

UNIVERSITY AND PROGRESS ଯୁଗ୍ମତି ଓ ପ୍ରଗତି

# ଉର୍ମି URMI

The Journal of the  
Odisha Society of the Americas



**GLOBAL ODISHA  
CONFERENCE**  
Washington DC, USA July 1 - 2, 2015  
THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF THE AMERICAS

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# ଉତ୍ସ URMI

## Journal of The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA)

OSA 2015 Annual Convention and Global Odisha Conference  
July 1-4, 2015

Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, Washington DC



### ସଂହତି ଓ ପ୍ରଗତି



**Editorial Team:** Bigyani Das, Sulochana Patnaik, Jhinu Chhotray, Babru samal, Shashadhar Mohapatra, Manoj Panda, Joy Gopal Mohanty

**Cover Artist:** Jayashree Samal  
**Section Graphics:** Tina Satapathy

# ବନ୍ଦେ ଉତ୍କଳ ଜନନୀ

ବନ୍ଦେ ଉତ୍କଳ ଜନନୀ,  
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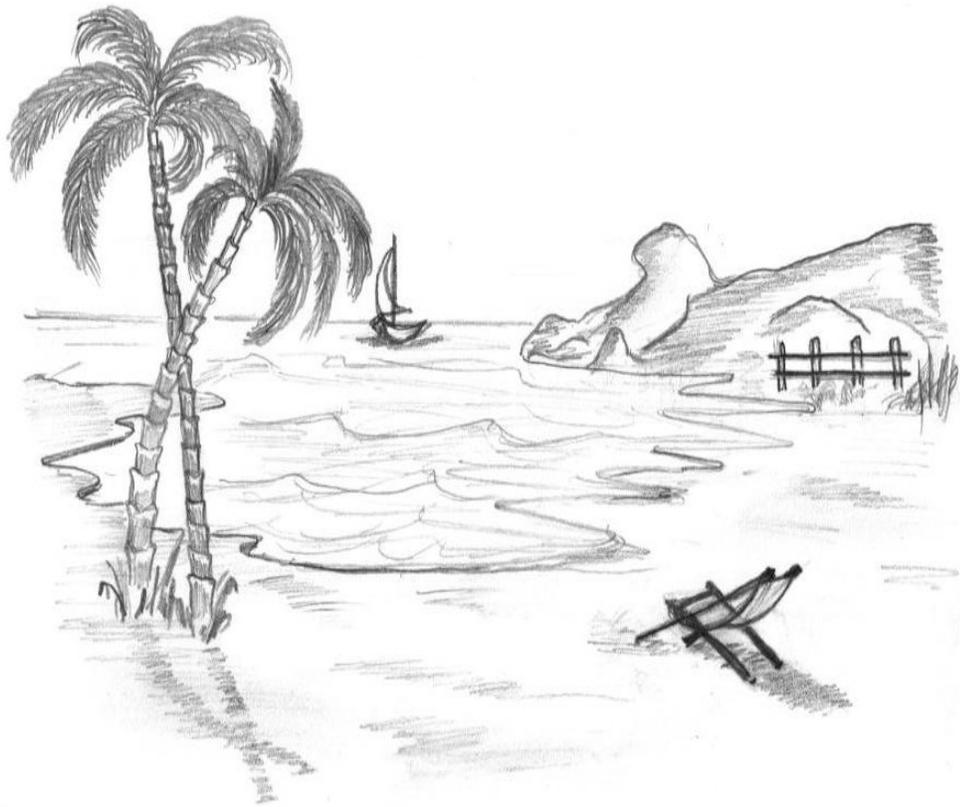
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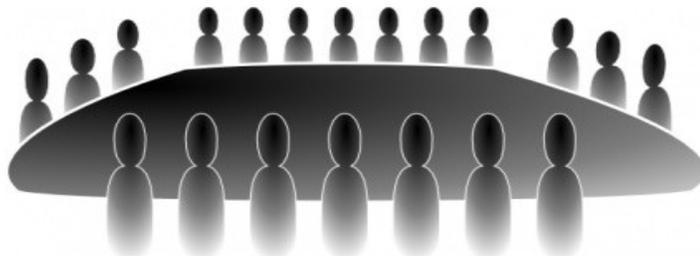


# ବେଳାଭୂମି

(Belabhumi - The Beach)



# OSA 2015 Convention and Global Odisha Conference Organization Committee



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Vice President: Sikhanda Satapathy

Secretary: Sabita Panigrahi

Treasurer: Prashanta Ranabijuli

Editor (OSA Newsletter Utkarsa): Satya Pattanaik

Web: Bikash Panda

**Convener:** Pratap Das

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Conference)  
Gatikrishna Tripathy  
Sikhanda Satapathy

### Treasurer

Bijaya Dash

### Budget

Sanat Pattanaik  
Prafulla Nayak  
Ajit Sahu

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### Advisors

Nilambar Biswal  
Brajendra Mishra  
Biju Mishra  
Rabindranath Patnaik  
Jacob Patnaik

### Technical/Audio Visual

Sushant Mohanty, (Chair)  
Balakrishna Dixit, (Co-Chair)  
Shibashish Hota  
Kaushik Mohanty  
Sanjay Sahu

### Logistics

Hemant Biswal  
Prakash Sahu  
Anant Mishra  
Deepa Parija  
Girija Sahoo  
Subrat Rout  
Gatikrishna Tripathy

### Communication

Snigdha Hota  
Parameeta Kanungo

**Hospitality**

Manaswini Sahu, (Chair)  
Nivedita Mohanty, (Co-Chair)  
Babita Nayak

**Project Management**

Naresh Das  
Shivraj Kanungo  
Sabyasachi Mathur  
Sanat Pattanaik  
Sudip Patnaik  
Sudhir Raju

**Registration**

Pradeep Behera, (Chair)  
Manoj Mishra, (Co-chair)  
Debabrata Das  
Anasuya Dash  
Subhendra Mishra  
Swati Mishra  
Ipsa Mohanty  
Arun Ojha  
Bidya Padhi  
Lali Tripathy

**Accommodation**

Prafulla Nayak (Chair)  
Sashadhara Mohapatra (Co-chair)

**Quality Surveillance/Damage Control**

Surendra Ray

**Food**

Surya Sahu (Chair)  
Pradyut Behera (Co-chair)  
Sujata Bisoi  
Debananda Das  
Iti Das  
Jibesh Das  
Meera Mohapatra  
Ila Ojha  
Sandeep Patnaik  
Sujit Prusti  
Urmila Sahu

**Publications/Souvenir/Directory**

Bigyani Das, (Chair)  
Babru Samal, (Co-chair)  
Jhinu Chhotray  
Sulochana Patnaik  
Sashadhara Mohapatra  
Joy Gopal Mohanty  
Manoj Panda

**Exhibits**

Chandan Pratihari, (Chair)  
Upendra Das, (Co-chair)  
Debasish Pattnaik

**Seminars/Workshops**

Pinaki Panigrahi (Chair)  
Santanu Chhotray  
Swati Mishra  
Ajay Mohanty  
Bidyashree Parhi  
Babru Samal  
Saroj Rout  
Charudutta Panigrahi  
Gati Tripathy

**May I Help You**

Devanshi Nikita Chowdhury  
Manaswee Mishra  
Simoni Mishra  
Sahu, Amrita  
Anika Satapathy  
Shreya Tripathy

**Youth Program**

Alok Mohanty (Chair)  
Mrunali Das (Seminar Chair)  
Bagmi Das (Seminar Co- Chair)  
Neha Satapathy (Cultural Chair)  
Natasha Mohapatra (Cultural Chair)  
Alok Mohanty (Cultural Co-Chair)  
Lonika Behera  
Shilpa Das  
Shweta Das  
Suraj Das  
Lisa Mishra

**Fund Raising**

Hemant Biswal  
Pratap Das  
Upendra Das  
Chinmaya Mohanty  
Deepa Parija  
Prakash Sahu  
Bijay Satpathy  
Gati Tripathy

**Cultural**

Anu Biswal, (Chair)  
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Dharitri Banerjee  
Krishna Behera  
Lonika Behera  
Sushmita Behera  
Meeta Bhuyan  
Rita Bisoi  
Jhinu Chhotray  
Debaki Chowdhury  
Alpana Das  
Atasi Das  
Bigyani Das  
Madhabi Das  
Ipsita Das  
Pratap Das  
Puspa Das  
Sujit Das  
Sheela Das  
Nirlipta Daschowdhury  
Bijaylaxmi Dash  
Lipika Dash  
Pratap Dash  
Pranati Dash  
Itishree Dhala  
Deepak Dhala  
Balakrishna Dixit  
Bipsha Hota  
Shivashish Hota  
Snigdha Hota  
Parameeta Kanungo  
Karabi Mishra  
Leena Mishra  
Nrusingha Mishra  
Surajita Mishra  
Swati Mishra  
Riti Mishra

Bidhu B Mohanty  
Ipsa Mohanty  
Kaushik Mohanty  
Sulochana Patnaik  
Devina Mohapatra  
Meera Mohapatra  
Adishree Nayak  
Babita Nayak  
Bandita Nayak  
Smriti Nayak  
Utkal Nayak  
Anuradha Panda  
Asmi Panigrahi  
Kalpana Panigrahi  
Lipa Panigrahi  
Rosy Panigrahi  
Tapasi Panigrahi  
Bidya Padhi  
Deepa Parija  
Disha Parija  
Maushumi Patnaik  
Rita Patnaik  
Sudeep Patnaik  
Padmini Pattnaik  
Subhalaxi Pratihari  
Reema Raju  
Surendra Ray  
Millie Ray  
Subrat Rout  
Priti Routray  
Rutu Sahani  
Girija Sahoo  
Rina Sahoo  
Ayashkant Sahu  
Kirtan Sahoo  
Lin Sahu  
Manaswini Sahu  
Sanghamitra Sahu  
Susmita Sahu  
Lina Samantaray  
Sikha Sen  
Lali Tripathy  
Shreya Tripathy

**Decoration**

Geeta Mohanty, (Chair)  
Sikha Sen, (Co-chair)  
Hemangini Behera  
Anu Biswal  
Bijaylaxmi Dash  
Lipika Dash  
Ila Ojha  
Chandan Pratihari

**Awards/Certificates**

Devraj Sahu, (Chair)  
Bijay Satpathy, (Co-Chair)  
Riti Mishra  
Sanghamitra Sahu

**Sports/Games**

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Bramhapriya Sen (Co-chair)  
Girija Sahoo  
Hemant Biswal  
Subrat Rout  
Raja Panigrahi  
Kirtan Sahoo  
Satish Kumar  
Gautam Sen  
Ajit Das

**Senior Forum**

Joy Gopal Mohanty (Chair)  
Nrusingha Mishra (Co-chair)

**Web/Graphics**

Ayaskant Sahu, (Chair)  
Surya Sahu, (Co-Chair)  
Alok Mohanty  
Alok Ray  
Jayashree Samal  
Ila Ojha  
Chandan Pratihari

**Little OSA**

Hosensu Sahoo  
Barnali Panigrahi  
Meeta Bhuyan  
Salai Dhavakodi

**Global Odisha Special Teams****Overall Coordinator/Program****Management**

Sulochana Patnaik  
Gourab Nanda  
Manas Samantray  
Prasanna Nayak  
Sunil Sabat

**Cultural Team**

Anu Biswal (Chair)  
Niranjan Tripathy (Kennedy Center )  
Eva Mohanty  
Gayatri Joshi  
Lalatendu Mohanty  
Srigopal Mohanty  
Lipika Dash  
Snigdha Hota  
Tina Satapathy  
Ipsa Mohanty  
Atasi Das  
Shilpa Das  
Shweta Das  
Swagatika Swain  
Bijaylaxmi Dash  
Sagarika Pattnaik  
Shubhra Sahoo  
Shailaja Raju  
Neha Satpathy  
Sulagna Dash  
Amrita Sahu  
Anika Satpathy  
Manaswee Mishra  
Simoni Mishra  
Shreya Tripathy  
Debanshi Nikita Chowdhury  
Sarasi Rout  
Nandita Behera - Choreographer  
Amulya Balabanta Ray - Teacher

**Meeting**

Sikhanda Satapathy  
Gourab Nanda  
Subrat Rout

**Business & Entrepreneurship Track**

Ajaya Mohanty- Chair  
Amiya Nayak - Co-Chair  
Sandip Nayak - Panelist  
Gourab Nanda- Panelist  
Saroj Rout- Panelist  
Sukanta Mohapatra -Panelist  
Pritidhara (Jini) Mohanty) - Panelist  
Nishikant Sahoo – Co-Chair and Library  
Seminar  
Priyadarsan Patra – Library Seminar  
Sandip Dasverma- Library Seminar

**Literature Track**

Bigyani Das – Chair  
Gagan Panigrahi – Co-Chair

**Spiritual Track**

Satya Pattanaik – Chair  
Anjana Chowdhury – Co-Chair  
Dharitri Banerjee – Co-Chair  
Panchanan Satpathy  
Sarat Mohapatra  
Mousumee Jena  
Atasi Das  
Debanjan Chowdhury  
Sujata Mahapatra  
Abhinna Das

**Education Track**

Binod Nayak - Chair  
Ashutosh Dutta - Co-Chair  
Abani Patra - Co-Chair  
Chitaranjan Das  
Sidhartha Das  
Leena Mishra  
Amiya Mohanty  
Annapurna Pandey  
Sulochana Patnaik  
Sikhanda Satpathy  
Sushant Satpathy

**Tourism Track**

Chitta Baral - Chair  
Tina Satapathy - Co-Chair  
Shyam Patra  
Santosh Tripathy  
Sushant Satpathy  
Lalu Mansinha  
Dhirendra Kar  
Triloki Pandey  
Annapurna Pandey  
Ipsita Mahapatra  
Kishore Dash  
Tapan Pattnayak  
Pradosh Sahoo  
Gagan Panigrahi  
Sharell Cook  
Satya Pattnaik  
Debajyoti Pati  
Chhabi Mishra  
Manjusha Patnaik

**Health Track**

Pinaki Panigrahi – Chair  
Nivedita Mohanty – Co-Chair

**Website**

Jayshree Samal  
Blkash Das

**Brochure**

Jayshree Samal  
Babru Samal

**Public Relations**

Deepa Parija  
Manaswini Sahu  
Priti Biswal

**Amazing Odisha**

Anu Biswal  
Pratap Das

**Who wants to be NRO Champion**

Salil Mishra

# OSA Administration (2013-2015)



## OSA National Staff Members

| Position           | Name                   | Email                           | Phone          |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| President          | Tapan Padhi            | president@orissasociety.org     | (469) 544-4295 |
| Vice President     | Dr. Sikhanda Satapathy | vicepresident@orissasociety.org | (512) 248-8970 |
| Secretary          | Sabita Panigrahi       | secretary@orissasociety.org     | (416) 223-2756 |
| Treasurer          | Prashanta Ranabijuli   | treasurer@orissasociety.org     | (512) 697-9494 |
| General Counsel    | Niraj Rath             | niraj.rath@gmail.com            | (214) 250-4009 |
| Editor             | Satya Patnaik          | sppatnaik@hotmail.com           | (614) 408-8596 |
| Web Administration | Bikash Panda           | bikash@gmail.com                | (925) 639-9148 |

## Chapter Presidents/Representatives

| Chapter Name         | Chapter Head         | Email                      | Phone          |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| California           | Sunil Sabat          | sunil_sabat@yahoo.com      | (510) 364-3903 |
| Chicago              | Jhara Das            | jharadas@yahoo.com         | (630) 904-6208 |
| Grand Canyon Chapter | Simant Misra         | misrahome@gmail.com        | (480) 515-3841 |
| Maryland – Virginia  | Sujata Nayak         | esnayaks@msn.com           | (301) 528-9702 |
| Michigan             | Punyatoya Sarangi    | punyatoyas@yahoo.co.in     | (248) 991-1344 |
| Minnesota/North-west | Debasis Das          | ds.debasis@gmail.com       | (952) 476-5850 |
| New England          | Arun Mohanty         | arunmohanty_05@yahoo.com   | (617) 224-3275 |
| New York-New Jersey  | Amar Senapati        | jagakalia@yahoo.com        | (732) 649-1809 |
| Ohio                 | Anil Patnaik         | anil.dipali@gmail.com      | (937) 912-4363 |
| Ozark (central)      | Radhagobinda Mohanty | rmohastat@charter.net      | (636) 220-6588 |
| Pacific Northwest    | Priyadarsan Patra    | ppatra@seedsnet.org        | (503) 617-0667 |
| Rocky Mountain       | Sadhu Behera         | sadhu.behera@gmail.com     | (303) 517-3297 |
| South East           | Sakti Singh          | sakti_singh@yahoo.com      | (919) 412-1228 |
| Southern             | Pramod Mahapatra     | m_pramod99@yahoo.com       | (423) 709-8301 |
| South-West           | Siddharth Behera     | siddharth.behera@gmail.com | (512) 537-6042 |
| Washington, DC       | Bimal Mishra         | bimal_mishra@hotmail.com   | (301) 610-2098 |
| Canada               | Abani Pattanayak     | abanip@yahoo.com           | (647)406-3392  |

## **Committees and Associated Members 2013-2015**

### **OSA Election Committee - 2015**

| <b>Position</b> | <b>Name</b>       | <b>Email</b>   |
|-----------------|-------------------|--|
| Chair           | Durga Misra       | <a href="mailto:dmisra@njit.edu">dmisra@njit.edu</a>             |
| Member          | Ashutosh Dutta    | <a href="mailto:ad37@caa.columbia.edu">ad37@caa.columbia.edu</a> |
| Member          | Jagannath Mohanty | <a href="mailto:jpmohanty@yahoo.com">jpmohanty@yahoo.com</a>     |

### **Other Committees**

#### ***Committees***

Social

Youth

Senior Citizen

Cultural

Organizational

Awards

Odissi Steering

Education Steering

Fund raising guideline

#### ***Members***

Pramod Mahapatra

Jhara Das

Prashanta Ranabijuli

Niraj Rath

Tapannita Padhi

Pratap Das

Hari Arjun Patro

Annapurna Biswal

Purna Patnaik

Niranjan Tripathy

Sadhu Behera

Amulya Das

Saswata Mohapatra (Chair)

Sridhar Rana

Purna Patnaik

Sikhanda Satapathy (ex-officio)

Anu Biswal

Purna Patnaik

Pratap Das

Niranjan Tripathy

Ipsita Mahapatra

Niharika Mohanty

Abani Patra

Ashutosh Dutta

Annapurna Pandey

Ashok Samal

Sikhanda Satapathy

Jay N Bhuyan

Dhirendra Kar

Safaquat Khan

Prakash Sahu

Pramod Mahapatra

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Finance & Audit                         | Prashanta Ranabijuli<br>(Treasurer)<br>Akhileswar Patel<br>Loknath Patro<br>Debashis Panda  |
| Let's Learn Odia                        | Kuku Das<br>Satya Patnaik<br>Sikhanda Satapathy   |
| Membership Drive                        | Manoj Padhi<br>Leena Mishra<br>Prashanta Ranabijuli   |
| OSAnet Moderation                       | Manoj Padhi<br>Sunil Sabat  |
| OSA Website                             | Bikash Panda<br>Ranjan Rath   |
| OSA Website Modernization               | Rupananda Mishra<br>Susant Routray<br>Prashanta Ranabijuli  |
| Regional Drama Festivals                | Sandip Kumar Dasverma<br>Tapas Sahoo<br>Birendra Jena<br>Gayatri Joshi<br>Leena Mishra  |
| Champu Chanda Odissi                    | Sanjukta Mishra<br>Sujata Patnaik<br>Pratap Das<br>Debaki Nandan Choudhury<br>Sabita Panigrahi  |
| Odisha Development Committee            | Sukant Mohapatra (chair)<br>Amiya Nayak<br>Annapurna Pandey<br>Leena Mishra<br>Abani Patra<br>Jay N. Bhuyan<br>Dhirendra Kar<br>Safaquat Khan |
| Grievance Hearing Committee             | Kuku Das<br>Panchanan Satpathy<br>Surya Mishra  |
| OSA Public Library Initiative Committee | Nishikanta Sahoo, Chair<br>Sandip K, Dasverma<br>Priyadarsan Patra<br>Sri Gopal Mohanty<br>Prabhu Prasad Sahoo<br>Sushant Dash                |

## OSA Executives

### President

Tapan Padhi  
(469) 544-4295  
[president@orissasociety.org](mailto:president@orissasociety.org)

### Vice President

Dr. Sikhanda Satapathy  
(512) 248-8970  
[vicepresident@orissasociety.org](mailto:vicepresident@orissasociety.org)

### Secretary

Sabita Panigrahi  
(416) 223-2756  
[secretary@orissasociety.org](mailto:secretary@orissasociety.org)

### Treasurer

Prashanta Ranabijuli  
(512) 697-9494  
[treasurer@orissasociety.org](mailto:treasurer@orissasociety.org)

### Editor

Satya Patnaik  
(614) 602-7021  
[satyapatnaik11@gmail.com](mailto:satyapatnaik11@gmail.com)

## 46<sup>th</sup> Convention & Global Odisha

### Convener

Pratap Das  
(301) 801-7757  
[pratapdas1@gmail.com](mailto:pratapdas1@gmail.com)

### Organizing Committee

Leena Mishra  
[Leena\\_mishra@hotmail.com](mailto:Leena_mishra@hotmail.com)

Annapurna Biswal  
[biswalanul@gmail.com](mailto:biswalanul@gmail.com)

Bimal Mishra  
[Bimal\\_mishra@hotmail.com](mailto:Bimal_mishra@hotmail.com)

Gatikrishna Tripathy  
[gatikrishnat@gmail.com](mailto:gatikrishnat@gmail.com)

### Track Chairs

#### Education

Binod Nayak  
[binodnayak@hotmail.com](mailto:binodnayak@hotmail.com)

#### Business

Ajaya Mohanty  
[ajkmohanty@gmail.com](mailto:ajkmohanty@gmail.com)

#### Tourism

Dr. Chitta Baral  
[chitta@gmail.com](mailto:chitta@gmail.com)

#### Health

Dr. Pinaki Panigrahi  
[ppanigrahi@unmc.edu](mailto:ppanigrahi@unmc.edu)

#### Spiritual

Satya Patnaik  
[satyapatnaik11@gmail.com](mailto:satyapatnaik11@gmail.com)

#### Literature

Dr. Bigyani Das  
[bigyanidas@yahoo.com](mailto:bigyanidas@yahoo.com)



## Message from the President, OSA

I convey my best wishes to OSA members on publishing “URMI” to commemorate 46th annual convention and 1st-ever Global Odisha Conference at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center, 201 Waterfront Street, National Harbor, MD 20745. The Global Odisha Conference and OSA Convention will be attended by Odias residing in US and Canada. About 2000 Odias from various professional, cultural and educational areas will congregate to celebrate Odia culture and strengthen collaboration in various socio-cultural issues. The events will be graced by dignitaries such as legendary Odia classical singer, Smt. Shyamamani Patnaik, renowned spiritual leader Dr. Chandra Bhanu Satpathy, Padma Bibhushan Shri Raghunath Mohapatra and will be addressed by Hon’ble Nisha Desai Biswal, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Hon’ble Jim McDermott, Congressman and Padma Bhushan Dr. Bhakta B. Rath, Associate Director of Research at Naval Research Laboratory (NRL), Indian Ambassador Mr. Arun Singh among others.

For the first time, OSA leadership is taking a humble attempt in developing a unique international platform to promote collaboration and partnership among Odias residing globally and in Odisha. It is an initiative to congregate successful people in various professional, business, cultural and educational areas around the world to contribute to the development of Odisha and India. This is in line with the vision of the Government of India that each state should constitute its own global talent pool. Our effort is geared towards accepting the challenge of Indian Prime Minister Hon. Narendra Modi to globalize India. We are also inviting several key stake holders from USA and India, and internationally acclaimed personalities in Indian art, culture, education, business and literature. Highlights of some of the planned activities are spectacular cultural programs (Amazing Odisha) at the Kennedy Center, hosting the convention at one of the best convention centers of the world - Gaylord Resort, and displaying Odisha Tourism Department's Road Show and conducting symposiums on health, education, tourism, business, spirituality and literature.

Social progress is largely due to the intellectual creativity of human beings. The impact of a rich cultural tradition and history of our success of all human activity has resulted in unique dance forms, painting and music that inspire awe, and the creativity that spans beyond our imagination as proud Odias. Today, in an advanced society it continues to evolve at a rapid pace, the tools such as facebook, youtube etc that help us convey our thoughts and ideas have become an integral part of our daily lives. However, in this Global Odisha conference we will endeavor to influence our attendees to reflect upon our great cultural tradition. In addition, OSA is taking every step possible to create an impact in the field of education, health, spirituality, literature and entrepreneurship collaboration for development among people from all the countries, Odisha, USA and Canada. This intention is based on the values of our education, profession, culture, tradition and a committed passion towards betterment of our motherland and adopted homeland.

The continued success of SYSCO – Social, Youth, Senior Citizens, Cultural and Organizational aspects of OSA depend upon true volunteers of OSA. I continue to appeal to our members to spare some time off their busy schedule to help OSA to come forward to support initiative such as HAI-888-OSA (help an individual) which OSA launched successfully recently. Regarding finances, OSA has invested judiciously for growth of our savings which has already shown positive result.

It was an eventful term for us. We faced “Phailin” as one of the worst natural disasters in Odisha's history and OSA members showed the compassionate attitude by making largest donation in OSA's history sent to CM's relief fund. We were successful in collaborating with Odisha Government to apply the donated money to build modern libraries in Phailin affected areas. I particularly feel happy for what we have done for our society, expanding our help to non-members and increasing our visibility in Odisha and in US. We have provided stronger support to help families in distress and help Odia students, entrepreneurs and faculties both academically and professionally.

I'm confident about the future of this great organization. The strong support of our OSA members and sponsors towards initiatives of OSA such as GOC (Global Odisha Conference), our outstanding advancements in social engagement, and the energy and talent of our volunteers are reasons to believe that OSA will accomplish even bigger and better things in the years to come. Since the beginning of this non-profit organization OSA, our esteemed members have contributed immensely either through the organization or on a personal basis to the benefits of people in need, for right causes through various charitable activities from time to time. At this time, friendship and pragmatic cooperation of our chapters, and inter-country Odia associations are needed more and more with each and every passing day, as all of us immigrants face same issues. We are equally emotional to do our best for our home state and contribute to the betterment of both adopted homeland and own motherland.

In the true spirit of OSA, however, we remain cognizant that as we develop our membership base, we also have a responsibility to make impactful contributions to further our tradition and culture among Odia families. Regional chapters will constitute a key element of that responsibility going forward. Through the establishment of the new chapters such as Rocky Mountain Chapter in Colorado, under able leadership of the chapter president, we have been successful in showcasing Odia tradition and values to mainstream American community. In our term we have taken initiative and provided impetus

and support for the formation of new chapters in Atlanta and Florida which is now beginning to bear fruit. OSA emphasized regional chapter revitalization as part of its growth strategy and, drawing on our experience to date, we should intend to proactively engage in initiatives that stimulate regional chapter activities, including support for community activities undertaken by the chapters aimed at generating further interest in OSA.

I will be completing my term as President this year, I will continue to work closely with our Board of Governors to advance OSA's key priorities and assure a smooth transition to new leadership team. It has been an honor to serve as the president of the Odisha Society of the Americas and a privilege to meet and build my friendship with so many talented BOG members, benefactors, sponsors, well wishers and above all OSA members. I am extremely proud of our executive members who established a strong foundation of selfless volunteering work for OSA and have shown their leadership ability by completing all activities of OSA through their infallible commitment to OSA with integrity and dignity. Our general counsel provided the right counseling at the right time. Our OSA editor took the quality of OSA journal and newsletter "Utkarsa" to few notches up. The strong leadership ability of the Convener, co-convener, organizing leaders, cultural committee chair, symposium track chairs, multiple committee members and above all dedicated volunteers have been phenomenal in their commitment and hard work to organize the convention of this biggest magnitude in the history of OSA. I'm truly grateful to all of you for what we have done together. Your selfless collaboration, social responsibility, culturally influenced innovative suggestions, and volunteering spirit are the essence of what makes OSA great.

I believe the publication of URMI, the souvenir is a truly meaningful event, marking a significant and exciting moment in the history of OSA members' cultural tradition. This kind of annual Souvenir serves as a window for learning about our own people, culture, custom, tradition & literature. It will also act as a bridge with second generation and will go a long way towards promoting literary understanding.

Again, on behalf of the executive committee and Board of Governors of the OSA, I would thank the volunteers of OSA to continue to build a strong foundation of OSA culture and traditions for the road ahead. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Editors for undertaking such a worthwhile task.

With best regards,



**Tapan Padhi**, President, The OSA



## Message from the Convener

Dear Friends,

It is my honor and privilege to invite you to the first-ever Global Odisha Conference (GO 15) and the 46th annual OSA convention from July 1-4, 2015 at the prestigious Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center, 201 Waterfront Street, National Harbor, MD 20745. This convention will not only offer an opportunity for Odias to converge together to demonstrate the spirit of solidarity, share experiences, take action, unite for social exploration by engaging in art, culture, and literature unique to this state, it will also provide a platform for practitioners, researchers and educators from around the world who are engaged in social and economic development to present, discuss and debate on issues that are critical for both economic and social development of our state.

Our belief in the concept of "Progress" through "Unity", has prompted us to select "Samhati" and "Pragati" to be the theme of this convention. Our hope is to provide you with a forum to discuss new ideas and opportunities, with the potential for Odisha's transformation. I am sure that you all will agree with me that we often undermine ourselves and are apprehensive of projecting ourselves as being proud Odias. Though this might not be true in all cases but it can be ascribed to most of us. Apart from individual level, even at a national level, Odisha is not well marketed and exposed as compared to states like West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and many other states. Is it because we as Odias have not taken the initiative to raise awareness of the rich and dynamic state we originate from? It is now time for us to propel ourselves to execute our vision to enrich, promote and celebrate Odia culture and heritage and place Odisha beside competing states.

The idea of hosting the Global Odisha Conference emerged as a consequence of our vision to make this convention all encompassing by also targeting Odias from overseas to immerse in our efforts of state building. The conference is expected to consolidate the various recommendations and create a solid, cohesive and powerful package delineating action oriented programs, projects and regional initiatives that the government of Odisha can consider implementing. We thus expect Global Odisha conference to be an exciting intellectual hub where ideas will be expressed, shared and implemented. This demonstrates our interest in partnering with the Odisha Government to bring our state into the limelight. I urge the future stakeholders of OSA to develop a sense of ownership for these initiatives and work towards transforming our vision into reality.

All of you have undertaken great efforts and invested a lot of time in ensuring your participation in this convention. We understand that many could not make it due to other commitments. I recognize that this convention is a bit more expensive than the previous conventions. However, I can assure you that after spending 4 days at Gaylord, engaging in the Think Tank sessions, entertainment by the film stars, noted musicians and your national friends and children, attending the special sessions such as Yoga, Children programs, Senior's Forum, Kabita Patha, Inaugural programs, Kennedy Center programs, you will agree that you got your money's worth. We tried our best to create this feeling among the participants while designing the convention activities and I hope we as a team have accomplished our goal!

Bande Utkal Janani!

Pratap Das

## Message from the Co-Conveners



Dear Friends,

Welcome to OSA convention 2015!

It has been my honor and privilege to have served as the co-convener of the 46<sup>th</sup> OSA Annual Convention. Serving in this capacity has changed my life and deepened my appreciation for what it means to be a convention leader.

The 46<sup>th</sup> OSA Annual Convention along with 1<sup>st</sup> Global Odisha Conference is an opportunity to all immigrant Odias to celebrate our Odia culture, heritage and camaraderie. We also need to pass on these cherished values to our next generation so that they can continue to carry the torch forward. Keeping these core values as our inspiration, we the Washingtonians started planning the convention that celebrates the Odia pride in all of us. Thanks to OSA for believing in us and giving us the opportunity to host this convention.

The Washington DC chapter convention was designed by the veteran leaders of Washington DC who wanted to showcase a convention that highlights the Odia pride. Our goal was to present Odias living abroad a unique experience that highlighted our Odia pride through unique cultural programs, seminars, sports activities and Odia film festival to entertain and educate younger and older generations alike and to keep them linked to their motherland. As a co-convener of Annual OSA Convention, I realized the magnitude of what we were planning to do and solicited everyone's help and contribution to make this convention a success. This success could not have been achieved without the help and guidance from other chapter members on multiple fronts. Lastly, but not the least, I thank the members of the Washington DC Chapter, who spent countless hours to make this event a grand success.

I thank all OSA members for your participation and hope you have a good time here in Washington DC area!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gatikrishna Tripathy'.

Gatikrishna Tripathy  
Co-convener, 46<sup>th</sup> OSA Annual Convention

## Message from the Co-Conveners



Dear Friends,

It's with great pleasure that I welcome you all on behalf of the organizing team of 46<sup>th</sup> OSA Convention to the annual convention and Global Odisha Conference to be held in Gaylord Resort and Convention Center, National Harbor, Maryland. Every year we celebrate our achievements in the annual convention and also make an effort to connect with Odias in North America preserving the heritage and culture of our native land Odisha.

OSA is a 46 year old organization. This year convention has taken a bold step and added a new wing to the regular annual convention as Global Odisha Conference. The goal of the Global Odisha conference is to invite the Odias all around the globe to reflect on the power of ideas to change our lives and showcase our community to the world.

The mega event of this year will also be a showcase for star studded entertainment and many traditional programs from Odisha and here in addition to being a platform for national and international business, education and professional forums held by well known entrepreneurs, academicians and established professionals from around the world. This undoubtedly propels us further in executing our vision to enrich, promote and celebrate Odia culture and heritage on a world platform. Some of you have travelled long distances to be here, bringing unique insight and experience. Our hope is to provide you with a forum to discuss new ideas and opportunities with transformative potential.

We are pleased to present an interesting and engaging schedule to inspire your participation. Throughout the four days of the joint program you will have the opportunity to attend Global Odisha Conference or/and the Annual Convention of OSA. Join us and be a part of our collective vision of Global Odisha Conference and bring your energy to make it a memorable one. Your presence in this event will undoubtedly forge common bonds and initiate friendship and partnership lasting a lifetime.

Finally, on behalf of the entire convention team I wish you a very happy 46<sup>th</sup> anniversary and hope to meet many of you personally throughout the convention. I also take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to the entire convention team for putting together this exceptional event for all of us.

Leena Mishra  
Co-Convener  
Global Odisha Conference

## Message from the Vice President, OSA



### OSA thoughts...

*Sikhanda Satapathy*

In *the Prophet*, Khalil Gibran writes a very interesting note on *pleasure*. “Go to your fields and your gardens, and you shall learn that it is the pleasure of the bee to gather honey of the flower, But it is also the pleasure of the flower to yield its honey to the bee. For to the bee a flower is a fountain of life, And to the flower a bee is a messenger of love, And to both, bee and flower, the giving and the receiving of pleasure is a need and an ecstasy.” There is no better way to describe similar pleasure that exists in our OSA conventions. The organizers and the attendees are like the flower and the bee, each complementing an ecstasy with a need. Moreover, the hosts of yesteryears are our guests of this year, taking turns in the flower-bee roles.

The organizers of this convention have toiled hard, very hard indeed, to give a unique shape to the yearly event, to bring a new dream to fruition and to strengthen the Odia brotherhood in the North America. Of course, every intention is not fulfilled and every action doesn't succeed. In this year's case, many thoughts and endeavors didn't see the light of the day, yet there are many innovations and novelties that are bound to enthrall the attendees. For the first time in OSA history, there will be such a congregation of artists and intellectuals. Not only the bridge that has been under construction for last many decades between the North American Odias with their motherland will be immensely strengthened, a new era of Odia globalization will be initiated.

Somebody had asked me why one should become OSA life member paying \$300. To me, just attendance at the convention is reason enough. The society organizes a three day extravaganza, whose value is much more than the cost we bear. The cost of organizing a convention is in the neighborhood of \$200k now-a-days. On top of that the sweat labor amounts to about \$50k-\$100k, which any professional organizer would charge for a similar event. With an average of 300 families attending the convention, the value per family is over \$600, not counting the sweat dollars! Therefore, with a \$100 registration fee, benefit is over \$500 in just one convention, making the OSA life membership a great bargain! Of course the attendees spend additional dollars on travel, hotel and food, which is expected in any vacation or conference attendance, and hence can't be counted in the equation. In addition, among many intangible benefits, OSA provides a platform for expression for members, through OSANet, quarterly newsletter, Utkarsa and annual souvenir, Urmi. OSA supports celebration of Odia culture through annual regional dramas, Odia speech competition, champu, chhanda Odissi performances at chapter level and at the convention. OSA provides a platform for the members and their children to showcase their talents in dance, music, drama, poetry, entrepreneurship, etc. Like minded folks come together to discuss issues of common interest through forums on women, senior citizen, literature, etc.

OSA conventions typically feature popular Odia artists and accomplished individuals in various areas of art and culture, who are a treat to watch, listen and interact. Lately OSA has formalized an Odisha Development Day, which finds an expanded expression in the Global Odisha Conference this year, where professionals in different areas are expected to come together to collaborate, formulate action plans or just network. In addition to all these, OSA also works for disaster relief in Odisha, and supports Odias in distress in America. If all of these are not reason enough for membership in a socio-cultural organization, then what is? *“Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity.”*

I take this opportunity to thank all who have generously supported OSA financially and otherwise, without which many of OSA’s activities including hosting of the convention would have been difficult. I welcome all loving hearts to the convention, and thank all of the organizers who have contributed immensely through their time and labor.

*Sikhanda Satapathy*

*Vice President, OSA*

## Message from the Secretary, OSA

Dear Friends,

I am excited to welcome you all to the first Global Odisha Conference and 46th Annual Convention of OSA. I am also excited to congratulate all the committees and volunteers who made these events possible and successful. OSA is a non-profit volunteer organization established by people from Odisha, India. Among organizations in North America of the Indian subcontinent, OSA is one of the oldest organizations. Initially, OSA helped connect those who had left Odisha and were living in various parts of USA and Canada. This society brought them together and gave them a strong sense of belonging as they adjusted to a new culture and new country. Over the years, it has helped promote Odia culture, its artists, language and its heritage in North America. I am proud to say that in times of need, its esteemed members have also helped people of Odisha in both the motherland and the adopted homeland through numerous charitable activities. It has all happened due to the initiative and the selfless work of its many volunteers. OSA has grown a lot and its roles and responsibilities have also broadened. I am proud to be part of the vibrant OSA family and I am sure you are as well. We OSA executives have worked together along with all chapter presidents and representatives to keep OSA’s goals afloat and take the organization a step further.



I am pleased to inform that OSA membership has increased to over 1200 families. I am excited to welcome new members to our OSA community. I would like to request each and every member of OSA

to spread the word and educate fellow Odias about the organization and encourage them to become members of OSA. If every member brings even just one new member, then our membership will be doubled. I'd like to request once again to all of the OSA parents to encourage their adult children, who are above 18 years old, to become OSA members.

OSA members always come up with creative ideas to promote Odia culture. The Regional Drama Festival (RDF) is one of them. It was conceived by Sandip Das Verma of Washington state and Sri Gopal Mohanty of Canada. The objective of the RDF is to develop a closer relationship between communities of people from Odisha residing in North America, through a festival with a special focus on drama. I am pleased to announce that the RDF grant has been increased from \$500 to \$800. I am also excited to announce that on 6<sup>th</sup> of June two RDFs were hosted by Canada and New England.

As you may know, the OSA CCO (Champu, Chhanda and Odissi) competition is to promote Odissi, Champu and Chhanda by young Odias in North America. This program has been conceived by Mrs. Lata Misra. OSA is proud to introduce a CCO instrumental competition along with vocal competition. This will provide our children that play instruments with a platform to showcase their talent. Instruments such as flute, violin, harmonium, guitar, etc. are encouraged.

OSA has also introduced a Help Line available through the OSA website. This "help an individual" number **HAI-888-4OSA** (424-888-4672) is operational and is actively monitored by volunteers.

The web address for OSA is <http://www.odishasociety.org/>. I highly recommend that you visit the site frequently. You can find information about our activities, newsletter Utkarsha, monthly Board of Governance (BOG) meeting minutes, yearly general body meeting minutes and much more. You will also find various guidelines such as convention guidelines and award guidelines. In a nutshell, you will find answers for many of your questions, as well as important information about the organization. If you want to contact the executives or any chapter representatives you can also find the contact information there.

The OSAnet Yahoo group is OSA's communication medium. Prior to 2007, there was no exclusive network for OSA members to communicate with each other. Ornet was used as a network to communicate with the members, and OSA executives were using it to pass on important organization related messages to the members. But it was not an OSA network. In May 2007, OSAnet was established, and at the Detroit convention a motion was passed unanimously to use OSAnet as an official network to be used for OSA activities. As it is currently the only communication network for the members to discuss OSA activities, I encourage all the members to join the network to share their ideas and stay informed about OSA activities.

Currently OSA has 17 chapters. The newest chapter is Rocky Mountain which brought in more than 25 new life members. We are in the process of forming three new chapters in Florida, Atlanta and Seattle.

As you may know, we conduct monthly Board of Governors meeting among chapter presidents and OSA executives every second Sunday of the month. We post the minutes on OSAnet, the OSA website, as well as in Utkarsha. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns you want shared. We will add them to our agenda.

Again, I request each and every one of you to become actively involved in OSA activities and help OSA grow as a community, whether it is through arts, culture, humanitarian, higher education, Odisha community development or OSA helpline.

I take this opportunity to thank my teammates Tapan Padhi, Sikhanda Satpathy and Prashanta Ranabijuli for their diligent support and help over the last two years. Their commitment towards our society is commendable. I am proud of working with this extraordinary team. Meeting every Wednesday night was not easy while they were all swamped with personal and professional commitments. Still, they have truly inspired me to work with sincerity and dedication. I have learnt a lot from each of them, their commitment towards the community, their flawless work, selfless effort, calmness, honesty and talent.

I would like to congratulate the new team Sushant Satpathy, Sulochana Patnaik, Sidharth Behera, and Saradakanta Panda for taking the responsibility of OSA.

Regards,

Sabita Panigrahi

Secretary, OSA (2013-2015)

sabitapanigrahi@rogers.com

## Message from the Treasurer, OSA

Greetings Friends,

Welcome to the Global Odisha Conference and 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of OSA! *“A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work”*. The first ever **Global**



**Odisha Conference** and the **46<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of OSA** is a reality because of the tireless effort of hundreds of volunteers. Let us appreciate the effort of these volunteers and enjoy the fruit of their labor.

Strength of a volunteer based organization like OSA lies in its membership base and in its financial health. I am happy to report that we are making steady progress on both fronts. As of this day, OSA's membership base has increased to **1200+** families and the bank balance at the National level has grown to about **\$240K**. Including the balance at Chapter level, the total balance of OSA is close to **\$350K**.

Now, here are some of the financial and operational achievements over the last two years.

### **OSA's Long-term investment**

You will be pleased to hear that OSA's long-term investment is performing well. In a short span of 7 months the initial investment of **\$150K** has grown to more than **\$156K**, a gain of **\$6K**. The investments were made in conservative instruments - \$100K in CD, \$35K in S&P 500 Mutual Fund, and \$15K in cash - after considerable deliberation among Finance Committee members and after due approval by the BOG. The goal was to generate about 5% return per annum so the current performance is ahead of the

expectation. In 10 years, which is the time horizon for this long-term investment, the total return could be upwards of **\$75K**. I believe the long-term investment of this nature is the first time in OSA's history and hope that this be used as a template for future investments.

### **Annual Fundraising Drive and establishment of Emergency Relief Fund**

Several disasters struck us in 2013-14. But as always OSA members came forward to help fellow Odias and victims of natural disasters in Odisha. Through various fundraising drives OSA raised more than **\$100K**. However, we learnt that disasters are bound to happen and we need to be prepared for them, not react after they happen. I am thankful to EC, BOG members, and OSA members for approving the establishment of "**Emergency Relief Fund**" and approving the guideline for "**Annual Fundraising Drive**". As of this writing we have **\$15,598.12** in the Emergency Relief Fund.

### **Improved Transparency**

In order to bring transparency to financial transactions, several operational improvements were introduced

- Quarterly Account Statements are shared promptly on OSANet
- Receipts are issued for membership fee collection and donation

### **Improved Income Sources**

Various measures were taken to generate more revenue for OSA

- OSA Fee for Convention was increased from \$15 to \$25. This increase will bring in additional revenue (about **\$3,000** to **\$5,000** each year) to OSA.
- Long-term investment was created to generate periodic income. The investment is expected to give 5% annual return, which is about **\$7,500** per year.
- OSA is now registered with AmazonSmile program. This program could generate hundreds of dollars in new income.

### **Increased Support for various activities**

- RDF grant was increased from **\$500** to **\$800**. In addition, five RDF events were budgeted each year.
- Support for Odia Debate, CCO, and various other competitions at Convention have continued. Increasing the prize money for various awards have been discussed.

### **Establishment of OSA Helpline (HAI-888-4OSA)**

OSA Helpline is now operational. People are using it. We have received eight calls in the last two months.

### **PAN Card**

OSA has obtained a PAN card from the Income Tax Department of India. PAN Card is a requirement now-a-days to receive donations in India.

## **Membership**

We have crossed **1200\*** mark for membership. Achieving this milestone was possible because of persistent effort from many volunteers. Special thanks to our newest Rocky Mountain chapter for bringing in more than 25 new life members. Discussion for another new chapter is underway.

Here is a snapshot of membership increase from last year.

| <b>Membership Category</b> | <b>As of May 31<sup>st</sup> 2014</b> | <b>As of May 31<sup>st</sup> 2015 *</b> | <b>Increase in membership</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Life members               | 921                                   | 963                                     | 42                            |
| Benefactors                | 42                                    | 42                                      | 0                             |
| Patrons                    | 51                                    | 51                                      | 0                             |
| 5yr members                | 51                                    | 62                                      | 11                            |
| Annual members             | 40                                    | 84                                      | 44                            |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>1105</b>                           | <b>1202 *</b>                           | <b>97</b>                     |

\* Includes new members registered through Convention 2015

OSA has made considerable progress in recent years, but I believe that the best days are ahead of us. I am thankful to have gotten the opportunity to serve the organization for the past two years. As your Treasurer I tried to fulfill my duty to the best of my ability with only OSA's interest in mind. I wish to thank the current EC, Committee members, BOG members, and OSA members for their encouragement, support, and guidance along the way. And I am confident that OSA will be in good hands of our new Executives: Mr. Sushant Satpathy, Mrs. Sulochana Patnaik, Mr. Saradakanta Panda, and Mr. Siddharth Behera.

Please join me in welcoming all the new members to OSA family (The new member list is presented elsewhere in this souvenir).

Regards,

Prashanta Ranabijuli

Treasurer, OSA (2013-2015)

512-917-4715 (Mobile)

ranabijuli@gmail.com

# Message from the Past President, OSA Washington DC Chapter (2012-2014)



Dear Friends,

A journey that began thousands of miles away from the land of Neelachala (Puri), where our footprints have crisscrossed numerous times, has surpassed all boundaries and continues to bring us together, inspire each one of us to congregate and share our common experiences. It is a great pleasure to have had the opportunity to serve the local Odia community along with my friends Sushmita Behera and Bijay Satpathy as the past office bearers of the OSA DC Chapter.

In the last seven to eight years we have seen a surge of young spirited friends who have actively networked and collaborated like rivulets merging into community events to keep the enthusiasm going. We have made simple yet subtle changes in how we conduct ourselves to reflect our embracing spirit in a non-intrusive manner. On the one hand we are loosely coupled focused with our day to day life and on the other hand we are a strong cohesive community standing by each other when the need arises.

Here amongst us are the very best of Odias that always make us feel proud. We consider ourselves as part of the bridge generation. On one end we connect with our elders in the community from whom we get to learn a lot and on the other end we have our younger brothers and sisters who shower us with a lot of love - all tied in a tight embrace. The three have fused seamlessly into one, navigating the flight towards the same goal - the goal to preserve and promote our Odia culture and heritage and let our children learn & grow to be good caring citizens. We have come a long way in increasing the number of participants in Odissi and Odia music, dance, and drama programs from what it was a decade back. There is still scope to grow even more and encourage new members to carry on the spirit of service. It has been a worthwhile experience, and it gave us the opportunity to know people, learn and serve our community that we so dearly love.

We had the opportunity to accept and host the first GOC and OSA Convention in Washington DC this year and I take this opportunity to welcome you all to this convention.

We sincerely hope that your stay is comfortable and that you meet and link with friends and family from around the globe and our hospitality makes a lasting positive impression of our OSA DC Chapter Odia community.

With Warm Regards,

Prakash Sahu – Past President (2012-2014) OSA DC Chapter

# Message from the President, OSA Washington DC Chapter



Dear Friends,

On behalf of OSA DC Chapter, I welcome you all to the Global Odisha Conference and 46<sup>th</sup> OSA Annual Convention from July 1<sup>st</sup> to July 4<sup>th</sup>. We are very proud to host the first Global Odisha Conference along with the 46<sup>th</sup> OSA convention. We are striving to prove that we are truly a global community living in many different countries with a common thread. My special thanks go to Mr Pratap Das (Convenor), Ms. Leena Mishra (Co-convenor) and Mr. Gatikrishna Tripathy (Co-convenor) for their dynamic leadership. My sincere thanks also go to the countless volunteers from OSA DC. The hard work, dedication and endurance with which they work is truly amazing. I cannot be more proud of the OSA DC chapter officials, Snigdha Hota, Bidyashree Parhi and Subrat Rout. They are entirely dedicated and are helping me unconditionally for this convention from the very beginning of the planning process.

This year's theme is: "Unity and Progress". Yes, we need to be united and connected as a community to achieve our common goal "progress". I request all the participants to connect at least with five new persons in this convention and continue to do so in the coming conventions. I believe the more we are connected, the faster progress we can achieve.

Finally, we have so many great artists visiting from Odisha, we will have an Odia film festival, and the "Amazing Odisha" show at Kennedy Center depicting the life and cultural history of Odisha. I hope all of you will enjoy the fun-filled activities, youth events, delicious foods, and cultural activities.

Wish you all the best!

Bande Utkal Janani.

Sincerely,

Bimal B. Mishra  
President, OSA DC

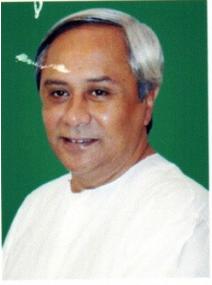
# Message from the Chief Minister, Odisha

NAVEEN PATNAIK  
CHIEF MINISTER, ODISHA



STATE SECRETARIAT  
BHUBANESWAR

8th JUNE 2015



## MESSAGE

I am glad to know that the Odisha Society of the Americas is organizing the Gobal Odihsa Conference and annual OSA Convention at the Kennedy Center, Washington DC on July 1-4, 2015.

The Odia diaspora in the USA and Canada is evolving as a strong community and making their mark in various fields in both the countries. They are also deeply rooted to their culture and promoting it. Their effort to strengthen the inter-cultural relationship between Odisha and the Americas is admirable. Odisha has a unique culture that is quite attractive to the western world. Appropriate social interaction and cultural promotion can strengthen our ties further.

I extend my warm greetings to the Odia community living in the USA and Canada and wish them great success in their endeavour.

( NAVEEN PATNAIK )

# ଏଇତ ପ୍ରଗତି, ଆମ ଆଖି ସାମନାରେ



ପ୍ରିୟ ଓସାବନ୍ଧୁ ଓ ବାନ୍ଧବୀ ମାନେ

ନମସ୍କାର ।

ସେ ଏକ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଥିଲା; ଛୋଟିଆ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଟିଏ କାହିଁ କେତେବର୍ଷ ତଳେ । ବିଦେଶଭୂମିରେ ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସ୍ତର ଶୁଣିବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ; ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଏକାଠି ବସି ଖାଇବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ; ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗୀତ ଶୁଣିବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ । ସେଇ ଛୋଟିଆ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଟିକୁ ନେଇ ଗଢ଼ି ଉଠିଥିଲା ଏ ଯେଉଁ ଓସା ୪୬ ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ, ଆଜି ସେ ନୂଆବେଶରେ ରୂପାନ୍ତରିତ ହୋଇଛି; କେଉଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାରର ବୈଠକଖାନାରୁ ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଛି ବିଖ୍ୟାତ ହୋଟେଲ୍ ଗେଲର୍ଡରେ ନିଜକୁ ପରିପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବାକୁ । ଏଇତ ପ୍ରଗତି; ଆମ ଆଖି ସାମନାରେ, ଆମମାନଙ୍କ ସଂହୃଦିର ଜ୍ୱଳନ୍ତ ଉଦାହରଣ ।

ସେମିତି ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖିଛନ୍ତି ଓସାର କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତା ମାନେ, ବିଶ୍ୱ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କ ମିଳନୀ ପାଇଁ; ଏବର୍ଷ ସେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନର ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ରୂପାନ୍ତର ନହୋଇପାରିଲେ ବି ସେ ଯେଉଁ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଟି ମନରେ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱାଳିଲା, ସେ ନିଷ୍ଠା ଦିନେ ତାଳପତ୍ର ମେଲିବ, ସେଥିରେ ପୁଲ ପୁଟିବ, ଫଳ ଫଳିବ; ଆଉ ସେକଥାକୁ ମନେ ପକାଇବ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତର ଓସା; ପୁଣି କେତେବର୍ଷ ପରେ ।

ଏମିତି ଏକ ଘଟଣାବହୁଳ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଓସା ସ୍ମରଣିକା ଉର୍ମିର ସଂପାଦନା ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଭାର ଗ୍ରହଣ କରି ମୁଁ ନିଜକୁ ଭାଗ୍ୟବତୀ ମନେ କରୁଛି । ସହ ସଂପାଦକ ଓ ସଂପାଦିକା ମାନଙ୍କ ସହଯୋଗରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ମିଶି ଏ ପ୍ରକାଶନୀ ଉର୍ମିକୁ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କ ପଠନର ଆନନ୍ଦାନୁଭୂତି ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରିଛୁ । ଆଶା, ଆପଣମାନେ ନିଷ୍ଠା ପଢ଼ିବେ, ଖୁସିହେବେ ଓ ଏ ସଂପାଦନାଟିରେ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ସମସ୍ତ ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଲେଖା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଚିହ୍ନିବାକୁ ପ୍ରୟାସ କରିବେ ।



ପ୍ରବାସରେ ଆଜି ବିକଶିଛି ପୁଟି  
 ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ପୁଲ  
 ଦିଗ ଚହଟଇ ବାସ ମହକଇ  
 ରୂପ ତା ଅମୂଲ ମୂଲ ।  
 ସଂହୃଦିର ସେତୁ ବାନ୍ଧିଅଛି ଓସା  
 ମିଶାଇ ସୌହାର୍ଦ୍ଦ୍ୟ ସ୍ନେହ  
 ଲୁହାଠାରୁ ବଳି ଶକତ ସେ ବନ୍ଧ  
 ପ୍ରଗତିର ବାର୍ତ୍ତାବହ ।  
 ଏ ବର୍ଷର ଆମ ବିଶ୍ୱ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କ  
 ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ପ୍ରୟାସ  
 ଯୁଗଯୁଗ ପାଇଁ ଗାଉଥିବ ଗାଥା  
 ରଚି ନୂଆ ଇତିହାସ ।  
 ଓସା ସାଜସାଥୀ, ଓସାର ଅତିଥି  
 ସ୍ୱାଗତ ଘେନ ଆମର  
 ଅରପଣ ତୁମ ମନସୁଖ ପାଇଁ  
 ଏ ସ୍ମରଣିକା ସମ୍ପାଦନା ।

ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ  
 ସଂପାଦିକା, ଉର୍ମି  
 ଓସା କନ୍ଭେନ୍ସନ୍ ୨୦୧୫

# Editorial: A Momentous Time in OSA History

Dear Friends

Greetings!

This is a momentous time in OSA history, The annual convention has moved from the Odia family's living room to Gaylord Hotel in Washington DC and we all, the attendees of this year's convention have become symbols of this auspicious moment. Our unity (samhati) has made this progress (pragati) possible. Welcome to DC and to OSA 46th Annual Convention and Global Odisha Conference.

OSA annual souvenir has also gone through changes. From hand written Odia writings and publications in India to use of sophisticated Odia fonts, sophisticated graphics and many digital typesetting options. Computers have become faster and communication with emails and cell phones have been helpful in receiving materials, coordinating reviews and sharing information.

Irrespective of all the facilities, the task is "The Task" and it involves time commitment. I thank our editorial team members Babru Samal, Shashadhar Mohapatra, Joy Gopal Mohanty, Sulochana Pattanaik, Jhinu Chhotray and Manoj Panda for helping in reviews, decision making and communicating with the authors. I am grateful for their willing assistance, as I am to the contributors.

I thank Dr Babru Samal for coordinating Meghna Memorial award in creative writing that is being managed by the souvenir team every year in honor of Meghna, the little girl from Michigan chapter who illuminated the OSA scene during her short span of life. The award management involves formulating judging criteria, selecting judges, organizing articles for judging and making the necessary communications.

There have been difficult times in taking certain decisions, for example, only publishing original articles, articles from only OSA members, and a few invited articles. I thank my team members for being consistent and cooperative in making mutual judgments without which it would have been difficult to maintain the page limit and quality of the souvenir.

I take this opportunity to thank the fundraising committee and all the sponsors of OSA convention 2015, in particular the generous people that have put the advertisement in this souvenir. Without your help, this publication task would have been very hard. Thanks for your generosity.

Last, but not least, I thank my family members, my husband Naresh Das and daughters Bagmi, Mrunali and Shashwati for being very tolerant with my schedule during this whole time of editing task. My children would be calling and I would not be available. I would be sitting near the computer for hours during the weekends without even saying a word to my husband. Thank you my family for all your understanding and support for my passion.

Souvenir is a team effort in a very large scale, involving not only the editorial team members, but also the authors, the officials, the convention teams such as the fundraising team, the web team and the press. Communication has been a humongous task. Thus, irrespective of all our best efforts, there might be oversights and I ask for your forgiveness for these unintentional mistakes.

Enjoy the souvenir and enjoy the convention.



Bigyani Das  
Editor, OSA



## About Urmi

Urmi is the annual publication of The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA). The name "Urmi" for this annual publication/souvenir was just selected last year. The souvenir provides a medium for OSA members to share their thoughts, reflections of OSA and their life's unique experiences in the form of essays, stories and poems. Each year the annual convention committee selects an editor and the editorial committee to be in charge of soliciting articles, conducting reviews, and publishing the souvenir for convention attendees. This is in addition to OSA's editorial team that publishes its quarterly newsletter Utkarsa. In addition to publishing the annual souvenir and directory, OSA convention editorial committee also manages Megna memorial award for OSA youth.

This year's souvenir contains seven sections. The editorial team came up with the idea to name these sections in synchronization with "Urmi" which is often used for ocean wave.

The first section contains information on the convention team members, OSA official teams, the messages from OSA officials, the convener, co-conveners, chapter president and a few distinguished personalities. We have named this section "*The Beach*" (*beLABhumi*). Hope you will enjoy the ocean from this beach, know about OSA, know about the convention organizers and the team members that are behind making this convention happen.

The second section is focussed on this year's theme, "*Unity and Progress*" (*Samhati O' Pragati*). We have named this section "The waves of the mind" (*manataranga*). The members of the editorial team have shared their thoughts on this year's theme. Hope these waves will touch your heart and you would know these passionate editorial team members better.

The third section contains writings from our younger OSA members. You will be very proud to read their stories, poems and essays. We have named this section, "*Pearl*" (*muktA*). Please touch these pearls, make your own and preserve it; inspire these young minds to become excellent thinkers.

The fourth section contains writings from our OSA thinkers, philosophers and poets. Some of them are long time members of OSA; they have a lot of stories to share with us. We have named this section, "*The Sand*" (*sikatA*). This section has many interesting articles on OSA history, OSA member's experience in this adopted land and poems. Please take a walk in this sand and enjoy the pleasant breeze, or just sit and make a sand castle.

The fifth section is the Odia section. We have named this section "*Coral*" (*pohaLA*). Like coral controls the carbon dioxide in the ocean water, this section will control your stress by bringing calmness, positive emotions and familiarity to your own language, own culture and own people.

The sixth section is for those people in our lives that are no more. They have taught us, they have been our friends, they have touched us. We have named this section, "*Lighthouse*" (*batighara*). The stories of their life will show us the light to the right path to follow. See them, feel them and know them better. This section is our tribute to those departed souls.

The seventh or the last section is the section on important Odisha information and OSA information, new members and the financial status. We have named this section "*The Sound of the Conch*" (*Sankhadhwani*). The sound of the conch is considered auspicious in our culture. The knowledge of the members on the organization and its processes is a blessing for our organization. Let this moment bring all the good things to OSA. Let it be auspicious.

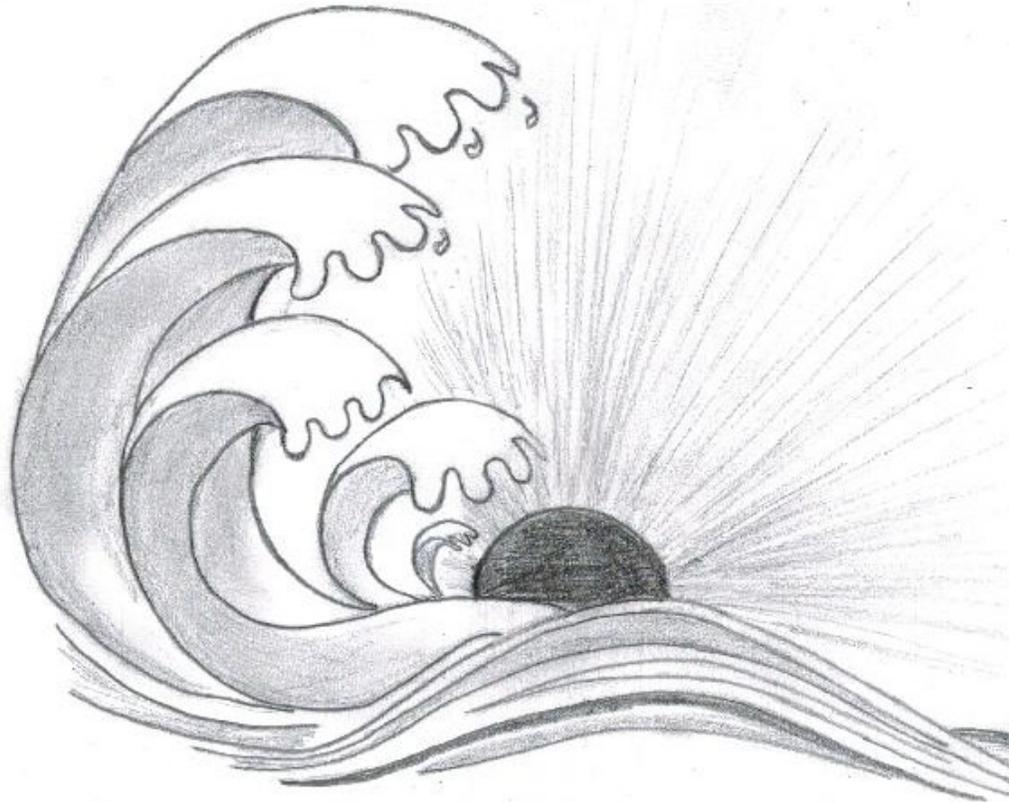


# ମନତରଙ୍ଗ

## (Waves of Mind)

ସଂହତି ଓ ପ୍ରଗତି ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧରେ....

Samhati and Pragati (Unity &Progress) Special





## ଯେ ଦେଶ ଯାଇ, ସେ ଫଳ ଖାଇ

ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ

ତାଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଖୁବ୍ ଭଲ ଲାଗୁଥିଲା । ସିଏ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ପିନ୍ଧିଥିଲେ, ଶାଢ଼ୀ ସହିତ ମ୍ୟାଟିଙ୍ଗ୍ ଛୋଟ ଏକ ଚିକିଲି ପିନ୍ଧିଥିଲେ ଓ ବେଶୀ ବାନ୍ଧିଥିଲେ । ମୁଁ ଯେତେଗୁଡ଼ିଏ ସେସନ୍ ଆଟେଣ୍ଟ୍ କରିଥିଲି, ସେଥିରୁ କେତେଗୁଡ଼ିଏ ସେସନ୍ରେ ସିଏ ଚେୟାରମ୍ୟାନ୍ ରହିଥିଲେ । ଆମ ଫୁଲଡ୍ ତାଲନାମିକ୍ସର କେତେଜଣ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ଗବେଶକଙ୍କ ସହିତ ତାଙ୍କର ସବୁବେଳେ କିଛିନା କିଛି ଆଲୋଚନା ହେଉଥିଲା । ଶେଷରେ ତାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ମୋର ପରିଚୟ ହେଲା । ସେ ହେଲେ ଯୁନିଭରସିଟି ଅଫ୍ ସିନ୍ସିନାଟିରେ ମେକାନିକାଲ୍ ଇଞ୍ଜିନିଅରିଙ୍ଗ୍ ଡିପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟରେ ପ୍ରଫେସର୍ ତକ୍ଟର୍ ଭର୍ମିଳା ଘିଆ ।

ତାଙ୍କର କେତେଜଣ ଭାରତୀୟ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀ ସବୁ ମିଶି ଯୋଜନା କରୁଥିଲେ କେଉଁଠିକୁ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଯିବେ । ଆମ ହୋଟେଲ୍ଟି ମୁଖ୍ୟ ବଜାରଠାରୁ ଟିକେ ଦୂରରେ ଥିଲା ଓ ସେଠି ପାଖରେ କିଛି ଭାରତୀୟ କି ଚାଇନିଜ୍ ଭୋଜନାନ୍ୟ ନଥିଲା । ମୁଁ ବି ଭଲ ଭାରତୀୟ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଖୋଜୁଥିଲି, ତେଣୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଯାଇ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା କଲି । ଏହି ସମୟରେ, ତକ୍ଟର୍ ଭର୍ମିଳା ଘିଆ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲେ ଓ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀ ମାନଙ୍କର ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ବିଷୟରେ ପଚରାଉଚରା କଲେ । ମୋ ସହିତ ତାଙ୍କର ପରିଚୟ ହେଲା । ତାପରେ ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଭାରତୀୟ ଭୋଜନାଳୟ ଯିବାର ଯୋଜନା କଲୁ । ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମାନେ ତକ୍ଟର୍ କୀର୍ତ୍ତି ଘିଆ ମଧ୍ୟ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲେ । ସେମାନେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗାଡ଼ି ଭଡାରେ ନେଇଆନ୍ତି । ହିରହେଲା ସିଏ ତାଙ୍କ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ତିନି ଜଣଙ୍କୁ ନେଇଯିବେ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟ ଗୋଟିଏ ଟ୍ୟାକ୍ସିରେ ଅନ୍ୟ ସମସ୍ତେ ଯିବେ । ମୁଁ ଘିଆ ଦମ୍ପତ୍ତିଙ୍କ ସହିତ ତାଙ୍କ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ବସିଲି । ବାଟରେ ଆମେ ଅନେକ ଆଲୋଚନା କଲୁ । ମୋର ବାଲଓମେଡିକାଲ୍ ରିସର୍ଚ୍ ବିଷୟରେ ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କୁ କହିଲି ଓ ସେ ତାଙ୍କ କାମ ଓ ଷ୍ଟୁଡେଣ୍ଟ ମାନଙ୍କ ବିଷୟରେ କହିଲେ ।

ଶାଢ଼ୀ, ପିନ୍ଧି, ଚିକିଲି ଲଗେଇ, ବେଶୀ ବାନ୍ଧି ଏତେ ସଫଳତା ଅର୍ଜନ କରିଥିବା ତକ୍ଟର୍ ଘିଆଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ମୋର ସମ୍ମାନ ବହୁତ ବଢ଼ିଯାଇଥିଲା । ଆମେରିକା ଦେଶର ପୋଷାକକୁ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବାପାଇଁ ମୋତେ ମୋ ମନ ଭିତରେ ଥିବା ସଂସ୍କାର ସହିତ କେତେ ଯୁଦ୍ଧ କରିବାକୁ ନ ପଡ଼ିଛି ? ବର୍ଷେ, ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ କାଳ ସେଇ ଭାରତୀୟ ପୋଷାକରେ ହିଁ କନ୍ଫର୍ଟେବଲ୍ ଯାଇଥିଲି, ଚାକିରି ପାଇଁ ଇଣ୍ଟରଭିୟୁ ବି ଦେଇଥିଲି । ତେବେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ଜଣେ ଉପଦେଶ ଦେଇଥିଲେ, ‘ଯେ ଦେଶ ଯାଇ, ସେ ଫଳ ଖାଇ’ । ଭେକ ଦେଖି ଭିକ ମିଳେ । ଆମେରିକା ଦେଶରେ ଚାକିରି କରିବାକୁ ହେଲେ, ଆମେରିକା ଦେଶରେ ରହି ସଫଳତା ଅର୍ଜନ କରିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ସେ ଦେଶର ବେଶପୋଷାକ, ଚାଲିଚଳନ ବି ଆଦରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ । ସେଇକଥା ଚିନ୍ତାକରି ମୁଁ ଭାବିଥିଲି କେବେ ବି ଏ ଦେଶରେ ରହିପାରିବିନି ବୋଲି ଓ ଭାରତକୁ ଫେରିଯିବାର ଯୋଜନାରେ ଥିଲି । ହେଲେ ଇଣ୍ଟରକ୍ସର ବିଚାର ଅନ୍ୟରକମର । ଏ ଦେଶରେ ରହିଗଲି । ଏବେ ଏ ଦେଶର ଚଳଣୀକୁ ଅନେକଟା ଆଦରିନେଇଛି; ବେଶପୋଷାକଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭକରି ହ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡସେକ୍ କରିବା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ।

ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଜୀବନରେ କେବେକେବେ ଶାଢ଼ୀ, ଚିକିଲି, ସାଲୁଆର୍, କମିଜ୍ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ଭାରତୀୟ ପ୍ରସାଧନ ପିନ୍ଧି ଦୋକାନକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ ଶେଷ ସମୟରେ ଗ୍ରିଟିଙ୍ଗ୍ କାର୍ଡ କିଣିବା ପାଇଁ କି ଗିଫ୍ଟ୍ କିଣିବା ପାଇଁ । ଏମିତିକି ଏୟାରପୋର୍ଟରୁ ଫେରିବା ସମୟରେ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଦେଇଶୁର, ଯାଆ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ବିଦାୟ ଦେବାକୁ ଆସିଥାନ୍ତି; ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ପିନ୍ଧି, ଚିକିଲି ପିନ୍ଧି ଆସିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ । ସେମିତି ବି କେବେକେବେ ଭାରତୀୟ ପୋଷାକରେ ଜେ-ସି-ପେନି କି ସିଅର୍ସରେ ବି କଲିଗମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଦେଖା ହୋଇଯାଏ । ତେବେ ଏସବୁ ମତେ ଆଉ କିଛି ଖରାପ ଲାଗେନି । ମୋ ନିଜଭିତରେ କନ୍ଫର୍ଟେବଲ୍ ଏତେ ବଢ଼ିଯାଇଛି ଯେ, ମୋ ପୋଷାକକୁ ନେଇ କିଏ ଯେ ମୋତେ ମୋ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିତ୍ୱଠାରୁ ଅଲଗା କରି ଭାବିବ, ସେ ବିଷୟକୁ ନେଇ ମୁଁ ଏତେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହୁଏନି । ମତେ ଯାହା ଯେତେବେଳେ ସୁବିଧାଲାଗେ, ମୁଁ ସେସବୁ ପିନ୍ଧେ ।

ମୋ ମନର ସଂସ୍କୃତି ସହିତ ମୋ ଆକାଂକ୍ଷାକୁ ମୁଁ ସଂହତି ସୁତାରେ ବାନ୍ଧିଦେଇଛି । ଜୀବନଯାତ୍ରାରେ ଆଦରିଥିବା ବୃତ୍ତିର ପ୍ରଗତିପଥରେ ତକ୍ଟର୍ ଭର୍ମିଳା ଘିଆଙ୍କ ଭଳି ଠିକ୍ ଏକାଭଳି ଚାଲିନପାରିଲେ ବି, ପ୍ରଗତିର ପ୍ରୟାସରେ ଯେ ମୋର ଏ ସତ୍ୟତାର ସ୍ୱୀକାର ଆଲୋକବତୀ ସାଜିବ, ସେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ମୋର ଅତୁଟ ରହିଛି ।



## ସଂହୃତିର ସ୍ମରଣରେ.....

ଶଶଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର



ସଂହୃତି ବିଷୟରେ କିଛି ଲେଖିବାକୁ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ ଦିଆଯାଇଛି । କ’ଣ ଲେଖିବି ଭାବି ପାରୁନଥିଲି । ଭାରୁ ଭାରୁ ଗୋଟିଏ କଥା ମନେ ପଡିଗଲା । ଭାବିଲି ଏହାଠାରୁ ସଂହୃତିର ବଡ଼ ଉଦାହରଣ କଣ ହେଇପାରେ । ମୋ ଜୀବନରେ ଘଟିଥିବା ଏ ଏକ ଘଟଣା, ଅଙ୍ଗେ ନିଭେଇଥିବା ଘଟଣା । କହିବାକୁ ଚିକିଏ ଲାଜ ଲାଗୁଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ, ମୋ ମତରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କପାଇଁ ଏ ଏକ ଶିକ୍ଷଣୀୟ ବିଷୟ ବସ୍ତୁ । ତେବେ ଆସନ୍ତୁ, ଶୁଣିବେ ମୋ କଥା । ବନ୍ଧୁଗଣ ! ମୋ ଜୀବନରେ ମୁଁ କେତେ ଥର ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ସହ ସାମ୍ନା ସାମ୍ନି ହେଇଛି । ମୃତ୍ୟୁକୁ ଖୁବ୍ ପାଖରେ ଦେଖିଛି, କିନ୍ତୁ, ହାତଛତା ହେଇଛି, ତାକୁ ଠକି ଦେଇ ଆସିଛି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ ରଣୀ । ମୋତେ ଲାଗେ ଏତେ ଶୀଘ୍ର, ମୋର ସେ କଥା ବୟସରେ ବୋଧହୁଏ ଭଗବାନ ଉପରକୁ ନେବାପାଇଁ ଚାହୁଁନଥିଲେ ।

୧୯୭୬ ମସିହା । ମୁଁ ସେତେବେଳେ ବାଣୀବିହାରରେ ପଦାର୍ଥ ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ତିପାଟମେଣ୍ଟରେ ଏମ୍. ଏସ୍. ସି ଶେଷ ବର୍ଷର ଛାତ୍ର । ବାଣୀବିହାରରେ ୨ୟ ଛାତ୍ରାବାସରେ ରହୁଥାଏ । ହଠାତ୍ ପିକ୍‌ନିକ୍‌ରେ ଭଙ୍ଗାରିକା ଯାଇଥାଉ । ଆମ ହଠାତ୍‌ରେ ଅଧିକାଂଶ ପିଲା ଜଗତସିଂହପୁର, ପୁରୀ ଓ ଯାଜପୁର ଅଞ୍ଚଳରୁ । ବସ୍ତାଭିକାରରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା । ପାଖରେ ବିସ୍ତୃତ ମହାନଦୀ । ନଇକୁଳରେ ମା’ ଭଙ୍ଗାରିକା ଠାକୁରାଣୀଙ୍କର ଗୋଟିଏ ଛୋଟ ମନ୍ଦିର । ସୁନ୍ଦର ପରିବେଶ । ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ନଇରେ ପହୁଁରିବାକୁ ଚାଲିଲୁ । ବାଜି ପଡିଲା ଯେ କେଉଁ ଅଞ୍ଚଳ ପିଲା ବେଶି ବାଟ ପହୁଁରି ଜିତିବ । ଜଗତସିଂହପୁର ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ବେଶିବାଟ ନଯାଇ କୁଳ ପାଖରେ ପହୁଁରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ପୁରୀ ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ଆଉ ଚିକିଏ ଦୂର ଯାଇଥାନ୍ତି । ମୁଁ, ମୋର କ୍ଲାସ୍‌ମେଟ୍ “ମୋହନ ଦାଶ” ଓ ଆମର ଜଣେ ସାଙ୍ଗ “ଗୀତାପତି ମହାନ୍ତି” ଯିଏକି ଷ୍ଟାଟିଷ୍ଟିକ୍‌ସ୍‌ରେ ପିଜି କରୁଥିଲେ, ଆମେ ତିନି ଯାଜପୁର ବନ୍ଧୁ ପହୁଁରି ପହୁଁରି ବହୁତ ବାଟ ଚାଲିଗଲୁ । ବାହାଦୁରୀ ଦେଖେଇ ଚାଲିଗଲୁ ସିନା କିନ୍ତୁ ଫେରିବାକୁ ଯେ ପଡିବ ସେ କଥା ଭୁଲିଯାଇଥିଲୁ । ଗୋଡ଼, ହାତ ହାଲିଆ । ପାଟି କଲେବି କୁଳକୁ ଶୁଭିବନି । ମୁଁ ଭାବିଲି ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ଆଉ ରାହା ନାହିଁ । ତିନି ଜଣଙ୍କର ଏକା ଅବସ୍ଥା । ଶେଷରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବୃକ୍ଷପାଞ୍ଚି ତକାତକି ହୋଇ ମୋହନ, ଗୀତାପତି ଓ ମୁଁ ତିନି ସାଙ୍ଗ ଏକାଠି ହେଲୁ । ସିନ୍ଧାନ୍ତ କଲୁ ଯେ ଦୁଇଜଣ ପହୁଁରିବେ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟଜଣକୁ ଟାଣିବେ । ଏମିତି ଅଦଳ ବଦଳ କରି କୁଳରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଅନେକ ସମୟ ହେଇଯାଇଥାଏ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ କୁଳରେ କେହି ନଥାନ୍ତି । ସେମାନେ ଭାରୁଥିଲେ ଯେ ଆମେ ଖୁସିରେ ପହୁଁରୁଛୁ । ପହଞ୍ଚିଲାବେଳକୁ ଜୀବନ ପ୍ରାୟ ନଥିଲା, ଏକରକମର ଦରମଲା ହେଇଯାଇଥାଉ । ଭାଗ୍ୟ ଆମର ଭଲ ଯେ ଆମେ ସେଦିନ ବଞ୍ଚିଗଲୁ । ଆମେ ଯଦି ତକାତକି ନହୋଇ, ଏକାଠି ନହୋଇ ଏ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ନନେଇଥାନ୍ତୁ ତେବେ ତିନିଜଣ ବାଣୀବିହାର ଛାତ୍ରଙ୍କର ସଲୀଳ ସମାଧି ସେଦିନ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ହେଇଥାନ୍ତା, ଏଥିରେ ତିଳେ ମାତ୍ର ସନ୍ଦେହ ନାହିଁ । ମୋର ମନେ ଅଛି ମା’ ଭଙ୍ଗାରିକା ଠାକୁରାଣୀଙ୍କୁ ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆଟିଏ ମାରି ପାଣିକୁ ଡେଇଁଥିଲି ସେଦିନ । ତାଙ୍କରି କରୁଣାବଳରେ ବଞ୍ଚିଗଲି ।

ତା’ର ଦିଦିନ ପରେ ଖବରକାଗଜରେ ବାହାରିଥିଲା ଯେ ଭଙ୍ଗାରିକାରେ ପିକ୍‌ନିକ୍‌ରେ ଯାଇ ପହୁଁରୁଥିଲା ବେଳେ କେତେଜଣ ଇଞ୍ଜିନିୟର୍ କଲେଜ ଛାତ୍ର ପାଣିରେ ବୁଡି ମରିଗଲେ । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ମୃତ ଦେହ କିଛି ଦୂରରେ କୁଳରେ ପାଣିରେ ଭାସୁଥିଲା । ସେ ଖବର ପଢି ସେଦିନ ଦେହଟା ସିତେଇ ଆସିଥିଲା । ସେମାନଙ୍କ କଥା ଶୁଣି ଦୁଃଖ ଲାଗିଥିଲା । ଏହା ଭିତରେ ଚାଳିଶ ବର୍ଷ ବିତି ଗଲାଣି । ସେକଥା ଏବେ ମନେ ପଡିଲେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ଦିଜଣଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦେବା ସହ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ମୁଣ୍ଡ ନଇଁଯାଏ । ଏବେ ପାଣିକୁ ଗଲେ ବହୁତ ଭାବି ଚିନ୍ତି, ବୁଝି ଅକଲ ଖଟେଇ ଯାଉଛି ।



# ସୁଖ କହିବି ନାଁ ଦୁଃଖ କହିବି କି ଅଙ୍ଗେ ଲିଭେଇବା କଥା କହିବି .....

ଝିନ୍ଦୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ



ସୁଖ କହିବି ନାଁ ଦୁଃଖ କହିବି କି ଅଙ୍ଗେ ଲିଭେଇବା କଥା କହିବି । ମାର୍ଚ୍ଚ ମାସ ଚବିଶି ତାରିଖ, ୧୯୮୨ ମସିହା । ନୂଆ ଜୀବନ, ନୂଆ ଆଶା, ନୂଆ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ନେଇ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ଏଆରପୋର୍ଟରେ ପଦାର୍ପଣ କରି ନ୍ୟୁୟର୍କ ଅଭିମୁଖେ । ମନରେ ମିଶ୍ରିତ ଅନୁଭୂତି । ବାପା, ବୋଉଙ୍କର ଲୋଚକଭରା ଚକ୍ଷୁ, ତାଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ଷ ଭରା ହାତର ଝର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଆଉ ତାଙ୍କ ଉପଦେଶ, “ମା’ ରେ, ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ ମନରେ ରଖି ସଂସାର ପଥରେ ଆଗେଇବୁ ।” ସେଇ ସବୁ କଥା ମନେ ପଡି ମତେ ଅଧିର କରି ପକାଇଥାଏ । ପୁଣି ମନ ଭିତରେ ମୋର ଉତ୍ତେଜନା, ବହୁ ଦିନର ମୋ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ସେଇ ଆମେରିକା ରାଜ୍ୟ ଦେଖିବି ବୋଲି । ପାସପୋର୍ଟ ଆଉ ଆବଶ୍ୟକୀୟ କାଗଜପତ୍ର ଧରି ଗେଟ୍ ଭିତରେ ପଶିଲି । ବାରମ୍ବାର ସତର୍କ କରାଯାଇ ଥାଏ, ‘ସିଏ ଯାଉଥିବେ ନ୍ୟୁୟର୍କ, ତାଙ୍କୁ ହିଁ ଅନୁସରଣ କରୁଥିବୁ ।’ ମୁଁ କେତୋଟି ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ମନରେ ଚିହ୍ନଟ କରି ତାଙ୍କ ପଛେପଛେ ହିଁ ଚାଲୁଥାଏ । ଶେଷରେ ପ୍ରେନ୍ ଭିତରେ ନର୍ତ୍ତାରିତ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲି । ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ପାଇବାରେ କୌଣସିଟା ଅସୁବିଧା ହେଉନଥାଏ । ପ୍ରଥମେ ନିଜକୁ ନିଜ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ସହଜ କରି ବସି ସାରିବା ପରେ ପ୍ରେନ୍ର ଚାରିଆଡକୁ ଆଖି ବୁଲେଇ ଆଣିଲି । ପ୍ରାୟ ଅଧାରୁ ବେଶି ଭାରତୀୟ ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ମନ ଖୋଲୁଥାଏ ଓଡିଆଟିଏ ଦେଖନ୍ତିକି! ପ୍ରେନ୍ ଛାଡିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଫାଇଟ୍ ଆଟେନ୍ତ୍ୟାଣ୍ଟ ନିରୀପଦ ସୂଚନା ବାଣୀ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଇଗଲା । ସେତେବେଳେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଇଂରାଜୀ ମତେ କାନକୁ ଯୋଗାଡି ରିଡିଙ୍ଗ୍ ପରି ଲାଗୁଥାଏ । ତାଙ୍କ କଥାରେ ମୁଁ ଫୁଲ୍ଲସ୍ପର୍ଶା କେଉଁଠି ଧରିପାରୁନଥାଏ । ସେ ଯାହାହେଉ, ମୁଁ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ବୁଝେ କି ନ ବୁଝେ ମୋ ପାଖ ମହିଳା ଯାହା କରୁଥାଆନ୍ତି ମୁଁ ସେୟା କରୁଥାଏ । ମୋର ହାବଭାବ ଦେଖି ସେ ମହିଳା ଜଣକ ଜାଣିପାରିଲେ ଯେ ଏଇଟା ମୋର ପ୍ରଥମ ଆମେରିକା ଯାତ୍ରା । ମୁଁ ନପଚାରିବା ଆଗରୁ ମତେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ମିଳି ଯାଉଥାଏ । ପ୍ରେନ୍ଟି ଉପରକୁ ଉଠିଲା ।

ମୁଁ କୌତୁହଳ ସହ ଆଖି ଦିଓଟିକୁ ଝରକାଟିରେ ଛିର କରି ଦେଇଥାଏ । ଆକାଶରୁ ତଳ ଲାଇଟ୍ ସବୁ ଚମତ୍କାର ପନିକଣ୍ଠି ପରି ଦିଶୁ ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ମଜା ଲାଗୁଥାଏ ସେ ଦୃଶ୍ୟକୁ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିବା ପାଇଁ । ସାଙ୍ଗେ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ସବୁ ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ହେଇଗଲା । ପରିଷ୍କାର ନୀଳ ଆକାଶରେ ଜହ୍ନଟି ଖୁବ୍ ଆକର୍ଷଣୀୟ ଦିଶୁଥାଏ । ବରଫ ଆଉ କାଚଗାୟ୍ ର ରୁଣୁଣୁଣୁ ଶବ୍ଦରେ ମୁଁ ପ୍ରକୃଷ୍ଟିତ ହେଲି । ରାତି ଭୋଜନ ସମୟ । ଫାଇଟ୍ ଆଟେନ୍ତ୍ୟାଣ୍ଟ ହାତର ସେ ତିନର୍ ଟ୍ରେଟିକୁ ଦେଖି ଆମ ପିଲାବେଳର କଣ୍ଠେଇ ଖେଳ କଥା ମୋର ମନେ ପଡିଲା । ମଜା ଲାଗୁଥାଏ ସେ କୁନି ଟ୍ରେ, କୁନି ଚାମଚ୍, ଆଉ କଣ୍ଠ ଚାମଚ୍ ଦେଖି । ରାତ୍ର ଭୋଜନ ପରେ ମତେ କେତେବେଳେ ଯେ ନିଦ ଆସିଗଲା ମୁଁ ଜାଣିନି । ସେ ସମୟରେ ପ୍ରେନ୍ରେ ଖାଇ ଖାଇ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଲାଗି ଯାଉଥିଲା । ଆଜିକାଲିକା ପରି ଏଆରଲାଇନସ୍ ଗୁଡାକ ଏତେଟା କଞ୍ଜୁସ୍ ନଥିଲେ । ପୁଣି ବରଫ ଓ କାଚ ଗାୟ୍ ର ରୁଣୁଣୁଣୁ ଶବ୍ଦ ଆଉ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଲାଇଟ୍ରେ ମୋ ନିଦ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଗଲା । ସକାଳ ଭୋଜନ ସମୟ । ଖାଇବା ପରେ ପୁଣି ଝରକା ଖୋଲି ବାହାର ଦୁନିଆକୁ ଉପଭୋଗ କରି । ଖୁବ୍ ମଜା ଲାଗୁଥାଏ ତୁଳା ସଦୃଶ୍ୟ ମେଘମାଳାକୁ ଦେଖିବା ପାଇଁ । ସବୁବେଳେ ଦେଖି ଆସିଛି ଆମ ଗଣେଶ, ସରସ୍ୱତୀ, ଦୁର୍ଗା ପୂଜାରେ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତୀଙ୍କ ପଛରେ ସବୁ ତୁଳାରେ ମେଘ ତିଆରି ହେଇଥାଏ । ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆ ମାରିଲି ସେଇ ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ।

ୟା’ଭିତରେ ଦଶ ଘଣ୍ଟା ବିତିଗଲାଣି । କିନ୍ତୁ ମୁଁ ଏପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ହେଲା ରେଞ୍ଜ୍ ରୁମ୍ ଯାଇନି । ବଡ଼ ଅସୁସ୍ଥି ଲାଗିଲାଣି । ମୁଁ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଭୁଲ୍ ବୁଝିଥିଲି ବା ଶୁଣିଥିଲି ଯେ ରେଞ୍ଜ୍‌ରୁମ୍ରେ ପଶି ଲକ୍ ହେଇଗଲେ ଖୋଲିବା ଟିକି । ମୁଁ ସେଇ ଡରରେ ଆଉ ରେଞ୍ଜ୍‌ରୁମ୍ ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ପୟାସ କରୁନଥାଏ କି ସିର୍‌ରୁ ବି ଉଠୁନଥାଏ । ଉଠିଲେ କାଳେ ଅସୁବିଧାରେ ପଡିଯିବି । ମୁଣ୍ଡଟିକୁ କମ୍ପଳରେ ଘୋଡେଇ ହୋଇ ବସିରହିଲି । ୟା’ଭିତରେ ଫାଇଟ୍ ଆଟେନ୍ତ୍ୟାଣ୍ଟ କେତେଥର ଯେ ଆସି ତିନର୍/ଲକ୍ଷ୍/ସ୍ନାକସ୍/କୃସ୍ ଦେଇ ଗଲାଣି । ମୁଁ କିନ୍ତୁ ଶୋଇବାର ବାହାନା କରି ବସିରହିଲି । ଆହୁରି ୪/୫ ଘଣ୍ଟା କେମିତି କଟିବ ସେଇ କଥା ଭାବୁଥାଏ । ଗୋଟିଏ ଘଣ୍ଟା ମତେ ଯୁଗଟିଏ ପରି ଲାଗିଲାଣି । ଆଉ ମୋର ଆମେରିକାରେ ମନ ନଥାଏ । ଆମ ଘର ବାଧୁରୁମ୍‌କୁ ଖାଲି ମୁଁ ଝୁରୁଥାଏ । ଶେଷରେ ମନକୁ ଶରୀରର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ସହିତ ସଂହତି ରକ୍ଷା କରି ମୋର ଆମେରିକା ଭୂମିରେ ଏ ପ୍ରଗତି ପୁଣି ପଦକ୍ଷେପର ପ୍ରାରମ୍ଭରେ ସହାୟତା କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ ମୁଁ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ତାକୁଥାଏ । ପରିଶେଷରେ ପାଇଲଟ୍ ଘୋଷଣା କଲା ଯେ ନ୍ୟୁୟର୍କ ଆଉ ଦୁଇ ଘଣ୍ଟା । ଝରକା ଖୋଲି ମନଟାକୁ ଅନ୍ୟ ଆଡେ ନେବା ପାଇଁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କଲି । ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ପ୍ରେନ୍ ତଳକୁ ଖସିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା । ଏଇ ସେଇ ‘ଆମେରିକା’, ମୋ ପିଲାଦିନର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ । ଉପରୁ ଘର ଆଉ ରାସ୍ତା ଗୁଡିକ ଚମତ୍କାର ଦିଶୁଥାନ୍ତି ଛବିବହିର ଛବି ପରି । ସେଇ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଉପଭୋଗ କରୁକରୁ ପ୍ରେନ୍ ନ୍ୟୁୟର୍କର ମାଟି ଛୁଇଁଲା ।

ମୋ ପିଣ୍ଡରେ ଏଥର ପ୍ରାଣ ପଶିଲା । ମୁଁ ସେମିତି ସେଇ ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅନୁସରଣ କରି ରେଞ୍ଜ୍‌ରୁମ୍‌ଟିଏ ପାଇ ନିଜକୁ ଚିହ୍ନା ମୁକ୍ତ କଲି । ଆଃ କି ଆନନ୍ଦ--ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଚିରସ୍ମରଣୀୟ ।



## କାଲିର ସମ୍ଭାବନା ଆଜିର ସତ୍ୟ

ସୁଲୋଚନା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ..... ଲେଖିଛନ୍ତି...



ପଛକୁ ଆଖି ଫେରାଇଲେ ଆଖି ପାଏନି । ସ୍ମୃତି ସବୁ ମନକୁ ବିହ୍ୱଳିତ କରି ପକାଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ପଛକୁ ଚାହିଁ ମୋ' ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ଜୀବନକୁ ବିଶ୍ଳେଷଣ କରେ, ଅବା ଆମେରିକାରେ ବସବାସ କରୁଥିବା ମୋର ପ୍ରିୟ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ବନ୍ଧୁ/ବାନ୍ଧବୀଙ୍କ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ଜୀବନକୁ ମାପେ, ପରଖ କରେ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସମାଜ ମୁଖପତ୍ର ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ମନକୁ ଆସେ, ଯେଉଁଠି ଆମେ କେତେଜଣ ନିଜର ଭାବକୁ ପରିପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପାଇଛେ କହିଲେ ଅତ୍ୟୁକ୍ତି ହେବ ନାହିଁ ।

ମୋ' ସହିତ ଆପଣମାନେ ହୁଏତ ଏକମତ ହେବେ ଯେ, ଆମେରିକାକୁ ପ୍ରଥମ କରି ଆସିଲାବେଳେ କିଏ ଭାବିଥିଲା ଯେ, ଏଠି ବି ଓଡ଼ିଆ କବିତା ବା ଗଳ୍ପ ଲେଖିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳିବ ଏବଂ ତାକୁ ପଢ଼ିବାକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅନେକ ପାଠକ/ପାଠିକା ମିଳିବେ । କିଏ ଭାବିଥିଲା, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅକ୍ଷରରେ ନିଜ ଲେଖାକୁ ଟାଇପ୍ କରିହେବ? କିଏ ଭାବିଥିଲା ଆଜିକାଲିର ସୋସିଆଲ୍ ମିଡ଼ିଆ ଓ ଇଣ୍ଟରନେଟ୍ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ପୁସ୍ତକ ପଢ଼ି ଆନନ୍ଦ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ କରିହେବ ? ମୁଁ ତ କରି ନ ଥିଲି ! ଗତକାଲିର 'ନାହିଁ' କେତେବେଳେ 'ସମ୍ଭାବନା'ରେ ପରିଣତ ହୋଇଛି ଏବଂ ସମ୍ଭାବନା ଆଜିର ସତ୍ୟରେ । ଏ ସତ୍ୟ ଆମର ସଂହୃଦିର ପରିଚାୟକ ଏବଂ ଏ ସଂହୃଦି ଆମର ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ପ୍ରଗତିର ସୂଚକ । ଏହା ଆମର ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜ ପାଇଁ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବ ଇତିହାସ । ଆସନ୍ତୁ ଆମେ ସଂଘବନ୍ଧ ଭାବରେ ଗଢ଼ିବା ଆମ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଇତିହାସ - ଆସନ୍ତୁ ଏକ ନୂତନ ଉର୍ମରେ ଭାସି ଭାସି ସପନ ଦେଖିବା !!





## Sticks Together

*Joy Gopal Mohanty writes.....*

I remember an incidence in my child-hood days. One day, my teacher brought a bunch of sticks to the class. He asked me to break one stick and I could break it just like that. Then he tied 10-15 sticks together and asked me to break them again. This time it was hard and I could not break them. Then he asked me, "Did you learn anything from this? " I was thinking about it. He continued, "What you learn from here, you can use it in your life. Did you notice, it was very easy to break one stick; but you could not break when several sticks were together? One can still break them together; but it will need more power than yours. If we tie many more sticks together, it will take even greater power to break them." So we learnt from these sticks, "United we stand and divided we fall."

I am thinking about this incidence while I think about this 46<sup>th</sup> grand OSA convention. In 1969, a few non-resident Odia families in USA and Canada got together in somebody's house and created an organization named "OSA" with a hope to grow with time. In fact, today it has grown to several thousand Odia families strong. Such is the "Unity" that has given strength to local Odias around Washington DC, to host a four-day *Mela* of first ever Global Odia Conference followed by OSA convention in the coming first week of July 2015. This event is expected to bring thousands of Odias from all over the world to the Gaylord hotel at Washington DC, to sit together, to eat together, to laugh together, to sing together, to dance together, to speak Odia in person among friends together, and above all to share their ideas and thoughts together via this souvenir "Urmi". Let this process progress year after year and keep OSA alive for many years to come. Cheers!!



## Unity and Progress - As I See

*Manoj Panda*



Unity and Progress are concomitant in nature, universal in vision, harmonious in diction and adroit in operation. From time immemorial, the planets, the stars, the elements, living, non-living all are functioning in their own ways to get the whole universal system continuing with their identities and activity domains interacting seamlessly. All these are possible because of intrinsic oneness existing on the background while the temporal diverse world running on its top.

However in our behavioral world, often we see many fissures that stem the overall progress in all levels of perception in one way or other to prevent it reaching the intended height. The cause behind is that the aforesaid intrinsic unity is not reflected in the same way outside both individually and collectively. In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson "The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is, because man is disunited with himself". It is an important observation. When the inside is broken within a being, that gets transmitted outside. Hence to ensure the outside unity, inner unity of body, mind and soul are important in every being. Imagine what will happen if the schism is introduced to the sub-systems governing the life in this world? Life will simply be disturbed and in the worst case will be extinguished. Cases in point are natural disasters like tsunami, earthquake, flood, volcanic eruptions etc. We are glad that we do not have much access to disrupt that Greater Unity that ensures the existence of Life. On the other hand our individual and collective activities do contribute to perpetuate that ubiquity of cohesion to some extent.

We understand now that how important is the role of unity in securing not only existence but also progress of life process. As a denouement of disunity the conflicts have risen and the ravages of the same have scarred the relationship fabric of this world from the highest level to the lowest in myriad ways possible. The root cause of this, lies in the perception of different identities based on zillion kinds of ideas, reasons, enterprises and what not goaded by lack of unity in the overarching landscape of diversity. Realization of the significance of identity from the most primitive level and understanding the same while traversing through the odyssey of countless discrepancies happening through multifold phases of time, is the key to maintain positive evolution in the realm of peace, amicability and beatitude. Once one traces one's identity to that primordial origin, then all contentions subside and a fertile ground of collaborative flourishing existence and its continuity is assured in no uncertain terms.

When the inner self unfolds to the new awakening of unity, it gives a strong impetus to extend the same with other people, community, and environment. And this greater unity helps build better living while propelling momentum in all dimensions extending from individual level to the humanity at large while serving societies, communities, nations and diaspora. The secret of collaboration and fellow

feeling is apprehended by all. Here are couple of excerpts from my poem “Beyond Tranquility- Cradle of Identity”:

Ingrained is the Savior in every heart cavity  
An awakened identity seasoned by the rainbow of Diversity  
Where each flower of Universe garden bloomed each identity  
As fluttering spray of flowers in the zephyr of unity and amity  
A divine harbinger of Dream and Sagacity  
Multiplying the sublime elegance into horizon infinity.

It is blazing trail of universal kinship  
Bold exposition of illustrious identity  
Where each identity is enlivened, enriched by one’s own abundance  
Culminating in Exploration of a novel stride  
Toward a Higher Consciousness  
In the evolutionary hierarchy.



## **United We Stand and Flourish**

*Babru Samal*

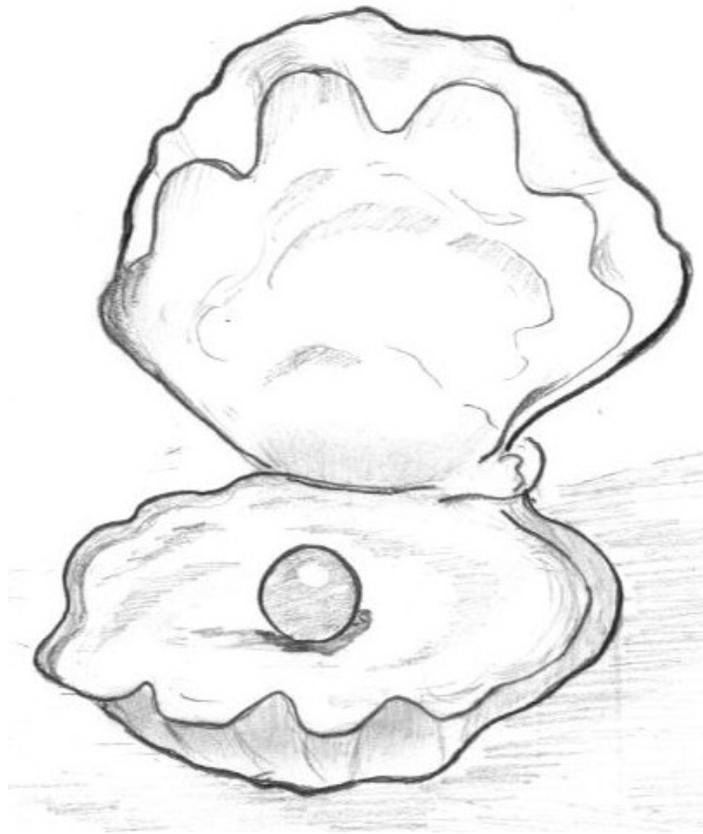
Our various faiths and features  
Accents, talents, hues and flavors of dishes coalesce  
To create this wonderful ensemble of us  
Composing a collage, an origami of our existence

Our federation and consolidation  
Like our faculty of senses  
Let us enrich our language, faith  
Tradition and culture  
Like the symphony of sounds  
Emanating from  
The flute, the sitar, the tablas and the violin  
Transforms the mundane individual vibration  
To a magnificence overture.



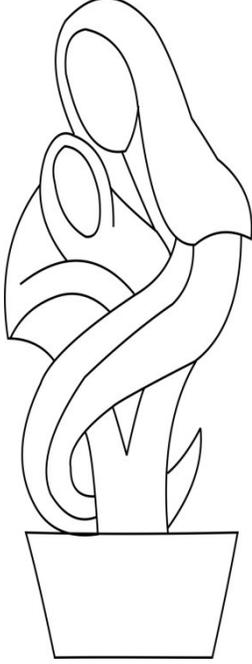
# ମୁକ୍ତା

Mukta - Pearls Uncovered



## ମା'କୁ ଉପହାର

ଗୋକୁଲ ମହାନ୍ତି



ତୋ କୋଳ ଛାଡ଼ିବା ପରେ ହିଁ ଦେଖିଛି, ଦୁନିଆ ଏ ଯେ ସତ ମିଛର ।  
ତୋ ହାତ ଛାଡ଼ିବା ପରେ ହିଁ ଜାଣିଛି, ସଂସାର ଏ ଯେ ହସ ଲୁହର ॥  
ତୋ ଡାକ ଶୁଣିବା ପରେ ହିଁ ବୁଝିଛି, ତୋ'ଠାରୁ ମଧୁର ନାହିଁ କିଛି ।  
ତୋ ଛୁଆଁ ପାଇବା ପରେ ହିଁ ଭାବିଛି, ସେଇ ଅନୁଭବ ସବୁ କିଛି ॥  
ତୋ କାନି ଧରିବା ପରେ ହିଁ ଜାଣିଛି, କେତେ ମହତ ସେ ପଣତର ।  
ତୋ ପାଦ ଛୁଇଁବା ପରେ ହିଁ ଲାଗିଛି, ଚଳନ୍ତି ଠାକୁର ତୁ' ମୋହର ॥  
ତୋ ବିନା ଜିଇଁବା ମରିବା ସମାନ, ନାହିଁ କିଛି ଅର୍ଥ ଜୀବନର ।  
ତୋ କଥା ଲେଖିବା ପରେ ହିଁ ଭାବୁଛି, ଶବ୍ଦ ସରିଗଲା ଦୁନିଆର ।



Gokul Mohanty lives in southern California with his little brother Mukul and parents, Smita and Gopal Mohanty. He is in 9th grade at West Ranch High School. He has been inspired by his grand father eminent writer Dr. Guru P. Mohanty to write and speak Odia language and adhere to its culture. He is passionate about literature.

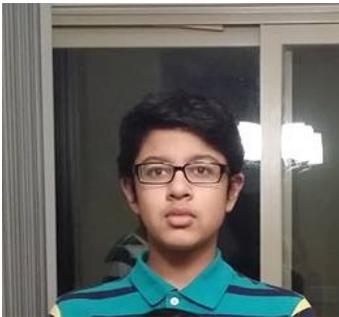
# Happiness

*Rohan Ray*

**M**y life is pure happiness  
Every day something or the other  
From when I wake up to when I go to sleep  
A boundless feeling of glee  
From a neighborhood full of friends  
to a party nearly every weekend  
Piles of homework every day, but that never breaks my spirit  
Instead I look to it as yet another game: Finish quicker and see your friends sooner  
Tennis classes with my best friend  
And the best coach ever for swimming  
Every negative thing is looked upon positively  
Homework as onward success and riches  
Boring classes as onward experience and perseverance.



Who said life's not fair?  
It's perfectly fair for me.  
To me, life is like a glass  
When the water is at the halfway mark, it's your choice how to describe it  
Half full? or half empty.  
It's your choice how you feel about it  
It's your choice how you act about it  
Without a positive attitude, happiness is but a distant thought.



Name: Rohan Ray, Age: 13, Grade: 7  
Address: 1864 Oak Forest Dr. Troy, MI-48085

\*Third Prize in 2015 Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing, Senior Category

## The Old Man

*Saswat Pati*

**A**n old man with a bag on his back stumbles down Kirby Drive  
His face is hollow and broken as if something has been lost inside.  
Shoulders that once stood proud and stout now slouch and fall  
Countless men pass by every day not willing to give him pay at all.

He tries to tell them of his sorrow in life, but they scorn his pleas  
All he has is his shopping cart full of booze and his futile dreams.  
Every morning he sees that the stars are flickering out,  
and ponders and contemplates if he took the right route.

He spends his time musing of what his life had to offer,  
And how he did not gather happiness and memories to fill his empty coffers.  
He thinks of everything that he has to regret  
Since now all that remains is the warm fire of his cigarette

Epilogue:

*I do not see him anymore, ambling along the road but he inspires me to follow the right path and not the wrong.*



**Saswat** (13 yrs) lives at East Glen Haven Blvd in Houston, TX. He is the son of Drs. Arati and Debananda Pati. He is an eighth grader at St. John's School. His hobbies include singing, writing poems, playing piano, and reading books.





## From the Grave

*Satwik Pattanaik*

The dawn of day, draws the night away;  
That holds the stars at bay.  
The sky once black, with a tinkling light,  
Now a shade of bright blood red.  
The bliss of sleep, crawls away,  
Get up and out of bed.  
The chilly air, pricks the skin,  
Reality and pain,  
So fresh comes flooding back to me,  
My comrades that lived, now slain.  
More of us march in ranks,  
To the pit now known as hell,  
As we lie in wait, with pointed guns,  
Think, "Will this be farewell?"  
To protect the people far and dear,  
We must lay down our lives.  
Is it all worth it?  
Ask our sons and widowed wives.  
Sticks and stones may break my bones,

But no bullet can pierce my soul.  
The devil lives in these bloody hands,  
That leaves men dead and cold.  
Where once was a heart, now only lies,  
A tiny bullet hole.  
I march down here every day,  
This graveyard now my home,  
So that my children don't have to see this  
grave,  
This grave that I now roam.  
When I look at the stars,  
And count, the folk that live in peace,  
I find the light inside of me,  
The reason that I fight.  
I sleep tonight,  
To rise again, and see the dawn of day,  
To fight another war,  
In the graveyard, where I stay.

---

Satwik Pattanaik: Age 15, Grade 9

## What's in A Name? More than An Array of Letters

*Shruti Nanda*

It was a very humid day in Bhubaneswar, when my family arrived at the temple where '*Nama karana*', a huge celebration to name my newborn baby cousin, would take place. As Oriya's, we have a very special ritual that is celebrated on the twenty-first day after the baby is born. This function is known as '*Ekusia*'. It is on *Ekusia* that the '*Nama karana*', or the name initiation ceremony is conducted.

My Aja and Aaaie had invited many family members and friends. Despite the treacherous heat in the temple, everyone around me wore colorful, Indian garments and waited patiently to see our new family member. Finally, my Mamu and Maie (aunt) arrived with my cousin. It was a time of jubilation; bells began to chime, and flowers were thrown everywhere. There was a special puja conducted, and at the end; each woman in our family took handfuls of flowers and turmeric rice, circling around him three times with a '*hulahuli*'. It symbolized the well-being of the baby, warding off evil spirits. The rituals of these traditional, religious festivities are amazing. Behind each tradition, there is a purpose and significance. Although as a child, one may not understand the purpose. However, these ceremonies and understanding your culture shape the child into a good citizen.



As I watched this, I experienced an "Aha" moment. I suddenly felt much more mature and grown up, because I realized that a person was going to look up to me, and follow my actions and behavior. It was not just the excitement and anticipation of a cousin brother; rather, it was a feeling of responsibility and obedience of an older cousin. While cradling him in my puny arms, I remember his closed eyes, so innocent, and sleeping soundly, like baby Krishna; I felt like a mother.

After the ceremony was over, we all ate the prasad and lunch. As usual there was quite a variety of food...almost endless. I especially liked '*Sirini*', Kanika and Rasogolla. Honestly, when I first saw *Sirini*, the brownish color liquid, it did not appeal to me, however, once I tried it, it was delicious. Then it was time to name the baby. It was interesting to see, how the Priest said his name should start with the letter '*A*'. I suggested the name, Aman Krishna Nanda. Apparently I was too young to understand that although he was part of our family, his last name wouldn't be '*Nanda*'. It would be Kar. I became irritated, and felt that I should have the right to name him. My Mom took me aside and calmly tried to explain that his parents have to choose the name, like she had chosen mine. She told me that similar ceremony had been done for me. At that moment, I realized how much thought goes into naming a child. Although I understood this, I still went off into my own world imagining his name was, Aman Krishna Nanda.

Finally, after a lengthy hour, the whole family came together and agreed on the name: 'Aarav', meaning Peace. My Mamu whispered the name in his right ear. He told me that his pet name would be Aman, also meaning peace. Ironically, my little cousin was practically the "messenger of peace". I was thrilled to hear his name would be Aman too, the name I came up with. Today, as I look back and wonder, I'm not really sure how the name Aman occurred to me; I guess I felt a sense of tranquility when I held him 😊



Age - 14 years  
Place - 14 Captain Forbush Ln, Acton,  
Massachusetts  
Grade - 9th  
School - Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

Interests - Enjoy dancing and choreographing,  
Karate and running. She loves outdoor activities, is  
on the Ski team.

## Remember Me

*Shreya Tripathy*

Imagine if I was given one moment,  
just a single piece of my past.  
I could hold it close forever,  
and that moment would always last.

I'd put the moment in a safe,  
within my heart's dwelling.  
I could open it when I wanted,  
and watch its retelling.

I have too many memories to share,  
so I keep them under lock and key.  
I hope you will look back on all our memories  
and be reminded of me.

After all we have been through,  
please keep me in your heart.  
As I replay all our moments,  
before we were apart.



---

Shreya is 13 years old.

\*Second Prize in 2015 Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing, Senior Category

## Lost Existence

*Srujani Das*



Is reality, a dream?  
Where everybody says, to be “unique”  
This lie will soon scream  
After it, becomes antique

Illusion after illusion  
In this fake, reality  
Living with delusions  
Identity, has a high mortality

The stench of our failure  
Unclear, no clarity  
Learn to be your own saviour  
Cherish your rarity



Time, is a thief  
But so are all of us  
We chose to steal each other’s relief  
We just, make a huge fuss

But why do we do it?  
Just to fit in?  
What happens to our own spirit  
That we add, to our sins?

Just be yourself  
Transforming, how does it help?  
Everyone should be, himself  
Don't get tangled in a mess like kelp

If we all act, talk and think the same way,  
Then how do we differentiate each other?  
We should all be unique, and have our own say  
We should be ourselves, and not even bother

Is reality, a dream?  
Where you say, you are “unique”  
This lie will soon scream  
After it, becomes antique

---

*Srujani Das is a grade 9 student in the IB program. She lives in Brampton with her parents and her younger brother. She enjoys playing the piano, badminton and reading books in leisure time.*

*\*First Prize in 2015 Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing, Senior Category*

## The Door

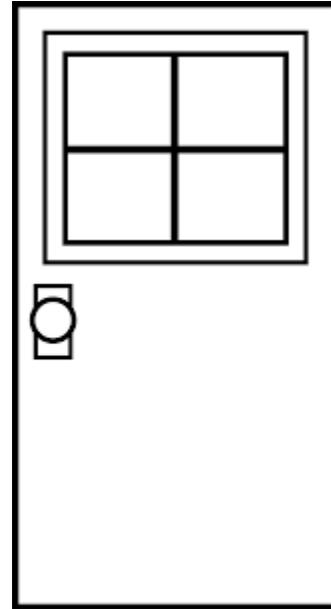
*Srujani Panda*

**A** long time ago  
There was an option  
When I had to pick a door  
Blue, black, white, or red,  
I didn't know where to go.

On the sunniest of days,  
The sky is blue.  
In the calmest of breezes,  
The sea is blue too.  
So beauty pulled me to pick the blue door  
Little did I know what I was in for.

I twisted open the doorknob  
And walked right in.  
How was I to know?  
What lied within?

The colours were different  
Hence were the paths  
But what I didn't know  
Was that they all lead to the same place, alas.

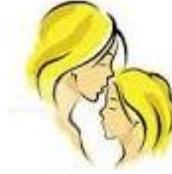


*Srujani is a Grade 8 student at Toronto. She is 13 year old. She lives with her parents Dr. Tanmay Panda and Dr. Sunanda Mishra Panda*

## Mama, Oh, Mama

*Suchismita Ojha*

Mama, oh, Mama of all the things I need to tell you,  
One stands out and that's that, "I LOVE YOU!!!!"  
You were there to put a Band-Aid on my knee,  
Whenever it got hurt, even though, you sometimes laughed evilly.  
You were there when I was hungry,  
You gave me something to eat,  
You never let me starve, and had delicious meals prepared for me  
(Except for mula (radish), alu (potato), and papaya. YUCK!!!!!!)  
You made sure I got good grades,  
Even though you never taught me how to play charades.  
Mama, oh, Mama you are my moral compass. You taught me  
everything I needed to know.  
You taught me from right and wrong, and a lot of  
Brahma Gyana.  
Mama, oh, Mama if there's one thing I have to say,  
It's that,  
You're more than my mama, you're my best friend!! 😊



*Suchismita enjoys music (piano), dancing (Odissi), writing poem and stories, and an avid reader. She is 13 years old and lives in Clarksburg, Maryland with her brother Ajeetesh , elder sister Suman and parents Arun and Ilwala Ojha.*

## REMEMBER TO FORGET

*Sushrita Haripriya*

I looked at Annika. I had seen memories of her lifelong joy, yet, now I could sense her soul's angst. Yesterday, she had passed away, shedding her bodily shell and unveiling her soul. Today, she stood with drops of cherished memories clinging to her illuminated soul, like moths attracted to a flame, a dangerous combination. As I approached what was once Annika, I saw a single memory come to her. It was a scratched and battered one, beaten from years of remembrance. I was curious, and I let myself delve into her thoughts.

Rested on an elegant chaise lounge, a young Annika sat in her mother's lap. Her eyes shone like rising suns, filled with as much curiosity as the legendary Pandora. She was a complete perfectionist. Everything that was associated with her had to be immaculate. She was, however, neither extremely beautiful nor unattractive either, an ordinary child when it came to looks. But she was charming nonetheless. Her mother, Kareena, mused over her problems at work, while her father, Ben, went to the kitchen for a snack. The ever-so-curious Annika thought out loud.

*"What happens to people when they die?"*

Her mother stared at her quizzically; probably wondering how her daughter got such questions.

*"Well, I don't know,"* said Kareena. *"Maybe you go to a happy place,"* she explained, *"where you forget everything and live another life."*

A rebellious young Annika decided against this. *"I don't want to **forget** everything! I want to **remember**. Forgetting is for old people."*

Ben rebuked; *"Annika! Don't say things like that. It's not nice to say things about 'old people'. They can't help it, can they?"* Annika let her body wilt in shame and sank into her mother's lap. *"Anyways,"* the flustered father continued, *"people don't know what happens for sure. My best bet would be with what your mother said."*

Annika sighed. She believed that her mother and father were right. If they were correct, she would have to take measures to remember herself when she would die. And since she had already declared that she would conquer the stated problem, to do the 'forbidden', there was a particular hunger for the defeat of her opponent, forgetfulness. She had to remember, but how? How could she possibly remember, and defy death, how? The answer to that remained untold, and it would not be a while before the sought solution would be revealed. For the time being, however, the light bulb of 'eureka' in her head was switched off.

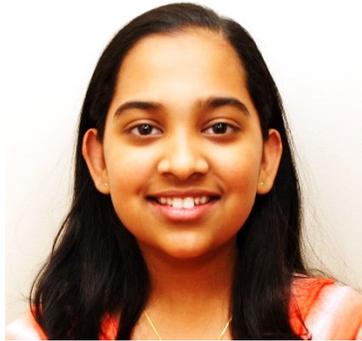
When she went to her private school in her wealthy town, the light bulb in her head was switched on. They were reading about a boy who filled a jar with pieces of paper, on which he wrote acts of kindness that had been directed towards him that day, so that he would remember them in the future.



“Well,” thought Annika, “I can use a jar to keep my memories in, so that I remember them.” It was a silly, childish plan, but it was worth a try. Every night, Annika would write the most memorable events from that day. But soon organizing her memories got chaotic. She had so many memories worthy of her jar that, soon, it was a box in which they were dispensed. That box soon was replaced with a suitcase. Soon, on her wedding day, she had written enough entries of memories to fill all in the notebooks (reserved for memories) which she put in her short 5’6” bookshelf (reserved for memories also). It was a diary in its own sense, a memoir of her pleasurable, envied life. To put her life in a clear perspective, she was the wife of a wealthy business man, and had seen no poverty in her life. Her story was not the ‘Rags to Riches’ type, but rather, the ‘rich princess who marries the even richer prince’ type. She lived in a mansion overlooking the beach, with an attached pier that was a room in itself, with walls and a roof, but the spectacular part was that it was glass-bottomed. Now I envision yet another memory of her.

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**Postal Address:** 583 Harrington Court, Harleysville, PA 19438



**Sushrita Haripriya** turned 13 in March. Born with a passion for dance, she is also an avid reader with an insatiable hunger for books. She resides in Pennsylvania with her mom, dad, and younger brother. She is in 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Pennfield Middle School in the North Penn School District, and her career goal is to be a pediatrician. Her first published story was for her school library in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, titled ‘The Best Day Ever’, and she has been writing ever since. Her sole goal is to enjoy life, and she hopes that she will live to see and contribute to an improved world.

# Elements

Anwesa Ranabijuli

Elements

**WATER**

**EARTH**

**FIRE**

**AIR**

Key parts of this planet

**WATER**

At times so cool and collected  
Yet has the power to rage like a storm  
Flexible like the wind  
Searing like the **FIRE**  
yet  
it's touch is cool  
like the gaze of the moon

**EARTH**

The most sturdy of all the elements  
it's stance defiant and stubborn  
but when broken in  
as shapeless as **WATER**  
It's form falling where it pleases  
like embers of **FIRE**

**FIRE**

It's scorching arms that caress  
as it encases it's victim in a fatal embrace

**FIRE** is violent

rash

impulsive

Yet it's also just as flexible as

**WATER**

but can steel it's gaze like **EARTH**

**AIR**

The kindest of them all  
it's comforting touch  
brushes against your exposed skin  
but like a mother  
it has a temper  
and can pierce you like **WATER**  
as it slices left and right  
Cutting through your skin  
with an impulse like **FIRE**

And a constant dominance like **EARTH**

Elements

Key parts of this planet

Simple, complicated, necessary  
a vital piece of our universe



Anwesa Ranabijuli,  
8<sup>th</sup> grade, 14yrs

## Temporarily Gold

Arya Mohanty

One part of his consciousness knew that he was still lying there, on the bed, in the Annex room. Yet another, separate part of his being was upright now, in a sitting position, and beneath him he could feel that he was not on the soft blankets at all, but rather seated in an uncomfortable plastic chair. His hands now held a few papers, all scarred with dark pencil marks. Lines, clefs and dots filled the paper. A word suddenly flashed in his mind *music*.



And he could see, though his eyes were closed. He could see other people of his age, most of them probably twelves or thirteens. They were all sitting, and the youths were of all shapes and colors, and were wearing many shades of various garments. All of the people were different, unique; yet they were a combined unit. They all had one thing in common, a beautiful sound being exerted from their lungs. They were *singing*. He felt a wave of warmth, family and togetherness. As he felt the notes move around in that small stuffy room, he felt memories being made, that were going to go down in history. He stood up, hand in hand with the others around him, and closed his eyes, as if he and the people around him each trusted their life on one another. A paroxysm of togetherness surrounded him, as if the singers were all merging into one heart; one soul. Suddenly, the music stopped, and the room exploded with applause.

Then the scene changed. There were metal benches lining the wall of the room he was in. Many different people were sitting on the benches while listening to the man in the middle. All of them were all wearing similar clothes; a uniform. They listened to a man in the middle, who was telling them how proud of them he was, how they had all come together to form something incredible. They put their time and effort into doing something to make other people's lives better. Tears sprung from the eyes of people surrounding him. Then, they all get up and start to walk, following the man. They step into the blinding sunlight, dust swirling around them. Their faces appear on the big screen. Cameras surrounded them, interviewers attacked them from all sides, yet they stood calmly collected in center of the chaotic mess and respectfully answered the questions. The undertone of excitement was easily perceptible, they seemingly couldn't stop smiling. The man once again called them to attention, they all stood in a 'U' formation.

"Just have fun," he said. They all at once started singing, a harmonious tune he had never heard before; yet it was so familiar. A tune they had rehearsed since September, when they all met. This was it the moment that they had been preparing for so many months. This was the

end, their last chance to sing together, and they all knew it. They cherished every note of this song, committing every second to memory. As they got near the end, tears gathered in the eyes of the girl next to him. They walked off the stage hand in hand. Months of excitement until this very moment, now comes to satisfaction and disappointment of it being over. The girl broke into a sob, and a ring of friendly embraces surrounded her. Soon all of them were in a clump hugging, cherishing every moment they had spent together, remembering all of the fights that just made their bonds stronger, remembering all the laughs they shared and the special moments. They all hugged and some cried, and they stood there together for who knows how long. Sometime during the hug, the administrator, the leader of the group who had become part of their "family," joined. They then said their goodbyes and went their different ways; like branches on a tree, they all grow in different directions, yet their root remains the same.

Then, there was a flash of light and his eyes slowly opened. He was back in the annex room, laying on the bed. The warmth of family had left him, and he was once an again in his cold grey world. If only he could live in a world like theirs. If only moments like that could last forever. If only friends like that could stay together forever. 'But dawn goes down to day', as Robert Frost said, 'nothing gold can stay.'



**Name: Arya Mohanty**

Age: 14 years, Class- 8th Grade at McCall Middle School,  
Home Address: 2 Ridge St, Winchester, MA - 01890

## Operation Iraqi Freedom Destroyed My Life

*Dabanjan Nandan Chowdhury*

Why can't I smile, a reporter asked me.

I see blood pouring in all corners of my sight.

I see darkness on all four sides.

My life has blown up! My life has exploded!

I am no longer precious!

My family has been vilified by evil ghosts  
with humongous weapons.

Massive macabre Eagles flew and  
shattered my community into rubble  
and shards of glass.

Red on the flag, fifty stars on the flag, the color of blood.

Red I see everywhere, 50 white stars I see everywhere,  
darkness I see everywhere.

My house vanishes into flames of agony.

All through, I see rivers of tears, death.

Darkness! Loneliness! Unhappiness!

Terror! reside in me; they go everywhere I go.

Those eagles, that color red, 50 stars all came  
and destroyed me. Blood pours in all corners  
of my sight. I see darkness on all four sides.

Debanjan Nandan Chowdhury is a 16 year old, rising senior at Clarksburg High School. He is the son of Debaki Nandan and Anjana Chowdhury and lives in Germantown, MD. He is in the school swim team, a Boy Scout in Troop 489, interested in drama and enjoys travelling the World.



## Renewed Determination

*Dev Satpathy*

Free will is too fickle.  
But without strong will,  
Progress will be naught but banal,  
So our destinies will not be still.

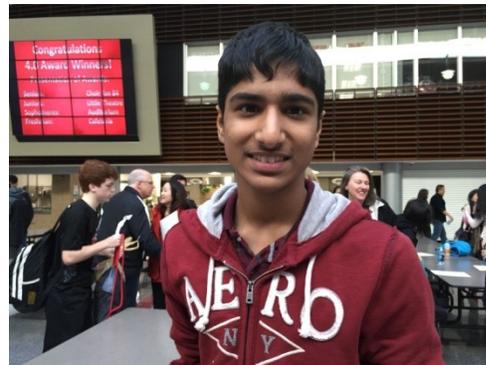


Destiny is too fickle.  
Why set out on a predetermined path?  
And fear others' wrath?  
Through our own actions,  
We can make our power triple.

Fate is too fickle.  
Our decisions must be our own.  
Unaffected by insignificant ripples,  
As actions others will condone.

Staying against all odds,  
Against the oncoming wave of adversity.  
We can choose to fight.  
And seize our destiny.  
As our fated right.

And we shall overcome,  
Anything and everything.  
And gain our freedom,  
To make sure our lives,  
Are ever changing.



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*Dev is a 14 year old freshman that goes to Naperville Central High School in Naperville, Illinois with his parents Sushant and Ipsita Satpathy. He plays the drums and enjoys learning other languages, like Chinese, Spanish, and Japanese.*

## Ashwin Jiang: An Initiative to Remember

*Gaurav Behera*

Ashwin Jiang was a student attending Hopkins College in Baltimore, Maryland. He was surrounded by beautiful artworks from various countries that were hung all around his school. There were several pieces of original artwork that stood out to him were odd-shaped masks from the South Africa, a Lotus bowl of Emerald from China, and a fresco depicting a prince of the Gupta Empire from India. Ashwin has always loved marveling at different styles of art and researching the progress of art over time.

Curiosity overwhelmed Ashwin one day after school when he was waiting for a bus, so he dashed through the vast halls packed with colorful paintings to where the artworks that boggled his mind were located. He looked closely at the artwork; examining each bevel or stroke. He kept asking himself why these pieces of art interested him at such an extent. While he was examining the items, he took note of the creators of the works of art, which were marked on each item. When Ashwin heard the bus approaching the bus stop at the front of the entrance of the university, Ashwin pushed his notes into his pocket, and he immediately dashed for the bus. He fortunately boarded the bus, but he was disgusted by the odor that grabbed his nose. Its intensity clouded his train of thought.

When Ashwin reached the building of his apartment, he jumped off the bus, and he raced inside. He threw open the door and jumped into the chair of his computer desk. He took out his notes and looked up the artworks over the Internet. After hours of scrawling the Internet, Ashwin found interesting yet disturbing facts about the fascinating artworks. He discovered that the artworks are from ancient times made by artists whose artworks were stolen and never returned to their rightful family. Somehow, the school must have acquired the pieces to artwork without the knowledge that they were stolen. He quickly jotted down his agenda for the next day to talk with administration about this matter.

The next day, Ashwin walked to the principal's office before school started to consult her of this matter. Ashwin was greeted by a warm welcome by the principal, and she asked, "Good morning, Ashwin! What brings you here today?"

Ashwin replied, "Well, in the hallways, I have noticed many pieces of artwork displayed. Three of them drew my attention."

"Which ones?" the principal replied, "There are many out there."

"I am talking about the masks, emerald bowl, and the fresco," Ashwin replied.

“Oh, those! Yes, those are the school’s most prized possessions!” the principal exclaimed, “What about them?”

Ashwin hesitated, “I did some research online, and those artworks seem to be...stolen,” he said.

The principal frowned, “Hmm. I don’t believe so. We got them from a museum that was closing down. I doubt they would steal such amazing artifacts.”

Ashwin replied, “I believe they should be returned to their rightful owners.”

“I’ll see what I can do,” the principal quickly replied, “I suggest you come back to me by the end of the school day.”

Ashwin sat through his classes as his day flew by like a breeze. His English professor persistently picked on him as his mind was in the clouds. His algebra professor simply ignored his dazing off. He simply had his mind on those seemingly stolen artworks. By the end of his last class, he was relieved to go back to the principal’s office to face the verdict of his conclusion. But, the principal was not present at the time, there was a note left for him which read, “All artworks within the college’s premises are acquired legally, and are in proper ownership of the college.” Ashwin still had his doubts about the artworks as he had seen identical artifacts on reliable news channels that depict the artifacts and declare them as stolen. He visited the new art history professor, Professor Bern, to gain more insight in this case. The professor greeted him warmly and he asked, “What can I do for you today?”

Ashwin asked, “Have you ever heard about the Lotus bowl of Emerald from China, or the fresco depicting Prince Sanjiv of the Gupta Empire?”

Professor Bern replied surprised, “Yes, I have! Those are lost or stolen pieces of history, but no one has been able to find them!”

Ashwin reflexively replied, “I have! They are on the northwest corridor!”

Ashwin and Professor Bern walked towards the corridor holding the precious artwork. The professor took a closer look at the objects, and he concluded that they seem genuine. He was surprised the college selfishly kept these objects when they belong to their respective families.

“I will bring an expert tomorrow to confirm my finding, and legal actions can be taken to bring these to their owners,” Professor Bern said.

Ashwin was excited to see justice, but he did not want to bring his hopes too high. The next day, Ashwin was glad to see another individual accompanied by Professor Bern examining the artwork.

“These seem genuine to me,” said the expert, “Why are they here? They are degrading in this environment.”

“Should the police be notified?” asked Ashwin.

“Yes,” Professor Bern replied, “the college has ignored returning these precious pieces of history. Actions should be taken”

Later that day, police officers seized the precious artwork and located their righteous owners. The college apologized for their lack of initiative as they received them from a closing museum, and believed that they were rightfully theirs.

That night, headlines blared, “Student Recovers Stolen Artworks of History!” The long stolen items were returned to their respective families. Ashwin received more recognition than he thought he deserved, but this proved that with a little initiative, a big difference could be made.



Gaurav Behera  
2071 Century View LN NE  
Rochester, MN 55906

Gaurav is 15 years old living in Rochester, MN. He is in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and attends Century High School. He is interested in English writing and literature; analyzing texts beyond the superficial.

## The Princess's Song

*Nistha Panda*

The royal guard ran in, his eyes screaming louder than any human voice.

"I'm so sorry," the guard said, with heavy voice. King Rayin followed the guard down hundreds of stairs to the royal gardens. What had happened to his baby girl? When they came to the flowery floor, he saw the doctor crouching over a body a few feet away. Her body. He ran to the body and pushed the doctor away. Her eyes were shut and sticky crimson fluid poured from her head. He enclosed her palms in his left hand and cradled her head in his other. Her eyes opened, ever so slightly.

"*Baba...*" just barely loud enough for the king to hear.

"Oh, Ravva, everything will be alright. Just hold on..." he whispered back. But she couldn't hold on. Not like her mother did for her last seven days. Minutes later, little Ravva slipped from her father's grasp. She was gone. Forever.

...

They were here. India. The smell of spices and mosquito repellent filled the evening air. Cole had never been here before, but his adoptive family had many times.

The setting sun made the reddish dust shimmer like gold. It was better than he thought it would be. Back in Montana, one of the kids in his class had gone to India over the summer. They say he came back so swollen with mosquito bites that they couldn't fit him through the door, but Cole couldn't find any mosquitoes now. His adoptive sister, Abani (Abi for short), said they came out when it was darker. She was probably right; she came here every year to see her grandmother, while Cole stayed with his adoptive father, Luke Lihn, in Montana. This time they weren't here to see Abi's grandmother. Instead, Abi's mom, Sashi Sahu, had come to set the scene for one of her books. Sashi, a writer, usually left the kids with her husband while traveling the world for inspiration for her books, but now her husband was gone and there was nowhere to leave them. They rode a bumpy car ride into the distance.

It was big, and glowing in the sunset. Perched on the mountain, the hotel's cerulean swimming pools gleamed in the orange sky, while splashes of colorful gardens and minarets surrounded the main building. Sashi said the hotel used to be a palace, till the king sold it. When they walked through the huge glass doors, twinkling chandeliers and kind faces greeted them. The three of them walked upon the scarlet carpet that was rolled to the reception. Sashi started checking in, but something was wrong with the bookings.

"Somehow they lost the records holding information about your room. But the nice man says you can pick any room you like for free." Sashi nudged Cole towards the desk. A young man with obsidian hair and tanned skin bent over the counter. His black and white tuxedo matched his guilty smile. All of him was perfect.

“What room would you like, young man?” His voice hinted with an accent.

“Eight,” Cole replied immediately. Eight was his lucky number. He was born on August 8th. He was eight years old when the Linhs took him off the streets. He had eight gifts to remind him of his biological parents.

The man’s perfect smile faltered. “I’m sorry, but room number eight has been taken. I can give you room number seven if you like.” Cole nodded. It’s not like he cared. Cole grabbed his suitcase and started walking. Abi and Sashi had taken the elevator to the second floor. He wandered around the first floor looking for his room.

He opened the door of the room and the ringing tones of a piano filled his ears. It was one of the most beautiful things he heard. He looked around the room. It was like any other hotel room, but there was a hole in the wall to his right; a hole to room eight. He dropped his suitcase and backpack on the ground and crouched down to peer through the hole. Room eight was much better looking than his. In fact, it looked like it was meant for royalty. A grand piano stood in the corner of the room. There was also a girl. She was sitting on what looked like a gold-plated bench, playing the grand piano that looked like Mount Everest next to her. Her wavy dark hair swayed as she moved to the music that her fingers made. She looked a few years younger than Cole, about nine or ten years old. She may have been young, but she had the talent of a professional. Cole could’ve listened to her play for hours.

Then someone rapped at the door. He ran up to open it. Abi was waiting, her fingers tapping away at her phone. She looked up.

“Is the room alright?”

“Um... yes.” Abi didn’t say anything about the music. In fact, she acted like it was never there.

“Good. We’re going to go out to eat dinner. Mom told me to come get you.” He shut the door behind him, and the little girl’s song disappeared.

...

Cole woke up to the sound of music. The little girl was still playing her song. Cole wasn’t sure if it was the same song. It sounded strangely familiar. It didn’t really matter what she played, it was always beautiful.

Knocking interrupted the song. Cole got up to find Abi at his door again. The streaks red in her matched her glasses, which matched her sparkly sandals. She was ready to go.

“YOU’RE NOT READY YET!!!! The cab is waiting outside. Go!” Abi pushed him towards the bathroom. He quickly got ready and found Abi was sitting at the edge of his bed staring the whole in the wall.

“Do you hear it?” he asked her.

"Hear what?" Abi gave him a confused and slightly concerned look.

"Nothing," Cole mumbled. He pushed the door open and Abi followed him. The cab was in fact waiting for him.

"Where were you guys?" Sashi glared as Abi and Cole slipped into the back.

"Cole wasn't ready yet." Sashi started to look worried. Cole was known to get up early and at the latest, on time. He didn't wake up late unless he was sick.

"Are you feeling alright?" Sashi's voice softened.

"Yes. Just a little jetlagged." Cole faked a yawn, but Sashi still didn't look convinced.

"If you say so... just remember I have to be at the Fort early tomorrow. It's my last day to explore and I need to know everyone of its secrets." Cole knew that the only reason Sashi had let her kids off of school for a few days was to see the great Amber Fort. There wasn't really anything great or mysterious about the fort, but it was said to be beautiful. Sashi had told him that she had gone on vacation to the Amber Fort when she was little. She said it was a sight she'd never forget.

The Amber Fort sat next to the midnight blue lake that made it look like gold flakes had kissed the sunset. Intricate paintings covered every inch of the walls. The entrance was grand, a staircase leading up to the large opening. Tourists rode elephants through the maze of buildings. Sashi lead the kids inside. The inside was even more colorful than the outside. The fort was like the North Star on a dark winter night, glowing bright and beautiful. Cole and Abi roamed the fort till it was time to go. They ate dinner and headed back to the hotel. Cole declined Abi's offer to watch a movie and retired to his bedroom, longing to hear the little girl play.

...

The next day was the same. Sashi ran off to do her research, while Cole and Abi explored the Fort. When they were done, they got in a rickshaw and rode back.

"Do you want to watch a movie?" Abi asked they ride back home. She was squished next to Cole in the small back seat of the rickshaw.

"Sure." Cole replied. As much as it pained him to think this, he really did need to get his mind off of the piano. After eating dinner the day before, he had sat there for hours listening to the little girl next door play till he finally fell asleep. Knowing Abi, she'd probably watch a movie so old that no one her age knew it existed or a cheesy Disney one. Abi usually had every line in the movie memorized, but she was good at not giving the plot away. Cole liked to watch her imitate the characters and make fun of the bad guys, something she'd been doing since they were in fourth grade.

"If you're going to watch a movie you're going to have to watch it in Cole's room because I've got some work to do before we leave tomorrow." Abi turned to look at Cole

"It's okay if we watch the movie in your room, right?" She was smiling brightly. Cole nodded, knowing that she really wanted to watch the movie. They hadn't watched a movie

together since her dad left their world behind. In fact, Cole couldn't remember anyone watching a movie for the last year or so, which was weird because he lived with Abi, who watched every movie that came to theaters, even if it was the worst movie created in the last century.

Abi wanted to watch "The Emperor's New Groove", her all time favorite Disney movie. Abi carried the DVD for that movie everywhere she went. As they watched Cole and Abi found himself laughing so hard his stomach hurt, like they did when they were nine. When the movie was over, the two of them sat there, trying to hold back their laughter in fear that they would forget to breathe. As they sat there in silence, Cole followed Abi's eyes to the hole into wall.

"Do you hear it?"

"You asked me that the other day. I still don't know what you're talking about."

"Come here. I'll show you." Cole crouched down on his knees next to the hole in the wall. He motioned for Abi to sit next to him. She walked up hesitantly, not knowing what to expect.

"Look through the hole." Abi did as Cole said.

"Do you see a little girl in the corner. She's playing the piano. It's kind of soft right now, but it's there. She's always playing that piano. And she's really good at it." Abi gave him a confused look.

"Cole I don't know—" Abi's phone started to ring. She grabbed the phone, listened for a few seconds, than hung up.

"Mom just called for me to come. I'll be right back." She ran out the door, leaving Cole to the music.

A few minutes later, Cole heard a knock on the door. Sashi was standing there.

"Can I come in?"

"Of course." Sashi went to sit on his bed. She glanced at the hole in the wall, then looked back at Cole, her eyes filling with concern. Cole stood there awkwardly, waiting for Sashi to say something.

"Come sit next to me." He wondered why she was here (instead of working on her novel), but did as she told. Sashi's eyes started to fill with pain, as she started to speak.

"Abi was telling me about something you said about a little girl next door," She waited for Cole to explain, but he wasn't sure if he wanted to. He wasn't sure where this conversation was going. "She also said that you kept asking if she could hear that little girl playing the piano. She told me that she didn't see or hear that little girl that you were talking about." Cole knew what she thought.

"I'm not crazy. She's really there — right in the other room. She's playing very softly right now. That's why you can't hear her, but she's there. I can show you. I can —" Sashi squeezed Cole's hand. Her eyes were getting watery.

“Cole, I-I know that Luke not here anymore has been hard on you. I’ve read pain can do things to the mind. I just want to make sure everything’s alright.” Sashi pulled Cole into a hug. Cole began to cry. He wasn’t sure why, though. He knew that he wasn’t crazy.

“I’m not crazy.” Cole whispered into Sashi’s shoulder.

“I know you’re not.” They sat there in silence, the only sound was the soft tones of a grand piano in the background.

...

They were leaving today. Sashi had helped Cole pack yesterday. There was just one last thing he needed to do. He needed to take a picture of that girl. He needed to prove she was real Cole pulled out his phone and looked through the hole.

“Ahhhh!!!!” Cole screamed and pushed away from the wall. He didn’t just see that. He peered through the hole once again. Instead of seeing a beautiful room with a little girl in it, all he saw was blood red.

Cole ran to the lobby and up to the front desk, where he was supposed to meet Sashi and Abi, but they weren’t there yet. Instead, he found that man from their first day there.

“Is there something I can help you with?” The man smiled warmly at Cole.

“There is a little girl in the room next door, in room number eight, but for some reason she disappeared. Instead all I could see was blood red.”

“Was she playing the piano?” The smiled had disappeared off the man’s face. Cole nodded. The man didn’t say anything, focused on something that Cole couldn’t see.

“What’s wrong?” Cole asked. “I want to know the whole story.” The man thought for a few more seconds, then sighed.

“Are you sure? It’s a long story.” Cole nodded.

“A long time ago, this hotel used to be the home to King Rayin and his lovely wife, Abha. They were happy as ever, with their wealth and their first child on the way, but the mother fell sick the day after the baby was born. Abha only survived seven days, her last words naming the child ‘Ravva’, the Hindu name for beauty.

“Ravva grew to be beautiful, just like her mother predicted. She was also a musical prodigy and she especially loved the piano. The child and her father were happy until the year when Ravva lost her vision to a disease that caused her eyes to become a disgusting shade of blood red. Even without her vision, Ravva was a great musician and knew how to take care of herself, but the king would not let Ravva out of his sight. He didn’t want to lose, Ravva like he lost her mother.

Occasionally, King Rayin had to leave his daughter for work. On those days Ravva was supervised by servants, but there was a day where she was left all alone. That was the day she died.” The man stopped for a moment. He took a deep breath and continued.

“After Ravva’s death, King Rayin sold the palace to his most a young guard, my great-grandfather. For years the palace sat there, gathering dust. Finally *Dadaji*, my grandfather, thought that the palace’s beauty should be shared with the world, so he made it a hotel. The

years went by and my father was born. When my grandfather died, my father took on responsibility. When *Baba* took on the job, the princess's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday was around the corner. In honor of Ravva's birthday, he redecorated her room so it looked the way it did when she was alive. He made it to be like a memorial, closing off the room to guests. It had everything, including her grand piano. Her room was known as Room 8. After Ravva's 150th birthday, *Baba* started to notice something. Every once in a while, there would be a person staying in Room 7 who said they saw a little girl who was exceptionally good at playing the piano." The man stopped and looked right into Cole's soul.

"You said you saw blood red this morning, right?"

"Yes. Why do you think that happened?"

"I think, she was looking right back at you."

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*Nistha Panda is an 8<sup>th</sup> Grader (13 year old) in Hopkins Junior High School, Fremont. She is artist by heart, she plays Upright Bass (was part of California All State Honors Orchestra), loves to paint, write mysteries and perform Odissi Dance. She lives in Fremont with her parents and her cute little brother.*



(Selfie painted by Nistha)

## **The Cyclops**

### **Odysseus's Journal**

*Parneeta Mohapatra*

The dry heat of the island was a blessing after months of voyage. My men and I walked off our ship and all took a deep breath of fresh air. Finally we had made it to land.

“Odysseus! Look here!” one of my men called out to me. I looked to where he was pointing and was shocked. A footprint, as big as man, marked the sand.

“Oh dear,” I thought to myself, “Have we entered the giants’ lair?”

Travelling a little further, we were delighted to see a cave. It had a humongous entrance, and the inside was the size of a palace. We scavenged the inside for food and found cheese.

“We must burn an offering to Zeus,” I told my men. So we lit a fire, and then sat around the embers.

And then HE came, dumping dry wood near the entrance and closing the opening of the cave with a boulder larger than even my ship, leaving the male sheep outside. He rushed over to the females, milking them carefully. And then he saw us.

“Oh no! It isn’t a giant! It’s the Cyclops Polyphemus.” Internally, I was screaming.

“Strangers, who are you and what are you doing here?” At his voice, I could hear the heartbeats of my men get faster from fright.

“We are from Troy, blown off our course. Our luck have it we stand here, and hope for your help - as custom is to honor strangers. Have care, for Zeus will avenge the unoffending guest.” I managed to keep my voice level headed, thinking to myself, “I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, and I cannot show fear.”

His reply caused the cave to shake, and elicited a terror from deep inside of me.

“I DO NOT CARE FOR YOUR THUNDERING ZEUS. We Cyclops are the sons of Poseidon, and for Zeus we have no fear.”

In one stride, he came forward and caught two of my companions and feasted on them, his movements similar to those of a mountain lion. I drew my sword to fight him but a paralyzing realization came to me. If I killed this brute now, then we would have no means of leaving the cave. So he fell asleep, and we waited for morning.

The sun rose, and the Polyphemus had a breakfast consisting of another group of my men. Then he went out to do his usual routine of a shepherd, but making sure to close the stone door as he left.

“Goddess Athena, please give me wisdom. How do I hurt him, but still allow us a chance to leave?” And then it came to me.

I would use a six foot section of an olive tree, and whittle the end to a point. I would then take it and grind the spike in the Cyclops’s eye, along with four of my men.

At evening, after the Cyclops settled and ate two more of my men, I went forward holding a bowl of a dark drink. "Cyclops, have some wine."

He seized the bowl, and downed two more in the matter of seconds. Drunkenly, he fell asleep to my tunes, "Cyclops, what is my name? My name is Nohbody, everyone calls me Nohbody."

I went and retrieved the olive branch from where he hid it under a pile of dung, and charred it in a fire. Taking a deep breath, I readied myself and the remainder of my men for the events that were to unfold.

We lugged the spike near the Cyclops and drove it into his eye socket. Blood spewed everywhere, eyelid and eyelash were seared. The great Polyphemus let out a roar and we jumped back in alarm. His screams reached the ears of nearby Cyclops, and they came and asked what was wrong. Polyphemus replied with "Nohbody's tricked me! Nohbody's ruined me!" and the other Cyclops left, and to this I let out a hearty laugh.

"How would we get away now?" I wondered. Then I saw the rams, and since of pride filled me as I drew on my wits. I tied three rams together, and slung a man under each middle one. This was a difficult feat, as the rams smelled so vile, none of my men wanted to go near them. Afterwards, I tied myself to the largest, woolliest ram out of the flock.

Gagging from the smell, I waited till morning in misery, for when the Cyclops would let the sheep out for their graze.

Out in the open, we dropped and rolled out from under the rams and ran to our ship. Turning and counting the men we lost, I saw my men's faces turn to those of grief. We loaded what sheep we could onto the ship and set sail.

Turning, I taunted the Cyclops. In his fury, he broke a piece of the hilltop and threw it down at us; however, blessed we were as it missed the ship by mere inches. I cupped my hands around my mouth to taunt him again, only to be reprimanded by my crew. I could not help but let out one final shout. "Cyclops! If a mortal man were to ask how you were blinded, tell him it was Odysseus who took your eye!"

My actions consequently caused Polyphemus to send a prayer to his father Poseidon. "Oh hear my lord, thou father: grant that Odysseus never see his home, and should he see his roof again, let that day be far, and allow dark years in between. Let him return without his companions and return to bitter days at home.."And that was the last I heard as we drifted away from the home of the Cyclops. "Oh, no. What have I done?"



Parneeta Mohapatra is 14 years old.

**Unnamed**  
*Rachel Woody*

In nature how obscene it seems  
For doves to beat ravens down  
To bind their feathers with weathered  
Vines and force them to the ground

What is the raven but a dove?  
Who dons the shrouds of mourning?  
And perches upon rooftops-same  
To rouse the slumbering sun

Although the coat he wears may gleam  
Opaque, obsidian, sleek  
Although his cry is as a scream  
He, too, flies, free and dies as meek



Rachel Woody is of age 15. She attends Middleton High School in Madison, WI

## From the Unraveled World

*Rishi Satpathy*

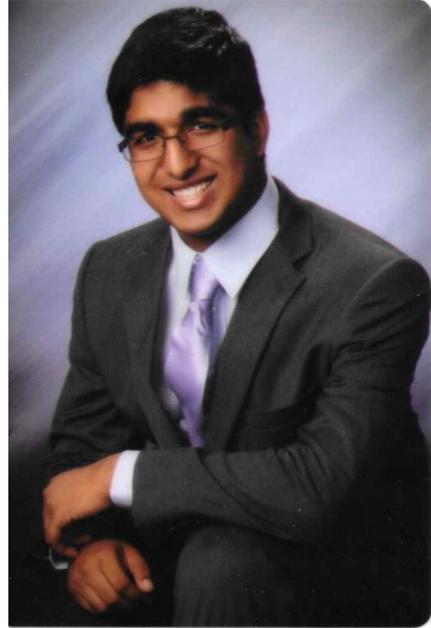
As the world splinters 'round,  
Everything fades to white.  
When looking, all to be found,  
Is anything but bright.

All the world is splintered,  
And nature has been stirred.  
But in this world of darkness,  
I can face forwards, dauntless.

Bravely defiant, I rush into the unknown,  
Into worlds I have never known.  
Through and through,  
Changing and making myself anew.

Looking back through this unraveled world,  
Seeing all the blankness within.  
I wake up with a jolt,  
And realize where I have just been.

With regret in my eyes,  
I let go of this guise.  
Looking back on this myriad of experience,  
I decide to reject dissidence.



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*Rishi is a 17 year old that lives in Naperville, Illinois with his parents Sushant and Ipsita Satpathy and his brother Dev. He loves to sing.*

# Moksha

*Samyak Mishra*

What is Moksha? Dictionary answer of which is liberation from rebirth cycle. How would one reach this Moksha or even why would one want to attain Moksha?

You can find studies of Moksha in Hinduism as old as the first millenium B.C.E. Different schools teach moksha in different ways resulting in multiple interpretations. One definition of moksha is linked with Samsara which sees human life as cycles of rebirth. This cycle was seen as a cycle of suffering as each life is subject to pain and injury. By being released from this cycle, one's soul would get freed from suffering or attain moksha. According to Klaus Klostermaier, a researcher on Hinduism, moksha can be attained in this birth by removing all obstacles in life and living a humane life. This gives psychological liberation from adhyasa, fears besetting one's life, and avidya, ignorance. According to Daniel Ingalls, Moksha in many schools is taught as a natural goal beyond dharma or duties. Self-discipline is the path to dharma, moksha is self-discipline perfected that it becomes second nature. Dharma is step one in the process of attaining moksha.

The concept of Moksha is also found in other religions like, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. In Buddhism it is more commonly known as nirvana. Nirvana is attaining highest happiness In Jainism, Moksha is being released from the cycle of births and deaths so one becomes a siddha, one who has accomplished the ultimate objective. In order to do this one must get rid of all karmas because if karma is left then it must be fulfilled. In Sikhism the concept is known as Jivan mukti which is realization of the ultimate reality or jnana and is the master of sense and self.

According to the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that one should give up everything and surrender himself to Him to reach Moksha. But what does giving up everything mean? According to Valayapet Ramchariar, Lord Krishna's words are directed towards Arjuna's ignorance. Arjuna knows Krishna is Him or the Supreme One, but he does not know how to reach him. Krishna tells Arjuna and the rest of the world that the only way to reach Him is through Supreme Surrender at his feet and gets rid of the ties to objective things.

How do we lead our everyday lives to attain Moksha? Moksha to me means happiness and looking for this happiness inside instead of outside. After going years to Chinmaya mission, a Vedantic school, my understanding is, we first have to think about the things we are attached to that are unnecessary such as our gadgets, clothes, money which can create distractions instead of fulfilling a need. At the same time, we need to hold tightly to our values and respect our loved ones by following our dharma or duties. We should live a good life and follow our dharma. As a teenager my dharma is to learn and respect. I feel Moksha can be attained in this life right now right here.

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Name: Samyak Mishra, 8th Grade  
Fischer Middle School, IL

2395 Adamsway Drive, Aurora, IL



## Dance

### *Sarasi Rout*

Roses are red  
Violets are blue  
Dancing is the best thing I ever knew

Dancing has power  
Dancing has a flash  
Don't just give up and put dancing in the trash

You show passion  
You show expression  
Dancing gives you a nice impression

Follow your dreams  
Follow your heart  
Give it a try like you did in the start

It tells a comedy  
It tells a mystery  
Dancing is how you tell a story

Birds and flowers  
Trees and grass  
Dancing always starts from scratch

Now you know, what to do  
Try it out  
If dancing is right for you.



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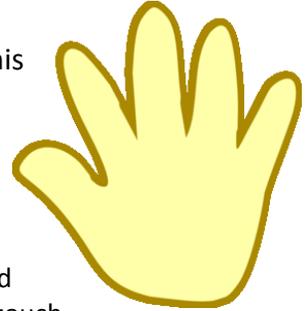
Sarasi Rout is 9 years old and is a third grader at Buffalo Trail Elementary School in Aldie, Virginia. She is the daughter of Subrat Rout and Ipsa Mohanty and elder sister of Shayona( two and half years ). She loves to read, write, dance and play soccer, basketball. She is very active and fun loving. Her favorite pass time is to play

# United We Stand, Divided We Fall

*Shivank Mishra*

Is it important to stay together in life? I think so. I will illustrate this through the story of the five fingers.

The human hand has 5 fingers. The pinky, ring finger, middle finger, index finger, and thumb. One day they fought. The pinky said that she was the cutest. The ring finger said that she was the most beautiful. The middle finger said that he was the tallest. The index or pointer finger said that he could point to everything in the world. The thumb said that he was the strongest. All of them said they didn't want to be with each other so they spread themselves out so not one touch each other. No one wanted to work with each other. When a man dropped something, he could not pick up. If he wanted to cook, he could not cook. When he was hungry, he could not eat anything. Without food, he was hungry. The body began to droop from not eating and the fingers suffered along with the body. After a while the five fingers realized if they don't work together they can't do anything. They finally decided that they would be friends so they could eat food and drink water and live and have fun. In the end they forgave each other.



In the story the five fingers learnt that they needed to work with each other to do their job. An example from the human world is in the game of football. It is easier to play with a team rather than by yourself. If you are working on a project it is more fun to do it with a partner rather than by yourself. Doing things with a team makes things more fun and easier to do.

The five fingers began as enemies but at the end they became friends. They had to become friends so they could do their job together and not by themselves. That is why we should work together to do our job in this world. They could survive and had fun when they became friends and so should we.

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Shivank Mishra  
4th Grade  
Steck Elementary school

2395 Adamsway Drive  
Aurora, IL-60502

## Magic of Spring

*Simoni Mishra*

I slide open the door leading to the deck with my winter jacket on, yet, something is different. The air doesn't have the chilly feeling to it as it had before. There is action in the air, warmth with the sunshine that switched winter to spring. The amount of energy that had hibernated inside me in winter for months bursts out of me within a second. I immediately throw off my jacket and run.



As I step from stones to the lawn, the smell of our dinner and the sound of the roaring stove fade away. The fragrance of the distant cherry blossoms in my neighbor's yard engulfs my senses. For, no matter how long you wait out the day beside blossoms, the urge for it still remains. For every new breathe that is taken in, newborn enchantments arise. Nearby, in our yard an oak tree patiently spreads its branches for the comfort of the small robins that were chirping and twittering on its limbs, their lovely spring tunes. I spot the cherry blossom tree who is conducting the music that the natural musicians were making. The lush grass sways to the beat as the delighted audience. I sit right next to the oak tree watching the lingering clouds in the clear blue sky, with the cold touch of my lemonade soothing the heat of the bright orange sun. I lean back onto the oak tree to enjoy the beautiful spring afternoon.

I close my eyes and wait for something to happen. Just above the horizon, the sun is slowly setting, little by little, hinting that night will begin when the day will end. I think of our beloved spring. School felt like the usual, a day of math, reading, social studies, and science all smooshed together in a sandwich with no room to even breathe. The different sensations of spring drive away your stress when you get home. I remember when I was younger, the moments I passed in this delightful season; the time when I twirled around on our driveway with an umbrella in my hand when it was raining. Just before that, the winter had almost fully frozen my body from head to toe, and the number of jackets I was wearing was uncountable! The king of seasons sweeps away the layers of the ice cold snow with its deep rays of the sun dazzling everywhere. Fortunately, year after year, spring has never failed to return after a long year.

My thoughts were scattered when a couple of minutes passed silently till I heard the familiar sounds of the kids from my neighborhood starting to round up for a game of the usual, basketball. At first, I just watched, until I gathered enough energy to walk out of my afternoon snooze and join the game. Occasionally, another child would come and ask to play. I got up and raced to them, the gentle breeze blowing against me with each step. I waited patiently for my

teammates; looking around to position myself more accurately. It seemed like in a flash the game was over. I rounded up my teammates and again we played. Every moment of the game was spent on concentrating heavily on the ball and where it is. Bounce! Bounce! I hear the rubber's emphatic cry to play. Soon our team scores and I decide that it is time to retire from a day of basketball. I go inside and think, after a hard day of school imprinting your body, only the glorious feeling of a beautiful spring day can cure you.



*Simoni Mishra is a fifth grader at Cold Spring Elementary Magnet program in Potomac, MD. Apart from writing she loves to dance, sing and enjoy the water.*

\* First Prize in 2015 Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing, Junior Category

## Asthma and Me

*Sulagna Dash*

Kids like to eat ice-cream and popcorn, right? They also like to play with their siblings and talk to friends about cool things. But they do not like to do all these fun things when they have a bad cough. When I was 9 years old, that was exactly what happened to me. I had a cough which wouldn't go away with simple over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and cough syrups. I was not enjoying anything at all!

My cough started in March when I had a common cold. My doctor advised me to use the common OTC medicines, but it did not help. My mom then tried to cure it with honey and ginger. She also gave me medicine for acidity thinking that my habit of drinking less water at school might be causing acidity and cough. But instead of getting cured, the cough became worse. I felt terrible, exhausted, fatigue, and restless all the time. At times, I was coughing continuously and my throat hurt a lot. It was quite difficult for me to eat or sleep as I started throwing up while coughing. Sometimes, it gave me chest-pain too. My family was quite worried seeing my condition. Neither I nor my mom could sleep at night!

A week later, when the cough didn't show any sign of improvement, my mom took me to the pediatrician. The doctor checked me thoroughly and could hear wheezing. Then she did some tests and diagnosed my cough as **asthma**. She gave me a beautiful fish mask to put on my face which covered my nose and mouth! A pipe was connecting the mask to a machine called *nebulizer* in which she put the asthma medicine *Albuterol Sulfate*. I was asked to sit quietly and breathe as much as I could. I read few books while I was on the nebulizer. In about 20 minutes, I felt a lot better and relaxed. The doctor talked to my mom and prescribed some medications for me. I got to bring my new nebulizer and an inhaler home with me! The nebulizer box had many stickers, activity books, crayons, and other fun things inside it.

For the next two weeks, I had to use the nebulizer and inhaler twice a day – once in the morning before leaving for school and once at night before going to bed. Each nebulizer session took about 8-10 minutes. Before I start the nebulizer, I always gather at least ten books near me to read. So I never felt bored while on the nebulizer.

The activity books I got from the doctor's office had some information for kids on asthma. I learned that asthma is a disease which makes it difficult for air to get into your lungs. Some every-day asthma triggers are pets, mold, hard exercise which makes you breathe really fast, dust in your house, and dust mites. Did you know that, sometimes getting really excited, feeling very mad, sad, or scared also can cause an asthma attack?

A couple of facts on asthma which I found on the internet surprised me! For example, I read that cockroach droppings are asthma triggers. I remember seeing cockroaches during my trip to Odisha, India; but never thought that they have some asthma connection! Another interesting thing I read was that some people eat bat meat to cure asthma! I wonder how people believe in such weird things! Asthma is a long-term disease which doesn't have a cure. You can only control it.

My doctor had given me a chart to help monitor my asthma during the course of my

treatment. The chart had three colored sections: green, which was for 'controlled asthma', yellow, which was for 'uncontrolled asthma', and red, which was for 'dangerously uncontrolled asthma'. The doctor told me that I was in the yellow section and could come to green with the help of my medicines. I started taking my medicines twice a day, but after two weeks it changed to once a day. It took me about one month to reach the green level! I remember I was taking my inhaler for a longer time on need basis. When my cough went away completely my doctor advised me to stop taking medicine. If only I get asthma like symptoms again (especially during spring allergy season), she advised me to take my inhaler.

I am very happy that I don't have to take my asthma medicine anymore. In my daily life I learn Odishi dance, go to swimming class, and participate in different sports without any breathing problem. I enjoy playing outside and talking to my friends for long! Now I like to eat popcorn and ice-cream with my little brother once again.....



Sulagna Dash  
13612 Palmetto Circle,  
Germantown, MD 20874

*Sulagna is 10 years old and attends 4<sup>th</sup> Grade at Ronald McNair Elementary School in Germantown, Maryland. She lives in Germantown with her dad, Pratap Dash, her mom, Bijayalaxmi Dash and her little brother, Subham Dash. She loves to read books, act in Odia dramas, sing classical music with keyboard etc.*

# Mystery of Missing Emerald

*Yogesh Mohapatra*

It was just another scalding hot day in Egypt. Amber and Lavezzi had just finished outside, taking a cool drink of water. They chattered away happily, talking about the things they would do tomorrow. Lavezzi's father, Mr. Frank, who was an archaeologist, called her to come home. "Bye" Lavezzi yelled. "See you later", Amber replied. Amber looked at her emerald ring, a very precious present for her and a similar one for Lavezzi on last Christmas. 'I can't wait till tomorrow,' she thought. After she said goodnight to her mother, Mrs. Annemarie, who was the President of Egypt, Amber dragged herself to bed, thinking what she would do the next morning.

Soon enough, it became midnight. Amber was in deep sleep. All of a sudden, there was a huge explosion behind her. The window fragments flew, falling on her bed. She woke up, startled, until she saw a dark figure looming over her. "MOM, DAD, SOMEBODY HELP" she cried. The figure grabbed her hand and took the ring, throwing her to the ground. "Here, Here, Here!" a dozen of security guards muffled voices yelled as they were frantically trying to open the door. The dark figure looked up, jumped out the broken window, and drove through the dark sand dunes.

"Omnee, Omnee, we need your help," Mr. Frank yelled into the telephone. The famous detective from the U.S. was best friend of Mr. Frank. "What happened?" Omnee asked. Mr. Frank told him what had happened the previous night. "If you don't help, the President will keep the amusement parks and anything fun for kids closed until the emerald ring will be found." Mr. Frank replied. "Okay, when do you want me to come?" Omnee asked from other side. "Now would be good." Mr. Frank muttered. "All right, see you tomorrow at the airport." Omnee replied.

To find out the first clue, Omnee decided that he should start from where the ring was stolen. After receiving permission from the President, he took a look at Amber's bedroom. There was still broken glass, and judging from the shape of the glass broken, a person with military boots must have broken in. After looking over the room, he met with Amber. Although it was a bit awkward, a world famous detective talking to a 9 year old, they discussed as if she was an adult. Omnee asked all types of questions, but the answers were pretty straight forward.

In the heat of everything, the president of Egypt forgot that Lavezzi also had emerald ring too. So when Lavezzi was skipping to the Amber's room to ask if she could come play outside, Mrs. President said " No, and in fact young lady ! You will be sending to jail with your father because you stole my daughter's ring. "What..." Lavezzi said. But before she could say anymore, the emerald ring was gone from her little fingers and she got taken away by the guards. She and her father was taken to the jail within no time.

While Mrs. Annemarie quickly paced to get to her daughter's room, Omnee stopped her. "So you found the ring?" he asked. "Yes." Mrs. Annemarie replied, panting with excitement. "Well, where did you find it?" He asked. "From Mr. Frank's daughter, obviously Frank and Lavezzi are the thieves we were looking for" Annemarie retorted. "I know Frank does a lot of things, but thievery is not on the list." Omnee exclaimed. "Well maybe you don't know him that much after all." Annemarie yelled. "Well, Madam! I would request to ask your daughter yourself." Omnee smirked while controlling his temper. "Yeah, and we will see who is right." The president shrieked as she stomped out of her room to find her daughter.

"Honey, I found it." the President of Egypt said. "Thanks Mom! Where did you find it?" Amber beseeched. "With your friend Lavezzi," She replied. "Wait, where is she now?" Amber inquired anxiously. "Ohh! she is enjoying the tortures of the jail." the President replied with a cruel smile. Amber took off her ring that her Mom just put into her finger and said with a heavy tone " Mom this is hers. I and she are the only in Egypt that have this similar emerald rings." "I.. What..." she stammered. " And now my friend is in jail having the worst day of her life, for no reason." Amber cried. "Guards, release them." The president ordered. "Thank you, thank you Mom thank you." Amber replied still sniffing.

"I did tell you that Frank is not a thief. But don't worry, there still is another way to find out." Omnee said. He explained his plan to the president. " It could be used, but people may lie." the president of Egypt tried to explain. "Oh, I will find who is lying and who is not, Madam." Omnee replied with an unnerving smile.

The plan was to get ambassadors from every country and to ask questions to all of them, the same ones, and during that, to finally unmask the thief. True, people may lie, but that was when Omnee's experience was to work. He would then ask the people more questions whom he suspects, this time privately, putting the suspect under pressure, and hopefully unmasking everything they knew.

The Ambassadors of every country summoned. After talking about the case, Omnee asked questions. If one would have notice, Omnee was beaming with clues. So, he dismissed everybody, and decided to stay at Frank's house.

At 3 O' in the morning Omnee woke up with a start. He knew something was wrong. Since Omnee worked in the Army, he had his own rifle. He strapped it to his back and quietly walked to Frank's room. Nothing suspicious. He walked quietly to Lavezzi's room and almost gasped. He was lucky that he didn't peep or else he would have given away his position. Right when the dark silhouette was about to take the ring, Omnee took out his gun. The figure froze. He took out his gun and pointed it at Omnee. Suddenly three other men appeared at the room, their guns pointed at the figure. Suddenly, smoke poured out of nowhere.

"Lavezzi" Omnee yelled. Fortunately she understood. She tucked and rolled under the bed. 'Duck!!!!!!' Omnee's instincts screamed. He ducked and three bullets hit the place he just was standing. Then he heard someone's grunt. Finally the smoke cleared.

There were 2 people lying on top of each other. One of them was a security guard and the other was the most wanted person in last 6 days who was an expelled army captain of London, notorious for smuggling precious jewelries, artifacts, ancient sculptures around the world. Omnee told the guard to get off. Omnee looked through the broken window and grinned with success that his plan worked as the thief could not go out the window. Hundreds of armed men were gathered down there, ready to arrest him. Omnee called some of them up. Omnee and the policemen searched the culprit's pockets and found the missing emerald ring. Omnee handed over it to Amber. Most importantly, the President declared significant discount in amusement park's entry fee which made every kid of Egypt thankful to Omnee. For the week of the chase, every child in the Egypt that went to school had a break, in honor of Omnee's great feat.



Postal Address: 61 Winding Hill Drive, Hackettstown, NJ 07840

Age - 11yrs

Grade - 5th

School- Chester M Stephens Elementary School, Mount Olive, New Jersey

Interests- Basketball, Chess, Music, Reading

## July the 4th

*Ajitesh Ojha*

I can see the sky like with beaming lights  
With so many colors  
It is like a dream in the sky  
So pretty  
In red green golden and blue  
And in so much other colors  
In the sky on July the Fourth.

In the OSA Convention ...  
So many friends and families come together  
To celebrate with joy  
It is so much fun  
With all your friends and family by your side  
You are as happy as can be  
With a day of fun.



Ajeetesh Ojha 3rd Grade, Age 8

***Ajeetesh enjoys music (piano), arts, biking and swimming and lives in Clarksburg, Maryland with her sister Suchismita , elder sister Suman and parents Arun and Ilwala Ojha.***

## An Unspoken Bond

*Amrita Sahu*

I hide behind a rock  
Compare my mundane self  
To the passion in the wolf's eyes  
Standing out in the darkness  
Glowing  
The flames dance a beautiful piece

And he stares on  
Suddenly he throws back his head  
Let's a song loose  
Echoing through the forest night

Spirit Wolf, Spirit Wolf  
Just let me see  
Spirit Wolf, Spirit Wolf  
Just let me be  
Brothers and sisters come, come  
And see the spirit so long gone

The final note rings in my ears  
How do I understand  
I do not know  
I am but a normal being  
With no powers of such

But all understand that raging storm  
Beneath that calm attire  
That wondrous gleam  
That sadness, that deadly fire  
Is a harbinger of news

Good or bad, I cannot tell  
Then...  
A moment of complete silence  
Broken by gunshots

I turn in fear  
Urge the friend on  
He stays where he was  
His paw beckons  
and his mind reaches out to me  
He calls  
Join me, brother  
Come with me  
Feel the pull of the wild  
Join me in my race against time

And I agree  
I come with him  
I chase and I leap  
I cut through the wind  
Then I stop  
I look around

But brother wolf is gone  
And I hear  
A whisper through the trees  
Spirit Wolf, Spirit Wolf  
Thank you for finding me.



### About Amrita Sahu:

Amrita, daughter of Prakash and Manaswini Sahu is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 11 years old. She loves to read, write, and draw. She enjoys classical dancing – both ballet and Odissi and learns Hindustani music. Her latest interest is doodling.

\*Third Prize in 2015 Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing, Junior Category

## The Disaster

Anika Satapathy

Her face beading with sweat  
Feet slowly slipping off the edge  
Knuckles growing a bright red  
Heart thumping to the beat of the distant drums  
Head bent over her chest  
Eyes wandering the hole beneath her  
    She gripped on for her life  
Along the edge of the active volcano  
In the hot air  
Above the rapidly churning lava  
    Rushing up like blood in a vein  
With a “whoosh”  
Below her a new ground appeared  
Without a grieving moment to spare  
Around her the ground grumbled and gritted.  
Near her a crack sprinted towards her  
Past her as she ran  
Behind her the lava emerged  
    She raced down the side of the volcano  
    A storm started brewing  
Its storm clouds spinning  
Turning into a tornado  
Towards her it moved  
    She darted out of the tornado's path  
    Lightning struck the mountain  
    Rattling, reaching, racing  
Its stones tumbling down  
Creating an landslide tumbling towards her  
    She swam across the frigid river  
    Waves growing by the minute bigger  
Slowly turning into a small tsunami  
Almost overtaking her  
    Finally she reached the other side  
    From the disaster spot she scrambled aside

Face wet with precipitation  
Hair clung to her face  
Heart thumped in her ears  
Mind processing the disasters that happened  
Knowing very well that she survived



*Anika lives in Clarksville, MD with sister, Neha and parents Tina and Sikhanda Satapathy. She is a 6th grade student with interests in painting/ sketching, soft ball, piano, viola, ukulele, singing and dancing.*

# The Journey of My Life

*Archa Sahoo*

It all started after I was born in Champaign, a little town of Illinois. My family, including my mom, dad and me lived there for about 2 and half years. First I learned the language Oriya from my parents, as they belong to Odisha, a state of India. Then I moved to a place called Georgetown, Massachusetts. When I was 3 years old, my new baby brother Asish was born. During that time, my grandmother also came over for a few days to stay with us. We celebrated Asish's 1 year birthday at the club house in our apartment. All his friends and my friends were attended the celebration. That time I was in preschool and I was a very sweet and kind girl. My best friends were Nora and Lidia at that time. We played together the whole school year. In our class, there was a girl named Kylie and she used to bully me sometimes. She made faces to me few times also. I had so many memories of my friends when I was little.

The next year I went to kindergarten at Pearly school. I found my best friend Brianna at the school. Another boy named Nick, harassed me a lot in the kindergarten. The next year, we moved to our new house at Chelmsford. I went to first grade at Byam School. My teacher was Mrs. Hogan. She was kind and generous and very skinny. My friend Abhi lifted her up once. On the bus, these two girls named Mia and Gracie used to be very mean with me. I feel so bad and I stood up to tell them that it was not right. The next year, I went to second grade and my teacher was Mrs. Sullivan. She has 3 children and she was very nice. My best friends were Rebecca and Eshal. One day Rebecca hesitated to me because I was going to India for a month and that was really long time. So my friends pretended not to be with me for some time and I felt bad. But when I came back they told me that they were just trying to surprise me because they were missing me. The last, I am going to talk about my third grade teacher Mrs. Morasse. She is very kind and she has one daughter. She teaches me language and arts. I also have another teacher Mrs. Streeter. She teaches us math and science. She has two girls. I hope, Mia and Gracie would never bully me again and that's the story of the journey of my little life so far.

## THE END



Archa Sahoo

Address: 19 Bentley Lane, Chelmsford, MA 01824

Archa is 9 years old. She is in 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Byam Elementary School, Chelmsford MA. She is an Odishi classical dancer. She loves reading, swimming, dancing, painting, music and Gymnastics.

## Lunchtime: A Symphony

*Arnav Patra*



The pots sit in line for fire  
Lighters wait to be brought to life  
Vegetables want to dance in a pan  
But they stare at a cold fridge wall  
The butter is lost without the bread  
As the stark black fridge rumbles on...  
A stomach growls staring at the fridge  
As the clock's ticking pierces the silence ...

The spices are useless without a dish  
Salt sits alone without pepper  
The still fridge gathers dust staring at the pantry  
The milk looks longingly at the cookies  
The bread turns green, imagining it with butter  
The cheese dreams of gamboling with crackers  
One more stomach sits wistfully in front of the stove  
The clock joins in with its tick...

The fire is lit as a sharp sound fills the room  
Anxiety builds in the fridge as it squeaks open like a mouse in delight  
The pot smiles silently as it is slowly filled  
The lighter is alive at last  
The crackers frolic towards the cheese carried on delightful hands  
The bread and butter prance joyfully in a jolly jig  
Another stomach gathers, a family almost complete  
And the clock clacks on...

The pantry opens with doors squealing in delight and spices bounce out  
Salt and pepper dance to their spicy salty song  
Cheese and crackers smile together in harmony  
Vegetables are tossed skipping in the pan  
One last stomach frisks in for them all to be content  
A family is finally complete  
The symphony of a meal is complete  
As the clock strikes noon melodiously...

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Arnav Patra lives in Buffalo, Ny with his father Abani Patra and mother, Sipra Roychoudhury. Arnav loves geography and has won the New York State Geography bee and will represent NY at the nationals in DC in May 2015. Arnav also enjoys books and music. He plays the cello and sings Hindustani Classical as well. Arnav also enjoys playing tennis and swimming. Arnav also enjoys writing poems and won 2nd place for his poem "Fireworks" in last years Meghna memorial awards in Columbus.

\*Second Prize in 2015 Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing, Junior Category

## Remembrance

Aaryana Rajanala

Sometimes I find the way people think strange. The way they would apologize to you if someone you knew died. The way they tried to be empathetic when they could force out no more condolences. The way they always told you the person would live on in their hearts and minds. The way everyone pretended everything was okay even though nothing could have been worse. Not many people thought this way. I remember a girl who did, though. Her name was Eternity. I had a lot of different perceptions about her. She was mysterious. Fun. Cautious. Thoughtful. Eternity had only one friend that I know of. Me.

The first time we met was when I was eight years old. My mother had died that day and I was walking on our street. I remember seeing only the ground for seconds, minutes, hours, until a voice said, "Hey, what's up with you?"

I looked up and saw a girl who must have been my age. She was fairly tall, with pale skin and brown hair and icy blue eyes that cut right through you. I never forgot that piercing stare. She was sitting on the wall that surrounded the neighborhood, looking down at me questioningly. I sniffed and wiped my eyes. "My mom just died."

Her eyebrows shot up in surprise. "Really? Well...you seem to be okay. You still have a dad, right?" Hesitantly, I nodded. "Then you shouldn't be so sad. You have someone who can help you remember her. Someone to comfort you when you feel like you've lost everything." She cast her eyes to the ground. "I don't. I really have lost everything."

I tilted my head to the side. "What do you mean?"

She motioned to a few stones on the ground by the wall and called me to sit next to her. I scrambled up the uneven bricks. "My family's dead," she muttered. "A long time ago. My mom died when I was born and my dad died right after. I had an older brother who took care of me for a while, but then he left."

I frowned. "Left? What do you mean?"

She shrugged. "I'm not sure. One day I woke up, and he was gone."

"Oh..." I mumbled. "I-I'm sorry."

She laughed hollowly. "Sorry? It's not like you did anything. It's not like it's your fault I'm alone now. So please, don't say you're sorry. It'll just make me feel guilty because you feel guilty."

I smiled at her, the sadness still heavy in my eyes. "Really? You think that too?"

Her eyes brightened and she grinned. "Yes! You think...we could be friends?"

I jumped down from the wall. "Of course," I said. "I'm Rosemary."

She jumped down beside me and held out her hand for me to shake. I took it. "Call me Eternity." We became close after that. For the first few years, we played games and just enjoyed each other's company. I found her waiting for me on the wall every day after school. We were both twelve at that point.

One day I asked, "Where do you live?"

She thought for a moment and then sang softly,

*"Nowhere to go, no home to stay  
I've come here for only a while  
I need some hope to freshen my heart  
Then back to the road to for the mile."*

I stared at her for a long time, then nodded. I didn't say anything else for a while. That day we just sat in silence until the sun set, casting us into darkness. When that happened, though, Eternity stared at the pitch black sky and asked me, "Rosemary, have you ever seen a star?"

Raising my eyebrows, I exclaimed incredulously, "Of course I have!"

Eternity tilted her head contemplatively. "What are they?"

"Well, I...I don't think I could really define it, but—"

She shook her head. "No, not a definition. I didn't think this would be that hard. Tell me, Rosemary, what is a star?"

"I...But I don't..." I sighed. "I'm not so sure how to describe it. There's an old legend that they were carried away by all those who have died and been forgotten."

Eternity pointed up to the sky. "Well, my home...my home is wherever the stars are. Wherever they are now."

I followed her finger and thought I saw the smallest pinpoint of light illuminating the black skies. It was gone just as quickly as it had appeared.

She was inquisitive too. Especially about my name. "What did your parents name you Rosemary for?"

I tilted my head in thought. "I don't know."

"For the plant? Rosemary is a pretty herb."

My shoulders lifted in a careless shrug. "I don't think so. I mean, would you name your child for an herb?"

She smiled brightly. "Fair point. What else is there that they would know? Hmm..."

I closed my eyes and leaned back on the wall. "Wait, what did you mean when you said rosemary was pretty?"

She eyed me uncertainly. "Well, isn't it?"

"Well, it...it's an herb. I've never really thought it was particularly pretty."

She giggled knowingly. "Don't rule out the possibility. I can't think of anything else Rosemary stands for."

"I think," I sighed, "Rosemary was a character in a story my mother used to tell me. But I can't really remember."

Eternity laughed. "Very bad! Don't forget things. Remembering is important. Sometimes, after too long, it can become our only link to the past. If we forget the past now, things from before everything, then we'll lose it forever. Even when someone dies, they still exist in our memories. Forgetting is when we truly lose something."

So I thought about her question. For days and days I looked around our house for something that could tell me why I was named Rosemary. A storybook? A journal with lists of names for girls? Anything indicating flowers or a love for old herbs? I even asked my dad if my mom had been interested in botany. I decided to look in a dictionary, but Rosemary wouldn't be in any of the newer ones. I managed to find an old, worn book, unbelievably thick. It read:

*Rosemary-*

- 1. An evergreen shrub, Rosmarinus officinalis, of the mint family, native to the Mediterranean region, having leathery, narrow leaves and pale blue, bell-shaped flowers, used as seasoning and in perfumery and medicine*
- 2. A traditional symbol of remembrance*

So remembrance, then? Was that it? It was possible. My mother could have been the kind of person to do something like that. I told this to Eternity and she simply nodded. "It makes sense. Well, whatever the reason is, Rosemary is still a beautiful name." I started to thank her, but she stopped me. "Don't say thank you. I'm just telling you I think your name is pretty. Anyway, it was your mother who named you. Right?"

I nodded. "Yeah. My mother named me."

Eternity laughed a little and said, "Yes. And that is another memory of her to keep with you. Your own name holds her heart. Never forget that."

The years seemed to fly past. I turned fifteen, a number not acknowledged by most. Why was the number fifteen significant to anyone anymore? My friendship with Eternity grew more and more, until I was spending almost entire days with her.

One day I had decided to help my dad clean out the storage room. After a while he went out and left me cleaning, alone. I was digging through a metal box to see what we could donate. I found a picture frame with the picture of a beautiful woman with green eyes and long black hair and caramel colored skin, all like my own. I stared at it and screamed.

I sank to the floor, tears pouring out of my eyes. It was my mother. I kept screaming with absolute agony, my head pounding, my heart getting so heavy I couldn't sit up. I remembered that day...when I had heard she died...and it didn't hurt, not at all. It was like she had never left me.

But this was far worse, all the pain hitting you at once when you finally realized you lost something you needed.

I covered my head with my hands, like that would block out all the pain and make it stop hurting. I wanted it to stop hurting!

Why won't the pain go away?

I felt a hand on my shoulder and heard Eternity's soft, soothing voice. "Shh, calm down. It's alright. It's alright."

I lifted my head up, unable to see Eternity with my vision blurred by the tears. I buried my face in her shoulder and she held me there. "Shh. We've all lost something. I understand how you feel. Just calm down."

"Why?" I sobbed. "Why did they take my mother away from me?"

"Oh, Rosemary..." She drew in a sharp breath. "Listen to me, Rosemary. Listen and remember. Rosemary, you're strong. Just be strong. Can you do that for me?"

"Just make me forget!" I begged, the pain overwhelming. "Please, just let me forget about it, let me go!"

She gasped. "How dare you!" she chided. "How dare you do this to your mother? Rosemary, it's your job to remember her!"

I looked up at her. I opened my mouth to speak, but no sound came out. Her words drilled right through me.

She smiled. "Is that...better then?"

I nodded and hugged her tight, wiping the tears from my eyes. "Thank you," I whispered. "Thank you so much."

When my dad came back, I pretended nothing had happened. I never questioned how Eternity heard my screams that day, or how she got into the house. I didn't care. She helped fill a hole inside me that I hadn't even realized existed until that day, an empty hollowness that was slowly consuming me entirely. After that day, I felt complete.

And it was all because of Eternity.

The next day I kept going on as if everything was still normal. It could have been called normal, but it wasn't really 'normal'. It was almost like it was better.

When I got back from school, Eternity was waiting for me on the wall like always. "Rosemary?" she called tentatively.

I walked up to her and hoisted myself up beside her. "What is it? Is something wrong?"

She hesitated, then shook her head. "No. Nothing is wrong. I just wanted to say...thank you.

Thank you for being my friend."

I stared at her for a moment. "No!" I exclaimed. "No, absolutely not! I should be thanking you! I if you hadn't come, I never would have gotten over my mother's death. If you hadn't come, I'd probably still be at home crying and wishing for things that I know would never happen."

She smiled and took my hand. "Rosemary...I'm glad that I had the opportunity to call you my friend."

I nodded and hugged her. I wish I had said more that day. Asked her why she was saying that so suddenly. But I didn't. I don't know what I could have expected her to say, but anything would have been better than...nothing.

We began talking less and less, drifting apart for some reason. Now that I think about it, at first, I thought she was acting pretty strange. I asked about her a lot at school and all, but I never heard anything about her. When I asked why no one knew about her, she simply said, "Try asking about someone named Wish."

I did. No one knew of a blue-eyed girl named Wish.

"Try asking about Serenity."

I did. No one knew of a blue-eyed girl named Serenity.

"Try asking about Reflection."

I did, and one of my teachers said he might be able to help. He took me into his classroom and searched for Reflection. The first thing the ancient book said was:

*Reflection-*

*A mythical girl, mainly referred to when talking about old legends. She was said to take physical forms and help people below her when they had lost anything, including hope. After helping one person, she would leave to help the next. Her goal was to have accomplishments worthy of the stars. She is also known as the Goddess of Remembrance. I gasped. She was known by many other names, including Dream, Wish, Regret, Serenity, and Eternity.*

That day I ran home from school.

When I reached my street, I looked everywhere, but I didn't see Eternity. "Eternity!" I shouted. "Eternity, where are you?" Tears pricked my eyes. Was...was that it? Was she gone now? I sank to my knees, unable to breath. "Eternity!" I shouted one last time. The name seemed to echo off the walls, a perpetual scream, never to cease. But really, it just echoed through me, bouncing off the hollowness inside.

*Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!*

My dad died four years later. At first, I thought I would be scared about it, scared that I would have to feel the pain of losing him weighing down on my heart again. But I never did. Every time I thought I would, I just took a deep breath and repeated what Eternity had told me. It was my job to remember my dad. I had to remember him. If I ever forgot him, Eternity would never forgive me.

It rained at his funeral. The raindrops bounced off the leaves of the trees, the wet grass, the umbrellas of everyone who knew my father. They all came up to me and said, "I'm sorry." I didn't need it. I really didn't.

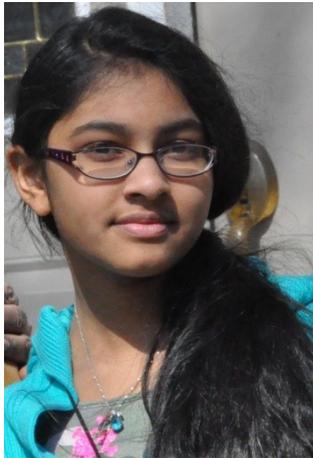
But I simply gave a sad smile and replied, "It's fine." The lie echoed in my head. *It's fine. It's fine. It's fine.*

*But I'm not fine.*

As the rain stopped and the storm clouds cleared, the sun began to set, its colors mingling with the blue of the sky and making a light orangey pink. I watched as the color turned into lavender, then purple, then dark blue, and finally fade to an endless black. I thought I saw something out of the corner of my eye, the shadow of a young girl about sixteen, with icy blue eyes that shone with a certain brilliance. "Like the stars," a voice whispered. "That's where I come from. They're eternal. The stars will never go away." There was absolute glee in the voice. "Thank you, Rosemary. It's because of you that I finally made it back where I belong."

I looked up and saw the faintest twinkle of light in the sky, but then it was gone. Eternal stars. I smiled, the rain mixing with the tears of sadness and hope trickling down my face.

You were my star, Eternity, and I'll never forget you.



Name: Aaryana Pradhan Rajanala  
Age: 12 Yrs, Grade: 7th  
Address: 12, Revere St, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Aaryana is an author who loves reading and music of every kind. She is in seventh grade and enjoys language arts and science, as well as orchestra and choir. Writing makes up more than half of her life. She enjoys playing the violin, singing and, of course, writing - one of her favorite pastimes is writing about any topic that occurs to her, be it magic or the rhythm of life. ...

## As I Reach Into the Water

*Barenya Das*

As I reach into the water  
I feel the calmness and cool  
As I reach into the water  
I know what to do  
I will dip in and dive in so my eyes can see,  
What wondrous wonders lie in front of me?

As I reach into to the water  
All my worries go away  
As I reach into to the water  
I only want to stay  
I will listen to the peaceful noises  
of the fish and the frogs,  
And watch bubbly bubbles arising near drifting logs

As I reach into the water  
Do you know what I see?  
As I reach into the water  
I see my own reflection right under me.



---

Barenya, Age 11, lives in New Jersey.

## **My Vacation in London**

*Debanshi Nikita Chowdhury*

I still think about those days. How I could go back and have the same fun. It was like the best time in my life. It was back in 2012, summer break. I was on American Airlines going to London. I couldn't sleep at all in the flight. I was so excited. I was going to London for the first time. I was going to see my baby cousin who just turned 2! I asked my brother, "Aren't you excited going to London for the first time?" "Eh", my brother said with no enthusiasm. How could he not be excited? We were going to London where the queen lives. On top of it, London was hosting the Olympics that time too. How could my brother not be excited going to London? It was an 8 hour flight. The plane food was disgusting as usual. When we reached London, I kept on asking my mom, "Do I look okay? Is my hair messy?" My mom kept on saying, "Yes, you look fine." At the airport we freshened up and then we called a taxi. This taxi isn't some ordinary taxi. It's a London taxi. In that special taxi, the seats face each other. So cool! The average speed of our taxi was 100 kilometers per hour. As it was Sunday Morning, there was no traffic. Therefore, we reached at my cousin's house within an hour.

My cousin lives in an apartment. In London, houses are really expensive. As soon as we got off the taxi, we were full of excitement and were greeting my 2 years old cousin who was waving his hands through the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor window. All of sudden he sneezed, smashing his lips on the window railing. That caused his mouth to bleed. It kind of ruined the moment. He was very cute and chubby. My cousin's grandparents (my dad's uncle and aunt) were also visiting there from India. We enjoyed nice Indian brunch with sour spicy pickle. After food, my cousin wanted to play with me. He had gotten some books from their library in London. At first he was interested in me reading him the books but then he got so bored, that he'd lie on my lap and just stare into space. Apparently he didn't want me to stop reading him books. As I was tired reading him books, I'd just read him one page or even a word and say, "Finish!" My cousin then would say, "Finich!" So cute! That evening we went to walk around their community and played at their park. I made a few friends too. While walking on the streets we noticed most shops close there by 6:00 pm. We had a long night with family talks and finally slept by 1:00 am.

The next morning, we all had to wake up early so we could get to Windsor Castle (Queen Elizabeth's child hood castle.) I was so happy and excited to go to the queen's castle, just wanted to jump around and yell, "Yippee!" We had to go by a train. "Ugh!" Did you know the train station was so disgusting. It took us 20 minutes to get there from the train station. There was a long line to get tickets. The tickets were expensive too. The Windsor Castle staff gave us headsets to learn about the history of the Windsor Castle. We ate at Mc Donalds. I know what you're thinking. Why didn't I eat at some good restaurant? I didn't want to walk a long way and McDonalds was the nearest restaurant that we could find. After food, we went to the gift shop but my parents didn't buy any key chains or magnets. However, they bought us 3 books. One was about Queen Elizabeth II and her completing the Diamond Jubilee, the 2<sup>nd</sup> book was the history of Windsor Castle, and the last book was about the Buckingham Palace. The history of the two castle were boring but the Diamond Jubilee book was awesome. By the time my family got on the train it was already evening. The day went so quick. Once I reached my cousin's house, everyone ate dinner. My mom saved some French fries for me from McDonalds. When my cousin tried the french fries for the 1<sup>st</sup> time, he ate one French fry and then he dropped the rest on the ground. When my mom saw that, she got mad at me for not keeping an eye on him. That night we all slept early.

Next morning my cousin woke up before me and threw our toothbrush in the toilet. My dad's uncle took them out and started cleaning it with soap. After all that I woke up. I did not want to use my toothbrush after hearing the story but neither did I want bad breath. I had to use that toothbrush. (Sadly.) I took shower, ate a Nutella sandwich, and then went on the disgusting metro train, blah blah blah. The trip that day was for the Buckingham Palace, (the palace Queen Elizabeth II currently lives in.) We bought tickets and got the headsets. Sadly no visitors could take the full tour of Buckingham Palace since Queen Elizabeth II lives in it. So you could only see a part of the palace. I loved the jewelry displays of the queen. I was very sad as my dad not buy me the diamond crown of the queen. We came out around 5:00 pm. Instead of spending that night in my cousin's house, we enjoyed in my mom's friend's house. He had a daughter of my age and a son of my brother's age. His daughter was really interested in hair accessories. We had makeovers and I got to play on her 3DS. I however felt sad for my brother because my friend's brother was in some kind of summer camp and so my brother had to hang out with the adults. My mom's another friend came over there to meet us. His wife and daughter were in USA. He brought us all Magnum ice-cream. It was delicious and creamy. The chocolate covering was bitter though. We went to a restaurant once we finished the ice-cream. By the time we finished our dinner, it was really late and there'd be no taxi neither the train to take us back. So, we had no choice other than sleeping over at their house. Well that wasn't the plan. That night my friend told me a ghost stories and I started laughing. Since we were so loud, my brother had to come and tell us that we had to sleep. At that moment I just wanted to ask him, "How come the adults haven't slept and especially him?" Before I could ask him anything, he had left. Thereafter we didn't laugh too loud because we knew that other people in the neighborhood had slept. My mom and her mom came to join us. Her mom told us a story and by the time the story had ended, I was fast asleep. The next morning, I woke up early to go back to my cousin's house. When my cousin saw me, he asked me where I was. My reply to him was, "When I was coming to your house a big monster had eaten me and I had to fight my way out of the mean monster's stomach." My cousin was very scared. My parents told me that we had to go to a beach.

After lunch, my uncle took my family to the beach. It was not a sandy beach. (For some of you might be thinking, "Are you kidding me?") Walking on the pebble beach was very painful. When I went in the water, the stones came rushing with the current of the water and hit my toes really hard. "OUCH!" What I really loved about the beach was that they had a mini carnival on a bridge in the water. In that carnival, I enjoyed coffee flavored ice-cream. It was creamy, no caffeine in it though, luckily, it was sweet like cotton candy. The ice-cream was melting in my mouth. OH, that was good. "Aww, man!" Me and my brother jumped on a different kind of trampoline, where they would tie us using a rope and the trampoline would bounce us up in the air. Boing! Boing! Boing! After that, my dad asked if we all would eat some food. I wasn't hungry because of the ice cream. I wanted to go on the Haunted House. So, I either had to wait for my brother to finish his boring Chinese food so he could come with me or I go on the haunted house by myself. I chose going on the ride by myself. So brave of me! On this ride, the lights were off. Then a few seconds later, the lights started blinking. Do you want to know what happened next? Are you positively sure you want to know? Oh well here it goes. Then a zombie comes near me and as soon as the monster is about to grab me, the cart I was sitting on pulls me away. The next stage comes and a Frankenstein squirts water at me. Ok, now that was really creepy. I felt weird having that liquid the Frankenstein squirted on me. In the last part of the ride, my legs were shaking and tears were coming out of my eyes. It was windy and cold. My legs were shaking because of the cold temperature and my eyes were watery because of the wind. The ride was overall awesome. "Whoohoo" Meanwhile, my brother played one of the carnival games and he won me a stuffed fish. It got late and we went home. However, this time I didn't reach home by a train. I reached home with one of a kind London taxi. When I reached home, I gave my stuffed animal to my cousin. We played a game with my

cousin, where he had to touch the fish, while I was swinging it over his head. This game was boring but easy for my cousin. After that game we ate dinner and went to sleep.

The next day was a Friday. We all woke up late and had late breakfast. Around 12:00 pm we went to a big mall in London, which had a viewing area for the London Olympics. You may be thinking wow, that's so cool, well no. All we got to see was the tents of London Olympics. I don't know why there was a big line just to see this. However, after watching the tents, my parents took me and my brother to the food court. FYI: London cokes are really strong. My family ate at an Indian restaurant. The food was good. After food, we took pictures around the mall and visited Olympic Village. After returning from there, we watched the London Olympics on TV. While, we were watching, my cousin wanted to play with me, instead of eating his dinner. I had to hide under the dining table, so he wouldn't get distracted. He thought I left and said "NANI PALEILA?". Finally, he found me after 30 minutes. Couldn't he think of checking under the dining table? I know he's small. If you want to find someone, then check under the table. We all slept late that night and got up late and relaxed. At noon we drove to the Jack and Jill windmill, where we had nothing to do except to view the country side scenery. It felt really peaceful in the Jack and Jill windmill. We came home early that evening as the next day we had to leave London. I had so much fun. I tried to have the most fun as I could. I knew that I'd never forget this vacation.

We had to wake up early to go to the airport. My dad, brother, and I had to go India to visit our family members but my mom had to return to USA. Her job only allowed her to have a one week vacation at a time. I wish my mom could have come with us to India too. The airport was an hour away from my cousin house. When I was getting on the taxi, my cousin was all quiet and didn't even know that I was leaving. As soon as the engine of the car started, he started to cry. I was so sad. I wanted that week to start again. The experience I had in London was amazing. I wish I could go back to London again. My dad's uncle and aunt came with us because they needed to go to India too. My mom went to US on American Airlines, but we all went on Air India, (an airline company.) My uncle had dropped us at terminal 3 by mistake. So, we had to go on the connecting train immediately to terminal 5. We got our passports checked and we showed our boarding pass to enter into the flight. The flight smelled like a carpet. This smell was horrible and I got a headache from having to smell it. I just wanted some fresh air at that moment. We sat down on our seats, put our buckles and 20 minutes later, the flight started. After a 10 hours flight, we reached Indira Gandhi International Airport at New Delhi, India.

During this wonderful trip, I was thinking about my friends in US and how the school will be next year, and about the upcoming India trip etc. Now, when I look back, I should have spent all the time enjoying in London without any thoughts. I learnt when we think about the past or future, before we know it, the present is over. Specially in vacations, the enjoyment will be over. One may never get this enjoyment again. So, always think about the present. By thinking about the past or the future, the time is running out. Even if I take another London Trip now, I will not get the 2 years cousin, he is 5+ years now and I am going to be a teen soon. I can never get that pleasure again. It will be a different experience.



*(Debanshi Nikita Chowdhury (Age 12) is the daughter of Debaki Nandan and Anjana Chowdhury of Germantown, MD. She is a 6th Grade Student of Argyle Magnet Middle School, Silver Spring, MD. She loves to read and write. She is also active in Odissi Dance, Violin Playing and Singing. The following is a picture with her brother and little cousin in London during her 2012 London Trip.)*

# How Social Media Affects Us

*Deepak Dalai*

We live in the Digital Age, where social media is found the most. Social media lets us connect with others and lets us share our ideas on the web with others. Before I tell you *how* social media affects us, I need to tell you the history of social media. People all over the world use social media. Someone all the way in Ireland could be skyping someone right here, in the U.S. Or a person in Russia could have posted a picture of himself sledding on Facebook, and someone in Canada could be looking at the picture. If you can afford a phone or computer, you can get social media. Social media didn't start with Facebook, Twitter, or Snapchat. It all started with BBS (Bulletin Board System). In the late 1970's, some brilliant person invented BBS. It was all really simple, there is one central system where you can download games and post messages. It was all really amazing, considering the time period. Later on, amazing advances in social networking had happened; Yahoo was setup, Amazon in the picture. In 2006, Facebook was in. Then, Google+ was created in 2011. Many people thought this as a friendly site you can interact with. But things started to change.

## ***Social media is addictive.***

Studies show that 63% of Americans log on to Facebook daily and 40% log on multiple times each day. People use the site for different reasons; however, it usually serves, on some level, the same basic purposes: distraction and boredom relief. "Likes" and comments are positive reinforcement for posting information, making it difficult for a person to stop. Researchers have found this so common that they created a scale to measure this addiction: The Berge Facebook Addiction Scale.

## ***Social media makes us compare our lives with others'.***

Posts on social media can tell us how other people's days are going and how. If things are going particularly well for people in social media and you're having a rough day, of course this will likely affect your mood in a bad way. Actually, in 2012 a team of researchers in the UK surveyed users, 53% of whom said social media had changed their behavior; 51% said it was negative behavior because of decline in confidence they felt because of unfair comparisons to others.

## ***Social media gives power to cyberbullies.***

Cyberbullying is an enormous concern, especially for children. An organization that goes for internet safety, called Enough is Enough, did a survey and found that 95% of teenagers who use social media have witnessed cyberbullying, and 33% have been victims themselves.

## ***Social media can make us unhappy.***

A study from the University of Michigan collected data about Facebook users and how it correlated with their moods. Long story short, they found that the more frequent users were unhappier than those who used the site less. Over more time, frequent users also reported lower satisfaction in their lives overall.

### ***Social media can lead to fear of missing out***

Fear of missing out is a thought occurs when you feel pressure to be doing what everyone else is doing, attend every event, and share every life experience. It can make you feel anxious and cause social media users to question why everyone is “having fun without them.” Surveys have even found that people feel insecure after using social media because they feel that they aren’t “good” enough.

### ***Social media often leads to multitasking.***

How are you even concentrating on one thing? The thing is, you’re probably not – especially if one of those things is a social media site. Research has shown that our brains don’t have the capacity to fully focus our attention on two things at once, and instead multitasking causes our brain to quickly switch from one task to another. Imagine yourself on social media and you’re doing your homework, sooner or later you’ll almost completely forget about the homework.

***Social media wasn’t meant to do any of these things. It was supposed to let people share their ideas and connect them together.***

### ***Social media enhances our connectivity.***

Perhaps one of the most important points is that social media doesn’t necessarily take us out of the real world. It can instead be used to revive and preserve relationships with other people. Even more exciting about this technological world is that there is an incredible number of like-minded people who can connect in just one click. Research presented in the journal *The British Psychological Society* (long name) found that students who experience low self-esteem can take advantage of social media and its capability to bond them with others in order to pull themselves up from slumps in their mood.

### ***Social media can help with socialization.***

Research presented at the 119th annual American Psychological Association (another long name) found that you can actually gain social skills by using social media. In part, this is because shy people may feel safer behind a computer screen (or smartphone, or tablet, or... well, you get the idea...it’s everywhere). So shut off the computer and do some real socialization, face to face.

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Deepak Dalai is 11 years old and lives in Palatine, IL. He goes to Pleasant Hill Elementary and has many friends there. He likes to read, play chess, basketball, and play with his little brother.

## **Malala's Mission for All Girls' Education**

*Maya Devalcheruvu*

Malala Yousafzai is a passionate promoter of girls' education. In the Swat Valley, Pakistan, girls are not allowed to have education. As a child, she became an advocate for girls' education, which resulted in the Taliban issuing a death threat against her. She was shot because of her strong belief and actions, and had to move to Birmingham, England.

Malala was born on July 12, 1997, in Mingora, Pakistan, located in the country's Swat Valley. She attended a school that her father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, had founded. For the first few years of her life, her hometown Swat remained a popular tourist spot that was known for its summer festivals. However, the area changed as the Taliban took control.

In 2008, the Taliban surrounded her homeland of Swat valley. Swat was a great place to stay until the Taliban began entering the region. They banned TV and DVDs, bombed schools, and threatened teachers who were educating girls. Those who did not listen to the Taliban would be subjected to violence.

In September 2008, after the Taliban began attacking girls' schools in Swat, Malala gave a speech in Peshawar, Pakistan. The title of her talk was, "How Dare the Taliban Take Away My Basic Right to Education". In early 2009, Malala began blogging for the BBC about living under the Taliban's threats to deny her an education. In order to hide her identity, she used the name Gul Makai. However, Malala's true name was revealed to be the BBC blogger in December of that year. Yet, Malala continued to speak out about the right of all women to have education. In 2011, she was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize. That same year, she was awarded Pakistan's National Youth Peace Prize.

When Malala was 14, her family found out that the Taliban had issued a death threat against her. Malala was frightened for the safety of her and her father. Her father felt that the Taliban would not actually harm a child.

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the day started as a normal day for Malala. Her mother made her usual breakfast, tea, chapatis, and egg. It was another day of exams. After school, Malala and her best friend, Moniba, decided to take the 2<sup>nd</sup> bus home. When Malala was traveling by bus from school to her home, a man boarded the bus Malala was riding in, and he demanded to know which girl was Malala. In the bus, Malala's friends looked towards Malala, which gave her identity away. Malala also didn't have her head covered, a Pashtun tradition. The gunman fired a Colt 45 at her, hitting Malala in the left side of her head, and the bullet then traveled down her neck. Two other girls were also injured in the attack.

After the shooting, Malala was airlifted to a military hospital in Peshawar where doctors successfully removed the bullet from her shoulder. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012, a group of Pakistani and British doctors decided to move her to Rawalpindi. Malala was conscious but very restless. She seemed stable. Mumtaz Khan, a doctor at the hospital in Rawalpindi, said that she had a 70% chance of survival. The doctor realized the bullet had caused her brain to swell and that she needed an emergency surgery to remove a portion of her skull to relieve the pressure. That first surgery saved her life.

Her next treatment was to be in Germany, where she could have received the best medical treatment. Other offers to treat Malala came from all around the world. However, on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Malala traveled to the United Kingdom for further treatment. It was the first time Malala had been outside of her country. She was treated at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

She survived the Taliban bullet that shattered her skull's thinnest bone, driving fragments into her brain. The Taliban's bullet also hit a facial nerve. Malala had surgery on her face, which made her able to smile and laugh again.

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, Malala left the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham to stay at her family's temporary home in Birmingham. In March 2013, she and her family moved to a permanent home in Birmingham where she currently lives. She was able to resume her formal education and started attending school at Edgbaston High School.

She gave a speech at the United Nations on her 16th birthday, in 2013. She has also written an autobiography, *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*, which was released in October 2013. Tens of thousands of people have signed a petition calling for Malala to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. In October 2014 she received the Nobel Peace Prize, along with Indian children's rights activist Kailash Satyarthi. At age 17, she became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Now Malala is continuing her dream to have all girls educated everywhere in the world. She has accomplished so much since her days at Swat Valley. Yet, Malala is heartbroken that she cannot return to Swat Valley, her home, and see her friends. Malala has continued to speak out on the importance of education, though the Taliban still considers Malala as a target.

Malala is a great inspiration to me and to other girls in the world. I have read her book a few times. Personally, I feel that girls should follow the idealism of Malala, and should fight for their own education. I dream and sincerely hope that all girls in the world will have a formal education.



*Maya Devalcheruvu  
115 Aster Road, San Carlos, California 94070*

*Maya Devalcheruvu is 12 years old and lives in San Carlos, California. She is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Central Middle School and participates on the school leadership council, plays soccer and piano, is a girl scout, and learns Odissi dance from her mother, Niharika Mohanty.*

## I Wish

*Nikita Ranabijuli*



*Nikhita Ranabijuli, is in 1st grade. She is 7 years old. She lives in Austin, TX with parents Chandana and Prashanta Ranabijuli."*

The world would be a better place  
if all the kids in the world had  
a mommy and daddy and a big  
sister like me.

The world would be a better place  
is every little kid like me had  
a littlest pet shop toy like me.

The world would be a better place  
if everyone is organized  
and neat and clean and nice to each other.

The world would be a better place  
if all the kids had pizza  
to eat and smoothie to drink and  
lots of strawberries to eat.

The world would be a better place  
if everyone cared for the Earth  
that we live in and every one grow  
lots and lots of trees and plants.

The world would be a better place  
if there are lots of faeries in the  
garden and take away all the allergies  
and all of the kids play outside.

The world would be a better place  
if all the dogs and cats had a  
place to live and had a owner  
who love them.

The world would be a better place  
if all the kids went to good school  
like mine Cactus Ranch Elementary  
and teacher like mine Mrs. Kennedy.

The world would be a better  
place if everyone smile and was  
happy.

The day all my wishes come  
true the world will be a  
better place.

# Traded!

*Nisheet Panda*

I still remember the day I found out I was traded for a machine. My name is Jack Main. Year after year I thought my parents had died.

The old wise man who raised me, Sage, always said, "There is something special about you, Jack."

"I'm just an orphan," I would say.

"I need to tell you something when you're 16," he would softly say. The conversation always ended there. I needed to find out sooner...

On my 16th birthday Sage told me one thing! I was traded by my parents for a machine.

"I was forced to trade or they would kill you and me," said Sage.

Anger burned like a wildfire inside of me. Soon there was an open hole in the ground. "That is one of my secret passages, Jack," Sage said. We jumped down into the hole. I saw an underground fortress. It was surrounded by lava. "How will we get in?" I asked Sage.

"Jack, during your time with me you have always had fire-proof clothes," Sage said.

We walked in, but we didn't burn. Soon a laser beam scanned us. The gargantuan metal door opened and we walked in.

"Your parents can't find us in here," Sage said.

"That is great," I grumbled.

"Here is the plan. We will wear these invisible cloaks and take these robotic snakes with us. In the machine there are three holes. We will put the snakes in these holes and that will shut down the machine and then we will have saved the world. Understood?"

"Sort of..."

Immediately, we started training. We went back to the surface. One room that I was forbidden to enter as a child was the training room. Sage finished the training exercises very easily while I was tripping over lasers, being caught off guard by robots, and accidentally throwing my invisible cloak.

After two days of training, I was ready. We went underground to go into my parents' base. When we went in, no one saw us.

“We need to get to the middle,” Sage whispered.

A familiar voice said “He is here.” We were near the machine when we became visible.

“Hello Sage and Jack,” my dad said in an evil voice.

“Mr. and Mrs. Main, do you think you can spare the world for me?”

“No-” my father attempted to say, but he fell to the ground snoring, like everyone else in the room. Soon, I fell asleep as well...

Sage put me to sleep, along with everyone else, with sleeping powder so he could take everyone to safety while he dropped a bomb to destroy the building and machine. We saw that my parents were running away. I told Sage to contact the police.

Once Sage was finished we ran to catch them. With their gravity guns, my parents flinged cars at us. We dodged them except for one that hit Sage. I kept running, but I was praying on the inside that he was still alive. I caught them, with the help of the police and threw them in prison.

The world was saved thanks to us.



Nisheet Panda is a 4<sup>th</sup> grader (9 years old) in Mission Valley Elementary School, Fremont, CA. He plays Base Ball and like to build Legos. He plays Alto Saxophone in his school band. He lives in Fremont, CA with his parents and sister Nistha.

## **My Brother Prish**

*Praneet Swain*

Do you know my brother Prish? He is just the best!

He loves adventure and our house is his adventure spot.  
He can take walking laps around every room in his home.  
He can climb the walls to prove himself an adventurer.  
And if you hold him, he will scream until he's free for his adventure.

His mind has 2 parts - 99.99% curiosity and 0.01% patience.  
Curiosity makes him turn his head all the way around in search of something new.  
He can grab people's heads to get something new out of it  
or even suck your shoes to examine them  
I even think his brain has suction pads to stick to TV  
because he sees TV for infinity without knowing or thinking.

He loves his Bhai so much that he's always interested in holding him.  
He loves his dad so much that he is bound to laugh when he sees him.  
He loves his mom so much that he gets lullabies when she rests him on her lap.  
But careful! He loves to layer with spit whoever he loves!

I love him so much that I can never take his eyes away from him.  
Prish is the apple of my eye and nobody can replace him.  
I love him so much that I won't say a mad word at him or ever leave him alone as a loner.  
I guess my brain has stick to him and will never be separated from him.

Now that is my baby brother, Prish!



Praneet is a proud brother of nine month old Prish, He is a third grader at Owen Elementary and loves to play soccer. He cheers for New England Patriots Football team and Indian Cricket Team.

# New Jersey Odia School



Aadvik Parhi, Anamika Banerjee, Barenya Das, Gyan Mohanty, Ellora Mohanty, Emma Minerva Mohanty, Mahashweta Gyen, Sheya Singha (New Jersey) and Rosa Das (Kansas)

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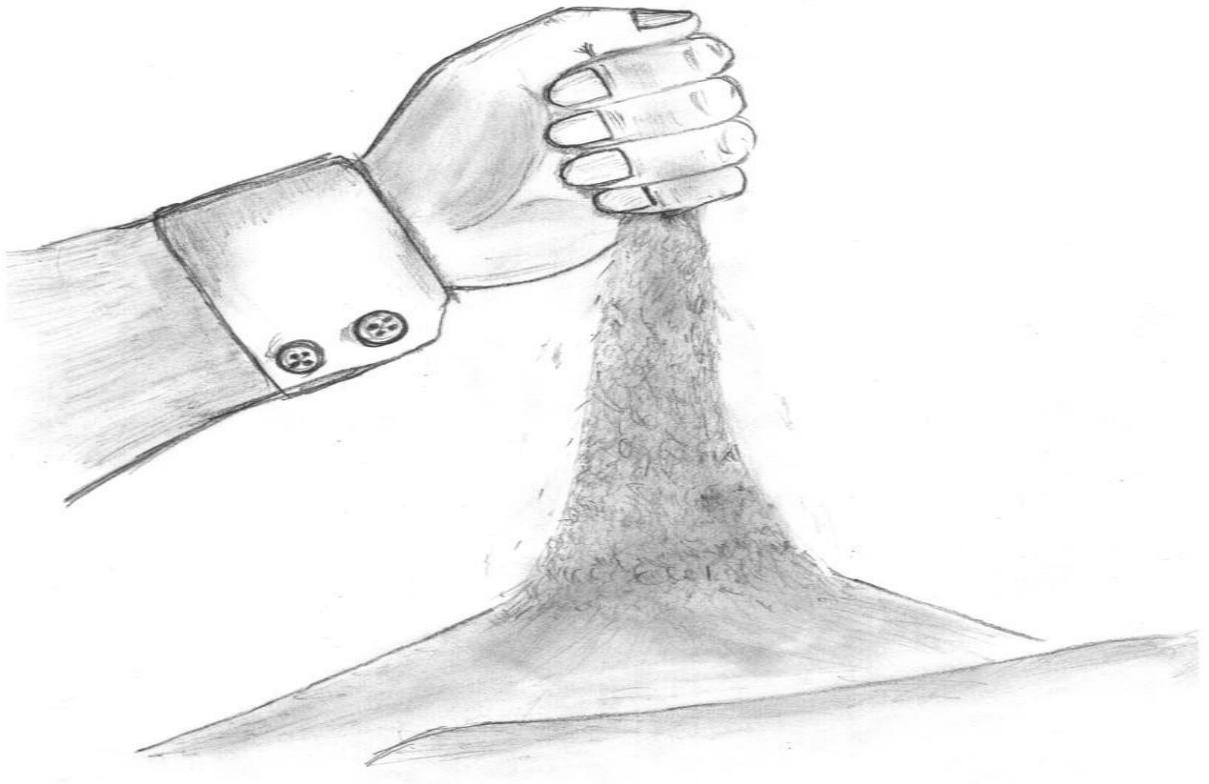
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# ସିକତା

## Sikata - The Sand



## Constructing Odia Society in America

*Lalu Mansinha (LM) and Manaranjan Pattanayak (MRP)*

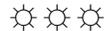


*It is only rarely in history that we get the privilege of fashioning a new community in a new land from isolated individuals dispersed across a vast continent. Coming from an old world country with a long history is in fact a baggage, as there are no old world community wisdom as to whether to construct a community, and if so, how? And yet fashioning a community where none existed must be in the genes, for, wherever there were a few*



*Odias, community associations spontaneously nucleated. The national organization OSA also started up spontaneously.*

*We have used the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual OSA Convention at Glasboro, New Jersey, to sketch the Odia experience in US and Canada. Fifteen years after the founding of the Orissa Society of America, the annual convention was already an established tradition. What was different from nowadays was the involvement by almost the totality of members in all aspects of the convention, providing a history of shared collaborations, crises, anecdotes and intimacy. That 1984 Convention was also unique in that the Convention managed to acquire a budgetary surplus of \$12,000, which was used to endow permanent scholarships at Berhampur, Sambalpur and Utkal Universities.*



Those who whizz by or through New Jersey, from New York to Washington DC on the NJ Turnpike, I-95, pass through the hustle and bustle of a mega metropolis, a crowded urban jungle stretching continuously from Boston to Washington DC. The towns and cities, once separated by long distances, have now merged. One can pass seamlessly from one city to another without noticing it. Most travelers do not realise that just minutes away from the turnpike in this mega metropolis, towards the ocean, lay rural New Jersey, mostly empty, with small towns interconnected by slow, long, rural highways. Glasboro is in central, rural New Jersey.

On this morning, July 1, 1984, passersby on the campus of Glasboro State College, Glasboro NJ would have witnessed a strange scene. A bunch of brown skinned people, sitting or standing on the steps of the Dining Hall, facing the rising sun, executing some strange ritual.

We, that group, raised the glasses to the rising Sun, welcoming the new day, Sunday, July 1, 1984, the start of the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Orissa Society of the Americas (OSA). We were on the steps in front of the Dining Hall at Glasboro State College, in Glasboro, in rural New Jersey, about an hour away from Philadelphia. The group consisted of Lalu Mansinha, Kula Mishra, Prafulla Padhi, Chandra Misra, Ram Saran Sahu, Rabi Patnaik (President, OSA), Manaranjan Pattanayak (Convenor) and others. For most of the night we had been washing, chopping, stirring, preparing the meals for the next day. We were taking a pause from our assigned convention duties, at the end of our all night kitchen shift, before our other daytime duties began, on this, the first day of the convention.

The toast in the light of the rising Sun on July 1st was in fact a toast to us, a celebration of the camaraderie of OSA, of working side by side with new friends and old. We were both tired and energetic simultaneously. We felt good about ourselves, about our friends, about OSA, about the world. All we needed was a bracing cup of tea or coffee, and we were ready to go another 24hours in the

service to OSA, in effect to ourselves, our own community. There is an exhilaration in sweating it out in the trenches, with your friends.

The previous day had been spent collecting everything needed to run a OSA Convention, boxes of stuff crammed into trunk, and in cars, between, around and on the people. And also everything needed to cook and serve the 100 or so families. We drove to the campus of Glasboro State College (now Rowan University). Glasboro was home to Owens-Illinois Glass Company, and Anchor Hocking. But the town's main claim to fame was that at the height of the cold war, over June 23 to 25, 1967, it was the meeting place for two world leaders, Premier Alexei Kosygin of the Soviet Union and President Lyndon Johnson of the United States. The next noteworthy event in the town was the OSA Convention of 1984.

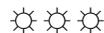
After arrival in Glasboro, some of us had a more adventurous night than others. Since Glasboro is a small town, and also as the stores are closed for the July 4<sup>th</sup> holidays, every item had to be purchased ahead and brought in on June 30, prior to the start of the convention. But as always, Murphy's Law comes true, and someone forgot to bring *haldi* powder and someone else forgot to bring the vegetables. Food is important at any Odia gathering and this was recognized right away as a crisis of first proportions.

The Odia love for good food, for tasty Odia dishes was well known. By 1984, we have had the experience of 15 years of organizing annual conventions. What came as a surprise however, was that of all the happenings at a Convention, the most mentioned item among attendees was the quality and quantity of the snacks and meals. Without *haldi*, the Glasboro 1984 Convention would be remembered in posterity for Indian meals with no *haldi*, if that was at all thinkable.

Factor in the enormous local pride that each Host Chapter, Local Convention Committee, and the Convenor have in making their convention the best ever. Much of the pride involved meals. Sample snippets of conversations: *'Think of it, we could offer tasty meals for \$15/day for three meals; they are charging \$20!!'*. *'They served on ordinary paper plates. Do you remember, we had high quality chinette plates'*. *'We will not serve the dishes. Let them serve themselves and eat as much as they want. I made sure we have cooked enough for everyone'*. Sooner or later, every Convenor and every Host Convention Committee figures out that the meals are very important at the OSA convention.

So on the night of June 30, 1984, after having spent one and half hours in the heavy holiday traffic, in arriving at Glasboro, the Convenor (MRP), took a quick decision. We would go back to Yardley, collect all the *haldi* powder at home, buy lots of cabbage, and come back. Thus we LM, Kula Mishra and MRP sped into the night in his ageing Oldsmobile Olds-88, along the winding rural roads of central New Jersey. We collected the *haldi*, and then sought out the night manager of the Path Mark supermarket in Falsington PA and requested him to sell us all his cabbages. The late night shoppers, the night staff, and the manager at PathMark, were astonished at this strange sight of three brown guys trundle out the door cart after cart piled with cabbages, to be dumped unceremoniously into the trunk of the Olds-88. Perhaps to this day they are still scratching their heads in disbelief.

We started back after midnight. Halfway, MRP pulled over, saying he was too sleepy to drive, and LM drove all the way back to Glasboro. We unloaded the cabbages, and then joined the night kitchen gang in chopping, cooking, washing etc., until sunrise.



For the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, there was not much admiration for America in India. The great universities of the US, Harvard, MIT, the Ivy League schools, Caltech, Berkeley were essentially unknown. In India Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial College, Edinburgh, Manchester etc. were recognized as 'real' universities. So most Indian students went to the UK. My (LM) *mausa* Golak Bihari Dhal, went to UK to study for two years, and then visited America for only three months. He did not write much about his stay in UK, but he was so impressed by the few months in the US that he wrote the first Odia travelogue on the New World, *Amerika Anubhuti*, published in 1952. He was certainly one of the first handful of Odias, to step on US soil.

I (LM) had heard rumours of an earlier Odia, with a surname possibly 'Majhi', who was exiled by the British for throwing a bomb, back in 1918 or so. Majhi ended up in Chicago. An Odia, was going through the pages of the phone directory, saw the surname, suspected an Odia connection, and rang the number. The person who picked up the phone was the son of possibly the first Odia immigrant to US. Regardless, with no definite proof, this story should be considered an unsubstantiated anecdote.

By 1960 there were perhaps no more than 20 Odias in US and Canada. When visiting a new city, it was common practice for Odias to go through the print phone directories for Odia surnames, and then call them. There usually was excitement at the receiving end to hear another Odia voice, and there was an instant dinner invitation. Thus did the Odias, dispersed in small isolated pockets in a vast land, get to know each other and about each other. One by one, in city after city, the number of Odias in US and Canada increased. At some critical number, local Odia associations self-nucleated.

It will be another 10 years before the first Odia national organisation came into being. In Hosmer Auditorium, Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Connecticut, on October 17, 1970, at 5 PM, the first Odia 'Convention' in US and Canada, was held, with 55 Odias in attendance. It was decided to form the Orissa Society of the Americas (OSA). Executives were elected by acclamation: President Gauri Charan Das; Vice-president Amiya Patnaik; Secretary Bhabagrahi Misra; Treasurer Nagabhusan Senapati.

For that first OSA Convention all the delegates who came from distant points stayed at the house of Bhabagrahi Misra, the only one with a house. All the food served at the first evening was happily prepared by the ladies at home. For that first year of OSA, the annual membership was \$3 per family, \$2 single. Three donations were received for amounts of \$20, \$10, and \$5.

Almost simultaneously, local Odia associations spontaneously self-organised in cities around US and Canada, and happy to join OSA. OSA chapters opened in New York, Boston, San Francisco, Toronto, Atlanta, Chicago.

It is worth pondering: Does one need a community association to survive in North America? The people from UP survive very well without a UP association. Have you ever heard of a Madhya Pradesh Association? So why did the Odia immigrants in US and Canada spontaneously form local Odia associations, and then a national association? Is it in our genes? Was this self-nucleation of community associations due to our cultural upbringing in the Odisha of 1950s, 60s, 70s?

Not that the newly formed associations were without internal conflict. In fact one may say that the internal conflicts were also part of the natural order of things. So important at the time of happening, the internal conflict stories are now part of the 'good old days' of nostalgia. And the rivals of the conflicts have evolved into respected friends.



The practice of putting up convention delegates with Odia families, started at the first founding OSA Convention by Bhabagrahi Misra, continued for 10 years. Odia families happily put up Odia guests, whom they had never met, in their homes. Thus were lifetime bonds between families initiated. This practice ended with the Chicago Convention of 1981.

During this infancy of OSA, the level of involvement by the OSA membership in the convention was very high, almost 100%. Everyone was a delegate as well as a worker. Since delegates stayed with local families, everyone contributed. Very little money changed hands.

From the first convention in 1970, right until 1980, conventions were 1 day affairs. For the 1981 Convention in Chicago a new tradition was started, the first multi-day convention. Another innovation was that delegates stayed at a college residence, not with local Odia families.

From 1981 onwards, the cost of attending a convention went up, and the level of involvement of members and delegates with the organization of the convention came down. This was a great divide, both in the costs, and in the level of involvement.

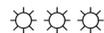
Still then, as now, attempts were always made to keep the cost of attending a convention as low as possible. The use of cheaper college residences, rather than hotels and motels, continued on for

several decades. Serving Odia and Indian meals during the convention posed a significant problem. Even though Indian caterers and restaurants were now able to cater the convention, at affordable rates, college residences, and hotels, had restrictions on the use of outside caterers. Colleges would insist that the campus food service could serve Indian meals. But the quoted price was high and the Indian food so served was amateurish. Hotels similarly insisted that their chefs are capable of preparing Indian meals, of course at exorbitant prices, for indifferent quality. Many conventions opted to use the better equipped school cafeterias, which were available in the summer, without restrictions on outside caterers or serving of home cooked dishes.

The quality of stage performances, both with local talents and artists from Odissa, improved and soon good quality light, sound and stage equipment became an absolute requirement for the OSA convention. The three major requirements, inexpensive residence, well equipped auditorium, and Indian meals, preferable with walking distance of each other, became the major factors in the selection of a venue for the annual convention.

Glasboro was selected for the 1984 OSA Convention not because of the historical distinction, nor was it selected because it was home to two major glass manufacturing companies. Glasboro College made available the residences, an auditorium with a stage with light and sound equipment, a dining facility, with access to the kitchen for cooking by us. Glasboro State College was most cooperative, and agreed to everything, at reasonable cost.

We were tired, but there was no time to sleep. Each of us had other assigned duties for the new day. The breakfast crew was already arriving. My duties were much simpler. I (LM) was assigned to be the checker for the meal tickets at dinner. It gives me great pleasure to report that I denied the Convenor (MRP) entry, because he did not have a ticket, and said, he left his wallet in his room, and the ticket was in the wallet. 'A likely story', I said. I did not accept his statement, and asked a very grumbly friend to go and get his ticket, before he could get any breakfast or lunch. I had to do it to the Convenor, because we had to show that we were serious about getting a correct count of the number of people served.



There were other cost cutting measures, illustrative of constructing the Odia community. I (LM) was attending a meeting of the American Geophysical Union in 1982 in downtown Philadelphia. Between the sessions I wandered off to see the historic Reading Market, which someone told me was architecturally unique. It was lunch time. Wandering around from stall to stall, I discovered an Indian gentleman manning a sandwich and pop shop. I bought a sandwich, started chatting and found that he was a fellow Odia. I found his life story fascinating; so very different from mine. Mine has been an unending series of lectures and lessons. Anadi Naik was a Bhoodan worker who has walked with the saintly Vinobha Bhave! Excitedly I told Manaranjan, who lived in Yardley, Pennsylvania, north of Philadelphia, about this new Odia I had discovered in the Reading Market. We all soon met. It was clear that Anadi Naik could be of benefit in the upcoming 1984 Convention. Because Anadi Babu had a retail store, he could get so many of the needed items at wholesale rates. And so he did, carrying so much of the supplies in his boxy van.

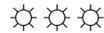


Lata Mishra was in charge of the cultural programs at the Glasboro convention. The well-known Odia drama Patent Medicine, by Fakira Mohan Senapati, was presented on stage in English, primarily for the younger generation, who also starred in the play. Lina Pattanayak was Sulochana; Nick Patnaik was Chandramani; Babu Sahu was Makara.

Simply astonishing was the creative talent of Bijoy Misra and Sarat Misro who composed an original script right at the convention and presented a very enjoyable and authentic *daskathia pala* of a journey through Odisha.

With Murphy's Law operational, the promises that Glasboro State College made to us were only partially fulfilled. It was summer and during negotiations we had stressed the need for air-conditioning in the residences and the auditorium. They had assured us, and reassured us. Well the AC failed. There were other problems. Glasboro College authorities were apologetic, and made us an offer we could not refuse. They not only apologised, when the time came to pay the bill, they surprised us by informing that there was no bill to pay, as they had decided not to charge for anything.

That was the \$12,000 windfall in the Convention budget. Since the local chapter was OSANY (OSA New York), OSANY decided to endow three scholarships in perpetuity at Berhampur, Sambalpur and Utkal University, for outstanding students. This was the first endowed scholarship at any of these institutions with money earned by overseas Odias.



Perhaps every older generation goes through this, of nostalgia. But we miss the involvement, the laboring together in the trenches, and reveling in the success of a job well done. We miss the OSA Conventions of the early years, so full of life, our life, built up with our toil, our sweat. Then we were poorer; we stayed in inexpensive college residence, cooked all the meals ourselves, and had a grand old time creating an illusion of being back in Odisha, eating Odia food, talking in Odia, and enjoying the organized and disorganized chaos. We miss the stories of the forgotten *haldi* and the cabbage and toast to the rising Sun.



*Lalu Mansinha <[mansinha@uwo.ca](mailto:mansinha@uwo.ca)> lives in London, Ontario, Canada.*

*Manaranjan Pattanayak <[mana\\_pattanayak@msn.com](mailto:mana_pattanayak@msn.com)> lives in Overland Park, Kansas*

## Reminiscing the Past!

*Saradindu Misra*



It was August 16, 1971 when I landed in New York from Odisha. For a couple of weeks, I stayed in the family of an American friend in the New York suburb of Great Neck. I brought a letter from a friend of mine in Bhubaneswar, addressed to Dr. Krushna Mohan Das. It took me two weeks to locate Dr. Das by telephone. Once the contact was made, Krushna Babu invited me to his house in Cambria Heights, another suburb of New York City. I arrived in his house the next Friday to spend the weekend with his family. Das family, at that time, consisted of him, his wife Basi Apa, his younger

son, Tukuna (now Dr. Annada Kumar Das), a dog, a parrot and two parakeets. After formal introduction with Dr. Das and his family, we sat down for dinner. In the previous two weeks, I had only been eating American food. So this was my first taste of Odia food in America. Food was excellent. While in his house, Dr. Das offered me to stay in his house until I could establish myself. I took his offer and the next week, I moved to his house with my belongings. There were not many Odia families in New York around that time – only a handful of them. Most weekends, they would assemble in the Das home and Basi Apa would treat them with sumptuous Odia food. I got to know all those Odia families and became good friends with them. Soon with the company of Dr. and Mrs. Das, I started visiting those families. Several months before my arrival in America, Dr. Das had started the Orissa Society of New York which was a forerunner of the Orissa Society of the Americas started in Boston under the leadership of Gouri Das and Bhabagrahi Misra. They started compiling the names and addresses of all the Odias living in different parts of the U.S.A. and formed an organization and named it as the Orissa Society of the Americas. Thus OSA was born! And the New York society became its first chapter.

For the first time, I attended the annual OSA day in Hartford, Connecticut in 1972. My wife, Lata, had joined me then and we were still living with the Das family. There were only a handful of Odias from nearby places, notably from New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Individual families prepared food in their houses and brought them to the gathering. Few speeches were made and the entertainment was provided by Kabita Patnaik and Shakuntala Mangaraj who sang Odia songs. Pramode Patnaik came from Alabama and thrilled the audience with his usual antics. In the successive years, the venue of the gathering shifted to New Jersey under the leadership of Amiya Patanaik. More people started attending, but it was still a small affair.

Let us talk a little bit about New York at that time. Until 1975, there was not a single Indian store around New York with the exception of one appliance store in Canal Street in the New York City, run by a Jewish family. On weekends, hordes of Indians would flock in the store to buy 220 volt small appliances for carrying to India. Grocery and spice were carried by an Iranian store located in the lower Manhattan (it is still there!) from where all the Indians would procure their ration. The first Indian-owned grocery store started in Flushing, Queens in 1975, along with a sari store, a record shop and a restaurant. Soon Indian stores opened like mushrooms all over the city and we did not have to go to New York to purchase grocery and staple items.

During this time, Rabindra Ray, a graduate student of the Columbia University, introduced me to a bunch of Indian students who operated an Indian program in the University's WKCR-FM radio station. They gave us a slot to run a weekly Odia radio program in that station. Thus, for the first time Odia radio program was heard in the tristate (NY, NJ and CT) which were presented by me and Lata Misra, continuously, for several years. In 1977, Pratap Das arranged a memorable open air program in the famous Lincoln Center of New York where Sujata and Sunanda, daughters of Surendra and Sukanti Ray performed. The sisters had just arrived from Odisha. While Sujata played the harmonium, Sunanda sang an Odissi song, accompanied by Pratap on tabla. Lata Misra sang a Sambalpuri song. The program was very well received by the public.

Now coming back to OSA activities, all the OSA gatherings were a one-day affair. People would bring home-cooked food for the consumption of the gathering. If any out-stationers would like to spend a night, that will be gladly accommodated by the local people. No hotel stays; no catered food. This format continued until 1980. The Convention is getting bigger now and needed bigger quarters to accommodate the attendees. In 1981, Chicago Convention, Convener Surya Mishra, booked a hotel and ordered food from outside vendors. However, in 1983, Convener, Pratap Das arranged the Bowie State College campus to host the convention. Instead of the hotel room and catered food, people stayed in the dormitory of the college campus and used the campus kitchen to prepare food by the convention volunteers. The Convention venue altered between hotels and campuses for several years, and generally lasted for three days. The most ambitious convention is happening this year – The Global Convention! It is scheduled for a five day stint with Odias attending from all around the globe.

The main attraction of the older conventions were eating food in a community set-up and, of course, the entertainment program in the evenings. Entertainment was miniscule in the early days. I remember 1974 Convention, held in College Park, MD where the entertainment program was a song by Bandita Nayak, accompanied by Rabi Patnaik on harmonium. The scene had changed since. The entertainment program grew bigger and bigger with every successive year. Soon after, Pratap Das arrived in America and started playing *tabla* with his master stroke. Lata Misra, for the first time, started singing Odissi, accompanied by Pratap on *tabla* which was received very well by the public. With Odissi songs, came classical Odissi dancing. The most notable dancer at that time was none other than Subrina Biswal, daughter of Nilambar and Anu Biswal of Maryland. She started classical dancing at the age of nine. She was an excellent dancer and was given the honor of performing in the United Nations. She danced in every convention and the audience adored her performance. She could have been one of the top Odia dancers, but sadly she passed away in 1989, the day after performing in the Nashville Convention, at a very young age. Another talented young dancer was Lita Sarangi, daughter of Rajendra and Mina Sarangi of Canada. I saw her spell-binding performance in 1984 in Glassboro, NJ Convention. She too passed away the same year in a plane crash in an Air India flight bound for India. Thus Odias of North America lost two immensely talented young artists.

Let us shed a little light on the status of stage dramas that were done by the Odias in North America in those days. First and foremost: one incident comes to my mind, the Rice Lake annual camping. It used to be a two days affair and was attended not only by the Canadians, but also by the Odias from neighboring U.S.A. also attended the camp. There were a lot of fun and entertainment, along with good food, fishing, boating and nightly entertainment. I remember in the year 1978 Sri Gopal Mohanty came up with the idea of doing a stint from Fakir Mohan's "Patent Medicine". This impromptu drama featured Sri Gopal Babu, Jnana Dash and Lata Misra and was hilarious. Canadians have a wealth of talent in staging good and serious dramas; most noteworthy was the episode of *Bhagia* and *Saria* from the novel "Chha Mana Atha Guntha", played brilliantly by the husband-wife duo, Gagan and Sabita Panigrahi, and

was very ably directed by Sri Gopal Mohanty in the 1994 Pomona Convention. The soulful performance of Gagan and Sabita brought tears to the eyes of the audience. Prior to this event, in 1984, for the first time, an all ladies drama, "Dekha Dekhi", was staged in the Washington Convention. It was hilariously played by Kabita Patnaik, Laxmi Pati, Kalpana Kanungo, Rajalaxmi Padhi, Lata Misra and Prabhashree Ray. However, the culmination of all stage plays took place in the Princeton Convention, 2003. Again, it was a rendering of Fakir Mohan's "Patent Medicine", played brilliantly by Manaranjan Pattanayak, Pradip Tripathy, Pradeep Mohapatra and Lata Misra. The play was so well received that it was repeated next year in the Dallas Convention and was hailed as a milestone.

Reminiscing the past could be a herculean task. It can go on and on. So it must come to a close now. But before I close, I want to pay homage to my friends who are no longer in our midst, such as, Pramode Patnaik, Dilip Satapathy, Hemanta Senapati, Krushna Mohan Das and Basi Apa, Amiya Patnaik, Jagat Subudhi, Bimal Mahanti, Bijay Mahapatra, Arun Das, Prakash Patnaik, Rajendra Sarangi, Annapurna Kanungo and Kashinath Sahoo. I might have missed a few. All of them have contributed significantly to the growth of our community in so many ways. May their souls rest in peace!



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*Saradindu Misra is a life member of OSA. He lives in Franklin Park, NJ along with wife Lata.*

## My Experience at the Cleveland Clinic

*Dr. Debendra Kumar Das*

**Introduction:** I first visited the Cleveland Clinic (CC) during the Christmas break of 2010 to have a thorough examination on my heart, because ten years prior to that, I had undergone heart bypass surgery in Anchorage, Alaska. I thought it was high time for a checkup on the condition



of my heart. I was so impressed with the quality of physicians, treatments and the medical facilities at the CC that I went back again in the summer of 2011 to receive treatments for my other ailments. I am planning to go there again in the summer of 2015 for a cardiovascular examination. In this article, I wish to describe my positive experience at the CC and my personal experience with the coronary artery disease (CAD). I hope people reading this article would benefit from the lessons I learned and be able to avoid the CAD or deal with it effectively at an institution like the CC.

**Health history:** I grew up generally healthy in Odisha and had not experienced any serious ailments in my childhood. Although, I was not that good in sports and games and never got selected into any teams in my high school or college days, I was interested in playing all sorts of games and kept myself fit. I was attracted to body building in my high school years, which got reinforced, when I joined the Regional Engineering College (REC) Rourkela. For all the five years I spent at REC, I was a regular at the college gymnasium and maintained a good physique. Upon graduation from REC, I came to the USA for graduate study at Brown University in the fall of 1972.

Things changed from then on. My graduate school classmates were from all over the world. As I recall, I had classmates from West Germany, France, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Israel, Egypt, Iran, India and of course some from American universities. I found that all of them were in the top level of their classes at their respective universities. It was extremely competitive to secure top grades in courses with all those competitors in my classes. There was the concern that, if we did not do well in the courses, we might lose our assistantships. Therefore, the graduate students used to spend countless hours at their desks in the Barus and Holley Engineering Building of Brown University. In order to save time, I never cooked and ate most of the time at our university refectory or at the nearby McDonald's, which was close to our science library, where I often studied late into the evenings. So, my diet changed completely from what I was eating in India. I consider this as the most serious detriment to my coronary health. There was no history of CAD in my family in India.

**My coronary artery disease:** I met my wife Katherine (Kate) Anne Cross in 1975 at the International House of Brown University, where foreign and American students used to meet. After dating for a while, we moved into an apartment together. Not being a good cook, I was unable to teach Kate how to prepare some Indian foods. My mom used to tell me that I was never a fussy eater and was happy with any kind of food in my childhood. That quality helped me a great deal to adjust to the American diet. Kate prepared tasty American dishes and I got used to them. Thus from 1976 onwards, my diet became principally a nonvegetarian diet. Later on, my heart surgeon in Anchorage had told me “your arteries are narrower, because they have genetically evolved for people with grains and vegetables as their principal diet. With the intake of meat regularly, your arteries are prone to blockages by the plaque deposit from the high-fat content nonvegetarian diet.”

Coronary artery disease is an insidious disease. It creeps up on the patient without any sign because the plaque continues to build on the interior wall of the arteries. By 2000, when I was 53 years old, I began to feel the first sign of discomfort caused by the CAD. From time to time I began to experience pin-pricking sensations on the left side of my chest. It came usually after a heavy dinner, while I would be sitting in a position, which pressed my stomach against the heart. The CAD pain appears in different ways for different people and the intensity of pain also varies from person to person. It was never too painful for me and was infrequent. So, I ignored it for a while, but always mentioned to Kate about my chest discomfort to keep her informed and listen to her opinion. After hearing about my discomfort for about a year, Kate insisted that I discuss about this with my physician, Dr. Jeff Partnow. Dr. Partnow, an internal medicine specialist was a graduate of Brown University having completed his BS and MS in biology and had gone to Harvard to receive his MD degree. Because of these facts, I had chosen him as my physician from the time of our arrival in Fairbanks, Alaska in 1984. In our meetings, Dr. Partnow and I always had nice conversations about the games Brown University was playing against other Ivy League schools, and I was impressed at his level of interest and knowledge about sports.

When I expressed to Dr. Partnow about my periodic mild discomfort in the chest, he examined me very carefully, because jokingly he used to tell Kate that “Deben is a stoic individual who can hide pain.” From a series of EKG and a number of exercise and thallium stress tests, he detected some anomalies in my heart and immediately referred me to a very senior cardiologist, Dr. Rhyneer at the Providence Hospital in Anchorage. Dr. Rhyneer explained to me that he had performed thousands of angiograms and he believed it was the definitive test which would give the correct diagnosis of my coronary artery problem. He performed the angiogram on my heart in early January 2001 and detected three blockages in my coronary arteries. He also showed me those blockages on the TV screen, while I was being examined. His suggestion was to immediately undergo heart bypass surgery, because it is always the best approach to get this done before a heart attack occurs. Once a heart attack occurs, a part of the

heart muscle dies and the damage is irreversible. Therefore, in March 2001, during the spring break of our university, I went to Anchorage and underwent triple heart bypass surgery in Providence Hospital. As I remember, it was a very painful surgery and my recovery was slow. It was because I had become a diabetic by that time for about 7 years. Fortunately, I was not insulin-dependent then, and my diabetes was kept under control, using oral medicines.

**My appointment at the Cleveland Clinic:** About 10 years after my heart bypass surgery, around 2010, I began to feel minor discomfort on the left side of my chest, confined mostly to the surface. During the past decade, I had done some reading and research on my own to understand the CAD and had come to know about the reputation of the CC on heart treatment. I read that the Heart and Vascular Institute of the CC was ranked the best in the nation for cardiac care by *U.S. News & World Report* every year since 1995. Therefore, I wanted to go there. I did extensive inquiry and with the help of a colleague from our electrical engineering department, who had gone to the CC for his heart valve surgery, I obtained the name of his cardiologist, Dr. James Thomas at the CC. Doing research on the qualifications of Dr. Thomas, I was highly impressed. He had received his MD degree from Harvard in 1981 and had been at the CC since 1992. He was a professor of medicine and biomedical engineering and medical director, heart and vascular institute at the CC. Thus, I wrote to him a letter on our university letterhead, from one professor to another, requesting an appointment with him. I was extremely pleased to receive his prompt response giving an appointment to see me on Dec. 28, 2010.

**Sydell and Arnold Miller Pavilion:** I arrived at the CC on the evening of Dec. 26, 2010 and stayed at the CC guest house. The CC provides excellent accommodations in the campus at three levels of lodging rate, the guest house being the most economical, yet quite neat and clean. The guest house is just opposite to the Sydell and Arnold Miller Pavilion, where all the cardiology and cardiovascular units are located. During my walking tour on Dec. 27, I was highly impressed seeing all the facilities in that pavilion, which the locals called the “heart center”. This is the largest and busiest heart program in the nation. I had the checkup in this building on Dec. 28 morning by Dr. Thomas. To my delight, all the cardiology test results came out well. The bypass grafts were working fine. Imagine my mental relief, because I had gone to the CC with the apprehension that they might open up my chest cavity again to repair or redo the coronary artery grafts or at least place some stents in my coronary arteries. But Dr. Thomas assured me that none of those were necessary, not even an angiogram, because my heart was working fine. However, from my blood test profiles, he found that the glucose level was extremely high. He attributed my surface chest discomfort to nerve related pain caused by uncontrolled diabetes, and immediately set up an appointment at the Endocrinology and Metabolism Institute located there. I was examined there the next day and was recommended to go on insulin right away.

**My impressions on the physicians:** Including my second visit to the CC in June 2011, I have been treated by three physicians there; Dr. Thomas of cardiology, Dr. Jean-Paul Achkar of

the gastroenterology and Dr. Leann Olansky of endocrinology. Each one of them graduated from top-ranked medical schools in the USA and is highly qualified in his/her discipline. I believe I had received excellent treatment from all of them. I would recommend them to all my friends, relatives and acquaintances needing treatments in their respective specialties.

I was so pleased with my heart treatment that I recommended Dr. Thomas to the family of my REC friend, Dr. Birendra Jena, who has been a longtime resident of Ohio. Dr. and Mrs. Jena had come to visit me at the guest house of the CC, when I was undergoing treatment there. At a later date, Mrs. Jena had a checkup with Dr. Thomas. I heard from Birendra babu that they were very pleased with the treatment.

I was struggling with ulcerative colitis despite the treatment by a physician in Fairbanks. It was not well-controlled with the treatment locally. However, when I went to the CC and received the treatment of Dr. Achkar, it was so effective that my disease has been in remission since I was treated by him in June 2011. I just can't say enough about my experience at the CC.

I was saddened to learn that, while making my appointments for the upcoming summer of 2015 at the CC, I was informed that Dr. Thomas had moved to a heart institute in Chicago in June 2014, after 22 years of service at the CC. I will miss him, and have to find another heart specialist at the CC for my checkup in 2015.

**Some valuable information regarding the CC:** During my stay there, while not undergoing treatment, I walked around and discovered many interesting things. I browsed through their main library in the campus and found it to be well-equipped with books, journals, newsletters, magazines, video and audio media. I noticed many physicians, researchers, medical students reading in that library which is normally seen in research and educational institutes. The statistics of 2009 presented by the CC, showed that there were about 2000 physicians and scientists working there. That year 3.7 million patients had visited the CC. Each year, patients come to the CC from every state in the USA, plus more than 80 countries of the world. Among the foreigners, I noticed a large percentage of patients were from the Middle East, generally from the wealthy families. The Heart and Vascular Institute provides a Preventive Cardiology Program (PCP) in an outpatient clinic setting. They combine the multidisciplinary expertise of physicians, nurses and other health care professionals from cardiovascular, endocrinology, hypertension, internal medicine and nutrition therapy to help individuals with heart disease, or those with cardiovascular disease risks. Diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol are cardiovascular disease risk factors and unfortunately, I had all of them. These are found commonly in many Indian populations, who are mostly the sedentary workers. This PCP program advises them about the optimal life style changes and medical managements to prevent the occurrence and/or progression of cardiovascular disease. I would have greatly benefitted, if I had been aware and followed this type of PCP program. People following the program could reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke and may reduce the need for heart bypass surgery.

**Some fun things to do while visiting the CC:** There is an international food café in the pavilion where I enjoyed many foreign foods and I highly recommend it. I also found a wonderful chapel for all religions, where I went and prayed, not only for my health but also for the recovery of many extremely sick patients I saw at various institutes of the CC. I went to the Case Western Reserve University, which is within the commuting distance and walked around the campus, remembering my REC classmate, Dr. Mahesh Pati and our batch mate, Dr. Kishore Kar, from the University College of Engineering, Burla; both did their graduate studies at that university. I also went to the Cleveland Browns Stadium and the shores of the great lakes to notice the maritime history of Cleveland, which was a great industrial city at one time. I would not recommend folks to go there for a health checkup in December due to harsh weather. Summer is the best time to go there. All in all, it was a great experience and I recommend the CC to the readers.



*Dr. Debendra Kumar Das, P.E.*  
*Professor and Past Chair of Mechanical Engineering*  
*University of Alaska Fairbanks*  
*Fairbanks, AK 99775 U.S.A.*  
*Tel. [\(907\)474-6094](tel:9074746094)(Office), Fax [\(907\)474-6141](tel:9074746141)*  
*E-mail: [dkdas@alaska.edu](mailto:dkdas@alaska.edu)*  
*Web URL: <http://cem.uaf.edu/me/people/deben-das.aspx>*

## The Odia Doctor

*Dr. Prasanna K. Pati*

"Dr. Morgan, we do not want a Hindu colored doctor for our brother, George. Please assign him to a white Christian doctor. Dr. Sonjee does not even look like a psychiatrist. We know from a non-believer Hindu that this doctor Sonjee is a devotee of a black God called Kalia."

I was a psychiatrist in a large mental hospital in the heartland of America, one of those insane asylums started by the pioneers for care, custody and treatment for the mentally ill. The grounds were beautiful with trees, lawns and flower beds. It was like a beautiful park. Inside the multiple buildings, there were hundreds of patients. I was an admitting psychiatrist in one of the wards. In the hospital, there was hope and despair, joy and sorrow, so many facets of insanity and life and death all in an interplay. The staff at all levels were dedicated despite the huge stress and the painful events and stories behind each patient.

I could go on and on, but let me turn to the story as it unfolded. I was a treating physician for a newly admitted patient who had grown up in the deep south, where the African Americans have been treated as sub-humans for centuries.

Now, I am back to the story. Dr. Morgan, administrator and medical superintendent of the hospital had listened carefully to the sisters' request. He got up abruptly from his chair to look out of the window at the beautiful grounds on this rainy day. He was there for a couple of minutes and then abruptly returned not to his chair but stood in front of these two middle-aged sisters of George. He literally shouted at them, "Dr. Sonjee is a highly qualified psychiatrist. I hire physicians not on the basis of skin color, ethnicity, religion or the country of origin, but only based on training, character and qualifications. Do you understand that? Dr. Sonjee will remain your brother's physician. I repeat there will be no change of doctors."

George has been admitted to the hospital by a court. After the staff update by the Charge nurse, it was always my first priority to briefly assess all patients assigned to me on the previous night. Mrs. Gilmore the head nurse brought George to my adjoining office. George refused to sit down, paced back and forth, he was highly agitated, burst into racial slurs and profanities.

"Nurse, I do not want a nigger as my doctor. This doctor Sonjee is a pathetic looking nigger. I heard from another patient that this doctor is from India and not even a Christian."

Mrs. Gilmore, a big nurse, stood between me and George. George went into a new tirade against the judge, the justice system, the hospital and the nurse, interspersed with profanity. He was also menacing and made gestures with his fist. We psychiatrists are trained to be patient and compassionate and to treat all patients with dignity. At this point, I had the gut feeling that both the nurse and I might be assaulted. George was a big robust man, quite capable of strangling both of us to death or beating us up.

I am NOT a person who prays and asks for divine guidance, but at this point I muttered to myself "Oh Lord Shiva."

I picked up the phone and ordered Rex and Joe, our psychiatric aides to come to my office immediately which was just next door. They came in immediately and stood on each side of George who looked at me, Mrs. Gilmore and the psychiatric aides and sat down on the chair. I ordered Mrs. Gilmore to give George intra-muscular tranquilizer and told George, "The medications that I have just ordered will help you calm down. I have also ordered that you be secluded. Rex and Joe will check on you frequently today. You will be also getting oral

medications and I expect you to cooperate. Within a day or two, you will be in good control. I know it has been very difficult for you, I want you to cooperate fully with the nursing staff.”

After several days of medications and supportive contacts, George improved to the point of being accessible to a more intensive psychiatric examination. From then on I made it a top priority to have brief psychotherapy sessions, along with some of my other patients. Eventually, George and I developed a good therapeutic rapport. George came from a very chaotic and abusive background. We together worked on these issues, also I had family therapy sessions with his wife, to help her understand her husband's illness. Eventually George improved to the point of being discharged back to his home and with a follow-up plan with the county mental health clinic.

As I look back, I could have been killed by George. One of the psychiatrists that I knew, was shot to death by a patient in his office and another, who was very close to me, was savagely attacked by a patient in the hospital setting, died of a traumatic brain injury. Was I scared to death at the initial encounter with George? Yes, you bet I was. I could have been history. It was part of the profession and thus, it was out of my mind, until a dozen years later.

I received a phone call from George's wife Elizabeth. For a moment I couldn't remember about the patient, George. She reminded me that I was his doctor at the hospital and that I had a number of family therapy sessions with her and her two sub teenage daughters. Slowly all of that came back to me, like a replay of an old scary movie.

Elizabeth even quoted me from the family therapy sessions I had. She would keep a diary of the sessions. The following are some of the quotes that she had meticulously recorded. According to her, I had stated, "Nobody is 100% mentally healthy and nobody is 100% mentally ill. There is not a single person in the USA who is not affected directly or indirectly by mental and emotional disorder and depending on multiple stressors we move back and forth in this spectrum."

Lastly, Elizabeth told me that she had a special request and that George was in a terminal stage of pancreatic cancer and that he wanted to see me. I said to myself, "Oh my God! What is this request and why should I go?" I replayed the scene of my first encounter with George, the profanities, the N word, veiled threats of me being assaulted along with Mrs. Gilmore; I told Elizabeth that I would think it over and call her the next day. Her response was not to wait too long, that George might lapse into a coma, but that his mind was fairly clear.

I had a calling from the depths of my heart that I should go, even though I didn't know what to expect.

I called Elizabeth the next day and told her that I would be there. It was the same town and thus, it was just a few minutes ride.

Elizabeth met me in the door and took me to George's bed side. I was shocked to see this giant of a man, almost like a skeleton. I shook his hand and George, tried to get up for the handshake but, was unable to reach my hands. He had an enchanting smile, indicating his pleasure that I had come, then he started sobbing and Elizabeth started wailing. I held his hands tightly. He looked at me and then, his mood changed and there was a smile again. Finally, "Dr. Sonjee, are you still a believer in Kalia, the Lord Jagannath? After I recovered, and over the years I met some Odias who also know you. I studied the Hindu mythology enough. Dr. Sonjee, I am sure you have visited the temple of Goddess Kali in Kolkata." At this point, his voice was feeble. He muttered; "The reason I wanted to see you is to offer you an apology about the first time you saw me in the hospital." I held his hand tightly, but I was speechless. Elizabeth was sobbing. I tried to remember what Lord Krishna had told Arjuna in the battlefield of

Kurukshetra on the meaning of life and death. I thought to myself, “Here was a former patient of mine, confronting me literally about the meaning of life and death”.

I even tried to recall the Old Testament of the Bible about life and death. There was only one line I could recall, "A time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance."

In my home, I had a small bottle of water from the river Ganges. It was uncanny that I had carried the small bottle with me. I took out the bottle and put a few drops of the water between George's quivering lips. At that moment, I became a Brahmin priest and whispered in his ears, "May Lord Jagganath walk with you wherever you are going to." Elizabeth was crying loudly and I was tearful.

George was slowly lapsing into a coma and with the enigmatic smile I planted a tender kiss on his forehead chanting “Om Namo Shivaya”.



*Dr. Pati is a retired psychiatrist who lives in Salem Oregon with his wife Norma. He played the role of Dr. Sonjee, a psychiatrist in the Oscar winning movie, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" in 1975. He invites any Odia producer to make films based on any of the stories in his book "Adventures and Misadventures of Dr. Sonjee". The story "The Woman from Georgia" from this book has been already made into the film, "Desires of the Heart" by a very creative Odia producer, Solila Parida, but not yet released. Dr. Pati can be reached by email at [njrpati@gmail.com](mailto:njrpati@gmail.com)*

## I Really Don't Know about HIM

*Sulakshana Sen*

Last evening my niece Sima called me from Chicago, asked me to write a story about "JAGAT-NATH" aka the BIG THAKUR Jagannath for upcoming "Ratha Jatra". After we chatted for half an hour from A to Z about our kids, relatives living here and India, I told her that I will try. After I hang up the phone, I laid myself in the bed, and kept thinking what I knew about Jagannath, the supreme God? What could I write about Him?

Smiling a little to myself I realized that I really didn't know anything about Him. May be I knew nothing- yes, nothing except the stories that I heard about the Lord in my elementary school days in Orissa. Thoughts came flowing to my mind connecting Lord Jagannath.

The first time when my little daughter Susan saw God *Jagannath* at Puri, asked "Who cut out His hands, Mommy? His brother's and His sister's hands too?"

I liked the unexpected question from my five year old, tried to satisfy her curiosity and told her the story that I learned from my mother *how all Their hands left half done*.

"When the king opened the door, the carpenter was half way to finish the hands, the king was not supposed to enter or open the door until the work was complete. That was the promise both the king and the carpenter agreed. But the king entered unexpectedly and broke the promise. The carpenter died instantly. The work was left half done, everything was complete without the hands of all deities."

"All of Them look good as it was left, isn't it?" I asked her.

"I like Jagannath's face and his brother's and sister's- all of their faces".

Susan got distracted with an unexpected beating on her head. A *panda* bit her head lightly with a cane with the name of God. I was not sure how much my daughter was convinced by my story, but she did not ask any more about the hands, no one asked me about *Their Hands*.

While I was still laying on the bed and thinking of Sima's reminder that I have to write about Jagannath, my mother's smile flashed in the stillness of the room. The TV, the dresser, the side lamps and all the stuffs around me started to disappear.

I started vividly remembering the day in our *Thakur Ghar* at Khurda while Bou was busy doing her daily rituals. She used to scrub the small cute brass jugs and silver utensils until they dazzled, rinsing different sizes of *beta changudi* for keeping flowers to serve Gods and Goddesses. I watched her putting flowers on Jagannath and Krishna, she put sandal paste dots on their faces, I asked her,

"Bou, what do you want to get from *Jagannath*?"

"Nothing...."

"Nothing?...What do you mean???"

"You must be asking to get something, a good groom for my oldest sister Minoo apa, money or something???"

"No, I don't, because He is not going to give."

"How do you know that He will not give? Why are you doing so much *Puja* then?"

"I am doing, because I like to do it".

"Bou, you spend hours for your *Puja* in morning and evening *alati*, saving *khai*. *Ukhuda*, *Pheni*, new ripe mango, *sandesh* to offer Him for *Bhoga*. You do fasting whole day on special occasions like *Janmastami* and other *Pujas*. Why do you do all the *Puja* then, if you don't ask for anything?"

As if she did not hear anything, she repeated "Jagannath would not give". Bou emphasized.

"Is Krishna the one to give?"

"No, Krishna is Jagannath too, just another form."

In my early teen then, I somehow got the idea that one had to pray and ask God to give, what was hard to get. Bou's words confused my world that I knew then. After a pause, Bou broke the silence herself, "just because you prayed or asked, you should not expect. All Gods say "*Do your Duty*".

"You are doing your duty, Bou, every morning and evening for four hours!"

"Yes I am doing *Puja*, But God is not asking me to do that. I am doing it to feel close to Him."

I interrupted not taking her words for granted, "Then tell me, who will give that is hard to get?"

"Not something or anything, you get to work hard for what you deserve, if it is not in your hands, then just leave everything to Him."

"Yes, okayyy... I would work hard leaving everything to Him, if still would not get, then who would I pray? Is there any God bigger than Jagannath and Krishna?"

Bou did not want to hurt my feelings anymore, ignoring my last question she replied "If you are in the right path, working hard, ask the Goddesses *Laxmi*, *Durga* and *Kaali*. They get pleased faster, they are wives of Jagannath and Krishna with different *rupa*."

That was all. Getting hope, I left the room.

That month, *Rathajatra Mela* was coming up at Gurujanga, a village, walking distance from Khurda. I went with Bou to see the pulling of three beautiful *Raths* with Jagannath, Balabhadra and Shuvadra. I enjoyed pulling the Rath in the crowd but enjoyed the *Mela* more spotting my school friend Jhunu and her mother close by the pond where people wash their legs before entering the temple. While Bou was busy buying *Bhoga*, *Sakara*, *Khai*, banana, coconut, flowers, *bela patra*, *karpura* and *Dipa*, the temple became so crowded that both of our Moms decided to leave us girls close to the small stationary shop with blue tent half covered. We were

looking around. Jhunu got a pair of red ribbons, I spent my savings of ten paisa for a pair of pink-butterfly hair clips and fifty paisa to get a *Laxmi* statue, got it all wrapped in an old news paper from the stationery shop. When our Moms came out, we rode rickshaws in our separate ways. On our way, Bou stopped the rikshawalla to get a *kula* and a small red *changudi* to put flowers for her Gods and Goddesses. We both came home quite happy. I placed the small *Laxmi* statue in my room- not in the Thakur room midst of all Bou's Gods. My *Laxmi statue* was wearing a bright red saree, yellow blouse, long black hair, golden color necklace and a smiley face with dark-red lip color. I showed to Bou later and said "Bou, does not this statue look just like your *Laxmi*, next to Jagannath?" A smile flicked in her face.

Mostly every year, Bou and Bapa used to go to Puri to offer 'shradhha' in Jagantnath's temple. There was no need for her to make all the arrangements; white rice, new *handi*, green plantain, *bhoga* or *daksina*. I could feel she was excited to see Jagannath at Puri. Bou was ready for her next day visit to *Bada Deula*. She wore her special white saree with bright red-border having velvet golden yellow swans, facing each other by a lotus in between. Usually, Bou and Bapa used to go by 8:00AM, first bus to Puri from Khurda and come back late night around 10:00PM. I wondered why they did not feel like going to spend some time in the beach, the most beautiful beach in India! After they finished *shradhha Puja*, they used to eat *Avada* in the temple, get home some *magaj ladu* for our neighbors. Bou used to get '*balita*' and dry *Avada* used to be packed in little rolled majenta-pink fabric bags. Every time she used to go, she also changes her glass bangles in *Bada Danda*. There are rows of dazzling bangle shops in *Bada Danda* to the right side of the road; after that they get back catching the last bus to Khurda. When the door bell would ring I ran to open; first thing I used to take her hands to mine to see what kind of bangles she selected. Going to Puri for giving *Shradhha* to my grandfather became a yearly routine, but for Bou- that was the only chance to see Jagannath.

As I got older to take responsibility, one day I asked Bou, if we both could visit Jagatnath, just two of us together. She jumped at the idea, we asked Bapa and he Okayed it. I remembered, she lead me to *Arun Stambha* to put *dipa*. The *Singha Dwar* was wide open. I got really shocked to see that Bou was still holding her *Dipa* showing towards Jagannath, while tears were flowing nonstop from her eyes. She was so happy a minute ago! Without the slightest idea 'why' she was crying, I held her hand without a word. That day we were lucky, the line moved faster in spite of the crowd when we reached the *Singhason*, Bou asked me to hug Jagannath, I stretched my hands as far as it go, but could not quite hug, as He is too big around, Bou touched Him and bowed her head in the floor chanting some *mantras* I could not understand. I saw Bou was not crying anymore. She led me to *Laxmi* temple. After offering *Dipa* to *Laxmi*, she asked me to sit on the temple verandah, I looked at her face, and there were no tears, her face looked fresh. I

took a breath of relief. Pausing a little I asked Bou, "Why were you crying when you first saw Jagannath?"

She took few seconds then replied "No, I was not really crying. I was too happy."  
"How can you be happy when you are crying?"  
"You can, when one cannot control too much happiness in the heart- those bursts into tears sometimes". I preferred to stay quiet, we have to get the *Avada*, bangles from *Bada Danda* and catch the bus soon. We got hurried.

Time passed.....

In one unfortunate evening, we got bad news that my brother-in-law Tulu Bhai had a serious motor bike accident; he was admitted in Neuro- surgery department at Cuttack hospital with multiple brain injury. When a baby goat crossed his path running away from her mother, trying to save the baby goat, Tulu Bhai could not control the bike; he got unconscious and was bleeding profusely. A passer-by Truck driver picked him into his truck and got him to emergency ward at Cuttack hospital. My sister Minoo apa, received the bad news immediately, leaving the kids with next door neighbor, a block Jeep drove her to CTC hospital. Seeing Tulu Bhai unconscious, Minoo apa was desperately trying to stay close to her husband, but the rushing doctors and nurses pulled him away to the surgery room in a stretcher. We all reached CTC hospital after an hour while he was going through surgery. After nine hours of surgery the doctor came out to say, "We did our best." Tulu Bhai was motionless.

After four days, the doctor asked to call all the family members to give Tulu Bhai a last visit, expecting any minute the worst would happen. Next morning, the nurse got surprisingly shocked and rushed to call the doctor, "His brain is responding differently". The doctor on duty ran to Tulu Bhai and prescribed some new medications. Tulu Bhai started recovering slowly but steadily, after two months he started recognizing people. He uttered his first word "Minoo, Minoo..." Minoo apa did not leave him even for a moment except with a trusted family member to use toilet, she did not take bath for four months. At midnight, she would wipe her hands and legs with a soaked towel sitting on a *satranji* at his bed side in semi dark room, when most patients were lying in bed like dead bodies including Tulu Bhai.

Tulu Bhai recovered almost completely and the neuro surgeon Dr. Rath remarked to my Apa "You are really a *Sabitri* and Mr. Patnaik is definitely your *Satyaban*". He smiled proudly. Tulu bhai came home totally cool except to follow some physiotherapy sessions to follow. I was thinking of Bou if she ever asked to Jagatnath to save her son-in-law? According to her strong

belief Jagannath already knew and would be there for her daughter, because no one would, except Him.

Time to time, I went to visit my Minoo Apa to see the progress on Tulu Bhai and reported to Bou and Bapa. One late summer afternoon, Minoo Apa and I were both chatting and flash backing the horrible accident of Tulu Bhai. We came up relating to something at CTC hospital. Minoo Apa said, "I knew, he would never leave his children Mama and Papu alone in this world". Pondering few seconds I said, "It is amazing that Tulu Bhai beat all the odds, but how did you know that after the best brain doctor gave up his hope?"

Making me filled with goose bumps Apa said, "The exact time, when Tulu Bhai was pulled away to Neuro-surgery room by a stretcher, I was helplessly weeping leaning to the surgery room wall giving up all my hope. Out of nowhere in the hospital crowd someone passed by me with a huge rush pushing the crowd and siding himself out, as if he is running late to do something important. Before I looked, he put a broken Feni-*Jagannath prasad* in my hand and rushed away like a thin wind, I heard a strange unknown voice "no worries" echoed in the hospital air. Instantly, I got all the strength to fight for Tulu Bhai taking 'no' for an answer".

Life resumed from where it was unexpectedly catapulted...like nothing happened.

After few years, I came to America, but could not forget to wrap my *Laxmi* statue that I got it from Gurujanga *Rathajatra Mela*, packing it carefully with a small Jagannath photo in a new folded saree in my carry-on VIP hard luggage, in case it would break. After two years staying in America, the first time when I went to visit India, I hugged Bou tight and tears filled up my eyes. I did not figure out why I could not stop the tears.... except remembered that Bou cries every time seeing Jagannath at Puri Temple. Were the tears flowing with immense joy? I guessed.

After Minoo Apa's children got married and happily settled in their lives, a sudden onset of cancer already metastasized took Minoo Apa away from us and out of this world to meet our Bou who already passed away. Tulu bhai is still alive- healthy. She was really a *Sabitri* that all of us want to be.

Recently, I went to India-then to Puri and got a real big wooden Jagannath with yellow *mukuta and* yellow silk ghagara, Balabhadra with blue *mukuta and* blue silk ghagara, and Their sister Shubhadra with red *mukuta and* red silk *ghagara*, all ghagaras are trimmed beautifully with golden lace. With some *sanja balita*, margenta pink bag filled with dry *Aavada* and a *Sankha* that Bou gave me when I left, I placed Jagannath with his brother and sister in one side of my

computer table. When I looked at Jagannath through the eyes of Bou, I wondered, “What should I ask Him to give to me? There was nothing came to my mind....nothing. Bou and Minoo Apa both passed away but it seemed as if Tulu Bhai's accident just happened and someone from nowhere came through the rush to save him...."Who was Him?"

While writing this, I still feel an out of body experience. I do not do Puja every day, but I sit to work at my computer every day. Before I click the computer mouse, I always look at Jagannath, thinking that I really don't know about Him.

"Did Bou know about Him?" I heard Bou's soft smile saying "You do not have to know Him, He knows us all".



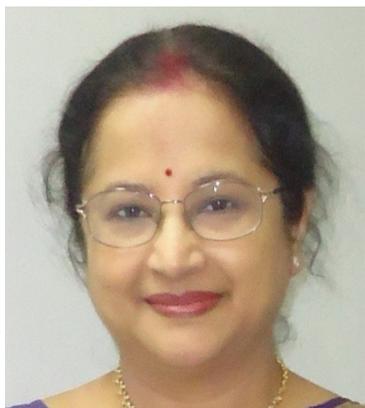
**P.S.** Three weeks after I finished the story, I got sad news that Tulu Bhai passed away with a heart stroke.



*5328 Coquina Shores Lane, Port Orange, Fl 32128*

## My Tryst with Twitter in Cuttack

*Tapasi Misra*



I came to the US in July, 1979 and have been travelling back to India every year since. One would naturally assume that I am by now well acclimatized to and in sync with the sweeping changes that have been taking place in India these last decades. That I settle down in smug contentment in my old country soon after landing. But the truth is that every time I land in my old country, it feels like a new country in some aspect or the other and I am caught unawares, unprepared. Some of the changes are, of course, refreshing and reassuring. But others, especially those I notice in my contemporaries, people in their 50s, 60s, 70s, are at once unnerving and amusing... Or could it be that I am the one who has remained in a limbo, suspended over the Atlantic Ocean, while they have wisely kept up with the natural progress of society and culture?

I am back in India after 10 months and am already overwhelmed by the inadequacy of my techy vocabulary. Shortly after landing in New Delhi two months ago, I headed for my friend's place in the heart of the city. I noticed that her middle aged driver, originally from rural Bihar, made several stops on the narrow staircase as he hauled my enormous suitcases to the apartment on the second floor. Embarrassed, I tried offering help but he quickly motioned me to stop, saying, "Nehi Madam, wo kya hai ke airport chhodne ke baad WhatsApp dekha nehi to, bacche kuch na kuch bhejte rahte hain" (No Madam, I just haven't looked at my WhatsApp messages since we left the airport, the kids have been sending all kinds of messages). That moment remains frozen in my mind's eye - two well-travelled, beaten up suitcases precariously balanced on the steep steps, 10 bony fingers furiously striking the keys of a smart phone, me wondering if I heard him right or was it an early attack of jetlag. I remember suddenly feeling far from home, displaced... But in the next few months I would quickly learn and embrace the new lingua franca of my old country.

The door flung open and I found myself rescued by the welcoming arms of my beautiful friend, Mita. "You are home!" Afraid to wake up her elderly in-laws I tip toed in, but it turned out that uncle and aunty were wide awake, sipping lemon tea. Deeply touched, I said, "Awww, you shouldn't have let your parents stay up for me Mita, I could have seen them tomorrow."

"Oh no, they are not waiting for you," she said, "They don't sleep before 1 am these days."  
"TV?"

“No, Facebook.”

Uncle was busy sorting out a social media problem with the help of their teenaged granddaughter while Aunty stood nearby complaining about the idiosyncrasies of Facebook. Next morning, over a scrumptious Marwari breakfast, Aunty mourned the bad Wi Fi connection, the unpredictability of her iPhone... “You have an iPhone, Aunty?”

“Who doesn’t,” she shook her head resignedly, “Aaj kal ke zamane mein? Rakhna padta hai, beta (have to have it, dear).” I went to my room and pulled down the Rejai over my head to answer my very non iPhone.

Next morning as I was surfing the net for news, courtesy their newly installed very reliable Tata Docomo, I chanced upon a picture of my all-time favorite actress Sharmila Tagore with her children at a family wedding. The picture showed a close- up shot of some beautiful faces that seemed weirdly off. Then I read the caption. “Beautiful Soha says that it is her last Selfie as an unmarried woman.” Wait...Bollywood celebrities taking Selfies? Is it possible that they don’t know that millions of their pictures, from every angle and every direction, are splashed all over the media, walls, billboards on every highway, every single moment of every single day, 24/7?

I came home to what I considered comfortably tottering Odisha and was at once assaulted by the word Twitter. The first event I was asked to attend was as a judge at a Jhoti (intricate designs made on the floor with rice flour paste) competition between young women from a shelter. While I gasped at the beautiful designs and concentrated on the task in hand, I noticed that some of the judges, all middle aged women or older, were rushing through it. Too many interesting Tweets. “You mean messages from irate husbands waiting for their lunch at home?” No, they laughed, Amitabh B won the 3<sup>rd</sup> Padma award, read his Twitter! “Now?! Wait, let’s focus on the Jhotis...” But their ears were already glued to their shiny iPhones, spreading the latest “hot” news. There was also some Twitter about Obama’s impending visit to India, mostly about the Odia designer’s dress that Michelle was rumored to be donning at the Indian Republic Day parade celebrations. In the course of the afternoon at the Jhoti competition there were a lot of Selfies and group picture taking with phones which they preferred to the more traditional camera. It’s easier, one said, to upload to Facebook and WhatsApp. I also overheard complaints and apologies for not being more active on social media, followed by promises to rectify the lapse.

I remember the time in India about 3 decades ago when people started getting engrossed in TV shows they called “serials”. I had simply stopped visiting anyone during particular shows, especially in the evenings. What was more disconcerting was when visitors, especially close relatives, to your house would walk in requesting, “Tike TV ta kholibu kire, *Saas Kabhi Bahu Thi* arambha hei jiba”(Please could you turn the TV on, the drama called *Saas Kabhi Bahu Thi* is about to begin). Most family visits entailed watching other people’s favorite shows over chaha, singada and mitha, with a few forced pleasantries during the commercials. I noticed this time

that people my age still watched a lot of TV, but now WhatsApp is what keeps them from having meaningful conversation with you. By people, I mean siblings, friends, sisters-in-laws... Those for whom you have made the 10,000 mile journey!

Within two months I was already speaking a different language, just keeping up with the tech savvy new culture of my ancient country where I had grown up glued to Vividh Bharti radio and LP players and matinee shows at the Hind or evening shows at Grand Cinema. The former were more thrilling as they involved bunking classes in Ravenshaw College. Afternoons were spent trying to listen in to friends' love stories by requesting the telephone operator to connect us. Evenings were reserved for cramming for exams. Our lexicon consisted of words such as tape recorders, LP, 45, 78, color, black and white, cross connections, overseas trunk calls, blue aerograms... But that lexicon has become extinct even to my former partners in crime. They now lament that I don't Facetime them from America.

I was astonished to see a very conservative classical music teacher, who professed to hate everything modern and constantly evoked the days of unrecorded oral music traditions, demolish her mobile phone till she had located the Blue Tooth chip. She requested me to download music for her from the internet because, "Sethi sabu asal jinisa miliba" (because you'll get authentic stuff from there). I watched her in awe as she mastered the computer within days - from learning to plug it in to enthusiastically using Skype to teach music to my friend's daughter in Texas. As I watched her lightening transformation I wondered if it had anything to do with the highly tech savvy current direction of the wind in the country, that swept up everyone in its wake, old, young, educated, uneducated, rich, poor. In another week or so I wasn't surprised when the astrologer I visited wanted me to throw away the traditional horoscopes etched on palm leaves and get a computer generated one. Because, he said, the old almanacs cannot compete with the accuracy of the computer. He might very well be right but it was strangely fascinating, coming from this silver haired man in his eighties, bent over a litter of papers, sacred beads, birth stones, shloka books...

The day I reached Odisha, I was assaulted with questions and concern about my daughter's marital status.

"Are you thinking about it or not?" everyone asked.

"Yes, but you know...she has to find someone."

"But you must be on the lookout, just in case."

"Yes, but I don't know how..."

"How!?" They screamed. "Have you not heard of Bharat Matrimony, Shaadi.com, Simply Marry," my husband's aunt asked. "Finding the right person has never been easier," my friends shrugged. They told me which site is better for NRIs, which is best for finding highly educated people, which is to hunt the cutest.

“Really, you mean you don’t go through people, word of mouth, old family friends, like before?”

“Of course not, that’s too complicated and limiting,” they shook their heads.

“Not anymore those old methods, now that leading business woman Ekta Kapoor has mobilized all eligible single people from all over the world on one page...” I was given detailed instruction on how to go about it by an aunt.

“Save the proposals you like on a Pen Drive,” I was told, “because with all the power cuts, who knows how reliable your internet is. And of course, talk to the parents first. And always ask for the rashi, nakshetra (zodiac sign and birth star)...”

“And remember, as parents it is your responsibility to get the children married. They are after all only children, at any age...”

Despite the badgering that ensued for the next few weeks on this issue, my head cleared and I felt land under my feet. Some things don’t change, thank god. I was home again.



*Tapasi Misra lives in San Antonio with her husband, Lalatendu Misra. She is the Founder Director of Awaaz San Antonio, a non-profit advocacy group for people affected by family violence. This article was written on her recent trip to Cuttack.*

## I Am A Yogi

Parimita Mohanty



First I thought to name my topic as, “I have become a Yogi”. Then the question bumped into my head asking, “What was I, before I became a Yogi?”

I was actually a Yogi even before I came to know “I am a Yogi”.

In reality when people listen to the calls of their hearts and follow that for what they want to be can be their profession unless they get diverted by any other means. And sometimes people do go a complete different direction for many reasons, choices or circumstances from what they would have really wanted to be in their lives. Some leave a space for their passions to come back in future and reopen it when they have the luxury of time and other resources, while others either completely forget it or drop that idea as a sacrifice to what matters or what is importantly going on in their current lives.

Whatever may be the reason True Passion never dies! It waits, it shakes, it awakes when a favorable situations occur and nothing can control that suppressed vibration to come out once stimulated.

Something similar happened to me in my life. I started falling in love with a deeper Spiritual life 12 years ago, practiced all kinds of yoga, meditation, holistic therapies, holistic living, and anything I can possibly name that I have come across with and collected knowledge, practice, learning and experiences of the same .

Now when I look back at those 12 years I see it as a deeper “passion” that I always thrived for not to achieve but to live. Because, **it is true that I have actually not achieved anything but have lived the achievements honestly. There is a huge difference between these two; to achieve, “is to be at the end of the search “; where as to live, “is a continuous process in exploration”!** There is no end to how we want to live! We are definitely not living how we used to live in our childhood, ten years ago, last year, or even last week. Life is continuously changing whether we are aware of it or not. Life is a continuous process of growth and evolution.

**(“We have left the old to live the new always and ever”! Some are conscious of the transformation and some are never eyewitness to it .But it happens anyway to one and all. Because, Change is the very nature of the Mother Nature! It waits for none.)**

*So in this process of “achieving and living”, “learning and growing” we do shift from old ideas to newer or renewed ideas. It is like “experimentation”. Nothing stays the same always and forever. Things happen, people change and ideas shift.*

My original idea was to become a Yogi and that fascinated me deeply. In the process of becoming a Yogi, I have come to strongly, truly, and honestly accept that “I am a Yogi”! There is nothing to be thoughtful about it to say or state that. Because you know yourself very well and you are what you are. There is no wrong or right about it of who you are.

How have I realized that? To be someone or something we go through a certain time and processes and then it's done but sometimes it keeps going even after big achievements occurred then we know “it's not from me” but “it's ME”. This in itself was a big realization for me of its own. And it didn't come any easy either. After many eye openings, many awakenings, and many spiritual successes I came to realize my true nature, my true potentialities. Then, it was up to me, really up to me to do what with, either I continue to know more or drop there as the end of my journey or quest to know the SELF more. Because what comes next is the bonus point the main part is already over. I could feel it, see it and know it by looking at myself.

But it is human to be curious. Curiosity is our very nature. We don't stop. We keep learning, we keep exploring more and more of the same thing a little polisher and better each time.

We keep polishing, we keep living that polish. Human being is the only blessed species to enjoy this. It's a continuous adventure for us.

My previous thought was “I am becoming a Yogi” or “I am in the process of to be a Yogi”. That has been cleared now much better. Because I am eye witnessing my process that it is not ending but it keeps going like an endless road to the heaven. So it is beneficial, wise and peaceful for me to accept nature as designed by nature that “I am not happening” but “I have happened already” and I am not becoming a Yogi but “I am a Yogi”.

Accepting this truth made the whole growth process easier. After finding what I am, life became easier and it didn't get confused any more about myself but to just enhance the beauty of being more and more of what I am.

I used to think, over the years slowly when I would know my Yogi self I would probably come down to enjoy life less in general or be more in yellow robes kind of living. But No it didn't happen that way.. I have liked and lived life to be not of any less of what I would deprive or not like about myself to be a Yogi. Not at all; No compromise on that .No decrements of life styles but only increments has happened as a preference and it did match well to my growth and my belief system. It has been a practice of lifestyles of my yogic livelihood. I do like eating at nice- classy restaurants ,I do like wearing designer clothes, like to maintain organic healthy lifestyle, love going around the world seeing ,exploring new places, meeting new people, learn from their lives and their cultures, make new friends, adopt what inspires me from different places, things or beings.

An enjoyment of complete self freedom, with complete self love and respect and the same for others are a true Yogi's nature. I am proud to find, and live unto that completely. I am very happy and content not to be with me but to be “me” which was originally designed by the

Divine Designer. Finding my true self this life is a joy that can't be felt unless experienced and lived. It is a joy not given by any but by enhancing, igniting the "SELF'S" divine qualities that came as a gift only to the "SELF". No two men are equal in this earth. Each human being is designed specially, individually and uniquely and given its own unique individual attributes.

Living a Yogic lifestyle today is not less than living a doctor's, architect's, astronaut's, sportsmen, movie stars, or any influential profession's life. It is another passion, another profession. It is a passion that someone wants so much to make "being passionate" as his/her profession. Like a doctor or a sportsman wouldn't want to be a Yogi when they grow up unless it is their desire, like wise a Yogi cannot be into other professions if it is not his/her desire. Even there are renowned doctors who are monks, movie stars and politicians as well and its fine to be that. It is their extension into unlimited choices of fields. Being human is a vast life of choices.

I didn't choose to be a Yogi, I didn't become a Yogi but I realized that "I Am a Yogi".

If something that excites us a lot that means it is definitely our true nature. And I just kept adding, decorating, beautifying it more and more .**There is no end to beauty. Beauty is a reflection of who we truly are. It is never done, never enough. It is never complete. It keeps growing, adding, enhancing more and more as long as there is life to it.**

My Yogic part started from beauty of meeting my own Light/Truth/Spirit and became marvelously gorgeous day by day as I explored, embraced and opened innumerable of this magical treasure.

This was a little expression of my long spiritual journey in finding me who I am and I am proud to say that "I Am a Yogi"! I am not in yellow robes, neither have I left family nor I crazily participate in religious /spiritual practices that are truth or taboo or fear based. I just celebrate the true sense of being a Yogi as I freed myself first from the cage of my own Ego. I must explain Ego here. Ego is not necessarily all bad or negative; ego is also that is good or positive about us. Still it is a trap of good and bad inside us. Like day and night we will continue with the good and bad forever. But if we are fortunate enough we can awaken from this play and we don't need to change this play because it is a design of the nature. We don't mess with that ever. Once Spiritual awakening happens everything remains the same but our way of seeing things changes. So they don't affect us anymore. But it is a challenge even after awakening we can be in the trap again and again if not keeping up with our higher selves .It is like you have to water the plant until it becomes a strong tree and survives on its own.

Thank you very much for reading my story my journey of a Yogi.

God Bless You All in which ever path you are heading home to your SELF.

Peace to all. Namste~



Parimita Mohanty, 5036 NW Millstone Way, Portland, Oregon, 97229

## **.Our Odia Powwow**

*Triloki Nath Pandey*

With my sons, Alok, Akash, and my wife, Annapurna, I have been attending the annual convention of the Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) since 1996. Since Alok and Akash are adults now, they attend the convention when it is convenient to them, but Annapurna and I continue to attend like our annual pilgrimage. Annapurna being very active (personally and politically) in the Society has a reason to attend, but I often wonder what I get from going to OSA convention. Here I wish to make some comments and observations.



As a researcher, I am studying “Native Americans and their lives” for over five decades. I have attended their powwows in various parts of the country. Powwow is an Algonquian word, which means a social get-together, a ceremony, and a meeting for discussion. Many years ago, a Native American scholar said that their powwow is a communal expression of belief that is shared by hundreds of Native Americans who gather from across this country to celebrate their uniqueness as a people indigenous of this land. Modern economic reality has made them leave their sacred ancestral land and move to urban places in search of a living. Is it not what made us leave our land and come to this country in search of a better future for us and our children?

Just like the Native Americans, we, Indians, have come to this land with our past, our heritage, and history. We have adjusted to the modern realities here but are always in search of the occasions when we can transcend those realities and stand together as a unique people. I believe that our annual get-together, our convention is such an occasion. We are dispersed all over North America but are united by our culture and tradition and are connected in the belief that by sharing our food, by performing our dances, by speaking in our mother tongue, and by socializing with our extended family and friends, we will renew ourselves.

Our convention serves as a vital catalyst for cultural renewal. We never get tired of watching Odissi dance day and night. We watch dramas and other cultural performances presented by different chapters of OSA and hear the songs and poems we have heard back home. Actually, these activities are expressions of ourselves and they let us share our sense of ourselves with one another.

I must admit that I enjoy seeing old friends and making new ones, but I am overwhelmed by the cultural performances presented by our children and young boys and girls. We raise our children to honor their elders, and they are being taught, by example, the value of culture by keeping alive the legends, folk tales, and traditions of various regions of Odisha, their ancestral homeland.

Watching Odia identity perform at the convention year after year enlivens my own spirit and fills my long Fourth of July weekend with joy and happiness in the company of friends who help me define the meaning of my own life.



*Dr. Pandey is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Santa Cruz*

## Reconciliation

*Jayasmita Mishra*



When you are looking for love and I was, you try everything. For years, I followed the advice of friends, associates and self-help authors but none could reach to the crux of the problem. Yes, I have failed and my failure means his failure too. It would take both of us to save our wedded-life. Yet I cannot tell you how many times I switched off the music system in the middle of a love song and burst into tears because I lacked a relationship to sing about. A chubby baby's giggle, a pregnant lady waddling like a duck, a proud young mother trudging along with a stroller, a seemingly happy couple, a sweet sacred home and all such similes were strong enough sights to spark a trickle of tear in my eyes. Yes, I was jealous of them and could feel the pain within. At this point of life, I had indeed reached the backside of twenty and in quest for some stability and meaning in life.

Family and friends say I am a good catch. A smart gentle attractive woman like me seemed to be the ideal and compatible partner for my broad shouldered handsome Vivek. Yes, today the same Vivek seemed to be a mental pathology, with a trail of unflattering adjectives that my mind could tag him with-"silent", "selfish", "brooding", "uncommunicative", "emotionally barren" and last but not the least a nincompoop of the first grade, spoiling his life for other's sake. He had lost interest in me and I could see, hear and sense that I had become a mere image of dollars and an item of trade for him.

Our relationship remained limited only to the boundaries of the rent that I would pay him at the end of each month and the services that he expected me to fulfill at his will, that too within the closed walls of this home- that smothered me to death. I knew very well that he was abusing me and his gestures definitely served as doses of slow poison.

My parents lived close enough to support me, I had a well-paid job to lean upon, but the path to this home seemed to be my destination. Every evening, my car would head back to this place wherein lay my heart and hearth. We lived here as roommates, he never ate from my hands and I hardly cooked for myself. Yet, I take pride and solace in calling this place my home-for in the eyes of one and all we were -Man & Wife. My tired body would always lay down calm on this bed where I have learnt to sleep alone.

A sweet innocent little girl of the neighborhood once had mustered up enough courage to ask me a sensitive query-"why can't you have babies, like others do"? May be, God never willed it for me as he seemed to have other plans.

Reminiscences behind had always spoken of the good times that we had shared together, the happy moments that we had witnessed. All seemed to be dreams that would never ever materialize once again.

My man Vivek was robbed, oh! no, not by another woman but to his brethren who seemed more important to him than me. Back home in India we know that a woman is married to a family and not to the man alone. It is true, that I am no longer an Indian as on legal terms, but in deeds, thoughts and words I do possess the same traits that were imbibed within me during the growing years of life where I had spent most of my crucial stages of growth and development.

Sanju, his brother's wife cooked, cleaned and ironed for him. His paycheck was passed on to her and she seemed to gain some sort of sadistic pleasure seeing me unhappy. She possessed the wisdom to have two men dancing to her tune. When not in harness, his hours were spent entertaining himself amidst their family within which he revolved. Sanju's daughter, baby Esha seemed to be fulfilling his fatherly needs. Maybe he would never crave to be a father, as would a mad woman like me, who always yearned for a baby made up of Vivek's gene planted and nurtured within my very womb.

Weekends were times when I would ignite my spirits hoping against hope that something concrete would crop up and I would once again win his heart. Efforts to please him were vain. Our relationship always ended in between a bunch of tangled wire that would trip me up. At the wee hours of the mornings, Vivek would be mine and with the rays of the sun, the push theory would work dragging him out of the house, leaving me lonely, desperate, desolate, and whining like a street dog left out to fend for himself. Nothing seemed to work and I would end up cursing my fate.

One fine day, he told me that he had taken the decision to move out while I ought to think and plan my life goals. These were his final and ultimate words and I knew he would be rigid. I ended up being cranky, after sleepless nights, restless, as I would feel; even the sleeping pills stopped working. I sat upright in the mid of the night, I muttered to myself, "Vivek, very soon I would be losing you. Let us decide on something more worthwhile giving ourselves another big chance to make up." However, the deal was always with me to give in to his unrealistic demands while he never was in a mood to compromise. In my eyes, he was always at fault. I closed my eyes and thought for a while the problem was "Vivek", but in reality I was robbing myself of the power to transform the situation. Because while you do not have control over what others do and think the one person you can change is "you". I seemed depleted of all my resources, my mind could think of nothing else to heal the wound. Like a wounded tigress, I lay in bed tossing all through the night. He seemed to be a stone, sick at heart and weak in mind.

The sunshine glittered on the dust, gathered on the photo album that had cherished memories of that important day of our life when he was my Prince charming and I was his Dream girl. Today, they remain untouched, remnants of the memento of our rusted relationship over a time period.

"Divya, this is not a relationship to give up, think hard -will you be able to adjust to another stranger? Moreover, who knows that person might be worse? Would you be able to live the rest of your life alone? Yeah, you are lucky to be living in a free society where no one bothers about anyone except the self, but again do not forget your roots. Will you be able to forget this

Man of your life? The guy with whom you have lived for seven whole years? Is your heart ready to take the ultimate decision? Will you be happy after breaking this relationship?"- The walls echoed around asking her the same questions again and again. The furnitures around seemed to laugh at her - these were those which both had taken great care to choose, buy and set in accordance to their heart's desire. "Friends, family and the rest would always be there - but remember – Divya - you are the one to face the real consequences."

As if awaking from a reverie the reality dawned - better late than never. Going by the collective adage, "All men are dogs", or looking at the individual person you're dealing with, it's so much easier to blame him than to ask yourself, is there something about me that I haven't looked at yet? The truth is, when we want a relationship with a man who isn't ready to love us fully, it's a signal that we too aren't ready and there is still some more scope for adjustment and amendment. Whenever he was in a mood of getting emotionally intimate, I knew I used to pull away, sometimes I did even yield and that was when I too needed him. Raged, irritated and depressed at times my independent woman persona would become prominent and "I'd say: I don't need you and you are expendable, but the truth was it was always from the mouth and never from the heart. I remembered my friend Mita's words: "My husband thinks I am a fool, he just takes me for granted and always tries to find fault with me, but I know underneath his tiger skin is a baby lamb whom I can manipulate. In spite of his harsh outer he does have a heart that melts like cheese; I have the faith he would never throw me away and would go to any extent for my sake - be the need. "Not all men are same", You wouldn't think it would be hard to let a man do things for you, but for me it was", says another friend, I know. While there are other lucky ones: like Rekha, Mona, Anu, Sova and the rest who behave like a queen and are fortunate enough to have their men at their beck and call.

"Maybe, I was somewhat different, made up of all steel and iron and thus had to bear the burnt. Being a self-sufficient woman is not a bad thing, living in this country has taught me to be self-reliant in many other ways that his traditional bent of mind failed to appreciate, but that does not rule out the fact that I did not need Vivek as my life partner. "The woman within me started craving for that idol which very well I knew I had lost. Baby, I got this! "- if indeed a man feels he has no place or purpose in your life, he has no reason to stay there.

For me things seem to be more difficult: will I be able to tolerate him with another woman in his arms. How far can I go out of his life without meeting him at any point-after all we live in a small world. Suicidal thoughts at times overwhelm my imagination, but that too seems scary, one has to have the real guts for that and I knew I was weak. "Divya, do not give up!" chuckled the little girl of the neighborhood as I sometimes used to speak out my heart to her. Her naive mind also could realize my agony and the need for support.

I was determined to do something and I knew the keys were in my hands. I realized that my sense of insecurity and senseless ego was the primal force that tried to end our relationship. My negative mind-set and fault-finding attitude that took hold of my reins, drove me towards bad behavior, it injured me most and the anger remained taking less time to fade. This all resulted in the chipping away at my most cherished relationships. As I have traveled through life, some shadow of myself has added color to my true image - in all of my moments at the

conscious, sub-conscious or unconscious level they have been revealed in the dual form of joy and pain. In reality, I have been operating with negative feelings brought from another time and place, associated with a whole separate set of issues. I gradually learnt that one could not create anything good with leftovers from the past. The therapy as suggested by my Psycho-pal lay in healing the past wounds that keep hurting you and to step back from living on the edge to quote her very words: to leave that dust ball in the corner and go to bed, thanking the Lord for the good day that had passed.

When we are sweet to ourselves, we are sweet to others. From an unhappy place, nothing satisfies. We see clearly that we are born to love, not to judge and that it is not our job to fix anyone. We all have the right to live our own lives and learn our own lessons. When your fellow beings do not take the right path, it is only because they do not see it yet and if we can, there is no harm in leading them forward.

Relationships offer the greatest opportunities for learning and growing at whatever depth we choose. I have learnt the hard way: I will give in for I cannot afford to lose him and no matter how he behaves, unconditional LOVE is what I will give, that is the only weapon that would ease my pain and end my suffering.

A smile in her face, twinkle in her eyes, with dimples deep, Divya remains determined in her will to win. Time has taught her to have faith on Him who makes each one of us to dance on His stage. She has learnt to count upon her own instincts to better understand her beloved's mood swings and dance to his tune, each moment passes with high hopes, for one can only do one's best. Stressing on his positive approach while negating the irrational moves, have made her a happier soul. Enjoying, rather than enduring his sarcastic and eccentric ways has paved a path for improvement and things have started working in her favor.

A small step on his part serves as a giant leap for Divya. Relentlessly, her effort continues as she successfully saves each and every twig of her battered nest.

---God apparently created Eve for Adam, to serve as a support on which rests the edifice of strong family bonds. Marriages are indeed made in heaven, meant to be preserved on earth.



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*Dr. Jayasmita Mishra lives in New York*

## Some interesting Odia personalities of current times

*Jnana Ranjan Dash*

### OSA's "perception" issue

Orissa Society of the Americas (OSA) suffers from a "perception" problem. Many young Odias in California, for example, do not like to be part of OSA in a chapter structure, because they somehow think OSA is a very "quarrelsome" and "highly political" organization. Are we a quarrelsome community,



whose members show a lot of vanity and rudeness? How do we explain the rude and disrespectful language in ORNET and OSANET postings? How does one explain the rudeness displayed at last years convention in Ohio when the food line got a little slow and some people shouted at elders in charge of food? Someone who saw that made a promise never to attend another convention. How do we explain to a first-time attendee, the chaotic general body meeting where shouts and rude behavior are on regular display?

We are told that many cities where Jagannath temple is established and Rath Yatra is celebrated; Odia groups are divided on "personal ego" issues. This is paradoxical since the name of Lord Jagannath's chariot is called "Darpa Dalana" (crush your ego). Why do some of our members hanker after name and fame and practice a "my way or the highway" approach to everything?

We have heard of the "crab mentality" of Odias. Are we displaying that even here in North America with examples like the failed lawsuit against OSA? Our second generation even notices the "quarrelsome" nature of the first generation at OSA venues. In that case, how do we motivate them to continue the legacy?

Time has come to reflect on these issues. We have to turn this around and be a more positive, loving, and caring organization where mutual respect is key. We must rejoice at the achievement of our community members and not feel jealous.

### Interesting Odia personalities

Many young members of our community may not know the Odisha ancestry of the following names:

- *Subhash Chandra Bose* (freedom fighter, born In Cuttack in 1897. He graduated from Ravenshaw Collegiate School before heading to University of Calcutta and Cambridge)
- *Sam Pitroda* (former advisor to Indian Prime Minister, born in Bolangir)
- *Lalit Mansingh* (former Indian ambassador to the UK and USA and foreign secretary)
- *Ajit Jain* (possible successor to Warren Buffet, grew up in Cuttack, student of Stewart School before IIT, Kharagpur)
- *Mira Nair* (well known film director, spent her childhood in Odisha during her father's posting, she even speaks the language)
- *Hari Prasad Chaurasia* (famous flute player, who started his career at All India Radio, Cuttack and got married to an Odia)

The following is a partial list of ten highly accomplished Odias of modern times. They are special because they are not from the usual academia or technical professions and they are not glory-seekers and award-huggers. Humility is their hallmark and we should all feel proud of them.

### **Paramhansa Swami Prajnanananda**

He is 55 years old and is a kriya yoga guru. Born in a small village near Pattamundai, his name was Triloki Dash and he started his career as a lecturer in economics at Ravenshaw College during the 1970s. Then his deep spiritual quest took him away from the academic path and he joined his guru Swami Hariharananda Giri. At the age of 39, his guru conferred the highest title of Paramahansa and made him the leader of the Kriya Yoga Institute. He travels extensively all over the world and is a frequent visitor to the ashram in Miami, Florida. You must visit his Balighai ashram near Puri (few kilometers on the way to Konark), a serene and peaceful campus of several acres. During a recent meeting in February in Cuttack, Swamiji told me about his various social projects all over Odisha. He has authored many books and one I like the best is on St. Francis of Assisi's life and teachings. He radiates love and compassion and one feels very peaceful in his presence. Swamiji truly symbolizes the words of Nobel Laureate Romain Rolland (for Sri Ramakishna Paramhansa), "like a splendid symphony of the universal soul". Check the website: [http://www.kriya.org/swamiji\\_\\_main.php](http://www.kriya.org/swamiji__main.php)

### **Devdutt Pattanaik**

Devdutt grew up in Mumbai and is 45 years old. Trained as a doctor, he started his career serving at many organizations like the Apollo Hospital group. Then he became a leadership consultant, mythologist and author whose works focus largely on the areas of mythology and management. He has written a number of books related to Hindu mythology, including *Myth = Mithya: A Handbook of Hindu Mythology*, *The Pregnant King*, and *Jaya: An Illustrated Retelling of the Mahabharata*. He is the former chief belief officer of the Future Group, one of India's largest retailers. He writes a column for the newspaper Mid-day. His TED talks are very popular. You can check it here: [https://www.ted.com/talks/devdutt\\_pattanaik](https://www.ted.com/talks/devdutt_pattanaik)

### **Swami Sarvapriyananda**

Last year around October, I stumbled into a talk by Swami Sarvapriyananda to IIT, Kanpur students on "Who am I, according to Mandukya Upanishad", a rather complex subject.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGKFTUuJppU>).

Then I found out that he was born in Odisha, grew up in Bhubaneswar and got his MBA from the Xavier's Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar. Right after that he decided to change course and joined the Ramakrishna Mission, Kolkata as a monk. I had the opportunity to listen to two of his talks last January on his maiden visit to the USA. Being very young (early 40s), his spiritual evolution is amazing. He is a great communicator and is full of deep knowledge of Vedanta. He is posted as the resident teacher of the Vedanta Society of Hollywood and will be joining there soon.

### **Bibhu Mohapatra**

Bibhu at age 43 has made a big name in high-end fashion design, a highly competitive field. After spending several years at the prestigious J.Mendel, Bibhu started his own design house and his creations have been worn by well-known names such as Angelina Jolie, first lady Michelle Obama, etc. Check his website: [www.bibhu.com](http://www.bibhu.com)

He is a friend of my son and came to his wedding where I interacted with him. His humility is quite striking. He grew up in Rourkela and after getting his masters degree in economics from Utah, decided to attend the Fashion Institute, New York. From there he has been climbing the success ladder. Bibhu was invited to the 2005 OSA convention in Los Angeles to speak to the youth. He brings the color of Odisha to his modern fashion designs.

### **Swami Sharanananda**

Swami Sharanananda is the resident acharya of Chinmaya Mission, Chicago. He graced the OSA convention in 2013 and several Chicago Odia families are regular attendees of his Sunday morning talks. Formerly a mathematics teacher in Rourkela, Swamiji comes from Puri. He has a child-like loving personality and is full of compassion and humility. The Chicago Indian community adores him and his popularity has kept him there for over twenty years. Swamiji has vast knowledge of our scriptures and is a wonderful communicator with a great sense of humor.

### **Ramakanta Panda**

Ramakanta Panda is a well-known heart surgeon and is head of the Asian Heart Institute, Mumbai. He is 61 years old and comes from a village in Jajpur district. He spent several years at Cleveland Heart Institute. His reputation is extremely high as a good human being besides being a top-notch doctor. He has done heart operations to former prime minister Man Mohan Singh and many other dignitaries. Swami Tejomayananda, head of Chinmaya Mission narrated to me how caring Ramakanta Babu was after doing open heart surgery. He came all the way to Powai regularly to personally check on Swamiji's well being.

### **Nandita Das**

Nandita Das is a well-known name in Indian films. She is the daughter of painter Jatin Das from Baripada. When she came as a keynote speaker to 2005 OSA Convention in Los Angeles, she freely interacted with young people as well as adults. She eloquently described her love for Odisha and Baripada at various sessions at the convention. A highly accomplished actress, her films have got many awards. She also got into directing her first film Firaq some years back. She frequently visits Odisha to help promote Odisha's culture and art. Nandita lives in Delhi with her husband and young son.

### **Sona Mohapatra**

Sona Mohapatra from Cuttack is an artist, singer & performer who has defied the Bollywood route to popularity with her full-blooded voice, electric style and electrifying performances. She is a trained Hindustani classical singer but her first love is the folk music. She aspires to bridge the ancient to the contemporary with her music. She has released several albums and has sung for many films. She also sang on several episodes of TV program Satyameva Jayate (hosted by actor Amir Khan). She has

collaborated on tracks with international music icons like David Bowie & INXS and many international DJ's. She is married and lives in Mumbai.

### **Sambit Patra**

This young man, 41 years old from Odisha was trained as a doctor. Currently he is the national spokesperson for BJP. We have seen him many times in Indian TV speaking on behalf of the prime minister and BJP. He also runs an NGO called Swaraj to help the backward community such as Dalits from all over India in cleanliness and healthcare facilities. He was appointed by BJP party president Amit Shah to be a key spokesperson for the ruling party.

### **P.K.Mishra**

He is currently the additional secretary to the prime minister of India, known as the second most important bureaucrat of the country. A retired IAS officer Mr. Mishra is from Sambalpur and spent his entire career in Gujarat where Narendra Modi was the chief minister. His track record was excellent and that brought him into this special position in the PMO (Prime Minister's Office). With Nripendra Mishra as the principal secretary (retired IAS from UP), they call it the Mishra Square at the PMO.



*About the author: 6789 Glenview Drive, San Jose, California 95120, jnan.dash@att.net*

*Jnana Ranjan Dash has been in Canada and the USA since 1970 and is a life member of OSA. He is a former executive at software companies like IBM and Oracle.*

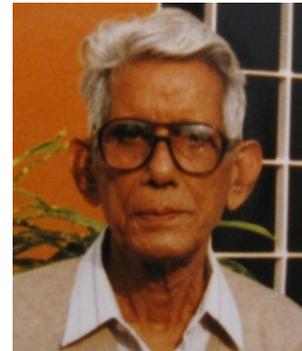


## Pranabandhu Kar Birth Centenary

*Gitimoy Kar*

The year 2014 marked the birth centenary of Late Pranabandhu Kar (1914-1998), the eminent playwright and short story writer who played a pioneering role in driving Renaissance age in Odia literature and stamped an indelible imprint that has continued to inspire generations of writers.

The birth centenary was observed at the highest echelons of literary sphere in India with the Central Sahitya Akademi dedicating and hosting several programs in his honor. The Sahitya Akademi has announced to publish a monograph on Pranabandhu Kar's life and works under the 'Makers of Indian Literature' series, which is expected to be released this year (2015). It will also undertake translation of his plays and short stories into English, Hindi and other languages in order to expose his works to a wider and global readership.



Late Pranabandhu Kar

The Birth Centenary year celebrations kicked off on September 13, 2014 with a daylong seminar hosted by the Central Sahitya Akademi and Odia Department of Utkal University that was attended by eminent literary personalities. They hailed his contribution to the growth and flourish of Odia literature. He had a transformative impact on the literature of his time that was in the midst of a transition into the modern. He was a writer of extraordinary genre who introduced an entirely new style of story-telling using existentialism as his tool to portray social realities and human psychology, they said.

Sahitya Akademi President Dr Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari said, "Kar commands an exalted place in the landscape of Indian literature. He was a pioneer of modern Odia literature, bringing in a new style in writing which has since been adopted by succeeding generations of writers and playwrights".

Akademi Secretary Dr. K. Sreenivasa Rao described him as a humanist and existentialist, who chose to explore the psyche of his characters within their existence in the physical world. This innate capability to bring out the psychological workings is the hallmark of the creative genius that Kar was. He also asserted, "His life, works and legacy should be classified in the annals of world literature instead of the narrow Odia or Indian literary sphere".

Convener of Odia Advisory Board of Akademi, Dr. Gourahari Das said. "Each and every work of Kar is a treatise in itself. There should be concerted efforts to not only publish the monograph but also translate his works into different languages, so people across the globe can enjoy his invaluable literary creations". An unpublished play "*Eka Mati Aneka Akasha*" (meaning *One land and many skies*) written around 1973-74 was released on this occasion, prompting calls for publication of more of his unpublished works as well as translation into other languages.

In addition, several other dignitaries (stated as follows) also spoke on the life and different aspects of Kar's works.

- Prof. Narayan Sahoo (Literary critic and head of Odia Department, Utkal University)
- Ramakanta Rath (noted writer)
- Dr. Ashok Das (Vice Chancellor (VC) of Utkal University)
- Ananta Mohapatra (Veteran theatre personality)
- Dr. Omkar Mohanty (former VC of Biju Patnaik University of Technology)
- Debdas Chhotray (Former VC of Ravenshaw University) and
- other literary critics like Prof. Baishnab Samal, Prof. Narayan Sethi, Prof. Santosh Tripathy, Dr. Sanghamitra Mishra, Prof. Khirod Behera, Dr. Bishnupriya Ota, Dr. Rajlaxmi Jena, Niladri Bhusan Harichandan, Banoj Tripathy along with Srimoy Kar, son of Late Pranabandhu and Editor of The New Indian Express, Odisha.

Later, on October 26, 2014, the Odisha Sahitya Akademi hosted *Pranabandhu Kar Birth Centenary function* with President Satakadi Hota along with literary personalities like Bijay Mishra, Bijay Kumar Satpathy, Sanghamitra Mishra, Giri Dandasena and Srimoy Kar as speakers. A reading session on his top short stories, one act plays and drama including that of the classic '*Sua Muhanre Patara*' (meaning, A leaf in front of a river flow) was held with the attendance of an eminent audience.

Apart from intense literary and academic activities, the Centenary celebrations achieved much more by bringing the playwright alive on stage and up close with the people through a series of presentations of his famous plays at different places in Odisha. Most noteworthy was the staging of Pranabandhu Kar's last play "*Eka Mati Aneka Akasha*" by *Shatabdira Kalakar* Group at Bhanja Kala Mandap on December 4, 2014, directed by Dhira Mallick. The play dealt with critical human relationships, love, passion, betrayal and above all resilience of the soul, kept the jam-packed audience hooked to the stage for the entire duration without even a whimper. The play was preceded by a function, where two books '*Pranabandhu Karanka Galpa Samagra*' and '*Charoti Shrestha Nataka*' an anthology of his most famous works "*Shweta Padma*", '*Ashanta*', '*Snayu Sanhar*' and '*Maatira Manisha*' were released by Narsingha Mishra, Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly, and Soumya Ranjan Patnaik, Editor of daily newspaper "Sambad".

A website [www.pranabandhukar.com](http://www.pranabandhukar.com) was also launched on the occasion. Pranabandhu Kar's eldest son and US-based executive Dr Gitimoy Kar and critic academician Dr Hemanta Das spoke on the eminent writer's life.

Again on January 26, 2015, the very play "*Eka Mati Aneka Akasha*" was presented at a five-day National theatre festival '*Mathkhai Mahotsav*' at Bolangir, earning rave reviews.

Pranabandhu Kar's plays were also showcased at the 17<sup>th</sup> *Kalinga Natya Mahotsav*, a multi-lingual drama festival organized by *Shatabdira Kalaakara* from February 9 to 13, 2015 at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar. The festival opened with the play "*Eka Mati Aneka Akasha*" by the host Group but the real revelation was during the following evenings when '*Ashanta*' was adapted in Bengali and staged by Kolkata-based *Dum Dum Sabdho Mugdho Natya Kendra* and the famous '*Snayu Sanhara*' presented in Hindi by Delhi-based *Utsav Theatre Group*. '*Sua Muhanre Patara*' was staged by *Natya Chetana*. The festival closed with the play '*Swetapadma*' presented by *Panchama Veda Group*, Bhubaneswar.

As the curtains came down on the festival, the packed audience rose to their feet in applause. A befitting tribute to the writer, whose works continue to hold sway even in today's contemporary society with viewers identifying and relating themselves to the characters conceived and painted around half a century back.



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*Dr Gitimoy Kar, a retired executive of Corning Inc. lives in Tampa, FL. He and his wife Rita are OSA Life members.*



## **OSA: Break the Glass Ceiling**

*Annapurna Pandey*

For the future of OSA, it is time for all of us to consider the position of women in our organization. Women are more than half of the OSA membership, but are rarely nominated or elected to decision-making positions: only three out of twenty-two OSA presidents have been women. Why is that Odia women who have become successful professionals in the host culture, still constitute a minority in the socio-political positions of our organization?

Historically, the American socio-political situation was quite similar to the diasporic Odia women's situation.. The difference is that gradually more women are entering the political domain in the United States with twenty-one in the senate and one hundred and seven out of four hundred and thirty five in the congress. This is reflected at the local, district and state level, for women in the United States. Along with the rise of feminist movements, more and more men and women realize that it is time that women share the political responsibility of governing society. Many socio-political organizations at various levels have certainly helped improve the situation. This has not happened in the forty -six years since the inception of OSA. One wonders whether it is because of cultural stereotype or that women continue to be burdened by doing double duty (at home as well as work). Perhaps this hardly leaves them with any time to spare for leadership roles in OSA. But we know that the commitment of some women makes them willing and able to take on the work of OSA. The job of the future is to see how they can be recognized and supported in important positions in our organization.

### **Odia Women in the diaspora: History and Background**

Even though most Odia women grew up overprotected in secure families, the majority of them in the U. S. are professionals who have successfully integrated themselves into mainstream society through their careers. They significantly contribute to the economic success of their families, heading into the middle class suburban way of life, ensuring their children's successful professional futures, and promoting the practice of Indian diaspora as the model minority. In addition to their incorporation into American society, Odia women impressively uphold Odia culture and heritage in selecting various feasts and festivals to celebrate and in teaching their children Odia language, instilling Odia identity. Also they are the principal community organizers in promoting and maintaining the Odia culture ten thousand miles away (not quiet,

more like 8000) from their ancestral land. They have taken the lead in establishing Odia schools, teaching their daughters the Odia classical dance “Odissi,” and celebrating various religious rituals to help their children develop a hyphenated identity that integrates them into American society without losing their core identity and values.

My own experience is very similar to other Odia women in the United States. Though my husband is Indian but not Odia, we have brought up our two sons to appreciate Odia culture. The boys made friends with Odia kids of their age visiting from different regions of the country. Even as young adults making their own way in the world, they feel that they are part of the OSA extended family. At the OSA conventions, I have met so many of my family friends! What comfort it has been for me because I never felt the need to explain myself to anyone. I have been quickly accepted and felt welcome by my community. Though I was developing my own career as an academic, when I was asked to serve as Vice President of OSA, I took up the post in this organization which is so central to my life as an Odia in America.

I quickly learned the history and the background of OSA, which was started in 1969 by some visionary Odias who came to North America thanks to the immigration act of 1965 that opened up opportunities for South Asians to come to this country. They missed the Odia culture and heritage, their familiar food, language, feasts and festivals, and were worried about losing their children to mainstream society— hence they started OSA as a socio- cultural organization to promote Odia culture and identity. Aiming to unite the Odias living in the Diaspora, it is heartening to note that now OSA has eighteen chapters spread throughout North America. With the formation of chapters in different regions, OSA emphasized the continuance of cultural roots through celebrations like *Ganesh Puja*, *Saraswati Puja*, and *Durga Puja*, *Holi*, and *Kumar Purnima* (a festival to honor and celebrate the spirit of young women and men).

Jagannath has become the marker of Odia cultural identity in the Diaspora.

Recently, the Odias in different regions transport their presiding deity, Jagannath, from their homeland to the USA. They realize that in order to come to terms with their life in the diaspora, their communal god must come to live with them as well. In the last ten years, the Jagannath idol has been installed in twenty-three regions in the East, West, North and South of North America, and worshipped with lot of pomp and ceremony.

In due course, OSA has developed a practice of connecting with the home state, Odisha, by promoting development projects for the benefit of the people of the state. OSA’s signature event is the annual convention, which takes place during the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. A local chapter

hosts it; hundreds of Odias come together under the same roof for three days and three nights every year. They breathe, smell, eat and embody the Odia culture – a close knit bonding experience. In the words of a veteran Odia woman, an OSA member, a regular at the OSA convention, “Coming to the OSA convention is like visiting my natal home. After it is over, it is like going back to my in-laws home”.

### **Women as the Center of The Odia community**

In the last twenty-six years of my involvement with the Odia community, I have been amazed to observe women’s active role in every community activity. In any Indian event, two things are crucial to make an event successful – food and a cultural program. Invariably women are in charge of both these domains. Each cultural celebration is meticulously, systematically and elegantly organized by a group of women: responsibilities are shared; husbands are supportive, but the main architects of community events are women. For example, Holi, the festival of colors is organized by a female community member in collaboration with other women, it takes months to prepare the event, starting from booking a community hall; preparing the cultural activities by the children with guidance and training from their mothers and community aunts; food planned for hundreds of people; the collection of funds and cleaning up among other responsibilities. Women make it possible for the whole family to come together in this community event.

It is needless to say that without the commitment of women, their devoted zeal and enthusiasm, the transportation and celebration of the Jagannath idol could not have been possible. In one instance, when Jagannath was installed in Los Angeles, California in 2013, women took it upon themselves to collect the money, were in charge of building the chariot, sewing the costume for the idol and the chariot, planning the three day long installation ceremony, in effect, making the whole event an astounding success. Every month, the women organize a *bhajan* ceremony where the community comes together to celebrate the occasion.

### **OSA and Women:**

The irony is that women, who are vibrant as community organizers, active in promoting cultural heritage in the field of religion, art, dance, music, food and maintain Odia identity, still constitute a negligible minority in leadership role in OSA. As an organization, we allow women to be helpmates and workers, but when it comes time for a woman to become a candidate for office, we ignore her accomplishments both in the organization and in her career. We do not treat her with dignity and evaluate her on her merits but investigate family history or other features that were long left behind in India.

Much research suggests that women are better at political decision-making, more thorough, and detail oriented. Their life experiences as caring and supportive nurturers certainly affect their leadership. Commenting on why Hilary Clinton should be the next President of the United States, Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid offered the great advantage of a woman president at this time in American history: "Women are much more patient," "They can be, if they are pushed the wrong way, combative, but they are not combative. A lot of we men are combative just by nature. It is not just by nature, but through life experiences, women are more geared to the issues of fairness and representation". Even as women are making more headway in the US politics, women in the Odia diaspora are being held back instead of being encouraged and supported to join its political organizations.

### **Why is the second generation not actively involved in OSA?**

One wonders - the second generation may not feel connected with the organization because they are caught up in their own work and personal life. There are exceptions. For example, in 2013, a very bright second-generation attorney volunteered her time to revise the OSA constitution, which was written in 1969 and was revised piecemeal. She spent countless hours to rewrite the constitution. OSA could not afford to pay for her time and only offered her a sense of appreciation, nothing else. Some second generation Odia are married outside the community and as their children grow up, they are turning to OSA for their children to participate in cultural and religious activities and to learn about Hindu cultural values. Some of them have also played key roles in improving the OSA organization

What I have found in talking to many women in the second generation is that they are not active because they have not been appreciated and adequately acknowledged for their volunteer roles. They find OSA to be patriarchal, male dominated, and old fashioned. A few men take it upon themselves to speak for the community. Many women, of the first and second generation, do not feel it is worth their time and effort to challenge some of the men. It becomes an issue of honor and image. Women may not speak up when they know what is happening is utterly wrong. They do not come out openly to protest mainly because they are concerned with image, reputation, and family honor. To keep OSA viable into the future both men and women will have to confront their own ideas about power, honor, dignity, and self-respect.

### **Some reflections:**

Comparing OSA politics with the US politics, I see a positive change in the women's participation in the Congressional and Senate elections. Who is responsible? What has worked to bring this change in the U.S? Feminist movements, increasing women of color organizing, the mobilization of women in to leadership roles by many political think tanks like Emily's List have

helped. “Let us break the glass ceiling” campaigns have begun to alleviate the masculine nature of the state. In contrast, OSA remains very masculine. Women are still looked upon as dependents of men. Professionally women have done well and have taken up the responsibility of being the cultural promoters of the community. Perhaps they are over- burdened and over-extended by juggling between so many duties and responsibilities and hardly have time to put more on their plates. Maybe they do not want to come under the scrutiny of OSA . Partha Chatterjee (2009) very aptly pointed out that women still are defined as private beings in relation to men as public beings. Women’s prominence in community activities is looked upon as an extension of the personal and private whereas politics is a whole different game of public scrutiny and judgment.

**Vision for a change:**

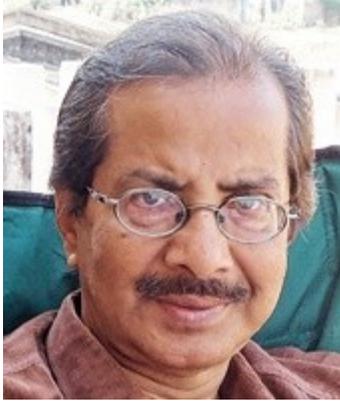
OSA represents the identity politics of the Odia diaspora and must be taken seriously for the future standing of the community. In order to see more women in leadership roles, there has to be a change in the mindset of our members. As long as it is assumed that women are not good enough and are not capable, our consciousness will not evolve and our organization will be in jeopardy. As responsible members of society, we should take it upon ourselves to recognize the leadership of women. We, both men and women, are complicit in holding back women and in endangering our organization when we accept the cultural stereotype of women and do not raise a voice against unfair practices, other wrongdoing, and inefficient governance. Just like various think tanks promoting women’s leadership in the United States, more and more support groups should emerge to enable women’s leadership in our community. Both men and women must come forward to stand against cultural stereotype, so that a safe space can be created. Our organization will be more inclusive and participatory when women of the first and second generation feel more appreciated for their love and passion for the community. Then we can all take pride in being equal partners of an organization that keeps alive our core identity and values.



*Annapurna Pandey*  
*101 Lisa Court*  
*Santa Cruz*  
*California 95060*  
*adpandey101@gmail.com*

## This Land and that Subtle Sound

*Devdas Chhotray*



This land, the land of the west coast , is rather unfamiliar to me. The east coast I know some what for I went to school there. The 'subtle sound' that we are talking of in Odisha hardly exists any more. It is now a tortuous cacophony. You walk in the streets of Cuttack, or for that matter in any other town, and it is full of loud and ugly sounds, more than men. The sound of screeching vehicles, countless two-wheelers, honking horns, spine tingling cell phones, generators in every shop front howling like grind mills, and everybody talking every time on cell phone, loud and intimidating, all these will drive you crazy. Where is the subtle sound that we are talking of ? Even in the house of God, where the sound should be sublime, on the grand road of Puri, you will be instantly hit by the dissonance of disco bhajans. Where has gone the Akshay Mohanty melodies of Salabeg's writings, 'Shrikrushnanka banshi dhwani suni, Chakita hela Jamuna pani ' (Listening to the sounds of Krishna's flute, the waters of Jamuna were enchanted.) Instead hear the rapturous bellowing- ' Mar Kalia mar pendu, eka madake net chhindu'(Kick the ball hard o Dark One! And tear up the net in one lethal shot.) Where is the subtle sound?

Well, I am aware, I am partly joking, and I have made a too literal meaning of the words 'land' and 'sound'. Here in our subject today, the land stands for 'opportunity' and the sound stands for what is inchoate, what is not heard. In odia there is a beautiful word for it, 'Anahat Dhwani'. So when it comes to the fine print , the concern is, what is this land of opportunity, which is always strange and unfamiliar to the new comer, and continues to be so at least for the first generation of immigrants, except for the subtle sound that he has left behind the seven seas.

I am not dealing with this nexus in the context of 'globalization ' or 'economic development'. I am dealing with it purely in the realm of human psyche. Because , when I first arrived in this hemisphere, and stood shivering in cold, and looked with a primeaval fear at the totally unfamiliar constellation of stars in the sky, I did not think of the economics of opportunity, I thought of my own identity and survival, and what would happen if I die in this alien land.

So it is the realm of the psyche. Pardon my narcissism, and allow me to present a poem which I had written then in 1981, as a monologue of one Oriya American to another. Although it is seemingly in lighter vein, it does contemplate a symbiosis of the 'land' and 'sound' that we are talking about.

"I have just come back from Orissa  
My soul is soothed  
Even the flight tag is still on the bag  
which is unopened. It contains  
a huge appliqué wall hanging from Pipili  
A fairly large oriya painting  
Of a bathing Radha with her clothes stolen  
New puja releases of Akshay Mohanty  
A pair of brand new shoes  
A small wood icon of Jagannath  
The last photograph of my dying mother  
And nothing else, if you really rummage  
You can touch the dust of Cuttack  
Stuck to the bag  
For gundi and raw pan leaves  
Oh God, what tussle with the customs!  
I have just come back from Orissa  
My soul is soothed

Why don't you go too?  
Even if for three weeks  
You have stayed in America far too long  
What tireless research for years  
And those long hours in the laboratory  
Meanwhile the children have grown up  
And look different  
The wife has picked up computer  
And absentmindedness  
Please go on a retreat  
Even if it is for only three weeks  
You will get solace from Mahanadi  
And friendship in Cuttack streets  
Life doesn't run fast there  
And time is unending  
You will get friends around  
Still without jobs, unmarried

Days will pass in ecstasy  
You can at will spit the pan juice  
Anywhere on the road  
And the banana peels  
And burnt out cigarettes  
Your wife can visit her ailing father  
And the kids too will get the chance

To see what they haven't  
Live and roaming cattle on the road  
From touching distance "

This was then my psyche, and the psyche of my generation. Most of them formed the set of people who, for the first time, finished their education, and settled down in this country, without returning. They got jobs, acquired Oriya wives in a hurried marriage at Cuttack or Bhubaneswar, and American citizenship in that order. Unlike the earlier ones, who were few and sporadic and always returned after the Ph D to teach or research in India, they, the young men of my generation came in hoardes, went beyond campus jobs, explored various opportunities, and made America their own. Although they were thrilled by their 'American Dream', they were sometimes numbed by nostalgia, by the memory of homeland, by the fear that they would not be near their closest one, when they die, by the fear of their own death continents away from the place of their own birth.

They comforted themselves that they would be able to go back after a few years. They wistfully thought of their old age to be spent in their native village, in pristine purity, in a clean and commodious house with English commodes in toilets, all built with their American earning. They envied most the man who was able to make frequent trips to India. They would have left instantly, some said, except that in India there is no fresh orange juice in tetrapack.

In the nineties, when some of us were busy in Government of India to open up the country for direct foreign investment, I had an opportunity of approving Tropicana's venture for marketing fresh orange juice without added sugar in tetra pack. That however did not enhance the number of retreats to pastoral Orissa to any appreciable degree. On the other hand, they stayed back, each and every one of my generation, they stayed back and prospered and went up places, and it is indeed they, who created what we call now the biggest Oriya diaspora. They are the begetter of the crowd we have today.

Whether it is Calcutta or California the Oriya immigrants had a very sad coinage in their vernacular to denote themselves - 'Prabasi Odia'. Having left Orissa in my early twenties I have borne that pain of severance in my ordinary living. My worst nightmare which revisits me even now is of an unknown railway station where I am frantically looking for a train which will take me to Cuttack. The platform is crowded but unfamiliar and there is none who understands my language. I desperately ask but do not understand the strange sounds they make. There was somewhere a deep seated fear and ignominy in being known as 'Prabasi Odia'. It was like a tight rap on the face. Mercifully after the Jews left Israel and spread further West to other countries, the word 'diaspora' has come into vogue for all immigrants. It has now a streak of respectability mostly kindled by the diasporic achievements.

Back in Orissa, we envy the Odia diaspora of the US as a charmed group of those who had the fortune to arrive. We envy the second generation more than the first, not because of the money they earn, but the easy confidence they have, and the way they have become increasingly different from us, and increasingly close to the country of their parents destination.

The paradox is implicit in the envy. Imagine a Yogesh Pati, a Bhakta B Rath, a Jitendra Mohanty, and many brilliant young achievers whom I do not know by name, imagine them never having left Odisha. Where would then Odisha have found its true international glory? The diaspora movement which went through its most trying time during genesis has now become the new fount of glory and identity.

I am tempted to recount my own case. We went to college in the sixties. Even without TV, DVD, and cell phone, and computers, it was an exciting time. With the help of Indian newspapers, outdated journals, and occasional foreigners in the town, we knew we are a part of the Beatnik generation, and also a part of the international student unrest, and Paris barricade. We knew at least by name, Allen Ginsberg and Tarique Ali.

It took me ten more years, many circumlocutions, and the freak of winning a fellowship, to join the Cornell University in upstate New York in the Fall of 1981. I boarded the now nonexistent 001 Pan Am flight from Delhi, carrying a pair of most uncomfortable 'Ambassador' shoes from Bata in my luggage, as we were told that shoes are expensive in the US.

The New York cab driver shouted at me since I did not know that cab drivers are required to be tipped.

I did not know many things actually.

I did not know, one can not carry more than 22 dollars in cash when one exits India.

I did not know that gin and tonic make the most amazing anodyne when you are 30,000 ft above in the sky and experiencing massive homesick blues.

I did not know, if an American girl says 'hi' to you, while she is passing by she is just being polite, and there is nothing more it.

I did not know that there are libraries that do not shut in the night.

I did not know that a pint of beer, a can of coke, a bottle of milk cost the same, a quarter.

I did not know what is a 'trillion', for nobody in 1981 used that word except Carl Sagan in Cornell for he was calculating the trajectory of the Voyagers.

I did not know many more things. I did not know there are walking shoes. I did not know students can write their final examination in pencil, and there is no stigma attached to left hand.

I did not know that mothers get so worried if their school going daughters do not get a boy friend to date.

What I did not know soon became my everyday knowledge; thanks to this land and its exposure. The difference was phenomenal. It was, to borrow an expression from the IT vocabulary, the difference between being connected and not being connected. It was like the difference India experienced between the time before Sam Pitroda had taken the C-dot revolution to Indian villages and now.

After my exposure to this land, I did not remain the same. Certain things changed permanently for me. The subtle sounds that I had carried within me, like my elements, were initially lost, like one loses hunger in a strange surrounding. But it bounced back in due time, as an assertion of good will to my newly acquired status in the diaspora. That eased the passing of my time. I would like to believe that in the following years the same has been replicated in a steady flow and the diaspora has now become more vital and productive

In my mind the process is likened to the process of formation of the riverine islands. The flow of the river through the natural process of alluvion and diluvion creates a land mass by gradual accretion. Over a period of time a shallow island is born which maintains its umbilical chord with the main land no doubt, but often it is more fertile and yielding than the land of its origin. I propose a toast today for similar elevated fertility in the fast growing Odia diaspora in American shores.

(Summary of the keynote address delivered on July 4, 2010 in the OSA Convnetion at San Francisco.)



## **An Odia Austrian: This is My Story**

**Kamalakanta Mohanty**

Since 1974, I am in Austria. At that time, I came here to finish my hotel management diploma and return to India. However, later on, I got opportunities to stay here. Even, I became an Austrian citizen and an owner of an upper class restaurant that caters Italian, Austrian and Indian dishes daily.



Recently, my cousin brother, Joy Gopal Mohanty in USA, asked me to attend the Global Odisha Conference to be held at Washington D.C. in July 2015. It would have been nice to attend and meet other Odias around the world; but I cannot due to my personal situation at that time. Then, he gave me the inspiration to write something about my story and to share it among other Odias through the publication of the proceedings of the Global Odisha Conference followed by 46th Annual Convention of the Odisha Societies of the Americas.

I was born in 1947 in Kania, Odisha into a lower middle-class family. Kania is a very small village in a rural area surrounded by rice fields near Balikuda. I grew up along with my two brothers and two sisters, helping my parents with work around the house. In my time at school, I was an average student and I managed to finish my college with a Bachelor's degree in Math, Chemistry and Physics.

Later on around 1970, I came to Delhi as my relatives were there and got an opportunity to work in the then Oberoi Intercontinental hotel. There I worked as a flight-catering supervisor. While working there I took training in junior management in hotel industry. I stayed with Oberoi Intercontinental for 3 years in the night shift (8 PM -8 AM). During this time, I was looking for an opportunity to improve my career. With advice from my seniors there, I got the idea to go abroad for hotel management training. I applied to several schools in UK, USA and Europe; but my school of choice was Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management, located in Klessheim in Salzburg, Austria as it was the cheapest and I could afford the cost with study loans. After joining there in 1974, I finished the diploma in hotel management in two semesters. Immediately, thereafter, I started my first job in Austria as a waiter.

As a person, I always liked to mingle with people around me. Initially, it was difficult to interact socially there, as I did not know German, the Austrian language. Within three years, I could learn sufficient German and started interacting with my Austrian peers quite well. People around me always appreciated me due to my sincerity and friendliness. During this period, I had the opportunity to go around Austria and learn their culture. Even I met my first and former Austrian girlfriend there. In 1977, she gave birth to my first son. Unfortunately, in the 80s, we were separated, but I still keep my relationship with my son as a responsible father.

Then in 1984, I got a job as a restaurant manager in a four-star-hotel in Feldkirch. This is a medieval city in the western Austrian state of Vorarlberg on the border with Switzerland and Liechtenstein. There, I oversaw the coordination of kitchen chef and the restaurant service. I also had another duty there to take charge of customer care. During this time, I met my present Austrian wife, with whom I have two sons.

Always my aim was, to run my own business. After I worked in Feldkirch, I got a very good job as an assistant manager in a restaurant with a sitting capacity of ca. 250. There, my responsibility was accounting, menu planning, coordination with the kitchen chef and banquet planning. All these experience gave me the impetus to start a restaurant business of my own. It was after more than three and a half years I worked there, my wife and I found an opportunity to buy a renowned restaurant, by the name "Bad Haslach". "Bad" in Austrian means "Bath". This establishment exists since 1476 in a very traditional background. It used to be a Spa (therapeutic bath) with its own spring. With my wife, who is a skilled kitchen and service worker, I bought this property in 1991. At that time to get the loan, we could cover only 2.5% of it, with my wife's savings. The name of the restaurant is, "Restaurant Haslach". In the beginning, we used to have about ten employees including my wife and myself. From that time on, we run a multi-cuisine establishment having Italian, Austrian and Indian specialties. In these 24 years of business, we are now well known around the region including eastern Switzerland and south-west Germany. On different occasions, we get the opportunity to cook for other establishments, such as the Austrian Casino in Bregenz, which is the capital of Vorarlberg, the westernmost federal state of Austria. There we represented Indian cuisine for one week. In addition, we give lessons in Indian and Austrian cooking to interested people as a project with own crossover recipes specializing in vegan and vegetarian cuisine.

Even though, I have been in Austria for more than 40 years, I have not forgotten my Indian culture and heritage. I am very proud of my Odia culture itself. To show this to my Austrian friends, we organized a one-week Indian festival in 2001 here. We had exhibits of tribal music and Odissi dance with a group of 12 Indian artists. As a special guest, we had former Odisha chief minister Giridhar Gamang to perform. In 2002, we hosted the Barefoot Collage singers and dancers from Jaipur, Rajasthan getting great feedback from our customers. In addition, we are celebrating different Indian festivals, such as Diwali or Holi, to bring another part of India closer to our customers. As I am an Austrian citizen for several years, in reciprocal sense, I wanted to show Indians, a part of Austrian culture. So in 2006, I suggested to one of my Austrian friend and artist, to develop a music and film project in which a group of ten people, including musicians and a film crew flew to India to give an impression about my adopted country. It took a year of planning to achieve this goal. In the end, we travelled from Rishikesh, Hardwar via Varanasi and Calcutta to Puri. During this trip, we had several public performances of Yodelling, Choir, Canon-singing and modern Austrian music. The result of this project was a movie called

“Jodeln in Indien” (i.e. “Yodelling in India”) with several screenings all around Austria and a DVD release.

When I left India, my father did not like my plan to come to Austria, as I will be neglecting my responsibility as his eldest son being so far away. However, all these years, I have not forgotten my relatives and friends in India. During these years, my wife and I have helped perform wedding ceremonies of both of my sisters, by both financially and personal participation. We even financed one sister, a full-fledged house, the other, a half-financed house and my brothers to invest money in their businesses in Odisha, India. We still visit India as often as we can and participate in as many Hindu ceremonies there (such as Mundan, Astaprahari and of course weddings) as family members.



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*Restaurant website:* <http://www.haslach.cu.cc>

*My email address:* [indian.rest.haslach@aon.at](mailto:indian.rest.haslach@aon.at)



Restaurant Haslach

## Runa.....The Debt

*Manjusha Patnaik*



The illustrious son of Odisha, Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra<sup>1</sup>, needs no introduction. He is credited for the revival of Odissi and other colloquial performing arts of Odisha like Gotipua and Jatra in the 20th century. Epitomizing the portrayal of Geeta Govinda, he presented the classical dance form of Odissi at the national and international podium. In recognition of his lifelong devotion and dedication to Odissi, he was the first person from Odisha to be conferred the three prestigious Padma awards - the Padma Shree, Padma Bhusan and Padma Vibhushan. Undoubtedly, he was, and continues to be a glistening pearl in the realm of cultural identity of Odisha. Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra had travelled far and beyond, surpassing the boundaries of time and space. But his heart resided in a small hamlet nestled in the banks of river Bhargavi, Raghurajpur, his place of birth. Located just 1.3 kms along the scenic road from Chandanpur (en-route the sacred city of Puri), Raghurajpur is the cradle of numerous arts and crafts of Odisha including Pattachitra, Paper Mache, Talapatrika and the traditional divine dance form, Gotipua. This is where the maestro found his passion for dance and mastered the traditional dance forms of Gotipua and Oddissi.

For a young enthusiast and mindless dilettante of various art forms, the many feats of the Guru were nothing short of the fantastic stories that fill up volumes of heroic childhood fables. Imagine my excitement of running into the Guru, yes, very much in person, in a village none other than his own place of birth! This was in the summer of 2003, a year before his sad demise, when my sister and I met the legend during one of my numerous site visits to Raghurajpur for my under-graduate research project. I vividly remember the frail silhouette of an elderly gentleman near the village temple that gradually mellowed as the familiar face of the exuberant Guru emerged. Sheltered beneath a large black umbrella, the Guru adorned no tangible carnations of his numerous acclamations. Clad in a simple white dhoti, he was in the avatar most special to him- an ordinary villager.

Conscious of our diminutive existence, my sister and me mustered enough courage to introduce ourselves. The Guru welcomed us with his ever-smiling grace and simplicity. Over the past decade, I have often revisited this day, making numerous futile attempts to re-construe our conversation. What I recollect is an effortless obscured tête-à-tête, sheathed by the warmth of a loving grandfather sharing the treasures hidden in the core of his heart. His calm voice and serene demeanor was resonating the depth of his emotions. The words spoken were not those of the world-renowned tri-Padma award recipient Odissi dancer, but of a loving son of Raghurajpur who wished to serve and repay his beloved mother.



*Maa Bhuasuni Temple decorated for RIACE*

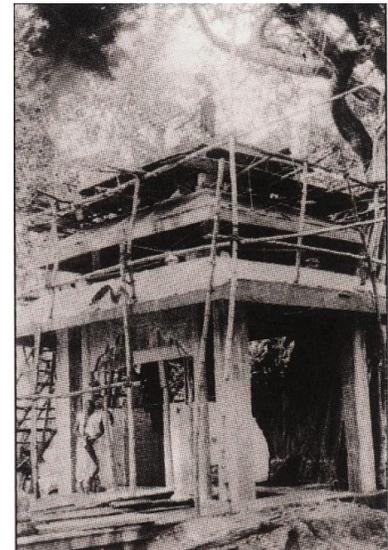
*Festival, 2012*

*(Photo Credit: Author)*

The Guru reminisced his childhood spent in his house near Gopinath Mandir, his exhilarating trips to the banks of river *Bhargavi* and revealed glimpses of his passion for masonry work. Not only did he find his passion for dance in the village, he believed he owed his life to the village deity, *Maa Bhuasuni*, the Goddess for protection of children. He felt the least he could do for his divine Mother to whom he owed everything was to build a temple, which he had completed the previous year. *Maa Bhuasuni* had been worshipped for ages in the open, sheltered amidst the roots of a banyan tree, with the branches above for protection from the adverse forces of nature. The Guru had built the new abode for his dearly loved *Maa* on the same sacred site, beneath the hanging branches of the aged banyan tree. His present thought was to construct a small Rasoi Ghar (kitchen) for the temple since the cook was scared to perform his duties in the open with snakes lurking in the vicinity.

I came to understand the immense significance of *Maa Bhuasuni* in the life of the Guru much later. Described in his biography<sup>2</sup> 'The Making Of A Guru' by his eminent disciple and dancer, Ileana Citaristi, the banyan tree was the abode of Goddess *Bhuasuni* to whom the village women offered their children for protection. Little Kelu was also offered by his mother to the Goddess when he was ill with chicken pox at the age of four. She literally left him at Her feet, holding Her responsible for the future of the child. The ailing child recovered few days later regaining his full health. Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra never forgot this narration and remained indebted to the Goddess until the very end.

Though brief, the lucky happenstance to meet Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra has left a deep and indelible impression in me. His earnest yearning to return to his place of origin and serve his 'Mother' has humbled my notions on success and life. Is Mother the Supreme Being by virtue of giving birth, or the divine blessing that protects us in our hour of need, or the place of one's origin? Or, is 'Mother' the culmination of all the socio-cultural processes that has made us the people we are? The true measure of how far we have travelled or how high we have scaled the ladder of accomplishments is how we serve our Mother and look after her cultural heritage<sup>3</sup>. The term heritage encompasses the tangible and intangible values of the past while cultural heritage includes the entire corpus of material signs - either artistic or symbolic - handed on by the past to each culture. What Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra accomplished is a classic example of how one can safeguard and conserve one's own heritage. The temple he built is not only a tangible manifestation of his love for his Mother but also offered a podium for performance, showcasing the numerous art forms nurtured in Raghurajpur. Needless to say, one's cultural heritage can be truly conserved when it becomes the underlining approach of our everyday 'way of life'. While gratifying the debt and love for his beloved Mother, Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra was successful in doing his bit towards the conservation of the immense cultural values associated with this tiny artisans' village.



*Maa Bhuasuni* Temple under construction

(Photo credit: "The Making of a Guru" by Ileana Citaristi)

Known for her glorious maritime heritage, overseas voyages for trade and commerce have been an intrinsic cultural phenomenon of Odisha. Historically, the merchant sons of Odisha (*sadhabas*) have travelled far and near, sharing her exquisite arts and artifacts beyond the geographical and political boundaries of the present State, and those of the erstwhile kingdom of Utkala. This is most pronounced in *Baliyatra*<sup>4</sup>, whence the Odia *Sadhabas* embarked on their voyages along river *Mahanadi* to share their skills and crafts, returning not only with riches, but enriching the cultures of both the host and the visitors. Today, while we still observe the lingering traditions of floating a symbolic *boita* (boat) or lighting a *diya* (lamp) on kartika Purnima commemorating the archaic daring voyages, the worthy sons and daughters of Odisha continue to embark on journeys overseas, similar in kind but of different flavors. Irrespective of the physical distance, one travels or scales the height of success, are we not all indebted to our roots and cultural heritage to have become the people who we are? As quoted by the great leader Marcus Garvey, “A people without the knowledge of their past, origin and culture is like a tree without roots”, one can truly safeguard one's cultural heritage when one understands the true essence of being an Odia. Odisha is not a mere State....not a place....nor a language....nor a dance ...or a temple. 'Odisha' is the unique culmination of numerous cultural processes through time immemorial to the present day, the spark of which is alive in each and every one of us. It is upto us to decide how we serve our Mother and what values of our past we intend to take forth for our future generations to come.

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*Manjusha Patnaik lives in Edison, NJ. Contact Info: Phone, 203 906 5170; Email, manjushapatnaik@gmail.com*

## **Raja: A Celebration of the Girl-Child**

*Suchitra G. Das*

ବନସ୍ତେ ଡାକିଲା ଗଜ,  
ବରଷକେ ଥରେ ଆସିଛି ରଜ,  
ଆସିଛି ରଜ ଲୋ!  
ବେଗି ହୁଅ ସଜବାଜ ॥

*Banaste Daakilaa Gaja  
Baraske thare asichi raja,  
asichi rajalo  
begi hua sajabaaja*



So goes the song, sung by a group of young girls prettily dressed, and taking turns at a swing suspended from a dense banyan tree's tough prop roots. With every swish of the swing, a chorus of high-pitched young voices belt out songs of childhood, of love, and of leaving.

The swings, the songs, the showers and the sweets--I remember being a part of this festival. It was one lucky summer, when school was closed till the third week of June and we didn't have to hurry back before the 15<sup>th</sup>. It just wasn't the same when we celebrated this festival away from native Odisha. The note of wistful happiness in the songs left a lingering impression on my mind. My heart was filled with the memory of wearing new clothes, getting my forehead decorated with sandalwood paste, eating sweet delicacies and swinging away the hours of the day.

Nostalgic memories of childhood flood my mind as I recall those fleeting moments. It was a phase of life without a furrow on my forehead. Yes, *Raja* only comes once in a year; a period free of care and worries comes only once in a lifetime. This brings in its wake the message of making most of this celebration of life. Herald the new; enjoy the moment. For it is those moments you will look back upon, and savor as a beautiful time in your past.

Why does this celebration hold so much meaning for me? I experienced this festival in its full splendor only once in my life. What is the true meaning of *Raja*, this festival from the coastal Indian state of Odisha? For three whole days, girls and young adults make merry. The origin of this festival could be the primal fertility rites of agricultural society in Odisha. The word *raja* comes from the word *rajaswala* literally meaning menstruating, synonymous with fertility and productivity. It also serves as a reminder of the natural order of life, which comes around in perfect succession, reinforcing the cycle of birth, death and regeneration. It is a departure from the traditional celebrations of divinity, and festivals meant for the well-being of family and most often for sons.

Though it is celebrated mainly in coastal Odisha, in the districts of Puri, Cuttack and Balasore, it has garnered Odisha-wide participation in its annual celebration. *Raja* is observed in many ways in different regions of Odisha. For the villagers it is primarily a festival to consecrate the earth and its fertility cycle with the sowing of seeds. For the Kondha tribe of Keonjhar, it is a time to pick their life partners after a

brief courtship. For the residents of Puri, it goes from a family celebration to a mass festival where families congregate at Baliharchandi Temple for three days to enjoy the festivity and food provided by the temple administration. For urbanites, it has become an occasion to enjoy three days of fun and frolic, and savor special foods. But at the center of these regional variations is the daughter of the family. Whether it is a child, a teenager, a prospective bride, or a newly married woman, the festival glorifies the female entity. It celebrates the importance of girls as the source of life for the next generation, ones who need to be taken care of and nurtured.

Pronounced as '*raja*' ('a' as in *Paul*), it is celebrated in the middle of June, the hot, humid month of Indian summer. For three consecutive days in June (Jyestha-Asadh), daughters, young and newly married, engage in rituals exclusively meant for their enjoyment. The three days are categorized into: *Pahili Raja*- June 14th is the last day of *Jyestha*; *Raja Sankranti* - June 15th officially the day when monsoon starts and marks the beginning of the agricultural year in Odisha. "*Bhuin Dahana*" is when the first seeds are planted and the celebration begins. It is followed by "*Basumati Puja*" when a *silipata*" (a stone pestle) representing the mother earth is decorated with turmeric paste, vermilion powder, flowers and is given a ritual bath, worshipped and fed *podapitha*, a sweet made of rice, coconut, molasses, and spices.

These three days are symbolically referred to as *rajaswala* (a woman menstruating). On this day tampering with the soil is strictly prohibited. Mother Earth undergoes a period of rest symbolizing a woman, who also rests for three days during that period. Girls and young women, on these three days, dress up in new clothes, have their faces decorated with sandalwood paste, smear *alata* on their feet, and bedeck themselves in flowers and jewelry. Newly married women return to their parent's home laden with gifts from their in-laws and indulge in merrymaking. The ladies of the house take a break from household chores and while away their time playing cards. The menfolk do the bidding of their sisters, daughters and wives, and in general enjoy the festivity with equal gusto.

On these three days, girls are not allowed to walk bare feet; they can only do so by wearing slippers made from banana stalk husks. Younger children are carried by fathers, uncles, or brothers. The highlight of the festival is swings. Usually strung from banyan, peepal, mango or make-shift props, these swings are the heart and soul of the festival. The swing represents a childhood pastime, a favorite object of fun and play, and of freedom. When it lifts into the air, there is a release from all things burdensome. The girls gather at village centers, or private homes with trees, and swing away the whole day, singing beautiful songs of childhood, love and friendship, of getting married and of becoming a part of the responsible world. Gone will be the days when they could abandon themselves to freedom and uninhibited fun, for a woman's freedom is limited, and ends when she gets married and shoulders the responsibility). So these three days are the golden days for being pampered by every member of the family.

The *Raja* Festival as I see it is a rare affirmation of the importance of the girl-child in Odia culture. Though it is an agrarian festival associated with the first monsoon and planting of seeds and therefore a fertility rite, the mood and songs of the festival as it has evolved over the ages, speaks to me of

something more touching. At what point of time a fertility rite transformed into an all-girls celebration is hard to tell. But given that earth is referred to as 'mother', she is the factual and symbolic representation of all females as the source of future generations. These three days represent for girls/young women a time when they can make merry, something that is so rare and fleeting in our patriarchal society. In a very unique manner, I feel, it truly celebrates the girl-child, which is pretty unusual and speaks volumes of a society and culture that values its daughters. I have not seen a similar sentiment in any other festival in other Indian communities.

How many festivals or fasts are observed for the wellbeing of a daughter? The only other country, that I am aware of, that celebrates its daughters is Japan. *Hina Matsuri*, or the Festival of Dolls is celebrated annually in the spring on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. It is also known by the westernized name *Girls Day*. It is said the festival originated in China, where relatives would gift paper dolls to the daughters of the family, who in turn would submerge them into streams, signifying the casting away of any misfortunes. By the time this tradition reached Japan, it had morphed into a full scale celebration of daughters being presented with expensive and beautiful dolls. The dolls are put on display on 5 or 7 tiers. After a party of tea, rice cakes and saki with friends, the entire family gathers for dinner to wish their daughters best of health, wealth and prosperity.

The Raja celebration made me thoughtful, happy, and sad at the same time about this timeless tradition of honoring girls in Odisha. Women usually pray for the wellbeing of a family, brother/son i.e. *Kumar Purnima*, *Rakshabandhan*, , and/or for a husband-- *Gauri Vrat*, *Shivaratri*, *Savitri Brata* etc. That is why it is so heartening to know that Odisha truly has a beautiful tradition of honoring her daughters as a significant segment of the human race, and recognize the vital importance of their wellbeing

In contrast to so much of gender discrimination all over India, Odia girls have a special place in the hearts and minds of their people. But sadly this beautiful tradition is losing its luster in Odisha, and slowly becoming only a symbolic gesture. The male to female ratio is tilting in favor of male births.

The Festival of *Raja* should serve as a reminder to everyone that our daughters are precious, and they need to be nourished, educated, heard, and given a chance to live life with freedom, not just for three days, but forever.



Fremont, CA  
April 19, 2015  
suchitramd@yahoo.com



## Let's Look Through the Rear-View Mirror

*Surendra Nath Ray*

Remarkable advancement of Odisha has only happened in the last twenty years in the shade of that of India. However, record of accomplishment for Odisha compared to other states of India is not that encouraging. During my College days (1960s) three states, Assam, Bihar, and Odisha were the most unprivileged states, Assam being the poorest. After the economic revolution in India these three states are still considered to have poverty level (% of persons below poverty line)<sup>1</sup> much below the national average of 21%. On this scale, Odisha (32.59%) is below Assam (31.98%). It is not good news.

When Odias headed towards USA in late 60's, some of us including me came here for higher education, not wealth in mind. At that time, United States was a preferred and best opportunity providing country. So, we settled here and then started an organization, OSA (Odisha Society of the Americas) to feel that we were not detached from our motherland and culture. Later on, we accepted citizenship here to capture best of the two societies. We felt and behaved as the "path finders" for India/Odisha development. We sponsored visitors, government officials, industrialists, artists, and politicians from Odisha/India in great numbers to achieve the goals of the prosperity of Odisha/India. During this revolutionary development, Odisha's economy grew to the extent that dollar became cheaper. In terms of social and community development, we fell too short. We always felt our gratitude towards Odisha for what then poor Odisha had given us, but also grew frustrated that Odisha could not take the opportunity to become better. The reasons are known, a very opportunistic class of people enjoys the life, but general population especially poor is far left behind.

The purpose of this article is to get a reflection on how we, non-resident Odias (NRIs), have tried to support Odisha development, revisit the paths travelled, and regroup on things that have not worked, and resume the "Go." For the last 30 years, we repeated an approach: conceive a Odisha development program, vet it with government officials, write up MOUs, make a list of action items, leave Odisha and then no follow up. This sure has not produced satisfactory result. I am excluding small things like a few new business start-ups, a few hundred/thousand dollars donation, or a few collaborations with colleges or universities. In order to make some impact in the development we have to apply the management planning principles and discipline that we NRIs are exposed to in our daily life here. Luckily, Odisha developed big things, infrastructure as an example, in a few years, the same kind of work took 50 years for America. So, to please

the voters (for elected officials) or to please the administrators (for promotion) we need to present to them that kind of quick accomplishments. We have to do root cause analyses of the failures, develop/modify ideas eliminating earlier ineffective approaches, and move on. I have never seen any such innovative ideas in our OSA publications or anywhere in news media articles for public consumptions. What I have observed is that we have been repeating the same cycle of things without any change. For example, Utkarsa Vol. 51, December 2014, Page 110 published a copy of a directive from Government of Odisha to three districts for acceptance of \$65K donation from OSA for repair of Phailin damaged libraries. Is this directive writing an accomplishment or a new idea to hold the government responsible for unsuccessful projects, hell no. Such directives had been signed many times before, so what? I have a bunch of those in my waste box when I was working on some projects which I am going to enumerate some of those in the following paragraphs. I would rather suggest a small “thank you” letter from OSA to the government appreciating their support after the completion of the work and publish that. I appreciate Utkarsa’s announcement of a donation but not sure what the directive is good for. OSA’s involvement in the Odisha development is only to provide a backdrop and not implementation cover of any kind or hold Odisha development responsible for any behavior.

In summary, we have to address some fundamental problems in pursuing developments in Odisha. Developments in a state/country can only be accomplished by its stakeholders, namely the educational institutions, industries, and government together. In that group of stakeholders, we can fit in to the industry and education. I had all along tried this formula that effectively works in the western world but it has not born any fruit for us back home due to lack of firsthand knowledge and experience of stake holders in Odisha. That does not mean we should not try. We just have to convince them that there is money for all stakeholders and need to enhance their awareness. This year (2015) again we have been vetting, planning, talking about many things and I have reservations in the outcome. I have talked about it to many others in our society, and they also have put time with me supporting me, thank you, but this should become our Mantra for any development projects.

Looking through the rear-view mirror, let us learn from failures and modify the path for the goal.

I will briefly describe a few things we have tried before. We have to collect information from others to learn from their experience as well. I was probably the first (or second, depending) non-resident Odia to open a software company in USA, started in late 80’s when it was becoming clear that Western World will need an English educated pool of people for computer software in particular. It was obvious then that the underutilized educated mass of

India was required and it fit the bill. As a result, many Indians became Billionaires and India's infrastructure and economy grew. I had promoted Indian businesses that also included entrepreneurs (Satyam, Oberoi Hotel, India Prime Minister IT office) and Mumbai delegation (Coffee and tea) as examples. But then my goal was Odisha not India. Now there are several small companies trying to get established in Odisha but they are not visible at the national level.

I had started a project with Ravenshaw College (now Ravenshaw University) creating a chapter of the Ravenshaw College Alumni Association for NRIs in the mid-80's. Professor T.P. Das and Dr. Bhakta Rath had approached me to start some programs for the Physics Department there. Dr. Naresh Das (USA) had helped in the fundraising and donations started coming in enthusiastically from a broad spectrum of Odias whether or not they were Alumni. That was incredible! Later we even started requesting people to hold money and do not send us money until we were sure that we could successfully spend it. Working with the government and Ravenshaw Trust we pledged for three projects as a pilot program at the cost of 3 lakh rupees (in 1985 rupees). We remitted them one lakh rupees as the first installment and told them to order the equipment and promised them the rest after they ordered the equipment. We had executed all official documents one could think then. Their reason for delay was that department was concerned about the security of the modern expensive equipment. Nothing ever happened.

A few years back, I had tried to establish a pool of researchers (or think tank) in Ravenshaw University and other institutions, met them to design a publishing business that could enrich knowledge of common population who could start small businesses, become leaders, and innovators. Nothing happened. In this list, I know many others could substitute "I" with their own name and tell the similar stories. Lately some of us have worked on a Tourism concept paper. Moreover, that also did not work. Blames are everywhere. Sometimes that is very easy and pastime pleasure. That should be abolished. We do not have a model to follow. Let us develop one. Let us work with all the three stakeholders.

I believe Odisha needs us but we have to talk to them in their language. Let us do it.



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<sup>1</sup>, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty\\_in\\_India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_in_India)

*Dr. Surendra Nath Ray lives in Maryland with his wife Sukanti.*

# APPLICATION OF NANOTECHNOLOGY IN CANCER THERAPY: EARLY DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

**Jessika Baral and P. L. Nayak, Ph.D, D.Sc., FSPS, FANS**

*Mission San Jose High School, Fremont, CA, USA, and*

*P. L. Nayak Research Foundation, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India*



## 1. Introduction

Cancer killed 7.9 million people worldwide in 2013 and the death toll from this disease is predicted to rise by 45% over the coming two decades. It is clear that new therapies are needed and gene therapy offers some promise for the treatment of neoplastic disease. In gene therapy a gene encoding for a tumouricidal protein is administered and expression of the tumouricidal protein within the tumor cell nucleus leads to tumor cell death. Gene delivery to tumor cell nuclei is however extremely challenging. Effective gene delivery to solid tumors requires therapeutic DNA to evade extra cellular nucleases, extravasate the blood stream (despite its macromolecular and charged nature), enter the tumor cells, gain entry to the tumor cell nuclei and finally result in expression of the therapeutic protein. One method of delivering genes is by using viruses and indeed an apoptosis causing gene therapeutic exists for patients in China, which is administered intra tumourally but as metastasis is the main cause of death, systemic therapies that are able to eradicate tumors, distal to the site of delivery are badly needed.

Nanotechnology has the power to radically change the way cancer is diagnosed, imaged and treated. Currently, there is a lot of research going on to design novel nanodevices capable of detecting cancer at its earliest stages, pinpointing it's location within the body and delivering anticancer drugs specifically to malignant cells.

## 2. Cancer Nanotechnology

Cancer nanotechnology is emerging as a field of interdisciplinary research, cutting across the disciplines of biology, chemistry, engineering, and medicine, and is expected to lead to major advances in cancer detection, diagnosis, and treatment. The basic rationale is that metal, semiconductor, and

polymeric particles have novel optical, electronic, magnetic, and structural properties that are often not available from individual molecules or bulk solids. Recent research has developed functional nanoparticles that are covalently linked to biological molecules such as peptides, proteins, nucleic acids, or small-molecule ligands. Medical applications have also appeared, such as the use of super paramagnetic iron oxide nanoparticles as a contrast agent for lymph node prostate cancer detection and the use of polymeric nanoparticles for targeted gene delivery to tumor vasculatures. New technologies using metal and semiconductor nanoparticles are also under intense development for molecular profiling studies and multiplexed biological assays.

Nanoscale devices smaller than 50 nanometers can easily enter most cells, while those smaller than 20 nanometers can transit out of blood vessels. As a result, nanoscale devices can readily interact with biomolecules on both the cell surface and within the cell. Nanoscale devices are already proving that they can deliver therapeutic agents to target cells, or even within specific organelles. Yet, despite its small size, a nanoscale device is capable of holding tens of thousands of small molecules, such as a contrast agent or drug.

***The major areas in which nanomedicine is being developed for cancer include:***

- ***Prevention and control.*** Developing nanoscale devices to deliver cancer prevention agents and designing multicomponent anticancer vaccines.
- ***Early detection and proteomics.*** Developing “smart” collection platforms for simultaneous mass analysis of cancer-associated markers.
- ***Imaging diagnostics.*** Designing targeted contrast agents that improve the resolution of cancer to a single cell.
- ***Multifunctional Therapeutics.*** Creating therapeutic devices that can control the release of cancer fighting drugs and optimally deliver medications.

### **3. Improved Diagnostics**

Nanodevices can provide rapid and sensitive detection of cancer-related molecules by enabling scientists to detect molecular changes even when they occur only in a small percentage of cells. This would allow early detection of cancer – a critical step in improving cancer treatment. Nanotechnology will allow the reduction of screening tools which means that many tests can be run on a single device. This would make cancer screening faster and more cost-efficient.

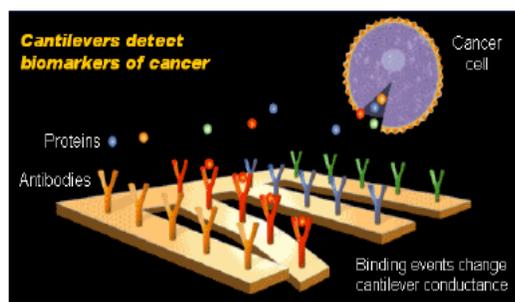
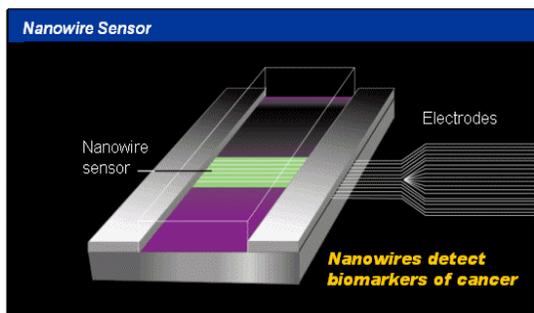
### **4. Nanowires**

Nanowires by nature have incredible properties of selectivity and specificity. Nanowires can be engineered to sense and pick up molecular markers of cancer cells. By laying down nanowires across a microfluidic channel and allowing cells or particles to flow through it. The wires can detect the presence of genes and relay the information via electrical signals/connections to doctors and researchers. This technology can help pinpoint the changes in the genetics of cancer. Nanowires can be coated with a probe such as an antibody that binds to a target protein. Proteins that bind to the antibody will change

the nanowire's electrical conductance and this can be measured by a detector. Jim Heath, a nanotechnology researcher at California Institute of Technology has designed a nanowire detector. Each nanowire bears a different antibody or oligonucleotide, a short stretch of DNA that can be used to recognize specific RNA sequences. He has tested the nanowire chip on proteins secreted by cancer cells. Carbon nanotubes are also being used to make DNA biosensors. This uses self-assembled carbon nanotubes and probe DNA oligonucleotides immobilized by covalent binding to the nanotubes. When hybridization between the probe and the target DNA sequence occurs, the change is noted in the voltammetric peak of an indicator. The DNA biosensors being developed are more efficient and more selective than current detection methods.

## 5. Cantilevers

Nanoscale cantilevers are built using semiconductor lithographic techniques. These can be coated with molecules (like antibodies) capable of binding to specific molecules that only cancer cells secrete. When the target molecule binds to the antibody on the cantilever, a physical property of the cantilever changes and the change can be detected. Researchers can study the binding real time and the information may also allow quantitative analysis. The nanometer-sized cantilevers are extremely sensitive and can detect single molecules of DNA or protein. Thus providing fast and sensitive detection methods for cancer related molecules.



## 6. Imaging and detection

Nanoparticle contrast agents are being developed for tumor detection purposes. Labeled nanoparticles and non-labeled particles are already being tested as imaging agents in diagnosis procedures such as computed tomography (CT) and nuclear magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

Super paramagnetic nanoparticles are used for MRI. They consist of an inorganic core of iron oxide coated or not with polymers like dextran. There are two main groups of nanoparticles:

- 1) Superparamagnetic iron oxides whose diameter size is greater than 50nm
- 2) Ultrasmall superparamagnetic iron oxides whose nanoparticles are smaller than 50nm.

Quantum dots are nanoscale crystals of a semiconductor material such as cadmium selenide, whose color properties depend on particle size. Quantum dots can be linked to antibodies and combined to create assays that are capable of detecting multiple substances simultaneously. They can

be used to measure levels of cancer markers such as breast cancer marker Her-2, actin, microfibril proteins and nuclear antigens. Quantum dots are robust and very stable light emitters. The photochemical stability and the ability to tune broad wavelengths make quantum dots extremely useful for biolabelling.

Nanoparticles can be used as tumor biomarkers. They help the detection process by concentrating and protecting a marker from degradation so that the analysis is more sensitive. Streptavidin-coated fluorescent polystyrene nanospheres used in flow cytometry to detect biological molecules have shown greater sensitivity as compared to conventional dyes.

## **7. Cancer Therapy**

Nanoscale devices have the potential to radically change cancer therapy by increasing the number of highly effective therapeutic agents. Nanoparticles can serve as customizable, targeted drug delivery vehicles capable of ferrying chemotherapeutic agents or therapeutic genes into malignant cells while sparing healthy cells. This may allow for smaller doses of toxic substances as the drugs are delivered directly to the target tissue. Doctors may also be able to deliver the toxin in a controlled and time-release manner.

### ***Targeting***

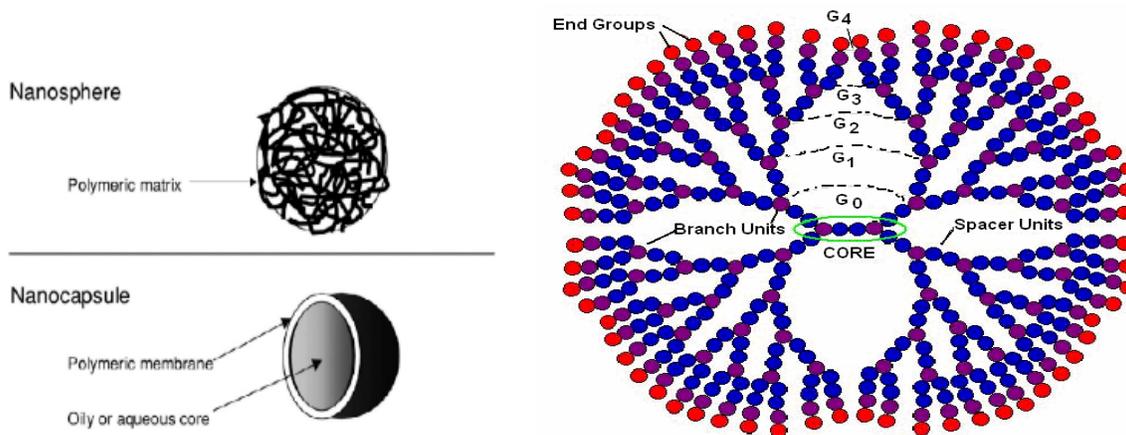
Currently, cancer fight drugs are toxic to both tumor and normal cells, thus the efficacy of chemotherapy is often limited by the side-effects of the drug. Some nanoscale delivery devices, such as dendrimers (spherical, branched polymers), silica-coated micelles, ceramic nanoparticles, and crosslinked liposomes can be targeted to cancer cells. This increases selectivity of drugs towards cancer cells and will reduce the toxicity to normal tissue. This is done by attaching monoclonal antibodies or cell surface receptor ligands that bind specifically to the cancer cells. Some cancer targeting molecules include high-affinity folate receptor, luteinizing hormone releasing hormone and integrin  $\alpha_7\beta_3$ . Some research on folate nanoparticles showed higher specificity for cancerous human cells. In addition, the folate nanoparticles improved the uptake of the encapsulated drugs that it carried. Surface modification of nanoparticles can also enhance the permeability of drugs to create high-permeability nanoparticle-based cancer therapeutics. Barriers to cancer drugs can be in the form of the cell's plasma membrane or epithelial or endothelial layers of cells. Research on the covalent attachment of peptidic membrane-translocation sequences (MTS), peptides with the ability to pass through membrane, to nanoparticles have shown increased permeability through membranes. With improved cell permeability, nanoparticles can become more therapeutically effective drug transport vehicles.

### ***Nanoshells***

Destruction of solid tumors using high heat has been in investigation for some time. Some thermal therapies include the use of laser light, focused ultrasound and microwaves. The benefits of

using thermal therapeutics is that most procedures are non-invasive, relatively simple and have the potential to treat tumors where surgery is not possible. However, to reach underlying tumors, the energy sources have to penetrate healthy tissues, often destroying healthy tissue. Nanoshell-assisted photo-thermal therapy (NAPT), is a simple, non invasive procedure for selective photo-thermal tumor removal. It makes use of nanoshells that absorb light in the near infrared (NIR) region. Nanoshells have a core of silica coated with an ultra-thin metallic layer, normally gold. By adjusting the core and shell thickness, nanoshells can be designed to absorb and scatter light at a desired wavelength. Nanoshells for cancer therapeutic purposes have been designed to have a peak optical absorption in the NIR, as this is the wavelength that optimally penetrates tissue. The metal shell converts the absorbed light into heat with great efficacy and stability. In addition, biomaterial nanoshells are composed of elements that are biocompatible. Due to their small size, nanoshells are preferentially concentrated in cancer cells by enhanced permeation retention (EPR). Further specificity can be engineered by attaching antigens on the nanoshells which are specifically recognized by the cancer cells. By supplying a NIR from a laser, the particle heats up and kill the tissue. Research has shown that the temperature within the nanoshell-treated tumors rose by about 40°C compared to a rise in 10°C in tissues that was treated with NIR light alone. Thus using a NIR laser, cancer tissue can be destroyed by local thermal heating around the nanoshells.

## 8. Nanoparticles



**Structure of Dendimer**

Nanoparticles can be in the form of nanospheres (matrix systems in which drugs are dispersed throughout the particle) and nanocapsules (drug is confined in an aqueous or oily cavity surrounded by a single polymeric membrane). Nanoparticles have the potential to overcome biological, biophysical and biomedical barriers currently faced by conventional administration of cancer drugs. If designed appropriately, nanoparticles may selectively target tumors, while protecting the drug from inactivation

during transport. Poly (isobutylcyanoacrylate) has been used to make nanocapsules with an oily core for hydrophobic drugs.

Experiments have shown that nanospheres loaded with anticancer drugs successfully increase drug concentration in cancer tissues. Some nanospheres are made of poly-isohexylcyanoacrylate, poly-methylcyanoacrylate and biodegradable poly-ethylcyanoacrylate. Further improvements to these nanospheres are being researched into by coating the nanoparticles with hydrophilic polymers like poly-ethylene-glycol, poloxamines, poloxamers and polysaccharides to provide a “cloud” of hydrophilic and neutral chains at the particle surface. Molecules like poly-ethylene-glycol reduce nonspecific attachment or uptake. This allows longer circulation without being taken up by the body’s macrophages, so as to direct more specific targeting. Chemists and engineers have also turned synthetic materials into nanocarriers. Dendrimers, 1 to 10 nanometer spherical polymers of uniform molecular weight made from branched monomers have been proven to provide a multifunctional cancer agent. In one experiment, researchers attached folate – which targets the high-affinity folate receptor found on some malignant cells, the indicator fluorescein and an anticancer drug (methotrexate or paclitaxel) to a single dendrimer. Experiments showed that the dendrimer delivered the therapeutic drugs while simultaneously labeling the cells for fluorescent detection. A group of scientists have used nanoparticles to deliver a gene that forces blood vessels to selfdestruct. This prevents angiogenesis, or the formation of blood vessels in a tumor. The group targeted the nanoparticle surface with an integrin (a protein present on growing blood vessels),  $\alpha_v\beta_3$ , and packed a mutant gene *Raf-1* that prevents blood vessel formation. Researchers treated mice with tumors with the nanoparticles and tumor regression was observed. On closer examination, dead blood vessel cells were observed in the tumors.

## 9. Societal Implications

Presently, according to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), one out of every five deaths in the United States is related to cancer. Cancer research in the U.S. hopes to eventually see a time when cancers can become manageable. Nanotechnology is an emerging technology with potential use in prevention, early detection, development of innovative diagnostics, early warning of relapse and design of effective and safe therapeutic modalities as noted above. Nanotechnology has also helped speed up the process of understanding cancer as a disease process. The outcomes of cancer research has the power to transform the vision of the National Cancer Act of 1971 into an ambitious goal: the elimination of the suffering and death due to cancer. National Cancer Institute has formed the NCI Alliance for Nanotechnology in Cancer, a comprehensive, integrated initiative encompassing researchers, clinicians, and public and private organizations that have joined forces to develop and translate cancer-related nanotechnology research into clinical practice. Despite the potential impact of nanomedicine in cancer, the societal implications of such a rapidly progressing field has to be taken into consideration. As the science leaps ahead, the ethics lags behind. There is a danger of derailing nanomedicine if the study of ethical, legal and social implications does not catch up with the speed of scientific development. Nanomedicine is a powerful and revolutionary development that is likely to have significant impact on

society, the economy and life in general. As quoted from Langdon Winner's *Technologies as forms of life*, technologies are not merely aids to human activity, but also powerful forces acting to reshape that activity and meaning of life.

### ***Addressing social and ethical issues***

While nanotechnology is still in the fledging stages the ethical considerations follow speculatively. However, it is a good time to start addressing ethical implications. A good place to start is to examine our experiences with biotechnology and information technology as these fields are likely to share similar issues with nanotechnology. The study of the social implications of nanomedicine should not be conducted in isolation from a few major players. Instead, it should have an intersectoral approach. Those studying ethical and social implications should have regular opportunities to interact with, and represent, scientists, different activist/pressure groups, government and industry. Most importantly, there should be public engagement. The active engagement of everyday folks in the shaping of public understanding of emerging issues and controversies in this area could bring about extremely valuable contributions to issues; problems and possible solutions. Journalists need to be involved in the early stages of nanotechnology research as they are an important influence on public perception. Science museums should consider how it might include exhibits on ethical and social implications. Nanotechnology education can be developed for students in high school and college, so that citizens can be engaged early in balanced discussions of issues.

## **10. Conclusion**

Prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer have always been a formidable medical challenge. In fact, cancer has long been considered an incurable disease and it is grouped with Hepatitis C and AIDS. Throughout the bulk of human history, cancer tended to be fatal in those who were unfortunate to develop it. Cancer will continue to be a big problem since it is a disease that is also related to age. As our population average age increases due to medical advances cancer will be a major disease of the aging. Cancer nanotechnology is an interdisciplinary area of research in science, engineering, and medicine with broad applications for molecular imaging, molecular diagnosis, and targeted therapy. The basic rationale is that nanometer-sized particles, such as semiconductor, quantum dots and iron oxide nanocrystals, have optical, magnetic, or structural properties that are not available from molecules or bulk solids. When linked with tumor targeting ligands such as monoclonal antibodies, peptides, or small molecules, these nanoparticles can be used to target tumor antigens (biomarkers) as well as tumor vasculatures with high affinity and specificity. In the mesoscopic size range of 5–100 nm diameter, nanoparticles also have large surface areas and functional groups for conjugating to multiple diagnostic (e.g., optical, radioisotopic, or magnetic) and therapeutic (e.g., anticancer) agents. Recent advances have led to bioaffinity nanoparticles probes for molecular and cellular imaging, targeted nanoparticle drugs for cancer therapy, and integrated nanodevices for early cancer detection and

screening. These developments raise exciting opportunities for personalized oncology in which genetic and protein biomarkers are used to diagnose and treat cancer based on the molecular profiles of individual patients. It is expected that nanotechnology will help with new treatments for dreaded diseases.



## **Tell Me Why**

*Tanmaya Panda*

On a summer day  
When the grass is green  
And there is bright sunshine  
Trees are full and look agile  
And I am on a long drive  
I feel happy and I smile  
And suddenly sadness engulfs me  
Why! Tell me why!!

On a rainy day  
When the clouds are black  
There is wind, lightening and outside dark  
Heavy downpour and nothing visible  
And I am on my long drive  
Enjoying rain and listening to music  
Suddenly sadness engulfs me  
Why! Tell me why!!

On a cold winter day  
When outside is white  
Heavy snow and chill wind blowing  
Trees look like ghosts  
And at a snail's pace vehicles moving  
And I am on my long drive  
Wearing my long overcoat and enjoying coffee  
Suddenly sadness engulfs me  
Why! Tell me why!

What to talk about spring and autumn  
When the nature is at its best  
Pleasant weather and cheerful sun



Everyone outdoors having fun  
And I am on my long drive  
With my family each moment enjoying  
Suddenly sadness engulfs me  
Why! Tell me why!!

Be it Spring, Autumn, Summer, Rain or Winter  
When most people on earth lack food, clothes and shelter  
And still there is politics, hatred, racism and despair  
Everyday many like me suffer  
And I have nothing better for them to offer  
Even if I am on my long drive  
To enjoy company, coffee or weather  
Should not sadness engulf me?  
Tell me why? Why not??



*Dr. Tanmay Panda*  
*Toronto*  
*23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015*

## My Perspective of Life.....

*Itishree Panda*

Days of my life are on a running spree,  
I have no way of stopping them.  
They seem to be marching ahead free  
I have no way of blocking them.

My girl days cover the stories  
That are too vague to put on a cast,  
My mid-life holds many tales  
That are buried in the past.

I realize day by day,  
Life is marching deep into the second innings,  
Giving warning and asking me to get ready  
For the end of the beginning.

The end shouldn't be looked, I am told,  
As nothing that is there after,  
Rather, the end is an open gate  
For the next, that might be better.

If I want my next to be better,  
I should start working now, as they say.  
"Realize the past Karma, apply the self effort,  
You can be free of the effects of the day".

One point, although, to be noted here,  
Work, not result, should be in my mind,  
I should Give all that I have, put every bit that I could,  
Keeping the expectation, way behind.

"Detachment" is the magic word,  
That I should understand and apply,



While fulfilling my assignments of this life,  
Without getting tired of the "Supreme's", supply.

Conscious repetition of self effort,  
Day after day after day, to-day,  
Might prove to be beneficial,  
helping me ready to liberate.

My Life ..... A journey, is designed  
By someone "The Great".  
A road is laid out for me to travel  
Without any regret.

I am to understand  
that life is full of struggle,  
I am to prepare myself to handle it  
without a great deal of trouble.

I have to put every effort  
So that I can stay forever "Happy".  
I have to apply strategies  
So that, consciously, I avoid being snappy.

The first strategy they say,  
Is to understand the senses,  
Keep them under control,  
Don't come under their influences.

All five of them: Sound, Smell, Sight, Touch and the Taste,  
Are notorious in playing games and designing our fate.  
Agitation, anxiety, jealousy and anger that result in unhappiness  
All crop up making us dance la-Tate-tet.

If we evaluate all five  
Weighing their effects on a scale of one to ten,  
Quickly, we realize that desires generated by  
The "Sight" and the "Taste", are easily entertained.

Sight ruins our present by making us allured  
To the objects that are attractive and colorful,  
We get passionate about owning them,  
Without which our life feels less meaningful.

Desire to win such objects,  
Multiplies with leaps and bounds,  
Failure to win adds to our misery and results in  
Unhappiness ....that engulfs us all around.

"Taste" ruins our moment to moment existence,  
Making us want more and more,  
Once fulfilled, we crave again,  
Failing which, mind and body create uproars.

Desire flourishes,  
Overshadowing the body completely  
Mind follows,  
Ignoring the intellect absolutely.

Attachment grows,  
Detachment falls.  
"Karma" in this life accumulates  
Preparing the next life's troll.

Finally, if I could announce.....

A Life without desires and needs,  
Is the life we should try to nourish,  
A Life without cravings and greeds  
If maintained, we will definitely flourish.



*Itishree Panda, 6862 Windwood Dr. Cincinnati, Ohio-45241*

## Strength of Unity

*Nrusingha Mishra*



In perfect unison with a unique formation a group of birds forging ahead showing grit  
With a deep understanding of strength of unity and reliance upon one another insight  
In hard days of winter and falling show use their sixth sense and communicate without fail  
Make sure not to leave anybody in the group especially who are frail  
Escape to safe haven and move to distant warmer places in self-defense  
Protect family, young off springs and store food to feed all with force intense  
Patience, hard work and discipline guide them back sweet home at the advent of spring  
Live in community enjoying one another company sharing joys, sorrows in fellow-feeling



Nrusingha is inspired by the theme, Unity and Progress, of the Global Odisha Convention 2015 in Washington, DC

## Endless Road

*Srushti Panda*

On a dark night with no moonlight  
Stood a girl on a lonely road,  
Lost was she and scared was she  
Didn't she know what to do!

She looked around  
to find someone  
Wind was cold and her steps echoed  
Scared was she with every step  
Didn't she know what to do!  
She walked walked on and on  
On this endless road  
None was there anywhere around  
To help her get back home  
All of a sudden she heard a sound  
and her heart skipped a beat  
Wide eyed and scared she wished to run  
Didn't she know where to go!

With all her might she turned  
to see if it was another lonely soul  
But instead she saw a black cat  
scurrying down the road.  
With a heavy heart she walked on and on  
When suddenly there appeared a man  
Tall was he and alone was he  
And he looked as scared as was she.

She asked O' stranger where you headed  
and all he said was nothing  
So in silence they walked together  
on and on and on and on.



Srushti lives in Toronto with her parents Dr. Tanmay Panda and Dr. Sunanda Mishra Panda. She is pursuing her Bachelors of Engineering in Computer Science at York University



## Jataayu

*Translation by Suchitra Pattnaik*

*Original poem in Odia by Late Raghunath Das*

Oh! Who is she,  
Crying so loud and mourning,  
So desperately she pleads?  
Panchavati shudders,  
Overwhelming all and the Lord.

Who is she, whose tears roll,  
Smudging each leaf,  
It leaves impressions  
of despair and woes?

And, what is it, exploding in the sky,  
It thunders such obscenity?  
Imperiously it disrupts  
The forest and it's total sanctity.

Oh, it is the Pushpak chariot  
Fleeing it comes, flying from the north  
Sita sits aggrieved in Ravana's clutch  
Lamenting, crying - holding unto truth.

It is Ravana, in disguise he comes,  
Clad as Brahmin, snatches Sita away  
Helpless, she cries – 'Rama', 'Rama'  
And Rama, far away.

All these tears and torment  
Is it all in vain??  
Are we all, so inert and dead?  
No voices heard and no protests,  
It is injustice - that seems to prevail.

Can I really fight, against might  
So little power that I have? No, I must...  
My invincible soul soars,  
Against injustice it roars.

I am Jataayu, the eagle –  
set to fight  
I know, Ravana, I won't match your might,  
I may or may not win, but fight I must.

It's my will that I trust.

Injustice, I want slain and stopped.  
That is the solace to Sita and the just.  
That is my victory..So fight I must.

Lower your chariot you scoundrel!  
Stop at once! Else a battle and you bleed  
With my nails – so honed.

Don't you dare to ignore.  
Here is the first blow  
Of the eagle, unknown, so obscure  
And your blood will flow.

See! The great king of Lanka  
Lifts his sword and snips my wing.  
Scattered in the sky are my blood drops  
Each is a seed of truth, again to blossom recompensing.

I shall still obstruct – wing I've yet another  
Easy it will not be,  
Ravana, to go past me.  
Evade you can't, you invade me,  
It is my protest, you shall have to bear  
Despite being the king  
You had to fight me, "Just a bird".  
That, you have to hear.

Gone are both my wings now.  
Let it be .....No worries....  
I shall remain an inspiration prime,  
For posterity- willing to fight - in all time.

'Valmiki 'shall write –  
This eagle had fought, much before Rama  
And fought all alone,  
Arm less, against twenty arms,  
An army in one - just one bird  
A wing for truth, A wing for justice  
Ready to soar ever,  
Jataayu gives up never.



## The Construction Project

*Babru Samal*



Like the oil drops in a plate of water  
Massaged by a soft breeze  
Coalesce or split  
Forming different shapes and sizes  
And assume the existence in iridescent colors  
Daily events manicure our lives  
Spanning days, weeks, months and years  
The story of our lives  
Get written by so many authors  
Some known and many unknowns  
Like the guy who controls our wifi connection  
Or the truck driver that came suddenly  
To send the unsuspected one to the other world  
The book we read  
The boss we work for or against  
The spouse we share or wish to  
The child in her or his own universe  
The agonizing aging parents  
The chill wind of the winter  
And the steamy air of the summer  
Are all architectures in  
The construction project of our lives  
(((\*\*)))



**Only YOU**  
**Surya Nayak**

You are a waterfall  
falling restlessly to the lake.  
I watch you endlessly.

Alone and silent,  
I merge into solitude,  
and eventually,  
I feel your pulse.

Now I gather my strength  
to cogitate over the past.  
The tears of acceptance  
blur my eyes; but  
the vision improves.  
I see an image- it is you.

I perceive the smile and sense  
the warmth of your breasts,  
the comfort, the relief,  
the veneration, the strength and  
Love, naturally revolves around you.

As I run my fingers through your hair,  
I grasp the elements  
and acknowledge the truth.

The caress is you,  
The absolution is you  
The frigid is you,  
The dead is you.

And life is you,  
None but you,  
The Only YOU.



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*Surya Nayak writes in both English and Odia. He lives in Maryland with his wife Sujata*

## I am not sure I thanked you

*Mrunali Das*

I am not sure I thanked you  
For making me the person I am today.  
Just know everything you have done,  
Has shaped me in incontrovertible ways.

Thank you for the Saturday morning lessons.  
My ability to learn would not be the same without them.  
Every academic achievement of mine,  
From those lessons, does each stem.

Thank you for pushing me through Odissi.  
Even when I threw tantrums, you never let me quit.  
You taught me persistence and determination,  
And I thank you for your grit.

Thank you for buying me books.  
By doing so, I was exposed to oh so much:  
Different people, places, events, knowledge,  
I wouldn't have otherwise been able to touch.

Thank you for teaching me about Hinduism,  
For the bhajans, the beliefs, the mythology.  
You have influenced, my worldview,  
You have contributed to my philosophy.

Thank you for cooking regularly.  
My life would be bereft without cumin,  
Turmeric, coriander, ginger, and other spices  
That are, thanks to you, staples of my kitchen.

I love you so much, words will not suffice,  
Though I may not regularly tell you.  
Happy Mother's Day, my dear Mama Das!  
With lots of love, from your Lulu.



*Mrunali lives in Scottsdale, AZ (Dayton, Maryland - Permanent Home) and teaches Mathemarics.*

## The Little Bird Flies Away

*Bibek Das*

The little bird drops out of the nest,  
With wings that still need to grow,  
Wobbles into the turbulent sky  
With a promise to navigate the wind,  
With a wish to soar high above the ground

The papa bird and mama bird (and another tiny bird) are left behind,  
Wondering if the little bird will make it in this troublesome world  
Giving birth was under their control, but writing fate is not  
Every bird needs to find its own trajectory of journey  
The past is gone, the present throws a challenge so that the future could be great  
The parents wish the little one had stayed a little longer,  
Waited until its wings were a little stronger  
But the law of nature takes its course  
For this there should be no remorse  
We wish you the best little bird  
May you rise above the sky and reach new heights  
We love you always  
The nest is there should you feel stress



## **IGurukul**

*Sri Gopal Mohanty*

We were looking for the address. There I saw 'IGurukul' sign on the top of a store window and there we were at our destination. No need for any more search for the address.

It was April 5. IGurukul was celebrating Odisha Dibasa to mark April 1, the day Odisha was made a separate province and invited the Bay area Odia community to join the celebration. This time was unlike other years when the event was restricted to its own members – one may call them as part of IGurukul family. In that way, IGurukul has kept its promise to promote Odia language and Odisha's culture outside Odisha, in particular in Bay Area.

At the entrance we were warmly greeted by Kuku Das, the visionary for founding this Institution. Joined by friends and supporters, the Institution has comfortably established its identity at this location in a large room which was transformed from a typical shopping store in a row of shops into an elevated position of educational institution.

As I proceeded into the elongated space, I met Manoj, Gayatri Joshi, Bibek, Mita and Jayashree, who I believe are some key members of the family. As my movement started opening up further into the space I could not avoid noticing those cute and pretty girls dressed up in Odissi costumes, their spontaneous eagerness to dance and unwillingness to wait for the scheduled time for the actual performance.

I turned back towards the entrance as if I missed something. Indeed I did. There I met Anji – Anjalika Pattanik – the inspiring soul of Bay Area Odia community who hugged me with her unpretentious love and respect. My eyes fell on the display of several Odia books which was part of the collection of Anji, Surya Babu (her husband) and Kuku. Without hesitation I picked up a few. Even though I saw most of them earlier, my uncontrolled sentiment just pushed me to touch and open them. I saw as if Fakir Mohan, Gopinath, Kahnu Charan, Sitakanta Mohaptra, Pratibha Ray and others staring at me.

The event was organized just before midday. It was impossible not to smell the aroma of food. That's precisely what happened to me and I could not resist turning my face from books to laid out covered cooked items. The dishes were gathering right at the entrance door for lunch.

Well, I have to move away from there and I did towards the front side. There at the front corner was placed Lord Jagannath's deity, majestically decorated – the big round eyes were fixated yet without any doubt left the perception of the symbolic omnipresence. If we stretch our imagination a little further, we might and I say we might think this whole hall as the Puri Temple – enter to see carriers of cooked food and then to enter 'Jagamohana' (the audience hall) for 'darshana' of the Lord inside the inner core of the Temple.

Slowly the gathering was gaining its momentum. The atmosphere was informal and yet not overly noisy which was somewhat unusual invariably in any Odia gathering. At some point the formal programme started with an introduction by Kuku after the inauguration of lighting the lamp in front of the Deity.

But the real introduction to Odisha Dibasa was artfully presented by seven children, orchestrated by IGurukul teaching staff and parents. They opened with a song in praise of Mother Odisha. Yet their real challenge was to remember the lines in Odia and the unusual names and to narrate smoothly. Each child was given a segment of different aspects of Odisha: its political formation , geography, literature, music, dance, festivities, architecture, handicrafts and others. Such names like Madhusudan Das, Fakir Mohan Senapati, Nilakantha, Gapabandhu were no hurdle for them even without a piece of paper to look at. Towards the end there was a little boy who topped it by his voice of confidence: I am an ABCO, American Born Confused Odia; I am born in America, my father is a Tamilian and my mother is an Odia and see I am a confused Odia..... There was a roar of laughter.

These days no Odia programme without a touch of Odissi is ever considered to be complete. To many Odisha and Odissi have become synonyms. And the girls were patiently waiting for this moment. Gayatri conducted the Odissi dances – Mangalacharan, Sthayi and Abhinaya. No matter how often I see Odishi presentation, I am always carried away every time by its charm and grace producing the beauty to behold. Or am I biased with a sentimental attachment? Perhaps, perhaps, never-the-less....

My memory goes back to my childhood days. Every time I see a jatra I get attached and we the children like to produce one. I try to vividly remember the characters, the costumes, the expressions, the gait, the music and so on. So we the children/ youth also intend to be part of that imaginary world like jatra where one can lose the humdrum of mundane existence.

Our Odissi world similarly creates for me a space of beauty and bliss where a rational world melts down.

In the gathering I happened to meet a few of my generation who have come from Odisha to visit their children like me and my wife Shanti. We are visiting our daughter Niharika (Rini) who runs an Odissi school – Gurushradha.

We were very fortunate that we arrived just on April 3 and got the opportunity to attend the event.

One visiting mother recited her own poem dedicated to mother Odisha – a beautiful one expressing every ounce of her love for the mother or motherland.

At this point we ask ourselves: In doing so are we parochial ? Yes, in doing so if we bring hatred in our mind for others and if we restrict our emotion in a very narrow sense. No, if we understand the priciple of unity in diversity. And our Jagannatha culture proclaims this spirit of universality.

Well, well, let's return to the event as it was progressing.

At some point Kuku requested me to say a few words. I tried to bring a few historical points to one's attention.

- 1) Odisha was the first province to be formed on the basis of language.
- 2) In the struggle, Gouri Shankar Ray's name has to be remembered who started the first Odia press in Cuttack. A language can not survive without publication and distribution.
- 3) The challenge by some Bengali antagonists that “ uria ek swatantra bhasa noi” was taken seriously by Fakir Mohan Senapati when he started producing volumes of writings in rural/ vernacular language which is no way connected to any other language including Bengali.
- 4) John Beame, a British administrator who was proficient in languages attested that Odia was a separate language.
- 5) Coming to Odissi dance, one might remember the development that led to its recognition as a classical dance form. At the first Inter – University Youth Festival held in Talkatora Garden, New Delhi in 1954, Priyambada Mohanty's dance was considered by Statesman's art critic Charles Febri to be uniquely pristine and distinct from other dance forms. Besides several gurus, Kabichandra Kali Charan Patnaik did the academic research and a presentation to National Sangeet Natak Academy for Odissi's recognition. He gave the name “ Odissi” to this freshly recognized dance form.
- 6) Kali Charan ( different from Kelu Charan, the eminent Odissi Guru) was a dramatist, lyricist, music composer, choreographer and producer of plays. He was the pioneer of modern social dramas. He established Odisha Theatres in Banka Bazar, Cuttack in 1939 which staged many plays like Akhira Dekha, Girl School, Chumban, Atibadi Jagannath Das, Abhjan, Bhata, Chakri. Odisha Theatres could not continue beyond 1949. He always included Odissi songs and Odissi dance (the form known then) in his plays.
- 7) Indrani Rahman brought Odissi for the first time to the international audience. In fact I saw her dance in Montreal in 1960, which made me to promote Odissi in NA in my own humble way. I thought that was one sure way to get Odisha recognized both in India and abroad.
- 8) Odissi in its original form, be it Mahari or be it Gotipua seemed to have a rural base and did not have the present day sophistication. Practically all performing art forms of Odissa originated and preserved in Odissa's villages – Jatra, Pala, Daskathia, Rabana Chhaya to name a few.
- 9) In a similar vein, Vernacular Odia as Odisha's rural language was rich and distinct which was used by Fakir Mohan. Earlier Sarala Dasa's Mahabharat and Balaram Dasa's Lakshmi Purana were written in this form of Odia which is different from Sanskritized Odia that is commonly used in most Odia literary work.
- 10) In recent development, Gopinath Mohanty used vernacular Odia in almost all his literary work. His originality in literary circle was highly acclaimed. He also became the first author who produced very lengthy fictions of high quality. He was the first Odia to receive Jnana Pitha award.
- 11) From the culture and language point of view, Odisha has three streams: Sanskritic, rural and tribal. Twenty-three percent of Odisha's population constitutes of tribal people. It is ironic that while we recognize Jagannatha culture is a synthesis of both tribal and non-tribal cultures, the non-tribals are oppressing and decimating tribals in the name of progress and development.

It was time for lunch. When I arrived there I was totally stunned to see the list of dishes spread through from one end to the other. Kuku told me that they requested participants to bring

authentic Odia dishes and that's how in everyone's view the Odisha Dibasa was to be celebrated by displaying Odisha's rich culinary art. About 40 items or more.

Of course without fish no Odia food is complete. Please forgive me for my earlier comparison of conglomeration of these dishes with Puri Temple's kitchen – only an analogy say in terms of 'chapan bhoga' in the Temple.

The afternoon led to a session for singers – extremely talented ones. When someone sang an Akshaya Mohanty's song I remember some of his earlier songs during late fifties like 'mo rangalata rushichi re', 'nua nua dina kete bada adara', 'jahaku jie rasichi' and many theme songs like 'konarka', 'kanchi bijaya', 'manika patana', 'taapoi', 'salilara trushna'. Later, 'Kanchi Bijaya' and 'Manika PataNa' were combined to form the LP production 'Kanchi Abhijan'. We all remember Akshaya Mohanty but who wrote all those romantic songs and lyrics of those themes which made a history in the world of rural-cum-modern songs that just created a stir in the minds of old and young alike ? Can anyone recall a name: Partha Sarathi Mohapatra ? In late sixties this pair was known as: Khoka Bhai ( Akshaya Mohanty) – Bulu Bhai ( Partha Sarathi).

Time has moved. We had to leave early because our grandson was restless to leave after having a stomach full of good food.

Let me profusely thank IGurukul members and many others who provided a memorable afternoon for us.

In the car I was musing over the afternoon's lunch time. That's where I met Manoj Sahu and Introduced myself to him. He said: we know you. Should I bask in my glory or should I feel humble to recognize how benevolent the Bay Area community is ?

Will you embrace us as one of you ? Will you ?



*Sri Gopal Mohanty  
Emeritus Professor  
Department of Mathematics and Statistics  
McMaster University  
Hamilton, Ontario  
Canada*



## Financial Fears

*Jay Misra\**

Behavioral Finance tell us that we fear high-profile, low probability incidents more, but ignore more immediate risks.

Here are some of the common fears and their probability of occurrence :

Air Travel Accident, 1 in 567,480.

Lightning Strike, 1 in 9,903,437.

Snake Bite, 1 in 50 Million.

Mountain Lion Attack, 1 in 32 Million.

Asteroid, 1 in 250,000.

Spider Bite, 1 in 51 Million.

Shark Attack, 1 in 315 Million.

Dog Attack, 1 in 9,593,955.

Swine Flu, 1 in 383,758.

But the occurrence of financial disasters, has much higher odds, which we fear less and take little notice of :

43% of Americans are 90 days away from poverty, if they loose their job.

Most Americans have less than \$25,000 in retirement savings.

Social Security will be exhausted by 2033.

One in six Older Americans, lives below the poverty line.

American Workers are projected to be \$6.6 Trillion short of their needs.

You spend 12-18% more when you use a credit card, instead of cash.

48% of Americans do not contribute to their workplace retirement plan.

US National debt rises an average of \$3.8 Billion per day.

68% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck.

8 in 10 workers plan to continue working in retirement, for lack of funds.

Far scarier than natural disasters, is the real burden of financial risks, we face. We, thus do not plan to fail, but fail to plan, said someone, for dying too early, living too long, becoming sick and disabled, and running out of money.

## Love My 401(K)

Congratulations on contributing to the retirement partnership program, with your Employer and the Government, both Federal and State. Some of the highlights of the program:

You will be the sole contributor, Government will not put any funds into it, the Employer may help with a miniscule amount. If you leave the job early, the Employer Match will be returned to the Employer, called Vesting.

You will not be taxed on your contribution, disguised as Tax-Deduction. We, the Government, will determine how much you can save, 25% of income, up to \$17,500. You will bear all the expenses and fees, fund charges, management fee, reporting fee, and will take all the risks of the market. You can not access the account until age 60, unless you pay a penalty (10%) and taxes (25-33%), hence sending , us, 40% or so as our share, and we will let you have the rest 60%.

We, the Government, will determine what your share will be in future and will reserve the right to change our percentage , the taxes. Between age 60 and 70, you can take as much as you like from the account, but have to pay ordinary income taxes, which will be much higher than you are paying now, 25-30%. We will collect over 30%, as our share and let you have less than 70%, your share. We, the Government, will decide how much you can take out from the age 70 onwards. But will collect 30% or so in taxes, and let you keep the rest, 70% or so.

If you take less, than we allow, or if you want to save for later, or for your heirs, we will charge a penalty of 50% and the tax, 33%, collect 83% as our, Government's, share and let you have the rest, 17%. If you died, with retirement funds not distributed, we will charge 30% in taxes and 45% in estate taxes, and collect our share of 75%, and will let you have the rest 25%.

If you wish to put \$10,000 a year, into your 401(K), we will help you save on taxes, say \$3000, at 30%. When you are ready to retire, and have contributed \$10,000 over 30 years or so, and put \$10,000 x 30 years = \$300,000 in the account, we have allowed, over \$3000 x 30 years = \$90,000 of tax savings. Because, we, the Government, are very generous to the public. However, when the account has grown from \$300,000 to say \$1,000,000 in the account in 30 years, we will be there to collect \$300,000 in taxes, at 30%. We invested \$90,000 in you and have patiently waited 30 years, hence we deserve to make at least \$300,000. It seems very fair. We may collect more, to fund those wars and other expenses.

Please add your State Taxes, 6% in Georgia, to the above percentage(s) of Federal Taxes.

**Good Luck, Please save more, in your 401(K).**

President Ronald Reagan, started the 401(K) revolution, with help from his Treasury Secretary, Donald Regan, then CEO of Merrill Lynch. This opened the flood gates, every one investing in the stock market.

Whom has it helped more, ordinary public or Wall Street guys ? You decide. Wonder, why people are occupying Wall Street ? President George Bush, tried hard to put all the money people pay in Social Security taxes, into stock market, with help from his Treasury Secretary, Hank Paulson, CEO of Goldman Sachs, but did not succeed. Congress kept the social security deposit out of the markets. However, other financial measures, created the cliff of 2007-2008, worse than that of the depression of 1930s. Any surprise, why 90% people are poor in the US ?

## Creditor-Protection of Assets

Business Owners and Professionals can lose wealth as a result of creditors and Judgments from Lawsuits.

With advance planning and proper measures one can protect, some or most of their assets, and make it difficult for creditors to reach them. To become 'Judgment Proof' will require tax and legal advice and fees to the Experts, but should be worth the time, effort and money.

Here are a few suggestions :

- Increase errors and omissions and liability coverage(s), including an Umbrella Policy.
- Incorporate your Business, and do not conduct as sole Proprietor or General Partner.
- Create Multiple Business Entities, so that debts and liabilities of businesses do not cross transfer.
- Own business employment and fiduciary insurances, to combat claims by employees.
- Create wealth in Qualified retirement plans, protected under ERISSA, exceptions IRS and Quadro.
- Form IRA Rollover plans, protection by State, not ERISSA, Employee Retirement Income Security Act.
- Title Assets in Spouse's name, but divorce and Quadro, Qualified Domestic Relations Order) may affect.
- Joint tenancy arrangements with spouse may be exempt from creditors, except when both have same debtor.
- Prepare an Asset Protection Trust, APT, as a Grantor, with investments, with an independent trustee.
- Wealth should created be as: Primary Residence, Cash Value Life Insurance, and Deferred Annuities.
- Asset protection planning should not be fraudulent, and should not be to defraud creditors. Proper tax and legal advice must be obtained. Becoming financially solvent, becoming debt free, and creating
- Wealth in exempt ways will generate 'Well Planned Estate(s) ' and improve Cash Flow for ever.



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\* phone 770-232-7447, web : [www.invetninsure.com](http://www.invetninsure.com), E-Mail : [misrausa@yahoo.com](mailto:misrausa@yahoo.com)

# Odishan Art History and Archaeology - Changing Perspectives

*Saroj Kumar Mohapatra*



Often the study of history involves political history with reference to the military exploits and administrative achievements of the dynasties. That has now been set aside and a trend has developed to put emphasis on the story of the art, of the people, their life, thought and culture. Life and art of the people of any region such as Odisha in any period constitutes the most important aspect of their history.

The art history of Odisha has largely depended on archaeological finds in the shape of stone artifacts, rock-paintings, rock-cut caves, temples, military strongholds, stone and copper plate inscriptions, coins and excavated materials like seals, sealing, metal implements, terracotta objects, wooden structures and carvings. These materials are abundantly found throughout Odisha (1).

Around two centuries ago, the study of ancient Odishan art, archaeology and architecture emerged as a budding pursuit. In the major part of the nineteenth century, it grew out of a keen and relentless interest in Odishan antiquities, art and artifacts. These objectives set a tone for and determined the methods adopted in the study of Odishan archaeology and art history during the later part of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries and even in the twenty-first century (2, 3).

Monuments of Odisha dating from early historical period to the advent of the Muslims in the Sixteenth century are the true repositories of its ancient culture with particular reference to their artistic merit. These monuments include caves, temples, viharas, stupas and stray sculptures belonging to almost all the religious sects of the land. Besides several other aspects of the material culture of the people, they present numerous types of ancient Odishan art. This aspect of Odishan culture has hitherto remained a neglected subject. But, of late eminent scholars like K. C. Panigrahi, R. P. Mohapatra, K. S. Behera and T. E. Donaldson have brought out serious scholarly publications on Odishan art history and archaeology. All of them are primarily trained archaeologists, art historians or historians. These Scholars however were more object-or-monument-centric in their approach to the study of Odishan history and architecture and remained largely detached from the study of written sources to interpret different aspects of cultural history (4-7).

European and British scholars like Sterling, Kittoe, Princep, Ferguson, Hunter, Beams, Toynbee, Cunningham, Beglar, Fleet, Luders and Stenknow exhaustively utilized these archaeological findings

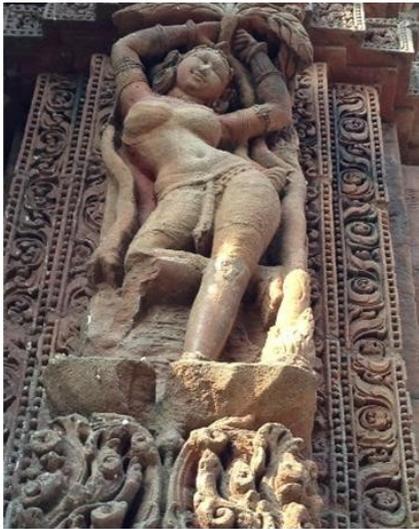


Artistic architectural design of Rajarani temple



Parasuramesvara temple design showing decorative motifs

during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, brought to their notice in reconstructing the history of Odisha on a scientific basis. Except for Beglar, others confined their accounts on the archaeological monuments of the coastal strip of Odisha preferably those found in Cuttack and Puri districts. Beglar followed the ancient tracts and besides reporting some of the important monuments of these regions penetrated into the hilly areas of ex-feudatory states of Odisha. Some of these scholars concentrated their works on Ashokan Edicts and the old Brahmi inscriptions of Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves, while others studied on monuments of Bhubaneswar, Konark, and Cuttack. Their works opened up new avenues of further exploration and research for unravelling the glorious art and past of Odisha. These luminaries were mostly responsible for inspiring a host of Indian scholars like R. L. Mitra, M. M. Ganguly, M. M. Chakravarty, R. P. Chanda, N. K. Bose, N. N. Vasu, R. D. Banerjee, B. C. Majumdar, K. P.



Alasakanya (Damsel) in folded leg  
(Rajarani Temple, Bhubaneswar)

Jayaswal, B. M. Barua, T. N. Ramachandran and Debala Mitra, during last phase of the nineteenth and the early phase of the twentieth centuries (2, 3).

The important characteristic feature in the study of temple art in Odisha is the overall clarity of its decorative art. Each individual art motif being clearly defined as a self-containing element in the total art design program (8). Each sculptural image is well contained within the architectural boundaries without overlapping with each other. Each vertical projecting divisions of the wall and spire of the temple (known as *paga or ratha*) is carved with figure sculpture encased by scrollwork, which functions as a self-contained unit in the overall decorative program. Therefore, each figure is isolated from the ones appearing on the adjacent vertical projecting divisions of the wall. Many a times, the bulk of the study has been approached from a purely archaeological and

architectural standpoint with little regard for stylistic and objective art analysis like the study of body ornamentation. Studies concentrating on details of such ornamentation, body proportion, pose and hand gestures are of course distinct contributes in developing an evolving chronology.

The sophisticated tradition of concurrent narration in Odishan literary genres, such as employment of graceful figures (*alasa-kanyas*) and conveyance of literary modes in visual narrative art (non-decorative figure sculptures and decorative motifs of *Kirtimukha*, *Vajramastaka*, *Chaitya* Window, female figures, animal figures including mythical figures, architectural designs, scroll motifs, and erotic sculptures) has been explored by Panigrahi (9, 10), Mohapatra (4, 11-14), Donaldson (15, 16), and Behera (6, 17, 18). The faithful



Sculptural panel with dancers and musician with various positions and hand gestures  
(Courtesy: Odisha State Museum)

representation of visual narration and the adaptation of literary figures in visual terms reveal an intimate understanding of the sculptor with the prevalent literary tradition (19). Depiction of woman abduction, reminiscent of the popular story of Dushyanta and Sakuntala, dramatic fight of Udyana with Vasavadatta on the reliefs of Rani Gumpha caves in Udayagiri and Khandagiri are some of the glaring examples of early Odishan/Indian art. The use of winged animals, honeysuckles and merlons indicate a west-Asian influence (4).

The works of these learned scholars, underline the need of further studies to interpret the intricacies and distinctiveness of Odishan narrative art and its relationships to narrative modes in the literary, performance and visual arts across cultures. With regard to classical traditions, a sophisticated vocabulary of gestures, postures, movement and communication in the performing arts (*natya* and *nrtya*) – with detailed and codified uses for the hand gestures, postures and positions (*hastas*, *mudras*), modes of movement, and tempos of movement – shares many features in common with the plastic arts of ancient and early medieval Odisha (19). The best examples are found in Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves and temples in Bhubaneswar. The dance performance depicted on both the lower and upper wing of *Rani Gumpha* and the depiction of dancers and musicians on the window grills of Parusuramesvar temple in Bhubaneswar are noteworthy. The monuments of Odisha replete with narratives from Epics and *Puranas*, episodes of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, Siva *Purana*, and *Bhagabata Purana* are noticed on the walls of temples like *Lakshmanesvara*, *Parasuramesvara*, *Swarnajalesvara*, *Rajarani*, *Brahmesvara*, *Lingaraja*, *Chitrakarini*, *Meghesvara* and *Ananta Vasudeva* in Bhubaneswar (12).



Krishna Vastraharana (Odisha State Museum)

The painstaking research conducted by physical verification of structural features of monuments and direct observations of their artistic and sculptural representations are very impressive. The concept of a multidisciplinary integrated study of monuments that will include all dimensions – material, geometrical, historical, conceptual, ritual, skills and tools - with a view to decoding the grand scheme lay the grand foundation of a new methodology for Odishan art history.

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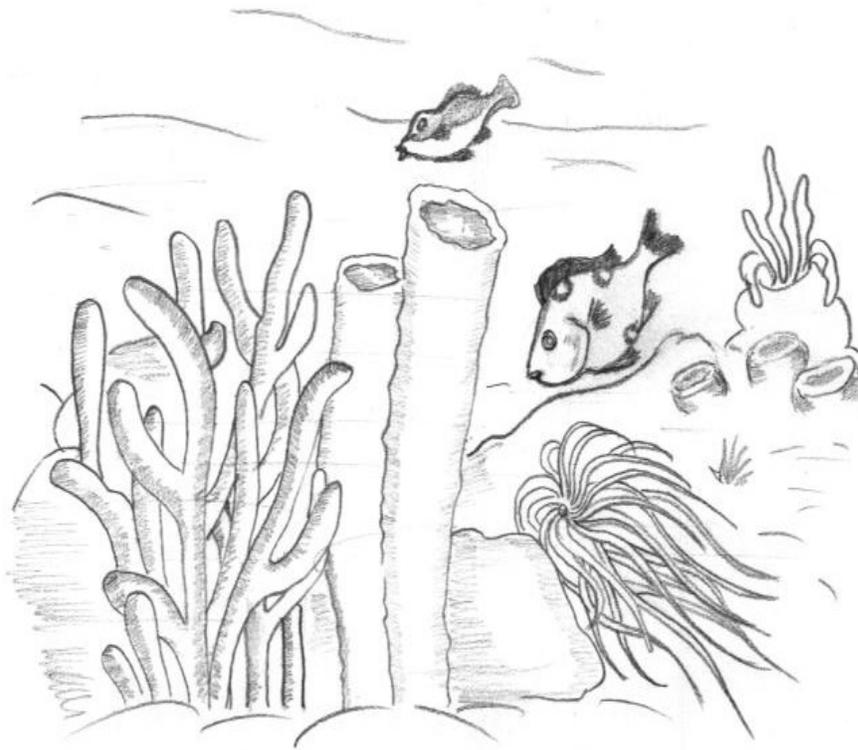
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Author's address: 2113 Edward Stec Blvd., Edison, NJ 08837, Contact info: Phone, 732-642-4544, E-mail: [tikoo\\_s@hotmail.com](mailto:tikoo_s@hotmail.com).

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# ଘୋହଳା

(Coral)



# କାଦମ୍ବିକା

ଶଶିଶେଖର ଶତପଥୀ



ସମୟ ବୋଧେ ଦିନ ତିନିଟା କି' ଚାରିଟା ହେଇଥିବ । ପ୍ରାୟ ଆଠ ଦଶ ମାଇଲ୍ ବାଇସାଇକଲିଂ କଲା ପରେ ମିତ୍ତୈରୀ ନଦୀ କୂଳର ଏକ ନିର୍ଜନ ବେଞ୍ଚ ଉପରେ ବସୁ ବସୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଭୁଲେଇ ପଡ଼ିଛି । ହଠାତ୍ ଏକ ନାରୀର କଣ୍ଠ ସ୍ଵରରେ ଛାଇ ନିଦଟା ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଗଲା ।

- ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ, କଣ ଶୋଇପଡ଼ିଲ କି? ତମ ପାଖେ ବେଞ୍ଚରେ ଚିକିଏ ବସିପାରେ?

ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଆଖି ମକଚି ନିଦରୁ ଉଠିଲା । ବଡ଼ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ କଥା । ଝିଅଟା ତା ନାଁ ଧରି ଡାକୁଛି, ଅଥଚ ସେ ତାକୁ ଆଦୌ ଚିହ୍ନି ପାରୁ ନାହିଁ ।

ଝିଅଟିର ଗୌର ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଦେହ । ପାଞ୍ଚଭୃଷା ବେଶଭୂଷା । ନୀଳ ରଙ୍ଗର ଛିଟ ଛିଟ ହାତକଟା ଗାଉନ୍ ଯାଦ ପାଖାପାଖି ଲମ୍ବି ଯାଇଛି । ଅକ୍ଷରେ ଗୋଟାଏ ଧଳା ରଙ୍ଗର ବେଲ୍ଟ୍ ଓ ତାକୁ ମ୍ୟାଟ୍ କରି ପାଦରେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଧଳା ରଙ୍ଗର ହାଇହିଲ୍, ଦି' ହାତରେ ଦିପଟ ସରୁଆ କାଚ ଓ କପାଳରେ ଗୋଟେ ଧଳା ରଙ୍ଗର ଟିକିଲି ।

ଦୀର୍ଘ ଦୁଇଶ ଚାଳିଶ ମାଇଲ୍ ଲମ୍ବା କେଟୀ ଟ୍ରେଲିଂ ମିତ୍ତୈରୀର ସେକ୍ସ ଲୁଇସ୍‌ରୁ ବାହାରି ମିତ୍ତୈରୀ ନଦୀ କୂଳେ କୂଳେ ନିଘଞ୍ଚ ଜଙ୍ଗଲ, ମକା ଖେତ, ଛୋଟ ବଡ଼ ଝରଣା, ପାହାଡ଼ ପର୍ବତାଦି ଅତିକ୍ରମ କରି, ପଶ୍ଚିମ ପଟେ କ୍ୟାନ୍‌ସାସ୍ ସିଟି ସହର ପାଖେ ସରିଛି । ଆଗରୁ ଏଇ ଟ୍ରେଲିଂ ମିତ୍ତୈରୀ-କ୍ୟାନ୍‌ସାସ୍-ଟେଲ୍‌ସ୍, ଏଇ ତିନୋଟି ପ୍ରଦେଶକୁ ରେଳ ଯୋଗେ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରୁଥିଲା । ଏଇ ତିନୋଟି ପ୍ରଦେଶର ଆରମ୍ଭ ଅକ୍ଷରକୁ ନେଇ ଏମ୍‌କେଟୀ ବା ସଂକ୍ଷେପରେ କେଟୀ ଟ୍ରେଲ୍ ଭାବେ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ଏଇ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଟ୍ରେଲିଂ ।

କେଟୀ ଟ୍ରେଲ୍‌ରେ ଅନେକ ଝିଅ ଚାଲନ୍ତି, ସାଇକେଲ୍ ଚଳାନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ, ଗୋଡ଼ରେ ସାଧାରଣତଃ ଚିପା ହାଫ୍ ପେଣ୍ଟ୍ ଆଉ ଦେହରେ ହାତକଟା ଟି ଶାର୍ଟ ଖଣ୍ଡେ ପିନ୍ଧି । ସାଇକେଲ୍ ଚଳେଇବାକୁ ସୁବିଧା ବୋଲି । ଏ ଝିଅଟି କିନ୍ତୁ ଅତି ଅଭୂତ । ପୁରୀ ରକ୍ଷଣଶୀଳ ବେଶଭୂଷା ତା'ର । ଆଉ ବଡ଼ କମନୀୟ ତା' ମୁହଁ । ସଦ୍ୟଜାତ ଗୋଲାପ ଫୁଲ ସଙ୍ଗେ ତୁଳନା କରା ଯାଇପାରେ । କଞ୍ଜଳ ଭରା, ମୃଗନୟନା ଆଖି ସହିତ ଲମ୍ବା ନାକ ଓ ଇଷତ୍ ଗୋଲାପି ଓଠ ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ମନକିଣା ହସ । ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟ ସଂଗୀତକାର ଅଭିଜିତ୍ ମଜୁମ୍ଦାରଙ୍କ ଦି' ପଦ ଗୀତ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତର ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଲା - “ସିଏ ମୋ ସପନେ ଆସି ନିଦକୁ କଲା ଚୁନା ଚୁନା, ତୁ କି' ସେଇ ନୀଳ ନୟନା, ତୁ କି' ସେଇ ନୀଳ ନୟନା ।” କିନ୍ତୁ, କିଏ ଏଇ ଲାବଣ୍ୟବତୀ ଝିଅ, ସିଏ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତର ନାଁ ଧରି ଡାକୁଛି, ଅଥଚ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ତାକୁ ଆଦୌ ଚିହ୍ନି ପାରୁ ନାହିଁ ?

କିନ୍ତୁ, ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଏ ସବୁ କଥା କ'ଣ ଭାରୁଛି ? ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରରେ ଅଛି - “ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଣାଂ ପଦରଜୋ ରାଜନ୍ ଶକସ୍ୟାପି ଶ୍ରୀୟନ୍ ହରେତ୍ ।” ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମାନଙ୍କର ପାଦଧୂଳି ପଡ଼ିଲେ ଆଉ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଅପଥା ସଂସ୍ପର୍ଶରେ ଆସିଲେ ସ୍ଵର୍ଗର ଇନ୍ଦ୍ର ବି' ଶ୍ରୀହୀନ ହୋଇଯାଆନ୍ତି । ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ତ' ବାହାସାହା ଲୋକ । ଏଇ ଝିଅଟି ସାଙ୍ଗେ କଣ ହାସ୍ୟାଳାପ କରିବା ଠିକ୍ ହବ ?

ଏପଟେ ସଂସ୍କୃତ ଶ୍ଳୋକର ତାତନା ଓ ବିବେକର କୁଠାରାଘାତ, ସେପଟେ ଅନିନ୍ଦ୍ୟ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟର ଅଧିକାରୀ, ରୂପସୀ ନାରୀର ଆକର୍ଷଣ । ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ କୋଉ ଆଡ଼କୁ ଯିବ, ଜାଣି ପାରିଲାନି । ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକଟିକୁ ତଡ଼ି ଦେଇ ପୂର୍ବ ପରି ଘୁଞ୍ଚୁଟି ମାରି ଶୋଇବ ନା' ତା' ସାଙ୍ଗେ କିଛି ହସଖୁସି କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା କରିବ । ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ବଡ଼ ଦୁନ୍ଦ୍ରେ ପଡ଼ିଲା ।

ଠିକ୍ ସେଇଭଳି ଦୁନ୍ଦ୍ରେ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲେ ରାଜା ଦୁଶ୍ୟନ୍ତ, ମହାକବି କାଳିଦାସଙ୍କ ଶକୁନ୍ତଳା କାବ୍ୟରେ । କଥାରେ ଅଛି, “ଉପମା କାଳିଦାସସ୍ୟ ।” ଅର୍ଥାତ୍, କାଳିଦାସଙ୍କ ଉପମା ଭଳି ଆଉ ଉପମା ନାହିଁ । କାଳିଦାସଙ୍କ ଉପମା ନ ଦେଲେ କୌଣସି ଲେଖା ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହୁଏନି । ଲେଖକର ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତର ଦୁଶ୍ୟନ୍ତଙ୍କ କଥା ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଲା ।

ରାଜା ଦୁଶ୍ୟନ୍ତ ବଣରେ ଭ୍ରମଣ କରୁ କରୁ ଶକୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କ ରୂପରେ ମୁଗ୍ଧ ହୋଇ ତାଙ୍କୁ ବିବାହ କରିଥିଲେ ଓ ପଛେ ଆସି ତାଙ୍କୁ

ନେବେ ବୋଲି କଥା ଦେଇଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯା' ଭିତରେ ରଖି ଦୁର୍ବାସାଙ୍କ ଅଭିଶାପରେ ଦୁଶ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଶକୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ପୁରାପୁରି ଭୁଲି ଯାଇଥିଲେ । କାଳକ୍ରମେ ଶକୁନ୍ତଳା ଦୁଶ୍ୟନ୍ତଙ୍କ ଦରବାରକୁ ଯିବା ପରେ ରାଜା ବଡ଼ ଅତୁଆରେ ପଡ଼ିଥାଆନ୍ତି । ଦୁର୍ବାସାଙ୍କ ଶାପ ଯୋଗୁ ଶକୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ଚିହ୍ନି ପାରୁନଥାନ୍ତି, କିମ୍ବା ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟବତୀ ନାରୀଟିକୁ ବି' ଛାଡ଼ି ପାରୁନଥାନ୍ତି । ଦୁଶ୍ୟନ୍ତଙ୍କ ମନର ଏହି ଦ୍ଵନ୍ଦ୍ଵକୁ କାଳିଦାସ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନା କରିଛନ୍ତି, ଅତି ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭାବେ ।

“ଇଦମ୍ଭୁପନତମେବଂ ରୁପମକ୍ଳିଷ୍ଟକାନ୍ତି, ପ୍ରଥମ ପରିଗୃହୀତଂ ସ୍ୟାନ୍ନବେତି ବ୍ୟବସ୍ୟନ୍ ।  
ଭ୍ରମର ଇବ ବିଭାତେ କୁନ୍ଦମନ୍ତଃ ତୁଷାରମ୍, ନ ଚ ଖଲୁ ପରିଭୋଞ୍ଜଂ ନାପି ଶକ୍ନୋମି ହ୍ରାତୁଂ ॥”

- କେତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଟିଏ ଏଠି ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ହୋଇଛି ଓ ମୋତେ ବାହା ହେଇଚି ବୋଲି କହୁଚି । ମୋର କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ କଥା ଜମା ମନେ ପଡୁନାହିଁ । ତାକୁ ବାହା ନ ହେଇ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବି କେମିତି; କିନ୍ତୁ ଏଇ ଅପରୂପ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟବତୀ ଝିଅଟିକୁ ହ୍ରାତରୁ ଛାଡ଼ିବାକୁ ବି' ତ' ମନ ଯାଉନି । ସତେ ଯେପରି ସକାଳ ସମୟରେ ଭଅଁରଟିଏ ଶିଶିରମ୍ମାତ ଢୁଲ ଫୁଲଟି ଉପରେ ଦୋଳାୟମାନ ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ରହିଥାଏ । ଶିଶିର ପଡ଼ିଥିବା ଯୋଗୁଁ ଢୁଲଫୁଲର ମହୁ ଆସ୍ଵାଦନ କରିପାରେନି, କିମ୍ବା ମହୁ ଲୋଭରେ ପଡ଼ି ଫୁଲଟିକୁ ଛାଡ଼ିକରି ବି' ଯାଇପାରେନି । ବିଚରା କ'ଣ କରିବ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଏବେ ? ଯଦିଓ, ବିରାଡି କପାଳକୁ ଶିକା ଛିଡ଼ିଚି !

ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତକୁ ଆଉ ବେଶୀ ସମୟ ଭାବିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିଲା ନାହିଁ । ତାର ଅନାବନା ଚିନ୍ତାଧାରାରେ ବ୍ୟାଘାତ ଦେଇ ଝିଅଟି କହିଲା - ତଥାପି କଣ ମତେ ଚିହ୍ନି ପାରୁନ, ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ? ମୋ ଘର ପରା ଏଇ ନଦୀ କୂଳରେ, ସେଇ ଯୋଉ ସିକାମୋର ଗଛର ବଣ ଦେଖୁଛ, ତା' ପାଖରେ । ତମେ ତ' ମୋ ଘର ଆଗ ବାଟେ ସବୁ ଶନିବାର, ରବିବାର ସାଇକେଲ୍ ଚଳେଇ ଆସ । ଆଉ, ମୋ ଘର ପାଖେ ରହି ମୋ ପାଇଁ କେତେ ପ୍ରେମ କରିତା ବୋଲ, ମନେ ମନେ ବା' କେବେ କେବେ ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ ବି' । ଏବେ ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଲା ମୁଁ କିଏ ?

ପ୍ରେମ କରିତା ? ଏ ଝିଅଟା କି ଅସମ୍ଭବ କଥା କହୁଚି ?

ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତର କବିତାରେ ବଡ଼ ଆଗ୍ରହ । ତେବେ, ଇଚ୍ଛା ଥିଲେ ବି' ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ତା ଜୀବନରେ ସେତେଟା କିଛି କବିତା ଲେଖିପାରିନି । ଖାଲି କଲେଜ୍ ଜୀବନରେ, କେତେଟା ଦୁର୍ବଳ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ଜଣେ ଅଧେ ସହପାଠିନୀଙ୍କୁ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ କରି ଦି' ଚାରିଟା କବିତା ଲେଖିଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ, କେବେ ବି' ସାହାସ କରି ସେ କବିତା କାହାକୁ ଦେଇ ପାରିନାହିଁ । ଏବେ ବି' ପ୍ରୌଢ଼ ଜୀବନରେ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ସେଇ କବିତା କିଛି ସାଇତି ରଖିଛି; ଅତି ଗୋପନରେ । ଆଉ ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ସେ କେହି ନଥିବା ବେଳେ ପଢେ । ଅତୀତର କଥା ମନେ ପକାଏ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ, ଯେଉଁ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଯୌବନର ମାଦକତା ଭିତରେ କବିତା ଲେଖି ବି' ସାହାସ କରି କାହାକୁ ଦେଇ ପାରିନି, ସେ କୁଆଡ଼େ ପ୍ରେମ କରିତା ଏଇ ଝିଅ ଘର ଆଗରେ ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ ଗାଉଥିଲା ! ନିହାତି ବାଜେ କଥା । ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଆଉ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁନି ତ' ?

ହଠାତ୍ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ମନରେ ଗୋଟେ ଅଜଣା ଭୟ ଖେଳିଗଲା । ଏ' ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ ଭୂତ କି' ତାହାଣୀ ନୁହେଁ ତ' ? ନା' ସ୍ଵର୍ଗର କୋଉ ଅପ୍ସରା ମଣିଷ ବେଶରେ ଏଠିକି ଆସିଛି, ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଉପରେ ଦାଉ ସାଧିବା ପାଇଁ ?

ଭାରତରେ, ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ସୁଷମାର ଗନ୍ତାଘର, ନିକାଞ୍ଚନ ବଣ ଜଙ୍ଗଲରେ, ଯେଉଁଠି ମୁନି ରକ୍ଷିମାନେ ତପସ୍ୟା ସାଧନରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ, ସେଇଠି ସ୍ଵର୍ଗର ଅପ୍ସରା ମାନେ ବି' ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ମୁନି ରକ୍ଷିଙ୍କ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଭଗ୍ନ କରିବା ପାଇଁ । ତା'ଛଡ଼ା ଅନେକ ଦେବଦେବୀ ବି' ପ୍ରକୃତିର ନୈସର୍ଗିକ ସୁଷମାରେ ବିଦୁଳ ହୋଇ, ପ୍ରକୃତିକୁ ନିଜ ରହିବା ଜାଗା ଭାବେ ବାଛି ନେଇଛନ୍ତି । ସ୍ଵୟଂ ଶିବ ତ' ନିଜ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀକୁ ଭୁଲି ହିମାଳୟ କୋଳରେ କେଉଁ ଆଦିମ କାଳରୁ ବାସ କରି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ମା' ଗଙ୍ଗା ତ' ଗଙ୍ଗାନଦୀ ଗର୍ଭରେ ହିଁ ରହନ୍ତି ।

ଯଦିଓ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଏ ସବୁ କଥା ବହିରେ ପଢ଼ିଛି, ତଥାପି ଭାରତରେ କି' ଆମେରିକାରେ ସେ କୌଣସି ଦେବଦେବୀଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷରେ ଦେଖିନି । ତେଣୁ ସେ ଛିରନିଞ୍ଜିତ ଯେ ଏମିତି କିଛି ଦେବଦେବୀ, ଭୂତ, ତାହାଣୀ ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ନାହାନ୍ତି, କେବଳ ମଣିଷ ମନର କାନ୍ଥନା ମାତ୍ର ।

ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତକୁ ଆଉ ବେଶୀ ଭାବିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିଲାନି । ତୀର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ ଆଖିରେ ଚାହିଁ ଝିଅଟି କହିଲା - ତଥାପି ତମେ ମତେ ଚିହ୍ନିଲନି, ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ? ମୁଁ ପରା ତୁମ ପ୍ରଣୟିନୀ । ମିତୈରୀ ନଦୀର ଅଧିକ୍ଷତ୍ରୀ ଦେବୀ କାଦମ୍ବିକା । ତମେ ତ' ସବୁବେଳେ “ସୁନ୍ଦରେ ତୁଠିର ଅବସାଦ ନାହିଁ, ଯେତେ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ ନୁଆ ଦିଶୁଥାଇ” ଆଦି ଗୀତ ଗାଇ ମୋ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟର ଭୂୟସୀ ପ୍ରଶଂସା କର । ଏଇ ପରା ଗଲା କାଲି ମଧ୍ୟଯୁଗୀୟ କବି ଗୋପାଳକୃଷ୍ଣ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକଙ୍କ ପଂକ୍ତି - “କି ନାଦରେ ପ୍ରାଣ ସଜ୍ଜନୀ, ଶୁଭୁଛି କଦମ୍ବ ବନେ, ଶୁଚିରେ ସୁଧା ବରଷି, ଧୃତି ନାଶେ ମଜ୍ଜି ମନେ ।” - ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ ବୋଲୁଥିଲ ମୋ ଘର ଆଗେ ସାଇକେଲ୍ ଚଳେଇବା ବେଳେ ? ଯଦିଓ

ମିତ୍ତୈରୀ ନଦୀ କୂଳରେ କଦମ୍ବ ବଣ ନାହିଁ, ସିକାମୋର୍ ବଣ ତ' ଭଣି ।

ଦିନ ଦି' ପହରେ କେଟୀ ଟେଲ୍ରେ ପାଗଳା ମାନଙ୍କ ପରି ରାଧାକୃଷ୍ଣ ପ୍ରେମଲୀଳା ସମ୍ବଳିତ ଗୀତ ସବୁ ମୋ ଘର ଆଗେ ଗାଇବାର ଅର୍ଥ କ'ଣ ? ଯଦି ତମେ ମତେ ଭଲ ନ ପାଉ ଥାଅ ? ନା ମୁଁ ଏ ସବୁ କଥା ମନରୁ ଗଢି କରି କହୁଚି ?

କାଦମ୍ବିକା ପୁଣି କହିଲା - ପ୍ରଥମେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ମୁଁ ତମ ଉପରେ ରାଗୁଥିଲି । ସାଧାରଣ ମଣିଷ ହୋଇ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗର ଦେବୀଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ପାଇବାର ଆହ୍ୱାନୀ ତୁମର ଆସିଲା କେମିତି ? କିନ୍ତୁ, ଯେତେବେଳେ ଜାଣିଲି, ତୁମର ଏ ପ୍ରେମ ପାପିବ ପ୍ରେମଠୁ ଭିନ୍ନ, ସେତେବେଳଠୁ ତୁମ ପ୍ରତି ବି' ମୋ ମନରେ ଗଭୀର ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଆସିଲା । ତମକୁ ବି' ମୁଁ ଭଲ ପାଇ ବସିଲି ।

ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତ ବଡ଼ ସନ୍ଦେହରେ ପଡିଲା । ଇଏ କହୁଚି ତାକୁ ଭଲ ପାଉଛି ବୋଲି । ଆଉ ସେ କୁଆଡେ ଦେବୀ କାଦମ୍ବିକା । ହେଲପାଇ ପାରେ । ନ ହେଲେ ଏ ଅତିହୀନ ଝିଅଟା ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତର ନାଁ ଜାଣିଲା କିପରି ? ଯା' ବି' ସତ ଯେ, କେଟୀ ଟେଲ୍ରେ ସାଇକେଲ୍ ଚଳେଇବା ବେଳେ, ନିଛାଟିଆ ସମୟରେ, ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ସୁଖମା ଭରା ମିତ୍ତୈରୀ ନଦୀ, ବଣ ପାହାଡ଼ ଘେରା ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଅପରୂପ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ବିମୁଗ୍ଧ ହୋଇ, ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତ ତୁଣ୍ଡରୁ ଅପୂର୍ବ ଭଲ୍ଲାସରେ ପ୍ରେମ ସମ୍ବଳିତ ଓଡିଆ ଗୀତ ସବୁ ସ୍ୱତଃ ବାହାରି ଆସେ ଓ ସେ ବି' ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ଖୋଲା ମନରେ ଗୀତ ସବୁ ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ ଗାଇଥାଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ, ସତରେ କ'ଣ ଇଏ ସର୍ବବ୍ୟାପୀ ଦେବୀ କାଦମ୍ବିକା, ଆଉ ସେ ଲୁଚି ଲୁଚି ତା' ଗୀତ ସବୁ ଶୁଣୁଥିଲେ ? ମହା ବିପଦର କଥା ।

ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତର ମନେ ପଡିଲା ମହାଭାରତର ଶାନ୍ତନୁଙ୍କ କଥା । ହସ୍ତୀନାପୁର ନରପତି ଶାନ୍ତନୁ ମୃଗୟା କରୁ କରୁ ଅପୂର୍ବ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟବତୀ ଗଙ୍ଗାଦେବୀଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ପାଇ ବସିଲେ । ସେତେବେଳେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଙ୍କଦ୍ୱାରା ସ୍ୱର୍ଗରୁ ଅଭିଶପ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଗଙ୍ଗାଦେବୀ ଗୋଟିଏ ସୁନ୍ଦରୀ ନାରୀ ବେଶରେ ମର୍ତ୍ତ୍ୟକୁ ଆସି ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ଅଭିଶାପରୁ ମୁକ୍ତିଲାଭକୁ ହେଲେ ମର୍ତ୍ତ୍ୟରେ କିଛି ନାରକୀୟ କାଣ୍ଡ କରିବାର କଥା ଥାଏ । ଏବଂ ତା' ସାଙ୍ଗେ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ବଶିଷ୍ଠଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ଅଭିଶପ୍ତ ଅଷ୍ଟବସୁଙ୍କୁ ଉଦ୍ଧାର କରିବାର ଯୋଜନା ବି' ଥାଏ । ଶାନ୍ତନୁଙ୍କ ସହିତ ବିବାହ ଏଇ ସର୍ତ୍ତରେ ହେଲା ଯେ ଗଙ୍ଗାଦେବୀ ଯାହା କଲେ ବି' ଶାନ୍ତନୁ କିଛି କହିବେ ନାହିଁ । ସାତଜଣ ସଦ୍ୟଜାତ ଶିଶୁଙ୍କୁ କ୍ରମାଗତ ଭାବେ ନଦୀରେ ବୁଡେଇ ହତ୍ୟା କଲା ପରେ ଶେଷରେ ଅଷ୍ଟମ ଗର୍ଭରେ ପିତାମହ ଭୀଷ୍ମଙ୍କ ଜନ୍ମ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଅଷ୍ଟମ ଶିଶୁଟିକୁ ହତ୍ୟା କରିବାକୁ ଗଲାବେଳେ ଶାନ୍ତନୁଙ୍କ ଧୈର୍ଯ୍ୟରୂପି ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଗଙ୍ଗା ଶାନ୍ତନୁଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡି ଚାଲି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ଓ ଶିଶୁଟି ଅଳ୍ପକେ ବଞ୍ଚି ଯାଇଥିଲା ଗଙ୍ଗାଦେବୀଙ୍କ ପ୍ରକୋପରୁ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ, ସେ ତ' କୋଉ ପୁରୁଣା ଯୁଗର କଥା । ଇଏ ହେଉଚି କଳିକାଳ । ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତ ରାଜା ନୁହେଁ, ଜଣେ ସାଧାରଣ ମଣିଷ । ଆଉ ଇଏ ଯେ ଗୋଟେ ଦେବୀ ହୋଇଥିବ, ତା'ର ବି' ସମ୍ଭାବନା କମ୍ । ମାତ୍ର, ପୁରାପୁରି ନହେଲେ ବି' କଥାଟାକୁ ଅଧାଅଧି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ନ କରି ରହି ହୁଏନି । ଠିକ୍ ଯେମିତି ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତର ଭଗବାନ ବା ଦେବଦେବୀଙ୍କଠି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ନ ଥିଲେ ବି' ସବୁ ଠାକୁର ଠାକୁରାଣୀଙ୍କୁ ସେ ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆ ମାରେ, ଭୋଗ କରେ, ଗୁହାରି କରେ - କାଳେ ସେମାନେ ସତ ହୋଇଥିବେ ।

ସତରେ ଇଏ ଯଦି ମିତ୍ତୈରୀ ନଦୀ ଦେବୀ କାଦମ୍ବିକା ହୋଇଥାଏ, ତାହାହେଲେ ସେ କୋଉ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ କିଛି ଅଘଟଣ କରି ଦେଇପାରେ । ଆଖି ଆଗରେ ମିତ୍ତୈରୀ ନଦୀଟା କୁଳୁ କୁଳୁ ଶବ୍ଦ କରି ତା' ଗନ୍ତବ୍ୟ ପଥରେ ଚାଲିଛି । ଦୀର୍ଘ ଦୁଇ ତିନି ହଜାର ମାଇଲ୍ ଅତିକ୍ରମ କଲା ପରେ ସମୁଦ୍ରରେ ମିଶିବ । ଏଇ ଝିଅଟା ଭଲ ପାଉଛି କହି ନଦୀରେ ତାକୁ ଆଉ ବୁଡାଇ ଦେବି ତ' ? ଯେମିତି ସ୍ୱୟଂ ଗଙ୍ଗା ଦେବୀ ନିଜର ଶିଶୁ ସନ୍ତାନ ରୂପେ ସତ୍ୟବସୁଙ୍କୁ ଜନ୍ମ ଦେବା ପରେ ପରେ ଗଙ୍ଗା ନଦୀରେ ବୁଡେଇ ବୁଡେଇ ମାରିଥିଲେ ଓ ଏକମାତ୍ର ପିତାମହ ଭୀଷ୍ମ ହିଁ ତାଙ୍କ କବଳରୁ ବଞ୍ଚି ପାରିଥିଲେ ?

କିନ୍ତୁ, କାହିଁ ମହାଭାରତର ଏକକ ପୁରୁଷ ପିତାମହ ଭୀଷ୍ମ, ଆଉ କାହିଁ ତେଲଲୁଣ ସଂସାର ଗଢିଥିବା ଛାର ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତ ? ପିତାମହ ଭୀଷ୍ମ ସିନା ଗଙ୍ଗା ଦେବୀଙ୍କ କବଳରୁ ଅଳ୍ପକେ ବଞ୍ଚିଗଲେ, ହେଲେ ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତ ଏ ଯାବତ୍ ଯେତେ ସବୁ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ସଂସ୍ପର୍ଶରେ ଆସିଛି, ସେମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରୁ କାହାରି ବି' କବଳରୁ ବଞ୍ଚିବାକୁ ସକ୍ଷମ ହୋଇପାରିନି । ଏବେ ପୁଣି ସିଏ ଅଗତ୍ୟା କାଦମ୍ବିକା ହାବୁଡରେ ପଡିଚି । କ'ଣ ହବ କେଜାଣି, ବିଧାତାଙ୍କୁ ଜଣା ।

ସାହସ୍ୟ ବାନ୍ଧି ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତ କହିଲା - ମା' କାଦମ୍ବିକା, ଆଉଣ ମୋ ପ୍ରଣୟିନୀ ନୁହୁଛି । ମୁଁ ତ' ବାହାସାହା ଲୋକ । ଆଉଣ ମତେ ହୁଇରାଣ ନ କରି ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବାଟରେ ଚାଲି ଯାଆନ୍ତୁ । ମୁଁ ତ' ସେ ବେଞ୍ଚଟା ଉପରେ ଆରାମରେ ଶୋଇଥିଲି ।

“ଏ କି କଥା କହୁଚି ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତ ? ତମେ ଭଲ କରି ଜାଣିଚ, ତମେ ମତେ ଭଲ ପାଅ । ମୁଁ ତୁମର ଅତି ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ । ଏଥିରେ କିଛି ଲାଜ କରିବାର ବା' ଡରିବାର କୌଣସି କାରଣ ନାହିଁ । ମୁଁ କୋଉ ଭୂତ ତାହାଣୀ ନୁହେଁ - ଏ ନଦୀର ସ୍ୱୟଂ ଅଧିଷ୍ଠାତ୍ରୀ ଦେବୀ । ମୁଁ ତୁମର ବା' ତୁମ ବୈବାହିକ ଜୀବନର କୌଣସି କ୍ଷତି କରିବି ବୋଲି ତମେ ଚିନ୍ତା କରି ପାରିଲ କେମିତି ? ତୁମ ଓ ମୋ ସଂପର୍କ ନିତାନ୍ତ ନିବିଡ । ମୁଁ ତୁମ ଜୀବନର ମଙ୍ଗଳ ହିଁ କରିବି ।”

ହଠାତ୍ ଝଲକାଏ ଅଣ୍ଟା ପବନ ବାଜିଲା ଶୁଭକାନ୍ତର ମୁହଁରେ । ସେପଟେ ଅନେଇ ଦେଖିଲା ବେଳକୁ ବେଞ୍ଚ ଉପରଟା ଖାଲି ।

ଆକାଶର ନୀଳରଙ୍ଗ ଭେଦ କରି ଇଗଲ୍ ପକ୍ଷୀ ଦି'ବା ଚକ୍‌କର୍ ମାରି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି, କେଁ କଟର ଶବ୍ଦ କରି, ପୂଜୁତିର ନିର୍ଜନ ଶୂନ୍ୟତାକୁ ଉପହାସ କରି । ସେପଟେ ଖରସ୍ତୋତା ମିଜୌରୀ ନଦୀ ତା' ବାଟରେ ବହି ଚାଲିଛି କୁଳୁ କୁଳୁ ନାଦରେ, ନିରବଛନ୍ଦି ଭାବେ । ସତେ ଯେମିତି ପ୍ରେମିକ ଓ ପ୍ରେମିକା ବିଷୟରେ ହିସାବକିତାବ ରଖିବାକୁ ତା' ପାଖରେ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତେ ବି' ସମୟ ନାହିଁ ।

ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ଆଖି ମଳି ମଳି ଉଠି ବସିଲା । ଜାଣି ପାରିଲାନି ସେ, କାଦମ୍ବିକା ସତ ଥିଲା, ନା' ସେ ଖାଲି ବେଞ୍ଚ ଉପରେ ଶୋଇ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଥିଲା ।

ୟା ଭିତରେ ଦୀର୍ଘ ପାଞ୍ଚ ଛଅ ବର୍ଷ ବିତିଗଲାଣି । ସମୟ ପାଇଲେ ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତ ସାଇକେଲ୍ ଖଣ୍ଡିଏ ଧରି ମିଜୌରୀ କୂଳକୁ ଆସେ । ସେଇ ବେଞ୍ଚରେ ଅନେକ୍ ସମୟ ବସି କାଦମ୍ବିକାକୁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରେ । ଏବେ ବି' ସେଇ ବେଞ୍ଚ ଅଛି କେଟୀ ଟେଲର ଶହେ ପଞ୍ଚସରୀତମ ମାଇଲ୍ ଖୁଣ୍ଟ ପାଖରେ, ଯେଉଁ ବେଞ୍ଚରେ ତାର କାଦମ୍ବିକା ସାଙ୍ଗେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ଦେଖା ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଯୌବନର ଉନ୍ମତ୍ତ ମାଦକତା କାଳର କରାଳ କବଳରେ କେଉଁ ଦିନରୁ ବିଲୁପ୍ତ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି । ତଥାପି କାହିଁକି କାଦମ୍ବିକା କଥା ଚିନ୍ତା କଲେ ଏକ ଅପୂର୍ବ ଶିହରଣ ଖେଳିଆସେ, ଶୁଭ୍ରକାନ୍ତର ମନରେ । ଏ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସେ ଆଉ କେବେ କାଦମ୍ବିକାକୁ ଥରେ ବି' ଦେଖିନି । କିନ୍ତୁ, ବଡ଼ ଶାନ୍ତି ପାଏ ସେ ଏଇଠି ବସି, କାଦମ୍ବିକା କଥା ଭାବି ।

ମଣିଷ ଓ ପୂଜୁତି ଭିତରେ ଯେଉଁ ନୈସର୍ଗିକ ପ୍ରେମ, ତାକୁ ସାଧାରଣ ପାର୍ଥିବ ପ୍ରେମ ସହିତ ତୁଳନା କରିବା ଏକ ଧୂଳିତା ମାତ୍ର ।



*Address: Sashi Satpathy, 2809 Butternut Ct, Columbia, MO 65201*

# ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ

ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୋପାଳ ମହାନ୍ତି

*‘ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି ମୋ ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି, ବାପ ଘର ଯିବ ବୋଲି ଗୋଟ କାଢି ବସିଛି...’  
‘ଟପ୍ ଟପ୍ ଘୋଡ଼ା ଚାଲେ, ଭରା ଦି’ପହର ଖରାବେଲେ...’  
‘ଆଗୋ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରମଲିକା ...’  
‘ଆମରି ଗାଆଁର ସଞ୍ଜ ସକାଳର ନିତି ଦିନ କଥା ଯେତେ...’*

ସେ ଗୋଟିଏ ସମୟ ଥିଲା ଯେତେବେଳେ ଏ ଗୀତଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ମନ ଚହଲି ଉଠୁଥିଲା, ଏମିତିକି ରିଙ୍ଗାବାଲା ମୁହଁରୁ ଶୁଭୁଥିଲା, ‘ମୋ ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି...’।

ଗାୟକ ତ ଅଧିକାଂଶଙ୍କୁ ଜଣା ନିଶ୍ଚୟ - କିନ୍ତୁ କେତେ ଜଣ ଜାଣନ୍ତି କାହାର ଏ ଲେଖା ?

ଧୀରା (ଭଲ ନାମ ହେଉଛି ଝରଣା) କହିବେ ‘ମୁଁ ଜାଣେ । ଆହୁରି ଅନେକ ଗୀତ ମଧ୍ୟ, ତାଙ୍କରି ଲେଖା । କିନ୍ତୁ -’

ତାଙ୍କୁ କଟକର ତତ୍କାଳୀନ ସଂଗୀତ ଦୁନିଆ ଚିହ୍ନିଥିଲା ‘ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ’ ନାଁରେ । ସମୟ କହିଲେ ୧୯୫୪ ପରେପରେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂଗୀତ ଜଗତରେ ବିରାଟ ଚହଳ ପଡ଼ିଗଲା ଏକ ନୂଆ ଧରଣର ଗୀତର ଆଦର ଓ ପ୍ରସାରରେ । ସେତେବେଳେ ଆଉ ଜଣେ ନାଆଁ କରି ଆସୁଥିଲେ - ‘ଖୋକା ଭାଇ’ - ଅନ୍ୟ କେହି ନୁହନ୍ତି, ସେ ହେଲେ ସୁବିଖ୍ୟାତ ଗୀତିକାର ଓ କଣ୍ଠଶିଳ୍ପୀ ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମହାନ୍ତି । ସେମିତି ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ ଆଉ କେହି ନୁହନ୍ତି, ସେ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ଗୀତିକାର ପାର୍ଥସାରଥୀ ମହାପାତ୍ର ଯିଏ ଏ ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ଗୀତଗୁଡ଼ିକର ସୂକ୍ଷ୍ମ ଓ ଯାହାଙ୍କର ଏସବୁ ଗୀତକୁ ଲଗାଇ ଅଧିକାଂଶ ଲେଖା ଖୋକା ଭାଇଙ୍କ କଣ୍ଠରୁ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ମିଳିଥାଏ । ଆଉ ଧୀରା ହେଲେ ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇଙ୍କ ପତ୍ନୀ ।

ଏଇ ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ ଓରଫ ପାର୍ଥ ମୋର ସାଙ୍ଗ । ଭଲଭାବରେ ଚିହ୍ନା ହେଲା ଫକୀରମୋହନ କଲେଜରେ ମୋର ବି.ଏ. ପଢ଼ାର ସହପାଠୀ ହେବାରୁ । ଆମେ ଦିହେଁ ଗଣିତ ଅନର୍ସ ନେଇଥିଲୁ ବାକି ଦୁଇ କି ତିନି ଜଣଙ୍କୁ ମିଶାଇ । ମୁଁ ତାକୁ ଡାକୁଥିଲି ପାର୍ଥ ନାଁରେ । ସେତେବେଳେ ଆମର ଘନିଷ୍ଠତା ଏତେ ନଥିଲା । ସେ ରହୁଥିଲା ହୁଷ୍ଟେଲ୍‌ରେ ଅଲଗା ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀଙ୍କ ସହିତ । ତାର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ବିଷୟରେ ଆଗ୍ରହ ଥିଲା - ଗୀତ, ତାମା, ଅନ୍ୟ ଯା କିଛି, ଏମିତିକି ରାଜନୀତି ପାର୍ଟି ପାଇଁ ରିଙ୍ଗାରେ ବୁଲି ପ୍ରଚାର କରିବା । କେବେ କେବେ ମୋ ପାଖରୁ ଗଣିତ ନୋଟ୍‌ସ୍ ମାଗି ନେଉଥିଲା ।

ସେ ଆସିଥିଲା ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଏକ ଖ୍ୟାତନାମା ପରିବାରରୁ । ବାପା ସୀତାକାନ୍ତ ମହାପାତ୍ର ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଥିବା ବିଧାନ ପରିଷଦର ଜଣେ ସଭ୍ୟ ଥିଲେ । ଜେଜେବାପା ଭାଗବତ ସାମନ୍ତରାୟ ମହାପାତ୍ର ବାଚସ୍ପତି ଥିଲେ । କାନ୍ତକବି ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀକାନ୍ତ ମହାପାତ୍ର ଥିଲେ ତାର ବଡ଼ବାପା ଯାହାଙ୍କ ପୁଅ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ, ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ସଂଗ୍ରାମୀ ଓ ରାଜନୀତିଜ୍ଞ ନିତ୍ୟାନନ୍ଦ ମହାପାତ୍ର, ଏମିତି ଜଣାଥିଲେ ‘ଡଗର’ ପତ୍ରିକାର ସଂପାଦକ ଭାବରେ । ପିଲାଟି ଦିନରୁ ପାର୍ଥ ବାପାଙ୍କୁ ହରାଇଥିଲା ଓ ୯ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସରେ ଆଖିଟିଏ ହରାଇ ବସିଲା ।

ହାଇସ୍କୁଲ୍ ପରେ ତାକୁ ବାଲେଶ୍ଵରରେ ପଢ଼ିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲା ତା’ର ପିଇସା ବାଲେଶ୍ଵରବାସୀ ମୁଖ୍ଠର ମୁକୁନ୍ଦ ପ୍ରସାଦ ଦାସଙ୍କ ତତ୍ତ୍ଵାବଧାନରେ । ବାଲେଶ୍ଵର ଛାଡ଼ିଲା ପରେ ପାର୍ଥ ପାଟନାକୁ ଚାଲି ଯାଇଥିଲା ଆଉ ଜଣେ ପିଇସା, ପାଟନା ହାଇକୋର୍ଟର ଆଡ଼ଭୋକେଟ୍ ଗଜେନ୍ଦ୍ର ପ୍ରସାଦ ଦାସଙ୍କ ପାଖକୁ । ସେଠାରେ ସେ କ୍ଷତିସ୍ପର୍ଡ଼ିଭ୍ରେ ଏମ୍.ଏ. ଓ ବି.ଏଲ୍. ପଢ଼ା ଶେଷ କରି ରେଭେନ୍‌ସା କଲେଜରେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ହୋଇ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇଥିଲା ୧୯୫୫ ମସିହାରେ ।

ସିଏ ଗୋଟାଏ ବେଳ ଥିଲା ଯେତେବେଳେ ରେଭେନ୍‌ସା କଲେଜ, କଟକ ତଥା ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଏକ ନବୀନ ପ୍ରବାହ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହେଲା ପରି ଜଣା ପଡ଼ିଲା ଖାସ୍ କରି ସଂଗୀତ ଓ ନୃତ୍ୟ ଜଗତରେ । ୧୯୫୪ ମସିହାରେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଥିଲା **Inter University Youth Festival** । ସତରେ ଲାଗିଲା ଯେମିତି ଯୁବତେଜର ଏକ ବିକାଶ ଓ ପ୍ରସାରଣ । ଫେସ୍ଟିଭାଲ୍ ହେଉଥିବା ଜାଗା ନୁଆଦିଲ୍ଲୀର ତାକକୋଟ୍ରା ଗାର୍ଡନ୍ ଦୋହଲି ଯାଉଥାଏ । ଏଠାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ନିଜର ଗୌରବ ପାଇଁ ନୂତନ ମାର୍ଗର ସୂଚନା ପାଇଲା ଯେତେବେଳେ ପ୍ରିୟମ୍‌ଦା ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କ ନୃତ୍ୟକୁ ଏକ ସ୍ଵତନ୍ତ୍ର ନୃତ୍ୟ ବୋଲି ଗଣାହେଲା, ବିଶେଷ କରି **Statesman** ଖବରକାଗଜର ସୁନାମ ଅର୍ଜିତ **arts critic Charles Febri**ଙ୍କ ମତରେ । ଏ ଘଟଣାର କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ନୃତ୍ୟକୁ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରୀୟ ନୃତ୍ୟର ମାନ୍ୟତା

ମିଳିଥିଲା । ସେମିତି ମିଳିତ ଗାନ ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତାରେ ବଶ୍ୱାସ ନ କରିବା ଭଳି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପ୍ରଥମ ପୁରସ୍କାର ପାଇଥିଲା ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଦୁଇ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି । ମିଳିତ ଗାନରେ ଭାଗ ନେଉଥିଲେ ଅକ୍ଷୟଙ୍କ ସହିତ କେତେକ ଯୁବକ ଓ ଯୁବତୀ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଦଳର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱାବଧାନରେ ଯାଉଥିଲେ ଇଂରାଜୀ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ତିଲୋତନ ମିଶ୍ର । ପାର୍ଥ ରେଭେନ୍ସାରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବା ପରେ ସହକାରୀ ଭାବରେ ଯିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଥିଲା । ତାର ମିଳିମିଶି ଚଳିବାର ପ୍ରକୃତି ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ଆକୃଷ୍ଟ କରୁଥିଲା ଓ ଫଳରେ ସେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରିୟଭାଜନ ହୋଇପାରିଥିଲା ।

ଇଏ ଓ ଥିଲା ମୋ ଜାଣିବାର କ୍ଷଣ ଦଶନ୍ଧି ଶେଷ ଭାଗର କଥା (୧୯୫୬ - ୧୯୬୦) । ଇତି ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପାର୍ଥ ଆସିଛି **Ann Arbor**ରେ ଥିବା **University of Michigan**ରେ ପି. ଏଚ୍.ଡି. କରିବାକୁ ୧୯୬୨ରେ । ମୋର ବିଭାଗର ୧୯୬୩ରେ ଓ ଆମର ଝିଅଟିଏ ହୋଇଥିଲା ୧୯୬୪ରେ । ବିଭାଗର ପରେ ଫେରିବା ବେଳେ ଭାରତରୁ କିଛି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗୀତ ଆଣିବାକୁ ଯାଇ କଲିକତା ବଜାରରୁ କିଣିଲି । ମାତ୍ର ପାଞ୍ଚ ଛଅ ଖଣ୍ଡ **78 rpm**ର ରେକର୍ଡ ପାଇଲି । ଫେରି ଆସି ସେ ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ମୁଁ ଓ ମୋ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଶାନ୍ତି ଦିନରାତି ଶୁଣିଲେ ବି ବିରକ୍ତ ଲାଗୁନଥିଲା ।

୧୯୬୪ରେ ମୁଁ **McMaster University**ର ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ଭାବେ ଯୋଗଦେଲି । ୧୯୬୫ ମସିହା ହେବ, ମୋର ଚିକାଗୋରେ ଗୋଟିଏ **conference**କୁ ଯିବାର ହେଲା । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗତ ନଳିନୀକାନ୍ତ ହୋତା କାନାଡାର ଲଣ୍ଡନ ସହରରେ ଥିବା **University of Western Ontario**ରେ ପି. ଏଚ୍.ଡି. କରୁଥିଲେ । ସେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପାର୍ଥକୁ ଜାଣିଥିଲେ ତାଙ୍କର ରେଭେନ୍ସା ରହଣି ବେଳେ । ତା ଛଡା ଏମିତି ହେଲା ଯେ ଆମ ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କର ସାଙ୍ଗ ସୁଯମ ମିଶ୍ର ବି ପି.ଏଚ୍.ଡି. କରୁଥିଲେ ଚିକାଗୋରେ । ତେଣୁ ଠିକ ହେଲା ଯେ ସେ ଓ ଆମ ପରିବାର ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ଚିକାଗୋ ଯିବା ଓ ବାଟରେ ପାର୍ଥକୁ ଭେଟିବା ।

ଏତେ ଦିନ ପରର କଥା, ତେବେ ପାର୍ଥ ସହିତ ମୁଁ ଏତେ ଘନିଷ୍ଠ ଓ ନଥିଲି । ହେଲେ ଆମେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ବେଳକୁ ସେ ଆମ ପାଇଁ ଖାଇବା ରାନ୍ଧି ରଖିଥିଲା ଓ ଅନେକ ଯତ୍ନନେଲା । ଏଇଟା ପାର୍ଥର ଅନ୍ୟକୁ ଅତି ଆପଣାର କରି ନେବା ଗୁଣ ତାର ଅନେକ ଗୁଣ ଭିତରୁ ଗୋଟାଏ । ସେତିକି ନୁହେଁ, ମୋର ଯାତ୍ରା ମନେ ଅଛି, ଆମକୁ ବୋଧହୁଏ ଦେଲା ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କର ଗାଇଥିବା ଗୀତର ଟେପ୍ । ଅବଶ୍ୟ ତାରି ଲେଖା, କିନ୍ତୁ ମନେ ପଡୁନାହିଁ ଯେ ସେ ଏ କଥାଟାକୁ ଆମର ବୋଧଗମ୍ୟ କରାଇଲା ଭଳି କହିବାର ।

ସେବେଠୁ ଆମେ ରଙ୍ଗ ଭଳି ମନ ପୁରାଇ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗୀତକୁ ଅନବରତ ଚାଉଟାଉ ଗିଳିଲା ପରି ଶୁଣିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲୁ । ଖାଲି ସେଇ ଗୀତଗୁଡ଼ାକ ଦିନରାତି ଲାଗିଲା ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ବାଉଳେଇ ହେଲା ପରି ।

ପର ଘଟଣା । ମୁଁ ଚାଲିଗଲି ୧୯୬୬ରେ **Delhi IIT**କୁ - ସେତିକିବେଳେ ଯୁକ୍ତରାଷ୍ଟ୍ର ଚାର୍ଲ୍ସଟନ୍ରେ ଥିବା ତା. ବିଜୟ ଦାସ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ **AIIMS**ରେ ଥିଲେ ଓ ରହୁଥିଲେ **IIT** ନିକଟରେ ଥିବା **Green Park**ରେ । ପାଖରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ମା ଓ ସାନ ଭାଇ ମଞ୍ଜୁ (ସ୍ୱର୍ଗତ ଅରୁଣ ଦାସ ଯେ ୨୦୦୯ରେ ଦେହତ୍ୟାଗ କଲା ଓ ରହୁଥିଲା **Washington, DC** ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ) । ବିଜୟ ବାବୁ ବର୍ଷକ ଭିତରେ ବିବାହ କରି **Stanford University**କୁ ଚାଲି ଆସିଲେ । ଏହାରି ଭିତରେ ପାର୍ଥ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ଥିବା ଭାରତ ସରକାରଙ୍କ ଫ୍ୟାମିଲି ପ୍ଲାନିଂ ବୋର୍ଡରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇ ସାରିଥାଏ । ବିଜୟ ବାବୁ ଯିବା ପରେ ତାଙ୍କ **F-46 Green Park** ଭଡା ଘରକୁ ନେଲା । ତାର କିନ୍ତୁ ବିଭାଗର ହୋଇ ସାରିଥିଲା ୧୯୬୭ ମସିହାରେ ଓ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁଅ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ପୁଅଟି ନାଁ ଥିଲା ସିଦ୍ଧାର୍ଥ, ତାକ ନାଁ ଲୁରା (ସେ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ପରିବାର ସହ **New Orleans**ରେ ରହୁଛି) । ଘରକୁ ପଶିଲା ପରେପରେ ପାର୍ଥ ତା ପରିବାରକୁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ନେଇ ଆସିଲା ।

ଏକ ବଡ଼ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନର ହାଉଆ ଲାଗିଲା ସେବେଠୁ । ନ ଜାଣିଲା ପରି ଛାଏଁଛାଏଁ ଆମ ଦୁଇ ପରିବାରର ସଂପର୍କ ଟାଣୁଆ ହେବାକୁ ଲାଗିଥାଏ । ମୁଁ ଗୋଟିଏ **Standard** ମଡେଲର ଗାଡ଼ିଟିଏ କିଣିଥାଏ । ପ୍ରାୟ ପ୍ରତି ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାରେ ଆମେ **Green Park** ଯାଉଥିଲୁ ପାର୍ଥ ଘରକୁ, ରବିବାରରେ ମଧ୍ୟ । ମଞ୍ଜୁ ବି ଆସି ଯାଏ । ଆଉ ମିଶା ମାମୁଁ (ଯୋମିନୀ ମୋହନ ଦାସ ଯାହାଙ୍କୁ ମଞ୍ଜୁ ମିଶା ମାମୁଁ ଡାକୁଥିଲା) ଅଫିସ୍ ଫେରନ୍ତା ଅନେକ ବେଳେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଯାଆନ୍ତି । ତା ଛଡା ଅନ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନେ ଆସୁଥାଆନ୍ତି । ଜଣା ପଡୁଥିଲା କି ପାର୍ଥ ଘରଟା ସତେ ଏକ ଧର୍ମଶାଳା ।

କାହିଁକିନା ଧୀରା (ପାର୍ଥର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ) ଅତି ସ୍ନେହୀ, ବୋଧହୁଏ ଏଥିରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀର ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତା ହେଲେ କିଏ ଜିତିବ କହିବା ମୁସ୍ତିଲ୍ । ଧୀରା ଆମ ସୋରର ଝିଅ, ମୋ ସାନ ଭଉଣୀର ସମସାମୟିକ ଓ ଏକପ୍ରକାର ମୋର ଦୁରିଆ ବନ୍ଧୁ । ପାର୍ଥକୁ ମିଳିବାକୁ ଆସି ଅନେକ ଦିନ ବହୁତ ସମୟ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିବାକୁ ପଡେ ସେ ଅଫିସରୁ ବେଳାବେଳି ଆସି ପାରେ ନାହିଁ ବୋଲି । କିନ୍ତୁ କାହାରି ଅଭିଯୋଗ ନ ଥାଏ ବିଶେଷତଃ ଧୀରାର ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା ଯୋଗୁ । ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଥିବା ଆଗନ୍ତୁକମାନେ ନିଜନିଜ ଭିତରେ କଥାବର୍ତ୍ତା କରି ସମୟ

କଟାଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ।

ଆମେ ବି ବାରମ୍ବାର ସେ ଅବସ୍ଥାର ଭୁଲ୍‌ଭୋଗୀ । କିଛି ନ ହେଲେ ମଞ୍ଜୁ ସହିତ ଗପସପ ହୋଇଯାଏ, ସେ ବି ଗୋଟେ ମଜାଦାର ଖାମଖିଆଲିଆ ପିଲାଟିଏ ଭଳି, ସବୁବେଳେ ଭାଇ-ଭାଇ ଆଉ ଶାନ୍ତିକୁ ଦେଇ-ଦେଇ କହି କଥାରେ ମସ୍ତ ଥାଏ - ଆର୍ଟିଷ୍ଟ ଲୋକ ତ । ଶାନ୍ତିକୁ କେବଳ ମଞ୍ଜୁହିଁ ଦେଇ ବୋଲି ତାଙ୍କେ - କେତେ ମିଠା ସେଇ ଭାଇ ଓ ଦେଇ ତାଙ୍କ ।

ଦିନକର ଘଟଣା । କଥାହେଲା ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ପାଖ ରେଷ୍ଟୁରେଙ୍କରେ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଯିବା । ଆମେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲୁ, ମଞ୍ଜୁ ବି । ବସିଛୁ, ବସିଛୁ, ସମୟ ଗତି ଚାଲୁଥାଏ, ରାତି ବଢ଼ି ଚାଲୁଥାଏ, ବିନ୍ଦୁ ପାର୍ଥ ବାବୁଙ୍କର ଦେଖା ନାହିଁ । ବିଚରା ଧୀରାଏ ମୁହଁ ଟିକି ହେଲାଣି । ଶେଷରେ ଆମେ ଚାଲିଗଲୁ ରେଷ୍ଟୁରେଙ୍କକୁ । ତଥାପି ଅନାଇ ବସିଛୁ, ଏଇ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ବୋଧହୁଏ । ଆଶା ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେଇଥିଲୁ ପ୍ରାୟ । ଖାଇବା ସରି ଆସିଲାଣି, ଦେଖ ତ ପାର୍ଥ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ଆସି । ସମସ୍ତେ ତାକୁ ବାହିଁ ଥାଆନ୍ତି, ହେଲେ ତାର ଦୋଷୀଦୋଷୀ ମୁହଁକୁ ଦେଖି ମନରେ ଯେତେ ତୁମୁଳ ଝଞ୍ଜ ସବୁ ଭୁସକିନା ଉଠେଇଗଲା ଅଦିନିଆ ବତାସ ପରି । ସିଏ ଥିଲା ପାର୍ଥ, ଅତି ଆଦରର ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ ।

**F-46 Green Park**ର ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟତା ବିଜୟବାବୁଙ୍କ ରହିବାଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇ ସାରିଥିଲା । ସେ ସେଠାରେ ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ପୂଜା କରାଇ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କୁ ତାକୁଥିଲେ । ପାର୍ଥ ଥିବାବେଳେ ସେ ସ୍ଥାନଟିର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଅତି ମାତ୍ରାରେ ବଢ଼ି ଯାଉଥିଲା ପରି ମନେ ହେଉଥିଲା ।

ପାର୍ଥ ତା ପରିବାର ସହିତ ଆମ IIT ବସାକୁ ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ଆସେ । କେଉଁଠିକୁ ବୁଲିଗଲେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ଯାଉଁ । ସାଥୀ ହୋଇ ଆମ ଦୁଇ ପରିବାର ଯାଇଥିଲୁ ଜୟପୁର ବୁଲିବାକୁ ।

ପାର୍ଥ ସଂସର୍ଗରେ ଆସିଲେ ମନେ ହୁଏ ଯେମିତି ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସଂଗୀତ, ନୃତ୍ୟ ଓ ନାଟକ ଜଗତଟା କଟକରେ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରୀଭୂତ ଥିଲା ଓ ସେ ଥିଲା ସେଥିରେ ଗୁଡେଇ ଗୁଡେଇ ହୋଇ ଅତି ଘଷ ମାତ୍ରାରେ । ଆକାଶବାଣୀର ତିରେକ୍‌ଟର୍ କୃଷ୍ଣମୂର୍ତ୍ତି, ଆଜିର ଭାରତରେ ଅଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ବଂଶୀବାଦକ ହରିପ୍ରସାଦ ଚରଣାସିଆ, ସେତେବେଳର ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ବେହେଲା ବାଦକ ଓ ସଂଗୀତ ରଚନାକାରୀ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ମିଶ୍ର ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ ବା ଅକ୍ଷୟ, ପ୍ରଫୁଲ୍ଲ, ସିକନ୍ଦର, ପ୍ରଣବ, ଶ୍ୟାମାମଣି, ନିର୍ମଳା ମିଶ୍ର, ବୀଣା ଦେବୀ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ ବା କାଳୀଚରଣ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ, ପ୍ରିୟମ୍‌ଦା, ପଙ୍କଜ ଦାସ, କେଲୁ ଚରଣ, ଦେବ ପ୍ରସାଦ, ରଘୁନାଥ ଓ ସଂଯୁକ୍ତା ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ ବା ନ୍ୟାସନାଲ୍ ମ୍ୟୁସିକ ଏସୋସିଏସନ, କଳାବିକାଶ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର, ଅନୁପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣା ଥିଏଟର, ଜନତା ଥିଏଟର ବା ନୂଆ ହୋଇ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସିନେମା କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ହେଉ - ସବୁ ତା ପାଖରୁ ଶୁଣି ସେ ଦିଗରେ ମୁଁ ବହୁତ କିଛି ଶିଖିଥିଲି । ଆକ୍ଷୟ ଲାଗେ ତାର ସେହି ଅକଳନ ଅନୁଭୂତି ମାତ୍ର କେଇଟା ବର୍ଷର, ୧୯୫୫-୧୯୬୨ ଭିତରେ କେବଳ ।

ଗୀତ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚାବେଳେ ପାର୍ଥ ପାଖରୁ ମୁଁ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ପାଉଥିଲି ଅକ୍ଷୟ, ଆଉ ଅକ୍ଷୟର ପ୍ରଶଂସା । କିନ୍ତୁ ନିଜର ନାଁ କେଉଁଠି ନ ଥାଏ - ନା ଥାଏ ବତାମି, ନା ଥିଲା ଇର୍ଷା । ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ପାର୍ଥ କିଛି ଗୀତ ଟେପ୍ ଦିଏ ମୋତେ । କଟକ ରେଡିଓ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରୁ ଟେପ୍ ହୋଇ ତାକୁ ମିଳୁଥାଏ । ୧୯୬୮ରେ ନୂଆ ବାହରିଥିବା ‘କିଏ କାହାର’ ଚଳଚ୍ଚିତ୍ରର ଗୀତଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ତାରି ପାଖରୁହିଁ ମୋତେ ମିଳିଥିଲା ବିଶେଷ କରି ଏହା ସିନେମା ହଲ୍‌କୁ ଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ । ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶନାରେ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଏଥିରେ ପାର୍ଥ ଲେଖା ଗୀତଟି ‘ହାୟ ମଦଭରି ଆଖି ...’କୁ ଗାଇଥିଲେ ସେତେବେଳର ପ୍ରଖ୍ୟାତ କଣ୍ଠଶିଳ୍ପୀ ଶ୍ୟାମଲ୍ ମିତ୍ର । ଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ଗୀତ ଶୁଣିବା ପରେପରେ ଆମେ ସେ ବର୍ଷ ଖରା ଦିନେ କଟକ ହିଁ ସିନେମା ହଲ୍‌ରେ ‘କିଏ କାହାର’ ଦେଖିଥିଲୁ ।

ପାର୍ଥର ଏଇ ଲେଖିବାର ଉତ୍ସ ତ ମୁଁ ବାଲେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଦେଖି ନଥିଲି କି ଆଗରୁ ଜାଣି ନଥିଲି । ତେବେ ଆସିଲା କେଉଁଠୁ ଓ କେବେ ? ତା କହିବା ଅନୁସାରେ, କଟକରେ ଚିହ୍ନା ହେଲା ପରେ ଅକ୍ଷୟ ତାକୁ କହିଥିଲେ ଯେ ଅନ୍ୟ ଗୀତିକାରଙ୍କ ଲେଖାକୁ ଗାଇବା ପରେ ସେ ନୂଆ ଧରଣର ଲେଖା ଖୋଜୁଛନ୍ତି । ତା’ର ବଂଶରେ ଲେଖାଲେଖି କରିବାର ଶକ୍ତି ଉପରେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ରଖି ତାକୁ ପ୍ରବର୍ତ୍ତାଇ ଥିଲେ ଲେଖିବାକୁ । ସେବେଠାରୁ ପାର୍ଥର କଲମ ଚାଲିଲା ଯେ, ସେ ଆଉ ବନ୍ଦ ହେବାର ନୁହେଁ ।

ଡଃ. ରେଣୁ ମିଶ୍ର ‘କଥା କଥା - କବିତା କବିତା’ ର ୨୦୧୪ ୨ୟ ସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ଥିବା ତାଙ୍କ ଲେଖା ‘ଅତୀତର ଅଜନାରୁ’ରେ ଉପର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ଟିକିଏ ଭିନ୍ନ ଭାବରେ । ତାଙ୍କ ଲେଖିବା ଅନୁସାରେ ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମହାନ୍ତି କହୁଛି ଯେ ବୁଲୁ ବାବୁଙ୍କ (ଅକ୍ଷୟ ଏହି ଭାବରେ ତାକୁଥିଲେ) ରହିବା ମେସ୍‌ରେ ଅକ୍ଷୟଙ୍କ ସହିତ ତବଲା ବଜାଇବା ସାଥୀ ଜାନକୀଲାଲ ଆଦିତ୍ୟ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ବୁଲୁବାବୁ ଲାଜକୁଳା ଥିଲେ ଓ ନୂଆ ନୂଆ ଗୀତ ଲେଖି ତକିଆ ତଳେ ଲୁଚେଇ ରଖୁଥିଲେ । ଦିନେ ସେ ବାଧୁରୁ ମାଲିଆ ବେଳେ ଜାନକୀ ତକିଆ ତଳୁ ଗୋଟାଏ ଲେଖା କାଗଜ ଆଣି ଦେଖାଇଲା । ଅକ୍ଷୟ ସେତେବେଳେ ନିଜ ମନ ବୁଝିବା ଓ ଶ୍ରେଣୀତାଙ୍କର ହୃଦୟକୁ ଛୁଇଁବା ଭଳି ନୂଆ ଗୀତ ଖୋଜୁଥିଲେ । ବାସ୍ ମିଳିଗଲା, ଗୀତଟି ଥିଲା -

*ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି ମୋ ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି...*

ସେଇଦିନଠାରୁ ଯେପରି ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ ଓ ଖୋକା ଭାଇ ଗୋଟିଏ ତାଳର ଦୁଇଟି ପୁଲ ଅବା ଖୋକା ଭାଇ ପୁଲ ହେଲେ, ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ ତାର ତେମ୍ପ ।

ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ, ଖୋକା ଭାଇଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଲେଖିଲେ ଅସରକ୍ତି ‘ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି’ ପରି ଗୀତ ଯାହା ମନଛୁଆଁ ଓ ରସରସିଆ । ମଣିଷଟି ସହଜ ଓ ସରଳ, ସେହିପରି ତା ଲେଖାର ଭାଷା ସହଜ ଓ ସରଳ । ଲୋକଟିର ଦରଦ ଓ ଦୟା ଥିଲା, ତା ଗୀତର ଭାବ ବି ଥିଲା ଦରଦଭରା ଆଉ ଅଭିମାନଭରା ରୁଷା, ଯଦି ଧରିନେବା ରୁଷିବାଟା ବାହାରିଛି ଦରଦପଣିଆରୁ । ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ କଥା, ପ୍ରାୟ ସବୁ ଗୀତଗୁଡ଼ିକ ରୋମାଞ୍ଚିକ୍ ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ରସିକତାପୁର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ବିଷୟବସ୍ତୁ ଥାଏ ପ୍ରେମିକର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀର ରୂପ, ମନ ଓ ପ୍ରେମ ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧରେ ଧାରଣା । ପୁଣି ଗୀତର ଭାଷା ଭାବପ୍ରବଣତାର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସୂକ୍ଷ୍ମ ଅଂଶକୁ ଖୋଲିତାଡ଼ି ଦେଖାଇଛି । ଯଥା ଅଭିମାନର ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନା -

*ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି ମୋ ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି, ବାପଘର ଯିବ ବୋଲି ଗୋଡ଼ କାଢ଼ି ବସିଛି  
ମନକୁ ତା ଗଲା ନାହିଁ ଆଣିଲି ଯେ ଗହଣା , ଫିଙ୍ଗି ଦେଲା ସବୁ ମୋର ଦୋଷ କିବା କହନା  
ଧାନ ଉଷା ହାଣ୍ଡି ପରି ମୁହଁ ତାର କରୁଛି...*

ସେହିପରି ପଢ଼ିଲି ପ୍ରେମ ଓ ପରେ ତାର ରୂପାନ୍ତରର ଭାଷା -

*ନୁଆ ନୁଆ ଦିନ କେତେ ବଡ଼ ଆଦର, ନୁଆକୁ ପୁରୁଣା ହେଲେ ତୁଠ ପଥର  
ଯେତକି ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ ସେତକି ଲାଗେ ଭଲ, ଆଖିରୁ ଦୁର ହେଲେ ଆହୁରି ଖୋଜେ ମନ  
ଦି’ ଦିନ ଚିହ୍ନରେ ତ ନିଜର*

.....

*ସବୁଠୁଁ ଭଲ ଏହି ଅଳପ ଜଣାଶୁଣା, ଚିକିଏ ରାଗରୁଷା ଚିକିଏ ଦୁଃଖମଣା  
କଥା କଥାକେ କେତେ ଚାତର*

ପାର୍ଥ ଲାଜୁରା ଥିଲା ସତ, ରୋମାଞ୍ଚିକ୍ ଥିଲାନି କି ?

ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇ ଲେଖିଲେ ମିଳିତ ଗାନ ଏକ ନାହିଁ ନ ଥିଲା ଢଙ୍ଗରେ - ରସରସିଆ ନ ହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଭାଷଣ ଭାବରେ ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ବିଷୟବସ୍ତୁ ଓ ଭାଷା ଅତି ମନଲୋଭା । ଶବ୍ଦ ଯୋଜନାର ଶୈଳୀରେ ଥିଲା କାରୁକାର୍ଯ୍ୟ, ଯଥା - ‘ଠପ୍ ଠପ୍ ଘୋଡ଼ା ଚାଲେ’ ବା ‘ଡିବି ଡିବି ଡିବି ବାଜଇ ନାଗରା’ - ଯାହାକୁ ଶୁଣିଲେ ଶୋଭା ଆଖି ବୁଜି ଅନୁଭବ କରେ ଯେମିତି ଘୋଡ଼ା ଯାଉଛି ବା ନାଗରା ବାଜୁଛି । ତା ଛଡ଼ା ଏମିତି ଲେଖା ହୋଇଥିଲା ଯେ ଯେମିତି ମିଳିତ ଗାନ ଗାଇବା ବେଳେ ଫିକ୍ୟତା (**harmony**) ରହି ପାରିବ । ୧୯୫୪ ମସିହା **Inter University Youth Festival** ରେ ‘ସ୍ଵର ତୀର୍ଥ’ ଗାଇ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ମିଳିତ ଗାନରେ ପ୍ରଥମ ପୁରସ୍କାର ନେବା ପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ବିଶେଷତଃ କଟକ ରେଡିଓ ଷ୍ଟେସନ୍‌ରେ ମିଳିତ ଗାନକୁ ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟ କରାଇବାର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ବଢ଼ି ଯାଇଥିଲା - ମୋର ମନେ ହୁଏ ଏଥିପାଇଁ ତିରେକ୍‌ଟର୍ କୃଷ୍ଣମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ଓ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ଵର ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କର ଅବଦାନ ଅନେକ ଥିଲା ।

୧୯୫୪ ପରେପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସଂଗୀତ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଏକ ନୁଆ ଯୁଗ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହେଲା । ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇଙ୍କ ମନ ଛୁଇଁଲା ଲେଖାକୁ ଖୋକାଭାଇଙ୍କ ମନ ମତାଣିଆ ସ୍ଵରରୁ ଶୁଣିବା ଏକ ମତୁଆଲା ଭାବର ଆଗ୍ରହରେ ପରିଣତ ହୋଇଥିଲା ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପ୍ରତି କୋଣେ କୋଣେ । ‘ଖୋକାଭାଇ-ବୁଲୁଭାଇ’ ଗୀତର ବିଶେଷତ୍ଵ ଥିଲା ପଲ୍ଲୀଗୀତ ଓ ଆଧୁନିକ ଗୀତର ଏକ ନୂତନ ଧରଣର ମିଶ୍ରଣ - ବାଜିଲା ମାତେ ଜଣା ପଡ଼ି ଯାଉଥିଲା ସେମାନଙ୍କର ବୋଲି; ‘ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମହାନ୍ତି-ପାର୍ଥ ସାରଥୀ’ ଯୋଡ଼ିର ଗୀତ ବିଛାଇ ଗଲା ଗାଁ-ବଜାର ବାଟରେ ଘାଟରେ ।

ପାର୍ଥ କଟକ ଛାଡ଼ିବା ପରେପରେ ଅକ୍ଷୟ ନିଜେ ଗୀତ ଲେଖିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଥିଲେ । ଗୀତିକାର ଭାବରେ ତାଙ୍କର ଖ୍ୟାତି ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ । ସେ ମଧ୍ୟ ରୋମାଞ୍ଚିକ୍ ଗୀତ ଲେଖିଛନ୍ତି ଅନେକ, କିନ୍ତୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଲେଖାର ଶୈଳୀ ଅନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାରର ।

ଆମେ ଭାରତ ତଥା ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ଛାଡ଼ିଲୁ ସେଇ ୧୯୬୮ ମସିହା ଖରାଦିନ ଶେଷରେ । ମୁଁ ଫେରି ଆସିଥିଲି **McMaster University** କୁ । ଆମର ସୁନ୍ଦର ଅତୀତତା ଏବେ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ମାରୁଛି, ତା ଥିଲା ମାତ୍ର ଗୋଟିଏ ବର୍ଷକର । ଏବେ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ମନେ ଅଛି ଗୋଟିଏ ଘଟଣା । ଆସିବାବେଳେ ଗାଡ଼ିଟାକୁ ବିକିବାକୁ ହେବ । **Standard** ଗାଡ଼ି କିଣିବାକୁ ଗରାଖ ମିଳିବା ମୁସ୍ତିକ୍ । ପାର୍ଥ ଜାଣିଲା ପରେ କୌଣସି ପ୍ରକାରରେ ଗରାଖଟିଏ ଠିକ୍‌କଲା । ଗାଡ଼ିର କାଗଜପତ୍ର ଓ ଟଙ୍କା ଦେବାନେବା କନଟ୍ରୋଲ୍‌ରେ ହେବ । ଟଙ୍କା ନଗଦ, ଟେକ୍‌ରେ ନୁହେଁ । ଏତେ ଲୋକ ଗହଳି ଓ କ୍ୟାମ୍ପ ବ୍ୟାପାର ପାଇଁ ସେ ନିଜେ ଅନ୍ୟ ଜଣଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଯାଇ ଏହାର ବୁଝି କରାଇ ନଗଦ ଟଙ୍କା ସହିତ ଫେରି ଆସିଥିଲା ମୋ ପାଖକୁ ।

ପାର୍ଥ ଘରର ବାତାବରଣ ଥିଲା ସରଳ, ନିରାତମ୍ବର କିନ୍ତୁ ଭରପୁର ଥିଲା ଆଦର ଓ ସ୍ନେହରେ - ରଢ଼ିଥିଲେ ଏହାକୁ ପାର୍ଥ, ଧୀରା ଆଉ ମଞ୍ଜୁ ମିଶି । ଫଳରେ ଖୁବ ଶୀଘ୍ର ସେମାନେ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗୋଷ୍ଠିର - ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜ, ନୀଳାଚଳ ସମିତି (ହାଉସ୍ ଖାସ୍ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମନ୍ଦିର) - ନିକଟତର ହୋଇ ଆସିଲେ । ହୁଠାତ୍ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ତାଲିକା ବଢ଼ିଲା, ତା ସାଙ୍ଗେ ବଢ଼ି ଯାଉଥାଏ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କର ଆଗ୍ରହ ଓ ଉତ୍ସାହ ।

ଠିକ୍ ଆମ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ଛାଡ଼ିବା ପରେପରେ ସେଠାରେ କୁମାର ଉତ୍ସବ ପାଇଁ ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କୁ ଅଣା ଯାଇଥିଲା ପାର୍ଥ ଓ ମଞ୍ଜୁର ବେଞ୍ଚ ଓ ପ୍ରରୋଚନାରେ । ଦିଲ୍ଲୀର ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ଭବନରେ ଉତ୍ସବ ପାଳନ କରାଗଲା । ଏପରି ଏକ ଉତ୍ସବ ସେଠାରେ କରାଇବା ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କ ପକ୍ଷରେ ପ୍ରଥମ ଥିବାରୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ମନ କୁଣ୍ଠେ ମୋଟ ହୋଇ ଯାଉଥିଲା । ସେ ଦିନ ରାତିରେ ଥିଲା ଅକ୍ଷୟଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଏକ ବିଶେଷ ସଂଗୀତର ଆସର ପାର୍ଥ ଘରର ଛାତ ଉପରେ । ରାତଟି ଅକ୍ଷୟଙ୍କ ସ୍ଵରରେ ରୋମଞ୍ଚିକ ହୋଇ ଉଠୁଥିଲା ଯେମିତି ଏ ରାତି ସରିବ ନାହିଁକି ?

ଏ ଦୁଇଟି ଜାଗାରେ ଗୀତ ରେକର୍ଡ କରା ଯାଇଥିଲା ଯାହା ସେ ଆଗ ପରି ମୋତେ ପରେ ଦେଇଥିଲା ।

ପାର୍ଥ ମଧ୍ୟ ଭାରତ ଛାଡ଼ିଥିଲା ୧୯୭୦ରେ ବିଶ୍ଵ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କର ଡେମୋଗ୍ରାଫି ବିଶାରଦ ଭାବରେ **Bangkok**ରେ ଯୋଗଦେଇ । ଆଖ୍ୟର୍ଯ୍ୟ, ତାର ପ୍ରଫେସନାଲ୍ ଦିଗଟା କାହାରି ଆଖିରେ ପଡ଼ୁ ନଥିଲା, ଏମିତିକି ମୋର ମଧ୍ୟ, ଯଦିଓ ଆମେ ଦୁଇଜଣ **Statistics**ରେ ପି.ଏଚ୍.ଡି. କରିଛୁ । ମଝିରେ ଆମର ଭେଟ ହୋଇଛି ନିଉୟର୍କର **Yorktown Heights**ରେ ସ୍ଵର୍ଗତ ବିମଳ କୃଷ୍ଣ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କ (ବିମ୍ବୁ ଭାଇ) ଘରେ (**OSA**ର ଜଣେ ପୁରାତନ ଆଜୀବନ ସଭ୍ୟ) । ତା'ଛଡା ସେ କାନାଡାରେ ଆମ ଘରକୁ ଧରେ ଆସିଥିଲା ।



୧୯୭୪ ମସିହାରେ ମୁଁ **sabattical leave** ନେଇ କଲିକତାର **Indian Statistical Institute**ରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଲି । ଯିବା ବାଟରେ ମୁଁ ଓ ମୋ ପରିବାର **Bangkok**ରେ ପାର୍ଥ ଓ ତା ପରିବାର ପାଖେ ଅଟକିଥିଲୁ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ପାର୍ଥ ଓ ଧୀରାଙ୍କର ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁଅ ଗୌତମ ଯାହା ପାଖରେ ଧୀରା ହାଇଦ୍ରାବାଦରେ ଏବେ ରହୁଛି) ଓ ଆମର ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିଅ ଥିଲେ । ତାର ଦୁଇଟା କଥା ମନେ ପଡ଼େ । ସେ କହିଥିଲା, - ଗୋପାଳ ଏଠି **beef** ସହିତ ତୁଳସୀପତ୍ର ପତି ରକ୍ଷା ଯାଏ । ତୁଳସୀପତ୍ର କହିଲେ **basil**କୁ ବୁଝାଏ; ଏବେ ଏ କଥାଟା ସାଧାରଣ ପରି ଲାଗୁଛି, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେତେବେଳେ ଅତୁଆ ଲାଗୁଥିଲା । ଦ୍ଵିତୀୟ କଥାଟି ତିହ୍ନାଇ ଦିଏ ତାର ହୃଦୟକୁ । ଆମେ ଆସିଲା ବେଳେ ଆମକୁ କିଛି ସରୁ ବାସନା ଚାଉଳ ଓ ଚିନି ଦେଲା, ଖାଲି ସେତିକି ନୁହଁ, **airport**କୁ ଆସି ଆମର ଏଥିପାଇଁ ହୋଇଥିବା ଅଧିକ ଓଜନକୁ କୁହାକୁହି କରି ଖସାଇ ଦେଲା (ଆମକୁ ତ ସେଠାକାର ଭାଷା ଜଣା ନ ଥିଲା) । ଭାରତରେ ସେତେବେଳେ ଭଲ ଚାଉଳ ଓ ଚିନି ସହଜରେ ମିଳୁନଥିଲା । ପରେ ପୁଣି ଧରେ କଲିକତା ଆସିବା ବେଳେ ସେହି ଚାଉଳ ଓ ଚିନି ବୋହି କରି ଆମ ପାଇଁ ଆଣିଥିଲା ।

ସମୟ ଚାଲିଯାଏ... ସେ ଦିନ - ଦିନଟା ଥିଲା ୧୯୭୬ ଜୁନ୍ରେ । ବିମ୍ବୁ ଭାଇ ଅତୀତ ଖବର ଦେଲେ - ପାର୍ଥ ଚାଲିଗଲା । ବିଶ୍ଵାସ ହେଲା ନାହିଁ - ମାତ୍ର ୪୩ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସରେ .... କଣ ହେଲା, କେମିତି ହେଲା, ଯେତେ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କଲେ ବି ତାର ଉତ୍ତର ମିଳିଲା ନାହିଁ । ଆଉ ଧୀରା ଓ ପିଲା ଦୁଇଟି ....

ସମୟ ଗତି ଯାଇଛି । ଯାରି ଭିତରେ ୩୯ ବର୍ଷ ବିତି ଗଲାଣି । ଧୀରା, ସିଦ୍ଧାର୍ଥ ଓ ଗୌତମ ସମୟ ଓ ଅବସ୍ଥା ସହିତ ଯୁଦ୍ଧ କରି ଆଗେଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ।

ମୁଁ ଯାଇ ହାଇଦ୍ରାବାଦରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଛି ଧୀରା ପାଖରେ ଏଇ ଫେବୃଆରୀ ୬ ତାରିଖ ଦିନ । ସେ କ୍ଷୁର୍ଣ୍ଣ - ଏବେ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ଦୀର୍ଘ

ବିରହର ଗାଢ଼ିଆ ଦାଗ ଉଠି ମାରୁଛି, ସେ ଏବେ ଗାଢ଼ି ପାର୍ଥ ଲେଖା ଗୁଡ଼ିକ କିନ୍ତୁ ଲୁହ ବଦଳରେ ହସିଲା ଚେହେରାରେ । ତାର କଣ୍ଠ ଅତି ମଧୁର ଓ ସେ ଦିଲୀରେ ଥିବା ବେଳେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ଭାଗ ନେଉଥିଲା । ଗାଲଲେ ଏବେ ବି ସୁନ୍ଦର ଶୁଭୁଛି - ସ୍ତୁତି, ତୁମେ ପାଉଁଶି ତଳର ନିଆଁ - ଜଳୁଛି, ଜଳ । ସେ କହେ କି 'ମୁଁ ଖାଲି ଦୂରରୁ ଦେଖୁଛି ଆଜି ସେ ଧୀମା ଧୀମା ଜଳୁଥିବା ନିଆଁକୁ' ।

ମୁଁ ବି ସେତେବେଳେ ଅଣ୍ଟାଳି ହେଲି ସେଇ ଅତୀତକୁ ।

ଧୀରା ଶୁଭୁ ମଧ୍ୟ । ତେଣୁ ପ୍ରଥମରେ ଥିବା ଗୀତ ବା ପାର୍ଥର ଅନ୍ୟ ଗୀତଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଜାଣିଲେ ସୁଦ୍ଧା 'କିନ୍ତୁ' ପରି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନବାଚକ ଚିହ୍ନ ମନରେ ଗୋଲେଇ ହେଉଥାଏ । ପାର୍ଥ ଲେଖା ଗୀତର ପ୍ରଚାର ହେଉଛି କିନ୍ତୁ ଦୁର୍ବଳ ଅନ୍ୟ ଗୀତିକାରଙ୍କ ନାଁରେ । ଏହାର ସତ୍ୟତାର ଏକ ନମୁନା ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳିବ ତଳେ ଦିଆ ଯାଇଥିବା **web page**ରେ-

[odiamusic.com/Category/CategoryResult.php?first=38Second=Kie+Kahara](http://odiamusic.com/Category/CategoryResult.php?first=38Second=Kie+Kahara)  
[oriya.incredibleorissa.com/movie/kie-kahara](http://oriya.incredibleorissa.com/movie/kie-kahara)

ପ୍ରଥମଟିରେ 'କିଏ କାହାର'ର ସବୁ ଗୀତର ଗୀତିକାର ଲେଖା ଅଛି ଦେବଦାସ ଛୋଟରାୟ । ଦ୍ଵିତୀୟଟିର ଗୀତିକାରଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପାର୍ଥର ନାଁ ନାହିଁ ।

କ୍ଷୋଭର ଲସାରାରେ ଧୀରା ମୋତେ ବଢ଼ାଇ ଦେଇଥିଲା ବହି ଖଣ୍ଡେ - 'କଥା କଥା - କବିତା କବିତା' ମେଗାଜିନ୍, ତ- ରେଣୁ ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧଟି ପଢ଼ିବାକୁ କହି ।



୧୯୫୫ ପରେପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂଗୀତ ଜଗତରେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଏତେ ବିରାଟ ଚହଳ ପଡ଼ି ଯାଇଥିଲା, ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଏହାର ପଛରେ ଥିଲେ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଚିହ୍ନାଇବା ଓ ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ସମ୍ମାନ ଦେବା ସମାଜର ଉଚିତ ନୁହେଁ କି ? ଚହଳ ବେଳେ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କରୁଥିଲେ, କିଏ ଏହି ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମହାନ୍ତି ଆଉ କିଏ ସେ ପାର୍ଥ ସାରଥୀ ? ଅକ୍ଷୟ ତ ଅମର ହେଲେ ଗୀତ ଜଗତରେ, କିନ୍ତୁ ପାର୍ଥ ସାରଥୀ ? ଏହି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନକୁ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ କରି ଏତେ ଦିନ ପରେ ତ- ରେଣୁ ମିଶ୍ର (ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଶାରଦ) କଲମ ଉଠାଇଲେ ମାତି ଚକଟି ହୋଇ ମାଗିରେ ମିଶି ଯାଇଥିବା ପାର୍ଥ ସାରଥୀ ମହାପାତ୍ରଙ୍କୁ ଜନତା ଆଗରେ ଛିଡ଼ା କରାଇବାକୁ ଓ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଯଥାର୍ଥ ସମ୍ମାନ ଦେବାର ଚେଷ୍ଟାରେ - ସେ ୨୦୧୪ରେ ଲେଖିଥିଲେ 'ଅତୀତର ଅଇନାରୁ' ।

**ତ- ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧରୁ ମୁଁ ପାର୍ଥ ଲେଖା କେତୋଟି ଗୀତର ଅଂଶ ତଳେ ଦେଉଛି ।**

*ତୁମ୍ଭେ କଥା ହୁଏ ତାରା ତାରାରେ, ତୁମ୍ଭେ କଥା ଭାଷା ଆଖି ଆଖିରେ  
 କିଏ କହେ ଯାହା ହେଲା ଥାଉ ଆଜି ଏତିକି, କାଲି ତ ଦେଖାହେବ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାର ବାସରେ...*

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*ଅଳ୍ପ ତାର ବୟସ ବୋଲି ଗନ୍ଧ ଭଲ ଲାଗେ, ଶୁଣିବା ଲାଗି ବାହାନା କରି ନିଇଟି ଆସେ ଆଗେ  
 ସେଇ କଥାକୁ ସତର ଧର କାହିଁକି ଶୁଣେ ବସି, ପଚାରି ଦେଲେ ଲାଜରେ ସଜି ମାଗିରେ ଯାଏ ମିଶି...*

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*ମୁଁ ଯେବେ ଓଠ ଖୋଲି ଗୀତ ପଦେ ଉଠେ ଗାଲ, ସେ ଆସି ଓଠେ ମୋର ହାତ ତାର ଦିଏ ଥୋଇ  
 ନା ନା ଗାଅନା କାନେ କାନେ ଯାଏ ଖାଲି କହି ....*

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*କଂପନ ତୋଳି ଯେତେ ମୁଁ ତାକିଲି ମୋ ମନ ବୀଣାର ତାରେ  
 ମୁହଁନା ତାର ପରଶି ପାରିନି ତୁମରି ମରମ ବାରେ ....*

ତ- ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ତାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧଟି ଶେଷ କରିଛନ୍ତି ପାର୍ଥର ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଲେଖାରୁ କିଛି ପଦ ଉଦ୍ଧାର କରି ଯାହା ତା'ର ଅତି ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ବନ୍ଧୁ ଅକ୍ଷୟ ଗାଲିଥିଲେ । ପଦ ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ହେଲା -

*ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମୁଁ ଯେ ଯୁଗ ଯୁଗ ଧରି ଧରଣୀର ବୁକୁ ପରେ,  
 ରୂପ ମୁଁ ନେଇଛି କଳା କୁଶଳୀର ତୁଳନାକାରେ ଧରା ଦେଇ  
 ସଂଗୀତ ରୂପେ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ମନର ବାରତା ଆସିଛି ନେଇ,*

ପୁଷିଛି କେବେ ମୁଁ ଦରଦୀ କବିର ଅମର ଲେଖନୀ ଗାରେ ।

ଶେଷ କରୁଛି ବୁଲୁ ଭାଇଙ୍କର 'କୋଣାର୍କ' ଗୀତରୁ ଯାହା ଅକ୍ଷୟଙ୍କ କଣ୍ଠରୁ ଶୁଭେ -  
ଏହି ଦରିଆର କୁଳେରେ, କୋଣାରକ ଆଜି ପିରତୀର ବତୀ ଜାଳେରେ...

**ମୋ ପାଖରେ ଥିବା ପାର୍ଥ ଲେଖା ଗୀତ ଯା ତା ପାଖରୁ ମିଳିଥିଲା -**

(ଗାଈଛନ୍ତି ଅକ୍ଷୟ)

ରଙ୍ଗଲତା ରୁଷିଛି

ସବାରୀ ଚାଲେରେ ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ

ଶୁଣ ଯାହୁକୁ ଯିଏ ରସିଲା

ନାଟି ତାର ଚଂପା

ମୋତେ ସାଇଲା ସାଇଲା ମୋ ନାକର ଶୁଣା

ମୁଁ କହିଲି ସଜ ଯାହା ତୁ କହିଲୁ ବାସି

କିଏ ପିନ୍ଧିଥାଏ ସୁନା ରୁଡି ହାତେ

ପାନ କିବା ହେବ ଲୋଡା

ନୁଆ ନୁଆ ଦିନ କେତେ ବଡ ଆଦର

ଏତେ କଥା ଥିଲା ତୋ ମନରେ

ଜାତକ ପଡିଛି ରାଜ ଯୋଗକ

ବାହୁରେ କୁଟାଇ ତୋର ରାଧାକୃଷ୍ଣ ମୂରତି

ଆଗୋ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରମଲିକା

ନଦୀର ନାମ ଅଳସ କନ୍ୟା

ସେ ଚଲଟି ପରିଆ

ଖରା ଦିନେ ଶୀତ ହେଲା ଜନକନିଆ

ତୁମ ଉପରେ କି ରଖିବି ଭରସା ମୁହିଁ

କିଶୋରି ପାଶୋରି ଦେ ନା

ହାୟ ମଦଭରି ଆଖି ଯାଏ ଇସାରାରେ ଡାକି

ଏଇ ଝୁମୁଝୁମୁ

କଇରେ କଇ ମୋର ଗୋଲାପ କଇ

ହାତୀ ସଜ କର

କୁସୁମ କୁସୁମ କେଳି କୁସୁମ

(ଗାଈଛନ୍ତି ବୀଣା ଦେବୀ)

ଦିନ ଥିଲା ଯେବେ ଚାହିଁ ବସିଥିଲ

ନାଚି ନାଚି ଛେଉରେ ମନ ଆଜି ଯାଉରେ

ଆମେ ଦିହେଁ ନଦୀର ଦୁଇ କୁଳେ

କୋଣାର୍କ - ଆଜି ଦରିଆର କୁଳେରେ (ଗାଈଛନ୍ତି ଅକ୍ଷୟ)

ମିଳିତ ଗାନ (ଅକ୍ଷୟ ଓ ସାଥୀମାନେ)

କାଞ୍ଚି ବିଜୟ - କାବେରୀର ନୀଳ ଜଳଧାରା କାଞ୍ଚି ରାଇଜର ସୀମା ଛୁଇଁ  
ମାଣିକ ଯୋଡ଼ି - ଭକତର ମାନ ରଖିବାକୁ ଦିନେ  
ଆକାଶବାଣୀର 'କାଞ୍ଚି ବିଜୟ' ଓ 'ମାଣିକ ଯୋଡ଼ି'କୁ ମିଶାଇ ପରେ ରେକର୍ଡରେ ବାହାରିଛି 'କାଞ୍ଚି ଅଭିଯାନ' ନାମରେ ।)  
ତଅପୋଇ - ବୋଇତ ଗଲା ବାଣିଜ ଗଲା ଇତିହାସରେ ରହିଲା ଖାଲି  
ସଲିଳ ତୃଷ୍ଣା - ମୁଁ ସୁନୀଳ ସାଗରେ ଥିଲି ଯେ ଅତଳ ଜଳେ ମିଶି  
ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ଦିବସ - ସାତ ଦରିଆର ଆରପାରୁ ଆସି ବିଦେଶୀ ବଣିକଦଳ  
ଆମରି ଗାଆଁର ସଞ୍ଜ ସକାଳର  
କେରି କେରି ସୁନା ... ଆଲୋଲୋ ମାଲୁଣି ଏଥକୁ ଉପାୟ କର

ସଂଗୀତାଭିନୟ - କୃଷ୍ଣ ଗାଥା



# ଅଶାୟତ ଭାଗ୍ୟ

ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ



ଏଇଟା ସମସ୍ତେ ଜାଣନ୍ତି ଯେ ଭାଗ୍ୟ ଆମର ଆୟତରେ ନାହିଁ । ତଥାପି କେତେ ଦାର୍ଶନିକ ଆଶା ଦେଇଥାନ୍ତି, ‘ମଣିଷ ନିଜ ଭାଗ୍ୟର ରଚୟିତା’ । ସେମିତି ସାଧୁ ସନ୍ଥ ମାନେ ବି ପ୍ରବଚନ ଦିଅନ୍ତି, କେବଳ ଏ ଜନ୍ମର ଭାଗ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ନୁହେଁ, ପରଜନ୍ମର ଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ଏ ଜନ୍ମରୁ ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରଣରେ ରଖିବା ପାଇଁ କଣସବୁ କରିବା ଉଚିତ, ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ଏତେ ଉଦାହରଣର ସ୍ଥାପନା କରନ୍ତି ଯେ, ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଅନୁଗାମୀ ମାନେ ଏ ଜନ୍ମକୁ ଭୁଲି ପରଜନ୍ମର ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ସାଧନା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦିଅନ୍ତି । ସବୁ ପରାମର୍ଶ ବେଳେବେଳେ କାହା ଜୀବନରେ ଘଟିଯାଏ; ଯେଉଁ ମାନଙ୍କ ଜୀବନରେ ଅସତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରତିପାଦିତ ହୁଏ, ସେମାନେ ହତଭାଗ୍ୟ ବୋଲି ନିଜକୁ ଧରିନିଅନ୍ତି ଅଥବା ସାଧୁସନ୍ଥ ମାନେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ମନର ନିର୍ମଳତା ନେଇ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କରନ୍ତି ।

ସୁନିତାକୁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଆତ୍ମା ପରାମର୍ଶ ଦେଲା ଯେ ତା ଜୀବନର ଅଘଟଣ ପାଇଁ ସେ ତାହିକ ସାଧକ ସଦାଶିବ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କ ପରାମର୍ଶ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ କାମ କରିବା ଉଚିତ, ସେତେବେଳେ ସୁନିତା ମୁହଁରେ କିଛି କହିଲାନି ସତ, ତେବେ ଭାବିଲା, ଆଉ ଆତ୍ମାକୁ କେବେ ପରାମର୍ଶ ମାଗିବନି । ଆତ୍ମା ଜଣେ ତାଙ୍କର, ପୁଣି ଆମେରିକା ଦେଶରେ ପରିଶ୍ରମରୁ ଅଧିକ ରହିଲାଣି; ତଥାପି ଏମିତି ଗୁଣିଗାରିତିରେ କେମିତି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରୁଛି କେଜାଣି ? ଏମିତି ଗୁଣିଗାରିତି ସମୟରେ କେତେ ଜୟନ୍ତ୍ୟ କାଣ୍ଡ ଆଜିବି ଘରୁଛି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ, ଏକବିଂଶ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀରେ ମଧ୍ୟ । ମଣିଷମାନଙ୍କୁ ଜିଅନ୍ତା ପୋତି ଦିଆଯାଉଛି; ନାରୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଉଲଗ୍ନ କରି ରତନିଆଁରେ ତାତିଥିବା ଲୁହାଛତିରେ ସର୍ବ ସମ୍ମୁଖରେ ପିଟାଯାଉଛି । ଜଣେ ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ହୋଇ ସୁନିତା କଣ ଏସବୁ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରିବ ? ତେବେ ଆକାଶକୁ କେମିତି ବାଟକୁ ଆଣିବ ? ଜଣେ ବିବାହିତା ନାରୀ, ଦୁଇଟି ସନ୍ତାନର ଜନନୀ, ସେ ନାରୀ ସହିତ ତାର ଏକମାତ୍ର ପୁତ୍ର ଆକାଶର ସମ୍ପୃକ୍ତ । ସେଦିନ କେମିତି ନିର୍ଲଜ୍ଜ ଭାବେ କହିବିଦେଲା ସିଏ ବାପା, ମା’ ଓ ସାନଭଉଣୀ ଆଗରେ ? ଏପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସେ ଆଠାତରୁ ନିଜକୁ ମୁକ୍ତ କରିପାରିନି ସୁନିତା । ଆଉ ରଘୁନାଥଙ୍କ କଥା ଛାଡ଼ । ଯେମିତି ଜୀବନ ସେଇଠି ସରିଯାଇଛି । ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ସାମନାରେ କେମିତି ମୁହଁ ଦେଖେଇବେ ? ପୁଅକୁ ଏତେ ଉଚ୍ଚ ଶିକ୍ଷା ଦେଲେ, ତାଙ୍କର ହେଲା, ନୈତିକତା ଶିକ୍ଷା ଦେଲେ, ମନ୍ଦିର ମାନଙ୍କରେ ସବୁବେଳେ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ରୂପେ କାମ କରୁଥିଲା; ତେବେ ଏତିକି ସିଏ କାହିଁକି ବୁଝିଲାନି ? ଯେମିତି କଉଁଠି କଣ ବାକି ରହିଗଲା; ସେଇ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ବୁଡ଼ିରହିଲେ ରଘୁନାଥ ।

ସବୁ ବନ୍ଧୁବାନ୍ଧବଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ଯିବାଆସିବା ବନ୍ଦ ହୋଇଗଲା । ସତ୍ୟାହରଣର ଗୀତ ଆସର, ସିନେମାଦେଖା, ସେସବୁ ବି ବନ୍ଦହେଲା । ସୁନିତା ବୁଝିପାରିଲାନି କଣ କରିବ ? ପୁତ୍ରର ଚିନ୍ତା ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଚିନ୍ତାର କାରଣ ହେଲା । ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ କେତେକେତେ ଖରାପଚିନ୍ତା ବି ପଶିଲା, ତିପ୍ରେସନ୍, ଯେଉଁଟାକି ଏସୁଗର ପାୟତଃ ସବୁଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଗ୍ରାସୁଛି; ପୁଣି ବୟସ୍କମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ତ ତାହା କାଳ; ସେଇ କାଳ ଏବେ ରଘୁନାଥଙ୍କୁ ଗ୍ରାସ କରିଲାଣି । ସିଏ ନିଜେ ବି ତ ତିପ୍ରେସନ୍; କିଛି ନ କହିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ କେମିତି ଜାଣିପାରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଶେଷକୁ ନିରୁପାୟ ହୋଇ ସିଏ ଆତ୍ମା ଦେଇଥିବା ତାହିକଙ୍କ ଫେନ୍ ନମ୍ବରକୁ ଡାୟଲ୍ କଲା । ବୁଡ଼ି ଯାଉଥିବା ଲୋକକୁ କୁଟାଖଣ୍ଡି ସାହା ।

ସେପଟରୁ ଧରିଲେ ଜଣେ ମଧ୍ୟବୟସ୍କ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି । ଅନ୍ତତଃ ସ୍ୱରରୁ ସେମିତି ଅନୁମାନ ହେଉଥିଲା । କଟକରେ ସୁନିତାର ବାପା, ମା, ଭାଇ, ଭାଉଜ ସମସ୍ତେ ରହନ୍ତି; ହେଲେ ଏ ଅଜାଗା ଘା, ନିଜ ପୁଅର ଏ ଅପକର୍ମ ବିଷୟରେ ସେ କଣ ପରିବାରକୁ ଜଣାଇପାରିବ ? ବରଂ ସତରେ ଯଦି ତାହିକଙ୍କ ମହିମାରୁ ଆକାଶ ସେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକର ଆୟତରୁ ବାହାରି ଆସିବ ତ, ସେଇଟା ହେବ ଭଲ ସମାଧାନ ।

“ଓଁ, ଚାମୁଣ୍ଡାୟ ନମଃ; କିଏ କହୁଛନ୍ତି ।” – ତାହିକ ବିଶ୍ୱନାଥ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ।

“ଆଜ୍ଞା ମୁଁ ସୁନିତା କହୁଛି, ନମସ୍କାର । ଆତ୍ମା ଆପଣଙ୍କ ନମ୍ବର ଦେଇଥିଲା । ପରାମର୍ଶ କରିବାର ଥିଲା ମୋ ପୁଅ ବିଷୟରେ ।”

“ନିଷ୍ଠୁର, ନିଷ୍ଠୁର, ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପୁଅର ନାଁ କୁହନ୍ତୁ ।”

“ଆକାଶ, ଆକାଶ ପଚନାୟକ ।”

“ବୟସ?”

“ଚଉତିରିଶ ।”

“ଗୋତ୍ର ।”

“ଭରଦ୍ୱାଜ ।”

“ରାଶି ?”

“ଜାତକ ତ ଆମେ ଯେମିତି କରିନୁ । ତେବେ ତା’ର ଜନ୍ମ ଆମେରିକା ଦେଶର ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡ ରାଜ୍ୟର ବାଲ୍ଟିମୋର୍ ସହରରେ, ଜନ୍ମ ହସ୍ତକିନ୍ଦସ୍ ହସ୍ତପିଚାଲ୍ରେ, ମେ ୧ ତାରିଖ, ୧୯୮୦ ମସିହାରେ, ସକାଳ ୯ଟା ପହର ମିନିଟ୍ ।” – ଆଭା ଯେମିତି ସବୁ ବତେଇଥିଲା, ସେ ସବୁ ଜନ୍ମ ଘଟଣା ସିଏ ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରି ରଖିଥିଲା ଓ ତାହାଙ୍କୁ ବତାଇଦେଲା ।

ତାହାଙ୍କ ହୁଏତ କିଛି ଗଣନା କଲେ । କିଛି ସମୟର ନୀରବତା ପରେ ସିଏ ଦୀର୍ଘଶ୍ୱାସ ନେଇ କହିଲେ, “ତମ ପୁଅକୁ ଜଣେ ତାହାଣୀ ବଗ କରିଛି ।”

ସୁନିତାର ଛାତି ଭୟରେ ଉଠିଲା, ପଡିଲା । ଏ ତାହାଣୀ ଶବ୍ଦକୁ ହିଁ ସିଏ ଘୃଣାକରେ । ତାପରେ ଆକାଶ ଯେଉଁ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ବିଷୟରେ କହିଥିଲା, ସିଏ ବି ସେଇ ହସ୍ତପିଚାଲ୍ରେ ଜଣେ ତାହାଣୀ । ତାକୁ ଏ ତାହାଣୀ କହିଲେଣି । ଫୋନ୍ରେ ରହିବ ନା ଫୋନ୍ କାଟିଦେବ, କିଛି ବୁଝି ପାରିଲାନି ସୁନିତା । ଉପାୟ କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ଘର ବୁଡି ପାଣି ଆଣ୍ଟୁ ହେଲାଣି । ପୁଅକୁ ସେ ନାରୀ କବଳରୁ ମୁକ୍ତ କରିବାର ଆଉ କିଛି ବି ଉପାୟ ନାହିଁ ।

ସୁନିତା ପଚାରିଲା, “ମୋ ପୁଅକୁ ମୁକ୍ତ କରିବାର କଣ କିଛି ଉପାୟ ନାହିଁ ?”

“ଅଛି, ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ଅଛି । ତେବେ ଅଷ୍ଟଧାତୁର ଏକ ବିଶେଷ କବଚ ତିଆରି କରି ପୁଅ ହାତରେ ପିନ୍ଧେଇଦେବାକୁ ପଡିବ ।”

“ହେଲେ ପୁଅ ତ ତାହାର, ସେଠି ତାହାଣୀ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ବି ତ କିଛି ଗହଣା ପିନ୍ଧିବାକୁ ଅନୁମତି ମିଳେନି । ପୁଅ କଣ ମୁଦି ପିନ୍ଧିବ ? ଆଉ କଣ କିଛି ଉପାୟ ନାହିଁ ?”

“ଅଛି, ଟିକେ କଷ୍ଟକର । ମୁଁ ଅଷ୍ଟଧାତୁର ଏକ କଣିକା ତିଆରି କରି ତାକରେ ପଠାଇଦେବି । ପୁଅକୁ ସେ କଣିକାଟିକୁ ଖୁଆଇବାକୁ ପଡିବ । ସେ କଣିକାର ପ୍ରଭାବରେ ପୁଅର ମନରେ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ଆସିବ ।”

“କେତେଦିନ ଲାଗିବ ?”

“ଆପଣ ହିଁ କହିଲେ, ସବୁ କିଛି ହୋଇଯିବ । ତେବେ ଶୀଘ୍ର ମତେ କୁହନ୍ତୁ । ମତେ ଯେମିତି ମନେହେଉଛି, ଟିକେ ତେରିକଲେ ସେ ତାହାଣୀ ନାରୀକୁ ଖୁବ୍‌ଶୀଘ୍ର ତୁମର ପୁତ୍ର ଚିରଦିନ ପାଇଁ ନିଜର କରିନେବ ।”

ସୁନିତା ଆଉ କିଛି ବି ଭାବିନି । “ହଁ” କହିଦେଲା ।

ଅଷ୍ଟଧାତୁ କଣିକା ତିଆରି କରାଇବା ଓ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପୂଜାପୂଜା ପାଇଁ ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଦୁଇହଜାର ଡଲାର୍ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚହେଲା । ଏ ଭିତରେ କେତେଥର ସୁନିତା ତାହାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ପରାମର୍ଶ କରିଛି । ସବୁ ରଘୁନାଥଙ୍କ ଅଗୋଚରରେ, ସିଏ ଘରେ ନଥିବା ବେଳେ ।

ଏମିତି ଦିନେ ସେ ଅଷ୍ଟଧାତୁର କଣିକାଟି ପୋଖରେ ଆସି ଘର ଠିକଣାରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା । ସେଥିରେ ପୂଜାର ଭୋଗ ବି ଥିଲା । ସୁନିତାର ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ମନ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କରୁଥିଲା ନିଜକୁ, ଏମିତି ଅପରୀକ୍ଷିତ ଜିନିଷ ସିଏ ନିଜ ସନ୍ତାନକୁ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଦେବ କି? ସେଥିରେ ଯେ କିଛି ଜୀବାଣୁ ନାହିଁ ବୋଲି କିଏ କହିପାରିବ ? ଆଉ ସେ ଧାତୁ ଯେ ଶରୀର ପାଇଁ ବିଷାକ୍ତ ନୁହେଁ ସେକଥା କେମିତି ସିଏ ଜାଣିବ ?

ଘରେ ସେମିତି ଅଶାନ୍ତି ଲାଗି ରହିଥିଲା । କେମିତି ଏକ ନୀରବ ଅଶାନ୍ତି । ଝିଅ ଅବନ୍ତୀ କଲେଜରେ ପଢ଼େ, ହଫ୍ଟେଲ୍‌ରେ ରହେ । ଭାଇ, ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କର ବହୁତ ସାଙ୍ଗ । କିଏ ଜାଣେ ସିଏ କଣ ଭାବୁଛି ? ଆକାଶ ତାର ସଂପର୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ଘୋଷଣା କରିବା ଦିନଠାରୁ ଅବନ୍ତୀ ସେ ବିଷୟରେ କିଛି କହିନି । ତେବେ, ଘରକୁ ସବୁବେଳେ ଫେନ୍‌କରେ ଓ ବାପା, ମା'ଙ୍କୁ ଖୁସିଦେବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟାକରେ । ରଘୁନାଥଙ୍କର କିଛି ବି ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ହୋଇନି । ନିଜକୁ ପ୍ରବୋଧନା ଦିଅନ୍ତି, ସୁନିତାଙ୍କୁ ବୁଝାନ୍ତି, “ଆମର ଯାହା କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଥିଲା, ଆମେ କଲେ, ଏବେ ସିଏ ତାର ଯାହା କରୁଛି କରୁ ।” ହେଲେ, ନିଜ ମନ ଭିତରେ ସବୁବେଳେ କଷ୍ଟ ପାଉଥାନ୍ତି ରଘୁନାଥ; ସେଇଟା ସୁନିତାକୁ କଣ ସିଏ ଲୁଚେଇପାରିବେ, ପଇତରିଶ ବର୍ଷର ସଂପର୍କ ତାଙ୍କର; ହାତେହାତେ ସିଏ ବୁଝନ୍ତି ରଘୁନାଥଙ୍କୁ, ତାଙ୍କ ଚାହାଣୀକୁ, ତାଙ୍କ ଚାଲିକୁ, ତାଙ୍କ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତାକୁ । ସବୁବେଳେ ମନ ଛନଛନ, କାଳେ ଆକାଶ ସେ ଝିଅଟିକୁ ବାହା ହେଇ ପଡ଼ିବ? ତେବେ ତ ସବୁ ସରିଯିବ ।

ସୁନିତା ନିଶ୍ଚୟ କଲା । ନା, ସିଏ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ସେ ଭୋଗ ଓ ଅଖ୍ୟାତ କଣିକାଟିକୁ ଖୁଆଇବ ଆକାଶକୁ । ଫେନ୍‌ କରି ଆକାଶକୁ ଡାକିଲା, “ଘରକୁ ଟିକେ ବୁଲିଆସେ; କଣ ନିଜେ ରୋଷେଇ କରି ଖାଉଥିବୁ, ଆସେ ଟିକେ ଅବନ୍ତୀର ଫ୍ରିଜ୍‌ରେକ୍ ବେଳକୁ । କୁଆଡ଼େ ଟିକେ ବୁଲିଯିବାର ପ୍ରୋଗ୍ରାମ୍‌କରିବା ।” ଆକାଶ ହୁଏତ ମା' ଠାରୁ ଏମିତି ସ୍ନେହବୋଳା ଭାଷା ଆଶା କରୁନଥିଲା, ତେଣୁ ରାଜି ହୋଇଗଲା । କେବଳ ଘରକୁ ଆସିବ ଦୁଇଦିନ ପାଇଁ; ବୁଲିତ ଯାଇହେବନି; ହେଲେ ଭଉଣୀ ସହିତ ଭେଟହେବ ଓ ବାପା, ମା'ଙ୍କୁ ହୁଏତ ଟିକେ ବୁଝାଇବାର ଅବସର ମିଳିବ । ସୁନିତା ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା । ଆକାଶକୁ ସେ ଭୋଗ ଓ ଅଖ୍ୟାତ କଣିକା ଖିରିରେ ଭର୍ତ୍ତିକରି ଖୁଆଇବାର ଯୋଜନାରେ ରହିଲା । ସ୍ୱାମୀଙ୍କୁ ବୁଝାଇଲା, “ଯାହା ଆକାଶ କହିବ କହୁ, ସିଏ ତ ବଡ଼ହେଲାଣି; ଆମେ କାହିଁକି ତା ଜୀବନରେ ଦଖଲଦେବା ? ଦେଲେବି ସିଏ କୋଉ ଶୁଣିବ ? ତେବେ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କୁ ଡାକିବା ଯେ ଆକାଶକୁ ଭଲ ବୁଝି ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ; ଭଲ ବିଚାର କରୁ, ଭଲ ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ନେଉ ।” ରଘୁନାଥ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କର ଏମିତି କଥାରେ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟହେଲେ; ଭାବିଲେ, ହୁଏତ ନିଜର ଦୁଃଖକୁ ଲୁଚାଇବାକୁ ଏମିତି ନିଜକୁ ପ୍ରବୋଧନା ଦେବାର ନାଟକ କରୁଛି ସୁନିତା । ତେବେ ସିଏ ମଧ୍ୟ ବୁଝିଲେ, ଏତେ ବଡ଼ ପୁଅକୁ ସେ କିଛି କହିପାରିବେନି ।

ମାର୍ଚ୍ଚମାସ ପରର ଚାରିଖ । ଅବନ୍ତୀ ଘରକୁ ଆସିଥାଏ । ତାର ଅନ୍ୟ ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ବି ସବୁ ନିଜନିଜର କଲେଜରୁ ଘରକୁ ଆସିଥାନ୍ତି ଓ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଯୋଜନା ତିଆରି କରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଆକାଶ ଆସିଲା । ସେମିତି କିଛି ହେଇନି, ସେମିତି ସମସ୍ତେ ନିଜନିଜର ସଂପର୍କରେ ଖୁସିରହିଲେ; ଆକାଶର ସେ ନାରୀବନ୍ଧୁ, ଯେଉଁ ବିଷୟକୁ ନେଇ ଏତେ ବଡ଼ ଦୁର୍ଘଟଣା ଘଟିଗଲା ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଜୀବନରେ, ସେକଥା କେହି ବି ଅବତାରଣା କଲେନି । ଆକାଶକୁ ଖିରି ସହିତ ଭୋଗ ଓ ଅଖ୍ୟାତ ଖୁଆଇଦେଲା ସୁନିତା; ମନେମନେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କୁ ସୁମରଣା କରି ତାହିକଙ୍କ ତନ୍ତ୍ରବିଦ୍ୟାର ସୁଫଳପଳିବାପାଇଁ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନାକଲା ।

ଦୁଇଦିନ ପରେ ଆକାଶ ଫେରିଗଲା । ଅବନ୍ତୀ ମା'କୁ କହିଲା, “ଜାଣିଛୁ ତ ଭାଇ ଜୁଲାଇ ୪ ଚାରିଖରେ ବାହାହେବାକୁ ପ୍ଲାନ୍ କରୁଛି ।”

“କାହାକୁ ?”

“କାହାକୁ ମାନେ । ସେଇ କିଛିନାକୁ । ତା' ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ସିଏ କାମକରେ ।”

“କାହିଁ? ଆମକୁ ତ କିଛି କହିଲାନି ସେ ?”

“ତମମାନଙ୍କୁ ସର୍ପରାଇଜ୍ ଦବ । କହୁଥିଲାନା ସିଏ ଜୁଲାଇ ୪ ଚାରିଖ ବେଳକୁ ତମମାନଙ୍କୁ *ବାହାମାସ୍* ଯିବାକୁ । ସେଇଠି ସର୍ପରାଇଜ୍ ଦବ ।”

ସେଦିନ ରାତିରେ ଶୋଇପାରିଲାନି ସୁନିତା । ସତରେ କଣ ସେ ତାହିକଙ୍କ ଔଷଧ କାମକରିବ ? ସେ କିଛିନାଠାରେ କଣ ଦେଖିଲା ଲଏ, ତାଠାରୁ ଦଶବର୍ଷ ବଡ଼, ପୁଣି ଦୁଇଦୁଇଗା ପିଲାର ମା' । ପ୍ରଥମ ପଡ଼ିଠାରୁ ଛାଡ଼ପଡ଼ ନେଇଛି । ଯେତେ ଭଜନନା ହେଲେ ବି ସୁନିତା ଜାଣନ୍ତି ସେ ଏସବୁ ଗୃହଣ କରିପାରିବେନି । କିଛିନାକୁ କେବେ ବି ସିଏ ଆକାଶ ସହିତ ଦେଖି ସହିପାରିବେନି । ଆଉ ରଘୁନାଥଙ୍କ କଥା ଛାଡ଼ । ସିଏ ତ ଆହୁରି ତିପ୍ପେସ୍ତ୍ ହୋଇଯିବେ । ସେଇଦିନରୁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ମାନସିକ କରି ଆଇଁଶ ଛାଡ଼ିଦେଲା ସୁନିତା । ତାହିକଙ୍କ ସହ ପରାମର୍ଶ କରି ଆଉ ଦୁଇଦିନିଟା ବିଘ୍ନ ନାଶକାରୀ ପୂଜା କରିପକାଇଲା ।

ଏ ଭିତରେ ମାସେ ବିତିଗଲାଣି । ସୁନିତାକୁ ଡିପ୍ରେସନ୍ ଘାରିଛି । ଜୁଲାଇ ୪ ତାରିଖ ଯେତେ ପାଖେଇଆସୁଛି, ତାର ହୃତ୍‌ସ୍ପନ୍ଦନ ସେତେ ବଢୁଛି ।

ମୋ ମାସ ୧ ତାରିଖ । ଆକାଶର ଜନ୍ମଦିନ । ସକାଳେ ଆକାଶକୁ ଡାକି ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଜଣାଇଲା ସୁନିତା । ଆକାଶ ବହୁତ ଖୁସି । ଆଜି କିଛିନା ସହିତ ଜନ୍ମଦିନ ସେଲିବ୍ରେଟ୍ କରିବ ହୋଟେଲ୍ ମେରିଅର୍ ରେ । ଆକାଶ ଯେତେ ଖୁସିରେ ସେସବୁ କହୁଥାଏ, ସୁନିତା ଦେହରୁ ରକ୍ତ ପ୍ରବାହ ଯେମିତି ବନ୍ଦ ହୋଇଯାଉଥାଏ । ମନେମନେ ଯେତେ ଅଭିସଂପାତ ଥିଲା, ସବୁ କିଛିନା ଉପରେ ବରଷିଗଲା । ସତରେ ସେ ତାହାଣୀଟା ପାଇଁ ତା’ ସୁଖର ସଂସାର ଆଜି ଭାସିଯିବାକୁ ବସିଛି । ମରିଯାଆନ୍ତା କି ସେ ତାହାଣୀ ।

ସେଦିନ ରାତିରେ ସିଏ ତାହିକଙ୍କୁ ଡାକି ନିଜ ମନର ସବୁ ଦୁଃଖ ଗାଇଗଲା । ପୁଅ ଯେ ସେ ଝିଅକୁ ଜୁଲାଇ ୪ ତାରିଖରେ ବାହାହେବାକୁ ଯୋଜନା କରୁଛି, ସେକଥା ବି କହିଲା । ତାହିକ ଆଶ୍ଚାସନା ଦେଲେ, “ଜମା ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁନି; ମୋ ଗଣନା କହୁଛି, ଯଥାଶୀଘ୍ର ସେ ବିଦ୍ଵ ବାଲିଯିବ ।”

ମୋ ୧୧ ତାରିଖ ଦିନ ସକାଳୁ ଅବନ୍ତୀ ଫୋନ୍ କରିଥିଲା । ସେଦିନ ଆମେରିକାରେ ମଦର୍ସ୍ ଡେ; ମା’ ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ବିଶେଷ ଦିନ । “ହାପି ମଦର୍ସ୍ ଡେ” କହିସାରିବା ପରେ ଅବନ୍ତୀ କହିଲା, “ଜାଣିଛୁ, ଭାଇର ଗାର୍ଲଫ୍ରେଣ୍ଡ୍ କିଛିନା ଆକସିତେକ୍ସ୍ରେ ମରିଗଲା ।”

“କଣ ତୁ କହୁଛୁ ? କେମିତି ?”

“କେମିତି ମାନେ, ତିନର୍ ପାଇଁ ତ୍ରାଇଭ୍ କରି ଆସୁଥିଲା; ଗୋଟିଏ ଯୁବ ତ୍ରାଇଭର୍ ସହିତ ଆକସିତେକ୍ସ୍ ହେଲା । ତାକୁ ସାଙ୍ଗେସାଙ୍ଗେ ହସ୍ପିଟାଲ୍ ନେଇଗଲେ । ହେଲେ ସେଠି କିଛି ସମୟପରେ ତାର ଡେଥ୍ ହୋଇଗଲା ।”

“ତତେ କିଏ କହିଲା ?”

“ଭାଇ ଟେକ୍ସ୍ଟ୍ କରିଥିଲା ।”

ସୁନିତାର ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଚକ୍‌ଚକ୍ ଖାଉଥିଲା । କେବେ ବି ତ ସିଏ ଚାହୁଁନଥିଲା ସେ ତାଙ୍କୁରାଣୀ ଝିଅଟିର ଏମିତି ଅକାଳ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ହେଉ । କେବଳ ନିଜ ପୁଅଟିର ଭଲ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ପାଇଁ ତା’ ପାଟିରୁ ଏମିତି କାଳକଥା ବାହାରି ପଡିଥିଲା ।

ତେବେ ତାହିକ ବିଦ୍ୟା କଣ ସତ ? ପଦାର୍ଥ ବିଜ୍ଞାନର ପ୍ରଫେସର୍ ସୁନିତା ପଚନାୟକର ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ବିଜ୍ଞାନର ସୂତ୍ର ସବୁ ରହସ୍ୟମୟ ମନେ ହେଉଥିଲେ । ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ସତେ ଯେମିତି କେଉଁଠି କିଛିଟା ବୁଝିବାକୁ ବାକି ରହିଯାଇଛି; ଯେମିତି ଏ ଅଧିଭୌତିକ ସୂତ୍ର; ଯାହାକୁ କାରଣ ଦେଇ ବୁଝିହେବନି କି ବୁଝାଇହେବନି । କେବଳ ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ନେବାକୁ ପଡିବ ନିଜ ମନର ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଭିତରେ, ଭାବନାର ସୂକ୍ଷ୍ମ ବଳୟ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ।



ଡକ୍ଟର୍ ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ ଡେଟନ୍, ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡରେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମାନଙ୍କ ନରେଶ ଦାସ ଓ କନ୍ୟା ବାଗ୍ଡା, ମୃଣାଳୀ ଓ ଶାଶୁତୀଙ୍କ ସହ ରୁହନ୍ତି ।  
ଓସାକୁ ଉତ୍ସର୍ଗୀକୃତ ତାଙ୍କର କବିତା ପୁସ୍ତକ ‘ସଂପର୍କର ସେତୁ’ ଏବଂ ବିଦ୍ୟାପୁରୀ ପ୍ରକାଶନୀରୁ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୋଇଛି । ଏହା ବ୍ୟତୀତ  
ଗତବର୍ଷ ତାଙ୍କର ଗଳ୍ପ ସଂକଳନ ‘ରହସ୍ୟ’ ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୋଇଯାଇଛି । ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀକୁ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରିବାର ମାଧ୍ୟମ ହେଲା -  
**bigyanidas.osa@gmail.com.**

# ମିନାଦେଇ

ସୁଲୋଚନା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ



ଶଙ୍ଖରା ବିଲକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ବାହାରିଛି । କେଉଁଠୁ ବର୍ଷ ବର୍ଷରୁ ସାଇତିଥିବା, ଛିଣ୍ଡି ଆସୁଥିବା କମ୍ବଳଟିଏ ଦେହରେ ପକାଇଛି । ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଝିଅ ଆମେରିକାରୁ ଆଣି ଏ କମ୍ବଳଟା କୋଉ କାଳେ ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ବାବୁ ତାକୁ ପେଡିସାଇତା କରି ବେଳେ ଅଧେ ଘୋଡି ହୋଇଥିବେ । ମାଣବସା ବେଳେ, ଦିନେ ଶଙ୍ଖରା-ପୁଅ, ଶନିଆ, ସାଆନ୍ତାଣୀ ମା'ଙ୍କ ହାତ ମଣ୍ଡପିଠା ଖାଇବାକୁ ଆସିଥିଲା ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ । ହାତ ସେଦିନ ଭାରି ଶୀତ ପଡିଲା ଆଉ ମା' ତାକୁ ସେଇ କମ୍ବଳଟା ଘୋଡିହେବାକୁ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ବାବୁରେ ରହିରହି ଠାଏଠାଏ ଫଟି ଯାଇଥିଲା । ଶନିଆ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଲା କ୍ଷଣି, ଶନିଆ ମା' ତା'ଠୁ ଆଣି କମ୍ବଳଟାକୁ ସାଇତି ରଖିଦେଲା । କୁଆଡେ କେମିତି ବାହାରକୁ ଗଲେ ବା ଘରକୁ କିଏ କୁଣିଆ ଆସିଲେ ସେଇଟା ସେମାନେ ବାହାର କରି କୁଣିଆଙ୍କୁ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ଆଜିକାଲି, ଗୁଡାଏ ଦିନ ଗଲାପରେ ପୁରା ଛିଣ୍ଡି ଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସେମାନେ ତାକୁ ବେଶୀ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଶୀତ ପଡିଲେ କେଉଁ ଦିନ ଶଙ୍ଖରା ତ କେଉଁଦିନ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ସାବି ଘୋଡାଇ ଦୁଅନ୍ତି । ଶନିଆ ବି ଦିନେଦିନେ ଜିଦ୍ କରେ ଯେ ତାର ବି ପାଳି ପଡିବା ଉଚିତ, ଯେହେତୁ ସାଆନ୍ତାଣୀ କମ୍ବଳଟା ତାକୁ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜି କମ୍ବଳଟା ଦେହରେ ପକାଇ ଶଙ୍ଖରା ଆଖିକୁ ଲୁହ ଆସିଗଲା । ପିଲାଦିନେ କେତେ ସିଏ ମିନାଦେଇଙ୍କୁ କାଖେଇଥିଲା - କେତେଥର ଧାନ ବାଡିଆ ଦେଖେଇବାକୁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ବାରିକୁ ବୁଲାଇ ନେଇଥିବ । କେତେଥର କନ୍ଧୁଅ କରି ଦୋଳଯାତ୍ରା ଦେଖାଇ ନେଇଥିଲା । କୁଆଡେ ଆମେରିକା ଗଲେ ଯେ ଦେଖିବା ସପନ ପରି । ଆଜି ହାତ ମିନାଦେଇ ଏଇ ତିସେମ୍ବର ସକାଳେ ଆସି ଗାଁରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବେ ବୋଲି ଖବର ପଠାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଏତେଦିନ ପରେ ସିଏ ଦୁଇ ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ନେଇକି ଆସିବେ ଆଉ ଶଙ୍ଖରା ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିବ, ଭାବି ଭାବି ଖୁସି ହୋଇଗଲା । ଯୋଗକୁ ସେ କମ୍ବଳଟା ବି, ମିନାଦେଇଙ୍କ କଥା ତାକୁ ଆଦୁରି ମନେ ପକାଇଦେଲା । ସେଇ ଖୁସିରେ ବଡ ଝିଲ୍ ଗିଲାସରେ ଗିଲାସେ ନାଲି ଚା' ଆଉ ମୁଢି ଦି'ଟା ଗାମୁଛାରେ ଧରି ଦାଣ୍ଡ ପିଣ୍ଡରେ ବସିଥିଲା ।

ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟଙ୍କର କଅଁଳିଆ କିରଣରୁ ଧାରେ ବାରଣ୍ଡର ଗୋଟେ କଣରେ ପଡୁଥାଏ । ପାଖ ପଡିଶା କେଶବୀ ବି ଆସି ଦୁଆରେ ବସିଲା । କେଶବୀ, ଶଙ୍ଖରାଠୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଦଶ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସରେ ବଡ । କୁଛେଇ କୁଛେଇ ବାରଣ୍ଡରେ ବସି ତା' ନାତୁଣୀ ମାଳିଆକୁ ତାକ ପକାଉଥାଏ, 'ମାଳିଆଲୋ, ମା'ଠୁ ମୋ'ପାଇଁ କହି ଦାନ୍ତକାଠି ଆଉ ପାଣି ଢାଳଟାଏ ମାଗିକି ଆଣିଲୁ ।' ମାଳିଆ, ବାର ବର୍ଷର ଝିଅଟିଏ । ଦୁଇପଟ ପାଉଁଜି ପିନ୍ଧି ଝୁମୁରୁ ଝୁମୁରୁ ହୋଇ ପାଣି ଢାଳରେ ନିମ୍ନ-ଦାନ୍ତକାଠିଟାଏ ପକାଇ ଦେଇ ସିଏ ଦଉଡି ଦଉଡି ପୁଣି ଘର ଭିତରକୁ ଫେରିଗଲା । ତା' ନିଜର ଦାନ୍ତକାଠିଟାଏ ଦାନ୍ତରେ କାମୁଡି ଆସି ବସିଗଲା ଜେଜେ ପାଖରେ । ଛେପ ମେଧେ ବାରଣ୍ଡା ତଳକୁ ଥୁ କରି ଫେପାଡି ପଚାରିଲା, 'ଶଙ୍ଖରା ଜେଜେ, ତମେ କଣ ଏତେ ସଅଳୁ ଚା' ପିଇଲଣି, କାଇଁ କୁଆଡେ ଯିବକି ?' ଶଙ୍ଖରା କହିଲା, ଶୁଣିବୁ କି, ଆଜି ପରା ତୋ' ମିନାଦେଇ ଗାଁକୁ ଆସିବ ଖବର ଦେଇଥିଲା । ସେଇଥିଲାଗି ବସନ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ବାହାରିଛି । ମାଳିଆ କହିଲା, 'ମିନାଦେଇ, ଆମେରିକା ମିନାଦେଇ ?' ମାଳିଆ ଆଖିରେ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଓ ଓଠରେ ହସ-ଧାରେ ଲାଖି ରହିଥାଏ । ମାଳିଆ ପଚାରିଲା, 'ଜେଜେ, 'ମତେ ଚିକିଏ ସାଙ୍ଗର ନିଅନ୍ତ ନି? ମୁଁ ବି ତାଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଆମେରିକା କଥା ଶୁଣନ୍ତି । ଭୁଗୋଳ ବହିରୁ ସିନା ପଢିଛି, ହେଲେ ସତରେ ଆମେରିକାରେ ରହୁଥିବା ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ସେଠା କଥା ଜାଣିବାକୁ ଭାରି ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଉଛି ।' ଦୁଇ ଖେପାରେ, ଦୁଇ ଚାରିଟା ପାହାଚ ତେଇଁ ମାଳିଆ ଶଙ୍ଖରା ଘର ପିଣ୍ଡରେ ହାଜର ହୋଇଗଲା । ଜେଜେର ହାତ ଧରି, ଆଖିକୁ ଆଖି ରଖି ଅତି କାକୁଡି ହୋଇ କହିଲା, 'ଜେଜେ, ମୁଁ ତମକୁ ଆଦୌ ହଇରାଣ କରିବିନି, ମତେ ଚିକିଏ ସାଂଗରେ ନିଅନ୍ତ ନି ? ତମ କଥା ସବୁବେଳେ ଶୁଣିବି, ତମକୁ ନାଲି ଚା କରିଦେବି ।' ଶଙ୍ଖରା ବଡ ହୁଁ ଚାଏ କରି କହିଲା, 'ଯା ତେବେ ବାହାର । ସେମାନେ କେତେବେଳେ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରୁ ବାହାରିବେ ଜଣା ନାହିଁ । ମୁଁ କିନ୍ତୁ ଯାଇ ବସନ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ବସିଥିବି ।' ମାଳିଆ ପୁଣି ଦୁଇ ଖେପାରେ ଗୁଣୁଗୁଣୁ ହୋଇ ଗୀତ ଗାଇଗାଇ ଘର ଭିତରକୁ ଯାଇ ଫୁଲଟାଏ ଖୋଜିଲା । ଫୁଲ୍ ବୋଲି ତିନୋଟି । ଗୋଟିଏ, ସେଇ ମିନାଦେଇ ତାଙ୍କ ଝିଅ ଲୋଲାର ପୁରୁଣା ଫୁଲ୍, ତାକୁ ଛୋଟ ହେବାରୁ ଦେଇଥିଲେ, ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ ଗାଁ ଯାତରୁ ଆଇ ତା ପାଇଁ କିଣି ଦେଇ ଥିଲା । ଆଉ ଗୋଟେଟ ସୁଲ୍ ଜାମା । କୋଉଟା ପିନ୍ଧିବ ସିଏ ଠିକ୍ କରି ପାରୁ ନ ଥାଏ । ମା'କୁ ତାକ ଛାଡିଲା । ସେଥିରେ ଡେରି ହେଲାକୁ ସେଇ ସୁଲ୍ ଜାମାଟାକୁ ପିନ୍ଧିଦେଇ ବାହାରି ଆସିଲା ।

କେଶବାର ଘର ବୋଇଲେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବଖରା ଶୋଇବା ଘର । ସପ ପକାଇ ଜେଜେ, ମା' ଓ ନାତୁଣୀ ଶୋଇ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ଆସବାବ କହିଲେ ବାଙ୍କୁ ଖଣ୍ଡିଏ । ସେଥିରେ ମା' ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଦି ଖଣ୍ଡ ଲୁଗା ରଖିଥାଏ ଆଉ କେତେବେଳେ କେମିତି ଖୁରୁରା ପଇସା ଲୁଚାଇ ରଖିଥାଏ । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ସେଇ ପଇସା ଦେଇ ନାତୁଣୀକୁ ପଠାଇ ଗାଁ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଦୋକାନରୁ ଦଶ ପଇସାର ଗୁଣ୍ଡି ହେଉ ବା ଆଜୁ ଦି'ଟା ହେଉ ଆଣି ଦିନଟାଏ ଚଳାଇଦିଏ । ଘରଟା ନ ହେଲେ ଖାଲି ଖାଲି । ଏ କାନ୍ଧରୁ ସେ କାନ୍ଧ ଯାଏ ମୋଟା ଦଉଡିଟାଏ ବନ୍ଧା ହୋଇଥାଏ ଶୋଇବା ଘରେ । ସେଥିରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ଲୁଗା, ଗାମୁଛା ପଡିଥାଏ । ବାବୁ ଘରୁ ଦଶହରାକୁ ଲୁଗା ଖଣ୍ଡେ ମିଳିଲେ ତାକୁ କେଶବା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ବାଙ୍କୁରେ ରଖିଦିଏ । ନ ଥିବାର ସଂସାର ତାଙ୍କର, କିନ୍ତୁ ହସ ଖୁସିର ସଂସାର । ସମସ୍ତେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ପାଆନ୍ତି, କାହାର କ'ଣ ଦରକାର ପଡିଲେ ଅଖ୍ୟ ଭିତି ବାହାରି ପଡନ୍ତି । ଶଙ୍ଖରା ଆଉ କେଶବା ଦୁଇ ପରିବାର ହେଲେ ବି ଦୁଇ ଭାଇ ପରି ଚଳି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି କୋଉ ଅମଳରୁ । ଆଜି ଶଙ୍ଖରା ଜେଜେ ସଙ୍ଗେ ବସ୍ତ୍ରାଣ୍ଡକୁ ଯିବା ମାଳିଆ ପାଇଁ କିଛି ନୁଆ ନୁହେଁ । ନୁଆ ହେଉଛି ମିନା ଦେଇଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିବ ସିଏ ଆଗ । ଗାଁ ଲୋକ ଦେଖିବେ ପଛେ ।

ମାଳିଆର ଖୁସିରେ ଗୋତ ତଳେ ଲାଗୁନଥାଏ । ବାଁ ପଟ କାନ୍ଧ ଖୋପରୁ ପାନିଆଟା ଆଣି ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ବୁଲାଇ ଆଣିଲା । ରିବନଟାଏ ବାନ୍ଧିବ ବୋଲି ମନ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲେ ବି ସମୟ ଆଉ ନାହିଁ । ଶଙ୍ଖରା ତା' ଗିଲାସଟାକୁ ସେମିତି ବାରଣ୍ଡାରେ ଥୋଇ ମୁଢିତକ ଗାମୁଛାରେ ବାନ୍ଧି ମାଳିଆ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ବସ୍ତ୍ରାଣ୍ଡକୁ ବାହାରି ଗଲା । ଦୁହେଁ ହାତ ଧରାଧରି ହୋଇ ଚାଲିଲେ କିଛି ବାଟ । ହଠାତ୍ ମାଳିଆ କହିଲା 'ଜେଜେ ଏମିତି କ'ଣ ଆମେ ଖାଲି ହାତରେ ଯିବା ? ମିନା ଦେଇଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଫୁଲଟାଏ ନେଇଯାନ୍ତି !' ଶଙ୍ଖରାର ସ୍ତରରେ ବିରକ୍ତି, କହିଲା, 'ପାଗେଲିଟା ନା କ'ଣ, ଫୁଲଟାଏ କ'ଣ ହେବ? ତୋ ପାଇଁ ପୁଣି ତେରି ହେବ ।' ମାଳିଆ କହିଲା 'ମୁଁ ଏଇ ଗଲି ଆଉ ଆସିଲି ।' ଏକା ଦଉଡାରେ ମାଳିଆ ଘର ପଛ ବାଡିରେ ହାଜର ।

ଶୀତ ଦିନେ କେଶବା ଓ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ସାବି ବାରିରେ କୋଶଳା ଶାଗ ପଟାଏ ଲଗାଇଥାନ୍ତି । ଦୁଇ ଧାଡି ଲଙ୍କା ଗଛ । ଲଙ୍କା ଗଛ ଫୁଲ ଆଉ କଷିରେ ଭର୍ତ୍ତି ହୋଇଥାଏ । ପରିବା ନ ଥିଲେ, ଲଙ୍କା ଗୋଟାଏ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଦଲେ ପଖାଳଟା ଚଳିଯାଏ । ଶିମ୍ପୁ ମଞ୍ଜିରୁ ଗଜୁରି ଲତାଟିଏ ବି ମାଡିଥାଏ ଚାଳକୁ । ବାସନ ମାଜିବାକୁ ବଡ ପଥର ଖଣ୍ଡେ ପଡିଥାଏ । ସେଇଠି ଠିଆ ହୋଇଛି ଗୋଲାପ ଗଛଟିଏ । ମାଳିଆର ଆଖି ଗୋଲାପ ଫୁଲ ଉପରେ । ପେଛାହୋଇ ଦରଫୁଟା ଫୁଲମାନେ ଆକାଶକୁ ଚାହୁଁଥାନ୍ତି । ମାଳିଆ ସେଥିରୁ ଗୋଟାଏ ଫୁଲ ଛିଣ୍ଡାଇ, କାଳେ କିଏ ଦେଖିବ ବୋଲି ତୁପ୍ତୁପ୍ତ ପାଦ ପକାଇ ରାସ୍ତାକୁ ବାହାରି ଏକା ଦଉଡାରେ ଜେଜେ ପାଖେ ହାଜର । ଗୋଲାପ ଗଛର କଣ୍ଠରେ ହାତ ଚିକେ ଆସୁଡି ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥାଏ । ସେଥିକି ତାର ନିଘା ନାହିଁ । ମନ ତାର ଭାରି ଖୁସି । ଫୁଲଟାକୁ ନେଇ ମିନାଦେଇଙ୍କୁ ଉପହାର ଦେବ । ଗଛରୁ ଫୁଲ ଛିଣ୍ଡାଇଛି ବୋଲି ଜେଜେମା ଗାଳି ଦେଲେ ବି ତାକୁ ବାଧିବନି ।

ଦିନକର କଥା ମନେ ପଡି ସିଏ ମୁରୁକି ମୁରୁକି ହସିଲା । ତା'ପରେ ଆଉ ରହି ପାରିଲାନି । କାହାକୁ ତ ହେଲେ କହିବ ? ସ୍କୁଲରେ ଦିଦି ଦିନେ କହିଥିଲେ, 'ଖୁସି ବାଞ୍ଛିଲେ ବଢେ' । ତେଣୁ ସିଏ ଶଙ୍ଖରାକୁ ଖୁସିର କାରଣ ନ ଜଣାଇ ରହି ପାରିଲାନି । ସେତେବେଳେ ତାକୁ ଆଠ ବର୍ଷ ହୋଇଥାଏ । ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ସିଏ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଯାଇଥାଏ । ସେଠି ରେମନ୍ ସର୍କସ୍ ପଡିଥାଏ । ସେତିକିବେଳେ ମିନାଦେଇ ତାଙ୍କ ଦୁଇ ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ଧରି ଓଡିଶା ଆସିଥାନ୍ତି । ବାବୁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ସର୍କସ୍ ଯାଇଥାନ୍ତି । ସର୍କସ୍ରେ ଆଗ ଧାଡିରେ ବାବୁଘର ପିଲାଙ୍କ ମେଳରେ ବସି ମାଳିଆକୁ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗ ପାଇଲା ପରି ଲାଗୁଥାଏ । ସେତିକିବେଳକୁ ସର୍କସ୍ରେ ଜୋକର୍ ଆସି ମିନାଦେଇଙ୍କ ପୁଅ ସଚିନ୍ ହାତରେ ଗୋଲପ ଫୁଲଟିଏ ଧରାଇଦେଲା । ସଚିନ୍ ତାକୁ ଦୁଇ ପରଖ ଦେଖିନେଲାପରେ, ମାଳିଆକୁ ଇଠାଠାରେ କଣ କହିଲା ଆଉ ଫୁଲଟା ତା' ହାତକୁ ବଢାଇଦେଲା । ଇଠାଠା କଥା ନ ବୁଝିଲେ ବି ସିଏ ହାତ ବଢାଇ ଫୁଲଟା ନେଲା । ବାବୁ କହିଲେ, 'ଦେ ଧର, ନାତି ତତେ ଗୋଲାପ ଫୁଲ ଦଉଛି । କହୁଛି ତା' ମା'କୁ ବି ଗୋଲାପ ଫୁଲ ଭଲଲାଗେ ବୋଲି ।' କେତେ ବର୍ଷ, ସିଏ ସେ ପାଞ୍ଜିକ୍ ଫୁଲକୁ ସାଇତି ରଖିଥିଲା । ଏବେ ଦିନେ ଧୂଳିରେ ଫୁଲଟା ଖରାପ ଦେଖା ଯାଉଥିଲା ବୋଲି ଜେଜେମା' ତାକୁ ଫେପାଡି ଦେଲା । ଆଜି, ମାଳିଆ, ଧୂଳିରେ ଗୋତ ଘୋଷାରି ଘୋଷାରି ଚାଲିଲାବେଳେ ଗୋଲାପ ଫୁଲଟାକୁ ସନ୍ରେ ତା' ଫୁକ୍ ପକେଟ୍ରେ ରଖିଦେଲା । ଆଜି, ଫୁଲରେ ସିଏ ଆଦୌ ଧୂଳିର ଧାସ ଲଗାଇ ଦେବନି । କେତେବେଳେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବ ଭାବି ମନ ତାର ଅସ୍ଥିର ହେଉଥାଏ । ରାସ୍ତା ମନେ ହେଉଥାଏ ଅସରକ୍ତି । କେମିତି ମିନାଦେଇଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିବ ସେଇଆ ତାର ଚିନ୍ତା ।

ସକାଳର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟକୁ ପଛ କରି ସେମାନେ ଧୂଳି ଧୂସର କଟା ରାସ୍ତାରେ ଚାଲିବାରେ ଲାଗିଥାନ୍ତି । ଗାଁ ରାସ୍ତା । ଏ ଯାଏ ପିରୁ ହୋଇନି । ସବୁ ବର୍ଷ ଇଲେକ୍ସନ୍ ବେଳେ ଲୋକେ ଆସି କହନ୍ତି ରାସ୍ତା ପିରୁ କରିଦେବେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଇଲେକ୍ସନ୍ ସରିଲେ କେହି ଆଉ ଧରା ଦିଅନ୍ତିନି । ବର୍ଷାଦିନେ ରାସ୍ତା ଅବସ୍ଥା ନ କହିଲେ ଭଲ । ରାସ୍ତା କଡରେ ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ କିଆ ବୁଦା, ଆଉ ଲଙ୍କା ଆମ୍ବର ବଗିଚା । ଶଙ୍ଖରା ତାହାଣପଟ ବଗିଚାକୁ ହାତ ଦେଖାଇ କହିଲା 'ଏ ବଗିଚା ଆମ ବାବୁଙ୍କର' । ମାଳିଆର କୋଉପିକି ନଜର ନାହିଁ । ସିଏ ଏକାମୁହାଁ ହୋଇ ଚାଲିଥାଏ । ଦୂରରୁ ବସ୍ତ୍ରାଣ୍ଡ ଦିଶୁଥାଏ । ଗାଁ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଛୋଟ ବସ୍ତ୍ରାଣ୍ଡଟିଏ । ଗାଁକୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ମାତ୍ର ବସ୍

ଆସେ । ଦୁଇଟା ମାଟାତୋର୍ ଆସେ । କାଁ ଭାଁ ଲୋକ ଟାଙ୍କି ନେଇ ଆସନ୍ତି । ଟାଙ୍କି ସିଧା ଗାଁ ଭିତରକୁ ଚାଲିଯାଏ । ବସ୍ତ୍ରଖଣ୍ଡରେ ତିନୋଟି ଚା' ଜଳଖିଆ ଦୋକାନ । ସବୁବେଳେ ସେଠି ଭିତ ଲାଗିଯାଏ । ଗାଁ ବାସିନ୍ଦା ବି ବେଳେବେଳେ ସମୟ କଟାଇବାକୁ ବସ୍ତ୍ରଖଣ୍ଡକୁ ଆସନ୍ତି । ବରା, ପିଆଜି ଓ ଚା' କମ୍ପରେ ଗପସପ ଖୁବ୍ ଜମେ । ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାବେଳେ ବଉଳଗଛ ବେଦି ଉପରେ ତାସ୍ଖେଳର ମାତ ପଡେ । ଗାଁ ବାଲା ଚାନ୍ଦା ଆଦାୟ କରି ବେଦିଟିଏ କରିଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ରାମୁ ସାହୁର ଗୁଡିଆ ଦୋକାନ, ଗଛର ବାଁ କଡକୁ । ତା ଦୋକାନରେ ସବୁଠୁ ବେଶି ଭିତ ହୁଏ; କାରଣ ବେଦି ଉପରେ ଚାହା କମ୍ ଧରି ଗାଁ ଯାକର ଗୁଲିଖଟି ଚାଲୁଥାଏ । ମାଳିଆ ଦୁରୁ ବେଦି ଆଡକୁ ଅନାଇ ଜେଜେକୁ କହିଲା 'ଜେଜେ ଆଜି କାଲି ଏଠି ଭାରି ଭିତ ହୋଇଛି ? ବସ୍ତ୍ରାବି ଠିଆ ହୋଇଛି ! ବସ୍ତ୍ରା ଖରାପ ହେଲା ନା କଣ ?' ଶଙ୍କରା ଭାବିଲା ସତ ତ, ବସ୍ତ୍ର ତ ଦଣ୍ଡେ ଠିଆ ହେବା କଥା ନୁହେଁ, ଆଜି କ'ଣ ହେଲା ? ବସ୍ତ୍ରକୁ ଲୋକ ଜଗି ରହିଥାନ୍ତି । କଣ୍ଠକଟରକୁ ଠେଲି ପେଲି ଟିକେଟ୍ ଟିଏ ଧରି ଧସିପଶି କେମିତି ସିଟ୍ଟାଏ ପାଇବେ ବୋଲି ସବୁବେଳେ ମାତ ଗୋଳ । ଆଜି କିନ୍ତୁ ଲୋକଗହଳି ବେଦିମୁଳେ ଦେଖାଯାଉଛି ।

ଶଙ୍କରା ଓ ମାଳିଆ ଉତ୍ସୁକ ହୋଇ ଆଗକୁଆଗକୁ ଚାଲିଥାନ୍ତି । ଲୋକମାନେ କହୁଥାନ୍ତି, ବସ୍ତ୍ର ଆଦିତେଣୁଟାଏ ହୋଇଗଲା କାର୍ ସହ । ଶଙ୍କରା ଭିତ ପେଲି ଭିତରକୁ ପଶିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା । ମାଳିଆ ପ୍ରତି ତାର ଆଉ ନଜର ନଥାଏ । ବେଦି ପାଖରେ ପ୍ରବଳ ଭିତ ଦେଖି, ଶଙ୍କରା ସେଇ ଆଡକୁ ଗଲା । ଦେଖିଲା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକଟିକୁ ଶୁଆଇ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ପାଖରେ ପିଲା ଦିଓଟି ଠିଆ ହୋଇ କାନ୍ଦୁଛନ୍ତି । ଅନେକ ଲୋକ ଘେରି ରହିଥାନ୍ତି । କିଏ କିଏ 'ଆମୁଲାନସ୍ କାଲି ତେରି କରୁଛି' ସେଇ କଥା କହୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଗାଁ ଗହଳରେ ସେଇ ଅସୁବିଧା । ତାଙ୍କରଟିଏ ପାଇବା କାଠିକର ପାଠ । ଆମୁଲାନସ୍ ଆସିବା ବେଳକୁ ଜୀବ ଥିଲେ ହେଲା । ଶଙ୍କରା ଏ ଭିତରେ ବେଦି ପାଖରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲାଣି । କିନ୍ତୁ ପାଖକୁ ଯାଇ ଦେଖିଲା ମିନାଦେଇଙ୍କୁ ସେଠି କିଏ ଶୁଆଇ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ତା' ଛାତି ଫଟିଗଲା ପରି ଲାଗୁଥାଏ । କ'ଣ କରିବ ସେ ଭାବି ପାରୁନଥାଏ । ଆମେରିକାରୁ ଆସି ଏଠି ଏଇ ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ଧୁଳି ଧୁସର ହୋଇ ଶୋଇ ରହିଛନ୍ତି ! ଶଙ୍କରା ପାଟିରୁ କଥା ବାହାରୁ ନଥାଏ । ଦେହରୁ କମ୍ପକଟା କାଢି ସିଏ ମିନାଦେଇଙ୍କୁ ଘୋଡାଇ ଦେଇ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ହାତ ଦେଇ ବସିପଡିଲା । ମାଳିଆ କେତେବେଳେ ଆସି ତା ପାଖରେ ଛିଡାହୋଇ ଝୁଁ ଝୁଁ ହୋଇ କାନ୍ଦୁଥାଏ । ପକେଟ୍ରେ ଗୋଲାପ ଫୁଲଟା ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଚାପରେ ମକଟି ହୋଇ ଅବସ୍ଥା ନଥାଏ, ତଥାପି ତା ପିଲା ମନ, ଗୋଲାପ ଫୁଲଟିକୁ ଆସ୍ତେ କାଢି ମିନାଦେଇଙ୍କ ହାତ ପାଖରେ ଥୋଇଦେଲା - ଫୁଲରୁ ପାଖୁଡା ସବୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଛିଣ୍ଡି ଯାଇଥାଏ, ବିକଳ ହୋଇ କାନ୍ଦିକାନ୍ଦି ସିଏ କହୁଥାଏ 'ହେ ଭଗବାନ, ମତେ ପଛେ ନିଅ ମୋ ମିନାଦେଇକୁ ଉଠେଇ ଦିଅ ....' ସ୍ଵର ତାର କ୍ଷୀଣ ଶୁଣା ଯାଉଥାଏ । ପଛରୁ କିଏ କହୁଥାଏ 'ବିଧିର ବିଧାନ କେ କରିବ ଆନ !'



*ସୁଲୋଚନା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ଏଲ୍‌କରିଙ୍ଗ, ମେରାଲାଣ୍ଡରେ ରହନ୍ତି । ସେ ଓସାର ନବନିର୍ବାଚିତା ଭାଇସ୍ ପ୍ରେସିଡେଣ୍ଟ ।*

# ଫୋନ୍ କଲ୍

## ସ୍ନିତା ପଣ୍ଡା

ଫେସ୍‌ବୁକ୍ ନଥିଲେ ସତରେ ମ ଜମା ଜାଣି ହୁଅନ୍ତାନି, କାହାର କେତେ-ତମ ବିବାହ ବାର୍ଷିକୀ ଗଲା, କାହାକୁ କୋଉ ଗହଣା ଦୋକାନରୁ କେମିତି ଏକଦମ୍ ଅବିକଳ ସୁନା ସେଜ୍, "ମନେ ପଡୁଛି ନା ଅମୃତ ସିନେମାରେ କାଜଲ କ'ଣ ପିନ୍ଧିଥିଲା", କ'ଣ ଗିଫ୍ଟ ମିଳିଲା ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ଇତ୍ୟାଦି । ଷ୍ଟାଟସ୍ ଏବଂ ଫଟୋ ଅପ୍‌ଡେଟ୍ ଆସିବାର ପାଠ ସେକେଣ୍ଡ ବି ହେଇନି ଦଶଟା କମେଣ୍ଟ୍ । "ଅପା, ଭାଇ, କ'ଣ ନ ଦିଶୁଛନ୍ତି, ପୁରା ବର୍ଲି ବର୍ଷ", ଆଉ ଜଣେ ରାନ୍‌ଦେଇଁକ କମେଣ୍ଟ୍‌ରେ ପୁରା ଗୀତଟା, "yeh ankhein yeh chehra yeh noor, insaan ho ya pari ho tum, kitni fursat se banaya hoga tumhe banane wale ne" କୁ କପି କରିଦେଲେ । ମୁଁ କମେଣ୍ଟ୍ ପଢ଼ି ପଢ଼ି, ମନେ ମନେ ଭାବୁଛି, ଯଦି ଫେସ୍‌ବୁକ୍ ନଥାନ୍ତା, ସାଂଗସାଥୀ କେମିତି ଜାଣି ପାରୁଥାନ୍ତେ...", ଆଜି କାଲିର ରିସ୍ତା କରୁଲ୍‌ର ଷ୍ଟାଣ୍ଡାଡ୍ କେତେ ଉପରକୁ ଗଲାଣି, କେତେ ମହଂଗା ହେଲାଣି । "ଠିକ୍ ଏତିକି ବେଳେ ଦୀପ୍ତିର ଫୋନ୍ ଆସିଲା ।



"କ'ଣ ନିଷ୍ଠା ନାନୀ, ଜାଗୁଡିର ଫେସ୍‌ବୁକ୍ ଫଟୋ ଦେଖିଲେ? ଛି ଛି, ସେ କ'ଣ ପିନ୍ଧିଛି ! ସେଥିରେ ଦେଖନ୍ତୁ ନା, ଲୋକମାନେ ଏତେ ପ୍ରଶଂସା କରୁଛନ୍ତି ଯେ, ଓ.ମ୍.ଜି (OMG) ।"

ତୁମେ ତା' ହେଲେ କମେଣ୍ଟ୍ କରି ଦଉନ ସଫା ସଫା, ତୁମ ମନରେ ଯାହା ଅଛି । "ସତ କହିବାକୁ କିଆଁ ଡରିବି, ସତ କହି ପଛେ ମଲେ ମରିବି", ବୋଲି ମୁଁ କହିଲି ।

"ନିଷ୍ଠା ନାନୀ, ଆପଣ ଭଲ କଥା କହୁଛନ୍ତି ? ତା' ଫେସ୍ ବୁକ୍‌ରେ, ତା' ସ୍ଵାମୀ, ତା' ଭାଇ, ତା' ଯା, ତା' ଶାଶୁ, ସମସ୍ତେ ତା'ର ଫ୍ରେଣ୍ଡ୍, କେହି କିଛି କହୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି, ଓଲଟା ଫଟୋକୁ ଲାଇକ୍ ପରେ ଲାଇକ୍ ମାରି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି...ମୋତେ ଲାଇକ୍ ଲାଗି ଯାଉଛି ।"

ହଉ ଛାଡ଼, ଆମର କ'ଣ ଯାଉଛି କହି ମୁଁ ଚପିକ୍ ବଦଳେଇବାକୁ ଚାହଁଲି । ମନେ ମନେ ବାପୁଜୀଙ୍କୁ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାଞ୍ଜଳି ଜଣାଉଥିଲି ଭାବି ଭାବି, "ମନ୍ଦ କଥା କହିବିନି, ଦେଖିବିନି, ଶୁଣିବିନି ।"

ଦୀପ୍ତି କିନ୍ତୁ ଜମା ଚପିକ୍ ବଦଳେଇବାକୁ ନାରାଜ୍ । ମୋତେ ଲାଗୁଛି, ଦୀପ୍ତି ବୋଧେ ଜାଣି ସାରିଲାଣି, ଭଲ କମେଣ୍ଟ୍ ନ ଲେଖିଲେ, ଲାଇକ୍ ନ ମାରିଲେ, ତାକୁ ଆସ୍ତେ ଆସ୍ତେ ଘରେ ହଉଥିବା ପାର୍ଟିକୁ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ ଆସିବା ବନ୍ଦ ହେଇଯିବ !!

"ଆଉ, ଗୋଟେ କଥା ମନେ ପଡ଼ି ଗଲା ନିଷ୍ଠା ନାନୀ । ସେଦିନ ନମ୍ରତା ତା' ଘରେ ପାର୍ଟି କରିଥିଲା, ବହୁତ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଡାକି ଥିଲା । ମୁଁ ତ, ନୂଆ ନୂଆ ଆସିଥିଲି, ତେଣୁ ଅଧେରୁ ବେଶୀ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଚିହ୍ନି ନ ଥିଲି । ନମ୍ରତାର ବାପାଙ୍କ ସାଂଗେ ମୋ' ମଉସା ଢେଙ୍କାନାଳ କଲେଜରେ ଏକାଠି ପଢୁଥିଲେ । ସେଇଥିରୁ ସେ ମୋତେ ଚିହ୍ନି ଡାକିଥିଲା ବୋଧେ? ଆପଣ ଆସି ନ ଥିଲେ?"

ମୁଁ ଭାବୁଥିଲି କହିବି, ମୋତେ ତ ସେ ଡାକି ନଥିଲା, କିନ୍ତୁ ଚିକେ "ଆଲୋ ସଖୀ ଆପଣା ମହତ ଆପେ ରଖା"କୁ ମନେ ପକେଇ ଟାଳି ଦେଲି । ଓଲଟା କହିଲି, ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପାର୍ଟିକୁ କ'ଣ ଆଉ ସବୁବେଳେ ଯାଇ ହଉଛି?

"ସେ ପାର୍ଟି, ନମ୍ରତା ତା' ବରର ଚାଳିଶତମ ଜନ୍ମଦିନ ପାଇଁ କରିଥିଲା, ମୋତେ ତ ଲାଗୁଛି ନମ୍ରତାର ବର ୪୫+ । ସେଦିନ ମୁଁ ପ୍ରଥମେ ଦେଖିଲି, ଆରୁଲାଣ୍ଡ । ଲୋକ କେମିତି ବେଶଭୂଷା ହୁଅନ୍ତି । ଆମ ଚିକାଗୋରେ ଏମିତି ମା ଲୋ ମଲ୍ଲି ଫେସନ୍ କେହି ହୁଅନ୍ତିନି । ସେଇଠି ମୋର ପ୍ରଥମ ଥର ପାଇଁ ଜାଗୃତି ସାଂଗେ ଦେଖା ହେଇଥିଲା । ସେ ତା' ଆଡୁ ଆସି ଦୁଃଖ ସୁଖ ହେଲା । "ଏକୁ ଚିହ୍ନିଛ, ତାକୁ ଚିହ୍ନିଛ ବୋଲି ପଚରା ଉତ୍ତରା କଲା । ମୋତେ ମୋ କଲେଜ୍ ଦିନର ରାଗିଂ ମନେ ପଡୁଥିଲା । ସେତେବେଳେ ଫୁଲେଇ ହେଇ ଜଣେଇ ବି ଦେଲା, ଜାନକୀ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ମୋର ମାମୁଁ, ତା'କ ପଡିଶା ଶ୍ରୀକାନ୍ତ ପଣ୍ଡାଙ୍କୁ ତୁମେ ଜାଣିଥିବ ବୋଧେ ।"

"ଦେଖୁଚକ୍ତି ନା ନିଷା ନାନୀ, ତା'ର କେମିତି କଳ୍ପନା, ଜନ୍ମନା; ଇଏ କି କଥା, ମୋ' ବାପା ଶେଲ୍ଟର ଛକରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି ବୋଲି କ'ଣ, ମୁଁ ଯେତେ ଲୋକ ସେଇ ସାହିରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି, ତା'କୁ ଚିହ୍ନିଥିବି ? ମୁଁ ତ ବାହା ହେଲା ପରେ ବାପା ରିଟାୟର୍ଡ୍ ହେଇ ମେଟ୍ରୋ ପାଖରେ ଯେଉଁ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ୍ କମ୍ପ୍ଲେକ୍ସ୍ ହେଇଛି ସେଠି ଘର କିଣିଲେ । ମୁଁ ସମୁଦାୟ ତିନି ବା ଚାରିଦିନ ରହିଥିବି । ଏଇଠୁ ଆମେ ଏତେ କମ୍ ଦିନ ପାଇଁ ଯାଉ । ମୋ ଶାଶୁ ଘର ଭାରି ସୁନ୍ଦର, ନାତିକୁ ଦେଖିବା ବାହାନା କରି ବେଶୀ ଦିନ ବୋଉ ପାଖକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ଦିଅନ୍ତିନି । ଆପଣ ପୁରୁ ଯାଆନ୍ତୁ ଏଇ କଥାଟା କେବେବି କହିବେନି ।"

କଥା ସରୁନି, ସିୟାତେ ମୋ' ଦୁଇ ପୁଅ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଆଳରେ ତଳକୁ ଆସି ଚାରି ଥର ପଇଁତରା ମାରିକି ଗଲେଣି । ମୋତେ ସତରେ ଲାଜ ବି ଲାଗିଲାଣି ଏଇଆ ଭାବିକି, ମୋ ପୁଅମାନେ କ'ଣ ଭାବୁଥିବେ, ଆଜି ମା ସକାଳୁ ସକାଳୁ ଗପରେ ଏକଦମ୍ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ । ସାନପୁଅକୁ ବାହାନା ବି ମିଳିଯିବ ଭାଓଲିନ୍ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ନ କରିବାକୁ । ଆଜିକାଲିକା ପିଲା କିଛିବି ଖୁସିରେ କରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ନାହିଁ । ଦେଖାଯାଉ ଠେଲି ଠେଲି ତା ବେହେଲା ବାଦନ କେତେ ଆଗଉଛି । ଆମକୁ ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳୁ ନଥିଲା । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ଲାଗୁଛି, ଖାଲିଟାରେ ଅବଧାନଙ୍କୁ ପୋଷୁଛି । ମୁଁ ବି ଘଣ୍ଟାକୁ ଅନଉଛି, ଭାବୁଛି, ଦୀପ୍ତି ଯଦି ତା ମନଖୋଲା ଗପ ପେଡି ଆଉ ଦୁଇ ମିନିଟ୍ରେ ବନ୍ଦ ନ କରିଛି ମୋତେ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ, ମୋ'ର ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ କଲ୍ ଆସୁଛି, ପରେ କଥା ହେବା କହି ଏ ଅସରକ୍ତି ଗପକୁ ସାରିବାକୁ ପଡିବ ।

"ନିଷା ନାନୀ, ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ କଥା କହିବି, ଆପଣ ମନ ଦୁଃଖ କରିବେନି ତ ?" କାହିଁକି ପଚାରିଲ, କିଏ ଉଲଗ୍ନ ବେଶ ହେଲା ବୋଲି ମୁଁ କାହିଁକି ମନ ଦୁଃଖ କରିବି? ଇଏ କି କଥା । "ଯିଏ ଯାହାକୁ ରସିଲା କିଆପୁଲ ପରି ବାସିଲା ।" ମୁଁ ଏମିତି ବି ମାଗଣା ଆଡ଼ଭାଇସ୍ ଦେବା ଆଉ ନେବା କେବେଠୁ ବନ୍ଦ କରିଦେଇଛି । ଏଇ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଏକ୍ ସେ ବଡ଼ କର ଏକ୍ । ମୁଁ ସେ ଭୁଲ୍ କେବେ ବି କରିବିନି । ହଉ ଦୀପ୍ତି କୁହ କ'ଣ କହୁଥିଲ, ମୁଁ ତମକୁ ମଝିରେ ବନ୍ଦ କରିଦେଲି । "ନାହିଁ, ନିଷା ନାନୀ, ଜାଗୃତି ମୋତେ ସେଇ ନମ୍ରତା ଘରେ ପଚାରିଲା, 'ଏଇଠି କୋଉଠି ରହୁଛ, ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ୍ ନା ଘରେ ? ମୁଁ ତାକୁ ଯେମିତି କହିଲି, ହଁ ସ୍କୁଲ୍ ସମସ୍ତେ ଭଲ କହୁଛନ୍ତି ବୋଲି, ଆମେ ଜେମ୍ସ୍ କ୍ରୀକ୍ରେ ଘର କିଣିଲୁ, ସେଇ ଲାମ୍ବର୍ଟ୍ ସ୍କୁଲ୍ ଡିପ୍ଟିକ୍ସ୍ରେ, ସେ ତକ୍ତାଳ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଲା, ସେଠି ଜଣେ ନିଷା ଦାଶ ରୁହନ୍ତି, ତାଙ୍କୁ ଜାଣିଛ ? ତାଙ୍କର ପରା ଛାତ୍ରପତ୍ର ବିବାଦ ଚାଲିଛି ? କ'ଣ ହେଲା କିଛି ଖବର ରଖୁଛ ?"

"ସତ କହିଲେ, ନିଷା ନାନୀ ସେତେବେଳେ ନା ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଜାଣିଥିଲି, ନା ଜାଣିଥିଲି ଆପଣ ମୋ' ଘର ପାଖେ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ଏମିତି କିଏ କଥା ହୁଏ ? ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରି ହଉନି ଏତେ ଆଧୁନିକା ପୋଷାକ ପିନ୍ଧୁଛନ୍ତି, ସବୁ ଚାଲି ଚଳଣରେ ପ୍ରିୟଙ୍କା ଚୋପ୍ରା ବି ଟକ୍‌କର୍ ଦେଇ ପାରିବନି, ଆଉ ଚିନ୍ତାଧାରା ଏତେ ଅନୁନତ । ମୁଁ ତ ଆପଣଙ୍କଠୁ ସାନ, ଏଇ ଛଅ ସାତ ମାସ ହେଲା ଜାଣିଛି, ଜାଗୃତି କେମିତି ଏତେ ନିର୍ଭୟ କଥା କହି ପାରିଲା । କହୁଛି କ'ଣ ନା ଜେ.ବି. ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ତା' ନିଜ ମାମୁଁ, ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ତା' କକା, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର କ୍ରୀଡ଼ମ୍ ପ୍ଲାଜାଟା ତା' ବାପାଙ୍କର । ଆଉ ମୁଁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ପଚାରିଲି, କୋଉ କଲେଜ୍ରେ ପଢୁଥିଲ, ତଳକୁ ଅନେଇ କହିଲା, "ଉପର ସାହି ମହା ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ।"

ଠିକ୍ ଏତିକିବେଳେ ମୋ ସାନ ପୁଅ ଚିତ୍କାର କଲା "ମା, ତୋ' ଗସିପ୍ ସରିଲା? ....."

ଦୀପ୍ତିପୁ, ଚାଲ ପରେ କଥା ହେବା କହି ଫୋନ୍ ରଖିଲି...

ମୋ ସାନ ପୁଅ ଡିସ୍‌ବର୍ସ ନ କରି ଥିଲେ ସ୍ବାହାକୁ କହିଥାନ୍ତି, ମୁନୁ ଅପାଙ୍କ ଶାଶୁ ମୋତେ କ'ଣ କହିଥିଲେ, ବୋଧେ ସେ ଜାଣି ପାରିଲେ ମୁଁ ଚିକେ ଦୁଃଖ, ଯେତେବେଳେ ମୁଁ ଦୁର୍ଦ୍ଦଶା ମଧ୍ୟ ଦେଇ ଯାଉଥିଲି, ଜୀବନ ହାରି ଦେବାର କାମନା ଏବଂ ବଂଚିବାର ଇଚ୍ଛା ଦୁଇ ପୁଅଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ, ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସଂଘର୍ଷ କରୁଥିଲି: "ମା' ଲୋ ସୀତା-ମାତା ପରମ ପୁରୁଷ ରାମଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡ଼ି, ଦୁଇ ପୁଅ ଲବ-କୁଶଙ୍କୁ ଧରି ଯେଉଁ ବାଲ୍ମୀକି ଆଶ୍ରମରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ ତାକୁ, ଆଜି ଦିନରେ ଆମେ ସୀତାଙ୍କ ଇଚ୍ଛାକୁ କଣ କହିବା? ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ତୋ'ର ସବୁ ଦୁଃଖ ଦୂର କରିବେ ।"



ସ୍ମିତା ପଣ୍ଡା, ମିଲିଟେନ୍, ଜର୍ଜିଆରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଦୁଇ ପୁଅ, ଜୀବନ୍ ଓ ଜୀଦେଗୀଂକ ସାଥୀରେ ରହନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ ଇମେଲ୍:  
[smita\\_panda@hotmail.com](mailto:smita_panda@hotmail.com)

# ଆଶାର ରତ୍ନ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ

ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଳତା ମିଶ୍ର (ରଥ)

ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ ପାଳନ କେବଳ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିଆନ୍ ଧର୍ମାବଲମ୍ବୀ ମାନଙ୍କପାଇଁ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଦିନଟିଏ ନୁହେଁ ... ଏବେ ସାରା ବିଶ୍ୱର ପ୍ରାୟ ଅନେକଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଦିନଟିଏ । ଆମେରିକାରେ ରହୁଥିବା ପ୍ରାୟ ସବୁ ଧର୍ମାବଲମ୍ବୀ ମାନେ ନିଜ ଘରେ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ ଟ୍ରୀ ସଜାଇବା, ନିଜ ପରିବାର, ବନ୍ଧୁ ବାନ୍ଧବ, ଆତ୍ମୀୟ ସ୍ୱଜନଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ଉପହାର ଆଦାନ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରିବା ଏକ ପରମ୍ପରା ହେଇଗଲାଣି । ଆମେରିକାକୁ ଆସିଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲୋକମାନେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ଏଇ ପ୍ରଥାକୁ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବାକୁ କୁଣ୍ଠିତ ହେଉଥିଲେ ବି ଅଳ୍ପ କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ ଖୁସି ପାଇଁ ଆପଣେଇ ନିଅନ୍ତି । ନଭେମ୍ବର ମାସର ଅଧ୍ୟାକ୍ଷଗିରିଙ୍କ ଗୁରୁବାର ପରଠୁ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ସମଗ୍ର ବାତାବରଣରେ ଭରିଯାଏ ଶୁଷ୍କା, କରୁଣା, ଅନୁକମ୍ପା ଓ ସହାନୁଭୂତି । ପ୍ରାୟ ଏକମାସ ଧରି ମଲ୍, ଦୋକାନ ବଜାର, ଘର ଏବଂ ଅଫିସ୍ ବିଲ୍ଡିଙ୍ଗ୍ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ଆଲୋକ ସଙ୍କ୍ଷା ଖୁବ୍ ମନୋମୁଗ୍ଧକର । ଗୋଟିଏ ବର୍ଷ ଭିତରେ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ୍ ସମୟ ହେଉଛି ମୋ ପାଇଁ ଗୋଟିଏ ନିଆରା ସମୟ ... ମୋ ମତରେ ଏହା ଏକ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ରତ୍ନ ଯାହା ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ମନରେ ଭରିଦିଏ ଏକ ନୂତନ ଉତ୍ସାହ, ଅନେକ ନୂତନ ଆଶା ଓ ନୂତନ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଏବଂ ଅସରଳି ଅନନ୍ୟ ଅନୁଭବ । ସମସ୍ତେ ଏହି ରତ୍ନର ପ୍ରତିଟି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତକୁ ମନଭରି ଅନୁଭବ କରନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ସ୍ମରଣୀୟ କରିବାକୁ ଚାହାନ୍ତି । ଏଇ ସମୟକୁ ଅନେକ ଗିରିଙ୍ଗ୍ ସିଜିନ୍ ବା ଦେବାର ରତ୍ନ ବୋଲି ମଧ୍ୟ କୁହନ୍ତି । ଆତ୍ମୀୟ ସ୍ୱଜନ ପରିବାର ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀ, ସହକର୍ମୀ , ପଡୋଶୀଙ୍କୁ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ୍ ଉପହାର ଦେବାପାଇଁ ସମସ୍ତେ ତତ୍ପର ହୋଇଉଠନ୍ତି । କ୍ରମଶଃ ବଢୁଥିବା ଥଣ୍ଡା ପ୍ରତି କାହାର ଭୂଷେପ ନଥାଏ । ଦୋକାନ ବଜାର ରାସ୍ତାଘାଟରେ ଭିତ ଲାଗିରହେ । ପାର୍କିଙ୍ଗ୍ରେ ଝଟଟିଏ ପାଇବା ଭାଗ୍ୟର କଥା । ତେଣୁ ଏଇ ସମୟରେ ମଲ୍ରେ ଭିତ ଭିତରେ ଦୋକାନରୁ ଦୋକାନ ବୁଲିବୁଲି ସପିଙ୍ଗ୍ କରିବାର ଅନୁଭୂତି ଯେତିକି ଆନନ୍ଦଦାୟକ ସେତିକି କ୍ଳାନ୍ତିକର ।

ଏମିତି ସେଦିନ ସପିଙ୍ଗ୍ ସାରି ଫେରିବା ବାଟରେ ମୋର ପ୍ରିୟ ମାକ୍ଡୋନାଲଡ୍ କଫି ସହିତ ମାକ୍ଡୋନାଲଡ୍ ଫ୍ରେଞ୍ଚ୍ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ମଜ୍ଜା ନେବାର ଇଛାରେ ମାକ୍ଡୋନାଲଡ୍ରେ ପଶିଲୁ ଆମେ ଦୁହେଁ । ଇଏ କବାଟ ଖୋଲିବାକୁ ଯାଇ ଦେଖନ୍ତି ଜଣେ ବୟସ୍କା ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳା ହାତରେ ଅନେକ ଗୁଡ଼ିଏ ବ୍ୟାଗ୍ ଧରି କବାଟ ଖୋଲିବାର ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଇଏ କବାଟ ଖୋଲି ଧରି ଠିଆହେଲେ , ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କ ପଛରେ ଠିଆ ହେଇଥିଲି । ଆମେ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କଲୁ ସେ ବାହାରିବା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ । ସେ ବାହାରକୁ ଆସି ଆମକୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଜଣେଇ ଯାଙ୍କୁ ପଚାରିଲେ, ‘ମୋ ପାଖରେ ଗୋଟିଏ କୁପନ୍ ଅଛି ...ଗୋଟିଏ କିଣିଲେ ଆରଟି ମାଗଣା, ହାମ୍ବର୍ଗର୍ ଆଉ କଫି ...ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କ କାମରେ ଆସିବ କି?’ କହିବା ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଥରଥର ହାତରେ ସେ ଧରିଥିବା ଜରିବ୍ୟାଗ୍ ଭିତରେ ଥିବା ଗୁଡାଏ କୁପନ୍ ଭିତରୁ କୁପନ୍ଟିକୁ ଖୋଜିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ । ଇଏ ନମ୍ କଣ୍ଠରେ କହିଲେ, “ଆପଣ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁନି; ଆମେ ହାମ୍ବର୍ଗର୍ ଖାଉନି, ତେଣୁ କୁପନ୍ଟି ଆମର ଦରକାରରେ ଆସିବନି” । ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳା ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲେ, “ତୁମେ ଦୁହେଁ କଫି ତ ନିଷ୍ଠୁ ପିଉଥିବ ! ମୋ ପାଖରେ କଫି ପାଇଁ ଗୋଟିଏ କୁପନ୍ ଅଛି ... ଗୋଟିଏ କିଣିଲେ ଆରଟି ମାଗଣା ।” ଜରିବ୍ୟାଗ୍ ଭିତରେ ଥିବା ବିଭିନ୍ନ ରଙ୍ଗ ବେରଙ୍ଗ କୁପନ୍ ଭିତରୁ ସେ କୁପନ୍ଟିକୁ ଖୋଜିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ । ଇଏ ପୁଣିଥରେ ନମ୍ କଣ୍ଠରେ କହିଲେ, “ଆପଣ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁନି” । ଯାଙ୍କୁ ନିଜ କଥା ପୁରା କରିବାକୁ ନଦେଇ ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳା ଯାଙ୍କ ହାତକୁ କୁପନ୍ଟି ବଢେଇଦେଇ ଗର୍ବ୍ ଯେଇ କହି ପକେଇଲେ, “ତୁମେମାନେ ବ୍ୟବହାର କଲେ ମୁଁ ବହୁତ ଖୁସି ହେବି” । କୁପନ୍ଟିକୁ ଯାଙ୍କ ହାତକୁ ବଢେଇଦେଇ ସ୍ଥିତ ହୁଏ କହିଲେ, “ତୁମେ ମୋତେ କବାଟଟି ଖୋଲିବକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟକଲ, ବଦଳରେ ମୁଁ ବି ତୁମ ପାଇଁ କିଛି କରିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଛି, ଇଏ ପରା ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ୍ ସମୟ ।”

ଆମେ ଦୁହେଁ ଉତ୍ତରରେ କୁଣ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇ ହସିଦେଲୁ କେବଳ । ତାପରେ ସେ ମୋତେ ଚାହିଁ ଉଦାସ କଣ୍ଠରେ କହିଲେ, “ମୋ ମନ ଆଜି ବହୁତ ଦୁଃଖ, ମୁଁ ଆଜି କିଛି ମୂଲ୍ୟବାନ ପଦାର୍ଥ ହଜେଇ ଦେଇଛି ।” ଏକ ଲମ୍ବା ଦୀର୍ଘଶ୍ୱାସ ନେଇ ସେ ପୁଣି କହିବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ ... କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ମୋର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମୋତେ ଡିଭୋର୍ସ ଦେଲେ, ସେତେବେଳେ ମୋ ନାତୁଣୀ ମୋତେ ଗୋଟିଏ ମୁଦି ଉପହାର ଦେଇଥିଲା, କହିଥିଲା, - ଜେଜେମା, ତୁମେ କେବେ ନିଜକୁ ଏକୃଷ୍ଟିଆ ଭାବିବନି, ଯେତେବେଳେ ଏକା ଲାଗିବ ଏଇ ମୁଦିକୁ ଦେଖିବ, ଆଉ ଭାବିବ ଭଗବାନ ତୁମକୁ ବହୁତ ଭଲପାଆନ୍ତି ଆଉ ମୁଁ ବି ତୁମକୁ ବହୁତ ଭଲପାଏ, ମନେ ରଖିଥାଅ ବାଇଗଣି

ରଙ୍ଗ ମୋର ପ୍ରିୟ ରଙ୍ଗ, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ବାଇଗଣି ରଙ୍ଗର ପଥରବସା ମୁଦିଟିକୁ ତୁମ ପାଇଁ ବାଛିଛି ।” କହିସାରି ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳା ନିଜ କୋର୍ ପକେଟ୍‌ରୁ କିଛି ବାହାର କରି ମୋତେ ଦେଖେଇଲେ... ମୁଁ ଦେଖେତ...ହାର୍ଟ ସେପ୍‌ର ମୁଦିଟିଏ... ରୁପା ମୁଦିଟିଏ ହେଇଥିବ ବୋଧେ...ଯାହା ଭିତରୁ ପଥରଟିଏ ଖସି ଯାଇଥିବା ପରି ଲାଗୁଥିଲା...ପଥରଟିର ରଙ୍ଗ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ବାଇଗଣି ହେଇଥିବ ବୋଲି ମୁଁ ମନେମନେ ଧରିନେଲି । ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳା କହିଲେ, “ଆଜି ସେଇ ବାଇଗଣି ରଙ୍ଗ ହାର୍ଟ ସେପ୍ ପଥରଟା କୋଉଠି ଖସିପଡିଲା, ଖୋଜିଖୋଜି ପାଉନି” । ସେ ପୁଣିଥରେ ଲମ୍ବା ଦୀର୍ଘଶ୍ଵାସ ନେଲେ ଏବଂ ଆଗରୁ କହିଥିବା ଧାଡିଟିକୁ ଆଉଥରେ କହିଲେ, “କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ମୋର ସ୍ଵାମୀ ମୋତେ ଡିଭୋର୍ସ ଦେଲେ, ସେତେବେଳେ ମୋ ନାତୁଣୀ ମୋତେ ଗୋଟିଏ ମୁଦି ଉପହାର ଦେଇଥିଲା, କହିଥିଲା, - ଜେଜେମା, ଜେଜେବାପା ତୁମକୁ ଡିଭୋର୍ସ ଦେଲେବି ତୁମେ କେବେ ନିଜକୁ ଏକୁଟିଆ ଭାବିବନି, ଯେତେବେଳେ ଏକା ଲାଗିବ ଏଇ ମୁଦିକୁ ଦେଖିବ, ଆଉ ଭାବିବ ଭଗବାନ ତୁମକୁ ବହୁତ ଭଲପାଆନ୍ତି ଆଉ ମୁଁ ବି ତୁମକୁ ବହୁତ ଭଲପାଏ, ବାଇଗଣି ରଙ୍ଗ ମୋର ପ୍ରିୟ ରଙ୍ଗ, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ବାଇଗଣି ରଙ୍ଗର ପଥରବସା ମୁଦିଟିକୁ ମୋ ପ୍ରିୟ ଜେଜେମା ପାଇଁ ବାଛିଛି । ...ହେ ଭଗବାନ ମୋତେ ପଥରଟି ଶିଘ୍ର ମିଳିଯାଉ” । ତାଙ୍କ ଉଦାସ ମୁହଁକୁ ଦେଖି ସ୍ଵତଃ ମୋ ପାଟିରୁ ବହାରିଗଲା, “ମୁଁ ବି ଭାରୁଛି ଆପଣ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ପାଇବେ” । ସାଙ୍ଗେ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳାଙ୍କ ମୁହଁ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ଵଳ ଦିଶିଲା । ସତେ ଯେମିତି ସେ ଏମିତି ଚିକେ ଆଶ୍ଵାସନାର ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷାରେ ଥିଲେ । ସ୍ଥିତ ହସି କହିଲେ ... “ମୋ କଥା ଧୈର୍ଯ୍ୟର ସହିତ ଶୁଣିଥବାରୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଭଗବାନ ତୁମ ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କୁ ସୁଖି ରଖନ୍ତୁ । ମେରି ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ୍ ।” “ମେରି ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ୍ ଟୁ ଇଉ ୠ”, କହି ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କ ଯିବା ରାସ୍ତାକୁ ଚାହିଁରହିଲି ।

ସେ ଧୀରେଧୀରେ ଚାଲୁଥିଲେ । ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ଯେମିତି ଉଇଙ୍କର୍ ଜ୍ୟାକେଟ୍ ଆଉ ବୁଟ୍‌ର ଓଜନ ସେ ବୋହି ପାରୁନାହାନ୍ତି; ତଥାପି ତିସେମ୍ବର ଶୀତ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଘର ଭିତରେ ବାନ୍ଧି ରଖିପାରିନି, ବରଂ ଶୀତ ସହିତ ଯୁଦ୍ଧ କରିବାକୁ ସେ ବାହାରି ଆସିଛନ୍ତି ଏକାଏକା ଠିକ୍ ଯେମିତି ନିଃସଙ୍ଗତା ସହିତ ତାଙ୍କର ଯୁଦ୍ଧ ଜାରି ରହିଛି । ଧୀରେଧୀରେ ଯାଇ ସେ ତାଙ୍କ ଗାଡିର ଦୁଆର ଖୋଲି ଗାଡି ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ କଲେ ଆଉ ହାତ ହଲେଇ ଆମକୁ ବିଦାୟ ମାଗିଲେ । ମୁଁ ମୁହଁ ଫେରାଇ ଦେଖେତ ସେପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଇଏ କବାଟକୁ ଖୋଲି ଧରିଥିଲେ । ଆମେ ଭିତରକୁ ଗଲୁ । ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ନଥିଲେ ବି ସେ ଦେଇଥିବା ...ଗୋଟିଏ କିଣିଲେ ଆରଟି ମାଗଣା ...କୁପନ୍‌ଟିକୁ ଆମେ ବ୍ୟବହାର କଲୁ । ଯୁଦ୍ଧର କଫି ପଇସାରେ ସେମିତି ରୁଚି ନଥିଲେବି “ଭଦ୍ର ମହିଳାଙ୍କ ସମ୍ମାନରେ” କହି କଫି ପଇସାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭକଲେ । ଭଦ୍ର ମହିଳାଙ୍କ ହସରେ ଭରି ରହିଥିବା ନୀରବ ବେଦନା ଆଉ ତାଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ ପୁଟି ଉଠୁଥିବା ନିଃସଙ୍ଗତାର ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ମୋତେ ତଥାପି ବ୍ୟଧିତ କରୁଥିଲା । ଇଏ କହିଲେ, “କେତେ ସଂକ୍ଷେପରେ ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳା ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ କାହାଣୀ କହିଦେଲେ” । ଉତ୍ତରରେ କିଛି କହିବାକୁ ନଥିଲା ମୋର, କେବଳ ଦୀର୍ଘଶ୍ଵାସଟିଏ ବାହାରିଆସିଲା । ମୁଁ କଫିରେ କ୍ରିମ୍ ଢାଳି ହ୍ରେଷ୍ଟା ମିଶୋଉ ମିଶୋଉ ଭାରୁଥିଲି, - ତାଙ୍କ ନିଃସଙ୍ଗ ଜୀବନର ଅମୂଲ୍ୟ ସଂପଦ ସେଇ ବାଇଗଣି ପଥରଟି ତାଙ୍କୁ ମିଳିଯାଆନ୍ତା କି?

ଡୋର୍ ପାଖରୁ କାହାର ଆବାଜ ଆସିଲା...ମେରି ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ୍ ।



୨୨୫୪୭, କରେକ୍ଟ୍ ଡ୍ରାଇଭ୍  
ମାଲୋମ୍, ମିଡିଗାନ୍  
ୟୁକ୍ଟରାଜ୍ ଆମେରିକା

[swapnalata@comcast.net](mailto:swapnalata@comcast.net)

# ସାଧ୍ୟ ଭ୍ରମଣ

## ଶାନ୍ତି ଲତା ମିଶ୍ର

ଖାଲି ପାଣି ମାଠିଆଟାକୁ ଦି ଗୋଇଠା ଦେଇ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଦେବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଉଥିଲା ଯେ, ଛାତ ନିଜକୁ ସଂଯତ କରିନେଲେ ରୁଦ୍ଧ ବାବୁ । ରାଗ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ମାଠିଆଟା ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଦେଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ନିଜ ପକେଟରୁ ହିଁ ଟଙ୍କା ଦେଇ ପୁଣି ମାଠିଆ କିଣିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ । ରିଟାୟାର୍ଟ



ଜୀବନରେ ପେନସନ୍ ଟଙ୍କା ତ ଗୋଟି ଗଣିତା । ମାପିରୁପି ନ ଚଳିଲେ ନିଜେ ହଇରାଣରେ ପଡ଼ିବେ । କ'ଣ କରିବେ ସେ ଭୁଲ୍ ତ ତାଙ୍କର । ପୃଥିବୀର ସବୁଠାରୁ ଯେ ମୁଖ, ସେହିପରି ଏକ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀକୁ ବିବାହ କଲେ ଜୀବନଟା ଯାହା କଲବଲ ହୁଏ । ଅନ୍ୟ କାହାର ତ ଏପରି ଅନୁଭୂତି ନଥାଏ । କହିବେ କାହାକୁ ! ଶୁଣିବ ବା କିଏ ! ଶୁଣି ରୁଝିବ ବା କିଏ ! ଆଉ ରୁଝିବ ବା କାହିଁକି !

ଘରେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ନାହିଁ କି ! ମାଠିଆରେ ପାଣି ନାହିଁ । ସବୁଦିନ ଚାରିଟା ବେଳେ ସେ ଯାଆନ୍ତି ସାଂଧ୍ୟ ଭ୍ରମଣରେ । ଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଦି ଗାସ ପାଣି ପିଇ ସେ ବାହାରକୁ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ଚାଲିଲା ବେଳେ ହାଲିଆ ଯେପରି ନ ଲାଗିବ । ପାଣି ନ ହେଲା ନାହିଁ ମୁଖ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀକୁ କଣ ଏକଥା ଜଣାନାହିଁ, ପାନ ଦି ଖଣ୍ଡ ଦବାପାଇଁ । ଗଲା ବେଳକୁ ପାନତବା ବି ମିଳିଲାନି । ରୋଷେଇ ଘରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଦିଅଁଙ୍କ ଘର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଖୋଜିଗଲେ ସେ । ଯାଃ, ଆଜି ସବୁ ବିଭ୍ରାଟ । କିଛି ହୋଇ ପାରିବନି । ଶୋଇବା ଘରକୁ ଗଲେ ଚାଦରଟା ପାଇଁ ଯେ ..... ଚାଦରଟା ଯୋଉ କଣରେ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲା ସେଇ କଣରେ ସେମିତି ପଡ଼ିଛି । ଦି ଦିନ ହେବ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ 'ସୂତିବାଳା'ଙ୍କୁ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ସଫା କରି ଦେବାକୁ ଯେ ସଫା ତ ଦୂରେ ଥାଉ ସେଇ କୋଣରେ ସେମିତି ପଡ଼ି ରହିଛି ଚାଦରଟା ।

ରାଗ ତମତମରେ ଗରଗର ହୋଇ ଘରୁ ବାହାରି ଗଲେ ରୁଦ୍ଧ ବାବୁ । ଆଜି ଗଜାନନ ବାବୁ ବି ତାଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଯାଇ ପାରିବେନି ଭ୍ରମଣରେ ବୋଲି ନାତି ହାତରେ ଖବର ପଠେଇ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ତାଙ୍କର ଦେହ ଭଲ ନଥିବାରୁ । ଯାହା ହେଉ ଗଜାନନ ବାବୁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ନିଜର ବେଶୀ ଭାଗ୍ୟବାନ । କିଛି ନ ହେଲେ ବି ଗଜାନନ ବାବୁଙ୍କର ଏକ କୁଳାଙ୍ଗର ପୁଅ ଅଛି ଘରେ । ବୋହୂ ବି ଓ ଦି ଟା ନାତି ଘରେ ରହୁଛନ୍ତି ତାଙ୍କ କଥା ରୁଝିବାକୁ । ହେଇ ତ ନାତି ଆସି ଖବର ଦେଇଗଲା ଜେଜେଙ୍କ ଦେହ ଖରାପ ବୋଲି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ! ସେ ନିଜେ ଦେହ ଖରାପରୁ ଉଠି ଯାଇଥାନ୍ତେ ଖବର ଦେବାକୁ ଯେ ତାଙ୍କର ଦେହ ଭଲ ନାହିଁ ବୋଲି । ତିନିତିନିଟା ପୁଅ ତାଙ୍କର । କିଏ ଯାଇ କୁଆଡେ ସବୁ ରହୁଛନ୍ତି । ବର୍ଷରେ ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଚିଠି, ଦି ବର୍ଷରେ ଥରେ ଆସି ମୁହଁ ମାରି ଦେଇଯାଆନ୍ତି । ହିଁ ବାପା ବୋଉ ବଞ୍ଚିଛନ୍ତି । ସେତିକି ଜାଣିବାଟା ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ତାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ । କେମିତି ବଞ୍ଚିଛନ୍ତି । କାହା ଦ୍ଵାରା ବଞ୍ଚିଛନ୍ତି । କ'ଣ ତାଙ୍କର ଦରକାର କି ନାହିଁ ଜାଣିବାର ବି ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ମନେ କରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ବୃଦ୍ଧ କାଳରେ ମଣିଷ ବଞ୍ଚି ଥାଉ ଥାଉ ନିତି ମରୁଛି । କାହାକୁ କହିବେ । ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଯାଇ କୁଆଡେ ରୁଲୁଛନ୍ତି । ଗରଗର ହୋଇ ମନକୁ ମନ ବକର ବକର ହୋଇ ଚାଲୁଥିଲେ ରୁଦ୍ଧ ବାବୁ ।

ସାଇ ଯାକରେ ଯେତକ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକ ଅଛନ୍ତି ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର କିଛି ନା କିଛି ବୁଝି ଅଛି, କାହାର ରୂପ ଅଛି ତ କାହାର ଗୁଣ ଅଛି ତ କାହାର ବିଦ୍ୟା ବା ଧନ । କିଏ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ତ କିଏ ସରସ୍ଵତୀ, କିଏ କମଳା ତ କିଏ ବିମଳା । କିନ୍ତୁ ସୂତିବାଳାଙ୍କର କୋଉପିରେ କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ନାଁ ଟା କ'ଣ ନା ସୂତିବାଳା । ଆଜି ଆଉ ଭାଲି ହୋଇ ଲାଭ ବା କଣ । ତାଙ୍କ ବେଳରେ ନିଜ ଇଚ୍ଛାରେ ତ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ବଛା ଯାଉ ନଥିଲା । ଯାହା ତାଙ୍କ ଭାଗ୍ୟରେ ଲେଖାଥିଲା ସେଇଆ ହେଲା । ଆଜି ଭାଲି ହୋଇ ଦୁଃଖ ସାଉଁଟିବା କେବଳ ସାର ହେଉଛି । ଦିନ କାଳ ସରିବାକୁ ବସିଲାଣି । ପାଚିଲା ଆମ୍ବ, କେତେବେଳେ ଝଡ଼ିବେ ଗଛରୁ କିଏ ଜାଣେ । ଆଜି ଆଉ ଦୁର୍ଭାଗ୍ୟ ଲିଖିତ ଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ଦୋହରାଇଲେ କଅଣ ହେବ । ଚାଲୁଥିଲେ ସେ ଏକ ଅନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ରାସ୍ତାରେ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟହୀନ ଭାବରେ ।

ସୂତିବାଳା ଫେରି ଆସି ଦେଖନ୍ତି.....ରୋଷେଇ ଘରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଦାଣ୍ଡ କବାଟ ଯାଏ ସବୁ ଖୋଲା ମେଲା । କଣ ଯେ କରିବେ “ସୂତିବାଳା” । ମାତ୍ର ଘଣ୍ଟକ ପାଇଁ ଘରୁ ଗୋଡ଼ କାଢ଼ିଥିଲେ ସେ । ସୀତା ବୋଉଙ୍କର ଅକ୍ତିମ ସମୟ । ପଡୋଶୀ ରବି

ବୋଉଙ୍କ ସଂଗେ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ସେ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ତାଙ୍କୁ । ଏତିକି ସମୟର ଅନୁପସ୍ଥିତିରେ ଘରେ ଖଣ୍ଡ ପ୍ରଳୟ । ଭାଗ୍ୟ ବସତଃ କେହି କୁକୁର ବିଲେଇ ରୋଷେଇ ଘରେ ପଶି ନାହାଁନ୍ତି । କ’ଣ ଯେ କରିବେ ସୂତିବାଳା, ଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ କେବଳ ନିୟିବା ବ୍ୟତୀତ । ପୃଥିବୀର ସର୍ବଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ମୁଖ ଅବାଗିଆ ମଣିଷକୁ ବିବାହ କରି ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷ ସେ କେମିତି ଯେ ବିତେଇଲେଣି କେବଳ ସେ ହିଁ ଜାଣନ୍ତି । ଛାତ, ଆଜି ଆଉ ଭାଗ୍ୟ ସଂଗେ ବିବାହ କରି ଲାଭ କ’ଣ । ହାତ ଗଣତିରେ ଆଉ କିଛିଟା ବର୍ଷ ଏ ସଂସାରର ଅତିଥି ସେ । କରିବାକୁ ବା ଭାବିବାକୁ ହାତରେ ଆଉ ବେଶୀ ସମୟ ନାହିଁ । ଏମିତି ଏମିତିରେ ଦିନ ବିତି ଗଲେ ଗଲା ।

ଆଜି ବାବୁ ପାଣି ବି ପିଇ ନାହାଁନ୍ତି । କୁଆଡେ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି, ଖାଲି ମାଠିଆଟାକୁ ଗଡେଇ ଦେଇ । ମାଠିଆଟା କଣା ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିବାରୁ ସେଥିରେ ମାଟି ଲଗେଇ ଶୁଖେଇ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ସେ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଆଜି ମାଠିଆଟାକୁ ଖାଲି କରିଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ମାଠିଆ ପାଖରେ ଢାଳେ ପାଣି, ଗିଲାସ ସବୁ ରଖି ଦେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଦିଶିଥିବକି ତାଙ୍କୁ ! କଣ ଯେ କରିବେ ସେ । ଆଜି ବାଟରେ ହାଲିଆ ହୋଇ ଚେତା ବୁଡି ପଡିଲେ ସେଇ ବୁଝିବେ । ଶୋଇବା ଘରକୁ ଗଲେ ସେ; ତାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରିୟ ଗପ ବହିଟାଏ ଆଣି ବାହାର ବାରଣ୍ଡାରେ ବସି ପଢିବେ ବୋଲି । ବାହାରେ ଭଲ ସୁଲୁ ସୁଲିଆ ଥଣ୍ଡା ପବନ ବୋହୁଛି ।

ଏଇ ଦେଖ ବାବୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଚାନ୍ଦରଟା ବି ନେଇ ନାହାଁନ୍ତି । ସେମିତି ସାର୍ଟ ଖଣ୍ଡେ କି ଗଞ୍ଜି ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଗଲେଇ ଦେଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ବୋଧେ । କାଲି ବର୍ଷା ହୋଇଥିବାରୁ ସେ ତାଙ୍କ ପୁରୁଣା ଚାନ୍ଦରଟା ସଫା କରି ପାରିନଥିଲେ ଶୁଖିବନି ବୋଲି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ବଡ ପୁଅ ଗଲା ବର୍ଷ ଦେଇଥିବା ନୂଆ ଚାନ୍ଦରଟା ସେ ଶେଷ ଉପରେ ରଖି ଦେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଆଖି ଚାନ୍ଦର ଉପରେ ପଡିବ ବୋଲି ତା ଉପରେ ପାନ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଥାଳିଆରେ ରଖିଦେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ । ପାନ ଉପରେ ଆଖି ପଡିଲେ ଚାନ୍ଦର ଉପରେ ଆଖି ପଡିବ ବୋଲି । ଧନ୍ୟରେ ସେ ଆଖି । ଆଙ୍ଗୁଠି ଗେଞ୍ଜି ନ ଦେଖେଇଦେଲେ ସେ ଆଖିକୁ କିଛି ଦିଶେନା । ସେ ସୀତାବୋଉଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖି ଗଲାବେଳେ ରୁଦ୍ରବାରୁ ନିଘୋଡ ନିଦରେ ଶୋଇ ଘୁଙ୍ଗୁଡି ମାରୁଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ନ ଉଠେଇ ଶିୟ ଫେରି ଆସିବେ ଭାବି ଚାଲି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ତାଙ୍କୁ କିଛି ନ କହି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେଠି ସାଇର ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ଚିହ୍ନା ଜଣା ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖି ଗପୁ ଗପୁ ଚିକେ ଡେରି ହୋଇଗଲା । ଯୁଆଡେ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ଯାଆନ୍ତୁ । ଏ ଥଣ୍ଡାଳିଆ ପବନ ଯୋଗୁ ବେଶୀ ସମୟ ସେ ବାହାରେ ରହି ପାରିବେନି, ସୂତିବାଳା ଭଲ ଭାବରେ ଜାଣନ୍ତି ।

ଦାଣ୍ଡ ବାରଣ୍ଡାକୁ ଚାଲିଆସିଲେ ସୂତିବାଳା ଖବର କାଗଜ ଓ ଗପ ବହି ଧରି । ବାରଣ୍ଡାରେ ଝୁଲୁଥିବା ବେଞ୍ଚ ଦୋଳିରେ ବସି ଝୁଲିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ ପିଠିପଟ ବାଡାରେ ଆଉଜି । ତିନି ଜଣ ବସି ପାରିବା ପରି ଲମ୍ବା ବେଞ୍ଚରେ ସାଇ ଘୋଡେଇ ଗୋଡ ଲମ୍ବେଇଦେଇ ଗପବହି ପଢିବସିଲେ ଯେ ……ଗପରେ କୋଉ ମନ ଲାଗୁଛି ।



ଫେରି ଆସିଲେ ରୁଦ୍ର ବାବୁ ଖୁବ୍ ଶିୟ ସୂତିବାଳାଙ୍କ ଅନୁମାନକୁ ସତ୍ୟରେ ପରିଣତ କରି । ସୂତିବାଳାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ବସି ପଡିଲେ ଦୋଳିରେ । ଥଣ୍ଡା ପବନରେ ରୁମ ସବୁ ଟାଙ୍କୁରି ଉଠିଛି । ଶିୟ ଘୋଡେଇ ଦେଲେ ଭଲ ଚାନ୍ଦରରେ ସୂତିବାଳା ରୁଦ୍ରବାରୁଙ୍କୁ । ପାନ, ପାଣି ଓ ଖବର କାଗଜ ଘୋଗେଇ ଦେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ । ଏଇ ମୁଖ ଅତି ପ୍ରିୟ ବୁଢିଟି ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ନଥିଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ ଆଜି ନର୍କରେ ପରିଣତ ହୋଇ ସାରନ୍ତାଣି । ମୁଗ୍ଧ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରେ କେବଳ ଚାହିଁ ରହିଲେ ରୁଦ୍ରବାରୁ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ମୁହଁରେ କିଛି ପ୍ରକାଶ ନ କରି । ତାଙ୍କର ନିତ୍ୟ ନୈମିତ୍ତିକ ରାଗ ଗରଗର କଥା ଗୁଡାକୁ ଚାପି ରଖି ଗର୍ଭସ୍ଥ କରି ସାରିଲେଣି । ପୁଣି ହୁଏତ ଦରକାର ପଡିପାରେ ସାମଞ୍ଜସ୍ୟ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପରିସ୍ଥିତିରେ ସେଇ ଶବ୍ଦ ଗୁଡିକ ଆଗାମୀ ଦିନକୁ ।

ଏ ସଦୟ ପ୍ରୀତି ଉପହାରର ବିନିମୟରେ ଆଣିଥିବା ରସଗୋଲା ଦିଶା ବଢେଇ ଦେଲେ ରୁଦ୍ରବାରୁ ସୂତିବାଳାଙ୍କ ହାତକୁ । ମୁଗ୍ଧ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରେ ଚାହିଁଲେ ସୂତିବାଳା ତାଙ୍କର ଅତି ପ୍ରିୟ ମୁଖ ସ୍ୱାମୀଙ୍କୁ । ତାଙ୍କର ସ୍ନେହ ଶୁଣା ବିନା ଏ ଜୀବନ ନର୍କ । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଦିନ ସାନ୍ଧ୍ୟ ଭ୍ରମଣରୁ ଫେରିବା ବେଳେ ରୁଦ୍ରବାରୁ କିଛି ନା କିଛି ଆଣିଥାନ୍ତି ସୂତିବାଳାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ - ବରା, ସିଙ୍ଗଟା, ପକୋଡି, ଲଡୁ, ଜଲେବି, ରସଗୋଲା ବା ଅନ୍ୟ ସେହିପରି କିଛି । ଏ ତାଙ୍କର ନିତି ଦିନର ଗତାନୁଗତିକ ଜୀବନ ଧାରାର ପ୍ରଣାଳୀ । ସେଇ ଦୋଳିରେ ବସି ସେମାନେ ଖାଆନ୍ତି । ରାତି ଭୋଜନରେ କ’ଣ ଖାଇବେ ଆଲୋଚନା କରନ୍ତି । ସେଇ ଦୋଳିରେ ବସି ସୂତିବାଳା ଚଷମା ଲଗେଇ ଗପ ବହି ପଢନ୍ତି ଓ ରୁଦ୍ରବାରୁ ଖବର କାଗଜ । ଦାଣ୍ଡରେ ଯିବା ଆସିବା କରୁଥିବା ଚିହ୍ନା ଜଣା ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ତାକ ଦେଇ ପାଖକୁ ଆସିବାକୁ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରନ୍ତି । ପାନ, ପାଣି ଦ୍ୱାରା ଆପ୍ୟାୟିତ କରି ଗପର ଆସର ଜମାନ୍ତି । ଆଜି ଚିକେ ରଗା ରଗି ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ବୋଲି କ’ଣ ତାଙ୍କ ନୈମିତ୍ତିକ ଜୀବନ ଧାରାରୁ ସେମାନେ ଓହ୍ଲି ଯିବେ !

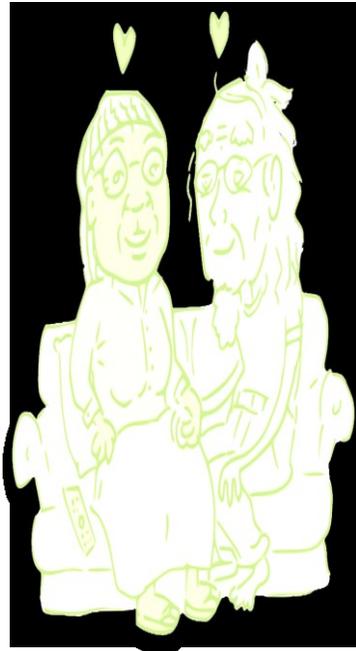
“ -ବୁଝିଲ ସୂତି ! ଆଜି ରାତି ପାଇଁ କିଛି ବିଶେଷ ଆଉ ରୋଷେଇ ବାସ କରନା । ସକାଳର ଘୋଡ ଭାତ ବଳିଛି ତାକୁ

ପଖାଳି ଦିଅ । ମାଛ ଭଜା ତ ଅଛି । ଶାଗ ଦିଗା ଆଣିଛି ବଜାରରୁ । ବଡ଼ି ଦେଇ ଭାଜି ଦିଅ । ହେଲଗଲା ରାତ୍ର ଭୋଜନ” । ସବୁଦିନ ରୁଦ୍ରବାବୁ ରାତ୍ର ଭୋଜନ ପାଇଁ ଏହିପରି ପରାମର୍ଶ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସୃଷ୍ଟିବାଳା ତାଙ୍କର ଯାହା ଇଚ୍ଛା ହୁଏ, ଯାହା ଘରେ ଥାଏ ସେଇଆ ରାନ୍ଧନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯାହାର ରୁଚିରେ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ତିଆରି ହୋଇଥାଉ ପଛେ ଦୁହେଁ ଆନନ୍ଦରେ ଖାଆନ୍ତି । ଆଉ ଖାଇବା ବେଳେ ସେଇ ପୁଅ, ବୋହୂ ନାତି ନାତୁଣୀଙ୍କ ଗପସପରେ ରାତ୍ର ଭୋଜନ ପର୍ବ ଶେଷ ହୁଏ । ଏଇତ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗ, ଏଇତ ଆନନ୍ଦ । ଯେତେ ରାଗ ରୁଷା ହେଲେ ବି ଏଥିରୁ ଓହ୍ଲି ଯିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଛି ବା କିଏ !!



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ଶାନ୍ତି ଲତା ମିଶ୍ର, ରଚେଞ୍ଚର, ମିନେସୋଟାରେ ରହନ୍ତି ।



# ବୋଉକୁ ଚିଠି

ଜୟଶ୍ରୀ(ରାଜୁ) ମହାନ୍ତି

ପୁଞ୍ଜ୍ୟସ୍ତଦା ବୋଉ,

ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ଶ୍ରୀଚରଣେ ଶତକୋଟି ପ୍ରଣାମ । ସ୍ୱର୍ଗରେ ଥାଇ ତୁ ଓ ବାପା ଆମର ଭୂମିଷ୍ଠ ପ୍ରଣାମ ଜାଣିବ । ମନକଥା ଜଣାଇ ତୋ ପାଖକୁ ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଚିଠି ଲେଖିବାର ଏତେ ଇଚ୍ଛା ଥିଲେବି ହେଲ ପାରିଲାନି । ତୁ ଯା' ଭିତରେ ସଂସାର ଛାଡ଼ି ଚାଲିଗଲୁ । କଥାରେ କୁହୁଛି ମନ କଥା ସହସ୍ର କୋଷ ଯାଇପାରେ । ତୁ ଯେଉଁଠି ଥାଆ ମୋ ମନ କଥା ତୋ ପାଖରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବ ବୋଲି ମୋର ଆଶା ।

ବୋଉ, ତୁ ଶୁଣି ଖୁସିହେବୁ, ଆମ ଭାଉଜ ନୀତି, ନିୟମରେ ଠାକୁର ପୂଜା କରୁଛନ୍ତି । କୌଣସିଥିରେ ତୃପ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ହଁ, ଧରେ ମନେ ଅଛି ମୋର, ଭାଉଜଙ୍କ ହାତ ଧରି କେତେ କହୁଥାଉ, 'ଲିଲି, ମୁଁ ଗଲାପରେ ମୋ ଝିଅ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ପଚାରୁଥିବୁ ।' ତୋ ଭାନୁ ଓ ମୁଁ ଆମ ଘରକୁ ଯାଇଥିଲୁ । ଭାଉଜ ସେମିତି ସ୍ନେହ ଓ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାରେ ଖବର ବୁଝୁଥାଆନ୍ତି । ସେଥିରେ ମୋତରୁ ଅବହେଳା ନାହିଁ ।

ତୁ ସଂସାରରୁ ବିଦାନେବା ପୂର୍ବଦିନ ଅଭିମାନରେ ମତେ କହୁଥାଉ, 'ତୁ ତୋ ନାତି, ନାତୁଣୀ, ପୁଅ, ବୋହୂ, ଝିଅ, ଢାଙ୍କୁଁ ପାଇ ମତେ ଭୁଲି ଶଲୁଣି ।' ବୋଉ, ମୁଁ କଣ ତତେ ଭୁଲି ପାରିବି ? ତୁ ପରା ମତେ ଜନ୍ମ ଦେଇଛୁ ।

ମୋର ଅସ୍ତିତ୍ୱ ତୋହରି ପାଇଁ । ମୁଁ ତୋର ରକ୍ତ, ମାଂସ ଓ ନିଶ୍ୱାସରେ ଗଢ଼ା । ତୋହରି କୋଳରୁ ଆସି ଆମ ଗାଁର ମାଟିକୁ ମୋର ପ୍ରଥମ ଛୁଆଁ । ତୋହରି ପାଇଁ ମୋର ଆଜି ଏ ସଂସାର ସହ ପରିଚୟ । ତତେ କେମିତି ଭୁଲିବି? ତା ଛଡ଼ା, ତୋର ଓ ମୋର ଜାତି, ଧର୍ମ, ଗୋତ୍ର ଓ ଚିନ୍ତାଧାରାରୁ ସବୁ ଗୋଟିଏ-ନାରୀ ଜାତି ।

ବୋଉ, ବୟାଳିଶ ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ, ମୋ ହାତ ଆଞ୍ଜୁଳିରେ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ଫଟା ଦେଇ ଆମ ଘରୁ ବିଦା କରିଥିଲୁ ଆଉ କହିଥିଲୁ, 'ମା'ରେ, ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ରଖି ସଂସାରରେ ଚାଲୁଥିବୁ ।' ତୁ ଯେତେବେଳେ କହୁ, 'ମୁଁ ତତେ କିଛି ଦେଇ ପାରିନି,' ମୋ ମନରେ ଆସେ ଆଉ ବା କଣ ଦେଇଥାଆନ୍ତୁ ? ତୁ ତ ଏତେ ବଡ଼ ଅମୂଲ୍ୟ ସଂପଦ ଦେଇଛୁ ତୋ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କୁ ଯେ ଯାହାକି ଅନେକ ତପସ୍ୟା କଲେବି ମିଳିବା କଷ୍ଟ । ସେଇ ବିଶ୍ୱାସରେ ତୋ ପିଲାମାନେ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ନପତି ସଂସାର ପଥରେ ଆଗେଇ ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ।

ବୋଉ, ତୋର ସବୁବେଳେ ଅଭିମାନ ଥିଲା, ମୁଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗଲେ ବେଶି ସମୟ ତୋ ସହ କଟେଇପାରେନି ବୋଲି । ଅନେକ ସମୟ ତତେ ମୁଁ ବୁଝେଇପାରେନି ବା କହିପାରେନି ମୋ ମନର କଥା । ଏତିକି କହୁଛି, ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ଅସୀମ କରୁଣା, ତୋର, ବାପାଙ୍କର ଓ ଅନ୍ୟ ଗୁରୁଜନ ମାନଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ, ପରିବାର ଓ ଅନେକ ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀଙ୍କ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ, ତୋ ଢାଙ୍କୁଁଙ୍କର ନିଃସ୍ୱାର୍ଥ ପ୍ରେରଣାରୁ ଆଜି ତୋ ଝିଅ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଅନେକ ନିରାଶ୍ରୟା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଉପକାର ପାଇ ପାରିଛନ୍ତି । ତୋ ହାତରେ ଦେଇଥିବା ପ୍ରଥମ ପାଞ୍ଚଶହ ଟଙ୍କାରେ 'ଆମର ବିଶ୍ୱାସ' ଓ 'ନାନୋ ଫାଇନାନ୍ସ' ର ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଇଥିଲା ଆମ ଘରର ଏକ ଛୋଟିଆ କୋଣରେ । ଶୁଣି ଖୁସି ହେବୁ ସେଇ ଜରିଆରେ ଆଜି ପ୍ରାୟ ଦଶ ହଜାର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଆଉ ତାଙ୍କ ପରିବାର ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ପାଇପାରିଛନ୍ତି ।

ବୋଉ, ବିଦେଶରେ ତୁ ଓ ବାପା ମତେ ସିନା ବାହା କରିଥିଲ; କିନ୍ତୁ ମୋ ମନଟା ଯେମିତି ସବୁଦିନ ପାଇଁ ଛାଡ଼ିଦେଇ ଆସିଥିଲି ମୋ ବାପା, ବୋଉ, ଭାଇ, ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟରେ, ଆମ ଘରର କାନ୍ଧ ବାଡ଼ରେ, ଆମ ଗାଁର ଅଙ୍ଗବଙ୍ଗ ରାସ୍ତା, ଓ ମାଟି ଦୁଆରରେ । ଯା' ମଧ୍ୟରେ କେତେ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ । ତୁ ଆଉ ମା(ଶୋଶୁ) ଗଲାପରେ ସବୁଥାଇ ଯେମିତି ସବୁ ଅପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଲାଗୁଛି । ଆକାଶରେ ପୁନେଇ ଜନ୍ମ ଅଛି ହେଲେ କିରଣରେ ଶୀତଳତା ନାହିଁ, ସେଇ କୋଇଲି ଅଛି, ହେଲେ ତା ସ୍ୱରରେ ମଧୁରତା ନାହିଁ, ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣୀ ଚାଲିଛି, ହେଲେ ସେଥିରେ ସରସତା ନାହିଁ । ସମୟଟାକୁ ତ କାନିରେ ବାନ୍ଧି ରଖିପାରିଲିନି ହେଲେ ସେଇ ଶିଷା, ଅଭୁଲ୍ଲା ସ୍ମୃତି, ଅନୁଭୂତି, ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା, ସବୁ କିଛି ଚଲାପଥରେ ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ପ୍ରେରଣା ଦେଇଛି, ଠିକ୍ ବାଟରେ ଚାଲିବାକୁ ବାଟ ଦେଖେଇଛି ଓ ଅନ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ଚିନ୍ତା କରିବାର ଉତ୍ସାହ ଓ ଉଦ୍‌ଯୋଗ ଆଣିଛି । ଆଶାକରେ, ଠାକୁରଙ୍କର, ତୋର ଓ ବାପାଙ୍କର ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦରୁ ମୋ ଶେଷ ଜୀବନ ସଂସାର ଜର୍ଜର ସହ ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କ ସେବାରେ କଟିଯିବ ।

ହଉ ଥାଆ ବୋଉ । ତୋ ମନରେ କେବେ କେମିତି କଷ୍ଟ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ତୋ ରାଜୁକୁ କ୍ଷମା ଦେବୁ । ଭୁଲିବୁନି । ରହୁଛି ।

ପ୍ରଣାମ ସହ ।

ତୋର ସବୁଦିନର ରାଜୁ ।



# ପିତ୍ତଳ ପୃଥିବୀ

ଶୁଭେନ୍ଦୁ ମିଶ୍ର

ପୁରୀ ସମୁଦ୍ର କୁଳରେ ବସିଥିଲେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁ । ଆଗରେ ଢେଉ ଗୁଡିକ ଆସି କୁଳରେ ବାଡେଇ ହେଉଥାନ୍ତି । ଲୋକମାନେ ଗାଧୋଇ ଥାନ୍ତି । ପିଲାମାନେ ଖେଳୁଥାନ୍ତି । ବଢିଆ ପାଗ । ହାଲୁକା ପବନ ବୋହୁଥାଏ । ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ମନ ଆନନ୍ଦରେ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ବାବୁ ପୃଥିବୀର ବହୁତ ଦେଶ ବୁଲିଛନ୍ତି । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଯାଗାରେ ସମୁଦ୍ର ମଧ୍ୟ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିଛନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ପୁରୀ ସମୁଦ୍ର କୁଳ ସବୁ ନିଆରା । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଭାରି ଶାନ୍ତି ଲାଗୁଥାଏ ।



ଏତିକି ବେଳେ ତାଙ୍କର ନଜର ପଡିଲା ସାମ୍ନାରେ ଦୁଇଟି ପିଲାଙ୍କ ଉପରେ । ପିଲା ମାନେ ବାଲିରେ ମନ୍ଦିର କରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ବହୁ ପରିଶ୍ରମ କରି ମନ୍ଦିର ତୋଳା ଚାଲିଥାଏ । ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ଢେଉ ଆସି ସବୁ ଧୋଇ ନେଇ ଯାଉଥାଏ । ପୁଣି ପିଲାମାନେ ମନ୍ଦିର ଗଢୁ ଥାନ୍ତି । ପୁଣି ଢେଉ ଆସି ଧୋଇ ନେଇ ଯାଉଥାଏ । ଏ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା ଚାଲିଥାଏ । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଏହା ଦେଖି ଭାବନାରେ ହଜି ଗଲେ ।

ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ପିଲା ହୋଇଥିଲା ବେଳେ ବାପା, ମା, ଭାଇ, ଭଉଣୀ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଆନନ୍ଦରେ ଗାଁରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ଦୋଳ ରେ ଘୋଡ଼ା ନାଚ, ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ବିମାନରେ ବୁଲି ଘରେ ଘରେ ଭୋଗ ଖିଆ, ମେଳଣ, ରଜ ରେ ପିଠା ଖିଆ, ଦୁର୍ଗା ପୂଜା ଏ ପରି ବାର ମାସ ର ତେର ପର୍ବ ର ମଜା ନେଉଥିଲେ । ବିଲ ରେ ବୁଲିବା, ଖରା ବେଳେ ବାଡି ପଟେ ଯାଇ କୋଳି ତୋଳିବା, ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାରେ ଗାଁ ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା କରିବା, ନଇ ବଢିରେ ଯାଇ ବନ୍ଧ ଜଗିବା, ଏ ସବୁ ଗାଁ ର ଅନୁଭୂତି । ମ୍ୟାଟ୍ରିକ୍ ପରୀକ୍ଷା ପରେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଉଚ୍ଚ ଶିକ୍ଷା ପାଇଁ ସହର କୁ ଗଲେ ।

ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଗାଁ ରେ ଯେଉଁ ବାଲି ର ମନ୍ଦିର ଗଢି ଥିଲେ, ଜୀବନ ରୂପୀ ସମୁଦ୍ର ତାକୁ ଲିଭେଇ ଦେଲା । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଆଉ ଏକ ମନ୍ଦିର ଗଢିବାକୁ ଚାଲିଲେ ସହରକୁ ।

ସହରରେ ଉଚ୍ଚ ଶିକ୍ଷାର ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୁଏ । ନୂଆ ପରିବେଶ । ନୂଆ ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥୀ । ସକାଳଟା ଟିକେ ଡେରିରେ ହୁଏ ଓ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାଟା ଟିକେ ଡେରିରେ ସରେ । ନୂଆ ସାଙ୍ଗ ମାନଙ୍କର ବହୁତ ରଙ୍ଗ । ଅଳ୍ପ ଟିକେ ପାଠ ପଢ଼ା ସାଙ୍ଗରେ, ବହୁତ ସିନେମା ଦେଖା, ହୋଟେଲ୍‌ରେ ଖିଆ, ଗୁଲି ଖଟି ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ସବୁ ଚାଲିଥାଏ । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ମେଧାବୀ ଛାତ୍ର ଥିବାରୁ କଲେଜରୁ ପାସ୍ କରିପାରିଲେ ଓ ଗୋଟିଏ ଚାକିରିରେ ଯୋଗଦାନ ଦେଲେ । ଇତି ମଧ୍ୟରେ ବିଦେଶରୁ ଚାକିରି ପାଇଁ ଡାକରା ଆସେ । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଭାବିଲେ ଏତେ ପାଠ ପଢିଲି, ବିଦେଶରେ ଚାକିରି କଲେ ଏହାର ସହଯୋଗ ହେଇପାରିବ । ବିଦେଶରେ ରୋଜଗାର ବି ଭଲ ହେବ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଭାଇ, ଭଉଣୀମାନେ ବାହାସାହା ହେଇ ସଂସାର କଲେଣି । ସେମାନେ ଟିକେ ଟିକେ ଅନାଟନ ଭିତରେ ଗତି କରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ବାପା ଚାକିରୀ ରୁ ଅବସର ନେଲେଣି । ଶ୍ଵାଶୁ ଟିକେ ଟିକେ ବାହାରିଲାଣି । ତାଙ୍କର ଓ ଔଷଧ ପାଇଁ ଟଙ୍କା ଦରକାର । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଭାବିଲେ ବିଦେଶ ଗଲେ ଭଲ ରୋଜଗାରରୁ କିଛି ଅଁଶ ନିଜ ପ୍ରିୟଜନ ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ କରି ପାରିବେ । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଅବସ୍ଥା ସୁଧୁରି ଯିବ । ଏହା ଭାବି ସେ ବିଦେଶ ଗଲେ ।

ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ସହରରେ ଯେଉଁ ବାଲିର ମନ୍ଦିର ଗଢିଥିଲେ, ଜୀବନ ରୂପୀ ସମୁଦ୍ର ତାକୁ ଲିଭେଇ ଦେଲା । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଆଉ ଏକ ମନ୍ଦିର ଗଢିବାକୁ ଚାଲିଲେ ବିଦେଶକୁ ।

ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ବିଦେଶରେ ଭଲ ଚାକିରି ପାଇଲେ ଓ ପ୍ରିୟଜନ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆର୍ଥିକ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ପଠେଇବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ । ବିଦେଶରେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ନୂଆ ଦୁନିୟାର ସାମ୍ନା କରିବାକୁ ପଡିଲା । ପୁଞ୍ଜି । ପୁଞ୍ଜି ବିଦେଶିନୀ । ରମ୍ଭା ମେନକା ପଲ ପଲ । ଗୋଡ ବୁଲେଇ ଦେଲେ ନାଚଶାଳା । ମୁହଁ ବୁଲେଇଲେ ଭଲିକି ଭଲି ଦୋକାନ । ଦୋକାନରେ ଜିନିଷ ମାନେ ଦାଉ ଦାଉ କରି ଜଳୁ ଥାନ୍ତି । ସତେ ଅବା କହୁ ଥାନ୍ତି ଆମକୁ ଘରକୁ ନିଅ । ଆମେ ସବୁ ଭାରି କାମରେ ଆସିବୁ । ଇଆଡେ ରମ୍ଭା ମେନକା ମାନେ ଭଲିକି ଭଲି ପୋଷାକ ପିନ୍ଧି ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ ଆଖି ଠାରି ତାକୁ ଥାନ୍ତି । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଏ ସବୁ ଦେଖି ଭାବିଲେ ଶଳା ସ୍ଵର୍ଗଟା ଏଇଠି । ହାତ ପାଆନ୍ତାରେ ମିଳି ଗଲା । ଇଆଡେ ବିଦେଶିନୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗ ପାଇବାକୁ ହାକୁ ହାକୁ ହେଉଥାନ୍ତି, ସିଆଡେ ମନରେ ତର, ଘରେ ଜାଣିଲେ କଣ କହିବେ । ହେଲେ ଏ ଯୁଦ୍ଧରେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଜିତିଗଲେ । ନିଜ କୁଳର ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିଅ ମମତାକୁ ବାହାହେଲେ ଓଡିଶା

ଆସିକରି । କିଛିଦିନ ପରେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଓ ମମତା ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ବିଦେଶ ଫେରିଲେ । ବିଦେଶରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ମମତା ଅଳ୍ପ ଦିନ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ବିଦେଶିନୀ ପାଲଟି ଗଲେ । ଛୋଟ ଛୋଟ ଲୁଗା ପିନ୍ଧା, ନାଚ ଗୀତ ସବୁ ଚାଲିଲା । ଶୁକ୍ରବାର ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାରୁ ଆମୋଦ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଇଯାଏ । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପରିବାର ଜଣଙ୍କ ଘରେ ଏକାଠି ହୁଅନ୍ତି । କୁକୁଡ଼ା ମାଂସ, ଛେଳି ମାଂସ, ମାଛ, ଚିକ୍କିଟି, ଅଣ୍ଡା, ମାକାରୋନି, ନୁଡୁଲ୍ସ୍, ବରିଟୋ, ଚାଲୁପା ପ୍ରଭୃତି କିସମ କିସମର ଖାଇବାରେ ଭୋଜି ଜମି ଉଠେ । ବାବୁ ମାନେ ଚିକେ ଚିକେ ନାଲି ପାଣି ଆରମ୍ଭ କରନ୍ତି । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ବାବୁଆଣି ମାନେ ଚିକେ ଚିକେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ରାତି ବଢ଼ିଲା ପରେ ନାଚ ଗୀତ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୁଏ । ବାବୁ ବାବୁଆଣିଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ପିଲାମାନେ ବି ଏଥିରେ ଯୋଗ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ମମତା ଓ ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ପାଖାପାଖି ସଭ୍ୟତାରେ ରଲେଇ ଗଲେ । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ବି ବହୁତ ଖୁସୀ । ଯା ହେଉ, ସେ ଗୋଟେ ଦେଶୀ ଝିଅ, ବିଦେଶୀ କଲେବରରେ ପାଇଗଲେ । ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ନିଜର ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇଲା । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଆଉ ପୂର୍ବ ପରି ଟଙ୍କା ପଠେଇ ପାରିଲେନି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଥିବା ଘର ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପାଖକୁ । ସମୟ ଅଭାବରୁ ଏତେ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ବି ଆଉ ହେଇ ପାରନ୍ତିନି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଲୋକଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ । ଘର ଲୋକଙ୍କ ସହ ସଂପର୍କ ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ କମି ଆସିଲା । ବିଦେଶରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ହେଇ ରହିବା ଏତେ ସହଜ ନୁହେଁ । ପୁରା ପୁରି ଏକ କଠିନ ବ୍ୟାପାର । ବହୁତ ମେହେନତ ଦରକାର । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଓ ମମତା ସେଥିରୁ ବାଦ୍ ଯାଆନ୍ତେ କିପରି ।

ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ବିଦେଶରେ ଯେଉଁ ବାଲିର ମନ୍ଦିର ଗଢ଼ି ଥିଲେ ଘରକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବେ ବୋଲି, ଜୀବନ ରୂପୀ ସମୁଦ୍ର ତାକୁ ଲିଭେଇ ଦେଲା । ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ବିଦେଶରେ ଆଉ ଏକ ମନ୍ଦିର ଗଢ଼ିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ ନିଜ ପରିବାରକୁ ନେଇ ।

ଈତି ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଓ ମମତା ଦୁଇଟି ସନ୍ତାନର ଅଧିକାରୀ ହେଲେ । ବିଦେଶରେ ଏତେ ଦିନ ରହିଲେଣି ଅଥଚ ନିଜର ଘର ଖଣ୍ଡେ ନାହିଁ । ଦିନେ ଏହି କଥା ଭାବି ଭାବି ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହେଲେ ମମତା । ନିଜ ମନ କଥା ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ କହିଲେ । ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ମନକୁ କଥାଟା ପାଇଲା । ହେଲେ ଘର କିଣା ବଡ଼ ଝାମେଲା । ଦୁନିଆ ଧାର୍ କରଜ କରି ଘର ଖଣ୍ଡେ କିଣା ହେଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଅବସ୍ଥା ସୁଧୁରିଗଲା । ଅବସ୍ଥା ସୁନ୍ଦର ହେଇଗଲା । ଘର ପାଇଁ ଯେଉଁ ଧାର୍ କରଜ କରିଥିଲେ ସେ ସବୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଶୁଝି ଆସିଲା । ପୁଣି ଦିନେ ଭାବିଲେ, ଏ ଘରର ଧାର୍ ତ ଶୁଝି ଗଲାଣି, ପିଲାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଦି'ଟା ଘର କରିଦେଲେ ହୁଅନ୍ତା ନାହିଁ ? ଆମ ବାପା ମା' ତ ଆମ ପାଇଁ କିଛି ରଖି ନ ଥିଲେ । ଆମେ କେତେ ପରିଶ୍ରମ କରି କିଛି କରିପାରିଲୁ । ଆମ ପିଲା ଗୁଡ଼ା ଆମ ଭଳିଆ ହଇରାଣ ନ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ ।

ବିଦେଶରେ ଯେଉଁ ବାଲିର ମନ୍ଦିର କରିଥିଲେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଘର ପାଇଁ ଉଧାର ନେଇକରି, ଜୀବନ ରୂପୀ ସମୁଦ୍ର ତାକୁ ଲିଭେଇଦେଲା ଉଧାର ଶୁଝି କରି । ତା ପରେ ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଆଉ ଏକ ମନ୍ଦିର ତିଆରି କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଚାଲିଲେ ଉଧାର ନେଇ ପିଲାଙ୍କ ଘର ତିଆରି ପାଇଁ ।

ରମେଶ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ବୟସ ପଚାଶ ପାଖାପାଖି । ଜୀବନର ପ୍ରଥମାର୍ଦ୍ଧରେ ଯେଉଁ ସବୁ ମନ୍ଦିର ତୋଳିଥିଲେ ସେ ସବୁ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଗଲାଣି । ପୁରୀ ସମୁଦ୍ର କୂଳରେ ବସି ତାଙ୍କୁ ଏ କଥାଟା ବିଦ୍ୟୁତ୍ ଭଳିଆ ଲାଗିଲା । ସେ ଚମକି ପଡ଼ିଲେ ।

ପୁଣି ଫିକ୍ କରି ହସି ଦେଲେ । ଧେର୍ ମୁଁ କଣ ଭାବୁଛି । ଘର ତ ଅଛି ନା । ହେଲେ ଆରେ ମନ, ସେ ଘର ଆଉ କେତେ ଦିନ, ମାତ୍ର ଅଢେଇ ଦିନ । ଆଉ ଏତେ ଦିନର ସ୍ମୃତି, ଅନୁଭୂତି, ମଉଜ, ମଜଲିସ୍, ସେ କୁଆଡ଼େ ଯିବ । ଆରେ ଏ ଅଝଟିଆ ମନ, ସେ ସ୍ମୃତି, ଅନୁଭୂତି, ମଉଜ, ମଜଲିସ୍ ବି ଆଉ ଅଢେଇ ଦିନ ।



*The world, even if you hold on to it, will slip. ପିଛିଳ ପୁଥିବୀ (Slipping World)*

ଶୁଭେନ୍ଦୁ କୁମାର ମିଶ୍ର ଜି / ମ୍ ୯, ଭି. ଏସ୍. ଏସ୍ ନଗର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ୭୫୧୦୦୭ formerly from Guelph, Ontario, Canada

# ଈଶ୍ଵର

ପ୍ରତିଭା ରାୟ



ଗାଁ ସରଗରମ । ମଶାଣି ପଡ଼ିଆର ଭୂତପ୍ରେତମାନଙ୍କୁ ଧମକତମକ, ଲାଞ୍ଜ, ତନ୍ତ୍ରମନ୍ତ୍ର ବଳରେ ଘଉଡ଼େଇ ଦିଆଯାଇ ସଭାମଞ୍ଚ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭାବରେ ଗଢ଼ା ହେଉଛି । ଲୋକଙ୍କ ବସିବା ପାଇଁ ବିସ୍ତର ଜାଗା ଅବଶ୍ୟ-ସେଥିରେ କଣ୍ଠାଝଣା, ମଣିଷ ଖପୁରି, ହାଡ଼, ଭଙ୍ଗାମାଠିଆ, ହାଣ୍ଡି, ଖପରା ଅନ୍ଧବହୁତ ପଡ଼ିଛି । ଜନତା ସେସବୁ ଖାତିର କରେନାହିଁ । ସେସବୁ ତ ତା' ଜୀବନର ନିତିଦିନିଆ ଅଂଶ । ଗାଁପିଲାଏ ସେସବୁ ନେଇ ଖେଳନ୍ତି । ତିଆଁ ମାରନ୍ତି, ଗଡ଼ାତଡ଼ା ହୁଅନ୍ତି । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଜୀବନୀଶକ୍ତି ପ୍ରଖର । ତେଣୁ କିଛି କ୍ଷତି ହୁଏନାହିଁ । ଗୋରୁଖୁଆଡ଼ ଭଳି କାଠ ବାଉଁଶର ବାଡ଼ ତିଆରି ହୋଇ ଚାରିପଟ ବନ୍ଦ । ମଞ୍ଚ ନିକଟକୁ ଯେମିତି କାହାରି ଧାପ ନପଡ଼େ । ଆଜିକାଲି ଭୂତପ୍ରେତଙ୍କ ଅପେକ୍ଷା ମଣିଷଗୁଡ଼ାକ ବେଶୀ ଖତରନାକ । ଗାଁ ଗାଁରେ ବୋମା ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀମାନେ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ଭଲ ବ୍ୟବସାୟ ସେଥିରେ ଚାଲେ । ବାଣ ବେପାରରେ ବର୍ଷକ ବାରମାସ ପେଟ ପୂରେନାହିଁ । କାରଣ, ଭାତ-ତୁଣ ଭଳି ସବୁଦିନ ବାଣ ଲୋଡ଼ା ହୁଏନାହିଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ବୋମା ଲୋଡ଼ାହୁଏ ସବୁଦିନ । ସକାଳେ, ସଞ୍ଜରେ, ଖରାବେଳେ ବୋମାର ଚାହିଦା ଅଛି । ଖାକି ପୋଷାକଧାରୀ ବାବୁମାନେ ବନ୍ଧୁକ ଧରି ଧାଁଦଉଡ଼ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ବିଚରାଗୁଡ଼ା ବଡ଼ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ଅଛନ୍ତି । କେମିତି ଭଲରେ ଭଲରେ ଭୋଟ୍ ସଭାଟା ବଢ଼ିଯାଉ । ଜନତାର ଚିନ୍ତା ନାହିଁ କି ଦକ ନାହିଁ । ଗୋରୁକୁ ଅଡ଼େଇଲା ଭଳି ଅଡ଼େଇ ଅଡ଼େଇ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆଣି ଖୁଆଡ଼ ଭିତରେ ବସେଇ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ପରୋପକାରୀ ଦେଶସେବୀମାନେ । ଜବାବ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ସଭା ସରିଲେ ପେଟ ପୂରାଇ ଭାତ, ଡାଲମା ଖାଇବାକୁ ମିଳିବ, ମଜୁରି ବାବଦ ପଇସା ବି ମିଳିବ । କେତେ ମିଳିବ ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ପାଉଣା ଛିଡ଼ିନି ସିନା; କିନ୍ତୁ ମିଳିବାଟା ନିଶ୍ଚିତ । ଏବେ ଭୋଟ୍ ସଭାଟାକୁ କହୁଛନ୍ତି 'ନିର୍ବାଚନୀ ସଭା' । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପାଟିରେ ପଶୁନି, ସେଥିରୁ ମିଳିବ କ'ଣ । ଇଂରାଜୀ କହିଲେ ଯାହା, ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କହିଲେ ସେଇଆ ! ଗାଁ ଲୋକ ଜାଣନ୍ତି ଭୋଟ୍‌ର ବାଦୀପାଲା ଏବେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଗଲା । ବାଃ ! ବିନା ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚରେ ମନୋରଞ୍ଜନ ତ ହେବ । ତା' ପରେ ଖାଇବା - ପିଇବା, ମଜୁରି । ଗାଁର ବେକାର ଟୋକାମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅସ୍ଥାୟୀ ଚାକିରି ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଖଣ୍ଡେ ମିଳିଯାଇଛି । ସ୍ଥାୟୀ ଚାକିରି ମିଳିବ ବୋଲି ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ବି ମିଳିଛି । କେଜାଣି, ସତ କି ପାଣିରେ ଗାର । ତେବେ ତାଗଡ଼ା, ଗୁଣ୍ଡାଗିରିରେ ଓଷାଦ୍ ଆଉ ଜୀବନକୁ ପାଣି ଛଡ଼ାଇ ଦେବା ଭଳି ସାହସୀ ଟୋକାମାନଙ୍କର ଚାହିଦା ଏଇ ଅସ୍ଥାୟୀ ଚାକିରି ପାଇଁ ବେଶୀ । ହଉ, ଦିନାକେତେ ତ ମଦ, ମାଂସ ଧୁଳା ଉଡ଼ାଇବ । ବିଚରାଗୁଡ଼ା ସବୁଦିନେ ଏସବୁ ପାଆନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଈଶ୍ଵର ଯଦି ବପୁ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ତାହାହେଲେ କାମରେ-ଦେଶ କାମରେ ଲାଗୁ । ବଡ଼ପାଟିଆ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରରେ ନେତାଙ୍କର ଗୁଣଗାନ ନାମସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନ ଭଳି ଚାଲିଛି । ଲୋକେ ଚାତକ ଭଳି ଚାହିଁ ବସିଛନ୍ତି । ଅଠର ବର୍ଷୀୟ ପିଲାମାନେ ନେତାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରସେସନ୍ ଆଗରେ ନାଚ ଗୀତ କରିବେ ବୋଲି ଉତ୍ସାହରେ ଅଧୀର ହୋଇପଡ଼ିଲେଣି । ତା' ଭିତରେ ଚଉଦରୁ ଅଠର ପିଲା ବି ଅଛନ୍ତି । ଗାଁପିଲାଙ୍କର ଜନ୍ମତାରିଖ କାହାକୁ ବା ଜଣା ! ବାପା- ମାଆ ବି ତାରିଖ ଭୁଲି ଯାଇଥାନ୍ତି । ଏଇ ବଡ଼ଲୋକିଆ ପିଲାମାନେ ଜନ୍ମତାରିଖ ଗଣି ଗଣି ସହଜ ବୁଢ଼ା ହୋଇଯାଆନ୍ତି ବୋଲି ଗାଁଲୋକଙ୍କର ବିଶ୍ଵାସ । ଲାଭ କ'ଣ । ତମ ବୟସ ତ ତମ ରକ୍ତରେ ଲେଖାହେଇଛି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ତେଜୁରା ପିଟିବା କି ଲୋଡ଼ା ? ଯେମିତି ବାବୁଘର ପିଲାମାନେ ସ୍କୁଲରେ ବୟସ କମେଇ ନାଁ ଲେଖାନ୍ତି, ସେମିତି ଏଇ ଅଲୋଡ଼ା ଜନତାଙ୍କ ପିଲାମାନେ ବୟସ ବଢ଼େଇ ଭୋଟ୍ ତାଲିକାରେ ପଣିସାରିଲେଣି । ଦୁଇଟାଯାକର ଲାଭ ଅଛି । ମଣିଷ କ୍ଷତି ସହିବା ପାଇଁ କିଛି କରେନାହିଁ । ତେଣୁ ପନ୍ଦର ବର୍ଷର ପୁଅକୁ ଅଠର କହିବାରେ କ୍ଷତି କ'ଣ । ତଦ୍ଵାରା ତା' ଆୟୁଷରୁ ତିନିବର୍ଷ ତ କେହି ନେଇଯିବ ନାହିଁ । ଏଣିକି ନେତା-ନେତାମାନେ ବର-କନ୍ୟା ଭଳି ବେଶ ହେଇକି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ବଡ଼ ସୁନ୍ଦର ମାନ୍ତ୍ରଣି । ଭୋଟ୍ ପରବ ନଥିବାବେଳେ ନାଣ୍ଡି ହୋଇ ବୁଲୁଥିବେ, କଲେଜ ଝିଅଙ୍କ ଭଳି ଜାମା ପ୍ୟାଞ୍ଜ ପିନ୍ଧୁଥିବେ, ମାତ୍ର ବାହାଘର ଠିକ୍ ହୋଇଗଲେ ଯେମିତି ଝିଅଙ୍କର ବେଶ ବଦଳିଯାଏ, ସେମିତି ନେତାମାନେ ଶାଢ଼ି ପିନ୍ଧି, ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଓଡ଼ଣା ଦେଇ, ସିନ୍ଦୂର ଟୋପା ପିନ୍ଧି, ବେକରେ ଗେଣ୍ଡୁମାଳ ପକାଇ କି ସୁନ୍ଦର ନମସ୍କାର ପକେଇ ପକେଇ ମଞ୍ଚ ଉପରକୁ ଉଠନ୍ତି । ନେତାମାନେ ବି କିଏ କେତେମତେ ବେଶ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତି । କାହା ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଠେକା ତ କାହା ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ପଗଡ଼ି, ଆଉ କାହା ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ମୁକୁଟ । କାହା ମଥାରେ ଚନ୍ଦନଟୋପା ତ ଆଉ କାହା ମଥାରେ ସିନ୍ଦୂରକଳି । ସମସ୍ତେ ଆଉ ପ୍ରକାରେ ଦିଶନ୍ତି । ଏମତି ବେଶ ବଦଳାଇ ଆସିଥାନ୍ତି କାହିଁକି ? ରାବଣ ସିନା ସୀତାଙ୍କୁ ଚୋରି କରିବାପାଇଁ ବେଶ ବଦଳାଇଥଲା; ଏମାନେ ବେଶ ବଦଳାଇବାର

ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ କ'ଣ ? ଜନତାଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ବସିଥିବା ଗାନ୍ଧୀ ଅମଳର ଜଣେ ବୁଢ଼ା ମାଷ୍ଟର କହିଲେ - “ସୀତା ଚୋରି ତ ସାମାନ୍ୟ କଥା, ସେତେବେଳେ ରାମ ଥିଲେ ସୀତାଙ୍କୁ ଉଦ୍ଧାର କରିବାପାଇଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏ ବେଶ ବଦଳ ପରା ଦେଶ ଚୋରି ପାଇଁ, ଆଉ ରାମ କାହାନ୍ତି ଦେଶକୁ ଉଦ୍ଧରିବା ପାଇଁ ।” ଜନତା ଭିତରୁ ଜଣେ କହିଲା - “ଦେଶ ଚୋରିଟା ବା କଉ ବଡ଼ କଥା, ବିଦେଶୀମାନେ ଦରିଆପାରି ହେବା ହେଲାଣି ବହେ ବର୍ଷ । ଦେଶୀ ଲୋକ ଯଦି ଦେଶ ଚୋରି କଲେ, ସେଥିରେ ଆମର କି ଯାଏଆସେ । ଦେଶତ ତା’ ଆନରେ ଅଛି ନା, କୁଆଡ଼େ ତ ପଳଉନି ।” ଦୀର୍ଘଶ୍ୱାସ ଛାଡ଼ି ମାଷ୍ଟର କହିଲେ- “ତୁମକୁ ବୁଝାଇବା କଷ୍ଟ, କାରଣ ତୁମେ ତ ସ୍କୁଲଘର ମାଟି ମାଡ଼ିନ । ତୁମର ବିଚାର ଉପରେ ତ ଭାତ ଡାଲି ବଢ଼ାହେଇଛି, ତୁମକୁ କହି ଲାଭ କ’ଣ ?” ଠିକ୍ ଏତିକିବେଳେ ଜନତା ଭିତରେ ଉଠିଲା ଆନନ୍ଦର କଳରବ । ନେତାଙ୍କ ସଜ୍ଜିତ ଯାନ ଦେଖୁ ନୁହେଁ, ନେତାଙ୍କ ଯାନ ଆଗରେ ରୁପେଲି ଜଗତର ହୀରୋ- ହୀରୋଇନ୍‌କୁ ଗୀତ ଗାଉଥିବାର, ନାଚୁଥିବାର, ହାତଯୋଡ଼ି ଭୋଟ ପାଇଁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରୁଥିବାର ଦେଖୁ । କେହି ଜଣେ କହିଲା - “ପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କ କୃପାରୁ ଏ ଚର୍ମଚକ୍ଷୁ କ’ଣ ନଦେଖିଲା ! ଆମେ ନିଶ୍ଚେ ଏଇ ନେତାଙ୍କ ଚିହ୍ନରେ ଭୋଟ୍ ବାଡ଼େଇଦେବା ।” ଆଉଜଣେ କହିଲା - “ଆଉ ଦଳ ନେତାଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ବି ଖାସା ହୀରୋ- ହୀରୋଇନ୍ ଆସିଥିଲେ । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଆସିବେ । ଓଲିଉଡ଼, ବଲିଉଡ଼, ହଲିଉଡ଼, ଜଲିଉଡ଼, ଟଲିଉଡ଼, ଠଲିଉଡ଼, ତା’ ପରକୁ ପର ତ, ଭ, ଶ, ତ, ଥ... କ୍ଷ’ ଉଡ଼ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ହୀରୋ-ହୀରୋଇନ୍‌ଙ୍କୁ ଏମାନେ ଉଡ଼ାଇ ଆଣିପାରିବେ । ତମେ ଏଥର କାହାକୁ ଭୋଟ୍ ଦେବ ?”



ଜଣେ ସବ୍‌ଜାନ୍ତା ଟୋକା କହିଲା - “ଅଧାକିଆ ଲୋକଟିଏ କହିଲା, ମୁଣ୍ଡଟା ଘାଉଁରେଇ ଦେଉଛିରେ ଭାଇ ! ମୁଁ କିଛି ଦେଖୁବିନି, ଆଖି ବୁଜି ସବୁ ଚିହ୍ନ ଉପରେ ଭୋଟ ବାଡ଼େଇଦେବି । ସମସ୍ତେ ତ ଖୁଆଇଲେ, ପିଆଇଲେ, ନାଚତାମସା ଦେଖେଇଲେ, ଅଣ୍ଟାଗୁଞ୍ଜା ଦେଲେ, ପକ୍ଷପାତ କରି ଧର୍ମହାନି କିଆଁ କରିବି ।” ଜଣେ ରସିକିଆ କହିଲା - “ଖୁବ୍ ଭଲ ଖୁବ୍ ଭଲ, ଏହା ହିଁ ପ୍ରକୃତ ଗଣତନ୍ତ୍ର ନୀତି । ଗଣତନ୍ତ୍ରରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ସମାନ, ବାଛବିଚାର କାହିଁକି ? ଭାରତଟା ସବୁଠୁ ବଡ଼ ଗଣତନ୍ତ୍ର ନା । ସେଇଥିପାଇଁ ଆମର ବାଛବିଚାର ରଖିବା ଉଚିତ ନୁହେଁ ।” ନେତା ମଞ୍ଚ ଉପରକୁ ଉଠିଯିବା ମାତ୍ରେ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତି ମୁତାବକ କରତାଳି ଅଜାଡ଼ି ହୋଇପଡ଼ିଲା । “ଜୟ ହୋ... ଜୟ ହୋ...” ଶବ୍ଦରେ ଗଛତାଳରେ ବସିଥିବା ବାକି କେତେଟା ଭୂତପ୍ରେତ ଉଡ଼ି ପଳେଇଲେ ।

ନେତା ଭାଷଣ ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ - “ମୋର ଅତି ପ୍ରିୟ ଭାଇ ଓ ଭଉଣୀମାନେ...”

ଜଣେ ଫସ୍ତୁ ଫୁସ୍ତୁ ହେଲା -ଆରେ ଏଇଟା ତ ଧୋତରା ବୁଢ଼ାଟେ, ଆମ ଭିତରେ ତ ତା’ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀ ବୟସର କେହି ନାହାନ୍ତି, ବରଂ କହିଥାଆନ୍ତା- “ମୋର ପୁଅ-ବୋହୂ, ଝିଅ-ଜାଇ-ନାତି-ନାତୁଣୀମାନେ ।” ଆଉ ଜଣେ ଫୁସ୍ତୁ ହେଲା - “ଆରେ, ମୁଁ ଜାଣିଛି ମାନନୀୟ ନେତାଙ୍କର ଅଣନାତି, ପଣନାତି ବି ଅଛନ୍ତି । ଛାଡ଼, ଆମେ ତାଙ୍କ ଦଳରେ ମିଶିଲୁ ବୋଲି ସେ ଭାବିସାରିଲେଣି । ତେଣୁ ଆମେ ହେଲୁ ଗୁରୁଭାଇ-ଭଉଣୀ ।” ଠିକ୍ ଠିକ୍ - ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ପାଳି ଧରିଲେ । ଏତିକିବେଳେ ଶାନ୍ତିରକ୍ଷା ପାଇଁ ପୋଲିସ୍ ଲାଠିଚାଳନାର ଲଜିତ ଦେଲେ ।

ଜନତା ମୁକ୍ତ ହୋଇ ବସିରହିଲେ ।

ନିର୍ବାଚନୀ ଭାଷଣ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଲା - “ମୋ ହୃଦୟ ଦୁଃଖରେ ଫାଟିପଡ଼ୁଛି ଯେ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଉପରେ ଛାତ ନାହିଁ । ଆପଣଙ୍କର ଚାକିରି ନାହିଁ । ଖାଦ୍ୟ, ଶିକ୍ଷା, ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ, ପିଇବା ପାଣି କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ଏପରିକି ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପୁଅମାନେ ହାତକୁ ଦି’ହାତ ହେବାପାଇଁ ଆଖପାଖରେ ଭୁଣହତ୍ୟା ଯୋଗୁଁ ଝିଅ ବି ମିଳୁନାହାନ୍ତି । ଆମ ସରକାର ଆସିଲେ ଏସବୁ ଅସୁବିଧା ଦୂର କରିବା ହେବ ଆମର ପ୍ରଧାନ କାମ । ଆମର ସ୍ନୋଗାନ ହେଉଛି - ଗରିବ ହଟାଓ ଔର୍ ଗରିବୀ ବଟାଓ । ଆପଣମାନେ ସମସ୍ତେ ମୋ ସହ ଏହି ବାକ୍ୟଟିକୁ ଉଚ୍ଚସ୍ୱରରେ ଚିନିଅର କୁହନ୍ତୁ ।” ଜନତା ଆବେଗର ସ୍ରୋତରେ ଭାସିଯାଇ ସେହି ବାକ୍ୟର ପୁନରାବୃତ୍ତି କଲାବେଳେ ନେତାଙ୍କ ପାଖଲୋକ ରୁପଚୁପ୍ କରି ତାଙ୍କ କାନ ପାଖରେ

କହିଲା - “ସାର୍, ଶେଷବାକ୍ୟଟା ଓଲଟା କହିଦେଲେ । ଏହି ପଦ ଏବେ ବିରୋଧୀ ଦଳକୁ ଆମ ବିରୋଧରେ କହିବା ପାଇଁ ସୁହାଇବ । ଆପଣ ଦୟାକରି ଲିଖିତ କାଗଜକୁ ଭଲ କରି ପଢ଼ି କୁହନ୍ତୁ ।”

“ତୁମ୍ଭ କର, ତମେ ନେତା ନା ମୁଁ ନେତା । ଏସବୁ ଚଳିବ ଚଳିବ... । ପ୍ରଥମେ ଯେଉଁ କଥାଗୁଡ଼ାକ କୁହାଗଲା ସେଗୁଡ଼ାକ ବି ଓଲଟା ଫଳିବ । କେବଳ ଆମ ସରକାର ନୁହେଁ, ସବୁ ସରକାର ତ ଯାହା କହନ୍ତି ତାହା ଫଳେନାହିଁ । ବରଂ ଓଲଟା ଫଳେ । ତା’ଛଡ଼ା ଏଗୁଡ଼ାକ ମୂର୍ଖ, ଫୁଟପାଥରେ ମଶାଣି ଦାଢ଼ରେ ବଞ୍ଚୁଥିବା ଲୋକଗୁଡ଼ା । ଏତେ ଗହନକୁ ଠଉରେଇ ପାରିବେନି । ତମେ କିଆଁ ଜିରାରୁ ଶିରା କାଢ଼ୁଛ ।”

ନେତା ପୁଣି ଭାଷଣ ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ- “ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଘର ହେବ, କାରଣ ଆମେ ଜାଣିଛୁ ଗରିବ ଭିତରେ ହିଁ ଈଶ୍ଵର ବାସ କରନ୍ତି । ଗରିବର ପୂଜା ହେଉଛି ପ୍ରକୃତ ଈଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କର ଆରାଧନା । ଗରିବ ଈଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଉପରେ ମନ୍ଦିର ତୋଳିବା ପାଇଁ ଆମ ସରକାର ରକ୍ତପାତକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଖାତିର କରେନାହିଁ । ଜନତା ଭଳି ଈଶ୍ଵର ମଧ୍ୟ ମୂକ । ସେ ଈଶ୍ଵର ଆଜି ଖରାତରାରେ ବର୍ଷା ବତାସରେ ବେଘର ପଡ଼ିଛନ୍ତି । ଆପଣଙ୍କ ସହଯୋଗ ଆମର କାମ୍ୟ । ଶିବ ମନ୍ଦିରଟିଏ ହେଲେ ପାର୍ବତୀ ବସିବେ, ରାମ ମନ୍ଦିର ହେଲେ ସୀତା ବସିବେ, ନାରାୟଣ ମନ୍ଦିର ହେଲେ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ସ୍ଥାପନା ହେବେ । ଆମ ଭିତରେ କେତେଜଣ ନେତାଙ୍କ ଭଳି ହନୁମାନ, କାର୍ତ୍ତିକେୟ, ନାରଦ ଆଦି ଚିର ବ୍ରହ୍ମଚାରୀ ହୋଇରହିଛନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ କଥା ଛାଡ଼, କିନ୍ତୁ ଅନ୍ୟ ସବୁ ଦେବତାଙ୍କର ଏକ ବା ଏକାଧିକ ପଢ଼ା । ତେଣୁ ତୁମ ପୁଅମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅଲବର୍ତ୍ତ ଝିଅ ମିଳିବ ।”

ଜଣେ କେହି ଚିତ୍କାର କଲା - “ଆଜ୍ଞା ! ଏବକାର ଶିକ୍ଷିତ ପିଲେ ଆଉ ବାହାହେବାକୁ ରାଜି ନୁହନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କର ଝିଅ ଦରକାର ନାହିଁ ।”  
କାରଣ - ନେତା ପତାରିଲେ । ଜଣେ ଠିଆ ହୋଇଯାଇ କହିଲା - “ଆଜ୍ଞା, ବାହାଘରର ଦିନ କେଜଣା ନଯାଉଣୁ ସ୍ଵାମୀ, ଶାଶୁ, ଶ୍ଵଶୁର, ବଂଶକୁଟୁମ୍ବ ଯାଇ ଜେଲ୍‌ରେ । ଝିଅର ବାପା ମାଲାମାଲ୍ । ଆପଣମାନେ ପରା ଏଇ ଆଇନ ଗଢ଼ିଛନ୍ତି । “ଆମ ସରକାର ଆସିଲେ ସବୁ ଆଇନ ବଦଳିଯିବ । ମୋର୍ ଉପରେ ଆଇନକାନୁନ କିଛି ରହିବ ନାହିଁ ।” - ନେତା କହିଲେ । “ଖୁବ୍ ଭଲ... ଖୁବ୍ ଭଲ...” - ଜନତାଙ୍କ ଭିତରୁ ଆନନ୍ଦର କଳରବ ଉଠିଲା । କେହି ଜଣେ ଠିଆ ହୋଇ କହିଲା - “ଆଜ୍ଞା, ଆମ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଉପରେ ତ ଚାଳ ନାହିଁ । ଆମକୁ ତ ମନ୍ଦିର ମନା, ମନ୍ଦିର ତିଆରି କରି ଲାଭ କ’ଣ ? ଆମ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଉପରେ ଆଗ ଚାଳ ଉଠୁ ।” ନେତା ଉଚ୍ଚସ୍ଵରରେ କହିଲେ - “ତମେମାନେ କିଛି ବୁଝୁନାହିଁ । ଉଚ୍ଚକୁ ଉଠିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୋଟିଏ କରି ପାହାଚ ଉଠିବାକୁ ହୁଏ । ତୁମମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଘର ତିଆରି କରିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ସେଥିରେ ଅନେକ ଝାମେଲା ଅଛି । ସେ ଜମି କାହାର, ତା’ର ମାଲିକାନା କାହା ହାତରେ ଅଛି, ଏମିତି ଅନେକ କଥା । ସେ କଥା ଯାଅ କରୁ କରୁ ଆଉ ଗୋଟାଏ ସରକାର ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଯିବ । ତୁମ କଥା ଭାବିବ କିଏ ? ବରଂ ମନ୍ଦିର ତିଆରି କଲେ କେହି ପାଟି ଫିଟାଇବେ ନାହିଁ । ଗୋଟାଏ ଜମି ଉପରେ ପତାକାଟିଏ ଉଡ଼ାଇଦେଲେ କଥା ସରିଲା । ଆମ ଦେଶ ହେଉଛି ଧର୍ମନିରପେକ୍ଷ ଦେଶ । ଧର୍ମ ନାମରେ ଘରଫାର, ସଂପତ୍ତି, ବଗିଚା, ଫାର୍ମ ଯାହା କଲେ ବି ସେଥିରେ ହାତ ମାରିବାକୁ କାହାରି ସାହସ ହେବନାହିଁ । ମନ୍ଦିରକୁ ଦାନ ଦେବା ପାଇଁ ହୁଣ୍ଡି ଥୁଆହେବ । ଦାତାମାନେ ଆଖୁବୁଜି ଦାନ ଦେବେ । ସେଥିରେ ପ୍ରସାଦ ରକ୍ଷା ହେବ । କିନ୍ତୁ ତୁମକୁ କେହି ଦାନ ଦେବେ କି ? କେହି ଜଣେ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କଲା - କିନ୍ତୁ ଆମକୁ କେହି କ’ଣ ମାଗଣାରେ ପ୍ରସାଦ ଦେବ ? ନେତା ଉଚ୍ଛ୍ଵସିତ ହୋଇ କହିଲେ - “ଟିକେ ନିଜର ଅକଲ ଖଟାଅ । ପାଳି କରି ତୁମମାନଙ୍କର ଲଙ୍ଗଳା ଛୁଆରୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଲେଖାଁ ମନ୍ଦିର ଭିତରକୁ ଛାଡ଼ିଦେବ । ତା’ପରେ ତ ମନ୍ଦିର ମାରା, ଭୋଗ ମାରା, ଦିଅଁ ମାରା, ବାସ୍ ଭୋଗଯାକ ବାହାରେ ଢଳାଯିବ, ତୁମେ ଗୋରୁ କୁକୁରମାନଙ୍କୁ ଜବତ କରି ପେଟେ ଲେଖାଁ ପ୍ରସାଦ ଖାଇବ । ଆଉ ମନ୍ଦିର କଡ଼େ କଡ଼େ ଯେଉଁ ଦୋକାନ ବଜାର ବସିବ ରାତିରେ ତା’ରି ଦାଢ଼ରେ ଶୋଇପଡ଼ିବ । ସେଇଠି ତୁମର ପିଲାଛୁଆ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ବଢ଼ିବେ, ସଂସାର ବଢ଼ିବ, କାମିକା ହାତ ବଢ଼ିବ ।” ଜନତା ଆନନ୍ଦରେ ବାହା... ବାହା... କଲେ । ସରକାର ଯେ ତାଙ୍କ ପଞ୍ଜିରା ଭିତରେ ଈଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କୁ ଚିହ୍ନଟ କରିଛନ୍ତି ତାହା ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଗର୍ବର ବିଷୟ । ସେମାନେ କିନ୍ତୁ ସବୁଦିନ ଗରିବ ହୋଇ ରହିବାରେ ଦୁଃଖ ନାହିଁ । ନେତା କହିଲେ - “ତୁମର ବୁଝିବା ଉଚିତ ଯେ ତୁମ ଭିତରେ ଈଶ୍ଵର ଥିବା ଯୋଗୁଁ ତୁମର ମନ୍ଦିରକୁ ଯିବାର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ନାହିଁ । ଧନୀ ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଆଉ ଈଶ୍ଵର ନାହାନ୍ତି । ତେଣୁ ସେମାନେ ଈଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କୁ ଖୋଜି ଖୋଜି ମନ୍ଦିରକୁ ଆସନ୍ତି । ଆହା ! ବିଚାରା ଧନୀଗୁଡ଼ିକ... ।”

ଜଣେ ସବ୍‌ଜାନ୍ତ ଟୋକା ଉଠିପଡ଼ି କହିଲା - “ଆଜ୍ଞା ! ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଏହି ମଞ୍ଚରେ ଆଉ ଏକ ଭୋଟ ସଭା ହୋଇସାରିଛି । ସେ ନେତା ମନ୍ଦିର ବିରୋଧରେ ବିଷୋଦ୍‌ଗାର କଲେ । ସେ କହୁଥିଲେ ଯେ ସହରର ରାସ୍ତା କଡ଼େ କଡ଼େ ସେମାନେ ଗରିବ ପାଇଁ ଜମି ଖୋଜିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଆଉ ଜମି ନାହିଁ । ସବୁ ବେଆଇନ ଜବରଦଖଲରେ ଲାଗିଯାନ୍ତେ ମାଡ଼ି ବସିଛନ୍ତି । ସେଠି ଗଞ୍ଜେଇମାଡ଼ୁ ଆରମ୍ଭକରି ଯାବତୀୟ ବେଆଇନ କାରବାର ଚାଲିଛି । ସେ ନେତା କହୁଥିଲେ ଯେ ମନ୍ଦିର ଫନ୍ଦିର ଖାଲି ଗରିବକୁ ଶୋଷଣ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଗୋଟାଏ ଭେଳିକି । ଗରିବ ପାଇଁ ତାଙ୍କ ସରକାର ବାତ୍ୟା ଆଶ୍ରୟକ୍ଷମା ତିଆରି କରିବେ । ବାତ୍ୟା ନଥିବା ସମୟରେ ସେଠାରେ ସ୍କୁଲ୍ କଲେଜ୍ ଚାଲିବ । ବାତ୍ୟା ସମୟରେ ଗୋରୁ, ମଇଁଷି, କୁକୁର, ବିଲେଇ, ସାପ, ବେଙ୍ଗ ସେଠାରେ ଆଶ୍ରୟ ନେଇ ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚାଇପାରିବେ । ଗରିବ ପାଠ ପଢ଼ିବ ଏବଂ ବଞ୍ଚିବ ବି ।” ନେତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ସବୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ଅଛି । ସେ କହିଲେ - “ଆଉ ତୁମମାନଙ୍କ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଉପରେ ଛାତ । ସେ କଥା ପଚାରିଥିଲ କି ନାହିଁ?”

“ଆଜ୍ଞା, ଅଲବର୍ ପଚାରିଛୁ । ପଚାରିବା ଆମର ଅଧିକାର । ନେତା ମଧ୍ୟ ସନ୍ତୋଷଜନକ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ସେ କହିଲେ - “ମଣିଷ ଏକ ମୁକ୍ତ ଜୀବ । ସେ ମୁକ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଜନ୍ମିଥିଲା, ମୁକ୍ତ ହୋଇ ମରିବ । ତା’ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଉପରେ ଛାତ, ଆଉ ତା’ ଚାରିପଟେ କାନ୍ଧର ଅର୍ଥ ବନ୍ଦୀଶାଳା । ହଜାର ହଜାର ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ଆମେ ମୁକ୍ତ ଆକାଶ ତଳେ ବଞ୍ଚିଛୁ ଏବଂ ବଞ୍ଚିରହିବୁ । ଖାଲି ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ବିପର୍ଯ୍ୟୟକୁ ଡର । ସେଇଥିପାଇଁ ଗୃହ ନାମକ ବନ୍ଦୀଶାଳା ଗଢ଼ିଥିଲା । ଗରିବର ଘରଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଏପରି ତିଆରି ହୁଏ ଯେ ବାତ୍ୟାର ଗୋଟାଏ ଝାମ୍ପରେ ସେ ଘର ତା’ ଉପରେ ପଡ଼ି ତା’ର ପ୍ରାଣ ନିଏ । ତେଣୁ ଘର ଅପେକ୍ଷା ବାତ୍ୟା ଆଶ୍ରୟକ୍ଷମ ଅଧିକ ନିରାପଦ ।”

ନେତା ଉଦ୍‌ଘେଷିତ ହୋଇ କହିଲେ - “ଆମ ଦଳ ତୁମକୁ ଲାଗି ମଣ୍ଡିଛି । ଅଥଚ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଦଳ ତୁମକୁ ଗାଈଗୋରୁ, ଘୁଷୁରି, ମଇଁଷି ମଣ୍ଡିଛି । କେଉଁଟା ସମ୍ମାନଜନକ ?”

“ଆଜ୍ଞା, ଆମେ ସମ୍ମାନର ସହ ବଞ୍ଚିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁ” ଜନତାର ଉତ୍ତର ।

“ତେବେ ତୁମେମାନେ ଲାଗି ପାଲଟିଯାଅ ଏବଂ ମନ୍ଦିର ତିଆରି ପାଇଁ ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନରେ ଭାଗ ନିଅ, ସେମାନେ ଲାଗି ଚିହ୍ନିପାରୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି, ଗୋରୁଗାଈକୁ ଚିହ୍ନିଛନ୍ତି । ତେଣୁ ମନ୍ଦିର ତିଆରି ପାଇଁ ରକ୍ତପାତ ହେଲେ ବି ଆମ ସରକାର ପଛଘୁଞ୍ଚା ଦେବାକୁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ନୁହନ୍ତି । ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ ପାଇଁ ପଟୁଆର ଆବଶ୍ୟକ । ପଟୁଆର ପାଇଁ ଗରିବଙ୍କ ସହଯୋଗ କାଳେ କାଳେ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ହୁଏ । କାରଣ ଗରିବଗୁଡ଼ା ଲାଗି ପରି ନିଃସ୍ୱାର୍ଥ, ନିର୍ଲୋଭ ଏବଂ କ୍ଷମତାପିପାସୁ ନୁହନ୍ତି । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଧନ ଓ କ୍ଷମତା ନଥିବାରୁ କିଛି ଆଶଙ୍କା ନାହିଁ । ଧନୀଗୁଡ଼ା ତରୁଆ, ଲୋଭୀ, କ୍ଷମତାପିପାସୁ । ଧନ କ୍ଷୟ, କ୍ଷମତା କ୍ଷୟ, ଯଶ କ୍ଷୟ ସବୁକୁ ଡରି ଡରି ନିତିଦିନ ମରୁଥାଆନ୍ତି । ଗରିବ ମରେ ଥରେ । ଯଦି ସେହି ଗରିବଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ମନ୍ଦିର ନିର୍ମାଣ ହେବ ତେବେ ପଟୁଆର ବାହାରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ । ଦେଶ ପାଇଁ ଯିଏ ପ୍ରାଣ ଦିଏ, ସିଏ ଶହଦ । ଲାଗି ପାଲଟି ଯିଏ ପ୍ରାଣ ଦିଏ, ସେ ଭକ୍ତ । ଏ ଦେଶ ଦେବଭୂମି, କେବଳ ଦେବତାଙ୍କର ଦେଶ ନୁହେଁ, ଭକ୍ତର ଦେଶ । ତୁମେ ହିଁ ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ଏହି ପବିତ୍ର ଭୂମିର ଦେଶବାସୀ, ଏଥର ପଟୁଆର ବାହାରୁ ... ବାହାରୁ... ।” ପଟୁଆର ବାହାରି ପଡ଼ିଲା । ଖାଲି ପେଟ, ଖାଲି



ପାଦ, ଖୋଲା ଦେହ, ଖୋଲା ମୁଣ୍ଡ, ହୃଦୟଖୋଲା ଆବେଗ । ପଛରେ ନେତାଙ୍କ ଶୀତଳାପ, ଗୋଳାବାରୁଦ, ବୁଲେଟ୍ ନିରୋଧକାରୀ ସୁସଜ୍ଜିତ ଯାନ । ନେତାଙ୍କ ଭାଷଣ ଚତୁର୍ଦିଗରେ କୁଆପଥର ଭଳି ବର୍ଷି ଯାଉଥାଏ- “ଗରିବ ହୃଦୟ ଭିତରେ ଲାଗି ରହିଛନ୍ତି, ସେ ଲାଗିକୁ ସମ୍ମାନ କରିବାକୁ ହେବ, ତାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ମନ୍ଦିର ନିର୍ମାଣ ଆମର ସଂକଳ୍ପ, ଗରିବମାନେ ଗୋରୁଗାଈ ନୁହନ୍ତି, ତାଙ୍କର ଆଉ କିଛି ବି ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ନାହିଁ । ଲୋଡ଼ା ହେଲେ ଗରିବର ହୃଦୟ ଫାଡ଼ି ଆମେ ଲାଗିକୁ ଦେଖାଇପାରୁ, ରକ୍ତପାତକୁ ଆମେ ତରୁନାହିଁ ।”

“ଡରୁ ନାହିଁ, ଡରୁ ନାହିଁ” - ପରୁଆର ଭିତରୁ ରୋଳ ଉଠିଲା । ସେପରୁ ମାଡ଼ିଆସିଲା ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ ପରୁଆର । ଦୁଇ ନେତାଙ୍କ ବାଦୀପାଲାର ସ୍ଵର ଭିତରେ ଗୁଳି ବର୍ଷଗଲା । ଏହି ସ୍ଵରଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଗୁଳି-ନିରୋଧକ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଗରିବର ହୃଦୟ-ନିରୋଧକ ନୁହେଁ । ଗରିବଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟ ଠାରୁ ଗୁଳିଗୁଡ଼ାକ ଈଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କୁ ଖୋଜୁଥିଲା । ଯାନ ଆଗକୁ ଚାଲୁଥିଲା । ଭାଷଣ ଥମୁ ନଥିଲା । ଗରିବଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟ ଭେଦି ରକ୍ତାକ୍ତ ଈଶ୍ଵରମାନେ ରଥଚକ ତଳେ ଚିହ୍ନାର କରୁଥିଲେ ।”

ଈଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କର ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ନାହିଁ । ଗରିବର ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ନାହିଁ । କାରଣ ଏ ଦେଶରେ ଗରିବର ଅଭାବ ନାହିଁ । ଚାଲ... ଆଗେଇ ଚାଲ... ଡରିବାର କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ରକ୍ତ ଚୁଡ଼ୁବୁଡ଼ୁ ପରୁଆର ଆଗକୁ ଚାଲିଲା ।



ଆଖ୍ୟାୟିକା, ୨୭, ଗଜପତି ନଗର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ଵର

# ଅକସ୍ମାତ୍ ଆମେରିକା

ବିଭୂତି ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ



ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ଗୋପିନାଥ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କ ଶେଷଦିନ ସବୁ କଟିଥିଲା ଆମେରିକାରେ । ସେଠାରେ ସେ ନିଜ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ଯେତେବେଳେ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଫେରନ୍ତି, ମତେ ଦେଖାହେଲେ କହନ୍ତି- ଥରେ ଆମେରିକା ବୁଲି ଆସ । ଲେଖିବା ପାଇଁ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରେରଣା ପାଇବ । ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କ ସହ ଏକମତ ହୋଇପାରେ ନାହିଁ, କଥା ଛଳରେ କହେ - ପୁଞ୍ଜିବାଦୀ ଆମେରିକା ସୃଜନଶୀଳ ଲେଖକମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରେରଣାର ଉତ୍ସ ବୋଲି ମୋର କେବେ ମନେ ହୋଇ ନାହିଁ । ହେମିଙ୍ଗ୍ସ୍ଟ୍ରି ଏବଂ ନର୍ମାନ୍ ମେଲରଙ୍କ ପରେ ଆମେରିକା ଅନ୍ୟ କୌଣସି ବିଶ୍ୱ ବିଖ୍ୟାତ ଲେଖକଙ୍କୁ ଜନ୍ମ ଦେଇ ନାହିଁ । ସଲ୍ ବେଲୋଙ୍କ ପରି ଆଉ ଯେଉଁ କେତେ ଜଣ ନୋବେଲ୍ ପାଇଛନ୍ତି ସେମାନେ ଆମେରିକା ମାଟିର ମଣିଷ ନୁହଁନ୍ତି । ଅନ୍ୟ ଦେଶରୁ ଆସି ଆମେରିକାରେ ଆଶ୍ରୟ ନେଇଥିଲେ । ଅପର ପକ୍ଷରେ ପାର୍ବଲୋ ନେରୁଦାଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଗାର୍ସିଆ ମାର୍କେଜଙ୍କ ପରି କେତେ ଜଣ ଲେଖକ ଅଛନ୍ତି - ଯେଉଁମାନେ ସାମ୍ୟବାଦୀ ଲାଟିନ୍ ଆମେରିକାରେ ଜନ୍ମ ହୋଇ ବିଶ୍ୱ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ପାଣିପାଗ ବଦଳାଇ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ଯଦି କେବେ ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳେ ତେବେ ସେଇ ଲାଟିନ୍ ଆମେରିକାର ସମୁଦ୍ର କୂଳ କିମ୍ବା ପାହାଡ଼ ଉପରେ କିଛି ଦିନ ରୁପ୍ତାପ୍ ସମୟ ବିତାଇଆସିବି ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ଭାଗ୍ୟର ବିତମ୍ବନା । ଚାହିଁ ନଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଗତ ବର୍ଷ ଜୁଲାଇ ତିନି ତାରିଖରେ ମତେ ଅକସ୍ମାତ୍ ଆମେରିକାରେ ହିଁ ପହଞ୍ଚିବାକୁ ହେଲା । ଉପଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଥିଲା, ଆମେରିକା କଲମ୍ବସ୍ ସିଟିରେ ଆମେରିକା ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସୋସାଇଟିର ୪୫ତମ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବ, ସେହି ଉତ୍ସବର ପ୍ରଧାନ ବନ୍ଧା ଭାବରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବାର ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ । ଆଜିକାଲି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ବାହାରକୁ ପହଞ୍ଚିବା ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ନ ନେଇ କୁଆଡ଼େ ଯାଇ ପାରେ ନାହିଁ । ଏକାକୀ ବିଦେଶ ଯାତ୍ରାର ଅନୁଭବ ନଥିବାରୁ ପହଞ୍ଚିବା ସହ ପୁଅ ରତୁରାଜକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ନେବା ଜରୁରୀ ଥିଲା । ସତ୍ୟ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ମତେ ୨୦୧୪ ମସିହା ଜାନୁୟାରୀ ମାସରେ ଚେଲିଫିଙ୍ଗନ୍ରେ ଆମେରିକା ଯିବାପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହେବାକୁ କହି ରଖିଥିଲେ ହେଁ ଓସା ସଭାପତି ତପନ ପାଢୀ ମାତ୍ର ଜୁନ୍ ୧୮ ତାରିଖ ଦିନ ଆନୁଷ୍ଠାନିକ ଭାବରେ କଲମ୍ବସ୍ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବରେ ଯୋଗଦେବାପାଇଁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କଲେ । ଏତେ ଅଳ୍ପଦିନ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଆମ ତିନିଜଣଙ୍କୁ ଆମେରିକା ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ଭିସା ମିଳିବାରେ ପର୍ବତ ପରିମାଣ ପ୍ରତିବନ୍ଧକ ଥିଲା । ବହୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା ପରେ କଲିକତାସ୍ଥିତ ଆମେରିକା ଦୂତାବାସ ଆମ ତିନିଜଣଙ୍କ ଭିସା ମଞ୍ଜୁର କଲା, ଜୁନ୍ ୨୮ତାରିଖ ଦିନ । ଜୁଲାଇ ଦୁଇ ତାରିଖରେ ଆମର ଫ୍ଲଇଟ୍ । ଶେଷ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ମୋ' ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଭିସା ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିପାରିଲା ନାହିଁ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଏକାକିନୀ ଛାଡ଼ିଦେଇ ଆମେରିକା ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ଆଦୌ ଆଗ୍ରହ ନଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯେହେତୁ ଆମ ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କର ଫ୍ଲଇଟ୍ ଟିକେଟ୍ ହୋଇ ସାରିଥିଲା, ଏବଂ ତା ପୂର୍ବଦିନ ରାତିରେ ଆମେରିକା ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସୋସାଇଟିର ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ସଦସ୍ୟ ତକ୍ଟର୍ ଏସ୍ କେ ଦାଶ୍ ଯେ କୌଣସି ମତେ କଲମ୍ବସ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଉତ୍ସବରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବା ପାଇଁ ବିଶେଷ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରିଥିଲେ, ଆଗ-ପଛ କିଛି ନ ଭାବି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରୁ ନୂଆଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ଯାଇ ସେଇଦିନ ରାତିରେ ଆମେରିକାନ୍ ଯୁନାଇଟେଡ୍ ଫ୍ଲାଇଟ୍ରେ ଉଠିପଡ଼ିଲୁ । ତା' ଆରଦିନ ଭାରତୀୟ ସମୟ ଅପରାହ୍ନ ଦୁଇଟା, ଆମେରିକାନ୍ ସମୟ ଭୋର ଚାରିଟାରେ ଆମେ ନେଉଆର୍କ୍ ଏୟାରପୋର୍ଟରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲୁ । ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଛାଡ଼ିବା ଆଗରୁ ପ୍ରଥମ ଆମେରିକା ଯାଉଥିବା ଯୋଗୁଁ ତକ୍ଟର୍ ଦାଶ ମତେ ଏକ ଜରୁରୀ ପରାମର୍ଶ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । କହିଥିଲେ, ଏୟାରପୋର୍ଟରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଗୋଟିଏ ହୁଇଲ୍‌ଚେୟାର୍ ନେଇଯିବା ପାଇଁ । ହୁଇଲ୍‌ଚେୟାର୍‌ର ତାଲୁକ୍‌କୁ ପାଞ୍ଚ-ସାତ ଡଲାର୍ ଦେଇଦେଲେ ସେ ହେବ ଆମର ଗାଇଡ୍ । ଏୟାରପୋର୍ଟର କାଲବା କଟକଣା ଅତିକ୍ରମ କରି ସେ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ କଲମ୍ବସ୍ ଫ୍ଲାଇଟ୍ରେ ଉଠାଇ ଦେବ ।

ତକ୍ଟର୍ ଦାଶଙ୍କ ପରାମର୍ଶ ମ୍ୟାଜିକ୍ ଭଳି କାମ କରିଥିଲା । ହୁଇଲ୍ ଚେୟାର୍ ତାଲୁକ୍ ଆମକୁ ସକାଳ ଆଠଟା ଫ୍ଲାଇଟ୍ରେ ବସାଇ ଦେଇଗଲା । ଦୁଇ ଘଣ୍ଟା ଗତିଲା ପରେ ଇଉନାଇଟେଡ୍ ଏୟାରକାର୍ପୋର୍ଟ କଲମ୍ବସ୍ ବିମାନ ବନ୍ଦରରେ ଅବତରଣ କଲା । ଛୋଟ ବିମାନ ବନ୍ଦର, କିନ୍ତୁ ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ରୌଦ୍ରବୃତ୍ତ ପୂର୍ବାହୁକୁ ନୀଳାଭ ଶୀତଳତାରେ ଆଛନ୍ନ କରି ରଖିଥିଲା । ଓସା ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବର ଆବାହାକ ସତ୍ୟ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ଆମକୁ ଏୟାରପୋର୍ଟରୁ ହୋଟେଲ୍ ସେରାଟନ୍‌କୁ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ନେଇଯିବାକୁ ପଠାଇଥିଲେ ଯାହାକୁ ସେ ଥିଲେ ମୋର ଲେଖକ ବନ୍ଧୁ କୃତିବାସ ନାୟକଙ୍କ ପୁଅ ଉତ୍କଳ ନାୟକ । ହୋଟେଲରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲାପରେ ପୁଅ ରତୁରାଜ ସହ

ଦେଖାହେଲା ଓସାର କୋଷାଧ୍ୟାୟ ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ରଣବିଭୂଳିଙ୍କ ସହ । ୧୯୯୨-୯୩ ମସିହାରେ କଲିକତାରେ କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର୍ ମେଣ୍ଟେନାନ୍ସ କରୁଥିବା ସମୟରେ ସେ ତାର ସହକର୍ମୀ ଥିଲେ । ଦେଖାହେଲା ବି-ଜେ-ବି କଲେଜରେ ଏକଦା ମୋର ସହକର୍ମୀ ରାଜନୀତି ବିଜ୍ଞାନର ପୂର୍ବତନ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ଦିଗମ୍ବର ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ସହିତ, ଆସ୍ତେ ଆସ୍ତେ ଅପରିଚିତ ଆମେରିକା ଚିହ୍ନାଚିହ୍ନା ମନେହେଲା ।

ଆମେରିକାନ୍ ଓଡିଶା ସୋସାଇଟିର ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବା ପାଇଁ ଆମେରିକାର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ବସବାସ କରୁଥିବା ପ୍ରାୟ ତିନିଶହ ଓଡିଆ ପରିବାର ଆମ ସହିତ ସେଇ ହୋଟେଲ୍ ସେରାଟନରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ଆମେରିକା ସାଧାରଣତଃ ଇମିଗ୍ରାଣ୍ଟ୍ ବା ବିଦେଶାଗତ ମାନଙ୍କ ଦେଶ । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦେଶ ଓ ଜାତିର ଭିନ୍ନ ରୁଚି, ଭିନ୍ନ ଭିନ୍ନ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ଆଖ୍ୟାୟିକ ସହାବସ୍ଥାନ ସ୍ଥଳ ଏଇ ଆମେରିକା । ବିଳମ୍ବରେ ହେଲେ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ଓଡିଆମାନେ ଏହି ମହାସାଗରରେ ସାମିଲ ହୋଇଥିବା ଆନନ୍ଦର କଥା ।

ଯୁକ୍ତରାଷ୍ଟ୍ର ଆମେରିକା ଏକ ବିଶାଳ ଦେଶ । ଏହି ଦେଶରେ ଗତ ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରାୟ ତିନିଶହ ହଜାର ଓଡିଆ ପରିବାର ଜୀବିକା ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନରେ ଆସି ବସବାସ କରି ରହୁଛନ୍ତି । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଅବସ୍ଥାନର ଦୂରତ୍ୱ ଯୋଗୁ ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଓଡିଆ ମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଭାବ ବିନିମୟ ସହଜ ହୋଇନାହିଁ । ଆମେରିକା ଓଡିଶା ସୋସାଇଟି ଭିନ୍ନ ଭିନ୍ନ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ରହୁଥିବା ଓଡିଆ ମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସେତୁବନ୍ଧ ଭାବରେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରୁଛି । ସେହି ଓଡିଶା ସୋସାଇଟିର ଟ୍ରଷ୍ଟମ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବାପାଇଁ କଲମ୍ବସ୍ ସହରକୁ ଆସିଥିବା ପ୍ରାୟ ସାତେ ତିନିଶହ ଓଡିଆ ପରିବାରର ଏକତ୍ର ସମାବେଶ ଏଇ ସହରକୁ ସେଇ କେତେଦିନ ଏକ ମିନି ଓଡିଶାରେ ପରିଣତ କରି ଦେଇଥିଲା ।

ଓସା ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବରେ ପ୍ରଧାନ ଅତିଥି ଭାବରେ ଓଡିଶାର ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଚିତ୍ରଶିଳ୍ପୀ କୈଳାଶ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ମେହେର, ମୁଖ୍ୟବନ୍ଧୁ ଭାବରେ ମୁଁ ଏବଂ ସମ୍ମାନିତ ଅତିଥି ଭାବରେ ଓଡିଶାର ସଂସ୍କୃତି ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଅଶୋକ ପଣ୍ଡା ଯୋଗଦେଇ ଥିଲୁ । ଓଡିଆ ଚଳଚ୍ଚିତ୍ର ସଙ୍ଗୀତ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶକ ଅଭିଜିତ୍ ମଜୁମଦାର୍ ଏବଂ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ କଣ୍ଠଶିଳ୍ପୀ ତପୁ ମିଶ୍ର ତାଙ୍କ ସହଯୋଗୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ସହ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଉପସ୍ଥାପିତ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବରେ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ଥିଲେ ।

ଜୁଲାଇ ଚାରି ତାରିଖ ଦିନ ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନ ନଅଟା ସମୟରେ ବାରବାଟୀ ଦୁର୍ଗନାମରେ ନାମିତ କଲମ୍ବସ୍ ସହରର ଆଭିଜାତ ପ୍ରେକ୍ଷାଳୟରେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଥିଲା ଉପସାଗନ ଉତ୍ସବ । ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ ଓଡିଆ ଭାଷା, ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ସଂପର୍କରେ ମୁଁ ନିଜର ବନ୍ଧବ୍ୟ ଉପସ୍ଥାପିତ କରିଥିଲି । ଏହି ଅଧିବେସନରେ ମତେ ଦିଆ ଯାଇଥିଲା ଲାଇଫ୍ ଟାଇମ୍ ଆଚିଭ୍ମେଣ୍ଟ୍ ଆଓର୍ଡର୍ ସ୍ୱରୂପ ଦୁଇ ହଜାର ଡଲାର୍ ଅର୍ଥରାଶି ଏବଂ ତାମ୍ ଫଳକ । ଜୁଲାଇ ପାଞ୍ଚ ତାରିଖ ଅପରାହ୍ନରେ ଗୋପୀନାଥ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କ ଜନ୍ମ ଶତବାର୍ଷିକୀ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ବୈତରଣୀ ସଭାକକ୍ଷରେ ଆୟୋଜିତ ଏକ ସେମିନାରରେ ମୁଁ ମୋର ବନ୍ଧବ୍ୟ ରଖିଥିଲି । ସେହିପରି ତାର ପୂର୍ବଦିନ ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣରେଖା ସଭା ଗୃହରେ ମୋର ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ଜୀବନର ଅନୁଭୂତି ଶୁଣିବା ପାଇଁ ଆଗ୍ରହୀ ଶୋଚା ମାନଙ୍କର ଭିଡ ଜମି ଯାଇଥିଲା । ଜୁଲାଇ ପାଞ୍ଚତାରିଖ ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନରେ ସେହି ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣରେଖା ସଭା ଗୃହରେ ଆୟୋଜିତ କବିତା ପାଠୋତ୍ସବ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗତ କବି ଗୋପାଳଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ସୁପୁତ୍ର ପରାଶର ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ସଂଯୋଜନାରେ ଆୟୋଜିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଧର ନାୟକଙ୍କ କବିତା ପଢି ଶୁଣାଯିଲେ ତାଙ୍କର ଆମେରିକା ପ୍ରବାସୀ ପୁତ୍ର ବିନୋଦ ନାୟକ । ସ୍ମରଣିତ କବିତା ପାଠ କରିଥିଲେ ନୀଳକଣ୍ଠ ଦାଶଙ୍କ ନାତୁଣୀ ସୁମିତ୍ରା ପାଢୀ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ । ଜନ୍ମଭୂମି ଓଡିଶା ଠାରୁ ବିଛିନ୍ନ ହୋଇ ଦୀର୍ଘ ଦିନ ଆମେରିକାରେ ଅବସ୍ଥାନ କରୁଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଓଡିଆ ମାନଙ୍କ ଭାଷା ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରୀତି ମତେ ମୁଗ୍ଧ କରିଥିଲା ।

ନବକୃଷ୍ଣ ଚୌଧୁରୀଙ୍କ ଜୀବନୀ ଲେଖକ ଅନାଦି ନାୟକଙ୍କ ସହ ଏହି ସମ୍ମିଳନୀରେ ଦେଖାହେଲା । ସେ ଯେ ଇଂରାଜୀରେ ଉପନ୍ୟାସ ଲେଖନ୍ତି ସେ କଥା ମତେ ଜଣା ନ ଥିଲା । ତାଙ୍କର ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଉପନ୍ୟାସ ମତେ ଉପହାର ଦେଲାବେଳେ ଜାଣିଲି ପତ୍ନୀ କାରଲ୍ଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସେ ଆମେରିକାର ମେରିଲାଣ୍ଡରେ ରହୁଛନ୍ତି । ଦେଖାହେଲା ଅକ୍ଷୟ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କ ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ବନ୍ଧୁ ପ୍ରତାପ ଦାସଙ୍କ ସହିତ । ଚିହ୍ନା ହେଲା ତାଙ୍କର ଉପାବଲୁଭ ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ସହ, ଯିଏ ଦୁଇ ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ଓସା ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବକୁ ପୁସ୍ତକ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନୀ ପାଇଁ ଯାଇଥିବା ମୋ' ଲିଖିତ ସମସ୍ତ ବହି କିଣିଥିଲେ !

ସୁଦୂର ଆମେରିକାରେ ମୋ' ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଯେ ଏତେ ଅନୁରାଗୀ ପାଠକ ଅଛନ୍ତି, କଲମ୍ବସ୍ ଓସା ଟ୍ରଷ୍ଟମ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବକୁ ଯାଇ ନ ଥିଲେ କୌଣସି ଦିନ ମୁଁ ତାହା ଜାଣି ପାରି ନଥାନ୍ତି । ସେହି ତିନିଦିନ ରହଣି ମଧ୍ୟରେ ମୋର ଅନୁରାଗୀ ପାଠକ - ପାଠିକାମାନଙ୍କ ଉଷ୍ଣ ସାନ୍ନ୍ଧ୍ୟ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ମୁଁ ନିଜକୁ ନୂତନ ଭାବରେ ଆବିଷ୍କାର କରିଥିଲି । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଅକୃତିମ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା, ଆମେରିକା ଓଡିଶା ସୋସାଇଟିର କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତା, ବିଶେଷ କରି ସଭାପତି ତପନ ପାଢୀ, ଆବାହକ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ସତ୍ୟ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାତା ସଦସ୍ୟ ତକ୍ତର ଶୀତଳକଣ୍ଠ ଦାଶଙ୍କ ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ସହୃଦୟତା ଦୀର୍ଘ ପନ୍ଦର ଘଣ୍ଟାର ବିମାନଯାତ୍ରାର ଜ୍ୱାଳି ଦୂର କରି ମନକୁ ଏକ ସ୍ନିଗ୍ଧ ଆନନ୍ଦରେ ଭରି ଦେଇଥିଲା ।



# ମୁକ୍ତ ପାଲଟିବାର ସମ୍ଭାବନା

ଗୌରହରି ଦାସ



୨୦୦୨ରେ ଚୀନ୍ ଯିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପାଇଥିଲି । ଭାରତ ସରକାରଙ୍କ ତରଫରୁ ଦେଶର ଭିନ୍ନ ଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରଦେଶର ଦଶ ଜଣ ଲେଖକଙ୍କୁ ଚୀନ୍ ଯିବା ଲାଗି ଡକାଯାଇଥିଲା । ସେଠିକି ଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କଥା ମୋ ମନ ଭିତରେ ଉଠି ମାରିଥିଲା । ପ୍ରଥମ କଥା ହେଉଛି, ଭାରତ ପରି ଚୀନ୍ ଗୋଟେ ପୁରୁଣା ଦେଶ; ରାଜା ରାଜୁଡ଼ା, ଧର୍ମଧାରଣା ଓ ଦେବ ବିଶ୍ୱାସର ଭୂମି । ଆମେ ଯେମିତି ଭାରତକୁ ଦେବତାମାନଙ୍କର ଜନ୍ମଭୂମି କହୁ, ଚୀନାମାନେ ନିଜ ଦେଶକୁ ସେମିତି ଦେବତାଙ୍କ କର୍ମଭୂମି କହନ୍ତି । ସେମାନେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରନ୍ତି ଚୀନ୍ ହେଉଛି ବିଶ୍ୱର ନାଭିକେନ୍ଦ୍ର । ଏପରି ଏକ ଦେଶ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ କମ୍ୟୁନିଷ୍ଟ ଶାସନ ଭିତରେ କିଭଳି ବଞ୍ଚିରହିଛି? ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ କଥା ହେଲା, ଚୀନ୍ର ଲୋକ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଭାରତଠାରୁ ଆହୁରି ୨୭ କୋଟି ଅଧିକ ହୋଇଥିବା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ସେ ଦେଶ ଆମ ଦେଶଠୁଁ ଅର୍ଥନୀତି କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଏତେ ଆଗକୁ କିପରି ଯାଇପାରିଛି?

ବେଙ୍ଗିରେ ଥିବାବେଳେ ସେଠିକାର ଭାରତୀୟ ଦୂତାବାସ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ଆମକୁ ଥରେ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ସେଇଠି ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଥିଲି, ଭାରତ କହିଲେ ଚୀନ୍ର ଜଣେ ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକ କ'ଣ ବୁଝେ? ମୋତେ ଉତ୍ତର ମିଳିଲା, ଭାରତ କହିଲେ ଚୀନ୍ର ଜଣେ ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକ ବୁଝେ ଯେ ତାହା ଗୋଟିଏ ବିରାଟ ଦେଶ । ସେ ଦେଶ ପାଖରେ ପରମାଣୁ ଅସ୍ତ୍ର ଅଛି ଓ ବରାବର ସେ କାଶ୍ମୀର କଥାକୁ ନେଇ ପାକିସ୍ତାନ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଲଢ଼େଇ କରୁଛି । ଭାରତରେ ବହୁତ ଦେବତା, ବହୁତ ଦୁଃଖ! ଉଦ୍‌ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଶେଷକଥା ପଦକ ମୋ ଛାତିରେ ଗାର ପରି ଚାଣି ହେଇଗଲା । ବହୁତ ଦେବତା, ବହୁତ ଦୁଃଖ । ସତକଥା ତ! ଭାରତରେ ଚେତ୍ରିଶକୋଟି ଦେବତା ବୋଲି ଆମେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରୁ । ତା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ଭାରତର ଆଜି ଏତେ ଦୁଃଖ ଯେ ଶହେକୋଟି ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଏହି ଦେଶକୁ ପୃଥିବୀର ଅନ୍ୟତମ ଦରିଦ୍ର ଦେଶ ବୋଲି କୁହାଯାଉଛି । କାହିଁକି?

ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଦାରିଦ୍ର୍ୟକୁ ଇଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ବୋଲି କହନ୍ତି ମୁଁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସପକ୍ଷରେ ନାହିଁ । ଦାରିଦ୍ର୍ୟ ମଣିଷ ଜାତିର ଅଭିଶାପ । ଯେଉଁ ଅଭିଶାପ ମଣିଷ ଭିତରୁ ସବୁ ଜୀବନରସ ଶୋଷି ନିଏ, ତା ଭିତରେ ହାନିମଣ୍ୟତା ଭରିଦିଏ, ତା'ର ଆଶା, ଆଗ୍ରହ ଓ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନକୁ ମାରିଦିଏ, ତାକୁ କେବେ ବି ମୁଁ ଇଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ବୋଲି କହିପାରିବି ନାହିଁ ।

ମଣିଷ ଜୀବନର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ କ'ଣ? ସୁଖ, ଶାନ୍ତି ନା ସତ୍ୟର ଉପଲବ୍ଧି? ମଣିଷ ଗୋଟେ ପ୍ରାଣୀ, ବାଘ ବିରାଡ଼ି ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାଣୀ । କୀଟପତଙ୍ଗ ଭିତରେ ବି ଜୀବନ ଅଛି । ଗଛଲତା ଭିତରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଜୀବନ ଅଛି । ତାହାହେଲେ ମଣିଷକୁ କାହିଁକି ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଜୀବ ବୋଲି କୁହାଯାଉଛି? ଆପଣମାନେ ଜାଣନ୍ତି, ଏ ପୃଥିବୀ ପଞ୍ଚ ମହାଭୂତ, ପାଞ୍ଚ ମୌଳିକ ଉପାଦାନ କ୍ଷିତି, ଅପ୍, ତେଜ, ମରୁତ ଓ ବ୍ୟୋମରେ ନିର୍ମିତ । ଏହି ପଞ୍ଚ ପଦାର୍ଥଯାକ ସମସ୍ତ ଜୀବ ବା ବୃକ୍ଷଲତାଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ କିନ୍ତୁ ନାହିଁ । ପଶୁମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ଚାରିଟି, ପକ୍ଷୀମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ତିନିଟି, କୀଟ ପତଙ୍ଗଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ଦୁଇଟି (ଅଗ୍ନି, ବାୟୁ) ଓ ବୃକ୍ଷ ଲତାରେ ମାତ୍ର ଗୋଟିଏ ମୌଳିକ ପଦାର୍ଥ 'ଜଳ' ଅଛି । ମଣିଷ ଭିତରେ ଥିବା ବ୍ୟୋମ ବା ଇଥର ସ୍ୱର୍ଗୀୟ ଚେତନାର କଥା । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଭାଗବତରେ କୁହାଯାଇଛି " -ମଣିଷ ଦେହେ ଦିବ୍ୟଜ୍ଞାନ, ଦେଖ୍ ସନ୍ତୋଷ ଭଗବାନ" । ଆମ ଭିତରୁ ଅଧିକାଂଶ ଲୋକ କେବଳ ସୁଖ କାମନା କରୁ । ସେ ସୁଖ ଭୌତିକ ସୁଖ, ପଞ୍ଚ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରିୟର ତୁଷ୍ଟି ବିଧାନ କରୁଥିବା ସୁଖ । ସମୟେ ସମୟେ ଆମର ସୁଖ ପାଇଁ ଅନ୍ୟ କାହାକୁ ଦୁଃଖ ଦେବାକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆମେ କୁଣ୍ଠାବୋଧ କରୁନାହିଁ । ମୋର ଏଇ ଜିନିଷଟି ଉପରେ ଲୋଭ ଆସିଗଲା । ଏଇଟି ମିଳିଲେ ମୁଁ ଖୁସି ହେବି । ମାତ୍ର ଆପଣ ତାହା ଦେବେ ନାହିଁ । ତେଣୁ ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଠକି, ଚୋରି କରି ବା ବଳ ପ୍ରୟୋଗ କରି ସେ ଜିନିଷଟି ନେବି । ଆପଣ ଦୁଃଖ ପାଇଲେ ପାଆନ୍ତୁ । କିଛି ଲୋକ ଅଛନ୍ତି, ସେମାନେ ସୁଖ ଚାହାନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ, ଶାନ୍ତି ଚାହାନ୍ତି । ସୁଖ ଓ

ଶାନ୍ତି ଦିଲଟି ଏକାକଥା ନୁହେଁ । ଶାନ୍ତି ଚିକିଏ ଗଭୀର ପ୍ରଦେଶର କଥା । ବିଳାସବ୍ୟସନ ମିଳୁ ନମିଳୁ, କାଲି ପାଇଁ ଖାଦ୍ୟ-ବିଶ୍ରାମର ନିଶ୍ଚିତତା ଥାଉ ନ ଥାଉ, ମନ ଶାନ୍ତି ଥିବା ଏପରି ଯୋଗୀ ସାଧକଙ୍କୁ ଆମେ ଦେଖୁଛୁ । ମାତ୍ର ପୃଥିବୀରେ ଖୁବ୍ କମ୍ ଲୋକ ଅଛନ୍ତି ଯେଉଁମାନେ ସୁଖ ଚାହାନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ, ଶାନ୍ତି ସୁଖା ଚାହାନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଜଗତର ଦୁଃଖ, ଦୁର୍ଦ୍ଦଶା ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅହୋରାତ୍ର ବିଚଳିତ କରେ । ସେମାନେ ସତ୍ୟର ସନ୍ଧାନ କରନ୍ତି । ସେ ଆଦିଗୁରୁ ଶଙ୍କରାଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇପାରନ୍ତି, ସେ ଗୌତମବୁଦ୍ଧ ହୋଇପାରନ୍ତି, ସେ ଠାକୁର ନିଗମାନନ୍ଦ ମଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇପାରନ୍ତି । ଈଶ୍ଵର ବା ବୃହତ୍ ତତ୍ତ୍ଵ ମଣିଷକୁ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରି ଏକା ଛାଡ଼ି ଦିଅନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ତା' ପାଖେ ପାଖେ ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ପ୍ରତି ମଣିଷ ପାଖରେ ଈଶ୍ଵର ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ମାତ୍ର ମଣିଷ ତାଙ୍କର ଉପସ୍ଥିତି ଅନୁଭବ କରିପାରେ ନାହିଁ । ତା'ର ଅବସ୍ଥା ସେଇ ଲୋକଟି ପରି ହୁଏ, ଯିଏ ଘରକୁ ପିଠି କରି ଛିଡ଼ାହୋଇ ରାସ୍ତାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଛି ଓ 'ଘର କାହିଁ, ଘର କାହିଁ' ବୋଲି ଖୋଜି ହେଉଛି । ପିଠି ବୁଲେଇ ଦେଲେ ଦେଖନ୍ତା, ଘର ତା ସାମ୍ନାରେ, ହାତ ପାଆନ୍ତାରେ । ମାତ୍ର ସେ ତାହା କରିପାରୁ ନାହିଁ । ଅଭ୍ୟାସର ଦାସ ପାଲଟି ଯାଇଛି ସିଏ । ଆମେମାନେ ଅଧିକାଂଶ ସେହିପରି । ଈଶ୍ଵର କାହାନ୍ତି, ଗୁରୁ କାହାନ୍ତି, ଠାକୁର କାହାନ୍ତି ବୋଲି ଖୋଜି ହେଉଛୁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଈଶ୍ଵର, ଗୁରୁ ବା ଠାକୁର ଯେ ଆମ ନିଜ ପାଖରେ ବା ନିଜ ଭିତରେ ଅହରହ ରହିଛନ୍ତି, ସେକଥା ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ କରୁନାହୁଁ ।

ଭାରତରେ ବହୁତ ଦେବତା, ବହୁତ ଦୁଃଖ ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗକୁ ପୁଣିଥରେ ଫେରିଯାଉଛି । ଧର୍ମ ଓ ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକତାର ମୂଳମନ୍ତ୍ର ହେଉଛି ମନକୁ ମନ ସହ ଯୋଡ଼ିବା, ମଣିଷକୁ ଦେବତାର ସ୍ତରକୁ ଉନ୍ନତ କରିବା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଧର୍ମ ଯେତେବେଳେ ମଣିଷକୁ ଦେବତା ସ୍ତରକୁ ନ ଉଠେଇ ପଶୁ ସ୍ତରକୁ ଖସେଇନିଏ ସେତେବେଳେ ଆମେ ତାହାକୁ କ'ଣ କହିବା? ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ଆରମ୍ଭରେ କେବଳ ମଣିଷ ଥିଲା, ଧର୍ମ ନଥିଲା । ମଣିଷର ଧର୍ମ କହିଲେ ଥିଲା ଆହାର, ନିଦ୍ରା, ମୈଥୁନ । ତା'ପରେ ଧର୍ମ ଆସିଲା । ଈଶ୍ଵର ବିଶ୍ଵାସ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହେଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜି ପୃଥିବୀର ଅଧିକାଂଶ ଦେଶର ମୂଳ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ବେକାରଙ୍କୁ ଚାକିରି ଦେବା ନୁହେଁ, ଭୋକିଲାକୁ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଦେବା ନୁହେଁ, ବୁଢ଼ାବୁଢ଼ୀଙ୍କ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟକୁ ଯତ୍ନଶୀଳ କରିବା ନୁହେଁ, ବରଂ ଧର୍ମ ପ୍ରଚାର । ନୋବେଲ୍ ବିଜେତା ଗୁଣ୍ଡର ଗ୍ରାସ୍ କହିଛନ୍ତି ଭାରତରେ ଯେଉଁ ଧରଣର ସମ୍ବେଦନହୀନତା ସେ ଦେଖୁଛନ୍ତି ତାହା ଅନ୍ୟତ୍ର ଦେଖିନାହାନ୍ତି । ଦୁଇଦୁଇଟି ବିଶ୍ଵଯୁଦ୍ଧ ଅପେକ୍ଷା ଧର୍ମଯୁଦ୍ଧରେ ଅଧିକ ଲୋକ ପ୍ରାଣ ହରେଇଛନ୍ତି । ପାକିସ୍ତାନ ଓ ଭାରତର କଲିର ମୂଳ ମଞ୍ଜି ତ ଧର୍ମ!

ପୃଥିବୀର ସବୁ ଧର୍ମ ଓ ସବୁ ଧର୍ମଗୁରୁ ମଣିଷକୁ ଉଦାର ହେବାପାଇଁ ଶିକ୍ଷା ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନ ଅପେକ୍ଷା ସାଧନାକୁ ବେଶି ଗୁରୁତ୍ଵ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷା ଅପେକ୍ଷା କଷ୍ଟ ସହିବାକୁ ଶ୍ରେୟଃସ୍ଵର ବୋଲି ମନେ କରିଛନ୍ତି । କୋଉଠି କୁହାଯାଇ ନାହିଁ, କେବଳ ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନ ହିଁ ଜୀବନର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ । କେଉଁଠି କୁହାଯାଇନାହିଁ ଅନ୍ୟ ଧର୍ମର ମୂଳୋପାଦାନ ହିଁ ଈଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କ ଉଦ୍‌ବୋଧନ । ଦି' ଦିନ ତଳେ ଖବରକାଗଜରେ ବାହାରିଛି, ସାତ ଆଠଜଣ ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନୀଙ୍କୁ ପୁଲିସ୍ ଗିରଫ କରିଛି । କାରଣ ସେମାନେ ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ଚୋର ଥିଲେ । ଏ ପୋଷାକ ତାଙ୍କର ଛଦ୍ମବେଶ ଥିଲା । କେବଳ ଗେରୁଆ ପୋଷାକ ପିନ୍ଧିଲେ ମଣିଷ ବଡ଼ ହୋଇଯାଏ ନାହିଁ । ନିକଟରେ ସ୍ଵାମୀ ଅଗ୍ନିବେଶ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆସିଥିଲେ । ଗୋଟିଏ ସଭାରେ ଆମେ ଦୁହେଁ ଥିଲୁ । ସେ କହିଲେ, ଭାରତର ମୋଟ ଗାଁ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ୫ ଲକ୍ଷ ଏବଂ ଏହି ୫ ଲକ୍ଷ ଗାଁରେ ଅଛନ୍ତି ପ୍ରାୟ ୬୦ ଲକ୍ଷ ସନ୍ନ୍ୟାସୀ । ପ୍ରତି ଗାଁ ପିଛା ତଳେନେ ସାଧୁ ସନ୍ନ୍ୟାସୀ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ତା ସତ୍ତ୍ଵେ ଏ ଗାଁ ଗହଳରେ ଏତେ ଅନ୍ଧବିଶ୍ଵାସ, କୁସଂସ୍କାର ଏବଂ ଦୁଃଖ କାହିଁକି? ସନ୍ନ୍ୟାସୀମାନେ ତାହାର ପ୍ରତିବାଦ କରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ କାହିଁକି?

ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ପରମହଂସ ଥରେ ଗାଧୋଇବାକୁ ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଦେଖିଲେ ଗୋଟିଏ କଙ୍କଡ଼ା ବିଛା ଭାସିଯାଉଛି । ସେ ତାକୁ ଉଠେଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କଲେ । ମାତ୍ର କଙ୍କଡ଼ା ବିଛାଟି ତାଙ୍କୁ କାମୁଡ଼ି ଦେଲା । ଯତ୍ନଶୀଳରେ ତାଙ୍କ ହାତ ବିକ୍ଷିଲା । ସେ ଛାଡ଼ିପିଟି ହେଲେ । ମିନିଟକର ବ୍ୟବଧାନ ପରେ ସେ ପୁଣି ଥରେ କଙ୍କଡ଼ାବିଛାକୁ ପାଣିରୁ ଉଦ୍ଧାର କରିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଲେ । ଏଥର ମଧ୍ୟ ସେଇ ଏକାକଥା ହେଲା । ଏମିତି ଏ ଘଟଣା ନଅଥର ଘଟିଲା । ଏ ଦୃଶ୍ୟଟି ଦୂରରୁ ଥାଇ ଆଉ ଜଣେ ଲୋକ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ । ସେ କହିଲେ, ତୁମେ ବଡ଼ ନିର୍ବୋଧ ଲୋକ । କଙ୍କଡ଼ା ବିଛାଟି ତମକୁ ନଅଥର କାମୁଡ଼ିଲାଣି । ତମ ହାତଟା ନେଲି ପଡ଼ିଯିବଣି । ତାକୁ ତା ରାସ୍ତାରେ ଛାଡ଼ିଦେଇ ତମେ ଚାଲିଯାଉନା କାହିଁକି? ସେ ଲୋକଟି ଜଣେ ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକ ଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ତାକୁ ଯାହା ଠିକ୍ ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ସେ ସେଇ କଥା କହୁଥିଲା । ସାଧାରଣ ମଣିଷମାନେ ଏଇଆ କରନ୍ତି । ମାତ୍ର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ପରମହଂସ ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକ ନଥିଲେ । ସେ ଥିଲେ ସାଧୁ, ତପସ୍ଵୀ ।

ତେଣୁ ସେ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲେ, "ସାଧାରଣ କଙ୍କଡ଼ା ବିଛାଟିଏ ହୋଇ ସେ ତା'ର କାମୁଡ଼ା ସ୍ୱଭାବ ଛାଡ଼ି ନାହିଁ, ମୁଁ ମଣିଷ ହୋଇ ଅନ୍ୟକୁ ବିପଦରୁ ରକ୍ଷା କରିବାର ଗୁଣଟି ମୋର ଛାଡ଼ିଦେବି? ତାହା କେବେ ହୋଇପାରିବ ନାହିଁ!"

ଈଶ୍ୱର ଆମର ପାଖେ ପାଖେ ସବୁବେଳେ ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ମଧୁସୂଦନ ରାଓ ଲେଖିବା ପରି, "ଯାହା ମୁଁ କହଇ, ଯାହା ମୁଁ କରଇ, ଯାହା ମୁଁ ଚିନ୍ତଇ ମନେ । ଜଗତର କର୍ତ୍ତା ପରମ ଈଶ୍ୱର ଜାଣୁଛନ୍ତି ପ୍ରତିକ୍ଷଣେ ।" ସେ ତାଙ୍କର ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ଯାଦୁକରର କାଉଁରୀ କାଠି ପରି ଆଣି ଛୁଆଁଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ କିଛି ଲୋକ ଈଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ କରୁଣାକୁ ମ୍ୟାଜିକ୍ ପରି ଭାବନ୍ତି । ସେତେବେଳେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଅନ୍ଧବିଶ୍ୱାସ ସ୍ତରକୁ ଚାଲିଯାଏ ।

ଲୋକଟିଏ ଗାଁରେ ଥାଏ । ବନ୍ୟା ମାଡ଼ିଆସିଲା । ଅନ୍ୟ ଲୋକମାନେ ନିଜ ନିଜର ଜିନିଷପାତି ଧରି ଉଇ ଜାଗାକୁ ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ବାହାରିଲେ । ଲୋକଟି କିନ୍ତୁ ଗଲା ନାହିଁ । ପ୍ରଥମେ ଗୋଟେ ଶଗଡ଼ ଆସିଲା । ଶଗଡ଼ବାଲା ଡାକିଲା, ଆସ । ଲୋକଟି ମନା କଲା । କହିଲା, ଈଶ୍ୱର ମୋତେ ରକ୍ଷା କରିବେ । ତା'ପରେ ସରକାରଙ୍କ ଜିପ୍ ଆସିଲା । ଲୋକଟିକୁ ଡକରାଗଲା, ପାଣି ମାଡ଼ି ଆସୁଛି, ପଲେଇ ଥାଏ । ଲୋକଟି କିନ୍ତୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ କଥା ଶୁଣିଲା ନାହିଁ । ବଡ଼ି ପାଣିରେ ଗାଁ ବୁଡ଼ିଲା । ଡଙ୍ଗାଟିଏ ଆସିଲା । ନାଉରିଆ ଡାକିଲା, "ଘର ବୁଡ଼ିଲାଣି, କାହାକୁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଛ, ଆସ!" ଲୋକଟି ମନରେ ଭାବିଲା, ସିଏ ତ ଈଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ ଭକ୍ତ । ଈଶ୍ୱର ଆସି ତାକୁ ରକ୍ଷା କରିବେ । ତେଣୁ ଡଙ୍ଗାରେ ବି ଗଲା ନାହିଁ । ପାଣି ବେକ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ହୋଇଗଲା । ଉତ୍ତୁରୁ ହେଲା । ଏତିକିବେଳେ ହେଲିକପ୍ଟରଟିଏ ଉଡ଼ିଯାଉଥିଲା । ବଡ଼ି ଅଞ୍ଚଳର ଲୋକକୁ ଦେଖି ସେମାନେ ଦଉଡ଼ି ଖସେଇଲେ । ତା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ଲୋକଟି ଗଲା ନାହିଁ । ଶେଷକୁ ପାଣିରେ ବୁଡ଼ିକି ସେ ମଲା ।

ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ପରେ ଲୋକଟିର ଈଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଦେଖା ହେଲା । ଲୋକଟି ଈଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କୁ ପଚାରିଲା, "ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ଏତେ ଭରସା ରଖୁଥିଲି, ଆପଣ ମୋତେ ବୁଡ଼େଇ ମାରିଲେ? କିଛି ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କଲେ ନାହିଁ?" ଈଶ୍ୱର ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲେ, "ଯଦି ମୁଁ କିଛି ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରି ନାହିଁ, ତାହାହେଲେ ତୁମ ପାଖକୁ ଶଗଡ଼, ଜିପ୍, ଡଙ୍ଗା ଓ ଶେଷକୁ ହେଲିକପ୍ଟର ପଠେଇଥିଲା କିଏ?"

ଏ ପୃଥିବୀରେ ବି' ପ୍ରକାର ଲୋକ ଅଛନ୍ତି । କିଛି ଲୋକ, ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଈଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ପାଆନ୍ତି । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଅଧିକ । ସେମାନେ ସାଧୁ, ସତ୍ତ୍ୱ, ଆଦର୍ଶବାଦୀ । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କଠାରୁ କମ୍ ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୋଷ୍ଠୀର ଲୋକ ଅଛନ୍ତି - ଆବୁବେନ୍ ଆଦାମ୍ଙ୍କ ପରି, ଯାହାଙ୍କୁ ଈଶ୍ୱର ଭଲପାଆନ୍ତି । ଆବୁବେନ୍ ଥିଲେ ଜଣେ ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକ । ନିଜ ପିତାମାତାଙ୍କ ସେବା କରନ୍ତି, କ୍ଷେତବାଡ଼ି କଥା ବୁଝନ୍ତି । ଦିନେ ରାତିରେ ଦେଖୁଛନ୍ତି, ଆଲୋକ ପଡ଼ୁଥିବା ଜାଗାରେ ଜଣେ ବସି କ'ଣ ଲେଖିଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ସେ ପଚାରିଛନ୍ତି,

"ଆପଣ କ'ଣ ଲେଖୁଛନ୍ତି?"

: ମୁଁ ତାଲିକା ତିଆରି କରୁଛି । ଈଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ପାଉଥିବା ଲୋକଙ୍କ ତାଲିକା ।

: ଦେଖିଲେ, ମୋ ନାଁ ସେ ତାଲିକାରେ ଅଛି କି ନାହିଁ? - ଆବୁବେନ୍ ପଚାରିଛନ୍ତି ।

: ନା, ନାହିଁ । - ଲୋକଟି କହିଲା ।

ଆବୁବେନ୍ ଆଦାମ୍ ଫେରିଆସିଲେ ।

ଆଉ ଦିନେ ଦେଖିଲେ ସେଇ ଲୋକ ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ ତାଲିକା ତିଆରି କରୁଛନ୍ତି ।

"ଆଜି କି ତାଲିକା" - ଆବୁବେନ୍ ପଚାରିଲେ । "ଈଶ୍ୱର କେଉଁମାନଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ପାଆନ୍ତି ତା'ର ତାଲିକା" - ଉତ୍ତର ମିଳିଲା । ଆବୁବେନ୍ ଫେରିଆସୁଥିଲେ । ଲୋକଟି ପଛରୁ ଡାକି ପଚାରିଲେ, "ଏଥରେ ତୁମ ନାଁ ଅଛି କି ନାହିଁ ପଚାରିବ ନାହିଁ" ।

: ନା, କାରଣ ସେ ତାଲିକାରେ ତ ନଥିଲା । ଏଠୁ କୁଆଡୁ ଆସିବ?

: ତଥାପି ଦେଖିଯାଆ । ଆରେ, ତୁମ ନାଁଟି ତ ପ୍ରଥମରେ ଅଛି ।

ଆବୁବେନ୍‌ର ମୁହଁ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଉଠିଥିଲା ।

ଭୋକିଲା ଲୋକର ମୁହଁରେ, ପାଢ଼ିତ ଲୋକର ଚେହେରାରେ, ସାନପିଲାଙ୍କ ଦରୋଟିରେ ଓ ଗରିବର ଲୁହ ପାଖରେ ସବୁଦିନେ ଈଶ୍ଵର ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ଆମେ ଗଣେଶଙ୍କ କ୍ଷୀରପିଆ ନାଁରେ ବାଲୁଟି ବାଲୁଟି କ୍ଷୀର ଢାଳି ଦେବା, ଅଥଚ ଏଇ ଦେଶର ହଜାର ହଜାର ପିଲା କ୍ଷୀର ଚିକିଏ ପାଉ ନଥିବେ, ଏହାର ନାଁ କ'ଣ ଧର୍ମ? ଆମେ କାଠ ଓ ପଥରର ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ କୋଳେଇ ଧରିବାରେ ବାଧା ନାହିଁ, କିନ୍ତୁ ମଣିଷର ଛୁଆକୁ ଅଛୁଆଁ, ଅଛବ କହି ଦୂର୍ ଦୂର୍ କରିବା କ'ଣ ମଣିଷପଣିଆ?

ଆଜି ସମାଜରେ ମୁଖାପିନ୍ଧା ମଣିଷଙ୍କର ଭିଡ଼ ଅନେକ । ଆପଣମାନେ ଯେଉଁମାନେ ସତ୍‌ସଙ୍ଗ କରନ୍ତି, ସଦ୍‌ଗୁରୁଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ଦୀକ୍ଷା ନେଇଛନ୍ତି, ସେଇମାନେ ଆଜି ମୁଖାପିନ୍ଧା ଲୋକଙ୍କ କବଳରୁ ଏ ଜନ୍ମଭୂମିକୁ ମୁକ୍ତିଦେବା ପାଇଁ ଉଦ୍ୟମ କରିବା ଦରକାର । ସାଧାରଣ ମଣିଷ ଆଜି ମାନସରୋବରର ହଂସଟିଏ ପରି ବିପନ୍ନ । ଦୟା, କ୍ଷମା, କରୁଣା, ଆହାପଦ ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ଆମ ଭିତରୁ ହଜିଯାଉଛି । ଜୀବନ ଖୁବ୍ ଲମ୍ବା ଓ ଅର୍ଥହୀନ ପାଲଟି ଯାଉଛି । ଅନେକ ଲୋକ ମନେ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ଏ ଜୀବନ ଥାଇ ଯାହା ନଥାଇ ସେଇଥା । ଆତ୍ମହତ୍ୟା କରୁଛନ୍ତି ବୟସ୍କ ମଣିଷ । ଘର ଛାଡ଼ି ପଳେଇ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି ଦାୟିତ୍ଵବାନ ଗୃହସ୍ଥ ।

ମଣିଷ ସବୁବେଳେ ଆଶାକରେ ତା ପାଇଁ ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ସବୁ କରିଦିଅନ୍ତୁ, ସେ ଅନ୍ୟପାଇଁ କିଛି କରୁ କି ନକରୁ । ଆମ ପାଇଁ ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ମଞ୍ଚ ତିଆରି କରନ୍ତୁ, ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ଗଛ ଲଗାନ୍ତୁ, କେନାଲ ଖୋଳନ୍ତୁ, ରାସ୍ତାକୁ କଣ୍ଠା ହଟେଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ । ଆମେମାନେ ନିଜ ପାଇଁ ଗୋଟିଏ ନିୟମ ବାନ୍ଧୁ, ଅନ୍ୟପାଇଁ ଆଉ ପ୍ରକାରେ ନିୟମ । ଇଏ ପ୍ରବଞ୍ଚନା ଭିନ୍ନ ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ନୁହେଁ । ଆମ ଭିତରେ ବାସ କରୁଥିବା ଈଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ମଧ୍ୟ ଇଏ ଅନ୍ୟାୟ ।

ମଣିଷକୁ ତା'ର ଜଡ଼ତାରୁ, ତା'ର ନିର୍ବୋଧତାରୁ, ତା'ର ପଶୁତରୁ ମୁକ୍ତି ପାଇଁ ଈଶ୍ଵର ବିଶେଷ ପ୍ରତିନିଧିଙ୍କୁ ପଠାନ୍ତି । କେବେ ଯୀଶୁ, କେବେ ବୁଦ୍ଧ, କେବେ କବୀର, କେବେ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ, କେବେ ପ୍ରଣବାନନ୍ଦ ଓ କେବେ ନିଗମାନନ୍ଦ । ଆମେ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଠାକୁର ପରି ଭକ୍ତି କରିବା, ସମ୍ମାନ କରିବା, ଭଲ ପାଇବା । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେମାନେ ଠାକୁର ଥିଲେ ବୋଲି ଏଭଳି ଭଲ କାମ କରିପାରିଲେ ଏବଂ ଆମେ ଠାକୁର ହୋଇ ନଥିବାରୁ ସେଭଳି କାମ ଆମଠୁଁ କେହି ଆଶା କରିବା କଥା ନୁହେଁ କହି ନିଜର ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ଏଡ଼ାଇ ଯିବା ନାହିଁ । ଆମେ ଏହି ମହାପୁରୁଷମାନଙ୍କର ଫଟୋଚିତ୍ର ଓ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିକୁ ପୂଜା କରିପାରନ୍ତି ବା ନ କରିପାରନ୍ତି । ଚିତ୍ର ବଡ଼ କଥା ନୁହେଁ, ଚରିତ୍ର ବଡ଼ କଥା । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଚରିତ୍ରକୁ ଆମେ ପୂଜା କରିବା । ସେମାନେ ଯେଉଁ ଗୁଣର ଅଧିକାରୀ ଥିଲେ ସେଇ ଗୁଣର ଅଧିକାରୀ ହେବା । ତାହାହେଲେ ତ ବଳେବଳେ ସବୁ ସମସ୍ୟାର ସମାଧାନ ହୋଇଯିବ । ଏହି ମହାପୁରୁଷମାନଙ୍କୁ କେବଳ ଧୂପ ଚନ୍ଦନ ଦେଇ ଠାକୁର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟଭୁକ୍ତ କରିଦେଲେ ଆମେ କିନ୍ତୁ ପୁଣି ସେଇ ଅନ୍ଧବିଶ୍ଵାସର ଗଳି ଭିତରକୁ ଠେଲି ହୋଇଯିବା । ସବୁ ଶାମୁକା ଭିତରେ ମୁକ୍ତା ପାଲଟିବାର ସମ୍ଭାବନା ଚିକକ ଥାଏ । ଆସନ୍ତୁ ଆମେ ସ୍ଵାତି ନକ୍ଷତ୍ରର ବର୍ଷାବିନ୍ଦୁକୁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରୁଥିବା ଶାମୁକା ପରି ନିଜକୁ ମହତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଓ ମହତ୍ତର ଚିନ୍ତା ପାଇଁ ଉନ୍ମୁଖ ରଖିବା, ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତ ରଖିବା ।



"ଅନୁଭବ"  
 ୩୭୮ ବରମୁଣ୍ଡା ଗାଁ  
 ଭୁବନେଶ୍ଵର ୭୫୧୦୦୩



# ସାବି ବେଞ୍ଜା

ଶାନ୍ତନୁ କୁମାର ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ

ଆଗେ ଗାଁମାନଙ୍କରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଅଲିଖିତ ନିୟମ ପ୍ରଚଳିତ ଥିଲା । କୌଣସି ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଲୋକ ନିଃସନ୍ତାନ ଅର୍ଥାତ ବନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ହେଲେ ଲୋକେ ତା ମୁହଁକୁ ଚାହୁଁନଥିଲେ । ଦୈବାର୍ ସେପରି ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଲୋକର ସାମନାସାମନି ହୋଇଗଲେ ଲୋକେ ସେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଲୋକଟିକୁ ଗାଳି ଦେଉଥିଲେ , “ଛିଃ ଛିଃ ! କି ଦୁର୍ଯ୍ୟୋଗରେ ଆଜି ରାତି ପାହିଥିଲା !” ତେଣୁ ବନ୍ଧ୍ୟାନାରୀମାନେ ଲୋକଲୋଚନର ଆଡୁଆଳରେ ଯଥାସମ୍ଭବ ଗାଁ ଭିତରେ ଚଳି ଶିଖୁଥିଲେ । ଯେଉଁମାନେ ସେପରି ଚଳିପାରୁନଥିଲେ ସେମାନେ କି ଯେ ନାରଖାରିଆ ଜୀବନଯାପନ କରୁଥିଲେ ସେ କଥା କହିଲେ ନସରେ ।

ବଟମୂଳ ଗାଁର ସାବି ବେଞ୍ଜା ଥିଲା ସେହିପରି ଜଣେ ଅଭାଗିନୀ ନାରୀ । ଏକେତ ବନ୍ଧ୍ୟା, ଦ୍ଵିତୀୟରେ ବିଧବା ହୋଇଗଲା ପରେ ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ଓରଫ ସାବି ବେଞ୍ଜା ବିଲ୍‌କୁଲ୍ ଗୋଟାଏ ସାପ ପରି କୋଉ ଗାତରେ ଯାଇ ପଶିଲା ସେ ଖବର ରଖୁନଥିଲେ ଗାଁର ଚାଳିଶ ପଚାଶ ଘର ସବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଅସବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଲୋକେ । କିନ୍ତୁ, ସାବିବେଞ୍ଜା ଯେ ସେଇ ବଟମୂଳ ଗାଁରେ ରହେ, କାମଧନ୍ୟା କରି ପେଟପାଟଣା ମଧ୍ୟ ଚଳାଇଥାଏ ଏ କଥା ଜାଣିଥାନ୍ତି ସମସ୍ତେ । ତେବେ ସାବିବେଞ୍ଜା ଥିଲା ଏକପ୍ରକାର ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାଣୀଟିଏ ଯାହାଠୁଁ ବିଲବାଡିରେ କି ଢିଙ୍କିଶାଳରେ କାମ ଆଦାୟ କରୁଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଲୋକେ କଦାପି ଦେଖିପାରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ ତାର ଜୀଅନ୍ତା ମୁହଁକୁ । କାରଣ ସାବି ବରାବର ତାର ତା ମୁହଁକୁ ହାତେ ଲମ୍ବର ଓଢଣା ତଳେ ଘୋଡେଇ ରଖୁଥିଲା । ଓଢଣା ଚେକି ଗଲା କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ଭିତରେ ସେ କଦାପି କାହାକୁ ଜାଣତ ବା ଅଜାଣତରେ ନିଜ ମୁହଁ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଦେଇ ନଥିଲା ।

ସାବିର ବର ଅମୁ ସୋଇଁ କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷତଳେ ହଜଜା (କଲେରା) ରୋଗରେ ଆକ୍ରାନ୍ତ ହୋଇ ମରିଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଥରେ ତା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ସାବିତ୍ରୀକୁ ବିକଳ ହୋଇ ପଚାରିଥିଲା – “ମୁଁ ମରିଗଲେ ତୁ କେମିତି ବଞ୍ଚିବୁ? ତତେ ଏ ଗାଁ ଲୋକେ ବାରକଥା କହିବେ । ସହଜେ ତ ବାଞ୍ଛବୋଲି ମୁହଁ ଚାହୁଁନାହାନ୍ତି ତୋର ସେମାନେ, ମୁଁ ମରିଗଲା ପରେ ସେମାନେ ପୁଣି ଡାକିବେ ତତେ ‘ଆଲୋ ବାଞ୍ଛ କରକଟି ରାଞ୍ଛ’ ବୋଲି । ସେମାନେ ତତେ ସେମିତି ଡାକିଲେ ମୋ ଅମ୍ବା ହତସକ୍ତ ହବ । ତୁ ତାହେଲେ ରେଡି ହେଇଯା । ମୋ ଜୁଇ ନିଆଁ ଉପରକୁ ଡେଇଁ ପାରିବୁ ଯଦି ଆମେ ଦୁହେଁ ପାଇଯିବା ମୁକତି ଏକା ସାଙ୍ଗରେ । ଡ୍ରାହି ପାଇଯିବୁ ତୁ । ଖାଲି ଡ୍ରାହି ମୁହଁ ଲୋ ସାବି –ତୋ ନାଁ ରହିଯିବ କାଳକାଳକୁ । ଲୋକେ ଡାକିବେ ତତେ ତା ପରେ ସତୀ ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ବୋଲି । ପାରିବୁ? ଡେଇଁ ପାରିବୁ ମୋ ଜୁଇ ନିଆଁକୁ?”

ସାବି ତା ବରର ମଇଳା ଲୁଗାପଟା ନେଇ ଧୋଇବାକୁ ଗଲା ଖରାଦିନିଆ ନଈ ତୁଠକୁ । ଘର ଆଗରେ ନଈବାଲି । ଅଧ ମାଇଲିଏ ଦୂର ଡାକିଲା ବାଲିକୁ ଖାଲି ପାଦରେ ଚାଲିଚାଲିକା ପାରିହେଲା ପରେ ଯାଇ ପଡେ ସରୁଆ ପାଣି ଧାରଟିଏ । ସେଇଟି ସାରା ଗାଁର ନଈ ତୁଠ । ସାବି ନଈତୁଠରେ ବସି ମଇଳା ଲୁଗାତକ ଧୋଇଲା ବେଳେ ତା ବରର ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବଟାକୁ ଆଉଥରେ ସଫାକରି ଭାବି ଲାଗିଲା ନିଜ ମନରେ । ମନ ଭିତରୁ ସେତିକିବେଳେ ପାଇଲା ନିର୍ଭର ଜବାବଟିଏ – ‘ହଁ ଲୋ ସାବି, ତୁ ସତୀ ହେଇଯା ! ତୋ ନାଁ ସତୀ ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ବୋଲି ଏ ପୋଡା ଗାଁର ପୋଡାଲୋକଙ୍କ ମୁହଁରେ ରହିଯାଉ ହେଲେ କାଳକାଳକୁ! ତୁ ସତୀ ହେଇଯା!’

ଲୁଗା ଗଣ୍ଡିରାକ ସଫା କରିସାରି ନଈରୁ ଫେରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଅମର ସ୍ଵାଇଁ ଓରଫ ଅମୁ ସୋଇଁର ଦେହରୁ ଜୀବନ ଛାଡିଯାଇଥାଏ । ଯା'ପରେ ଯାହା ହବାର କଥା ହେଲା । ସାବିର ତୁହାକୁତୁହା କୁହାଟ ଶୁଣି ଗାଁ ଲୋକେ ଜାଣିଲେ ଯେ ଅମୁସୋଇଁର କାମ ଫତେ । ସେଇଠୁ ବନ୍ଦୋବସ୍ତ କରାଗଲା ଅମୁଁ ସୋଇଁର ଶବ ସକ୍ଵାର କିପରି କୋଉ ଢଙ୍ଗରେ କରାଯିବ ସେଇ କଥା । ତେବେ ବଟମୂଳ ଗାଁର ନିୟମ ଅନୁସାରେ ହଜଜା ରୋଗରେ ମାରା ପଡିଥିବା ଲାସ୍‌ଟାକୁ ପୋଡାପୋଡି ନକରି ତାକୁ ନଈରେ ଫୋପାଡି ଦେବାଟା ହିଁ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରସମ୍ମତ ବୋଲି ଠିକ୍ କରିଦିଆଗଲା ।

ଅମୁସୋଇଁର ଶବକୁ ଅଗ୍ନିରେ ସକ୍ଵାର କରାନଯାଇ ନଈ ବାଲିରେ ଫୋପାଡି ଦିଆଯିବା ଯୋଗୁଁ ସାବିବେଞ୍ଜାର ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚିଗଲା ସତ; କିନ୍ତୁ ଆପଣା ମାନ ମହତ ରକ୍ଷା କରିବାକୁ ବିଚାରି ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଲୋକଟି ସେଇଦିନୁ ସାପ ପାଲଟିଗଲା ପରି ପଶିଗଲା କୋଉ ଗାତରେ କେଜାଣି । ତାକୁ ଆଉ କେହି ଦେଖିବାକୁ ପାଇଲେ ନାହିଁ ଦିନ ଆଲୁଅରେ । ତେବେ, ଗଲା ଅଇଲା ବେଳେ ତା' କୁଡିଆ ଦୁଆର ମୁହଁରେ କେତେଦିନ ଧରି

ଅଜବ ତାକ କୁହାଟସବୁ ଶୁଣାଯାଏ ତାକୁ । ଗାଁ ଲୋକେ ଛିଗୁଲେଇ ଛିଗୁଲେଇ ତ ତାକ ମାରିବେ –ବାଞ୍ଚ କରକଟି ରାଣ୍ଡି ଅଲକ୍ଷଣୀ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ନାନା ଉଲ୍ଲୁଗୁଣା ଦେଇ ତା ନାଁରେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ରାତି ଅଧକୁ ତା କାନରେ ପଡେ ଆଉ ଏକ ପ୍ରକାର ବିକଳ ଆର୍ତ୍ତ ଚିତ୍କାର । ସେ ଚିତ୍କାର ତା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଅମୁସୋଇଁର ବୋଲି ନ ଚିହ୍ନିବାକୁ ଚାରା ନଥିଲା ଆଦୌ ସାବିର । କାନ ଦେଇ ସାବି ଶୁଣେ- “ସାବିଲୋ! ମୋ ଆତ୍ମା କେତେ ହସ୍ତସନ୍ତ ହଉଛି ଦେଖୁଛୁଟି? କଥା ଦେଇଥିଲୁ, କଥା ରଖୁଲୁ ନାହିଁଟି? ଆ’ ପଲେଇ ଆ ! ଶୀଘ୍ର ପଲେଇ ଆ । ବଡ ବିପଦ ଆଉଟି ଲୋ ସାବି ତୋ ଉପରକୁ । ଗାଁ ଟୋକାମାନେ ମସୁଧା କରୁଛନ୍ତି ତେଣେ ବରଗଛ ମୂଳେ କିଟିକିଟି ଅନ୍ଧାରରେ । ତତେ ଉଠେଇ ନେବେ ଲୋ ସାବି! ରଖେଇ ବସେଇ ଦେବେନି ଆଉ ସେ ଅସୁରମାନେ ତତେ । ଏଥୁରୁ ବଞ୍ଚିପାରିବୁ ନାହିଁଲୋ! ଯଦି ଭଲ ଦଶା ଅଛି ବଢିଲା ନଳକୁ ଡେଇଁପଡ; ନହେଲେ କନିଅର ମଞ୍ଜିମୁଠାଏ ଗୁଡରେ ବାଟି ପିଇବେ । ତା ନକରି ପାରିଲେ କିରାସିନି ବୋତଲେ ଦିହ ଉପରେ ଢାଳିଦେଇ ଦିଆସିଲି ମାରିଦେ ଲୋ ସାବି- ବ୍ରାହି ପାଇଯିବୁ । ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ସେ ପାଷାଣ ଗୁଡାକର ହାବୁଡରୁ ।”

ଗଲା କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି । ପ୍ରତି ରାତିରେ, ରାତି ଅଧକୁ ପହରିକିଆ ବିଲୁଆ ବୋବାଳି ପଛପଛେ ଏଇ ବିକଳ ଆର୍ତ୍ତଚିତ୍କାର ଶୁଣିଆସୁଛି ଅମୁସୋଇଁର ଯୁବତୀ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ସାବି, ତା କୁଡିଆ ବାହାରୁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯେତେ ଇଚ୍ଛା କଲେବି ବଢିଲା ନଳପାଣି ଭିତରକୁ ଡେଇଁପାରୁନି ସେ । ଅଥଚ ତା ଘର ସାମ୍ନାରେ ବୋହୁଟି ନଳ ମହାନଦୀ । ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ବର୍ଷ ବର୍ଷାଦିନକୁ ଆସୁଛି ନଳବଢି । ଆଉ ବର୍ଷାଦିନେ ବଢିଲା ମହାନଦୀ ବଟମୁକ ଗାଁ ତଳେ ଦିଶେ ସାତ ସାଗର ଏକା ଥରେ ଏକାକାର ହୋଇ ତା ଆଡକୁ ଛାତି ପଡେଇ ଦେଲାପରି ।

ବଢିଲା ନଳ, କନିଅର ମଞ୍ଜି ଗୁଡ ବା କିରାସିନି ଦିଆସିଲି କୌଣସିଟା ପ୍ରତି ସାବିର ମନ ଟାଣି ହେଉନି ଦେଖୁ ଦିନେ ଆଉ ଶୁଭିଲା ନାହିଁ ସାବିର ବର ଅମୁସୋଇଁର ପ୍ରେତାତ୍ମାର ତାକ, କୁଡିଆ ଦୁଆରବନ୍ଧ ଆରପଟେ । ସେଦିନ ରାତିରେ ଢେରବେଳ କାନେଇଲା ସାବି ସେ ତାକକୁ । କାନେଇ କାନେଇ ରାତି ପାହିଗଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଅମୁ ସୋଇଁର ପ୍ରେତାତ୍ମାର ତାକ ଆଉ ଶୁଣାଗଲା ନାହିଁ ସେଇ ରାତିରେ । ସେ ରାତି ତ ଗଲା । ତା ପର ଦିନ ରାତିରେ ବି ସେମିତି କାନେଇ ରହିଲା ସାବି । କିନ୍ତୁ, ନା -ସବୁ ଶୁନ୍‌ଶାନ୍ ସବୁ ଚୁପ୍‌ଚାପ୍ ।

ବୋଧହୁଏ ଅମୁସୋଇଁର ପ୍ରେତାତ୍ମା ମୋକ୍ଷ ପାଇଗଲା, କି ପୁନର୍ଜନ୍ମ ପାଇ ପୁଣି ମଣିଷ ହୋଇ ଜନ୍ମନେଲାଣି କୁଆଡେ କୋଉଠି କାହା ଘରେ ବୋଲି ଆଶ୍ୱାସନା ଦେଲା ସାବି ନିଜକୁ ନିଜେ ସେ ଦିନ ରାତିରେ । ଖୁବ ଉତ୍ସାହ ଲାଗିଲା ତାକୁ ଆଜି ବହୁ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ । ଗଲା କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ସତରେ କୋଉରାତିରେ ଟିକେ ଭଲ କରି ଶୋଇପାରୁନଥିଲା ସେ । ତା ବରର ସେଇ ଆର୍ତ୍ତଚିତ୍କାର –ସାବିଲୋ! ଆ ପଲେଇ ଆ! ତାକ ତାକୁ ଅରହର କରିପକାଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏଇ କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲା ଏକ ପ୍ରକାର ବେଧତକ ହୋଇ ରାତିବିକାଳି ନିଜ ଘର ଭିତରେ ନିଜେ କବାଟ କିଲିଦେଇ ରହିଯାଇ ପାରୁଥିଲା ସେ- କାରଣ ତାର ସାହାସ ରହିଥାଏ ବରାବର ଯେ ତାକୁ ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଜଗି ବସିଛି ଜଣେ କୁଡିଆ ବାହାରେ । ସେ ଥିଲା ଯାଏ ତର କାହାକୁ ଭୟ କାହାକୁ ! ଏଇ ଥିଲା ବଞ୍ଚିରହିବାର ଦମ୍ଭ ଟିକକ ସତରେ ସାବିର! ସେ ନିର୍ଭୟରେ ଆତଯାତ ବି ହେଇ ପାରୁଥିଲା ଗାଁ ଭିତରେ । ଦିନବେଳେ ଯଦିତ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ହାତେ ଓଢଣା ଟାଣି ସାପଟିଏ ଭଳି ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ଚଳିଯିବାକୁ ପଡୁଥିଲା ତାକୁ କୌଣସି ପ୍ରକାରେ, ଏଇ ବର୍ଷ କୋଡିଏଟା, ତା ବରର ଅକାଳ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ପରେ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜି? ଆଜିଠୁ ? ଆଜି ରାତିରେ? ସାବି କପାଳରେ କି ଦଶା ଲେଖା ଅଛି କିଏ ଜାଣେ? ଏଇ ତର ପଶିଗଲା ମାଲପିଟିର ଛାତି ଭିତରକୁ ।

ଠିକ୍ ସେଇଦିନ ରାତିରେ ହିଁ ଘଟିଲା ଦୁର୍ଘଟଣା । କୁଡିଆ ବାହାରେ ଖସିଯାଏ ଫୁସଫାସ୍ -ତାପରେ ଆଉ କେତେପ୍ରକାର ଶବ୍ଦ ପଛକୁ ଶୁଭିଲା ଅସଭ୍ୟ ବର୍ବର ଶବ୍ଦ କେତେଟା । ସେଇଠୁ କୁଡିଆ କବାଟକୁ ଠେଲିଦେଲେ ସେମାନେ ଖୁବ ଜୋରରେ । ସାତ ଆଠ ହଳ ହାତ ଏକାଠି ମିଶି ଠେଲୁଆନ୍ତି କବାଟଟାକୁ ବୋଲି ଅନ୍ଧାଜ କରିନେଲା ସାବି କୁଡିଆ ଭିତରେ ଥାଇ ।

ସେତିକିବେଳେ ମନେ ପଡିଗଲା ସାବିର- ତା କୁଡିଆ ଘର କଣରେ ଗୋଟାଏ ଟିଣରେ ଟିଣେ କିରାସିନି ଆଉ ଦିଆସିଲି ମୁଠାଏ ମହଯୁଦ ହେଇ ରହିଥାଏ କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲା ସେଇ ଏକା ଜାଗାରେ । କିରାସିନି ଟିଣକୁ ଅନ୍ଧାରରେ ଦରାଣ୍ଡି ଆଣିଲା ସେ । ଟିଣ ମୁହଁରୁ ଠିପି ଖୋଲି ଦେଲା । ଦିଆସିଲି ମୁଠାକ ଖୋଲି ପକେଇଲା ତରତରକରି । ପୁଞ୍ଜାଏ ଦିଆସିଲିକାଠି ଧରିଲା ସେ ଏକାବେଳକେ ଗୋଟିଏ ହାତରେ ।

ଧାଡ଼ଭୁସ୍ ହେଇ ଗଳି ପଡିଲା ଦଦରା କୁଡିଆ କବାଟଟା ଘର ଭିତରକୁ । ସାଁସଁ ହେଇ ପଶିଆସିଲେ ଜନ୍ମୁ ଭଳି ସେମାନେ ଅନ୍ଧାରିଆ କୁଡିଆ ଭିତରକୁ ।

ଖୋଲା କିରାସିନି ଚିଶକୁ ଗୋଟାଏ ହାତରେ ଉପରକୁ ଟେକିଲା ସାବି । ସେଇଠୁ ସଜାଡି ଧରିଲା ଦିଆସିଲି କାଠି ଆଉ ଦିଆସିଲି ଖୋଳକୁ ଆର ହାତ ମୁଠାରେ ।

ସଁସଁ ଫଁଫଁ ହେଇ ବେଢି ଆସୁଥାନ୍ତି ତାକୁ ଚାରିପଟୁ ଜହ୍ନମାନେ । କିରାସିନି ଚିଶକମାକ ଛାଟିଛାଟି ଢାଳିଦେଲା ଏଥର ସାବି ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଉପରକୁ- ଦୋଳଯାତ ହୋରିଖେଳରେ ପିଚକାରି ମାରିଲା ପରି ଚାରି ଆଡକୁ । ଫୋପାଡିଦେଲା ଚିଶଟାକୁ ତଳକୁ । ସେଇଠୁ ପଟାକ୍କିନା ଗୋଟାଏ ପରେ ଗୋଟାଏ ଦିଆସିଲି କାଠି ଜଳିଲାଗିଲା ଆଉ ସେ ଫୋପାଡି ଚାଲିଲା ଜଳନ୍ତା ଦିଆସିଲି କାଠିଗୁଡାକୁ ଆଖୁବୁଜାକରି ଚାରି ଆଡକୁ ।

ସକାଳକୁ ବଟମୂଳ ଗାଁ ଲୋକେ ଦେଖିଲେ ସେଇ ମାରାତ୍ମକ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ । ଗୋଟିଏ ପାଟିଲା ଆମ୍ବରଙ୍ଗର ପାତେଳି ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଲୋକ ଠିଆ ହେଇଥାଏ ଅଣ୍ଟାରେ ଶାଢ଼ିକାନିକୁ ଜବରଦସ୍ତ ଗୁଡେଇ ଅମୁସୋଇଁର ଦାଣ୍ଡ ଦୁଆରେ । ତା ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଓଢଣା ନଥାଏ । ତାକୁ ଅନେକେ ଚିହ୍ନିପାରିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ଗଲା କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲା ଓଢଣା ତଳେ ମୁହଁ ଲୁଚେଇ ସାପଭଳି ଲୁଚିଛପି ଚଳପ୍ରଚଳ ହେଉଥିବା ସାବିବେଞ୍ଚାକୁ ପୁରୁଷ ଲୋକେ କେମିତି ଚିହ୍ନିଲେ ଏତେ ଶୀଘ୍ର!

କିଏ ଜଣେ ବଡପାଟିରେ ଚିରଚିରେଇ ଉଠିଲା –ଏଇ ସେ ସାପ! ଦେଖୁଚି ତାକୁ? ଆଠଆଠଟା ଲୁଆନ ଟୋକାକୁ ଆମ ଗାଁର ଦଂଶିଚି ଏଇ ସାପ କାଲି ରାତିରେ । ଉଠାଅ ଠେଙ୍ଗା –ଚାହିଁଚ କଣ?

ଠେଙ୍ଗା ଉଠୁଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ପୁଣି କିଏ ଜଣେ କୋଉଠୁ ଆସୁଛି ବଡ ପାଟିଟାଏ କଲା, “ବନ୍ଦ କର! ଫୋପାଡି ଦିଅ ଠେଙ୍ଗା ଫେଙ୍ଗା । ପଡବେ ଗୋଡତଳେ ଯାଏ ! ଇଏ ସାପ ନୁହେଁ, ସତୀ । ଆମ ଗାଁର ସତୀ ସାବି ବେଞ୍ଚା ଇଏ- ଚିହ୍ନି ପାରୁନ? ”

ସାବିବେଞ୍ଚାର କୁଡିଆ ଘରଟା ପୋଡିଯାଇ ପୁରା ପାଉଁଶ ପାଲଟି ଯାଇଥାଏ । ପାଉଁଶ ଭିତରୁ ଦିଶୁଥାଏ କେତେଟା ଭେଣ୍ଡିଆଙ୍କ ଦରପୋଡା ଲାସ୍ । ଆଉ କେତେଟା ଦଉଡିଯାଇ ପଡିଥିଲେ ନଇବାଲିରେ । ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଗଣ୍ଡିରୁ ଦେଖାଗଲା ପୁରା ଆଠ !



ପ୍ରଫେସର୍ ଶାନ୍ତନୁ କୁମାର ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ (୧୯୩୩-) । ଭାରତର ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରର ଲେଖକ ଭାବେ ପରିଚିତ ଜଣେ ସୁପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ଆଧୁନିକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭିପନାସିକ ତଥା କଥାକାର । ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ସେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ରାଜଧାନୀ ସହର ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ସମ୍ପ୍ରୀକ ବସବାସ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ।  
ଠିକଣା - ୭୮ ଶହୀଦ ନଗର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ଓଡ଼ିଶା । ଟେଲିଫୋନ୍ ୯୧-୮୬୫୮୧୨୭୨୮୪, ୯୧-୯୩୩୬୨୧୯୦୯୦



# ରଣ ଶୁଖା

ନିରୁପମା ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ

ଟ୍ରେନିଂର ଷ୍ଟାଇପେଣ୍ଡ ପାଇଁ ଆବେଦନ କଲାବେଳକୁ ସେଇ ଯେ ଲେଖିଦେଇଥିଲା “ଦରିଦ୍ର ଅସହାୟଙ୍କ ସେବା କରିବା ମୋ ଜୀବନର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମତେ ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳୁ”, ସେଇ ପଦକ କଥା ତାକୁ ଆଜି ଆଣି ଏଠି ପହଞ୍ଚିଛି କୋରାପୁଟର ଆଦିବାସୀ ଅଧ୍ୟୁସିତ ମାଳ ଅଞ୍ଚଳର ସରକାରୀ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିୟାନ ମିସନାରି ପରିଚାଳିତ ଏଇ ଡାକ୍ତର ଖାନାରେ ।

ଆଜି ତା ଚାକିରିର ପ୍ରଥମ ଦିନ । ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରୁ ନର୍ସିଂଟ୍ରେନିଂ ସାରି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ମାତ୍ରେ ଏ ଜର୍ବନି ଅର୍ଡର ପାଇଲା ଓ ଗାଁକୁ ଯାଇ ଜେଜେଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖା କରିଦେଇ ଚାଲିଆସିବି ଏଠିକି । ଜେଜେଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଲା ବେଳେ ଭାରି ବାଧୁଥିଲା ତାକୁ । ପିଲାଦିନୁ ଗୋଟାଏ ଗାଡ଼ି ଆକ୍ ସିଡେଟ୍ରେ ବାପାମାଙ୍କୁ ହରାଇ ଏଇ ଜେଜେ ଜେଜମାଙ୍କ କୋଳରେ ମଣିଷ ସେ । ତାର ଚିକେ ବୁଦ୍ଧି ହେଇଗଲା ଦିନୁ ଜେଜମା ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ ଡାକିଲେ ସେ ଚିଡେ । କାହିଁକି ତାଙ୍କୁ ଆଉ ଡାକୁଛୁ? କଣ ରଖିଲେ ତୋ ପାଇଁ? ଯାର ଉତ୍ତରରେ ଜେଜେମା କହିବ —“ତତେ ପରା ମତେ ଦେଇଚି” । ଏବେ ସେ ବି ଚାଲିଗଲାଣି । ଜେଜେ ଏକା ଗାଁରେ । ଅବଶ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କର ଏତେ ଅସୁବିଧା ନାହିଁ । ସୁସ୍ଥ ଶରୀର । ତଥାପି ବୁଢ଼ାଲୋକ ତ! କେମିତି କେଜାଣି ପିଲାଦିନୁ ଗାଁର ଦରିଦ୍ର ବୁଢ଼ାବୁଢ଼ୀଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିଲେ ତା ମନ ଖରାପ ହେଇଯାଏ । ତାକୁ ମାୟା ଲାଗେ । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ବସି ସେମାନଙ୍କ କଥା ଶୁଣେ । ଜେଜେମାକୁ ଲୁଚେଇ ଘରୁ କଣ ସବୁ ଦେଇ ଦିଏ ବୋଲି କେତେ ଗାଳି ଖାଇଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତା ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଛାଡ଼ି ପାରେନାହିଁ । କଣ ମନେହେଲା ମ୍ୟାଗ୍ରିକ୍ ପରେ ଜିଦିକଲା ନର୍ସିଂ ପଢ଼ିବ । ଯେ ଯେତେ ବୁଝେଇଲେ ଶୁଣିଲା ନାହିଁ । ଏକୁଟିଆ ଝିଅଟିଏ ସହରରେ କୋଉଠି ଯାଇ ରହିବ । ଜେଜେ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ଥିଲେ ।

ନର୍ସିଂ ହସ୍ପିଟାଲରେ ରହିବାର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଓ ଷ୍ଟାଇପେଣ୍ଡ ମିଳିବା କଥା ଶୁଣି ରାଜି ହେଇଗଲେ । ଦୁଇ ବର୍ଷର ପାଠ ପଢ଼ା ପରେ ପୁଣି ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରୁ ବର୍ଷକର ସ୍ୱେସିଆଲ୍ ଟ୍ରେନିଂ ନେଇ ଫେରିବି ସେ । ଆଜିର ଡାକ୍ତରଖାନା ଭିତରକୁ ପଶିଲା ମାତ୍ରେ ଯେଉଁ ଖାତରେ ତାକୁ ତୁ୍ୟଟି ଦିଆଗଲା ସେଠିକାର ଅବସ୍ଥା ଦେଖି ଭଲ ଲାଗିଲା ତାକୁ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ।

ପ୍ରଥମେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ଅବଶ୍ୟ ମନ ହୁଡ଼ୁବୁଡ଼ୁ ହୁଅଥାଏ । କିଏ ଯେମିତି ପଚାରୁଥାଏ- ଏଇ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଥିଲୁ ? ତଥାପି ମନକୁ ବୁଝାଇଲା- ଦେଖ, ମୁକୁରୁ ବିରକ୍ତ ହୁଅନା । ଆମ ରାଜ୍ୟର ଯାହା ଅବସ୍ଥା ତତେ ସବୁ ସମ୍ଭାଳିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ । ଧୈର୍ଯ୍ୟଧର । ଏ ଚିନ୍ତାରୁ ଓହରିଯାଇ ଝରକା ବାଟେ ଜଙ୍ଗଲର ଗଛ ବୃକ୍ଷ ଫାଙ୍କରୁ ଦିଶୁଥିବା ଅରାଏ ଆକାଶ ଉପରେ ଆଖି ପକେଇଛି କି ନାହିଁ କଡ଼ ବେତରୁ ଡାକଟିଏ ଶୁଭିଲା —“ଝିଅ !”

ସବିତା ତମକି ପଡ଼ିଲା । କିଏ କେଉଁଠି ଏମିତି ଜେଜେଙ୍କ ପରି ଡାକୁଛି ତାକୁ? ବୁଲି ପଡ଼ି ଚାହିଁଲା ସେ । ସରୁସରୁ ହାତଗୋଡ଼, ରୋଗୀଣା ରୁଡ଼ିଆ ମୁହଁର ବୁଢ଼ାଟିଏ ସେ ପାଖ ଖଟରେ । ଆଦିବାସୀ ଲୋକଟିଏ ହୋଇଥାଇ ପାରେ ହୁଏତ । ଏତେ ଦୁର୍ବଳ ଯେ କିଛି ଜାଣିବା ମୁସ୍କଲି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତା ଆଖିକୁ ଦେଖି ସେ ଚାହିଁ ରହିଲା — ଠିକ୍ ଜେଜେଙ୍କ ଚାହାଣି । ଏଇ ତ କାଲି ମାତ୍ର ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେଇ ଆସିବି ତାଙ୍କୁ ଗାଁରେ-

ସେଦିନର ତୁ୍ୟଟି ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଲା ତାର ସେଇ ବେତରୁ । ବୁଢ଼ାଟିର କି ଆନନ୍ଦ! ଖୁସିରେ ତା ମୁହଁ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଦିଶୁଥିଲା । ପେସେଣ୍ଟକୁ ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣି କରି ସାରି, ବିଛଣା ଚାଦର ବଦଳେଇ ଦେଇ, ଖୁଆଇବାର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କଲା । କେମିତି କେଜାଣି ଅନ୍ୟମନସ୍କ ଭାବେ ତା ମୁହଁରୁ ବାହାରି ପଡ଼ିଲା-“ଜେଜେ ତୁମର ଏଠି କିଏ ଅଛନ୍ତି?”

ପେଟୁଆ ଆଖି ଦୁଇଟିରେ ପୁଣି ସେଇ ଚାହାଣି । ନାହିଁ କେହି ନାହିଁ ଲୋ ମା! ଦିନାସ ହେଲାଣି ଏଇଠି ପଡ଼ିଛି । ଏଠି ଡାକ୍ତରଖାନାରୁ ଖାଇବାକ ମିଳୁଛି, ଜିଇଁଛି । ପରେ ବେଶ୍ କଷ୍ଟରେ ହାତ ଉପରକୁ ଉଠେଇ କହିଲା – “କେବେ ଦିନ ସରିବ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଇ ଜଣା । ତୁମେ ଆଜି ନୂଆ ଆସିବ ନା-ମନେ ହେଉଛି ତମେ ସିଷ୍ଟର୍ ନୁହଁ, କେହି ଆପଣାର ଲୋକ । ବୋଧେ କିଛିକାମ ଅଛି ତୁମ ଠି ମୋର ।”

ଭାଷା କେମିତି ମାର୍ଜିତ – ସବିତାକୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗିଲା । ସବିତା କଣ ପଚାରିବ ପଚାରିବ ହେଲା – । କିନ୍ତୁ ମନେମନେ ଭାବିଲା- ଆଉ ଆଜି, ପରେ ପଚାରିବା ସ୍ଥିର କରି ନେଇ ସେ ବୁଢ଼ାର ବେଡ୍ ପାଖ ଛାଡ଼ିଲା । ଦିନସାରା ଚାହିଁ ଉପରେ ସବିତା ସେ ଆଖି ଦିଓଟିର ଚାହାଣିକୁ ଭୁଲି ପାରୁନଥାଏ । ଚାଟ୍ ଦେଖିଲା- ଯଜ୍ଞାରୋଗୀଟିଏ । ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ଉନ୍ନତର ଲକ୍ଷଣ ତ ଦିଶୁନି । ବରଂ ଖରାପ ଆଡ଼କୁ ଗତି କରୁଛି ଦିନକୁ ଦିନ । ଦିନ ଗତି ଚାଲିଲା । କେମିତି କେଜାଣି ସେ ବାନ୍ଧି ହେଇଗଲା ସେ ବେଡ୍‌ଟି ସାଥରେ । ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ଠାରୁ ଅଧିକ ସମୟ ଦିଏ ସେ ତାକୁ । ଆପଣାର ଲାଗେ ବୁଢ଼ାଟି । ସେଦିନ ବେଡ୍ ପାଖର ଡ୍ରୟାର ସଜାତ ସଜାତୁ ଦରମଇଲା ଲୁଗାପଟା ଭିତରେ କନାମୁଣି ଖଣ୍ଡିକରେ ଗୁଡ଼ିଆ ଚକା ପୁଟୁଳି ଟିଏ ଦେଖିଲା । ସେକଥା କହିଲା ବୁଢ଼ାକୁ- ଏଠି ଚକା ରଖିବ ଯେ କିଏ ତ ନେଇଯିବ ! ଅଧିକରେ ରଖି ଦଉନ!

ହସିଲା ବୁଢ଼ା – “ସେ କଣ ମୋର ଯେ ରଖିଦେବି? ତା ବେଳ ହେଲେ ସେ ନେଇଯିବ ..”, ଆଗ୍ରହରେ ସେ ଚକା ପୁଡ଼ାକୁ ଚିପି ପକେଇଲା କନାମିଶା କରି ଓ ତା ପରେ ଥରଥର ହାତରେ ସେଥିରୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଚକା କାଢ଼ି ସବିତା ହାତକୁ ବଢେଇ ଦେଇ କହିଲା, “ଯା ଲୋ ମା – ଚାହା ଚିକେ ପିଇଦେଇ ଆସିବୁ! ଗେର୍ ପାଖ ନବିନା ଦୋକାନ ଚାହା ଭାରି ସୁଆଦ ।”

ସବିତା ପ୍ରଥମେ ମନା କରୁଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ବୁଢ଼ାଙ୍କର ବାଧ୍ୟବାଧକତାରେ ହାତରେ ଧରିଲା ସେ ଚକାଟି । ତାଙ୍କ ମନରେ ଦୁଃଖ ଦେବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା କଲାନାହିଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ, ପୁଣି ଡ୍ରୟର ସଜାଡ଼ିଲା ବେଳେ ସେଇଟିକୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଚକା ପୁଟୁଳି ଭିତରକୁ ଧାରେ ଗଲେଇ ଦେଲା ।

ଏଣିକି ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ଏଇ ଘଟଣାର ପୁନରାବୃତ୍ତି ହୁଏ । ବୁଢ଼ା ଚକାଟିଏ କାଢ଼ି ସବିତାକୁ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ଓ ସବିତା ସେଇଟି ତାଙ୍କ ଅଜାଣତରେ ପୁଣି ସେଇଠି ରଖିଦିଏ । ସବୁଦିନେ ବୁଢ଼ା କହନ୍ତି – ମୁଁ ରଣୀ ମଣିଷ, ରଣ ନଶ୍ଟୁଲେ କଣ ଛୁଟି ମିଳିବ? କଣ ତା ମାନେ ସବିତା ବୁଝି ପାରେନା । କେହି ନଥିବେ ଏମିତି କଣ ହୁଏ କୋଉଠି? ପଚାରି ପଚାରି ଜାଣିଲା ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ତାଙ୍କର ନିଜର କେହି ନାହାନ୍ତି । ଚିହ୍ନା ଜଣା ଯେ ବା ଅଛନ୍ତି ବନ୍ଧୁବାନ୍ଧବ କାହାର ବେଳ ଅଛି ଏ ରୋଗୀକୁ ଜଗିବାକୁ? ସଭିଏଁ ତ ଦୁଃଖୀ ଦରିଦ୍ର, ଦିନସାରା ଖଟିଲେ ଖାଇବେ । ଏଣୁ ସବିତା ଜାଣିଲା ଏଇଟି ତା ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ । ଅବଶ୍ୟ ମିସନାରି ଡାକ୍ତର ଖାନା- ସବୁକଥାକୁ ଯତ୍ନ ହେଉ ନଥିଲେ ବି ଏମିତି ଆମ ସରକାରୀ ଡାକ୍ତରଖାନା ପରି ଅବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥିତ ନୁହେଁ ।

କେବେଦିନେ ପଚାରିଥିଲା “ଜେଜେ ଘରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ମନ ହଉନି?” ବୁଢ଼ା ଚିକେ ବେଳ ଚୁପ୍‌ହେଲେ, ତା' ପରେ କହିଲେ-କି ଘର ? ଏଇ ତ ମୋ ଘର ତମେ ସବୁ ମୋ ପରିବାର । ହଜିଗଲେ ଖୋଜିବାକୁ କେହିନାହିଁ କି ମରିଗଲେ କାନ୍ଦିବାକୁ କେହିନାହିଁ । ବ୍ୟାସି ଥିଲା ମୋର ପରିବାର । ସେ ହଜିଗଲା ପରେ ତ ମୁଁ ପାଗଳ ହେଇଗଲି । ଘର ଉଜୁଡ଼ିଗଲା । ଏଇ ଡାକ୍ତରବାବୁ କେତେ ଯତ୍ନ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ସେଇଦିନଠୁ ଯେ ଦେହ ଖରାପ ଲାଗିରହିଲା ଆସି ଏଠି ପହଞ୍ଚି ଗଲାଣି ।

ବ୍ୟାସି ଶବ୍ଦଟି ଚିହ୍ନାଟିହା ଲାଗିଲା ସବିତାକୁ । ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ଟ୍ରେନିଂ ନେଲା ବେଳେ ଆଁଲୋ-ଇଣ୍ଡିୟାନ୍ ଔପଚିଏ ଥିଲା ତାର ରୁମ୍‌ମେଟ୍ । ନାଁ ତାର ସିଲ୍‌ଭାନିଆ । ସେଇ କହେ ଏଇ ଶବ୍ଦ । ଆମେ ଗେହ୍ଲାରେ ଧୋବଲି ବଉଳା ତାକିଲା ପରି ସେମାନେ ତାଙ୍କ ଗାଈକୁ ତାକିଲି ବ୍ୟାସି । ତେବେ ବୁଢ଼ାଙ୍କର ଗାଈଟିଏ ହଜିଟି ଜାଣିଲା ସବିତା । ଆଉ ଦିନେ ଥିବ ହେଇ ଖଟ ଉପରେ ବସିଥିବା ଦେଖି ପଚାରିଲା- ଜେଜେ କାହାକୁ ମନେମନେ ଖୋଜୁଛ? ସବୁବେଳେ ତ କହୁଛ ପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କୁ ଡାକୁଛ । କିଏ ତମ ପ୍ରଭୁ କହିଲା?

ବୁଢ଼ାଙ୍କର ମାର୍ଜିତ ବ୍ୟବହାର ଦେଖି ସେ ନିଶ୍ଚିତ ଥିଲା ଯେ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିୟାନ ହୋଇଥିବେ, ଜିସସ୍ କି ମଦର ମେରିକ କଥା କହିବେ । ନହେଲେ କୋଉ ସେଝଙ୍କ କଥା ।

ବୁଢ଼ା କିନ୍ତୁ ଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲେ ଆହୁରି ମାର୍ଜିତ ଢଙ୍ଗରେ । କହିଲେ- ହଁ ଥରେ ଯାଇଥିଲି ଯେ ଦେଖୁଥିଲି ତାଙ୍କୁ । ସେଦିନ ଥିଲା ରବିବାର । କି ସୁନ୍ଦର ସେ ରୂପ! କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଉ କାହିଁ ସେ ସୁଯୋଗ? ରଣ ଶୁଝିବାକୁ ଗଲେ ସିନା ଯାଇ ଦେଖା ହବ! ଆହୁରି ଦିଗ୍ଘଣ ଥିଲେ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ- କାହାରି ନାଁ ଆଉ ମନେ ପଡ଼ୁନି । ସେଇଠି ତାଙ୍କୁ କହିଦେଇ ଆସିଥିଲି – ବ୍ୟାସି ଯଦି ଫେରିବ ମୋର ଯାହା କିଛି ସଞ୍ଚିତ ଧନ ତୁମକୁ ଦେଇ ଦେବି । କେତେଦିନ ପରେ ବ୍ୟାସି ଯେମିତି ଦିନେ ଉତ୍ତାନ ହେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା ସେମିତି ହଠାତ ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲା । ତାକୁ ଡାକ୍ତର ବାବୁକୁ ଦେଇଦେଲି । ଆଉ ମୋ ସଞ୍ଚିତ ଧନ ଯାହାକୁ ଦେବି କହିଥିଲି ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖକୁ ଯାଇ ପାରୁଛି ନା ଦେଇ ପାରୁଛି?

ସବିତା ଜାଣିଲା –ଜର ବଢ଼ିଛି, ବାଉଳି ହେଉଚକ୍ତି । ଧୀରେ କରି ଶୁଏଇ ଦେଲା ସେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଖଟ ଉପରେ । ସ୍ଵର ଥରିଲାଣି, ତଥାପି କହି ଚାଲିଥାନ୍ତି ସେ- ଆଃ, ସେଠି କି ଲୋକ ଗହଳି! ମତେ ତ ସବୁ ଦିଶିଯାଉଛି । କହୁକହୁ ହଠାତ୍ ସଚେତନ ହେଇପଡ଼ିଲେ ସେ । ସବିତାକୁ ବେତ୍ ପାଖରେ ଠିଆ ହେଇ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଚାହିଁଥିବା ଦେଖି କହିଲେ- “ଆରେ ମା! ମୋର ସେ ଚଙ୍କା ପୁରୁଲିଚି କୋଉଠି ରଖୁଛୁ, ବାହାର କଲୁ ଚିକେ- ଗଣି ଦେଖୁଲୁ କେତେ ଅଛି ।”

ତାଙ୍କର ବାଉଳାଚାଉଳା କଥା ଶୁଣି ସବିତା ମନେକଲା –ଲୋକ ଗହଳି? କୋଉ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଗହଳି କଥା କହୁଚକ୍ତି ଏ? ବୋଧହୁଏ କୋଉ ରବିବାରରେ କୋଉ ସହରର ବଡ଼ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚର ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ ଗହଳି କଥା ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଯାଉଛି ଯାଙ୍କର । ପୁଣି ଚଙ୍କା ପୁରୁଲି କାହିଁକି ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲା ଲୋକ ଗହଳି ସାଙ୍ଗରେ? ତଥାପି ତାଙ୍କ କଥା ମାନି ତ୍ରୟର ଭିତରୁ ଚଙ୍କା ଧଳିଟି କାଢ଼ି ଆଣି ଅଜାତିଦେଲା ସେ ତାଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ, ହସପିଚାଲ୍ ବେତ୍ ଉପରେ । ମାସେ ହେଲା ନିଇତି ନିଆ ଆଉ ରଖା ହଉଥିବା ଚଙ୍କାର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଗଣିଲା-ଏକୋଇଶି । ପୁରୁଣା ବେଳର ଓଜନିଆ ଚଙ୍କା କେତୋଟି । ବଡ଼ପାଟିରେ କହିଲା- “ଜେଜେ ଶୁଣୁଚ ତ –ଏକୋଇଶି! ଏଥିରେ ତମର ଅଛି ସର୍ବମୋଟ ଏକୋଇଶି ରୂପା ଚଙ୍କା ଜେଜେ ।”

“ଏ! ଏକୋଇଶି ? ଏଥିରେ ତ ମୂଲରୁ ଯେତିକି ଥିଲା ସେତିକି ରହିଛି! ଏ କେମିତି କଥା? ଏଇଟା କଣ ଗୋଟାଏ ଅସରକ୍ତି ମୁଣି? କେତେ ତ ଦେଇସାରିଛି ସେଥିରୁ ଲୋ ମା କେତେ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ । ପୁଣି ରହିଲା କେମିତି ଯୋଉ ଏକୋଇଶିକୁ ସେଇ ଏକୋଇଶି ଏ ମୁଣିରେ! ହଉହଉ ଯାହା ଅଛି ସେତକ ସେ ତିନିଜଣଙ୍କୁ ବାଣ୍ଟିକରି ଦେଇ ଦବୁ ଝିଅ-ତତେ ଲାଗିଲା ।”

ସବିତାକୁ ଡର ମାଡ଼ିଲା । ବାରମ୍ବାର ପଚାରିଲା –କାହାକୁ ଦେବି? କୋଉ ତିନିଜଣ ସେମାନେ? ନାଁ କଣ ସେମାନଙ୍କର?

କିନ୍ତୁ ଉତ୍ତର ମିଳିଲା ପ୍ରତିଥର ତା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ସେଇ ଗୋଟିଏ –ତିନିଜଣଙ୍କୁ ।

ସବିତା ପାଇଁ ତଥାପି ଲୋକଚିର ଭାଷା ଥିଲା ଦୁର୍ବୋଧ । କେତେଥର ଜର ଏମିତି ବଢ଼ିଛି କମିଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜି ଏ କି ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ଦେଇ ଦଉଚକ୍ତି ସେ ତାକୁ? ରଣ ଶୁଝିବା କଥା ଅବଶ୍ୟ ସେ କହୁଛି ଅନେକ ଥର । ସେ ପଚାରି ଲାଗିଥାଏ – କାହାକୁ ଦେବି ଏ ଚଙ୍କା ଜେଜେ?

କେତେଥରର ତାକ ପରେ ଆଖି ଖୋଲିଲେ ବୁଢ଼ା । ଜରୁଆ ପେକୁଆ ଆଖି ମେଲା କରି ଚାହିଁଲେ-୭୦ ଥରି ଉଠିଲା-ସବିତା ନଇଁ ପଡ଼ିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ଛାତି ଉପରକୁ ସେ କଣ କହିବେ ଶୁଣି ପାରିବ ବୋଲି । ଏଥର ବହୁ କଷ୍ଟରେ ହାତଟି ଉଠାଇ ସେ ତା ବେକରୁ ଝୁଲୁଥିବା ଲକେଟ୍‌ଟିକୁ ହାତରେ ଧରି କହିଲେ, “ ଯାଙ୍କୁଇ ଦେଇ ଦବୁ । ଯାଙ୍କରି ଠେଙ୍ଗ ମୁଁ ରଣା”

ଘଡ଼ଘଡ଼ ଶୁଭୁଥାଏ ସେ ସ୍ଵର । ଧରିଗଲା ସବିତାର ଦେହ । ପ୍ରତିଥର ସେ କହିଚକ୍ତି – ତିନିଜଣଙ୍କୁ । ଏଇ ତେବେ ସେ ତିନିଜଣ?

ସେଦିନ ଘରୁ ଆସିଲା ବେଳେ ଏଇ ଲକେଟ୍ ଥିବା ହାରଟିଏ ପିନ୍ଧେଇ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ଜେଜେ ତାକୁ । ଆଉ କହିଥିଲେ, “ଏଇ ତତେ ଜଗିବେ! ପ୍ରଥମ ମାସର ଦରମା ଯାଙ୍କରି ପାଖକୁ ପଠେଇ ଦବୁ ।”

ଦରମା ପାଇଲାଣି ଦୁଇଦିନ ହେବ । ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ କରିନି ସିନା, ହେଲେ ଜେଜେଙ୍କ କଥା ଭୁଲିଯାଇଥିଲା । ଏ ବୁଢ଼ା କଣ ସେଇକଥା ମନେ ପକେଇ ଦେଲେ? ତାଙ୍କ ଦବା ଏକୋଇଶିଟି ଟଙ୍କା ହାତରେ ଧରି ବାହାରି ଆସିଲା ସେ ଚାଲିଚାଲି ଲାଟରୀକୁ ଓ ତା ଦରମା ଟଙ୍କାଟକ ଆଣି ଏ ଏକୋଇଶିଟି ଟଙ୍କା ସହିତ ମିଶାଇ ପୋଷ୍ଟ ଅଫିସକୁ ଯାଇ ମନି ଅର୍ଡର କଲା ପୁରୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ମନ୍ଦିର ଠିକଣାରେ । ଦୁହଁଙ୍କ ରଣ ଶୁଝା ସରିଲା ଆଜି- ଭାବିଲା ସେ ।

ଦରିଦ୍ର ଅସହାୟଙ୍କ ସେବା କରିବାକୁ ଯେ ପଣ କରି ଆସିଥିଲା ତାହା କଣ ତେବେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଲା ଏଇଠୁ? ସବୁ ଅସ୍ଥିରତା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ତାକୁ ଏ ଆରମ୍ଭ ଭଲଲାଗିଲା ।

ଏତକ କାମ ସାରି ଫେରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ବେଶ୍ ଡେରି ହେଇଯାଇଥିଲା । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ଅବଶ୍ୟ ତା ପେସେଞ୍ଜ୍ ମୁହଁ ଉପରେ ଧଳା ଚାଦର ଘୋଡ଼ା ହୋଇସାରିଥିଲା । ସେ ଆଉ ଥୟ ହୋଇ ରହି ପାରିଲା ନାହିଁ । ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ମୁହଁ ଦିଶିଗଲା ତାକୁ ବାରମ୍ବାର । ଗାଁକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ଚାରିଦିନ ଛୁଟି ଦରଖାସ୍ତ୍ରଟିଏ ଲେଖିଲା । ସକାଳ ବସ୍ ର ଟିକେଟ୍ ପାଇଁ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରି ଲାଟରୀକୁ ଫେରିଲା ସକାଳ ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହେବାକୁ ।



ଲେଖିକା ପରିଚୟ-ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ନିରୁପମା ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ( ୧୯୩୭-) ତାଙ୍କର ସ୍ମୃତନ୍ତ୍ର ଶୈଳୀର ଫିଟର ରଚନା, ଅନୁବାଦ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଏବଂ ମୌଳିକ କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ରଗଳ୍ପ ରଚନା ଲାଗି ସୁପରିଚିତ । ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ : ୭୮୮, ଶହୀଦ ନଗର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ।

# ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଛନ୍ଦ

## ସୁମତୀ ପାଢ଼ୀ



ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ଯାବତୀୟ କିୟାର ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳା ଅଛି । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ରତୁରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପୁଲ ପୁଟେ ଓ ଫଳ ଫଳେ । ଭିନ୍ନ ଭିନ୍ନ ଜନ୍ମୁ ଭିନ୍ନ ଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରକାର ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଖାଆନ୍ତି । ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ମାନେ ମିଳିମିଶି ସମାଜରେ ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳାବନ୍ଧ ଜୀବନ ଅତିବାହିତ କଲେ ସମାଜର ଉନ୍ନତି ସାଧିତ ହୁଏ । ଭାଷାର ମଧ୍ୟ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳା ଅଛି । ଯେ କୌଣସି ଭାଷାରେ ଭାବର ଭଙ୍ଗ ଦେଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଏକ କଥା ବା କଥା ସମୂହକୁ ଭିନ୍ନ ଭିନ୍ନ ରୂପରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରାଯାଏ । କଥାର ଏକ ସ୍ଵର ମାତ୍ରର ଯଥା ସଂଶ୍ଳେଷରେ ଯେଉଁ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ପୁଟେ, ତାହା କବିତା । ସ୍ଵରପୀଠରେ ଏଇ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ସମ୍ପତ । ଏହି ସ୍ଵର ସଂଶ୍ଳେଷଣ ବା ସ୍ଵରସୃଷ୍ଟି ଯହିଁରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଏ ତାର ସାଧାରଣ ନାମ ଛନ୍ଦ । ସରଳ ଭାଷାରେ କହିବାକୁ ଗଲେ ଯେଉଁ ଗୀତରେ ପଦବିନ୍ୟାସ କଲେ ବାକ୍ୟ ଶୁଦ୍ଧିମଧୁର ହୁଏ ଏବଂ ଶୋଭା ବା ପାଠକର ଚିତ୍ତରେ ରସ ସମ୍ପାଦ ହୁଏ ତାହାକୁ ଛନ୍ଦ କହନ୍ତି ।

ଆମେ ଯାହା ଯେଉଁ ଭାବରେ ଲେଖୁ ବା କହୁ, ତାହା ସେହି ଭାବରେ ଅନ୍ୟଜଣେ ନ ପଢ଼ିଲେ ବା ନ ବୁଝିଲେ ଆମ ଲେଖା ବା କୁହାର କିଛି ଅର୍ଥ ନାହିଁ । ଲେଖା ଓ କଥାର ଭଙ୍ଗ ବା କବିତାର ଛନ୍ଦରେ ଏଇ ପଢ଼ିବା ବା ବୁଝିବା ଯେତେ ଜନ ଓ କାଳରେ ବ୍ୟାପକ, ସେ ଲେଖା ଓ କୁହାର ମୂଲ୍ୟ ସେତିକି ବେଶି । କବିତାର ଛନ୍ଦ ଓ କଥାର ଭଙ୍ଗ ସାର୍ବଜନୀନ ହେବା ଦରକାର । ସାର୍ବଜନୀନତା ଓ ସର୍ବକାଳିକତା ପୁଞ୍ଜିତ ପାଇଁ ଛନ୍ଦକୁ ନିୟମରେ ପକାଯାଇଛି । କହିବା ଭଙ୍ଗରେ ଯେଉଁ ବାକ୍ୟରେ ପଦ ବିନ୍ୟାସ କରାଯାଏ ତାକୁ ଗଦ୍ୟ କୁହାଯାଏ । ନିଶ୍ଚାସ ଗ୍ରହଣ ପାଇଁ ମଧ୍ୟେ ମଧ୍ୟେ ସାମାନ୍ୟ ବିରାମ ନେଇ ବାକ୍ୟ ଶେଷରେ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବିରାମ ନିଆଯାଏ । ଅର୍ଥବୋଧର ସୁବିଧା ପାଇଁ ବିରାମ ସ୍ଥାନ ମାନଙ୍କରେ ଛେଦ, ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧଛେଦ ଓ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣଛେଦ ପ୍ରଭୃତି ଚିହ୍ନ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ କରାଯାଏ । ଯେତେବେଳେ ଏହି ବିରାମ ଚିହ୍ନ ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ପରିମିତ ସ୍ଥାନ ଓ କାଳର ବ୍ୟବଧାନରେ ବ୍ୟବହୃତ ହୋଇ ଅର୍ଥବୋଧର ଅସୁବିଧା ମଧ୍ୟ ଘଟାଏ ନାହିଁ ସେତେବେଳେ ଛନ୍ଦର ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୁଏ । ଯେଉଁ ରଚନା ଆବୃତ୍ତି କାନରେ ମଧୁର ସ୍ଵରର ସଂଯୋଗ ଯୋଗୁ ମନରେ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଭରିଦିଏ ତାହା ଛନ୍ଦ ।

ପୁରାକାଳରେ ଛନ୍ଦ ନିୟମରେ ପକାଇବା ପାଇଁ ବେଦ ମନ୍ତ୍ରର ଗଭୀର ଓ ବ୍ୟାପକ ଆଲୋଚନା ହୋଇଥିଲା । ବେଦର ଭାଷା ସଂସ୍କୃତ ନୁହେଁ । ବେଦ ମଧ୍ୟ କଥିତ ଭାଷା ବା ଗଦ୍ୟ ନୁହେଁ । ବେଦ ସେହି କାଳର ପ୍ରାକୃତ ଭାଷାଭାଷୀ ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଗାନ । ଭାଷା ତଥା ଛନ୍ଦରେ ସାର୍ବଜନୀନତା ଆଣିବା ପାଇଁ ସଂସ୍କୃତ ଭାଷାର ଉତ୍ତର ହେଲା । ଆର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଭାଷା ଯେତେବେଳେ ନାନା ପ୍ରାକୃତରେ ଭିନ୍ନ ହେଲା ସେତେବେଳେ ସଂସ୍କୃତ ଭାଷା ତିଆରିହେଲା । ନାନା ବୈୟାକରଣଙ୍କ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟରେ ତାହା ସ୍ଥିର ହୋଇ ଶେଷରେ ପାଣିନୀଙ୍କ ସ୍ଵରବିଜ୍ଞାନ ସମ୍ପତ ବ୍ୟାକରଣରେ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠିତ ହେଲା । ହିନ୍ଦୀ, ମରାଠୀ, ଗୁଜୁରାଟୀ ଓ ବଙ୍ଗଳା ପରି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଏକ ପ୍ରାକୃତ ଭାଷା । ମାତ୍ର ଛନ୍ଦ ହିସାବରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆର ସ୍ଵାତନ୍ତ୍ର୍ୟ ଅନ୍ୟ କୌଣସି ପ୍ରାକୃତରେ ନାହିଁ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ସ୍ଵତନ୍ତ୍ର ସ୍ଵର ଓ ହସନ୍ତ, ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ, ସ୍ଵାରନ୍ତ ବା ସଂଯୁକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ ପରି ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୋଟିଏ ଅକ୍ଷର ହୋଇଥିବାରୁ ଆମେ ବଢ଼ଳ, ଜଗତ (ଜଗତ୍) ପରି ଶବ୍ଦ ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ କରିପାରୁ । ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ଶବ୍ଦ ବା କାବ୍ୟ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଅଥବା ପ୍ରାନ୍ତରେ ସ୍ଵତନ୍ତ୍ର ସ୍ଵର ବା ହସନ୍ତ ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ ଥିଲେ ତାହା ସ୍ଵର ରଙ୍ଗ ଅନୁସାରେ ଅକ୍ଷର ରୂପେ ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ ହୁଏ । ଶବ୍ଦର ଆଦ୍ୟ ସଂଯୁକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ କରିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ପ୍ରକୃତି ବିରୁଦ୍ଧ । ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ଶବ୍ଦର ଆଦ୍ୟରେ ଓ ପ୍ରାନ୍ତରେ ସ୍ଵର ଗାମ୍ଭୀର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସମାନ ପରିମାଣରେ ଆରୋପ କରାଯାଏ; କିନ୍ତୁ ବଙ୍ଗ ବା ଅନ୍ୟ ଭାଷାରେ ଶବ୍ଦର ଆଦ୍ୟରେ ସ୍ଵର-ଗାମ୍ଭୀର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବେଶୀ ଓ ପ୍ରାନ୍ତରେ ଉଣା । ତେଣୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ‘ମୋହିତ’ ଓ ବଙ୍ଗଳାରେ ‘ମୋହିତ୍’ ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ କରାଯାଏ । ସବୁ ସଂସ୍କୃତ ଶବ୍ଦରେ ସଂଯୁକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନର ପୂର୍ବବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ସ୍ଵର ହସ୍ତ ଥାଏ, ସେହି ଶବ୍ଦ ଉତ୍ତରରେ ପରିଣତ ହେଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ଅବିକଳ ହସ୍ତ ରହେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାକୃତ ଭାଷାରେ ତାହା ଦୀର୍ଘରେ ପରିଣତ ହୁଏ । ଉଦାହରଣ ସ୍ଵରୂପ ସଂସ୍କୃତ ଶବ୍ଦ ‘ଛତ୍ର’ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ଛତା ହୁଏ କିନ୍ତୁ ବଙ୍ଗଳାରେ ‘ଛାତା’ ହୁଏ । ‘କଙ୍କଳ’ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କଙ୍କା ହୁଏ, ବଙ୍ଗଳାରେ ‘କାଙ୍କା’ ହୁଏ । ଏଣୁ ବଙ୍ଗଳା ପରି ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ସଂଯୁକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନର ପୂର୍ବବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ହସ୍ତ ସ୍ଵରକୁ ଦ୍ଵିମାତ୍ର ରୂପେ ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ କରାଯାଏ ନାହିଁ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଛନ୍ଦରେ ଅକ୍ଷର-ଗଣନା ଓ ମାତ୍ରା-ଗଣନା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରଭେଦ ନାହିଁ । କେତେକ ଆଧୁନିକ କବି ବଙ୍ଗ-ଭାଷାର ଆନୁକରଣରେ ସଂଯୁକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନର ପୂର୍ବବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ସ୍ଵରକୁ ଦ୍ଵିମାତ୍ର ରୂପେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ କବିତାରେ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବାରୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ କବିତା ପାଠକ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଶୁଦ୍ଧିକରୁ ପ୍ରତୀତ ହୁଏ । ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ଯୁକ୍ତ, ଅଯୁକ୍ତ, ସ୍ଵର, ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ ସବୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଏକ ମାତ୍ରକ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ବରଂ ଦ୍ଵିମାତ୍ରକ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସବୁ, ବେଳେବେଳେ ଫିଟି ଅଲଗା ହୋଇଯାଏ । ଯଥା; ପରବ, ପୁନିଅ, ସିନିଅ, ଗରବ, ଖରତା, ଚରତା ଇତ୍ୟାଦି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ କବି ଛନ୍ଦ

କଳା ଦ୍ୱାରା ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଭାଷାର ଏକତ୍ର ଆନନ୍ଦନ କରେ । ଛନ୍ଦର ଏପରି ଶକ୍ତି ଅଛି ଯେ ତାହା ଭାଷା ଦୁର୍ବୋଧ୍ୟ ହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେହି ଶକ୍ତି ଛନ୍ଦରେ ଥିବା ଭାବଟି ଶୋଚାର ଦୃଢ଼ତାରେ ଆଜି ଦେଖିପାରେ । ଏଣୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ନଜାଣିଥିବା ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ମଧ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂଗୀତ ଶୁଣିବା ପାଇଁ ଆକୃଷ୍ଟ ହୁଏ ।

ପଦ୍ୟରେ ବିରାମ ସ୍ଥାନକୁ ଯତି କହନ୍ତି । ଏକ ସ୍ୱର-ଝୁଙ୍କର ଆରମ୍ଭରୁ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣଯତି ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଥିବା ଅକ୍ଷର ସମଷ୍ଟିକୁ ସ୍ତବକ (stanza) କହନ୍ତି । ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ଚରଣ-ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟ ସୁଶୃଙ୍ଖଳ ଗୀତରେ ପରସ୍ପର ସଂଶ୍ଳିଷ୍ଟ ହେଲେ ସ୍ତବକ ହୁଏ । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଚରଣର ପ୍ରାନ୍ତ ଅକ୍ଷର ଏକ ହେଲେ ଚରଣ ମାନଙ୍କର ପରସ୍ପର ସଂଶ୍ଳେଷ ପରିଷ୍କୃତ ହୁଏ । ଚରଣ ମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରାନ୍ତଅକ୍ଷର ମାନଙ୍କର ଏପରି ମିଳନକୁ ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର (rhyme) କହନ୍ତି । ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷରର ପୂର୍ବବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ସ୍ୱରକୁ ଉପଧା ବା ଉପାନ୍ତ୍ୟ ସ୍ୱର କହନ୍ତି । ଚରଣ ମାନଙ୍କର ଉପଧା ସ୍ୱର ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ପରି ଏକ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ଛନ୍ଦ ମାଧୁରୀ ପରିଷ୍କୃତ ହୁଏ । ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ଓ ଉପଧା ମିଳନର ବିଚାର ବେଳେ ଳ - ଳ ବା ଉ - ଉ ସ୍ୱର ଯୁଗ୍ମ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରଭେଦ ଲକ୍ଷିତ ହୁଏ ନାହିଁ । ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ଏକ ଚରଣରେ ଉପଧା 'ଳ' ହେଲେ ଅନ୍ୟ ଚରଣର ଉପଧା 'ଳ' ରହି ପାରେ । ଏହିପରି ଉ-ଉ ସ୍ୱର ଯୁଗ୍ମର ବ୍ୟବହାର ହୁଏ । ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ପଦ୍ୟ ମାନଙ୍କରେ ଳ, ଳ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣଦ୍ୱୟ ଓ ନ, ଣ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣଦ୍ୱୟ ପରସ୍ପର ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ବିବେଚିତ ହୋଇଅଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣରେ କୁତ୍ରାପି ଶେଷରେ ହଳନ୍ତ ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ ନାହିଁ । ତେଣୁ ଉପଧାର ମିଳନ ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ପାଇଁ ଦରକାର ନାହିଁ । ଉପଧା ହେଉ ବା ଅନ୍ତ୍ୟ ହେଉ ଶେଷ ସ୍ୱରର ମିଳନ ହିଁ ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷରର ପ୍ରାଣ । ଦେଶ ସଙ୍ଗେ ହାସ ମିଳାଇ ହବ ।

ପୂର୍ବେ ପରସ୍ପର ଅର୍ଥଗତ ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧ ଥାଇ ବା ନଥାଇ ସମାନ ସଂଖ୍ୟକ ଅକ୍ଷର ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଚରଣଦ୍ୱୟରେ ସ୍ତବକମାନ ଛନ୍ଦ ମାଧୁରୀ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ରଚିତ ହେଉଥିଲା । ଏଥିରେ ସାତ ଠାରୁ ଷୋହଳ ଅକ୍ଷର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ବ୍ୟବହୃତ ହେଉଥିଲା ।

ଉଦାହରଣ ;

ଚକା ଚକା ଭଉଁରୀ ।  
ମାମୁଘର ଚଉଁରୀ ।  
ମାମୁ ମତେ ମାଇଲା ।  
ମାଇଁ ମୋତେ ଖୋଇଲା ।

ଏହା ସଂକ୍ଷରା ଛନ୍ଦ ।

ଉଦାହରଣ ;

ଧାଇଁ ପାରୁଥିବ କୋଣେ ।  
ତୁଡ଼ା ଖାଉଥିବ ପୋଷେ ।  
ରଜାର ଚାକର ହେବ ।  
ଦେଶ ଲୋକେ ଦଣ୍ଡ ଦେବ ।

ଏହା ଅକ୍ଷରା ଛନ୍ଦ ।

ଉଦାହରଣ ;

ଶଙ୍ଖଚିଲ ମହାବିଲ ଧୋବ ଧାଉଳିଆ ପକ୍ଷୀ ।  
ରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ର କହିଯାଇଚକ୍ତି ସୀତା ବଡ଼ ଦୁଃଖୀ ।

ଏହା ଷୋଡ଼ଶାକ୍ଷର ଛନ୍ଦ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଅସମାନ ଅକ୍ଷର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଚରଣମାନ ମଧ୍ୟ ରଚିତ ହେଉଥିଲା । ଦାସକାଠିଆ ମାନେ ପଦ୍ୟ ରଚନା କରି ଯେଉଁ ଗଳ୍ପ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନା କରନ୍ତି ସେଥିରେ ଅକ୍ଷର-ସଂଖ୍ୟା ସମାନ ହୁଏ ନାହିଁ । ଶାରଳାଦାସଙ୍କ ମହାଭାରତ ଏପରି ଚରଣ ମାନଙ୍କର ରଚିତ । ବ୍ରଜନାଥ ବଡ଼ଜେନା ମଧ୍ୟ ଏପରି ଚରଣ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ସ୍ତବକ ରଚନା କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଯଥା ;

ଆରେ ଯେତେ ଶୁଣାଇଲି କୁଳବିଦ୍ୟା ପାଠ ଶାଠ ।  
ଶୁଣି ପଲ୍ଲବିତ ଗଛ ଶୁଖି ହେବ କାଠ ।

କମଳା ଚରଣ ମାନଙ୍କର ଅକ୍ଷର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ସମାନ କରି ସ୍ତବକ ମାନ ରଚନା କରାଗଲା । ପ୍ରଥମେ ପର୍ବମାନଙ୍କରେ ଅକ୍ଷର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ସମାନ କରା ଯାଉନଥିଲା । ଯଥା:

ଖରାଦିନ ଦାଣ୍ଡଧୁଳି ।  
ଉଷ୍ଣ ପିଣ୍ଡରେ ବସି ଭାଇନା ପାଠ ପଢ଼ୁଥିବ ବହି ।  
ହଲୁଥିବ କାନ ନୋଳି ।

ପରେ ଦୁଇ ଚରଣକୁ କବିମାନେ ତିପର୍ବା କଲେ ଓ ଚରଣ ମାନଙ୍କର ଅକ୍ଷର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ପରି ପର୍ବମାନଙ୍କ ଅକ୍ଷର ସଂଖ୍ୟାର ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳା ରକ୍ଷା କଲେ । ପ୍ରଥମ ଚରଣର ପ୍ରଥମ, ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଓ ତୃତୀୟ ପର୍ବର ଅକ୍ଷର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଚରଣର ପର୍ବମାନଙ୍କ ଅକ୍ଷର ସଙ୍ଗେ ଯଥାକ୍ରମେ ସମାନ ହେଲା । ଉଦାହରଣ :

କାହା କରମରେ ଖିରି ଖିରୀଷା ।  
କାହା କରମରେ ଲତୁ ।  
କାହା କରମରେ ଖାରିଆ ଖତା ।  
ଚୋବେଇ ଚୋବେଇ ମରୁ ।

ଏକ ଚରଣରେ ଭିନ୍ନ ଭିନ୍ନ ପର୍ବମାନଙ୍କର ଅକ୍ଷର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ସମାନ ହେବ ଏପରି ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ବିଧି ନାହିଁ । ତିପର୍ବା ଛନ୍ଦ ବଢ଼ି ଚତୁଷ୍ପଦୀ ମଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇଅଛି । ଉଦାହରଣ :

ପାଚିଲା କାଞ୍ଚୁ ବାଜିଲା ଚାଞ୍ଚୁ ।  
ଗାଲର ଉପରେ ଗାଲ ।  
ହେଲା ଚଢ଼ତ ସରିଲା ଭାତ ।  
ଯେଉଁଠି ଖାଲ ସେଇଠି ଚାଲ ।

ଏହାର ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଚରଣ ଚତୁଷ୍ପଦୀ ।

ଉଦାହରଣ :

ବନ୍ଦଇ ଦିନ ବାନ୍ଦବ ହରି ।  
ଯେ ତମ ଚକ୍ଷୁ ଖଣ୍ଡନକାରୀ ।  
ସଦା କମଳା ନନ୍ଦ ବିଷ୍ଣୁରୀ ।  
ସ୍ୱଭାବେ ଇନ ।

ଏହା ବୈଦେହୀଶ ବିଳାସ ରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ଏକ ସପ୍ତପଦୀ ଚରଣ ।

ଉଦାହରଣ :

ଦେଖି ନବ କାଳିକା ।  
ବକାଳିକା ମାଳିକା ।  
ଆଳୀ କାଳିକା କାନ୍ତ ସୁରି ।

ଏହା ଲାବଣ୍ୟବତୀରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ଏକ ଚତୁଷ୍ପଦୀ ଚରଣ । ତେଣୁ ଛନ୍ଦ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ପର୍ବ ଅନୁସାରେ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ବିଭାଗ କରାଯାଇପାରେ । ଯେଉଁ ସ୍ତବକରେ ପ୍ରତି ଚରଣରେ ଦୁଇପର୍ବ ଥାଏ ସେ ସ୍ତବକର ଛନ୍ଦ କୁ ଦ୍ୱିପର୍ବା କୁହାଯାଏ । ଯେଉଁ ସ୍ତବକର ଚରଣରେ ତିନି ପର୍ବ ଥାଏ ସେ ସ୍ତବକର ଛନ୍ଦକୁ ତ୍ରିପର୍ବା କୁହାଯାଏ । ଯଦି ସ୍ତବକରେ ଏକ ଚରଣ ଏକପର୍ବ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟ ଚରଣ ଦ୍ୱିପର୍ବ ହୋଇଥାଏ ତାକୁ ବିଷମ ଦ୍ୱିପର୍ବା ଛନ୍ଦ କୁହାଯାଏ । ସେହିପରି ଏକ ଚରଣ ଏକପର୍ବା ଓ ଅନ୍ୟ ଚରଣ ତିପର୍ବା ହୋଇଥିଲେ ତାହାକୁ ବିଷମ ତିପର୍ବା ଛନ୍ଦ କହନ୍ତି । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଅକ୍ଷର ଦ୍ୱିପର୍ବା ସ୍ତବକ ମିଶି ବା ଦ୍ୱିପର୍ବା ସମସରା ସ୍ତବକ ସହିତ ବିଷମ ଦ୍ୱିପର୍ବା ଅଥବା ବିଷମ ତିପର୍ବା ସ୍ତବକ ମିଶି ଅନେକ ପ୍ରକାର ଛନ୍ଦର ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୁଏ । ଏହିପରି ଦୁଇ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ମୂଳଛନ୍ଦ ମିଶି ଯେଉଁ ଛନ୍ଦ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୁଏ ତାହାକୁ ସଂସୃଷ୍ଟି କୁହାଯାଏ । ଉଦାହରଣ :

ପଧାନ ଯାଇଛି ଧାନ ବିଲକୁ ।  
ମାରି ଆଣିବ ଶଙ୍ଖ ଚିଲକୁ ।

ଶଙ୍ଖଟିଲ କଲା ବସା ।  
 ପାଇକାଣୀଙ୍କର ଏତେ ଭରସା ।  
 ଦେଖାଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ମଜୁରପୁରିଆ ଖୋଷା ।  
 ଏଥିରେ ଦିଓଟି ଏକାଦଶାକ୍ଷରୀ ଦ୍ଵିପଦୀ ଚରଣ ଓ ତିନୋଟି ବିଷମ ଦ୍ଵିପଦୀ ଚରଣ ମିଶି ଗୌଡ଼ିଏ ସ୍ତବକର ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଘଟିଛି ।  
 ଉଦାହରଣ :

ତୁହିମା ଜନମଭୁମି ପବିତ୍ର ଭାରତ ଭୂମି  
 ତୋହର ସନ୍ତାନ ଆମେ ଅଟୁ ସରବେ ।  
 ତୋ ଶ୍ରୀଚରଣେ ସେବା ପାଇଁ ମନ ପ୍ରାଣ ଦେବା  
 ଗାଇବା ତୋହର ନାମ ଆନନ୍ଦ ରବେ ।  
 ତୋ ଆନନ୍ଦେ ହୋଇବା ସୁଖୀ ।  
 କାନ୍ଦିବା ଦୁଃଖରେ ତୋର ହୋଇଣ ଦୁଃଖୀ ।

ଏଥିରେ ଦିଓଟି ଚତୁଷ୍ପଦୀ ଚରଣ ଓ ଦିଓଟି ବିଷମ ଦ୍ଵିପଦୀ ଚରଣ ମିଶି ଗୋଟାଏ ସ୍ତବକ ହୋଇଛି ।

ଯେଉଁ ଛନ୍ଦରେ ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର-ମିଳନ ନଥାଏ ତାକୁ ଅମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ଛନ୍ଦ କହନ୍ତି । ଇଂରେଜୀରେ ତାକୁ **blank verse** କୁହାଯାଏ । ଇଂରେଜୀ ଛନ୍ଦର ଅନୁକରଣରେ ମାଇକେଲ୍ ମଧୁସୂଦନ ପ୍ରଥମେ ବଙ୍ଗ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଅମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ଛନ୍ଦ ବ୍ୟବହାର କଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ଅନୁକରଣରେ କବିବର ରାଧାନାଥଙ୍କ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଏହି ଛନ୍ଦ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରଚଳିତ ହେଲା । ଏ ଛନ୍ଦରେ ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ମିଳନ ହୁଏ ନାହିଁ ଏବଂ ଅର୍ଥ ବିଭାଗର ଛେଦ ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର-ଛନ୍ଦର ପ୍ରତି ଚରଣରେ ରହିଲା ପରି ଏଥିରେ ନଥାଏ । ଉଦାହରଣ ;

ସର୍ବହର କାଳ ମହା-ବଳୀଠାରୁ ବଳି ।  
 କଠୋର ଏ ଧନୁ ତୋର କଠୋର ଭୀମର ।  
 ମହାଗଦା ଗ୍ରାସର ସେ ପକ୍ଵରମ୍ଭା ପରି ।

(କଠୋର ଭୀମର ମହାଗଦା - ଏହା ଏକ କଥା ହୋଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ 'କଠୋର ଭୀମର' ପଦଦ୍ଵୟ ଏକ ଚରଣରେ ରହି 'ମହାଗଦା' ପଦଟି ଅନ୍ୟ ଚରଣରେ ଅଛି ।)

ଛନ୍ଦ କାବ୍ୟଶିଳ୍ପ; ସେଥିରେ ସ୍ଵର ଭାଷାର ଭାବକୁ ଅନୁସରଣ କରେ । ଛନ୍ଦ ଗାଇବା ପାଇଁ କେବଳ ସଙ୍ଗୀତଜ୍ଞର ଲୋଡ଼ା ନାହିଁ । ପ୍ରାଚୀନ, ଆଧୁନିକ, ମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର, ଅମିତ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ଯେଉଁ ବି ଛନ୍ଦ ଗାଇବାକୁ ହେଲେ ଛନ୍ଦର ଗତି ସଂଗେ ଚିତ୍ରିତ ଭାବର ଧାରା ମିଳାଇ ବୋଲି ଜାଣିବା ଲୋଡ଼ା । ଛନ୍ଦ ଶବ୍ଦରୁ ଛାନ୍ଦ ଶବ୍ଦର ସୃଷ୍ଟିହୋଇଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କାବ୍ୟର ନାମ ଛାନ୍ଦ । ଯଥା ସେ ଛାନ୍ଦ ପଢ଼ୁଛି । ସର୍ଗର ନାମ ଛାନ୍ଦ । ଯଥା ମୁଁ ଲାବଣ୍ୟବତୀରୁ ତିନି ଛାନ୍ଦ ପଢ଼ିଛି । ନାନା ଛନ୍ଦ ପ୍ରୟୋଗରେ ରଚିତ କାବ୍ୟ 'ଛାନ୍ଦ ସାହିତ୍ୟ' ନାମରେ ଅଭିହିତ ହୋଇଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଛନ୍ଦ ବା ଛାନ୍ଦରେ 'କୋଷ ଅଭିଧାନ ବା ବ୍ୟାକରଣ ଅଥବା ଅନ୍ୟ ପକ୍ଷରେ ସ୍ଵରମୟ ବା ତାଳ ସମନ୍ୱୟ' ଦରକାର ନାହିଁ । ଓଡ଼ିଆର ଛନ୍ଦ ଚାତୁରୀ ଭାରତର ଭାଷାମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଅନନ୍ୟ ସାଧାରଣ ବୋଲି କୁହାଯାଇଛି ।



ଏ ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧର କେତେକାଂଶ ନୀଳକଣ୍ଠ ଦାଶଙ୍କର 'ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ସମ୍ମତ ବିଶୁଦ୍ଧ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବ୍ୟାକରଣ' ପୁସ୍ତକରୁ ଏବଂ ବିନାୟକ ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କର 'ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶ' ପୁସ୍ତକରୁ ଉଦ୍ଧୃତ ହୋଇଛି ।



# ଅନଭବ୍ୟକ୍ତ

ପ୍ରତିଭା ଶତପଥୀ

ତୁମେ ଆସୁଚ ଆସୁଚ ଲାଗିଲେ  
 ମୁଁ ଲୁଚିପଡ଼େ ।  
 କାଳେ ପାପରା, ପୋକଖିଆ ହାତମାଂସ  
 ସମ୍ଭାଳିପାରିବ ନାହିଁ ତୁମ ଭାର,  
 ଧସି ପଡ଼ିଥିବା ରକ୍ତର ଖଳଖଳ  
 ପିନ୍ଧାଇ ପାରିବନି ତୁମକୁ  
 ସଜବେଶ ସୁନ୍ଦର,  
 ଟାକୁଆ କୁଆଁ ପିଟେଇବନି ଜମାରୁ  
 କାଳେ ଧରିଉଠିବ, ମରିଲାଗିବ  
 ମୋର ଉଜାର  
 ତୁମେ ଜାଣିପାର,  
 ଏମିତିରେ, ତୁମେ ବଡ଼ ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ।

ଆଜି ଗୋଟାପଣେ ଘଷିମାଜି ତିଆରିଛି  
 ବିଶ୍ୱାସକର,  
 ଡରଛାଡ଼ିଛି, ଲାଜଛାଡ଼ିଛି  
 ରକ୍ତରେ ନିଆଁ ପୋଇଁତି,  
 ପାହାନ୍ତର ସ୍ତବ୍ଧତା  
 ତାଳପତ୍ରରେ ଛପିରହିଥିବା ବଞ୍ଚଳତା -

ତୁମ୍ଭେ ଖସିପଡ଼ୁଥିବା ତାରାଙ୍କୁ

ଗୋଟେଇ ନଉଥିବା ମହାନଦୀର ମୁହାଣ  
 କଇର ପିଙ୍କାପିଙ୍କା ବାସ୍ନା  
 ମହାଶୂନ୍ୟରେ ଚମକିଯିବା କଣିକା  
 ଖୁବ୍ ଏକୁଟିଆ  
 ସବୁଦିନର ଥଣ୍ଡାଶେଷରେ  
 ବନ୍ଦନର ବାତ୍ସଲ୍ୟତା,  
 ଏମିତିବେଳେ  
 ମୁଁ ହାତ ବଢ଼ାଉଛି ତୁମକୁ ।

ବହୁଶ୍ରମୟ ତୁମଖେଳ  
 ଅତିଦ୍ରୁ ଛାୟାପଥ ମଝିରେ ତୁମଘର  
 ଦିଗ୍‌ବିଦିଗ ତେତନାର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନାକୂଳତା  
 ବୁଝାଇସାରିଛି ମୋତେ  
 ଅପାଂଜ୍ଞେୟତା ମୋର ।  
 ଡାକିଲେ ଆସ, ନ ଡାକିଲେ ବି ଆସ  
 ଘୁରିବୁଲ, ଅଥୟକର  
 ଅଥଚ  
 ଅଲେଖା ରହିଯାଏ ଧାଡ଼ିଗୋଟିକ ମୋର  
 ତୁମ ଅଦଉତିରୁ ହିଁ  
 ସବୁଥର ।



ପ୍ରତିଭା ଶତପଥୀ  
 ପି. ଭିନ୍‌ପାକ  
 ପଟିଆ, ଝେସନ୍‌ରୋଡ଼  
 ପୋ କେ.ଆଇ.ଆଇ.ଟି, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର-୭୫୧୦୨୪

# ଧର୍ମେ ପ୍ରାପତ ନରହରି

କଳ୍ପନାମୟୀ ଦାଶ, ମିନିଆପଲିସ୍



କଣ୍ଠୁ ତୁମର ଝରିଥାଏ ଭାଷା ଅବିରତେ ଛଳଛଳ  
ଆଖି ଫେଲ ଥରେ ଦେଖିନିଅ କେତେ ନୟନୁ ଝରୁଛି ଜଳ ॥  
ପାରିଦିଅ ତୁମ କାନ

କେତେ ମର୍ମର ବେଦନାରେ ଯିବ ବଡ଼ି ତୁମର ମନ । ୧।

ଜନକ ଜନନୀ, ଶାଶୁ ଓ ଶୁଶୁର ବାଟ ବସିଛନ୍ତି ଚାହିଁ ।  
ଶେଷ ଜୀବନରେ ତୁମରି ଛାଇରେ ଆୟୁ ଲିଭାଇବା ପାଇଁ ॥  
ଗୋପାଏ ବାକ୍ୟ ପାଣି

ତୁମରି ହାତରୁ ପାଇବାକୁ ଶୁଣି ତୁମରି ବଦନୁ ବାଣୀ । ୨।

ବେଳ କରି ଦକ୍ଷେ ଚାହୁଁ ଠିଆହୋଇ ଶିଶୁ ନିଷ୍ଠପ ମୁଖ,  
ଦରୋଟି ଭାଷାରେ ମଣିଷ ଭୁଲଇ ସାତ ଜନମର ଦୁଃଖ ।  
ଆହା ସେତ ନ ମିଳିଲା ଧନ

ନୀତ ଶୂନ୍ୟ କରି ଶାବକେ ଉଡିଲେ ମନ କିଆଁ ଛନ୍ଦୁଛନ୍ତି । ୩।

କେଉଁଠି ଦେଉଳ, କାହିଁ ପାଠଶାଳା, କାହିଁବା ତାଙ୍କରଖାନା,  
ଦଳଦଳ ହୋଇ ଗଢି ଗଢାଇଲ, ଉଡାଇଲ କେତେ ବାନା ॥  
କିବା ତାର ପରିଣତି ?

କରିବା ଆଗରୁ ଯୋଜନା ସକଳ କରିନାହିଁ ଭାବିଚିନ୍ତି । ୪।

ଘରୁ ଖାଇ ପିଲେ କଲେଜେ ପଢିଲେ ଛାତ୍ରାବାସ ଗଲା କାହିଁ?  
“ସହାବସ୍ଥାନ” ରୀତିଟି ଆମର ପୁସ୍ତକ୍ ଗଲା ଉଭାଇ ।

କେଣେ ଚାକିରି ହୋଇଛି ଥୁଆ ?

କେଉଁ କୁଳର ତ ହେଲେନି ସେମାନେ ଦୁଇନାବେ ହୋଇ ଠିଆ । ୫।

ଅଳପବିଦ୍ୟାର ରୂପ ଭୟଙ୍କର ସମାଜକୁ ଗଲା ଖାଇ ।  
ମଣିଷ ଭିତରେ ମଣିଷପଣିଆଁ ନାହିଁରେ ନାହିଁରେ କାହିଁ ॥  
ନାହିଁ ବାରଣ ଭଉଣୀ ମାଆ ।

ଧର୍ଷଣ ଛାଡି ଗଣଧର୍ଷଣେ ବାବୁଏ ହେଲେଣି ଠିଆ । ୬।

ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମଲ୍ ଘର ତାଲା ପତିଲାଣି ସହରେ, ସହରେ, ଗ୍ରାମେ  
ଧରମ ଧୂଜା ଉଡୁଛି ସବୁଠି ବନ୍ଧୁ ହେ ତୁମ ନାମେ  
ଯହିଁ ଦେଉଳ କରିଛ ଠିଆ  
ଧୂପ ନୈବେଦ୍ୟ ଦୂର କଥା କେହି ଦେବାକୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି ଧୂଆଁ । ୭।

ହେ ମହାମାନବ ଆଗାମୀ ଦିନର ଯୋଜନାକୁ ବଦଳାଇ ।  
ନେଡିଗୁଡ ଆହା କହୁଣୀ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ବୋହି ॥  
ସହଯୋଗୀ ବନ୍ଧୁ ସହ

ଚିନ୍ତାଶୀଳ ହେ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ତୁମ ନୂଆ ରୂପରେଖ ଦିଅ । ୮।

ଜନତା ମଙ୍ଗଳ ନିବେଶିଲେ ମନ ଜନାର୍ଦ୍ଦନେ ସିନା ପାଇ ।  
ଦୁଃଖ ଅର୍ଜିତ ଧନକୁ ଦିଅନା - ଦିଅନା ଅବାଟେ ବାହି ॥  
ଧନ ଅର୍ଜନେ ଧର୍ମ କରି!

ଧନ ଅର୍ଜନେ ଧର୍ମ କରି, ଧର୍ମେ ପ୍ରାପତ ଯେ ନରହରି । ୯।



# ଝରକା

## ଶୀଖଣ୍ଡ ଶତପଥୀ

ଝରକା ଫାଙ୍କରୁ ଦେଖିଛି ମୁଁ କେତେ  
ସୁଖଦୁଃଖ ଦିବାନିଶି  
ଜୀବନ ଅମୃତ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବିଷକୁମ୍ଭ  
କାଳର କରାଳ ବିଧି ।

ନବ ପ୍ରଭାତର ସନ୍ଦ୍ୟ ମୁକୁଳିତ  
ଜୁଇଜାଇ ଚଂପା ହେନା  
ମଧୁ ମହକରେ ଭାବ ବିଭୋରିତ  
ହୋଇ କେତେ ଆନମନା ।

ଅତି ସରାଗରେ ପ୍ରସାରିତ ହାତେ  
ତୋଳିଛି ଫୁଲ ପାଖୁଡ଼ା  
ନରମ ମାଟିର କଅଁଳ ପରଶେ  
ଧାଇଛି ବାଟ ଅମତା ।

ଶୁଣିଛି ଶିଶୁର ଦରୋତି କଲୋଳ  
ଯୁବା ଉଦ୍ଦାମ ଆଳାପ  
ସୁନ୍ଦର ତରୁଣୀ ମୃଦୁମନ୍ଦ ବାଣୀ  
ଆଣିଛି ଶରୀରେ ତାପ ।

ଦେଖିଛି ମୁଁ ପୁଣି ନତ ପକ୍ଷକେଶ  
ବେଦନା କୁଞ୍ଚିତ ମୁଖ  
ସରବହରାର ଆକୁଳ କନ୍ଦନ  
ହୃଦବନ୍ଧ ଶୋଭ ଦୁଃଖ ।

ଦାଣ୍ଡରେ ଦେଖିଛି ଗୋଦର ଗୋତିଆ  
କୁଷ୍ଠ ଯଷ୍ଠା ପ୍ରପୀଡ଼ିତ  
ଶୁଣିଛି ଜନନୀ ରୋଦନ କଠୋର  
ଅନାହାରେ ମୃତ ପୁତ୍ର ।

ମନ୍ଦିର ଗରଭେ ଅଖଣ୍ଡ ପ୍ରଦୀପ  
ଅବିରତ ଘଣ୍ଟଧ୍ୱନି  
ଶୁଣିଛି ଅସ୍ତକ୍ଷ ପୂଜକର ମନ୍ତ୍ର  
ଦେବ ବେଦବାକ୍ୟ ମଣି ।

ଦେଖିଛି କୁଟିଳ ମାନବର ମନ  
ଚକ୍ରାନ୍ତେ ଅଧିର ସଦା  
କୌଶଳେ ରଚଇ ଯୋଜନା ଅନୀତି  
ଭ୍ରମ ମାୟାଜାଲେ ବନ୍ଧା ।

ମାନବ ଜୀବନ ନୁହଁଇତି ପରା  
ଦିନ ମାସକରେ ଗଣା  
ଅକର୍ମ ନିଷ୍ଠଳ ନିଷ୍ଠଳ ଯେସନ  
ଧାନ କ୍ଷେତେ ଅନାବନା ।

ବାତାୟନେ ଆସେ ବାତ ଅବଗଣେ  
ରୁକ୍ଷ କରିଦିଏ ଶ୍ୱାସ  
ମୁକ୍ତ କର ଏଇ କାରାଗାରୁ ମୋତେ  
ଫିଟାଇଣ ବନ୍ଧନସ୍ୟ ।

ଅନେକ ଯତନେ କରିଛି ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା  
ଅବୟବ ସାରା ଯେଶି  
ମୁକୁଳି ପାରିନି ଝରକା ଫାଙ୍କରୁ  
ଯାଇପାରି ନାହିଁ ଖସି ।

କାଳ ତାତନାରେ ଏବେ ତ ଗଲାଣି  
ଝରକା କବାଟ ଭାଙ୍ଗି  
ଯୁଗଯୁଗ ଧରି ପାରିବ କେ ରହି  
ସମୟ ବଳକୁ ଲଢ଼ି ।

ଆଜି ମୁଁ ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତ ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳ ରହିତ  
ପ୍ରଭୁଜନ ସାଥେ ମିଶି  
ବିଚରଇ ସାରା ବିଶ୍ୱ ବହୁାଣ୍ଡରେ  
ଅନୁକ୍ଷଣେ ଦିବାନିଶି ।

ପଲକରେ ନାହିଁ ଦେଦୀପ୍ୟ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ  
ସୁରୁଜର ଅନୁରାଗ  
ଶୁଭେ ନାହିଁ କାହିଁ ପକ୍ଷୀର କାକଳି  
ମଧୁକରର ସଂଗୀତ ।

କାହିଁଗଲେ ସବୁ ପ୍ରିୟ ପରିଜନ  
ଯା ସାଥେ କଟିଲା ଦିନ  
କାହିଁ ଗଲେ ସେହି ଶତ୍ରୁ ପ୍ରତିବେଶୀ  
କ୍ଷଣକ୍ଷଣ ହୀନମାନ ।

ଯେତେଥିଲେ ନର ନୃପତିଙ୍କ ବର  
ଦୁର୍ଯ୍ୟୋଧନ, ଯୁଧିଷ୍ଠିର  
ଅଶୋକ, ବାବର, ପୁରୁ, ହିନ୍ଦଲର  
ମହାପଥେ ଅଭିସାର ।

ଦିବସ ରଜନୀ ଆକାଶ ମେଦିନୀ  
ନଦୀ ଗିରି ଏକ ପ୍ରାୟ  
ଅକ୍ଷର ଆଲୁଅ ସମଭାବେ କ୍ଷୟ  
ନିଜ ପରର ବିଲୟ ।

ଘେନିଲେ କେ କେତେ ଅରଜିବା ଧନ  
ନେଇଗଲେ କାରେ ସାଥେ  
ବିଶ୍ୱବିଜୟର ବାନା ଉତାଳଣ  
କରାଳ କାଳର ସ୍ରୋତେ ।

ଗର୍ବ ଅଭିମାନ ମାନ ସନମାନୁ  
ମୁକ୍ତ ଆଜି ଏହି ଡନ  
ଅମାପ ଅଜ୍ଞାତ ଅତଳ ଆକାଶେ  
ଭ୍ରମଳ ପର ଯେସନ ।

ଦେଖରେ ମାନବ ଅନ୍ତକାଳ ଡବ  
ନାହିଁଟି ଅନେକ ଦୂର  
ତୁଚ୍ଛାରେ କିଂପାଇଁ ବିଷାଦ ରଗାଉ  
ଭାରୁକି ତୁହି ଅମର?



# କଳାଟଙ୍କା

ଶଶଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର

ବୋଲାଉଛ ଯେତେ ଦେଶଭକ୍ତ ତୁମେ  
ଗାନ୍ଧୀ କି ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ  
ଜନତାଙ୍କପାଇଁ ତୁମ ପ୍ରାଣ କାନ୍ଦେ  
ସତେକି ତାଙ୍କରି ବନ୍ଧୁ

ଦେଶର ସେବକ, ଦେଶର ରକ୍ଷକ  
ତୁମେହିଁ ଚଳାଅ ଦେଶ  
ତୁମେ ରାଜନେତା କର ଦେଶ ଚିନ୍ତା  
ଦିଅ କେତେ ଉପଦେଶ

ଦେଶର ଅର୍ଥକୁ ଲୁଣ୍ଠନ କରି  
ତୋଳିଅଛ କୋଠାବାଡ଼ି  
ବାକି ଯାହା ଅର୍ଥ ରଖୁଅଛ ନେଇ  
ବିଦେଶ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କରେ ମାଡ଼ି

କଥା କଥାକରେ ଭାଷଣ ମଧ୍ୟରେ  
ଦେଖା ମାତୃଭୂମି ପ୍ରୀତି  
ଦେଶର ସମ୍ପତ୍ତି ଚୋରିକରିବାକୁ  
ଏ ତୁମର ରଣନୀତି

ନିଜ ଦେଶବାସୀ ମରୁଥାନ୍ତେ ପଛେ  
ସେ ଚିନ୍ତା ତୁମରି ନାହିଁ  
ବିଦେଶୀ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ମଙ୍ଗଳପାଇଁ  
ତୁମେ କାନ୍ଦ କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ?

ବିଦେଶୀ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କରେ ରଖି କଳାଟଙ୍କା  
କରୁଅଛ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଧନୀ  
ନିଜ ଭାଇ ବନ୍ଧୁ ଉପାସେ ରୁହନ୍ତୁ  
ହେଇ ବଡ଼ ହିନିମାନୀ

ବେକାରୀ ସମସ୍ୟା ବଢ଼େ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ  
ନାହିଁ କିଛି ପ୍ରତିକାର  
ଏ ଦେଶ ଶିକ୍ଷିତ ଯୁବକ ଯୁବତୀ  
ହୁଏ କେତେ ହତାହର

ଉପାର୍ଜନ କ୍ଷମ ନହେଉଥିବାରୁ  
କରେ ଆତ୍ମ ବଳିଦାନ  
କିଏ କୁହେ ଆଜି ସ୍ଵାଧୀନ ସମସ୍ତେ  
ମୁଁ କହୁଛି ପରାଧୀନ

ଆକଳନ କରେ କିଏ ଟ୍ରିଲିୟନ୍ (ଡଲାର)  
କିଏ କହେ ତାଠୁଁ ବେଶୀ  
ସେ ସବୁ ଅର୍ଥ ଦେଶକୁ ଆସିବ  
ଶୁଣ ମୋର ଦେଶବାସୀ

ଯେଉଁ ପାର୍ଟି ଏବେ ସର୍କାର ଗଢ଼ିଲେ  
କହିଥିଲେ ଟାଣ କରି  
ସବୁ କଳାଟଙ୍କା ବିଦେଶରୁ ଆଣି  
ଦେବେ ରାଜକୋଷ ଭରି

ଏଦେଶ ଜନତା ପାଇବେ ସେ ଟଙ୍କା  
ଦଶ ଲକ୍ଷ ଜଣେ ଜଣେ  
ଅଭାବ ହଟିବ, ଦେଶ ଆଗେଇବ  
ମୋଦି କହିଥିଲେ ଦିନେ

କଳା ହୁଏ ଧଳା, ଧଳା ହୁଏ କଳା  
ଏ ଏକ ଗୋଲକ ଧରା  
ନେଇ ଥୋଇପାରେ ଯିଏ ତାକୁ ଭାଇ  
ସେ ଯାଦୁଗର ଫକୀ

ଛଅମାସ ମଧ୍ୟେ ଆଣିଦେବେ ଟଙ୍କା  
 ଥିଲା ବିଜେପି ସୋଗାନ  
 ଶାସନ କ୍ଷମତା ପାଇଲେ କରିବେ  
 କଳାଟଙ୍କା ସମାଧାନ

ଇଲେକ୍ସନ୍ ବେଳେ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ଅର୍ଥ  
 ତାଙ୍କ କର୍ପୋରେଟ ଭାଇ  
 ସେହି ଅର୍ଥ ବଳେ, ଆଉ କଉଶଳେ  
 ଦେଲେ ପାର୍ଟିକୁ ଜିତାଇ

ଏବେ କହୁଛନ୍ତି ଆମ ରାଜ୍ଞନେତା  
 ସହଜ ସେ ନୁହେଁ ଭାଇ  
 କଳାଟଙ୍କା ହାତ ବହୁତ ଲମ୍ବିଛି  
 ଆମ ହାତ ପାଉନାହିଁ

ଥରେ ପାରିହେଲେ ଇଲେକ୍ସନ୍ ନଇ  
 ବଦଳଇ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି  
 ମିଛ ପ୍ରଲୋଭନ ଜନତାଙ୍କୁ ଭେଟି  
 ଦେଖାଇଲେ କରାମତି

ବହୁତ ଗଭୀର ଲମ୍ବିଛି ତା ଚେର  
 ଜଣା ପଡୁନାହିଁ କିଛି  
 କିଏ କହେ ତାଙ୍କ ବନ୍ଧୁ, ପରିବାର  
 କର୍ପୋରେଟ ଭାଇ ଅଛି

ଧନ୍ୟ କଳାଟଙ୍କା କର ମୁହଁ ବଙ୍କା  
 ଧନ୍ୟ ତୁମ କରାମତି  
 ତୁମପାଇଁ ସତେ ବିଶ୍ଵରେ ଆଜି  
 ଚାଲେ ନିତି ରାଜନୀତି



ବିଦେଶରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କରେ ଗଢ଼ିତ କଳାଟଙ୍କା ବିଷୟରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଅଳ୍ପ ବହୁତ ଅବଗତ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ଏ ବିଷୟରେ ଯାହା ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସମ୍ବାଦପତ୍ର କି ଓଟିଭି ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇଛି ତାକୁ ଏ କବିତାରେ ସ୍ଥାନ ଦିଆଯାଇଛି । ସ୍ଵଚ୍ଛତାବେ କହିବାକୁ ଚାହେଁ ଯେ ଏ ମୋର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ଅଭିମତ ନୁହେଁ । , ୨୧୦୫  
**ହିତେନ୍ଦ୍ରଭାଲି ଲେନ୍, ସିଲଭର ସ୍ପ୍ରିଙ୍ଗ୍, ମେରୀଲ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡ -୨୦୯୦୪**

# ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ

## କବି ସ୍ଵର୍ଗତ ରଘୁନାଥ ଦାସ

ଶିହରୁଛି ପଞ୍ଚବଟୀ  
କାହାର ଏ ବିକଳ କ୍ରନ୍ଦନେ?  
ବିଶ୍ଵପିତା ଥରେ ଯଥା  
ଆଶ୍ଵିତର ଆର୍ତ୍ତ ନିବେଦନେ।

କାହା ନେତ୍ର ଝରିପଡ଼େ  
ବିନ୍ଦୁ ବିନ୍ଦୁ ଉଷ୍ଣ ଏ ଲୋତକ?  
ପତ୍ରେ ପତ୍ରେ ରଖିଯାଏ  
ବେଦନାର ନିଶ୍ଚିତ ସତ୍ତକ।

କରେ କେ ଘର୍ମର ନାଦ ଉର୍ଜ୍ଜ୍ଵଳଭେ?  
ଅଶଲୀଳ ଶବଦ!  
ପ୍ରକମ୍ପିତ କରେ ଦର୍ପେ?  
ବନସ୍ଥଳୀ ହେଉଛି ବିସ୍ମୃତ

ଛୁଟିଆସେ ଉତ୍ତରରୁ  
ପଳାତକ ପୁଷ୍ପକ ବିମାନ  
ଶୋକାକୁଳା ସତୀ ସୀତା,  
ପାଶେ ତାଙ୍କ ବସିଛି ରାବଣ।

ଯତିବେଶେ ଲଙ୍କାପତି  
ନେଉଛି ତ ସତୀଙ୍କୁ ଚୋରାଇ,  
ଅସହାୟେ ସତୀ ତାଙ୍କେ 'ପତି' 'ପତି'  
ପତି ପାଶେ ନାହିଁ।

ଜଡ଼ ହେଲା ପଞ୍ଚବଟୀ?  
ବ୍ୟର୍ଥ ଯିବ ଏତେ ଅଶ୍ରୁପାତ?  
ନଗ୍ର ବ୍ୟଭିଚାର ଏଥୁ  
କରିବେନି କେହି ପ୍ରତିବାଦ?

ଆପାଶାର ହୀନ ବଳେ  
ମନେ ବୁଥା ଜାରିଛି ସଂଶୟ;  
ବପୁର ଶକ୍ତି ମୋ କ୍ଷୀଣ,  
କିନ୍ତୁ ମୋ ଆତ୍ମା ଯେ ଅଜେୟ।

ମୁଁ ଛାର ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପକ୍ଷୀ  
ପ୍ରତିପକ୍ଷ ପ୍ରବଳ ପ୍ରତାପୀ  
ନୁହେଁ ତାର ସମକକ୍ଷ  
ପ୍ରତିବାଦ କରିବି ତଥାପି।

ପାରେ ବା ନ ପାରେ ମୁହିଁ,  
ଅନୀତିର ରୋଧୁବି ଗତିକୁ,  
ସତ୍ୟ ଲାଗି ଯୁଦ୍ଧିବି ମୁଁ,  
ଆଶ୍ଵାସନା ହେବ ସେ ସତୀକୁ।

ଛୁଟିଲି ଆକାଶେ ମାର୍ଗେ-  
ଦୁରାଚାରୀ! ରଥ ନୁଆଁ ତଳେ  
ନେହିଲେ ରୁଧିରସିନ୍ଧୁ  
କରିବ ହିଁ ତୀକ୍ଷ୍ଣ ମୋ ନଖରେ।  
କରେ ରକ୍ତସ୍ନାତ।

ଅବଜ୍ଞା କରିଲୁ ମୋତେ!  
ରାବଣରେ ପ୍ରଥମ ଆଘାତ  
କରେ ଆଜି ଶକ୍ତିହୀନ ପକ୍ଷୀ ଏକ  
ଅଜ୍ଞାନ ଅନ୍ଧାର-  
କରେ ରକ୍ତସ୍ନାତ।

ମୋ ଲାଗି ଧରିଛି ଖଡ଼ଗ ଲଙ୍କପତି;  
-ଏ ପକ୍ଷ ଛେଦେ;  
ବିଛୁରିତ ହୁଏ ସତ୍ୟ-ରକ୍ତବୀଜ  
ଆକାଶର ଖେତେ।

ଆନ ପକ୍ଷେ ପ୍ରତିରୋଧ କରିବି ମୁଁ  
ଛାଡ଼ିବିନି ବାଟ,  
ମୋର ପଦାଘାତ  
ଶିରେ ତା'ର ବହିବ ହିଁ ଲଙ୍କାର ସମ୍ରାଟ।

ବେନିପକ୍ଷେ ଛିଡ଼ିଗଲା;  
ଛିଡ଼ିଯାଉ, ନାହିଁ ମୋ ଶୋଚନା;  
ମୁଁ ରହିବି ଯୁଗେ ଯୁଗେ ଯୁୟୁଧ୍ଵର  
ଜ୍ଵଳନ୍ତ ପ୍ରେରଣା।

ଲେଖିବ ବାଲ୍ମୀକି;  
ସତୀ ଲାଗି ପକ୍ଷୀ ଏକ  
ରାମ ଆଗୁଁ ଯୁଦ୍ଧିଥିଲା ବିଂଶବାହୁ ପ୍ରତିପକ୍ଷେ  
ଯୁଦ୍ଧିଛି ଏକାକୀ।

ଏକକ ସେ ସେନା  
ପକ୍ଷେ ସତ୍ୟ, ପକ୍ଷେ ନ୍ୟାୟ  
ଅବିନୀତ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥର ତେଣା।



# ମାମା

ମାଧବୀ ଦାସ

ଭାରି ସୁଆଦିଆ ମୋ ମାମାର ହାତ  
ତିଆରି ପଖାଳ କଂସା  
ଗେହୁା ଧନ କହି ମାମା ଯେବେ ତାକେ  
ମାମା ଗେଲ ମଦୁମିଶା ।

ଦୁନିଆରେ ସିଏ ସବୁଠାରୁ ଧନୀ  
ଯା' ପାଖରେ ଅଛି ମାଆ  
ମାଆ ପରା ଆମ ନିରାପଦ ଦୁର୍ଗ  
ଦୁର୍ଦ୍ଦିନ ବେଳର ସାହା ।

ମାମା ମୋତେ କୁହେ, ମୁଁ ଏକା ତାହାର  
ଦୁନିଆରେ ସବୁକିଛି  
ବିନା ପ୍ରତ୍ୟାଶାରେ ଭଲ ପାଇବାକୁ  
ମାମା ପରି କିଏ ଅଛି ।

ଇଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କୁ ଯଦି ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁ  
ଦେଖ ଥରେ ମାମା ମୁଖ  
ସବୁ ଦୁଃଖ କଷ୍ଟ ସହି ସେ ଆମକୁ  
ଦେଇଛି ପରମ ସୁଖ ।

ତୁମେ ଜାଣ ମାମା, ତୁମଠାରୁ ଦୂରେ  
ରହି ମୁଁ ପାରିବି ନାହିଁ  
ସାତ ଦରିଆର ପାରେ ପଠାଇଛ  
ମୋର ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ପାଇଁ ।

ତୁମ ପରି ସ୍ନେହ ମମତାର ମୁର୍ତ୍ତି  
କେହି ନାହିଁ ଏ ସଂସାରେ  
ତୁମ ସାଥେ ସଦା ରହିବାର ସୁଖ  
ଦିନକୁ ନିତି ମୁଁ ଭାଲେ ।

ଜାଣିଅଛି ମାମା ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ତୁମେ  
ତୁମେ ଯିବ ବହୁଦୂର ଚାଲି  
ଚିକି ହୃଦୟ ମୋ ଭାବୁଛି ନୀରବେ  
କାହିଁକି ମୁଁ ବଡ ହେଲି ।



# ପୂଜା

ବରୁଣ ପାଣି

ସବୁ ତ ତାଙ୍କରି ଇଚ୍ଛା, ବୋଲି ପ୍ରଭୁ ପୁରୋହିତ, ଯାଉଯାଉ କହିଗଲେ ମୋତେ |  
ଦକ୍ଷିଣା ଖୋସିଦେଇ, ପେଟପୁରା ଖାଇସାରି, ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ଦେଇଥିଲେ କେତେ ||  
ଘରଣୀ ମୋହର ଖୁସି, ଦେଖୁ ତିଥି, ଦେଖୁ ରାଶି, ଆୟୋଜନ କରିଥିଲେ ବୋଲି |  
ସରଗକୁ ଥିବା ରାସ୍ତା, ଦୁଇ ପ୍ରାଣୀ ପାଇଁ ଆଜି, ସଅଳ ସଅଳ ଗଲା ଖୋଲି ||  
ଅଳକ୍ଷୁ ଭରା ଏଇ, ଜୀବନଟା କଳୁଥିଲି, ସବୁ ଯେବେ ରୁପ ଚାପ ହେଲା |  
ବାଦନ, ଭଜନ, ଆଉ ଜଣାଣ, କୀର୍ତ୍ତନ ସବୁ, ଆକାଶରେ ଧୁଆଁ ହୋଇଗଲା ||  
ମୋ ସବୁ ଦେବତାମାନେ, ଖଟୁଳୀରେ ସେଇପରି, ମେଧା ହୋଇ ବସି ରହିଥିଲେ |  
ପ୍ରିୟା ମୋର ବସିଥିଲା, ହାଲିଆ ସେ ହୋଇଥିଲା, ସରଞ୍ଜାମ ଜଞ୍ଜାଳର ପାଲେ ||  
ଚିତ୍ତି ମୋର ଚାଲିଥିଲା, ଖବର ସେ ଦେଇଥିଲା, ଆଉ ବାରଜଣ ଆଜି ମଲେ |  
ଧରମ ନାଆଁ ରେ ସବୁ, ଶହୀଦ ବଳି ପଡିଲେ, ଦୁନିଆକୁ ଛାଡି ଚାଲିଗଲେ ||  
ଧୂପବତୀ, ଝୁଣା ସବୁ, ସରିଯାଉ ଥିଲେ ଧୀରେ, ଝୁଲସ ଝୁଲସ ନିଆଁଟିରେ |  
ଅଶ୍ୱାବଥା ନେଇ ମୋର, ଘରଣୀ ଭକତି ତାର, ଅଜାତେ ସେ ଦିଅଁ ପାଦଥିରେ ||  
ମନ ମୋର ଅସ୍ଥିର, ନ ଯାଏ ଦିଅଁ କତିର, ଭାବେ ସେ ସରଗେ ଭଲ ଅଛି |  
ଆଜିକାଲି ବୋଧେ ସେତ, ସେଠାରେ ବହୁତ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ, ଏପଟେ ନଜର କମ୍ ଅଛି ||  
ପ୍ରିୟାକୁ ଦେଖାଇ ଦେଇ, ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆଟେ ମାରିଦେଇ, ମୁଁ ବି ମୋ ଜଗତେ ଚାଲିଗଲି |  
ଆଉ ବାରଜଣ ପାଇଁ, ମନଟା ମୋ ମାରିଦେଇ, ଏକାଏକା ବସି ଝୁରୁଥିଲି ||



ବରୁଣ ପାଣି, 314 ସିମୋଇଆ ଲେନ୍ ରିଜିଲାର୍ଡ, ମିଶିଶିପି 39157





# କ୍ଷଣିକ କ୍ଷଣ

ବିଷ୍ଣୁପ୍ରିୟା ମିଶ୍ର

ହେ କ୍ଷଣିକ କ୍ଷଣ  
 କ୍ଷଣେ ଯାଅ ରହି  
 ଯାଅ କ୍ଷଣେ ରହି ସଖା  
 ବାରେ ଯାଅ ରହି  
 ତୁପି ତୁପି ଆସ ସଦା  
 ଲୁଚି ଯାଅ ଚାଲି  
 ଝରି ଯାଏ ଏ ପରାଣ  
 ପଥ ଚାହିଁ ଚାହିଁ

ଗଢ଼େ ଭାଂଗେ ଡୋଳେ କେତେ  
 ନିଜେ ମୁଁ ନିଜକୁ  
 ତୁମ ଆବାହନ ପୂଜା  
 ଥାଲି ଧରିବାକୁ  
 ମୋ ଜୀବନ ହସ କାନ୍ଦ  
 ବିଷାଦ ବେଦନା  
 ପ୍ରସାଧନ ଆରାଧନା  
 କାତର ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା  
 ସବୁ ତୁମ ପାଇଁ ସଖା  
 ସବୁ ତୁମ ପାଇଁ  
 ଟିକେ ଯାଅ ରହି ଆଜି  
 ଯାଅ ଟିକେ ରହି

କେତେ ନିରିମମ ଶୀତ  
 ଅଦିନ ହେମନ୍ତ  
 ଲୁଚିଲେ ପଲ୍ଲବ ମମ  
 ସକଳ ବସନ୍ତ  
 ଉଜୁଡ଼ିଲା ଭରା କ୍ଷେତ  
 ହତହେଲା ଶିରୀ  
 ମନ ଆକାଶରୁ ଜହ୍ନ  
 ହାଏ ଗଲା ମରି

ଲଗନ ଫଗୁଣ ଆଜ

ମତୁଆଲା ହୋଲି  
 ଛନ୍ଦେ ନାଚ ସଂଗେ ମମ  
 ନବ ରଂଗେ ଢଳି  
 ତନୁ ମନେ ପଶତେ ମୋ  
 ନବ ରଂଗ ଢାଳି  
 ଆଜୀବନ ଏ ଲଗନ  
 ରହିଛି ଅନାଇଁ

ଲେପିବି କପାଳେ ତୁମ  
 ଚନ୍ଦନର ଚିତା  
 ମୋ ଲଲାଟ ପଟେ ତୁମେ  
 ବିଜୟର ଚିକା  
 ଲେପିବି ଆନନେ ଫଗୁ  
 ଅରୁଣ ଅବିର  
 କ୍ଷଣିକ ପରାଣେ ମମ  
 ଅମୃତ ଅମର  
 ଅମର ଅମୃତ ଲିପି  
 ଯାଅ ଲେଖୁ ଦେଇ

ଫୁଟି ଯାଅ ହେ କୋରକ  
 ଦିବ୍ୟ ଶତଦଳ  
 ଜୀବନ ପ୍ରଦୀପେ ଶିଖା  
 ପାବନ ଉଜ୍ଜଳ  
 ଅରପିବି ହେ ଅପୂର୍ବ  
 ଅପରୁପଂକ ପୟରେ  
 ତୁମକୁ ସୋହାଗେ ଏକ  
 ନୀରବ ମନ୍ଦିରେ  
 ନୀରବ ମନ୍ଦିରେ ସଖା  
 ଅକୁହା ପ୍ରୀତିରେ  
 କ୍ଷଣେ ଯାଅ ରହି ବନ୍ଧୁ  
 କ୍ଷଣେ ଯାଅ ରହି



# ତପ୍ତପାଣି

ଦେବରାଜ ସାହୁ

ପ୍ରକୃତିର ବିସ୍ମୟ  
ପାଣିର ଉତ୍ତାପ, ଆଉ  
ଗନ୍ଧକର ଆତ୍ମାଣ  
ବାଳକର ମନକୁ କରେ ଚମତ୍କୃତ

ସଂସାର ସାଗରରେ ଗୃହସ୍ଥ ହୋଇ  
ସନ୍ତରଣ ବେଳେ  
ଅଶନିଶ୍ଚାସୀ ହୋଇ  
ମନ ଖୋଜେ ତପ୍ତପାଣିର ଉତ୍ତାପ

ରୋଗ ଉପଶମର ଆଶୁର୍ଯ୍ୟ  
କିମ୍ବଦନ୍ତିର ବିସ୍ତାର  
ବିଶ୍ୱାସର ନିରୀହ ନିଶ୍ଚାସ  
ସନ୍ଦେହର ଅବକାଶ ଆଣେନା

ଜଂଜାଳ ଜାଲରେ ଛନ୍ଦି ହୋଇ  
ରୁଦ୍ଧ କାରାଗାର ଆଶଂକା  
ସତେକି ଅବଲୁପ୍ତ ହେବ  
ଗଂଧକର ଆତ୍ମବୈଦରେ

ତରୁଣ ମନର ଆଶା  
ବିଖ୍ୟାତ କରିବି  
ଉଷ୍ଣ ପ୍ରଶ୍ରବଣ  
ତଥ୍ୟ ନିଦାନ କରି

ଜରାଜୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ମଣିଷର  
ଅନ୍ଧିମ ଅଭିଳାଷ ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ  
ପାଞ୍ଚ ନିବାସ ବିଳାସର ଆଳୟ  
ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଅବମାନନା

ତପ୍ତପାଣି ହେବ  
ବିଶ୍ୱ ବିଖ୍ୟାତ,  
ସମୃଦ୍ଧ ହେବ ଏ ଅଞ୍ଚଳ  
ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକଙ୍କ ପଦ ଯୌତନରେ

ଖାଦ୍ୟ ପାନୀୟର ପ୍ରାରୁର୍ଯ୍ୟ  
ଗାଡ଼ିର ଆତମ୍ବର  
ବେଶ ବାସର ଝଲକ  
କିନ୍ତୁ ତପ୍ତପାଣି ସୁରକ୍ଷା ହୀନ!



# ସୁପ୍ରଭାର ଚିଠି

ଗଗନ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ

ପନ୍ଦର ବରଷ ତଳେ ଦେବଯାନୀ  
ଆମେରିକା ଆସେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଛାଡ଼ି,  
ମନ କେବେ କେବେ ଲାଗଇ ଉଦାସ  
ଜ୍ଞାତି କୁଚୁମ୍ବକ କଥା ମନେ ପଡ଼ି ।

ମାତା, ପିତା, ଭ୍ରାତା ଭଗିନୀ ସମେତ  
ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଥିଲା କେତେ ବନ୍ଧୁ ତାର,  
ସେହି ଦିନୁ ଆସି ବାନ୍ଧିଛି ବିଦେଶେ  
ସ୍ଥାମୀଙ୍କ ସହିତେ ନିଜର ସଂସାର ।

ଆମେରିକା ଦେଶେ ଧାଁ ଦଉଡ଼ରେ  
ନାକ ପୋଛିବାକୁ ହୁଏ ନାହିଁ ତର ,  
ମିଳେନା ସମୟ ବସି ଭାବିବାକୁ  
ପିଲା ଦିନ ସାଥୀ ନିଜ ପରିବାର ।

ଅଚାନକେ ଦିନେ ଡାକ ଜରିଆରେ  
ପାଏ ଚିଠିଟିଏ ଘର ଠିକଣାରେ,  
ସମୟ ହେବାରୁ ପଢ଼ି ବସେ ସିଏ  
ଲେଖା ହୋଇଥିବା ଘଟଣା ତହିଁରେ ।

“ପ୍ରିୟ ଦେବଯାନୀ ! ସୁପ୍ରଭା ଲେଖୁଛି,  
ଜାଣେ ନାହିଁ ତୋର ମନେ ଅଛି କି ନା ?  
ସାଜ ହୋଇ ଦୁହେଁ ପଢୁଥିଲେ ଆମେ  
ଅନେକ ବରଷ ତଳର ଘଟଣା ।”

କିଏ ସେ ସୁପ୍ରଭା ? ହଠାତ୍ କେମିତି  
ନ ଆସଇ ଦେବଯାନୀର ମନକୁ,  
ପଢ଼ିଲା ତଥାପି ଉକ୍ତ ସହିତେ  
ସୁପ୍ରଭା ସତରେ କିଏ ଜାଣିବାକୁ ।

ପୁଣି ସେ ଲେଖୁଛି,



ଅକସ୍ମାତେ ଦିନେ ଭେଟିଲି ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ  
ଦେଲା ସିଏ ତୋର ସବୁ ସମାଚାର,  
ଜାଣିଲି ତା'ଠାରୁ ଆମେରିକା ଯାଇ  
ବାସ କରୁଅଛୁ ଧରି ପରିବାର ।

ଗର୍ବ କଥା ଇଏ ହେବୁ ତୁହି ବଡ଼  
ନ ଥିଲା କାହାରି ମନରେ ସନ୍ଦେହ,  
ପିଲାଟି ଦିନରୁ ତୁଳସୀ ଭଳିଆ  
ବାସୁଥିଲା ତୋର ବାସ ମହମହ ।

ମନେ ଅଛିନା ରେ ଅତୀତ ଘଟଣା  
ସାଥେ ନିଭାଇବା ହାଇସ୍କୁଲ ବେଳ ?  
ପାଠପଢ଼ା ସାଥେ କରୁଥିଲେ କେତେ  
ହସ, ଥଟ୍ଟା, ମଜା, ରାଗ, ରୋଷ, ଖେଳ ?

ଶେଷରେ ସ୍କୁଲରୁ ହୋଇଲେ ଉତ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ  
ଆମେ କେତେ ଜଣ ପ୍ରଥମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ,  
ଉଚ୍ଚ ଆଶା ନେଇ ଉଚ୍ଚ ଶିକ୍ଷା ପାଇଁ  
ଲେଖାଇଲେ ନାମ ଆମେ କଲେଜରେ ।

ତୁ'ତ ଜାଣିଥିଲୁ ବାପାଙ୍କର ସେତେ  
ଆର୍ଥିକ ଅବସ୍ଥା ନଥିଲା ସୁଖଳ,  
କିପରି ମେଣ୍ଟାନ୍ତେ ମୋର ପଢ଼ା ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ  
ଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ପାଶେ କି ଅବା ସମ୍ବଳ ?

ଦୁର୍ଗା ପୂଜା ଛୁଟି ପରଠାରୁ ଆଉ  
ହେଲାନି ସମ୍ଭବ କଲେଜ ଯିବାକୁ,  
ଜୀବନରେ ଥିବା ଉଚ୍ଚ ଆଶାତକ  
ହୋଇଲା ସମାନ ପାଣି ଫୋଟକାକୁ ।

ଶୁଣିଥିଲି ତୁହି କଞ୍ଚିନିଜ କଲୁ  
ପଦାର୍ଥ ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ଅନର୍ଥ ସହିତେ,  
କରିଥିଲୁ ଷ୍ଟାଣ୍ଡ ଆମ କଲେଜରୁ  
ଜାଣି ଆଣିଥିଲି ଗର୍ବ ମନେ କେତେ ।

ତାପରେ ଜମାରୁ ପାଇନି ଖବର  
ସମୟର ସ୍ରୋତେ ଗଲେ ସବୁ ଭାସି,  
କିଏ କେଉଁ ମତେ ଗଢିଲେ ସଂସାର  
ଭଲ ଅବା ମଧ ଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ଭରସି ।

କେଇ ମାସ ଧରି ରହିଲି ମୁଁ ଘରେ  
ମାଆଙ୍କୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିଲି କାମରେ,  
କିପରି ଯୋଗାଡ ହେବ ବାହା ଘର  
ରହିଥାଏ ଚିନ୍ତା ସଭିଙ୍କ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ।

ନାନା ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବରୁ ଶେଷରେ ଗୋଟିଏ  
ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବେ ସମସ୍ତେ ରାଜିହେଲେ ଘରେ,  
ମଧ୍ୟବିତ୍ତ ପରିବାର, ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଜଣ  
ଶିକ୍ଷକ ଚାକିରୀ କରନ୍ତି ଗାଆଁରେ ।

ନିରାଡମ୍ବରରେ ସରିଲା ବିବାହ  
ନୂତନ ଜୀବନ ଅଜଣା ସଂସାର,  
ବାପ ଘର ମୋର କରିଦେଇ ପର  
ସେ ଦିନୁ ବରିଲି ଶଙ୍ଖା ଓ ସିନ୍ଦୂର ।

ଉଚ୍ଚ ଶିକ୍ଷା ସ୍ବପ୍ନ ନହେଲା ସାକାର  
ହେଲେ ମନେ ପତେ ଯେତେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ମୋର,  
ତେଲ ଓ ଲୁଣର ସଂସାର ଭିତରେ  
ବାହି ବସିଲି ମୁଁ ତରୀ ଜୀବନର ।

ଏକ ପରେ ଏକ ତିନୋଟି ସନ୍ତାନ  
ମାଆ ହେବାର ମୋ ଘଟିଲା ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ,  
ପିଲାଙ୍କ ଯତନ ରକ୍ଷାବତ୍ତା କାମ  
ପାଇଁ ହେଲି ମୁହିଁ ସର୍ବଦା ସଜାଗ ।

ମାସ ପରେ ମାସ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ବର୍ଷ  
ବିତିଲା ସମୟ ଆଖି ପିଛୁଳାକେ,  
ଘରୋଇ ଜଞ୍ଜାଳ ପରିବାର ଛଡ଼ା  
ଅନ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ତର ନ ହୋଇଲା ଟିକେ ।

ଶିକ୍ଷକ ବେତନ ମିଳୁଥିଲା ଯେତେ  
ଚଳିଯାଉଥିଲା ସଂସାର ଖୁସିରେ,  
ନଥିଲା ଅଭାବ ସୁଖେ କରୁଥିଲା  
ଥିଲା ସ୍ନେହ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ପ୍ରୀତି ପରସ୍ପରେ ।

ପ୍ରିୟ ଦେବଯାନୀ ! କପାଳ ଲିଖନ  
ସବୁଦିନ କିନ୍ତୁ ଯାଏନି ସମାନ,  
ଏଇମିତି ଇଏ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ଦିନେ  
ଯୋଗଦେବା ପାଇଁ କାହା ଜନ୍ମଦିନ ।

ରାସ୍ତା ଘାଟ ଏଠି କେମିତି ଜାଣିଛୁ  
ଗାଡ଼ି ଚଳାଇବା ନୀତି ଓ ନିୟମ,  
ଜଣା ନାହିଁ ଜମା, ହେଲେ ସବୁ କିନ୍ତୁ  
ଗାଡ଼ି ଚଳେଇବା ପାଇଁ ହମ ହମ ।

ମଦ ପିଇ ପୁଣି ଗାଡ଼ି ଚଳାଇବା  
ପାଇଁ ନାହିଁ ଏଠି ଜମା କଟକଣା,  
ସେଥିପାଇଁ ନିତି ଶହ ଶହ ଲୋକେ  
ସାମନା କରନ୍ତି ରାସ୍ତା ଦୁର୍ଘଟଣା ।

ଫେରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଯାକ ଗାଡ଼ିସାଥେ  
ଧକ୍କା ହେଲା ଟ୍ରକ ମଝି ରାସ୍ତାପରେ,  
ଗୁରୁତର ଭାବେ ଆଘାତ ହେଲାରୁ  
ଦାଖଲ ହୋଇଲେ ଡାକ୍ତର ଖାନାରେ ।

ପାଇ ମୁଁ ଖବର ଅସ୍ତବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହୋଇ  
ଚିକିତ୍ସା କକ୍ଷରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲି ଯାଇ,  
ଭିତ୍ତା ହୋଇଥିଲା ବ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡେଜ ଦେହରେ  
ଅଚେତ ହୋଇ ସେ ରହିଥିଲେ ଶୋଇ ।

ପାରିଲିନି କହି କଥା ପଦ୍ମୁଟିଏ  
ଯେତେ ଦିନ ସିଏ ରହିଲେ ସେଠାରେ,  
ଲିଭିଗଲା ମୋର କପାଳୁ ସିନ୍ଦୂର  
ଖୋଲିଲାନି ଆଖି କେବେ ଆଉ ଥରେ ।

ଅଭାଗିନୀ ମୁହିଁ ହରାଇ ବସିଲି  
ପତି ଦେବ ମୋର ଏଇ ବୟସରେ,  
କପାଳ ଲିଖନ କେ କରିବ ଆନ  
ମୋ ପରି ଦୁଃଖିନୀ କିଏ ଦୁନିଆରେ ?

ମାଘ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣିମାକୁ ବରଷେ ପୂରିବ  
ଜାଣିନି କେମିତି କାଟିଛି ମୁଁ ଦିନ,  
କାହା ଭରସାରେ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେଇଗଲେ  
ମୋତେ ଆଉ ତାଙ୍କ ଡିନୋଟି ସତ୍ତାମ ?

କେଉଁ ଦିନ ଗଣେ ଖାଇବାକୁ ମିଳେ  
କେଉଁ ଦିନ ପେଟ ରୁହଇ ଭୋକିଲା,  
କିଏ ଜାଣିଥିଲା ହାନି କପାଳ ମୋ  
ମୋହରି କପାଳେ ଏମିତି ଘଟିଲା ।

ବାପା ମାଆଙ୍କର କରୁଣା ବଳରେ  
ସମ୍ଭଳା ପତଳ କିଛିଟା ସଂସାର,  
ବୃଦ୍ଧ ବୟସରେ ବାପାଙ୍କୁ ମୋହର  
କାହିଁକି ବା ଦେବି ମୋ ଦୁଃଖ ଖବର ?

ଚିରିଗଲେ ଲୁଗା ମରାମତି କରି  
ପିନ୍ଧି ଦେବାପାଇଁ ହୁଏନି କୁଣ୍ଡିତ,  
ପରିଶ୍ରମ ବଳେ ନିଜ ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା  
ବଜାୟ ରଖିବା ପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ଚେଷ୍ଟିତ ।

ଦେବଯାନୀ ତୁହି ପାରିବୁନି ଚିହ୍ନି  
ଦେଖୁ ଯଦି ମୋତେ କେବେ ପୁଣି ଥରେ,  
ସେ କାଳ ସୁପ୍ରଭା ଏବର ସୁପ୍ରଭା  
ଆକାଶ ପାତାଳ ତପାତ ତହିଁରେ ।

ପିଲାଙ୍କର ମୁହଁ ମୁହଁ ଚାହିଁ ଚାହିଁ  
ଧରିଛି ଜୀବନ କୁର ଦୁନିଆରେ,  
ଗୋଟିଏ ବୃଦ୍ଧରୁ ଡିନୋଟି କଳିକା  
ଅନାଲ ବସିଛି ପୁଟିବା ଆଶାରେ ।

ଅଟଳ ବିଶ୍ଵାସ ରହିଛି ମନରେ  
ସୁରଭି ତହିଁରୁ ଭରିବ ହୃଦୟ,  
ସେହି ଆଶା ବହି ଜିଇଅଛି ମୁହଁ  
ବଞ୍ଚି ରହିବାର ସେତକ ଉପାୟ ।

ଲେଖୁ ଲେଖୁ ବସି ଲେଖୁ ଦେଲିଣିରେ  
ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ନଥିଲା ଏତେ ଲେଖିବାରେ,  
ଭାବିବୁନି ମନେ କିଛି ଦେବଯାନୀ

କରିଦେବୁ ସାଥୀ ହିସାବରେ ।

ଚିଠି ଦେବୁ ନିଶ୍ଚେ ଲେଖୁ ତୋ ଖବର  
ଶୁଭ ମନାସୀ ମୁଁ ରହୁଛି ଏଥର,  
ଆଶା କରୁଅଛି ଭୁଲିନାହିଁ ମୋତେ  
ମନେ ପକାଇବୁ ସୁପ୍ରଭା ତୋହର ।

ରହୁଅଛି ତୁହି କାଳିଫର୍ଷ୍ଟିଆରେ  
ବାସ ମୋ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗାଆଁ ଗହଳିରେ,  
କାହିଁ ରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଅଯୋଧ୍ୟା ରାଜନ  
ତୁଲ୍ୟ ହୋଇବେ କି ରାମା ଭଣ୍ଡାରୀରେ ?

ଦେବଯାନୀ ତୁହି ଭାବି ପାରିବୁନି  
କେତେ ମୁଁ ଆନନ୍ଦ ପାଇ ତୋ ଖବର,  
ମନରେ ସାହସ ବାନ୍ଧି ଲେଖୁଅଛି  
କରୁଅଛି ଆଶା ପାଇବି ଉତ୍ତର ।

xxxxxx  
ହେଲାନି ବିଶ୍ଵାସ ଦେବଯାନୀ ଅବା  
ସତରେ ପଢ଼ୁଛି ଚିଠି ସୁପ୍ରଭାର ?  
ଖସି ପଡ଼ିଥିଲା ହାତରୁ ଲଫାପା  
ବହି ଯାଇଥିଲା ଲୁହ ଧାର ଧାର ।

ଭାବିଲା ଏଥର ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗସ୍ତରେ  
ଭେଟିବ ନିଶ୍ଚିତ ସୁପ୍ରଭା ସହିତ,  
ପୋଛି ଦେଇ ଲୁହ ଚିପୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟରେ  
ଅଫିସ ଯିବାକୁ ହୋଇଲା ଉଦ୍ୟତ ।

ଜୀବନର ପଥ ଅତୀବ ଦୁର୍ଗମ  
କେତେ ବେଳେ ନେବ କେଉଁ ମୋତ କିଏ ?  
କିଏ ଚାଲିଥାଏ କିଏ ଥକିଯାଏ  
କିଏ ଆସେ ପାଶ କେ ଦୂରେଇ ଯାଏ ।



ଏକ ଦୀର୍ଘ କବିତାରୁ.....

## ଅଟିହ୍ନା ପୃଥ୍ବୀ (୧)

ଗିରିଜା ଶଙ୍କର ମିଶ୍ର

କୋଟିଏ ଜନତା ତୁମେ କୋଟିଏ ତୁମ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ  
ମନ ମୋରଜି କୁଆରିଆ କୋଟିଏ ଆଶାରେ  
ଆଶା ମୋର କିନ୍ତୁ ବିଚ୍ଛିନ୍ନ ତୁମ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ପରିଧିଠାରୁ,  
ଯେପରି ଭିତାମାଟି ବିଚ୍ଛିନ୍ନ ମୋର ତୁମ ସଭ୍ୟ ଜଳାକାରୁ

ତୁମ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ପୂରଣ କରିବାକୁ-  
ମୁଁ ସାଜିଲି ନୀଳକଣ୍ଠ  
ପାଣିର ବିଭସ୍ତ ତାଣ୍ଡବ କଳି ସମ୍ବରଣ  
ସାଜି ଅନନ୍ତା ରାଣ୍ଡିପୁଅ

କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜିଭି ନିରନ୍ତର ପରିଚୟ ଖୋଜେ  
ପାଣିର ବୁଦ୍ ବୁଦ୍ ରେ-  
ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ବିଦ୍ୟୁତ୍ ଖୁଣ୍ଟରେ  
ପୁଣି ସ୍ଫୁଲ୍ ଘରର ଭଙ୍ଗାକାନ୍ଥର ମାନହୀନ ମାନଚିତ୍ର ରେ

ନିରୀହ ଚାହାଣି ମଧ୍ୟେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଅସୁମାରୀ,  
ଲଜ୍ଜା ସିଙ୍ଗାଣି ନାକ ଛୁଆ ମୋର ବେଖେ-  
ମୋ ଆଖିରେ ଆଖି ମିଶାଇ...  
ବାଉଁସ କରତି ମୁଠାଏ ମୁଠାରେ ମୁଠାଇ

ଦିସାରାର ଝଡ଼ାଫୁଙ୍କା ପରେ,  
ଯେବେ ସାତସିଆଁ କଳ୍ପାତଳୁ କାସିଭଠେ ମାଲପ-  
ଅନ୍ଧାର ଆହୁରି ଗାଢ଼ ହୋଇ ଯୋଡ଼ି ହୁଏ  
ମୋ ଜୀବନ ଅମାବାସ୍ୟା ମଧ୍ୟରେ

ସଭ୍ୟତାର ଧଳା ଚଟାଣ ଉପରେ ଚଢ଼ି,  
ଯେବେ ତୁମେ ନିର୍ବାଚନୀ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀହାର ବାଣ୍ଟ  
ଜାତିଲାଗି ମୋ ଆତ୍ମାହୁତି କୁ ଦଳି ମକଚି ଦେଇ,  
କୋଟିଏ ଜନତା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀହାରର ଫର୍ଦ୍ଦ ଫର୍ଦ୍ଦ ବାଣ୍ଟି ନିଅନ୍ତି

ଦରିଆ ଏପାରି ଭିତାମାଟିରୁ ମୋର  
ଭୟାକୁଳ ସଂକୃତିତ କଣ୍ଠରୁ



ଶୁଣାଯାଏ କି ଅବା ତୁମକୁ  
ଅନୁନୟ ଭରା ଭାବ ମୋର??  
ତୁମ ବିଦ୍ୟୁତ୍ ଯୋଜନାରେ  
ପିଠି ଦେଖାଇ ସାଜିଥିଲି ଦିନେ ଭିତ୍ତିଭୂମି  
ଅନ୍ଧାର ରହିଗଲା ଜୀବନରେ  
ଅତିତୀବ୍ର ବୈଦୂତିକ ଆଘାତ ଦେଇ

ପ୍ରକୃତିର ସନ୍ତାନ ମୁଁ ବଞ୍ଚିଛି ପ୍ରକୃତି କୁ ନେଇ  
ସୁନେଲୀ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ କିରଣରେ  
ହଳଦୀ କ୍ଷେତର ମହକରେ  
ସ୍ୱପ୍ନକୁ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନରେ ହଜାଇ

ଶାଗୁଆ ଜଙ୍ଗଲ ମଧ୍ୟେ ପୁଣି ଲାଲ୍ ରକ୍ତର ହୋଲି  
ଅଜଣା ରାଜାର ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ପୁଣି ବିଚିତ୍ର ନୀତି  
ବିଭସ୍ତ ମୋ ଅତୀତ ବିଭସ୍ତ ମୋର ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ  
ପୃଥିବୀର ଏକ ଅତିହୀନ ପୃଥିବୀରେ ମୁଁ ଅତିହୀନ ମଣିଷ

ଆଲୋକ ରେ ଆଲୋକିତ ଚିତ୍ ମିତ୍ ତୁମ ଦୁନିଆଁ,  
ନଭଶୁକ୍ଳୀ ପ୍ରାସାଦ ଉପରେ ତୋଳ ଆଉ ଏକ ତଳ  
ସୀମାହୀନ ଆଶା ତୁମ ସୀମାହିନ ତୁମ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ  
କିନ୍ତୁ କରିପାରିବ କି ମୋ ଦୁର୍ବିପାକର ସୀମା ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରଣ???

କୋଟିଏ ଜନତାକୁ...  
ଏ ପ୍ରକୃତି ସନ୍ତାନର କୋଟିଏ ଶୁଭକାମନା  
କିନ୍ତୁ ଦରିଆ ଏପାରି ପୋଡ଼ା ମାଟିରୁ ମୋର...  
ଏହି ଗୋଟିଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ..... ବାସ୍ ଗୋଟିଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ



## ହସ

ଝିନ୍ଦୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ

ଶିଶୁର ହସରେ ବିଭୁଙ୍କ ଚିଠା  
କିଶୋର ହସରେ ମହୁର ଥିଲା ।

ଯୁବତୀର ହସ ବେସର ବଟା  
ଯୁବକର ହସ ମେଦିନୀ ଫଟା ।

ପ୍ରେମିକାର ହସେ ଲାଜୁକୀ ଛିଟା  
ରସିକ ପ୍ରେମିକ ହସ ଚହଟା ।

ବିଜୟର ହସ ହୃଦୟ ଫଟା  
ହତାସିଆ ହସ ଫସର ଫଟା ।

ମଜାଳିଆ ହସେ ଜୁଆର ଭଙ୍ଗା  
ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଙ୍ଗ ହସ ଜୁଇର ଲଟା ।

ବଦରାଗୀ ହସ ବିଦ୍ୟୁତ୍ ଛଟା  
ଗର୍ବୀର ହସ ତେଜୁରା ଫଟା ।

ଖଳଲୋକ ହସ ଘାଣ୍ଟ ଚକଟା  
ବିଦୁପର ହସ ବଶୁଆ କଣ୍ଠା ।

ଅଲାଜୁକ ହସ ଦାନ୍ତ ନିକୁଟା  
ନିରସିଆ ହସ ଅଲଣା ଖଟା ।

ସରଳିଆ ହସେ ଚନ୍ଦନ ଛିଟା  
ନମ୍ରତାର ହସ ତୁଳସୀ ଜଟା ।

ପାକୁଆ ପାଟିରେ ସବୁଠୁ ମିଠା  
ମନ ଟାଣିନିଏ ସେଇ ହସଟା ।



# ସ୍ଵର୍ଗୀୟ ପ୍ରେମ

କୁକୁ ଦାଶ

ସମୟ,

ସମୁଦ୍ର ଜୁଆର, ଆସି ଚାଲିଯାଏ ଭଙ୍ଗା ପତେ  
ହୃଦୟରେ ଧକ୍କା ଲାଗେ, କ୍ଷତ ବିକ୍ଷତ ହୁଏ  
ରୁଧିରାନ୍ତ ମନର ବେଦନାକୁ, କହିବାକୁ  
ମନ ଖୋଜେ ମନକୁ |

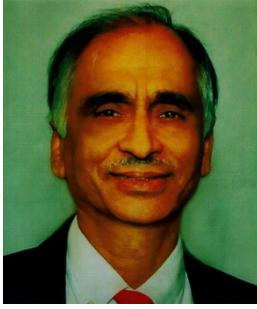
ବୁଝନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ କେହି  
ଉପହାସ ଫିଙ୍ଗି ଦେଇ ଚାଲି ଯାଆନ୍ତି  
ଦଳ ଛାଡ଼ି ରହିଥିବା ଏକୃତ୍ୟା ପକ୍ଷୀଟିଏ ପରି ମନ କାନ୍ଦି ଉଠେ |

ତୁମେ ଯଦି ଠିକ୍ ସେତେବେଳେ ମୋ ମନ ସାଗରେ ପ୍ରତିଫଳିତ ହୁଅ  
ପାହାନ୍ତି ଆକାଶର ତାରା ହୋଇ  
ମୁଁ ହସି ଉଠେ ଅସରନ୍ତି ହସ,  
ମନର ପରିଧିରେ ତୁମକୁ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରବିନ୍ଦୁ କରି  
ମୁଁ ତା'ର ଚାରିପଟେ ଅମାନିଆ ପିଲାଟିଏ ପରି ଘୁରି ବୁଲେ  
ହାତରେ ଷଡ଼େଇ ଧରି ଖରାବେଳେ ଆତ୍ମତୋଟା ଗହଳରେ |

ମନ ଭିତରେ ରହିଯାଅ ମନ ବାନ୍ଧି ଲୀଳାବତୀ ସୂତ୍ର ହୋଇ  
କୋଣାର୍କର କେଉଁ ଏକ ନାୟୀକାର ରହସ୍ୟମୟ ହସ ସାଜି  
ବୁଝିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରି ଅବୁଝା ରହିଯାଅ ଅଧା କଷ୍ଟା ଅଂକ ହୋଇ  
କିନ୍ତୁ ଚାହିଁ ଦେଖ ସଖୀ, ଆଜି ଆମେ ସେହି ସ୍ଵର୍ଗୀୟ ପ୍ରେମରେ ବିଭୋର  
ଘର ବସାଇଛେ ସତ୍ୟ ବିଶ୍ଵାସ ନୀତରେ  
ରହିଯିବା ବାନ୍ଧିହୋଇ ସ୍ନେହର ତୋରିରେ  
ଯେ ହେବ ଅନେକ ବେଶୀ ଶକ୍ତ  
ଜନ୍ମ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ଠାରୁ  
ଯେଉଁମାନେ ପୃଥିବୀର ଚିରନ୍ତନ ସତ୍ୟ!!



କୁକୁ ଦାଶ, ସାନ୍ତାକ୍ଵାରା, କାଲିଫର୍ଣ୍ଣିଆ



# ପଣା ଯାତ୍ରା, ପୁନଶ୍ଚ

## ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ମିଶ୍ର

### ପିଲାଦିନେ

ପଣା ଯାତ୍ରା ଆସିଲାଣି, ଗଙ୍ଗେଶ୍ୱର ମେଳା ହେବ,  
 ଗାଁ ସାରା ହେଲେ ପୁଲକିତ,  
 ଭଳି ଭଳି ବିପଣୀରେ, ଭରିଯିବ, ଗାଁର ପଡ଼ିଆ  
 ପାରୁଥାଏ ଲୀଳା ହେବ, ସଭିଏଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ  
 ମାସାନ୍ତର ଝାମୁ ଓସା ଖରାକୁ ଖାତିର ନାହିଁ,  
 ଧରି ବାପା-ବୋଉଙ୍କର ହାତ,  
 ସଂକ୍ରାନ୍ତିର ଶୁଭ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ, ଶିବସ୍ନାନ କରିବାକୁ,  
 “ଓଁ ଶିବାୟ” ଗାଉଥିବୁ, ବନିବୁ ଭକତ  
 ପାଦୁକା ଓ ବେଲପତ୍ର ପାଇ, ପୂଜା କାମ ସାରିଦେଇ  
 ବୁଲୁଥାଉ ପ୍ରଜାପତି ପରି,  
 ନିମାଇଁକ ଉଚ୍ଚସ୍ତର ରେକର୍ଡରେ  
 “ଶିଂଶୁପା ବୃକ୍ଷର ତାଳେ” ବାଜୁଥାଏ ଗଗନ କଂପାଇ  
 ଖାଇବାକୁ ମନ ଲୋଡ଼େ, “ବିକଳି କର”ଙ୍କ ଲଢ଼ୁ  
 ବରା ଆଉ ମିଠା ରସଗୋଲା,  
 ଜିରାଗୁଣ୍ଡ ଲଙ୍କା ତୁନା ଦେଇ  
 ବିକୁଥାଏ “ଜଗୁସାହୁ” ଖଟା ଦହି ବରା  
 ଛଣ ଛେଟା ଦେଇ ତୁନା ତୁନା ବରଫ ମିଶାଇ  
 କେତେ ରଙ୍ଗ ପାଣିଦେଇ ଥଣ୍ଡା ସରବତ,  
 ଏ ଖରାରେ ଦି ଢୋକ ପିଇଦେଲେ,  
 ଲାଗେ ସତେ ସରଗ ଅମୃତ  
 ଗାଁ ଦାଣ୍ଡେ, ମନ୍ଦିର ପ୍ରାଙ୍ଗଣେ ବାଜୁଥାଏ  
 ଢୋଲ ଆଉ ମହୁରୀର ସ୍ୱର,  
 ବ୍ୟାଧିମୁକ୍ତ ଭକ୍ତମାନେ, ପାଟଲୁଗା ପିନ୍ଧିସାରି  
 ପାଟୁଆ ନାଚିବା ପାଇଁ ବନ୍ଧ ପରିକର

## ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ପରେ

ଯାଇଥିଲି ନିଜ ଦେଶେ ପରଦେଶୀ ସାଜି  
ବୁଲିଗଲି, ନିଜ ଗାଆଁ, “ପଣାଯାତ୍ରା” ଆଜି  
ସାଥେ ଥିଲେ ପରିବାର, ଏସି-ଥୁବା ଗାଡ଼ିଟିଏ ଧରି,  
ମୁହଁରେ ଫେସ୍-ମାସ୍କ, ବେଙ୍ଗଳାର ଗୋରୁମୁଖା ପରି  
ଧୁଳି ଭରା ଗାଁ ଦାଣ୍ଡ, ବାଟ ସାରା ବହୁତ ଗହଳି  
ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ବହୁ ଭିଡ, ବାହାରେ ରଖିଲେ ଯୋତା, ଚାଲିହେବ ନାହିଁ,  
ମନ୍ଦିର ଭିତରେ ଧୂପ, ଦୀପ ଏତେ ଧୂଆଁ ପାରିବୁନି ସହି  
ପାଦୁକାରେ ବହୁତ ଜୀବାଣୁ, ବିନ୍ଦୁଟିଏ ପିଇ ହବ ନାହିଁ  
ଦୋକାନରୁ ଖାଇବାକୁ ମନା, ମାଛି ଭଣ ଭଣ ଚାହିଁ ହବ ନାହିଁ  
ମେଳାଟାରେ ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଭିଡ, ଝାଳ ବୋହି ଲୁଗାପଟା ହେଲା ସର ସର,  
ସହରକୁ ଫେରିବା ସଅଳ,  
ଯାତ୍ରା ଦେଖା ଏତିକିରେ ସାର

ଜନମିଛି ମାଟିଘରେ, ଚଳିଛି ଯେ, ଗାଁ ମାଟି  
ଅପତରା ଭୂଇଁକୁ ଆଦରି,  
ଖେଳିଛି ଯେ, ଗାଁ ଟୋକା ସାଥେ, ଗୁଲି ଦଣ୍ଡା ଓ ବାଗୁଡ଼ି, ଅବା ବୋହୂ ଚୋରୀ  
ସେ ସିନା ବୁଝିବ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ “ପଣାଯାତ୍ରା”, ଗାଁ ମେଳା,  
ପାରୁଥା ସବାର  
ତା ମନେ ଭରିଛି ସବୁ, ବିଶ୍ୱାସର ଢୁଙ୍କୁ ହୀନ ମମତାର  
ରୁଦ୍ଧ ଗନ୍ତାଘର  
ବିଶ୍ୱାସରେ ବିଶ୍ୱନାଥ ଥିଲେ ସିନା,  
ଠାକୁର-ପାଦୁକ, ବନିବ ଅମୃତ,  
ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ହରିଲେ ମନୁ, ଅମୃତ ବି ହୋଇବ ବିଷାକ୍ତ



୧୧୦୬ ଡେଲ୍ ଓଡ଼ କ୍ରେସେଣ୍ଡ, ସତବରୀ, ଓଢ଼ାରିଓ, କାନାଡା ପିମ୍ପାଲ ୪୪୧୮୪  
ଦୂରଭାଷ ୭୦୫ ୫୨୨ ୩୯୦୯



## ଅମୃତର ସନ୍ତାନ ପରାଶର ମିଶ୍ର

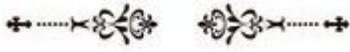
କିଏ କୁହେ ଏମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆଦିମାନବତ'  
 କିଏ କୁହେ ବଣ ମଣିଷ  
 କିଏ ପୁଣି କୁହେ ଜଙ୍ଗଲୀ ତ'  
 କିଏ କୁହେ ପାହାଡ଼ୀ ମଣିଷ,  
 ପ୍ରଗତି ଓ ଆଧୁନିକତାର ଆଳରେ  
 ସଭ୍ୟ, ଶିକ୍ଷିତ ମୁଖାପିନ୍ଧା ନେତା ଓ  
 ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକଙ୍କ ଆହା ରୁଚୁର ସହାନୁଭୂତି  
 ଛଳନା ଓ ପ୍ରତାରଣାରେ  
 ଯୁଗ, ଯୁଗର ଦଳିତ, ଅବହେଳିତ,  
 ଅବାଂଛିତ ଓ ବିସ୍ଥାପିତ ଆଦିବାସୀ  
 ମୁକ୍ତ ଆକାଶ ଓ ଖୋଲା ଜଙ୍ଗଲରୁ  
 ଧରାହୋଇ ବନ୍ଧା ହୁଅନ୍ତି  
 ସରକାରୀ ଫାଇଲରେ,  
 ସରକାରଙ୍କ ପଞ୍ଚବାର୍ଷିକ ଯୋଜନାରେ ।

ଗୋପୀନାଥଙ୍କ ଅମୃତର ସନ୍ତାନ  
 କୃତ୍ରିଆ କନ୍ଧ, ତଙ୍ଗରିଆ କନ୍ଧ, ପରଜା,  
 ଗଣ୍ଡ, ଶଉରା, ଗଦବାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ, ଜୀବିକାକୁ  
 ଜାଣିବାର, ଶିଖିବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ କରନା  
 ସରକାରଙ୍କ ଆୟୋଜିତ ବର୍ଷିକିଆ  
 ଆଦିବାସୀ ମେଳାରେ  
 ଭୃଗୋଳ, ସାମାଜିକ ବିଜ୍ଞାନ,  
 ଅର୍ଥନୀତି, ଦର୍ଶନ, ଓ ତର୍କ ବିତର୍କରେ ।

ବିକାଶ ଓ ବିସ୍ଥାପନ ଭିତରେ ଥିବା  
 ଏକ ଅସନ୍ତୁଳିତ ସମୀକରଣର ବାହାରେ  
 ଗୋପୀନାଥଙ୍କ ଅମୃତର ସନ୍ତାନର  
 ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଜୀବନଚର୍ଯ୍ୟା, ସାମାଜିକ ସମ୍ଭାବକୁ  
 ବୁଝିବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ କରିବୁ ଆସ

ରିଂଗାଜାନି, ଦିସାରୀଙ୍କ ମନ୍ଦ୍ର ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣରେ  
 ସରବୁ ସାଓଁତା, ସୁକୁଜାନି, ମାଣ୍ଡିଆ ଜାନିର  
 ପ୍ରତିବାଦ ଓ ପ୍ରତିରୋଧରେ  
 ମହୁଲି ମଦରେ, ଚଇତି ନାଚରେ  
 ଧାଂଡା ଧାଂଡୀର ଉଦୁଲିଆ ପ୍ରେମରେ,  
 ଆଉ ପୁଣି ନଇ, ଝରଣା କୁଳରେ  
 ବଂଜଣୀ ପୁଞ୍ଜର କୋଳାହଳରେ ।

ମାଟି, ପାଣି, ପବନର  
 ଉଦାରତାକୁ ଭଲ ପାଇ,  
 ପାହାଡ଼, ପାହାଡ଼ୀ, ନଇ, ଜଙ୍ଗଲ  
 ପ୍ରକୃତି ଓ ଜୀବନକୁ ଆପଣାର କରି,  
 ଜୀବନର ଜୟଗାନ କରି  
 ପ୍ରକୃତିର ସନ୍ତାନ, ନିଞ୍ଜପଟ,  
 ସରଳ ଓ ସହଜ ମଣିଷ  
 ଗୋପୀନାଥଙ୍କ ଅମୃତର ସନ୍ତାନ  
 ଜଳ, ସ୍ଥଳ, ଅନ୍ତରୀକ୍ଷକୁ କରିଥାଏ  
 ମହିମାମୟ , ମଧୁମୟ, ଓ ଅମୃତମୟ ।





# ଦୁଇଟି ସନେଟ୍

ସତ୍ୟ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

## ସଞ୍ଜ

ତୁମେ ସ୍ଵର୍ଣ୍ଣତ ଚନ୍ଦନବନ ମୁଁ ଯେ ନିଛାଟିଆ ବଣମଲ୍ଲୀ  
ତୁମେ ଆଶ୍ଵିନୀର ମୁଗ୍ଧ ମଳୟ ମୁଁ ଯେ ବୈଶାଖର ଚୋରାବାଲି  
ତୁମେ ତ ସାଗର ସୁଦୂର ପ୍ରସାରୀ ମୁଁ ଯେ ଲହଡ଼ିର ଅସ୍ତ୍ରାୟୁଷ  
ପୀୟୂଷ ସମ ତୁମ ପ୍ରୀତି ପ୍ରିୟ ! ଦଗ୍ଧ ପ୍ରାଣର ଅଭିଳାଷ

ତୁମେ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟର ଅମ୍ଳାନ ଆଭା ମୁଁ ଯେ ଶରଦର ଶେଷ ଜହ୍ନ  
କେଉଁ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନର ନୀଳ ସରସୀରେ ଭିଜୁଥାଏ ଏଇ ତନୁ ମନ  
ଭଗ୍ନ ହୋଇଛି ମଗ୍ଧ ତପସ୍ୟା ବନ୍ଦୀ ହୋଇଛି ଯତ୍ନବନ  
ସେଇ ନୟନର ତୀକ୍ଷ୍ଣ ତୀରରେ ଅଂଗରେ ମୋର ଶିହରଣ

ତୁମେ ଶିଳ୍ପୀର ଶାଣିତ ନିହାଣ ମୁଁ ଯେ କୋଣାରକ ତାରୁକଳା  
ଦିବ୍ୟ ପଥର ଏକଲା ଯାତ୍ରୀ ମୁଁ ପ୍ରେମ ମୋହର ପାଛୁଣାଳା  
ତୁମେ ତାଣ୍ଡବର ରୁଦ୍ରଝଙ୍କାର ମୁଁ ଯେ ପ୍ରଭାତର ବେଦଧ୍ଵନୀ  
ଜୀବନ ଯେଉଁଠି ଗ୍ରୀଷ୍ମ ପ୍ରବାହ ସ୍ଵର୍ଣ୍ଣ ତୁମର ସଂଜୀବନୀ

ଆଜି ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାର ବିଭୋର ବିଜନେ ମତୁଆଲା ହୁଏ ତଳତାଳି  
ତୁମ ଶବ୍ଦରେ କରିଦିଅ ମୋତେ ଗୀତଗୋବିନ୍ଦର ପଦାବଳୀ

## ରାତ୍ରି

ତୁମରି ଆକ୍ଷିର କଜଳ ଧାରରୁ ଗା'ରେ କଞ୍ଜଳ ପାଇଁ  
ଅମାନିଆ ଏଇ ରାତିଟା ଯେମିତି ଯାଇଛି ପାଗଳ ହୋଇ  
ମନରେ ପୁଟିଛି ଅସୁମାରୀ ପୁଲ ଅଭୁଲ ! ଏ ଅନୁଭବ  
ଆଜି ଏ ରାତିର ରଂଗଶାଳାରେ ପ୍ରଣୟର ମହୋତ୍ସବ

ତୁମେ ବସିଅଛ ଯୁଗ ଯୁଗ ଧରି ଆଶାର ପ୍ରଦୀପ ଜାଳି  
ଜୀବନ ଖେଳୁଛି ତୁମ ସାଥେ କେତେ ମିଛିମିଛି ଲୁଚକାଳି  
ରାତି କରେ ତାକୁ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ବିଭୋର, ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ଆଶଇ ମାୟା  
ଅନ୍ଧାର ଘେରା ଜୀବନରେ ଆଶେ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରଧନୁର ଛାୟା

ଯତ୍ନବନ ଯେବେ ପାରିଲାନି ଲେଖି ଜୀବନର ମଧୁଗୀତି  
ଶତ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟର ଆଲୋକଠୁ ସତ ଅନ୍ଧାର ରାତିର ପ୍ରୀତି  
ଆଜି ଏ ରାତିର ପ୍ରଣୟ ବେଳାରେ ନିଶଦ ଶଙ୍ଖ ଧ୍ଵନୀ  
ଗାଇଯାଏ କେତେ କାନ୍ତ କୋମଳ ଅପେକ୍ଷାର ଆବାହନୀ

ତୁମରି ଆକ୍ଷିର କଜଳ ଧାର ଯେ ଲୁହରେ ଯାଇଛି ଧୋଇ  
ପୂର୍ବରାଗର ଲୋହିତ କବରେ ରାତି ଯାଇଅଛି ଶୋଇ



୭୪୬୪ ଓଡ଼ିତମ୍ ଲେନ୍, ତବ୍‌ଲିନ୍,  
ଓହିଓ ୪୩୦୧୬, ଯୁକ୍ତରାଷ୍ଟ୍ର ଆମେରିକା

# ଆତଙ୍କ

ସତ୍ୟଜିତ୍ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

ଆତଙ୍କବାଦୀର ଗରଜେ କମାଣ  
ରକତର ହୋରି ଖେଳୁଛି ଭୀଷଣ  
ସହସ୍ର ମରଣ କାରଣ ବନିଛ  
ଦେଶ,ଗ୍ରାମ,ବନ୍ଧୁ ଜଳାଇ କରିଛ  
ଜନନୀର କୋଳ ଉଜାଡ଼ି ଦେବାକୁ  
ଧର୍ମ ନାମରେ ଧରମ-ଅନ୍ଧ କୁ  
ଜନମ ମାଟିର ଅଭିଶାପ ବନି  
ଜିହାଦ୍ ନାମରେ ଲୁଣ୍ଠିତା ମେଦିନୀ  
ସରଳ, ନିଷ୍ଠାପ କିଶୋର ହୃଦରୁ  
ଜଳିଯିବ ଦିନେ ତୁମେ ଉଷ୍ମାସୁର  
ଆତଙ୍କ ଯେ ଆଜି ଆତଙ୍କିତ ଅତି  
ମାନବ ରୂପରେ ଦାନବର ଭାତି  
ଯଦି ତୁମେ ଅଟ ଅମୃତ ସନ୍ତାନ  
ଜୀବନ ଲଗାଇ ବଞ୍ଚାଅ ଜୀବନ

ବରଷାଏ ଗୋଳା ତୁହାକୁ ତୁହା,  
ସଇତାନ୍ ମେଲି ଆପଣା ବାହା ।  
ରତାଇଛ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ତାଣ୍ଡବ ଲୀଳା,  
ଶ୍ମଶାନ,ଧୂସ ପ୍ରୟୋଗ ଶାଳା ।  
ଅନାଥ କରିଛ ଅବୋଧ ଶିଶୁ,  
ବନାଇ ଦେଇଛ ବର୍ବର ପଶୁ ।  
ରୋପଣ କରୁଛ ଆତଙ୍କବାଦ,  
ମସ୍ତକ ହରାଏ ମାନବ ବାଦ ।  
ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଲୁଚି, ଭରିଛ ହିଂସା, ବ୍ରେଶ  
ଜଳାଇବ ସେହି ହଳାହଳ ବିଷ ।  
ବର୍ବରତାର ନିର୍ମମ ସାକ୍ଷୀ,  
ନିବନ୍ଧ ରଖୁଛି ଲୋଲୁପ ଆଖି ।  
ମ୍ଲେହ,ପ୍ରେମ,ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ପାଇଁ ଯେ ଲଗନ  
ତେବେ ହିଁ ପାଇବ ଅମୃତ ସନ୍ତାନ ।



## ଜୀବନ - ସୁନନ୍ଦା ମିଶ୍ର ପଣ୍ଡା

ପ୍ରେମର ଗଜଲରେ ମସ୍ତୁଲ୍ ମନତଳେ  
ଥାକିଥାକି ଅକୁହା ଦୁଃଖ,  
ଅନେକ କହୁଛି - ଜୀବନଟା ସମୟର ତାସଖେଳ  
ଶରୀର କ୍ଷଣଭଙ୍ଗୁର,  
ଆବେଗ-ଅନୁଭବ, ସବୁ ମିଛ, ସବୁ ଫମ୍ପା  
ଆଶା, କଳ୍ପନା, ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷାର ଅକଳନ ବ୍ୟଥା I

ଜୀବନ ତ ଏକ ରହସ୍ୟ ସଂଗୀତ !  
ସେହି ଛାୟା ରହସ୍ୟ ଖୋଜିବାରେ  
ଏତେ କିମ୍ପା ବ୍ୟର୍ଥ କରିବା ସମୟ (?)

ବରଂ ଭଲ  
ସବୁ ଆବେଗ-ଅନୁରାଗ, କାମନା-ବାସନା,  
ପ୍ରୀତି-ଅପ୍ରୀତିର ମିଶ୍ର ଅନୁଭବ ଭିତରେ  
ହତାଶାକୁ ବାଦ ଦେଇ ଜୀବନ ପଥରେ  
ଚାଲିବା ଚାଲୁଥିବାଯାଏ I  
ଦୁଃଖର ସିନ୍ଧୁକ ଭିତରୁ ହସ ଚିକେ ସାଉଁଟି  
ମାଖୁ ହୋଇ ପଡ଼ିଲେ,  
ହୁଏତ କେଉଁ ଆର୍ତ୍ତ ମଣିଷର ହୃଦୟରେ  
ଫୁଟିପାରେ ଆତ୍ମାର ଛଳପତ୍ତ  
ହୁଏତ ରାଜସଭା ଅବା ରାଜରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରରେ  
ବାରମ୍ବାର ଅପମାନିତ ହେଉଥିବା ଦ୍ରୌପଦୀ  
ସହଜ ହେଇପାରେ ଆଗାମୀ ଦିନରେ  
ଦୁଃଖାସନମାନଙ୍କ ଜାନୁଭଙ୍ଗର କଳ୍ପନାରେ !!



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*Dr. Sunanda Mishra Panda lives in Toronto. She is a poet, social worker and currently the Vice-President and Secretary of CANOSA.*

# କେବେ ଯଦି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ

ଦେବକୀ ନନ୍ଦନ ଚୌଧୁରୀ



କେବେ ଯଦି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ

ଆସ ଏ ଭକତ ଭଜନରେ,  
ଧୋଇବି ମୁଁ ପାଦ ତୁମ,  
କାନ୍ଦି କାନ୍ଦି ଆଖି ନିରେ,  
ରଖିବିନି ଆଖିରେ ମୁଁ ପଲକ ଘୋଡ଼ାଇ,  
ଲୁହେ ବୋହି ଯିବ କାଳେ - ଲୁହେ ବୋହି ଯିବ କାଳେ

କେବେ ଯଦି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ..... ।

ସେଦିନ ଭଜନେ, ଭାବନରେ ବୁଡ଼ି ଯିବ  
ନିଳାଚଳ ଅବା ବୃନ୍ଦାବନ ଭୁଲି ଯିବ  
ଚନ୍ଦନ, କର୍ପୂର, ତୁଳସୀର ମାଳ ଛାଡ଼ି,  
ହୃଦୟେ ବସିବ ମୋର, ହୃଦୟେ ବସିବ

କେବେ ଯଦି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ..... ।

ସେଦିନ ଭଜନେ ଭକ୍ତିର କଦମ୍ବ ଥିବ,  
ଲୁହର ଯମୁନା ଭାବ ଧୂପ ଉଡ଼ୁଥିବ,  
ଝୁମି ଝୁମି ପ୍ରଭୁ ତୁମେ, ପତି ଯିବ ଭଳି,  
ମନ କୁଞ୍ଜେ ମୋର, ମନ କୁଞ୍ଜେ ମୋର

କେବେ ଯଦି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ..... ।

ସେଦିନ ଭଜନ ପରେ, ତୁମେ ଯେବେ ଯିବ,  
ଭାବ ଦଉଡ଼ିରେ ବାନ୍ଧି ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିବ,  
ଶ୍ରୀମନ୍ଦିରେ ବସି ଭକ୍ତକୁ ଦର୍ଶନ ଦେବ,  
ହେଲେ, ମନ ଏଠି ଥିବ - ମନ ଏଠି ଥିବ

କେବେ ଯଦି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ..... ।



# ମହାପ୍ରୟାଗ

ସ୍ନେହ ମହାନ୍ତି

ସେ ଦିନ ଶୁଭିଳା ଜନ ମୁଖରେ, ଦେବତା କିବା ସେ ନର ରୂପରେ  
ତମକାଞ୍ଚ ଦେଇ ଦିବ୍ୟ ଜ୍ୟୋତିରେ, ଜନମ ନେଲା ସେ ଶୁଭ ବେଳାରେ  
ଏମନ୍ତ ସମୟେ  
ସୁଖ ବିଭବରେ, ରାଜପୁରୀ ହେଲା ସରଗ ପ୍ରାୟେ ।

ପ୍ରକୃତି ହସିଲା କୁସୁମ ହାସେ, ସୁଖେ କଲେ ଖେଳା ସର୍ବେ ହରଷେ  
ଦେବ ପ୍ରେରିତ ସେ ରାଜକୁମାର, ରାଜ୍ୟ ସୁଖ ହୃଦ୍ୟ କରିଣ ଦୂର  
ପିତା କଲେ ଚିନ୍ତା  
ନିୟତି କି ଖାଲି ଲେଖୁଛି କପାଳେ କଠିନ ବ୍ୟଥା ।

ବିଳାସ ବ୍ୟସନ ସମ୍ଭୋଗ ତେଜି, ରାଜକୁମାର ସେ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ମଜ୍ଜି  
ଜୀବନ ଯେଉଁଠି ଅକାଳେ ଝରେ, ଜରା ବ୍ୟାଧି ପୁଣି ପରାଣ ଭରେ  
ଅଳିକ ସୁଖରେ  
ଭଂଗୁର ଜୀବନ ମନ କାହିଁ ଧାଏଁ ସିନା ବ୍ୟର୍ଥରେ ।

ଜୀବନର ଯେତେ ବିଭବ ରାଶି, ସପନ ସମ ସେ ଜୁଆରେ ଭାସି  
ଦୂରୁ ମରୀଚିକା ରୂପରେ ଦେଉ, ବାସ୍ତବ ଜୀବନେ କାକର ସେହୁ  
କ୍ଷଣେ ଆସେ ସିନା  
ସୁଖ ଭରି ଦିଏ, ଲିଭିଯାଏ କ୍ଷଣେ ଦେଇ ଯାତନା ।

ପଦ୍ମ ପତ୍ର ଜଳ ସମ ଜୀବନ, କେଉଁ ସୁଖ ପାଇଁ ଧାଏଁ ପରାଣ  
ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ଏହି ରହସ୍ୟ ଭେଦି, ଉଦାସେ ଯାତନା ମରମେ ଖେଦି  
ନିର୍ବାଣ ସନ୍ଧାନେ

ନୀରବ ନିଶ୍ଚଳ, ରାତ୍ରି ପ୍ରହରେ ରାଜପୁର ଛାଡ଼ି ମାୟା ବଂଧନେ  
ବୋଧୁଦୃମ ତଳେ, ତପସ୍ୟାରେ ରତ ସିଦ୍ଧି ଲଭିଲେ  
ବୌଦ୍ଧ ଧର୍ମ, ନୀତି ଧର୍ମ ପଦେ ଲେଖୁ ପ୍ରଚାରି ଗଲେ  
ଯୁଗ ଯୁଗ ଯାଏ

ବୌଦ୍ଧ ଧର୍ମ ନାମେ, ଜଗତେ ପ୍ରଚାରି, ଅମର ହୋଇଲେ ମହାପ୍ରୟାଗେ ।



ସ୍ନେହ ମହାନ୍ତି (ଡଲି), ହଂଟିଂଗ୍‌ଟନ୍ ବିଡ୍, କାଲିଫର୍ନିଆ; ଫୋନ୍: ୭୧୪-୮୪୮-୦୭୯୪



# ଆରେ ମନ କାହିଁ ଧାଉଁ...

ମନୋଜ ପଣ୍ଡା

ଆରେ ମନ କାହିଁ ଧାଉଁ ବିଷୟର ବିଷକୁ  
ଛାଡ଼ି ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ନାମ ଅମୃତର ରସକୁ । (ଘୋଷା)

କେତେ ଜନ୍ମ କେତେ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ କେତେ ଦେହ କେତେ ମନ  
କେତେ ସୁଖ କେତେ ଦୁଃଖ ଜରା ବ୍ୟାଧିର ଜୀବନ ।

କେତେ ପୁତ୍ର କେତେ ପୁତ୍ରୀ କେତେ ବନ୍ଧୁ ପରିଜନ  
କେତେ ମାତା କେତେ ପିତା କେତେ ଆତ୍ମୀୟ ସ୍ୱଜନ ।

ସବୁ ସମ୍ପର୍କର ତୋରି ଧରି ତୋର ସତ୍ତାକୁ  
ବନ୍ଧନ ଚକ୍ରର ଦୋଳି ଖେଳାଉଛି ବରାକୁ ।

ଆରେ ମନ କାହିଁ ଧାଉଁ...

କାହିଁ କରୁ କୃତି ବୃତ୍ତି ଯହିଁ ହୁଏ ତରୁ ସତୀ  
କାହିଁ ଅର୍ଜୁ ଧନ ଜନ ଧରି ପାପର ନିକିତି ।

ଯହିଁ ଚାଲେ ବିକା କିଣା ବଜାଇ ଅନୀତି ବୀଣା  
ଜ୍ଞାନ ମାପେ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞାନକୁ ଧରି ବୁଦ୍ଧି ବାଟବଣା ।

ଆମୋଦ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଲୀଳା ବିବେକ ବିହୀନ କଳା  
ଶିକ୍ଷା ଯହିଁ ବାଟ ଚାଲେ ଧରି ଶୀଳ ହୀନବଳା ।

ସବୁ ପୂଜା ଯେବେ ହୁଏ ଆଖି ଠାରି ଧର୍ମକୁ  
ମୁକ୍ତିପଥ ଉଦ୍ଘୋଷିତ କେବେ ହେବ ମର୍ମକୁ ।

ଆରେ ମନ କାହିଁ ଧାଉଁ...

ମନ ମହୋଦଧି ଜଳେ ଆଶା ଉର୍ଜ୍ଜ୍ୱ ଆବେଗେ ଖେଳେ  
ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରିୟାଗତ ଚେତନ ମାୟା ରଜନୀରେ ଭାଳେ ।

ବିଭୁ ନାମ ଯେବେ ଟାଣେ ନିସ୍ତୁଟ୍ଟ ବିଜନ ବେଳେ

ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ପ୍ରାଣ ବୁଡ଼ି ଯାଏ ଚିରନ୍ତନ ମହାଭାବେ ।

ନିରାକାର ବିଶ୍ୱାଧାର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତ ବାହ୍ୟ ଅଭ୍ୟନ୍ତରେ  
ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ନିରନ୍ତର ସମାହିତ ଚରାଚରେ ।

ସୃଷ୍ଟି, ସ୍ଥିତି ଲୟର ସେ ଅଖିଳ ନିଦାନ  
ଅଗତିର ଗତି ପୁଣି ପରମ କାରଣ ।

ସଙ୍କୁଚିତ କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ରତାର ହେଉ ଅବସାନ  
ଜାଗି ଉଠୁ ସର୍ବ ହୃଦେ ଆନନ୍ଦର ଶାନ ।

ଅନନ୍ତ ବିତାନେ ପ୍ରଭୁ ଅଭେଦ ନିର୍ବେଦ  
ସଭାର ପ୍ରକାଶେ ସଦା ଜୀବ ଉଜ୍ଜୀବିତ ।

ଏକାଭୂତ ବିଶ୍ୱ ପ୍ରାଣ ଅଟ ଦୟାମୟ  
ଜଗତ୍‌ପତି ମହାବାହୁ ଅତିମ ଆଲୟ ।

ଏକ ଧ୍ୟାନେ ଏକ ମନେ କରେ ମୁଁ ପ୍ରଣତି  
ଅମୃତର ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ଝରିପଡ଼ୁ ନିତି ।

ଶୁଭ ଦିନେ ଶୁଭ ତିଥେ କରଇ ବନ୍ଦନ  
ପୁଷ୍ପାଞ୍ଜଳି ଘେନା କର ପ୍ରଣାମ ଚନ୍ଦନ ।



# ନବକଳେବର ନବୀନ ନାଗର

ରଘୁନାଥ ଦାସ



ଜଗତ ଠାକୁର ଆଜି ଆଗଭର  
ନବକଳେବର ନେଇ  
ଜଗତର ବାସୀ ଅତି ଖୁସି ହୋଇ  
ପାଛୋଟି ଆଣନ୍ତି ଯାଇ ।  
ଜଗା କାଳିଆର ଶୁଭ ପଦୁଆର  
ଭରିନୀ ସୋଦର ସାଥେ  
ସଜବାଜ ହୋଇ ଭକତ ଗହଣେ  
ବିଜେ ହୋଇଲେ ସେ ରଥେ ।  
ସହିଛ ମୋ ଅଳି, ସହିଛ ଅର୍ଦଳି  
ଗୁହାରି ମୋ ଦିବାନିଶି  
ପୂରାଇଛ ନାଥ ସର୍ବ ମନୋରଥ  
ପ୍ରେମସୁଧା ଧାରା ବର୍ଷି ।

ନଗରେ ନଗରେ ଦରିଆ ସେପାରେ  
ଉଡ଼ଇ ତୋହରି ବାନା  
ହରଷ ମନରେ ଭକତିରେ ସର୍ବେ  
କରନ୍ତି ତୋ ଉପାସନା ।  
ଜଗତ ଠାକୁର କରୁଣା ଅପାର  
ଭକ୍ତବୃନ୍ଦ ଅତି ତୋଷ,  
ଆହେ ଦୀନବନ୍ଧୁ ପ୍ରଭୁ କୃପାକ୍ଷିଣ୍ଣୁ  
ଭାବଗ୍ରାହୀ ଜଗଦୀଶ ।  
ନବକଳେବର ନବୀନ ନାଗର  
ଅପୂର୍ବ ମହିମା ତୋର,  
ତୋ ଚତୁର୍ଥା ଶୋଭା ବଡ଼ ମନଲୋଭା  
ଘେନ ପ୍ରଣାମ ମୋହର ।



# ବତ୍ତିଘର

## Light House



## Physics Professor Surjyo Narayana Behera (1941-2011)

*Devaraj Sahu*



Professor Surjyo Narayana Behera

Professor Surjyo Narayana Behera, former Vice-Chancellor of Berhampur University and former Director of the Institute of Physics, Bhubaneswar, passed away on December 14, 2011 at age 70 due to complications arising from heart-related illness. Earlier, he had undergone heart bypass surgery at the Apollo Hospital in Bhubaneswar and was fitted with a pacemaker.

Surjyo Narayana Behera was born in Bhanjanagar area on August 16, 1941. He completed his M.Sc. in physics from Ravenshaw College, Cuttack in 1962 [Reference 1]. He obtained his Ph.D. in theoretical solid state physics from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur in the year 1967. His doctoral dissertation was done under the supervision of Professor Bibhuti B. Deo.

Dr. Behera's Ph.D. in solid state theory from IIT, Kanpur was a watershed event for several reasons. First of all, at the time of his Ph.D. defense, he had already published two papers in the prestigious physics journal, the Physical Review. The first paper dealt with calculation of lattice thermal conductivity using the Kubo formula. The second paper dealt with substitutional defects and resonant modes in solids. Secondly, his Ph.D. advisor, Professor Deo, is an elementary particle theory practitioner and has not returned to solid state theory. Thirdly, Dr. Behera's Ph.D. oral presentation was extremely well-done and he exuded confidence [Reference 2] in the presence of experts. His presentation clearly showed that he had mastered and worked out the details of his presentation. Finally, it was quite uncommon at that time to be married while enrolled in the Ph.D. program. Dr. Behera was married to Mrs. Indira Behera [References 2, 3]. A daughter, Smruti Behera was born in Kanpur. Unfortunately, Mrs. Behera

passed away during child birth and Dr. Behera remained a widower for most of his life. The passing away of his wife had a profound effect on Dr. Behera. He was determined to bring up Smruti with the affection and care of a mother as well as a father. People who know him personally say that Dr. Behera remained committed to all the care he could possibly provide to his daughter who was without a mother.

Dr. Behera did his post-doctoral research at the Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia in Canada from 1967 to 1969. He worked in collation with Professor K. S. Viswanathan at the Simon Fraser University. During his stay in British Columbia, one of his acquaintances from IIT Kanpur, Mr. Binod B. Nayak (who currently resides in North Potomac, MD, USA) wrote to him about his forthcoming trip to Seattle, Washington for higher studies. Dr. Behera, being the gentleman he was, wrote Mr. Nayak a check for \$500 which was waiting for Mr. Nayak upon his arrival in Seattle. Mr. Nayak also visited with him in British Columbia and developed a strong bond with him.

Dr. S. N. Behera returned to India and started the Physics department of Berhampur University as a special officer in 1969. He later became the Head of the Physics Department. The Physics Department expanded to have other faculty members: Dr. Krutibas Patnaik, Dr. Mamata Satpathy, Dr. Lakshmidhar Satpathy, and Mr. Arun K. Rath. The author was fortunate to have these illustrious teachers from 1971 to 1973 for his M.Sc. courses. Professor Behera taught solid state physics in the first year and advanced solid state physics in the second year. He was an exemplary teacher who instilled the love for solid state physics in many students, including the author.

Professor Behera is invariably regarded by his students as the top teacher they have had. In addition to being an exceptional teacher, he was very happy to talk to students in a one-to-one basis. He was never in a rush to cut short a conversation with a student. He was a true gentleman who never intimidated his students. In the year 1971, Professor Behera was the external physics examiner for the author in the B.Sc. (Hons) physics examination at the S.K.C.G. College in Parlakhemundi. The author was doing an experiment on dispersion of light. After testing his knowledge on routine topics, Professor Behera wanted to test him at a higher level. He asked the author what happens when the index of refraction is imaginary. The author had no answer. He further asked, what happens if the index of refraction is complex. The author could not answer that question either. The author was worried that he would be penalized for not knowing the answers. However, Professor Behera understood the limitations of a hapless undergraduate student and was fair in his evaluation.

During the author's M.Sc. years, Professor Behera taught many of the modern concepts of Physics, particularly solid state physics. He was talking about electronic band structure

calculations, in particular muffin-tin potential. The potential is spherically symmetric in the muffin-tin region and flat in the interstitial region. The problem was that the students had no idea what a muffin-tin was. So, to simplify matters, Professor Behera asked us to think about idli and tin instead of muffin and tin!



1972 Berhampur University Physics Department. Prof. Behera is seated on chair, fifth from the right.

In the year 1974, Professor Prasanta K. Misra joined as Professor of the Physics Department of Berhampur University and assumed duties of the Head of the Department. Professor Misra was Professor Behera's teacher at Ravenshaw College. Professor Behera always paid his due respects to Professor Misra and strove to make the department even better. The author became a faculty member of the Berhampur University Physics Department in 1974. Professor Behera was always unwavering in his encouragement to his former student to make him a better teacher.

Professor Behera left Berhampur for Bhubaneswar and joined the newly established Institute of Physics (IOP) as Assistant Professor on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1975. He immersed himself in teaching and research at IOP. He rose through the ranks of the Institute to the post of Professor and then Director. One of his students at IOP [Reference 4] fondly recalls that Professor Behera was one of the two best teachers he ever had. About 15 students received their Ph.D. degrees under his guidance at the IOP. Some of his earliest Ph.D. students are [Reference 3]: Dr. Pratibindhya Nayak, Dr. Shaikh Samsur, Dr. Gouranga C. Mohanty, Dr. Debanda Sa, Dr. Harnath Ghose, and Dr. Manidipa Mitra.

Professor Behera was a visiting scientist at many international institutions: Institute of Mechanics of Moscow State University, Moscow; Drexel University, Philadelphia; Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan; Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia; Duisburg Essen University, Duisburg, Germany.

Professor Behera had a soft corner in his heart towards the author, his former student. He was gracious enough to come to the author's marriage function at Bhubaneswar to bless the newlyweds. He was very happy to learn that the author was going abroad for higher studies. He wished the author all the best in his higher studies.

Professor Behera retired from IOP in October 2002 and became the Vice-Chancellor of Berhampur University from October 2002 to January 2004. After retirement, Professor Behera was actively involved in research activities with several institutions. In the later part of his life, Professor Behera ended his widower status by marrying Ms. Olga Bylya from Moscow.

Professor S.N. Behera's untimely death brought grief to his family, his students, his friends, and his many admirers. He was a gem of a person and a true gentleman. His fond memories will always shine in the hearts and minds of everyone who came into contact with him.

## **References**

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- [3] Professor Pratibindhya Nayak, Emeritus Scientist-CSIR, School of Physics, Sambalpur University, Jyoti Vihar, private correspondence.
- [4]. Dr. Shashadhar Mohapatra, Silver Spring, MD, USA, private communications.

## Remembering Professor Sashi Bhusan Mohanty

*Prasan K. Samal*

Professor Sashi Bhusan Mohanty breathed his last on March 18, 2015 after a brief fight with cancer. This sad event was rather unexpected as he was in reasonably good health until about two months prior. He had been a resident of the Washington-Maryland area ever since his arrival in U. S. A. in January of 1960. Throughout this long period of 55 years he was quite popular in the local Indian community. Being one of the few long term permanent Odia residents of the area he was the go-to-man for many newcomers. He provided advice, guidance, and encouragement to many Odia and other Indian newcomers helping them get settled in the new land. For some new students, he had provided assistance in the form of financial sponsorships and assistance with college admission. He was always there for any Odia or Indian who needed his help. However, being a veterinarian he had a special interest in helping the veterinary students coming from India to receive higher education in USA.



Beginning in the late 1950s through the mid-1960s, U. S. A. attracted a fair number of agricultural and veterinary professionals from India. This was an era when the Indian government began placing strong emphasis on modernizing and advancing agricultural and animal husbandry sectors in India in order to increase food production. During this period, young Indians from these professions were selected by the Indian Government and were sent over to U. S. A. for training at the post-graduate level under various exchange programs (e.g., UA AID and US TCM) - most of which were typically 6 to 9 months long. Several other young professionals came over to U. S. A. on their own initiative as it afforded them a wider choice in the field of study and a choice of universities. Opportunities in India for well qualified technical/professionals were quite good at that time, and many who completed their academic programs in U. S. A. were able to find good positions in India and so they returned. Still, many others remained in U S A and continued with their professional pursuits. A large majority of these professionals are now retired in India and U. S. A., and several have passed away. All of them have made significant contributions in their respective fields of specialization. Those who returned to India have helped with the advancement of agricultural and veterinary sciences particularly in research and education. In fact, the standard of education in India, in these areas has significantly improved, thus diminishing the need for overseas education. Those who settled in U. S. A. have also made significant contributions in the fields of their

specialization. Sashi Babu, who had worked for a few years in India as a Veterinary Surgeon, belonged to this era.

Sashi Babu joined the University of Maryland at College Park to pursue graduate studies in Microbiology. Microbiology underwent significant advancement in the late 1950s and 1960s. Application of microbiology to farm animals was of great importance in U. S. A., and as such it attracted substantial amount of private and public funding for research. Shortly afterwards, viruses were discovered and the field of virology evolved. Sashi Babu worked on Virology and Tissue Culture for his Ph. D. He completed his M.S. and Ph. D. in record three and-a-half years and was right away appointed an Assistant Professor in the Department of Veterinary Science in the University of Maryland, College Park, Md. He worked on bovine respiratory viruses. In a short period of three years, he became an internationally acclaimed expert on bovine respiratory diseases and was also promoted to the rank of Associate Professor. In 1972 he was awarded the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship to do research at the University of Munich in Germany for one year. A year after his return from Germany he was promoted to the rank of Professor.

Prior to his German tenure he was a member of the Working Team on Comparative Virology under the aegis of World Health Organization and Food and Agricultural Organization (WHO/FAO). Upon his return to U. S. A. he was appointed the Head of the Working Committee on Bovine, Equine, and Porcine Picorna Viruses. His laboratory at the University of Maryland became the international reference laboratory for these viruses.

Effective January 1986, he was appointed Acting Associate Dean of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine (one year later a Search Committee confirmed him as the permanent Associate Dean). Beginning in 1982, the old department of Veterinary Science had been renamed Maryland Campus of Virginia Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine (VMRCVM - a shared college by the states of Virginia and Maryland). The Maryland State Board of Higher Education was unwilling to pay more money for the growth of the College, and it took almost 10 years of effort on the part of Sashi Babu to legislate full funding for the College from the Maryland government. This made the Maryland wing of the College a legitimate and equal partner of the VMRCVM. The Maryland wing of the College was uniquely situated to take advantage of all well-known federal research facilities (NIH, Walter Reed Naval Medical Center, the USDA, the FDA the National Zoo, and the Baltimore Aquarium). Subsequently, the Maryland program received a multi-million dollar donation to establish a veterinary medicine related research facility from a wealthy Marylander, Mr. Gudelsky, in the memory of his younger son Avrum who wanted to be a veterinarian but died in a motorcycle race (the Gudelsky family also donated funds to Maryland Medical School's Cancer Center). With this

funding the Avrum Gudelsky Veterinary Center was constructed off Metzert Road, which became the permanent home of the Maryland wing of the College beginning in 1990. Sashi Babu was proud to have helped establish this state-of-the-art research and academic facility at University of Maryland during his tenure.

In addition to his administrative, research, and teaching activities, Sashi Babu was also busy with giving seminars and lectures at universities all over the world. As an internationally recognized virologist on bovine respiratory diseases (BRD) he was an invited speaker to academic and research organizations in Austria, Egypt, Greece, Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, England, Scotland, Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and China. In 1981 he took a six-month sabbatical leave to work with research organizations in India and Sri Lanka, and thereafter he continued to cooperate and support research activities in those countries. Based on his research, a live intra nasal virus vaccine is commercially available for bovine rhinotrachitis, a virus, which if left untreated causes severe respiratory tract disease in cattle and abortion in pregnant cows. This was an important practical application of his research for the cattle industry in U S and abroad.

In 1981 he, and his co-author Dr. Sukanta Dutta (also from Odisha), published the book entitled, "Veterinary Virology" - the first of its kind. It received good reviews in the US and abroad. It was adopted as a textbook in some veterinary colleges in US and abroad. The book was translated into Japanese and Spanish editions and a special Philippines paper-back edition. His second book, "Electron Microscopy for Biologists" was published in 1982. In 1996, Sashi Babu retired as Associate Dean and Department Chair of Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, College Park Campus, and remained as Professor Emeritus until he passed away.

Sashi Babu had a difficult upbringing, losing his father, an elementary school teacher, to cholera when he was two and-a-half years old. To make matters worse, his extended family, which supported him, also lost several more male members to the epidemic. He was a bright and hard working student from the very beginning. He was able to complete his high school and junior college education by tutoring children of well-to-do families, in exchange for room and board. After he completed his intermediate science diploma at the Maharaja Purnachandra College in Baripada, he was selected to by the Odisha Government to study veterinary medicine in Patna, Bihar with a full stipend. He graduated from the Bihar Veterinary College in 1956 with a Gold Medal.

Sashi Babu was a caring and compassionate person and he has helped many in need, both in India and here. He established two trust funds in his village (Durgapur in Balasore district),

one for assisting poor families with their medicinal expenses, and the other for assisting poor students. He has also financed the establishment of a Hanuman Temple in the village.

Here is an excerpt from Sashi Babu's "Memoirs", reminiscing his early days in College Park, Maryland:

*"Every morning before the start of classes, Panda Babu and I would walk to the campus. On our way, we stopped at People's Drugstore (now called CVS) or the Little Tavern for a cup of Coffee (10 cents) and a donut (5 cents). We also bought sandwiches from local deli or from People's. Since I did not eat any beef or pork at that time, it was difficult for me in the beginning. Very soon, I could eat pork and bought a ham sandwich (cold or fried). The dinner meals in the dining hall were okay. I had to get used to American food and it was quite difficult at first. The dinner ticket at the dining hall was 90 cents and milk was available. The dining hall (there was only one at the time) opened at 4:30 PM, and, to avoid the undergraduate rush, we went to dinner at this time. The menus were different each day. There was fried or baked chicken or fish, on Fridays, vegetables, at times, rice in a small bowl as a side dish. Whenever there was only beef or pork, I ate vegetables and bread. One could go for 2-3 helpings of milk (supplied by the Dairy Science Department). As time went by, I was able to eat pork but not beef (I never relished it)"*

(Incidentally, Panda Babu, Dr. Bagabata Panda, had come to University of Maryland a year prior to Sashi Babu. He returned to India after completing his graduate studies in Poultry Science. He is now retired and living in Bhubaneswar.)

**In Memoriam**  
**Sushama (Panigrahi) Rath**  
*Debaki Nandan Chowdhury*

Sushama (Panigrahi) Rath, daughter of the late Lingaraj Panigrahi, Chief Justice, Minister of Education, Finance and Law and Speaker of the state parliament, and Swarnamai; wife of Padma Bhushan Bhakta B. Rath, left her family and friends on August 19, 2014, during her sleep at the Fairfax Hospital, Virginia. We are all like small satellites, tied to her by her love, caring and affection.

Those were the days. The entire world was engaged in war for the second time, with the participation of the United States, engaged both in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. India was not an exception. Indian soldiers were deployed to the North African front, as well as remaining alert at the Burma border for a possible Japanese invasion. However, the attention of the majority of Indians was focused on the Independence movement.

It was in these times of turmoil and unrest, as the silver lining in a dark cloud, the Panigrahi family rejoiced on the occasion of the birth of their daughter, and on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of her birth they named her “Sushama”. Sushama grew up in Berhampur and Cuttack, two peaceful and pleasant towns in those days, under the dotting care of her parents. Since her birth she was the apple of their eyes.

During the early years of school, her father recognized her keen interest in math, science and language. Mr. Panigrahi had the hope that she would grow up to study medicine and become a practicing physician. At that time he realized that the state of Orissa did not have a good women’s college for science, which he later corrected during his service as the minister of education by inaugurating a number of new schools and colleges. After her high school, Sushama was sent to Calcutta for studies in Science, Math and English, a then well-known institution called the “Loreto College”. Her mother was unhappy to have her daughter away from home and opposed her studies in medicine. After two years of premed training, she returned to Cuttack and joined the Sailabala Women’s College, to graduate in her second favorite subject in English literature. During this period, she received many honors and awards for her debating skills and public speaking.





*Receiving Medal from Vice Chancellor P.K Parija*



*Speaking at a radio broadcast with Principal Sadasiva Mishra*

She developed a keen interest in English literature, and decided, with her father's permission, to continue her master's studies at the Allahabad University, which, at the time, had one of the best English departments in the country. For her master's thesis, she chose a challenging topic, "The theological views of George Bernard Shaw", which was highly praised by the department faculty.

During the summer, prior to the last year of her master's studies in 1962, Sushama was introduced to Bhakta B. Rath, who was then professor at Washington State University, spending his summer months at Bhubaneswar. Coincidentally, Dr. Rath's uncle, Judge Gopabandhu Mishra, and Justice Panigrahi were good friends and through their suggestions both met at her residence. Following their mutual acquaintance that summer, they returned back to their respective institutions for continuing their teaching and studies. Nearly a year later, during the summer of 1963, they were married.



Soon after their marriage, both of them came to the U.S through a special visa provided to her by the U.S State Department, bypassing the office of the U.S. Consulate. Both of them traveled across the Pacific, stopping at various islands and Southern United States. Upon her arrival, her first encounter with her husband's faculty colleagues, to see the Nation in mourning the assassination of President Kennedy.

Both her and his parents were strongly opposed to their return to the United States. In spite of two job offers, one in Raurkela and the other in the Bhabha Atomic Research Institute, Mumbai. They both convinced their parents that they would return to the US for a temporary period before permanently returning home, a plan interrupted by the birth of their daughter Mina.

Sushama decided to continue her studies in American literature at the Washington State University to overcome her homesickness. She chose her thesis on the subject of "The influence of Indian Philosophy on the life and works of Walt Whitman (her favorite poet) and Henry David Thoreau". Because of her scholarship, she was asked to join the teaching faculty of the university while finishing her master's degree, and was inducted into the honor society Phi Beta Kappa. Following her graduation with a second master's degree, the family moved to Pittsburgh, where Dr. Rath was invited as a senior scientist of a prominent research laboratory and Sushama returned to school to work towards her Ph.D. degree at the University of Pittsburgh. Because of her excellent performance after the first semester, she was asked by the faculty to teach a course at the University, while continuing her education. After finishing about two thirds of her degree requirements, she gave birth to twin boys, which brought an end to her studies. She remained busy full time as a mother.

That year, 1969, was an unusual year filled with memorable events around the world and the Nation. Man took his first steps on the face of the moon, travelling on Apollo 11, launched from Cape Kennedy. Ms. Golda Meir elected as the first female Prime Minister of Israel. The great national hero, Dwight Eisenhower died. The streets of every major city in the United States were filled with young protestors against the Vietnam War.

The year was also eventful for the Rath family. While in her third trimester, in anticipation of her second birth, she received the most sorrowful news of the death of her beloved father. While she was in a highly immobile condition, needing assistance to standup and sit down, she decided to leave Pittsburgh that same day to reach Berhampur in order to attend her father's funeral. About three weeks left before her giving birth, she returned to Pittsburgh, an arduous journey in those days. Everyone on both sides was holding their breath, as to whether she would be able to make the journey. With providence always on her side, she made it to Pittsburgh safely, and soon thereafter, gave birth to their twin boys, Manesh and Manik. She used to say that after having a daughter, they both were wishing for a boy and both their prayers were answered.

In 1972, they moved to Saint Louis, followed by their last move to Virginia in 1976. When the children were grown, Sushama decided to try her hand in an entirely new field of computer software, studying at the local college. Recognizing her proficiency in the subject, the college offered her a full-time position to serve as the senior program analyst, where she remained until her passing. During this period, she was working with a small staff of programmers, and developed many new and unique codes, tailored to the College Administration functions.

Following her funeral, two memorials in celebration of her life were held. One at the Hindu temple with her dear friends and the other, due to the insistence of the college administration and her associates, at the college cultural center. On a solitary corner of the campus, the college has planted a tree in her memory.

She was a strong supporter of many charitable institutions, and served as first lady of ASM International during Dr. Rath's tenure as President of the society. In support of education, she, along with her husband, established endowments at US universities (some still in progress). Additionally, establishment of a scholarship (also in progress), which carries her name, at the Sailabala College in Cuttack. She is survived by her husband, three highly devoted children, Mina (Martin), Manesh (Rebecca) and Manik (Wendy) and her four most beloved grandchildren. I have seen her gleaming eyes and wide smile every time she embraced her grandchildren. While she has joined her beloved parents, she's greatly missed by all her family and friends.



Allow me to conclude with a short poem written by an anonymous poet:

***"She is Gone"***

*You can shed tears that she is gone  
Or you can smile because she has lived.*

*You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back  
Or you can open your eyes and see all she's left.*

*Your heart can be empty because you can't see her  
Or you can be full of the love you shared.*

*You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday  
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday*

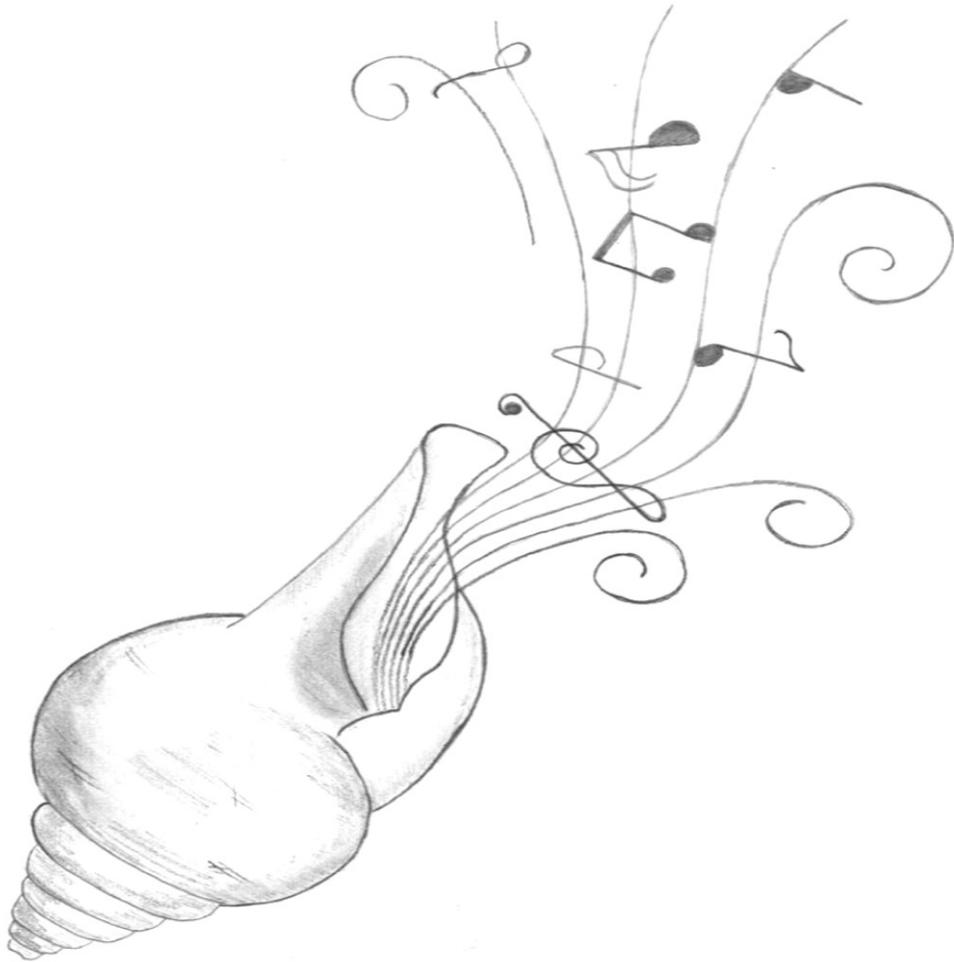
*You can remember her and only that she's gone  
Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.*

*You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back  
Or you can do what she'd want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.*

**Prepared by Debaki Chowdhury, May 2015** with inputs from the family members, Mina, Manesh, Manik and Dr Bhakta Rath.

# ଶଙ୍କଧ୍ୱନି

(Sankhadhwani - Sound of the Conch)



## Welcome New Members

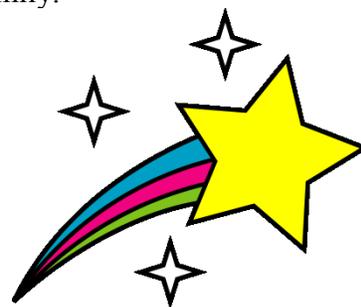
*Prashanta Ranabijuli, OSA Treasurer*

Please join me in welcoming following new members to OSA family.

### **New Life Members**

Pradipta & Manasi Mishra, MI  
Siddharth & Kusum Basak, KS  
Debadutta & Nibedita Behera, MA  
Ramaballav & Kalpana Mohapatra, KS  
Hemanta & Mamata Pradhan, NJ  
Kew & Shobhana Ray, GA  
Tapas & Smita Sahoo, TX  
Sameer & Gayatri Senapati, NC  
Sanjeev & Geeta Sahoo, MI  
Papu & Sipa Nanda, TX  
Lohari Murphy, OH  
Sangram Sahu, MI  
Rabindra Senapati, MN  
Raj Subudhi, MI  
Samrat & Lulipta Mohanty, CO  
Deepak & Kadambini Jena, CO  
Mahendra & Snehasmita Shadangi, CO  
Kumar & Kabita Behura, CO  
Srimaya Rath, OH  
Sujata & Nagbhusan Das, CA  
Bikram Mohanty, GA

Anirudha Sahoo, MD  
Anurag Mishra, GA  
Ashok Mishra, GA  
Atasi Das, MD  
Bhaskar Panigrahi, MA  
Bibhu (Tunu) Misra, VA  
Biyatpragyan Mohanty, VA  
Debashis Patel, NJ  
Joydip Banerjee and Dharitri, VA  
Kirtan Sahoo, VA  
Manas Swain, NJ  
Manoj Das, GA  
Ram Misra, VA  
Satyaban Mohapatra, GA  
Satyadeep Patnaik, NJ  
Sujata Bohidar, VA  
Prafulla Nayak, VA  
Shivashis Hota, VA  
Kamalakanta & Gertrud Mohanty, Vorarlberg  
Sumanta & Damayanti Nayak, NY  
Shyamsundar & Bidyashree Parhi, VA



### **New 5-Year Members**

Amitav & Nibedita Das, NC  
Shyamsundar & Bidyashree Parhi, VA  
Sulakshana & Shukdeb Sen, FL  
Shantanu & Chitra Tripathy, TX  
Suchitra & Pradeep Das, CA  
Prasanta & Tripti Parida, DE  
Pramit & Punam Rath, OH  
Debasis Patnaik, VA  
Gourab Nanda, MD  
Hosensu Sahoo, VA  
Lalit Behera, MD  
Nivedita Misra, MD  
Pradeep Ganguly, VA  
Saroj Nanda, NY  
Sudhir Sinha, Dubai

### **New Annual Members**

|                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Biswajit & Leena Pattnaik, MI    | Abani Pradhan, MD                |
| Siddharth & Anuranjita Nayak, TX | Ajita Pattanaik, VA              |
| Debabrata Das, MD                | Alok Ray, VA                     |
| Rupesh Jain, CO                  | Amulya Mishra, NJ                |
| Sanjay Khadanga, PA              | Anil Tripathy, NY                |
| Sanjib Mohanty, IN               | Anindita Mahapatra, MA           |
| Parimal Nandi, OH                | Asit Patnaik, NJ                 |
| Jyoti Nayak, CT                  | Bharat Biswal, NJ                |
| Akshaya Panda, MN                | Bibhu Patnaik, PA                |
| Basant Pradhan, NJ               | Bijay Roy, IL                    |
| Chandan Pratihari, VA            | Binita Mohanty, Essex            |
| Digant Dash, IL                  | Choudhury Barendranath Misra, DE |
| Anand Maharana, OH               | Debabrata Behera, GA             |
| Suchitra Pattnaik, Odisha        | Debasis Mohanty, CT              |
| Jayadeep Patra, ON               | Debi Prasad Mohapatra, CT        |
| Sheela Geraghty, OH              | Dipak Ray, NY                    |
| Ritesh Senapati, OH              | Gayatri Kanungo, VA              |
| Nirmalya Tripathy, Jeonju        | Jagat Kar, Odisha                |
| Laura & Abhinav Pattanayak, NJ   | Joydeep Roychowdhury, OH         |
| Tushar Acharya, CT               | Jyoti Biswal, NJ                 |
| Tushar Mahapatra, VA             | Karabi Mishra, MD                |
| Biswajita Samal, NE              | Krishna Mishra, Odisha           |
| Dr. Mamata Mohanty, Odisha       | Krushna Samanta, NJ              |
| Jayasmita Mishra, NY             | Manoj Kumar Mohanty, OH          |
| Sambit Mohapatra, MA             | Moushumi Roy, SC                 |
| Sarba Das, CA                    | mr rath, NJ                      |
| Srija Srinivasan, CA             | Nachiketa Satpathy, VA           |
| Susant Kumar Mallik, New Delhi   | Nitai Misra, GA                  |
| Ananya Mohanty, WI               | Parthasarathi Roy, NJ            |
| Girija Sahoo, VA                 | Rabi Patnaik, VA                 |
| Jayadeep Patra, ON               | Rajashree Das, MD                |
| Ruchi Pattanayak, CT             | Rajdeep Mohapatra, NJ            |
| Rina Misra, TX                   | Rajiv Patnaik, VA                |
| Salomi Pradhan, AZ               | Ravi Duvvuri, IL                 |
| Smaraki Mohanty, NY              | Sandeep Samal, CT                |
| Soumendra Rath, NJ               | Saroj Panigrahi, NH              |
| Sujata Sullivan, MD              | Sarthak Pattanaik, NJ            |
| Sujit Das, VA                    | Satyabadi Mishra, CT             |
| Sujit Mohanty, VA                | Shashibhushan Rath,              |
| Suresh Raut, IL                  | Sheffy Das, TX                   |
| Sushant Mohanty, Odisha          | Shyam Biswal, MD                 |
| Sushmita Pradhan, NJ             | Swaraj Dash, VA                  |

# Financial Reports

Prashanta Ranabijuli, OSA Treasurer

## OSA Account Statement – Annual view (from 06/01/2014 to 05/31/2015)

### OSA Account Statement as of 05/31/2015

| Prashanta Ranabijuli<br>Volunteer/Treasurer, OSA (2013-2015) | <b>Amount</b> | <b>Income/ Expense Category</b> |
|--|---------------|---------------------------------|
|--|---------------|---------------------------------|

### Cash Balances as of 06/01/2014

|             |              |  |
|-------------|--------------|--|
| Checking #1 | \$210,913.52 |  |
| Checking #2 | \$10.00      |  |
| PayPal      | \$0.00       |  |

|  |                     |  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| <b>Total Cash Balance as of 06/01/2014</b> | <b>\$210,923.52</b> |  |
| Convention 2014 Advance receivable         | \$10,000.00         |  |
| <b>Total Balance as of 06/01/2014</b>      | <b>\$220,923.52</b> |  |

|                 |             |  |
|-----------------|-------------|--|
| <b>Receipts</b> | \$24.54     | AmazonSmile income                                       |
|                 | \$1,614.63  | CCO CD Sale  |
|                 | \$500.00    | CCO Donation Received                                    |
|                 | \$21,360.00 | Convention 2014 advance return, registration, and profit |
|                 | \$1,250.00  | Convention 2015 Sponsorship                              |
|                 | \$18,775.00 | Various donations received (LTA, SSKYEA, SB etc. )       |
|                 | \$3,058.27  | New Emergency Relief Fund received                       |
|                 | \$2,000.00  | Library Initiative Fund received                         |
|                 | \$4,177.10  | Membership fee collected                                 |
|                 | \$1,850.00  | ODD donation received                                    |
|                 | \$402.00    | Odia Language donation                                   |
|                 | \$2,000.00  | Phailin Relief Fund (redirected to ERF)                  |
|                 | \$50.00     | Return Payment   |

|                 |                      |   |
|-----------------|----------------------|---|
| <b>Payments</b> | <b>(\$1,159.19)</b>  | Administrative expenses (tax return, mailing, card printing, state filing etc.) |
|                 | <b>(\$12,754.91)</b> | Ashok Nayak Fund Disbursed  |

|  |                     |   |
|--|---------------------|---|
|  | (\$6,250.00)        | Various awards (prize money) given at Conv 2014 (SB awards, SSKYEA, Meghna, CCO, ...) |
|  | (\$952.00)          | Award Plaques   |
|  | (\$929.71)          | Convention 2014 Expenses  |
|  | (\$10,000.00)       | Convention 2015 Advance   |
|  | (\$1,916.45)        | Election Expenses   |
|  | (\$106.00)          | Higher Education Seminar 2014 expenses  |
|  | (\$200.00)          | Jyoti Patnaik Fund disbursed  |
|  | (\$50.00)           | Odia Debate Award   |
|  | (\$2,000.00)        | LTA Award 2014  |
|  | (\$1,658.58)        | Ticket cost for LTA Awardee 2015  |
|  | (\$2,305.50)        | ODD 2014 expenses   |
|  | (\$2,000.00)        | OSA guest for Convention 2014   |
|  | (\$2,400.00)        | RDF support money   |
|  | (\$150.12)          | Website expenses  |
| <b>Performance of Longterm investment in this period (Gain/Loss)</b> | \$6,321.75          | as of 05/27/2015  |
| <b>Net Increase (Decrease)</b>                                       | <b>\$18,550.83</b>  |   |
| <b>Accounts Receivable</b>   |                     |   |
| Convention 2015 Advance receivable                                   | \$10,000.00         |   |
| <b>Cash Balances as of 05/31/2015</b>                                |                     |   |
| Checking #1  | \$57,554.48         |   |
| Checking #2  | \$15,598.12         |   |
| TD Ameritrade  | \$156,321.75        | as of 05/27/2015  |
| PayPal   | \$0.00              |   |
| <b>Total Cash Balance as of 05/31/2015</b>                           | <b>\$229,474.35</b> |   |
| Convention 2015 Advance receivable                                   | \$10,000.00         |   |
| <b>Total Balance as of 05/31/2015</b>                                | <b>\$239,474.35</b> |   |
| <b>Balances under special funds</b>                                  |                     |   |
| ODF  | \$1,165.30          |   |
| CCO Fund   | \$1,532.62          |   |
| Odia Language Dev Fund   | \$2,836.50          |   |
| Emergency Relief Fund  | \$15,598.12         |   |
| Library Initiative Fund  | \$2,000.00          |   |
| <b>Total Balance (as of 05/31/2015)</b>                              | <b>\$239,474.35</b> |   |
| Total Balance (as of 06/01/2014)                                     | \$220,923.52        |   |
| <b>Net Increase</b>  | <b>\$18,550.83</b>  |   |

**OSA Account Statement – After the transition (from 09/01/2013 to 05/31/2015)**

**OSA Account Summary Statement as of 05/31/2015**

Prashanta                      Ranabijuli                      **Amount**  
Volunteer/Treasurer, OSA (2013-2015)

**Cash Balances as of 09/01/2013**

Checking #1    \$204,797.30  
Checking #2    \$1,929.28  
PayPal                \$0.00

**Total Cash Balance as of 09/01/2013**    \$206,726.58

Convention 2013 Advance receivable                \$0.00

**Total Balance as of 09/01/2013**                **\$206,726.58**

**Cash Balances as of 05/31/2015**

Checking #1    \$57,554.48  
Checking #2    \$15,598.12  
TD Ameritrade    \$156,321.75    as of 05/27/2015  
PayPal                \$0.00

**Total Cash Balance as of 05/31/2015**    \$229,474.35

Convention 2015 Advance receivable                \$10,000.00

**Total Balance as of 05/31/2015**                **\$239,474.35**

**Total Balance (as of 05/31/2015)**                \$239,474.35

Total Balance (as of 09/01/2013)                \$206,726.58

**Net Increase**    **\$32,747.77**

# OSA 2014 Convention Finance Report

Report prepared by Mr. Akshay Pradhan, OSA 2014 Convention Treasurer

Repurposed by Mr. Prashanta Ranabijuli, OSA Treasurer

Convenor: Mr. Satya Pattanaik

Chapter President: Mr. Arata Rout

Audit Committee: Mr. Loknath Patro, Mr. Debashish Panda, Mr. Satyakam Mishra

## INCOME

|                                     |                   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 51000 - OSA Convention Income       |                   |
| 51100 - Registration & OSA Fee      | 32,851.45         |
| 51200 - Food Receipts               | 60,403.09         |
| 51300 - Sponsorships                | 73,177.07         |
| 51400 - Donations                   | 10,301.87         |
| 51500 - DVD Sale                    | 1,142.71          |
| 51600 - Parking Voucher Sale        | 3,046.00          |
| 51700 - Paan Sale                   | 409               |
| TOTAL 51000 - OSA Convention Income | 181,331.19        |
| 52000 - OSA National Income         |                   |
| 52100 - OSA Memberships             | 3,100.00          |
| 52200 - Loan From OSA               | 10,000.00         |
| TOTAL 52000 - OSA National Income   | 13,100.00         |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>                 | <b>194,431.19</b> |

## EXPENSES

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 71000 - 2014 OSA Convention Expenses    |                          |
| 71100 - Operational Expenses            |                          |
| 71110 - Bank Service Fees               | 8.95                     |
| 71130 - Supplies & Mailing              | 787.09                   |
| 71140 - Printing                        | 12,228.94                |
| 71150 - Paypal Fees                     | 2,549.85                 |
| TOTAL 71100 - Operational Expenses      | 15,574.83                |
| 71200 - Facilities and Equipments       |                          |
| 71210 - Event Insurance                 | 1,053.00                 |
| 71220 - Convention Center Rental        | 41,502.04                |
| 71240 - Video and Photography           | 3,527.00                 |
| TOTAL 71200 - Facilities and Equipments | 46,082.04                |
| 71300 - Cultural-Seminar-Exhbtn-Youth   |                          |
| 71310 - Cultural                        |                          |
| 71311 - Decoration                      | 3,214.00                 |
| 303                                     | URMI - OSA Souvenir 2015 |

|  |  |            |
|--|--|------------|
|  | 71312 - Light and Sound Rental               | 2,282.82   |
|  | 71313 - Showcase Event                       | 3,650.64   |
|  | 71314 - Majumdar Program                     | 13,134.81  |
|  | 71315 - Rudrakhya Program                    | 379.23     |
|  | 71318 - Artists Honorarium                   | 6,773.94   |
|  | TOTAL 71310 - Cultural                       | 29,435.44  |
|  | 71320 - Youth                                |            |
|  | 71322 - Youth Quiz Competition               | 699.78     |
|  | 71323 - Youth Social & Community Event       | 1,880.60   |
|  | TOTAL 71320 - Youth                          | 2,580.38   |
|  | TOTAL 71300 - Cultural-Seminar-Exhbtn-Youth  | 32,015.82  |
|  | 71400 - Awards & Prizes                      |            |
|  | 71410 - Cultural Awards                      | 1,483.28   |
|  | 71420 - Non-Cultural Awards                  | 400        |
|  | TOTAL 71400 - Awards & Prizes                | 1,883.28   |
|  | 71500 - Food Expenses                        |            |
|  | 71510 - Food Packages                        | 56,032.00  |
|  | 71520 - Food related other Expenses          | 1,011.62   |
|  | 71530 - ODD Lunch Exp                        | -300       |
|  | TOTAL 71500 - Food Expenses                  | 56,743.62  |
|  | 71600 - Hospitality & Guest Services         |            |
|  | 71610 - Welcome Packets                      | 4,909.89   |
|  | TOTAL 71600 - Hospitality & Guest Services   | 4,909.89   |
|  | 71700 - Transportation & Accommodation       |            |
|  | 71710 - Transportation                       | 400        |
|  | 71720 - Hotel Expense for guests             | 2,666.43   |
|  | TOTAL 71700 - Transportation & Accommodation | 3,066.43   |
|  | 71800 - Reserve Fund                         |            |
|  | 71830 - Credit Return                        | -711.00    |
|  | TOTAL 71800 - Reserve Fund                   | -711.00    |
|  | 71900 - Other Expenses                       |            |
|  | 71910 - Misc Expense                         | 1,729.00   |
|  | 71911 - Parking Vouchers                     | 2,500.00   |
|  | 71930 - Refund , Cancel, no-show             | 16         |
|  | TOTAL 71900 - Other Expenses                 | 4,245.00   |
|  | TOTAL 71000 - 2014 OSA Convention Expenses   | 163,809.91 |
|  | 72000 - OSA national Liability & Refund      |            |
|  | 72100 - OSA National Life Membership         | 2,400.00   |
|  | 72200 - OSA National Annual Membership       | 600        |
|  | 72400 - Loan repay to OSA                    | 10,000.00  |

|                        |  |                   |
|------------------------|--|-------------------|
|                        | 72500 - OSA Fees to OSA  | 4,140.00          |
|                        | 72600 - OSA 5-Year membership  | 100               |
|                        | TOTAL 72000 - OSA national Liability & Refund                          | 17,240.00         |
|                        | <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>  | <b>181,049.91</b> |
|                        | <b>TOTAL PROFIT</b>  | <b>13,381.28</b>  |
| <b>ADJUSTMENT</b>      | Recover lost membership revenue of 63 non-members (as approved by BOG) | <b>-2,520.00</b>  |
| <b>ADJUSTED PROFIT</b> |  | <b>10,861.28</b>  |
|                        | Chapter's share of the profit  | 5,430.64          |
|                        | OSA National's share   | 5,430.64          |

For any questions, please contact:

Prashanta Ranabijuli  
Treasurer, OSA (2013-2015)  
512-917-4715 (Mobile)  
ranabijuli@gmail.com

## **Welcome OSA 2015-2017 Officials**

### **Congratulations to OSA 2015-2017 officials!**

President: *Mr. Sushant Satpathy of Naperville, IL*  
Vice President: *Mrs. Sulochana Patnaik of Elkridge, MD*  
Secretary: *Saradakanta Panda, Jacksonville, FL*  
Treasurer: *Siddharth Behera, Austin, TX*

## Past OSA Conventions and Conveners

*Dr Kula C. Misra*

| <b>Year</b>              | <b>Convener</b>                             | <b>Place</b>                        |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2015 (46 <sup>th</sup> ) | Pratap Das                                  | National Harbor, MD (Washington DC) |
| 2014 (45 <sup>th</sup> ) | Satya Pattanaik                             | Columbus, OH                        |
| 2013 (44 <sup>th</sup> ) | Gyana Pattnaik                              | Chicago, IL                         |
| 2012 (43 <sup>rd</sup> ) | Amulya Das                                  | Seattle, WA                         |
| 2011 (42 <sup>nd</sup> ) | Tapan Padhi                                 | Plano, TX                           |
| 2010 (41 <sup>st</sup> ) | Kuku Das                                    | San Francisco, CA                   |
| 2009 (40 <sup>th</sup> ) | Uma Ballav Mishra                           | Trenton, NJ                         |
| 2008 (39 <sup>th</sup> ) | Gagan Behari Panigrahi                      | Toronto, ONT, Canada                |
| 2007 (38 <sup>th</sup> ) | Ravi Rout                                   | Detroit, MI                         |
| 2006 (37 <sup>th</sup> ) | Joy Gopal Moanty                            | Columbia, MD                        |
| 2005 (36 <sup>th</sup> ) | Kirtan Behera                               | Newport Beach, CA                   |
| 2004 (35 <sup>th</sup> ) | Niranjan Tripathy                           | Dallas, TX                          |
| 2003 (34 <sup>th</sup> ) | Saradindu Misra                             | Princeton, NJ                       |
| 2002 (33 <sup>rd</sup> ) | Sreekanta Nayak                             | Greenbelt, MD                       |
| 2001 (32 <sup>nd</sup> ) | Saroj Mohanty                               | Chicago, IL                         |
| 2000 (31 <sup>st</sup> ) | Kula Chandra Misra                          | Nashville, TN                       |
| 1999 (30 <sup>th</sup> ) | Lalatendu (Lalu) Mansinha                   | Toronto, ONT, Canada                |
| 1998 (29 <sup>th</sup> ) | Saroj Behera                                | Monterey, CA                        |
| 1997 (28 <sup>th</sup> ) | Pradeep Rath                                | Houston, TX                         |
| 1996 (27 <sup>th</sup> ) | Annapurna Biswal                            | Washington, D..C.                   |
| 1995 (26 <sup>th</sup> ) | Sarat Mahapatra                             | Minneapolis, MN                     |
| 1994 (25 <sup>th</sup> ) | Manaranjan Pattanayak                       | Pomona, NJ                          |
| 1993 (24 <sup>th</sup> ) | Sudarshan Mishra                            | Troy, MI                            |
| 1992 (23 <sup>rd</sup> ) | Mahendra Mishra                             | Atlanta, GA                         |
| 1991 (22 <sup>nd</sup> ) | May Ann Pattanayak                          | Chicago, IL                         |
| 1990 (21 <sup>st</sup> ) | Pratap Das                                  | Washington, D.C.                    |
| 1989 (20 <sup>th</sup> ) | Radhakanta Mishra                           | Nashville, TN                       |
| 1988 (19 <sup>th</sup> ) | Hemanta Senapati                            | Saginaw, MI                         |
| 1987 (18 <sup>th</sup> ) | Prasanna Kumar Samantaray                   | Stanford, CA                        |
| 1986 (17 <sup>th</sup> ) | Asoka K. Das                                | Toronto, ONT, Canada                |
| 1985 (16 <sup>th</sup> ) | Dasarathi Ram                               | Kent, OH                            |
| 1984 (15 <sup>th</sup> ) | Manaranjan Pattanayak                       | Glassboro, NJ                       |
| 1983 (14 <sup>th</sup> ) | Pratap Das                                  | Bowie, MD                           |
| 1982 (13 <sup>th</sup> ) | Sitikantha Dash                             | Minneapolis, MN                     |
| 1981 (12 <sup>th</sup> ) | Surya Mishra                                | Chicago, IL                         |
| 1980 (11 <sup>th</sup> ) | Ladukesh Patnaik and<br>OSA Management Team | Detroit, MI                         |

| Year                     | Convener                                     | Place             |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------|
| 1979 (10 <sup>th</sup> ) | Ram Saran Sahoo and<br>OSA Management Team   | New Brunswick, NJ |
| 1978 (9 <sup>th</sup> )  | Rabi Patnaik and<br>OSA Management Team      | Wheaton, MD       |
| 1977 (8 <sup>th</sup> )  | Amiya Patnaik* and<br>OSA Management Team    | Riveralr, NJ      |
| 1976 (7 <sup>th</sup> )  | Amiya Patnaik* and<br>OSA Management Team    | Riveralr, NJ      |
| 1975 (6 <sup>th</sup> )  | Jnana Ranjan Dash and OSA<br>Management Team | Toronto, Canada   |
| 1974 (5 <sup>th</sup> )  | Prafulla Mishra and<br>OSA Management Team   | College Park, MD  |
| 1973 (4 <sup>th</sup> )  | Amiya Patnaik* and<br>OSA Management Team    | Riverside, NJ     |
| 1972 (3 <sup>rd</sup> )  | Amiya Patnaik* and<br>OSA Management Team    | Riverside, NJ     |
| 1971 (2 <sup>nd</sup> )  | Bhabagrahi Mishra and<br>OSA Management Team | Hartfoed, CT      |
| 1970(1 <sup>st</sup> )   | Gauri Das and<br>OSA Management Team         | Hartford, CT      |



## **The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA)** Washington DC Chapter

### **Welcomes You to First Global Odisha Conference and 46th Annual Convention**

**Vision:** The vision of OSA is to promote and propagate Oriya culture in Americas by bringing together all the people interested in Orissa.

**Mission:** The mission goals of The Orissa Society of Americas (OSA) are:

- The mission goals of The Orissa Society of Americas (OSA) are:
- To provide a mutually supportive environment for the better interaction of Odia immigrants of North American countries through socio-cultural growth, friendship and fellowship;
- To enhance the awareness of Odisha and Odia traditions in North America through cultural promotion, social events, and developmental activities;
- To facilitate the exchange of information between Odisha and the United States/Canada.

## Odisha Beyond the “Siesta”

Charudutta Panigrahi



A siesta is a short nap taken in the early afternoon, often after the midday meal, which is invariably a heavy and elaborate. In tropical and warm weathers it is a common practice in many countries and many states in India. I have learnt albeit late in the day, that this practice need not be an important reason for any judgment on the efficiency of people of a specific region, more so Odisha. As a state steeped in culture, soft skills and social binding, there is no reason to be defensive about the perceived ‘softness’ of the people. On the contrary I would laud this as the ‘soft power’ of the people who strike a balance between religiosity & realism in a sublime manner. Sublime is the key word. And that’s the strength.

Odisha today is one of the few states in India, literally few, where the soft power of the people has resulted in unprecedented growth. This proves the hypothesis of “brazen aggression being the key to material success”, completely wrong (on a tail spin). About 15 years ago the same people had developed an indurate attitude towards the “decline’ of the state. And as is the wont with my NRO/NRI cousins who are caught in a time warp, nothing still seems to move in the state. Let them be content in the daily push and grind of ever shrinking roads, water & electricity shortage, schools without space, unwarranted and foolish mad rush to participate in civil society. My grand & subtle state should never miss the bus.



Yesterday, in the smartly arranged “Interactive meet on Investment opportunities for IT/ITES/ESDM companies in Odisha” at Delhi, the overwhelming interest of the prospective and existing IT/ITeS players in venturing to Odisha was clearly palpable. Over the years I have been witnessing the sharply changing quality of interaction between the government and the industry, specifically in Odisha context. Today the government edifice is proactively technical, risk friendly and commerce savvy. In many instances, the industry has expressed their surprise in the level of government preparedness in project or program outlays and layouts. This goes out to the world. We need not be ‘loud” and obtrusive

like many states, who still nurture the belief that India's growth story is married to theirs, solely. Development is nobody's prerogative or sole duty. It is combined effort of the civil society, the industry under the political leadership in a democracy.

The 80s saw the state under a spell of decrepit, dangerous crony capitalism, rampant and unprecedented corruption, complete erosion of social security, deliberate neglect of underdeveloped areas like the KBK region, and resulting decay in Odia traditional ethics, social culture & self-esteem.

In the last 15 years, we as a state have limped back to normalcy, with some hiccups which are expected as a splinter of the macro national socio-political dynamics. With a budget outlay of ₹60303.09 Crore in 2013-14, the Non Plan ratio has gone up from about 27% in 2006-07 to about 59% in 2013-14. This is the highest ever ratio achieved by Odisha. A Revenue surplus of ₹1904.61 crore has been projected in the Budget Estimates for 2013-14 which is about 0.65% of GSDP and the Fiscal Deficit is projected at ₹5945.13 crore which is about 2.03% of GSDP. Odisha has seen far-reaching changes in the last decade, and the state's economic growth remains close to 9 per cent despite a global decline and its growth rate is one of the highest in the country. The state has also succeeded in reducing the poverty levels from 57.2 per cent of the households in 2004-05 to over 38 per cent in 2011-12. Between 2004 and 2010, Orissa recorded a 20.1% decline in poverty as against a national rate of 7.4%. In 2000, Odisha had the biggest fiscal deficit and debt: GDP ratio among all states. In 2002-03, Odisha had the worst Debt-GSDP ratio at 55.92%. Since then the ratio has fallen to 17.59% in 2011-12. It has fallen further to 16.55% in 2012-13. Presently, it has become a revenue-surplus state. But the capital account (loans for e.g.) need to fare better. There are areas which need even further improvement. Capital receipts have not been growing. In fact the receipts were much less than the budgeted Rs 6,606 crore at Rs 2,362 in 2011-12; a shortfall of Rs 4,243 crore. There have been consistent overruns on the capital account.

Today Odisha is written as a balanced, growing state/society where there is all round stability. But we are so submerged with negativity that we think it is fashionable to be a perennial doubting Thomas. "We cannot be so good" is still a pervading popular sentiment. Unfortunately some quarters fuel such thoughts to demoralize the youths of the state. Let's start believing in ourselves, our government and our growth. Odisha is the most preferred destination in India in the Metal sector, in Energy & power, in cement, in mega infrastructure projects not for no reason. I am running a campaign to counter question the naysayers about the veracity of their "assumed beliefs" and their authenticity in terms of research and data source. They have none. There is a constant squabble with the doomsayers when their theories and propaganda is based on nothing or in some cases "personality driven". If I don't like someone, it is no way going to change the reality of the functioning of government machinery which is much bigger than any individual.

When has 235 projects, amounting to an investment of Rs 8,84,733 crores been cleared under the single window system in Odisha ever? And these 235 projects cover a diverse set of industries like air products, aviation, cement, food processing paper and paper products and do not contain only metal projects. The next big and expanding IT/ITeS stop in India is Bhubaneswar. Many hardware majors like Lenovo, Dell are showing early interest in Odisha for investments. How many of us are aware that the planned Info Valley (IT SEZ & Township) houses the largest integrated IT park in eastern India and an upcoming Bhubaneswar Knowledge corridor would have IIT, NISER, IMA and IT SEZ. This mix of manufacturing & knowledge sector development is unique in India. But we don't care to know about

this and leave aside “feeling good” about the growth. “Negativity” is a malaise deeper & many times detrimental than left wing extremism in Odisha. Being deliberately counterproductive and anti-development is definitively anti-nationalist. But it is often difficult to give it a tangible character and hence it escapes cunningly below the radar and without interventions. This is a slow poison.

Now the time has come for all of us to disseminate the truth. With all the skill building programmes running in the state by the non-profit agencies I would strongly suggest that they should implement soft skills/life skills courses. This should be a regular curriculum to sensitise youths about their state, the players, the economic balance sheet, the expenditure and revenue patterns etc. Even being selfish is pardonable as long as we endeavor to make our state self reliant and an economic hub for our next generations to live proudly in the state whose resources belong to them. When we move from a rental economy to a “creating” economy, we need to empower our next generations with the skills and abilities to use their own resources (their Odisha where the land and other natural resources belong to them). The potential impacts of renting/leasing as a long-term trend, though, are worrisome: renting and sharing could lead to lower values and net worths. Though, realistically we cannot avoid renting for few years initially. But the ripple effects of renting could be catastrophic: adjusting to a consumer who does not necessarily buy, but rather rents, would necessitate a shift in production, sales, and even employment structures. As an example, everything interesting in economics happens at the margin, so if so many consumers choose to rent an apartment instead of buying a house or managing with a car-share program instead of purchasing a new vehicle, then demand for new houses and cars drops. And with dropping demand the creativity and value chain would concurrently get destroyed. It is imperative to attract the youth now to build their skills, give them a career path, handhold them to be entrepreneurs and most significantly educate them about their own state. This is probably one topic (about Odisha) which they lack the most, today.

Odisha, the silent beauty, the unobtrusive juggernaut is well on its path, in its characteristic self-effacing manner. Only those who are committed to serious economic activities in the State know the true quality of the content of the state. The bureaucracy (*nee* technocracy) is extremely well groomed, dynamic, sparing no efforts to organize and disseminate information for the investors and prospective stakeholders in the country and outside. The Interactive meet spearheaded by the dynamic Office of the Principal Resident Commissioner, Government of Odisha was ably and visibly supported by the technically qualified and prepared Commissioner-cum-Secretaries (specifically IT, IDCO, MSME) of the relevant departments and garnered serious interest among the business fraternity. They could feel the strength of a concerted, well coordinated solidarity in the government, which is often a suspect in many states in India. As one participant remarked, “we never knew this side of Odisha”. I smiled wryly and pledged silently that we, as the civil society, would take the cudgel up and amplify the outreach to a global level. This need not be an unrealistic imposition but would certainly be factual and an economic manifestation of the “shy and reticent” we.

Odisha is now transitioning from a historic high to an economic high. We should learn to savor this.

On 20<sup>th</sup> May, **Smart Odisha**, the non-profit think tank had its roundtable in Bhubaneswar. This is an inclusive mission towards a *better* Odisha. Socio - Economic growth doesn't just happen. It requires vision, investment and courage. The mission of Smart Odisha is to forge and operate an independent,

non-profit think tank dedicated to strategic thinking and action on the transformation of Odisha to a developed economy.

- **Smart Odisha** is a platform of convergence : Without creating extra infrastructure and hierarchies, it would bring together the research capacity of social scientists, technical institutions, Industries, professional bodies in Odisha and on Odisha, and connecting them as a cadre of global leaders in development research
- **Smart Odisha** would foster new ways of learning, producing, structuring and mobilizing development knowledge
- **Smart Odisha** would interconnect researchers, knowledge, expertise and resources in support of development research capacity in the State.
- **Smart Odisha** would generate and share high quality research & big data to inform, support policymaking and advance social and economic development

Odisha doesn't mind the siesta but there is a much renewed, invigorated, rejuvenated force to propel strategic growth of the economy and the Odias.

Long live the "softness" and the modesty of Odias.

We evolve and reinvent continuously, because you are the torch bearer.



*Charudutta Panigrahi, FIDR*

*(Nonprofit Think-tank based in Bhubaneswar and working across India)*

[www.fidrindia.org](http://www.fidrindia.org)

*(Author of the book, **Vignettes**, Founder & mentor of **FIDR**, architect of **Smart Odisha**, Speaker at national and international forums, Charudutta heads an international investment Foundation and sits on the Boards of think tanks, social enterprises and business entities. He works closely in the Public Policy space. He can be contacted at [charu@fidrindia.org](mailto:charu@fidrindia.org). His Skype is charudutta.panigrahi)*

## **World Odia Organization**

*Dr Bhagabat Sahu*

The organization with the name "World Odia Organization" has been formed and is currently registered in TN. Please check <http://www.worldodiaorganization.com/> to know more.

The contacts are: [das\\_pk@hotmail.com](mailto:das_pk@hotmail.com), [satyapatnaik11@gmail.com](mailto:satyapatnaik11@gmail.com), [baradaipr@gmail.com](mailto:baradaipr@gmail.com), [kishoredwibedi@rediffmail.com](mailto:kishoredwibedi@rediffmail.com), [drbcsahu@gmail.com](mailto:drbcsahu@gmail.com), [misra.bijoy@gmail.com](mailto:misra.bijoy@gmail.com)

# OSA Library Initiative: Letters from Odisha

Nishikanta Sahoo

**URGENT**

**Government of Odisha  
General Administration Department**

\*\*\*\*\*

**SANCTION ORDER**

No. 7202 / Gen., dt. 18.03.2015  
GAD-CMRF-DONA-0006-2014

From  
Shri C.R.Patra, OAS(S)  
Joint Secretary to Government

To  
The Branch Manager, State Bank of India,  
Forest Park Branch, Ganga Nagar, Unit-6  
Bhubaneswar.

**Sub: Release of Rs.24,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh) only out of Chief Minister's Relief Fund – Cyclone-2013 S.B A/c No.33378452680**

Sir,  
Please remit a sum of **Rs. 24,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakhs)** only in favour of the Collector, Ganjam in shape of Bank Draft and debit the amount in CMRF -Cyclone-2013 account bearing No. 33378452680 for the following purpose.

| Sl No | Name of the District | Proposal   | Amount       |
|-------|----------------------|--|--------------|
| 1     | Ganjam               | Modernization of Berhampur Municipal Corporation Library | 20,00,000/-  |
| 2     | Ganjam               | Repair & Improvement of Shashibhusan Pathagara           | 2,00,000/-   |
| 3     | Ganjam               | Repair & Improvement of Sadhana Pathagara, Station Road  | 2,00,000/-   |
| 4     |                      | Total  | 24,00,000/-- |

Yours faithfully,

*[Signature]*  
Section Officer

*[Signature]*  
Joint Secretary to Government

Memo No. 7203 / Gen. Date. 18.03.2015

Copy forwarded to the Collector, Ganjam for information and necessary action.

He is requested to utilise the amount for modernization of libraries and intimate details report of physical and financial progress and furnish U.C to this Department for record in CMRF account.

*[Signature]*  
Joint Secretary to Government

Memo No. 7204 / Gen. Date. 18.03.2015

Copy forwarded to the Private Secretary to Chief Minister / Mr. Tapan Padhi, President, The Odisha Society of Americas, 3413 Citrine Round Rock, USA /Mr. Nishikant Sahoo, The Odisha Society of Americas, 3413 Citrine Round Rock, USA for information.

*[Signature]*  
Joint Secretary to Government

OFFICE OF THE  
COLLECTOR & DISTRICT MAGISTRATE  
GANJAM, CHATRAPUR  
(CULTURE SECTION)



06811 263752(DCO),  
06811 263700(R),  
(FAX) No. 06811 263344(F),  
Email ID : rescollectorgm@yahoo.co.in  
cultureofganjam@gmail.com

Letter No. 203 / Culture

Dtd. 27.04.2015

To

**The Commissioner,  
Berhampur Municipal Corporation,  
Berhampur, Ganjam**

Sub: Modernization, repair & improvement work of the 3 library out of Odisha Society of Americas, (OSA) grant regarding ---- Request for submission of status report, action plan & detail estimate.

Madam,

This is to inform you that Odisha Society of Americas, (OSA) have donated Rs. 24 Lakhs to Odisha Chief Minister Relief Fund for modernization, repair & improvement of following libraries which are under the management of Berhampur Municipal Corporation.

| Sl No. | Name of the Library                           | Purpose              | Amount      |
|--------|---|----------------------|-------------|
| 1.     | Berhampur Municipal Library (BML)             | Modernization        | 20,00,000/- |
| 2.     | Shashibhusan Pathagara, Berhampur             | Repair & Improvement | 2,00,000/-  |
| 3.     | Sadhana Pathagara,<br>Station Road, Berhampur | Repair & Improvement | 2,00,000/-  |

The Joint Secretary, General Administration Department, Govt. Of Odisha have already released the above Rs.24 Lakhs to us in shape of Demand Draft.

You are therefore requested to furnish the status report along with the action plan and detail estimate for execution of modernization, repair & improvement work of above libraries at your level to District Office latest by 05.05.2015 positively . On receipt of your above report the required fund will be sent to you immediately for execution of above work at your level.

This may be given top priority in the interest of public.

Yours faithfully,

  
**Collector and Dist Magistrate,  
Ganjam, Chatrapur**

Dt. 27.04.2015

Memo 204 / Culture

Copy to Joint Secretary, General Administration Department, Govt. Of Odisha . for kind information with reference to his Memo no. 7203/Gen. Dt. 18.03.2015.

  
**Collector and Dist Magistrate,  
Ganjam, Chatrapur**

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With Best Compliments to  
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on this occasion of  
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Conference and 46th Annual  
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Naresh, Bigyani, Bagmi,  
Mrunali, Shashwati



# INTERNATIONAL JAGANNATHA SOCIETY

14800 Vishnu Way, Suite B  
Harvest, AL 35749, USA  
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EIN: 46-2269676  
www.int-jagannatha-soc.org  
E-Mail: int.jagannatha123@gmail.com

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इ॒मे त्वो॒र्ज॒त्वा॒ घ्रा॒यव॑स्सोपा॒यव॑स्स्य दे॒वो ब॑स्सवि॒ता प्रा॑र्प॒यतु॒ श्रेष्ठ॑त॒माय॒ कर्म॑णे ।

Oh Lord, we resort to Thee for the supply of foodstuffs and vigor. May the Creator, the fountain of happiness and knowledge, inspire us for the performance of noblest deeds with our organs. – Sam Veda

OM Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya!

On behalf of International Jagannatha Society, Professor Hanekreshna Setapathy, President and person in charge of the India Branch (IJS, Bharat), and myself are inviting you to attend the **third International Jagannatha Sammilani in Puri, Odisha, India.**

Convener- Prof Harekrushna Satapathy, VC

E-mail: [hks\\_vc@yahoo.co.in](mailto:hks_vc@yahoo.co.in)

Phone: +919440626551

Coordinators- Baradapasanna Das

E-mail: [baradaipr@gmail.com](mailto:baradaipr@gmail.com)

Phone: +9861145687

Venue: Sri Jagannath Sanskrit University

Puri 753002, Odisha India

Topics: 1. Socio cultural Implications of NabaKalebar

2. Jagannath Consciousness

3. Ratha Yatra Festival

Prominent guests: H.H. Sankaracharya of Puri, Sri Gajati Maharaja Dibyasingh Deb, Cabinet Ministers from Delhi and others from abroad have been invited. The details will be posted later.

Internationally known researchers scholars professors from India and abroad will be the guest speakers. Arrangements are being made for the delegates to have darshan of the LORD and the Ratha Yatra festival.

Registrations – No Fees. Accommodation and travel on your own.

For contact information visit [www.int-jagannatha-soc.org](http://www.int-jagannatha-soc.org)

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or [baradaipr@gmail.com](mailto:baradaipr@gmail.com) Tel+9861145687 or [satyapatnaik11@gmail.com](mailto:satyapatnaik11@gmail.com) Tel 614-408-8596

or [sarat710@gmail.com](mailto:sarat710@gmail.com) Tel- 651-739-0426 or Sabyasachi Satphathy Tel-+919437132230

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**Saroj Rout**  
*Vice President*  
saroj@oraninc.com  
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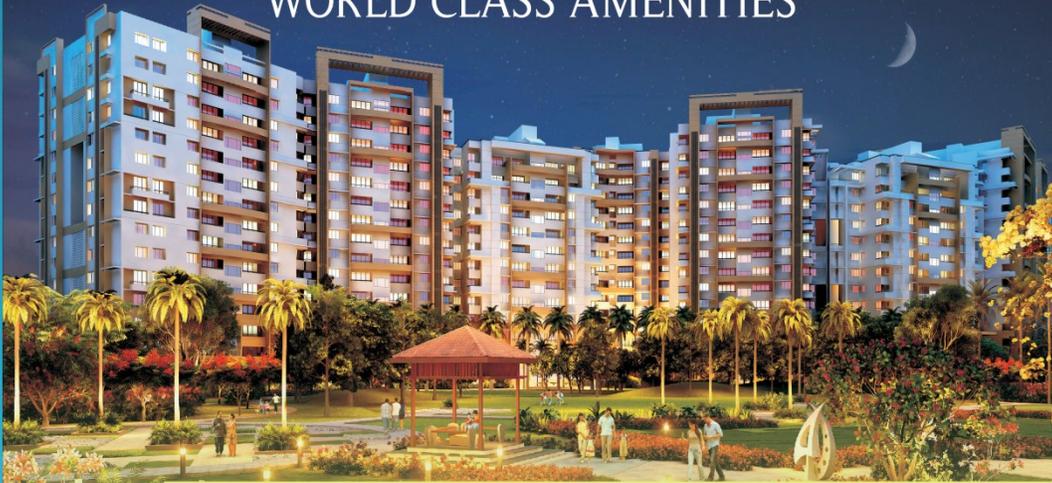
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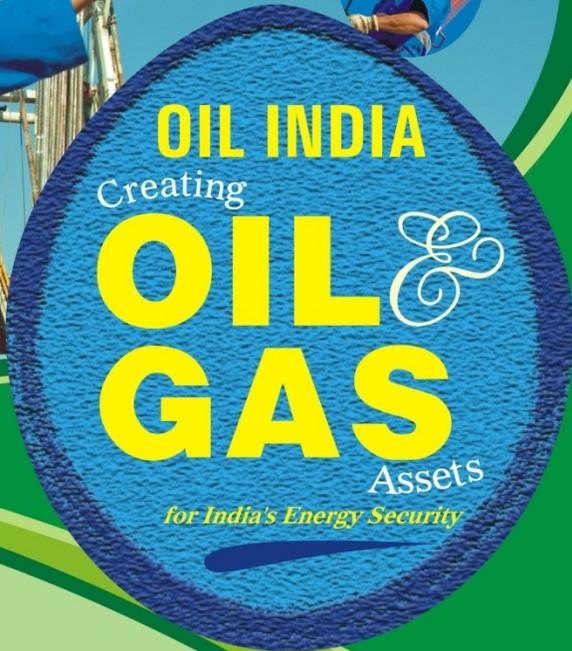
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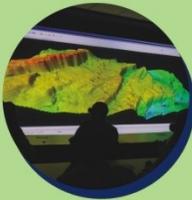
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# The Odisha Society of the Americas, New England Chapter (OSANE)



**Welcome  
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in  
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**June 23, 2015**

### **MESSAGE**

I am delighted to know that the First Global Odisha Conference and the 46th Annual Convention of the Odisha Society of the Americas is being organized on July 1-4, 2015 at Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, National Harbor, Maryland, including a programme 'Amazing Odisha' at Kennedy Center of Performing Arts, Washington DC.

2. The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA), being one of the oldest Indian American associations in the US, has been organizing its conventions annually to provide a platform for the people of Oriya origin to connect with each other and to promote the cultural heritage of Odisha. As in the past, this year's convention, with art programmes, folk dances, seminars and films, will showcase the artistic heritage of Odisha.

3. I am sure the Global Odisha Conference will provide a common platform to exchange ideas towards promotion of diverse fields including business, education, health, tourism, art, literature, culture and religion. Such initiative by Pravasi community of Oriya origin is commendable and will go a long way in fostering the community feeling. This will also help in connecting the community with their roots.

4. I congratulate all members of the OSA on this occasion and wish them success in their endeavours.

  
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