



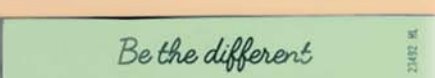
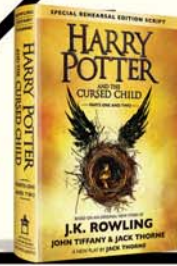
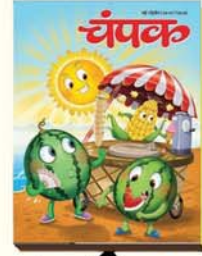
Visteel Mahila Samiti
Quarterly Magazine

Spark

.... ignite, illuminate, sparkle...

Volume - 8 Issue - 2 April - May - June 2019

BOOKS, MAGAZINES & MEMORIES





Dear Readers

The Editorial team proudly presents one more unique creation of SPARK which serves as a platform to highlight the literary, cultural and philanthropic activities of VMS collective. On behalf of the editorial board I extend a warm welcome to all the readers and writers who have volunteered to contribute to this edition.

With the blistering summer days and the scorching sun restricting our movements we can think of passing time with a good book. Books become our best friends. With this theme (BOOKS, MAGAZINES AND MEMORIES) Team SPARK has decided to explore the impressions of books, magazines and their memories that our members have come across.

"We can do no great things, only small things with great love" - Mother Teresa

VMS believes tackling too much at a time is a recipe for disaster. So start small and make a great change one step at a time.

Together with the unrelenting support of CSR department of RINL-VSP, various steps have been taken by our Executive Committee members of VMS in reaching out to the underprivileged, are once again estimable.

Quenching the thirst of the daily commuters by joining hands with the SAI seva organization to open the water kiosk during hot summer days, donating recycled cotton bags to the needy vegetable vendors with an aim to make the environment plastic free, Providing financial help towards the education of girls or extending medical help to the villagers nearby. Hot summer days could not dampen the spirit of the members.

Our summer issue highlights and showcases the event of the year which was a fun-filled Annual Gala - The VISTEEL NITE. Besides, a dive into some of the achievements of the past year through a well made PPT, a vibrant cultural show and a dinner with spouse was organised.

My special appreciation for the members who contributed to the DIVYOKTI feature.

I am fortunate to be surrounded by a highly effective team in the editorial board who pulls the show together. They work hard in assessment and processing of submitted articles. I feel sorry for the non publication of some of the articles due to lack of space which was inevitable. The magazine is also backed up by a cast of reviewers whose suggestions help to engender trust of the readers.

Wishing you all the best

Sarada Rath

Sarada Rath

Editor in Chief & President, VMS



UNSPOKEN LANGUAGE

- Sujal Kumar Malik



Almost everyday I see this lady, roaming around my office. She is old, dark, thin, tall and with wrinkles on her skin. Every time she sees me, she comes to me and asks "chinna, bagunara?" i.e. "Hey! Little boy, hope you are doing good". Every time I see a beautiful smile on her face. Irrespective of place, season, situation I see this smile, this lady –full of life.

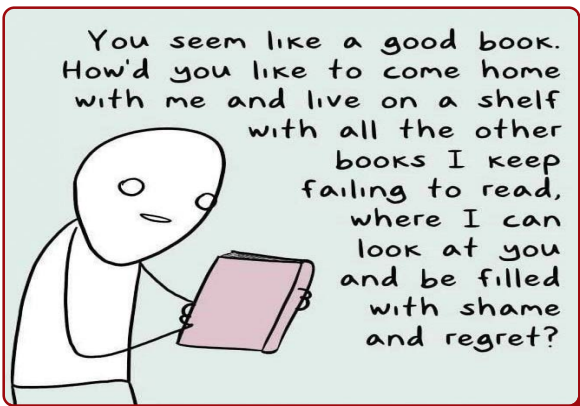
I don't remember when was the first time I met her. Over the years, gradually, she has become someone I look for in the office vicinity. She is quite aged and because of being thin she looks to be weak. She never shows her weakness. At the end of the day I see her walking with her old bag, filled with a lunch box and some more items.

Neither I understand her language properly nor does she but we communicate. We communicate, using everything other than spoken language. I have felt that to communicate with her, spoken language is rarely required. Gestures and expressions do it for us. There is a bridge built between us with a language that is not spoken but is only felt with closeness and compassion.

300 Rs a day is her income she told. To reach this plant where she works, she had to change Jeep once. A round trip from plant to her house costs her 60 Rs and 20 Rs is for tea, two times a day. Exact 220 Rs per day she can take home from this plant, she told.

She is very expressive. Whenever, she sees me in the canteen she will come to me. She eats fruit salad from my plate. Once I tried to make her eat using a fork. She was very uncomfortable and couldn't do it. Since then she smiles and eats with her hands. During festival time she will ask for money and once the festival is over she will never ask for it again. Gradually she has drawn my attention inexplicably.

She walks towards the pick-up location, keeping the setting sun behind. There is blue coloured iron fence with maroon coloured concrete base along the road. She follows this road everyday. I have never seen her with anyone. She walks alone. There are many in the office but to pat on the shoulder and ask "chinna, bagunara?" you are the only one!



PEOPLE WHO SAY THAT
I'M HARD TO SHOP FOR
MUST NOT KNOW WHERE TO
BUY BOOKS



एक मुलाकात

- प्रसेनजीत सरकार



आज फिर मुलाकात हुई
उनसे और उनकी तन्हाई से
ऐसा लगा कि खुशियों की बारिश कर दूँ
पर रोक लिया
अपने आप को
बस चुपचाप देखता ही रहा उनकी वही दो आँखें
ऐसा लगा जैसे अभी हँस देंगी
पता न था कि उनको किस चीज का गम था
सौदागर तो हम ठहरे थे
जो निकल पड़े थे उनसे मिलने
हाँ मुलाकात हुई पर
कुछ बोल न पाए
ऐसा लगा कि ओढ़ दूँ आँचल उनके सिरहाने
पर रोक लिया
अपने आप को
सामने सफेद कपड़े में लिपटी
अपनी चूड़ियाँ तोड़ रही थी वो
बारिश हुई अरमानों की
जिन्होंने धो दिया माथे की सिंदूर को
ऐसा लगा लाल हो गई है मेरी दुनिया
बढ़ा दूँ अपना हाथ उनके चेहरे तक
पर रोक लिया
अपने आप को
आँखें बंद होने लगीं
पूरी दुनिया अँधेरी दिखने लगी
सन्नाटा पूरा छा गया

और वह हमसे चिपक के रोने लगी
धड़कनें थम सी गईं
जैसे पहले भी कभी ऐसा हुआ होगा
जब हमने पहली दफा उन्हें देखा होगा
और आज
आखिरी बार
वही खामोशी
वही हालात
पर इस बार मौत हमारी हुई
और तन्हाई में वह आँसू बहाने लगी
ऐसा लगा संभालूँ उनको अपनी बाहों में
पर रोक लिया
रोक लिया
अपने आप को
आँखें बंद हुई और वो गायब हो गई
यह मुलाकात बस खत्म हुई
वह चली गई
हम जलते रहे
धुआँ, धुआँ
नामो निशान मिटता गया
खत्म हुआ यह सिलसिला
पर हँ
कल फिर कहीं उनसे मुलाकात होगी
वही तन्हाई और वही बात होगी
शायद कल फिर...
... एक और मुलाकात होगी।



PRIDE AND PREJUDICE-

My thoughts & wishes within

-PN Savitry



Reading is my favourite hobby. My English faculty comprising of Mrs. Elizabeth in school and Mrs. David in college introduced me and my classmates to the works of famous authors like Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy among many other good writers. They taught us to ask for the catalogue, whenever we went to a library so that we get an idea of the books available in the library.

Also, both of them suggested to always buy a book and then read.

I would regularly borrow books from the library. Each time it would be a different book of a different author. One day, I borrowed the book *Pride and Prejudice* on the recommendation of a friend and read it. And then I read it again and again! It is one of the few books that kept me captivated. Not sure if it was my age or the writing style or the story or the characters that kept me attracted to it.

"*Pride and prejudice*" by Jane Austen is my all time favourite novel. I cannot remember how many times I've read it. I had a paperback edition

of the book in my college days. Each and every dialogue of Elizabeth Bennett, Darcy I could repeat to the dot. I used to personify myself in the characters of Lizzy, Darcy etc. and think this situation could have been in a different way. Jane Austen could have written like this or that. Time passed, I completed my graduation, got married, came to Vizag, later subscribed to the mobile library run by Mr. N. Sivannarayana, Ukku club library. & enjoyed my reads. In due course of time I got to know about "Kindle" and subscribed for online reading too. One day I wanted to read '*Pride & Prejudice*' again and searched for it. I could not believe myself!! I got to see hundreds of variations of *Pride and prejudice* written by various authors. One by one I started reading these variations (at least 20 I have read till now) and I was fully and totally satisfied that my dream to see Elizabeth and Darcy in different shades of characters was fulfilled to the fullest. I was too happy to learn that readers all around the world were like me only wishing for more and more from *Pride and prejudice*.

HELEN KELLER- MY INSPIRATION

- Aparna Ravi



Books are the best food for our mind. They give us a peculiar joy and we forget all the cares and worries of life. They mold our thought and give us a proper direction. They are the best guides and philosophers.

Reading books is my pastime. Books are my never-falling friends. When I am out of tune with myself, I take recourse to reading books by great writers and masterminds.

It does not worth mentioning that everyone has his/her own most favourite book. The favourite book is the one which remains in the mind

forever and is never boring even if it is read for the tenth or hundredth time.

I have read a number of books. Some books leave a profound influence upon our minds. The book which has appealed to me the most is "*The Story of my Life* by Helen Keller"

"*The story of my Life*" is an autobiography that recounts Helen's experiences as she adjusts to the world as a blind and deaf person. Helen begins the story by describing her earliest

memories of sights and sounds and her memory of contracting the illness that resulted in her deafness and blindness. Helen learned sign language after her illness, but she describes the isolation she felt from the world around her and the frustration she felt while trying to learn.

At the age of six, Helen's life changes drastically when she is referred to a teacher who has had tremendous success educating blind and deaf children. Helen devotes the rest of the book to describing her experiences learning to read, write, and speak under the tutelage of her teacher, Anne Sullivan. She describes the sensory experiences Miss Sullivan encouraged that helped her first learn words, and then learn the meaning of words, and then gain a fuller understanding of their meaning in the world around her. Helen describes moments of insight

that came over the course of her learning as she was able to connect her learning activities to her childhood memories of sights and sounds. By the end of the book, the author's descriptions of past and present come together to give the story continuity and meaning.

I like her book because she writes with a natural ease and power, hardly equaled by any other writer of that category.

In her autobiography, Helen describes her experiences with so much ease and sincerity in such a lucid style it cannot but stimulate love and wonder for her. But the most striking feature of this book is her strong will and iron determination to cross all the hurdles of a handicapped person in her own life and therefore, it has the universal appeal to all the readers throughout the world.

...On collected words of MOTHER



- Leela Ravi

***"Wherever a beautiful soul has been
there is a trail of beautiful memories"***

Since my early childhood, I was fascinated with books, magazines and newspapers. The kind of books read were very simple and had good moral values. During my college years my aunt had visited our place. She also had a habit of reading books. One such book was on education from the "Collected Words of The Mother Divine". I had the opportunity to read it. It consisted of the prayers, meditation, people's faith in the Divine, life experiences shared and words written by the Divine Mother. Reading those Divine words and life experiences inspired me. Slowly I too started believing and unknowingly there was an ardent faith towards the Divine.

On the other side, I had completed my graduation & was working for a private firm. Later got married and began a new chapter in my life. A year passed by and one fine day I got to know that I conceived. The doctor whom I visited was

far relative of mine and said she would take care of my delivery. My pregnancy went on very well with all those tests, checkups, medicines etc like any other woman. It was during the 7th month the doctor said that the baby inside my womb had turned upside down and probably it may not be a normal delivery. This made me very upset as I didn't want an operation. My thought went on to that book. I laid my hands on the book and randomly opened it. To my surprise, my eyes flashed on to the words by the mother " I am there, do not worry ". These words lingered within myself till the time of delivery.

Came in 8th month and during a medical checkup it was confirmed that it would be a cesarean and there was no possibility of normal delivery. My mind and thoughts were completely towards the divine and just prayed

to have a normal delivery. In my 9th month prior to my due date of delivery, I visited the doctor for the final checkup around 10am and I was asked to get admitted at that very moment. I was admitted in a special ward. The doctor said she is making all arrangements for the cesarean and the operation would be around 3:30 pm. It was almost 1:30 in the afternoon and by then pains started increasing in a normal phase. The doctor visited me and said all was okay and said would return to the hospital post lunch. In the mean while I was suffering terribly with pain. Now it was around 3:10pm. The nurse who was taking care of me had asked me to go to the washroom as it was time for operation. She held my hands firmly and took me till the wash room with utmost care. To my shock I was unable to pee as I could feel some flesh coming out of my body. It was the baby that was slowly coming out. I was unable to walk by then. I told the same to the nurse. She got horrified and started shouting to call the head matron. The head matron put me on the stretcher, and dragged it

to the labour room. The doctor was unavailable by then. The head matron herself was in a panic state and started praying Jesus Jesus, Jesus... I was conscious and watching all by myself whatsoever was happening. It was 3:27 and... a cute, thin, fair prince was born. It was a NORMAL delivery. My eyes were filled with tears and happiness and the faith which I had on the Divine. At 3:30pm the doctor entered the labour room and to her surprise the delivery was all over. She said how could that be possible when it was a cesarean case? She patted me as well as the head matron and said it was for the first time in the history of that hospital such a case had happened. The matron who took care of the delivery was highly appreciated for her work and was rewarded.

While penning down this wonderful memory of mine, I am having goose bumps and tears rolling down. I owe my gratitude to my aunt for gifting me such a wonderful and precious book which inspires me even today.

Excerpts from the moon Diary

They say a pen is mightier than a sword. And when it turns into a book, it becomes the ultimate weapon.

Chandamama was a staple for us. The book never looked to be worth it but had valuable lessons which no one shall forget.

It accompanied me, leaving the loneliness aside and made me to think deeper and understand the situations better.

It still couldn't make me understand why honesty is always betrayed and gave me knowledge and experience apart from learning.

It taught me how to see the real world and How to read the real faces.

Vikram-Betal presented us with stories and Ethical dilemmas the sort of which we face in real life. Knowing that both sides are correct yet what do we decide?

- Jayanti Dwivedy



No matter the time or day, whenever a copy of Chandamama used to land up, an eternal battle ensued, one which can rival any world wars, between us siblings, to get our hands on the book. That was our version of spoilers the likes of which cannot be even compared by GOT or even Avengers. The race on who will read it the first and reveal the spoilers as an evil game between siblings.

It made me fly through the pages opening a portal into a different world. Where I was the creator/character and the story was my happy place.

It was a book I want to live.

Some because of the stories.

Some because of the truth.

FOND MEMORIES OF MALGUDI DAYS



-Priyanka Gupta

Whenever I wander into the beautiful golden street of my childhood, I am amused to see the numerous numbers of magazines & comics. I am thankful that I had a childhood where I could play in dust with my friends, where summer vacations meant all day cycling and of course reading favorite comics!

Still today, whenever I hear the names or pass by book stall of railway stations and see copies of 'Nandan', 'Champak', 'Chacha Chaudhary', Children's knowledge bank etc. a wide smile come on my face.

But the book which I was really attached to in my childhood, which gave me butterflies whenever I went through its pages was 'Malgudi Days' by R. K. Narayan.

It was always my childhood dream to visit Malgudi but alas! I grew up and found out that it was just an imaginary place.

I was even more attached to this book because every day on DD national at 2' o clock I could visit the Malgudi town. The tune of serial that would make me run and sit us in front of TV set. For the next 25 odd minutes I would be transported to the world of Malgudi and lose myself in the escapades of Malgudi.

This is the kind of book I remember to read stories per day for 32 consecutive days but I

found myself reading for 10 minutes then reading for 20 minutes then so gobbling up one tale after the next ,eventually looking up and realizing that a good portion of my day has passed. When I discovered this book my own days were much like their stories , intensely brief and full.

Malgudi is on that wonderful map of places in the literary universe, either real or imaginary ,that not only provide a setting but possesses a soul. It is a tale about a small, self contained bustling town that is not fully cosmopolitan nor agrarian in spirit. There is a college, a train station , a tourist bureau, even a film studio! Like the pick-pocket , who lives quite literally hand to mouth, most of the residents of Malgudi had difficult lives. The fact that characters are wanting does not necessarily make them admirable. In fact , many of the characters are far from admirable. They represent a series of human faults and foibles , from the petty to the absurd laziness, avarice, dishonestly. They are hunted by debt and failures. What makes us care for such pathetic characters is that they, like most of us, are strivers driven by hopes for a slightly better life. As a avid reader , I am grateful to R. K.Narayan for filling my childhood with curiosity and sweetness.

MY HOLIDAY READ-MATILDA



-Srijita Roy

This summer I went to Kolkata to my grandmother's house to spend my vacation. Since I did not have much homework and could not go out much because of the soaring temperature outside I decided to relax at home. For me the ultimate relaxation is reading a story. This time I choose Matilda written by Ronald Dahl.

In a small Buckinghamshire village, Matilda Wormwood discovered her love for reading books and teaches herself to read at the age of three. She started bringing books from the library but her parents treated her with disdain and encouraged her to watch television instead

of reading books. Matilda then goes to a school where the head mistress is depicted as "a fierce tyrannical monster who to frighten the life out of pupils and teachers alike." She then discovers about her power of moving things without touching them and uses it to help Miss Honey after getting to know her secrets.

I enjoyed reading this story very much and loved funny parts like when Matilda stuck her father's

hat to his head as a revenge. I loved the way author Ronald Dahl presented the story. Roald Dahl was a British novelist, short story writer, poet, screenwriter, and fighter pilot. His books have sold more than 250 million copies worldwide. Dahl's short stories are known for their unexpected endings, and his children's books for their unsentimental, macabre, often darkly comic mood, featuring villainous adult enemies of the child.

READERS' DIGEST-THE MAGAZINE THAT INSPIRES YOU....



-T K Nagabhushana

While I was a Graduate Engineer of 1977 batch in Bhilai Steel Plant, I had plenty of free time before getting posted to a department. It was during this period that I started looking for self motivational & development books to read that would improve my proficiency in English, General Knowledge in all spheres of life. When I chanced to read an issue of Reader's Digest(RD), it was convincing that it would help me improve in every way. When one of my batch mates asked my recommendation to name a few books in English which would improve him in all the above aspects,RD came to my mind. I advised him that for persons not used to reading books in English and with a fixed objective of getting inputs for expansion of knowledge horizon from a single source,RD is the best choice. Eversince that time, my friend and I have become regular readers of this monthly magazine, month after month.

Soon, I found that RD is for the whole family, containing articles on general topics, politically conservative, an upbeat and best selling monthly magazine. Each and every article is of enduring value and interest. "Wordpower", a vocabulary quiz enriches our word power."Laughter the best medicine "is a

collection of jokes submitted by readers. It has original articles condensed articles reprinted from other magazines,book excerpts, collection of jokes, anecdotes, ,quotations, ,cartoons and other short pieces.Articles are short, allowing busy readers to keep up with a variety of topics without investing too much time that may not be available at a stretch. It also contains true stories of real people, columnist'ssection, health tips and humour .The section titled "RD Living "covers matters related to family, food,home and money.I have observed that RD is one of the most carefully edited magazines, articles are fact checked for authenticity and controlled by an elaborate editorial hierarchy to ensure that the final product is homogeneous and articulate in every sense.RD model has been introduced in many countries around the world with issues that are customised to a certain extent with local content.One such example is found in the 100 year old Kannada language monthly digest "Kasturi" read by mostly discerning intellectual class with a high sense of social awareness.The magazine has an elaborate fixed model and features usually one survival story called "Drama in real life", normallyat least one individual achievement story, a medical article, several stories related

to humanity and morals, several articles with practical advice, some politically inspired articles criticising bureaucracy, radical ideologies and other behaviour inconsistent with the dominant ideology. The survival stories have a characteristic format-the dramatic turn of events in the middle then return in time with an elaborate description of the initial situation. Rescue does not come at the very last para. There is always time to restore the initial peace and formulate a lesson. The last sentence often thanks the Almighty or mentions the medals awarded to the heroes of the stories.

Individual achievements: The RD characters are always struggling against bad luck, discriminatory systems or regulations, diseases and their only weapons are their own courage, cooperation between individuals and an occasional helping hand from the invisible God!

Optimism: Most RD stories have happy ending.

There is only one other case where the article may acknowledge in the end that there are still many difficulties to overcome and give advice.

Moral conservation: Though RD has from the beginning written very openly on sex. It has always been emphatically in favour of traditional marriage. It has been appreciative of loyalty to country, discipline, charity and opposed to feminism, love among all races without restraining borders.

Free market economy: In almost every issue, the magazine opposes restricting taxes, Government regulations, budget increases, labour unions and for many decades, the communist system.

These special features of RD have had inspiring & motivating effects many a time, at times saddening ;to read about the unfortunate, but consoling during my own bad times.

MY CHILDHOOD INSPIRATIONS

Ahh, speaking of my childhood, I would say, it was full of adventures and lot many memories that my old age will not be enough to recall all the stories.

At least ten days of our summer holidays were very well spent in any one of the corners of the country. While my brother and I would be busy filling our pockets with lots of adventures during those ten days, our parents would be busy buying us many books consisting of local cultures and traditions and reading them to us.

The train journey would never seem tiring or boring with CHAMPAK and CHACHA CHOUDARY's adventures and beautiful sceneries moving backward while we move forward.

However, to summarize my childhood, I would proudly say, I had grown up along with Harry, Hermonie, Ron and other fictional characters of J.K. Rowling in her evergreen series of fantasy, "HARRY POTTER."

Kavyasree K V S K



Reading the characters grow up and growing along with them, was an invaluable lesson for me. There was so much to learn from the characters, not just magic.

Neville Longbottom, who was afraid of everything proved that the meekest person can grow into a force to be reckoned with. Which Dumbledore acknowledges by saying, "It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends."

As the characters grow, they tell us that "It is our choices that show us who we truly are, far more than our abilities."

Characters like Gilderoy Lockhart, Albus Dumbledore prove that "Age doesn't always denote wisdom. Never belittle anyone for being young, even children have the capacity for wisdom."

Ron and Hermonie (Apparently my favourite characters) – Their relationship proves that “First impressions aren’t always correct – and the best relations take work.”

Fred and George (every body’s favourite twins) – They prove that “Anything is possible if you have got enough nerve.”

Over all of the above, Severus Snape inspires me the most. His love for Lily taught me that “Love is the strongest force in this world.” The way he helped his students tells us that “There is always some good in everyone. One should extend help to others, out of genuine concern.”

I must also admit that my interest in this fantasy series evolved with watching the movies where I was awestruck with the magic. As I grew up, I realized that the movies of the series are similar to ice berg that can be seen from the ship. It looks very small but underneath the water, it’s huge, so is the difference in books and movies. It was then I read all the books and drew the inspiration. While reading the series, along with loving the characters, I started loving novels and story books and now I have a good number of collection of books which can make a decent library.

Happy Reading!

मेरा बचपन



- श्रीमती ज्योत्सना रानी नायक

न कोई चिंता थी न कोई तनाव
हर गम से मुक्त था मेरा मन
न कोई चाहत थी, न कोई लोभ
ऑचल की छांव में बीता जीवन
न पाने की लालच थी
न खोने का डर
सदा प्रसन्न-पुलकित रहता था तन-मन
नहीं कोई स्वर्गलोक की,
बल्कि इसी लोक की बात बताती हूँ
जिया है हर किसी ने
उसी जीवन की बात सुनाती हूँ
निर्भय-निश्चल था आजाद यह मन
जब जी रही थी मैं अपना बचपन
हर सुबह-शाम वाल सखाओं के संग

धमा चौकड़ी मचाना
तो कभी खेतों की खाक छानना
धूप-छांव की परवाह किए बिना
सारा दिन खुल कर जिया था
भागते हुए आकर
आंगन में बैठी
मुझे सहलाती थी
मीठे-मीठे गीत सुना
मन मेरा बहलाती थी
कहती बेटा भूखा है?
कुछ तो खा ले
फिर मैं सिर उसके गोंद में
रख कर सो जाती थी।

हमारे अपने

डॉ पद्मजा जी एक मेधावी और उत्साह से परिपूर्ण महिला हैं तथा संस्कृत की अध्यापिका हैं। मूलतः वे कामर्स की छात्रा रही हैं और एम काम तक पढ़ाई की है। उन्होंने तेलुगु में भी एम ए किया है तथा उन्हें तेलुगु साहित्य के प्रति अगाध लगाव है। उन्होंने तेलुगु में 300 कविताएँ, 50 कहानियाँ, 110 निबंध आदि की रचना की है। उनके इस योगदान हेतु उन्हें अनेक पुरस्कार और सम्मान प्राप्त हुए हैं। डॉ पद्मजा आर आई एन एल से सेवानिवृत्त श्री भास्कर राम शर्मा की धर्मपत्नी हैं। प्रस्तुत है उनसे बातचीत के कुछ अंश -

स्पार्क: आपके लिए पुस्तकें कितनी महत्वपूर्ण हैं?

डॉ पद्मजा: बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण हैं। लेकिन मीडिया और सेलफोन के जमाने में कभी-कभी लगता है कि किताबों का दौर खत्म हो गया। किताबों से जो आनंद मिलता है, वह कहीं और नहीं मिल सकता। किताब एक अच्छा मित्र जैसी होती है। मैं अपने पति के रिटायरमेंट के बाद जब टाउनशिप से यहाँ आई तो मेरे पास कुल किताबों के साठ बैग थे। उसमें से दो बैग कहीं खो गए। मुझे बहुत दुःख हुआ। मैं रो पड़ी थी। यह सब अपने लगाव पर निर्भर करता है।

स्पार्क: क्या सोशल मीडिया, इंटरनेट एवं इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उपकरण आज पुस्तकों के विकल्प हैं?

डॉ पद्मजा: नई तकनीक पुस्तकों के विकल्प कभी नहीं बन सकते। क्योंकि तकनीक में अच्छी और बुरी आदतों के लिए सामग्री मिलती है, पर पुस्तकों में आदत खराब करने वाली सामग्री नहीं होती। आज भी सोने के पहले मैं आधा घंटा किताब जरूर पढ़ती हूँ और अब मेरे परिवार की यह संस्कृति बन गई है।

स्पार्क: अध्ययन के हिसाब से आपका समय अच्छा था या अब अच्छा है?

डॉ पद्मजा: हमारे जमाने में मौके कम थे। लेकिन जो

मौके थे वे बेहतर थे। जैसे हमारे गुरु बहुत अच्छे और समर्पित होते थे। लेकिन अब ऐसा कुछ नहीं है। अच्छे गुरुओं का अभाव है। अब तो गूगल भी गुरु है। आज गुरु और शिष्य दोनों का ध्यान मात्र अंक हासिल करने



की ओर रहता है। ज्ञान अर्जन के प्रति विशेष ध्यान नहीं दिया जा रहा है। सौभाग्य से पी एच डी के लिए आंध्र विश्वविद्यालय में ही मुझे अच्छे गुरु मिल गए थे और उनकी बदौलत मेरी डिग्री हो पाई।

स्पार्क: आपके हिसाब से लिखने-पढ़ने वालों की सबसे बड़ी समस्या क्या है?

डॉ पद्मजा: आज साहित्य के प्रति लोगों की अभिरुचि कम हो गई है। पढ़ने वालों की संख्या कम होने के कारण लिखने वालों की संख्या भी कम हो गई है। लेकिन इसके विपरीत बात यह है कि आज कोई भी आसानी से लेखक व लेखिका बन जा रहे हैं। लेकिन उसमें क्वालिटी नहीं होती। इसकी वजह से साहित्य और साहित्यकार के साथ-साथ समाज को भी क्षति पहुँच रही है।

स्पार्क: जीवन के विभिन्न स्तरों पर पुस्तकों से हमें कैसे जुड़े रहना चाहिए?

डॉ पद्मजा: बहुत ही आसान है, प्राथमिक स्तर पर हम भाषा सीखते हैं। फिर जब थोड़ा बढ़ते हैं, तो अपने ज्ञान को बढ़ाने एवं जीवन जीने के लिए आवश्यक संसाधन जुटाने के गुण सीखना चाहिए। जीवन व समाज को जब समझने तथा उसके लिए एक सामाजिक प्राणी बने रहने की आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करने के लिए अपनी अभिरुचि के अनुसार हमें पुस्तकें पढ़ना चाहिए। साथ ही ज्ञान की निरंतरता बनाए रखने के लिए हमें हर तरह की पुस्तक पढ़ना चाहिए।

स्पार्क: 'स्पार्क' पत्रिका के माध्यम से आप कुछ कहना चाहेंगी?

डॉ पद्मजा: महिलाओं एवं बच्चियों के उत्पीड़न के खिलाफ हम सभी को मिलकर काम करना चाहिए। पिछले कुछ वर्षों से असंयमित करने वाली घटनाएँ बहुत बढ़ गई हैं। हमें इन बुराइयों से सख्ती से लड़ना चाहिए।

श्री आर पी साहू आर आई एन एल में उप महाप्रबंधक (निर्माण) के पद पर कार्यरत हैं। मूलतः आप एक अभियंता हैं। परंतु रंगमंच के प्रति आपकी विशेष रुचि ने आपको संगठन एवं रंगमंच की दुनिया में एक सफल नाटककार और सफल नाट्य निर्देशक की पहचान दिलाई है। श्री साहू ने अब तक ओड़िया में लगभग 53 नाटकों की रचना की है और अपने निर्देशन में उनका मंचन भी किया है। प्रस्तुत है उनसे बातचीत के कुछ अंश -

स्पाक: समाज में रंगमंच की क्या भूमिका है?

श्री साहू: रंगमंच पंचम वेद है और नाटक समाज का प्रतिबिंब। समाज में जो-जो घटनाएँ घटती हैं, उन सबके मंचन के माध्यम से दर्शकों का ज्ञानवर्धन होता है। साथ ही समाज में व्याप्त भ्रष्टाचार, हिंसा, अत्याचार जैसी सभी चीजों को नाटक में उतारकर दर्शकों को आगाह किया जा सकता है और समाज में परिवर्तन लाया जा सकता है। रूस, फ्रांस, इंग्लैंड जैसे देशों में शेक्सपियर के नाटकों के मंचन से समाज में बहुत बदलाव हुआ है। किताब पढ़ने से उसका असर कम समय के लिए होता है। लेकिन नाटक में साउंड, लाइटिंग जैसे स्पेशल इफेक्ट्स का उपयोग करके नाटककार अपनी बात सीधे दर्शकों के दिल तक पहुँचा सकता है।

स्पाक: आप रंगमंच से जुड़े हुए हैं, आज रंगमंच की क्या स्थिति है?

श्री साहू: डिजिटलाइजेशन, सोशल मीडिया, टी वी, सिनेमा आदि के कारण नाटक की स्थिति जरूर विगड़ी है। लेकिन हम रोज ऑफिस में, घर में नाटक ही तो कर रहे हैं। जो ज्यादा नाटक कर सकता है, वह ज्यादा सफल हो जाता है। नाटकों का महत्व कम नहीं हुआ है। रंगमंच और नाटक का अस्तित्व आज भी है और कल भी रहेगा, इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं।

स्पाक: श्रोताओं एवं दर्शकों के मन में जगह बनाना कितना कठिन अथवा आसान है?

श्री साहू: देखिए, यह बात नाटककार पर निर्भर रहती है। आजकल हम देख रहे हैं कि कुछ लोग अश्लीलता जैसी बहुत ही सस्ती चीजों का उपयोग करके रातों-रात मशहूर हो जाते हैं। लेकिन उसमें सृजनशीलता और मनोवैज्ञानिक तौर पर दर्शकों को सोचने पर विवश किया जा सके, इस तरह की चीजें नहीं होतीं। यदि नाटककार नाटक लिखते समय या उसका मंचन करते समय इन सभी चीजों को ध्यान में रखते हैं और नाटक में नौ रसों को शामिल करते हैं तो समाज का एक वर्ग अवश्य उससे प्रभावित होगा, इसमें दो राय नहीं हैं।

स्पाक: मूलतः आप एक इंजीनियर हैं, पर क्या बता सकते हैं कि आपके भीतर का कलाकार कब जागा?



श्री साहू: नाटक के प्रति लगाव शायद मेरे खून में है। हमारे गाँव में हर साल नाटक होते हैं, जिनसे मुझे लिखने की प्रेरणा मिली। मुझे लगा कि 'अरे, मैं तो इससे बढ़िया लिख सकता हूँ।' और तब से मैं नाटक लिखने लगा। बाद में जब मैं हाईस्कूल में था तो अफीशियल्ली में ने नाटक लिखा और मैं प्रतियोगिताओं में भाग लेने लगा। मैं सफल भी होने लगा। मैं इंजीनियर तो हूँ, लेकिन नाटकों के प्रति भी मेरा विशेष लगाव है, जिसकी वजह से मैं दोनों में संतुलन बिठा पाया। शहर में 'उत्कल' के नाम से एक समिति है, जिसकी ओर से मैं नाटक लिखता हूँ और उनका निर्देशन भी करता हूँ। टाउनशिप में कई सांस्कृतिक समितियों के कार्यक्रमों में मैं ने नाटक निर्देशन किया। विस्टील महिला समिति के कार्यक्रम में भी एक नाटक का निर्देशन किया। मैं नाटक लिखते समय रंगमंच, दर्शक किस वर्ग के हैं, और नाटक के मंचन हेतु उपलब्ध सुविधाएँ किस प्रकार की हैं, ये सब बातें ध्यान में रखता हूँ। शायद ये सब मेरी सफलता के कारण हैं।

स्पाक: एक पाठक के रूप में आपकी मनपसंद पत्र-पत्रिकाएँ कौन सी हैं और क्यों?

श्री साहू: मैं मूलतः ओड़िया साहित्य का पाठक हूँ। हमारी लाइब्रेरी में कादंबिनी, अपरूपा, अनन्या जैसी पत्रिकाएँ मंगाई जाती हैं और मैं समिति के सभी लोगों को इन्हें पढ़ने के लिए अभिप्रेरित करता हूँ। मैं ये सभी पत्रिकाएँ पढ़कर समाज में हो रही चीजों की जानकारी लेता हूँ। मैं ने हिंदी साहित्य में प्रेमचंद के उपन्यास भी पढ़े हैं और कुछ कविताएँ भी पढ़ीं। हमारी समिति में भी महीने में एक बार सभी को बुलाकर नाटकों एवं साहित्य का विश्लेषण किया जाता है।

स्पाक: समाज में खुशहाली बढ़ाने में साहित्य कैसे मदद कर सकता है?

श्री साहू: साहित्य के बिना समाज का कोई अस्तित्व नहीं है। मनुष्य अन्य प्राणियों से इसलिए भिन्न है कि उसके पास दिमाग है, सोचने और समझने की क्षमता है। अच्छा साहित्य मनुष्य को हमेशा प्रभावित करता है। उसे सोचने एवं समझने के लिए विवश करता है। उसे सच्चे आनंद की अनुभूति कराता है। इससे समाज में खुशहाली भी बढ़ती है।

reaching out



Financial aid given by VMS



Donation of cloth bags to vegetable vendor.



జ్యోతి ప్రజ్యులన చేసి చలివేంద్రాన్ని ప్రారంభిస్తున్న శారధరధ్

చలివేంద్రం ప్రారంభం

ఉక్యుటోవోషివ్, ఏప్రిల్ 15: సమాజంలో అవసరమైన వారికి తగిన విధంగా సేవలందించమే ప్రధాన ధ్యేయంగా సత్యసాయి సేవా సంస్థలు ముందుకు సాగటం గొప్ప విషయమని విన్సెట్ మహిళా సమితి అధ్యక్షురాలు శారధరధ్ అన్నారు. స్టీల్ ప్లాంట్ జనరల్ ఆస్పత్రి వద్ద సత్యసాయి సేవా క్రుస్తు ఏర్పాటు చేసిన చలివేంద్రాన్ని సోమ వారం ఆమె ముఖ్య అతిథిగా హాజరై ప్రారంభించారు. ఈ సందర్భంగా ఆమె మాట్లాడుతూ గత 26 ఏళ్ళుగా నిరంతరం సేవలందించటం గొప్ప విషయమని, వేసవిలో ప్రజలు, ప్రయాణికులు సేవలను సద్వినియోగం చేసుకోవాలని అన్నారు. అనంతరం పలు ప్రాంతాల్లో మొక్కలు నాటారు. ఈ కార్యక్రమంలో రత్నారాయ్ చౌదరి, మిథు చక్రవర్తి, కన్వీనర్ జి.రామకృష్ణ తదితరులు పాల్గొన్నారు.

Chalivendram programme at VSGH Bus Stop.



A moment of Visteel nite



Donation of sewing machine.



Donation of grill doors and renovation of the damaged floor at Government School, Despatrunipallem.



Donation of tissue bags to vegetable vendors at Rayathu bazaar and the weekly market as part of the campaign for plastic free Ukkunagram.



Swachh Bharat campaign, Rythu bazaar.

Installation of dust bins at Rythu bazaar.



Release of 7th anniversary issue of Spark

A moment of Visteel nite



VISTEEL NITE



M. Indumati



D. Sravani

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"

-Nelson Mandela

The essence of these words has percolated into the collective conscience of the mankind and driven it to strive for an empowered future society that is empathetic, sustainable and equally accessible, just like the rainwater percolates into the ground and thereafter flows around unseen, sustaining the nourishment of all life forms without any bias and prejudice. Today, more than ever, mankind finds itself trying to illuminate the darkest corners of the world with the light of Education, a revolution that doesn't seem to be affected by nationality, caste, creed or sex.

Today, Persons with Disabilities (Divyang) find themselves immensely benefited by this paradigm shift in the mankind's quest for education. Being the special people that they are in the fabric of society, their special needs are being well attended to by the Special Educators and Therapists. People qualifying and specialising in the field of Special Education has been on the rise. Be it the philanthropic drive or the intellectually challenging career option that they thrive or simply the self-respect and satisfaction that they derive, no matter the reason, many people are taking up careers in Special Education and finding themselves actively engaged in various roles.

Multiple career options offering various roles like educators, therapists, managers, consultants, rehabilitators or even academia and freelancing, etc, offer a spectrum of choice for those interested to pursue a career in this field. Both, Government establishments as well as NGO's have constant requirements of qualified individuals in the field of Special Education. An organised training infrastructure that is affordable and the sustainable demand ensuring stable employment opportunities have made it a viable career option that provides for the rare combination of offering both financial as well as personal satisfaction.

In this edition of Spark, we are proud to present the interviews of Mrs. M. Indumathi, a Special Educator and Mrs. D. Sravani, a speech trainer, both offering their "Special" services at our beloved Arunodaya Special School in Ukkunagaram.

INTERVIEW WITH Mrs. INDUMATHI (SPECIAL EDUCATOR)

Madam, could you please tell us about your educational background and the Hatke turn in your career?

Sure, I was a happy housewife staying here in Ukkunagaram. I did my B.Com and worked in the administrative wing of Little Angels School for some time. I have been a volunteer at the Satya Sai Seva Organisation for a long time and as a part of the volunteering, was sent to nearby villages to train and interact with the children. Those interactions and the gradual improvement and motivation in children's responses to my teaching methodology gave me a great sense of satisfaction. The

children being from the rural background and remarkable improvement shown by them with a little amount of extra care and attention than the regular students gave me reasonable confidence in my abilities, which I suppose is the reason for the idea of teaching to germinate in my mind.

How did the Hatke journey begin in your life and what led you to choose it?

For a brief period, we had moved to Visakhapatnam for our Kid's education. While in the city, I had the option of taking up a job or further education. Although I was inclined to take up neither and devote my time to service, a chance encounter introduced me to the Special B.Ed. program. Inspired by my previous service experience, I was ready to take up the challenge of educating the special children. Therefore, I enrolled myself for the Special B.Ed. course over Distance mode in Thakur Hari Prasad Institute of Research and Rehabilitation, Hyderabad. The course was of 2 years duration and there were many specializations in the course dealing with Hearing Impaired(H.I), Visually Impaired(V.I) and Intellectually Disabled (I.D) , I chose my specialisation in I.D, taking heart from the experience I had in dealing with educating the rural children.

What was the course about and who can aspire to take up such a course?

The course dealt with the scientific way of teaching and dealing with the Special Children. The course involved many practical sessions and a lot of theoretical sessions on types of disabilities in children, their biological and physiological study and the scientific strategies to deal with them, child psychology, education planning and management, curriculum planning, rehabilitation, etc. The practical sessions inspired us to come up with innovative ways of explaining and planning activities. The peer group at my institute were also a great source of help and learning, as some of them were quite experienced in this profession. People with a penchant for service and generous amount of patience and innovativeness can aspire to be successful in such courses. It is not a regular teacher training course where you are the boss and you decide the way a class is run. This course trains you up and prepares you for the challenge of being a patient company, an evolved individual who can be a bit of a teacher, a friend and a parent as per the needs of the special child.

How has your career been after the completion of course?

After completion of the course, I heard of an opening here in Arunodaya Special School in Ukkunagaram. I got selected and came back to join here, so it was like a homecoming of sorts for me. The career itself has been a very satisfactory one for doing the course offered me scientific approach of dealing with the needs of the special children. The amount of time spent with the kids, the racking of brains to come up with new ideas every day to explain and train the children is a great motivation in itself.

What is the scope for such a profession in our country? Why should anyone pursue it despite many other glamorous and well-paying options?

There is immense scope and opportunity in this profession as well. Many youngsters and elderly people alike are working in freelance mode in major metro cities, earning at their absolute convenience. Also, many NGO's and government bodies are recruiting qualified individuals with Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) Certification regularly, with handsome pay packages. CBSE has made it mandatory to have a special educator in every school due to the rising instances of slow-learners, Autistic children and hyper-active children. There is also an option of research and academia for continuing in the pursuit of knowledge. But more than anything else, this career offers the greatest self-satisfaction and lessons in humility than any high-paying job. A chance to educate and empower a special person is not just a job but way of celebrating life itself.

Thank you, madam. That last line of yours sums up our entire interview very aptly.

INTERVIEW WITH Mrs. SRAVANI (SPEECH TRAINER)

Madam, could you please tell us about your educational background and the Hatke turn in your career?

Hello, I completed my intermediate/+2 and was looking for suitable options when I came across the two-year diploma course (D. Ed) in Special Education. Neither me nor anyone in my family had a prior experience in this field, my parents trusted me and encouraged my interest. That was when my life took a wonderful turn, for I loved every aspect of my course and could absolutely relate to every aspect being taught in my college. Even in my diploma, I chose the specialisation of Hearing-Impaired(H.I) individuals, for I found it to be very challenging.

How has your career progressed after your Hatke decision?

As I mentioned, my specialisation in dealing with H.I individuals led me to learning speech therapy. But I found that the application of speech therapy wasn't limited to H.I individuals alone, it was beneficial to any Special Child, as a matter of fact many normal children also suffer from minor speech defects which can be assisted and rectified with the help of speech therapy. This universal aspect of the specialisation greatly interested me, and it has served me well even in my present role at Arunodaya Special School in Ukkunagaram as a Speech Trainer. To be able to empower these children with the power of communication and giving words and sounds to their ideas comes across as a richly satisfying and rewarding experience.

How can anybody teach about sound to someone who has never heard a sound in life?

Well therein lies the whole challenge of it, speech therapy has some scientific techniques and activities by which we introduce these children to the world of sound. Every child has a different aptitude, so the approach would vary with each and every individual. We start off at letters, words and identifying familiar objects and expressing them, later progressing to the formation of sentences, etc. We do have many tricks up our sleeves like getting the children to blow balloons to teach them to get the air out, lip reading, sign language etc. It's an intellectually challenging and straining task which can only be sustained when one is motivated by the spirit of service.

Can you tell us about the challenges that you face in your career?

There are many, but the one I personally have the largest trouble in dealing with, is the expectation of the parents. It is quite understandable that the parents wish a world of good for their children, but their parental affection sometimes overshadows their acceptance and that is where we have to patiently explain to them about the ground realities. Also, the amount of care and constant attention demanded by the children can sometimes be physically and emotionally draining. Some of the kinds in particular demand us to be at our innovative best, for, many of the tried and tested ideas may not work out smoothly, that is a professional change that you always have round the corner and you need to be prepared to sweat it out.

So, what does the future hold for you?

Many more wonderful children to train (Laughs), but I have quite a few options to choose from. Since I have finished my diploma, I can go by the graduation route and acquire a special B. Ed qualification to qualify me for the government jobs. At the same time, I could do further certifications and short-term courses in this field of Speech Therapy and improve my credentials. The scope for growth and progress is tremendous. Today more than ever, the society has started giving importance to the necessity of Special Education. Even parents nowadays have improved acceptance of the special needs of their child and are not shying to enrol them in a Special School. With proper qualification, experience and the service motive, I can expect to carve a golden future not just for myself but also for a handful of kids and their parents as well.

We are sure you will do that madam! Me and the society would forever be thankful to countless Special people like you who are working backstage making the world much more empathetic and inclusive with every passing day.



Den Bosch - a peep into the Duke's Forest

- Deepa Vaishnavi V M



It was a pleasant April afternoon.

My luggage and I, a la 'main aur meri tanahai', were on our way to a Bed and Breakfast (B&B) less than a kilometre from the railway station. I had barely navigated the cobble stoned pathway and crossed a bridge on the river when I heard a 'trrrrrnnnnnnnnng'!

Startled, I looked to my left and saw a lady bearing down on me. Within seconds she had passed me by but not before smiling at the look of surprise on my face. And surprised I was, for the lady would have been at least 70 years old and, was riding a bicycle! Even as I watched her go by, I saw a whole clutch of kids riding past on their cycles. And thus I was initiated into the world of Hollanders and their cycles.

Tulips and water, lots of each, came later. For me though it will always be cycles. Why? Probably because, even as I my train from Amsterdam slowed down at Den Bosch railway station, I had seen a multi-level cycle parking lot near it and had been surprised by it.

's-Hertogenbosch, the formal name of Den Bosch, is the capital of Brabant in southern Netherlands. **'des Hertogen bosch'** translates into **'the Duke's Forest'** and is in honour of Duke Henry I of Brabant who founded it during the 12th century (Source: Wiki). I was here as a part of my Europe trip.

After a quick bite for lunch, I settled down to enjoy the view from my B&B room. The window opened to colourful flowers and looked onto the river **Dommel**. The air was so fresh, one has to experience it to believe it. Adding to my sense of wonder was seeing sun light at 8.00 pm! A first for me.

In case you are wondering, the sun rises early and sets late during summers in this part of the world.

A stroll by the river side post dinner rounded off Day One.

Day Two started with a hearty breakfast at the B&B.

My helpful host organized a taxi for me to see the **Spherical Houses** in the neighbourhood of Bolwonigen, a few kilometres from the city centre. Once there, it took me a couple of minutes to get used to the houses - they looked like round white mushrooms that had sprouted in a cluster. The board near the entrance mentioned that these small (floor area of only 55 square metres!) houses were built in 1984 by Dries Kreijkamp, a well-known sculptor, industrial designer and architect who believed that 'round shapes are the most seminal and natural accommodation for both people and animals.'

My next stop was **'De Citadel'** Pettelaarse Schans, built at one end of the Zuiderplas or Pettelaar Lake, and with a history dating back to



the 14th century. I did not visit the Brabant Historical Information Centre (BHIC) there due to paucity of time. I however did stroll on the peaceful green lawns within the ramparts of this star-shaped Citadel. Two cannons pointed towards the town were the only indication that this had once been a major Bastion.

I reached the **Noorbrabants Museumby** 11.30 AM and spent the next 3 ½ hours going through its many rooms, oohing and aah-ing at its exhibits.

The museum recently celebrated the 700 year old history of '**The Brotherhood of Our Lady**' which was established in 1318, and has many artefacts related to the same. Also on display were some of Vincent Van Gogh's paintings. In sharp contrast was the show 'A Chinese Journey - the Sigg Collection' that was on during my visit.

The museum had so much to offer that I could have happily spent an entire day there. However, as I was looking forward to meeting my friend Jennifer after nearly a decade, I exited the museum by around 3.00 PM.

Following our initial greetings, off strolled across to the nearby **St. Janskathedraal** - the Roman Catholic Cathedral Church of St. John. We spent some time here with Jennifer showing me the prayer room she favoured. From there we walked over to a river-side restaurant for lunch, ever on the lookout for errant bicycle riders - it was nearly 4.00 pm by then.

Post our relaxed meal, we went on a 50-minute boat trip on the **Binnendieze** -the waterways that run beneath the city. One can find many interesting things during the ride including dark

bat dwellings that one can almost touch, low overhead bridges, an erstwhile sewage system of the old city, and lessons in vice and virtue too. I could not understand a word of the commentary by the boatman as it was all in Dutch. Luckily for me, Jennifer ensured that I had a pamphlet in English which I could refer to.

Among other things, what I remember to this day is the silence in the main tunnel as the water gently lapped against the boat.

And soon, almost before I knew it, the hands of the clock had crossed 6.00 PM, and it was time for 'ghar ka khaana' at Jennifer's place. Here I got to taste a miniature version of the delectable cream-filled and chocolate-coated Bossche Bollen, a Den Bosch speciality.

My day concluded with a nice stroll back to the B&B with Jennifer's mom. Accompanying us silently was a tinge of regret that my brief stay in Den Bosch was coming to an end. As I wished her 'Good Night', I promised myself that I would return to this city of history, helpful people and cycles. Hopefully sooner than later.

Fact File

- ◆ Den Bosch is around 100 kms south of Amsterdam and is accessible by both road and train.
- ◆ Places to see / things to do: various museums, art centres and bastions, stroll through the old city centre, visit the national parks, and shop.
- ◆ There are options for lodging, mostly mid to high end, in the form of B&Bs and hotels.
- ◆ The people are friendly, and the pace here is as relaxed as a cycle ride.





The Voice of the Other

Sarthak Majumdar



Book Review: The Ministry of Utmost Happiness
by Arundhati Roy

'How to tell a shattered story?

By slowly becoming everybody.

No.

By slowly becoming everything.'

Thus begins, 'The Ministry of Utmost Happiness' the second novel of celebrated writer and activist Arundhati Roy. It was a long gap after her first novel 'The God of small things' which won the Booker Prize and the hearts of many. In the mean time although some non-fictions, compilations of essays have come into light and the author mostly have been in news for her role as a social activist and for her views opposing the right central government.

This book, 'The Ministry of Utmost Happiness' is in all senses very different from her first novel. It's less a novel and more a chronicle of all those who are marginalized in our society. Marginalized in any aspect you imagine, economically, professionally, politically, religious minorities and by gender. The set and the characters are all rather 'unknown', whom we have a rare chance meeting and know they exist but never really get to look into their lives.

The story begins at the hugely populated ChandniChowk area of Old Delhi (yes, the area

in and around Red Fort and Jama Masjid, with all its old worldly charm and terrific traffic jam and heavenly biryanis, kebabs and firni) where a transgender child takes up a life of a eunuch. After a life as eunuch for years Anjum falls out with her (I mention 'her' as was there in the novel) group and with nowhere to go takes shelter in a old graveyard. This graveyard gradually becomes a source of inspiration and a shelter for some more who had been marginalized, branded and roughed up by the society or by life at large. A young man, who uses a false name and is trying to escape from his earlier life, but at the same time thinks of avenging the past horrors, an middle aged intellectual lady, an architect who had an affair with one of her batch mate in college, a man from Kashmir who turns out to become a militant, an old Ustadof classical music who was Anjum's guru before she choose the life of a eunuch, Anjum's college going daughter whom she had once rescued from a garbage bin and had reared, all come together with their lives, their stories, their idea of the society and the country. Like the gown of a dervish or baul, the story gets stitched together with pieces of different colors and texture.

It is a fascinating story with no real story in it. If you have read this review up to this line, you have it in you to read the book and it's a must read for you.

There are too many books I haven't read, too many places I haven't seen, too many memories I haven't kept long enough.

"A BOOK IS NOT A BOOK
UNLESS IT IS
AN EXPERIENCE."
-UNKNOWN





देवदास : मेरी यादें, मेरे एहसास



- सलिल कुमार सहाय

शरतचंद्र चट्टोपाध्याय के ख्यातिप्राप्त उपन्यास 'देवदास' को मैंने बहुत पहले जब मैं किशोरावस्था में था, तब पढ़ा था। इस उपन्यास की कथा ने मुझे भीतर तक झकझोर दिया और मेरी भावनाओं को आज भी झंकृत करती रहती है।

यह उपन्यास सन् 1900 में लिखा गया था। इसकी मुख्य कथा एक असफल प्रेम कहानी पर आधारित है। इस उपन्यास का मुख्य पात्र देवदास मुखर्जी है, जो तालसोनापुर गाँव के एक जमींदार का बेटा है, जो बहुत ही जिद्दी व लापरवाह है। इसी गाँव में पार्वती उर्फ पारो नाम की एक लड़की भी रहती है। पारो मध्यमवर्गीय परिवार की समाज भीरू कन्या है। देवदास मुखर्जी और पारो दोनों गाँव के स्कूल में साथ पढ़ रहे थे। साथ पढ़ते हुए धीरे-धीरे बड़े भी हो गए। किशोरावस्था की दहलीज पर न जाने कब उनके दिलों में प्रेम ने जन्म लिया, पता भी नहीं चला।

गाँव की पढ़ाई खत्म करके देवदास को आगे की पढ़ाई के लिए कलकत्ता जाना पड़ा। पारो बेचारी गाँव में ही रह जाती है। जैसा कि माना जाता है 'विरह प्यार की जागृत अवस्था है', ऐसा ही हुआ। दूरियाँ बढ़ने के साथ-साथ पारो में प्यार की तीव्रता खूब बढ़ गई। परंतु देवदास पर उसका असर बहुत नहीं हुआ। या यँ कहें कि देवदास भी समाज भीरू था या प्यार की गहराई व उसूलों से अनभिज्ञ था। जब पारो अपने प्यार का हवाला देते हुए देवदास के समक्ष परिणय का प्रस्ताव रखती है, तब देवदास लोकलाज व खानदानी प्रतिष्ठा की वजह से पारो के परिणय निवेदन को नकार देता है। इस बीच पारो के पिता जी अपनी जिम्मेदारी से जल्दी छूट पाने व कुछ आर्थिक लोभ व श पारो का विवाह हाथीपोता गाँव की एक अधेड़ उम्र के विधुर भुवन चौधरी से कर देते हैं।

पारो के विवाह उपरांत देवदास जब अपने गाँव आता है तो उसे अपने अधूरेपन व अस्तित्वहीन होने का बोध होता है। वह बहुत क्षुब्ध होता है और सारे रिश्ते-नाते तोड़कर पुनः कलकत्ता चला आता है। कोलकाता में उसकी मुलाकात चुन्नी बाबू से होती है। चुन्नी बाबू एक शराबी है और उसकी संगत देवदास को भी शराबी बना डालती है।

चुन्नी बाबू ने देवदास की मुलाकात एक तवायफ चंद्रमुखी से करा दिया। पारो के प्रति देवदास का समर्पण और दीवानगी देखकर चंद्रमुखी ने भी देवदास से प्यार करना आरंभ कर दिया।

अचानक देवदास के पिताजी की मृत्यु हो जाती है। यह खबर सुनकर देवदास अपने गाँव तालसोनापुर आता है। यहाँ उसकी मुलाकात पारो से होती है। देवदास की हालत देखकर पारो बहुत दुखी होती है और देवदास को अपने ससुराल आने को कहती है। देवदास भी उसे वचन देता है और कहता है कि 'मरने से पहले तुम्हारे गाँव हाथीपोता एक बार जरूर आऊँगा।'

पिता की अंतेष्टि के उपरांत देवदास पुनः कलकत्ता आ गया, लेकिन यहाँ आकर उसे पारो को खोने, धन के अभाव होने, नशे की आदत आदि हेतु अपराधबोध होता तथा जीवन के प्रति निराशा की वजह से पूरा जीवन खोखला दिखाता है। उसे लगने लगता है कि अब उसका अंत निकट आ चुका है। पारो को दिए गए अपने वचन के अनुसार अब वह पारो के गाँव हाथीपोता के लिए निकल पड़ता है। परंतु अफसोस कि रास्ते में ही उसका प्राणांत हो जाता है और डोम लावारिश समझकर उसकी मृत देह का अंतिम संस्कार कर देते हैं। इस प्रकार पारो, देवदास व चंद्रमुखी के प्रेम का दुःखद अंत हो जाता है।

इस उपन्यास में देवदास एक नकारात्मक चरित्र है, जिसने न अपनी पढ़ाई पूरी की, न अपने परिवार की प्रतिष्ठा के अनुरूप आचरण किया। पारो से अगाध प्यार के बावजूद भी वह उसे अपनाते की हिम्मत न कर सका और अंत में पारो से मिलने की आस लिए निकलता तो है पर रास्ते में ही मर जाता है, जो उसके नाकाम जिंदगी के प्रमाण हैं।

हालाँकि देवदास का चरित्र एक नकारात्मक है, फिर भी देवदास के चरित्र में पारो के लिए आत्मिक प्रेम और दीवानगी, उसे खोने का अपराधबोध, उसकी याद में अपने आप को मिटा देने का माहा आदि ने इस उपन्यास को देश-विदेश में खूब ख्याति दिलायी है। इस उपन्यास का हर पाठक अपने आप में देवदास और पारो को ढूँढ़ने का प्रयास करता है।

రచయితను కలిసిన నా జ్ఞాపకం



- పెద్దిబొట్ల సావిత్రి

రామాయణము ఆదికావ్యము. వాల్మీకి మహర్షి ఎంతో హృద్యంగా వ్రాసిన కావ్యము. అన్ని భాషలలోని కవులు, రచయితలు రామాయణ కావ్యాన్ని తిరిగి రాసారు. ఎంతోమంది పరిశోధనలు చేసారు. మన తెలుగువారికి భాష్యం అప్పలాచార్యులు గారు, చాగంటివారు, షణ్ముఖ శర్మగారు, గరికపాటివారు మొదలైన వారందరి పుణ్యాన రామాయణ, భాగవత మరియు ఇతర ఆధ్యాత్మిక విశేషాలు మరింత బాగా తెలుస్తున్నాయి. వీరి ప్రవచనాలు తెలుగువారు ఎంతో శ్రద్ధగా వింటుంటారు. ముఖ్యముగా రామాయణము అందరినీ మంత్రముగ్ధులని చేస్తుంది. ఈ యుగంలో కూడా అన్నదమ్ములు, తల్లిదండ్రులు, స్నేహితులు, భార్యాభర్తలు ఎలా మెలగాలో, వాళ్ళ మధ్య సంబంధ బాంధవ్యాలు ఎలా ఉండాలో తెలియజేసే ఆదర్శ గ్రంథం. రామాయణ కథానాయకుడు రాముడైతే సుందరకాండ కథానాయకుడు ఆంజనేయుడు.

సుందరకాండ విషయంగా జరిగిన ఒక చిన్న సంఘటన అందరితో పంచుకుంటున్నాను. 'శాస్త్రి దగ్గర సుందరకాండము చూసాను. చదువుతుంటే చాలా బాగుందనిపించింది. వైజాగులో వెతికాను, దొరకలేదు. నువ్వు హైదరాబాదులోనేగా ఉన్నావు, నీకు దగ్గరే కదా, వైజాగ్ వచ్చేటప్పుడు తీసుకురా' అని ఆర్డర్ వేశారు శ్రీవారు.

నేనా కొండాపుర్ నుంచి దిల్లీషుక్నగర్ రోజూ అప్ అండ్ డౌన్ చేస్తూంటే కూకట్‌పల్లి మధ్యలో ఎక్కడ వస్తుంది? సర్లే, ఎప్పుడూ పుస్తకాలు పెద్దగా తిరగేయని మనిషి ఆదికావ్యమైన రామాయణము లోని సుందరకాండ అడిగితే ఎలా కాదనగలను? వాట్సాప్ ద్వారా ప్రకాశకుల అడ్రస్, ఫోన్ నెంబరు

సంపాదించాను. 'శ్రీమద్రామా-యణము, సుందరకాండ, తాత్పర్యకర్త శ్రీచలమచర్ల వేంకట శేషాచార్యులు, జయలక్ష్మి పబ్లికేషన్స్.'

వెంటనే జయలక్ష్మి పబ్లికేషన్స్ కి ఫోన్ చేసి చలమచర్ల వేంకట శేషాచార్యులు గారి సుందరకాండ ఉందని కంఫర్మ్ చేసుకున్నాను. సమయము చెప్పి, వస్తానని చెప్పాను. టెక్నాలజీ ఇంతగా అభివృద్ధి చెందిన ప్రపంచంలో ప్రయాణాలు సులువైనాయి. ఓలా క్యాబ్ బుక్ చేసుకుని గూగుల్ మ్యాప్స్ పెట్టుకుని సమయానికి చేరాను. అదొక ఇల్లు, బయట చిన్న బోర్డు 'జయలక్ష్మి పబ్లికేషన్స్' అని ఉంది. బెల్ కొట్టాను. తెల్ల బనీను, లుంగీ వేసుకున్న ఓ పెద్దాయన తలుపు తీసారు. పెద్ద హాలు, గోడలకి ఉన్న అరలలో అన్నీ పుస్తకాలే. ఆనందంతో మతి పోయింది. రామాయణం, భారతం, భాగవతం, వేదవేదాంగాలు, రుద్రం, వివేకానందుడి రచనలు, ఇలా తెలుగు మరియు సంస్కృతంలో పుస్తకాలు. సుందరకాండ అడిగాను. వచనము, పద్యములలో ఎంతోమంది వ్రాసిన, ఆంధ్రీకరించిన సుందరకాండ నాముందు పెట్టారు.

'నాకు చెలమచర్ల వేంకట శేషాచార్యుల గారిది మాత్రమే కావాలి' అన్నాను. 'మీరు చదువుతారా' అని అడిగితే, 'కాదండీ, మాది వైజాగ్, మా ఆయన చదువుతారు. చెలమచర్ల వేంకట శేషాచార్యులు గారు వ్రాసిన సుందరకాండే తెమ్మన్నారు.' వెంటనే నేను అడిగిన పుస్తకం ఇచ్చారు.

ఇంతలోనే ఫోన్, 'ఎలాగూ షాపులోనే ఉన్నావుగా, మా గురువుగారికి రిటైర్మెంటు గిట్టగా ఏదైనా పుస్తకం తెచ్చేయి' అని మళ్ళా ఆదేశాలు జారీ చేసారు శ్రీవారు. సరేనని అక్కడ ఉన్న పుస్తకాలు తిరగేస్తూ

పక్కనున్న పెద్దాయనని కనుక్కుని ఆయన సలహా మేరకు కొన్ని ప్రసిద్ధమైన గ్రంథాలు కొనేసాను. ఉచితంగా హనుమంతుడు మొదలైన రామకృష్ణ ప్రచురణలు 5 పుస్తకాలు, రెండు సుందరకాండ సీడీలు కూడా బహుమతిగా ఇచ్చారు. ధన్యవాదాలు తెలిపి, డబ్బు కట్టి రసీదు తీసుకుంటున్నప్పుడు ఆయన నా వివరాలు అడిగి తెలుసుకున్నారు. నేను కూడా ఆయనను 'మీ పేరేమిటండీ' అని అడిగాను. ఆయన 'చలమచర్ల వేంకట శేషాచార్యులు' అని చెప్పారు. ముందు ఆశ్చర్యం, తరువాత ఆనందంతో పొంగిపోయాను. నేను కొన్న పుస్తక రచయిత ఆయనే అని తెలుసుకుని చాలా సంతోషించాను. ఆయనకు మళ్ళా నమస్కరించి, ధన్యవాదాలు తెలిపి, ఒక సెల్ఫీ

తీసుకుని అక్కడినుండి బయలుదేరాను.

సుందరకాండ అందుకుని శ్రీవారు పొందిన ఆనందం వర్ణించలేను. సుందరకాండ చదువుతూ అప్పుడప్పుడు, అక్కడక్కడా ఆయన చెప్పిన విషయాలు నాకు కొత్తవే. ఎన్నో ఘట్టాలు మనస్సును కదిలించివేస్తాయి. సీతాదేవి కష్టాలు కన్నీళ్లు తెప్పిస్తాయి. ఆమె సీతాదేవి కనుకనే రావణాసురుని ఎదుర్కొనగలిగింది. అంజనేయుడు కనుకనే సీతాదేవిని వెదికి కార్యము సాధించాడు. రామాయణము ప్రతి ఒక్కరూ చదివి తీరవలసిన గ్రంథము. ప్రతి ఇంటిలో ఉండవలసిన పుస్తకం. అందులోని సుందరకాండ కార్యసాధనకు తప్పక చదవవలసిన భాగము.

పుస్తకమొక ప్రియనేస్తం



- డా ఎమ్.వి.జె. భువనేశ్వరరావు

'పుస్తకం హస్త భూషణం' అన్నారు పెద్దలు.

'చిరిగిన చొక్కాయైనా వేసుకో. కాని ఓ మంచి పుస్తకం మాత్రం కనుక్కో' అన్నారు మరో పెద్ద రచయిత.

'పుస్తకం అనేది ఈ ప్రపంచంలో ఉండి ఉండకపోతే ప్రపంచం ఏమైపోయేదోననే భయం వేస్తుంది నాకు. నమిష్టి కుటుంబాలు చిన్న కుటుంబాలుగా విడిపోయాయి. చిన్న కుటుంబం చింతలు లేని కుటుంబం అవునో కాదో తెలియదు గాని కుటుంబంలోని మనుషులు నలుగురైననూ నాలుగు రకాలుగా ఉంటున్నారు. 'ఎవరికి వారే యమునా తీరే' అన్నట్లు యమునా నదీ తీరంలోనే కాదు, ప్రతీ ఇంట్లోనూ అలాగే ఉంటున్నారు. వేరు వేరు ఆలోచనలూ, వేరు వేరు దృక్పథాలతో ప్రతీ వ్యక్తి ఒంటరిగా మారి 'ఏకాకి' గా మిగిలిపోతున్న నేటి పరిస్థితులలో 'పుస్తకమే' వారికి ప్రియమైన

నేస్తమైంది. మనశ్శాంతి కరువైనపుడు మిత్రుడు వెంటనే చెంతకు వస్తాడో లేదో చెప్పలేం, కాని 'పుస్తక మిత్రుడై'తే ప్రతీ క్షణం స్వాంతన ఇవ్వటానికి సర్వసన్నద్ధంగా ఉంటాడు. మౌనంగా మనతో సంభాషిస్తూ ఉంటాడు. మనం కోప్పడినా తను కోప్పడడు. మనకు నచ్చినంత సేపు మనకు 'తోడు' గా ఉంటాడు. పుస్తకాన్ని మించిన మిత్రుడు మరొకరు ఉండరు.

'పుస్తకం' అనేది విజ్ఞాన సర్వస్వం. పుస్తకం లేకపోతే విద్య లేదు, వినోదం లేదు. పుస్తకం మన చిరకాల బంధువు. ప్రతీ ఒక్కరి ప్రియమైన ఆత్మబంధువు... అక్షరాల విన్యాసాన్ని నిరంతరం మోసే బహురూప వేదిక పుస్తకం. పుస్తకం విజ్ఞాన వాహకం. ఒక తరం నుండి మరో తరానికి ప్రయాణం చేసే ప్రపంచాన్ని చరిత్ర రూపంలో తనలో నిక్షిప్తం చేసుకుంటుంది. నిర్మాణ శాస్త్రమైనా, నాట్య చరిత్రవైనా పుస్తకం

భద్రంగా పదిలపరుస్తుంది. చదువరులకు చక్కని వేదికై అలరిస్తుంది. విద్యార్థియైనా, వృద్ధమానవుడైనా 'పుస్తకం' లేకుండా ముందుకు సాగగలడా అన్నది సందేహమే.

పుస్తకాలయాలైనా, గ్రంథాలయాలైనా వ్యక్తి మరియు నమాజు వురోగమనానికి దోహదం చేసేవే. మేధస్సును వికసింపజేసేది, తేజస్సును ఉజ్వలంగా తీర్చిదిద్దేది, ఉషస్సును యశస్సుగా మార్చగలిగేది, విత్తనాన్ని వృక్షంగా చేయగలిగేది, మానవుడిని మహనీయుడిగా పెంపొందింప చేయగలిగేది,

అణువును బ్రహ్మాండంగా చూపించగలిగేది పుస్తకమేనని చెప్పక తప్పదు.

పుస్తకం ఒక వినోద విపంచిక, ప్రపంచ విహార దీపిక, వ్యక్తిత్వ వికాస నూచిక, విజ్ఞాన వేదిక, ఏ రూపంలోనున్నా అది ఎవ్వరికైనా ఎల్లప్పుడూ స్నేహ హస్తాన్ని అందించే అభిసారిక. అందుకే పుస్తకాన్ని పదిలేయడమంటే ఒక సన్నిహిత సంబంధాన్ని దూరం చేసుకోవటమే. నమ్మకమైన మిత్రుడిని చేజార్చుకోవడమే.



NEIGHBORHOOD STORIES

Metro Mumbai to Beautiful Retro Ukkunagaram



- Nirmala

Lost in the sands of time, we often forget how our past progressed towards our present. Back when I was in Mumbai, life ran and I loved running with it. Mumbai, being a major city of India, was nothing new to the busy roads, bustling trade and jostling opportunities. Night life in Mumbai was magnetic and I loved being attracted to it. Being born and raised in Mumbai, I knew every nook and corner of the place. I could be the perfect tour guide if one came around there, maybe even now!

It wasn't until 1995, that I had to leave the city of seven Islands. I got married and shifted to Vishakhapatnam Steel Plant with my husband. In the course of daily routine, things here seemed to come to standstill for me. The slow life slowed me down. Or maybe it was only my perception. My life was transformed from pre-scheduled chores to a pretty peaceful one. The natural beauty of township was marvellous! Every day, when I went for a morning walk, I discovered immense positive inspiration embedded in the songs of the birds, the sun

shine above the lake, and what not but the very air itself.

In 1996, a new person entered my life. I had a daughter. This cute little girl was the one we reflected our love to. She doubled the joy in my heart. My husband had to work shifts and sometimes extra hours. During all these times, I never felt lonely. One reason was my daughter and the second was the awesome facilities township offered. The activities and movies at the clubs, serene places of worship, well set up parks and most importantly, ever lovely people. You could strike a conversation with a new person every day and find happiness in it. The schools in township cater to all needs of a child's development. The scope for extra-curricular activities and sports is huge!

And...just like that I've spent 24 years in township enriched by its aura. Words fall short to describe my experience here. Truly, Ukkunagaram built a strong fortress of love, harmony and peace in my heart!!



समाजस्य हितं संस्कृते एव निहितम्

- जे एस यादव



नास्ति इदृशः नरःकोऽपि यः आत्मानं भरततीयं तु कथयेत् परं च संस्कृतं न स्वीकुर्यात्। संस्कृतभाषायाः महत्त्वं कस्यापि भरतीयस्य अविदितं नास्ति। इयं भाषा एव भारतस्य प्राणभूता भाषा अस्ति। पुरा भारते संस्कृतभाषा सम्पर्कभाषा-रूपेण स्वीकृतासीत्। साम्प्रतमपि इयं भाषा समस्तं भारतम्

एकवध्तासूत्रे बद्धुं समर्था।

संस्कृतभाषा विश्वस्य सर्वासु भाषासु प्राचीनतमा, सर्वोत्कृष्ट-साहित्य समन्विता चास्ति। संस्कृत भाषा सर्वाषां भारतीयाणां जननी मता। अन्यासु भारतीयासु भाषासु अपि अस्याः शब्दाः प्राचुर्येण दृश्यन्ते। इयं भाषा सरला, मधुरा, सुसम्पन्ना चास्ति। अस्याः व्याकरणं सर्वथा सम्मृद्धं, सबलं, नियमनिबद्धं च शोभते। विश्वस्य प्राचीनतमाः ग्रंथाः, चत्वारो वेदाः अस्यामेव भाषायां सन्ति। येषां महत्वमपि अद्यापि सर्वोपरि विद्यते।

संस्कृतसाहित्यस्याध्ययनेन सद्विचाराः स्वयमेव उत्पद्यन्ते। भाषा इयं धर्मप्राणाः अस्यां धर्मस्य विस्तृता व्याख्या कृतास्ति। अतः संस्कृतशिक्षणस्य महती आवश्यकता वर्तते। यदि वयं भारतं, भारतीय-संस्कृतविषये अद्य न चिंतयामः तर्हि महती हानिः भविष्यति।

भावार्थ

समाज का हित संस्कृत में निहित है...

ऐसा कोई व्यक्ति नहीं है जो अपने आप को भारतीय कहता हो और संस्कृत को स्वीकार न करता हो। यह भाषा भारत की प्राणभूत भाषा है। पूर्व में कभी संस्कृत को संपर्क भाषा के रूप में स्वीकार भी किया गया था। आज भी यह भाषा भारत को एकता के सूत्र में बाँधने में सक्षम है। यह भाषा विश्व की प्राचीनतम भाषाओं में से एक है और उत्कृष्ट साहित्य से समन्वित है।

संस्कृत लगभग सभी भाषाओं की जननी मानी जाती है। अन्य भाषाओं में भी इसके शब्द प्रचुर मात्रा में मिलते हैं। इसका व्याकरण सदैव समृद्ध, सबल और नियमबद्ध माना जाता है। विश्व के प्राचीन ग्रंथ वेद आदि इसी भाषा में लिखे गए हैं। संस्कृत साहित्य के अध्ययन से सद्विचार स्वतः आने लगते हैं। यह भाषा धर्म की प्राण है और धर्म की व्याख्या इसी भाषा में की गई है। आज संस्कृत शिक्षण की महती आवश्यकता है। हम भारतीय यदि इस भाषा को बचाने के लिए नहीं सोचेंगे तो हमारी संस्कृति की बहुत हानि होगी।

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

Knowledge which is in the book, money
which has passed on to another hand; in
times of need, it is of no use.

THE LANDSDOWN BUILDING

Vani



I have an aunt who was very fond of reading - be it the news paper or magazines such as Star & Style, Eves weekly, Illustrated Weekly of India, Filmfare, Star Dust and many more. When we would come over during vacations, she would buy us all our favourite comics, including Champak, and one Amar Chitra Katha too.

Those days the only way to subscribe to our favourite books and magazines was through the book agency. Same was the case with the renowned 'Screen' newspaper. This paper would have all the Hindi film industry gossip and grapevine.

The very famous news paper agency in the city of Mysore was housed in the very famous, more than a century old Landsdown Building which was next to the even more popular Phalamruta Juice Centre.

My aunt was a teacher of Maths and Physics. Her place of work was very far from home because of which she was compelled to live in a hostel and visited home over weekends. After she got off at the main bus stand, she would straight head to the lands down building. The guy there would have kept a bundle of magazines and also the Screen newspaper ready to give it to my aunt. My aunt spent a considerable part of her income on buying these books.

If my aunt wouldn't come home on a certain weekend, a gang of us would go to the Landsdown Building, quote my aunts subscriber number which was #7, collect the bundle, drink shared glasses of juice at Phalamruta and rush back home.

All my cousins would make sure to reach my grandparents home before my aunt arrived! The arrival of the rickshaw meant, "Aunt Mythili has arrived". All the boys would carry her baggage and the goodies she would bring and the girls would carry the bundle of magazines. We would have decided among ourselves as to who will read which magazine first and second and so on. We had to read it over the weekend because my aunt would take all the magazines when she left on Monday morning.

Come Monday and all the magazines would go off to Mandya where another group of readers would be waiting for these magazines...

Years rolled, we graduated from school to college and to university. My aunt retired. The paper vendor was now delivering my aunt's favorite magazines at her doorstep. Few months into retirement, she lost interest in reading her favourite books and found other hobbies to keep herself occupied. News papers replaced the magazines and completing the Sudoku and Word Jumble made Mythili happy.

The iconic aged Landsdown Building caved in one rainy day and took a few lives. Experts were brought in to save the building and all commercial establishments in the building had to vacate. Our favourite book store doesn't exist anymore.

Today my aunt is 80 years old, frail, losing memory and disinterested in most things. But the moment we mention the Landsdown Building, her face lights up and she goes back in time to those beautiful memories...



Indrani Maji

Noodles with an Indian twist

Indochinese or Indian Version of Chinese is loved by all. Being a cuisine in itself the flavour it offers to Indian palates makes it irresistible.

My fascination grew towards it all the more during the college years, watching the mouth-watering flavours getting infused in the wok of small local Chinese joints or Tapris. These were our favourite freaking out spot.

If you do love Indochinese more than authentic Chinese, this recipe of Spicy noodles is perfect to make you drool.

The recipe which has been a winner for me for years; sharing with few tips to get the best results.

Detailed Recipe:

Ingredients:

*1 packet noodles. *2 tablespoon of Oil (refined will do though sesame oil gives a perfect taste)
*1 teaspoon of minced garlic *1 teaspoon of minced ginger. *1 green chilli in slits. *1 medium red onion. *veggies of your choice finely chopped. I used carrots, Bell peppers, capsicum)
*1 tablespoon of Soy sauce. *1/2 tablespoon of white vinegar. *1/2 tablespoon of Green chilli sauce. *1/2 tablespoon of Red Chilli sauce. *1/4 teaspoon of Ajinomoto (optional) *1/4 teaspoon of Hot sauce (like siracha, optional). *1/2 teaspoon of sugar. *1/4 teaspoon of black pepper powder. *1/2 teaspoon of Chilli oil (optional) *Salt to taste. Though keep it low as all the sauces have salt in them and secondly we will boil the noodles in salt water). *Slits of Spring onion greens, red chilli slits for garnish.

Procedure :

*Take an open pan. Fill it with ample water. About 5

cup. Add 1/2 tsp salt to it. Bring it to boil. Add noodles to this boiling salt water. *Cook till Al dente'; 90% done. This is the step which helps to keep away noodles getting sticky.

*Pour cold water. Drain excess water. Spread on Muslin cloth. Remove and Toss over 2 teaspoon oil on them. Will help to keep noodles tangle free.

*To the wok add oil. At medium flame add minced garlic n ginger. *Add Chopped onion. Once it's pinkish brown add the veggies. Stir at high flame for just a minute so that they retain their crunch.

*Bring these veggies to a side gently. To the remaining oil add black pepper powder, Sugar, Sauces and salt. *To this Add the noodles. *Toss well with tongs. *Mix the two well with a gentle stir. *A minute on high flame and you are done.

Garnish with Spring onion greens and serve the spicy fiery treat. The tips to get not sticky and perfect noodles : *Always Take an open mouth vessel to boil the noodles. This will help the noodles not sticking to each other. *Add noodles to boiling water and cook at high flame.

*Stir veggies at high flame to maintain the crunch.

*Cook noodles till if you cut through a strand of noodles it should show you a small pale white uncooked portion. *Pour Cold water immediately to stop the cooking process. Helps to wash off extra starch. And you get tangle free, non sticky noodles. *Restrict to veggies as Carrots, Bell peppers and Capsicum. They're crispy n give perfect crunch against the others which may be mushy. I've chopped the veggies, you may cut them lengthwise and flaunt their bright colours explicitly.

Hope the above tips and the recipe helps you all to get the perfectly done bowl of happiness.

NUTRI DELIGHT

Schools have reopened and again the kids are on run since morning to evening. I too get busy with them and many a times we miss out our daily intake of nuts and dried fruits. So thought of trying to combine all goodness into One and now kids will remember to have on their own instead of me running behind them.

Ingredients

Dates 1 cup, Cashew 1/2 cup, Almonds 1/2 cup
Walnuts 1/4 cup, Pista 1/4 cup, Sunflower seeds 2 tbsp, Poppy seeds 2 tbsp + 1 tbsp for garnishing,

Ghee 1 tbsp, Honey 1.5 tbsp, Cardamom powder 1/2 tsp. Crush the dates in a blender without adding any water. Roughly chop all the nuts. Dry roast poppy seeds. Take 1 tbsp of ghee in a pan and roast all the nuts and sunflower seeds together. In the same pan add the remaining ghee, add the dates paste and sauté till the mixture thickens. Once the mixture thickens to a lump add all the nuts, sunflower, poppy seeds and honey. Mix well to incorporate all the nuts with the dates mixture. Add cardamom.



Pranic Healing

Pranic Healing is an ancient science and art of healing that utilizes **prana or life energy** to heal the whole physical body. All living things are surrounded and permeated by vital energy that the ancients in different traditions called "life force". It also involves the manipulation of energy and bio plasmic matter of the patients body. GrandMaster ChoaKok Sui (a filipino) is the "modern founder" of Pranic Healing, which was developed over a 20 year period using experimentation and evidence-based research.

Two Basic principles of Pranic Healing

Principle of Self-Recovery: In general, the body is capable of healing itself at a certain rate.

Principle of Life Energy: For life to exist, the body must have prana, chi or life energy. The healing process can be accelerated by increasing life energy on the affected part and on the entire body.

Prana or Ki is that life energy which keeps the body alive and healthy. In Pranic healing, the healer projects prana or life energy to the patient, thereby accelerating the patient body's inborn ability to heal itself.

Bioplasmic body means a living energy body made up of invisible subtle matter or etheric matter.

The energy body comprises of the inner and outer aura. The inner aura interpenetrates and extends beyond the physical body by approx. 4 to 5 inches. It follows the contour of the physical body.

Beyond the inner aura is another luminous energy field called the 'outer aura' extending to about 1 meter.

The energy body serves as a protective shield against germs and 'diseased energy'. Based on the principle of correspondence, when the energy body is healed, the physical body also gets healed. Pranic Healing is a 'no touch' healing system.

Just as the physical body has **vital organs**, the energy body has major, minor and mini chakras.

Chakras are like **power stations**, they supply life energy to major and vital organs. Major chakras are about 3 to 4 inches in diameter.



-K.Akhil

Kirlian Photography which was developed by Kirlian couple in 1939, can be used to photograph the energy body.

Healing is brought about by removing the diseased bioplasmic matter (known as 'cleansing') from the patients energy body and subsequently transferring or projecting Prana (known as 'energizing') through the healer to the patient. The healer functions as a channel for transference of healthy prana. There are three primary sources of prana: Sun, Air, Ground.

Pranic Healing can be used to treat -

Minor ailments such as: Fever, Migraine, Aches, burns, itches, joint pains, Gastro-intestinal problems

Major ailments such as: Diabetes, Cancer, Tuberculosis, Kidney ailments.

Pranic Healing is a highly effective healing technique and can be used to heal problems beyond physical diseases. It can be effectively used to heal - Lifestyle related problems like stress and tension etc.,

Psychological disorders like phobia's, depressions etc., Addictions like smoking, alcoholism, drugs etc.

Financial healing, Relationship healing. The efficacy of the healing depends among other factors upon the proficiency of the healer and more importantly the receptivity of the patient.

Pranic Healing is practised by thousands of people across the world and there are currently over 100 Pranic Healing centers across the globe. Pranic Healing combined with medical treatments continues to help millions globally. Pranic Healing is not intended to replace conventional medicine, but rather to complement it. For more information on Pranic Healing, centres and individuals offering Pranic Healing, one may read/get material on internet.

Apke Raai, hamara dil behlaye...

Dear Spark

Thank you for sharing the previous issues of Spark too.

Read few of them and they are really good. Thank you for the opportunity given to me. Never thought I'd pen down.

- Archana Divecha

Dear Spark Team,

I just loved this little plumpy 7th birthday edition of Spark. Though I knew few significances of 7 like colours in rainbow, days of week etc. I came to know the various other significance too. Thank you Spark. As said by Archana regarding Holi, my son was never satisfied with the pichkari we used to get for him. Even now during every Holi, I remind him about that.

I always love Deepa Vaishnavi writings very simply & interestingly done. Information regarding 7 by Mr Nagabhushana is amazing Spark u are sparking

- Vidya Ravi

In this spark magazine so many people have shared their own stories, their life experiences, love story, travel experience, so many quotations and articles on number 7 (on theme of 7. I liked Dil se, where Tulika ma'am shared her new style of teaching and a beautiful connection between teacher & students. The most interesting article I liked is The love story of Shaswati & Sharthak. And The beauty of seven by Nagbhusana sir.

As a bachelor, I liked the easy to make khichadi in the recipe of Indrani Ma'am. I will try to make this tasty khichadi? on this upcoming Sunday.

And my special thanks to the team of Spark due to which I came to know so many facts about number seven which I never think of. And I felt good to see mine and my colleagues onliners in Spark magazine.

Heartiest wishes to Team Spark.

Abhishek Gupta

I have read around 70 % of the articles...they are beautifully written...I liked the dil se dilon tak by Tulika prasad...the book review on Tuesdays with morrie...some good information about 7 by Prashant Kumar...and the awesome article Divyokti by Savitry maam... Overall a good initiative to keep us engaged, entertained and informed...

-Rajat Shukla

Dear Editor in chief and president VMS, It is my pleasure to go through the VMS 7th anniversary newsletter "Spark". It is so evident that the magazine colour, photo, texture and presentation is of high standard. The fantastic topics based on 7 were really really good. The section book review and travel diaries enhances the professional character of the magazine. Under Khana khazana, seven Dal khichdi is helpful for bachelor's and forced bachelor's. If possible add one page each on spiritualism, patriotism, sports and science. I look forward for next issue. I wish all the best for Spark and the editorial board and the president VMS. Regards,

Dr K C Sahoo

I am very happy to know that 'Spark' is completing seven years. I am regular reader of ' Spark 'and very much impressed by the quality of articles and activities of VMS. I hope that 'Spark' will continue for many years to come. On this great occasion I complement the 'Spark' team for their wonderful contribution and achievement and wish you all a great success.

I am thankful to you also for always receiving copy of ' Spark '.

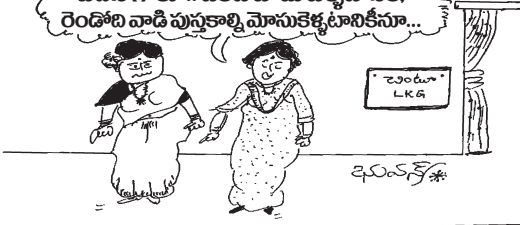
Sushma Chauhan

Spark was a nice read. I really liked the book review section. hope people will be motivated to read more and write more too. Dil se dilon tak brought a smile to my face and could connect to the teacher and some of its best moments - innocence and creativity experienced by Tulika Prasad. The wide range of importance of seven is pretty well highlighted. Junoon ke rahi was very interesting. We know the very talented Shobana. On the whole a good read. ???

-Leena Ghosh

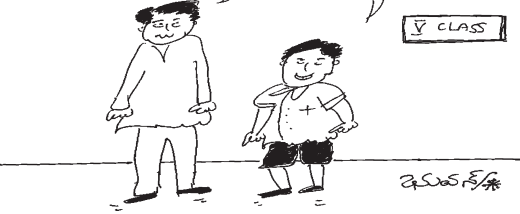
LAUGHTER

మా బంటూకి రెంటు బుస్ పాస్ లు తియ్యాలి వదిన గారూ.. ఒకటి వాడు వెళ్ళటానికి, రెండోటి వాడి పుస్తకాల్ని మోసుకెళ్ళటానికినూ...



గ్రంథాలయాల్లో 'నిశ్శబ్దం' అని బోర్డు పెడతారెందుకనీ

పుస్తకాలు మాట్లాడే మాటలు మనకు విస్మించవలసి... సార్



నీకు చాలా మంది ఫ్రెండ్స్ ఉన్నారంటే ఏమిటో అనుకున్నాను.. ఈ పుస్తకాలేనా...



LEISURE

1. Which Photography can be used to photograph the energy body?
2. Which book would improve proficiency in English, General Knowledge in all spheres of life?
3. Where was the very famous newspaper agency in the city of Mysore housed in?
4. Who offers services to the persons with special needs?
5. Which stories of "Chandamama" presented ethical dilemmas?
6. What is the formal name of Den Bosch?
7. How many stories are there in Malgudi days?
8. What is the striking feature of "The Story of my Life by Helen Keller"?

Editorial Team

Sarada Rath

Editor-in-Chief

Satyendra, Vani Deshikachar, Gopal, V. Suguna, Bharadwaj, Savitry Srinivas, Indrani Maji, Sushma Ekka, Namita, K. Akhil, Subrata Deb

*Aapke Raai,
hamara dil behlaye...*

Hi Spark!

Just finished reading the magazine. Loved the articles. Especially the ones regarding the number 7 were very informative.

You all are doing a splendid job.???

-Shobhna Chandrashekar

స్పార్క్ పత్రిక నెంబరు 7 థీమ్ విశేష సంచిక బాగా ఆకట్టుకుంది. థీమ్ కి సంబంధించిన అన్ని రచనలు బాగున్నాయి. తెలుగులో 'ఏడు సంఖ్య విశిష్టత' మరియు 'సప్త సందేశాలు', 'ఆశల వేడుకోలు' కవితలు నాకు చాలా నచ్చాయి. స్పార్క్ పత్రిక ఇలాంటి మంచి మంచి అంశాలను తీసుకుని అన్ని వర్గాల పాఠకులను ఆకట్టుకోవాలని మనసారా అభిలషిస్తున్నాను.

- ఐ లక్ష్మీకాంతం

విభిన్న అంశాలతో విస్తృతంగా ప్రచురించబడుతున్న స్పార్క్ పత్రిక నాకు ఎంతో నచ్చింది. దీనిలో డా భువనేశ్వర రావు గారి కవిత 'సప్త సందేశాలు', కార్టూన్స్ నన్ను ఆకట్టుకున్నాయి. ఇంత మంచి పత్రిక ప్రచురణకు తోడ్పడిన వారందరికీ నా శుభాభినందనలు.

- ముత్యాల భరత్ కుమార్

స్పార్క్ పత్రికా కా కలెవర్ एवं सभी रचनाएँ मनमोहक लगीं। सात संख्या को लेकर जो विशेषांक निकला है, वह संपादक समूह की पत्रिका के प्रति निष्ठा को दर्शाता है। आशा है कि पत्रिका आगे भी हमें नये-नये विषयों के साथ लुभाती रहेगी। ऐसी सुंदर पत्रिका के प्रकाशन हेतु संपादक समूह को हार्दिक बधाई...

- विरमपाल सिंह

स्पार्क पत्रिका में प्रकाशित सभी रचनाएँ अच्छी लगीं। इसमें 'दिव्योक्ति' शीर्षक से संस्कृत की उक्तियों से पाठकों को अवगत कराने का प्रयास प्रशंसनीय है। पत्रिका ऐसे ही निरंतर प्रगति करती रहे... ईश्वर से यही प्रार्थना है।

- राजेश कुमार

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