

VIPRANUDI

English Journal from the house of AKBMS



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अविद्यारण्यकान्तारे भ्रमतां प्राणिनां सदा । विद्यामार्गोपदेष्टारं विद्यारण्यगुरुं श्रये ॥

To souls that wander in utter dismay in the dense woods of mental ignorance,
He shows the path of true wisdom; Homage to the great Saint Vidyaranya!

His Holiness Sri Vidyaranya



Sri Vidyaranya was the 12th Jagadguru of the Sringeri Sharada Peetham from 1380 to 1386 A.D. He brought fame and glory to the Mutt through his dynamic leadership and unique contributions to Spiritual and Vedantic thought. His marvellous interpretative skills reconciled many apparent differences in philosophic texts. His works constituted the greatest treatises in post-Shankara Advaitic literature.

Karnataka Simhasana Pratishtapanacharya

Sri Vidyaranya was not only a sage but was also, an empire builder. It was while His Holiness was doing tapas at Matanga hill that the two warrior brothers, Harihara and Bukka, approached him. With the guidance and blessings of Sri Vidyaranya, they established their own kingdom with its capital on the left bank of the Tungabhadra river. Following the sage's counsel, they shifted their capital to the right bank, naming it Vidyanagara, as a mark of respect and gratitude to their Guru. The city, which came to be popularly known as Vijayanagara or City of Victory was planned in accordance with the directions of sage Vidyaranya in the form of a Sri Chakra, with the Virupaksha temple in the middle and nine gates all around. He is forever, revered as an enlightened Brahmin who architected a Hindu dynasty at a time when it was most needed...



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VIPRANUDI**-English Journal from the house of AKBMS**

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Ashok Haranahalli
President - AKBMS



Presidential Message

Dear Friends

Greetings to you all.

The months of April and May have been very important to AKBMS in terms of organizing various programs and connecting the people of our community together.

In the month of May, we undertook a visit to Haveri which itself was important in many ways. On 7th May 2022, we reached Haveri, took part in a Sanghatana program and later reached Gadag. On the way, we were fortunate to visit an age-old temple at Someshwara. The Brahmins of Lakshmiswara insisted that we visit their place and hence went there and addressed our Brahmin brethren. We spoke about the importance of being united and connected so that our strength as a community can get stronger. It was very heartening to know that the activities and efforts of Mahasabha have reached the remote villages and towns of Karnataka.

Moving further, we reached Gadag and had the opportunity to visit and speak to social activist Sri Huyilagula Narayanarao. The next part of our travel was the procession through the streets of Gadag by our Vipra community starting from Veeranarayana Temple. I would not be wrong in saying that this procession actually set the momentum for a kind of Brahmin movement. Men Women, children, and seniors were all present at this procession. A bike rally with lots of people on their bikes was also organised. It was a sight to behold. One of the leaders present there mentioned that this kind of Brahmin procession was held

about twenty years ago and was indeed a great thing that it is happening now and in the same fervour and festivity.

After this satisfying stint at Gadag, we proceeded to our next destination. On the way, we also met the Brahmin leaders at Annegeri and exchanged talks with them. We had to reach Hubli for a meeting there. But got delayed due to the enthusiastic rally and procession at Gadag. We reached for the meeting at 9.30 in the night. But what was very heart-warming was the fact that the meeting was well attended even though delayed by 2 hours. It went on until 11 in the night. AKBMS acknowledges this enthusiastic gesture of the committed people of Hubli.

The next morning, we were at Dharwad addressing our Brahmin friends, at an event organized by Sri. Hanumantha Dumbal, the Ex-Mayor of Dharwad. Speaking on this occasion, Sri. Hanumantha Dumbal promised to reserve 2000 sq. ft of land for AKBMS activities. We are thankful to him for such a kind gesture and appreciate his sense of social responsibility and requested him to continue his service to humanity at large and Brahmins in particular.

Moving to Belgaum, we participated in another Brahmin meet organized by Vilas Joshi and Ravindra Sripad and it is apt to mention here that the event was organized very well. Just like the procession at Gadag, we witnessed a huge procession of brahmins, young & old, men & women - all participating with a feeling of pride.

Most importantly we inaugurated the Industrial department of AKBMS on this occasion and discussed all the possibilities and services that can be offered through this initiative.

A place to run the office of the Mahasabha at Belgaum has been made available at no cost by Sri. Vilas Joshi. We truly appreciate this gesture and it only demonstrates the pride and trust he has in the Mahasabha.

After a series of meetings like these and visiting various towns, we reached Sirsi where a meeting of the Working Committee of the Mahasabha was organised. Later a get-together of all our Brahmin friends was held. I had the opportunity of meeting some of the

important and influential members of the community. This meet was made possible by the unstinting efforts of Sri. Sashibhushan Hegde and his team. Incidentally, this was the first-ever meeting conducted in Sirsi. It was indeed a kind of historical moment for all of us.

Thus continued a month full of visits, meetings and processions, all aimed at achieving one common purpose of unification and coming together of the Brahmin community. Looking back, I would sum up this month that went by as one of the most hectic and at the same time a very gratifying experience for all of us at the Mahasabha.

I will come back in the next month with more information to share with you all.

Let Peace Prevail. Salutations to you all



Ashok Haranahalli

AKBMS Projects Announcement

Inviting applications from Vipra Community for "PRATHIBHA PURASKAR"

AKBMS, in view of encouraging academic excellence, is inviting applications from students who have finished SSLC (10th standard) and PUC (plus 2) exams recently. Students who have scored high marks (98% and above) may submit their applications with attested marks card copies to the AKBMS office on or before 20.08.2022. For more details, please contact: +91 99458 40620

Inviting applications from Vipra Community for "Monthly Pension Disbursement Scheme"

AKBMS has constituted a Monthly Pension Scheme to help the financially stressed - Physically Challenged, the Elderly, and the women in distress. Those willing to avail this monthly pension need to submit an application duly recommended by any of the AKBMS working committee or Executive committee members. For more details, please contact AKBMS office.

Satyesh N. Bellur
Editor-in-chief



From the Editor's desk...



Dear Readers...

Welcome to our fifth edition of Vipranudi – the English journal from the house of AKBMS. We are happy to announce that from this edition onwards, our journal will also be available in print form, delivered to the homes of all those like-minded readers who have graciously subscribed to the journal. We sincerely thank each of them and pray that their numbers swell.

Special thanks from the editorial board are also due to our president, Sri, Ashok Haranahalli Ji, and the AKBMS committee members for having supported us from the very beginning.

On another note, I recall that time in 2005 when my first book was released. Like any other first-time writer, I used to give a copy of my book to my friends and those that I thought were interested in literature. It is their body language when they received the book that was of utmost interest to watch. Some used to take it with a smile and keep it aside. That's it! There were some who used to take it and immediately open the book, read a few lines and appreciate the writing. Needless to say, these people meant a lot to me. I respected them as they showed their respect for a book and more so, showed their genuine appreciation for a budding writer. Why am I telling this? Please read on...

On the 29th of May, it was our privilege to have His Holiness Sri Sri Vidhushekara Bharati Mahaswamiji release our journal in front of a vast gathering at the Shankar Mutt in the city. When His Holiness cut the ribbon and took out the journal copies, he handed them to others around, and then the spectacle happened.

Without any hesitation, he spontaneously appreciated the journal's look and feel. Till he got to address the gathering, and that was a good half an hour or so, he was going through the journal, page by page. It was a "moment of truth" for me to watch this from such close quarters. Coming from His Holiness, it was not mere appreciation, but a divine blessing. I consider this an important milestone in our journey. The photograph that shows His Holiness engrossed in reading our journal is something that we all can cherish for a long time to come. A picture is worth a thousand words, they say! On behalf of all the writers, I submit my respectful salutations at the Holi Feet.



A journal will appeal to its readers because of its content and presentation. I would like to place on record, our sincere thanks to Mr. Satyanarayana Joshi of Nagaratna Printers, Bengaluru who has been helping us design our journal from its very first edition. I was wanting

to interview him for the journal and profile him and his team for their creative work rendered. Being someone who does not wish for publicity and is extremely shy of the 'spotlight', it was very difficult to even get him to speak to me. The little I know of him is all that I can share with you. He hails from Chikkamagaluru. His mother Smt. Nagaratnamma was a homemaker. His father Sri. P.G.Joshi started a business in Printing Services in a small way. Mr. Satyanarayana Joshi took the family business to another level and today runs one of the leading printing services companies in the city. His team comprising of Smt. Manjula and Smt. Vishala is personally involved in taking inputs from us and designing the journal. They are responsible for its overall design. I wish to personally thank Sri. Satyanarayana Joshi and

his team at Nagaratna Printers for all their support. I wish him the very best in all his future business endeavors.

We are introducing a new section featuring short stories. It is with great reverence and delight I am inviting Sri. Bhimachar Sir to pen this column and be a part of our team of writers. At 98 years, he is the "youngest" amongst us! He indeed is a great inspiration to all of us.

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

Editor's Note



- ✿ The subscription fee for getting the print copy of the journal is Rs. 1000 for 2 years (Includes 24 editions).

You can subscribe to the journal using the links that can be found on the AKBMS website. Various payment options are available. It is so simple...
<https://akbms.com/Home/vipranudiJournal>

- ✿ AKBMS members and their families can submit their articles under the following sections for publication:

- ◆ Poetry of the Month
- ◆ Essay of the Month
- ◆ Guest Column

Pl. e mail your articles to : Satyesh.bellur@gmail.com gayathridevi2007@gmail.com

- ✿ We welcome your feedback and any constructive suggestions for improvement. Please mail them to: editorvipranudienglish@akbms.com

- ✿ The decision of the Editorial Board in terms of journal content will be final.

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AKBMS – News & Events

I have great pleasure in bringing this report highlighting some recent activities of AKBMS to your perusal :

Guruvandana of Sri Sri Jagadguru of Sringeri

"The Welfare of a community lies in following and practicing one's culture"

– Sri Sri Vidushekhara Bharathi of Sringeri.

- ❖ A Guruvandana program was held on 29th May 2022, to render our respects to our Paramapujya Jagadguru Sri Sri Vidushekhara Bharathi of Sringeri Sharadhapeetam. If each one of us practices and uphold our culture in all sincerity, it will lead to the overall peace and well-being of our community observed Jagadguru. We usually run after temporary satiation of our desires, but it is only through following one's culture and religion sincerely and diligently that one finds long-lasting peace and well-being, said Sri Sri Vidushekhara Bharathi while addressing the gathering held at Shankara mutt hall organized by AKBMS. This life of a Brahmin is given to us as a result of the accumulation of good work done in previous births. It is not easy to be born a Brahmin. And at the same time, just being born as a brahmin is just not enough. It becomes our prime duty and responsibility to follow and practice our culture and religious practices to become a true brahmin. His holiness also insisted that when our elders and influential people follow our culture and set an example, the Brahmin identity is created and as a result, the community gains a lot of respect from the rest of the world. This also results in safeguarding ourselves and our culture and not allowing anyone to look down upon our community. The Shodasha Samskara, the sixteen rituals for a Brahmin should be followed by every individual which in due course will help us to follow a religious path in our lives. The core values and the sensitive side of our religion should be demonstrated to the coming

generations and then and then only our Brahminism can survive. Today what is of paramount importance is the unification and sustainability of our culture and practices. He wished and blessed our President Sri. Ashok the responsibility and strength to carry out this great work.

- ❖ Speaking on this occasion, Sri. Ashok Harnahalli expressed that if Sanathana Dharma is still alive and followed by the Hindus, it is only because of Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya. He spoke about the holy city of Sringeri established by Shri Adi Shankara being the one and an only mutt that has given a meaning and practical approach to Sanathana Dharma. He prayed and bowed to Sri Sri Vidushekhara Bharathi seeking blessings for the entire Brahmin community.
- ❖ Vipranudi English, a new initiative by the Mahasabha editorial team led by Sri. Satyesh N Bellur released the first copy of its edition at the sacred hands of the Jagadguru. Several important people were present on this occasion. Sri. Chandrashekhara retd Judge, MLA Sri. Ravi Subrahmanya, Sri. U.B. Venkatesh and Sri. Mahesh Joshi President of Kannada Sahitya Parishat graced the occasion.
- ❖ An amount of Six lakhs was offered as a part of Guruvandana of Sri Sri Vidushekhara Bharathi, Jagadguru of Sringeri Sharada Peetam.
- ❖ This program organized by Mahasabha was well attended by a lot of brahmins and all of them took the blessings of the Jagadguru.

Brahmins conference at Sirsi

- ❖ The Brahmins conference at the TRC Sabha bhava, Sirsi was duly conducted and well attended by the Brahmins of that locality. Sri R.V Deshpande Ex MLA, President Vidhana Sabha Sri. Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri, Sri Shivaram Hebbar Industrialist, Sri Pramod Hegde Vice President of Gram Panchayat, Sri. V.S Hegde President of Swanavalli Mahasannidanam, Sri. Ramakrishna Hegde Haragi President of

TRC Bank, Sri R.S. Hegde President of Havyak Mahamandal Sri. Shashibhushan Hegde State President and all the Committee members of Mahasabha were present on this occasion.

- ❖ Sri. Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri spoke on this occasion and was very happy that President Sri Ashok has been visiting all the places across Karnataka. He was surprised and happy about the energy and enthusiasm showed by the Mahasabha.
- ❖ There are more Brahmins in the North Karnataka region and hence it is very important that we stay united and do a lot of progressive work for the Brahmins said Sri. Shivram Hegde. Economically backward Brahmin students have to be given enough facilities to pursue their education which will help build a strong society in the future he observed.
- ❖ Brahmins by nature are nonconflicting people. They prefer to stay away from any sort of violence. Yet, there is a lot of unity required within ourselves in order to make this a strong society opined Sri. R. V. Deshpande. He hoped that in the coming days Sri. Ashok will bring about lots of changes in AKBMS for the betterment of our community.
- ❖ Sri Vishweshwara Bhat a journalist spoke on this occasion and posed a question. He said all these years Brahmins have lived and survived and succeeded without Reservations. So now, is it ok to go to the Govt and demand Reservations for Brahmins. Sri Ashok Haranahalli in his speech addressed this issue. He said he has not approached the Govt to offer Reservations for Brahmins. In fact, Reservations for economically backward students is what was demanded. There are scores of students who are brilliant, yet not able to pursue higher studies. If there is a reservation for the economically backward students, then Brahmin children also deserve it. A 10% reservation based on the economic status of the students of the Brahmin community is what is the need of the day. He firmly believed that if we all get together and unite as one community, burying all our differences then lots of things can be achieved.
- ❖ This conference at Hubli concluded successfully with people coming from all corners of the state and representations

from all the sub-castes of our Brahmin society.

2nd Meeting of the Working Committee of AKBMS at Sirsi

- ❖ The second meeting of the Working Committee of Akhila Karnataka Brahmana Mahasabha was held on 21st May 2022 at Sirsi. People who represented the different heads of departments of the Mahasabha were duly present at the meeting. There were more than 100 committee members who actively took part in the meeting on that day.
- ❖ Sri Raghavendra Bhat presented a report on all the activities, initiatives and projects undertaken by the Mahasabha in the past months. All the Convenors of presented a report on the activities that were duly conducted in the areas that they represented. At the end of all this Sri Ashok Haranahalli, President of Mahasabha said that though all these activities in the past 4 or 5 months may look very effective and productive, in reality, we have to create a platform to reach each one of the members of our brahmin community and hence there is a need to expand our activities and also speed up the initiatives. He called upon all the representatives to make the best use of their position and complete all the projects initiated until now. A decision to conduct the next Committee Meeting in September at Shimoga was also unanimously taken on that day.
- ❖ Sri. H. N. H. Swamy, the senior member made the introductory speech on that day.

Inauguration of the Medical Cell of the Mahasabha

- ❖ A Health and Medical Cell to provide medical services to the poor and needy people of our community was established by Sri Ashok Haranahalli
- ❖ The inaugural function was held at the BNMIT college grounds. Honouring some of the achievers was also a part of this function.
- ❖ Sri Ashok said in his speech that a separate wing for women and the Youth, which can function individually was started, and to have a medical cell to cater to the needs of poor brahmin people was on his mind and it has been now possible. The cell has an

understanding with more than 10 hospitals to extend their support and services in giving affordable medical help to those who need it.

- ❖ The State Convenor for this most awaited Medical Cell Dr. Sri C. A. Kishore gave a detailed blueprint of this noble initiative and requested all the rich, successful and large-hearted Brahmin Community members to come forward and join hands with the Medical Cell.
- ❖ MLA Sri Ravi Subrahmanya, popular film artist Sri. Suchindraprasad, Social Worker Medini Garudachar, Film actor Sunder Raj, Sri Narayanrao Mane of BNM Institute spoke on this occasion and wished and prayed that this cell offers its noble services to all those in need.
- ❖ A medical camp by Swasthi Samruddhi Bharatha, Ayurveda Prathistana was conducted on-site that day. Free check-up facilities for Cancer, diabetes and the like were conducted.
- ❖ Padmashree awardee Dr. B. N. Gangadhar was awarded and honored with the title "Vipra Vaidya Seva Rathna" on this day. Along with him, Dr. Jayanthi, Dr. Srinivas K. Bannigol, Dr. H.N. Ravikumar were also honoured with the title "Vipra Vaidyashree".

Other Events

1. **Krishna Yajurveda Kannada** – the 13th edition was released by Jyothy Samskruthika Prathishtana by the Jagadguru of Sringeri Sharada Peetam Sri Sri Vidhu Shekhara Bharathi. Dharmika Pravara Dr. Sri. BNV Subrahmanya was instrumental in initiating this noble task of translating the Yajurveda in Kannada.
2. **Sri. Ashok's visit to Hebbsur in Chamajanagar district** : On this occasion he said it was his dream to provide health insurance at the lowest possible price, to provide health and medical services to the poor and needy Brahmins, and Free consultation on legal aspects by lawyers. He was very happy that it has come true now.
3. **Meeting with Sri Prahlad Joshi, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs** : The issues and shortcomings of the Brahmin community were discussed in detail. Some of the issues that were discussed are:

- a. EWS certificate currently is valid only for one year. This should be extended to at least 5 years.
 - b. Patrika Jahiratu nithi should be extended to Brahmins-run newspapers also.
 - c. Requested the Minister to extend required support in construction of Gayathri Bhavan at the allotted land in Hubli.
4. **Membership drive at Hubli** : Sri Pramod Mannoli flagged off the drive which was organized by Moresh Kulkarni, President of Sri Krishnendra Guru Utsav Samiti.
 5. **Sri Lakshmi Laksharchane by Brahmana sabha of Hombe Gowdanagar** : MLA Sri Uday Garudachar and Medini Garudachar were present on this occasion.
 6. **Pratibha Puraskara program was organised by Chitpavana Brahmana Samaja** : Sri Raghavendra Bhat and Sri. Karthik Bapat was present on this occasion.
 7. **New President elected for Sorba Taluk Brahmana Sabha** : Sri Diwakar Bhawe has been rendering his services to Social, Educational and agricultural departments. He has now taken another responsibility of being the President of Brahmana Sabha in Sorba.
 8. **Establishing a Women's wing at Dakshina Kannada and Udupi district**: Roopa Shastri, the Women Convenor for the state women's wing inaugurated and spoke on this occasion. She said the role of a woman becomes very important in establishing a strong and steady community.
 9. Membership drive at JP Nagar 7th phase was conducted.
 10. **Visit to Dharmasthala Grameena Abhivruddhi Samsthe**: Smt Roopa Shastri visited this Samsthe and discussed the opportunities for developing women's entrepreneurship
 11. **Sri Shatha Chandika Yaga at Yelahanka**: Sri Sri Paramparaavadhootha Sathish Sharma of Arasikere Sri Maruthi Sachidananda ashrama participated in this event. Sri Koushik and Sri Srikanta Prasad from AKBMS also organized a Membership drive on this occasion.



Mrs. Veena Prahlad

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Swadharma

For the most part, Bhagavad Gita is about how we should do our duties. Our kartavya karma should follow our dharma, which is the main takeaway from the Gita.

Krishna's discourse starts because Arjuna was distraught due to shoka (grief) and Bhaya (fear) Arjuna was in grief because he knew he would have to kill his elders to win the war and he was afraid of the consequences of this act.

Bhagavanta allayed Arjuna's shoka, by explaining that he is only destroying the body and not the soul of any warrior.

na tvevāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ na tvaṁ neme janādhipāḥ
na chaiva na bhaviṣhyāmaḥ sarve vayamataḥ param
(Gita 2.12)

Shree Krishna tells Arjuna that there was no time when these kings were not present, nor were Krishna or Arjuna.

This is because the soul lives on and is avinashi (never destroyed) Krishna explains that it is analogous to changing clothes.

vāsāṁsi jīrṇāṇi yathā vihāya navāni gṛhṇāti naro 'parāṇi
tathā śharīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇānya nyāni sanyāti navāni
dehī (Gita 2.22)

Akin to a man disposing of old clothing for new ones, the soul (Shareeri / dehi / jeevatma / Atma) disposes of the old body (shareera / deha) when he dies and gets a new body when he is born.

antavanta ime dehā nityasyoktāḥ śharīrīṇaḥ
anāśhino 'prameyasya tasmād yudhyasva bhārata
(Gita 2.18)

All these perishable bodies of the indestructible, eternal, soul (aprameya, immeasurable) are destructible, therefore Arjuna, you do war.

Having told Arjuna why there is no reason for him to be sorrowful, Krishna goes on to

Thus Spake Lord Krishna

explain why Arjuna should not fear the consequences of killing his kin in the war.

swa-dharmam api chāvekṣhya na vikampitum arhasi
dharmyāddhi yuddhāch chhreyo 'nyat kṣhatrīyasya
na vidyate (Gita 2.31)

From the point of view of swadharma also you do not have to be apprehensive, as there is nothing more worthy for a Kshatriya like Arjuna than a dharmayuddha (righteous war)

Krishna introduces a new term swadharma in this shloka. This would seem like a sudden change in the discourse from the eternal to swadharma. The concept of Atma is difficult to understand for ordinary people like you and me. How to relate to something that we can only barely perceive? How can we not believe what we are seeing in front of us? We have accepted so many responsibilities as - children, spouses, managers at work, etc. How to take ourselves out of all this? In other words how to extricate ourselves out of this world and focus on that eternal being? Do we have that ability? If not, then what should we do?

When you don't embark on this path of inquiry, ignorance is bliss. But, now that the journey has started, it is not possible to turn back. We can never ignore what we know. We have only begun on this path of inquiry, like Arjuna. We cannot leave our responsibilities and start focusing on finding that eternal being that Krishna was describing. Krishna doesn't want us to do that. Remember he didn't want Arjuna to leave the world and accept the life of a sanyasi. Guessing our predicament, Bhagavanta begins the answer, which is the rest of the Gita.

Thus begins the discourse on Karmayoga, the path prescribed for us - the common people. The first term we have to understand, on the path of Karmayoga is Swadharma. Swadharma is what we have accepted to do. I have duties as a daughter, wife, mother etc. This is my swadharma. I agree to do this out of my own free will. Arjuna's swadharma is that of

a Kshatriya (warrior) His duty right then (that the war has been declared and the two armies are facing each other) is to do war. That is his kartavya (rightful duty) Krishna is saying Arjuna need not worry about the consequences, as anyone following swadharma is doing what is right. It is the same as that of a soldier not doing anything wrong killing an enemy soldier. He will be doing it to do his duty to his country.

If Arjuna did leave the battlefield, the battle will go on. No one is indispensable. If as an employee of a company I do not do my duty, the company will not stop functioning. Each individual has his/her destiny. It is not dependent on someone else, but his/her or herself only. Then what is the point of our life here on earth?

The answer is that it is the consequence of our previous karma. We have to do this task to move ahead. The job of the mother is what I had committed to. Arjuna had committed to war. This war Krishna says is only available for someone fortunate.

yadṛichchhayā chopapannam swarga-dvāram
apāvṛitam
sukhinaḥ kṣhatriyāḥ pārtha labhante yuddham
īdṛiṣham (Gita 2.32)

A war like this is like the opened doors of the heavens for a warrior and only a few fortunate warriors get to participate in such a war without even asking for it.

Every person on earth has different life experiences. Some are born into luxury; some are born on the streets. Some have loving parents, some are orphans. Siblings in a family are different, though everything around them is the same. Our scriptures say this is because of the prarabdha karma. The consequence of the karma (all that we do) we did in the past life. All unfinished businesses and desires result in us taking birth after birth, to exhaust all that we wished to do. It is a very good theory that explains life as we know it.

Now that we are in this birth, trying to exhaust the consequences of previous births, and we get presented with an opportunity to do so, it would be as good as the gates of heaven are open to us, whatever the definition of heaven is to us. For most people, it is a life that

is free of all problems perhaps which we face every day. For the mumukshu (people on the path to self-realization) it is getting to know who they are. We willed for this life and this situation. So they are being presented to us. Facing this life as it comes is the best way to go.

Most situations presented to us only make us better. We might as well do it with a smile on our faces and with enthusiasm.

atha chet tvam imam dharmyam saṅgrāmam na
kariṣhyasi
tataḥ sva-dharmam kīrtim cha hitvā pāpam
avāpsyasi (Gita2.33)

If you don't do this righteous war, you will incur sin for not doing your duty.

hato vā prāpsyasi swargam jītvā vā bhokṣhyase mahīm
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya yuddhāya kṛita-niśchayaḥ
(Gita 2.37)

If you die you will go to heaven for doing your rightful duty. If you win you will enjoy this kingdom that rightfully belongs to you. Therefore get up and decide to do war.

sukha-duḥkhe same kṛitvā lābhālābhau jayājayau
tato yuddhāya yujyasva naivam pāpam avāpsyasi
(Gita2.38)

Treat joy or sorrow, profit or loss, victory or defeat with equanimity, and then you will not incur sin.

The closest word in English for dharma is righteousness. Krishna is calling the war a righteous war. What is right differs from person to person, situation to situation. If we don't do our duty, the task we are committed to doing, it is we who are hurt most than anyone else associated with the task. Just like the definition of heaven is different for different people, the definition of hell is also different. Most of us know what is right. If we take pride in being on the right path (just like Arjuna took pride in him being a valiant Kshatriya) not doing what we agreed to do does make us miserable. We create our hell. For a righteous person, this is equivalent to sin.

At the end of the Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna, this is my opinion, and you decide what you want to do. We create our heaven and hell. It is entirely up to us to do the righteous war, do swadharma or not.

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My quest for Spiritual Well-being

The most important EMI

During my childhood, I used to play with marbles a lot and was very good at aiming. I used to win a lot of marbles from friends and at times when they lost everything they had, they used to borrow a few from me to continue playing. Sometimes they returned them back and sometimes not. I too was not bothered much and never kept a count of “who had taken how many from me”. This is different from the loan we take as an adult from the Banks and Money Lenders (aka. Sharks), for instance. If you don't return your loans, the Banks will encash your mortgages and the sharks, sometimes your life!

There is another loan that without an exception, we all take during our life and don't bother much about its repayment. The ones that offer these loans to us are neither Banks nor Sharks and hence, we have no perceptible mental stress or danger to life at any point that would make us repay these voluntarily. Can I say that we take them for granted!

Yes. The majority of us do take them for granted. The irony is that a majority of us even don't know that we have received these loans (or shall I call them “grants”) in abundance during our lifetime and we need to repay them before we depart from here.

The first debt that is on our heads is the one that we receive from the almighty. He has given us a well-meaning nature that addresses all our requirements to germinate, groom and bloom. I always wonder how architecturally the almighty has crafted the mother earth and that human life is possible only here and nowhere

else in the cosmos. It has everything that we need. Air, Water, Fire, Food, Materials needed to weave dresses and build houses – the list is endless. The jewel in this crown is the human body itself. The human intellect from the time of creation to this date, all put together, has failed to even understand this body structure in all its splendour, let alone clown one to perfection. If we do not take time off, once in a while at least, to marvel at this creation and surrender in front of its master, then living such a life becomes worthless for us.

Among all that the almighty has offered us, let us for example, take just the air and the water without which we perish. He has been such a magnanimous divine entity that he has not held his hands back when he has given them to us. The air and the water he has offered are in their purest form and most importantly, in abundance. Added to this, let us not forget that he has offered these to us at no cost, meaning absolutely free. Pure, free and in abundance, are all his gifts (nothing wrong in calling them “loans”!) to us.

Once we realise that there is this debt on us, then how do we repay it? Many would say that it is repaid when we show utmost devotion to the almighty. Some would feel that when we do not forget to pray to him several times during the day and visit his pilgrimage centres several times during our life, we would have





fulfilled our obligation towards him. The majority of the populace strongly believe that their praises,

their high-pitched songs and bhajans and all their ritualistic offerings to him would make them debt-free. These are important initial steps that we need to adhere to in order to merely understand that we indeed have a huge debt from the almighty that we need to clear. But, the most important EMI that we have to pay all through our life to repay this debt is something very different.

We need to protect all his gifts to us and hand them over to our next generation in the same way that we have received them from him – pure, in abundance and free. We can use them, but not abuse them. We can cultivate them, but not contaminate them. If we can pause for a moment and see around us how much pollution and poison we have added to our air and water, we will realise that as a society, we have thus far failed miserably to repay our debt to him. How long should we continue this? Just because he does not come after our mortgages like the banks and life like the sharks, can we simply look the other side and forget our EMIs?

ಎಮಗಿರುವ ಪರಿಸರವ ದೈವನಿತ್ತಿಹನುಚಿತ ।
ಸಮವಾಗಿ ಹಂಚಿಹನು ಭೇದವೆಸಗದೆಯೆ ॥
ರಮಣೀಯವಾಗದನು ಕಾಪಿಟ್ಟು ತೆರಳಿದರೆ ।
ಸಾಮಿಯುಣ ತೀರಿತೆಲೊ – ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ॥
(ಸಾಮಿ = ಭಗವಂತ, ಸ್ವಾಮಿ)

Spirituality is not merely about going on a pilgrimage and praying devotedly to the lord there. It is also about ensuring that the river that is flowing nearby, is retained as pure and potable as it deserves to be or as it is intended to be by the lord.

This act of ours will be more meaningful and beneficial to society at large, than any other sacred rites and rituals that we may follow.

The almighty will be mighty pleased, for sure!

ॐ

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

Guru Vandana Program at Shankarmutt Bangalore

Photo Gallery



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Brah-men & Women

The path of Satya

H.R. Bapu Satyanarayana is a quintessential Mysorean. If you want to know how a typical Mysorean looks, you have to take a look at Bapu Satya. He appears simple, for one. That's because he is indeed simple. He exudes warmth. He is another name for humility when somebody else with half his accomplishments would likely struggle to keep his head in its place. He is every inch contented.

You will find him on his early morning stroll on the serene Manasagangotri campus of the University of Mysore. Until recently his wife gave him company until health issues kept her away. He sings along loud, in a rich voice. A clear indication that the campus and the salubrious weather simply bring out the joy that rightfully belongs to every Mysorean.

His joy and contentment are also because he has achieved immensely as a highway engineer. Long years into retirement have not slowed him. He is as active as he was while in service. He is a prolific writer and he has countless letters in the reader's column to his credit. He is active as a social activist, too. PM Vijendra Rao interviewed him for Vipra Nudi.



VN : You must be mighty happy to see the development of India, especially regarding infrastructure, including roads, since 2014. Does it make you itch to reverse the clock, if you could, and resume contributing your expertise?

BS : There has been a paradigm shift in the

development of infrastructure in both in scope and spread, especially regarding the road network. While in earlier times civilization flourished on the banks of the rivers, the road network has stimulated the same. Since 2014 infrastructure development has followed the trend set by the prime minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, to whose credit goes the Golden quadrilateral project. He also gave the push to rural road development, a highly commendable initiative. During my time I had the satisfaction of working as chief engineer in charge of monitoring the progress of road development all over India, as well as allocating funds, for five years. We do talk of sustainable development and yet in practice, we are not able to achieve it. For example, millions of trees have had to be cut to pave the way for the road network. This has been a Catch-22 situation involving the social activists and the governments. It also has an impact on climate change. It is worrisome.

The other disconcerting fact is that despite many steps initiated, it has not been possible to reduce the deaths on our roads. Even more disturbing is that a high percentage of deaths is of youngsters and those gainfully employed. Besides trauma to their families, it also means a great economic loss to the country. Unfortunately, this is an issue where the major responsibility rests on the vehicle drivers. Besides, it has other contributing factors also. Possibly, if I had been still working, I would have been able to articulate my views. I was also monitoring the reduction of road humps/speed breakers that are proving to be a great traffic hazard. Another concern is the death on our roads due to potholes.

VN : I am sure that a man of your seniority would have lots to contribute, even in an advisory role, given the fact that you have been a vital part of the organisational set-up during different dispensations. Would you like to make a comparative analysis of the different work situations during such a vast expanse of time? How was it to work during the so-called Licence Raj system? Did you start breathing easy when it was gradually lifted, even during the fag-end of your career?

BS : Throughout my professional career I had no complaints as there was a free atmosphere to discharge my duties. I started working in Navsari under Kakrapara Project which was in the then Bombay Province. Later, I joined the Central Water and Power Commission and then joined the Ministry of Transport, where I worked for nearly 30 years. I was the secretary of the Engineering Organisation in the ministry and I fought for our rights in promotion because there was a pronounced bias for people selected by the IRSE exam while others like myself were selected through an interview by UPSC. I spoke publicly about the discrimination between the Civil services like IAS, IPS etc. and the Engineering cadre on pay structure and service conditions. I was once cautioned by the cabinet secretary through my elder brother. However, my focus was always my work which earned me encomiums all through the Confidential Reports. It helped me achieve a quantum jump in the seniority list. There is a great shift in the approach to work now. It was only manual during my time whereas now technology has taken over with computers, mobiles, etc. After retirement in 1991, I served as Chairman of five National Highway Arbitration Tribunals and also on a three-member panel to monitor the NH4 project from Bangalore to Davangere and beyond executed jointly by an international agency.

VN : You may also want to offer your insightful views on how technology has changed the functioning of things in your domain of highway development. Pre-construction survey, reliance on satellite guidance, information technology, CAD, et al. A plethora of developments have taken place and they continue to change.

BS : Earlier, everything was manual and graduated from slide rules to a calculator. However now technology has made a paradigm shift in pace at every stage from project conception, survey, project preparation, tendering, awarding and construction. Computers have become the new tool for everything and hence every engineer has to become familiar with their use. Mobile has revolutionised communication and it helps to give quick instructions. We have got introduced to new concepts like Build Operate and Transfer, Private-Public-Partnership, etc. Toll collection to help finance projects is another significant development. The pace of road

construction has increased considerably (more than 30 km of road/day). The quality of bridges is much superior now. Multiple lanes on widened roads to facilitate bludgeoning traffic have become the norm. Inevitably, manual labour has been replaced by mechanisation. In short, technology has taken over every aspect of development. India ranks third in road networks in the world.

VN : What thrills you more in the present scenario - is it the pro-active political leadership which is giving due thrust to infrastructure or is it the revolutionary technological spin-offs at hand?

BS : I have partially answered this in reply to your earlier question. Yes, the political scenario after 2014 has considerably changed. Technology has greatly helped. One distinctive change is the series of initiatives taken to improve the lives of people at the basic level, like Swach Bharat, toilets, Jan Dhan, etc. which are issues that nobody thought of earlier.

VN : Your concerns about fuel consumption going up because of the high speeds that road traffic will henceforth see between Mysore and Bangalore, thanks to the new multiple lanes. How do you reconcile between you being a highway engineer and a peace-loving pensioner who does not want Mysore to lose its old-world charm?

BS : Passage of time changes everything including the value system. Technology and communication have brought revolutionary changes and linked all countries as global villages. This is a reality. Unlike before the concept of enjoyment has changed and it is instant satisfaction and hedonistic living now. It is the younger generation that is driving the world everywhere. As an elder, I may have my perception of enjoyment. True, Bengaluru linked with Mysuru with 10 lanes and a time of travel reduced to 75 minutes may not be my cup of tea but the world does not stop for me. Yes, progress cannot stop and the rise in fuel prices has become a peripheral issue that gets solved over time but the crucial question is how it is going to affect this Royal Mysore with innumerable magnificent heritage structures. For people like me after seeing Bengaluru being converted into a concrete jungle whether this 10-lane link will also make Mysuru go the Bengaluru way. Increasingly, in saving Mysuru from such a prospect there will be a trial of

strength between the social activists and the government. Seeing the recent example of Chamundi Hill and the issue concerning the Lansdowne Building and Devaraja Market, I have an uneasy feeling Mysuru will lose the fight in course of time unless due measures are taken. A solution to save the situation would be to constitute a high-level steering committee under the chairmanship of the Royal Scion Yaduveer KrishnadattaChamaraja Wadiyar. He should be vested with summary powers to have a final say in any development proposal of the government so that concept of sustainable development takes place to retain Mysuru's unique status as the Royal City.

VN : Please share your professional experiences outside of India. Your UN assignments, for instance.

BS : I had to work in Tanzania, looking after World Bank-aided sites. It provided me an opportunity to interact with experts from other developed countries on diverse engineering subjects. At that time I had done only the BE course but the interactions served to admire the quality of our teaching in India. Subsequently, I was appointed on selection as Engineer/Contract Advisor under UNDP for building a new capital at Dodoma and also as a consultant on a brief assignment to the World Bank on urban projects in Tanzania and Ethiopia. It was a rewarding experience for I saw the real face of socialism in governance under President Julius Nyerere (Tanzania). It helped reverse my preconceived notions and appreciate their sterling value system. I enjoyed total freedom as head of the directorate to work during my foreign assignment and my recommendations were acted upon fully. Without many facilities, I had to work with only one other fellow engineer. We did quality work working manually and earned the appreciation of my principal secretary. The leader of the World Bank visits once three months and appreciated our work. In Dodoma, I had to deal with an international consulting firm from England. I had a unique and pleasant experience for when the consulting firm came up with a demand for compensation, I examined it threadbare and gave my recommendation. Then a tripartite meeting was held presided over by the director. In the meeting, he told the firm that "my contract advisor has given his recommendation and he is an expert and I accept his recommendation".

His word was final and the firm had to abide by it. It was a fantastic feeling and it boosted my morale. In contrast, if such a claim arose in India, it would be decided by a time-consuming arbitration procedure.

VN : Please share something about your role as a watchdog.

BS : From my high school days I started writing for newspapers and magazines. I cultivated the habit of reading and it started from my study at Sarada Vilas Intermediate College. I read many important and topical books, mostly in English that helped me to gain good proficiency in writing in English. While working in Delhi I used to write to Indian Express and Hindustan Times on social and political issues. Reading my letters, Mr Venkobachar, an Under Secretary in the Government of India, came to my house several times and told me that I must grow out of this letter writing and write a book. He even offered his research services. He even bought me books, mostly written by Arun Shourie. Since so many social issues provoke me to express my views, I write in newspapers / magazines on various subjects. I write on transport and road infrastructure offering solutions, as it is my domain. The local daily Star of Mysore and other publications have been generous to publish my letters. It's a hobby I picked up from my Delhi days. I am happy that Mysore City Corporation has also responded to my views positively. There was an unexpected Certificate of Achievement that I received from The Economist. Apart from several cash prizes for the 'Letter of the Week' in Asian Age, I received a book for the 'Letter of the Week Award' from The Indian Express, New Delhi, containing 'Best in the Indian news Business 2005-2006' Also I was one of a few letter writers who were facilitated in the office of the Times of India, in Bangalore. I have compiled 150 letters in a compendium out of about 4000 letters. I am a permanent member of the Mysore Grahaka Parishat. Society has nurtured me so much and I must pay my debt by discharging my duty as a useful citizen of the country. The experience gained is being utilised in creating awareness in the area of my subject to the best of my ability. I am in my 91 st year but still keep myself busy in so many ways.

In my life, I have adopted three Mantras by which my father lived to his 105th year. They are; 1. Zest for life 2. Rosy outlook on life and 3. Willpower.

Annapurna Murthy

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Career Guidance

SCHOLARSHIPS

Education and training are a must for all students. Every student must have the desire and motivation to excel in the field chosen. Many times, there will be constraints and a lack of resources for a student to continue studies. In poverty struck homes, they want their children to earn rather than study. If a student is facing financial problems, there are Scholarships offered by Governments, Popular Companies, Private trusts, caste scholarships, Industrialists and celebrities offer many types of scholarships for the underprivileged! The most important thing is one must have information about what these scholarships are, who is offering them, When and how to apply, details of the websites, etc....

Students have to keep looking out for advertisements generally in the month of March/April and apply on time.

Broadly there are 3 types of Scholarships:

- 1. Merit Scholarships :** Merit scholarship considers only the merit of the student.
- 2. Merit cum Means Scholarships :** Merit Cum Means Scholarship considers the income of the parents.
- 3. Interest-Free Loan Scholarships :** awards the loan to the deserving students which could be paid after successful completion of the course without any interest.

NOTE: Students cannot avail of 2 scholarships at the same time. The Merit of the students should be maintained every year to avail scholarship.

Caste scholarships : Brahmins, Muslims, Marwaris, Vysyas, Vokkaligas and others have



set aside some funds to help the needy students. There are some associations that help the failed students also. (This is very important as the students need to be supported even when they fail)

Govt Scholarships (MHRD) : Offered for undergraduation in science and other subjects, Medical, Overseas, Engineering, Law, Pilot Training, Fine Arts etc.

Government Scholarships from other countries : The Arab Republic of Egypt Scholarship, Australia's John Crawford Scholarship British Government Scholarship, Spanish Government Scholarship, etc.

There are 2A category Scholarships: offered to Sc//ST/OBC

There are several Scholarships offered by the govt of India for the Disabled

MHRD Scholarships for the girls : Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Udaan (CBSE), Swami Vivekananda Single Girl Child Scholarship (UGC), PRAGATI (AICTE), SAKSHAM for differently-abled (AICTE), ISHAN UDAY and ISHAN VIKAS (UGC) and many many more...

Bank loans : Student loans help finance academic pursuits that seem out of reach by borrowing from the government or a private lender such as a bank. Student loans are paid back with interest after graduation. Many successful personalities were able to climb the social mobility ladder through student loans.

Student loans to study abroad have opened doors for many Indian students aspiring to expand their horizons and get new career opportunities along with having an experience of a lifetime. Getting an international degree also gives students great exposure and an edge in getting hired for high-paying jobs.

Several Indian banks offer different student loan schemes for pursuing higher education in India as well as abroad. Such loans are meant to cover tuition fees, hostel fees, and other related expenses while the students pursue their courses.

Most banks have a list of permitted courses and institutions for which the loans can be availed. You can apply for a student loan if the course and the institution you are interested in are included in the bank's list.

Knowledge about education loans can

help ambitious students attain good education, improve their job opportunities, and eventually have the capacity to pay back the loan successfully. Remember that loans are borrowings and need to be paid back.

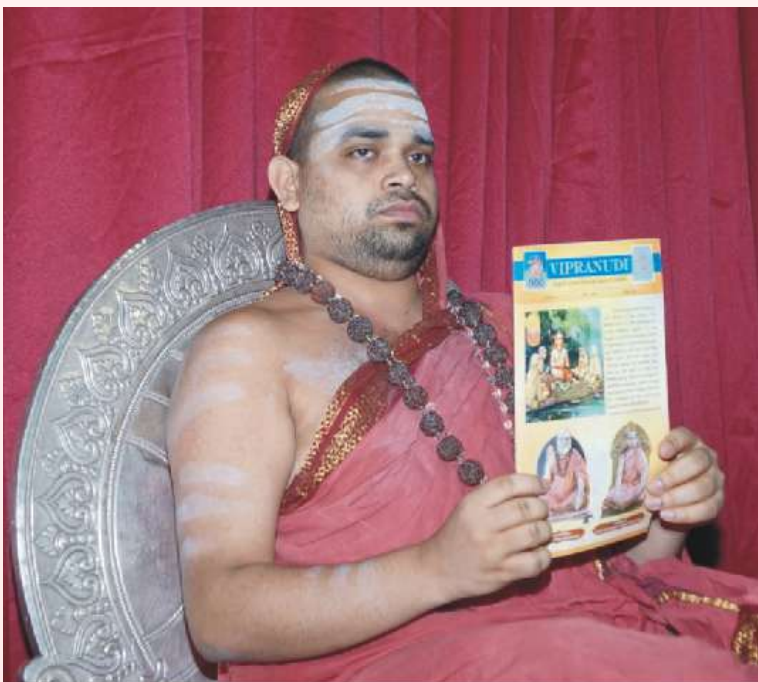
NOTE : The above is a simple guide to let the students know that funding is possible for studies in India and Abroad. Scholarships are on offer by several govt private and other agencies. Differently-abled students need not worry, they also have many scholarships on offer. You need to select for what subject and study you need the scholarship.

Planning is the key to success. Knowledge of the subject you want to pursue your studies, keeping the websites handy, and applying on time will help you reach your goal.



PhotoGallery

Guru Vandana Program at Shankarmutt Bangalore



Kiran Kannappan

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Nuggets from Samskrutam

Ideas Related to Speech in Samskrit Tradition

Knowledge was passed on from generation to generation through oral tradition in ancient India. Different families/clans took it as a sacred responsibility to preserve their specific branch of Veda, which can be noticed in the Pravara. (प्रवरः: an introduction to the individual from the rishi, gotra, Veda-Shaka lineage) A strong sense of prosody in samskrit works can be attributed to the sustenance of this oral tradition. Prosodic acoustic and rhythmic patterns in the form of poems and in some cases prose passages have played a significant role in aiding memorization necessary in oral traditions, with large emphasis placed on the practicality of knowledge and its immediate relevance.

पुस्तकस्था तु या विद्या परहस्तगतं धनम् ।
कार्यकाले समुत्पन्ने सा विद्या न तद्धनम् ॥

Knowledge in a book and wealth in other's hands, cannot be used at the time of necessity. Only well-assimilated knowledge or skill becomes handy at the time of its need.

Studying or acquiring knowledge is described as a process of three steps. (While these steps are extensively referred to during the study of philosophy, they can be aptly applied to all kinds of studies or skill acquisitions.) The first step is Shravana (श्रवणम्). In this step, the student attentively listens and observes the teacher. Second step is Manana (मननम्). This step involves thinking about the subject from step one and clarifying doubts. The third step is Nididhysana (निदिध्यासनम्). Work on the subject either in practice or thought, until it is completely assimilated and is one with the student.

मातेव रक्षति पितेव हिते नियुङ्क्ते कान्तेव
चाभिरमयत्यपनीय खेदम् ।

लक्ष्मीं तनोति वितनोति च दिक्षु कीर्तिं किं किं न
साधयति कल्पलतेव विद्या ॥

Knowledge protects like a mother, accommodates like a father, engages like a wife, entertains by removing grief, provides wealth, and spreads fame from all directions.... What is it that knowledge cannot provide? It is like Kalpavriksha, the wish-yielding tree.

आचार्यात् पादमादत्ते पादं शिष्यः स्वमेधया । पादं
सब्रह्मचारिभ्यः पादं कालक्रमेण च ॥

The process of learning is said to take place from four sources. A quarter of what we learn is from the teacher, the second quarter is by ourselves, the third from fellow students and the rest over time.

Effective knowledge assimilation in a student needs a fourfold connection known as Anubandha-Chatushtaya (अनुबन्धचतुष्टयम्). The four connected entities are, first the Subject of study Visaya (विषयः), second the student attempting to study Adhikari (अधिकारी), third the usefulness of this subject of study to the student in his purpose Prayojana (प्रयोजनम्), fourth the interrelation of the subject to the goal, student and usefulness Sambandha (सम्बन्धः). Adhikari the student, with all the abilities needed for assimilating the subject to attain the usefulness of his/her set goal Prayojana. The Visaya, the subject should have the right Sambandha, relation to that purpose of attainment. With these four in place, effective learning begins.

The relationship that exists between the sound (वाक्) and the object under consideration (अर्थ: meaning in the form of object / action / emotion) it represents is what makes us understand a word or sentence or conversation in the right context. This applies to both spoken and written, ears are stimulated by a spoken word, while eyes pick up the written word. The representative object appears in our mind as soon as the word is cognized, the sound being a symbol for the object intended. This relation is said to be permanent (नित्यः/नित्यः शब्दार्थसंबन्धः).

वागर्थीविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।
जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥

This benedictory verse of Kalidasa in Raghuvamsha is a salutation to the Primordial Couple Parvati and Eshwara. Established in close proximity in an everlasting relation like the meaning and its sound, the primal couple are the representations of all the sounds and words ever-present, for they are the parents of the entire creation, Salutations to them.

Words form part of a sentence. Each word has a distinctive meaning but it is only a collection of right words guided by intent (आकाङ्क्षा), ability (योग्यता) and context (सन्निधिः) forms a meaningful sentence. It is in such a sentence that we find communicable ideas.

While understanding a sentence, we grasp the denoted meaning or the indicated meaning or suggestive meaning. The outcome or understood meaning is termed as vacyartha (वाच्यार्थः), lakshyatha (लक्ष्यार्थः) and dhvani (ध्वनिः) and the process of such cognition is Abhidha-vritti (अभिधावृत्तिः), lakshana-vritti (लक्षणावृत्तिः) and vyanjana-vritti (व्यञ्जनावृत्तिः). Let us look at some examples.

Two people are conversing by the wayside and a multicolored cow passes by. One person exclaims "Look, a multicolored cow is walking by." Upon hearing this the second person's

attention is drawn to the cow. The understanding here is direct.

The same two people are continuing to converse and a fast motorist drives by. One of the two exclaims, "That flashed by like lightening". The second person understands that the motorist is being compared to lightening and that bike sped was fast. Here there is no direct reference to the motorist, yet the listener is able to make the connection. The understanding is indicative. The classic example phrase is "Cowherd village on the river Ganga" (गङ्गायां घोषः). There can be a village only on the bank of the river Ganga, so that is indicative.

Time has elapsed in conversation and one among the two suddenly realizes this and says "It is getting dark". Immediately the other person makes the connection that it is time to say goodbye and head home. Here it is a suggestive process and the outcome is a suggestion.

स्वेच्छाकेसरिणः स्वच्छस्वच्छायायासितेन्दवः ।
त्रायन्तां वो मधुरिपोः प्रपन्नातिच्छिदो नखाः ॥

In this benedictory verse, of Dhvanyaloka by Anandavardhana prays- May the slayer of demon Madhu, Lord Vishnu who took the form of Narasimha of his own free will, with his ten brilliant white nails which supersede the light of the moon, with which he tore open Hiranyakashipu driving away the fear of his devotees, protect us all. It is said that the author is suggesting a bold and valorous presentation of the new ideas in Aesthetics with this opening verse.

These ideas of language understanding are discussed in great detail among grammarians, philosophers, logicians and others. They categorize each of these further, but for the most part, almost all our relation with language is covered in direct, indicative and suggestive understandings. The day-to-day transaction is mostly direct. Different societies have their own indicative phrases, idioms, etc. Suggestions are mostly part of artistic endeavors like songs, dialogs, writings, etc.

(End of Part 4)

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Avani - the good earth

COW, SOIL & HEALTH



If we look at the cow population map of India and compare it with the map showing the incidence rate of cancer, one would be startled. There is an unmistakable relation between a decrease in cow population and cancer. Not that there aren't other causes for the dreaded disease, but the maps, prepared by two different entities as two independent studies, reveal that animal husbandry is much more than economy. It's health, too.

For instance, the states of Kerala and Mizoram have very low cow populations of just 12 & 1.6 lakhs respectively (source: India in Pixels) and they both have the highest cancer incidence rate of 135 & 121 per lakh (source: The Lancet), whereas the BIMARU states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan & Uttar Pradesh have the highest population of cows per unit of land and have registered the lowest incidence rate for cancer.

Although this requires further studies and peer reviews, these two maps are reflecting the naked eye, the health issues caused by (a) the cattle meat consumption pattern and (b) the carcinogenic nature of chemicals and fertilizers used as growth accelerators/pest control. The two states mentioned above (Kerala & Mizoram) are also literally the top consumers of meat in India per capita and the BIMARU states, the least. The high concentration of residual

pesticide content in meat is what perhaps is triggering the disease.

However, the aspect of soil quality and its relation to cow economics is what this article will emphasize.

Sunbeams, the energy drivers of earth, are captured by photosynthesis through chlorophyll in grass/leaves. The wonderful choreography of nature where herbivorous animals eat grass and discharge undigested residue of plant matter that is rich in nutrients and indigenous microbes helps the grass to regenerate is a well-known fact. This symbiotic relationship between plants, microbes and animals is nature's master stroke which we humans are trying to rediscover. Rediscover, because, our pastoral ancestors had these insights as they merely complemented the process to grow food by letting nature be herself.

Then, the "Green revolution" happened during the 60s.

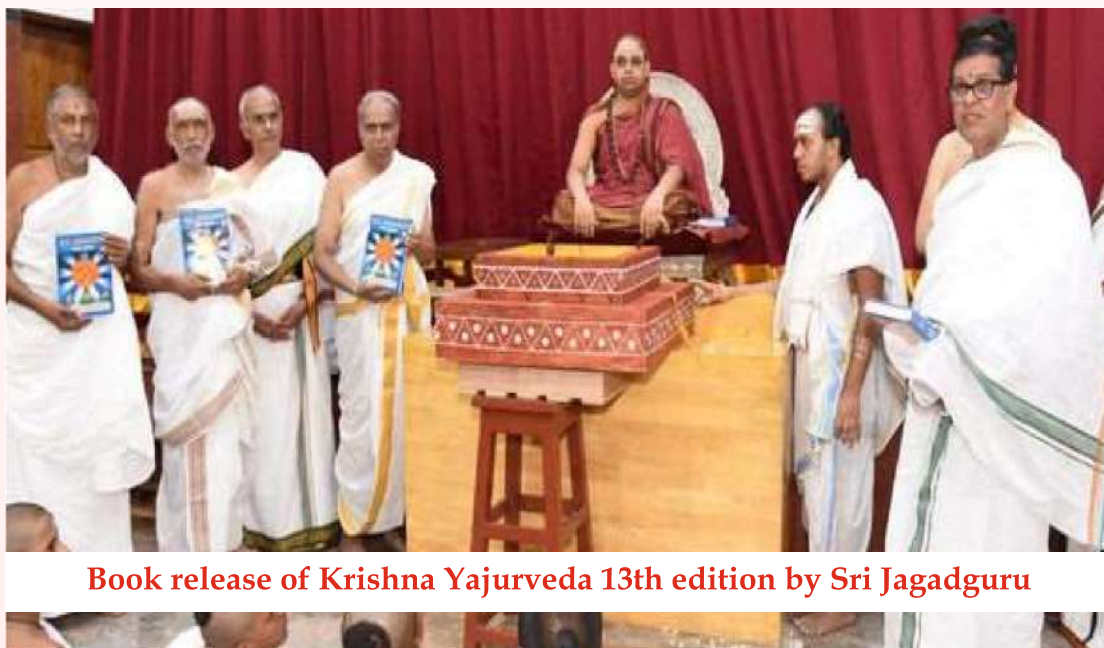
It had its rationale. Food security for a burgeoning population, self-dependency in terms of production of high-yielding food grains, and poverty alleviation through enhanced food production, to name a few. Back then, many experts believed that this revolution was a necessary evil & they might not have been entirely wrong in the short term. However, the long-term effects of environmental, financial and sociological problems like droughts, farmer debts & suicides, soil deterioration and pollution of air, soil and water, and the ruins caused by chemicals, all led to a collapse of agricultural systems in many Indian states.

By the 70s, Punjab was producing more than 70% of India's food grains, bringing riches to its farmers. But the mechanisation of the agriculture sector resulted in a low bovine population which in turn degraded the soil in particular and the ecosystem in general. Today,

over 40% of Punjab's soil is useless and about 50% of soil is low on nitrogen and phosphorus, the vital building blocks for food production. Over irrigation too brought in excess alkalinity and salinity in the soil. Punjab has registered the second-highest cancer incidence growth rate of 44% per lakh of population in a short span of 25 years between 1990-2015.

Cow grazing and encouraging cattle to safely move from pasture to pasture will help bring back nutrients to the soil. Herbivores build the soil on which humans grow food. Hydroponics is an emerging alternative to soil-based agriculture & its produce is already commercially sold in far-eastern markets & we shall understand more about it in the following editions.

For a hot climate country like India, pest control is a big problem and therefore production of 100% organic food is a challenge but it's possible to significantly reduce the usage of chemicals. As consumers of food, we can drive this revolution of low chemical food in India. The true green revolution would be to abandon chemical-based food in a phased manner and embrace organic alternatives. Many apps bring organic producers and consumers together. Edible home gardens help cut-down dependencies to that extent. It's time we put food on the plate of our next generation that's made by nature's methods.



Book release of Krishna Yajurveda 13th edition by Sri Jagadguru



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Health on Your Plate

FATS IN YOUR DIET – UNHEALTHY OR HEALTHY?



Fats in the diet, generally have a very bad reputation. Some of this is justified because certain types of fat may play a role in the causation of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and obesity. But not all fats are bad. In fact, some fats are good and may even help to promote good health. Knowing the difference can help one decide which fats to avoid and which to eat in moderation.

Fats can be found in foods from both plants and animals. Fat is as essential as protein and carbohydrates for the body. Certain bodily functions absolutely require fat. For example, fat-soluble vitamins – like Vit A, D, E, and K require dietary fat in order to be absorbed. Fats form an integral part of all cell membranes. Cholesterol is required for the synthesis of important hormones like – estrogen, progesterone, cortisol, and testosterone. Hence the concept of a “zero-fat diet” is not only unwise but can also be harmful.

Let's now have an overview of the different types of dietary fats. Fats and oils contain a mixture of fatty acids, and it is the predominant type of fatty acid they contain which makes them more healthy or less healthy

There are mainly three main types of dietary fats – Saturated fats (or fatty acids), Unsaturated fats, (or fatty acids), and Trans fats (or fatty acids)

Saturated fats are generally solids at room temperature. Foods like butter, palm and coconut oils, cheese, and red meat have high amounts of saturated fat. Saturated fats increase the LDL (bad) cholesterol in the blood. It causes cholesterol to build up in the arteries (blood vessels). High levels of LDL cholesterol

increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. It also increases the LDL (bad) to HDL (good) ratio, which is another heart disease risk factor. An abundance of saturated fat has also been associated with other negative health effects, such as increased inflammation, cancers, and mental decline

Unsaturated fats on the other hand, which are liquid at room temperature, are considered beneficial fats because they can improve blood cholesterol levels, ease inflammation, stabilize heart rhythms, and play a number of other beneficial roles.

Unsaturated fats are further classified into 2 types:

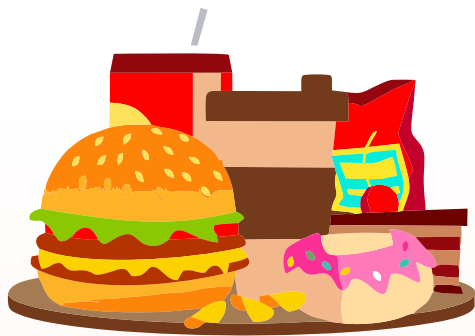
Monounsaturated fats/fatty acids (Eg: Olive oil, Avocado oil, Peanut oil, Canola oil), and

Polyunsaturated fats/fatty acids (PUFA): Polyunsaturated fats are of two types: omega-3s and omega-6. These two polyunsaturated fatty acids are regarded as 'essential' because the body cannot make them – they must come from the diet. These are alpha-linolenic acid (an omega 3 fat) and linoleic acid (an omega 6 fat).

Omega-3 fats (Eg. Walnuts, legumes, such as kidney beans, Linseeds or flaxseed, Soybeans and tofu)

Omega-6 fats (Eg. Sunflower oil and seeds, Sesame oil and seeds, Safflower oil, Soybean oil, Corn (maize) oil, and Rice bran oil)

Polyunsaturated fats are used as building blocks in the membranes that surround all the cells of the body and contribute to the structure of the brain

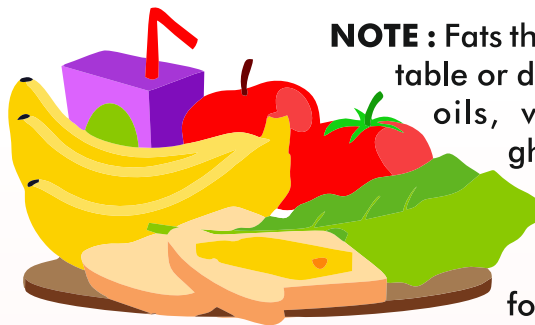


Trans Fats (or fatty acids): These are the worst types of fats. They are a form of unsaturated fat. They occur in both natural and artificial forms. Natural trans fats occur in the meat and dairy products from animals, such as cattle, sheep, and goats. They form naturally when bacteria in these animals' stomachs digest grass. Artificial trans fats are made when food makers turn liquid oils into solid fats, like hydrogenated vegetable oils and margarine. Here, the vegetable oils are chemically altered to stay solid at room temperature, which gives them a much longer shelf-life. Trans fats can be found in many fried, "fast" packaged, or processed foods,

They are the worst -because consuming them significantly increases LDL (bad) cholesterol and decreases the HDL (good) cholesterol, while most other fats tend to increase both LDL and HDL. Trans fats cause systemic inflammation, increased formation of blood clots, and reduced endothelial function or vascular relaxation - all contributing to increased cardiovascular risk.

So which type of fat and how much of it must we consume in order to maintain a healthy life?

The amount of fat needed by an individual should be able to meet the requirements of essential fatty acids, provide palatability, and yet should not produce any adverse effects.



NOTE : Fats that are used as such at the table or during cooking (vegetable oils, vanaspati, butter, and ghee) are termed "visible" fats. Fats that are present as an integral component of various foods are referred to as "invisible" fat.

The total fat (visible + invisible) in the diet should provide between 20-30% of total calories. Saturated fat intake should not exceed 8-10% of total energy. The intake of PUFA should be 8-10% of energy intake. The remaining 8-10% of fat calories can be derived from mono-unsaturated fatty acids.

The visible fat intake in the diets can go up to 50g/person/day based on the level of physical activity and physiological status. Adults with a sedentary lifestyle should consume about 25 g of visible fat, while individuals involved in hard physical work require 30 - 40g of visible fat per day. Visible fat intake should be increased during pregnancy and lactation to about 30g. Diets of young children and adolescents should contain about 30-50g/day. (Source: Dietary Guidelines for Indians -an ICMR publication)

Trans Fat: Trans fats should be avoided as far as possible. Less than 1% of the total calories or 0-1g per day is ideal.

Recommendations by the American Heart Association - Consume less than 5-6 % saturated fat, less than 1% trans-fat, and between 50 and 70 g of total fat per day. The daily limit for cholesterol is no more than 300 mg.



When it comes to fat intake remember -

"It's not a DIET, It's a LIFESTYLE CHANGE!"

Anitha Nadig

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Mind over Matter



Radha's life completely changed after her son was born. She felt the joy and satisfaction of becoming a mother, the second time in the first six months in spite of her sleepless nights taking care of the baby 24/7 and managing the elder child. Occasionally worries crept in as she felt her son was lagging behind other babies of his age in terms of motor movements. Her anxiety peaked when he turned one and a half and not meeting the significant milestones of his development in terms of crawling, standing and walking. On consulting doctors and getting tests done, her son was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, a group of disorder that affects a person's ability to move and maintain balance and posture.

Radha had to quit her job to take care of her son. This had also led to a change in school for her daughter due to financial strain in the family. She is juggling between household tasks and taking care of her husband and daughter. Most of the days, her day ends with physical and emotional exhaustion. Frequently she is haunted with guilt that she is unable to take care of her parents, who solely depend on her in their old age.

Mahesh was devastated when he heard his mother was diagnosed with cancer. He was brought up by his mother all alone as his father had succumbed to an accident when he was two. When Mahesh realised that her mother is not going to survive for long, he went through intense anxiety, depression and guilt. He wanted to give the best to her. With his high-paying job and good insurance coverage,

Mahesh managed to get the best treatments for his mother. He hired a full-time help. In those 3 years of his mother's cancer diagnosis to her demise, Mahesh withered physically, and emotionally. His relationship with his wife and career declined. Mahesh could not focus on anything but her mother. He was unable to complete his work on time in the office. He was oblivious to the needs of his wife. His emotional drain led to physical issues. He did not find time to do anything apart from attending to his mother and work.

Ahana was twenty-eight and the only daughter. She came from a middle-class family and aspired to work and support her parents. She was insistent that she gets married only after settling into a good job. After an initial struggle, she found a job that was of her interest and paid decently. As she was settling into her new job and looking forward to a better life for her and her parents, Ahana's father was diagnosed with Parkinson's, a progressive nervous system disorder that affects movement. He started losing balance, falling and hurting himself. In a year's time, he reached a stage where he could not manage himself without help. Ahana's sense of responsibility towards her parents, and anticipated guilt of leaving her parents if she gets married, held up Ahana from deciding on her marriage. Ahana's mother was old too and both mother and daughter could not help her father on their own. Ahana hired part-time help. Her earnings soared in paying for treatment and the help. Their lifestyle was back to square one. She was battling to prioritize her own needs with her role as a daughter. With part-time help, though the falls of his father had reduced, there were one or the other things every day, which needed her attention and action. She was not able to focus on work. In the last two years, while her peers moved into the next role and got a good hike, Ahana stayed on the career ladder where she was when she joined. She experiences anxiety, anger, guilt and depression quite often.

Ashok meets his friends after a long time. He felt so good connecting to his friends after three years. He used to miss all the monthly and annual meets of his school and college friends. Many of his friends, who knew nothing about Ashok's personal life labelled him as a 'family man' who does not give time to friends. Some of his friends were surprised to see him at the get-together. Some pulled his leg saying, how come Ashok's wife let him attend a party! Ashok thought that this was the time to share what happened to him and his family in the last three years. He shared about how his father was diagnosed with dementia, and how he slowly lost all his cognitive abilities like memory, judging and perception. How his father forgot who he was and his family members. Ashok, briefly shared he was busy attending and taking care of his father along with other work and family responsibilities. Many of his friends expressed sorry for what his father had to go through. Some of them apologised for pulling his leg all these years for not attending the parties. Ashok noticed that none of his friends asked how he felt in the last three years, taking care of his father. In the last three years, Ashok has felt immense frustration, helplessness, anger and anxiety. The emotional turmoil and stress have significantly affected his physical health too.

Each one of us would have been a caregiver for a loved one, at one or the other time in our adult life.

WHO IS A CAREGIVER?

As per the American dictionary, a Caregiver is someone who provides for the needs of children or of people who are ill or cannot provide for their own needs. A caregiver is a person who attends to the needs of a person who has a short- or long-term illness, injury, or disability. A caregiver can be a spouse, parent, children, family member, or even a professional help. Caregiving impacts the caregiver in different ways based on the relationship with the patient. Longer the period of caregiving, the higher the impact on the caregiver.

ISSUES WITH CAREGIVING

Caregiving issues can affect a professional

paid caregiver as well as an unpaid person who gives care to a loved one, a friend, or a family member. A variety of issues stem from caregiving. The common caregiving issues revolve around:

Primary issues: Physical issues and Mental health issues

Secondary issues: Relationship issues, Financial strain, Setback in work, Reduced quality of life, Lack of self-care and Isolation, loneliness & apathy

Caregiving often results in chronic psychological stress. Based on the relationship and equation with the patient, the emotional state of the caregiver varies. One may experience intense anxiety and depression thinking about the worst. When the caregiving is forced or previous experiences with the patient are unpleasant, there could be a lot of anger the caregiver goes through.

Physical strain and long-term caregiving may lead to irritation and frustration to the caregiver. Because of the energy and time required for caregiving, a caregiver may not be able to indulge in self-care activities like physical exercise, relaxation activities and so on leading to stress. As caregiving is taxing when it is long-term, a caregiver may not be able to spend quality time with other relationships like spouse, children, or parents which may hamper those relationships. This may lead to emotions like guilt, hurt and anger. Caregivers, if working may get stuck in career growth as focusing on the work and dedicating to career aspirations may not be possible. This also can contribute to the financial strain with no salary revisions. This again can lead to emotions like anxiety, frustration, disappointment, depression and so on.

One of the studies from Carers worldwide shows that there are 273 million caregivers in India alone. 84% of them are women and girls. 92% of the caregivers worry about money and 79% suffer from anxiety and depression. A study shows that in India, unpaid caregiver spends 24.6 hours a week in a week in caregiving activities. 3.5 hours a day goes into caregiving activities alone. The physical and emotional stress of caregiving consumes energy and time beyond 3.5 hours a day.

CARE FOR CAREGIVERS:

It is equally important for the caregiver to take care of self along with caring for the patient, especially when the caregiver is a family member. As we now know, caregivers go through a series of emotional issues. Processing these emotions in a safe place with empathetic and non-judgemental listening can help the caregiver to ventilate the pent-up emotions. A caregiver can talk and share what they are going through, how they are feeling, and their challenges with anyone they trust. The listener can listen and offer any help if they could and refrain from advice. Because the caregivers may not have options and look forward to someone who could listen and understand them. They can also talk to counsellors or psychologists to learn techniques to process their emotions on their own.

If the family of the patient is financially

well, they can think of hiring full-time or part-time help, reducing the burden on the family member on their caregiving activities. There are a lot of agencies that provide professional help who are trained to give care for specific illnesses/disabilities. There are also long-term care centres for the sick. There are short-term respite homes that give a temporary break and relief from caregiving for the caregiver and the family. One can explore the options based on their needs and affordability.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU SEE A CAREGIVER?

Do you want to know how can you help a caregiver, if you come across one?

Just listen to them. Acknowledge what they are going through. Ask them how are they dealing with the stress? Offer them small, specific help if you could do. Refer them to a counsellor for professional help.



Rosalynn Carter, Former First Lady of the United States says –

“There are only four kinds of people in this world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who will need caregivers”

Caregiving is universal



Inauguration of Medical cell of AKBMS

PhotoGallery

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Performing Arts...



In the previous article, the role of accompanists in a music concert was discussed.

It is essential that an artist must have perfect planning to make the programme a grand success. Music has two faces, one being theoretical knowledge and the other, being practical skills. though we certainly know that any performing art breaths and lives through performance, then why is theory important for a musician? This is because, when an artist builds up the castle of music on the strong foundation of theoretical knowledge, then the particular music will be cherished for a long time.

In ancient times, music as an art was performed in temples and palaces. Music and dance were patronised by kings and temple authorities. In India music was made universal by the composers of medieval period. Veterans like Basavanna, Purandara dasa and other Haridasas, Chaitanya Maha Prabhu, Meerabai, while propagating the finer elements of music with the combination of spirituality were responsible for bringing music to the common man. In later stages, music got its place even in public dias. several music sabhas started pouring in. Music was added in syllabi at all levels in education system.

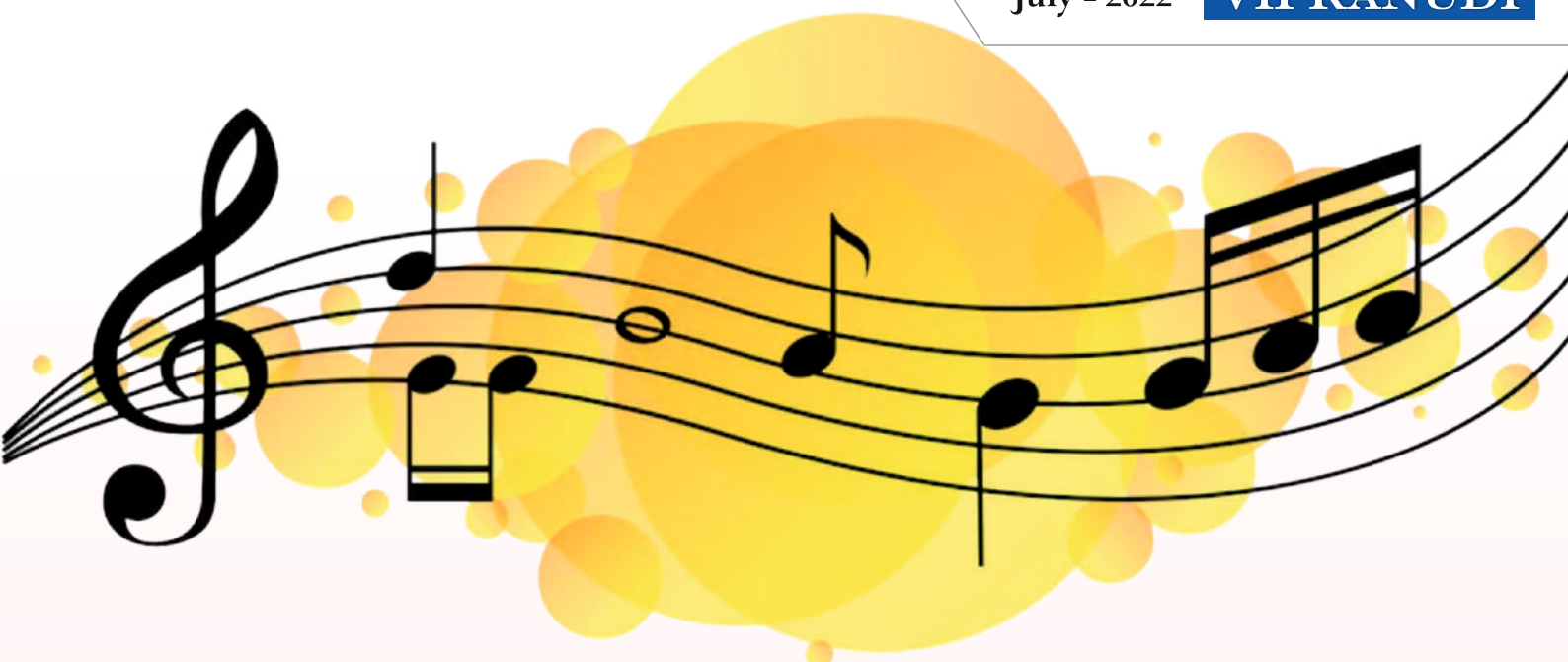
Musicians started looking at various dimensions to make a concert successful. Vid.Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar is said to have introduced a new and scientific approach to music concerts. "Shrutir mata layah pitaha",

“श्रुतिमता लयःपिता” says that Indian music focusses more on Shruti and laya. It is very interesting to know that only in Indian music system do we have distinct technical words which we seldom find in any other music system of the world. Laya is certainly different from taala, where in taala is said to be mechanical, laya can only be experienced internally. Likewise Shruti is mentally experienced and perceived in Indian context. Both these aspects must be given utmost importance during a performance.

The most important duty of the performer is to tune the tamboora to perfect Shruti. The four strings i.e., shadja, panchama, saarane and anusaarane must blend with each other while tuning a tamboora. A perfectly tuned tamboora will produce antara gandhara when shadja string is plucked. Because of this reason, musicians in Hindustani music keep two tambooras in a concert.

A main criterion which a performer should always keep in mind is the list of compositions which one is going to present. As discussed in the previous article, usually a varna is chosen as the opening composition. It is felt that by singing a varna, the performer's voice warms up because of the brisk mode in which the varna is rendered. It is noteworthy to choose a varna which is composed in a rakti raga like Darbar, Kedaragowla, Kalyani, Mohana, Hamsadhwani, Shankarabharana etc. By doing so, the minds of the performer and the listener will set a wonderful mental state to enjoy a concert in the best way.

The selection of the ragas for the concert plays a vital role. Indian music system has a variety of ragas like janaka, janya, oudhuva, shadhava, bhashanga, kriyanga, vakra raga etc. Each composition must be chosen so that most types of ragas just mentioned, are covered. . A concert which follows only janaka ragas or janya ragas is sure to curb the creative mood of both the performer and the listener. A



good combination of all types of ragas will pave way for the proper blooming of creativity or manodharma as popularly known. Again, while selecting the ragas, it is very important that both shuddha madhyama and prathi madhyama ragas are selected irrespective of the type of composition one sings.

A unique feature of Indian music is the science behind swara nomenclature. Each swara has its own colour and unique shade. Gamakas are the pillar of Indian music. Hence to make a concert successful one must deeply understand and be able to portray the inbuilt subtle gamakas which take different shades in different ragas. Navarasas are the mirror of a raga or a composition. Both maatu and dhaatu ie lyrical and musical content in a particular composition must be well analysed before presenting it in front of the audience. Technically it is termed as sahitya bhava and sangeeta bhava. A performer who through experience can blend these two elements is sure to climb up the ladder of great success.

The meaning of each word, sentence and whole composition will give extra validity to one's musical skills. While selecting the compositions one should never forget to choose ragas which can portray various rasas and elevate the mood of both the performer and the listener. Thematic analysis plays an important part here.

For example, Sri. Tyagaraja's compositions are filled with the finer bhava of atma nivedana. Sri. Muttuswamy Dikshitar's compositions are highly majestic with various

intricacies hidden within which need a lot of practice to sing with confidence in front of a knowledgeable audience. Compositions of Sri purandara dasa and other Haridasas, and of Sri. Annamayiyya, are immersed with utmost devotion towards their deities. Thorough knowledge of rasa bhava of each composition must be understood for a good presentation.

A performer should never forget the language in which he or she is performing. At least a few songs in the language spoken in the region should be included in a performance.

Next, the pace of singing plays a major role. Singing all the compositions at an unchanged speed may not have a positive impact on the listener and the accompanying artists. Adopting the technique of rendering each composition in a suitable and different speed will surely enhance the aesthetic aspects.

The selection of taal as of compositions is also important. Singing all songs in the same tala, be it adital or roopaka tala is sure to bring down the impact of any concert. Compositions from various talas with different jaathis offer added value. While choosing the type of composition, one must give importance to choosing from both madhyama kala and vilamba kala krutis.

In a concert, the artist must render different types of compositions such as varna, Ganesha stuti, a brisk kruti with a short alapana and swarakalpana, followed by a vilamba kala kruti or raga tana pallavi in a major raga should be chosen. The raga-tana-pallavi is the center stage of the whole concert. Perfect preparation

to make the accompanying artists follow this item with ease is expected here. A Tani avartana or an opportunity for laya vinyasa should be allowed for the percussion artists to depict the beauty of laya patterns. The main artist should be very careful to take up the place of composition once the Tani avartana ends. Proper knowledge of laya helps the main artist to take a concert to greater heights.

To divert the audience to a lighter mood, the performer will have to select a devaranama, or Bhajan, or an astapadi or a jaavali towards the end of a concert. Choosing a lighter composition with appropriate ragas helps to wind down the concert. A performer will be appreciated for selecting compositions with apt ragas, keeping in mind both the view of entertainment and enlightenment.

A good performer doesn't discard the request of a good audience. There is a practice in concerts to send audience requests. A performer who with a smile initiate to oblige it will no doubt, win the hearts of listeners.

There are a few more does and don'ts for a performer.

Clear pronunciation plays a vital role, without which the audience may never understand the meaning of the word and lose all interest in listening to the music. Proper

knowledge of breaking the words also is to be practiced well in advance. A performer should give more space to accompanying artists to showcase their skills. Appreciating the finer elements of accompaniment is also a welcome factor. Developing a good rapport with the audience is very important for the performer. Ending a concert with a brisk tillana in an energetic raga-like behag, kamach, bilahari, etc would give the audience a great experience and prepares them to look forward to the future programs of that particular performer.

The same principles apply to both the vocalist and solo instrumentalists.

A greater responsibility of a solo instrumentalist is to learn the sahitya of all the compositions. Merely playing the swaras will no way help the player, because, in Indian music, the instrumentalists are expected to follow vocal tradition. It is essential that an instrumentalist also can play the sahitya of the composition.

I conclude my write-up with a phrase from a shloka of Sree Krishna quoted in Bhagavad Geeta, "yad bhaavam tad bhavathi" (यद्भावं तद्भवति) which can be applied to all spheres of life, so also to music. How best a performer conceives the concept of a music concert, so good and successful result will be achieved.



Bike Rally by Vipra youths at Gadag

PhotoGallery

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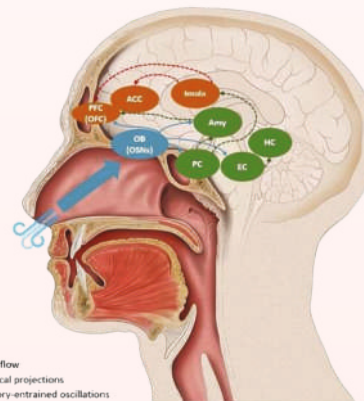
Yoga The Brain Asana

The Roulette of Cognition and the Breath: - Pranayama

The breath is a key ally in the Yogic journey – the act of inhaling air, not only makes intake of oxygen possible but also connects the cardiovascular, nervous and respiratory systems. After birth, the first gush of air into the lungs heralds life and the last breath out means death. The action of breathing integrates anatomy, the nervous and respiratory systems and more importantly, becomes the thread that connects the mind and body in the current moment. Breathing makes consciousness and perception possible. Through the breath, we invite Prana into our bodies and mind - we make life, living, feeling, thinking and being possible. It is then no surprise that the Yogic philosophy perceives the breath as the steering wheel of the body car. Imagine an everyday scenario: Rama is walking on the street and he sees an object that he recognizes as a snake. The fear induced by this recognition starts bodily reactions - his heart starts pounding, his muscles tense, his brain gets aroused into a super-alert state, his attention is focused outward, and he starts fleeing the scene to avoid getting bit by the imagined snake. He later realizes that it is indeed a rope and not a snake. At this point, the breath is his steering wheel – because he cannot consciously reduce his heartbeat, nor can he at will relax his muscles. He can neither directly switch off the 'fight-or-flight' response triggered in his nervous system. His only control is on the breath, which he can consciously regulate to gain control of the heart, mind and body. Rama starts breathing slowly, he heaves a sigh of relief, his heart rate reduces, the muscles prepared for action are now on standby, and his state of alertness is now more normal since the need for quick action is now gone. The phenomenal importance given to breathing in yogic practice is rooted in this knowledge of the

nervous system – that the breath and breathing although automatic and unconscious, can also be regulated consciously to alter the state of mind and consciousness. Hence the asanas are always prescribed with breathing mandates, either with or without conscious regulation.

Pranayama, one of the limbs of Ashtanga Yoga is the science of inviting, sustaining, using and metabolizing Prana towards the goal of 'Chitta-vrittinirodha' (freedom from compulsive thought-centred consciousness). This freedom from compulsive thought allows the person at the steering wheel into advanced states of



perception/ concentration. In his commentary on the Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, Swami Vivekananda explains the sutra: tadadrashtu

huswaroopeavasthanam thus: 'At that time (the time of concentration) the seer (the Purusa) rests in his own (unmodified) state'. He goes on to explain why redemption from compulsive Chitta-vritti is needed to go deeper into regulating the mind: 'As soon as the waves have stopped, and the lake has become quiet, we see the ground below the lake. So with the mind; when it is calm, we see what our nature is; we do not mix ourselves but remain our selves.' What this means neuro - scientifically, is that by correct Yogic practice, a new neural architecture of conscious cognitive control of the autonomic nervous systems is possible. This is achieved by Abhyasa (correct practice) and the Yamas and Niyamas prescribed to aid the practice. Such a practice puts in place new neuronal pathways through practice-induced neuroplasticity – thereby transforming the nervous system altogether.

The autonomic nervous system is a system

that works on what is called 'integrated reflexes' – a series of quick actions that do not involve brain control for the response. Let us assume you just touched a very hot object, your hand takes less than a second to immediately retract it, to achieve this quick response, the sensory neurons from the hand relay information to the nearest spinal cord centre, which then in an instant relays orders to the bones, muscles and nerves that make a retraction of the hand possible. Much like such reflexes, there is certain automaticity associated with all kinds of human behaviour, we feel compelled to react to a bad incident, a painful reality, a difficult person or situation or stimulus. By breaking this cycle of compulsivity and by choosing a lifestyle, orientation, and practice such as Yoga we develop a whole new layer of intelligence into the person holding the steering wheel. Yoga transforms the status of his nervous control hierarchy such that his spirit truly metamorphoses from a caterpillar to a beautiful butterfly; free to fly or home at will.

An ancient Zen master is said to have bequeathed the secret to the mind as 'Attention, Attention. By paying attention to the breath, one merely does not become more mindful but cortical control of breath is activated, which means one can use the breath to activate the cerebral cortex which makes more complicated decisions possible beyond the binaries of anger -happiness, bad and good feelings. Also, attentive breathing can directly modify higher cognitive pathways in the brain and exert a more subtle cognitive perception-integration system to what is otherwise a sensory-driven reflex-based system. Hence, with practice, a conscious sensory withdrawal is in demand by the Yogi. Let's take an everyday example. If the CEO of a company wants to concentrate on deciding the future corporate strategy, he needs to

'concentrate' his prana-shakti to evaluate all layers of the problems with their various stakes. For this, he needs to withdraw inwards, only then the lake becomes still, and the 'seer' sees the problem. Only then, will he be able to strategize as per the context and finalize action to be taken at the steering wheel much more effectively. Compare this to a CEO who is distracted, whose Chitta is 'vritting' and running around in circles, getting attached to thoughts of failure, or unreal perceptions of his company's strengths - he will never be able to see what is at the 'bottom of the lake' and use his metacognitive and intuitive abilities. His ability to 'deep dive' within, at the required moment and do what is called 'right action' according to Bhagavadgita, will not be under his conscious control. He will be at the behest of suitable conditions externally, and gambling at the Roulette wheel of an unanchored mind – hitting the cognitive jackpot then becomes a matter of luck and chance.

By creating a whole new neural architecture that can use the basic human apparatus with conscious control, curated self-driven experiences are now possible. It is now possible to remain calm during adverse conditions, it is now possible to regain control of compulsive actions, and reactive emotions – one can choose what one wants to experience - the current. That is a complete turn-around from normal animalistic reflex and reactive consciousness that we are evolving from – this is why the Yogic consciousness is perceived as a more evolved state as well.

Figures :

1. Breath-induced brain cerebral cortex activations. Nasal breathing stimulates olfactory sensory neurons in the olfactory bulb, which synchronizes respiratory rate and neural oscillations in the olfactory bulb and piriform cortex. Source: Original Scientific Review: Keeping the Breath in Mind: Respiration, Neural Oscillations, and the Free Energy Principle, Front. Neurosci., 29 June 2021, Sec. Autonomic Neuroscience <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnins.2021.647579>.
2. Various Pranic-regulation practices are depicted in Hatha Yoga Pradipika.



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The NRIs Kaleidoscope

Student NRIs

In the first article of this series, we broadly explored the experiences of NRIs as they adjust to life in their adopted country. In the second article, we focussed on how differences in social cultures, between western countries and India, impact the lives and experiences of NRIs. In the third article, we explored the differences that develop between NRIs and RIs (Resident Indians) over time. In this fourth article, we explore the experiences of Indian students who travel abroad for education. While Indian students are not usually viewed as NRIs, compared to Indian families living abroad, we include them in the NRI group because they too are residing outside India and many tend to settle outside India after their education.

Student NRIs

On average, approximately 3.5 Lakh students (350,000) depart India to study overseas, annually. This average has been exponentially increasing over the years. Although the preferred countries to study abroad are US, Canada and UK, Indian students are studying in over 85 countries. At any given time, more than 10 Lakh (1 million) Indian students are studying overseas. More than 50% of them are in North America. Indian students are now the single largest source of contribution to international education institutions. They contributed roughly US\$7.6B to the American education system in 2019 (Pre-Covid Period).

These statistics are relevant and useful to any discussion relating to Student NRIs, due to several reasons.

- ✳ India is home to the largest population of young adults (18-23) anywhere in the world. This group will continue to play an important role not just in the development of India, but in the larger world.

- ✳ They support the College education system in several countries that otherwise would not be able to sustain their local communities.
- ✳ While some Indian students return to India after studying overseas, a larger proportion tends to permanently reside outside India adding to the overall NRI population. As discussed in earlier articles in this series, the NRI community contribute significantly to their adopted countries and India.

Indian students go abroad to study for the following key reasons.

- ✳ The number of world-class educational institutions in India is limited and there is immense competition to gain admission to those esteemed institutions.
- ✳ International institutions offer bursaries, scholarships, and other incentives to attract top talent from India.
- ✳ Indian students get a higher quality of education, work opportunities and real-world industry experiences from international institutions compared to Indian institutions. This is evidenced by the global success and experience of Indian alumni from foreign universities.
- ✳ Indian students gain exposure to new cultures and lifestyles that enable them to become global citizens.

Experiences of student NRIs

It is obvious that both foreign universities and Indian students mutually gain in their ways through engagement. What may not be so obvious are the challenges that Indian students face when they leave home for studies abroad. Getting an education outside India, over 2-4 years, can be quite a difficult experience for many students. Like other migrants, Indian students need to adjust to the unfamiliar ways and cultures of their new country of residence.

Teaching styles, study patterns, languages, accents, societal norms and behaviours, attire, food, etc. may all be different from what they are used to in India. The first six months tend to be the hardest as they come to grips with the unfamiliar. This phase often hurts the quality of their study and performance in tests or exams. In addition, these students and their families miss each other. A key challenge faced by new Indian students is the need to take up local small jobs to supplement their scholarships or personal funds. It is not common practice in India for students to earn their way through life unlike in Western countries. They generally rely on their parents' support system. This brings us to a tragic real example of what Indian students and their families go through.

About fifteen years ago, a young Indian student studying in Australia was working part-time in a Car wash facility to supplement his funds. Unfortunately, this student collapsed on the job and was pronounced dead when taken to the hospital by Paramedics. It was later learnt that the young student had an undetected heart condition that had caused his untimely demise. This student did not have any relatives or close friends in Australia. A couple of other Indian student acquaintances who were working with this student contacted the parents who lived in Gujarat to communicate the tragic news. It transpired that the parents were struggling financially and were unable to arrange for their son to be flown back to India for the last rites. The hospital couldn't keep the body for long and the pressure mounted on the friends to make arrangements. While the Indian High Commission may eventually have helped, the parents wanted their son to be brought back to Gujarat as soon as possible. Through mutual contacts, the friends reached out to this author and a few other local NRIs. We quickly contributed a substantial amount of money and arranged for the body to be flown to his parents within three days of his passing. None of us had ever seen the student or his friends and knew nothing of the family. We were motivated by the single thought of reuniting the unfortunate son with his grieving parents. No child or parent should ever go through such tragic circumstances. Unfortunately, such situations do occur and most student NRIs are least prepared for them.

Another common challenge faced by student NRIs relates to their differences in the local communities

where they study. In 2009, a major controversy involving Indian students broke out in the Australian cities of Melbourne and Sydney. At that time close to 1 lakh (100,000) Indian students were studying in Australia. Some students came from rural India intending to gain permanent residency and citizenship. Higher costs of living in cities like Sydney and Melbourne forced them to live in cheaper and less-tolerant suburbs with an increased risk of crimes in general. About 1500 Indian students lodged complaints to police that they were assaulted or robbed or subject to racial vilification. These incidents gained intense coverage in local and Indian press. Many in India generalised these incidents and labelled them as "hate crimes" and accused the Australian Government and Victorian Police of inaction. I was privileged to work with the Victorian Government and Police as a prominent Businessperson of Indian origin and had access to data that indicated most of the reported incidents were opportunistic by bad elements of society and very few were related to racism fuelled hate crime. Subsequent investigations by the Indian Government revealed that less than 15% of reported incidents could be linked to racism. The point of this story is that resident Indians and the media tend to be quick to label incidents against Indians abroad as race-related. That tends to be incorrect and fuelled by wrong emotions. As in any country, including India, it is fair to expect less than 20% of the population to be racist or bigoted. However, they gain so much attention and coverage that the majority 80% of a population who are decent people, tend to be broad-brushed along with the bad segment. Student NRIs and their families and friends in India mustn't fall prey to such irrational generalisations.

During the initial days of the Ukraine war in March 2022, many Indian students studying in Kyiv went through harrowing circumstances of trying to flee from Ukraine and get back to India. It was painful to see the plight of these



Indian students. It was also sad to see the polarization of opinion and comments in the Indian diaspora about these students. Many resident Indians and sections of Indian media seemed to adopt an apathetic view about these students suggesting they should have been prepared for these circumstances given they chose to go abroad to study. I doubt they would have those opinions if their son or daughter had been caught up in that situation. The point of this anecdote is not political or social rhetoric. It is to offer the perspective that student NRIs may face difficult challenges when they go abroad to study, and we have already made the points for why they go abroad. Their life is harder outside India, and they deserve our sympathy.

Recommendations for student NRIs

1. Take up sufficient insurance cover before leaving India for unforeseen risks
2. Register personal details and contact details for the family in India, with the local Indian High Commission
3. Focus on studies and build strong roots of competency that will lead to professional success
4. Establish a strong and mutually rewarding network with student friends, local community residents and businesspeople
5. Behave well and uphold Indian values of tolerance, respect, and hard work and stay on the right side of the local customs and law. More importantly, adopt a broad and discerning mindset about foreign societies and don't become a victim of biased or narrow thinking
6. Take up part-time jobs to supplement funds
7. Do volunteer work for university / local community
8. Travel across the country whenever an opportunity presents
9. Participate and integrate into local cultural activities
10. Keep an open and flexible mindset about staying back outside India or going back

Brahmins procession at Belgaum

PhotoGallery



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YOUR PASSPORT TO EXCELLENCE IN EXPRESSION – BONDING WITH THE BEST...

Humans have always exhibited a fascination with animals. Animals too have played a significant role in human civilization for thousands of years. The human-animal bond is mutually beneficial and essential to the health and well-being of both. Hunter-gatherer societies dominated early human civilization which gave ample opportunities for human involvement and interactions with animals. Gradually, as animals entered the human encampments animals were domesticated to meet human wants and needs. The domestication created new roles for animals beyond sustenance.

Thus the relationship paved way for the animals in all walks of life. The language was no exception. Thus we come across many idioms based on animals.

1. BARK UP THE WRONG TREE.

Means False assumption / Mistaken feeling.

Dogs, the earliest domesticated animal, were used in hunter-gather societies to assist with hunting and taking down the prey.

This is an American expression, coming from the hunting expeditions of the 19th Century. The hunters were after the Raccoons, whose fur was very expensive. Raccoons are wild animals that were of the size of a Cat. Hunters used hunting Dogs who could recognize and chase the Raccoons sitting on top of the tree, and the dogs would continuously bark at the tree. Hunters following the dogs would know in which tree the Raccoons were hiding. But, sometimes, the Raccoons would escape but the dogs would

continue to bark, thus misleading the hunters. So when the Dogs made the mistake and the Raccoons escaped, it would be said “barking at the wrong tree”.

2. FEATHER IN YOUR CAP.

Means a symbol of achievement or Honour.

This idiomatic phrase comes from several cultures. It has been a practice in many cultures to wear a feather in a cap after the achievement.

It refers to the hunting expedition also when a hunter would catch the first fowl and would wear the feather as an achievement. This practice is found in the Native Americans also who wear the feather in the headgear after the warrior has performed a brave act.

There is a famous Nursery rhyme of the 15th Century.

Yankee Doodle went to town, riding on a pony.

He stuck a feather in his cap and called it Macaroni.



It is said that it originated from the British Forces taking part in the American war of Independence, where the British made fun of the revolutionary militia. Doodle was a term used for a simpleton. Macaroni was a slang used by the British to refer to the Dandy. The thinking behind the idiom is the Yankees were so stupid as to wear a feather in their cap and think that they are fashionable.

3. WHITE ELEPHANT.

Means Creating more trouble than Possession.

This idiom has come from Thailand, where the King used to have several White Elephants. Whenever a white elephant was seen the king would claim and keep it with him. But whenever he was displeased with anyone either among his subjects or courtiers, the king would gift them with a White Elephant. The person who had angered the King would suffer huge expenditure taking care of the White Elephant. Finally, he would be ruined by the gift.

4. LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG.

It Means Revealing a secret by chance / by mistake.

This idiom comes from the country fairs where piglets used to be sold. But sometimes the traders were not honest and they used to put a cat instead of a piglet in the bag. So when the buyer came home and opened the bag he would find the cat jumping out of the bag. So the secret used to be out. The cat is used probably because the cat was more popular and cheaper livestock in those days.

5. BEAT AROUND THE BUSH.

Means prevaricate or avoid coming to the point.

Beat around the bush comes from the hunting parlance. In medieval England, the hunters used to take people to beat the bush. This roused the birds and hunters could catch



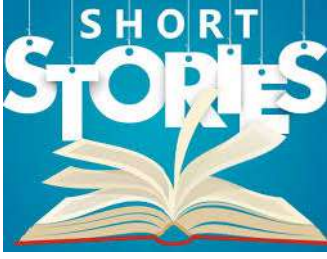
the quarry in the net. So beating around the bush was a preamble to the main activity of hunting. So also, to say all other things than coming to the main point is called beating around the bush.

6. RAINING CATS AND DOGS.

Means to rain very heavily. This idiom has come from England. England is a small island country and has very unpredictable weather where thunderstorms are very common.

In the 17th Century England, people often found their cats and dogs sleeping on the rooftop. Whenever, there was a thunderstorm, due to the heavy rains, the cats and dogs sleeping on the rooftops came tumbling down. It almost looked like it rained cats and dogs. That's why the idiom " Raining Cats and Dogs " denotes heavy rains.

Historically, humans have displayed an interest in connection to Nature, forming a relationship and eventual bonds with animals in their environment. The early human-animal relationships were more utilitarian. Varied opportunities for human-animal interaction led to a deeper connection between man and animal resulting in bondages and fulfilling the human desire to build stronger ties with animals. In the process, it gave us – the lovers of the English Language, a plethora of animal Idioms.



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



Short Story

We are a Foreigner in our own Land

"Saab... Taxi chahiye kya"?

I was silent. Never looked at him. He followed me like a Nakshatrika.

"Saab... aap ka saamaan dijiye. mai laakhe atha hu. Kahaa jaana hai"?

I never opened my lips. He continued...

"saar... enge pono? airport taxi evulo aavdo, noor rubha less pannit taango. parva ille"

I was feeling uncomfortable. Still, I threw a sweet little smile at him. As there were no usual reactions from me, he stared at me from head to toe and pretending to have understood the situation, continued...

"ekkad povali saar? cheppandi saar. nenu pilisikoni pothaanu"

I showed my displeasure by waving my head. I had no desire to talk to this unsolicited intruder. Suspecting that I have not understood him, he now literally transported me to Kerala.

"evida poganam? nyaan kondu pogaam"?

By this time, I was very much annoyed by his words. Still, I maintained my composure and remained silent. As though he realised the problem, he continued in his tottered English now...

"saar... Anywhere in city... You tell... I take... You tell saar, please"

My patience too has limits. Putting aside my bag, distancing my smile for the first time

and staring at him – "yaake? Kannada barodilva? athavaa naanu kannadadavana haage kaanodilva ninage? atahavaa, neenu kannadadavanalva"?

"Oh saar... neevu nammorena? gottaagalilla. heli saar, ellige hogabeku"? At last, pure Kannada words had slipped from his tongue. He was looking happy that he had finally got a customer.

But I wasn't happy! I said curtly – "Being a Kannadiga, you should have spoken to me in Kannada first and then tried others. But you didn't. Kannada became your very last choice. I will not sit in your taxi"

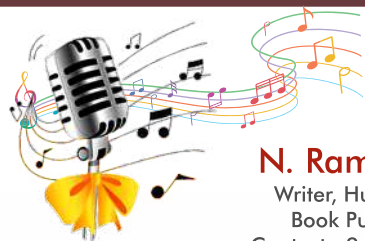
He was startled for a brief moment at my stern voice. He stared at me as though he was looking at a rare species of wild animal that has escaped from the woods. Murmuring bitterly, he departed in search of another customer who would oblige him.

Yes. In "namma Bengaluru" Kannadigas have become "a rare species of wild animals". Neither here nor there!

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



SHORT STORIES



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Whip of Humour

The Music Day Musings

'What a breeze!' chimed Seema, adjusting her contours to the settee at the corner of my study room.

'Yes. Strong winds are but the hallmark of Ashada' I said, closing the curtains.

'Oh! Not the windy breeze! I meant that the entire World Music Day was a breeze' averred the music enthusiast, referring to a particular day a fortnight ago.

'I am all ears' I said, surreptitiously searching for a few wads of cotton.

'Each person presented his or her style of music. The West Indian fast bowler who broke many batters' bones played chin music.'

'That's a new one. How was it?'

'Ear-splitting. The boneless chickens were there too.'

'What do you mean?'

'Hens, to be more precise. As they were afraid of facing fast bowlers they were termed chicken. The batsmen with many ducks under their belt fit the nomenclature hen, right?'

'Which music genre did the batsman adhere to?'

'Hip-hop. There was the local politician with his retinue of hooligans too. Some were followers of Alternative Rock' continued Seema.

'Ah! The Nirvana trio rocked in the early 1990s. Smells like team spirit!' I sang, looking hither and thither for my piano.

'It is Teen spirit and not Team spirit' her corrective tone would have made a 1960's school teacher proud; 'these men were neither aware of the trio nor the song. Their alternative rock has nothing to do with music'

'I am all ears' this time there was no attempt to rummage for the cotton wads.

'Alternative rock is Tomato. The leaders send these hooligans on pelting errands. Rocks being heavy, tomatoes serve as alternative rock. The leaders preferred different music though.'

'Alternative Country music?' I hazarded a guess.

'Not far off the mark. Some rats with stashed loot did harbour such thoughts. But these leaders liked Pop music quite a lot' declared Seema. The gleam in her eyes suggested a detour of sorts.

'Ah! Franck Sinatra, The Beatles, Lady Gaga... no wonder they have gone gaga over it' I toed the line.

'Pop music is the music created by the popping of champagne and other bottles' explained Seema. 'A few from the slums down the lane too had assembled over there. Music has no barriers you know'



'Country Pop? They will not be able to afford the Real Pop like the leaders' I queried.

'Nay. They were more inclined towards dance – tap dance. They get tap water once in a while and have to be really on their toes to reach the forefront. Tap music keeps them in shipshape condition' beamed Seema. She was really on song today!

'There were a few software guys too. Naturally, they were into electronic art music and electronic dance music. Some liked Glitch too' she averred.

'Any particular reasons for such likings?'

'Yes. Those who liked electronic art music were into clip-art, word art and such stuff. Those with an affinity toward dance music were into animation. Glitch followers were into hardware with an emphasis on computer repairs' explained Seema.

'They surely would have rocked' I could imagine the scenario.

'Ah! Rock! Now, that was a huge coterie if ever there was one! The traffic police band liked Noise Rock; the architects association liked Hard Rock, Maths haters' inc. by default liked Math Rock; they had twisted the famous

saying into 'between a hard rock and math book'. The opposition leader with a yen for rallies off and on liked Progressive Rock. There was an English Cricket fan too who said 'Root Rock' is the best music now. A further query revealed that he is a die-hard Joe Root fan. He said 'if anyone has metal, it is Root'. Some Funk' a hint of exasperation quoted her otherwise chirpy mien.

'Speaking of Metal...' I began.

'Yes. Some welders preferred Hard Metal. Muscle heaps masquerading as humans liked Heavy Metal, the political speech listeners' group liked Drone...' Seema chirped away.

'And what would you like to listen to in this breezy atmosphere?' I asked.

'Pop Music'

I went towards the music panel. 'Not that kind. The Pop of popcorn from yonder' she declared pointing at the popcorn popper.

For once, I was in sync with her music.

