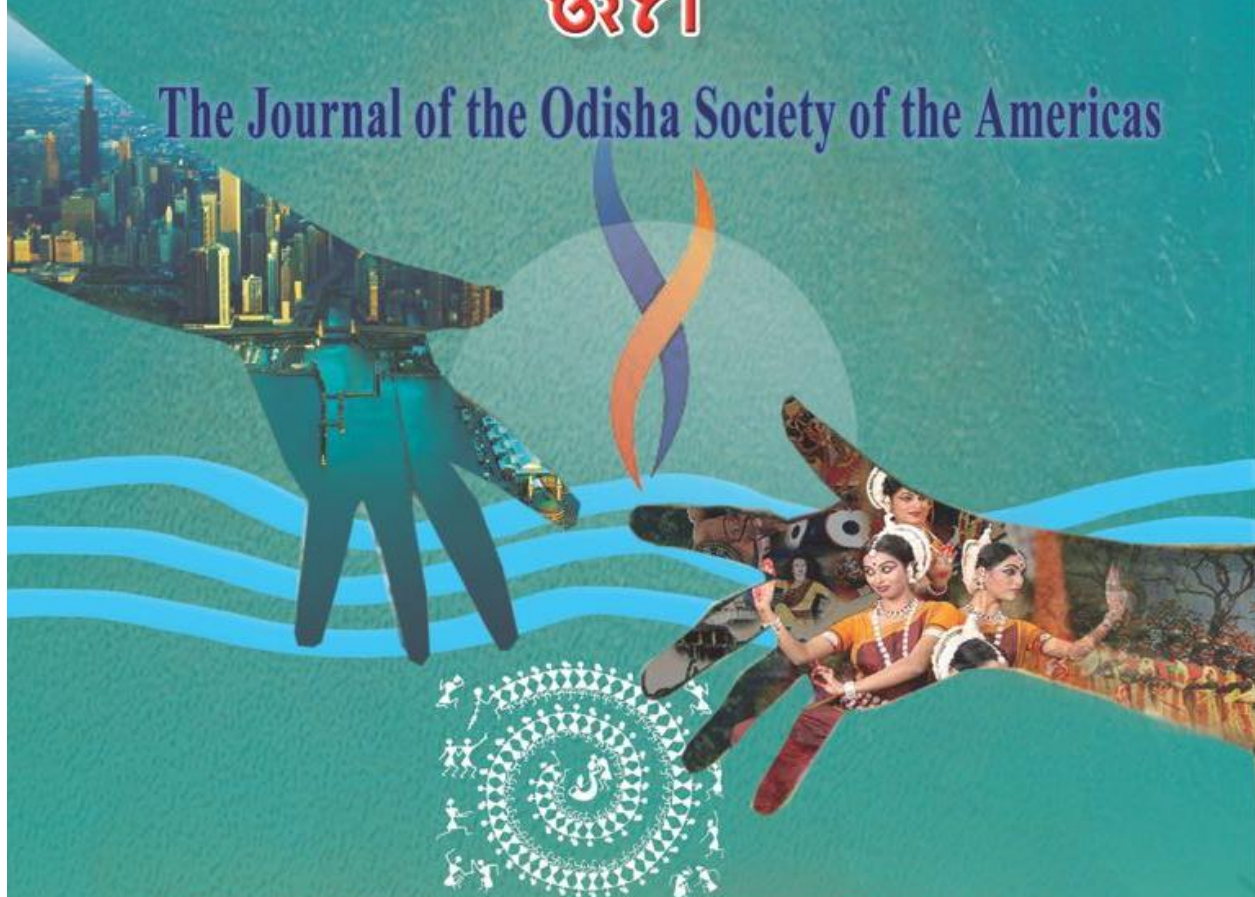




ଉର୍ମି

The Journal of the Odisha Society of the Americas



ବଡ଼ ହେଉ ଅବା ସାନ: ଏକ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣ
Bridging Generations: Celebrating Odia Unity
49th OSA Annual Convention-2018

July 5- 8, 2018
Dearborn, Michigan



With Best Wishes



**FROM
ALL THE MEMBERS OF MI-OSA**

Jagannatha Swami Nayanapathagami Bhabatu Me
ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ସ୍ବାମୀ ନୟନପଥଗାମୀ ଭବତୁ ମେ !



Tamaso Ma Jyotirgamaya

O Lord, keep not in the Darkness (of Ignorance). But lead me
toward the light (of Knowledge)

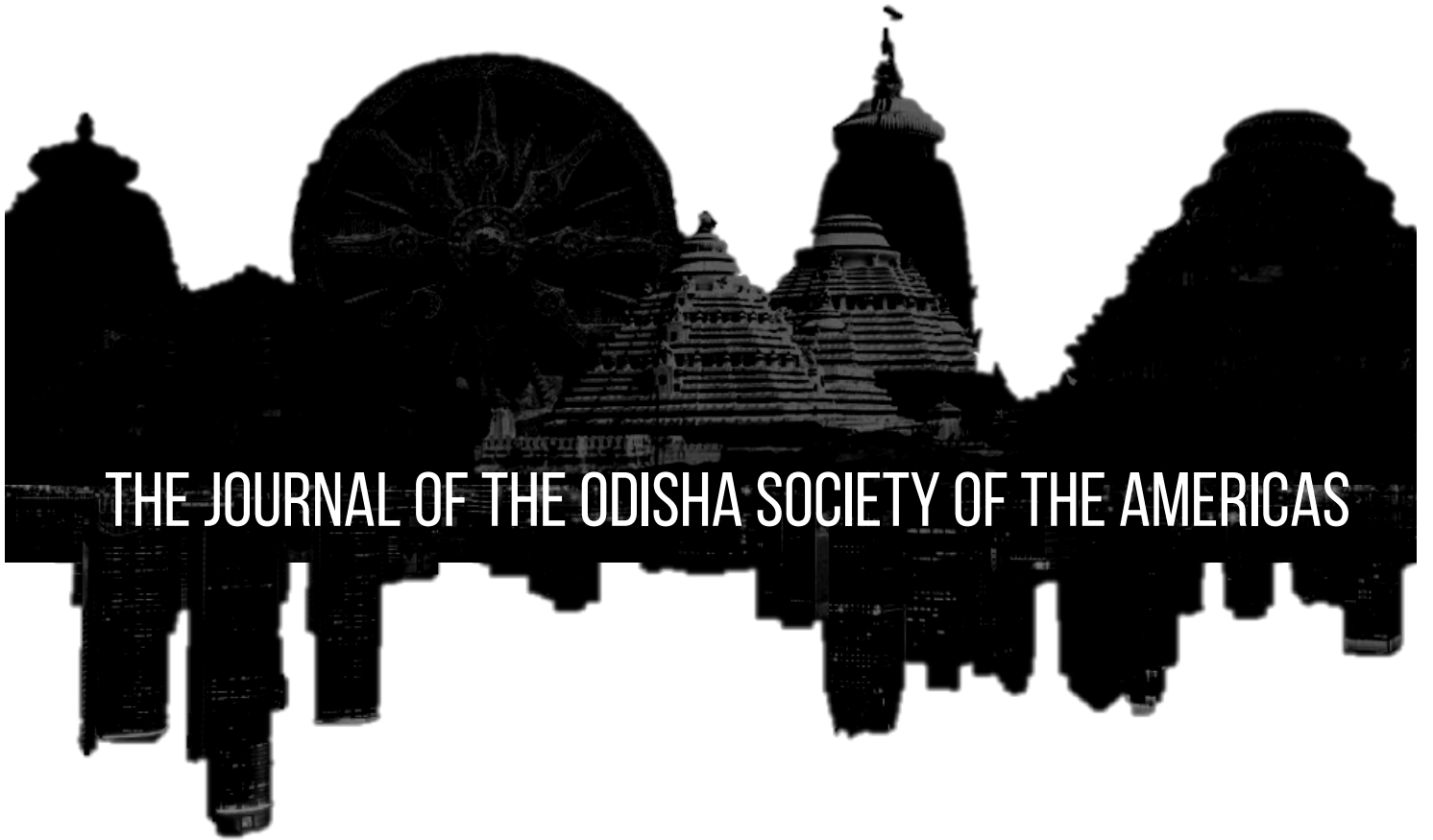
ତମସୋ ମା ଜ୍ୟୋତିର୍ଗମୟ

ONE in All, All in ONE

Ratha Yatra 2017, Parashakthi Temple, Pontiac Michigan



ଉର୍ମି URMI



THE JOURNAL OF THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF THE AMERICAS

BRIDGING GENERATIONS: CELEBRATING ODIA UNITY

ବଡ଼ ହେଉ ଅବା ସାନ: ଏକ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣ

49TH ANNUAL OSA CONVENTION

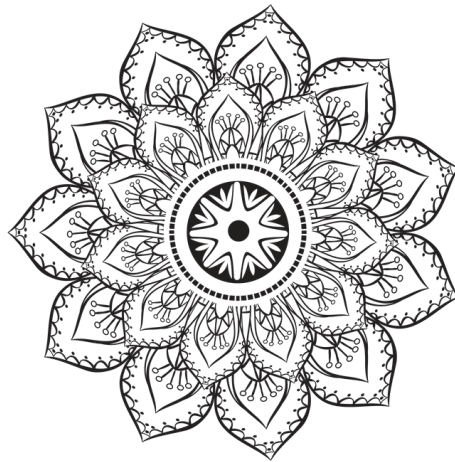
JULY 5-8, 2018

DEARBORN, MI



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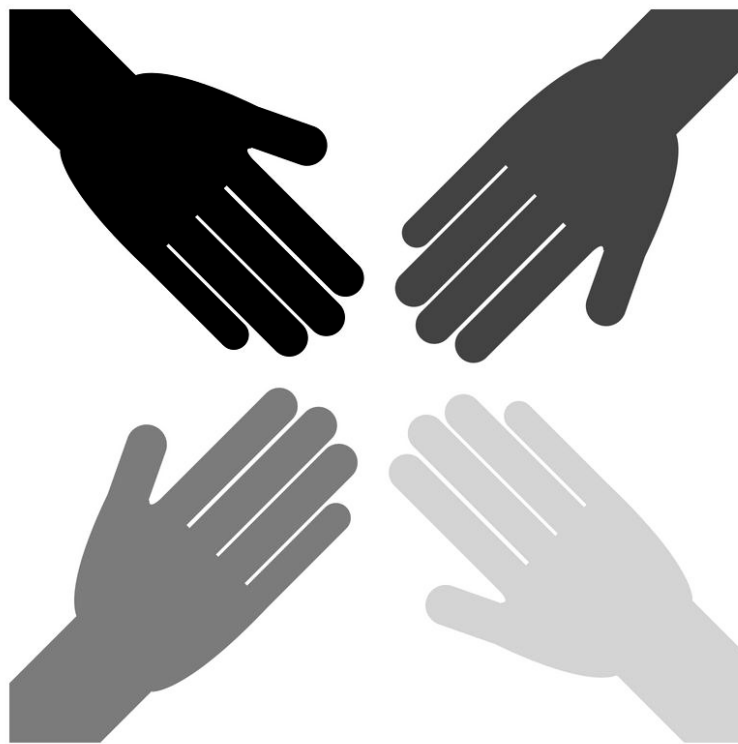
The Odisha Society of the Americas Vision and Mission

OSA will continue to strive to be a focal point of all Odias around the world to debate issues and to find action plans in the nurture and promotion of Odia heritage and culture and matters meaningful to Odias. The annual conventions and regional celebrations will continue to play major roles in this endeavor along with the electronic preservation & dissemination of information and efforts to gain media attention for Odia people's causes.

Vision: The vision of OSA is to promote and propagate Odia culture in Americas by bringing together all the people interested in Odisha.

The mission goals of The Odisha Society of the 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.



Urmi Cover Page

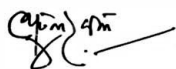
Designer Atul Bal: The cover page of the Souvenir defines the goal of the convention. This year, we recruited an artist from Odisha to design the cover page of both the 2018 Souvenir and Directory publications.

We selected Mr. Atul Bal for his outstanding contribution to contemporary Odia literature. He has designed 350 covers of Odia books written by many famous Odia writers as well as Souvenirs of various organizations, including The Pratishruti, an Odia literature magazine published from Ohio. He works as a Reader in Sri Sri Jagannatha Maha Vidyalaya, Raj Nagar, Kendrapara, by profession. He uses his leisure time as an artist and as a graphic designer. Apart from being an artist, he is also a writer. His first published book is an Odia short story collection, named “Muktira Barnabodha.” His second short story, “Moha Mukti,” is in the process of being published.

It was a pleasant experience to work with Mr. Bal in developing the design based on our theme.

His words on the cover page design:

ସବୁ ସଂଘାତକୁ ପ୍ରତିହତ କରି
ବିପ୍ଳବବିଶ୍ୱରେ ଆମେ ମେଲିବା ନିଃଶ୍ୱାସର ଡାଳପତ୍ର
ତେରେଇ ଯିବା ମାଟିର ମାୟାରେ
ଜିଇଁବା ଆସ୍ଥାରେ, ସଂପ୍ରୀତିରେ,
ପାରସ୍ପରିକ ସହଯୋଗରେ ...



Let's live in love
feet on the soil of this globe
braving all odds
with confidence, reciprocity, hand in hand,
helping each other.



Acknowledgements

The Souvenir & Directory Publishing Committee would like to thank the following individuals/groups for their support and contributions towards a smooth publication:

- OSA executives and MI–OSA executives.
- Former OSA President Mr. Sushant Satapathy and former OSA Vice President Mrs. Sulochana Patnaik for their valuable advice.
- Mr. Prasanta Bhunya (on behalf of OSA editorial board) for extending help and kind support in a timely manner.
- Dr. Bigyani Das and Mr. Satya Pattanaik for their timely support and advice.
- Volunteers for making the endeavor easier by giving their valuable time and effort.
- Our writers and the parents of young writers.
- The cover page artist Mr. Atul Bal.
- The inside cover page artist Ms. Nayna Rath.
- Convener Dr. Shishir Senapati and the Convention Committee.
- The printer of this journal, McNaughton & Gunn Inc., for completing this project in a timely fashion.

Sincerely,

2018 Souvenir and Directory Publication Team

Swapnalata Mishra (Rath) (Chair), Sasadhara Sahoo (Co-Chair)

Santosh Kar & Biswajit Puhan (Core Committee Members)

Disclaimer

The Odisha Society of the Americas and the Souvenir Publication Team is not responsible for the accuracy and validity of the submitted content. The ultimate validity of the articles and any liability rests on the individual author.



OSA Administration



OSA National Executive Team

Position	Name	Email	Phone
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OSA Administration

Chapter Presidents/Representatives

Chapter Name	Chapter Head	Email	Phone
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Grand Canyon	INACTIVE	INACTIVE	INACTIVE
Maryland – Virginia	INACTIVE	INACTIVE	INACTIVE
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South East	Shankar Baral	sbaral20@gmail.com	(704)992-5908
Southern	Prabhat Nalini Patnaik	nalinik@bellsouth.net	(615)367-4273
South-West	Sarada Panda	osa-sw@odishasociety.org	(904)612-3091
Washington, DC	Anjana Chowdhury	Anjana.OSADC@gmail.com	(240)320-6252

OSA Administration

Committees and Associated Members

OSAnet Moderation: Sunil Sabat, CA Prashant Padhy, IL Prabhat Mohapatra, NJ	OSA Impact: Sushil Panda VP, OSA Soumya Mohanty Abhishek Panigrahi Amisha Paul	OSA Awards: Ranjita Mishra, Chair Jagannatha Ratha Aparna Mohapatra Sujata Patnaik Debashis Das Susil Panda, VP, OSA
Regional Drama Festivals: Sandip Dasverma, Chair Leena Mishra, DC Tapas Sahoo Gayatri Joshi, CA Birendra Jena, OH	Finance: Prashanta Ranabijuli, TX Niranjan Pati, NJ Siddharth Behera, TX Sachi Pati, Treasurer, OSA	Grievance Handling: Esha Bandyopadhyay Dash, CA Birendra Jena, OH Pitamber Sarangi, NJ
Guest Selection: Susil Panda, VP, OSA Dr. Sishir Senapati (Convener, 2018 Convention), Dhirendra Kar, NC Gopal Mohapatra, TX Sabita Panigrahi, Toronto	OSA Library: Nishikant Sahoo, MA Ajay Mohanty, DC Nalini Patnaik, TN Sushanta Satpathy, IL Priyadarsan Patra, AZ Sandip Dasverma, CA BNR Subuddhi, Odisha Surya Padhi, Odisha	Member Action Committee: Sameer Senapati, NC, Chair Manoj Mohapatra, IL Ashok Panigrahi, CT Prakash Sahu, VA Anshuman Panigrahi, NJ Kamal Panda, CA Manoranjana Panda, TX
OSA Healthcare Initiative: Dr Saswati Mohapatra, NJ, Chair Dr Amiya Nayak, OK Mr Sanat Patnaik, DC Mr Palash Das, NC	Odissi Steering: Pratap Das, Chair Annapurna Biswal Niharika Mohanty Niranjan Tripathy Ipsita Mahapatra Purna Patnaik	Let's Learn Odia: Gagan Bihari Panigrahi Pramod Mohapatra Swapnalata Rath Sujata Pattnaik Ranjita Mishra Sujit Das Gayatri Mohapatra Kuku Das
Member Support: Pradeep Mohapatra, Coordinator	Youth Forum: Leena Mishra, Coordinator	

OSA Past Executives (1970-2017)

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer	Nominated Editor-in-Chief
2015-2017	Sushant Satpathy, IL	Sulochana Patnaik, MD	Saradakanta Panda, TX	Siddharth Behera, TX	Prasanta Bhunya, Canada/ Kanaka Hota, IL
2013-2015	Tapan Padhi, TX	Dr. Sikhanda Satpathy, DC	Sabita Panigrahi, Canada	Prashanta Ranabijuli, TX	Satya Patnaik, OH
2011-2013	Annapurna Pandey, CA	Kuku Das, CA	Leena Mishra, DC	Sushant Satpathy, IL	Sridhar Rana/Julie Acharya Ray
2009-2011	Bigyani Das, MD	Pradeep Mohapatra, NJ	Annapurna Pandey, CA	Akhileswar Patel, NJ	Sridhar Rana/Julie Acharya Ray
2007-2009	Pratap Das, MD	Ashutosh Dutta	Priyadarsan Patra	Sandip K. Dasverma	Sikhanda Sathpathy/Saubhagyala xmi Mahapatra
2005-2007	Niranjan Tripathy, TX	Dhirendra Kar	Bigyani Das, MD	Prakash Patro	Sikhanda Sathpathy
2003-2005	Laxminarayan Bhuyan, CA	Nivedita Mohanty(VA)	Hari Arjun Patra(TX)	No position	Bigyani Das
2001-2003	Sanak Patnaik, NY	Leena(Pepi) Dehal	Anuradha(Lolly) Ihrke	No position	Likun Mishra
1999-2001	Anadi Naik	Kanan Mishra	Bijoy Mishra	No position	Smritirekha Panda
1997-1999	Gopa Patnaik	Annapurna Pandey	Babru Samal	No position	Gyana Patnaik

OSA Past Executives (1970-2017)

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer	Nominated Editor-in-Chief
1995-1997	Late Hemanta Senapati	Sujata Patnaik (IL)	Parikshita Nayak (MI)	No position	Purna Patnaik
1993-1995	Sita Kantha Das, MN	Gopa Patnaik	Late Bijan Rao	No position	Alekh Dash/ Purna Patnaik
1991-1993	Digambar Mishra, AL	Renuka Panigrahi	Late Hemanta Senapati	No position	Kula Chandra Misra
1989-1991	Amiya Mohanty(TN)	Biju Mishra(VA)	Keshav Dwivedy(VA)	No position	Digambar Mishra / Sura P. Rath
1987-1989	Asoka Das, ON, Canada	Pratap Patnaik, ON, Canada	Late Anil Pattanayak, IL	No position	Lalu Mansingh / Saradindu Mishra/ Manaranjan Pattnayak
1985-1987	Saroj Behera, CA	Purna Patnaik	Sarat Misro, CA	No position	Deba Mohapatra(CA)
1983-1985	Rabi Patnaik, MD	Saradindu Mishra, NY	Pratap Das,MD	No position	Jnana Ranjan Dash(CA)

OSA Past Executives (1970-2017)

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer	Nominated Editor-in-Chief
1981-1983	Ladukesh Patnaik(CA)	Late Hemanta Senapati	Satyabrata Shaw	No position	Jnana Ranjan Dash(CA)
1978-1981	Late Pramode Patnaik	Ladukesh Patnaik	Satyabrata Shaw	No position	Jnana Ranjan Dash(CA)
1975-1978	Late Amiya Patnaik	1st VP:Late Manindra K. Mohapatra2nd VP-Samar K. Bhuyan	Rabindra K. Ray	Prasanna K. Samantaray	Jnana Ranjan Dash(CA)
1973-1975	Late Gauri Das (CA)	1st VP: SriGopal Mohanty,2nd VP: Surya K. Mishra	Late Pramode Patnaik	Late Amiya Patnaik	Late Pramode Patnaik/ Late Gauri Das
1972-1973	Bhabagrahi Mishra(Orissa)	1st VP: SriGopal Mohanty,2nd VP: Surya K. Mishra	Late Pramode Patnaik	Late Amiya Patnaik	Late Pramode Patnaik/ Late Gauri Das
1970-1972	Late Gauri Das (CA)	1st VP:Late Krushna Mohan Das2nd VP- Ami ya Patnaik	Bhabagrahi Mishra	Nagabhusan Senapati	Bhabagrahi Mishra/ Late Gauri Das

OSA Convention Journey

The Odisha Society of The Americas (OSA) has been organizing its Annual convention every year on a weekend...on or ...around July 4th from the year 1970 in different places of USA and Canada being hosted by OSA chapters with the support of local OSA members. Sometimes at some places (where there is no chapter yet), OSA members (with 15 or OSA members) get together and come forward to take the responsibility under the leadership of an OSA life member. OSA convention is the centerpiece of OSA activities. It is the annual forum for all OSA members as well as people who are connected to Odisha, who have interest to mingle with other odias from different places of USA and Canada, who have interest to promote odia culture in North America by getting together with likeminded people to have fun through exchanging ideas, sharing cultural spirit and celebrating the ODIA identity as ONE big family. It has been always a great experience for attendees, especially children, who makes new friends. Many of them have continued to be friends forever. Hats off to the energy and spirit of all leaders and volunteers who have been given their time for OSA selflessly to organize conventions continuously for last 49 years.

Michigan OSA convention committee is thankful to all volunteers and attendees of 49th OSA Convention. Hope you all had a memorable experience. The journey of the OSA convention should continue...*it would continue by bridging generations and celebrating ODIA unity.*

Next stoppage will be New Jersey for 50th annual OSA Convention.

The Journey

One-day Conventions

1970(1st)	Gauri Das and OSA Management Team	Hartford, CT
1971 (2nd)	Bhabagrahi Mishra and OSA Management Team	Hartford, CT
1972 (3rd)	Amiya Patnaik* and OSA Management Team	Riverdale, NJ
1973 (4th)	Amiya Patnaik* and OSA Management Team	Riverdale, NJ
1974 (5th)	Prafulla Mishra and OSA Management Team	College Park, MD
1975 (6th)	Jnana Ranjan Dash and OSA Management Team	Toronto, Canada
1976 (7th)	Amiya Patnaik* and OSA Management Team	Riverdale, NJ
1977 (8th)	Amiya Patnaik* and OSA Management Team	Riverdale, NJ
1978 (9th)	Rabi Patnaik and OSA Management Team	Wheaton, MD
1979 (10th)	Ram Saran Sahoo and OSA Management Team	New Brunswick, NJ
1980 (11th)	Ladukesh Patnaik and OSA Management Team	Detroit, MI



OSA Convention Journey

(Two– or Three–day Conventions)

1981 (12th)	Surya Mishra	Chicago, IL
1982 (13th)	Sitikantha Dash	Minneapolis, MN
1983 (14th)	Pratap Das	Bowie, MD
1984 (15th)	Manaranjan Pattanayak	Glassboro, NJ
1985 (16th)	Dasarathi Ram	Kent, OH
1986 (17th)	Asoka K. Das	Toronto, ONT, Canada
1987 (18th)	Prasanna Kumar Samantaray	Stanford, CA
1988 (19th)	Hemanta Senapati	Saginaw, MI
1989 (20th)	Radhakanta Mishra	Nashville, TN
1990 (21st)	Pratap Das	Washington, D.C.
1991 (22nd)	Mary Ann Pattanayak	Chicago, IL
1992 (23rd)	Mahendra Mishra	Atlanta, GA
1993 (24th)	Sudarshan Mishra	Troy, MI
1994 (25th)	Manaranjan Pattanayak	Pomona, NJ
1995 (26th)	Sarat Mahapatra	Minneapolis, MN
1996 (27th)	Annapurna Biswal	Washington, D.C.
1997 (28th)	Pradeep Rath	Houston, TX
1998 (29th)	Saroj Behera	Monterey, CA
1999 (30th)	Lalatendu (Lalu) Mansinha	Toronto, ONT, Canada
2000 (31st)	Kula Chandra Misra	Nashville, TN
2001 (32nd)	Saroj Mohanty	Chicago, IL
2002 (33rd)	Sreekanta Nayak	Greenbelt, MD
2003 (34th)	Saradindu Misra	Princeton, NJ



OSA Convention Journey

(Two- or Three-day Conventions)

2004 (35th)	Niranjan Tripathy	Dallas, TX
2005 (36th)	Kirtan Behera	Newport Beach, CA
2006 (37th)	Joy Gopal Moanty	Columbia, MD
2007 (38th)	Rabindra Rout	Detroit, MI
2008 (39th)	Gagan Behari Panigrahi	Toronto, ONT, Canada
2009 (40th)	Uma Ballav Mishra, Lalatendu Mohanty	Trenton, NJ
2010 (41st)	Kuku Das	San Francisco, CA
2011 (42 nd)	Tapan Padhi	Dallas, Texas
2012 (43rd)	Amulya Das, Pradeep Sahoo, Rakesh Patnaik	Seattle, WA
2013 (44th)	Gyana Patnaik, Sarj Khandai, Tarani Mohapatra	Chicago, IL
2014 (45th)	Satya Patnaik, Anil Patnaik, Swadhin Patnaik	Columbus, OH
	Deepak Swain	
2015 (46th)	Pratap Das (Convener)	Washington DC
	Leena Mishra, Gatikrishna Tripathy	
2016(47th)	Sourya Mahapatra, Pradeep Dhal, Bikash Behera	Boston, MA
2017(48th)	Sulochana Patnaik, Sushant Satpathy	
	Sarada Panda, Siddharth Behera	Cruise from Miami to Bahamas
2018(49 th)	Dr. Shishir Senapati, Sushil Panda	Dearborn, MI

(All above data have been gathered from OSA website and some previous year's souvenirs- S&D team)

OSA New Jersey Chapter

Invites you to

50th Annual OSA convention

July 4th Weekend, 2019

49th OSA Convention Committee

Convener

Shishir Senapati

Co-Convener

Sushil Panda

(OSA VP)

Advisors

Bhawani Tripathy

Biswajit Puan

Jogesh Panda

Julie Samantray

Krishna Senapati

Rabindra Rout

Santosh Kar

Sudipta Mishra

Sunita Das

Sunil Pattnaik

Puspa Nayak



Michigan OSA Executives

President

Vivek Das

Vice President

Tarakeswar Pradhan

Secretary

Sonali Pattanaik

Treasurer

Sangram Basantia

Executive Member

Girija Rout



49th OSA Convention Committee

Committee	Chair	Co-Chair	Team Members
Award	Manasi Mishra	Sunita Mahapatra	Lopamudra Mishra, Sarbani Mishra, Swapnalata Mishra
Booth / Exhibition	Nutan Satapathy	Diptikanta Sandhibigrah	Ratimukta Satapathy
Cultural	Rina (Chandana) Mahapatra	Swati Mishra	Ananya Pattanaik, Biswajit Agasti, Manasi Mishra, Nivedita Mishra, Reshma Das, Sakambari Tripathy, Sangita Pradhan, Sanghamitra Satapathy, Sudhakar Dakshinamoorthy, Swapnalata Mishra, Swayamprava Panda
Decoration	Saswata Nayak(Jhilli)	Pushpa Mahapatra	Pragyan Bisi, Raj Subudhi, Subrat Mohapatra
Finance/Budget/Accounts	Biswajit Pattnaik	Ratimukta Satapathy	Srikanta Sahoo
Food	Krushna Panda	Maitreyi Satapathy	Anil Kumar Sahoo, Julie Das, Leena Patnaik, Madhusmita Kota, Pitabasa Panda, Pushpita Bhuyan, Puspita Das, Rajshree Nayak, Ranjita Samantaray, Rudrakshi Basantia, Sarbani Mishra, Snehanjali Misra, Sonali Pattanaik, Sushil Panda, Tanushree Patra
Fund Raising	Akshaya Ray	Raj Subudhi	Nihar Mishra, Parag Mishra, Subhendu Das, Trailokanath Padhi
Guest & Artist Selection	Shishir Senapati	Sangita Pradhan	Pitabasa Panda, Rina(Chandana) Mahapatra, Subhasis Mohanty, Swapnalata Mishra
Hospitality	Punyatoya Sarangi	Geeta Sahoo	Anuja Bhatta(Pooja), Sasmita Padhi, Sonali Pattanaik, Subrat Mohapatra



49th OSA Convention Committee

Committee	Chair	Co-Chair	Team Members
Logistics	Satchi Sarangi	Abhishek Nepak Satya Mohanty	Sasmita Padhi, Srikanta Sahoo
Mehfil	Subhasis Mahanty	Pitabasa Panda	Biswajit Puan, Girish Nayak, Jyotirmayee Sahoo, Sangram Basantia, Sanghamitra Satapathy, Santanu Misra, Saswati Swain, Subhasis
Registration	Pramod Satapathy	Hrudaya Mahapatro	Anyarath, Karishma Satapathy, Manoj Acharya, Narendra Kota, Raj Subudhi, Sanjeev Sahoo, Suman Mishra, Sudipta Mishra
Seminar	Smriti Panda	Akshaya Ray	Alok Hota, Bhawani Tripathy, Jogesh Panda, Lyudmila Mishra, Nivedita Mishra, Neena Marion, Poonam Panda, Puspita Bhuyan, Sasadhar Sahoo, Shashwati Swain, Sonali Pattanaik, Suman Panda, Sunita Das, Swapnalata Mishra
Sports	Dillip Subudhi	Girija Rout	Aseem Mishra, Biswajit Puan, Parag Mishra, Ramanath Mishra, Ratimukta Satapathy, Satya Mohanty, Sunil patnaik, Sudhakar Dakshinamoorthy, Santosh Ka, Sanjib Sahoo, Tikhnadhi Kamalakhya
Souvenir/Directory	Swapnalata Mishra (Rath)	Sasadhar Sahoo	Anyarath, Ananya Pattnaik, Biswajit Puan, Girija Rout, Mamata Sahoo, Nayna Rath, Nirmal Rath, Sanghamitra Satapathy, Santosh Kar, Sunanda Mishra,



49th OSA Convention Committee

Committee	Chair	Co-Chair	Team Members
Stage Management/ Technical /Video/ Photography	Sangram Sahu	Tarakeshwar Pradhan	Aseem Mishra,Biswajit Puan,Jessica Pattanaik,Nihar Mishra,Nirmal Rath, Ratimukta Satapathy, Rajalaxmi Pattnaik,Rita Mallik,Raj Subudhi, Sunil Pattnaik, Sangeeta Lathkar, Soma Sahu,Sangram Basantia, Subrat Mohapatra,Suman Mishra, Tikhnadhi Kamlakshya, Trilokyanath Padhi,Tuli Mohanty
Venue	Arun Tripathy	Debashis Acharya	Abhishek Nepak,Srikanth Sahoo, Sunil Pattnaik
Web Development	Devashish Das	Girish Nayak	Akshaya Ray,Sangram Basantia
Youth Activities	Lyudmila Mishra	Puspita Bhuyan Poonam Panda	Ranjita Samantaray, Rita Mallik,Seema Raut, Soma Sahu,Smriti Panda,Tuli Mohanty
Facilitation/Admin/ MTG Coordination/Com munication	MI OSA Executive Team	MI OSA Executive Team	Girija Rout, Sonali Pattanaik, Sangram Basantia,Tarakeshwar Pradhan,Vivek Das
Public Relation	Manoj Acharya	No Position	No Position



Message from the OSA National President Lalatendu Mohanty

I welcome you to the 49th OSA Annual Convention and convey my best wishes on publication of “URMI” to commemorate 2018 OSA convention in Dearborn, a suburb of Detroit, the Motor City of the world. This will be a great annual extravaganza of culture, music, and fun. Arranging a convention of this magnitude is an extraordinary effort. Behind all extraordinary efforts, there are many extraordinary individuals. I was lucky to get an opportunity to meet a few of them and felt their energy, motivation and passion to put forward a life-size convention. I am confident that they would over-surprise you this year.

This year’s theme is “Bridging Generations: Celebrating ODIA Unity.” Yes, we already have three generations of Odia in North America and there is immense need to bridge the gaps from jataka to Instagram.



Irrespective of the generation, we should be proud of what we have achieved as a society for all Odias. We are professionals, entrepreneurs, academicians, and scientists to Padma Bibhusana. Not to mention the proud community and a classic heritage we all are part of.

Our greatness comes by doing a few small things and taking little steps, consistently. We continue to provide a mutually supportive environment for Odia immigrants (ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କୁ), explore ways to showcase our culture and heritage at a different level (ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗାଥା), and work hard for the local community and for the land of our roots (ଓଡ଼ିଶା).

First and foremost, we are one family in this adopted land bonded by our common root. We thrive to provide a social safety-net for all Odias, both members and non-members. Looking out for each other is now one of our principles which is very essential in this current ominous atmosphere.

We continue to empower OSA members to voice their opinions, be part of our decisions while we try to be inclusive to the highest. Our priority to brand the society with actions is starting to give positive results. We have started an aggressive campaign in social media featuring ourselves in high profile targets.

Knowing your culture and heritage, means you know where you come from and where you are going. We are unique because of our robust roots, magnificent culture, and the strong heritage. OSA will continue to work hard to preserve and promote our culture, no matter what. It’s not too late to let the heritage genie out of the bottle. We have taken firm steps to influence our chapters to showcase it to a bigger community by providing additional incentives. It puts us at lesser risk of having the young generation growing up without an identity. We need to celebrate and practice our heritage and traditions with pride.

Our roots are not in landscape or a country, or a people, they are inside us. We need to speak our home languages without shy, fear, or favor. We need to rock our afros and braids without being influenced by anyone. It’s our culture and it needs to be respected. If we don’t celebrate heritage, we will not understand its values. Conventions are an attempt to facilitate and revive those feelings. Let’s be part of it every year as an annual heritage journey.

Community is our strength. We are committed to be part of this adopted land, also the motherland of many of our next generations. Besides thinking about the less privileged in Odisha, we must get involved with the community we all are now part of. We must encourage our next generations to get involved in social initiatives locally under the “OSA Impact” banner. Without involvement in local community, we will not have a strong quality of life.

Whatever we do, wherever we go, Odisha will continue to remain close to our heart. We will continue to be part of the Odisha at her success as well as adversity. We will stand besides everyone who makes a meaningful impact on the bottom-of-the-pyramid segment. We will continue to support social entrepreneurship, advocate for social justice, facilitate opportunity for higher education and, end the digital divide.

However, it's time to think bigger than before. A bigger cause with a much longer impact. Let's partner with organization for a higher cause, whether it is to improve the skillset, provide farm-aid for farmers, digitize Odisha, eradicate Malaria or promote Odisha in the world forum.

Our vision is high, morale is solid, but we have limited hands. I appeal to all members to spare some time from your busy schedules to help OSA build a strong foundation of OSA culture and traditions for the road ahead.

Now, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve the society. I am an ordinary person who has been blessed with extraordinary executive team and selfless volunteers with foolproof commitments to serve OSA with integrity and dignity.

On behalf of the executive team and Board of Governors of the OSA, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Editors for undertaking such a worthy task. I would also like to give a shout-out to OSA 2018 convention team and all OSA National committees for their selfless work and commitment.

Sincerely,

Lalatendu Mohanty
National OSA President



Message from the 2018 Convener

Dr. Shishir Senapati

Namaskar! It is my great honor and distinct pleasure to welcome you all to the 49th OSA Convention at Ford Community and Performing Arts Center and the elegant Edward Hotel in Dearborn, Michigan. This is the fifth time the convention has been hosted in Michigan since the inception of OSA in 1969, and 11 years after your last visit to Detroit. The 2007 convention was an extraordinary affair, and we are excited about the substantial number of first-time participants who will now receive the memorable experience of the convention in Michigan.



Like in the past, the annual convention is a time when we celebrate our achievements and connect with the heritage of our native land with fellow Odias. Over the years it has been observed that Millennials tend to shy away from our culture and roots, and often feel isolated in the convention. With that perspective, we have chosen the theme of this convention — “Bridging Generations: Celebrating ODIA Unity.” This year's convention will address relevant topics through seminars, cultural events, and youth programs. There is an urgency to think about importance of youth's roles and contributions as torchbearers of Odia culture and heritage. OSA is 49 years old, and we reached this milestone not by accident, but by virtue of our dedication and commitment. We want to pass it on to our new generations to upkeep our culture and heritage in our adopted land. We know of our differences between the generations in many aspects of our lives. But let us initiate the process in this convention to minimize the gaps which will gain momentum in future years to come, and find a way for a smooth transition to youth to unify Odia community in a more acceptable way appropriate to the pluralistic culture in the 21st century. Our convention team has worked diligently to reflect the theme in all aspects of the convention.

An issue I want to highlight is the increasing cost to organize OSA's annual convention. It has come to the point where it is difficult to find a hosting chapter. In view of this, I urge you all to have discussion at length during a general body meeting.

I hope you all will have great time in Michigan during the convention period by enjoying cultural events, enthralling presentation by artists from Odisha, sumptuous food catered to individual tastes, thoughtful seminars, exciting youth programs, charismatic speakers, a relaxed time in mehfil, along with your stay in a cozy hotel room.

My special thanks to our volunteers, chairs/co-chairs, MI-OSA executives, and advisors for their untiring effort and perseverance in hosting this convention. I also express my sincere gratitude to OSA national executives for their continued support and directions. My heartfelt thanks to all individual and corporate donors. Lastly, I cannot complete my remarks without extending my thanks to our participants, honorable guests, speakers and artists from Odisha, as well as North Americas.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Shishir Senapati
Convener

49th Annual OSA Convention, 2018
Dearborn, Michigan





A Message from National OSA Vice President Susil Panda

My Dear Friends,

Namaskar!

On behalf of Odisha Society of the Americas, I welcome all of you to the 49th annual OSA Convention.

It gives me immense pleasure to see all of us with Odia background and heritage coming together in this platform for 49 years. That is a unique achievement we all should be proud of. Once in a year, hundreds of Odias come together under one roof, relive the memories we have left behind, and experience the uniqueness of our traditions. I commend the Michigan chapter for organizing the convention this year, the founding fathers who started this 49 years ago, and those who carried it forward for so many years. Looking forward, this tradition should continue for lifetimes.



It has been a great experience for me after taking the responsibility of OSA Vice President. I have met many new people, made new friends, and learned of so many accomplished individuals in our community in North America. Local chapters are active in a variety of ways, notably Utkal Diwas, Saraswati Puja, Holi, Deepabali, Kumara Purnima and summer get-togethers at the beach and resorts. Many chapters are showcasing Odia art, food and craft in larger Indian and American gatherings. Every year, there is at least one or two more Jagannath Pratista being conducted in North American temples, Rath Yatra is performed in most major cities. Odia friends and family are engaged in all form of social media in most cities and regionally.

While it is very encouraging to see so much of activities in local chapters bringing Odias together, there is always room for more. Especially in the current political climate with uncertainties, let's put additional effort to bring us closer, keep us together as one family and make us stronger. Let's bring new ideas using the platforms available locally and nationally.

Thank you all so much for coming together in this august event and making it a success. I hope the memories you take back will be shared in your local groups and you will invite more people to join the platform as members and attendees in Golden Jubilee convention in 2019 hosted by NY/NJ chapter.

Susil Panda
Charlotte, NC
Vice President OSA
Co-convener De-facto, OSA Convention 2018, 2019



Message from the National OSA Secretary Amar Senapati

I take this golden opportunity to welcome you and your family to the 49th annual OSA Convention in Dearborn, Michigan. Michigan volunteers, under the leadership of Dr. Sishir Senapati, are working relentlessly around the clock to make it a grand and enjoyable convention for all of us. I am sure we all will have a good time during these three days.



The BOG Members have been taking their responsibility very seriously. Every month we conduct BOG meeting on every second Sunday at 7 PM EST, and there has been record participation during last meetings. The minutes of the meeting are duly recorded and are available on the OSA website through the link: <http://www.odishasociety.org/bog-meeting-minutes/>

Since August 2017, a few major resolutions were proposed and approved by BOG members.

In October 2017, aligning with the vision of OSA it was proposed and approved that a fund of \$1,500 (\$250 for each chapter) would be allocated for promoting Odia culture outside of the Odia community.

To increase the number of OSA members, the life member fee was reduced to \$200 and the student membership was made free. These will remain effective until the GBM in July 2018.

During April 2018, it was proposed and approved that the OSA Convention registration fee will be waived for our senior citizens attending the convention.

It has also been determined that the 50th OSA Golden Jubilee Convention will be organized by New York & New Jersey Chapter in the year 2019.

As of April 2018, the total OSA membership stands at 1,230 families. Since January 2018, more than 50 new members have registered as part of the membership drive. [NYNJPA - 17, South East - 12, New England - 11, Southern - 3, Chicago, Michigan, Ohio - 2, North West - 1]. This does not include the memberships registered through 2018 OSA Convention.

I would also like to take this opportunity to share a few developments at various local chapters during this time

Mr. Sarada Panda took over as the Chapter President for the vacant South West Chapter in August 2017.

In March 2018, Mr. Debasish Panda was kind enough to extend his tenure by another two years as OSA Chicago President.

Our sincere thanks and gratitude to both for their time, dedication, and effort toward OSA. I request and encourage all other chapters due for elections (normally every 2-4 years) to elect new representatives using a democratic process.

I would like to encourage every OSA member to participate in all local events throughout the year in big way to spread the Odia culture in North America. My sincere request is to make every effort to spread our message among all other Odia friends to motivate them to join OSA as life members to make this organization stronger. With the membership growth, we can represent ourselves as a strong and integral Indian community in this adopted land.

At the end, I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to all OSA members who are spending countless hours volunteering for our community to make it strong and vibrant. Please do not hesitate to communicate with me for any feedback or suggestions via email (asenapati@gmail.com, secretary@odishasociety.org).

Jai Jagannath!!!

Amar Senapati
National OSA Secretary

List of OSA New Members by State.

Name	State	Membership Type
Pradipta Das	AL	Family - Life
Bikash Behera	CT	Family - Life
Tushar Acharya	CT	Family - Life
BIJAY DAS	CT	Family - Life
Pradeep K Sahu	CT	Family - Life
Siba Rath	CT	Family - Life
Bilas Das	CT	Family - Life
Silpi Das	CT	Family - Life
Deepak Mishra	CT	Family - Life
Prasanna Sahoo	CT	Family - Life
Bikhipta Panda	GA	Family - 5 Year
Biswa Ranjan Dash	GA	Family - 5 Year
Subhendu Sadangi	IL	Family - Annual
Subhendu Sadangi	IL	Family - Life
Anil Kar	IL	Family - Life
Sangya Padhi	MA	Family - Life
Satish Sahoo	MA	Family - Life
Manoj Acharya	MI	Family - Annual



Sanjib Kumar Das	MI	Student - Annual
Biswajit Ray	NC	Family - Life
Tarini Dash	NC	Family - Life
Amitabh Misro	NC	Family - Life
Shankar Baral	NC	Family - Life
Rajat Patro	NC	Family - Life
PRADEEP PANDA	NC	Family - Life
Prakash Mohanty	NC	Family - Life
Pabitra Mohanty	NC	Family - Life
Prabhu Mahapatro	NC	Family - 5 Year
Praveen Patro	NC	Family - Life
Mahesh Panda	NC	Family - 5 Year
Ajeet Padhi	NC	Family - Life
Pramit Panda	NJ	Family - Life
sammit panda	NJ	Family - Life
sukant paikray	NJ	Family - 5 Year
Sidharth Mohanty	NJ	Family - Life
uma shankar padhy	NJ	Family - Life
Anurag Mohanty	NJ	Family - Annual
Deepak Sahu	NJ	Family - Life
Suresh Penumetch	NJ	Family - Life
Krushna Samanta	NJ	Family - Life
Naresh Dalua	NJ	Family - Life
Arabindakshaya Mishra	NJ	Family - Life
Kuntala Jena	NJ	Family - Life
Anish Mahakud	NJ	Family - Life
Anik Mahakud	NJ	Family - Life
Pradyumna Mallik	NJ	Family - Life
Rekha Tripathy	OH	Family - Life
Ashok Kumar Dandpat	OH	Family - Life
Bishnu Maharana	PA	Family - Life
Tanmayee Mohapatra	PA	Family - Life
Bagmita Mohapatra	WA	Family - Life





Message from OSA Treasurer Sachi Pati

Dear OSA members and my fellow Odia friends,

On behalf of the OSA Michigan Convention Team and OSA National team, let me welcome you to the OSA 49th convention during July 2018. OSA Conventions over the time have become very challenging logistically. Working as a local team to put together this event is very satisfying. OSA Michigan chapter and convention members have spent numerous hours and have worked really hard to present you a marvelous event. Please enjoy everything the convention has to offer and take a moment to thank the convention team for their volunteering efforts and hospitality.



2017-2018 Budget

Income

Budgeted (July
2017-June 2018)

OSA Fees	\$500
OSA Membership	\$1,750
NET (2017-Current Year) Convention	\$500
Income - OSA Share	
Investment Income	\$4,000
OSA Convention Chief Guest Travel and	\$2,000
Visa Sponsorship	
LTA Award Sponsorship	\$3,500
Other Sponsors (SB Award for Academic	\$4,200
Excellence, Performing Arts, SSKYEC	
- Samik Singh Kalinga Youth	
Entrepreneurship Competition)	
Total Income	\$16,450



Expense

RDF (Drama Festival) Grants	\$2,000
Utkal Divasa and India Festival Support	\$1,500
Chapter level awards	\$1,000
Youth mentorship program	\$500
OSA Chief Guest for Convention - 2017	\$2,000
Awards & Plaques	\$1,000
LTA Award and Award Travel Cost	\$3,500
Administrative Expense	\$1,000
OSA Level awards - OSA Convention	\$2,000
URMI Print Expenses - OSA Share - 2017	\$500
Convention	
Misc Expense	\$500
Total Expense	\$15,500.00
Net (Budgeted)	\$950.00

Financial Statements - As of April 30, 2018

THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS

Statement of Activity - Fiscal Year Start - Ending in April
July 2017 - April 2018

	<u>Total</u>
Revenue	
2018 Champu Donation	1,000.00
2018 Detroit Convention Collection by OSA National	0.00
2018 Subrina Biswal Academic Excellence.	1,000.00
Amazon Smiles Non-Profit Revenue	18.12
General Donations	725.00
Membership Dues	9,796.00
NJ Chapter Matching	170.00
OSA NW Microsoft Volunteer Matching	297.30



OSA Public Library Initiative	2,000.00
Total Revenue	\$15,006.42
Gross Profit	\$15,006.42
Expenditures	
Bank Charges & Fees	64.45
Mailbox Rental	84.00
Meals & Entertainment	45.65
Memorial Services	140.13
OSA Grants - RDF Grant	1,000.00
OSA Grants - Utkal Divas and India Festival	750.00
PayPal Fees	242.54
Quickbooks accounting monthly fee	93.00
Returned Bill Payments	0.00
Shipping and Postage	18.23
Taxes & Licenses	20.47
Uncategorized Expense	39.12
Website Expenses	152.05
Total Expenditures	\$2,649.64
Net Operating Revenue	\$12,356.78
Other Revenue	
TD Ameritrade Investment Gain	4,550.39
Total Other Revenue	\$4,550.39
Net Other Revenue	\$4,550.39
Net Revenue	\$16,907.17

THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS
Statement of Activity - Transition Date Start - Ending in April 2018
September 2017 - April 2018

	Total
Revenue	
2018 Champu Donation	1,000.00
2018 Detroit Convention Collection by OSA National	0.00
2018 Subrina Biswal Academic Excellence.	1,000.00
Amazon Smiles Non-Profit Revenue	18.12
General Donations	725.00
Membership Dues	9,796.00
NJ Chapter Matching	170.00
OSA NW Microsoft Volunteer Matching	297.30



OSA Public Library Initiative	2,000.00
Total Revenue	\$15,006.42
Gross Profit	\$15,006.42
Expenditures	
Bank Charges & Fees	64.45
Mailbox Rental	84.00
Meals & Entertainment	45.65
Memorial Services	140.13
OSA Grants - RDF Grant	1,000.00
OSA Grants - Utkal Divas and India Festival	750.00
PayPal Fees	242.54
Quickbooks accounting monthly fee	93.00
Returned Bill Payments	0.00
Shipping and Postage	18.23
Taxes & Licenses	20.47
Uncategorized Expense	39.12
Website Expenses	152.05
Total Expenditures	\$2,649.64
Net Operating Revenue	\$12,356.78
Other Revenue	
TD Ameritrade Investment Gain	4,550.39
Total Other Revenue	\$4,550.39
Net Other Revenue	\$4,550.39
Net Revenue	\$16,907.17

THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS

Statement of Financial Position

As of September 1, 2017 (Exec Committee Transition Begin)

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets Bank	
Accounts	
Checking Main	99,358.13
Convention Account	0.00
Emergency Relief Account	17,598.12
TD Ameritrade	187,915.84
Total Bank Accounts	\$304,872.09
Total Current Assets	\$304,872.09
TOTAL ASSETS	\$304,872.09



**LIABILITIES AND
EQUITY**

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Other Current Liabilities

OSA Various Short Term Payables	0.00
Mailing 2017 Souvenir in Canada	53.04
OSA Pacific NW Chapter - 2017 Utkal Divas Payment	250.00
OSA Pacific NW Chapter 2017 April MSFT Contribution	1,200.00
Sruti Mohapatra (2016 LTA)	2,119.37
Subrina Biswal Award - 2017	700.00
Video preparation for MFA by Praful Library	392.46

Total OSA Various Short Term Payables	\$4,714.87
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Total Other Current Liabilities	\$4,714.87
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Total Current Liabilities	\$4,714.87
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Total Liabilities	\$4,714.87
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Equity

Opening Balance Equity	300,157.22
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Retained Earnings	0.00
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Net Revenue	0.00
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Total Equity	\$300,157.22
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TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$304,872.09
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THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS

Statement of Financial Position

As of April 30, 2018

	<u>Total</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Checking Main	89,161.76
Convention Account	0.00
Emergency Relief Account	17,559.00
PayPal Bank	633.40
Syndicate Bank - India - Rupee Acct - USD Equiv	245.43
TD Ameritrade	192,466.23
Total Bank Accounts	\$300,065.82
Other Current Assets	
Loans to Michigan Chapter for Convention	20,000.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$20,000.00



Total Current Assets	\$320,065.82
TOTAL ASSETS	\$320,065.82
LIABILITIES AND	
EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
OSA Various Short Term Payables	0.00
Mailing 2017 Souvenir in Canada	0.00
OSA Pacific NW Chapter - 2017 Utkal Divas Payment	0.00
OSA Pacific NW Chapter 2017 April MSFT Contribution	0.00
Sruti Mohapatra (2016 LTA)	0.00
Subrina Biswal Award - 2017	700.00
Video preparation for MFA by Praful Library	0.00
Total OSA Various Short Term Payables	\$700.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$700.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$700.00
Total Liabilities	\$700.00
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	302,458.65
Retained Earnings	0.00
Net Revenue	16,907.17
Total Equity	\$319,365.82
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$320,065.82

OSA Investments and Future Plans

In the month of Nov. 2014, OSA invested 150K USD in a very conservative investment which is a mix of bonds, cash and mutual funds. As of March 2018, the same portfolio has increased in value to approximately 192K. Based on this success and with BOG approval, we have formed an Investment and Finance Committee in 2018. The investment committee's goal is to review the cash balances and provide a recommendation to BOG on our future investment strategies. The committee is in very early stages and will work with OSA Treasurer and EC to meet, review and recommend future investment strategies and changes from current path (if any). OSA BOG will make the final



determination regarding acceptance and implementation of the Investment and Finance Committee recommendations.

OSA Financial Operations – Summary and Broad Guidelines

All OSA entities (local chapters and national body) use OSA national TAX ID. OSA files taxes annually as one group which includes all local chapter and the national body.

We encourage all local chapters to collect donations as they see fit and spend on core OSA Mission statement, as provided in our constitution and by-laws.

In the spirit of staying fully compliant with all local and national 501(c)(3) laws, OSA would like to reiterate finance related guidelines to all of OSA officials and entities.

1. OSA Local chapters can and should generally use OSA EIN to open bank accounts. Bank accounts may be operated only by OSA members.
2. We must follow all IRS 501(c)(3) policies and not issue tax exempt letters for donors for the portions of the donation for which a service or product was exchanged. Donations satisfying OSA mission statements are generally eligible for a tax-exempt letter from OSA.
3. Year-end tax filing is an aggregation of all OSA local chapters and national statements. Local chapter presidents and executives formally sign the year end statements and submit to OSA National for IRS filing.





MESSAGE

I am glad to know that The Odisha Society of The Americas is celebrating the 49th Annual OSA Convention at Ford performing Art Centre, Dearborn Michigan during July 5-7, 2018 and also bringing out a souvenir in commemoration.

The Odia community in the Americas is a vibrant community with significant achievements in diverse fields. Both India and America are great democracies, and both exhibit amazing cultural diversity. The Odia Diaspora has been significantly contributing to the enrichment of both the cultures and heritage. The OSA Convention is certainly a significant platform for the promotion of our unique cultural heritage.

I extend my warm greetings to the members of OSA and wish the convention a grand success.

(NAVEEN PATNAIK)



United States Senate

731 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2204

July 6, 2018

The Odisha Society of the Americas
23061 Julieann Ct
Farmington Hills, MI 48335

Dear Society Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your 49th Annual Convention. Welcome to Michigan!

Whether in music, sports, science, medicine or the arts, this event is a great opportunity to join together to celebrate the many contributions and achievements of the Odia community. I applaud your leadership in uniting North America's Odia communities through cultural events, education and community service. Thank you for sharing your culture and building bridges of understanding.

I know this event involved incredible hard work and planning and I applaud the efforts of those that made it possible.

Thank you for your support of the Odisha Society and its important mission. I hope you have a memorable event.

Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Message from MI-OSA Chapter President Vivek Das

Brothers and Sisters from North America, India, and other parts of the world: welcome to the 49th OSA Convention in Dearborn, Michigan.

We share a common heritage and culture and are here to cherish and celebrate it. Our theme this year is “Bridging Generations: Celebrating ODIA Unity.” The history of Odisha, known by its earlier names of Kalinga and Utkal, dates back to remote antiquity. The State was known far and wide, for its heroic deeds, maritime trade, and founders of overseas expansion of its people. The sufferings of war in the battle of Kalinga in 261 BC and the heroic fight and sacrifice of its people moved the great emperor Ashoka, and led him to abandon his expansion and seek asylum in Buddhism.



In modern times, The Paika Bidroha, was an armed rebellion against the British East India Company's rule in Odisha in 1817. It is now acknowledged as the first war of independence against the British rule. The temple of Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe, is in Puri, Odisha. In Odisha, Lord Jagannath is the epicenter of the religion and belief of Odia people. The following of Lord Jagannath is based upon love and affection, service, sacrifice and equity. The Odissi dance is one of the six acknowledged classical dance forms of India. It has an origin in the temples of Odisha. The rhythm, Bhangis and Mudras used in Odissi dance have a distinct style of their own. The dance is performed mainly with the theme of the infinite love between Lord Krishna and Radha. The fluid movements and grace distinguishes Odissi from other dance forms. In Odissi, the torso movement is considered very important which is soft, lyrical and graceful.

As we look around, we celebrate the achievements of Odia people in North America. This generation has contributed immensely to the fields of science and technology, information technology, commerce, education, research and development, engineering and medicine in North America. The hard work, dedication, and efforts have paid off and the Indian community, of which we are a part, is one of the most prosperous communities. At the same time, we are very much involved in improving the lives around us, both in our local communities, as well as in Odisha. The Odia community in North America has been involved in disaster relief, adopt-a-village, building an electronic library, among other activities in Odisha.

In Michigan, our community of adult and youth members have worked together in community service events packing and distributing food for the poor and needy people in local food banks and soup kitchens. Through such efforts, more than 5,912 pounds of food was managed for distribution to needy people recently. Thank you for caring. Similar philanthropic and community service activities have been organized in New York, New Jersey, and other states by local Odia communities. Our youth has taken a leadership role in such activities. The second generation of Odia youth has brought much pride to the community by excelling in academics, making excellent career choices, starting enterprises, engaging in community services, and leading meaningful lives. We have witnessed the Odia youth here in Michigan taking leadership in our temple and Ratha Yatra activities, music and dances, participate in our Kumar Purnima and puja activities, achieve academic excellence, while eventually going on to become productive and valuable members of the community. At the same time, they have maintained close links with their parents and community elders and given them due respect and attention. Watching the youth taking part in our community activities, excel at school and college, and make excellent career and life choices, makes my heart



swell with happiness and pride. Their honesty and maturity and adaptation to the greater American culture while acknowledge and respecting their own identity is commendable.

Our community is strong and has a glorious future ahead. It is appropriate that we have chosen the theme as “Bridging Generations: Celebrating ODIA Unity.” When you know your roots, you feel a sense of identity. The elderly and the youth work together bridging the generations. It gives a sense of meaning and helps you feel grounded and gives you strength. Culture is an invisible bond that ties a community together. We have come together to celebrate this glorious tradition and culture.

I would like to thank the past President of MI-OSA, Mr. Pradipta Mishra, and his team for their initiative in getting the Convention to Michigan.

Also, I would like to thank all the past presidents of MI-OSA and their teams for their selfless service to the community in Michigan.

I am grateful to the convener Dr. Shishir Senapati, our entire Convention Committee, Advisors and Volunteers, my executive team members and all of our volunteers for the excellent team work and for tirelessly striving to hold the OSA convention in Michigan.

Also I would like to thank the current OSA executives for all their help and support. Thank you for coming and experiencing the warmth of the Odia community in Michigan. Come dance, sing, dine, and celebrate our culture and heritage with us. May Lord Jagannath bless us all.

Warm regards,
Vivek Das
MI-OSA Chapter President



ODISHA SOCIETY OF THE AMERICA MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Bringing together Michiganians interested in Odisha and its culture



Listed are the MI-OSA office bearers:

President (P), Vice President (VP), Secretary (S), Treasurer (T), Executive Member (EM)

1988 - 2001

Ladukesh Pattanaik (P), Hemant Senapati (S/T)
Natabara Khunti (P), Bailochan Behera (S/T)
Raj Mishra (P), Ranganath Mishra (S/T)
Kalyani Mishra (P)
Sirish Mishra (P)
Hemant Senapati (P), Surendra Mahanti (VP), Sudipta Mishra (S/T)
Nitin Doshi (P)
Anjali Misra (P), Prabir Mishra (S/T)

2001 - 2003

Pushpa Nayak (P)
Jogesh Panda (S/T)

2003 - 2005

Chandana Mahapatra (P)
Arun Tripathy (S/T)

2005 - 2007

Snigdha Senapati (P)
Akshaya Kumar Ray (S)
Santosh Kar (T)

2007 - 2009

Jogesh C Panda (P)
Reshma S Das (S)
Maitreyi Satapathy (T)

2009 - 2011

Pushpita Bhuyan (P)
Lyudmila Mishra (S)
Swayamsidha Mohanty (T)

2011 - 2013

Pitabasa Panda (P)
Vivek Das (S)
Pramod K Satapathy (T)

2013 - 2015

Punyatoya Sarangi (P)
Swati Mishra (S)
Sunil Pattanaik (T)

2015 - 2017

Pradipta Mishra (P)
Nutan Satapathy (S)
Sasadhar Sahoo (T)

2017 - 2019

Vivek Das (P)
Tarakeshwar Pradhan (VP)
Sonali Pattanaik (S)
Sangram Basantia (T)
Girija Rout (EM)

Editorial: An Experience to Cherish

Swapnalata Mishra (Rath)

Namaskar! Congratulations to all OSA members for the 49th Annual OSA Convention in Michigan. It is a great pleasure and honor to be on the team and serve OSA one more time after 11 years by leading the Souvenir and Directory team to release the 2018 annual Souvenir, Urmi. My sincere thanks to the Convener, Dr. Shishir Senapati, and his advisors for nominating me. I tried my best at every step. I was blessed to work with a dedicated team. So I would like to introduce and thank all my enthusiastic core committee teammates:



- Mr. Sasadhar Sahoo (co-Chair and in charge of the Directory)
- Mr. Santosh Kar (in charge of coordinating the Meghna Memorial Award Competition and proofreading Odia section)
- and Mr. Biswajit Puhan (in charge of the printing process)

They accepted responsibility and stood by me in the decision making process.

Our first responsibility as a team was to decide the convention theme, based on suggestions offered by our MI-OSA chapter members.

We focused on the elemental level of our core identity: the common thread which binds us together first. If we can keep the core intact, we will be successful in keeping the outer shell intact. We perceived that there is a need for a message now that can bring Odias of all ages together by transmitting each of our pride in our identity as Odia.

I would like to share our introspection and group discussion as it was exactly reflected in Mr. Biswajit Puhan's words:

“In the rapid changing digital age, which is morphing, mutating and springing up instant cultures, identities and new ways of life are much like looking through a kaleidoscope. As we all ride in the ocean of life, we all seem to drift a little adrift over time, while building our own small comfort islands, of our own generations, even amongst our own bigger communities.

Let this convention be dedicated for us all to make an effort to bridge these generation-islands, bridge them via young reaching out to elder and elder reaching out to youngsters. Let our common identity: our language, our festivals, our food, our music, and our common proud lineage be the glue once more. This is the first part of the theme.

Let the effort we do now, aspiring to make this a convention of purpose, one which will culminate all our efforts towards bringing Odias from all generations together, lead to a 'Celebration of UNITY,' as people of a proud land... For being ODIA. The celebration will be the OSA convention 2018. This is the second part of the theme.”



Thus, the convention planning took its shape with the theme line “Bridging Generations: Celebrating ODIA Unity,” (Bada heu aba sana: eka ama Odia prana).

My search for the editor of the English section started from there. While searching, I extended my thought from our generation to our second generation. I approached Anya, my elder daughter, who had experience in editing. To tell the truth, I was not expecting that she would easily accept the huge responsibility in the busy schedule of her day-to-day life. But she accepted my offer happily with pride as a second generation Michigan OSA member. It was interesting to understand her professional side while editing articles. She accepted my decision to go easy with each and every article while editing and formatting as the OSA Souvenir is meant to encourage the creative spirit of OSA members, especially young children. She took the huge burden on her shoulder, without knowing what she committed for, but slowly and steadily tried her best to accomplish the goal. This whole experience reminds me of when I sent one of her stories for the 2002 OSA Souvenir when she was in second grade. She made sure that I sent her story without making any changes to it. When someone from the family appreciated her write-up, she was so excited and I can never forget the smile on her face. So I guess time itself blessed her to make an effort to take the responsibility and to give back to the community she grew up in. It was not simple for her with a full-time job, but she managed to reach the goal with dedication, care, and compassion. What else a mother can cherish!

Our next challenge was fixing a low scale budget for the publication of Souvenir and Urmi, that basically decided our planning to move cautiously. We feel lucky that we could manage the best we could ...so far!

Thanks a lot from the bottom of my heart to:

- Mr. Prasanta Bhunya (OSA Editor, Utkarsha),
- Mr. Girija Rout (MI-OSA Executive member)
- Mrs. Mamata Sahoo
- Mr. Nirmal Rath

Their help to Souvenir and Directory team in the right time meant a lot! The annual Souvenir has been elegantly providing an opportunity to members with a passion for writing to share their immigrant experiences and creative thoughts with fellow members. It is important to mention that the OSA Souvenir has been the only medium in North America to publish Odia articles by Odia writers based in USA and Canada. Odia language was the base of Odisha when it was formed as a state in British India in 1936 and Odia feeling is the base of OSA as an organization. The 2,000 year old history of Odia literature was the base of Odia language to be designated as the sixth classical language of India. Though it is the official language of Odisha, it is unfortunately losing its popularity as a spoken and written language. As immigrants from Odisha, it is our responsibility to preserve our mother tongue which is the most important part of our heritage



So, my heartfelt thanks to the handful of writers and editors who contributed regularly toward the Odia section of the Souvenir for more than 40 years. Readers who can't read Odia are definitely missing some exciting writers and their write-ups. I just hope that one day, kids will be able to read the Odia section of the Souvenir, which will inspire them to take a dip in the vast ocean of Odia literature. Also, I am grateful to writers in English section who have tried to discuss our culture from different aspects. I am sure that would help our children to get closer to the land of their ancestors. Urmi, literally means waves in the sea or ocean in Odia. An ocean or a sea can never be imagined without its waves created in the water itself. Literally, waves can be expressed as the feelings of sea/ocean. Urmi, the OSA Souvenir, reflects activities of OSA as an organization as well as the thought of OSA members in various form of writings such as poetry, short stories, essays on a variety of topics, and obituaries. We solicited articles/photographs/art only from OSA members. At the same time, we encouraged OSA members to share well written write-ups, photographs and other submissions from their family/friends/favorite writers from India and Odisha. We learned the lesson that everybody does not follow guidelines. It was indeed hard, but we managed.

Our sincere thanks to all writers and photographers, as well as parents of young writers, who supported us in a timely manner. Current school-going young writers are growing up in an Odia society, which is very different culturally, socially as well as technically than their seniors (second generation), who grew up as school kids here before the millennium. Readers will be thrilled to feel the understanding of our young writers' observation of their society, their country, and their feelings about Odisha. Their storytelling style from such a young age is really promising. Since we did not get photographs from many writers, we decided to keep only Meghna Memorial Award winners headshots with the articles to maintain the uniformity in formatting. We hope everybody will understand.

All writers were requested to share about themselves and their thought about OSA from their point of view. Many writers sent their views which has been posted below their articles, though some were shortened for the sake of space. It was interesting to see the common feelings of all writers of different generations. They all are proud of their identity as Odia. They all honored OSA as being the cause of their cultural growth as Odias while staying and raising family far away from Odisha. Most of them described OSA as the home away from Odisha. It actually, helped me, as an individual, to feel connected to each of them through their expressions through writing, my passion. 49-year-old OSA grew up day by day because of the nurturing, selfless chapter-level volunteers moving forward to reach the milestone of 50th convention in 2019. Passion builds up the spirit, the spirit spreads its infectious energy, and attracts like-minded individuals to get together and plan to pass the passion to the future generations. "Pen is mightier than sword!" Please forgive us for all unintentional mistakes. Let us keep supporting our OSA, the BRIDGE to Odisha, our motherland.

May Lord Jagannatha bless us all! Thank you!



Message from the Souvenir and Directory Committee Co-Chair Sasadhar Sahoo

Namaskar! I welcome you all to the beautiful city of Dearborn for the 49th OSA Convention of the Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA). My heartfelt congratulations to each of the OSA members of each chapter and the 2018 Convention Organizing Committee for all their challenging work, commitment, and dedication in organizing what is sure to be a weekend filled with this momentous event packed with exciting and valuable programs, celebrations, and fellow feeling. We are excited to meet you all and very much appreciate your support and participation. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Odia diaspora to integrate in our rich culture and traditions.



The theme of 49th OSA convention in English is **Bridging Generations: Celebrating ODIA Unity** and in Odia is **Bada Heu Aba Sana: Eka Ama Odia Prana**. It seems like we are on the same wavelength because this is the guiding principle of OSA, and we are not only strengthening our culture and identity in the Americas, but we have also been connecting with different generations of all Odia people back home. It is a clear indication how well connected our children, parents & grandparents feel with people back home despite being raised 12,000 miles away.

One aspect of our vision has been to transcend various barriers and build bridges across generations, channeling our services for passing our beautiful Odia culture and heritage to our next generation. One way to achieve this goal has been to increase awareness of OSA among the second generation Odias and enthruse them to become members of our organization. We have been quite successful in reaching out to our youth and several of them have come forward to become members of our society. We still have a long way to go, and my sincere appeal to you all is that you ask your successful family members, relatives & friends to join OSA and make it an even more vibrant organization. To succeed in this society, we should build bridges and coalitions with like-minded people and make our own culture and contributions visible to the larger society. This event has also helped the local Odia diaspora to unite and show the strength. It is on to us to ensure the next generations are exposed to our culture and I hope this convention is their gateway to our culture.

This year we made a conscious attempt to make the convention Souvenir and Directory finances significantly more sustainable and transparent by careful planning, cost control and generous, indefatigable volunteerism. Our volunteers took a broad-based, participative approach that constitute a principal element of community participation, sustenance and common good. Hope you find the 3-day celebration most rewarding. Most importantly, our Souvenirs' writers and volunteers are the foundation of this convention and truly the backbone of our community. They are the unsung heroes who are willing to share their time, talents, and energy to help make this event a success. It's important to let each of them know just how much they are appreciated. Once again, meet and greet your friends old and new at the convention, take in the sights, sounds, and smells around you and, above all, enjoy yourselves to your full extent.

Best wishes,

Sasadhar Sahoo (Co-Chair)



Literature

English Reflections Across Generations



Drawing: “Bridging Generations” by Rayna Mohapatra



“Tranquility” by Rayna Mohapatra

Rayna Mohapatra is a 13 year old middle school student from Chicago, IL. She is a very fun loving and artsy girl. She loves art and music. She started to paint at the age of 3, and started on acrylic on canvas at the age of 9 under the guidance of her mother. One of her paintings has been housed in the Naperville Crime Prevention Calendar. She is the daughter of Prasanjit Mohapatra and Amrita Kar.



Editorial: Building Bridges and Legacies

Anya Rath

I think it's fair to say that the first place my words were ever published was in an OSA Souvenir. I still remember the rush of adrenaline I would get when I would see the crisp new book, overflowing with stories and poems. I would rip the Souvenir open and rifle through until I found the story or poem I had submitted that year. There is something to be said for the joy you get seeing your name printed. The pride in seeing "By Anya Rath," first introduced by this very journal, never diminished as I went on to a professional writing career.



When my mother, Swapnalata Mishra, asked me to take on this role, I said yes mainly because I cannot say no to her (I'm sure she's rolling her eyes). But as I came to understand this year's theme, I quickly understood how perfect this would be. Aside from being a mother-daughter collaboration, this was also partnership between generational views on the importance of community projects. A new approach to completing a time-honored publication that always had its presence on any Odia coffee table.

I grew up in a Michigan town that had little to no South Asians. My desi community, as a child, was the Odia community. Then when I went to college, the sea of Gujaratis, Punjabis, Telugus etc. did not have the slightest idea where my family was from: Odisha. They wanted to know if I was North Indian or South Indian—I had never even thought of my identity this way.

"Neither," I would reply. "I'm East Indian, I've got a little bit of everything." Eventually, it would turn into jokes that I'm from a "made up place," much to my chagrin. I resented that young people from other Indian states had the privilege of community on campus, shared language, and a claim on popular music and pop culture. I too wanted to be able to turn to my close friends and give sass in Odia. I wanted to be able to mention my motherland without having to pull up a map of India on my phone.

There comes a time, however, where you need to stop blaming others for their lack of knowledge, and do what you can to educate people. Be the reason why one more person knows where Odisha is. I think it's on our generation to aggressively revel in our identity. As a child, I shied away from my mom's Odia lessons. However, she would be surprised to know that I now hope to learn how to read and write Odia as an adult in order to fully experience the beauty of the language and its intricacies. In the rise of social media, Odia artists and comedians are finding prominence in pop culture—I hope to see this type of presence continue to blossom. Representation is so important.

Editing and compiling this journal has been quite the endeavor, but I've also learned so much about Odia history and perspectives. I encourage you to take the time to read about the accomplishments of our ancestors and to truly soak in the pride many of these stories emanate. It



gives me joy to know that there are so many people passionate about spreading information about Odia culture, and I believe it's on my generation to recognize and carry that cultural torch forward.

In a celebration of this year's theme, "Bridging Generations: Celebrating ODIA Unity," I chose to present the English section as a bridge with each submission symbolizing a traveler at a different point in their journey across the "bridge of life." It begins with our youth section, "Pioneers." The name was chosen to recognize that life is about discovering and learning new things about the world for your own personal growth, and the section is organized by age. The "bridge" then continues on to "Wayfarers," a section dedicated to more experienced perspectives in the OSA community. Then finally it ends with "Across the Bridge," where we pay our respects to community members who have passed.

I believe from its very beginning, the OSA Souvenir has been a bridge that has connected generations. It has been a home for everything from the most simple poems to complex analytical articles. While it might not have much rhyme or reason, it very clearly captures the essence of who we are as a community: a diverse group of humans who dearly love our culture and want to share our experiences. I find that the cover of the Literature section, a painting created by **Rayna Mohapatra**, a 13-year-old girl from Chicago, truly emulates that spirit. Here is what Rayna had to say:

"As a second generation girl, my background and heritage really defines who I am as a person. This painting shows that bridge between the Indian part of me and the American part of me. The background is meant to look rusty and old. The jhoti at the top and the Jagannath in the hand, is painted to symbolize my Odia heritage. The Statue of Liberty is representing the American side of me. The true bridge is embodied in the hands that I painted, one being old and the other being young, representing my generation and the generations of my elders. They are holding out the two idols and are meant to be sharing their background and knowledge of where they come from. Even though I was born halfway across the world from my parents, I still have learned to love and embrace that part because that side is so much stronger."

I want to give a special thank you to my mother for helping me understand the magnitude of this project, Mrs. Ananya Patnaik and my sister Nayna Rath for proofreading, and Mr. Tapas Sahoo for compiling and editing a fantastic ode to Odia culture. I also thank each of the writers who took the time to share their stories and their truth. Finally, I am grateful to have grown up in the MI-OSA community, where I was able to create lifelong friendships. Even though my extended family was states away, the local Odia community stood in as de facto aunts, uncles, and cousins. I hope that this journal gives another small child the joy it gave me and the confidence to continue sharing their unique perspective and stories. We need to keep on spreading the Odia love and culture. This is our time.

Sincerely,
Anyra Rath
English Editor



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**Denotes Meghna Memorial Award Competition winner*

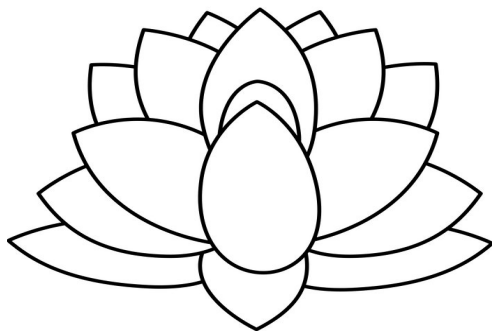


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Pioneers

The power of youth voices and discovery



Drawing by Nayna Rath

“The future belongs to those who believe in the
beauty of their dreams.”

— Eleanor Roosevelt





Photo by Aseema Agasti

Special Section: “Know Our Odisha”

Foreword by Tapas Sahoo

While serving the Dallas Odia community for almost two decades, what always comes first in my mind is our kids—how can we keep our language and culture alive through them and carry it forward to the next generation. Being born and brought up in a distant land and different culture makes it that much more difficult for them. Neither do they have their extended family around, nor the encompassing social infrastructure that we were granted during our childhood.

They need to know about their roots and feel proud about the glorious heritage of the land of their parents and ancestors. The best way to teach them, I thought, was to ask them to research themselves. I was able to encourage and guide ten young researchers, from second grade through 10th, to explore and learn a multitude of facts about Odisha. Each of them chose one area and conducted the research independently in about one month. In this article, I have compiled their findings in an abridged format for quick and easy reference.

Being full of untold stories, this article will surprise you—I’m sure! Let us know our Odisha well, feel proud, and further our glory.



Editor’s note: This section is a unique compilation that explores Odisha’s history, culture, food, festivals, and more. It was compiled and edited by Tapas Sahoo, of Texas. This project and undertaking is a wonderful example of this year’s theme and is the perfect guide to introduce anyone to the basics of being Odia.



ପରିଚୟ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶା

Know Our Odisha

Contributed by 10 young researchers

Compiled and edited by Tapas Sahoo

ଭକ୍ତ, କଳିଙ୍ଗ, ଉଡ୍ର, ଅବା ଓଡ଼ିଶା - ଭିନ୍ନ ସମୟରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ନାମ ଏବଂ ଆକାର ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଛି ଆମ ମାତୃଭୂମି। ଆଜିର ଜଗତବ୍ୟାପୀ ଇଣ୍ଟରନେଟ୍ ଯୁଗରେ ମନରେ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଆସେ - କେଉଁଠି ଆମ ମୂଳ ଭିତ୍ତି, କ'ଣ ଆମ ପରିଚୟ, ଆମର ବୈଶିଷ୍ଟ୍ୟ? ନୂତନ ପିଢ଼ାର ଓଡ଼ିଆପୁଅ କେଉଁ ଉଦାହରଣ ଦେଇ ବଖାଣିବ ତା ପୂର୍ବ ପୁରୁଷଙ୍କ ଗୌରବଗୀତ?

ଆମ ଅତୀତ ଛୁଇଁ ଥିଲା ଉତ୍କଳର ଯେଉଁ ଛୁଇଁ ଶିଖର, ଆମ ଭୌଗଳିକ ପରିଧି ଛୁଇଁ ଥିଲା ବିଷ୍ଣୁଚିର ଯେଉଁ ଦିଗନ୍ତବ୍ୟାପୀ ଚୌହଦି, ଇତିହାସର ଜୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପୃଷ୍ଠାରୁ ସାଉଁଟି ଆଣି ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ତୋଳି ଧରିବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ କରିଛି ସେଇ ଗୌରବର କିଛି କାହାଣୀ।

କେଉଁ ଆବହମାନକାଳରୁ ଭାରତ ଇତିହାସର ଏକ ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଅଙ୍ଗ ରୂପେ କଳିଙ୍ଗ ଶୋଭା ପାଇ ଆସିଛି। ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟପୂର୍ବ ୩୦୦୦ ରୁ ୫୦୦୦ ମସିହା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଘଟିତ ହୋଇଥିବା ମହାଭାରତ ଏବଂ ରାମାୟଣରେ ଉଲ୍ଲେଖ ଅଛି କଳିଙ୍ଗ ରାଜ୍ୟର ବିଶେଷତ୍ବ ବିଷୟରେ।

ବୋଧହୁଏ ଆମ ଗୌରବମୟ ଇତିହାସର ପ୍ରଭାବ ଯୋଗୁଁ ଏକମହାନୁଭାବତା ଏବଂ ବିଶାଳତା ସର୍ବଦା ପ୍ରତିବିମ୍ବିତ ଆମ ଜୀବନ ଦର୍ଶନରେ। ସେଇଥିପାଇଁ ତ ଆମ ଠାକୁର "ବଡ଼ ଠାକୁର", ଆମ ଦେଉଳ "ବଡ଼ ଦେଉଳ", ଅଥବା ଆମ ନଦୀ "ମହାନଦୀ"; ହୀନମନ୍ୟତାର ସ୍ଥାନ ବା କାହିଁ ସେଇ ଉଦାର ଆତ୍ମା ଚେତନାରେ!

ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଓଡ଼ିଆପ୍ରାଣ ଆଜି ଦଣ୍ଡାୟମାନ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନର ପ୍ରହେଳିକାମୟ ବୋଲିକିରେ - ପଛରେ ଅତୀତର ଗୌରବ, ଆଗରେ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତର ଆହ୍ୱାନ। କେତେ ପରିମାଣରେ ସଫଳ ଆମେ ଏଇ ରୂପାନ୍ତରରେ, କଅଣ ଅବା ଆମ ସଫଳତାର ମାନଦଣ୍ଡ?

ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନର ଏଇ ଘଟି ସନ୍ଧି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ଆସନ୍ତୁ ନେବା ଏକ ଦୃଢ଼ ସଂକଳ୍ପ - ଅକ୍ଷୟ ହେଉ, ଅମର ରହୁ ଆମ ଗୌରବ।

As second generation Odias in the USA, the kids always wonder about their identity and roots relating to the land of their parents and ancestors. They often stumble upon questions like: "Which part of India you are from—North or South?," "Where is Odisha," "What's special about Odisha;" and find themselves to be not so comfortable answering these. Even many adults struggle when it comes to making a strong case for showcasing Odisha.

It's an irony that despite our glorious past, and having a vast potential to become great again, we suffer from an unfounded inferiority complex, founded mostly on the lack of knowledge about our own heritage.

The unsurmountable peaks of progress attained by our past and the immensity touched by our geographical boundaries beckon to retell the story—the story of the relentless bravery of Kalinga warriors; the adventure and entrepreneurship of the merchants and traders; the grandeur of our arts, crafts, architecture, and engineering; the intellectual profoundness of religious saints and philosophers; the eloquence of our literary masterpieces; and above all, the vivacity of the maestros in the field of music and performing arts.

This article is an attempt to recollect those stories from the torn pages of our famed history and enlighten the new generation. Ten young researchers, from second grade through 10th, took up the challenge to explore and learn a multitude of facts about Odisha including: history, geography, culture, language, literature, religion, arts & crafts, temples & architecture, famous personalities, tourist attractions, and cinema.

Here they present their findings, in their own words, for all of us to know our Odisha—to feel proud about our roots and further our glory.

୧୫୭୮ରୁ ୧୮୦୩ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟାବ୍ଦ, ଦୀର୍ଘ ୨୩୫ ବର୍ଷ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ରାଜଧାନୀ ରୂପରେ ବହୁଶେଷ ପୂର୍ବ ନିଜର ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତାକୁ ବଜାୟ ରଖୁଥିଲା ଯଦି ଏବଂ ମରାଠା ମାନଙ୍କ ଆକ୍ରମଣରୁ ଖୋର୍ଦ୍ଧାର ବୀର ପାଇକମାନଙ୍କ ପରାକ୍ରମ ଯୋଗୁଁ ଇଂରେଜ ଶାସନ ଅଧୀନକୁ ଆସିବାରେ ଖୋର୍ଦ୍ଧା ହେଉଛି ଭାରତର ଶେଷତମ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନ ଦୁର୍ଗ। ଖୋର୍ଦ୍ଧାର ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ପାଇକ-ବିଦ୍ରୋହରେ ଦେଶପାଲ୍ ହସି ହସି ଜୀବନ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ଜୟୀ ରାଜଗୁରୁ, ବକ୍ସି ଜଗବନ୍ଧୁ, ଏବଂ ତାପଙ୍ଗର ବଳବେହେରା।

ସେହିନି ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତର ଲାଲିମାକୁ ଲାଜେଇଦେଇ ଦୟାନଦୀ କଳିଙ୍ଗ ବୀରଙ୍କ ଚକ୍ରରେ ଲାଲ୍ ହୋଇଥିଲା। ମୃତ୍ୟୁର ତାଣ୍ଡବ ଖେଳ ବଦଳାଇ ଦେଇଥିଲା ଚଣ୍ଡାଶୋକକୁ ଧର୍ମାଶୋକରେ। କିନ୍ତୁ ତାର ପ୍ରାୟ ୧୦୦ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଚେଦୀବଂଶରେ ଜନ୍ମନେଇ କଳିଙ୍ଗ ବୀର ଖାରବେଳ ପ୍ରତିଶୋଧ ନେଇଥିଲେ ମଗଧ ଆକ୍ରମଣ କରି, ଅଶୋକ ଚୋରାଇ ନେଇଥିବା “ଜୀନ” ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିକୁ କଳିଙ୍ଗକୁ ଫେରାଇ ଆଣି।

କେବଳ ୧୪ ବର୍ଷର ରାଜତ୍ୱ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଖାରବେଳ ଭାରତର ଅଧିକାଂଶ ରାଜ୍ୟକୁ ନିଜର ସାମ୍ରାଜ୍ୟଭୂକ୍ତ କରିବା ସହ ଶ୍ରୀକୃର ଯଦନ ଆକ୍ରମଣରୁ ମଗଧକୁ ରକ୍ଷା କରିଥିଲେ। ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ଭାରତ ଇତିହାସର ଶାସକ ମାନେ ଯଦି ତାଙ୍କ ଭଳି ଉଚ୍ଚ ବିଚାର ସଂପନ୍ନ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତେ, ହୁଏତ ଭାରତ କେବେ ବି ଇଂରେଜ ଶାସନ ଅଧୀନକୁ ଆସି ନ ଥାନ୍ତା।

- ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟପୂର୍ବ ୪୦୦ ରୁ ୫୦୦ ମସିହା ଭିତରେ ଧଉଳି ନିକଟସ୍ଥ ଶିଶୁପାଳଗଡ଼ରେ ଗଢ଼ି ଉଠିଥିଲା ଏକ ବାଣିଜ୍ୟିକ ମହାନଗର ଯାହା ଗ୍ରୀସର ଆଥେନ୍ସ ସହରରୁ ଲୋକସଂଖ୍ୟା ଓ ଆକାରରେ ବଡ଼ ଥିଲା।

- କଳିଙ୍ଗର ସର୍ବବୃହତ୍ ସମ୍ରାଟ୍ ଖାରବେଳ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟପୂର୍ବ ୧୯୩ - ୧୭୦ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଭାରତର ବହୁ ପରାକ୍ରମୀ ରାଜାଙ୍କୁ ପରାସ୍ତ କରି ନିଜର ସାମ୍ରାଜ୍ୟକୁ ଗଙ୍ଗାଠାରୁ କାବେରୀନଦୀ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ବିସ୍ତୃତ କରିଥିଲେ।

- ଖାରବେଳଙ୍କ ସମୟରୁ କଳିଙ୍ଗର ବଣିକମାନେ ସାତଦିଆପାରି କରି ଜାଭା, ସୁମାତ୍ରା, ସିଂହଳ, ଓ ମାଳୟ ଦ୍ୱୀପମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ବାଣିଜ୍ୟ କାରବାରରେ ସଫଳତାର ଚରମ ସୀମା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ କରିଥିଲେ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଇତିହାସ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ବାଲିଯାତ୍ରା - ଯାହାର ନାମ ଉତ୍ତୁତ ହୋଇଛି, କଳିଙ୍ଗର ସାଧବ ପୁଅ ମାନଙ୍କର ଇଣ୍ଡୋନେସିଆର ବାଲିଦ୍ୱୀପକୁ ବାଣିଜ୍ୟ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ବୋଇତ ଯାତ୍ରାରୁ। ଏଇ ପାରମ୍ପାରିକ ପ୍ରଥା କଟକ ଓ ପାରାଦ୍ୱୀପର ମହାନଦୀ କୂଳରେ କାର୍ତ୍ତିକ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣମୀଦିନ ଆଜି ବି ପ୍ରଚଳିତ। ଓଡ଼ିଶାବାସୀ କବଳୀପୁଆରେ ବୋଇତ ଗଢ଼ି, ଘିଅ ବୀପ ଜାଳି, ବନ୍ଦାପନା କରି ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଶୁଭ ମନାସି ମା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ଓ ଶ୍ରୀ କାର୍ତ୍ତିକେୟଙ୍କୁ ପୂଜା କରିଥାନ୍ତି।

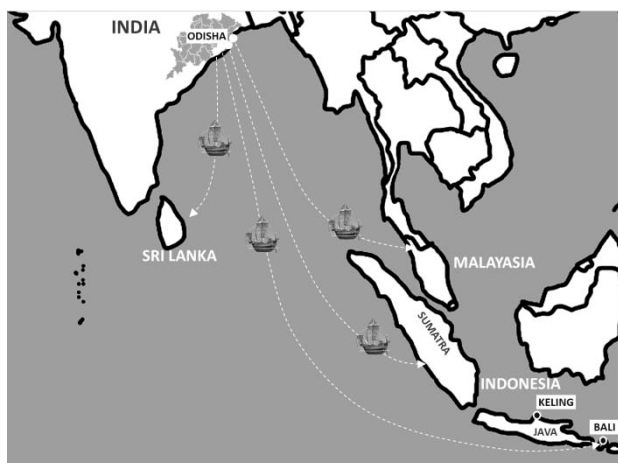
Historical Landmarks

Odisha was known as Kalinga in ancient times. Mahapadma Nanda was the very first ruler of Kalinga. The Nanda dynasty ruled for almost a century until Ashoka came and conquered Kalinga in the Kalinga War. After he saw all this bloodshed, he converted to Buddhism and as did most of Odisha. King Kharavela ruled Kalinga after Ashoka. He was a devoted Jain and introduced Jainism in Kalinga. Hiuen-Tsang, a Chinese Buddhist monk visited Oddiyana soon afterward, which was a Buddhist part of Odisha. Nearly a thousand years later, Narasimhadeva I constructed the Konark temple. In the same dynasty, the Jagannath Puri temple was also built.

Unlike other provinces, Odisha was an independent regional power until the Mughals and Marathas came. And thereafter, the British finally took control of Odisha in 1803.

c. 350 BCE	Mahapadma Nanda was the first ruler of Kalinga	c. 1040 CE	Lingaraj temple built by Yayati Keshari I
c. 261 BCE	Ashoka conquers Kalinga in the Kalinga War	c. 1174 CE	Jagannath Temple built by Ananga Bhima Deva
c. 170 BCE	Kharavela ruled over Kalinga	c. 1245 CE	Konark temple was built by Narasimhadeva I
c. 600 CE	Shashanka invades Kalinga	c. 1278 CE	Queen Chadrika builds the Ananta Vasudeva Temple
c. 639 CE	Hiuen-Tsang visited Oddiyana	1803 CE	Odisha came under British rule
c. 885 CE	Janmejaya I establishes the Somavamsi dynasty	1936 CE	Separate Odisha state was formed
c. 1135 CE	Anantavarman Chodaganga shifts his capital to Kataka		

Ancient Trade and Commerce



Odisha had a lot of international trade going on since ancient times. Chinese celadon and coins, as well as Roman pottery and coins were excavated in Odisha. Kalinga also traded with the Indonesian islands of Java and Siam. It is said that Kalinga established a colony there. Arabic pottery has also been found in Odisha and a giraffe in the Konark temple indicates trade with Africa.

The remains of the ancient city Sisupalgarh has been discovered near Bhubaneswar, the capital of Odisha. Archaeologists claim the city to be at least 2,500 years old. Archaeological evidence from Sisupalgarh suggests that the trade contact between ancient Odisha and Rome dates back to the 1st and 2nd century AD. Evidences show that at least eight oceanic routes linked the eastern coast of India with the Malay countries dated back to 3rd

and 4th Century.

Dynasties in other countries:

Malaysia/Indonesia: Many of you may not be knowing that Kalinga's influence on Indonesia and Malaysia was not limited to trade and commerce only. Around the 7th century AD Kongoda Dynasty from Kalinga migrated to Malaysia and Indonesia and established the influential Sailendra dynasty that epitomized Buddhism in South East Asia; including construction of Borobudur temple, the largest Buddhist structure in the world. Even today, all people of Indian origin are called "Keling" in Indonesia in memory of their association with the mighty Kalinga empire. Also, there is a province in Java named "Keling" to the present day.

Sri Lanka: The Sinhalese of Sri Lanka are the descendants of their first king Vijay, an exiled prince from city of Sinhapura in Kalinga who arrived in 543 BC and named his kingdom as Sinhala in connection with his origin "Singhapura".

Historical Sites:

The ruins of the old Barabati Fort lie on the right bank of the Mahanadi, in the western part of the city. All that remains of the Fort is an arched gateway and the earthen mound of the nine-storied palace. Archaeological surveys reveal that the Fort was roughly rectangular in structure having an area of over 102 acres (0.41 km²), and it was surrounded on all sides by a wall of laterite and sandstones.

Recent excavations have unearthed a great center of Buddhist learning called “Puspagiri University” which ranks along with Nalanda and Takshila universities. Puspagiri flourished between 1st and 11th century AD in three distributed campuses on top of the three adjoining hills, Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, and Udayagiri, which were all once major Buddhist monasteries. After excavation, archaeologists have found many answers to the mysteries around Buddhist life and customs. They have found out how meditation studies were achieved, and many colossal sculptures of the Buddha. Many bodhisattvas were also found here. Bodhisattva is a person who wants to accomplish Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings, and is a very common figure in Buddhist art.

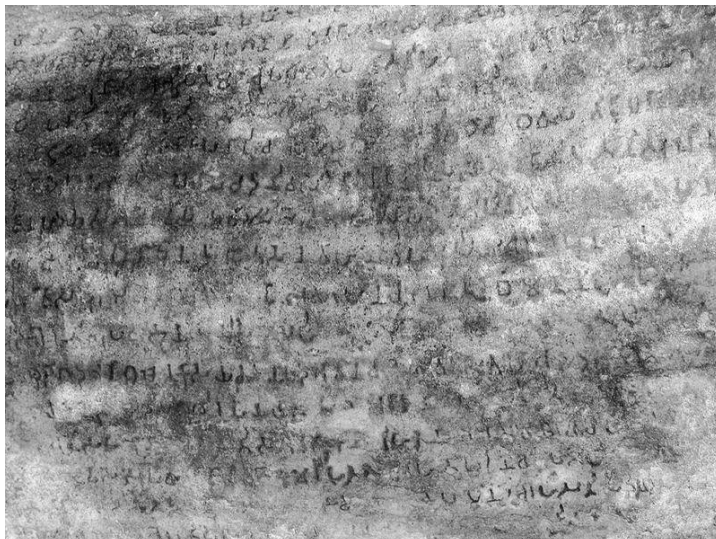
Dhauligiri is a holy Buddhist site which is located on the banks of the river Daya, 8 km south of Bhubaneswar in Odisha (India). It is a hill with vast open space adjoining it, and has major Edicts of Ashoka engraved on a mass of rock, by the side of the road leading to the summit of the hill. Dhauhi hill is presumed to be the area where the Kalinga War was fought. Foreign Buddhist groups like the Japanese have also built temples and stupas here. This is the place where Ashoka realized the horrors of war and converted to Buddhism. He sought to it that major Buddhist sites and stupas were to be built here.



Barabati Fort



Ruins of Sishupalagada

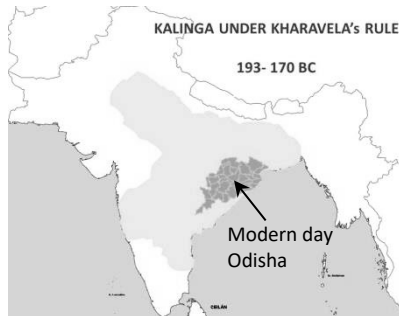


Inscriptions from Hathi Gumpah



Buddhist Stupas from Ratnagiri

Ancient Period:



- In ancient history Odisha was known as Kalinga
- Kalinga's most famous king was Emperor Khārabeḷa.
- His kingdom started from Ganges in the North to Krishna in the South; Bay of Bengal in the East to Arabian Sea in the West.
- Khandagiri and Udayagiri caves have the inscriptions about him.

Modern Period:

- Odisha is one of the 29 states of India located in eastern India
- Odisha has 30 districts
- Bhubaneswar is the capital
- Cuttack is the oldest city. Its more than 1000 years old
- Rourkela is called the steel city because of the big Steel Plant

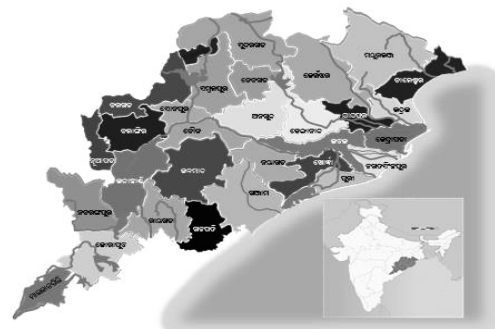


Geographical Features:

- Major rivers are Mahanadi, Brahmani, Rushikulya, Tel, Ib and Daya Nadi
- Emperor Ashoka fought with Kalinga on the banks of Daya river
- Hirakud dam on Mahanadi is the longest earthen dam in India; it drains an area twice the size of Sri Lanka
- Chilika lake is the largest coastal lagoon in India and second largest in the world
- Major mountains are Mahendragiri, Dhauligiri, Niyamgiri, Kapilas and Daringbadi
- Major cities are Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Rourkela, Berhampur, Sambalpur, Puri, Balasore, Bhadrak
- We can see tigers at Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district in the North
- Elephants and deer roam freely along the Eastern Ghats
- River dolphins, giant salt water crocodiles can be seen in the Bhitarkanika National Park and Chilika lake



Satellite Image of Odisha



Rivers of Odisha

Costumes:

In Odisha women wear different types of saris. Odisha is famous for the Katak and Sambalpuri sarees. These sari designs contain very peculiar designs and seem very dignified. In Odisha, men wear dhoti, kurta and gamucha. Women wear lots of jewellery; the silver “Tarakasi” (filigree) jewellery of Katak is very famous.

*Sambalpuri Saree**Maniabhanha Saree**Silver Filigree**Marriage Costume***Festivals:**

There is a saying in Odia – “ବାର ମାସରେ ତେର ପର୍ବ” (“Bara Masa re Tera Parba”), which literally means there are 13 festivals in 12 months; the actual meaning is there are too many festivals in Odisha. The main festivals are: Dhanu Yatra, Magha Saptami, Saraswati Puja, Dola Yatra (Holi), Ashokastami, Mahavisuva Sankranti (Pana Sankranti), Rama Navami, Jhamu Yatra, Chaita Parva, Sitalsasthi, Raja Festival, Ratha Yatra (Car Festival), Jhulan Yatra, Rakhi Purnima, Ganesha Puja, Durga Puja, Kumar Purnima, Deepabali, Nuakhai, Kartika Purnima, Aunla Nabami and Prathamastami.

*Durga Puja**Dola Jatra**Kumar Purnima**Kartika Purnima**Raja Parba***Food:**

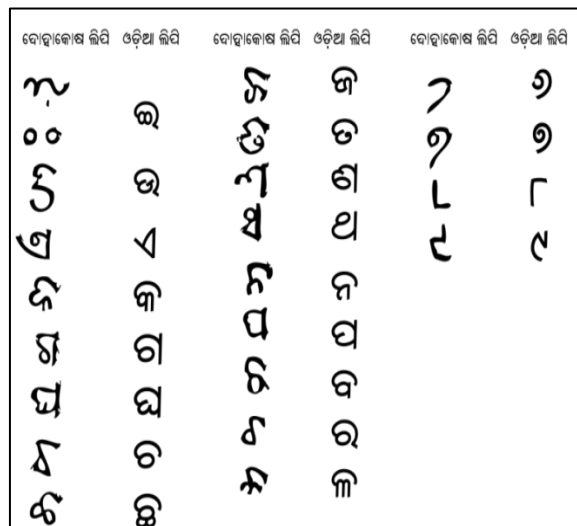
Odisha has many delicious dishes- Khechedi, Chingudi Malai, Macha Jhola, Dahi Bara, Aloo Dum, Chhena Poda and Rasabali. Compared to other Indian cuisines, Odia food use less oil and spices but are very flavorful. The people of Odisha eat rice, dali (lentils), fish, goat meat, chicken, and lots of vegetables and saga (greens). Ghanta tarakari or mixed vegetable curry is a specialty in Odisha. Lots of sweets like Chhena Poda, Poda Pitha, Rasabali, Chhena Jhili are only available in Odisha. Coconut is used in many dishes. "Panch-phutana" is a blend of five spices- mustard, cumin, fenugreek, anise and calonji seeds, and is widely used in Odia kitchen.

*Chhena Poda**Rasa Bali**Machha Jhola**Ghanta Tarakari***Traditional Games:**

After school kids play indoor/outdoor games such as "Luchakali," which means hide and seek. Another popular game called "Bohu Chori" is played like this - two players will come to play in the field and there is a box and the two players will be a bride and groom. The groom has to take the bride to the box. Another game is "Chora Police," the chora, or thief, has to hide somewhere and the police counts to as much as the chora says before hiding. Another game is "Doli Khela", which means swinging on a swing. Boys play “Bagudi”, “Bati Khela” (marbles), and “Pua Badi.”

Odia Language:

- Odia language is an Indo-Aryan language that is spoken natively by around 33 million people around the world.
- It is mainly spoken in Odisha, but also in neighboring states of West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh. In addition, it has a significant presence in foreign countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Fiji.

*Ancient vs. Modern Odia script*

• It has a long literary history, and doesn't have as many borrowed elements as other Indian languages.

• Since 2014, it has been designated as a Classical Language of India by the government.

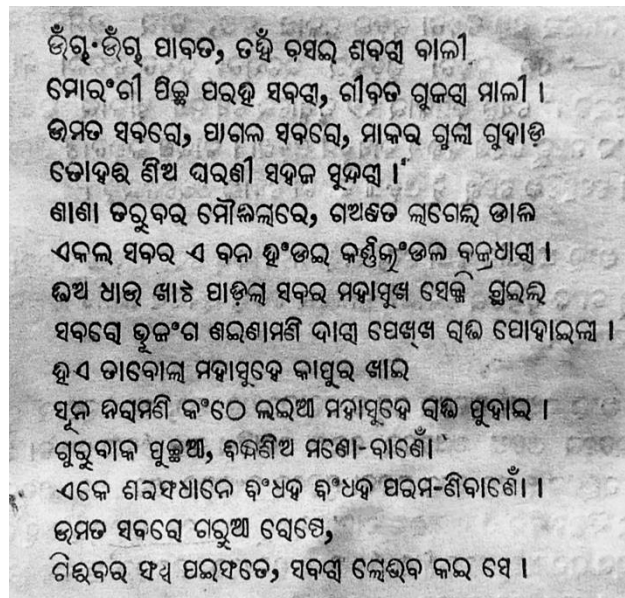
• Katak Odia is spoken in the eastern half of the state, and is considered Standard Odia.

• The major dialects of Singhbhum, Baleswari, Ganjami, Sambalpuri, Desiya, Bhatri, and Halbi arise from the different geographical areas of Odisha.

• In 1867, Odia language faced the fear of extinction when a movement was started claiming it was not a separate language. John Beames, a British civil servant and a linguistic scholar saved it based on his extensive research and recommendation that Odia was a unique language.

Odia Literature:

- In the ancient epic Mahabharata, the Kalinga kingdom is mentioned many times, especially as Kalinga sided with Duryodhana and the Kauravas in the Kurukshetra War.
- The earliest evidence of Old Odia is from the 3rd century BC found at Dhauli, and the Hathigumpha inscription from around 150 BC.
- The Charyapada from 7th-9th century AD is the earliest known literature related to modern Odia.
- The history of Odia literature has shown a strong tradition of poetry, especially devotional poetry.
- The golden period was between 14th to 15 century when Mahabharat, Ramayan, Bhagabata were written. Sarala Das, Balaram Das, Jagannath Das, and Jayadev were prominent writers of that period.

*First written Odia poem from 7th century***Poets and Authors:**

- Poet Sarala Das from the 14th century AD is sometimes referred to as the Vyasa of Odisha, because he translated the Mahabharata into Odia, and wrote the Vilanka Ramayana and Chandi Purana.
- Kabi Samrat Upendra Banja was widely considered the greatest poet of Odia literature and was even nicknamed the Emperor of Poets. His greatest works include the Raghunatha Bilasa and the Ratna Manjari
- Radhanatha Ray (28 September 1848 – 27 April 1908) was a famous Odia poet and is known as “Kabibara”
- Madhusudan Rao (“Bhaktakabi”) was a popular Odia poet from the 1800s to 1900s.
- Fakir Mohan, or Utkal Byasa Kabi, played a leading role in creating the distinct identity of the Odia language.
- Kuntala Kumari Sabat was an eminent poet and writer, the first lady doctor in Cuttack, and a social worker.

The Origin: Originally, aboriginal tribes lived in Odisha.

- When the Aryans came, the tribes merged their religions with Vedic Hinduism. This resulted in one of their gods, Nila Madhava, becoming a staple of the Hindu pantheon over time, as lord Jagannatha.
- Oldest scripture of Odisha is Madala Panji of Puri temple in 1042 AD.

Various Faiths:

- Odia people essentially follow the same traditions as many Vedic Hindus, with a few variations due to their different ethnic backgrounds. Most religious and social ceremonies involved singing, dancing and ritualistic feasts.
- While Odisha is home to predominantly Hindus, it is also populated by Christians (2.8%), Muslims(2.2%), and other minorities (0.1%), such as Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains.

Buddhism: During the reign of Ashoka (268-232 BC), Buddhism was the prime religion in the state.

- This can be deducted due to the numerous Stupas and Buddhist learning centers present in Odisha. One famous sculpture is Shanti Stupa in the heart of Bhubaneswar.
- Buddhism was a belief that was less about religion, and more about achieving self-improvement through enlightenment and freeing yourself from the problems of humanity in order to reach Nirvana, by ridding yourself of desire in order to achieve peace.

Jainism: Jainism became prominent during the reign of King Kharavela (180-130 BC)

- Jainism is a religion that teaches that plants, animals, and humans all have souls, and each soul is of equal value. Jainism entails extremely strict vegetarianism and reducing the amount of Earth's resources used as much as possible. Jains are not allowed to hurt any other creature. In Jainism, the goal is to get out of the reincarnation cycle by eliminating all karma from the soul. Jains do not believe in gods. They must break through the cycle on their own.

Hinduism: Hinduism was revived by Adi Shankaracharya in the 9th century.

- Numerous temples and structures got erected including Konark Sun Temple, Lingaraj Temple, Bhubaneswar, Jagannath Temple, Mukteshwar Temple, and Vaital Deul Temple.
- Puri Temple is considered one of the holiest places as it is included in Char Dhams for Hindus.

Jagannath Culture:

- Jagannath has been worshipped from pre-historic times by the aboriginal tribes as per the Puranic texts. Centuries of change in the political and religious landscape of Odisha has enriched the cult and culture of Jagannatha with a unique system of elaborate rites and rituals. Vedic Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism all have flourished in Odisha at different points in time and have contributed to the Jagannath culture.
- Jagannatha is equally claimed by the aboriginal tribes and the Vedic Hindus to be their original deity of worship. When we think of the Puri temple, we also think of the presiding deities therein as well as the pattern of cultural life that is in vogue around it
- Jagannath is treated as the 9th Avatar, as a substitute or equivalent for Buddha. Many traditions held in Odisha are specific to worshipping him. The Puri temple holds many of these traditions. For example, none of the food cooked inside ever goes to waste. Also, a priest must climb to the top of the temple and change the flag every day. This is no small feat considering that the temple dome stands 45 stories high. This ritual has been practiced for 1,800 years. If it is not changed every day, the temple gets shut down for 18 years.
- Ratha Yatra is a yearly festival that takes place at the Puri temple every summer. It is celebrated by pulling an idol of Jagannatha, as well as two related deities, his brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra, on two chariots for 3 kilometers, or approximately 1.9 miles. This is done to transfer the idols to another temple, specifically the Mausī Maa temple in the case of Puri, but this tradition is practiced in several Jagannatha temples all over the world. The idols are changed every year. The temple has the old idols buried on top of one another and are said to eventually disintegrate on their own.



Various Handloom Sarees

Handloom sarees in Odisha are some of the world's prettiest and unique sarees. There are varieties of these sarees, for example, Sonepuri, Pasapali, Bomkai, Barpali, and Bapta. These sarees are made with fabric that is woven on a handloom, and is known for the symbolism of shell, wheel, and flower. They are greatly influenced by the Jagannath culture and frequently display temple borders, mythological designs and the traditional colors of Jagannath.



Silver Filigree

Filigree artwork is one of the most enchanting artworks. Silver Filigree is a highly skilled art form from over 500 years ago that were traditionally done by local artisans in East Odisha. Filigree basically refers to silver wires interwoven to make a lace like decoration. It is considered to be the perfect form of art to be used for arabesque designs. The delicacy of this art makes it an alluring and feminine art form of jewelry.



Pipili Chandua

Pipili chandua, the famous appliqué work comes from Pipli village, which was established by the King of Odisha for accommodating the craftsmen who made appliqué umbrellas and canopies for the annual Jagannath Yatra. the appliqué work in its colourful best is most prominent in the cloth covers of the three chariots of the presiding deities in which they travel every year during the Ratha Yatra or Car Festival. A characteristic style of the Odisha appliqué involves three dimensional patterns made by folding of the upper piece of cloth into triangles and attaching them to the base.



Pattachitra

The patachitras of Odisha are icon paintings that include the wall paintings, manuscript painting, palm-leaf etching, and painting on cloth, both cotton and silk. It is a tradition to complete the borders of the painting first. The painter then starts making a rough sketch directly with the brush using light red and yellow. The main flat colors are applied next. The painter then finishes the painting with fine strokes of black brush lines, giving the effect of pen work. When the painting is completed it is held over a charcoal fire and lacquer is applied to the surface. This makes the painting water resistant and durable, besides giving it a shining finish. The materials used in the paint are from natural sources.



Stone Carving

Stone Carving in Odisha is the ancient practice of sculpting stone into art and utilitarian objects. It is practiced in Puri and Lalitgiri. Some of the monuments using stone carving are Sun Temple of Konark, Udayagiri, Ratnagiri, Jagannath, Lingaraj, and Mukteshwar.

Odisha is a state with a rich cultural and architectural heritage. The wonderful temples located in the state are a major part of that heritage. The capital, Bhubaneswar, is actually known to be the city of temples. Here are some facts about a few of the most beautiful temples in Odisha.



Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri

- The most important temples in Odisha, was built in 11th century by King Indradyumna. The temple covers around 400,000 square feet and is divided into four distinct sectional structures - Garbha Gruha, Mukhashala, Nata-mandapa, Bhoga mandapa. It is famous for its annual Rath Yatra.

- The image of Jagannath is made of wood and is ceremoniously replaced every 12 or 19 years. The flag located on the top of the tower always flies the opposite direction of the air flow. The Sudarshan Chakra standing at the top of temple is 20 feet in height and weighs a ton. It said to be visible from every corner of the city and it is installed in such a way that it makes you feel that it is facing toward you irrespective of the place you are in. The temple is constructed in such a way that the shadow of the main dome cannot be observed at any given time.



Sun Temple, Konark (a UNESCO World Heritage Site)

- Built by King Narasimhadeva I of Eastern Ganga Dynasty in 1255 CE, it took 1200 artisans working for 12 yrs to build this temple.
- Dedicated to the Sun god, it has been built in the form of a giant ornamented chariot of the Sun god, Surya. It has 12 pairs of elaborately carved stone wheels and is pulled by a set of seven horses. It is carefully oriented towards the east so that the first rays of sunrise strikes the principal entrance.



Lingaraj Temple, Bhubaneswar

- It is one of the oldest and largest temples and was built around 11th Century CE. This temple shows the Harihara form of Lord Shiva.
- Three small temples of Ganesha, Karthikeya and Gauri are also located here. A black stone statue of Mata Parvati's resides inside the Gauri temple.
- The Bindusagar Tank near Lingaraj Temple is believed to contain drops of all major rivers in India.
- Bhubaneswar, is named after Lord Shiva, Tribhuvaneshwar - Lord of the 3 Worlds.



RajaRani Temple, Bhubaneswar

- This 11th century temple was dedicated to Vishnu and was originally known as Indreswar temple. Later it was renamed because of the dull red and yellow sandstone known as "Rajarani" that it was constructed from.
- It is built in the pancharatha style on a raised platform with two structures: a central shrine called the vimana (sanctum) with a spire over its roof rising, and a viewing hall called jagamohana with a pyramidal roof.



Mahima Gadhi, Joranda

- This temple was built in the 20th century although the shrine existed since the 14th century. It is the Samadhi Peetha of Mahima Goswami, who spread the Mahima Dharma. This is a distinct religion whose principles are similar to those of Panchashakha, Buddhism, Tantra and Jainism.

- The Mahima Dharma started by people from the underprivileged castes in a caste-based Hindu society as a social reform and protest against the dominance of Brahmanism

- The temple is dedicated to the supreme lord worshipped as the Sunya Brahma or Shapeless Lord. Hence no idols are worshipped in this temple.

Many famous personalities shaped our state's views and current state. From the kings to the freedom fighters to the actors and singers, Odisha brought together a multitude of personalities

Kings:

- A powerful monarch of the East Gupta dynasty, **Langula Narasimha Deva I** lived in medieval Odisha and was famous for building the Konark Temple.
- Bira Pratap **Purushottama Deva** was the second king of the Gajapati dynasty. He was the son of Kapilendra Deva Routara, who was speculated to have started out as a poor cow herder
- **Krishna Chandra Gajapati** was the architect of the independent state of Odisha. He spent extensive amounts of money on this and was the one to propose it at the first "Round Table" conference.

Freedom Fighters:

- **Subhas Chandra Bose** was one of the most influential freedom fighters of Indian history who fought against the British rule. He became controversial allying with Germany and Japan during World War II.
- A member of the king's court, **Jayakrushna "Jai" Rajguru Mohapatra** fought to recapture a British province in India. He was later killed brutally by British rulers.
- One of the earliest freedom fighters of India, **Bakshi Jagabandhu** was the leader of the so-called "Paika Rebellion," *paika* being an Odia soldier, which, like many, was a rebellion against the British.
- **Madhusudan Das**, the "Madhu Babu" of the common people, was a political figure in Odisha who worked for social and political reform. He helped to form modern day Odisha by forming an organization for the unification of the state.

Poets and Authors:

- **Kabi Samrat Upendra Banja** was widely considered the greatest poet of Odia literature and was even nicknamed the Emperor of Poets. His greatest works include the Raghunatha Bilasa and the Ratna Manjari
- **Sarala Das** was the first poet of Odisha and was best known for transcribing the Mahabharata, Vilanka Ramayana, and Chandi Purana in Odia.
- **Radhanatha Ray** (28 September 1848 – 27 April 1908) was a famous Odia poet and is known as "Kabibara"
- **Madhusudan Rao** ("Bhaktakabi") was a popular Odia poet from the 1800s to 1900s.
- **Fakir Mohan**, or "Byasa Kabi," played a leading role in creating the distinct identity of the Odia language.
- **Kuntala Kumari Sabat** was an eminent poet and writer, the first lady doctor in Cuttack, and a social worker.

Social and Political Activists

- A social worker, reformer, and political activist, **Gopabandhu Das** had a lot of opinions on how the country could change. His efforts resulted in more accessible journalism in Odisha for the average civilian.
- **Godabarisha Mishra**, despite being brought up a conservative Brahmin, was very against the caste system. His books and poems brought attention across the nation to social issues.
- **Bijayananda Pattnaik** was the third chief minister of Odisha and undoubtedly the greatest political figure of the state. He was a close aide to Nehru and Indira Gandhi and played major roles at the National level.

Directors, Musicians, and Actors

- **Nila Madhab Panda** is an internationally acclaimed filmmaker who has directed 70 films, documentaries, etc. His first movie, "I am Kalam," received one national award and 32 international awards.
- An Odia singer who first appeared on "Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Singing Superstar," **Sniti Mishra** now holds concerts all over the world. Her Indo-Swedish fusion band, Mynta, has gained a lot of fame as well.

Sports Personalities

- **Debashish Mohanty** and **Shiv Sundar Das** played important roles in Indian cricket team.
- **Padmini Rou** is a chess player who, before the age of 14, became an international champion. She currently holds the titles of International Master and Woman Grandmaster



Chilika Lake

The Chilika Lake is spread out over the Ganjam, Khurda, and Puri Districts of Odisha. It is the most popular bird wintering migratory ground. It is the largest coastal lagoon in all of India and is the second largest coastal lagoon worldwide. There is a legend in which a female named Jaai was on a ferry to meet her husband on an island of the lake, but the ferry drowned. In memory of her, a temple was built on one of the island and was named after her as Kalijai Temple.



Konark Sun Temple

The Konark Sun Temple is a temple in the Puri District of Odisha. The temple complex is in the shape of a chariot. The temple was built at the mouth of the Chandrabhaga, but the shore has receded since then. The temple is the best known Sun temple in India. The temple was built by the King Narasimhadeva with the help of 1200 artisans. The entire project took 12 years.



Nandankanan

Nandankanan is a large zoo and botanical garden with an area of 990 acres of the Chandaka forest near Bhubaneswar. Part of the botanical garden that includes a 134-acre lake, has been declared a sanctuary. A major attraction of the zoo is a large area for wild animals such as lions and tigers, called Safari, into which guided tours are conducted in caged vehicles. More than 3.3 million visitors visit Nandankanan every year.



Udayagiri and Khandagiri

One of the earliest groups of Jain rock-cut shelters, the caves of Udayagiri (Hill of Sunrise) and Khandagiri (Broken Hills) show excellent histories of rock-cut architecture, art and religion. The two hills are about six km west of Bhubaneswar, separated by a highway. Udayagiri is the hill on the right with about 18 caves, among which the largest and the most beautiful is the double storeyed Rani Gumpha (Queen's Cave). It is the largest Buddhist complex in Odisha.



Ratnagiri

Ratnagiri, excavated in the 1960's, was once the site of a major Buddhist monastery, in the Jajpur district of Odisha. From the impressive remains and large number of sculptures discovered, it is clear that the Buddhist establishment of Ratnagiri, witnessed a phenomenal growth in religion and architecture till the 13th century CE.

Quick Facts

- The Odia movie industry is known as Ollywood
- The industry started in 1936
- Only two other films were produced until 1951
- Ollywood produces about 20 films a year
- 60s-90s was known as the golden era
- The industry started with only Rs. 30,000



Sita Bibaha (1936)

- First Odia movie
- Made by Mohan Sundar Deb Gishwami
- Made with a budget of Rs. 30,000
- The actors were paid Rs. 35-150 in salary
- Had 14 song sequences
- First screened at Puri's Laxmi Talkies

Famous Actors

- Sharat Pujari
- Prashanta Nanda
- Dhira Biswal
- Uttam Mohanty
- Sriram Panda
- Bijay Mohanty
- Siddhant Mohanty

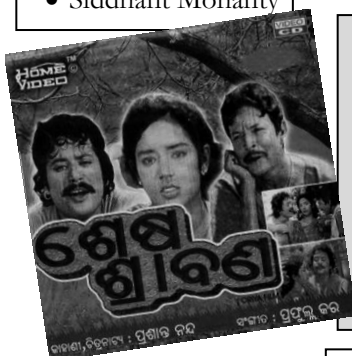
Jajabara (1975)

- First regional film in India to be digitally colored
- First to be given a theatrical re-release in the states
- Stared Siram Panda, Banaja Mohanty, and Tripura Mishra



Famous Actresses

- Jharana Das
- Tripura Misra
- Mahasweta Roy
- Aparajita Mohanty
- Banaja Mohanty
- Tandra Ray



Shesha Shrabana (1976)

- Directed by Prashanta Nanda
- Stared Prashanta Nanda and Mahasweta Roy
- Created a box office record
- Won many renowned awards

Famous Music Directors

- Balakrushna Das
- Basudev Ratha
- Akshay Mohanty
- Prafulla Kar
- Santanu Mahapatra

Famous Directors

- Sisir Mishra
- Prashant Nanda
- Sadhu Meher
- Nitai Palit
- Sarat Pujari
- Ravi Kinagi

Famous Female Singers

- Tripti Das
- Vani Jayaram
- S Janaki
- Bhubaneswari Mishra
- Arati Mukherjee

Famous Male Singers

- Akshay Mohanty
- Prafulla Kar
- Chitta Jena
- Pranab Pattanaik
- Sikandar Alam
- Tansen Singh

Gapa Helebi Sata (1976)

- First color Odia film
- Starred Harish Mohapatra and Banaja Mohanty
- Was remade in 2015



Tulasi Apa (2015)

- Won 6 Odisha state awards
- Won around 30 awards
- Was filmed in original locations



Phula Chandana (1982)

- Budget of INR 3,485,000
- Stared Uttam Mohanty and Aparajita Mohanty
- Considered as a Classic

Vacation on Top of a Super Volcano

Sristi Swagata Sahoo

The rock is 640,000 years old. If it erupts, it will destroy the whole USA! The first caldera is 2.1 million years old, the second caldera is 1.3 million years old, and the third caldera is 630,000 years old.

This summer I went to Yellowstone National Park with my family. My grandparents came too. My dad bought a lot of suitcases to use. I was the first one to finish packing, but I wasn't really done because my booster seat wasn't packed yet.

Our flight to Salt Lake City was on 13 July. We woke up early morning. I ate a sandwich for breakfast. From my flight, I saw a lot of mountains and I saw the Great Salt Lake. When we landed in Salt Lake City airport, my dad rented a car. We drove for six hours to get to our condominium at Big Sky, Montana. Our condominium had 2 sets of bunk-beds. So, my brother and I could both sleep on the top of the bunk beds!



Next day, we drove to Yellowstone National Park towards Lower Geyser Basin. At Lower Geyser Basin, there was a geyser that erupted water all over us. We also saw bison resting very close to the road. The steam vents made a lot of whistling noise. Next stop was Black Sand Basin. There was a monster geyser erupting hot water and black sand. There were two dormant geysers which were very quiet. Finally, we went to Old Faithful in the Upper Geyser Basin. This geyser is a very famous geyser and erupts really high. Lot of people were waiting for Old Faithful to erupt. When we saw the eruption, there were three birds drinking the geyser water! On our way back from the Old Faithful, we stopped at the Grand Prismatic Spring in the Midway Geyser Basin which is one of the most beautiful and largest hot springs.

Next day we went to Norris Geyser Basin. It smelled like rotten eggs because the volcanic gases smell like that. It rained a lot, and we finished our lunch during that time. At the Mud Volcano, there were very interesting springs, with one called Black Dragon's Caldron. When we got to the actual mud volcano, next to the muddy and bubbling mud, there was a bison sitting next to it just a few feet away from the walkway! Next stop was Mammoth Hot Springs. Mammoth Hot Springs was very beautiful. It all looked like snow. We stopped briefly at the Petrified Tree. It looked like stone because it was there so long it turned into stone. At Tower Falls, the part of the mountain behind us looked like it towered over us! The waterfall was a few minutes' walk where you can see the tower structures the waterfall has made. Hayden valley had a lot of bison and a lot of rolling

hills. It also had a lake where we saw many Canadian geese. Mount Washburn was highest elevation and we drove along the mountains where we could see some patches of snow in July!

When we went to West Thumb Geyser Basin the next day we saw a lot of geysers next to the lake. The Yellowstone Lake is very big and there was a little bit of land at one point. My brother went into the lake on the rocks. The Upper and Lower Falls are the biggest waterfalls I've ever seen. You have to hike to get a view of the upper falls. The falls were in Grand Canyon of Yellowstone, and the rock that the river carved was a nice yellow color.

On the last day, we spent time in Big Sky Resort. We went on the chair lift to the top of a mountain, and I got a chance to try out the kiddie zip line twice! I enjoyed it very much!

I hope my experience motivates you to travel to the top of the super volcano!!

Sristi Swagata Sahoo is 7 years old. She is daughter of Tapas Sahoo from Dallas , Texas. Her mom guided her to write this article. She goes to 2nd Grade, Frisco TX. Her Hobbies are Dancing (Odishi), painting, playing piano, role-playing with my dolls, becoming an encyclopedia of US national parks.

Ocean

Puneeta Choudhury

The waves gushed
The wind hollered
The birds cawed
But that didn't stop me

I ran through the wind
As the waves picked up
Rising like a demon
Roaring above me

Covering me like a blanket
But shoving me down
Running for my life
Hoping it would change

But the Ocean stopped me once again...

Puneeta Choudhury is nine years old and in fourth grade at Woodbrook Elementary School in New Jersey. Her parents are Archana Patra and Pradeep Choudhury.



Seasons

Shreeya Sahoo

As waves smile upon me, the sun shines down on me
As I think to myself, the flowers bloom and start singing a song.
The birds call my name as the trees dance.
Soon the summer is over, all is gone.

Fall comes next, its leaves a beautiful brunette,
the waves are calm, the sun hides behind the clouds,
the birds call to each other, the trees rustle in the wind.
I hope summer will soon come again.

Winter is here now, ever so white, The snow covers the ground like a blanket, trying to keep the
grass warm, the waves start to freeze in the cold,
harsh breeze, the sun no longer shines on these chilly, snowy days,
the birds are gone, not a single tweet,
the snow falls and the trees are now covered.
But, Groundhogs Day brings me hope.

Spring comes now, the flowers bloom, the waves start to splash and play,
the birds come back and whisper my name,
the sun comes out, smiling now,
trees start to get its leaves.
Summer is back, the people chant hooray!

Shreeya Sahoo is in fourth grade and is the younger daughter of MI –OSA members Sangram and Soma Sahoo from Northville, Michigan. She likes to read, write, and play piano.

Visiting Ashrams in India

Haripriya Mahapatra

There are some places around the world that give you a feeling of peace. These places make you feel very relaxed and afterwards, just hearing those names brings joy. Since I have had such an experience, I would like to share it with you. In the summer of 2015, I had the rare opportunity to visit three ashrams in South India with my Dad and grandparents. These ashrams are located in Amritapuri in Kerala, Pondicherry, and Tiruvannamalai (Arunachala) in Tamil Nadu.



Amritapuri

Amritapuri is named after a living saint known as Amma, Mata Amritanandamayi Devi. She is a world renowned humanitarian and spiritual leader, who is also recognized as the hugging saint because when someone comes to see her, she embraces as a mother hugs a child. To reach her ashram, we took a plane to Trivandrum, Kerala, and then drove for three hours. The ashram is on an island that has the Arabian Sea on one side and a canal-like waterbody called the Kerala backwaters the other side. When I got there, I got amazed to find even though it was 1:00 AM, all around there were people doing things like sweeping the ground and arranging things for the next day's activities. I got to know from my Dad that over the years, many people across the world being inspired by Amma have decided to permanently stay in Amritapuri. Amritapuri has 5,000 permanent residents, and receives about 5,000 visitors on a typical day when Amma is in the ashram. I woke up very early the next morning. Immediately, I looked outside the window and felt the Ashram activities had begun even though it was still dark. My Dad and I thought that it would be nice to go to the nearby beach and take a walk.

Amma, along with Ashram residents, often goes to meditate on the beach. I recalled, a few years ago, when I was visiting the ashram, I had a chance to go with her to the beach and it felt good. I realized then that Amma can make the atmosphere very peaceful. Later in the morning, we went to see Amma in a big hall called darshan hall. Amma came and guided all for some meditation then gave a small talk in her native language called Malayalam. One devotee was translating her talk to others. I heard that Amma was talking about ego. Ego means the person in us who desires to do or get something. After the speech, Amma personally distributed lunch (Prasad) to about 2000 people who were there that time. Prasad is a food that is first offered to God before one eats it. I saw something astonishing about Amma. After handing out the Prasad, Amma started eating hers among the huge crowd. I was surprised to see that although a lot of people were talking and there was a lot of distraction around, Amma was quietly eating without talking to anyone. It wasn't like she was in a quiet place and no one was around. I recalled, my Dad once explained, while eating one should not talk and feel grateful to the God for the food. So, I thought Amma was just respecting the food by giving full attention to it.

In the evening, we came to darshan hall again to join Amma when she sings bhajans. Bhajans are songs for God. We had a chance to sit very close to Amma during bhajans. In the middle of the bhajans I felt cold. A person (I call her Rupa aunty), who was helping us around, took me out of the hall and brought chocolate for me and then took me to Amma's room. Amma's room was a simple one with a few photos of various Gods, a small sofa, and a mat on the floor. Rupa aunty told me that Amma sleeps on the floor and uses the sofa if she has to meet someone to discuss something. I felt really lucky to be there because I never imagined that I would be in the room of such a divine person. The next day, I went to have a darshan of Amma. During darshan, Amma gives hugs and also some Prasad which is usually a fruit, a candy, or a piece of sweetmeat.



There is always a big crowd around Amma. Lot of noise, cries, laughter, etc. Amma was so lovingly talking to everyone. She was not tired at all. After giving the darshan, Amma asked us to sit next to her for some time. The time we spent with her after the darshan was so nice that in just a little time I felt so calm and happy. After sitting there for a while, we came back to our room to get ready for our next trip the following morning. Amritapuri was a nice place indeed.

Pondicherry

Our next destination was the Ashram of Shri Aurobindo (1872-1950) and The Mother (1878-1971) at Pondicherry. The Mother is also known as Shree Maa in Odia. She was the spiritual companion of Shri Aurobindo. To reach Pondicherry, we flew from Trivandrum, Kerala, to Chennai, Tamil Nadu. From the airport, we went to one of my Dad's friend's house in the IIT campus of Chennai. My Dad told me that IITs are one of the finest places to study Engineering and Science in India. We had lunch there, and then headed to Pondicherry which is about three hours drive. It was night 9:00 PM when we reached there. We directly went to a hotel that was booked earlier. The next day, we went to see the ashram. I heard that Shri Aurobindo was one of India's freedom fighters during the British rule before he became a saint. He founded the ashram, lived there for about 39 years, and when he died, he was buried in the ashram. I got to know even The Mother (Shree Maa) was buried at the same place. Their burial place is called Samadhi. First we went to see the Samadhi.

After sitting at the Samadhi for some time, something very rare happened. My Dad and I had an urge to enter the building where Shri Aurobindo lived. We entered the building, looked around, went upstairs and got into his room, where he lived for 24 years continuously. There was a watchman at the door, but he did not stop us. Later we got to know, it is a rare privilege to go to Aurobindo's room and meditate. To maintain the sanctity of the place, Shree Maa had advised that one can go to Shri Aurobindo's room only on his or her birthday. The rule is strictly followed by the Ashram. In the room, I was given some flowers to offer near the bed of Shri Aurobindo. I had also a chance to sit quietly for some time. It really felt very peaceful, something similar to what I felt while being with Amma. I felt very lucky because I could be there although it was not a birthday for any one of us.

Next morning, we went to Auroville, a small town near Pondicherry. Auroville was founded by Shree Maa as a model town where one can live and grow spiritually. It is a memorial to Shri Aurobindo. There is a famous sphere shaped, golden building called Matrumandir built by Shree Maa as a place to meditate. It represents universal living with soil from all countries underneath its foundation. Unfortunately, we couldn't go inside the building because we did not have tickets that we should have bought from the management office earlier in the day. That afternoon, we left for our next destination, Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi's Ashram.



Tiruvannamalai

Shri Ramana Maharshi's Ashram is in temple town Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu. The town has a temple dedicated to Arunachal Shiva. Bhagavan Ramana (1879-1950) came here when he was 16 years old and lived there until people recognized him as a saint.

After reaching the ashram, we went to Ashram office for a room to stay. Afterwards, when we were on our way to Ramana's temple, something really funny happened. I was holding a water bottle and was looking around.

There were a lot of monkeys in the ashram premises. I think, one monkey was very thirsty. So what it did was, it came over to me, snatched the water bottle out of my hand, opened the water bottle, drank like a human would, then closed the cap and jumped away with my bottle. I was a bit scared, but was amazed to see the monkey drinking like a human being and closing the cap. When we went inside Ramana's temple, the Aarati (a traditional way to offer prayer by waving a lamp in front of the deity) was to begin. The place was really very peaceful. After Aarati, we went for dinner in the dining hall. The dinner was served on leaf plates to rows of people who were to sit on mats spread on the floor. The food was simple, but very delicious. Usually, I take ice cream after food when I eat at a restaurant. Here in the ashram, they don't serve ice cream. But I experienced something interesting. I did not feel any urge to eat ice cream after eating the ashram food.

The next day, my Dad and I went to hike on the Arunacharla hill that is also known as the hill of auspicious fire. Raman said and many believe that the hill is Lord Shiva Himself. There we went to Skandaashram, a cave on the hill where Ramana stayed for seven years when he was young. We meditated there for some time. On our way back, I heard the life and teachings of Ramana being read in a room. I went in and sat for some time. It felt very nice to hear the reading.

Subsequently, my Dad and I visited the room where Ramana spent his last days. His dishes were arranged in a shelf and I learnt something there. Well you might be thinking, "what would I be learning from plates, dishes etc.?" Trust me, when I keenly observed the plates and cups, I realized one can really learn about Ramana even from those dishes. Although those dishes were very old, they were shining like gold! It shows how sincere Ramana was in maintaining those! The next day we went to the Arunachala Shiva temple, which was a massive temple. We also drove around the Arunachala hill in the late afternoon. The taxi driver explained that people consider walking around the hill is same as circumambulating around the Shiva. It is very auspicious. The next day morning we left for Bhaubaneswar, where my grandparents live.

What I learned

Throughout the whole trip, I learned something from each place. In Amma's ashram, I learned how to do work with love and fun. In Shri Aurobindo's ashram, I learned how to stay focused in one's own work and thoughts. And in Ramana's ashram, I learned how to remain simple,



sincere, and yet peaceful. My entire trip to the three ashrams lasted only seven days. This may not be long, but the memory of it will stay with me forever. I really think, these are the places that one can visit when one is very lucky. I am glad that I am one of those lucky ones.

Haripriya Mahapatra is 10 years old and in fifth grade in Potsdam, NY. He is the son of Santosh and Lipika Mahapatra, who are life members of OSA. His hobbies are reading biographies and swimming. He wants to be a scientist.

The Snowball Fight

Bastav Senapati

When I have a snowball fight
We make a lot of balls all right!
Then we countdown 3-2-1,
The snowball fight has just begun!
We throw an' throw
An' duck and go
There are two men out,
They mope an' pout.
Three men left
Suddenly I met
A snowball gun
That shoots a ton.
I picked it up
And beat 'em up.
I won the game,
I was a fame.
They called me cheat,
But I was the heat.
The Majority
Had voted me.
So I actually won
A snowball gun
For-
Myself and me.

Bastav Senapati is 10 years old and in fourth grade in Crisafulli Elementary School in Westford, MA. His passion is doing art and origami. Bastav thinks OSA is fun and has participated in Veda chanting and previously played the tabla in OSA events.



My Dream Trip to Odisha

Aditya Pattanaik

I have a dream trip in which I want to go to Puri, Odisha. Puri is located in the eastern coast of Odisha and is approximately 60 KM South of Bhubaneswar. I have been to Puri, when I was a small kid.

My dream trip is to visit Puri again for many reasons. I want to see the Jagannatha temple that was constructed hundreds of years ago. It is said meeting and serving Lord Jagannatha, the Lord Of The Universe, purifies one. I hope to meet Ma Gundicha as well to earn her blessings that will help me in life, and I will be purified. If I am lucky, I may be able to see the Naba Kalebara which happens every 18 years so if I get there at the right time, I will be able to see the burning of the previous idol of Lord Jagannatha, Lord Subhadra, and Lord Balabhadra and watch the installation of the new idols of them.

I also hope to go to Ananda Baazar. At Ananda Bazaar, we get the Mahaprasada, which is the food that has been served to Lord Jagannatha and then to Goddess Vimala. They serve the food on plantain leaves. There are 6 different times for the different Bhogas as there are 6 different times that Lord Jagannatha and Goddess Vimala are served food. The times are Gopal Vallabh Bhoga, Sakala Dhupa, Bhoga Mandapa Bhoga, Madhayaana Dhupa, Sandhya Dhupa and Bada Singhara Bhoga. The time range from breakfast to dinner is, 8:30 A.M.(Gopal Vallabh Bhog) to 11:00 P.M. (Bada Singhara Bhoga).

Since it is too hot there, I will like to swim at the famous Puri beach that will help me cool down. Next, I want to go to Chilika Lake to eat fresh seafood, see the tides and watch the amazing views from the boats.

Last but not least, I wish to pull the Ratha in the Ratha Yatra. The Ratha Yatra is chariot pulling festival, where the three statues of Lord Jaganatha, Lord Subhadra and Lord Balabadhra ride in three different carts and if I can help pull it, it is believed that I am serving them and so all my wishes will be fulfilled, along with being filled with energy and happiness. I got a feel for it in Cincinnati Rath Yatra. After the Yatra, I want to wait the nine nights at the Gundicha Temple and then pull the Ratha back again on Bahuda Yatra. If I do this, my happiness and energy will grow more than 10 times.

If I visit Puri, I will have a huge learning experience about Bada Thakura, Bada Deula and Bada Danda — which I hadn't got when I went to Puri as a child. That is why my dream trip is going to Puri, Odisha.

Aditya is a sixth grade student at Ankeney Middle School in Beavercreek, Ohio. He has a passion for music and he plays musical instruments such as piano, keyboard and flute. Aditya feels proud to be involved in local OSA events for the kind of platform it gives to his generation. He along with all his family members participate and enjoy organizing events alongside his parents, Anil and Deepali Pattanaik. Aditya has been playing keyboard as background music to many local OSA events, recently playing background music for “Bande Utkala Janani” to the tune of a kids chorus. He has been attending all the OSA conventions since he was 5 years old and always look forward to the future conventions.



Texting While Driving Should be Illegal

Dhruv Das

A few years ago, whenever we stopped at a red light, my mom would look at her phone to see if she had got any notifications. I always had to point out when the light turned green because she was too busy looking at her phone. Luckily, we never got into a crash, but not all of these types of incidents are success stories. Texting while driving should be illegal across the country. First of all, it has caused many deaths and injuries. It is also very distracting. Finally, it is as bad as drunk driving.

First of all, texting while driving has caused many deaths. One driver, Reggie Shaw, was texting while driving when he crashed into another vehicle. “During one fateful slip over the line, Shaw’s SUV sideswiped a Saturn sedan carrying driver James Furfaro and his passenger, Keith O’Dell. These two individuals were scientists, husbands, and fathers. The impact spun their car sideways into Shaw’s lane, and the trailing pickup truck plowed into the side of the Saturn, killing both men instantly.” (Henneberg, 2017).

Phone records showed that Shaw was texting his girlfriend at the time of the accident. This means that because he was looking at his phone, he crashed into a car, killing two people. Unfortunately, this isn’t the only time texting while driving (TWD) has caused accidents. “People who drive while texting are 23 times more likely to have an accident than a non-distracted driver” (Genachowski, 2017). This means that it is very likely that TWD will get you into a crash. However, the fact that TWD is distracting is what is causing the crashes.

Texting while driving is extremely distracting. Not only does it take “your eyes off the road”, it also takes “your hands off the wheel” and takes “your mind off driving” (CDC, 2017). This means that not a single part of you is going to be doing anything related to driving.

Also, in 2006, Adam Gazzaley did a test with teenagers where he sent texts to them while scanning their brain in a driving simulator. The results showed that even though the eyes are open the “brain’s not processing all of the information.” (Henneberg, 2017). This means that when reading a text, you aren’t going to think about making a turn, or going and stopping. Some people even say that TWD is as distracting as driving drunk.

Finally, TWD is as bad as drunk driving. To begin, more people are TWD than drinking while driving. “The CDC reported last fall that alcohol use among teen drivers has decreased by 54 percent since 1991. Texting, however, has quickly grown in the last five to seven years, Adesman said.” (Ricks, 2013). That means that there will be more deaths than texting while driving because there are less people doing it. Furthermore, it is more dangerous. Tests have proven that drinking while driving. In test settings, drunken drivers had faster response times than did drivers who were reading and sending texts.” (Genachowski, 2017).



This is why texting while driving should be illegal. Texting while driving has caused numerous deaths and injuries, it is distracting in multiple ways, and it is way worse than drinking and driving. So don't forget, if you are one of the unlucky people that text while drive, you could be the one ending someone's life, including your own.

Dhruv Das is currently a sixth grader at Robert Frost Middle School in Rockville, Maryland. He enjoys playing tennis, playing flute and piano. He is the son of Debananda Das and Deepa Parija, life members of OSA.

A Trip to A Different Planet

Aditya Pradhan

With a loud thud, our plane touched down in India. After the long wait for our luggage, we left the airport and our family members picked us up. It had been a long flight and I was already half asleep.

I woke up the next day ready to explore the local attractions. The second I woke up, the different environment was obvious. The smell of cows filled the room and cars honked every five seconds. Slightly confused, I asked for some milk and saw that milk comes in a packet similar to like Cheez-Its. Everything is so different, it's basically a different planet.

We explored places like botanical gardens that had some nice plants and trees that could never grow in our cold climate. We spent a lot of time there and eventually headed back home. The next morning, we had planned to go to other places, but I got sick. Apparently, I couldn't handle unpasteurized milk. So I spent a good week and a half in bed, but I got to spend more time with family.

After I recovered, we drove to see some other family members. The way people drove there amazed me. No one seems to take the traffic lights seriously. It's as though they mean nothing! There are also so many people, everywhere you go, there's a lot of traffic as well. Even though the roads aren't organized, I didn't see a single accident, which is impressive! I also liked the concept of having little roadside shops on the freeways (which wouldn't work in the US). We stopped at a roadside restaurant and there were house flies everywhere. I was flustered by them, but the food was great.

I met my relatives after many years, and it was great. I was asked three standard questions by almost everyone: How is your school? What do you do in summer? Why can't you stay longer? After answering them so many times, I had my answers ready in my mind.

The thing I was most flustered with was the Wi-Fi. If I wanted to go to my room and use it, it didn't work. I had to go all the way back to the living room, reconnect, and stay there. Small things



like these never really bother us in the US. We have everything right here for us, so we never think about the rest of the world.

The end of our trip came quickly and before I knew it, I was back on a plane. I thought about the trip and realized how different everything was, but how cool it was to see a different part of the world. I was a little sad to leave, but happy to return to regular life.

Aditya Pradhan is 13 years old and in eighth grade at Frost Middle School in Livonia, MI. Aditya is the only son of Tarakeswar and Sangeeta Pradhan, who are OSA Life Members. Through the years being part of OSA, Aditya has made friends and has participated in cultural programs. He has also learned a lot about Odia culture and cuisine.

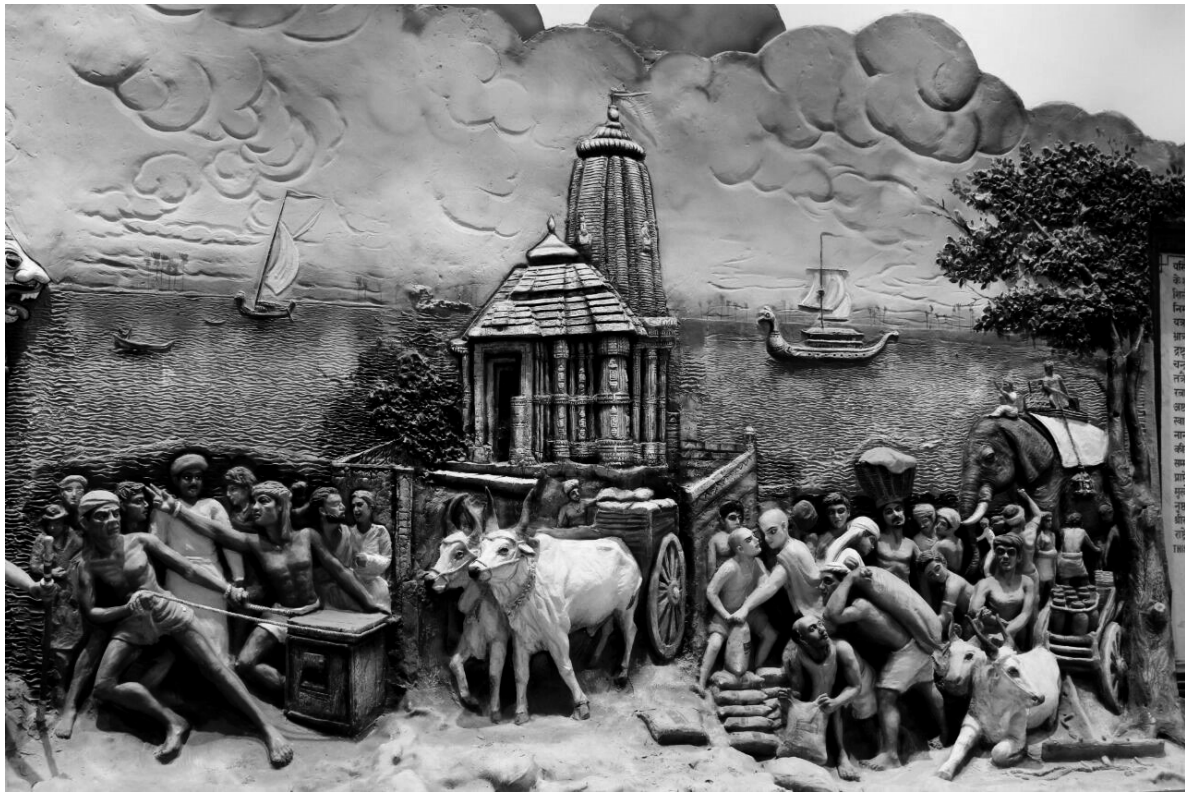


Photo taken at the State Museum of Odisha. Photo Courtesy of Shashanka Nanda (Dhenkanal, Odisha).



The Symbol of Life

Prachi Mahapatra

Gold and rubies, diamonds galore
Washed up on the white sand, on the beach shore
Even they seem to pale in front of this person
Whom without, our lives would worsen
Who is as bright as the sun we see
Who is as beautiful as the colors of sunset
Who is cleaner than the River Thames, and kinder than all of the good souls combined.
This person has a job 24/7, with no breaks nor paid vacations
This person sacrifices everything, so their loved ones would have no limitations.
Enduring hardship, and not getting what they deserve
Hoping only that in the hearts of their loved ones, their memory would be preserved.
Who is this person, you might ask, is this?
This person is the symbol of life. In other words, God, the sunset and sunrise, and happiness in the
form of a human being. Whom without, there would be no humans on the face of this planet.
As most of you might call them, mom.

Prachi Mahapatra is 13 years old and in eighth grade. She lives in Canton, MI, with her parents, Sunita and Hrudaya Mahapatra, and her older brother Pratyush. She has been learning Bharatnatyam for 9 years, and enjoys swimming and track. Prachi has grown up in Michigan's Odia Society, and carries the Odia culture with her!

Beauty in the Sky

Rishika Satapathy

As early as the Rooster crows,
to as late when the crickets chirp.
Vibrant colors of all kind streak the sky,
as if signaling that the sun has woken up from its rest.
Reddish orange with specks of gold in between,
seems to put a soothing smile on the dull staring faces.
Every line, splashed with color in hazy wave,
are filled with silent memories of those who watch

Rishika is 13 years old and in ninth grade. She lives in Northville, MI, and enjoys dancing, painting, writing, and swimming. She is the only daughter of Nutan and Ratimukta Satapathy, life member of OSA.



OSA From My Point of View

Shilpi Mohanty

MI-OSA is really beneficial for me as I get to celebrate my Odia roots and appreciate my Odia culture with pujas and functions. Some examples of pujas and functions we all celebrate in MI OSA every year is Basanta Utsav, Ratha Yatra, Ganesh Puja, and Kumar Purnima. I feel glad being a part of this as every year in Basanta Utsav and Kumar Purnima I get to enjoy and dance alongside my friends to honor these festivals. I have also met amazing people and made great friendships due to our OSA community. Also, due to MI OSA, I appreciate how unique I am compared to all of the other kids at my school. Thereby, I am grateful to be a part of MI-OSA along with my family.

Shilpi Mohanty is 13 years old and attends Novi Middle School. She is the daughter of Satya Mohanty and Sonali Pattanaik. The family had been participating in MI-OSA events since September 2014.

A Day to Remember

Simoni Mishra

“Good luck!”

My mom turned and walked into the cafeteria, leaving my inexperienced 4th grade self in a line with towering high schoolers. Just under an hour ago, at a time when most folks would have been cozying up by the fireplace after dinner, my parents and I had left for a random high school in the middle of PG county where a geography bee was being held.

When we arrived, a middle-aged man met us at the front desk, giving us a grunt and some monotonous, jumbled words in a sentence that I later understood as him telling us to follow him. There in the waiting room, the assured 5-minute wait slowly became, 10, then, 20, and then 60. The first couple of minutes, I distracted myself with the task of learning the ins and outs of the unfamiliar room.

Soon, my boredom caught up with me, and my mind once again became preoccupied with my fear of the bee. I was running through all of the different ways that I could possibly embarrass myself in front of the audience that would be watching the bee. You have to understand that this was my view on geography bees, or any bees for that matter. Sure, I was, and still am a social person, but at the same time, I am also a clumsy one, who trips on her own feet and falls on her face, right when she wants to make a good impression. It didn't matter to my illogical mind that for about 6 weeks, I was stuffing all sorts of crazy facts into my brain. In my mind, it was inevitable that I would fall off the stage while answering a question, land on the judges' table, and then break an arm, and well, you get what I'm trying to say.



Just as I was concluding my optimistic pep talk, the greeter man walked into the door of our classroom and took us to yet another place where I was to wait. Except, this time, it was with a bunch of nerdy high schoolers, and the wait time was only two minutes instead of 60.

A woman came out of the auditorium and asked for the whole group of us to come in. In single-file formation, we hobbled on to the stage assuming our designated seats. I could feel my heart beating faster, the bead of sweat forming on my forehead, and even the steady paced breathing of the person behind me. That's all I noticed as my name was called.

Slowly, I got out of my chair and trudged to the front of the stage. I lean into the microphone and the judge asks me my question.

"The Rio Hondo forms a boundary between Mexico and what other country?"

My hands shook as they gripped the microphone and answered, "Belize."

As I walked back to my chair, all I could feel was relief that the first round was over, and at the same time, the crushing apprehension of the upcoming rounds. After what felt like 100 years, all the preliminary questions were completed. I was surrounded by a sea of empty chairs, and the four-remaining high-schoolers.

As soon as the tiebreaker round began, I knew that I have absolutely no chance of winning. The kids next to me were the epitome of nerds. One was wearing the stereotypically nerdy, wire framed glasses, and the other, a T-shirt with a science joke on it.

The first tiebreaker question was about some far-off river with a name that I had never heard of. Strike 1 for me. Somehow, I managed to answer the next question out of pure luck. The following, I wasn't so lucky.

Since it was a double elimination round, I was out. I slowly walked off the stage, willing the tears in the corners of my eyes not to fall. I found my way to where my parents were sitting, and wedged myself between them as they, and the people around us whispered, "Congratulations!", and "Great job!" and even, "How old are you?"

It took me a minute to get over my loss and pay attention to the rest of the bee. However, my mind had already drifted off.

I realized, no matter how cliché it sounded, the only thing that counted was that I tried my best. And I had. All I had left to do was make sure that I got back up after my fall, ready to try and fall again. This is what is so great about failures. After a rough storm has ripped apart your house, you figure out what the weaknesses were in that house and make it better. That way, your house will not only withstand the intensity of the original storm, but also one that is more violent as well.



A year later, when I was thinking of an important moment in my life, I thought of this one. Now, I view failures so much more differently than I had before. Now, they aren't moments of embarrassment, or shame, but venues of success in the world. After all, it was Henry Ford who said, "Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently."

Simoni Mishra is 13 years old and in eighth grade at Takoma Park Middle School Magnet Program in Maryland. Her long association with OSA has allowed her to embrace her identity as an Odia American by teaching her to be proud of our language, customs, and culture. Her passions are dance, music, science, and technology.

Escape Sumedha Jena

She's confined in a world
And she can't escape her mind
Imaginations unfurled
Too many feelings unable to be controlled

It feels like a labyrinth
Overcrowded with webbed lies
Her thoughts make her scream and shout
Nobody can hear her beyond her cries

Wanting to escape to a place
Somewhere where she cannot be traced
She wishes to escape from reality
Cause she dreams of a paradise of her own

She is engulfed by the darkness
Deep breaths and salty tears
Words devouring her from inside
She is lost within the chaos on the street

Every night she thinks about this madness
Thoughts swallowing her soul
Wandering, never knowing where to go
Left to make the decision
She doesn't know how to choose

Battling her mind every day, every night



Slowly spiraling downwards
Her demons may act silent
However, they are never leaving her alone

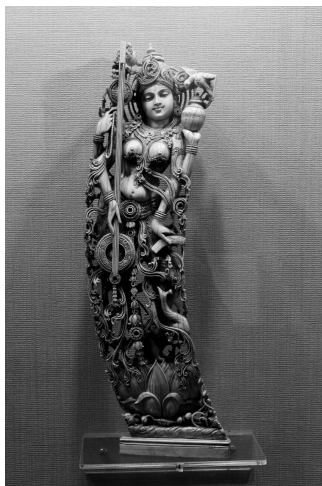
Always looking for an excuse
To whisper silently in her ear
She needed enough strength
To make herself sane again

She was left in a confused state
Full of maniac episodes
She did not want to see a sign of judgment
She did not want to change anymore

Stronger than she was before
She couldn't let herself crumble anymore
The shadows were her friends
No longer basking in its darkness

Able to breathe in the pristine air
The golden sunlight shining on her face
Facing each day with a smile
She was finally able to escape

Sumedha Jena is 13-years-old and in eighth grade at Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Edison, NJ. Her passions are reading and writing. She wants to continue reading world literature and contribute to the literary world so as to bridge the gaps between societies. She wants to get into Biotechnology profession where human feelings will take over technology. She is the daughter of Sandhya R Jena and Nilasundar Jena.



Ivory Sculpture displayed at the State Museum of Odisha. Photo Courtesy of Shashanka Nanda.



Unforgettable

Simran Dillip

She handed her ticket to the security guard before walking through the metal detector. No alarm sounded as she passed through, and, with a nod from the guard, her ticket was handed back to her. The guard gave her brief instructions to where she would be seated and then sent her off, turning to the next person in line. She nodded and walked in the direction he had said, blending in with a group of fangirls that were headed the same way.

She passed through a set of doors leading to the ground level of the stadium, where people were murmuring with excitement. The fangirls all clumped together and sat down at one of the rows farther back, while she continued to the front and sat down. The stage was just within reach—if she stretched out her arm, she could probably touch it. A few minutes passed before the lights started to dim, and the high-pitched screams began.

“Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Ambrose!”

Everyone around her screamed even louder as he walked onto the stage right in front of her. Her mouth opened to join the screaming fans, but she froze. He was so beautiful. Seeing him in person was so much different. She stood there, mouth open as he started to play his black and white electric guitar. The first few notes brought her out of her shock, and she smiled, the first trace of any emotion that night. She looked up at the handsome person on the stage. Everyone around her was singing along with him, so she joined in, her body swaying along to the music.

He tripped up a little when he heard a wonderful voice joining his. It was a quiet voice, a drop of water in the ocean, but it had such prominence that he couldn’t miss it. He quickly got back on track, hoping that anyone would blame the slight pause on a sound error, and tried to focus the girl’s beautiful voice rather than the music in his earpiece. A small smile broke out on his face as he finished the song.

As he finished the song, she saw pure happiness on his face as he looked at the sold-out stadium. His ocean blue eyes shone so brightly in the dim-lit stadium as he looked at his dedicated and loving fans. He walked over to the piano to the side of the stage and started playing a new, slower tune.

She sang along to every song and listened to the person she loved so dearly, despite having never talked with him. This was the closest she had been to him in her life. He helped her through so much, helped her feel loved. He helped her feel confident and beautiful. She smiled at everything he’d ever done for his fans. If she could only thank him.



More songs played as the night was winding down, but she wanted to stay here forever. She wanted to keep listening to his voice, she wanted to see him in person again. His eyes twinkled as he started to speak.

“Thank you guys for coming out tonight. It really means a lot.”

A few girls screamed ‘I love you’ when he paused, He blushed when he heard the calls, still not used to hearing that.

“This last song is about one of my best friends. Things got a bit rough and he sadly isn’t here anymore. I hope you like it!”

As soon as he started playing the first few chords, she knew what song it was. It was her favorite song. It brought back memories of the family and friends she lost and tears started to well up in her eyes as she sang along. She looked up and saw that he was tearing up a bit too. He finished the song and every fan was screaming and crying.

They didn’t want this to end, they didn’t want him to leave. The parents politely clapped, happy they could finally go home after being in a stadium for hours with screaming teenagers. He walked up to the front of the stage and reached down to touch some of the outreached hands. They instantly let out a squeal of joy. One girl turned pale and looked like she would faint. He gave them a forced smile and looked at the girl next to that group.

She was here alone and had a tear slipping down her cheek. One look at her beautiful green eyes and he knew, he could feel that she experienced what he had. He knew she lost someone close to her, someone dear to her heart. She knew what he was feeling when he wrote that song; she had felt the terror when she realized he was gone, and the empty space that could never be filled. They held each other’s gaze for a quick second before he looked away.

He stepped away from the front of the stage, eyes of every fan following him. Cheers and screams echoed through the stadium as he held up his guitar and bowed, then walked off the stage. He could still hear the crowd as he entered his dressing room, but he couldn't tear his mind away from the girl with the green eyes. He only thought of her as he walked to his private jet. He only thought of her on his way to LA, over 2,000 miles away from her. He only thought of her as he landed at the airport. She just wouldn’t leave his mind.

She was still frozen in shock from what she experienced as she exited the stadium with the waves of amazed fangirls and tired parents. He had actually noticed her in the crowd of thousands. She shook her head and started walking to where her car was parked, replaying that moment over and over in her head as she drove.

When she got to her apartment, she laid down on her bed, tired, and realized something. He probably wouldn’t remember her. He would have looked many other fans like that, he hugged



hundreds of people he's never met, he smiled at thousands of girls every night. She realized that to him, she would just be another girl in the crowd. It would be silly to think that she could mean more.

Simran Dillip is 13 Years old, daughter of Dillip & Priya Behera. She is a student in Newmarket Jr/Sr. High School, Newmarket, NH 03857. Her passions are music, writing and dancing to Odissi. Simran has enjoyed all the past OSA conventions attended. She has actively participated in various activities such as dance and other competitions. She is an active youth member of her local chapter and has served as a volunteer on many occasions. .

Life...A Dear one!

Ayush Panda

Time flies,
So does Life,
Life is Fragile,
We have to be strong.

Let's make every day a miracle to be,
For long I used to wonder,
Why is it always me?
As God created everyone,
And kept then the same for long time,
Then just a thought came....

Hmm...
For his dearer one
Gave them joy and sorrow,
Adventure and happiness,
And a fragile empty mind with so much to give,
Come... Let's fill color in our life.

Pamper for something different and special,
Paint your own bright color for the world to see.
It's not the big things that matter in life,
Tiny little things make the difference,
And give all the happiness to life.

Enjoy the yellow, orange, red fall leaves color,
Spectacular butterfly wings,
The silent breeze, the river side,
To top it all,
Just being with my little brother,
Cuddling time...



Ah! Life is so beautiful,
Just capture the moment,
Open the window of life,
And let time fly.....
For a moment,
That makes us all wonder.

“Thank you Life, for all you have to offer!”

Ayush Panda is a freshman at Metea Valley High School, Aurora, IL. He lives with his parents, Meghkanta Mohapatra and Debashish Panda, and his younger brother Adwik. He loves swimming, waterpolo, playing Tabla, roller blading and is a junior black belt in Karate. He has a fascination for photography and cars.

The Dance Battles

Manaswee Mishra

I am ancient and prehistoric. Sitting in a position that no other dancers could sit in. I wore many silver ornaments, whereas the only ornament others wore was a skirt. The other dancers had long legs, and arms that extended with grace. They would never understand the pain my legs went through when sitting in a position they had never even heard of. My name is Odissi, and I was born in the antediluvian temples of Odisha. I was very bright when I was young, but as India was ruled by the Mughals and then the Britishers, I was hushed into the quiet state that affected me for decades. After my country found its independence, I was revived by my guru and father, Kelucharan Mohapatra.

Dance is an art. It brings people together no matter country or culture you are from. I am in a dance convention which was a place for everyone to come together and dance.

Ballet went first. She created a trance that elevated everyone. Ballet's extensions went up so high that when she did a grand jeté it created an over split. Her feet had an incredible turnout, her toes were pointed to the fullest extent. I approached Ballet as she finished her dance.

“Great job! Your grace is phenomenal.” I said with enthusiasm.

At first, she gave me a weird look. She quickly recovered, and used obvious acting skills to say, “Thank you! You are going to do great too.”

Her uncertainty was clear. She talked to me like I could not compare to her greatness, to her royalty. Ballet was not the only one who gave me this type of impression. Modern, Jazz, Tap, Hip Hop, and Lyrical all gave me the feeling as well. Even when I performed, I could see them questioning my moves, my rhythm and my music.

I brushed off their attitude. I thought if they couldn't appreciate other dance forms, then why should I take it to heart? After all, every dance is unique and it should be appreciated on its own. I would make them realize that they were wrong. When I was given a chance to speak, I said,



“All dance is the same. No matter how many different types of moves and music there are, there is only one purpose of dance: to make us happy, nothing else.”

I ended with this sentence. At first, no other dancers said anything, no one moved. But when someone started clapping everyone joined. I was relieved, I had gotten my message through. I could see the realization in Ballet’s eyes. I did what I needed to do.

Manaswee Mishra is a freshman at Marriotts Ridge High School. She enjoys dancing and playing music, especially the cello. Her experience with OSA started when she was 3 years old in the 2007 OSA convention in Michigan. She has performed in Kumar Purnima and Basant Ustav many times in MI-OSA before moving to Maryland at the age of 7. As she got older, she understood that in order to keep our culture alive, we needed to have dedication. She started helping her chapter in Maryland and it helped her understand how our community worked. It was always a team effort and without it OSA wouldn’t be where it is today.

Rising from the Ashes

Amrita Sahu

Imagine
An island
In a secluded archipelago
That, unbeknownst to us,
Hides an entire world
Full of beauty and wonder
The power and strength of nature
Is almost overwhelming

Lost in its elegance
Is a place of danger and hostility
An inhospitable landscape
Built upon bricks of ash
And forged from
The incandescent rivers of flames
That spread the story of volcanic destruction
A stony, rocky land
That seems to hide all signs of life

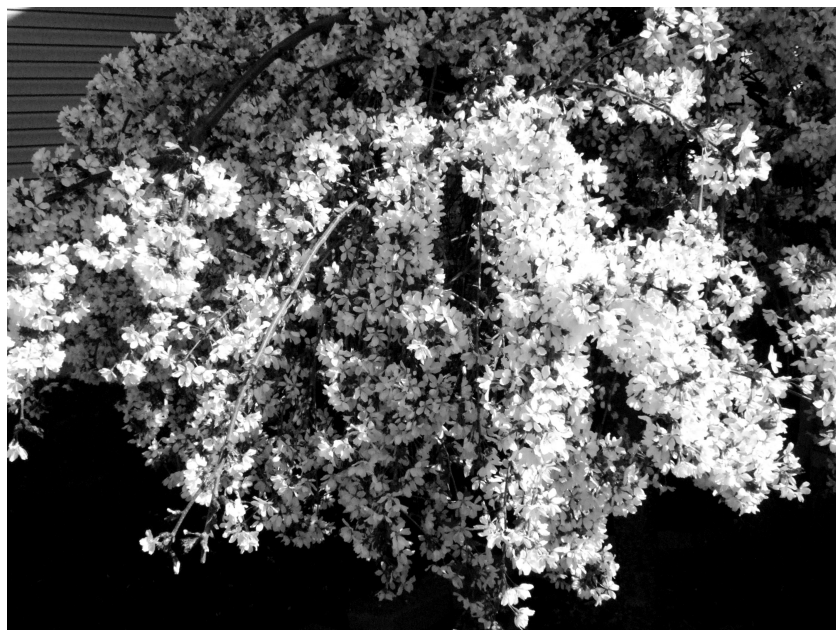
Yet, as I walk upon the pebbles and hardened lava
Suffocating the soil
I spot a speck of green
The color of vitality
Not a field



Not a bush
Not even a tuft
Just a single blade of grass
Peeking through the timeworn boulders
Dancing in the wind
Determined and persevering
A thirst to survive
That cannot be quenched
A fight
That cannot be won or lost
The epitome of the battle for life
Eventually,
Be it today or tomorrow,
We will find
That single blade of grass
Is both everything
And nothing at all
Insignificant

Yet the most important thing that we may ever witness.

Amrita is in 8th grade and lives with her parents, Prakash and Manaswini, and elder brother, Sarthak, in Herndon, Virginia. She is fond of reading, writing and drawing.



Odisha Through the Eyes of a Millennial

Nishant Sadangi

Odisha,
the Land of God, is my ground,
And Utkala is my roots.
I witness the colossal mountains,
looming over the reserves of wildlife,
chaperoning the waterfalls and forests,
as celestial beasts strife.
The ferocious tigers from Similipal,
protect their landscape,
swarms of feathered friends,
infiltrate the vast waters of Chilika Lake.
Creators compose patachitra,
the depictions of God,
as the village of Raghunathpur,
is abode.
To appease our savior, Lord Jagannath,
the swift debadashis offer Odissi,
adorning the fine silver,
work of Tarakasi.
The sun shines everywhere,
but it settles on the throne of Konark Sun Temple,
the wind causes a commotion,
as bells ring in the Puri Jagannath Temple.
The footsteps of grandeur souls,
echo in the deep sands of Puri,
ultimately finding Nirvana,
departing at Swargadwara...
Odisha,
the Land of God, is my ground,
And Utkala is my roots.

Nishant Sadangi is 14 years old and currently in 8th grade at Gregory Middle School in Naperville, Illinois. He loves to play baseball, table tennis, chess, guitar and cello. He is the son of Subhendu Sadangi.



My Mother

Sia Pradhan

My mother is a lion.
Protective of her young.

Firm

when it needs to be.

Loyal

My mother is a leader.

Fearless and powerful.

Clever,
strategic and calculated.

Never indecisive,
never in the wrong.

My mother is the ocean

Serene,

but intense.

Comforting,
feels like home.

Underneath lies some of the
Deepest mysteries of the world.

My mother is a piano.

A soothing instrument.

It can be loud,
but it can also be soft.

It can play,
Many different notes.

Just like my mother's
Many different emotions.

My mother is a diamond
in the blackness of coal.

One of a kind,
hard to find.

Pure and shiny.

Beautiful and
strong.

Sia Pradhan is 14-year-old who attends eighth grade at Detroit Country Day School in Michigan. She is the daughter of Sangita and Jyoti Ranjan Pradhan. She enjoys to spend her time with family and friends. Her hobbies include playing Tennis and Bollywood dancing.



Should College Tuition Be Free?

Samay Shashwat Sahoo

Many families in Texas struggle to save enough money for their children to attend college. Paying tuition and fees is quite a colossal task for a poor through even a middle-class family, and with a big increase in tuition rates of Texas state schools, their load grows even more. Students are increasingly applying for loans, which they have to manage with difficulty later. Tuition has gone up to compensate for reduced state funds since in the past years. The total revenue growth of Texas schools has decreased rapidly and more funding is required to keep them running at current standards. The State of Texas should provide free college tuition to graduates of certain merits in order to support their bright futures and reduce the burdens of student debts that millions face.

In the past decade, the average tuition and fees in Texas has nearly doubled, which causes increased disinterest in students. This affects many families who, despite saving for years, might not be able to cover all costs. Students of such families “are struggling with the seemingly insurmountable challenge of paying for their children’s college,” which leads to students deciding not to attend college (Watkins and Daniel). This affects a student’s future career since it is shown that “college graduates, on average, earned 56% more than high school grads in 2015,” according to data from the Economic Policy Institute (Rugaber). Most people who enter the workforce with only a high-school degree have an immanent disadvantage, facing more difficulty in securing a stable job. Providing free college tuition can rationally provide an opportunity for students who can’t afford college, since they will be able to continue in their studies with no restraints. With the financial limits alleviated, this issue can be improved as more people will be more educated in their fields, with a likely better start to a new phase in life.

Rising costs at universities is evident in the amount of people who apply for student loans, leading to the hampering of attaining a stable life after college. In 2015, US citizens “held a whopping \$1.3 trillion in student debt”, showing the continuing worry for students who step into the workforce (Hess). People apply for student loans to be able to attend college since they might be facing financial issues in their families. By providing free college tuition, students, who are especially in a tough situation, can achieve what they wish to do. They would have more focus “on their studies rather than worrying about how to scrape together enough funds for each upcoming school term,” which could lead to more success in future careers (Redd). This can especially help aspiring artists and writers, for example, who might not have a steady income until years later. Student debt also makes it “harder to save for a down payment and make monthly mortgage payments,” hindering people from being able to buy houses, which wasn’t such an issue prior to rising costs (Davidson). It can be seen how the effects of prolonging student debts in people's lives can hinder the affordability of even the average lifestyle. In order to reduce student debts, free tuition is one logical way to achieve this as students won’t be troubled by loans and debts. Providing for free college tuition for the whole state of Texas, therefore, can greatly improve people’s lives by eliminating the constant fear and worries that come with student debts.



However, some argue that making college completely free can hurt the economy and affect the standards at which colleges are run in Texas currently. From “2010 to 2015, Texas ranked last in the nation in total per-student revenue growth at its colleges and universities”, according to a study by the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (Watkins and Daniel). This is reflective of the reduced state appropriations to public universities due to economic issues. Reduced state funding from taxes, along with increased enrollment, causes Texas universities to be affected with the threatening of the future of universities nationwide as well. Since colleges in Texas are growing to improve research programs and increase standards, students and their families are now the main funders.

Reducing this main support could potentially cause a difference in how the public universities in Texas run. In a survey conducted by HuffPost and YouGov “six in ten respondents said they identify the quality of their state colleges and universities as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’” (Kingkade). Further reducing the money received by colleges by providing free tuition can affect the general excellence of Texas universities. In order to keep providing this for students, some argue that the high tuition costs need to persist until other funding systems improve.

The moral value of helping people who aren’t able to afford something they need is immense, and free tuition achieves that. Although doing so has some potential drawbacks, it provides many important benefits. One can acknowledge the number of Texans who aren’t able to afford college and the even more who are constantly budgeting for debt years after finishing college. This emphasizes that the state of Texas should provide free tuition, which is essential to improve these conditions. It is believed that every American should be provided an equal opportunity, however, with the current spike in tuition and fees this isn’t the case and needs to be changed to improve the future.

Samay Shashwat Sahoo is 15-year-old and his hobbies are playing the guitar and becoming an encyclopedia of cars. In his own words, here is what he thinks of OSA: “Being in close proximity to a group of very dedicated Odia volunteers including my father, I have been acquainted with OSA since my toddler years. Even though Dallas hosted their first OSA convention in 2004, I truly experienced it in 2011 when the whole Dallas Odia community rose to unprecedented level of collaboration and unity. It was like preparing for a big carnival – everybody working hard to deliver their part, my house becoming a workshop with many uncles and aunts working day and night. As a 9-year-old, it was an amazing experience for me – taking part in drama, dance, song, poem recital, and above all having fun with friends in a wonderful atmosphere. It was a great community building event. I started to recognize that we belong to a bigger fraternity; that there exists a common thread binding us all as Odias. I am ecstatic now to see that thread persisting through the years and am ready to carry it on as a member of the next generation.”

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Is Christopher McCandless a hero or fool?

Priyanka Choudhury

Just try to picture yourself teleporting back to the Mesozoic era 250 million years ago, where one's obligated to face the perils of uncivilization. A human being must acquire the physical and mental agility required to constantly confront ruthless beasts, dreadful weather conditions, and most significantly, deal with the lack of abundance of food. Facing the daunting realities of the wilderness is a preposterous challenge that any individual should not have to ever undertake.

However, a 24 year old man Christopher McCandless, often strived for the opportunity to explore the elements of wildlife as a means of breaking free from the chains of consumer culture. McCandless was a highly knowledgeable adult graduating from Emory University who later decided to hitchhike to Alaska on the April of 1992. From that day on, he began to dive into the Alaskan Wilderness without any proper gear, maps, compass, or an adequate amount of food and supplies.

As a result of his actions, he died in August 1992 after four months of survival in the wild and since then, many viewed him as an inspirational young adult with a strong will to take on such a baffling adventure. Although others may hold a positive perception of his unique character and audacity, he is really just an insane man encountering the wild completely unequipped.

To begin with, Christopher McCandless was negligent of his own health and surroundings. The day McCandless arrived at the start of the Stampede Trail on April 28, Jim Gallien, the person who had driven him gave him many precautions. A Wikipedia article on the background information of Christopher McCandless states that he "ignored Gallien's persistent warnings and refused his offers of assistance" (Wikipedia 2). His continual refusal to Gallien's advice implies how he is so oblivious and senseless of the world around him. Any other well-educated individual would have never precipitously leap into the woods without fully becoming aware of the area and take an unnecessary risk like this. Furthermore, McCandless successfully killed a massive moose weighing around a thousand pounds and let it go to waste afterwards. An article, known as, "The Beatification of Chris McCandless: From Thieving Poacher into Saint" by Craig Medred mentions, "apparently tried to preserve the flesh by smoking, apparently failed, and obviously let lots of prime meat go to



waste” (Medred 4). McCandless’s thoughtless actions reveal how he took the exploration of wildlife as some sort of game and entertainment. He clearly lacked the seriousness and adult-like mentality to make mindful decisions instead of unwisely putting himself under a life-threatening situation. Hence, closely examining these actions of McCandless pinpoints his carelessness of the environment and his condition of life.

In addition, Christopher McCandless had committed many unethical acts before he set off into the cold, bitter air of Alaska. Jon Krakauer, the author of an article called, “Death of an Innocent” addressed how McCandless was “congenial” and “peppered Gallien with sensible questions” (Krakauer 1) about what berries he could consume. Krakauer’s classification of his behavior as “congenial” doesn’t at all correlate to Medred stating, “From South Dakota, McCandless headed southwest and illegally slipped into Mexico packing a handgun” (Medred 3).

Illegally carrying a gun without a license is an indication of his inability to be a civilized being and be independent. With an honors degree from a well-rounded university, he still relied on his peers to be fully exposed to the formidable components of nature. McCandless even used obscene language to present his view about the policies and rules of the government. Unable to control his emotions he uttered the words, “How I feed myself is none of the government’s business.” (Medred 4). He expressing his strong distaste and indignation towards the government truly prove to the audience of his failure to adapt to the time and culture of today’s society. He could not accept the standard conventions of society and wanted everyone else to see life as just a joyful adventure with a carefree attitude. Being informed of his immoral behavior, one can find it hard to believe he is a well-educated man.

The death of Christopher McCandless is the epitome of foolishness and insanity. This man was in its purest essence a reckless individual simply meandering into the woods without the proper equipment and training. Examining McCandless’s tragedy and the events leading up to that incident makes it more apparent that he took this deadly journey for self-gratification rather for appreciation of wildlife. He deliberately put himself into isolation to get away from the world’s ethics, standards, and customs.

Priyanka Choudhury is 16-years-old and is in 11th grade at JP Stevens High School in New Jersey. She is the daughter of Archana Patra and Pradeep Choudhury.



Save The Earth

Bill Senapati

“The bottom line is that when Senator Inhofe says, 'Global warming is a hoax,' he is just dead wrong, according to the vast majority of climate scientists.”

Vermont senator Bernie Sanders speaks the truth when he speaks against Senator Inhofe who believes that climate change is not real. Humans are faced with a tremendous task to clean up the planet. Luckily, the stewards of the Earth live around the world in both developed countries and in ones which are still developing. These stewards lead by example which people around the globe can follow or incorporate into their own cleanup plans. Average citizens can also take part in the conservation efforts. All around the globe, the stewards of the Earth are leading by example, making a difference and providing methods for regular people to follow in order to fight climate change.

Bhutan is leading by example, being the world's first carbon negative country. The developing country is nestled in between two of the most overpopulated countries in the world, India and China. The nation overall is not just carbon neutral by not releasing any carbon into the air, it is even carbon negative. That means that the nation's lands intake more carbon than they produce. Since seventy-one percent of the nation is under tree cover it can absorb many tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. In addition to reducing the carbon footprint, the deep forestation of Bhutan makes it an incredibly biodiverse place. Several years ago, a Bengal tiger was seen suffering in the hot dense jungle and it was having a difficult time. However, since all of Bhutan's forests are connected together the tiger was able to travel from the hot jungle to the more mountainous areas of the nation where it is much cooler. Bhutan gives examples to people around the world to follow, so that they can work toward attaining themselves a cleaner world. Some of the examples are strong government influence. The president of Bhutan has passed many laws for several government agencies to exist and help conserve the beautiful nation. Bhutan also has another practice that governments around the world could use: a focus on Gross National Happiness instead of Gross National Product. This shows how Bhutan is leading by example for other countries around the world.

The Swedish city of Malmo is leading by example, by being Europe's first carbon neutral city. The city is proof that developed places can also be changed in such a way that they help the environment. Over the course of 10 years, what used to be an industrial wasteland has been transformed into a charming city, with the joint efforts of green companies and the city's government. The city is leading by example because it is the first city in Europe to attain carbon neutrality. A variety of renewable energy sources work together to fulfill the entire city's needs and provide excess energy to nearby cities. The city has lots of public transport such as buses, for when the weather is not nice, and bikes for all its residents, for when the weather is more pleasant outside.



Garbage trucks are eliminated from the equation because there is a system of vacuum tubes that collects all the rubbish to one centralized station. At the station, it is carefully burned so that the energy released can continue the burning and create energy for the city. Food waste is reused by the city. All of the city's public transportation buses are fueled by biogas that is produced from the food waste generated by the city. There are very few cars in the city, and those that are there are powered by electricity. Residents can use a simple iPad app to see how much energy they have used in the day, and when electricity is cheaper. By allowing the citizens to interact with how much energy they are using on a ground level and adjust their activities, they are able to feel how they are making a difference, and are more inclined to support the environmental movement as a whole. If the data gathered from the city is positive, then more community leaders and governments will try to replicate the results of the town of Malmö which is leading by example.

Similar to a community, a coral reef hosts a very vast ecosystem that is very vulnerable to damage from man made waste, and people are making a difference in the preservation of this environment. There are multiple components that must be considered when deciding what areas to protect. Natives living near a coral system have depended upon the pure and raw reef system for food for thousands of years. They are in sync with the environment and draw just enough fish to make a living and keep the environment in a healthy state. Banning fishing in an area outright would cause the natives living there to lose their jobs. Joshua Drew states, "To help balance the need for conservation and making a living, scientists had suggested that instead of one big park that provides a lot of coverage for one reef system, while leaving the rest unprotected, a better way is to create a system of protected areas nested together like pearls on a string". The pearl system of coral conservation areas shows a balance between protection and making a living for the nearby residences. Residents will not be significantly affected because there are many small areas of protected land that they can simply avoid, and many other places where they can fish. In case there is an environmental disaster in one of the areas that is protected, all the other conservation areas will be relatively unaffected since they are spread out. If there was just one large protection area then one major disaster like an oil spill would affect the entire area and harm the environment. By analyzing the locals living in an area and the environment as a whole, Earth's stewards are able to make a difference in the fight against climate change.

Individuals that like to scuba dive around coral reefs can make a difference in the fight against climate change. For example, marine biologist Dr. David Vaughan has a deep passion for scuba diving and he is the program director for coral restoration at the Mote Tropical Research Center in the Florida Keys. Dr. Vaughan broke a piece of coral into smaller pieces and instead of the coral becoming stressed and dying it grew like crazy. Vaughan claims, "... we can actually stimulate what the water will be like 100 years from now, so we can try to forecast which of these corals are gonna be winners and utilize the ones that you know will be better adapted in the future to those conditions". Using science Dr. Vaughan can choose which coral growths have the genetics required



to better survive 100 years from now. Using the corals that have favored genetics, he can essentially breed coral, similar to how pets can be bred, until he has a coral that has the genetics required to survive successfully in the future. Dr. Vaughan and his small organization are making a difference without any central governmental help.

There are several global leaders who have united together to fight global warming and regular people can help. A member of the European parliament and the vice chair for the environment, Dan Jorgensen, comments about what we can do to change the world. Jorgensen states, “taxation is probably a very large part of the solution because what we need to do is put tax that is a price on consuming the things that will cause a lot of carbon emission.” This elucidates that what needs to happen to help save the environment is that there need to be taxes on things that will result in carbon emission. Taxes will raise the prices of things that emit a lot of carbon. Things that emit a lot of carbon will be more expensive than things that emit little carbon. Things that emit little carbon will be relatively cheaper than things that emit a lot of carbon. Therefore, the economy will shift towards the go green mind set. Men and women can carry reusable shopping bags instead of paying tax on plastic bags. Individuals can also make a difference by using reusable water bottles instead of buying plastic bottles. Driving fuel efficient cars is yet another thing that people can do to reduce carbon emissions into the air. Individuals can make a big difference in the fight against climate change by following a green lifestyle.

The planet Earth has been home to life as we know it for thousands of years. It is not time to ask what the Earth can do for us, rather what we can do for the Earth to keep it healthy for generations to come. Developing nations and developed nations must all come together in order to save the Earth. Bhutan, one of the smallest nations on this planet, boasts seventy-one percent forest cover and it is carbon negative. Sweden, a developed nation, has renovated an old abandoned junk yard into a high tech environmentally friendly neighborhood. Coral reefs are also an essential part of saving the Earth from calamity. Finally, taxes can be the solution to change the consumer mindset to become environmentally friendly. The blue-green planet has been home to life for millions of years, and it must be conserved in order to sustain life in the uncertain future.

Bill Senapati is 17-years-old and is in 11th grade at Westford Academy in Massachusetts. His passions are helping to community and music. He is proud that we are able to gather in the foreign land and celebrate Odia culture.



An Eggsay

Disha Das

We go way back, eggs and I. In the beginning, our relationship was fairly standard. We didn't really encounter each other that often, anyways. I mostly had fried eggs, sometimes an omelet, or a hardboiled egg. As I grew older, eggs became a frequent source of my curiosity and questions about the world. The questions have evolved throughout my life, of course. From wondering whether it was really luck that every egg that I had ever witnessed crack open never seemed to contain a baby chick inside, to finding that, considering simple evolution, the egg did come first, not the chicken! After seeing a Pinterest hack on how to figure out if eggs are fresh or not, I learned why bad eggs float at the top of a glass of water, while fresh eggs will sink to the bottom. Not all my scientific discoveries were met with the same amount of delight, such as when I came to the unfortunate realization that there was such a thing as too many eggs, learning about cholesterol in the process.

I think I could use eggs as a fairly accurate measure of major milestones in my life. The day that my parents decided I could be entrusted with a hot pan and eggs in my hand is really when the game changed. Not only was I overjoyed with my new responsibility to keep the kitchen from descending into chaos, I began to appreciate eggs in all their glory, after realizing all the ways I could cook them. And, even though I'm not 18 yet, I believe that adding red pepper flakes to my eggs, in addition to the traditional salt and pepper, marked my transition into a sophisticated young adult.

As I reflect on eggs, I realize the many lessons I have learned from them. When my dad placed an egg on my plate where the yolk had already broken in the pan, I came to the startling realization that my parents were not perfect. Years ago, I went to a hotel where for breakfast, a chef made omelets in front of us. Working efficiently and skillfully, he sprinkled our choice of toppings and flipped the omelet onto itself, creating a bundle of eggs and vegetables, bound together by cheese. The omelet was delicious, but watching him make the omelet was the most captivating, and now memorable, part. He taught me that having a positive attitude toward your work will not only make it more enjoyable for yourself, but also spread positivity to those around you.

Eggs have been a constant form of trial and error. Whenever I tried to fry an egg, the whites would cook but leave the yolk jarringly cold, thus ruining my prime fried egg experience. But after learning that the easy fix was to put some water in the pan, cover it with a lid, and let the steam cook the egg from the top and bottom, I was able to relish in the warm, creamy yolk once again and enjoy my eggs even more than I had before.

Another time, I decided to try a new trick I had read online to get a creamier yolk in a hardboiled egg. I even asked my entire family if they wanted hard boiled eggs before I started, because I felt like sharing. But, as I realized later, I didn't wait until my water was fully boiling to turn the heat off and put my eggs in. When I tried to peel the eggs, the whites were so undercooked that they stuck to the eggshell, leaving me with two half cooked yolks, one of them (somewhat) able



to retain a runny white mixture around the sides. My parents traded a legitimate snack for some bewildered amusement. I learned three very important lessons from this ordeal: 1) Patience, grasshopper. 2) When you try new things, you won't necessarily get it right the first time. 3) Always tell your parents you'll give them food after you have made it and verified that it is indeed edible.

Even though my egg "failures" can be considered the "downs," I associate eggs more with the "ups" of my life. I have used eggs to celebrate my accomplishments, like when our chemistry class decorated eggs before blowing them up, right after the AP exam. For me, eggs also represent effort and lavishness: the days I decide to have eggs for breakfast, I commit myself to taking the time to make a healthier, tastier, and more artfully plated meal than my daily Cheerios.

As much fun as I've had with my egg experiences, I am most excited for what the future holds, college and beyond. I look forward to a time when I can successfully poach an egg, or to a day when I can make scrambled eggs with the actual intention of making scrambled eggs, rather than a convenient back up plan for when I am unable to flip my omelet. Whatever obstacles I encounter, I know that eggs will always be there for me, whether they give me the energy to start the day, or are just a nice addition to some ramen noodles after a hard day of work.

Disha Das is currently a high school senior at Thomas Sprigg Wootton High School in Rockville, Maryland. She is an avid follower of tennis. Her other hobbies are cooking and listening to music. She is a varsity tennis player. She is also trained in Hindustani Classical Vocal music and piano. She is the daughter of Debananda Das and Deepa Parija, OSA Life Members and brother of Dhruv Das.



Munising Falls, MI. Photo Courtesy of Mamata Sahoo



The Interview

Srujani Das

The mellow silence drapes a translucent curtain
while you sit across from me.
Your eyes judging from afar,
Burn.

Our perfectly painted purple world starts to melt away from around us,
as you start to wake up to this artificial reality.

The brown ragged journal comes out of your pocket
Along with your favorite Montblanc black inked pen.
You look up at me and start scribbling down three words on the last page.
The journal and pen are carefully placed back into the pocket.
The wooden engraved clock ticks away quickly

Your spring love ran away, but you have no regrets.
The youngsters immersed themselves in their own virtual reality,
But you have no regrets.

You stopped planting your favorite white roses 13 years ago, but you have no regrets
The consultation left no room for comments, apologies, or questions

Your eyes start to wander and finally stop to stare at the empty space behind me,
Your distorted view clouds your thoughts
Your legs cross over one another,

And your arms, which were resting on the glistening wooden armrest,
move into your pocket and you pull out that ragged journal again.

You open it to the last page. You look at the three words you scribbled down.
and with a calm tone and authoritative smile, you look at me and say
“Bravo, my life.”

Srujani Das is a senior in high school in Atlanta. She lives with her parents, Mitali and Smaran Das, and her younger brother. Her hobbies include playing the piano, chess, writing and reading.



Editor's Note: This column stood out to us as a true representation of this year's souvenir theme. It makes us consider the power of generational change and how the experiences we give today's youth transform tomorrow's leaders.

The Value of Community

Gaurav Behera

It was a bright and blistering afternoon. Every soul except my grandfather retreated to the shadows. Dawning a bucket hat and swinging a briefcase, he ventured into the sun to survey land to be developed for a temple and community gathering center. I called for him to come back home because of the heat, but he simply turned around, smiled, and went on his way.

My grandfather is a retired civil engineer. He used to brave the heat and climb structures using any nook and crevice he could to get a better view of the progress of his projects. His occupation is highly prestigious where he lives. Many students, especially engineering students, aspired to be just like him. However, toward the end of his career, complications from diabetes significantly limited his tolerance of the intense heat.

It was the longest 45 minutes of my life, but the backbreaking weight of anxiety suddenly lifted when he came back. I asked him why he continued his demanding work ethic at such an old age when his coworkers, most of whom were much younger, practiced a relaxed work ethic. He smiled and quoted an old Odia proverb that can be translated, "While they think of work for the glory, I think of work as duty."

This seemingly simple statement puzzled me. I asked him numerous questions about what this duty was but got no definite answer. Months later, back in Rochester, I was helping elderly hospital volunteers complete their required annual training. They could not see well, so I read every slide aloud. Although the task proved to be tiresome, I noticed that the trainees were smiling with satisfaction. In most trainings, they had dreary expressions, and I never knew how I was doing. But this one was much different, and their smiles motivated me to help them even more. However, I looked over my shoulder and noticed others offering little assistance to the volunteers they were working with. I could tell that those senior volunteers were struggling.

My grandfather's words came to mind, and I realized that many classify work and duty as separate entities. They work only mechanically, while those who do their work with sincerity are doing their duty, that is, their contribution to society, to something greater than themselves. I also realized my grandfather viewed work as his life's purpose. He believed it was his duty to serve his community by building that temple and community gathering center. His compassion and love for his community inspired me to reflect on my relationship with my community, and I developed a greater appreciation for the people who supported opportunities that enabled me to pursue my passion. Like my grandfather, I feel it is my job to give back to my community because it has given



so much to me. Because I have seen the effects of disease on people close to me, I believe I can contribute best by applying my technology interest to medicine.

My grandfather helped me see the value of doing my part for the community. Working with senior volunteers, developing economical medical diagnostic tools, and other projects have given me a level of satisfaction I had not experienced before. I seek to contribute and improve my community and hopefully in my own small way the rest of the world.

Gaurav Behera is 18 years old and in 12th grade at Century High School in Rochester, MN. He is the son of Gautam and Sandhya Rani Behera. His passion is making healthcare more accessible to people across the world. In his opinion, OSA gives a firsthand experience of Odia culture tradition and friendship to the next generation of Odias who grew up in the Americas. OSA's annual event always made him feel as if he is visiting Odisha, helping him connect to Odisha and his relatives on a deeper level when he actually visits there.

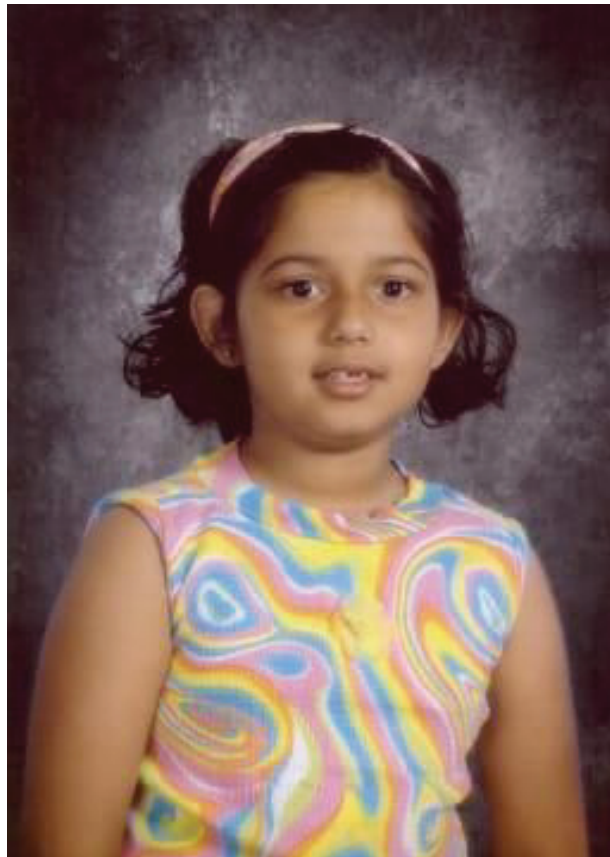


Sculpture of Elephant at Sun Temple of Konark. Photo courtesy of Shashanka Nanda.



Meghna Memorial Award Competition

49th Annual OSA Convention, 2018



Late Meghna Mohapatra

The Spirit of Creative Writing

“Words build bridges into unexplored regions.”





“Aspiration” by Swapnalata Mishra (Rath)

Meghna Memorial Award: The Threshold to the World of Creative Writing

The Michigan Odia community lost little Meghna in a road accident right after a grand celebration of Kumar Purnima on Nov. 5, 2005. The next morning, it was very hard for each of us to accept that such a hard truth really can happen overnight. But it was the truth, and the Michigan Odia community stood together to bear the shock.

To honor Meghna and to pay tribute to her creative spirit, it was deemed appropriate to institute the “Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing.” Michigan OSA made its first attempt through the 2007 OSA Convention Souvenir Committee and awarded winners at the convention. The same year, National OSA accepted Michigan OSA’s proposal to organize the Meghna Memorial Award competition every year by soliciting articles from school-going children up to the age of 18 through the annual Souvenir. The following year, on behalf of Meghna Memorial Trust as the award coordinator, I contacted the Chairperson of the 2008 OSA Convention Souvenir Committee Sri Lalatendu Manasingh. Officially, the 2008 OSA convention Souvenir team accepted the responsibility and a new Era started for the children of odia origin in North America.

Each year after that, convention Souvenir committees regularly took over the responsibility to conduct the competition with the established guidelines proposed by the Meghna Memorial Trust (posted in OSA website). MMAC has reached its 11th year awarding 21 kids from Odia origin in North America. Recently, with popular demand, second and third place prizes have been added, and are being sponsored by generous individuals.

The 2017 Annual OSA convention was arranged to be in a Bahamas cruise by OSA executives. The OSA (Utkarsha) editors took over the responsibility of the Meghna Memorial Award Competition. This year also OSA Utkarsha Editors volunteered to manage the competition along with the 2018 Souvenir team. The Souvenir committee decided to submit all Souvenir write-ups for the Meghna Memorial Award Competition. We did not disqualify any article because our goal is to encourage the creativity and writing spirit of all Odia children in USA and Canada.

It was a wonderful experience to witness the enthusiasm in children expressing their literary creative spirit. My sincere thanks to Mr. Prasanta Bhunya, who represented OSA Editorial Board and Mr. Santosh Kar, who represented 2018 Souvenir committee to organize the competition.

Long live Meghna’s creative writing spirit! May God bless our young writers to be successful in the vast literary world outside of OSA.

My sincere thanks to all parents who have encouraged their children to write and honor their own creative spirit. Congratulations to the winners! Way to go! Effort should go on!

“Let us sacrifice our today, so that our children can have a better tomorrow.”

— A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Swapnalata Mishra (Rath)
Chair, 2018 Souvenir & Directory Committee



Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing: The Journey

Meghna is alive with her creative spirit among our young writers who aspire to pen. Her memorial award is a platform to showcase the fresh wordsmiths of OSA. Targeting the creative writers of ages 7-12 and 13-18; MMA came a long way with promising vision for the future OSA literateurs. The certificate and check is a mere formality, but the motivation makes the soul of our creative children active. It brings a positive vibe which makes them put their imagination into words and their write-up becomes their brain child. One after another, they create and procreate these precious gems.

Being a part of MMA, I feel great to support the cause and sandwich myself in between judges and the writers. The selection of judges is the most important process, and we choose judges who understand the psychology, our Western Odia children, while simultaneously having experience in the world of literature. Choosing judges is a challenging task but for such a benevolent cause, we get judges at par.

The write-ups are selected with the criterion for recognition as circulated by the Souvenir team. They are coded neutrally, and with all caution sent to judges for evaluation. The judges then send it back with their evaluation and the winner is announced. They are then recognized at the OSA convention.

Our judges:

Dash Benhur



Born in 1953 at Kendrapada, he was an academician of political science for 35 years and now lives in Bhubaneswar. A literateur, he has penned 140 books of short stories, poems, novels, essays, travelogues, and features. He is the recipient of Odisha Sahitya Akademi Award, Odisha Vighyan Akademi Award, and The National Competition for Children's Literature prize of NCERT, New Delhi and Bal Sahitya Puraskar of Sahitya Akademi.

Jyoti Nanda



Born in 1955 at Talcher, a Revenue subdivision of Odisha, Jyoti Nanda currently lives in Bhubaneswar. Jyoti Nanda is a retired teacher of History with interest in writing Odia fictions. He has in depth knowledge in relation to art, culture, and literature of Odisha as well as of international fame. His write-ups gives deep insight into world literature. He is a master of translating literature of the world into Odia for our readers.



Mona Dash



Mona, originally from India, now lives in London. A fiction and poetry writer who was awarded a 'Poet of Excellence' in the House of Lords' and Asian Writer UK 2018. Her book "Untamed Heart" and poetry collections "Dawn-drops" and "A Certain Way," allowed her to participate in readings in venues such as Lauderdale House, Nehru Centre, The House of Lords, The Library, Leicester Writes Festival, Yurt Café, and London. Her short stories have been listed in various competitions in UK.

Narendra Patnaik



Born in Kashipur of Rayagada, Narendra Patnaik is now a broadcaster with All India Radio for the last 28 years. He is a presenter of literary magazines on the radio regularly. He is the co-author of "Ketoti Apadha File," which brings awareness about the unsung heroes of undivided Koraput. "Aadibhoomira Turyanada" is a monumental work done by him and three other authors. This piece explicates the story of atrocities of foreign rulers in Koraput district and the brave struggle put up by the innumerable freedom fighters

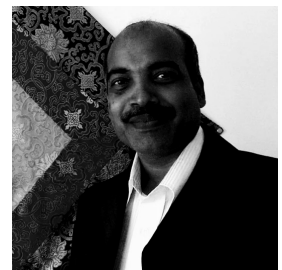
My heartfelt thanks goes to the judges who evaluated the budding writers of the OSA family by giving their precious time and experience in art, culture, and literature. I appreciate the effort of Meghna Memorial Trust, Souvenir team, and the executive body who marathoned Meghna's creative spirit in North America.

Bonne Chance...!

Prasanta Kumar Bhunya

MMAC 2018 Team

On behalf of OSA Editors



Meghna Memorial Award Junior Division: Third Place

A Broken Bridge

Sarthak Das

A clouded, faded and grey century,
A facade
Labelled the “Golden Age of Diversity”

An immature human being
Trapped within a fantastical realm of the world
To them, the real world is unseeing

A disrupted bridge of communication
Between old and new
A need for continuous narration

The broken telephone between two generations
Telling a message
It becomes a distant relation

New meets old
Lessons are told
They wait for the future to unfold

This gap in generations
The future should lead to
Affection and admiration



Sarthak Das is 12 years old, and is in seventh grade at Ridgeview Charter School of Atlanta. He lives with his parents, Smaran and Mitali Das, and his older sister. His hobbies include playing soccer, playing the guitar, and reading books.



Meghna Memorial Award Junior Division: Second Place

Unforgettable Night

Adwik Panda

It was a normal school day. I was excited because I had got 100% on my test and on top of it, one more day until the long weekend fun. I had everything planned for the long awaited break, I just had to deal with Friday which was a pajama and movie day anyways. So technically, my fun day started from Thursday evening. But things always don't go as we plan, little did I know that day will be the life changing day for me and my family.

That night was the longest night so far. Thursday, 12 a.m. at my house, I was awake but my parents thought I was sleeping. I suddenly heard my mom crying. I asked "What's going on?"

My mom didn't say anything. I asked my brother, but before I asked him, I heard his tears. In tears, my brother said my grandma (but all grandkids call her "Dada") died. I felt the tears falling from my eyes. It seemed like I was the last one standing. A very strange sensation of falling into a black hole. My mom told my dad that she had to go visit my grandpa. I was so sad that I bit my tongue. I tried not to scream and keep my emotions to myself. I was so sad more like I was mad, a feeling so hard to describe.

The next day, me, my dad, and my brother dropped my mom at the airport. My mom was going to India to spend time with her family. I wished I could go.

I still miss my grandma. My mom thought that her mom would live forever, but that is never the reality. At that moment I felt undone, under the tempest.... just wanting to close my eyes and wish everything go back to like before. Lord give me the strength to overcome this pain.

I will miss you Dada for the rest of my life!!!!!! You will always be in my heart remembered, no matter how old I am.



Adwik Panda is a third grader at Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary School in Aurora, IL. He lives with his parents Meghkanta Mohapatra and Debashish Panda, and also has a older brother Ayush. He loves basketball, swimming, and rollerblading. He has a fascination for cartwheels and karate.



Meghna Memorial Award Junior Division: First Place

Adhira's Ocean

Ajeetesh Ojha

The ocean waves were burying the ship under its great forces. The rain was pounding on the deck, as the ship was being tossed around in the waves. Great amounts of grays were streaked among the sky as the lightning flashed. He knew there was no turning back now.

The crew was scurrying around, running, trying to save themselves from the fleets of water flooding the ship. The darkness in the midnight sky thickened as the wind was pushing the people of the ship.

Adhira found herself pulling the sails up, but it was no use. With such powerful winds, the cream of the once whole flag was being torn apart. She heard people yelling at her to do something about the sails, but she was helpless.

And then, slowly, turned into rapidly, people were being thrown off the ship. They tried to grab onto the railing, and Adhira herself tried to hoist them up, and instead of allowing her too, they shouted at her, "It's your fault!" And they pushed her away, willing to die than to be saved.

But the waves got stronger, and Adhira got weaker. The wind slammed into her face—agonizing, making her fall into darkness...

Adhira woke up, lying on the sandy shore of an island. The water gently pushed against the shore, the water rippling ever so slightly. It was dreamy, and it was dead silence. Adhira could feel her own pulse attempting to recall what had happened. But the seagulls flying around cheerfully were too distracting.

Her looks were no longer a cunning beauty as it had been on the ship. Her eyes were a stormy gray, and her hair aghast with bits of sand and seaweed in it. Her clothes were a mess as well. Her complexion was a pale brown, and she looked very much like a hobo.

Adhira flopped down, too tired to think. She lay there in the sun for a while, unaware of anything around her. It wasn't until she heard the loud waves crash for a second of consciousness, she woke up. The radiant light was reflecting on the sea.

"It must be about afternoon now," she muttered. Half-heartedly she got up. "Well, if I'm going to be stuck here for the rest of my life, I better start exploring..."

She was exhausted, and though she was in no shape to look around, it's what she was born to do.

Adhira was a sailor, a crewmate, a friend of the ocean. The ocean was an unexpected, dangerous place. What would strike, could never be known. Adaption is what she learned. Adapting to whatever she could find—know.



But what's the use, she thought. She was ashamed of herself, and she couldn't live up to the fact knowing it was her fault that so many had died. There was a lump in her throat. Adhira sighed and tried to push the thought away, but she couldn't.

But the only thing that Adhira could do was stay and think. Think about the memories that had once drowned her deep into thoughts. Now, none of that seemed to matter now. She wished that she had appreciated home back then. How lovely it would have been to be home right now, sitting in an armchair.

But what was more was she had never shown her appreciation, even for things that she did appreciate. Sadly, she looked over the horizon into the light blue of the sea. The ocean was all she could depend on now. The rays of light brought her warmth and hope.

"I'll be saved," she muttered to herself, sighing. Whatever was to happen was to happen for the good of herself and everyone. Adhira started praying to Lord Shiva. Adhira was a big follower in God and believed in the gods. Kneeling down, she started to pray.

Adhira started to chant, "Om namah Shivaya," repeatedly. This continued for another hour, her concentration being set in stone. She missed her home, and she missed her family and the crew. She missed being on the ship, and everything else that had once been a part of her life. Adhira through her conciseness could feel the essence of peace overflowing her body from the meditating.

Then, her concentration was broken when she heard the sound of great waves splashing, and in the distance, she saw a great brown chunk of wood—a ship! Lord Shiva had listened to her prayers!

Waving her arms wildly in the air, Adhira hopped up and down on the shore. The ship was getting larger and larger each second, and Adhira was bubbling with happiness. The ship finally docked, and Adhira hopped onto it.

Smiling to herself, she was welcomed aboard by the rest of the surviving crew, assuring her that none of the deaths were her fault. Adhira's head were filled with thoughts of home as she started off into the clouds.



Ajeetesh Ojha is 11 years olds and is a sixth grader in Clarksburg, Maryland. He loves singing, doing art , playing piano and flute and writing articles for OSA magazine. He is in drama club of his middle school. His parents are Ila and Arun Ojha, OSA life members.



Meghna Memorial Award Senior Division: Third Place

An Apparition by the River

Aaryana Rajanala

It was about to rain. He could feel it. The air was suffocatingly thick, threatening to collapse in a mass of all-encompassing clouds. It clung to his skin, pressing its way through his entire being, forcing the warm humidity into him. He sighed, tilting his head downwards as he stared at the water, shimmering in the streetlights, rippling beneath the footsteps of the ghosts that danced on the river. This had been her favorite weather, the calm before the storm, the stillness that made them ache with the wish that things could always be so peaceful. He rested his elbows on the railing, feeling the icy metal burning his arms. If only she could see how beautiful it was tonight...

"Excuse me," a small voice said from beside him. He turned reluctantly away from the water and looked downwards to see...a little boy, enveloped by a periwinkle raincoat with the sleeves hanging off his arms, his face barely visible beneath his bright yellow hat, an orange umbrella held over his head, shadowing him from the light. The boy peered up at him with small, curious brown eyes. "Can you please tell me your name?"

He stared at the boy for a while, perplexed by his peculiarity, then nodded, smiling sadly. "My name is Khed," he said softly.

Be careful, my love, that name is a sweet, dangerous thing.

The boy continued to look up at him, frowning ever so slightly. And then, the statement more a thoughtless comment than any kind of meaningful remark, he said, "Your name means regret."

Khed nodded and turned back towards the river, placing his arms back on the railing, focusing on the ghosts' dance, their every step, every turn, every flourish with which they skated on top of the water. "Yes. I think it ended up being kind of fitting. What's your name?"

"Fitting?" the boy asked, ignoring his question. "Why?"

Khed raised an eyebrow, his interest in this strange child barely overcoming the grief that made it too painful to speak. "Why do you want to know?"

The boy shrugged. "I like stories."

"You probably like adventure stories, though," Khed sighed, looking wistfully at the water. "Stories with action and happy endings. Mine is a sad story."



You can't say what kind of story it is until you finish it!

"Sad stories can still have happy endings," the boy said, joining him by the railing. He gripped the thin metal bars with small, gloved hands.

Khed didn't say anything, looking down briefly at the boy before turning his gaze back to the water, watching it shift and shimmer in the moonlight...

"This was her favorite place," he mumbled absentmindedly to himself.

"Whose favorite?" the boy asked suddenly.

Khed had nearly forgotten he was there. "A friend of mine," he replied simply.

"Did she have a name?"

Suhani.

"I don't think it would make any difference to you."

He stared up at Khed. "Maybe I know her."

He shook his head, locks of black hair falling over his eyes, obscuring his vision, hiding the ghosts. "No, there's no chance you could have met her, not the way fate carries on. It would be too fortunate for me to meet someone who knows her."

Fate is a strange, twisted thing. Every now and then, it comes to our aid. How do you think we met, my love?

The boy stared up at him, watching him carefully, searching for answers Khed could never reveal. "Who was she?"

My sweet, sweet Suhani...

"She was a woman who meant a lot to me."

Awe entered his gaze, and he said his next words with reverence. "Were you...in love with her?"

Khed nodded. "Yes, that's right. I loved her so much that I never wanted to let her go."

Please, Khed, please, please don't ever let go...

"Are you still in love with her?"

"More than you could ever imagine."



The boy glanced in all directions, searching for something. He turned back to Khed. "Where is she, then?"

The clouds collapsed, the downpour hitting them fast and hard, the sound thick in their ears. The wind sighed, refusing to provide solace as it drifted past them. Khed shivered, immediately drenched, clothes clinging to his skin, hair dripping, chilled by the wind.

"I don't know," he whispered, his voice trembling, the tears mixing with the raindrops on his cheeks.

I love the sound of the rain, how it drowns out all the other noises. It makes it easier to focus on you.

The boy reached over with his umbrella. "Here," he offered.

Khed shook his head. "Your parents would be very upset if you got wet."

"That's okay," the boy insisted, adjusting his hat to keep out the rain.

Khed smiled at the boy, the expression as melancholy as ever. "Thank you," he said, taking the bright orange umbrella.

"But why don't you know where she is? You said you never wanted to let her go."

"I didn't have much of a choice."

I'm sorry, Khed, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry...

The boy didn't move for a second, watching the river ripple beneath the torrents of rain, distorting the reflections of the light in the water. "Why does she like it here?" he asked, shuffling closer to Khed in an attempt to share the umbrella. The raindrops pounded on his cap, demanding entry, the sound deafening as it filled his ears.

Khed smiled downwards at the boy, moving sideways so that the umbrella sheltered them both.

"She loved the water," he breathed. "The way it never stopped moving and changing to adapt and accommodate...and yet, it remains unyielding to even the most powerful of forces. And she loved the way it sparkled in any kind of light, how reflective it was, how it could show you worlds in a single wave."

It breathes, Khed, just like us, the ebb and flow, the eternal energy, the perpetual pulse... can you feel it?

"Wow," the boy gasped, staring at the river, eyes widening with a newfound appreciation.



Khed's eyes gleamed, shining with a dim reminiscence. "And she used to stand here and watch the ghosts dance on the water, and she'd try to teach me to follow the steps. Sometimes I could see the edges of translucent dresses, hands in hands, the water rippling to a song I could never quite make out. I saw flower petals floating on the river and laughter ringing through the air. But I could never hear the music."

It's a waltz, Khed, you have to feel the beat, the rhythm, match the tempo. See, it's not so hard! Keep listening, keep listening!

The boy watched the water carefully, as if trying to find the ghosts himself, trying desperately to catch sight of the flowers, the hands, just a glimpse of the apparitions on the water. "I can't see it," he said, his eyebrows creasing, though more in disappointment than frustration. "How did she see them?"

"She had a special kind of magic." Khed smiled at the river, watching the ghosts drift elegantly through the rainbows in the mist created by the rain. Maybe he'd be able to join them someday.

"But why isn't she here right now?" the boy said suddenly, shaking him out of his thoughts. "Why aren't you two together if you were really in love?"

Khed? Khed, what's wrong?

"We had a fight," Khed said simply, his head beginning to pound at the thought of it.

S-Suhani, I...it's nothing.

"About what?" the boy pressed.

No, Khed, that's not true. I know you better than that. Don't lie to me.

"I can't even remember," he gasped, gripping the railing. The umbrella almost slipped out of his trembling hand. "It was so long ago and such a short argument and so trivial that I don't know why it ever happened..." The ghosts slowed down as the rain intensified, as if the storm made it harder for them to continue, like it had overpowered the music.

Please, Suhani, it's nothing--

"Then why didn't you just make up with each other? Couldn't you have said sorry?"

Of course it isn't nothing! You aren't feeling good, Khed, and I need to know why, so please just be honest and tell me!

Khed shook his head. "No, I couldn't have."

Listen, I'm sorry, but I just...I'm not...



“Why?”

You’re not what? Khed, this isn’t the first time you’ve done this. Why is it that you always feel like you can’t talk to me? I need you to talk to me, we can’t keep doing this!

Khed could barely move, overcome by a leaden sorrow weighing him down, the rain refusing to wash away the remnants of remorse burning inside him. The ghosts mocked him as they twirled past. “It was too late for me.”

Suhani, please just let me...let me explain what’s going on. I promise, I’ll talk now, just please don’t go!

The boy’s hat covered his frown almost entirely, but the expression was audible when he spoke. “But why?” he asked again, the confusion only serving to amplify his curiosity.

I...I can't do this right now. I'm sorry, Khed, but I've heard too many apologies. Please, just figure out how to trust me and come back.

Khed forced himself to take a deep breath, struggling to see straight, his focus shifting between the gentle rhythm of the waves, the specters skating across the water’s surface, and the rain as it fell, drop by drop by drop, like crystals in the air, shimmering for eternities before falling, so fragile that they shattered at even the slightest touch. “I didn’t want her to worry,” he whispered at last, each word making him ache.

The boy was about to ask another question, but he stopped himself. “You didn’t tell her something,” he mumbled in realization, looking back towards the water. “You lied to her. Then...is she gone?”

“No,” he replied, wiping the tears from his cheeks. “No, she’s out there somewhere. She told me to come back, but I never did. I never could.”

“But you loved her!” the boy exclaimed suddenly in objection, staring up at Khed with wide eyes.

Khed returned his gaze, unflinching beneath the underlying accusation. “I know,” he said, the words barely audible against the rain.

The ghosts had all stopped, turning towards him, watching him with critical, all-knowing eyes. The rain had slowed to a soft drizzle. He didn’t give the boy a chance to say another word before continuing, “Sometimes we do that. Sometimes we care about each other so much that we do our best to protect each other...but that ends up causing us the most pain. Sometimes we love each other so much that we can’t see when we’re hurting them.”



The ghosts smiled at him, nodding in approval. The music began again and they continued, step by step, turning and spinning, swaying in time to the song.

The boy opened his mouth to say something, but he was cut off by the voice of a woman, calling frantically, “Sonu! Sonu, where are you?”

“Amma,” the boy muttered in response, turning away from the water.

The woman walked up to him at a brisk pace, splashing through the puddles on the ground as she hurriedly held her own umbrella over his head. “Why aren’t you holding your umbrella?” she demanded, frowning at him with more concern than anger.

“I was sharing it,” he responded, turning back. “With him. It started raining and--” He stopped mid-sentence, freezing as he saw the space beside him, occupied by only the orange umbrella on the ground.

The woman raised an eyebrow, taking the boy by the hand. “Please, stay with me right now, alright? I just need to put this down and we can leave.”

The boy stared at the single white flower in the woman’s hands as she clutched it to her chest, protecting it from the rain. Moving to pick up his umbrella, he nodded and watched as she bent down to place the flower by the edge of the railing, smiling warmly at it. He couldn’t see her expression as she knelt there.

He watched her breathe in deeply and whisper to him, “Sonu, please listen. Promise you won’t ever keep secrets from me, alright?”

The boy looked up, startled, hesitating before answering. “Okay, Amma,” he said at last. “I promise. But why?”

She stood, wiping tears from her cheeks and turning back towards him. He felt his heart melt as he saw the fear in her eyes, hidden beneath the layers of despair, looking almost guilty. “Because I once lost someone whom I loved very, very much to a secret.”

She took his hand and he stared up at her. “Who?” he asked, the question formed purely by his innocent curiosity.

He heard her breathe in again, her voice trembling when she spoke. “His name was Khed.” The boy didn’t have time to react as they turned to leave, the woman’s steps swift, almost rushed, as if desperate to escape the sorrow that blew in the breeze by the river.

But just as they began to walk away, the boy heard music playing behind him, a silvery waltz, the melody lyrical and remorseful and so bittersweet it made his heart ache. He stopped and turned around to see ghosts on the water, swaying to the gentle, lilting rhythm. They all stared at him for



just a moment before turning their attention back to each other, dresses like clouds hovering gracefully over the river, flower petals appearing where they lifted their feet.

And then his gaze shifted back to the flower the woman had left on the ground. Khed was standing there, smiling at him. “My sweet, sweet Suhani,” he sighed, picking up the flower. He held it close to himself, breathing in its scent gingerly, afraid it would vanish all too soon.

I’m waiting for you, Suhani. But take as much time as you need. When you come, we’ll have eternities to ourselves. And we can dance longer than any of the others.

The boy didn’t look away until the woman tugged gently on his hand. “What are you looking at?” she asked, peering down at him.

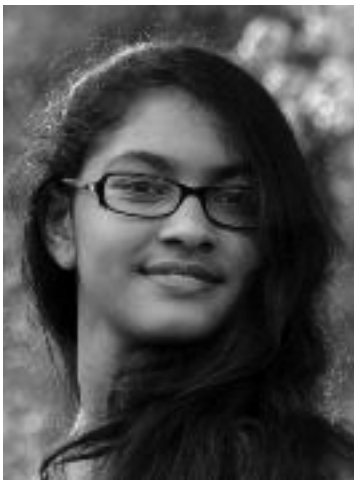
He hesitated, then shook his head. “It’s nothing, Amma. I was just wondering...can you teach me how to dance like the ghosts?”

The woman didn’t respond for a moment, unsure of what to say. “The...ghosts,” she murmured. A sad smile emerged from beneath the grief in her eyes. “Of course I can. But why this question all of a sudden?”

He glanced back at Khed, who was still staring at the water. “There’s someone I have to teach,” he answered. “And then, he’ll be able to practice for you.”

The woman’s smile broadened and she sighed contentedly as they kept walking, the music fading behind them. And as they walked, an apparition stood by the river, watching as the love of his life walked away, preparing to continue to await her return.

My sweet, sweet Suhani...



Aaryana Pradhan Rajanala is 15-years-old and in 10th Grade at Bridgewater-Raritan High School in New Jersey. She has lived in different parts of the country, including Michigan, Missouri, and New Jersey. She is the daughter of Sushmita Pradhan and Nagesh Rajanala. Currently, her favorite subjects in school are Latin, literature, and choir. She participates in the Model UN club at school and volunteers for causes that she believes in. As well as writing, she also loves to sing and play the violin.



Meghna Memorial Award Senior Division: Second Place

Green Eyes and Your Freckles and Your Smile

Arya Mohanty

The rumbling of the tracks crescendo as the train approaches the station. Arya steps onto the train, which has a peculiar scent, unwilling to touch anything, but of course not before being jostled by angry strangers who seemed to be perpetually late. Arya hated the subway. Another day, the sun rose over the horizon only to be obscured by the grey clouds. Arya sighed as she attempted to stay upright whilst attempting to come into contact with as little of the grimy subway surface as possible.

She was on her way to her summer internship at a research facility. She spent hours on public transport to go to an overcrowded building where people could look down upon her and judge her based on her merit and appeal to the naked eye. She had to remind herself every morning: she was doing this for college, so she could get a good job, and support her brother and parents. Everything seemed to be for college these days, so she could have a bright future. What was so great about the future anyway? Spending long hours at a dead-end job just to pay the countless bills held no appeal in Arya's mind.

Needless to say, Arya was not the biggest fanatic of life at the moment. She recalled a time when going on the train and not holding onto the rails was a most daunting task. Her mother would always get upset at her for not holding onto the rails, fearing that she may fall forward, and Arya's extraordinary talent of tripping over thin air only contributed to this fear. She used to be so excited to be able to go on a train or bus, and the sense of adventure that came from it, like anything could happen.

Arya was so easily excited by the beautiful world around her back then, and she used to see beauty in everything. She saw the world through rose colored lenses. Her future was bursting at the seams, filled with hope. Looking back, she realizes what she missed were the little things, such as going down to the playground every evening with her family. She misses playing soccer with her very best friend every weekend, and being the star of the team; that is how her naive self saw the world. She missed the fascinating little hallways in her house where she could throw a ball against the wall and have it return to her hands as if it were a person itself. She missed being able to fit into all the closets and hide away there for hours, for it was like having a universe all to herself, the pitch black making the minuscule space seem endless.

Arya loved that house, until it was taken from her by time, like everything else she loved. She loved the people in it, and the small corner store down the street where she would always sneak into on the way home from school to get Andy Capp's Cheddar Fries Chips and Hubba Bubba; she would go down to get quarters for her mom as well. Her parents never liked that she would go there



by herself; they were always worried she would get hurt. They did not even approve of her going down the street by herself, to her second favorite house in the neighborhood, her best friend Tati's house.

Tatiana De Oliveira, was a tall, skinny, Brazilian girl. She had long brown hair, freckles, an impressive shoe collection, and striking green eyes that Arya could pick out from any crowd. Green eyes that made her feel like home. The two had met in first grade when Arya was sitting near the fence, watching the other kids play basketball, unable to join due to her short stature and inability to properly perceive the placement of the metal hoop or her strength in order to complete the objective of the game. Tati had come up to Arya and showed Arya her newest Barbie doll, popstar Barbie. The two sat there and talked about all that their little minds could conjure up, and from that moment on, they were never seen without one another.

After school Arya and Tati would talk on the phone. They would share everything, from their dreams to their favorite television shows. They even pretended to be far off relatives, long lost sisters, and told everyone at school they were family. Arya could never imagine having anyone else by her side. No matter how old they got, Arya promised her and Tati would always be best friends. They would never stop talking, no matter how far away they moved. How naive of her to think this may be different. Greedy time takes everything.

A jolt pushed Arya out of her thoughts, as the train came to a abrupt stop, leaving Arya tumbling over her own feet into the grumpy obese man in front of her wearing a oil-stained t-shirt. Mumbling an apology, Arya stepped off of the train. Arya hated the subway. She could not wait to get out of the dank smelling environment. She hurried up the stairs, toward the busy Boston street, reminiscing about how much had changed since then; how much she changed. She turned for just one second to look at the station behind her, to check if anything was left behind, and suddenly felt a burning hot sensation spreading across her chest. She immediately turned and backed away, cursing under her breathe. She mentally grumbling about how her week could not possible get any worse while grabbing the ends of her shirt and fanning it to relive some of the pain from the scorching coffee. She looked up to face her aggressor, only to find a pair of striking green ones peering back at her. A feeling washes over her: home.

In that moment, Arya realized no matter how much has changed or how much time has passed, the one thing she will always have is a home. Time can take a lot away from you. It can take away possessions and people, but it can never take away your home. Home is where people love and care for you, and would put you above all else. It is a feeling rather than a place. No matter how far you roam, there's no place like home.



Arya Mohanty's parents are Arun and Namrata Mohanty. She currently attends Winchester High School. Her hobbies are singing, dancing, and various other forms of art. Arya thinks OSA is a wonderful organization because it brings a part of the culture from another nation to this country. She is eternally grateful for the opportunity to showcase her talent and meet wonderful new people all while learning more about her family's customs.

Meghna Memorial Award Senior Division: First Place

Every Migrant Worker

Nishant Mishra

The blinding sun rose over the barren land in a rush. Birds twittered, dogs barked, and the sounds of the people overtook the acres of land that lies east of Oakland, California. It was the life of the earth, simple, but pure - or so it seemed. In the crooks and crevices of this land lay the decaying bones of animals, the foul stench of death, and the desperate wave of survival. The animals and the people in the land lay isolated in their own minds, secluded and suspicious of every conscious being around them. The paranoia, the hostility, the sheer disconnection between the people...it was all there, asleep, yet ready to spring forth and attack...but to the young man, bright and compassionate, the land was what it seemed: simple but pure.

Byron pulled the brim of his hat down to see ahead. The ramshackle place, with its ramshackle buildings, spelled opportunity for the young traveler. He found a run-down ranch building in front of acres of arid land. The young adult found its decrepitness encouraging - the more broken a place was, the more likely it is that they could use him for work. A smile crossed Byron's face. It had been only a week since his parents had told him to leave, and he had already found his first pot of gold: a ranch in need of work. Byron took a deep breath and pushed the door open.

"Whaddya want?" snarled a grizzled man as he sat up straight in his creaking chair, startled by the clanging of the bell that was hanging on the door.

He too wore a hat for the sun, though his was wider, finished, and had no clashing patches around it like Byron had on his. A small tag hung from his shirt, with the name "Angelo" in messy black cursive. The room itself was old, with planks reinforcing a number of cracks and holes, but was clean. Aside from the planks, the room was monotonous and boring.

"I'm looking for work," came Byron's curt reply. He had learned early on that rambling to a superior was not a route that led to success. The man scanned Byron from head to toe, taking quiet note of the muscles on his arms and his young face.

"Git inside. Start helping the other ranch hands."

The traveler winced at the man's words.

"I ain't going nowhere until I start hearing about some payment." Byron stopped himself from giving an edge to his voice. One wrong move could end everything.

"50 dollars at the end of the month. Now do what you're told," the man replied flatly.

For a moment, Byron was at a loss. The job had been, unexpectedly, granted almost immediately. Byron was not about to complain. The whole exchange had been eerie, almost like Angelo knew that someone was going to come in for work. Byron began to wonder what other types of people roamed the



ranch if it was this easy to get in. The lack of standards bothered him, but the worker dismissed the thought. He had found his job, and for now, there wasn't left to be worried about...but he had no real idea how wrong he was.

It was not long until he had clambered his way to the fields. Others eyed him warily but didn't speak, until a large, beefy man stepped forth. He had two small eyes and a barrel-like body, giving Byron an amusing urge to roll him down a hill.

"Who're you?" The man's voice was full of contempt and disgust.

"The name's Byron. I'm new here. Nice to meet ya."

The line had been a friendly gesture, but it was clear from the deepening scowl on the man's face that the situation was not getting any better.

"I don't like that look on your face. (Byron quickly made his face neutral, but by then it was too late) You're here for work? Looks like the higher-ups are trying to get some of us replaced. Sorry if its a problem, but most of us 'ere aren't ready for that."

The man aggressively took another step towards Byron, causing the younger man to step back instinctively. Alarm bells went off in Byron's head. There was nothing that screamed weakness more than backing up. Four other men took a place behind the aggressor, shuffling forward menacingly. A high voice had pierced through the air.

"Stop! What in the world do ya think ya doing!" Another man had pushed through the crowd. Like Angelo, he too had a name tag, his reading "Frederick" in the same black cursive. "You out of your mind? Attacking another man five minutes after he gets on the job?"

The man was tall and lean, with close-cropped black hair. He radiated authority, and it seemed as if the world that he lived in would bend down to him voluntarily. The would-be-attacker backed away, and the men behind him disappeared so fast that it seemed as if they had vaporized. Byron took a second to marvel at how that situation had been diffused by three sentences from one man. The others hastily looked away from the scene and began to work once more, and the young worker turned around to see Frederick's hand stretched towards him.

"The names Frederick, but you can call me Fred." And just like that, the friendship between Byron and Fred was born, and rose above the mistrust, the anger, the disconnection.... or so it seemed.

The two spent the day together, hauling bags of grain to the sole-truck and working in the field for hours. It was strenuous work, but Byron had expected no less. Freddie told Byron how to dodge danger, and Byron told Fred more about school, something Fred had never had before. But Byron still had doubts. Something about his new friendship just felt too fast, too rushed. He began to wonder if he was letting Fred know too much too soon, but those doubts started to melt like butter in a fire. Byron's doubts slipped, growing smaller and smaller, with the red flag in his mind that warned him to slow down beginning to shrink. By the time the sun had begun to set, it seemed as if Byron and Fred had known each other their entire lives...and the red flag had gone with the sun.



“...and then I told him, ‘turn around, and I’ll show ya where my shoe fits!’” Fred animatedly recounted, as Byron roared with laughter.

The former-traveler could hardly believe it. Throughout the harsh, convoluted period that was his childhood, Byron never had the company of someone like him. The seemingly bleak day had ended that. The two sat down for the day, their work completed. Byron decided that it was a ripe time to recite how his journey started:

“It was Monday, and me mam’ and dad came right up to me and told me I had to leave. You know how our place was? I’ve seen more sturdy things made from three planks of wood! It couldn’t hold up three people. I was shocked at first, but I realized that it was for the best. I took up what I had, told those two goodbye, and jumped on the road. Today proves at least that I was right about it!”

“You sure were,” replied the veteran worker. He began to grin until a sharp clang came from the bell. Someone had entered the ranch office. Fred seemed to be alarmed, but Byron, however, was pleased.

“Another guy? Let’s welcome him along!” Byron, giddy at the prospect of another friend moved forward but was stopped when Fred placed an iron-grip on his shoulder.

“I don’t think this one’s looking for work.” The two began to hear raised voices from the office. Byron glanced at Fred, who had blanched.

“What’s wrong?” Byron asked his new friend, who had seemed to have completely lost his composure.

“Ah, n-nothing,” Fred said in an utterly unconvincing stutter.

His face began to shake, and sweat had broken onto his face, making his forehead oily. Fred took a step back, and his eyes widened when the ranch office door burst open, with four men in police uniforms walked out, with a submissive Angelo following in tow. A small crowd of ranch workers began to gather. The frontmost officer, clearly a distinguished man by the look of his meticulously shined badge and his organized set of clothes, stepped forth.

“Listen up, rats! There’s word that abusive substances are a sort of “trading” currency in this joint. We’re gonna look through everyone here, and if anyone tries to run, we’ll take him down.” The deputy held a warrant in his left hand and showed it to everyone in the crowd.

The other three officers began to search the workers one-by-one. Byron froze for a second but realized that he had no reason to be afraid. He hadn’t seen as much of a trace of what the officers were looking for. But in a moment, a frightening thought struck him. If this place was ridden by drugs, then it was a trap, not an opportunity. Byron began to have one revelation after another. Angelo only accepted him so readily because the ranch, crawling with drug addicts, needed more people for each one they lost to addiction. Angelo must have seen an opportunity to gain profit by hiring another person to sell drugs to. Byron trembled as his thoughts drifted to Fred. It was obvious that Fred had some power, and the only way to have power here was to have the drugs, to be a provider. Things became even clearer. Fred had never been trying to be his friend. He was only trying to get close to make some money by gaining a new customer! Every one



of these thoughts swarmed towards Byron to the point that he felt as he was going to pass out. It took a moment, but he recovered and whipped around, only to see Fred being hassled by two of the police.

“I saw ‘im! The new guy over there! He had them! Search him, he has them!”

Byron’s heart ran cold. He had been tricked, by his new friend no less! He looked at Fred’s face, wrapped in an ugly grimace. Each tooth that Fred bared stabbed Byron’s heart, invoking pain like no other. Byron backed away, stumbling on the floor. He began to breathe evenly, again reassured by the fact that he had nothing to fear from the police. And then he saw it. On the sandy ground, beside him, lay a plain brown pouch. It had fallen from Bryon’s pocket. He wondered for a split-second where the bag had come from...and then he knew.

His memory flashed back to a few minutes ago, when Fred had placed his hand on Byron’s shoulder, his other at Byron’s side. It was the perfect opportunity, and Fred had taken it to get himself out of the frying pan. The policeman caught sight of the pouch and sprung forth. Byron, dazed with the sudden turn of events, scrambled back up and took off in the other direction, taking a glance at Fred’s impassive face and figure, which gave a final, agonizing, pull in Byron’s chest. He kept running, a small mob of the workers gathered and began to follow the police across the field. He could hear the police’s yells, Angelo’s panting, and worst of all, Fred’s silence.

He ran for nearly a half-hour, finding energy with the sheer rage that threatened to blow-up. Field became sand, which in turn became short grass: Byron reached a forest. The sickening betrayal had given his legs a spring, with his desire to survive ensuring that he moved in the continuous racing movement that kept going on and on. It took some mental effort, but Byron was able to stop running, collapsing in a small clearing that lay beside a brook. The police and the ranch workers were nowhere to be found - Byron had left them behind.

He realized with a start had left his possessions - his money, hat, and watch, all going-away gifts from his parents - at the ranch house. Byron snarled at the thought of Fred scavenging what was useful from the pile that Byron had left behind. Jumping into the friendship so quickly had been a mistake, and it had cost Byron everything. He cursed himself for not listening to those alarm bells or that red flag. If he had only waited, there would have been a chance for him to see the truth early on. He sat down, looking at the gleaming moon, the shining stars, all looking fake and disgusting, their brightness burning his eyes rather than pleasing them as they had done every time before. Those stars had once been a symbol of hope, but he had no idea what they were now.

Some time passed. Byron couldn’t tell how long he had been sitting. Tears still glistened in Byron’s eyes, and there was still no sign of the police or the workers. But he felt like he was being chased anyway. Is it always going to be like this? Byron asked himself. Yet, like every time he had asked himself the question before, no answer came.

Byron would have sat there for the rest of eternity if he hadn’t heard them - those faint yells in the distance told him that the police had found the forest - they had found him. Byron’s face twitched, and the rest of his body froze. Was there any point in running? If the crowd caught him, it was all over. He would rot in jail for



the rest of his life. But how would running away fix anything? If he ran, he would be left alone, hungry, and penniless - a shell of who he was only a day before.

And that's when Byron remembered his dream. The one thing he couldn't bring himself to tell Fred, or anyone else he had met on the road.

On his first day out of the house, Byron had seen two men walking to their farm with their arms around each other. They seemed to be inseparable, almost as if they were one person. They walked, talked, and worked as one. They were, undoubtedly, best friends. When Byron had seen them, he was shocked. No one lived together on the road. But there they were, and Byron wanted nothing more than that. It was, he realized, a dream that he could not let go of.

His mind shifted back to reality. The yelling had gotten louder, and the crowd has gotten closer. Byron had yet to make his move. He glanced at the river. If he crossed it now, he would be able to escape. There was a chance, not only to leave the crowd behind but to find what he truly wanted in his life. There was still hope to find that person that would complete him, and he knew that he had no choice but to believe in it. With one last look at the stars and a final, resigned sigh, Byron bounded across the river, and into the night. He, like every other migrant worker, would just have to keep moving.



Nishant Mishra is a sophomore at Princeton High School in Princeton, NJ. He loves to play clarinet and violin, as well as read novels in his free time. His parents are Sambit Mishra and Minakshi Dash. The family belongs to the OSA-NY/NJ chapter. In the past, he has volunteered at the Wayne temple during occasions like Rath Yatra and New Years' day (which were organized by the OSA-NY/NJ chapter). His family started volunteering at the Community food bank drive-in Hillside, NJ in March. He is from Bhubaneswar, and OSA helps him feel closer to his hometown even though the U.S. and India are many miles apart. He has enjoyed watching religious ceremonies like the Odissi dance during Rath Yatra and eating delicious Odia foods on special occasions. Being part of OSA has made him feel like he is part of a bigger family, allowing him to explore another part of his identity.





Photo taken at Frederik Meijer Gardens in Grand Rapids, MI, by Nirmal Rath



Wayfarers

Musings, reflections, and wisdom from a
more experienced generation



"Illusion" by Amrita Kar (Chicago, IL)

“In the moment of crisis, the wise build bridges
and the foolish build dams.”

— Nigerian Proverb





“Reflections” by Sangram Sahu



The Jagannath Legend

Bikram Das

Many thousands of years ago, during the “Satya Yuga” or “Age of Truth,” there reigned, in the kingdom of Malava, somewhere in Central India, a just and pious king named Indradyumna. He was a devotee of Vishnu, the Supreme Lord and Creator of the Universe, and had built a splendid temple in his capital, where Vishnu’s image was installed. Each morning, the king worshipped this image with great devotion.

One night Vishnu appeared to Indradyumna in a vision—but not in the form in which the king worshipped Him. Instead, He appeared in the form of Neela Madhav, the Blue God—a form that was of supreme beauty. Indradyumna’s heart was filled with joy when he saw the vision of Vishnu in the form of Neela Madhav. He fell on his knees and prayed, “Lord, I pray that I may see You always in this Divine Form. Tell me, Lord, where can I find You in this form?”

Vishnu smiled mysteriously and said “ I dwell as Neela Madhav in the land of Utkala, which lies to the east. Search for my image there, and when you find it, bring it to Malava and install it in a temple. Then I shall dwell here, in Malava.”

The vision disappeared.

The next morning, King Indradyumna summoned the royal priest and told him of the vision. “Send a messenger to the land of Utkala,” the king said, “and let him find the exact place where Lord Vishnu dwells as Neela Madhav. I shall bring the Lord’s image here and install it in a temple, so that He may dwell in my kingdom.”

The royal priest sent for his younger brother, whose name was Vidyapati. “Vidyapati,” he said, “ Go to the land of Utkala, which is in the east, and come back and tell us where the image of Neela Madhav is to be found. Do not return until you have found the image. But do not tell anyone what you are looking for.”

So Vidyapati set out for Utkala in quest of the Blue God. For many months he traveled through mountains and dense jungles, until he came to a village, deep inside the forest. This was the home of the Savara tribe and their chief, Viswavas, lived here with his beautiful daughter, whose name was Lalita.

Viswavas was a kind man. He saw that Vidyapati was tired after his long journey and offered him shelter and food. “Stay here and rest, my son, until you have recovered your strength,” he said to Vidyapati.

To his daughter Lalita he said “This young man is our guest. Take good care of him.”



Viswavasu then went out into the jungle, leaving his daughter Lalita to look after Vidyapati. Vidyapati was a handsome young man, tall and strong, who looked more like a prince than a priest. Lalita fell in love with him at once when she saw him and Vidyapati too was enchanted by her beauty.

Viswavasu returned from the forest late that night. Vidyapati and he chatted for a long time and Vidyapati told him many stories of the lands through which he had travelled. But he did not mention King Indradyumna or the vision that he had seen and said nothing of the quest for the Blue God, which had brought him to the east.

Viswavasu saw that Vidyapati was not only handsome but also a man of great learning and wisdom. He had been looking for a suitable groom for his daughter Lalita and realized now that he could not find a better groom for her. He saw also that Lalita and Vidyapati were in love, and was happy.

He said to Vidyapati, "My son, you can stay here as my guest for as long as you wish." So Vidyapati stayed on.

After a few months, Viswavasu said to him, "Vidyapati, it is my wish that you should marry my daughter, Lalita, and become my son-in-law. Will you agree to marry her?"

Vidyapati replied, "Sir, you have been so kind that I shall do anything that you ask of me."

Vidyapati and Lalita were married and lived happily with Viswavasu in his house. But Vidyapati observed that Viswavasu went out into the forest every morning and returned home late at night. "Where does he go every morning?" he asked himself. "I must find out ! There seems to be some mystery here !"

Some days later, he asked Lalita, "Why does your father go into the jungle every morning? Where does he go?"

But Lalita said, "I don't know. He has not told me!"

Vidyapati repeated his question many times to her in the days that followed, and each time Lalita answered "I don't know."

At last, Vidyapati pretended that he had been hurt by her refusal to answer his question. "You do not love me," he said to her, "Or you would tell me where your father goes."

Lalita told him, "My father is not only the chief of the Savara tribe but also its priest. It is his duty to worship the god of our tribe, whom we call Neela Madhav. That is why he goes into the jungle every morning. He goes to the temple of Neela Madhav."



“Where is this temple?” Vidyapati asked her, greatly excited by what she told him but not revealing his excitement.

“There is no temple,” she replied. “But deep inside the forest, there is a mountain, and on top of that mountain there is a cave. It is in that cave that Neela Madhav dwells. His image stands there.”

“Can you take me to the cave?” Vidyapati asked. “I would like to offer worship to Neela Madhav.”

“No,” Lalita replied. “You cannot go there because you do not belong to our tribe. Only my father can go to the cave, as he is our priest. Only he knows the way to the cave.”

Vidyapati said, “Lalita, as I am your husband, I belong to your tribe now. Your father has no sons. Who will succeed him as Neela Madhav’s priest when he is no more? But as his son-in-law, who is like a son, I could take his place. Therefore, he should show me the way to Neela Madhav’s cave. Will you ask him to let me come with him tomorrow?”

“There is some truth in what you say,” Lalita said. “I will speak to him tonight.”

That night, Lalita conveyed to her father all that Vidyapati had told her. He thought over the matter and said, “Vidyapati is a good man, but how can I be sure that he will respect the laws of our tribe and not reveal the secret of Neela Madhav’s cave to anyone? Let me think.”

He thought for a long time and then said, “He may come with me, but on one condition. He will have to be blindfolded. If he agrees, he may accompany me, but not otherwise.”

“Let me ask him,” Lalita said. She went to Vidyapati and told him of her father’s condition. He agreed to it at once.

Next morning, Viswavasud and Vidyapati prepared to go to Neela Madhav’s cave. The condition was that Vidyapati would be blindfolded while going to the cave as well as returning from it, so that he would not see the path along which he was travelling; that way, there would be no chance of his revealing the secret cave to anyone. Viswavasud tied a piece of cloth tightly across his eyes so that he could not see anything. But Vidyapati had thought of a way by which he could defeat Viswavasud’s plan. He carried a quantity of mustard seeds, hidden in a bag which he had tied around his waist, concealed beneath his garments. As they walked through the jungle, he dropped some of the seeds on the ground, along the path, unknown to Viswavasud. The seeds would germinate and grow into plants; and should he ever wish to return to the cave later, these mustard plants would be his guide.



Viswavasu and Vidyapati went to Neela Madhav's cave, with Viswavasu leading the younger man. The blindfold was removed and both men worshipped the Blue God with great devotion. Then they returned to the Savara village.

A few days later, Vidyapati said to his father-in-law, "Sir, I dreamed last night that my father is very ill. I must return to my own country and see how he is. But I shall be back soon."

Viswavasu and Lalita were unhappy when they heard this, but they did not try to stop Vidyapati. Vidyapati returned to Malava and he and the royal priest told King Indradyumna about all that had happened. The king was overjoyed on hearing that Vidyapati had seen Neela Madhav's image and could lead him to it. He summoned his minister and high officials and said to them "I want you to raise a great army, with many chariots, horses and elephants. I myself will lead the army to the land of Utkala, where Neela Madhav dwells, and we shall bring the Lord's image to our country."

An army was raised and King Indradyumna led it across mountains and forests to the land of Utkala. Vidyapati then said to the king "Your Majesty, only you and I will go up the mountain to Neela Madhav's cave. The army must remain behind."

So Vidyapati and King Indradyumna went up the mountain to the cave. But when they reached the cave, they found it empty. The image of Neela Madhav had disappeared!

"Vidyapati!" King Indradyumna shouted in anger, "where is the Lord, whom we have come to take back to our country? Did you really see Neela Madhav here, or have you been lying to me?"

"Your Majesty," Vidyapati said. "I would never dare to do such a thing. But let us pray to Neela Madhav. I am sure that He will explain this mystery Himself!"

So King Indradyumna and Vidyapati sat down in the cave, with eyes closed and their minds focused on Neela Madhav and prayed to Him to reveal to them why he was no longer in the cave. Perhaps He had been displeased and had left the cave in anger; if so, they begged His forgiveness.

For three days and nights they prayed, but the mystery of Neela Madhav's disappearance was not solved. Then, suddenly, they heard a voice like thunder speaking to them from the sky:

"Know, oh mortals, that I am the Lord of the Universe. The whole world is My home and I dwell wherever I choose. I have decided not to remain in this form—the form of Neela Madhav. Now, the world will see me in a new form. I shall take on the 'Daru' form—the form of a wooden log. I shall come floating in the sea. When you see the Daru in the water, you must bring it to the shore. Then you must find a craftsman who will carve, out of the Daru, a form such as no one has seen before. That will be My new form. Then you must erect a temple on a mountain that stands next to the sea, and in that temple you must set me up in my new form, so that My devotees may see Me and rejoice."



The voice from the sky ceased and Indradyumna and Vidyapati knew that the quest for Neela Madhav had ended. They would have to wait for the Lord to appear, in His own good time, in the form of a log of wood. However, they did not have to wait long.

King Indradyumna had another vision in which he saw a great log of wood floating in the sea, close to the shore, near the place which we now call Puri. He called his minister and high officials and said “The Lord has arrived. Let us travel eastward to Utkala once again, but to the sea this time, so that we can receive the Lord and welcome Him to our land.”

They travelled east to the sea, and sure enough, they saw a great log of wood floating in the water, not far from the shore. Indradyumna’s men brought the Daru to the land.

Indradyumna commanded his officials “Send out many men—to the east, north, west and south. Make a proclamation. Tell the finest carpenters in the land to assemble here. They will have to carve the Lord’s image out of the Daru. He who makes the image will be rewarded beyond his dreams, but if he fails, his right hand will be amputated.”

Many came and tried to carve the Lord’s image out of the Daru, but the wood was so hard that that their tools could produce not even a scratch on it. Indradyumna was greatly dejected. “The Lord lies hidden in that log of wood,” he said, “and it is He who will decide when it is time to reveal Himself. Who are we to give Him form and shape ? We can only pray.”

They prayed and waited until, one day, an old carpenter, whose face was wrinkled with age and whose hands shook when he picked up hammer and chisel, came to the king and said, “Your Majesty, I will carve the Lord’s image.”

“You?” the king exclaimed in wonder and surprise.

“Yes, I. But on one condition. The Daru must be placed inside a palace, and I shall work alone, behind closed doors. No one should see me at work or ask any questions until the work is completed. If this condition is not observed, I shall go away and leave the work unfinished. Is that agreed?”

The king and his courtiers conferred together and the King said, “This man is a hoax. Who has heard of such strange conditions being laid down by a mere carpenter? Send him away at once!”

But the king’s minister said, “Your Majesty! Let us not act in haste. No carpenter in the entire kingdom has been able to make even a dent on the Daru. Let us give this old man a chance.”

So the Daru was placed inside a palace which had never been occupied since the day it was built. The old carpenter went inside with his tools and asked that all doors and windows be shut.

“No one should try to peep and observe what I am doing,” the carpenter said. “If I find anyone spying on me, I shall go away at once, leaving the work unfinished.”



Everyone left and the carpenter began his work. He seemed to be working all day and all night, for the sound of his hammer and chisel could be heard without a break.

The king and the queen were impatient to see the image which the old carpenter was carving inside the palace. “We must be patient,” King Indradyumna said to the queen. “The old man will take his own time.”

The sound of the carpenter’s hammer told them that the work was going on, but after fifteen days had passed, they could no longer hear the sound.

“What is the matter?” the queen asked herself. “Has the old man run away? I must find out.”

That night, she went quietly to the palace where the carpenter was working. It was perfectly dark. All the doors and windows were shut, but the queen found that one window was partly open. She tried to peep in.

But she had no longer pushed her head in through the window when she found herself confronted by the old carpenter. On seeing the queen he said “Your Majesty, the King had promised that no one would try to see me at work. Now you have broken that promise. I cannot stay here for even a moment now.”

He picked up his tools and left—or rather, vanished into thin air. He was there one moment and gone the next. No one saw him go—for he was no ordinary carpenter. He was Vishwakarma, the architect of the gods, and a god himself. He had been sent by Vishnu Himself to carve the Daru into an image.

The queen went to King Indradyumna at once and informed him of what had happened. The king was heartbroken but said not a word in complaint. Next morning, they all went to have a look at the work that the old carpenter had produced. They had hoped to see a single uniquely beautiful image of Lord Vishnu, although no one knew in which form the Lord would be represented. But what they saw shocked everyone.

The carpenter had produced four human figures—or at least, one could imagine them to be figures of human beings. Each had a human face, with enormous eyes and smiling mouths but no ears. They had neither arms nor legs: they were limbless trunks. What did they represent? Were they human beings struggling to take on a superhuman shape? Or creatures from another world trying to become human? Gods in the shape of men or men who resembled gods? New life forms? Who could tell? Was this the form in which Vishnu wanted his devotees to worship him in future? But why had the carpenter created four figures instead of one? Was this an unfinished piece of work, or had he produced a higher form of art, which left the viewer asking questions that had no answers?



The wise men in King Indradyumna's court debated for a long time the significance of the work which the unknown carpenter had left behind, but could reach no conclusion. At last, someone suggested that they sit down to meditate on Vishnu, the Creator, since it was He who had created this entire drama. He alone could answer their questions. Many were the possible answers that they came up with, which were put down in books for others to ponder over. Some said the dominant figure in the group, with the dark countenance and eyes like wheels, who was called Jagannath, represented Krishna; others said He was Buddha. Some were of view that He represented "shoonya"—nothingness, the absence of existence. One of the lesser figures was said to be that of Balaram, the elder brother of Krishna; the other was that of Subhadra, Krishna's sister. A cozy family group.

Gods are usually accompanied by their consorts: Shiva always has Parvati by His side; Vishnu is usually shown together with Lakshmi. But why was this mysterious figure, Jagannath, accompanied by his sister rather than his partner? This was the very essence of divinity—all aspects of godhood squeezed into abstract figures that represented everything—or nothing. The nearest thing to the Formless Brahma that could be imagined.

The debate continues. It is only Jagannath, the Supreme Lord, who can generate a debate that has gone on for millennia and seems to have no end. We need these legends to sustain us, to teach us that there are higher things beyond the world of cars and computers.

The story of the Lord has been retold by Dr. Bikram Keshari Das. Dr. Bikram K. Das is a former Professor of English, based in Bhubaneswar. He was a Fulbright-Smith-Mundt scholar at the University of Pennsylvania (1962-63). He has translated a number of Odia books into English, including "Paraja" by Gopinath Mohanty and "Adibhumi" by Pratibha Ray. He was awarded the Sahitya Academy award by the Government of India in 1989 for his translation of the book "Paraja." Dr. Bikram K Das, is the father of the Mr. Vivek Das, an OSA Lifetime member and the current president of the OSA Michigan Chapter.

Thakur: Your Manifold Facets

Sonali Pattanaik

Thakur, you are the Creator of the whole world
Who brings beauty, success
And prosperity in our life.

Thakur, you are the motivator
who rejuvenates our heart
And accelerates our ability
With an illuminating hope.

Thakur, you are the well-wisher



who colored our world with
Happiness and fulfillment and
Who has bestowed his mercy
And purified the immoral souls.

Thakur, you are the glimmer
whose gentle compassion
Shine like the Morning Star and
Whose light turns us away from sin
And erases darkness from our life.

Thakur, you are the caretaker
Whose goodwill seals us
With an eternal calm
And whose kindness heals us
With salvation's balm

When detestation, cruelty and
Enviousness divides us,
Thakur, you are the integrator
Who unites us through love,
Sympathy and humanity.

When anger, greed, bewilderment,
Madness and pride in our mind
Deviates us from the correct path,
Thakur, you are the trailblazer who
Shows us the truthful and auspicious path.

Thakur, you are the mentor
Who transmits the wealth of knowledge and
Awareness across the whole world which
Eliminates the darkness of the ignorance.

Thakur, you are the savior
Who guides us at the time of the need,
Who gives us strength and
Courage to overcome our despair
And bring rays of happiness in our life.

Sonali Pattanaik lives in Novi, Michigan, with her husband Satya Mohanty and her two lovely daughters, Shilpi and Suhani. She is extremely honored to be MI-OSA's current secretary. She considers this a great opportunity to serve our OSA Community. MI-OSA is homelike with its extended and cohesive Odia Family. She has made many cherishable friendships and family through this community.



Yellow Packet

Jigyansa Mohanty

“Feeling happy” was the status update of Saakshi Mishra at 5 p.m. as she has been eagerly waiting for this day. Immediately after updating her status, her display picture too was updated with a dimpled picture of her five year old Ahaan. She couldn’t stop grinning as the day after was Ahaan’s fifth birthday and she was in a mood to celebrate. For last two years, they have been only doing the puja followed by a small cake cutting for the little one at home.

Though Saakshi was keen to celebrate, her husband Nishant was averse to it. Saakshi couldn’t oppose, as she was pretty aware of the new home loan EMI and the impact it was having on their monthly budget. Moreover, for Nishant, puja has always been primary and celebrations secondary, hardly leaving any scope for Saakshi to argue with him on the same.

But this time Saakshi showed her true mettle when she confronted Nishant and decided to go ahead with Ahaan’s birthday celebrations. All thanks to the new kitty group she had joined in the beginning of the year. In their kitty, they have a compulsory contribution per month followed by a chosen winner who gets the full amount for that particular month in a yellow packet. It was a win – win situation for Saakshi and her friends, as along with the money they used to relish homemade yummy delicacies, they would spend time gossiping and chitchatting.

Every month, Nishant used to hand over a certain amount of money to Saakshi for groceries and other daily household expenses. Saakshi used to spend the money judiciously enough ensuring that she would be left with Rs.2000 at the end, which she can contribute toward her kitty. From the time she joined, Saakshi has been secretly pinning hope for Ahaan’s birthday month as she wanted to be the lucky one to grab the yellow packet by any chance. Sure enough, she was euphoric as her name was finally picked. She jumped with joy when the packet was placed in her hand. It was as if she was at the top of the world. She immediately rushed home as she had to call her guests, finalize on food not ignoring her kiddo’s choice for sure, and last but not the least birthday cake, decorations and gifts.

“It’s less than 24 hours for the party,” she thought as she went on to prepare the guest list. Though anxious, she preferred to stay calm as she took her cell phone and started making calls to her friends.

Some said ‘Yes’, some ‘No,’ and finally, Saakshi got a clear picture of how many invitees are going to make it for the evening. Next was food for obvious reasons. Immediately, she finalized the menu and was about to call the caterer when she was interrupted by a breaking news alert flashing on her TV set.

“Discontinuation of thousand rupees currency notes... What a great change,” she thought. But suddenly, a chill ran down her spine as she anticipated the worst. “What am I going to do? My



yellow packet and its contents: the thousand rupee notes will be of no use now. It was this money on which I had pinned my hope, now when I need them the most how can they be futile, she thought.

She could not speak to Nishant as he was on a tour to Delhi and was about to reach the next day. Moreover, she had already informed her friends and didn't have the courage to call up and say that the party is canceled. Above all, little Ahaan was so excited and she could not choose to break his heart.

She had never felt this way in her entire life: so helpless and inert. She knew that the family caterer was a man of principles, and it will be difficult to convince him to take the order against the so-called thousand rupee notes she was having.

Finally putting her inhibitions aside and holding herself together she once again glanced on the guest list to have a head count. "OK, 30 people including me, Nishant and Ahaan, what if I cook myself?" she wondered.

Keeping her composure she made a menu that boasted all of her little one's favorite dishes: Dahi bhalle, Chhole puri, veg pulao, and kheer.

All set, she rang her local grocer. Joshi Uncle was a kind hearted elderly man who loved kids. Whenever Ahaan used to accompany his parents to the store, he was more than happy to take him in his arms and give him whatever he eyed on. When Saakshi explained her situation to Joshi Uncle, he ensured immediate delivery of the goods at her doorstep. Once she got her stuff, she started off with soaking the chickpeas and the split de-husked black gram lentils in water with the aim of wrapping up the rest the next day.

She was highly confused regarding the return gifts. Somewhere after knowing about the ongoing chaos, she was pretty sure that gift stores won't be accepting the thousand rupee notes and she cannot afford to wait till tomorrow.

Suddenly, something struck her. Ahaan and his friends had some group photographs which they had taken together. She took out the prints of the photos from the printer and pasted it on the craft sheet. Each piece was subsequently colored and highlighted with some decorative material. In this way, Saakshi was able to complete nine pieces, including one for Ahaan as she knew seeing his friends he too would cry to grab one. By the time she was done with her work, it was 11 p.m.

With each passing hour, her tension increased two fold. She was apprehensive of the party, and many unanswered questions started popping into her mind: "How will be the food, is everyone going to like it or not? The gifts, will they appeal the kids or not? What will Nishant say hearing to all this?"



Finally, she hesitantly tried to close her eyes and in no time she was in deep slumber. She woke up when her phone rang, and it was none other than Nishant on the other side. Nishant called to inform that his flight was late due to fog and he will be reaching somewhere around 4.

Her heart sank as she recollected all of yesterday's events. Realizing it was her sweetheart's big day, she planted a kiss on Ahaan's forehead, hugging him tightly in her arms. Rubbing her eyes and taking her hair in the form of a poofy bun, she marched on to the kitchen.

She started assembling things in her mind, and with the same vigor, went on completing the dishes one after another. Within no time, her house was filled with the aromatic smell of the spices and kitchen platform was covered with the big bowls, making it obvious that a sumptuous meal is on its way. In between, calls were popping in for Ahaan and the little fellow seemed extremely elated, expressing his thanks to each caller.

Finally Saakshi felt bit relieved as she thought she is done with most of her work and it's only the decoration part that's need to be taken care of.

"Oh...that can be done by Nishant, once he is here," she thought.

Suddenly she realized that the principal component has been ignored: the cake.

"Oh my God, what am I going to do now, how could I be so silly," she thought.

All her happiness evaporated within no time, giving way to stress and tension. With no time left to order a customized cake, she decided to take a regular one from the shop. She suddenly developed cold feet and didn't know how to tide over the situation.

Suddenly, the doorbell rang and it was her kitty friends who were standing in front of her. She was so much engulfed in her own thought that she didn't notice the white box they were carrying. Ahaan was delighted and with immense curiosity rushed to open the box.

"Oh, Mamma, such a nice cake, it's the Spidey!" he screamed at the top of his voice.

That very moment, Saakshi rushed to look into the box and was taken aback seeing a birthday cake which seemed enough for 30 people. As she looked up she found her friends smiling and giving a high five to cute Ahaan. She didn't know what to say. She was highly confused and puzzled, thinking that she had not invited some of them to the party which she was hosting. But for her friends it was a surprise visit for little Ahaan and they wanted to make it special with this cake.

Immediately, Saakshi rushed to get coffee and snacks for her friends and in no time the group got busy clicking pics with the ever cheerful lad. By the time they left, it was 5.p.m. and Nishant too was back with lot of gifts for his beloved boy.



Within no time, the father-son duo went ahead with the decorations marking the end of the preparatory stage and the beginning of the real event. Friends started pouring in and finally birthday boy got to celebrate his big day in style.

Ahaan was elated and so was his mom. By the time party ended Saakshi was tired and exhausted, but at the same time happy and content. She couldn't have asked for more. When Nishant patted Saakshi for her unceasing effort and undying spirit that went on to make the party a success, she just gave a sly smile as she knew how difficult it would have been without the help of her kitty friends and Joshi Uncle who at the nick of the time helped her when she was in utter despair.

Looking at the untouched yellow envelope, she thought about how unpredictable life is and how adaptable we are to its everchanging challenges. Maybe this is what makes it so beautiful.

Jigyansa Mohanty is a banking professional from Pune, who currently resides in Michigan with her family. Though she does not have a literature background, she loves to pen stories whenever a topic interests her. Apart from writing, she is an avid reader, a doting mother, and a person who believes that life is all about creating oneself. She has been published in Induswomanwriting, Odisha Society of America's journal and Taapoi magazine

SEASONS

Prasanta Kumar Bhunya

The baby angel whispered
Bees and butterflies were humming
Chipmunks and beavers passing by
Still they heard bone clear;

She uttered to the bud
Said she, with a smile on her lips
Blinking her sparkling eyes
She told "I love you spring;"

Summer sun blisters me
Rain restrains me indoor
Winter gushes so shivering
Spring, it's you gives bountiful joy;

She kissed the bloom, blossomed
Explained the bloom with care,
Bees heard and butterflies too
Chipmunks, beavers either listened;



My brightness is summer's
Rain's Soft supple I owe
My calmness is winter's heart
And thus lovely am the spring;

The baby angel applauded
Mirthful like no one else,
Bees and butterflies thrummed
Chipmunks and beavers set off;

Seasons of nature bestow
Always gives to earth ever
Brightness, softness, equanimity
That's what seasons' worth

Prasanta Kumar Bhunya lives in Toronto, Canada, currently serving on the Utkarsha Editorial Team.

Alluring Odisha

Sasadhara Sahoo

Odisha beckons with an incredible heritage of temples, monuments and rich culture. From the Jagannath Temple in Puri to Konark's Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to Asia's largest brackish water lake to a 480-km long coastline dotted with virgin beaches, the state has something for everyone.

Endowed with a rich cultural heritage and an old-world charm, Odisha is a kaleidoscope of past splendors and present glamour. Traditionally known as the land of Lord Jagannath, Odisha has innumerable temples. It is probably the only state where one can find the chronological development of temple architecture starting from 2nd century BC to 13th century AD and beyond to the modern times.

The temples of Bhubaneswar, Sun Temple of Konark, and Jagannath Temple of Puri constitute the Golden Triangle of Odisha. The 13th century monument at Konark is not only a World Heritage Site, but also a monument par-excellence.

The beaches of Odisha at Chandipur, Konark, Puri, Gopalpur, Paradeep, Pati Sonapur, Balighai and many more are rated among the best.

Asia's largest brackish water lake, Chilika, spread over more than 1100-square-km, is home to millions of residents and migratory birds from as far as Siberia and Dolphins. The confluence of



the Bay of Bengal and the lake at the new mouth near Rajhans Island provides a panoramic view. The lake is dotted with numerous islands with romantic names. Delicious dishes of fish, prawn, and crab fresh from the lake are simply sumptuous.

There are two national parks (Similipal and Bhitarkanika) and more than 20 sanctuaries. Similipal is one of the best tiger reserves in the country. Bhitarkanika is one of the two mangrove forests of India and is rich in its crocodile population and migratory birds. Down the creeks at Gahirmatha, millions of Olive Ridley Turtles come to lay eggs twice a year. Nandankanan on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar is a biological park and a major center for white tiger breeding and conservation program of the Government of India. It is here that gharials were bred in captivity for the first time.

There are a plethora of fairs and festivals, celebrated with pomp and gaiety in every nook and corner of Odisha. The Rath Yatra of Puri is the grandest festival of Odisha that attracts pilgrims and tourists alike. However, festivals like Dhanuyatra of Bargarh, Chadak Mela of Chandaneswar, Durga Puja of Cuttack, Laxmi Puja of Dhenkanal and so on lend colour to Odisha's celebration of life. Festivals like Konark Festival, Rajarani Festival, Shreekshestra Festival, Kalinga Mahotsav, Puri Beach Festival, Baripada Chhow Festival, Sambalpur Folk Festival, Koraput Tribal Festival are theme-based tourism festivals, which have become a major draw for tourists.

The graceful dance is mentioned in scriptures and depicted in sculptures. Prominent among folk and tribal dances are Sambalpuri, Ghoomra, Ranapa, Koya, Gadaba and Chhou, all a continuing manifestation of non-verbal art of expression. Handicrafts like the silver filigree of Cuttack, applique work of Pipili, pata paintings of Raghurajpur, stone sculptures of Puri and textiles of Sambalpur represent creativity expressed in art. Tourists can either see people working on their designs at the sites or even sample a souvenir or two at various curio shops. Odisha is poised for a great leap to attract more and more tourists both domestic as well as foreign in the years to come.

Undoubtedly, my native Odisha is bestowed with bounties of nature, rich heritage and history.

Sasadhar Sahoo lives with his wife Mamata and son Saswat in Northville, Michigan. He is the co-chair of the Souvenir and Directory Committee.

An Outsider Looks at the Paika Rebellion

Triloki Nath Pandey

I am an outsider in more than one sense. I am not an Odia, and I am an anthropologist among historians, journalists, literary luminaries, and media moguls who are well represented here. My anthropological sensitivities developed in my research and teaching on Native peoples of North America, especially the Hopi, the Navajo, and the Zuni of the American Southwest, as well as the “tribal” peoples of India. When the Spanish conquistadors arrived in the Southwest in the mid 16th



century, they could recognize the differences between the ancestors of the Hopi and the Zuni, who were farmers, and the ancestors of the Navajo people, a majority of whom were “foot nomads.” The farming people came to be known as “Pueblo Indians,” as they lived a sedentary life in small villages.

At the time of their “discovery,” the Pueblo Indian population was much larger and they occupied many more villages than they do today. They suffered a great deal at the hands of Spanish colonizers. Their women were violated, their children were stolen, their land was confiscated, and their religion was demonized.¹

All this seems familiar to us since the British merchants of the East India Company were doing the same thing to various castes and tribes in India. Colonialism led to a havoc among the colonized people everywhere. All of us are familiar with the “civilizing mission” of the colonizers for the colonized people. And almost in every part of the colonized world people took up arms against the colonizers. The Pueblos were so outraged by the colonial oppression that in the summer of 1680, all the Pueblo Indians joined hands to make the Spanish colonizers move off their land. It was a bloody rebellion and over 500 Spanish colonizers lost their lives. The Pueblo people were so traumatized that many of them deserted their villages and moved to the nearby mesa tops, as the Zuni did, and remained there until 1692, when peace was restored by General De Vargas (see Pandey 1977 for details).

I have described elsewhere that all the Puebloan societies were theocratic and they had many rites and customs in common (see Pandey 1994). They all valued their women and children, and were very disturbed to see the colonizers disrespect them. Listening to the many papers presented at this conference, I realize that the situation was not much different in Odisha. The British East India Company had taken the advantage of the instability and lack of unity in various parts of Odisha, which was torn apart by the Maratha chiefs in the South and the Muslim Nawabs from Murshidabad in Bengal. The East India Company had won and established their rule over most of the South and had been in Bengal well over a century and a half before occupying coastal parts of Odisha in 1803. The British justified their occupation in the name of establishing the rule of law and providing “order” in an unstable state. But the rule of law was so elusive and the economic exploitation so harsh that people began to rebel against the British occupation soon after the Company soldiers marched into Odisha.

Historians Bipan Chandra, Amales Tripathi, and Barun De in their book “Freedom Struggle” (1972, revised edition 2015) report that rebellion against the atrocities committed by the

¹ The Pueblo Indian leaders – artists, poets, politicians, priests, and pundits – got together in order to make a film “ Surviving Columbus” , shown on the PBS on October 12,1992, Columbus’s Quincentenary, documenting the crimes and cruelties committed by the Spanish colonizers on the Pueblos.



East India Company on Odia people began in 1804, culminating into the Paika Rebellion in 1817. What was happening in Odisha during that critical period? Reading historical accounts and listening to eminent historians, well represented here, it seems to me that every caste and community was deeply disturbed by what the Company soldiers, merchants, and their employees were doing in the coastal regions of Odisha. The farmers could not afford to pay the arbitrary rent they were charged, the zamindars started to lose their land in auctions held in far away Fort William in Calcutta, and weavers could no longer practice their craft for lack of support given to them by the Company. The traders started to complain because new taxes were imposed on salt, a common ingredient of Odia cuisine and on other commodities (see Farooqui's paper in this volume)

I was startled to learn about the imposition of a new law, popularly called "the sunset law," to auction the property of Odia landlords who were unable to pay new taxes on their land. These auctions were held at the time of sunset at Fort William and mostly the Bengali merchants and elites, who had benefited from the East India Company, headquartered there, could afford to buy them. In fact, 52 percent of Odia landlords were alienated from their land between 1804 and 1816 due to this crafty land revenue system. Perhaps this disinheritance caused a lot of chaos and unhappiness all around, paving the path of foot soldiers, the Paikas, to rebel against the British in 1817.

As I see it, this rebellion was a mass movement involving people from all sections of Odia society because everyone was affected by colonialism. How one looks at it and interprets what was going on depends on one's politics and ideology.

I read in the Indian newspapers that contemporary Odia politicians are not sure whether Jayee Rajaguru started the rebellion in 1804 or it was Buxi Jagabandhu who was the real leader of the Paika Bidroha of 1817. The people of Khurdha are not so amused by this hairsplitting by politicians². Historians have reported that soon after the British annexation of the coastal regions of Odisha in 1803, almost everywhere there was mass unrest or occasional revolt, culminating in the Paika Rebellion of 1817.

The Bidroha was such an all encompassing event that the eminent novelist Fakir Mohan Senapati captures it in his "Six Acres and a Third," written almost half a century after the Rebellion. He describes vividly, and at times humorously, the exploitation of both the Odia masses and the classes by the merchants of the East India Company and its employees.

In my opinion, it is still an open question whether the Paika Rebellion was the first war of independence against the British Raj or it was the war of 1857 as described by historians. In this volume, there are several papers which are addressing themselves to this question. Historical

² The Pueblo Indian leaders—artists, poets, politicians, priests, and pundits—got together in order to make a film "Surviving Columbus," shown on the PBS on Oct. 12, 1992, Columbus's Quincentenary, documenting the crimes and cruelties committed by the Spanish colonizers on the Pueblos.



accounts are full of several revolts and rebellions organized by castes as well as tribes against the British colonialism, happening in the 18th and the 19th century in different regions of India³. (See Chandra, Tripathi and De 1972/2015). It seems to me that politicians of different parties have taken it upon themselves to settle this question for the country.

I am aware of a similar situation in the United States. As I described at the very beginning of this paper, the great Pueblo Indian Rebellion of 1680 took place almost a century before the war of independence which led to the birth of the United States of America in 1776. Now there are many historians of Spanish America as well as Native American intellectuals who are demanding that the great Pueblo Rebellion of 1680 be recognized as “America’s first war of independence.” Whether it is going to happen or not depends on whose voices are going to be heard and who is going to be silenced by the state. Only time will tell.

In conclusion, I have no doubt in my own mind that the Paika Rebellion of 1817 was a mass movement of resistance against the tyranny of the East India Company and its employees. It was not just a revolt of one sector of Odia society against the colonial tyrants as some scholars have suggested. What we need is a concerted effort made by everyone—scholars, movie makers ,priests, politicians of every hue—to collect whatever material, oral and literate, is available on the Paika Bidroha in order to ask the central government for its due recognition in history books as well as in the textbooks used everywhere in India

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Endnotes.

1. See the front-page story reported in **The Pioneer**, Sunday November 26, 2017 .
2. see Chandra, Tripathi, and De (1972/2015) for details. I wish to acknowledge the stimulating conversations I had with Barun De and Bipan Chandra over the past four decades. I continue to mourn their loss.

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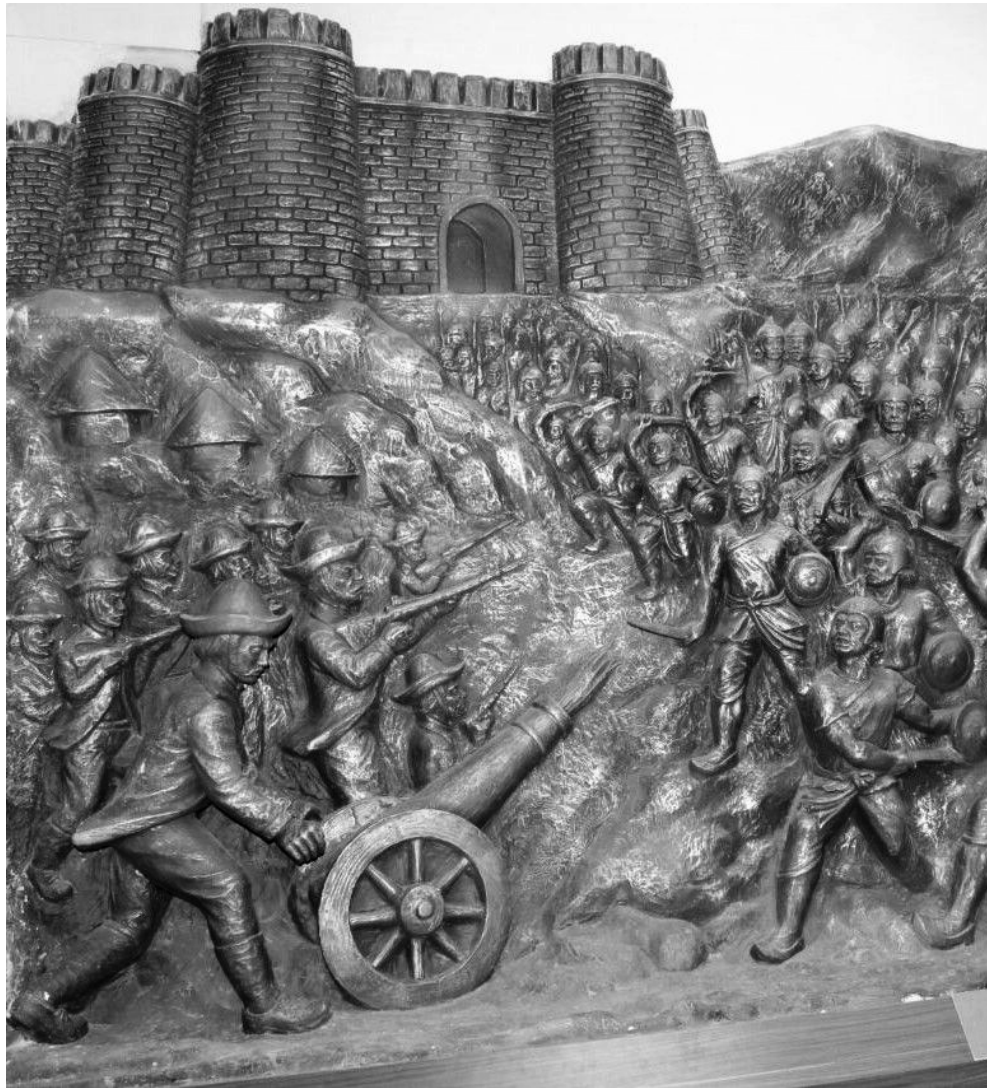
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Depiction of Paika Bidroha the State Museum of Odisha. Photo courtesy of Shashanka Nanda (Dhenkanal, Odisha).

Morning Walk in Bhubaneswar: A Smart City

Annapurna Devi Pandey

On my senior Fulbright Nehru Teaching and Research grant (2017-18), I was privileged to stay in Bhubaneswar for nine months getting reacquainted to my peers with whom I had started my teaching career in early 1980s. It was a sobering experience to realize what I lost in the last 30 years I have been away and what I have gained. I was so lucky that this reconnection with the place and people of my early years in life happened at this point in my life. How I wish that everybody gets that opportunity and that privilege!

As I had mentioned before, this is the first time in the last 30 years, I am staying in Bhubaneswar, the capital of Odisha for a long stretch of nine months, and have discovered the walking culture here. I have been introduced to Madhusudan Park, Pokhariput, about two kilometers away from my present home. It is a very modern park which had a complete makeover in 2015. Now, it is well equipped with a tiled walking path, running trails, a skating rink, and a few exercise machines in an idyllic set up with tropical trees and lots of grassy land for relaxation and fun.

Here my morning starts with the bells from the Siva temple next to my home and the sounds of morning Azan from the mosque nearby. In California, it is a farfetched dream. I have to drive about an hour to go to the nearest Hindu temple in Fremont. By the time I make my tea and pretend to get ready, the morning sun greets me in my bedroom from the sky across the pond. I make a wish: that this scenario continue forever! But as we all know everything is transitory, so also the beautiful ever glowing red faced morning Sun.

Then, very reluctantly, I pull myself out of the door for my morning walk. Half a dozen dogs greet me just outside my gate. In the last several months of my stay they have never bothered me. When I came to this neighborhood, they were the first ones to welcome me, always happy to see me even empty-handed. They would lick me and shower me with all their love and affection. Many of us mistake it as undue advance or get threatened by their jubilant welcome, but I am assured, they are the most loving friends. I feel sad when people kick them, pour hot oil on them or beat them nearly to death. Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita that for the enlightened, there is no difference between a dog and a pious Brahmin. In the modern society, it has become our second nature to perform our rituals without understanding or appreciating what they are meant for. We may be very God-loving and pious, but don't treat our fellow beings properly.

I live across *Jhara Pokhari* (natural pond) and next to it is a dainty Siva temple. I start walking by the side of *Jhara Pokhari* where several women and men take a morning dip while the caretaker opens the gate of the temple to the public for their morning *darshan* (viewing). The month of Kartik, which just ended, was different. The temple bells started around 4 a.m. with people congregating at the temple for the morning *kirtan* (prayer with music) in order to earn good deeds for the whole year and maybe for life and after.



Here, I see people coming on bikes, motor bikes and even cars to have a darshan of Lord Siva. People make a beeline for the pond for several reasons – to perform family rituals like a sacred thread ceremony or wedding; performance of the last rites after the demise of near and dear ones; immersion of the plaster of Paris idols like Ganesh, Saraswati, Biswakarma, the Kartikeya, Durga among others celebrated regularly in Indian culture. I gather it is a rare natural waterbody in the extended neighborhood besides grand Bindu Sagar near Lingaraj temple about 4 -5 kilometers away. So Jhara Pokhari which makes my home so cherishable is on big demand on various socio- religious grounds. For example, on Kartika Purnima, thousands of people came to the pond and visited the temple for *boita bandana*. Kartika Purnima marked the closure of the holiest month of the lunar year.

Boita bandana is a symbolic worship of the sailboat reminiscent of maritime trade that once flourished in the state of Odisha. Now it is a socio-religious ritual gently reminding Odias of their past maritime glory when the traders transported fine textile abundantly produced in the state to nearby countries in Southeast Asia.

This annual festival also reminds me of my childhood in Cuttack, the neighboring city, when my mother used to wake me up around 4am, give us a bath after anointing my body in coconut oil to protect me from the cold weather, and put kohl in my eyes to take me to Mahanadi about 2 kms away to get the blessing of Lord Siva on the banks of the river. Today my heart bleeds to see all the plaster of Paris, plastic and Styrofoam dumped into the pond in the name of religious rituals. They keep floating long after these rituals. Should cleaning not be part of the ritual? Who is going to do it? Municipality, low paid, lowly placed workers? We are already in 21st century. What have we learned from our education and awareness?

Walking tradition as an exercise among the middle class in which I count myself is fairly a new phenomenon. While I was growing up in the neighboring city Cuttack, my father walked everywhere in town and my mother worked constantly at home cooking and cleaning besides taking care of us, her five children. I do not think she had time to walk outside her household chores. Walking exercise is a class phenomenon. The farmers and laborers do not walk for exercise as they are working relentlessly in the field and engaged in construction and factories. Now in the process of modernization, the swelling middle class is tied to sedentary jobs and realize the need to do structured physical exercise.

I walk through the sleepy streets to Madhusudan Park. Here walking is taken as a multi task activity and on the street I see various flavors of walking activities by different age groups. Older retired men walking in groups deeply engrossed in chatting about their family, retired life or sharing all the achievements of their grown children living far away. I see them on my way to and from the park. On their return, they congregate at the roadside tea stall to have a cup of tea, giving a finishing touch to their morning relish.

Men and women picking flowers from the roadside tagar (angiosperms), and kaniar (yellow oleander) trees for gods and goddesses is a common sight, with them hardly noticing the trash littered all around the trees on the side of the road. People dump the trash from homes on the roadside. I have never seen a single walker ever picking up trash and putting them in the easily



visible trashcans supplied by Bhubaneswar Municipality Corporation (BMC). It is the job of low class and low caste janitors who sporadically pick up the trash and put in carts to haul them away. I see how the caste system is in vogue even though the laws prohibit the existence of caste system long ago.

Women walk in twos or fours, many of them on their walk making sure to buy vegetables for the lunch preparation. I hardly see women in their 20s and 30s on the morning walk. If at all they come by, they will accompany their sister, mother or an older relative. I also see some spouses on their walks, wives perhaps finding the only time to have a chat with their husbands. I pass through a few temples on my way to the park. It is wonderful to see older women making garlands at the temple while the disinterested priest on cell phone. What a great way for older women to meet and feel useful being at the service of gods and goddesses and catching up with each other!

I easily detect the park site with thousands of motor bikes, cars and other vehicles parked in the front. It shows how so many people are taking their walk at the park seriously. A friend of mine once jokingly said, Biju Patnaik Park about 2 kms away is for the upper class bureaucrats and decision makers, whereas this park is for people like us the middle class. Along with exercise, the park is a site of socialization. I see people greeting each other “Jai Jagannath,” walking in groups or sitting and chatting on cozy benches spread all around the park. Exercise of this kind is certainly not visible in public spaces in the United States. Also, walking/ running is certainly not part of group behavior, individuals do it in their own way and at their own pace.



This park has attracted many entrepreneurs – vendors for energy drinks, vegetables, morning snacks, fitness advertisement groups and so on. I can see they have a lucrative business with so many middle class walkers and fitness enthusiasts. Parks are increasingly becoming lucrative places for various enterprises. This may be tied to a new development in town which I had never seen –mushrooming of Patanjali stores selling all health improvement food, medicine and drinks. People are definitely becoming conscious of good health and their wellbeing. I am pleased to see these new developments but continue to be troubled by the amnesia I witness about the disconnection of littering, dirt and pollution and one’s health and wellbeing.

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Ignored

Sri Gopal Mohanty

Ignored was Odisha—her people, language, architecture and culture—and is still being ignored.

Ignored, neglected and quite often humiliated. Odisha's glory of the past was overshadowed. Odia language was almost to be subsumed under Bengali. her people's simplicity, generosity, and tolerance were misunderstood as to be naïve, a sign of ignorance and lack of masculinity, and her art and culture were sidetracked for being rustic. Under sustained pressure from outside rulers, Odisha's intellectual and creative force shrunk to be hidden quite often inside the rural ethos.

However, the smoldering desire for being counted and to have 'self-dignity' as a natural yearning for any individual gave rise to the Odia nationalistic movement during the late 19th century. Its purpose was to unite fragmented parts of Odia speaking people who were living in other states as second-class citizens and create one state—Odisha—for them. It is well known that Madhu Babu and Fakir Mohan among others were leading the movement and eventually Orissa (as it was called then) came into existence in 1936.

The objective of the movement was also to support India's independence but it was a question of priority to form Orissa first because of the apprehension that in an independent India, Odias would not have the same self-dignity as say, Bengalis, Hindustanis, or Telugus, and the idea of forming Orissa later might be ignored.

Odia nationalism is evoked mainly for preservation of Odia language and by people's emotional attachment to Lord Jagannatha. The Jagannatha philosophy is liberal and eclectic in the sense that it assimilates the important postulates of almost all religions. It espouses universal humanism—we all are children of God—and induces mutual respect among each other. This principle is reflected in the society to make it inclusive and not to neglect or dehumanize others, unlike customary in many parts of India. For example, caste based division is less felt in Odisha in contrast to several other states.

In spite of the lofty ideal, unfortunately the societal attitude is often trapped by the so-called mother-in-law and daughter-in-law syndrome, that is, the mother-in-law who was victimized during her period of being a daughter-in-law, victimizes her own daughter-in-law—one who was neglected neglects others instead of being generous—as if it is a behavioral norm.

Babaji Padma Charan Das (1868 – 1940) was a contemporary of Utkal Gauraba Madhu Sudan Das and Vyasakabi Fakir Mohan Senapati. Born in Soro, Balasore, he received his B.A. degree from Ravenshaw College. From his childhood, he was very religious and became a Vaishnava to spend a large part of his life in Vrindavan. During his time, Odisha had already adopted Radha-Krushna devotional (Bhakti) cult and the religion-cultural scene in Odisha was heavily influenced by Gaudiya Vashnavism. Practically every village had a Radha-Krushna temple, and



devotional songs in praise of divine love of Radha-Krushna were sang as part of religious practice, called Kirtan. The language of songs was Bengali and the tune (swara) was of Gaudiya kirtan. At this juncture Babaji Padma Charan felt a need for “Odia Kirtan,” and became its pioneer by writing four books: “Odia Kirtan” part 1-2 and “Sangita Harabali” Part 1-2. He published these during 1913-17. These were written in Odia and were in traditional ‘raga’s like basant, khambaj, kamodi, and purabi. There was another important aspect of Padma Charan’s compositions. During any of Radha-Krushna related festival, such as Chandana, Jhulana, Raasa and Dola, it was customary (even now) particularly in Puri and the vicinity to have gotipua dances accompanied by Champu, Odissi, and Chhanda without any reference to any particular festival or the season. Babaji composed lyrics specifically meant for each festival. In Sangita Harabali, this feature is highlighted with abundant lyrical description of the season and the festival, in addition to the usual theme of divine love. What is appealing in his Kirtan is that common folks in Odisha can take part in singing, while in gotipua dances they will be mere spectators.

Besides his pioneering contribution to Odia Kirtan, Babaji wrote 24 books during his lifetime, three of which were dramas—Shree Prataprudra Deva, Kansa Badha and Shree Shree Radha Govinda Keli Bilasa—which predate dramas of eminent Vaishnav Pani.

It seems Padma Charan’s passion for Odia language and Odia music was so deep that he created “Odia Kirtan” and was a pioneer in enriching Odia ‘Bhakti’ literature. Sadly, after his death he has been ignored.

It is no exaggeration that the name of Akshaya Mohanty has been permanently etched in modern Odia music—he is considered to be its father. Soon after 1955, there was a new kind of spring and an uproar in the world of Odia music, which was neither a freshness induced in traditional music nor was revamp of folk music. It was a never-done-before bold experiment of expressing rural romantic sentiment in modern lyrical rendering. Partha Sarathi Mohapatra’s “Mo Rangelata Rusichhi” in the voice of Akshaya Mohanty just had the never-seen-before magical effect on the youth’s tender mind. Even one could hear the riksha puller humming “Mo Rangelata Rusichhi” in the lanes of Cuttack and under the open sky. Partha (Bulu Bhai) was the lyricist and Akshaya (Khoka Bhai) was the vocalist. The pair’s musical charm spread like wildfire. They were like two flowers in one stem—then...

Bulu Bhai had an untimely death in 1976.

Khoka Bhai became immortal and Bulu Bhai remained incognito.

When we think of Odissi dance, we are immediately reminded of Kelu Charan Mohapatra for just reasons. The dance is a beautiful harmonious blend of music and choreography. Kelu Babu’s many dance productions were the result of two persons sitting together at odd hours in the night – him with the music composer Bhubaneswar Mishra. In any dance performance, one can feel the charming impact of Bhubaneswar Babu’s composition. Both these men were also like two flowers in one stem.



The glory of Odissi dance has spread all over the world. Yet Bhubaneswar Babu's name hardly receives any significance.

The urbanized Odisha neglects and even exploits rural Odisha and has become the cause of destruction of rural economy. Non-tribals do the same to tribals.

The prevalent hierarchy of feudalism and the influence of neighboring regions on sustaining class-caste system apparently has a restraining impact on followers of Jagannath philosophy who are changing. Yet Odisha remembers and eulogizes milk maid Manika, Bhima Bhoi, and Sal Beg.

India's civilization and culture have been a continuous process of ever absorbing and assimilating changes because the fundamental principle of 'unity in diversity' has been their core. Interestingly, people of Odisha have found their belief to be akin to this principle. That's why when Odisha's nationalism movement started, it appealed to many.

At present the very values for which Odia nationalism movement was fought are being challenged to accept the concept of uniformity by majoritization, that is to accept what majority people are following. For example, in many schools learning Hindi has been a priority which may eventually make Odia learning redundant. The liberal religious beliefs in Odisha may give way to a narrow set of prescribed beliefs.

India's cherished model of democracy followed through the principle of "unity in diversity" is a pride and that's why it can be called "Incredible India." The country is being curiously watched by rest of the world. Canada's adoption of pluralism is very close to India's model.

A possible threat to sustain India's diversities is looming. And there is a good chance, Odisha will be ignored again!

Sri Gopal Mohanty is a Professor Emeritus in Mathematics and Statistics at McMaster University, Canada. Throughout his life, he has taken active parts in different socio-cultural organizations. He is associated with OSA just after its formation. He is one of the few drama enthusiasts who started OSA Regional Drama festival movement, which has become a popular event in every region. He takes special interest in cultural aspects of Odisha and of people in general. He believes in individualism, favorably directed toward serving the humanity. With that spirit, he is presently working with Mahila Shanti Sena(MSS), a movement to build peace through women-led and community-based empowerment.

THE SUBLIME AND THE SILLY

Reflections on our current treatment of mythological characters and episodes

Manoj Das

"There are four very great events in history, the siege of Troy, the life and crucifixion of Christ, the exile of Krishna in Brindavan and the colloquy with Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra," scribbled Sri Aurobindo in a notebook way back in 1913 and he continued, "The siege of Troy created Hellas, the exile in Brindavan created devotional religion (for before there was only



meditation and worship), Christ from his cross humanised Europe. The colloquy at Kurukshetra will yet liberate humanity. Yet it is said that none of these four events ever happened.”

That was when some intellectuals of the 20th century were in one of their periodical feats of materialistic denial. Their zeal, however, even if quixotic, could be given its due place in epistemology as a line of quest. But when an “intellectual” of our time attempts to humour us by associating Krishna with kinky eve-teasers loitering on the city lanes, when an avant-garde drama group associates the Pandavas demolishing a haunted forest allotted to them by the Kauravas for founding their habitation with contemporary ecological misadventures, when novelists in several Indian languages, apart from some in English, find in the intriguing character of Draupadi an opportunity available to them in a golden platter to evaluate her in the light of their own knowledge of psychology, it is time to wonder which, between our environmental and cerebral climates, had become more polluted.

Irony of the short-cut

The aforesaid evaluating light, of course, is nothing but darkness—a condition caused by our inability to penetrate the consciousness of a remote past, apart from the fact that most of the writers concerned hardly go beyond short, retold versions of the concerned ancient works.

But forget about the writers who exploit the people’s fascination for the epic characters; an embarrassing irony is, even those who claim to present the epics proper in a modern language may not have taken the trouble of reading the original works. In 1981, the Indian Express sent me a work entitled “The Mahabharata of Vyasa: Condensed from Sanskrit,” for review. I had the shock of my life when I found out that this widely circulating work in English was not condensed from Sanskrit but from some other already condensed version, either in English itself or some other language, say Bengali or Hindi. To cite a simple example of the professor-author’s casualness, he confidently states that Arjuna and Bhima apart, “the three other Pandavas are happy with their common wife Draupadi, and Vyasa records no extra-marital amorous dalliance on their part.” Well, the Mahabharata of Vyasa speaks clearly about Yudhishthira’s wife Devika, Sahadeva’s pair of wives Vijaya and Bhanumati, Nakula’s wife Karenumati, as well as of their parents and their children.

The professor-author’s list of reasons justifying Krishna coming to Draupadi’s rescue consist of her being his relative, and once she having bandaged his wound by tearing a part of her own “expensive dress,” and thirdly because both were self-born. But in his understanding of the situation, the reason for which millions of men and women of the subcontinent have shed tears as well have celebrated that poignant moment—Duhshasana trying to disrobe her but failing because of the intervention of Grace, has no place at all. The message the episode delivers—that when all human agencies fail one, the Divine does not fail if one surrenders to Him, is of no relevance for him. (By the way, the Express published the review with a cartoon showing the professor-author driving Arjuna’s chariot, instead of Krishna!)

Does this typify the new-fangled attitude we nurture toward our mythology, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata in particular? I am afraid, it is so to a great extent. We have no patience for the



original; some situations are attractive to us; we knit our fancy around them, but would not care to study the background of the situation; we love certain values but forget that a bygone era could have had a different set of values. No common yardstick could be used to measure characters of different ages with gaps of millennia between them.

Judging Draupadi

Both Valmiki and Vyasa were realists in the best sense of the term. But their sense of realism was vaster than that of ours. They believed that things were not governed by physical factors alone; there were forces and beings belonging to several supra-physical, supra-rational spheres who intervened in human life.

Let us briefly examine the case of Draupadi in its original context. A number of contemporary novels and plays and poems in different languages have presented this character, attributing to her such emotions and passions that are common to an average woman of our time, disregarding the very basic fact that she was not a human being. No doubt, an emanation too assumed human traits, and as the realist Vyasa has shown, Draupadi was no exception.

King Drupad performed a Yajna, or sacrificial fire-rite, wishing to have a son powerful enough to vanquish his enemy, Drona. A son of course was granted to him. But the supernatural forces which the rite invoked knew better: a son would not serve the king's purpose. Drona would belong to a camp that would be too powerfully hostile and evil to be tackled by any being short of an emanation of Shakti, the feminine aspect of Divinity. Hence from the Yajna emerged Draupadi. Unlike Sita or Savitri, she was already a radiant young lady.

In fact, a study of the Mahabharata would doubtlessly establish that but for her determination for revenge growing ever stronger through her experiencing terrible humiliation again and again, the Pandavas could probably have reconciled to their own fate and the Kauravas could probably have been spared. She alone was continuously conscious of her mission: She alone could keep together the five Pandavas, the five supernatural emanations, who were the chosen providential instruments to fight the Evil.

Hence, before we pounce upon that character armed with our human laws of psychology, Freudian or otherwise, we must remember that she was outside the moral code of conduct governing the life of the mortals. At the end of the big battle, in the geniality of a homely atmosphere, when some of the ladies requested her to reveal the wizardry behind her commanding allegiance of five husbands together, her answer was disarmingly unexpected: she could do so because she had no lust in her!

Over the centuries, the two epics have inspired innumerable works in every genre of literature. They have also been retold by geniuses who have added new flavours to the original situations—for example Kampan in Tamil and Tulsidas in Hindi, so far as the Ramayana is concerned. These seer-pets would not let Sita be even touched by her kidnapper. In one of them, Ravana had to lift the very chunk of earth on which Sita stood; in the other Ravana could carry only



an illusory Sita! These poets and many more like them in different Indian languages have carried the epic situations to different new heights through their lofty realisations; they have not degraded them through any puny sense of social realism. Well, I believe we have enough of social realism as well as a cocktail of that and eroticism, apart from surrealism and existentialism. We may let the epics rest in their own exclusive sphere.

The episode of Ekalavya

Facts are presented by the epic poets in a detached way—and it is for us to form our opinion of the characters concerned. The young forest-dweller Ekalavya, son of a chieftain, has secretly mustered certain miraculous feats of archery taught by Drona only to his select disciples. The young man worships Drona as his guru. This is found out. Confronted by the Master, Ekalavya is ready to pay him his due. The latter demands his right-hand thumb and the young man readily sacrifices it. Surely, nobody can fail to sympathise with the young man and criticise Drona for his unusual demand. This author too has not reconciled himself to Drona's attitude.

Even so we should not deny the backdrop its due. What was that?

Ekalavya had disabled a dog from opening its mouth, applying a complex formula of archery that at once sealed its lips with crisscross of seven arrows. He did so simply because the creature had the audacity to bark at him.

There are three arguments in favour of Drona's action. The first one is a rather light argument, product of a modern brain which says that certain occult techniques of archery were Drona's 'copyright,' none had the right to 'steal' them. The second is a pragmatic one. From Ekalavya's conduct toward a poor animal, it is worth asking ourselves what could have happened if this unchallengeable archer had started applying his knowledge on human beings, his future forest-dwelling subjects, if he felt vexed by any of them at any time. Hence his uncanny power, not accompanied by the ethical principles of its application, had to be curtailed. The third argument is even more serious. A guru in those days was not concerned with a disciple's worldly success alone, but also with the consequences of his deeds. Better one is less successful than one is spiritually crushed by the success.

But all said and done, Ekalavya remains great and unique for his truthfulness and courage, independent of any later-day estimate of his greatness conditioned by contemporary bias.

It is to be noted that Ekalavya continued to be an archer, though bereft of certain subtle quality of that discipline. Significantly, he participated in the epoch-making Kurukshetra War. He joined the Kauravas, the camp which Drona led as one of its Generals.

One is not bound to look upon our epics as a repository of spiritual truths or revelations of supra-rational laws working in our life mixed with the mundane laws. One could also regard them as nothing more than creations of a primeval imaginativeness containing some elements of history. Or one could simply disregard them. But if we choose to deal with their characters and situations, we



must do so in proper reference to their context as presented by the epics themselves and also taking into account the spirit and values of the era.

Krishna the incredible survivor

If Krishna is abused in a myriad of fashions in poetry, drama, and films showing him as a young man dancing with abandon with damsels of Gopa or with Radha, it is because hardly anybody remembers the fact that he was a small boy as long as he lived in Gopa, the backdrop of this phase of his activities. By then he had not even been to any school. He left for Mathura, put an end to the tyrant that was Kamsa, and from there was sent by his father to the Gurukul of Sage Sandipani at Avantipura. He never returned to Gopa to play the romantic hero that has been so mercilessly made out of him. While his relationship with the Gopis, as narrated by the Bhagavatam, had an esoteric significance, it is portrayed by playwrights, story-tellers and artists as happenings at the crude physical plane and naturally the masses have devoured them as such.

And so far as Radha is concerned, she does not appear anywhere in the three basic works containing Krishna's biographical information: Bhagavatam, Harivamsa and the Mahabharata. Radha is an experience, a revelation nonpareil of Divine Love that dawned in the consciousness of the post-Bhagavatam Vaishnava mystics. Krishna was a physical entity, Radha is a spiritual realisation. What is most surprising, even some of the highly gifted poets of the middle ages and later times have introduced erotic elements into their presentation of the Radha-Krishna theme. Their poetry is wonderful, but the treatment of the theme is most regrettable. It is a paradox.

Oddly indeed, the dilution and popularisation of the life of Krishna has been the inspiration behind countless works of art, literature, drama, sculpture and folklore, some highly creative and some deplorably clumsy, some inspiringly lofty and some incredibly vulgar. In the history of Indian culture there is no other theme that had so widely amused and entertained, as well as illumined and enlightened the people of different strata for thousands of years.

But the amazing truth is, despite all kinds of popular treatment of Krishna, sometimes even farcical, his vibrant name has continued to transcend them; the Indian psyche has continued to see nothing but the supreme liberator in him, or has felt something inexplicable in that character which dazzled through a thousand layers of ignorance heaped on it over the ages.

The satire par excellence

Rama has been repeatedly taken to task for exiling Sita. But did Valmiki's Rama do that? No!

Valmiki is the original recorder of Rama's life. Others may build upon his story, but that must be taken as a separate story; such later creations cannot alter the original character of Rama. Valmiki alone is the first and hence the authentic biographer of Rama.

The post-script canto of the Ramayana, customarily accepted as an integral part of the epic, is not Valmiki's creation. His epic ends with the return of Rama to Ayodhya and his magnificent coronation that had remained suspended for a tumultuous period of fourteen years. Even without



the opinion of experts, any reader with a minimum knowledge of Sanskrit, like this author, could easily feel the difference in style between the main text and the appended chapter.

But hats off to the poet of the post-script chapter—whoever he is! It would be a pity if we miss the point he tries to make, his sharp satire on the conduct of mice and men of all times, and rest proud and contented with a chance to find fault with Rama.

The infant Sita had emerged from the earth; she had been nurtured by a loving father Janaka; through marriage, she had been entrusted to the care of the Purushottama, “the person sublime,” Rama. Lo and behold, the crafty evil power that is ever eager to sabotage any state of harmony managed to steal her. Through a war that was terrible and complex, Rama rescued her. Lest the hero should have any doubt about her having remained pure in her consciousness, she herself ordered for a fire to be made, entered it (nobody asked her to do so), and came out unscathed, for pure as flames she was, flames could not have harmed her.

Alas, while all is well and Rama, with Sita by his side, has ushered in such an unprecedented period of happiness for his kingdom that Ramarajya would stand for the most ideal rule, “we the people,” decided that we must be entertained to a miracle; she must demonstrate the Agnipariksha before a thousand lusty eyes. If she had done it once, why not once again? Otherwise she is a fallen woman, having lived in a demon’s domain for a while.

But she had done it once out of her free-will, in order to disarm Rama, the one person who mattered to her, of any misgiving. She would not of course care to satisfy the mob curiosity.

But, lo and behold, miracle she did perform! At her all-transcending cry, the Mother Earth parted and she returned to her source, planting a lasting slap on the agape humanity. A truth had emerged from the core of the earth; but we did not deserve it.

The epic characters and situations, despite interpolations and a million misrepresentations, conceal sparks of truth. Remember, for example, Savitri, a pre- Mahabharata character whose story is integrated into the epic. This princess of Madra married the forest-dweller Satyavan, with the full knowledge that he was to die in a year. But mustering the spiritual splendour that lay in her own occult self, transforming her love into an invincible power, she confronted that fatal moment and succeeded in transcending it, erasing death from her consort’s destiny. Thousands of years later Sri Aurobindo finds the legend a symbol and accepting it as base, creates his immortal epic Savitri, his visualisation of a new destiny for mankind, transcending the present phase of evolution dominated by ignorance epitomised in death.

Let us not behave ungratefully towards our heritage of mythology, and to the two epics in particular, the mighty foundation and succour for the robust growth of our literature, our philosophy and every aspect of our culture.

Manoj Das, who lives in Pondicherry, India, is an award-winning Indian author who writes in Odia and English. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2001 for his contributions to literature and education. This article was submitted by OSA life member Sulochana Patnaik.



The Awaited Dawn

Meghkanta Mohapatra

In the darkness of the night,
All I think as if nothing is right.
Dark the night, fearful it is,
Rain, storm added makes life seize.

Who can stop the end of the night?
Who can stop the candle burning bright?
Who can stop the dawn to come?
End of night is always dawn.

Once night gone, the day comes up
Dark, rain, storm and fearing stop.
When I think that all is lost
Awaited dawn comes in my thought.

Up I look and thank him more
Pray him for strength to endure
All the fear and all darkness
Wait for morning lark's access.

Then the Awaited Dawn comes on
Blithe of large rings on and on
East comes up with rising Sun
All my sorrows then have their mourn.

Counting what He have all
After thunderstorm as a lull
Thank thy God for all concern
After the darkness, who made dawn.

You can think that yours is today
Like the dark night, husk and hay
Morning will be only full of my share
Filled with fragrance, peace, and colorful flowers.

Meghkanta Mohapatra lives in Aurora, IL. She is professionally a MBA, mother of two kids, with a full time teaching job, balancing kids' activities and unending house work too. She still has unleashed three poetry books and is a co-author in one textbook. Apart from all this, her fingers flutters for ceramics too.



Power of Astro-Palmistry

Joy Gopal Mohanty

When I was a boy growing up in Odisha, almost all families had a family astrologer who used to create a horoscope for every newborn. While it is a birth record showing date, time and place of birth, it also contains a chart depicting the positions of stars and planets at the birth time. When this chart is properly interpreted, it is supposed to tell a lot about the person's health, character, education, marriage and occupation.

However, at times, some people make fake horoscopes by putting wrong information to show a perfect match of a specific man and woman before marriage. In such a situation, if that marriage fails, people blame the horoscopes. But, if an astrologer also knows palmistry, then horoscope data can be validated with the data from reading palms of an individual. **Anyone can change the horoscope with fake data but cannot change the palm information.** Therefore, Astro-Palmistry or reading one's horoscope and palm together can be powerful than reading just the horoscope.

Recently, during my visit to Odisha, I discovered an Astro-Palmist named, "Mr. Harihar Sethy" in *Kataka* (formerly Cuttack). He is a retired engineer and practices Astro-Palmistry as his passion and hobby. I learned that he has published two volumes of books in Odia, "*Anoobhootee MaaLaa*" meaning "Garland of experiences," in which he has depicted his past analyses of horoscopes and palms of real cases showing how these readings were accurate and helped solving problems of people.

Here, I am delighted to translate one of those cases (Volume I, case No. 11, named, "*Manashchakhyu*" meaning "Mind's eye" or "Inner-Look") and present it here as an example of the power of Astro-Palmistry. Following, is my translation in brief from what Mr. Sethy narrated in Odia:

"One hot summer day at Kataka, Odisha, India, I was at my house. An old man arrived at my gate on an auto-rickshaw along with a young man and a young woman around noon time. When asked, he said he has come from a distant village. The young man who accompanied him was his eldest son and the young woman was his daughter Anita. After they settled down, I asked why they decide to come to me at this unusual time. The old man said, "*I usually come to Kataka on monthly basis for Anita to get her checkup with her Psychiatrist and today I came for that. At the same time, I thought of meeting with you to get some advice for Anita.*" Then he asked my forgiveness for disturbing me at an unusual time for consultation. Since he had come from a distant village, I felt pity for him and asked what he wants from me. Immediately, he started describing about his problem and mental pain.

'About two years back, Anita got married to a handsome young man named 'Chandan,' son of Mr. Raju Mishra from a nearby village. Chandan is such a good natured and decent-mannered human being that everybody liked him. He was around 28 years of age. After finishing his M.A. degree, he was working as a lecturer in a local non-government college. However, he was not satisfied with his job. So, he was preparing for and attending new job interviews when available. After marriage, Anita and Chandan were doing very well and we were so happy to learn about Anita's well-being.

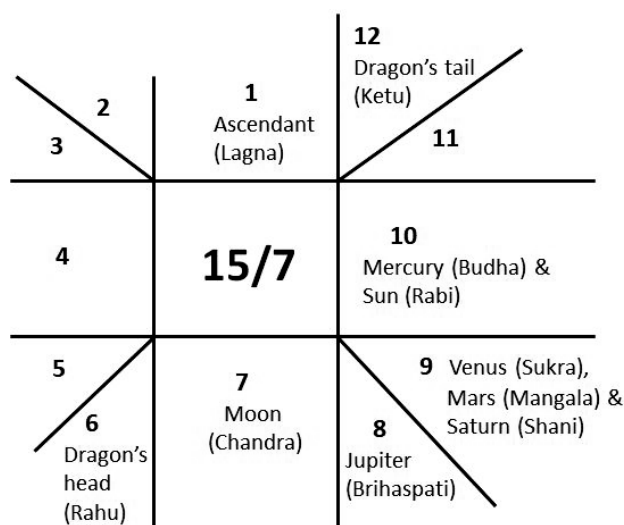


Suddenly, after about two months of their marriage, a bad incident happened, and we got devastated. We were told that Chandan committed suicide. We were informed that he jumped from a bridge onto a concrete floor and so his head and face were brutally damaged making him unrecognizable. They also said, no one knew about him for two to three days. When vultures were flying around the dead body, someone reported to police. Police found some papers from one of the pockets of the dresses on the dead body that had Chandan's home address. So, police informed Chandan's parents about the incident. Even though, his face was unrecognizable, family members identified the body to be of Chandan from the dresses on the body. After post-mortem, parents and family members performed his last rites. After some inquiry, police closed this case with a statement that Chandan committed suicide as he was unable to find a suitable job. For us, it was a big surprise as we had never noticed any depression or mental problems with Chandan.

As we are from a very religious ('Shaashan' kind) brahmin family, there are strict guidelines for a widow in the society. Young widows were not allowed to remarry. They are supposed to wear only white sarees, live a simple detached life until death, not allowed to wear red bangles or vermilion dot on forehead (symbol of a married woman), not allowed to eat any non-vegetarian food (eat only plain vegetarian), not allowed to show up or participate in any festivities, and not allowed to talk or mix with any other men outside family members. Although Anita has done her M.A., she cannot be an exception. For Anita, at her very young age, being a widow was a big blow for her and she became mentally unstable. And perhaps because of that, she was unable to accept this tragedy. She continued to dress up like a married woman including vermilion dot on her forehead, and that was not acceptable to Chandan's family. This caused a rift with her in-laws' family. Chandan's parents were also devastated as their dream of living with their son and daughter-in-law vanished. People started blaming Anita as a bad omen for Chandan's family. That also aggravated Anita badly, and they wanted to remove her from their house. So, we had no other choice but to accept Anita back in our house. She is our only daughter and we decided to keep her until our death. And now, we would appreciate if you would kindly analyze Anita's horoscope and her palm, and let us know the cause of her misfortune and when her madness will end.'

Interestingly, while Anita's father was describing her story of misfortune with tearful eyes, Anita was quiet, and grave as if she does not care for anything. That surprised me. Anyway, I started analyzing Anita's horoscope (see figure below).

Her birth was on January 22, 1960. Ascendant (*Lagna*) is in the house of Aries (*Mesa*), Moon sign (*Raasi*) is Libra (*TuLaa*, No.7) and she was born with star (*Nakhyatra*) 'Swaati' (No. 15). She is now 28 years old and currently she has "Saturn (*Shanee*) effect (*Mahaadasaa*).'' Jupiter (*Bruhaspatee*) is in the eighth house. There are no bad planets around. Even it indicates that she can have children. Venus, the Lord of seventh house is in the house of Sagittarius (*Dhanu*) or the ninth



Anita's horoscope



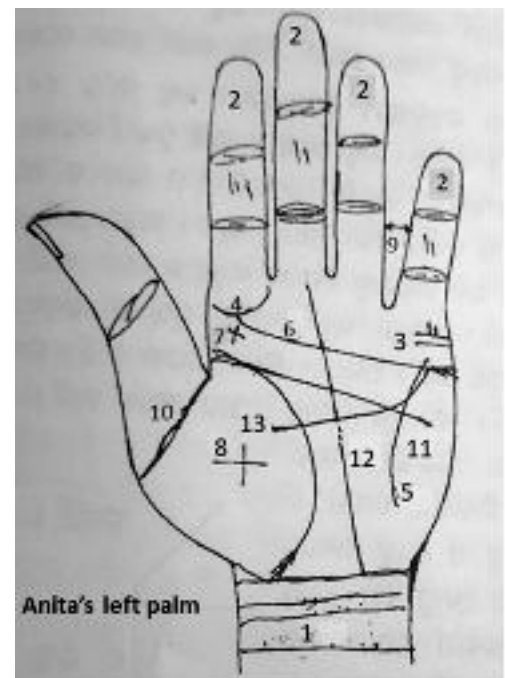
house. Dragon's Head (*Raahu*) being in the sixth house gives mental strength to Anita to deal with unforeseen danger. So, this can free her from all dangers. And there is no sign of becoming a widow. Even, there is no bad effect of Mars (*Maangalika Dosa*). There is no sign of marriage more than once. However, it shows that the ascendant (*Lagna*) is in between the Dragon's Head (*Raahu*) and Tail (*Ketu*), which creates a bad situation called 'Time Serpent (*Kaal Sarpa*) effect,' which is probably the reason of Anita's misfortune. In fact, this is not that bad that it can cause Anita a widow. I was perplexed with this.

I thought, maybe her horoscope is wrong. So, I started analyzing her palm (see figure next). As can be seen, her palm shows two lines (marked '3') under the Mount of Mercury. These two lines indicate that she will have only one marriage, and there will be good relationship between husband and wife. Moreover, these lines indicate that the couple would live long and there is no indication of her to be a widow.

Her palm is square type (marked '1'). Finger tips are square type too (marked '2'). Head line is straight, deep, and clear (marked, '11') which means there is no indication of bad sign. And these three markings indicate that she is not of imaginative type, rather she should be judgmental, hard working, and a scholar. Also, these indicate that she should be brave, not depressive type, and can handle hard times with patience. In her palm, arc of Jupiter (marked '4') and the line marked '5' for her extrasensory power (Brain line) are of very good type, which should help her to foresee future, and to lead her in maintaining a religious life.

Her heart line (marked '7') starts from the lower part of the mount of Jupiter and runs straight down to the mount of Mercury. People of this feature are normally kind-hearted. Hence Anita should be kind and can forgive as well as can receive forgiveness. That means, she can enjoy life while helping others. She cannot be of selfish nature. In addition, signs of cross in her palm in the mount of Jupiter (marked "7") and in the mount of Venus (marked, "8") shows the signs of an ideal and lovable person. Which means, she can tolerate life well, is not sick of sexual desire, and cannot accept a second husband.

The separation distance between the little finger and ring finger (also named as "Sun" finger) (marked, "9"), indicates that she cannot be disturbed with what others say and rather can stay firm with what she thinks right. The island sign (marked, '10') in her thumb indicates her to be a mother of a son and a daughter. However, her fate line is broken between her approximate age of 27 to 30 years (marked, '12'), indicating that she will face danger in this period of time. In fact, within her 30 years of age, one obstruction line starting from the mount of Venus has intersected the life line, the fate line and the brain line, and then joined the heart line. This suggests that this obstruction line is supposed to cause Anita's all physical and mental torture and at the end, will give peace in her heart. In summary, the readings from Anita's horoscope and palm suggest that it is impossible for her to become a widow. I was confused but I had confidence in my readings after practicing horoscope



and palm reading for several years. Therefore, I was suspicious with the decision of others around Anita. Yet, I was helpless. So, I asked Anita's father to pray God and let Him find the truth with time.

However, after listening to my analysis, Anita smiled and was very happy. For a few moments, she completely forgot that she was a widow and started praising the power of my horoscope and her palm analysis. She started speaking to me, 'If your analysis says, I cannot be a widow, I am not doing anything wrong. **In my mind's eye**, I can feel that I am married. So, I will continue to wear bangles and vermillion dot on my forehead and wait for my husband until my death.'

At that point, I stopped Anita and told her to recite '*Mahaa-mrutyunjaya mantra*' every day, as it can be powerful to protect her husband if he is still alive. In addition, she should also recite '*Gaayatri mantra*' for the Goddess *Laxmi* everyday after bathing. This will help in encouraging her to lead her life in a righteous path while boosting her patience and interest in life. I also requested Anita's father and brother to cooperate with her if they want her wellbeing.

'Let her wear bangles and vermillion dot in her forehead if that keeps her in peace and there is no major expense to it. This will not be any serious injustice for a mentally unstable person like her as **rules of society and religion are not applicable to patients. As a matter of fact, these days, many married women also do not wear bangles or vermillion dot and society does not go after them.**' With this, I let them leave. Anita appeared satisfied while her father and brother were not.

In the meantime, six months had passed. I received two letters from Anita. She has been reciting both "*Mahaa-mrutyunjaya mantra*" and "*Gaayatri mantra*" regularly as per my suggestion. She was also dreaming of her husband to be with her. This is also helping her to keep good health and stable mentally. Neighbors and society are showing compassion towards her and do not criticize her as they think she is mad. Her family members are also in peace with her. Moreover, she is not seeing her Psychiatrist any more.

I received a third letter from Anita in June 1988 that she wrote from a hospital in south India. I was delighted to read that letter and felt grateful to the Almighty. I realized that unselfish and unconditional love for the God-Almighty creates miracles. Addressing me with respect Anita wrote:

'I am writing this letter from the bedside of my husband as I found him admitted in a hospital here in south India. God has heard my prayer and has reunited me with my husband.

Four days ago, one lecturer who works in the same college where my husband was working came to our house. According to him, he recently visited his daughter and son-in-law living in this city in south India. During, his stay here, he came to a nearby restaurant for a snack and saw my husband working there as a laborer. Even though he was a colleague to him in the past, my husband could not recognize him, nor did he speak to him. The lecturer also realized that Chandan behaved like a dumb. Since he was sure about recognizing my husband, he decided to contact the restaurant owner. Apparently, the restaurant owner found my husband a couple of years back on the street begging for food and was a dumb person then. He felt pity for my husband and brought him to his restaurant. At that time, he could not even sign or write down his name and address. That is why he



decided to keep him in his hotel, so that he can get food and put him to work whatever he could do. My husband did not remember anything of his past. The restaurant owner thought maybe he was dumb from his birth. And now he got surprised when the lecturer described to him about my husband's past.

When I heard this, I was so thrilled to meet my husband. My father and brother also agreed to come with me. By the time we met him, the restaurant owner already showed pity on him and admitted him into this hospital for the last two days under the supervision of the head Psychiatrist. I was delighted to see him as soon as we reached there. So also, my father and brother. However, my husband was quiet with no response to see us.'

Anita wrote me her fourth letter before they left the hospital. According to her, 'Chandan regained his memory after electric shock treatment and magnetic therapy for seven days. He could recognize us and became alright in two weeks. After he got discharged from the hospital, we went to see the restaurant owner. He became delighted to see us, and apologized to us for putting my husband to do dirty job without any salary. Interestingly, he saved his pant and shirt that he was wearing when he met him initially. Chandan, however, could not recognize the dresses initially but later remembered them to be his friend's. He could not tell how these dresses came to him. He only said that on the day of his job interview, he stayed in the city with his childhood friend who was wearing these dresses. Even though his friend did not study well in school, due to his good fortune, he was living lavishly having a good house, car and other amenities. It seems, he was involved in selling drugs. Perhaps because of that, he had many enemies. We learned that the night my husband was with him, he was attacked by the enemies. As a friend, it is understood that Chandan tried to resist the attack. Unfortunately, miscreants hit Chandan on his head thinking that he is a co-worker. As a result, Chandan was unconscious. He did not remember anything after that. He did not even realize how many days have passed in between. We came to know later that the railway workers in south India discovered him from the goods train containment when he was still not in his good senses nor could he speak. They were kind to him, gave him food to eat and then left him on the station to survive. He did not have any money with him and he could not even remember who he was. He was maintaining his life on begging here and there until he met the restaurant owner. As he forgot his past, he forgot his education too.

After analyzing all this, we concluded that perhaps, those miscreants thought he was dead after he became unconscious. They hit his friend so bad that he was dead. They planned to throw these two bodies somewhere in the remote area from the city. Most likely, they changed the clothes between the bodies so that police would not be able to identify the dead bodies correctly. Then probably, they threw his friend's body from the bridge and threw Chandan into a nearby goods train open containment as he appeared dead. It is a long story now.

Thank you again for your bold analysis of my horoscope and palm readings that gave me strength to wait for my husband and to finally reunite with him.'"

Joy Gopal Mohanty is a life member of OSA and a researcher. He lives in Maryland with his family. He can be contacted at jgmohanty@yahoo.com.



Wings of Freedom

Jayasmita Mishra

The inner voice within me spoke; I chose the path of freedom. The time is now, let go!

Proving myself right used to be a major character flaw. I had to face not one, but many who needed justification and I realized it was futile. Some people believe that holding on and hanging in there are signs of strength. However, there are times in life in which it takes much more strength to just let go.

I stuck to my philosophy: “I don’t care about what other people say about me. I know who I am and I don’t have to prove anything to anyone.”

I identified my strengths and had to make a conscious effort to change my personality. Holding on to resentments was a burden and it made me all the more fragile. The realization dawned as I had to choose to hold on to either one pole: the East or the West. A single question got me started. Do you want to be right or do you want peace? These magic words released me years ago and put me on the path of freedom.

Time and tide wait for none. It has already been four years that my ex-husband and I have divorced. The kids have grown up and have left the nest to be on their own. In their late 20s, Ricky and Ruchi are fully aware of the situation and have accepted a new member into the family. As a mother, I have never dishonored the image of their father and even from a distance, the bonding has always been tight and healthy. This was something I have always appreciated and maintained.

Fate has its own plans; at a time when we would have looked forward seeing the kids spreading their branches and bearing fruit, things took an ugly turn. A part of the root got swayed, drifted, mingled and finally getting entangled. He remarried, a young damsel, 20 years younger.

He could not look at me the day when he confessed that he had a girlfriend. At first I thought it was a joke and assumed, this phase would pass. He was in India while I was busy looking after the kids in the US. He literally begged for freedom.

Leaving behind a cushy lifestyle and stable job back home, starting a new life from scratch was no joke. Like all immigrants, we were dreamers and were determined to achieve the American Dream: giving a better future to our kids. Things were pretty stable on my end. I smiled with distrust and became sarcastic. Just as things were settling down. “You’ll ruin the kids’ lives,” I warned him.

Arnav was my first crush, we had dated for six years and knew each other flesh and blood. Blessed as we were, we had the best of education from premier institutions of the country and had landed in prestigious jobs. He topped the Administrative Services while I had taken up a teaching job in a leading educational Institution. Amidst a big fat Indian wedding,



we were pronounced as Man and Wife. Witnessed by a large number of family, friends and well-wishers, we had taken the oath to remain faithful to each other not only in this life but as per Hindu norms for seven more lives hereafter.

After a brief spell of Bollywood romance, we started a family with Ricky followed by Ruchi, the love of our lives. As doting parents, our life revolved around the little ones as we witnessed and enjoyed each and every step of their milestones: motor, language and social-emotional development. The kids had it all. As parents we were PERFECT.

One fine evening, Arnav came home with the good news that he was chosen as an expat representing the Indian government in a lucrative position in New York, the financial hub of USA. Ricky and Ruchi were excited to have a taste of the western world and looked forward to this change. Determined to achieve the best and make it happen.

We relocated to rebuild our home in the land of opportunities where Lady Luck (Statue of Liberty) stood strong and tall, promising a golden future to one and all.

Building a new home in an alien land was not an easy job, we stood by each other solid and strong, by God's grace, the teething problems got sorted out and with time we gained foothold. Banking upon my PG degree, I had been fortunate enough to get a teaching position in a public school, which was pretty close to home. Both Ricky and Ruchi loved the freedom of no boundaries school system that this nation had to offer. With a strong backgrounds in both science and maths, they skipped grades and were in most advanced courses, scoring a high percentile. The curriculum was flexible, satisfying, and gave them a vision for a promising future. They dreamed of going to Ivy League schools, and we were determined to provide them the very best.

A carefree childhood with memorable prom days were over and the kids moved forward to college education. With the cost of higher education mounting up, we started taking loans to make ends meet.

Like most Indian Americans, we led a comfortable life, living in a big house, driving luxury cars and planning the very best for our kids. We were in debt, but, no worries, that is much normal in a growing capitalist economy. I cherish those days, I was in the middle of a smooth sailing family boat.

Today, I look back with no regrets. My loneliness gives me a chance to reflect on the past. I have always been a giver and that gives me immense satisfaction. Arnav, was called back by the Government of India to resume his high profile job, he left us. I had pushed him to go, for I realized how much his career meant to him. With advancing age I thought, with his cushy job with a Babu lifestyle of India would do him a lot more good. Moreover, I was capable and could handle things here in the US on my own. I presumed, that day was not far, I would soon join him as and when my children settled down in life.



Staying apart from each other had its own glitches. A reversal of time added to the fuel. No doubt, we missed each other. At the same time, priorities changed. I became more and more attached to my job, shouldering the full blown responsibility of paying the bills, cooking, cleaning. Slowly I fell into the trap of a robotic life pattern. Distance posed as an obstacle, in spite of modern means of communication, like Whatsapp and Facebook. We lacked the basics: human touch.

The bible says, God created Adam and Eve emerged from his rib meant to become a toy, dancing to his whims and fancies. Arnav became lonely and missed his family. I could sense his desperation, he had started drinking more and more alcoholic drinks. I was far away and could not be of much help. My focus was on the kids. This situation created a perfect environment for “my Arnav” to slip into the trap of a modern Eve. She was after his power and money. I was the giver, who gave away my husband and sons to the wings of freedom.

“I should get going,” I say. Yet, I have nowhere to be. I stand upright, a wrecked ship with strong sails, as I look up to the Statue of Liberty.

I have it all, my freedom. My job is my anchor, I pay my own bills as they pile up at stipulated intervals. I have been a good mother and witnessed the joy of seeing my children soaring high into the clouds with strong wings of their own. I am in pain, but it's not sorrow. I feel it's a sense of relief and gratitude.

I have done my best and banked on the love that is unconditional- expecting nothing in return. Our relationship came to an end because the partnership did not function properly. Yet, my love for Arnav remains deep within, forever.

God bless America!

Dr Jayasmita Mishra Ph.D., has received her doctoral degree from Delhi University, in the field of Educational Psychology. She migrated to the US in the year 2000 and lives in New York with husband Akshay Kumar and kids, Suprav and Supriya. An avid freelance writer and a loyal life member of OSA, she has contributed regularly to the OSA journal with short stories that are mostly related to aspects related to a migrant's Birdseye view of life. In the OSA Convention held in Rhode Island in 2016, she was one of the pioneers who actively introduced the Pitha Competition among ladies. A unique blend of culture and cuisine, it was a superhit and was applauded by one and all.



Window Tree

Snigdha Mishra

Tree at my window, window tree.
Silent sentinel, what do you see?
Arms outstretched, whispering,
What are you trying to tell me?

What do you dream of, window tree?
Does the scolding jay intrude on your thoughts?
Does the squirrel's endless chatter
Disturb your silent reverie?

I watch your arms open wide, welcome me
As you sway in the morning breeze.
What music do you dance to?
What ethereal, silent melody?

When cardinals fly into danger, recklessly
flinging themselves into my window each spring,
Are you unmoved? Do you watch impassively?
No! Not you, my window tree.

When snow falls through the night — softly, silently,
You bear that weight without complaint.
You glitter and glisten as the sun touches you,
My very own Christmas tree.

The first rays of spring warm your brow
And summer breezes ruffle your leaves.
Through autumn rains and winter snows,
You stand serene as the seasons flow.

Everything that nature throws your way
You greet and accept with grace.
Long after my bones are dust,
You will be there to greet another day.



My shade does not spread so wide,
My roots do not delve as deep.
I have neither your beauty nor your strength.
So I just drift along life's moving tide.

What do you wish to tell me?
I have watched and listened, and now
I think I hear what you are trying to say.
My steadfast friend, my very own window tree!

I must live my life like you, grounded in tranquility
Endure without complaint for the greater good.
Strive to be the very best I can be, strong and wise.
For you've taught me how, my window tree.

Snigdha Mishra resides in Dublin, OH, with her family. Along with her career in Contracts Management, she teaches and performs Hindustani classical music and writes poetry in her rare moments of spare time. She and her husband have been OSA Life Members since 1996.



Discovering Odisha: The Language Way

Dash Benhur

As Odias, we can take pride in many things connected with Odisha—the land that has given us our name. Pride, which may be translated as '*swabhimana*' or '*garba*' in Odia, is bad if it gives us a false sense of our own greatness and makes us look down on others. But certain kinds of pride can be good, as they help us to honour and treasure the things which have real value, which add meaning to our lives. If you feel proud because you are rich, live in a big house, and ride in a big car which no one else can afford, that is the wrong kind of pride. But we can be rightfully proud of the fact that even the poorest Odia woman, living in a mud hut, will decorate her home every morning with artistic *jbuntia* designs. She takes pride in her own home.

One of our aims should be to help Odia children to recognise and respect those things in Odisha which add to its value—our history, our culture, our traditions, the beauty of our temples, the richness of our art, our language and its literature, our dance and music, our festivals and our food. We should also learn to respect the people, the men and women, who have helped to make Odisha a beautiful and artistic land.

Some things become so much a part of our daily lives that we take them for granted and pay no attention to them. For example, many people living in Puri seldom care to visit the sea-beach and admire the beauty of the sea. To take another example, many of us are so used to the taste of the *pithas* which our mothers make that we never realise just how delicious they are, and with what great care they are made. We take them for granted.

Just as an individual can take many things for granted and miss the beauty of those aspects of life which make it richer, an entire race can neglect those elements of its culture that are unique and should be treasured. It is important that we, as Odias, should learn to understand and treasure the things which make the culture of Odisha so rich, instead of taking them for granted.

Let us start with the language which most of us speak at home—Odia. We use it every day, but do we ever stop to think what a rich language it is? Or do we think about the wonderful books written in that language, which our mothers read every morning or evening—the *Odia Bhagabat*, *Mahabharat*, *Ramayana* or the *Laxmi Purana*? These books are part of the wealth that belongs to every Odia—they make our lives richer and more beautiful. To appreciate these books fully, we should know something about the language in which they have been written.

There are two main groups of languages in India. The important languages of North India—Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Odia and Assamese—have grown out of Sanskrit, which was the language of our Aryan ancestors. On the other hand, the main languages of South India—Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam—are Dravidian languages. There are many other



languages, such as Santhali, Manipuri and Chhatisgarhi, which are spoken by the different “*adivasi*” tribes living in different parts of India, mainly in Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, as well as the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Mizoram etc.

The Odia language is unique among Indian languages because it combines elements of Sanskrit, which forms its base, together with some elements of the Dravidian languages such as Telugu and Tamil, as well as words taken from the languages of the *adivasis* living in Odisha. No other Indian language can boast of such a rich and varied “stock” of words.

The Sanskrit language, at some time in the distant past, was the language of knowledge, but it gradually became the court language, or the language used by priests for religious rituals. For everyday use, Sanskrit developed a “corrupted” form, known as “*apabhramsa*” or Pali. Many Sanskrit words were simplified in Pali; for example, “*dharma*” changed into “*dhamma*.”

About 2,500 years ago—that is, around the third century before the birth of Christ—the land that is now known as Odisha and was then known as Kalinga, was invaded by Ashoka, the king of Magadha (modern Bihar). A bloody war was fought on the banks of the Daya River, at the place known as Dhauli, near Bhubaneswar. The soldiers of the Kalingan army fought bravely but were defeated, and thousands of them were killed. Kalinga was conquered by Ashoka, but he himself was conquered by Kalinga. It is said that the religion preached by Buddha was already widely prevalent in Kalinga, as some of Buddha’s earliest disciples were from Kalinga. Ashoka was so much horrified by the violence and bloodshed which he himself had caused that he was converted to the Buddhist faith and decided to give up violence forever.

Today, we can find at Dhauli, a stone pillar on which has been inscribed a long message from Ashoka to his subjects— mainly the people of Kalinga. It is a message of love and peace. This message is in the Pali language, which was then widely used in Kalinga. We can say that Pali was then the language of Odisha— the ‘mother language’ out of which Odia has developed. The pillar at Dhauli is thus the first text in the “Odia” language, written 2,500 years ago.

Another important text, also in Pali, is the famous inscription in the Hathi Gumpah at Udaygiri, near Bhubaneswar. It is from this text that we learn about Kharvela, the great king of Kalinga whose armies conquered vast tracts of land in the north, east, and south of modern Odisha.

Thus Odisha is not only culturally very rich, but also very ancient. A people’s real strength lies in its language and culture. Let us discover Odisha and bask under its benign glory trying to create a beautiful roadmap for future.

Dash Benhur was an academican of political science for 35 years and now lives in Bhubaneswar. A literateur, he has penned 140 books of short stories, poems, novels, essays, travelogues, and features. He is the recipient of Odisha Sahitya Akademi Award, Odisha Vighyan Akademi Award, and The National Competition for Children’s Literature prize of NCERT, New Delhi and Bal Sahitya Puraskar of Sahitya Akademi.



My Experience at OSA Convention

Chandra Misra

I consider myself a storyteller rather than a writer since I don't have much experience in writing. But I can talk nonstop for hours with anecdotes about my experiences at the few OSA conventions I have attended from 1982 to 2007.

Every year during July 4th weekend, Odia people from North America get together for the long weekend. For me, it is a good time to renew old friendships. We start the usual way, catching up by updating each other on what we are doing currently. Most of the men separate out talking, and we ladies sit around in conversation which is concentrated on our children and who got married to whose daughter etc. Many times, our conversation will divert to those days where we were in our secondary school and the constant troubles we all got into. We always have excellent Odia music, dance and drama which are done by local and guest artists from Odisha.

My observation was sometimes it goes on longer than what I would like to see. I am always more interested in talking to the people and catching up. So, at times, I was little disappointed when the program goes on for a longer time in the auditorium where we have to remain silent. Still, I also understand as a mother, everybody wants their children to perform any way they can. This is a stage where many young children get their first chance to show their talent to the Odia uncles and aunts.

We also have many seminars which one can choose depending on their interest, which everyone appreciates and enjoys. Sometimes it is a dilemma which one to attend since we cannot be at more than one at the same time.

I have heard and know that when you go away for a weekend for a conference, you are going away to be with people you want and to deepen your friendship with them. Too often, in daily life, we are overwhelmed with sensory distractions and can't hear the voice of friendship. When we are together under one roof, we unplug ourselves from our daily routine and are there to strengthen our long relationships. As I remember the experience, the yearly gathering at OSA is a special time to make a deeper connection with people whom I knew as a young girl and adult. I cherish that very much.

As usual, OSA may have some basic rules and regulations like any other conference. Since our theme is "Bridging generations: celebrating ODIA unity," I have few observations and suggestions. It seems generally we cling together with the people we know even if they are from the same U.S. location (Example is all NY people or CA people stay together). It is very hard if someone is new and looking to meet Odia families. One may get lost in the big crowd and end up spending time alone with their own family. I have heard this complaint from many—which they ended up sitting and eating by themselves. So why come all the way spending time and money, which they can very well do in a nice place on their own? So in my view, a special introduction



session should be held, where families can introduce themselves and say what has brought them to the conference. If possible, others, who sit near, should try to carry on a conversation or exchange phone numbers. I must urge that no one should take more than five minutes, so everyone gets a chance to say something.

I would urge everybody including me to go and take part in OSA when possible because it gives us experience like eating soul food. Life would not be nearly as interesting, exciting, or emotional without friends along for the ride. OSA is our window to the world outside of us and our family life. It functions as a support team when life gets a bit overwhelming—which, at one point or another, it always does. Nostalgia is a beautiful feeling. It reminds us of the way things once were, the happiness that we experienced growing up, and all the wonder. OSA gives us that in North America. It takes us to a place we enjoyed once as children. I am happy to see that many young people, who went with their parents as children, have met at an OSA convention and still talk about it.

Each Odia person has his or her own story about OSA. Although we all have similar beginnings, the middle and the end will differ greatly. OSA publishes a great yearly magazine which includes news, stories, and poems from various authors from Odisha and North America. This gave people a chance to express their writing ability when we did not have Facebook or smart phones. It is the OSA magazine which gave me a chance and confidence that I can write my anecdotes and it will get published. I read my little story 17 times when first time I saw it in our magazine— “writer: Chandra Misra.”

I give thanks to all the volunteer editors of OSA magazine who encouraged many people to express their thoughts to write and keep it up. My experience of OSA is just like anything in life: Some fun and some disappointment. Overall, it is worthy for me to attend it, although regretfully I have not done that recently.

Chandra Misra is a resident of North Wells, Pennsylvania. She is an OSA life member.



Depiction of the King and Queen of Puri at the Sun Temple of Konark. Photo Courtesy of Shashanka Nanda.



I Will Shout ‘Til The Last Wicket Falls

Biswajit Puhan

Why should we play in a tournament?

That was the first question popped out on a cold evening, at a corner table at Bawarchi restaurant in Novi, way back in early 2017. Few of us huddled together and were trying to find ways to vitalize the new cricket season. We had a bunch of very capable and eager players who desperately wanted to improve their game but finding a ground during the summer was becoming ever bigger challenge every passing season.

There were doubts, some very valid. Can we coexist this with the “fun weekend cricket”? Can we find enough warriors to commit to 10 weekends? Will members feel burdened in anyway?

I would not pretend that we had answers for all, but I felt, everyone was willing to lend their hands toward opening a new window for this team, as if to see if Odia Cricket Association (ODCA) can fly thru the newly opened window. After all, six years ago we had similar doubts. Can we play with a leather ball? My personal reasoning was we needed a further challenge in order to grow as a team, to find an additional spark to ignite the next booster phase of our journey. To me, the best way to build up a team was to play matches. I hoped the adrenal of match play would rub onto not just the players in the field, but on all of us.

Slowly the remaining doubts got washed down one by one that evening, possibly due to the equal effect of surging emotions to take our talent to the Michigan cricket scene and the strong Kingfisher draft. The rest is history. I am not willing to judge the decision taken that evening, and I beg you not to. Let us look at last season as part of our mutual journey, not as a measure of success or failure of that evening’s decision. Life flows like a river, ever moving forward. Success, as well as failures, of a time point are mere shadows in the running water, absolutely transitory.

The Semi-Final match was with Knight Riders. One of the better teams in our division. Led by Sahesh, whose potent left arm seam, made him eventually the highest wicket taker of the division. Things started slow, but we lost quick wickets in the opening overs. Before long it was clear we have to play out Sahesh quietly before he could do further damage.

Dips and Ajodhya managed to build a small partnership, it looked we may be back to driving seat soon. A cracking back foot drive thru covers by Dips stated our intent. It was a good ball, on the off stump corridor, just short of length and climbing. I would have defended, or at best, try to push between cover fielders to steal a single. Dips actually played it on the front foot, just moved the body weight back to right leg and punched the ball effortlessly thru covers, from middle of the bat for four, left leg stayed forward all along. Facing a good spell, this was as good a shot as any he played through the season. Unfortunately, the revival did not last long. A mix-up lead to a bit of distraction, Dips fell shortly afterwards. Only Bullet-Chand hung around, curbing his natural instinct



for stoke play to extend the innings as far as he could, (though he did pinged a monster over mid-wicket). Girija played a great cameo, but we folded for 93 all-out. Few, even amongst our supporters gave us a chance at that time.

To me, personally, the next few minutes, during that innings break, defined ODCA as a team.

We all joined in a team huddle. I remember saying, “You are already winners, play freely, play your best.”

Dilip spoke his captain line, “Let us focus on the first wicket. Once we get one, others will come.”

He was putting the goal before the team, rather than worrying about the smallness of the total to defend.

The last voice was Sid’s. Eyes bright and focused with intent, voice strong and booming. He said, “I will keep shouting, Keep your heads UP, I will keep shouting ‘til the last wicket falls.”

There was honesty, belief, and hint of clairvoyance which proved to be the defining moment for the ODCA team.

By the time ODCA defended a partly 93 runs, all the bowlers bowled supremely to the plan, Dilip, Sudhakar (Ana bowled exceptionally throughout the season, amongst the top few in the division), Amit opened and followed by Sid and Gaya with Dips cleaning up the tailenders. They eventually folded for 73. There was an ecstatic jubilation of players. Those fortunate to be at the Warren ground threw their arms up and ran into the field to lift the players. I was driving and checking my phone every two minutes, while trying to keep the car on the road. Many of us were glued to their phones (thanks to Rati and Mishre’s supreme effort to provide us with a live score feed), even Vivek’s pet terrier Squiggy, who was there on the ground, was dancing too. All souls spontaneously joined together in the euphoria of that moment.

Later that night, ruminating alone on that moment, I asked myself, what is it that we celebrated so uninhibitedly? Just a win? Such unison, such infrangible passion and heart? The field was as if a temple for those fleeting moments, without a god maybe, but the collectiveness, fervor of joy was no less than the cumulative positive energy of a congregation of devotees at the altar. This is what sports can do to us. It allows us to go into a space, engage and celebrate what we flawed humans can do as a team. Let the game be an extension of our humanism. May the intoxication with sports continue to last and keep providing us with these shots to help discovering ourselves anew?

Over the course of the season, few of you approached me with a question: “What is the purpose of us playing? Are we just playing to get as many wins as possible at any cost so we can win the trophy?”



My answer then was as unequivocal no. Winning or losing is a byproduct of the function of playing the game, but it should not be the sole purpose, in my opinion. Did it make us better that day because we won the semi-final or made us worse because we lost the final? Hope it illuminates the point I am trying to make.

I wish that the energy and debate we devoted last season toward obsessing about "how to win" could have been reconfigured as interest in improving our skills and performance. We may have a chance of playing a lot better, as a result, a greater chance at influencing the result positively. The other aspect which is very dear to my heart is of self-building, where each player sets up small goals during the season, whether at skill level or personal level, and is able to work on it to rise individually while helping to raise the entire team along with. It is my dream, one day, by playing more matches like this that we all grow out a bit of our genetically induced self-preservation-first habit, and able to look at the world as part of a collective soul.

A week later, after we lost the final, when we were packing up and loading kits and sundry items to our cars, Sid ran into me, looked directly in my eyes, in the same even tone, same positive belief, same honesty I heard during the innings break at semi-final win, and said "Sorry bhaina, did not work, we gave it all."

I hugged him and said "It does not matter, we have our team, we have you and we will have our chance."

To hide my tear of joy, I abruptly turned around before he could notice and walked away knowing that this team is a force now and nothing can stop it.

A new season is upon us now. Let us cherish the jersey we put on our back, let us cherish the ODCA name we proudly bear, and let us aspire, to be truly free on the field, like a bird flying.

"ODCA, Odia Cricket Association, Michigan is a community based club, proud to bear the Odia name in our jersey alongside a golden **nila-chakra** logo, symbolizing pride of the ancient land we hail from. This team grew out of mutual passion for game of cricket along with a loftier goal of strengthening Odia brotherhood in southern Michigan. In the very first year of joining the extremely competitive Michigan Cricket league, our team managed to reach the finals of its division in 2017. "— Biswajit Puhan

Biswajit Puhan, a team member of the Souvenir and Directory Committee, lives in Farmington, Michigan, with his wife Reshma and son Rishav. He is an active MI-OSA member .



Some Thoughts on Diwali

Akash Pandey

A friend tells me he attended a Diwali party over the weekend.

“I learned a lot,” he says. He’s white, so I’m not surprised. “The hosts told me about Diwali in their hometowns on the southern tip of India, about fireworks raging at 8 in the morning and syrupy sweets devoured by the mouthful. They had this one sweet at the party,” he tells me before describing it: two words, a brownish ball dunked in syrup.

Gulab Jamun?

“Yes! Awful,” he says. “It’s already fried, can’t they just dab it up with a little syrup on top instead of dousing it? I didn’t realize,” he continues, “How different home-cooked Indian food is from the dishes you order in restaurants. Naan is junk food?”

I smile, thinking about the kid in me that used to hold up buffet lines to stack his small plate with a half-dozen naan.

Another friend tells me about Diwali at his firm in San Francisco. He’s the only brown guy there and thus the explainer-at-large. “Nobody knows anything about it,” he says, “It feels weird to be the one who breaks it down for them. I mean, c’mon, our office is in arguably the most ethnically diverse city in America.”

I wonder if it’s coincidence that he’s looking for a new job.

A parent volunteer in the office asks me how I celebrated. She laughs when I shrug my shoulders. I know her story, at least I feel like I do. Second-generation like me. Except her parents raised her in Malaysia where she met and married a Malay. Now their son, carrying a mish mash of identities rooted in three countries and two continents, is in eighth grade. When we first talk, she opens up about how little she knows about her ancestral land: doesn’t speak the language; doesn’t recognize the names of the states my parents are from.

“How did you celebrate Diwali?” I ask, expecting a familiar story of muted jubilee.

I learn quickly that I read too much into one conversation. “We fast,” she says. “It takes time to prepare my son, who gives up meat for four days. My husband and I fast the full four days. We are done now so I brought sweets to share with the office staff.”

I smile, thinking about how my mom would have done the exact same thing. So much for a generation gap.



An eleventh-grader flags me down in the hallway. “Becca is looking for you,” she says. “She got henna!”

I find her in my classroom.

“Look!” She shows off the inside of her arm, intricately dyed and patterned. “I got it at my mom’s office Diwali party,” she starts before reeling off names of the food they served: samosas, paneer, chicken tikka.

“What did you do to celebrate?” she asks.

“Nothing this year,” I smile, concealing my irritation at the false pretense.

Later, I repeat the words in my head: nothing this year. As if every other year, I’m out lighting fireworks and singing Lord Ram’s praises.

I don’t remember the last time I did anything noteworthy for Diwali. I suspect I’m not in the minority either. For all the celebratory texts and snaps I received from second-gen friends, I kept wondering: how long have us Indian-Americans cared so much about this Hindu holiday? Did we do anything for it in college? I sure as hell haven’t seen it celebrated in any workplace I’ve been in since college. But in 2017, we suddenly care. Why? Is it an act of religious awakening? An act of resistance against an agenda concerned over the ‘browning’ of America? Or is it that others are recognizing it more, making us feel obligated to do so?

I’m weary of calling it a religious revival. If it were, I’d expect to see messages in my inbox for each of the half-dozen Hindu holidays a month. I’d expect visits to temple, overuse of the word “auspicious,” GIFs with quotes from celebrated Swamis. You know, the stuff our parents do.

As for resistance to the Trump agenda, I’m not so sure. Perhaps some of us felt compelled to celebrate our religious difference and affirm its place in this country, but let’s be real. We’re far from the most beleaguered brown folks right now. In fact, while Mr. Trump ended decades-long White House traditions of celebrating the end of Ramadan and Passover Seder, he hosted a Diwali party.

“In doing so,” he said, “We reaffirm that Indian-Americans and Hindu-Americans are truly cherished, treasured, and beloved members of our great American family.”

That’s high regard for a voting bloc that went 80% in Hillary’s favor. I mean seriously, find me another ethnic group that Trump used three flattering synonyms to describe in the last year. (No, his Jewish daughter does not count.)

To be fair, Trump’s celebration of Diwali is nothing new. It was first recognized federally by President Bush in 2003. Six years later, President Obama held the first celebration at the White House. In countries with a significant amount of Hindus, like Fiji, Malaysia, and Mauritius, Diwali is



an official holiday. In some school districts in Maryland, New Jersey, and New York, it's now a school holiday.

Last year, the USPS issued a Diwali postage stamp, a set of which rest comfortably in my parents' kitchen drawer. This year, I received wishes from friends, colleagues, and students alike. All of these gestures suggest that the growing ranks of Indians in this country means something more than the contributions we make to our country's GDP. Others with stories so similar to ours hear the words 'ban' and 'wall'; we hear overtures toward inclusion.

And yet I felt odd about the celebration of Diwali in America this year. For most Americans, it came and went. Nothing more than a box on a calendar. Maybe someone's birthday. But for me, someone who calls himself Indian-American, it poked at that affiliation: is it bad that I didn't know it was this week? Is it bad that I acted like I usually celebrate to one of my students? Is it bad that I ate an al pastor burrito the day of? It's good that I know the backstory of Lord Ram, though right? It's good that I messaged relatives, right? These are the questions that flipped through my head like a coin landing sometimes on 'good,' sometimes on 'bad.' But why play this game in the first place? What obligation do I have to honor the holiday this year if it hasn't meant much to me in the past?

The truth is that I didn't have any such obligation. But it felt like I did. And for the countless other Hindu Americans who sent out celebratory messages, from the devotees to the downright confused, I have to wonder if it felt that way too.

The other truth is that Diwali ties us together. A friend attends a party; another friend feels it being ignored in his office; a parent volunteer in the office fasts for it; a student celebrates at her mom's workplace; friends and relatives send celebratory messages. Is this so bad? If Hindu Americans and non-Hindu Americans can look beyond their differences to find communion in the celebration of a Hindu holiday, what's wrong? After all, as Benedict Anderson established years ago, nations create unity through "imagined communities" where members maintain "deep attachments" to each other in the absence of face-to-face interaction. Thus through our collective embrace of Diwali, by making a statement in the White House, or fasting for four days, or chowing down on some chicken tikka at an office party, we affirm our shared Americanness.

But it's worth asking: who gets to imagine the community that comes to define me? Whose imagined community is it? And what gets lost when a holiday distinguishes me from you while aiming at something shared? For one, Diwali gives those of us who feel as part of the community a simple way to opt-in. Acknowledge the holiday. Send some celebratory texts. Eat some sweets. Pat yourself on the back. A focus on Diwali can be distracting though, making us feel uniformly embraced in an America where inequities persist: textbooks that portray Hindus as dirty, primitive people; the conflation of 'Indian American' and 'Hindu American' when only about half of the former identify as the latter; the invisibility of the impoverished and undocumented within our ranks.



And how can we forget Srinivas Kuchibhotla? Only four years older than me on that unseasonably warm February afternoon when he brushed off a request from his wife, Sunayana, to drink tea and watch the sunset. “Where tea?” he texted before meeting his friend, Alok, for a beer at their usual hangout, Austin’s Bar and Grill. It was the last text Sunayana received from him. And the last words heard by Srinivas and Alok? “Get out of my country,” from Adam Purinton who was apprehended after bragging about “killing two Middle Eastern men.”

Srinivas and Alok fell victim to the rarest of fates for Indian-Americans today. It is not usual to hear stories like theirs. Instead we hear about our rise: tech CEOs, governors, Netflix stars. There may be a hundred Indian-American success stories for every dream deferred story. Many of us feel free as birds in this inherited homeland. But, as Ruth Bader Ginsburg reminds us, “the true symbol of the United States is not the bald eagle. It is the pendulum. And when the pendulum swings too far in one direction, it will go back.”

So celebrate, my friends. Enjoy Diwali. But be wary of the pendulum taking you for a ride.

Akash Pandey is a proud OSA Life member, currently working as a teacher in Pacific Collegiate High School, Santa Cruze after finishing his masters from University of Chicago and graduating from UC Berkeley. He has participated in youth seminars in various conventions. He has served OSA as an editor for Utkarsha from 2015-17.

Longevity

Arun Misra

In Sanskrit, they say, ‘Jeevet Shardah Shatam:’ Live for 100 years.

But the financial aspects of living longer, has other considerations too. Here is the saying, “You will be around, but will your money?”

Your money has to last as long as you do. People live longer now, and retirement may last equal to working years. Hence, the concern on adequate funds to survive till the end.

Here are some interesting facts on longevity in the US.

Life expectancy has kept on increasing:

1900s: 49 years; 1920s: 56; 1940: 64; 1960: 70; 1980: 74; 2000: 79.

Women live 5 years longer than men. The average life expectancy for men now is 76, while it is 81 for women. After the age of 80, the ratio of widows to widowers is 5 to 1.

The highest life expectancy is in Hawaii, 81.5 years, and the lowest is in Mississippi, 74.8. Georgia seems to do OK with 77-78 years.



There are more centenarians in US now than ever before. A total of 53,000 people are over the age of 100.

What makes us to live longer? Here are a few tips:

- Be friendly and helpful to others, positive relationships help.
- Get a pet. You have 12% more of a chance of surviving a heart attack if you have a pet.
- Sleep enough: a minimum of 4 hours, more than 8 hours reduces life expectancy.
- Intimacy reduces stress, improves sleep quality, and bonds people (especially couples) together.
- Optimistic, happy people avoid premature death by 50%. Indulging in pity-parties increases pessimism.

The value of exercise and meditation can never be overemphasized. Meditation relieves from stress.

Physical activities enhance longevity, and maintain good health. One hour of exercise extends life by 11 hours, while 2.5 hours of moderate activity per week can extend life expectancy by 4.5 years.

People in the US save very little. Saving more for rainy days, for retirement, and for a long life is very important.

To make money last longer, one should consider the following:

- Work longer. Do not retire early, preferably until age 70.
- Start saving today. Time value of money is enormous. The longer you save, the better it gets.
- Have a specific plan to accumulate enough funds, 10-20 times of annual salary is needed for retirement.
- Maximize social security benefits. Instead of drawing benefits, wait until 70, which increases the pot much.
- Keep plenty of insurance to avoid economic risks, and cover for life, medical, and long term care costs.

Arun Misra is an OSA life member and a financial planner and realtor. He was the co-convener of the OSA National Convention in 1992.



Sun Temple of Konarka. Photo courtesy of Shanshanka Nanda.



A Difference in Generations

Saswat Sahoo

Words flow simply
You say what you're thinking
But what if your voice was restrained
Because of your race or gender?
They spoke.
How do you change the world?
You speak even when everyone says
you can't
Do you remember all the men and
women who spoke?
Were they praised or thanked for it?
No, they weren't
But they knew that generations after
it would make a difference.

Saswat lives with his parents Mr. Sasadhar & Mamata Sahoo in Northville, MI. He is attending University of Michigan.



Status of the OSA Regional Drama Festival

Sandip K. Dasverma

Chair, OSA Regional Drama Festival

Started in 2009, the Regional Drama Festival (RDF) is going to be a decade old in 2018.

RDF was initiated as per an OSA national executive resolution. In 2008, Sri Gopal Mohanty was appointed as the first coordinator to organize RDF in different regions of North America.

The first RDF was staged in the year 2009 in Denton, TX, on April 4, 2009, by the OSA South West Chapter, then lead by Tapan Padhi. It was titled Southern Regional Drama Festival.

In 2010, at Dr. Mohanty's initiative, a three-member Coordination Committee was formed with Sri Gopal Mohanty, Sandip K. Dasverma, and Brajendra Panda (Chair). This was formalized by an OSA General Body Meeting resolution at the Dallas Convention in 2011. Sri Gopal Mohanty withdrew from the Committee in 2011 and in 2012, Brajendra Panda also retired. At the Seattle convention, Priyadarshi Dash and Priyaranjan Mohapatra joined the RDF Coordination Committee with Sandip K. Dasverma as Chair.

In 2014, it expanded to include five coordinators: Birendra Jena (North East), Leena Mishra (East), Gayatri Joshi (Pacific West), Tapas Sahoo (South Central), and Sandip K. Dasverma (Chair). It was decided that coordinators will coordinate their respective zones.

Over the years, five flexible regions have been functioning: Eastern, Northern/North Eastern, Central/Northern (Chicago), and Southwestern (Texas and AK) and a Pacific West zone. There have always been attempts to cover other areas, as possible.

We need some imaginative bold steps to take RDF forward. OSA's Golden Jubilee year is 2019. Getting two Odia dramatists from Odisha and holding drama workshops/camps in all five regions are on the table. A budget of \$5,000 to \$7,000, will be necessary in addition to hosting of the dramatists by local Odias. The ideas are still evolving.

Concept:

The concept of Regional Drama Festival is:

1. To revive COMMUNITY CONTACT via families visiting from outside the area, who stay with host families of the RDF hosting area, like early OSA convention days (1970s and 1980s).
2. To hold LOW-COST regional gatherings akin to mini-OSA convention gatherings, so as to enhance lasting camaraderie among members and friendship among kids, in different neighboring states and chapters, in all the regions of USA.
3. To DEVELOP inherent and latent ACTING and LANGUAGE skills (acting, script writing, prop preparation, music etc.) in a region, among immigrant Odia .
4. To PROMOTE LEADERSHIP GROWTH via organizing multi-chapter events.
5. To ENCOURAGE KIDS PARTICIPATION so as to expose them to Odia language and culture. (SPECIAL Kid's dramas presented in RDF have been enjoyed by the community members. Enthusiasm of the kids, and their parents have been phenomenal. Ask Swapnalata Rath (MI) or



Prativa Sahoo (NE) or Tapas Sahu (Dallas) to share drama scripts and their experience.)

6. To ENSURE visiting KIDS are each offered some program time, so visiting Kids are integrated with locals KIDS and have a WHOLESOME experience.

The OBJECTIVE of RDF is to develop a closer relation among communities of people from Odisha residing in various region of North America, through a festival with a focus on drama.

Highlights and Status:

RDF is on the verge of a takeoff with more than 80 Odia dramas already staged in various regions of USA and Canada. In 2017, California RDF staged in Woodside, CA, a drama team from St. Helens (Oregon) Chapter participated and staged Gogol's classic Inspector General, translated and scripted in Odia, as "Agyan Hajur" by Rajashree Kanungo. For the first time, a team from Portland Oregon, lead by Seema Choudhury and Rajashree Kanungo with 22 adults and kids, travelled more than 700 miles to present their drama at California RDF, a "RECORD." Classic "Chha Man Atha Gunth" of Byasakabi Fakir Mohan Senapati, dramatized by Sri Gopal Mohanty, was staged by California chapter's own team, led by Priyadarshi Das. It was a super rendition.

Another RDF was organized on May 6, 2017, by NJ Chapter, in which three teams from NJ, Connecticut and Washington DC, participated. Kids participated in all of them.

Three more RDFs were held in 2017 at Toronto, Canada and Austin, TX. OSA National has budgeted money for five festivals per year.

The real miracle thus far has been participation of 29 kids from Dallas in the kids drama "Mauna Sila," at the Austin Festival in 2014.

It is hoped that a RDF will be held soon in the Atlantic South Eastern region. Leena Mishra (WA) is in charge. With election of an OSA VP and Treasurer from the area, dreams of RDF in the Carolinas and Georgia will likely soon become true.

The overall experience indicates that RDF has become part of the host Chapter's activities, albeit alternate years. RDF is becoming financially viable by attracting slowly a bigger audience, and the initial reluctance to hold RDF due to financial burden is waning. In due course, families, in participating Chapters, are developing rapport among themselves. The expected interest in OSA, that RDF was expected to engender, is already there.

Benefits accrued:

1. An Odia drama Yahoo group(odiadramagroup@yahoo.com) has been operating for years now, connecting the Odia drama enthusiasts all over North America. Odia drama scripts are stored for use there. Additionally, WhatsApp groups have been formed for each RDF and also a OSA National RDF group. They have been found good for quick communication.

2. A few Odia playwrights have emerged in NA, often based on the American experience. This includes Sri Gagan Panigrahi of Toronto, Manoj Mohapatra and Salil Mishra of Chicago, Birendra Jena and Basanta Mohapatra of Cleveland, Swapnalata Rath (Mishra) of MI, Prativa Sahoo of NE, to mention a few. Dr. Birendra Jena published a collection of his plays in "Dura Pahada O Anyanya Nataka," who acknowledges in his book that his difficulty in finding scripts for RDF, led him to pen them.

3. OSA Conventions rotate from city to city around USA. Held in hotels, they are expensive



to attend. Therefore, many cannot attend the conventions on a regular basis. RDF plays a complementary role to fill this vacuum and provides opportunities for interacting with other community members in a region and participation in cultural activities. As a positive consequence new community leaders have emerged.

5. The interaction among people living in the neighboring states/region, during RDF releases positive energy, initiatives and communications, leading to many other initiatives. e.g.

- a. Odia Poetry reading via conference calls.
- b. Odia Poetry reading in Radio program in NJ/NY via conference call or skype.
- c. Publication of an Odia magazine “Pratishruti” from North America, etc.
- d. iGurukul, under the leadership of Kuku Das and Gayatri Josh, has started an Odia program in San Francisco Bay Area in 2018.

Lessons Learned:

1. It is difficult to rehearse a drama when the participants live more than 30 minutes of driving time apart. Innovative ways like voicing remotely during rehearsals or via conference calls/skype have been used. The experience of rehearsing in person, remains superior. We recommend the drama team members remain in one city/half hour driving distance. It is a relevant constraint. Action: Form area (city) based drama teams.

2. The experience of STAYING OVERNIGHT with local families is far richer than driving back the same day or staying at a hotel. The bonds developed with one overnight stay, is found to be very long lasting.

3. ENSURE child participation, to keep the kids excited, involved and be part of parent’s cultural life and milieu.

4. The RDF can’t be sustained in cities, where population of Odia families is 50 or less, due to a shortage of audience. Halls have a capacity of 200 or more and finance is a constraint.

5. WEATHER can be a limiting condition. To avoid RDFs in North/North East should be held before October 15. This will avoid winter snow storms. Two festivals scheduled in November suffered for this reason, the 9th RDF in 2011 (NJ) and 13th RDF (due to cyclone ‘Sandy’) in 2012 (Washington DC).

Main issues:

Main issues which need to be addressed by OSA Board of Governors, for sustainability of RDF.

1. Cooperation and commitment of Chapter Presidents to RDF and the appointment of a RDF Coordinator.
2. Financial grant from OSA National to it’s Chapters for conducting RDF and making them viable.

1. Cooperation and Commitment of OSA Chapter Presidents for RDF

The core of RDF success is in the hands of the OSA Chapter Presidents. Their complete cooperation, effort and support brought RDF this far. This is an additional demand on their time.

I urge that the elected chapter officials make RDF a regular Chapter activity, just like Kumar



Purnima, Saraswati Puja etc, on alternate or third years. We also found the following steps are helpful for RDFs' smooth operation and success:

- Chapter President should select a chapter RDF coordinator early, who is proactive and an enthusiastic Odia drama lover, concurrent with his or her term.
- In January and June of each year, the regional chapter coordinators should decide a mutually convenient date, location and host city, of participating chapters of the region.
- The reservation of a hall should be preferably four to six months in advance, to get a quality hall at a reasonable price (rents vary widely). It gives time to out-of-town teams to organize. Hold it (i) between February-May for the Spring RDF, originally conceived to sync with Odisha Day (April 1). (ii) Before October 15 for Fall RDF, syncing with Kumar Utsab but the avoid snow storms where envisioned.
- Allow sufficient practice time in order to encourage new participants to join. Make wide PUBLICITY, so it reaches all Odias, members and non-members in the region.
- Ensure all adult teams organize KID'S DRAMA teams and all visiting kids are given an opportunity, to participate.

2. Financial grant from OSA National to Chapters for RDF and its viability:

- The finances are a matter of concern for all smaller chapters. RDFs are organized by the Chapters with one of their regular programs. Thus the costs (\$2,500 on an average) are absorbed by the local Chapters, with the \$800 grant from OSA National.
- Suggestions:
 - OSA raises the grant amount to \$1,000 in future.
 - RDF can be financed by naming it after a deceased OSA member in his memory by his friends and family. e.g. "XXX" Memorial RDF. The idea was proposed by Amar Pani (TN.)
 - Chapters can sell ad-spaces in their brochures.
 - Steps should be taken to have a GENERAL EVENT INSURANCE by OSA, each year – so that chapters do not have to buy a separate insurance coverage for the halls rented for RDF and various chapter programs. This reduces the cost significantly.
 - Sync other children activities like Odia spelling bee, science talent test, Odia song competition, etc.
- OSA grants encourage events which expose new immigrants/students to OSA activities. This is a productive investment to recruit New members and should be an integral part of RDFs. OSA national executives have in the past indicated they expect five new life or five year members per RDF.
- GOAL: RDF in future shall be self-sustaining via ads, donations and/or sponsorship.

Recommendations:

1. When a small-town resident, with only a few Odia families around, you should visit the nearest RDF as audience. You will be welcomed so well that will be your second "Home coming". Enthused? Then form your own drama team in your town, OSA Members or non-Members, no restrictions.

2. ASK FOR HELP. To get A GOOD ODIA SCRIPT, a dress (eg. a Odisha's constable uniform) or sound (a typical cycle rickshaw honking in Cuttack street), you are only a phone call, e-mail, or a WhatsApp message away. Experienced group members eagerly share their expertise.



You contact them via odiadramagroup@yahoo.com, or WhatsApp RDF groups, or RDF coordinators: to access resources, seek help or share problems. .

3. AVAILABILITY of eight good quality wireless mics, prevent lots of event day headache. So urge organizers to upgrade mic quality and quantity and share the availability information with all teams.

4. Discuss logistics with participating teams four weeks in advance, so there is time to resolve inadequacies and constraints.

5. We have recently developed a FAQ about the RDF which is given in Reference 3.

Gratitude:

This article won't be possible without the interest and support of Sm. Swapnalata Rath, MI, a genuine at heart enthusiast and supporter of RDF. I am greatly indebted for her persistence and patience.

Ref:

1. **OSA Regional Drama Festival - a Recap of 4 years** By Sandip K. Dasverma

<https://bit.ly/2yhngnK>, Page 41 and 46.

2. A List of Dramas presented in RDFs since 2009 - as updated till April 2014

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1WRhcpEuWAvzIY2o2qYR4hkS2Ap2dlK94XvhpJg4k2tc/edit?usp=sharing>

3. RDF - FAQ:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1N9XJveOfNtntrSl38hZcFDCqUYF1WH38BtyAJ0y1mHw/edit>

4. State of OSA Regional Drama Festival in 2014: A Report:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1z06X2ea5n_O3MxnC6m2Qh_EhNINBjD3hEuVLsjOq7G4/edit

5. Regional Drama Festival, an Update by Sandip K. Dasverma

(https://docs.google.com/document/d/19Cooi8RHq9Q6mm_EBMRg5_xXMeNRvXsqvGhU1desM8I/edit)





Children's Drama: Kanchi Abhijan
 RDF 2010, OSANE
 Photo by Nishikanta Sahoo





Children's Drama: Satyara Jay
 RDF 2014, MI-OSA
 Photo by Swapnalata Mishra





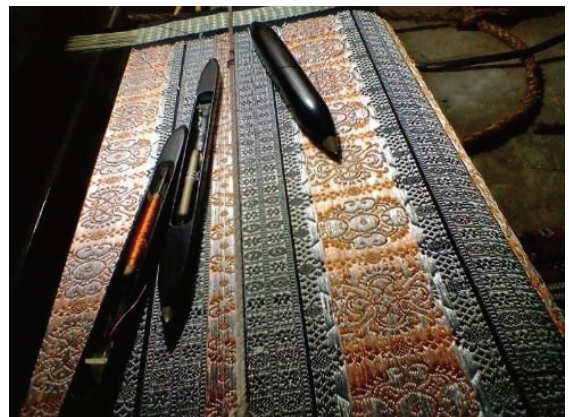
Children's Drama: Dharama
 RDF 2014, Dallas
 Photo by Tapas Sahoo



“Our Glory, Our Dream”



Top:: an example of the spirit-wear worn by the ladies of the MI-OSA community. Bottom left: The weavers for the project. Bottom right: An up close look at the border.



Dressing to Make a Difference

Lyudmila Mishra

For most women, the excitement about what they will wear for an OSA convention starts long before they register for the event. Many will spend hours shopping for the perfect outfits and matching jewelry and accessories. They will adorn themselves in immaculate finery and then the three days at the convention will zip by. Hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars will be spent in the hopes of creating the perfect image of style and elegance. Although their efforts will be memorialized in the innumerable pictures and selfies that will be taken at the event, the effort will be relegated to the past, just as a memory.

What if the same effort, time and money could be pooled together and channeled in a manner that not only highlighted one's external beauty, but also exemplified the beauty of the spirit within? What if it left an impact not just on a moment captured in a picture, but in shaping lives for a better future? Those were the questions a group of progressive minded Odia ladies from Michigan asked themselves. They wondered if they could dress in a manner that would truly reflect who they were, their spirit of service to the Michigan Odia community, their love for each other, their desire to leave a positive impact, and their pride in the Odia heritage.

After a little brain-storming, these like-minded ladies decided to redirect a small portion of their fashion budget and pool it together to make a social impact. They decided that they would order sarees directly from a weaver in Odisha, someone who made a living solely out of weaving traditional Odia sarees. By combining their saree orders, they could create an economic opportunity for a family in a meaningful manner. Maybe a father has been trying to save enough to conduct his daughter's wedding, or a mother has been dreaming about sending her children to a good school, or perhaps a son is waiting to afford an expensive medical treatment for his elderly parents. If the money could be pooled together then perhaps it was potentially enough to help that family overcome some of their financial hurdles. They also decided to make their sarees identical. This would lessen the burden on the weaver, and it could become their "spiritwear".

A group of volunteers formed the Michigan Odia Ladies Spirit-Wear Committee, and using social media they spread word about their idea. In just a few weeks, 65 women signed up to support the cause. With the help of family and friends in Odisha they were able to identify a weaver from a small village in Odisha whose life could be positively impacted. They collectively ordered a uniform saree for each one of the supporters.

The saree was designed to represent their Michigan identity in addition to their Odia roots. The blue color of the body of the saree represented the blue waters of the Great Lakes that surround Michigan, and the thousands of inland lakes that adorn its landscape. The way the ladies came up with the final design will remain memorable forever. Cheers to their spirit!





This spirit-wear would symbolize their:

- Warm welcome to all the guests from other OSA chapters.
- The unity in mind and spirit as members of *MI-OSA*.
- Pride in their Odia culture and Odisha handlooms.
- Pride in the beauty of Michigan, the land of blue lakes.
- Desire to create a positive impact

It is the hope of the Michigan Odia Spirit-Wear committee that when the guests of the convention see these 65 women standing united, welcoming visitors with whole-hearted enthusiasm, they look beyond the saree that adorns them and look for the jewel that these women hold in their hearts—the desire to make a difference in even with the simple act of donning a saree.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and sincere efforts of my fellow members of the spirit-wear committee.

Mrs. Swapnalata Rath, Mrs. Pushpita Das, Dr. Sangita Pradhan, Mrs. Sonali Seema, Mrs. Maitreyi Satapathy and Mrs. Swati Mishra

I would also like to acknowledge all the enthusiastic participants, without whom this effort would have never been successful. Some of them knew that they would not be able to attend the convention, but they still ordered a saree.

Aiswarya Mohanty
Amita Pathak
Ananya Pattanaik
Anjali Mishra
Atasi Mishra
Divya Satapathy
Dolly Sahoo
Geeta Sahoo
Jhilly Subuddhi
Kajal Mishra
Krishna Senapati
Leena Pattanaik
Lisa Bedbak
Lyudmila Mishra

Maitreyi Satapathy
Mamata Sahoo
Mamuni Padhi
Manashi Mishra
Manju Ray
Meena Sahu
Pinky Samal
Pooja Acharya
Punyatoya Sarangi
Puspa Mohapatra
Rajashri Nayak
Rajeswari Behera
Ranu Mohanty
Rina Mohapatra

Sangita Pradhan
Sanjukta Mishra
Sarbanee Mishra
Seema Rout
Shilu Swain
Smriti Panda
Soma Sahoo
Sonali Mohanty
Sunita Das
Sunita Mohapatra
Susmita Patra
Swapnalata Rath
Swati Mishra
Swayamprava Panda



Madhumita Pattnaik
Mamuni Swain
Madhuri Panda
Madhusmita Kota

Ruby Das
Rudrakshi Basantia
Sandhya Mishra
Sanghamitra Satapathy

Sweta Jagadev
Tuli Mohanty
Uma Satapathy
Veena Badapanda

There are also several other ladies who agreed to join the spirit-wear effort and will be wearing sarees of similar design and color to show their support. I would like to thank them for their enthusiastic participation too.

Anita Mohanty
Aseema Agasti
Chitra Rout
Julie Das
Lipsa Tripathy

Lucy Mishra
Nivedita Mishra
Pragnya Bishi Acharya
Puspa Nayak

Ranju Samantray
Rita Mallik
Sanjukta Mishra
Sunanda Mishra
Tanushree Subuddhi

Mrs. Lyudmila Mishra is a proud member of Michigan OSA Chapter & MI Odia Ladies spirit-wear Committee.

Editor's Note: On behalf of the Spirit Wear team, my sincere thanks to Mrs. Itishree Pattanayak, for all her effort to make our dream come true by being the contact person between us and the weavers, and Mrs. Tanmaya S. Pradhan for helping us by shipping the saree from Bhubaneswar. - Swapnalata Mishra



Drawing by Rayna Mohapatra





“Serenity” by Aseem Mishra (Troy, Michigan)



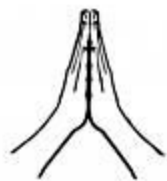
Across the Bridge

In memory of those who have passed



“The life of the dead is placed
in the memory of the living.”

— Marcus Tullious Cicero



Dr. Smriti Bardhan

August 16, 1940–September 14, 2017



Dr. Smriti Bardhan passed away at Vanderbilt University Medical Hospital on September 14, 2017, from complications of pneumonia. Smriti was born to the late Nirmal Chandra and Suprabha Bardhan, in Balasore, Odisha, India on August 16, 1940. Grown up in a family of scholars, she received her education, including a Ph. D. in Genetics, in India. She was a professor of zoology in Odisha before coming to the United States in 1978. After a year as a visiting scholar at the Northwestern Medical School in Chicago, she moved to Nashville in 1979, which became her home for life. She continued her research in genetics, first at Meharry Medical College and then at Vanderbilt University. Her pioneering works on the identification of proteins to target tumor cells as well as cloning DNA, were published in *Nature*, a scientific journal.

Known to many people as “Sejdi,” she was a kind, compassionate, and caring individual. She embraced and made friends with people of all ages and from all walks of life. She was actively engaged in community service, regularly organized and participated in cultural and spiritual activities. She was a devotee of Lord Jagannath and was an active member of the Sri Ganesh Temple. Known for her honesty, she was committed to her friends and family. She had boundless energy, and loved to help anyone in need. In spite of her debilitating arthritis, she was fiercely independent and had an undying zest for life. She was and will remain an inspiration to one and all, on how to overcome the many hurdles in life. She is survived by three sisters, two brothers, two brothers-in-law, and many nieces and nephews. Her Odia friends in Nashville will always miss their Sejdi.

This obituary was originally published in OSANet.



Smriti Di

Dr. Bijoy M. Misra

Dr. Smriti Bardhan passed away at Vanderbilt University Medical Hospital on September 14, 2017 from complications of pneumonia. Smriti was born to Late Nirmal Chandra and Suprabha Bardhan, in Balasore, Odisha, India on August 16, 1940. Grown up in a family of scholars, she received her education, including Ph. D. in Genetics, in India. She was a professor of zoology in Odisha before coming to the United States in 1978. After a year at the Northwestern Medical School in Chicago, as a visiting Scholar, she moved to Nashville in 1979, which became her home for life. She continued her research in genetics, first at Meharry Medical College and then at Vanderbilt University. Her pioneering works on the identification of proteins to target tumor cells as well as cloning DNA, were published in Nature.

Smriti di was one of the diligent and committed individuals who helped install the first Sri Jagannatha idol in the US through the effort of the Odias. She continued to prepare food every week for the devotees to help continue the worship service. She was noble, religious and extremely generous. I had met Smriti di in Virginia through my college brother Purushottam Babu, whose wife was a sister to her. As a person with deep scientific interests she was reserved, soft-spoken and utterly curious. She was deeply affectionate and could easily own a person with her association and kindness. The encounters with her in Nashville in the decade of the '90s were most pleasant with the love befitting that of an elder sister.

Nashville was blessed to have a set of Odia ladies who had formed a group to divide work for the weekly service at the temple. Smriti di was one of the most dependable members in the group. In spite of her sickness in the joints that she developed through the change of climate, Smriti di was a smiling volunteer for the service of the temple. Living by herself, she had offered her energy to serve the cause of Sri Jagannatha.

Jai Jagannatha.

Dr. Bijoy M Misra lives in Lincoln, MA and is in the Faculty at Harvard University. He is a physicist and a language specialist. He participated in the activities of the Odisha Society of the Americas in the early years doing plays and directing children's activities. He was the Treasurer of the Society during 199-2001 and was instrumental in the Cyclone Relief Program organized by OSA



Dr. Dinyar Bhathena

April 17, 1939 – November 3, 2017



Dr. Dinyar Bhathena was born in Mumbai and moved to USA about 39 years ago after joining the teaching faculty at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. The calm and quiet gentleman was well-respected by his friends as well as the entire Michigan Odia community because of his simple, humble, and respectful nature.

In Memory of Dr. Dinyar Bhathena **Dr. Upasana “Nikki” Senapati**

I’m 14 years old. My mother has coaxed me into attending an Odia dinner party with the promise that my friends will be there. I scan the room and estimate that no one in attendance is under the age 35. I sigh in anticipation of a boring evening. As I turn to leave, I spot a small elderly gentleman with large rectangular glasses sitting quietly in the corner. I guess my mother kept her promise after all.

I sit down next to Bhathena Uncle and tell him about the latest book I’ve been reading—a science fiction novel in which robots overtake the human race. We discuss the book for hours and topics span from the perils of modern-day technology to science and social responsibility.

From elementary school to high school, Bhathena Uncle taught me math weekly. Lessons, however, weren’t limited to algebra and calculus; we would inevitably stray off-topic and have various whimsical yet profound conversations. Looking back, I appreciated his patience as an educator and his willingness to indulge my childhood curiosity. Questions such as “What if we had a robot apocalypse?” were always met with a thoughtful response.



Bhathena Uncle and I would watch countless hours of Food Network together. If I showed interest in a particular recipe, he would bring ingredients so we could cook together. In addition to the kitchen, we spent many hours in his car. He drove me to dance and tennis practice, dentist appointments, and as I got older, to the airport and medical school interviews.

When he got sick, our roles reversed. I began cooking for him and driving him to doctor's appointments and various errands. During this period, I realized how little I knew about him despite two decades' worth of friendship. I learned that he had frequented the same Amish butcher shop weekly for the past ten years. When he entered the store, every employee came from behind the counter to embrace him. The week he was hospitalized for heart failure and didn't come to the shop, the owners called him concerned for his health. While putting away his groceries, I found a pathology textbook, which I was surprised to learn that he had written a chapter in. During my years in medical school using the same textbook, he had never mentioned he was a co-author. I was helping move boxes in his apartment, when I uncovered a gold plaque awarding him "Faculty Member of the Year" at Wayne State University, where he had practiced, researched, and taught for decades. For a man who I had a myriad of conversations with, he rarely spoke about himself.

Bhathena Uncle was a humble genius. He was a quiet observer, but florid conversationalist when prompted. He was a refined food critic who was grateful for any meal. He was eccentric yet understated. He was a traditionalist with a penchant for learning and discovery. He was selfless and kind.

When I was 6 years old, aunties and uncles would smile and laugh when I proclaimed that Bhathena Uncle was my best friend. Years later, when it stopped being cute, I would continue to make the same claim. I miss my friend dearly and I don't know where I would be without his love, support, and our amusing yet meaningful conversations.

The writer of this tribute, Dr. Upasana Senapati, is the only daughter of OSA Benefactors Dr. Shishir and Krishna Senapati. She lives in Michigan.



Dr. Subhas Mohapatra

1941-2017



One of the most active pioneer members of OSA, Dr. Subhas Mohapatra, passed away on Friday, December 22, 2017, at his firm house in North Carolina. He was a passionate and involved member of OSA and the Odia community at large. Dr. Mohapatra had been very active both in OSA and his professional, educational, and agricultural research activities. OSA had conferred the Gopabandhu Das Memorial Award to him during the 2014 OSA Convention for his selfless service to OSA and Odisha. He contributed immensely in the field of the cultural, educational and social activities of OSA, especially as the organizer of Subrina Biswal competition in OSA conventions. His contributions to Odisha in both India and USA are noteworthy.

- “Dr. Mohapatra is a true Odia, not only by birth but in spirit and by work. His outstanding contribution to Odia society in the field of agricultural science, humanitarian assistance, and Odisha development has made us proud; be it through OSA or his own charitable organization, ‘Indo-American Friendship Foundation,’ or his academic route. Mr. Mohapatra has always stood for Odisha, its culture and values.” - OSA Awards Committee
- Dr. Mohapatra experimented with different approaches to eradicate hunger and poverty in rural Odisha.
- Through NGO partnerships, Dr. Mohapatra promoted interest-free micro finance to NGOs and farmers, provides assistance in the form of technology, guidance and materials such as seeds, fertilizer, and irrigation facilities.
- He pioneered soccer (football) in North Carolina, USA as coach, referee, and referee administrator (1975-2005).

Dr. Mohapatra will be missed forever. He is survived by his wife Dr. Nirupama Mohapatra, his son Gautam, and his daughter Tanuja.



“Last Goodbye”

Dr. Nirupama K. Mohapatra

A cold December morning
My brain is frozen
My heart is cold
My body shivers.

What did I hear?
My husband has “passed”
But, he did not take a test!

He is gone?
But I am not finished
Talking; Nagging; and Complaining.
Most of All, I am not done loving him!

Please God,
Give me one minute with him
Just to hold him tight
Feel his heart beat
And tell him, please take me with you.
We are a team.

Nirupama married Subhas Babu in Boston, Massachusetts, at the age of 20. Their love affairs lasted 52 years.

Aja (Grandfather)

“A tribute to Dr. Subhas C. Mohapatra”

Aryan Das

Aja was very kind and caring towards everyone. He took a lot of pride in his research, and invited me to visit his farm several times. I always wished I could visit his farm, but never got a chance to. I deeply regret not going there. I wanted him to know that I appreciated his research and him by visiting the place he took so much pride in. I know he would have been happy if anyone visited or looked at his work. Aja was a role model to me. He was very active and worked hard. I have not seen people with as much energy as he had. He was very sociable towards everyone and I enjoyed talking with him. I used to have conversations with him about how he played soccer in India.

I will miss him, and I am very grateful I met a person as amazing as him.

Subhas babu was Aja to all second generation Odia children in Southeast chapter. Aryan Das, a ninth grader, lives with parents Sivabarate and Romita Das in Cary, NC.



Dr. Subhas Chandra Mahapatra: “The Farmer’s Agriculturist”

Dr. Bijoy M. Misra

Subhas babu, “Subhas bhaina” to many, was an Odia institution in the US. Coming from a distinguished family in Dhenkanal district, he studied botany and became a student leader. Diminutive and fairly articulate, he was mission-oriented and principled to the core. All Odias must have enough to eat and that no progress was possible without feeding the population was his internal call. He invented methods, coached farmers, and did numerous boot camps to help increase the productivity of the land. He exported his technique free of charge to many corners of the world to benefit the hungry and improve the quality of life of people.

He was one of the early pioneers in establishing the Odisha Society of the Americas and helped to build it as a viable organization with the proper by-laws and the rules of registration. He made it a routine to attend the annual Conventions and helped as a barefoot volunteer for any activity on site. He was a worker par-excellence, he never knew how to rest. His whistle blowing to guide people into files was a sight at each Convention. He invested money in prizes to help locate talents among the immigrant children. Though many disagreed with him on the process and the evaluation, one cannot but admire his zeal and enthusiasm in riding over the stage and getting the children engaged.

He created a parallel non-profit organization called Indo-American Friendship Forum to sponsor the prizes. He made his home in the warm climate of North Carolina and was at his best working at his farm in tracking down his new inventions. The inventions included development through air hygrometry, soil conservation with restricted foot-print plant specimens, and gravity-induced inverted farming. On annual trips to Odisha he hosted training camps in teaching the farmers to grow more food with limited resources. His methods did gain acceptance in other countries. A driven man to modernity and technological advancement, his views were from the point of view of the man in the field. A poor man has no language and no time for culture. The society must feed him and clothe him. Subhas babu was his friend, his protector. He made a difference in the lives of many. He made a mark in the community for his principled workmanship and singular determination in increasing the food production for the average farmer! Subhas babu was a brother and a well-wisher!

The power that he was got a break a year ago through a stroke. Though a bit slowed down, he continued his usual pace for a year. On Dec. 22, 2017, he left the mortal body while in sleep! The earth took him in her laps without making noise or commotion! His inventions would continue to help people!



Prof. Chandrasekhar Rath

October 10, 1929 - February 2, 2018



Prof. Chandrasekhar Rath has been a deep thinker, eloquent speaker, athlete, and fascinating writer touching all genres of literature, a creative artist with his hands on sculpting, painting, clay modeling, doodling, carvings on wood and stone, and an inspiring professor par excellence with pupils all over the world. Many awards and doctorates were conferred on him for his illustrious work in the fields of education, oration and literature. He has been a spiritually realized person: austere, straight and unbending. A complete man who assimilated all aspects of culture and art; and disseminated the Indian values in India and abroad.

Born on October 17, 1929, Prof. Rath still stands out among his contemporary writers in Odia literature for his remarkable background and contributions to diverse literary genres like belle-letters, fiction and poetry. His strong roots in the legacy of a traditional Indian family gave him an early exposure to scriptural Sanskrit which is the fount of his pan-Indian thought and philosophy. Degrees in Mathematics and English gave him both precision of expression and a rich sensibility for literatures available through English. In Lucknow, he studied English literature under Prof. N.K.Siddhanta, an eminent scholar from Oxford. Acharya Narendra Dev was his Vice-Chancellor and Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma taught him law and others who played vital role in shaping post-independent India. He himself was an example of whatever he taught.

His writings form a rich tapestry of sensibility in their depth, dimension and diverse pictures of life with an inherent urge to unfold the ultimate truth through simplicity, charm and glitter of poetic prose to entice the reader, thus creating his new genre of essays. While continuing to write his essays, he seamlessly changed to a powerful story writer. He believed that every form has its own identity and all that can be told in a short story cannot be expressed in an essay.

He has three novels, 16 volumes of short stories, nine volumes of essays, and four volumes of poetry in his mother tongue, Odia. As rightly assessed by critics, his three novels form a trilogy of



a thesis, antithesis, and synthesis viz. Yantrarudha story of hoary traditions and time honoured values of life, Asurya Upanivesha, exposes the total absence of values in a world of darkness while the third one Nav Jataka is a transcendence of values to superhuman heights. They seem to represent the past, the present, and the future of mankind in the Indian perspective.

Rathasaptaka is sheer emotional profound poetry in prose laced with scriptural erudition woven around Lord Jagannath and Rath Yatra. The other is *Pathachakra Diary*, a record of reflections and meditations inspired by Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. He also translated the commentary of Acharya Shankara on the Bhagwad Gita into Odia. Ritu Chitrashala, unique Sanskrit Composition with his own English rendering (Picture Gallery of Seasons and other Compositions) and hundreds of his poems in English were released in the Hyderabad Literary Festival.

Prof. Rath has probably a much larger number of admirers of his oratory in India and abroad than he has readers of his books. His speeches were ex tempore and at ease. He addressed at Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad (Calcutta) 1991, Divine Life Society (Rishikesh) on 125th Birth Anniversary of Swami Shivananda 1991, The Parliament of Religions: Centenary Celebration of Vivekananda's Chicago Address (Calcutta) 1993, Foundation Day Oration, Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture (Calcutta) 1994, Swami Vivekananda Birthday Oration Patna & Lucknow 1995-96, Institute of Human Studies (Hyderabad) 1998, Religio-cultural Assemblies (USA and Canada) 1999, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch 1998-2002, All India Senior Citizens Study Camps (Nainital): Spiritual Orations 10 days every year during 1998-2002 on the Gita, The Upanishads, The Life Divine, Supramental Manifestations, The Mother; Speeches in public forum in Lucknow University, 2008, Public Speeches on Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy & Indian Cultural Heritage at Singapore, 2009, Addresses in Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bhubaneswar, 2009-12, Renaissance International Orations, 2010-12, Nilakantha Memorial Oration, Bhubaneswar 2013 (YouTube), Swabhimana Divas Oration, Aama Odisha, 2014 (Sambad Aam Odisha Website), Think Literature: Keynote Address, 2013 (Youtube).

In addition, World Union meetings were conducted by him once every month for several years as an exercise of introspection and spiritual seeking.

Seminal Research:

Papers presented in conferences and seminars exceed a hundred, to name a few:

Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi has included two papers in their prestigious 100 volume encyclopedia: The Yogic Experiences of Mahima Dharma; The Yoga of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Institute of Orissan Culture, Bhubaneswar included in their special volumes released after National level seminars: New Face of Shaktism in Odisha. The Cultural Root in the Mahabharata; The Legend & Symbol of Lord Jagannath.



Literary Awards and Recognitions:

Prajantra Vishuva Swikruti 1963&1967, Prajantra Vishuva Award (Essays), 1971, Dharitree Recognition (Comprehensive), 1979, Odisha Sahitya Akademi(Novel), 1973, Odisha Sahitya Akademi(Essays),1978, Sarala Award (Stories),1982, Sambalpur University Bharat Chandra Award,1989, Jaggannath Samman (Comprehensive),1997, Sahitya Akademi National Award (Stories),1997, Hutch Crossword Book Award for novel Yantrarudha,(Translated title Astride the Wheel), 2004, D.Litt.by Lucknow University, 2008, Kadambini Award, 2010, Atibadi Jagannath Das Award, 2010, Sahitya Bharati Award, 2011, D.Litt by Utkal University of Culture in 2012, Utkal Sahitya Samaj Lifetime Member Award, 2015, Chaturdhaa Samman, 2017.

Padmashri (2018)

Submitted by Dr. Sitikantha Dash, OSA Benefactor

Writer detail: Sashibhusan Rath



Photo by Swapnalata Mishra (Rath)



“I want to be the bridge to the next generation.” — Michael Jordan



“The Mighty MAC” by Sangram Sahu



OSA Awards

OSA Nomination-Based Awards

2018

Distinguished Odia Award

Dr. Annapurna Pandey

Arun Das Memorial Kalashree Award

Kuku Das

Subrina Biswal Award for Academic Excellence

Devyesh Satpathy

Yuva Kala Vikas Award

Sabrina Khuntia

2017

OSA Nomination-Based Awards

Dr. Sukant Mohapatra – Distinguished Odia Award

Dr. Basant Mohapatra – Arun Das Memorial Kalashree Award

Ms. Jessika Baral – Subrina Biswal Award for Academic Excellence

Mr. Anshuman Mishra – Youth Volunteer Award

Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing (Senior)

Amrita Sahu, VA (1st Prize)

Priyanka Choudhury, NJ (2nd Prize)

Aaryana Rajanala, NJ (3rd Prize)

Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing (Junior)

Sumedha Jena, NJ (1st Prize)

Ananya Pradhan, NJ (2nd Prize)

Dhruv Das, MD (3rd Prize)



These participants received Outstanding Performance Award Certificates for their excellent performances during the 48th OSA Convention. In addition, each participant received a \$100 Amazon gift card.

Subrina Biswal Performing Arts-Junior

Anisha Senapati
Abhinna Das
Adwaita Das

Subrina Biswal Performing Arts -Senior

Saheb Panda
Alisha Senapati

Odissi-Champu-Chhanda

Sanjana sahoo
Aditya Patnaik
Ankita Mohapatra

Odia Vocabulary

Abhinna Das
Anisha Senapati
Aditya Patnaik

Odia Speech

Ankita Mohapatra
Alisha Senapati
Aryaman Mohapatra
Sameksha Mohapatra

OSA Got Talent-Tiny Tot

Adwaita Das
Adwait Patnaik
Tanvi Mishra

OSA Got Talent- Junior

Shobhna Sahoo, Eesha Ray
Aditya Patnaik
Abhinna Das
Debasnata and Debabandya Dash

OSA Got Talent- Senior

Saheb Panda
Alisha & Anisha Senapati
Anand Das
Sanjana Sahoo and Anwesha Sarangi
Dev Satpathy
Ankita Mohapatra
Aryaman Mohapatra

2017 Pramode Patnaik Inter-Chapter Drama

Washington DC and Ohio Chapter (joint recipients)



ଭୂମି

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ



॥ ବଡ଼ ହେଉ ଅବା ସାନ : ଏକ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗ୍ରାଣ ॥

“ ଭଜ ହେବା ପାଇଁ କର ଯେବେ ଆଶା
ଭଜ କର ଆମ ନିଜ ମାତୃଭାଷା ”



ଆନ ଭାଷା ଆନ ପରମ୍ପରା



ଆନ ଓସା ଆନ ଯାତ୍ରା

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୧୯୯୩ ରୁ ୨୦୧୮ ... ଏକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣର ଯାତ୍ରା

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣର ଆଧାର ପ୍ରଭୁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରଣାମ ଜଣାଇ ସଂପାଦକୀୟ ଭାବେ ଉପସ୍ଥାପନା କରୁଛି ନିଜ ଅଙ୍ଗେ ନିଭା କଥା ଯାହା କି ଓସା ପରିସରରେ ମୋର ଅସ୍ଥିତ୍ୱର ପରିଚୟର କାରଣ ।

ଏଭିତରେ ମୁଁ ଏ ଦେଶରେ ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷ ବିତେଇ ସାରିଛି । ସମୟ କୁଆଡୁ ଆସେ କୁଆଡେ ଯାଏ ସତରେ ! କାଲି ଭଳି ଲାଗେ ନୁଆ ଜାଗା ନୁଆ ଜୀବନ ଶୈଳୀକୁ ଆପଣେଇ ନେବାକୁ ନେଇ ନିଜ ଭିତରେ ଚାଲିଯାଏ ଯୁଦ୍ଧ । ସକାଳେ ଚା' ପି'ଲା ବେଳେ, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଖବର କାଗଜ କୁ ଖୋଜୁଥିବା ଆସି ଦୁଇଟା ଆଉ ସାରା ଦିନ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ରେ କଥା ଦୁଇ ପଦ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ଉଛନ କାନ ଦୁଇଟାର ଅଭିଯୋଗରେ ହୃଦୟ ଭାରାକ୍ରାନ୍ତ ହୋଇ ରୁହେ । ଏ ଦୁଃଖ କାହାକୁ କହି ହୁଏନି । କହିଲେ ଲୋକେ ହସିବେ, କହିବେ ଏତେ ବାଟ ଆମେରିକା ଆସିକି ଏୟା ଖୋଜୁଛି ତୋ ମନ । କିନ୍ତୁ ନ କହି ବି ରହି ହୁଏନି, ଲୋକ ହସା ବି ହୁଏ । ବାପା ମା, ପରିବାର, ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥୀଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ବିବାହର ତିନି ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀଙ୍କ ପାଖେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବା ପରେ ଯେ ମୁଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ମାଟି ପାଣି ପବନକୁ ଝୁରିବି, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ବ୍ୟବହାର ନ କରି ମୁଁ ବ୍ୟଥୁତ ହେବି, ଏହା ଥିଲା ମୋ ପାଇଁ ଆଶାତୀତ । ବେଶ୍ କିଛି ଦିନ ଲାଗିଗଲା ବୁଝିବାକୁ, ଏହାହିଁ ସବୁ ଥାଇବି ମନ ଭିତରେ କିଛି ଗୋଟେ ଖାଲି ଖାଲି ଲାଗୁଥିବାର କାରଣ । ଏ ଭିତରେ ପରିଚୟ ହୁଏ ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାର ମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ । ୧୯୯୩ ମସିହା ଓସା କନ୍ଦଭେନ୍ଦ୍ରଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ସମସ୍ତେ ଖୁବ୍ ଉତ୍ସାହିତ ଥାନ୍ତି । ପ୍ରତି ସଭାରେ କାହା ନା କାହା ଘରେ ଏକାଠି ହୋଇ, ଆସୁଥିବା ମହୋତ୍ସବର ଯୋଜନା ଚାଲିଯାଏ । ସବୁ ଥର ଯାଇ ହୁଏନି, କିନ୍ତୁ ଯେଉଁ ଥର ଯାଇ ପାରେନି, ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଏବଂ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ହାତ ତିଆରି ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରକାରର ରନ୍ଧାକୁ ଘରେ ବସି ଝୁରୁଥାଏ । ଆଉ ଯେବେ ଯାଏ, ନାନୀ ଅପାମାନେ ସ୍ନେହ ଶୁଣାରେ ବଳେଇ ବଳେଇ ଖୁଆନ୍ତି ଆଉ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭାବେ ବାନ୍ଧିବୁଧିକି ଘରକୁ ଦେବାକୁ ବି ଭୁଲନ୍ତିନି । କାରଣ ପ୍ରଥମତଃ ନୁଆ ଆମେରିକା ଆସିଯାଏ, ତା ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ଅତି ଶୀଘ୍ର ମା ହେବାକୁ ଯାଉଥାଏ । ସେ ଆଦର ସକ୍ରୀର ଭିତରେ କେତେବେଳେ ମୋ ଭିତରର ଖାଲି ଖାଲି ଲାଗୁଥିବା ଭାବ ଆସ୍ତେ ଆସ୍ତେ ବଦଳିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା । ତା ଭିତରେ କନ୍ଦଭେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଆସିଲା, ଏତେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଆମେରିକାରେ ଏକାଠି ଦେଖିବା ମୋର କଳ୍ପନା ତୀତ ଥିଲା । ସ୍ନେହ ସୌହାର୍ଦ୍ଦ୍ୟରେ ପରିପୁର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବେଶ ମୋତେ ସତରେ ବିଭୋର କରିଥିଲା । କନ୍ଦଭେନ୍ଦ୍ର ସରିବାପରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ନିଜ ଘର ସଂସାରରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ରହିଲେ । ଘର ପାଖେ ଥିବା ସୀମିତ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସଂପର୍କ ବଢ଼ିଲା । ସମସ୍ତେ ପ୍ରାୟ ବୟସରେ ବେଶ୍ ବଡ଼ ଥିଲେ ମୋ'ଠୁ । ମୁଁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ନୀତଟିଏ ବାନ୍ଧିବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଥିଲି, ସେତେବେଳେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରୁ କେହି କେହି ଶୂନ୍ୟ ନୀତକୁ ସଜାଡ଼ି ନୁଆ ଜୀବନର ନୀରବତାକୁ ଆପଣେଇବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ କରୁଥିଲେ । ଅନ୍ୟ ସମବୟସ୍କମାନେ ବି ଥିଲେ ଯେଉଁ ମାନେ ନିଜ ନୀତ ର ବ୍ୟସ୍ତତା ବା କୋଳାହଳରେ ହେଉ ବା ନୀତ ଗଢ଼ିବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଭିତରେ ହେଉ ମଜ୍ଜି ରହିଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ନାନୀ ଅପାମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସଂପର୍କ ବଢ଼ିଲା । କାରଣ ବୟସରେ, ଅନୁଭବରେ ଅନେକ ତାରତମ୍ୟ ଥିଲେ ବି ଆମର ଗୋଟିଏ ଅନୁଭବ ସାଧାରଣ ଥିଲା, ଆମେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଝୁରୁଥିଲୁ । ମୁଁ ନୁଆ ଆସିଥିଲି, ଝୁରିବା ସ୍ୱାଭାବିକ । ମାତ୍ର ସେମାନେ ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନର ଏକ ବଡ଼ ସମୟ ଆମେରିକାରେ କଟେଇ ସାରିଲା ପରେବି ଯେଉଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଥିଲେ ସେଇ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସ୍ମୃତିକୁ କେବଳ ହୃଦୟ ଭିତରେ ସାଇତି ରଖି ନଥିଲେ, ନିତି ଦିନର ଜୀବନରେ ବି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ହେଇ ରହିଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ ଶୈଳୀରେ ଆମେରିକାରେ ଥାଇ ବି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାମାଜିକ ଜୀବନର ଏକ ବିଶେଷ ଭୂମିକା ଥିଲା । ରନ୍ଧାବଜା, ବେଶଭୂଷା, ଘରକରଣା, କଥାବାଉଁର୍ ସ୍ନେହ ଶୁଣା ସବୁଠି ନିଛକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପଣର ଛାପ ଥିଲା । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ସମୟ କଟେଇଲା ବେଳେ ମୁଁ ଭୁଲିଯାଏ ମୁଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ନୁହେଁ ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ରେ ଅଛି । ସୁଖ ଦୁଃଖର ଜୀବନର ଛୋଟ ବଡ଼ କଥାକୁ ନେଇ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଉପଦେଶ, ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ହସ ଖୁସି, ନୁଆ ଆସିଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାରକୁ ସ୍ୱାଗତ କରିବା, ବିଦାୟ ନେଇ ଯାଇଥିବା ପୁରୁଣା ସାଙ୍ଗଙ୍କୁ ମନେ ପକେଇବା, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପୂଜା ପର୍ବ ପର୍ବାଣି ପାଳନ କରିବା, ପରସ୍ପର ସହିତ ସୁଖ ଦୁଃଖରେ ଠିଆ ହେବା, ଏମିତି ଅନେକ ଅନୁଭବ ନେଇ ଗଢ଼ି ଉଠିଲା ମୋର ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜ ସହିତ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ସଂପର୍କ ।

ମୋ ଅଜାଣତରେ ସଫାହାତକୁ ମୁଁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରି ରୁହେ ଯେଉଁଠି ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଦେଖା ହେବ । ମାସକୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଦୁଇଥର ମୁଁ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏକାଠି ଦେଖେ , ଏମିତି ପ୍ରାୟ ସଫାହାତ ଅନ୍ତରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାର ମିଳନରେ ଆମ ଜୀବନ ଆଗକୁ ବଢ଼ିଲା । ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଥିବାର ଦୁଃଖ ଲାଘବ ହେବାରେ ସେଇ ସବୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମିଳନର ତ ପ୍ରଭାବ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ରହିଥିଲା ।

ତାରି ଭିତରେ ଆମ ନୀତ ର କୋଳାହଳ ବଢ଼ି ଚାଲିଲା । ଦୁଇ ଝିଅ ଜନ୍ମ ହେଇ ବଢ଼ିଲେ, ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥୀଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଖେଳିବା ପାଇଁ ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଆୟୋଜିତ ଉତ୍ସବ ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଆମ ଜୀବନକୁ ଉତ୍ସବ ମୁଖର କଲା । ପରିବେଶକୁ ନେଇ ଆମରିକୀୟ ପରଂପରାର ପ୍ରଭାବ ତ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ ଜୀବନରେ ପଡ଼ିବା ସ୍ଵାଭାବିକ, କିନ୍ତୁ ଆମେରିକାରେ ରହି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଓ ପରଂପରାକୁ କିଛି ଅଂଶରେ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କର ନିକଟବର୍ତ୍ତୀ କରାଇବା ଯେ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ, ଆଉ ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜର ଭୂମିକା ଗୁରୁତ୍ଵପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ଏକଥା ଆମେ ଅନୁଭବ କଲୁ । ଆସ୍ତେ ଆସ୍ତେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଭାବରେ ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜର ଭୂମିକା, ଆଉ ତାର ସଭ୍ୟ ସଭ୍ୟା ମାନଙ୍କର ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ଓ କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ, ଜାତୀୟ - ଆର୍ତ୍ତଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ ଓସାର ଭୂମିକା ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଲି । ୧୯୯୪ ମସିହା ନଭେମ୍ବର ୧୩ ତାରିଖରେ ୨୦୦୦ ମସିହାରେ ପୁଣି ଥରେ ନାଗ୍‌ଭିଲ୍ ଓସା କନ୍ଫେରେନ୍ସରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ଆସିଲା । ସେତେବେଳେ ପିଲା ମାନେ ଟିକେ ବଡ଼ ହେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ହୋଟେଲ୍‌ରେ ପ୍ରତି କୋଣ ଅନୁକୋଣରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ଶୁଣି ବଡ଼ ଝିଅର ପ୍ରତିକ୍ରିୟା... “ସମସ୍ତେ କ’ଣ ଏଠି ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କଥା ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ମାମା!”... ଯେତିକି ଆନନ୍ଦ ଦାୟକ ଥିଲା ସେତିକି ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟଜନକ ଥିଲା ମୋ ପାଇଁ । ବାରମ୍ବାର ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କୁହ! ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କୁହ ! କହିବାକୁ ପଡୁଥିବା ଝିଅକୁ କିଛି ନ କହିବି ଏମିତି ଏକ ପରିବେଶରେ ସେ ଅଚାନକ ସ୍ଵତଃ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା କରିବ ମୋର କଳ୍ପନାତୀତ ଥିଲା । ହୋଟେଲ୍‌ରେ ଏତେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଏକାଠି ଦେଖି ମୋ ସାନ ଝିଅ ଭାବିଲା ଆମେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଯାଇଛୁ, ତା ଭିତରେ ସେ ତା ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଥିବା ଭାଇଭଉଣୀଙ୍କୁ ଖୋଜୁଥିଲା । ସେହି ଓସା ମଞ୍ଚରେ ପ୍ରଥମ ଥର ପାଇଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ନାଟକ ପରିବେଷଣ କରି ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓସାକୁ ଓସା ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ ସମ୍ମାନିତ କରାଇ ପାରିବାର ଅନନ୍ୟ ଅନୁଭବ ଏବେବି ମୋତେ ଆମୋଦିତ କରେ । ସାଥୀ କଳାକାରମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ଥିଲେ ସ୍ଵର୍ଗୀୟ ହେମନ୍ତ ସେନାପତି ଓ ସ୍ଵର୍ଗୀୟ ସ୍ଵର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସେନାପତି(ଜୁନି ଅପା) । ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ସମୟରେ ହେମନ୍ତ ବାବୁ ମୋତେ କହିଥିବା କଥା ଏବେ ବି ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଲେ ଆସିବୁ ଲୁହ ଆସେ, “ ଆଉ କନ୍ଫେରେନ୍ସ ପାଇଁ ତୁ ଏବେଠୁ ଲେଖା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେ”, ପର ବର୍ଷ କନ୍ଫେରେନ୍ସ ବେଳକୁ ସେ ଆଉ ଆମ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ନଥିଲେ । ଜୁନି ଅପାବି ଆଉ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ସେଇ ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣକୁ ମୋର ଶତ ପ୍ରଣାମ । ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓସାରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସ୍ମୃତି ଏବେବି ଉଜ୍ଜୀବିତ ।

ଆମେରିକା ଆସିବାପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଠାରୁ ଦୂରେଇ ଯିବାକୁ ବାଧ୍ୟ ହେଇ ଥିଲି । ମାତ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲେଖା ପଢ଼ିବା ପାଇଁ ଓସା ସୋଭେନିୟର୍ ଥିଲା ବର୍ଷ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ମୋର ଏକମାତ୍ର ଆଧାର । ବନ୍ଧୁ ବାନ୍ଧବ, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାଙ୍ଗ ମାନଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ଗଲେ ମାଗି ବସେ ନୂଆ ସ୍କ୍ରୁଣିକା, ଯଦି ଥାଏ ଦିଅନ୍ତି, ପଢ଼ିଯାଏ ଗୋଟେ ନିଃଶ୍ଵାସରେ । କିଛି କୋଉଠି ହଜିଯାଇଥିବା ମୂଲ୍ୟବାନ କିଛି ଆଉଥରେ ପାଇଗଲା ଭଳି ଲାଗେ । ସେଇ ସବୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂପାଦକ, ସଂପାଦିକା, ଲେଖକ ଓ ଲେଖିକା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ସାରସ୍ଵତ ପ୍ରଣାମ । ଏଠିକି ଆସି ଜୀବନରେ ବହୁତ କିଛି ପାଇଛି ସତ, କିନ୍ତୁ ଝୁରି ହେଇଛି ଆଜୀବନ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ଆଉ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ର ସାନିଧ୍ୟକୁ । ବୟସ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ସେ ଅନୁଭବର ଗଭୀରତା ଆହୁରି ବଢ଼ୁଛି ।

୨୦୦୩ ମସିହାରେ ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଅପାଙ୍କ ଉତ୍ସାହରୁ, ମୋ ଭିତରେ ସାରସ୍ଵତ ଝୁହା ପୁନର୍ଜୀବରଣ ହେଲା । ମୁଁ ସ୍କ୍ରୁଣିକାକୁ କବିତା ଓ ଗପ ପଠେଇବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଥିଲି । ୧୯୯୩ ମସିହା ପରେ ୨୦୦୭ ମସିହାରେ ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓସା ପୁଣିଥରେ କନ୍ଫେରେନ୍ସ ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ନେଇ ସପ୍ତମତାର ଶୀର୍ଷ ମଣ୍ଡଳ କରିଥିଲା । ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓସାର ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷା ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ କ୍ରିଷ୍ଣା ସେନାପତି ଙ୍କ ଅନୁରୋଧରେ ମୁଁ ସ୍କ୍ରୁଣିକା ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ନେଇଥିଲି । ସ୍କ୍ରୁଣିକା ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ରେ ଥାଇ ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ ଓସାର ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପାଇଥିଲି । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପ୍ରତି ଭାବ ଓ ଓସା ପ୍ରତି ରହିଥିବା ସତ୍ତ୍ଵେତ୍ତ୍ଵେ ମୁଁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣକୁ ଭେଟିଥିଲି । ମୋର ଉତ୍ସାହ ଦ୍ଵିଗୁଣିତ ହେଇଥିଲା ।



୨୦୦୭ ମସିହା ପରେ ଦୀର୍ଘ ୩୩ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ପୁଣିଥରେ ମୁଁ ଏବେ ୨୦୧୮ ଓସା ସ୍ମରଣୀକା ସଂପାଦନାର ଦାୟିତ୍ବ ରେ । ଅନେକ କିଛି ବଦଳି ଯାଇଛି ଆମ ଚାରି ପଟର ଦୁନିଆ । ଏ ଭିତରେ ଓସାର ସଭ୍ୟ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ବୃଦ୍ଧି ସହିତ ଆମେରିକାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଓସା ପରିବେଶ ବାହାରେ ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି ଘଟିଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ପ୍ରବାହ ଘରେ ଘରେ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବା ଅଗ୍ରଜ ପ୍ରତିମା, ଶ୍ରୀ ସତ୍ୟ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକଙ୍କର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ଓ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ବାସ୍ତବିକ ପ୍ରଶଂସନୀୟ । ଏଇ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ପାଇଁ କେବଳ ଜଣେ ଲେଖିକା ଭାବରେ ନୁହେଁ ଉଚ୍ଚକୋଟୀର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ପାଠିକା ଭାବରେ ମୁଁ ଉପକୃତ । କେବେ କେବେ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହୁଏ ...“ ଆଃ ଏଇ ପ୍ରକାରର ସୁବିଧା ସୁଯୋଗ ମୋତେ ଆଗରୁ ମିଳି ନଥାନ୍ତା ! ବିଗତ ୨୫ ବର୍ଷ ଭିତରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ମୁଁ ଆଉ ଟିକିଏ ଅଧିକ ନିକଟତର ହେଇ ପାରିଥାନ୍ତି ।” ସମକାଳୀନ ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକା ମାନେ ପରସ୍ପରର ନିକଟତର ହେଇ ପାରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳିଛି । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଓସା ପରିସରରେ/ଓସା ପରିସର ବାହାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପାଠକ, ବେତାର ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ପ୍ରସାରଣ, ଦୂରଭାଷୀୟ କବିତା ପାଠ ଇତ୍ୟାଦିର ଆୟୋଜନ ବି ହେଉଛି । ଫେସ୍ ବୁକ୍ ଓ ହାଟ୍ ସ ଆପ୍ ର ଭୂମିକା ଏଥିପାଇଁ ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ରହିଛି । ତା ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ହେଇଛି ଅନ୍ୟ ଚାପ୍ଟର ମାନଙ୍କ ଭଳି ମିଡ଼ିଆନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାମାଜିକ ଜୀବନ । ଓଡ଼ିଶା ବାହାରେ ବଢ଼ିଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସହିତ ବୈବାହିକ ସୂତ୍ରରେ ବନ୍ଧା ଅଣଓଡ଼ିଆ ମାନଙ୍କର ଓସା ପ୍ରତି ଆଗ୍ରହ ବଢ଼ିଛି । ଦୁଃଖର କଥା ଡିଜିଟାଲ୍ ଯୁଗରେ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ବକୁ ବଢ଼ି ଭାବରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ ବିପକ୍ଷରେ ଅନେକ । ଅନ୍ତର୍ଜାଲ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ବ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ସାଧନ କରିବ ବୋଲି ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଦୃଢ଼ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ।

ନୂଆ ପୁରୁଣା ସଭ୍ୟ ସଭ୍ୟାଙ୍କର ଅଭିନବ ଚିନ୍ତାଧାରା ନୂଆ ଯୋଜନାର ପରିକଳ୍ପନାରେ, ଏବେ ମିଡ଼ିଆନ୍ ଓସା ସମୃଦ୍ଧ । ୨୦୧୮ରେ ଆଉଥରେ ଓସା କନ୍ଫରେନ୍ସର ଦାୟିତ୍ବ ବହନ କରି ବିଶ୍ୱ ସମ୍ମୁଖରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣର ଐକତ୍ତ୍ୱ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ କରିବାପାଇଁ ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକୀୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆହ୍ୱାନ ଦେଇଛି ମିଡ଼ିଆନ୍ ଓସା । ଏଇ ସମୟ ସାପେକ୍ଷ, ବ୍ୟୟ ବହୁଳ ମହୋତ୍ସବର ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତିରେ ବିଗତ ବର୍ଷେ ହେଲା ଅତିଥି ସକ୍ତାର, ଉତ୍କଳ ଖାଦ୍ୟପେୟ, ମନୋରଞ୍ଜନ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ପାଇଁ ଯଥାସାଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟାରେ ସଭ୍ୟ ସଭ୍ୟା ମାନେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ (ନିଜ ସାଧ୍ୟ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ) ଦାୟିତ୍ବ ନେଇଥିବା ପ୍ରତିଟି ପରିବାରର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ଜୀବନ ପ୍ରଭାବିତ ଓ ବ୍ୟତିବ୍ୟସ୍ତ, ତଥାପି ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକୀୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏକତ୍ରିତ କରିବାର ଉତ୍ସାହରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ବିଭୋର । ପରସ୍ପରକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରି ସବୁ ସମସ୍ୟାର ସମାଧାନ ପାଇଁ ସେମାନେ ବାଟ ଖୋଜି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି । ଗତ ଆଠ ମାସର ଯୋଜନା ଓ ଗତ ତିନି ମାସର କଠିନ ପରିଶ୍ରମକୁ ନେଇ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପରି ମୁଁ ବି ସ୍ମରଣିକା ସଂପାଦନା କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ ପାଇଁ ସଂପାଦନା କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ଛୋଟ ବଡ଼ ସୁବିଧା ପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ମାଗିଥିଲି ଅନ୍ୟ ମାନଙ୍କୁ, ଯେଉଁ ମାନେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିଥିଲେ ସେମାନେ ହେଲେ, ଶ୍ରୀ ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ଭୂୟାଁ, ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ରାଜଶ୍ରୀ ନାୟକ, ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ସୁନୟା ମିଶ୍ର, ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ସଂଘମିତ୍ରା ଶତପଥୀ ଓ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଗୁଲି ମହାନ୍ତି । ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।

ବିଶେଷ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଚରୋଣ୍ଡେ ନିବାସୀ, ଉତ୍କର୍ଷ ସଂପାଦନା ମଣ୍ଡଳୀର ସଭ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀ ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ଭୂୟାଁଙ୍କୁ ! ମୋର ପରାମର୍ଶ ରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗର ମୁଖପତ୍ର ମଧ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତି । ମିଡ଼ିଆନ୍ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଉଭୟ ବିସ୍ତୃତ ବେଳାଭୂମି ରେ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ । କାନାଡାରେ ଥାଇ ବାଲୁକା ଶଯ୍ୟାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପାରମ୍ପରିକ ଝୋଟି ଆଙ୍ଗିରାର କଳ୍ପନା କରିପାରିଛନ୍ତି ଶ୍ରୀ ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ଭୂୟାଁ । ଏଇ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାବ ତ ଓସା ମିଳନୀର ପ୍ରାଣ । ଧନ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣ । ନିଜ ରଚନାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ କୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାବ ଓ ଶବ୍ଦ ରେ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ କରିଥିବା ବିଭୋର ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ସହଯୋଗ ପାଇଁ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଅନିର୍ବାଚ୍ୟ କାରଣ ବଶତଃ ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକା ମାନଙ୍କର ଫଟୋ ପ୍ରକାଶ ନ କରିବାର ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନେଲୁ । ଯେଉଁମାନେ ପଠେଇଥିଲେ ଆମକୁ କ୍ଷମା କରିବେ । ଫର୍ମାଟିଙ୍ଗରେ ଲେଖକ/ଲେଖିକା ମାନେ ଭିନ୍ନ ଦୁଇ ପ୍ରକାର ଫର୍ମ୍ (ସାରଳା ଓ ନିର୍ମଳା) ବ୍ୟବହାରର ଜଟିଳତା ଭିତରେ ଯଥାସାଧ୍ୟ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଛି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗକୁ ସଜାଡିବା ପାଇଁ । ତୃପ୍ତି ମାର୍ଜନା କରିବେ ।

ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ବର ମୁଖପୃଷ୍ଠକୁ ଜୀବନ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଶ୍ରୀ ଅତୁଲ ବଳ । ତାଙ୍କ ଭାବ ବିହ୍ୱଳ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣକୁ ପ୍ରଶଂସା ।

ପଚିଶ ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ମୁଁ ପ୍ରଥମ ଥର ପାଇଁ ଓସା କନ୍ଫରେନ୍ସରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇଥିଲି । ସେତେବେଳେ ମୋ ସହିତ ମୋ ଜଠର ରେ ଥାଇ ମୋ ଭିତରର ଆନନ୍ଦକୁ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିଥିବା ମୋ ବଡ଼ଝିଅ ଆନନ୍ଦା ଏ ବର୍ଷର ଇଂରାଜୀ ବିଭାଗର ସଂପାଦନା ଦାୟିତ୍ବ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବା ଓ ତା ତା ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ସଂପାଦନା ବେଳେ ଅନେକ ବିଶେଷ ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ସମୟରେ ଆମକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିଥିବା ସାନ ଝିଅ ନୟନା,



ଦୁହେଁ, ମୋ ପାଇଁ ଅଶେଷ ଆନନ୍ଦର କାରଣ । ଗତ ତିନି ମାସର କଠିନ ପରିଶ୍ରମକୁ ନେଇ ଦୈନନ୍ଦିନ ଜୀବନର ତେଲଲୁଣ ସଂସାରକୁ ଏକ ରକମ ଅଣଦେଖା କରିବାକୁ ପଡିଛି ମୋତେ, ଜୀବନ ଜଟିଳ ହେଇଛି ସତ, ତାକୁ ସରଳ କରି ପାରିଛି ସ୍ବାମୀ ନିର୍ମଳ ରଥଙ୍କୁ ଧୈର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଓ ସହଯୋଗ । ଓସାର ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓସାର ଭାବ ପ୍ରବଣତାର ପରିପ୍ରକାଶ, ସରଳ ଆଉ ନିର୍ମଳ ଭାବ ଦେଇ କାମ କରିବାକୁ ପଡିବ ।

ପାଠକେ ! ଭାବୁଛନ୍ତି କି ସଂପାଦନାରେ ଏସବୁ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ଅନୁଭୂତି ବଖାଣିବାରେ କି ମୂଲ୍ୟ ରହିଛି ! ତେବେ ଅନୁରୋଧ, ମୋ ପତିଶ ବର୍ଷର ଯାତ୍ରାକୁ ନିଜ ଜୀବନରେ ପ୍ରତିଫଳିତ କରି ଦେଖନ୍ତୁ ଆପଣଙ୍କର ମୋ ସହିତ କ’ଣ ସାମଞ୍ଜସ୍ୟ ରହିଛି ! ବିଶେଷଣ କରନ୍ତୁ ମୋତେ, ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜରେ ମୁଁ ଭେଟିଥିବା ପ୍ରତିଟି ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କୁ, ଓସା ପରିସର ରେ ମୁଁ ଭେଟିଥିବା ସହୃଦୟ ବନ୍ଧୁ ଓ ବାନ୍ଧବୀ ମାନଙ୍କୁ, କନ୍ଭେନ୍ସନ୍ ପାଇଁ ନିଜର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ସମୟ ଦେଇଥିବା ଦାୟିତ୍ବସଂପର୍ଷ ସ୍ବେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀଙ୍କୁ ଓ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ପରିବାର ବର୍ଗଙ୍କୁ ଓ ଶେଷରେ ନିଜକୁ । ଦେଖିବେ ଗୋଟିଏ ସୂତ୍ରରେ ବନ୍ଧା ଆମେ ... ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣ ।

“ବଡ଼ ହେଉ ଅବା ସାନ : ଏକ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣ”

ଚାଲନ୍ତୁ ସମସ୍ତେ ମିଶି ଆମେରିକାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାକୁ ଲିଖିତ ଭାଷା ଭାବେ ବଞ୍ଚାଇ ରଖିବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ କରିବା ! ଉର୍ମିର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗରେ ମୋତି ର ସନ୍ଧାନ କରନ୍ତୁ, ସେଇ ମୋତି ଆମ ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ପହଞ୍ଚାଇବାର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରାଯାଇ ପାରିଲେ, ହୁଏତ ସେଇ ମୋତି ଆମ କାହାଣୀ ଶୁଣାଇବ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆଗାମୀ ଦିନ ମାନଙ୍କରେ !

୪୯ତମ କନ୍ଭେନ୍ସନ୍ ପାଇଁ ଓସାର ସମସ୍ତ ଭାଇ ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କୁ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ । ଅବାଞ୍ଛନୀୟ ତୃଟି ପାଇଁ କ୍ଷମା କରିବେ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ କାଳଜୟୀ ହେଉ ! ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ମହାନାୟକ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏବଂ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗର ପାଠକ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ନମସ୍କାର !

ସ୍ବପ୍ନଲତା ମିଶ୍ର (ରଥ)

ସଂପାଦିକା, ଉର୍ମି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ

(swapnarath90@gmail.com)



ବନ୍ଧେ ଭକ୍ତଳ ଜନନୀ !



କୃପାକର ଭାବଗ୍ରାହୀ

ଶଶଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର

ପୂର୍ବ ଜନ୍ମଫଳ ଭୋଗ କରିବାକୁ
ଜନମତି ଦେଲ ସାଇଁ
ଏ' ଭବ ସାଗର ପାରହେବା ପାଇଁ
ବାଟ ଦେଖାଇଲ ନାହିଁ ? (୧)

ମୁଁ ଛାର ମଣିଷ କେମିତି ବୁଝିବି
ତୁମ ଲୀଳା କୃପାସିନ୍ଧୁ
ଜନମ, ମରଣ ତୁମରିତ ସୃଷ୍ଟି
ଦେଇଅଛ ଜଗବନ୍ଧୁ ? (୨)

ମାୟା, ମୋହ ଜାଲେ ବାନ୍ଧି ପକେଇଲ
ଭାରି ଶକ୍ତ ତା'ର ତୋରି
ସେ' ଗୁଡ଼ ରହସ୍ୟ ବୁଝି ନପାରିଲି
କଲା ମୋତେ ଏତେ ସରି (୩)

କାହା ଜୀବନକୁ କରିଅଛ ତୁମେ
ଗୋଲାପ ଫୁଲର ଶେଷ
କିଏ ପାଉନାହିଁ ଖୁଦ ମୁଠେ ପୁଣି
ଲୁଚେଇ ପାରୁନି ଲାଜ (୪)

କରିନାହିଁ ତୁମେ ମୋ' ଜୀବନ ପଥ
ଶତକଡ଼ା ଶହେ ଭଲ
କେବେ ଭେଟିଅଛି ଟାଙ୍ଗରା ଭୁଇଁତ
କେବେ ପୁଣି ଗାଢ଼ ଖାଲ (୫)

ଖଞ୍ଜିଥିଲ ଯାହା ଦୁଃଖ, ସୁଖ ସବୁ
ବାଉଳା କରିଛି ମନ
ପତି, ଉଠି, ପତି ଧାଇଁଛି ପ୍ରଭୁହେ
ରଖିବାକୁ ମୋର ଟାଣ (୬)

ପାଇଅଛି କିଛି, ହରାଇଛି କିଛି
କହିବାକୁ ମାତେ ଲାଜ
ସବୁ ଦେଖିପାର, ସବୁ ଜାଣିପାର
କି କହିବି ଦେବରାଜ (୭)

ତୁମରି ସୃଷ୍ଟିରେ ଯେତେ ଭଲ ସବୁ
ଉପଭୋଗ କରିଅଛି
ଫୁଲର ସୁଗନ୍ଧ, ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରଧନୁ ରଙ୍ଗ
ମନ ଖୁସି କରିଅଛି (୮)



ଶୀତଳ ପବନ, କୋଇଲିର କୁହୁ
ମଧୁମକ୍ଷୀଙ୍କ ଗୁଞ୍ଜନ
ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ଗାଁ ପରିବେଶ
ସ୍ମୃତିଭରା ପିଲାଦିନ (୯)

ସହଜ ହେବକି ମୋର ଏ' ଜୀବନ
ଏ' ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ମୋ' ମନେ ଆସେ
ହାଲ୍‌କା ହେବକି ଦୃଃଖ ଓ ଯାତନା
ତୁମେଥିଲେ ପାଶେପାଶେ (୧୪)

ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ଶ୍ରାବଣର ଧାରା
ଫଗୁଣର ରାତି ଦିନ
ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ଶୀତ ସପନ
ଶରତ ରାତିର ଜହ୍ନ (୧୦)

ସେସବୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର-ଉତ୍ତର ପାଇବା
ମୋତେ ଲାଗିଗଲା ତେରି
ମୁଁ ଯେ ମୂଢ଼ ନର ବୁଝିଗଲି ଆଜି
ବିଶ୍ୱାସକୁ କରି ତୋରି (୧୫)

ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ନୀଳ ଆକାଶ
ସମୁଦ୍ର ବେଳାଭୂଇଁ
ତୁମ ନଈ, ନାଳ, ବଣ, ପାହାଡ଼
ଯାଇଥିଲା ମନ ଛୁଇଁ (୧୧)

ଏତେ ଭୁଲ୍‌କଲି ତୁମକୁ ମୁଁ ଭୁଲି
ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥକୁ ସାରଥୀ କରି
ପୁରା ଜୀବନଟା କଟିଗଲା ମୋର
ତୁଣ୍ଡେ ନଧରିଲି “ହରି” (୧୬)

ଝରଣାର ଗୀତ, ଝିଙ୍କାରୀ ଶବ୍ଦ
ଉଛୁଳା ନଈର ରୂପ
ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ତୁମ ମନ୍ଦିରରେ
ଜଳୁଥିବା ଆଶାଦୀପ (୧୨)

କେବେ ରଖିନାହିଁ ଲୋଭ ମହାପ୍ରଭୁ
ତୁମ ରତ୍ନ ଭଣ୍ଡାରରେ
ଏ' ହାତରେ ଦେଲେ ଯେତେ ଅର୍ଥ ତୁମେ
ଫେରିଯିବ ସେ' ହାତରେ (୧୭)

ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ'ର ପଣତ
ମା'ର ଉଷ୍ମ କୋଳ
ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ଗୁରୁଜୀର ବାଣୀ
ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀଙ୍କ ମେଳ (୧୩)

ଜୀବନର ଦୀପ ହୁଏ ଦିପଦିପ
ଲିଭିଯିବ କେବେ ଦିନେ
ଜୀବ ଗଲାବେଳେ ଖୋଜୁ ଏ ପରାଣ
ପ୍ରଭୁପାଦ ମନେମନେ (୧୮)



ବୃହତ୍ପୁତ୍ର ଏକ ଶୁଖିଲା ପତର

ମୁଁ ଏବେ ଉଡେ ଏଣେତେଣେ

ଅନେକ ରହିଛି ଅକୁହା କଥା ତ

ଲୁଚି ରହୁ ଏ ପରାଣେ (୧୯)

ମନକଥା ଖୋଲି କହିବାକୁ ପରା

ଇଚ୍ଛାଶକ୍ତି ହୁଏ ଲୋଡ଼ା

କହିବି କହିବି ବୋଲି ଭାବୁଭାବୁ

ହେଲି ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଢ଼ା (୨୦)

ଜୀବନର ଏଇ ସାୟାକୁ ବେଳାରେ

କରୁଅଛି ମୁଁ ଗୁହାରି

ଭାବ ର ଠାକୁର ଭାବ ବୁଝିପାର

କରବ ଜି ଭବୁ ପାର ? (୨୧)



ତେଃ ଶଶଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର ‘ଓସାର’ ଲାଇଫ୍ ମେମ୍ବର, ମେରୀଲ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡର ବାସିନ୍ଦା । ସେ’ ଡ୍ରାସିଙ୍ଗଟନ୍ ହସ୍ପିଟାଲ ସେକ୍ଟରରେ ରେଡିଏସନ ସେଣ୍ଟି ଓ ଡାଏଗ୍ନୋଷ୍ଟିକ୍ ମେଡିକାଲ ପିନ୍‌ଜିକ୍ସ୍ ଡିଭିଜନରେ ଡିରେକ୍ଟର ଭାବରେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରତ । ସମୟ ମିଳିଲେ କବିତା ଲେଖିବା, ଭଜନ ଶୁଣିବା ଓ ବିଜୁ ଖେଳିବାକୁ ପସନ୍ଦ କରନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କର ଚିନ୍ତାଟି ଓଡ଼ିଆ କବିତା ସଂକଳନ ‘ପ୍ରବାସୀର ଆତ୍ମଲିପି’, ‘ସ୍ମୃତି ନୈବେଦ୍ୟ’ ଓ ‘ଚେତନାର ଅଭିବ୍ୟକ୍ତି’ ଏଯାଏ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇଛି ।)



ଆମେ ଓ ଆମ ପରଂପରା

ଦାଣ୍ଡ ବେନଝୁର

ମଣିଷ ଜୀବନ କେବଳ ବଞ୍ଚିବା ପାଇଁ ନୁହେଁ । ବଞ୍ଚିବା ସହିତ କିଛି ନୂଆ କରିବାର ପ୍ରବଣତା ମଣିଷକୁ ପଶୁମାନଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ଭିନ୍ନ କରି ଠିଆ କରେ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସେ ସବୁବେଳେ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ରହସ୍ୟ ବୁଝିବାକୁ ମନ ବଳାଏ; ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ନିୟମକୁ ଓଲଟପାଲଟ କରେ ପୁଣି ପ୍ରକୃତି ବିରୁଦ୍ଧରେ ଯାଇ ଅପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ଜୀବନ ଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ମୌଳିକ ରହସ୍ୟ ଆଦି ଖୋଜିଥାଏ ।

ଏବେ ଦେଖା ଗଲାଣି ମଣିଷ ହିଁ ସଂସାରରେ ଏକ ମାତ୍ର ପ୍ରାଣୀ ଯେ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ପ୍ରକୃତି ବିରୋଧୀ । ସତେ ଯେମିତି ସେ ପ୍ରତିନିୟତା ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଛି ପ୍ରକୃତି କୁ ପରାହତ କରିବ ଏବଂ ଜିଣିଯାଇ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବ ଯେ ସେ ହିଁ ସର୍ବଶକ୍ତିମାନ । ସେ ହିଁ ପ୍ରକୃତିକୁ ପଦାନତ କରିପାରେ ।

ଏଇ ଭଳି କେତେ କେତେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କଳାପ ଯେତେବେଳେ ମଣିଷ ସମାଜରେ ଧରାବନ୍ଧା ହୋଇଯାଏ ଓ ବର୍ଷ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ପାଳିତ ହୁଏ, ସେ ସବୁହୋଇଯାଏ ପରଂପରା । ତେଣୁ ପ୍ରତିଟି ସାମାଜିକ ପରଂପରାରେ ଆମେ ତିନିଗୋଟି ସ୍ତର ଦେଖିବାକୁ ପାଉ । ଗୋଟିଏ ହେଉଛି ପ୍ରକୃତି ସହିତ ସାମିଲ ହୋଇ ତାର ରହସ୍ୟ ବୁଝିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିବା । ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଜୟଗାନ କରିବାର ପରଂପରା । ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ହେଉଛି ପ୍ରକୃତିର ନିୟମ ଉପଯୋଗ କରି ଓ ତାକୁ କିଛିତ ବଦଳାଇ ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ପ୍ରକୃତି ସହିତ ରହି ପୁଣି ନ୍ୟୁନ କରି କିଛି ନୂଆ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରିବାର ପରଂପରା । ତୃତୀୟଟି ହେଉଛି ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ବିପରୀତ । ଯାହା ଅଛି ତାକୁ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ନୂଆ କରି ଗଢି ମାନବିକ ବଡ଼ପଣ ଦେଖାଇବାର ମନୋଭାବ । ଏ ସବୁ କଥାକୁ ଭଲ ଭାବରେ ବୁଝିବା ପାଇଁ ହେଲେ ପ୍ରତିଟି କଥାର ଅନୁଶୀଳନ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ । ମଣିଷ ଦିନକୁ ଦିନ ଅଧିକ ବୁଦ୍ଧିମାନ ହେଉଛି । ଏହି ବୁଦ୍ଧିର ବିସ୍ତାର ସହିତ ଦେଖା ହେଉଛି ଅନେକ ଅନନୁଭୂତ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ମନେ ହେଉଛି, ମଣିଷ ଯେମିତି ପ୍ରଳୟ ମୁହାଁ ହେଉଛି । ନିଜେ ନିଜର ଅସ୍ତିତ୍ବକୁ ବି ହଜେଇ ଦେବା ପାଇଁ ସେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ । ସେ ଆଉ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଅଧସ୍ଥନ ହୋଇ ରହିବାକୁ ଚାହେଁନା । ଚାହେଁ ନିଜେ ସ୍ୱୟଂଭୂ ହୋଇ ତା ନିଜକୁ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବ, ହାତ ମାଂସ ଓ ରକ୍ତର ମଣିଷ ବଦଳରେ ତିଆରି କରିବ ଯନ୍ତ୍ର ମାନବ । ସେ ହେବ ଅଧିକ ବଳଶାଳୀ, ଅଧିକ ବୁଦ୍ଧିମାନ ପୁଣି ରୋଗ, ଶୋକ, ଦୁଃଖଠାରୁ ଅନେକ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱରେ ।

ସେଇ ଏକା କଥା କୋଉ କାଳୁ ଭାରତୀୟ ମୁନି ରଖିମାନେ ବି କଳ୍ପନା କରି ସାରିଥିଲେ । ପୌରାଣିକ କାହାଣୀ ଓ ଉପାଖ୍ୟାନ ମାନଙ୍କରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ଅସୁରମାନେ ଏହି ଶ୍ରେଣୀର ଥିଲେ । ସେମାନେ କେହି ସତସତିକା ପାହାତ ତୁଲ୍ୟ, ଅନେକ ମସ୍ତକଧରୀ, ସହସ୍ରବାହୁ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ନ ଥିଲେ । କଳ୍ପନା ଚକ୍ଷୁରେ ମଣିଷ ଦେଖିଥିଲା ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ । ସେ ଦେଖେଇବାରେ ସେ ପ୍ରମାଣିତ କରିଥିଲାଯେ ସବୁବେଳେ ଶୁଭ ମନାସୁ ଥିବା ଦେବତା ମାନେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏଇ ଅସୁର ମାନଙ୍କ କବଳରେ ପଡ଼ନ୍ତି, ତାଙ୍କୁ ବର ଦେଇ ବଳୀୟାନ କରାନ୍ତି, ପୁଣି ତାଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦୀତ ମାତ ଖାଇ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଗତର ଖଟନ୍ତି । ଶେଷକୁ ତକା ପାରି ସର୍ବନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ କାନ୍ଦି କହନ୍ତି – ଆମକୁ ରକ୍ଷା କର ।

ଭାରତୀୟମାନେ କେଉଁ ଅତୀତ କାଳରୁ ସେ ସବୁ ଦେଖିଥିଲେ ନିଜର ମନଃଚକ୍ଷୁରେ । ହେଲେ ଆଜି ଭାରତରେ ସେ ଚିନ୍ତନ ପରଂପରାରେ ପରଳ ମାଡିଛି । ପାଶ୍ଚାତ୍ୟ କାଚରେ ପ୍ରଗତିର ଅସୁର ରୂପ ଦେଖି ଏମାନେ ତଟସ୍ଥ । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ମନ, ଆମେ ସେଇଆଡ଼କୁ ଧାଇଁବୁ । ସେଠି ପ୍ରକୃତିକୁ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଦେବାର ପରଂପରା ଚାଲିଛି ।

ପ୍ରକୃତିକୁ ପଦାନତ କରିବାର ପ୍ରମତ୍ତତା ଘାରିଛି ତଥାକଥିତ ବିକଶିତ ଦେଶମାନଙ୍କରେ ।

ଆମର ପରଂପରା ଥିଲା – ପୁତ୍ରାପୈ କ୍ରିୟତେ ଭାର୍ଯ୍ୟା । ପୁଅଟିଏ ପାଇଁ, ବଂଶରକ୍ଷା ପାଇଁ ନାରୀଟିଏ ଗ୍ରହଣ କର, ତାକୁ ସହଧର୍ମିଣୀ କର । ସହଧର୍ମିଣୀ ଗ୍ରହଣରେ ଯୌନକ୍ରିୟା ବଡ଼ କଥା ନଥିଲା, ତା ସହିତ ଯୋତା ହୋଇଥିଲା ବୈବାହିକ ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧର ଏକ ଚମତ୍କାର ପରଂପରା, ବରକନ୍ୟାର ପରଂପରା, ନାରୀ ପୁରୁଷର ପରଂପରା, ଜୀବନର ଅସଲ ବୀମା ପାଇଁ ଏକ ସାମାଜିକ ପରଂପରା – ଯାହା



ନାମ ପରିବାର । ସେଇଥିପାଇଁ ପୁରୁଷ ସହ ପୁରୁଷର ଯୌନ ସଂପର୍କକୁ ଭାରତ କହିଥିଲା, ଅନୈତିକ ସଂପର୍କ । ଅଥଚ ଦଳେ ଉଦ୍‌ଘୋଷ କଲେ କଥା ଶୁଣି ଆଉ ଦଳେ ନୁଆ ପରଂପରା ଗଢିବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେଣି, ଆମେ ବି ଗୋ ମ୍ୟାରେଡ୍ କରେଇବୁ, ପୁରୁଷ ପୁରୁଷ ମିଳନ କରାଇବୁ । ଭାରତରେ ବି ଗଣ ମାଧ୍ୟମମାନେ କେତେ ଖୁସିରେ ସେ ବିବାହ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଗୁଡିକର ଛବି ଉଠେଇ ଏ ପରଂପରା ଆହୁରି ବଡ ବୋଲି ଡିଆଁଖେଳ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ।

ଏ ଯେଉଁ ପରଂପରାର ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ତିଆରି ଚାଲିଛି, ତାହା ହେଉଛି ଆମର ପୂର୍ବ ବର୍ଷିତ ତୃତୀୟ ସ୍ତରର ପରଂପରା । ଏବେ ଆମେ ସେ ତିନିଗୋଟି ପରଂପରା କୁ ଅନୁଶୀଳନ କରିବା । ପ୍ରଥମ ପରଂପରାର ଉଦାହରଣ ହେଉଛି ବିବାହ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଭଳି ଏକ ଚମତ୍କାର ଉତ୍ସବରେ ନାରୀ ପୁରୁଷ ମିଳନ ଘଟାଇ ମଣିଷ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବା । ଏହା ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଜୟ ଗାନର ପରଂପରାର ବୋଲି ଗ୍ରହଣ କରା ଯାଇପାରେ । ଏହି ଭଳି ରାଶି ରାଶି ଉଦାହରଣ । ତେବେ ଆମେ ଏହି ଗୋଟିକ ପ୍ରାମାଣିକ ଭାବେ ଆଗରେ ରଖି ପାରିବା ।

ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଚି ହେଉଛି ପ୍ରକୃତିର ନିୟମକୁ କିଛିତ୍ ବଦଳେଇ ପରଂପରା ଗଢିବାର କଥା । ଅର୍ଥାତ ମଣିଷ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ପାଇଁ ନୀରବ ରହିବ, ପୁରୁଷ ରହିବ ଅଥଚ ସେଥିପାଇଁ ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ଉପାୟରେ ମିଳନ ଅନାବଶ୍ୟକ । ଟେକ୍ସଟୁର ଉପଯୋଗରେ ସନ୍ତାନ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରାଯାଇ ପାରିବ, ଯେଉଁଥିରେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ପୁରୁଷର ଦେଖା ସାକ୍ଷାତ ବି ଅବରକାରୀ । ଏ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ପରଂପରାଟି ଅଧା ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ । ସତକଥା ଏହାର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ବେଶି, ଯେଉଁମାନେ ନିଃସନ୍ତାନ ହୋଇ ଦୁଃଖ ଭୋଗ କରୁଥିଲେ । ମାତ୍ର ଏଇଠି ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ କରିବାର କଥା ଯେ ମଣିଷ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ପାଇଁ ଶୁକାଶୁ ଜରାୟୁ ଛଡା ଯେଉଁ ବାତାବରଣ ବା ମନଃସ୍ଥିତି ସଂପର୍କରେ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଉଠିବ । ଏ ପରଂପରାର ଅମଙ୍ଗଳ ପରିଣତି ଆମେ ଆଗକୁ ଭୋଗ କରିବା । ଏ ଭଳି ମଣିଷମାନେ ସମ୍ବେଦନଶୀଳ ହେବା କଷ୍ଟକର ।

ଏବେ ଆସିବା ତୃତୀୟ ସ୍ତରକୁ । ମଣିଷ ଆଜିକାଲି ସବୁକଥା ଅପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ଉପାୟରେ ତିଆରି କରିବାକୁ ବ୍ୟଗ୍ର । କେହି କେହି କହୁଛନ୍ତି ମଣିଷ ପ୍ରଜୀବନରେ ଏସବୁ କରୁଛି । ମାତ୍ର ବୁଝିବାକୁ ହେବ ଯେ ପ୍ରଜା ମଣିଷ ସମାଜ ପାଇଁ ଶୁଭଙ୍କର ନ ହେଲେ ତାହା ରାକ୍ଷସ - କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ପରିଣତ ହୁଏ । ଅପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ଉପାୟରେ ବୁଦ୍ଧି- ପ୍ରବଳ ମସ୍ତିଷ୍କ ଗଢିବା ପାଇଁ ଚାହେଁ ମଣିଷ, ମାତ୍ର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଉଠେ ଏ ଟେକ୍ସଟୁ କାହିଁକି? ଗୋଟିଏ ରାକ୍ଷସ ଓ ଗୋଟିଏ ରକ୍ଷିଙ୍କର କଥା ଆମେ ଏଠାରେ ମନେ ପକାଇବା । ରାକ୍ଷସ ରାବଣ ଜଣେ ପ୍ରବଳ ପ୍ରତିଭାଧାରୀ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞାବାନ ପୁରୁଷଥିଲେ । ଅଥଚ ଫଳ କ'ଣ ହେଲା? ବିଶ୍ୱାମିତ୍ର ଜଣେ ଅତି ଶକ୍ତିଧାରୀ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞାପୁରୁଷ ସେ ହିଁ ପରିକଳ୍ପନା କରିଥିଲେ ଏକ ମଧ୍ୟ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗର । ପୁରୁଷ ପୁରୁଷର ମିଳନ ଘଟାଇ ଅପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ଯୌନ କ୍ରୀଡାର ଆଦିବାଜ ବପନ କରିଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ କାଳରେ ସେଭଳି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକୁ ବିଶ୍ୱାମିତ୍ରୀ ବୋଲି କୁହାଗଲା । କେଉଁ କାମରେ ଲାଗିଲା ବିଶ୍ୱାମିତ୍ରଙ୍କର ଏତାଦୃଶ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞା? ମଣିଷ ପରଂପରା ତିଆରି କରେ । ଯେଉଁ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଦୀର୍ଘଦିନ ଧରି ଲୋକାଚାରରେ ଚାଲୁ ରହେ ତାହା ପ୍ରଥମେ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଓ ପରେ ପରଂପରାରେ ପରିଣତ ହୁଏ । ପରଂପରା ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଜୟଗାନ କରୁ କି ନକରୁ, ପ୍ରକୃତିର ନିୟମରେ ଅଦଳବଦଳ ଆଣୁ ବା ନ ଆଣୁ ଏପରି କି ପ୍ରକୃତି ବିରୁଦ୍ଧରେ ଯାଉ କି ନଯାଉ, ତାର ଅସଲ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ହେଲା ଲୋକହିତରେ ସମାବିଷ୍ଟ ହେବା । ସମୁଦ୍ରର ମଙ୍ଗଳ ସାଧନ କରିବା ।

ପରଂପରା ଯେତେ ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ହେଲେବି ଯଦି ଲୋକହିତ-ବିରୋଧୀ ତାହା ଅବଶ୍ୟ ବର୍ଜନୀୟ । ଏପରି କୌଣସି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହେବା ଅନାବଶ୍ୟକ ଯାହା ମଣିଷ ସମାଜରେ ଦୁଃଖ, ଶୋକ, ଘୃଣା ଓ କଷ୍ଟ ଭରିଦେବ । ନୁଆ କରିବା ନାଁରେ, ଆଧୁନିକତାର ଆଳରେ ଆମେ ଯେତେ ସମୂହ ବିରୋଧୀ ହେବା, ଏ ପୃଥିବୀର ଆୟୁଷ ସେତେ ସେତେ କମି ଯିବ । ବାତାବରଣ ପରିବେଶ, ମାନସିକତା, ଆକାଶ, ପୃଥିବୀ, ଜଳ, ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟରଶ୍ମୀକୁ ଆମେ ଦେଶ ଦେଶ ଭିତରେ ବଣ୍ଟିବା ଠିକ୍ ହେବ ନାହିଁ । ଏହା ସମଗ୍ର ମାନବ ଜାତିର ଗଣିଧନ । ଅଥଚ ଧନୀ ଦେଶ କହୁଛି ମୁଁ ମୋ ଆକାଶ ନିର୍ମଳ ରଖିବି, ଅନ୍ୟ ଦେଶରେ ଗରିବୀ ହଟେଇବା ନାଁରେ କାରଖାନା ବସେଇ ଧୂଆଁ ଛାଡିବି । ମୁଁ ହେବି ବଳୁଆ ଦେଶ, ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ରହିବେ ମୋ ତଳେ । ଏ ପ୍ରକାର ମନୋଭାବ ହିଁ ଆଧୁନିକ ମନୋଭାବ ଅଟେ ।

ଏସବୁ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ସମାଜରେ ନୁଆ ତିଆରି ହେଉଥିବା ପରଂପରା କଥା । ଏ ଭଳି ପରଂପରା ଯେପରି ଆସ୍ଥାନ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ନକରେ ଆମେ ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଟେକ୍ସଟୁ ହେବା ଦରକାର । ସମାଜର କଲ୍ୟାଣ କାମନା କରିବା ହେଉଛି ଅସଲ ମଣିଷପଣିଆ । ଯିଏ ଯେତେ ପ୍ରକାର ଭାଷା କହିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ହୃଦୟର ଭାଷା ହେଉଛି କରୁଣା । । ବିଶ୍ୱବ୍ୟାପୀ କରୁଣାର ପରଂପରା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବା ହେଉଛି ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ମାନବିକତା ।



ଓସା କନ୍ଭେନ୍ସନ୍ ୨୦୧୮ର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ବକ୍ତା , ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ଦାଶ ବେନ୍‌ହୁର୍ ଭାବେ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠିତ, ଶ୍ରୀ ଜିତେନ୍ଦ୍ର ନାରାୟଣ ଦାସ ଶିଶୁ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଜଗତକୁ ନିଜର ଅନନ୍ୟ ଅବଦାନ ପାଇଁ ୨୦୧୪ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଏକାଡେମୀ ଦ୍ଵାରା ପୁରସ୍କୃତ । ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଏକାଡେମୀ ଏବଂ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ଏକାଡେମୀ ଦ୍ଵାରା ମଧ୍ୟ ସମ୍ମାନିତ ଶ୍ରୀ ଦାଶ ପୁରୀ ସାମନ୍ତ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଶେଖର ମହାବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟରୁ ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଭାବେ ଅବସର ଗ୍ରହଣ କରି ସାରିଛନ୍ତି । ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଓ ଆମେରିକା ଆସିବାର ବ୍ୟସ୍ତତା ଭିତରୁ ସମୟ କାଢି ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ପାଇଁ ଯୁଗୋପଯୋଗୀ ଲେଖା ପଠେଇଥିବାରୁ ଶ୍ରୀ ଦାଶଙ୍କୁ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।

ଶ୍ରୀ ଦାଶ ନିଜ ଫେସ୍‌ବୁକ୍ ପୃଷ୍ଠାରେ ନିୟମିତ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରୁଥିବା ଭାଷାଞ୍ଜଳୀ ଧାରାବାହିକରୁ ଦୁଇଟି ପଂକ୍ତି ନିମ୍ନରେ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ, ଭାଷାର ସରଳତା ଓ ଲିଖନ ର ସାବଲିଳତା ରୁ ଶ୍ରୀ ଦାଶଙ୍କ ନିଛକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣର ପରିଚୟ ମିଳେ ।

ଭାଷାଞ୍ଜଳି

ଦାଶ୍ ବେନ୍‌ହୁର୍

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ବୁଡ଼ି ଯାଉଥିଲା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜାତି,	ମଧୁରାଓ ଚାଳି ଲେଖନୀ ଯୁନ,
ସେ ବେଳେ ସେମାନେ ଉଠିଲେ ମାତି ।	ସଜାଡ଼ି ଧରିଲେ ଭାଷା-ଭୁବନ ।
ଶତାବ୍ଦୀପୁରୁଷ ଗୌରୀଶଙ୍କର,	ଏଇମନ୍ତେ କେତେ କବି ଲେଖକ,
ଉତ୍କଳଦୀପିକା କଲେ ବାହାର ।	ଭାବେ ଏକ କଲେ ସାରା ଯୁଲକ ।
ଫକୀରମୋହନ ଲେଖିଲେ ବୋଲି,	ମାତୃଭାଷା-ମାଆ ପଣତ ଧରି,
ଭାଷା ଠିଆ ହେଲା ନୟନ ମେଲି ।	ଉଦ୍ଧରିଲୁ ଆମେ ହୋଇଲୁ ପାରି ।
ରାଧାନାଥ ବଡ଼ କିମିଆ କଲେ,	ଆଜି ଯାହା ଦେଖ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶା,
ନୂଆ ଭାବ ଭାଷା ସଂଚାରି ଦେଲେ ।	ଭାଷା ଯୋଗୁଁ ଗଢ଼ା ବଡ଼ ସରସା ।
ଗଙ୍ଗାଧରଙ୍କର ଭାବ କୀରତି,	ମାଆ ପାଦ ତଳେ ଯୁଣ୍ଟିଆ ମାର;
ବୁଝାଇଲା ଭାଷା-ଗଂଗା-ଭାରତୀ ।	ଶୁଝି ପାରିବାନି ସେ ରଣ ଭାର ।



ଓଡ଼ିଆ କହ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପଢ଼
ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଶୁଣ ନିତି,
ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲେଖୁ ବୁଝାଇ ଦିଅ
ଭାବ ଝରଣା ଗୀତି ।

ଭାଷା ମାତ୍ରକେ ଜାତି ଜାତିକା
ଦେଶ ଦେଶରେ କେତେ,
କଳନା ତା'ର କରିବ କିଏ
ହିସାବ ନାହିଁ ସତେ ।

ଇଂରେଜି ଶିଖ ହିନ୍ଦୀ ବି ଶିଖ
ଯେତେ ପାରୁଛ ଶିଖ,
ଭାଷା ପାହାଡ଼ ଚୂଡ଼ାକୁ ଉଠି
ଆବୋରି ବସ ତୀକ୍ଷ ।

ମୋ ମାତୃଭାଷା ଭାରି ନିଆରା
ଘି-ଆରିସା ପିଠା,
ଯାହାକୁ ଯାହା ଲାଗୁ ପଛକେ
ମୋ ଲାଗି ଭାରି ମିଠା ।



ବନ୍ଧେ ଭକ୍ତ ଜନନୀ

ଯେଉଁମାନେ ସଂଘର୍ଷ କରି ଆମ ପାଇଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିଥିଲେ ସେଇ ମହାନାୟକ ମାନେ ଆମର ପୂଜ୍ୟ ।
ଯେଉଁ ପୂର୍ବ ପିଢ଼ୀ ଆମ ପାଇଁ ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାରେ ଓସା ଗଠନ କରିଛନ୍ତି, ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଣାମ ।

ଅରୁପ ଭଷା ରାଣୀ ପଣ୍ଡା

ବିନ୍ଦୁ ବାଦଲ ସମ-
କିଏ ତୁମେ ଭଲ ଦେଖା ଦିଅ ଆଜି
ଅନ୍ତର ନଭେ ମମ !

ପିପାସୁ ମନ ମୋ, ଚାତକର ସମ
ଚାହିଁ ରହିଥିଲା ଦୂରେ
ଏତେ ଦିନେ ଆଜି, ପାଇଛି ସେ ଖୋଜି
ଗହନ ପରାଣ ପୁରେ ।

ମନର ବିଭୋରେ ଖୋଜେ ଆଜି କା'ରେ ?
ନିବିଡେ, ମରମେ ଭୋଗେ,
ଲୋତକ ଝରାଇ ବେଦନା ହଜାଇ
କାହାର ପରାଣ ମାଗେ ।
କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ତ !

ଦୂରେ ଦୂରେ ଖାଲି ଯାଏ ଅପସରି
ଦିଏ ନାହିଁ କାହିଁ ଧରା ତ !
ନଦେଇ ପଛକେ ଧରା
ଦରଶନେ ତା'ର ସେଇ ରୂପ-ରେଖା
ହେଉ ସେ ଆତ୍ମହରା ॥
ତାହାରି ପରାଣେ ହଜି
ଦୁନିଆର ସବୁ କୋଳାହଳେ ବୁଲି



ପରାଣ ତା' ଯାଉ ମଜି
 ଦେଖି ତାର ରୂପରେଖା
 ଆଜି ମୋ ଅନ୍ତର ଲଭୁ ଖାଲି ତା'ର
 ପରଶ ସେ ମଧୁ ମଖା ।
 ଲୋଡା ନାହିଁ କିଛି ଆଉ ତାହାରି ପରଶ
 ଅନ୍ତର ମୋର ଯୁଗେ ଯୁଗେ ପାଉ ଥାଉ ।

This poem has been written by Mrs. Usharani Panda(submitted by Dr. Jayasmita Panda from New York . She lives in Cuttack, Odisha. She is well known for her significant contribution to Odia literature in the form of poems, and short stories. Her literary creations have been published in various magazines, newspapers and books. These articles have not only been appreciated by the readers but also have been recognized in the form of laurels and awards conferred to her by various Literary Associations.

ରୀତି ଯୁଗରେ କବି ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ଙ୍କ ସ୍ଥାନ

ସୁମିତ୍ରା ପାଢୀ

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଆଧୁନିକତା ମାର୍ଗରେ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ କରିବାର ଆରମ୍ଭ ଆଜକୁ ଦେଢ଼ଶହ ବର୍ଷରୁ ବେଶୀ ନୁହେଁ । ଏହା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ପାଞ୍ଚଶହ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ଦୁଇ ଭାଗରେ ବିଭକ୍ତ କରାଯାଇ ପାରେ । ପ୍ରଥମରେ ଧର୍ମ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟରେ ରସ ସାହିତ୍ୟ । ପୁରାଣ, ଗୀତା, ମାଳିକା, ଷୋଡ଼, ଭଜନ ଆଦି ଧର୍ମ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଗତ । ରୀତି ଯୁଗର କାବ୍ୟ କବିସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଆଦିଙ୍କ ସଙ୍କଳିତ ରସ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ର ଅନ୍ତର୍ଗତ । ଏହି ବିଭାଗ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ନୁହେଁ । କାରଣ ଧର୍ମ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ରସ ବିବର୍ଜିତ ନୁହେଁ କିମ୍ବା ରସ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଧର୍ମ ବିରହିତ ନୁହେଁ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ନିଜ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଅଟଳ ଓ ଦୃଢ଼ ରହି ମଧ୍ୟ କାହାରିକୁ ଫିଙ୍ଗି ଦେଇ ନାହିଁ । କବି ଦିବାକର ଦାସ କହିଛନ୍ତି ‘ ସମସ୍ତ ବୈଷ୍ଣବ ପୂଜିବ, ଆପଣା ସୁତ ନ ଛାଡ଼ିବ, ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ସଂଗେ ପ୍ରୀତି ହେବ, ନିଜ ଭାବରେ ଦୃଢ଼ ଥିବ ‘ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଏ ପ୍ରକୃତି ଓ ପ୍ରକାଶ ଜଗତରେ ଅତୁଳନୀୟ । ‘ରୀତି ‘ ଶବ୍ଦ ର ଅର୍ଥ ହେଉଛି ‘ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ପଦ ସଂଗଠନ ‘ । ଏ ଯୁଗରେ ଯେଉଁ କବି ଯେତେ ପରିମାଣରେ ଶବ୍ଦ ବିନ୍ୟାସ ଚାତୁରୀ ଦେଖାଇ ପାରୁଥିଲା ସେ ସେତିକି ସୁଦକ୍ଷ କବି ହୋଇ ପାରୁଥିଲା । ଏ ଯୁଗର କାବ୍ୟ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ କଳ୍ପନାର ଆତିଶଯ୍ୟ, ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନାରେ ଅତି ରଞ୍ଜନ, ଭାଷାର ଧ୍ୱନି ମୂଳକ ଚାତୁରୀ, ସଂଗୀତ ପ୍ରବଣତା, ତଥା ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଅଳଙ୍କାରର ଯଥେଚ୍ଛା ପ୍ରୟୋଗ ହଉଥିଲା । ରୀତି ଯୁଗର ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସଂସ୍କୃତ ଅଳଙ୍କାର ସାହିତ୍ୟ ର ପ୍ରଭାବରେ ପ୍ରଭାବାନ୍ୱିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଏ ଯୁଗର କବି ମାନଙ୍କର ଆଦର୍ଶ ଥିଲେ କାଳିଦାସ, ମାଘ ଶ୍ରୀହର୍ଷ, ବାଣଭଟ୍ଟ ଆଦି କବିଗଣ । ରୀତିଯୁଗୀୟ ବହୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ କାବ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କ ବ୍ରଜଲୀଳାକୁ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରକରି ରଚିତ । ଦନାଇ ଦାସଙ୍କ ଗୋପୀ ଭାଷା, ଦେବ ଦୁର୍ଲଭଙ୍କ ରହସ୍ୟ ମଞ୍ଚରୀ, ଦୀନକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କ ରସ କଲ୍ଲୋଳ, କବିସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସଦାନନ୍ଦବ୍ରହ୍ମାଙ୍କ ଯୁଗଳ ରସାମୃତ ଲହରୀ, ଯୁଗଳ ରସାମୃତ ଭଉଁରୀ, ବ୍ରଜଲୀଳାମୃତ, ଉପେନ୍ଦ୍ରଭଞ୍ଜ ଙ୍କ କଳାକଉତୁକ, ଭକ୍ତ ଚରଣଙ୍କ ମଥୁରାମଙ୍ଗଳ, ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ସାମନ୍ତସିଂହାରଙ୍କ ବିଦଗ୍ଧ ଚିନ୍ତାମଣି, ବ୍ରଜନାଥ ବଡ଼ଜେନାଙ୍କ ଶ୍ୟାମ ରାସୋତ୍ସବ, ନାରାୟଣ ଦେବଙ୍କ ବୃନ୍ଦାବନ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ବିହାର ଆଦି କାବ୍ୟଗ୍ରନ୍ଥ ଏହାର ଦୃଷ୍ଟାନ୍ତ । ଏ ଯୁଗକୁ ଉପେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଭଞ୍ଜଙ୍କ ନାମାନୁସାରେ ଭଞ୍ଜଯୁଗ କହୁଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏ ଯୁଗରେ ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ସାମନ୍ତସିଂହାରଙ୍କର ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଅବଦାନ ରହିଛି । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁଙ୍କ ରଚିତ ‘ବିଦଗ୍ଧ ଚିନ୍ତାମଣି’ କୁ ଅନେକ ସମାଲୋଚକ



ରୀତି ଯୁଗର ଶେଷ କାବ୍ୟ ବୋଲି କହିଛନ୍ତି ।

କବି ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ୧୭୫୭ ମସିହାରେ କଟକ ଜିଲ୍ଲାର ଯାଜପୁର ଅଞ୍ଚଳର ବାଲିଆ ଗ୍ରାମରେ ଜନ୍ମଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କର ପିତାଙ୍କ ନାମ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରଜିତ ସାମନ୍ତସିଂହାର ଓ ମାତାଙ୍କ ନାମ ତୁଳସୀ ଦେବୀ । ସଦାନନ୍ଦ କବିସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବ୍ରହ୍ମା ତାଙ୍କର ବାଲ୍ୟଗୁରୁ ଓ ଦୀକ୍ଷାଗୁରୁ ଥିଲେ । ୧୭୭୭ ମସିହା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁଙ୍କ ସହିତ ତାଙ୍କର ସଂପର୍କ ଥିଲା । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ପ୍ରୀତି ଚିନ୍ତାମଣି, ବିଦଗ୍ଧ ଚିନ୍ତାମଣି, ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା, ରସବତୀ, ପ୍ରେମକଳା ଓ ପ୍ରେମ ତରଙ୍ଗିନୀ ଆଦି କାବ୍ୟରଚନା କରିଥିଲେ । ଏ ସବୁ କାବ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟତୀତ ତାଙ୍କର ‘ଦୀନ ଜଣାଣ ଚଉତିଶା’, କୋଇଲି ଚଉତିଶା ‘ଆଦି କେତକ ଚଉତିଶା ଓ ପ୍ରାଥମିକ ରଚନା ଭାବେ ‘ଚଢ଼େଇ ଗୀତ ଓ ବାଘ ଗୀତ ଆଦି କେତକ ରଚନା ଉଲ୍ଲେଖ ଯୋଗ୍ୟ । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ଙ୍କ ରଚନାମାନଙ୍କରେ ସର୍ବତ୍ର ଉପେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଭଞ୍ଜଙ୍କର କାବ୍ୟର ଛାୟା ସୂଚିତ । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁଙ୍କ ରଚନା କେବଳ ରାଧାକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କ ପ୍ରେମରେ ଆବଦ୍ଧ ନରହି କାଳ୍ପନିକ କାବ୍ୟକୁ ଅବଲମ୍ବନ କରିଥିବାରୁ କବି ଭଞ୍ଜ କାବ୍ୟ ଅନୁକରଣ କରିଥିଲେବୋଲି କୁହାଯାଇପାରେ । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁଙ୍କ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା କାବ୍ୟରେ ଦୁର୍ଯ୍ୟୋଧନଙ୍କ କନ୍ୟା ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ସହିତ କୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ପୁତ୍ରର ବିବାହ ବିଷୟ ଘେନି ଉପେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଭଞ୍ଜଙ୍କ ପରି ପୌରାଣିକ କାବ୍ୟ ରଚନା କରିଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁଙ୍କ ରଚନାରେ ଭଞ୍ଜ କାବ୍ୟକୁ ଅନୁକରଣ କଲା ହୋଇ ନାହିଁ, ତାଙ୍କର ରଚନାରେ ମୌଳିକତା ଫୁଟି ଉଠିଛି । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ଆଳଙ୍କାରିକ ରଚନାର ବିକାଶ ସାଧନା କରିଥିଲେ । ସେ ଅକ୍ଷର ନିୟମର ରଚନା, ଯମକାଳଙ୍କାର ର ରଚନା ଛଡା ଅନେକ ପ୍ରକାର ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳାଙ୍କର ର କବିତା ରଚନା କରିଥିଲେ । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ନିଜ ରଚନାରେ ଯେତେ ପ୍ରକାର ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳାଙ୍କର ର ସମାବେଶ କରିଛନ୍ତି ଅନ୍ୟ କୌଣସି ପ୍ରାଚୀନ କବି ସେତେ ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳାଙ୍କର ର କବିତା ରଚନା କରି ନାହାନ୍ତି । ଅଳଙ୍କାର ର ସମାବେଶ ଯୋଗୁଁ ସ୍ଥାନେ ସ୍ଥାନେ ତାଙ୍କର କବିତା ଦୁର୍ବୋଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ତହିଁରେ ଅନନ୍ୟ ମାଧୁରୀ ଅଛି । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ବିଦଗ୍ଧ ଚିନ୍ତାମଣି ର ରଚନାରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଗୁରୁ ସଦାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ପଥ ଅନୁସରଣ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଏହି କାବ୍ୟର ସରଳ ହୃଦୟ ଭେଦୀ ଭାଷା ସମନ୍ୱିତ ବାସ୍ତବ୍ୟରସଗର୍ଭକ କଳାମାଣିକ ଛାନ୍ଦଟିରେ ସଦାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ଭାବ ପ୍ରତିବିମ୍ବିତ । ଏ କାବ୍ୟରେ ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ପ୍ରେମର ସ୍ୱରୂପ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନା କରି ଶୃଙ୍ଗାର ଭକ୍ତି ର ନିଦର୍ଶନ ଦେଖାଇ ଆପଣାକୁ ସଦାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ଶିଷ୍ୟ ବୋଲି ପ୍ରମାଣ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ବହୁ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରରେ ସୁପଣ୍ଡିତ ଥିଲେ । ସେ ଗୌତମଙ୍କ ନ୍ୟାୟ, କଣାଦଙ୍କ ବୈଶିଷ୍ଟିକ, କପିଳଙ୍କ ସାଂଖ୍ୟ, ଜୈମିନୀଙ୍କ ପୂର୍ବମୀମାଂସା, ବ୍ୟାସଦେବଙ୍କ ଉତ୍ତର ମୀମାଂସା, ରୁକ୍, ସାମ, ଯଜୁଃ ଓ ଅଥର୍ବ ଆଦି ଚାରିବେଦ, ରଘୁବଂଶ, କୁମାର ସମ୍ବତ୍, ବୈଷ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଭୃତ୍ୟ କାବ୍ୟରେ ଗଭୀର ବ୍ୟୁତ୍ପତ୍ତି ଅର୍ଜନ କରିଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ ସେ ଦୃଢ଼ ଭାବରେ କହିଛନ୍ତି ଚିନ୍ତାମଣି ପାଠ କରିବା ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିର ଉକ୍ତ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ର ମାନଙ୍କରେ ପ୍ରବେଶ ଥିବା ଦରକାର । କବିଙ୍କର ଜ୍ୟୋତିଷ ଓ ଆୟୁର୍ବେଦ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରବେଶ ଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ସେ ବିଦଗ୍ଧ ଚିନ୍ତାମଣି ରେ ରାଧାଙ୍କ ବିରହ ଦଶାରେ ଦେହ ଦାହ ଜ୍ୱର ନିବାରଣ ନିମିତ୍ତ ବିଶାଖା ମୁଖରେ ଔଷଧର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରି ଲେଖିଛନ୍ତି

‘ବିଶାଖା କହଳ କୃଷ୍ଣ ନାଗର

ପଦ୍ମିନୀ ମୂଳ ସଂଯୋଗ ହେଲେ

ରସ ପରିପାକ ଘଟଣା ଯୋଗେ

ଦେହ ଦାହ ଜ୍ୱର ଘୁଞ୍ଚିଯିବ ପାଞ୍ଚ ବହନ କର ‘

ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁଙ୍କର ହିନ୍ଦୀ, ବଙ୍ଗଳା, ପାର୍ସୀ ଓ ମରହଟ୍ଟୀ ଭାଷାରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ଦକ୍ଷତା ଥିଲା । ସେ ବହୁ ଗ୍ରନ୍ଥ ପାଠ କରି ସେଥିରୁ ରସ ସବୁ ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରି ତାଙ୍କର କାବ୍ୟ ଗୁଡିକ ରଚନା କରିଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ରଚନାରେ ସ୍ୱକବି ପ୍ରତିଭା ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇଛି । ସଦାନନ୍ଦ କବିସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବ୍ରହ୍ମା ଅଞ୍ଜଦଶ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ମଧ୍ୟ ଭାଗରେ ଯାଇ ପୌରୋହିତ୍ୟ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ କରୁଥିଲେ । ସେ ସମୟରେ ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ଜନ୍ମଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ ଓ ସଦାନନ୍ଦ ତାଙ୍କର ଗୁରୁ ହୋଇଥିଲେ । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ତାଙ୍କ ରଚନା କରିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ସଦାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ରଣୀ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି । ସଦାନନ୍ଦ କବିସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କର ଧର୍ମଗୁରୁ ଥିଲେ ହେଁ କାବ୍ୟଗୁରୁ ରୂପେ ସେ ଉପେନ୍ଦ୍ରଭଞ୍ଜଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ୱୀକାର କରିଛନ୍ତି । ସେ ଲେଖିଛନ୍ତି “ ଉପଲମ୍ବ ପଦ ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ମନୁ, ଉପେକ୍ଷିତ ନୋହିବ ତ ଦିନୁ ଦିନୁ ” । ଧର୍ମ ପ୍ରଚାର ଭାଷା ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଉନ୍ନତି ଘଟାଏ ।



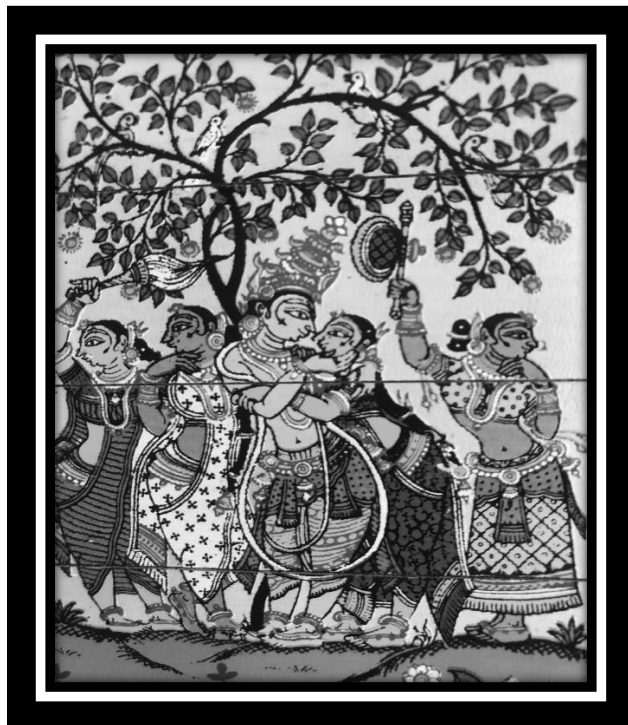
ଧର୍ମ ପ୍ରଚାର ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକ-ପ୍ରଚଳିତ ଭାଷାରେ ନୂତନ ଧର୍ମ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାତା ମାନେ ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ପ୍ରଣୟନ କରନ୍ତି, ତା ଦ୍ଵାରା ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକେ ଧର୍ମ ର ମର୍ମ ବୁଝି ପାରିବେ । ଏ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଯେତେ ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଆବିଷ୍କୃତ ହୋଇଛି ତାହା ପ୍ରାୟ ବୈଷ୍ଣବ ଧର୍ମରେ ଜଡ଼ିତ । ବୈଷ୍ଣବ ଧର୍ମ ପ୍ରଚାର ପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ବେଶୀ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ ହୋଇଛି । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ଗୌଡ଼ିୟ ବୈଷ୍ଣବ ଥିବାରୁ ତାଙ୍କ କାବ୍ୟରେ ସେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ନାମ ଉଲ୍ଲେଖ କରି ନାହାଁନ୍ତି । ବହୁ ସମାଲୋଚକଙ୍କ ମତରେ ପ୍ରୀତି ବର୍ଦ୍ଧନରେ ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ଅସାଧାରଣ ଶକ୍ତି ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ କରିଛନ୍ତି । କବି ପ୍ରେମକୁ ମନରେ ଏକ ଅଂଶ ରୂପେ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ୧୮୦୬ ମସିହାରେ ଇହଧାମ ତ୍ୟାଗ କରିଥିଲେ । ରୀତିଯୁଗର କବି ହିସାବରେ ସେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ତାଙ୍କର ଅଶେଷ ଅବଦାନ । ତାଙ୍କର ରଚନା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ରୂପ ଓ ରୁଚି ଦେଇ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ କରିଛି ଏବଂ ରସ ଦେଇ ରସାଳ କରିଛି । ତାଙ୍କର କାବ୍ୟ ସବୁ ଯୁଗେ ଯୁଗେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଭଣ୍ଡାରକୁ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ କରୁଥିବ ।

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ଏହି ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧର କେତେକାଂଶ ବିନାୟକ ମିଶ୍ର ଙ୍କର ‘ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଇତିହାସ’, ଡକ୍ଟର କୁମୁଦିନୀ ମିଶ୍ର ଙ୍କର ‘ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ରୁ ଆଧୁନିକ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଆଲୋଚନା’, ପଣ୍ଡିତ ନୀଳକଣ୍ଠ ଦାସ ଙ୍କର ‘ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର କ୍ରମ ପରିଣାମ ଓ ନରେନ୍ଦ୍ରନାଥ ମିଶ୍ର’ ଙ୍କର ‘ଶୈଳ ଓ ସୀମାନ୍ତ ‘ ପୁସ୍ତକ ମାନଙ୍କରୁ ଉଦ୍ଧୃତ ହୋଇଛି ।

ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ସୁମିତ୍ରା ପାଢୀ, ସ୍ଵାମୀ ହର ନାରାୟଣ ପାଢୀଙ୍କ ସହିତ, ବର୍ଲିନ୍ , ଓଷ୍ଟ୍ରିଆରେ ବାସ କରନ୍ତି । ୧୯୭୭ ମସିହାରୁ କାନାଡା ଆସିବା ଦିନରୁ ଓସା ସହିତ ଜଡ଼ିତ । କାନୋସାର ଜଣେ ସକ୍ରିୟ ସଭ୍ୟା ଭାବରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ନିର୍ବାହ କରିବାକୁ ଭଲ ପା’ନ୍ତି । “ ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ବଞ୍ଚାଇ ରଖିବାକୁ ଓସା ସ୍ମରଣିକାର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ପ୍ରଶଂସନୀୟ ।”, ବୋଲି କୁହନ୍ତି ସୁମିତ୍ରା ପାଢୀ ।

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ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି

ତାପସ ରଞ୍ଜନ ସାହୁ

ଅନେକ ଏକାନ୍ତ ଅପରାହ୍ନରେ ଯେବେ
ଅକାରଣ ଆଳାପର କାରଣ ଖୋଜିଛି,
ଯେତେବେଳେ ବିନା ସର୍ତ୍ତରେ ବାଜି ଜିତିବାକୁ,
ଅବା ବିନା ଆଡ଼ମ୍ବରରେ ଅତୀତକ
ସମୟକୁ କରିଦେବାକୁ ଚାହଁଛି ଉତ୍ସବ ମୁଖର,
ବିନା ଉପକ୍ରମରେ ଯେବେ
ବଖାଣି ଦେବାକୁ ଭାବିଛି ଉପନ୍ୟାସ ।

ହେ ମୋର ପ୍ରିୟ ବନ୍ଧୁ
ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ସମ୍ପର୍କ ରହିତ ସେଇ ସମ୍ପର୍କର ନିବିଡ଼ତା
ଅପହଞ୍ଚ ଦୂରତ୍ବରେ ଥାଇ;
ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ସାତ ଦରିଆ ପାରିରେ ବି କାନ୍ଧଟିଏ ଅଛି
ସାହାରାର ସ୍ତମ୍ଭ ଟିଏ ହୋଇ ।

ଜୀବନର ମହାଭାରତରେ ଯେବେ
ଶିଥିଳ ହୋଇଛି ସଂଯମର ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳ,
ଯେତେବେଳେ ଆଳସ୍ୟର ସହଜାତ ଛାୟା,
ଅବା ଲାଳସାର ସର୍ବନାଶୀ ଲେଲିହାନ ମାୟା
ଗ୍ରାସ କରିବାକୁ ବସିଛି ଅଖଣ୍ଡତାକୁ ବିବେକର,
କର୍ମପରାୟଣତାରେ ଯେବେ
ଜୁଆର ପରେ ଆସିଛି କେବେ ଭଙ୍ଗା -
ହେ ମୋ'ର ପୁଣ୍ୟ ଗୁରୁଦେବ



ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ତବ ଅନୁଶାସନର ଉପଯୋଗିତା
କର୍ମକ୍ଷେତ୍ର କୁରୁକ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ରହି;
ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ଶାସ୍ତି ଦୁହେଁ, ଅମୂଲ୍ୟ ସେ ଥିଲା ଅନୁଗ୍ରହ
କାନଧରି ଠିକ୍ ରାସ୍ତା ଥିଲା ଯେ ଦେଖାଇ ।

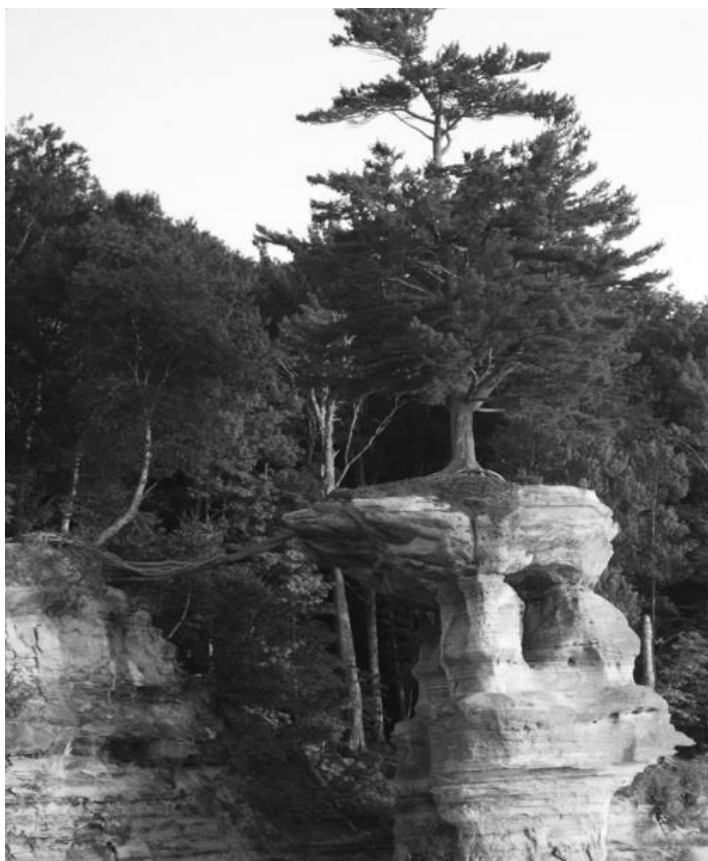
ବିଳମ୍ବିତ ଭୀଷ ଗୋଧୂଳିରେ ଯେବେ
ଜାହ୍ନୁର ଫେରନ୍ତା ପଥକୁ ଅନାଇ ବସିଛି,
ଯେତେବେଳେ କମ୍ବୁ ନ ଥିବା ଉଡ଼ର ପ୍ରକୋପରେ,
ଅବା ଅସହ୍ୟ ପୀଡ଼ାରେ ବ୍ୟଥିତା କୁନି ଝିଅର କାନ୍ଦ
ସାରା ରାତିକୁ କରିଚି ଉଜାଗର,
ଆଖି ବୁଜି ମନାସିଛି ଯେବେ
ଦେବତା'କୁ କେତେ ଯେ ନୈବେଦ୍ୟ -
ହେ ମୋ'ର ଦେବ ତୁଲ୍ୟ ପିତା, ମାତା
ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ସବୁ ତୁମ ଚିନ୍ତା ଆଉ ଉଦବେଗର ଅର୍ଥ
ସ୍ୱୟଂ ପିତୃତ୍ୱର ଭାର ବୋହି ନେଇ;
ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ତୁମ ତ୍ୟାଗ, ସାଧନା, ଓ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ତଳେ
ରହିଥିବି ଚିର ରଣୀ ହୋଇ ।

ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି,
ଅନେକ ଅବହେଳିତ ସତ୍ୟ
ଅଜାଣତେ ପରିଣତ ବୟସକୁ ଛୁଇଁ,
ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ଗଢ଼ିବାକୁ ହେବ ହୃଦୟରେ ରାମ ସେତୁ



ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ଗଢ଼ିବାକୁ ହେବ ହୃଦୟରେ ରାମ ସେତୁ
ପୂର୍ବ ସହ ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ପିଢ଼ୀ ଯୋଡ଼ି ଦେଇ,
ଆଜି ମୁଁ ବୁଝିଛି
ଯାତ୍ରା ଅଛି ଦୂର ବହୁଦୂର,
ଥକିବାର ଅବକାଶ କାହିଁ?

“ତାପସ ସାଧୁ ତାଲାସ୍ ଓସାର ସକ୍ରିୟ ସଭ୍ୟ । ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ଏକାଠି କରି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ନାଟକ କରିବା ସହିତ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଉଦ୍ୟମ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ସହିତ ପରିଚିତ କରାଇବାକୁ ଭଲ ପା’ନ୍ତି । ୨୦୦୪ ମସିହାରେ ସୁରଶିକା ସଂପାଦନାରେ ଲେଖିଥିଲେ, “ଗୋଟିଏ ପିଢ଼ୀରୁ ଅନ୍ୟ ପିଢ଼ୀକୁ ସଂରଚିତ ହେଲେ ହିଁ ବଞ୍ଚି ରହିବ ଭାଷା ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ।” ୨୦୧୮ ମସିହା ବାର୍ଷିକ ଓସା ଅଧିବେଶନର ଏହାହିଁ ଆହ୍ୱାନ, ଏହି ତତ୍ତ୍ୱକୁ ନେଇ ରଚିତ ଉପରୋକ୍ତ କବିତା ପାଇଁ କବିଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।” ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଲତା ମିଶ୍ର



ଯେଉଁଠି ବି କରୁ ଘର, ପରିଚୟ ଆମ ମୂଳ ଆଧାର – ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଲତା ମିଶ୍ର



ଆତ୍ମାନୁଧ୍ୟାନ

ଯୋଗେଶ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ପଣ୍ଡା

ଅଖିଳ ବିଶ୍ୱର ପରମାତ୍ମା ଯେ ଅଟନ୍ତି
 ଘଟେ ଘଟେ ଆତ୍ମା ରୂପେ ବିଜେ କରିଛନ୍ତି
 ସେହି ସର୍ବବ୍ୟାପୀ ଆତ୍ମା ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦୋହ୍ୱ
 ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ । ୧।

ଶରୀର ବିନାଶେ ଯାର ନହୁଅଇ ନାଶ
 ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରିୟ ମନ ବୁଦ୍ଧିର ପରେ ଯାର ବାସ
 ସେହି ପରାପୂର ଆତ୍ମା ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦୋହ୍ୱ
 ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ । ୪।

ଅଜର ଅମର ଯା'କୁ ବେଦ ବଖାଣେ
 ଗୀତାରେ ଯେ ଜ୍ଞାନ କୃଷ୍ଣ ଦେଲେ ଅରଜୁନେ
 ସେହି ଅଜାମର ଆତ୍ମା ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦୋହ୍ୱ
 ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ । ୨।

ଯାହାର ପ୍ରକାଶେ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ଏ ଜଗତ
 ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ତାରା ଯା ଆଲୋକେ ଆଲୋକିତ
 ସେହି ବିଶ୍ୱାଲୋକ ଆତ୍ମା ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦୋହ୍ୱ
 ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ । ୫।

ନା ଅସ୍ତେ ଯେ କଟେ ନା ଜଳେ ଯେ ବୁଡେ
 ନା ଅଗ୍ନିରେ ପୋଡେ ନା ପବନେ ଉଡେ
 ସେହି ଅବିନାଶୀ ଆତ୍ମା ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦୋହ୍ୱ
 ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ । ୩।

ସୁଖ ଦୁଃଖ ହାନିଲାଭେ ଯାର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ନାହିଁ
 ପାପପୁଣ୍ୟ କର୍ମବନ୍ଧ ଯା'କୁ ନ ଛୁଆଁଇ
 ସେହି ନିରାମୟ ଆତ୍ମା ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦୋହ୍ୱ
 ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ । ୬।

ନାହିଁ ଯହିଁ ରୋଗ ବ୍ୟାଧି ନାହିଁ ଶୋକ ଭୟ
 ଆନନ୍ଦ ପରମାନନ୍ଦ ସଦାନନ୍ଦମୟ
 ସେ ଆନନ୍ଦମୟ ଆତ୍ମା ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦୋହ୍ୱ
 ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ ଶିବୋହ୍ୱ । ୭।

Jogesh lives in the great state of Michigan with his dear wife Dr. Smriti Panda, and two beautiful daughters Suman and Poonam. The above contemplative stanzas on the nature of soul are inspired by Bhagavan Sri Sankaracharya's proclamation that I am the pure awareness Sat-Chit-Anand Atman.



ତମ୍ବୁ

ବରୁଣ ପାଣି

ଦୁଇ ଶହ ଛଅ ଗୋଟି, ଛୋଟ ବଡ଼ ଖୁଣ୍ଟ ନେଇ
ଗଢ଼ା ଏଇ ତମ୍ବୁ ମାନେ, ଚହଳ କରିଲେ
ସାତରଂଗୀ ଛତା ପରି, ସମୟ ସାଗରର ଏଇ ବେଳାଭୂମିଟାରେ
ଯୁଦ୍ଧ ପ୍ରେମ ଆବେଗର ହିସାବ ନିକାଶ କଲେ ।।

ସୁରୁଯତା ପ୍ରଖର ହୋଇଲା, ମଳୟ ଯେ ବହି ବହି ଗଲା
ଆଉ ରଂଗ ସବୁ ଫିକା ଫିକା ହେଲେ
ବସିଛନ୍ତି ତମ୍ବୁ ମାନେ, ମେଳାଟା ଯେ ବେଶ୍ ଜମିଛି
କେରା କେରା ଚିରା କନା, କେତେ ସବୁ ନୂଆ ଓ ପୁରୁଣା
ତମ୍ବୁ ସବୁ ନେଇ ପରା ସଭ୍ୟତା ଯେ କେତେ ଆଗେଇଛି ।।

କିଛି କିଛି ତମ୍ବୁ, ନବୀନ ଉଜ୍ଜଳ ରଂଗର
ଇସ୍ତାହାର କରି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି
ଆଉ କେତେ ଭଂଗା ତମ୍ବୁ ଝରି ଝରି, ସରି ସରି,
ବାଲି ତଳେ ଅପହରା ଲୁଚିଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ।।

ଅଧା ଭଂଗା ବିକଳ ସେ ବିକଟାଳ, ଫିକା ଫିକା ରଂଗ ସବୁକୁ ସାଇତି
କେତେ ସବୁ ତମ୍ବୁମାନେ ଗୌରବର ଇତିହାସ ବକି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି
ଆଉ କେତେ, ନୂତନ ଯୌବନ ନେଇ, ନୂଆ ନୂଆ ତମ୍ବୁମାନେ
ସାଥକୁ ଯେ ଖୋଜି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ।।

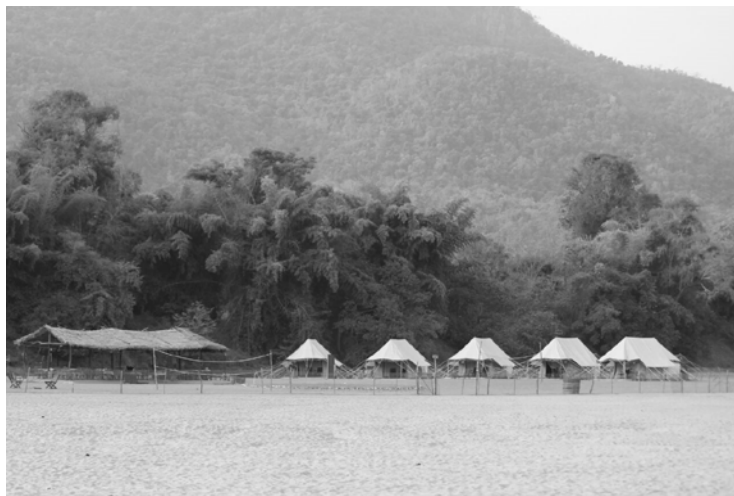
ଦୁଇ ଶହ ଛଅ ଗୋଟି ଛୋଟ ବଡ଼ ଖୁଣ୍ଟ ନେଇ ଗଢ଼ା ଏଇ ତମ୍ବୁମାନେ
କାନ୍ଦି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି, ହସି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି, ଆଉ ଭଂଗି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ।।



କେବେ କେବେ ଖରା ହୁଏ, କେବେ ବା ବରଷା ହୁଏ
 କେବେ ଅମାନ୍ତିଆ ତୋଫାନ୍ ଯେ ଆସେ
 କେବେ କେବେ ରଂଗ ଝରେ, କେବେ ବା ଭଜ୍ଜଳ ହୁଏ
 କେବେ ପୁଣି ତୋଫାନେ ସବୁ ଭାଂଗେ ରୁଜେ ଶେଷେ
 କେତେ ସବୁ କରୁଣ କାହାଣୀ ସରେ, ଲୁଣିଆ ଲୁହ ଯେ ଝରେ
 ସେ ଲୁହେ ସାଗର ଭରେ, ତେବେ ଯାଇ, ମଳୟ ଯେ ବହେ ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ।।

ଦୁଇ ଶହ ଛଅ ଗୋଟି ଛୋଟ ବଡ଼ ଖୁଣ୍ଟ ନେଇ ଗଢ଼ା ଏଇ ତମ୍ବୁମାନେ
 ଅନନ୍ତ କାଳରୁ ଧରି କରୁଣ ସେ କାହାଣୀ ଲେଖି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି
 ଲୁଣିଆ ଲୁହରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଏ ସାଗରଟା ଭରି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି
 ବିଦଗ୍ଧ ଏ ଦିଗ୍ ବଳୟେ ଉଆଁସିଆ ଧୁଆଁ ଭିତରେ ଯେ ନିରନ୍ତର
 ଝରି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି, ସରି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି, ମରି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ।

“ବିଛିନ୍ନାଞ୍ଜଳ ରେ ଜନ୍ମ । ପଶ୍ଚିମ ବଙ୍ଗଳାରେ ରହିଛି ବହୁତ ଦିନ । ତାପରେ କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ଜୀବନ ବିତିଲା ଚିତ୍ତ ଲାଗୁ
 ମିଶିଶିପିରେ, ହେଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପଣ ଛାଡ଼ିଲାନି ମୋତେ । ଏୟାର ମୋର ପରିଚୟ, ମୁଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ । ୨୦୦୫ରେ ଓସା ସୋଭେନିୟର
 ସଂପାଦନାରେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିଥିଲି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗରେ ନିୟମିତ ଭାବେ କବିତା ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇ ଆସୁଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଠାରୁ ଏତେ
 ଦୂରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ପ୍ରସାର ପାଇଁ ଯେଉଁ ମାନେ ସକ୍ରିୟ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆନ୍ତରିକ କୃତଜ୍ଞତା ।” କୁହନ୍ତି ଓସାର ଆଜୀବନ ସଭ୍ୟ
 ବରୁଣ ପାଣି ।



ଚିକର ପଡ଼ା- ଶଶାଙ୍କ ନନ୍ଦ

ସ୍ବପ୍ନର ଓଡ଼ିଶା

ପ୍ରଭାତ ନଳିନୀ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

ମାତୃଭୂମି, ଜନ୍ମଭୂମି, କର୍ମଭୂମି "ମୋ ଓଡ଼ିଶା "
ସବୁଠୁ ମିଠା ମୋ ମାତୃଭାଷା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ॥
ପରମ୍ପରାରେ ଖ୍ୟାତ ଆମ ଐତିହ୍ୟ, ପ୍ରାଚୀନ କଳା,
ସାହିତ୍ୟ, ଭାସ୍କର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଭରା ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସଂସ୍କୃତି ॥
ତେରପର୍ବ ହୁଅଇ ପାଳିତ ବାର ମାସରେ
ହସଖେଳେ ଜମିଯାଏ ଓଡ଼ିଆର ଘରେ ଘରେ,
ପୁଟିଖେଳ ଓ ରଜବୋଲି କୁଆଁର ପୁନେଇଁ ଗୀତରେ ॥
କଳାକୃତି ଭରପୁର ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶା " କଳିଙ୍ଗ- ଭକ୍ତଳ "
ବିଶ୍ବ ଐତିହ୍ୟରେ ଗଣା କୋଣାର୍କ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟମନ୍ଦିର ରହିଛି ନିଶ୍ଚଳ ॥
ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଗନ୍ତାଘର ଜଳସମ୍ପଦ ସମ୍ଭାର
ଭକ୍ତଳର କମଳା ଚିଲିକା ମରାଳମାଳିନୀ
ବିଦେଶୀ ପକ୍ଷୀଙ୍କ ଆବାହିକା ॥
ଶୋଭାବର୍ଦ୍ଧନକାରୀ ମହାନଦୀ, ରକ୍ଷିକୁଲ୍ୟା, ବୈତରଣୀ
ଅଂଶୁପା ଓ ବିସ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବଙ୍ଗୋପସାଗର,
ନିୟମଗିରି, ମହେନ୍ଦ୍ରଗିରି, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଗିରି
ନିଘଞ୍ଚ ବନାନୀ ଶୋଭା ଅତି ମନୋହର ॥
ପ୍ରଭୁ ବଳଭଦ୍ର, ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ମା' ସୁଭଦ୍ରା
ଠାକୁର ଓଡ଼ିଆର , ବିଶ୍ବ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ସେଇ
"ଜଗତର ନାଥ" ବୋଲାନ୍ତି ଚଳନ୍ତି ଠାକୁର ॥
କିମ୍ବଦନ୍ତୀ ବୀର ଐର ଖାରବେଳ ଯେ ଏଇ ମାଟିର
ଏଇ ମାଟିରେ ଚଣ୍ଡାଶୋକରୁ ଧର୍ମାଶୋକ ହୋଇ



ଶୋକାଧୂର ଅଶୋକ ପ୍ରଚାରିଲେ "ଅହିଂସା ଧର୍ମର" ॥
ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାଧବ ପୁଅ ଜାଭା ,ସୁମାତ୍ରା ଯାଏ ବାଣିଜ୍ୟରେ,
ଆପଣା ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ସଂସ୍କୃତି, କୀର୍ତ୍ତର ଜୟଗାନ କରେ ॥
ପରମ୍ପରାରେ ଖ୍ୟାତ ଆମ ଐତିହ୍ୟ, ପ୍ରାଚୀନ କଳା,
ସାହିତ୍ୟ, ଭାସ୍କର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଭରା ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସଂସ୍କୃତି ॥
ସେହି ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ପ୍ରେରଣାରେ
ଆମେରିକାରେ ଆମ ଓସା ସମିତି ଗଢ଼ା
ବାଣ୍ଟୁ ଆମେ ହରଷରେ ସ୍ନେହ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ପ୍ରିତୀ ॥
"ବନ୍ଦେ ଭକ୍ତ ଜନନୀ"

Dr. Prabhat Nalini Pattanayak lives in Nashville, TN and current President of South East Chapter of OSA .



ତାପସ ସାହୁ

ଆମ ଗାଁ ...ଆମ ମା

ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ଭୂୟାଁ

ମୋ ଓଡ଼ିଶା... ଗାଁରେ ରହେ, ସହରରେ ବୁଲେ, ନଗରରେ ଯାଏଁ। ସବୁଠି ସେ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କୁ ଖୋଜେ; ଡାକରା ଦିଏ, ନିଦରୁ ଉଠାଏ। ପ୍ରତି କୋଣ ଅନୁକୋଣରେ ପ୍ରାଣ ସଞ୍ଚାର କରେ। ତେବେ ଯାଇ ଆମର ପିଣ୍ଡରେ ଜୀବନ ପଶେ। ଏଇ ଆମ ମା; ଓଡ଼ିଶା। ଶାନ୍ତ - ଶୁଦ୍ଧ - ସୁନ୍ଦର। ମୋ ଗାଁ; ଗଞ୍ଜାମ ଜିଲ୍ଲାର ଛୋଟିଆ ଗାଁଟିଏ; ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପ୍ରସାଦ। ସବୁ ଗାଁ ଭଳି ଗାଁଟିଏ। ଏଇଠି ବିଲ ବଣ ପାହାଡ଼ରେ ସେଇ ସବୁ ଅଛି ଯାହା ଭିତରେ ଆମେ ସବୁ ବଢ଼ି ଆସିଛେ। ଭାଇ-ବନ୍ଧୁ-କୁଟୁମ୍ବଙ୍କ କଥା ଆଉ ଏଡ଼ାଇ ହେଲାନ୍ତି। ସେଇଥି ପାଇଁ ଲେଖି ବସିଛି ଆମ ଗାଁ କଥା; ଆମ ମା କଥା। ଲେଖି ଚାଲିଥିବି ତା ସହ ମାଟିରେ ମିଶିବା ପରିଯନ୍ତେ। ଏଣୁତ ଥରେ ମନକଥାକୁ ଉଦ୍ଧାରି ନେଇଥିଲି କାଗଜ ଉପରେ;

ଜନ୍ମରୁ ମିଳିଛି ସେଇତ ଇନାମ

ଏକ୍ସ୍‌ଡ଼ିଶାଲରୁ ନିର୍ବାଣ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତେ

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପ୍ରସାଦ

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପ୍ରସାଦ;

ମୃତ୍ୟୁରେ ରହିବ ସେଇ ଭିଟାମାଟି

ନରହିବି ପଛେ ସଦାକାଳେ ରହୁ

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପ୍ରସାଦ;

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପ୍ରସାଦ

ମାଟି ଧୂଳି ନଈ ବିଲ ବଣ ତୋଟା

ଆନନ୍ଦେ ରୁହନ୍ତୁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ମିଳୁ

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପ୍ରସାଦ

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପ୍ରସାଦ।

ଏଇ ସବୁକୁ ସାଉଁଟି ଆଣିଥିଲି; ପିଲାଦିନର ସବୁ କଥା ମନେ ପକାଇ ବୁଲିବାରେ ଲାଗିଥିଲି ସେଇ ସବୁ ନଦୀ, ନାଳ, ବନ୍ଧ, ବାଡ଼, ବିଲ, କିଆରୀ, ତୋଟାମାଳ, ହିଡ଼ ଆଉ କଡ଼ । ସତେଜ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ସେଇ ସବୁ ଅନୁଭୂତି ଆଉ ଅନୁଭବ ଏକାକାର ହୋଇ ସ୍ମୃତି ର ହାତରୁ ବାହାରି ଆଖିକୋଣରେ ଜଳେଇ ଆସିଥିଲେ। ଏଇ ସବୁ ମୋର ଅଣ୍ଟା ପରମାଣୁରେ ସଞ୍ଚରିଯାଇଛନ୍ତି।

ରୋମାନ୍‌ସ୍‌ ସବୁ ଟାଙ୍କୁରି ଉଠୁଥିଲା। ବୟସର ଆଶ୍ୱାସନାରେ ଏଇ ରକ୍ତ-ଅସ୍ଥି-ଚର୍ମ ସବୁ ଆଣ୍ଟେଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ହେଲେ ମୁଁ ରହି ଯାଇଅଛି ଏଇ ଚପଳାମୀର ଚଉହଦିରେ। ଏଇଠୁ ମୋର ମୁକ୍ତି ଦରକାର ନାହିଁ। ଇଏ ହିଁ ମୁକ୍ତି, ମୋକ୍ଷ ଆଉ ସରଗ ମୋର। ମୋ ଭଳି ଆହୁରି ଜାତି ପ୍ରଜାତିର ପ୍ରାଣୀ ସବୁଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିଲି ଆଗଭଳି । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ ଆଖିଏ କଥା, ଅନ୍ତରରେ ଅବ୍ୟକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟଥା। ପରିବେଶ ବଦଳିଛି, ପରିସ୍ଥିତି ବଦଳିଛି ଆଉ ସେ ଭିତରେ ବଦଳି ଯାଇଛି ଜୀବନର ସରଳତା। ସେଇ ସଂଗ୍ରାମର ସବୁ ପ୍ରାଣର ଛବି ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ। ଆଶା, ଏଇ ଛବି ସବୁ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ କିଛି ମନେ ପକାଇଦେବ। ସ୍ମୃତି କୁ ଉଜ୍ଜୀବିତ କରିଦେବ। ଏଇତ ଆମ ଗାଁ...ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶା...ଆମ ଭିଟାମାଟି । ଛବି ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ। ଆଶା, ଏଇ ଛବି ସବୁ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ କିଛି ମନେ ପକାଇଦେବ। ସ୍ମୃତି କୁ ଉଜ୍ଜୀବିତ କରିଦେବ। ଏଇତ ଆମ ଗାଁ...ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶା...ଆମ ଭିଟାମାଟି ।

ମୋ ଗାଁର ପ୍ରକୃତିପ୍ରଦତ୍ତ ସବୁଜ ତୋରଣ। ଖରା ବର୍ଷା ଶୀତରେ ଆଁଠିଭଳି ଠିଆ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତି। କେତେଯେ ଡାହିକି ମାଙ୍କୁଡ଼ି, ଲୁହୁଲୁଟାଣୀ ଖେଳିଛି ଏଇ ତୋଟାରେ। କେତେ ବହି ଏହାର ଶାଖାପ୍ରଶାଖାରେ ବସି ପଢ଼ିଛି କେତେଯେ କାବ୍ୟକବିତା। କେତେ ଆମ୍ବ ଗୋଟେଇ ଖାଇଛି ଆଉ କେତେ ଝଡ଼େଇ ଖାଇଛି। କେବେ ତୋଟାଳିଆ ଗୋଡ଼େଇଟି ତ କେବେ ବାପାଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ କେତେ ଫେରାଦ ହୋଇଛି ମୋ ନାଁରେ। ଆଜି ପୁଣିଥରେ ସହକାର ଡାକିଲା; ଖେଳିବକି ସାନବାବୁ; ଆସ। ସେଇ ଡାଳ ସେଇ କୋଳ; ଡେଇଁପଡ଼। କହି ଫେରିଲି ତାକୁ; ଫେରିବି ତୋ ମୂଳକୁ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ।



ଗାଁ ଦାଣ୍ଡରେ ସକାଳ ହୁଏ; ତା ସହ ଜାଗ୍ରତ ହୁଏ ଗ୍ରାମବାସୀଙ୍କର ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଆଉ ଆଶ୍ୱା ଐଶ୍ୱରୀୟ ସଭା ଉପରେ। କାର୍ତ୍ତିକ ମାସର ସକାଳ ଆହୁରି ନିଆରା। ସତେ ଯେପରି ସାରା ବର୍ଷର ପୁଣ୍ୟ ଏହି ଗୋଟିଏ ମାସର ପୂଜି ଉପରେ ଠିଆ। ନୀଳଚକ୍ର ଆହୁରି ସ୍ପଷ୍ଟ ଦିଶେ ଗ୍ରାମବାସୀଙ୍କୁ। ହାତ ଉଠିଯାଏ ଉପରକୁ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନାର ଆଉ ସେଇ ବିଶ୍ୱାସରେ ତଳକୁ ଢାଳି ହୋଇ ଆସେ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ। ସେଇ ଆଶ୍ୱା ଆଉ ଭରସାରେ ସଭିଜ ଜୀବନ ଯାତ୍ରା ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୁଏ। ସେଇ ସରଳ ନିରୀହ ଗ୍ରାମବାସୀଙ୍କ ନିମନ୍ତେ ମୋର ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା; କେଉଁଠୁ ଆଶୀର୍ଷ ବରଷୁ ନବରଷୁ ହେଲେ ଏମାନଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ ସେନେହ ସରାଗରେ ଭରିଯାଉ । କାଉ କୁକୁଡ଼ା ବିନା ସତେ ଯେପରି ଗାଁ ଉଠେ ନାହିଁ। ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ସକାଳୁ କାଉର କା କା'ରେ ହିଁ ଗାଁ ସକ୍ରିୟ ହୋଇଉଠେ । ତା ସହ ଅନଳସ ଜୀବନ ସବୁ ନିତିଦିନିଆ ଘରସଂସାରରେ ମାଟି ଉଠନ୍ତି। ଗାଁ ଚଳଚଞ୍ଚଳ ହୁଏ। ଅନ୍ଧକଣାଟିଏ ପାଇଁ କାଉ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏ ଚାଳ ସେ ଅଗଣା ଉଡ଼ି ବୁଲେ। କେବେ ମୁନାର ଗୁଣ୍ଡାରୁ ତ କେତେବେଳେ ଜେଜେର ଜାଉ ପଖାଳରୁ ପାଏ କିଛି । ପାତ୍ରଘର ମାଙ୍କୁ; ଅଣ୍ଟା ଛୁଇଁ ଗଲାଣି, ହେଲେ ମନ ଆଉ ହୃଦୟ ଛୁଇଁ ପାରିନି। ଭଗବାନ ତାଙ୍କୁ କଣ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ଜାଣିନି କି କେବେ ପଚାରିନି; ହେଲେ ନିଜିତି ଫୁଲ ଚାଙ୍ଗୁଡ଼ି ଧରି ବାହାରି ପଡ଼ନ୍ତି ସକାଳେ। ଧନ୍ୟ ସେ ପ୍ରଭୁ ଧନ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କ ଲୀଳା। ସେଇ ଲୀଳାମୟଙ୍କ ଇଚ୍ଛାରେ ତାଙ୍କ ମୁହଁର ସେଇ ହସ ମୁଠାଏ ବିଚ୍ଛିନ୍ନ ଚାଲିଥାନ୍ତି ସେ । ଶୀତୁଆ ସକାଳେ କାଠିକୁଟା ଏକାଠି କରି ନିଆଁ ଜଳାଯାଏ ଆଉ ସେଇଠି ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୁଏ ସକାଳର ସମାଗମ। ନିଆଁ ପୁଇଁବା ସଉକ ଛୁହଁ ଏକ ମଜ୍ଜା ସବୁ ଗାଁର। ଏଇଠି ସରଗରମ ହୁଏ ନାନା ଆଲୋଚନା ଏହାର ଚାରିପଟେ ଘେରି ରହିଥିବା ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ। ଗାଁ ଆଗେଇ ଚାଲେ ଦିନ, ମାସ ଓ ବର୍ଷ ସହ ତାଳ ଦେଇ ।

ଗାଁରେ ସବୁ ବଦଳିବାରେ ଲାଗିଛି। ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ଚାଳଘର ସବୁ ହଜିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲାଣି ଆଉ ତାସହ ସେଥିରେ ରହୁଥିବା ସରଳ ନିଷ୍ଠାପ ହୃଦୟ ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ମଧ୍ୟ। କିଏ କାମକୁ ବାହାରିଲାଣି ତ କିଏ ଗୃହାଳ ସଫାରେ ଲାଗିଛି। କିଏ ଗୋବର ଗୋଟାଇବାରେ ତ କିଏ ବୋକାନ ଖୋଲିବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ। ଏଇ ଗାଁ ସକାଳ ହେଲେ ଜୀବନ୍ତ ହୋଇଉଠେ। ହେଲେ ନାଡ଼ି କ୍ଷୀଣତର ହେବାରେ ଲାଗିଛି। ଅଶ୍ୱିରା ତୁଠରେ ସକାଳେ ସବୁ ଗଣି ଖୋଲା ହୁଏ କଥା ଆଉ ନଥାଏ। ସଭିଏଁ ଏଇଠି ଜ୍ଞାନୀ ହୋଇଯାଆନ୍ତି ସାହାଡ଼ା ଆଉ ମୁତୁରୀ କାଠିରେ ଦାନ୍ତ ଘଷିଲା ବେଳେ। କାନରେ ପଇତା ଲଗାଇ ପାତ୍ର ପୁଅ ଆକବର ଗାଁଙ୍କ କଡ଼ା ଗୁଡ଼ାଖୁ ଘଷିଘଷି ବନ୍ଧ ହୁଡ଼ାରେ ଚାଲିଯାଉଥିବ। ସେପଟୁ ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ ଶାସନରୁ ତ୍ରିପାଠୀ ପୁରୋହିତେ ରାଲି ସାଇକେଲରେ ମାଡ଼ି ଆସୁଥିବେ। ଗାଁ ବନ୍ଧ ଏଇ ସବୁର ନିତି ସାକ୍ଷୀ। ଗାଁ ପଦୁଅଁ ପୋଖରୀରେ କଇଁଫୁଲ ତୋଳା ଚାଲିଛି। ମା ମଙ୍ଗଳାର ପୀଠକୁ ଯିବ। ଏଇ କଇଁଫୁଲରେ ମା'ର ବଡ଼ ଆଶା। ମା'ର ଡୋରଣ, ଖୁମ୍ବ, ସେଣି, ପ୍ରଭୃତି ସବୁରେ ଏଇ କଇଁ ଫୁଲ ଶୋଭାପାଏ। ମାର ବେଶୀ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏଇ କଇଁଫୁଲରେ ହୁଏ। ଝୁଣା ଧୂପଦୀପ ଭୋଗରାଗର ସେଇ ସଞ୍ଜବେଳାରେ କାଳେସୀ ଝୁମି ଗାଇ ଉଠେ;

"ଏ ଘର ସେଣିକି ଲୋ ମୋର ସେ ଘର ସେଣିକି ଲୋ

ମୋର କଇଁଫୁଲ ବେଶୀକି" ମୋ ମା ମଙ୍ଗଳା...!!!

ଭକତ ସବୁ ଉଛୁଳି ଉଠନ୍ତି। କେହି କେହି ନିଜ ମନରେ ମାନସିକ କରି ପକାନ୍ତି ବଳି ନିମନ୍ତେ। ବଳି ଦିଆ ହୁଏ ମା ନାଁରେ। ହେଲେ ମା କଣ ସତରେ ବଳି ମାଗେ...! ଏଇ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ମତେ ଆନ୍ଦୋଳିତ କରେ; ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିସ୍ୱାର୍ଥ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଏଇ ଦେବଦେବୀଙ୍କୁ ମାଧ୍ୟମ କରା ହୁଏ। ବଳି ଏକ ବାହାନା ...ନିଜ ମନର ହିଂସ୍ରତାକୁ ବାସ୍ତବତାର ରୂପ ଦେବା ନିମନ୍ତେ!

ମା କଇଁଫୁଲରେ ଖୁସୀ...ମୃତମତି ସବୁ ହିଂସ୍ରତାରେ...!!!

ଦଶେରା ଦିନ ନାଉଁଟ ଅରଖ ନୁଆଁ କଣିବା ଦିନ ଗାଡ଼ି ଧରି ବାବୁଭାଇମାନେ ଧାଆଁନ୍ତି। କିଏ ଠାକୁରାଣୀ ପାଖକୁ ତ କିଏ ଭୂୟାଁଣୀ ପାଖକୁ। କିଏ ପଞ୍ଚମା ତ କିଏ ସିଦ୍ଧ ଭୈରବୀ। ଗାଡ଼ିମୋଟୋର ପୂଜା ହୁଏ। ଦର କଷାକଷୀ ହୁଏ ପୂଜାରୀ ଆଉ ଗାଡ଼ିମାଲିକ ଭିତରେ। ଫଟଫଟିଆକୁ ଏତିକି ଆଉ ଚାରିଚକିଆକୁ ଏଇୟା। ସାନଗାଡ଼ିରେ ଏତେଟା ନେମ୍ବୁ ଆଉ ବଡ଼ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ଏତେଟା। ଏଇଥିରେ ମଣ୍ଡାମାଳ ସେଇଥିରେ ମନ୍ଦାର ମାଳ। ଏମିତି କେତ କଣ। ସତେ ଯେପରି ବାହାନ ପୂଜା ପୁରାଣ ପୋଥିରେ ଏସବୁ ନେଖା ହୋଇଛି। ଏଇ ପୂଜା ପଦ୍ଧତି କଥା ସହସ୍ର ବରଷ ତଳର ଭଳିଆ। ରାସ୍ତା ଉପରେ ନଡ଼ିଆ ଭଙ୍ଗା ହୁଏ; ବିତରା ଶ୍ରୀଫଳ ଅନାଥ ଭଳି ରାସ୍ତାରେ ଚିତ୍କୁଡ଼ ହୋଇ ଭାଙ୍ଗିପଡ଼େ। ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଛେପଖଙ୍କାରରେ ତ ଆଉ ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଗୁଅମୁତ ଉପରେ। ଆଉ ଫାଳେକୁ ସନେଇର ପୁଅ ଧାଇଁ ଯାଇ ଉଠାଇ ଧରି ଧାଏଁ। ଏଇ ପୂଜା ପେଇଁ ଧୁଆଧୁଇ ଅଉ ପୂଜା ନୈବେଦ୍ୟ। ତାପରେ ସେଇ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ମଦମାଂସ, ନ୍ୟାଉଅନ୍ୟାଉ, ଗନ୍ଧବାସେନା, ହାଲହୁକୁମ୍ଭ, ଅଗେରା ହୁଏ। କିଏ ନିଘା ରଖୁଛି !! ବାହାନ ପୂଜା ତ ସରିଛି...!!!



ବାରକୁଳା ପତରଗୋଟେଇ ନାଁରେ ସଭିଏଁ ଡାକନ୍ତି ଏଇ ମାନଙ୍କୁ । ହେଲେ ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ କୌଣସି ଫେରାଦ ନାହିଁ । ବଢ଼ିଲା ଗଛ ଭଳି ଜୀବନଟାକୁ ତ ବକଟେ ପାଣି ଦେବାକୁ ହେବ । ତେଣୁ ଏଇ ଅଭିଯାନ । ଏମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଗ୍ରୀଷ୍ମ, ବର୍ଷା, ଶୀତ ଓ ବସନ୍ତ ସବୁ ଏକାକାର । ଜୀବନ ସଂଗ୍ରାମରେ ସଂଘର୍ଷରତ ସୈନିକ ଏମାନେ । ବେଳେବେଳେ ଜୀବନ ଅକ୍ଷୟ ହେଲେ ଏମାନେ ନୁହଁ । ମୃଷା ଅଜାତା ଆରପାରିକୁ ଚାଲିଗଲା । ବଞ୍ଚିଥିଲା ବେଳେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ବି ତା ଘଣା ନିକଟ ଦେଇ ଯାଏ; ହସି ହସି ପଚାରନ୍ତି ସେ... ଭୂୟାଁ ପିଲା, କେବେ ଆସିଲା । ସବୁ ଭଲ ତ...! ପଢ଼ାପଢ଼ି ଚାଲିଛି ତ...! ଏଇ ସରାଗ ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ହଜୁଛି ଗାଁରୁ; ଏଇ ମାମୁଁ ଅଜା ମଉସା ସବୁ ହଜିବା ସହ ।

ବେଳକୁ ବେଳ ଶ୍ରୀହୀନ ଦିଶୁଛି ମନ୍ଦିର ହତା । ରକ୍ଷଣାବେକ୍ଷଣ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଅର୍ଥାଭାବ ହେତୁ ଅନେକ ଦିନ ହେଲା ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ଚୂନଲେପ ଟିକେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଲାଗିନି । ଅନେକ କାରୁକାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଏହି ଭଳି ଲୋପ ପାଇଯିବ । କଥାରେ ଅଛି...ରଖେ ହରି ମାରେ କିଏ; ମାରେ ହରି ରଖେ କିଏ । ହେଲେ ଏବେ ହରିଘର କଥା:ଦେଖାଯାଉ ବୁଝୁଛି କିଏ ? ସକଳ ତୀର୍ଥ ତୋ ଚରଣେ... ଏଇ ବିଶ୍ୱାସରେ ଚାଲିଛି ମଉସା ଓ ମଉସାଙ୍କ ଭଳି କେତେ ସରଳ ଜୀବନ; ଜୀବନର ଜଟିଳତାର ମାୟାରେ କେବଳ ଇଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ ଭରସା ବୋଲି ନିଜକୁ ଟେକି ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ଜୀବନର ମନ୍ଦରେ ନିଜକୁ ହିଁ ଅପାରଗ ଆଉ ଭଲକୁ ଇଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ ଦାନ ଭାବି ବଞ୍ଚି ନିଅନ୍ତି । ଏଇ ମଉସାମାନେ ଶାନ୍ତିରେ ରୁହନ୍ତୁ । ଅସ୍ତୁ ।

ପଞ୍ଚୁକରେ ଝାଞ୍ଜ ଖୋଳ କରତାଳ ସହ ପ୍ରଥମ ପ୍ରହରରେ ଏଇ ନାମ ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନ ଝଙ୍କୁତ ହୁଏ । ତାପରେ କାଉ କା କହେ, ଗଞ୍ଜା କ କହେ ଆଉ ଗାଁ ଆଖି ଖୋଲି ଉଠେ...ଧିରେ ଧିରେ । ସଂସ୍କାରର ଏରୁଣ୍ଡି ବନ୍ଧ ତେଜ ଆଧୁନିକତା ଏଇ ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନ ଭିତରେ ପଶି ଆସିଲାଣି । ନାମ ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନରେ କେଉଁଠି କେଉଁଠି ହିନ୍ଦୀ ଗୀତର ସ୍ୱର ମଧ୍ୟ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ମିଳିଲାଣି । ଜିନ୍ ପ୍ୟାଣ୍ଟ ଆଉ ଟି ସାର୍ଟର ଅବାଧ ପ୍ରବେଶ ହେଲାଣି । ହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏଇ ହଟତମ ଉତ୍ତରେ ସେଇ କମଳା କଷ ଆଉ ହଳଦିଆ ଗେରୁଆ ଲୁଗା ନିଜର ସ୍ୱାଭିମାନ ବଜାୟ ରଖୁଛନ୍ତି । ଏହି ପଞ୍ଚୁକ ଆଜିବି ଅନେକ ଗାଁର କାର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ବିଶ୍ୱାସର ପ୍ରତୀକ । ଛାଡ଼ିଯାଇଛି ନିଶ୍ଚିନ୍ତ ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷାରେ ଏଇ କାର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ସରିଯାଏ । କିଏ ପୁଣ୍ୟ ଅରଜେ ଆଉ କିଏ ପାପ ଧୁଏ । ଏଇତ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ; ଏଇତ ଜୀବନଯାତ୍ରା...!!!

ରଙ୍ଗବିରଙ୍ଗର ସବୁ ଫୁଲ ଆମ ଗାଁର । କୌଣସି ଗୁଣରେ କମ୍ ନୁହଁନ୍ତି । କେହି ଦେଖିବାକୁ ସୁନ୍ଦର ତ କେହି ଛୁଇଁବାକୁ କୋମଳ; କେହି ଶୁଦ୍ଧିବାକୁ ସୁବାସିତ ତ କେହି ଔଷଧୀୟ ଗୁଣରେ ଭରପୂର । ଏଇ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟମୟ ସବୁଜ ପରିବେଶରେ ବଡ଼ ହୋଇଥିବାରୁ ପ୍ରକୃତି ସହ ମନ ଲାଗି ଯାଇଛି । ଆମ ଗାଁର ସୁନ୍ଦରତାକୁ ଏଇ ଫୁଲମାନେ ହିଁ ଆହୁରି ଦ୍ୱିଗୁଣିତ କରିଥାନ୍ତି । ନଦୀ, ନାଳ, ବନ୍ଧ, ବାଡ଼, ବିଲ, କିଆରୀ, ଡୋଟାମାଳ, ହିଡ଼ ଆଉ କଡ଼ ସବୁଠି ଏଇମାନଙ୍କ ପସରା । ପ୍ରତି ଫୁଲଙ୍କ ସହ ମୋର କିଛି କଥା ଆଉ ଅନୁଭୂତି ଜଡ଼ିତ । କହି ବସିବି ଏଇମାନଙ୍କର କଥା । ଆମ ଗାଁ ଗହଳକୁ ସପନ ରାଇଜ କରୁଥିବା ଏଇ ଛୋଟ ଫୁଲଙ୍କ କଥା । ଫୁଲ ଛୋଟ, ହେଲେ ଏମାନଙ୍କ ସୁନ୍ଦରତା ମନକୁ ଛୁଏଁ । ଅଳପ ସମୟରେ ଏମାନେ କହିଯାନ୍ତି ଅନେକ କଥା; କେବେ ଶୁଣନ୍ତୁନା... । ପାଠ ନପଢ଼ିଲେ ପୋଡ଼ମାହାରିଆ ହେବୁ; ମା ବାପା ସବୁ ଆକଟ କରନ୍ତି ଗାଁ ଗହଳରେ । ଆଉ ଗାଁ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଅବା କେଉଁ ଅପନ୍ତରା ବିଲବାଡ଼ିରେ ଏଇ ସବୁ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳେ । ଭାଗ୍ୟରେ ଥିଲେ ବଇଁଶୀ ସୁର ମଧ୍ୟ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ହୁଏ । ଗାଁର ଭୌଗୋଳିକ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନର ସାକ୍ଷୀ ଏଇ ପୋଡ଼ମାହାରିଆ ସବୁ । ଅନେକ ଘଟଣା ଓ ଦୁର୍ଘଟଣାର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷଦର୍ଶୀ ।

କେଉଟମାନେ ମାଛ ଧରନ୍ତି । କେବେ ନାଠି ବା ବନିଶୀ ପକାଇ; କେଞ୍ଚୁଆ ଲଗେଇ । କେବେ ପୋହଳା କେବେ ବେନ୍ଦା ପକାଇ । ହେଲେ ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ମାଛ ସବୁ କମିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲେଣି । ଏବେ ଏଇ ମଣିଷେ ପାଣିରେ ଜାଲ ପକାଇ ଏମାନେ ଜୀବିକା ନିର୍ବାହ କରନ୍ତି । ରବର ଟ୍ୟୁବ୍ରେ ବସି ଘେରା ଠିକ୍ କରନ୍ତି । ରାତି ସାରା ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷା କରନ୍ତି ମାଛକୁ ଜାଲରେ ଫସିବା ପାଇଁ । ଆଉ ସକାଳେ ସେସବୁ କୁ ଧରି ବିକିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ । ଗାଁ, ଘର ଓ ପିଲା ମାଲକିନାଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଏଇ ବଣଜଙ୍ଗଲ ଘେରା ବିପଦସଙ୍କୁଳ ଜଳଭଣ୍ଡାର ନିକଟରେ ଶୁଅନ୍ତି ମଧ୍ୟ ରାତିରାତି । ସବୁ ପେଟର ନାଟ । ମୁଠାଏ ଭାତର କଥା...! ଜୀବନ ପ୍ରଣାଳୀ ଏପରି ମଧ୍ୟ ଥାଏ...!!!ବୁଢ଼ା ମଉସାର ବୟସ ଏଇ ଅଣ୍ଟା ନୁଆଁଇନି; ସମୟ ଏଇ କେଶକୁ ଧଳା କରିନି; ସଂସାର ଏଇ ଶିରାପ୍ରଶିରକୁ ଚର୍ମ ଆଡ଼କୁ ଉଠାଇ ଆଣିନି! ହେଲେ ଜୀବନ ସହ ସଂଗ୍ରାମ କରିକରି ଏଇ ମନ ଶୀତଳ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଛି । ଜୀବନର ଏଇ ଚିରାଚରିତ ଚଳଣିକୁ ଆଦରି ନେଇଛି ଏଇ ମଣିଷ । ଲୁହ ଲହର ସଂସାରରେ ସବୁ ସ୍ୱେଦ ବନ୍ଧନ ପଡ଼ିଯାରିଛି । କେବେ ଜମି ବିକା ହୋଇଛି ଝିଅର ବିବାହ ନିମନ୍ତେ ତ କେବେ ପୁଅର ପାଠପଢ଼ା ନିମନ୍ତେ ସହଧର୍ମିଣୀର ଖାସୁଲୁମାଳ ବନ୍ଧନ ରଖା ହୋଇଛି । ହେଲେବି ଜୀବନ ସଂଗ୍ରାମ ସରିନି । ବିକିବାକୁ ଆଉ କିଛି ନାହିଁ; ବନ୍ଧନ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଆଉ କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ଅଛି ଖାଲି ଏଇ ହାଡ଼ମାଂସର କସରା ଦେହଟା । ଏମିତି ପଞ୍ଚଭୂତରେ ମିଳାଇଯିବ;



ରାମ ନାମ ସତ୍ୟ ଡାକରାରେ । କିଛି ଆଣି ନଥିଲା; କିଛି ନେବନି ହେଲେ ଦେଇଯିବ ଜୀବନ ଯାକର ଦିହଘଷା ନିତିଦିନିଆ ଯୁଦ୍ଧ
ଦେହିଁ ଡାକରା ପାଇଁ ଜାଗତିଆର ଥିବା ପାର୍ଥିବା ଶରୀର ଟାକୁ...ଏମିତି...ଏମିତି...!

ଅକ୍ଷିମୁଠି ଦିନଠୁଁ ହିଁ ଚଷାପୁଅର ଆଖିରେ ଏଇ ଛବି ନାଚି ଉଠିଥାଏ । ତାର ରକ୍ତ-ସ୍ନେହ-ବୀରୀର ସମ୍ପଦ ଇଏ । ଦୋଓଡ଼ ଚାଷ କରି
ମୁଠାମୁଠା କରି ଏଇତ ସୁନା ବିଞ୍ଚି ଦେଇଥାଏ । ସେଇ ସୁନାର ଗାଲିଚା ଇଏ ! ଆଖି ପୁରେଇ ଦେଖୁ ନେଇଥିଲି ଟରୋଷ୍ଟୋ ଫେରି
ଆସିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ । ଦଇବର ନଜର ନଲାଗୁ ଏଇ ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଫରୁଆରେ ମୋ ଗାଁର । ଚଷାପୁଅ ଶୁକରବାର ବିଡ଼ା ସାଇତି ରଖେ; ମା
ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଙ୍କୁ ଦେବା ପାଇଁ । ସେଇଥିରେ ହିଁ ତାର ବିଶ୍ୱାସ; ତାକୁ କେବେ ଭୋକରେ ରହିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବନି । ଏଣେ ରାଆଁଳି ମାନେ ଭିଡ଼ିଯାନ୍ତି
ବିଲ ମଝିରେ ଧାନକେଣ୍ଡା ଖୁଣ୍ଟିବାକୁ । ଆଉ କିଏ ବିଲହୁଡ଼ା ତଳେ ଗଡ଼ିଶ ଚେଙ୍ଗାମାଛ ଧରିବାରେ ମଜ୍ଜିଯାନ୍ତି । ଯୁବା ଗଡ଼ିଶ ମାଛର
ରଙ୍ଗରଙ୍ଗୀଳା ଛିଲକା ହେଉ ବା ତେଣା ପଙ୍କୁଆ ପାଣିରେ ଚବକୋଉ ଥାଏ । ତେଣେ ଆର ହୁଡ଼ାରେ ବଗଟିଏ, ନଡ଼ିଆ ଗଛରେ
ଗେଣ୍ଡାଳିଆ ଜମି କଟିରେ ପୋଡ଼ ମାହାରିଆ ଏଇ ସବୁ ଦେଖୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଏଇମିତି କେତେ କଣ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳେ ଏଇ ସବୁଜ
ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ କ୍ଷେତବାଡ଼ିରେ । କେବେ ଗାଁକୁ ଆସନ୍ତୁ ।

ବିଲ ଭିତରେ ଧାନଗଦା; ସବୁ ଗାଁର ଏକ ସାଧାରଣ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ । ପ୍ରଥମେ ଅମଳ, ତାପରେ ଏଇଠି ଗଦା ହୁଏ । ହଳ ଶଗଡ଼ ଆସେ
ତାପରେ ସବୁ ବୁହା ହୁଏ ଖଳାକୁ ଖେଳେଇବା ପାଇଁ । ସେଇଠୁ ଧାନ ବସ୍ତାରେ ବନ୍ଧା ହୋଇ ଅଟେଇକୁ ଯାଏ । ତାପରେ ଢିଙ୍କି ହେଉ
ଅବା ମିଲ୍ ହେଉ; ସେଇଠି କୁଟାହୁଏ ଆଉ ଚାଉଳ ସଂଗ୍ରହ ହୁଏ । ମାଟି ପଥରର ଚୂଳୀ ବାଟରେ ଘାଟରେ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳେ;
ମୁଲିଆ ମଜଦୂର ଆଉ ଗରୀବ ଗୁରୁବା ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଚୂଳୀ । ଏଇଠି ରନ୍ଧା ହୋଇଥିବା ଅନ୍ନବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ କେବେ ଚାଖୁଛନ୍ତି କି ଭାଇ ଓ
ଭଉଣୀ, ମୁଁ ଚାଖୁଛି । ଆହା କେଡ଼େ ସୁଆଦ । ଚକିରେ ଲାଗି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ବି ସୁଆଦ; ଲୁଣଲଙ୍କା ଏପାଖ ସେପାଖ ହେଲେ ବି ସୁଆଦ ।
ନିଆଁପାଉଁଶରେ ଗୋଳାଇ ହୋଇ ରହିଥିବା ବେଲା ଚଟୁରେ ଘଣ୍ଟା ଏଇ ଅନ୍ନବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ ହିଁ ଭୋକର ମହତ ବୁଝେ । ଶୁଖିଲା ତୁଣ୍ଡକୁ
ଅମୃତ ପ୍ରାୟେକ ଲାଗେ । ହିଁ ଏଥିରେ ବାଦଶାହା ମସାଲା, ଏଡେରେଷ୍ଟ ଅବା ଇଷ୍ଟି ମସାଲା ପଡ଼େନି; ପଡ଼ିପାରେନି । କେବେ ଜୀରା
ସୋରିଷ ଧନିଆ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅମିଳକ ଏଇ ଅନ୍ନବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନରେ । ହେଲେ ମୁଁ ଖାଇଛି ବାଟରେ ଘାଟରେ ; ଚାଷୀମୂଲିଆଙ୍କୁ ମାଗିଯାଚି । ଏଇ
ସୁଆଦ ହିଁ ଭୋକ ମାରେ ଆଉ ପେଟକୁ ଥଣ୍ଡା ରଖେ । କେବେ ଖାଇ ଦେଖନ୍ତୁ ତ !!!

ଉଡ଼ିଗଲେ ଗେଣ୍ଡାଳିଆ ଝାଡ଼ିଦେଇ ପର...! ଏଇ ଗୀତକୁ ମନେ ପକେଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ଏଇ ବିହଙ୍ଗ ଯୁଗଳ । ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ଏମାନଙ୍କ
ପ୍ରଜାତି ହଜୁଛନ୍ତି । କେବଳ ରହିଯିବ ଗୀତ କେତେ ଧାଡ଼ି । କେବେ କିଏ ଶୁଣିବକି ନାହିଁ; ତା'ର ମଧ୍ୟ କିଛି ଗତି ଅଛି ନାହିଁ ।
ଗୋଧନବାହୁଡ଼ା ବେଳ ଇଏ । ସକାଳେ ଘର ଛାଡ଼ି ଯାଇଥିବା ସଭିଏଁ ଫେରନ୍ତି । ପକ୍ଷୀ ଫେରେ, ମଣିଷ ଫେରେ ଆଉ ଫେରେ
ଆଜିର ଦିନ । ସବା ପରେ ଫେରେ ସୁରୁଜ ଦିବ୍ବଳୟରେ ସେପାରକୁ । ହେଲେ ଫେରେନି ସମୟ; ହାତରେ ସେଇ ଦିନକୁ ଧରି
ବୁଜିନିଏ ତା ମୁଠାକୁ । ସଭିଙ୍କୁ ଫେରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ । ସାରାଦିନର କ୍ଳାନ୍ତଶ୍ରାନ୍ତ ଶରୀରଟାକୁ ଠେଲିପେଲି ଫେରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ ପୁଣି କାଲି
ପାଇଁ ଜାଗତିଆର ହେବାକୁ । ଏଇତ ଜୀବନ; କେତେ ଆଜି, ଗତକାଲି ଆଉ ଆସନ୍ତାକାଲି ଭିତରେ ମିଳେଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଏଇତ
ଦୁନିଆଁ; ଆଜିକୁ ଇତିହାସ ପୃଷ୍ଠାରେ ସାଇତି ରଖି ଗତକାଲି କରି । ଏମିତି ଫେରିବାକୁ ହୁଏ ଆଜିକୁ ଗତକାଲିର କାଉଁରୀ ପେଡ଼ିରେ
ସାଇତିବାକୁ; ଏମିତି ବାହାରିବାକୁ ହୁଏ ଆଜିର ଦୁଆରରୁ ଆସନ୍ତାକାଲିର ଅଗଣାକୁ । ଏଇତ ଜୀବନ; ଅଡ଼େଇ ଦିନିଆ । ଚାଲନ୍ତୁ
ବାହାରିବା ଆଜି ପୁଣି ଫେରିବା ପାଇଁ !

ସଡ଼କଟିଏ ଭଲରେ ନାହିଁ; ହେଲେ ଯୋଜନ ଯୋଜନ ବ୍ୟାପୀ ଯୋଜନାରେ ଦେଶ ଫାଟି ପଡ଼ୁଛି । ଗାଁ ପିଲାଙ୍କ ପାଦରେଜୋଡ଼ା
ଖଣ୍ଡେ ନାହିଁ । ଗୁଣ୍ଡାଏ ପେଟରେ ଦାନା ପଡ଼ିଛି କି ନାହିଁ ଅଜଣା । ହେଲେ ହସ କୋଟିଏ ଟଙ୍କାର ଧରି ବୁଲି ହେଲେ ହସ କୋଟିଏ
ଟଙ୍କାର ଧରି ବୁଲି ଖେଳୁଛନ୍ତି ଆମ ଦେଶର ଭବିଷ୍ୟନିଧି ସବୁ । ଏଇମାନଙ୍କୁ ଦିବ୍ୟ ଆଶୀର୍ଷ ମିଳୁ । ଏଇ ସଡ଼କ ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣମୟ କରି
ଗଢ଼ି ତୋଳନ୍ତୁ ଏଇମାନେ । ଗାଁର ନିଜର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମି, କେଉଁ ଆବହମାନ କାଳର ହେଉଛି ଏଇ ଶୁକୁଘର । ଗାଁରେ ଏବେବି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଏଇଠି
ନଯୋଇଲା ଯାଏଁ ସବୁ ଅଶୁଦ୍ଧ । କେତେ ଜଣ ଏମାନଙ୍କୁ ଛୁଇଁବାକୁ ଏବେବି ଭାବନ୍ତି ହେଲେ ଏମାନଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ନଯୋଇଲା ଯାଏଁ ସବୁ
ଅଶୁଦ୍ଧ ବୋଲି ମନେ କରନ୍ତି । ଏଇ ସମୀକରଣ ମୁଁ ଏବେବି ବୁଝିପାରିନି । ଏ ସବୁ କହିବାକୁ ଗଲେ...ବନ୍ଧାସ୍ । କାମକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛୁତ ଦିଅ
ଆଉ କାମ କରୁଥିବା ଲୋକର ମହତ କର, ଏହା ହିଁ ହେଉ ।



ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଉପାଦାନ ପାଣି ପବନର ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛତାର ଅଭାବ ଗାଁ ଗହଳିରେ । କେବେ କଣ୍ଟ୍ରାକ୍ଟରର ଠକାମୀ ହେଉ କେବେ ଆମ ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଶରୀର ଆଉ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟରକ୍ଷା ଜ୍ଞାନର ଅଭାବ ଏଇ ସ୍ଥାନଟିକୁ ଏଇଭଳି କରି ରଖିଛି । ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ହିଁ ସମ୍ପଦ କେବଳ ବହିରେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦିଶୁଛି...ଆଉ ଅସଲରେ ସାରା ଭାରତର ଗାଁ ଗହଳରେ ନଳଗୁଡ଼ିକର ଏଇ ଦଶା...!!! ଏଇ ରାସ୍ତା ପଡ଼ିଛି ସେଇମତେ; ବେଳଅବେଳରେ ରାଜନୀତି ଘୋଡ଼ାବେପାରରେ କେବେକେବେ କାଙ୍କରା ମାଟି ଗୁଡ଼ି ଢେଙ୍କାଳ ଘୋଡ଼ି ହୁଏ ମୁଠି ଫିଙ୍ଗା ବାଲି ସହ । ଅଧା ନଙ୍ଗଲା ରହେ ଅଧାଦିନ । ସିପେଇ ସର୍ଦ୍ଦାର ଭଳିଆ ଏଇ ବାଉଁଶ ନାଳୀ ସବୁ ଭିତରେ ଲୁଚେଇ ଧରନ୍ତି ସାନ ଗଛ ତାଳ ସବୁ । କିଏ କେବେ ଭାଗ୍ୟ କରିଥିଲି ବଞ୍ଚିଯାନ୍ତି ଆଉ କେତେ ଜଣ ଖରାତରା ଚାପରେ ଡରିଯାନ୍ତି । ସବୁ ଗାଁ ରାସ୍ତାର ଏଇ ଦଶା । କେବେକେବେ ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟ ସଡ଼କ ଯୋଜନାର ବିଜ୍ଞାପନ ଦେଖିଲେ ଏଇ ରାସ୍ତା ଆଖିରେ ନାଚି ଉଠେ । ଏଇୟା କଣ ସତରେ ରାମରାଜ୍ୟର ସପନ; ଆମ ରାଜ୍ୟର ସପନ ! ଏଇତକ ପାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଫିରିଙ୍ଗି ସହ ଧରାମରା ଦେଲେ କଣ; ପାଇଲେ କଣ!! ଆବର୍ତ୍ତନ-ବିବର୍ତ୍ତନ-ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନରେ ଚାଲିଛି ଏଇ ଦୁନିଆଁ । ମୋ ଗାଁ ମଧ୍ୟ । ହଜି ଯାଇଛି ସବୁ ଚାଳଘର ଆଉ ଏବେ ସବୁ ଠିଆ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି ରଙ୍ଗ ବିରଙ୍ଗ କୋଠାସବୁ । କିଏ କହିଲା...ଦେଶର କିଛି ବଦଳିନି ବୋଲି...!!!

ଗାଁରୁ ଫେରିଥିଲି ଭାରୀ ମନ ନେଇ । ପାଞ୍ଚ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଯାଇଥିଲି ଭଙ୍ଗାମନ ନେଇ ଆଉ ଫେରିଲି ବି ସେଇ ମନ ନେଇ । ସାଉଁଟି ଆଣିଲି କେତେ କଥା ଆଉ ବ୍ୟଥା । ଗାଁରେ କେତେ ସବୁ କଣ ବଦଳି ଯାଇଛି । ସେ ସବୁକୁ ଅଡ଼େଇ ଅତୀତକୁ ଖୋଜୁଥିଲି । କେତେ ମିଳିଲା ଆଉ ଜାଣିଲି ଅନେକ କିଛି ହଜି ଯାଇଛି । ଗାଁର ଆଦର, ସୁଆର, ସେନେହ ସବୁ ମିଳେଇ ଗଲାଣି ସେଇ ବୁଢ଼ାଅଜ୍ଞା ଆଉ ମାମୁଁଙ୍କ ହଜିବା ସହ । ଏଇଥର ପାତ୍ରଘର ଆଇଁଙ୍କ ମୁହଁରୁ "ଗରାଖ" ପଦ ଶୁଣି ପାରିଲିନି । ଇଙ୍ଗିଲି ଆଇଁର ହଇରେ ନାତିଆ ପଦ ବି ସପନ ଥିଲା । ଶୁଖୁଆ ଭଜା ଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ ତେଲି ଘର ଅଥବା କଙ୍କଡ଼ା ପୋଡ଼ା ଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଭଣ୍ଡାରୀ ଘର ଆଉ ନାହିଁ । ଜୀବନରେ ଯେତେ ଆଗକୁ ଧାଉଁଛି ପଛରେ ଏଇ ଗାଁ ଆହୁରି ଦୂରକୁ ଚାଲି ଯାଉଛି । ଫେରିବି ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ସେଇ ଗାଁକୁ ହେଲେ କେତେ ହାତ କେତେ ବୁକୁ ହଜିଯାଇଥିବ ତାର କଳନା ନାହିଁ ।

କରତ ଝିକିଲେ କାଟୁଛି ଆଉ ପେଲିଲେ ବି...! ଏଣେ ମାଇଲେ ଗୋହତ୍ୟା...ତେଣେ ମାଇଲେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମହତ୍ୟା...! ଜାଣେନା...ମୋ ଭଳି କେତେ ତ୍ରିଶଙ୍ଖ କେତେ ସଂଶୟରେ ଆଗେଇ ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ଏଇ ଗାଁ ପାଇଁ ସପନ ସାଉଁଟିବା ପାଇଁ । ସେଇ ସପନ ସତ ହେଉ...ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର । ଏଇ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ଗ୍ରାମଦେବତା ଆଉ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ...

ବାଟରେ ଘାଟରେ ଯାନିଯାତରାରେ

ପ୍ରତି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ପ୍ରତିଟି ସ୍ୱନ୍ଦନେ

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜୀବନ ଧାର

ଏଇ ମୋ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପ୍ରାଣ

ସେରକ ପୁରିଲେ ମାଣକ ପୁରଇ

ଭୁଲି ଯାଅ ନାହିଁ ଭାଇ ଓ ଭଉଣୀ

ଘଡ଼ିଏ ପାଣିର ଗାର

ଏଇ ମାଟି ହିଁ ଜୀବନ !

" ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାର ୮ବର୍ଷ ରହଣିରେ ଓସା ହେଉଛି ଏବେ ସାତ ସମୁଦ୍ର ତେର ନଇ ଏପାରିରେ ମୋର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାରଟିଏ । ସେଇଠାରୁ ହିଁ ମିଳିଛି ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ସମ୍ମାନ ଆଉ ପରିଚୟ ଏଇ ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାରେ । ପ୍ରାୟ ସଭିଙ୍କ ଆଦରର ପୁତ୍ର ଏବେ । ଓସା ପରିବାରର ସମସ୍ତ ଭାଇ ଓ ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କ ଦିବ୍ୟଚେତନା ଓ ଗଠନାତ୍ମକ ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି ତଥା ଶାନ୍ତି ଓ ପ୍ରେମର ସହାବସ୍ଥାନରେ ହିଁ ଏଇ ଓସା ହେବ ଶାନ୍ତି ଓ ସୌହାର୍ଦ୍ଦ୍ୟର ଐକ୍ୟ ପରିବାର । ହେ ମୋର ଭାଇ-ବନ୍ଧୁ-କୁଟୁମ୍ବ, ଆସନ୍ତୁ ସଭିଏଁ ସଭିଙ୍କ ହାତଧରି; ଅନ୍ୟର ସ୍ୱାଭିମାନ ଗୌରବ, ମର୍ଯ୍ୟଦାକୁ ସମ୍ମାନ ଦେଇ ଅଗ୍ରସର ହେବା ଓସା ପରିବାରର ସମୃଦ୍ଧି ମାର୍ଗରେ । ଜୟ ହୋ " । ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ଭୂୟାଁ



ପୁରୁଣା ପଲ୍ଲୀ - ନୂଆ ପଲ୍ଲୀ

ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ମିଶ୍ର

ପୁରୁଣା ପଲ୍ଲୀ

ସେ ପଲ୍ଲୀର ଭାଷା ଥିଲା, ଶୋଭା ଥିଲା

ଥିଲା ଡା'ର ମା'ର ମମତା

ସେଇ ଗାଁ ବାଣ୍ଟୁଥିଲି, ମାଟିଘର ଆଉ ଗଛ ଛାଇ,

ସଞ୍ଜବେଳେ ଗୋଧୂଳି ର କେତେ ଧୂସରତା ।

ମନେପଡ଼େ

ଆତ୍ମଧାଡ଼ି, ଡାଳବଣ, ଗାଁ ପୋଖରୀର କଇଁଫୁଲ

ଆଉ ବିଲ ବାଡ଼ିର ଚେହେରା,

ସେ ପଲ୍ଲୀରେ ନାଚୁଥିଲୁ, ପାଇକଛାମାରି ବାଗୁଡ଼ିର ଖେଳ,

ନନ୍ଦୁ ଖେଳ ଆଉ ରଜବୋଲି,

ଖୁବୁରୁକୁଣି ର ଓଷା, ଜହ୍ନିଫୁଲ ଚୋଳା

ସାରୁଗଛ ମୂଳେ ବେଙ୍ଗ ଓ ବେଙ୍ଗୁଲିଙ୍କ ସମସ୍ତରେ ଗୀତ ବୋଲା ।

ସେ ଗାଁରେ ପଇସା ନଥିଲା ସତ

ଭରିଥିଲା ଭାଇ, ନନା, ମଉସା, ମାଉସୀଙ୍କର ଅଜଣା ସମ୍ପର୍କ

ସେ ଥିଲା ମୋ ପୁରୁଣା, ମହକେ ଯେଉଁଠି ଆତ୍ମର ବଉଳ,

କିଆ ଓ କେତକୀ ଫୁଲର ବାସନା,

କୋଇଲି ର ସ୍ବର ଶୁଣି ମୋ ଗାଁ ଡାକ ଦିଏ 'ବସନ୍ତ ଆସିଲା'

ସକାଳୁ ଡାକଇ ବିଲୁଆ ନନା ତ, ସଞ୍ଜରେ ଗୋଧନ ଘର ଫେରନ୍ତା ।

ନୂଆ ପଲ୍ଲୀ

ବିଦେଶ ରେ ବହୁଦିନ ରହିସାରି, ସପନରେ ଭାବିବାର ଅଳ୍ପ ନାହିଁ

ଯାଇଥିଲି ବୋଲି ହେବି ଗାଁ ମାଟି , ପାଇବାକୁ ଗୋଧୂଳି ପରଶ

ଯାହା ମୁଁ ଦେଖିଲି ଭାଇ, ନ କହିଲେ ଭଲ ।



ବଂଶଦେଶୁ ଯବନ ଆସିଲେ, ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଦେଲେ ଦେଉଳକୁ,
ବର୍ଗୀ ଆସିଲେ ବୋଲି ଚାରିଆଡ଼େ ଆଡ଼ଙ୍କର ରାଜ,
ମୋଗଲ ଆସିଲେ ସତ, ଭାଙ୍ଗୁଥିଲେ, ଲୁଟୁଥିଲେ ଧନ ଓ ଦରବ;
ଫିରିଙ୍ଗି ଆସିଲେ ସତ, ରୋପିଦେଲେ ଇଂରାଜୀ ସଭ୍ୟତା ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ଏବେ , ଏ କ'ଣ ହେଲା ?
ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ଧରି ମୋ ଗାଁ, ମୋ ଦେଶ,
ମୋ ମାଟି ବଦଳି ନ ଥିଲା,
ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ପରେ ଚାହୁଁ ଚାହୁଁ
ଦିନ କେଇଟା ପରେ, ସବୁ ବଦଳିଲା -
ପୋଷ୍ଟୋ, ଟିଷ୍ଟୋ, ଏସାର, ମିଡଲ, ଜିନ୍ସଲ,
ନେତା ଓ ଜନତାଙ୍କୁ ନଚେଇ ନଚେଇ ବଢ଼ାନ୍ତି କନ୍ଦଳ ।

ଇଏ ଏକ ନୂଆ ପଲ୍ଲୀ,
ତା'ର ସବୁ ଅଛି, ଚକମକ ବିଜୁଳି ଆଲୁଅ,
ଚିଢ଼ି, ସେଲ୍ ଫୋନ୍, ମଦଭାଟି, ହୋଟେଲ,
ଢାବା ଆଉ ସିନେମା ହଲ ରେ ଭରା
ମୋ ଛୋଟ ଗାଁ ଟି ନିଜ ରୂପ ହଜାଇ ଦେଇଛି
ଅଜାଣତେ ପାଲଟି ଯାଇଛି ଏକ ଅସତ୍ୟ ନଗରୀ ।

Niranjan Mishra, an Odia by heart is a OSA life member, also an active Can OSA Member lives in
Sudbury, Ontario, Canada (e-mail: nmishra@persona.ca)



ଫେଟୋ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନଳତା ମିଶ୍ର



ଫେଟୋ ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ଭୂୟାଁ



ରଣୀ ତୋ ମମତାର

ମିତାଲି ଦାସ

ଗର୍ଭରେ ତୋ ସ୍ଥାନ ଦେଇ ମୋତେ ଦେଲୁ ତୁ ଜୀବନ

ମରିଥିବୁ କେତେ ଥର ପାଇ ତୁ କଷଣ

ଜନନୀ ହୋଇଥିଲୁ ତୁ ଜନମ ଦେଇ ମୋତେ

ପ୍ରସବ ବେଦନା ତୁ ପାଇଥିବୁ କେତେ !

ତୋ ଜୀବନେ ଥିବା ପଳ ପଳ ଅନ୍ଧାରକୁ ଭୁଲି

ଆଲୋକ ଦେଖାଇଲୁ ମୋତେ ଦୁନିଆ କୁ ଆଣି

ଶିଶୁ କନ୍ୟାକୁ ତୋର ନେଇଥିଲୁ କୋଳେଇ

ତୋ ପଣତ କାନିରେ ମୋତେ ରଖୁ ତୁ ଘୋଡ଼ାଇ !

କେତେ କେତେ ବିପଦରୁ ଆପଦୁ ସତେ

ହୃଦୟରେ ମମତା ଭରି ରଖୁଲୁ ଲୁଚାଇ

ମୋ ମୁହଁର ଖୁସି ଦେଖୁ ତୁ ହେଇଥାଉ ଖୁସି

ତୋ ଦୁଃଖକୁ ଲୁଚାଇ ତୁ ଦେଇଥାଉ ହସି !

ମମତାରେ ଖୋଇ ଦେଉ ପାଟିରେ ମୋ ଆହାର

ଭୋକ ଶୋଷ ଭୁଲି ଯାଉ ଖୁସି ଦେଖୁ ମୋହର

ଆଜୁଳି ଧରି ଶିଖାଇଥିଲୁ ମୋତେ ତୁହି ଚାଲି

ତୋ ସମୟ ଆସିଲା ଯେବେ ହାତ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେଲି !

ଶୋଇଯାଏ ନିଶ୍ଚିତରେ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ରଖୁ ତୋ କୋଳରେ

ପାହିଥିବ କେତେ ରାତି ତୋର ଉଜାଗରରେ

ସ୍ବାଭିମାନ ସପନ ତୁ ଦେଖାଇଲୁ ଆଖିରେ ମୋର

କରିବାକୁ ସାକାର ନିଦ ନ ଥିଲା ନୟନେ ତୋର !



ପାଲିଥିଲୁ ମୋତେ ତୁହି କେତେ ଯେ ଯତନେ
ନଥିଲା ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥ ତୋର, କିଛି ପାଇବାର ଆଶା
ପାରିବିନି ସୁଦ୍ଧି କେବେ ତୋ ମମତାର ରଣ ବୋଉ ,
ଚିରକାଳ ରହିବି ମୁଁ ରଣୀ ହୋଇ ତୋହର !
(ମୁଁ ଓଷା ର ଲାଇଫ ମେମ୍ବର ମୋତେ ଲେଖିବା,ରୋଷେଇ ଓ ବଗିଚା କରିବାକୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗେ)- ମିତାଲି ଦାସ

ବୋଉ

କୁକୁ ଦାସ

ବୋଉ,

ତୁ ମୋ ମନର କାହାଣୀ
ତଲା ପଥରେ ଥିବା ଗଛର ଶୀତଳ ଛାୟା
ମନର ବଗିଚା ରେ ଫୁଟିଥିବା ଗୋଲାପ ପାଖୁଡ଼ା
ମଲ୍ଲି, ଜୁଇ ଜାଇ ର ବାସ୍ନା
ଜୀବନର ଉନ୍ମାଦନା
ଜରରେ କୁହୁଳୁ ଥିବା ଶରୀର ରେ
ବୁଲାଇଥିବା, କଅଁଳ ହାତ ର ସ୍ପର୍ଶ ତୁ,
ମୁଁ ଜାତ ବା ଅଜାତରେ ନେଇଥିବା
ପ୍ରତିଟି ନିଃଶ୍ୱାସ ପ୍ରଶ୍ୱାସ ତୁ
ଶୀତ ରାତି ର ଉଷ୍ମ କମ୍ବଳ ତୁ
ପୁଣି ବର୍ଷା ର ପ୍ରତିଟି ମୁହଁନା ଆଉ
ମେଘୁଆ ପାଗରେ ଝଲସୁଥିବା ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରଧନୁ ତୁ
ଧୋ ବାୟା ଗୀତ ଶୁଣି ଶୋଇଥିବା
ମୋ ନିଷ୍ଠାପ ମନର କୋମଳ କାନ୍ଦଣା ଆଉ
ମୋର ପ୍ରତିଟି ହସରେ ଚମକିଥିବା ସୁନେଲି କିରଣ ତୁ
ତୁ ପୁଣି ମୋ ସୁପ୍ତ ମସ୍ତିଷ୍କ ର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଅନାବନା ।।
ମୋର ତୁ ଅତୀତ, ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଆଉ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ



ତୁ ସ୍ବର୍ଗର କମଳ କଳିକା, ଆଉ ସ୍ବଚ୍ଛ ପାରିଜାତ
ଆକାଶରୁ ବଡ଼ ଆଉ ସାଗରର ଗଭୀର
ସ୍ନେହ, ପ୍ରେମ, ମମତାର
ବନ୍ଧନେ ଜାଗ୍ରତ
ଜନ୍ମ, ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ଠାରୁ ଅନେକ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ବରେ ତୁ

ବୋଉ,
ତୁ ମୋ ମନ ସିଂହାସନେ ଭିରାଜିଥିବା
ଅଜର ଅମର ପ୍ରତୀକ
ପ୍ରଜ୍ବଳିତ ଲେଲିହାନ ଶିଖା ମୋ ମନ ବୀପ ର
ତୁ ମୋର ଚଳନ୍ତି ଠାକୁର।

Kuku Das, a past convener, a past OSA vice President and Co-founder, President of iGurukul lives with her family at Santa Clara, California.. Currently she's leading OSA's "Let's Learn Odia" programme.

ମା' ମୋର

ପରାଶର ମିଶ୍ର

କାହିଁକି କେଜାଣି ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଜୀବନର
ପ୍ରତିଟି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ
ମୋର ଖାଲି ମା' କଥା ମନେ ପଡ଼େ
ପୁରସ୍କାର ମିଳିବା ସମୟରେ
ତିରସ୍କାର ମିଳିବା ସମୟରେ
ମୋ ଦୁଃଖରେ, ସୁଖରେ
ଜୟ, ପରାଜୟରେ, ହସ, କାନ୍ଦରେ



ମା' ମୋର ମଙ୍ଗଳ କାମନା କରି
କହୁଥାଏ ବାବୁରେ, ଧନରେ
ଯେଉଁଠି ଥା, ଯେମିତି ଥା
ସୁଖରେ, ସରଳରେ,
ସହଜରେ, ନିରାପଦରେ ଥା' ।

କାହିଁକି କେଜାଣି,
ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଜୀବନର ପ୍ରତିଟି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ
ମା'ର ଲୁଗା ପଣତରେ ମୋର
ଲୁଚିବାର ଦିନ ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଥାଏ
ମା'ର ଲୁଗା ପଣତର ଶୀତଳ ଛାଇ
କେତେବେଳେ ମୋ ଆଖିର ଲୁହ
ପୋଛୁଥିଲା ତ' କେତେବେଳେ
ମୋ ଧୂଳି, ଧୂସର ଦେହକୁ
ଅତି ସରାଗରେ ଝାଡ଼ି ଦେଉଥିଲା ।

ବର୍ଷାରେ ଭିଜି, ଖରାରେ ଜଳି
ବାହାରେ ଖେଳି ବାପାଙ୍କ ବେତ
ମାତକୁ ଡରି, ଲୁଚୁଥିଲି ମୋ ମା'ର
ପଣତ କାନିରେ,
ଧୂଆଁ ହେଲେ, ଜ୍ୱର ହେଲେ,
ମୋ ଦେହ ଖରାପ ହେଲେ
ମା'ମୋର ମୋ ଦୋଷ ନଦେଖି
ଦୋଷ ଦେଉଥିଲା ବାଡ଼ିପଡ଼ା ବର୍ଷାକୁ
ନିଆଁଗିଳା ଖରାକୁ ।



ମୁଁ କାନ୍ଦିଲେ, ଜିଦକଲେ, ଅଝଟ ହେଲେ
ମୋତେ କାଖରେ କାଖେଇ ଘର ଅଗଣାରେ
ବୁଲେଇ, ବୁଲେଇ, ଚଢେଇ ଦେଖେଇ
ମା'ମୋର ଗାଉଥିଲା
'ବାଇ ଚଢେଇରେ ବାଇ ଚଢେଇ
ତୋ ମା' ଯାଇଛି ଗାଇ ଚରେଇ
ଫେରିଲେ ଆଣିବ ପାଟିଲା ବେଲ
ଖୁଆଇ, ପିଆଇ କରିବ ଗେଲ' ।

ମମତାମୟୀ ମୋ ମା'ର ଗେଲ, ଆଦର,
ସ୍ନେହ, ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା, ଶୁଭାଶିଷ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ
ମୋତେ ବାଘପରି ବଳବାନ,
ଘୋଡ଼ାପରି ବେଗବାନ ହୋଇ
ଆକାଶରେ ଉଡିବାର, ପାଣିରେ ବୁଡିବାର
ମହାମନ୍ଦ ଶିଖାଇ ନିଜେ ସେ ପୁରରେ ଥାଇ
ଏ ପୁରରେ ମୋତେ ଘଣ୍ଟ ଘୋଡ଼ାଇ ରଖୁଛି ।

ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଜୀବନର ପ୍ରତିଟି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ
ମୋର ମା' କଥା ମନେପଡୁଛି ।

“ I have been actively involved with OSA since 1995 and participated in Pramod Patnaik drama competitions, Kabita Patha, cultural activities etc. A drama written and directed by me entitled ‘Nilam’ got the 1st prize at one of our conventions. I have also been actively involved in our local chapter and taking the lead in organizing CanOSA’s annual Sahitya Pathachakra. OSA has empowered me to take pride in my language, culture, and heritage and also in reaching out and connecting with our OSA friends on a regular basis.” Parashar Mishra



ଚିଠି

ସୁଚୀସ୍ମୃତା ପଣ୍ଡା

ସୁଦେଇ ହାତରେ ଖଣ୍ଡେ କାଗଜ ଧରି ଦୌଡ଼ି ଦୌଡ଼ି ଆସିଲା । ଦାଣ୍ଡ ଦୁଆରୁ ଚିକ୍କାର କରୁଛି "ମା ମା ବିଦେଶ ରୁ ଚିଠି ଆସିଛି. ତାକ ବାବୁ କହିଲେ ସାନ ବାବୁ ପଠେଇଛି." ଜାନକୀ ହାତରୁ କଂସା ଖସି ପଡ଼ିଲା. ଧାଇଁ ଆସି ଚିଠି ଟା ସୁଦେଇ ହାତରୁ ନେଇ ଗଲେ. ଘଡ଼ିଏ ସେ ଲମ୍ବାପାକୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ରେ ଜାବୁଡ଼ି ଧରିଲେ । ଚଉଷଠି ମସିହା ଶ୍ରାବଣ ମାସ ଗୁରୁବାର ଟାରେ ପୁଅ ତାଙ୍କର ଘର ଛାଡ଼ି ବିଦେଶ ଗଲା । ତାର ବାପା ଚାଲିଗଲା ପରେ ଛୁଆଟା ତାଙ୍କର ଯେମିତି ହଜି ଗଲା । କେଜାଣି କାହିଁକି ତାଙ୍କ ଠୁ ଦୁରେଇ ଗଲା । ବିଦେଶ ରେ ପଢ଼ିବାର ଜିଦ୍ ଧରି ବସିଲା. ଜାନକୀ ଯେତେ ବୁଝେଇଲେ ବି ସେ ଶୁଣିଲା ନାହିଁ । ମନ ଜମା ମାନ୍ନୁ ନଥିଲେ ବି ବାପ ଛେଉଣୁ ପିଲା ଟା ଦୁଃଖୀ ହେବ ଭାବି, ଛାଡ଼ି ଉପରେ ପଥର ରଖି ତା ଯିବାର ବନ୍ଧବୋସ୍ତ କଲେ । ହେଲେ ବାର ବର୍ଷ ବିତି ଗଲା । ଆଗେ ବର୍ଷ କୁ ଥରେ ଚିଠି ଟେ ଆସୁଥିଲା । ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ସିଏ ବି ବନ୍ଦ ହେଇ ଗଲା । ଆଜି ଏତେ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଚିଠି ଟେ ପାଇ ଆଖିରେ ତାଙ୍କର ଧାର ଧାର ଲୁହ । ସତେ ଯେମିତି ବର୍ଷ ବର୍ଷ ର ଅଭିମାନ ଆଜି ତାଙ୍କର ଲୁହ ହେଇ ଖସି ପଡ଼ୁଛି । ଲୁହ ପୋଛୁ ପୋଛୁ ସୁଦେଇ କୁ କହିଲେ "ଗଲୁ ଚିକେ ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ମାଷ୍ଟେରୁ ଖବର ପଠେଇବୁ । ଆଜି ଉପରବେଳା ଫେରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଘର ଆଡ଼େ ଚିକେ ଆସିବେ । କୁନା ର ଚିଠି ଟାକୁ ପଢ଼ି କି ଶୁଣେଇଦେବେ । "ହଁ ମା ମୁଁ ଯାଉଛି ।" ଏତିକି କହି ସୁଦେଇ ଘରୁ ବାହାରି ଗଲା ।

ଏଇ ଭିତରେ କେତେ ଘଡ଼ି ଯେ ଚାଲି ଗଲାଣି ଜାନକୀ କୁ ଜଣା ନାହିଁ । ସେ ସେମିତି ପଥର ଭଳି ରୋଷେଇ ଘର କାଛ ଟାକୁ ଆଉଜି ପଡ଼ି ବସିଛନ୍ତି । ହାତରେ ତାଙ୍କର ସେଇ ଚିଠି ଟା । ହଠାତ କି ସୁଦେଇ ର ପାଟି ଶୁଣି ସେ ଚମକି ପଡ଼ିଲେ । "ମା ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ମାଷ୍ଟେ ଆସିଛନ୍ତି । ମୁଁ ତୁମ କଥା ଶୁଣି ସ୍କୁଲ ଆଡ଼େ ମାଡ଼ିଗଲି । ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରି କି ମାଷ୍ଟେରୁ ସାଥରେ ଧରି ଆସିଛି । ...ବସନ୍ତ ବସନ୍ତ ମାଷ୍ଟେ ।", ଏତିକି କହି ସେ ସପ ଟାକୁ ବାରଣ୍ଡା ରେ ପାରି ଦେଲା । ଜାନକୀ ଡରବର ରେ ମୁହଁ ପୋଛି ଦେଇ ଚିଠି ଟାକୁ ବଢ଼େଇ ଦେଇ ସୁଦେଇ କୁ କହିଲେ, "ଯା ମାଷ୍ଟେରୁ ପାଇଁ ପାଣି ଗିଲାସେ ଆଣି ଦେ । ଆଉ ଶୁଣେ ସେ ରୋଷେଇ ଘର କଣ ହାଣ୍ଡି ଭିତରେ ଆରିଷା ପିଠା ଅଛି । ମାଷ୍ଟେରୁ ଦେ ।" ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ମାଷ୍ଟେ ପାନ ଛେପ ପକାଉ ପକାଉ କହିଲେ, "କୁନା ର ଚିଠି ଆସିଛି. ଖାଲି ଆରିଷା ପିଠା ରେ ହେବନି ।" ଏତିକି କହି ସେ ପଢ଼ା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ ।

ଆଦରଣୀୟ ବୋଉ,

ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆ ମାରୁଛି । କ୍ଷମା କରିବୁ ତୋ ପାଖକୁ ଏତେ ଦିନ ପରେ ଚିଠି ଲେଖୁଛି । କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଭିତରେ ସମୟ ହେଉନି । ହେଲେ ବୋଉ ଦିନ ଗୋଟେ ବି ଯାଉନି ଯେବେ ମୁଁ ତତେ ମନେ ପକେଇନି । ତୋର ସେ ବାବୁ ତାକ ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲେ ଆଖି ଭରି ଯାଏ । ତୋର ପଣତ କାନିର ବାସ୍ନା କୋଉ ମହଙ୍ଗା ଇତର ରେ ନାହିଁ । ବୋଉ ଲୋ ତୋର ହାତ ରକ୍ଷା ଖାଇବାକୁ ବହୁତ ମନ ହେଲାଣି । ବିଦେଶୀ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ରେ ମୁଁ ତୋ ମାଛ ଚରକାରୀ, ଭେଣ୍ଟି ଆମ୍ବିଲ ର ସ୍ବାଦ ଖୋଜେ । ତୋର ଯୋଉ ମାର୍ଗଶିର ଗୁରୁବାର ର ଘିଅ ଫୁଟା ତାଲା ଆଉ ଆଲୁ ବାଇଗଣ ଚଟଣି କେବେ ଭୁଲିନି । ସେଦିନ ଘର ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଲା ବେଳେ, ତୋର ସେ ବିକଳ ମୁହଁ ଟା ମୋ ଆଖି ଆଗରେ ନାଚି ଯାଉଛି । ମୁଁ ଯେ କେତେ ନିଷ୍ଠୁର । ମୁଁ ଆସନ୍ତା ଏପ୍ରିଲ ମାସ ଚୌଦ ତାରିଖ ରେ ଭାରତ ଫେରି ଆସୁଛି । ମୋ ସାଥରେ ତୋର ବୋହୂ ଜେନି ଆସୁଛି । କ୍ଷମା କରିବୁ ତତେ ନ ଜଣେଇ ମୁଁ ଏଠି ବାହା ହେଇ ଗଲି । ହେଲେ ମା ଛେଉଣୁ ଝିଅ ଟି ଆସି ମତେ ଅନୁଭବ କରେଇଛି ଯେ ମୋ ବୋଉ ଆଉ ଆଉ ମୁଁ କଣ ହରାଉଛି । ମିଛ ମରାଚିକା ପଛରେ ଗୋଡ଼େଇଛି । ବୋଉ ଲୋ ତୁ ମୋର ସମ୍ପତ୍ତି ତୁ ମୋର ଐଶ୍ବର୍ଯ୍ୟ । ମୁଁ ଆଉ ଦଣ୍ଡେ ବି ତତେ ଛାଡ଼ି ରହିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁନି । ଆଶା କରୁଛି ତୋର ଏଇ ଅଭାଗା ପୁଅ କୁ କ୍ଷମା କରିଦେବୁ ଆଉ ଜେନିକୁ ସ୍ବାକାର କରିବୁ । ତତେ ଦେଖିବା ଅପେକ୍ଷା ରେ,

କୁନା

ଚିଠି ପଢ଼ିସାରି ଜାନକୀଙ୍କ ହାତରୁ ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ମାଷ୍ଟେରୁ ଆରିଷା ପିଠା ନେଇ କେତେବେଳୁ ଯାଇ ସାରିଲେଣି । ଘର ଛାଡ଼ି ଗଲାବେଳେ କୁନା କେମିତି ଦିଶୁଥିଲା, ତାର ପିଲା ବେଳର ଜିଦି ଅଝଟ ସବୁ ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଯାଉଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କର, ପିଲାଟା କେମିତି ଦିଶୁଥିବ, ବୋହୂ ଟି



ବୋହୂଟି ଏବେ କେମିତି ହେଉଥିବା ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ଭାବନାରେ ବୁଡ଼ିଗଲା ବେଳେ ପଡ଼ିଶା ଘରର ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ଧୂପ, ଘଣ୍ଟ ଆଳତୀ ଶବ୍ଦ ରେ ଜାନକୀ ଚମକି ପଡ଼ିଲେ କାନିରେ ମୁହଁ ପୋଛୁ ପୋଛୁ ଚରବର ରେ ଅଗଣା ଚଉରା ଆଡେ ମୁହଁଇଲେ । ଆଜି ଆଉ ଗୋଟି ତଳେ ଲାଗୁନି ତାଙ୍କର । ଚଉରା ମୂଳରେ ଜୁହାର ହୋଉ ହୋଉ କହିଲେ "ହେ ମା ବୃନ୍ଦାବତୀ ତୁମକୁ କୋଟି ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆ । ଏକୋଇରେ ବଳା ବିସିକେଶନ ମୋର । ବାର ବର୍ଷ ର ବନବାସ ପରେ ତାକୁ ଆଖି ଭରି ଦେଖିବି । ହେ ମା ଲୋ ମୋ ଛୁଆ କୁ ସବୁ ସୁଖ ଦିଅ ବହୁତ ଆମ୍ଭେଷ ଦିଅ" ।

"I live in Chicago with my husband Subhendu Sadangi and my 14 year old son Nishant. I am a research scientist by profession. I am fortunate enough to author many scientific research publications on oncology and patents. Besides writing, music and food are my passion. We are OSA life member. OSA is HOME away from home.".....Suchismita Panda

ହୃଦୟ ର ଶୂନ୍ୟସ୍ଥାନ

ସୁନନ୍ଦା ମିଶ୍ର

ପଡ଼ିଶା ଘର ଦୁଇ ମହଲା ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ପୁରୁଣା କୋଠା ଘର କାନ୍ଥ ରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଫାଟ । ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ଦେବୀ ଚାହା କପ ଟି ଧରି ସବୁଦିନେ ଅଗଣା ରେ ବସି ନିରେଖୁ ରହିଥାନ୍ତି ସେ ଶିଉଳି ଲଗା ପାଉଁଶିଆ କାନ୍ଥ କୁ । ମାଳତୀ ସବୁ ଦିନେ ଏ ଘଟଣା କୁ ଦେଖେ, ହେଲେ ଆଜି ଆଉ ନିଜକୁ ରୋକି ପାରିଲାନି ।

"ମା ! ବାଲେଶ୍ୱର ରେ ଏରକମ ପୁରୁଣା କାଳିଆ ଘର କିଛି, ନୂଆ ଜିନିଷ ନା କିସ ? ସବୁଦିନେ କିସ ଦେଖନ୍ତି ସେ ଶିଉଳି ସର ସର କାନ୍ଥ ରେ ?"

ମା ଙ୍କ ର ଧ୍ୟାନ ଟିକେ ହେଲେ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଲାନି ମାଳତୀ ର ଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ରେ ।

କହିଲେ "ସେ କାନ୍ଥର ଫାଟ ଭିତରୁ ଝୁଲି ରହି ଥିବା ବାରମାସୀ ଗଛ ଟି କୁ ଦେଖୁ ପାରୁଛୁ? କେବେ ଗଛର ସବୁ ଡାଳ ରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଲେଖା ଫୁଲ, ତ କେବେ ଗୋଟିଏ ହେଲେ ନାହିଁ ।" ମାଳତୀ ଭଲ କାହିଁ ଜାଣିବ ମା କେଉଁ ଗୁଡ଼ ଭାବନା ରାଉଜ ରେ ବୁଲୁଛନ୍ତି ! ପାନ ଖଣ୍ଡିକହାତ କୁ ବଢେଇ ଦେଇ ଚାଲିଗଲା ବାକି କାମ ସାରିବାକୁ । ମା ଙ୍କ ଗୋରା କପାଳ ରେ ଲାଲ ଦାଉ ଦାଉ ସିନ୍ଦୂର ଟୋପା ଟି ତା ଆଖି କୁ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଅନୁଭବ ଟିଏ ଦିଏ । ତାର ମନେ ବି ନାହିଁ ପ୍ରଥମେ କେବେ ଆସିଥିଲା ଏ ଘର କୁ । ତା ଜନ୍ମ ଆଗରୁ ତା ବୋଉ ନିଜ ଜୀବନ କୁ ଏ ଘର ନା ରେ ସମ୍ପି ଦେଇ ଥିଲା । ଯେବେ ଠାରୁ ସେ ଦେଖୁଛି, ଟାଙ୍ଗାଇଲ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ଛଡ଼ା ଆଉ କିଛି ପସନ୍ଦ ନୁହେ ମା ଙ୍କର । ତା ଉପରେ ପାନ ଖଣ୍ଡେ ପାଟି ରେ ଦେଇଦେଲେ, ମାଳତୀ ଅଳ୍ପ ସମୟ ପାଇଁ ଚାହିଁ ରହି ଯାଏ ।

ବାଲେଶ୍ୱର ର ଏ ପୁରୁଣା କୋଠା ଘରରଭିତ କୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଯେଉଁ ଚାଲିଆ ବସ୍ତି ଟିଏ ଗଢି ଉଠିଛି, ସେଇଠି ମାଳତୀ ର ଘର । ବାଲେଶ୍ୱର ରେ ନୂଆ ନୂଆ ସହରୀ ଜୀବନ ର ପରସ ଲାଗିବା ବହୁତ ଆଗରୁ, ଏ ଦାରିଦ୍ର୍ୟତା ର ତାଜ ମହଲ ସବୁ ଗଢି ଉଠିଥିଲେ । ଯାହା କି ଲୋଲୁପ ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ରେ କୋଠାଘର ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଚାହିଁ ରହିଛନ୍ତି କେଉଁ କାଳ ରୁ । ହେଲେ ୫ ଫୁଟ ଉପର କୁ କେବେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଉନ୍ନତି ନାହିଁ, କି ଝାଟିମାଟି କାନ୍ଥ ଉପରେ କଂକ୍ରିଟ ର ଆବରଣ କେବେ ଲାଗୁନାହିଁ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ମାଳତୀ ର କୌଣସି ଆପତ୍ତି ନାହିଁ ତାର ଦାରିଦ୍ର୍ୟତା କୁ ନେଇ । ଚାଲିଆ ଘର ନା କୁ ମାତ୍ର ତାର ଠିକଣା । ଏଇ କୋଠା ଘରେ ଭୋର ରୁ ରାତି ଯାଏଁ ତାର ସମୟ କରୁଛି । ଏଥିରେ ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ଦେବୀଙ୍କର ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥ ମଧ୍ୟ ଥାଏ । ସେ ସହଜ ରେ ଯିବା କୁ ଦିଅନ୍ତିନି ମାଳତୀ କୁ । ସେ ଚାଲିଗଲେ କଥା ହେବା କୁ ଲୋକ ନାହାନ୍ତି ଏଡ଼େ ବଡ଼ ଘରେ । ଘରେ ସିନା କହିବାକୁ ଦୁଇଟି ଲୋକ, ସେ ଓ ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ୱାମୀ । ଗୋବିନ୍ଦ ବାବୁ ମୂଳରୁ ଅଧିକାଂଶ ସମୟ ବାହାରେ କାଟନ୍ତି । ସହର ର ଯେତିକି ପୁରୁଣା ଲୋକ ଙ୍କ ସହିତ ତାଙ୍କର ବନ୍ଧୁତା । ହେଲେ ମାଳତୀ ନ ଥିଲେ ସାବିତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଏକାକୀୟ ର ଅଛନ୍ଦାସ୍ୟ ମୋଟା ମୋଟା କାନ୍ଥ ରେ ବାଜି ଫେରି ଆସନ୍ତି ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖ କୁ ପୁଣି ଥରେ । ଆଜି ସିନା ନୀତ ଟି ତାଙ୍କର ନିରବ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଛି । ଦିନେ ଏଇ ଘର ପୁରି ଉଠୁଥିଲା ଶାଶୁ, ଶ୍ୱଶୁର ଙ୍କ



ତାଗିଦ ଓ ନଶାନ୍ଦ, ଦିଅର ଜ୍ଞ ଅଜ୍ଞା ମଜା ରେ । ୧୭ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସ ରୁ ଏ ଘର କୁ ବାହା ହୋଇ ଆସିଥିଲେ । ଆଉ ତାଙ୍କ ଦୁଇ ପୁଅଙ୍କ ହସ,ଗୀତ ଓ ଅସରନ୍ତି ମାନ ଅଭିମାନ, ଅଳି, ଅର୍ଦଳି ଆଜି ବି ମନେ ପଡିଲେ ଗତ କାଲି ପରି ଲାଗୁଛି ।

ମାଳତୀ ମା ଛେଉଣ୍ଡ ହେବା ଦିନ ଠୁ ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ଦେବୀ ତାଙ୍କ ଉଦାର ପଣ ରେ ଘୋଡେଇ ରଖି ଥିଲେ ମାଳତୀ କୁ । ଗୋପନ ଭାବେ ଝିଅ ର ମା ହେବାର ସୁଖ କୁ ଅନୁଭବ କରୁଥିଲେ । ଦଶହରା, କାଳୀ ପୂଜା, ରଜ ପର୍ବ ବେଳେ ଜାମା ପଟା କିଣି ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ଆଉ ମାଳତୀ ବାଲେଶ୍ଵର ର ଖୁଣ୍ଟା ମିଜାଜ ପୂଜା ବଜାର ରେ ମନ ଖୋଲି ବୁଲେ ଓ ମା ଦେଇଥିବା ହାତ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ରେ ମହି ଦୋକାନ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ରସଗୋଲା ଠାରୁ ନେଇ ଗୋପାଳ ଭାଇ ର ଚେନାହୁର ଠେଲା ଗାଡ଼ୀ ଯାଏଁ ବୁଲି ବୁଲି ଖାଏ । ମା ଜ୍ଞ ପାଇଁ ତାଙ୍କ ମନ ପସନ୍ଦିଆ ଦୋକାନ ରୁ ଆଳୁ ଦମ ଆଣିବାକୁ କେବେ ଭୁଲେନି । ଦୁହେଁ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ବେଳେ ବସି ଅନେକ ଗପ ସପ ହୁଅନ୍ତି । ସେ ବାର୍ତ୍ତାଳପ ରେ ମା ଓ ମାଳତୀ ଯଥାକ୍ରମେ ଅତୀତ ଓ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ର ଦର୍ପଣ ରେ ଭଜି ମାରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ପରସ୍ପର କୁ । ସେ ଦର୍ପଣ ରେ ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ଦେବୀ ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ ଯାକର ଶିକ୍ଷା କୁ ମାଳତୀ ଆଗରେ ଦେଖେଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ମାଳତୀ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେ ଶିକ୍ଷା କୁ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରି ତାର ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ କୁ ଦେଖିବା ପାଇଁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରେ ସେ ଦର୍ପଣ ଭିତରେ । ପୁଅ ମାନେ ଆମେରିକା ରେ ସବୁଦିନ ପାଇଁ ରହିବା ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନେଲା ପରେ ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ଦେବୀ ନିଜ ରକ୍ତ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ଉପରେ କୌଣସି ଆଶା ଭରସା ନ ରଖିବାର, ଛଳନା ମାତ୍ର କରୁଛନ୍ତି ବୋଲି ମାଳତୀ ଖୁବ ଭଲ ଭାବେ ଜାଣେ । ଅନେକ ଚେଷ୍ଟା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ପୁଅ ମାନେ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଆମେରିକା ନେବା କୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ରାଜି କରେଇ ପାରିଲେନି ତାଙ୍କୁ । ମାଳତୀ କେବେ କେମିତି ପଚାରେ " ମା ଆପଣ ଆମେରିକା ଗଲେ, ସେଠି ନାତି, ନାତୁଣୀ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖି ଦିଅ, ମନ ଭଲ ରହିବ । ଏ ପୁରୁଣା ଘରେ ଏକା ଏକା ରହି କିସ ନାଗି ସବୁ ଦିନେ ଝୁରୁଛନ୍ତି ତାଙ୍କ ଡେ ? " ତୁ ବୁଝିବୁନି ଲୋ ମାଳତୀ, ଏଇ ଘର ର ପ୍ରତି କାନ୍ଧ ରେ ମୋ ଅସଂଖ୍ୟ ସ୍ମୃତି ଲେଖା ହେଇଛି । ଏଣେ ବୟସ ବହୁତ ହେଲାଣି, କେତେବେଳେ କଣ ହେବ କିଏ ଜାଣିଲା? ମୁଁ ମରିବି ଯଦି ଏ ଘରେ ମରିବି । ସେ ପରଦେଶ ରେ ଯାଇକି କାହିଁକି ମରିବି ? ତା ଛଡ଼ା ଘର ଖାଲି କରି ପଳେଇ ଗଲେ ମୋ ଜିପାରେ କିଏ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ଦୀପ ଜାଳିବ?"

ମାଳତୀ ତାର ସୀମିତ ଜ୍ଞାନରେ ଆଉ ଅଧିକ ବୁଝାଇ ନ ପାରିଲେ ବି ଠିକ ଜାଣିପାରେ ମା କେତେ ଏକୃଷ୍ଟିଆ ମନେ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ନିଜକୁ । ଯେଉଁ ଶା ବର୍ଷ ରେ ଥରେ ପୁଅ, ବୋହୁ, ନାତି, ନାତୁଣୀ ଆସନ୍ତି, ମା ପ୍ରାଣ ପଣେ ଲାଗି ପଡି ମାଳତୀ ସହିତ ସଜନୀ ଶାଗ, କଳମ ଶାଗ ରାନ୍ଧି ଖୁଆନ୍ତି । ବାଡ଼ି ର ଗଡ଼ିଆ ରୁ ଲୋକ ଲଗେଇ ତୁନା ମାଛ, ପୋହଳା ଧରି ପତ୍ର ପୋଡ଼ା ଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ମସଲା ତରକାରୀ ଯାଏଁ ସବୁ ନିଜେ ରାନ୍ଧନ୍ତି । ଆଉ ବୋହୂ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ତାଗିଦ କରି, ବାର ବାର ଚି ଚୁଡ଼ି ପିନ୍ଧିବା ପାଇଁ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ଧଳା ଶଙ୍ଖା ବାଲା କୁ ଆଗରୁ କହି ରଖି ଥାନ୍ତି, ବୋହୂ ମାନେ ଆସିଲେ ଦୁଆର ରେ ଡାକ ପକେଇବା ପାଇଁ । ବୋହୂ ମାନେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଯେତିକି ଦିନ ରହନ୍ତି ମା ଜ୍ଞ କଥା କୁ ଅମାନ୍ୟ କରି ପାରନ୍ତିନି । ହେଲେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଚାପା ଅସନ୍ତୋଷ ମାଳତୀ ଦେଖି ପାରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ । କାହିଁ ସେମାନେ ମୋଡେର୍ନ ଝିଅ ଆଉ କାହିଁ ଏ ସବୁ କାତ ଚୁଡ଼ି, ଧଳା ଶଙ୍ଖା ର ପ୍ରଥା । ଏ ସବୁ ଗାଉଁଲି କଥା ଭାବି ଗାଡ଼ି ରେ ବସୁ ବସୁ ଚୁଡ଼ି ତକ ଖୋଲି ହାଣ୍ଡ ବେଗ ରେ ରଖି ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ବାଡ଼ି ପଟ ଗଡ଼ିଆ ରେ ମାଳତୀ ବାସୀ ବାସନ ସଫା କଲା ବେଳେ ମା କେତେବେଳୁ ପଛରେ ଆସି ପାହାଚ ରେ ବସିଥିବା ଦେଖି ତମକି ପଡିଲା ।

"ହଇ ଲୋ ଏ ମାଳତୀ! ପୁଅ ଘର କଥା ଛିଡ଼େଇବାକୁ ଆସିଥିଲେ ପରା? କଣ ହେଲା ?" ମାଳତୀ ଟିକେ ଲାଜେଇ ଗଲା । ବାସନ କୁ ଜୋର ରେ ଘଷି ଲାଜ କୁ ଲୁଚେଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରି କହିଲା "ମା ଦୁଇ ମାସ ପରେ ବାହାଘର ତାରିଖ ଠିକ ହେଇଛି" । ମା ଅଳ୍ପ ହସି କହିଲେ "ଯା ହଉ ଭଲ ହେଲା, ତୋ ବାପା କହୁଥିଲେ ଭଲ ଘରେ ବାହା ହଉଛି ତୁ । ପଡିଶା ଘର ରମେଶ ବାବୁ ଜାଣିଛନ୍ତି ତୋ ଶାଶୁ ଘର ପରିବାରକୁ । ଖୁସି ରେ ରହିବୁ ତୁ ସେଠି ।" ମା ଜ୍ଞ ମୁହଁ କୁ ଆଡ କରି ମାଳତୀ ଚାପା ହସ ଟିଏ ହସିଦେଲା ।

ସବୁଦିନ ଭଳି ଆଜି ମଧ୍ୟ ମା ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ଦୀପ ଜାଳି ଆସିବା ଆଗରୁ ମାଳତୀ ଚା କପ ଧରି ଚି ପୟ ପାଖରେ ଜଗି ଥାଏ । ଦିନ ରେ ମା ଜ୍ଞ ମନ ପସନ୍ଦିଆ ପଡୁଆ, ଶୁଣୁ ସୁନିଆ ଶାଗ, ତୁନା ମାଛ ଚଡ଼ଚଡ଼ି ସବୁ କଲା, ହେଲେ ଏ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ମା ଜ୍ଞ ମୁହଁ ରେ ସେ ସ୍ୱାଭାବିକ ପ୍ରଶଂସା କି ହସ ଦେଖିନି । ପାନ ବେଳ ଗତିଗଲେ, ମା ଯେମିତି ଡାକ ପକାନ୍ତି, ସେ ଡାକ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆଜି ଶୁଣିନି । ଭୋର ରୁ ଆସିଲା ବେଳେ ମା ଆଜି ଆଗରୁ ଉଠି ଦାଣ୍ଡ ରେ ବସିଥିଲେ । ଅଲଗା ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ମା ଜ୍ଞ ବ୍ୟବହାର ତାକୁ । ମା ଜ୍ଞ ଚା କପ ଚି ଧରେଇ ମାଳତୀ ପଚାରିଲା, " ମା ଆଜି କିସ ହେଇଛି, ଏମିତି ମାନ୍ଦା ଲାଗୁଛନ୍ତି?" ।



ସାବିତ୍ରୀ ଦେବୀ ଜ୍ଞ ମୁହଁରେ ଆବେଗର ଜୁଆର ମାଡି ଆସିଲା । ସତେ କି ବର୍ଷ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଶୁଣିବା ପାଇଁ ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ ଥିଲେ କିନ୍ତୁ ପଚାରିବା ଲୋକ ନ ଥିଲେ । ମା ଜ୍ଞ କଣ ଜାକି ହେଇଯାଉଥିଲା, "ତୁ ଭୋର ରୁ ଆସି ଘରର ଦାୟିତ୍ବ ନେଉଥିଲୁ ଲୋ ମାଳତୀ... ଦାଣ୍ଡରେ ଗୋବର ପାଣି ଛିଞ୍ଚିବା ଠୁ ନେଇ ରାତି ଖାଇବା ବନେଇବା ଯାଏ । ପୁଅ, ବୋହୂ, ପତିଶା ସମସ୍ତେ ଛାଡି ଚାଲିଗଲେ କିନ୍ତୁ ତୋ ଯୋଗୁ ମୁଁ କେବେ ଏକୃତିଆ ଭାବି ନ ଥିଲି ନିଜକୁ । ତୋ ବାପା ଜୁ ତ ଜାଣିଛୁ, ରାତି ନ ହେଲେ ତାଙ୍କର ଘର କଥା ମନେ ପଡେ ନାହିଁ । ମୋ ଘର ଖାଲି ହେବାକୁ ଦେଇ ନ ଥିଲୁ ଏ ଘରକୁ ଆସିବା ଦିନ ଠୁ । ତୁ ମୋ ଏକୃତିଆ ରହିବା ଅଭ୍ୟାସକୁ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଦେଇଛୁ ଲୋ ମାଳତୀ ।" ମାଳତୀକୁ ଆଜି ହଠାତ ପର ପର ମନେ ହେଉଥିଲା । ଆଖିରୁ ତାର ଲୁହ ପାହାଡି ଝରଣା ପରି ଅମାନ୍ତିଆ ହୋଇ ବହିଗଲା । ସେ ପୋଛିବାକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଚାହୁଁନି ଆଜି, ତା ବୋଉ ମଲା ଦିନ ଠାରୁ ମା ତାର ସବୁ କିଛି ଥିଲେ । ସମ୍ପର୍କର ଅବୁଝା କାହାଣୀ ଯେମିତି ତା ମନ ମସ୍ତିଷ୍କ ସହିତ ଲୁଚକାଳି ଖେଳୁ ଥାନ୍ତି ।

ପ୍ରକୃତିସ୍ଥ ହୋଇ ମୁହଁ ଟେକି ଚାହିଁଲା ମା ଜୁ । ମା ଅନେଇ ରହି ଥାନ୍ତି ସେଇ ବାରମାସୀ ଫୁଲ ଗଛକୁ । ତାର ନିରୁପାୟ ଆଖି ଦୁଇଟି ଅନୁସରଣ କଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୁ । ସେ ଗଛରେ ଆଜି ମାତ୍ର ଗୋଟିଏ ଫୁଲ । ଖୁବ ଜୋର ଦୋହଲୁ ଥାଏ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ବେଳର ପବନରେ । ଅଗଣା ର ମଲ୍ଲି ହାଲକା ସୁଗନ୍ଧ ଚହଟାଇ ନିଜ ଉପସ୍ଥିତିକୁ ଯେତେ ଜାହିର କଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ମା ଜ୍ଞ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଭଙ୍ଗ କରିବାରେ ଅସମର୍ଥ । ମାଳତୀ ଆଜି ପାଇଛି ତା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର । ଦିନସାରା ର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ କିରଣରେ ବାରମାସୀ ଗଛଟି ଝାଉଁଳି ଯାଇଛି । କେତେ ଫୁଲ ଏ ଗଛରେ ମଉଳି ଝଡି ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି ଗୋଟି ପରେ ଗୋଟି । କାଲି ଏ ଗୋଟିକ ଫୁଲ ମଧ୍ୟ ଝଡି ଯିବ । ଅଗଣା ର ମଲ୍ଲି ଯେତେ ବାସିଲେ ହେଲେ, କଣ ତା ବାମ୍ବା ବାରମାସୀ ଗଛକୁ ଉଧାରରେ ଦେଇ ପାରିବ? ସାରା ଦିନର କ୍ଲାନ୍ତି କଣ ସାନ୍ଧ୍ୟକାଳୀନ ଶିରି ଶିରି ପବନ ମେଣ୍ଟେଇ ପାରିବ? ହେଲେ ବି ଝାଉଁଳା ଗଛଟି ସେ ପୁରୁଣା କାନ୍ଥରୁ ବଂଚିବାର ଆଶା ନେଇ ନିଜର ଅନ୍ତିମ ମଉଳା ଫୁଲ ଟିକୁ ଜାବୁଡି ଧରିଛି ।

" ମୁଁ ସୁନନ୍ଦା ମିଶ୍ର, ବାଲେଶ୍ବର ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ, ଉତ୍କଳ ଯୁନିଭର୍ସିଟିରେ ମନସ୍ତତ୍ତ୍ବ ବିଭାଗରେ ପୋଷ୍ଟ ଗ୍ରାଜୁଏସନ. ଓ ଏମ ଫିଲ ଡିଗ୍ରୀ ହାସଲ କରିଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ବାଲେଶ୍ବର ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ ଓ ଭାରତର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଜୀବନ କାଳର ଅଧିକାଂଶ ସମୟ ବିତେଇବା ପରେ, ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ମିଟିଗାନରେ ନିଜ ପରିବାର ସହିତ ରହୁଛି । ବିଦେଶରେ ଓଶା ସହିତ ମୋର ସମ୍ପର୍କ ଯେବେଠୁ ଗଢି ଉଠିଛି ସେବେ ଠାରୁ ମୋ କୁନି ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ମୋ ପାଖରେ ମୁଁ ପାଇ ଯାଇଛି । ଓଶା ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ସହାୟତା ପାଦେ ପାଦେ ଅନୁଭବ କରିଛି । ଏକଜୁଟ ହୋଇ ଆଗକୁ ବଢିବା ଦୃଢ ମନୋବଳକୁ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ଦେଖି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଅଭାବକୁ କିଛି ମାତ୍ରାରେ ପୂରଣ କରି ଦେଉଛି ଓଶା । ଓଶା ମୋ ପାଇଁ ବିଦେଶ ମାଟିରେ ଏକ କୁନି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ।" ସୁନନ୍ଦା ମିଶ୍ର



ଅନ୍ୱେଷଣ

ସୁଜାତା ଦାସ

ବୈଦୁର୍ଯ୍ୟ ପାହାଡ଼ ଚୂଡ଼ା ରେ

ଅଛନ୍ତି ଯୁଗ ପୁରୁଷ ଜଣେ

ଯାଚି ଦେଉଛନ୍ତି

ସୁଖ ଶାନ୍ତି ର ଅମାପ ଐଶୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ

ମାଗିବା କ୍ଷଣେ ।

ମୁଁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଛିଡ଼ା କରି ନେଲି

ସବୁକିଛି କୁ ପଛ କରି

ବାହାରି ଯିବି ବୋଲି.....

ଏବଂ ବାହାରିଗଲି ।

ଖୁବ୍ ଉଚ୍ଚ ସେ ପର୍ବତ

ଆରୋହଣ ଖୁବ୍ କଷ୍ଟସାଧ

ଯଦ୍ୟପି ନୁହେଁ ଅସମ୍ଭବ ,

ନିଶ୍ଚୟ କଲି

କୌଣସି ବି ମୂଲ୍ୟ ବିନିମୟ ରେ

ମୁଁ ଯିବି,

ଯୁଗ ପୁରୁଷ କୁ ଭେଟି

ଅମାପ ସୁଖ ଶାନ୍ତି ମାଗି ଆଣିବି ।

ବାଟରେ ଅନାବନା ଗୀତ ଗାଇ

ପାଦରେ ଛନ୍ଦି ହେଲା ନଈ

ଆଡ଼େଇ ଦେଲି ତା ଅଲିଅଳ ପଣ

ଲୁହପୋଛି ବାଟଭାଙ୍ଗି ସେ ଗଲା ବହି



କଢ଼ି ରୁ ସଦ୍ୟ ଫୁଟି ଥିବା
ଫୁଲ ଚି ଲାଜେଇ ଚାହିଁଲା
ଭଅଁର ଛୁଇଁବାର ପ୍ରଥମ ପୁଲକ
ବାଣିବାକୁ ବୋଧେ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲା,
ହାତ ହଲେଇ ମୁଁ ଆଗକୁ ବଢ଼ିଗଲି
ସେସବୁ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା କି ସମୟ ନ ଥିଲା ।

ମଳୟ ପବନ ଶିର ଶିର କିଛି କହୁଥିଲା
ବୋଧେ କହୁଥିଲା...
ଚିକେ ବସିଯାଅ, ପୋଛିଦେବି ଝାଳ
ଦେବି ବସନ୍ତ ର ପ୍ରଥମ ଚୁମ୍ବନ
କାନରେ କହିବି
ଆମ୍ଭ ବଉଳ ର ପ୍ରଥମ ଗୋପନ ସପନ....
ନା... ମୁଁ ରହିଗଲି ନାହିଁ...ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ନ ଥିଲା
ମୋତେ ଚୁଡ଼ା ରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବାର ଥିଲା,
ସବୁକିଛି ସେଇଠୁ ହିଁ ପାଇବାର ଥିଲା ।

ମୁଁ ବୋଧହୁଏ ଦିଶୁଥିଲି କ୍ଲାନ୍ତ ବିବର୍ଣ୍ଣ
ପ୍ରଜାପତି ମୋତେ ଦେଖୁ ଚିକେ ରହିଗଲା
ରଙ୍ଗ କିଛି ଯାଚିଲା ଆପଣା ଡେଶାରୁ
ମୋ ଅହଂକାର ଅବଜ୍ଞା ରେ ମୁହଁ ବୁଲେଇ ନେଲା,
ଓ ଆଗକୁ ଚାଲିଲା ।

ବେଳ ରତ ରତ
ମୁଁ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲି ଝାଳ ସର ସର
କ୍ଲାନ୍ତ, ପରିଶ୍ରାନ୍ତ,



ଯୁଗ ପୁରୁଷ ବସିଛନ୍ତି
 ଅଳ୍ପ ଅଳ୍ପ ହସ୍ତଛନ୍ତି
 ମୁଁ କିଛି ମାଗିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ହିଁ
 ସେ ରଖିଲେ ସର୍ତ୍ତ...
 ସବୁ ଦେବି ଯାହାବି ମାଗିବ
 କିଛି...
 ଯାହାସବୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଛି ସ୍ବଇଚ୍ଛାରେ
 ସେ ସବୁ ଆଉ ନ ମାଗିବ ।
 ଅନେକ ବେଳ ଧରି ମୁଁ ସେମିତି ବସିଛି
 କ'ଣ କ'ଣ ମାଗିବି
 ଚିଠା ବୋଧେ ହଜାଇ ଦେଇଛି !
 ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବୁଡ଼ି ଗଲେଣି
 ମୋ ଗାଁ ନଈ ଭିତରେ
 ଫେରିବି ବୋଲି ମୁଁ
 ପାଦ ଦି'ଚା ଲୁ ଖୋଜି ହେଉଛି ।

ସୁଜାତା ଦାସ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଭୁବନେଶ୍ବରରେ ନିଜ ପରିବାରଙ୍କ ସହିତ ବସବାସ କରନ୍ତି । ପେଶାରେ ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସାହିତ୍ୟପଠନ ଓ ସୃଜନ ତାଙ୍କର ନିଶା ଅଟେ । କବିତା ସଂକଳନ 'ମୃଣ୍ମୟ ଅଭିସାର' ତାଙ୍କ କବି ପ୍ରତିଭାର ପରିଚୟ ଦିଏ । ଏହି କବିତାଟି ସୁଜାତାଙ୍କ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ ମତା ସାହୁଙ୍କ (ମିଟିଗାନ) ଦ୍ବାରା ପ୍ରେରିତ । ମତା ସାହୁ ମିଟିଗାନ ଓସା ର ସକ୍ରିୟ ସଭ୍ୟା ।



ଅଭିଳାଷା

ଝିନୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ

ଥାଆନ୍ତାକି ପକ୍ଷ ମୋର ଉଡିଯାନ୍ତି ବହୁ ଦୂର
ତେଇ ମୁଁ ଯାଆନ୍ତି ଚାଲି ମନଗଢା ଏ ପ୍ରାଚୀର
ପହଞ୍ଚନ୍ତି ଯାଇ ଦୂରେ
ଏ ସଂସାର ଆରପାରେ
ଯେଉଁଠି ନଥିବ ପ୍ରଲୋଭନ ବନ୍ଧନର
କିଏ ପତି, କିଏ ପତ୍ନୀ
କିଏ ପୁଣି ଭ୍ରାତା, ଭଗ୍ନୀ
କିଏ ପୁତ୍ର, କନ୍ୟା ଆଉ ସଖା, ସହୋଦର
କ୍ଷଣିକ ଏ ମୋହ ମାୟା
ସବୁ ମିଥ୍ୟା ଦେଖାଣିଆ
ସଂସାର ସଂପର୍କ ସେ ଯେ କେବଳ ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥର ।

ଥାଆନ୍ତାକି ପକ୍ଷ ମୋର ଉଡିଯାନ୍ତି ବହୁ ଦୂର
ଶୁଣି ଆଉ ନପାରନ୍ତି ଏଠାକାର କୋଳାହଳ
ପହଞ୍ଚନ୍ତି ଯାଇ ଦୂରେ
ଲୋକ ସମାଗମ ପାରେ
ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ହୁଅନ୍ତା ବସୁବାଦୀ ଦୁନିଆର
ଧନ, ଜନ, ଯଶ, ଖ୍ୟାତି
ଜୀବ ଧାଏଁ ପଛେ ନିତି
ହ୍ରାସ ହୁଏ ନାହିଁ କେବେ ତା ମୃଗତୃଷ୍ଣର
ଦେଖାଇବା ମତିଗତି



ଲାଗିଅଛି ବାଜି ନିତି
ନତାଏ ମଣିଷକୁ ଏ ବୃଥା ଅହଂକାର ।

ଥାଆନ୍ତାକି ପକ୍ଷ ମୋର ଉଡିଯାନ୍ତି ବହୁ ଦୂର
ତେଇ ମୁଁ ଯାଆନ୍ତି ଚାଲି ମନଗଢା ଏ ପ୍ରାଚୀର
ପହଞ୍ଚନ୍ତି ଯାଇ ଦୂରେ
ଭେଦଭାବ ଆରପାରେ
ଦେଖିବିନି ଯହିଁ ବଛାବଛିର ବିଚାର
ମାଲିକର ରଙ୍ଗ ଆଖି
ଧନୀର ହାକିମ ଜାରି
ଦୁର୍ବଳରେ ଅତ୍ୟାଚାର ସଦା ସବଳର
କିଏ ରାଜା, କିଏ ଧନୀ
କିଏ ଦୀନ, ହିନିମାନି
ସବୁରି ହୃଦୟ ପଦ୍ମେ ବସନ୍ତି ଲଗ୍ନର ।

ଥାଆନ୍ତାକି ପକ୍ଷ ମୋର ଉଡିଯାନ୍ତି ବହୁ ଦୂର
ପହଞ୍ଚିବି ଅଭିଳାଷୀ ଏକ ଆଶ୍ରମ କୁଟୀରେ
ଶାନ୍ତ ସେଇ ପରିବେଶ
ସେ ନୈସର୍ଗିକ ଝରଣ
ବୁଝାଇବ ଶାନ୍ତି ଗଙ୍ଗା ପ୍ରତଟି କୋଷରେ
ଶୁଣୁଥିବି ସାଧୁବାଣୀ
ଶୁଭିଯିବ ଶଙ୍ଖ ଧ୍ବନି
ପୌତହେବ ଏ ଶରୀର ଓଁକାର ଧ୍ବନିରେ
ସମନ୍ୱୟ ଅନୁଭୂତି
ନିଃସ୍ୱାର୍ଥ ପ୍ରେମର ଶକ୍ତି



ବାନ୍ଧିଥିବ ମନକୁ ମୋ ସଦା ଶ୍ରୀପୟରେ ।

ଝିନୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ ସେଷରୁଭିଲ୍, ଭର୍ତ୍ତିନିଆରେ ରହନ୍ତି । ସେ ନିୟମିତ ଭାବେ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଓସା ପତ୍ରିକାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ କବିତା ପ୍ରକାଶିତ କରି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି ।
ତାଙ୍କର କଳା ପ୍ରତି ଖୁବ ଆଗ୍ରହ ।

ମଣିଷ କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ?

ବିଜୟମୋହନ ମିଶ୍ର

ଆକାଶରେ ତାରାମେଲେ, ଗଛର ଆଡୁଆଲେ,

ଜହ୍ନ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ନଇଁ ନଇଁ ,

ନଇ ସେପାରି ପବନ, ମଧୁରିଆ ଉପବନ

ଗନ୍ଧ ଆଣେ ଛୁଇଁ ଛୁଇଁ ,

ନଇ ପାଣି କୁଳୁକୁଳୁ, ବହଇ ପାହାଡ଼ ତଳୁ

ଢେଉ ନାଚେ ଥେଇ ଥେଇ,

ବୋଧୁମୂଳେ ବୁଦ୍ଧ ଭାବେ, ଧରଣୀ ସମାବେଶ ଠାବେ

ମୁଁ ମଣିଷ କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ?

କଳି ତକରାଳ ଯୁଦ୍ଧ, ସର୍ବତ୍ର ସଭିଏଁ ବିରୁଦ୍ଧ,

ସାଧୁ ଦେଖେ ନଇଁ ନଇଁ ,

ଦରିଆ ସେପାରି କମାଣ, ଗୋଳା ବାରୁଦ କ୍ଷେପଣ,

ଗନ୍ଧ ଆଣେ ଛୁଇଁ ଛୁଇଁ ,

ମା କାନ୍ଦେ ଲୁହ ଭାଳି, ତାଣ୍ଡବ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଅଟକାଳି

ଶାଗୁଣୀ ନାଚେ ଥେଇ ଥେଇ,

ବୋଧୁମୂଳେ ବୁଦ୍ଧଭାବେ, ଧରଣୀ ସମାବେଶ ଠାବେ

ମୁଁ ମଣିଷ କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ?



ଭୋକିଲା ପିଲା ଅନ୍ଧ ନାହିଁ, ବାପ ଖୋଜେ ବିଭ ନାହିଁ
 ମା ଚାଲେ ନଇଁ ନଇଁ,
 ପାଚେରୀ ସେକଡ଼େ ସବୁଜ, ମଦମାଂସ ସଜବାଜ
 ଗନ୍ଧ ଆଣେ ଛୁଇଁ ଛୁଇଁ,
 ପାଚେରୀ ଡେଇଁବି ମୁଁ, ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ପୋଷିବି ମୁଁ,
 ନାଟିବି କାନ୍ଥେ ଥେଇ ଥେଇ,
 ବୋଧୁମୂଳେ ବୁଦ୍ଧ ଭାବେ, ଧରଣୀ ସମାବେଶ ଠାବେ
 ମୁଁ ମଣିଷ କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ?

ତରୁଣୀ ବାପଛଡ଼ା, ଦୁନିଆରେ ଘରଭଡ଼ା,
 ଦେଖୁଥାଏ ନଇଁ ନଇଁ,
 ବଜାର ଲୁଆଡ଼ି ଆଖଡ଼ା, ସବୁଠି ମରଦଙ୍କ ଆଡ଼ଡ଼ା
 ଗନ୍ଧ ଆଣେ ଛୁଇଁ ଛୁଇଁ,
 ପଇସା ଗୋଟେ ବାହାନା, ଚୋରୀ ଲୁଲୁମ ସାମିଆନା
 ଲଙ୍ଗଳା ମୁକୁଳା ଥେଇ ଥେଇ,
 ବୋଧୁମୂଳେ ବୁଦ୍ଧ ଭାବେ, ଧରଣୀ ସମାବେଶ ଠାବେ
 ମୁଁ ମଣିଷ କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ?

ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ରୁଦ୍ଧ ବୁଦ୍ଧି ମୋର, ନିଷ୍ଠୁଳ ଆଉ ନିର୍ବିକାର,
 ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞା ଭର୍ଷ ନଇଁ ନଇଁ,
 ଲୋଭ ଦୁଃଖ ଏ ସଂସାର, ମଣିଷ ବାସନା ଅପାର,
 ଗନ୍ଧ ବହେ ଛୁଇଁ ଛୁଇଁ,
 ମଣିଷକୁ ଶାନ୍ତି ଦେବି, ମଣିଷକୁ ସତ୍ୟ ଦେବି,
 ଜଗତ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଥେଇ ଥେଇ
 ବୋଧୁମୂଳେ ବୁଦ୍ଧ ଭାବେ, ଧରଣୀ ସମାବେଶ ଠାବେ,
 ମୁଁ ମଣିଷ କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ?

Dr. Bijoy M Misra lives in Lincoln, MA and is in the Faculty at Harvard University. He is a physicist and a language specialist. He participated in the activities of the Odisha Society of the Americas in the early years doing plays and directing children's activities. He was the Treasurer of the Society during 1999-2001 and was instrumental in the Cyclone Relief Program organized by OSA.



ଅଯୋଧ୍ୟା

ବିଜୟ ମିଶ୍ର

ସମୟ-ବନବାସ ର ପୂର୍ବ ରାତି

ବାହାରେ ଅନ୍ଧାର ରାତି, ପେଟା ଡାକେ ଆମ୍ଭ କୋରଡ଼ରେ
ସାଇଁ ସାଇଁ ଶୀତଳ ପବନ ନିରବତାର ଅଖଣ୍ଡ ରାଜୁତି
ଏ ସହର ଶୋଇ ରହେ ଦେଖୁ ଦେଖୁ ଗୋଲାପି ସପନ
ଆମକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ହେବ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଛାଡ଼ି ପଞ୍ଚବଟୀ ବନ !

ପଥ ଆମ ସୀମାହୀନ, ଲକ୍ଷ ଆମ କାହିଁ କେତେ ଦୂର
କଣ୍ଠକ କଙ୍କର ପଥେ, ଚଳାଇବାକୁ ଆମ କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ପାଦ
ରଖିବାକୁ ପିତୃ ସତ୍ୟ, ଶୁଦ୍ଧିବାକୁ ଜୀବନ ର ରଣ
ଆମକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ହେବ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଛାଡ଼ି ପଞ୍ଚବଟୀ ବନ !

ମିଥୁଳା ରେ ସଖି ଗହଣରେ, ତୁମେ ଦେଖୁଥିବ କେତେ ସୁନେଲି ସପନ
ଅଯୋଧ୍ୟା ରେ ମଣିମୁକ୍ତା, ରାଜସୁତ ଶାନ୍ତ କାନ୍ତ ଜଳଦ ଗମ୍ଭୀର
ସବୁଟି ଅତୀତ ଆଜି ସତ୍ୟ ଖାଲି ସରଣୀ ଅସୀମ
ଆମକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ହେବ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଛାଡ଼ି ପଞ୍ଚବଟୀ ବନ !
କି ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ନିୟତିର ନର ଦେହେ, ନପାରି ମୁଁ ଜାଣି
ସମୟର ଅନ୍ତରାଳେ ଲୁଚି ଅଛି, କି ଅବା କାହାଣୀ
ଦୂର ଚକ୍ରବାଳ ପାରୁ ଶୁଣେ ଖାଲି କାଳର ଆହ୍ୱାନ
ଆମକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ହେବ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଛାଡ଼ି ପଞ୍ଚବଟୀ ବନ !
ଡରିବନି କେବେ ସଖି ସାଥୀ ଆମ ରୁଦ୍ରର ଆଶିଷ
ପଥରେ ପାଥେୟ ଆମ ପରସ୍ପର ପ୍ରୀତି ଓ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟୟ
ଦେଖୁ ଦେଖୁ ଯିବା କେତେ ବନ ଶୋଭା, ଶୁଣୁଥିବା ବିହଙ୍ଗର ଗୀତ



ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ ଅଛି ଆମ ପଥ ମଧ୍ୟେ ଉଷାର ଅରୁଣ

ଆମକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ହେବ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଛାଡ଼ି ପଞ୍ଚବଟୀ ବନ !

ମୋ ବାପି (ବାପା)ଶ୍ରୀ ବିଜୟ ମିଶ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଶାର କେନ୍ଦୁଝର ଜିଲ୍ଲାର ଅବସର ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ଡେପୁଟି ଜେନେରାଲ ମ୍ୟାନେଜର ,ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସ୍ୱର୍ଜ ଆଇରନ ଲିମିଟେଡ଼ !
କର୍ମମୟ ଜୀବନ ଭିତରେ ଯତ କିଂଚିତ ସମୟ ମିଳେ , ସେ ସେହି ସମୟକୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଘରେ ଥିବା ଛୋଟ ଲାଇବ୍ରେରିରେ କଟାଇବାକୁ ଭଲ ପାଆନ୍ତି ! ମୋର
ଆଉ ମୋ ସାନ ଭଉଣୀ ସ୍ୱସ୍ତିର ଚରିତ୍ର ଗଠନରେ ତାଙ୍କର ବହୁତ ବଡ଼ ଭୂମିକା ! ଲେଖା ଲେଖି ପ୍ରତି ତାଙ୍କର ଗଭୀର ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ରହିଛି ! ତାଙ୍କ କିଛିଟା ଲେଖା
ଭିତରୁ "ଅଯୋଧ୍ୟା " ଅନ୍ୟତମ ! ଆଶା କରୁଛି ଆପଣ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗିବ !-ସ୍ୱାତୀ ମିଶ୍ର



କନ୍ୟାଟିଏ

ମିନତି ମିଶ୍ର

କନ୍ୟା ସିଏ, ଝରଣା ଟିଏ

କଳ ନାଦିନୀ, ଆହ୍ଲାଦିନୀ ଧାରା ଟିଏ

ଭାଳିଦିଏ, ସୁଶୀତଳ ବାରିଷମ ଅମୃତ ଧାରା

ପ୍ରସାରି ତା ହାତ ଦୁଇ, କଅଁଳ ପରଶ ଦେଇ

ପୋଛିଦିଏ ମନ ତଳୁ ଯେତେ ଅବସାଦ !



ଦୁହିତା ସିଏ, ମୟୂରୀ ଟିଏ
 ବିଚିତ୍ର ବର୍ଣ୍ଣା, ଅପରୂପା ସୃଷ୍ଟି ସିଏ
 ସ୍ନିଗ୍ଧ କରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣାଳୀରେ ଫଗୁର ରଙ୍ଗ ବୋଲି
 ଧୂସର ମନ ମରୁରେ ସାଜି ନବ ଦୁର୍ବାବଳ !
 ତନ୍ମୁଖା ସିଏ, ତଟିନୀ ଟିଏ
 ରୁକ୍ଷଗିରି ବନ୍ଧ ଚିରି,
 ନୃତ୍ୟରତା ଫଲଗୁ ଏକ
 ବନାନୀ ତେଇଁ, କୁଳକୁ ଛୁଇଁ
 ଆଗେଇ ଯାଏ ଧୀରେ
 ପରଶି ଯାଏ ମଧୁର ଛୁଆଁ, ଧରଣୀ କରି ସିନ୍ଧୁ
 ମନରେ ଭରେ ଅପାର ଶକ୍ତି, ପୁଲକ ଅପ୍ରମିତ !
 ନନ୍ଦିନୀ ସିଏ, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରିକା ଟିଏ
 ବିଛାଡ଼ି ଦିଏ ବିମଳ ଆଭା, ଭିଜାଇ ଦିଏ ପ୍ରାଣ
 ଶେଫାଳୀ ସମ ଝରିଯାଏ ସେ,
 ବିଚରି ବାସ, ଛୁଟାଇ ହସ
 ଫୁଟାଇ ଦିଏ ଖୁସୀର ପାରିଜାତ !
 ଝଅଟି ସିଏ, ଝରାଟିଏ ତ
 ଫୁଆରା ପରି ଚଞ୍ଚଳ ଏକ, ଖୁସିର ଫୁଲଝରି
 ଧରଣୀ ପରି ସବୁ ତ ସହେ, ପାଶୋରେ ଦୁଃଖ
 ଫୁଲଟି ପରି ହସି ତ ଦିଏ, ଭୁଲାଇ ଦିଏ ମନ !!

“ ମୋ ମା ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ମିନତି ମିଶ୍ର, କେନ୍ଦୁଝର ବାଣୀ ବିହାର ର ସଂସ୍କୃତ ବିଭାଗର ଛାତ୍ରୀ ଥିଲେ । ପାଠ ପଢ଼ିବାରେ ତାଙ୍କର ସବୁବେଳେ ଅନେକ ଆଗ୍ରହ ! ଚାକିରି କରିବାର ଇଚ୍ଛା ଥିଲା ଓ ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳିଥିଲେ ବି ସେ ତାଙ୍କର ଜୀବନର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ସମୟ ତାଙ୍କର ପରିବାରକୁ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ଘର ବାହାର କାମ, ପିଲାଙ୍କ ପାଠ ପଢ଼ା ଛଡ଼ା ସେ ଅନେକ ସମୟ ସମାଜ ସେବା, ଗରିବ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ପାଠ ପଢ଼ାଇବା, ନିଜେ ହୋମିଓପାଥ ବହି ପଢ଼ି, ଡାକ୍ତରଙ୍କ ସଂଗେ ପରାମର୍ଶ କରି, ତାଙ୍କୁ ଔଷଧ ଯୋଗେଇବା, ଜଣା ଅଜଣା ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବା ଆଦି କାମରେ ସେ ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନର ଅନେକ ସମୟ ବିତାନ୍ତି ସବୁରି ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ସ୍କୁଲ ଜୀବନରୁ ତାଙ୍କର ଅନେକ କବିତା ଓ ଗଳ୍ପ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ପରିଚିତ ହୋଇଛି ! ତାଙ୍କର କିଛି ଦିନ ତଳର ମୋ ମନକୁ ଛୁଇଁ ଥିବା କବିତା ଟିଏ ଆପଣ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ! ଆଶା କରୁଛି ଆପଣ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗିବ !” ସ୍ବାତୀ ମିଶ୍ର

(ସ୍ବାତୀ ମିଶ୍ର ମିଡ଼ିଗାନ୍ ଓସାର ସକ୍ରିୟ ସଭ୍ୟା ଏବଂ ଓସାର ଆଜୀବନ ସଭ୍ୟା ।)



ସେ ଦିନ ତ ସେଇପରି ଥିଲା

କଳ୍ପନାମୟୀ ଦାଶ

ସେ ଦିନ ତ ସେଇପରି ଥିଲା ।

ଫୁଲ ପିନ୍ଧେଇ, ରିବନ୍ ବାନ୍ଧି, ପାଉଁଶର ମାଖୁଦେଲେ

ଝିଅ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଦିଶୁଥିଲା ଗୋଟେ କଣ୍ଢେଇପରି ,

ଷୋହଳ ବୟସୀ ମାଆଙ୍କୁ ଅଧିକ କିଛି,

ଜଣା ନଥିଲା ,

ଘର ଭର୍ତ୍ତି ଚାକର ଚାକରାଣୀ,

ସେବାରେ ରହିଲେ,

ମାଠିଆ ମାଠିଆ ଜଡାତେଲ,

ରାଶି ତେଲ ଘଷାଇ ,

ମୋଡା ଦଳା ସେକାସେକି କରିଦେଲେ

ଜୀବନ ତମାମ୍ ଝିଅଟି କାଟିବ

ସୁସ୍ଥ ଜୀବନ

ସେଦିନ ତ ସେଇପରି ଥିଲା ।୧।

ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଚକିତ କଲା ଝିଅଟି ।

ଅତି ମାତ୍ରାରେ ଜିଜ୍ଞାସୁ

ସମସ୍ତେ ଆମୋଦିତ

ଚାଟଶାଳୀରେ ଆସନ ପାଟୁଛି

ସକାଳୁ ସକାଳୁ ଅବଧାନେ ଆସିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ,

ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟୋଦୟ ହେଉ ହେଉ

ଜେଜେ ମାଆ ପଠେଇ ଚାଲିଲେ ଛଅ

ଫଳ, ପନିପରିବା, ଧୋତି, ଗାମୁଛା,



ଡାଲି, ଚାଉଳ, ଲୁଗା, ହଳଦୀ, ଘିଅ
ନାତୁଣୀ ଟେକ ଦେବ ଅବଧାନକୁ
ଗୋଡ଼ତଳେ ପଡ଼ି ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ନବ
ଭଲ ପଢ଼ିବ ମହାଦାନୀ ହେବ.

ଦାନ କରି ଶିଖିବ ।
ସେଦିନେ ତ ଏଇମିତି ହଉଥିଲା ।୨।

ବାପା କହିଲେ ମୋ ଝିଅ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରକୁ ଯିବ,
ଗୁରୁଜନ କହିଲେ ,
ତିଡ଼ିକ୍ଷା ଅଛି ପ୍ରବଳ , ଝିଅ ସଂସ୍କାରୀ ହେବ
ଶିକ୍ଷକ କହିଲେ
ତାକୁ ପଢ଼ାଇ ଦେବା, ତାକୁ ଉଡ଼ାଇ ଦେବା
ବହୁତ ଉପରକୁ ଉଠିଯିବ ଆମ ଚାଟଶାଳୀ ନାଁ
ଗଉରବ ରେ ଟେକି ହେଉଯିବ ସବୁ ଗୁରୁଙ୍କର ମୁଣ୍ଡ
ଆଉ ପରିବାର ହାତରେ
ସଂସାର ଯାକର ଆନନ୍ଦ ହେଉଯିବ ତୁଣ୍ଡ ।
ଅଚାନକ କିନ୍ତୁ !
ସବୁ କିଛି ସମାପ୍ତ ହେଇଗଲା ।
ସେଦିନ ତ ସେଇପରି ଥିଲା ।୩।

ବାଳିକା ବେଳରୁ ବାଳା
ବହି ରଖି ବୋହୂ ହେଇଗଲା
ପରଘରେ ଜାଳିବାକୁ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଉଦିଆ
ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ କରିଦେଲା ଅମାବାସ୍ୟା ।
ବହିଟିଏ ଖୋଲିଲେ
ଅଧିକ ରାତି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ
ଆଲୁଅ ଜଳାଇ ପଢ଼ିଲେ ...



ଠାକୁର ଘରେ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନାଟିଏ ବୋଲିଲେ
ଚିତ୍ର ଆଙ୍କିବାକୁ କାଗଜଟିଏ ଖୋଜିଲେ
ଅଭିଯୋଗ ଆସିଲା ।
ଅନ୍ଧର ମହଲରୁ , ଉପର ମହଲରୁ
ସାଇ ପଡ଼ିଶାରୁ
"ଏ ଝିଅ ବିଭା ହେବାର ନଥିଲା "
ବୋଲି ଚିପ୍ପଣୀ ମିଳିଲା
ସେଦିନ ତ ସେଇପରି ଥିଲା ।୪।

ବାପା, ପରିବାର, ଶିକ୍ଷକ ଆଦିଙ୍କ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନରେ
ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣକ୍ଷେପ ପକାଇ
ନିଜସ୍ୱ ପ୍ରତିଭା କୁ ଜଳାଞ୍ଜଳି ଦେଇ
ଝିଅଟି ଆଗେଇଲା
ପିଠାପଣା, ଡାଲି, ଡାଲମା
ଶାଗ, ମାଛ, ଡର୍କାଠାପତ୍ରରେ
ମନଭାଳି ଦେଲା ।
ଲୀଳାବତୀ ଉପାଖ୍ୟାନ ଖନା ବଚନକୁ ମନେ ମନେ
ଦୋହରାଇଲା ।
ସେଦିନ ତ ସେଇପରି ଥିଲା ।୫।

ଓସାର ଜଣେ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ସଭ୍ୟା ଏବଂ ଅନେକ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ସୋଭେନିୟର କୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ କବିତା ଗଳ୍ପ ଆଦି ନିୟମିତ ଭାବରେ ପଠାଇ ଆସୁଥିବା ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ
କଲ୍ଲନା ଦାଶ ମିନେଷୋଟାରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ତଃ ଶୀତକଣ୍ଠ ଦାଶଙ୍କ ସହିତ ରୁହନ୍ତି । କର୍ମମୟ ଜୀବନରେ ସମୟ କାଢ଼ି ଲେଖାଲେଖି କରିବା, ରୋଷେଇ
କରିବା, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜ ଓ ଭାରତୀୟ ସମାଜରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ନିଜକୁ ନିୟୋଜିତ ରଖନ୍ତି ।



ଜୀବନ ଧାରା ଅମୀୟ କୁମାର ମହାନ୍ତି

ସରିଯାଏ ଜୀବନ ଗୋ ଭରି ଯାଏ ପ୍ରାଣ
କେତେ ସ୍ନେହ ମମତା ଗୋ କେତେ ଅଭିମାନ ।
ସ୍ମରଣେ ରହିଛି ଲାଖୁ ପ୍ରୀୟାର ମୋ ପ୍ରଥମ ପରଶ
ଆଣିଥିଲା ଅଙ୍ଗେ ମୋର ପ୍ରେମର ବତାସ ॥

ଆଷାଢ଼ ର ଶ୍ୟାମ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ବିଜୁଳି ଝଟକ
ଆଣୁଥିଲା ଶିହରଣ ଅପାର ଅନେକ
ଶରତର ଶୁଭ୍ର ନୀଳ ଆକାଶ ଅଙ୍ଗ ରେ
ଭଠେ ଯେବେ ଜହ୍ନ ହସି ଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନା ର ଶେଯ ରେ ॥

ସ୍ନେହର ପିୟୁଷ ପିଇ ଗଣୁଥିଲୁ କୋଟିଏ ତରାରେ
ଅଗଣିତ ତାରା ଗଣା କେବେ ନାହିଁ ସରେ
ପ୍ରେମ ର ନିଶା ରେ ସ୍ବପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଥିଲୁ କେତେ
ସନ୍ତାନ, ସନ୍ତତି, ଧନ, ଗାଈ, ଘୋଡ଼ା ଯେତେ ॥

ଗୁରୁ ଗରଜନେ ଯେବେ ଥରୁଥିଲା ଆକାଶ ର ଅଙ୍ଗ
ତଡ଼ିତ ହାର ଶୋଭନେ ଦେଖୁଥିଲୁ ଅନନ୍ୟର ରଙ୍ଗ
ଜୀବନ ମଧ୍ୟାହ୍ନେ ଯେବେ ହୁଏ ଭାରା କ୍ରାନ୍ତ
ଦିଅ ମତେ ଆଶ୍ୱାସନା ସାହସ ଭରିତ ॥

ଲଘୁ ହୁଏ ବୋଉ ମୋର ଆସେ ଅଙ୍ଗେ ଶକ୍ତି
ଭଦ୍ରାସ ମନେ ମୋ ଜାଗେ ନବ ଅନୁଭୂତି
ଅତୀତେ ନ ଥିଲେ କେହି ଅବା ନାହିଁ ଏବେ



ତୁମ ଭଳି ପ୍ରୀୟା ମୋର ଏ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭବେ ॥

ଗୋଧୂଳି ଗୋ ନଇଁ ଯାଏ ଆଣି ଦୂଆ ରଙ୍ଗ
ଜୀବନ ଯମୁନା ଭେର ସୁଶାନ୍ତ ଚରଙ୍ଗ
ନୀରବ ନିଶ୍ଚନ୍ଦ ଆଉ ଅପଲକ ନେତ୍ରେ
ନୟନ ଅୟନେ ଆସେ ଦିବା ସ୍ବପ୍ନ କେତେ ॥

ମନର ମନ୍ଦିରେ ଜଳେ ଭକ୍ତିଭରା ବତୀ
ମାଗୁଣି ଆମ ପ୍ରଭୁ ଦିଅ ଚିର ଶାନ୍ତି ॥

Professor Dr. Amiya Mohanty currently living in Richmond, Kentucky with his wife Mrs. Sharat Kumari Mohanty. Since the beginning of the establishment of OSA Organization, Dr. Mohanty has been involved with OSA in various ways like in membership drive, preparing OSA Constitution, OSA Organization committee formations. Dr. Mohanty served as a president of OSA and received the distinguished Odia award in 2015.

After five years of research and teaching in Utkal University, came with Fulbright and Smith-Mundt fellowships to Florida State University in 1964. After finishing his Ph.D. in Sociology, he taught in Western Kentucky University, Georgia Southern University and lastly in Eastern Kentucky University. As a Professor Emeritus, he received Fulbright Specialist Award in Sociology. He served as Distinguished Fulbright Professor for research and teaching in American Center of Oriental Research in Jordan and subsequently in University of Putra in Malaysia.



ପଦ୍ୟ ପ୍ରେମିକା

ଗଗନ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ

ଲିଭି ଯାଉଥିଲା ହୋମ ଅଗ୍ନିଶିଖା
ଭାସି ଆସୁଥିଲା ସାହାନାଲ ସୁର,
ଫେରିଯାଉଥିଲେ ପ୍ରିୟଜନେ ଘରେ
ଥମି ଯାଉଥିଲା ଜନ କୋଳାହଳ । ୧ ।

ତେଜି ଭାତା ପିତା ଭଗିନୀ ଜନନୀ
ସହି ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥୀ ବନ୍ଧୁ ପରିଜନେ,
ଆସିଲ ସେ ଦିନ ନବ ବଧୂ ସାଜି
ଅଳଙ୍କ ପୟରେ ସଜଳ ନୟନେ । ୨ ।

ନିଜ ବାପଘର କରିବେଇ ପର
ବରି ନେଇଥିଲ ଶଙ୍ଖା ଓ ସିନ୍ଧୁର,
ପଦ ପାତ କଲ ପର ଘରେ ଆସି
ଅଜଣା ମଣିଷ ଅଜଣା ସଂସାର । ୩ ।

ବାସର ଶେଯରେ ସରମକୁ ତେଜି
ହୋଇଥିଲ ତୁମେ ମୋ ଅଙ୍କ ଶାୟିନୀ,
ମୋ ପାଇଁ ତୁମେ ଗୋ ଭର୍ବଣୀ ମେନକା
ଚିତ୍ତ ବିନୋଦିନୀ ମୋ ମନ ମୋହିନୀ । ୪ ।

ତୁମ ହସ ବୋଲା ନରମ ଚାହାଣୀ
ନେଉଥିଲା ଯେବେ ଚିତ୍ତ ଚୋରି କରି,

ଭାବୁଥିଲି ତେବେ ପକ୍ଷୀରାଜେ ଚଢ଼ି
ସପନ ପୁରୀକୁ ଯାଆନ୍ତେ କି ଉଡ଼ି । ୫ ।

ତୁମକୁ ବସାଇ ପ୍ରଣୟ ବେଳାରେ
ଖୋଦୁଥିଲି ମୁଁ କୋଣାର୍କ ମନ୍ଦିର,
ତୁମେ ନାନା ଛନ୍ଦେ ତୁମେ ନାନା ରଙ୍ଗେ
ରଙ୍ଗାଉଥିଲ ଗୋ ମୋ ହୃଦ କନ୍ଦର । ୬ ।

ଦୁଇ ଦୁଇ ମନ ଦୁଇ ଦୁଇ ପ୍ରାଣ
ମିଳନର ଅନ୍ତେ ସନ୍ତକ ସ୍ବରୂପ,
ବିକଶିତ ହେଲା ପ୍ରଣୟ କୁସୁମ
ସୁବାସ ଯାହାର ଅଶେଷ ଅମାପ । ୭ ।

ପିତୃଭର ସ୍ବପ୍ନ ସେବନ ନିମନ୍ତେ
ପଦ୍ମ ହୋଇ ଦେଲ ପ୍ରଥମ ସୁଯୋଗ,
ନଅ ମାସ ଗର୍ଭ ପୀଡ଼ା ସହ୍ୟ କଲ
ତଥାପି କରିନ କେବେ ଅଭିଯୋଗ । ୮ ।

ପର ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ନିଜ ସୁଖ ତେଜି
ପର ସୁଖ ପାଇଁ ରଖିଲ ନଜର,
ମୋ ଦୁଃଖ ସୁଖରେ ନିରାଶା ଆଶାରେ
ଭାଗ ନେଇ ତୁମେ ହେଲ ଭାଗୀଦାର । ୯ ।



ନୀଳକଣ୍ଠ ପରି ପିଇଲ ଆକଣ୍ଠେ
ଗରଳ ସମାନ ମୋ କଟୁ ବଚନ,
ଚାରୁ ଯୁଗ ତୁମ ଖୋଲିବାର କେହି
ଦେଖୁନି କେବେ ବି, ରହିଲ ମଉନ । ୧୦ ।

ଆଜିବି ଭାବିଲେ ଲାଗେ ଅଭିନବ
ତୁମ ସାଥେ ସେହି ପହିଲି ଫଗୁଣ ,
ସମୟ କଷଟି ପଥରେ ଆହୁରି
ଜକ ଜକ ଦିଶେ ସତେକି ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ୧୧ ।

ଜୀବନ ସାଗର ଉଛୁଳ ଡରଙ୍ଗେ
ପତ୍ନୀ ଓ ପ୍ରେମିକା ଭୂମିକା ନିଭାଇ,
ଦୁନିଆ ଆଗରେ କରିଲ ସ୍ଥାପିତ
ଯିଏ ପତ୍ନୀ ସିଏ ପ୍ରେମିକା ଅଟଇ । ୧୨ ।

ସେପାଇଁ କହିବି ଆଗୋ ପ୍ରିୟତମା
ତୁମେ ମୋ ପ୍ରେୟସୀ ତୁମେ ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧାଙ୍ଗିନୀ,
ଯମୁନା ତଟରେ ଅବା ଶ୍ମଶାନରେ
ତୁମେ ମୋ ରାଧିକା, ତୁମେ ମୋ ଋକ୍ଷଣୀ । ୧୩ ।

Gagan Behari Panigrahi has been actively involved in OSA cultural and literary activities since his arrival in North America. He is a regular contributor to OSA magazine and participates in Odia Kabita Pathachakra of yearly OSA conventions. He gets inspiration from fellow OSA literature lovers. Recently he has published collection of his poems in two books called "Phula Bagicha" and "Pratichhabi". He lives in Toronto with his wife Sabita Panigrahi.



PC- Gagan panigrahi



ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ସୁଧଳ

ଶାନ୍ତି ଲତା ମିଶ୍ର

ସକାଳୁ ଉଠି ଦେଖିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଚାରିଆଡ଼ ଧଳା, ପୁରା ବାହାରଟା । ରାତି ସାରା କାଲି ବରଫ ପଡ଼ିଛି । ତିନି ଇଞ୍ଚ ବୋଧେ ହେବ । ସତେକି ଧଳା ଚାନ୍ଦର କିଏ ଘୋଡେଇ ଦେଇ ଯାଇଛି ପୁରା ଧରିତ୍ରୀ ଉପରେ । ‘ନମିତା’ଙ୍କର ଏମିତି କାଲି ଠାରୁ ମନ ଟିକେ ଉଦାସ ଥିଲା । କାଲି ଅଫିସରୁ ଫେରି ମଉସାଙ୍କ ଦେହାନ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଯିବା କଥା ‘ଉର୍ମିଳା’ ମାଉସୀର ଚିଠିରୁ ଜାଣିଲେ । ସାନ ମାଉସୀ ସେ, ପିଲାବେଳେ ତା କାଖରେ କୋଳରେ ସେ ବଢ଼ିଥିଲେ । ମନ ଟିକେ ଦୁଃଖ ହେଲା । ଯଦିଓ ମଉସା ରୋଗରେ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲେ, ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ଆଶା ନଥିଲା ବୋଲି ମେଲ୍‌ରୁ ଜାଣିଥିଲେ । ତଥାପି ଏତେ ଦୂରରେ ରହୁଥିବାରୁ ଏ ସବୁ ଖବର କେବେ ବି ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗେନି ।

ମାଉସୀ ବୋଉଠୁ ବହୁତ ସାନ । ପିଲାବେଳେ ଅଜାଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ଗଲେ ସେ ହିଁ ଘରେ ଥାଏ । ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିକି କି ଖୁସି ହୁଏ । ତାଙ୍କ ସଙ୍ଗେ ଖେଳେ ଗପ କହେ, ଗାଧୋଇ ଦିଏ, ଖାଇବାକୁ ଦିଏ , ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପିଛା ଲାଗିଥାଏ । ଫେରିଲା ଦିନ କି କାନ୍ଦ । ସେ ବାହା ହୋଇଗଲା ବେଳେ ସବୁ ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କର କି ମନ ଦୁଃଖ ସମସ୍ତେ ତାକୁ ଧରି ବହୁତ କାନ୍ଦିଥିଲେ । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ବେଶୀ କାନ୍ଦିଥିଲେ ନମିତା । କାରଣ ସେ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କଠାରୁ ବଡ଼ । ବେଶୀ ଗେହୁ ଆଦର ମାଉସୀ ଠାରୁ ପାଇଥିଲେ ।

ଇ ମେଲ୍ ଆରମ୍ଭ ଦିନରୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଚିଠି ଆସିବା ପ୍ରାୟ ବନ୍ଦ । ବୋଉ କେବେ କେମିତି ପଚାରି ଥିଲା ଯେ, ଆଜି କାଲି ସେ ବି ବଡ଼ ଭାଇଙ୍କର ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କୁ କହି ଇ ମେଲ୍‌ରେ ଖବର ପଠେଇ ଦଉଛି । ତାକୁ ବି ସହଜ ହେଇ ଗଲାଣି । କିଏ ଲେଖୁଛି ବସି ହାତରେ, ପୁଣି ତାକୁ ଟିକେଟ ମାର, ତାଙ୍କରେ ପକାଅ ଏତେ ଝମେଲା କିଏ କରୁଛି । କାଲି ଯେତେବେଳେ ଚିଠିଟି ଦେଖିଲେ, ଭାବିଲେ ବୋଉର ବୋଲି, ଅଫିସରୁ ଆସି ଆଗ ଚିଠି ଖୋଲି ବସିଲେ ଯେ ମଉସୀଙ୍କ ଚିଠି । ତାଙ୍କ ଚିଠି ଦେଖି ଶଙ୍ଖା ତ ମନରେ ଲାଗଲା । ହଁ ଆଶଙ୍କା ସତ କରି ଚିଠିର ଖବରଟି ଭଲ ନଥିଲା । ଦୁଇ ଧାର ଲୁହ ତ ବହିଗଲା । କାରଣ ମଉସା ବି ମାଉସୀ ପରି ସ୍ନେହ ଆଦରରେ କେବେ ଉଣା କରୁ ନଥିଲେ ।

ତିନର ଭଲରେ ଖାଇ ନଥିଲେ । ସେମିତି ଶୋଇଗଲେ । ସକାଳର ଏ ସ୍କୋ ଦେଖି ମନ ଆହୁରି ଉଦାସ ହୋଇଗଲା । । ସ୍ଵାମୀ “ସମର”ଏଇ ଗଲେ ଅଫିସକୁ କିନ୍ତୁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଆଜି ଅଫିସ କାମରେ ଅନ୍ୟ ଏକ ସହରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ହେବ ଏଇ ସକାଳୁ । ଦୁଇ ଘଣ୍ଟାର ରାସ୍ତା ହୋଇ ଯିବାରୁ ଡ୍ରାଇଭିଙ୍ଗ କରିକି ଯିବେ । ଅଧିକ ସମୟ ଲାଗିପାରେ ବି ପାଗ ଖରାପ ଯୋଗୁ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମନର ଭାରସାମ୍ୟ ଟିକେ ଏପଟ ସେପଟ ନମିତାଙ୍କର ସକାଳୁ । ଆଜି ଅଫିସ ନ ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ଠିକ କରିନେଇ । ମ୍ୟାନେଜର ପାଖକୁ ଫୋନ କରିଦେଲେ । କାଲିର ଖବର, ଆଜିର ଏ ସ୍କୋ ଦି ଟା ଯାକ ମନକୁ ଆବେଶ କରି ରଖିଥିଲେ ।

ସକାଳୁ ମନରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରକାର ଭାବାନ୍ତର ଥିଲେ ବି ମନ ହୁଉଥିଲା ଗରମା ଗରମ ବରା ପକୋଡା ସିଙ୍ଗଡା ସଂଗେ ଅଦା ପକା ତା ପିଇବାକୁ । ଏମିତି ଥଣ୍ଡା ପାଗରେ ଏସବୁ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେବା ସଂଗେ ପିଲାଦିନଟା ଆଗ ମନେ ପଡ଼ି ଯାଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ କରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଲା ନାହିଁ ସେପରି କିଛି । ଫୁଲ ରେ ଥିଲା ଫ୍ରେଜନ ପଞ୍ଜବି ସାମୋସା ତାକୁ ଆଣି ଓଭେନରେ ଗରମ କଲେ ଆଉ କଫି ମେସିନରେ କଫି ତିଆରି କରି ପିଇଲେ । ରାତିରେ ଭଲ କରି ନିଶାଉ ଥିବାରୁ ସକାଳୁ ଭୋକ ବି ହୁଏ, ନ ଖାଇଲେ ନଚଳେ, କିନ୍ତୁ କରିବାକୁ କିଛି ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଉନି ।

ପିଲାବେଳର ବହୁ ସ୍ମୃତି ମାଉସୀ ସହିତ କଟେଇଥିବାର ମନ ଭିତରେ ବାର ବାର ଉଠି ମାରୁଥାଏ । ସେଇ ଭାବନାରେ ନିମଗ୍ନ ଥିଲା ବେଳେ ଫୋନ ଟା ବାଜି ଉଠିଲା । ଫୋନ ଧରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଉ ନଥାଏ କିନ୍ତୁ ପଡୋଶୀ ‘ଏଞ୍ଜେଲିନା’ର ଫୋନ ଦେଖି ବାଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ଉଠେଇଲେ । କାଳେ କଣ ଦରକାର ଥିବ । ଏପରି ପାଗ ହେଲେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର କିଛି ନା କିଛି ଦରକାର ପଡିଯାଏ ବେଳେ ବେଳେ



ତା ବ୍ୟତୀତ ‘ଏଞ୍ଜି’ ସଂଗେ ତାଙ୍କର ଭଲ ସଂପର୍କ । ଦରକାର ବେଳେ ସେ ବହୁତ ତାଙ୍କୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିଛି । ନମିତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ବାମୀ ବହୁତ ଥର କାମରେ ବାହାରକୁ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ଘରେ ସେ ଏକା ପୁଅ ‘ବିବେକ’କୁ ଧରି ରୁହନ୍ତି ।

ଚାରି ବର୍ଷ ପୂର୍ବେ ଥରେ ସ୍ବାମୀ ସମର ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଯାଇଥିଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ପରିବାରର କିଛି କାମରେ । ହଠାତ ରାତିରେ ବିବେକ ଦିନେ ନିଃଶ୍ବାସ ନେଇ ପାରିଲାନି ସେ ବହୁତ ଡରି ଗଲେ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ବୁଦ୍ଧି ବାଟ କିଛି ଦିଶିଲାନି ହଠାତ ଫେନ କଲେ ରାତି ଅଧରେ ଏଞ୍ଜିକୁ । ବିନା ଦ୍ଵିଧାରେ ତା ସ୍ବାମୀ ଆଉ ସିଏ ଦୁଇ ଜଣ ଆସି ବିବେକକୁ ହସ୍ତିଚାଲ ନେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ଏମରଜେନସିକୁ । ତା ବ୍ୟତୀତ ବି ଅନେକ ଥର ଅନେକ ପ୍ରକାର କାମରେ ସେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ନେଇଛନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେଦିନ ରାତି ପରେ ସେ ପୁରା କୃତଜ୍ଞ ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ । ବାଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ଏଞ୍ଜିର ଫେନକୁ ଉଠେଇଲେ କିନ୍ତୁ ଯାହା ଶୁଣିଲେ ମୁହଁ ତାଙ୍କର ବିକୃତ ହୋଇଗଲା । ଅତ୍ୟଧିକ ଥଣ୍ଡା ଯୋଗୁ ଗାତିଟା ତାର ଷ୍ଟର୍ ହେଉନି । ଆଜି ତାର ଅଫିସରେ ଅର୍ଡେଣ୍ଟ କାମ ଅଛି ନିହାତି ଯିବାକୁ ହେବ ସେ ରାଲତ ମାଗୁଛି । ତାର ସ୍ବାମୀ ଘରେ ନାହାଁନ୍ତି । ଏଞ୍ଜିର ଅଫିସ ବିଲଡିଂଂ ଠାରୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଅଫିସ ମାତ୍ର ପାଞ୍ଚ ମିନିଟ୍ ଡ୍ରାଇଭିଙ୍ଗର ଦୂରତା । ତେଣୁ ଅନେକ ସମୟରେ ଦୁହେଁ ପରସ୍ପରକୁ ଦରକାର ବେଳେ ଏପରି ରାଲତ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ପୂର୍ବରୁ । ସେଇ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ଆଜି ସେ ବୋଧେ ରାଲତ ମାଗିଛି ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜି ସେ ଯେ ଅଫିସ ଯାଉନାହାନ୍ତି । କହିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଲାନି ଶୁଣିଲେ ହୁଏତ ସେ ଅନ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରିନେବ । କିଏ ଏଇଲେ ଏତେ ଶୀତରେ ସ୍ଵେଚ୍ଛର, କୋଟ, ଗୋବସ୍, ମଫଲର, ଗଦାଏ ଲୁଗାପଟା ପିନ୍ଧି ଏ ଶୀତରେ ଗାତି ଚଲେଇ ଅନ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ଯିବ । ନିଜ ପାଇଁ ଯିବା ଅଲଗା କଥା । ମନେ ମନେ ରାଗୁଥିଲେ ନମିତା କିନ୍ତୁ କାହା ଉପରେ ରାଗିବେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଉପରେ ନା ଏଞ୍ଜି ଉପରେ । ଦୁହେଁ ପରିବେଶ ପରିସ୍ଥିତିପାଖରେ ଅନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରିତ । ମନ ଭିତରର କ୍ରୋଧ, ବିରକ୍ତିକୁ ବାନ୍ତରେ ଚାପି ଧରି ଏଞ୍ଜିକୁ କହିଲେ ରେଡି ହେବାକୁ ...

ସେ ପାଞ୍ଚ ମିନିଟ୍ ଭିତରେ ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ସେ ଆଜି ଅଫିସ ଯାଉନାହାଁନ୍ତି ଯଦି କହିବେ, ଏଞ୍ଜି ଜାଣିଲେ ହୁଏତ ଖରାପ ଭାବିବ, ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରିବାକୁ କହିବ । କିନ୍ତୁ ତା ପାଖରୁ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରକାର ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ନେଇଥିବାରୁ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କାରଣରୁ ସେ କୃତଜ୍ଞ । ତେଣୁ ନିରବ ରହିବାଟା ଶ୍ରେୟସ୍କର, ସେ ମଣିଲେ । କିଏ ଜାଣେ ତାଙ୍କର ବି ପୁଣି ତା ପାଖରେ କେତେବେଳେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ଦରକାର ପଡିବ ।

ନିହାତି ଦରକାର ନ ପଡିଲେ କେହି କାହାକୁ କେବେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ମାଗେ ନାହିଁ । ତେଣୁ ଯେତେବେଳେ କେହି ଆସି ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ମାଗେ ବିନା ଦ୍ଵିଧାରେ ଓ ନିଜର ଶକ୍ତି ଅନୁସାରେ ତାକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବା ଉଚିତ ଏବଂ ତା ହଉଛି ମାନବିକତା ବା ମାନବ ଧର୍ମ । ବାପାଙ୍କୁ ଏଇ କଥାଟା ସେ ଶିଖିଛନ୍ତି । ସମର ବି ସବୁବେଳେ ସେଇଆ କୁହନ୍ତି । ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ମାତେହିଁ ଅଦୃଷ୍ଟର ଅଧୀନ ।

ସବୁ ବୁଝୁଥିଲେ ବି ତାଙ୍କୁ ଭାରି ରାଗ ମାତୁଥିଲା ଏଞ୍ଜି ଉପରେ । ଆଜି ହିଁ ତା ସ୍ବାମୀକୁ ବାହାରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ଥିଲା, ଆଜି ହିଁ ତା ଗାତିକୁ ଖରାପ ହବାର ଥିଲା । ଜୀବନର ଅନେକ ଅହେତୁକ ଘଟଣା ଏହିପରି ହିଁ ଘଟେ । ବିନା ଜ୍ଞାତସାରରେ ବିନା ଖବର ଦେଇ ଆସିଯାଏ । ସବୁ ଜାଣିଥିଲେ ବି ମଣିଷ ତଥାପି ଏକୁ ତାକୁ ଦୋଷ ଦିଏ ।

ବାଟରେ ଗଲାବେଳେ ବିଶେଷ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ବି କରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଲାନି । ଅନ୍ୟ ଦିନେ ଏଞ୍ଜିକୁ ଦେଖିଲେ ସେ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନକର । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏଞ୍ଜି ତାର କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ସ୍ବାଭାବିକ ଭାବେ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଲା ଅନ୍ୟଦିନ ପରି । ସେ କେବଳ ହିଁ ବା ନାଁ ରେ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଉଥିଲେ । ଆଜି ତାଙ୍କର ଘରୁ ଟିକେ ବି କୁଆଡେ ବାହାରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଉ ନଥିଲା ।

ଏଞ୍ଜିକୁ ଅଫିସରେ ଛାଡି ଫେରିଲା ପରେ ସେ ଆଉ ଆଜି ଘରୁ କୁଆଡେ ବାହାରିବେନି, ଏଇଆ ମନେ ମନେ ଭାବୁଥିଲେ ବି ସୌଜନ୍ୟତା ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ଏଞ୍ଜିକୁ କହିଲେ ଅଫିସରୁ ଫେରିଲା ପରେ ରାଲତ ଦରକାର ହେଲେ କଲ୍ ନିଷ୍ଠେ କରିବୁ । ଏଞ୍ଜି ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଜଣାଇ କହିଲା ଏତିକି ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ନମି, ଫେରିଲା ବେଳେ ଅଫିସର କୌଣସି କଲିଗ ରାଲତ ଦେଇଦେବ ତୁ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହବୁନି । ଆଶ୍ଚସ୍ତ ହେଲେ । ଯଦିଓ ସେ ଜାଣିଥିଲେ ଏଞ୍ଜି ଅଯଥା ହଇରାଣ କରିବନି । ତଥାପି ଭଦ୍ରାମୀ ତ ଦେଖେଇବା ଦରକାର । ସଂସାରରେ ବଞ୍ଚିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ଅନିଚ୍ଛା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ମଣିଷ କେତେ କଣ ଯେ କରେ ତାର ଠିକଣା ନାହିଁ ।



କିନ୍ତୁ ଫେରନ୍ତି ରାସ୍ତାରେ ଦେଖିଲେ ବସ୍ ଉପରେ ଜଣେ ବୃଦ୍ଧା ମହିଳା ବସ୍ ପାଇଁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଛନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଶୀତରେ ଥରୁଛନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ରାକତ ମାଗୁଛନ୍ତି ହାତ ଦେଖେଇ । ଦେଖି ନ ଦେଖିଲା ପରି ନମିତା ଆଗକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ଉଦ୍ୟତ ହେଲେ ସତ କିନ୍ତୁ ବିବେକ ବାଧା ଦେଲା । ବିଚାରା ସେପରି ଅସୁବିଧା ଭୋଗ ନକରୁଥିଲେ ହୁଏତ ସେ ରାକତ ମାଗି ନଥାନ୍ତେ ବସ୍ ଉପରେ ଠିଆ ହୋଇ । ଶୂନଶାନ ଯାଗା । ଆଉ ପଛରେ ଗାଡି ଆସୁଥିବାର ବି ଦେଖା ଯାଉନି । ନିହାତି ଦରକାର ନ ହେଲେ ଏତେ ଥଣ୍ଡାରେ କେହି ଘରୁ ବାହାରନ୍ତିନି । ଏତେ ଶୀତ । ମାଇନସ୍ କୋଡିଏ ଡିଗ୍ରୀ ଫରେନାହିଟରେ ଅଛି ବାହାରର ତାପମାତ୍ରା । ଗାଡି ଭିତରେ ହିଟଙ୍ଗ ଚଲେଇ କରି ବି ତାଙ୍କୁ ଭିକ୍ଷା ଥଣ୍ଡା ଲାଗୁଛି ।

ପୁଣି ଇଉ ଟର୍ଣ୍ଣ କରି ଫେରି ଆସି ମହିଳାଙ୍କୁ କୁଆଡେ ଯିବେ ବୋଲି ପଚାରିଲେ । ସେ ପାଖ ହୁଞ୍ଚିଗଲକୁ ଯିବାକୁ କହିଲେ । ଦେହ ଟା ଜର ଜର ଲାଗୁଛି । କିଛି ଭଲ ଲାଗୁନି । ତାଙ୍କର ପାଖରେ କେହି ରହୁ ନାହାଁନ୍ତି । ବସ୍ରେ ଚାଲିଯିବେ ବୋଲି ଭାରୁଥିଲେ କିନ୍ତୁ ଏତେ ଶୀତରେ ବସ୍ ପାଇଁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିବା ତାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଆଉ ସମ୍ଭବ ହେଉ ନଥିବାରୁ କଷ୍ଟ ଦେଲେ ବୋଲି କ୍ଷମା ମାଗିଲେ । ତା ସହିତ ଗର୍ବ୍ ବେଗ୍ ଯୁ କହି ଶହେ ଥର ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ କରିଚାଲିଥାନ୍ତି । ଭଲ ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ସେ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦର ଭାଷା ସବୁ ।

ହୁଞ୍ଚିଗଲରୁ ଫେରିଲା ପରେ କିପରି ଫେରିବେ ନମିତାଙ୍କର ପଚାରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଲାନ୍ତି ଯଦିଓ, ଜାଣିବାକୁ କିନ୍ତୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଉଥିଲା । ସେ କିଛି ପଚାରିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ମହିଳା ତାଙ୍କ ଡରଫରୁ କହିଲେ ସେ ଫେରିଲା ବେଳେ ଟ୍ୟାକ୍ସି ନେଇନେବେ । ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଲାଗିଲା ନମିତାଙ୍କୁ । ତାଙ୍କର ଦାୟିତ୍ବ ନଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କୁ ଘରକୁ ଫେରେଇ ଆଣିବା ଯଦିଓ ଆତ୍ମା ଓ ବିବେକ କହୁଥିଲେ ଟିକେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିଦେଲେ କ୍ଷତି ବା କଣି ।

ଘରୁ ଗଲାବେଳେ ଡରଡରରେ ଭୁଲି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ସେଲ ଫୋନଟା ନେବାକୁ । ଆସି ଫୋନରେ ମେସେଜ ଦେଖିଲେ ସମରଙ୍ଗ ମେସେଜ । ଖୋଲି ଶୁଣିଲେ ସକାଳେ ସେ ଅଫିସ କାମରେ ଯିବା ରାସ୍ତାରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଗାଡି ଖସି ଯାଇ ରାସ୍ତା ତଳକୁ ଓଲଟି ପଡିଥିଲା । କିଛି ଲୋକ ଦେଖି ପୋଲିସରେ ଖବର ଦେଇ ତାଙ୍କୁ ହୁଞ୍ଚିଗଲ ନେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ସେ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭଲ ଅଛନ୍ତି ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହେବାର କିଛି କାରଣ ନାହିଁ । ସାମାନ୍ୟ ହାତ ଗୋଡରେ ଟିକେ ଆଘାତ ଲାଗି ଯାଇଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଗାଡିର ରିପେୟାର ଦରକାର ହେବ । ବିଶେଷ କ୍ଷତି ନହୋଇଥିଲେ ବି ତେଣୁ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଛି ଏଠି ସେଠି ।

ଗୋଡ ତଳୁ ମାଟି ଖସି ଆସୁଥିଲେ ବି ସବୁ ଠିକ ଠାକ ଅଛି ବୋଲି ଜାଣି ସଂଯତ କରିନେଲେ ନିଜକୁ । ମନେ ହେଉଥିଲା ସେଇ ବୃଦ୍ଧାଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଭଗବାନ ବି ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ଦେଇଗଲେ । ଦୁର୍ଭାଗ୍ୟ ଏହା ଠାରୁ ଆହୁରି ଅଧିକ କିଛି ଦୁର୍ଯ୍ୟୋଗ ଘଟେଇ ପାରିଥାନ୍ତା । ସେ ପିଲାବେଳୁ ଶୁଣି ଆସିଛନ୍ତି, କାହାର ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ କେବେ ଖାଲି ଯାଏନା । ଆଜି ସେଇଆ ହିଁ ତାଙ୍କର ମନେ ହେଉଛି ।

ଏଞ୍ଜିକୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦେଲେ । ସେ ନ କହିଥିଲେ ସେ କଦାପି ଏ ପାଗରେ ଘରୁ ବାହାରି ନଥାନ୍ତେ । ବୃଦ୍ଧାଙ୍କ ଶୁଭାଶୀଷ ତାଙ୍କୁ ମିଳି ନଥାନ୍ତା ।

‘ମୁଁ ଶାନ୍ତି ମିଶ୍ର ମୋ ସ୍ବାମୀ ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ପ୍ରସନ୍ନ ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ସହିତ ରଚେଞ୍ଚର, ମିନେସୋଟାରେ ରହେ । ମୋର ସ୍ବାମୀ ମେୟୋ କ୍ଲିନିକ ରେ କାମ କରନ୍ତି । ପୁଅ ଆଉ ଝିଅ ଦୁହେଁ ନିଜ ନିଜର ଚାକିରି କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଘର ଠାରୁ ଦୂରରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି । ଦୀର୍ଘ ୩୫ ବର୍ଷ ହେବ ମୁଁ ନିୟମିତ ଭାବେ ଓସା ସ୍କୁରଣିକା କୁ ଲେଖା ପଠେଇ ଆସୁଛି । ଆମେରିକାରେ ୩୮ ବର୍ଷର ରହଣିରେ ଓସା ସ୍କୁରଣିକା କୁ ମୁଁ ବହୁତ ପାଖରୁ ଦେଖି ଆସୁଛି । ସେତେବେଳେ ଆଉ ଆଜିର ଓସା ସ୍କୁରଣିକା ଭିତରେ ଆକାଶ ପାତାଳ ପ୍ରଭେଦ । ସେତେବେଳେ ଦୁଇ ବା ତିନୋଟି ଓଡିଆ ଲେଖା ତିରିଶ ବା ଚାଳିଶ ପୃଷ୍ଠାର ସ୍କୁରଣିକା ଭିତରେ ଆବକ୍ଷ ଥିଲା । ଏବେ ତାର ପୃଷ୍ଠା କେବଳ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇନି, ଉଚ୍ଚକୋଟୀର ଓଡିଆ ଲେଖା ମାନ ବି ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇଛି । ନିଜର ମା ଆଉ ମାତୃଭାଷା ଠାରୁ ମଧୁର ଆଉ କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ସେହି ମାତୃଭାଷାର ଉତ୍ତୋରଉତ୍ତର ଉନ୍ନତି କାମନା କରୁଛି । ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ପିଢୀ ତାର ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ତତ୍ତ୍ବ ନେବେ ବୋଲି ଆଶା ବି ରଖୁଛି ।’ ଶାନ୍ତିଲତା ମିଶ୍ର, ରଚେଞ୍ଚର, ମିନେସୋଟା ।



ଅପରିଚିତ

ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟସ୍ନାତା ରଥ

ହଠାତ କାମ କରୁ କରୁ ଫୋନ୍‌ରେ ନଜର ପଡ଼ିଗଲା । ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଆଠ! ଆରେ ଏବେ ତ ଚାରିଟା ବାଜିଥିଲା ଭଲିଆ ମନେ ପଡୁଛି । ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହେଇ ପଡ଼ିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି । ଯୁକ୍ତ ଉଠେଇ ପାଖାପାଖି ସିଟ ସବୁକୁ ଚାହିଁଲା । କେହି କୁଆଡେ ନାହିଁ । ସମସ୍ତେ କେତେବେଳେ ଯେ ଚାଲିଗଲେ ଆଉ ସେ କିଛି ବି ଜାଣି ପାରିଲାନି । ନିଜ ଉପରେ ରାଗ ଆସିଲା । କଣ ଦରକାର ଥିଲା ଏତେ କାମ କରିବା ଆଜି । ସେ ପୁଣି ଶୁଦ୍ଧବାରଟାରେ । ଜଳଦି ଜଳଦି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସଜାଡ଼ି ସିଟ ରୁ ଉଠିଲା ସେ ଆଉ ଚାଲିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲା ।

ଲମ୍ବା ଅଫିସ କରିଡୋର ...କିନ୍ତୁ କେହି ଜଣେ ବି ଦେଖା ଯାଉ ନାହାନ୍ତି । କେମିତି ଗୋଟେ ଶୂନ୍ୟ ଲାଗୁଛି । କାଚ ବାଟେ ଚାହିଁଲା ବାହାରକୁ ସେ । ଭୀଷଣ ବର୍ଷା । ତା ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ବିଜୁଳି ଆଉ ଘଡ଼ଘଡ଼ି ବି । ଟିକେ ଡର ଲାଗିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି କୁ । ଖାଲି ଅଫିସ ଦୁହେଁ ପୁରା ସହର ତା ହିଁ ତା ପାଇଁ ନୂଆ । ଏଇ ସମ୍ଭାଷଣ ତଳେ ହିଁ ତ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇଛି ସେ ଏଇ ଚାକିରୀରେ । ଆଉ ବେଶି କେହି ସାଙ୍ଗ ବି ହେଇ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ଖାଲି ଯାହା ଟିମ୍‌ମେଟ୍ ମାନଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଥରେ ଦି ଥର କଥା ହେଉଛି । ବାସ ସେତିକି । ଏମିତି ଭାବୁ ଭାବୁ ଜୋରରେ ପାଦ ପକେଇଲା ସେ ଲିଫ୍ଟ ଆଡ଼କୁ ।

ଠିକ ପଣିବାକୁ ଉଦ୍ୟତ ହେଲା ବେଳକୁ ପଛରୁ ଶୁଭିଲା, "କ୍ଷମା କରିବେ, ସେଟା ଖରାପ ଅଛି । ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ସିଡ଼ି ବାଟେ ଯିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ ।" ଟମକି ପଡ଼ି ଚାହିଁଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି । ପଛରେ ଠିଆ ହେଇଥିଲେ ଜଣେ ଭଦ୍ର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି, ଗୋଟେ ହାତରେ ଅଫିସ ବ୍ୟାଗ ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ ହାତରେ ଛୋଟ ଫୋଲଡିଂ ଛତା ଧରି । ତେଜୀ, ଗୋରା, ସୁନ୍ଦର ଚେହେରା । ତା ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ଆଖିରେ କଳା, ମୋଟା ଫ୍ରେମର ଚଷମାଟା ବେଶ ଭଲ ମାନ୍ଥୁଥିଲା । ଏତେ ସମୟ ପରେ ଟିକେ ସାହସ ଆସିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତିର । ଯାହା ହଉ, କିଏ ତ ଅଛି ଅଫିସରେ... ଯିଏ କି କାମ କରୁଛି ଏତେ ରାତି ଯାଏଁ ।

ଟିକେ ଅତମତ ହେଇ କଥା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲା ସେ, "ଏଇ ଲିଫ୍ଟଟା ସକାଳେତ ଠିକ ଥିଲା । ହେ ଭଗବାନ, ଏବେ ଏତେ ମହଲା ସିଡ଼ିରେ ଓଲଟିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ !"

ଅଳ୍ପ ହସିକି ଭଦ୍ରବ୍ୟକ୍ତି କହିଲେ "ଭଗବାନଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ ସକାଳେ ଏଇଟା ଖରାପ ହେଇନଥିଲା ନହେଲେ ଭାବନ୍ତୁ ତ ! ସେତିକି ସିଡ଼ି ଉପରକୁ ଚଢ଼ିକି ଆସିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିଥାନ୍ତା ।"

"ସେଇଟା ବି ସତ" କହୁ କହୁ ହସି ପକେଇଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ।

ନିଜର ପରିଚୟ ଦେଇ ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ ସେ "ମୁଁ ଅନୁଭବ । ପାଖାପାଖି ଦି ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି ଏଇ ବିଲ୍ଡିଂରେ କାମ କରୁଛି । ମୋ ଅଫିସ ନବମ ମହଲାରେ । ଆପଣ କଣ ଏଠି ନୂଆ ? କ୍ଷମା କରିବେ, କିନ୍ତୁ ଏଠି କୌଣସି ମହିଳା କର୍ମଚାରୀଙ୍କୁ ଏତେ ରାତି ଯାଏଁ କାମ କରିବାର ଦେଖିନି ତ, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ପଚାରିଦେଲି ।"

"ହଁ, ନୂଆ । କାହା ସାଙ୍ଗେ ପରିଚୟ ବି ହେଇପାରିନି । ଅଫିସ ଖାଲି ହେଇଗଲାଣି । ମୁଁ ଜାଣି ବି ପାରିଲିନି ।" ନିଜ ମନର ଡରକୁ ଲୁଚେଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁ କରୁ କହିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ।

"ଚାଲନ୍ତୁ ଏଥର ତଳକୁ ଯିବା ଆଉ ବେଶି ଡେରି କଲେ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଅସୁବିଧା ହେଇପାରେ ।" କହୁ କହୁ ସିଡ଼ିରେ ପାଦ ରଖିଲେ ଅନୁଭବ ।

ବାଧ ଶିଶୁଟିଏ ପରି ଚାଲିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି । ମନରେ ତାର ବହୁତ ଆଶଙ୍କା । ଏଠୁ ବେଶି ବସ ଯିବା ଆସିବା କରେନି । ଅଟୋ ବି ମିଳେ କାଁ ଭାଁ । ନୂଆ ସହରରେ ତାକୁ ରାସ୍ତା ଘାଟ ବି ଠିକରେ ଜଣା ନାହିଁ । କଣ କରିବ ସେ । ତାର ସବୁ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣକ୍ଷେପ ପକାଇ ଅନୁଭବ ପୁଣି ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ "ଯଦି କିଛି ମନେ କରିବେନି, ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଘରେ ଛାଡ଼ିଦେବି । ଗାଡି ଅଛି ମୋର । ଏତେ ବର୍ଷା ରାତିରେ ଏଠୁ କିଛି ମିଳିବା କଷ୍ଟ ।" ଏଇ ଭିତରେ ସେମାନେ ତଳେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ସବୁଆଡେ ଚାହିଁଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି । ଗାର୍ଡ ବସିଛି ଚୌକି ଉପରେ ଅଧା ତୁଲେଇ । ତାକୁ ଦେଖିକି ଟମକି ପଡ଼ି କହିଲା, "ମାତାମ, ଆଜି କଣ ବହୁତ କାମ ଥିଲା କି ? ଏତେ ରାତିରେ ଏକା?" ଏଇ ଲୋକଟା ତାର ଜମା ପସନ୍ଦ ନୁହେଁ । ରେଜିଷ୍ଟରରେ ଦସ୍ତଖତ କରୁଥିଲା ବେଳେ ସବୁବେଳେ ଉପରେ ପଡି କଥା



ସବୁବେଳେ ଉପରେ ପଡ଼ି କଥା କହିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିବ, ଠିକ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ଅଫିସ ଏଣ୍ଟ୍ରି ରେଜିଷ୍ଟରରେ ଦସ୍ତଖତ କରୁଥିଲା ବେଳେ । ତାର ପାନଖୁଆ ବାନ୍ତ ଆଉ ହାତ ହଲେଇ କଥା କହିବାର ଢଙ୍ଗକୁ ଦେଖିଲେ ହିଁ ରାଗଲାଗେ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତିକୁ । ଏବେ ବି ଦେଖୁନ କେମିତି କଥା ହେଉଛି । ପାଖରେ ଆଉ ଜଣେ ଭଦ୍ରବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ବି ତ ଠିଆ ହେଇଛନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ ହାଲଚାଲ ତ କିଛି ପଚାରୁନି ।

ମୁହଁରେ ଟିକେ ବିରକ୍ତି ପ୍ରକାଶ କରି ଗୋଟେ କଡକୁ ଯାଇ ଠିଆ ହେଲା ସେ । ପୁଣିଥରେ ଭାବିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲା । କଣ କରିବ ସେ । ଅଜଣା ଲୋକର ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ଯିବା କଣ ଠିକ ହେବ । କେମିତି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରିବ ସେ । ପୁଣି ଆଜି କାଲିର ଯୁଗରେ । କିଛି କହି ହେବନି । ବୋଧେ ତା ମନର ଡରକୁ ସଠିକ ଭାବେ ମାପି ନେଇଥିଲେ ଅନୁଭବ । ଟିକେ ପାଖକୁ ଆସି କହିଲେ "ମୁଁ ବୁଝି ପାରୁଛି । ନୂଆ ଜାଗାରେ ନୂଆ ଲୋକ ଉପରେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରିବା କଷ୍ଟ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଭାବିକି ଦେଖନ୍ତୁ । କେବେ ବର୍ଷା ଛାଡ଼ିବ କହି ହେବନି । ଆଉ ବସ, ଅଟୋ ମିଳିବା ପୂରା ଅସମ୍ଭବ ଏବେ । ଯଦି ବି ମିଳିଲା, ଅଜଣା ଅଟୋ ଡ୍ରାଇଭରକୁ ଯଦି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରି ପାରିବେ, ତାହେଲେ ଅଫିସର ସହ କର୍ମଚାରୀକୁ କାହିଁକି ନୁହେଁ । " ଛାଡ଼ ଯାହା ହେବାର ଥିବ ହବ । ଯେତେବେଳେ ଆଉ କିଛି ଉପାୟ ନାହିଁ, ବେଶି ଭାବିକି ଲାଭବି ନାହିଁ । ମନରେ ସାହସ ସଂଚୟ କରି କହିଲା ସେ "ଠିକ ଅଛି, ମତେ ଦୟାକରି ଛାଡ଼ି ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ ଘର ପାଖେ । "

କାରରେ ବସିଥିଲା ବେଳେ ସେଇ ଅଳ୍ପ କିଛି କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ଭିତରେ ଅନୁଭବଙ୍କର ଗମ୍ଭୀର ଅଥଚ ଭଦ୍ର, ଅମାୟିକ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିତ୍ୱରେ ଖୁବ ପ୍ରଭାବିତ ହେଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି । ଅଳ୍ପ ସମୟରେ ପହଂଚାଇଦେଲେ ସେ ଘର ଆଗରେ । କହିଲେ, "ଆପଣ ଘର ଭିତରକୁ ଯାନ୍ତୁ । ମୁଁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଛି ଏଠି । ଗଲା ପରେ ମୁଁ ଯିବି " ସତରେ... କେତେ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱବାନ ଲୋକଟି । କଲିଂବେଲ କୁ ଟିପୁ ଟିପୁ ଭାବୁଥିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ଆଉ କହିଲା "ବହୁତ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ । ସୋମବାର ଦିନ ଦେଖା ହେବ ଅଫିସ ରେ । "

"ସୋମବାର ଦିନ.... କେଜାଣି... ଦେଖାଯାଉ..." ଏମିତି କିଛି କହୁ କହୁ ହଠାତ ଅଟକି ଗଲେ ଅନୁଭବ ଆଉ ଏଯାବି ମୁହଁରେ ଲାଖି ରହିଥିବା ସ୍ମିତ ହସ ଟିକକ କାହିଁକି କେଜାଣି ଟିକେ ଫିକା ହେଇଗଲା ପରି ଜଣାଗଲା ।

"ଆଜି ବହୁତ ଡେରି କଲୁ ତୁ । ମୁଁ ପୂରା ବୋର ହେଇ ଗଲିଣି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତୁ ଆସିଲୁ କେମିତି, ଆଉ ଗପୁଡ଼ କାହା ସାଙ୍ଗେ " , କବାଟ ଖୋଲୁ ଖୋଲୁ କହିଲା ରୁମ ମେଟ ବୀପା ।

"ଆରେ ଅଂଧୁଣି ଟା ନା କଣ. ଏତେ ବଡ଼ ଗାଡ଼ି ଟେ ଦେଖା ଯାଉନି ତତେ " ଅନୁଭବଙ୍କୁ ବାଏ କରୁ କରୁ କହିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ।

"କଣ ଯେ ତୁ କହୁଛୁ ପାଗେଲୀ । ହଉ ଆଜି ଗୋଟେ ନୂଆ ଟିକେନ ଡିସ ବନେଇଛି ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ ଭଲ ମୁଭି ବି ଡାଉନ ଲୋଡ଼ କରିଛି । ଜଲଦି ଆସେ ତୁ । " ଏମିତି କହୁ କହୁ ଏକ ପ୍ରକାର ଟାଣି ନେଇଗଲା ବୀପା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତିକୁ ଘର ଭିତରକୁ ।

କିଛିଟା ମିଠା ଆଉ ରୋମାଞ୍ଚକର ସ୍ମୃତି କୁ ନେଇ ଶୋଇଗଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି । କେମିତି ସକାଳ ହେଇଗଲା ଜଣା ବି ପଡ଼ିଲାନି । "ଜଲଦି ଉଠେ ଆଉ ଖବର ପଢ଼ । ଗଧଙ୍କ ଭଳିଆ ଶୋଇଛୁ କଣ" ବୀପାର ପାଟିରେ ବିରକ୍ତ ହେଇ ଉଠିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି । ହାତକୁ ଫୋନଟା ବଢ଼େଇ ଦେଉ ଦେଉ କହିଲା ବୀପା "ତମ ଅଫିସ ବିଲ୍ଡିଂର ଲିଫ୍ଟଟା କାଲି ରାତିରେ କ୍ରାସ ହେଇଯାଇଛି । ଯାହା ହଉ... କେହି ଲୋକ କିନ୍ତୁ ନ ଥିଲେ ତା ଭିତରେ । "

ନିଜ କାନକୁ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରି ପାରୁନଥିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି । କଣ ହେଇଥାନ୍ତା କାଲି ! ଯଦି ଠିକ ସମୟରେ ଅନୁଭବ ଆସିନଥାନ୍ତେ । ମନ ଭିତରଟା ଆଉ ଥରେ କୃତଜ୍ଞତା ରେ ଭରିଗଲା ତାର । ଯଦିଓ ଶନିବାର ଦିନ କାମ ନଥାଏ ତଥାପି ଥରେ ଅଫିସ ଯାଇ ଦେଖୁ ଆସିବାକୁ ସ୍ଥିର କଲା ସେ । ଯାଇ ଦେଖିଲା ବେଳକୁ ସେଠି ଲୋକ ଭର୍ତ୍ତି । ଲିଫ୍ଟ ଭାଙ୍ଗିବାର ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା ଚାଲିଛି ସବୁଆଡ଼େ । ଇଚ୍ଛା ନଥିଲେ ବି ସେଇ ଗାର୍ଡ ପାଖକୁ ଗଲା ସେ । ତାକୁ ଦେଖୁ ଦେଖୁ ଚିହ୍ନି ପକେଇ ଲୋକଟି କହିଲା, "ମାତାମ, କାଲି ଆପଣ ଗଲା ପରେ ହିଁ ଲିଫ୍ଟଟା ହଠାତ ଖସି ପଡ଼ିଲା । ଠିକ ଏମିତି ହେଇଥିଲା କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ । ଲିଫ୍ଟ ଭାଙ୍ଗିକି ଜଣଙ୍କର ଜୀବନ ଚାଲି ଯାଇଥିଲା ଆଉ କିଛି ଲୋକ ଆହତ ବି ହେଇଥିଲେ । ଭଗବାନଙ୍କ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ମନେ ମନେ ହାତ ଯୋଡ଼ୁ ଯୋଡ଼ୁ ପଚାରିଲା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି , ଜାଣିଛ କି ତାଙ୍କୁ ? ଯିଏ ମୋ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଥିଲେ, ନବମ ମହଲାରେ କାମ କରନ୍ତି । "

ବାନ୍ତ ଦେଖେଇଲା ଗାର୍ଡ ତାର ସେଇ ସ୍ୱଭାବ ସୁଲଭ ଢଙ୍ଗରେ । "ମାତାମ, ମଜା କରୁଛନ୍ତି କି? କାଲି ପରା ଆପଣ ଏଠି ଏକୃତିଆ ଠିଆ ହେଇଥିଲେ ଆଉ ନିଜେ ନିଜେ କଣ ସବୁ ଗପୁଥିଲେ । ମୁଁ ଭାବିଲି ଯାଇ ପଚାରିବି ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ । ଯାଉ ଯାଉ ଦେଖିଲି ଆପଣ



ପଲେଇଛକ୍ତି, ଆଉ ନବମ ମହଲା କଣ ? ଏଠି ପରା ସବୁ ମିଶିକି ସାତଟା ମହଲା ଅଛି । " ପାଦ ତଳର ମାଟି ଯେମିତି ଖସିଗଲା ପ୍ରାୟୁର ଆଉ ଦେହରୁ ବୁହେ ଝାଳବି ବାହାରି ଗଲା । ଆରେ ସତେ ତ! ଗାଡ଼ ଠିକ କହୁଛି । କାଲି ଦୀପାକୁ ବି ଘର ଆଗରେ ଏତେ ବଡ଼ ଗାଡ଼ିଟା ଦେଖା ଯାଇନଥିଲା କେମିତି !

କିଏ ସେ ଅପରିଚିତ!! ଆଉ କାହିଁକି ତା ଜୀବନଟାକୁ ରକ୍ଷା କରିଦେଇଗଲେ? ଇଏ ଆଉ ସେ ନୁହେଁ ତ ଯାହାର କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ.... !!!

କୌଣସି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ପାଉ ନଥିଲା ସେ । ସବୁ ଚିନ୍ତା ଶକ୍ତି ତାର ଲୋପ ପାଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା । ଖୋଜିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଥିଲା ସେ ଅଜ୍ଞାତ ଅଶ୍ରିରୀର ପରିଚୟକୁ!!!

“I am a Software Engineer by profession, but on a break for couple of years since Aavahan (my son) came to our life. I love to write, read and make various cuisines at leisure.

OSA is doing a great job by uniting all the Odias here. The "souvenir" is a great motivation for everybody to express their thoughts as well as to stay connected in a foreign soil.”

Surjyasnata Ratha, South East Chapter, OSA .



ଅଢ଼ଳ - ସ୍ମୃତିର ମିଶ୍ର



ମୁଁ ଏକ ସର୍ବନାମ

କୃଷ୍ଣା ସେନାପତି

୧୬ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ବିଲାତରୁ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଛନ୍ତି । ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ, ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କ ସ୍ବାମୀ । ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କ ମନରେ ଭଲମନ୍ଦର ପ୍ରତିକ୍ରିୟା ନ ହେବାଟା ଅସ୍ବାଭାବିକ ବୋଧହୁଏ । ତୁଣ୍ଡବାଇଦ ସ ହସ୍ତ କୋଶ । ସାନବାରୁ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଛନ୍ତି । ପତା ପ୍ରତିବେଶୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଯେ ଗୋଟିଏ ତାଜା ଖବର । କାହା ମୁହଁରେ କେତେ କଥା । କିଏ କହୁଛି ବିଲାତି ମେମ୍ବର ନିଶା ଛାଡ଼ିଗଲା । କିଏ କହୁଛି ତତି ଦେଇଥିବ, କିଏ କହୁଛି ଆଉ କାହାକୁ ବାହାହେଇ ଯାଇଥିବ, ସେଠିତ ସବୁ ସମ୍ଭବ । ସେଠାର ରାଜ କୁମାର ସୁନ୍ଦରୀ ପତ୍ନୀକୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ବୁଢ଼ୀ ପ୍ରେମିକାକୁ ବାହା ହେଇ ପଡ଼ିଲା । ପୁଣି କିଏ କହୁଛି ବଡ଼ ବାବୁ, ବଡ଼ ମା ଆଉ ସାନ ମା ଙ୍କର ତପସ୍ୟା ଓ କର୍ମର ସୁଫଳ ଆଜି ମିଳିଛି । ରତ୍ନମଣି ଶାନ୍ତି ନିବାସରେ ରହୁଥିବା ପୁରୁଣା କର୍ମଚାରୀ, ରଘୁ କକା, ଗୁମାସ୍ତା ବାବୁ, ପୂଜାରୀ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ନନା ଏବଂ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ କର୍ମଚାରୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ମନରେ ସୁନାମିର ଶଙ୍ଖ । ନୂଆ ସରକାର ବଦଳିବା ପରି ସାନ ବାବୁ, ଅସଲ ମାଲିକଙ୍କର ଉପସ୍ଥିତି କିପରି ଭାବରେ କାହା ଭାଗ୍ୟ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରିତ କରିବ, ସେଇ ଆଶଙ୍କା ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ମନରେ ।

ଘରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଶୋଇ ପଡ଼ିଲେଣି । ରାତ୍ରୀର ନିଃଶବ୍ଦତା ଆଉ ଗମ୍ଭୀରତା ହୃଦୟକୁ ଥରେଇ ଦେଉଛି । ରାତ୍ରୀଚର ଜୀବଜନ୍ତୁଙ୍କ ଛତା ସମସ୍ତ ପ୍ରାଣୀ ଶାନ୍ତିରେ ନିଦ୍ରାଭିଭୂତ । ହେଲେ ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ ପଲକ ପଡୁନି । ଏହି ଘର ସହିତ ସଂପର୍କ ବାହାଘର ପରେ ନୁହେଁ, ତାର ବହୁତ ଆଗରୁ । ବାପା ବିମଳ ରାୟ ଓ ଶ୍ଯଶୁର(ବାବା) ହରିହର ମର୍ଦ୍ଦରାଜ ଥିଲେ ବାଲ୍ୟ ବନ୍ଧୁ । କ୍ଷୀର ନୀରର ସଂପର୍କ । ବାପା ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଇଞ୍ଜିନିୟର, ଓ ବାବା ଉତ୍ତର ପ୍ରଦେଶରେ ଆଇ.ଏ.ଏସ ଭାବରେ କର୍ମମୟ ଜୀବନ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଥିଲେ ଏକ ସଙ୍ଗରେ । ତାଛଡା ଦୁଇ ପରିବାର କେତେ ଦେଶ ବିଦେଶ ଭ୍ରମଣ କରିଥିଲେ ଏକା ସାଙ୍ଗରେ । ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ତିନି ବର୍ଷ ବଡ଼ ଥିଲେ ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କଠାରୁ । ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ଓ ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କ ବିବାହ ଥିଲା ଦୁଇ ପରିବାରର ସ୍ବପ୍ନ । ହେତୁ ପାଇବା ପରଠାରୁ ମନପ୍ରାଣ, ପ୍ରେମ ସବୁ ଥିଲା ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁମୟ । ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିତ୍ବ ଥିଲା ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସବୁଠାରୁ ବଡ଼ ଆକର୍ଷଣ । ରେଭେନ୍ସା କଲେଜ୍‌ରେ ପଢ଼ିବା ବେଳେ ନୂତନ ନିଯୁକ୍ତ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକଙ୍କର ପ୍ରେମପତ୍ର ଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭକରି ସବୁଠାରୁ ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ବନ୍ଧୁ ଅଜିତ୍ର ପ୍ରେମ ନିବେଦନ ଗୋଟିଏ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତପାଇଁ ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କୁ ପଥଚ୍ୟୁତ କରି ପାରି ନାହିଁ । ବୟସ ବଢ଼ିବା ସହିତ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ଥିବା ଆକର୍ଷଣ ଓ ଭଲ ପାଇବା ତାଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ କାୟା ବିସ୍ତାର କରି ଚାଲିଥିଲା ।

ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ସ୍କୁଲ ଅଫ୍ ଇକୋନୋମିକ୍ସରେ ଶେଷ ବର୍ଷ ବେଳକୁ ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀ ଜେ. ଏନ. ଇଉ ରେ ଇଂଲଣ୍ଡରେ ଏମ.ଏ ପାଇଁ ଯୋଗ ଦେଲେ, ଏହି ସଂଯୋଗ ଆଣିଦେଇଥିଲା ପରସ୍ପରକୁ ଚିହ୍ନିବା ପାଇଁ ସୁଯୋଗ । ହସଖୁସିରେ ସମୟ କଟି ଯାଉଥିବା ବେଳେ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କର ବିଲାତ ଯାଇ ଲ'ପଡ଼ିବାର ଯୋଜନା ସେ ଜାଣିବାକୁ ପାଇଥିଲେ । ମନରେ ଭରି ଯାଇଥିଲା ଦୁଃଖ ଓ ବିଚଳତା... ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ଯଦି ବିଲାତରୁ ନ ଫେରିବ, ଆଉ କାହାର ପ୍ରେମରେ ବାନ୍ଧି ହୋଇ ରହି ଯା'ନ୍ତି ! ଘନିଷ୍ଠତା ସତ୍ତ୍ବେ ମନର କଥା କେବେ ସେ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରି ନଥିଲେ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ । ତାଙ୍କର ଦୃଢ଼ବିଶ୍ବାସ ଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କର ଭଲ ପାଇବା ତାଙ୍କର ବିଶ୍ବାସକୁ ମର୍ଯ୍ୟାଦା ଦେବେ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ । ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କର ଏମ୍.ଫିଲ୍ ସରିବା ବେଳକୁ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କର ଲ' ପଢ଼ିବାବି ଶେଷ ହେଲା । ସେହି ସମୟରେ ବାବାଙ୍କର ବିବାହ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ ଦୁଇ ପରିବାର ଭିତରେ ଆଣି ଦେଇଥିଲା ଆନନ୍ଦର ଢୁଆର । କେତେ ସୁନେଲୀ ସ୍ବପ୍ନ ସେ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ... ସଂସାର, ପରିବାର ଆଉ ନୂଆ ଜୀବନକୁ ନେଇ । ସ୍ବାମୀ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ଓକିଲାତି କରିବେ ଆଉ ସେ ନିଜର ପରିବାରର ଯତ୍ନ ନେଉ ନେଉ ନିଜ ଲେଖିକା ହେବାର ସ୍ବପ୍ନକୁ ସାଥ୍ୟକ କରିବେ । ବିବାହ ସବୁ ଝିଅଙ୍କ ଜୀବନରେ ଆଣିଦିଏ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ । ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀ ମଧ୍ୟ କିଛି ବ୍ୟତିକ୍ରମ ନଥିଲେ । ବିବାହ ପରେ ସେ ହେଲେ ଝିଅରୁ ବୋହୂ, ରାୟରୁ ମର୍ଦ୍ଦରାଜ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏଇ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ଯେ ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନରେ ଜଟିଳତା ଭରି ଦେବ ଏକଥା କଳ୍ପନାତୀତ ଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ । ବାହାଘର ତିନି ଦିନ ଚାଲିଯାଇଥିଲେବି କିଛି ଗୋଟେ ବାହନା କରି ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଥର ମଧ୍ୟ ଦେଖା ନକରିବା ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କୁ ବ୍ୟଥିତ କରିଥିଲେ ବି କାହାକୁ କହିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ନଥିଲା । ଚତୁର୍ଥୀ... ନବ ଦଂପତ୍ତିଙ୍କର ଅବିସ୍ମରଣୀୟ ଦିନ । ଏକ ନୂତନ ଜୀବନର ଶୁଭାରମ୍ଭ । ବୋହୂବେଶରେ ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କର ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷା, ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷାରେ ରହିଯାଇଥିଲା, କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ହୋଇ କେତେବେଳେ ସେ



ଶୋଇ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲେ ସେ ନିଜେ ବି ଜାଣି ପାରିନଥିଲେ । ସକାଳୁ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ହାତଲେଖା ଚିଠିଟିଏ ପାଇଥିଲେ, ଗୋଟିଏ ଧାଡ଼ିରେ ଲେଖାଥିଲା, "sorry, do not expect anything from me at this point of time" ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ବିବ୍ରତ ହୋଇ ତଳକୁ ଚାଲିଆସି ଖୋଜିଥିଲେ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କୁ । ଜରୁରୀ କାମରେ କଟକ ଯିବାର ସମ୍ଭାବ ଶୁଣି ମନରେ ଉଠିଥିଲା ଅନେକ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ, ମନ ଭାରି ହେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା ଦୁଃଖିନ୍ନରେ, ମନରେ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଆସିଥିଲା, ଏ ବିବାହ ବନ୍ଧନ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କର ଇଚ୍ଛା ବିରୁଦ୍ଧରେ ହେଇନିତ, ଏମିତି ନବବଧୂକୁ ନକହି ଏମିତି ଚିଠି ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଲେଖି ଚାଲିଯିବାଟା କଣ ଉଚିତ୍ । ଦୁଇ ଦିନ ପରେ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ଫେରିଲେ, କିନ୍ତୁ ଘରକୁ ଫେରି ଆସିବା ପରେ ତାଙ୍କର ବାବାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ବିବାଦ ଓ ଯୁକ୍ତିତର୍କ ର କାରଣ ବିଶଦ ଭାବରେ ଜାଣି ନପାରିଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏତିକି ବୁଝିଥିଲେ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କର ମୋଟା ଅଙ୍କର ଟଙ୍କା ଦାବାକୁ ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି ନଦେବାଇ ଥିଲ ସବୁ ବିବାଦର, ସବୁ ଅଶାନ୍ତିର ମୂଳ । ତାପରେ ଘରଛାଡ଼ି ଚାଲି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ବିଲାତ । ସବୁ ଆଦର୍ଶ କାଲିଦାକୁ ଫଳା କରୁଥିବା ବିଲାତଫେରନ୍ତା ଯୁବକ ନବବଧୂକୁ ନଜଣେଇ ବିଲାତ ଫେରିବା କେଉଁ ଆଦର୍ଶ କାଲିଦାରେ ଯାଏ ବୁଝି ପାରିନଥିଲେ ସେ , କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ହେଇ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରନାଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ପାଖରୁ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ହାତଲେଖା ନୋଟ୍ " I will be back soon" ତାଙ୍କୁ ଧର୍ମ ସଙ୍କଟରେ ପକେଇ ଦେଇଥିଲା । ଏ ପଟେ ଅମାବାସ୍ୟାର ଅନ୍ଧାର ସେପଟେ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣିମାର ଶୀତଳ ଆଭାସ ଦୂର୍ବଳ କରି ଦେଇଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କୁ । ମାତ୍ର ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସମସ୍ତ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗର ପ୍ରୟାସ ବ୍ୟର୍ଥ ହେଇଛି । ସମୟ ତା ବାଟରେ ଆଗେଇ ଯାଇଛି । ବୋହୂ ହେଇ ଆସିବାର ପାଞ୍ଚବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଶଶୁରଙ୍କର ମୃତ୍ୟୁ, ତାର ଚାରି ଦିନ ପରେ ଶାଶୁଙ୍କର ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ଆଉ ଅଳ୍ପ ଦିନର ବ୍ୟବଧାନରେ ନିଜ ବାପା ମାଙ୍କ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଅସହୟତା ଭିତରକୁ ଠେଲି ଦେଇଥିଲେ ବି ସଂସାରର କଠିନ ରାସ୍ତାରେ ଘାତ ପ୍ରତିଘାତ ଭିତରେ କିପରି ଚାଲିବାକୁ ହୁଏ ସମୟ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଶିଖେଇ ଦେଇଛି । ଏ ଭିତରେ ଅନେକ ବର୍ଷ ଚାଲି ଯାଇଛି । ବାବାଙ୍କ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ପରେ ନିର୍ବାଚନରେ ଲଢ଼ିବା ପାଇଁ ଦଳୀୟ ନେତାଙ୍କ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣକୁ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟାକ୍ଷାନ କରିଛନ୍ତି ସେ । ରାଜନୀତି ଓ ରାଜନୀତିଜ୍ଞ ଶବ୍ଦ ଦୁଇଟି ପାଇଁ ତାଙ୍କ ମନରେ ମିଶ୍ର ପ୍ରତିକ୍ରିୟା । ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ସକାଳ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ କିରଣରେ ଆଲୋକିତ ତଙ୍କର ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟ ପରିବେଶ ବୈଜୟନ୍ତୀଙ୍କୁ ଆଣିଦିଏ ନୂତନ ଆଶା ଓ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ।

ବାବାଙ୍କର ଗ୍ରାମରେ ଉନ୍ନତିର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ସଫଳ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ତାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରୟାସରେ ଆଜି ଗଢ଼ି ଉଠିଛି women's cooperative bank, Income generation program for underprivileged, women's empowerment organization ଏହି ସଂସ୍ଥା ଆଣି ଦେଇଛି ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟନାରୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ମନରେ ଆତ୍ମ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ, ସମ୍ମାନର ସହିତ ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ । ସାଂସାରିକ ଜୀବନର ଉପଭୋଗ କରିବାର ଭାଗ୍ୟ ମିଳିନି ହେଲେ ଅନ୍ୟ ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ଆନନ୍ଦକୁ ଭଲ ଭାବେ ଉପଲବ୍ଧି କରିଛନ୍ତି ସେ । ପ୍ରତି ଦିନ ସକାଳୁ ଛାତରୁ ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଚାଲି ଚଳଣୀ, ସରଳତାର ଆଭାସ ହୃଦୟରେ ଭରିଦିଏ ଜୀବନର ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି । ମନରେ ତଥାପି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଥିଲା ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ଫେରିବେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜି ସକାଳେ ତାଙ୍କ ଘର ସାମ୍ନାରେ ଟାକ୍ସି ଠିଆ ହେବାର ଦେଖି ସେ ନିଜ ଆଖିକୁ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରି ପାରି ନଥିଲେ । ୩୯ ତ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ! ହାତରୁ ଖସି ପଡ଼ିଥିଲ ଚାହା କପ୍ । ଭଙ୍ଗ ଚାହା କପ୍‌କୁ ଉଠେଇବା ବଦଳରେ ତାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ତା ଆଉ ଜଳଖିଆ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରିବାକୁ ଚାଲି ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ମନରେ ଅନେକ ଦ୍ରବ୍ଧ, ଅନେକ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ... ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ଏମିତି ଅଚାନକ ଆସିବାର କାରଣ କ'ଣ ହେଇପାରେ, ଟଙ୍କା ନେବାକୁ ଆସି ନାହାନ୍ତିତ, ଛାତପତ୍ରର ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି ନେବାକୁ ଆସି ନାହାନ୍ତି ତ! କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ... ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ ସେଇ ପୂର୍ବ ପ୍ରେମ, ସ୍ନେହ ଭରା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ... ତୁମେ ଭଲ ଅଛ ତ? ଅଜଣା ଲୋକକୁ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲା ପରି ସେ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଇଥିଲେ ...ମୁଁ ଭଲ ଅଛି, ଆପଣ କେମିତି ଅଛନ୍ତି ? ନିଜ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନରେ ତୁମେ ବଦଳରେ ଆପଣର ସମ୍ପ୍ରେସନରେ ନିଜ ଉପରେ କେମିତି ଏକ ବିରକ୍ତି ବୋଧ ଆସିଥିଲା । ସତରେ କେତେ ବଢ଼ି ଯାଇଛି ଦୂରତ୍ୱ । ତାଙ୍କ ବିଗତ ଜୀବନ ଆଜି ଇତିହାସ । ଶରୀରରେ ବଥଟେ ହେବା ବେଳେ ତାକୁ ଭୋଗିବାର ଅନୁଭବ, ଆଉ ତା ଚିହ୍ନକୁ ଦେଖି ବଥକୁ ମନେପକେଇବାର ଅନୁଭବ ଭିତରେ ଆକାଶ ପାତାଳ ତପ୍ତ । ଏବେ ସେ ସବୁ ଭାବି କିଛି ଲାଭ ନାହିଁ । ସମସ୍ତ ସ୍ଥାବର ଅସ୍ଥାବର ସଂପତ୍ତିର ମାଲିକାନାର ସତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ନାଁରେ କରିଦେଇ ସେ କଟକ ଚାଲିଯିବା ଉଚିତ୍ ବୋଲି ଭାବି ଗୋଟିଏ ଚିଠିରେ ସବୁ ହିସାବକିତାବ ସହିତ ଆବଶ୍ୟକୀୟ କାଗଜ ପତ୍ରରେ ନିଜର ଦସ୍ତଖତ ଦେଇ ସମସ୍ତ ବନ୍ଧନରୁ ମୁକ୍ତ ହେବାଇ ଶ୍ରେୟ ହେଇପାରେ । କିଛିଦିନ ପ୍ରୟାସ ନିତୁ ଘରେ ରହି ନିଜର କିଛି ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରି ପାରିବାର ଆତ୍ମ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କର । ସକାଳ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ କଟକ ଚାଲିଯିବାକୁ ସ୍ଥିର କରିଥିଲେ ସେ ।



ଏଣିକି ନିର୍ଭୟ ମନରେ ଆତ୍ମସମ୍ମାନ ନେଇ ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ପ୍ରବଳ ଇଚ୍ଛା । ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କୁ ନେଇତ ଜୀବନ । ଥରେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଚାଲିଗଲେ ଶତଚେଷ୍ଟା କଲେବି ସେ ଆଉ ଫେରି ଆସେନା । ଏ ଘର, ବାବାଙ୍କର ଲାଲବେରୀ, ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟ ପରିବେଶ, ତାଙ୍କୁ ଜୀବନରେ ଅନେକ କିଛି ଶିକ୍ଷା ଦେଇଛି ।

ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ନିଜର ଶେଷ କୃତଜ୍ଞତା ବ୍ୟକ୍ତ କରି ବାହାରି ପଡିଲେ ବୈଜ୍ୟୟନ୍ତି । ଉପର ମହଲାରୁ ତଳେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ସହିତ ମୁହାଁମୁହିଁ ହେବାର ଶଙ୍କା ସତ ହୋଇଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ କଳ୍ପନାତୀତ ଥିଲା ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ କ୍ଷମା ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା । ବୈଜ୍ୟୟନ୍ତିଙ୍କ ହାତରୁ ଶୁଟକେଶ୍ ଛତେଇ ନେଇ କହିଥିଲେ , " I love you, can't live without you . I am indebted to you for everything you did on my behalf for the family." ଛାଣ୍ଟୁ ପାଲଟି ଯାଇଥିଲେ କିଛିକ୍ଷଣ ସେ । ହୃଦୟ ରେ ତଙ୍କ ନାରୀତ୍ୱ ଆଉ ବିଫଳ ମାତୃତ୍ୱର ଅବ୍ୟକ୍ତ ଚିହ୍ନାର । ତାଙ୍କୁ ନ ଛାଡି ଯିବାର ବାରମ୍ବାର ଅନୁରୋଧ ବୈଜ୍ୟୟନ୍ତିଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ ଲୁହ ଭରି ଦେଇଥିଲା । ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁ ନିରବରେ ଚାଲିଯାଇଥିଲେ ସେଠୁ । କାନରେ ବାରମ୍ବାର ଗୁଞ୍ଜରି ଉଠୁଥିଲା ଦିବ୍ୟେନ୍ଦୁଙ୍କ ଇଂରାଜୀ ବକ୍ତବ୍ୟ । ହୃଦୟରେ ତାଙ୍କ ନାରୀତ୍ୱ ଆଉ ବିଫଳ ମାତୃତ୍ୱର ଅବ୍ୟକ୍ତ ଚିହ୍ନାର ।

ସେ ତ ଏକ ସର୍ବନାମ । ନିଜ ଭିତରେ ସେ ଦେଖି ପାରୁଛନ୍ତି ଶହ ଶହ ଅବଳା ନାରୀଙ୍କର ମାନସିକ ନିର୍ଯାତନା ଆଉ ଅକୁହା ଦୁଃଖର କାହାଣୀ । ସମାଜ କେତେ ଦୁର୍ବଳ କରି ଦେଇଛି ନାରୀକୁ । ଆଗକୁ ଯିବେ ନା ପଛକୁ ଫେରିବେ ... କିଛି ଗୋଟେ ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ନେବାକୁ ହେବ । ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ନନାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ, “ସାନ ମା ଆପଣଙ୍କର ତା ଆଉ ସାନ ବାବୁଙ୍କର କଫି । ଆପଣ ନେଇକି ଯିବେ ନା ମୁଁ ଦେଇ ଆସିବି” ।

(ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ କିଶ୍ନା ସେନାପତି ମିଟିଗାନ୍ ଓସାର ଜଣେ ସକ୍ରିୟ ସଭ୍ୟା ଓ ପୂର୍ବତନ ସଭାନେତ୍ରୀ । ସେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଡଃ ଶିଶିର ସେନାପତିଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର , ମିଟିଗାନ୍ରେ ବାସ କରନ୍ତି ।)

‘ଏକ ପକ୍ଷରେ ଯଜ୍ଞ ଓ ତ୍ୟାଗ, ଅନ୍ୟ ପକ୍ଷରେ ପରିଗ୍ରହ ଓ ଲୋଭ - ଏହାହିଁ ଜୀବନ ।

ଏହି ଦୁଇଟିଯାକର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଜୀବନରେ ଅସ୍ୱୀକାର କରିହେବନି ।”

ପ୍ରତିଭା ରାୟ (ମହାମୋହ)



ଦାସତ୍ବର ବେଡ଼ି

ସୁଲୋଚନା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ବାବୁ ଘରେ କାମ ସାରି ଘର ବାହୁଡ଼ା । ସଂଧ୍ୟା ନଇଁ ଯାଇଛି । ମାର୍ଗଶୀର ଆକାଶର ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଆଲୋକ ମନଲୋଭା ଦିଶୁଛି । ବାବୁଘରେ ଘର ଦ୍ୱାର ଲିପା ପୋଛା କରି ଅଙ୍ଗୁଳ କଟକଟ ହେଉଛି । ଜହ୍ନ ଦେଖି ଉପଭୋଗ କରିବାକୁ ସମୟ ନାହିଁ । ଘରେ ତେଣେ ଅନେକ କାମ ପଡ଼ିଛି । କେମିତି ସଅଳ ସଅଳ ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଯିବ ସେଇଆ ଚିନ୍ତା । ପୁଅ ଭୋକରେ ଆଉଟୁ ପାଉଟୁ ହେଉଥିବ । ରୋଷେଇ ଘରେ ଚାଟିଆଏ ହେବ ଭାତ ହାଣ୍ଡିରେ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲା । ଖାଇବାକୁ ତିନି ଜଣ ମଣିଷ । ଶାଶୁ ଶଶୁର ଆଉ ପାଞ୍ଚ ବର୍ଷର ପୁଅ ଗୋପାଳ । ତେର ବର୍ଷର ଝିଅ ରଂଗୀ, ରାଉତରାୟ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଘରେ ସକାଳ ସଂଜେ ବାସନ ଦିଲଟା ମାଜି ଦିଏ ଆଉ ଚାହା ଜଳଖିଆ ସେଇଠି ଖାଇ ଦେଇ ଘରକୁ ଆସେ । ଝିଅର ଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଆଉ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ ଚିନ୍ତା କରିବାକୁ ପଡେନି । ସଂଜରେ ସେମିତି ସ୍କୁଲ ଫେରନ୍ତା ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଘର କାମ ସାରି ଭାତ ରୁଟି ବଳକା ଯାହା ମା' ଦିଅନ୍ତି ତାକୁ ଖାଇ ଘରକୁ ଫେର । ଆଜି ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉର ମନ ଘର ଧରିଛି । ପୁଅ ଆଉ ଶାଶୁ ଶଶୁରଙ୍କ ଖାଇବା ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ମନ ଅସ୍ଥିର ହେଉଛି । ହାତରେ ରୁଟି ଖଣ୍ଡେ ନାହିଁ କି ପଇସା ଦିଲଟା ବି ନାହିଁ । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ଫେରିଲା ବେଳେ ସାଆନ୍ତାଣୀ ରୁଟି ଅବା ପାଉଁରୁଟି ଦିଲଟା ହାତରେ ଧରାଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ଆଜି ବୋଧେ ତରବରରେ ଥିଲେ, କିଛି ଦେଇ ନାହାନ୍ତି । କାମ ସାରି ସିଏ କିଛି ସମୟ ବାରଣ୍ଡାରେ ବସିଥିଲା । ହେଲେ କେହି କିଛି କହିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ସିଏ ଯାହା କାମରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ରହିଲେ ଦେଖି ସିଏ ଘରକୁ ବାହାରିଲା । ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଭାବିଲେ କିଛି ଲାଭ ନାହିଁ । ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ଜୋରରେ ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ।

ଦୁଃଖର ସଂସାର ରଂଗୀବୋଉର । ସୁଖ କହିଲେ, କେବଳ ପୁଅ ମୁହଁକୁ ଚାହିଁଦେଲେ ସିଏ ଖୁସି ହୁଏ । ପୁଅ ଦିନେ ବଡ଼ ହେବ, ରୋଜଗାର କରିବ, ରଂଗୀବୋଉର ଦୁଃଖ ଯିବ, ସେଇଆ ଭାବି ତା ମନ ଖୁସି ହୋଇଯାଏ । ଆଗମୀ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତର ସୁନେଲୀ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମନ ଚାହିଁଲେ ବି ତର ଲାଗିଲା ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ । ସେମିତି ସିଏ ଇଆତୁ ସିଆତୁ ଭାବି ଭାବି ଚାଲିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା । ହଠାତ ମନେ ହେଲା ତା ପାହୁଣ୍ଡ ସହ ସମାନ ପାଦ ମିଳାଇ କିଏ ପଛରୁ ଆସୁଛି । ପଛକୁ ବୁଲି ଚାହିଁବାକୁ ତର ଲାଗୁଥାଏ । ଏଣେ ପାଦ ଶବ୍ଦ ପାଖକୁ ପାଖକୁ ଲାଗି ଆସୁଥାଏ । କିଛି ପ୍ରତିକ୍ରିୟା ହେବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଏକ ବଳିଷ୍ଠ ହାତ ତା କାନ୍ଧରେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲା । ସିଏ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଜଡ଼ ପରି ଠିଆ ହୋଇଗଲା । ତରରେ ଛାତି ଥରୁଥାଏ । ଚାରିଆଡ଼କୁ ଚାହିଁଲା ରଂଗୀବୋଉ । କେହି କୁଆଡେ ଦେଖା ଯାଉ ନ ଥାନ୍ତି । ପଛକୁ ଚାହିଁବାକୁ ଶକ୍ତି ନଥାଏ । ପଛରୁ ଏକ ପରିଚିତ ସ୍ୱର ଶୁଣାଗଲା ... “ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ତୋ’ ସହ କଥା ପଦେ ହେବା ପାଇଁ ମତେ କେତେ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିବାକୁ ହେଉଛି । ତୁ ତ ଜାଣୁ, ଘରେ ତୋ’ ମା’ ସାଆନ୍ତାଣୀ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ ସାମ୍ନାରେ କଥା କଅଣ, ତତେ ଚାହିଁଲେ ବି ଘରେ ତାଙ୍କର ଲୀଳା ହୋଇଯିବ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ବାହାରେ କଥା ହୋଇ ହେବ ବୋଲି ତୋ’ ପଛେ ପଛେ ଆସିଲି । ଦେଖ, ତୋ’ ପାଇଁ ଟଙ୍କା ଶହେଟା ଆଣିଛି । ଦରମା ପାଇବାର ପନ୍ଦର ଦିନ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି । ଭାବିଲି, ତୋର କିଛି ଦରକାରକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ହେବ ” । ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ପଛକୁ ବୁଲିଗଲା । ଦେଖିଲା ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁ ସାମାନ୍ୟରେ । ହାତ ଟାଣି ନେଇ ଟଙ୍କା କିଛିଟା ତା ହାତରେ ଗୁଞ୍ଜି ଦେଲେ, ଆଉ ହାତକୁ ଧରି ଦୁଇ ମିନିଟ୍ ତାକୁ ଚାହିଁଲେ । ସେ ଚାହାଁଣୀ ରେ ଯେମିତି ଏକ ଆତ୍ମବିଶ୍ୱାସ ପ୍ରବୃତ୍ତି ଫୁଟି ଉଠୁଥାଏ । ଲଏ ସେଇ ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁ ବୋଲି ମନେ ହେଉ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ଘରେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଆଗରେ ମୁଣାଟିଏ ପରି କେଉଁଠି ଛପି ରହିଥାନ୍ତି । ଆଜି ଯେମିତି ସିଏ ଜଣେ ଭିନ୍ନ ମଣିଷ ! ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉର ହାତ ଶୀଥିଳ ହୋଇ ଆସିଲା । କଣ କହିବ ଭାବୁଥାଏ, କିନ୍ତୁ କହି ପାରୁ ନ ଥାଏ । ହଠାତ ମନକୁ ଯେମିତି କିଏ ବଳ ଦେଇ ଦେଲା । ଦେହରେ ବଳ ନ ଥିଲେ କଣ ହେଲା, ମନରେ କେଉଁଠୁ ବଳ ଆସିଗଲା । ହାତରୁ ହାତ ଖସାଇ ନେଇ କହିଲା, “ନାଉ ବାବୁ ମୋର ସେମିତି କିଛି ଦରକାର ନାହିଁ । ଦରକାର ପଡ଼ିଲେ ମାଗି ନେବିନି ସାଆନ୍ତାଣୀଙ୍କୁ ? ସାଆନ୍ତାଣୀ ତ ଆମର ସାକ୍ଷାତ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ, ଆମର ଅନ୍ନଦାତା । ସିଏ ତ ମୋର ଭଲରେ ମନ୍ଦରେ ସବୁବେଳେ ସାହା । ମିଛ କହୁନି ଆଜ୍ଞା, ଆପଣ ଆଉ ମା ନ ଥିଲେ ଆମର ସଂସାର କୁଆଡେ ଭାସି ଯାଆନ୍ତାଣି । ଆପଣ ମାନଙ୍କ ଦୟା ମୁଁ କେବେବି ସୁଝି ପାରିବିନି । ଆପଣ ଯାଆନ୍ତୁ, ମୋର ତେଣେ ଅନେକ କାମ



ବାଳି ରହିଛି । ଅନ୍ଧାର ହେଲାଣି । ସଞ୍ଜ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ମୋର କାମ ସାରିବା ଦରକାର ” । ହାତରୁ ହାତ ଖସି ଯାଇଥିବାରୁ ଟଙ୍କାଟା ତଳେ ପଡିଗଲା । ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ବଡ ବଡ ପାହୁଣ୍ଡ ପକାଇ ବୁଲି ପଡି ଚାଲିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା । ଅଳ୍ପ ଦୂରରେ ଘର ତାର । କିନ୍ତୁ ଜଣା ପଡୁଥିଲା ସତେ ଯେମିତି ତାକୁ ମାଇଲ ମାଇଲ ଅତିକ୍ରମ କରିବାକୁ ପଡିବ । ହଠାତ ମନେ ହେଲା ଘରକୁ ଯିବା ରାସ୍ତା ଯେମିତି ବଢିବାରେ ଲାଗିଛି । ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଗୋଟ ଘୋଷାରି ହେଉଛି । ଦେହ ଆଉ ମନର ସମସ୍ତ ବଳ ଖଟାଇ ସିଏ ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଛି । ହେଲେ ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଭୂତ ତା ଉପରେ ଘୋଡା ସବାର ହୋଇଛି ପରା !

ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁ ଗାଁର ଜଣେ ମାନ୍ୟ ଗଣ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି । ଆଖ ପାଖ ଗାଁରେ ତାଙ୍କର ବଡ ନାଁ । ଦରକାର ବେଳେ ସିଏ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବାକୁ ଆଗଭର । ପାଖ ସହରରେ ସିଏ ତହସିଲ ଅଫିସର ବଡ ବାବୁ । ପୁଅ ଝିଅ କଲେଜରେ ପଢ଼ନ୍ତି । ଘରେ ସୁନ୍ଦରୀ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ । ଜମି ଜମା ବି ଅନେକ । ପଇସାର ଅଭାବ ନ ଥାଏ । କାହାକୁ କେବେହେଲେ ବ୍ୟବହାରରେ ଉଣା କରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଛଅ ଫୁଟର ବଳିଷ୍ଠ ଚେହେରା । ଉନ୍ନତ କପାଳ । ରଂଗ ତୋଫା ଗୋରା । ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଘଟ କଳା ବାଳ । ତାହାଣ କାନ ପାଖରୁ ଦୁଇ ସୋରା ବାଳ ପ୍ରାୟ କିଏ ଧଳା ରଂଗ କରି ଦେଇଥିବା ଭଳି ମନେ ହୁଏ । ଆପାତତଃ କହିଲେ ଚେହେରାଟି ସୁନ୍ଦର । ବାହାରକୁ ସର୍ବାଙ୍ଗ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦେଖା ଯାଆନ୍ତି କହିଲେ ଅତ୍ୟୁକ୍ତି ହେବ ନାହିଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଭିତରଟା କ’ଣ କେହି ଜାଣନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଅବା ଜାଣିଥିଲେ ବି ପଦାରେ ପକାଇ ନିଜକୁ ଧରା ପକାଇବାକୁ କେହି ସାହାସ କରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଏପରିକି ପ୍ରକୃତ ପ୍ରକୃତି ଜାଣିଲେ ବି ଲୋକ ଆଖି ବୁଜି ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମନୋରମା ମଧ୍ୟ ଜାଣି ନ ଜାଣିଲା ପରି ରହିଥାନ୍ତି । ପାପ କରୁଥିବା ଲୋକ ପାପୀ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଜାଣି ଶୁଣି ପାପକୁ ଘୋଡାଇ ରଖୁଥିବା ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ମଧ୍ୟ କମ୍ ପାପୀ ନୁହଁନ୍ତି । ସେ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ଦେଖିଲେ ମନୋରମାଙ୍କୁ ପାପୀ କୁହାଯିବ । ଦଣ୍ଡ ପାଇଲେ କିଏ କେତେ ଦଣ୍ଡର ଭାଗଧାରୀ ତା ଠିକ୍ରେ ସାବ୍ୟସ୍ତ କରିବାକୁ ବିଚାରକର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ପଡିପାରେ, ସିଏ ନିରପେକ୍ଷ ଭାବରେ ଦୋଷୀକୁ ଦଣ୍ଡ ଦେବ !

ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ଚାଲିଗଲାଣି । ଛାଇ ଛାଇଆ ସଞ୍ଜ ଅନ୍ଧାରରେ କୁଆଡେ ମିଶିଗଲାଣି । ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁଙ୍କ ହାତ ତଳକୁ ଖସି ଆସିଲା । ତଳକୁ ଦେଖିଲେ । ଟଙ୍କାତଳ କୋଟା ମୋଟା କାଗଜ ଟୋଳାଏ ପରି ପଡିରହିଛି । ସିଏ ଚାରି ଆଡକୁ ଆହୁରି ଥରେ ଦେଖି ନେଲେ । କାଳେ କୁଆଡୁ କିଏ ଆସୁଥିବ ପରା ! କାଳେ କିଏ ତାଙ୍କୁ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ସହ କଥା ହେବା ଦେଖି ଦେଇଛି କି ? ଟିକିଏ ନଇଁ ଯାଇ ଟଙ୍କାଟା ଉଠାଇନେଲେ ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁ । କେତେବେଳେ ସନାତନ ପଛରୁ ଆସି ପାଖରେ ଠିଆ ହୋଇଛି ସିଏ ଦେଖି ନାହାନ୍ତି । ସନାତନ କହିଲା, “ ବାବୁ ଏ ଅବେଳରେ ଏଠି ଠିଆ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି ? କିଛି ଅସୁବିଧା ନାହିଁ ତ ? ମତେ କହୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି ? ” ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁ ଥଡ ମଡ ହୋଇଗଲେ । କଣ କହିବେ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ପଡିଗଲେ । କାଳେ ସନାତନ ତାଙ୍କୁ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ସହ କଥା ହେବାର ଦେଖି ଦେଇଥିବ ଭାବି କହିଲେ, ନାଇଁ ସାଆନ୍ତାଣି ଭୁଲିଗଲେ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ କହିବା ପାଇଁ ଯେ ଘରେ ଆଉ କିଛି ଦରକାର ଥିଲା । ମୁଁ ବଜାର ଆଡେ ଆସୁଥିଲି ତ – ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ ସେଇଆ କହିବାକୁ ଭାବି ଚାଲି ଆସିଲି । ଦେଖିଲି, ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ କହିବାରେ ଲାଭ ନାହିଁ । ମୁହଁରେ ମୁହଁରେ ନାହିଁ କରିଦେଇ ‘କାମ ଅଛି’ କହି ଚାଲିଗଲା । ” ସନାତନ କହିଲା, ମତେ କହୁନାହାନ୍ତି ଆଜ୍ଞା, ଏଇନା କହିଲେ ତାକୁ କାନ ଧରି ଟାଣି ଆଣିବିନି ? କଣ ହେଲା, ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ମୁହଁ ଉପରେ ଜବାବ ଦେବ ? ତା’ ପୁଣି ନାହିଁ କରି ? ଦେଖୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି ଆଜ୍ଞା, ଆଜିକାଲି ଯୁଗରେ କାହାକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବା କଥା ନୁହେଁ ! ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଦାନରେ ସିଏ ଘର ଚଳଉଛି, ଆଉ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ନାହିଁ କରୁଛି ? ତାର ଏତେ ବହୁପ ? ଯାଉଛି ବାବୁ ତାକୁ ଆଣି ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚାଇ ଦେବି । ଆପଣ ଯାଆନ୍ତୁ ବଜାର ଆଡେ ” । ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁଙ୍କଠୁ ଉତ୍ତର ପାଇବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସିଏ ଚାଲିଗଲା । ଦାମୋଦର ବାବୁ ‘ତ୍ରାହି, ତ୍ରାହି’ କହି ବଜାର ଆଡେ ମୁହାଁଇଲେ ।

ସନାତନକୁ ବଡ ସୁଯୋଗଟାଏ ମିଳିଗଲା ଯେମିତି । ଚାରି ପାଞ୍ଚ ମିନିଟରେ ଦୌଡି ଦୌଡି ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ ସାଇ ଡେଇଁ ଯାଇ ବାଉରୀ ସାହିରେ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉର ଘର ସାମନାରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲା । ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ସେତେବେଳକୁ ଘର ଦୁଆର ମୁହଁରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ସୁନା ବୋଉ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଗପ ଯୋଡିଦେଇଥାଏ । ତାକୁ ଚମକାଇ ଦେଇ ସନାତନ ଧଇଁ ସଇଁ ହୋଇ ବଡ ପାଟିରେ କହିଲା, “ ହେ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ, ବାବୁଙ୍କ କଥା ନ ଶୁଣି ତୁ କୁଆଡେ ଚାଲି ଆସିଲୁ କିଲୋ ? ଆଜିକାଲି ତ ତୋର ଭାରି ବହୁପ ହେଲାଣି ? କଅଣ ହୋଇଛି କି ? ତୁ ତ ଆଉ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ର ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ମାନୁନୁ ? ବାବୁଆଣୀ ତତେ ସିଆଡେ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରି ବସିଛନ୍ତି ! ଯା ଯା, ଯେତେ ଶୀଘ୍ର ପାରୁ ଫେରିଯା ” । ରଂଗୀବୋଉ ମୁହଁ ବୁଲାଇ ଚାହିଁଲା ସନାତନକୁ । ଗାଁରେ କଳିଆ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଭିତରୁ ପ୍ରଧାନ ହେଲା ସନାତନ । ତାକୁ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲେ ସିଏ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର



ମାନ ମହତ ଉଜାଡି ଦେବ । କେତେ କଥା ଗାଁରେ ମିଛ ସତ କହି ପ୍ରଚାର କରିବ । ଘରେ ତେର ବର୍ଷର ଝିଅଟାଏ ବି ଅଛି । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ତରରେ ଚଳୁ ଚଳୁ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉର ଦିନ ଯାଉଛି । ତେଣୁ ସିଏ ନରମ ସ୍ଵରରେ କହିଲା, ‘କାଲି ଆସିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସଆନ୍ତାଣୀ ତ ମତେ କିଛି କହିଲେ ନାହିଁ ? କହୁଛ ଯଦି ଯିବି ସିନା, ହେଲେ ଘରେ ମୋର ଯାବତ କାମ ପଡିରହିଛି’ । ତାହାଙ୍କ ସ୍ଵରରେ ସନାତନ କହିଲା, ‘ଉଣା କାମ ତୋଅର ପଡିନି କି ? ସତେ ଅବା ଘର ଉଜୁଡି ଯାଇଛି ?’ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗିଲାଣି ସନାତନର ମନ୍ତବ୍ୟ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଘଟଣାରେ ଉଦ୍ଧେଜନା ନ ଆଣିବାର ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିବାକୁ ସିଏ ଭତିତ ମନେ କଲା ଓ ଫେରିଗଲା ବାବୁ ଘରକୁ ।

ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ ଦେଖିଲେ କେହି କହିବେନି ତାର ତେର ବର୍ଷର ଝିଅଟାଏ ଅଛି ବୋଲି । ଶ୍ୟାମଳ ରଂଗ ହେଲେ ବି ଦେଖିଦେଲେ ଯେମିତି ମନ ପୁରିଯାଏ । ଟଣା ଟଣା ଆଖି । ଛୋଟ ପତଳା ଓଠ । ପତଳିଆ ଚେହେରା । ନହ ନହକା ଅଳ୍ପ ଉପରକୁ ଉନ୍ନତ ବକ୍ଷ ଯୁଗଳ । ତେଲ ସର ସର ମୁଣ୍ଡ ବାଳ ଏକାଠି ହୋଇ, ବେକ ତଳକୁ ଗଣ୍ଠିଟିଏ ହୋଇ ରହିଛି । କପାଳରେ ବଡ଼ ନାଲି ଚିକିଲିଟାଏ ତାର ଛୋଟ ମୁହଁକୁ ଗିଳି ପକାଇଲା ପରି ଦିଶେ । ବାବୁଆଣୀଙ୍କର ଚିରା ଫଟା ପୁରୁଣା ଲୁଗାରେ ବି ସିଏ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦିଶେ । ଗାଁ ଯାକର ଛତରା ଟୋକାଙ୍କର ଆଖି ତା ଉପରେ ଅବା ସତ କହିଲେ ତାର ଭରପୁର ଯୌବନ ଉପରେ । ସନାତନ ସେଇ ମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରୁ ଜଣେ । କେତେବେଳେ ସୁବିଧା ଚିକିଏ ମିଳିଲେ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ସଙ୍ଗେ ଦୁଇ ପଦ କଥା ହୋଇଗଲେ ଯେମିତି ତା ମନ ପୁରିଯାଏ । କଥା କହିଲା ବେଳେ ତା’ ଲାଳୁଆ ଆଖି ଲାଖିଯାଏ ତା ଦେହରେ । ଯେମିତି ଗୋଟାପଣେ ଗିଳିଯିବ । ଆଜି କେତେ ଦିନକେ କଥା କହିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳିଛି, ଆଉ ବାହାନାର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ପଡିନି । ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ସହିତ ପାଦକୁ ପାଦ ମିଳାଇ ସିଏ ବି ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା । ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ପଚାରିଲା, ‘ହେ ସନିଆ ଭାଇ, ତମେ ପୁଣି କୁଆଡେ ଚାଲିଲ ? ମୁଁ ତ ଯାଉଛି ବାବୁ ଘରକୁ ତମ କହିବା ଅନୁସାରେ, ତମେ ବି କଅଣ ବାବୁ ଘରକୁ ଯାଉଛ ?’ ସନିଆ ଭଉର ଦେଲା, ‘ସଞ୍ଜ ହୋଇ ଆସିଲାଣି । ତୁ ଏକୁଟିଆ ଯାଉଛୁ ତ’ ! ସେତିକି କହି ସନିଆ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉର ବାଁ ହାତକୁ ନିଜ ହାତ ଭିତରେ ଛଦି ଆଣିଲା । ଅନେକ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଜଣେ ପୁରୁଷର ଝର୍ଣ୍ଣ କେମିତି ଅଜଣା ମନେ ହେଲା ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉର । ଛାତି ଭିତରେ ବିଜୁଳିର ଚମକ ଖେଳିଗଲା । କ’ଣ ଘଟି ଯାଉଛି ତା ଯେମିତି ତାର ଅକ୍ତିଆରର ବାହାରେ । ସନାତନ କୁଣ୍ଡଳ ଆଣିଲା ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ । ତାର ବିଶାଳ ବସ୍ତୁରେ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉର ନହନହକା ଦେହଟି ଲତା ପରି ଗୁଡାଇ ହୋଇଗଲା । ସମୟ ସେଇଠି ଝିର ହୋଇ ରହିଗଲା କିଛି ସମୟ । ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉର ହୋସ ଆସିଗଲା । ନିଜକୁ ଛଡାଇ ଆଣିଲା ସେଇ ଅଭାବନୀୟ ଦୂର୍ବଳତାରୁ । ଦୁହେଁ ବୁଝ ବାପ ପୁଣି ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ । କାହା ପାଟିରୁ କଥା ବାହାରୁ ନଥାଏ । ବାବୁ ଘର ଗଳି ପାଖରୁ ସନାତନ ସେ ସଂଧ୍ୟାର ଅନ୍ଧକାରରେ କୁଆଡେ ମିଶିଗଲା ।

ହସିବ କି କାନ୍ଦିବ, ସୁଖ ଭାବିବ କି ଦୁଃଖ ଭାବିବ ଜାଣି ପାରିଲା ନାହିଁ ରଂଗୀବୋଉ । ଦୈହିକ କ୍ଷୁଧାକୁ ପ୍ରଥମ ଥର ପାଇଁ ଅନୁଭବ କଲା । ସତର ବର୍ଷରେ ବାହା ହୋଇଥିଲା । ବାହାଘର ବର୍ଷ ପୁରଣବେଳକୁ ଜନ୍ମ ହୋଇଥିଲା ରଂଗୀ । ସେଇ ଦିନଠୁ ତାର ନାଁର ଅଭା ପଡି ନାହିଁ, ସିଏ ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ହୋଇଯାଇଛି । ବାହା ହୋଇ ସ୍ଵାମୀ ସହ ଘର କରିବାର ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ, ସ୍ତ୍ରୀର ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସମର୍ପଣତା ଭିତରେ ଯେ ମଣିଷଟିଏ ଅଛି, ତା ଭୁଲି ଯାଇଥିଲା ସିଏ । ପରିବାରକୁ ସୁଖରେ ଚଳାଇବାର ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ନେଇ ସ୍ଵାମୀ ତାର କଲିକତା ଚାଲିଗଲେ ଯେ ଏ ଯାଏଁ ଫେରି ନାହାନ୍ତି । କିଏ କହୁଛି ସେଠି ସିଏ ଆଉ କାହାକୁ ବାହା ହୋଇ ଘର କଲେଣି । ନିଜ ଦୁଇ ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ମଣିଷ କରିବ ବୋଲି ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉ ବନ୍ଧ ପରିକର । ଆଜି ମନେ ହେଉଛି, ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ଜୀବନରେ କେଉଁ ଏକ ଅଜଣା ହାତର କରାମତି ତଳେ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହାର ମାନି ଯାଏ । ସେଇ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତର ସିଏ ଦାସ ହୋଇ ରହିଯାଏ ସାରା ଜୀବନ । ସେ ଦାସତ୍ଵର ବେଡି, ବାନ୍ଧି ଦିଏ ମନୁଷ୍ୟତ୍ଵର ସତ୍ତାକୁ, ବାନ୍ଧି ଦେଇଛି ରଂଗୀ ବୋଉକୁ ଆଉ ତାର ସ୍ଵାମୀକୁ !

“ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ହିଁ ସମାଜର ପ୍ରତିଛବି ଏଥିରେ ଥାଏ କିଛି କଳ୍ପନା ଆଉ କିଛି ବାସ୍ତବତା ଆଉ କିଛି ସାମାଜିକ ଇତିହାସ । ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରତି ଆମର ଆଗହୁରୁ ଆମେ ପ୍ରତିବକ୍ଷ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରୁଛେ ଆମର ବାର୍ଷିକ ପତ୍ରିକା ‘ଉର୍ମି’ । ଆମେରିକାରେ ବହୁ ବକ୍ଷ ରହିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆମେ ଯେ ଆମ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ଭୁଲିନେ ତାହା ପ୍ରତିଫଳନ କରେ ଆମ ମାନଙ୍କର ଗନ୍ଧ କବିତାରେ । ମୋର ଲେଖିବାର ଆଗ୍ରହର ପୂର୍ବଜନ୍ମ ହୋଇଛି ଏହି ସୁଯୋଗରେ । ଆମେରିକାକୁ ଆସିବା ପରେ ଓଡିଆରେ ମୁଁ ଯେ ଲେଖିବି ଏବଂ ମୋ ଲେଖାକୁ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିପାରବି ତାହା ଥିଲା ସ୍ଵପ୍ନାତୀତ । ମୋ ପ୍ରତି ଓସାର ଏହି ଅବଦାନ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଯୋଗ୍ୟ ”।

ସୁଲୋଚନା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ଏଲକ୍ରିଜ, ମେରିଲାଣ୍ଡ



ଶୁଭସ୍ୟ ଶୀଘ୍ର

ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ

ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ମଙ୍ଗଳ ଆଳତୀ ସରିବାପରେ ବୃନ୍ଦାବନରୁ ଆସିଥିବା ସାଧୁ ନରସିଂହ ମହାରାଜଙ୍କର ପ୍ରବଚନ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଲା । ସାଧୁବାବା ବୁଝାଉଥିଲେ, “ଆଠ ଲକ୍ଷ ଜନ୍ମପରେ ଆମେମାନେ ଏ ଦୁର୍ଲ୍ଲଭ ମଣିଷ ଜନ୍ମ ପାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଏ ଜୀବଜଗତରେ କେବଳ ମଣିଷ ହିଁ ଚିନ୍ତା କରିପାରେ । ଆଉ ସବୁ ଚିନ୍ତାକୁ କର୍ମରେ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ କରାଇବାର ବୀଜମନ୍ତ୍ର ହେଲା, ‘ଶୁଭସ୍ୟ ଶୀଘ୍ର, ଅଶୁଭସ୍ୟ କାଳହରଣମ୍’ । ଯେତେବେଳେ ଭଲ ଚିନ୍ତନଟିଏ ଆସିବ, ସେସବୁକୁ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱଶାତ୍ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେବା ଉଚିତ୍, ନହେଲେ ସେ ଶୁଭକାର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ କିଛି ପ୍ରତିବନ୍ଧକ ଆସିପାରେ ।”

ପ୍ରବଚନ ସରିବାପରେ ସେଠି ପ୍ରୀତିଭୋଜର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଥିଲା । ସେଦିନ ପ୍ରୀତିଭୋଜର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରିଥିଲେ ସୁରୁ ଦିଦି । ତାଙ୍କ ଝିଅର ବାହାଘର ଠିକ୍ ହୋଇଯାଇଥିଲା, ସେଇ ଖୁସିରେ । ପ୍ରସାଦ ସେବନ କରିବା ସମୟରେ ସୁରୁ ଦିଦି ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାକୁ ପଚାରିଲେ, “ଆଉ, ଆପଣଙ୍କର ପୁଅର ଖବର କଣ ? ତା’ ବାହାଘର କେବେ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ?”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ଭଗବାନ ରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଙ୍କ ଆଡ଼କୁ ହାତ ବଢେଇ କହିଲେ, “ସିଏ ଯେବେ କୃପା କରିବେ ।”

ଘରକୁ ଫେରି ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ବଡ଼ ଅସ୍ଥିର ହୋଇଯାଇଥିଲେ । ପୁଅ ପ୍ରମୋଦକୁ ବଡ଼ିଶିବର୍ଷ ପୁରିଲାଣି, ହେଲେ ବାହାହେବାକୁ ମନ ସ୍ଥିର କରୁନି । ଆଜିକାଲିଆ ପିଲା, ପୁଣି ଆମେରିକାରେ ବଢ଼ିଛି, ନିଜ ହାତରେ ନିଜେ ଚଉଦ ପା । ସେଥିରେ ବାପା, ମା’ଙ୍କର ଭାରତୀୟ ଦର୍ଶନତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଓ ଉପଦେଶକୁ ସିଏ ମାନିବ କାହିଁକି ? ଏବେ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଘରକୁ ଆସିଲେ ସିଏ ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ପୁଣିଥରେ ଚେଷ୍ଟାକରିବେ ।

ପୁଅ ଘରକୁ କିଛିମାସ ଛୁଟିରେ ଆସିଥିବା ସମୟରେ ତାକୁ ବୁଝାଇ କହିଲେ, “ଦେଖେ ଧନ, ତୋର ପୁରୁଣା ଗାର୍ଲଫ୍ରେଣ୍ଡ୍ ମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ କେମିତି ବ୍ରେକଅପ୍ ହୋଇଗଲା ? ତୁ ଯଦି ଏ ଆମାଣ୍ଟକୁ ପ୍ରଯୋଜ୍ କରିବାକୁ ଏମିତି ଡେରି କରିବୁ, ସିଏ ବି କେତେବେଳେ ପୁଣି ଚାଲିଯିବ । ତୁ ତାକୁ ପ୍ରଯୋଜ୍ କରୁନୁ କାହିଁକି ? ତତେ ବଡ଼ିଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି । ଆଉ କଣ ଚାଲିଶି ବର୍ଷରେ ବାହାହେବୁ ? ତୋ ବାପା ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷରେ ବାହା ହୋଇଥିଲେ ।”

ପୁଅ ଅସ୍ଥିର ହୋଇଉଠିଥିଲା, “ମା’ ତମେ ମତେ କଣ ଛୋଟପିଲା ଭାବିଛ ? ନିଜେ କହୁତ ମତେ ବଡ଼ିଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି । ତା’ ମାନେ ମୁଁ ଜଣେ ବୟସ୍କ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି । ମୋର ବୁଝିବାର ଶକ୍ତି ଅଛି । ଆମାଣ୍ଟ ଏବେ ପି-ଏଚ୍-ଡି- କରୁଛି । ସେଇଟା ସରିଯାଉ ।”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା କହିଲେ, “ହେଲେ ଧନ, ତା’ ପି-ଏଚ୍-ଡି- କେବେ ସରିବ, ବର୍ଷେ କି ଦିବର୍ଷ ଲାଗିବ, ତୁ ଏତେ ଦିନ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିବୁ ? ପୁଣି ତା ଭିତରେ ଯଦି କିଛି ଗଣ୍ଡଗୋଳ ହୋଇଗଲା, ତ ଗଲା ।”

ପୁଅ ଲିଭିଙ୍ଗ୍ ରୁମ୍‌ରୁ ଉଠି ବାହାରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ବାହାରିଲା । “ମା, ତମେ କେବେବି ମିନିଟିଏ ମତେ ଶାନ୍ତିରେ ରହିବାକୁ ଦେବନି । ମୁଁ ତ ଛୋଟପିଲା ହୋଇନି, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ଘରକୁ ଆସିବାକୁ ଚାହେଁନି । ସବୁବେଳେ ମତେ ଛୋଟପିଲାଙ୍କ ଭଳି ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବ ।”

ପୁଅ ଘରୁ ବାହାରିଯିବା ପରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଅଜିତେଶ ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ବିରକ୍ତ ହେଲେ । “କାହିଁକି ସେ ପ୍ରକୃତି ଛାଡ଼ୁନ । ପିଲାଟା ଛୁଟିରେ ଆସିଛି କେତେଟା ଦିନ ପାଇଁ । ତାକୁ ଭଲରେ ଖୁଆଅ, ପିଆଅ, ଭଲକଥା କୁହ । ତମେ ଜମା ବୁଝିବନି; ତମର ସେଇ ବାହାଘର କଥା ବାହାର କରିବ ଆଉ ତାକୁ ବିରକ୍ତ କରେଇବ ।” ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ତୁପ୍ ହୋଇଗଲେ । ସନ୍ତାନ କେବଳ ସେଇ ଗୋଟିଏ । ତା’ କଥା ସବୁବେଳେ ମନକୁ ଆସେ । ବିଶେଷତଃ ତାର ଦୁଇଟି ବାଳିକାବନ୍ଧୁଙ୍କ ସହିତ ବ୍ରେକଅପ୍ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସିଏ ଚିନ୍ତିତ ।



ପୁଅଟା ଆଉ ସାରା ଜୀବନ ଅଭିଆତା ହୋଇ ରହିଯିବନି ତ? ସେମିତି ତ କେତେ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କ ପିଲା ଅଭିଆତା ହୋଇ ରହିଛନ୍ତି । ପ୍ରମୋଦର ପ୍ରଥମ ବାଳିକାବନ୍ଧୁଟି ଜଣେ ଭାରତୀୟ ପତୋଶୀଙ୍କର ଝିଅ ଥିଲା, ପ୍ରାଞ୍ଜଲ୍ । ତା’ ହାତକୁଲ୍ ସୁଇଚ୍‌ହାର୍ଟ । ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାଙ୍କୁ ବି ସେ ଝିଅଟି ବଡ଼ ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ନହେଲେ ବି ଗୁଜୁରାଟୀ ଝିଅଟିଏ, ଭାରି ସଂସ୍କାରୀ । କଥକ ନାଚ ଶିଖୁଥିଲା । ତା’ ଝୁଲ୍‌ର ସବୁ ନାଚ ପ୍ରୋଗ୍ରାମ୍‌କୁ ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ତା’ ବାପା, ମା ବି ଖୁବ୍ ବହୁପ୍ରିୟ ଓ ମେଳାପୀ । ସେ ଝିଅଟି ସହିତ ତାଙ୍କ ପୁଅ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ପ୍ରମ୍‌ରେ ଯାଇଥିଲା । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଜୋଡ଼ି କେତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦିଶୁନଥିଲା ସତେ ? ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା କେତେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ । ବିବାହର ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କାର୍ଡରେ ଛପାହେବ, “ପ୍ରମୋଦ ସହିତ ପ୍ରାଞ୍ଜଲ୍ ଶୁଭ ପରିଣୟ” । ହେଲେ ଉଭୟ କଲେଜ୍ ଗଲେ ଅଲଗାଅଲଗା ସ୍ଥାନକୁ । ପୁଅ ପଢ଼ିଲା କାଲିଟେକ୍‌ରେ, ସେ ଝିଅ ଗଲା ପଢ଼ିବାକୁ ଭରଜିନିଆ ଟେକ୍ । ସେ ଝିଅର ବାପା ଚାକିରି ବଦଳାଇ ଚାଲିଗଲେ ନିଉଜର୍ସୀ । କଲେଜ୍ ସରିବାବେଳକୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସଂପର୍କ ବି ବଦଳିଯାଇଥିଲା । ପୁଅର କଲେଜ୍ ଗ୍ରାଜୁଏସନ୍‌କୁ ସେମାନେ ଯେବେ ଯାଇଥିଲେ, ସେଠି ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଚିତ୍ତେଇଦେଲା ତା’ ନୂଆ ଗାର୍ଲଫ୍ରେଣ୍ଡ୍ ସୋନାକୁ । ସୋନାର ବାପା ଭାରତୀୟ ବଙ୍ଗଳା, ମା’ ଅଷ୍ଟ୍ରେଲିଆନ୍ । ସେମାନେ ସମସ୍ତେ ମିଶି ଲକ୍ଷ୍ କରିବାକୁ ଗଲେ । ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା କିଛି ପଚାରିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲେ, ହେଲେ ଅଜିତେଶ ଇଙ୍ଗିତରେ ମନାକରିଦେଲେ ।

ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିବାପରେ ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ତାକୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କରିଥିଲେ, “ପ୍ରାଞ୍ଜଲ୍ ଖବର କଣ ?”

ପ୍ରମୋଦ - “ସିଏ ତ ଗ୍ରାଜୁଏଟ୍ କଲା କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର୍ ସାଇନ୍‌ସ୍‌ରେ । ଏବେ ତାକୁ ମାଇକ୍ରୋସଫ୍ଟ୍‌ରେ ସିଆଟ୍‌ଲ୍‌ରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଚାକିରି ମିଳିଯାଇଛି । ସିଏ ଜଏନ୍ କରିବ ଜୁଲାଇରୁ ।”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା - “ବହୁତ ଭଲକଥା । ତୋର ବି ତ କାଲିଫର୍ଣ୍ଣିଆରେ ଚାକିରି ହୋଇଯାଇଛି । ତମମାନଙ୍କର ବାହାଘର କଥା ମୁଁ ଭାବୁଥିଲି । କେବେ କଲେ ଭଲହେବ କହିଲୁ ।”

ପ୍ରମୋଦ - “ମା’ ତମେ ବୋଧହୁଏ ଜାଣିନ, ପ୍ରାଞ୍ଜଲ୍‌କୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୁଜୁରାଟୀ ବୟଫ୍ରେଣ୍ଡ୍ ମିଳିଯାଇଛି । ସେମାନେ ଆସନ୍ତାବର୍ଷ ବାହାହେବେ । ଏବେ ସୋନା ମୋର ଗାର୍ଲଫ୍ରେଣ୍ଡ୍ । ଆମେ ଏବେ ବାହାହେବା ବିଷୟ ଚିନ୍ତାକରିନୁ । ଯାଉ କିଛିଦିନ ।”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ମନେମନେ ବଡ଼ ଦୁଃଖିତ ହେଲେ । ଏତେ ଭଲ ଝିଅଟା ପ୍ରାଞ୍ଜଲ୍, ତାଙ୍କ ବୋହୂ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ଭଲ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତା । ଏବେ ଏ ସୋନା ଝିଅଟା କେମିତି ହୋଇଥିବ କେଜାଣି ? ତା’ ମା’ ତ ଅଷ୍ଟ୍ରେଲିଆନ୍ । କି ସଂସ୍କାର ଶିଖେଇଥିବ ସିଏ ? ପୁଅ ବାହାରକୁ ଯାଇଥିବା ବେଳେ ସିଏ ସ୍ୱାମୀଙ୍କୁ କହିଥିଲେ, “ତମେ ଟିକେ ବୁଝାଉନ ? ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ କମ୍ୟୁନିଟିରେ ବି ତ ବହୁତ ଝିଅ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ସିଏ ଯଦି କାହାକୁ ପସନ୍ଦ କରନ୍ତା ?”

ଅଜିତେଶ କହିଲେ, “ଆରେ ମୁଁ କଣ ବୁଝେଇବି । ଏ ଦେଶରେ ସେ ବୁଝାବୁଝି କାମକରେନି । ଦେଖ, ସିଏ ଏବେ ନୂଆ ଚାକିରିରେ ଯୋଗଦେଇଛି । ପୁଣି ଚାକିରି କିଛିଦିନ କରି ମାଷ୍ଟରସ୍ କରିବ ବୋଲି ଭାବିଛି । ତା’ ପଢ଼ାପଢ଼ି ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଥମେ ପୂରଣ ହୋଇଯାଉ । ତାପରେ ଦେଖିବା । କୋଉ ବୟସ ହୋଇଯାଇଛି ?” ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା କିଛି କହିଲେନି । ହେଲେ ସିଏ ସବୁବେଳେ ଚିନ୍ତିତ ରହନ୍ତି । କୌଣସି ଭଲକାମ ହେଲେ ଶୀଘ୍ର ଆରମ୍ଭକରି ସାରିଦେବା ଉଚିତ । ଏଇ ସତ୍ୟଟି ସିଏ ନିଜ ଜେଜେ ଓ ବାପାଙ୍କଠାରୁ ଶୁଣି ଆସିଛନ୍ତି ଓ ଅନୁଭବ ମଧ୍ୟ କରିଆସିଛନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ ନିଜ ବଡ଼ ଭଉଣୀର ବାହାଘର ଲାଗିଥିଲା । ସବୁ ଠିକ୍ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ବାପା ଚାହୁଁଥିଲେ ଶୀଘ୍ର ସାରିଦେବାକୁ । ହେଲେ ସେତିକିବେଳେ ସେ ବରପାତ୍ରଙ୍କର ଉଚ୍ଚଶିକ୍ଷା ପାଇଁ ବିଦେଶ ଯିବାର ଖବର ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା । ସିଏ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତିରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ରହିଲେ । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଘରଲୋକ କହିଲେ, “ପୁଅ ପ୍ରଥମେ ଯାଉ, ବର୍ଷକପରେ ଫେରିଲେ, ଆମେ ବାହାଘର କରିବା ।” ବର୍ଷକ ପରେ ବି ସେ ପାତ୍ର ଫେରିଲେନି । ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିକରି ତିନିବର୍ଷ ବିତିଗଲା । ସେ ପାତ୍ରଙ୍କର ସେଠି ବାହାହୋଇ ରହିଯିବାର ଖବର ଆସିଲା । ଅପାପାଇଁ ପୁଣି ଗୋଟିଏ ଯୋଗ୍ୟପାତ୍ର ଖୋଜୁଖୋଜୁ ଆହୁରି ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ ବିତିଗଲା । ଶେଷରେ ସିଏ ଏମିତି ଘରେ ବାହାହେଲା ଯେ, ସେ ପରିବାର ମସ୍ତବତ ଲୋଭୀ ଜୁଟିଲେ । ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାର ବାପାଜେଜେଙ୍କ ସଂପତ୍ତିକୁ ଖାଇଲେ । ତଥାପି ବି ଅପାକୁ ସୁଖ ବୋଲି କିଛି ମିଳିଲାନି । ସବୁବେଳେ ଖୁଣ୍ଟା ।



ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ ଚାକିରି କରି ମାଷ୍ଟରସ୍ କଲା । ତାପରେ ପି-ଏଚ୍-ଡି ମଧ୍ୟ କଲା । ମଝିରେ ସିଏ ସୋନା ସହିତ ବାହାଘର କଥା ପଚାରିଥିଲେ । କେବେ ବାହାଘର କରିବା ବୋଲି ତାର ପରାମର୍ଶ ମାଗୁଥିଲେ । ପ୍ରଥମେ ତ ସିଏ ମାଷ୍ଟରସ୍ ସରିଲେ, ପି-ଏଚ୍-ଡି ସରିଲେ କହି ଚାଲିଦେଉଥିଲା, ତାପରେ ଦିନେ ଜଣେଇଲା ଯେ ସୋନା ସହିତ ତାର ବ୍ରେକଅପ୍ ହୋଇଗଲା । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ସୋନା ସହିତ ତାର ପାଞ୍ଚବର୍ଷର ସଂପର୍କ ହେଲାଣି । ସେମାନେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ଯୁରୋପ୍ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ବୁଲିବାକୁ । ସାଉଥ୍ ଆମେରିକା ଯାଇ ମାଟ୍ରୁପିଟୁ ବୁଲିଆସିଲେ । ହାଡ୍ରାକ ଯାଇ ସଞ୍ଜାହଟିଏ ବୁଲିଲେ । ସୋନାକୁ ଧରି ସିଏ ସାତଆଠ ଥର ଘରକୁ ଆସିଥିଲା । ଏତେ ସବୁ ସଂପର୍କ ପରେ ବ୍ରେକଅପ୍ କେମିତି ହୋଇପାରେ ?

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ଅଧିର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇ କହିଥିଲେ, “ମୁଁ ସୋନା ସହିତ କଥାହେବି । ଏମିତି କେମିତି ହୋଇପାରିବ ?”

ପ୍ରମୋଦ ବୁଝେଇଥିଲା, “ମା, ତମେ ତାର କଣ ଯେ ସିଏ ତମ କଥା ମାନିବ ? ଇଏ ହିନ୍ଦି ଫିଲ୍ମ୍‌ର କାହାଣୀ ନୁହେଁ । ଏଠି ସମସ୍ତେ ସ୍ବାଧୀନ । ସୋନାକୁ ବୁଝେଇଲେ କଣ ଆମର ବାହାଘର ହୋଇଯିବ ? ନେଭର୍ । ସିଏ ଏବେ ଯୁରୋପ୍ ଯିବ ପଢ଼ିବାକୁ ଡିନିବର୍ଷ ପାଇଁ । ତାକୁ ଡିଞ୍ଜର୍ କରିବା ଉଚିତ୍ ନୁହେଁ ।”

“ହେଲେ ? ଏତେବର୍ଷର ସଂପର୍କ, ଏମିତି କଣ ଟିକେ ଭୁଲ୍‌ବୁଝାମଣା ହୋଇଗଲା ବୋଲି, ପୁରା ଭାଙ୍ଗିଦେବ ?”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାଙ୍କ ଯୁକ୍ତିକୁ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ପ୍ରମୋଦ କହିଲା, “ଯୋଉ ସଂପର୍କ ଭାଙ୍ଗିବା କଥା, ସିଏ ତ ଦିନେନା ଦିନେ ଭାଙ୍ଗିବ ନା । ଭାବତ ଦେଖି ମୁଁ ଯଦି ସୋନାକୁ ବାହା ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତି ଆଉ ଆମର ଡିଭର୍ସ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତା, ସେତେବେଳେ ତ ଅଧିକ ସମସ୍ୟା ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତା ନା । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ତରତର ହୋଇ ବାହା ହୋଇଯିବା ଉଚିତ୍ ନୁହେଁ । କିଛିବର୍ଷ ସଂପର୍କକୁ ପରଖି ଦେଖିବା ଉଚିତ୍, ତାପରେ ଯଦି ମ୍ୟାଚ୍ ହେଲା ତ ବାହାହେବ, ନହେଲେ ନାହିଁ ।”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାଙ୍କ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ କିଛି ପଶୁନଥିଲା । ନିଜ ସନ୍ତାନ ଏବେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଶିଖୋଉଛି ସଂପର୍କ କଣ । ବାପାଙ୍କ ଭଳିଆ ଏ ଶୁଣି ଆଶିଛି । କୌଣସି କଥାକୁ ଗୁରୁତ୍ବ ଦେଇ ଶୀଘ୍ର ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ନେବେନି । ଦିନ ଗତିଯାଉଥିବ, ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ, ବିବ୍ରତ ହେଉଥିବେ, ଆଉ ଶେଷରେ ଏମିତି ହତବଳିଆ ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ନେବେ ଯେ, ନିଶ୍ଚାସ ମାରିବାକୁ ସମୟ ନଥିବ । ହେଲେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଥର ସିଏ ଏମିତି ଠିକିଲେ ଯେ, ସେଇଥିରୁ ବୁଦ୍ଧି ଶିଖିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବଢ଼ିଆ ଆଇତିଆ ଆସିଥିଲା । କିନିକାଲ୍ ତାଟା ସବୁ ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରି କେମିତି ଗୋଟିଏ ସେଣ୍ଟାଲ୍ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଠୁଳ କରିବ ଓ ତାହାରା ବିଭିନ୍ନ ରୋଗ ଓ ଲକ୍ଷଣ ପାଇଁ ସହଜରେ ଔଷଧ ପାଇଁ ସଂକେତ ମିଳିଯିବ, ସିଏ ସେମିତି ଗୋଟିଏ ସିଷ୍ଟମ୍ ତିଆରି କରିବାକୁ ଡିଜାଇନ୍ କରୁଥିଲେ । ହେଲେ ଅନ୍ୟସବୁ କାମରେ ମାତି ସେ ରିସର୍ଚ୍ଚ ଟିକେ ଡେରି କରିଦେଲେ । ତାଙ୍କର ଜଣେ କଲିଗ୍ ସେ ଆଇତିଆ ନେଇ, ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ଚାକିରି ଛାଡ଼ି ଗୋଟିଏ କଂପାନୀ ଖୋଲିଦେଲା । ଏବେ ସେ କଂପାନୀ ବହୁତ ବଢ଼ିଗଲାଣି । ସେ କଲିଗ୍ ଲକ୍ଷଲକ୍ଷ ଡଲାର୍ ରୋଜଗାର କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଆଉ ଅଜିତେଶ ଯେମିତି ଥିଲେ ସେମିତି । ତାଙ୍କର ସେ ପାଟେଣ୍ଟ୍ କି ଉଦ୍ଭାବନରେ ନାଁ ମଧ୍ୟ ନାହିଁ । ପୁଅଟି ବି ସେମିତି । ଥରେ ଠିକିଲେ ହୁଏତ ବୁଝିବ । ଆରେ, ବାହା ଯଦି ନହେବୁ, ସଂପର୍କ ଏତେ ବଢେଇବା ଦରକାର କଣ ? ସ୍ବାମୀ, ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଭଳି ଏକାଠି ରହୁଥିବ, ଖାଉଥିବ, ବୁଲୁଥିବ, ଆଉ ତାପରେ ଦେଖିଲାବେଳକୁ ବ୍ରେକଅପ୍ । ଭଲ ଦେଶରେ ରହିଲେ ଯେ, ଯେତେ ଅଜବ କଥା ସବୁ ଦେଖିବ ଏଠି । ମୋନା ସହିତ ବ୍ରେକଅପ୍ ପରେ ଏଇ ବର୍ଷଟିଏ ହେଲା ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଆମାଣ୍ଟ ସହିତ ନୂଆ ସଂପର୍କ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଛି । ଆମାଣ୍ଟ ଆମେରିକାନ୍ ଝିଅଟିଏ । ତାକୁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ପ୍ରଥମ ଥର ଘରକୁ ନେଇ ଆସିଥିଲା, ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାଙ୍କୁ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ଯେମିତି ଏଇ ଝିଅଟି ହିଁ ତାଙ୍କର ବୋହୂ ହେବ । ହେଲେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସଂପର୍କର ବର୍ଷଟିଏ ବିତିଯାଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ବିବାହ ବିଷୟରେ କିଛି ବି କହୁନଥିଲା । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ନିଜ ତରଫରୁ ପଚାରିଦେଲେ ଯେ, ଉଭୟ ବାପ, ପୁଅ ତାଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ଖପା ।

ଏ ଭିତରେ ଆହୁରି ବର୍ଷଟିଏ ବିତିଗଲାଣି । ପ୍ରମୋଦକୁ ଡେଡିଶି ପୁରିଲା । ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ଆଉ ପ୍ରମୋଦକୁ କିଛି କୁହନ୍ତିନି । କଣ ବା କହିବେ ? କହିଲେ ତ ସିଏ ଶୁଣିବନି । ତେଣୁ କହିବେ ବା କାହିଁକି ? ତା’ ପରବର୍ଷ କିଞ୍ଚିମାସ୍ ଛୁଟିରେ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଆସିଥିବା ବେଳେ, ସିଏ ଅଜିତେଶଙ୍କ କଥା ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ତାକୁ ଭଲରେ ରାନ୍ଧିବାଢ଼ି ଖାଇବାକୁ ଦେଲେ, ସମସ୍ତେ ମିଶି ଝିଆରୀ ମିତୁର ବାହାଘର ପାଇଁ



ମାର୍ଚ୍ଚମାସରେ ଭାରତ ଯାତ୍ରା ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ଶପିଙ୍ଗ୍ କଲେ । ପ୍ରମୋଦର ବାହାଘର କଥା ସିଏ ଜମା ବି ଉଠେଇଲେନି । ଘରେ ଶାନ୍ତି ଥିଲା । ପ୍ରମୋଦ ବି ବାହାଘରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ଛିର କରିଥିଲା ।

ଫେବୃୟାରୀ ପନ୍ଦର ତାରିଖ । ଅଜିତେଶ ଅଫିସ୍ ଯାଇଥାନ୍ତି । ଘରର ସବୁକାମ ସାରି ଗୋଟିଏ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବହି ବସି ପଢ଼ୁଥାନ୍ତି ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା । ହଠାତ୍ କଲିଂବେଲ୍ ବାଜିଲା । ଏ ଅସମୟରେ କିଏ ବା ଡାକୁଥିବ ଭାବି ସିଏ କବାଟ ଖୋଲିବାକୁ ଉଠିଲେନି । ହଠାତ୍ କବାଟ ଖୋଲିବାର ଶବ୍ଦ ହେଲା । ତରିଗଲେ ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା । ଇଏ କଣ କିଏ ଚୋର ?

ଚିକେ ଛକିଛକି ଦ୍ଵାର ପାଖକୁ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି ତ ହଠାତ୍ କବାଟ ଖୋଲି ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଆସି କୁଣ୍ଡେଇ ପକେଇଲା । ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇଗଲେ । “ଆରେ ତୁ । ଆଗରୁ ତ କିଛି କହିନଥିଲୁ । ହଠାତ୍ କେମିତି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲୁ । ସବୁ ଠିକ୍‌ଠାକ୍ ଅଛି ତ ?”

“ହଁ ମା, ସବୁ ଠିକ୍‌ଠାକ୍ ଅଛି । ତମ ପାଇଁ ଭଲ ଖବର । ମୁଁ ଗତକାଲି ଆମାଣ୍ଟକୁ ଭାଲେଷ୍ଟେଇନ୍‌ସ୍ ଡେରେ ପ୍ରୟୋଜ୍ କଲି ଓ ସିଏ ଗ୍ରହଣ କଲା । ତମକୁ ମୁଁ ଫେନ୍‌ରେ କହିପାରିଥାନ୍ତି, ହେଲେ ସେଇଟା ଏତେ ଚମତ୍କାର ହୋଇନଥାନ୍ତା । ଏବେ ତମ ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ । କୁହ, କେବେ ବାହାଘର କରେଇବ । ତମେ ଯେମିତି ବାହାଘର କରେଇବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁବ, ସେମିତି ହେବ । ଆମାଣ୍ଟର କି ତା’ ବାପା, ମାଙ୍କର କିଛି ବିରୋଧ ନାହିଁ । ହେଲେ, ମୁଁ ଅର୍ଥ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ କରିବି । ମତେ ଖାଲି ତମେ ଆଦେଶ ଦେବ ।”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ବିଶ୍ଵାସ କରିପାରୁନଥିଲେ । ଯେଉଁ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ତାଙ୍କୁ ସବୁବେଳେ ବାହାଘର କଥା କହିଲାବେଳେ ବିରୋଧ କରୁଥିଲା, ଆଜି ସିଏ ଏତେ ମନଖୁସିରେ କେମିତି ଏକଥା କହୁଛି? ଆଖିରୁ ଖୁସିର ଲୁହ କେତେବୁନ୍ଦା ଝରିପଡ଼ିଲା । “ସତରେ ଧନ । ତୁ ସତ କହୁଛୁ ?”

“କଣ ବିଶ୍ଵାସ ହେଉନି । ତେବେ ଦେଖ ଏ ଫଟୋକୁ । ମୋ ସାଙ୍ଗ ଉଠେଇଛି । ତାକୁ ମୁଁ ଫଟୋ ନେବାକୁ ନିଯୁକ୍ତ କରିଥିଲି ।” ଏମିତି କହି ପ୍ରମୋଦ ତାଙ୍କୁ ସେଲ୍‌ଫୋନ୍‌ରେ ଆମାଣ୍ଟକୁ ପ୍ରୟୋଜ୍ କରିଥିବାର ଫଟୋ ଦେଖେଇଲା ।

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାଙ୍କ ଖୁସିର ଅନ୍ତ ନାହିଁ । ତାଙ୍କ ଶରୀର ମନ ସବୁ ଚଞ୍ଚଳ ହୋଇଉଠିଲା । ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଫେନ୍ କରି କୁଳଗୁରୁଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ବାହାଘର ତାରିଖ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରିଆଣିଲେ । ତାପରେ ତ କାମରେ ଲାଗିଗଲେ ଚଞ୍ଚଳାଙ୍କ ଭଳି । ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ସବୁ ଫେନ୍ କରି ଜଣେଇଦେଲେ । “ବଉଳ, ଜୁନ୍ ଚବିଶ ତାରିଖ ଦିନ ବାହାଘର । ନିଷ୍କୟ ଆସିବୁ ।” ଏମିତି କାହାକୁ ‘ବଉଳ’ କହି, କାହାକୁ ‘ଅପା’ କହି, କାହାକୁ ‘ଭାଉଜ’ କହି ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରିପକେଇଲେ । ସମସ୍ତେ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇଗଲେ । କଣ ଏତେଶୀଘ୍ର ଚାରିମାସ ଭିତରେ କେମିତି ବାହାଘର ଯୋଗାଡ଼ କରିପକେଇଲେ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ବନ୍ଧୁବାନ୍ଧବ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ବି ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରିପକେଇଲେ । ଆମାଣ୍ଟର ପରିବାରକୁ ତକେଇ ହିନ୍ଦୁଧର୍ମ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ନିର୍ବନ୍ଧ ବି କରିପକେଇଲେ । ଆମାଣ୍ଟର ପରିବାର କାଲିଫର୍ଣ୍ଣିଆରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି, ତେଣୁ ବାହାଘର ସେଇଠି ହେବାର ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନିଆଗଲା ଓ ରିସେପ୍‌ସନ୍ ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡ୍‌ରେ ହେବାର ଯୋଜନା ହେଲା । ମାର୍ଚ୍ଚ ମାସରେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଭାରତ ଗଲେ, ସ୍ଵତନ୍ତ୍ର ଭାବେ ପୁଅକୁ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ନେଇ ତା’ ଚଏସ୍ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ବୋହୁ ପାଇଁ ଗହଣା ଗଢାଇ ଆଣିଲେ ଓ ନିଜ ପରିବାରବର୍ଗଙ୍କୁ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରିଆସିଲେ ।

ପ୍ରମୋଦର ବାହାଘର ଦିନ ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାଙ୍କର ହାତଗୋଡ଼ ପବନରେ ଚାଲୁଥାଏ । ବର ଶୋଭାଯାତ୍ରା ବେଳେ ବହେ ନାତିଗଲେ । ବାହାଘର ପରେ ଯେଉଁ ରିସେପ୍‌ସନ୍ ଭୋଜି ହେଲା, ସେଠି ବି ବଡ଼ ଇମୋସ୍‌ନାଲ୍ ଭାଷଣଟିଏ ଦେଇଦେଲେ । ପୁଅ ସହିତ ମିଶି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗୀତ “ମା’ ସିନା ଗାଏ ଲୋରି”ରେ ନାଚି ପକେଇଲେ । ସାଙ୍ଗମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ବହୁତ ମଜାକଲେ । ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡ୍‌ରେ ରିସେପ୍‌ସନ୍ ବି ଜୁଲାଇ ୧ ତାରିଖ ଦିନ ମେରିଅଟ୍ ହୋଟେଲ୍‌ରେ ସେମିତି ଜମାଦାର ହେଲା । ସେଦିନ ସେମାନେ ହୋଟେଲ୍‌ରେ ରହିଲେ । ତାପରଦିନ ସବୁ ସରିଲାପରେ ଖୁସିରେ ପୁଅବୋହୁଙ୍କୁ ଧରି ହୋଟେଲ୍‌ରୁ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଲେ ।

ଦୁଇଦିନ ବିତିଯାଇଥିଲା । ପୁଅବୋହୁ ପାଖରେ ଥିଲେ । ଘର ଦୁଲୁକୁଥିଲା କୋଳାହଳରେ । ତାପରେ ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀ, ବନ୍ଧୁବାନ୍ଧବ ସମସ୍ତେ ବିଦାୟ ନେଲେ । ଆଉ ଦୁଇଦିନ ପରେ ପୁଅବୋହୁ ବି ବିଦାୟ ନେବେ । ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ପୁରି ଛାଣୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଆମାଣ୍ଟକୁ ପୁରି ଆଳୁଦମ୍,



ଭଲଲାଗେ । ଅଜିତେଶ ପୁଅ, ବୋହୂଙ୍କ ସହିତ ମିଶି ରୋଷେଇଘର ତାଳନିଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ପଡ଼ିଥିବା ଚେୟାରରେ ବସି ଗରମଗରମ ପୁରି, ଆଳୁଦମ୍ ଖାଉଥାନ୍ତି ।

ଅଜିତେଶ ଏହି ସମୟରେ ପ୍ରମୋଦଙ୍କୁ ପଚାରିଲେ, “ଆରେ ବାବା, ତୋ ମା’ ଚାରିମାସ ଭିତରେ ବାହାଘର ହେବାର ନିଶ୍ଚି ନେଇଗଲା, ମତେ ଉଠେଇଲା, ପକେଇଲା । ହେଲେ ବାହାଘରଟା ଏତେ ଶୀଘ୍ର କରେଇନେବାକୁ ତୁ ଆଉ ଆମାଣ୍ଡା କେମିତି ମାନିଗଲା, ମୁଁ ଏପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରିପାରୁନି । ଏଠି ଅନ୍ଧତଃ ବର୍ଷଟିଏ ସମସ୍ତେ ରଖୁଛନ୍ତି ବାହାଘର ଆୟୋଜନ କରେଇବା ପାଇଁ ।

ଆମାଣ୍ଡା ଭଲରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବୁଝିପାରୁନଥାଏ । ପ୍ରମୋଦ ତାକୁ ବାପାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନଟି ବୁଝେଇଦେବା ପରେ ସିଏ ହସିହସି ଇଂରାଜୀରେ ଯାହା କହିଲା, ତାର ସାରମର୍ମ ହେଲା, “ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ମା’ଙ୍କର ‘ଶୁଭସ୍ୟ ଶୀଘ୍ରମ୍’ ଉପଦେଶଟିର ଯଥାର୍ଥତା ଆମେମାନେ ଅନୁଭବ କରିପାରିଲୁ । ତାର କାରଣ ହେଲା ମୋ ବଡ଼ ଭଉଣୀ, ତା’ ଚାକିରି ପାଇଁ ଡେରି କରିକରି ଶେଷରେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ମା’ ହେବାପାଇଁ ଇଚ୍ଛାକଲା, ସେତେବେଳେ ତାଙ୍କର ଜଣେଇଲେ ଯେ ସିଏ ଆଉ ମା’ ହୋଇପାରିବନି । ଆଉ ସିଏ ପରାମର୍ଶ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ଯେ ଯଦି ସିଏ ମା’ ହେବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲେ, ତେବେ ସେଇଟା ଆଗରୁ ନିଶ୍ଚି ନେଇଥିଲେ ଭଲ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତା । କେବଳ ସେଇଟା ନୁହେଁ ବାପା, ପ୍ରମୋଦ ମତେ ମା’ ଙ୍କର ‘ଶୁଭସ୍ୟ ଶୀଘ୍ରମ୍’ କଥା କହି ପ୍ରେରଣା ଦେଇଆସୁଥିଲେ । ସିଏ ଉତ୍ସାହିତ କଲେ ବୋଲି ମୁଁ ମୋ ଥେସିସ୍‌ର ଚପିକ୍ ବିଷୟରେ ଶୀଘ୍ର ସିନ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ନେଇଗଲି ଓ ଶୀଘ୍ର ଥେସିସ୍ ସାରିପାରିଲି । ହେଲେ ମୋର ଜଣେ ସାଙ୍ଗ କେଉଁ ଚପିକ୍‌ଟା ରଖିବ ସିନ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ନନେଇ ଖାଲି ଗତେଇ ଚାଲିଲା, ଆଉ ଏପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ତାର କିଛି କାମ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇନି ।”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରିପାରୁନଥିଲେ । ପ୍ରମୋଦ ଆଉ ଆମାଣ୍ଡା ତାଙ୍କ କଥାର ଏତେ ମର୍ଯ୍ୟାଦା ଦେଉଛନ୍ତି ?

ପୁଣି ଆମାଣ୍ଡା ତିଳୋତ୍ତମାଙ୍କ ପାଖକୁ ପୁରି ନେବାକୁ ଆସି ଗେହେଲୁ ହୋଇ କହିଲା, “ଜାଣିଲ ମା, ଆମେ ଏ ନିଶ୍ଚି ବି ନେଇଛୁ ଯେ ଆମ ବାହାଘରର ଏକବର୍ଷ ବାର୍ଷିକୀ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଆମେ ବାପା, ମା’ ହୋଇଯିବୁ । ତେରିକଲେ କାଳେ ମୋ ଭଉଣୀ ଭଳି ସବୁଦିନ ପାଇଁ ବାପା, ମା ହୋଇପାରିବୁନି ।”

ତିଳୋତ୍ତମା ସ୍ନେହରେ ଗନ୍‌ଗଦ ହୋଇଉଠିଲେ । ଆଉ ଅନ୍ୟ ସମୟ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ସିଏ ହୁଏତ ମନେମନେ ଗରଗର ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତେ, “ଛୋପରିଟା, ନା ଲାଜ, ନା ସରମ । ଶାଶୁ, ଶୁଶୁରଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ କଣ ଏମିତି କଥା କୁହାଯାଏ ?” ହେଲେ ଏ ସମୟ ଅଲଗା ଥିଲା । ସେଇଆ ତ ସିଏ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲେ । ପ୍ରମୋଦଙ୍କୁ ତେତିଶି ପୁରିବ । ଆମାଣ୍ଡାକୁ ବି ବଡ଼ିଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି । ଏବେ ପିଲା ନହେଲେ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତରେ କଣ ହେବ କିଏ ଜାଣେ ?

ଅଜିତେଶ ବାବୁ ଆମାଣ୍ଡାକୁ ସ୍ନେହିତ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରେ ଚାହିଁ ମନ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଦେଲେ, “ହଁ ମା, ଶୁଭସ୍ୟ ଶୀଘ୍ରମ୍ । ଏଇଟା ତମମାନଙ୍କର ବହୁତ ଭଲ ନିଶ୍ଚି ।”

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ଡକ୍ଟର ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ ଡେଟନ୍, ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡରେ ରହନ୍ତି । ପ୍ରଫେସନ୍‌ରେ ସିଏ ଜଣେ କମ୍‌ପ୍ୟୁଟେସନାଲ୍ ସାଇଣ୍ଟିଷ୍ଟ । ଲେଖାଲେଖିରେ ତାଙ୍କର ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଆଗ୍ରହ । ସେ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ତିନିଟି ଗନ୍ଧ ସଂକଳନ, ସଂପର୍କ, ରହସ୍ୟ ଓ ଅଶାୟତ ଭାଗ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ କରିଛନ୍ତି ଓ କବିତା ସଂକଳନ ‘ସଂପର୍କର ସେତୁ’ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ୧୯୯୯ ମସିହାରୁ ସିଏ ନିୟମିତ ଭାବେ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ଓସା କନ୍‌ଭେନ୍‌ସନ୍‌ରେ ଯୋଗଦାନ କରିଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ସମସ୍ତ ଓସା ସଭ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କଠାରୁ ବି ସିଏ ସେଇ କାମନା କରନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ ମତରେ, ବିଦେଶ ଭୂମିରେ ଓସା ଆମପାଇଁ କେବଳ ଏକ ସଂଗଠନ ନୁହେଁ, ଏହା ଆମର ଘର ଓ ପରିବାର । କନ୍‌ଭେନ୍‌ସନ୍ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ପରିବାରର ମିଳନୀ ଉତ୍ସବରେ ଯୋଗଦାନ କରିବା ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରିବାର ମାଧ୍ୟମ ହେଲା, bigyanidas.osa@gmail.com (OSA Membership Status: Patron)•



ଏକ ସୁନା ଘଣ୍ଟା ର କାହାଣୀ

ଡଃ. ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦାସ

ଉଣେଇଶ ଅଠେଇଶ ମସିହା ଡିସେମ୍ବର ଅଠର ତାରିଖ । ଭାରତୀୟ ଜାତୀୟ ମହାସଭାର ନବ ନିର୍ବାଚିତ ସଭାପତି ପଣ୍ଡିତ ମୋତିଲାଲ ନେହେରୁଙ୍କୁ କଲିକତାରେ ସମ୍ବର୍ଦ୍ଧନା ଦେବାର ଆୟୋଜନ ଥିଲା ଇତିହାସର ଏକ ଅତ୍ୟୁତ୍ସବ ଘଟଣା । ଆୟୋଜନର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଆକ୍ତି ସୁଭାଷ ବୋଷ । ହାତ୍ତା ଷ୍ଟେସନରୁ ଏକ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣାବ୍ୟ ଶୋଭା ଯାତ୍ରାରେ ନିଆଗଲା ସଭାପତିଙ୍କୁ ସଭାସ୍ଥଳକୁ । ଭବ୍ୟ ରାଜକୀୟ ସମ୍ବର୍ଦ୍ଧନାର ଆୟୋଜକ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବକ ବାହିନୀର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ସୁଭାଷ ବୋଷ । ସାମରିକ ପରିଚ୍ଛଦରେ ସୁସଜ୍ଜିତ ହୋଇ ସର୍ବ ପ୍ରଥମେ ସେ ସାମରିକ କାଇଦାରେ ଅଭିବାଦନ ଜଣାଇଲେ ସଭାପତିଙ୍କୁ । ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଲା ଶୋଭାଯାତ୍ରା । ମାଟିଆ ଖାକି ପୋଷାକରେ ସୁସଜ୍ଜିତ ମଟର ସାଇକେଲ ଆରୋହୀ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବକ ଦଳ , ତାଙ୍କ ପଛରେ ପତକା ଧରିଥିବା ମହିଳା ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ଦଳ, ତାଙ୍କ ପଛରେ ଖାକି ପୋଷାକରେ ପୁରୁଷ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବକ ଦଳ, ତା ପଛରେ ବ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡ ଓ ଡ୍ରମ ବାଦକମାନେ, ସବା ଶେଷରେ ସାମରିକ ପୋଷାକ ପରିଧାନ କରିଥିବା ଅଶ୍ୱାରୋହୀଦଳ, ଅଶ୍ୱାରୋହୀଦଳଙ୍କ ପଛରେ ସଭାପତିଙ୍କ ଘୋଡ଼ାଗାଡ଼ି, ତା ପଛରେ ମଟରଗାଡ଼ିରେ ପଣ୍ଡିତ ମୋତିଲାଲଙ୍କ ପତ୍ନୀ ଓ ଯତୀନ୍ଦ୍ରମୋହନ ସେନଗୁପ୍ତଙ୍କ ପତ୍ନୀ । ପୁଣି ଅଶ୍ୱାରୋହୀ ଦଳ, ପଦାତିକ ଦଳ ଓ ସର୍ବ ଶେଷରେ ମୋଟର ଗାଡ଼ି ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ସଭା ସ୍ଥଳକୁ ଶୋଭା ଯାତ୍ରାରେ ଆଗେଇ ଯାଉଥିଲେ ହଜାର ହଜାର ଦେଶପ୍ରମୀ ।

ଏ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଥିଲା ଅପୂର୍ବ , ଅତ୍ୟୁତ୍ସବ ଓ ଅଚିନ୍ତନୀୟ ବାସ୍ତବତା । ସୁଭାଷ ବୋଷଙ୍କ ନେତୃତ୍ୱରେ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସାମରିକ ଆବବକାଇଦାରେ ଏପରି ଶୋଭାଯାତ୍ରା ବୋଧହୁଏ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ପୂର୍ବରୁ କେବେ ହୋଇ ନ ଥିଲା । ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କ ସ୍ୱଦେଶ ପ୍ରୀତି , ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳା ଜ୍ଞାନ , ଆତ୍ମିକନିଷ୍ଠା ଓ ପ୍ରଗାଢ଼ ଇଚ୍ଛାଶକ୍ତିର ନିଜେ ପ୍ରତିଫଳନ ଥିଲା ଏ ବିରଳ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ । ଯାହା ବିସ୍ମୟ ବିମୁଗ୍ଧ କରି ଦେଇଥିଲା ବ୍ରିଟିଶ ରାଜଶକ୍ତିକୁ । ହଜାର ହଜାର ନିର୍ଭୀକ , ଦେଶଭକ୍ତ , ଉତ୍ସର୍ଗୀକୃତ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବକଙ୍କ ଭାରତମାତା ଜୟଧ୍ୱନି , ଲେଫଟ ରାଇଟ , ଲେଫଟ ରାଇଟ ଧ୍ୱନି , ଶୁଭ ଶଂଖ ଧ୍ୱନି , ପୁରନାରୀମାନଙ୍କର ହୁଳହୁଳି, ବାଦ୍ୟଧ୍ୱନି, ଚଲାପଥ ଉପରେ ଅବିରତ ପୁଷ୍ପ ବର୍ଷଣ -ଏ ସବୁଥିରୁ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟୟ ହେଉଥିଲା , ଆଉ ବେଶୀ ଡେରି ନାହିଁ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା । ସ୍ୱରାଜ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ପାଇଁ ସମଗ୍ର ଭାରତ ବର୍ଷର ଆବାଳ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ବନିତା ଯେପରି ଉତ୍ସାହ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଦିନେ ଏଇ ବଙ୍ଗଳାରେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ପଦାର୍ପଣ କରିଥିଲେ ଇଂରେଜମାନେ ବଣିଜ କରିବାକୁ ଆସି ଏପରି ଶାସନ ବିସ୍ତାର କଲେ ଯେ, ଭାରତୀୟଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଶୋଷଣ , କଷଣ, ଦୁଷଣର ପ୍ରତିଭୁ ପାଲଟି ଗଲେ ।

ଏହି ଶୋଭାଯାତ୍ରା ଯେପରି ସୂଚାଇ ଦେଉଥିଲା ଏଇ ଅସ୍ଥିଗର୍ଭା ମାଟିରେ ପୁଣିଥରେ ବିପ୍ଳବର ମନ୍ତ୍ର ପାଠ କରିଛନ୍ତି ସୁଭାଷ ବୋଷ । ନେତାଜୀ ସୁଭାଷ ବୋଷ । କିଂ କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ବିମୁଗ୍ଧ ରାଜଶକ୍ତି ଭୟଭୀତ, କାତର, ସମସ୍ତେ ଅନୁଭବ ନିରବ ଦ୍ରଷ୍ଟା ପୋଲିସର ଅସହାୟତାକୁ ଦେଖୁ । ଏହି ସାମରିକ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତି ଅନ୍ତରାଳରେ ଥିଲା ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କର ଏକ ସୁଦୂର ପ୍ରସାରୀ ପରିକଳ୍ପନା । ଏହି ଐତିହାସିକ ଶୋଭାଯାତ୍ରା ଥିଲା ତାର ପୂର୍ବାଭାଷ । ଭାରତୀୟ ଆତ୍ମା ପୁରୁଷର ପ୍ରତିଭୁପୁରୁଷ ସୁଭାଷ ବୋଷଙ୍କ ଅପୂର୍ବ ସାହାସିକତା, ବୀରତ୍ୱ, ଆତ୍ମ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ , ସ୍ୱାଭିମାନ , ପ୍ରଚଣ୍ଡ ଦେଶପ୍ରେମ , ଦୃଢ଼ ସଂକଳ୍ପ , ଆତ୍ମିକ ନିଷ୍ଠା ଓ ଆକାଶୀ ବି ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ରେ ଭୋର ଶୌର୍ଯ୍ୟଦୀପ୍ତ ପୌରୁଷର ଏ ପ୍ରଥମ ଜାଗରଣ ଥିଲା ବିଦେଶୀ ଶାସକ ପାଇଁ ଏକ ମନ୍ତ୍ର ରଣ ହୁଂକାର ।

ନା , ଆଉ ନୁହେଁ । ବେଶି ଦିନ ଆଉ ଏ ଭାରତବର୍ଷକୁ ପଦ ଦଳିତ , ପରାଧୀନ କରି ରଖିବା ସମ୍ଭବ ନୁହେଁ । ଗଭୀର ନିଦ୍ରାରୁ ଉତ୍ଥତ ପୁରୁଷ ସିଂହର ଏ ଆହ୍ୱାନ । ସ୍ୱଳ୍ପ କାତର ବ୍ରିଟିଶ ଶକ୍ତି । ଏ ଆହ୍ୱାନର ପ୍ରତି ଆହ୍ୱାନ ଯେପରି ମିଳାଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କ କଣ୍ଠଦେଶରେ ।

ସେଇ ଦିନଠୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଥିଲା ଗୋଟିଏ ଆତ୍ମାହୁତି ମହାଯଜ୍ଞ । ଉଣେଇଶ ଏକଚାଳିଶ ମସିହା ଜାନୁୟାରୀ ସତର ତାରିଖ । ପୋଲିସ ଆଖିରେ ଧୂଳି ଦେଇ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଦ୍ଧାନ ହୋଇଗଲେ ସୁଭାଷ । ଭାରତର ସାହସ , ଶୌର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଓ ଆତ୍ମତ୍ୟାଗର ପ୍ରତୀକ ସୁଭାଷ । ଆଇ ସି .ଏସ.ସୁଭାଷ । ଆଜାଦ ହିନ୍ଦ ଫୈଜର ନେତାଜୀ ସୁଭାଷ । ଯିଏ କହିଥିଲେ , “ମତେ ତୁମେ ରକ୍ତ ଦିଅ , ମୁଁ ତୁମକୁ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ଦେବି ” । ହେ ମୋର ଭାରତବାସୀ , ଭୁଲିଯାଅ ନାହିଁ ଯେ ଦାସତ୍ୱ ଠାରୁ ବଡ଼ ଅଭିଶାପ ଆଉ କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ଭୁଲିଯାଅ ନାହିଁ ଯେ ଅନ୍ୟାୟ ସହିତ ସାଲିସ କରିବାଠାରୁ ବଡ଼ ଅପରାଧ ଆଉ କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ଭୁଲିଯାଅ ନାହିଁ ଅନ୍ୟାୟ କରିବାଠାରୁ ଅନ୍ୟାୟ ପାଖରେ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ନୁଆଁଇବା ଅଧିକ ଗୁରୁତର ଅପରାଧ ।” ଡାକରା ଦେଇ କହିଥିଲେ – “ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ଚଲୋ ” ।



ପୃଥ୍ବୀ ଇତିହାସରେ ଆମ୍ଭ ବଳିଦାନର ଯେତେ ଯେତେ କାହାଣୀ ରହିଛି, ସୁଭାଷ ବୋଷଙ୍କ ରହସ୍ୟମୟ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଦ୍ଧାନ, ଆଜାଦ ହିନ୍ଦ ଫୌଜ ଗଠନ, ଇଂରେଜ ସରକାର ବିରୁଦ୍ଧରେ ଲଢ଼େଇ କରି ଦେଶକୁ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ସଂଘର୍ଷ ଓ ସଂଗ୍ରାମର କାହାଣୀ ପାଖରେ ସେ ସବୁ ଘ୍ନନ ଦିଶନ୍ତି । ଆଇ.ସି.ଏସ ଚାକିରୀ ପରି ଭୋଗ ପ୍ରତିପ୍ରତି, କ୍ଷମତା ଐଶ୍ୱର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ଝଲି ଝଲି କରୁଥିବା ହୀରାଖଟିଟ ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣ ମୁକୁଟ ଯାହା ମଥାରେ ଭାଗ୍ୟ ପିନ୍ଧାଇ ଦେଇଥିଲା ଦିନେ, କେତେ ପ୍ରଚଣ୍ଡ ଦେଶପ୍ରେମ ଥିଲେ ସେପରି ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ଜଣେ ପଦାଢ୍ୟାତ କରିପାରେ ତାର ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ପଟାନ୍ତର ନାହିଁ । ସତେ ଯେମିତି ତାଙ୍କ ରକ୍ତ, ମାଂସ, ସ୍ନେହ, ଶ୍ୱାସ ପ୍ରଶ୍ୱାସରେ ଥିଲା ମାତୃଭୂମି ପ୍ରତି ପ୍ରଗାଢ଼ ଅନୁରାଗ । କ୍ଳେଶ, ଗ୍ଳାନି, ଅବସାଦ, ଦୁଃଖ, ଦୈନ୍ୟ, କ୍ଷୁଧା, ତୃଷ୍ଣା ସବୁକିଛି ସେ ଦେଶପ୍ରୀତି ପାଖରେ ତୁଚ୍ଛ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଛି । ନିଜକୁ ନିଜେ ହବ୍ୟ ରୂପେ ଆହୁତି ଦେଇଥିଲେ ଦେଶପ୍ରେମର ମହାଯଜ୍ଞରେ ।

ସାରା ବିଶ୍ୱରେ ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ବିଶ୍ୱଯୁଦ୍ଧର ଘନଘଟା । ଲହୁ ଲହୁରେ ହୋରି ଖେଳୁଛି ମହାକାଳ । ଚତୁର୍ଦ୍ଦିଗରେ ଧ୍ୱଂସର ଡାଣ୍ଡବଲୀଳା । ଠିକ ଏତିକିବେଳେ ଛକ୍କବେଶରେ ଜଣେ ମୃକ ବଧୂର ମୁସଲମାନର ପରିଚୟ ନେଇ ଦୁର୍ଗମ ପର୍ବତମାଳାକୁ ଡେଇଁ କାବୁଲରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲେ ବୋଷ । ଜାନ୍ତୁୟାରୀ ମାସର ବରଫାବୃତ୍ତ ପର୍ବତମାଳା, ରକ୍ତାକ୍ତ ସମସ୍ତ ଅଂଗ, ପଦେ ପଦେ ମୃତ୍ୟୁର ଆଶଙ୍କା । ମନରେ ନିଜ ମାତୃଭୂମିକୁ, ଆତ୍ମୀୟସ୍ୱଜନଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଥିବାର କୋହ, ହୃଦୟରେ ବ୍ୟଥା, ପ୍ରାଣରେ ଅସ୍ତ୍ରମାରୀ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ।

ଆକାଶରେ, ବତାସରେ ମୃତ୍ୟୁର ପଦଧ୍ୱନି । ବାରମ୍ବାର ଧସିଯିବାର ସମ୍ଭାବନା କୁ ଭୂକ୍ଷେପ ନ କରି ଶେଷରେ କାବୁଲରେ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି ସୁଭାଷ । ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ - ସଶସ୍ତ୍ର ସଂଗ୍ରାମ । ଇଂରେଜ ବିରୋଧୀ ଶକ୍ତିମାନଙ୍କ ସହାୟତାରେ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନ କରିବେ ଭାରତବର୍ଷକୁ । ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଆଉଜଣେ ଦେଶଭକ୍ତ ଭଗତରାମ । ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଦ୍ଧାନ ସମ୍ଭାବ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟାପୀ ଯାଇଥାଏ । ଦେଶ ହୁଲୁହୁଲୁ । କାବୁଲରେ ବେଶାଦିନ ରହିବା ଅସମ୍ଭବ । ରକ୍ଷିଆ ହେଉ କି ଜର୍ମାନ କି ଜାପାନ ହେଉ କାହାର ହେଲେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ସହଯୋଗ ଲୋଡ଼ା । ଆଶ୍ରୟ ଲୋଡ଼ା ।

ଏତିକିବେଳେ ଛକ୍କବେଶୀ ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କୁ ପିଛା କରିଛି ଜଣେ ଆଫଗାନ ପୋଲିସ । ସନ୍ଦେହ କରି ଆନାକୁ ଡାକିଛି । ଅସୁସ୍ଥ ମୃକ ବଧୂର ଛକ୍କବେଶୀ ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କର ତ ତୁଣ୍ଡ ଖୋଲିବାର ନାହିଁ । ଭଗତରାମ ବୁଝେଇ ଶୁଝେଇ ପୋଲିସଟିକୁ ବିଦା କରିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଅତି ନମ୍ର ଭାବରେ କହିଛନ୍ତି - ସିପାହିଜୀ ମୋର ଏଇ ମୃକ ବଧୂର ଚାଚାଜୀ ଅସୁସ୍ଥ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଡାକ୍ତରଖାନାରେ ଭର୍ତ୍ତି କରି ଚିକିତ୍ସା କରାଇବାକୁ ଆଣିଛି । ଆମେ ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକ । ଚୋର କି ଡକାୟତ ନୋହୁଁ, ଆନା କୁ କାହିଁକି ଯିବୁ ? ଦୟାକରି ଆମକୁ ହଇରାଣ କରନ୍ତୁନି । ଲୋକଟା କହିଲା - ଆନାକୁ ଚାଲ । ଦାରୋଗା ବାବୁ ଡକାଇଛନ୍ତି, ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଯଦି ... । ତୁଣ୍ଡରେ ତା'ର ଇଂଗିତ । ଭଗତରାମ ତା କବଳରୁ ମୁକ୍ତି ପାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଦୁଇଟି ଟଙ୍କା ତା ହାତକୁ ବଢ଼େଇ ଦେଲେ । ଲୋକଟି ଖୁସି ହୋଇ ଚାଲିଗଲା । ଠିକ ପରଦିନ ସେ ପୁଣି ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲା ।

ଆଉ କହିଲା - ଦାରୋଗା ବାବୁଙ୍କ ହୁକୁମ । ତୁମକୁ ଯେମିତି ହେଉ ଯିବାକୁ ହେବ । ଭଗତରାମ ମନେମନେ ଭାବିଲେ ବାଘ ମୁହଁରେ ରକ୍ତ ଲାଗିଛି । ତା ହାତକୁ ଦଶ ଟଙ୍କାର ନୋଟ ଟିଏ ବଢ଼ାଇ ଦେଇ ସେ କହିଲେ - ମୋ ଚାଚା ଅସୁସ୍ଥ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ମୁଁ କୌଣସି ମତେ ଆନାକୁ ନେଇଯାଇ ପାରିବିନି । ତୁମେ ଏ ଟଙ୍କା ନେଇଯାଅ । ଆଉ କୋଣସି ଦିନ ଏଠାକୁ ଆସିବନାହିଁ । ଲୋକଟି ନିର୍ଲଜ୍ଜ ଭଳି ହସିହସି କହିଲା - ଦୋଅସ୍ତ, ତୁମଠୁ କ'ଣ ଏ ଟଙ୍କା ନେଇପାରିବି ? ଯଦି ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାରେ କିଛି ଦେବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଛ ତେବେ ଏମିତି ଗୋଟେ ଜିନିଷ ଦିଅ, ଯାହାକୁ ଚିର ଦିନ ମୁଁ ପାଖରେ ସ୍ମୃତି କରି ରଖିବି ।

ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କ ପରିଚୟ ଲୁଚେଇବାକୁ ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କର ସୁନାର ଘଡ଼ିଟି ଭଗତରାମ ହାତରେ ପିନ୍ଧିଥିଲେ । ସେଇ ଘଣ୍ଟାଟି ଉପରେ ତା'ର ଲୋଲୁପ ଦୃଷ୍ଟି । ଇଚ୍ଛୁକ ହେଲେ ଭଗତରାମ । ମନେ ମନେ କହିଲେ ଇଏ କି ବିଷମ ପରୀକ୍ଷା ! କିନ୍ତୁ ଉପାୟ ନାହିଁ । ଧରା ପଡ଼ିଲେ ମହାବିପଦ । ଯେ କୌଣସି ଉପାୟରେ ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କ ଅସଲ ପରିଚୟକୁ ଲୁଚାଇ ରଖିବାକୁ ହେବ । ସୁଭାଷ ଠାରି ଦେଲେ ଭଗତରାମଙ୍କୁ । ବାଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ଘଣ୍ଟା ଟିକୁ ବଢ଼େଇ ଦେଲେ ଭଗତରାମ । ସେ ଅର୍ଥ ପିଣ୍ଡାତ ପୋଲିସର ଆଖି ଦୁଇଟି ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଦିଶିଲା । ଖୁସିରେ ମୁହଁ ଝଲିସି ଉଠିଲା । ସେ ଘଣ୍ଟା ଟିକୁ ଧରି ମହାନନ୍ଦରେ ଚାଲିଗଲା ବେଳେ କହିଲା - ହଉ, ତୁମେ ତୁମର ଚାଚାଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଚିକିତ୍ସା କରାଅ । ମୁଁ ତୁମକୁ ଆଉ ହଇରାଣ କରିବିନି । ଦାରୋଗାବାବୁଙ୍କୁ କହିଦେବି, ତମେ ଦୁହେଁ ଆମ ଦେଶର ଲୋକ । ମଫସଲରୁ ଆସିଛ, ଚାଚା ଙ୍କୁ ଡାକ୍ତରଖାନାରେ ରଖି ଚିକିତ୍ସା କରିବା ପାଇଁ । ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କର ଇଚ୍ଛାତ ପରି ଚାଣୁଆ ଛାତି ଭିତରଟା ଅବ୍ୟକ୍ତ ବେଦନାରେ ଧରି ଉଠିଲା । ଆଖି ଜକେଇ ଆସିଲା । ପିତାଙ୍କର ମୁହଁ ଭାସି ଉଠିଲା ସ୍ମୃତି ପଟରେ । ଯେଉଁ ଦିନ ଆଇ.ସି.ଏସ.



ପରୀକ୍ଷାରେ ଉତ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ସୁଭାଷ, ପିତା ଜାନକୀନାଥ ଏଇ ସୁନାର ଘଡ଼ିଟିକୁ ଅତି ଆଦରରେ ପିନ୍ଧାଇ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ହାତରେ । କହିଥିଲେ – “ଏଇ ଘଣ୍ଟାଟି ମୋର ସ୍ମୃତି ସ୍ବରୂପ ସବୁଦିନ ତୁମ ହାତରେ ବାନ୍ଧିବ” । ହୃଦୟର ଏ ମହାଦୀର୍ଘ ରହସିକୁ ବି ତ୍ୟାଗ କରିବାକୁ ହେଲା ।

ଦେଶର ମାଟି, ଆତ୍ମୀୟ ସ୍ବଜନ, ସୁଖ ସମୃଦ୍ଧି, ବହୁ ବହୁ ମଧୁର ଅନୁଭବ , ଆପଣାପଣ ସବୁକୁ ଜଳାଂଜଳି ଦେଇଥିଲେ ସୁଭାଷ । ଅଜଣା ,ଅନିଶ୍ଚିତ, ବିପଦପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପଥରେ ପାଦ ଥାପିଥିଲେ ସୁଭାଷ । ଗୋଟିଏ ସ୍ବପ୍ନ , ଗୋଟିଏ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ,ଗୋଟିଏ ତପସ୍ୟାର ମନ୍ତ୍ର ପାଠଥିଲା - ଦେଶର ମୁକ୍ତି । ଗ୍ରୀଷ୍ମର ରୌଦ୍ର ଦଗ୍ଧ ମଧ୍ୟାହ୍ନ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟପରି ବହ୍ନିମାନ ସୁଭାଷଙ୍କ ଆତ୍ମବଳିଦାନର ବହୁ ବହୁ ଅନାଲୋଚିତ ସଙ୍ଘର୍ଷମୟ କରୁଣ ଜୀବନ ଗାଥା ଏ ଜାତିର ଉତ୍ତର ବାୟାଦମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏବେବି ଅଜଣା ।

(ଏହା ସତ୍ୟ ଘଟଣା ଉପରେ ଆଧାରିତ)

ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦାସ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର କଟକରେ ତାଙ୍କ ପରିବାରଙ୍କ ସହିତ ବସବାସ କରନ୍ତି । ସେ ଅବସର ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ଅଧ୍ୟାପିକା । ସେ ଜଣେ ଲେଖିକା, ଗାଳ୍ପିକା,ଉପନ୍ୟାସିକା ଓ ସମାଜସେବିକା । ଲେଖା ତି ଲେଖିକାଙ୍କର ଉତ୍ତମୀ ମିତାଳୀ ଦାସ ପଠେଇଛନ୍ତି । ମିତାଳି ଦାସ ଓସା ର ଆଜୀବନ ସଭ୍ୟା ।



ପରିଭାଷା

ବନ୍ଦନା ପଣ୍ଡା

ଚେନ୍ନାଇର ସମୁଦ୍ର କୂଳ । ମୁଁ ସମୟ ପାଇଲେ ଆସି ବସିଯାଏ । ସମସ୍ତେ କୁହନ୍ତି ଏଠି ମଣିଷ ସବୁ ସୁଖ ଦୁଃଖ ଭୁଲିଯାଏ ବୋଲି । ମୁଁ କିନ୍ତୁ ଦୁଃଖ ସୁଖର ମନ୍ଥନ କରିଥାଏ ଏଠି । କେତେବେଳେ ମୁଁ ନିଜର ଭୁଲ୍ ଦେଖେତ କେତେବେଳେ ଅନ୍ୟ ମାନଙ୍କ ଭୁଲ ମୋତେ ଜଳ ଜଳ ହୋଇ ଦିଶିଯାଏ । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ଦୁଇ ତିନି ଦିନ ଧରି କୌଣସି ସମସ୍ୟାର ସମାଧାନ ଦିଶେ ନାହିଁ । ପୁଣି ଦିନେ ହଠାତ ସମୁଦ୍ର ଯେମିତି ଢେଉ ଖେଳେଇ ଖେଳେଇ ହସି ହସି ସବୁ ସମସ୍ୟାର ସମାଧାନ ବୁଝେଇ ଦେଇ ଯାଏ ।

ନୂଆ ବଦଳି ହେଇ ଆସିବା ବେଳେ ସହରଟା ବଡ଼ ଅଜବ ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ମୋତେ । ଅନ୍ୟ କୌଣସି ଭାଷା ବୁଝିବାକୁ ନାରାଜ ଏଠିକା ଲୋକ ମାନେ । ନିଜ ଭାଷାରେ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ହେବା ଗର୍ବର ବିଷୟ କିନ୍ତୁ ବାହାରୁ ଆସିଥିବା ଲୋକଟିଏ କେମିତି ତୁମ ଭାଷା ବୁଝି ପାରିବ? ପଡିଶା ଘର ବନ୍ଧୁଙ୍କୁ (ଯିଏ କି ମୋ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ହିନ୍ଦୀରେ କଥା କହୁଥିଲେ) ଆଲୋଚନା ବେଳେ ଏମିତି କେମିତି ଏଠିକା ଲୋକମାନେ ବୋଲି ପଚାରୁଥିଲି । ସ୍ଥିତ ହସି ସେ ସ୍ଵଳ୍ପରେ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଇଥିଲେ, “ ମାତୃଭାଷା” । ମୁଁ କହିଲି, “ମାତୃଭାଷା ସତ କଥା ଯେ, ମା ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ମାଉସୀ ପିଉସୀମାନେ ବି ତ ଅଛନ୍ତି, ତାଙ୍କୁ ବି ଧରିକି ଚଳିବାକୁ ପଡେ ।” ସେ ହସି ଦେଇ ଆଲୋଚନା ବଦଳେଇ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ସେଦିନ ।

ମୁଁ କିନ୍ତୁ ଭାବୁଥିଲି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ପଠାଣ ଗଳି, ବଙ୍ଗଳା ଗଳି, ତେଲେଙ୍ଗ ବଜାର, ମାରୁଡ଼ାତି ବସ୍ତି ହେଇ କେତେ ଜାଗା ଏମିତି ଅନ୍ୟ ଭାଷାର ଲୋକ ମାନଙ୍କ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ଉତ୍ସର୍ଗୀକୃତ । ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମାନେ ଏ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ନିଷ୍ଠିତ ଭାବେ ବହୁତ ଭଲ, ଆପଣାପଣ ପାଇଁ ବାହାରୁ ଆସୁଥିବା ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅଧା ହିନ୍ଦୀ ଅଧା ଇଂରାଜୀ କଥା କହି କୋଳେଇ ନେଉ । ‘ଯେ ଦେଶ ଯାଇ ସେ ଫଳ ଖାଇ’ ନୀତିରେ... ଆସେ ଆସେ ମୁଁ ଭାଷା ସହିତ ପରିଚିତ ହେବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲି , ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଲୋକ ମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଭାଷା ଜନିତ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ ସମସ୍ୟା ଅଳ୍ପ ଦୂର ହେଇଗଲା ।

‘ସୁଷ୍ଟଲ୍ ! ସୁଷ୍ଟଲ୍’ ତାଙ୍କରେ ମୁଁ ଭାବନା ରାଜ୍ୟରୁ ଫେରିଲି । ପିଲାଟିକୁ ଦେଖୁ ଦେଖୁ ତା ଭାଷାରେ କହିଲି , ‘ତୋତେ ପରା ଏଇନେ ମନା କରିଥିଲି ନେବିନି ବୋଲି ...ତୁ ପୁଣି ଆସିଗଲୁ ?’ ପିଲାଟି କହିଲା, “ ଆମ୍ଭ, ନିଅ ନା, ଅଳ୍ପ କିଛି ଅଛି, ସରିଗଲେ ଘରକୁ ପଳେଇବି ।” ପିଲାଟିକୁ ଆଉ ଥରେ ଚାହିଁଲି ... ସାତ ଆଠ ବର୍ଷର ପିଲାଟିଏ । ଚିତ୍କଣ କରି ମୁଣ୍ଡ ବାଁ କଡେ ସୁଛା କରି କୁଣ୍ଡେଇଛି । ହାଫ୍ ପ୍ୟାଣ୍ଟି ଆଣ୍ଟୁ ତଳକୁ ଆଉ ତାକୁ ଅଧା ଲୁଚେଇ ତା ଉପରକୁ ହାଫ୍ ସାର୍ଟ ଖଣ୍ଡେ । ନିଜ ଉଚ୍ଚତାର ଅଧା ଉଚ୍ଚାର ଗୋଟେ କାଚଲଗା ଟିଣ ଲହ ଲହକା ହାତରେ ଉଠେଇ ଧରିଛି । କାଚ ଭିତରୁ “ସୁଷ୍ଟଲ୍ ” ମାନେ ବୁଟ ସିଝା ଗୁଡା ଦିଶୁଛି । ଟିଣ ଉପରେ ମସଲା, ପ୍ଲେଟ୍ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ମଧ୍ୟ ସଜତା ହେଇ ରଖା ହେଇଛି । ଶୁଣିଥିଲି ପାଖ ଆଖ ଛୋଟ ହୋଟେଲଗୁଡାଙ୍କର ଏମିତି କିଛି ଧନ୍ଦା ଚାଲିଥାଏ । ଛୋଟ ଛୋଟ ପିଲାଙ୍କ ହାତରେ ନିଜ ଦୋକାନ ଜିନିଷ ଦେଇ ବିକ୍ରି କରିବାକୁ ପଠେଇବେ, ଛୋଟ ପିଲା ବୋଲି ଯେମିତି ଲୋକ ମାନେ ଦୟା ଦେଖେଇ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ କିଣିବେ । ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଲି, “ ଏଗୁଡା ତୋ ପାଇଁ ତିଆରି କରୁଛି କିଏ ? ଏବେ ତୋର ପାଠ ପଢା ନାହିଁ ... ଏସବୁ ଏବେ କାହିଁକି ବିକିଛୁ... ସ୍କୁଲକୁ ଯାଉ , ପାଠ ପଢୁ ?” । ମୋ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନରେ ପିଲାଟି ହଠାତ୍ ଉତ୍ସାହିତ ହୋଇ ହସି ହସି ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲା, “ହଁ ଆମ୍ଭ ମୁଁ ସ୍କୁଲ କୁ ଯାଏ । ଚତୁର୍ଥ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ପାଠ ପଢେ । ମୋ ମା ଏଇ ପାଖ ହୋଟେଲ୍‌ରେ ବାସନ ମାଜେ । ସିଏ ସୁଷ୍ଟଲ୍ ତିଆରି କରି ଦିଏ । ମୁଁ ସ୍କୁଲରୁ ଫେରି ଦୁଇ ଘଣ୍ଟା ଆସି ବିକି ଦେଇ ଯାଏ । ତା ପରେ ଘରେ ଯାଇ ପାଠ ପଢେ । ଯୋଉ ଦିନ ସବୁ ବିକି ହେଇଯାଏ ମୋ ମା ମୁହଁରେ ହସ ଖେଳି ଯାଏ । ଆଉ ସେ ହସଟା ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମୁଁ ବ...ହ...ତ ଭଲ ପାଏ ।”

ତା କଥା ଶୁଣି ଆଖି ଛଳ ଛଳ ହେଇ ଆସିଲା । ମୁଁ କହିଲି, “ହଉ ଦେ ଗୋଟେ ପ୍ଲେଟ୍ ଦେ” ।



ହଠାତ୍ ପୋଲିସ୍ ଟିଏ ବାଡ଼ି ହଲେଇ ହଲେଇ ସେଠି ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା । ‘ବାହାର, ବାହାର, ବାହାର ସବୁ ଏଠୁ ।’, କହି ପିଲାଟିକୁ ଦୁଇ ପାହାର ପିଟି ପକେଇଲା । ମୁଁ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଉଠି ଠିଆ ହେଇ ପଡ଼ିଲି ଅଟକେଇବା ପାଇଁ , ଚିହ୍ନା ପୋଲିସ୍‌ଟିକୁ ଦେଖି । କିନ୍ତୁ ମୁଁ କିଛି କହିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସେ ଆଉ ଦି ପାହାର ପିଲାଟିକି ପକେଇ କହିଲା... ଆପଣ କିଛି ଜାଣି ନାହାନ୍ତି ମାତାମ୍ । ସବୁଦିନ ମାତ ଖାଉଛନ୍ତି, ପୁଣି ଆସି ହାତର ହେଇ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ‘ଚାଇଲ୍ଡ ଲେବର’ ଉପରେ ସରକାର ଏତେ କଡ଼ା କଟକଣା କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଏମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏଠି ଏମିତି ଦେଖିଲେ ଆମ ଚାକିରି ବି କୋଉଦିନ ପକେଇବ ।’ ପିଲାଟି ଜୀବନ ବିକଳରେ ସେଠୁ ଧାଇଁ ପକେଇଲା । ଅଧା ଡିଆରି ସୁଷ୍ଟଲ୍ ପ୍ଲେଟ୍‌ଟି ବାଲିରେ ମୁହଁ ମାଡି ପଡିଥିଲା ।

“ଆପଣଙ୍କର କ’ଣ ଆଜି ଏଠି ଡ୍ୟୁଟି ପଡିଛି”, ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଲି । ସେ କହିଲେ, “ହଁ ମାତାମ୍, ଗୋଟେ ସିନେମା ସୁଟିଂ ହଉଛି । ବେବୀ ରୀନା ଆସିଛନ୍ତି ସୁଟିଂ ପାଇଁ । ଲୋକ ଭିଡ ସମ୍ବଳିବାକୁ ମୋ ଡ୍ୟୁଟି ଆଜି ଏଇଠି ଲାଗିଛି ।”

ଚାଇଲ୍ଡ ଲେବର!!! ବେଙ୍ଗ୍ ଚାଇଲ୍ଡ ଆକ୍ଟର ବେବୀ ରୀନାଙ୍କର ଗୁଲ୍ ଗୁଲ୍ ମୁହଁକୁ ମନେ ପକେଇ, ମୁଁ ଭାବୁଥିଲି “ଚାଇଲ୍ଡ ଲେବରର ପରିଭାଷା ସତରେ କ’ଣ !” ମୁଁ ସମୁଦ୍ରକୁ ଅନେଇ ରହିଲି ଉତ୍ତର ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ ।

(ଗୋଲ୍ଡିକା ବୟନା ପଣ୍ଡା ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ବାସ କରନ୍ତି । ଗଲ୍ଡିକୁ ପଠେଇଛନ୍ତି ତାଙ୍କର ସାନ ଭଉଣୀ ଲୁସିନା ଶତପଥୀ, ଓସାର ଆଜୀବନ ସଭ୍ୟା ।)



ଫଟା-ମମତା ସାହୁ



କୁକିଙ୍ଗ୍ କ୍ଲାସ୍

କମଳା ଶତପଥୀ

ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଶୁଣିଲେ ଯେ ତାଙ୍କ ଭାବିପତ୍ନୀ ରୋଷେଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ଧୂରୀଣା । ସେତେବେଳେ ତାଙ୍କ ଚବିଶ ଇଞ୍ଚିଆ ଛାତିଟା ତତକ୍ଷଣାତ୍ ଚାଲିଗଲା ଇଞ୍ଚିକୁ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତିତ ହେଇଗଲା । କନଭେଣ୍ଟ ପଢୁଆ ଝିଅ ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ନୃତ୍ୟଗୀତରେ ନିପୁଣା ବୋଲି ତ ଆଗରୁ ଖବର ପାଇ ହି ସାରିଥିଲେ, କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜିକାଲିକା ନିହାତି ମତର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଝିଅ ହେଇକି ବି ରୋଷେଇରେ ରୁଚି ରଖୁଥାଇ ପାରେ, ସେକଥା ସେ ଆଦୌ ଭାବିନଥିଲେ । ବରଂ ଭାବିଥିଲେ ବିବାହ ପରେ ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ରୋଷେଇଆର ଅତିରିକ୍ତ ବୋଝ ତାଙ୍କୁ ବହନ କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ । ତା' ନକରି ପାରିଲେ, ନିଜକୁ ହିଁ ରୋଷେଇଘରେ ଅବସ୍ଥାପିତ କରିନେବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ ସବୁଦିନ ପାଇଁ !

ମୁଦି ପିନ୍ଧେଇ ଆସିବା ପରେ ତାଙ୍କ ବୋଉ ସଗର୍ବରେ ଘୋଷଣା କରିଦେଲା ଯେ ଝିଅଟିର ସବୁ ଭଲଗୁଣ ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ରୋଷେଇରେ ଆଗ୍ରହ ସବୁଠାର ବଡ଼ ଗୁଣ । ସେଇ ଆଗ୍ରହକୁ ସାକାର ରୂପ ଦେବାକୁ ବର୍ଷେ କାଳ ରୋଷେଇ ସ୍ଥଳରେ ବିଧିବଦ୍ଧ ଭାବରେ ସେ ଶିକ୍ଷା ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଛି । ଚାଇନିଜ୍, ମୋଗଲାଇ, କଣ୍ଟିନେଣ୍ଟାଲ୍ । ଆଇ, ସବୁ ପ୍ରକାରର ଖାଦ୍ୟ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରିବାରେ ସେ ଏକଦମ୍ ଓସ୍ତାଦ । ବୋଉ ପାଟିରୁ କଥା ଶେଷ ହେଉ ନହେଉ ଘରେ ଖୁସିର ଲହର ଖେଳିଗଲା । ଏ ମହଙ୍ଗା ଯୁଗରେ ବାରମ୍ବାର ହୋଟେଲ୍ ଯାଇ ପାଟିସୁଆଦ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଖାଇବାର ଆଗ୍ରହକୁ ଏଥର ଘରେ ପୂରା କରାଯାଇ ପାରିବ । ନୂଆବୋହୂର ହାତ ପରଷାରେ ଏଥର ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ମନର ଓରିମାନା ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହେବ । ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁଙ୍କ ମନ ଖୁସିରେ ଝୁମି ଉଠିଲା । ଯାହାହେଉ ଏଥର ସାଙ୍ଗମାନଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ଛାତି ଫୁଲେଇ କିଛି କହିବାର ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କର ବି ହେବ ।

ସେ ଦାସବାବୁ, ମହାନ୍ତିବାବୁ ଆଉ ଯୋଉଥିରେ ଯାହା ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ ପଛେ, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପତ୍ନୀମାନେ ରନ୍ଧନ କଳାରେ ନିହାତି ତଳ ଗ୍ରେଡ୍ ର, ସେଥିରେ ସନ୍ଦେହ ନାହିଁ । କେବେ କେମିତି ଦୁଃଖ କରି ସେମାନେ କହୁଥିବାର ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁ ଶୁଣିଛନ୍ତି ଯେ ବାହା ହେଲା ଦିନରୁ ପାଟିରେ ତାଙ୍କର ପୋକ ପଡ଼ିଗଲାଣି ! ଭଲ କରି ରାନ୍ଧିବା ବାଢ଼ିବା କ'ଣ, ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପତ୍ନୀମାନେ ଆଦୌ ଜାଣିନାହାନ୍ତି ।

ଯାହାହେଉ ଏଥର ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁ ନିତି ଦିନ ନୂଆ ନୂଆ ଜିନିଷ ଖାଇ, ଯାଇ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ବଖାଣ କରିପାରିବେ ଆଉ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଝାଉଁଳି ପଡୁଥିବା ମୁହଁର ଅପୂର୍ବ ଦୃଶ୍ୟକୁ ପ୍ରାଣଭରି ଉପଭୋଗ କରିପାରିବେ । କଥାରେ କଥାରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଦୁର୍ବଳତା ପ୍ରତି ଆଙ୍ଗୁଠି ଦେଖାଉଥିବା ଦାସବାବୁ, ମହାନ୍ତିବାବୁଙ୍କୁ ଏଥର ସେ ଆଙ୍ଗୁଠି ଦେଖେଇବେ । ଯଦି କେବେ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳିବ, ତେବେ ଘରକୁ ଡାକିଆଣି ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ହାତରନ୍ଧା ଖୁଆଇବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ ମଧ୍ୟ କରିବେ ।

ସେ ଯାହାହେଉ, ବହୁତ କଳ୍ପନା ଜଳ୍ପନା ଆଉ ସୁନେଲି ସ୍ବପ୍ନ ଦେଖିବା ଭିତରେ ମହାପାତ୍ର ବାବୁଙ୍କର ବିବାହ ପର୍ବ ଶେଷ ହେଇଗଲା । ପତ୍ନୀ 'ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା' ଗୋଟିଏ ଚାଉଳରେ ଗଢ଼ା । ରୂପ ଯେମିତି, ଗୁଣ ବି ସେମିତି । କଥା କହି ମନ ଜିଣିନେବା ଯେମିତି ଜଣାଥିଲା, ଘରର କାମଦାମ କରି ବଡ଼ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଖୁସି କରିଦେବା ବି ସେମିତି ଜଣାଥିଲା । ଘରର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ସଦସ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଶଂସା କରି କରି ପୋତି ପକେଇଲେ ନୂଆବୋହୂକୁ ଆଉ ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁଙ୍କର ଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ।

ଏମିତି ଘରେ ବାହାରେ, ଚାରିଆଡେ ପତ୍ନୀର ଭୂରି ଭୂରି ପ୍ରଶଂସା ଶୁଣି ଶୁଣି ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁ ନିଜକୁ ଚିମୁଟି ପରୀକ୍ଷା କରିନେଲେ, ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ଯାହା ଘଟୁଛି, ସେସବୁ ସତ୍ୟ ନା ତାଙ୍କ ଜାଗ୍ରତ ଆଖିର ସ୍ବପ୍ନ !

ଅଷ୍ଟମଙ୍ଗଳା ଯାଉ ନଯାଉ ଶୁ ନୂଆବୋହୂ ଯାଇ ରୋଷେଇ ଘରର ମୋର୍ଚ୍ଚା ସମ୍ଭାଳି ନେଲା । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ଉଦ୍ବିଗ୍ନା – କି ପ୍ରକାରର ଖାଇବା ଆଜି ବୋହୂ ବନେଇବ । ଘରଲୋକ ତ ତା'ର ବେଶ୍ ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ କଥା କହି ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି, ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ସେସବୁ ସତ୍ୟ ନା ବାହାଘର ପୂର୍ବର ମିଛ ପ୍ରଶଂସା କେବଳ !

ନା, କିଛି ପଦେ ବି ମିଛ ନଥିଲା । ବୋହୂ ସତରେ ରୋଷେଇରେ ଥିଲା ନିପୁଣା । ରୋଷେଇ ଘରେ ପାଦ ଥୋଉ ଥୋଉ ସେ ଘୋଷଣା କରିଦେଲା ଯେ ସେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଆଜି ଚିତ୍ ଫ୍ରେଞ୍ଚ୍ ଟୋଷ୍ଟ ବନେଇ ଖୁଆଇବ ।

ଚିତ୍ ଫ୍ରେଞ୍ଚ୍ ଟୋଷ୍ଟ !! ଇଏ ପୁଣି କୋଉ ଜିନିଷ !!!



ବୋହୂ ତାଲିକା କରିଦେଲା । ତାଲିକା ମୁତାବକ ଗୋଟି ଗୋଟି କରି ସବୁ ଜିନିଷ କିଣାହେଉ ଆସିଲା, ଆଉ ବୋହୂ ବନେଇଲା ଚିନ୍ତା ଫ୍ରେଞ୍ଜ ଟୋଷ୍ଟ । ଆଃ, କି ସ୍ବାଦିଷ୍ଟ ! ଏମିତି ଖାଦ୍ୟ ପୁଣି ଏ ଜଗତରେ ଥାଏ ! ସମସ୍ତେ ହାତ ଚାଟି ଚାଟି ଖାଇ ଚାଲିଗଲେ ।

ପେଟ ଭରି ଖାଇସାରିଲା ପରେ ବି ମନ କହୁଥିଲା ଆହୁରି ମିଳନ୍ତା କି, ପୁଣି ଖାଆନ୍ତେ । ଖାଇବାବାଲାକୁ ସିନା ସୁଆଦ, ହେଲେ ବନେଇବାବାଲାକୁ କେତେ କଷ୍ଟ ହେଉଥିବ !

କିନ୍ତୁ ନା, କିଛି କଷ୍ଟ ହେଉଥିବା କଥା ଜଣା ପଡିଲାନି । ସମସ୍ତେ ଏତେ ଖୁସିରେ ଖାଉଥିବାର ଦେଖି ବୋହୂ ନିଜେ ଭାରି ଖୁସି ହେଉଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ଏତେ ଜଣଙ୍କୁ ରାନ୍ଧି ଖୁଆଇବାରେ ତାକୁ ଯେ କିଛି କଷ୍ଟ ହେଉଥିବ, ସେମିତି କିଛି ବି ଜଣେଇଲାନି । ବରଂ ଆହୁରି କ'ଣ କ'ଣ ସେ ବନେଇ ଜାଣେ, ତା'ର ତାଲିକା କହି ଦେଇଗଲା । ଭରା ପେଟରେ ବି ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପାଟିରୁ ଲାଳ ଥପ୍ ଥପ୍ ଗଡିପଡିଲା ସେ ନାଁ ସବୁ ଶୁଣି । ଜଳଖିଆ ପରେ ସ୍ବେସାଲ୍ କଫି ବି ପିଆଗଲା । ତାହା ବି ନୂଆବୋହୂ ହାତର କରାମତିର ନମୁନା ଥିଲା । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ମୁହଁରେ ଥିଲା ଗୋଟିଏ କଥା - ଆଜି ପରିକା ଜଳଖିଆ ଆଉ କଫି ଆଗରୁ କେବେ ଚଖା ହେଇନଥିଲା ।

ସାହିପଡିଶାରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ କୁହାଗଲା .. ଫୋନ୍ କରି ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀଙ୍କୁ ବି କୁହାଗଲା । ଲୋକେ ଖୁସି ହେଲେ କି ମୁହଁ ମୋଡିଲେ, ଜଣା ପଡିଲା ନାହିଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ କହିଲା ଲୋକ କହିଚାଲିଲା । ଆଉ ଏଇ କହିବାରେ ତାକୁ ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ଆତ୍ମସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟି ମିଳିଲା ଯେ ଅନ୍ୟ ଆଗରେ ଛାଡି ଫୁଲେଇ କହିବା ଭଳି ଉପାଦାନଟିଏ କେବଳ ତାଙ୍କରି ପାଖରେ ହିଁ ଅଛି ।

ଘଣ୍ଟାଏ ବିଶ୍ରାମ ପରେ ଦ୍ବିପହରର ଖାଇବା ପାଳି । ପୁଣି ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ଆଗ୍ରହ । ଏଥର କୋଉ ନୂଆ ଜିନିଷ ?

ହାଇଦ୍ରାବାଦୀ ବିରିୟାନୀ !

ଆରେ ବାଃ, ଖାଲି ନାଁ ହିଁ ଶୁଣା ଯାଇଥିଲା ଆଗରୁ ... ଏବେ ପାଟି ବି ଚାଖୁବ ଏ ଜିନିଷର ସ୍ବାଦ କିପରି ଥାଏ ।

ତାଲିକା ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହେଇଗଲା । ବଜାରକୁ ଯାଇ ସବୁ ଜିନିଷ ପରିମାଣ ମୁତାବକ କିଣାହୋଇ ଅଣା ହେଇଗଲା । ବୋହୂ ଢୁଟିଗଲେ ରନ୍ଧାକାର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ । ସମସ୍ତେ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲେ ଏପରି ଏକ ସୁନ୍ଦର ପ୍ରୋଜେକ୍ଟ୍ ରେ ନିଜର ସହଯୋଗ ଦେବାକୁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ବୋହୂ ମନା କରିଦେଲା । ଆଉ କେହି ହସ୍ତକ୍ଷେପ କଲେ ତା'ର ସବୁ ଭୁଲଭାଲ୍ ହେଇଯିବ । ତେଣୁ ସେ ଏକା ଏକା ହିଁ ରୋଷେଇ କରିବ ।

ଭଲକଥା, ବସିକି ଖାଇବାକୁ କାହାକୁ ବା ଭଲ ନଲାଗେ !

ରୋଷେଇଘରୁ ମସଲା କ୍ଷୀର ସୁଗନ୍ଧ ଭାସି ଆସୁଥିଲା । ସକାଳ ଜଳଖିଆ ହଜମ ହେଇନଥିଲା ତଥାପି ମସଲାର ସୁଗନ୍ଧରେ ପାଟିରୁ ପାଣି ବାହାରି ଆସିଲା । ଦୁଇ ଘଣ୍ଟାର ପରିଶ୍ରମ ପରେ ଝାଳନାଳ ହୋଇ ବୋହୂ ରୋଷେଇଘରୁ ବାହାରିଲେ । ଆଃ.. ହାଇଦ୍ରାବାଦୀ ବିରିୟାନୀର ସୁଗନ୍ଧ ପେଟର ଭୋକକୁ ଚଉଗୁଣୀତ କରିପକୋଉଛି । ଡକରା ଆସିଗଲା । ସମସ୍ତେ ଟେବୁଲ୍ ପାଖକୁ ଧାଇଁଗଲେ । କାକୁଡି, ଟମାଟର ପିଆଜ କଟାରେ ସଜା ହୋଇଥିଲା ହାଇଦ୍ରାବାଦୀ ବିରିୟାନୀ ଆଉ କରୁମ୍ବର ।

ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁ ଭାଗ୍ୟବାନ୍ । ପତ୍ନୀ ଯଦି ସ୍ବାମୀର ପେଟ ଚିହ୍ନିପାରିଲା, ତେବେ ତା' ଠାରୁ ବଳି ବଡ଼ ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ ଆଉ କିଛି ନାହିଁ । ଆଉ ଏଠି ତ ପତ୍ନୀ କେବଳ ପତିର ନୁହେଁ, ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପେଟ ଚିହ୍ନିପାରୁଛି । ଏହା ଠାରୁ ବଳିକି ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ ଆଉ କ'ଣ ଥାଇପାରେ ! ପୁଣି ପେଟପୁରା ଖାଇବା, ପୁଣି ଭୁରି ଭୁରି ପ୍ରଶଂସା, ଆଉ ତା'ପରେ ରାତି ଖାଇବାର ବ୍ୟାକୁଳତା ସହକାରେ ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷା । ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁ ନିଜ ନବ ବିବାହିତା ପତ୍ନୀକୁ ଚାହିଁଲେ । ଆଜି ସାରା ଦିନଟା ରୋଷେଇଘରେ ପୂରା ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ । ତଥାପି କିନ୍ତୁ କ୍ଲାନ୍ତିର ଏତେ ଟିକେ ଚିହ୍ନବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବି ମୁହଁରେ ନାହିଁ । ବରଂ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପ୍ରଶଂସାରେ ତାହା ଆହୁରି ଟକ୍ ଟକ୍ କରିଉଠୁଛି ।

କୁଣ୍ଡେମୋଟ ହେଇଗଲା ତାଙ୍କ ଛାତି । ଏପରି ପତ୍ନୀ ଭାଗ୍ୟରେ ଥିଲେ ମିଳେ । ଘରେ ଯେଉଁ ଜଣେ ଦୁଇ ଜଣ କୁଣିଆ ମଇତ୍ର ରହି ଯାଇଥିଲେ, ସେମାନେ ବୋହୂପରଷା ଖାଇବାକୁ ନିଜ ରହଣୀକୁ ଆଉ ଦୁଇ ଚାରି ଦିନ ପାଇଁ ବଢେଇଦେଲେ । ଏପରି ଭୋଜନ ଛାଡିଦେଇ କୋଉ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଭଲ ଯିବାକୁ ଚାହିଁବ ? ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଉପରେ ଉପରେ ପ୍ରଶଂସା କଲେ ବି ଭିତରେ ଭିତରେ ସନ୍ତୁଳି ଉଠୁଥିଲେ ସେମାନେ । ଆଉ କୌଣସି ନା କୌଣସି ପ୍ରକାରେ ନୂଆବୋହୂକୁ ଅପଦସ୍ତ କରିବାର ବାହାନା ଖୋଜି ହେଉଥିଲେ । ଦୂର ସଂପର୍କୀୟା ଖୁଡି ଜଣେ ତ ସମ୍ଭାଳି ନପାରି କହି ପକେଇଲେ ଯେ ନୂଆ ନୂଆ ସମସ୍ତେ ଏମିତି କରିଥାନ୍ତି । ପୁଣି ଦିନ କେଇଟା ଭିତରେ ନିଜର ଅସଲ ରୂପ ଦେଖେଇଥାନ୍ତି ।



ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁଙ୍କୁ ଖୁଡ଼ିଙ୍କର ଏ ଆକ୍ଷେପ ବଡ଼ କଷ୍ଟକର ପ୍ରତୀତ ହେଲେ ବି ବଡ଼ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ କି ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଇ ହେବ ଭାବି ତୁପ୍ତ ରହିଗଲେ । ମନେ ମନେ କେବଳ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା କରିଚାଲିଲେ ଯେ ଖୁଡ଼ିଙ୍କର ଏ ଆକ୍ଷେପ କେବେ ବି ସତ ନହେଉ । ଏମିତି ବି ତାଙ୍କର ଦୃଢ଼ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଥିଲା ଯେ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଏପରି କୌଣସି କାମ କେବେ ବି କରିବ ନାହିଁ, ଯୋଉଥିରେ ତାଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟକୁ ଆଘାତ ଲାଗିବ ।

ଖବର ବ୍ୟାପିବାକୁ କ’ଣ କିଛି ସମୟ ଲାଗେ କେବେ ! ବୋହୂର ରୋଷେଇ କଳା ବିଷୟଟି ଦିନ କେଇଟା ଭିତରେ ଦୂର ଦୂର ସଂପର୍କୀୟମାନଙ୍କ ଘରେ ବି ଯାଇ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲା । ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁଙ୍କ ଭାଗ୍ୟରେ ପୁଣି ଏତେ ସୁଖ ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ ଲେଖା ହୋଇଥାଇ ପାରେ ! ଦେଖିଲା ଲୋକ ଦାନ୍ତ କାମୁଡ଼ି ରହିଲେ, ଆଉ ନଦେଖିଲା ଲୋକ ପରୀକ୍ଷା କରିବା ପାଇଁ ବାହାନା କରି ଧାଇଁ ଆସିଲେ । ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁଙ୍କ ଦୂର ସଂପର୍କୀୟ ମାମୁପୁଅ ଭାଇ, ଯିଏ ସ୍ୱଭାବରେ ଟିକିଏ ଟକଳା, ସେ ଯେମିତି ଶୁଣିଲା ନୂଆବୋହୂ ହାତର କରାମତି ବିଷୟରେ, ମିଛଟାରେ ଅଫିସ୍ କାମର ବାହାନା କରି ଆସି ତାଙ୍କ ଘରେ ତେରା ଜମେଇଦେଲା । ନୂଆବୋହୂର ପ୍ରଶଂସାରେ କୌଣସି କାର୍ପଣ୍ୟତା ନଦେଖେଇ ସେ ନିଜର ରସନା ତୃପ୍ତିରେ ଲାଗିଲା ।

ତାଙ୍କ ବଡ଼ବାପା, ଯାହାଙ୍କୁ ପୁଅବୋହୂ ପଚାରୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି ବୋଲି କେବେଠୁ ଗାଁରେ ଯାଇ ମନଦୁଃଖରେ ରହୁଛନ୍ତି, ବଡ଼ମାଆଙ୍କୁ ତାଙ୍କର ଦେଖେଇବାକୁ ଅଛି କହି ତାଙ୍କ ଘରେ ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲେ । ଜଣେ ପିଇସୀ, କୋଉଠାର ମାମୁ, ଲେଖାଯୋଖାର ଭାଇ – ସମସ୍ତେ କାହିଁ କେତେ ଦୂର ସଂପର୍କୀୟ ହେଇଥିଲେ ବି କିଛି ନା କିଛି ର ବାହାନା କରି ଆସି ହାଜର ହେଇଗଲେ ଜିଭକୁ ସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟ କରିବାକୁ ।

ନୂଆବୋହୂ ବି ଆତ୍ମପ୍ରଶଂସାରେ ମୁଗ୍ଧ ହେଇ ବନେଇ ଚାଲିଗଲା ଗୋଟାକ ପରେ ଗୋଟାଏ ଆଇଟମ୍ ଯାହାର ନାଁ ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁଙ୍କ ଚଉଦ ପୁରୁଷରେ ବି କେହି ଶୁଣି ନଥିଲେ । ପନିର ଟିକ୍କା ମସଲା, ଟିକେନ୍ ଟଙ୍ଗାଟି କବାବ, ମସଲା ପ୍ରାଇଡ଼ ରାଇସ୍, ବୈଙ୍ଗନ୍ ଉଇଥ୍ ପ୍ରନ୍ ମସଲା, କାଶ୍ମିରୀ ଦମ୍ ଆଲୁ, ବଟର୍ ଟିକେନ୍, ଭେଜିଟେବୁଲ୍ ସ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡୱିଚ୍, ଟ୍ରିପଲ୍ ରାଇସ .. ଏମିତି ଏମିତି କେତେ କ’ଣ !

ଖାଇଲାବାଲା ଜାଣିବାର ଚେଷ୍ଟା ବି କଲାନାହିଁ ଯେ ଏସବୁ କୋଉଥିରେ ବନ୍ଧୁଛି, ବନେଇବାକୁ କେତେ ସମୟ ଲାଗୁଛି, କେତେ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ବି ହେଉଛି । ତା’ର ମତଲବ ରହିଲା ଖାଲି ଖାଇବାରେ । ଆଉ ଖାଇଲା ବେଳେ ବାହାଦୁରୀ ଦେଖେଇବା ପାଇଁ ନିଜ ସାଥେ ସାଥେ ଆଉ ଦୁଇ ଚାରି ଜଣଙ୍କୁ ବି ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ନେଇକି ଆସିଗଲା କେବେ କେବେ ।

ମାସ ଶେଷ ହେବାକୁ ବସିଲା । ତଥାପି ଘର ଛାଡ଼ିଯିବାକୁ ଯୋଜନା କରୁଥିବାର କାହିଁ କେହି ଦିଶିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁଙ୍କ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଚିନ୍ତା ପଶିଲା । ସେ କ’ଣ ବାହା ହେଇଥିଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀକୁ ପୂର୍ବରୁ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ! ସେ କୁଆଡ଼େ ଟିକିଏ ବୁଲିବାକୁ ଯାଆନ୍ତେ .. ସିନେମା ଦେଖନ୍ତେ .. କି ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ଯାଆନ୍ତେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯିବେ କେମିତି ? ଘରେ ତ ସବୁବେଳେ କୁଣିଆ ମଇତ୍ର ପଶି ରହିଛନ୍ତି ! ସେଇମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ରନ୍ଧାରେ ବଜାରେ ତ ରାତିଦିନ ଏକ ହେଇସାରିଲାଣି, ଆଉ ବୈବାହିକ ଜୀବନକୁ କେମିତି ବା ସେ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିବେ ! ଖାଲି ସେତିକି ତ ନୁହେଁ, ଦିନରାତି ଘରେ ଲୋକ ହାଉଯାଉ ହେଲାରୁ, ପତ୍ନୀ ସହିତ ଏକାନ୍ତରେ କିଛି ସମୟ କାଟିବାକୁ ବି ତାଙ୍କୁ ମିଳୁନଥିଲା । ଏମିତି ବି ପତ୍ନୀ ନିଜ ପ୍ରଶଂସା ଶୁଣି ଶୁଣି ଏତେ ଉତ୍ପୁଲ୍ଲିତ ଯେ ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ଘଡ଼ିଏ ବସି ରହି ସୁଖଦୁଃଖ ହେବା ଅପେକ୍ଷା ରୋଷେଇ ଘରେ ଯାଇ ଝାଳନାଳ ହେବାକୁ ତାକୁ ଅଧିକ ସୁଖକର ଲାଗୁଛି ।

ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁ ଯେତେ ପ୍ରକାରେ ବୁଲେଇ ବାଲେଇ କହିଲେ ବି ସେ ଆଦୌ ଘରୁ ବାହାରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହୁଏନା । ‘ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାବେଳେ କ’ଣ ଯିବା ମ, ଏଇଲେ ତ ଖାଇବା ପିଇବା ବେଳ ..’ । ରାତିରେ ଯିବା କଥା କହିଲେ – ‘ନା, ନା, ଏଇଲେ ବାପା ଆସିବେ ... ଭାଇ ଆସିବେ ... ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଖାଇବା ଚାଉଳ ହେଇଯିବ, ମୁଁ ଯାଏ ରୋଷେଇଘରକୁ ..’ କହି ଅବିଳମ୍ବେ ସେ ଖସି ଚାଲିଯାଏ ।

ଓଃ .. ଯଜ୍ଞଶାବରୀ ମହାପାତ୍ରବାବୁ ଛଟପଟ ହେଇଉଠନ୍ତି । କାହିଁକି ଏମିତି ଝିଅକୁ ବାହା ହେବାକୁ ସେ ରାଜି ହେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ଯିଏ ସ୍ୱମୀର ମନ ଅପେକ୍ଷା ତା’ ପେଟକୁ ଅଧିକ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଦେଉଛି, ଭାବି ମିୟମାଣ ହେଇପଡ଼ିଲେ ।



ହେଲେ ଏଇଲେ ଏକଥାକୁ ସେ କାହାକୁ ଅବା କହିପାରିବେ ! ଯିଏ ଶୁଣିବ, ତାଙ୍କ କଟା ଘା'ରେ ଚୂନ ମଳିବାକୁ ତପ୍ତର ହେଉଛନ୍ତିବ ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ । ଏଇ ଦୁଇ ଦିନ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ହିଁ ତ ଦାସବାବୁ, ମହାନ୍ତିବାବୁଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ନିଶକୁ ଫୁଲେଇ ନିଜ ପତ୍ନୀର ଭୂରି ଭୂରି ପ୍ରଶଂସା କରିଥିଲେ ସେ । ତା'ରି ହାତରକ୍ଷା ଖାଇବାକୁ କେମିତି ଘରେ ସବୁବେଳେ ଲୋକ ହାଉଯାଉ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ବୋଲି ବଢେଇ ଚଢେଇ କହିଥିଲେ । ଏଇଲେ କୋଉ ମୁହଁରେ ତାଙ୍କ ମନ ତଳର ଦୁଃଖକୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବାକୁ ଯିବେ ସେ ! ବରଂ ତୁମ୍ଭ ରହିଯିବା ହିଁ ଭଲ ହେବ ତାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଭାବି ଦାନ୍ତ କାମୁଡ଼ି ରହିଲେ ।

ହେଲେ ରହି ପାରିଲେନି ତାଙ୍କ ବୋଉ । ଏ କ'ଣ ? ରୋଷେଇ ବାସରେ ଆଗ୍ରହ ଅଛି ବୋଲି ବଡ଼ ଖୁସିରେ ବୋହୂ କରିଥିଲେ ସତ, ହେଲେ ପରିଣତି ଏପରି ହେବ ବୋଲି ତ ସେ ଜାଣିନଥିଲେ ! କୁଣିଆ ମଇତ୍ର ଘରଛାଡ଼ି ଯିବାକୁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହେଉନାହାନ୍ତି । ବୋହୂର ପ୍ରଶଂସା କରିବା ଆଳରେ ନିତି ନିତି ମହାରାଜା ପରି ଭୋଜନ ଠୁଁସି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ତାଙ୍କ ଆର୍ଥୀକ ଅବସ୍ଥା କେଉଁ ସ୍ତରରେ ଯାଇ ପହଞ୍ଚି ସାରିଲାଣି, ସେକଥା କେହି ଜାଣିବାକୁ ବି ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ନୁହନ୍ତି ! ସେ ବି କୋଉ ମୁହଁରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଯାଇ ଜଣେଇବେ ଯେ ଆଉ ତମମାନଙ୍କ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ଉଠେଇବାର ସାମର୍ଥ୍ୟ ମୋର ନାହିଁ, ତେଣୁ ନିଜ ନିଜ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଯାଅ !

ବାହାଘର ବେଳେ ବଡ଼ ଜୋର ରେ ତ କହିଦେଇଥିଲେ ଯେ ବାଛି ବାଛି ବୋହୂ ଆଣିଛି, ଦେଖିବ ରହିଥା ! ରୂପ ଯେମିତି, ଗୁଣ ବି ସେମିତି । ମୋ ପୁଅକୁ ଏତେ ଅଙ୍ଗା କରୁଥିଲ.. ବାହାଘର ହେଇପାରୁନି ବୋଲି ଟାପରା କରୁଥିଲ, ଏଇଲେ ଦେଖିବ କେମିତି ତା' ଭାଗ୍ୟରେ ହୀରାଟିଏ ଅଛି ! ତୁମମାନଙ୍କ ବୋହୂ ତା'ର କାଣି ଆଙ୍ଗୁଠିକୁ ବି ସରି ହେବନି । ଏଥିରେ ମିଥ୍ୟା କିଛି ନଥିଲା ସତ, ହେଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ନିଜର ସେହି କଥା ଏଇଲେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ହିଁ ମହଙ୍ଗା ପଡ଼ିଲାଣି । ନିତି ନିତି ସେ ମୋଗଲାଇ, ହାଇଦ୍ରାବାଦୀ, ଚାଇନିଜ୍, ଥାଇ, ଖାଲି ଖାଲି ମନଟା ବିଚିକିଟା ଧରିଲାଣି । ସାଧା ଭାତ ଗଣ୍ଡେ ଆଉ ଜିରା ଫୁଟା ତାଲି ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ଆଳୁ ଭରତା ଟିକେ ଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ ପାଟି ଚରସି ଗଲାଣି । ହେଲେ କେମିତି କହିବେ ସେକଥା କାହାକୁ ! ଘରେ ଯେଉଁ ପୁଞ୍ଜାକ ଅତିଥି ଦିନରାତି ତାରି ହାତରୁ ଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଚାହିଁ ବସିଛନ୍ତି, ଏକଥା ଶୁଣୁ ଶୁଣୁ ତ ସେମାନେ ନାକ ଟେକିଦେବେ ଆଗ । ମୁହଁ ଛିଆଡ଼ି ନିଶ୍ଚୟ କହିବେ – ବେଙ୍ଗ ପେଟରେ କି ଘିଅ ହଜମ ହୁଏ ! ଏତେ ଭଲ ଖାଇବା ଖାଇବାର ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ତମର ଥିଲେ ସିନା ଖାଇପାରିବ !!

କିନ୍ତୁ ଯାହା ପଛେ ହେଇଯାଉ, ବୋହୂକୁ ଏଥର କହିବେ ସେ । ମାସେ ବିତିଗଲାଣି । ଯେତିକି ରାନ୍ଧିଲା, ରାନ୍ଧିଲା । ସମସ୍ତେ ଖାଇଲେ, ଖୁସି ହେଲେ, ପ୍ରଶଂସା କଲେ, ସବୁ ଠିକ୍ ଅଛି । ଏଥର କିନ୍ତୁ ସମସ୍ତେ ନିଜ ନିଜ ଘରକୁ ଯେପରି ଫେରିଯିବେ, ସେପରି ରୋଷେଇ ହେଉ ।

ପରଦିନ ସକାଳୁ ସକାଳୁ ବୋହୂ ରୋଷେଇଘରେ ପାଦ ଥୋଇବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସେ ଯାଇ ସେଠି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲେ । ଯେତେ ଡବା ଡବି ସବୁ ଥିଲା, ସେସବୁ ଖୋଲିକି ଦେଖିଲେ । ଏ ମା' ... ଇଏ କ'ଣ ...? ସବୁ ଡବା ତ ଖାଲି ! ବାହାଘର ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଘିଅ, ତେଲ, କାଜୁ କିସମିସ୍ ଗରମ ମସଲା, ଗୁଣ୍ଡ ମସଲା, ତାଲି ଚାଉଳ, ଜିରା ଧନିଆ, ସବୁ ଭରି ଦେଇଥିଲେ ସେ । ଜମାରୁ ମାସଟାଏ ରୋଷେଇ କରି ବୋହୂ ସବୁ ଖାଲି କରି ପକେଇଛି ! ଏମିତି ହେଲେ ଘର କେମିତି ଚଳିବ ? ପୁଅର ମାସକ ଦରମା ଯଦି ଏମିତି ପରକୁ ଖୁଆଇ ପିଆଇ ସାରିଦେବ, ତେବେ ଚଳିବେ କେମିତି ! କିନ୍ତୁ ସମସ୍ୟା ହେଲା, ସେ ଏବେ ତାକୁ ଆକଟ କରିବେ କେମିତି ? କୋଉ ମୁହଁରେ କହିବେ ଯେ ବହୁତ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ହେଇଯାଉଛି, ତେଣୁ ଏତେ ଆଉ ତେଲ ଘିଅ କାଜୁ କିସମିସ୍ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରି ରୋଷେଇ କଲେ ଚଳିବନି ! କ'ଣ ଭାବିବ ନୁଆ ବୋହୂଟା ? କହିବ କି – କେମିତିଆ ଦରିଦ୍ରୀଆ ଘରକୁ ବାପା ମା' ମୋତେ ପଠେଇ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି !!

ମାତ୍ର ପରିସ୍ଥିତି ଯାହା ହେଲାଣି, ସହ୍ୟ ବି ତ କରିହେଉନାହିଁ । ଆଜି ଯଦି ନକହିବେ, ତେବେ ଅବସ୍ଥା ଆହୁରି ଅସମ୍ଭାଳ ହେଇଯିବ ଦିନକୁ ଦିନ । ଯୋଉଦିନ ବି କହିବେ, ପରିସ୍ଥିତି ଏମିତି ହିଁ ହେବ । ତା'ହେଲେ ଆଜି କାହିଁକି ନୁହେଁ ? ମନକୁ ବହୁତ ପ୍ରକାରେ ବୁଝେଇଲେ .. ଏକତ ସେକତ କରି ବହୁତ ଚିନ୍ତା କଲେ । ଶେଷକୁ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ନେଲେ ଯେ କହିବେ ତ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ, ତେବେ କଥାଟାକୁ ଏମିତି ବାଗରେ କହିବେ ଯେ ତାକୁ ଯେମିତି ବାଧୁବନି । ମାନେ ସାପ ମାରିବେ ତ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ... ତେବେ ବାଡ଼ି ନଭାଙ୍ଗିକି !

ସକାଳୁ ସକାଳୁ ରୋଷେଇଘରେ ଶାଶୁଙ୍କୁ ଚିତ୍କାମସ୍ ହୋଇ ଠିଆ ହେଇଥିବାର ଦେଖି, ବୋହୂ ପ୍ରଥମେ ଟିକିଏ ଶଙ୍କିଗଲା । ବୋଧହୁଏ ଭାବୁଥିବ – ଏ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଲଲାକାଟା ମୋର ହେଇଗଲା ପରେ ଶାଶୁ ପୁଣି କାହିଁକି ଆସି ପାଦ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ଏଠି ! ମନେ ମନେ ସାମାନ୍ୟ ଅସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟ ବି ହେଇଯାଇଥିବ, ସେଥିରେ ସନ୍ଦେହ ନାହିଁ । ତେବେ ପ୍ରକାଶ ନକରି ଠିଆ ହୋଇ ରହିଗଲା ।



ବୋହୂର ଏବେ ମନେ ପଡୁଥିଲା ତା'ର ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀମାନେ କହୁଥିବା ଗୋଟେ କଥା – ରୋଷେଇ ଏପରି ଏକ କଳା, ଯୋଉଠି ବଡ଼ମାନେ, ବିଶେଷ କରି ଶାଶୁଘରର ଲୋକମାନେ ହସ୍ତକ୍ଷେପ କଲେ, ସେ କଳାର ଆଦୌ ବିକାଶ ହେଇପାରେ ନାହିଁ । ଆଜି ବୋଧେ ସେମିତି କିଛି ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ରଖି ଶାଶୁ ଆସି ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ରୋଷେଇଘରକୁ । ମାନେ ନିଜ ଅଙ୍କୁଶ ଚଳେଇବା ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ହିଁ ସକାଳୁ ସକାଳୁ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ମାତ୍ର ସେମିତି ହେଲେ, ସେ ଆଦୌ ରୋଷେଇ କରିପାରିବ ନାହିଁ ବୋଲି ସ୍ପଷ୍ଟ ଭାବରେ କହିଦେବ । ଯିଏ ଯାହା ଭାବୁ ପକ୍ଷେ, ହେଲେ ଯୋଉ କଳାକୁ ଏତେ କଷ୍ଟରେ ସେ ଆୟତ କରିଛି, ତାକୁ ନିଜ ହିସାବରେ କରିକି ହିଁ ସେ ତା'ର ମଜା ଉଠେଇବ । ତେଣୁ ବିଶେଷ କିଛି ଉପଦେଶ ଦେବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିବେ ଯଦି, ତେବେ ସେ ରୋଷେଇଘର ଛାଡ଼ି ଚାଲିଯିବ ପକ୍ଷେ .. ହେଲେ ଲାଙ୍ଗ ପଡ଼ିବ ନାହିଁ କି, ତାଙ୍କ ହିସାବରେ ରୋଷେଇ କରି ନିଜ କଳାର ବିଶେଷତାକୁ ମାରିଦେବ ନାହିଁ ।

ମନେ ମନେ ଚାଲିଥିବା ତା'ର ସମସ୍ତ କଳ୍ପନା ଜନ୍ମନା ଉପରେ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣକ୍ଷେପ ପକେଇ ଅତି ସ୍ନେହରେ ଶାଶୁ ତାକୁ କହିଲେ, “ବୋହୂ, ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଭାରି ଖୁସି ଯେ ତୋ' ହାତରେ ସତରେ ମା' ଅନ୍ନପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣା ଅଛନ୍ତି । ତୋରି ଲାଗି ଆମେ ଏତେ କିମ୍ବଦନ୍ତୀ ଖାଦ୍ୟର ସ୍ବାଦ ଜାଣିପାରିଲୁ, ଖାଇବାର ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ ପାଇଲୁ । ହେଲେ କଥା କ'ଣ କି, ଏତେ ଗରିଷ୍ଠ ଭୋଜନ କରିବାର ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ତ ଆମର ଜମାରୁ ନଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ଦୁଇଦିନ ହେବ ମୋ ପେଟଟା କେମିତି ମୋଡ଼ି ମୋଡ଼ି ହେଉଛି । ତୋ' ଶ୍ୱଶୁରଙ୍କର ଅବସ୍ଥା ବି ପ୍ରାୟ ସେହି ରକମର । ତେଣୁ ମୁଁ କ'ଣ କହୁଥିଲି କି ...”

ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ କଣ୍ଠରେ ଏତେ ବେଶି କୋମଳତା ଥିବାର ଦେଖି ବୋହୂର ମନ ପୁରା ଭିଜି ଭିଜିଗଲା । ନିଜକୁ ଧୂଙ୍କାରୀ ଉଠିଲା ଯେ ମିଛୁଟାରେ ଅଯଥା କଥା ଭାବି ସେ ଆତଙ୍କିତ ହୋଇପଡ଼ିବା ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ କିଛି କଠିନ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ନେଇଯିବାକୁ ମନ ସ୍ଥିର କରୁଥିଲା । ଶାଶୁ ତ ତା' ରୋଷେଇକୁ ନେଇ କିଛି ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା କରିବାକୁ ଆସିନାହାନ୍ତି, ବରଂ ଆସିଛନ୍ତି ନିଜ ପେଟ ବିଷୟରେ କିଛି କହିବାକୁ । ଖାଲି ସେତିକି ନୁହେଁ, ତା'ର ରୋଷେଇ ଯେ ବାସ୍ତବରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ମନକୁ ମୋହିପାରିଛି, ସେକଥା ଦର୍ଶାଉଛନ୍ତି ।

ସେ କିଛି କହିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ପୁଣି ଶାଶୁ କହିଲେ, “ଯାହାହେଉ ରୋଷେଇରେ ତୋର ଏତେ ଆଗ୍ରହ, ମତେ ଖୁବ୍ ଖୁସି କରିଦେଇଛି । ହେଲେ ମୋର ଅନୁରୋଧ ଆଜି ଖାଲି ସାଧା ଭାତ, ଡାଲି, ସନ୍ତୁଳା, ଶାଗ, ଆଳୁ ଭରତା ଟିକିଏ ରାନ୍ଧେ ।”

ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ପାଟିରୁ କଥାଟି ବାହାରିଲା ମାତ୍ର ଚମକି ପଡ଼ିଲା ବୋହୂ । ତା'ର ଏ ଚମକିବା ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ଆଖିରୁ ବାଦ୍ ଗଲା ନାହିଁ । ବୋହୂ କ'ଣ ଭାବିବ ବୋଲି ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ କହି ପକେଇଲେ, “ସତ କହୁଛି, ଆମେ ତୋ' ରୋଷେଇରେ ଖୁବ୍ ଟୁପ୍ତ । ହେଲେ ସତ କହିବାକୁ ଗଲେ ରୋଜ୍ ରୋଜ୍ ଏପରି ମହାରାଜାୟ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଖାଇବାର ସାମର୍ଥ୍ୟ ଆମର ନାହିଁ କି ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କୁ ବସି ଖୁଆଇବାର ତାକତ ବି ନାହିଁ । ତେଣୁ ଏବେ ଠାରୁ ଘରେ ସାଧାରଣ ଖାଇବା ହିଁ ବନେଇବୁ ।”

ବୋହୂ ମୁହଁରେ ଆତଙ୍କ ପୁଟିଉଠିଲା । ଥ ଥ ମ ମ ହେଇ କହିଲା, “ହେଲେ କୁକିଙ୍ଗ୍ କ୍ଲାସ୍ ରେ ମତେ ଏଗୁଡ଼ା ତ କେବେ ଶିଖା ହେଇନାହିଁ ! ସେସବୁ କେବେ ମୁଁ ରାନ୍ଧିନି କି କେମିତି ରନ୍ଧାହୁଏ ଶିଖିନି । ଖାଲି ଭାତ ଡାଲି ରାନ୍ଧିବାକୁ କ'ଣ ମୁଁ ଏତେ କଷ୍ଟ କରି କୁକିଙ୍ଗ୍ କ୍ଲାସ୍ ଜଏନ୍ କରିଥିଲି ! ସେସବୁ ତ ଯିଏ ନାହିଁ ସିଏ ରାନ୍ଧିପାରିବ । ମୁଁ କାହିଁକି ମୋର ଅଯଥା ସମୟ ନଷ୍ଟ କରିବି ଏଠି । ମତେ ତ କେବଳ ଏମିତି ହିଁ ରୋଷେଇ ହିଁ ଆସେ । ଆଉ ସେସବୁ ଖାଇବାକୁ ହେଲେ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ତ କରିବାକୁ ହିଁ ପଡ଼ିବ !” କହିଦେଇ ବୋହୂ ଯଥାଶୀଘ୍ର ଚୁଲି ମୁଣ୍ଡକୁ ପଲେଇଲା ସକାଳ ପାଇଁ କିଛି ବିଶେଷ ଜଳଖିଆର ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧ କରିବା ପାଇଁ । ଆଉ ହତବାକ୍ ହୋଇ ମହାପାତ୍ର ବାବୁଙ୍କ ବୋଉ ସେଇଠି ଠିଆ ହେଇ ହେଇ ଭାବୁଥିଲେ, ସାନପୁଅ ବାହାଘର ପାଇଁ ଝିଅ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଗଲେ ତା'ର ରୂପ ଗୁଣ ପକ୍ଷେ ନଦେଖିବେ, ହେଲେ ଆଗ ପଚାରିବେ କାହାଠୁ ରୋଷେଇ ଶିଖିଛି ସେ —ମା' ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ନା କୋଉ କୁକିଙ୍ଗ୍ କ୍ଲାସ୍ ରୁ !

(ଓସା ସ୍ମରଣିକାର ନିୟମିତ ଗାନ୍ଧିଜୀ ଶାନ୍ତିଲତା ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କର ସାନ ଭଉଣୀ, ଆଧୁନିକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଜଗତର ଆଗଧାଡ଼ିର ଗାନ୍ଧିଜୀ କମଳା ଶତପଥୀ ନଭି, ମୁମ୍ବାଇରେ ବାସ କରନ୍ତି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଜଗତକୁ ଗନ୍ଧ, ଉପନ୍ୟାସ, କବିତା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ନିରନ୍ତର ଭଜନୋତ୍ସବ ଅବଦାନ ପାଇଁ ସେ ବହୁବାର ସମ୍ମାନିତ । ୨୫ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି ମୁମ୍ବାଇ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମହିଳା ସଂସଦର ବାର୍ଷିକ ମୁଖପତ୍ରର ସଂପାଦନା କରି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ସାଂପ୍ରତିକ ସମସ୍ୟାକୁ ନେଇ ତାଙ୍କର ଅନେକ ଜନପ୍ରିୟ ଗପ ଭିତରୁ ଗପଟିଏ ଓସା ପାଠକ/ପାଠିକୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସମୟ ସୀମା ଭିତରେ ପଠେଇଥିବାରୁ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।) (ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଲତା ମିଶ୍ର)



ସହସ୍ର ସମ୍ପର୍କର ଢେଉ

ସତ୍ୟ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

ମାସାନ୍ତ୍ୟସେଷରାଜ୍ୟର ଛୋଟ ସହର ଡାଲୁନ୍ ରୁ, ପେଟ୍ଟିଲୁନିଆ ରାଜ୍ୟର ହୋମେଷ୍ଟେଡ୍ ସହର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ପ୍ରାୟ ଚାରିଶହ ଅଠସରୀ ମାଇଲର ଦୂରତାକୁ ମୁଁ ଆଠଘଣ୍ଟାରୁ କମ ସମୟରେ ପୂରା କରି ଯେତେବେଳେ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ଅଫିସ ସାମ୍ନାରେ ମୋ ଟର୍ଯୋଟା କାମ୍ପିକୁ ପାର୍କ କଲି, ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ବନ୍ଦ ହେବାକୁ ମାତ୍ର ଦୁଇମିନିଟ ବାକି ଥିଲା । ଏଇ ଆଠଘଣ୍ଟା ଡ୍ରାଇଭ ର ରାସ୍ତା କଟ ବିଶ୍ରାମ ସ୍ଥଳରେ ମୁଁ ମାତ୍ର ଦୁଇଥର ରହିଥିଲି, ପାଞ୍ଚ ପାଞ୍ଚ ମିନିଟ ପାଇଁ । ଆଉ ଦୁଇଥର ଷ୍ଟାରବକ୍ସ କଫି ପାଇଁ, ଆଉ ପାଞ୍ଚ ପାଞ୍ଚ ମିନିଟ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ଯଦିଓ ପ୍ରଚୁର ଭୋକରେ ମୁଁ ଆଉଟ୍ରୁପାଉଟ୍ ହେଲିଣି କିନ୍ତୁ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତେ ବିଳମ୍ବ ନକରି ଏକ ନିଃଶାସରେ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ଅଫିସ ଭିତରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲି ।

“ହେଲୋ, ମୁଁ ଅରୁଣ ମି..”, ଏତିକି କହୁକହୁ, ଅଫିସ ବାୟିଝ୍ରେ ଥିବା ଆଫ୍ରିକୀୟ ଆମେରିକୀୟ ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳା ଜଣକ ତାଙ୍କ କମ୍ପ୍ୟୁଟର ପରଦାରୁ ମୁହଁ ନ ହଟାଇ ପାଖରେ ରଖାଯାଇଥିବା କ୍ଲିପ୍‌ବୋର୍ଡକୁ ମୋ ଆଡକୁ ବଢେଇଦେଇ କହିଲେ, “ଏଇ ଫର୍ମରେ ଯେଉଁ ଯାଗା ମାନଙ୍କରେ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ନାଁ ଛପା ହୋଇଛି, ତା’ରି ଉପରେ ଦସ୍ତଖତ କରିଦିଅନ୍ତୁ ଏବଂ ଏ ରହିଲା ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଚାବି, ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ବାଗତ କରିବାପାଇଁ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣରୂପେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ।”

ସତେ ଯେମିତି କମ୍ପ୍ୟୁଟର ପରଦାରେ ମୋର ଗତିବିଧି ଉପରେ ନଜର ରଖୁଥିଲେ ସେ ।

ମୁଁ ଦସ୍ତଖତ କରି ଫର୍ମକୁ ଫେରାଇ ଦେଲାବେଳକୁ ସେ ଅଫିସ ବନ୍ଦ କରିବାପାଇଁ ଛିଡା ହୋଇ ସାରିଥିଲେ । ମୋ ମନଭିତରୁ କିଛି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଟେକୁଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପଚାରିବାପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ସଙ୍କୋଚ ବୋଧକଲି । ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ଚାବି ଧରି ମୁଁ ମୋ କାର ପାଖକୁ ଆସିଲି ଏବଂ ଦେଖିଲି ଯେ ସେ ମଧ୍ୟ ମୋ ପଛେ ପଛେ ବାହାରିଗଲେ ।

ମୁଁ ଦସ୍ତଖତ କରି ଫର୍ମକୁ ଫେରାଇ ଦେଲାବେଳକୁ ସେ ଅଫିସ ବନ୍ଦ କରିବାପାଇଁ ଛିଡା ହୋଇ ସାରିଥିଲେ । ମୋ ମନଭିତରୁ କିଛି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଟେକୁଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପଚାରିବାପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ସଙ୍କୋଚ ବୋଧକଲି । ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ଚାବି ଧରି ମୁଁ ମୋ କାର ପାଖକୁ ଆସିଲି ଏବଂ ଦେଖିଲି ଯେ ସେ ମଧ୍ୟ ମୋ ପଛେ ପଛେ ବାହାରିଗଲେ ।

ମୁଁ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟକୁ ଆସି ତାଲା ଖୋଲିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟାକଲି । ଅନେକଥର ଏପଟ ସେପଟ କରିବା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ମଧ୍ୟ ତାଲା ଖୋଲିଲାନି । ସେଇ ସମୟରେ ଏକ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ଦମ୍ପତି ବାହାରୁ ଆସିଲେ ଓ ମୋ ସାମ୍ନା ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ଖୋଲି ଭିତରକୁ ଗଲେ । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ବୟସ ନିଶ୍ଚିତ ଭାବେ ଅଣୀ ଉପରେ ହେବ । ବୃଦ୍ଧା ଜଣକ ହୁଇଲ୍ ଟେୟାରରେ ବସିଆଆନ୍ତି ଓ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ହୁଇଲ୍ ଟେୟାର ହ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡେଲକୁ ପଛରୁ ଧରି ବଡ଼ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରର ସହ ତାଙ୍କୁ ନେଉଥାଆନ୍ତି ।

ମୋତେ ଲାଗିଲା, ସେ ମୋ ଆଡକୁ ଧ୍ୟାନ ନଦେଇ ଭିତରକୁ ଗଲେ । ପ୍ରାୟ ପାଞ୍ଚ ମିନିଟ ପରେ ପୁଣି ବାହାରକୁ ଆସିଲେ ସେ ହୁଏତ ତାଙ୍କ ନଜର ମୋ ଉପରେ ପଡିଥିଲା ଏବଂ ସେ ନିଶ୍ଚିତ ଭାବେ ବୁଝିପାରିଥିଲେ ଯେ ମୁଁ ତାଲା ଖୋଲିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ବେଶ୍ ସମୟ ଲଗେଇଲିଣି, ତଥାପି ତାଲା ଖୋଲୁନି ।

ସେ ମୋ ନିକଟକୁ ଆସିଲେ ଏବଂ କହିଲେ, “ହେଲୋ, କଣ ତାଲା ଖୋଲିବାରେ ଅସୁବିଧା ହେଉଛି କି?”

ମୁଁ କହିଲି, “ସାର୍, ପ୍ରାୟ କୋଡିଏ ମିନିଟ ହେଲା ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଛି, ବୋଧହୁଏ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ଅଫିସ ଭୁଲ ଚାବି ଦେଇଦେଇଛି, କିନ୍ତୁ ଅଫିସ ବନ୍ଦ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି, ଏବେ କଣ କରିବି କିଛି ବୁଝିପାରୁନି ।”

“ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହୁଅନି, ଚାବି ଦେଖାଅ,” ସେ ଆତ୍ମବିଶ୍ବାସର ସହିତ କହିଲେ । ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କ ହାତକୁ ଚାବି ବଢେଇଦେଲି । ସେ ଚାବିକୁ ତାଲା ଭିତରେ ପୁରେଇଲେ ଏବଂ ଥରକରେ ଖୋଲିଦେଲେ ।

“ଏଥିରେ ଛୋଟିଆ କୌଶଳ ଅଛି, ହାଲକା ପଛକୁ ଠେଲି ଡାହାଣକୁ ମୋଡିବାକୁ ହେବ”, କହି ମୋତେ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ କରିଆରେ ବୁଝାଇ ଦେଲେ କୋଉଠି ମୁଁ ଭୁଲ କରୁଥିଲି । ତାପରେ ତାଙ୍କ ସାମ୍ନାରେ ମୋତେ ଥରେ କରି ଦେଖାଇବାକୁ କହିଲେ । ମୁଁ ସେଥିରେ ଭରଣ ହେଲି ।



“ଅଭିଜ୍ଞତା ବନ୍ଧୁ, ଅଭିଜ୍ଞତା ! କିଛିତ ମୂଲ୍ୟ ଅଛି ଅଭିଜ୍ଞତାର ! ” ଟିକେ ଉଚ୍ଛ୍ୱସରେ କହିଲେ ସେ ମୁଁ ମଧ୍ୟ ସ୍ମିତହସ୍ୟ ଦେଇ ତାଙ୍କ କଥାକୁ ସମର୍ଥନ ଜଣାଇଲି । ସଂକ୍ଷେପ ଐତିହାସିକ ବାର୍ତ୍ତାଳାପ ପରେ ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କୁ “ଗୁଡ଼ନାଇଟ୍” କହି ଭିତରକୁ ଗଲି ଓ ସେ ମଧ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟକୁ ଫେରିଗଲେ ।

ପରଦିନ ସକାଳ ନଅଟାରେ ମୋ ଡୋର ବେଲ୍ ବାଜିଲା । ମୁଁ ତା’ର ଦଶ ମିନିଟ୍ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଉଠିଆଏ । ରବିବାର, ତେଣୁ ଅଫିସ ଛୁଟି । ପୁରା ଦିନ ବାହାରକୁ ଯିବାର କୌଣସି ଯୋଜନା ନଥାଏ । ସାଥରେ ଆଣିଥିବା ଲଗେଜକୁ ଖୋଲି ଠିକ ଯାଗାରେ ରଖାରଖି କରିବା ହିଁ ଆଜିର କାମ ଭାବି ମାଇକ୍ରୋଝେଡ୍ରେ ତା ରଖୁଥାଏ । କବାଟ ଖୋଲି ଦେଖିଲି ଯେ ସେଇ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ଭଦ୍ରବ୍ୟକ୍ତି, ମିଷ୍ଟର ସ୍ଲିପ୍ ଛିଡା ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି ।

“ମୁଁ ଭିତରକୁ ଆସିପାରେକି ?” ସେ ପଚାରିଲେ

ମୁଁ କିଛି କହିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସେ ଭିତରକୁ ପଶିଆସିଲେ ଏବଂ ସୋଫା ଉପରେ ବସିଲେ ।

“ମୁଁ ଭାରତୀୟ ତା ଚିଆରି କରୁଛି, ଆପଣ ପିଇବାକୁ ଚାହଁବେ ?” ମୁଁ ଧୀର ସ୍ୱରରେ ପଚାରିଲି ।

“ଓଃ, ଆଇ ଉଡ୍ ଲଭ୍ ଟୁ ଡ୍ରିଙ୍କ୍ ଇଣ୍ଡିଆନ୍ ଟି ଆଣ୍ଡ୍ ପ୍ୟାଙ୍କ୍ ୟୁ ସୋ ମଚ୍ ଫର୍ ଅଫରିଜ୍ ” ସେ ହସିହସି କହିଲେ ।

ତାଙ୍କ ହାତକୁ ତା କପ୍ ବଢେଇ ଦେଇ ମୁଁ ସୋଫା ଉପରେ ବସି ପଡିଲି ଏବଂ ପଚାରିଲି, “କେବେଠୁ ଏଇ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟରେ ଅଛନ୍ତି?”

“ଏଇ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟରେ ମୋର ଦଶ ବର୍ଷ ହୋଇଗଲା । ବହୁତ ଭଲ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ । ଅକ୍ରେଡିଟିଆନ୍ସ ମାନଙ୍କର ଯତ୍ନ ଠିକରେ ନିଅନ୍ତି । ଚବିଶ ଘଣ୍ଟା କଣ୍ଟ୍ରୋଲ୍ ସପୋର୍ଟ, ରାତି ଅଧରେ ଡାକିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଘଣ୍ଟାକ ଭିତରେ କେହି ନା କେହି ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଯିବ ।” କହିଲେ ସେ ।

ମୁଁ ଆମ୍ବୁପ୍ରିୟ ଦୀର୍ଘଶ୍ୱାସ ନେଇ ମନେମନେ ଭାବିଲି, “ଯାହାହେଉ, ଇଣ୍ଡିଆନ୍ ଅନୁକମ୍ପାରୁ ମୋତେ ଠିକ୍ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ମିଳିଯାଇଛି । ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ ଭଲରେ କଟିବ ।”

ସେ ପୁଣି କହିଲେ, “ମୋର ଜନ୍ମ ଏଇ ସହରରେ । ମୋ ଜେଜେବାପା ଜର୍ମାନୀରୁ ଆସିଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ଏହି ସହରରେ ଥିବା ଷ୍ଟିଲ୍ କାରଖାନାରେ ଶ୍ରମିକ ରୂପେ କାମ କରୁଥିଲେ । ମୋ ଜେଜେମାଙ୍କ ପରିବାର ଆୟରଲାଣ୍ଡରୁ ଆସିଥିଲେ । ମୋ ବାପା ମଧ୍ୟ ସେଇ ଷ୍ଟିଲ୍ ମିଲରେ କାମ କଲେ । ସେ ଜଣେ ଶ୍ରମିକନେତା ଥିଲେ । ଥରେ ମିଲ୍ ମାଲିକ ସ୍କଟଲାଣ୍ଡରେ ସପରିବାର ଛୁଟି କଟାଉଥିବା ସମୟରେ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱରେ ଥିବା ମ୍ୟାନେଜର ଶ୍ରମିକମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଅସଦାଚରଣ କଲେ । ବିନା ନୋଟିସ୍ରେ କିଛି ଶ୍ରମିକଙ୍କୁ ଛଟେଇ କରିବା ସହ ଶ୍ରମିକଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ଘଣ୍ଟା ମଜୁରୀ କମେଇଦିଆଗଲା । ଅନ୍ୟ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅଧିକା ସମୟ କାମ କରିବାକୁ ବାଧ୍ୟ କରାଗଲା । ମୋ ବାପାଙ୍କ ନେତୃତ୍ୱରେ ଶ୍ରମିକମାନେ ଧର୍ମଘଟ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଲେ । ଘରୁ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଲୋକ ଏବଂ ପିଲାମାନେ ମଧ୍ୟ ବାହାରିଆସି ମିଲ୍ ସାମ୍ନାରେ ଧାରଣା ଦେଲେ । ପ୍ରାୟ ତିନି ମାସ ଏପରି ଚାଲିଲା । ଯେତେବେଳେ ତିନିହଜାର ଶ୍ରମିକ କାମ କରିବାକୁ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣରୂପେ ମନା କରିଦେଲେ ମିଲ୍ ମ୍ୟାନେଜମେଣ୍ଟ “ନେସନାଲ ଡିଟେକ୍ଟିଭ୍ ଏଜେନ୍ସି” ନାମକୁ ନିଯୁକ୍ତି ଦେଲେ ଯାହାର କାମ ହେଲା ନୂଆ ଶ୍ରମିକ ଆଣି ମିଲ୍ ଚଲାଉବା । ଶ୍ରମିକମାନେ ଡିଟେକ୍ଟିଭ୍ ଏଜେନ୍ସିକୁ ଅଟକାଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟାକଲେ । ମଧ୍ୟରାତ୍ରିରେ କିଛି ଡିଟେକ୍ଟିଭ୍ ସଦସ୍ୟ ଧର୍ମଘଟକାରୀଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରୁ କିଛି ଜଣଙ୍କୁ ଜବରଦସ୍ତ ଟାଣି ସେଠାରୁ କିଛି ଦୂରକୁ ଘୋଷାରି ନେଲେ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ରକ୍ଷାକରିବାକୁ ଯାଇ ଧାରଣାରେ ବସିଥିବା ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ବି ତାଙ୍କ ପଛେପଛେ ଚାଲିଲେ । ସେଥିରେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଓ ପିଲାମାନେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଥିଲେ । ଦୁଇ ଦଳଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରାତି ଅନ୍ଧାରରେ ଲଢେଇ ହେଲା । ସକାଳେ ଲଢେଇ କମିଲା ପରେ ଦୁଇ ପକ୍ଷରୁ କିଛି ମୃତ ଶରୀର ମିଳିଲା ଯେଉଁଥିରେ ମୋ ବାପାଙ୍କ ମୃତ ଦେହ ମଧ୍ୟ ଥିଲା । ଏଥିରେ ଶ୍ରମିକ ଏକତା ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଗଲା ଓ ସେମାନେ ହାର ମାନିଲେ ।”

“ତାପରେ?” ମୁଁ ଆଗ୍ରହର ସହ ପଚାରିଲି ।

“ମୋତେ ସେତେବେଳେ ମାତ୍ର ଚଉଦ ବର୍ଷ । ଘରର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଏବେ ମୋ ଉପରକୁ ଆପେଆପେ ଆସିଗଲା । ମୁଁ ସ୍କୁଲ ଛାଡି ମିଲ୍ରେ ମଜଦୁରୀ କରିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଲି । ମୋ ବାପାଙ୍କର ଗଭୀର ଇଚ୍ଛା ଥିଲା ଯେ ମୁଁ ହାଇସ୍କୁଲ ପାସ୍ କରି କଲେଜକୁ



ଯାଏ । ମୋ ପରିବାରର ଇତିହାସରେ ସେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ କେହି ହାଜସ୍ତୁଲ ପାସ୍ କରିନଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ବାପାଙ୍କ ଇଚ୍ଛା ପୂରଣ ହୋଇ ପାରିଲା ନାହିଁ ।” ସେ କହିଲେ

ଆଉ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ମା?” ମୁଁ ଆଗ୍ରହ ସହକାରେ ପଚାରିଲି । “ବାପାଙ୍କ ଅକାଳ ବିୟୋଗରେ ମା ଭାଙ୍ଗିପଡ଼ିଲେ । ମୁଁ ପଣ କଲି ଯେ ମାଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ କେବେ ଲୁହ ଆସିବାକୁ ଦେବିନି । ସେ ସମୟରେ ପରିବାରର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମାନେ କାମ କରିବାକୁ ବାହାରକୁ ଯାଉନଥିଲେ । କଠିନରୁ କଠିନ ପରିଶ୍ରମ କରି ମାଙ୍କୁ ସୁଖ ଦେବା ହେଲା ମୋର ବାକି ଜୀବନର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ । ସେ କହିଲେ ।

ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ଵରରେ ମୃଦୁତା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ କଲି । ବୋଧହୁଏ ମାଙ୍କର କଥା ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚାରେ ଆସିବାରୁ ସେ ନିଜଭିତରେ ଆବେଗର ଜୁଆର ଅନୁଭବ କଲେ ।

ତାଙ୍କର ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ଜୀବନ ଜାଣିବାକୁ ମୋର ଆଗ୍ରହ ହେଲା । ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଲି, “ତାପରେ କଣ ହେଲା?”

“ତାପରେ ଆଉ କଣ । ସମୟକ୍ରମେ ବିବାହ ହେଲା । ପୁଅଟିଏ ହେଲା । ବାପାଙ୍କ ଇଚ୍ଛାକୁ ପୂରଣ କରିବାପାଇଁ ପୁଅକୁ କଲେଜ ପଠାଇଲି । ଏବେ ପୁଅ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କରେ ମ୍ୟାନେଜର, ଏଇଠୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଦେଢ଼ ଶହ ମାଇଲ ଦୂରରେ ।” ସେ କହିଲେ ।

ମୁଁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ କଲି ତାଙ୍କ ମୁହଁରେ ଏବେ ପରିତ୍ରପ୍ତିର ଭାବ ।

“ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପତ୍ନୀ...” ମୁଁ ଆଗକୁ ପଚାରୁ ପଚାରୁ ସେ ମୋ କଥା ନସରୁଣୁ କହିଲେ, “ସାରା ଜୀବନ ମୋ ପତ୍ନୀ ମୋର ଏବଂ ମୋ ପରିବାରର ସମସ୍ତ ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ଦୁଲାଭକ୍ଷି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଗଲା କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲା ତାଙ୍କର ତାହାଣ ପାଖ ପାରିଲିସିଏ । ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କର ସବୁ କାମ କରେ । ହୁଇଲ୍ ଟେଲାରରେ ବସେଇ ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ଘଣ୍ଟାଏ ପାର୍କରେ ବୁଲିଏ । ଏଇ ବୟସରେ ଜଣେ ସାଥୀର ମାନସିକ ସହାୟତା ଜୀବନରେ ନିହାତି ଆବଶ୍ୟକ । ଅଳ୍ପ ବୟସରେ ଆମର ବିବାହ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଆମ ବିବାହକୁ ଷାଠିଏ ବର୍ଷ ପୁରିବ ଆଉ କେଇ ମାସରେ ।”

“ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ ସଂଘର୍ଷମୟ ହେଲେବି ମୁଁ ତା ଭିତରେ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ଦେଖିପାରୁଛି, ଆପଣ ଜୀବନ ଉପରେ ବିଜୟ ଲାଭ କରିପାରିଛନ୍ତି ।” ମୁଁ ଆବେଗିକ ସ୍ଵରରେ କହିଲି ।

“ମୋର କୌଣସି ଗ୍ଳାନି ନାହିଁ । ମୁଁ ମୋର ଜୀବନକୁ ନେଇ ଖୁବ୍ ଖୁସି । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତକୁ ମୁଁ ଗଭୀର ଭାବରେ ଜିଇଁ ଛି, ଏକଦମ୍ ନିକଟରୁ ଦେଖୁଛି ।” ସେ କହିଲେ ଏବଂ ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କୁ ମଧ୍ୟାହ୍ନ ଭୋଜନ ଦେବାର ସମୟ ହୋଇଗଲା କହି ଉଠି ଚାଲିଗଲେ ।

ପ୍ରାୟ ଛଅ ମାସ ପରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିକଏଣ୍ଟ ଅପରାହ୍ନରେ କିଏ ଡୋର ବେଲ୍ ମାରିଲା । ମୁଁ ଖୋଲି ଦେଖେ ତ ଜଣେ ଆମେରିକୀୟ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ । ସେ ମୋ ସହିତ କଥା ହେବାକୁ ଚାହିଁଲେ । ମୁଁ ଭିତରକୁ ଡାକିଲି ।

ସେ କହିଲେ, “ସାର୍, ଆପଣଙ୍କ ସାମ୍ନାରେ ଯେଉଁ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ଦମ୍ପତି ରହୁଛନ୍ତି ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କର ପୁଅ ଏଠୁ ଦେଢ଼ଶହ ମାଇଲ ଦୂରରେ ଅନ୍ୟ ଏକ ସହରରେ ମୁଁ ରହେ । ବାପାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଆପଣଙ୍କର ବନ୍ଧୁତାକୁ ନେଇ ବାପା ଅନେକ ସମୟରେ କୁହନ୍ତି । ଆପଣ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଏତେ ସମୟ ଦେଉଛନ୍ତି, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ହୃଦୟରୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦେଉଛି ।”

ମୁଁ କହିଲି, “ନାହିଁ, ଏମିତି ଔପଚାରିକ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁନି । ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବାପା ଜଣେ ସ୍ଵୟଂ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି । ଅନୁକମ୍ପାର ଅବତାର । ସେ ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରେରଣା । ତାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ମୋର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ ମହାର୍ଦ୍ଦ, ତୀର୍ଥଯାତ୍ରାଠୁ କିଛି କମ ନୁହେଁ । ମୁଁ ମଧ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କ ନିକଟରୁ ଅନେକ କିଛି ଶିଖୁଛି । ତା ଛଡା ସମୟ କାଟିବା ପାଇଁ ଯା’ଠୁ ଆଉ ଭଲ ଉପାୟ ଆଉ କଣ ହୋଇପାରେ?” ସେ ପୁଣି କହିଲେ, “ଯେହେତୁ ସେମାନେ ଏଇ ସହରରେ ତାଙ୍କର ସାରା ଜୀବନ ବିତେଇଛନ୍ତି ତାଙ୍କୁ ଯେତେ ଅନୁରୋଧ କଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେ ମୋ ପାଖରେ ଆସି ରହିବାପାଇଁ ରାଜି ହେଉନାହାନ୍ତି ।”

ମୁଁ କହିଲି, “ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବନ୍ଧୁ ବୁଝିପାରୁଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏ ସ୍ଵାଭାବିକ କଥା ।”

ସେ ପୁଣି କହିଲେ, “ଆସନ୍ତା ଶନିବାର ମୋ ବାପା ମା’ଙ୍କର ବିବାହ ବାର୍ଷିକୀ । ମୁଁ ଏଠାରୁ ଅଢେଇ ଘଣ୍ଟା ଦୂରରେ, ଷ୍ଟେସ୍ ଉର୍ଜନିଆରେ “ଷ୍ଟୋନୱାଲ ରିଜର୍ଟ ” ଦୁଇଦିନ ପାଇଁ ଭଡାରେ ନେଉଛି । ଆସନ୍ତା ଝିକଏଣ୍ଟକୁ ଆପଣମାନେ ମୋ ବାପା ମାଙ୍କ



ସହିତ ସେଇଠି ବିତେଇବା ପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ଆମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରୁଛି । ଆପଣ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବନ୍ଧୁମାନଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଆସିବେ ।”

ତାଙ୍କର ବିବାହ ବାର୍ଷିକୀ ଦିନ ମୁଁ ଓ ମୋର ସହକର୍ମୀଙ୍କ ସମେତ ପ୍ରାୟ କୋଡିଏଟି ଦେଶର ନାଗରିକ ମିତ୍ରସମ୍ବ୍ ଏବଂ ମିଷ୍ଟର ସ୍ଲିଥ୍ ବିବାହ ବାର୍ଷିକୀ ପାଳନ କରିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ଷ୍ଟୋନୱାଲ ରିଜର୍ଚ୍ଚରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲୁ । ତାଙ୍କ ପୁଅ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ବିଦେଶୀ ନାଗରିକଙ୍କୁ ଆମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ସ୍ଲିଥ୍ ପରିବାର ସହିତ ଆମେ ପୂରା ଝିକଏଣ୍ଟ୍ ରିଜର୍ଚ୍ଚରେ ରହିଲୁ ।

ତାଙ୍କ ପୁଅ କହିଲେ, “ମୋ ବାପା ମାଙ୍କର ପୃଥ୍ବୀ ଭ୍ରମଣ କରିବାର ପ୍ରବଳ ଇଚ୍ଛା ଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେତେବେଳେ ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ସମ୍ବଳ ନଥିଲା । ମୋର ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ ଯେ ଆମକୁ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କ ଦେଶ, ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ବିଷୟରେ ଅବଗତ କରାନ୍ତୁ ।”

ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦେଶର ସଂସ୍କୃତି, ଐତିହ୍ୟ ଓ ପରମ୍ପରା ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ବିଷୟରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ନିଜନିଜର ବନ୍ଧବ୍ୟ ରଖିଲେ । ଶେଷରେ ମିଷ୍ଟର ସ୍ଲିଥ୍ ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନରେ ବିବାହ ବାର୍ଷିକୀକୁ ଯା’ତୁ ଅଧିକ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭାବେ ପୂର୍ବରୁ କେବେ ପାଳନ କରିନାହାନ୍ତି କହି ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି କୃତଜ୍ଞତା ଜ୍ଞାପନ କଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ ଆତ୍ମବିଭୋରତାର ଔଜ୍ଞାଳ୍ୟ ମୁଁ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ପାଇଲି । ମିଷ୍ଟର ସ୍ଲିଥ୍ ମତେ ବିଶାଳ ସମୁଦ୍ର ପରି ଦେଖାଗଲେ, ମୋତେ ଲାଗିଲା ଯେମିତି ସେ ସମୁଦ୍ର ଭିତରେ ସହସ୍ର ସମ୍ପର୍କର ଢେଉ ଭାସୁଛି ଏବଂ ପ୍ରତିଟି ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣତା ରହିଛି । ସ୍ଲିଥ୍ ପରିବାରର ଏହି ଅନାବିଳ ତ୍ୟାଗକୁ ଉପଲବ୍ଧି କରିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଦେଶରେ ଏ ପ୍ରକାରର ସମ୍ପର୍କ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳିବ ବୋଲି ମୋର କଳ୍ପନାର ବାହାରେ ଥିଲା ।

ରିଜର୍ଚ୍ଚରୁ ବାହାରିବା ସମୟରେ ମୁଁ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ଦମ୍ପତିଙ୍କୁ ମୋ ଗାଡିରେ ଆସିବା ପାଇଁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କଲି ।

ତାଙ୍କ ପୁଅ ମୋ ସହ ହାତ ମିଳେଇ ମିଳେଇ କହିଲେ, “ସାର୍, ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଅନେକ ଅନେକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । କିନ୍ତୁ ବାପା ମା ମୋ ସହିତ ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟରେ ଛାଡି ମୁଁ ସାଙ୍ଗେସାଙ୍ଗେ ମୋ ସହର ଅଭିମୁଖେ ବାହାରିଯିବି । ପୁଣି ଦେଖାହେବ ।”

ନିଜ ସଂପର୍କରେ ଏବଂ ଓସା ସଂପର୍କରେ ଓସା ର ଆଜୀବନ ସଭ୍ୟ ଓ ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାରୁ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତିର ସଂପାଦକ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ସତ୍ୟ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ଯାହା କୁହନ୍ତି ...

“ମଣିଷର ସାମଗ୍ରିକ ବିକାଶ ପାଇଁ ସମାଜର ଅବଦାନ ପ୍ରଚୁର ଏବଂ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ମଣିଷର ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ସମୟରେ ସମାଜକୁ ବିନା ସର୍ତ୍ତରେ କିଛି ଦେବାର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ରହିଛି । ମୁଁ ଏହି ଦର୍ଶନରେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରେ ଏବଂ ଜୀବନ ଯାପନ କରେ । ମୋ ନିଜ ଭାଷା ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି କରାଇବା ବୋଧହୁଏ ସମାଜପାଇଁ ମୋ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱବୋଧର ପୂର୍ବ ନିମନ୍ତେ ସବୁଠୁ ଭଲ ମାଧ୍ୟମ ବୋଲି ମୁଁ ଭାବେ । ତେଣୁ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ମୋ ପାଇଁ ସବୁବେଳେ ସେବା ହୋଇ ରହିଥାଏ ଏବଂ ମୁଁ ସେଥି ନିମନ୍ତେ କିଛି ନା କିଛି କରୁଥାଏ । ଆଗାମୀ ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷ ଭିତରେ ମୋ ଭାଷା ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ନୋବେଲ ପୁରସ୍କାର ଟିଏ ମିଳିବାର ଏପରି ଏକ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ମୁଁ ରାତି ଦିନ ଦେଖୁଥାଏ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ମୋର କିଛି କରିବାର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଦୁଇଟି ଦିଗକୁ ନେଇ ପ୍ରଥମରେ ଆମେରିକାରେ ଥିବା ପ୍ରାୟ ଦଶହଜାର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାରଙ୍କୁ ନିୟମିତ ଭାବରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ପଢିବାପାଇଁ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ସାଧନ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ କରିବା, ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ବିଶ୍ୱ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଅଂଶ ଭାବରେ ପରିଚିତ କରାଇବା ।

ଓସା” ସହିତ ମୋର ସମ୍ପର୍କ ଗଲା କେଇ ବର୍ଷର, ମୋତେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଯାହା ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଦିଆଯାଇଛି, ମୁଁ ନିଃସର୍ତ୍ତ ରେ କରିଛି, ୨୦୧୩-୧୫ ଓସା ତ୍ରୟୋମାସିକ ପତ୍ରିକା ଉତ୍କର୍ଷର ସମ୍ପାଦନା ଦାୟିତ୍ୱରେ, ୨୦୧୪ ଓସା କନଭେନ୍ସନ୍‌ର କନ୍ଭେନର ଭାବେ, ପଚାଶତମ ଓସା କନଭେନ୍ସନ୍‌ର ସ୍ଥାନ ଚୟନ କମିଟିର ସଦସ୍ୟ ଭାବେ, ୨୦୧୫ ଓ ୨୦୧୬ କନଭେନ୍ସନ୍‌ର ଅତିଥି ଚୟନ କମିଟିର ସଦସ୍ୟ ଭାବେ ମୁଁ ମୋରକର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଯଥାସାଧ୍ୟ ପାଳନ କରିଛି ୨୦୧୭-୧୯ ପାଇଁ ମୋତେ ଓ ସାର ଜନ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଦିଆଯାଇଛି । ଅନେକ ସମୟରେ ଲୋକମାନେ ପଚାରନ୍ତି ଯେ ଆମେ ଏହାର ସଦସ୍ୟ ହେଲେ କଣ ଆମର ଲାଭ ହେବ? ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ଆମ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଓସା ଗଠିତ । ଆମ ମାନଙ୍କର ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ଓସାକୁ ପ୍ରଗତିଶୀଳ କରିପାରିବ । ଓସାର ପ୍ରଗତିର ଅର୍ଥ ହେଲା ଏହାର ସଦସ୍ୟ ମାନଙ୍କର ପରିଚୟ ସୁଦୃଢତା, ବିଶ୍ୱଦରବାରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆର ପରିଚୟର ସ୍ୱାତନ୍ତ୍ର୍ୟ ଆଣିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ଓସା ପରି ସଂସ୍ଥାର ଦୃଢ ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ରହିଛି, ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିବିଶେଷ ଏପରି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରିପାରିବନାହିଁ, ତେଣୁ ଏହାର ଲାଭ ସାମାଜିକ, ସମ୍ପ୍ରଦାୟ ବିଶେଷ, ଓସାକୁ ସୁଦୃଢ କରିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ଆମର ନିଃସର୍ତ୍ତ ମନୋବୃତ୍ତି ନେଇ ସେବା କରୁଥିବା ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ଲୋଡା, ଯାହାର ଘୋର ଅଭାବ ମୁଁ ଅନୁଭବ କରିଛି ଏବଂ ତା ସହିତ ପ୍ରଗତିଶୀଳ ଦୂରଦୃଷ୍ଟିସମ୍ପନ୍ନ ନେତୃତ୍ୱ ଲୋଡା ।” E-mail: satyapatnaik11@gmail.com

୭୪୭୪ ଝିଙ୍ଗୁ ମ୍ ଲେନ୍, ଡକିନ୍, ଏହିଓ ୪୩୦୧୭, ଯୁକ୍ତରାଷ୍ଟ୍ର ଆମେରିକା,



ସଂପାଦନାର ଶେଷ କଥା...

“ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ଆଶ୍ରାକରି ସଫଳତା କୁଳ ଆଡ଼େ ଆଗେଇଲି । ମନରେ ଖୁବ୍ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଆସିଲା ଏଥିରେ ମୁଁ ସଫଳତା ପାଇବି । ତଙ୍ଗଟା କୁଳରେ ବୋଧେ ଲାଗିଯିବ । କିନ୍ତୁ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ଗୋଷ୍ଠିଙ୍କର ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି ପାଇଲି ନାହିଁ । ଶେଷରେ ଦେଖିଲି ମୋ ତଙ୍ଗଟା ଫୁଟା । ପ୍ରାଣପଣେ ଗୋଟିଏ ହାତରେ ମଙ୍ଗ ଧରି ଆଉ ହାତରେ ପାଣି କାଢ଼ିଲି । ମନରେ ଆଶା ହୋଇଥିଲା ତଙ୍ଗଟି କୁଳରେ ଲାଗିଯିବ, ଆଉ ଅଳ୍ପ ବାଟ ବାକି, ମନରେ ପାପ ଛୁଇଁଲା । କୁଳରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ତଙ୍ଗ ବୁଡ଼ିବା ଟା ସୁନିଶ୍ଚିତ ବୋଲି ଜାଣି ପାରୁଛି । ଏବେ ପାଣିକଢ଼ା ଛାଡ଼ିଦେଇ ମଙ୍ଗକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଛାଡ଼ିଲି । ଦୁଇ ହାତ ଟେକି ମୋର ଇଚ୍ଛାଦେବ ଓ ମୋର ପ୍ରିୟ ପାଠକ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ନମସ୍କାର ଜଣାଉଛି ।”

ମୋ ଫୁଟାତଙ୍ଗର କାହାଣୀ

ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗତଃ ଫତୁରାନନ୍ଦ

ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି ପାଇବାର ଆଶା ନେଇ ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିନୀ । ଭାବ ସମୁଦ୍ରରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ସ୍ୱତଃ ଝରି ଆସେ ଲିଖନ ହୋଇ । ଲିଖନକୁ ଜୀବନ ଦିଏ ପାଠକର ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି । ପାଠକର ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି ପ୍ରେରଣା ଦିଏ ଲେଖକକୁ ...ଆନ୍ଦୋଳିତ କରେ ଭାବ ସମୁଦ୍ରକୁ...ଜନ୍ମ ନିଏ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ପରେ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ । ପାଠକର ଆଦର, ସମର୍ଥନ ପାଇ ସ୍ୱୀକୃତିର ପଗଡ଼ି ବାନ୍ଧି ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୁଏ ସମାଜରେ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକର ଅସ୍ତିତ୍ୱ । ନିଜ ଅଜାଣତରେ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ଦୀପତିଏ ପାଲଟିଯାଏ ଅନ୍ଧାରରେ ସଜୁଥିବା ଅନେକଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ । ବତୀଘର ହୋଇ ଠିଆହୁଏ ସମାଜ ପାଇଁ, ଆଶାୟୀ ପାଠକଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ । ଭାବର ଦୁନିଆ ବାସ୍ତବ ଦୁନିଆ ଠାରୁ ବିସ୍ତାରିତ ସତ କିନ୍ତୁ ବାସ୍ତବ ଦୁନିଆ ଭାବର ଦୁନିଆର ଭିତ୍ତି ଭୂମି । ସମାଜର କଲ୍ୟାଣ ପାଇଁ ସମାଜ ସହିତ ସଂଗ୍ରାମ କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକକୁ, ନିଜର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ଜୀବନ ପାଲଟିଯାଏ ଯୁଦ୍ଧକ୍ଷେତ୍ର । ପାଠକକୁ, ସମାଜକୁ ଆଲୋକ ଦେଖାଉଥିବା ସାହିତ୍ୟିକର ଜୀବନ, ଦୀପତଳ ଅନ୍ଧାର ପରି ଅନ୍ଧାରରେ ସଜୁଥାଏ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଅଜାଣତରେ । ଆର୍ଥିକ ସୁଛଳତା ନଥିଲେ ନିତିଦିନର ତେଲଲୁଣ ସଂସାର ବିପର୍ଯ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହୁଏ । ଅନେକ ସମୟରେ ସେଇ ସଂଘର୍ଷ ଭିତରେ ହଜିଯାଏ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ । ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ପାଇଁ ସମାଜ ହରାଇ ବସେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବତୀଘର । ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସମାଜର ଦର୍ପଣ । ଏଇ ଦର୍ପଣ କେବଳ ସାଂପ୍ରତିକ ନୁହେଁ, ଏହା ଚିରନ୍ତନ । ଗୌରବର ବିଷୟ... ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଇତିହାସ ଦୁଇ ହଜାର ବର୍ଷରୁ ଅଧିକ ବୋଲି ଭାରତୀୟ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରୀୟ ଭାଷାରେ ଷଷ୍ଠ ସ୍ଥାନର ମାନ୍ୟତା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ମିଳିଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପାଠକର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ବଞ୍ଚେଇ ରଖିବା ଏବଂ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲିଖନକୁ ଉତ୍ସାହିତ କରିବା ।

ପାଠକେ ! ଲେଖକକୁ ପୋଷାହିତ କରନ୍ତୁ, ସମ୍ମାନ ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ । କିଏ ଜାଣେ ...ହୁଏତ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଉତ୍ସାହ କାରଣରୁ ଦିନେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକକୁ ବିଶ୍ୱ ଦରବାର ସମ୍ମାନିତ କରିପାରେ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବହି ଓ ପତ୍ରିକା କିଣନ୍ତୁ । ଲେଖାଟିଏ ମନକୁ ଛୁଇଁଲେ ଲେଖକ/ଲେଖିକାଙ୍କୁ ମନଖୋଲି ଜଣାନ୍ତୁ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗର ପ୍ରତିଟି ଲେଖା ମନ ଛୁଆଁ, ଭାବୋଦ୍ଦିପକ ଏବଂ ଆମ ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଜୀବନର ପ୍ରତିଫଳନ । । ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ ପ୍ରଭୁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପାଠକଙ୍କୁ ସମର୍ପିତ । ଏବେ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ହାତରେ ମଙ୍ଗ । ନମସ୍କାର !



“ତୁମେ ବଂଶୀ ବଜାଉଛ, ହସୁଅଛ, ସବୁରି
ଜାନରେ କ’ଣ କହିଦିଅ !
ଯାହା ପୋଛିଦିଏ ସବୁ ସ୍ମୃତି, ସବୁ ଧୂସର ଅତୀତ!”
ଶ୍ରୀ ରମାକାନ୍ତ ରଥ, ଶ୍ରୀରାଧା



OSA2015 cultural program.

“You can wear masks, but can you mask your love for each other”

Jagannatha Rath,
Plano, Texas



‘କୁଆଁର ପୁନେଇ ଜହ୍ନଗୋ ଫୁଲ ବଉଳ ବେଣୀ
ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ଛନ୍ଦରେ ନାଚିବା ଆଗୋ ଆସ ସଙ୍ଗିନୀ ।’



Michigan OSA 2017 Kumar Purnima Celebrations

“Precious Smiles, Tireless heels”

Tikhnadi Kamalakhya

Lansing, Michigan



ଶାନ୍ତି ସ୍ତୁପ



ଓଁ ଶାନ୍ତିଃ ଶାନ୍ତିଃ ଶାନ୍ତି







Gandhiji in Odisha



Bonda Tribe Ornaments

Pictures collected by Biswajit Puan

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49th OSA Convention Committee

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