association in the past. Soon she changed the very face of the dance, by introducing musical instruments, like violin, set and lighting design elements, and innovative costumes, and jewellery inspired by the rich temple sculptures of South India.

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Presidential Message

Ashok Haranahalli
President - AKBMS

Dear Friends

Greetings and Best Wishes on
MahaShivarathri.

Starting from Ganeshahabba, Mahasabha has been celebrating all the traditional festivals and in continuation celebrated Mahashivarathri with a lot of fervor and festivity. Starting from 6 pm to 6 am the next day, this festival was celebrated with continuous Abhishekas and Poojas by our members and thereby seeking the blessings of the Mahadeva.

The Ugadi festival is also planned to be celebrated in the month of March. NageHabba a program is planned in memory of AKBMS's first President Late Master Hirannaiah on this day.

AKBMS under the new committee has successfully completed one year. This last year has seen a sea of events initiated by various committees established to function collectively and individually. Even though there are still a lot of things to be accomplished as a Brahmin community, we acknowledge the hard work put in by various committees to make this past year an eventful one. We truly are very grateful to all

our Seniors, Gurus, Committee members, and the entire community for making this possible. Going forward, we take it upon ourselves to speed up the work taken up, work towards the upliftment of the poor and needy of our community, protecting our Sanatana Dharma I humbly seek your contribution and cooperation in reaching these goals.

Mahasabha has started an initiative to support the economically backward section of our society, the Archakas, the Cooks, the destitute, and the physically disabled by giving out monthly pensions. The Mahasabha as of now is disbursing Rs. 500/- per month to those who are in need especially the destitute and the physically challenged. We have also established very subsidized medical facilities for these categories of Brahmins. Big hospitals like Narayana Hrudayalaya and Manipal hospital have come forward to handhold the Mahasabha and offer diagnosis and treatments at a very reasonable rate. Along the same lines, it gives me immense pleasure to inform you all that our "Vipra Vaidyakiya Vedike" consisting of eminent doctors will initiate a Helpline program for the benefit of our community. Under the guidance of eminent personalities from Economics, Small scale industry, Media, and the Press, Mahasabha is spearheading lots of initiatives in the field of Education, Employment, health, and upholding Sanatana Dharma and work has already started in this direction.

It is a very sad and unpleasant situation that

prevails in society today. Brahmins are being mocked on various media platforms. Brahmins have always been out of all such cheap politics and are known to be the most nonconflicting people. We strongly condemn and oppose the recent statement made by Ex-Chief Minister Shri H.D. Kumaraswamy on the caste of Shri Prahlad Joshi and mocking the Chitpavan community of Brahmins in a public forum. This type of statement is unwarranted and is most unexpected when it is made by responsible people in Society. Mahasabha has

expressed its displeasure in all the media platforms condemning such types of irresponsible statements. Many of our Brahmins who hold responsible positions in this society have not raised their voices in support of the Brahmins. This is a cause for our concern. On the same note, we also need to understand that it is all the more important to stay connected and united and have a single goal of protecting and nurturing Sanatana Dharma.

Ashok Haranahalli
Yours Truly

Ashok Haranahalli





From the Editor's desk...

Satyesh N. Bellur
Editor-in-chief

Dear Readers...

Welcome to our thirteenth edition of Vipranudi – the English journal from the house of AKBMS.

It has been one year since we started the journal. I was invited to AKBMS to inaugurate their website launch and it was then that Sri. Ashok Harnahalli Ji asked me to contribute articles to their Kannada News Magazine – Vipranudi. I asked him “Why not AKBMS start an English Magazine to reach out to a larger section of people who do not read Kannada”? “Why not? Why don't you start that for us”? was his immediate response and I was flabbergasted.

I thought about this and met with him the subsequent week and told him that instead of starting a news magazine I would be more interested in starting a journal that will have varied articles from eminent authors. I shared my ideas with him and as is his practice, he said “You have my support. You start and run it as you find suitable. But as AKBMS cannot provide funds for this, you need to volunteer and get writers to do the honours without honoraria. As the print version will involve expenses, this will be an online journal”. I agreed.

The difficult task was then to find writers of eminence who could provide articles, not just one but many and without taking any

honorarium. What initially looked like a herculean effort became such an easy and enjoyable experience. As and when I called writers that I knew and asked them to be a part of this journey. They wholeheartedly agreed to write and thanks to them that we are here with our Anniversary Edition seeing the light of the day in such brilliance.

After the third edition on the website, Ashok Ji called me and said –“Look Satyesh... I did not expect this to be so beautifully coming up. From the next edition, let us have it in print too. We will try and get subscriptions and advertisements for the same and also provide AKBMS funds if required. This will have to be one of our flagship projects. Kudos"! So, from the fourth edition onwards, we are in print too and that is something that we all can be proud of.

My sincere thanks to all the writers who have been with us from day one. They have provided articles on time. Each one is a gem! We have varied subjects encompassing a multitude of articles from Geetha to Spirituality; Engineering Technology to Medicine; Performing Arts to Languages; Career Guidance to Conselling; History to Sports; Guest Articles to Book Reviews; Humor to Informative essays; Personality Interviews to Book Reviews – The list goes on. We have writers from both India and outside (NRIs) enriching every edition of the journal. We have uniquely designed every single cover page to introduce one of the famous and illustrious

achievers from the community. Overall, we have made this journal a healthy and entertaining read for young and old alike. Every reader, irrespective of their subject of interest, will find something fascinating here. This is a journal that a family can proudly place on their visitor's table for everyone to read and enjoy! I also thank my Editorial Board for their timely help.

I also wish to thank the DTP team, The printers, and the IT team for all their timely help thus far. Though we only have had a few, I thank those advertisers who have associated with us.

Let all of us celebrate this "moment of truth", feel proud of the past, and recommit to making this journal reach more homes in the months to come.

Mrs. Anitha Nadig has been one of our eminent writers from the first edition. She has been writing the column – "Mind over Matter". It is with great pleasure that I wish to inform you that she has recently published her book titled – "A quest for a new career". This is a story of her transformation from a software engineer to a wellness coach and counselor. This book is a testimony of her journey toward realizing her cherished goals. Anyone who is at crossroads experiencing difficulty in choosing an alternate career path will find this book extremely motivating and informative. I have had the privilege to write the foreword to this book and needless to say, I enjoyed reading it from cover to cover. On behalf of all of us writers at the journal, I wish Anitha Ji the very best for her book and look forward to more from her in the days to come.

"ACTION IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION REDUCES THE DISTANCE BETWEEN YOU AND THE GOAL"

Anitha Nadig's *A Quest for a New Career Path* will motivate you to discover your passion and purpose as you look for an alternative career. With clarity and practical solutions, this book guides you through the exciting process of changing your mindset to help you shed your inhibitions and blaze the trail that you've always wanted. It also deftly handles money matters and the preparations required to begin a new calling with confidence.

This book is packed with activities that will take you on an inner journey of self-exploration and answer your most pressing questions on finding meaning in life. Anitha's candid recollections of her personal career-change journey form the heart of the book, giving readers useful insights into the nitty-gritty of mid-life career changes. By the end of the book, you will be ready with an action plan to smoothly transition towards your passion project.

A Quest for a New Career Path is a must read for anyone who wants to think beyond the nine-to-five and lead a fulfilling and purposeful life.



Anitha Nadig author, coach and counsellor founded Mind Sakhya (www.mindsakhya.com) with an aim to help people to make friends with their minds and blossom their lives to the fullest. She has spent a decade and half in the IT industry with leading MNCs before transforming her passion for mental health awareness to a new career as a wellness coach. Anitha Nadig lives in Bangalore with her family.



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We also have a new member on our Editorial Board from the last edition. I welcome Sri. Venkatesh Dwarakanath Ji to be our Public Relations Officer (PRO). He has been very supportive of our cause from the beginning. I am sure that his inclusion on our Editorial Board will enhance our zeal to excel further and reach out to many more readers.

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



Satyesh Bellur

Satyesh N. Bellur



Guest Column

C R Sathya

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A holy edifice of yore: ANANTHASHAYANAM

For the devotee, who is visiting Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city of the state of Kerala, there is one place that he or she never misses. And that is the Abode of Lord Vishnu-Ananathashayanam-as the scriptures say, known more popularly as SreeAnanthaPadmanabhaSwamyTemple. Anantha or Ananta meaning infinite or endless is also the name of the serpent on which Lord Vishnu is resting here. The word also signifies that the serpent's hoods, which support the world, are limitless in number. The worshipping image of Lord Vishnu in this Temple depicts him as a reclining (Shayanam) figure on the bed formed by the serpent Anantha. This seven-acre edifice, sprouting out of one of the busiest commercial parts of the city, draws thousands of devotees every day and many more on festival days. The object of reverence and the main attraction is, of course, the imposing Deity of Lord PadmanabhaSwamy enshrined in a thousand-year-old temple with legendary tales about the shrine stretching back to several centuries earlier.

The evolution :

The Temple has lent a historical and political significance too to the State of Kerala. Having been adapted by the Venad dynasty, whose kings have worshipped here from around 800 AD-1000AD, the Empires of the 1stCheras, Ays and Venad had physical connections with the Temple. In 825 AD, during the reign of 2ndChera Empire, UdayaMarthanda Varma

established practices and rituals for the Temple. However, there exists no description of the physical shape of the Temple then. The final shape of the Temple, as we perceive it today, was obtained by incremental constructions, carried out by successive kings. The early contributions came from Bhaskara Ravi Varma in 1050 AD (First known renovation) and Veera Kerala Varma in 1125-1155AD (2nd renovation). Later Rama Marthanda Varma 1459-1461 AD undertook the reconstruction of the roof of the sanctum and an earlier version of what today is known as OttakkalMandapam. He temporarily shifted the main idol to a place called "Balayayam". An earlier version of Gopurams on all four sides came up. Perhaps now, a Master plan existed demarcating various functional areas for further development.

And in 1481 AD, VeeraKothaMarthanda Varma reconstructed the northern Gopuram; 9 years later, King Iravilravi Varma chose granite stones to replace wood in many parts of the temple, followed by Unni Kerala Varma commencing East Gopuram and laying plans for the imposing Mandapams which greet the devotees now from the entrance to the Sanctum. In the 1595-1608 period, a fire breaks out at Balayayam, the temporary abode of the Lord. In 1686, during the reign of Veeralravilravi Varma, another fire breaks out and almost engulfs the Sanctum, oil-soaked wooden light stands, stored oil, and thatched shelters being the main cause. But for the next hundred years, no work was undertaken to safeguard against such fires.

VeeraMarthanda Varma arrives on the scene (1729-1758) and launches the biggest reconstruction programme. He shifts the wooden idol from Balayayam to the Sanctum. He then replaces the original wooden idol of SreeAnanthaPadmanabhaSwamy with a new idol crafted out of an assemblage of 12,008 Saligramas, on which a special herbal mixture is coated. The king also completes the five storeys of the East Gopuram and Sivellipura, the 365 pillared outer corridors. He also adds a Temple kitchen, a flagstaff with gold covering, and an assembly hall-NataksalaMukappu-at the main entrance. Above all, he installs Ottakkal, a single stone slab of around 5 m. square on which the devotees have to stand to have Darshan of the Lord through three massive doors spanning across this slab and Ottakkal also supporting the current roof structure over it. His successor, KarthikaThirunal Rama Varma (1758-1798), completes East Gopuram and an exclusive Mandapam called KulashekharaMandapam, housing exquisite sculptures and musical pillars. With this, the Temple attains the final shape as we see it now. A structural failure and another fire broke out in later years but were taken care of by successive rulers. Since then and till now, festivals and Pujas are conducted uninterrupted by a host of priests and supporting staff.

What is most remarkable is the fact that despite several historical and religious disturbances that took place on the Kerala coast, in the form of aggression, wars, and conversions by occupiers, the Temple still retains all its traditions as they were centuries ago and has preserved its sanctity under the patronage of every successive Venad king. Even today, the head of the erstwhile Travancore Cochin Royal family, residing in Thiruvananthapuram, never fails to worship the Lord every morning before the day starts.

The Temple complex today:

In the past, the Temple was safely tucked in a double-walled fort complex but the city of Thiruvananthapuram, under the pressure of population explosion and commercial forces, grew all around the fort. The Temple surroundings are almost choked by traders, who sell just about every ware to the visitors, including the well-known savories of Kerala-banana, jackfruit, and Tapioca chips. The devotee has to make his entry through an east-facing passage leading to the Temple entrance. Here, to the left, are some old palatial buildings converted now into a small museum and change rooms, and to the right is a Temple pond with steps to facilitate ritualistic bathing. The functional area of the Temple is about 7 acres and is basically in the shape of a rectangle. The smaller sides of this rectangle are on the east and west while the longer sides are on the north and south directions. As an integral part of the Temple building, a thick stone wall serves as an inner fort. The wall is about 5 m high in a few places and has in it four doors in four directions, the eastern door being the prominent entry for visitors. For the entry of the members of the Royal family, there are four other smaller doors preserved for the purpose. On entry through the eastern door, the visitor passes through a high-roofed Mandapam- NataksalaMukappu-in which the lady members of the Royalty could watch many cultural activities staged. At the end of this Mandapam, the east Gopuram towers up to a height of 33m, from the top of which, one can get a fantastic sunset view over the city of Thiruvananthapuram.





Further ahead, the visitor now steps into a rectangular corridor that surrounds the inner Temple. Called Sivelippura, this imposing corridor is around 6m in width and 7 m high with 365 supporting pillars that hold its roof in positional along its length. Even the roof is laid with stone slabs. And the corridor runs for a length of half a km. Now one glimpses a gold-covered flagstaff after which, to the left is the KulashekaraMandapam housing sculptures and musical pillars. Ahead, from the left is the entry door into the Sanctum after crossing a shrine of SreeNarasimhaSwamy. The first object one perceives now is a single slab platform on which one has to climb up via side steps to get a view of the Deity.

This platform, known as Ottakkal (meaning a single stone), supports a roof of copper-clad sheets, propped up by fourteen gold-coated pillars. The Inner Sanctum, which now the devotee beholds, has a separate copper-clad roof of

it's own and the entry is through three doors from the Ottakkal side. As the Sanctum is lit only by oil lamps, it takes a few seconds to perceive the main idol, stretched behind the three door openings, and make out the finer details of Lord Vishnu and serpent Anantha. The main idol decked with ornamental jewelry, and complimented by several idols around, is difficult to comprehend with one look. It is not surprising to see the devotees craning their

necks to get a better view, rather anxiously, as the priests keep persuading them to move forward. On climbing down the Ottakkal steps soon after the Darshan, one can glimpse some historical inscriptions carved on the sides of Ottakkal, before exiting to the outer corridor - Sivelippura. In the complex, there are also many smaller shrines to visit dedicated to Sree Narasimha Swami, SreeSastha, SreeKrishna, SreeKshetrapalan, SreeMahaGanapathi, Sree Ramaswamy, and Sree Vishwakshenan. While this sums up some physical aspects of the inner Temple, some oddities strike the discerning visitor about the entire complex.

Deviations that strike the eye:

Most of the Kerala temples are modest in their size, built with a common architectural style with foundations and supporting walls using locally available laterite blocks. The upper structure is in wood with provision to keep hundreds of oil lamps, above which a copper-clad roof rests. The four-sided roof structure is again Kerala`s unique feature, to ward off the fury of monsoon rains. The doors are in solid wood, supported by metal hinges. The floor is generally covered with fine river sand and partly laid with stone slabs. The handiwork seen in these temples is mainly of the local craftsmen.



On the other hand, the Ananthashayanam complex strikes a different note. It is mammoth in size, completely in stone construction,

except for the Sanctum, and resembles more towards Dravidian architecture. There are some deviations noted in the positioning of Mandapams and idols from conventional practices. But what strikes the eye are the stone blocks-thousands of them- making up the fort walls, the inner Temple, the corridors, and even the idols, shaped and placed in position after overcoming many an engineering and logistic problem, at the quarries and the Temple premises. Thousands of man-hours must have been expended to transport the stone blocks across the most difficult terrains and waterways that surround the city. An estimate by the undersigned about the number of stones transported runs something like this, by today`s standards: 55,000 bullock cart trips, 1,83,000 hand-drawn trips and 19,000 lorry trips!

The magnitude of work involved is best reflected in the construction technique employed for the outer fort wall. Without the aid of cement or mortars, the stone blocks are so shaped that they interlock in position without allowing any movement in 3 directions- akin to the way the Egyptians employed for their pyramids!

Then, of course, there is the Ottakkal, a 15-tonne single-stone slab, arising curiosity and wonder concerning its origin, transportation,

and positioning on site. The main idol of AnanthaPadmanabhaSwamy too is an interesting construction as mentioned earlier. And one cannot brush aside the latest news that emanated from the Temple about the hidden treasures in its secret underground vaults, probably placing the Temple in the category of the richest Temples in the world. For those who have not visited the Temple yet, it is time to plan a trip at least once in a lifetime!

Accompanying images :

1. The Temple complex viewed from the eastern side(Google images)
2. The Deity: Sree PadmanabhaSwamy (Google images)-Not the actual idol in the Temple
3. One portion of the inner fort wall (Author)

Editor's Note

: Sri. C.R. Sathya was formerly: Group Director, Composites, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram and Senior Vice President (Technology), Tata Advance Materials Ltd, Bengaluru. He is a well-known name in the field of Kannada Literature. He is a recipient of the prestigious Kannada Sahitya Academy Award.





TIMELESS TRADITIONS...

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Necessity of Sandhyavandana (Part 2) Importance of Arghya to Surya

In the previous article, we saw the necessity for Brahmanas to perform the most basic and non-negotiable nitya-karma, Sandhyavandana. We also briefly understood that giving arghya to Surya, doing Gayatri japa and saluting the dig-devatas (cardinal directions) formed the most common angas or the parts of Sandhyavandana. Let us delve deeper into each of these angas to know what they are and how they should be performed.

We have already learnt that the most appropriate time to give arghya is ಖಂಡೋಪಲಬ್ಧ ಕಾಲ and this refers to the time the sunrays and stars, both are visible. This applies to both, sunrise and sunset. To understand this better, we have to first know what brahmi-muhurta is.

Brahmi-muhurta : Brahmi-muhurta is the 14thmuhurta kala/part of the night. One muhurta is 48 minutes, with a whole night consisting of 15 muhurtas. The time of sunrise varies each day, according to geographic location and time of year, and the time of the Brahmi-muhurta varies with it. For example, if sunrise is at 6:00 AM, the Brahmi-muhurta begins at 4:24 AM and ends at 5:12 AM. For all practical purposes and our easy reference, Brahmi-muhurta can be fixed between 4.00 AM to 5.30 AM.

Ayurveda, yoga sutras and our elders have been very vocal about waking up in the

morning in Brahmi-muhurta. Ayurveda elucidates the core concept of tri-doshas in our physical body – Vata (air and ether), Pitta (fire and water) and Kapha (earth and water). The changes in our body regarding these doshas are found to be cyclical. E.g., From sunrise until 10:00 AM – Kapha is predominant, from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM Pitta is predominant and from 2:00 PM till sunset, Vata is predominant. The cycle continues during the evening and night. Vata is predominant from 2:00 AM until 6:00 AM (sunrise). Brahmi-muhurta occurs during this phase, and those who are adept in yoga, suggest this to be the best time to meditate – 1 ½ hours before dawn as the mind is inherently still at that time. Ashtanga hridaya sutrasthana 2ndchapter corroborates with the sutra—“ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ಮುಹೂರ್ತ ಉತ್ತಿಷ್ಠೇತ್ | ಸ್ವಸ್ಥೋರಕ್ಷಾರ್ಥಮ್ ಆಯುಷಃ ||”

The below illustration gives a better understanding of ಖಂಡೋಪಲಬ್ಧ ಕಾಲ to perform morning Sandhyavandana :

1. Having woken up in the brahmi-muhurta, the pre-cursor to starting the day is to have a bath (we have already learnt the significance of the bathing ritual in previous articles).

ಆವೋನಿಸರ್ಗತಃಪೂತಾಃಕಿಂಪುನರ್ವಹ್ನಿಸಂಯುತಾಃ |
ತಸ್ಮಾದುಷ್ಣೋದಕೇಸ್ನಾಯಾತ್ತದಭಾವೋಯತೋದಕಂ ||

The Lalitopakhyana states that water naturally is very pure. At the same time, if fire heats this water, the water becomes even more sanctified. Hence, we should prefer warm water for our baths. If warm/hot water isn't available, then we can use cold water as an exception.

2. Let us take an example date of March 1st. As per the Panchanga, sunrise at Bengaluru on March 1st is 6.29 AM (location-wise / date-wise sunrise information is available on most jyotisha apps or the internet or traditional panchangas)
3. Hence, the ideal time to give arghya on March 1st is a few minutes before 6.29 AM. This is the time when both, the stars and sun rays are visible.
4. To arrive at the time to give arghya, we may need 10 minutes before 6.29 AM to start the Sandhyavandana. Hence, Sandhyavandana has to start at 6.20 AM.
5. We get ready to give arghya after finishing the purva-angas of the Sandhyavandana as per respective traditions.

How to give arghya?

ಸಂಧ್ಯಾಯಾಂಗಾಯತ್ರಿಯಾ ಅಭಿಮಂತ್ರಿತಾ ಅಪಃಸರ್ವೈಃ ಪೀಷಂತಿ
– from Taittiriya aaranyaka.

This means that after pouring water into our hands, we have to energize this water with the Gayathri mantra. The arghya to Surya has to be given while standing facing east during morning Sandhyavandana and while sitting facing west during evening Sandhyavandana. Another interesting fact that many of us may not know is that while giving arghya (both morning and evening), we have to throw the water towards Surya. Though this may seem a very mechanical activity, we can grasp the internal meaning if we read and understand what our Puranas say.

Regarding arghya, Vishnu Purana narrates the following:

The 'Arghyas' we give to Surya have to be skyward from our palms. These serve as missiles to destroy demons known as 'Mandeha'. Mandeha is a compound word and if this is split, we get Manda (laziness) and Eeha (selfish desires). In Kaliyuga, people are affected mainly by laziness – both physical and mental & selfish desires. If these two aren't overcome, people cannot achieve anything. Therefore, one of the most basic exercises to control the mind and become selfless and active is to chant the Gayatri mantra. Further, water is an excellent carrier of electricity. If the Gayatri mantra is chanted with supreme concentration and faith energizing the water meant for arghya that is given to Surya, this has a tremendous positive impact on our physical and mental health.

Many get doubt regarding the paryaya or alternative in case the arghya has to be given much later than the ಖಂಡೋಪಲಬ್ಧ ಕಾಲ. In such situations, depending on the traditions followed, we can give ಪ್ರಾಯಶ್ಚಿತ್ತ ಅರ್ಘ್ಯ. The concept of an exception is to ensure, we as brahmins, **don't miss the mandatory routine of Sandhyavandana.**





Thus Spake Lord Krishna

Mrs. Veena Prahlad

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Bound or Liberated: The Choice is yours...

Life is full of choices, and one of the most important choices we make is how we approach our duties and responsibilities. Are we bound by them, or are we liberated through them? The answer lies in how we perform our actions.

Many of us are familiar with the idea of being bound. We tie the knot when we get married, and in our culture, this is called 'vivaha bandhana.' The word 'bandhana' means being tied or tethered. We also use phrases like 'being bound to work' or 'bound to his ideals/principles.' Even *Bheeshma*, a prominent figure in the *Mahabharatha*, spoke of being bound by his vow. He was so bound that he couldn't stop his grandchildren from fighting over the kingdom, despite his stature and wisdom.

Having been born we cannot escape doing action or karma.

niyataṁ kuru karma tvaṁ karma jyāyo
hyakarmaṇaḥ
śharīra-yātrāpi cha te na prasiddhyed akarmaṇaḥ
(Gita 3.8)

Do your accepted duties. Action is better than inaction. As without action your body also cannot be sustained.

But, is this what life is all about? Simply doing actions to sustain ourselves? If so, why was



Arjuna tormented, and why do we sometimes feel unhappy doing actions to sustain ourselves?

yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra loko 'yaṁ
karma-bandhanaḥ
tad-arthaṁ karma kaunteya mukta-saṅgaḥ
samāchara (Gita 3.9)

Do your work with utmost dedication (like a sacrifice/yajna) else it will bind you to this world (karma bandha), therefore Arjuna does your duty without attachment.

The answer lies in the way we approach our duties. The Shloka above tells us to do our accepted duties, for inaction is not an option. However, we must perform these duties with dedication and a selfless attitude. Doing so liberates us, while selfish actions bind us to this world.

Through our own life experiences, we may have realized that selfless action brings us peace and contentment, while selfish actions rarely do. Even if we acquire an object with

great difficulty, the happiness we derive from it will always be short-lived. It will soon be replaced by restlessness and the desire to possess more. This is why it is called karma bandha, or the bondage to the world through action (Karma)

However, when we perform our duties with detachment, focusing on doing them in the best way possible, we eventually become liberated from the cycle of life and death. We will have no desire for anything, so there will be no need to be born to perform any duty.

How do we perform our duties in this way? By keeping our focus on doing our duty in the best possible way we can, without discriminating between tasks. All types of work are sacred, and none are considered menial. We must perform them as an offering to God.

This is said beautifully in the shloka below

uddhared ātmanātmānaṁ nātmānam avasādayet
ātmaiva hyātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ
(Gita 6.5)

We are responsible for ourselves. We can

uplift ourselves or push it down for we are our friend and we are our enemy.

Ultimately, the choice of how we perform our duties is up to us. We can perform them to satisfy our greed or to complete our commitments. It depends on where we are on our spiritual journey. It is up to us to attain liberation from our bondage, and the shloka above tells us that we are responsible for ourselves. We can uplift ourselves or push ourselves down, for we are our friends and our enemy.

Bheeshma's enemy was his vow, while Arjuna's was his false sense of who he was and his attachment to his relatives. We all have our enemies, but we must make our life worthwhile and lead ourselves to liberation.

In conclusion, the Bhagavad Gita teaches us that we have the power to choose whether we are bound or liberated through our actions. By performing our duties selflessly, we can break free from the cycle of life and death and achieve true liberation. The choice is ours, and it is up to us to make the right one.





My Quest for Spiritual Well-being

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The three aspects of hygiene...

When I was in the hostel while doing my engineering, one of the daily routines that always took a back seat was – bathing. Due to scarcity of water, it was available to us only till about 8 in the morning. As water used to be heated using logs of wood and not electricity, hot water was available till about 7 in the morning. So, I had to get up at 5 in the morning and stand in the queue for my turn and if lucky, was able to get hot water. So bathing those days was more of a luxury and once or twice a week indulgence than a daily ritual. When my other disciplined friends who took baths more frequently used to tease and taunt me on this, I used to tell them that cleansing the mind was more important than cleansing the body and they used to dismay at my (rather opportunistic) wisdom!

But that is indeed wisdom! Our body gets dirty due to the external filth that it picks up and also due to the internal waste that it generates. The bodily dirt is something that one can see and hence needs a daily wash. It is healthy too and that is the reason that our Sanatana Dharma made Shaucha one of the enduring practices for mankind. But, does it stop there?

While the bodily produced dirt can be seen, the mind too produces a lot of dirt and toxins that are more harmful to life and not seen by the naked eye. They can only be perceived if one is sensitive to their occurrences. They come in different shades and at different intensities and at different times. Lust for excessive pleasure, Anger, Greed, A strong sense of "I",

jealousy – These are the dirt that the mind constantly throws up. Alas, they cannot be cleaned using soap and shampoo.

A stricter adherence to discipline and conduct is needed to clean the mind than needed to clean the body. A constant inner urge to correct them as and when they show up is the mantra. We can delay the cleansing of the body by a few days, but do the same to the mind and we will be in deep trouble. Procrastination is one vice that can ruin anyone...

"A sound mind in a sound body," say the learned. But when it comes to shaucha, probably it is wiser to say – "A sound body exists when there is a sound mind"! Once the mind gets dirty, then it may take a whole life to clean it...

Having got these two elements of human cleansing under check, it is time for an individual to look at cleaning his Atman, the soul. It has a large pool of engraved memory (samskara) amassed from its previous innumerable number of existences. There are bad and good human values hidden among them. While the good ones need to be nurtured, the bad ones need to be identified, realised, corrected and cleaned. A regular introspection of the self will reveal those impurities in its samskara and allows one to work on them.

Cleansing of the body can be a routine exercise while the cleansing of the mind is a laborious

but concerted and continuous process. What differentiates the cleansing of the Atman from the rest is that it has to be a lifelong moment-to-moment practice carried out with utmost consciousness. But when carried out well, it not only enlightens the individual in his current journey of life but also enriches his future unknown journeys...

Spirituality is not merely about cleansing the body and the mind. It is all about cleansing the samskara. Can we then say – “A sound mind and a sound body exist around a sound Atman”?

ॐ

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

ತನುವ ನೀ ದಿನನಿತ್ಯ ತೊಳೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ತೆರದಿ |
ಮನವನ್ನು ಆಗಾಗ್ಗೆ ಶುಚಿಗೊಳಿಸಬೇಕು ||
ತನುಮನದ ಶೌಚದಲಿ ಆತ್ಮವೂ ತಾ ಮಿಂದು |
ಅನುದಿನವು ಶಾಂತಿಯೆಲೆ - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||





Career Guidance

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Medical Transcription as a Career

I come across many students who are depressed, feel inferior to others, have financial constraints to study, have family problems, have a loss of earning member, also take extreme steps in life etc. My advice to all those who belong to this sect is, don't lose hope, explore opportunities, research what you can do...

If someone has good English, wants to work from home with flexible hours and also earns well, you could choose to be a Medical Transcriptionist!!!!

Medical Transcription is one of the fastest-growing fields in health care. Medical transcription is one of the speedy growing IT-enabled services in India. With the rapid change in the outlook of Indian healthcare and the privatization of the insurance sector India provides an ideal location for conducting medical transcription with its large population of educated English-speaking people and the comparatively low cost which encourages companies abroad to outsource their work to the Indian Medical Transcription field.

Medical transcription is an interesting and challenging career. It is the process whereby one accurately and swiftly transcribes medical records dictated by doctors and others, including history and physical reports, clinical notes, office notes, operative reports, consultation notes, discharge summaries, letters, psychiatric evaluations, laboratory reports, x-ray reports and pathology reports. M.T. or Medical Transcriptionist is a person who

assists physicians and speciality surgeons usually by transcribing, formatting and proofreading their dictated medically oriented report of a patient's health history. This dictation covers pretty much everything that takes place between the healthcare provider and the patient. Usually, the information dictated by doctors is recorded either on tape or onto digital voice processing systems. The process of medical transcription is transferring this information using word processing. Transcription services range from small, one-person home-based businesses to sophisticated, high-tech corporations which employ transcriptionists. Some medical transcription services now employ both 'on-site' and home-based medical transcriptionists. Medical transcription services serve client hospitals throughout the nation and abroad. Government guidelines mandate hospitals globally to maintain these reports.

For future reference. Insurance Companies require medical records including these Physician notes for processing insurance claims. The global medical transcription software market size was valued at \$1.32 Bn in 2019 & is projected to reach \$4.89 Bn by 2027, with a CAGR of 17.8% during the forecast period (Fortune Business Insights)

The process :

1. Doctors in the US speak into a voice recorder, dictating their patient's medical reports.

2. His voice goes to a central computer.
3. The voice is converted into digital signals, which are beamed up to a communication satellite.
4. Data received from the satellite is transcribed into written form in India.
5. Transcribed reports are bounced back to the US as digital signals via satellite.
6. After being processed by the central computer again the data reaches the doctors' table the next morning as a printed report.

Personality traits and skills :

The Personality traits required for the job are - Good writing and communicative English, good listening skills, a bundle of patience, keeping updated on the latest happenings in the medical field, the ability to understand Medical Terminologies, the ability to refer to the right books, Good computer skills, ability to pay attention to details, responsibility, Time Management skills, strong typing and ten-key skills, critical thinking skills, ability to handle newer electronic gadgets and precision are other requirements for the job.

Education :

There is no prequalification required to take Medical transcription as a career. However, Graduates in any discipline (Science preferred) with good English language skills, comprehension, English grammar, and keyboard skills are preferred to become medical transcriptionists. Nevertheless, every aspiring medical transcriptionist has to undergo intensive training to qualify as a professional. The training curriculum includes subjects such as Americanisms, phonetics,

m e d i c a l terminology, and computer skills. Success in this newly emergent profession requires documentation ability (not a keyboard specialist), and a high degree of fluency in medical language which requires intensive study.



HealthScribe, the largest MT company in India, has tied up with National Institute for Excellence in Telemarketing (NEXT) in Bangalore to provide training to aspiring medical transcriptionists. The NEXT curriculum is the result of years of dedicated research by HealthScribe in developing a programme suitable for Indian conditions. HealthScribes tried and tested curriculum, training material, and trainers have been made available to NEXT to offer candidates the best training programme in the industry.

The training period can range from 3 months to 2 yrs. Online classes are also available.

Career Prospects :

With the IT revolution sweeping the country, a large number of new career options have opened up for the next generation of 21st-century job seekers. One of the hot new careers is the medical transcription (MT). As per NASSCOM estimates, the medical transcription industry has the potential to generate jobs for over 160,000 professionals annually and attain an aggregate industry revenue of Rs.9,000 crore per annum. Flexible timings and place of work and good remuneration are among the factors that have made medical transcription a stable career option for thousands of Indians in recent times.

Medical transcription services from India are sought after by players in many other countries.

With the advent of voice recognition software and the technological advances to grasp and analyze the human voice, there will be a continuous need for skilled transcription specialists who have enough understanding of the health record to create an accurate final document. The growing rates of chronic conditions and the ageing population around the World will continue to increase the demand for healthcare services. With a growing number of medical procedures and tests, medical transcription is essentially required.

Major Sectors where MT can seek employment are:

Government Jobs, Hospitals, Health care

departments, Private Clinics, and Private Companies. Employment opportunities are also available as: Court Reporters, Interpreters and Translators, Medical Records and Health Information Technicians, Information Clerks, Medical Assistants, Secretaries and Administrative Assistants.

A Medical Transcriptionist can work as a Medical coder, Certified Medical Coder (CMC), Medical Record Coder, Senior Medical Transcriptionist, Medical Scribe, to name a few...





Mind over Matter

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Life with a paranoid personality (Part-2)

Next week, when Bhavana & Mohan came into the counselling, Counsellor observed that they were in a better mood.

Bhavana started the conversation with enthusiasm. 'After last week's session, we were discussing my mother-in-law's suspicious nature. Mohan also shared what his father went through and how it has affected him. Mohan has seen both of them getting into fights whenever my father-in-law confronted her. And it had not led to any constructive talks. So, Mohan does not confront his mother which used to irritate him as a child.

'Yes, but I never realised that discussing these things with her would help us to understand each other. Last week has been better, and our fights have been reduced. When we misunderstand each other, we are able to think through and apologise later. This had never happened after we moved to India', Mohan said in a calm tone.

'Last week no such serious incidents happened. But we would like to know how to deal with these kinds of situations and strengthen the relationship between both of us', Bhavana looked at Mohan as he nodded in agreement.

Counsellor said with a smile, 'Thanks for sharing this. I see a shift in your thinking.

"We want to know what makes my mother think and behave this way and whether it can be treated. Also, we are open to getting counselled if that helps', Mohan added.

'Wonderful Mohan, that makes my work much easier'. Counsellor then educated him about the suspicious nature of Mohan's mother, and how some people show a pattern of distrust and suspect others without adequate proof or reasons. They feel that others are constantly trying to deceive or harm them. These kinds of people do not think their behaviour is problematic. Hence getting them help through treatment or counselling is a challenge. Counsellor also explained that there could be multiple factors behind this mental illness. Biological and environmental reasons may contribute to this nature. Childhood trauma also can lead to this nature. This is more often seen in families having schizophrenia and delusional disorders. Mohan and Bhavana understood the mental health condition Mohan's mother has. They were concerned about it.

'At least I feel better now that I understand the reason behind my mother's nature. I feel relieved partially' Mohan mentioned in a sad tone.

'I used to take her accusations personally.

Looks like that actually enhanced my anger and anxiety. I was thinking, what did I do to get such treatment from her? What is my fault? Now, we know, she acts this way because of her mental health condition. Is there a way to help her sir?'

'She will need a psychiatrist's help. A psychiatrist will diagnose the illness and based on the severity, will prescribe the medicine. Counselling can go in parallel.

Turning to Bhavana, 'We will see if we can convince her to take her to the doctor, though I am not sure if she agrees'. Bhavana nodded in agreement.

Counsellor also mentioned that Bhavana will need counselling as these incidents have been very traumatic and that need to be processed through the sessions. Along with individual therapy for Bhavana, he recommended couple

therapy which can help them in understanding each other better, learn to sort out conflicts, and better communication skills.

'Thank you so much, sir. I am ready to start the therapy from next week' Bhavana confirmed her willingness to start the therapy. While leaving the center, she also mentioned that she is positive about dealing with similar incidents in the future in a better way.

Bhavana was on individual therapy for three months and processed the trauma. She learnt techniques on how to deal with her anger, anxiety and hurt feelings during the therapy sessions. Her mother-in-law was not willing to meet the doctor and continues to show the same behaviour. Bhavana can deal with situations with a lesser impact on her.

Mohan and Bhavana have started with couple therapy. They are enjoying to know each other better.





Real Lessons in HISTORY

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Rājākārya-prasakta Dewan Bahadur Sir M N Krishna Rao - Part 2

(This is the concluding part of the English translation of Chapter 12 of DV Gundappa's Jnapakachitrashaale – Vol. 4 – Mysurina Dewanaru. Translated by Vedavyas M G and Edited by Hari Ravikumar and Raghavendra G S. Published with permission from Prekshaa Publications.)

Seetharamiah's Hospitality

In the next week or ten days, I reached Delhi. Seetharamiah was waiting at the train station by the time the train reached. I asked him, “How did you know of my arrival?” He said, “I got it somehow. You have arrived now, have you not?”

“Why did you come?”

He answered, “To escort you.”

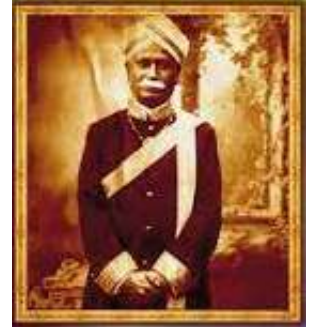
I said, “I was thinking of some other arrangement.”

“Let the other arrangement be kept aside. Please accept this arrangement now.”

This friendly banter went on for some time. Seetharamiah sheltered me as a guest for two to two and a half months. I raised the question of expenses a couple of times. He said, “Let all that get settled in Bangalore. I have been

ordered. I have to follow it. And you have to please cooperate.”

He silenced me thus. Those were the days that Seetharamiah and I spent very happily. We used to travel together. With Kālidāsa's Megha-sandēśa book in hand, we went to Ujjayinī [Ujjain] and visited Mahākāla devālaya and the environs of the Śiprā river. We both went to Kurukshetra and bathed at the Pāṇḍava Lake. We visited Gītā-mandira. We had a darśana of Bhagavān Śiva at Sthāneśvara [Thanesar]. We also went to the Durgā shrine nearby. On the way, we recounted several poetic references, recited the verses and enjoyed discussing their poetic nuances. Seetharamiah's knowledge of English literature was excellent, too.



At the Legislative Council

In 1927, I was a member of the [Mysore] Legislative Council. Those were the early days of the Dewanship of Sir Mirza Ismail. M N Krishna Rao was the Finance Minister then. At that time, in one of my speeches, I raised objections, alleging that the management of the treasury of the Mysore State was far from satisfactory. I said that the government was spending a lot of money but it lacked an adequate administrative audit

system that examines the expense immediately and puts a stop to unwanted expenditures. While I was speaking, Krishna Rao's face assumed a serious mode. As soon as I sat down, he stood up and said: "It appears this member has no idea of reality. In the government's present system, there are sufficient control measures to keep the expenses under check and for investigating them." I did not react, for I believed Krishna Rao's words to be honest.

That evening, an envelope reached the place where I was staying, from the minister's office. It contained many hukums and orders issued by the government regarding financial expenditure. I read all of them and I was impressed. The next day, after the Council met, I greeted Krishna Rao and asked him, "What is the guarantee that the work is going on in accordance with those orders?" He replied, "That is a constitutional matter. The government can consider it."

Estimation of Worth

That afternoon, during the lunch break after the Council session, Sri H C Dasappa came to me and said, "Of all the people, why did you have to raise objections against that brāhmaṇa?"

I asked, "Why are you so kind to that particular brāhmaṇa?"

Dasappa replied, "He is the only real brāhmaṇa I have met. Hence, my reverence for him; don't trouble him!"

This is an illustration that competence and integrity earn respect on their own.

The Position of Dewan

In 1932, when Mirza saheb went to London to attend the Round Table Conference, M N Krishna Rao was appointed the acting Dewan. This was only for a few months. During this time, when I was going for a walk one morning, Krishna Rao was walking toward me. I greeted him. Krishna Rao exclaimed, "Hello, it's been a long time since I saw you!" I replied, "You are under work pressure now. If I come to meet you, your time will be wasted and you may be inconvenienced!"

"Why do you think so?"

"Councillor's work and Dewan's responsibilities – both are put together. The load may have gone up," I said.

"I don't see any such thing!"

"You may have had to go on circuit."

"Why circuit?"

I said, "Well, to meet people to consider their petitions and enquire about their hardships."

"Should I travel to enquire? Is it not enough to solve those that come here?"

I asked, "Won't the daily load double then?"

Krishna Rao replied, "Our government was not formed today. It has a foundation of a hundred years. Rules and regulations have naturally evolved. There are no defects in that part. To implement those laws, there are responsible officers who earn one thousand to one thousand five hundred rupees. If they don't do their work, there is nothing the government can do. If they do, there is not

much work for the government. A difficult question might crop up once a month or once in two months. That is the only work for the minister. Our main job is to make sure that various officers of the government are doing their job and are following rules and regulations.”He gave this kind of elaboration. It was natural for him to feel that the minister's work was simple. I can think of three reasons for this:

1. Experience

He was experienced in managing all departments. He started his career in the government's Finance Department. Being directly or indirectly related to the Finance Department, every government department comes to the attention of the Treasurer. This may have given the idea to Krishna Rao that the government's work is not difficult.

2. Intellect

Krishna Rao's intelligence was naturally sharp. He would quickly and comprehensively grasp the depth, extent, and essence of any thought that came to his mind. His natural way of thinking was extremely methodical. What was difficult for others was effortless for him.

3. Integrity

Above all was his honesty. He would completely listen to his conscience and not pay attention to any other urge or advice. He would not give heed to any scheme, trick, cunning, or complex plans. His thoughts were always straightforward; his mind travelled in a straight line. Krishna Rao was faithful to his duty and work. He remained unfazed by people's bouquets or brickbats.

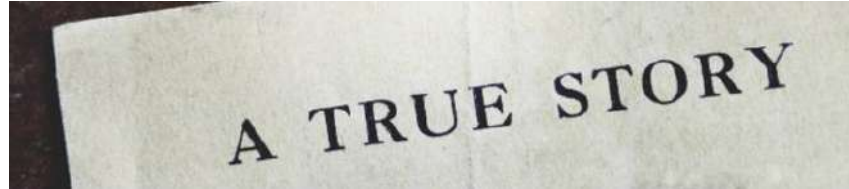




The NRIs Kaleidoscope

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This series of articles broadly explores the experiences and perspectives of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) as they lead their lives in their adopted countries across the world. In this article, we narrate a true story that happened in Melbourne, Australia in Feb 2023.

The NRI Travel Story

The excitement was building up and palpable. She had not travelled to India since 2017 when she lost her mother. Then Covid happened and the skies were closed to international travel for more than two years. She was very keen to see her sister, other relatives and friends. Every conversation somehow seemed to come back to India. She had one foot in Melbourne where she lived and virtually another foot in Bengaluru. She had booked her flights on Singapore Airlines in November 2022 for travel in February 2023. Weeks and days seemed to pass by at a dizzying pace. She finished all her shopping for India four weeks prior to the departure date. Excitement was building up on both sides and her sister in Bengaluru started counting the days before they could see each other. They had arranged for a reliable private taxi operator to pick her up from Bengaluru Airport. She had booked flights carefully to avoid landing in Bengaluru at night. She had mixed feelings. She was excited to travel to India after a long gap and yet was nervous and anxious because she was

travelling alone. She had heard stories from her friends in Australia and USA about Air Suvudha hassles and other inconveniences. She packed her suitcase four days before the scheduled departure. There was not much to take from Melbourne, but she was taking a large suitcase. Her plan was to bring back delicious snacks, congress peanuts, other crispies, pickles and delicacies even though everything is abundantly available in Melbourne these days. Her reasoning was "that it was not the same". Who can argue with a woman who is going "home" after 6 years, even though she has lived in Australia longer than she has lived in India?

One day before the departure date, she set about making her famous Badam Burfi. Nobody made Badam Burfi better than her, on either side of her or her husband's family and she was the defacto uncrowned queen of Badam Burfi. She revelled in making Badam Burfi's from Desi Ghee made in Melbourne and it had become a tradition for her to make them here and take them to India. Nobody in her family ever thought that even the best Badam Burfi from the famous Venkateshwara Sweet-Meat Shop or any other shop came anywhere close to "her" Badam Burfi. Why is there the word "meat" in Indian sweet shops? That is a topic for another day... The Badam Burfi was packed carefully in air-tight plastic boxes and placed gently in the Suitcase.

Two days before the departure date, at her husband's insistence, she had printed all travel documents on the all-in-one homeprinter/photocopier/ scanner and had photocopied travel documents like her Australian Passport. She had carefully stored the printouts and copies in a plastic folder that she was taking with her carry-on bag. All that remained on the day of travel was to pack the toiletries, small electrical stuff like phone chargers, etc.

Her flight from Melbourne to Bengaluru via Singapore was on Friday night. There was a heat wave in Melbourne given Summer in the Southern Hemisphere lasts till the end of February. She woke up very excited that departure day had finally arrived. They were sitting on their Veranda, her husband and she, sipping coffee when he casually asked to see her travel documents. It was in his DNA to distrust everyone except himself. He had inherited that quality from his Father who may have inherited it from his Father. He had to constantly check and recheck everything himself and didn't take others' words for granted. He was obsessed with fretting about things so much, so he often drove back home to check if they had turned off the gas or if they had locked the door properly. He often drove his family crazy with his obsession and often he had uncovered mistakes before they happened.

She brought a travel wallet for him to check the documents and to her disbelief, he pointed out that she had taken his passport and OCI (Overseas Citizen of India) card instead of hers... She didn't know what to say as she lost colour from her face. Yet again his obsession and paranoia had turned out to be right. Luckily there were 12 hours to the flight, and this had been discovered at home and not at the airport. She went to get the right passport and OCI card as he rolled his eyes. What follows is this conversation...

She: Here is my passport, check it as you always do.

He: Ok, that's your passport and good to see that it is valid till 2028. Where is your OCI card?

She: There, in the other pouch. (Now looking a little anxious not knowing if he was not finding it or if it was missing)

He: It is not there

She: What? I always keep it there. How can it not be there? Where can it go? (Disconcerted look on her face as she snatches the travel wallet and sees there is no OCI card)

He: Have you kept it anywhere else?

She: Let me go and check. (Comes back after 10 minutes, distraught). I have looked everywhere, and I can't find it. I have found the old, expired passports and other documents but the OCI card is missing... (Her anxiety is visible now and she is in panic as her heart beats faster and her head throbs)

He: Stay calm it will be there somewhere. Let me search too. Do you remember when you last saw it? (His mind is racing too but he tries hard not to let the situation blow up. Together, they take everything out of the Cabinets where they keep these things and go through every item in detail. After 15 minutes of frantically searching, they give up. A sense of dread and a cold feeling overcomes her. She calls her daughter who stays separately in a different suburb of Melbourne to ask if she had her mother's OCI card by chance. The answer is negative.

She: How can I travel without an OCI card? Will they let me board the Flight? Why did this happen to me and today? (She is now in tears and her body is shaking)

He: Don't panic. Let us talk to the Airline at the Airport. We can show them the India visa that is stamped on your old, expired passport. That

visa validity says "Lifelong". It may not matter that your OCI card is missing. Also, these days Indian immigration may grant a visa on arrival. Most countries do and you can show your Indian Visa. (Even as he is trying to maintain a brave front, his mind is distrusting his own words. He thinks that the Indian Immigration officials will never be considerate or helpful, especially to NRIs. He is thinking up Plan A and Plan B. He is thinking it might be best to go to the Airport and see what Singapore Airlines might say. If they won't board her, then it might be best to apply for a travel Visa at the local consul office in Melbourne and travel on a later date)

She: Oh God, what have I done? Where is the OCI card? How will I travel today? What will I tell my sister? (You can almost hear her heart pounding. Her face is red and an avalanche of tears is about to roll from her swollen eyes as she looks at her open but neatly packed suitcase)

He: Did you say you made photocopies of the Passport and OCI? (His face looks like the Sun bursting from the clouds as a realisation suddenly dawns on him. She is looking blankly at him not understanding what he is asking. Like a possessed demon, he lunges across and lifts the cover off the Photocopier. They stare, open-mouthed, at the OCI card lying neatly and flatly on the glass panel of the photocopier. It had been there for three days...They look at each other unable to speak...

She starts to breathe again...



||Shri Shankaralinga Vijayatell



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Crime Prevention - A Criminologist's Perspective

Varsha Avadhany

Risk Culture & Security Expert

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HUMAN EMOTIONS AND CRISIS EVACUATION PREPAREDNESS

Over the years have had some of the most challenging assignments of crisis evacuations- Floods, cyclones, violent protests, terror attacks... the latest has been the Turkey-Syria Earthquake and Ukrainewar. Writing this article has my cumulative understanding of how people's emotions play a vital role while planning evacuation plans.

1. The crisis won't hit me!

Have seen this mostly in floods and the latest in Ukraine. Denial that water can enter will enter their house, their house won't be hit by a mortar, or enemy forces will be stopped from entering their house.

There is a sense of **'eternal hope'** things will get back to normalcy.

Preparedness index – Reflective listening while building a circle influencer who can get the subject ready for evacuation within a short time. The choice of getting evacuated lies with the individual, we can't decide for them.

2. I am not ready for this!

This occurs in every kind of situation. Despite sending an 'N' number of communication on how to keep a 'Go-grab bag' prepared, they are never ready with it.

There is a feeling, **someone else will keep it ready** for them. In my experience have found it slightly 'well to do' affluent class of the society

Preparedness index – Take charge and start preparing things for the 'Grab-n-Go bag' and get them set for the evacuation

3. What exciting times!

There are always a bunch of adventure-seeking enthusiasts, who have skewed viewpoints of such scenarios and believe it is an adrenaline rush time.

Their constant dialogue **"I know it... I don't need help"**.

Preparedness index - Assertive communication on what is expected for adherence is evac situations. Emphasis should be laid on being a team player

4. How can I move with such bare amenities?

The most challenging part of evacuation assignments has been demands ranging from.

"What will be my mode of transport... Will it be a private charter/ helicopter or luxury car?"

“Will I be escorted all the way to the Safe Haven?”

“What kind of food will get? I have certain allergies”

“Will I be put up in luxury accommodation? Will I have to share my toilet and bathrooms?”

They pose a high to extreme risk to any evacuation assignment due **lack of adaptiveness coupled with an urge to reputationally damage the efforts of the team**

Preparedness index – Get leadership buy-ins on the extent of 'Duty of Care and the budgets allotted

Be connected with a decision maker in the leadership team who is authorized to take decisions on the go

5. I am exhausted... How long will this last?

When the finish line is closer, there are many who experience a sudden slump, their body gives up on them.

Have had to assist women/ children crying, men experiencing extreme pains

Preparedness index– Get trained in Psychological First Aid, a must-do deal with emotional outbursts and psycho-somatic symptoms from extreme trauma and stress

In the new world order where in the climate crisis, and geo-political crisis is all rising, it is time to equip more crisis managers in your organization. Time to have psychological aspects included in the Risk management index.

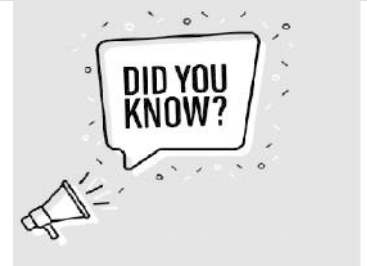




Did you know?

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INCREDIBLE COINCIDENCES

Coincidences are the concurrence of events or circumstances without apparent causal time by accident but seem to have some connection. When coincidence happens, it's almost always unbelievable. Sometimes they look random but sometimes there appears to be a larger meaning or a pattern than what they seem.

Here are a few coincidences of history that are shocking and amazing.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND JOHN F. KENNEDY:

There are many incidents in the life of these two giants which are strikingly similar and unparalleled in the history of the World.

Both Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy were Presidents of the United States of America within a gap of exactly 100 Years.

Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846, while Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946 again exactly a hundred years later.

Lincoln was elected as the 16th President on 6th November 1860, while Kennedy was elected as the 35th President on 8th November 1960.

John Wilkes Booth, who shot Lincoln, was born in 1839, while Lee Harvey Oswald who shot Kennedy was born in 1939. Both of them were shot before they could face the murder trial.

John Booth shot Lincoln in a theatre and then ran to a warehouse, while Lee Oswald pulled

the trigger on Kennedy from the window of a warehouse and then ran to a theatre.

Both John Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald were Southerners

Lincoln and Kennedy were both Civil Rights Campaigners. Both were shot dead on a Friday, on the back of their head.

Lincoln's wife was present at the time of his assassination. Kennedy's wife Jacqueline Kennedy was with him in the motorcade when Kennedy was shot.

Lincoln was shot in Ford's theatre. Kennedy was shot in an automobile made by the Ford Motor Company. It was a Lincoln!!

Lincoln had a Secretary by the name of Kennedy. He advised him not to go to the theatre in Washington on that fateful day. Kennedy had a Secretary named Lincoln who strongly advised him against going to Dallas.

On the day he was assassinated, Lincoln told his guard William Crook "I believe there are men who want to take my life and I have no doubt that they will do it. If it is to be done, it is impossible to prevent it."

Kennedy told his wife Jacqueline and his advisor Ken O'Donoghue "If anyone wants to shoot the president of the United States of America, it is not a very hard job. All that one has to do is to get into a high-rise building someday with a telescopic rifle and there is nothing that anybody can do about it" That

"someday " proved to be the same day he shared his thoughts with his wife and the Secretary. He was shot two and a half hours later.

After the death of Abraham Lincoln, he was succeeded by Andrew Johnson. He was a southerner. He was born in 1808.

After Kennedy's death, Lyndon Johnson succeeded him as the president of America. He was also a southerner. And he was born in 1908.

MARK TWAIN AND HALLEY'S COMET

Mark Twain was born in 1835. It was the same year that Halley's Comet appeared for the first time. It was a sheer coincidence that the Comet appeared in 1910 and it was in the same year that Mark Twain passed away. According to the New York Times, Mark Twain is said to have predicted, "The Almighty has said, no doubt, "Now here are these two unaccountable freaks: they came in together, they must go out together"

Strange are the coincidences. Unusual... odd... unfamiliar Are the ways of the World.... they are hard to believe but, amazing indeed.

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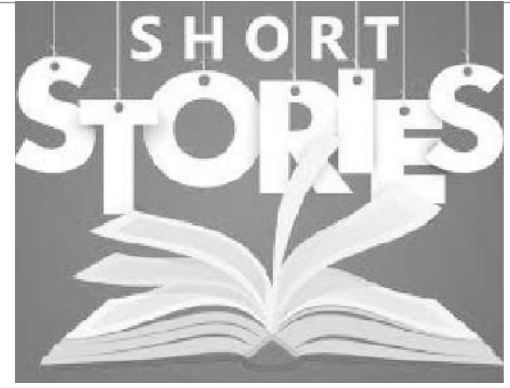


Short Story

B.R. Bhimachar

Author, (Retired) Professor of English.
Contact: 9741419764
(At 98 years, he is the youngest writer we have...!)

Chaos around a circle!



At the circle ahead of me, I was to turn right. I observed the traffic. The vehicles are coming from all directions...

Traffic lights were not functioning. The policeman who always used to be there, was not to be seen anywhere nearby. I slowed down and stopped my car just before the circle waiting for an opportune moment to make my next move. The vehicles behind me probably did not like my slowing down. They were rushing past me screeching and sounding horn like never before.

The driver of the car just behind me was grumbling in absolute irritation and indignation. He was blowing his horn as though expressing his rage at me. He lowered his window and putting his face out was screaming at me now –“Hey... Move forward. Why have you stopped? Are you waiting for this traffic to thin out? If you do not know how to drive in this sort of traffic, then why do you guys even come on road? You guys should simply stay home...”

I too lost my endurance. When everyone is stealing their way forward without giving way to anyone, why should I be patient and wait? I shouted back at the indignant driver that I was

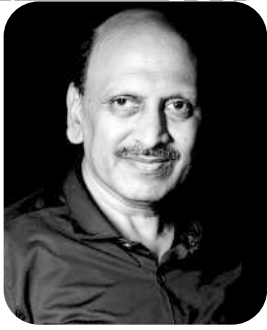
moving forward and in utter haste, released my clutch.

Vehicles were moving towards the circle from all directions. I advanced slowly. My front bumper was now almost touching the car ahead. The indignant driver behind was now almost over me. A truck which managed to sneak in towards the circle from the left was now stuck right in the middle. The auto from the opposite direction had his front wheel inside the circle and the rest begging to get in...

What a jam it was. No one could move an inch. The driver behind me was now furious about everything in the world. He was blaming the traffic, the roads, the politicians and even the God. If at all he had allowed me to wait a little longer and move when things were clear, we all would have moved on...

But who cares? Life goes on around the circle in circles...

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



Whip of Humour

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DEBATING



Off-Track: Debating the Where and How of Love

How and where does love begin? This has been an unanswered question for a long. But now so many people are ready to answer this question.

“It is all in the footwear. Right from the Ramayana days, footwear has been an intrinsic part of the attire. Bharatha did not possess the right slippers to go with the royal attire and hence went in search of Rama who had a suitable pair. This paved the way for the adage 'Shoe (Or slipper) makes the Man' and since then the men with the best footwear have been able to attract the best girls. While the boys look at girls from the head downwards the girls look at boys from the feet upwards and hence it is the footwear that will have to attract them initially. Hence we aver that footwear is where love begins” said the leading cobbler of the area.

“That may be true with the girls. But since the looks of the boys hover from the head downwards the girls will have to be more particular about their hairdo. It is the hairstyle that attracts girls to boys. Love starts from the crowning glory” said the hairstylist.

“For the hair to be stable, it is the hair cream that is important. Proper usage of hair cream will give the girls a well-groomed look. Hence it is the hair cream lotion bottles that herald the emotion of love” declared the hair cream manufacturer.

'Mere looks will not help. It has always been the

aroma emitted by the female of the species that has attracted the boys. The usage of hair oils has been the root cause for the increase in love among teenagers these days” averred the hair oil manufacturer.

“Speaking of aroma, we wish to state that the scent of hair oil is not endearing even though there are some very nice smelling hair oils in the market. But the aroma of hair oils is no competition to those emitted by our talcum powders. Hence we are proud to state that in most of the love cases, it has been the talcum powder that has been the catalyst” said powder papanna.

“Say what you will. But the real fact is that no person is said to be completely dressed unless the person wears a smile. For the smiling face to be attractive it has to show a wee bit of teeth. It is no good if such teeth are found to be unclean. The toothpaste manufactured by our company is the answer to all such imbroglios. The smile displayed by the persons after they have brushed their teeth using our paste has attracted the opposite to a great degree. That all the lovers sport a smile whenever they meet is proof that smile and hence toothpaste is the reason for love to flower and love begins with the flashy teeth” said the flash toothpaste company owner.

“Dress makes the man as well as the woman. A boy without a proper dress will never get any girl's address. Girls are always attracted by the shirts that boys wear. That is because every girl

wants to hold onto something or the other if and when the boy tries to slip away from her and the handiest is the lapel or collar of the shirt. Those who tend to jilt will be caught by the scruff of the neck and for this shirts are necessary. Thus it is the shirts that the girls love first and then the boys inside those shirts" said a wholesale shirt manufacturer.

"Again you are speaking about how girls are attracted to boys. When it comes to boys being attracted to girls it is the earrings, nose studs and necklaces that attract the boys. Once they start looking at these ornaments they also start observing the shapes of the ears, nose and so on and start appreciating the girl bit by bit. By the time such a bit-by-bit survey is complete the boy will be hopelessly in love with the girl" said the fake ornaments dealer.

"It is not the hairdo or the smile or the dress that attracts lovers to each other. It is our chips that attract each other" declared a wafer chips manufacturer "The boy will be holding an open packet of chips in his hand and munching a few wafers. The sound of the crunchy chips being munched will attract the girl. The boy will try to keep the chips packet away from the girl. The girl desperately tries to snatch the packet from him. They start quarrelling and end up loving each other. Hence, love begins in chip packets and the sound that heralds love is the crunch of the chips"

"For the boy to come to the shop and buy the said chips he will have to use a motorbike and he should drive it in a manner that would scare the daylights out of the devil itself. The boys who drive crazily and still manage to survive without any scratches on their bodies will attract the girls. It is probably because the girls will feel that such boys will not last long and a fling with them could land them good life insurance money once they skid a skid too much. Anyway it is the pillions motorbikes where love begins and the revving engine is the sound of love" said a bike unit owner.

"Bikes, shirts, makeup, ornaments and all such nonsense be hanged. It is the attitude of the boys and girls that attract each other. A shrill sounding female and a cacophonous attract each other immediately. Also, a preposterously dressed female and a boy in totally faded and torn clothing are attracted to each other like fleas to a corporation dustbin. Both the boy and the girl must possess the knack of stepping on each other's toes while dancing. It would be an additional qualification if both or at least one of them smokes and the other likes the foul smell of smoke. It is all in the attitude. Love sprouts in such claustrophobic atmospheres" declared a disco joint owner.

None of them felt that a warm heart is required to attract another equally warm heart and that only such 'welding' of hearts could lead to love and a possible wedding

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: Satyesh.bellur@gmail.com; gayathridevi2007@gmail.com
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The "Well-Read": Book Review

- Book introductions by authors & Book reviews by readers...



(Editor's Note : : It was our pleasure and privilege to invite Mrs. Anitha Nadig to share her perspectives about her recently published book titled –“A Quest for a New Career Path”. The book will motivate youngsters and the old alike to rediscover their passion and purpose as they look for an alternate career. The book is a must-read for everyone who is looking to change their course of life and find meaning while pursuing the career of their dreams.)

ABOUT THE BOOK

Anitha Nadig

Mind Coach and Emotional Wellness Counsellor
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“A Quest for a New Career Path”

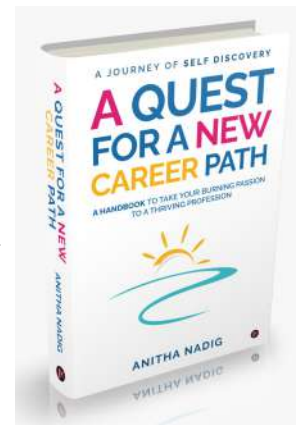
Do you ever feel like something is off in your career but you can't quite put your finger on it, like you're living in the Matrix? If you're feeling a little like Neo in The Matrix, then this book is for you. "A Quest for a New Career Path" by Anitha Nadig is a guide for anyone who feels unfulfilled in their current career and wants to discover their true passion. With practical guidance and valuable insights, the author takes the reader on a journey of self-discovery and self-transformation to help them turn their career dreams into reality.

The book is structured in a logical and easy-to-follow practical way, taking readers through the process of identifying their passion, feasibility checks, financial planning, networking, and mindset adjustments. The book is packed with practical advice, exercises, and real-life examples, making it an engaging and insightful read. The first step of the process is self-discovery, and the author stresses the importance of going “inward” regarding every stage to truly understand oneself. Anitha provides exercises and prompts to help readers

identify their passions, interests, and strengths, and how these can be aligned with their career goals.

One of the most remarkable things about the book is how the author's personal journey is intertwined with the advice she provides. Her story is inspiring and relatable, and she provides relevant examples from her own life and the lives of her clients. Another standout feature of the book is the planning guides and checklists that are provided at every phase. These tools make it easy for readers to keep track of their progress and ensure that they are on the right path to achieving their career dreams. The book also provides a handy QR code for online access to these resources, making it very convenient for readers to access and print these checklists.

Anitha Nadig's experience in the IT industry and her transformation into a wellness coach





make her the perfect person to write this book. She understands the challenges of a career change and provides valuable insights into how to overcome them. As someone who has known the author for over 20 years, I can attest to her positive attitude, go-get-it spirit, and clarity in life. Having enjoyed her previous works over the years, I immediately ordered the book on Amazon and this book was no exception!

"A Quest for a New Career Path" is an excellent book that provides practical guidance and valuable insights for anyone looking to discover their true passion and transform their career dreams into a reality. It's not just for those looking to change careers, but for anyone who wants to increase their self-awareness and unlock their potential to become a better version of themselves. The author's personal journey, combined with her experience as a wellness coach, makes this book a must-read for anyone looking to unlock their potential and lead a fulfilling life.

(Book is published by Notion Press and is priced at Rs 399 only. Those interested can order the book from Amazon or Flipkart. For copies they can also contact the author – Contact: 8277130366; anitha@mindskhya.com)



Unveiling of statue of Ex-President Late Dr. BNV SUBRAHMANYA at Ladies Hostel



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To,

