

VIPRANUDI

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Subrahmanyam Jaishankar

(Born 9 January 1955) is an Indian diplomat serving as the Minister of External Affairs of the Government of India since 30 May 2019.



Jaishankar was born in a Tamil Brahmin family in Delhi. His father was K. Subramanyam, a prominent Indian civil servant and his mother was Sulochana Subrahmanyam. He has two brothers: the historian Sanjay Subramanyam and the IAS officer S.Vijayakumar, the former Rural Development Secretary of India. Jaishankar did his schooling at The Air Force School, Delhi and at Bangalore Military School, Bengaluru. He then did his bachelor's degree in chemistry from St. Stephen's college, Delhi. He enrolled in IIT for a Master's in Chemistry but quickly realised it wasn't his natural fit. He tried different fields before he found his passion for Political Science. He then obtained his MA in political science and an M.Phil and later, PhD in international relations from JNU where he specialised in nuclear diplomacy. He was first married to Shobha who passed away from Cancer. He later married Kyoko, a Japanese.

In 2019, he was conferred with Padma Shri, India's fourth highest civilian honour. He is the first former Foreign Secretary to head the Ministry of External Affairs as a Cabinet Minister. Jaishankar is a multi-linguist and speaks English, Tamil and Hindi while also being conversational in Russian, Japanese and Chinese. Some of his quotes reflects his strong persona "Terrorism is not something that is being conducted in dark corners of Pakistan. It is done in broad daylight"

"We would not accept any country telling us who to buy weapons from and who not to buy from"

"The India way, especially now, would be more of a sharper or decider rather than just being an abstainer"

"After all, Atmanirbhar Bharat does co-exist with Vasudaiva Kutumbakam"

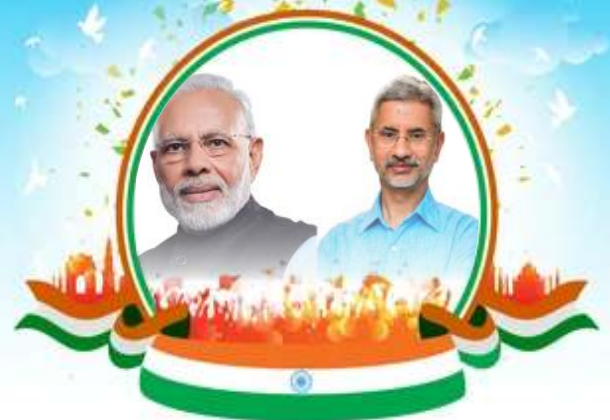
When people hailed him as the world's top diplomat he modestly regarded Lord Krishna and Lord Hanuman as the ultimate diplomats.

In 1977, he started his successful diplomatic career by joining the Indian Foreign Service (IFS). During his illustrious career spanning over 38 years, he served in different capacities in India and abroad including as a High Commissioner to Singapore (2007–2009) and as Ambassador to the Czech Republic (2001–2004), China (2009–2013) and the US (2014–2015).

Jaishankar played a key role in negotiating the Indi-US civilian nuclear agreement. On retirement, Jaishankar joined Tata Sons as their President, Global Corporate Affairs.

On 30 May 2019, he was sworn in as a Cabinet Minister in the second Modi Government. He was made the Minister of External Affairs on 31 May 2019. He played a key role in managing border tensions with China in Eastern Ladakh in 2020. His skills were tested during the recent Ukrain-Russia war when he successfully balanced India's relations with both the warring nations.

He also played a key role in strengthening India's strategic alliances with the US, Japan, Australia and France. Kudos to Modi Ji for having recognised a world-class diplomat in Jaishankar and appointing him as our External Affairs Minister.



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Presidential Message

Ashok Haranahalli
President - AKBMS

Dear Friends

Namaskaram to all my Vipra friends.

It is most welcome that the Supreme Court Constitutional Bench has ruled that the Central Government's move to abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution in 2019 is correct. This is a judgment of 'historic significance' in the history of our democracy. Two important events in India's post-independence history call out - first, the many centuries' struggle against Babur Dandanayak Mir Baki's demolition of the Sriram Mandir who built the Masjid on Ramjanmabhoomi. It was proved in the court that "it is the center of devotion of the Hindus" and now the grand Ram Mandir is being built. Another event is the known fact that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel worked hard to establish unity and integrity in the country by uniting many states. Especially his struggle to bring Hyderabad and Kashmir into India is uncommon. However, due to a few reasons, a problem arose in the matter of Kashmir. A large part of Kashmir was occupied by Pakistan. Though it is fair that Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir should join India, Article 370 of the Constitution was preventing it. Although the whole of Jammu and Kashmir was agreed to be an integral part of India even during the Constituent Assembly, in the process of merging it into India, a temporary clause in the form of a special status for Kashmir prevented other Indians from settling in Jammu and

Kashmir. Gradually, some developments forced the Kashmiri Pandits, the original inhabitants of Kashmir, out of their state.

The Constitution of India should be equally applicable to the whole of India. The dream of all Indians is not to have discrimination between the citizens of India which came true in 2019 with the abrogation of Article 370. A few people challenged this decision of the Supreme Court saying that Article 370 is temporary. Today, the court fulfilled the dream of all Indians and Sardar Patel by upholding that the President and the Parliament have the power to disable and cancel it.

The whole of India is now one. Even though it is due - to take back the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, our constitution applies now to all our territories under one administration which is something that has made Indians happy. The Centre's bold move to abrogate Article 370 is admirable as it has shown tremendous political will.

This issue of the newsletter comprises of the invitation for 'Abhijate 2024' which is the Maha Mahila Sammelanataking place on January 6-7 for women's organizations, development of women, and helping them overcome the challenges they are facing today. Expert women scholars in their respective fields will discuss the role of Vipra women in the fields of media, art literature, religion-culture, health, etc. in various panels and seminars

organized at the conference. This is being inaugurated by the country's Finance Minister Dr. Nirmala Seetharaman. I request ladies and gentlemen from all the villages and towns of the land to participate in this conference and make it a success.

For the unveiling of Maryada Purushottama's temple and the re-establishment of Sri Ramachandra Murthy, I am happy to inform you that the resolution (Sankalpa) of Akhila Karnataka Brahmin Mahasabha for Shatakoti Sri Rama Taraka for Japa Yajna has been successfully completed and more than a billion Nama Japa have been performed across the State for the sake of public welfare and prosperity. On January 22nd, the day when the centuries-old dream of Indians will come true, the Mahasabha has organized Ramataraka Maha Yaga across the

state to celebrate the re-establishment of Lord Rama's Divine Shrine in Ayodhya as a festival for all the Sanatani. On this occasion, the invitation for Sri Ramataraka Mahayaga, Sri Sita Kalyanotsava, and Sri Ramachandra Swami's Sahasra Kalashabhisheka Mahotsava arranged by the Mahasabha in Bengaluru on January 21st and 22nd, is in this issue. Requesting everyone to celebrate this day as a national festival with pomp in their respective towns. I also request all Vipras of the State and especially Vipra Bandhavas of Bengaluru to be part of the 2-day program held at Mahalakshmi Layout and be blessed by Sri Rama.

Ashok Haranahalli
Yours Truly

Ashok Haranahalli

Quotable Quotes from S Jaishankar



"The Global South are those who, whatever their limited resources, will do for other countries because we feel we all are a part of a family and their problem is our problem."



From the Editor's desk..

Satyesh N. Bellur
Editor-in-chief

Dear Readers...

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

I have an extremely happy news to share with you all. It is about Mrs. Anitha Nadig, our esteemed columnist who has been contributing valuable articles from the time the journal started its journey. Like every year, this year too Delhi Wire surveyed its readers to arrive at a list of the top 50 most influential authors of 2023. Anitha Nadig has been featured in this elite list. Her book titled "A Quest for a New Career Path" has been very well received by a large section of the readers and this has brought the referred accolade to her. I wish to quote the citation received by her as follows:

QUOTE :

This is the "Top 50 Most Influential Authors of 2023" – a campaign that unveils the genius, creativity, and impact of 50 authors who have captivated our hearts and minds with their compelling narratives, thought-provoking ideas, and unmatched storytelling prowess.

In a world where stories shape our understanding and connect us across borders, these authors have emerged as beacons of inspiration, transcending genres and pushing the boundaries of what we thought was possible with the written word. Join us as we embark on a journey to explore the diverse tapestry of literature, celebrating the profound influence these 50 authors have had on our collective literary consciousness.

Get ready to be inspired, enlightened, and transported to worlds crafted by the literary virtuosos who have earned their place among the "Top 50 Most Influential Authors of 2023."



UNQUOTE :

I had the privilege of writing the foreword for this book and as such have read the book not just as a reader, but as a critic too. The book details the author's transformation from a software engineer to a mental health councillor and enumerates the preparations she made for this life-changing decision to materialize. I would recommend this book to anyone who is thinking of making a career change and is driven more by a passion to do something that the heart is demanding than by mundane and materialistic calculations that the mind is seeking.

On behalf of the entire editorial team here, I wish Anitha Nadig the very best in all her future endeavours and also pray that many more accolades come her way.

Another milestone was achieved at AKBMS this month. The grandeur at which the 3rd state-level Women's Sammelan was conducted is a measure of how effective our organization has become under the leadership of Ashok

Harnahalli in reaching out to every section of the community and influencing people across the entire state. The entire 2-day carnival – The stage discourses, specific workshops conducted, the cultural shows, the stalls that were set up, the number of people who turned up and the colourful air of celebrations that were aroused on the occasion – were all simply outstanding! On behalf of the entire team here, I wish to congratulate every member of AKBMS that were involved in this mega show. Kudos...

It is January. Let us welcome 2024 with a resolve to make the year beautiful not just to ourselves and our loved ones, but to society at large.

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- Bank;

2- Pea;

3-Your voice;

4-Footsteps;

5-A comb

Quotable Quotes from Rahul Dravid

"I have failed at times,
but I have never stopped trying"





AKBMS – News & Events

Savithri Ramesh

Lead members of the AKBMS Women's wing.
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We have great pleasure in bringing this report highlighting some recent activities of AKBMS held during December 2023/January 2024, to your perusal:

Events and Programs of AKBMS :

1. An ambitious project of AKBMS is planned to happen on Jan 6th and 7th 2024 – Abhijathe 2024. All the initiatives, programs, and events planned before the event were to lead to the grand finale. Meeting all the Mathadhipathis and seeking their blessings, conducting various events in all the districts of Karnataka to give this event publicity and due coverage, including all the district representatives in various capacities and thus showcasing inclusiveness are being meticulously planned.
2. Tumkur District Brahmana Sabha, Akhila Karnataka Brahmana Mahsabha, and Tumkur Medical Hospital and University jointly organized a free medical camp on 16th Dec 2023 † Tumkur. About 163 Brahmins benefitted from this scheme and consulted on various medical ailments.
3. Sri Ashok Haranahalli along with Sri SudhakarBabu, KarthikBapat, K. S. Chayapathy, and Shri Hirannaiah visited the family of CaptPranjal on 30th November to offer his deep-felt condolences. As we all know, Capt Pranjal became a martyr at the borders of Jammu Kashmir recently and laid his life protecting the country from terrorist attacks. They sang the Vande Mataram

song chanted the Shanthi Mantra and prayed for the departed soul.

4. Sri Ashok Haranahalli has been awarded for his contribution to the field of education for the year 2023.
5. Sri Rama TarakaJapaYagnya was organized † Kolar district. This event was organized to spread awareness of the oncoming Women's Conference in Bangalore and also to announce the ShathaKoti Rama Nama JapaYagya event scheduled to happen on the 21st and 22nd of January in Bangalore.

A Special Report on ABHIJAATHE – 2024

6th & 7th January goes down the pages of the history of Akhila Karnataka Brahmana Mahasabha as one of the most successful and ambitious projects of Mahasabha.

Meticulous planning, wide publicity, and inclusiveness of women from all parts of Karnataka saw the super success of Abhijaathe 2024 a Vipra Mahila Samavesha.

Let us go back slightly to the time when Sri. Ashok Haranhalli took over as President of Mahasabha. One of the first things that he announced then was that we organize a state-wide conference of Vipra women to understand and address the various issues of women. He honestly believed that if the Brahmin community should stand unified as one strong community, it is the womenfolk who would be instrumental. He sowed the seeds of

this idea all across the State and ever since the event started taking shape. He made extensive plans organized the community and successfully brought them under one platform.

Abhijaathe which means a being of the higher order, as we all Brahmins are soon became an emotion, it became the mantra and became an ambitious project. Abhijaathe saw women from all walks of life from our community, representations from all the districts of Karnataka, and thousands of Vipra women flowing in to attend this mega event. A participation of nearly 15000 people marked this event as the event of our lifetime.

The three pillars of AKBMS – Samskara, Sanghatane, and Swavalambane – Upholding Tradition and Culture, Unity amongst us, and Self-sufficiency were showcased in this Conference.

6th Early morning started with the auspicious Ganapathy Homa, followed by chanting of the Vishnu Sahasranama and the LalithaSahasranama at the venue, followed by a grand inauguration function well attended by some of the most important Vipras. Smt. Nirmala Seetharaman our dear Finance Minister was supposed to flag off the event. But due to her busy schedule, couldn't make it to the event.

Sri. Tejaswi Surya MLA, Smt. Tejaswini Ananthkumar Vice President of Karnataka BJP and President of AdhanyaChethna, Sri. Gowri Shankar Administrator of Shringeri Sharada Peetam, Sri Uday Garudachar Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Sri. L.A.RaviSubramanya member of Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Sri. C.K. Ramamurthy, Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Smt. Medini Uday Garudachar, Smt. AlkaSudhirlNamdar decorated the dias.

Smt. Dr. Shubhamangala Sunil the State Convenor for Women proposed a warm

welcome to the dignitaries on the dais and the huge count of women in front of the dais. Later in the day, we had a VicharaGoshti on Women in Media participated by accomplished women from the media Smt. MalavikaAvinash, Smt. SudhaBelavadi. Between them, they shared their experiences in the Film and Theatre and on how women are portrayed on the screen. Later in the day, we had one more VicharaGoshti on Women and Culture/Faith. A lot of insights were drawn on the challenges in today's world to uphold our culture and to inculcate them into our younger generation. Shri. Shatavadhani Ganesh, Smt.AlkaNamdar led the discussion.

There were a lot of artists who displayed their talents to a very large and encouraging audience. Artists from across the State portrayed different aspects of entertainment and kept the audience enthralled and entertained. There were 3 venues where there were continuous performances. The main stage was Ubhaya Bharathi, then there was the Gargi Stage and the Parimala Stage. The finals of the Bhajane competition were held at the Parimala Stage and the artists competed with their renditions to a packed hall. AnoorAnanthaKrishna Sharma's Laya Lavanya Thaala Vadyaconcert was magical and mesmerizing and maddening. The audience went frenzy over the beats of the various percussions and the lilting flute and violin performance.

The next day morning saw another milestone reached. A grand procession from the Basavanagudi Ganesha temple to Shankarmutt of women in their most colorful attire, carrying AKBMS banners and placards of famous women of History, the chariot carrying our President Shri. Ashok Harnahalli, Smt. TejaswiniAnanthkumar, Smt. MediniUdayGarudachar, Smt. Usha Haranahalli and Smt. Shubhamangala gracefully moved along the streets,



announcing to the world that the Brahmins are a force to reckon

Drum beats, DolluKunitha, women with their kolatta, singing bhajans, Jai Shri Ram echoing through the air, it was truly a sight to behold. There was an air of camaraderie amongst all and a feeling of pride while taking this historic walk.

Later in the day, the DhiShakthi Award ceremony was organized. 34 accomplished Vipra women in various fields were awarded this title. It was truly a moment of goosebumps and the chest swelling with pride. There were women achievers in all age groups, starting from a young cricketer to a very old social activist.

Another insightful talk show was organized which spoke about the most needed topic of the day – Women and Health. A woman often neglects herself in the daily nitty-gritty of running the family, in the bargain more often than not neglecting her wellbeing. Various perspectives of how a woman needs to care for herself, and how to take care of her physical ailments and mental wellbeing were some of the few things that were discussed. Dr. Ramya Karthik, Dr. Jayanthi S, and Dr. Chandrika Muralidhar led this talk show. A lot of women said they benefitted immensely from this talk show.

Another important topic for the talk show was women's empowerment and skill development which was led by Smt. PriyaPuranik and Smt. SadhanaPote. The last of the talk shows was on Kannada Literature and Women. This chat had Dr. Anasuya Devi, Dr.MangalaPridarshini and Dr. L.G. Meera.

The entire conference was so designed that all the aspects of a woman's role or her participation or her thought process or even her own self were discussed and described very well. The conference got a lot of value addition because of such programs.

All put together the entire event was planned and organised very well. A lot of our Mahasabha put their heads together and helped immensely to put up a meaningful event. Kudos to Sri Ashok Haranahalli who is the driving force and Dr. Shubha Mangala Sunil who put her heart and soul into this event. She has been instrumental in bringing people from all over Karnataka together under one banner. Tirelessly toured all the districts, making connections with all the convenors and important people of those districts, and taking extensive steps to make full use of social media, she has truly stood up to her position and made this event possible. Congratulations to the entire team of AKBMS!



Abhijathe: Release of Souvenir



Abhijathe: Felicitation to Smt. Alka Sudhir Inamdhar



Guest Column

Ashok G Narendra

Retired Banker, Avid Bibliophile & Passionate Reader
Contact: 9611838712



Bendre's Meghadoota – Part 1

Kalidas's "Megha - Sandesham" in Sanskrit is considered one of his greatest works. It is described as a Doota-Kavya drawing inspiration from The Ramayana when Hanuman conveys Sri Rama's message to Sita. This idea became very popular and Sanskrit poets wrote outstanding poetry in which the "message" became the central theme.

D R Bendre translated MeghaSandesham into Kannada called "Meghadoota" - the cloud messenger. The gifted poet that he was, he captured gloriously Kalidas's imagination and beauty of expression. So beautiful that it is as good as original poetry to become "Bhavagrahana" and not a mere translation.

ಕವಿಯಕಮಲಕೃತಿಯಲ್ಲಿಉಂಡೆ ನಾನೊಬ್ಬ ಭಾವಭೃಂಗ ಪಕಳೆವಾತು ಉದಿರಾಡಬಹುದು, ತುಂಬೀತು ಸ್ವಾಂತರಂಗ ತೋಳುಗೀಳು ಸಡಲೀತು ಪ್ರಿಯರ ಸುಸ್ವಿಗ್ಧ ಬಂಧದಲ್ಲು ಪ್ರಾಣತುಂಬುವಾಅಧರಪಾನ ಇಳಿದೀತೆ ಉದರದಲ್ಲು?"

Meghadoot of Bendre consists of Peethike or foreword of 24 stanzas and 2 stanzas of Gratitude along with a translation of 115 Shlokas of MeghaSandesham (PoorvaMegha 63 + UttaraMegha 52)

Bendre says Meghadoota signifies Garuda, among DootaKavya. Garuda flying majestically in the high skies, makes other DootaKavyas appear like sparrows!

ನಿನ್ನದಾತ ಪಾದಗಳ ಮುಟ್ಟಿಕಟ್ಟಿದರುಕಬ್ಬವೊಂದು
ನಿನ್ನ ಭಾವ ಬೆನ್ನಟ್ಟಿಕಂಡರೋಯಾರೊ ಹಬ್ಬವೆಂದು
ನಿನ್ನದಾತಗರಿಗರುಡನಿರಿದು ಕಳುಹುವರೆ ಗುಬ್ಬಿಯೊಂದು
ಅಂಚೆ ಕೊಂಚೆ ಶುಕ ಕಾಕ ಕೋಕ ಬಕ ಕೇಕಿ ಭೇಕಿ ಎಂದು

The story is simplicity itself! AYaksha, in the service of Kubera, The God of Wealth, is

condemned to spend a year in exile, away from his recently -married wife, due to negligence on his part in the discharge of his duties. He comes down to Ramagiri(identified as present-day Ramtek near Nagpur), to spend the cursed year.

ಒಬ್ಬಯುಕ್ತತನ್ನೊಡೆಯನಿಂದ ನಲ್ಲೆಯನು ಅಗಲಿ ಬೆಂದು
ಶಪಿತ ವರುಷವನು ಕಳೆಯಲಾಗದೇ ಮಹಿಮೆ ಕಳೆದುಕೊಂಡು||
ಜನಕತನಯೆ ಮಿಂದುದಕಗಳಲಿ ತಣ್ಣೆಳಲ ಅಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ
ವಸತಿ ನಿಂದನೋರಾಮಗಿರಿಯ ಪುಣ್ಯಾಶ್ರಮಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ||

He has spent 8 months in solitary confinement and has become thin and depressed mentally. Almost mad! The sweet memories of the days spent with his beloved, chase him through day and night. The cursed Yaksha is only a shadow of himself, caused by the painful separation. The Golden bangle - KADAGA -on his forearm has slipped to his elbow in this short period. Thus it is a story of longing (Viraha). Bendre in the foreword describes the Earth's Viraha thus:

ಮಣ್ಣು ಹೆಣ್ಣು ಬಾನೊಡೆಯನಿಂದ ಅಗಲಿಹಳನಾದಿಯಿಂದ
ವಿರಹವಣೆಯಲಿ ತಿರುಗೆ ತಿರುಗುವಳು ಹೊತ್ತು ಸುತ್ತಿನಿಂದ
ಕಣ್ಣು ನೀರುಕಡಲಾಗಿಕಾದುಉಗಿಯಾಗಿ ಮೋಡವಾಗಿ
ಎದೆಗೆಉದುರೆ ಬಾನಿಂದ, ನವಿರುವಳು ಹೃದಯ ಹಚ್ಚನಾಗಿ

A natural phenomenon of Earth going around the Sun appears to the poet like the separation of two celestial bodies in Viraha!

With the arrival of Shravana come clouds, cooling the Earth. His spirit revives and he wants to send a message of his well-being to his wife imagining her plight, with her beloved in exile. He seeks to do this through the clouds that the wind carries, from Ramagiri to Alakapuri!

ಬಂದು ಶ್ರಾವಣಾ, ಎಂತು ಬದುಕುವಳೊ ಮಡದಿ ಜೀವ ಉಳಿಸಿ
ಮೋಡದೊಡನೆ ತನ್ನೊಳಿತಿನೊಸಗೆಯನು ಅಂತೆ ಕಳಿಸಲೆಳಸಿ ||
ಬೆಟ್ಟ-ಮಲ್ಲಿಗೆಯ ಹೊಚ್ಚ ಹೂವಿನೊಡ ಕಾಲನೀರ ನೀಡಿ
ಇದಿರುಗೊಂಡು ಬರಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಬಲಿದೊಲಿವ ಮಾತನಾಡಿ ||

He requests Megha to carry and deliver his message to his beloved. Sensing reluctance, he pleads and requests him to do this favour somehow, while flattering Megha and his dynasty in a sweet speech. The journey from Ramagiri to Alakanagari is long and arduous. He describes the route which is full of hills, rivers, forests, and cities with temples and many interesting things worthy of enjoyment.

ಹಾದಿ ಹೇಳುವೆನು ಕೇಳು ನಿನಗೆ ಅನುಕೂಲ ಪಯಣಕಾಗಿ
ಬಳಿಕ ನನ್ನ ಸಂದೇಶ ಕಿವಿಗೆ ಪರಿಣಮಿಸಲಮೃತವಾಗಿ||
ತೊಳಲಿ ಬಳಲಿ ಗಿರಿ ಶಿಖರಗಳಲಿ ಕಾಲಿಟ್ಟು ಸಾಗುವಾಗ
ದಣಿವತವಿಸು, ನೀರಿನಿಸೆ ಸವಿಸಿ ಆ ಹಳ್ಳ ಕೊಳ್ಳದಾಗ||

The route takes him through Dashaarna, Vidisha, Ujjaini, Avanti of King Udayana, Devagiri, Brahmavartha, Kanakhala, and beyond into the heavenly Himalayas to reach the city of Alakapuri. Even today this route can be followed, which stands as testimony to the poet's geographical knowledge and extensive wanderings. Yaksha points to the route that is most suitable to travel and describes the various landmarks till Megha reaches Vidisha.

ಕೃ ದಿಕ್ಕಿನಲಿ ವಿಧಿಶೆಯೆಂದು ಹೆಸರಾದರಾಜಧಾನಿ
ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಹೋಗಿ ಬಯಬಯಸಿದಂಥ ಹಣ್ಣೆನ್ನು ಕಾಮುಕಾ, ನೀ||
ಹುಬ್ಬು ಮುರಿವ ಬೆಡಗುಳ್ಳ ಮುಖಿಕೆ ಸರಿ ವೇತ್ರವತಿಯ ನೀರು
ಅವಳ ಬಳಿಗೆ ಗುಡುಗುಡಿಸಿ ಸೊಬಗ, ನೀನವಳ ಸವಿಯ ಹೀರು||

For Northbound Megha, Ujjain is off the main road but he cannot miss the festivities of ladies in the high-rise buildings of Ujjain, as otherwise, having eyes is wasteful! He requests Megha, "At night when the young girls in love, stealthily and hurriedly go to their men, please don't frighten them by your sound and lightning for they are frightened by the darkness and night, already. Just flash your lightning to show them the way"!

ಉತ್ತರಕ್ಕೆ ಹೊರಟಿವೆಗೆಲುಜ್ಜಯಿನಿ ಅಡ್ಡವಾದರೇನು?
ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಮೇಲುಮಾಳಿಗೆಯ ಭೋಗ ಕಳಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಡ ನೀನು||
ಆ ಊರ ಹೆಂಗಸರ ಕಣ್ಣುಬಳಿ ಮಿಂಚೆ ಮಿಣುಕುವನ್ನು
ಅವರಕಣ್ಣ - ಕುಡಿ - ಲಲ್ಲೆಯೊಲ್ಲೆಯಾ? ವೃಥಾಇದ್ದುಕಣ್ಣು||

As he goes up further, he comes across Nirvindhya, a river that has lost much of its water in summer and appears white with all the dry leaves that cover the middle. She eagerly awaits to welcome Megha to replenish her with rain.

ನಿನ್ನಕಂಡು ನಿರ್ವಿಂಧ್ಯೆ ಮುಂದೆ, ತೆರೆತೆರೆದು, ಅಂಚೆ ಉಲಿಸಿ
ಗೆಜ್ಜೆ ಪಟ್ಟಿ ಗಿಲುಕೆನಿಸಿ, ಎಡವಿ, ಸುಳಿನಾಭಿ ತೋರಿ ನಲಿಸಿ||
ಹಾದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬರೆ, ಆಗು ಸಮರಸಿಯು ಕೇಳಬೇಡ ಬದಲು
ಹೆಣ್ಣಿನೊಲವಿನಲಿ ಮಳ್ಳ ಮುರುಕವೇ ಮಾತಿಗಿಂತ ಮೊದಲು||

ಹೆಳಲು ಇಳಿದು ಒಕ್ಕಾಲು ಉಳಿದು, ನಡೆದಿಹಳು ತೆಳ್ಳಗಾಗಿ
ದಡದ ಮರದ ಒಣ ಎಲೆಗಳುದುರಿ ತನ್ನದರ ಬೆಳ್ಳಗಾಗಿ||
ನೀನು ಸೊಬಗ, ನಿನ್ನಿಂದ ಆಗಲಿ ತಾ ಸೊರಗಿ ಸಣ್ಣಗಹಳು
ದೈವದಿಂದ ನಿನ್ನನ್ನು ಸೇರಿ ಮೈದುಂಬಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹಳು||

Further up he will reach the territory of Avanti Nadu of King Udayana. Avanti is so enchanting that it is but a piece of heaven brought down to earth by those who returned from paradise after exhausting their stock of Punya. Such glorious imagery!

ಬಂದವಂತಿನಾಡಿನಲಿ ಉದಯನನಕಥೆಯ ಬಲ್ಲರಲ್ಲ
ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿರಿಯು ಹರಹಿರುವ ಪೂರ್ವಪುರವಿಹುದು ನಿಲ್ಲುಅಲ್ಲಿ||
ಪುಣ್ಯವಂತರೋ, ಪುಣ್ಯತೀರಲಿರೆ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಉಳಿಯಲಾಗ
ಸ್ವರ್ಗದೊಂದುತುಣುಕನ್ನೆತಂದರೋ ಇಳಿಗೆ ಇಳಿಯುವಾಗ||

As the first mild raindrops dampen the earth in Devagiri, the pleasant smell of earth spreads around and the elephants smelling it with their trunk hold it up and run around. Simultaneously the breeze that ripens fruits in trees welcomes you to Devagiri.

ನಿನ್ನ ಉಸಿರ ಹನಿ ಸೋಕಿ, ನೆಲದ ನರುಗಂಪು ಹೊಮ್ಮಿತಾಗಿ
ಬಂದ ಗಾಳಿ ಕುಡಿದಾನೆತಾನೆ ಹರಿ ಮೂಗೆ ಸೊಂಡಿಲಾಗಿ||
ಕಾಡಅತ್ತಿ ಹಣ್ಣೊಳಿಸುವಂಥ ತಂಗಾಳಿ ಇದಿರು ಬಂದು
ದೇವಗಿರಿಯ ಸೇರಿಸುವದಣ್ಣ, 'ಬಿಜ ಮಾಡಿತಾವು' ಎಂದು||

Thus the poet gives many interesting details of life and people for Megha to enjoy and reach Alakanagari.



Thus Spake Lord Krishna

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Energy to matter- matter to energy

Studying the Bhagavad Gita is comparable to delving into the realms of science. Krishna's discourse is notably logical and practical. He articulates the concept of matter emerging from energy and, in turn, being transformed back into energy—a profound cycle from energy to matter to energy. Our existence lies within this cycle: we originate from the energy referred to as Paramatma Tatva, God, or the supreme soul. In our journey, we engage in actions, with the energy required for these actions originating from the same source. Eventually, we undergo dissolution and return to that source.

The question arises: why do human beings and the entire created world seemingly endure suffering without any fault of their own? The answer lies in the fact that the created world is nothing but manifestations of the same energy. Krishna articulates this unity in several verses of his discourse.

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।

मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥

mamaivānśhojīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥsanātanaḥ
manaḥ-ṣaṣṭhānīndriyāṇiprakṛiti-sthānikarṣhati
(Gita 15.7)

Krishna not only asserts that the entire creation is an integral part of him but also offers insights into why we may perceive a disconnection. The Supreme soul's primal

desire to manifest into many entities initiated the action of creation, resulting in a cascade of karmic consequences through each amsha of Bhagavanta. These amshas, harbor desires, perpetuating the cycle of karma. The relentless pursuit of these desires keeps them entangled in the cycle of life and death. The root of these desires lies in the fascination the amsha or soul, develops for the created world. It represents the soul deviating from its true identity and becoming entwined with the material realm.

Arjuna's predicament serves as an illustration of how souls find themselves ensnared in confusion. The Bhagavad Gita, a reservoir of profound wisdom, addresses the fundamental queries of our existence, elucidating who we are, and the purpose of our being, and guiding transcending this earthly realm. The 15th chapter, known as Purushottama Yoga, contains verses that offer profound insights into these existential questions.

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥

śhrī-bhagavānuvācha
ūrdhva-mūlamadhaḥ-
śhākhamashvatthamprāhuravyayam
chhandānsiyasyaparnāniyastamvedasaveda-vit
(Gita 15.1)

Krishna draws a parallel between the observable world and an inverted ashvattha tree. The roots of this tree extend into the skies. The knowledge that what created us surrounds and permeates us is foundational. Analogous to a seed developing roots when sown in the soil, the significance of roots is evident for the sustenance of a plant or tree. If the roots perish, the tree will die, but if the rest of the tree is damaged and the root remains intact, regeneration is possible.

The symbolism of the inverted world tree stems from its root being the supreme soul, the Parmatma Tatva, situated in the skies. Without this divine essence, the world would cease to exist. The Parmatma Tatva entrusted the intricacies of creation to Brahma, symbolized as the trunk of the tree. Just as leaves nourish a tree, the Vedas serve as the leaves of this cosmic tree, enriching the soul to foster personal growth and a better life. However, it is crucial to recognize that the Vedas should not be exploited solely for personal gain. The Vedavit, one who comprehends their essence, understands that attention must shift from the branches to the root—the creator of the cosmic tree.

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते
नान्तो न चादिर्न च सम्प्रतिष्ठा ।
अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूल
मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा ॥
ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं
यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।
तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये
यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥

narūpamasyehatathopalabhyate
nāntonachādirna cha sampratishṭhā
aśvatthamenamsu-virūḍha-mūlam
asaṅga-śhastreṇadriḍhenachhittvā(Gita 15.3)

tataḥpadam tat parimārgitavyam
yasmingatānanivartantibhūyaḥ
tam evachādyam̐puruṣham̐prapadye
yataḥpravṛtīḥprasṛitāpurāṇī(Gita 15.4)

This tree is deceptive in its appearance, for it undergoes constant change. The world we perceive is in a perpetual state of flux-empires rise and fade, relationships evolve, and our bodies undergo continuous transformations. Despite appearances, even a flowing river, seemingly constant, undergoes continuous change. This dynamism is why the tree is named Ashvattha. In Sanskrit, 'shvah' denotes tomorrow, and Ashvattha signifies that which has no tomorrow. Despite our awareness that change is inevitable, there is a persistent human endeavor to maintain the status quo. However, this pursuit often leads to frustration, anger, and, ultimately, sadness.

Krishna advises against clinging to impermanence and suggests using the sharp sword of detachment to sever the alluring yet transient tree. By doing so, one can gain insight into the eternal—the root of the tree, symbolic of the creator. This detachment allows for a profound understanding of what endures amid the ever-changing landscape of existence.

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।
पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥

gāmāviśhya cha bhūtānidhārayāmyahamojasā
puṣṇāmichaushadhīḥsarvāḥsombhūtvārasātmaka
ḥ(Gita 15.13)

The supreme soul not only resides within all of creation, infusing it with 'life,' but also provides sustenance by becoming the nourishment essential for all living beings.

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥

ahamvaiśhvānarobhūtvāprāṇināmdehamāśhritaḥ
prāṇāpāna-samāyuktaḥpachāmyannaṁchatur-
vidham (Gita 15.14)

The digestive juices play a crucial role in breaking down the food consumed by creatures, converting it into energy essential for their survival. In essence, matter transforms back into energy by Bhagavanta as Vaishvanara.

Yet, a question remains: How will the remaining matter we observe revert to its original source of energy?

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो
लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे
येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥

śhrī-bhagavānuvācha
kālo 'smiloka-kṣhaya-kṛitpravṛiddho
lokānsamāhartumihapravṛittah
ṛite'pi tvāṁnabhaviṣhyantisarve
ye 'vasthitāḥpratyanikeṣhuyodhāḥ (Gita 11.32)

He is the Kala (death, destroyer) actively engaged in the dissolution of the world. This

act mirrors the earlier metaphor of cutting the world tree with the sword of detachment. The apparent world is merely a manifestation of our desire to exist within it. Once we recognize its impermanence, we come to the profound realization that we lack nothing and possess everything. This insight emerges from our intrinsic connection to the energy that is the very source and creator of all that surrounds us.

This concept is very well captured in the Shanti mantra from the Upanishads

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

We are integral components of the supreme soul, the Paramatma. In his completeness, we find our own fulfillment. Perceiving ourselves as separate from Him renders us incomplete, yet the ultimate truth is our perpetual unity with the supreme soul. By promptly severing the world tree, we reunite with that primal energy, embracing completeness and experiencing profound bliss.

Quotable Quotes from S Jaishankar

“We would not accept any country telling us who to buy weapons from and who not to buy from”





My Quest for Spiritual Well-being

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The tougher it gets, the better for well-being...

What is the sole objective of our life's journey? This search has been troubling the human race for centuries and different philosophers at different times and from different faiths have given different explanations. To me, the one answer that stands out is what Vedas offer. It is simple and yet, profound.

It is true that this body of ours is perishable whereas the soul is eternal. Since we believe in the concept of rebirth, it is easier for us to understand that the soul is on an eternal journey and based on its karma (I have discussed this in an earlier article), it takes different body forms (humans, animals, plants, etc) at different times and continues its journey. In other words, the almighty created a body structure for the souls to occupy and relentlessly and endlessly continue their journey. At this juncture, it is clear to us that though the soul is on its journey, it needs a body to enhance its well-being. It needs a medium to earn its well-being. Therefore, in our Vedic concepts, both the body and the soul are equally important. One lends support to the other to achieve well-being. Both are indispensable to each other.

Now the question that daunts us is – What is the Well-being of the soul? How do we recognise that what we do is helping the soul to enhance its well-being or is it destroying its very purpose?

ಆನಂದದನುಭವವೇ ಆತ್ಮನಾ ಹೆಗ್ಗುರಿಯು |
ಮಾನವನ ದೇಹವೇ ಅದಕೆ ಸಾಧನವು ||
ಅನಿಸುತ್ತೊಳಿತುಗಳ ತೊರೆಯುತ್ತ ಕೆಡಕುಗಳ |
ಜ್ಞಾನಿಯಾದರೆ ಜಯವು - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

We can find answers to these questions in Vedas. It is said that the almighty created the world (that includes all the body forms and the inert objects around) in order to help the soul experience “bliss” which happens to be the innate and integral manifestation of the almighty himself, at all times! So, when we say “soul is journeying towards achieving its well-being, we actually mean that the soul is on an eternal attempt to realise and experience that bliss”.

Once we realise that “experiencing bliss” is the sole objective of the soul and the body form is being its medium to acquire this, it also becomes the sole objective of all our lives. It becomes easier for us then to search for all those aspects and activities that help the soul (and in other words, us too) to achieve bliss. Whatever we do in our lives – in terms of thoughts, words and actions, has a direct bearing on the capability of the soul within to experience bliss. How do we then list those activities that are good for us and those activities that are not so good for us, given the fact that there is an innumerable number of activities that we indulge in?

India's spiritual wisdom comes in handy here. It does not list the infinite number of activities and segregates them as “Do's &

Don'ts" as done by the other belief systems of the world. It simply puts all of them into two buckets: the ones that are easy to accomplish and the ones that are tougher to accomplish. It concludes thereupon that the easier ones will take you away from and the tougher ones will take you closer to experiencing bliss.

This sounds a little weird, right? Let us look at some examples: When you see a purse full of money on the roadside, it is easier for you to pocket it under temptation while it is a difficult decision to find its true owner and hand it back to him; It is easier to visit a temple and put up an act of orthodoxy in front of the public while it is very difficult to be sitting alone in your little house and meditating upon the almighty in absolute silence and away from people's attention and praise; It is easier to feel jealous about your friend's success while it is very difficult to appreciate him for all his efforts and from the bottom of the heart, wish him well; It is easier to blame the world (sometimes including the God also) for all your mistakes while it is very difficult to accept full responsibility for your wrong deeds and make amends; It is easier to cheat while it is very difficult to stay upright and righteous – and the list goes on. From these few examples, if you

have realised that the tougher ones actually made you feel genuinely happy (blissful) and the easier ones always brought misery and ill-being at the end of it all, you have already realised all those activities that are blissful. It is as simple as this... ಕಷ್ಟಕರವಾದದ್ದೇ ಶ್ರೇಯಸ್ಕರ !

ಅರೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಯತ್ನದೊಳೆ ಯಶವು ಬೇಕೆಂದೆನಲು |
ಅರಸುವನು ತರವಿರದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಯುಕ್ತಿಗಳ ||
ಚಿರಕಾಲದಾಟದಲಿ ಚಿರಸುಖವ ಬಯಸಿರಲು |
ಸರಿದಾರಿಯೊಂದೆ ಪಥ - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

Spirituality is all about understanding the essence of any principle and practice and imbibing that essence beyond its limits into our daily life till the final realisation occurs. Against this backdrop, pursuing all those practices that are easy to accomplish might not be the best way forward to experience bliss. On the contrary, the tougher the thoughts, decisions, speech and actions become, they all lead to our well-being. To a blissful life!

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)

1. I have branches, but no fruit, trunk or leaves. What am I?
2. A seed with three letters in my name. Take away two and I still sound the same. What am I?
3. I'm an instrument through which sounds are made, and yet, not something that can be played. What am I?
4. The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
5. I have many teeth but I can't bite. I'm often used early but rarely at night. What am I?

(Compiled by Sudhir S Mysore)



Mind over Matter

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The Scary Pony Ride

"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf." - Jon Kabat-Zinn

Anxiety is an emotion that everyone experiences one or the other time. It is neither good nor bad by itself. The good or bad is based on the situations where it appears. Here is a personal story about anxiety and ways of dealing with it.

It was on my bucket list to visit Kashmir for a long time. Hearing the news about the terrorist attacks in Kashmir from the media, I was always anxious to plan a trip to this place.

When my husband expressed his desire to see the snow in Kashmir, I had to make up my mind to overcome anxiety about visiting this place and that is how this trip happened.

Once we decided to travel to Kashmir, I started following the news about it and updates on situations there. I also started talking to people who had visited Kashmir recently. We found a good travel agent who had experience in conducting tours in this place. With all these efforts, I got confidence that the tourist places in Kashmir are safe and the sensitive areas in Kashmir are at a distance of 200-250 km away from these places. That gave me a lot of relief.

A good start is half done. I had conquered my fear to an extent to start the journey. When we landed at Srinagar airport, seeing the CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force), a shrill nervousness passed through my body. As we traveled to our houseboat in Dal Lake, we could see the CRPF here and there with big guns and rifles. My mind started generating

thoughts of fear. I was getting thoughts like, 'O my god, there are so many police forces here. This place is not safe. This was repeating in my mind. After some time, I realized that CRPF is there to ensure safety. I should feel safe because of their presence and not panic with fear. This change in perspective helped in reducing my fear. Within one day, my mind got familiar with seeing the CRPF force and got habituated to it.

The first day we enjoyed the Dal Lake and Shikara ride. On the second day, we traveled to Pahalgam to see the beautiful valleys. A viewpoint called 'Mini Switzerland' was on our list. The only way to reach this place from the base point was on a Pony (A pony is a breed of horse that is smaller in size). When I heard that we had to go on a Pony, I started to worry. My earlier experience of horse riding was not that pleasant. It was so difficult for me to get on and off the horse because of my height. I had pulled my muscles and had suffered with pain for 2-3. My worrisome thoughts kicked in again. 'What if I face issues getting on the horse? What if I fall down while getting down?' I started getting these negative thoughts which increased my anxiety. Also, I was scared of the terrain. I had heard stories about 'pony rides' where the pony walks on the edge of the cliff. The experiences I had heard were very scary. With a skeptical mind, I sat in the car which drove towards Mini Switzerland. Around that time, I got a call from my brother. He was checking on us and our itinerary. When I told him about the pony ride, he immediately mentioned that the pony is not as tall as the horse. He had witnessed my horse experience

earlier and gave me confidence that I would be able to get on the pony easily. That reduced half of my anxiety. We reached the base and started talking to the pony guys. I asked a pony guy about the terrain. Sensing my anxiety, he said that the route was not steep. With that, my anxiety further came down and I was kind of okay to explore the pony ride.

I could get on a pony without much hassle. Pony started walking. The caretaker of the Pony, the Ponywala was also with us, walking along with the Pony. The terrain was a mix of plain land and road. I was so happy and thought that unnecessarily I was scared so much. Within a few minutes, we reached a terrain that was slushy and rocky. My anxiety was back. Pony slipped twice and my heart skipped a beat. It was an uphill journey initially. Ponywala started giving me instructions on how to have a balance on the pony. He asked us to lean forward when it was uphill and lean backward down the hill.

Initially, it was difficult for me to follow his instructions. As I paid attention to him and started to follow the instructions, I was more confident to have the balance. By the time I felt I got a hold of the pony, we reached a terrain where there was a steep valley on one side and a mountain on the other side. Pony had its own whims and fancies. It started to walk on the edge of the valley. I got very scared and started telling the Ponywala to ask the pony to walk on the other side.

Ponywala laughed and told me, 'Madam, this is a regular route to Pony. Trust the pony and you will be safe'. I was so scared to look at the valley. My heartbeat increased along with my anxiety. My thoughts raced at high speed generating all possible negative outcomes like, 'It is so steep, what if I fall and break my leg?', 'What if I lose balance and the pony drags me on the floor?', 'What if I fall and hit my head on a rock?'. Within 10 minutes I could hear my own heartbeat as it had become faster

and louder.

As my thoughts became unbearable, I told myself that I needed to take control of my thoughts and the discomforts in my body. I had no choice because I could not get down and walk in that terrain. That needed a knack I didn't have. My rational mind started telling me to apply CBT*(Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) and other techniques to calm down my nervous system. Slowly, I started to do a 'candle breathing'* exercise. Within 5 minutes of continuous candle breathing, my heartbeat slowed down. I started challenging my thoughts as I saw people who were returning from the trip on Pony. 'What is the chance of me falling down?', 'How many people have fallen from the pony today?', 'There were so many people going and coming on the pony. Did I see anyone falling down?' Asking these questions and answering them helped me to bring a perspective on reality. I had not seen anyone fall down or even heard anyone falling down the pony that day. If there were a lot of falls and injuries due to the pony ride, it would have been banned. Thinking rationally helped me to isolate the perceived threats from real threats. I also realized there was a risk with pony rides. But that could be mitigated with the right knowledge, trusting the horse, and following the ponywala's instructions.

While I was dealing with my anxiety through thoughts, Pony had its own way. It used to go off the trail or used to start running sometimes. My anxiety used to increase and my negative thoughts used to race. I started reframing my negative thoughts to positive ones. I started telling myself loudly in a rhythmic way, 'Trust the horse and lean back. The horse knows the job well while going downhill and 'Trust the horse and lean forward. The horse knows the job well while going uphill. Telling myself to trust the horse and keeping the right posture on the pony further reduced my anxiety and slowly I started to



relax. Once I started to relax, I was able to enjoy the beautiful scenery around me. I continued reframing my thoughts loudly and rhythmically (like chanting a mantra) and occasionally did candle breathing when my anxiety spiked.

Mini Switzerland was indeed beautiful. The way back on the Pony was much more enjoyable as I was able to relax. When we finished that trip, I was very happy with myself dealing with anxiety successfully.

Finally, the Kashmir trip was successful. We came back safely with many cherished moments.

In a nutshell, anxiety can be managed with the right tools. Here are some pointers to manage your anxiety.

1. Knowledge is power. Knowledge from the right sources about the thing that causes anxiety helps to reduce worries.
2. Exposing oneself to the feared object (though it creates discomfort initially) helps in reducing anxiety.
3. Asking questions and clearing your doubts helps to get a realistic picture.
4. In some cases, anxiety can be triggered due to a lack of skill in dealing with a thing. Recognizing and building skills is crucial.
5. Practice, practice, practice. It brings down anxiety.
6. Anxiety is a perceived threat. That means it is not a real problem or the problem is not immediate. Recognize whether the anxiety stems from a real issue or a perceived one. Real issues need to be solved while anxiety needs to be dealt with.
7. Anxiety means the human body goes into fight or flight mode triggered by the autonomous nervous system (ANS)). Candle breathing and chanting help the

ANS calm down and get out of the Fight or Flight response.

8. Anxiety manifests as thoughts too. CBT helps to deal with it.

Anxiety can be managed to a greater extent with the tested techniques mentioned in this story. You can't stop the waves. But you can learn to surf. Find a professional who can teach you to surf!

*Candle Breathing: Visualize a candle and inhale from the nose and exhale from the mouth as if one is trying to blow out the candlelight.

*CBT is a talking therapy that can help you manage your problems by changing the way you think and behave. It's most commonly used to treat anxiety and depression but can be useful for other mental and physical health problems.

Recently, I had a conversation with a friend who is dealing with anxiety. She does not believe in therapy and hence was not willing to explore it. When I told her that there are tools and techniques to deal with anxiety, she wanted real-life examples where therapy has helped. I was just back from a Kashmir trip and I shared my experience with anxiety and how I dealt with it using some techniques.

This conversation triggered me to write this article about how I dealt with my anxiety while going on a pony ride in the valleys of Kashmir.

1. Knowledge is power. When you are anxious, try to gather information about the topic of your anxiety from the RIGHT sources. By talking to different people who knew about Kashmir or had been there before helped me to gain knowledge and information about Kashmir. This reduced my anxiety.
2. Check if your anxiety is stemming from



foreseeing a real problem or it is a perceived problem. If the problem is real, you need to accept it and start acting to find a solution.

- a. Ask yourself if the problem has an immediate impact. Is it life-threatening? Come up with a solution/s, based on the urgency and importance.
- b. Look for a workaround when there is no direct solution
- c. Accept the problem when there is no solution. This may take time or need a helping hand.

Thinking rationally about the pony ride helped me to assess the probability of risks involved. Once I could understand the probability of the risk, I was also able to figure out the risk mitigation actions.

3. If the problem is not real, recognize whether your anxiety manifests in thought, emotional, physical layers, or in combinations. Use appropriate techniques to deal with your anxiety.

- a. Thought Layer: CBT helps
- b. Emotional Layer: Acknowledge and accept your emotions
- c. Physical layer: Breathing exercises and relaxation may help

Based on the severity of the anxiety, medicines may be required.

In my case, I was able to identify anxiety at all three layers. I used thought challenging and thought reconstruction from CBT for my thought layer, used candle breathing and chanting the reconstructed thoughts to deal with physical discomfort, and acknowledged and accepted my emotion as anxiety at an emotional layer. All these techniques helped me to manage my anxiety and not to avoid the situation(pony ride in this case) because of my anxiety.

By narrating this story to my friend, she was convinced and inspired enough to get professional help. Maybe, with this story, you could help someone with anxiety to give them a ray of hope.



Quotable Quotes from Rahul Dravid

"You don't win or lose the games because of the 11 you select. You win or lose with what those 11 do on the field"



Performing Arts...

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Sree Purandara Dasaru (1484AD to 1564 AD)

Sree Purandara Dasaru was born to Varadappa Nayaka and Rukmini who were rich diamond merchants. His poorvashrama name was Srinivasa Nayaka. There exist different opinions regarding his birthplace. It is strongly believed that he was born in a place called Agara at Teertha Halli in the family of Kannada deshadshta madhwa. Deshadshtas are those who migrated from Maharashtra to south Indian states. Sree Purandara Dasa acquired knowledge in Sanskrit, Kannada, and sacred music. He was married to smt.Saraswathi Bai at the age of 16. He had four sons namely, Varadappa, Gururaya, Abhinavappa, and Madhwapati.



The contribution and achievement of Sree Purandara Dasa need a voluminous write-up. As a composer, he has composed an number of varied compositions mostly in Kannada. His compositions can be studied under two main branches ie, literary and musical further it can be branched out under the various angles viz, implications of navarasas,navavidha bhakti,

varied compositional forms etc. Because of this very reason, he is aptly entitled "Sangeetha pitamaha".His holistic works are popularly known as "purandaropanishad".He is said to have composed 4,75,000 compositions...His compositions include devaranamas, ughabhogas, baalapatha for the beginners of Karnatak music, and pillarigeethe, which are sung all over the world.

Sri. Purandara Dasa's life history can be explained in two segments. His life in the first half is a picture of him being a miser. The colorful story of the incidence of him turning into a spiritual person is very popular. I feel I can skip it as everyone knows about it. He was very popularly Nicknamed "Navakoti Narayana", as he possessed nine crores of assets. He is said to have been the incarnation of Sri.Narada. With the concept of imparting the right way of life, from time to time various isms blossomed throughout the world.

India, being a land of spiritual abode, witnessed several religious flows of thoughts. It was the "Sanatana Dharma" which emerged as a blend of Indian ancient culture of life and rituals .shaivism, Vaishnavism,sree Vaishnavism, Buddhism, and Jainism, are the other prominent philosophical schools in India. We are gifted with 18 puranas, such as Vishnu Purana, Siva Purana, Garuda Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Devi Purana, etc which are the earliest sources of information about Indian philosophy at large. It can be said that these Puranas paved the way for the origin of various reformations in Indian history.

Let us connect to the topic of this article. Shree purandara dasa who was the "ಪಟ್ಟಿ ಶಿಷ್ಯ" of the great saint, Shree Vyasaraaya during the second half of his life, gave away all the wealth he had hoarded to the needy and with a ಜೋಳಿಗೆ, started ಊಂಚ ವೃತ್ತಿ, a unique way of living only on limited collection of groceries collected from chosen houses. All of the family members also joined him. It is where he, with his family, spontaneously composed en number of songs which were sung on streets. This symbolises the fact that the first step to spiritual upliftment is shredding away the "ego" in oneself and becoming lighter to climb the ladder of salvation easily. This can be proved by one of the compositions of purandara dasa wherein he says "ಅದದ್ದಲ್ಲ ಒಳಿತೇ ಆಯಿತು..."

It is an astonishing fact to know that the guru himself praised his shishya in one of his guru's songs, "ದಾಸರೆಂದರೆ ಪುರಂದರ ದಾಸರಯ್ಯಾ". It is indeed a very rare example of the magnanimity of the guru and the depth of knowledge the student has acquired which was used to enlighten the society.

Sree Purandara Dasa was an ardent devotee of lord Mahavishnu. This is depicted in all his songs. The Haridasas followed Vaishnavism and attributed their unchallenged devotion towards Lord Vasudeva, by composing thousands of songs in praise of all the ten incarnations of lord Vishnu. It is interesting to know that all of them followed the tradition of "ತಾರತಮ್ಯ", which is a unique principle of worshipping various forms of God according to their placements. Dualism being the strong belief of Dwaita philosophy, all Haridasas gave prominence to visualise the concept of differentiation, portraying the fact that both Atma and Paramatma are different. Where in the Advaita philosophy believes in the fact that both atma and Paramatma are the same "ಅಹಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾಸ್ಮಿ", the ultimate truth according to sree shankara charya.

It is noteworthy that all Haridasas have composed many devaranamas on Lord Ganesha, goddess Parvathi, lord Shiva, and lord subrahmanya who are prioritised deities of Shaivism. purandara dasa s Ankita was "ಪುರಂದರ ವಿಠಲ" which was named so by his guru. There is a strong belief that Purandara dasa hailed from a place called Purandaragadh in Pandarapura, a religious centre in Maharashtra where lord vittala is worshipped.

It is also believed that lord vittala is "ಭಜನ ಪ್ರಿಯ". Maybe for this very reason, almost all the songs of Haridasas are sung in Bhajan tradition and Hari Katha kalakshepa in Karnataka.

Small footwork was one of the inevitable parts of doing bhajans with a pair of "ಚಿಟಿಕೆ", a unique musical instrument used by hands stretching upwards. This can be understood as the total submission to the Lord's feet by ಕಾಯಾ,ಮಾನಸಾ,ವಾಚಾ...

The gaatha or the story of sree purandara dasa has no end .It is indeed never possible to completely analyse all the factors of purandara dasa being called very popularly the "janaka of karnatak music".

In my next article, I intend to analyse the various types of compositions that Sree Purandara Dasa composed.





Crime Prevention - A Criminologist's Perspective

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Geoeconomics... A seed for extreme violence?

A happy family... A couple, a child, and a dog enjoying daily life. Here comes the stressors mortgages, loans... A large house, 3 three cars, an exotic vacation... Above average lifestyle... How does this story continue?? The world sees wars, earthquakes, floods, Pandemics, and other disasters... the govt and bankers increase interest rates, inflation rates hit the roof, Economic slowdown hits the market and the cloud of mass layoff begins. The man loses his job, he resorts to addictions to overcome grief, the lady of the house is pressured to do multiple jobs, and the child is left to fend for itself. They start selling their assets to stay afloat, eventually depending on the state for the subsistence.

A common occurrence in the modern era, what has changed in the 21st century in the post-pandemic era? It is the end scene of such stories... earlier it would result in the suicide of the man, and protest marches against the state. Today it has multiple outcomes of extreme violence... homicide of family members or mass murders, participating in terror attacks, or becoming an arsonist.

Let's do a comparative study of the 20th century and 21st century from three lens

1. Geoeconomics- The early part of the 20th century witnessed World Wars, Genocides, Pandemics (Spanish flu, plague), deep depression, extreme resource crunch, very few jobs, and abusive workplaces.

Comparatively, the 21st century is witnessing Pandemics, wars, religious extremism, economic slowdown, high inflation, great resignation, rise in violence with weapons.

2. Socio-anthropological- The 20th century relayed a lot of family structures for emotional support, leaders at workplaces propagated values at the workplace with many walking the talk, and wealth was seen through the socialist lens of equity. Thus, this era propagated 'Larger good is my good too'. The threats seen during these times were mainly suicides and unstated domestic violence.

Comparatively, the 21st century is witnessing family structures, community structures, a rise in individualism, a rise in a capitalistic economy, and maximization of profits at the cost of people and nature.

3. Psycho-political influencers- In the 20th century the influence was based on political ideologies of governance, even turning atheistic and faith agnostic. The means of advocacy were newsletters and speeches. The genocidal strategies were also depicted in the form of stories and a few pictures which were found in later years. The deep-seethed emotions of anger and revenge were more suppressed as survival took precedence.

Comparatively, the 21st-century influencers are instant and picturesque

with the high religious, and ethnic radicalization messages... results of the digital revolution. The views expressed are extreme, more leaning towards instigating fear and hatred. Thus, the influence on the mind can result in multi-generational wars.

Profiling recent extreme violence attackers under the above lens

1. Terror attackers - Christ Church Mosque attackers or Sri Lankan Sunday Easter blast bombers were influenced by religious polarization and radicalized as terrorists
2. Mass shooters – The Teenager at the Bangkok Mall, or the Youth at Charles University, Prague had a history of broken family structure and mental illness.
3. Disrupters – The operational halt at Hamburg airport or the canister attack at

the Indian Parliament had disgruntlement towards both the state and family for their unstable life and took critical assets hostage to show their frustration

Two arguments that we often hear are, that one has access to weapons eased out, another being has the tolerance level to disagreements reduced. In the former situations regulatory environment has only got stringent with the rise in unsafe societal situations. However, this has also resulted in a rise in fear, anxiety, and suspicions. The development number of tech solutions for safety is unfortunately inversely proportional to making one feel safe and secure.

As a friend of mine from a developed European nation was saying, "I don't trust anyone on the road, in my hometown. I find many of them swaying and unstable wanting to pick up a fight". Today's volatility means living with self-secure mechanisms!!

II Shri Shankaralinga Vijayatell



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The Selfless Warriors of Shivaji

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3. Dadoji – Shivaji's Guru and a Grandfatherly Guide

The ideal qualities of a great leader and statesman in Shivaji's personality are not only attributed to the teachings of his mother, Jijabai, but are equally credited to his guru, Dadoji Kondadev. When Shivaji was just around nine years old, Shahaji Maharaj, exiled to the faraway land of Bengaluru, entrusted Dadoji with the responsibility of safeguarding and nurturing his family atop the fort of Shivneri, and, most importantly, overseeing the affairs of his privately held independent Jagir of Pune and Supe. The world witnessed what an exemplary king Shivaji turned out to be, thanks to Shahaji's foresight in choosing Dadoji as Shivaji's Rajaguru, mentor, a high beacon of moral standing, and a strict yet beloved grandfatherly figure.



'S h r i m a n Rajaguru' Dadoji K o n d a d e v Gochivade, born in 1577 into the Kulkarni family, belonged to the Marathi Deshastha Brahmin community, hailing from the Daund region in Maharashtra. His

family's roots can be traced back to Malhan, currently situated in the Shirur Tahsil of Pune District. Shivaji had the privilege of being closely associated with Dadoji for a significant period of eight to nine years during his

formative years. The Guru and Shishya relationship, the bond between a beloved grandfather and an adolescent boy, the dynamics between a strict general and a soldier, and a similar multitude of connections between the two had a profound influence on Shivaji's unparalleled personality.

Thanks to Dadoji, Shivaji wholeheartedly adhered to a rigorous schedule. Each day, commencing before sunrise, Shivaji engaged in studies involving stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, followed by lessons in ethics, impartial justice, horsemanship, swordsmanship, combat skills, wrestling, games, and physical training. Dadoji instilled a disciplined work ethic in Shivaji, emphasizing the importance of hard work and perseverance, and taught him to rectify his mistakes with love. Every day, Shivaji explored the nearby forests, hills, and mountains in the company of a few soldiers to learn the secrets of the "Brahmastra" and how to apply Mother Nature as a lethal weapon in the art of guerrilla warfare.

In addition to his daily classes in taxation, finance, dharmic-centered jurisprudence, and administrative matters within his Jagir, Shivaji also had to study Urdu, Persian, and Sanskrit languages under Dadoji's guidance. Despite Marathi being his mother tongue, being a Sanskrit scholar himself Dadoji taught Shivaji the art of translating Persian and Urdu words

into Sanskrit for the governance of his kingdom. With Dadoji's guidance, Shivaji entrusted the task of translating Persian and Urdu into Sanskrit for administrative purposes to Ramachandra Amatya, one of his ministers, with the assistance of Sanskrit scholars like Dhundhiraj, resulting in the creation of the "Rajyavyavahar Kosha." This administrative dictionary contains 1,380 Sanskrit words that are the Bharatiya equivalent of Persian and Urdu terms.

Thanks to Dadoji's farmer-friendly policies, the previously subjugated, disheartened, and suffering poor peasants and farmers developed a strong affinity, deep respect, immense loyalty, and great admiration for Shivaji, willingly offering their lives for his cause of 'Hindavi Swarajya'. Eventually, these peasants transformed into formidable warriors in Shivaji's service.

Dadoji passed away at the age of seventy in March 1647. He didn't merely impart theoretical knowledge; through his actions and a life of high morals, he left indelible imprints on the young Shivaji's character, instilling values of justice, ethics, and duty. Dadoji's impact on Shivaji's character transcended words and laid the foundation for Shivaji's future as a just and beloved leader. Dadoji's wisdom and teachings continued to guide Shivaji throughout his life. Just like Dadoji, Shivaji always had a little smile on his face, even a hearty laugh during grim situations, which helped his lieutenants find solutions rather than fretting.

Dadoji, a great visionary :

Dadoji was a great visionary and played a pivotal role in shaping the future of Hindavi Swarajya. All those boys who were trained by Dadoji, not only in civil administration but also in military warfare, pledged their allegiance

and joined Shivaji en masse after Dadoji's death.

Dadoji, as a true visionary, had trained a large number of Brahman clerks (Karkoons) to assist him in delegating his critical responsibilities as Shivaji embarked on ambitious expansion plans for his fledgling state. To name a few, AbajiSonde, Raghunath Pant Ballal, Shamaraj Pant, and the elder Pingle (Moropant's father), along with Naropant Hanumante, received education in this school. They excelled both as civil officers with expertise in finance and jurisprudence and as brilliant military commanders and warfare strategists. Each one of them demonstrated eminent service to Shivaji Maharaj in his ambitious plans to establish a sovereign state. Clearly, they constituted the intellectual and martial core of the new Hindavi Swarajya movement.

Dadoji also instilled the qualities of an iron hand and a heart of steel, essential for success, which were readily available in the peasant Mavli leaders, who were Shivaji's chosen companions since his boyhood. Dadoji ensured that Shivaji mingled with the impoverished peasant Mavlis as a friend in their war-play games in his formative stages. History highlights three such men: YesajiKank, TanajiMalusare, and BajiFasalkar, all raised in the rigorous discipline of their mountain hill-forts. Additionally, FirangojiNarasale, SambajiKavji, MankojiDahatonde, Gomaji Naik, Netaji Palkar, SuryajiMalusare, HirojiFarjand, DevjiGadhwe, and others also shared the Mavli heritage.

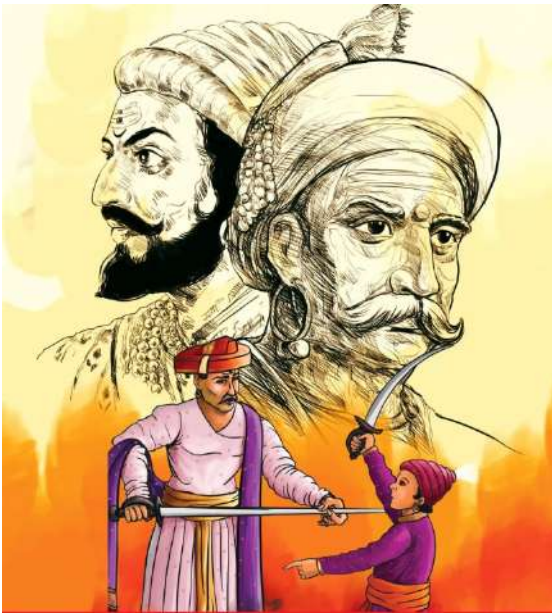
These individuals were later joined by significant Prabhu(CKP) leaders, including MurarBajiPrabhu of Mahad, BajiPrabhu of HirdasMaval, and Balaji AvjiChitnis from the Habshi territories.



Shivaji possessed a magnetic charm that even his enemies, those whom he had conquered on the battlefield, were transformed into his trusted followers.

The Brahmins, the Prabhus, and the Mavli leaders constituted the primary sources of Shivaji's strength during the first decade of building and expanding the Hindavi Swarajya. Dadoji's teachings were instrumental in unifying the otherwise fragmented Maratha society, molding them into a single-minded force dedicated to achieving sovereign Swarajya. Regardless of caste, sub-caste, social status, or economic standing, they were all trained to function as one cohesive unit in pursuit of the lofty ideals of Hindavi Swarajya.

One couldn't help but marvel at the sheer brilliance of Dadoji as a visionary and a true teacher, not only for Shivaji but also for his entire second line of leadership. It was these handpicked men who were instrumental in Shivaji's grand success.



Interesting Anecdote :

Dadoji imparted not just philosophical principles and ideals but also lived an

exemplary life. One particular anecdote illustrates the essence of Dadoji's character, acknowledged by almost all historians. Even though the Mughals, Adil Shahis, Nizam rulers, and some local potentates had reduced Pune to ruins, Dadoji brought the agricultural communities back to the city, nurtured them, and cultivated various crops like maize, jowar, wheat, gram, and lentils. Dadoji, with his own hands, cleared an area in Pune under his master Shahaji's name, grew a mango orchard, and warned of severe punishment if anyone dared to pluck even a single mango.

One day, while wandering in the orchard and appreciating the bunches of golden-colored ripening mangoes, Dadoji plucked a ripe mango to eat. A sense of guilt bothered him, realizing he had plucked the mango without seeking Shivaji's permission, which was tantamount to theft and shattered Dadoji's morale. Dadoji immediately lifted his sword to chop off his right arm, but Shivaji rushed in time and stopped him from doing so. As punishment for himself, Dadoji wore a heavy steel chain around his neck and dressed without the right sleeve for one whole year!

Dadoji's guidance and moral teachings played a critical role in shaping Shivaji as a young leader. However, the story of Dadoji and his moral lessons was not just about control or restraint; it had a profound influence on Shivaji's moral character. Shivaji was strict and unwavering in adhering to these principles. Despite many incidents that tested the boundaries of his moral code, he never wavered in adhering to Dharma. Dadoji's influence helped Shivaji develop a strong sense of morality and integrity from a very young age.



Wit & Wisdom

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MEN OF POWER

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



Abraham Lincoln was a kindhearted & compassionate person. The plight of the negroes and the civil war had a toll on him emotionally. Yet suffering and sadness did not erode his sense of humour and quick wit. With no trace

of bitterness, he was a benevolent President of the most powerful country in the world.

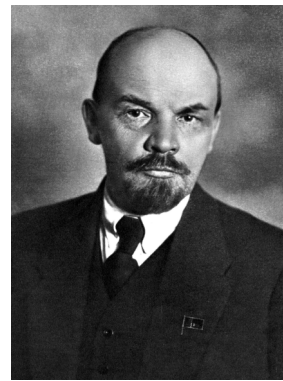
Lincoln was known for his inexhaustible granary of anecdotes. He could pick anyone to suit the situation. Once when asked about his storytelling, he quipped " You speak of Lincoln stories. I don't think it is a correct phrase. I don't make the stories by telling them. I am only a retail seller "

A visitor once made it to the White House. President Lincoln was busy polishing his shoes. " What !! Mr President! you are polishing your shoes !! Lincoln lost no time... Pat came the reply "Whose shoes do you polish ?"

Lincoln made light of his looks, and ungainly features and enjoyed the joke at his own expense. Once in a heated election campaign, Lincoln and his opponent were addressing the crowd. His opponent called him "a Double-faced liar".

Lincoln lost no time to give it back "He says I am a two-faced man. Look at me, gentlemen. If I had another face, would I be wearing this one?"

VLADIMIR ILYICH LENIN



Lenin was once exiled to Siberia. Once just before the completion of the exiled period, two policemen came to his house to search. They told him that they would search his house and if they found any prescribed books his exile period would get extended.

Lenin did possess prescribed books and some revolutionary documents on the bookshelf.

One stout policeman stood guard at the door in order not to allow anyone inside. The other short person began the search. He searched every nook and corner of the house. He came near the bookshelf. He wondered where to begin ... Top rack or the bottom rack

Lenin's wife was worried whether he would start from the bottom rack where revolutionary documents were kept.

Lenin was calm and quietly took a chair, put it near the shelf and told the policeman "You are short. Please stand on the chair. It will be comfortable to check the books."

The Policeman thanked Lenin, stood on the chair and examined all the books on the shelf. Time was running... He had examined four rows in three hours. He was becoming tired...

At this time the stout policeman standing guard near the door was becoming restless. "How long are you searching? I am tired and hungry.. finish it fast"

The short one answered "All right. Let's go for Lunch. It seems that we unnecessarily searched. We found nothing"

Both of them pleaded and requested Lenin to excuse them and left.

SIR R. G. MENZIES



R. G. Menzies by his ability and intellect, became the proud son of Australia and served his country as its premier at the young age of 44.

As soon as he became Prime Minister in 1939, he was teased

by an opponent saying "I take it that before choosing your cabinet, you will consult the powerful interests that control you"

Menzies replied "Yes, But please keep my wife's name out of this"

Raising the issue of a dance teacher having named a new one as 'Sir Robert Menzies and Scottish Thistle', Jack Comber of the Labour Party asked whether the dance consisted of one step forward and two steps backward and whether the PM permitted it to be named after him because it realistically portrayed the policy of the Government.

Sir Robert Menzies quickly retorted "I can imagine the opposition member's interest because I have always thought a famous dance was named after the Labour Party - The Rock and Roll"

To end the anecdotes of the rich and the powerful, let us hear about William the Conqueror.

When WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR and his army landed on the coast of England, he tripped and fell. He knew that those who saw him fall would take it to be a bad omen. Reacting cleverly to the situation, he took two handfuls of soil and exclaimed

"Thus I take possession of this land"



Quotable Quotes from S Jaishankar

"If you trade with someone and they are your biggest trading partner, it is impossible you don't have trade issues"



Short Story

B.R. Bhimachar

Author, (Retired) Professor of English.

Contact: 9741419764

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



**“How clever!
- An illusion...”**

Chandresh was slowly driving his car on one side of the Jayanagar shopping complex, searching for a suitable parking place. Sitting adjacent to him, Suma with her child aged two tugged to her chest also was desperately looking around and intensely praying that they find a spot at the earliest.

“See to your left. Someone is pulling their car out. You can park there” exclaimed Suma. “No No... I will never park there. The parking fee there is Rs. 20 an hour. You do not understand these things” was Chandresh's curt reply. He continued his search for a cheap parking slot and was looking around when Suma said “Look here. There are many empty spaces for parking. You can...”. Cutting her speech halfway through, Chandresh interjected “Never, Never here! The guys here never issue a parking ticket. But when you are pulling out, they demand Rs. 10 and if you try to negotiate with them, they shout back. Rowdies, they all are! You cannot even complain about them to the police as they are

all a part of this big gang. You do not understand these things”

He proceeded further in that street, turned to the right and passed a couple of crossroads and then turned left on a broad avenue. At last, the car halted in front of a house. He breathed a sigh of relief. He had found a free car parking slot and was in a triumphant mood. He majestically parked his car there and while getting out, looking at his sullen wife said “This is it! The perfect spot to park and no need to pay anything either. You do not understand these things”

Suma was silent. He had wasted half an hour trying to find this parking place and had in the process, also spent at least Rs 30 towards petrol. With her child around her waist, she was silently walking alongside Chandresh. The shopping complex was nowhere near her sight.

Yes, she does not understand these things anymore!

*(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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Deepu's Deft Financial Definitions

Deepu, the interviewee sat across from Sanmugan, the interviewer.

'What is money?' Sanmugan fired the first question.

'Black or white sir?'

'Money in any form is money. Define money.'

'Government money or private money?' The shoe seemed to be on the other foot. The interviewee had become the interviewer.

'What is the difference?'

'Government money is found in accounts books; private money is found in the houses of crooks.'

'Be done with such inanities. Just define money.'

'Hush, push or lush?'

Sanmugan was at a loss for words. He blinked analogous to an out-of-order tube light.

'Hush money silences the critics like 'for sale media'. Push money opens many closed doors. It is mostly found in resorts at election hours. Lush money finds its way to foreign shores.'

'I am not referring to any of these.'

'Ah! You are speaking about taxable money. Money is the lubricant that smoothens the working of government machinery.'

'Not bad. Can you provide one more definition?'

'It is a noteworthy smile stimulant.'

'Good. What is a bank?'

'Eye bank, blood bank, or river bank?'

'None of those three. Mister Deepu, you are eyeing the post of a financial adviser, and hence your currency of thoughts must be channelized towards money and money-related institutions only.'

'Sorry sir. Ok sir. Cooperative or Noncooperative banks, sir?'

'What is a noncooperative bank?'

'Many nationalised banks are noncooperative sir.'

'Streamline your peripatetic thoughts and answer to the point. What is a bank?'

'I beg to repeat sir, Cooperative or Noncooperative bank?'

'Define both' said an exasperated Sanmugan. The paucity of good candidates with the right experience was forcing his hand to be accommodative to this candidate who seemed to possess the right credentials.

'Cooperative banks are like the lands in Joshimath – prone to slide any moment. Noncooperative banks or more precisely nationalised banks are like deserts – wide expanses of red tape with a few oases of conviviality.'

'I will accept this for the time being.'

'Thank you; one more clarification sir. Are you asking about the left bank or the right bank?'

'You have lost me again Mr. Deepu.'

'Left banks are those controlled by communist

parties. Right banks are controlled by RSS and parties with similar interests.'

'Forget about it. Let's move on. What is interest?'

'It is that chunk of money which keeps people with money interested in banking.'

'Define simple interest, compound interest, and complex interest.'

Deepu's eyes lit up. He seemed to be in familiar territory.

'Simple interest is simple interest, sir. Like being interested in simple things like watching cricket, eating French fries...'

"Deepu..." Cried Sanmugan.

'Compound interest is taking a keen interest in happenings on the other side of the compound and complex interest is an acute proclivity towards shopping, sir. Compound interest usually results in a lot of selfies and very little purchase in huge complexes and Malls' Sanmugan's exasperation seemed to have no effect on Deepu.

'Mr. Deepu, this is about BANKING' Sanmugan spelt out each letter.

'Sorry sir. I take more interest in these than the extra earnings on the principal amount. I will mend my ways pronto sir. Shoot your next askance sir.'

'Why do banks have such huge bad debts?'

'That's easy to answer sir. Some people will not be principled to pay interest and some will not be interested in paying the principal sir.'

'How many types of deposits can you name?'

'Two sir.'

'Only two? Which are those?'

'Plaques and flab.'

'What?'

'Yes sir; those on the teeth and the waist. Those are the most difficult deposits to get rid of. Those are the best forms of fixed deposits. Once fixed, it's very difficult to unfix those.'

'You are again going off track mister. Come back to banking terms.'

'Savings, current and fixed deposits. Of those I have given two examples for fixed deposit already.'

'Ok. Explain the other forms.'

'Savings accounts are those found in the false bottoms of wardrobes and drawers in the houses of the rich and the mighty. The current account is one which shocks the person with money by way of repeated rides.'

'What is Capital Cost?'

'Money spent by the central government for providing freebies announced by State Governments.'

'What is a cash book?'

'That's a regular traffic police practice. They catch you. Cash or book is the option offered by the corrupt cop to the common man. You pay cash, they don't book.'

'What is Net income?'

'Income from Youtube and other social media postings.'

'Petty cash?'

'Money distributed for votes during the election period.'

'What is a debenture?'

'Embark means climb. Disembark means get down. Similarly, benture means he who sits on the bench or acquires power. Debenture is the one who gets down from the bench. In short, a dissident.'

'Dividend?'



'That's a British policy, sir. They were firm believers of dividend rule.'

'That's 'divide and rule' Deepu.'

'Oh! Is there a difference? I was not aware of it sir.'

'Can you answer at least one question without going on tangents?'

'Sure sir. If you were to ask me what a Scam is, I would have answered properly.'

'I bite. What is a scam?'

'A scam is a media lubricant; a TRP manufacturer; a tool for the opposite party to

shout about. A foreign direct investment which we never again see the shores of the depositor's country.'

'Deepu, I am sorry to tell you that though you are referred by the high and mighty, we cannot hire you for the post of Chief Accounts Manager.'

Deepu seemed crestfallen.

'But,' continued Sanmugan rising from his chair and proffering his hand, 'I hire you as our chief human relations officer. May you go on confusing all and sundry with your quirky thoughts and thereby make them forget their own demands.'

Significant events in January...

- 45 BCE – The Julian Calendar was first used on the 1st of Jan
- 1799 – Edward Jenner introduces Smallpox vaccine on Jan 21st which eventually leads to wiping out of this deadly disease
- 1910 – Radio was broadcast for the first time on 13th Jan
- 1966 – Death of Shri. Lal Bahadur Shastri in Tashkent, Russia on 11th Jan
- 1978 – Janata Party Government led by Morarji Desai demonetized notes of denomination Rs. 1000/-, Rs. 5000/- & Rs. 10,000/- on 16th Jan

(Compiled by Sudhir S Mysore)





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My God - who walks this earth

(Written in honor of my mother who lies in the hospital defying the inevitable)

Mother, I look at you, as you lay on the bed
With as much love in my heart
As you had, when you looked at me
As I had laid, in my cradle!

Mother, I hold your wrinkled hands, in mine
With as much gentleness
As you had, when you held mine
As you taught me to walk

Mother, I pray for your solace, as you lay oblivious, under the hospital
sheets
With as much faith you had.
When you prayed for me
When I was sick

Mother, I want to hold on to you as much as I want to let you go
I want to smile as much as I want to cry
I want to keep loving you, as much as you loved me
And much more, coz you are my living God!

Mother, today I make a promise, as I look at you
Taking every breath, with tireless effort
I will never tire to walk your path, and make every dream of yours
The reality you imagined!

Mother - I love you !





for January 2024

Abhijaathe 2024 a Vipra Mahila Samavesha



Sri Ramatharaka Japa Yagna



Sri Ramalalla



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