

/ IPRANUDI

English Journal from the house of AKBMS



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Shatavadhani Dr. R. Ganesh

(4th December 1962) is a 'shatavadhani' and one of India's foremost Sanskrit poets and scholars

Dr. R. Ganesh was born into a Brahmin family in Kolar, Karnataka. His parents were R. Shankar Narayan Aiyar and K.V.Alamelamma. His primary and middle school education was in Bengaluru and his high school education was in Gowribidanur. A graduate of Mechanical Engineering from UVCE, Bengaluru, he further acquired an M.Sc degree in Material Science and Metallurgy from the well-known Indian Institute of Science. He also holds a Masters' in Sanskrit from the Mysore University. Hampi University conferred a D.Litt in recognition of his thesis on the Art of Avadhana in Kannada. From the young gae of ten. Dr. Ganesh cultivated a passion for literature and studied in detail the great works of ancient poets in Sanskrit and Kannada. By the age of Sixteen, he blossomed into a poet of high merit. introducing the intricate elements of Chandas, Rhyme, Grammatical precision and traditionality into his style. He also mastered the unique art of 'Ashukavitva'a style of reciting poems 'extempore' on any given topic and in any given Chandas. The detailed and deep study of the various branches of Indian literature, arts and poetics further enriched his inherent talent and style.

At the age of Nineteen. he witnessed a session of Sanskrit Avadhana, which inspired him to try the art himself. This was a landmark not only in his life but also in the history of 'Avadhana'. The very next day, amongst a group of friends, he successfully ventured to perform a complete 'Ashtavadhana'! This was his glorious entry into the field; he set out to perform hundreds of such

Avadhanas, capturing the hearts and admiration of the public. He has been a perennial source of sheer fascination and pride to lovers of art and literature. The first formal public Avadhana of Dr. Ganesh was held at Kolar. Incidentally, his Hundredth and Two Hundredth Avadhanas were also held there. So far he has accomplished more than 1000 Ashtavadhanas and four Shatavadhanas on prestigious platforms at both the state and national levels. He has also performed in the American and European continents, giving the world a taste of Indian brilliance and talent. For Dr.Ganesh, Avadhana has never been merely a matter of passion. To him it is verily a sacred penance; each feat of 'Avadhana' is a sacred worship where the onlookers are the Gods themselves, whom he wishes to enlighten. His devotion and dignified attitude have added special charm and sophistication to his performances. Dr. Ganesh has been the first and only 'Shatavadhani' of Karnataka. He created a record in 1991 by performing a complete 'Shatavadhana' in a single day, which in normal course would take 3-4 days. He achieved it by composing 108 classic pieces of poetry and in eight languages! This was indeed a glorious feat intellectual world. His vast knowledge. experience, extraordinary talent, wit, and wisdom continue to amaze the audience across the globe.



To list all the awards received by Dr. Ganesh and to list all the literary works that he has authored, one would need to dedicate an entire book ... The Central Sanskrit University, Delhi recently conferred its honorary doctorate award on Dr. Ganesh. "Karnataka Rajyotsava Prashasti" (1992); "Badarayana Vyasa Puraskar" awarded by the President of India (2003): 'Avilamba Saraswathi'. 'Purusha Saraswathi', 'Kavyakantha', etc are some of the prestigious titles conferred on him... Nityaneeti; Kavitegondu Kathe; Dhoomadhoota; Samaanyadharma; Shaddarshana Sangraha; Vibhootipurusha Vidyaranya; Alankaarashastra; Mannina Kanasu; Bharateeva Kshaatra Parampare: Brahmapuriya Bhikshuka; Subhashita Samputa are some of his many books written in Kannada. Anveşanam; Sāmbalaharī (khandakāvya); Saugandhikā, a collection of sonnets; Śrīkrsna-laharī; Śrngāra-laharī gre some of his works in Sanskrit. He has delivered countless

number of lectures on varied subjects.



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VIPRANUDI

- English Journal from the house of AKBMS

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Торіс	Page
Presidential Message	3
From the desk of the Editor	5
The Masterminds - Varsha Avadhany	7
Guest Column - Lalitha & Sheshagiri Rao	9
Thus Spake Lord Krishna - Veena Prahlad	11
My quest for spiritual well-being - Satyesh N Bellur	14
Real Lessons in History - Pro. M.G.Vedavyas	16
Performing Arts - Dr.S.N. Susheela	20
Spaceuse - P.G.Diwakar	23
Crime Prevention - Varsha Avadhany	26
The selfless warriors of Shivaji - Guru Prasad Bhat	28
Short Story - B.R. Bhimachar	31
Whip of Humour - N. Ramanath	32
Rhyme and Rhythm - Dr. Anita R Bijoor	34



Presidential Message

Ashok Haranahalli President - AKBMS

Dear Friends

My salutations to Viprabhandhavas...

My best wishes to all of you on the occasion of Yugadhi. Come Yugadhi, and it is time for the summer holidays and the children are all getting ready for the same. Along with games and varied entertainment activities, it will be very useful for the parents to put their children through those programmes where our culture, heritage, festivals, etc are explained and taught. However, the recent trend is to admit children to those summer camps that teach them the next year's syllabus! To make them next-year ready! We are forgetting that for those young minds, cultural pursuits are as important as studies and extra curriculum is as important as curriculum. I urge all my viprabandhavas to enroll your children during these summer holidays into such programs that will introduce them to the religious practices of a Brahmin and teach them how they should pursue their lives in a well-defined holistic way.

In the last two years, I have had the privilege of observing many vipra organizations from close quarters and understand their working philosophies. Some of them have succeeded extremely well in realising their goals and some of them have utterly failed to reach their objectives. When I study those organisations that have succeeded

I realise that everyone involved in the organisation has worked together as a team and in fulfilling a common objective. Whereas in those failed organisations, people have worked for their own individual goals and not towards meeting the overall organisational objectives.

I wish to narrate a story. Though imaginary, it has a profound lesson for all of us. Once it so happened that all the different parts of the body started arguing as to which one was the best. Hands and legs told that without their involvement, there is no mobility at all. The eyes spoke about their vision and the brain, about its analytical power. When everyone had finished and more or less, they all had agreed that each of them was special in their own way, their attention fell on the stomach. They thought that the stomach was one useless organ and very inferior to them all. It would just lie there the whole day and do nothing at all! They started demeaning the stomach and ridiculing the same. The stomach then decided that it was time to teach them a lesson. It stopped working. The food was now not digested and hence, there was no absorption of the required essential nutrients for the body. Every single organ was slowly getting affected due to this and they eventually realised the importance of the stomach. The reason I narrated this story was to emphasise the fact that any organisation that works in unison and towards a common objective will lead the way

and others who work on selfish goals will perish.

From last year, we started organising a "hasyotsava kaaryakrama" in memory of our first President Late. Sri. Master Hirannaiha. In the recently concluded program on the 10th of April, the Sabha awarded the title "hasya sahitya vibhushana" to Sri. M.S. Narasimha Murthy in recognition of his services in the field

of Kannada hasya kshetra. This award in its last year's function was awarded to Sri. A.R.Mitra. I look forward to many more such programmes through which we can recognise the efforts of the vipra community members in various fields of activity. Till we meet again...

Yours Truly
Ashok Haranahalli

"Seva Deeksha" function and felicitations to achievers bu Sabha in Yaganti





From the Editor's desk...

Satyesh N. Bellur Editor-in-chief

Dear Readers...

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

Varsha Avadhany and I had the good fortune of spending some quality time with Sri. S. Sridharamurthy, General Secretary of AKBMS recently. Varsha has brought out a vivid interview of him in this edition's "Masterminds". Sridharamurthy Ji has silently contributed so much to the growth story of AKBMS in the last 2 years under the guidance of Sri. Ashok Harnahalli, we found it appropriate to have him featured in our edition. I urge all of you to read this interview to know more about one of the men behind AKBMS's success.

Many people of repute have been acknowledging the good work of AKBMS members in their fields. I feel personally happy to read such accolades given to our fellow distinguished members. One such appreciation has come from Sri Vikram Viswanath, Honorary Consul for Peru to Sri. Venkatesh Dwarakanath, Organising Secretary of AKBMS who manages the Medical Services Division. Mr. Venkatesh was recently honored at the Peru Consulate office in Bengaluru and was presented with the following letter of appreciation, which we have great pleasure in sharing with our readers.



Viknam Visuxanath Honorary Consul for Peru

Date: 19/04/2024

Dear Mr. Venkatesh.

I am writing to express my gratitude and to acknowledge the profound impact of your dedication and service. Your embodiment of the Kama Yogi ethos—selflessly pursuing your work with diligence and passion—is truly inspiring.

Over the past few years, I have had the privilege of witnessing your initiatives. Each interaction has deepened my appreciation for your commitment to fostering positive change within our community.

Please accept, the assurances of my highest consideration and esteem. Your exemplary service continues to inspire and motivate a legacy of community engagement and benevolence.

Thanking You, Yours Sincerely

M-

Vikram Viswanath Hon. Consul of Peru

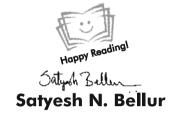
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We wish Mr. Venkatesh Dwarakanath to continue his good work and wish him the very best in all his future programmes at AKBMS. I have great pleasure in featuring none other than Shatavadhani Dr. R Ganesh on the cover page of this edition. He has been a Sanskrit Scholar par excellence and has been conferred the title of "Purusha Saraswathi"-something that does not come easily for any. He has revitalized the art of Avadhana in Kannada to such glory that his name is now synonymous with it. He has performed more than a thousand Ashtavadhana and four Shatavadhana events to date and seems to be heading for many more. Having had the privilege of being one of the pruchhukas in several of his Ashtavadhana events in the past

and being a follower of his talks/writings, etc I can only say this from the bottom of my heart – He is a scholar, a human being like none!

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



(Note: The text of the cover page has been majorly drawn from a Kannada article written by Suryaprakash Pandith and translated into English by B. Arati)

Answers to Puzzles - What am I?

1 - Fire;

2. Age;

3. Your Eyes;

4. Tomorrow;

5. Caterpillows

Significant events in April...

- 1896 The first modern Olympics began on 6th April
- 1912 Delhi was declared the capital & province of India on 1st April
- 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre, indicative of the culmination of the atrocities of the British, was carried out on 13th April
- 1949 Bharat Scout and Guide was established in 1949 on 5th April
- 2011 India won the ICC world cup the second time on 2nd April

(Compiled by Sudhir S Mysore)



The MASTERMINDS...

- Personalities behind AKBMS

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A LIFE OF PRINCIPLES – S. SRIDHARSMURTHY



Entering the Chamber of Sri. S. Sridharamurthy who is the General Secretary of AKBMS, one can be assured of all smiles and action. As soon as we sit down and before we even begin the conversation, a hot cup of coffee is served and words of pleasantries

are exchanged. Establishing a hospitable environment is the primary requirement for any organization and one should learn this from him. Being an ardent disciple of the Ramakrishna Mission, he has lived a life of simplicity and upliftment of society as the primary goals of his life.

A 1978 cadre, Karnataka Administrative Service (KAS) officer, he has served Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) for 40 years. He has been its Secretary for decades. Everyone knows how people working in that office and in that position, even for a few years, would end up with tons of money and several properties to their credit. Sridharmurthy is different and is honest to the core. He has a modest house to live and a life of principles to lead. Our editor-in-chief Satyesh Bellur who was with me, was telling me after the interview that this alone is enough for people to understand Mr. Murthy and appreciate the values he has stood for all through his life.

Born and brought up in Bengaluru, he graduated in Commerce from APS College

before joining KAS. While in service, he studied law at BMS Law College and joined the Karnataka Bar Association in 1985. This gave him the impetus to be appointed as the Statutory position of Council Secretary of BBMP and thereafter the Chief Law Officer. He retired from Service in 2018 and then went on to join the legal practice of Sri Ashok Haranahalli, the current President of AKBMS.

His journey with AKBMS is along with Sri Ashok Haranahalli whom he considers as his Guru and beacon of light. In 2016, he had also stood in as the Election Officer for the Maha Sabha. During the tenure of Sri Harnahalli and himself, the reach of the Mahasabha has widened with 75,000 registered members. 300 Executive Committee members, and 110 Office bearers, with the creation of federal structures across all districts. This led to having 25 Joint Secretaries, and 25 Vice Presidents. A Mahila Samaja was formed in which more than 50 meetings were held. Along with this, the General Body meeting in Hubli saw a participation of over 3000 members, and the Executive Committee meeting held at Shimoga drew over 1000 participants. What is most notable is the infrastructure development of the Mahasabha like the renovation of the Women's hostel, equipping it with Solar power. and ensuring proper sanitation. The biggest change has been to Gayathri Bhavana, the home of AKBMS. The duo has worked hard towards the upgradation of the ceremony hall on the ground floor, the creation of a smaller hall on the top floor, and having an in-house coffee shop that makes it now a place that

anyone can visit and feel happy about. The commercial outlet in the basement has ensured that there is some moderate monthly income for the Mahasabha.

Another important attribute of him is the low profile he keeps for himself. No one would have seen him on the dais of any of the Sabha functions so far. When the functions are on, he would be somewhere backstage or somewhere in the corner of the hall. He believes more in the work to be done than in the recognition to be stolen! When today, most people crave for acknowledgment and are willing to do whatever it takes to achieve this, the simplicity of Sri. Sridharamurthy is exemplary and worth mentioning here.

Today, he lives a contented life with his wife, Smt Uma. He has a daughter who is married and a son who works for a Financial



Services company. With a smile that oozes honesty and simplicity, he says "I am a very happy and contented man". All along our interview with him, he never spoke a word against any of the Sabha members. He only had good things to share about them and his staff. 'See no evil, Hear no evil, Speak no evil' probably represents his persona like nothing else can.

(**Note:** The Editorial Board congratulates Sri. S. Sridharamurthy for his yeomen service to the Sabha till now and wishes him the very best in the years to come...)

Quotable Quotes from B R Ambedkar



I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved

Cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence

Life should be great rather than long



Guest Column Lalitha G Rao & P.R.Sheshagiri Rao

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"Community-Led Conservation: A Success Story from Pavagada's Hill Ranges"

Introduction:

Preserving our planet's precious green cover has never been more crucial, especially in the face of rampant deforestation. In the heart of Pavagada taluk in Tumakuru district, Karnataka, a remarkable success story unfolds—a testament to the power of community-led conservation efforts. This narrative revolves around the revival of Mugadal Betta, Thimmappana Betta, Hosa Durga Betta, and K Rampura Betta, hill ranges that once faced the threat of deforestation due to the needs of the local villagers.

The Dilemma:

The equation seems simple: stop people from cutting trees by enforcing strict rules or providing alternatives. However, the reality is far more complex when villagers depend on the hills for essentials like firewood, fodder for livestock, and medicinal herbs. The challenge lies in finding a balance that preserves both the environment and the villagers' livelihoods.

Biodiversity at Stake:

Mugadal Betta and its counterparts were once home to majestic trees, creating a natural habitat for bears, leopards, Indian red foxes, wild boars, Hanuman langurs, wild rabbits, deer, and peacocks. The richness of these hill ranges played a vital role in the ecological

balance of the region, and their deterioration posed a threat to the entire ecosystem.

Revival Efforts:

The story takes a positive turn in 1995, as the trust of the temple deity of the local hill mostly youth from the villages surrounding the foothills decided to take matters into their own hands. Their mission is to stop cutting any trees, not allow setting fires, and restore the ecosystem. This proactive approach marked the beginning of a conscious effort by the villagers to protect the hills that had been a source of life for generations.

Enforcement and Fines:

The youth of the trust took a strong stance against tree felling and setting fire to the dry grass in summer, implementing fines for offenders. For every tree cut for firewood, a fine of Rs 1,001 was imposed. Higher penalties were set for those who felled more trees than necessary or for various other reasons, ranging from Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000. The small population of the village made it easier for the committee members to identify and penalize the culprits.

The Visionary Behind the Greening:

The youth leader's vision of restoring green to the barren bald hills dates back forty

years. Inspired by the lush greenery of the Western Ghats during a pilgrimage to Dharmasthala, decided to bring back life to the barren landscapes. His strong conviction and dedication to the cause laid the foundation for the flourishing of Mugadal Betta and its surrounding hills.

Natural Regeneration Triumphs:

A key lesson from this success story is the emphasis on native species over planned introductions by the forest department. Allowing the rootstock of earlier chopped trees to regrow not only saved money and time but also contributed to the extraordinary diversity of species. Four decades of relentless efforts by the villagers have not only preserved the green cover but have also transformed the hills into a thriving ecosystem.

The story of Mugadal Betta and its neighboring hills stands as a beacon of hope and inspiration. It highlights the potential for community-led conservation efforts to rejuvenate ecosystems, demonstrating that a harmonious coexistence between humans and nature is achievable. As we face increasing environmental challenges globally, this tale serves as a reminder of the positive impact that determined communities can have on the well-being of our planet.



Editorial Note

Lalitha and Seshagiri Rao are Agriculturists from a village near Pavagada with a keen interest in Research. Their work over three decades includes Natural Resource Management, Best Practices for Livelihood, Policy Changes, Climate Adaptation and Sensor Networks. They also lead the Field Research Station of the Indian Institute of Science located on their farm. Their Agri-tech startup "Krishi Hrudya" works to provide affordable, high-quality, hyper-local solutions to farming. Both the Husband and Wife have a degree in Agriculture Sciences. In addition, Sri. Seshagiri Rao has a Masters in Plant Breeding...



Thus Spake Lord Krishna

Mrs. Veena Prahlad

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





Ahimsa-taking more than your share

We have been increasingly aware of water shortages in Bangalore and witnessing the depletion of

various natural resources on our planet. Factors such as burgeoning human populations and human greed contribute to this alarming trend. As a result, the quest for sustainable solutions is becoming imperative. But how does Ahimsa fit into this equation? To understand this, let us first examine the concept of Himsa.

The usual idea of Himsa is about hurting others physically or emotionally, being cruel and making their lives miserable. Similarly, when we take more than our fair share of the planet's resources, we make life hard for many other living beings. When we abuse land by using excessive chemicals for profit-driven agriculture, we harm Mother Earth.

But it is possible to live sustainably and still provide for everyone. It all comes down to moderation.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु । युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दु:खहा ।।

yuktāhāra-vihārasya yukta-cheṣhṭasya karmasu yukta-svapnāvabodhasya yogo bhavati duḥkha-hā (Gita 6.17) In this verse, Krishna advises Arjuna to embrace moderation in all aspects of life. Whether it is eating, recreation, work, or sleep, practicing moderation can free us from many sorrows. Living with discipline enables us to accomplish more each day; it is a truth we've all experienced. Reckless living only leads to sluggishness and inefficiency.

Krishna's teachings in the Gita advocate for practical and achievable lifestyles, rather than lofty ideals. We often recognize this truth ourselves when we overeat, oversleep, or waste time. Yet, Arjuna questions why we fail to follow our own advice, seeking the answer from Krishna.

अर्जुन उवाच | अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः | अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ||

arjuna uvācha atha kena prayukto 'yam pāpam charati pūruṣhaḥ anichchhann api vārṣhṇeya balād iva niyojitaḥ (Gita 3.36)

Arjuna ponders why individuals often engage in wrongful actions, feeling almost compelled to do so despite knowing it is detrimental. Krishna's answer explains why we do Himsa.

श्रीभगवानुवाच | काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः || महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ||

śhrī bhagavān uvācha kāma eṣha krodha eṣha rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ mahāśhano mahā-pāpmā viddhyenam iha vairiṇam (Gita 3.37)

We engage in wrongdoing because desire and greed drive us, causing harm to ourselves and others through resulting anger. Krishna cautions that desire and anger act as our enemies, leading to our downfall, a truth we often realize through experience. In verses 3.38 and 3.39, Krishna explains that desire clouds our wisdom like dust on a mirror, likening insatiable desire to a burning fire, our enduring adversary.

Our greed drives us to accumulate more than necessary, depriving others of their fair share. When we hoard beyond our consumption, it often leads to waste. Rather than squandering resources, we could share them with those in need. It is crucial to recognize that we are interconnected within an ecosystem. Our culture believes in the world being one family.

अयं बन्धुरयं नेति गणना लघुचेतसाम् । लघुचेतसाम् उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥

ayam bandhurayam neti ganana laghuchetasam | udaracharitanam tu vasudhaiva kutumbakam || (mahoponishad 6.72)

The verse from Mahopanishad emphasizes that only those with narrow-minded perspectives differentiate between "mine" and "not mine," while magnanimous individuals perceive the entire world as one family. This broad-mindedness embodies the essence of Ahimsa. We cannot exist in

isolation; all beings on this planet depend on each other. Just as the balance of the Earth is delicate, so too are the relationships between its people. Any act of harm disrupts this balance. Therefore, Ahimsa is a crucial quality, acknowledged by Krishna among the divine virtues of humanity.

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् । दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं हीरचापलम् ।।

ahinsā satyam akrodhas tyāgaḥ śhāntir apaiśhunam dayā bhūteṣhv aloluptvaṁ mārdavaṁ hrīr achāpalam (Gita 16.2)

Krishna's discourse revolves around the concept of becoming a karmayogi. A karmayogi is someone who achieves self-realization, liberation, or unity with the divine (Paramatma) through selfless actions (karma). Acting selflessly means fulfilling one's duties for the well-being of all. When everyone is well so will the person who is doing the action too. Moreover, it facilitates a shift in focus from the external world to the divine essence within (Paramatma). Conversely, acting selfishly is likened to thievery.

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः | तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः ।।

iṣhṭān bhogān hi vo devā dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ tair dattān apradāyaibhyo yo bhuṅkte stena eva saḥ (Gita 3.12)

We receive many essential things from the world for our sustenance. The plant kingdom generously provides us with food, nourished by the selfless support of the earth and the warmth and light of the sun. Even the pollinators, such as birds and bees, contribute selflessly to enable plants to feed us. Their actions, devoid of personal gain, epitomize selflessness. Consequently, when an individual

selfishly enjoys the fruits of their actions, they resemble a thief, depriving the ecosystem without reciprocation.

All the environmental problems we encounter have practical solutions. The complexity arises from human greed, echoing Krishna's depiction of humans as thieves. Once humans embrace the perspective of the entire world as their family, implementing these solutions will occur swiftly and without delay.

Here is a story to wrap up this idea: Once, a Brahmana was brought before King Janaka for wrongdoing. Janaka decided that the Brahmana's punishment would be banishment from his kingdom. When the Brahmana asked about the boundaries of the kingdom so he could choose where to go, it prompted the wise King Janaka to contemplate the nature of ownership. He realized that what he considered as his own was transient, as it would belong to someone else after him, akin to how a house becomes someone else's once vacated. At last King Janaka could not determine if he truly owned a kingdom, let alone delineate its limits.

तया न विषयं मन्ये सर्वों वा विषयो मम । आत्मापि चायं न मम सर्वा वा पृथिवी मम ॥

tayā na vişayam manye sarvo vā vişayo mama ātmāpi cāyam na mama sarvā vā pṛthivī mama

(Mahabharata, ashwamedhika parva 32.11)

King Janaka expressed that his kingdom was both nowhere and everywhere. He reflected that from one perspective, even his body did not belong to him, yet from another, the entire world belonged to him. If it was true for him, it is true for all other beings too. Recognizing this truth, he invited the Brahmana to stay wherever he wished. Their conversation delved deeper into this philosophical line of thought. At the end, the Brahmana revealed himself to be Yamadharma, the god of death, who had disguised himself to learn King Janaka's insights on the concept of the self (atma).

King Janaka's perspective emphasizes that when we believe we possess something, we inadvertently become enslaved to it. However, upon relinquishing the notions of "me" and "mine," we attain mastery over that very thing.

Let us embrace Ahimsa, for in truth, the world is our family.

Quotable Quotes from Sachin Tendulkar



People throw stones at you and you convert them into milestones

Don't stop chasing your dreams, because dreams do come true

I have never tried to compare myself to anyone else



My Quest for Spiritual Well-being

Satyesh N. Bellur

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Effects of Maaya!

After spending all my life in Namma Bengaluru, a cosmopolitan city that boasts of offering everything an urban dweller would aspire for, it was a pleasant invite for me to visit my friend's village in North Karnataka and stay for a week. Like all my friends who have been tired of the city's ever-growing population and the associated problems that come with it, I too had an urge to explore the village life. I always thought that it would be a very different life in the villages. There wouldn't be any rush for anything to be done in a hurry, the nature around would provide clean air and the village houses would provide for a comfortable if not a luxurious living. Getting up in the morning listening to the chirping sounds of birds, then a nice dip in the village pond, rustic village savouries to enjoy during the meals, playing around with the cows, a short afternoon nap and then some long walks across the village and the nearby hills... Wow... This is something that I have been craving for years now and so, I readily accepted the invite and made my travel plans.

Most of the village life is exactly as I have explained above; needless to say, it is just the opposite of our urban lifestyle. The first two days in the village were blissful. I was enjoying every bit of this experience and feeling that I should leave the city, buy some land somewhere here and settle for life. By the third day, though everything was as in the earlier two days, I started missing the hubbub of city life and the crazy pace of my hectic work life there. This was calmness and in some ways, inactivity to the core! By the fifth day, I was

getting restless to get back to where I belonged. The initial fantasy for village life was now fading. When some of the villagers that I spoke to told me about the politics that prevail there, the lethargy that has crept into some of the villager's life and so on and how most of the kids in the villages are planning towards moving into cities for better life and fortune, my earlier thoughts seem to disappear silently!

ನಗರದೊಳಗಿರುವವಗೆ ಹಳ್ಳಿಜೀವನದಾಸೆ | ನಗರ ಸೇರುವ ತವಕ ಹಳ್ಳಿಗರಿಗೆಲ್ಲ || ಸಿಗದಿರುವ ಹಣ್ಣಿನಲಿ ರುಚಿಯೆಂಬ ಭ್ರಮೆಯಿರಿಸಿ | ಜಗವ ಪೊರೆವಳು ಮಾಯೆ - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

It is an irony that we are always aspiring for that which is not ours and we are always ignoring that which is a part of our life. We tend to underplay all that is good with us currently and overplay something that is alien and out of reach to us. Either way, we seem to be unhappy all the time! This is the effect of Maaya that is constantly playing on our psyche. Maaya makes us believe that the tastiest fruit is the one that you have not eaten so far! If we can overcome this restless internal fight, we can claim to be rid of Maaya and live a life of bliss—whether we live in cities or in villages then becomes irrelevant.

Another way in which Maaya conquers the world is by engaging us in a game of life whose success is always determined by a win or a loss. Whatever we end up doing – be it studies, be it work, be it sports, be it even our relationships with others – the end result that we all strive for

April - 2024

is always a win. That makes us super happy and if unfortunately, we have the other result in the bargain, we are mighty depressed. If Maaya had not invented these two results as eventualities for us and merely allowed us to play the game of life as it comes naturally, we all would have been blissful souls all through!

> ಸೋಲುಗೆಲುವುಗಳಲ್ಲೆ ಮನದ ತೋಯ್ದಾಟವಿರೆ | ಸೋಲುಗೆಲುವುಗಳೆರಡು ಮಾಯೆಯದೆ ಅಸ್ತ್ರ || ಎಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲು ದುಃಖವನೆ ನೀನುಂಡು ಬದುಕೆವೆಯೊ | ಸೋಲಿರಲಿ, ಗೆಲುವಿರಲಿ - ನವ್ಯಜೀವಿ ||

Can we live happily with what we have at our disposal without caring for a win all of the time? We can, but it needs supreme 'purusha prayatna' and a deep sense of understanding the laws of nature that the almighty has laid down for all living beings to follow...

Spirituality is all about understanding the essence of any principle and practice and imbibing that essence beyond its limits into our daily life till the final realisation occurs. Against this backdrop, Maaya has to be understood on a much deeper plane. It is to be used for our well-being rather than abused for our own destruction. In a couple of articles to follow, I would make an effort to delve deeper into this subject. We need to stay where we are and enjoy all those small little things that the almighty in all of his kindness has granted us. A win or a loss should not be in any way affecting our inner balance!

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



Puzzles - What am I?

(You will find the answers in the editorial section)



- Give me food and I'll live. Give me water and I'll die. Who am I?
- What goes up and never comes down?
- Your parents come over for a surprise breakfast while you are sleeping. You get out pancakes toast maple syrup and jam. What do you open first.
- What day, within a week of today, does not end in "Y"?
- Where do butterflies sleep?









Real Lessons in

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The Curse of the Mysore Wodeyars

Most people are familiar with the 'childless curse' cast upon the Mysore royal family long long ago - by Alamelamma before she jumped into the Kaveri River and killed herself. In this article, I delve deeper into this legend and examine the folklore as well as documented history. I have adapted this piece mainly from Sri. Vikram Sampath's absorbing historical book "Splendours of Royal Mysore - The Untold Story of the Wodeyars (Rupa Publications, 2023).

Before we start, let's reproduce Alamelamma's terrible curse -

Talakadu Maralagali... Malingi Maduvagali... Mysuru doregalige makkalagade hogali!



Let Talakadu turn into a desert... Let Malingi become a whirlpool... May the Mysore Kings be childless! **Prelude:** There are three main characters in the story - Rani Alamelamma, her husband Tirumala the second, and Raja Wodeyar, the then Chieftain of Mysore. I will narrate the story that has been passed on orally from generation to generation and then dwell upon the documentary evidence.

Raja Wodeyar was the chieftain of Mysore from AD 1578 to 1617. Mysore was not a kingdom as we know it now. It was just a group of villages whose heads owed allegiance to the Vijayanagara empire. In fact, it was Raja Wodeyar who was responsible for expanding it to the size of a Kingdom by annexing several provinces in the area by waging battles as well as through alliances. The episode of the curse is supposed to have taken place in 1610 during Raja Wodeyar's reign.

When Srirangaraya became king of the Vijayanagara empire in 1572, his brother Tirumala the Second was looking after Srirangapatna as its vice-chancellor. Tirumala II and Raja Wodeyar never got along well and Raja Wodeyar used every opportunity to defy Tirumala. In a series of deft and brave maneuvers, he convinced Srirangaraya that he was better than Tirumala II in handling battles as well as administration. Tirumala II on his part, tried to get rid of Raja Wodeyar more than once, by attempting to poison him and to get him murdered. But Raja Wodeyar survived

both attempts and was waiting for his chance to take revenge. He defeated Tirumala in a battle at Kesare and the emperor (Venkata by this time) felt that Raja Wodeyar would be a better representative of the empire. The story goes that that is when the empire Venkata handed over the famous golden throne to Raja Wodeyar and made him king of the region.

Meanwhile, Tirumala II was afflicted with Bennu Phani (a type of herpes of the back), a disease that took a toll on his physical health. He decided to retire to Talakad along with his wives Rani Alamelamma and Rangamma, to propitiate Lord Vaidyeshwara, the god of health, who he hoped would cure him of his illness.

The Curse: Raja Wodeyar thus reigned supreme and wanted to leave no stone unturned in taking possession of all that belonged to Tirumala II. Rani Alamelamma had brought all her jewellery along with her to Talakad. She was supposedly lending the same to adorn Goddess Ranganayaki of Srirangapatna every Tuesday and Thursday. Raja Wodeyar believed that the jewellery rightfully belonged to the state and wanted the Rani to hand them over to his treasury. But the Rani believed that they were her personal belongings and refused to part with them. To call a truce, she handed over the large pearl nose ring, which to this day is preserved at the Ranganathaswamy temple at Srirangapatna.

However, Raja Wodeyar would not relent and sent his soldiers to Malingi to get the jewels back. When Rani Alamelamma heard that the soldiers were approaching to take away the jewels by force, she decked herself up with all the jewels, went up the cliff at Malingi, and cried out to the soldiers to tell the Wodeyar that he won over them in life, but not in death; and that honour was more important to her than life. She prayed to Lord Vaidyeshwara to grant her the wish that she expressed as a curse. She then blurted out her terrible curse and jumped to her death into river Kaveri. The soldiers were dismayed by this action of the brave queen and shocked, they ran back to their king to report the unusual step taken by Rani Alamelamma.

The Aftermath

Raja Wodeyar was consumed by immense grief for having caused the death of a pious and steadfast queen. He spends sleepless nights with haunting guilt and worries about the curse affecting his family's future. He consulted the royal priest who recommended that he perform a penance by conducting her final rites (her husband had probably passed away by then). He also advised that a bronze statue of the queen be made and worshipped. Raja Wodeyar followed the priest's instructions and to this day, the bronze statue of Alamelamma is brought out on the ninth day of Dasara and prayers are offered to her.

What does the evidence say?

Let us now consider each curse in turn and examine the evidence.

Mysuru doregalige makkalagade hogali! – Due to its importance, let us consider this first. By makkalu (children) we have to assume that it refers to sons who will succeed their fathers and that the idea of the curse was to end the lineage. It is true that many kings of the Wodeyar dynasty did not beget sons and even if they did, that son did

April - 2024

not beget another. Raja Wodeyar himself actually had four sons, but only one of them ruled over the kingdom during 1637-38. Raja Wodeyar's son Narasaraja had a son (Chamaraja V) who ruled from 1617 to 1637. There have also been several cases where the next king came either through adoption within the family (nephew, brother, etc.) or adoption from outside the first family. From 1610 when the Alamelamma episode was supposed to have taken place, to the present day, there have been 17 kings or scions (postindependence) of the royal family. Of these, in seven cases, the title has passed on to the son while in the other 10 cases, the title has gone to others (nephew, brother, uncle, adopted son, etc.). Interestingly, since 1714, the title has never passed on to two successive 'son' aenerations.

One can therefore conclude that the curse has turned out to be only partially true. Or if you prefer, partially false.

Let us now look at the documented evidence. Historical documentation of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries makes no reference to this event or to Rani Alamelamma, Francis Buchanan (1762-1829) has recorded even the minutest details of the Mysore kingdom in 'A Journey From Madras Through The Countries Of Mysore, Canara and Malabar'. He mentions only the local legend of a woman who curses surrounding temples to be submerged in sand as she finds it difficult to cross the river to get to the temples on the other side. There is no mention of the 'childless' curse. If the curse really existed, would he have missed out on such a leaendary one when in fact, he has documented a smalltime curse?

Colonel Mark Wills (1759-1831) was a historian and an East India Company Administrator. He compiled an exhaustive history of the region, but he too misses out on Rani Alamelamma. If the Rani episode had taken place 200 years earlier and it was such a famous legend, would both these historians really miss the folklore?

This is where the historical evidence gets interesting. We find that Rani Alamelamma makes an appearance suddenly in B L Rice's Gazetteer in 1876. The three-line curse makes an appearance with all the details. In fact, the then Maharaja published it. Why would the king himself publish a piece of alleged history that is so embarrassing to the dynasty when in fact, it has not been mentioned for the past 200 years? It becomes increasingly clear that the story was fabricated in the early to midnineteenth century.

If it was fabricated, why was it? This is where Dalhousie and the Doctrine of Lapse enter the picture. This doctrine used extensively by Dalhousie to extend the British empire in India, prohibited Hindu rulers without an heir from adopting sons. This paved the way for the British to annex many kingdoms. The Mysore nobility must have seen this development with some alarm and must have thought that Mysore would soon pass into British hands. To avert this, a possible escape route might have been to claim childlessness due to the curse. The king probably hoped this legend would give Mysore an exception from the Doctrine of Lapse. It is another story that it was annexed only after the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War.

On the whole, it appears safe to conclude that the legend of the curse was an

afterthought and attributing it to Rani Alamelamma may not do justice to history.



Talakadu Maralagali – Anyone who has visited Talakaduhas seen how it abounds in sand and one starts wondering how so much sand can get accumulated, unless it is through some divine intervention. This phenomenon somehow strengthens the belief in Alamelamma's curse. Let us see what the scientific evidence says.

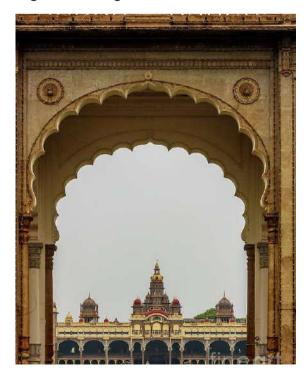
In the mid-fourteenth century Madhava Raya, a minister of the Vijayanagara Empire, built the Madhava Mantri dam across the river Kaveri near Talakad. This caused the meandering of the river downstream. Geologists will tell you that when meandering takes place and the river turns around itself, it causes the outer banks to get eroded by the waters of the river and leaves sand deposits along the bank. If one studies the map of the Kaveri River around Talakad, it is easy to see this phenomenon of the river curving and turning. This turn makes the outer part flow faster than the inner bank. Over time, this results in erosion as well as deposition of sand on the side of the inner bank. Talakadu is one such phenomenon.

Geologically speaking therefore, it appears Alamelamma had very little to do with the sand dunes of Talakad, though her legend has left impressions on the sands of time!

Malingi Maduvagali - As mentioned above, the shifting course of the Kaveri in a westward direction exposed the inner banks. But it also eroded the outer banks, causing parts of it to collapse and form great whirlpools. This was what was meant by MalingiMaduvagali.

Whatever the historical, scientific, archaeological, or geological evidence, folklore is fascinating and captures one's imagination. Even assuming the legend is not true, credit must be given to the anonymous person who coined the curse, for it has remained in public memory for hundreds of years and is bound to enthrall people of the region for centuries to come.

Often, history is a folklore repeated again and again across generations.



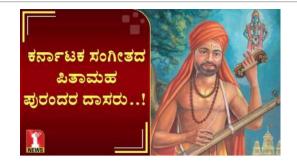


Performing Arts...

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SANGEETA PITAMAHA (Part-2)

Sri PurandaraDasais revered as the "Father of Karnatak Music".In one of my previous articles, I have tried to analyse the reasons behind naming Sri Purandaradasa, as Karnataka Sangeetha Pita Maha.

In this article, I will try to establish the reasons for giving Such a great honour to him. By the time the Haridasas Emerged in the history of Karnataka State the ancient Indian music was losing its life to a great extent. This was inevitable due to the complexity of various elements of music such as Raga System, Tala System, adherence to a difficult language i.e. Sanskrit, etc. Music for performance, Music teaching and Music learning were at stake. The Margi Ragas, marga talas which had all 6 tala angas made the common man not lend his ears to music. Music could be performed at only two places, one being the temples and the other Palace Courts...

When at this crucial time Sri Purandara Dasa realised the need to transform the total content of the South Indian Music System without which the Indian Music System, especially in South India would not have survived. The first text which dealt with the new word DESI could be traced back to the 7th century AD in the text BRIHADDESHI written by Matanga who belonged to 7th century A.D.He coined a new radical terminology for Musical aspects. The word "Desi" depicts the influence of Regional Cultural heritage blending with the ancient Marga System. This healthy change-

over applies both to Karnatak Music and Bharatanatyam.

The Haridasa movement has made immense contributions to the cultural, Philosophical, Literal, Social and spiritual outlook and heritage of our country. We can analyse the great foundation that was stoned by Sri PurandaraDasa from the various dimensions mentioned below:

- The fragrance of the Kannada language was very cleverly spread through Kannada Musical compositions.
- This opened a new horizon of changing the flow of music based on a new but Strong Foundation
- Deshi Raga System was successfully implemented
- Ancient Marga talas were reformed structurally and the Deshi tala system was replaced
- As in the ancient times where the musical compositions were composed taking Namavali of Gods and goddesses to a large extent., Sri PurandaraDasa converted the essence of Sahitya deriving from Vedas, Puranas, Bhagavata, Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc. into simple and self-expressive phrases in his Kannada Padas, Ugabhogas and other

compositions including Suladis. The verbal meaning of Suladi can be understood as Sul-Haadi which means a very easy path, a correspondent word for Deshi

- tis believed that the Raga Hari Kambhoji was the very first raga for a beginner Earlier. An incredible new format was introduced by PurandaraDasa who adopted the raga Maya MalavaGowla as the first raga to be learnt
- It is noteworthy to mention that in Asampoorna Mela Paddati this particular raga was called Malavagoula. When after Sampoorna Mela Paddati was restructured by Scholars of Musicology like Venkata Makhi and Rama Matya, the prefix word MAYA was attached to MalavaGoula for the very reason to fit it in 15thplace inside the 72 mela cycle, which is considered as the unchallenged Scheme of classification of South Indian Raga System. Be it India or other countries, the Karnatak music system has adopted a uniform syllabi for BaalaPaatha (lessons for beginners). It is none other than Sri PurandaraDasa who composed these basic lessons which came into voque only during his time.
- Bala Patha Syllabi contained various "Varases" or phrases containing only Swaras or notes. SaraleVarase, Tarasthayi Varase, MandraSthayi Varase, DaatuVarase, JantiVarase and Alankaras in Seven SaladiSapta Talas with varying Jathis vizTriputa: Three vowels, Chaturashra: four vowels, Khanda: five vowels, Mishra: Seven vowels and Sankeerna: nine vowels. This new method

of adopting Tala Jathis and applying them in SuladiSaptaThalas is the greatest academic Contribution by Sri PurandaraDasa.

- Maybe for this very reason, the South Indian music system was aptly renamed as "Karnatak Music". In all the states of South India, the same syllabus is taught both for vocal and instrumental music even today
- The Concept of Trikala Singing (Singing in 3 subsequent speeds) was a wonderful fresh concept of Sri PurandaraDasa. This method of singing the Bala Pathasat at three speeds further was extended for Varna too(a complex Composition). It is very interesting to see this concept being widely accepted by all performers while singing Alapana, Swara Kalpana and Raga Tana Pallavi which stands as a unique epitome of Creative Musicor Manodharma Sangeetha.
- Sri Purandara Dasa's legacy of introducing Ganesha Stuti which clearly says that the ancient composition Naandi Daru found as the first song in ancient Sanskrit drama is another contribution. He chose the Raga Malahari which was born out of Maya Malava Gowla which certainly evoked an inquisitive nature in the students to learn about the structure and difference between a Parent raga (Janaka raga) and Janya raga. This experiment of Sri Purandara Dasa has been the topic of many research Projects. It is not possible at all to explain these technical reformations conceptualised by him in a nutshell
- + Though the first opening Song
 "Lambodara lakumi Kara" is in Sanskrit

the last one "Kereya Neeranu Keregechalli" is in Kannada

- Two observations are inevitable here. The Swamy Nishte or the commitment to the chosen God is well portrayed here. The first word signifies the importance of Ganesha Stuti who is aptly called VighnaNivaraKa. The second word LAKUMI KARA where in the expression of commitment to Vaishnavismor the Dwaita philosophy which draws one's attention. After Lord Ganesha, he invokes Goddess Lakshmi who is Vishnu Sati. More than establishing the Supremacy of both the philosophies of Dwaita and Advaita it should be considered a perfect example of Ishta Daivanishte which also depicts the unique method of following the TARATAMYA system followed by all the Haridasas. This Composition is where Sahitya or the Maatu is introduced for the first time along with Proper Dhaatu (notation)which is named as Pillari Geethe, Pillari is a Sanskrit word for Lord Ganesha.
- Both in literature and musical compositions an extensive usage of Prosody (linguistic grammar) can be seen. Sri PurandaraDasa not only simplified the content of Karnatak Music but also gave a new outlook to compositions by adding rhetorical beauty. When we talk about this it is the Adiprasa, Antya Prasa, Proper division of words, etc. that comes under Prosody and Rhetorics. In his Pillari Geethe he has stressed the role of Prosody and Rhetorical aspects in Enhancing the literary beauty of Musical composition.
- + Even in the Hindustani Music system, we

can see that Sri Purandara Dasa's Baala Paatha in the same raga(Bhairav) is taught for beginners.

- The last but not the least contribution of Sri PurandaraDasa is his innovative changes which stood unchallenged for future centuries. Here the change over of Raga from Hari Kambodi to Maya MalavaGoula as the very first Raga for the beginners is referred to as the most scientific outcome of a great musicologist, Sri Purandara Dasa.
- → The Scientific reason here is the aspect of shruti interval between two subsequent notes. To be more simple the gap between Sa and Ri is very short in Maya Malava Goulaand also this lesser gap can be seen between all seven notes. It is an established fact that both for vocalists and instrumentalists, a raga, like this, is technically easier to be understood and learn without much confusion. This also proves that Sri PurandaraDasa was an expert in Lakshya(Practical aspects) and Lakshana aspects (theoretical) of Music.

Before Ending this article I must say that the whole music fraternity in Indian Music is indebted to the iconic composer Sri Purandara Dasa forever. Very aptly Purandara Dasa has the great privilege to be named as DASA SHRESHTA. Purandasada Dasa's compositions are popularly and collectively called "Sri Purandaropahishad".

In my next article, I will put an effort into analysing one or two compositions of Sri PurandaraDasa from different perspectives.

(To be Continued...)





Space Applications for Development

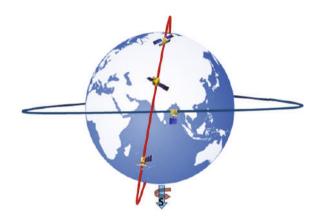
April - 2024

P G Diwakar

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Part 2: SPACEUSE - Satellites for Multipurpose Use

Before we start our discussions on the various applications of space technology, it would be appropriate and useful for us to know the meanings of some of the commonly used words in space technology. In this article, I am precisely going to do that. Let us begin...



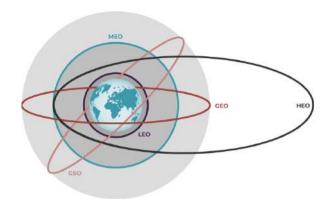
1.0 Upagraha

Space tech is looked at as a very high-tech area of research that is beyond the bounds of the common citizen. It is my own experience that when I come across someone and get introduced as a space scientist, the expressions on their face with raised eyebrows followed by some queries are always special (!!). Generally, space tech people are somewhat looked at as aliens and many wonder what we are made of and why do we send so many rockets with upagrahas up into the sky. What is this "Upagraha" all about ?, Why should you put so many Upagrahas into space ?, how do they function?, What are its uses? When do they fall

down? and so on. Primarily, "Graha" itself creates a lot of curiosity!, and now "Upagrahas" are even more curious objects and they are man-made. So, it is difficult to imagine the kind of questions that could come up, when the word space or rockets or upagrahas are used in some context. But, on the contrary, if I say that "Today's world cannot do its normal duties if upagrahas are not functional", which is true and we don't realise it as it is too seamless. Normally, the day starts with the weather report, people choose their driving routes based on GPS data, we use ATMs to withdraw money, long-distance calls are made using the SATCOM network, thousands of lives get saved from a mighty cyclone through accurate predictions, evening television programs/entertainments are beamed through a small dish antenna (DTH) on top of our houses. All these happen with the help of Upagrahas on a daily basis and the world comes to a grinding halt if they fail to function. So, let us explore more interesting applications of these upagrahas or satellites in different sectors that affect human lives, directly or indirectly.

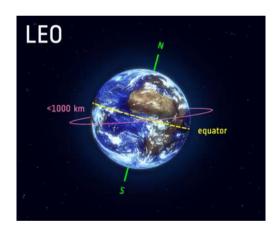
2.0 Satellites & Orbits

Before we dwell on the various applications of space technology, let's get to know about satellites and their orbits. Satellites often get launched into Low Earth



Orbits (LEO) or distant Geosynchronous Equatorial Orbits (GEO) depending on the nature of usage. Different types of rockets are used in each of these launches, depending on the payload they carry and the distance to be traversed in space.

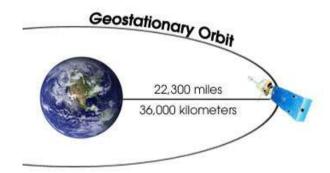
2.1 Low Earth Orbits (LEO)



The satellites at LEO normally go around the Earth from pole to pole at an altitude of about 600 to 900 km and provide interesting images of the Earth. These spacecrafts are also called as polar sun-synchronous orbiting satellites which are primarily used for studying the natural resources of the earth. At such altitudes, the satellite takes about 100 minutes to complete 1 full circle around the globe (about 14 orbits per day). During this time about 50% of its orbiting time is spent covering the sun- illuminated portion of the Earth. It may also be interestingly noticed here that while the satellite goes from pole to pole

around the earth, the earth itself rotates from west to east underneath it, allowing the satellite to capture different parts of the globe (images) and transmit these images to earth through satellite-based telemetry to ground stations. Interesting events to note here are the rotation of the Earth, the sun that illuminates different portions of the Earth and our satellites that capture high-quality digital pictures of the Earth as they keep moving. The satellites that operate in the optical region of the electromagnetic spectrum, like our handheld camera, utilize the illumination of sunlight for imaging or taking pictures of the earth. There are many other ways for imaging from space and we will discuss them subsequently. Today, our satellites in the LEO orbit can image an object as small as 50cm X 50cm on the ground (Indian Remote Sensing-IRS- series of satellites). This enables us to produce very high-resolution images that can show individual houses, Trees, Gardens, Vehicles on the road, etc with clarity.

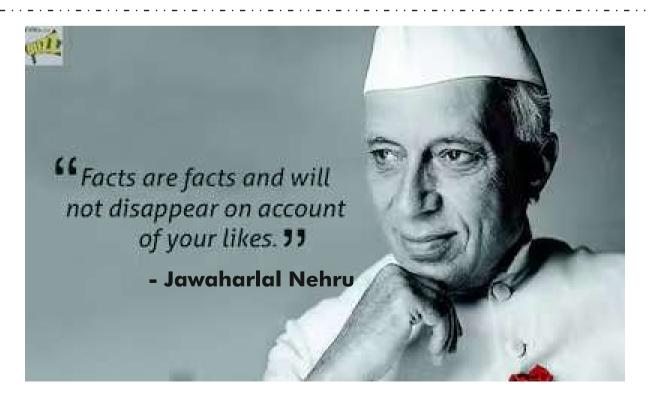
2.2 Geosynchronous equatorial orbits (GEO)



While we discussed above on LEO-based imaging, it is even more interesting to know how GEO works. As mentioned earlier, GEO operates from a larger distance from the earth and is much different from LEO, as certain

applications need constant watch and communication linkage to the ground. For example, if we need constant weather watch updates, then it is required to position our satellites in such a way that they always watch our region from space and provide inputs. But the earth continuously rotates about its axis while going around the sun which needs to be addressed too. So, we need to position our satellites also at the same speed as the rotation of the earth, above the equator, to achieve this. It may be noted that the location of our country is towards the north of the equator (about 80N to 370N Latitude). Popular usage shows that GEO is also equivalent to "Geo-stationary Orbit". The interesting part of the explanation lies in the orbit being "Geo-stationary"!!. It is well known that the earth rotates about its axis at the rate of about 1,600 km/hr while it travels at the rate of about 1 lakh km/hr around the sun in its orbit. For the satellites to move at the same speed as the rotation of the earth, they have to be placed in about 36,000 km orbit

(based on a simple theory of mass and gravity of the earth). Once the satellites are placed in such an orbit, these satellites could made to point to a particular portion of the earth and provide continuous data, round the clock. So, the orbital altitude of about 36,000 km is where a satellite moves with just the right speed to remain above the same point on the earth, all the time. Now, this is what we call an "eyes-in-the-sky" looking down on India and its surroundings on a 24x7 basis. They provide real-time information on any major disaster that may occur around our region including weather early warnings, agro-met forecasts, telecommunication networks, and regional navigational systems, as these satellites are always available, accessible, and hence most vital for the nation. India's INSAT and GSAT constellations are all serving the country from GEO and the nation heavily depends on them. So, next time when one of our satellites goes up into the sky, you know what is it meant for, right?





Crime Prevention - Criminologist's Perspective Varsha Avadhany

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WHY BEHAVIOUR RISK MANAGEMENT AND HOW TO BEGIN IT?

The other day, I received a call stating that an employee was to be terminated and there was a need to profile him to determine if he would become violent and to put mitigating controls in place if necessary. My first question in such cases is always, "What made you come to me at the last juncture when the violent tendency is that extreme? Do you not believe in the Prevention of Violence, rather than Crisis Management of Violence?" Well, the main principle of Behaviour Risk Management is to Prevent Crime/Violence. The job skill set and knowledge lie in analyzing the escalation of violent behaviours and controlling the triggers to de-escalate the situation.

Coming to the various names this profession is called:

- 1. TAT Threat Assessment Team
- 2. WPV Workplace Violence Prevention
- 3. ITM Insider Threat Management
- 4. HTM Human Threat Management

The crux of all these programmes is the understanding of human behaviour that

manages machines and other fellow human beings.

Let's start from the beginning of how to become a Behaviour Risk Management Professional:

- Knowledge: Multi-sectoral from Psychology, Sociology, Criminology, Economics, History, Political Science, Law, and Forensics.
- Skill set: Keen observer, listening to the unsaid (non-verbal communication expert), situational crisis manager, organizational navigator, high empathy with minimum bias, and collaborative spirit.

While other professions profess the various tenets of collaboration and the need to work as one team, for a Behaviour Risk Management Professional, that is the starting point. Our assessment principle of "Protective Fact Finding" is based on building trust with various stakeholders, collecting facts, building patterns/trends, and thus arriving at the risk involved in the situation. We strongly believe that an individual is affected not just by

unilateral factors but by a multiplicity of factors, thus creating a complex web of relationships, conversations, thoughts, and biases. Our job is to undo the knots, figure out the crux of the matter, and remove the noise/frills and the main triggers to deescalate the situation. Also, what one needs to understand in this profession is that we never close a case; we only close a situation. An individual who has a violent tendency needs to be under constant monitoring (may not be active) to deploy a trigger management system to prevent escalation of the situation.

The main challenges that we face are:

- → Nascent profession: In the West, this
 profession started in the 2010s, and in the
 East, awareness is building today on the
 need for such specialised expertise. Thus,
 70% of jobs entail creating awareness of
 our role and the way we go about
 managing cases.
- + Generalization of behaviour management: Most people who work in people management professions generalize the trigger management systems of violence, thus creating riskier situations rather than de-escalating them. One of the cornerstones of our profession is having minimal bias and working on here-and-now principles, though we might have the facts from the history of the behaviour, we only bring them for protection and trend analysis.

Some of the cases that we find difficult to manage are Workplace Harassment cases coupled with the threat of suicide or homicide. Normally, there are budding signs of these situations, such as verbal altercations, absenteeism, low performance, etc. If brought to us at that stage, we put in trigger management systems to weed out such concerning behaviours. Unfortunately, such cases come to us only when they reach the peak of threats of violence, leading to crisis management rather than prevention of crime/violence.

I often get asked how we started this program in our organisation. Here are a few steps towards it:

- 1. Look at the risk register and separate Behaviour Risk cases. Build a pattern of it.
- 2. Call experts and have awareness talks with various stakeholders.
- 3. Train the team on the tenets of this profession.
- 4. Build a policy framework and start the process of leadership buy-in.
- 5. Allocate budgets and hire a person for the role.

However, the most important aspect of the success of this program is building a 'Risk Culture' and practicing' Zero Tolerance'.



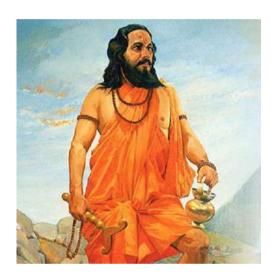
The Selfless Warriors of Shivaji

Guru Prasad Bhat

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6. Swamy Samartha Ramadas – The Spiritual Guru of Shivaji (Part-1)





Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's spiritual master, Swamy Shri Samartha Ramdas, is wellknown to most people in Maharashtra. Narayana Panta, his Purvashrama name before becoming an ascetic, was born into a Marathi DeshasthaRigvedi Brahmin family in April 1608 to SuryajiPanta and RanubaiThosar. His family followed ancient Vedic traditions. worshiping Surya, i.e., Pusha, the Sun. Narayana's father passed away when he was just a seven-year-old boy, leading him to become deeply introverted and contemplative about the mysteries of life and death. Within a year after Shivaji Maharaj passed away, realizing that the purpose of his life too was over, Swamy Samartha left his physical body on February 2, 1681, through the practice of Prayopavesha, which involves complete abstinence from food and water until the last breath

Swamy Shri Samartha Ramadasa was a contemporary of Shivaji Maharaj and played a significant role in establishing "Hindavi Swarajya," offering great support as his ardent well-wisher and spiritual Guru. The revered saint was an advocate of Advaita philosophy and a devoted follower (Paramabhakta) of Bhagwan Sri Rama and Hanumanta. Shri Samartha followed a daily routine of exercise and physical austerities to discipline the body, keeping it agile and healthy, devoid of any desires, mirroring the disciplined devotion of his deity Hanumanta.

Narayana was inspired to accept sannyasa or ascetic renunciation during his wedding ceremony when he was just twelve years old. In the midst of his wedding rituals, as he held the auspicious mangal sutra in his hand, he heard the purohit chant the words 'SulagnaSavadhana,..... Sumuhurte savadhana....'. He interpreted the meaning of "Savadhana," as "be careful" or "be mindful," as a divine warning signal, and at that very moment, he threw away the mangalsutra and fled from the wedding hall, never to return. Deep within, at such a tender age, his innate yearning was to break free from all worldly attachments in his quest to comprehend the true meaning of life, death and beyond.

Narayana arrived in Panchavati, near

Nashik, the sacred site where Sri Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana stayed during their vanavasa or wandering life in exile. It was also the place where Lakshmana cut off the nose of Surpanaka, Ravana's sister. There, he engaged in deep penance, chanting the RamanamaTarakamantra some thirteen crore times over twelve years, leading to profound divine revelations. In profound reverence to his Aradhyadeva Sri Rama, he assumed the new ascetic name of Swamy Samartha Ramadasa. There was a reverberating aura around him that mesmerized people, drawing them to throng to his spiritual teachings.

Samartha Ramadas spent twelve years wandering as an ascetic across undivided Bharat. He witnessed the deterioration of Sanatana Dharma due to unrighteous mlechha rulers and interacted with impoverished common people who suffered from the atrocities and injustice caused by these unscrupulous rulers. The nation, once renowned for its profound knowledge of science and spiritualism, as well as valor and bravery, now found itself languishing in the labyrinth of helpless servitude, with no inkling of how to wriggle out of it. His mind was perturbed by the penury and abject poverty prevalent in almost every town and village of Bharat. In response to these experiences, he authored two books. 'AsmaniSultanee' and 'ParachakraNirupana,' with the sole aim of curbing this decline.

At the consecration ceremony of the Sri Rama temple in 1648, built by Samartha Ramadas in the town of Chaphal through public contributions, the eighteen-year-old Shivaji met him for the first time. Samartha Ramadas was deeply impressed by Shivaji's oath of Swarajya a few years prior, his daring capture of a few forts from Adil Shah in recent months, his people-oriented policies, the

caring way he interacted with the people despite the adulation, and his fledgling army of 3.000 men and horses. This meeting marked a defining moment in the lives of both Swamy Samartha Ramadas and Shivaji Maharaj, as they shared a common vision for Dharma and Swarajya. He foresaw the extraordinary zeal and determination to restore dharma and establish Hindavi Swarajya in Jijabai and her son, Shivaji. While ashrams and temples served as the external manifestations of Swamy Samartha's Dharmic mission, teaching patriotism and offering specific advice to restore Dharma were his internal pursuits. Through these mediums, he continued to inspire the public until the end.

Disciples from different villages regularly visited Samartha Ramadas, further expanding his circle of followers. He made continuous efforts to attract new and suitable disciples, assigning them specific tasks for his Dharmic and patriotic missions. During his relentless travels, he engaged in dialogues with various notable personalities. Discourses and writing were two of his most powerful tools, and he amplified his mission through religious talks and writing to trigger a mass movement to resurrect Dharma and, through it, attain Swarajya. Although he didn't wield the sword himself, he urged people to take up arms in the fight for Dharma-centric Swarajya. These individuals and his wandering ascetic disciples served as the eyes and ears of Shivaji's unofficial yet reliable spy network.

Samartha Ramadas was also the political guide and mentor to Shivaji Maharaj. His profound inspiration and consistent guidance greatly inspired Shivaji Maharaj to establish the Hindavi Swarajya. While both Swamy Samartha and Shivaji were two separate individuals with independent worldly views,

distinct personalities, and unique perspectives, they complemented each other in their respective fields to achieve their common mission and carried out their duties relentlessly.

Samartha Ramadas built many temples all over Bharat dedicated to his revered deities of Sri Rama and Hanuman. He toiled tirelessly to revive Dharma. Shivaji Maharaj restored the Parali Fort for Swamy Samartha to meditate and penance and aptly renamed it "Sajjangad" where noble souls like Samartha Ramadas resided. Even after becoming the Chhatrapati, Shivaji Maharaj visited Sajjangad often to spend a few days in the pious and peaceful presence of Swami Samartha. The tranquility of Sajjangad brought solace to Shivaji Maharaj's turbulent mind from fighting many wars, helping him find inner peace amidst the intrigue, chaos and endless wars.

Samartha Ramadas wrote many books in a simple Sanskrit-mixed Marathi style that is still appreciated by many to this day. He composed various works such as Shri ManacheShlok; Dasabodh; Shri Maruti Stotra; Atmaram; Shadripu Nirupana; Manapanchak; Chaturthaman; Ramayana (Marathi-Tika) and more.

Despite having access to abundant wealth and offerings at his disposal, the dispassionate Swami Samartha didn't change his daily routine of going from house to house, chanting "Jai Jai Raghuveer Samartha...!" while holding his begging bowl for alms. He would not partake in his alms without this chant and consumed only such food once a day. Harsh seasons didn't deter him from this routine. Witnessing Samartha's austere way of life, Shivaji Maharaj donated his entire kingdom to him and implored him to lead a comfortable

life as the ascetic king of Swarajya. Samartha Ramadas smilingly accepted this and immediately appointed Shivaji Maharaj as his representative of this newly donated kingdom, instructing him, "You are no longer a king; you are a servant to them. Manage the kingdom on my behalf as a Seva or service to the subjects." This transformed Shivaji's approach to governing Swarajya, becoming a Sevak (dedicated servant) rather than a worldlyattached king. From that day onward, before taking his seat on the throne, Shivaji Maharaji would first bow down to the sandals of Samartha Ramadas, then to the throne, and only then would he ascend it. He always remembered the brave soldiers who had sacrificed their lives for the establishment of Swarajya.

Shivaji Maharaj provided essential comforts for Shri Samartha, including a bed laden with Jinambara (a deer skin), his Yogadanda with a concealed sword for self-protection, wooden sandals (Paduke), and his begging bowl etc. All these items have been well preserved at Sajjangad fort even today.

Many letters were exchanged between Shivaji and Samartha. Shivaji Maharaj consistently addressed Samartha as "Shri Sadguruvarya," a term that reflected the immense respect and devotion he held for Sri Samartha. The love, trust, admiration, and reverence that Shivaji had for Samartha Ramadas are evident in many of his letters and writings. Becoming the disciple of a spiritual giant like Samartha Ramadas was a blessing for Shivaji. This profound spiritual awakening was reflected in Shivaji's character and played a pivotal role in his remarkable ascent, much like the towering Himalayas.

(To be continued...)



Short Story

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



My husband is unique!

Suresh's temperature has risen high. "Get up slowly. Let us go to the hospital" said Ratna to her newly wedded husband. She made him get up from the bed carefully.

Suresh's face had faded and looked exhausted. He opened his almirah and pulled out an old dhoti that was tucked somewhere behind his office clothes. He wore it along with an ordinary shirt. Ratna was perplexed by his attire but reasoned out that light attire like dhoti must be comfortable for him when not feeling well.

After paying five hundred rupees at the reception of this multi-specialty hospital for registration, they moved towards the consultation room of the Doctor. When they entered the room and sat down, the Doctor opened a file and started filling up Suresh's details...

"Age"?
"28 Doctor"
"work..."?

"I am working as a lecturer in Chamarajpet Government College!"

Ratna was shocked to hear this. Somehow she managed to keep her cool and was now staring at her husband. Though while explaining his illness to the Doctor, he turned surreptitiously towards Ratna and winked at her, Ratna was still in a state of confusion. After the Doctor wrote a prescription and they had bought the required medicine from the inhouse pharmacy, they both had come out.

While walking towards the Ola car that awaited them, he held her hand and murmured in her ears — "Don't get frightened, my dear. I have not deceived you. Had I given the clue to the Doctor that I was a well-paid Senior Software Engineer working in a multinational company, he would have prescribed a zillion (unwarranted) tests and might have admitted me too. My bill would have mounted upwards. Hence, I told him a white lie..."

A wave of joy passed over Ratna's face now. Avoiding the attention of the driver, while getting into the car, she lovingly threw a flying kiss at her husband...



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



Whip of Humour

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"The election commission will soon ask you to disclose your assets sir," said the secretary.

"That I shall fain adhere to," replied the candidate.

"That's strange... I mean, commendable, sir," stammered the secretary.

"Transparent is the word dear fellow; I believe in being transparent, always have," boasted the boisterous leader.

"Ah! That's surely a switch. Till now even the window panes of your house and office as well as the side glasses of your cars have not been transparent. Tint is the apt word."

"Not anymore. I had the tints removed yesterday."

Rinku, the secretary was aghast. "That's not the real YOU" he mumbled.

"Scoff if you must. But it's time to shed my skin and come into the open. The more people see of me the more the chances of winning the election" he stated.

"Aptly put sir. Snakes have to shed their skins" Rinku said with a twinkle in his eyes.

"You call me a snake?" growled the leader.

"Nothing wrong with it, sir. Election is the time when human nature becomes latent and the animal in the man rules the roost" Rinku said in mock defence.

"I would like you to call names in order to prepare for a suitable repartee. For instance, when someone calls me a snake, I would take it as a compliment deeming it to mean that I am good at protection of hidden treasure." "Hidden treasure?"

"Yes. Dissidence is the real asset in politics. Having a sway over the dissidents stowed away in Resorts is tantamount to looking after hidden treasure."

"Very well, Sir. You wanted me to call you names. Let me begin with calling you a monkey" ventured Rinku.

"I would say that I am the forefather of the person who called me so. Also, monkeys are one of the most active species in the world. A sedate person like me would be delighted when compared favourably with an active species."

"Donkey?"

"But that's the truth. The underworld is full of dons – liquor dons, counterfeit note dons, money laundering dons and so on. I hold all their keys. Hence calling me a Don-key will just be stating the obvious."

"Chameleon?"

"I would say that I blend with the surroundings perfectly. If and when I jump from one party to another, blending with the territory is considered an asset. Hence 'Chameleon' does not offend me."

"Turncoat?"

"Is it really not spelt "turn quote"? We political leaders must turn the quotes of the great ones to our advantage. When one says 'Garibi Hatao' it is construed as eradication of our poverty; not of the country. "Arise, awake, stop not till the goal is reached" has a different meaning for us. It means that we should not stop till we come to power by hook or crook."

"Is it not hook or crook?"

"One crook is not sufficient to win an election. So, CROOKS it shall be."

"Excellent, Sir. Your thick skin will surely be the envy of Hippos and Rhinos. coming back to the asset declaration issue, are you going to declare the three hundred acres of land you purchased when you were the agriculture minister?"

"Me? I just arranged funds for the purchase of it. It was purchased by my first brother-in-law. It is not mine."

"Oh! That's true. All that you had to do to 'arrange funds' was to open your Safe and count out the currency notes," said an amiable Rinku.

"The real challenge was to arrange the money to be paid by cheque. The cooperative bank was a real boon."

"The very insignificant matter that your sister is the founder and president of that bank helped you along."

"That's a trivial detail" concurred the leader.

"Will you declare the petrol bunk near your house as your asset?"

"Of course not. It belongs to my second brother-in-law's brother. He had good agricultural income to purchase the same."

"Indeed! Two acres of land atop the Nandi Hills. I would give a thousand dollars for a blade of grass grown there. It's balder than the head of Persis Khambatta in Star Trek."

"Are you still my secretary or have you defected?" Suspicion writ large, the leader peered at his deputy.

"I am just stating that you have to be more careful sir. If you were to have it in the name of your third sister who has five acres of coffee plantation courtesy your largesse which yields four crore rupees per year, it would have been more acceptable."

"Thanks Rinku. I will arrange for it pronto."

"Will you declare the four shopping complexes which are in your name?"

"Not in my name. My name is Venkatachalapathi. One complex is in the name of V.C. Pathi, one in C. Venkat; another is in the name of V.P. Chalam."

"The fourth one?"

"Chinnu Chalapathi. My mother used to call me Chinnu."

"But Aadhar, Bank accounts..."

"Elementary, mister Rinku. Those are all taken care of by my well-paid auditor."

"Magnificent, Sir. Will you declare the huge bundles of money stacked away in your brother's arm house?"

"But that money is a mirage" declared the leader.

"How can money be a mirage?"

"It is there now. During elections, it will reach the doors of hut dwellers, 'Vote For' screamers and musclemen who round up the votes. Since that money is here now and gone tomorrow, it does not merit any declaration."

"But you have to mention some assets in the Assets Column."

"I will."

"And what will that be?"

"The names of all the people in my constituency who belong to my caste."

"Why?"

"They are the true, real assets of any leader in this secular country!"





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THAT'S A MOTHER!!

She stood by the table, cutting her favorite fruit,

The last one in the basket, the last one for the season.

She decided to have it, as she reminiscenced her childhood days.

A tug at her apron disrupted her thoughts,

"Mom, Thank you. I hope it's for me" said her little one, eyeing the fruit.

"Of course, it is, you know I don't like this fruit at all" she said That's a MOTHER!!

She sat dozing on the dining table, waiting
Waiting for her son to return home, for dinner
Fighting off her sleep with her will.
Startled she was when the phone ring
"Mum, I will leave in a while, Hope you were not asleep" he said
"No son, I was reading a book and I'm not sleepy at all" she said
That's a MOTHER!!

While God, in his Book of Golden Rules Wrote that, one must always speak the truth He made an exception – That's a MOTHER!!







for April 2024

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Shivaratri Celebrations at Gayathri Bhavan















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