

# Journal of the Orissa Society of the Americas



Celebrating Our Heritage and Diversity

ଆମର ଐତିହ୍ୟ ଓ ବୈଚିତ୍ର୍ୟର ମହୋତ୍ସବ !



38th Annual Convention, 2007  
Detroit, Michigan



**Wishing all the best**  
For the success of  
**The 2007 OSA convention**  
**Detroit, Michigan**

**Kalinga Hospital**  
&  
**Hospital Corporation of Orissa**

*Greatly appreciate the support of all  
oriyas, inside or outside the country.  
Kalinga Hospital is one of the premier  
healthcare institutes in Eastern India  
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# Journal of the Orissa Society of the Americas



**JagannathaSwami Nayanapathagami Bhavatu Me!**



ଜଗନ୍ନାଥସ୍ଵାମୀ ନୟନପଥଗାମୀ ଭବତୁ ମେ !

*With Best Wishes from*



*All the Members of OSA, Michigan chapter*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The souvenir committee would like to thank the following individuals / groups for their support and contributions:

- ❖ Dr Ravi Rout , Convener of 38<sup>th</sup> OSA Annual Convention
- ❖ All members of the 38th OSA Annual Convention Organizing Committee
- ❖ Sri Babru Samal and Dr. Nirode Mohanty (editors of previous journals) for their valuable advice and suggestions
- ❖ Mrs. Jayashree Samal for souvenir cover page design
- ❖ Dr Bigyani Das and Sri Hara Padhi for their assistance in collecting contact details of oriya writers in USA/Canada
- ❖ Honorable competition judges:
  - Photo contest: Mr. Babru Bahan Samal
  - Essay Competitions: Dr. Pradyot Pattnaik, Dr. Nirode Mohanty and Sri Binod Bihari Nayak
- ❖ Worldorissa.com for publishing the invitations for journal articles
- ❖ J&M Reproductions, Inc

Sincerely,

2007 OSA Souvenir Publication Team,

Manoj Panda, Swapnalata Mishra (Rath)

Biswajit Puhan, Nageswar Rajanala

Sasadhar Sahoo & Niladri Mohapatra

**Artist's thought on Coverpage design:**

The series of imagery is a presentation of diversity in Oriya culture. The temples of the east coast, the dances of the Western rissa, the palm leaf manuscripts that exhibit and preserves the glorious past, the mudra's of the enchanting Odissi dance, the folk festivals that are so much ingrained in different places, all proclaim and attest that this land of ours is unified by its diverse colorful culture.

Jayashree Samal



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*Dhirendra Kar*

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Upasana Senapati



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, OSA 2005-2007

**D**ear Fellow Oriyas and OSA Members:

It is a pleasure and honor to welcome you all to the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Orissa Society of the Americas. Please join me in commending the organizing team and members of the OSA Michigan Chapter for their hard work and success in assembling a rich and wholesome program for your enjoyment. The enthusiasm and hospitality of the Michigan Chapter shows though their effort to host the convention for the fourth time, having done it previously in 1980, 1988, and 1993.

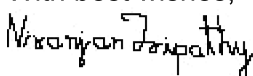
The theme of this year's convention is: Celebrating our Heritage and Diversity. As people of Orissa, we always take great pride in our heritage – be it our spiritualism, dance, music literature or architecture. The need to connect to our heritage is perhaps even more compelling for the Oriya Diaspora, especially those making a home in North America. In the early days, OSA Convention was the primary platform to experience and display our cultural heritage. Over the years, as the Oriya community has matured, expanded and prospered, our second generation now has greater local exposure and access to Orissa heritage than we ever did when we arrived in here! The OSA Convention is a wonderful forum to share and celebrate this achievement.

OSA is the largest organization of people connected to Orissa in this continent, representing over 600 families. However, we are only as strong as our membership. If you are not a member, please join today. I also urge you to get involved in one of the 14 regional OSA Chapters throughout North America.

As my tenure to serve as OSA President comes to an end, I would like to thank all members for giving me this opportunity. I am especially indebted to my Co-office bearers, Vice-president, Mr. Dharendra Kar, Treasurer, Mr. Prakash Patro, and Secretary, Mrs. Bigyani Das for their unwavering support. I also thank the ever-dependable Joint Editors of *Utkarsa*, Mr. Sikhanda Satpathy and Mr. Tapas Sahoo and the many OSA Chapter presidents who have been generous with their help and advice.

I want to close by urging that let this convention also be a time for reflection over our collective effort to build and function within a community. Like many other immigrant communities before us, we have had our share of failures and success. Let us learn from our mistakes and build on our accomplishments, and more importantly, let us exercise restraint and humility, as we continue our journey in this continent.

With best wishes,



Niranjana Tripathy  
Denton, Texas



## REPORT FROM SECRETARY, OSA 2005-2007

**D**ear Fellow Members of The Orissa Society of the Americas (OSA)

I begin with thanking you for affording me the continued opportunity to serve as the Secretary of this remarkable organization. Words are simply inadequate to express the pride and honor I feel being able to serve in this capacity. I never cease to be amazed by the tremendous talent of our members and our children I meet in my local community and during every convention. Together, we comprise an extremely gifted pool of cultural talents. Together we can (and will) make a difference to our cultural identity, our community, and our heritage.

OSA year 2006-2007 has been a very exciting and challenging year for us. We had a very successful convention in 2006 organized by the members of Washington DC Oriya community and we would experience another successful convention in 2007 organized by the members of Michigan chapter. I thank the organizers for their enthusiasm, dedication and dynamism in creating these historical enchanting moments for their community members. Following are some of the highlights of our performance in the year 2006-2007.

**Membership:** This year we had 67 new members (Benefactor: 3, Life Members: 15, Annual members: 49). I thank all the new members for their interest in the organization and for their faith on our organization. I request all the annual members to continue their relationship with OSA by becoming permanent members (Benefactor, Patron or a Life Member) or renewing their annual membership with us. We now have 1158 members in total (including annual members).

**OSA Newsletter Utkarsa:** OSA editors Dr Sikhanda Satpathy and Tapas Ranjan Sahoo had brought out the issues of Utkarsa regularly with information about local chapters as well as about OSA business. We thank for their volunteer time and effort is serving as the editors.

**OSA 2006 Souvenir Distribution:** OSA 2006 souvenir was distributed among all the permanent members. If anybody has not received a copy, please contact Dr Bigyani Das (4525 Rutherford Way, Dayton, MD, 21036; 410-531-7445; [bigyanidas@yahoo.com](mailto:bigyanidas@yahoo.com)).

**OSA Webpage:** OSA webpage is the center piece for all OSA related information. We thank OSA web designer Santanu Das for putting so many hours of voluntary service to keep this webpage updated. Our constitution, by-laws, membership information, newsletter and upcoming events can now be accessible from OSA webpage. Please visit <http://www.orissasociety.org> regularly for all OSA related information.

**OSA's Relationship with Orissa:** OSA's relationship with Orissa is now stronger than before. OSA's vice president Mr Dharendra Kar attended Prabasi Oriya Dibasa organized by NROFC (Non-Resident Oriya Facilitation Center) on December 24, 2006. Many prominent OSA members attended the event. Children of OSA families participated in the cultural presentations.

**Local OSA Chapters:** All of the local chapters of OSA are doing extremely well as regards OSA's mission goals of socio-cultural interaction and inclusion. We thank the chapter representatives for their voluntary service and dedication.



**OSA Election 2007:** We thank OSA 2007 election commissioner Dr Shanti Mishra and her team members for their voluntary service to the community. Managing election has become a very difficult situation and we thank for Dr Mishra's patience and perseverance to do her duty diligently for the sake of her community.

Last, but not least, we thank Michigan chapter representatives, President Snigdha (Krishna) Senapati, Secretary: Akshaya Ray, and Treasurer: Santosh Kar for taking initiative in organizing the convention in Michigan. Our gratitude goes to Ravindra Rout, Convener and his extremely talented and dedicated team members for organizing 38<sup>th</sup> convention.

I look forward to meet my fellow OSA members in Michigan. For anyone who has never before attended the annual convention, I can guarantee you that sharing the experience of convention with fellow Oriyas from across USA and Canada will empower and energize you in your exploration of our rich cultural heritage and remind you (if you need to be reminded) of what drew you to become a part of this organization in the first place.

With Sincere Regards,

Bigyani Das  
Secretary, OSA



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONVENTION

**I**t is my distinct pleasure and honor to welcome our invited guests, distinguished speakers and fellow OSA members to the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual OSA Convention. This year's convention is being held at the magnificent Ford Performing Arts and Community Center (FPAC) and at the elegant Dearborn Hyatt Regency. Both of these facilities are located in the heart of Dearborn, Michigan- hometown of legendary automotive genius, Henry Ford. We are certainly adding an important chapter to our remarkable and enduring journey of 38 years by being here and reflecting back on our achievements. This is an extremely proud moment for all of us. We are celebrating our 38 years of existence, and we certainly did not achieve this milestone by accident, but by virtue of our absolute determination, dedication and commitment to this institution. Let us extend our sincere thanks to those founders and visionaries who had established this wonderful organization 38 years ago.

Like in the past, the annual convention is the time when we celebrate our achievements and connect with the heritage of our native land with fellow Oriyas. However, with increasing globalization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the very identity of our culture is at stake. Therefore, this is an extremely opportune moment to reflect on our roots and bond with our heritage. That is why we have very aptly chosen the theme of this convention "Celebrating our Heritage and Diversity." The entire convention team has worked diligently to reflect this theme in all aspects of the convention. Furthermore, we have invited many distinguished speakers to enlighten you with their knowledge and wisdom of our rich heritage and diversity. The team has done an exceptional job of providing you with the right ambience to catch up with the good old days in an elegant atmosphere. So take advantage of this opportunity to enrich yourselves and carry this memory to cherish for years to come. Let me extend my sincere thanks to the entire convention team for putting together this magnificent event. I say it again: well done friends. I salute you.

In closing, I must say that although we have come from different backgrounds and may have differences in many aspects of our lives, we are certainly bound into a single family through a unique thread of our language and heritage. Let us build the bridge between our native land and the adopted country that brings bright prosperity and joyous harmony to all of us. Let us make the foundation of this bridge stronger with our cultural diversity and rich heritage. Let us support this bridge with pillars of our successes and entrepreneurship. Let us pave the path of this bridge with the mosaic of our diversity and brighten the walkways with the lights of love and harmony. Let that bridge be a meeting place called the OSA convention to meet and celebrate for generation to come.

On behalf of the entire Convention Team I wish you a very happy 38<sup>th</sup> anniversary and hope you have an unforgettable and enjoyable experience here in Michigan.

Ravi Rout

Chairman 38<sup>th</sup> Annual OSA Convention



## MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT, OSA, MICHIGAN CHAPTER

On behalf of OSA-Michigan Chapter, I welcome all the participants and guests to the 38<sup>th</sup> OSA Annual Convention in Detroit from June 29<sup>th</sup> to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. My special thanks go to Dr. Ravi Rout, the convener of our convention for his dynamic leadership and to all the various organizing committee members for their exceptional dedication and endurance in planning and executing the convention events. I would like to extend my thanks to the volunteers for their untiring efforts, without which the convention would not have been a success. In fact, I lost count of our preparatory meetings since October 2006, which not only motivated us but led to the resolution of various issues while building up our confidence for the successful execution of the convention planning. This is for the first time, we have about 35 volunteers who contributed to fund-raising according to their capacities. They also mobilized funds from other sources from within and out of the state.

This year's convention theme: "Celebrating Our Heritage and Diversity" will definitely lead to further our understanding of cultural differences and lessen the gap between the first and second generation Oriyas. I hope this convention inculcates in all of us a sense of our identity and heritage by initiating and cultivating a process for acculturation through various seminar topics, cultural programs, and lectures by eminent persons from Orissa and the USA.

I can't complete my remarks without extending my thanks to our honorable guests, speakers who will enrich us with their wisdom and expertise in different fields. I am thankful to the OSA national executive committee for choosing the Motor City for the venue of the convention and their continued support and meaningful directions in the preparatory phase of the convention. My heartfelt thanks also go to all of our individual and corporate donors.

I hope all of you will enjoy great speeches, thoughtful seminars, fun-filled activities, joyous youth events, enthralling cultural programs, meeting old friends while creating new ones, varieties of tasty food and your overall stay in the beautiful Motor city.

Vande Utkala Janani

Sincerely  
Krishna (Snigdha) Senapati

President, OSA Michigan Chapter.





**NAVEEN PATNAIK**  
CHIEF MINISTER, ORISSA



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D.O. No. 195.....

BHUBANESWAR

Dated 10.5.07.....

### MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the Orissa Society of the Americas is organising its 38<sup>th</sup> annual convention at Dearborn Hyatt Regency, Dearborn Michigan, USA and bringing out a souvenir on the occasion.

I thank you for inviting me to attend the said convention. I would have liked to attend it but I regret that I may not be able to attend the said convention due to other preoccupations.

I wish your convention a great success and hope that your association will continue to support the developmental activities of our State.

  
(NAVEEN PATNAIK)



## MESSAGE FROM CONGRESSMAN SANDER LEVIN

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
CHAIR, SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRADE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

**Sander Levin**  
12<sup>th</sup> District, Michigan

CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE  
COMMISSION ON CHINA  
CHAIR, 110<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

June 29, 2007

Dear Friends:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone attending the Orissa Society of the Americas 38<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention in Dearborn, Michigan.

The Orissa Society of the Americas (OSA) plays a vital role throughout the year in building broad understanding of Oriya ethnicity in the United States and in supporting its membership. This year's theme "Celebrating our Heritage and Diversity" is certain to bring together a distinguished group of individuals from throughout the country to celebrate the many achievements of Indian Americans. I have so enjoyed other opportunities to join with you and I know this Convention will serve as another opportunity to highlight many successful endeavors as well as future plans of OSA.

Please accept my congratulations for the exceptional work you have accomplished during this first 38 years. I would also like to congratulate the Michigan Chapter for hosting such an important event.

Best wishes for an enjoyable convention and continued success.

Sander Levin  
Member of Congress

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## MESSAGE FROM SENATOR CARL LEVIN

CARL LEVIN  
MICHIGAN

### United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2202

June 29, 2007

Orissa Society of the Americas  
9535 Ridge View Drive  
Columbia, MD 21046

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to offer my best wishes to each of you at the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention gala as you focus on the OSA mission and reflect on the theme, "Celebrating our Heritage and Diversity." I am certain you will enjoy the venue for your convention, and I am pleased to join the Michigan Chapter in welcoming you to the Greater Detroit area.

OSA can be proud of its progress in building a strong coalition to promote better understanding of the richness of Oriya culture, and information exchange between Orissa and the United States and Canada. Through effective programs and services, OSA has an important role in strengthening the social and cultural life of the community while adding to the vitality of the economic and career growth of its members. As OSA works to expand its impact and supportive outreach, it affirms its commitment to the well-being of all of the people in this community, and beyond.

Again, best wishes for great convention.

Sincerely,

Carl Levin

CL/ec



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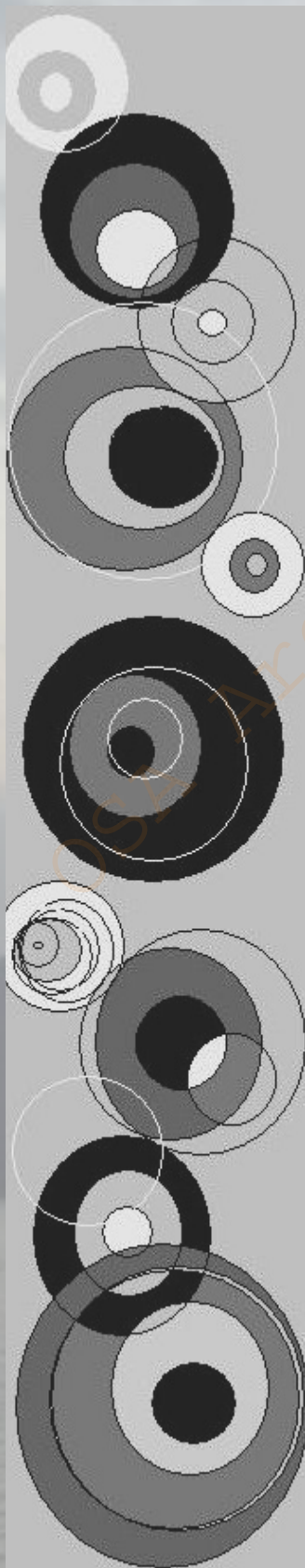
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View of Bay of Bengal near Konark

©Biswajit Puhan



## EDITORIAL

**“If you want your dreams to be, build it slow and surely;  
Small beginnings, greater ends, heartfelt work grows purely.  
If you want to live life free, take your time, go slowly.  
Do few things, but do them well, simple joys are holy.”**

The above immortal lines from a great saint unfold the vistas of opportunities for each one of us to build our dreams in the pathways of life.

Welcome Friends! This is the time of the year to meet, greet, enjoy and think together for new milestones and their transformation to reality. It is a great privilege for me to go through the reflections of beautiful minds. What appealed me the most is the common thread of “oDiAness” which runs firm and hold the pearls of expressions.

This is a great opportunity to celebrate our unity, harmony and to strengthen our common ground of identification i.e. our oDiA origin. Quoting some lines of my poem “Retrospection”:

Days of joy and days of hardship,  
Weave the life of blissful kinship;  
Face the challenge to keep it alive,  
Always in the realm of Time.

In the journey of life we have come this far with grit, determination, persistence and above all with dreams of success. Sands of time bear the footprints of our rich culture, unparalleled valor, magnificent traditions, illumining heritage of art, craft, trade, music, dance, literature, science and what not. Through ups and down we haven't given up our originality even though we are far away from the land of our origin. The hymns of greatness vibrate in us. The rhythm of our spirit beacons us to rise further. The bloodline of our chivalry inspires us at every juncture to proceed to the pinnacle. Hence despite our differences the banner of oDiAness flies high with all glory.

However we have a long way to go. The mantle, which has been carefully nurtured, is to be passed to the able hands. It is the responsibility of each one of us to make that happen by following the path of Truth and Righteousness being securely ensconced in the wings of love and care.

My salutation to the creative spirit of all our contributors! They are the main anchors of this endeavor. My sincere gratitude is due to the souvenir team members (Smt. Swapnalata Mishra-Ratha, Sri Biswajit Puhana, Sri Sasadhara Sahoo and Sri Nagesh Rajnala) who did their best to bring out this wonderful edition. I am grateful to Sri Nirode Mohanty, Sri Pradyot Pattnaik and Sri Binod Nayak as they kindly agreed to be the judges for the Kids' Essay Competition. Hope the readers will enjoy!

Let the dales of our dreams bloom with realizations!

Manoj Panda  
Editor



*OSA Archived 2015-09-09*

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# *.Reminiscences....*



## An Oriya Wedding in America

Saradindu Misra

**W**hen OSA was formed in 1969, there were hardly 100 Oriya families all across America. By 1979 that figure might have been doubled. Now we boast of more than a thousand Oriyas families living in the United States and their numbers are growing every day. The families who settled here in the early part of 1970 have certainly come of age. Most of them are retired now and their children have grown to become adults and are shining in their chosen fields with great success. There is not a single reputable university in the U.S.A. where Oriya students have not set foot. They hold enviable positions as doctors, lawyers, managers, professors, IT specialists and what not, thereby bringing laurels not only to themselves, but also to their families and community.

The one thing we the senior Oriyas missed during our stay abroad were family weddings that took place back home. Many of us were not able to attend such weddings due to distance and tight work schedule in this foreign land, although we always craved for such festive occasions. No more now. For the last decade or so, we see a lot Oriya marriages taking place in this far off country when our children have grown to become adults. We don't miss the wedding ceremonies in Orissa any more. Every year, dozens of Oriya weddings are taking place in this country with the same pump and glamour that was once possible only back home.

Although most Oriya marriages are one-day affairs, but in the recent past, marriages are held more elaborately, covering three to four days. Examples of such events were one when Sanjiv, son of Saroj and Suniti Behera of San Jose got married to Milli, daughter of Kali and Jyotsna Misra of Saskatoon in August of 2001. The other one is the wedding of Simi, daughter of Birendra and Navanita Patnaik of New Jersey to Mohit Dewan of Minnesota. Both the weddings lasted for several days with *Mangana (Mehendi)* on one day, followed by the actual marriage ceremony on the next day. These events were attended by a large number of Oriya families from all over the United States, including relatives from India.

These days, Oriya marriages are taking place by dozens in America. Last year, my wife and I had the privilege of attending eight such functions, each one of them as memorable as the other. We got to meet a lot of friends those who came from far off places whom we had not met in years. The occasions were festive and the spirits were high. I will showcase one such wedding, which took place in 2006.

In August of 2006, Anjan (we call him Bapi), eldest son of Shanti and Uma Mishra of Newburg, NY got married to Sonal, daughter of Sumitra and Jugal Malpani of Rutland, VT. Shanti told us months in advance to set aside the days, proceeding and following the date of the wedding. Most of us in the tri-state area knew Bapi since he was born. Unlike some of the other Oriya boys and girls born in America, Bapi was never shy to interact with older Oriya



community and had a close relationship with other Oriya families. As a young boy, he felt quite comfortable in the company of the friends of his parents, striking a conversation with the elders from school to American politics, whenever possible.

Shanti and Uma chartered a luxury bus to transport the groom's party (*Barajatri*) from their home in Newburgh to Killington, VT where the ceremony was to take place. Some of us decided to take the bus, leaving the driving to the bus driver. Those of us who took the bus trip, arrived at the house of Shanti and Uma in Newburgh on Thursday evening, August 17, and were accommodated in local hotels for the night. In the morning of Friday, August 18, after breakfast, first the groom left the house amidst the sound of conch and *Hulahuli*, followed by the *Barajatri* that boarded the bus. Around 11 AM, the bus left Newburgh bound for Killington. Some fifty passengers were on board. The trip was for four hours, covering about 210 miles. The fun started right after the bus left Newburgh. Some of us watched Hindi movies being played in the bus video. Some others engaged in an *Antakshari* competition, while others decided to take a nap in the cozy bus. Dr. Prabhu, a close family friend of the Mishras from Newburgh was in-charge of looking after the passengers, together with Ramaballava (younger brother of Uma), and Dr. Nanakram Agarwal, another close friend of Uma. We called them wardens of the bus. The wardens made sure that we had plenty of snacks and soft drinks. However, their most important function was to make sure that the headcount in the bus was correct; each time there was a disembarking from and subsequent embarking to the bus. There always seemed some confusion over the headcounts as the wardens invariably missed their own count and the headcount had to start all over again! Around 1.30 PM, the bus arrived near Albany at a rest area for lunch which the Mishra family brought from Newburgh. After lunch, the *Barajatri*s boarded the bus and the headcount started again. With the "all clear" sign from the wardens to the bus driver, the bus proceeded towards Killington.

We reached the hotel in Killington around 4 PM and met with a lot of other friends those who elected to drive or fly directly to venue. Let me talk a little about Killington. It is one of the most famous ski resorts of Vermont with spectacular snow-packed trails that gets extremely busy with vacationers during the winter months. Finding a place in the area is next to impossible unless arrangements were made several months in advance. In the summer, the resort is equally beautiful and picturesque. The Killington Grand Resort and Hotel is by far the biggest property in the area where arrangements were made for all of us to stay for the wedding. It is a huge hotel just on the foot of the Killington Mountains with a perennial creek flowing on the base, offering the most magnificent views. After we lodged in our respective rooms, the guests assembled in one of the public rooms where the bride's father, Mr. Jugal Malpani, greeted us and ushered us for snacks, and the festivities began thereafter. Snacks over, we went into our respective rooms for changing to more formal attire. In the evening, we reassembled again in one of the big halls of the hotel, which was packed with guests from both the groom's side as well as from the bride's side. So many Oriya families! They not only came from the surrounding areas, but from far off places, such as, Canada, California, Arkansas, Michigan, etc. The gathering was no less than an OSA Convention! We saw a lot of families that we did not see for years. People started greeting each other and soon got lost in all kinds of conversation. After an hour or so, the musical event started which the bride's side organized. They performed all kinds of dances, filmy as well as traditional. There were singing too. The entire crowd in the hall started dancing to the tunes along with the performers. As usual, there





was speech making from both the sides. The program continued for about two hours after which everyone was ushered to another hall for a sumptuous vegetarian dinner. By the time the dinner was over, the exhausted guests retired to their rooms to get some sleep and be ready for the next day wedding.

The next morning, Saturday, August 19, after breakfast in the hotel, the guests got ready for the wedding ceremony, which was supposed to start around 1 PM. Lunch was served before the ceremony after which the groom's party assembled at the other side of a little bridge that connected the creek and the hotel. The loudspeaker was blaring popular Hindi tunes, such as, *Baharon Phool Barsao*, *Ghar Aya Mera Paradesi*. Amidst all the noise, fanfare and dancing to the filmy tunes, the groom's procession (*Barajatri*) slowly proceeded over the bridge to the other side where the bride's party was ready to receive the *Barajatri* and the groom. Bapi was dressed in regal attire with the exception of his crown (*Mukuta*) on his head, which Shanti and Uma forgot to bring from their house. Bapi looked no less than a prince, ready to conquer the hearts of the bride and her family. After some preliminary rituals, all of us entered the big hall where a beautifully decorated *Mandap* was created for the ceremony. A Hindu priest from Boston performed the ceremony with rigid conformity to the Hindu traditions and rituals. The hall was packed with invitees who were dressed impeccably, specially the ladies who dazzled with their gold and diamond ornaments, and expensive brocades. It was a feast for the eyes of the beholder! The ceremony lasted for an hour or so, after which the guests were treated to a cocktail party and finally to the big dinner. The day was very hectic, full of fun and activities. When finally everything was over, it was way past midnight and the tired guests returned to their hotel rooms for a few hours of shut-eye.

The next morning was the return trip to Newburgh. During the breakfast, the people who came on their own transport or flew started bidding good buy to each other. The newly married couple left for Newburgh in their stretch limo. We then boarded the bus for our return trip. Just before the bus started, the mother and the maternal uncle of the bride entered the bus, and with folded hands, begged for forgiveness in case there were any lapses in their treatment of the *Barajatri* for the two days we stayed under their care. This was a rare gesture true of the best Indian traditions that touched all of us.

We arrived in the afternoon in Newburgh. During the bus trip, Sambit, younger brother of Bapi traveled with us in the bus. The fact that we were served vegetarian food throughout our stay in Killington as the Malpanis are strict vegetarians, and the Oriyas are great lovers of fish and meat; my wife, Lata, jokingly told Sambit to make sure that he chooses a girl as his life partner whose family would be non-vegetarian. Sambit thought for a while and then replied that he would give serious consideration to this proposal! However, as if they had read our minds, the Mishras had made elaborate arrangements for snacks upon our arrival at their house that included, besides other dishes, meat, chicken, shrimp, etc. After savoring the tasty snacks, we waited for the newly wed couple to arrive. The Mishra house was beautifully decorated with intricate Odissi designs and colored lights. When the couple arrived, Bapi's parents, and his older sister Devjani, greeted them at the entrance and demanded her *Nanada Putuli* from the bride and allowed them in the house only after she got her present. The couple then entered the house, once again, amidst the sound of conch and *Hulahuli* by the ladies, which created an atmosphere of joy and mirth in the surrounding area. It was great fun to be a part of that





festivity which brought back nostalgic memories of such occasions from back home. Finally, the dinner was served, non-vegetarian of course; and then the guests departed bidding good buy to the newly-weds and the members of the Mishra family. It was an absolute fun-filled three days!

Weddings are by far the best occasions when family members living apart get a chance to be together for a few days along with relatives and friends. Here, in this distant land, they enjoy the festivities even more. Amidst the festivities they get a rare chance to meet their old friends those who live far away. The ladies prepare for the occasion months in advance. They buy new saris and ornaments just for the occasion and present them as vivaciously as possible. The fun and participation in such ceremonies is a source of great rejuvenation, which lasts for several months in future. I am sure that as long as the first generation Oriyas will hold weddings for their children, they will continue to keep this tradition alive. Let's see if the second generation will follow suit!

*Saradindu Misra is a Life Member of OSA and lives with wife Lata in Franklin Park, NJ.*



*©Biswajit Puhan*

*Where there is love there is life.*



## **An Entire Life is made by Living in Moments...**

**Sunanda Holmes**

**A**s a child growing up in a village in Orissa, I really loved mud. I loved the way mud caked my feet as I clambered through my family's fields. I loved its velvety touch in my hands as I made my own little mud bricks to build little mud houses. I ate mud and chased it with seeds to see if I could grow a tree in my stomach. Not even my parents' American shoes (back then, I think American shoes were actually made in America, not in China), which they sent regularly from here could entice me to stop running in the mud with my bare feet. Eventually I grew tired of our "domestic" mud. I wanted to experience the mud from far away places, so I set off to foreign lands - the other side of our village.

In those days, the Dalits were confined to their own neighborhood. We were separated by mere yards, yet theirs was a world apart. They lived along the river, drawing their water from its lazy, silty flow. I knew I wasn't allowed near where they lived, nor drink their water. Yet its pull was magnetic - new mud full of promise.

I set out to the river. Edging closer, I could see the Dalit children - the Panas - ill-clothed and looking ragged. My heart beat faster as I ventured across the line that separated our worlds. To my surprise, I was greeted warmly. The Panas allowed me to indulge in their wondrous, river-born mud. I went home, but came back the next day. And the next. Every afternoon, I went to their river, reveling in their lives, their water, their stories, and most importantly, their mud.

But secrets are hard to keep in an Indian village. My uncles, cousins and Budhima, my grandmother, all knew I was a wanderer in the village. I had left no part of my village unturned. But this time my Budhima discovered my excursions into the Pana sahi and demanded to know why I had been with those untouchable children. My answer? "Because they have the best mud." She soon told my uncle, who beat me like a proper disobedient Indian child should be. But in spite of the punishment, I went back, again and again.

Budhima eventually stopped telling my uncle about my travels, and I stopped getting beatings. Instead, Budhima waited for me outside our house with Tulasi for me to eat to somehow preserve my soul. She sprinkled water on me and muttered some prayers before allowing me in the house with hopes that somehow I would grow out of these wondering disobedient behavior as I got older. But, her quiet acquiescence had a powerful impact on me. Budhima, a highly traditional Indian matriarch, was within her rights to do whatever necessary to keep me confined to our side of the village. Yet she allowed me to create my own path in our village, even if it took me to the Pana sahi.

I've since ventured far past Budhima's threshold down to the Pana sahi, visiting more than 40 countries to seek new people, new cultures, and new experiences. Whether meeting with President Nelson Mandela in South Africa, running a marathon in Rome, or working with the poor and afflicted in Haiti, I feel at home. I can forge connections with people of all different





race, nationality and class without even understanding their language. I understand that we are all connected in this one web of life. Those days of wandering in my village and being with the Panas prepared me well to step beyond man made boundaries based on fears and distrust to connect with the rest of the world.

In August 2006, I visited my village after 27 years. My entire world as a child had grown small in my adult eyes. As I made my way to my Budhima's burial place, I could still see her and hear her forgiving ways in which she taught life's lessons. By some people's account, I remain a wanderer even today although I'm too old to play with even "good" mud. But as I raise my two teenagers, I try to remember that Budhima had trusted me to make some decisions for myself even if they seemed unconventional to her or other reasonable Indians. Like those long-ago trips to the river, my children's journeys may lead to wonderful discoveries about their global village that may be now beyond my imagination.

Sunnda K. Holmes lives in Bethesda, MD. She can be contacted at [sunandaholmes@yahoo.com](mailto:sunandaholmes@yahoo.com)



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*Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well.*





# The Conquest of Heaven

Arun Misra

The current religious and sectarian strife, the world over, points to the fact that each religious group is trying to show its direct connection with the 'Heavens' and to make sure that it stays under their control and is made available peacefully or forcibly to as many people as possible. Any such remark about Islam can be easily construed as 'blasphemy'. When the US media ridiculed Islam's concept of heaven and the availability of virgins there after death, it brings several other concepts to mind. Christianity considers sex as synonymous to 'sin'. Then, wouldn't it be natural to think that there are different Heavens? Is the one in the Islam then promoting sin by Christian standards?

Over 50 years ago, I remember, in remote India, my Brahmin/Hindu father, who was more friendly to Muslims than to his Hindu brethren, was often ridiculed for it. He will often ask, 'whether Muslims go to heaven' since Hindus believed the Muslim-way of life was kind of undeserving to go to heaven and make people laugh.

About 30 years ago, working at a medical school in Illinois, I attended bible study during lunch once a week for several months, encouraged by my supervisor, who was a bright Molecular Biologist and a devout evangelist, where only two of us will generally be present. He was amazed that coming from India and not knowing Jesus personally, how come I was so polite, nice and good. This is not a place to discuss the ignorance of average American towards the affairs of the world, but is definitely one of such examples.

The extreme tolerance (which tends towards meekness and subservience) of Hinduism (the so called Hindus will like to name their calling as *Sanatana Dharma*, the religion or the way of life, that is present since time immemorial and will last forever) can easily attend any religious service at a church, synagogue, mosque, gurdwara or temple believing God is omnipresent and has many forms, since Hindus have several hundred kinds of gods and goddesses of their own.

My supervisor at Illinois will many times ask me if I believed in resurrection of Christ. My apparent disbelief in agreeing to the fact that a person can rise from the dead made him to comment that he was so sorry, for a nice person like me would not go to heaven. This reminds me of a story I heard in India about Gandhi in late 1960s. When Gandhi was fighting the British in India and began his movement in Champaran, Bihar, there was widespread belief that British police/army could not touch/catch Gandhi, as he would fly in the air. This added much to the following of Gandhi, but later the number reduced, when several of his devotees saw him going to the latrine for his morning rites, and realized that Gandhi was like them.

It should also be added here what I heard from an agnostic American friend in St Louis in early eighties, when Attenborough's movie 'Gandhi' received several Oscar awards, that after many, many hundred years, this Gandhi will also walk on water.



Ghalib, the late Persian poet/philosopher who lived in India all his life, almost 400 hundred years ago, has a poem beginning with, '*ham to jante hain jannat ki hakikat lekin...*' (I know the truth about heavens, but it (heaven) is a good idea to keep us engaged). Another revolutionary, Kabir, a Muslim by birth, practicing customs of Hinduism, lived in Banaras (Varanasi/Kashi), one of the holiest places for Hindus. It is also believed by Hindus that if you die in Banaras, you will definitely go to heaven. No wonder elderly Hindus flock to Varanasi to die there eventually and to have a claim on heaven. Kabir, who ridiculed going to mosque/temple for prayers, as gods did not live there in his opinion, left Varanasi in the last days of his life, to die elsewhere (really in Magadha, present day Patna, not considered to be a holy place), to avoid going to heaven.

My agnostic father whom I mentioned above, who enjoyed being friends with Muslims, will also tease Hindus, about several of their four or more headed gods and goddesses, asking which one of the hands these deities might be using for tending to their runny nose. Common Hindus treat their gods as part of their family, and not an abstract concept as philosophers do and can make these amusing remarks.

The discussion of Darwinian evolution and intelligent design or creation is often summed up by prophetic sayings, like 'religion without science is lame, and science with religion is blind' without realizing that this discussion in India happened about 50,000 years ago and was concluded in the following way. That God created the earth and has come upon it (earth) several times, as avatar or incarnation to help mankind in the form of fish, tortoise, boar, half man-half beast, pigmy Vaman, warrior Parashuram, Rama, Krishna, lord Buddha, in nine different forms so far. He will come again as Kalki (the tenth incarnation/avatar), in human form, riding a white horse with sword in his hand, which the New Testament also talks about.

This makes me to postulate that the three wise men, who came from east to celebrate the birth of the child Christ should be retold. Child Jesus, when he was 8/10 years old, like a child Dalai Lama, who is located when the old Dalai Lama dies, as his reincarnation, went to India, especially Kashmir to study the scriptures, and returned as Christ around age 32, to the Middle East, as a social reformer to inculcate spirituality in his fellow human beings with his message of love and service. The saying of lord Krishna, '*Sarva Dharmaan Parityajya, Maamekam Sharanam Braja* (leave everything behind and come into my fold)' in Gita helped Jesus define his motto, 'no one reaches the lord without going through me'. No wonder, why my 75 plus years old mother-in-law in India, who spends several hours in front of Hindu deities everyday, when asked what gift I bring her from USA will ask for a nice picture of Jesus Christ, which she can put in her worship room with other gods/goddesses.

Hindus will have no difficulty accepting Jesus as one of the incarnations of God, but will hesitate to agree that Lord Father is single and has no wife, that women were created from the rib of a man; the earth was created merely 6000 years ago, as well as about the virgin birth. Hindus have their own sets of queer incidents described in scriptures, but ridiculing them is no blasphemy.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa said, "Different religions are different paths to reach the same God". He compared them to vehicles (like bike, car, train, bus, plane etc) for God





realization. But things are not so simple elsewhere, as most of the other great religions of the world forbid worshipping other's gods. These religions also claim only their right on the heavens, and do not believe any other God in ways other than that of theirs. Mahavir and Buddha are revered by Hindus as incarnations of God Vishnu. But Jains and Buddhists, the followers of Mahavir and Buddha, teach their devotees, that these two (Buddha and Mahavir) came from heavens into the wombs of Brahmin women on earth, but since Brahmins were not good enough, the wombs were transferred into women from warrior caste (Kshatriyas), hence both were born as sons of Hindu kings. Both Buddha and Mahavir were contemporary in the state of Bihar in northern India, over 3000 years ago. It is obvious, both Buddha and Mahavir were mad at Hindus, especially Brahmins, as the latter controlled the society then, and were not leading a respectable life style. Hence Buddha and Mahavir succeeded in reforming the Hindu society, and have great influence in India and all over the world. But the story of their birth is kind of far fetched at the least.

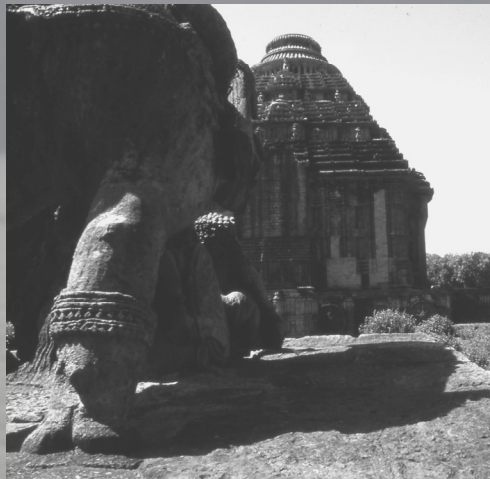
Devotees of Swaminarayana have been successfully building temples all over the world for the last decade or so, as did Prabhupada of Krishna Consciousness in the last 25 years.

Devotees at ISKCON, international society for Krishna consciousness, consider Krishna as supreme and other Hindu gods as kind of inferior. This Christian transformation of Hindu God Krishna into the concept of one Jesus/Christ brought this sect so much popularity in the West. In Swaminarayana temples, it is amusing to see Hindu Gods and Goddesses like *Hanuman*, *Rama* and *Sita* relegated to the position of security guards at temple entrance while Swaminarayana incarnation and their human forms occupy the central position at the sanctum sanctorum.

If the Hindu concept of *Sanatana Dharma*, *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (world as one family) and the immense respect of nature can find a wider and favorable follower in the modern world, we will experience greater tolerance between civilizations, less terrorism, and improvement in global environment leading to more peace and prosperity for mankind.

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*The attempt to combine wisdom and power has only rarely been successful and then only for a short while*





## Where Is My Goddess of Love

Harish Pradhan

**S**he was like a  
Piece of rough stone

I picked her up from  
An unknown village  
Carved out every  
Part of her body  
With love and care  
Chiseled her face, her lips,  
Her bosom and other limbs  
Like a master craftsman

She rose like  
A stunning sculpture  
The Goddess of  
Beauty and love  
To behold and adore  
Alas!

A wrong stroke  
of the chisel  
And she broke into pieces  
Now she lies in a heap of ruins

*Submitted by Dr. Prasanna K. Pati on behalf of Mr. Harish Pradhan, from his book of poetry, "Stone Forest". Mr. Pradhan is the Chief PRO of the NALCO at Bhubaneswar. He authorized Dr. Pati to submit one of his poems to the OSA Souvenir issue, 2007. He can be reached at [NJRPATI@aol.com](mailto:NJRPATI@aol.com)*

*It is in vain to expect our prayers to be heard, if we do not strive as well as pray*

## NANA (FATHER)

Nirupama Mohapatra

**T**he phone rings  
It is the middle of the night!  
It sounds ominous,  
Is my 'Nana' all right?

My mind wonders,  
To a far-away place,  
I see  
Outstretched arms  
And a smiling face.

My heart races,  
My mind runs,  
To reach  
The out-stretched arms  
As fast as I can.

He embraces me  
I closed my eyes,  
I feel my Nana's love  
No need to say goodbye.

The phone stops ringing  
I hear only the dial tone,  
My heart stops racing  
I realize  
My Nana has forever gone.

*Dr. Nirupama Mohapatra is a biology professor in North Carolina. This poem is dedicated to the "heritage theme" of the 2007 Convention and to all first-generation Oriyas who must, sooner or later, receive that inevitable ominous call from home. She lives in Apex, NC.*

*After a certain high level of technical skill is achieved, science and art tend to coalesce in esthetics, plasticity, and form. The greatest scientists are always artists as well.*



## My long lost lover

**Babru Samal**

**O**nce upon a time  
Before the logic overruled the emotion  
Before the knowledge stripped off my  
feelings  
There you were  
Far but very near  
Omnipotent but tender like a new born baby  
Invisible but omnipresent  
You were in my home  
Looking at me  
Smiling at me.

You were my mother,  
My child  
My beautiful lover  
I wrapped you in best clothes  
Put gold jewelries on your neck  
Woke you up in the morning  
Gave you bath and breakfast  
Lunch and dinner  
And put you to sleep  
And wake you up by singing

I never ate any thing  
Before feeding you first.

When I was in pain  
I wept and yelled at you  
Prostrating in front of your image  
I cajoled you  
Fought with you in my language  
Sometimes  
Did not talk to you like an upset lover

Now I am wiser  
Sophisticated, intellectual  
Analytical and advanced.  
You reside in heaven now  
And I am stuck in this mundane world  
Scared of the hell  
Scared of you

I ask for your blessings for my salvation  
I am no more a lover  
Or a son, or a daughter  
But some one down trodden  
Praying and asking for your forgiveness  
For the sin for being a human

*Shri Babru Samal is a regular contributor to OSA journal. He lives in Maryland.*

*An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind*



## Love Lines

Snigdha Mishra

*(to my closest friend of over twenty years, my husband)*

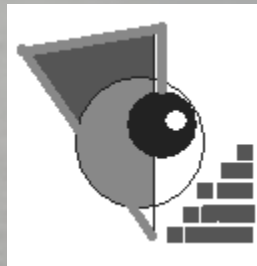
*I cannot begin to tell you*  
how much a part of me you are.  
Two minds, two egos, distinct entities.  
Separate bodies responding to each other.  
Yet sometimes I cannot tell where I end and you begin.

If you were to leave today and never return,  
Which part of me would miss you most?  
Would it be like losing a limb?  
Would it be like going blind?  
Perhaps it would be like losing my voice –  
For without you, I'd never sing again.

When did this happen to us?  
This complex intertwining of our lives,  
This convoluted interdependence?  
Is this what it feels like to relinquish control?  
Where does this road lead, I wonder.  
Or is THIS where we are meant to be?

Pretty words on dainty cards talk endlessly of love.  
But here it is from my point of view.  
It disturbs me to know  
I am so enmeshed in you.  
It terrifies me that we breathe as one –  
I know your end signifies mine.

*Snigdha Mishra resides in Austin, TX, with her husband and two children. A financial analyst, she also teaches and performs Hindustani classical music and writes poetry in her rare moments of spare time.*



*Any intelligent fool can make things bigger and more complex... It takes a touch of genius - and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction.*





## MR. PANIGRAHI WRITES A LETTER

Srikanta Mishra

On their 35<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, Mr. and Mrs. Panigrahi moved in to their new flat in Symphony Towers. It was one of the many ultra-modern flat complexes that had recently come up in the Forest Park area of Bhubaneswar, replacing squat traditional houses owned by ex-ministers and IAS officers. Mr. Panigrahi had spent his entire career moving from state capital to state capital in Central Government service and had finally taken retirement as the Accountant General of Maharashtra. He grew up in Puri, and his wife Manju was from Sambalpur. Bhubaneswar seemed like a reasonably laid-back place to settle down after the hustle and bustle of Mumbai. It also promised close proximity to relatives, old friends and other connections such as fading childhood memories.

Mr. and Mrs. Panigrahi's only child, Prakash, had gone to the US for higher studies after finishing his undergraduate degree at the Indian Statistical Institute. He was now a professor at the University of Pittsburgh, and a very eligible bachelor. With Prakash far away, Mrs. Panigrahi directed her affection to niece Sanjukta, who had recently returned to Bhubaneswar from Saudi Arabia. Her doctor husband, Manoj, had set up a state-of-the-art medical clinic near Biju Patnaik airport, only a few minutes away from Forest Park. Sanjukta soon became a surrogate daughter for Mr. and Mrs. Panigrahi.

Several of their neighbors in Symphony Towers were also recent transplants to Bhubaneswar. Prof. Mohanty had taught at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, and was currently working as Principal of one of the many engineering colleges that had sprouted around Bhubaneswar. He religiously wrote a letter to the Editor of Samaj every day. Dr. Tripathy, who seemed to have an endless supply of Sardarji jokes, had been an ophthalmologist at Lohia Hospital in Delhi and now wanted to try his hand at Ayurvedic medicine. The immaculately dressed and unfailingly polite Mr. Prusty had apparently served in the Indian Army, but was generally vague about where he had lived apart from Pune and what he had done.

The four families slowly grew close to each other, drawn by their common non-resident Oriya background. All of them enjoyed good music, and regularly went as a group to concerts organized by Bhubaneswar Music Circle. Having lived outside Orissa for so long, they also liked traveling around the state and visiting old temples and natural attractions. They took turns hosting lunch get-togethers once a month and spent the afternoon savoring good food and pleasant company. Afterwards, the men would converge to play bridge and to discuss politics and cricket, while the women knitted, exchanged recipes and talked about their children and grand children. Bhubaneswar was growing on them. Each of the families had chosen to forgo the attractions of a large metropolis in favor of the provincial air of Bhubaneswar. Like every other growing city, Bhubaneswar did have its share of pot-hole infested roads, intermittent



Power-cuts, worsening traffic congestion, and deteriorating air quality. But what kept on appealing to them was the general friendliness of the people and a placid pace of life.

When Mr. and Mrs. Panigrahi had comfortably settled down in Bhubaneswar, Prakash came to visit them from the US. Having pampered him for a few weeks, Mrs. Panigrahi gently broached the issue of marriage. Prakash, who seemed to be waiting for this moment, then delivered his *fait accompli*. He had been seeing an Indian girl named Archana, they had decided to marry each other, and he wanted his parents' blessings. Archana's family background seemed quite suitable – they were Tamil Brahmins settled in Gujarat, where her father worked for the ONGC. Mr. and Mrs. Panigrahi talked to Archana over the phone, looked at several smiling photos in both Indian and western garb, and decided they liked her. Prakash and Archana wanted to come to India the following summer to get married. It was decided that the wedding would be held in one of the beach resorts near Puri.

Shortly after Prakash left for the US, Mr. and Mrs. Panigrahi had invited Sanjukta and Manoj for dinner. The conversation was mostly about arrangements for Prakash's wedding, and the relative merits of Tosali Sands and Mayfair Resort as the wedding venue. Mrs. Panigrahi left to bring dessert to the dinner table. Sanjukta got up to remove the dirty plates. Suddenly, there was the noise of a crash followed by a scream from Sanjukta. Mr. Panigrahi and Manoj ran to the kitchen and found Mrs. Panigrahi lying on the floor clutching her chest. She was sweating profusely and seemed to have trouble breathing. Manoj looked at Mr. Panigrahi and mouthed the words "Heart attack". They carried Mrs. Panigrahi to the car and quickly drove to Manoj's clinic. Mrs. Panigrahi was taken to the ICU, where they managed to stabilize her. Manoj ordered a whole battery of diagnostics, which suggested significant arterial blockage. The next day, Mrs. Panigrahi underwent bypass surgery at Kalinga Hospital. Prakash arrived after a few days and spent most of his time in the hospital.

Their neighbors from Symphony Towers took turns providing round-the-clock vigil during Mrs. Panigrahi's week long stay at the hospital. Prakash left after another week as Mrs. Panigrahi was showing signs of returning to normal. Although she would have liked to have him spend a bit more time in Bhubaneswar, Mrs. Panigrahi shed only a few tears as she kissed Prakash good-bye. She was looking forward to his wedding. It was during this period that Sanjukta became an inseparable companion to Mrs. Panigrahi. Manoj also spent a fair amount of his spare time in the Panigrahi household, making sure that Mrs. Panigrahi was following the prescribed regimen of medication, diet control and rest to speed up her recovery.

Mrs. Panigrahi continued to stay bed-ridden. She ate very little, and would get tired after taking just a few steps. One day, Mr. Prusty and his wife had come to visit Mrs. Panigrahi. They chatted about this and that, with Mrs. Prusty doing most of the talking. *We are so glad to see your progress*, Mrs. Prusty said. *Hurry up and get stronger*, Mr. Prusty added, in his brusque army manner. *We are planning to hire a minibus and go visit the tiger resort in Similipal*. Mrs. Panigrahi smiled and said nothing. After their visitors had left, Mrs. Panigrahi held her husband's hand longer than usual as she kept looking at him. She appeared to be choosing her words carefully. *You should make arrangements for Prakash's wedding as soon*





as possible, she finally said, and closed her eyes. *Maybe I'll get to see Similipal in my next life,* she whispered after a few minutes.

Mr. Panigrahi did not sleep well that night. He had thought Mrs. Panigrahi's recovery was progressing well, although he was beginning to get worried about her lack of appetite and strength. Her sudden fatalistic attitude disturbed him immensely. The next day, he discussed his concerns with Manoj. *I was going to talk to you about it,* Manoj confessed. *I think there might be a latent infection lingering from the bypass surgery, he said. We may have to switch her to a stronger antibiotic.*

Prakash's wedding plans were accelerated. He flew to Bhubaneswar with Archana and her parents after a few weeks. They were married in a small Arya Samaj ceremony with only a handful of relatives and close friends in attendance. Her face flushed with excitement, Mrs. Panigrahi watched everything, said little and smiled a lot. Prakash and Archana had to be near her all the time. She seemed to be focused on capturing as many memories as possible.

Prakash and Archana returned to the US two weeks after the wedding. Mrs. Panigrahi insisted on going to the airport to see them off. Manoj arranged for a wheel chair for her. The Air Sahara flight to Delhi was late by two hours. Mrs. Panigrahi kept patting Prakash and Archana on the head. *Take care of each other,* she said again and again. When their flight was finally called, Prakash and Archana touched Mrs. Panigrahi's feet to take leave of her. She hugged both them and would not let go until Mr. Panigrahi gently touched her arm. *They should go now,* he said. Mrs. Panigrahi nodded, and pecked them on the cheek. *May God bless you,* she mumbled, stifling a sob. She stayed at the airport for several hours after Prakash and Archana's flight had left. Tears kept coursing down her cheeks. Every now and then, she would wave to some unknown departing passenger.

They brought Mrs. Panigrahi back to Symphony Towers. She refused her dinner that night and lay still in bed. Mr. Panigrahi sat beside her, gently caressing her back. He just could not find the proper words to express his feelings. So he sat there in silence, wondering how fictional characters have no difficulty articulating their thoughts in such moments. *Get strong, Manju,* he kept repeating in his mind. *You have to get stronger,* he pleaded. Later that night, Mrs. Panigrahi woke in a fit of coughing. Mr. Panigrahi turned on the night stand light to hand her a glass of water. He noticed blood stains on the blanket. As Mrs. Panigrahi kept coughing, the towel she held to her face turned even more reddish. Mr. Panigrahi telephoned Manoj. *Come soon,* he said. *Manju is coughing blood.*

Manoj and Sanjukta arrived within a few minutes with an ambulance from Manoj's clinic. Mrs. Panigrahi was taken to the ICU for a second time. Antibiotics were pumped into her body. She was hooked up to an oxygen machine, an IV drip and various diagnostic tools. Mr. Panigrahi waited helplessly by the foot of her bed. *I am going to telephone Prakash,* Sanjukta said softly. Mr. Panigrahi gave her a blank stare. He had stopped thinking.



Mrs. Panigrahi stayed comatose the entire day. She did not seem to respond to any of the new drugs. Manoj called for another specialist from Kalinga Hospital. They huddled for quite sometime and decided to change her medicine once again. Mr. Panigrahi watched the procession of doctors and drugs helplessly from a chair in one corner of the room. There was nothing he could do. He picked up a magazine one of the nurses had left in the room and found a blank piece of paper as he flipped through the pages. Mr. Panigrahi took it out and started doodling. His unfocused mind did not register that he was actually jotting down his memories.

Hours passed. Sanjukta came back with some food. *I will sit here and keep watch, why don't you sit outside in the waiting room and eat something,* she said. *I could not reach Prakash,* she added. *His flight must not have landed.* Mr. Panigrahi got up and stretched. He put the magazine with the piece of paper inside it next to Mrs. Panigrahi's bed. Sanjukta handed him the tiffin carrier she had brought. Mr. Panigrahi stepped outside and went looking for the waiting room. He washed his face, ate a little, drank some tea, and then returned to the ICU.

Manoj was there, looking at the charts and talking to the nurse. Mrs. Panigrahi had woken up and was sitting in her bed. The oxygen mask had come off. She held the piece of paper on which he had been doodling. When she saw him, she appeared to say something to him, but only a gurgling sound came from her lips. Suddenly, her chest heaved and she fell back on her pillow, eyes wide open. A slow trickle of blood pooled on her cheek. Manoj rushed to Mrs. Panigrahi's side and tried to revive her with an injection aimed straight at the heart. In the ensuing commotion, Mr. Panigrahi could only see one thing – the heart rate monitor machine showing a straight line with no blips. His Manju was no more.

Mr. Panigrahi slowly walked to Mrs. Panigrahi's bed, sat down beside her and gently kissed her on the forehead. He took the piece of paper from Mrs. Panigrahi's hand and straightened it out. *Manju is very tired and needs to rest for a while,* he said, looking at Manoj. *I will keep her company and read her a story. Why don't you go, freshen up, eat something and come back. I am not going anywhere.* Manoj wiped his tears and nodded in understanding. He held on to Sanjukta, who was sobbing uncontrollably at the foot of the bed. He glanced at the nurse and led all of them out. Mr. Panigrahi put on his glasses and started reading.

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*Manju, do you remember the day we arrived in Agartala a few weeks after our wedding? It was raining heavily that day. We sat in the veranda of my small Government bungalow, drank tea and talked about our neighbors. As it grew dark, you started humming a Sambalpuri song about some young girl lost in the rain. Then the elderly Talukdar couple from across the street stopped by. "We came over to greet the new bride," Mr. Talukdar said. Mrs. Talukdar held your hands as she welcomed you to Agartala. "So pretty," she kept telling me. You blushed and moved closer to me. I must have had a foolish grin on my face, because Mr. Talukdar promptly slapped me on my shoulder. "Enjoy life, young man," he said, "but take good care of your beautiful new responsibility."*





*Over the years, do you think I paid enough attention to Mr. Talukdar's advice, Manju? When Prakash was born in Patna, I surely wasn't much help after your mother left. I was trying very hard for a quick promotion and worked long hours in the office. No wonder you hated everything about Patna. As Prakash grew up, things became a little easier even as we moved from Patna to Jaipur to Trivandrum to Bhopal. What memories of Bhopal I have! Our house got burgled twice. We were in a big car accident. Prakash went to Allahabad to play in a cricket tournament and broke his leg. Didn't you walk out of the house wearing your Hawaii slippers as we hurried to catch a train to Allahabad?*

*During the next series of postings in Delhi, Hyderabad and Lucknow, our life revolved mostly around Prakash and his school work, quiz competitions and cricket matches. Then he went off to college in Calcutta, making our nest empty in Mumbai. You were never very comfortable in Mumbai. Remember how we started making plans for life after retirement when Prakash decided to go to the States? What was it that you once said, Manju? "My only son is going to settle abroad. That is why I want us to go back to Bhubaneswar, spend more time with relatives and friends, and see more of Orissa." So, I brought you back to Bhubaneswar.*

*Things are beginning to come together for us here, Manju. We have a good group of friends in Symphony Towers. Sanjukta and Manoj are like our daughter and son-in-law. How can you think about leaving all this and going away now, Manju? Who will hum the Sambalpuri song about a young girl lost in the rain when the monsoons arrive? Who will remind me to watch my blood sugar level and eat every two hours? Who will sing "dho re baya" and "aa jahna mamu" when Prakash and Archana have a baby? And who will listen to my poems and gently suggest better Oriya words? Without you, Manju, will there even be any poetry in my life? What will the monsoons feel like? Where will my blood sugar level go?*

*Do you know what we had promised each other during the last step of the saptapadi at our wedding? Everlasting friendship. Togetherness. For ever. As long as we live. That's what we had promised. Today, I am holding you to that promise, Manju. Please don't leave me alone.*

*Srikanta Mishra, an engineer who also dabbles in conversational Sanskrit, lives in Austin, TX. His hobby is to continue learning about Orissa and India so that he can teach his children more about our heritage.*

*Anyone who doesn't take truth seriously in small matters cannot be trusted in large ones either.*



## Meghana's Gift

Sangita Satpathy

The doctors hurried me into the delivery room. Ten weeks before my due date, my daughter was going to be born via emergency c-section. My sister, Soni, prepared to scrub in since my husband, Elliot, was still several blocks away. I wanted to wait for him, but my doctors said the baby wouldn't last that long inside.

Thankfully, she did wait the two or three extra minutes her father needed to make it to the hospital. Like a scene out of some really bad movie, I later found out Elliot got out of the cab and ran the last few avenues to get to the hospital. Just in time, he switched places with Soni as she was headed into the delivery room. It was a huge sigh of relief when he walked in through those doors. My doctor had held my hands as I got the epidural. Now, effortlessly my husband sat down, took my hands, and smiled. I remember whispering, and laughing, and telling him I was headed to Starbucks and the next thing I knew I was on this table being cut open. It is funny how things could change so quickly. Our baby had kicked constantly throughout my pregnancy, thank God. But this morning, I had not felt her move. After some debating with myself, I called Elliot. He thought it was nothing to worry about, but that I would feel better if I talked to my doctor. My doctor told me the same thing—no need to alarm, but come in. After hearing the heartbeat, he had said, I would be more at ease. So I called Soni and told her the situation. She decided to come with me to see the doctor, and then we'd have a leisurely lunch and day of shopping for the little one. But first, I was craving a tall mocha frappichino from Starbucks. Thank goodness Soni coaxed me into going to my appointment first; otherwise, this story may have ended quite differently. As it turned out, I didn't have extra moments to stand in line at Starbucks. Moments after I saw my doctor, I was told to go the hospital. After arriving there, I was told "something" was going to happen today. When they said it, I knew the doctors themselves were unsure of what that something would end up being.

As Elliot and I talked about all this, I started tearing up. I remember not feeling scared, but knowing fear would set in later. I simply didn't have the time to be scared right then. A few moments later, without much fanfare, my doctor told me he was pulling the baby out. And then it happened. I was scared-- scared in a way I never even knew existed until then. I could see it in Elliot's eyes too, and I knew he was thinking the same thing I was thinking: she didn't cry. We couldn't hear our baby girl cry.

I vaguely remember the doctors saying something about there being mucus and lamenting that there wasn't time to give me steroids to develop her lungs. I vaguely remember my OB saying it was alright though. She was small but strong—feisty was the word he used. But none of this was registering. Was I underwater? The anesthesiologist was trying to comfort me. Did something go wrong? Healthy babies cry as they are delivered. I asked Elliot a string of babbled questions, or I babbled the questions in my head; either way, he didn't answer me. He just squeezed my hand so tight, and stared straight ahead over the partition to watch them working on her. My head was pounding.





My first memory of Meghana: when they wheeled her out, and she made everything clear for me again. As they rolled her out the door, she opened her black fierce eyes, so big, so fast, just as she passed us. The nurses had already put her in the incubator and were racing her to the NICU. I wouldn't get to hold my baby today. I wouldn't get to kiss her today. And for more than a week, that moment was the only time we would see her eyes clearly open. But since she had opened them when it was the most crucial for me to know she was alright, strangely, that moment was enough for me. She was early and small, but I knew then that she was going to be alright.

And she was. What followed were seven long weeks in the NICU--she was there for 50 days. She fought the feeding tubes, pulled out her IVs, pulled up off her goggles and stared at her billi lights for hours on end. The nurses marveled at her tenacity. She was a fighter. Perhaps because of this, she was incubated for only a day. Her lungs were developed when they shouldn't have been. All of her organs in fact were in working order. She was incredibly active, and began taking my milk less than a week after she was born. It seemed silly, but I was so proud of her. Was she was fighting the system from day one? Although she made gains everyday, at 30 weeks and three pounds, there were multitudes of gains to be made. So there were days that I thought I would just always come to the hospital to visit her...the end never seemed clearly in sight. We had planned on starting a new life after our baby was born. Elliot and I soon realized it wasn't the way we had planned, but it was a new life never-the-less. So we started our new life as a new family with a new routine. Elliot came every morning and every evening, before and after work. I would sit with her all day, and in the evenings with him. I started to make friends during my long days at the NICU, chatting with the nurses and other parents. I watched as new babies came in with worried parents, long timers left with elated parents, and as a nurse grew from barely noticeably pregnant to definitely expecting. Things didn't seem that bad. Time passed quickly amidst all the people and hoopla of the NICU. It was easy to chat and hold Meghana, and just believe everything would work itself out.

After a few false promises, Meghana was released from the hospital. We literally couldn't believe they were sending her home with us. She was doing well when they released her, but we weren't totally out of the woods. She still had trouble "remembering" to breathe. So she came home on an apnea monitor. We'd become experts on putting the probes on her little chest in just the right positions and hooking them up to the machine. We heard many parents hated the monitor, but we loved it. Day and night, awake or asleep, it told us our baby was breathing. We actually slept peacefully many of those first nights, with Meghana hooked up to the machine and cuddled in my arms. However, because of the monitor and her general condition, our days were filled with multitudes of doctors' appointments, home care nurse visits, consults, and apnea monitor technicians. Some days it was difficult coordinating a friend's visit or a simple meal in the midst of so many appointments.

Yet, with all this being said, I can truthfully say, we were happy. We were incredibly happy, and joyful as we had our little girl at home. And much to our own amazement, we could do this parenting thing! We fed her, and changed her, and bathed her, and kissed her, and she grew and grew. She was a whopping 5+ pounds by now, and I seriously couldn't understand why everyone thought she was so small. She was huge to us! And she was such a good baby. She



made me laugh and smile all the time. She would curl up and sleep in my arms for hours. She would gurgle and kick and move around in her bassinet like she was gliding through space. I would strap her in my sling and take her for walks and go over to friends' homes...she was a content child. Most of all, she loved her baths. And when I'd give her baths in her tiny tub in the kitchen sink, and see her perfect little face, I would know I was absolutely hooked. She looked just like Elliot to me, and he said she looked like me to him. We were giddy; we were so in love with her. Now I knew, this was where all the clichés came from. We would jump through heaven and earth and all the fires in hell for her. Meghana had stolen my heart, and her father's heart; it was clear we'd never be the same, and we didn't want to be.

Not that everyday was rosy. There were the mandatory wake-up calls in the middle of the night. And the big decision to put her on formula after months of pumping because she was lactose intolerant. And then there was the day that would always stick out in my mind as the worst day ever. During Elliot's first business trip since Meghana's birth, the alarm on the monitor went off, indicating she had stopped breathing. I poked her, as I had been taught to do. And when she took a deep breath like she was coming up for air and cried, so did I. I had never let myself go there—to imagine not having her. And in that instant, I was there, and it is somewhere I hope to never have to go again. I was hysterical. I called the doctor and then Soni, or maybe vice versa. She came immediately and we took Meg to the doctor. The doctor checked her out immediately; after some tests, the doctor concluded the monitor needed adjustments to pick up her more shallow breaths. The technician came out the following day and made the appropriate adjustments. It had been a really bad scare, and she was fine.

Soon enough the days where we needed the monitor and all of the specialists were over. Meghana was eating and playing and growing like a normal baby. Elliot's job required him to move to Bermuda; we had postponed the move during the pregnancy, and during Meghana's first few months. Now, at four months, we happily moved and settled into our new and hopefully less eventful life together.

Meghana is one now. We still marvel at her antics daily. Elliot's job is a lot more relaxed than it was in the city; he is thrilled to spend every extra moment he has with her. I am thoroughly enjoying being a stay-at-home mom. After seven wonderful years as an elementary school classroom teacher, it is infinitely more gratifying to see the growth that takes place in my own child each day. I don't know exactly when I'll return to my career. There are still a lot of things I would love to do: go back to teaching, pursue a doctorate, maybe even write a children's book. But none of these things seem quite as compelling right now as playing blocks with Meghana, or watching her bounce as I sing her *Itsy Bitsy Spider* or *Humpty Dumpty*. I'm enjoying her now, I'll have to figure the rest as I go along. Now I know her unexpected, sudden arrival was a gift. Every parent is thankful for their child. But after everything we went through, I think it is just easier for us to be thankful for her every breath. That was her gift to us. She was ten weeks early, yet not a moment too soon.

*The daughter of Panchanan & Sashikala Satpathy, Sangita Satpathy-Lem lives with her husband Elliot and daughter Meghana in Bermuda.*

*Before God we are all equally wise - and equally foolish.*





## Introspection

**Jhinu Chhotaray and Babru Samal**

**T**his moment

A remembrance of the union  
Between a man and a woman  
Twenty five years later  
Appears so sweet,  
So simple,  
So romantic  
Appears as if  
The troubles of the world  
Never touched it.

Twenty five years ago  
Lots of wishes and dreams  
Greeted it with open arms  
Only the couple witness  
The storms it has weathered

On the altar  
The priest united two people  
Of different nature  
And initiated this arduous trip  
Filled with compromise  
And continuous effort to live together

She is the sweetheart  
Simple and innocent  
Full of endless dreams  
Full of forgiveness  
The understanding soft spoken  
Soul mate

She, the emblem of emotion  
He, the statue of reality  
Connected like the two ends a pole  
One's tears and heartaches  
Have no meaning for the other one

The distance between them enlarges  
By the pursuit of wealth  
That reins the mind  
This insatiate desire  
Has no end in sight

She day dreams  
What would have happen?  
If he was some one else

Then the reality sinks in  
The struggle for life goes on  
In spite of the differences  
In spite of the confrontation  
They are inseparable  
Like earth and the sky

The union lives on security,  
Dependency,  
Forgiveness,  
Tolerance,  
And  
Perseverance  
Not on show and tell  
Not on exchange of expensive gifts

This chariot of coupled life moves on  
The path narrows day by day  
The gap between the couple narrows too  
By the long travel together  
By the maturity  
By the experience of living

The life is the witness  
The consciousness is the judge  
The mind is the correction officer  
The time is the court  
It announces the verdict  
It resolves all the problems

Life is still unfulfilled  
It needs time to know one's own mind  
It takes time to know each other  
It takes time to fill the union  
With desire, love and romance

When looked back  
This marriage of twenty five years  
Appears like a drama filled with  
Arguments  
Quarrels  
Anger  
Misunderstanding  
Love  
Affection  
To live and let live  
Alone and together.

---

*Translation of the poem of Jhinu Chhotaray by Babru Samal*

*The fruit of the spirit is love, joy and peace*

## **A Short Life**

**Anuranjita Nayak**

**D**eathly silence prevailed .....

Or was it me, my helplessness seeping out my fatigued brain  
Suffocating all the noise around.

Yes there was the busy unit, buzzing with the alarms  
The play of decibels made by the gadgets attempting to stretch life beyond the limits.  
The world outside was alive with people chatting, rushing to bring, sustain and nourish life.

Behind the screen sobbed a somber heart .....

Moments ago, there was hope, prayers seemed to be answered.

Gradually the family was coming to terms with the unexpected

At home they had begun plans to welcome the newborn.

The crib all ready. Final touches done, the baby's room dressed up in blue of all hues

She dreamt of a naughty toddler and smiled to herself.

He came in rushing to this cruel world defeating every

Effort to stop him .....

He seemed like a champion, did very well,

Till that black ominous hour when her cell phone rang

The voice on the other side was the neonatologist

Who sounded so sparkly and jubilant the other day

But cold and eerie, as he announced the bleed in lungs

She tried to grasp what was told to her

Something wrong with her baby .....

They sounded like loosing the battle "we are doing everything we can"

Won't he live to see the day break?

Yes, he will. Keep faith; after all, he sailed through the trauma of being born.

Hearts pounding, she was wheeled in by her husband to the site

There was a crowd around her little helpless baby

Some familiar faces, some not, some known voices...





She fought nausea and an impending blackout  
Her son still hooked to that vibrating ventilator, shaking frantically trying to infuse life.

Maze of lines, tubes coursing through the tiny body.

He now looked very still, oddly calm, eyes half closed .....

Through teary eyes she looked up at the monitor,

The play of numbers proved life.

The gizmos and chemicals kept the little heart pumping.

She touched the little finger which no longer gripped hers

It was a hard decision to make,

The suffering to the little being was unbearable

Taking a deep breath they decided to let him go,

To set the spirit free.

He looked so peaceful with all those plastics removed

She held the tiny body against her chest for the very first time,

Her dreams melting away in the streams of tears.

The clock showed 8:20 AM, exactly 48 hours from when he had arrived.

*Anuranjita is a Pediatrician, currently a fellow in Pediatric Neurology. She lives in St. Louis, MO with daughter Aarushi and husband Siddhartha.*



©Rishav Puhan

*Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.*



## Death of a Shell Collector

Ghanashyam Mishra

**I**t was a very warm October evening. I was exhausted working the entire day in our yard pruning shrubs and cleaning yard debris. I decided to walk to the beach with a bottle of ice cold water in my hand. It was a short walk to the beach. A very crimson Carolina Sun was about to set behind the Sand Castle on the picturesque Sea Island beach. The noise of the summer vacationers and sweet voices of the little children playing on the beach sand was missing. The crickets have stopped chirping, but thousands of Monarch butterflies are fluttering in and out of the swaying sea oats. I was looking for my friend Joe, who usually comes out to collect sea-shell at this time of the day. I waited for about half hour. There was no sign of my friend. "May be I will go home and call Joe to go for a bite in the Bohiket Marina and watch the ever beautiful sunset over the marsh", I thought.

I walked back home and turned on the TV. The news headline startled me. A bearded old man has been critically injured in a hit and run accident near the Sand Castle, as he was crossing the road from the beach. The man carried no identification other than a plastic bag full of sea shells. He has been taken by ambulance to St. Joseph's Hospital. "No, it could not be", I shouted. I had little doubt that it was my good friend Joe. Calling the Hospital will be just waste of time. I jumped in to my car and raced towards the hospital.

As I was driving, my thoughts were racing back to early 1960s, when I first met Joseph Hughes. It was also a strange coincidence, when I got reunited with him a year ago under unexpected circumstances. It was a warm day like this day in mid-September of last year. I was sweating after a long walk on the beach, and sat down on the board walk. I was watching the panoramic sunset on the beach and was gazing at a huge garland of Pelicans flapping their wings in unison and heading to their nests.

I almost did not notice the semi-bald bearded man sitting across from me and examining his collection of sea-shells. He motioned me to come to his side. Without looking at me he held up an exotic shell." Amigo, I shall prove that there is a Lord, the Great Creator", he said. "Look at this magnificent Sea-biscuit, the lettered Olive, the banded Tulip, and this Giant Atlantic Cockle. It is only the Great Creator, who can create these incredible designs, even at the bottom of the deep ocean". I nodded my head and was surprised at his knowledge of the Atlantic Marine Lives. "How do you know so much about the sea-shells? I asked. "It is a long story', he continued looking across the ocean. "In my childhood days in India, my family used to go for vacation to the Puri Beach in Orissa, along the Bay of Bengal, and year after year, I got fascinated with the enchanting shapes and pattern of sea-shells I collected scattered over white sand bed along the beach". "Wait a minute; did you say Puri, Orissa?" I shouted in excitement. I could not believe, I am talking to some one who has been to my birth place, the place I love and admire, and the place whose memories are etched in my heart for ever. Now, he looked at me, and shouted "Mishra Da, Tumi, Ekhane?" I saw the sparkles in his eyes.





There was no doubt; it was my old friend Joseph Hughes. Joe was my co-worker in Bengal Coal Company, the largest of the British Coal Mining Companies in the 1950s and 1960s. Joe and I worked in the Chinakuri Mine, located about 20 miles from Assansol in the Burdwan District. The mine employed 2000 coal miners. The top managers were British, and the mid-level managers were either Punjabis or Bengalees. Most of the company people thought I was from Bengal, since I spoke the language fluently. We hugged and embraced each other. Both of us had tears in our eyes. It was a miracle reunion after more than four decades. "How is Becky", I asked. Suddenly, tears came rolling down like a monsoon downpour. "The Lord called for Becky, long time ago, Mishra Da. I will tell you some other time." I did not press any more.

It was a very historic day in my life, when I met Joe for the first time. It was July 1, 1961, my first day of work as an engineer trainee at Bengal Coal Company's Chinakuri Mine. I was told by the manager, Mr. Jacob Hughes, to report for the midnight shift. He directed that his nephew Joseph Hughes, the after-noon shift foreman, will give me an on-the-job orientation during the shift change. My duties were to clean up fallen rocks and debris from an underground tunnel that collapsed after a deadly methane gas explosion in 1958. Two hundred coal miners and several supervisors perished in the explosion. Later on, I came to know that Joseph Hughes father Bill Hughes was one of the supervisors, who died in that explosion. My crew consisted of twenty Gorakhpuri laborers and their team leader Bagha Singh. I did not like Bagha Singh, when I met him at the manager's office. With his handlebar mustache, and 300 pounds weight, he towered over my 130 pounds physique. Few minutes before mid night, I descended a 2500 feet mine shaft, and met Joseph for the first time in a dark tunnel to light up my career path of engineering for the next 45 years. Unlike his uncle, Joe's mannerism and mentoring brought me closer to my new friend. Joe helped me in overcoming my low self-esteem, and my fear of Bagha Singh. In the matter of weeks, I was riding on the back of Joe's motor cycle to the Assansol market.

Joe's father and uncle came to India from Ireland to work for the British Bengal Coal Company during the Second World War. None of the brothers were college educated, but obtained coal mine manager's certificates from England. Bengal Coal Company expanded its mining operations in the Burdwan District to supply for the railroads and the thermal power plants. Demand for coal was even more after the war and the early industrial growth of independent India. Joe's father Bill Hughes was promoted as the Deputy Manager of Chinakuri Mine in early 1950s. In those days, the coal company managers lived in luxurious furnished bungalows surrounded by flower gardens. There were servants, cooks, gardeners, and chauffeurs paid for by the company. The Hughes met their first tragedy at the death of Bill Hughes in a dark tunnel in the Chinakuri Mine disaster. "I was just seventeen years old when it happened, Mishra Da", Joe told me once. "But Uncle Jacob was the manager of Victoria Colliery, and my mom and I went to live with our uncle". Joe remembers his life as a child and a teenager was full of good memories. Thanks to the Anglo-Indian community in the Rail Road Colony of Assansol, Joe had many friends and social activities. His family traveled in first class coaches in the Assansol-Puri Express for the family vacation and lived in the luxurious Bengal Nagpur Railway (BNR) Hotel on the exotic Puri beach. Joe fell in love with the unpolluted white sand, the azure blue waters, the murmuring sea pines and the vast array of Cowry and other sea shells. It is there, he confided me once that he met beautiful Becky. "Mishra Da, she was only fifteen, with her curly black hair, dancing eye brows, and intoxicating blue eyes. I felt like in



Heaven, when I found out her father was the station master at Assansol Rail Station, and they live in BNR staff quarters. Becky attended St. Maria's Catholic School, and I was a student of St. Vincent's Boys School in Assansol. I kept in touch with her, and her family. My mom, uncle and aunt, were not very enthusiastic, since Becky Banerjee was Anglo-Indian. Her father was from England, but her mother was from Calcutta. But finally, our love prevailed. Of course you know the rest".

Of course, I knew the love birds. Joe would always talk about his plans for Becky after their wedding. He was just waiting to pass the mine manager's exams. That is where my help was needed.-to coach him for the week long examination conducted in Dhanbad. Joe was an excellent worker, a great team leader, but he lacked concentration in academics. It is our hard work and good luck that both Joe and I, passed the dreaded mine manager's examination in the first attempt. Later that fall, Joe and Becky got married. The young couple celebrated their honey-moon at the Puri beach, their first meeting place. I missed the great event. I was in West Germany working in a coal mine in the Ruhr coal fields. For a couple of years, we maintained correspondence. Then the letters came infrequently, and by late sixties, we completely lost contact. I was in America trying to find a new life for myself.

After our meeting on the beach some four decades later, Joe invited me to his sea-side villa overlooking the Atlantic. His living room was decorated with all kinds of sea shells, and shell arrangements. There are glass vases and baskets filled with sea shells, conch shells and sand dollars. There was a framed black and white photograph of Becky and their daughter Ashley on the fire place mantel and a colored photograph of his second wife Mary on the opposite side.

In one of our meetings, Joe narrated the rest of the tragic events in his life. In the late 1960s, there was turmoil in the Indian Coal Industry. Bolden by the communist rule in West Bengal, the labor force turned violent. The Naxalites used threat, intimidation and sometimes killing to force the mine management to pay higher wages and recruit trouble makers to join the work force. The productivity fell, mines closed. And finally, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi nationalized the coal industry. Even after that the violence continued. On the Christmas Eve of 1969, an unruly mob led by the Naxalites torched General Manager Jacob Hughes bungalow. The police looked as bystanders as the home burnt down. Mr. Hughes family perished. So were Joe's wife Becky, and their five year old daughter Ashley. Joe's life was spared, because he was inside the mine.

"This tragedy turned my life upside down", Joe said glancing at his wife and daughter's photograph. "After that, I left the coal mines and went to Calcutta to work for Mother Teresa's Sister of Charity. I thought, I will get some healing and peace. It is there, in a Calcutta orphanage, I met Mary Bennington. She was from Boston, and was doing missionary work, after her husband died in the Vietnam War. Prior tragedies in our lives bonded us together, and in the summer of 1976, we got married. We lived in Boston, and were traveling the world for Catholic Charities. For a while, I thought I was happy again. But the Lord had his plans. I lost Mary to cancer six months ago. Then I decided to move from the cold New England to a warmer climate. It is Lord's doing again that I moved to the Sea Island and got reunited with you. I hope it is my last move."





Now, I am at the Emergency Room of the St. Joseph Hospital. I approached the desk and enquired about the hit and run victim of Sea Island. She told me that the victim had severe trauma and has undergone surgery. "Mr. Mishra, you say you are a friend, you will do a great service if you can make a positive identification. He did not have any identification, except a bunch of keys, and this chain and locket around his neck. And he was carrying a plastic bag full of sea-shells". I looked at the pedant. It was Becky's picture. I told the nurse that I know Mr. Hughes, his home address in the Sea Island and I can give them his step son's phone number in Boston. She led me to the recovery room. Joe's head was heavily bandaged. He was breathing through a tube. I could not stand the sight. I returned back with tears in my eyes. That night, I called Joe's step son John. He said he will catch the next flight.

Early next morning, I got the dreaded phone call from the hospital. Joe Hughes did not make it. The great fighter who fought tragedies all his life could not survive the final one. Joe's body was cremated after a brief Catholic Funeral Service. John and I, scattered his ashes in a remote section of the beach. That was Joe's last wishes. He wanted to stay among the sea shells marveling about the Lord's creation of exotic aquatic species. There was magic in the air as the magnificent crimson Carolina Sun was going down behind the sand dunes. I wished good-bye to my dear friend, as I wiped tears from my eyes, and headed for home.

*Ghanashyam Mishra is a retired engineer. He graduated from Banaras Hindu University in 1961, and retired in 2005 from the US Department of Energy. He and his wife Dr. Manorama Mishra live in Johns Island, South Carolina.*



*A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.*





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***Blossoming Buds...***





**1<sup>st</sup> Prize Winner in the 2007 Souvenir Photo Competition,**

**©Anya Rath**

## GAZING THE STARS

Akash Ranjan Pattnaik

**H**ave you ever dreamed about sleeping under the open sky and gazing at the stars? A chance I had during my last trip to Orissa. With all excitement we reached Cuttack from Delhi by a train called Rajadhani Express. Many relatives were there in the station to receive us. I was really getting embarrassed when they were pinching my cheeks. And then we drove to our village. It's only about 20 miles from Cuttack but it seemed longer compared to covering similar distance in USA. We had to stop many times on the way. One of them was to eat *CHENAPODA* (cheesecake) in a roadside hotel. After reaching home I settled down with cousins, shared gifts and talked about USA.

All those days were filled with fun. I was excited to play my favorite game cricket with my cousins and some of the village kids. In the evening we did sneak out to the village shop (Ganga dokan) to have snacks (*bara* and *aluchop*) and mouthwatering *AMBASADHA* (dried mango paste). After a tiring day of fun, I laid myself down in the *veranda* on a hand made mat (*sapa*). Speaking of *verandas*, it's the most important part of the house. In the middle of the house this is an open place without roof. There you can sun bathe, relax, play, eat, hang clothes to dry, my *Badama* even cooks there. That's like a multipurpose room.

In India you have all the natural entertainment like climbing trees, playing hide and seek in the backyard, swinging in tree strings, competing in picking mangoes, jumping on haystacks etc. I found taking a bath in the tube-well better than doing the same in a Jacuzzi. It also saves energy and water as the used water is recycled to *Badabapa's* garden. When it rains you can take a shower. What fun!! It was very relaxing to sit in the veranda while enjoying the evening breeze (as if the AC was on) and watching all the stars in the sky, which I hardly get to see here. Only I got a similar feeling in my school field trip to local planetarium this year. My cousins and I counted all the stars and competed to find patterns. Then I remembered my vacation in smoky mountains in Tennessee where the house we stayed had a moon roof in the bedroom and that was known as luxury house. In India the people have an open roof area in almost every house which is not considered as luxurious addition.

That's how my holidays continued and of course came to an end one day. But those stars are printed in my brain as one of the sweetest memories ever....

*Akash is in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at Pittsfield Elementary School, Ann Arbor, Michigan.*

*You must be the change you wish to see in the world.*





## American Indian Students, College, and Culture

Suchismita Pahi

**I**t was a big surprise to hear Hindi words being shouted from one end of the walkway to another. I was so taken aback that I had to find who those people were. Then I saw the cricket match going on right in front of the University of Texas' main tower. The cricket players were yelling as loud as they could possibly do and looked absolutely ecstatic with their cricket bats and balls.

This was my first experience with other American born "Desis" (non-Oriya). University of Texas at Austin has an abundance of brown people. There are Fresh-off-the Boats (FOB) and American-Born-Confused-Desis (ABCD). Parts of the campus seemed like pieces of India.

Going to college was finally finding a place where people actually could know and understand you and your personality. It was the ability to identify with other people because they have to straddle the same "American-Indian" line that is so hard to straddle

The Hindi, the curry, the shared experiences with cousins you don't know and extended family members popping up out of nowhere, the pressure to be a doctor, engineer or just be amazing; the rasgullas, the mango lassi, and the craving for long Hindi movies that have the same plot revised in the ten billionth way. Then there was the irritation at questions we thought were silly, the phone calls we all got around ten o'clock asking if we've studied (while we actually were studying in the quiet study lounges) and all those other small issues that come with the American-Indian ground.

Oh, and the ridiculously crazy parties that the Punjabi and Gujarati organizations throw at least twice a month.

College is a place where both ABCDs and FOBs can mix and mingle and find common ground. Both parties are confused, trying to find a place, and hopefully a set of friends that will keep through all sorts of trials. Both parties also have much to learn from one another. They have so much in common with trying to figure out who they are as a person in both of their cultures that befriending one another is the easiest way to survive social and academic stress and pressure.

I thought people were just silly when they said college would be the best time of my life, but I guess they were right. It is definitely a place where one can explore many different aspects of religion, cultural values, American society, and history. There is no way people can leave without learning at least one thing about their own mind.

I believe that going to college is one of the best things for the American Indian teenager.



It offers a measure of independence and the ability to feel out who you really are. The parents raise the children as best as they can, but after that it is up to the teenager to find people who complement their personalities and try to grow more through their own introspection- or whatever the process is for that teenager.

In the end college actually isn't the place where kids "go wild, drink too much, have sex, do drugs, be immoral". Yes, they might go through some phases, but they won't come back having forgotten everything they've been raised with. Just altering some stuff to fit their American side as well as their Indian side.

College is the place where most American-Indians figure out what "culture" means to them as a new generation with no clear-cut path laid out for them to follow. Exactly like the parent generation- pioneers in their own ways.

*Suchismita Pahi graduated from Kingwood High School in 2006 and currently attends the University of Texas at Austin as a Neurobiology major. She enjoys writing on various subjects including society, culture, politics, and environment. She is active in multiple campus cultural societies and encourages participation to keep culture alive.*



*Storm over Grand Canyon, © Biswajeet Puhari*

*Freedom is not worth having if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes*





## Left alone without you

**Shashwati Das**

You used to be the highlight of my day  
Now you seem too far away.

You were the reason I laughed and  
smiled.  
You were the reason I was an excited  
child.

You were always there when I needed  
you most.  
Now all I want is for you to be close.

I would never want to lose you in  
anyway.  
Because of the wondrous times we had  
everyday.

I always wished that you would never  
leave me alone,  
I do not want to be stuck in a world  
unknown.

I don't know if I could last any longer  
I know I am not getting any stronger.

If I see you just once more,  
I will feel happy,  
Of that I am sure.

***Shashwati Das** is 12 years old and attends Folly  
Quarter Middle School. She will be in 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
this fall. Her hobbies include gymnastics, dance,  
and playing the violin. She is the daughter of  
Naresh and Bigyani Das.*

*Live as if your were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you  
were to live forever*

## The Lotus

**Nayna Rath**

Oh sweet and divine lotus! Please tell me  
how you came to be so lovely.

Oh sweet and powerful lotus! Please tell me  
how you became God's favorite flower.

Oh sweet and mighty lotus! Please tell me  
how something so elegant can grow in a  
swamp.

Oh sweet lotus! Please tell me all your  
secrets,

So I can become as divine, as mighty, and  
as powerful as you are.

***Nayna Tara Rath** lives in Macomb, Michigan. Her  
parents are Nirmal and Swapna Rath. Her sister is  
Anya Rath. She is in fourth grade at Atwood  
Elementary. Her hobbies include reading and writing.  
She also loves to dance, and drawing smiley faces. ☺*

*A crust eaten in peace is better than a banquet  
partaken in anxiety*



## A Wedding Awakening

Ayesha Misra

**"A**ww, mom isn't that sweet?" I asked as we watched a couple get married on the only English channel I could find on TV.

"Sure, for Americans, maybe, but it's too simple. You should see the wedding your uncle will have in a week. That's the whole reason your father and I brought you here for summer vacation," replied my mother.

"Yeah, whatever, the wedding is all everyone's talking about. Can we please talk about something else for a change? Why can't Indians have a normal wedding without so much fuss? If you ask me, I'd really like a topic change. I mean, the wedding is in like 5 days and everyone's already been worrying over it. In American weddings, you have the wedding, then the reception, and it's done. Nice, and simple, you know!"

The room got all quiet and everyone looked at me like I had just said the most terrible thing in the world. Finally, my mom broke the silence by saying, "Wait till you see... how much you will love this wedding. It's kind of hard to explain now, but you will be impressed, just watch."

I shrugged and sat there biting my nails, as there was a very awkward atmosphere in the room after what I had said. You'd think someone had died. My aunts looked at each other and then went on knitting, amazed that I could have said such a terrible thing. I had the sudden urge to roll my eyes, but I stopped myself, in case my mom reprimanded me for doing that too (she says I'm going through a rebelling phase).

A few days later, people came over to the house for a Haldi ceremony, which, my mom told me, was a ceremony where everyone puts Haldi all over the groom. My uncle sat in the middle of the floor and everyone formed a circle around him. If you asked me, I would have been very apprehensive to have people lather icky yellow stuff on me, but my uncle seemed excited and happy. Everyone put Haldi on their hands to put on him. They asked me if I wanted to join, but there was no way I was going to touch any of that stuff. So I stood on the sidelines, just watching. I had to admit though, it looked like great fun by the looks of joy on everyone's faces, and I was about to join in, but changed my mind. That night, as everyone talked about what great fun the ceremony had been, I regretted my decision a little bit. Somehow, my mom saw the look of disappointment on my face as I sat quietly, and told me not to worry, for the next day, there would be fun and games all day long, as that was another tradition of celebration before the wedding. I shrugged and pretended not to care, because that would mean my mom was right. But deep inside, I was very excited, and all night I couldn't sleep because of anticipation for the next day's events.

The next morning, I awoke to the sound of prayer and singing in the Pooja room, accompanied with the blowing of the conch shell. I would have considered this combination of those as a racket back home in California, but today, I couldn't imagine anything more





heartwarming. I got up, brushed my teeth, and walked into the kitchen. The wonderful aroma of *Puri* cooking immediately filled my nose.

After a very tasty breakfast, I helped get the house ready with decorations all day. That night, people from all over the neighborhood and many family members came to play Antakshri (Sangeet). It was a singing game, and that night was the funniest night I ever had in my whole life. Sitting there with all my friends and relatives, it was simply unforgettable. I started forgetting everything I had against Indian marriages and was determined to enjoy the wedding tomorrow to the fullest.

The next day was the wedding. I got dressed and watched my uncle, the groom get ready. It was quite interesting. After a while, the wedding car for the groom came, along with a band and marriage procession. All the way to the marriage hall, we all danced to the music and the band played while my uncle sat proudly in the car. Everyone danced and danced until we reached our destination. At the marriage hall, my uncle and his bride sat around a fire to finally get married.

This was the first time I actually saw the bride. She was very pretty in her wedding dress. It was bright and colorful, much prettier than the plain white gown I was so used to seeing. Finally, my uncle tied the knot with his bride and they were married! And the food! Tables and tables of food, filled with all kinds of meals and sweets imaginable. It was obvious how much work had been put into this wedding, the food and decorations and even the minor details. And it was all done with love. There was a wonderful atmosphere of joy and love in the air, which was much more contagious and nicer than that of the one in American weddings.

When the marriage procession danced back home, this time with the new bride, everyone was exhausted yet very happy. Over the next few days, I enjoyed many happy days with my relatives, and I got to know my new aunt. Unfortunately, it soon became time to return to America. I was tearful, as were my parents, and it was then I realized how much fun I had at the wedding and that I would never give up that memory for anything in the world. American weddings seemed so bland compared to the wedding I just experienced.

After my family was back in California, we got invited to my American neighbor's wedding. At her wedding, I sat on the pews and found myself searching for the same atmosphere of excitement that had been present in my uncle's wedding. Even though this wedding was also very nice with everything in white, representing simplicity, which I also liked, at that moment I wondered if it wouldn't be more fun with a little of the glamour of an Indian wedding. It was then that I realized how wrong I had been before to think Indian weddings were weird. I finally understood what my mom had been trying to explain to me; they were unique and special, and like nothing else.

*Ayesha Misra (Richa) is an 8<sup>th</sup> Grader from Aliso Viejo, California and is the daughter of Reena and Manoj Misra. She is an avid reader and loves dancing to Bollywood songs.*

*As long as you derive inner help and comfort from anything, keep it.*



## Are We Competent to speak Oriya in an Anglophonic society?

Soman Panigrahi

**I** was once watching an episode of the sit-com “That `70’s Show” when one of the characters, who was about to become a father, was rushing to the hospital to be with his newborn child at any cost. The reason for this urgency - to make sure that his child wouldn’t get mixed up with the other babies who don’t speak English. For some, this may seem as a completely ridiculous thought, but instances of this thinking are not uncommon in our society today. With English being the prominent language in North America, many immigrants who come from non-Anglophonic backgrounds are worried that their own children will not be able to ‘fit in’ with the rest of the community if they are taught their mother-tongue, and not English.

Contrary to popular thought, there is virtually no possibility of a conflict arising between learning one’s own language, and learning English. When a child begins his life at daycare/school, he or she will be at no disadvantage with English compared to the other children, who are also starting out their lives. After all, no baby is an English-speaking baby.

Learning a language is a family affair and comes naturally to the development of the human mind. In fact, scientific research states that within their crucial or critical period, a child can acquire any number of languages in their childhood. Thus, one should never be hesitant to teach their child their native language as well as English. This being said, the process of learning a language should never be forceful, for both the parent and child. One scene that comes to my mind is a diffident child trying to recite passages in Oriya, all the while being pressed on by his eager mother. I’m sure that this turns out to be quite tiresome for everyone.

Even though I was born and brought up in Canada, speaking Oriya in our household was always an integral part of our family. It has even come to the point that speaking English at home is actually quite awkward and uncomfortable for me. Even when my father wants me to practice a presentation or speech for school, I subconsciously resort to speaking in Oriya, or sometimes broken English with an Indian accent. I simply cannot bring myself to speak to them in a language that is foreign to both of us, at home.

My sister’s experience with learning languages is in a league of its own. From her birth till the age of two, she was exposed to only Oriya, as that is the language spoken at home. Then she went to an Italian babysitter, who spoke only a few words of English. Two years later, my sister was fluent in Oriya and Italian, but spoke only a few words of English. A number of our family friends frowned upon this, and were worried that my sister would never fit in at school, since she could speak so little English. Furthermore, many believed, and continue to believe, that learning Oriya as well as English would lower ones English comprehension and vocabulary. Just as they were with me, my parents were not concerned about our ability to comprehend English outside of the home, and they had no reason to be. A few months into kindergarten, and my sister could not stop babbling in her newly learnt language – English. She now has one of





the most extensive vocabularies in her class, and is an avid writer of short stories and poems in English.

Both my sister and I speak Oriya at home without a second thought. The current atmosphere is there for a reason. We have many Oriya-speaking family friends, so it is beneficial to be able to communicate with them in a language familiar to both of us. Among the Oriya-speaking youth in our community, we converse in Oriya, although English is familiar to all of us. There are, however, occasional instances where some Oriya parents speak to us in English, but instinctively we reply in Oriya. This is not to say that English is not allowed in the home – there is always that *phulei* or *gelhei* factor which my sister often attains by speaking in English.

After becoming quite fluent in spoken Oriya, the next step was to extend my interests to writing and reading the script. With the help of my parents, grandparents, and a few family friends I learned all the simple characters in the language, and through occasional practice I am able to read Oriya at a moderate pace. This skill has allowed me to participate in and contribute to our community in more ways than one. A few years ago, a number of Oriya's in the Greater Toronto Area put on a production of the *geeti-natya* "Karna-Arjuna", for the Kumar Purnima, which my father was co-directing. Because of my proficiency with sound technology, I was appointed the audio manager, and one of my responsibilities was to cue the pre-recording music tracks seamlessly into the live dialogue of the actors. This required me to follow the script, which, obviously, was hand-written in Oriya. The lines in the play used vocabulary and linguistic structures which are unlike the common ones used at home or day-to-day life - the language was more sophisticated and formally presented. My father had his doubts about me being able to understand the language well enough to follow the dialogue, let alone read his own handwritten script. To make the long story short, the production was effortlessly presented to an audience who honestly could not tell that a track was being played when the actors' songs fit so well into their dialogue. Not only was my Dad proud and thankful of me for this feat, but I was proud of myself for learning Oriya.

Another major benefit of being able to communicate in your mother-tongue is when you go to the mother-land. Visiting family in Orissa is no trouble at all, and it is definitely an enjoyable experience since we know the language. Picking up local colloquial terms is effortless, and it is useful to fit in to the rest of the population where already one is looked upon as an outsider. Outside Orissa, for example in Delhi, being able to speak Oriya works as a wonderful deterrent for sneaky shop-owners who are preying on English speaking foreigners so they can harass them, and perhaps fetch double the price of their goods. However, when not a single word of English comes out of your mouth, and all you really seem to be are tourists from Baleswar, Orissa, you are treated as pretty much an equal.

I also consider myself lucky to be Oriya. It is unquestionably a more straightforward and simple language, linguistically speaking, in comparison to Mandarin, Brazilian Portuguese and most of all English. I have many friends who are struggling to learn the thousands of Chinese characters to be able to write their native language, and others simply do not know what their parents are saying to their family friends and relatives, because all they know is English.



Speaking Oriya is an integral element in being a part of the Oriya community. Not too long ago, I was watching a recording of 'Orissa Day' being celebrated in one of the American

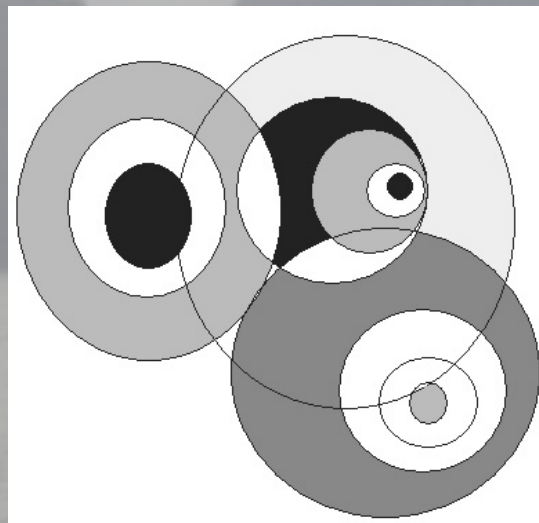
OSA chapters, but I wouldn't have known they were celebrating Oriya culture if my parents hadn't told me what I was watching. I didn't hear a single word of Oriya being spoken – or actually maybe I did, but it was pronounced so poorly that it sounded like English to me.

I am very fond of the Oriya culture, and am proud to be able to recognize and familiarize with the ancient script. For a recent art project on calligraphy and typography design, I brought in a manuscript written in Oriya on palm-leaves, and my art instructor was amazed. She had never seen such a unique and authentic manuscript brought in by one of her students, and she also took it home for her sister, a museum curator.

The point of learning Oriya is to be able to communicate in a new language, which happens to be your mother-tongue. No one is expecting you to study Oriya literature, or become a scholar or academic personality in the subject. Learning Oriya should be something that comes as naturally to you as learning how to eat. You do so from birth, and you continue to do so throughout your life. However, you are at no point in your life expected to become a master chef or win eating contests.

The bottom line is to be proud of being Oriya, and enjoy our heritage. The first step to get in touch with our roots would be to exercise and immortalize the language. It is an attainable goal, and should always been seen as one. For those of you, both parents and children, who are hesitant, try it out, because I am sure you are competent to speak Oriya in an Anglophonic society.

*Soman Panigrahi is a grade 11 student at the University of Toronto Schools. His passion lies in audio and video production. He lives with his parents Gagan and Sabita Panigrahi, and sister Ineka.*



*Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind*





## My Orissa & My USA

Selina Mohanty

I like to go to Orissa with my parents. The things I liked the most is to play with all my cousins in the sand in front of my Dad's house and I liked walking to the temple with my cousin. I like to listen to stories from my Grandma at night. She tells me stories about my Daddy's childhood.

The things I didn't like were the mosquitoes. They were everywhere. That's why I had to put a net around my bed. Some time it is too hot.

One day on my way home from temple with my cousin, I was very scared seeing the motorcycle coming right towards us. When I was going to run out of the way, my shoe slipped out of my foot. I had to run and get it. But it was too late. My cousin knew the person on the motorcycle. He stopped and said he would take us home.

USA is really a nice place. I have been to some of the states. I like to go to Disney land again and again. I like USA because I am born here and I have lots of friends here. I love my Sunday "Bal Bihar" class where I learn my Indian culture and get to see all my Indian friends. I go to school and attend church on Monday with my classmates. I love everything about USA besides Michigan cold weather. I love to play in the snow and make snow man but I hate to bundle up because it is not very comfortable. I always think which one place I really like! It is really difficult for me to decide. I think it will be difficult for me to decide even when I grew up.

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize, 2007 Meghna Memorial Award Winner - Essay Competition Age Group (4-8)**

*Selina is 7 years old. She lives in Flint, Michigan.*

## Ms THOMPSON-MY FAVORITE TEACHER

Aparna Ray

Do you know that Ms Thompson is my third teacher? Do you know why I like her the best? That is because Ms Thompson taught me how to read. She gives me key words to help me out when I make a mistake. When I am stuck on a word, she helps me sound it out. If I still can't get it right, she points at the picture on the page. When I get it right she is very happy with me.

Ms Thompson sits on a chair to read us a book. She shows the pages to us as she reads the words. She reads the book with expression, especially when she comes to an exclamation mark.

I like Ms Thompson's outfits. She wears matching jewelry. Sometimes she has flowers on her shirt. That makes her look pretty.

One time we were learning about the globes and maps. Ms Thompson asked us if we have visited any place other than America. I said that I had been to India when I was a little child. Then Ms Thompson turned the globe all the way around and showed the class where India was. She told us that when it was day time in India it was night in America.

I think Ms Thompson likes our whole class very much. And that includes me too.

*Aparna Ray is 6 years old. She goes to kindergarten in Deep Run Elementary in Elkridge, MD. She is the youngest daughter of Abhijit and Julie A Ray.*

*Problems cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them.*



## My U.S.A, My Orissa

Swagat Tripathy

**I** live in Michigan, USA but my motherland is Orissa, India. Both are amazing states and I have many fond memories.

In Michigan, it's cold most of the time but in Orissa, it gives you a warm welcome as soon as you arrive there. Stepping off the plane, you will see the beautifully carved wheels around the airport. It seems like the airport might just roll away.

I have gone to many temples and sea beaches in the USA but the temples in Orissa such as Puri -- the temple of Lord Jagannath, Konark -- the Sun temple, Dhauli -- a Buddhist temple, beautiful sea beaches are worth-seeing.

I have seen world famous Niagara Falls, Walt Disney World but Nicco Park easily evens it out. It is a small amusement park in Bhubaneswar where I have fun going on the rides with cousins. Compared to zoos in the USA, Nandan Kanan Zoo is cooler. Once a mahout let his baby elephant kiss me with his trunk!

But my most favorite places are my Grandparents' houses in Orissa which I miss a lot in the USA. I have fun sledding, snowboarding, building snowman and snow fighting in US and also have a blast playing cricket, hide-and-peek, and card games with my cousins in Orissa too.

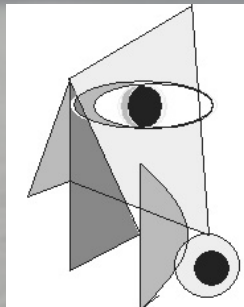
In the USA, I enjoy friend's birthday parties and I also enjoy the wedding ceremony and the thread ceremony in Orissa. All the decorations, music, dancing and food are amazing.

I have also sadly witnessed the death ceremony of my grandfather in Orissa. It was worth experiencing the rituals performed to make his soul peaceful and happy.

I love the cultural celebrations like Saraswati Puja, Ganesh Puja and Kumar Purnima in my birth country USA but the rich culture and architecture, beautiful places of my motherland Orissa are unforgettable.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Prize, Essay Competition Age Group (9-13)**

*Swagat is 11 years old. He lives in Ann Arbor, MI.*



*On every thorn, delightful wisdom grows,  
In every rill a sweet instruction flows.*





# The Sapphire Pendant

Anya Rath

**M**ira was hunkered down by an intricate plot. She listened to the Rajah complaining to the lead maid about the condition of his robe.

“Yes, your Highness. We will see that it is properly cleaned next time.” Ojal’s voice dripped with humbleness. She backed out of the splendid room, her head bowed. As soon as she was out of sight, she caught Mira.

“Ojal Didi, please!”

“Stupid girl. I am always doing the cleaning. The one time I trust you...” Ojal groaned with despair, “Mira, I have raised you from your childhood. Do me a good thing for once.” She stood up, spun on her heels, and marched off onto another corridor of the extravagant palace.

Mira glared at Ojal’s back. As soon as she was sure Ojal couldn’t hear her, she began weeping. This was not the life she wanted. She didn’t want to be a maid. She didn’t care that she was working in the royal palace. She wanted to be like the girls she watched from her window. Sure, their lives weren’t much better, but at least they got to go outside. They got to eat the sweets, and fruit. At least they would have marriage. But, she was a lowly maid. Destined only to stare at the feet of people.

“Miraaaaaaa!” came a shriek ricocheting all over the palace. The eight year old princess was Mira’s worst nightmare. Paveena had chosen Mira as her constant playmate.

Paveena waddled up to her, “Come. I want to play dolls. And afterwards you shall make me some pomegranate juice.”

Mira always wanted to say a loud “NO” to Paveena. But Paveena was the princess. She silently let herself be led into the princess’s quarters.

As Paveena preened for Mira, she glanced around the glorious room. The walls had bright colors sparkling on them, with the scent of jasmynes drifting in the room. If you stepped out onto the balcony, you could see peacocks prancing around by a clear pond, where maids tended a gorgeous array of flowers. Mira glanced around the room again when her eye caught a dazzling sapphire necklace.

Paveena caught her staring at it, and made a quick plan in her head. She always knew Mira was unenthusiastic when it came to playing with her. She would use the pendant as a temptation. She drawled, “Mira, after we play, I shall give you that useless sapphire choker. Look, I got new doll clothing!” Mira could hardly believe what Paveena was saying. She stared at the necklace longingly, and then nodded. After what seemed a long afternoon, and stained red fingers from making juice, Paveena commanded her to escort her to her room.

“Here you are Mira. I got it in a goody bag at Princess Iraja’s birthday. I tremendously dislike her. I want it out of my sight. You are dismissed.” Paveena handed her the necklace, and Mira left the room quietly. Inside she was jumping for joy. It was the most beautiful thing she owned. As she carefully tucked it into her bag in the maid’s quarters, Ojal saw it. She whispered

with shock, "Mira, how could you steal?" Mira glared at her, "I am not a thief! The Princess gave it to me."

"Ha, the Princess is known for her greediness. We'll be punished for having it now, but if they find it on us, our lives will surely be lost." "No, it is mine!" "You idiotic child, hand it to me!" saying this, Ojal proceeded to try to yank it from Mira.

Mira struggled with Ojal. She rolled away from her, and fastened it around her neck for the first time. Ojal vociferated with anger, and clawed at Mira. But Mira was barely in that world anymore. As soon as the choker was on her the world became a blur. Her head began spinning, as she disappeared from the world she called home.

Before Mira opened her eyes, she listened. All she could hear was silence. She groped her neck for her necklace, found it and squeezed it tightly. So, Ojal hadn't taken it while she was unconscious. She was angry at herself, for losing control like that. She loved Ojal like a big sister. Unfortunately that included the bickering. Finally she opened her eyes expecting to see her familiar surroundings. First she couldn't believe it. She was in a white room, lying on some kind of soft padding. The room smelt anything but flowery. A woman bustled in wearing a garment that only went down to her knees.

First the women garbled something in a language that she did not understand. Then Mira said, "What?" "Oh, you only speak Hindi. I said Sleeping Beauty has finally awoken. You know, the American Disney movie. Get it?" Mira just stared at her in confusion. What did American mean? Movie? What was this insane woman talking about?

The woman misinterpreted her confusion, "Oh, right. You have no idea why you're in the hospital. Well, some college students found you lying by the remains of the Sindoor Palace. You seemed feverish, and not knowing what to do with you, they brought you here."

Mira understood only one thing. She was not in the right place. As subtly as she could she asked, "Who are you? And, what is the date today?" "Well, my name is Komal, and I am your nurse. And today is June 1<sup>st</sup> 2007." Mira's head swam. 2007? "What should I do?" She wondered out loud. Komal smiled, "Just go back to school. I'm guessing that you were out on some outings with your friends, and you probably wandered away from your group."

Mira looked at her incredulously, "I am not from this time! I played dolls with Princess Paveena just yesterday." "*Queen* Paveena has been dead for centuries." "No, this can't be happening. I know I'm not crazy." As Mira babbled to Komal, the blue necklace glimmered, as if mocking her.

*To be continued in the next OSA souvenir....*

*Anya Rath is 13 years old, and goes to L'Anse Creuse Middle School North. She loves Indian culture, and English is one of her favorite subjects. She lives in Macomb, MI with her parents Swapnalata and Nirmal Rath, and her little sister Nayna. She is an eighth grader.*

*The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits*





## The Village Girl

Alyssa Sahu

**W**hen the cows are waking  
And as the chapattis are baking  
A little girl was wishing away  
She could go to the city one day  
She had arguments with her mom  
Stopped only at the time of dawn  
Just to go to learn in school  
And not to end up like a mule

Soon the village girl grew up  
But still drinking out of an old brass cup  
All she wanted was to work with computers  
Not to work all day with ancient pewter  
Soon she was accepted to a little college  
But still her mom said college mollege  
But the girl still went on to her dream  
Determined to become a bright star beam.

*Alyssa is 10 years old and goes to fifth grade in Challenger School. She is the only child of her parents Bilashi and Manoj Sahu, and lives in \* Cupertino, Northern California. Apart from academics, she takes keen interest in reading, dance and outdoor games like soccer.*

*Be content with your lot; one cannot be first in everything*

## UNITY

Saswat Sahoo

**I**f you separate within society,  
Everyone will pay.  
Because in this world we live in,  
Life gets harder by the day.

As everyone gets older,  
Our differences truly show.  
And if you are divided,  
You will never really know.

That every person's differences,  
Put together into one,  
Make this world a better place,  
And sometimes even more fun.

If we all work together,  
We can help make a better community.  
We are all searching for the same goals,  
Strong friendships, happiness and unity.

*Saswat is 10 yrs old (a 4<sup>th</sup> Grader) lives with his parents Sasadhar and Mamata Sahoo in Farmington Hills, Michigan. "Saswat is a wonderful writer and a marvelous Myth solver," says his teacher Mrs. Vlahos. MickMorris.com has published his work in 2006 myth writing contest.*

*Beware lest you lose the substance by grasping at the shadow.*



## My Family's Culture

Sanjna Pradhan

**M**y family's culture is Indian. India is in Asia. My Mom and Dad are born in Ordisa. My Grandparents live in Ordisa. My family lives in Michigan. I have a picture of my Grandparents at the Taj Mahal. The Taj Mahal is in India.

I was born in Michigan. My Mom and Dad taught me Indian culture. I visited India when I was three. The Indian flag's colors are green, orange and white, and there's a wheel in the middle of the flag. My family speaks English and Ordia. India is my family's favorite place except for me. My favorite places are Florida and California. When I visit India again I will see my Mom and Dad's school. Most of my cousins are in India. Two of my cousins live in Arkansas. My Mom's sister lives in Arkansas. I am my mom's sister's niece. Every night my Mom or Dad put me to sleep, and then kiss or hug me. I am an Indian and an American.

*Sanjna Pradhan wrote this at the age of 6, but now she is 7. She attends Brookfield Academy, in Troy, MI. She is the daughter of Drs. Jyoti & Sangita Pradhan.*

*Most people say that it is the intellect which makes a great scientist. They are wrong: it is character*

## Some Look Like Others Some Look Like Me

Darshee Patnaik

**S**ome look like others, some look like me when I glance in the river who do I see?

My face; all different from everyone I see  
Small people, tall people, medium people too.

Blue, Hazel, Brown, or Green.  
Some are mean and some are filled with glee.  
He or she is from France, Italy, or Brazil too  
Maybe from India, Japan, as well as Germany too.

Some look like others, some look like me when I glance in the river who do I see?  
Speaking Chinese or Portuguese's.

Speaking in different languages and living in different cultures and wearing different clothing all around me.  
Some look like others some look like me when I glance in the river who do I see?

*Darshee, who is in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, lives with her parents, Sourjya & Reena Patnaik, and her little sister Dibya in Robbinsville, New Jersey.*

*We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.*





## Dare to Paint

Ankita Mohanty

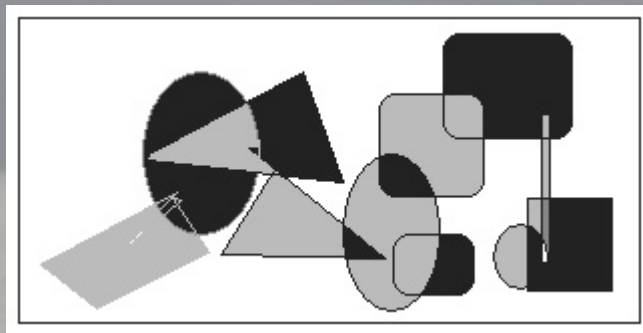
**Y**ou have likely been asked what your favorite color is. Is it yellow, red, green? Or is it the color of your Grandmother's song harmonizing India's prayer time? Is it the color of a child in rags, oblivious of his poverty? Is it the hue of his laughter as he bathes in the drains? Do you remember the color of your feet covered in the dust of the streets, the same as a *roti* smothered with ghee? Is that the most beautiful shade in your life? In mine, those colors create a kaleidoscope for which I view my homes: my India, my America.

Each day, I realize the power I have to see colors previously unborn. All I have to do is flip the kaleidoscope around, and I have fresh sight for the home I have grown up in. You may perhaps believe that the colors are different here in America. And you would be correct...almost. You see, the colors I see here are also made of precious memories. These colors, when mixed and painted with some heart, tell stories of freedom and open thought. I have realized that I have the power to paint my homes with any color I desire.

What astounds me everyday is not that I have this fantastic kaleidoscope through which I may view my homes, but the fact that these colors collide. They startle me with their fluidity. My Grandmother's prayers guide me to a freedom my peers in America can only dream of. The child in rags empowers me; his laughter dares me to change the world. On summer days, I study the dust wrinkles in my feet before sitting down for a hot *roti*. These colors are the connection between my homes; they beg to be painted each day.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Prize, Essay Competition Age Group (14-18)**

*Ankita Mohanty is 18 years old and lives in Mount Pleasant, Michigan.*



Rishav Puhan

*The tragedy of life is what dies inside a man while he lives.*



## My Aai

Ankita Ray

I had finished my lunch and was just about ready to curl-up next to Aja and listen to my regular afternoon story. It was the story of a witty thief who pulled off some amazing robberies but was actually good at heart. It was a story that had started a few years back and I had become addicted to it. It was fun to sit next to Aja and listen to him dramatize every scene. But lately I had been missing my daily story, as after lunch, Aai would take me upstairs into the abandoned room where I would often come to play. The room led to the balcony, which was our eventual destination.

Summers are usually very hot in Bhubaneswar but that day it was almost unbearable. So when Aai called me to follow her to that lonely hot room, I resisted by crying and throwing tantrums. I knew why she took me there every afternoon. And I hated it. Apparently it was to teach me to read. I was 5 and despised reading. It was so much easier to just sit down next to Aja and listen to his stories. Why did I need to learn to read? But Aai was determined to do whatever it took to teach me to read. At 5 years old, I was more interested in pretending to rule the world than do any of the boring stuff that she forced me to.

Aai would sit patiently on the floor near the balcony door, with her legs spread out, her sari tucked tightly across her waist, her right hand shading her eyes from the blazing sun and the left holding the most atrocious book on the face of the planet. I would read one or two sentences and run away before she could stop me.

That day I was pretending as if I had magical powers. I was pretending to be the ruler of the world. I was punishing a tiger for eating my poor bunny. My rein over the universe was interrupted when I heard her call: "Maa eithi Asilu". I let out a huge groan and stomped over to her thinking of the world's best excuses to avoid that painful reading session. She pulled me over and sat me down on her lap. Then she pointed at the words on the first page. To me it looked like they were in Chinese. I was very stubborn. I squeezed my eyes shut. Suddenly I felt her soft hands stroking my head. I opened my eyes and read the first sentence. Then the second and eventually the whole paragraph. I got so carried away by the book, that I finished the entire story! When I finished, I looked up at Aai's face. Her gentle eyes were brimming with tears. She let out a little squeal and put her arms tightly around me. That hug made me feel as if I was actually the ruler of the world and nobody could ever touch me. I felt that in Aai's eyes, I was the best.

As was her nature to share any of my accomplishments with everyone at home, she ran down the stairs as fast as she could to tell Aja about the seemingly jaw-dropping thing that I had just done. That afternoon's feat led to many repetitions of the same graphic description of the amazing act of her grand daughter's reading abilities.

When I turned 8 and could definitely read better than that hot summer afternoon, she started to teach me how to write in Oriya. She told me that if I did not learn how to write in Oriya, how would she be able to read my letters when I was grown up and lived far away from her? And I thought it was a good enough reason to learn some Oriya alphabet.





When I would come back from school, while Aai was visiting us in vacations, she would always feed me lunch with her hands. Brushing my head the entire time, she would unexpectedly begin to cry. At night as I would snuggle up to sleep with her, she would sit up and softly sing those beautiful Oriya lullabies that would make it feel like a garden blooming in the night light.

I always love to exaggerate my physical pains when Aai is around. It makes her fawn over me and pamper me as if I was a little child again. She would press my feet or head or just caress my face over and over with her soft hands telling me that things would get better. Today I feel selfish as I sit here with all the love and wisdom that she has given me, while she is in India and her tired feet throb from arthritic pain. I wish I could comfort her and give her back the love that she gave me, by pressing her feet and reading to her the same books that she taught me to read.

*Ankita Ray is 12 years old. She lives in Elkridge MD with her parents Abhijit and Julie A Ray and her 6 year old sister Aparna.*



*Tawas Light house Michigan ©Biswajit Puhan*

*Few are those who see with their own eyes and feel with their own hearts.*



## A Wonderful Experience

Ankita Nayak

**I** stood there with eyes locked to the paper. As I lowered the paper I could feel my senses coming back. I took a deep breath to stay calm and took a quick glance at the paper, I was holding, making sure it was mine. It was DEAD SILENCE. I stared at my smiling mother, who was standing by the kitchen stove cooking something. I wanted to say I made it in a calm voice, but instead, I let out a big, "OH MY GOSH! I MADE INTO THE DISTRICT CHOIR", like I was in the stands wanting the India Cricket team to win.

It started about a week ago. I was sitting in a seat in the music room trying to get a place (5 places) in the audition list for our school. There were 4 rows having 8 seats each and all the seats were filled. At the end, there were 8 students including me. As I held my breath waiting what would happen next, my music teachers were discussing. After one long minute passed, they said, "Come back tomorrow and we will have made a decision". As I walked out of the music room and into the cafeteria, all my friends were screaming questions into my face "Did you make it, did you make it, did you make it?" I simply said I do not know.

The next day I walked in to the music room only breathing when needed. "Okay, so today we have chosen 5 Students, Rebecca, Alex, Nicole, Cindy, and.....Ankita", said my music teacher. I squealed making sure only me and my surroundings could hear. I walked out of the music room waiting anxiously for the next Monday to occur.

I entered the audition stage waiting for my name to be called. "Ankita, your seat is waiting", said a lady. I followed the lady with a few other students on my tail. We entered a partially glass covered door which led us to another waiting room with less students. I sat in a chair in the corner of the hallway so that no one could hear me practicing. I started practicing, "Are you Sleeping, Are you Sleeping, Brother John, Brother John, Morning Bells are ringing, Morning Bells are ring," I stopped. I looked up finding myself staring into a lady whose hand was pointed toward the door. I got up and walked into the little room.

I walked out of the room with butterflies in my stomach. "Awwwww.....", I groaned thinking about what I did back in the tiny little room. I think I did okay on the melody tune compared to how bad I did on the rhythmic pattern and sentencing. I did pretty well on the song. I walked out of the door and into the main area where I first entered. My Dad got up from his seat and joined me in my walk out the door. I pushed the door in frustration and walked down the steps and into the car. "How did it go?" , said my Dad in an unsure voice "Okay, I guess, I will have to wait till the results come out on Thursday", I said in a gloomy voice.





It was Thursday afternoon and I just came back from school. I reached into the mailbox. I was scanning through the mail when my eyes stopped at a letter that said from PISD to Ankita Nayak. I rushed to the house and closed the door with a loud thud! "MAMA MAMA", I screamed. "I got a letter from PISD and I bet it is the choir results". "Let me see", she wiped her hand on the towel and took the letter from me. "You did well on the melody tune and you did perfect on the song and just went off on the rhythmic pattern, But.....". "Huh", I sighed. "But you made it!" I could not believe my ears, "WHAT?" I said. "You made it!" squealed my mother. I took the paper from her and read it. After maybe a minute passed, I screamed in the loudest voice that shook the whole house.

Every practice we had on Monday, we spent one and a half hours singing for a big performance on February 16, 2007. We were privileged to come and sing for 1000s of music teachers across the state ((TMEA) Texas Music Educators Associations). This Performance was held in San Antonio on a School Day. After our big performance we got many offers to sing in many great places.

In August, all 42 schools sent about 5 children to audition for this music program. ONLY 90 children got selected. I fell honored to be part of this excellent music program. I thanked my friends who supported me and my family for making this possible!

*Ankita Nayak is in the 5th grade and lives in Plano, Texas.*



*Intellectuals solve problems, geniuses prevent them.*



## **My Orissa, My USA**

**Aradhya Rajanala**

**M**onday morning: 8:15 --- I am in school saying "I pledge of Allegiance, to the flag of the united states of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible with Liberty and justice for all." That is my America – not my adopted homeland.

I don't think that we can call America our adopted homeland. After all, we say the Pledge of Allegiance everyday in school!! We take care of it and it takes care of us. How can we call America our adopted land?

Orissa – this is the land where I was born, my Aaii, my Tata (Grandpa), my Nanama Grandma) live. I love being in Orissa where I am pampered a lot. I get Tinkles, candy and good food everyday. America and Orissa are like two hands to clap in joy.

I visited Orissa on May 9, 2006. First, we went to Dehli and saw the India Gate. Then, I went to Bhubaneswar. All of my families live there. That's the main reason I was happy. The main language is Oriya, even though we also speak Hindi. Usually, there are lizards on the wall. Once, I tried to catch one!!

I was irritated when I saw that people and kids had to beg for money. I hated to see them suffer. I don't understand why people had to beg. After all, every country is free and people should have enough money to keep them going.

Sometimes, I watched cricket on television and cheered the India team on. I also cheered the Pistons in Michigan for NBA.

America and Orissa, though different, are both very special. I am proud to be an Indian American. In the same breath I can say God bless America, my home sweet home and Vande Utkala Janani.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Prize, Essay Competition Age Group (4-8)**

*Aradhya Rajanala is 8 Years old. He lives in Ballwin, MO*

*Only morality in our actions can give beauty and dignity to life.*





## Mixed Feelings

Anya Rath

**F**ive days a week, I say the Pledge of Allegiance. As I say it, I can't help but wonder... am I lying? I think of India fondly, even though I am an American citizen. I will defend India when it comes to things like job transfers. I am all out for India. Yet, I am a mixture of both cultures. I dress in red, white, and blue on July 4<sup>th</sup>. I wear my my traditional restrictions. However, I know that I can knock all these restrictions down, without a care in the world, but I don't. I cling to my culture and religion, because I am proud to be a Hindu and Oriya.

I love the Oriya community. It's so hard to explain it. I know about most of the *lehenga* or *salwar /kameej* for Rath Yatra. I know more about how George Washington surprised the Hessians, than I do about Indira Gandhi. I do all the common American rituals, but I also do my Indian things too.

Every time I go to a birthday party, I have to explain why I can't eat beef. I always try to explain Kumar Purnima to my friends, and I always struggle to do so. There are so many different procedures that I follow. But I do rebel. I do whine when my Mom calls me to wake up for temple. I do get upset about all the problems set forth by people since my childhood. I have my own group of friends. It's almost like a second family. I know my Oriya well, but I'm hesitant to speak it in public. I am always talking in English, even in response to an Oriya comment or question.

I eat Indian food every night for dinner, and American food for lunch. I am a mixture, of both cultures. It's a feeling you can't put into words. It's a special feeling to be a blend of two cultures.

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize, 2007 Meghna Memorial Award Winner - Essay Competition Age Group (9-13)**

*Anya Rath is 13 years old. She lives in Macomb, MI*



*The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it.*



## Experience is the Best Teacher

Upasana Senapati

**E**xperiences are like a potter's hands, molding character while it spins as a clump of clay on a rapidly turning wheel. As the wheel spins, life goes on. Some clumps of clay are not as easily molded as others. I believe that experiences represent the culmination of a person's beliefs and attitude in life. I am grateful that my experiences in India have shaped my goals and my outlook on life.

In India, for example, poverty is rampant. Since my father formerly worked for an NGO aiding destitute single mothers and their children in India, I was privileged enough to visit the site and fully understand the extent of poverty. There, I saw hundreds of women who could not provide for their starving children, watched their children hopelessly suffering from illnesses, and feeling humiliated about not knowing the identity of the children's fathers. Pregnant women wore fearful expressions because they felt desperate as they were bound to an unpromising future. Simply hearing their stories opened my eyes to how necessary it was for me to change their destitute state. I thought of the vicious circle they lived in and how their children and the grandchildren would continue to live in suffering. If I could help one person become an independent and productive member of society, I could stop generations of poverty to come.

It is commonly believed in today's society, getting "molded" is a sign of weakness. Being affected by your experiences has negative connotations. However, every experience should affect you, whether it involves continuing working towards your goals, or avoiding past mistakes. In essence, every moment should teach you something. Our experiences in life should prompt us to take action. Staying in touch with one's own feelings and empathizing with others will make us stronger and more determined to act.

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize, 2007 Meghna Memorial Award Winner - Essay Competition Age Group (14-18)**

*Upasana Senapati is 15 years old. She lives in Troy, MI*

*Weakness of attitude becomes weakness of character.*





## The Best Grandpa Ever

Sanket Mishra

**T**hink of a 74 year-old man sitting in an armchair reading a book, any book. Meet my Grandpa. Born in India, as a child my Grandpa was a natural reader, but it wasn't his school books. It was always some type of mystery or adventure book. He also did a lot of running and exploring, just like his favorite character, Huckleberry Finn. His favorite books as a child were Huck Finn and Robinson Crusoe.

As a child he had a very hard life. He lived around the time when India was struggling for its independence from England. They also had no electricity where he lived. He had to do all his work in oil lamp lights, and he didn't do very well in school. Also, when he was 12 years old, his father died. But he pulled through and went to Revenshaw College in 1948 and graduated in 1952. He worked as an auditor for the Accountant General's office. He also went on to work in the Secretariat, and Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited. After he retired he worked as a joint secretary for the Red Cross, and helped save thousands of lives in cyclones, earthquakes, and other disasters.

Now that he has retired my Grandpa has many hobbies. His hobbies include gardening, repairing work around the house, he is a do-it-yourself person, and he loves to do anything and everything. If you went to visit him you would see a tall, slim man, with thick black glasses. He has a shiny bald head with some white hair.

He is a very caring man. He has a temper but he cools down really easily, and he loves to make somebody's day. He is

really helpful for a lot of things, especially homework. I remember when I was really little, and I was learning the alphabet. I couldn't get it right, but my Grandpa was patient and helped me learn it. He shows a lot of patience when someone doesn't understand something. It's one of the great qualities that he has.

My most fond memories are from the times I used to go on picnics with him. They were usually on beaches along the coast of the Bay of Bengal. I remember when I was on a beach and was sliding down huge sand hills, and fell into the water. I was five, and I didn't know how to swim, so my Grandpa went into the water going against the 4-foot waves, and pulled me out. I was really scared. So he bought me an ice cream cone. I also remember when there was a cyclone in 2000. It was massive. Trees fell on our house and everything. Since the house was made of cement, it held and no one was hurt. I was pretty scared, so was my little cousin, so to take our minds off of it, my Grandpa made little paper boats and put them on the water. The water was pretty deep, especially on the porch. It certainly helped, and to top it off, we had crab for dinner.

My Grandpa is an important person in my life. Everyone says that me and him are very much alike. We do have a lot in common, which is good for me because of the qualities that he has. I'll always remember him for who he is, not only as a moody gentle man, but also as the best Grandpa ever.

*Sanket Mishra is a student of Grade 6. He lives in Eagan, MN*

*Once we accept our limits, we go beyond them.*



## ABCD or FOB?

Mrunali Das

**A**merican-Born-Confused-Desi or Fresh-Off-the-Boat? Isn't that the ultimate question as an Indian here in America? It is a question that each of us must ask ourselves. Do we attempt to destroy any sign of our heritage or do we take every chance to show it? I wonder about my status constantly. There will be times where I am ashamed of my heritage, while other times it fills me with pride. There will be times where I am happy to live in America, while other times I miss India. It is the ultimate conundrum.

I am asked to defend my Indian heritage in America, but I am also asked to defend being an American in India. I long for India's simplicity in America, while I long for America's advances in India. My loyalty is divided. My sometimes deplorable Indian accent has never escaped the scrutiny of my relatives in Orissa. While, some of my friends in America tease me about how I'm so "Indian" because I do *Odissi*, play *sitar*, have many *Hindi* CDs, and watch *Hindi* movies often. Yet at the same time, the same relatives resent me for having a cell phone at age 14, and some of the same friends envy the fact that I go to India every 2-3 years. These contradictions make life complicated.

In terms of cultural differences, the one major difference is respect. In Indian culture, it is typical to show respect towards an elder, while that is not as common in America. On the other hand, Americans are willing to respect someone's differences. My Indian side and American side will conflict on certain issues because of the difference of respect.

As for being an American with an Indian heritage, I am neither a FOB nor an ABCD. I am simply Indian.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Prize, Essay Competition Age Group (14-18)**

*Mrunali Das is 18 years old. She lives in Maryland.*

*There comes a time when the mind takes a higher plane of knowledge but can never prove how it got there.*





## My Orissa

### Saswat Sahoo

**I** was born in Rourkela and traveled almost all places across the state of Orissa. I loved every bit of my life in Orissa, when I went to Orissa in vacation. There always was a difficulty in living first a few days in Orissa. At the beginning, it was a big shock for me. But later I started realizing the fact that Orissa has been a tranquil state, which lived in itself. For various reasons, it never was a point of discussion for the people outside.

My Orissa lies along the eastern seaboard of India, south of Bengal. Its main attractions are the temples of the capital Bhubaneswar, the long sandy beach at Puri and the great Sun Temple at Konark. These three sites make a convenient and compact triangle. Orissa is predominantly rural, with fertile green coastal plains rising to the hills of Eastern Ghats. The state is mineral rich and is a big exporter of iron ore, with a large factory at Rourkela. The Oriyas, 25% of whom are indigenous tribal people, are particularly friendly and hospitable.

We play ball, tag, and hide-and-peek. *Kabaddi* is very popular. Now a day, Cricket is also played as well. As we live now in USA, sometime we are missing these games to play here like Orissa.

I went to Puri, which is one of the most important pilgrimage centers for the Hindus. The temple with its elaborate carvings and moldings are very fine examples of Kalingan architecture. The one of the most Hindu festival is Ratha Yatra of Jagannath in Puri. It attracts visitors from all over World. Images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and sister Subhadra deities are taken from the Jagannath temple to a country house about 2 miles away. I visited the finest temples - Lingaraj, Rajarani, Mukteswar, Brahmeswar and Parasurameswar. These temples are some of the best specimens of the Orissa Temple Architecture. I saw the Ashokan Edicts at Dhauli Hills, Bhubaneswar. On top of the Hill, near the ancient rock edict is a Peace Pagoda (Shanti Stupa). I saw the beautiful Sun Temple at Konark, that built in the 13th century in honor of the Sun God, contains exquisite carvings, elephants and lions and, colossal figures of warriors on horses, scenes of battle and chase - all carved with great imagination and skill, testifying to the high standard of ancient Indian art and engineering skill. I also visited UDAIGIRI CAVES; it is 10 kms west of Bhubaneshwar, which were occupied by the Buddhist monks as early as the 2nd century BC.

My Orissa is really famous for the highest excellence in the arts. The Sun Temple at Konarka is considered to be a particular Orissan masterpiece. There is a rich culture of wall paintings. They paint geometric motifs on their walls. The subject of many textile paintings is limited to religious themes like the story of Krishna. That's why I love my Orissa very much.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Prize Essay Competition Age Group (9-13)**

*\* Saswat is 10 yrs old (a 4<sup>th</sup> Grader) lives with his parents Sasadhar and Mamata Sahoo in Farmington Hills, Michigan. "Saswat is a wonderful writer and a marvelous Myth solver," says his teacher Mrs. Vlahos. MickMorris.com has published his work in 2006 myth writing contest.*

*The most incomprehensible thing about the world is that it is comprehensible.*



# Poetry Sestina

**Mrunali Das**

I hide within my poetry.  
I reveal thoughts and feelings,  
That I wouldn't tell anyone face to face.  
They link the reader to my very soul.  
They are windows to my heart,  
If the reader truly thinks.

To understand, one must think.  
One must think to understand the poetry.  
The poetry must be felt.  
The problems the authors face,  
The very essence of their souls.  
And the link between two hearts.

The poetry provides a connection heart to heart.  
Together, reader and writer feel and think.  
The true art of poetry,  
Is the expression of feelings,  
Without looking at a face.  
The connection between souls.

The reader's and the writer's souls,  
Both of their hearts,  
All of their thoughts,  
Are conjoined through poetry.  
They share the same feelings.  
The same problems are faced.

The disappearance of face,  
Allows two souls to connect.  
They see each other's hearts.  
So that they can think,  
About the shared poem.  
The comprehension of feelings

The comprehension of feelings,  
Without the use of faces.  
An understanding of two souls,  
Two different hearts,  
Each one thinks about the other's thoughts,  
All because of a poem.

My poetry lets me hide my feelings and my face on a piece of paper,  
And that makes way for a connection of soul and heart to let you understand my thoughts.

Mrunali Das is a 9<sup>th</sup> grader in River Hill High School in Clarksville, Maryland. She was first introduced to sestinas by her friend. A sestina doesn't rhyme. It revolves around 6 words that must end each line in the following pattern. 1-2-3-4-5-6/ 6-1-2-3-4-5/5-6-1-2-3-4/4-5-6-1-2-3/3-4-5-6-1-2/2-3-4-5-6-1. The last two lines must contain the six words with the first line containing words 1, 2, and 3, and the second line having words 4, 5, and 6.

*It is easier to denature plutonium than to denature the evil spirit of man.*





## My Identification in USA

Chandan Y. Sahu

**W**henever I look at a picture of myself when I was a baby, I wonder if I am an American, or an Oriya. Since I am both, I am part of the great "Melting Pot", which is otherwise known as the USA. Here, all the cultures combine to form one massive country of rich diversity. Here there are Hindus, Italians, Christians, Roman Catholics, Greeks, Russians, and people many more countries and sects. I live in a Melting Pot in where immigrants of every color and background are mixed together.

When I visit Orissa, I feel very different in my relatives' house. I feel as if I am in a whole new world of great culture and heritage. In India, my Grandma always goes to the temple in every morning, does Puja at home, and makes a nice breakfast of crispy PITHA and warm ALU BHAJA. At her house, anybody can come, eat, relax, and talk. There are no restrictions. There is always someone there to talk with. There is also no restriction for any food coming from anybody's house. There is a feeling of total freedom. As a part of Orissa, we do the same thing here.

In my devout family, not a single day passes without a Puja of some sort. The gentle tinkling bells fills my ears as I wake up in the morning. Here also, I am fortunate to be exposed in music, Chinmaya Mission, Geeta Chanting, Ratha Jatra, Lemont Temple, and frequent trips to India. We are also very crazy about Indian arts, food, and culture.

I am 11 years old. I am very proud over here to maintain my culture, and legend, within the Melting Pot. I feel I preserve the culture more effectively than other Indians living in India, who may get distracted over new technology, and western ideas. The funny thing is that some people are very addicted to western culture. Villagers wear jeans, die to eat burgers, and love to watch the Opera show. So what's going on? When I am trying to be Indian, people on the other side of the world want to be American.

Despite the challenge as an American, I will create a success story. Indians should be recognized as valuable citizens in this country. Here, we should all strive hard to preserve our great art, cuisine, culture, and above all, spiritual heritage. Overall, as an Oriya, I am very proud to be in the Melting Pot of America.

*Chandan is the son of son of Gangadhar and Madhusmita Sahu. He lives in Naperville, IL*

*To live in the presence of great truths and eternal laws,  
to be led by permanent ideals -  
that is what keeps a man patient  
when the world ignores him,  
and calm and unspoiled when the world praises him.*



## Questions

Sarita Mishra

**O**verhead speakers shriek in annoying, nasal tones:

“Ladies and Gentlemen, we are approaching the Detroit metropolitan area; at this time, please pull your tray tables / chairs upright. We thank you for flying Rip-off Airlines. Have a lovely stay in Detroit and be sure to fly with us again”!

(scrushh, fizzle). The mike collapses, clumsily.

Passengers begin to shift in their seats, ready for their respective ‘get-the-heck-outta-here’ modus operandis.

“Here we go”, thinks Sanjalina (Sanju to her family and friends). She sits, not stirring as the plane comes to full stop. Passengers scurry to get their bags. No point, she muses. We’re stuck here for at least 10 minutes, if not more. She’s right. Monsieur Pilot provides word up (as in): stuck on the tarmac, we’re the next ones in. Sanju looks out her window seat to view the concrete. Here we go (she thinks again).

Sanju’s in town for her umpteenth OSA Convention. Mixed feelings pervade. Every year, Sanju wonders whether it’s worth going. At that moment, a request comes through. Can she help organize a panel and / or present? As a teenager, she was part of cultural programs and helped organize youth seminars. She has no desire to say “no”?! OSA holds good memories.

She enjoys participating in panels and cultural programs. She loves this opportunity to engage while saddened by actual turnouts. The cultural programs have featured prominent artists all over the world while showcasing enormous talent her community has right here, state-side. So many more people should see this, says Sanju to herself; each and every time she views such greatness.

These days, few from her generation are present to attend / participate in Convention. Sanju ‘gets’ it as marriages have taken place, babies are being born. She, herself makes headway in her industry although so few from her community (if any) bother to ask about her accomplishments. After all: Sanju is not married, does not have kids. More or less, in all Indian communities; the ultimate measure of acceptance is: Marriage. Children (even for those who it’s not working out for). Our community rejects those who do not fall into “Formula” and does not support those who fall outside straight and ‘box-like’ norms.

Sanju’s hope for future generations is the acceptance of ALL individuals and their respective realities. Can we, as a community be free of judgments? Sanju muses. Seriously: CAN WE?





Are we ready to help one another regardless of gender and circumstance? Are we truly here to help one another? This is what an annual gathering must be about. Not about status, pretty saris, whose kid did what. Let's engage and embrace one another as a COMMUNITY.

Such are the thoughts swirling in Sanju's head.

Times are changing. Sanju grew up with exposure to Convention. To this day, she coordinates with her parents "Are you going this year"?

While Sanju decides whether to go or not, she asks herself :

Who will be there? What is there for me? A slew of aunties and uncles asking when I'll get married, have kids? So many questions and all without finding out who we are as actual individuals. This is not the energy Sanju wants to mingle with as there exist far too many comparisons and judgments within this community she grew up with. Is the environment supportive? Empowering? Sanju feels for the most part, the answer is "No".

She has been there, done this before. Sanju's hope (with many of her generation) is that the energy of Convention continues as more opportunities for sincere engagement present themselves for her generation and beyond. There is that Hope that this reality will be; as we Love and Thank our previous generations for lighting our Way.

*Sarita Misra was born in Orissa and raised in the U.S. She is a public relations specialist in Boston, Massachusetts who has been involved in numerous OSA Conventions.*



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*Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.*



## The Jungfrau

Ananya Mishra

Standing on the pure snow  
Of Jungfraujoch  
I see the bleak, icy peaks  
Towering above.

Eiger, Monch, and Jungfrau  
The ogre, the monk, and the young maiden.  
I wonder how it would feel  
To be the young woman,  
Out to milk the cows,  
Stumbling upon a beast instead.

Forever running from the ogre  
Always frightened, never secure.  
The Aletsch Glacier  
Enormous, creeping, fatal river of ice  
Extending below us.  
I cannot run too fast, too far  
For fear of falling into that icy snare.

The Capuchin monk, dressed all in brown,

Will stop the ogre from advancing.  
Standing grim and frowning  
Between my enemy and I.  
Never letting him approach too close  
To mar my tender innocence.  
The ogre won't dare hurt a holy man.

Now I stand here frozen in time  
Snowy grandeur all around me.  
People come and people go.  
Do they ever stop to think?  
I can never go home to my simple life  
What a sad fate is mine.

*Jungfraujoch, at 14,000 feet high, is the highest railway station in Europe.*

*Ananya, daughter of Snigdha and Srikanta Mishra, is a freshman at McNeil High School in Austin, TX. She loves to read and write, and is also taking Hindustani Classical Music and Bharatanatyam lessons.*

*All such action would cease if those powerful elemental forces were to cease stirring within us.*





## MY EUROPEAN VACATION

Anshuman Mishra

Last summer we had great fun. We went on vacation to Europe. We spent two and half weeks in Switzerland, Austria and Germany.

We stayed in a little village called Lauterbrunnen, which means “Many Springs”. It is in a small alpine valley. From there we took a little red train to the Swiss Alps to a place called Jungfrauoch. It was right next to the Jungfrau, Eiger and Monch mountains. These mountains were named after a story. This is the story. A long time ago, an ogre was chasing a young maiden. In the middle of them a monk stood protecting the young maiden. In Swiss German, Eiger means ogre, Jungfrau means young maiden, and Monch means monk.

My sister and I had a snowball fight on the Aletsch Glacier. Then we slid down the glacier near the Jungfrau and Eiger mountains on snow disks. The sliding path was 200ft long and had a big bump in the middle. It was really exciting! Then we visited the Trummelbach falls. There are ten falls inside a mountain and the water comes from melted snow. We rode a cable car inside the mountain to see them. It was very cold and scary. There was only a small railing between you and the falls, which were very cold and fast. They looked deadly.

After a few days we went on a boat cruise in Germany. We went down the Rhine and saw dozens of old castles on the banks. We explored Marksburg castle. (See the picture below.) It was awesome! It was on a hill above the river Rhine. It had coats of arms everywhere and gigantic cannons on the towers. You should have seen the armor collection. There was armor, hundreds of years old, dating back to the Roman Empire. It was awesome! The walls were made of huge stone blocks and people could only ride inside on horses.

In Mainz (also in Germany), we saw a very old cathedral built in 975A.D. It had a treasure chamber filled with things made of gold, silver and jewels. We also visited the Gutenberg museum. Johannes Gutenberg made the first printing press. We saw many old printing presses, Gutenberg’s first book and many really old books in different languages. Some books were hundreds of years old and had been written, drawn and painted by hand.

In Austria we stayed in the capital city – Vienna. There we saw Schonbrun palace. It was gigantic and very fancy. Mozart played the piano for the Emperor and Empress of Austria (the Hapsburgs) here when he was 7 years old. It had beautiful paintings, fancy furniture and lovely gardens with mazes.

We also went to see the famous Kunsthistorische museum and saw old Greek, Roman and Egyptian artifacts. The mummies and their cases were the best things ever. There were many paintings and statues too but I got tired after a while.



We went to see the Hundertwasser Haus. It is an apartment building with big trees growing on the roof. Every floor has a different color and shape. The fountains at the base are made of mosaic tile. When I grow up, I am going to live in an apartment in the Hundertwasser Haus and drive a cool Smart car. I will have to learn to speak German like my parents.

Then we came back to Switzerland and stayed in Zurich. We met old friends of my parents. We also saw where my parents used to live and the hospital (in Wettingen) where my sister was born. We went to a Swiss village called Apenzell where the houses are covered with paintings of flowers. In the road there was a spinning circle, which was mysterious.

We drove to Germany again to visit a castle called Neuschwanstein. It was built by mad King Ludwig of Bavaria and is completely white. We crossed from Austria to Germany at a town called AU. Snow white's castle in Disneyworld is a copy of Neuschwanstein. It rained hard on the way back and we got lost in Germany. It was an exciting adventure although I slept through some of it.

The cheese in Europe is really good and so is the ham. The fish is really fresh and good. The apricots and cherries are sweet and I can now drink iced tea. I did not like the pizzas much because they did not have much sauce but my parents loved it. I am definitely getting my parents to take me back to Europe soon. It is really a great adventure!

*Anshuman, son of Srikanta and Snigdha Mishra, attends 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at Pond Springs Elementary School in Austin, TX. He learns Karate and Hindustani classical music, and loves to read mysteries and books about space.*



*Anger dwells only in the bosom of fools.*





## Opportunity

### Lipsa Panda

Opportunity is a road,  
On which there are some branches.  
The road you choose,  
Means another to lose,  
And yet one to take your chances.

The road that you take,  
May be brittle or bitter.  
It may be barren or brutal,  
Or caustic or crucial.  
The guarantees you will glitter.

You may see a road,  
That is displays perfection before you.  
But this only means,  
Folk have fixed up the greens,  
And many before you went through.

You may see a road,

That is lousy with vines.  
But this only means,  
You see untouched, innocent scenes,  
And you do not need to pay tolls and  
fines.

You may feel, at times,  
Like a fallen bird.  
At times, you will be cold.  
And then you'll turn bold.  
A new sense of purpose, stirred.

Opportunity is a road,  
On which there are many branches.  
The road you choose,  
Means one to lose,  
And yet another to take your chances.

Lipsa Panda is a 15 year old from Syosset, NY who  
has just completed 9th grade.



©Luca Marella

*All our science, measured against reality, is primitive and childlike-and yet it is the most precious thing we have.*



# REFLECTIONS

Bagmi Das

The water reflects the fierce noontime sun, making it dance whenever a breeze happens by. It moves perfectly to the “*Dhadak Dhadak*” playing on my iPod as the water settles down into stillness. I watch the pinpricks of sunlight float on the miniature waves and I am at peace. The pond smiles back at me in its serenity.

I come here now and then to hear the dead grass rustle as history embraces me. It is a rarity that one can find peace in this tumultuous world. We are muddled everyday with so many meetings, rehearsals, and responsibilities that we cannot take time out to think about where we have come and how we have gotten here.

In 1957 and 1963 two separate miracles happened. My father was born in Sahada-Sabrang and miles away, my mother was born in Haldi Basant. They would not meet until 1986 until fate brought them to IIT Bombay and hit them with the bonds of marriage. The in-between years seem somewhat insignificant in the big picture. America, a few years later, is what came to define them. Today, they have well-paying and secure jobs, three daughters, and a beautiful home. “*Arey va*” and “*Shabash*” mouth the aunties and uncles when they walk into the foyer. They see me, studying in Carnegie Mellon, and my sisters, one spell-binding on her sitar and the other one pretty and spirited. Everything seems perfect.

For me, it is those mystery years that matter. It is those years that shine behind my parents’ smiles and fill the bedtime stories I was told as a child. Tales of school punishments, snakebites, and hardship are interspersed with comments of the genuine relationships built and getting ready for holiday celebrations. I can see the happiness that my parents absorbed in their childhood. Yet, it is this that they hide from us, disguising the joys of their pasts in the successes of the present.

Lilting laughter fills the air as the children play by the village pond. A little boy washes himself in the brown water and stomps his feet to splash around him. His mother scolds him and he runs farther into the water, turning back when he realizes that he cannot swim yet. He knows that he is his mother’s favorite, mischievous as he may be. His brothers come home from school and play with him some more and as he grows, he returns the favor to his younger sister and brother. In these older years, he runs free around the village, playing *gulli-danda* with all the others and squeezing in some time to do homework, depending on his mood. He struts to the bazaar, dreaming of his future and how great he will become. Every morning he wakes up and does *pranam* to the deities in his home and continues the tradition before dinner, when he sings *bhajans* with his brothers. He is a mama’s boy from the beginning and wants to make her proud. After years of schooling, he finally goes to Bhadrakh College and watches his mother beam as he moves on from there to a well-respected position at IIT Bombay.

A lifetime away is a little girl with pigtails. Her round eyes are filled with wisdom, even at an early age. She is always at the top of her class and known for her responsible nature. Her goal in life is set from the beginning: perfection. However, she remains a child. Like all little girls with pigtails, she screams with delight when *Raja* comes and she gets to travel to villages to meet her friends. Chat and other indulging foods become her vice and she continues to enjoy the spice as she travels well beyond her village into her college days. Fond memories of running around with her friends and participating in all of the shows and dramas performed will later fill her stories. Unfortunately, her writing must stop when she tries to focus on her academic goals. This plagues her, but she takes her fast as a new challenge that she will conquer. This is only



the beginning of obstacles will come in her way; she switches her set of pigtails for a lone braid as she sets off for her PhD studies at IIT Bombay.

Things are different now. The lone braid still stands and the boy, now a man, is as mischievous as ever. Time, though, has dragged them down. The diaries pile up in the back of a massive closet, forgotten amongst the shards of cloth, leftovers of a long ago sewing class. The solid black of the braid becomes highlighted with henna-colored strands and the spicy meals the man once enjoyed have turned into boiled vegetables. The daughters do not know of the journey taken. They mingle with friends and pop culture, at times unaware of the parents' constant effort to bridge the past and present. Paying for dance and instrumental lessons, encouraging *bhajan* programs, and cooking daily Indian meals, becomes an underappreciated routine. They are tired.

I flick the water, hoping that I have not disturbed the delicate balance of nature with my frivolity. I am all alone on this makeshift dock, but I can hear my mother calling.

"LITI! Come in NOW!"

I nod.

"Liti...there will be *saapa!*"

I rise, brushing off the granules of dirt that the breeze has playfully tossed on my jeans.

*Good-bye, my little paradise.*

"Aagyan Mama!"

"JALDI!"

As I run up the hill and onto my porch, I take one last look at the scene I have left. To my surprise, my mother is doing the same. Her eyes contorted and her brow furrowed, she is looking to make sure there are no creatures lurking under the dock, ready to bite me if I dare visit again. I sigh. She cannot see what I see.

*Bagmi Das, or Liti, is a sophomore at Carnegie Mellon University. She is the daughter of Naresh and Bigyani Das of Columbia, MD. She enjoys Odissi, bhangra, writing, and making a difference.*



*Sunset over Daya River ©Biswajeet Puhan*

*Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.*



## Lost In The Mist

**Ayesha Kar**

Lost in the mist,  
Nowhere around,  
Who cares if I'm not found.

Lost in the mist,  
All alone,  
I'm so used to it,  
That I don't moan.

Lost in the mist,  
I have abandoned reality,  
I'm a wimp,  
Not so mighty.

Lost in the mist,  
My life was over,  
Before it even started.

Lost in the mist,  
I'm a loner,  
Only if I appreciated,  
That my life was going slower.

Lost in the mist,  
I flew away without goodbyes,  
But everything I said was lies.

It was all ruined because,  
I got lost in the mist.

*Ayesha is 12 years old. She is a Grade 6 student. She lives in Somerset, NJ*

*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

## The Magic Song

**Ananya Kar**

If I could sing a magic song,  
That everyone can sing along  
I'd sing of joy and hope  
And the cooing of the doves.

And when we sing my magic song  
All hate and war would cease  
If I could sing a magic song,  
I'd sing a song of peace.

When I see a mother's arm  
Longing to hold her little angel,  
I wish then my magic song  
Can do a little wonder  
To sow a seed of hope,  
When that seed would sprout,  
All joy and hope would come out.

Have you seen that lonely man?  
Whose blue skies are all gone?  
I wish my magic song  
Can do a wonder again  
To find the man a sweet home.

I hope my magic song,  
Can do many splendid wonders  
So, let's do it altogether  
To sing it loud and loud  
Beyond the endless cloud  
To reach the magic wonderland.

*Ananya is the daughter of Santosh and Swayam Kar. She is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. She lives in Canton, MI*

*The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up.*



# Friends

**Maitrei Panda**

Who is sweet  
Who is kind  
Who has the right mind  
Who won't trade your friendship for a dime.

Who supports you when you're down  
Who saves you when you drown  
Who is loyal  
Who is smart  
Who makes sure we never part

Who is thoughtful  
Who is funny  
Who is willing to share their money

Here is the answer to my riddle, my best friends,  
They laugh, they play, and they say its okay,  
I think they deserve a bouquet.

*Maitrei is a 5<sup>th</sup> grader from Macomb, Michigan, lives with her parents Manoj and Meeta Panda.*



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*K.K. Hebbar Offerings*

## *Inner Sojourns....*



# Sri Jagannatha – The Lord of the Universe – His Story and Mystery

Manoj Panda

mahAmbhodhestIre kanaka-ruchire nILa-shikhare  
vasanprAsAdAntah sahaja-baLabhadreNa baLinA;  
subhadra-madhyA-sthoh sakala-sura-sevavasara-do  
jagannathah swAmi nayana-patha-gAmi bhavatu me.

The above verses flew from the pen of Adi Sankara which describes the three deities as located on the shore of the great ocean, situated upon the crest of the brilliant, golden Nilachala Hill, along with His powerful brother Balabhadra, and in the middle of them His sister Subhadra, Lord Jagannatha bestows the opportunity for devotional service upon all God loving souls. May that Jagannatha Swami be the object of my vision."

Who is this Lord Jagannatha, worshipped in Puri, one of the 4 dhAmas of hoary India, visited by thousands of devotees everyday. We will try to understand the Lord from three major perspectives namely legendary, historical and mystical.

The great war Mahabharata ended. Lord Krishna's time on earth was coming to an end. At the appointed time Lord Krishna left for His eternal abode by an arrow-shot inflicted by Jara Sabar. In Srimad Bhagabatam (In 11<sup>th</sup> Skanda or Canto, Chapter 30, Verse 33) it is described that "His foot having the form of a deer's face was [then] pierced by a hunter named Jara who thought he saw a deer, [aiming] with his arrow that was made with a fragment that had remained of the iron [sAmba's destroyed club]. To a fearful Jara, Lord Krishna assured that everything happened by His desire. Leaving His mortal body on the earth Lord Krishna ascended to His abode.

It is said that the Pandavas tried to cremate the body of Lord Krishna by all the means under their disposal but failed. It is described in 'DaruBrahma Gita' by Jagannath Das and 'IndraNilamani Purana' by Bamadev. Ultimately the Pandavas floated the Lord Krishna's body in the ocean. It is not known how long it floated in the ocean. But at last it came to the eastern coast of Bharata Varssa and was discovered by ViswAbasu, the sabara (tribal) king. As instructed in dreams, Viswabasu worshipped the Daru-Brahma (Lord Krishna's mortal remains) in a secret cave in the dense forest with unique divine ecstasy.

In the mean while Vidyapati from the kingdom of Malaba (Madhya Pradesh -Gujrat) came in search of Lord Neelamadhab (instructed by his king, a great devotee of Lord Vishnu, who came to know in his dream that Lord Neelamadhab was being worshipped somewhere in the forest near river Mahanadi) and entered the forest of "Savara" kingdom crossing river Mahanadi as described in 'NiladriMahodaya', the great Sanskrit text. King Viswabasu offered him generous hospitality. During his stay in the "Savara" kingdom Vidyapati came to know about the secret worship of Viswabasu. But Viswabasu would never reveal any thing about that. Vidyapati, in the mean while, fell in love with Vidyapati's daughter Lalita and married her.

In course of time Lalita requested her father to show Nilamadhaba to Vidyapati. Viswabasu agreed on condition that his son-in-law would be taken to the location blindfolded.





Vidyapati was however very clever. He tied some mustard in the end of his upper cloth and scattered the same on both sides of his path, which grew up and later helped Vidyapati to find out the way to the secret place of worship. Vidyapati saw Nilamadhab in the dense forest under a banyan tree and prayed to Him with great devotion. Viswabasu came to know about it afterwards. He forgave Vidyapati and permitted him to stay in the place and worship.

During his stay one day Vidyapati saw a crow fell down in a pool of water in front of the Lord NilamAdhaba (deity) and turned into a four handed God and went straight to Vaikunth, the abode of Vishnu. Vidyapati was spiritually inspired after the incident and tried to imitate the crow. The four handed God from the heaven warned him against doing it and requested him to do his duty as a messenger of the king. If he would fail to give message of the whereabouts of the Nilamadhaba to Indradyumna, he would turn into a frog and would remain in that condition for one thousand years.

In the mean while Indradyumna, the king of Malaba, got the message and paid a visit to "Savara" kingdom to see Lord NilamAdhaba. He felt proud that he was a supreme monarch who would be credited with the installation of the image of the Lord in a magnificent temple. But the Lord doesn't tolerate ego and arrogance. The image of the Lord NilamAdhaba disappeared. The king regretted his weakness and suspected that the Nilamadhaba was stolen by Viswabasu and quickly led his army to arrest him. The Lord, however, saved the situation declaring in King's dream that nobody was responsible for his disappearance. He asked the king to build a temple and invite Brahma, the creator to celebrate the purification ceremony.

Indradyumna built a temple of the height of one hundred twenty cubits, went to the heaven to invite Brahma to perform the purification ceremony. Brahma was then praying and doing some rituals. He asked his royal guest to wait. Hundreds of years passed in human calculation. The earth underwent many changes. The temple was concealed under hills of sea-sands. GalamAdhaba became the ruler of Orissa. Once while traveling, the hoof of his horse struck against the flag post of the temple. The king cleared the sands and to his utter surprise, noticed a great temple and claimed it as his own construction. But at that time Indradyumna who came down from heaven with Brahma for the purification ceremony, however, claimed that he was the builder. A dispute ensued. But there was no living being left on the earth who could now act as witness. However it was settled by the four handed crow God named Bhusanda who was immortal, on the branch of a banyan tree called "kalpabata" ( the tree of eternity) acted as the first witness. GalmAdhaba (means mAdhaba, who lied) was proved to be liar whose statue was installed outside the temple premises. He was not paid any respect and remained unworshipped.

Brahma, when asked to perform the purification ceremony, couldn't perform that. He could only tie a flag at the top of the temple, the sight of which could free men in bondage. The great temple in Nilachala (Blue mountain) remained vacant without an image for many years. Indradyumna lay on the grass bed starving. The Lord appeared in dream and declared that He would come in form of a log of wood at the confluence of the river Banki and the sea.

Indradyumna went in a magnificent royal procession of elephant and soldiers and tried to draw the log with all his forces from the water at the mouth of the river, but was unable to move it. The king was sorry for relying too much on physical forces, lay starving there again. Lord



Jagannath appeared to him again in dream and advised him not to make a show of physical force, should approach the log with all humility. Viswabasu and Vidyapati the two devotees should drive a golden cart with silken pillow and carry the log and thus the log was easily carried to the temple premises.

Thousands of artisans were engaged to build the images. They boasted of their skill and failed to make any progress. The log seemed too hard for them. When the king Indradyumna, queen Gundicha and thousands of artisans were at a fix, an old man (Lord Vishwakarma) appeared on the scene and promised to build the image. No one believed him as he was bent with age and looked too weak. But he proved his efficiency by lifting easily this too heavy log. The log was put inside the main temple. The old artisan was to build the images within 21 days. The door sealed would not be opened before that period was completed.

Fourteen days passed. No sound was heard from inside the temple. Queen Gundicha was afraid that the old man might be dead. The king was compelled to break the seal and open the door. Lo, the images were there but unfinished and the old artisan was not found anywhere. Every one believed that he might be the Lord Himself. King Indradyumna was very sad. But the Lord told him in his dream that, that was His desire. So events happened accordingly. Hence the three Vighras of Lord Jagannatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra were worshipped unfinished.

The Lord, now pleased, gave all liberty to Indradyumna to ask for any boon. The king did not ask for a bigger kingdom, more wealth or a long lease of life or any thing pertaining to physical or earthly happiness. His prayer was the most extra-ordinary one. He wanted that there should be nobody left in his family to claim this huge temple or the images as his proud heritage, for that would mar the efficacy of the good deed. The boon was granted by the Lord.

Nobody knows how long the old temple existed. But historically speaking the current temple at Puri was built by Ananta Barman Chodaganga Dev in middle of 12th century. It is a curvilinear temple and crowning the top is the 'srichakra' (an eight spoked wheel) of Vishnu. The temple tower was built on a raised platform of stone and, rising to 214 feet above the inner sanctum where the deities reside, dominates the surrounding landscape. The pyramidal roofs of the surrounding temples and adjoining halls, or mandapas, rise in steps toward the tower like a ridge of mountain peaks

The huge temple complex covers an area of over 400,000 square feet, and is surrounded by a high fortified wall. It contains at least 120 temples and shrines. With its sculptural richness and fluidity of the Orissan style of temple architecture, it is one of the most magnificent monuments of India.

The main shrine is enclosed by a 20 feet high wall. Another wall surrounds the main temple. A magnificent sixteen-sided monolithic pillar sits in front of the main gate. The gate is guarded by two lions.

There are elaborate daily worship services. There are many festivals each year attended by thousands of people. The most important festival is the Rath Yatra or the Chariot festival in





June. This spectacular festival includes a procession of three huge chariots bearing the images of Jagannath, Balarama and Subhadra through the streets of Puri.

The temple is considered sacred mainly by people from within Hindu traditions. However some Buddhist, Jain and Sikh groups also offer the site special reverence.

In modern times the temple is busy and functioning. It has a huge temple kitchen and feeds holy food called Mahaprasad to thousands of devotees daily. The temple has over 6000 priests, along with 14000 other employees serving as their assistants and attendants waiting on Lord Jagannath, as well as pilgrim guides.

Now let's try to understand mystic part of Lord Jagannatha. The inner meaning is very important the application of which uplifts one to eternal bliss.

Let's start with the verse "jagannathah swAmi nayana-patha-gAmi bhavatu me" which is very popular among the devotees. This suggests very deep seated significance. When the "mantras" or verses are recited with real understanding and "bhAva", one can feel the power and the intent of the "mantra" is fulfilled. Let's understand the meaning.

Jagannathah means "Jagatasya Naathah iti Jagannathah" or the Lord of the Jagat is Jagannatha. What is meant by Jagat? Jagat means which always changes. It consists of three worlds namely waking, dreaming and deep sleep state. All these stages involve changes of some sort or other. The Lord of all these three worlds, who controls these, is Jagannatha. We can say that whoever exist consciously in all the three states as a witness to all is the Lord. Waker is not the same person as the dreamer and dreamer is not the same person as deep sleeper or deep sleeper is not the same person as the waker. The reason being the experiences, experienced by three different personalities are not the same and the personality while in one state cannot experience that of the other and all of them are mutually exclusive. Then the question is who is present at all these states upon which the change of "states" take place? The answer is Consciousness, the presence of which in the body gives the expression of life and after the destruction of the body also remains unchanged, THAT is Jagannatha.

Now the next word to understand is "Swami". "Swami" means Lord. We have already used the word Lord in the first place, then why we repeat it in the next? This is very important. Here Swami means who knows the "Swa" again which is all pervading Consciousness. We know that "Brahmavid Brahmaiba Bhabati", that means who knows Brahman, is Brahman itself. In this regard Jagannatha is Brahman, the Lord which is nothing but all pervading ONE.

Next word is "Nayana". "Nayana" means eyes. "Nayana PathagAml" means in the path of the eyes or exposed to the eyes. Here the "Nayana" is referred to as "Jnaana Chakssu" or eyes of knowledge. Here the devotee prays for the Consciousness to be exposed to his/her "Jnaana Chakssu". In Bhagavad Geetaa Lord says:



Bimudhaah naanupasyanti pasyanti Jnaana chakssushah

Lord is only accessible to the “Jnaana Chakssu”, not to the deluded, ordinary eyes.

If we sum up these we can have the meaning that:

“Let the all pervading consciousness be exposed to my eye of knowledge” or I pray for God realization so that I can see Lord in everything as it is expounded in the Geetaa:

Yo mAmaeba AsammuDhah jAnAti Purushottamam  
Sa sarbabid bhajati mAm sarva bhAbena Bhaarata.

Lord Krishna says to Arjuna, “O Arjuna, the undeluded person who knows Me in reality as the Supreme Person, he, knowing all, worships Me in Everything. This is true state of God realization.

Hence Lord Jagannatha is non sectarian and is not bounded by any thing. It is “SakssyAt ParaBrahman”.

The Trinity expressed by the three deities represent “AUM”, three bodies (coarse, subtle and causal), they are the “karma”. “jnAna” and “bhakti”, yet all of them point to That ONE.

The unique shapes of the deities gives the indication of Brahman which has no shape, yet supports all the shapes, without hands and feet, it moves fast, without eyes it sees, without ear it hears, it knows everything, nobody knows it.. The deities have hands, eyes, mouth etc. yet those are not the actual shapes. It is said in the shewtAshwetara Upanissad, 3/19

apANipAdo yavano grahitA  
pashyatyachakssuh sa shruNotyakarnah  
sabetti bedyam na cha tasyAstibettAh  
tamAhuragryam purussam mahAntam

It is further said in Gita that

Sarvatah pANipAdam tat sarvatokssi shiromukham  
Sarvatah shrutimalloke sarvamAbrutya tissThati.

"Everywhere are His hands and legs, His eyes, heads and faces, and He has ears everywhere. In this way the Lord exists, pervading everything."

Lord Jagannatha indicate that great Truth. He is “mahAbAhu” as He supports (does “bahana”) of everything and being. The description of Brahman in Upanissad is nicely portrayed in the shapes of deities of Lord Jagannatha, Lord Balabhadra and Mother Subhadra. They are three, yet they are ONE. They look unfinished, but they are complete of completion. Their three colors indicate all the colors of human beings (Jagannath is Black (inscrutability) in color, Lord Balabhadra is white (enlightenment) in color, sister Subhadra is yellow (goodness) in color) in the word. His arms are parallel, hence willing to embrace the devotees from all over the world





and his eyes are round with out any eye lids so he can be always looking after the welfare of his devotees with out any sleep around the clock.

At the main gate of the temple ( Simhadwara or Lions Gate) there are 22 steps up which one must climb to enter the inner temple. Before meeting the Lord Jagannath we must become purified of the six worldly fetters, i.e. lust, anger, jealousy, greed, delusion and arrogance . This can be done slowly, in steps. The first five steps represent the five outer sense organs eyes, ears, nose , tongue and the skin. The next five steps represent the five prANas or life – prANa, apAna, vyAna, udAna, samAna. The next five steps represent the inner senses or tan-mAtras : rupa-sight, rasa- taste, gandha- smell, shabda-sound, sparsa- touch. Then the next five steps represent the pancha-kossas or sheaths (annamaya, prAnamaya, manomaya, vijnAnamaya and Anandamaya). When “chitta” is purified by the correct use of “buddhi”, ego is immersed in the Universal Truth. Then only the vision of Jagannatha or the all pervading Consciousness or God realization is possible.

All the festivities in the Lord Jagannatha temple are full of inner meaning. For example Ratha Yatra or the car festival has a very deep meaning. Here the three deities come outside of the temple, sit in three chariots, go to the Gundicha temple and come back on the tenth day to the main temple. This journey indicates the journey of life in each human body. Whoever realizes the Self in the body temple, realizes the Lord and attain ever blissful and conduct all the activities in the world as Jivanmukta.

Another important event is “nava kalebara” or new body. In special AssADha month the old outer coverings of the deities are discarded and new coverings are replaced. But the “secret objects” inside the coverings are exchanged from old to new. This indicates the continuous cycle of birth and death. Soul never dies, but the bodies do as said in the Bhagavad Gita: “dehi nityam abadhoyam dehe sarvasya bhArata”. The Lord is there in everybody. He is the life giver. But few are aware of that.

The realization of inner meaning is the goal of outer worship. Just as a model is presented to understand the big picture, the deities are the models through which the universal Truth is expressed. Our rituals, “mantras”, accessories of worship, objects of worship, festival observations etc. all are created to realize the ultimate Truth i.e. the Brahman; God is One. Everything is God. That is the realization of ultimate goal the unique oneness of apparent triad Sat-Chit-Ananda. The microcosm represents the macrocosm. Each human body is a Bhagavad Gita where the Lord is teaching the Truth every moment. By adjusting the lens of our intellect, we can understand that and apply the same in our lives to free ourselves from all bondages. That is the secret of Lord Jagannatha and His stories. Let’s all of us direct our goal towards the supreme Truth and realize ultimate bliss and peace.

OM SriJagannathArpaNamastu!  
OM Tat Sat OM.

*Manoj Panda lives in Detroit, Michigan.*

*Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value.*



# A JAGANNATH TEMPLE IN ORISSA

**Shashadhar & Meera Mohapatra**

**I**n Srimad Bhagavad Gita the Blessed Lord says:

dAtavyam iti yad dAnam , diyate 'nupakariNe  
deshe kAle ca pAtre cha, tad dAnam sAttvikam smrtam

It means that the charity which is performed as duty, at the proper time and place, to a worthy person, and without expectation of return, is considered to be “sAttwika” (which is the best) charity.

What could be a better gift than the donation to the construction of temple for Lord SriJagannath in Orissa which is to inspire thousands of people in the path of “satya”, “dharma”, “shanti” and “prema” ?

JSS (Jagannatha Seva Sanstha) is a charitable organization, created more 3 years ago, to strengthen the foundation of Jagannath Culture in rural Orissa, to help local schools, poor and sick people as well as needy students. JSS is building this temple to meet one of its goals.

We (my family) visited Orissa in August, 2005. It was August 12. The morning was gorgeous. The sky was clear and bright. The Lord smiled on us and gave His blessings. The groundbreaking ceremony “Bhumi Puja” (picture) was performed on that day with pomp and ceremony. During the ceremony a few drops of rain fell from the sky. Everybody including the priest said that rain was a good sign. After the puja vegetarian meals were served to everybody.

During the groundbreaking ceremony, our priest advised us that we should go to different places, meet with people and ask for alms “Viksyā” before laying the foundation stone of the temple. We asked him the reason for this. He explained by saying that people usually take pride when they build a temple or start a big project. They should not have that feeling in their minds at all. Therefore, one should go and ask for alms like a poor beggar. By doing that one not only gets rid of those negative thoughts but, also gets support and blessing from the people in the community and the Lord. It made a perfect sense to us. Since, we had to leave the country and were unable to be there on November 20th (foundation day), two of my sisters along with some volunteers from our village went from door to door in the neighboring villages with begging bowls in their hands in their bare feet and collected six thousand rupees. Both of my sisters had requested me and my wife to do so. I take this opportunity to ask our dear friends, brothers and sisters for their help (“Viksyā”) for this noble cause.

A major portion of the land for this temple project was donated by my family. Another piece of land was donated by one of my uncles in our village, a retired high school head master.

There is also plan to buy some lands adjacent to this property in the future. It is a long-term plan. The foundation work started on November 20, 2005 and it is progressing very well (picture). The original target to finish the temple work is within five years. This target date may





be reduced if we get external help from various donors including individuals and organizations.

The main temple has been designed like the temple at Puri. There would be three temples. The biggest temple at the back will be 65' high, the one in the middle will be 35' and the one at the front entrance will be 45' high. The temple will be built in three phases. The first phase consists of base of the temple (picture). It includes a prayer hall of 62' L x 46'W x 11'H. This prayer hall shall be used for religious discourses, shelter during natural disasters, providing vocational training to poor people, teaching computer to the children, renting for wedding and thread ceremonies etc. The second phase will build the actual three temples on the top of this hall. The initial estimate for this main temple was 50 lakhs (INR). But, recently the prices of building materials (cement, rods, chips etc.) have gone up. There are also plans to build a "Laxmi Mandir" at the side of the main temple, a kitchen, a residential quarter for the priest and his family, temple boundary, a pond and a public library. There is an existing pond nearby. It will be renovated to make it bigger and deeper. There is also a plan to create a trust fund to support the annual expenses of the temple including "Rath Yatra". The complete plan is estimated now to be more than 150 lakhs (INR).

I'll tell you a story of my childhood days. I was very young. I grew up in a small village. There were about 200 people at that time. Half of the people were "Sabarnas" and half were "Asabarna" (Harijana). I had no friends in my village. My older sister, a handful of my uncles and nieces were there but, they were older than me. I had lots of spare time. I was very naughty. I used to give hard times to small children especially who come to our village for begging. Sometimes, they come to our house almost routinely. My mother used to give food to each and every person who ever came to our door. Once there was a girl of my age who came for begging. I was scaring her away. My mother was begging me not to do so. I asked my mother, "why do you give them food always? You make them lazy". She would always give some reasons to please me. She would say: "she does not have a mother". I ask "How do you know she does not have a mother ? Then she would say "I have heard from other people". I knew she was telling just like that. Some other times she would say: "I give them for you guys". I ask, "why do you give them for us". She would say " If I give them then God will give more to my kids". I argue with her saying, "How do you know that God will give us in return "? She would say " I am your mother, trust me what I say". If I still insist, she would say : "Please let me do what I want to do. It is ok for me if you decide not to give anything to the poor and needy people when you grow up".

I will tell another story. Like a ritual in every household, we were taught to bow down to the Lord every morning and every evening. I just bow down and don't say anything or ask for anything. Once, I asked my mother. Do you say or ask something to the Lord when you bow down? She laughed and laughed. She said "you are so stupid". Then she was quiet for sometime. She didn't say a word. Perhaps, she didn't know an easy answer. I didn't give up. I insisted to get an answer from her that day. I said if you don't tell me then from today onwards I am not going to bow down to the Lord. I was a very stubborn child. She realized that I was serious. Then she said to me to repeat "O' Lord ! Give me knowledge, wisdom, long life, fulfill my wishes, and keep everybody happy, healthy and peaceful". It was a "mantra" to me. As of now, when I bow to the Lord, I chant those lines that my mother taught me several decades ago. This poor woman didn't have a degree from a school or college. She knew only how to read and write. But, she knew one universal language, which is love for all and hatred for none.



Whether it is because of God's grace or because of our hard work, we are His blessed sons and daughters. I feel that God is an integral part of life. We are all God's children. I also feel that it is our duty and responsibility to help those who are less fortunate and deprived and also the community as a whole that helped us to dream a dream and fulfill that dream. Now, it is our payback time. May be God will give to us more in our next birth and to our children as my mother believed in till she breathed her last. I add a beautiful quotation by Albert Pike "What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal".

As a fellow Oriya, I appeal to all our brothers and sisters in India, USA, Canada and all over the world for your help and support. It is said "Seva hi Dharma". One can do seva in various forms. One can give his/her time or advice, share his/her past experience, and above all one can generously contribute towards the temple fund.

Dr. Naresh Ch. Das has agreed that one can donate by writing a check to JOGA and mention it as "temple fund" in order to get a tax break. JOGA can write a check back to us. We are open-minded and are willing to accept any help. No amount is small when it is used for the Lord's cause.

Your kind donation to complete this noble project is very much appreciated. As we said before, it will be tax deductible. Please write the check to "JOGA", mention that it is for temple project and mail it to Dr. Naresh Ch. Das, 4525 Rutherford Way, Dayton, MD 21036, phone: 410.531.7445, email: [nareshdas@yahoo.com](mailto:nareshdas@yahoo.com). May Lord Jagannatha bless you, your friends and families. For questions, comments and suggestions please contact us.

*Humble Regards,*

*Shashadhar & Meera Mohapatra*

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*(We are grateful to Mr. Manoj Kr. Panda from Michigan for his valuable input on this article).*







*That deep emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.*



## Three Blessed Trees

Sneha P. Mohanty

In a deep forest on a mountaintop, there were three little trees growing up tall and big. The first one was Mahogany, the second one Teak, and the third one *Neem*. Growing up so close to one another, they became good friends. They talked about what they would like to be and what might happen to them. Mahogany, the first one, looked down to the ground and saw a jasmine vine surrounding his trunk. The vine was full of pink flowers with a sweet fragrance. Mahogany was happy that it was covered with such fragrant flower garlands. Then he said, "I would like to be an Armoire, carved with flower creepers and leaves, and I would protect the precious wardrobe of Kings and Queens inside my magnificent doors." The second tree, Teak, looked down and saw many people waiting to cross the river. There was a small boat, too small to carry them all, so many of them had to wait in the hot sun. Teak said, "I would like to be a big, strong ferry boat so that I could carry all the people together." The third one, *Neem*, looked down and saw cows and sheep grazing on the pasture. He said, "this is such a beautiful place that I would not like to leave this mountain top at all. I would like to grow tall and touch heaven. When people would rest under my green branches, they would look up and think of God." As the years passed by, the rain and the sunshine made the trees taller, stronger, and more beautiful.

One day the three trees saw three woodcutters coming towards them. The first woodcutter looked at the Mahogany tree and said, "This tree looked so shiny and strong that I will make it an Armoire and sell it to Kings and Queens who would keep their precious wardrobe in it. And I would be rich." With a swoop of his sharp, shining axe, the Mahogany tree fell down on the ground. The tree was happy thinking that it would hold the precious treasures that it had dreamt about for a long time. The second woodcutter looked at the Teak tree with strong and long branches. He thought it was perfect for a big boat that could be used by many people to cross the river. With a wink, he cut the Teak tree. The third woodcutter gazed carefully at the *Neem* tree and said, it was not yet the time to cut it and he decided to let it grow bigger and stronger. It would be best to cut the tree during the time of *Naba Kalebar* that comes every 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, or 19<sup>th</sup> year, the time of rebirth of Lord *Jagannath*, when the deities were made of new *Neem* wood.

In the mean time, the first wood cutter took the Mahogany tree to a carpenter and ordered him to make it an Armoire. The carpenter was amazed to see such a fine piece of Mahogany wood. At the same time, the *Jagannath* temple head priest ordered a *Bibhana*, (swinging cradle) for *Radha Krishna*. During spring, Lord Krishna, another form of *Jagannath*, and his consort *Radha* were taken to the *Bibhana* for five days. The busy carpenter by mistake made an Armoire in a different wood, but made the *Bibhana* in the Mahogany wood, carving it with beautiful decorations of flowers, vines, leaves, gods, goddesses, peacocks, devotees, and dancing girls. The first tree, Mahogany, lost the hope of being an Armoire, but became a beautiful swinging cradle for the God *Krishna*.

The second woodcutter took the Teak tree to a big boat builder and the Teak tree was excited to





become a big boat. After examining the tree, the boat builder said that the wood was suitable only for a small boat. The second woodcutter was disappointed, but sold it to the carpenter who was making small boats. The carpenter stacked it into his storage. On a summer day, the head priest came to the carpenter shop and ordered a small boat made with the Teak wood for Lord *Jagannath's* boat ride. During the summer time, *Madan Mohan*, a replica of God *Jagannath*, was taken for a boat ride in a nearby huge pond, *Narendra*, in Puri. The God was covered with sandal wood paste. The occasion is called *Chandan Yatra* and it is celebrated for twenty one days. The Teak tree was excited to become a small boat for carrying the Lord *Madan Mohan*, also known as *Krishna*.

For a long time, the *Neem* tree remained lonely. Then one day, at the time of *Naba Kalebara*, some chanting and dancing devotees came near the *Neem* tree and worshiped it with flowers, mango leaves, and Ganges water. Then they cut down the *Neem* tree with an axe and carried it in a bullock cart. After sizing the *Neem* tree to a big log, the log was dumped with two other *Neem* logs into a big pond. The *Neem* tree was sad being put into a muddy pond. It only wanted to live on a mountaintop so it could look at the sky and God. After some months those holy priests came back and carried the three *Neem* logs to a holy carpenter. The carpenter carved the log into an idol, with a wheel-like round black face, round eyes, without hands, legs, and ears and called Him Lord *Jagannath*. The other two logs became *Balabhadra* and *Subhadra*. The *Neem* tree did not imagine turning into such an unusual statue. It heard the devotees talking about the idols' unusual eyes. They said that these eyes are the sun and the moon in the face of the Lord *Jagannath*, the image of the formless supreme Brahman (universe).

On an auspicious day, the three idols, *Jagannath*, his brother *Balabhadra*, and his sister *Subhadra*, all made out of *Neem* wood, were placed in a big temple, in Puri. *Jagannath's* wish to propagate the universal brotherhood of mankind came alive. Every year millions of people around the world come to worship these trinity as the Lord of the universe, on the holy land of Puri, Orissa. The trinity is the symbol of peace, harmony and happiness. Every morning, when the Sun rises with bright colors, the three trees know in their hearts that they are blessed by Lord's love.

The author, a regular contributor to The OSA Journals, is inspired by a traditional folk story, "The Tale of Three Trees" by Angela Elwell Hunt, Lion Publishing, Colorado Spring, 1989.

*Appearances are often deceiving*



## As We Cast Our Nets

Ankita Mohanty

*Pray that we may remember our God.*

What is God to you?  
Is this God a bearded old man?  
Or a long-haired leader?  
A fiercely red-tongued woman,  
Or pot-bellied lover of peace?

What is God to you?

Is He Jerusalem or the holy Ganges?  
Is She Himalayas or Tibet?  
Is Her head covered in a shawl?  
or does He proudly wave a flag  
above His head?

To me, God is all that we can see  
and believe to be beautiful.

Vermillion etched on my mother's forehead  
speaks God to me.  
Sun that highlights the neighbor kid's  
sidewalk chalk  
enlightens God for me.  
A lovers' kiss, real and raw,  
sings God for me.  
The laughter of a beggar child  
cries God for me.  
And the capability of humanity to create and  
destroy  
emulates God for me.

I remember this God when I find:  
An orange I can easily peel  
The snooze button on my alarm  
The days toothpaste does not sting my lip

The pain of a scratched-up elbow and a  
breaking home  
and the strength it takes to find a Band-  
Aid—for both.

Late night phone conversations, which  
forcefully remind me that I am not alone,  
These are the things that remind me that  
God is...

Not a fish, able to be  
Captured in net named  
*Religion* with not enough holes.  
Do you not believe?  
that God, above all,  
deserves holes?

Our humanity begs of us  
to forget our fisherman instincts  
and perhaps remember our God.

*Ankita Mohanty is 18 years old. She lives in Mount Pleasant, Michigan.*

*Example is the best precept.*





## DIVINITY

Tania Mishra

Fragmented wishes, Collapsing values,  
Thundering Runaways of life  
Wrapped me up to something called "Shelter"  
Shelter so warm, and eternal,  
Wishes so calm and forever  
Where can one find them except "Divinity"  
No flora. no sticks,  
just peace around.  
With love astound  
Introspecting Myself,  
it was a truth unveiled  
that its Divinity that can save me  
its being divine that I can lead my life,  
The unknown "Supra" is unaware of fire, flowers, fragrance  
Just aware of heart full of love  
A heart that prays for all,  
at all times to come  
No wishes of own but just to thank  
That yet another day in my life to go  
with divinity so divine.

*Tania Mishra lives in Colorado Spring with her husband Ipsit Mishra*



*Seeing into darkness is clarity, Knowing how to yield is strength*



# RUDRAKSHYA

Purna Chandra Mishra

**R**udrakshya, the wonder bead is commonly known as the Utrasum Bead Tree. In botanical term this is known as Elaiocarpus/Elaeocarpus Ganitrus Roxb. It is said that only one who has the divine blessings of Lord Shiva (The destroyer in the Trinity of Gods) gets the opportunity of wearing this divine bead. Rudra means Shiva and Aksh means eye.

## The Legend

According to the religious text Devi Bhagwat Puran there was a Demon known as Tripurasur who was very strong and had divine energy and power. Due to these qualities he became arrogant and started to trouble deities and sages. No one was able to defeat this strong demon in war. On seeing his immoral actions Brahma, Vishnu and Other deities prayed to the Devahidev Mahadeva (The greatest, lord of Lords Shiva) to destroy evil Tripurasur. Lord Shiva closed his eyes and meditated for some time. When he opened his lotus shaped eyes tears fell from them on the earth. Wherever his tears fell the Rudrakshya tree grew. The fruits that grow on this tree are known as Rudrakshya beads. Lord Shiva then used his deadly divine weapon known as Aghor and destroyed Tripurasur. The seeds of the tree were distributed on the earth.

## Rudrakshya for Health

Rudrakshya, are the original Vedic Beads of Power worn by the Yogis of India and the Himalayas for thousands of years to maintain health and to gain self empowerment and fearless life on their path to Enlightenment and Liberation.

Historically the positive effects that have been exhibited in the wearers Neurophysiology, Personality and Physical Health has resulted in their being used widely in the Eastern Cultures of India, China and Japan by Hindus, Buddhists and followers of Zen. A combined study to research the Biomedical Implications of Rudrakshya was conducted with the Departments of Biochemistry, Electrical Engineering, Psychiatry, General Medicine and Psychology. This study proved and documented the powers and effects of Rudrakshya Beads scientifically with reproducible results.

Research has proven that Rudrakshya have powerful Electromagnetic, Paramagnetic and Inductive Properties that vary from the different Mukhis or facets (the different number of divisions found on the surface of each Bead). They also found that wearing or performing Japa with a particular Mukhi or set of Mukhis of the Rudrakshya Beads created specific electrical impulses that are sent to the brain through the process of galvanic skin response stimulating certain brain centers that transfer information.

When Rudrakshya Beads are worn over the heart and Rudrakshya Malas are revolved in Japa they interface and integrate with the human body at a silent subtle level of Consciousness. Due





to their dielectric and magnetic properties the Rudrakshya Beads initiate and effect positive change in our Neurophysiology. The Rudrakshya Effect brings the wearer into the Alpha State of present moment living that all Spiritual Disciplines teach as the path to self-empowerment, fearless life, Enlightenment and Liberation. The Alpha State produced in the brain boosts the confidence and inner strength of the wearer significantly and as a result the heart beat, circulation, function of endocrine glands and activity of neurons and respiration is normalized in the physical body. It was proven that wearing of Rudrakshya controlled heart beat and had a positive effect on Blood Pressure, Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Palpitations and Lack of Concentration. It was also found that Rudrakshya Beads have anti aging properties based on their Electromagnetism.

### **Astrological properties**

According to yogis and astrologers, Rudrakshya are very influential in removing bad effects of planets. Gems are used specially for removing the bad effects of planets, but if they are unable to pacify the evil influence - it is most advisable to wear Rudrakshya described in the following lines. Then not only planets are pacified but comfort and pleasure also come to its wearer and he becomes a favorite of Lord Shiva. Therefore a man must know which Rudrakshya bead will be useful to him.

### **Electrical properties**

The ability to send out subtle electrical impulses & inductive vibrations and act as a Dielectric as in a capacitor to store electrical energy. Our Human body, The Central Nervous System, Autonomous, Sympathetic & Para sympathetic Nervous System and various other Organ systems can be considered a complex Bio Electronic circuit. Constant pumping of blood by the heart, blood circulation, the transmission of various impulses -Touch, Noise, Smell, Sight, Taste to the brain and the continuous movement of Neurons and Neurotransmitters in the brain and Nervous system generates electrical impulses. This is termed as Bioelectricity. This flow of Bioelectricity facilitates movement of information from the brain to various parts of the body and back. What we feel, think, hear, taste, see. Perceive all depends on the subtle flow of Bioelectric current. This flow of Bioelectric current is occurs due to the existence of potential differences or the different energy levels between different parts of the body. As long as the flow of Bioelectricity is smooth the body functions normally and we have the feeling of being in control.

In modern age with intense competition the Stress levels have increased tremendously. Almost every individual has problems of Stress and Stress related ailments like insomnia, alcoholism, depression, Maladjustment, heart diseases, skin diseases etc. Any Doctor will confirm that almost 95% of the ailments are Psychosomatic or Stress related (i.e.) originating from Mind. When there is Stress or Maladjustment corresponding Stress signals are sent to the Central Nervous systems, there is an increased activity or abnormal of Neurons and Neuro transmitters. The magnitude of change will depend on the cause and specific case. When such a thing occurs and it occurs continuously, streamlined flow of electrical signals throughout the Mind-Body interface is disrupted and it makes us feel uncomfortable and we are not able to act



with our full efficiency. Our Blood circulation becomes Non-ideal and we feel various illnesses. Unfortunately this happens all the time. Rudrakshya beads act as a Stabilizing Anchor.

### **Magnetic properties**

Rudrakshya beads have both paramagnetic and diamagnetic with the most important property of Dynamic Polarity. We all are most probably aware of the beneficial healing properties of magnets. Magnetic Healing is becoming extremely popular off late and everyone who has been using magnets for healing has been getting the benefits and found overall betterment and rejuvenation. Rudrakshya beads retain most of the properties of Magnets but it is unparallel in one aspect, that of the ability to change it's polarity or the Property of Dynamic Polarity. The basic way of healing is based on the fact that the when the passage of arteries and veins which carry blood to and from Heart to all the parts of the body is blocked or reduced due to variety of reasons, various illnesses creep. Blood carries oxygen and energy to various parts of the body and cleanses it off waste materials. Any disruption of the smooth flow of Blood circulation is bound to cause illnesses. We experience pain and uneasiness due to improper blood circulation. Every cell in the blood as well as the Arteries and veins are charged either positively or negatively. Magnets have the poles Positive (+) and Negative (-).

When magnets are passed on various parts of the body the opposite poles of the magnets and that of cells get attracted and there is an expansion of the passage .The Arteries and veins open up to facilitate streamlined blood circulation. When there is a streamlining of blood circulation most of the illnesses get automatically healed and we feel better and rejuvenated.

But with magnets the polarity is fixed. When magnets are brought near a particular part of the body it opens up only those sections of veins and arteries where there is a matching of polarities hence complete healing and streamlining of blood circulation cannot be ensured. We experience healing and feel better but we can still go much further with Dynamic Polarity of Rudrakshya beads.

Various Literature mention of powerful Anti Aging properties of Rudrakshya beads. This is mainly because of the Dynamic Polarity of the Rudrakshya a bead thus the healing powers of Rudrakshya are far superior to that of Magnets. In some sense Rudrakshya beads can be termed to have some additional life or Intelligence as against Magnets.

### **Chemical Composition of the Rudrakshya Beads**

The Rudrakshya beads are mainly plant products that contain Carbon (50.024%), Hydrogen (17.798%), Oxygen (30.4531%), Nitrogen (0.9461%), and different trace elements in a combined form. The gaseous elements in the following proportion:

The following elements are also present albeit in less quantities:  
Aluminum, Calcium, Chlorine, Copper, Cobalt, Nickel, Iron, Magnesium, Manganese, Phosphorous, Potassium, Sodium, Silicon Oxide and Zinc.





## **Rudrakshya (Rx) Experimental Plantation in Orissa**

There were around 5-10 Rudrakshya trees in Orissa and many believed that Orissa soil was not suitable for Rudrakshya plantation. No fully-grown Rudrakshya tree was seen in the state of Orissa as of 1997. On an experimental basis few Rudrakshya saplings were planted in the year 1997 by Bhubaneswar based NGO SAHEET. The results were amazing. Just after 4 years i.e. in 2001 the trees grew to a height of 20-25 ft high and were full of fruits. It is seen that numbers of fruits were increased year after year. A tree, naturally producing different mukhis of beads 1 to 14. Mainly seen that the pancha (5) mukhi percentage is very high. The saplings were planted in geographically distributed areas of Orissa including Bhubaneswar, Puri, Berhampur, Sambalpur & Baleswar. Almost all the trees are fully-grown. This created news in the city and many newspapers including local TV stations published the success stories of sacred Rudrakshya Plantation in Orissa soil. The effort was well appreciated by the Governor of Orissa and received by the forest department.

In the year 2003-2004 more than 500 Rx saplings have been planted in different areas of Orissa State. Hence, plenty of beads will be available in coming 4-5 years for preparation of medicine in huge quantity to market abroad. Currently steps are being taken to extend plantation of Rx trees every in rural Orissa.

Rudrakshya - the wonder bead not only controls the planetary system of our body but also helps in curing almost every disease. In today's world many reputed Doctors, Scientists and Researchers have done studies on the many facets of Rudrakshya beads, and their work has not been in vain. Today they are implementing Rudrakshya beads for medical treatment.

## **Rules to Wear**

In general, the wearer and the worshipper of Rudrakshya are blessed with prosperity, peace and health. Yet there are certain precautions to be taken such as:

- (a) Mala that we wear in neck is made up of 108 beads or 54 beads or 27 beads. Do not use your Japa malas for wearing purpose because both have different purposes.
- (b) Clean your mala/beads regularly after an interval of 15 days. Dip in Luke warm water. Add a liquid soap. Keep it for about half an hour. Remove and just wipe from soft cloth. Do not rub strongly or use wire brushes. Apply some mustard oil on the beads by using a brush.
- (c) Before wearing, take mala or bead to a Shiva temple. Offer 'Rudra Abhishek' and then start wearing. But if your mala is blessed prior to purchase, you can wear it by chanting "Om Namah Shivaya" at least for three times.
- (d) Many astrologers also worked on Rudrakshya. They suggest 'Mukhi' based on Birth Rashi and Nakshastra.



(e) Someone desires seriously to come out of unwanted habits and live a life of purity can wear Rudrakshya and may find them free soon wearing it. This has happened to many. It may happen to you also if you will strongly.

### **Treatment Module**

1. For diseases affecting the skin (like chronic fungal and bacterial ulcer) the wound should be washed by Gaurishankar Rudrakshya water. Gaurishankar Rudrakshya should be put in a glass of warm water for whole night and early morning the wound should be cleaned with this water.
2. Diseases like AIDS, cancer which are more prone to secondary diseases in which the occurrences of secondary diseases could be prevented by drinking a glass of water of 21 face Rudrakshya overnight dipped.
3. Drinking the boiled milk with 14 face Rudrakshya can treat respiratory system diseases (Chronic Pulmonary diseases, pulmonary hypertension, cough and tuberculosis).
4. Wearing and drinking a glass of 11-face Rudrakshya dipped overnight treat diseases of circulatory system (hypertension, chronic heart failure, and congenital diseases of heart). According to the experimental view defined value of Rudrakshya in treating different kind of diseases are more beneficial to use for internally (drinking) over wearing Rudrakshya. Every mukhi have its own specific action so proper consultation is needed for solution and cure.
5. Rudrakshya can be used as acupuncture therapy by rubbing Rudrakshya in external body part like hand, forehead, and stomach. It will stimulate nerves for appropriate action to come in a minute.

### **Economic Importance**

Plantation of Rudrakshya has following socio-economic and environmental benefits:

- Rudrakshya tree bears fruit in 3 to 4 years. Each tree can produce 1000 fruits/year. If 85% fruit are five-faced and after excluding the processing cost, the net benefit (based on present market value of five-faced Rudrakshya, which is Rs. 24.00) will be around, Rs.20,000.00/year i.e. Rs 1600.00/month.
- Plantation of Rudrakshya, collection of beads, marketing the beads, making ornaments out of beads can put together to project it as a Small industry. From plantation to market, the Rudrakshya beads involve so many step that each step can generate enough employment to cut down our unemployment to a considerable size.
- Environmentally, the above-proposed small industry is pollution free, as well Rudrakshya plantation can be a part of social forestry project of Orissa Government. The Rudrakshya trees grow fast and almost maintenance free.

*For more information about Rudrakshya beads as well as plantation in Orissa please contact at the following address.*

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*Love is a better teacher than duty.*







©Sharat kolke

*Orissan Glory....*

# OUR ANCIENT ORISSA

SASADHAR SAHOO

## INTRODUCTION

In former times Orissa was part of a kingdom called Kalinga. On top of their power the Kalinga kings came into a conflict with emperor Ashoka. In 260 B.C. Ashoka defeated the Kalinga dynasty and destroyed their army. But the senseless killing shocked the emperor. He abstained from violence and was converted to Buddhism. Later, with the introduction of Hinduism, a golden age began in the region. From 9th century onwards thousands of temples were built. Many of them are well conserved, despite demolition by intruding Muslim armies. Between 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Moguls, Afghans and Marathas ruled the region. In this period the first Europeans came to Orissa. The Portuguese arrived in 1514, followed by the Dutch in 1625. In 1803 the British came to power. Half a century before they had defeated their European rivals at the Battle of Plassey in the northern region of Bengal. The British divided the area in three districts. Each of these districts was governed by a different administration. At times the people stood up against the British government. The British territorial division crossed natural and linguistic boundaries. After many requests of the Oriya people the British formed a province Orissa on 1st April 1936. The present state Orissa was formed in 1949 by admitting interior territories still within the natural boundaries of the area.

## LOCATION

Oriyas make up about 75 percent of Orissa's population with the rest belonging to various tribal groups. Oriyas traditionally lived at the delta of the Mahanadi River and in coastal lowlands along the Bay of Bengal. The Garjat Hills and Eastern Ghats are hills on the edge of India's Deccan Plateau, and they lie inland within Oriya land. To the west of these hills are interior plateaus. These hills and plateaus are some of the most heavily forested regions in India. The Mahanadi River flows across the middle of the state. Orissa receives about 60 inches (150 cm) of rainfall during the monsoon season, which begins in July and ends in October. It has cool winters with temperatures of about 68° F (20° C). In mid-February, the thermometer begins to climb as the hot, humid summer weather approaches. In June, average temperatures approach 85° F (30° C).

## LANGUAGE

Oriya is an Indo-Aryan language closely related to Bengali, Assamese, and other languages of eastern India. It has its own script and is one of official languages of India. Spoken Oriya varies throughout the region. It has a distinctive script, traceable to sixth-century inscriptions. It has thirteen vowels and thirty-six consonants (linguistically, spoken Oriya has six vowels, two semivowels, and twenty-nine consonants).





## FOLKLORE

Puri, a coastal town located at the south end of the Mahanadi Delta, has a famous shrine to Krishna in his form of *Jagannath* (lord of the universe). As one story goes, a hunter saw Krishna in the forest, thought he was a deer and killed him. He left the deity's body under a tree, where a pious person found it, cremated it, and placed the ashes in a box. The God Vishnu then asked a king to make an image from these sacred relics. The king asked Vishvakarman, an artisan, to do the work. He said he would if he were allowed to do it without being disturbed. The king became impatient after fifteen days and disturbed the artisan. The artisan was so angry that he never finished the work. To this day, the image is only a stump without arms or legs. The God Brahma gave the image its eyes and a soul. The temple in Puri keeps this legend alive by representing Krishna as a block of wood.

## RELIGION

The people of Orissa profess Hinduism overwhelmingly (96.4%), with Christianity (1.73 %), Islam (1.49 %), Sikhism (0.04 %) and Buddhism (0.04 %) trailing far behind. Obviously many Tribal groups have declared Hinduism as their religion. Oriyas are mostly Hindu. They worship Shiva, the Mother Goddess, the Sun God, and many other Hindu deities. The Vaishnava sect particularly reveres Krishna in his form as Jagannath. Many local deities and spirits also influence Oriya life and activities. In the villages each Brahman priest has a number of client families of Kshatriya, Vaisya, and some Sudra castes. There are also magicians (*gunia*) practicing witchcraft and sorcery. *Kalisi* or shamans are consulted to discover the causes of crises and the remedies.

## MAJOR HOLIDAYS

Oriya celebrates most Hindu festivals and several regional holidays. A large number of rituals and festivals mostly following the lunar calendar are observed. Their biggest regional holiday is the Chariot Procession (Ratha Yatra) of Jagannath in Puri. It takes place in June or July, and attracts visitors from all over World. Images of Jagannath and two lesser deities are taken from the Jagannath temple to a country house about 2 miles away. The images are placed in cars or chariots and pulled by pilgrims. The word "juggernaut" comes from "Jagannath" and refers to the God's massive chariot. Other important rituals are: New Year festival (Bishuba Sankranti) in mid-April; fertility of earth festival (Raja Parab); festival of plowing cattle (Gahma Punein); ritual of eating the new rice (Nabanna); festival worshiping the goddess of victory, known otherwise as Dashahara (Durga Puja); festival of the unmarried girls (Kumar Purnima); solar-calendar harvest festival (Makar Sankranti); fast for Lord Shiva (Shiva Ratri); festival of colors and the agricultural New Year (Dola Purnima); and, finally, festival worshiping Lord Krishna at the end of February. In November-December (lunar month of Margashira) every Thursday the Gurubara OSHA ritual for the rice goddess Lakshmi is held in every home.



## LIVING CONDITIONS

Oriyas mostly live in villages. Their villages usually have houses built along the sides of a single street and a small hamlet outside the central area where lower caste families live. Houses are usually rectangular and have mud walls and a gabled roof thatched with straw. Sometimes, richer families have a double roof, a small guesthouse, and a fence. Rooms in a typical Oriya home are used as cattle sheds, grain storage areas, bedrooms, and kitchens. Usually, part of the kitchen is set a side as an area where the family can pray. Furnishings include wooden beds, tables, and chairs. Oriya often decorates their walls with pictures of gods and goddesses, political leaders, and film stars.

## FAMILY LIFE

Oriya prefers to marry within their caste or sub caste, and outside their clan. An Oriya proverb states that "marital relatives from distant places are beautiful, as distant hills are enchanting," and so people often seek a marital partner from outside their village. Marriages are arranged. Marriage partners must not belong to the same *gotra* (mythical patrilineal descent group). A more costly dowry has replaced bride price among the lower and middle castes for the bridegroom among all classes and castes. After Marriage, residence is patrilocal, with the bride assuming the *gotra* of the husband. The Hindu marriage was ideally for this life and beyond, but since 1956 divorce has been permitted under legal procedures.

## SOCIO-POLITICAL Organizations

Orissa is a state in the Republic of India, which has an elected president. The governor is the head of Orissa, and the chief minister is elected head of the government of Orissa.

**Social Organization.** Traditional Oriya society is Hierarchically organized primarily on the basis of caste (and sub caste) and occupations and secondarily on the basis of social class. The highest castes, Brahman, are priests and teachers of the Great Tradition. Below them in descending order of status are: the Kshatriya, warriors and rulers; the Vaisya, or traders; and the Sudra, or skilled and unskilled workers and service holders. The occupations involving manual and menial work are low in status, and polluting occupations like skinning dead animals or making shoes are associated with the lowest castes, the Untouchables. Astrictive status in the caste system is sometimes checked now by acquired status in the class system. In rural Orissa patron-client relationships are common and social mobility is difficult.

**Political Organization.** Orissa is divided into thirteen Districts (*zilla*), and each district is divided into subdivisions (*tahsils*) for administrative purposes, into police stations (*thana*) for law-and-order purposes, and into community development blocs (*blok*) for development purposes. There are village-cluster committees (*panchayat*) with elected Members and a head (*sarpanch*) for the lowest level of self-administration and development. The community development bloc has a *panchayat samiti* or council of panchayats headed by the chairman, with all the sarpanch as members. Each caste or populous sub caste in a group of adjacent Villages also had a *jati*





*panchayat* for enforcing values and institutional discipline. The traditional *gram panchayat*, consisting of the leaders of several important castes in a village, was for maintaining harmony.

**Social Control and Conflict.** Warfare between adjacent princedoms and villages came to a stop under British rule. The police stations (*thana*) maintain law and order.

## CLOTHING

Men wear a *dhoti* (long piece of white cotton wrapped around the waist and drawn between the legs and tucked into the waist) and a *chaddar* (shawl draped over the shoulders). Women wear the *sari* (a length of fabric wrapped around the waist, with one end thrown over the right shoulder) and *choli* (tight-fitting, cropped blouse).

## FOOD

Oriya generally eats rice at every meal. At breakfast, cold rice, puffed rice (*mudhi*), or various types of rice cake (*pitha*) are eaten with molasses or salt, and tea. Thin rice pancakes are a specialty of Orissa. A typical meal consists of rice, *dal* (lentils), and vegetable curry using eggplant, spinach, and seasonal vegetables such as cauliflower, cabbages, or peas. Fish or goat meat also may be served. Food is cooked in mustard oil, except for offerings to the gods. Those offerings are prepared in clarified butter (*ghee*). A particular favorite in villages is a rice dish called *pakhala bhata*. Rice is boiled in bulk, and whatever is not eaten is stored in cold water. When this rice becomes a little sour, it is served cold with fresh green chilies. This dish is popular in summer, when it is eaten with curds and green mangoes. Bananas, coconuts, and limes are main fruits of the region. Oriyas are fond of sweets such as sherbets, cookies, and drinks. Some Oriya drink toddy (hot drink) made from fermented dates. Hashish (similar to marijuana) is combined with yogurt to make a drink called *bhang* and is drunk socially and at festivals.

Food plays an important role in Oriya ritual. At the feast for Shiva, for example, villagers prepare a huge, steamed rice cake made in the shape of a *lingam* (Shiva's phallic symbol) and stuffed with cheese, molasses, and coconut. It is dyed red and is worshiped before being eaten. More than fifty types of rice cake have been cooked to offer at the Jagannath Temple at Puri.

## EDUCATION

Orissa has a literacy rate (percentage of the population who can read and write) of fewer than 50 percent. More people tend to know how to read and write in cities than in villages. Parents, grandparents, and siblings care for infants and children and provide informal—and, recently, formal—education before school. Girls rarely proceed beyond primary school. Physical punishment to discipline a child is common, though infants are usually spared and cuddled. Respect for seniors in all situations and the value of education are emphasized, especially among the higher classes. Orissa has several government-run colleges and five universities. One of these, the Shri Jagannath Sanskrit University at Puri, is devoted to Sanskrit culture.



## CULTURAL HERITAGE

Many centuries Orissa has been a focal point for different cultures and migrations from other parts of the country. These influences found an expression in the Oriya temples and cults, in music and dance, paintings and popular art. Temples in Orissa are famous for their architecture called Kalinga style. A temple of this style consists of a structural duo, the main temple or shrine and the frontal porch. While the main temple called *viman* or *deul*, is the sanctum enshrining the deity, the porch or assembly hall called *jagamohan* is the place for the congregation of devotees. The former constructed on a square base, has a soaring curvilinear tower (*sikhara*) and is known as *rekha deula*. The latter built on a rectangular base is a *pidha* temple, i.e. its root consists of *pidhas* which are horizontal platforms arranged successively in a receding formation so as to constitute a pyramid cal superstructure. Although the two temples are architecturally different, they are constructed in axial alignment and interconnected so as to form an integral pattern. Some of the Oriya temples are among the finest in the world such as the Lingaraj Mandir at Bhubaneswar (11th century), the Jagannath temple at Puri (12th century) and the great Sun Temple at Konark (13th century). These temples are architectural treasures in the history of Hinduism and famous all over the world.

The culture of Orissa means the cult of Jagannath and the cult of Jagannath mean the synthesis of varied religions. In the ancient past Jagannath was worshipped by the original inhabitants or *adivasis* in the interior of Orissa. Centuries later his cult was described in various Sanskrit works. In the course of time Jagannath was embraced by other religions like Jains and Buddhists. Consequently the cult of Jagannath came to be regarded as the religion of the masses. The cult of Jagannath provides a common religious institution to all Hindus irrespective of their castes and sects. The Harijans and *adivasis* are admitted into the Jagannath temples. In the centre of the temple are statues of Jagannath and of his brother Balabhadra and his sister Subhadra. Their rudimental form reminds of a tribal origin. Another indication of its tribal origin is the presence of priests or *dates* who are considered Jagannath's relatives. It is assumed that they are descendants of the *adivasis*. Only the *Daitas* are allowed to touch the divine statues.

Medieval *bhakti* (devotional) poets have left Oriya literature with a rich tradition. Orissa is famous for its dance, music, and architecture. The *Odissi* is one of the six acknowledged classical dance forms of India. Like all other classical dances, for that matter like all Indian art forms, it has its initiation in religion and philosophy. Sculptures and architecture of the Oriya temples have largely influenced other arts – such as *Odissi*, that is originated as a temple dance for the gods. The Chhau dance, performed by masked male dancers in honor of Shiva, is another feature of Oriya culture. Oriya culture also includes vivid dances and songs, folk opera (*jatra*), puppet plays, and shadow plays (where the shadows of the characters are projected onto a screen using puppets).

Orissa is also famous for the highest excellence in the arts. Painting of icons (*patta* paintings), palm leaf painting, and woodcarving are important artistic traditions in Orissa. All Oriya paintings, the *Bitt chitra* or mural paintings, the *Pata chitra* or textile paintings and the *Talapatra chitra* or palm engravings, have more or less the same style and the same subject.





The art of painting is influenced by the cult of temples. The most important wall paintings are to be found in temples. The Sun Temple at Konarka is considered to be a particular Orissa masterpiece. There is a rich culture of wall paintings among the Kondh tribes. They paint geometric motives on their walls. The subject of many textile paintings is limited to religious themes like the story of Rama and Krishna. The palm engravings traditionally depict temples, gods and chariots.

The folk-art of Orissa is connected with its social and religious activities. In the harvesting season, when grain is trashed and stored, the mud walls and floors are decorated with murals in white rice paste. They are called *jhoti* and are drawn not merely with the intention of decorating the house, but to establish a relationship between the mystical and the material, thus being highly symbolical and meaningful. Throughout the year, the village women perform several rituals for the fulfillment of their desires. For each occasion, a specific motif is drawn on the floor or on the wall, for instance a stack of paddy structured like a pyramid and white dots superimposed with red are painted on the walls. To draw a *jhoti* the fingers are dipped into the rice paste and made to trace out intricate patterns on the floor or walls. Sometimes a kind of brush is prepared from a twig to one end of which a small piece of cloth is attached. *Muruja* is drawn on the floor with powders of different hues. Indigenous methods are used to get color powders. White powder is obtained from the grinding of stones; green powder is obtained from dry leaves, black from burnt coconut shells, yellow from the petals of marigold flower or turmeric and red from clay or bricks.

## WORK

Most Oriya grows rice. The state of Orissa accounts for about 10 percent of India's total rice output. Farmers still use a great deal of animal power and traditional tools. Cash crops include oilseeds, pulses (legumes), sugarcane, jute, and coconuts. Fishing is important in coastal areas. Many families also make traditional handicrafts. Since independence in 1947, some industrial development has occurred.

## SPORTS

Children play ball, tag, and hide-and-peek. They also like to spin tops and fly kites. Traditional games for adults include cards and dice. Bodybuilding and wrestling are common sports for men, and *kabaddi* (team wrestling) is very popular. Cricket, soccer, and field hockey are played in schools.

## CRAFTS AND HOBBIES

Orissa is known for its handicrafts, particularly its little carved wooden replicas of Jagannath. Painted masks and wooden animal toys for children also are popular. Local sculptors make soapstone copies of temple sculptures for pilgrims and tourists. Textiles include appliqué work, embroidery, tie-dyed fabrics, and various types of hand-loomed cloth. The artisans of Orissa are skilled in filigree work and make gold and silver jewelry. Local artisans also produce brassware and items made from bell metal (an alloy of copper and tin). Orissa also is known for its tie-dyed saris. Village women often like to ornament their bodies with tattoos.



The Oriya People are the dominant ethnic group in India's eastern state of Orissa. They share historical and cultural traditions that date to the sixth century BC. The ancient name of Orissa is Utkala, literally means "the highest excellence in the arts."

*Sasadhar Sahoo lives with his wife Mamata and son Saswat in Michigan.*

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*Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.*





## My Heritage

Nirode Mohanty

**W**hen the airplane starts preparing for landing at the Biju Patnaik Airport, Bhubaneswar, my heart fills with the joy of coming home, my Orissa. A lot of people do not know where is Orissa, what is the Oriya language, our heritage, and our contribution to this world. Once upon a time, Orissa was known as mighty Kalinga, the largest, powerful state in India and sometimes the ultimate art land, Utkala. Other names are: Utkalraata, Udra, Odra, Arabica, Oda, Odrarashtra, Trikalinga, Koshala, Kangoda, Toshali, Chedi (Mahabharata), Matsya (Mahabharata). By any name, it is famous for its exquisite temples including the Konarka Temple, a chariot at the beach where celestial dances are performed on its walls. Independent India's national flag has in its center, the Chariot wheel of Konarka, a symbol of peace and progress.

Oriya civilization is quite visible in Bali (Puri Temple), Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Burma, Siam Ripp (Angkor Wat), Cambodia. In Siam Ripp, the handicrafts and textiles resemble that of Orissa. Oriyas are the earliest settlers in Sri Lanka and Tamilians came later. Oriyas have established the first cultural empire of the world. The architectures are distinctly from Oriya artisans in those far out places. The Mogul Empire failed to occupy Orissa and the British colonialist was only later able to merge it with the British Empire as the last province. Late Madhusudan Das, among others, founded the present Orissa in April 1936. Many parts of the Kalinga region still remain in Bengal, Behar, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh. Oriyas had fought for the merger at the time of the States Reorganization Commission, but failed as they are nonviolent and peaceful people. Now they have lost those parts for ever. It is painful to say, when identifying our location, that we are located south of Calcutta, a one hour flight to Bhubaneswar.

My language, Oriya, is the oldest in the Indo European languages, and has many similarities with Sanskrit than any other languages. It has influenced Assamese, Maithili, Indonesia *Bhasa* and Malaysia *Bhasa*. People of Indonesia refer to themselves as *Bhoomi Putra*, and are called Kling. We have produced the great poet Jayadev, the author of famous *Geeta Govinda*, and the great Sanskrit Dramatist Kali Das, more celebrated than Shakespeare. It is now known that Gautama Buddha was born in Kalinga. It was the famous Kalinga war that changed militant Asoka to religious Asoka. Two caves near Bhubaneswar, Dhauligiri and Khandagiri, depict the fabulous period of Asoka and the golden era of Kalinga. Oriya writers like Fakir Mohan Senapati, Gopinath Mohanty, Surendra Mohanty, and Sachi Routray, among others, are in the forefront of Indian literature. It is no more appended to Bengali or Hindi literature, nor an issue of a separate language.

My heritage is of universal brotherhood, peace, and love. My God is Shri *Jagannath*, the Lord of the Universe who lives in Puri Temple. He knows no distinction of any color, caste, and community. The Temple kitchen serves the best vegetarian food and it offers *Bhog (Prasad)*, offerings sixty types of dishes at various times. You have to be lucky to taste all these sixty



kinds. It feeds the largest number of people in any part of the world with very little cost. *Jagannath* lives with his brother and sister, a tradition of Oriya family, in Puri Temple. In Puri Temple, there is no untouchability, a stigma in Hindu religion. *Jagannath* is served by lower caste *sevakas* (helpers). *Jagannath* Puri is the *safest, cheapest, friendly, easily accessible, and noncommercial temple among the Four Dharmas* (holy places), Puri, Rameswar, Dwaraka, Badrinath, as well as Tirupati, Kashi, and Calcutta Kali. Our Lord *Jagannath* is the symbol of Buddhism, Vaisnavism, Jainism, Salivates, all other forms of Hinduism, and other Asian religions. It is also the breeding ground of Aryan and Dravidian cultures.

Orissa is the land known for the best art and architecture that mankind can dream. *Jagannath* comes out every year with his brother and sister in three chariots to let the world see Him from outside, *known as the Ratha Yatra* festival. Orissa's Sambalpuri silk and Berhampuri Tassar pata are known for the best saris. *Odissi* dance, the classical, scriptural dance, is older than *Bharata Natyam* and is evolved from devotional music of God *Jagannath*. *Odissi* songs are the oldest classical songs, older than *Karnataki* and *Hindustani*. Orissa handicrafts and sculptures are unique manifestations of God, nature, and beauty.

Late Harekrushna Mahtab founded the new capital of Orissa at Bhubaneswar. He did not have much clout in Delhi and was on the opposition to the then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. The successive Chief Ministers of Orissa were struggling to keep their positions. The State of Orissa has remained poor despite its riches in minerals, raw materials, and forestry. The transportation and other infrastructures are poor. It has a beautiful coastline, the very large Chilika Lake, several hot springs, famous historical sights, like Lalitgiri, Udaygiri, Ratnagiri, Khandagiri, Mahendragiri, dating back to the third century, BC, and excellent beaches. Scholars from Persia, Greece, China and other places came to learn philosophy, science, and mathematics at the oldest Universities, Taxila, Nalanda and Ratnagiri. Chinese chronicler Hiuen Tsang, while visiting Orissa in 638 AD, was overwhelmed with the Oriya culture and was amazed to find 10,000 Buddhist monks. The tourist industry is meager though it is a haven for art, architecture, sculpture, fabrics, handicrafts, wild life, boating and movie making. If you want to know about Indian heritage and culture, your first introduction is through Orissa Heritage, just myriads of pearls of an ancient, grand civilization dating back to the earliest history of mankind, with some parts an unknown, unexcavated splendid past.



Konarka Temple, Chandrabhaga, Orissa, The Chariot Wheel, the Wall, the Temple

The author is thankful to Deba Mohapatra for his prize for the best front cover design for the 2005 OSA Journal and Kasturee Mohapatra for getting articles for the 2005 OSA Journal and for their effort to preserve *My Heritage*.

*Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very important that you do it*





## Maritime Heritage of Orissa

Shahabuddin Mohammad Gani

**G**erini, who had researched Ptolemy's geography, has mentioned "the mighty people of Kalinga had established an empire in Burma long before Ashoka led his victorious army into Kalinga. The overseas trade of Kalinga seems to have affected the economic condition of the Magadhan Empire and this may be one of the causes of the Kalinga War. The notes collected by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles indicate that the Indian colonization of Java commenced with the 20,000 families who were sent there by the King of Kalinga. The Samanta Prasadika also reveals that eight families from Kalinga had accompanied the Bodhi Tree to Ceylon at the instruction of Emperor Ashoka.

The Hathi-gumpha inscriptions of Bhubaneswar inform us that Emperor Kharavela had a strong navy and according to Prinsep and Hunter who had researched history of this region, he was well versed with maritime arts. Enormous evidences are available to prove that during the Christian centuries, the people of Kalinga had planted prosperous colonies beyond the high seas. Tamralipti, Chelitalo, Palura, Pithunda and many others were the prosperous ports on the shores of Kalinga. Pithunda was a very important port on the coast of Orissa and was at its peak at the time of Lord Mahavira. It is known from the text Utradhya Sutra that merchants used to come from Siam.

According to this authority some foreign merchants had matrimonial relations with the people of Kalinga. Pithunda was deserted by the time of Kharavela who claims to have rebuilt it and made it flourishing again.

Palura was also an ancient port of considerable importance. Greek historian Ptolemy had called it to be the most important trading station during his time. Ships bound for South East Asia used to begin their journey from this port. Ptolemy utilized this port as one of the pivots in drawing his geographical maps. Palura has been identified as Dentipur by the French scholar Sylvian Levi, on the ground that "Pal" the first part of the word means "Tooth" and "Ur" the second part means "city" Palura has been identified with the village called Palur near Rushikulya river in the district of Ganjam in Orissa. Chelitalo was another prosperous seat of Buddhism and a great emporium of trade, on the coast of Kalinga around 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. Hsuang T'sang has graphically described the prosperity of this port. Standing on the seashores of Chelitalo he observed the ships sailing towards the island, which is now Sri Lanka, and being a devotee of Buddha he at once thought of the sacred tooth relics enshrined there. In his visionary eyes he caught a glimpse of the globe radiating from the sacred tooth and illuminating the liquid horizon of the sea.



Some scholars have identified Chelitalo with Puri or Konarka. But with its back up of Buddhism and ships sailing towards Sri Lanka it should have been located near Lalitgiri on the mouth of river Mahanadi. The shore lines having moved further up to Paradeep. The recent excavations at Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udaigiri provide strong evidence of a sea outlet to these Buddhist establishments. Geological findings have confirmed that land is being reclaimed on the coast of Orissa as the sea recedes. In the Prachi river valley traces of a flourishing city has been found. Names like Boito-kuda, Banija-pur and old coins of different varieties indicate that Prachi was a trading center of worth in the past. From these ports the missionaries, traders and peaceful settlers used to sail abroad carrying with them Indian culture and religion to distant countries According to the French author of 'Soul of India', "India sent missionaries, China sending back pilgrims. It is a striking fact that in all relations between the two civilizations, the Chinese were always the recipients and the Indians the donors."

Evidences are available to show the close relations the Kalingans had with distant countries. Burma was like the other side of the bay. South Burma was known as Tailang in the Mon documents and to the northeast the land was known as Utkala. These names are very similar to Orissa's ancient name, Kalinga and Utkal. The Mon documents also call the modern town of Prome as Srikeshetra, which incidentally is the name of Puri in Orissa.

There was very intimate relationship between the royal families of Kalinga and Sri Lanka and because of this that Gheusiva in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD sent out the sacred tooth relics of Lord Buddha to his friend Mahasena, the Sri Lankan king. The Kalingan Princess Hemamala and her husband Dantakumara to Sri Lanka carried the sacred relics. By the time they reached there King Mahasena had died and was succeeded by his son Mathavanna. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC Emperor Ashoka had sent the Bodhi Tree to Sri Lanka through his son and daughter Mahendra and Sanghamitra who had embarked from the port of Tamralipti. The tooth relic that is enshrined in Sri Lanka is until today regarded as the center of the religious life of the island. The Chulavamsa records that the King of Kalinga Aggabodhi 11 (601- 11 AD) had been to Sri Lanka with his Queen and a minister for religious purpose. H.W. Codrington notes that in 1187 AD Nissanka Malla, king of Kalinga had seized the throne of Sri Lanka and is said to have restored the shrines of Anuradhapura. Matrimonial relationships existed between the royal families of these two countries. Close cultural and social contacts led to vigorous maritime and commercial activity. Ships from Kalinga used to sail through out the year unlike to the south East Asia, which depended on favorable winds.

Relations of Kalinga with Funan (China) were also very cordial. Chinese records disclose the fact that Indian ambassadors were regularly attending the Funanese Court. In the year 795 AD a King of Wu- Cha, identified as Odra country, named "one who is auspicious, the Lion" (King Subhakara Kesari) sent an ambassador named Prajna to the court of the Chinese Emperor Te- Toon and presented an autographed letter and a treatise on Gandavyaha. Prajna was a great scholar. He translated the letter and the book into Chinese and presented to the emperor.





Kingdoms of Sumatra (Suverna Dipa), Java, Bali and Combodia had very close contacts with Orissa. The Sailodbhavas of Kangoda had cultural and commercial relations with these islands. After the decline of this dynasty, a branch of it sailed across the sea and established an empire in the Far East with Java as the center. The history of Java as known from the annals of the Tang period (618- 906 AD) became eventful from the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. Records of this period mention Java as Holing, a Chinese version of Kalinga. The attendants at the Hindu temples in Bali are still called Parenda similar to Pandas of the temples of Orissa.

The influence of Orissan art was not confined merely within Orissa, it extended to greater Indian lands, in the wake of the adventurous spirit and maritime enterprise of the ancient Oriyas. Definite evidence of this influence is found in Burma, Siam, Combodia and other Indonesian islands.

It is more than probable, that the ornamental Kirti-mukha masks, flamboyant makaras (Crocodiles) and the guardian lions, which decorate the innumerable sanctuaries, are modeled on medieval Orissan prototypes. It will easily explain the surprising affinity of the Kala Makaras; the ornament par excellence of the Indo-Javanese architecture, with the Kirti-mukha and Makara (crocodile) heads sculptured on the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD Bhubaneswar temples like Parusaramesvara, even though Kalamakaras in the central Javanese art development was possible under Chinese influence.

The wonderful ruins of Champa, still preserve creeper designs and elephant heads, reminiscent of the best products of Orissa. Orissan art undoubtedly influenced the Buddhist school of art that flourished in Java under the patronage of the Sailendra dynasty. The Javanese Budhhas and Bodhisattavas of Borobudur have striking similarities with the Buddha images of Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udaigiri near Paradeep. These Buddhist images also resemble in serenity and gracefulness with the images of ancient Abhayagiri Vihara of Anuradhapur (8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century AD) in Sri Lanka.

Traits, such as concentration of force and typical curls of hair, as also the peculiar types of halo round their heads, lead us to infer that the Javanese Buddhas and Bodhisattavas of Borobudur and Prambanam (8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century AD) that are distinguished by the same clarity. The severity of conception, the same supreme spiritual fervor, the same monumental character and the same subtle sensitive modeling, may have as their prototype in the Orissan Buddhas of the early medieval era. Moreover, it is interesting to note that both, absolutely plain elliptical nimbus in high relief and the long tapering pointed halo, either plain or fringed with flamboyant scrolls, are typical Orissan features. Its simultaneous occurrence in Javanese works may connote something more than chance and coincidence. The famous monument of Borobudur and the splendid temple of Chandi Kalasan represent till today the splendour of Mahayanic art and culture achieved during the heady days of the Sailendra Empire.

On the temple of Sri Jagannath at Puri there is a well-preserved representation of a royal barge of the Madhyamandira type. The beautiful cabin has an arched roof supported by human figures. From the roof hangs a rocking seat, probably intended to help tide over the effects of seasickness. A rope or chain hangs from the roof to help one keep steady. On the southern side of the audience hall of the Sun Temple, Konarka, there is a panel in which it is depicted, a king sitting on the elephant receives ovation from a group people, dressed in long robes. Among the people there is a giraffe, an animal indigenous to no part of India. Most probably some traders



from Africa or Arab countries had brought this animal as a present to the king of Orissa. It is also believed that boats were used to transport huge stones from inland for building the Sun Temple at Konark on the sea shore.

On the full moon night of Kartik (November) a festival known as Bali-jatra is still celebrated on the banks of river Mahanadi. Sweet food items like Rasgollas, Laddoos and several Batashas and Phennes, which can be preserved and carried in a long journey, are still prepared and sold in the festival. These sweets and Purees are made in large shapes weighing four to five pounds each, were meant to be offered to the Sadhabas embarking on their journey overseas. Pumpkins in Orissa are known as Boito-Ko-kha-ru. This was one vegetable that used to last long, while kept hanging in slings and thus was conveniently carried aboard the ship as greens.. It has since acquired this name. People of Orissa, float on the sea or river well decorated toy-ships reminiscent of their maritime activities of the past.

The preparation “Thoka Pooi” particularly during “Bali Yatra” in Cuttack is no coincidence. That large size Pooies (a kind of food) were supplied to the Sadhabas to carry abroad the ship. Incidentally the Chinese during AD618-907 refer to food preparations introduced by foreign visitors, Reay Tennahill in the “Food in History” quotes from Edward H Schafer “A study of T’ang Exotics: The Golden Parches of Samarkand”. It mentions that in China “more refined foods were also adopted from foreign parts, little cakes fried in oil becoming particularly popular. The recipes for these dishes, even the cook themselves may have come from India, as did the ‘light & high’ wheat paste which was steamed in baskets. They latter may have been a raised bread – and it is interesting that the Chinese still steam bread today” ‘Stone Honey’ was another imported luxury in China. This was the juice of sugarcane boiled and then dried in the sun”. It is Orissa’s ‘Guda’, is still prepared in Orissa, and was one of the items of export from Orissan ports. The sugarcane juice after it is boiled is molded in earthen pots.

It is more than coincidence that in Thailand during the full moon in the 11<sup>th</sup> lunar month (usually November) is the time of the incomparably beautiful festival of LOY KRATHONG, when banana leaves shaped into boats carry candles across swollen rivers and canal. The spectacle is especially lovely in Chinag Mai and the Sukhothai Historical Park. This festival resembles the Balijatra festival celebrated all over Orissa during the same time.

Folk tales and legends relating to ships and overseas sojourn are widely circulated in this region of the country. The most popular story is that of Tapoi, where the miseries and privations of a girl from a family of seafaring merchants, by their wives, while the brothers had gone abroad, is described. Virgin girls pay tributes to this Tapoi in the month of Bhadra by observing the Khudrukuni Ossa (Fast).



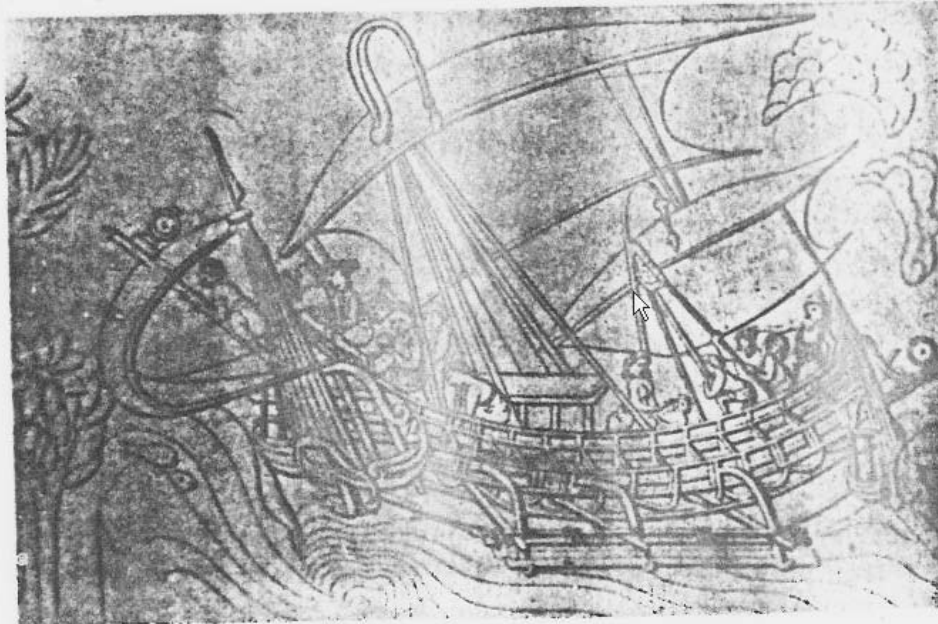


The festival known as Boita-bandana, is still celebrated in every Oriya home during Deepavali. They welcome or bid farewell to Boitas (Ships) after performing pujas. These and many other rites and ceremonies relating to long separations from family indicate that the people of Orissa are used to such vigorous maritime activities in the by gone days.

An Oriya poet composed this song in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, recalling the glorious economy of the state in those days

“O! Kalinga, evergreen with the vendor of crops,  
Where is another land in the globe to be thy match?  
For uncounted centuries, wealth on account of maritime trade did flow  
Like an unending stream into thee.  
Glory unto thy sons, known as Sadhabas {overseas traders}  
Due to whom thy coasts were studded with ports, overflowing  
With prosperity all along.”

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.VII(a). Indian Adventurers Sailing out to Colonise Java. 8th century AD





VII(b). Indian Adventurers Sailing out to Colonise Java. 8th century AD

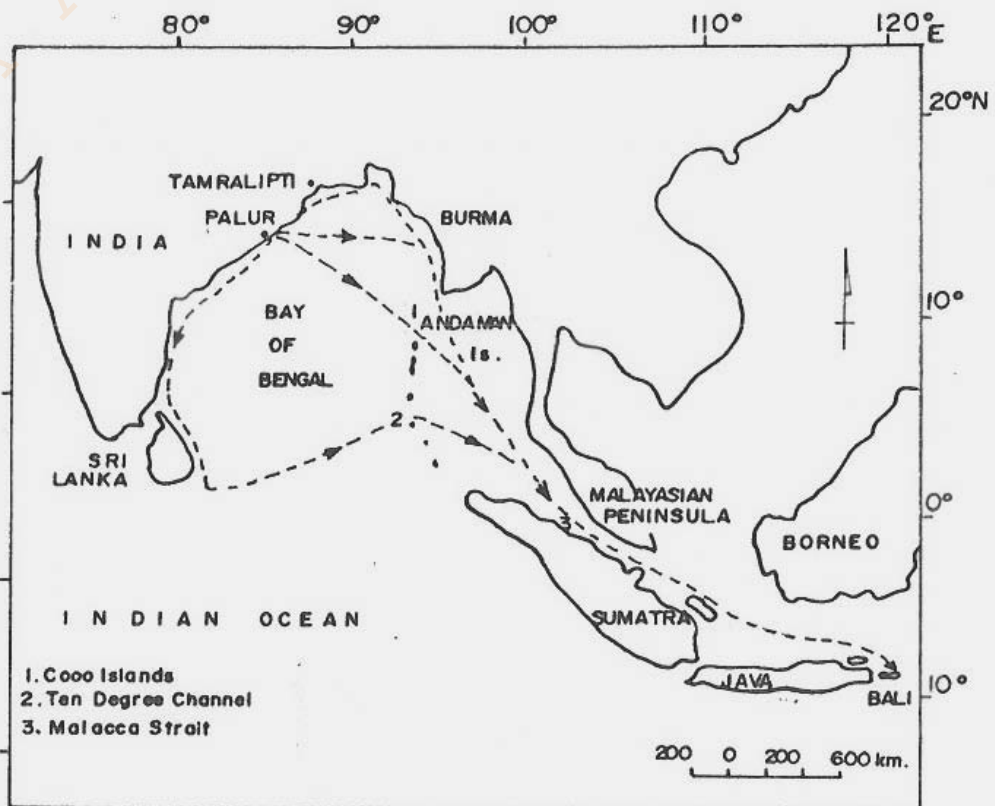


Fig. 10. Sea Route from Kalinga to Southeast Asian Countries.





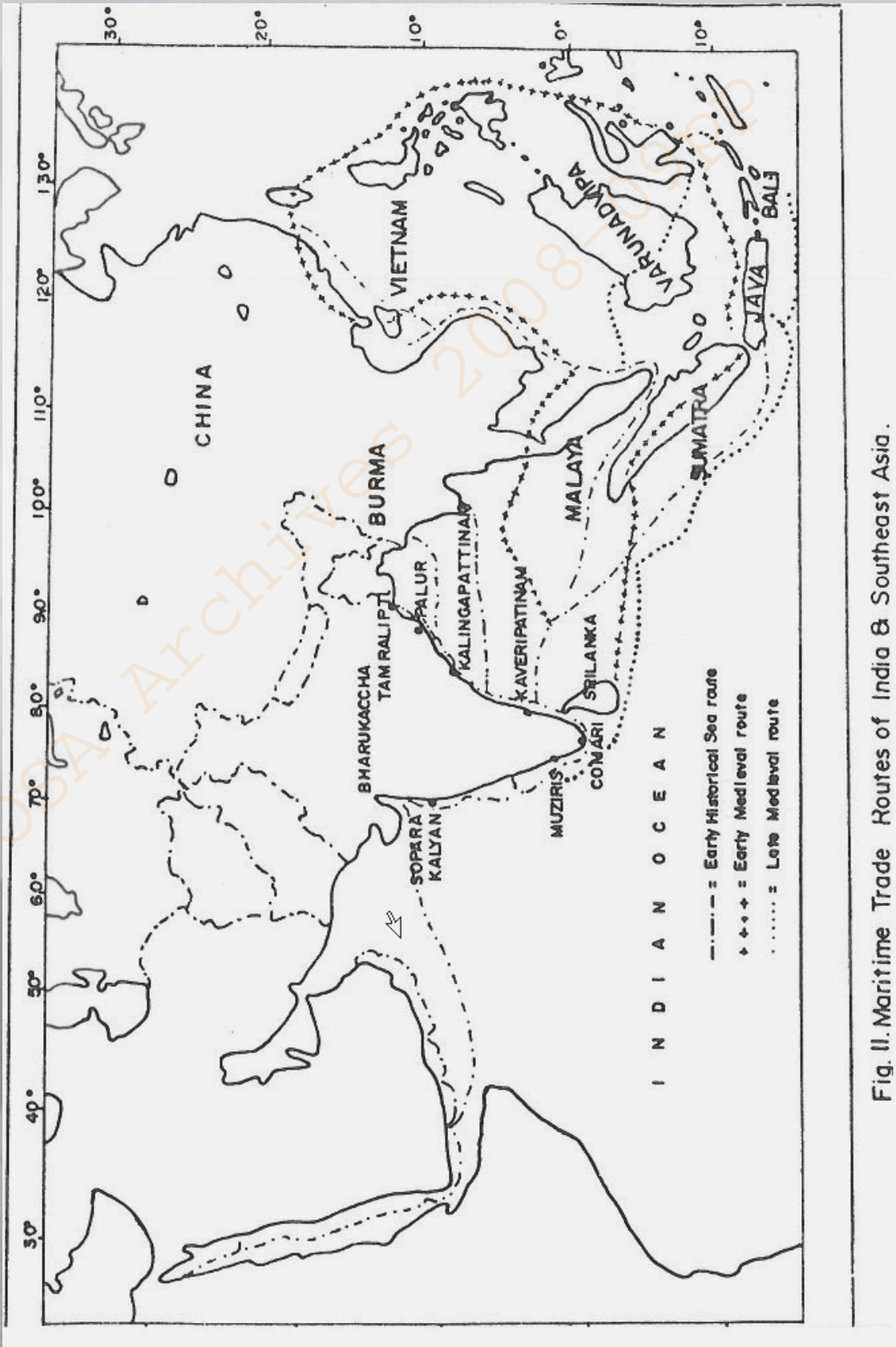


Fig. II. Maritime Trade Routes of India & Southeast Asia.

*To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life.*



## Miss you Mother...

Pratyush Ranjan Mohanti

Rich in Art & Culture,  
Temples all around,  
Blessings flow with the Bells...  
Ringing all the day,

Call of the Jungle,  
Tigers of Similipal,  
The endangered....  
But, the strength it commands..

The Gahirmatha.....  
Mothering Olive Ridleys,  
Promises .....  
In the Years to come.....

Sun Temple at Konark,  
World wonder .....  
Sacrifice of Dharmapada,  
The carvings of the wall..

Sandy beaches of Gopalpur,  
An unknown lighthouse .....,  
Footprints on sand ...getting washed  
Every now and then..  
Showing the path of life

Beauty of Tikarpada,  
The Gharials.....within,  
Flora & fauna...  
The dense land .....

The Black diamonds,  
The power it generates,  
Talcher, the black beauty..

And rhythmic Odissi.....  
Devotion of "Devdashis".....,  
Taking one closer to God

The Lord of the world,  
Jagannatha....., the Dham ...  
Swargadwara, where life is re-born.  
The Sabara Srikshetra.....  
In the lap of Koraput

Shanti stupa at Dhauli,  
Where the ego of war shattered,  
And bloodbath in the banks of Daya..  
Created a Dharmasoka..

The strength of Adivasis,  
The Bondos ,the Kondhs,  
The Koyas,  
And Lanjia Saura,  
The fragrance of their simplicity...

The sweet cakes of Raja,  
The Nuakhai, The Gamhapurnima,  
Yes.....Kumara Purnami,  
The earth Puja.....  
And Lots more.....

I miss you my mother...  
The longer I be here (in USA)  
The more I need you,  
I wish to be back in your womb,  
Once again.....  
Before my life ends..  
To feel secure & cared for.

*(The author is a Chartered Accountant in practice in Bhubaneswar, for more than a decade and has interest in Writing Poems ,traveling etc.)*

*To be capable of steady friendship or lasting love, are the two greatest proofs, not only of goodness of heart, but of strength of mind.*





## Travel Blogs from Orissa

Hemanta Ranjan Panda

The last time we had been to Orissa was in Early 2004. It's already three years and there was a need to re-charge ourselves as we have been missing our very own land. On New Year day, 01Jan2007, we decided to make an express trip for two weeks. Nowadays with direct flights to India from USA and internet bookings, it does not take more than five minutes to book your itinerary. Within ten minutes we had a plan to go to Orissa.

The first thing we did on arriving at Bhubaneswar in Jan07 was to plan for a day trip to Puri, a day after our arrival. Typically every Oriya on their trip to Orissa tries to pay a visit to Puri, to offer obeisance to our very own Lord of the Universe, juggernauting his way to a very special place in our heart.

On the way to Puri from Bhubaneswar we stopped over at Sakshi Gopal, where Gopal came all the way from Vrindavan to South India as a witness to keep his devotee's honor and stayed here for ever. This pastime of Lord Krishna is very popular both in India and abroad.



Sakshi Gopal

Bata Mangala

Puri Jagannath

On the way to Puri we stopped at Baata Mangala considered to be a must-stop on the way to Puri. We picked a day of less relevance as far as devotee presence in Puri was concerned, to avoid traffic. Instead Lord Jagannath had other plans. All Gangasagar devotees were converging at Puri on that day. We had a feel of Rath Yatra in January with devotees jostling to have a glimpse of the lord and security officials doing their best to keep the ecstatic visitors under control. Spectator management aspects are getting implemented with barricades getting built gradually to manage traffic inside the temple. The darshan was one of the best we had since many trips to this pious dham.

*Ananda Bazar*, Lord's cafeteria was full with people. We had sumptuous *Mahaprasad* and finished off with '*Tanka Torani*', sour remaining water from '*Avada*'. '*Tanka Torani*' is a specialty considering the curry leaves, ginger and its unique aroma, blending itself into an effect when eyes would close any moment. We did lot of shopping on '*Bada Danda*' (Grand Road) and by evening we had left for Puri Beach.



The beach front was full of newer and nicely maintained hotels. The marine drive had nice parking slots managed by city administration. Once we were on beach, we played with horses, camels. Puri beach has not lost its original fascination. The golden sand of Puri beach is of high quality with almost zero mud content, which puts it as one of the finest beaches of the world. It is considered if someone does not touch the water of Lord's ocean at Puri, his yatra to Jagannath abode is incomplete. On the way back from Puri to Bhubaneswar, we stopped at Pipli, famous for its appliqué craft, popular all around the world.

After two days break at Bhubaneswar, I left for Balasore to meet my Grandma. Bhubaneswar gave me a feeling of another concrete jungle, with a craze of builders and their customers trying to place people one above other. Instead, Balasore is not yet affected by the sprawling high rises and people lending each other a personal touch. The density of population has increased everywhere. On our way back from Balasore to Bhubaneswar we visited Bhaktivedanta Ashram ( [www.bvashram.org](http://www.bvashram.org)) at Bhadrak where the sizes of Jagannath deities are of similar size as Puri Temple.



Bhakti Vedanta Ashram, Bhadrak. [www.bvashram.org](http://www.bvashram.org)

An India trip without reference to Cricket is incomplete. Coincidentally, West Indies national cricket team was playing four one day internationals (ODI) during our trip. To top it all, our beautiful Barabati was hosting the teams as the venue of the second ODI on 24Jan2007. Barabati got an International game after three years due to which crowd excitement has reached a zenith of frenzy for tickets. There were threats from Laksh-e-toiba to disrupt the game.

Tickets were valued as Rupees 400/-(Gallery), Rupees 500/-(Gallery), Rupees 1500/-(Special enclosures: Just beside the side screens) and Rupees 4000/- (Pavilion). There was no information which would lead us to believe that we will surely get Rupees 1500/- tickets, our preferred ticket option. The ticket vendor, a bank, opened the ticketing process, three days prior to the scheduled game.

The method used to sell tickets was only from Barabati counter, and counters would open for second day only if tickets are available. No internet booking or [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com), which would tell us the status of booking. There was news of thirty thousand people standing in the queue prior to Dawn, on the first day of ticketing. Because of conflicting reports we were getting, we decided to go to Cuttack and get tickets ourselves, to be on the safe side.







Beautiful Barabati Stadium, Cuttack. Sachin Tendulkar fielding near the boundary line.

Once the tickets were ready, we broadcast the news to different members of our family from different parts to join us for a nice game at stadium. They all made travel plans to come to Bhubaneswar and we were all set to see the game on 24Jan07. On 22Jan07, when Indian team arrived at Bhubaneswar airport, a spectator mishandled Greg Chappell which did tarnish Orissa Cricket Association's name. Board of control for cricket in India (BCCI) was meeting to decide if the game should go on. In the meantime, West Indies cricket board was having a meeting on security aspects of their players after Lakshar-e-Toiba's threat. All these news were not good for cricket fans. My desperation level was high because, I was going to see a game in a stadium atmosphere after a decade.

Televisions have over simplified the game of cricket. It's not as simple as it looks. I remember in 1993, in Chennai when Devon Malcolm from England, hugely built, running from close to the boundary line to bowl to Sachin, a tiny looking boy, at 90 miles an hour, the ball would be traveling like a bullet. A person who has played cricket would realize that facing such fast pace is not easy. With slow motions on TV, and analyzing from a couch of your living room, it's easier said than done. Seeing cricket in front of your eyes with spectators sledging the fielders on the boundary line with match tilting either way every three to four overs is a treat. I wanted to be among the crowd and relish the action. To truly understand India, one needs to go in general compartments in Trains and mingle with crowd's sentiments. I found a practical test bed to realize India.

Match started at 2:30PM on 24Jan07. The news from the center was Brian Lara; West Indian captain was not playing. It was a day night encounter and crowd started pouring in as usual. There were at least ten thousand more spectators than the usual thirty thousand odd capacity. India started badly and by 15 overs India had lost four of its top order batsman. Hero worshipping is at peak now. After three stalwarts, Ganguly, Tendulkar and Dravid got out people started leaving. India was in a precarious condition with 46 for 4 (14.5 overs) and 90/7 (31 overs). People stated leaving and it was once again a chaos, asking folks ahead to sit down so that everyone can have a good look. As our seats were beside the side screen, we could see some movement off the seam early on. We were trying to pacify crowd to have faith because it could be anybody's game, with dew playing its part as game progressed.

It was becoming evening and flood lights were gradually getting switched on. Barabati stadium was so beautiful that it was giving a heavenly look. Then 62 run partnership between Dinesh Kartik and Ajit Agarkar was so crucial that gave Indians some breathing space and India got to 152/8( 40.2 overs), eventually limped to 189.



West Indians got off to a cracking start with the first ball dispatched to a four by Chris Gayle. Then immediately in second over Chris Gayle got out. Wickets kept falling at regular intervals.

Romesh Power bowled brilliantly. His loops and flight was taking a toll on West Indies' plan to accelerate at a later period of the game. He took a stunning catch as well. On hindsight after having seen that game and when he was not selected for India's 2007 world cup squad, I felt India did a big disservice to him. Chanderpaul was giving a lot of headache to India fans as he was keeping one end active with his nudges and pushes.

Finally in 49th over Zaheer Khan got rid of Shiv Chanderpaul and India won by 20 runs by making West Indies all out for 169. After we came out, we heard there were some people without tickets who managed to go inside somehow. We were disheartened earlier with India's poor run on the board but Romesh Power's accurate bowling and India's eventual win give us an ultimate feeling. On the way back, Cuttack to Bhubaneswar road was filled with automobiles at mid night hours. It was a day well spent.



Lingaraj Mandir; Krishna Balaram Mandir, ISKCON; Hanuman Mandir, Temple City, Bhubaneswar.

We had three days to go before heading for USA. 'Kora Khai' from Lingaraj Mandir and 'Avada' from Ananta Basudev Mandir still lingers in my memory. Beautiful Ram Mandir and Krishna Balaram (ISKCON) Mandir at Bhubaneswar made our Temple City visit a complete satisfaction. There was a life sized deity of Hanuman, which was at least three times taller than us. It was a quick and nice trip to Orissa. We got an opportunity to remember it for ever.

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*Better be wise by the misfortunes of others than by your own*







©Luca Marella

***Helping the Needy....***

## ORPHANS OF RURAL ORISSA

Subhas C Mohapatra

**B**efore 2005, I was totally ignorant about this issue, and after one year, I am still in the learning process. Involvement with the Orphan issue of Orissa was not a planned activity for IAFF. I got involved in it through serendipity.

There is an Orphanage named Nivedita Ashram in Patalipank, Dist. Kendrapara. It is, however, accessed through Kujang of Jagatsingpur District. Patalipank is about 13 km from Paradeep, the port city. A group of Indians belonging to AIC-WNY (American Indian Community of Western New York) have donated a 10-acre parcel of agricultural land to this orphanage to help it attain self-sustainability. One member of this group contacted me to ask if I can provide any assistance for the optimal use of the land. I agreed under the provision that I need to first survey the land and study the possibilities.

So, during my 2005 trip to Orissa, Mr. Mihira Rath of AIC took me to the orphanage run by Lutheran Mahila Samiti, and from there to the land located at Barakolipada. The trip was a memorable one for me because I had never ridden a motorized rural boat. We had to travel to Paradeep, from where we boarded the boat and traveled upstream for nearly two hours to reach Barakolipada, near what is known to local people as Batighar. For obvious reasons, this had to be done under high tide. Upon disembarking from the boat, we had to walk more than two kilometers to reach the farm. Because the orphanage had already started several projects, my options for developing a long-range plan were limited, but nevertheless exciting. Therefore I agreed to accept the responsibility without hesitation. Many a “day dreams” (indeed it was day dream because it took place in the middle of the day) floated through my mind at lightening speed. I was thankful to the almighty that finally I got a chance that might make some real difference.

After endless expressions of optimism, typical of my personal trait, we decided to hurry back to the boat before the low-tide sets in. Unfortunately, when we reached the boat, it was already low tide and our boat got stuck in the sand bed. Every one of us jumped out of the boat and started pushing it for nearly half km until we reached a safe water depth for navigation. Although it was easy for me to jump out of the boat, I had forgotten how to jump in to a moving boat and in the process almost drowned. If it were not for the quick action of several fellow passengers, that probably would have been the end of my dream. Any way, we reached the orphanage after dark and therefore had to spend the night there. I used this time to learn a little more than its agricultural need. What I learnt was not only eye opening for me, but it made me make a silent commitment to serve the orphans of Orissa for the rest of my life. This also brought back some decades old painful memories. After my wife and I had a son in 1973 and a daughter in 1975, we decide to adopt at least one and if possible more children from different orphanages of Orissa.





We were influenced to take this decision because most children being adopted by USA families in the seventies were from Romania and none from India. Our dreams were dashed because some of my family members felt insulted that we were planning to adopt children from the “street” while children of our own family could benefit equally from a western life. That night, at the Nivedita Ashram Orphanage, I thanked the Almighty that finally my dream was fulfilled; now all the orphans of Orissa are my grand children. Thus, my dream of providing agricultural technology took a life of its own and became a dream of serving the orphans of Orissa. When my wife learned of this decision she also was excited and gave me warning that I must not do a shoddy job just because they are helpless orphans. She drew up a methodical step-by-step plan for me on how to proceed. One such charge was to find out details about what happens to the orphans of Orissa while they are at the orphanage and after they leave the orphanage. I have addressed this later in this article.

I found that the Nivedita Ashram Orphanage is founded on the principle of Sri Aurobindo and Sri Ma. Because my approach would be based on western methods, I had to make sure that my methods do not run contrary to the spiritual methods already in use. Therefore, during the 2006 trip, I spent nearly two weeks at Pondicherry to learn about the principles and methods associated with Sri Aurobindo Philosophy and expanded by Sri Ma. I was simply stunned to find that the model that I had developed for the Nivedita Ashram was almost a carbon copy (albeit in a miniature form) what is already in full operation both at the Aurobinda Ashram at Pondicherry and at Auroville. Simply put, technological upliftment is not only possible along with spiritual upliftment, but, according to Sri Ma, must be a component of integrated education and service to the Devine. This not only gave me a sigh of relief, but I also found out that my struggle was over and the process of learning has just started. It is just a matter of faithfully duplicating the Pondicherry success at Patalipank. This is reflected in the master plan given in the second portion of this article.

Now about the Orphans of Orissa. As I have said in the beginning, it is still a learning process for me. However, the past year has given me some time to learn a little more about rural Orphans. During my 2006 Orissa tour, I conducted a nonscientific (and certainly superficial) survey at some of the leading institutions of Orissa such as Ravenshaw College, SCB Medical College, GM College, JITM, NIST, Synergy and KIIT. In some cases the survey was conducted while visiting the campus while for other institutions the survey relied on information given by people knowledgeable about these campuses. I did not find a single instance where a female student of faculty at any of these institutions actually grew up in an orphanage. It is quite appropriate to pause for a moment and ask where do the orphan girls go.

It is no exaggeration to say that not only these female orphans are abandoned on the roadside as infants, because “it is a girl and not a boy”, but they are also being abandoned on the roadside as adults. Therefore, it is no wonder that we do not find any of these orphans in the social hierarchy. Why this happens becomes clear when the cost involved in higher education is taken into consideration. For example, if a student qualifies for an Engineering college or Medical College, the cost of travel, boarding, lodging, books, equipment, tuition and health care etc. can easily exceed Rs.5000 per month. Thus, the total cost for each student could exceed Rs.2 lakhs during a 4-year period, not to mention the donations required in private colleges.



Against this stark reality, IAFF has embarked on an uphill battle to reverse the apathetic tide against the female orphans of rural Orissa. I am hopeful that readers of this article will join IAFF as partners in progress and help IAFF in one or more of the following ways:

1. Please read the attached master plan and suggest improvements in its contents and implementation.
2. Please donate to IAFF to the extent your resources permit each year for as long as you can afford. If you are making a donation in rupees, please send your donation to Plot 628, Lane 10, Palaspali, Aerodrome area, Bhubaneswar, Orissa 77751013. If you are donating in dollars, please send your checks to IAFF, 1413 Boxwood Lane, Apex, NC 27502. To save money, IAFF does not send receipts by mail. Therefore, if you send your e-mail address, I will be happy to send you an electronic receipt.
3. Please contact as many of your colleagues, friends, family members, relatives and acquaintances as possible to participate in this program to the extent their personal situations will permit.
4. If you know of a rural orphanage in your area or a neighboring area, please ask them to contact me for assistance their orphans.
5. Please donate your time as your situation permits. This will include visits to different orphanages to monitor and execute programs, offer tutoring and teaching assistance, and other assistance that might optimize the use of your donations at the orphanages.

#### **PROBLEM DESCRIPTION:**

For the purpose of this Master Plan, an orphan is defined as a child who has taken up permanent residence in a registered orphanage for one or more of the following reasons: 1) The child was abandoned at birth because it is a female child; it is not uncommon at the Nivedita Ashram to receive a newborn in odd hours of the night with the umbilical cord still attached. 2) One or both parents are deceased and the child is helpless. 3) One or both parents are alive but could not feed and clothe the child, and therefore surrendered the child to an orphanage.

At this writing, the Central Government allocates Rs.1500/month/child until the child becomes three years old for a maximum of 10 children per orphanage; the Nivedita Ashram has at present 16 infants. After three years, the state government allocates Rs.500/per child/month until the child becomes 18 years old for a maximum of 50 children per orphanage; the Nivedita Ashram has at present 65 orphans. Thus, the number of orphans to be cared for exceeds the number for which government support is available.

Fortunately, some orphans get adopted (about 8-10 per year at the Nivedita Ashram) while some others receive sponsorship from benevolent individuals and families (at present about 5 receive such sponsorship at the Nivedita Ashram). The number of such orphans is few and far between. Because most orphanages do not have resources to support adult children without government support, the orphans must leave the orphanage when they complete 17 years. This is where individual and social tragedies come into play: Begging, Prostitution, Sex-trade/trafficking, Exploitation through low pay and bonded labor etc. are among the tragedies frequently reported in the news media. It is not hard to imagine that for every reported tragedy, many such tragedies probably go unreported and unnoticed. These individual tragedies quickly become social tragedies because the clients of sex-trade are usually moneyed-men who seek multiple partners. Some of these males get infected with STDs (sexually transmitted disease)





including HIV-AIDS without even being aware of their own clinical status because they are ashamed/afraid to seek screening and treatment for fear of disclosure. Thus, they pass on these STDs to their spouses, children and even perhaps grand children. While, on one hand, these tragedies are wide spread, on the other hand few, if any, realize that the orphanages are minefields of talents waiting to be harnessed for the benefit of the society.

### **PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

It is my personal opinion that the above problem has an easy solution. As outlined below, a seamless educational protocol has been developed to keep the orphans “off the streets” and “in the class room” until they move on to professional careers. The following are various components of the proposed “seamless education protocol”.

**1. Early Care and Education:** The Nivedita Ashram is run through the philosophies of Sri Aurobinda and Sri Ma. In addition to spiritual education, the orphans are also provided basic education at the Ashram as soon as they become receptive to learning. Available resources will be used to reinforce this education through added emphasis on English (especially spoken English), Math, Science and Technology as early as possible. It is important that modern education with emphasis on science and technology does not run counter to the spiritual education the children are receiving. To facilitate this process, I went to Pondicherry for nearly two weeks to learn about the workings at the Sri Aurobinda Ashram. I was pleasantly surprised to find that science, technology and physical education are integral parts of the educational process at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville, an international community based on the application of science and technology. I am therefore convinced that spiritual and technological education can be blended together to impart integrated and holistic education to the resident orphans. Experts in “early child hood education” will be consulted to develop methods to identify the potential of each child as early as possible. In view of the fact that this is a highly variable trait, diagnosis, counseling and guidance will be a continuous process until each child’s potential and aptitude is identified. It is anticipated that assessment will become easier as the children mature and are capable of expressing their own preferences. Once such diagnosis has been accomplished, either appropriate education/training facilities will be developed at the orphanage or the child will be sent to an education/training center with needed financial support.

**2. Intermediate Education:** This includes children between 5-16 years old. If the aptitude/talent diagnosis shows that the child has high potential for scholastic accomplishment, appropriate coaching/guidance will be provided to optimize the child’s accomplishment. However, if the diagnosis shows that the child has limited potential for scholastic accomplishments, she will be directed toward a vocational training rather than and aimless academic pursuit. These children, however, will be provided functional education (such as counting money, balancing checkbooks and expense sheets, and trade related education such as health care, welding, electronics etc) so they can use this knowledge in their future pursuits. Depending on economic reality, the vocational training will be offered either at an institution founded for the orphans or at a distant institution with needed financial support. Those children who will be guided towards vocational education will



continue to receive, even after graduation, guidance, counseling and micro-financing until they are established in their chosen vocations.

**3. Distant Learning:** Computer technology will be used to offer distant learning and guidance wherever possible. This will not only compress the time and cost associated with travel, but will also enable IAFF to recruit experts who can give time on a voluntary basis. The possibility of such undertaking has already been tested successfully at Jahangirabad, near Salepur, through collaboration with ADIRE ([www.adire.org](http://www.adire.org)), a NGO in Orissa.

**4. Higher Education:** Those who show high scholastic/academic aptitude will be given needed financial support to accomplish their chosen goals. This support will be in the form of student loans rather than “give-aways”. The loan will be recouped in installments once the student finds gainful employment. Loan refund will allow IAFF to offer revolving support to a larger number of orphans. This model has already been applied by IAFF in the USA for students who come for higher education in non-technical fields without financial support.

**5. Vocational Education:** Those orphans who fail to progress along the academic path will be provided vocational education with emphasis on technology rather than the traditional “sewing”, “knitting”, “handicraft” etc. Thus, vocationally trained girls will learn nursing, midwifery, and even welding, electronics etc., which will enable them to compete in the male-dominated society.

**6. Adult Support System:** It is envisaged that the educational protocol through which the orphans will progress from their infancy will help them develop an outlook toward “thinking outside the box” in shaping their adult lives, which, hopefully, will also include marriage and family etc. It is further envisaged that some of these adults will face marital difficulties faced by others in the society. Because these orphans will lack “family support system”, they will return to the same orphanage where they grew up. Their children will receive the same care/education they themselves received while growing up at the orphanage. Because the returning adults will have vocational skills, they will produce “goods and services” that will be marketed through assistance from IAFF. It is to be noted that an “adult orphan” care is already in operation at the Nivedita Ashram for people abandoned by their children. This infrastructure will be augmented to handle new challenges resulting from returning adults.



The little orphans were abandoned at birth because they are girls.

*Dr. Subhas Mohapatra is President of Indo American Friendship Foundation (IAFF)*

*All religions, arts and sciences are branches of the same tree.*





# CANCER IN WOMEN

Dr. Devi P. Misra

**C**ancer is the second leading cause of death in women. The most common cancers affecting women are breast, colon, endometrial, ovarian, skin, cervical, and lung cancer.

## BREAST CANCER

Early detection is of paramount importance.

Recommendations:

- Yearly mammograms starting at age 40
- Periodic clinical breast examination – every 3 years in ages 20s to 30s and every year for age 40 years and older.
- Breast self exam
- Women at increased risk should have breast ultrasound or MRI – after consulting a physician.

## COLON CANCER

Predisposing Factors:

- Always starts as a polyp
- People over 50
- Family history of colorectal polyp or cancer
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Diet of high fat foods
- Overweight, smoking, inactivity

Testing options after age 50:

1. Yearly stool occult blood test
2. Flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years.
3. Yearly occult blood test & sigmoidoscopy every five years
4. Double contrast barium enema every five years
5. Colonoscopy every 10 years
6. CEA level – Carcinoembryonic antigen is a tumor marker of colorectal cancer.

Prevention:

- Taking aspirin, a tablet a day, reduces risk of colorectal cancer by 30%.
- Low fat diet rich in fruits and vegetables helps in prevention of polyps and colorectal cancer.



## ENDOMETRIAL CANCER

### Predisposing Factors:

- Over age 50
- Taking estrogen therapy without taking progesterone
- Using tamoxifen in breast cancer treatment
- Early onset of menstrual period
- Late menopause
- Infertility history
- Women with no children
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- History of hereditary nonpolyposis colon cancer

### Symptoms:

Unusual spotting and bleeding not related to menstrual periods.

### Testing:

Although the Pap test is very good at finding cancer of the cervix, it is not reliable for early diagnosis of endometrial cancer, the endometrial biopsy is.

Yearly testing with endometrial biopsy is offered by age 35 in those who have a family history or personal history of nonpolyposis colon cancer.

## OVARIAN CANCER

### Predisposing factors:

- Women with no children
- Unexplained infertility
- Having first child after age 30
- Menopause after age 50
- Fertility drugs
- Talc exposure
- On hormone replacement for more than 10 years
- Family history of breast, ovarian, colon, or endometrial cancer.

### Symptoms:

- Mostly asymptomatic
- Swelling of the abdomen
- Loss of appetite
- Bloating
- Abdominal pain
- Urge to urinate frequently
- Pelvic or back pain or leg pain
- Weight gain or loss
- Abnormal bleeding





Exam:

- Routine pelvic exam
- Transvaginal ultrasound
- CT scan
- CA-125 and CA 19-9 are markers for ovarian cancer

### CERVICAL CANCER

Can affect any sexually active person. Human papilloma virus (HPV) is found to be a causal etiology. More common in HIV patients.

Detection:

- Pap smears every 2 years until age 30
- Beginning at age 30, those who have had three normal Paps may get tested every 2-3 years.

With the advent of Pap testing, cervical cancer is an uncommon finding in the U.S.

- After 70 years, having had 3 normal Paps in the last 10 years, women may stop cervical cancer testing.
- After a total hysterectomy, Pap testing is not necessary.

### SKIN CANCER

Predisposition:

- Too much exposure to sun, particularly in fair-skinned people
- Close family member with melanoma
- Severe sunburn before age 18

### LUNG CANCER

Accounts for 15% of all cancer cases. More women die of lung cancer than breast cancer.

Risk Factors:

- a) Smoking – 8 out of 10 lung cancers are due to smoking. Nonsmoking spouses of smokers have a 30% greater risk of developing lung cancer.
- b) Radon (a breakdown product of uranium) exposure
- c) Asbestos exposure

Symptoms:

- Cough that does not go away
- Chest pain made worse by deep breathing
- Shoulder pain
- Hoarse voice
- Repeated bouts of bronchitis and pneumonia
- Swelling of the face and neck



- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Bloody sputum
- Shortness of breath
- Fever
- New onset of wheezing
- Seizures

Detection:

- Chest x-ray, CT scan, PET scan
- Needle biopsy, bronchoscopy, pleuroscopy, mediastinoscopy

*Dr. Devi P. Misra, MD, FACP lives in Huntsville, Alabama*



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*Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.*





# THE ORISSA FOUNDATION

## ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

- . **SAHAYA:** FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN CUTTACK COMPLETED A 3-YEAR GRANT IN 2000
- . **INSTITUTE OF ORISSAN CULTURE:** COMPLETED a 5-YEAR GRANT IN 2000
- . **SCB MEDICAL COLLEGE LIBRARY:** LIFETIME GRANT AND PROVIDED FIRST COMPUTER FACILITY IN 1997 TO THE COLLEGE LIBRARY
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- . **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY VANI VIHAR:** COMPLETED a 2-YEAR RESEARCH GRANT IN 2003
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- . **ORISSA DANCE ACADEMY:** SINCE 1985 TO PRESERVE ORISSA'S DANCE STYLES AND CULTURE
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- . **EDUCATION, HEALTH AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL ORISSA:** NOW IN SAMBALPUR WITH BISWA AND MRS. RANU MAHANTI, MICHIGAN
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*Destroy the seed of evil, or it will grow up to your ruin*



**Indira Social Welfare Organization**  
***ISWO***  
**HELP DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN, CHILDREN &**  
**UNDERPRIVILEGED**

The mutual sharing of personal problems during skill training class of 1985 brought about the idea of a group for social transformation. Indira Social Welfare Organization (ISWO) was then born, and was registered in the year 1989. The realization of a social change and promotion of social justice consolidated the group in taking various programs.

**Vision & Mission:**

The organization envisions just social order, where women and men can participate equally in all aspects of the society. Our mission is to create a society, free from discrimination and violence against women. A society, where social justice and human rights, shall be extended to all. We strive for an economic regeneration through thrift, skill training, entrepreneurship etc.

**Our Philosophy:**

We recognize the challenges faced, by women, Dalit, and other underprivileged. We believe that economic stability, education, and consciousness would truly empower women to fight these challenges, and to eradicate social prejudices.

**We Work For:**

- Awareness and protection of human rights.
- Awareness against violence against women (VAW) and trafficking.
- Eradication of gender discrimination, and establishment of women rights.
- Community development through economic regeneration and promotion of SHGs.
- Promotion of entrepreneurship and self employment among women.
- Child welfare and protection of child rights.
- Health and sanitation.
- Skill training on different handicrafts such as embroidery, zari craft and patch work, tailoring, appliqué, making soft toys etc. and providing platform for marketing.
- Training for rural entrepreneurship development.
- Protection of environment and promotion of agriculture,
- Education to SC/ST drop outs and promotion to adult literacy.
- Awareness and sensitization through cultural activities, public rallies, meetings, seminars etc.
- Rehabilitation to women victims.
- Network building, lobby, advocacy, and legal assistance.
- Anti-liquor campaign.

**Strategy:**

The strategy we adopted has many constituents, such as finding counseling to the victim, confrontation, legal action, lobby and advocacy, public awareness, and rehabilitation.

**Achievements:**

- ISWO runs three schools for SC/ST children and dropouts.





- More than one 100 women self help groups work in eight Panchayats, and one Municipal area catering to more than 40,000 people for socioeconomic sustainability.
- More than 500 women artisans received training in various handicrafts and other skills annually.
- Rehabilitation center for women victims.
- Human Right Cell of the organization provides a platform of redress in around 150 cases of women rights violation each year.
- Nationally acclaimed Department of Youth Affairs and Sports, Ministry of HRD, India.
- We are the recipient of many awards; however the following merit a mention: Outstanding Youth Club Award, Jayprakash Narayan Award, National Youth Award etc.

### Ekta Vahini:

It is an exclusive cultural troupe of ISWO which is an integral part of the organization. Through performances it provides a platform of dissemination of solutions against social prejudices, especially against women. The performances of the troupe, of various themes, have been acclaimed at National and International Congregations.

The spirit of the workers and volunteers is high and their commitment is unfazed. However their resource limitations and mobility constraints sometimes pose difficulties. Nevertheless our hope and trust on the generosity of our donors is intact. We are also hopeful that the executive/administrative apathy would gradually meet to accept the social changes.

**Please come forward for equality, justice, and empowerment. Assist for the development of women, children, and Dalits.**



ISWO would like to thank the OSA- MI chapter for their donations towards boring this tube well. One single tube well helps the villagers of Lahuni Pada.

#### *Contact Information:*

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*Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.*



## Preparing village children for a developed Orissa, India. Prachi Academy Science Gallery Project

Saubhagya Laxmi Mohapatra

India is fast changing in the direction of modernization, industrialization, and scientific growth. The fruit of these will be better possible when entire India is prepared to participate in the change. For many of the village kids their science education ends at the high school level. Their understanding starting from their own health and hygiene to the vast universe formally ends there. Those who could compete the odds, and continue at higher secondary education find it difficult to cope with the sudden demand of college curriculum. Building the strength of manpower through appreciation of science and technology from the school level is more than ever essential in rapidly developing India.

Prachi Academy, Adaspur, is a rural school situated in the center of a thickly populated area of Cuttack district in the state of Orissa. Due to the dedication of teachers, staff and management it has set a record of excellence over the years in student achievement, and participation in extracurricular activities at the local and state level. It accommodates all level of students from the local village while attracting the bright and brilliant students from several neighboring villages. However it lacks some basic needs for the advanced teaching-learning environment, it deserves. The total strength of the school is about 600. Here up to 60 – 80 students participate in each lesson at a time. It is even difficult for all students to see the demonstrations and experiments by the teacher. It might not be a problem for you and me to be actively involved in any teaching learning situation but think about the “back benchers” in rows of 10 or 12, who are mostly the below average, not so active! Think about the teaching time and guiding time a teacher would spend if he or she would like to involve 70 students in her lesson, especially when the subject is science.

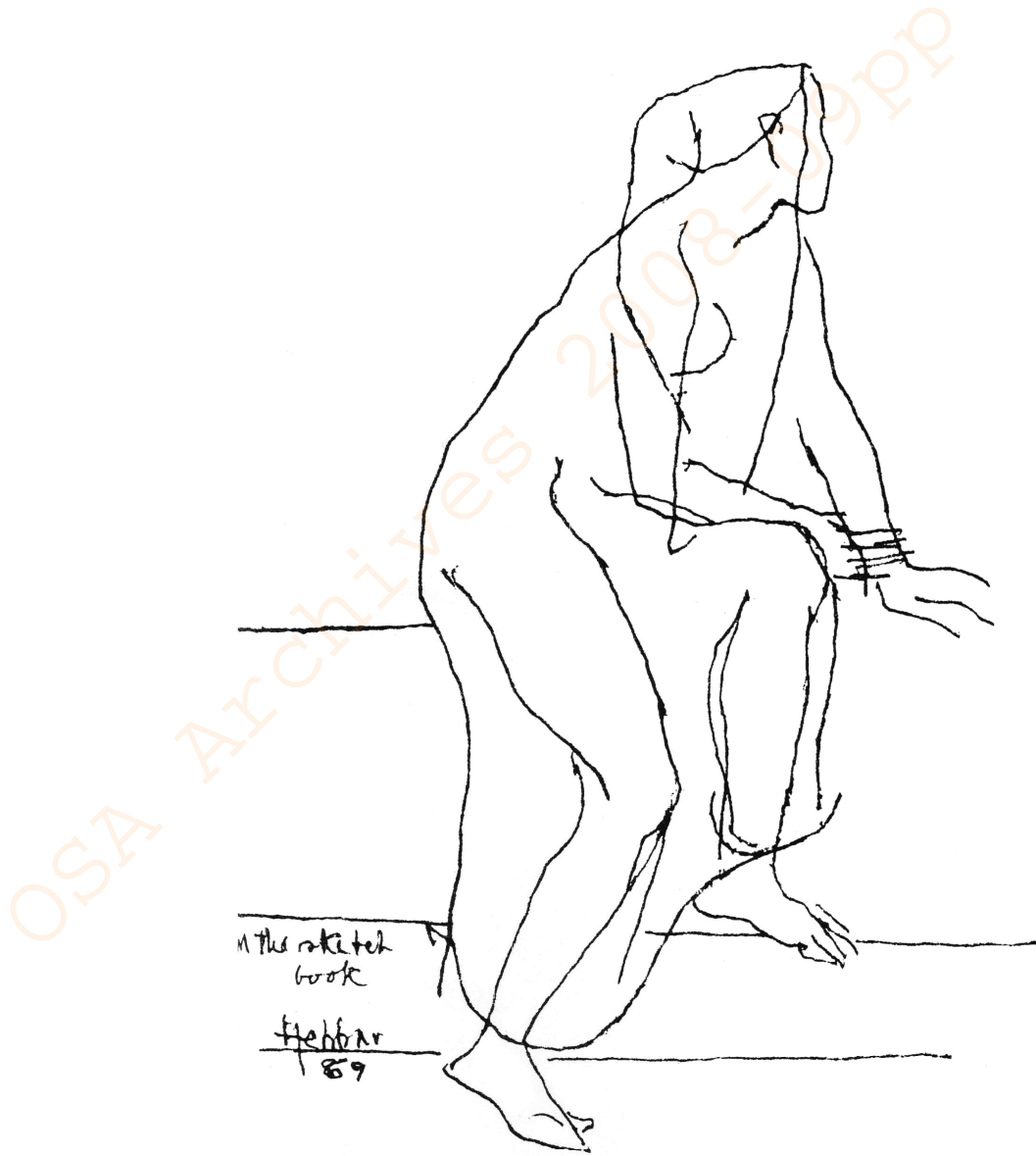
When I was considering taking up an improvement project in my beloved school, the need of a “Science Gallery” seemed to be the most appealing. “Prachi Academy Science Gallery Project” is designed to facilitate Science education among the students through a better teaching and learning environment as well as to provide a resource center for the neighboring middle and elementary schools and to the district and state administration. The project needs the funding for a building with a gallery for the students, equipped with projector and basic facilities to conduct experiments related to Science curriculum, adjacent apparatus room and to supplement the existing inventory of equipment. With the help and support of school staff and district administration and a local Non-profit organization Sampurna Centre for Women’s Empowerment and Social Development I am leading this project since 2005. The total estimated cost of this project is \$ 10,600 USD. The building is under construction. If you would like to know more about this project, or want to contribute or to initiate similar project in your school please visit [www.worldorissa.com/project](http://www.worldorissa.com/project) for more information.

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*Pure mathematics is, in its way, the poetry of logical ideas*







*K.K. Hebbar - From the sketch Book*

## ***From Oriya Homemakers....***



## Keeping the Strings Attached: Oriya Gruhini

Anindita Nanda

“Oriya Gruhini” as the name suggests is a vibrant internet community of mostly Oriya “gruhini’s” from US and the world over and has completed two and half years of a loving and caring relationship among its members. “Gruhini’s” represents the essence of every woman and is a celebration of womanhood in all its manifestations. Being far from home and making a new home in a land of opportunities and dreams, be it the USA or anywhere in the world, it may sometimes be a very exhausting and lonely experience without the support and the lending ears of friends and well wishers. And the role of Oriya Gruhini fulfills that need from its core to its sheath. “Oriya Gruhini” is there for fellow *gruhini’s* in their thick and thin, in their celebrations and achievements and in their ups and downs, encouraging and congratulating when one achieves a milestone in life be it in work or personal, sharing when one needs advice, lending a supporting shoulder when one needs a lift in spirits. In this day and age when everyone is busy with his/her daily duties and obligations, in this forum; friends take time from their days to make time for their *gruhini* friends. It has members from far and near, from India to Australia to the whole of US, from home-makers to artists to professionals to dreamers to entrepreneurs. Miles of distances do not matter as everyone is just an email away.

The community, which started with as few as 3 members, has grown by leaps and bounds and has a total of 37 members till date and hopes to continue with this trend of imbibing new members. Though most of the members have not met one another, they still are able to fill one another’s life with love, happiness, fun, smile and knowledge. This has been a forum to unite all Oriya housewives throughout the US and the world. In this transitional world of crisscrossing national boundaries, the ethnic consciousness of being an ‘Oriya’ has made us one of the most successful communities around the globe. The group has put in mammoth effort to portray a new outlook towards the development of Orissa and discuss the current problems that our state is facing. This group entails in providing a warm feeling of belongingness to members who have stayed out of Orissa for most part of their lives and gives them a glimpse of how Orissa has changed and is changing. Its members always try to create an atmosphere of a second home by indulging in discussions and sharing their own experiences of Orissa and abroad. Sunshine of love, warmth, and friendship sparkles the “Gruhini Parivar” everyday.

Sharing a thought, a joke, an idea, a notion, no matter how small or big is always welcomed with open arms and so are the new members who keep joining. We have seen lot of groups made only to fizzle out even before they get off the ground. Oriya Gruhini has been an exception to this due to the undivided loyalty of its members as an ardent group of enthusiasts who take it in their stride to go that extra mile and make a difference in the lives of all those who love to see the enormous amount of support from this group of extraordinary *gruhini’s* who are exceptional not only in the sense of what they have achieved but also are special in the way that they make the day of someone extra special with their attention, be it their birthday, anniversary, birth of a new baby or any other occasion for celebration and sometimes for no reason at all but





just to make one feel special and loved. Such delightful moments are not uncommon in this welcoming family, a family keeping the strings attached no matter where we are and who we are.

Oriya Gruhini is simply a luxury in life. Laughing from ones heart with a forwarded joke or refreshing their spirit with a mind blowing message when one is feeling low due to health issues or for some other reason, seeking an advice when one is in a dilemma, receiving a welcome back note when one is still missing family in India right after a trip from India, visiting places (through online albums) in India and all over the world where one have never been before through the lens of their gruhini friends. Parenthood is a difficult stage of life. But many to-be mothers and new mothers have shared their apprehensions, joys and eased their sorrows here. The sharing of ideas for parenting and well-being of children has always become an integral part of discussion in this group. In this family one gets heart warming hellos not only from friends one has never met, but also from those who are there and with whom one can share the days- like the birthdays, the anniversaries, ordinary days too of happiness, love, fear, concern, nearly everything and anything without inhibition.

It is a unique platform through which we reconnect with our Oriya culture and heritage and get to know each other and work towards building an everlasting relationship with gruhini's all over the world. We share project ideas (like photography, gardening, dancing etc.) and cooking recipes with the group. We have maintained diversity in the group. The non-Oriya's in our group can better speak about the feeling of togetherness prevalent here. Within this time span of two and half yrs, so many members have joined and left too. Despite that our spirit towards the continuity of the group has been the same as it was in the beginning.

We feel proud when Anya and Nayna do a splendid job in their academic carrier. With families far from us, we know when we need advice; we can always turn to the elders of the group like Swapna nani and Reene nani, who are there for us with their prompt guidance. When we feel a bit little down and low in spirits, Anindita (Ani) is always there to put a smile on our face with her prompt, charming and encouraging words. Mornings are always beautiful with the good morning messages from Smruti. Each occasion is captured well with Sujata's (Guddi) photography, birthdays are always colorful with Ambika's wishes, fun is always sprinkled with Namrata's (Nam) giggly lines, our intelligence is constantly put to test with Sujata's (Dolly) interesting polls, moments are always perfect with Nitu's presentation and Padmaja's jokes and Swati's delightful "Oriyinglish" pen downs and there is yet another sweet reason to open up the mailbox with a cup of tea in hand on a dusky, infinite morning, eyes and heart fixed on the message in the computer screen and to be a part of such a wonderful group created by Amita and nurtured and kept going by the commitment of all the other above gruhini's.

We have always stood by these words, "there are miles and miles to go before I sleep..." The Internet journeys for us, the Oriya Gruhini's, has just begun and we have a long way to go and we strongly believe that this platform has given us a strong base to enable us to be heard and to make a difference not only in each other's lives but also make us capable of working on what we strongly believe in which is and has been the primary objective, to preserve



and pass on a small piece of our culture and heritage. We will continue to work towards making Oriya Gruhini the voice of Oriya gruhini's all over the world! We would be happy to welcome anyone to our family.

Mail to Join Oriya Gruhini: [oriyagruhini@yahoo.com](mailto:oriyagruhini@yahoo.com) or [oriyagruhini@yahoogroups.com](mailto:oriyagruhini@yahoogroups.com)

(Note: This article has been edited and compiled by Anindita Nanda for OriyaGruhini. It is a compilation of the thoughts and writings of the members of the yahoo group OriyaGruhini.)



*El captain and Merced River ©Biswajeet Puhon*

*"Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterwards."*





## Few Recipes from the Kitchen of Oriya Gruhini

Compiled by Amita Mishra

Oriya cuisine is part of those unexploited Indian cuisine which is rich and varied. The recipes are generally simple and delicious and are delicately spiced unlike the typical Indian curries. The most important contribution of Oriya cuisine to Indian cuisine is Rassagolla, which has been used in Orissa thousands of years before being passed on to West Bengal. Also Kheeri (Kheer) which is very much popular in all parts of India originated from Puri, the land of Lord Jagannatha, thousands of years ago. The variety of food cooked in different parts of Orissa is vast and diverse. Each family has its own style of cooking which suits best to their tastes. And this tradition is passed on to generations, from mother to daughter, from mother-in-law to daughter-in-law and so on.

Following are some recipes shared by members of OriyaGruhini.

### 1. Sweet Podo Pita ( Bou's Style ) by Reene Das.

#### Ingredients:

2 Cups Basmati Rice, or Regular Rice (soaked overnight)  
1 Coconut (grated).  
Water  
Brown Sugar according to taste.  
A pinch of salt.  
1/2 cup buttermilk.  
1 stick of butter or Ghee  
Few whole cardamom seeds, or crushed, as desired  
Handful of Raisins ( and cashews if desired )  
3 to 4 Bay leaves.

#### Method

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Smear a cake pan, with butter. Keep aside. Blend the washed soaked rice, with the grated coconut with water as required. On the stove place a pot with a cup of water or more, add the brown sugar the stick of butter and the bay leaves. Let it boil, then add the blended rice, and coconut mixture. Once it starts boiling add the buttermilk. Keep cooking, till it becomes a little bit dry. Add cardamom seeds, and raisins. Pour this mixture, in the pan, pat the top with ghee, if required and bake for over an hour and a half, or till a toothpick comes out clean when pierced. Then cover, and cool it. Cut into slices, and enjoy.



## 2. A Sweet Dish with Mango Pulp by Swapnalata Mishra

One can mango pulp (any brand from Indian store)  
One cool whip 16oz.  
One can condense milk  
1 or 2 cardamom ( powder)  
Mix them all together and freeze it for minimum 3hrs.  
(If you want you can add 2 table spoons Pista powder)  
Take it out of the freezer 15mnts before you serve.

## 3. Dal Fry by Swati Dash

### Ingredients:

1 Cup Toor Dal  
One large onion minced  
One large chopped tomato  
2 Green Chilly chopped  
1/2 tspn minced ginger  
1tspn Jeera  
2tspn Kasuri methi  
1tspn Turmeric Powder  
Salt to Taste  
2tspn Sugar  
Few Tejpatta  
2-3 Green cardamom  
3tspn Oil  
Cilantro for garnishing

### Method:

Pressure cook toor dal with 3cup water adding turmeric powder and salt for 1 whistle. While done, put a karai on fire, heat the oil, add tejpatta, green cardamom, then add jeera, let it splutter, then add green chilly and ginger, and onion, fry for 3 minutes till the onion is transparent, add tomato and fry for another few minutes, till the tomato becomes soft, add kasurimethi, fry for another 2mins, then mixed the dal and let it boils for 2mins, add sugar, and garnish with cilantro and serve with pulao or roti.

## 4. Cabbage Manchurian By Swati Dash

### Ingredients:

1 large thinly sliced Cabbage  
1 cup Maida  
½ tspn Haldi





½ tspn Garam masala powder  
Salt to taste  
1 large sliced Onion  
1 sliced Tomato  
1 sliced Capsicum  
Green Chilly  
Ginger ½ tspn minced  
1 large Thinly sliced Carrot  
Soya sauce, Tomato Sauce, Chilly sauce  
Vinegar, China Salt  
Pepper ½ tspn grounded  
Oil for frying

#### **Method**

Take a wide mouthed container and put cabbage, maida, salt, turmeric and garam masala and mix well. Use as little water as possible. The dough should be of consistency for making small balls. Convert the dough into small balls. Deep fry them in the oil till they become golden brown. Put a karai on stove, and heat 3 tspn oil, add green chilly, ginger, onion and fry for 2 mins, then add capsicum fry for another 2 mins, add carrot fry for few minutes, add tomato fry for another 1 min, then add the cabbage balls, mix them together, add all the sauces and vinegar and china salt, grounded pepper check the salt and serve hot with paratha.

### **5. Carrot Kofta Curry By Swati Dash**

#### **Ingredients**

##### **For the Koftas:**

4-5 Carrots grated  
1 boiled and mashed Potato  
1 tbsp crumbled Paneer  
1 tsp Chilli Powder  
1 tsp Salt  
1 Green Chilli, finely chopped  
1/2 tsp Ginger-garlic paste  
1 tbsp Besan (gram flour)  
1 tsp Butter  
Oil to deep fry

##### **For the Gravy:**

1 cup Curd (yogurt)  
1/2 tsp Haldi (turmeric) Powder  
1 tsp Chilli powder



Salt to taste  
1 tsp Besan  
1 tsp Sugar  
1 tsp Mustard seeds, 1 tsp Cumin seeds  
1 tsp Ajwain (optional)

**Onion-Ginger paste:**

one big onion or two small onions and 1/2 inch ginger.  
Cut into small pieces fry it in one spoon oil and then blend in a mixer.

**For Garnishing:**

Coriander leaves, Cream , 1/2 cup Water

**Method:**

**For the Koftas**

Take a frying pan put butter in it. When butter melts put the grated carrot fry for 2 minutes and cover and cook on a low flame for 5 minutes . When the carrot turns little soft remove the pan and let it cool. Mix the other ingredients of koftas, except oil for deep fry. Make small balls. Heat the oil for deep-frying, and deep-fry these balls till they turn brown in color. Remove them from oil and let it cool.

**For the Gravy**

Take the curd add besan and sugar and blend it properly in a mixer. Heat butter in a deep bottom pan, put the mustard seeds, ajwain, cumin seeds and when they crackle add the onion paste to it fry it till oil separates, add chili powder and haldi to it and put the curd mixture in the kadhai. Boil it for 5-7 minutes. But stir it with a spoon continuously so that curd does not separate. Add salt to taste. Add water in it. When it cools drop the koftas in it and garnish it with cream and coriander leaves.

## 6. Recipe for Ambila (Sambalpuri Style) by Amita Mishra

**Ingredients**

1 Small eggplant, 3-4 pieces of Okra, 1 small Radish, 100 gms of Pumpkin- all cut into medium size pieces.  
3-4 Pieces of Arvi (Saru) peeled and diced, 1 Medium Sized tomato,  
3-4 tbs of Yougrt., 1/2 cup of Toor Dal





Curry leaves,  
Panch Phutn,  
6-7 Whole red chili,  
2-3 tbs rice soaked in water for 1 hour.

### **Method**

1. Grind the soaked rice with 1-2 flakes of garlic and 1-2 whole red chili.
2. Pressure cook dal with salt and Turmeric till almost done.
3. By that time put some oil in a pan and add mustard seeds. After the seeds splutter, add the cut tomatoes. After the tomatoes are cooked, bring it down to room temp.
4. Then to this tomato khata, add the ground rice paste, and yogurt. Mix it properly.
5. To the boiled dal add the vegetables(except Okra). Boil it again till the vegetables are done. By the mean time fry the okra in a frying pan with little oil. Fry till the stickiness of okra is gone. Add it to the boiling vegetables.
6. Add the mixture of step no 4 to the boiling vegetables and stir continuously. Boil again for 5-7 minutes.
7. Heat some oil in the frying pan and add the panch phutan. When they splutter, add the curry leaves and whole red chili . Pour this phutan over the ambila and cover it immediately so that the aroma of the phutan is completely absorbed by the ambila. Serve with rice.

**P.S. You can adjust the sourness by adjusting the amount of curd or tomato.**

## **7. Mixed Saga Bhaja**

### **Ingredients**

Few Phula Kobi patra, Mula saga, Koshala Saga all finely chopped and mixed together. Grind presoaked rice with 1-2 flakes of garlic and 1-2 whole red chili. Finely chop 1-2 green chili, 2-3 flakes of garlic, depending on the quantity of cut leaves. Mix altogether the leaves, chopped garlic, green chilies, the ground rice paste with salt to taste. Heat a tawa( frying pan) and put some oil in it. Then put above mixture in the tawa in round shape. When done, turn it round like a chakuli. Fry till golden brown on both the sides. This saga bhaja goes well with Pakhala.

## **8. Kakharu Manji Bhaja**

Take 100 grams of peeled dry Pumpkin Seeds. Grind it. To this paste add salt, finely chopped onion, green chili, coriander leaves and tomato. Heat a tawa (frying pan) and put some oil in it. Then put the above mixture in the tawa in round shape. When done, turn it round like a chakuli. Fry till golden brown on both the sides.

*Joy in looking and comprehending is nature's most beautiful gift.*



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ଓଁ ଶ୍ରୀ ଗଣେଶାୟ ନମଃ ।  
ମୁରୁଜରେ ଗଜାନନ, ଫଟୋ-ପୁଜାତା ଖୁଞ୍ଚିଆ



ମିଳିଗାନ୍ରେ ରଥଯାତ୍ରା





# ସଂପାଦକୀୟ.....

ବନ୍ଧୁଗଣ,  
ନମସ୍କାର!

୨୦୦୭ ଓସା' ମହୋତ୍ସବର ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗୀ ବୃନ୍ଦ, ଓସା'ର ସମସ୍ତ ସଭ୍ୟ-ସଭ୍ୟା ଏବଂ ସ୍ମରଣିକାର ଲେଖକ/ ଲେଖିକା ଓ ପାଠକ/ପାଠିକା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଜଣାଇବା ସହ, ଆମ ଐତିହ୍ୟର ମୂଳାଧାର ଓ ଆମ ବୈଚିତ୍ୟର ଅନନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରତୀକ ମଙ୍ଗଳମୟ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ପାଦପଦ୍ମ ରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗଟିକୁ ଅର୍ପଣ କରୁଛି ।

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ଓ ଓସାର ସଂପର୍କ ବାଉଁଶ ଓ ବଙ୍କାଶୀର ସଂପର୍କ ପରି ଚିରନ୍ତନ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ଓସାର ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଓ ସ୍ଥିତିର କାରଣ । ୧୯୩୬ ମସିହା ରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ରାଜ୍ୟ ଭାବରେ ମାନ୍ୟତା ପାଇବାର ଏକ ମାତ୍ର କାରଣ ଥିଲା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା । ନିଜକୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାବରେ ପରିଚୟ ଦେଉଥିବା କେତୋଟି ଯୁବ ପ୍ରାଣର ଉତ୍ସାହକୁ ନେଇ ପ୍ରାୟ ଅଠତିରିଶ ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ଓସା ଏକ ସଂଗଠନ ଭାବରେ ଗଠନ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଯେମିତିବି ହୋଇ, ଯେଉଁଠିବି ହେଉ ବର୍ଷକୁ ଥରେ ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାର ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନେ ଏକାଠି ହେବା, ଏକାଠି ହୋଇ କର୍ମମୟ ଜୀବନର ଦୁଃଖ-ସୁଖକୁ ବାଣ୍ଟିବା, ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସ୍ମୃତିକୁ ରୋମଛନ୍ନ କରିବା, ଏହି ଅବସରରେ ନିଜ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କୁ ନିଜ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ସହ ଯଥାସାଧ୍ୟ ପରିଚିତ କରାଇବା, ଅନ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାର ଓ ତାଙ୍କ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ମିଶିବାପାଇଁ ସୁଯୋଗ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବା ଥିଲା ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଏକମାତ୍ର ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ । ଏ ଭିତରେ ଅନେକ ଦିନ ବିତି ଗଲାଣି, ଆନୁଷ୍ଠାନର ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ଏବେ ବହୁବିଧ, ବାର୍ଷିକ ବନ୍ଧୁ ମିଳନ ଏବେ ମହୋତ୍ସବ ର ରୂପ ନେଇଛି ।

ଅଠତିରିଶ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଆଜି ଓସା ଏକ ବୃହତ୍ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ । କେବଳ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ନୁହଁନ୍ତି, ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଭଲ ପାଉଥିବା, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି କୁ ଆପଣେଇ ନେଇଥିବା ଆହୁରି ଅନେକ ଓସା ସହିତ ସଂପୃକ୍ତ । ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରାନ୍ତରେ ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଗଢ଼ି ଉଠିଛି ଓସାର ଚାପ୍ଟର ସବୁ । ଭିନ୍ନ ଜୀବିକା, ଭିନ୍ନ ଆଦର୍ଶ, ଭିନ୍ନ ରୁଚିବୋଧ ହେଲେବି ସଭ୍ୟ/ସଭ୍ୟା ମାନେ ଓସା ନାମକ ଗୋଟିଏ ସୂତ୍ର ରେ ବନ୍ଧା, କାରଣ ହେଉଛି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପ୍ରତି ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ପ୍ରତିସେମାନଙ୍କର ଆକର୍ଷଣ । ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ନୂଆ ଆମେରିକା, କାନାଡା ଆସିଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆଟିଏ ନୂଆ ଜାଗା, ନୂଆ ବାତାବରଣ, ନୂଆ କାମକୁ ଆଦରି ନେଉଥିବା ବେଳେ ମନେ ମନେ ଖୋଜି ହୋଉଥାଏ ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଓଡ଼ିଆକୁ, ଝୁରି ହୋଉଥାଏ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ । ସେଇ ନୂଆ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାର ମାନଙ୍କୁ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍ଥାନର ଓସା ଚାପ୍ଟରର ପୂରୁଣା ସଭ୍ୟ ଓ ସଭ୍ୟାମାନେ ଆପଣେଇ ନିଅନ୍ତି । କୁମାର ପୁଣିମା, ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ପୂଜା, ଗଣେଷ ପୂଜା ଓ ପିକନିକ୍ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ଆହୁରି ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଉତ୍ସବରେ ସେହି ନୂଆ ପରିବାରମାନେ ଅନ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାରମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ପରିଚିତ ହୁଅନ୍ତି, ପ୍ରବାସରେ ଥାଇ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପରିଚିତ ବାତାବରଣକୁ ଅନୁଭବ କରନ୍ତି ।

୨୦୦୭ ଓସା କନଭେନ୍ସନ୍‌ରେ ଐତିହ୍ୟ ଓ ବୈଚିତ୍ୟର ମହୋତ୍ସବ ଅବସରରେ; ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ପରିଚୟ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଆପଣ ଉଦ୍ୟମ କରି ସମ୍ପଳ ହୋଇଥିଲେ, ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ଏକ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଭାଷା ଭାବରେ ମାନ୍ୟତା ପାଇବାର ଅନେକ ପୁର୍ବରୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିଥିଲେ, ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅକ୍ଷରରେ ଲିପିବଦ୍ଧ କରି ରଖିଥିଲେ ତାଳପତ୍ର ପୋଥିରେ, ଯେଉଁ କର୍ମବୀର ମାନେ ଆଧୁନିକ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରପାତିର ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ନେଇ ନାନା ଘାତ ପ୍ରତିଘାତ ଭିତରେ କାଗଜ ଉପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅକ୍ଷର ଛପେଇ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟକୁ ଅମର କରିବାର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଥିଲେ, ଯେଉଁ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ମାନେ ଆଜୀବନ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସାଧନାରେ ରତ ରହି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ସ୍ଥିତିକୁ ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ ସୁଦୃଢ଼ କରି ପାରିଛନ୍ତି, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଐତିହ୍ୟକୁ ସୁଦୃଢ଼ କରିଛନ୍ତି ଓ ତହିଁରେ ବୈଚିତ୍ୟ ଓ ବୈଭବ ଭରି ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି, ସେମାନେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଆମର ନମସ୍ୟ ।

ଓସା ର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ ପ୍ରକାଶନାରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟ ସହାୟକ ଆମକୁ ଓଡ଼ିଫନକୁ ଉପହାର ଦେଇଥିବା ଶ୍ରୀ ଦେବାଶୀଷ ରଥଙ୍କର ଅବଦାନ ତିର ପ୍ରଶଂସନୀୟ ।

ଆମେରିକା ଓ କାନାଡାର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସହରରେ ବିଗତ ସଙ୍କ୍ରମଣ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ପ୍ରତି ବର୍ଷ ଓସାର ବାର୍ଷିକ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ପାଳନ ଅବସରରେ ପାରଂପରିକ ରୀତି ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ସ୍ମରଣିକା ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇ ଆସୁଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ ସ୍ମରଣିକାର ଶୋଭା ବର୍ଦ୍ଧନ କରିବା ସହିତ ଓସାର ସୁଖ ମାନଙ୍କର ଓ ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ଆତ୍ମ ପରିଚୟକୁ ଚୈତ୍ୟବାଦିତ କରିଆସୁଛି । ପୂର୍ବତନ କନଭେନ୍ସନ୍ ଗୁଡ଼ିକର ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗୀ ଏବଂ ସଂପାଦକ/ସଂପାଦିକା ମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗଟିକୁ ବଞ୍ଚାଇ ରଖିଛି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଗଣିଦେଲା ପରି ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାର କେତେଜଣ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକାମାନେ ନିଜ କଳ୍ପନା ଓ ଅଜ୍ଞେୟତା ଅନୁଭୂତିକୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାରେ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତ କରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପାଇ

ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି, ତାଙ୍କର ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସାଧନା ଅବ୍ୟାହତ ରହିଛି । ବିନା ପଠନରେ ଲିଖନ ର ସାର୍ଥକତା ନଥାଏ । ଓସା ସ୍ମରଣିକାର ପାଠକ/ପାଠିକା ମାନେ ଲେଖକ/ଲେଖିକାମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରେରଣାର ଉତ୍ସ ।

ଏଥରର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇଥିବା କିଛି ଲେଖାର ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକା ମାନେ କେହି କେହି ଆମେରିକା ବୁଲି ଆସିଥିବା ଅବସରରେ, କେହି କେହି ସଂପର୍କୀୟ/ବନ୍ଧୁ ମାନଙ୍କ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଏବଂ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ସ୍ଥାନରୁ ଲେଖା ପଠାଇଛନ୍ତି । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗର ଶୋଭା ବଢାଇଛି । ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରିତ ସମୟ ସୀମା ଭିତରେ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରିଥିବାରୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।

ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାର ଜଳବାୟୁ ଓ ସାମାଜିକ ବାତାବରଣର ସର୍ତ୍ତ ଓ ନିୟମ ଭିତରେ ଆମର ଜିଇଁବାର ଶୈଳୀ ବଦଳି ଯାଇଛି ଅନେକ ଦିନରୁ, ତଥାପି ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟ ଭିତରେ ନିଜସ୍ୱ ଭାବନା ଓ ଦେହନାକୁ ନେଇ ଓଡ଼ିଆଟିଏ ବଞ୍ଚିଛି (ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକା ର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାବରେ), କେବେ କେବେ ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଥିବା ମା' ର କୋଳ, ମାଟିର ବାସ୍ନା, ପାଣିର ସ୍ୱାଦ, ଆକାଶର ରଙ୍ଗ ଆଉ ପବନର ଝର୍କ କୁ ଝୁରି ହେଉଛି, କେବେ ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣୀର ଉତ୍ସବମୁଖର ଦିନ ଗୁଡ଼ିକର କୋଳାହଳମୟ ସ୍ୱର ଡାକୁ ବ୍ୟୟତ କରିଛି, କେବେ ପୁଣି ସଂପର୍କୀୟ ମାନଙ୍କର ସ୍ନେହସିନ୍ଧୁ ବାଉଁଶ, ବିଦାୟ ବେଳର ଲୁହଭିଜା ଆଖି, ଦୂରରେ ଥାଇ ବି ଶୁଭ ମନାସିବାର ନିଃସର୍ତ୍ତ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ତା' ନିଃସଙ୍ଗ ଜୀବନରେ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣତା ଭରିଦେଇଛି । ବାସ୍ତବତାର ମାୟାବିନୀ ଅଠାକାଠି ପଞ୍ଜୁରୀ ଭିତରୁ ଉଡ଼ିଯିବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ ନିଜକୁ ହେଉଛି ସତ କିନ୍ତୁ ଜୀବନ ପାଖରେ ହାରିଯାଇନୁ ଆମେ, ଜୀବନ ସହିତ ବୁଝାମଣା କରିଛେ, ଖାଣ୍ଟି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ନହେଇପାରିଲେ ବି ଆମ ଭିତରର ଓଡ଼ିଆଟିକୁ ବଞ୍ଚେଇରଖିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଛୁ । ଆମ ଭିତରୁ କେତେଜଣ ସମୟ ଦେଖି ଅଜ୍ଞେୟ ଅନୁଭୂତିରୁ ହେଉ ଅବା କଳ୍ପନାର ପ୍ରେରଣାରୁ ହେଉ କବିତା, ଗଳ୍ପ ଲେଖିବାରେ ପ୍ରୟାସ କରୁ କରୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅକ୍ଷର ଓ ଭାଷାର ଦର୍ପଣ ଭିତରେ ନିଜକୁ ଭେଟିଛନ୍ତି । ସେଇ ଲେଖକ/ଲେଖିକା ମାନେ ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାର ସାଧାରଣ ଜୀବନ ଯାତ୍ରାରେ ଇଂରାଜୀ ଭାଷାର ବହୁଳ ବ୍ୟବହାର ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ କେବେ କେବେ ସାବଲୀଳ ଭାବରେ ନିଜକୁ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଇଂରାଜୀ ଭାଷାର ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ନେଇଛନ୍ତି ସତ, ନିଜର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାରସ୍ୱତ ସାଧନାକୁ ଅବ୍ୟାହତ ରଖିବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଓସା ପରିସରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ପ୍ରୟୋଗ ପାଇଁ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଅତୁଳନୀୟ ଅବଦାନ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନୀୟ । ମା ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ସହାୟ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସାଧନା ସମ୍ପଳ ହେଉ । ସ୍ମରଣିକାର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ ବଞ୍ଚିରହୁ । ଦୁଃଖ କେବେ ନା କେବେ ବର୍ଷ ବର୍ଷ ର ଶମକୁ ସାର୍ଥକକରି ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାରେ ଜନ୍ମ ହୋଇ ବଢ଼ିଥିବା ଆମ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରୁ କାହାର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ପୁଣି ଆଗ୍ରହ ଆସିବ ଆଉ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପଢ଼ି ଲେଖି ଶିଖିବାକୁ ମନ ବଳିବ !

ଓସା ସ୍ମରଣିକାର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗର ସଂପାଦନା ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ମୋ ପାଇଁ କେବଳ ଗୌରବର କଥା ନୁହେଁ, ଏହା ଏକ ଦୁଃସାହସିକ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ । ମୋ ଉପରେ ଗଭୀର ଆସ୍ଥା ଓ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ରଖିଥିବାରୁ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ କିଷ୍କ ସେନାପତି, ତଃ ରବି ରାଉତ୍ ଓ ଓସା ମିଶ୍ରାନୁ ଚାପଟରର ସଭ୍ୟ ସଭ୍ୟା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରି ଲେଖା ପଠାଇଥିବା ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ସହଯୋଗ ପାଇଁ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଅବଶିଷ୍ଟ ଲେଖା ଗୁଡ଼ିକର ମୁଦ୍ରଣର ଗୁରୁ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ତୁଲେଇବା ସମୟରେ ମୈତ୍ରେୟୀ ସତପଥୀ ଏବଂ ଅମିତା ମିଶ୍ର ଙ୍କର ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ସମୟରେ ଅକ୍ଷୟ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ମୁଁ କୃତଜ୍ଞ । ସଂପାଦନା ର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ତୁଲେଇବା ଅବସରରେ ଲେଖକ/ଲେଖିକା ମାନଙ୍କର ଆଗ୍ରହ, ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଓ ଆବଶ୍ୟକୀୟ ଉପଦେଶ ମୋ ମନରେ ଉତ୍ସାହ ଓ ପ୍ରେରଣା ଭରିଦେଇଛି । ସଂପାଦନାର ଗୁରୁ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଓ କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟବୋଧର ସୀମା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହି ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକା ମାନଙ୍କର ନିଜସ୍ୱ ଲିଖନ ଶୈଳୀ କୁ ସମ୍ମାନ ଦେଇ ଲେଖା ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ସଥସାଧ୍ୟ ତୃପ୍ତିଶୂନ୍ୟ କରି ପ୍ରକାଶ କରାଇବାର ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତଥାପି ଯଦି କିଛି ତୃପ୍ତି ରହି ଯାଇଥାଏ ଲେଖକ/ଲେଖିକା ଓ ପାଠକ/ପାଠିକା ମାନେ କ୍ଷମା କରିବାକୁ ବିନୀତ ଅନୁରୋଧ । ସମୟୋପଯୋଗୀ ସହଯୋଗ ଓ ଉପଦେଶ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ୍ ଓ ଶ୍ରୀ ବବୁ ସାମଲଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ସ୍ମରଣିକା ସମିତିର ସମସ୍ତ ସଭ୍ୟ ମୋର ଅନୁଜ୍ଞା ତୁଲ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀ ମନୋଜ ପଣ୍ଡା, ଶ୍ରୀ ନାଗେଶ ରାଜନାଲା, ଶ୍ରୀ ବିଶ୍ୱଜିତ୍ ପ୍ରହାଣ, ଶ୍ରୀ ନିଳାଦ୍ରୀ ମହାପାତ୍ର ଏବଂ ଶ୍ରୀ ଶଶଧର ସାହୁ ଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ କୃତଜ୍ଞତା, ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସହଯୋଗ ଓ ଉଚିତ୍ ବୁଝାମଣା ବିନା ଏହି ଗୁରୁ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ତୁଲାଇବା ମୋ ପକ୍ଷରେ ଆଦୌ ସମ୍ଭବ ହୋଇ ନଥାନ୍ତା । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗର ମୁଖପୃଷ୍ଠା । କାହିଁ କେଉଁ ସୁଗରୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାମାଜିକ ଜୀବନରେ ଝୋଟିର ଏକ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ସ୍ଥାନ ରହିଛି ଏବଂ ବିଶ୍ୱ ଦରବାରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଏକ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ପରିଚୟ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିଛି ଓଡ଼ିଶା । ଚିତ୍ରକଳା ଏବଂ ନୃତ୍ୟ କଳାର ସମାହାରରେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗର ମୁଖପୃଷ୍ଠା ତିଆରିକରି ଜିଲି ସିନ୍ଦୂର ଙ୍କୁ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଆରମ୍ଭରୁ ଶେଷ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ମୋର ସ୍ୱାମୀ ନିର୍ମଳ ରଥ ଏବଂ ଦୁଇ ଝିଅ ଆନନ୍ଦା ଓ ନୟନାଙ୍କର ସହଯୋଗୀତା ଓ ସହନଶୀଳତା ପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ କୃତଜ୍ଞ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟ କାଳଜୟୀ ହେଉ ଏବଂ ମଙ୍ଗଳମୟ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କର, ଓସା ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ର ମଙ୍ଗଳ କରନ୍ତୁ ।



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ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଲତା ମିଶ୍ର(ରଥ)**

ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ମା ଗୋ କଣ୍ଠେ ଥା ॥ ବିଦ୍ୟା ନଆସିଲେ କହି ଦେଉ ଥା ॥



ଆଲୁଅକୁ ଚିହ୍ନିବା ଆଗରୁ, ପବନକୁ ଛୁଇଁବା ଆଗରୁ, ଆମ ଆଜାଣତରେ, ସଂପର୍କର ସ୍ଵତ୍ଵରେ ଆମେ ବନ୍ଧା, ସେ ସ୍ଵତ୍ଵ ଆମକୁ ଶିଖାଏ ସଂସାର ରେ ଜିଇଁବାର ମନ୍ତ୍ର, ବୁଝେଇ ଦିଏ ଆମର ସାଂସାରିକ ପରିଚୟ,, ହାତ ଧରି ଦେଖେଇଦିଏ ସଂସାର ରେ ଚାଲିବାର ବାଟ । ଚାଲୁ ଚାଲୁ କିଛି ବୁଝିବା ଆଗରୁ, କିଛି ଜାଣିବା ଆଗରୁ କେତେବେଳେ ପୁଣି ନିଜେ ଚାଲି, ନିଜ ସୀମା ସରହଦ ତେଇଁ ଆମେ ଅନେକ ବାଟ ଚାଲିଆସୁ.... ହାତ ଧରି ଚଳେଇ ଶିଖେଇଥିବା ଆମର ସଂପର୍କୀୟ ଏବଂ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଚାଲୁଥିବା ସେଇ ସାଥୀମାନେ ଅନେକପକ୍ଷରେ ରହିଯା'ନ୍ତି; ପଛକୁ ଫେରି ଚାହିଁବାବେଳେ ସେମାନେ କ୍ଷତ ଦେଖାଯାନ୍ତିନି ସତ କିନ୍ତୁ ପବନରେ ଥାଏ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଝର୍କା, ଆଲୁଅରେ ଥାଏ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆଭା, ସ୍ଵତ୍ଵରେ ଥାଏ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରୀତି ଆଉ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଥାଏ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା ! ମନେପଡ଼େ.....

“ ପିତା, ମାତା, ବନ୍ଧୁ, ଭାଇ, ଭଉଣୀର  
 ହୃଦୟେ ଭରିଛ ପ୍ରୀତି  
 ତେଣୁ ମୁଁ ସଂସାରେ ରହିଛି ଆନନ୍ଦେ  
 ସୁଖ ଭୁଞ୍ଜି ନିତି ନିତି ..... ”  
 (କବି ମଧୁସୂଦନ ରାଓ)



**ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଲେଖନୀରୁ.....**

ଲେଖକ /ଲେଖିକା	ଲିଖନ	ପୃଷ୍ଠା
ସ୍ଵର୍ଗତଃ ସଜି ରାଉତରାୟ	ପରିଚୟ ପତ୍ର	୧୬୧
ସ୍ଵର୍ଗତଃ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଧର ନାୟକ	ମୁଁ ତେବେ କି ମୋର ନୁହେଁ	୧୬୧
ଡଃ ଗୋକୁଳାନନ୍ଦ ଦାସ	ଶୂନ୍ୟ ପୁରୁଷ	୧୬୨
ଡଃ ହରେକୃଷ୍ଣ ପଣ୍ଡା	ସର୍ବ ଧର୍ମର ସମନ୍ୱୟ - ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ	୧୬୪
ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଶାନ୍ତି ମିଶ୍ର	ଉତ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣତଃ ଜାଗତଃ	୧୬୭
ଡଃ ଆଶା ମିଶ୍ର	ଆସ ତୁମେ ଅବତରି	୧୬୭
ଡଃ ସୋମନାଥ ମିଶ୍ର	ଉତ୍ ସାହେବଙ୍କ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରୀତି	୧୬୮
ଶ୍ରୀ ଅଭୟ ନାୟକ	ବାରମାସୀ (ହାଇକୁ ହାର)	୧୭୧
ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ନିନା ଦାସ	ଅନ୍ତଃସ୍ତନ	୧୭୨
ଡଃ ପ୍ରିୟଙ୍କା	ବିଦେଶୀ ବନ୍ଧୁ	୧୭୩
ଡଃ କୁମୁଦିନି ପାଢୀ	ଝଲକାଏ ନିଃଶ୍ଵାସ	୧୭୩
ଡଃ ସବିତା ଦାସ	ସୁବିଚାର	୧୭୪



## ବନ୍ଦେ ଉତ୍କଳ ଜନନୀ

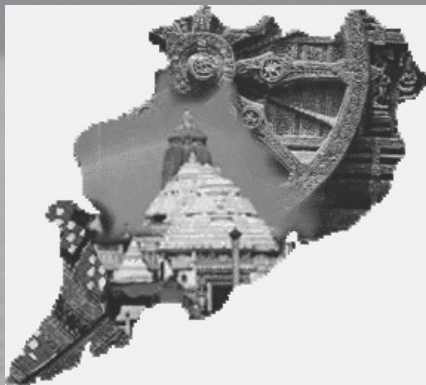
ବନ୍ଦେ ଉତ୍କଳ ଜନନୀ  
ଚାରୁ ହ୍ରାସମୟୀ, ଚାରୁ ଭାଷମୟୀ  
ଜନନୀ, ଜନନୀ, ଜନନୀ  
ପୁତ୍ର ପୟୋଧି-ବିଧୌତ ଶରୀରା  
ତାଳତମାଳ ସୁଶୋଭିତା ତୀରା,  
ଶୁଭ୍ର ତଟିନୀ କୁଳ ଶୀକର ସମୀରା  
ଜନନୀ, ଜନନୀ, ଜନନୀ ।

## କାନ୍ତକବି ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀକାନ୍ତ ମହାପାତ୍ର

ତୁ ପରା ବୋଲାଉ ଉତ୍କଳ ସନ୍ତାନ  
ତେବେ କିଂପା ତୁହି ଭୀରୁ  
ତୋହର ଜନନୀ ରୋଦନ କରିଲେ  
କହିବାକୁ କିଂପା ତରୁ । । ୧।  
ତୋ ପୂର୍ବ ପୁରୁଷ ବୀରପଣିଆରେ  
ଲଭିଥିଲେ କେତେ ଖ୍ୟାତି  
ହାକିମ ନିକଟେ ଦୁଃଖ କହିବାକୁ  
କିଂପା ଥରେ ତୋର ଛାଡ଼ି ? । ୨।

## ଉତ୍କଳ ଗୌରବ ମଧୁସୂଦନ ଦାସ

ଶିଳାଗୃହ ଅନ୍ଧକାରବାସୀ ମୁଁ,  
ଜନନୀ ! ଉତ୍କଳ, ନଥିଲି ଜାଣି,  
ଅଛି ଲୋ ତୋ ପୁରେ  
ଏମନ୍ତ ରୂପର ଲୀଳା; ନ ବାହୁଁ ତରଣୀ  
ଆଜି ଏ ଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନାରେ ନୀଳ ମହାନଦୀପୁରେ ।  
ଡକ୍ଟର୍ ମାୟାଧର ମାନସିଂହ





ପରିଚୟ ପତ୍ର  
ସ୍ୱର୍ଗତଃ ପଦ୍ମଶ୍ରୀ ସଚ୍ଚି ରାଉତରାୟ

ନିଜ ପରିଚୟ ମୁଁ କେଉଁପରି ଦେବି  
ଅନ୍ୟ କିଏ ଦେବ ବା କିପରି ?  
ମୁଁ କି ଜାଣେ ଆସିଲି ମୁଁ କେଉଁ ଠାରୁ  
ଯିବି କେଉଁଠାକୁ ।  
କିପରି କଲିବି ନିୟତି କୁ  
ଯା ବିସ୍ମୃତ  
ଅଜଣା ରୁ ଅଜଣା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ।  
ମୁଁ ତ ଏକ ଯାଯାବର, ଚାଲିଅଛି ଅବିରତ  
ସେଠାରୁ ସେଠାକୁ ।  
ମୁଁ ଜାଣେନା କେଉଁଠାରୁ କେଉଁଠାକୁ  
ଏବଂ କେତେବେଳେ,  
ଦେଶ କାଳ ପ୍ରାନ୍ତର ବାହାରେ  
ମୋ ଅତୀତ ଭବିତବ୍ୟ  
ଦେଖା ଶୁଣା ଜଣାର ବାହାରେ  
ଅବର୍ଣ୍ଣମାନରେ ।  
ମୁଁ ଅଟେ ମୋର ଅଦୃଷ୍ଟ ।  
ମୋର ଛିତି-ବିଂଦୁ ଏକ କାଳର ବୁଦ୍ଧବୁଦ୍ଧ,  
ଏକ ଲିତା ଗୋଟିଏ ମୁଦୁର୍ଣ୍ଣ  
ଯାତା ମୋର ଅପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣକ୍ଷେତ୍ର କୁ ।  
ମୁଁ ପୁଣି ସମାହାର ଦ୍ୱନ୍ଦ୍ୱ  
ନିଜ ଛତା ଅନ୍ୟ କୁ ସଂଖୋଳେ  
ଧରାଦିଏ ବିରୋଧାଭାସରେ ।

ମୋର ପରିଚୟ ପତ୍ର ଝୁଲେ ଏକୋଇ ବଟରେ,  
ନାହିଁ ଯାର କିଛିହିଁ ଅକ୍ଷର ॥

(ରଚନାକାଳ ୨୪-୮-୮୬)

(କବିତା ଟି କବିତା ୧୯୮୭ ଓ କବିତା ୨୦୦୩ ସଂକଳନ  
ଦ୍ୱୟରେ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ । କବିଙ୍କର ଝିଅ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଚିତ୍ରା ରାଉତ  
ଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ପ୍ରଦତ୍ତ ।)

ମୁଉଁ ତେବେ କି ମୋଅର ନୁହେଁ ?  
ସ୍ୱର୍ଗତଃ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଧର ନାୟକ

କୋଉଥି ପାଇଁ ଜନ୍ମ ହେଲି  
ଜନତାମୟ ଏ ବିଶ୍ୱ ତଳେ  
ଉତ୍ତର ତାର ଖୋଜିଲି କି ମୁଁ  
ନିତି ଦିନର ଜଞ୍ଜଳରେ ॥

କେବଳ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଅବିଶ୍ରାନ୍ତ  
ଅପକର୍ମ ରେ ଅତିକ୍ରାନ୍ତ  
ଭ୍ରାନ୍ତ ପରି ଘୁରି ବୁଲୁଛି  
ବାହାରୁ ଆସି, ପଶୁଛି ଘରେ  
ନିତି ଦିନର ଜଞ୍ଜଳରେ ॥

ମୁଉଁ ଏଠି କିଏ, ଏଇ ପଶୁ  
ପଚାରି ନାହିଁ ଏ ଯାଏଁ କିଆଁ  
ଜବାବ ଦେବା ଲୋକଟି କିଏ  
କୋଉଠି ଛପି ହୋଇଛି ଠିଆ  
ତାକୁତ ଖୋଜି କାହିଲି ନାହିଁ  
ଏମିତି ଭୁଲ୍ କଲି କିଂପାଇଁ  
କାହିଁକି ଅବା ତୁବି ରହିବି  
ବିସ୍ମୃତିର ଅତଳ ତଳେ ॥

ମୁଉଁ ତେବେ କି ମୋଅର ନୁହେଁ  
ଆଉ କାହାର ଖେଳ ପିତୁଳା  
ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଧର ନିଶାସକ୍ତ  
ଚାଲିବି ମହା ଆତ୍ମଭୋଳା  
ପ୍ରଦୀପ ଜାଳି ଦେଖିବି କେବେ  
ନିଜ ଚେହେରା ଦର୍ପଣରେ  
ଖୋଜିଲି ନାହିଁ ଜବାବ୍ କିଆଁ  
ନିତି ଦିନର ଜଞ୍ଜଳରେ ।

For his lifetime contribution to Odia literature; writer, poet and dramatist late Laxmidhar Nayak was awarded Ati Badi Jagannatha Das Award by the Orissa Sahitya Ekaademi. The above poetry(submitted by his son Binod Nayak from Washington D.C.) is from his unpublished collection of poems in the process of being published.

“କେହି ରହି ନାହିଁ, ରହିବେ ନାହିଁ ଟି ଭବ ରଙ୍ଗ ଭୂମି ତଳେ, ସର୍ବେ ନିଜ ନିଜ ଲୀଳା ଖେଳା ସାରି ବାହୁଡିବେ କାଳ ବଳେ ।”



## ଶୂନ୍ୟ ପୁରୁଷ: ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଗୋକୁଳାନନ୍ଦ ଦାସ

କିଏ ସେ ପୁରୁଷ ଯେ ଶୂନ୍ୟ! କିଏ ସେ ଶୂନ୍ୟ ଯେ ପୁରୁଷ!!

ଏହାର ସମାଧାନ ନିମ୍ନଲିଖିତ କେତୋଟି ପାହାଚରେ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ ।

- ଯୁଗ ଯୁଗର ତପ, ଯୋଗ, ଅନ୍ୱେଷଣ, ପର୍ଯ୍ୟବେକ୍ଷଣ, ଚିନ୍ତନ, ଅନୁଶୀଳନ, ଗବେଷଣା, ଦର୍ଶନ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ଭାରତର ଉପମାନେ ତନ୍ମୟ ହୋଇ ପାଞ୍ଚ ହଜାର ବର୍ଷ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ରହସ୍ୟ ଉନ୍ମୋଚନର ଝଙ୍କାର ଗୁଞ୍ଜରଣ କରିଥିଲେ - ଏକ ରହସ୍ୟମୟ, ଛନ୍ଦମୟ, କବିତାମୟ ନାସଦୀୟ ସୁକ୍ତ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ - ପରମ ସତ୍ୟର ଆଭାସ ନିର୍ଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ ବା ଶୂନ୍ୟତା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ । ନାସଦୀୟ ସୁକ୍ତ ହେଉଛି ଋକ୍ ବେଦରେ ସାତୋଟି ଶ୍ଳୋକର ସମାହାର । ଏହାର ରଚୟିତା ଋଷି ପ୍ରଜାପତି । ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ମୂଳ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ସଂପର୍କରେ ଏହା ଏକ ଅସାଧାରଣ କବିତା । ଏହାର ମୂଳ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱଟି ହେଉଛି:

ଶୂନ୍ୟତା ଏକମାତ୍ର ପରମ ସତ୍ୟ (ତଦ୍ ଏକମ୍);

ଏହା ସମସ୍ତ ଶକ୍ତିର ଉତ୍ସ ଓ ସମସ୍ତ ଭୌତିକ ଜଗତର କାରଣ ।

- ନାସଦୀୟ ସୁକ୍ତ ପରି ପୁରୁଷ ସୁକ୍ତ ବୈଦିକ ଋଷି ନାରାୟଣଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ଋକ୍ ବେଦରେ ରଚିତ କ୍ଷୋଦ୍ରକଟି ଶ୍ଳୋକ । ଏତଦ୍ ବ୍ୟତୀତ ଯଜୁର୍ବେଦ, ଅଥର୍ବ ବେଦ ଓ ସାମ୍ ବେଦରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପୁରୁଷ ସୁକ୍ତରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଅଭିବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଲିପିବଦ୍ଧ ।

ନିମ୍ନରେ ଋକ୍ବେଦରୁ ଦୁଇଟିକେବଳ ଶ୍ଳୋକର ଅବତାରଣା କରା ଯାଇଛି : ସହସ୍ର ଶୀର୍ଷା ପୁରୁଷଃ ସହସ୍ରାକ୍ଷଃ ସହସ୍ରପାତ୍ ।  
ସ ଭୂମିଂ ବିଶ୍ୱତୋ ବୃତ୍ତା ଅତ୍ୟତିଷ୍ଠ ଇଶାଙ୍କୁଳମ୍ ॥

ପୁରୁଷ ସହସ୍ର ଶିରଯୁକ୍ତ, ସହସ୍ର ଆଖିଯୁକ୍ତ ଓ ସହସ୍ର ପାଦଯୁକ୍ତ ଅଟନ୍ତି । ସେ ଏହି ଭୂମିକୁ ସବୁଆଡୁ ଘର୍ଣ୍ଣ କରି ତା ଠାରୁ ଦଶ ଆଙ୍ଗୁଳି ଅତିକ୍ରମ କରି ରହିଛନ୍ତି ।

ତତୋ ବିରାଟଜାୟତ ବିରାଜୋ ଅଧି ପୁରୁଷଃ ।

ସ ଜାତୋ ଅତ୍ୟରିଚ୍ୟତ ପଞ୍ଚଭୂମି ମଥୋ ପୁରଃ ॥

ସେହି ଆଦି ପୁରୁଷଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ବିରଟ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡ ଉତ୍ପନ୍ନ ହେଲା; ବିରାଟରୁ ଜୀବାତ୍ମା ରୂପକ ପୁରୁଷ ଉତ୍ପନ୍ନ ହେଲା, ଉତ୍ପନ୍ନ ହେବା ମାତ୍ରେ ସେ ନିଜକୁ ଦେବତା ଓ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ଆଦି ରୂପରେ ବିରାଟ ଠାରୁ ଅଲଗା କରି ଦେଲା । ତା' ପରେ ପୃଥିବୀକୁ ଉତ୍ପନ୍ନ କଲା ଏବଂ ଏହା ପରେ ଜୀବାତ୍ମା ପାଇଁ ଶରୀର ନିର୍ମାଣ କଲା ।

ମୋଟ ଉପରେ ପୁରୁଷ ସୁକ୍ତମ୍ ରେ ଆଦି ପୁରୁଷଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇ କିପରି ଭୌତିକ ଜଗତ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୋଇଛି ଓ କିପରି ତପ, ଯଜ୍ଞ, ମନ୍ତ୍ର, ତନ୍ତ୍ର, ଯଜ୍ଞ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦେବତା ମାନଙ୍କର ଆରାଧନା ପଦ୍ଧତି ସଂପର୍କରେ ଉଲ୍ଲେଖ ରହିଛି ।

ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱର ଅବତାରଣା ହୋଇଛି ଭଗବଦ୍ ଗୀତାରେ ନିମ୍ନ ଶ୍ଳୋକରେ:

ଯସ୍ମାତ୍ସରମତୀତୋ ଅହମକ୍ଷରାଦପି ଗୋତମଃ ।

ଅତୋଅସ୍ମି ଲୋକେ ବେଦେ ତ ପ୍ରଥିତଃ ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମଃ ॥

(ଗୀତା: ପଞ୍ଚଦଶ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ , ଶ୍ଳୋକ ୧୮)

ଯେହେତୁ ମୁଁ କ୍ଷର (ବିନାଶଶୀଳ ଶରୀର) ଠାରୁ ସର୍ବଦା ଅତୀତ ଓ ଅବିନାଶୀ ଜୀବାତ୍ମା ଠାରୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଉତ୍ତମ, ତେଣୁ ଲୋକରେ ଓ ବେଦରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ମୁଁ ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମ ନାମରେ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ।





ପ୍ରମୁଖ ବୈଦିକ ଦେବତାମାନେ ହେଲେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମା (ସୃଷ୍ଟି କର୍ତ୍ତା), ବିଷ୍ଣୁ (ପାଳନ କର୍ତ୍ତା), ମହେଶ୍ୱର (ସଂହାର କର୍ତ୍ତା) । ଏତଦ୍ ବ୍ୟତୀତ ଅନ୍ୟ ଦେବତାମାନେ ହେଲେ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ର, ବରୁଣ, ମରୁତ, ହନୁମାନ, ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ, କାର୍ତ୍ତିକ, ଗଣେଶ ପ୍ରଭୃତି ଯେଉଁମାନେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ଦର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଶକ୍ତି ମାନଙ୍କର ନାମକରଣ । କିନ୍ତୁ ବୁଦ୍ଧ ଦେବ ବୈଦିକ ଦେବତା ମାନଙ୍କ ଉପରେ କୌଣସି ବନ୍ଧବ୍ୟ ରଖି ନ ଥିଲେ; ସେ କେବଳ ସାଧାରଣ ମନୁଷ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କର ପୁତ୍ର ଓ ଶାନ୍ତିମୟ ଜୀବନ ଯାପନ କରିବାର ମାର୍ଗନିରୂପଣ କରିଥିଲେ ଓ ଅତ୍ୟଧିକ ଭାବରେ ନିର୍ବାଣ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଉପରେ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱଦେଇଥିଲେ । ଏହାର ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱକୁ ପ୍ରାଞ୍ଜଳ ଭାବରେ ପରିବେଷଣ କଲେ ଦାର୍ଶନିକ ନାଗାର୍ଜୁନ, (୨ୟ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ) ।

- କାଳକ୍ରମେ ନାସଦୀୟ ସୂକ୍ତ ଓ ପୁରୁଷ ସୂକ୍ତର ସମନ୍ୱୟରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଯୁଗରେ, ବହୁବିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ପରେ ନାସଦୀୟ ସୂକ୍ତର ଶୂନ୍ୟ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଓ ପୁରୁଷ ସୂକ୍ତର ପୁରୁଷ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱରୁ ଜନ୍ମ ନେଲା ଶୂନ୍ୟ ପୁରୁଷ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ:
- ଏହି ଶୂନ୍ୟ-ପୁରୁଷ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଜନ୍ମ ଦେଲା ଏକ ଇଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କୁ ଯେ ପରମ ସତ୍ୟ ଶୂନ୍ୟତାର ବା ନିର୍ଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ଦର ପ୍ରତୀକ ଓ ଯେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆଦି ପୁରୁଷର ବା ସଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ଦର ପ୍ରତୀକ; ଯେ ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମ; ଆଉ ସେ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି

"ଜଗନ୍ନାଥସ୍ୱାମୀ ନୟନପଥଗାମୀ";

ଏହାଙ୍କ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ଶଙ୍କରାଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟାବ୍ଦ ୮୦୦ ରେ ରଚନା କଲେ ଏକ କମନୀୟ କବିତା 'ଜଗନ୍ନାଥାଷ୍ଟକ' ; ଏଥିରେ ବିଷ୍ଣୁ ବା ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଭିନ୍ନ ଏକ ରୂପାନ୍ତରୀକରଣ ହେଉଛି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କର ପରିକଳ୍ପନା । ଏହି ପରିପ୍ରେକ୍ଷୀରେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥାଷ୍ଟକର ଆଠଟି ଶ୍ଳୋକରୁ ନିମ୍ନ ଶ୍ଳୋକଟି ତାତ୍ପର୍ଯ୍ୟ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ:

ନବୈପ୍ରାର୍ଥ୍ୟଂ ରାଜ୍ୟଂ ନ ଚ କନକମାଣିକ୍ୟଂ ବିଭବଂ  
 ନ ଯାତେ ଅହଂ ରମ୍ୟାଂ ନିଖିଳ ଜନକାମ୍ୟାଂ ବରବଧୁମ୍  
 ସଦା କାଳେ କାଳେ ପ୍ରମଥ ପତିନା ଗୀତଚରିତୋ  
 ଜଗନ୍ନାଥସ୍ୱାମୀ ନୟନପଥଗାମୀ ଭବତୁ ମେ ।

ମୁଁ ରାଜ୍ୟ ପାଇବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥା ନୁହେଁ, ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣମୟ ଭୋଗ ବୈଭବ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥା ନୁହେଁ, ସକଳ ଜନ ଖୁସିଶାୟୀ, ରମଣୀୟା ଦିବ୍ୟ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମଧ୍ୟ ମୁଁ ମାଗୁ ନାହିଁ, ଶିବ ଯାହାଙ୍କର ନାମ ଗାନ କରୁଛନ୍ତି, ସେହି ପ୍ରଭୁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମୋର ନୟନ ପଥରେ ରହନ୍ତୁ ।  
 ଜଣେ ଭକ୍ତ ନିଜକୁ ସମସ୍ତ କାମନା ରହିତ କରି, ନିଜକୁ ନିଃସ୍ୱ କରି ନିଃସ୍ୱ ଦେବତାଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା କରୁଛି ଯେ ସେ କେବଳ ତାଙ୍କର ନୟନ ପଥରେ ରହନ୍ତୁ - ନିଜର ସ୍ୱରଣରେ ରହନ୍ତୁ ।

- ସଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ଦ ବା ସୃଷ୍ଟି ସଦା ସର୍ବଦା ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ବିସ୍ତାରିତ ହେଉଥିବା ବିଶ୍ୱ ଜଗତ ସଦା ସର୍ବଦା ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ସଦା ସର୍ବଦା ଭଙ୍ଗ, ଗଢା ପକ୍ଷରେ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭାବରେ ପ୍ରକଟିତ ହୋଇପାରିନାହିଁ । ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ତଥା ଆବର୍ତ୍ତନ ସର୍ବଦା କ୍ରିୟାଶୀଳ; ପଞ୍ଚା, ଜ୍ଞାନ, ବିଜ୍ଞାନ, ଚେତନା କ୍ରମ ବର୍ଦ୍ଧନଶୀଳ; ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପଲ୍ଲବିତ ହୋଇ ନ ଥିବା ବୃକ୍ଷ, ଝରିପଡୁଥିବା ବର୍ଷା, ଭାସି ଯାଉଥିବା ବାଦଲ, ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧ ପ୍ରସ୍ଫୁଟିତ କଳିକା, ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧ ରଚିତ କାବ୍ୟ ଓ କବିତା, ମନୋରମ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧ ମୁକୁଳିତ ଅପୂର୍ବ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଗତିଶୀଳ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଏକ ଏକ ଉଦାହରଣ । ଏହିପରି କ୍ରିୟାଶୀଳ ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ଅନେକ ନୂତନ ସର୍ଜନାରେ ବିଶ୍ୱ ଝଙ୍କୁଟ । ଏହାର ସମାପ୍ତି କାହିଁ? ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ସର୍ବନିକା ପତନ ହୋଇନାହିଁ; ସବୁ ଯେପରି ଅଧା ଗଢା ।

ତାହାହେଲେ ଜଗତରନାଥ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହେବ କିପରି ?  
 ହାତ ଓ ଗୋତ ନଥିବା ଦାରୁ ବିଗ୍ରହ ତେଣୁ ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସର୍ଜନାର ପ୍ରତୀକ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ଦାରୁ ବିଗ୍ରହର ନାଭି କେନ୍ଦ୍ରରେ ଲୁଚାୟିତ ଦାରୁବ୍ରହ୍ମ ବା ନିର୍ଗୁଣବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ଦର ପ୍ରତୀକ ବୋଲି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରାଯାଏ । ଏହି ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୋଣରୁ ସ୍ୱୟଂ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ଯେ କି ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବିଶ୍ୱ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡର ପ୍ରତୀକ ନିଜେ ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭାବରେ ପ୍ରକଟିତ ରହି ଏକ ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବିଶ୍ୱ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡର ଉଦାହରଣ ସମଗ୍ର ବିଶ୍ୱବାସୀଙ୍କୁ ଦେଉଛନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣତାରୁ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣତାକୁ ଅଗ୍ରସର କରିବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରେରଣାର ଉତ୍ସ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି ।

ତେଣୁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ହେଉଛି ରୂପରୁ ଅରୂପକୁ, ଆକାରରୁ ନିରାକାରକୁ, ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣରୁ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣକୁ, ସଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ଦରୁ ନିର୍ଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ଦକୁ ଯିବାର ଏକ ଆହ୍ୱାନ; ମୋକ୍ଷ ବା ନିର୍ବାଣ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତିର ଏକ ମାର୍ଗ ।

- ମଧ୍ୟଯୁଗୀୟ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାମାନେ ହେଲେ: କବୀର, ନାନକ (ଉତ୍ତର ପ୍ରଦେଶ), ତୁକାରାମ, ଜ୍ଞାନେଶ୍ୱର (ମହାରାଷ୍ଟ୍ର), ଶଙ୍କର ଦେବ (ଆସାମ), ସାରଳା ଦାସ (ଓଡିଶା ଚତୁର୍ଦ୍ଦଶ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ), ପଞ୍ଚସଖା (ଅତ୍ୟୁତାନୟ, ଦୀନକୃଷ୍ଣ, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ବଳରାମ, ଅନନ୍ତ,

ଯଶୋବନ୍ତ), ଭୀମଭୋଇ, ଶୀତେତନ୍ୟ (ଓଡ଼ିଶା) । ଏମାନେ ଯେଉଁ ଭକ୍ତି ମାର୍ଗ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କଲେ ତାହା ମୁଖ୍ୟ ସନାତନ ଧର୍ମ, ବୌଦ୍ଧ ଧର୍ମ, ବୈଷ୍ଣବ ଧର୍ମ, ଶୈବ ଧର୍ମ ପ୍ରଭୃତି ସମସ୍ତ ଧର୍ମର ସମନ୍ୱୟରେ ଓ ବିବର୍ତ୍ତନରେ ଭାରତର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପରିମାଣରେ ଶୂନ୍ୟ-କୈମ୍ବିକ ଦର୍ଶନ ହିସାବରେ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠିତ ହେଲା । ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ମହିମା (ଅଲେଖ ଧର୍ମ) ମଧ୍ୟ ଶୂନ୍ୟ କୈମ୍ବିକ ।

ସାରଳା ଦାସଙ୍କ ମତରେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ନିରାକାର, ନିର୍ଗୁଣ, ଅଲେଖ, ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ବା ଶୂନ୍ୟ-ପୁରୁଷ । ସାରଳା ଦାସ ମହାଭାରତ (ଭୀଷ୍ମପର୍ବ ପଦ ୧୨୦, ୧୨୨-୨୩) କାବ୍ୟରେ କହନ୍ତି:

ସ୍ୱର୍ଗ ମର୍ତ୍ତ୍ୟ ପାତାଳ ତିନି ଭୁବନେ ସେ ହରି  
ମେଘ ମହାଶୂନ୍ୟ ସେ ନିରାକାର ଆବୋରି  
ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ସ୍ୱରୂପରେ ରୂପ ରେଖ ଧରି  
ସ୍ତ୍ରୀବର ଜଙ୍ଗମ କୀଟ ପତଙ୍ଗ ଆଦିକରି  
କାଞ୍ଚ ପାଷାଣ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି କାହିଁ ସେହି  
ଯୋଗ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ନିରାକୂଳ ନିଜେ ଶୂନ୍ୟଦେହୀ ।

ଏହି ମର୍ମରେ ଅତ୍ୟୁତାନନ୍ଦ କହନ୍ତି:

ଅଶାକାରଂ ମହାଶୂନ୍ୟଂ ଶୂନ୍ୟମଧ୍ୟେ ନିରାମୟ  
ନିରାମୟମଧ୍ୟେ ଜ୍ୟୋତିଃ ତଦ୍‌ଜ୍ୟୋତିର୍ଭଗବାନୟମ୍ ॥

ଭଲପଚାରିଲୁ ଗୁପତ ସନ୍ଧି  
ଶୂନ୍ୟ ପୁରୁଷ ଶୂନ୍ୟ ପରୋବନ୍ଦୀ  
ଶୂନ୍ୟ ପୁରୁଷ ଉଦାସରେ ରହେ  
ଶୂନ୍ୟ ପୁରୁଷ ସବୁ ମାୟା ବହେ ।  
(ଶୂନ୍ୟ ସଂହିତା, ୨ୟ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ)

ଏହିପରି ଭାବରେ ପ୍ରାଗ୍ ବୈଦିକ ଯୁଗରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ବୈଦିକ ଯୁଗ, ଜୈନ-ବୁଦ୍ଧଦେବଙ୍କ ଯୁଗ ଶଙ୍କରାଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟଙ୍କ ଯୁଗ, ମଧ୍ୟ ଯୁଗ, ଆଧୁନିକ ଯୁଗ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଭାରତରେ ବହୁ ବିଭିନ୍ନତା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ଏକ ବଳିଷ୍ଠ ଶୂନ୍ୟ କୈମ୍ବିକ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଚିନ୍ତାଧାରା ନିରବଚ୍ଛିନ୍ନ ଭାବରେ ପ୍ରବାହିତ ହୋଇ ଆସୁଅଛି । ଏହାହିଁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ; ଏହାହିଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସଂସ୍କୃତି; ଏହାହିଁ ଭାରତର ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକ ଶକ୍ତିର ପ୍ରାଣକେନ୍ଦ୍ର । ଏହି 'ଶୂନ୍ୟତା' ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଜନ୍ମ ଦେଇଥିଲା ଏକମାତ୍ର ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକ ଓ ସାର୍ବଜନୀନ ସଂଖ୍ୟା **ଶୂନ୍ୟ** ଯାହା ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ସାରା ପୃଥିବୀର ସଂପତ୍ତି ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସମସ୍ତ ଭୌତିକ, ବୈଷୟିକ ବା ବସ୍ତୁବାଦୀ ସଭ୍ୟତାର ଅନ୍ତରାଳେ ଲୁଚାଯିତ ପରମସତ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଶୂନ୍ୟତା ବା ନିର୍ଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ୍ ବା ଶୂନ୍ୟପୁରୁଷ ଶ୍ରୀ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ।

[ Professor Gokulananda Das presently chairman of the Institute of Mathematics and Application, Govt. of Orissa, Bhubaneswar, former Vice Chancellor of Utkal University, Receptient of Samant Chandrashekhar Award for outstanding research. Presently engaged in popularization of Mathematics, writing poems and essays; loves music. Now visiting California, with wife Nina to live with their son Raja Epsilon, daughter-in-law Babita and grandson Ricky Spandan. He can be contacted @ email: gdas100@yahoo.com; 177 DharmaVihar, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar-30, Orissa; Phone - 0674-2351212 ]

“ମୁଁ ବା କଣ ? ଶୂନ୍ୟ ରେ କେବଳ କ୍ଷଣେ ଅଛି  
କ୍ଷଣେ ନାହିଁ ଏପରି ଆଲୋକ,  
ଯେତେବେଳେ ଯାହା ଆଲୋକିତ କରେ  
ତାକୁ ଭାବେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡ ଗୋଟାକ ।”  
ଶ୍ରୀ ରାଧା, ଶ୍ରୀ ରମାକାନ୍ତ ରଥ





## ସର୍ବଧର୍ମର ସମନ୍ୱୟ - ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ହରେକୃଷ୍ଣ ପଣ୍ଡା

ପୁରାଣ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମକ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ଅନ୍ୟନାମ ଶ୍ରୀକ୍ଷେତ୍ର । ଏହି କ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ପ୍ରାଧାନ୍ୟ ଅନାଦିସିଦ୍ଧ ଏବଂ ବୈଦିକ ରଖିମାନଙ୍କ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରେ ସମାଧିକ ସମାଦୃତ । ଏହି ଶ୍ରୀକ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମହାପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କ ନାମ, ଧାମ, ଲୀଳା, ନିତ୍ୟ ଶାଶ୍ୱତ । ସେ ତିନାନନ୍ଦ । ଭଗବାନ ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣ ମଧୁରା ବୃନ୍ଦାବନ ଓ ଦ୍ୱାରକାରେ, ଭଗବାନ ଶ୍ରୀରାମ ଅଯୋଧ୍ୟାରେ ଯେଉଁ ସମସ୍ତ ଲୀଳା କରିଛନ୍ତି, ଆମ ବଡ଼ ଠାକୁର ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ନୀଳାଚଳ ଧାମ ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ସେହି ପ୍ରକାର ଲୀଳା ନିତ୍ୟ ସଂପନ୍ନ କରିଆସୁଛନ୍ତି ।

କେଉଁ ପ୍ରାଚୀନ କାଳରୁ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ତଥା ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଧର୍ମାବଲମ୍ବୀମାନଙ୍କର ଆକର୍ଷଣର କେନ୍ଦ୍ରବିନ୍ଦୁ ହୋଇଆସିଛି । ସାଂପ୍ରଦାୟିକ ବିଦେଶରହିତ ଆତ୍ମୀୟତା, ଆନ୍ତରିକତା ଏବଂ ବିଶ୍ୱାସନୀୟତା ହେଉଛି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ବିଶେଷତ୍ୱ । ଏହି ମହାନ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ପ୍ରଚାର ଓ ପ୍ରସାର ହେବାଦ୍ୱାରା ବିଶ୍ୱରେ ଭାତୃତ୍ୱ ଓ ମୂଲ୍ୟବୋଧର ବିକାଶ ଘଟିବ । ଜାତି ଧର୍ମ ଓ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ନିର୍ବିଶେଷରେ ଯେଉଁ ଦେବତା ସାରା ଜଗତରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟକୁ ଛୁଇଁପାରିଛନ୍ତି, ସେହି ଜଗତର ନାଥ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ । ସେ ହେଲେ ଭାବଗାହୀ, ସେ ଦୀନବନ୍ଧୁ, ସେ ଅନାଥର ନାଥ, ସେ ଅନ୍ଧଧର୍ମୀମାନ । ନାମକୁ ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥକ କରି ସେ ବିହୁକ୍ତି ଅନ୍ଧକୁ ଏବଂ ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି ଦିଅନ୍ତି ଆନୁଗତ୍ୟକୁ । ସେ ହେଲେ ସବୁଠାରୁ ଚିହ୍ନା ଓ ପୁରୁଣା ଗ୍ରାହକ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ମରଣ କଲେ ଯେଉଁ ଆନନ୍ଦ ମିଳେ ତାର ପଟାନ୍ତର ନାହିଁ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସେ ପରମାନନ୍ଦ ।

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଧର୍ମ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଧର୍ମର ସମନ୍ୱୟ । ବୈଷ୍ଣବ ଧର୍ମର ପ୍ରଚାରକ ଶ୍ରୀଚୈତନ୍ୟ ପୁରୀ ଆସି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ପ୍ରେମରେ ବିଭୋର ହୋଇ ସେଠାରେ ସ୍ଥାୟୀ ଭାବରେ ସବୁଦିନ ପାଇଁ ରହିଗଲେ । ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କର ଗୁଣ କୀର୍ତ୍ତନ କରି ଶେଷରେ ସେ ପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କ ଦେହରେ ଲୀନ ହୋଇଗଲେ । ହିନ୍ଦୁ ଧର୍ମରେ ହରି ଓ ହର ଏକ ଏବଂ ଅଭିନ୍ନ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଶୈବ ଧର୍ମାବଲମ୍ବୀମାନେ ଶିବମନ୍ଦିର ବେଢାରେ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାକରି ପୂଜାବିଧି ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରିଥାନ୍ତି । ସେହିଭଳି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ମହାଦେବ ବା ଶିବଙ୍କର ପୂଜା ଆରାଧନାର ସୁବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଥାଏ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଅଶୋକାକ୍ଷମୀ ଦିନ ମହାଦୀପ ଉଠିଲା ବେଳେ ହରିହର ଭେଟ ହେବାର ବିଧି ରହିଛି ।

ବିଦ୍ୱରାଜ ଗଣେଶଙ୍କ ପ୍ରଧାନ ଭକ୍ତ ଗଣପତି ଭକ୍ତ ପୁରୀ ଆସିଲାବେଳେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ଗଣେଶଙ୍କୁ ନଦେଖି ନିରାଶ ହୋଇ ଫେରିଯାଉଥିବାବେଳେ, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଗଜାନନ ବେଶରେ ଦର୍ଶନ ଦେଇ ତାଙ୍କର ମନୋବାଞ୍ଛା ପୂରଣକରିଥିଲେ । ସେ ଦୟାର ସାଗର, କରୁଣାସିନ୍ଧୁ । ଶିଖ୍ୟଧର୍ମର ଧର୍ମଗୁରୁ ଗୁରୁ ନାନକ ପୁରୀରେ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ଦର୍ଶନ କରି ତାଙ୍କର ଜଣେ ପ୍ରଧାନ ଭକ୍ତ ହୋଇଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ହେଲେ ପରମ ପୁରୁଷ, ସେ ବିଶ୍ୱବ୍ୟାପୀ କିନ୍ତୁ ନିରାକାର । ସହ ତୁଳସୀ ଦାସ ଶ୍ରୀକ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ତାଙ୍କ ପରମ ଆରାଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଭୁ ରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଙ୍କୁ ଦର୍ଶନ ନକରି ନିରାଶ ହୋଇ ଫେରିଯାଉଥିଲାବେଳେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ତାଙ୍କୁ ରଘୁନାଥ ରୂପରେ ଦର୍ଶନ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ସାଲବେଶ ସବନ(ମୁସଲମାନ) ପରିବାରରେ ଜନ୍ମଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିବାରୁ ସେ ପୁରୀ ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ପ୍ରବେଶ କରିପାରୁନଥିଲେ । ତଥାପି ନିଜର କଳ୍ପନାର ମାନସଚକ୍ଷୁରେ ପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କୁ ସେ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟହ ଦର୍ଶନ କରିପାରୁଥିଲେ । ଭକ୍ତବତ୍ସଳ ନରହରି ସାଲବେଶଙ୍କୁ ଦର୍ଶନ ଦେବାପାଇଁ ନନ୍ଦିଘୋଷ ରଥରେ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଥିଲେ । ସାଲବେଶଙ୍କ ରଚିତ କବିତା ଆଜି ମଧ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପୁରପଲ୍ଲୀରେ ସାଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନାରୂପେ ନିନାଦିତ । ସହ କବୀର ଓ ହରିଦାସଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଅପାର ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା, ପ୍ରେମ ଓ ଭକ୍ତି ଭାବ ଥିଲା । ଦାସିଆ ବାଉରୀର ତାକ ଶୁଣି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ସ୍ୱୟଂ ତାଙ୍କ ହାତରୁ ସ୍ୱହସ୍ତରେ ନତିଆ ସ୍ୱୀକାର କରୁଥିଲେ । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଜାତିଧର୍ମ, ଧନୀ ଗରିବ ବିବାଦ ଠାରୁ ବହୁତ ଉପରେ । ସେ କେବଳ ହୃଦୟ ଓ ଭାବ ବିହୁକ୍ତି । ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଓ ଭକ୍ତିରେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ତାକିଲେ, ସେ ଶୁଣନ୍ତି ଓ ହୃଦୟରେ ବାସ କରନ୍ତି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସେ ହୃଦୟନିବାସୀ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପ୍ରଧାନ ତୀର୍ଥସ୍ଥଳ ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଭାରତର ପ୍ରଧାନ ଚାରିକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ମଧ୍ୟରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟକ୍ଷେତ୍ର । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ବଳଭଦ୍ର, ମା ସୁଭଦ୍ରା ଓ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତୀକ ସୁଦର୍ଶନଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଶ୍ରୀକ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଚତୁର୍ଦ୍ଧା ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିର ପରିକଳ୍ପନା । ସେ ବଡ଼ଠାକୁର । ତାଙ୍କର ଦାଣ୍ଡ ବଡ଼ଦାଣ୍ଡ । ତାଙ୍କର ଭୁଜ ବଳିଆର ଭୁଜ । ତାଙ୍କର ଦେଉଳ ବଡ଼ଦେଉଳ । ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ଚକା ଆଖି ପାଇଁ ସେ ହେଲେ ଚକାନୟନ । ତାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରସାଦ ମହାପ୍ରସାଦ । ତାଙ୍କର କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଶ୍ରୀକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ବା ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର । ତାଙ୍କର ସବୁକିଛି ବଡ଼, ସେ ସବୁ ବିଷୟରେ ମହାନ ।

ବଡ଼ଦେଉଳର ଚତୁର୍ଦ୍ଧା ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ଦାରୁବହୁରୂପେ ବିରାଜମାନ । ପୃଥିବୀରେ ଅନ୍ୟ କେଉଁଠି ଏମିତି ଠାକୁର ଅଛନ୍ତି ? ତାଙ୍କର ହାତ ନାହିଁ, ଅଥଚ ସେ ମହାବାହୁ । ଗୋଡ଼ ନ ଥାଇ ସେ ହେଲେ ଚଳନ୍ତି ଠାକୁର । ସେ ସର୍ବବ୍ୟାପୀ । ତାଙ୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ଯେତେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନାକଲେବି ତାହା ସମୁଦ୍ର ଏକ ବାଲିକଣା ସଦୃଶ । କାରଣ ତାଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ହିଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ରୀତି ନୀତିର ସେ ଜୀବନ୍ତ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିମତ୍ତ ପ୍ରତୀକ । ସେ ଲୀଳାମୟ , ତାଙ୍କ କୀର୍ତ୍ତି ଅନନ୍ୟ । ଜାତି, ଧର୍ମ, ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ନିର୍ବିଶେଷରେ ଯେଉଁ ଦେବତା ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟକୁ ଛୁଇଁପାରିଛନ୍ତି, ସେ ହିଁ ଜଗତର ନାଥ



ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଆଜି ପୃଥିବୀର କୋଣେ କୋଣେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଧର୍ମର ପ୍ରଚାର, ପ୍ରସାର, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମନ୍ଦିରର ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା ଓ ଘୋଷଯାତ୍ରାର ଆୟୋଜନ । ସାରା ପୃଥିବୀରେ ଗୋରା, କଳା, ହିନ୍ଦୁ, ମୁସଲମାନ, ଶିଖ୍, ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିଆନ୍ ଆବାଳବୃକ୍ଷବନିତା ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ତାଙ୍କର ଭକ୍ତ ମାନେ ବିଦ୍ୟମାନ ।

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଧର୍ମ ଧନୀ-ଗରିବ, ଛୁଆଁ-ଅଛୁଆଁ ଭେଦଭାବ ରଖେନାହିଁ । ଆନନ୍ଦବଜାରରୁ ମିଳୁଥିବା ଅଭତା ମହାପ୍ରସାଦ, ତଥା ଅନ୍ୟ ଭୋଗବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନକୁ ଧନୀ-ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିନ, ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ-ହରିଜନ ଏକାଠି ମିଶି ଭୋଜନ କରନ୍ତି । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ ଧର୍ମାବଲମ୍ବୀମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଉଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ । ଯେଉଁମାନେ କୌଣସି କାରଣବଶତଃ ବଡ଼ଦେଉଳ ଭିତରକୁ ଯାଇ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଦର୍ଶନ କରିପାରିନାହାନ୍ତି, ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଦର୍ଶନ ଦେବାପାଇଁ ବଡ଼ଠାକୁର ବଡ଼ଦାଣ୍ଡରେ ନଅଦିନର ଗୁଣ୍ଡିଚା ଯାତ୍ରା କରିଥାନ୍ତି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସେ ହେଲେ ପତିତପାବନ । ଆମ ପରିବାରରେ ସ୍ନେହ ମମତା ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ମା ପରେ ମାଉସୀର ସ୍ଥାନ, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମଧ୍ୟ ମାଉସୀ ଗୁଣ୍ଡିଚାଙ୍କ ଘରେ ନ ଦିନ ରହିଥାନ୍ତି ।

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଧର୍ମ ଭାଇ ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କ ଅନାବିଳ ପ୍ରେମର ପ୍ରତୀକ । ବଡ଼ଭାଇ ବଳଭଦ୍ର ପରିବାରର କର୍ତ୍ତା ଓ ସର୍ବଦା ନିଜ ଭାଇ ଓ ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କୁ ନେଇଛି ପରିବାର ଗଠନ ହୁଏ, ତାର ପଥ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶକ । ତାଙ୍କର ସ୍ଵକ୍ଷରେ ଥିବା ହଳ ଲଙ୍କା କୃଷିକର୍ମର ପ୍ରତୀକ । ପରିବାର ପ୍ରତିପୋଷଣ ପାଇଁ କୃଷି ହିଁ ପ୍ରଧାନ କର୍ମ, ତାହା ହିଁ ସେ ସୂଚାଇଥାଆନ୍ତି । ସାନଭାଇ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ନିଜ ଧର୍ମପତ୍ନୀ ମହାଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଙ୍କ ଅପେକ୍ଷା ବଡ଼ଭାଇ ବଳଭଦ୍ରଙ୍କୁ ଉଚ୍ଚସ୍ଥାନ ଦେଇ ଭାତପ୍ରେମର ପ୍ରମାଣ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ମା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ପବିତ୍ରତା, ଶୁଦ୍ଧତାର ପ୍ରତୀକ । ଶୁଦ୍ଧତାର ସହ ଆରାଧନା କରିଥିବାରୁ ଶ୍ରୀୟା ଚଣ୍ଡାଳଶୀର ଘରକୁ ମହାଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ବୁଲିଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଏହି ଜନଶୃତିରୁ ପରିଷ୍କାର ପରିଚ୍ଛନ୍ନ ଘରେ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ବାସ କରନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଧର୍ମ ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ ଚଣ୍ଡାଳ ମଧ୍ୟରେ କୌଣସି ଭେଦଭାବ ରଖେ ନାହିଁ ତାର ପ୍ରମାଣ ଦିଏ ।

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କର ଲୀଳାର ପଟାନ୍ତର ନାହିଁ । ପୃଥିବୀରେ ଏମିତି କେହି ଠାକୁର, ଦେବତା ନାହାନ୍ତି, ଯାହାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ ଦିନର ନିତ୍ୟକର୍ମ ଠିକ୍ ଆମ ମାନଙ୍କ ଭଳି । ସେ ଆମ ଭଳି ରାତିରେ ଶୋଇ, ବିଛଣାରୁ ଉଠି, ନିତ୍ୟକର୍ମ ସାରିନ୍ତି । ଆମ ଭଳି ଗାଧୋଇ, ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଭାବରେ ସଜ ହୁଅନ୍ତି । ଶୀତ ଦିନରେ ଆମ ଭଳି ଶୀତ ଲୁଗା ପିନ୍ଧିବା ଓ ଖରା ଦିନରେ ଥଣ୍ଡା ପାଣିରେ ଗାଧୋଇ ଦେହ ଖରାପ ହେବା ନୀତି ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଆମ ମାନଙ୍କ ଦୈନନ୍ଦିନ ଜୀବନ ସହ ପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କ ସାମଞ୍ଜସ୍ୟ ଥିବାର ଜଣାପଡ଼େ । ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ସେ ଜଳଖିଆ, ପିଠାପଣା, ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରକାର ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ ସହ ଅନ୍ନ ଭୋଜନ କରନ୍ତି ।

ତାଙ୍କର ନୀତିମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସେ ଯେ ଆମ ଭଳି ଜଣେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ତାର ଉଦାହରଣ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଗଲେ, ସେ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପ୍ରଥମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ । ତାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଥମ ସେବକ ହେଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଗଜପତି ମହାରାଜା । ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ପ୍ରଚଳିତ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ ପିଠାପଣା ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ଭୋଗ ଲାଗେ । ତାଙ୍କ ସମ୍ମୁଖରେ ପ୍ରଚଳିତ ଦେବଦାସୀ ନୃତ୍ୟର ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଓ ପରିକଳ୍ପନା ନିଆରା । ଦେବଦାସୀ ମାନେ ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ସମର୍ପିତା । ଆଜିର ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ନୃତ୍ୟ, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ପ୍ରଚଳିତ ଦେବଦାସୀ ନୃତ୍ୟରୁ ସୃଷ୍ଟି । ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଯାବତୀୟ ଚାରୁକଳା, ପିପିଲିର ଚାନ୍ଦୁଆ, ପଟ୍ଟଚିତ୍ର, ତାରକସୀ କାମ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ କାରୁକାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବଡ଼ଦେଉଳରେ ପ୍ରଚଳିତ ରୀତିନୀତି ଓ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ସଂସ୍କୃତିରୁ ହିଁ ପରିପୁଷ୍ଟ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସର୍ବ ପରିଚିତ । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ବିନା ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପରିକଳ୍ପନା ଅସମ୍ଭବ ଏବଂ ଅବାସ୍ତବ ।

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ଯଦି ଧର୍ମଭାବ ଏବଂ ଦେବ ଭକ୍ତିରେ ଜୀବନକୁ ଶାନ୍ତି ନ ମିଳେ ତେବେ ସେ ଧର୍ମ ଭାବ ଓ ଦେବଭକ୍ତିରେ କିଛି ଅର୍ଥ ନଥାଏ । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଧର୍ମର ମୂଳଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଆତ୍ମାର ଶାନ୍ତି । ସବୁ ଧର୍ମର ମହାତ୍ମା ଏବଂ ଅବତାର ମାନେ ଜଗତର ସୁଖ, କଲ୍ୟାଣ ଓ ଶାନ୍ତି ପାଇଁ କାମ କରିଥାନ୍ତି ।

ବାଇଶି ପାହାଚ, କବି ପ୍ରସାଦ ମିଶ୍ର





## ଉତ୍ତରୀୟ ଜାଗତୀ ଶାନ୍ତି ମିଶ୍ର

ତମ୍ଭୁ ଫେଟ, ନିଦା ତେଜ, ଶଯ୍ୟା ତେଜ  
ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ପାଇଁ ରାତି ନାହିଁ, ଦିବା ମଧ୍ୟ ନାହିଁ.....  
ଏ ମାଟି ର ଯୁବ ଶକ୍ତି ! କାଳ କୁ ଉପେକ୍ଷା କରି  
ଶୁଅ ନାହିଁ, ଆଉ ଶୁଅ ନାହିଁ ।  
ଦେଖ, ଦେଖ କୁହେଲିକା ଘେରି ଘେରି ଆସେ  
ସଂରଚନା ଲିଭି ଲିଭି ଯାଏ, ଚେତନା ବି ହଜି ହଜି ଯାଏ  
ସମୟର କାଳସାପେ,  
ଅବଗାହି ଆୟୁଷ ବି ସରି ସରି ଆସେ ।  
ଅନ୍ଧାର ଦିଗ୍‌ବଳୟ, ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଏ ବିଶ୍ୱ  
ଦୁର୍ନୀତିରେ ଧୂମାୟିତ ଧରିତ୍ରୀ ଆକାଶ-  
ସୁନ୍ଦର, ମୁକ୍ତ କର ନବ ଚେତନା ରେ ।  
ଲୋଭ ଆସେ, ମୋହ ଆସେ, ସ୍ୱଳ୍ପନ ବି ଆସେ  
ଅବାଟ ରେ ଯିବା ପାଇଁ କେତେ ଛକ ଆସେ,  
ଆତ୍ମା ଚିଏ ଧରି ସାଥେ ବିବେକ ବି ଅଛି  
ଧୈର୍ଯ୍ୟହରା ହୁଅ ନାହିଁ, ରାହା ନିଅ ବାଛି ।  
ଆପଣା ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଭୁଲି, ସଂବେଦନା ଭୁଲି  
ପଶୁତୁ ପାଶରେ ପଡ଼ି କଲବଳ ହୁଅ ନାହିଁ  
ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖ ମନା ନାହିଁ, ପାଦ ଥାଉ ମାଟି ଛୁଇଁ,  
ଲକ୍ଷ ରହୁ ଶିର ହୋଇ, ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖ ମନା ନାହିଁ ।  
ଦେବତା ନହେଲେ ନାହିଁ, ପଶୁ କିନ୍ତୁ ହୁଅ ନାହିଁ-  
ମଣିଷତେ ହୋଇ ରୁହ, ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥ ଭ୍ରମ ତେଜି  
ତୁମେ ସୁମଣିଷ ହୁଅ ରେ-  
ଏ ଜାତିର ପ୍ରାଣ ମନ୍ତ୍ର, “ସର୍ବେ ଭବନ୍ତୁ ସୁଖିନଃ”  
ଭୁଲ ନାହିଁ, ଭୁଲ ନାହିଁ ।  
ନିଜକୁ ଜିଣିଲେ ସିନା ଜଗତ ଜିଣିବ,  
ତେବେ ଯାଇଁ  
ସୃଜନୀ ର ଗାଥା ଗାଇ ଶାନ୍ତି ମୈତ୍ରୀ ଫେରିବ ,  
ବିଜୟ ର ଗର୍ବୋଲ୍ଲାସେ ତିରଙ୍ଗା ବି ନାତିବ ।  
ମୁଖ ହେଲେ ଦୁଃଖ ନାହିଁ, ବୈଭବ ବି ଲୋଡ଼ା ନାହିଁ  
ମାନବିକତା ର ଗୀତା କୁ ପାଥେୟ ତୁ କର ରେ,  
ଭ୍ରାନ୍ତି ଭ୍ରମ ତେଜ ଆଉ ସୁମଣିଷ ହୁଅ ରେ-  
ଆବାଳବୃକ୍ଷବନିତା ମନେ ଆସ୍ଥାର ମୁରୁଜ ବୁଣି  
ପ୍ରଭାତର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସମ ହୁଅ ପ୍ରତିଭାତ  
ଏ ଜାତି ର ପ୍ରାଣମନ୍ତ୍ର “ସର୍ବେ ଭବନ୍ତୁ ସୁଖିନଃ”  
ଭୁଲ ନାହିଁ, ଭୁଲ ନାହିଁ ।  
ଏ ମାଟିର ଯୁବ ଶକ୍ତି !  
କାଳକୁ ଉପେକ୍ଷା କରି ଶୁଅ ନାହିଁ, ଶୁଅ ନାହିଁ ।

ଅମଲାପତା, ଜେଜ୍ଜୀନାଳ

## ଆସ ତୁମେ ଅବତରି ତଃ ଆଶା ମିଶ୍ର

ହେ ପ୍ରିୟତମ ! ତୁମେ କେବେ ଆସିବନି  
ମୋ ଜୀବନେ ଦୁଷ୍ମନ୍ତ ହୋଇ  
ମୁଁ ହେବିନି ଶକ୍ତକଳା ,  
ଦୁର୍ଦ୍ଦାସାର ଅଭିଶାପେ ଜଳିବିନି ,  
ମୋ' ଜୀବନ ହେବ ନାହିଁ ଦୁଃଖ ହାହାକାର ମୟ ।  
ହେ ମୋ'ର ପ୍ରିୟତମ ! ତୁମେ ଆସନାହିଁ  
ମୋ' ଜୀବନେ ରଘୁବୀର ହୋଇ  
ହେବି ନାହିଁ ମୁଁ ଜନକ ଦୁହିତା,  
ବାରମ୍ବାର ଅଗ୍ନି ପରୀକ୍ଷାର ହୋଇ ସମ୍ଭୁକ୍ଷୀନା,  
କରିବିନି ମୋ ଜୀବନ ଦର୍ଶ୍ୟାଭୂତା ।  
ଅବା , ସହି ସହି ତୁମର ସେ କଷାଘାତ ,  
ବରିବିନି ମାଟି ମା'ର କୋଳ  
ଫାଟିବିନି ଏ ଅବନୀ ହେବିନାହିଁ ଭୁଗର୍ଭ ଶାୟିନୀ ।  
ହେ ମୋ'ର ପ୍ରିୟତମ ! ତୁମକୁ ମୋ' ମିନତି ଏତିକି  
ମୋ ଜୀବନ - ରଜମାଞ୍ଚେ ତୁମେ କେବେ  
ଆବିର୍ଭାବ ହେବନାହିଁ ପଶୁସୁତ ହୋଇ  
ମୁଁ ହେବିନି ଯାଜ୍ଞସେନୀ କେବେ  
କୁରୁ ସଭାତଳେ ହେବିନାହିଁ ବିବସନା ,  
ତୁମେ ମୋତେ କରିବନି ପଶାଖେଳେ ପଶ  
ମୁଁ ହେବିନାହିଁ ମୁକ୍ତକେଶୀ  
ଅବା ବୋଲିବିନି ଶୋଣିତ ମୋ' ମୁକୁଳା କେଶରେ ।  
ହେ ପ୍ରିୟତମ ! ହେବନାହିଁ ତୁମେ ଗଉତମ ,  
ଶିଳା ହୋଇ ପଥପାନ୍ତେ ପଡ଼ିବାକୁ ନାହିଁ ମୋ'ର ଇଚ୍ଛା ,  
ତେତୟକୁ ଅନାଇବି - ଶିଳାରୁ ମାନବୀ ହେବି ,  
ତେବେ ଯାଇ ପୁଞ୍ଜିବ ମୋ' ଅପବାଦ ବ୍ୟଥା ।  
ହେ ମୋ'ର ପ୍ରିୟତମ !  
ଆସ ତୁମେ ମୋ' ଜୀବନେ  
ପୁଣ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାଣ ନେଇ  
ସେ ପୁଣ୍ୟରେ ଅବଗାହି ,  
ମୋ' ଜୀବନ ହେଉ ସୁଧାମୟ ।  
ଧୃବ ତାରା ହୋଇ ମୁଁ ଯେ  
ବାହିଁଥିବି ତୁମ ଆଗମନେ ,  
ଆସ ତୁମେ ଅବତରି ମୋ'ର ଏ ଜୀବନେ ।

## ଶହୀଦ ନଗର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର

ମୃଣ୍ମୟୀ ପତିକାର ରେ ପୂର୍ବ ରୁ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ଏହି କବିତା 'ଶ୍ୱେତ ସଂକେତ' ପତ୍ରିକା ଦ୍ୱାରା ପୁରସ୍କୃତ ଏହି କବିତା ଚି ତଃ ମିଶ୍ର ଜ୍ଞ ଝିଅ ପୁଣ୍ୟତୋୟା କ୍ଷତଙ୍ଗା ଜ୍ଞ ଦ୍ୱାରା ପ୍ରେରିତ ।



## ଉତ୍ ସାହେବଙ୍କ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରୀତି ତଃ ସୋମନାଥ ମିଶ୍ର

୧୯୬୦ ମସିହାର କଥା । ସେତେବେଳେ ମୁଁ ଆମେରିକାର ନିଉ ଇଂଲଣ୍ଡ ଅଞ୍ଚଳର କାମ୍ବ୍ରିଜ୍ ସହରର ବିଶ୍ୱପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ମାସାଚୁସେଟସ୍ ଇନଷ୍ଟିଚ୍ୟୁଟ୍ ଅଫ୍ ଟେକ୍ନୋଲୋଜି ରେ ଧାତୁ ବିଜ୍ଞାନରେ ସ୍ନାତୋକତ୍ତର ଉପାଧି ପାଇଁ ଗବେଷଣା କରୁଥାଏ । ମାସାଚୁସେଟସ୍ ପ୍ରଦେଶର ରାଜଧାନୀ ବୃହତ୍ତର ବର୍ଷନ୍ ସହରାଞ୍ଚଳ ଏକ ଆର୍ଟ୍ସଜାତୀୟ ମାନ୍ୟତାପାତ୍ର ଶିକ୍ଷା କେନ୍ଦ୍ର । ହାର୍ଭାର୍ଡ, M.I.T, ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଲଣ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ପୃଥିବୀ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ଏତି ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଅବସ୍ଥିତ । ଅନୁମତ ୧୦ ପ୍ରତିଶତ ବୈଦେଶିକ ଛାତ୍ର ଏହି ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ମାନଙ୍କରେ ଅଧ୍ୟୟନରତ । ଏହି ବୈଶିଷ୍ଟ୍ୟ କୁ ନେଇ ଏ ଅଞ୍ଚଳ ସଦା ଗର୍ବିତ । ‘ଆର୍ଟ୍ସଜାତୀୟ ଛାତ୍ର ସଂଗଠନ’ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ଏଠାରେ ଏକ ଭାରତୀୟ ଦିବସ ପାଳନ କରେ । ଭାରତୀୟ ଖାଦ୍ୟ, କଳାକୃତି, ପୋଷାକ ପରିଚ୍ଛଦ ଆଦିକୁ ନେଇ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ମଣ୍ଡପ ସଜା ହୋଇଥାଏ ।

ଏହିପରି ଏକ ମଣ୍ଡପରେ ଭାଗନେଇ ମୁଁ ବିଦେଶୀ ଅତିଥିଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ୱାଗତ କରୁଥିଲି ଏବଂ ଭାରତ ବିଷୟରେ ଥିବା ତାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଉଥିଲି । ଏତିକିବେଳେ ଏକ ଶ୍ରେତକାୟ ବୟୋଜ୍ୟେଷ୍ଠ ଆମେରିକୀୟ ମୋ ପାଖରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି କହିଲେ, ‘ମିଶ୍ରବାବୁ ନମସ୍କାର! ମୁଁ ଜଣେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅଛି ।’ ତାଙ୍କର ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ ଚିକିଏ ଅଖାତୁଆ ଶୁଭୁଥିଲା । ଲଙ୍କରେ ହରି ଶବ୍ଦ ପରି ଜଣେ ଗୋରା ସାହେବଙ୍କ ମୁହଁରୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଶୁଣି ମୁଁ ହତବାକ୍ ହୋଇଗଲି । ବୃହତ ବର୍ଷନ୍ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ସେତେବେଳେ ମୁଁ ଥିଲି ଏକମାତ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଆ । ଖୁସି ହୋଇ ପ୍ରତି ନମସ୍କାର ଜଣାଇ ମୁଁ ଭଦ୍ରବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କ ପରିଚୟ ପଚାରିଲି । ‘ମୋର ନାଁ ଜନ୍ ରାଇଟ୍ ଉତ୍ତମ । ମୁଁ ୧୯୩୫ ରୁ ୧୯୪୫ ମସିହା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଢେଙ୍କାନାଳର (ସେତେବେଳର ଗଡ଼ଜାତ) ଗ୍ରାମୀଣ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ଏକ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ଭାବରେ କାମ କରୁଥିଲି । ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଇଂରେଜ ଶାସନ ସମୟରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପୁରପଲ୍ଲୀରେ ଏକ ଧାର୍ମିକ ସଂସ୍ଥାର ପାଦ୍ରୀ ହିସାବରେ କାମ କରିବାର ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ ମୋରଥିଲା ।’

ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନଆପଣ କଣ କରୁଛନ୍ତି?’ ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଲି । ଉତ୍ ସାହେବ କହିଲେ, ‘୧୯୪୫ ରେ ମୁଁ ସପରିବାର ଢେଙ୍କାନାଳ ଛାଡ଼ି ଇଂଲଣ୍ଡକୁ ଫେରି ଆସିଲି । ସେଠାରେ ମୋତେ ଭଲ ଲାଗିଲାନାହିଁ । ୧୯୫୦ ରେ ମୁଁ ମୋ ପରିବାର ସହିତ ଆମେରିକା ଆସିଗଲି । ମୁଁ ଓ ମୋର ପରିବାରର ଅନ୍ୟ ସଦସ୍ୟମାନେ ଏଠାର ନଗରିକତ୍ୱ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିନେଇଛୁ । ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ମୁଁ Salvation Army, ଏକ ଅଣ ସରକାରୀ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ସଂସ୍ଥାରେ କାମ କରୁଅଛି । ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଲି, ‘ଏହି ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ସଂସ୍ଥାର କାମ କଣ?’ ସେ କହିଲେ, ‘ଆମେରିକାରେ ବହୁତ ଲୋକ ନିଶାଗ୍ରସ୍ତ ହୋଇ ନିଜର ଓ ନିଜ ପରିବାରର ବହୁତ କ୍ଷତି କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଆମ ସଂସ୍ଥା ଏହିପରି ନିଶାଗ୍ରସ୍ତ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ କାମ କରି ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ନିଶାମୁକ୍ତ କରିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଛି ।’ ‘ବାଃ, ଏତ ବହୁତ ପ୍ରଶଂସନୀୟ କାମ’ ମୁଁ କହିଲି ।

‘ତେବେ ଆପଣ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ କିଭଳି କାମ କରୁଥିଲେ?’ ‘ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆମ ସଂସ୍ଥା ଗାଁ ଗଣ୍ଡାରେ ବୁଲି ବୁଲି ନିଶାଗ୍ରସ୍ତ ଲୋକଙ୍କର ନିଶା ଛଡ଼ାଇବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଥିଲା । ପରାଧିନ ଭାରତରେ ଓ ଅତ୍ୟାଗୁରୀ ରାଜାମାନଙ୍କ ଶାସନରେ ଗ୍ରାମାଞ୍ଚଳରେ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟସେବା ଓ ଶିକ୍ଷା ପହଞ୍ଚି ପାରିନଥିଲା । ତା ସହିତ ନିଶାସକ୍ତ ହୋଇ ସେମାନେ ଦରିଦ୍ରତା ଉପରକୁ ଉଠି ପାରୁନଥିଲେ । ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କ ସେବାରେ ହିଁ ଆମକୁ ଆନନ୍ଦ ମିଳୁଥିଲା, ଯଦିଓ କିଛି ଧର୍ମାତ୍ମ ଲୋକେ ଏକଥା ସହି ପାରୁନଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ଧର୍ମାନ୍ତରୀକରଣ ଆମ ସଂସ୍ଥାର ମୂଳ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ବୋଲି ସେମାନେ କହୁଥିଲେ । ଏକଥା କହିଲା ବେଳେ ତାଙ୍କ ଆଖି ଦୁଇଟି ଛଳ ଛଳ ହୋଇ ଉଠିଲା, ଯେପରି ସେ ବିଗତ ଦିନର ଦୁଃଖାଦୀୟ ସ୍ମୃତିରେ ହଜି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ।

ବାତାବରଣକୁ ଚିକେ ହାଲୁକା କରିବା ପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଲି, ‘ଆରେ ଆପଣ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା କିପରି ଶିଖିଲେ ମତେ କହିଲେନି’ । ସେ ଚିକିଏ ହସି କହିଲେ, ‘ଆପଣ ଯୋଉମାନଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ କାମ କରିବେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ତାଙ୍କର ହୃଦୟ ଜିଣିବା ଦରକାର । ହୃଦୟ ଜିଣିବାର ମୂଳମନ୍ତ୍ର ହେଲା ତାଙ୍କ ଭାଷା ଶିଖିବା । ତେଣୁ ମୁଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ଶିଖିଲି ଓ ଭଲ ରୂପେ କହି ନପାରିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାକୁ ଭଲ ପାଇଲି । ବହୁତ ଦିନ ହେଲା ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କଥା ବାର୍ତ୍ତା କରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପାଇ ନଥିବାରୁ ହୁଏତ ମୁଁ ଆଗପରି ଆଉ କହି ପାରୁନି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମତେ କ୍ଷମା ଦେବେ’ । ମୁଁ ମନେ ମନେ ଭାବିଲି ଏଠି ବେଶିଦିନ ରହିବା ପରେ ବହୁତ ଭାରତୀୟ ତ ତାଙ୍କ ନିଜ ମାତୃଭାଷା ଭୁଲି ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଆଉ ଏତ ସହଜେ ଜଣେ ଇଂରେଜ ସାହେବ । ତଥାପି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ପ୍ରତି ତାଙ୍କର ଅନୁରାଗ ଦେଖି ମୋ ମନ ରେ ତାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ଏକ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଜନ୍ମିଲା । ‘କଣ ମିଶ୍ରବାବୁ ? କୋଉ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲେ ? ହଁ, ମୁଁ କହୁଥିଲି ନା ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ଏହି ଆର୍ଟ୍ସଜାତୀୟ ଭାରତୀୟ ଦିବସ ମେଳାକୁ ମୁଁ ଏକ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ନେଇ ଆସେ । ଏକେତ ଭାରତୀୟ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ମୋର ବହୁତ ପ୍ରିୟ, ତାଛଡ଼ା ମନରେ ଏକ ଆଶା ଥାଏ ଯଦି ହୁଏତ ଏକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଛାତ୍ର ସାଙ୍ଗେ ମୋର ଦେଖା ହୋଇଯାଏ । ଭାଗ୍ୟ କୁ ଆଜି ଏ ମେଳାରେ ପାଦ ଦେଉ ଦେଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଭାରତୀୟ ଛାତ୍ର ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ମତେ କହିଲା । ମୁଁ ଜଣେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବନ୍ଧୁଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା କରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ହାତଛତା କରିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଲିନି - ଆପଣଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗେ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା କରି ମୁଁ ବହୁତ ଖୁସି ।’ ଏକା ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଏତେ କଥା କହି ଉତ୍ ସାହେବ ଚିକେ ଦମ ନେଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ମୁଖ ମଣ୍ଡଳରୁ ଖୁସିର ଏକ ଝଲକ ବାରି ହେଇଯାଉଥାଏ ।





ଶ୍ରୀ ଓ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧ ସହ ଏ ଥିଲା ମୋର ପ୍ରାରମ୍ଭିକ ପରିଚୟ । କ୍ରମଶଃ ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧ ପରିବାରଙ୍କ ସହ ମୋର ଏବଂ ମୋ ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କର ବନ୍ଧୁତା ଗଢି ଉଠିଲା । ଅନେକଥର ସେ ଆମ ଭତ୍ତାଘରକୁ ଆସି ମୋ ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କର ହାତରକ୍ଷା ଓଡିଆ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଖାଇ ଆପ୍ୟାୟିତ ହେଉଥିଲେ । ଆମେ ମଧ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କ ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କ ହାତ ଡିଆରୀ କେବେ ଏବଂ ପାଖିର ମଜା ନଉଥିଲୁ । ସେ ବର୍ଷ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଗ୍ରିଟିଙ୍ଗ କାର୍ଡ ପାଇ ଆମେ ନହସି ରହିପାରିଲୁନି । ସେ କାର୍ଡ ରେ ବଙ୍କା ଟଙ୍କା ଓଡିଆ ଅକ୍ଷର ରେ ଲେଖାହୋଇଥିଲା ‘ବଡ଼ଦିନଙ୍କର ନମସ୍କାର’ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଓଡିଆ ଭାଷା ପ୍ରତି ତାଙ୍କର ମମତା ଆମ ମନକୁ ଛୁଇଁଗଲା । ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ ବେଳେ ଉପହାର ଆଦାନ ପ୍ରଦାନ ସେଠାକାର ଏକ ରୀତି । ସେଇ ରୀତି ଅନୁଯାଇ ମୋ ପତ୍ନୀ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କୁ ଏକ ରୁପା ତାର କସି ବଗ ଓ ସେ ମୋ ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କୁ ଦୁଇଟି ନିଜହାତରେ ସୁସଜ୍ଜିତ ଆମେରିକୀୟ କଣ୍ଢେଇ ଉପହାର ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କ ଓଡିଆ ପ୍ରୀତିର ଆଉ ଏକ ପ୍ରମାଣ ଥିଲା ଢେଙ୍କାନାଳରେ ଜନ୍ମ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିବା ତାଙ୍କ ଡିନି ଝିଅଙ୍କର ଓଡିଆ ନାମ - ଶାନ୍ତି, ପ୍ରୀତି ଓ ପ୍ରିୟା । ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧ ଝିଅମାନଙ୍କୁ ତାଙ୍କର ଇଂରାଜୀ ନାମରେ ହିଁ ଡାକୁଥିଲେ ।

ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କ ଆମକୁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ ଓଡିଶାର ସେବକାର ଗତଜାତ ବିଷୟରେ କିଛି ନା କିଛି କାହାଣୀ ଶୁଣାଉଥିଲେ । ସେ କାହାଣୀ ଭିତରୁ ଦୁଇଟି ବେଶ ରୋମାଞ୍ଚକର ଏବଂ ମଜାଦାର ଥିଲା । ଉଭୟ ଘଟଣା ତାଙ୍କର ନିଜର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ଅନୁଭୂତି ହେଇଥିବାରୁ ଆମକୁ ବେଶ୍ ହାସ୍ୟର ଖୋରାକ ଯୋଗାଉଥିଲା । ପ୍ରଥମ ଘଟଣାଟି ଘଟିଥିଲା ଯେବେ ସେ ପାଦ୍ରୀ ଭାବରେ ଢେଙ୍କାନାଳରେ ଯୋଗଦେଲେ, ତାର ଅଳ୍ପଦିନ ପରେ । ଓଡିଆ ଗୁଲିଚଳନୀ ଓ ପରମପରା ବିଷୟରେ ତାଙ୍କର କୌଣସି ଜ୍ଞାନ ସେତେବେଳେ ନଥିଲା । ଥରେ ସେବାକାମରେ କୌଣସି ଏକ ଛୋଟ ଗାଁ ଭିତରେ ଗୁଲି ଗୁଲି ଯାଉଥିଲା ବେଳେ ହଠାତ୍ ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିଅର କାନ୍ଦ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଶୁଭିଲା । ସେ ଯଲଦି ଯଲଦି ପାଦ ପକାଇ ସେ ଯାଗାରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲେ । ଦେଖିଲେ ଗୋଟିଏ ସବାରି କୁ ଲୋକମାନେ ବୋହି ବୋହି ନେଉଛନ୍ତି । ସବାରି ଭିତରେ ବସିଥିବା ଝିଅଟି ଜୋରରେ ବାହୁନି କରି କାନ୍ଦୁଥାଏ ଓ ସବାରି ଭିତରୁ ବାହାରକୁ ଆସିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଥାଏ । ସବାରି ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଗୁଲୁଥିବା ଲୋକଟି ଭିତରକୁ ଠେକୁଥାଏ । ଏ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଦେଖି ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କ ଭାବିଲେ କେତେକ ଦୁଃଖ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଲୋକ ଝିଅଟିକୁ ଅପହରଣ କରି ନେଇଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କର ଯତ୍ନେ ଗୋରା ଦେହଟା ରାଗରେ ଧରିଉଠିଲା । ସେ ହଠାତ୍ ପାଖରେ ଥିବା ଗଛ ଆଡୁଆଳରେ ଲୁଚିଗଲେ ଏବଂ ଗଛ ତାଳକୁ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଗୋଟିଏ ବାଡି ଡିଆରି କଲେ । ତାପରେ ଯାହା ଘଟିଲା ତାହା ହିନ୍ଦୀ ସିନେମାର Climax ଦୃଶ୍ୟଠାରୁ କୌଣସି ଗୁଣରେ କମ୍ ନୁହେଁ । ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୋରା ଲୋକକୁ ହାତରେ ବାଡି ଧରି ଅପ୍ରତ୍ୟାଶିତ ଭାବରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଉପରକୁ ମାଡି ଆସିବାର ଦେଖି ସବାରି ବାହକ ତଥା ଅନ୍ୟଲୋକମାନେ ସବାରିକୁ ଛାଡିଦେଇ ଛତଭଙ୍ଗ ଦେଲେ । ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କ ଝିଅଟି ପାଖକୁ ଆସିଲେ । ସେ ଭାବିଥିଲେ ଝିଅଟି ଖୁସି ହୋଇ କୃତଜ୍ଞତା ଜଣାଇବ । ସେପରି କିଛି ହେଲାନାହିଁ । ବରଂ ତା ମୁହଁରୁ ସେ ରାଗିଲା ପରି ଜଣା ପଡୁଥିଲା । ସେ ଯାହା ହେଉ ଓଡିଆ ଭାଷା ବୁଝି ପାରୁନଥିବାରୁ ସେ ଝିଅଟିକୁ ନିକଟବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ପୋଲିସ ଥାନାରେ ପହଞ୍ଚାଇ ଦେଲେ । ଥାନାରେ ଥାନାବାବୁ ଖଣ୍ଡ ଖଣ୍ଡିଆ ଇଂରାଜୀରେ ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କୁ ଯାହା ବୁଝାଇଲେ ତାର ମର୍ମ ଥିଲା ଏପରି - ଓଡିଆ ଘରର ଚଳଣି ଅନୁସାରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଶୁଭ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ ଠିକ କରି ଝିଅଟିର ବାପା, ମାଁ ତାକୁ ପ୍ରଥମକରି ଶାଶୁଘରକୁ ପଠାଉଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରଥମଥରରେ ପହିଲି ପାଳି ଗଲାବେଳେ ଝିଅଟି କାନ୍ଦିବା ସ୍ୱଭାବିକ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏହି କାନ୍ଦ ହିଁ ତାର କାଳହେଲା । ପୁଣି ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଶୁଭମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ ପାଇଁ ତାକୁ କେତେଦିନ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିବାକୁ ହବ କିଏ ଜାଣେ । ସବୁ ଶୁଣିଲା ପରେ ବିଚରା ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କର ଝିଅଟିକୁ କ୍ଷମା ମାଗିବା ଛଡା ଅନ୍ୟ ଗତି ନଥିଲା ।

ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଘଟଣା ଟି ଘଟିଥିଲା ପ୍ରଥମ ଘଟଣାଟିର କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ପରେ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କର ଓଡିଆ ଭାଷାରେ ଦକ୍ଷତା ବଢି ଯାଇଥିଲା । ଏପରିକି ସେ ଢେଙ୍କାନାଳ ଗ୍ରାମବାସୀ ମାନଙ୍କ କଥିତ ଓଡିଆ ମଧ୍ୟ ଭଲ ଭାବରେ ବୁଝି ପାରୁଥିଲେ । ଏଇ ଘଟଣାଟି ଘଟିଥିଲା ରେଳଗାଡି ଭିତରେ । ଥରେ ସେ ତାଳଚେର ପୁରୀ ପାସେଞ୍ଚର ଗାଡିରେ ତାଳଚେରରୁ କଟକ ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ଏକ ତୃତୀୟ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ଡବାରେ ଉଠିଲେ । ଡବାରେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡି ଗୁରି ପାଞ୍ଚଜଣ ଗ୍ରାମୀଣ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ବସିଥିଲେ । ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କ ତାଙ୍କ ସହଯାତ୍ରୀମାନଙ୍କ ବିପରୀତ ଦିଗରେ ଥିବା ବେଞ୍ଚର ଏକ କୋଣରେ ବସିଗଲେ । ଗାଡି ଛାଡିଦେଲା । ଗାଡି ଛାଡି ଦେବାର କିଛି ସମୟ ପରେ ତାଙ୍କ ସହଯାତ୍ରୀମାନେ ନିଜ ନିଜ ଭିତରେ ଖୁସିଗପ କରିବାରେ ଲାଗିଗଲେ । ଯଦିଓ ତୃତୀୟ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ଡବାରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୋରାସାହେବର ଉପସ୍ଥିତି ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଟିକିଏ ଅସହଜ ଲାଗୁଥାଏ କିନ୍ତୁ ପ୍ରକାଶ୍ୟରେ ସେମାନେ ତାହା ଜଣାଇନଥିଲେ ।

କିଛି ସମୟ ବିତିଗଲା । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଖୁସିଗପରୁ କିଛି କିଛି ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କ କାନରେ ପଡୁଥାଏ । ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ କୌଣସି ହସ କଥା ଶୁଣି ସେ ମୁରୁକି ମୁରୁକି ଟିକେ ହସି ଦେଉଥାନ୍ତି । ହଠାତ୍ ଜଣେ ସହଯାତ୍ରୀର ଧ୍ୟାନ ତାଙ୍କ ହସ ଉପରେ ପଡିଲା । ସେ ଡରିଯାଇ ତା ସାଙ୍ଗମାନଙ୍କୁ କହିଲା, ଆରେ ଦେଖତ, ଏ ସାଇବଟା କଣ ହସୁଛି । ତାର ଜଣେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଟୁଙ୍ଗାରି କହିଲା, ‘ଆରେ ସତେତ, ସାଇବ ଟା ତ ହସୁଛି’ । ଏକଥା ଶୁଣି ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କ ହସଟା ଆଉଟିକେ ବଢିଗଲା । ତାର ଅନ୍ୟଜଣେ ସାଥୀ ଏକଥା ଦେଖି ରୀତିମତ ଡରିଗଲା । ସେ କହିଲା, ‘ଇ ବାପା ସାଇବ ଟା ପଗଲା ନାଁ କଣ ! ନହେଲେ ଏହା ହସଟା କହିଲିକି ?’ ନିଜ ବିଷୟରେ ଏଭଳି ଟିପ୍ପଣୀ ଶୁଣି ଉତ୍ସବ୍ଧଙ୍କ ଆଉ ସମ୍ଭାଳି ପାରିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ସେ ଅଜହାସ୍ୟ କରି ଉଠିଲେ ।

ଗାଁ ବାଲାମାନେ ବିଚରା ବହୁତ ଭୟଭୀତ ହୋଇଗଲେ । ଗାଡ଼ି ଟା ଜୋରରେ ଗୁଲୁ ନଥିଲେ ସେମାନେ ଅବା ଟ୍ରେନରୁ ଡେଇଁ ଓହ୍ଲାଇ ପଡ଼ିଥାନ୍ତେ । ଆଉ କୌଣସି ଉପାୟ ନଦେଖି ସେମାନେ ଉଡ଼ି ସାହେବଙ୍କ ଆଡ଼କୁ ନ ଅନାଇ ପଛକରି ବସିଲେ । ଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ଟ୍ରେନର ଗତି ଟା କ୍ରମଶଃ ଧୀର ହୋଇଗଲା । କିଛି ଦୂରରେ ଷ୍ଟେସନ ଚିଏ ଦେଖାଗଲା । ଗାଡ଼ିଟି ପୁରା ରୋକିବା ଆଗରୁ ଗାଁବାଲା ମାନେ ଖପ ଖାପ ଡେଇଁ ଓହ୍ଲାଇ ଗଲେ । ସେତିକିରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଭୟ ଦୂର ହେଲା ନାହିଁ । ସେମାନେ ପ୍ରାନ୍ତର୍ଦ୍ଧୀ ଉପରେ ଦୌଡ଼ିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ । ଆଖ ପାଖରେ ଥିବା ଲୋକମାନେ ଏ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ବେଶ ଉପଭୋଗ କରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଉଡ଼ି ସାହେବ ଛାଡ଼ିବା ବାଲା ନୁହନ୍ତି । ସେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପଛରେ ଦୌଡ଼ି ଦୌଡ଼ି ଗୋଟିଏ ଗ୍ରାମବାସୀକୁ ଧରିପକାଇ କହିଲେ, 'ଆରେ ଶୁଣ ! କାହିଁକି ଏମିତି ଡରିକରି ପଳାଉଛ' । ଗ୍ରାମବାସୀଟି ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲା, 'ଆଜ୍ଞା ଆମେ କଣ ଇଂରାଜୀ ବୁଝୁଛୁକି?' ଉଡ଼ି ସାହେବ ତତକ୍ଷଣାତ ଜବାବ ଦେଲେ, 'ମୁଁ ତ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କହୁଛି' । ତାପରେ ନିଜ ସ୍ଵରକୁ ଯଥା ସମ୍ଭବ କୋମଳ କରି ସେ କହିଲେ, 'ଦେଖ ମୁଁ ତ ତୁମମାନଙ୍କର କିଛି ଅନିଷ୍ଟ କରିନାହିଁ । ତୁମ କଥାବାଞ୍ଛା ଶୁଣି ହସ ମାଡ଼ିବାରୁ ଟିକେ ହସି ଦେଇଛି ଯାହା, ଏଇଟା କଣ ଗୋଟିଏ ଅପରାଧ ?' ।

ଏତେବେଳକୁ ଯାଇ ଗ୍ରାମବାସୀଙ୍କ ମନରେ ଚେତା ପଶିଲା । ସେମାନେ ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ କଲେ ସାଇବ ଖାଲି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବୁଝି ପାରୁନି, କହିପାରୁଛି ମଧ୍ୟ । ଉଡ଼ି ସାହେବ ତାଙ୍କୁ ବୁଝେଇ ଶୁଭେଇ ପୂର୍ବ ତବାକୁ ଫେରାଇ ଆଣିଲେ । ଅବଶିଷ୍ଟ ରେଳ ଯାତାଟି ତାଙ୍କର ଶାନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ସୌହାର୍ଦ୍ଦ୍ୟ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବାତାବରଣରେ କରିଗଲା । ୧୯୬୫ ମସିହା ଜୁନ ମାସରେ ମୁଁ ଓ ମୋର ପତ୍ନୀ ଆମର ଆମେରିକା ରହଣି ସାରି ଭାରତକୁ ଫେରି ଆସିଲୁ । ଆସିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଆମକୁ ଆମର ଆମେରିକାନ ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ଏକ ଭବ୍ୟ ବିଦାୟ ଭୋଜିରେ ଆପ୍ୟାୟିତ କରିଥିଲେ । ସେ ଭୋଜି ରେ ଉଡ଼ି ସାହେବ ସପରିବାର ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ଥିଲେ । ସେ ମତେ ଘରର ଏକ କୋଣକୁ ଡାକି ନେଇ କହିଲେ, 'ମିଶ୍ର ବାବୁ, ମୁଁ ଭାରୀ ଖୁସି ଆପଣ ନିଜ ଦେଶ କୁ ଫେରି ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପ୍ରବେଶ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟାବର୍ତ୍ତନରେ ଲାଭବାନ ହେବ । ଯଦିଓ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଭାରତ ଫେରିଯିବା ଦ୍ଵାରା ମୁଁ ଏକ ଭଲ ବନ୍ଧୁ ହୋଇବି ତଥାପି ଆପଣଙ୍କର ଏ ପଦକ୍ଷେପକୁ ମୁଁ ସ୍ଵାଗତ ଜଣାଉଛି । ଆଜ୍ଞା ମିଶ୍ରବାବୁ ଯଦି ବିଶେଷ ଅସୁବିଧା ନହୁଏ ଆପଣ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ମୋ ପାଖକୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଜିନିଷ ପଠାଇ ପାରିବେ'? ସେ ଟିକେ କୁଣ୍ଡିତ ହୋଇ ପଚାରିଲେ ।

'ଆରେ ନାଁ ନାଁ, କି ଜିନିଷ କୁହନ୍ତୁ ନା' । ମୁଁ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲି ।  
 'ମଧୁସୂଦନ ରାଓଙ୍କର ଗୋଟିଏ ବର୍ଷବୋଧ । ମୋର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାରେ ଜ୍ଞାନ ବଢ଼ାଇବା ପାଇଁ ସେ ବହିଟି ମୋର ଏକାନ୍ତ ସହାୟକ ହେବ', ସେ ଟିକିଏ ହସି କହିଲେ । ଉଡ଼ି ସାହେବଙ୍କ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ପ୍ରତି ମମତା ମତେ ଅଭିଭୂତ କରି ଦେଇଥିଲା । ଭାରତକୁ ଫେରି ମୋର ପ୍ରଥମ କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ହୋଇଥିଲା 'ବର୍ଷବୋଧ' ର ଏକ କପି ଏୟାର ମେଲ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଉଡ଼ି ସାହେବଙ୍କୁ ପଠାଇବା ।

ଏଥୁ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଗୁଳିଶ ବର୍ଷ ବିତିଗଲାଣି । ଆମେ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ନିଜ ଜୀବନର ସାୟାଦ୍ଵରେ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ । ଆମେରିକାର ସ୍ଵତିସବୁ ପୁରୁଣା ଓ ଘୋସରା ହୋଇଗଲାଣି । ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତିର ୫୯ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅନେକ ଓଡ଼ିଶାବାସୀ ନିଜର ମାତୃଭାଷା ଶିଖୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି ଏବଂ କହିବାକୁ କୁଣ୍ଠା ବୋଧ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଅଥଚ ଇଂରେଜ ଶାସନ କାଳରେ ଜଣେ ଇଂରେଜ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ତତକାଳୀନ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଗଡ଼ଜାତ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ସେବା କରିବାକୁ ଆସି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଶିଖୁଥିଲେ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାକୁ ଏପରି ଭଲ ପାଇଥିଲେ ଭାବିଲେ ମତେ ଆଜି ବି ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଲାଗେ ।

ଅବସରପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ, ଜାତୀୟ ପ୍ରାଦେଶିକ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ, ରାଉରକେଲା

ଉଚ୍ଚ ହେବା ପାଇଁ କର ଯେବେ ଆଶା  
 ଉଚ୍ଚକର ଆଗ ନିଜ ମାତୃଭାଷା ।

ମାତୃଭାଷା ମାତୃଭାଷାରେ ମମତା ଯା ହୃଦେ ଜନମି ନାହିଁ  
 ତାକୁ ଯେବେ ଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଗଣରେ ଗଣିବା ଅଜ୍ଞାନ ରହିବେ କାହିଁ ?



# ହାଇକୁ ହାର

## ଅଭୟ ନାୟକ

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୪  
ବଡ଼ ହିନସ୍ତା ।  
ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଛତା ଦି ଭାଇ  
କାଛରେ ଚିତା

୪  
ଗୁଆ ପାନ ନେଇ ।  
ଶୋଲତଙ୍ଗ ଯା' ବାଲି  
ଆ-କା-ମା-ବଇ

୪  
ବାର ଯେ ମାସ  
ତେର ପରବ ଗଲା  
ବରଷ

୪  
ବହିଲା ଝାଞ୍ଜି  
କାଳ ବୁଜେ ସାବିତ୍ରିରୀ  
ପତିର ପାଞ୍ଜି ।

୪  
ଆଇଲା ରଜ  
ଦୋଳିଖେଳେ ଭୁଆଣୁଣୀ  
ଛତେଇ ଲାଜ ।  
୪  
ଗମ୍ଭୀ ପୁନେଇ  
ପେଙ୍ଗୁନଳି ଖେଳ ଶେଷ  
ଉଜାଡେ ଗାଇ ।

୪  
ଖୁଦୁରୁକୁଣୀ  
ଛେଳି ଚରେଇଲା କି  
ଗେଲ୍‌ହୀ ଭଉଣୀ ।

୪  
ସୁନିଆ ଭେଟି  
ସୁନାଟଙ୍ଗ ପୁଜା ହବ  
ଖୋଲିଲା ପେଟି



(Poet' s note : It is a bAramAsI poem, where each stanza is in the form of an Oriya haiku (a Japanese form of poem). I am not conversant with contemporary Oriya poetry, so not sure how common haikus are in Oriya literature. But it is quite fashionable among western youngsters to write English haikus. I have experimented to write haikus in Oriya. (I have broken some rules, though -- check the wiki on haikus.) I have organized the haikus in the form of a garland; hence the title "hAiku-hAra", though I have dropped the hyphen to tickle the readers. The "title-piece-haiku" and the "pendant piece-haiku" are to be read from top to bottom, all other haikus are meant to be read clock-wise. But I have left it to the imagination of the reader how to read them, though the position of the periods ( | ) provide enough hint .)

ସଜନ ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଦା ରହି । ପବିତ୍ର କର ଏହି ମହା ।



## ଅନ୍ତଃସ୍ତନ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ନୀଳା ଦାସ

୧

ସମୟର କୁଆରରେ  
ଉତ୍ତୁରୁ ହେଉ ହେଉ  
ଧରଣିଏ ପାଇଁ ବି ତ ଚତେ ଭୁଲିନି  
ଭୁଲିପାରିନି ।

ବାଇଆ ମାଆ, ବାଇଚଢେଇ ଗୀତ ଶୁଣୁ ଶୁଣୁ  
ପକ୍ଷୀ ଶାବକଟାଏ ପାଲଟିଯାଇ  
ତୋ କୋଳରେ ଶୋଇଯାଏ  
ନିର୍ଭୟରେ, ନିଶ୍ଚିନ୍ତରେ ଜାକିଜୁକି ହୋଇ ।

ନାହିଁ ନ ଥିବା ସମୟ ପହୁଁରି ପହୁଁରି  
ସ୍ୱର ତୋ ଚହଲି ଆସେ,  
ମୋ ଘରର ଚଉହଦି ତେଇଁ  
ମୋ ଅଜାଣତେ  
ଆଉ  
ଅନ୍ତରକୁ ଥରାଇ ଥରାଇ  
କଖରୁ ମୋ ଝରିଯାଏ  
ପହିଲି ଆଷାଢ଼ର ମନଛୁଆଁ ବର୍ଷା ସୁନ ହୋଇ ।

ମୋ ସ୍ମୃତିର ସୁନା ପକ୍ଷୁଆରେ  
ଜଉମୁଦ ଦିଆ  
ତୋ ମନର ଝରା ଆବେଗ ସବୁ

ଏବେ ବି ସାଇତା  
ହୁଦୟର ନିବୁଜ କୋଣରେ ।

୨

ମୋ ରକ୍ତରେ ଭିଜି ଭିଜି  
କଅଁଳିଆ ତେଣା ସବୁ  
ଶକ୍ତ ହେଇଗଲା ପରେ  
ରୁକ୍ଷା ରୁକ୍ଷା ହୁଦୟର  
ଅନ୍ତଃସ୍ତନ ଯେତେ  
ସତେ କଣ  
ଅନୁରଣି ଉଠୁଥିବ  
କାହିଁ କେତେ ଦୂରେ ଥିବା  
ନୁଆ ନୁଆ ଗଢା ନୀତଗିରେ ।

ହୁଦୟର ଝନନ ମୋ  
ଝରିତ କି ହେଉଥିବ  
ଛିଟିକି ପଡିଥିବା  
ମୋ ଦେହର ମାଂସ ଗୁକୁଡାରେ  
ଆଉ  
ବାଇଚଢେଇର ଗୀତ  
ସାତ ଦରିଆ ତେଇଁ  
ସ୍ୱାସରିତ ହେଉଥିବ  
ଉତକ୍ତା ସମୟର ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ ମାନଙ୍କରେ ।

ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଦାସ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ପ୍ରଫେସର ଗୋକୁଳାନନ୍ଦ ଦାସ ଙ୍କ ସହିତ, ପୁତ୍ର ରାଜା ଏସ୍.ସାଇଲନ୍, ପୁତ୍ରବଧୂ ବବିତା ଓ ନାତି ରାଜି ଝନନ ଙ୍କ ପାଖକୁ (କାଲିପକ୍ଷିଆ) ବୁଲି ଆସିଛନ୍ତି । ଠିକଣା: ୧୭୭ ଧର୍ମବିହାର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର

ଯାହାର ରୂପ ହୃଦେ ଶାନ୍ତି । ବେଦ ପୁରୁଷ ନ ଜାଣନ୍ତି ।





## ବିଦେଶୀ ବନ୍ଧୁ ତଃ ପ୍ରିୟଙ୍କା

ମୁଁ ମୋ ମାଟି କୁ ଛୁଇଁଛି  
ଚିହ୍ନା ଚିହ୍ନା ବାମ୍ନା ଏଠି ସବୁଠି,  
କିନ୍ତୁ ପୁନଶ୍ଚ ଖୋଜୁଛି ମନ  
ସପନ, ଆଲୋକ ଆଉ  
ଛାଇର ଲୁଚକାଳୀ ଖେଳ,  
କେତେ ମିଠା ମୁହଁ, ଆତ୍ମୀୟତାର ଭାଷା  
କେତେ ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ ।  
ଭାଷି ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି ଭଷା ବାଦଲ ପରି  
କେତେ ଭାରତୀୟ ବାମ୍ନା  
ଆଉ କେତେ ଅତର ମଖା ସ୍ଫୁଟି ।  
ନୀଳ ଜଳରାଶିର ମଧ୍ୟାନ ଉପରେ  
ଉଡ଼ି ଉଡ଼ି ଗଲା ବେଳେ,  
ଭଷା ବାଦଲ ଝରକାରୁ  
ମୁଁ ତୁମ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖୁଛି  
ମନ ଆଇନା ରେ,  
ଅଶ୍ରୁ ର ମୋତି ବିନ୍ଦୁର ଠିକ୍ ମଝି ଚକ୍ରାଧାରେ ।  
ଅରୁଣ, ଅକ୍ଷୟ, ଭବାନୀ,  
ମାମୁଲୁ, ମୋନା, ମିତି, ଅରୁଣି ମାନଙ୍କୁ  
ମୁଁ ଲୁଚାଇ ରଖିଛି ମନ ତଳ ସାତ ସିନ୍ଧୁକ ରେ ।  
ହେଲେ ଚାବି ତ ହଜିଛି ଠିକ୍ ଦରିଆ ମଝିରେ,  
ଆଜିବି ଖୋଜୁଛି .....ପାଇଲେ କହିବି !  
ଅଲେଖା ଠିକଣା ରେ ମୋର  
ଚିଠି ଖଣ୍ଡେ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଲେଖିବି ।

## ସୁଶାନ୍ତ ଲୋକ, ନୂଆଦିଲ୍ଲୀ

(ତଃ ପ୍ରିୟଙ୍କା ତିନି ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି ମିତିଗାନ ଛାଡ଼ି ଭାରତ ଫେରି  
ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ସ୍ଵାମୀ ପ୍ରବୋଧ ସ୍ଵାଇଁ ଏବଂ ଦୁଇ ଝିଅଙ୍କ ସହିତ  
ରହୁଛନ୍ତି, ଜୀବିକା ଓ ଜୀବନ ଭିତରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଥାଇବି ପ୍ରବାସୀ  
ଜୀବନ ର ବନ୍ଧୁ, ବାନ୍ଧବୀ ମାନଙ୍କର ସ୍ଫୁଟି ତାଙ୍କ ମନରେ ଏବେ  
ବି ଜୀବନ୍ତ ।)

“ଅମୃତ ବିନୟ ବଚନ, କହି ତୋଷିବ ପ୍ରାଣୀ ମନ”

## ଝଲକାଏ ନିଃଶ୍ଵାସ ତଃ କୁମୁଦିନି ପାଢ଼ୀ

ଝଲକାଏ ନିଃଶ୍ଵାସ ଖୋଜୁଛି !  
ଅଶନିଃଶ୍ଵାସୀ ସମୟ,  
ମୁଁ ତୋର ଗଭୀରତା ମାପୁଛି ।  
ନିରୁତ୍ତର ହେଲୁ ବୋଲିତ ଶାପଗ୍ରସ୍ତ ଆଜି  
କହି ଦେଲେ କଥାତ ସରତା ।  
କେତେବାଟ ଲାବି ଯାଉଛି ସମୟ?  
ମୁଁ ତୋର ପାଦଚିହ୍ନକୁ ଛୁଇଁବି ଭାବୁଛି,  
କିଏ ଜାଣିଛି ସେ ପାଦ କେଉଁଠି,  
କାହାକୁ ଛୁଇଁଛି ?  
\* \* \* \* \*  
ପୁଣ୍ୟଛେଦ ଚାହୁଁଛି ହେ ପରମ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମର !  
ତୁମ ପାଦ ଦେଖାଇ ଦିଅ ପାବନ ପରଶ  
ମୁଁ ନିଶ୍ଚିନ୍ତ ହୁଅନ୍ତି,  
ପହୁରି ଯାଆନ୍ତି ସତ୍ତ୍ଵ ବୈତରଣୀ  
ଛୁଇଁବାକୁ ପଦରଜ, ପତିତ ପାବନ ।

## ସୁଶାନ୍ତ ଲୋକ, ନୂଆଦିଲ୍ଲୀ

ସତ୍ୟ ଅଟଇ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଧର୍ମ । ସତ୍ୟ ସାଧନ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ କର୍ମ ।



Jhoti Design for OSA convention 2007  
By Jolly Sinha



## ସୁବିଚାର

### ୩. ସବିତା ଦାସ

ଆଜି ରୁବି ଆସୁଛି । ସବୁବେଳେ ସିଏ ତାର ହଠେଲରୁ ଖରାକୁଟିରେ ଓ ପୁଜାକୁଟିରେ ଆସେ । ଆଜି କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ବାପା, ମାଁ ଙ୍କ ଭୁଲ୍ ପ୍ରାୟଶ୍ଚିତ ପାଇଁ ସେ ମିସେସ୍ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ ଓରଫ୍ ବଡ଼ମାଁ ଙ୍କୁ ଧରି ଆସୁଛି । କୁନ୍ତଳା ରକ୍ଷାବଦ୍ଧରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ସତ୍ୟନାରାୟଣ ପୂଜାର ଆୟୋଜନ ରଖିଛନ୍ତି । ଦୁଇ ପରିବାର ଏକାଠି ହେବେ । ସବୁ ରୋଷେଇ ସରିଲାଣି ଖାଲି ଭାତଟି ରକ୍ଷା ହେବ । ଚାଉଳ ବାଛୁବୀକୁ କୁନ୍ତଳା ପୁରୁଣା ସ୍ମୃତିକୁ ଫେରିଗଲେ ।

ଦିନଥିଲା - କୁନ୍ତଳା ବାପା ମା' ଙ୍କର ଅତି ଅଲିଅଳୀ ଝିଅ ଥିଲେ । ବାପା ତାଙ୍କର ସମାଜରେ ଜଣେ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠିତ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଥିଲେ । ଏଣୁ ତାଙ୍କର ଶିକ୍ଷା ଭଲ ସ୍କୁଲ ଓ କଲେଜରେ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ସେ ଏମ୍.ଏ. ପାସ କରି ଜଣେ ଶିକ୍ଷୟତ୍ରୀ ଭାବେ ଗୋଟିଏ ସ୍କୁଲରେ କାମ କରୁଥିଲେ । କୁନ୍ତଳା ଯେମିତି ଦେଖିବାକୁ , ସେମିତି ତାଙ୍କର ବ୍ୟବହାର ମଧ୍ୟ । ତାଙ୍କର ସୁନ୍ଦର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିତ୍ୱ ଥିଲା । ଦେଖିଲେ ଲାଗେ ତାଙ୍କର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିତ୍ୱରେ ସ୍ନେହ ଓ ମମତା ଭରି ରହିଛି । ସେ ଖୁବ୍ ମିତ୍ତଭାଷୀ ମଧ୍ୟ ଥିଲେ । ଖାଲି ପାଠ ପଢ଼େଇବା ପାଇଁ ସେ ଆସନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ବ୍ୟବହାର ମଧ୍ୟ ଶିଖାନ୍ତି । ଏତେ ସ୍ନେହ ମମତାରେ ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ବାନ୍ଧି ରଖିଥାନ୍ତି, ସବୁଦିନ ପିଲାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଚଫି, ଚକଲେଟ ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ନେଇକରି ଆସନ୍ତି । ପିଲାମାନେ କେବଳ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ପାଆନ୍ତି ତାହା ନୁହେଁ, ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ସହକର୍ମୀ ମାନେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଖୁବ୍ ଭଲ ପାଆନ୍ତି ।

ସେ ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ରିଞ୍ଜାରେ ଘରୁ ଆସନ୍ତି । ସବୁଦିନ ପରି ସେଦିନବି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ହଠାତ୍ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଲାଗିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ରିଞ୍ଜା ସହିତ କିଏ ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ପଛକୁ ବୁଲି ଚାହିଁଲେ, ଏକ ଅଜଣା ଆଖି ତାଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ ମିଶିଲା ଭଳି ଲାଗିଲା । ସେ ଜଣେ ବୟସ୍କ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ । କୁନ୍ତଳା ଚିକେ ପ୍ରକୃତସ୍ତ ହୋଇଗଲେ । ପରେ ପରେ ସ୍କୁଲ ଆସିଯିବାରୁ ସେ ରିଞ୍ଜାରୁ ଓହ୍ଲାଇଗଲେ । ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ପାଞ୍ଚମିନିଟ୍ ପାଇଁ ଠିଆ ହୋଇ ରହି ଅନେଇ ଚାଲିଗଲେ । ଆଜି ସ୍କୁଲରେ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ଜମା ଭଲ ଲାଗୁ ନ ଥାଏ । ତୁହା କୁ ତୁହା ସେଇ ଗୋଟିଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ । କିଏ ସେ ଭଦ୍ରବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ? କାହିଁକି ଏମିତି ବିକଳ ହୋଇ ଏକ ଲୟରେ ଅନେଇ କରି ଗଲେ । ଚାରିଟା ବାଜିଲା, ସ୍କୁଲ ଛୁଟି ହେଲା, କୁନ୍ତଳା ପୁଣି ରିଞ୍ଜାରେ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଲେ । ଫେରିବା ବାଟରେ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଆସୁଥାଏ । ତେବେ ସେ ଯାହାହେଉ ସବୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନକୁ ଏତାଇ ସେ ନିତି ଦିନ ଭଲ ଘରେ ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲେ । ମୁହଁ ଗୋଟ ହାତ ଧୋଇ ନିଜର ନିତ୍ୟକର୍ମ ସାରି ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ଦେଲେ । ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ସେଇ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ । କିଏ ସେ ଭଦ୍ର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି !

ତା ପରଦିନ ରିଞ୍ଜା ଆସିଗଲା । କୁନ୍ତଳା ସ୍କୁଲ ବାହାରିଲେ । କିଛିବାଟ ଯିବାପରେ ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ରିଞ୍ଜା ପଛେ ପଛେ ଆସିଲେ । କୁନ୍ତଳା ଠିକ୍ ଜାଣି ପାରୁଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ନୀରବ । ଏହିପରି ଭାବେ ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ଚାରି ପାଞ୍ଚଦିନ ସେଇ ରିଞ୍ଜା ପଛେ ପଛେ ଆସନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ସ୍କୁଲ ଆସିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ କେଉଁଆଡ଼େ ଚାଲିଯାନ୍ତି । କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ଏହା ଏକ ବୋଧ ଭଳି ଲାଗିଲା । ସେ କୌଣସି କାମ ସ୍ଥିର ମନରେ କରି ପାରୁ ନ ଥିଲେ । ସବୁବେଳେ ବିଚଳିତ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କର ଏପରି ଅନ୍ୟମନସ୍କତା ଦେଖି ତାଙ୍କର ସହକର୍ମୀମାନେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ବାରମ୍ବାର ପଚାରୁଥାନ୍ତି, କ'ଣ ହୋଇଛି ତମର? କୁନ୍ତଳା କିଛି କହି ପାରୁ ନ ଥାନ୍ତି ।

ଦିନେ ସେ ସ୍କୁଲ ଆସିବା ବେଳକୁ ହଠାତ୍ ଦେଖନ୍ତି ଯେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ଜଣକ ରିଞ୍ଜାଟିକୁ ଧରି ଧରି ସାଇକେଲରେ ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । କୁନ୍ତଳା ତରିଗଲେ । ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ଖୁବ୍ କ୍ଷୀଣ ସ୍ୱରରେ କହିଲେ, “ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ କିଛି ଅସୁବିଧାରେ ପକେଇବି ନାହିଁ । ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ତ ସବୁଦିନେ ଦେଖୁଛି । ତାହାତା ମତେ ଆପଣଙ୍କର ବ୍ୟବହାର, ଚାଲିଚଳନ ସବୁକିଛି ବହୁତ ଭଲ ଲାଗୁଥିବାରୁ ମୁଁ ବିଶେଷ ଭାବେ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ଆକୃଷ୍ଟ ହୋଇଯାଇଛି ।” ସ୍କୁଲ ପାଖେଇ ଆସିଲା । ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ତାଙ୍କ ବାଟରେ ଚାଲିଗଲେ । କୁନ୍ତଳା ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍କୁଲ ଭିତରେ ପଶିଗଲେ । ବହୁତ ଅନ୍ୟମନସ୍କ ଥିବା ଭଳି ଜଣା ପଡ଼ୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଆଜି ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା କାସ୍ତୁକ୍ ସେ ଯାଇ ପାରିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ତାଙ୍କ ମୁଣ୍ଡ କ'ଣ ହୋଇଯାଉଥାଏ । କାସ୍ତୁକ୍ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେ ଆଜି ଠିକ୍ ଭାବରେ ପଢ଼ାଇ ପାରିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ତାଙ୍କର ଖାଲି ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକଙ୍କର କଥାଗୁଡ଼ା ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଯାଉଛି । ସ୍କୁଲ ଛୁଟି ହୋଇଗଲା । କୁନ୍ତଳା ଭଲରେ ଭଲରେ ରିଞ୍ଜାରେ ଯାଇ ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲେ । ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାରେ ପୁଣି କଲ୍ୟାଣେ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ ଜଣାଉଥାନ୍ତି, କ'ଣ ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକଙ୍କର ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ଅଛି । ତା ପରଦିନ ରବିବାର ଥିବାରୁ, କୁନ୍ତଳା ଭଲଭାବେ ବିଶ୍ରାମ ନେଲେ ।





ସୋମବାର ଦିନଟି ଆସିଲା । କୁନ୍ତଳା ସ୍କୁଲ ଯିବାପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହେଲେଣି । ପୂର୍ବପରି ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ଅଧାବାଟରୁ ରିକ୍ଷାକୁ ଧରି ଆସିଲେ । ପରେ ପରେ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ପଚାରିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲେ । ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଘରଟି କେଉଁଠି ? ଘରେ କିଏ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ବାପା କ'ଣ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ଇତ୍ୟାଦି । କୁନ୍ତଳା ଡରିତରି ସବୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲେ । ସବୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ର ଉତ୍ତର ଦେବା ପରେ ପରେ କୁନ୍ତଳା ତାଙ୍କୁ କହିଲେ, “ଆପଣଙ୍କର ସବୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ସରିଲାତ ? ଏଣିକି ଆପଣ ସ୍କୁଲ ଆସିଲାବେଳେ ରିକ୍ଷା ପଛେ ପଛେ ଆଉ ଆସିବେ ନାହିଁ” । ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ଅତି ନମ୍ର ଭାବରେ କହିଲେ, “ନାହିଁ ଆଜ୍ଞ” । ଏତିକି କଥାବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ପରେ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ଟିକେ ଭଲ ଲାଗିଲା, କାରଣ ସେ ଘରେ ଜମା ଶୋଇ ପାରୁ ନ ଥିଲେ । ଅସ୍ଥିର ଚିତ୍ତରେ ଏପଟ ସେପଟ ହେଉଥିଲେ । ଆଜି ସେ କ୍ଲାସ୍ ନେଲାବେଳେ ଢୁଳାଉଥା’ନ୍ତି । ସେ ଯାହାହେଉ ଚାରିଟା ବେଳେ ସ୍କୁଲ ଛୁଟି ହେଲା । ସେ ରିକ୍ଷାରେ ଯାଇ ଭଲରେ ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲେ ।

ଏମିତି ଏକ ସପ୍ତାହ ସରିଗଲା । ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ଆଉ ଆସି ନ ଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ଟିକେ ଭଲ ଲାଗୁଥିଲା । ପୁଣି କିଛିଦିନ ଯିବା ପରେ ହଠାତ୍ ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ବାଟରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗଛମୂଳେ ଛିଡା ହୋଇ ରହିଥାନ୍ତି । କିଛି କଥାବର୍ତ୍ତା କରି ନଥିଲେ କି ରିକ୍ଷା ପଛେପଛେ ଆସି ନଥିଲେ । ଏପରି ବ୍ୟବହାର ପ୍ରାୟ ଚାରିମାସ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ରହିଲା । ପୁଣି କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କର ଟେନ୍ସନ୍ ବଢିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା । ଏ ସବୁ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଦେଖି କୁନ୍ତଳା ଜାଣି ପାରିଲେ ଯେ ଏ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଆଉ ଛାଡିବେ ନାହିଁ । ତେଣୁ ସେ ଅନ୍ୟ ସ୍କୁଲକୁ ବଦଳି ହୋଇ ଯିବାପାଇଁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କଲେ । ଯାହାହେଉ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କ ଅଶେଷ ଦୟା ରୁ ସେ ଆଉ ଟିକେ ଦୂର ବାଟକୁ ଯାଇ ଅନ୍ୟ ଏକ ସ୍କୁଲରେ ଜଏନ୍ କଲେ । ମାସକ ପରେ ଏ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ କିନ୍ତୁ ପୁଣି ସେ ନୂଆ ସ୍କୁଲ ପାଖାପାଖି ଯାଗାରେ ଠିଆ ହୋଇ ରହିଲେ ।

ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ନୀରବରେ ସବୁବେଳେ ସ୍କୁଲ ପାଖରେ ଠିଆ ହୋଇ ରୁହନ୍ତି । ସ୍କୁଲ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଲେ କେଉଁଆଡେ ପକାଇ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ଏଣିକି କୁନ୍ତଳା ଦୂର ଜାଗାକୁ ଆସୁଥିବାରୁ ବସରେ ଯିବା ଆସିବା କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଦିନକର ଘଟଣା - ସ୍କୁଲ ଛୁଟି ହୋଇଯାରିଛି । କୁନ୍ତଳା ବସ୍ତ୍ରାଣ୍ଡରେ ବସ୍ ପାଇଁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଛନ୍ତି । ହଠାତ୍ ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲେ । କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କଲେ, “ମାତାମ୍ ଦୟାକରି କିଛି ଭାବିବେ ନାହିଁ”, କହି ବସ୍ତ୍ରାଣ୍ଡରେ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ବସିଲେ । କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କ ସଙ୍ଗେ କିଛି ସମୟ ପାଇଁ କଥାବର୍ତ୍ତା କଲେ । ବସ୍ ଆସିଗଲା, କୁନ୍ତଳା ବସ୍ରେ ଘରକୁ ଆସିଲେ ।

କଥାବର୍ତ୍ତାରୁ କୁନ୍ତଳା ଯାହା ଜାଣିବାକୁ ପାଇଲେ, ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ କୌଣସି ଏକ ଅଫିସ୍ରେ କାମ କରନ୍ତି । ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକଙ୍କ ନାମ ପ୍ରଦୀପ୍ତ କୁମାର ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ । ଏଣିକି ସେ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ଅଫିସ୍ ସାରି ଏକ ବସ୍ତ୍ରାଣ୍ଡରେ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଥା’ନ୍ତି । କୁନ୍ତଳା ସ୍କୁଲ ଛୁଟି ପରେ ଗଲେ ଦୁହେଁ ଅଳ୍ପ ସମୟ ପାଇଁ କଥାବର୍ତ୍ତା କରନ୍ତି । ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଲେ ଏଣିକି ତାଙ୍କ ମନରେ ସେଇ ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକ ନାଚି ଯାଉଥା’ନ୍ତି । ଏଣିକି କୁନ୍ତଳା ଖୁବ୍ ଖୁସି ମନରେ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ପୂର୍ବଭଳି ଚିନ୍ତାମୁକ୍ତ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ଏମିତି ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କର ମିଳାମିଶା ବର୍ଷେ ହୋଇ ଗଲାଣି । ଏଗିକଲ୍ପର ଡିପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟରେ ସେ କାମ କରନ୍ତି । କେତେଥର ସେ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ସିନେମା ନେଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଅନେକବାର ପାର୍ଟି ଯାଇ ଦୁହେଁ ଏକାଠି ବସି ଗପସପ କରନ୍ତି । ଭଲ ଭଲ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଉପହାର ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ଆସ୍ତେ ଆସ୍ତେ ସଂପର୍କ ଘନିଷ୍ଠ ହୋଇଛି, ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗତା ବଢିଛି । ଦିନେ ପ୍ରଦୀପ ବାବୁ ସତକଥା ଖୋଲି କରି କହିଛନ୍ତି । ସେ ବିବାହିତ । ତାଙ୍କର ଦୁଇଟି ସନ୍ତାନ । ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁଅ ଓ ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିଅ । ପିଲା ଦୁହେଁ ବେଶ୍ ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ହୋଇଗଲେଣି । ଏବେ ଛୁଆମାନେ ହାଇସ୍କୁଲରେ ପଢୁଛନ୍ତି । ଏ ସବୁ ଶୁଣି କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କ ମନ ଦୁଃଖରେ ଭରିଗଲା । କ’ଣ କରିବେ ସେ ? ଏପଟ ହୋଇ ପାରୁନାହାନ୍ତି କି ସେପଟୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଖଲାସ ପାଇପାରୁନାହାନ୍ତି । ଏତେ ବାଟ ଆଗେଇ ଯିବା ପରେ ପ୍ରଦୀପ୍ତ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକଙ୍କୁ ଭୁଲିବା ସହଜ ନଥିଲା । ଘରେ ଆଉ କିଛି କହିବାର ବାଟ ନାହିଁ । ହଠାତ୍ ଦିନେ ସ୍କୁଲ ଆସି ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ବରଂ ପ୍ରଦୀପ୍ତ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ସଙ୍ଗେ ଚାଲିଗଲେ । ପ୍ରଦୀପ୍ତ ବାବୁ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଚାରିପାଞ୍ଚଦିନ ଗୋଟିଏ ହୋଟେଲରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ପରେ ପରେ ଦୁହେଁ ରେଜିଷ୍ଟ୍ରି ମ୍ୟାରେଜ୍ କରି ଗୋଟିଏ କ୍ଲବ୍‌ରୁ ଚାଲିଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଦୁହେଁ ନୂଆ ସଂସାର କରିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ । ଏଣେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଓ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରଦୀପ୍ତ ବାବୁ ସବୁ କଥା କହିବାପରେ ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ମନଦୁଃଖ କଲେ । ଆଉ ତାଙ୍କର କିଛି କହିବାର ନ ଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ସେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ କହିଲେ, ଏ ବୟସରେ ଆଉ ବଦନାମ ନ ନେଇ ଆମକୁ ଗାଁରେ ଛାଡିଦେଇ ଆସ । ସବୁଆଡୁ ଭାବିଚିନ୍ତି ପ୍ରଦୀପ୍ତ ବାବୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଗାଁରେ ଛାଡିଦେଇ ଆସିଲେ । ମାସକୁ ମାସ ପ୍ରଦୀପ୍ତ ବାବୁ ପିଲାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଗାଁ ଠିକଣାରେ ଟଙ୍କା ପଠାନ୍ତି । ଏଣେ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କ ସଙ୍ଗେ ନୂଆ ଜୀବନ ଓ ନୂଆ ସଂସାର । ସବୁ ଆଶା ତ ପୂରଣ ହୋଇପାରେ ନାହିଁ । ତେବେ ସେ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କୁ ଖୁସି କରାଇବା ପାଇଁ ବହୁତ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଥା’ନ୍ତି । ଚାରି ଭିତରେ କୁନ୍ତଳା ଯେମିତି ସ୍କୁଲ ଯାଉଥିଲେ ସେପରି ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ନୂଆ ବାହା ହେଇଥିବାରୁ ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀମାନେ ଖାଲି ପଚାରୁଥାନ୍ତି, “ଭୋଜି କେବେଦେଉଛ” ।

ଏହା ଭିତରେ ସାତ ଆଠ ମାସ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି । କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କର ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିଅ ହୋଇଛି, ସମସ୍ତେ ବହୁତ ଖୁସୀ ଥାନ୍ତି । ହେଲେ କୁନ୍ତଳାଙ୍କର ଘର ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ମନ ଜମା ସୁଖ ନଥିଲା । କେହିହେଲେ ଘରୁଆସି ଝିଅ କୁ ଦେଖିଯାଇନାହାନ୍ତି । ଝିଅଟିର ଏକୋଇଶା ପୂଜା ଦୁହେଁ ନିଜଘରେ କରାଇଲେ ଏବଂ ‘ରୁବି’ ବୋଲି ନାମକରଣ କରାଇଲେ ।

ଆସ୍ତେଆସ୍ତେ ରୁବି ବଡ଼ ହୋଇଛି । କିଛିଦିନପରେ ତାର ସ୍କୁଲରେ ନାମ ଲେଖା ହୋଇଛି । ସ୍କୁଲରେ ଖୁବଭଲ ପାଠ ପଢୁଛି । ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀମାନଙ୍କ ସଂସର୍ଗରେ ଆସିଛି । ସେ ଜାଣିବାକୁ ପାଇଛି ତାର ବାପାଙ୍କର ଦୁଇଟି ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ଆଉ ତାର ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନେ ଗାଁରେ ପଢୁଛନ୍ତି । ସବୁ ଶୁଣିଲାପରେ ନିଜର ରାଗ ଓ ଅଭିମାନକୁ ଆୟତ୍ତ କରି ରଖିଛି । ମନ କଥା ମନରେ ଥାଏ । କାହାକୁ କିଛି ଜଣାଇନାହିଁ ।

ରୁବି ମାଟିକ ପରୀକ୍ଷାରେ ପ୍ରଥମଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ପାସ କରିବାପରେ ସେଇ ସ୍କୁଲରେ ଯୁକ୍ତ ୨ ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ବିଭାଗରେ ପଢ଼ିଲା । ପ୍ରଥମଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ପାସ ମଧ୍ୟ କଲା । ବହୁତ ଭାବି ଠିକ୍ କଲା ପାଞ୍ଚବର୍ଷୀୟ ଇଣ୍ଟରମେଡିଏଟ ଲ ପଢ଼ିବେ । ତେଣୁ ସେ ପୁନାରୁ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟ ମଗାଇ ସେଠାରେ ଆଡମିସନ ନେଲା । ମା ଓ ବାପା ଭଲରେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ସେଠାରେ ସେତେଲ କରାଇ ଆସିଲେ । କୁନ୍ତଳା ନିଜେ ପୁର୍ବଭଳି ସ୍କୁଲ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ଏଭିତରେ ପ୍ରଦୀପ୍ତ ବାବୁ ଚାକିରୀରୁ ଅବସର ନେଇ ସାରିଛନ୍ତି । ରୁବି ସବୁବେଳେ ଟେଲିଫୋନରେ ବାପାମାଙ୍କର ଖବର ନେଉଥାଏ । ଏହା ଭିତରେ ପୁରୀକୁଟିରେ ଓ ଖରାକୁଟିରେ ସେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆସିଛି । ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀମାନଙ୍କ ସଙ୍ଗେ କିଛିଦିନ ହସଖୁସୀରେ କଟାଇ ପୁଣି ପୁନା ଫେରଯାଏ । ପ୍ରତି ଖରାକୁଟିରେ ରୁବି କୁ ପାଇ ବାପା ଓ ମା ଖୁବ ଖୁସୀ ହୋଇଯାନ୍ତି । ଏଭିତରେ ସେ 'ଲ' ପାସ କରି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଛୁଟିସିଆଇ ସର୍ଭିସେସ ଚାକିରୀ ପାଇଛି । ଆଜି ସେ ଆସୁଛି, ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ବଡମା' ଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ।

\* \* \* \* \*

ଏଭିତରେ ରୁବି କେତେଥର ବଡମାଙ୍କ ପାଖକୁ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସବୁ ସୁବିଧା ଅସୁବିଧା ବୁଝିଛନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ତାର ସମାଧାନ କରିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଚାକିରୀକୁ ଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସେ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନେଲେ ଯେ, ଦୁଇ ପରିବାରକୁ ମିଶାଇ ବଡମା'ଙ୍କୁ ନ୍ୟାୟ ଦେବେ । ଏହା ପୁରାପୁରି ନ୍ୟାୟ ନହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଦୁଇ ପରିବାର ପ୍ରତି ସୁବିଚାର ହେବ ଏବଂ ତାଙ୍କୁ କିଛି ପରିମାଣରେ ଆତ୍ମସନ୍ତୋଷ ମିଳିବ । ନ୍ୟାୟମୂର୍ତ୍ତିର ଆସନ ଅଳଙ୍କୃତ କରିବାବେଳେ ମନରେ ଗ୍ଳାନିବୋଧ ରହିବ ନାହିଁ । ଦୁଇ ମା'ଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ନେଇ, ଭାଇଭଉଣୀଙ୍କର ଗେହୁଭଉଣୀ ରୁବି ନିଜ କର୍ମକ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ନୂଆଜୀବନର ଶୁଭାରମ୍ଭ କରିବାକୁ ଗଲେ ।

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ସୃଷ୍ଟିଗତି ଧର୍ମଚକ୍ର ଘୁରୁଥାଏ ପବନେ  
ଅପକର୍ମ ପଡେ ଧରା ନରହି ଗୋପନେ ।“



ଆମ ଭାବ, ଆମ ଭାଷା ! ଆମ ଜୀବନ, ଆମ ଜିଜ୍ଞାସା !

ଆମେରିକା ଓ କାନାଡାରେ ରହୁଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କ ଚିନ୍ତା ଓ ଚେତନାରୁ.....



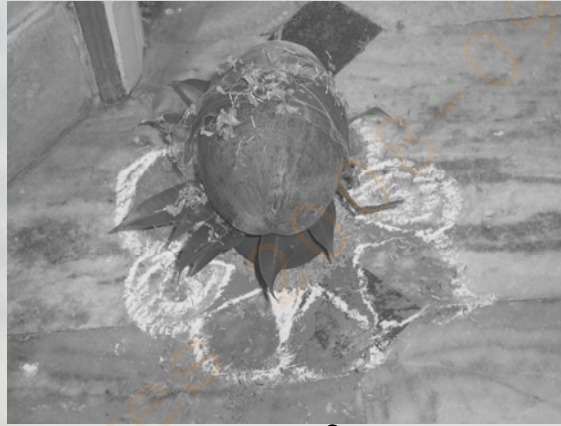
ଅନେକ ଦିନରୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଜିଲ୍ଲାର ଶୈଳୀ ବଦଳି ଯାଇଛି ସତ କିନ୍ତୁ ହୃଦୟ ଭିତରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆଟିଏ ବଞ୍ଚିଛି... । ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ମାଟି, ପାଣି, ପବନ କୁ ଝୁରି ହେଉଛି, ଅତୀତ ର ସ୍ମୃତିକୁ ପାଥେୟ କରି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି, ସଂସ୍କାର ଓ ଶିକ୍ଷାର ଭିତ୍ତିରେ କର୍ମ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଜୀବନର ସାଂସାରିକ ଜଂଜାଳ ଭିତରେ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ଗଢ଼ିବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଦେଖୁ ନିଜକୁ ବୁଝିବାକୁ ଅହରହ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଛି, ଜୀବନର ଲକ୍ଷକୁ ଖୋଜୁଛି । ଏକାନ୍ତରେ କେବେ କେବେ ନିଜ ସହ ଭେଟ ହେଲେ, ନିଜପାଖେ ମନ ଖୋଲି ଗପିବାକୁ ମନ ହେଲା ବେଳେ ନିଜକୁ ପଚାରୁଛି , “ସତକହିବି ନା ମିଛ କହିବି, କି ଅଙ୍ଗେ ନିଭେଇଲା କଥା କହିବି ?” ।

କିଛି ଗପ ଓ କିଛି ଅଙ୍ଗେନିଭା କଥା ଏବଂ କିଛି ସ୍ମୃତି ଓ କିଛି ଅନୁଭୂତି ର କବିତା :

ଲେଖକ/ଲେଖିକା	ଲିଖନ	ପୃଷ୍ଠା
ଅଲେଖ ଦାଶ	ଉତ୍କଳ ଜନନୀ	୧୭୯
ପରାଶର ମିଶ୍ର	ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ ସ୍ମୃତି	୧୮୦
ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୋପାଳ ମହାନ୍ତି	ଭଲଲାଗେ	୧୮୧
ସୁମିତ୍ରା ପାଢୀ	କଳି ଯୁଗର ଗଜାନନ	୧୮୩
ଗଗନ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ	ମନପକ୍ଷୀ ଠାରେ ମନର କଥା	୧୮୪
ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ମିଶ୍ର	କୋଇଲି	୧୮୬
ଶାନ୍ତିଲତା ମିଶ୍ର	ତୁମେ ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ମୋର	୧୮୮
ଝିନ୍ଦୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ	ବିଶେଷଣ	୧୯୧
ନନ୍ଦିତା ବେହେରା	ନଉଁକୀ	୧୯୨
ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ	ଭୂମିକା	୧୯୫
ଜୁଲି ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ରାୟ	କର୍ମା	୧୯୮
ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଲତା ମିଶ୍ର(ରଥ)	ସଖୀ ଠାରୁ ଚିଠି	୨୦୧
ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ	ପୀରତି-ଗୋରୀ	୨୦୫
କଳ୍ପନା ଦାଶ	ପଢୁ ! ତୁମେ ଆସିଥିଲ ?	୨୧୦
ଚିତ୍ରା ରଥ	ପ୍ରକୃତି	୨୧୩
ଆଶାଶ୍ରୀ	ମନ	୨୧୪
ଶଶଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର	ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଭ୍ରମଣ	୨୧୬
ଆଭା ମହାପାତ୍ର	ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଓ ଜୀବନ ଯାତ୍ରା	୨୧୯
ଯୋଗେଶ ପଣ୍ଡା	ଓକାର ଭଜନ	୨୧୯
ବବୁ ବାହନ ସାମଲ	ଏଇ କଥାକୁ	୨୨୦



ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ କ୍ୟାମେରାରୁ.....ଓଡ଼ିଶା



କଳସ-ସ୍ଥାଗତ ତ୍ରିପାଠୀ



ରାସ୍ତା କଡ଼ ଚେତାବନୀ (Roadside Reminder) - ଆନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ରଥ



ମାଟି ତୁଲୁ (Mud stove) - ଉପାସନା ସେନାପତି







## ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ ସ୍ମୃତି ପରାଗର ମିଶ୍ର

ତୁମେ ଦିନେ ଆସିଥିଲ ଏବଂ ପୁଣି ଦିନେ ଚାଲିଗଲ  
ଜନ୍ମ-ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ର ଏ ଅପରିବର୍ତ୍ତିତ ନାଟକରେ,  
ଯିବା-ଆସିବାଟା ଯଦିଓ ନିହାତି ବିସ୍ମୟ ନୁହେଁ  
କିନ୍ତୁ ଏମିତି କଣ ଛାଡ଼ିଗଲ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ମାଟି, ପାଣି, ପବନରେ  
ଯେ ତୁମେ ଯିବା ପରେ  
ଓଡ଼ିଶା ମା ମୋର କାନ୍ଦି, କାନ୍ଦି, ଝୁରୁଥାଏ  
ଅଭିମାନରେ, ଗର୍ବରେ ମନେ ପକାଉଥାଏ,  
କୋଶଳ, କଳିଙ୍ଗ, ଉତ୍କଳ ର ମହାନ ଇତିହାସକୁ  
ଆଉ ଉତ୍କଳ ର ମଣି ଉତ୍କଳମଣି ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁଙ୍କୁ !  
ବର୍ଷାରେ ଭିଜି, ଭିଜି, ଶୀତରେ ଥରି, ଥରି,  
ଖରାରେ ଜଳି, ଜଳି,  
ଲହୁ, ଲହୁ, ରକ୍ତର ତର୍ପଣ କରି  
ସ୍ନେହ, ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା, ସହାନୁଭୂତି ର ମହାମନ୍ତ୍ର ଗାଲ, ଗାଲ,  
ସେବା ଓ ତ୍ୟାଗ ର ଏ କି ଆଦର୍ଶ ଛାଡ଼ିଗଲ ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ ?

ଅନ୍ୟର ଦୁଃଖରେ ଦୁଃଖୀ ହୋଇ  
ଅନ୍ୟର ପୀଡ଼ା, କ୍ଳେଷ, ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ର ଉପଶମ ପାଇଁ  
ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲ ରକ୍ତନଦୀ ସନ୍ତରଣ  
ଲୋଭ କଲନି ଅନ୍ୟର ସ୍ୱାକୃତିକୁ  
ଅପେକ୍ଷା କଲନି କାହାର ପ୍ରମାଣପତ୍ରକୁ  
ତୁମ ନିଷ୍ଠାରେ, ତୁମ ଏକାଗ୍ରତାରେ  
ତୁମ ଚିନ୍ତା ଓ ଚେତନାରେ, ନିଃସ୍ୱାର୍ଥପର ଭାବରେ  
ବଦଳାଇଲ ସେବା ଓ ତ୍ୟାଗ ର ପରିଭାଷାକୁ !  
ଦୁଃଖୀ-ରଜ୍ଜୀ, ଝଡ଼-ବର୍ଷା, ବନ୍ୟା-ବାତ୍ୟାର  
ଶୋକାର୍ତ୍ତଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ,  
ଜୀବନ ଯୁଦ୍ଧରେ ପରାସ୍ତ ନହୋଇ,

ଲହୁ-ଲହୁକୁ ଏକାଠିକରି,  
ଜୀବନ ସଂଗ୍ରାମ କରୁଥିବା ପ୍ରତିଟି ମଣିଷ ପାଇଁ  
ତୁମେ ଥିଲ ପ୍ରେରଣାର ଉତ୍ସ,  
ନିଃସ୍ୱାର୍ଥପର ସେବା ଓ ତ୍ୟାଗର ଆଦର୍ଶ  
ଅବିଶ୍ୱାସ କର୍ମତତ୍ପର, ଆଶା, ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଓ ନିର୍ଭୀକତାର ବହୁ  
ଉତ୍କଳମଣି ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ,  
ତୁମେ ଥିଲ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜାତିର ମାନ ଓ ମହତ,  
ମାନବିକତା ଓ ଜାତୀୟତାର ପରାକାଷ୍ଠୀ!  
ଦାସେ ଆପଣେ, ଦୀନବନ୍ଧୁ ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ,

ଉତ୍କଳର ପ୍ରାଣ, ଉତ୍କଳମଣି ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ  
ସେ ପୁରରେ ଥାଇ ଆମକୁ ଆର୍ଶୀବାଦ ଦିଅ  
ଆମକୁ ଶକ୍ତି, ସତସାହସ, ମନୋବଳ ଦିଅ,  
ଆମେ ଫେରାଇଆଣିବୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜ୍ଞାନ,  
ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗାରିମାର କୋକିଳକୁ,  
ଆମେ ଗଢ଼ିବାକୁ ପ୍ରୟାସ କରିବୁ  
ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପ୍ରତିଟି ଗାଁ, ସହର, ମହାନଗରୀରେ  
ତୁମ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନର ବକ୍ତୃତାକୁ,  
ଆମେ ପୁଣି ଗର୍ବରେ ତଗ, ତଗ ଗାଇବୁ  
ତୁମ ଲିଖିତ  
'ସ୍ୱଦେଶଚିନ୍ତା', 'କାରାକବିତା'କୁ,  
ଝଡ଼ରେ, ବର୍ଷାରେ, ବନ୍ୟାରେ, ବାତ୍ୟାରେ,  
ଦୁଃଖରେ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ନ ପଡ଼ି ଆମେ ମନେପକାଇବୁ  
ତୁମ ନିଃସ୍ୱାର୍ଥପର ସେବା ଓ ତ୍ୟାଗର ଆଦର୍ଶକୁ !

ଚରୋକ୍ଷେ, କାନାଡ଼ା

(Parasara Mishra lives in Toronto, Canada with his wife Rekha and daughter Lipi. He has been actively involved with the Odiya community in the Toronto.)

“ମିଶ୍ର ମୋର ଦେହ ଏ ଦେଶ ମାଟିରେ,  
ଦେଶବାସୀ ଚାଲିଯାଆନ୍ତୁ ପିଠିରେ  
ଦେଶର ସ୍ୱରାଜ ପଥେ ଯେତେ ଗାଡ଼  
ପୁରୁ ତହିଁ ପତି ମୋର ମାଂସ ହାତ’  
ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ ଦାଶ





## ଭଲ ଲାଗେ ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୋପାଳ ମହାନ୍ତି

ସରସର ବୋହିଯାଏ ତେନ୍ତୁଳି ରଙ୍ଗର ପାଣି  
ଛାଣି ହୋଇ ଛୁତୁଛୁତୁ ଚାଳଛଣରୁ ନିଗାତି ।  
ନାଚନ୍ତି ବୁଦିବୁଦି ଛୋଟବଡ଼ ପାଣିର ଫେଟକା  
ଏଇ ମାତ୍ରକେ ଫଟିବେ, ଭଲ ହୋଇ ଭିତାଭିତି ।  
କେଣୁଆ, କେଣ୍ଡିମାନେ ଓଦାଳିଆ ପିଣ୍ଡାର ଧାରରେ  
ଆଉ ଚିକି ବେଙ୍ଗଲିର ଫକଫକ ତିଆଁ,  
ହେଇ ଦେଖ, ନାଚୁଛି କି ଭଙ୍ଗିରେ  
ମୋ କୁନି କାଗଜର ନାଆ ।  
ମୁଁ ବି ନାଚୁଛି,  
ଯିବି ମୁହିଁ ବିଲାତ, ଲଂରେଜର ଦେଶେ ।  
ତୁପୁରୁ ବରଷା ମାତେ ନାଆ ପଡ଼ିଲା ସତେକି ଭଲି,  
ତଥାପି ନିଶ୍ଚୟହିଁ ଯିବି ମୁଁ ବିଦେଶେ ।  
ବିସ୍ତାରିତ ହେଲା ନଉକାର ବସ ନଦୀର ଜଳରେ  
ବିସ୍ତାରି ହୋଇଛି ଏକା ମୁହିଁ ତାହାରି ବସରେ ।  
ଶୁଣାଯାଏ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଜଳର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଗୁଣ ଭାଷା  
ବରଷା ପାଣିର ଅସ୍ଥିରତାକୁ ଚପାଇ ।  
ମାଖିଯାଏ ଅଙ୍ଗେଅଙ୍ଗେ ଶୀତଳ ଚାନ୍ଦିନୀର ବିନ୍ଦୁ  
କ୍ଷଣିକ ପାଣିଫେଟକାମାନଙ୍କୁ ଛପାଇ ।  
ମୁଁ ହୁଜିଛି...  
ତେନ୍ତୁଳିଆ ପାଣି, ପାଣିଫେଟକା, କେଣୁଆ, କେଣ୍ଡି, ବେଙ୍ଗଲି,  
ଆଉ ମୋ କୁନି ନାଆ,  
ସବୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗେ ।

ପାଟିଗୋଳ ଖେଳାଖେଳି  
ସୁର, ମନ, ତେମା ଓ ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କ ମେଳରେ ।  
ଫଟକର କେଁ ଶବ୍ଦ ଶୁଣି  
ସବୁ ଶବ୍ଦ ଧରିଗଲା, ନିଶ୍ଚେ ଆସିଲେ ମାଞ୍ଚରେ ।  
ମୁହାଁମୁହିଁ ଚହାଁଚହାଁ ଭାଷା ନାହିଁ କାହାରି ପାଟିରୁ,  
ମାଞ୍ଚେ ତ ଆସିଲେ, 'ମାନସାଙ୍କ ଏବେ ହେବ' କହିବାରୁ ।  
ମାନସାଙ୍କ, ସାହିତ୍ୟ, ଭୂଗୋଳ, ଏମିତି ଏମିତି,  
ସଂଜ୍ଞ ଆଗେଇଲା,  
ଆଖିପତା ମାତି ପଡ଼ିଲେ  
ବେତର ଚାଉଁଳିନା ମାତ, ଲୁହଗତା କାନର ରଗତା ।  
ମଶା ମାଞ୍ଚରୁ ଖାଉଥିବ ପରା,  
ନ ହେଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ପିଠିରେ ବାଜେ କିପରି ଚାପୁଡ଼ା ।  
ପାଠ ହେଉନାହିଁ, ବୋଉ ତାକୁ ନାହିଁ  
ପେଟା ବୋବାଉଛି, ଆସୁ ନାହିଁ କେହି ।  
'ହେ ମାଞ୍ଚେ, ତାକଗାତି ଗଲାଣି ପରା',  
ପଶି ଆସିଲେ ବଡ଼ବାବା,

ଶୁଖିଲା ମୁହଁରୁ ହସ ଉକୁଟିଲା,  
ଚାଲ ଏବେ ଘରକୁ ଯିବା ।  
ଅଙ୍କଟିଏ କଷ୍ଟଥିଲି,  
ଅଧା କଷା ବେଗ୍ରେ ଥୋଇଲି ।  
କାନ୍ଧରେ ପକାଇ ଆଉ ଲକ୍ଷନଟି ଧରି,  
ଓଜନିଆ ଆଖି ଆଉ ପାଦଦୁଇ ଭାରୀ,  
ମୁଁ ଘରମୁହାଁ ।  
ବୋଉର ଚାରିଦା, ଲକ୍ଷନ ଛାଡ଼ିବୁ ନାହିଁ,  
ତୁଙ୍ଗିର ମିଞ୍ଜିମିଞ୍ଜି ଆଲୁଅ ପାଖରେ  
ଗୋତ ଲମ୍ବ କରି ସେ ବସିଛି ଅନାଇ ।  
ଲକ୍ଷନର କାତ ଟେକି ବଡ଼ୀକୁ ଫୁଲିଲା,  
ଫୁଲ୍ଲୀ ସଳିତାର କିରାସିନି ଗନ୍ଧ,  
କାଛବାଡ଼ ଏପରିକି ବୋଉର ମୁହଁ ଝାପୁଆ ମାରିଲା ।  
ଝାପୁଆମରା ବହିର ଭିତରେ  
ମୁଁ ଦେଖେଁ ଜ୍ୟାମିତିର ଅଧା କଷା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଷଷ୍ଠ ଉପପାଦ୍ୟରେ ।  
ବାସ୍, ହୋଇଗଲା -  
ମୁଁ ଅଙ୍କ ପଢ଼ିବି, କାହିଁ ମୋର ଖାତା ଓ କଲମ;  
ହୁଏ - ପରୀକ୍ଷା ପାଖେଇଲାଣି ପରା ଏବେ ଉଠ ମ ।  
ମୁଁ ହୁସ୍ତିଛି...  
ବୋଉ କେତେ ଭଲ,  
ଆଉ ସୁର, ମନ, ତେମା, ମାଞ୍ଚ, ବଡ଼ବାବା ।  
ମାନସାଙ୍କ, ସାହିତ୍ୟ, ଭୂଗୋଳ, ଆଉ ଷଷ୍ଠ ଉପପାଦ୍ୟ,  
ସବୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗେ ।

ମୁଁ ହେବି ବର, ବୁଢ଼ୀ ହେବ କନିଆ  
ମିଛାମିଛି ହେବ ବାହାଘର ।  
ଜହ୍ନୁ ଫଟି ପଡ଼େ ଶରଦ ଆକାଶେ  
ଖେଳା ହୁଏ ଦାଣ୍ଡେ ବାଲିଘର ।  
କୁଢେଇଲା ବାଲିର ଟଣା ଲମ୍ବ ରେଖାମାନ  
ତିହ୍ନାଇଲା ଘରଟାକୁ ।  
ବୋହୁବୋହୁକା ଖେଳରେ, ଆମେ ବି ଚିହ୍ନିଲୁ  
ନିଜନିଜ ଭୂମିକାକୁ ।  
ବାହାଘର ଯେ ସରିଲା,  
ଏବେ କଣ ? କାହିଁକି, ବୋହୁ ରାକ୍ଷିବାର ପାଳି ତ ପଡ଼ିଲା ।  
ବାଲି, ଗୋଡ଼ି, କାଠି, ପଥର ରୁଷ୍ଟାଗଲା ବାଞ୍ଚରୁ  
ଶିକୁ, କନିଆର ପତର ଛିଣ୍ଡାଗଲା ବାତରୁ  
ହୁଏ ରକ୍ଷାବଢ଼ା ସଢେଇ ଖୋଳପାରେ ।  
ଫୁଲଇଲା ମୁହଁ ସାବି, ସେ ଖେଳିବ ନାହିଁ କହି  
ଗରଗର ହେଲା ଶାମ, ଠିଆ ହେଲା ଖୁଷ୍ଟ ହୋଇ



ଖେଳ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଲା ନେତ୍ରଖୁଡ଼ି ତାକିବାରେ ।  
 ବାଲିଘର ପଡ଼ିଲା ଖାଁଖାଁ ହୋଇ  
 ଜହ୍ନ ଆକାଶେ ରହିଛି ଅନାଇ  
 ଲଏ ସବୁ ମିଛ, ସତ ବି ହୋଇପାରେ ।  
 ବାହାବେଦୀରେ,  
 ଏକ ହାତ ପାପୁଲି ଉପରେ  
 ଗୋଟିଏ ସାଉଁଳିଆ ନରମ ପାପୁଲି  
 ପୁରୋହିତେ ମନ୍ତ୍ର ପଢ଼ି ଦେଲେ ବାସି ।  
 ସେହି ଦିନରୁ, ଯାହା କୁହୁ ପଛେ  
 ପ୍ରିୟ, ପ୍ରଣୟିନୀ, ବାନ୍ଧବୀ ଅବା ଘରର ଘରଣୀ,  
 ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତେ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତେ ସେ ଯାଇଅଛି ଛନ୍ଦି ।  
 ରଙ୍ଗିଲା ଚାହାଁଣୀ, କୁହୁକିଆ କଥା, ଖିଲିଖିଲି ହସ,  
 ସେ ଯେ ଖେଳୁଛି ।  
 ମୁଁ ବି ଖେଳାଳି...  
 ମିଛମିଛ ବାହାଘର, ବୋହୂବୋହୂକା ଖେଳ,  
 ବୁଢ଼ି, ସାବି, ଶାମ, ନେତ୍ରଖୁଡ଼ି, ବାଲି, ଗୋଡ଼ି, ପଥର, ପତର,  
 ପ୍ରିୟ, ପ୍ରଣୟିନୀ, ଘରଣୀ,  
 ସବୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗେ ।

ତାକ୍ ଧନ କହି ବିନଦାଦା ବଜାନ୍ତି ମୃଦଙ୍ଗ,  
 କୁହୁକି ବଜାନ୍ତି ଯେମାନେ ହଲାନ୍ତି ସାରା ଅଙ୍ଗ ।  
 ‘ଖେଳନ୍ତି ହୋରି କି ରଙ୍ଗରେ ରାଧାମୋହନ’  
 ଗାଇବା ରତ୍ନରେ ଉଛୁଳଇ ତ୍ରିଭୁବନ ।  
 ହେ ମଦନମୋହନ,  
 ବିମାନରେ ବସି ବଇଁଶୀ ପୁଞ୍ଜୁଛୁ, ଆଉ ହସୁଛୁ ମୁରୁକି,

ମେଧେ ରଙ୍ଗ ନେଇ ରାଧାର ଦେହକୁ ଚୁଟୁଚୁଟୁ କରିବ କି ?  
 ଫଗୁଣ ଆସିଲା, ଆମ୍ବ ବଉଳିଲା, କୋଇଲି ଉଠିଲା ଗାଇ,  
 ସାଇପିଲା, ମିଶିପେ, ମାଇପେ  
 ହୋରି ଖେଳିବାରେ ହେଲେ ବାଇ  
 ଇସ୍, କିଏ ସେ ?  
 ପିତକାରି ରଙ୍ଗସାଣି ଭିଜାଇଲା ଧୋବ ଶାଢ଼ୀକୁ,  
 ଫେକିନା ହସ ବୁଦାମୂଳରୁ ଆସୁଛି,  
 ପାଦ ଆସୁ ନାହିଁ ପାଖକୁ ।  
 ଠାକୁରେ, ଦେଖୁଛ ତ ଏଇ ତମାସା !  
 କିନ୍ତୁ ମୁଁ ନ ଦେଖଇ ତମର ସେ ବାଙ୍କ ଚାହାଁଣୀ,  
 ମିଳେଇ ଯାଉଛି ରଙ୍ଗର ଭିତରେ  
 ଦେଖା ଯାଉଛି ଆଗରେ ଗୋଲ ଢିମା ଆଖି ଯୋଡ଼ି ।  
 ବିମାନ ନାହିଁ ତ ଅଛି ରତ୍ନ ସିଂହାସନ,  
 ବଇଁଶୀ ବଦଳେ ଦୁଇ ହାତ ପ୍ରସାରଣ ।

ଆହେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ !  
 ପୁଣି ମିଶିଗଲ,  
 ପୁଣି ଉଭା ହେଲ ।  
 ମନ ଦେଇ ତାକିଲି ମୁହିଁ ‘ଓଁ’ର ସ୍ଵରରେ,  
 ତା’ ବି ହଜିଲା, ‘ଶୂନ୍ୟ’ ରହିଗଲା ଧ୍ୟାନରେ ।  
 ମୁଁ ଶାନ୍ତ...  
 ବିନଦାଦା, ହୋରି, ରଙ୍ଗ, ଆମ୍ବ, କୋଇଲି  
 ମଦନମୋହନ, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ଓଁ, ଶୂନ୍ୟ  
 ସବୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗେ ।

## ହାମିଲ୍ଟନ୍, କାନଡା



“ମନେହୁଏ ଏ ସମୁଦ୍ର ତଥା ତା’ର ବିପୁଳ ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତି,  
 ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ନୁହେଁ, ମୋର ତନୁର ହିଁ ଏକ ପରିବ୍ୟାପ୍ତି,  
 ମନେହୁଏ ଏ ନକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଗଣ,  
 ମୋ ପ୍ରାଣର ନାନବିଧ ଅଜସ୍ର ସ୍ଵରନ,  
 ମନେହୁଏ ଏ ଆକାଶ, ନିସ୍ଵର, ଅସୀମ,  
 ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ନୁହେଁ, ମୋ ଚେତନାର ଭିନ୍ନ ଏକ ନାମ ।”

ମନୋଜ ଦାସ୍ ଧର୍ମପଦ : ନିର୍ଭୁଲ୍ ଠିକଣା, ଓସା ସୋଭେନିଅର ୧୯୯୮





## କଳି ଯୁଗର ଗଜାନନ ସୁମିତ୍ରା ପାଢ଼ୀ

ମାନବ ଜଗତରେ କେବେ ହେଲା ଗଣିତର ପ୍ରଚାର  
କିଏ ଅବା ଦେଇ ପାରିବ ଏହି କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନଟିର ଉତ୍ତର !  
ଭିନ୍ନ ଭିନ୍ନ ଉପାୟ ମାନ ଧରି ମାନବ କରିଛି ଗଣନା  
ସରଳ ହେଉ ବା ଜଟିଳ ହେଉ ନାହିଁ ତାର କଳନା ॥  
ବାଉଁଶ ଯୋଗେ ଗ୍ରହ ତାରାଙ୍କ ଗତି ହେଉଥିଲା ସ୍ଥିର  
ଦିଗ ପାଇଁ ନାବିକ କଲା ଲୁହାକଣ୍ଠର ବ୍ୟବହାର ॥  
ବାଣଭଜ କଳସରେ ପାଣି ରଖି କାଢ଼ୁ ଥିଲେ ଶୁଭବେଳା  
ଆକମ୍ପେତସ୍ତୁ ଗାଧୁଆ କୁଣ୍ଡେ ମୁକୁଟର ଖାଦ ଜଣାଗଲା ॥  
ପୁରାକାଳେ ଗଣନା ହେଉଥିଲା ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ବସ୍ତୁ ଯୋଗେ  
କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ହଠାତ୍ ପ୍ରଚାର ହୋଇଗଲା ଆଧୁନିକ ଯୁଗେ ॥  
ଦ୍ରୁତ ଗଣନା ପାଇଁ ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ଯତ୍ନ ହେଲା ଆବିଷ୍କାର  
କଂପ୍ୟୁଟ୍ ବା ଗଣିବା ଯୋଗୁ କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ନାମ ହେଲା ତାହାର ॥  
ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ସବୁ ଆଡେ କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ର ବଢ଼ିଲା ଆଦର  
ତୁରନ୍ତ ସଭ୍ୟ ମାନବ ସମାଜର ସାରଥୀ ହେଲା କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ॥  
କ୍ରମେ କ୍ରମେ କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ହୋଇଗଲା କଳିଯୁଗର ଗଜାନନ  
ସର୍ବ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟର ଆରମ୍ଭରେ ହୋଇଥାଏ ତାର ଆବାହନ ॥  
ଗଣେଶ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିକ ବାହାନ ନେଇ କରନ୍ତି ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡ ଭ୍ରମଣ  
କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ମାଉସ୍ କ୍ଷଣକେ କରାଇଦିଏ ବିଶ୍ୱ ପ୍ରଦକ୍ଷିଣ ॥  
ଗଜାନନ ଅଟନ୍ତି ସର୍ବବିଘ୍ନ ବିନାଶନ ବିଦ୍ୟାର ଆକାର  
କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ବିନା କଳିଯୁଗେ ହୋଇଯାଏ ସବୁ ଛାରଖାର ॥

ଚରଣେ, କାନାଡ଼ା



ବିଦ୍ୟା ଅଟଇ ମହାଧନ, ବାଳକେ କର ଉପାର୍ଜନ ।



## ମନପକ୍ଷୀ ଠାରେ ମନର କଥା ଗଗନ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ

ମନପକ୍ଷୀ ତୁହି ତେଣା ନ ଥିଲେ ବି ଉଡ଼ିପାରୁ ଅନାୟାସେ,  
କଥା ମୋର ମାନି ଉଡ଼ି ଉଡ଼ି ଯା ଦରିଆର ଆର ପାଶେ ।  
ଭାରତ ଭୂଇଁରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବୁ ଆଗ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସେଠାରୁ ଯିବୁ,  
ନିଳାଚଳ ଧାମେ ଜଗତର ନାଥ, ତାଙ୍କୁ ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆ ମାରିବୁ,  
ସେହିଠାରୁ ପୁଣି ଯିବୁ ବାଲେଶ୍ଵର ଖୋଜିବୁ ମୋହର ଗାଆଁ,  
କହିବୁ ମୋହର ବାରତା ସେଠାରେ, ଖୁସିହେବ ମୋର ମାଆ ।  
ବହୁଦିନ ଧରି ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଛି ମୁଁ ମନେ ପଡ଼େ ତା'ର କଥା,  
ବୁଢ଼ୀ ମଣିଷ ସେ କରୁଥିବ ଦୁଃଖ, ମଥା ହେଉଥିବ ବ୍ୟଥା ।  
ଏକ ବରଷରେ ଫେରିଯିବି କହି ହେଲା କୋଡ଼ିଏ ବରଷ,  
କିଏ ଜାଣିଥିଲା ଏତେ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ହେବ ମୋର ପରବାସ ।  
ବୁଝାଇ କହିବୁ ମାଆକୁ ମୋହର କଷ୍ଟ ନ ଆଣିବ ମନେ,  
ଯେତେ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ରହିଲେ ବି ଏଠି, ପୁଅ ତା' ଫେରିବ ଦିନେ ।  
ପାଠ ପଢ଼ା ସାରି ଏକ ମୁହାଁ ହୋଇ ଆସିଥିଲି ମୁଁ ବିଦେଶ,  
ସେତେବେଳେ ପରା ସବୁକିଛି ସେଠି ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ଭାରି ବିଷ ।  
କହିବୁ, ପ୍ରଥମେ ରହିଥିଲୁ ଆମେ ନେଇ ଗୋଟେ ଭଡ଼ା ଘର,  
ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ପୁଣି ଭାବିଲୁ ତାପରେ କିଣିବୁ ଘର ନିଜର ।  
ମାସ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ଧନ ସଂଚି ସଂଚି କିଣିଲୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଘର,  
ତିନିଭାଗ ପୁଣି ରଖି ଆଣିଅଛୁ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ଡଲାର ।  
କିଏ ଜାଣିଥିଲା ମଟଗେଜ ବୋଲି ଶବ୍ଦ ଗୋଟିଏ ଅଛି,  
ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କ ଏହି ଠାରେ ଯମରାଜା ପରି ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଉପରେ ବସିଛି ।  
ମାସେ ଗୋଟେ ଯଦି ପେମେଣ୍ଟ ନ ମିଳେ ଜବଦ କରିବ ଘର,  
ମହାଜନ ଠାରୁ କିଛି ଉଣା ନୁହେଁ, ତାକୁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଡର ।  
ସବୁ ମାସ ପୁଣି ବିଭୁଳି ସକାଶେ ଦେବାକୁ ହୁଏ ଟିକସ,  
ଜାଣି ନଥିଲି ମୁଁ ପାଣି ପାଇଁ ପୁଣି ପଇସା ଦେବ ମଣିଷ ।  
ଶୀତ ତାପମାନ ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରଣ ଘରେ, ଜମା ଲାଗେ ନାହିଁ ଶୀତ,  
କାରପେଟ ସବୁ କୋଠରୀ ଭିତରେ, କାଠରେ ତିଆରି କାଛ ।  
ଗୋଟିଏ କଳରୁ ଗରମ ପାଣିତ ଆର କଳୁ ଥଣ୍ଡା ପାଣି,  
ପାଇଖାନା ଅଛି ଶୋଇବା ଘରରେ, ନଥିବ କେବେ ସେ ଶୁଣି ।  
ଗରମ ପାଣିରୁ କି ଲାଭ ମିଳିବ ମଥା ଯାଉଅଛି ଘୁରି,  
ନଦୀରେ ଗାଧୁଆ ବଡ଼ ଶ୍ରେୟସ୍କର ଅବା ବାଡ଼ିର ପୋଖରୀ ।  
ଧାଡ଼ି ଧାଡ଼ି ଘର ରାସ୍ତା ଦୁଇ କଡ଼େ ରହିଛି ଗୋଟେ ନମ୍ବର,  
ଏହା ଦେଖି ମୋର ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଯାଏ ଗାଆଁ ମାଟି ଚାଳଘର ।  
ନା ଅଛି ଟିକସ, ନାହିଁ ମଟଗେଜ ସବୁରି ମୁହଁ ରେ ହସ,  
ମଟଗେଜ କଥା ଚିନ୍ତା କରି ଏଠି, ଧଳା ହେଲା କଳା କେଶ ।  
ଚାକିରୀ ଜୀବନ ଅତିବ କଠିନ, ନାହିଁ କିଛି ଧଳ କୁଳ,  
ସକାଳରୁ ସଞ୍ଜ କାମ କରି କରି ନ ମିଳଇ ଟିକେ ବେଳ ।  
ଆଜି ଅଛି ପୁଣି ଚାଲିଯିବ କାଲି କେହି ନ ପାରିବ କହି,  
ଭସା ମେଘ ପରି ଚାକିରୀ ଏଠାରେ ଅଟେ ଭାରୀ କ୍ଷଣସ୍ଥାୟୀ ।  
ଗୋଟିଏ ଦରମା ପଇସା ନିଅନ୍ତୁ ଚଳିବାକୁ ପରିବାର,

ସ୍ଵାମୀ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀରୀ ଦୁହେଁ କାମ କରିଗଲେ ସମୂଳା ପଡ଼ଇ ଘର ।  
ମାଆ ପାଖେ ମୋର କରିବୁ ତୁ ଯାଇ ଏ ଦେଶ ରତୁ ବର୍ଷନା,  
ଏଠିକାର ଶୀତ ଆମଦେଶ ସାଥେ ନ ହେବ କେବେ ତୁଳନା ।  
ଶୀତ ଦିନ ହେଲେ ଗଛ ମାନଙ୍କରୁ ଝଡ଼ିଯାଏ ସବୁ ପତ୍ର,  
ଥୁଣ୍ଡ ଗଛ ପରି ଠିଆ ହୋଇ ରହେ, ଧୂସର ଦିଶେ ସର୍ବତ୍ର ।  
କାଲୁଆ ପବନ ମାତି ଆସେ କାହୁଁ ପଡ଼େ ଭୀଷଣ ତୁଷାର,  
ରାସ୍ତା ଘାଟ ସବୁ ତୁଷାରରେ ଭରେ ଦିଶେ ଧୋବ ଫର ଫର ।  
ପିନ୍ଧିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ ଶୀତ ବସ୍ତ୍ର ପୁଣି ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଲଗାଉ ଟୋପି,  
ହାତରେ ଲଗାଇ ଗୋବସ୍ତ୍ର ଦୁଇ ଗୋଟି,  
ବାଟ ଚାଲୁ ପାଦ ଟିପି ।  
ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ବରଫ ବରଷି ଖସତା କରଇ ପଥ,  
ସାବଧାନ ହୋଇ ବାଟ ନ ଚାଲିଲେ ହୋଇଯିବ ବିତମାତ ।  
ଲମ୍ବା ଲମ୍ବା ସବୁ ଘର ମାନଙ୍କରୁ ବରଫ ଥାଏ ଓହଲି,  
ସୁରୁଜ କିରଣ ପଡ଼ିଲେ ସେଥିରେ ଝଲସେ ମୁକୁତା ଭଳି ।  
ଥୁଣ୍ଡ ଗଛ ପରେ ମେଞ୍ଚା ମେଞ୍ଚା କରି ଧବଳ ତୁଷାର ରହି,  
ଲାଗୁଥାଏ ସତେ ଫୁଟିଅଛି ଫୁଲ ମଣ୍ଡନ କରଇ ମହୀ ।  
ଜାଗା ଜାଗା ଅଛି ଷ୍ଟେଡିଙ୍ଗ ପଡ଼ିଆ ମସୃଣ ବରଫେ ଭରା,  
ଘାଙ୍ଗ ଘାଙ୍ଗ ଲୋକେ ଚକର କାଟନ୍ତି ବରଫ ପଡ଼ିଆ ସାରା ।  
ପିଲାମାନେ ଖେଳି ତୁଷାର ଉପରେ କରନ୍ତି ମଜା ଅନେକ,  
ଟବାଗନି ସାଥେ ଖସରି ଖସରି ଭୁଲିଯାନ୍ତି ଶୋଷ ଭୋକ ।  
ବସନ୍ତ ଆସିଲେ ତାପମାନ ବଢ଼େ ତରଳି ଯାଏ ତୁଷାର,  
ସବୁଜ ଘାସରେ ଗାଳିତା ପରାୟେ ଭରିଯାଏ ବାଡ଼ି ଘର ।  
ତାମ୍ପେଡ଼ିଲ ଫୁଟଟ ଗୁଲିପ ସହିତେ ଆଉ ନାନା ଜାତି ଫୁଲ,  
ବାସନା ବିହୀନ ଫୁଲ ମାନ ସିନା ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଭାରି ଭଲ ।  
ଆମ ଗାଆଁ ପରି ଫୁଟଟ ନାହିଁ ଏଠି ମନ୍ଦାର, ଟଗର, ହେନା,  
ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲେ ଦୁଃଖ ଲାଗେ ଭାରି ମଲ୍ଲୀ ଫୁଲର ବାସନା ।  
ନାହିଁ ଆମ୍ବ ଗଛ, କୋଇଲିର ସ୍ଵର, ପାହାନ୍ତି କୁକୁଡ଼ା ଡାକ,  
ହଳଦୀ ବସନ୍ତ, କୁମ୍ଭାଗୁଆ ପକ୍ଷୀ, କଜଳ ପାତି ଓ କାକ ।  
ରବିନ ନାମକ ଛୋଟ ବଢ଼େଇଟି ବସନ୍ତ ଆସିଲେ ଆସେ,  
ଶୀତ ଗାଲ ଗାଲ ପବନର ତାଳେ ସବୁରି ମନ ହରସେ ।  
ପତର କଅଁଳି ବୃକ୍ଷ ଲତା ମାନ ସବୁଜ ରଙ୍ଗରେ ଭରେ,  
ବରଫ ତରଳି ଝରଣାର ଜଳ କଳ କଳ ନାଦ କରେ ।  
ଆଠ ମାସ ଯାକ ଶୀତରେ କଟଇ ଖରା ବୋଲି ବାରିମାସ,  
ତାହାରି ଭିତରେ ବାଡ଼ି ବଗିଚାରେ କରିହୁଏ ଟିକେ ଚାଷ ।  
ପଡ଼ିଆ ଭିତରେ ବଣଭୋଜିମାନ କରାହୁଏ ଆୟୋଜନ,  
ଶିଶୁ ଠାରୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ସଭିଏଁ ଖେଳନ୍ତି ନ ଦେଇ କୁଆଡ଼େ ଧ୍ୟାନ ।  
କ୍ଷେତମାନ ଭରେ ସବୁଜ ରଙ୍ଗରେ ଚାଷୀ ମନ ହୁଏ ଖୁସି,  
ଗହମ, ମକାର ଅମଳ କରେ ସେ ମେସିନ ଉପରେ ବସି ।  
ଶରତ ଆସିଲେ ଗଛର ପତର ଟହ ଟହ ନାଲି ଦିଶେ,





ବନ ଉପବନ ରଙ୍ଗ ଭରି ଦେଇ ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ତଳେ ଖସେ ।  
 କାନାଡା ଦେଶର ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ଶୋଭା ଅତୀବ ମନୋହାରିଣୀ,  
 ଦେହେ ଧରି ହୃଦ, ନଦୀ, ବନ, ଲତା ଶୋଭିତା ପ୍ରକୃତି ରାଣୀ ।  
 ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ହୃଦ ଦରିଆ ପରାୟେ ଧରିଛି ମଧୁର ଜଳ,  
 ଏ ପାଖୁ ଦେଖିଲେ ଆଖି ପାଏ ନାହିଁ,  
 ନ ଦିଶେ ସେ ପାଖେ ସୁଳ ।  
 ତାଳ ଗଛ ଉଜା ଲହୁଡ଼ି ଆସୁଛି ଅକାତ କାତର ପାଣି,  
 ନୀଳ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ପିନ୍ଧି ଠିଆ ହୋଇଅଛି ସତେକି ପ୍ରକୃତି ରାଣୀ ।  
 ଖରାଦିନ ହେଲେ ହୃଦ କୁଳେ କୁଳେ ବାଲୁକା ରାଶିର ପରେ,  
 ଶୋଇ ରହିଥାନ୍ତି ନର ନାରୀ ଗଣ ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧନଗ୍ନ ପୋଷାକରେ ।  
 ବାପା ମାଆ ମାନେ ପିଲା ପିଲି ଧରି ହାଜର ହୁଅନ୍ତି ସେଠି,  
 ଛତାଟିଏ ପୋତି ତାହାର ଛାଇରେ ଖାଇ ବସନ୍ତି ଏକାଠି ।  
 ହୃଦ ଜଳେ ପଶି ମଉଜ କରନ୍ତି ରବର ବୋଟ ଉପରେ,  
 ଓଦା ବାଲି ସାଥେ ବାଲିଘର ତୋଳି ଆନନ୍ଦେ ଫେରନ୍ତି ଘରେ ।  
 ଆମ ଘରଠାରୁ ଶହେ କୋଶ ଦୂର ନାଏଗା ଜଳପ୍ରପାତ,  
 ଅନାଦି କାଳରୁ ବହି ଆସୁଅଛି ହିସାବ ତାର ନାହିଁତ ।  
 ସାରା ଦୁନିଆରୁ ଶୋଭା ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଆସନ୍ତି ସହସ୍ର ଲୋକ,  
 ଘନ ଘରଘର ପ୍ରବଣ ଗର୍ଜନ ଶୁଣି ହୁଅନ୍ତି ଅବାକ ।  
 ଶନି ରବିବାର ଦୁଇଦିନ ମାତ୍ର ସଞ୍ଚୟ ଭିତରେ ଛୁଟି,  
 ସଞ୍ଚୟ ଯାକର ଥକା ମାରିବାକୁ ଦିନ ଏହି ଦୁଇଗୋଟି ।  
 ଲୁଗା ସମସ୍ତପ୍ରକାର ବଜାର ସଉଦା ତାହାରି ଭିତରେ ହୁଏ,  
 ବନ୍ଧୁ ପ୍ରୀୟା ପ୍ରୀତି ଭେଟା ଭେଟି ପାଇଁ ମନତାହିଁ ରହିଥାଏ ।  
 ମେସିନ ଏଠାରେ ଲୁଗାସମ୍ପାଦକରେ ନାହିଁ ଏଠି ଧୋବା ଘର,  
 ବାସନ ବି ଏଠି ମେସିନ ମାଜୁଛି କହନ୍ତି 'ତିସ ଡ୍ରାସର' ।  
 ପନି ପରିବାଠୁଁ ମାଛ ମାଂସ ଯାଏ ମିଳେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଜାଗାରେ,  
 ତାଲି ତାଉଳ ଓ କାଗଜ କଲମ ସବୁ କିଛି ତା ଭିତରେ ।  
 ଆମ ସେଠାକାର ମାଛ ହାଟ ଭଳି ନାହିଁ ମାଛି ଭଣ ଭଣ,  
 ଭାତ ଗୋଟେ ଏଠି ତଳେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲେ ଖୁଣ୍ଟି ଖାଇ ହେବ ଜାଣ ।  
 ରାସ୍ତା ଦୁଇ ପାଖେ କୋଠା ଘର ବାଡ଼ି ସାଥେ ଅଙ୍ଗାଳିକା ମାନ,  
 ଚକ ଚକ ସମସ୍ତରୁ ଦିଶଇ ନାହିଁ ପାନ ଛେପ ଚିହ୍ନ ।  
 ଆମ ପରି ନାନା ଦେଶୁ ଲୋକେ ଆସି ବାସିଛନ୍ତି ଏଠି ଘର,  
 ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ମିଳେ ସବୁଭାଷା କିନ୍ତୁ ପ୍ରଚଳନ ଇଂରାଜୀର ।  
 କେତେ ପରିବାର ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କଥା ଶିଖାଇଛନ୍ତି ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ,  
 କେହି କେହି ପୁଣି ଅରାଜି ହୁଅନ୍ତି ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କହିବାକୁ ।  
 ଖୁସି ହେବ ଜାଣି ତା' ନାତି ନାତୁଣୀ ଜାଣନ୍ତି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା,  
 ତା' ସହିତେ କଥା କହିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ଉପୁଜିବନି ସମସ୍ୟା ।  
 ହିନ୍ଦୁ ମାନଙ୍କର ମନ୍ଦିର ରହିଛି ଖୀର୍ଷ୍ଣୟାନ ଗୀର୍ଜା ଘର,  
 ମୁସଲମାନଙ୍କ ମସଜିଦ ସାଥେ ସିନାଗଗ ଜୀଉଙ୍କର ।  
 କିଏ ପୁଜେ ହରି, କିଏ ଯୀଶୁ ଖୀର୍ଷ୍ଣ, କିଏ ତାକେ ପୁଣି ଆଲା,  
 ଯିଏ ଯାହା ତାକୁ ଇଶ୍ଵର ଗୋଟିଏ ସବୁ ହିଁ ତାଙ୍କର ଲୀଳା ।  
 କିଏ ପିନ୍ଧେ ବୁର୍ଖା, କିଏ ଯୋଡ଼ି କୁର୍ତ୍ତା, କିଏ ପୁଣି ପିନ୍ଧେ ଶାଢ଼ୀ,  
 ଲୁଙ୍ଗି, ତୁଡ଼ିଦାର ପିନ୍ଧା ସାଥେ ସାଥେ ପଗଡ଼ି ଅଛନ୍ତି ଭିଡ଼ି ।  
 ପ୍ୟାଙ୍କ କୋଟର ଚାହିଦା ଥିଲେବି ଜିଇନ ହୋଇଛି ଫେସନ,

ପୁଅ ଝିଅ ସବୁ ଜିଇନ ପିନ୍ଧନ୍ତି ଚିହ୍ନିବା ବଡ଼ କଠିନ ।  
 ଝିଅ ମାନଙ୍କ ଅଣ୍ଟା ତଳ ପିନ୍ଧା, ଏବେ ଫେସନ ଜୁଆଡ଼େ,  
 କିଏ ପିନ୍ଧେ ପୁଣି ଅତି ଛୋଟ ଝଟ ଚାହିଁବାକୁ ଲାଜମାଡ଼େ ।  
 ପୁଅ ମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ୟାଙ୍କ ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ଲାଗିଛି ଗୋଟେ ଜଞ୍ଜିର,  
 ଖସର ଖସର ଘୁସୁରୁଛି ତଳେ ସତେ କି ଯିବ ବାହାରି ।  
 ଏବେ ଯାଏଁ ମୁହିଁ ଦେଖିନାହିଁ କାହିଁ ଖୋର୍ଦ୍ଧା ଗାମୁଛା ପିନ୍ଧାରେ,  
 ଦୁଇ ଖଣ୍ଡି ମୁହିଁ ସାଇତି ରଖିଛି ନାଟକ ହେଲେ ବାହାରେ ।  
 ଯେମିତି ପିନ୍ଧନ୍ତୁ, ଯାହାବି ପିନ୍ଧନ୍ତୁ, ପିନ୍ଧୁଛନ୍ତି ଆନନ୍ଦରେ,  
 ଆମ ଗାଁ ଲୋକ ଛିଣ୍ଡା ଲୁଗା ଭାବି ନୟନୁ ଲୋତକ ଝରେ ।  
 ଏକୃଷିଆ ଥିଲେ ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଯାଏ ଓଡ଼ିଶା, ଓଡ଼ିଆ କଥା,  
 ସେଠାକାର ଭାବ, ସେଠାକାର ଢଙ୍ଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚଳଣି ପ୍ରଥା ।  
 ସେ ଦେଶର ପାଣି, ସେ ଦେଶ ପବନ, ସେ ଦେଶର ତରୁ ଲତା,  
 ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲେ ଲୁହ ଝରିଆସେ, ମଥା ହୋଇଯାଏ ବ୍ୟଥା ।  
 ବାରମାସେ ପରା ତେର ପର୍ବ ଲାଗେ, ସମସ୍ତ ଉଭେଇ ଯାଏ,  
 ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥୀ ବନ୍ଧୁ ପରିଜନ ସାଥେ ଭେଟିବା ସୁଯୋଗ ଥାଏ ।  
 ସିଏ ତ ଜାଣିଛି ନାହିଁ କେହି ଏଠି, ଜାତି କୁଟୁମ୍ବୁ ଆମ୍ବର,  
 ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ବନ୍ଧୁକରି ଆମେ ବାସିଛୁ ଘର ନିଜର ।  
 ବରଷ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଦୁଇ ପର୍ବ ପାଳୁ ହୋଇ ସର୍ବେ ଏକକୃଷ୍ଣ,  
 ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଖାଇବା, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂଗୀତ, ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ପୁଣି ନାଟ ।  
 ପ୍ରଥମ ପରବ ବିଷୁବ ମିଳନ କରୁ ବଡ଼ ଉତ୍ସାହରେ,  
 ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଆଲୋଚନା ପରେ ପଣା ପିଉ ଆନନ୍ଦରେ ।  
 ବଡ଼ ଧରଣର କୁମାର ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣିମା କରୁ ଏଠାରେ ପାଳନ,  
 ସଂଧ୍ୟା ବେଳେ ହୁଏ ପୁଅ ଝିଅଙ୍କର ନୃତ୍ୟ, ଗୀତ ଆୟୋଜନ ।  
 ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ମୁଖେ ଆଶା ଉଦ୍‌ଘାଟନା ଖେଳେ ହସର ଜୁଆର,  
 ବାଳକ ବାଳିକା ଫେରନ୍ତି ଗୃହକୁ ହାତେ ଧରି ଉପହାର ।  
 ମନପକ୍ଷୀ ମୋର ଜାଣେ ମୁହିଁ ତୋତେ ଦେଲିଣି ବହୁ ଖବର,  
 ତନ୍ମୁ ତନ୍ମୁ କରି ସବୁ ତୁ କହିବୁ ନ କରି କେବେ ଉଛୁର ।  
 ଜାଣେ ନାହିଁ ମୁହିଁ କିପରି ରଖିବୁ ଏତେ ଖବର ତୁ ମନେ,  
 ଆଶା ମୋର କିନ୍ତୁ ପାରିବୁ ତୁ କହି, ରଖି ସବୁ କଥା ଧ୍ୟାନେ ।  
 ଆଜିକାଲି ପରା ହେଲାଣି ଗାଆଁରେ ଦୂରଭାଷର ପ୍ରସାର,  
 ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମୁହିଁ ମାଆର ସହିତେ କଥା ହୁଏ ବାରମ୍ବାର ।  
 ଯେତେ କଥାହେଲେ ମନକଥା କିଛି ମନ ମଧ୍ୟେ ରହିଅଛି,  
 ତୋତେ ପାଇ ଆଜି ଭରସା କରି ମୁଁ ତୋ' ଆଗେ ବଖାଣୁଅଛି ।  
 ହାତୀ ବୁଲିଲେବି ଘନ ବନସ୍ତରେ ହାତୀ ଅଟେ ରଜାଙ୍କର,  
 ସେହିପରି ମୁହିଁ ଯେତେ ଦୂରେ ଥିଲେ ପୁଅ ସବୁଦିନେ ତା'ର ।  
 ମା'ର ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ, କାଳିଆର ଆଖି ସର୍ବଦା ରହିଛି ସାଥେ,  
 ତାଙ୍କରି କୃପା ହିଁ ଦିହୁଡ଼ି ଜାଳୁଛି ଜୀବନର ଚଳାପଥେ ।  
*(ଏଇ ଆଧୁନିକ ଯୁଗରେ ଛନ୍ଦବୋଧ ଓ ବାସ୍ତବ ଧର୍ମା କବିତା  
 ଲୋପ ପାଇଗଲାଣି । ଉପରୋକ୍ତ କବିତାରେ ଛନ୍ଦବୋଧ  
 କବିତାକୁ ଫେରାଇ ଆଣିବାରେ କବିଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ।*

**ଚରଣେ, କାନାଡା**

## କୋଇଲି ଲୋ ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ମିଶ୍ର

(ଏକ)

କୋଇଲିଲୋ

ଶୁଣିଯିବୁ ପଦେ ମୋର କଥା

ମୋ ମନରେ ଭରା ଯେତେ ବ୍ୟଥା ।

ବଡ଼ ପୁଅ, ସୁନାକର, ନାଆଁ ଦେଇଥିଲି,

ସୁନାପିଲା ପରି, ଭଲ ପାଠ, ଭଲ ଶାଠ

ସବୁତକ ଭଲ ଗୁଣ ଭରିଥିଲା;

କୋଉଥିରେ ଉଣା ଅବା?

ଭଲ ପାଠ ପଢ଼ି,

ବଡ଼ ଘରେ ବାହା ହେଲା,

କେତେ ଯେ ଯମକ ହେଲା,

'ଭଲ ବୋହୂ'ପାଇଥିଲି

କିଛିଦିନ ବୋହୂପଣ କରିଥିଲା

ଭଲରେ ଭଲରେ ।

'ସୁନା ମୋର' ପଢ଼ିବାକୁ ଗଲା ପାଠ,

ବିଦେଶ ସହର;

ଆଉ ପୁଣି କହିଗଲା,

“ବୋଉଲୋ!

ଦଉଡ଼ି ମୁଁ କଥା-

ପାଠ ପଢ଼ା ସରି ଗଲେ

ଫେରିବି ମୁଁ;

ରହିବି ମୁଁ ତୋ ପାଖେ, କରିବି ମୁଁ ଦେଶସେବା

ମୋ' ନିଜ ଦେଶରେ ।”

କଥାତକ କଥାରେ ରହିଲା

“ପୁଅ ବୋହୂ” ରହିଲେ ସେ ଦେଶେ,

ନାତିଟିଏ, ନାତୁଣୀ ଟି- ଆହା କି ସୁନ୍ଦର;

ମୁଁ ଯାହା ଦେଖୁଥାଏ- ଫଟା ଟିଏ ଧରି'

ଆସିବେ ଆସିବେ ବୋଲି

ଗଲା ଏତେ ଦିନ

“ଆଉ ବର୍ଷ ନିକ୍ଷେ ଆମେ ଯିବୁ”

ପୁଅ ବୋହୂ ଲେଖୁଥିଲେ ଚିଠି ।

ସମୟ ର ସୁଅ ସହ ତାଳ ଦେଇ, ପଦ୍ମ ଯାଏ ଘୁଞ୍ଚି ଘୁଞ୍ଚି ଧରେ,

ଯମୁନା ର ଜୁଆଣି ଥମିଲା, ମା' ର ମମତା ଥମି ଥମି ଗଲା

ମମତା ର ସେ ଟାଣ ଦଉଡ଼ି, ସମୟ ଓ ଦୂରତାରେ କ୍ଷୀଣ

ହୋଇଗଲା,

'ପୁଅ ବୋହୂ' ଚିଠି ଲେଖା କମି ଗଲା;

ସ୍ନେହ ଡୋରି ହୋଇଲା ପତଳା ।

(ଦୁଇ)

କୋଇଲି ଲୋ'

ଜାଣିବୁ ତ ସାନପୁଅ “କୁନାର” କିରତି,

ଗୁଣ୍ଡାଗିରି, ବଦନାମ କଲା ଦିନ ରାତି,

ହେଲା ନାହିଁ ପାଠ

ଶିଖିଲାନି ଶାଠ,

“କରିବି ମୁଁ ରାଜନୀତି

ନହିଲେ ମୁଁ ଯିବି ପାରାଦୀପ

ଟ୍ରଲର୍ ପକାଇ ଖାଲି

ଧରିବି ମୁଁ କଙ୍କଡ଼ା ଚିକ୍ନୁଟି”

ବାହୁଣ ଘରର ପୁଅ

ମାଛ ଧରି ବିକିବ ହାଟରେ,

କେତେ ମୁଁ କାନ୍ଦିଛି

ମୁଣ୍ଡ ବାଡ଼େଇଛି,

ବାହା ଦେବି ବୋଲି

ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ କେତେ ଯେ ଡାକିଛି ।

କିଏ ଆଉ ଝିଅ ଦେବ

“କୁଳାଙ୍ଗର, ବାଳୁଙ୍ଗା ଟା” କହିଲେ ସଭିଏଁ ।

(ତିନି)

କୋଇଲିଲୋ'

କୋଉଠି ତୁ ଆଶା ନେଲୁ

ସେ ଝଡ଼ ରାତିରେ?

ଶୁଣିଥିଲା କୁନା ମୋର

ବତାସ ର ବେତାବନୀ,

ମାନିଲାନି କଥା,

ତଙ୍ଗ ମେଲି ଚାଲିଗଲା ଦରିଆକୁ

ମାଛ ମାରିବାକୁ ।

କହିଗଲା “ତିକ୍ତା ନାହିଁ ବୋଉ !”

'ସାଧବ ପୁଅ ତ ଏମିତି, କାର୍ତ୍ତିକ ମାସରେ, ଝଡ଼ ବରଷାରେ,

ବୋଇତ ବନ୍ଦାଣ ସାରି; ଯାଉଥିଲା ନାଆ ଧରି

ଜାଭା ସୁମାତ୍ରା କୁ” ।

ଝଡ଼ ସରି ଗଲା, ବାତ୍ୟା ଗଲା ଥମି,

ଅଧ ଭଞ୍ଜା ଗଛ ଯେତେ ଦେଖୁ;

ସେମିତି,

ଏ ଦେଶର ମେରୁଦଣ୍ଡ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଗଲା ।





ମତେ ସିନା ଛାଡ଼ି ଗଲା, ଦରମରା କରି;  
ଏଇ ଅଧା ଭଙ୍ଗା ଗଛ ଭଳି ।

ଜାଣିଛୁ ତ ସବୁ, କ'ଣ ବା କହିବି?  
ଦରିଆର ଫେରନ୍ତି ଢେଉରେ,  
ଫେରି ଥିଲା ଖାଲି, ଟ୍ରଲର୍ ଭଙ୍ଗାଠୁଜା ଯନ୍ତ୍ରପାତି,  
ଛିଣ୍ଟା ରୁଜା ଜାଲ,  
“କୁନା ମୋର ………” କ'ଣ ବା କହିବି ଆଉ ?  
କହିତ ପାରୁନି” !  
ବୋଉ” ତାକ ଆଉ ଶୁଭିବନି !

### (ଗୁରି)

କୋଇଲି ଲୋ !  
“ସୁନା” ମୋର ବିଦେଶ ରୁ ପଠାଇଛି  
ଟଙ୍କା, ଆଉ ଛୋଟ ଚିଠି ଚିଏ !  
“ବୋଉମ !  
କୁନା କଥା ଶୁଣି ଭାରି ମନ ଦୁଃଖ,  
ଛୁଟି ନାହିଁ, ଯାଇତ ପାରୁନି  
ଗୁଳ ଘର ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଗଲା, ଚିନ୍ତା କରିବୁନି,  
ଟଙ୍କା ପାଇ କୋଠା ଘର କରିଦେବୁ,  
ଭିଟାମିନ, ଟନିକ୍ ଖାଇବୁ’  
ଦେହ ପା’ର ଯନ୍ ନଉଥିବୁ !  
ଆଉ ସାଲ ଛୁଟି ହେଲେ ଆମେ ସବୁ ଯିବୁ ।  
ଗାଁ ଘରେ ରହିଛୁ ତୁ ଏକା,  
ଭାରୁଛି ମୁଁ, ତୁ ଶୀଘ୍ର ଆ ଆମେରିକା”

କୋଇଲି ଲୋ  
କହିବୁ ସୁନାକୁ !  
ପଖାଳ ର ସ୍ଵାଦ କଣ  
ପଲାଇରେ ଥାଏ ?  
ଗୋବର ଲିପା ମାଟି କାଛର ବାସନା  
ମିଳିବ କି ଚୁନ ଲିପା କୋଠାଘରେ ?  
ଛପର ର ଚାଳ ପରେ ମାଟି ଥିଲା  
ଶିମ୍ପୁ ଆଉ କଖାରୁ ର ଗହଳିଆ ଲତା  
କୋଠାଘରେ ସବୁ ଲୁଚିଯିବ,

ଅଭାବର ଗନ୍ତାଘରେ ଭରି ଥିଲା  
କେତେ ଶାନ୍ତି, କେତେ ସୁଖ କେତେ ଆତ୍ମୀୟତା,  
ଆଲୁଅ ଜଳିଲେ ଯେମିତି ଅଂଧାର ଲୁଚିଛି,  
ପଇସା ପଶିଲା ସତ, ଲୁଚିଗଲା ମା’ ଆଉ ମାଟିର ମମତା ।

ଆଉ ମୋର ଲୋଡ଼ା ନାହିଁ ଟଙ୍କା  
ଏ ବୟସେ, ଲୋଡ଼ା ନାହିଁ ଯିବା ଆମେରିକା,  
ଲୋଡ଼ା ନାହିଁ ଦେହପା’ର ଯନ୍

କୋଠା ଘର, ପ୍ରଶଂସା ବା ନିନ୍ଦା,  
ଲୋଡ଼ା ଥିଲା ”ବୋଉ ତାକ”  
ସେତକ ସରିଲା,  
କେତେ ଦୋଷ ଦେଉଥିଲି, ଗାଳି ଅଭିଶାପ  
ସବୁ ଶୁଣି, ସବୁ ସହି,  
ତାକୁଥିଲା,  
“ବୋଉ” ବୋଲି ଘଡ଼ିକେ ଦିଅର,  
ସେ ଚାଲି ଗଲା !  
ଏବେ ଆଉ ଲୋଡ଼ା ମୋର ‘ଛ ଖଣ୍ଡି କାଠ’  
ଗାଁ ର ମଶାଣି……ଜଳିଛି ଯୋଉଠି ଯୁଦ୍ଧ  
ଶାଶୁ, ଶଶୁରଙ୍କର, ଆଉ ସବୁ ନିଜ ଲୋକଙ୍କର  
‘କୁନା’ ଆଉ କୁନା ବାପାଙ୍କର ।

### (ଶେଷ କଥା)

କୋଇଲି ଲୋ!  
ଅଶରୀରୀ କୁନା କୁ କହିବୁ  
ମୋ କଥା; ଏ ମନର କେତେ ଯେ ଯାତନା  
କହିବୁଲୋ; ମୋ ଆଖିରେ ଲୁହ ଆଉ ନାହିଁ;  
“ମାଣକ ପୁରିଲା ପୁତ, ସେରକ ପୁରିଲା”  
“ଉଠିବୁନି କୁନା ମୋର, ଏମିତି ଶୋଇଲୁ ?”  
ବୋଉ ତାକ ତକ ମୋର ସବୁ ସାରି ଦେଲୁ?”

### ସର୍ତ୍ତବରୀ, କନାଡା



ସତେକଣ ହଜିଯିବି ମୁଁ ବିଦେଶୀ ମାଟିରେ  
ନେବି ବିଦାୟ ବିନା ରାମ ନାମ ସତ୍ୟ ତାକରେ  
ଦେଶ କୁ ଫେରିବା ଆଶା ମୋ ରହିଯିବ ଆଶାରେ ?  
ରାନ୍ତୁ ମାହାନ୍ତି, କବିତା ଆଶା,ସୋଭେନିୟର୍ସ୍



## ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର ଶାନ୍ତି ଲତା ମିଶ୍ର

<p>ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର । ମୋ ସାଥରେ ଧରି ହାତ ତୁମର । ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର । ତୋଳି ସତସୁରେ ରାଗ ଝଙ୍କାର । ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର । ଜନ୍ମ ଭଉଁ ଥା'ନ୍ତା ଅମା ଅନ୍ଧାରେ । ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର । ଅଜ୍ଞାନ, ବଜ୍ଜିଳ ପଥରେ ତାର । ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର । ପ୍ରକୃଷ୍ଟିତ ପଦ୍ମ ତେଜି ଭ୍ରମର ।</p> <p>ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର । ପ୍ରସ୍ତର ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ପରି, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରରଶ୍ମି ତଳେ, ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର । ଜୟମାଳା ଦେଇ (ପୃଥ୍ଵୀରାଜ ପରି) ଗଳେ ତୁମର, ଯଦି ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତ ତୁମେ ମୋହର । 'କେଦାର-ଗୌରୀ' ପରି ଧରି ହାତେ କୃପାଣ । ଏ ମୋ ବିତମ୍ବିତ ଭାଗ୍ୟର ଉପହାସ କେବଳ । ମିଛ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ଆସି ବହୁଲାଲ ଯାଏ ଧରକୁ ଧର ।</p>	<p>ଉଡ଼ି ଯାଇଥା'ନ୍ତି ବହୁତ ଦୂର ॥ ଧରିତ୍ରୀ, ଆକାଶ କରି ଏକାକାର ॥ ୧ ॥ ଗାଇଥା'ନ୍ତା ଗୀତ ମୋର ନୂପୁର ॥ ଛମ୍ ଛମ୍ ଶବ୍ଦେ ହଜାର ଧର ॥ ୨ ॥ ନୃତ୍ୟରତେ ଥା'ନ୍ତା ସଦା ମନ ମୟୂର ॥ ମଳୟ ବହୁଥା'ନ୍ତା ଗୁଣ୍ଠ ରତୁରେ ॥ ୩ ॥ ପ୍ରଖର ହେଉଥା'ନ୍ତା ଗିରି ନିର୍ଝର । ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମୋର ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ର ପୁର ॥ ୪ ॥ ହୃଦ ସରସୀ ରେ ପୁଷ୍ପଥା'ନ୍ତା ଶତଦଳ କମଳ ॥ ପ୍ରଲୁବ୍ଧେ ଆସିଥା'ନ୍ତା ହୋଇ ପାଗଳ ॥ ୫ ॥ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଭାଗା ଡାରେ, କୋଶାଳ ଶିଳା ରେ, ହୋଇଥା'ନ୍ତି ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷାମଣୀ ତୁମର ॥ ୬ ॥ ଆଖି ଝଲସାଇ ଦେଇ ସଭିଜ୍ଞର ॥ 'ସଂଯୁକ୍ତା' ଜ୍ଞ ପରି ହୋଇ ଥା'ନ୍ତି ଅମର ॥ ୭ ॥ ପ୍ରତିବନ୍ଧ ସବୁ କରି ପଦେ ପହାର ॥ ଆଦରି ନେଇଥା'ନ୍ତି ହସି ହସି ମରଣ ॥ ୮ ॥ ନା ତୁମେ କେବେ ଥିଲ, ନା ଅଛ, ନାକେବେ ହେବ ମୋହରା ହୁଏତ କାଳେ ଦିନେ ତୁମେ ହୋଇ ଯିବ ମୋହର ॥ ୯ ॥</p>
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### ରଚକ , ମିନେଷୋଟା

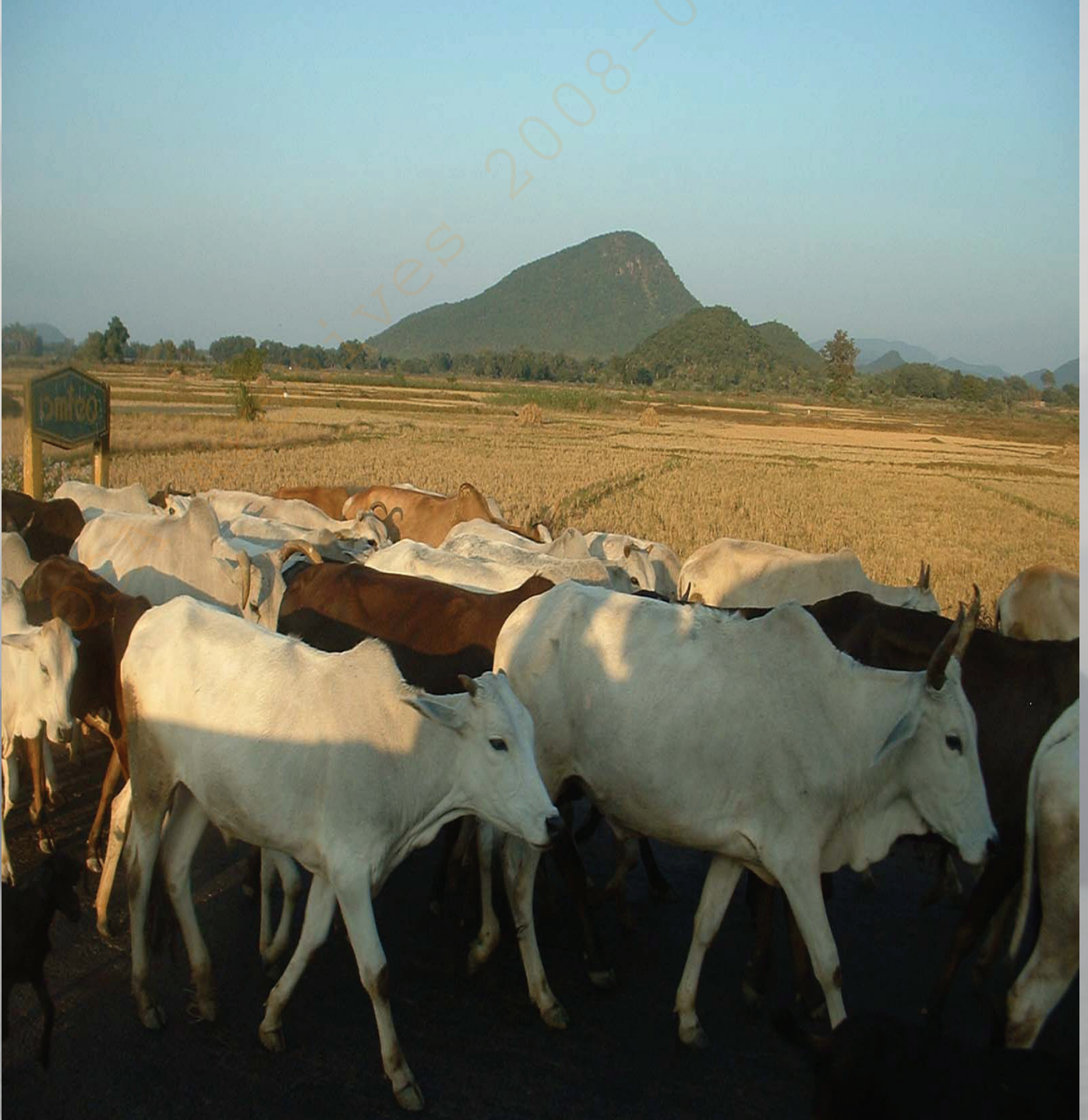
“ଏ ଜନ୍ମର ତୃଟି ପାଇଁ ମତେ ପୁନର୍ବାର ଜନ୍ମ ଦିଅ, ଏବଂ ଜନ୍ମଦିଅ ଏଇ ପବିତ୍ର ଭାରତ ଭୂମିରେ, ଯେଉଁଠି ମର ଦେହ ନେଇ ଜନ୍ମ ଲାଭ କରିଥିଲ ତୁମେ । ଭାରତର ଆତ୍ମା କୃଷ୍ଣମୟ , ଆନନ୍ଦମୟ, ପ୍ରେମମୟ । ପ୍ରେମପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହୃଦୟ ହିଁ ଐଶୀ କୃପା ର ଆଧାର । ମଣିଷକୁ ଯୁଗା କରି ଇଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରେମ କରାଯାଇ ପାରେ ନାହିଁ । ତେଣୁ ହେ ପ୍ରେମିକଣ୍ଠେଷ କୃଷ୍ଣ ! ମତେ ପ୍ରେମିକା ଜନ୍ମ ଦିଅ । ମତେ କୃଷ୍ଣପ୍ରେମିକା ଏବଂ ବିଶ୍ଵପ୍ରେମିକା କରି ବାରମ୍ବାର ଜନ୍ମ ଦିଅ ।”

ଯାଜ୍ଞସେନୀ, ପ୍ରତିଭା ରାୟ





# ଗୋଧୂଳି ବେଳା





ତୃଷ୍ଣା

ସୁଜାତା ମହାପାତ୍ର





## ବିଶେଷଣ ଝୀନୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ

ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତକ ଉଜାରଣ ରୌପ୍ୟ ଏ ବିବାହ ବାର୍ଷିକୀ  
ଶୁଭେ ସଦା ସରଳ, ସୁଗମ  
ଲାଗେ ଅବା ଛୁଏଁ ନାହିଁ ସଂସାର ଦାବାର୍ଣ୍ଣି  
ଦାମ୍ପତ୍ୟର ବନ ଉପବନ ।୧।

ଯେଉଁ ଆଶା, ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦିନେ ସ୍ୱାଗତମ କରିଥାଏ  
ଅନାଗତ ସେ ମୁଗ୍ଧ ଜୀବନ  
ଯାଇଥାଏ କେତେ ଝଟ ଦାମ୍ପତ୍ୟର ଉପବନେ  
ସାକ୍ଷୀ ଏକା ସେଇ ଦୁଇମନ ।୨।

ଅଜଣା ଜୀବନ ସାଥି ଦୁଇଟି ଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରକୃତି  
ଯୋଡ଼ିଦିଏ ବେଦିରୁ ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ  
ବନ୍ଧୁର ସେ ଦୀର୍ଘ ପଥେ ସମନ୍ୱୟ ସାଧନରେ  
କ୍ରମାଗତ ସର୍ବଦା ଉଦ୍ୟମ ।୩।

ପ୍ରାଚ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରତିପାଳନ ସରଳ ବାତାବରଣ  
ସେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନର ଖିଅ ଗଢ଼ିହୁଏ  
ତରୁଣୀ ଜୀବନ ସାଥି କ୍ଷମାଶୀଳ, ମିତ୍ତଭାଷୀ  
ଚିହ୍ନିବ ସଦା ତାର ମନ ।୪।

ନାରୀ ଯେ ଭାବପ୍ରବଣ ପୁରୁଷ ବାସ୍ତବବାଦୀ  
ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କର ବିପରୀତ ଧର୍ମ  
ଜଣଙ୍କ ଅନ୍ତର କୋହୁ ଉତ୍ତର ତା ଆଖି ଲୁହ  
ଅନ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ସେ ଯେ ମୂଲ୍ୟହୀନ ।୫।

ପାଞ୍ଚତ୍ୟର ବସ୍ତୁବାଦ ମନକୁ କରେ ଆୟତ୍ତ  
ଟାଣୁଥାଏ ଜୀବନ ଲଗାମ  
ଆଶାର ନାହିଁ ସମାପ୍ତ ପାଇ ନ ପାଇବା ବୋଧ  
ପ୍ରଭେଦଟି ଆହୁରି ବିସ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ।୬।

'ହେଇଥିଲେ ହେଇଥାନ୍ତା' ମନରେ ଅକାଟ୍ୟ ଚିନ୍ତା  
ତାଲି ରହେ ଜୀବନ ସଂଗ୍ରାମ  
ବିରୋଧ, ପ୍ରଭେଦ ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ଆକାଶ ପୃଥିବୀ ସମ  
ଦୁହେଁ ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କଠାରୁ ଅଭିନ୍ନ ।୭।

ନିର୍ଭୟତା, ନିର୍ଭରତା, କ୍ଷମା, ଧୈର୍ଯ୍ୟ, ସହିଷ୍ଣୁତା  
ବାନ୍ଧି ରଖେ ବିବାହ ବନ୍ଧନ  
ଦେଖେଇବା ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ଦେଇ ପାଇବାର ନୀତି  
ନୁହଇ ଏ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ମାଧ୍ୟମ ।୮।

ଯୁଗଳ ଜୀବନ ରଥ ଗଡ଼ୁଥାଏ ଅବିରତ  
ପଥ ହୁଏ ଦିନୁ ଦିନ ଶୀର୍ଷ  
ଦୀର୍ଘପଥ ଅଭିଜ୍ଞତା ବୟସ ପରିପକ୍ୱତା  
ଯୁଗୁ ପାଙ୍କ କ୍ରମଶଃ ସଂକୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ।୯।

ନିଜେ ରହେ ସାକ୍ଷୀ ନିଜ ବିବେକ ତା ବିଚାରକ  
ସଂକ୍ଷାଧକ ନିଜର ତା ମନ  
'ବିଜୟ'ର ଦିଏ ରାୟ ସମୟ ବିଚରାଳୟ  
ସମସ୍ୟାର ହୁଏ ସମାଧାନ ।୧୦।

ଜୀବନ ପାତ୍ର ଅପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସମୟର ପ୍ରୟୋଜନ  
ଚିହ୍ନିବାକୁ ପରସ୍ପର ମନ  
ନିଜର ଆତ୍ମ ପଠନ ତନୁ, ମନ ସମର୍ପଣ  
ବିବାହର ପ୍ରତି ଆଶା ପ୍ରେମ ।୧୧।

ପ୍ରତୀୟମାନ ଅତୀତ ଅଭିନୟ ସେ ଏକକ  
ସ୍ୱଜୀବନ କଲେ ବିଶେଷଣ  
ସୁଚ୍ଛି, ତର୍କ, ଅଭିମାନ, ରାଗ, ରୁଷା, ପ୍ରୀତି, ପ୍ରେମ  
ନାଟକଟି ସବୁର ମିଶ୍ରଣ ।୧୨।

ନିକଟ ଅତୀତରେ ଲେଖିକାଙ୍କର ୨୫ତମ ବିବାହ ବାର୍ଷିକୀ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ଲେଖାଟି ଲିଖିତ ହୋଇ ଥିଲା । ସ୍ୱାମୀ ସାନ୍ତନୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ ଏବଂ ଦୁଇଝିଅ ଶ୍ରୀୟା ଓ ଶିଳ୍ପୀଙ୍କ ସହିତ କବି ଝିନୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ ଭର୍ଜିନିଆ ରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି ।

### ବିବାହ ସଂସ୍କାର ବେଳେ ବରକନ୍ୟା ଙ୍କର ଘୋଷଣା

ହେ ବିଶ୍ୱର ଦେବତା ଗଣ ! ଆତ୍ମମାନଙ୍କର ସମାନ ବିଚାରକୁ ନିଷ୍ଠୟ ପୂର୍ବକ ଜାଣନ୍ତୁ । ଆମ୍ଭ ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କର ହୃଦୟ ଜଳ ସମାନ ଶାନ୍ତ ହେଉ । ପରମେଶ୍ୱର ଜୀବମାନଙ୍କୁ ଧାରଣ କର ରଖିବା ପରି ଜୀବନଯାତ୍ରା ରେ ଆମେ ଦୁହେଁ ଜଣେ ଅନ୍ୟ ର ସହଯାତ୍ରୀ ଓ ସହାୟକ ହେବୁ ।  
ପ୍ରିୟବ୍ରତ ଦାସ, ରତ୍ନବେଦ ସୌରଭ, ପୃଷ୍ଠା ୧୩୪



# ନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ନନ୍ଦିତା ବେହେରା

ବରହମ୍ପୁର ଗଞ୍ଜମ ଜଳାପରିଷଦ ହଲରେ ଚିତ୍ରପୁରୀ ପତ୍ରିକାର ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବରେ ମୋର ପ୍ରଥମ ପରିଚୟ ହେଲା ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ସହିତ । ଗୁରୁ କେଳୁ ଚରଣଙ୍କ ସୁଲଳିତ ବାଦ୍ୟ ଲହରୀ ସହ ତାଳ ଦେଇ ମଞ୍ଚ ଉପର କୁ ଉଠି ଆସିଲେ ସଂଯୁକ୍ତା ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ, ମୋର ପ୍ରିୟ ସଂଯୁ ନାନୀ । ଅବାକ୍ ହୋଇ ଚାହିଁ ରହିଥିଲି ସେହି ସ୍ୱର୍ଣୀୟ ନୃତ୍ୟାଙ୍ଗନାଙ୍କୁ, ସେଇ ଭାବ ବିଭୋର ଅବସ୍ଥା ରେ ଥାଇ ଶୁଣିଲି ବାପା ପଚାରିଛନ୍ତି, “ନାଚ ଶିଖିବୁ?” । ସାତ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସରେ ଚପଳମତୀ ମନକୁ ବାଛିବା ପାଇଁ ସମୟ ନଥିଲା । ବାପାଙ୍କୁ ଚାଣି ଚାଣି ନେଇଗଲି ଜଳାପରିଷଦ ଅଫିସ ଭିତରକୁ, ନାଚ କ୍ଲାସ୍ରେ ନାଁ ଲେଖାହେଲା । ସେତେବେଳେ କିଏ ଜାଣିଥିଲା ମୁଁ ନୃତ୍ୟକୁ ନେଇ ଜୀବନ ବିତେଇବି ବୋଲି ।

ବୋଉର କତା ଚାରିଦା, ଖାଲି ପାଠ ଆଉ ନାଚ କଲେ ଲୋକେ ଅଣ୍ଟିରା ଚଢ଼ା, ଘୋଡ଼ି ବୋଲି ଲୋକ ଡାକିବେ ଦିନ ଦିନ ଧରି । ମାଣବସା ଗୁରୁବାର ଗୀତ, ଚିତା ଲେଖା, ରଜଦୋଳିଗୀତ, ସବୁ କିଛି ଶିଖିବାକୁ ହେବ ନହେଲେ ଶାଶୁଘରେ ବାର ହାନିମାନ ହେବକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ । ବୋଉ ର ସବା ସାନ ଝିଅ ତା ପାଖେ ନସରପସର ହେଲା ବେଳେ ବୋଉ କାଇଦା କରି କେମିତି ହବିଷ ରକ୍ଷା ହୁଏ, କେମିତି ଗୁଡ଼ ଦିଆ ଓଉ ପଟା ଆଚାର ହୁଏ, ସବୁ ଶୁଣେଇ ଶୁଣେଇ ବର୍ଣନା କରେ । ଚିକିଏ ସମୟ ମିଳିଲେ କହେ, “ମୋ ଝିଅ ତ ସୁନାନାକି, ଏମିତି ତାଲିମ୍ ଦେବି ଯେ ଗାଁ ଟା ଯାକର ଝିଅ ହୁଏକୀ ହୋଇ ଜଳି ଯିବେ” ।

ଦିନ କର କଥା ମୁଁ କାନ୍ଦି କାନ୍ଦି ବାପାଙ୍କୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରିଥିଲି କନଭେଣ୍ଟ୍ ସ୍କୁଲରେ ପଢ଼ିବା ପାଇଁ । ବାପା ମୋର ଗାନ୍ଧୀବାଦୀ, କାରଣ ଜାଣିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଲେ । ମୁଁ କହିଲି, “ଆମ ନାଚ କ୍ଲାସ୍ କେତେ ଝିଅ ଆସନ୍ତି ସେମାନେ କନଭେଣ୍ଟ୍ ସ୍କୁଲ କୁ ଯା’ନ୍ତି, ଚକଚକିଆ କଳା ଯୋଡା ପିନ୍ଧନ୍ତି, ବେକରେ ଚାଇ ଭିଡି ସ୍କୁଲ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ଭାରି ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦିଶନ୍ତି । କଥା କଥାକେ ପସ୍ପଫସିଆ ଇଂରାଜୀ କୁହନ୍ତି, ସତେକି ଲଣ୍ଡନରୁ ଆସିଛନ୍ତି ଆଉ ମୁଁ ମଫସଲିଆ ନାଲିରୁଡା ଟେ ପରି ନରମି ରହୁଛି, ମୁଁ କନଭେଣ୍ଟ୍ ଗଲେ ମୋ ରୂପ ବି ବଦଳି ଯିବ” । ବାପା ଚିକିଏ ରୂପ ରହିଲେ, ଧିରେ ଧିରେ କହିଲେ, “ଆଗ ନିଜ ମାତୃଭାଷା କହି ଶିଖ, ବୁଝି ଶିଖ, ତା’ପରେ ପର ଭାଷା ମୁଖସ୍ତ କରିବୁ” । କହୁ କହୁ ହଜିଗଲେ ଅଜଣା ରାଜ୍ୟ ରେ, ଗୀତ ଆକାରରେ ଗାଇ ଉଠିଲେ ନୀଳକଣ୍ଠ ଙ୍କ କୋଣାର୍କେ କବିତା ର ଦୁଇ ଧାଡ଼ି-

“ ଶୋଇ ପଡ଼ିଛ କି ବାବୁହେ ନିଦେ ଯାଇଛ ହଜି,

ଆଜି ଯେ କୁମାର ପୁଣିମା ମନେ ନାହିଁ କି ଆଜି “

ବାପା ଥିଲେ ମୋର ପରମ ବନ୍ଧୁ, ଗୁରୁ । ମୋର ସକାଳ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୁଏ ବାପା ଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଚାହା ଟେବୁଲ୍ରେ, କଟକ ଆକାଶ ବାଣୀରେ ସକାଳ ମାଙ୍ଗଳିକ ଶୁଣୁ ଶୁଣୁ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରକାରର ଆଲୋଚନା ବି ଚାଲେ । ଦିନେ ଏମିତି ଏକ ମେଘମହାର ରାଗ ଶୁଣିବାରେ ମଜି ଯାଇଛୁ, ବାପା ଆକବର ଙ୍କ ସଭାରେ ତାନସେନ୍ ଙ୍କ ଗପ ଠିକ୍ ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲାବେଳକୁ ବୋଉ ଦୁମ୍ ଦୁମ୍ ହୋଇ ଦୌଡ଼ି ଆସିଲା, “ଆଲୋ ଏ ଘରେ କିଏ ଅଛି ଭଲ ! ସେ ପୋଡାମୁହିଁ ଛଉକି ବାଛୁରୀଟା ପଘା ଛିଣ୍ଡେଇ ଉପାତ କଲାଣି, ସବୁ କଅଁଳିଆ ଶାଗ ପଟାଳୀ ଖାଇ ହଜମ କଲାଣି ଏଠି ତୁମେ ଦୁହେଁ ବସି ମେଘମହାର ଶୁଣୁଛ । ମୁଁ ମରିଯାଆନ୍ତି କି ତରି ଯାଆନ୍ତି ଏ ନିଆଲଗା ଜୀବନରୁ” । ମୁଁ ଅଳସ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ହସି ହସି ବାପାଙ୍କୁ କହେ, “ମୁଁ ଚାଲିଲି କଲେଜ, ତାପରେ ନାଚ ସ୍କୁଲ, ତୁମେ ବାଛୁରୀ ସମ୍ପାଳ” । କେତେ କଣ ବାହାନା କରି ମୁଁ ପାର । ବାପା କିନ୍ତୁ ନଛୋଡ଼ବନ୍ଧା, ଯେତେ ବାଧାବିଘ୍ନ ଆସୁ ପଛେ ତାଙ୍କର ଜିଦ୍ ତାଙ୍କ ଝିଅ ଅଞ୍ଜଳୀ ରେ ମଣ୍ଡି ହେବା ସହ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚଣାସ୍ତ, ଦର୍ଶନଶାସ୍ତ୍ର, ଚିତ୍ରକଳା ସବୁଥିରେ ଯେମିତି ନିପୁଣା ହେବ । ଏମିତି ବାପା ଙ୍କ ସହ ଚା ପିଉ ପିଉ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସହିତ ମୋର ପରିଚୟ ହୋଇଥିଲା ।

ମନେ ଅଛି ଦିନେ ବାପା ଗାଇ ଉଠିଲେ ମାୟାଧର ମାନସିହ ଙ୍କ କୋଣାର୍କ, “ହେ କୋଣାର୍କ ବିଗତ ଯୌବନା ....“ତାଙ୍କ ମୁହଁରୁ ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ବାକ୍ୟ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ମୁଁ ଉତ୍ତର ରେ ଆବୃତ୍ତି କଲି ରବି ସିଂ ଙ୍କର ଏକ କବିତା ଯେଉଁଥିରେ ସେ କୋଣାର୍କ କୁ ଉପହାସ କରି ଲେଖିଥିଲେ,

“ କେତେ ମଜଦୁର୍ ଗର୍ଭର ପରି ବହି ବହି ଶିଳା ଭାର  
ବଞ୍ଚା କଲେଟି ନିଜ ମେରୁ ହାତ ହିସାବ ଅଛି କି ତାର  
କାଳ ର କବଳେ ଅମର ହୋଇବ ଯେଣୁ ଜଣକ ର ନାମ  
ଲକ୍ଷେ ବେନାମି ଜୀବନରେ ତେଣୁ ଗଢ଼ା ହେଲା ଶମଶାନ  
ଆଭିଜାତ୍ୟର ନାଁ ରେ ଯେଉଁଠି ସାଆନ୍ତିଆ ରୁଚି ରାଜେ  
ନଗ୍ନ ନଗରୀର ଚରଣ ନ ଧର ଚପଳ ଛନ୍ଦେ ନାଚେ ॥





ବାପା ସ୍ଥିତ ହସି ରୁପ ହୋଇ ରହିଗଲେ । ଆଉ ଘରୁ ବୋଉର କାକୁଟି ବିନତୀ ସ୍ଵର .... “ଆଜି ପରା କୁମାର ପୁଣିମା, କେତେ ସକାଳୁ ଝିଅ ମାନେ ଉଠି ଖଇ ଆଖୁଳୀ ଦେଲେଣି ଚୋକା ବର ପାଇବେ ବୋଲି, ଆମ ରାଜଯେମା ଦିନ ଦିପହର ଯାଏଁ ବାପାଙ୍କର ଗେହୁଝିଅ ହୋଇ କୋଣାର୍କ କରିତା ପଢୁଛି । ଆଛା ଏ ନାଚଗୀତ ବାପଝିଅଙ୍କୁ ପାଗଳା କଲା । କଣ କରିବି ମୋର କର୍ମଫଳ, ଝିଅ ତି ଘର ବୁଢ଼ି ହୋଇ ବସି ରହିବ, କୋଉ ବର ପିଲା ଭଲ ଖୁଲି ଝିଅ କୁ ବାହା ହେବ ।” ବାପା ତମତମ ହୋଇ ଗର୍ଜି ଉଠନ୍ତି, “ନହେଲା ନାହିଁ, ମୋ ଝିଅ ବାହୁଅ ରହିବ, ସିଏ ତ ଅଟ୍ଟକଳା ନିପୁଣା, ଆମେ ତାର ସ୍ଵୟଂବର ଆୟୋଜନ କରିବା । ଦେଶବିଦେଶ ରୁ ବରପୁତ୍ର ମାନେ ଆସିବେ ନିଜର ପରିଚୟ ପତ୍ର ନେଇ” । ମୁଁ ହସି ହସି ବାପା କୁ ମନେ ପକେଇ ଦିଏ ଫଳାର ମୋହନ ଜ୍ଞର ରେବତୀ ଗପ, ଦୁହେଁ ସମ ସ୍ଵରରେ ଗାଇ ଉଠୁ “ଲୋ ରେବୀ, ଲୋ ନିଆ, ଲୋ ଚୁଲ୍ଲୀ” । ବୋଉ ହାର୍ ମାନେ, କାଳି ଗାଇ ଟା ଉପରେ ଗରଗର ହୋଇ ଗୁହାଳ ଆଡେ ଚାଲିଯାଏ ।

ମୁଁ କଲେଜ୍ ଆଉ ନାଚ କାସ୍ ନେଇ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ, ବୋଉ ତା ଜିଦ୍ ରେ ଅଟଳ ରହି ମୋ ପାଇଁ ବର ଖୋଜା ରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ । ସତ କୁ ସତ କାହାକୁ କହି ଦିନେ ଆମ ଘର କୁ ଆଣିଲା ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ ଟିଏ । କଥା କଣ ନା କାର୍ତ୍ତିକ କ୍ଷ ପରି ସୁନ୍ଦର ଏଇ ଉଚ୍ଚ ଶିକ୍ଷିତ ଆଇ.ଏ.ଏସ୍ ଅଫିସର୍ ବରପାତ୍ର, ପିତାଙ୍କ ସହ ମୋତେ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଆସିବେ । ବାପା ଜ୍ଞର ଜିଦ୍ ତାଙ୍କ ଝିଅ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନୀର ବସ୍ତୁ ନୁହେଁ, ସିଏ ଆଗ ବରପାତ୍ର ଓ ତାଙ୍କ ପିତା କୁ ଭେଟିବା ପରେ ଯାଇ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଝିଅକୁ ଦେଖିବା ପାଳି । ବରପାତ୍ର ଓ ପିତା ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରିତ ସମୟ ରେ ଆମଘର କୁ ଆସିଲେ । ମୁଁ ଓ ଭାଉଜ ସୁନ୍ଦ ଆଶଙ୍କା ରେ ଛାତ ଉପରେ ରୁପଚାପ୍ ବସି ଥାଉ । ହଠାତ୍ ବାପାଙ୍କର ଗର୍ଜନ ଶୁଭିଲା, ସତେକି ଭସ୍ମ କରିଦେବେ । ଭାଉଜଙ୍କୁ ତାଙ୍କ କାନିପୁଲ ଫେରାଇ ଦେଇ କହିଲି, “ଗଲା ଏତେ ଦେଶପଟା!” । ତଳ କୁ ଆସି କଥା କଣ ବୁଝୁ ବୁଝୁ ଜାଣିଲି; ବର ପିତା ଘର ସାରା ବୁଲି ବୁଲି ମୋର ନାଚ ଫଟଟା, ମାନପତ୍ର ସବୁ କାଛ ରେ ଦେଖି ସାରି ଧିରେ ବାପାଙ୍କୁ କହିଲେ, “ଏ ନାଚଗୀତ, ପିଲାଳିଆମି ଛତାଛୁଝିଅ ଏମିତି କେତେ ଦିନ କରିବ ? ଏଥର ସଂସାର କରିବାର ସମୟ ଆସିଲା” । ବାପା ଧରିଲେ ବିଶ୍ଵାସିତଙ୍କ ରୁପ, ସତେକି ଭସ୍ମକରିଦେବେ ବାପ ପୁଅ ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କୁ , କେମିତି ଲାଙ୍ଗୁଟ ଜାଳି ବାପପୁଅ ଦୁହେଁ ପକେଇବେ ଆଉ ବାଟ ପାଇଲେ ନାହିଁ । ବୋଉ ବିଚିରବଟା ହାତଟାକୁ ମୁହଁ ରେ ସଲବଲ କରି ବୋଲି କାନ୍ଦି କାନ୍ଦି ଅଥୟ “ସତେ କଣ ଏ ଘରେ ସାହାନାଇ ବାଜିବ?” । ମୁଁ କହିଲି, “ବୋଉ, ମୋ ପାଇଁ ପକ୍ଷୀରାଜ ଘୋଡ଼ା ରେ ଚଢ଼ି ରାଜ କୁମାର ଆସିବେ, ଦେଖିବୁ ପୁରୁକିନା ଉଡିଯିବି.ତୋର ଚୁଲ୍ଲୀ ପୁଞ୍ଜା ତାଲିମ୍ ଆଉ କାମ ଦେବନି ସେତେବେଳେ” । ଭାଉଜଙ୍କୁ ଆସ୍ତେ କହିଲି, “ମୁଁ ଏବେ ଚାଲିଲି ନାଚ ସ୍କୁଲ୍, ଗୁରୁଜୀ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରୁଥିବେ” ।

ଆଉ ଦିନକର କଥା । ବାଣୀବିହାର ରେ ଇତିହାସ କାସ୍ ଭିତରକୁ ପଶିଗଲା ବେଳ କୁ ସମସ୍ତେ ହୋ ହୋ ହୋଇ ହସି ଉଠିଲେ, ତମକି ପତି ଦେଖିବା ବେଳକୁ ବାକ୍ ବୋର୍ଡରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ନୃତ୍ୟାଙ୍ଗନାର ଚିତ୍ର, ବାରି ପଟେ ଦର୍ଶକ ମଣ୍ଡଳୀ କରତାଳି ଦେଉଛନ୍ତି । ତଳେ ବଡବଡ ଅକ୍ଷରରେ ଲେଖା ହେଇଥାଏ “ନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ନନ୍ଦିତା” । ପ୍ରଫେସରଙ୍କ ସାମନାରେ ମୁହଁ ଯୋଡିଗଲା ମୋର । ଭାବିଲି ବସୁଧା ଦୁଲଫଳ ହୋଇଯାଆନ୍ତାକି, କେଉଁଠାରେ ଲୁଚିଯାଆନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଉପାୟ ନାହିଁ କାସ ସାରା ବସି ଭାବୁଥାଏ ବାପା ତ କହନ୍ତି ମୁଁ କଳାର ପୂଜାରିଣୀ । ଏ ନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ଶରଣା କାହିଁକି ଏତେ ଅତୁଆ ଲାଗୁଛି କିଛିକ୍ଷଣ ପାଇଁ ମନେହେଲା, ସତେକି ମୁଁ ଏକ ଅଭିଶପ୍ତ କିନ୍ନରୀ । କାହାକୁ ବା କହିବି, ବନ୍ଧୁଗଣ ଦେଖି ନଦେଖିଲା ପରି ରହିଲେ । ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାରେ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଲାବେଳକୁ ବାପା ଚାହାଧରି ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଥାନ୍ତି ମୋର ମୁହଁ ଦେଖି ବୁଝିଗଲେ କିଛିଗୋଟେ ଅଘଟଣ ଘଟିଛି । ମୁଁ ଧରିଲା ଗଳାରେ କହିଲି, “ଆଜି ସର୍ବସମ୍ପୃକ୍ଷରେ ମୁଁ ପରିଚିତ ଏକ ନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ଭାବେ” । ବାପା ହୋହୋ ହୋଇ ହସି ଉଠିଲେ, “କହିଲେ ତୁ ତ ଖାଲି ନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ନୁହେଁ ରାଜନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ । ତାପରେ ଅନର୍ଗଳ କହି ଚାଲିଲେ ସେଇ ବିଶ୍ଵର ରଚୟିତା ଯାହାଙ୍କର ଆଦେଶରେ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର, ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ, ବାୟୁ ତାଙ୍କର ଗତିପଥ ବଦଳାନ୍ତି ସେଇ ବିଶ୍ଵସମ୍ରାଟଙ୍କ ରାଜସଭାର ନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ତୁ । ସେଇ ସୁଖର ଏକ ଅର୍ପୁବ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଉତ୍କଳଦେଶ, ଯେ କଳାର ଭୂମି ସେଇ କଳିଙ୍ଗଭୂମିରେ ଜନ୍ମଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଛୁ, କେତେ ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟର କଥା । କଳା ତୋର ଅଂଶ ଏଥିରେ ମନଉଣା କରିବା ପାଏ” । ମୁଁ ନିମିଷକ ଭିତରେ ଭୁଲିଯାଇଥିଲି ମୋର ସମସ୍ତ ଯତ୍ନଶା । ବାହାର ଆକାଶକୁ ଚାହିଁ ଦେଖିଲି ମେଘର ସମ୍ଭାର, ମନେହେଲା ସତେକି ପକ୍ଷମେଲି ବନହଂସୀ ଯାଜି ନୀଳ ଆକାଶ ବୁକୁରେ ଲୀନ ହୋଇଯିବି । ଏଇ ସାରା ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଯେପରି ମୋର ରଂଗଭୂମି । ମୁଁ ସେଇ ରାଜନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ଯାହାର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଛନ୍ଦ ପାଦରେ ଶତ କଦମ୍ବର ରୋମାଞ୍ଚ ।

ବୋଉର ବାରମାସର ତେର ଉପବାସ କାମଦେଲା । ବାହାଘର ଦିନ ଯନ୍ତରେ ମୋର ସମସ୍ତ ନୃତ୍ୟ ସରଞ୍ଚମ ମୁଁ ସଜାଡି ରଖୁଥିଲି, ସଫଳତାର ସବୁ ମାନପତ୍ର ନିରେଖି ଦେଖିବା ସମୟରେ ବାପା ପ୍ରବେଶ କଲେ, କହିଲେ ତାଙ୍କର ଶେଷ ଉପଦେଶ ଦେବା ସମୟ ଆସି ଯାଇଛି । କାହିଁକି ଚିକିଏ ଗମ୍ଭୀର ଦିଶୁଥିଲେ, ମୋର ମନେହେଲା ଯେମିତି କଣ୍ଠ ମୁନୀ ଶକ୍ତକାଳୀଙ୍କୁ ବିଦାୟ ଦେବାର ଦୃଶ୍ୟ । ଗମ୍ଭୀର ସ୍ଵରରେ ବାପା କହିଲେ ‘ଜୀବନର ଗତି ଆଜିଠାରୁ ଭିନ୍ନରୁପ ନେବ । ସଂସାର ପଥ କଠିନ, ତାକୁ ନୃତ୍ୟାଙ୍ଗନାର ଗାରିମା ନେଇ ତଉଲିବୁ ନାହିଁ ଆଜିପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ କଳାକୁ ଉପଭୋଗ କରୁଥିଲୁ, ଏଥର ବିତରଣ କରିଶିଖ । ଦାନରେ ଥାଏ ମୁକ୍ତି ଓ ଆନନ୍ଦ । ତାଛଡା ସଂସାର ପଥରେ ଚାଲିଲା ବେଳେ କେତେବେଳେ କେଉଁ ଭୂମିକାରେ ଅଭିନୟ କରିବାକୁ ପଡିବ ଜଣାନାହିଁ । ଆଜି ଜନନୀ ତ କାଲି ପତ୍ନୀ, କେଉଁ ଦିନ ବନ୍ଧୁ ତ କେଉଁଦିନ ଭଗ୍ନୀ, ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଭୂମିକା ସ୍ଵତନ୍ତ୍ର ଯେମିତି କେହି କାହା ସହିତ ମିଶି ନଯାଆନ୍ତି । ସଂସାରର ଯନ୍ତ ନେବୁ, କଳଙ୍କି ଲାଗିବାକୁ ଦେବୁନାହିଁ । ନହେଲେ ଏତେ ଦିନର ସାଧନା ମାଟିରେ ମିଶିଯିବ ।” ତାପରେ ନିଜେନିଜେ ଗାଇ ଉଠିଥିଲେ,

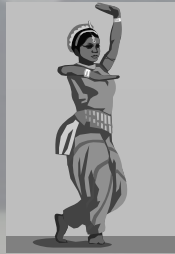
ଇଚ୍ଛାମତେ କାହିଁ ଚଳିବ ବା ଜନ  
ସଂସାରେ ନିଜର ନୁହେଁ ନିଜ ମନ ।

ଘରୁ ବିଦାୟ ନେବାର ସମୟ ଆସିଯାଇଥିଲା । ବୋଉ କାନିରେ ଚାଉଳ ଆଞ୍ଜୁଳି ଚାଉଳ ଦେଇ ବାପାଙ୍କ ମୁହଁକୁ ନିରେଖି ଚାହିଁଲି ମନେମନେ ଗୁମୁରି ଉଠିଲି ‘ହେ ବନ୍ଧୁ ବିଦାୟ !’ କାରଣ ତାଙ୍କ ମତରେ ଅଶୁ ଝରାଇବା ଏକ ବିଳାସର ଲକ୍ଷଣ । ତାଙ୍କ ପାଦଛୁଇଁ ମନେମନେ ଶପଥ ନେଇଥିଲି, ତୁମ କଳିଙ୍ଗ ଜେମା କଳାକୁ ଯତ୍ନରେ ବଞ୍ଚାଇ ରଖିବ ।

ନିକଟ ଅତୀତରେ ମୋର ଗୋଟିଏ ଛାତ୍ରୀ ମୋତେ ଗୋଟିଏ କବିତା ଉପହାର ଦେଇଥିଲା, ହୃଦୟ କୁ ଛୁଇଁଲା ଭଳି କବିତା ଟିଏ । ଭାବିଲି ମୁଁ ତ ତାର ଯୋଗ୍ୟ ନୁହେଁ ! ବାପା ସିନା ନାହାନ୍ତି, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ତ ମୋ ପ୍ରେରଣା ର ଉତ୍ସ, ତେଣୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ଉତ୍ସର୍ଗ କଲି ଏଇ କବିତା---

The art which you have given  
Lives deep within my soul.  
Like the call of a lighthouse on a distant shore.  
You have guided many home to a land of yore,  
Where temples once intangible,  
Brilliantly shine before awe struck eyes  
Where anklets chime melodiously.  
As feet break upon sacrificing earth  
Where there exists no pain,  
Behind red lips only radiant smiles  
In the winding path,  
Thorns will wait,  
But with a dancer's might  
They shall melt away.  
(Nirokhee)

ଡାଇରେକ୍ଟର, ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ଡାନ୍ସ୍ ସାର୍କଲ୍  
କାଲିଫର୍ନିଆ



“ମୁଁ ଏକ ପିତୁଳା ମାତ୍ର, ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶରେ ଅଗେଇ ଚାଲିଛି ।”

ଗୁରୁ କେଳୁଚରଣ ମହାପାତ୍ର  
(ଗୁରୁକୃପା, ନନ୍ଦିତା ବେହେରା, ସୋଭେନିଅର ୨୦୦୪)





## ଭୂମିକା ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ

ଝରକା କବାଟ ଖୋଲିଦେବାରୁ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାର ଶୀତଳ ପବନ ଝାଲୁଆ ଦେହଟିରେ ଚନ୍ଦନ ବୋଲିଦେଲାକି ସତେ ! ଏବେ ବିମଳା ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରୁ ଫେରିଲେ । ଭଟାଗାଡିଟିରେ ଏୟାରକଣ୍ଡିସନିଙ୍ଗ୍ ନଥିଲା । ସେଥିରେ ପୁଣି ଶାଢ଼ୀ, ଗହଣା କେତେ କଣ କିଣିବାର ଥିଲା । କଟକରେ ଭଉଣୀ ବସାରେ ପହୁଞ୍ଚି ରୁମ୍ ଭିତରେ ସବୁ ସେମିତି ଫେପାଡି ଦେଇ ବସିପଡିଲେ ବିମଳା । କଟକରେ କିଣାକିଣି କରିଥିଲେ ବି ଚଳିଥାନ୍ତା; ହେଲେ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଜୟନ୍ତଙ୍କର ସାଙ୍ଗ ଜଣେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଦୋକାନ ସହିତ ବୁଝାସୁଝା କରିଥିଲା । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଗରମରେ ଏ ବୃଥା ଦହଗଞ୍ଜ ।

ଶାଢ଼ୀ ସବୁ ବାକସ ଭିତରେ ସଜାଡି ରଖିରଖି ଭଉଣୀ କମଳା ମନ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଦେଲା, “ତୁ ଯେମିତି ଚିନ୍ତିତ ହେଉଛୁ ନା ଅପା, ମତେ ତ ଲାଗୁଛି ଡୋର ହିଁ ବାହାଘର ହେଉଛି, ଆଉ ତୁ ବୋହୂ ହୋଇ ଯାଉଛୁ କେଉଁ ଅଜଣା, ଅଶୁଣା ଘରକୁ ।” ଶାଶୁ ହେବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତି ଯେ କରୁଛି, ସେଇଟା କଣ ସହଜ କଥା । ମୁଁ ତ ଭାବିବି ପାରୁନି ଯେ ଶାଶୁ ଭୂମିକାରେ କେମିତି କଣ କରିବି । ବରଂ ବୋହୂର ଭୂମିକା ସହଜ ଥିଲା । ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ କଥା ମାନିଦେଲେ ବୋହୂର ଭୂମିକା ହୋଇଗଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ କେଉଁ କଥାଟା ଭଲ ଓ ବୋହୂର ମାନିବା ଭାବିତ, ଏ ସବୁ ବିଷୟରେ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନେବା ଏତେ ସହଜ କଥା ନୁହେଁ । “ ତୁ ଯାହା କହୁଲେ କମଳା, ଏ ବିମଳା ଅପା ଆମେରିକାରେ ପଢ଼ିବ ବର୍ଷ ରହିଲାଣି, ସେ ଦେଶରୁ କିଛି ଶିଖିଲା ନାହିଁ । ନା ଏ ଦେଶର ହେଲା, ନା ସେ ଦେଶର ହେଲା । ଆଲୋ, ଶାଶୁ ହବ ତ ଗୋଡ଼ଘଷା ଖାଇବ । ତା ପାଇଁ ଏତେ ଚିନ୍ତା କଣ?” ଦାଦାଙ୍କ ଝିଅ କାଞ୍ଚନ ଏତିକି କହି ରୋଷେଇ ଘରକୁ ଚାଲିଗଲା ।

ବିମଳା ହସିଲେ । “ଉପର ବରତା ଖସୁଛି, ତଳ ବରତା ହସୁଛି; ମଝି ବରତା କହୁଛି, ମୋ ଦିନକାଳ ଆସୁଛି ।” ଏମିତି ତ ବିମଳା ଥଣ୍ଡା କରୁଥିଲେ ଦିନେ ସୁମିତ୍ରା ଅପାଙ୍କୁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜି ବୁଝୁଛନ୍ତି ଶାଶୁ ହେବାଟା କେତେ ବଡ଼ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ, କେତେ ବଡ଼ ଚିନ୍ତା । କମଳା, କାଞ୍ଚନଙ୍କର ସମୟ ଆସିଲେ ସେମାନେ ବି ବଳେବଳେ ବୁଝିଯିବେ ।

ମନେପଡୁଛି ନିଜ ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ କଥା । ଷୋହଳବର୍ଷରେ ବାହାଘର ହୋଇଥିଲା ବିମଳାଙ୍କର । ସେତେବେଳେ ସିଏ ମାଟ୍ରିକ୍ ପରୀକ୍ଷା ଦେଇ ଫେରିଥାନ୍ତି । ବଡ଼ବାପା ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ ଆଣିଥିଲେ ଜୟନ୍ତଙ୍କର; ଏମ୍-ଏସ୍-ସି- ପାଶ୍ କରି ସେତେବେଳେ ସେ ନୂଆ ଚାକିରି କରୁଥାନ୍ତି କଟକରେ । ଏତେ ଭଲ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ, ହାତଛତା କରିବାର ନାହିଁ । ବାପା ରାଜି ହୋଇଗଲେ । ଷୋହଳ ବର୍ଷରେ ଶାଶୁଘର ଗଲେ ବିମଳା । ଶାଢ଼ୀ ବି ଭଲଭାବେ ପିନ୍ଧି ଜାଣିନଥାନ୍ତି; ରୋଷେଇବାସ ତ ଦୂରର କଥା ।

ଶାଶୁ ଦେଖେଇ ଦେଖେଇ କେତେ କଥା କହନ୍ତି; “ଆମେ କଣ ବୋହୂ ହୋଇନଥିଲୁ । ମୁଁ ତ ପୁଣି ତେର ବରଷରେ ବୋହୂ ହୋଇ ଆସିଥିଲି । ଘରୁଆ ପିଲା ହେଲେ ସିନା ଘରୁଆ କଥା ଶିଖିବ । ତରକାରୀ କରୁଛି, କେଉଁଦିନ ଅଲଣା ତ କେଉଁଦିନ ଲୁଣିଆ । ରୋଷେଇରେ ସିନା ମନଥିଲେ?”

ବିମଳା ସହିଯାଆନ୍ତି; କେବେକେବେ ଆଖିରୁ ଦୁଇଗୋପା ଲୁହ ଝରିପଡେ । ଏଥିରେ ଦିଅର ସୁମନ୍ତ ମା’ ଉପରେ ପାଟିକରନ୍ତି । ଶାଶୁଙ୍କର ରାଗ ବଢେ; ଦିଅର, ଭାଇଜନଙ୍କର ସମ୍ପର୍କ ଉପରେ ବି ସନ୍ଦେହ ରଖନ୍ତି ସେ । ସୁମନ୍ତକୁ ଗାଳି ଦେଇ କହନ୍ତି, “ଦିନ କେଲଟା ହେଇନି, ନୂଆବୋଉକୁ ଏତେ ଆଦରିଗଲୁ ଯେ ମା’ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚ କରୁଛୁ ?”

ଜୟନ୍ତଙ୍କର ନୂଆ ଚାକିରି । ସେ ଭତାଘର ଚାରିଜଣ ସାଙ୍ଗଙ୍କ ସହିତ ମେସ୍ କରି ରହୁଥାନ୍ତି । ତେଣୁ ଚାକିରି ଯାଗାକୁ ବିମଳାଙ୍କୁ ନେବା ସହଜ ନଥିଲା । ବିମଳା ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଗାଁରେ ଶାଶୁ, ଶୁଶୁରଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ଜୟନ୍ତ ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ଛୁଟିରେ ଗାଁକୁ ଆସୁଥିଲେ । ବିବାହର ତିନିବର୍ଷ ପରେ କୋଳକୁ ଆସିଥିଲା ବୁବୁ, ତାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଥମ ସନ୍ତାନ । ବୁବୁର ଜନ୍ମ ପରେପରେ ଜୟନ୍ତ ଆମେରିକା ଯିବା ବିଷୟରେ ଯୋଜନା କରୁଥିବାର କଥା ତାଙ୍କ ବାପାଙ୍କୁ ଜଣାଇଲେ ।

“ମୁଁ ପରା ଜାଣିଛି, ଇଏ ସବୁ ସେଇ ବୋହୂର ଶିକ୍ଷା ।” – ଶୁଶୁରଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ସକେଇ ସକେଇ କହିଲେ ଶାଶୁ ।

“ବୋହୂକୁ କାହିଁକି ମିଛରେ ଦୋଷ ଦେଉଛ ? ଏ କଥାଟା ତ ଜୟୀ ନିଜେ ନିଜେ ସ୍ଥିର କରିଛି ।”

“ତମେ କଣ ଜାଣିଛ ମା’ ଶାଶୁ, ଶୁଶୁରଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ରହିଲେ ସେବା ଯେ କରିବାକୁ ପଡିବ, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ବୋହୂର ଏ ଚାଲାକି ।”



“ହେଲେ ଜୟୀ ଏବେ ଆମେରିକା ଗଲେ ବୋହୁ ତ ଯାଇପାରିବନି । ସେଠି ତାକୁ ତା’ ନିଜ ଚଳିବାକୁ ଯାହା ଯେତିକି ପଇସାପତ୍ର ମିଳିବ । ସେଥିରେ ବୋହୁକୁ ନେଇ ଚଳିପାରିବନି ସେ ସେଠି । ବୋହୁ ତ ଆମ ପାଖରେ ଗାରେ ହିଁ ରହିବ ।”

ଶାଶୁ ତୁପ୍ ପଡ଼ିଯାଇଥିଲେ । ତଥାପି ଯେବେ ବି ଜୟନ୍ତଙ୍କ କଥା ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ମନକୁ ପାଉନଥିଲା, ସେତେବେଳେ ବୋହୁକୁ ଦୋଷ ଦେବାକୁ ଭୁଲୁନଥିଲେ ସେ । “ପାଖରେ ଶୁଏ, କାନରେ କୁହେ; ତା’ କଥାକି କେବେ ଅନ୍ୟଥା ହୁଏ?” – ଏ ସବୁ ଉଗ୍ରହମାଳି ବଖାଣି ଖୁଟିଶାଶୁ ଙ୍କ ସହ ବେଶ୍ ଗପର ପେଟି ଖୋଲିଦିଅନ୍ତି ସେ । ସେଇ ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ମାନ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଥିଲା ସାନ ଯା’ ଶ୍ୱେତା ଘରକୁ ଆସିବା ପରେ । ସେଦିନର ଘଟଣାଟା ବିମଳାଙ୍କ ଆଖି ଆଗରେ ଏବେ ବି ନାଚିଉଠେ । ଶ୍ୱେତାର ମାମୁଁ, ମାଙ୍କ ବମ୍ବେରେ ରହନ୍ତି । ସେମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆସିଥାନ୍ତି ଓ ଭାଣିଜୀକୁ ଦେଖା କରିବାପାଇଁ ଆସୁଥାନ୍ତି ସେଦିନ । ଶ୍ୱେତା ଘରଦ୍ୱାର ସବୁ ସଜାସଜି କରିଥାଏ । ତୁଳ୍‌ରୁମକୁ ସଫାକରି, ଟେବୁଲ୍, ଟେୟାର୍ ଆଦି ସଜାଇ, ଟେବୁଲ୍ ଉପରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଫୁଲଦାନୀ ରଖିଥାଏ । ସବୁ ସଜାସଜି କରି ଦୁଇଯାଆ ମିଶି ଜଳଖିଆ ଓ ରାତିଭୋଜନର ତିଆରି କରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ରୋଷେଇବାସ ସାରି ଯାଇ ଦେଖିବାବେଳକୁ ଦାଣ୍ଡଘରେ ଟେବୁଲ୍‌କୁ ଘୁଞ୍ଚାଇ, ଫୁଲଦାନୀକୁ ତଳେ ରଖି, ଶାଶୁ ପାନ ଭାଙ୍ଗିବାରେ ଲାଗିଛନ୍ତି । ଶ୍ୱେତାର ରାଗ ଚଢ଼ିଗଲା ।

“ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଆଉ କୋଉଠି ପାନ ଭାଙ୍ଗିବାକୁ ଜାଗା ମିଳିଲାନି ଯେ, ଏ ଘରଟାକୁ ଏମିତି ଅସନା କଲେ”, ଶ୍ୱେତା ଚଢ଼ା ଗଳାରେ କହିଲା ।

“ଆଲୋ ତୁ କେଇଟା ଦିନ ଆସିଲୁ ଯେ, ଏମିତି ହାକିମି ଦେଖାଉଛୁ । ଇଏ ମୋ ଘର ନା’, ତୋ ଘର ବା? ଟେବୁଲ୍‌ଟାକୁ ପୁଣି କଣ ଘୁଞ୍ଚେଇ ଦେଇ ତା’ ଜାଗାରେ ରଖିଦେଲେ ଚଳିବନି ?” ଶ୍ୱେତା ଛାତିବାର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକ ନୁହେଁ । ସିଏ ଜବାବଦେଲା, “ଏଇଟା ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଘର ଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏବେ ଏଇଟା ଆପଣଙ୍କର, ଅପାଙ୍କର ଓ ମୋର ଘର । ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କ ରୁଚି ଓ ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କ ଅତିଥି, ଅଭ୍ୟାଗତଙ୍କୁ ସମ୍ମାନ ଦେବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ ।” ଶାଶୁ ତୁପ୍ । ସେଇଦିନରୁ କିନ୍ତୁ ସିଏ ବିମଳାର ବେଶୀ ନିଜର ହୋଇଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଏ ଘଟଣାର ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ ପରେ ବିମଳା ଆମେରିକା ଆସିଥିଲେ । ସେ ଘରଛାଡ଼ିବା ଦିନ ଶାଶୁ କେତେ କାନ୍ଦିଥିଲେ ! “ତୁ ଯାଉଛୁ ଲୋ ବିମଳା, ଘରୁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ଚାଲିଯାଉଛି । ତୋ ବିନା ଏ ଘର, ଦ୍ୱାର ସବୁ ଶିରୀହୀନ ହୋଇଯିବ ।” ବିମଳା ଶ୍ୱେତାକୁ ବୁଝାଉଥିଲେ । ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ମନଦୁଃଖ ହେବା ଭଳି କଥା ନ କହିବ ଯେମିତି, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରିଥିଲେ । ଶ୍ୱେତା କହିଥିଲା, “ମୁଁ ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ପଢ଼ାଉଛି ଅପା, ମୋର କଣ ସେତିକି ଜ୍ଞାନ ନାହିଁ । ତେବେ ଅକ୍ଷୟଶ୍ରୀଙ୍କର କଥା, ଅନ୍ୟାୟ, ଅସଙ୍ଗତ କଥାର ପ୍ରତିବାଦ ନକଲେ, ସେ ସେମିତି ରହି ଆମ ସମାଜକୁ ଦୂଷିତ କରିବ ଅପା । ତମେ ସିନା ସହିଯାଉଥିଲୁ, ମୁଁ କିନ୍ତୁ ସେସବୁ ସହିପାରିବିନି । ହେଲେ ଜାଣିଶୁଣି ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କ ମନରେ କେବେ ଆଘାତ ଦେବିନି ।”

ଏବେ ବିମଳା ନିଜେ ଶାଶୁ ହେବାକୁ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ସିଏ ବୋହୁହେବାର ଅଠତିରିଶ ବର୍ଷ ପୂରିଗଲାଣି । ବୁଢ଼ୁକୁ ପଞ୍ଚତିରିଶ ହେଲା । ତାକୁ ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେବା ଦିନରୁ ତା’ ବାହାଘର ନେଇ ବିମଳା ଚିନ୍ତିତ । ବର୍ଷଟିଏ ବିତିଗଲେ ବିମଳାଙ୍କ ଆଗଙ୍କ ଆହୁରି ବଢ଼ିଯାଏ । ସରିତା ଅପାଙ୍କ ପୁଅ ଦୀପ୍ତ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଜର୍ମାନି ଝିଅଟିଏ ବାହା ହୋଇଗଲା, ସେତେବେଳେ ବିମଳାଙ୍କ ଚିନ୍ତା ଆହୁରି ବଢ଼ିଗଲା । ଦୀପ୍ତ ଜର୍ମାନି ଝିଅ ବାହାହେଲା ତ ହେଲା, ହେଲେ ସବୁଠୁ ଦୁଃଖର ବିଷୟ ଯେ, ସେ ବାପା, ମା’ ଙ୍କୁ ପଦଟିଏ ବି ପଚାରିଲାନି । ନିଜେନିଜେ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚରେ ବାହାଘର ଯୋଗାତ କରି, ବାପା, ମା’ଙ୍କ ପାଖକୁ କାର୍ଡଟିଏ ପଠାଇ ଦେଇଥିଲା । ସରିତା ଅପାଙ୍କର ସେ ଦୁଃଖଭରା ମୁହଁ ଓ କାନ୍ଦ ବିମଳା ଭୁଲିନାହାନ୍ତି । ଇଏତ ଗଲା ସରିତା ଅପାଙ୍କ କଥା । ଗୋକୁଳ ବାବୁ, ରମେଶ ବାବୁ, ମୀନକେତନ ବାବୁ, ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ପିଲା ଚାଳିଶ ଟପିଲେଣି, କିନ୍ତୁ ସବୁ ଅବିବାହିତ । କେବେକେବେ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ କଥା ପଚାରିଲେ, ବାପା, ମାଙ୍କ ଦୀର୍ଘଶ୍ରୀୟ କାନରେ ବାଜେ । ନାତିନାତୁଣୀ ମାନଙ୍କୁ କୋଳରେ ଧରି ନାନାବାୟା ଗୀତ ଗାଇବାର ଇଚ୍ଛାଟା ଦୁଃଖର ଆର୍ତ୍ତନାଦ ହୋଇ ମୁଖମଣ୍ଡଳରେ କଳାବାଦଲ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଦିଏ ।

ସେ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ବିମଳା ଭାଗ୍ୟବତୀ । ଏଇତ ଛ ମାସ ତଳେ ବୁଢ଼ୁକୁ ଧରି ସେମାନେ ତିସେମ୍ବର ମାସରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆସିଥାନ୍ତି । ଜୟନ୍ତଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗ ନଟବର କଟକରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି । ସିଏ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ତିନି ଘାଇଁ ଚାକିଆନ୍ତି । ଗପସପ ହେଉହେଉ କଥାଛଳରେ ବୁଢ଼ୁର ବାହାଘର କଥା ଉଠିଲା । ସେଇଠୁ ନଟବର ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ ଦେଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ବଡ଼ଶଳାଙ୍କ ଝିଅ ବିଷୟରେ । ତାଙ୍କ ବଡ଼ଶଳା ଅଞ୍ଜେଲିଆରେ ରହନ୍ତି । ସିଏ ଆଗେ ସିଙ୍ଗପୁରରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ଝିଅଟି ସିଙ୍ଗପୁରରେ ଜନ୍ମ । ଏବେ ଅଞ୍ଜେଲିଆରେ ଚାକିରି କରୁଛି; ତିରିଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି । ଝିଅର ବାପା, ମା ବି ତାର ବାହାଘର ନେଇ ଚିନ୍ତିତ । ଯୋଗକୁ ସେ ଝିଅ ସହିତ ସେମାନେ ବି ଦୁଇଦିନ ପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି ।

ଯୋଗକୁ ବୁଢ଼ା ଘଟସୁତ । ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମରଙ୍କର ମହିମା ବଡ଼ ବିଚିତ୍ର । କେଉଁଠି କଣ ଘଟାନ୍ତି ସେ ଓ କେତେ ଆକସ୍ମିକ ଭାବେ ଘଟାନ୍ତି, ତାର କଳନା କରିବା ମଣିଷର ଚିନ୍ତାଶକ୍ତିରୁ ବାହାରେ । ପାଞ୍ଚଦିନ ପରେ ପୁଣି ଧରେ ନଟବରଙ୍କ ଘରେ ରାତିଭୋଜନର ବନ୍ଦୋବସ୍ତ ହେଲା । ନଟବରଙ୍କ ବଡ଼ଶଳା ପ୍ରକାଶ, ତାଙ୍କ ପଞ୍ଚାବୀ ପତ୍ନୀ ସୁଶୀଳା ଓ ଝିଅ ରତ୍ନାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ପରିଚୟ ହେଲା । ରତ୍ନା ଓ ବୁଢ଼ୁ ବି ପରସ୍ପରକୁ ଜାଣିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପାଇଲେ । ଘଟଣା ସବୁ ଏତେ ଶୀଘ୍ର ଘଟିଗଲା ଯେ ସମୟର ଠିକଣା ରହିଲାନି । ଛୁଟି ଆଉ ତିନିସପ୍ତହ ବଢ଼ାଇ





ଏନଗେଜମେଣ୍ଟ ବି ସେଇ ସମୟରେ ସାରିଦେଲେ । ଆଠମାସ ପରେ ବିବାହ ତାରିଖ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରି ଫେରିଥିଲେ ସେମାନେ ଆମେରିକା । ବିମଳା ମନେମନେ ଜାତି, କୁଳର ଝିଅଟିଏ ଖୋଜୁଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ କିଛିଦିନ ମନରେ “କିନ୍ତୁ” ରଖିଥିଲେ । “କରଣ ଘରର ଝିଅଟିଏ ମିଳିଥିଲେ ଭଲ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତା ।”

“ଆରେ ତମ ପୁଅ ବାହା ହେଉଛି, ତମେ ସେତିକିରେ ଖୁସି ହୁଅ । ଯେତିକି ପାଇଛ, ସେତିକି ପାଇଁ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦିଅ । ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଜୀବନ ଥାଉ ଥାଉ ପୁଅ ବାହାଘର ଦେଖିବ । ଦେଖୁଛି ତ ତମ ମାରା ଅପା କେମିତି ପୁଅ ବାହାଘର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ପୂରଣ ନ ହେଉହେଉ ସଂସାର ଛାଡ଼ି ଚାଲିଗଲେ ।” ଜୟନ୍ତଙ୍କ କଥା ନିରାଟ ସତ୍ୟ ।

ତାପରେ ବିମଳା ସବୁ ପ୍ରତିବାଦ ଭୁଲିଗଲେ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଚିରିଣ ବର୍ଷ ହେବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସିଏ ତିନିଟି ସନ୍ତାନର ଜନନୀ ହୋଇସାରିଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ଭାବୀ ବୋହୂ ତିରିଶ ବର୍ଷରେ ବାହା ହେବ । ସବୁ ସେଇ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମରଙ୍କ ଲକ୍ଷ । ତାଙ୍କ ମନରେ ବି ଆଶଙ୍କା ଥିଲା ଯେ କାଳେ ତିରିଶବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଝିଅମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଜନନ ଶକ୍ତି କମିଯାଇଥିବ; କିନ୍ତୁ ତାଙ୍କରୀ ବିଦ୍ୟା ଆଜିକାଲି ବହୁତ ଉନ୍ନତି କଲାଣି । ସେଇ ବିଶ୍ୱାସରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଚିନ୍ତା ଚିକେ କମିଥିଲା । ବୁରୁ ତଳେ ଆଉ ଦୁଇଜଣ ପିଲା ଅଛନ୍ତି; ସାନପୁଅ ବୁରୁକୁ ଅଠେଇଶ ବର୍ଷ ହୁଏ ମାସକ ପରେ; ଝିଅ ଚିନି ସବୁଠୁ ସାନ, ମେଡିକାଲ୍ କଲେଜରେ ପଢୁଛି । ତେବେ ବୁରୁର ବାହାଘର ପରେ ସିଏ ଚିନି କଥା ଭାବିବେ ।

ବୁରୁର ବାହାଘର ମାତ୍ର ଦୁଇମାସ ରହିଲା, ଅଗଷ୍ଟ ୨୦ ତାରିଖରେ । ମେରିଅର୍ ହୋଟେଲ୍ ଭଡା ନିଆଯାଇଛି । ସାକ୍ଷ୍ୟାଥୀ ସମସ୍ତେ “ହୁ” କରିଛନ୍ତି ବାହାଘରକୁ ଆସିବେ । ସମୁଦା, ସମୁଦାଣୀ ବି ଅଛନ୍ତିଆରୁ ପାଞ୍ଚଦିନ ଆଗରୁ ପହଞ୍ଚିବେ । ବରଜନ୍ମାଙ୍କୁ ସଜେଇବା ପାଇଁ ବଲନା ଦିଆଯାଇଛି । ସଙ୍ଗତ, ଭାଙ୍ଗରା ନାଚ ଓ ଖାଦ୍ୟପାନୀୟ ପାଇଁ ସବୁ ବଲନା ଦିଆସରିଛି । ତଥାପି ବିମଳାଙ୍କ ଛାତି ଧତଧତ ହେଉଛି । ବାହାଘର ଦିନ ଯେତେ ପାଖେଇ ଆସୁଛି, ମନ ସେତେ ଆତଙ୍କିତ, ଚିନ୍ତା ସେତେ ବଢୁଛି । ଶାଶୁ ଭୂମିକାରେ ସେ ଠିକ୍ ଭାବେ ଅଭିନୟ କରିପାରିବେ ତ? ପରଝିଅଟିକୁ ଠିକ୍ ଭାବେ ଚଳେଇ ପାରିବେ ତ?

“ନିଜକୁ ଶାଶୁ ବୋଲି କେବେ ଭାବିବନି ବିମଳା । ମା’ ଭଳି ଭାବିବ । ତେବେ ସବୁ ସହଜ ହୋଇଯିବ ।” – ସାଙ୍ଗ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନା ଉପଦେଶ ଦେଇଥିଲା । “ଭାବିଦେଲେ ତ ସବୁ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ସେମିତି ସହଜ ହୋଇଯାଏନି । ସବୁ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ସହିତ ଅଧିକାର ଓ କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଯୋଡ଼ା ହୋଇଛି । ପରଝିଅଟିକୁ ନିଜଝିଅ ଭାବିଦେଲେ ମା’ର କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ସହିତ ଯଦି ଅଧିକାର ସାବ୍ୟସ୍ତ କରିଦେବି ତ, ସେଇଟା ହୁଏତ ଭୁଲ୍ ହୋଇଯିବ । ତେଣୁ ସବୁ ସମ୍ପର୍କକୁ ସେହି ସମ୍ପର୍କର ସୀମା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ହିଁ ଆବଣ କରି ରଖିବା ଉଚିତ ।” – ବିମଳା ମତ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ।

ବୋହୂଟି ତାଙ୍କର ଯଦି ସବୁ ସମ୍ପର୍କର ଅଧିକାର, କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଓ ସୀମାକୁ ଠିକ୍ ଭାବେ ବୁଝିଥିବ, ତେବେ ସେ ଉତ୍ତମ ଶାଶୁ ହେବାରେ କୌଣସି କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟରେ ହେଳା କରିବେନି । ବୋହୂ ପାଇଁ ଶାଢ଼ୀ, ଗହଣା, ବହୁବାନ୍ଧଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ବେଭାର, ଓ ବାହାଘର ପାଇଁ ବେଦୀ ସରଞ୍ଚମ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି କିଣାକିଣି କରିବା ପାଇଁ ସେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆସିଛନ୍ତି । ଶାଶୁ ଓ ନିଜ ମା’ ଙ୍କୁ ବି ନେଇକରି ଯିବେ । ବହୁତ କଷ୍ଟରେ ସେମାନେ ରାଜି ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି ବତନାତି ବାହାଘର ପାଇଁ ଆମେରିକା ଯିବାକୁ ।

X X X  
ବୁରୁର ବାହାଘର ସରିଯାଇଥିଲା । ମେରିଅର୍ ହୋଟେଲ୍ରେ ରିସେପ୍ସନ୍ ଚାଲିଥିଲା । ମା’ ଓ ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ବସି ତାଙ୍କ ଖାଇବା କଥା ବୁଝୁଥିଲେ ବିମଳା । ଭାଙ୍ଗରା ନାଚ ଚାଲିଥିଲା । ବୁରୁର ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ବୁରୁ ଓ ରତ୍ନାଙ୍କୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ନାଚିବା ପାଇଁ ଟାଣି ନେଇଗଲେ । ବୁରୁ ଓ ରତ୍ନା ନାଚରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଲେ ।

ଶାଶୁ କହିଲେ, “ଆଲୋ ବିମଳା, ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଓଢ଼ଣା ନଦେଲା ନାହିଁ, ନୁଆବୋହୁଟା ଏତେ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ନାଚିବ; କଥାଟା ମତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦେଖାହେଉନି । ଯା’ ମନାକର ତାକୁ ।” ଏଇ ସମୟରେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନା ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚି କହିଲା, “କନ୍ତାତୁ୍ୟଲେସନ୍ସ ବିମଳା; ଏବେ ତମେ ଶାଶୁ ହୋଇଗଲ ।” ବିମଳା କହିଲେ, “ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।” ତାପରେ ଗଳା ପରିଷ୍କାର କରି ପୁଣି କହିଲେ, “ସ୍ୱପ୍ନା, ଚିକେ ରତ୍ନାକୁ ଯାଇ କୁହ ସିଏ ନାଚିବନି ।” ସ୍ୱପ୍ନା ଆକ୍ଷୟ ହୋଇ କହିଲା, “କିନ୍ତୁ କାହିଁକି ? ଏଇଟା ତ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଖୁସିର ଦିନ । ଏଠି ସବୁ ବାହାଘରରେ ଏମିତି ହେଉଛି ।” ବିମଳା କହିଲେ, “ଯାଇ କହିଦିଅ ଯେ ଏଇଟା ତା’ ଶାଶୁଙ୍କର ଅନୁରୋଧ ।”

ତକଟର ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ ତେଟନ୍, ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡରେ ରହନ୍ତି । ଦୈନିଦିନ ଜୀବନର ଅଭିଜ୍ଞତାକୁ ନିଜ ଭାବନାରେ ଚିତ୍ରିତ କରି କାହାଣୀ ରଚନା କରିବା ତାଙ୍କର ସଉକ୍ ।

## କର୍ମା ଜୁଲି ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ରାୟ

ସକାଳୁ ଉଠି ଆନୁ ର ପ୍ରଥମ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ, “ମାମା, ଆମେ କଣ **Jewish** ?” । ମତେ ଚିକେ ହସ ମାଡ଼ିଲା । ମୁଁ କହିଲି “ନା” । ଆନୁ କହିଲା, “ମାମା ଆମେ **Jewish** ହେଇଥିଲେ କେତେ ଭଲ ହେଇଥାନ୍ତା” । ଏଥରକ ମୁଁ ଚିକେ ଗମ୍ଭୀର ସ୍ଵରରେ ପଚାରିଲି, “କାହିଁକି?” । ଉତ୍ତର ରେ ଆନୁ ମତେ **Jewish** ହେବାର ସପକ୍ଷରେ ଗୋଟିକ ପରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଯୁକ୍ତି ଦର୍ଶାଇଲା । ପ୍ରଥମେ ହେଲା ଯେ “ଆମେ **Hanuka celebrate** କରି ପାରିଥା’ନ୍ତେ” । ଦ୍ଵିତୀୟ ରେ, “ଆମେ **Jewish cake** ଖାଇ ପାରିଥା’ନ୍ତେ” । ତାପରେ “**Jewish dance** କରି ପାରିଥା’ନ୍ତେ” । ଏହା କହି “**Dance the Horah, this is the time of joy**” ନାଚ କରି ଦେଖାଇବା ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ “**Light the candle, light the candle, Hanukkah is here**” ଗୀତ ବୋଲି ଶୁଣାଇ ଦେଲା ।

ତିସେମ୍ବର ମାସ । ଆନୁ ସ୍କୁଲ ର କିଣ୍ଟରଗାର୍ଡେନ୍ କାମ୍ପରେ ଯୀଶୁ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟଙ୍କ ଜନ୍ମ, **Christianity, Judaism**, ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ବିଷୟରେ ପଢ଼ା ହେଉଥାଏ । ପାଞ୍ଚ ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ଯେତେ ବେଳେ ମୁଁ ଭାରତ ଛାଡ଼ି ଆମେରିକା ଆସୁଥିଲି, ଖୁବ ଘନିଷ୍ଠ ବନ୍ଧୁ ଜଣେ ମତେ କହିଥିଲେ, “ଜୁଲି, ନିଜ ପାଇଁ ଭାରତ ଛାଡ଼ି ଯାଉଛ । ଏହାର ପରିଣତି ରେ ତୁମ ପିଲାମାନେ ଯଦି କିଛି ଭୁଲ କରି ବସନ୍ତି, ତେବେ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଦୋଷ ଦେବ ନାହିଁ । ଭୁଲ ତୁମର, ଏହାର ଶାସ୍ତି ତୁମେ ପାଇବା ଉଚିତ” ।

ଆମେ ଆସି ଆମେରିକା ରେ ଅଗଷ୍ଟ ମାସରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲୁ । ସବୁ କଥା କେମିତି ଓଲଟା ଖାମ୍ ଛତା ଲାଗୁଥାଏ । ଏ ଜାଗାର ଶବ୍ଦ ଭିନ୍ନ, ବାସ୍ନା ଭିନ୍ନ । କଥା ଭିନ୍ନ, ଲୁଗା ଭିନ୍ନ । ଲୋକେ ଭିନ୍ନ, ରାସ୍ତା ଭିନ୍ନ । ମନ ଭିନ୍ନ, ପବନ ଭିନ୍ନ ! କି ଦେଶ ଇଏ? ସବୁ ବେଳେ ଶୀତ? ଘର ବହାରକୁ ଚାହିଁଲେ କେବଳ ଗାତି ଛତା କିଛି ଦିଶୁ ନାହିଁ । ଦିଲ୍ଲି ରେ ଏତେ ବର୍ଷ ରହିଥିବା ସମୟରେ ବି ପ୍ରାୟ ଏଇ ମଣିଷ ବିହୀନ ଗାତି ମାନଙ୍କ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳୁ ଥିଲା । ହେଲେ ରାସ୍ତା ରେ ରେଡି ବାଲା ମାନେ ଦିନ ରାତି ପରିବା ପତ୍ରର ଦର ଦାମ ବଡ଼ ପାଟି ରେ ତାକି ତାକି ଠେଲି ଗାଡ଼ି ନେଇ ବୁଲୁଥାନ୍ତି । ରାତି ଅଧ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ହୋ ହା ବାଲିଥାଏ । ଏ ଦେଶ ପରି ସବୁ ଆତ ନିର୍ଜୀବ ମନେ ହୁଏ ନାହିଁ । କାହିଁ ଦିଲ୍ଲିର ଖରା ଦିନିଆ ନିମ୍ନ ପୂଲର ମିଠା ବସ୍ତା, କାହିଁ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ଵର ର ନାଲି କୃଷ୍ଣଚୂଡ଼ା ଓ କାହିଁ ଏ ପାଇନ ଗଛର ତାରପିନ୍ ତେଲ ର ଗନ୍ଧ! ସେ ବାସ୍ନା ନାକରେ ବାଜିଲେ ମନଟା ହତୋସ୍ତାହିତ ହୋଇ ପଡ଼େ ।

ପ୍ରଥମ ଦିନ ଦ୍ଵିପହର ରେ ଶୋଇଥିବା ସମୟ ରେ ଉପର ଘରେ କେହି ଦୌଡ଼ିବାର ଶବ୍ଦରେ ମୁଁ ଧଡ଼ପଡ଼ ହୋଇ ଉଠି ପଡ଼ିଲି । ଛାତ କଣା କରି କେହି ଖସି ପଡ଼ିଯିବ କି ଆଉ ! ଦିନ ସାରା ଏକୁଟିଆ ଏକୁଟିଆ ଲାଗେ । ରାତି ହେଲେ ସବୁ ଆତ ଆହୁରି ତୁପ୍ତାପ୍, ଶୁନ୍ ଶାନ୍ । ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କର କେହି ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥୀ ନ ଥିବାରୁ ସେମାନେ ଘରେ ବସି ରୁହନ୍ତି । ସାନ ଝିଅ ଇଙ୍ଗୁଜୀ କହି ପାରୁ ନଥାଏ, ବଡ଼ ଖଣ୍ଡି ଖଣ୍ଡି କହୁଥାଏ । ନିଜର ଗାତି ନ ଥିବାରୁ, ଦୋକାନ ବଜାର, ବୁଲା ବୁଲି ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ପାଇଁ ଅନ୍ୟ ମାନଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ନିର୍ଭର କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ୁଥାଏ । ସେଥି ପାଇଁ କିଛି କିଛି ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ କରୁ କଥା ମଧ୍ୟ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ୁଥାଏ । ଆନୁ ଅଙ୍କିତାଙ୍କୁ ନିଜ ନିଜ ତେ କେୟାର୍ ଏବଂ ସ୍କୁଲ ରେ ଭଲ ଲାଗୁନଥାଏ । ଅଜା, ଆଇ, ଜେଜେମା’ଙ୍କ କଥା ସବୁ ବେଳେ ମନେ ପକାଇ ସେମାନେ କାନ୍ଦନ୍ତି । ମୁଁ ଭାବେ ‘ଏଇ କଣ ଆମେରିକା ଯାହାକୁ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଲୋକ ସେଠି ଥାଇ ଏତେ ଉତ୍ସୁକ ହୁଅନ୍ତି?

ସେଥର **New Jersey** ରେ ତିସେମ୍ବର ମାସରେ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଶୀତ ଏବ ସ୍ନୋ । କାମ ରୁ ଫେରି, ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ତେ କେୟାର ରୁ ନେଇ, ଚାଲି ଚାଲି ଘରକୁଫେରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଭିଷଣ ଧଣ୍ଡା ଓ **ice-sleet** ର ମାଡ଼ ପଡ଼ୁଥାଏ । ପଡ଼ି ଉଠି ଘୋଷରା ଓଟରା ହେଇ ଆମେ ତିନିହେଁ ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚୁ । ହାତ ମୁହଁ ସବୁ ଧଣ୍ଡାରେ ଅବଶ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥାଏ । ଘର ଭିତରେ ଗୋଟ ଦେଲା କ୍ଷଣି କାମ ମାତେ । **New Jersey** ର ସେଇ **apartment** ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ଅସରପାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରକୋପ କଥା ନ କହିଲେ ଭଲ । ଦିନ ରାତି ଚାଲି ଯାଏ ଘର ସମ୍ପ ଏବଂ **insecticide** ସ୍ତେ କରିବାରେ । ଏତେ ଅସରପା ମୁଁ ମୋ ଜୀବନ କାଳରେ **India** ରେ ବି ଦେଖି ନଥିଲି । ସବୁ ବେଳେ ଭାବେ, କି ଜୀବନ ଇଏ ? ଏଇ କଣ ମୋର ଏ ଦେଶକୁ ଆସିବାର ଶାସ୍ତି ? କେବେ ଫେରିବି ହେ ପ୍ରଭୁ !

ଏମିତି ଦେଖୁ ଦେଖୁ କେତେ ଦିନ କଟି ଗଲାଣି । ମତେ ଗାତି ଚଲା ଆସିଲାଣି । ଆଉ ସବୁ ବେଳେ ଶୀତ ଶୀତ ଲାଗୁ ନାହିଁ । ଉପର ମହଲାର ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଚାଲାବୁଲା ଶରରେ ମୁଁ ଆଉ ଆକର୍ଷ୍ୟ ହେଉ ନାହିଁ । ପାଇନ୍ ଗଛର ଗନ୍ଧ ଏବେ ବାସ୍ନା ରେ ପରିଣତ ହେଲାଣି । ଏ





ଘରେ ଆଉ ଅସରପା ନାହାନ୍ତି । ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍କୁଲ ଭଲ ଲାଗିଲାଣି । ସେମାନେ ପାଠ ଶାଠରେ ଭଲ କଲେଣି । ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ବେଳେ ଆମେରିକାନ୍ ଛୁଆ ମାନେ ଘରକୁ ଖେଳିବାକୁ ଆସିଲେଣି । ଏବଂ ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ସେମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ, ବଙ୍ଗଳା, ହିନ୍ଦି ଭୁଲି କେବଳ ଇଙ୍ଗ୍‌ଜୀ ରେ କଥା ହେଲେଣି । ଏ କଥାରେ ଆତଙ୍କିତ ହୋଇ ମୁଁ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ସବୁ ବେଳେ ତାଙ୍କ ଅଜାଙ୍କ କଥା ମନେ ପକାଇ ଦିଏ । ଅଜା କୁହନ୍ତି, “ଆରେ, ମୋ ନାତି ନାତୁଣୀ ମାନେ ଯଦି ଆଉ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ନ କହିବେ, ତେବେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ବୁଡ଼ି ଯିବ” । ଲିଭିଙ୍ଗ୍ ରୁମ୍ କାନ୍ଥ ରେ ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ନାଁ ରେ କାଗଜର ତାଲିକା ଟଙ୍ଗ ହୁଏ । ଦିନ ଭିତରେ ଯିଏ ବେଶି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ରେ କଥା ହୁଏ, ତାକୁ ପ୍ରାଇଜ୍ ମିଳେ । ପିଲାଏ ଇଙ୍ଗ୍‌ଜୀରେ କଥା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ ମୁଁ ପାଟି କରେ, “ଓଡ଼ିଆ ! ଓଡ଼ିଆ ! ମନେ ରଖ 'ଭାଷା ବୁଡ଼ି ଯାଉଛି' ! “

ଏଥର ମେରିଲ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡ ରେ ଜାନୁଆରି ମାସରେ ବେଶି ଶୀତ ହେଲାଣାହିଁ । ଆନୁ ମନ ଭାରି ଖୁସି । ଶୀତ ର ପ୍ରକୋପ ଯେଉଁ ଦିନ କମ୍, ସେଦିନ ଆନୁ ବେଶି କଥା କୁହେ । ନ ହେଲେ ସିଏ ରୁପ୍‌ଟାଏ । ଆଜି ବାହାରେ **temperature** ୭୦ ଡିଗ୍ରି । ଆନୁ ଆଜି ପୁଣି ସ୍କୁଲ କଥା ଗପୁ ଥାଏ । ମତେ କହିଲା, “ମାମା, ଜାଣିରୁ, ଆଜି ଯଦି **Martin Luther King Jr** ନଥା'ନ୍ତେ, ଆମେ ମାନେ, ମାନେ ଆମେ **brown skin Indian** ମାନେ, ବସ୍ ବା ଟ୍ରେନ୍ ର ପଛ ସିଟ୍ ରେ ବସିଥା'ନ୍ତେ । **Martin Luther King** ଙ୍କୁ ଆମେ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଜଣାଇବା କଥା” । ତାର ଏଇ ସବୁ କଥା ଶୁଣି ମୋ ମନ ଭିତରେ ବହୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଏବଂ ଗାନ୍ଧି ଆସୁଥାଏ । **Martin Luther King** ଙ୍କର ଗୁରୁ ପରା ମହାତ୍ମା ଗାନ୍ଧି । ତାଙ୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ତ କାହିଁକି ଆନୁ ସ୍କୁଲ ରେ କିଛି ପଢ଼ା ହେଉନାହିଁ? ମନେ ମନେ ଭାବୁଥାଏ ଯେ ଆମେ ଏତେ ପୂଜା ପର୍ବାଣୀ ରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲୋକେ ଏକାଠି ହେଉତୁ, ମନ୍ଦିର ରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭଜନ ବୋଲୁତୁ, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଡ୍ରାମା କରୁତୁ, ହେଲେ ଆନୁ ଆମର ସେ କଥା ତ କିଛି ମନେ ରଖୁ ନାହିଁ ? ଏ ଦେଶକୁ ଆସି ଅଜାଣତରେ ନିଜ ସ୍ଥାନ ତ ହରାଇଲୁ, **Visa, Green card** ପଛରେ ରାତି ଦିନ କଟି ଗଲା । ଏଇ କିଛିଟା ବର୍ଷ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଆଡ଼ଭୋଧ ବି ଚାଲି ଗଲା? ମୋ ପିଲା ମାନେ ଆମେରିକାନ୍ ହେଲଗଲେ? ଏଇ କଣ ମୋର ଏ ଦେଶକୁ ଆସିବାର ଆଉ ଏକ ଶାସ୍ତି?

କିଛି ଦିନ ଗତି ଗଲା । ଏକ ଆସରରେ ବଡ଼ ଝିଅର ସାଙ୍ଗ ମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା କାନରେ ବାଜୁଥାଏ । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରୁ ଗୋଟିଏ କହୁଥାଏ, “ମତେ ଦେଖିଲେ, ମୋ ସାଙ୍ଗ ମାନେ ମୋର **nationality** କଣ ବୋଲି ପଚାରନ୍ତି” । ଝିଅଟି ଦେଖିବାକୁ ସୁନ୍ଦର, ତେହେରା ରେ ତେଜା ଚଉଡ଼ା ଏବଂ ଶ୍ୟାମଳ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ତାର ବାପା **African American** ଓ ମା ଭାରତୀୟ । ତାର ବାପା ମା' ଙ୍କର **divorce** ହେଇ ଯାଇଥାଏ । ଝିଅଟି ତା ମା ପାଖରେ ରୁହେ । ତା ସାଙ୍ଗ ମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ରେ ସିଏ କୁହେ “ମୁଁ **Indian**” । ଏହା ପରେ ପିଲା ମାନେ ତାକୁ ଥଙ୍ଗା କରି ପଚାରନ୍ତି, "**Indian with a red feather or Indian with a red dot?**" । ପିଲା ଚିର ଏଇ କଥାଟି ମୋ ମନ ଭିତରେ ଅନବରତ ଖେଳେ । ମୋ ପିଲା ଙ୍କ **identity** ତେବେ କଣ ଏଇ **red dot?**

ଜାନୁଆରୀ ସରିଲା । ଫେବୃଆରି ମାସ ଆରମ୍ଭରୁ ହିଁ ଆନୁ ସ୍କୁଲ ରେ କେବଳ **Valentine's Day** ର ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା ଦିନ ରାତି **Valentine's Day** କାର୍ଡ ତିଆରି ଚାଲିଥାଏ । ଚିତ୍ତି ରେ **Valentine's Day** ର ସିରିୟାଲ୍ । ସବୁଆଡ଼େ କୁଆଡ଼େ 'love' ଉତୁଚି, ଖାଲି ଧରି ନେଲେ ହେଲା । ଆନୁ ସ୍କୁଲ ରେ **Valentine's Day** ପାର୍ଟି ରେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ତା କ୍ଲାସ୍ ଟିଚର୍ ଙ୍କୁ ସମ୍ମତି ଜଣାଇଥାଏ । ଅନେକ ପିଲାଙ୍କର ମା' ମାନେ ଆସିଥାନ୍ତି । ଛୋଟ ଛୋଟ ରଙ୍ଗିନ କାଗଜ ପ୍ରେଟ୍ ରେ ଆଇସ୍ କ୍ରିମ୍ ବାଜୁ ବାଜୁ ଜଣେ ମା' କହିଲେ, "**You know Alana was in trouble last Friday**" । ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନୀକ ଆଖିରେ ଚାହିଁଲି । ସିଏ କହିଲେ "**Alana kissed Justin Baldeli on his lips at lunch time**" । ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ ହସିଲୁ । **Justin Baldeli** ଆନୁ କ୍ଲାସ୍ ସବୁ ଠାରୁ ଦୁଇ ପିଲା ବୋଲି ମୁଁ ଆନୁ ଠାରୁ ଶୁଣି ଥାଏ । ଆନୁ କୁହେ ଯେ **Justin Baldeli** କ୍ଲାସ୍ ଭିତରେ ଦୌଡ଼ା ଦୌଡ଼ି କରେ । କ୍ଲାସ୍ ଟିଚର୍ ତା ଉପରେ ରାଗନ୍ତି ହେଲେ **Justin Baldeli** କାହା କଥା ମାନେ ନାହିଁ । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ଆନୁ ର ତା ଉପରେ ଦୟା ହୁଏ । **Justin** ଯେତେ ବିରକ୍ତ କଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ, ଆନୁ ତାକୁ କିଛି କୁହେ ନାହିଁ । ଭଦ୍ରମହିଳା ଜଣଙ୍କ ତା'ପରେ କହିଲେ, "**But Justin was smart. He told Alana, 'This is wrong. You should kiss only when you are married'**" । ଏହା ପରେ **Alana** ପଚାରିଲା, "**Then will you marry me?**" । ଏହାର ଉତ୍ତରରେ **Justin** କହିଲା, "**Yes, when I grow up**" । ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ପୁଣି ଥରେ ହସିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲୁ । ହେଲେ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିବା ବେଳେ ମୋ ମନ ଆଶାଙ୍କା ରେ ପୁରି ଉଠୁଥାଏ । ଏଇ କଣ ମୋ ଆନୁର ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ?



ସେଦିନ ରାତିରେ ଶୋଇବାକୁ ଗଲା ବେଳକୁ ଶୁଣିଲି ଦୁଇ ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କର କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ଚାଲିଛି । ବଡ଼ କହୁଥାଏ “ମୋର ଆଜି **lunch bag** ଟା ହାତରୁ ପଡ଼ି **snack pack** ଟା ନଷ୍ଟ ହେଇଗଲା” । ଏହା ଶୁଣି ଆନୁ ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ କହୁ ଥାଏ, “ନାନା (ସିଏ ତା ବଡ଼ ଭଉଣୀ କୁ ନାନୀ ନ ଡାକି, ନାନା ବୋଲି ଡାକେ) ନାନା, ଏକ୍ସ କହୁଛି କର୍ମା” । ମୁଁ ଚିକେ କାନେଇଲି । ‘କର୍ମା’ ? ସେମାନଙ୍କ ରୁମ୍ ଭିତରକୁ ଯାଇ ଆନୁକୁ ପଚାରିଲି, କଣ କହିଲୁ?” । ଆନୁ କହିଲା, “ମାମା, ଏଇଟା ହେଲା କର୍ମା । ନାନା ମତେ ସେଦିନ ତା **pizza** ରୁ ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଦେଲା ନାହିଁ । ଯେତେ ମାଗିଲି ମୋ କଥା ଶୁଣିଲା ନାହିଁ । ଆଜି ଦେଖ ତା ହାତରୁ କେମିତି ତା’ର **favourite snack** ଟା ପଡ଼ିଗଲା । ଏଇଟା ହେଲା କର୍ମା । **You get what you give**” ।

ଚିକେ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ଚାହିଁଲି ମୋ ପିଲା ଦିହିଁଙ୍କ ମୁହଁକୁ । ଯିଏ ଦୁର୍ଗା ପୂଜା ଠାରୁ **Hanukkah** ପାଇଁ ବେଶି ତପ୍ତର, ଯିଏ ମହାତ୍ମା ଗାନ୍ଧିଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ **Martin Luther King** ଙ୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ବେଶି ଜାଣନ୍ତି, ସେଇ ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କର ‘କର୍ମ ପକ୍ଷ’ ବିଷୟରେ ଏତେ ଜ୍ଞାନ ? ମୁଁ ଆହୁରି ପଚାରିଲି, “ଆଛା, ଆନୁ କହିଲୁ, ମୋର ‘କର୍ମା’ କଣ?” ଆନୁ ଚଟାପଟ୍ କହିଲା, “ତୋର ଦିଇଟା ପିଲା ଅଛନ୍ତି, ତୁ ଭଲ ଲୁଗା ପଟା ପିନ୍ଧୁ, ତୋ ବାପା ମା ତୋ ପାଖକୁ ବୁଲିବାକୁ ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି, ତୁ ଆମେରିକା ରେ ରହିବୁ, ତୋର କର୍ମା ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଭଲ” ।

ପର ଦିନ ଶନିବାର । ନାଚ କାସ୍ । ଦୁଇ ଭଉଣୀ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ନୃତ୍ୟ ଶିକ୍ଷା ନିଅନ୍ତି । ସକାଳୁ ଘରେ ଧାଁ ଧଉତ ଲାଗେ । ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ଗାଧେଇ ପାଧେଇ, ଭାରତୀୟ ପୋଷାକ ପିନ୍ଧାଇ ନାଚ କାସକୁ ନେଇ ଯିବାକୁ ହୁଏ । ସବୁ ଦିନ ପରି ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ କାସ୍ ୧୦ଟା ରୁ ୧୨ଟା । କାସ୍ ସରିବା ପରେ ଆମେ ମା’ ମାନେ ନିଜ ନିଜ ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ଧରି ଘର ମୁହାଁ ହେଲୁ । ଗାତିରେ ବସିବା ମାତ୍ରେ, ମୁଁ ବିତ ଝିଅକୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ପଦକୁ ବାରମ୍ବାର ଗୁଣୁ ଗୁଣୁ ହେବାର ଶୁଣୁଥାଏ । କହିଲି, “ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ ବୋଲୁନୁ?” । ସିଏ କହିଲା, “ମାମା ଆଜି ଆମ ନାଚ ଚିତ୍ତର ଆମକୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଅଭିନୟ ଶିଖାଇଲେ । ତାର ଗୀତଟି ଭାରି ଭଲ । ମୋ ମନରେ ଲାଗି ଯାଇଛି” । ଏହା କହୁ କହୁ ଦୁଇ ଭଉଣୀ ବୋଲିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ ‘କି ଶୋଭା ଗୋ କୁଞ୍ଜେ ମଦନ ମୋହନ, ଚାହାଁ ରେ ପ୍ରାଣ ମିତଣୀ...’ । ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ସେମାନେ କିଛି କିଛି ଶବ୍ଦର ଅର୍ଥ ପଚାରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ମତେ ଅର୍ଥ ବୁଝାଉଥାନ୍ତି । ରାଧାଙ୍କର ସହଚରୀ ମାନଙ୍କର ନାଁ ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ବରମ୍ବାର ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ କରୁଥାନ୍ତି - ଚିତ୍ରା, ଲୟ, ରେଖା ଓ ବୃନ୍ଦା । ବୃନ୍ଦାବନ ରେ ପୁଟିଥିବା ଜାଇ, ଜୁଇ, ମଲ୍ଲି, କେତକୀ, ନିଆଳି, କଦମ୍ବ ଫୁଲ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ କିପରି ସେମାନେ କୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କ ଦେହକୁ ସଜାଉଛନ୍ତି, ସେ କଥା ମତେ ବୁଝାଉଥାନ୍ତି । ସୁନ୍ଦର ଗୋପି ମାନେ କିପରି ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କୁ ଆଲଟ ଚାମର ଧରି ବିଧୁରନ୍ତି, କିପରି ତାଙ୍କ ଶ୍ରୀ ଅଙ୍ଗ ରେ ଚନ୍ଦନ ଲେପନ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ଓ ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣ ବଂଶୀ କିପରି ସେମାନଙ୍କର ମନ ମୋହି ନେଉଛି ମତେ ତାହା ଅଭିନୟ କରି ଦେଖାଉଥାନ୍ତି ।

ଗାତି ଭିତରଟା ଦୁଇ ଭଉଣୀ ଙ୍କର ସ୍ଵରରେ ଶୁଣ ହୋଇ ଯାଉଥାଏ । ଏତେ ଦିନର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଏବଂ ଗାନ ମୋ ହୃଦୟ ଭିତରୁ ଅନ୍ଧାଧିକେ ଧୋଇ ହୋଇ ଗଲା ପରି ଲାଗୁଥାଏ । ମନ ଭିତରେ କିଛି ସାହାସ ଆସୁଥାଏ ଯେ ସବୁ ଶେଷ ହୋଇ ଯାଇନି, ଆମେରିକା ରେ ମୋର ପିଲା ମାନେ **red-feather** କି **red-dot Indian** ହେବେ ନାହିଁ । ଆମେରିକାନ୍ ହେବାର ର ପୂର୍ତ୍ତାବ ରୁ ସେମାନେ ବର୍ତ୍ତି ଯାଇ ନ ପାରିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ନିଜକୁ ଏବଂ ଭାରତକୁ ଖୋଜି ପାଇବାରେ ବେଶି କଷ୍ଟ ପାଇବେ ନାହିଁ । ଆନୁ ଭାଷାରେ ମୋ ‘କର୍ମା’ ହୁଏତ ଏତେ ଖରାପ ନୁହେଁ !

(ଜୁଲି ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ରାୟ University of Maryland, School of Pharmacy ରେ Post Doctoral Fellow. ତାଙ୍କର ଦୁଇଟି ଝିଅ ଅଙ୍କିତା, ଅପର୍ଣ୍ଣା ଓ ସ୍ଵାମୀ ଅଭିଜିତଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସିଏ Elkridge, MD ରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି ।)

**“ I, too, have a vision for the new millennium. My vision is not about industrial or social development. It involves educating you, and my self, about our past. A past, rich in culture and tradition, whose understanding will hopefully help you better define yourself as a second generation Oriya American.”**  
**Srikanta Misra, Editorial OSAsouvenir97’**



## ସଖୀ ଠାରୁ ଚିଠି ସ୍ୱପ୍ନଲତା ମିଶ୍ର(ରଥ)

ସଖୀ,  
ପାଇଲି ମୁ ଆଜି ତୋର  
ହୋଲି ପାଇଁ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ପତର,  
ଆଖି ଆଗେ ନାଚିଗଲା.....  
ପିଲାଦିନ, ହସଖୁସି,  
ମାନ ଅଭିମାନ,  
ଗାଁଦାଣ୍ଡ, ତୋଟାମାନ  
ଯାନି ଯାତା, ମେଳା ମଉଛବ,  
ରଜଦୋଳି, ଦିପାବଳୀ  
ଦୋଳଯାତା-ହୋଲି ।  
ମନେ ଅଛି?!ହୋଲି ରଙ୍ଗ ଖେଳୁ ଖେଳୁ  
ଗାଲରେ ତୋ ବୋଲିଦେଲି  
ହାଣ୍ଡି କଳା ବୋଲି,  
ରହିଗଲୁ ଦିନ ଦିନ କଥା ବନ୍ଦ କରି,  
ଦିନ ଗଲା, ମାସେ ଗଲା, ବର୍ଷଟିଏ ଗଲା,  
ପର ବର୍ଷ ପାନ ଖିଲ ବୋଲି ଦେଇ  
କରି ଥିଲୁ ମୋ ମୁହଁ ବାନ୍ଦର !  
ତେବେ ଯାଇଁ କଥା ହେଲୁ ।  
ମନେଅଛି ?  
ରାତି ସାରା ମେଲଣ ପଡ଼ିଆ ରେ  
ରାମଲୀଳା ଦେଖୁ ଦେଖୁ  
ହସି ହସି ଗଡ଼ୁଥିଲେ  
ମାଇଟିଆ ରଘୁନାଥର ସୀତା ବେଶ ଦେଖି !  
ଚାହୁଁ ଚାହୁଁ ଦିନ ଚାଲିଗଲା.....  
ପିଲାଦିନେ ତାରା ଭଉଁ ଆକାଶ କୁ ଚାହିଁ ଚାହିଁ  
ଭାରୁଥିବା କିଛି କିଛି କଥା ସତ ହେଲା ।  
ମାର୍ବରକ୍ ପଢ଼ି  
ଗାଁ ଝିଅ ଗାଁ ବୋହୂ ହେଲି  
ନିତି ଦିନ ଗାଉଁଳୀ ଜୀବନର  
ନୀତି ନିୟମ ରେ ବାନ୍ଧିହେଇଗଲି ।  
ପରକୁ ଆପଣା କଲି, ଆପଣା କୁ ପର କରି  
ଜାଣିନି ମୁଁ କେତେବେଳେ ନିଜକୁ ଭୁଲିଲି,  
ଦୁଇ ପୁଅ ଦୁଇ ଝିଅ ଜ୍ଞ ଅଳି ଆଉ ଅଝଟ ଭିତରେ  
ଆସ୍ତେ ଆସ୍ତେ ପିଲାଦିନ ସ୍ମୃତି ଯେତେ ଫିକା ପଡ଼ିଗଲା,  
ତୁ କିନ୍ତୁ ସହର କୁ ଗଲୁ,  
କଲେଜ୍ ପରେ କଲେଜ୍  
ଯାଇ ଶେଷରେ ତୁ ଆମେରିକା ଗଲୁ,  
କାଗଜ ରେ ପଢ଼ିଥିଲି ତୁ ଆଉ ତୋ ବର  
ଦୁହେଁ ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ.

ଫଟୋ ରୁ ଜାଣିଲି,  
ବର ତୋର ବହୁତ ସୁନ୍ଦର ।  
ମୁଁ ଜାଣିଛି ଜନ୍ମକୁ ତୁ ଖୁବ୍ ଭଲ ପାଉ  
ଯେତେ ଯାହା ହୋଉ, ସୁଖଦୁଃଖ ସବୁ କିଛି  
ଜନ୍ମ ଆଗେ ମନ ଖୋଲି କହୁ ।  
କେବେ କେବେ ଜନ୍ମକୁ ମୁଁ ତୋ କଥା ପଚାରେ,  
ଜନ୍ମ କିନ୍ତୁ ରୁପ୍ ରହେ, କିଛି ନବୁଝିଲା ପରି  
ହାଁ କରି ଚାହିଁ ରହିଥାଏ ।  
ଆଜିକାଲି ତୋ ବୋଉ ତ ସହରରେ  
ତୋ ଭାଇଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ,  
ତୋ ଖବର ଦେବ ମୋତେ କିଏ ?  
ଭଲ କଲୁ, ଏତେ ଦିନେ ହେଉ ପଛେ  
ଚିଠି ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଦେଲୁ ।  
ଗାଁ କଥା ଲେଖିବି ବା କଣ,  
ସେଇ ପାଣି, ସେଇ ମାଟି, ସେଇ ତ ପବନ,  
ସେଇ ଏକା ରସ୍ତା ଘାଟ,  
ରାତି ରେ ଅନ୍ଧାର, ବର୍ଷା ଦିନେ ପତର ପତର  
ଖାଲି କିନ୍ତୁ ବଦଳିଛି ଲୋକଙ୍କର ମନ,  
ଗାଉଁଳୀ ଜୀବନେ ଆମ  
ଓଲିଭତ, ବଲିଭତ ମାୟା,  
ଏତ୍ସ୍, ମାଓବାଦୀ ପରି  
କେତେ ନୂଆ ଶରଙ୍ଗର ଭିତ ।  
ପ୍ରତିଦିନ କେତେ ନୂଆ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି,  
ନୂଆ ନୂଆ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଆଙ୍କେ ମନେ  
ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ସତ ହୋଉ କି ନ ହୋଉ ପରତ୍ରା ନଥାଏ  
ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଝାଳ ତୁଣ୍ଡରେ ମାରି ଜିଇବାକୁ ହୁଏ  
ତେଲଲୁଣ ସଂସାର ସାଙ୍ଗରେ  
ତେଲ ଆଉ ଲୁଣ ପାଇଁ ଲଢ଼ିବାକୁ ହୁଏ ।  
ଏବର୍ଷ ର ଦୋଳ ଯାତା ବନ୍ଦ ହେଲା,  
ମେଲଣ ପଡ଼ିଆ, ସାରାରାତି ଶୁନ୍-ଶାନ୍ ଥିଲା ।  
ଏମିତିତ ରାମଲୀଳା, ପାଲା, ଦାସ୍କାଠିଆ, ଅପେରା  
କାହିଁ କେତେ ଦିନୁ ସବୁ ବନ୍ଦ ଥିଲା ।  
ମେଲୋତି ପାଟି ନେଇ ଆସୁଥିଲେ  
ସହରର ବନ୍ଧା ବନ୍ଧି ଗାୟକ ଗାୟିକା,  
ସେତକ ବି ବନ୍ଦ ଥିଲ ଏଥର ।  
ହୋଲି ଖେଳ ବେଳେ ମାତ ପିଟି ହେଇ  
ଯୁବଗୋଷ୍ଠି ବୁହେଇଲେ ରଞ୍ଜ ନଦୀ  
ଗାଁଦାଣ୍ଡ ଭିଜିଥିଲା ରଞ୍ଜ ଆଉ ଲୁହର ରଙ୍ଗ ରେ ।  
ଜଣିଲି ମୁଁ ଚିଠିରୁ ତୋ,  
ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥ୍, ପିଲଛୁଆ ଧରି



ଜାକଜମକରେ ହୋଲି ଖେଳିବାକୁ ପ୍ଲାନ  
 କରୁଥିଲୁ,  
 ମନଖୁସି ହେଲା ଜାଣି,  
 ଏତେଦୂରେ ଥାଇ ବି ତୁ ଏ ଯାଏଁ ଭୁଲିନୁ  
 ଆମ ଗାଁ ର ସଂସ୍କୃତି ।  
 ସଖୀ ମୋର,,  
 କହିବି ମୋ ମନ କଥା ଖୋଲି ?  
 ଏମିତି କା ଅବିରଟେ ମିଳନ୍ତାନି କାହିଁ,  
 ସେ ଅବିରେ ସ୍ନହ ଆଉ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା  
 ର ମହକ ରହନ୍ତା, ଆଉ  
 ସେ ଅବିର ବୋଲିହେଲେ  
 ରାଗ ରୋଷ ହିଂସା ଦ୍ଵେଷ ମିଳେଇ ଯା'ନ୍ତା,  
 ହାତରୁ ହାତ କୁ ହେଇ

ସେ ଅବିର ଏ ଜଗତେ ବୁଣିହେଇ  
 ଶାନ୍ତି ଆଉ ମୈତ୍ରୀର ବାରତା ବାନ୍ଧନ୍ତା !  
 କାଲି ରଜ,  
 ପୋଡ଼ପିଠା ପୋଡ଼ା ହେବ,  
 ରଜ ବୋଲି ବନ୍ଧା ହେବ, କେତେ କଣ  
 କାମ ବାକି ଅଛି, ଯିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ ।  
 ସଖୀ ଲୋ,  
 ମା ମଙ୍ଗଳା ଆଉ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ତୋର ଭରସା ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ  
 ସ୍ଵାମୀ ଆଉ ପିଲାମାନେ ଖୁସି ରେ ଥା'ନ୍ତୁ ।  
 ଅସୁମାରୀ ସ୍ନେହ ସହ  
 ଏଇଠି ରହିଲି ,  
 ମୋ ଚିଠିର ଉତ୍ତରକୁ ରହୁଲି ଅନେଇ ।

### ମାକମ୍ବ, ମିତିଗାନ୍



ଦେବତାଙ୍କ ଲୀଳାଙ୍ଗନ  
 କେଉଁ ଏକ ଶାଶ୍ଵତ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତେ,  
 ନିୟତିର ହାତେ,  
 ପଶାକାଠ ପଡେ ମାତ୍ର ଥରେ ।  
 ଥରେ ମାତ୍ର ,  
 ଆଉଥରେ ନଫେର ସେ ଦାନ ।  
 ଶ୍ରୀ ଆରବିନ୍ଦ ଜ୍ଞ ସାବିତ୍ରୀ, ମହାପାତ୍ର ନୀଳମଣି ସାହୁ





ପୁଣ୍ୟପୀଠ-ବେଦବ୍ୟାସ



ଛୋଟ ମୋର ଗାଁ ଟି, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଯୋଡ଼ାପଥରେ ପଛେ ନଥାଉ ତା'ର ନା'ଟି





# ପୀରତି-ଚୋରୀ

## ଡକ୍ଟର ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

ଚୈତ୍ର ପହୁଣ୍ଡିକ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଝେୟନ ରାତି ନଅଟା ଚାଲିଣ ମିନିଟରେ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଚିକେ ଆଗରୁ ବାହାରି ଆସିଥିଲେ ଘରୁ । ବାପୁଜୀ ନଗରରେ ରହୁଥିବା ପୁତୁରା ଚୀନୁର କଣ କାମ ଥିଲା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ସାଗରରେ ସେଦିନ । ଚୀନୁ ନୂଆ କାର କିଣିଛି । ନୂଆ କାରରେ ବସାଇ ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଝେୟନରେ ଛାଡ଼ିଦେବ ବୋଲି ଆଗଭର ହୋଇ କହିବାରୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ସୁଧିଧା ନେବାକୁ ପଛେଇଲେ ନାହିଁ । ବାଟରେ କାର ବିଷୟରେ ଅନର୍ଗଳ ଗପୁଥିଲା ଚୀନୁ, ବାହାଦୁରୀ ଦେଖେଇ କେମିତି ଜୟପୁରରୁ ଫେରିଲା ଅଙ୍ଗବଙ୍ଗ ପାହୁଡ଼ିଆ ରାସ୍ତା କାଟିକାଟି ରାତି ଅଧରେ । ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର କିନ୍ତୁ ମନେ ପଡ଼ୁଥିଲା ଏଇ ଯେମିତି ଚୀନୁ ଜନ୍ମ ହୋଇଥିଲା ସେଦିନ । ତା ଏକୋଇଶାକୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଛୋଟ ସୁନାମୁଦିଟିଏ ଓ ସାର୍-ପେଟ୍ଟି ଧରି ବିନିଅପା ଘରକୁ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ପୁଅକୁ ଦେଖିବାକୁ । ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ହେଉନି ୨୩/୨୪ ବର୍ଷ ଗତିଗଲାଣି ଏଇ ଭିତରେ । ଚୀନୁ କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ଇଞ୍ଜିନିୟର ହୋଇ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଖୋଲିଥିବା ନୂଆ କଂପାନୀରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇଛି ଛ'ମାସ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି । ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଆଉ ଆଗ ଭଳି ନାହିଁ । ଅର୍ଥନୈତିକ ଅବସ୍ଥା ବଦଳି ଗଲାଣି । ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଚଳଣୀ ଆଉ ଆଗ ଭଳି ନାହିଁ । ଡ୍ରାଏର/ଡ୍ରାଇଅର, ସ୍ପୁର/ମୋଟୋର-ସାଇକଲ, ମୋବାଇଲ ଫୋନ ଘରେ ଘରେ । ଚିକେ ଉଚ୍ଚ-ମଧ୍ୟବିତ ପରିବାରରେ କଂପ୍ୟୁଟର ଓ କାର । ଲୋକମାନେ, ବିଶେଷ କରି ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକମାନେ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ କନ୍ୟସ୍ ହୋଇଗଲେଣି ଖୁବ । କଟକ, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକମାନେ ମର୍ଣ୍ଣି-ଓ଼ାକ୍ରେ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ଦୁଇ ସପ୍ତାହ ତଳେ କଟକ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ଶୁଭ୍ରା । ଶୁଣିଲେ, ମହାନଦୀ-ବିହାରରେ ଭୋଅର ଚାରିଟା-ପାଞ୍ଚଟା ସମୟରେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକମାନେ ପାଓ୍ୱାର-ଓ଼ାକ୍ରେ ବାହାରି ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥୀ ହୋଇ । ଫେରିଲାବେଳେ ରାସ୍ତା ଛକ-ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ, ଯୋଉଠି ନୂଆ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ କଂପ୍ଲେକ୍ସ ହୋଇଛି, ସେଠାରେ ଥବା ଶିବ ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆ ମାରି ପାଦୁକ ପାଇ ଘରକୁ ଫେରି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି ଖରା ଉଠି ଆସିବା ଆଗରୁ । କଟକର ବାସୁଭାଇଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମନୀ ଭାଉଜ ସେଦିନ କହୁଥିଲେ ତାଙ୍କ କଲୋନୀର ସେମାନେ ଚାରିଜଣ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକ ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ସବୁ ଦିନ ଭୋଅର ସକାଳୁ ବାହାରି ଯାଆନ୍ତି ଓ଼ାକ୍ରେ । ଗପୁଥିଲେ, “ମନଟା ଭଲ ଲାଗୁଛି ମୁଁ ଶୁଭ୍ରା, ପୁଣି ପରଦିନ ସକାଳର ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ ଘରର କାମ-ଧରା କିଛି ବାଧୁନି, ସମୟ କୁଆଡ଼େ କଟି ଯାଉଛି ।” ସାଇ-ପତିଶା ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା, ଝିଗୁରା ରାୟ ନୂଆ ସିନେମାଠୁ ରାଜନୀତି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଗପିଗପି ଗଲାବେଳେ ୨-୩ ମାଇଲ ଚାଲିବା ବାଧୁନି କାହାକୁ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ମଧ୍ୟ ଗୀତା ଅପାଙ୍ଗ ସଙ୍ଗେ ବିଜେବି କଲେଜ ପଛ ରାସ୍ତାରେ ଟଙ୍କାପାଣୀ ରୋଡ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ କେତେବାର ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ଗପି ଗପି । ଭୋଅର ସକାଳ ଚାଲିବାଟା କେମିତି କେଜାଣି ଦେହ ପାଇଁ କାମ କରୁ ନ କରୁ ମନ ପାଇଁ କରେ ବେଶୀ, ସାଥୀ-ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ଚାଲିଲେ । ଗସିପ୍ ନିଶା ଭୋଅର ସକାଳର ମଜରା ଛତେଇ ଦିଏ ।

କଳ୍ପନା ଛକରେ କୋଉ ବନ୍ଧୁକୁ ମଟର-ସାଇକଲରେ ହାତ ଉଠେଇ ହଲେଇବାର ଦେଖି ଚୀନୁ ଗାଡ଼ିକୁ ଚିକେ ଆଗକୁ ନେଇ କରେଇ ରଖିଲା । ପାଞ୍ଚ ମିନିଟ ଗପିବା ପରେ ଗାଡ଼ି ଛାଡ଼ି ଚାଡ଼ି ମୁହଁ ବୁଲେଇ କହିଲା, “ଚୀନୁ ମାଉସୀ ତେରୀ ହୋଇନିତ ?” “ଆରେ ନାଁ ରେ, ଆମେ ଘଣ୍ଟାଏ ଆଗରୁ ତଥାପି ଝେୟନରେ ପହୁଣ୍ଡିଯିବା”, ଶୁଭ୍ରା କହିଲେ । ସତକୁ, ପହୁଣ୍ଡିଲାବେଳକୁ ଆଠଟା ପଇତିରିଣି ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଚୀନୁ ତାଙ୍କ ହାତ ବ୍ୟାଗ ଧରିବାରୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରା କହିଥିଲେ, “ବ୍ୟାଗରେ ବେଶୀ କିଛି ନାହିଁରେ, ମୋର ଅସୁବିଧା ହେବନି କିଛି, ଏଠି ଗାଡ଼ି ବୁଲେଇ ପାର୍କ କରିବାକୁ ଯାଗା ନାହିଁ, ତୁ ଘରକୁ ଯା, ବିନିଅପା ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଥିବ ତତେ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଦେବା ଲାଗି ।” ଚୀନୁ ନମସ୍କାର କରି ଗାଡ଼ି ଚୁରାଇଲା ।

ଶୁଭ୍ରା କଳା ଚମଡ଼ା ବ୍ୟାଗଖଣ୍ଡକୁ ଧରି ଆଗେଇଲେ ଝେୟନର ରାତି ଭିତକୁ କାଟି । ବ୍ୟାଗ ଭିତରେ ଦୁଇ ଦିନ ପାଇଁ ଶାଢ଼ି ସାୟା, ବୁଉଜ ଓ ସାମାନ୍ୟ ଦରକାରୀ ଜିନିଷ ସହ ଗାଡ଼ି ଛାଡ଼ିଲେ ରାତିରେ ଖାଇବେ ବୋଲି ଛୋଟ ଚିଫ୍ଟ ବାଟିରେ ଲୁଚି, ଆଳୁଭଜା ସାଙ୍ଗେ ବଡ଼ ପାଣି ବୋତଲଟିଏ ଥିଲା ଯାହା । ଆଉ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରିୟ ମ୍ୟାଗାଜିନ ଦୁଇଟି ମଧ୍ୟ । ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର ସାଇନ୍ସ କନ୍ସଟରନ୍ସ ଅଛି କଲିକତା ଜଗଦିଶ୍ୱରମ୍ ରୋଡରେ ଦୁଇ ଦିନ ପାଇଁ । ରହିବା ଖାଇବାକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେଇ ବିଲଡିଙ୍ଗ ରେ କନ୍ସଟରନ୍ସ ତରଫରୁ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା । ଗହଳୀ କାଟି ଲମ୍ବା ସିଡି ତଳି, ଅପର ପଟକୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ପହୁଣ୍ଡି ଗଲେ କାରଣ ହାତୁରା-ଏକ୍ସପ୍ରେସ୍ ଲାଗିବ ଏଇପଟେ । ସବୁ ବେଷ୍ଟ ଭଣି, କୋଉଠି ଯାଗା ନାହିଁ । ଦେଖିଲେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବେଞ୍ଚରେ ଦୁଇଜଣ ଯୁବକ-ଯୁବତୀ ବସିଛନ୍ତି ପାଖକୁ ଚିଣି ସୁଟକେଶଟି ଧରି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ପଚାରିଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ବସି ପାରିବେ କି ଆଉ ଯୁବକଟି ବିନା ଉତ୍ତରରେ ସୁଟକେଶଟିକୁ ଟେକି ନେଇ ତଳେ ରଖିଦେଲା ଓ କହିଥିଲା ‘ପରଓ୍ୱା ନାହିଁ’ । ଯୁବା ଝିଅଟିର ବୟସ ଜଣା ଯାଉଛି ଅଠର/ଉଣେଇଶ ହେବ । ଝିଅଟିର ମୁହଁ ଓ ରଙ୍ଗର କେମିତି ଏକ ଅକୁହା ଆକର୍ଷଣ- କେମିତି ମିଠା ମିଠା ଚେହେରାରେ ବଡ଼-ବଡ଼ ନିରୀହ ଆଖି । ଗୋରା ନୁହେଁ, ଉଜଳିଆ ଶ୍ୟାମଳ ରଙ୍ଗକୁ ପୁରିଲା ପୁରିଲା ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟରେ ଭରା ଯୋବନର ଉରୁକା । ନାଲି ରଙ୍ଗର ବସିଲା ବୁଉଜର ଗୋଲ ବେକ ଉପରକୁ ବଡ଼ ପୁରୁଣାକାଳିଆ ଆଖିଦୁଣିଆ ଚଂପା-କଇଁ ସୁନାମାଳ । ଭାରି ମାନ୍ୟାଏ ଝିଅଟିକୁ । ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗିଲା । ଯୁବକଟିର ବୟସ ଲାଗିଲା ତେଜଶି/ଚବିଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେବ । ଗହମ ରଙ୍ଗର ଛଟା ପିଟା ଦେହ । ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଗୋଛାଏ କଳା କୁଞ୍ଜି-କୁଞ୍ଜିଆ ବାଳ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ସରୁ ନୀଶ । ପିନ୍ଧିଛି ନୀଳ ସାର୍ଟକୁ- ଜିନ ପେଟ୍ଟି, ହାତରେ ଘଣ୍ଟା । ଜଣା ପଡ଼ୁଥାଏ ନୂଆ ବାହା ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି ବୋଧେ । ଦେହକୁ ଦେହ ଲଗେଇ ବସିଛନ୍ତି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଶୁଣିଲେ ଯୁବକଟି ଉଠି କହିବାର, ଯାଇ କିଛି ଖାଇବା ଜିନିଷ ରାତି ପାଇଁ ନେଇ ଆସିବ ଓ ଭଙ୍ଗ ପାନ ଧରି ଝଅଟ ଚାଲି ଆସିବ । ଝଅଟି ତା ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଯିବାକୁ ଉଠିବାରୁ କହିଲା ଯାଗା ଛାଡ଼ିଲେ ଜିନିଷ ଧରି ଯିବାକୁ ପଡିବ ଆଉ ଫେରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଯାଗା ନ ଥିବ । ଯୁବକଟି ନିମିଷକରେ କୋଉଠି ଗହଳୀରେ ମିଶିଗଲା ।



ଯୁବକଟି ଯିବା ପରେ ଝିଅଟି କନକନ ହୋଇ ହୋଇ ଚାରିଆଡ଼କୁ ଚାହିଁବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା । ଆଉ କମ୍ ବୟସର ଯୁବତୀଟିକୁ ଏକୃଷିଆ ଦେଖି ଝେସନରେ ବୁଲୁଥିବା ଟହଲିଆ ଟୋକା ମାନେ ବେଶ ପାଖାପାଖିକୁ ଆସି ତାର ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ଆକର୍ଷଣର ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ । ଠେଲା ପେଲା ହୋଇ ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ ହସ ହସି ଚିଟିକା ମାରିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ । ଏସବୁ ଦେଖି ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଟିକେ ଘୁଞ୍ଚି ଲାଗି ବସିଲେ ଝିଅଟି ଆଡ଼କୁ ବେଶରେ, ଆଉ କଥା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଇ ପଚାରିଲେ ‘କୁଆଡ଼େ ଯାଉଛ’ ? ଝିଅଟି କହିଲା ‘କଲିକତା’ । ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କୁ କଥା ହେବାର ଦେଖି ପାଖ ଟୋକାମାନେ ଟିକେ ଦବିଗଲେ । ଚିଟିକା ମାତ କମିଗଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରା କଥା ଚଲେଇ ପୁଣି ପଚାରିଲେ ‘ନୂଆ ବାହା ହୋଇଛ ବୋଧେ’ । ଝିଅଟି ଲାଜେଇ ଗଲା, ଉତ୍ତର ନ ଦେଇ ହସିଲା । ମୌନ ସମ୍ପତ୍ତି ବୋଧେ । ମଥାରେ ବଡ଼ ଆମ୍ବକଣି ଟିକିଲି ଟିଏ ତାର । ଆଜିକାଲି କେହି ବେଶୀ ସିନ୍ଦୂର ଲଗଇ ନାହାଁନ୍ତି ଆଉ, କମ ବୟସର ଝିଅ ମାନେ ବାହା ହେବା ପରେ ବି ଆଉ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ନ ପିନ୍ଧି ସାଲଗୁର-କମୀଜ ପିନ୍ଧୁଛନ୍ତି । ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଭଲଲାଗିଥିଲା ଝିଅଟି ଶାଢ଼ୀ ପିନ୍ଧିଥିଲା ବୋଲି । ହଳଦୀ ରଙ୍ଗ ଶାଢ଼ୀର ନାଲୀ କୁମ୍ଭୀରକୁ ନାଲୀ ବାଉଁଶ ସଙ୍ଗେ ନାଲୀ ଟିକିଲି ଟି ଟା ଉକଳିଆ ମୁହଁଟିର ଆକର୍ଷଣ ବଢ଼ଇ ଥାଏ । ଏଇ ସମୟରେ ଯୁବକଟି ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ହାତରେ ଦୁଇଟି ପୁଡ଼ିଆ ଓ ଖିଲ ପାନ ଧରି । ଝିଅ ମୁହଁରେ ରଙ୍ଗ ଚହଟେଇ ହସ ଉକୁଟି ଗଲା, ସତେ ଯେମିତି କିଏ ହଜାରେ ମଲ୍ଲି ଫୁଲ ବିସ୍ଥିଦେଲା ଭଳି ।

ଆଉ ସେତିକି ବେଳକୁ ଟ୍ରେନର ହୁଇସିଲ୍ ଶୁଣାଗଲା । ଧୂଆଁ ଛାତି ଟ୍ରେନ ଆସି ଥାମିଲା ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଝେସନରେ । ଚଳ ଚଞ୍ଚଳ ହୋଇଗଲା ଅବହାତ୍ରା ନିମିଷକ ଭିତରେ । ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଯିବା ଆସିବା ହଲଚଳରେ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଯେମିତି ସରଗରମ ହୋଇଗଲା କିଛିକ୍ଷଣ । ଏବେ ଆଉ ଧାର୍ତ୍ କାସ କମ୍ପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ନାହିଁ ଆଗ ଭଳି । ସବୁ ସେକଣ୍ଡ କାସ ଆଉ କିଛି ଫାଷ୍ଟକାସ ଓ ଏ-ସି କମ୍ପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ପଛକୁ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା କେବଳ ସେକଣ୍ଡ କାସ ପଇସା ପାଇବେ କନ୍ଦମ୍ପରେନ୍ଦ୍ର ତରଫରୁ । ତେଣୁ ମାସକ ଆଗରୁ ବର୍ଥ ରିଜିଷ୍ଟ କରି ରଖିଥିଲେ, ବଗୀ ନମ୍ବର ଦୁଇ ଓ ଉଣେଇଶି ନମ୍ବର ସିଟ୍ । କଲିକତା ହେଲା ରାତିକ ଯାତ୍ରା, ଗୋଟେ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ଭଲ କାରଣ କିଛି ସମୟ ଶୋଇ ଯିବେ ଓ ଭୋଅର ସକାଳୁ କଲିକତାରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଯିବେ । ଲୁଗା ଥିବା ଚମଡ଼ା ବ୍ୟାଗ ଓ ହାତ ବ୍ୟାଗଟିକୁ ଧରି ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଶୀଘ୍ର ଶୀଘ୍ର ପାଦ ପକେଇଲେ । ଏକା ଏକା ଯାତ୍ରା କରିବାର ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର ଅଛି । ଟ୍ରେନ, ଟ୍ରାମ୍ ଧରିବାରେ ଅସୁବିଧା ନାହିଁ ତାଙ୍କର । ପାଖରେ ବସିଥିବା ଯୁବକ-ଯୁବତୀ ଦୁଇଜଣ ମୁହଁକରେ କୁଆଡ଼େ ହଜିଗଲେ ଭିତ ଭିତରେ । ଟ୍ରେନ ଭିତରେ ଢୁକି ନିଜ ସିଟ୍ଟି ପାଇ ବ୍ୟାଗ ଦୁଇଟିକୁ ଆଡେଇ ରଖିଲେ ଝରକା ଆଡ଼କୁ ଆଉ ବସିଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଦେଖିଲେ ସେଇ ଯୁବକ- ଯୁବତୀ ଦୁଇଜଣ ତାଙ୍କ ସାମନା ସିଟ୍ରେ । କେମିତି ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଲାଗିଲା ଚିହ୍ନା ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିଲା ଭଳି । ସେମାନେ ଆଗରୁ ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଯାଇଛନ୍ତି, ଠେଲା ପେଲା ଗହଳି ଭିତରେ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଦେଖି ପାରି ନ ଥିଲେ । ଟ୍ରେନ ଡବା ଭର୍ତ୍ତି ଲୋକ ଗହଳୀରେ ସେଇ ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କୁ କେମିତି ନିଜର ମନେ ହେଲା । ଟ୍ରେନ ଛାଡ଼ିବାର ହୁଇସିଲ୍ ଦେଲା ବେଳକୁ ବି ଧର୍ଯ୍ୟ-ମସି କେତେ ଲୋକ ପଶୁ ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ଟ୍ରେନ ଛାଡ଼ିଲା ନିଧାନ୍ୟ ସମୟରୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଦଶ ମିନିଟ୍ ବିଳମ୍ବରେ । ଯେତେ ଦୂରକୁ ଆଖିଗଲା ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର ମନେହେଲା ସବୁ ସିଟ୍ ଭର୍ତ୍ତି । ସାମ୍ନାର ଯୁବକ-ଯୁବତୀ ପୁଡ଼ିଆ ଖୋଲି ସେତେବେଳକୁ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଲେଣି ତାଙ୍କର । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଖାଇବା ଦେଖି ରାତି ପାଇଁ ଖାଇବା ଭର୍ତ୍ତିକରି ମାଳତୀ ଦେଇଥିବା ଚିଫିନ ବାଟି କଥା ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଲା । ମାଳତୀ ଶୋହଳ ବର୍ଷରୁ ବେଶୀ ହେଲାଣି ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ରହିଛି, ରୋଷେଇ ବାସ, ଘର ପୋଛା, ଲୁଗା ଭଙ୍ଗ ସବୁ କାମ କରି ଶୁଭ୍ରା କଲେଜରୁ ଆସିଲାବେଳକୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ ବସିଥାଏ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଅବିବାହିତା, ବିଜେବି କଲେଜରେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପିକା ଥିବାରୁ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଫ୍ଲଟ୍ ଟିଏ ମିଳିଛି ତାଙ୍କୁ । ସବୁ ଆଡ଼କୁ ସୁବିଧା ସେଠା । ମାଳତୀ ଭୋଅର ସକାଳ ଛ’ଟାରୁ ଆସି ରାତି ସାତକୁ ଚାଲିଯାଏ ତା’ ଘରକୁ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ତାକୁ ସବୁ ବର୍ଷ ନୂଆ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ଓ ତାଙ୍କ ପୁରୁଣା ଶାଢ଼ୀ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଭଲ ଦରମା ବି ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ତା’ ଝିଅ ବାହାଘରକୁ ଗତ ବର୍ଷ ରୂପା ଅକ୍ଷୟତା ଓ ପାଉଁଜୀ ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ନୂଆ ଜରିବସା ସିଲ୍-ଶାଢ଼ୀ ସହ ମ୍ୟାଟିଙ୍ଗ ଶାୟୀ ବାଉଁଶ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ମାଳତୀ ଖୁସି ହୋଇଥିଲା ଓ ଆଖି ତାର ଲୁହରେ ଭରି ଯାଇଥିଲା ସେଇଦିନ ମୁହଁସଞ୍ଚରେ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ମାଳତୀକୁ ଭଲ ପାଆନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ ଅବିବାହିତା ନିଛାଟିଆ ଜୀବନର ବିଜେବି କଲେଜ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟରେ ମାଳତୀ ହିଁ ତାଙ୍କର ସବୁଠୁ ନିଜା ଗହଣା, ଟଙ୍କା ପକେଇ ଗଡ଼ରେଇ ଆଲମିରା ଖୋଲି ଚାଲିଗଲେବି ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଭାବିବାକୁ ହୁଏନା । ମାଳତୀର ଚୋରୀ ନାରୀ ଗୁଣ ନାହିଁ । ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଚାଲିଯିବା ଦିନଠୁ ପର ପୁରୁଷକୁ ଆଡ଼ ଆଖିରେ ଚାହିଁନି, ଶରୀରର କ୍ଷୁଧା ଓ ମନର କ୍ଷୁଧା ସବୁ ଝିଅ ମୁହଁକୁ ଚାହିଁ ଭୁଲିଛି ମାଳତୀ । ଚିଫିନ- ବାଟିରେ ସଜେଇ ଲୁଟି, ଆଳୁଭଜା ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରିୟ ଲେନ୍ଦୁ ଆବାରରୁ ଟିକେ ରଖି ଦେଇଛି । ଖାଇବା ସାରି ପାଣି ବୋତଲରୁ ପାଣି ପିଇ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ପାଖକୁ ବ୍ୟାଗ ଘୁଞ୍ଚେଇ ରଖି ଟ୍ରେନ ଝରକାକୁ ଭିତ ବନ୍ଦ କରିଲେ ଶୁଭ୍ରା । ଦୁଇ ଟାୟାର ବର୍ଥରେ ତଳ ସିଟ୍ଟି ତାଙ୍କର । ଠିକ ତାଙ୍କ ଉପରର ବର୍ଥରେ ଜଣେ ବୟସ୍କ ଲୋକ ପ୍ରାୟ ଘୁଞ୍ଚି ମାରିବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଲେଣି ସେତେବେଳକୁ । ଯୁବକ- ଯୁବତୀଙ୍କ ତଳ ଉପରର ସାମ୍ନା ସିଟ୍ ଦୁଇଟି । ତଳ ସିଟ୍ରେ ତଥାପି ଦୁଇଜଣ ଦେହକୁ ଦେହ ଲଗେଇ ଗପୁ ଥାନ୍ତି । ଝିଅଟି ହସୁଥାଏ ଚାପା ହସ, ହସ ଯେମିତି ତାର ଲକ୍ଷେ ଟଙ୍କା । ମନ କିଣା ଲାଜୁଆ ଲାଜୁଆ ହସରେ ନିଟୋଳ ଆନନ୍ଦର ଛିଟିକା । ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର ମନେହେଲା ଭରା ସୌବନ୍ଦର ପ୍ରାର୍ଥ୍ୟରେ ଦୁଇଜଣ ଜୀବନକୁ ଉପଭୋଗ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା କର ବୁଲେଇ ଶୋଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଲେ ।

ଟିକେ ଆଖି ଲାଗିଗଲା ବେଳକୁ ବୋଧେ ଭଦ୍ରକ ଝେସନ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଯାଇଛି । ଉପରର ବୟସ୍କ ଲୋକ ଜଣଙ୍କ ତାଙ୍କ ବନ୍ଧାନୀଟି ଧରି ତରବର ହୋଇ ଉଠିଗଲେ । ଟ୍ରେନ ଛାଡ଼ିବାର ଶବ୍ଦ ପୁଣି । ତଥାପି ଯୁବକ-ଯୁବତୀ ସେଇ ସାମ୍ନା ତଳ ସିଟ୍ରେ ବସି ପରସ୍ପର ସାନ୍ନିଧ୍ୟକୁ ଉପଭୋଗ କରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଟିକେ ଅତୁଆ ଅତୁଆ ଲାଗିଲେ ବି ମୁହଁ ଘୁରେଇ ଶୋଇବାକୁ ପୁଣି ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଲେ । କିଛି ସମୟ ପରେ ଶବ୍ଦରୁ ଜଣାଗଲା ଯୁବକଟି ବୋଧେ ଉପର ଟାୟାରକୁ ଉଠିଲା । ଏବେ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ନିଶ୍ଚିନ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଯୁବତୀ ଦିଗକୁ କର ବୁଲେଇଲେ । ଝିଅଟି ତା





ଆସୁଥାଏ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ମଧ୍ୟ ନିଜ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ଅଞ୍ଚଳକୁ ଶୁଭେକ ଭିତି ଆଣିଲେ ଉପରକୁ ଓ ଆଖି ବୁଜିବାକୁ ଏଥର ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଲେ । ସକାଳ ପାଞ୍ଚଟାକୁ ହାତରା ଶ୍ରେୟନରେ ଗାତି ପହଞ୍ଚିଯିବ । ଶ୍ରେୟନରୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଘଣ୍ଟାଏ ଲାଗିଯିବ ତାଙ୍କ ନିଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସ୍ଥାନ 'ଜଗଦୀଶଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ରୋଡ୍'କୁ ଯିବାକୁ । ସେଠି ରୁମ୍, ବୋର୍ଡିଙ୍ଗ୍ ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ଖାଇବା ମିଳିଛି ଦୁଇଦିନ ପାଇଁ ଫ୍ରି-କନ୍‌ସ୍ପେରନ୍ସ ଚରମରୁ । ଆଖି ଲାଗିଗଲା ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର ।

ବେଶ୍ ଗହୀର ନିଦରେ ବୋଧେ ତିନିରୁ ଚାରି ଘଣ୍ଟା କରି ଯାଇଛି । ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଯିବା ଆସିବା ଶବ୍ଦରେ ନିଦ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଗଲା ତାଙ୍କର । ଖତଗପୁର ଶ୍ରେୟନ ବୋଧେ । ଗାତି ରହିଲା ଦଶରୁ ପନ୍ଦର ମିନିଟ୍ । ପୁଣି ଦୁଇସଲ୍ ଦେଇ ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲା ଗାତି । ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ପୁଣି ଭିତା-ଭିତି ହୋଇ ପଶିବାର ଶବ୍ଦ । ବଙ୍ଗଳା ଭାଷା ଶୁଣି, ଜାଣି ପାରିଲେ ଅନେକ ବଙ୍ଗଳୀ ବୋଧେ ଖତଗପୁରରୁ ଉଠିଛନ୍ତି । କେତେ ଲୋକ ଖତଗପୁରରୁ କଲିକତା ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିନ କାମ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ଯିବା ଆସିବା କରନ୍ତି । ଟେନ ଛାଡ଼ିବା ପରେ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପାଟି-ତୁଣ୍ଡ, ଚଲା-ଫେରା ଆସ୍ତେ ଥମିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ମନେ ହେଲା ଯୁବତୀଟି ବୋଧେ ଉଠିଛି । ଆଖି ବୁଜିଥିଲେ ବି ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଜଣା ପଡ଼ିଲା ପାଖ ଯୁବତୀର ହଲ୍‌ଚଲ୍, ତା ଶାଢ଼ୀ ଅଞ୍ଚଳର ହାଲୁକା ହାଡ଼ା ଓ ପାଉଁଜୀର ଝୁମୁକୀ ଶବ୍ଦ । ଶୋଇଲା ବେଳେ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ କରିଥିଲେ ଝିଅଟିର ହଲ୍‌ଦୀ ଲଗା ପାଦରେ ନାଲୀ ଅଳତା ଓ ଆମ୍ବକଣିଆ ପାଉଁଜୀର ଝୁମୁକୀ-ଝୁମୁକୀ ଶବ୍ଦ ଶୁଣିଥିଲେ । ଶସ୍ତା ଚପଲ ତା ପାଦର ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟକୁ କୋଉ ଗୁଣେ କମନ୍ଦ ନ ଥାଏ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଭାବିନେଲେ ଝିଅଟି ବୋଧେ ବାଧୁରୁମ୍ ଯିବାକୁ ଉଠିଛି । ତାର ଯାଗା ଛାଡ଼ିବାର ଚପଲ ଘୋଷରା ଶବ୍ଦ ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ପାଉଁଜୀର ଝୁମୁକୀ ଶବ୍ଦ ଅପସରି ଯାଉଛି ପାଖ ବାଧୁରୁମ୍ ଆଡ଼କୁ । ବାରି -ପାଞ୍ଚ ମିନିଟ୍ ପରେ ପୁଣି ଝୁମୁକୀ ଶବ୍ଦ ନିକଟେଇଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଜାଣିଲେ ଯୁବତୀଟି ସିଟ୍ ପାଖକୁ ଆସି ଠିଆ ହୋଇଛି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଆଖି ଖୋଲିଲେ । ଆଉ ନିଦ ହେଉନି । ଦେଖିଲେ ଝିଅଟି ଏ ଦିଗ ସେ ଦିଗ ପୁଣି ଦଶ ବାର ଫୁଟ୍ ଭିତରେ ହେବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା । ପାଖ ସିଟ୍ ମାନଙ୍କରେ ତଥାପି ଲୋକ ମାନେ ଘଣ୍ଟାଏ ଦୁଇ ଘଣ୍ଟା ଅଖି ବୁଜି ନେବାର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ବସି ପଡ଼ିଲେ ଏ ଥର । ଉପରକୁ ଚାହିଁଲେ ଯୁବକଟି ନାହିଁ ବୋଧେ ବାଧୁରୁମ୍ ଯାଇଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ମନେ ହେଲା ଝିଅଟି ବିବ୍ରତ । କନକନ ହୋଇ ଦଶ ବାର ଫୁଟ୍ ଯାଇ ଏପଟ ସେପଟ ହୋଇ ସିଟ୍ ଆଡ଼କୁ ଫେରୁଛି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଅନୁମାନ କରି ପାରିଲେ ଯୁବକଟି ଶୀଘ୍ର ଫେରୁନି ବୋଲି ଯୁବତୀଟି ବିବ୍ରତ ବୋଧେ । ପନ୍ଦର କୋଡିଏ ମିନିଟ୍ କରି ଗଲାଣି ଏ ଭିତରେ । ଝିଅଟି ଯାଗାରେ ବସୁନି ଆଉ । ଯୁବକଟି ତଥାପି ଫେରୁନି । ଟେନ ଝୁକୁ ଝୁକୁ ଶବ୍ଦ କରି ତଥାପି ଚାଲୁଥାଏ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ପଚାରିବାକୁ ଭାବି ଏଥର ଉତ୍ସୁକ ଆଖିରେ ଝିଅଟିକୁ ଚାହିଁଲେ । ଆଖିକୁ ଆଖି ପଡ଼ିବାରୁ ଝିଅଟି ମନକୁ କହିଲା 'କାହିଁ ଫେରୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି ଏ ଯାଏ' ଆଉ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ପଚାରିଲେ ତୁମ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମା ବୋଧେ ବାଧୁରୁମ୍‌କୁ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଝିଅ ଟି କିନ୍ତୁ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ପଶତଟିକୁ ଉପରକୁ ଉଠେଇ ନେଲାବେଳେ ହଠାତ୍ ଗଳାରେ ହାତ ମାରି କହିଲା ମୋ ସୁନା ମାଳ ? ବାପା ଚିତ୍କାରରେ ପୁଣି କହିଲା ମୋ ଚଂପା-କଢ଼ୀ ମାଳ ? ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଦେଖିଲେ ତା ଗଳାରେ ଥିବା ସେଇ ଆଖି ଦୃଶିଆ ପୁରୁଣା କାଳିଆ ଚଂପା-କଢ଼ୀ ସୁନାମାଳଟି ନାହିଁ, କୋଉଠି ଖସି ପଡ଼ିଛି କରୁକ ବୋଧେ, ବେଶ୍ ତଳକୁ ବା ମୁଣ୍ଡ ପାଖରେ କରିକିଆ ହୋଇ ରହିଥିବା ବ୍ୟାଗ ତଳକୁ । ତଳେ ଥିବା ଟିଶ ସୁଟକେଶ ଦାଢ଼କୁ ଯେତେ ଘୁଞ୍ଚାଘୁଞ୍ଚି କରିଲେ ବି, ଚଂପା-କଢ଼ୀ ସୁନାମାଳ ମିଳିଲା ନାହିଁ କୋଉଠି । ଝିଅଟି ଏଥର ଝରଝର କାନ୍ଦିବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଲାଣି ।

ପାଖ ବର୍ଷରୁ ଲୋକ ମାନଙ୍କ ଉତ୍ସୁକ ଆଖିର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଏଇଥର ଉଠିପଡ଼ି ଖୋଜିଲେ । ପୁଣିଥରେ କାହିଁକି କେଜାଣି ଚାହିଁଲେ ଝିଅଟିର ଗଳାକୁ, ମାଳ ଶୁନ୍ୟ ଗଳା ତାର କେମିତି ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଛତା ମନେହେଲା । ଝିଅଟିକୁ ପଚାରିଲେ ବ୍ୟାଗ ଭିତରେ ରଖି ଦେଇନ ତ? ଖୋଲିକି ଦେଖ । ଯୁବତୀଟି କହିଲା ସେ ନିଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଜାଣିଛି ମାଳଟି ଥିଲା ବେକରେ ଆଉ ଟିକେ ଶୋଇଯିବା ପରେ କର ନେଉଟିଲା ବେଳକୁ ବାଉଁଜ ଦୁକ୍ତରେ ଲାଗି ଯାଇଥିଲା ଏବଂ ଯୁବକଟି ତଳକୁ ଆସି ତାକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିଥିଲା ଦୁକ୍ତରୁ ଖସେଇବା ପାଇଁ । ଯୁବକଟି ଆଉ ଫେରୁନି, ଫେରିବନି ବୋଧେ, କାରଣ ଅପେକ୍ଷାର ସମୟ ଗତି ଯାଇଛି ନିଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଭାବେ । ଚଂପାକଢ଼ୀ ସୁନା ମାଳ ଆଉ ମିଳିବନି । ମାଳ ହଜିବାର ରହସ୍ୟ ସଙ୍ଗେ ଯୁବକଟିର ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧଧ୍ୟାନର ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ ଠଉରେଇବାକୁ ଡେରି ହେଲାଣି ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର । ଝିଅଟି ହସ୍ତ କାନ୍ଦୁଥିଲା ଗଭୀର ଗ୍ଳାନିରେ ମୁହଁକୁ ଲୁଚେଇ ତା ଶାଢ଼ି ପଶତର ଅସଫଳ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟାରେ । ସାମ୍ନା ର ଦୁଇଟି ଗୋଟିକିଆ ସିଟ୍‌ରୁ ଦୁଇଜଣ ଲୋକଙ୍କର ବାରମ୍ବାର ବାହାଣୀ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଓ ଯୁବତୀଟି ଆଡେ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଯୁବତୀଟିର ହାତ ଧରି ଚାଣିଲେ ଓ ପାଖରେ ବସିବାକୁ ଇସାରା ଦେଲେ ଓ କହିଲେ, “ଶୁଣ, ଥୟ ଧର । ଯୁବକଟି ତୁମ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମା ନାଁ ଆଉ କେହି ?” ଝିଅଟି ଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନରେ ଆଉରି ଜୋଅରରେ କାନ୍ଦି ପକେଇ କହିଲା ‘ମତେ ରକ୍ଷା କର- ସିଏ ମୋ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମା ନୁହେଁ, ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କ ସଂଗେ ମୋ ଘର ଛାଡ଼ି ଚାଲି ଆସିଛି । ଆସିଥିଲି ତାଙ୍କୁ ବାହା ହୋଇ ଘର କରିବାକୁ’ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଟେନର ଶିକୁଳୀ ଚାଣିବେକି ପଚାରିବାରୁ ଝିଅଟିର କାନ୍ଦ ବଢ଼ିଗଲା ଓ କହିଲା ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଗୋଡ ଧରୁଛି ଶିକୁଳୀ ଚାଣକୁ ନାହିଁ, ସମସ୍ତେ ଜାଣିବେ । ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଗୋଡ ଧରୁଛି କହି ନିଜ ପତିବା ବେଳକୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରା କହିଲେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଦୁଅନା ଆଉ, ଯାହା ହେବାର ଥିଲା ତା ହୋଇ ଯାଇଛି । ମୁଁ ତୁମକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବି । ପାଖ ଲୋକ ମାନେ ଚାହୁଁ ଛନ୍ତି, କାନ୍ଦ ବନ୍ଦ କରି ସବୁ କଥା ମତେ ଖୋଲି କହ । ପ୍ରଥମେ କହ ତୁମ ନାମ କଣ ଓ ଘର କୋଉଠି । ଝିଅଟି କାନ୍ଦ ବାପି ବାପି କହିବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଲା ।

ମୋ ନାମ କାଞ୍ଚନ । ଘର ସୁନାଖଳା- ନୟାଗଡ ପାଖକୁ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ପଚାରିଲେ ଯୁବକଟିର ଘର ଠିକଣା ଓ ପରସ୍ପର ସଂପର୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ଓ କାହିଁକି କଲିକତା ଯାଉଥିଲେ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି । ଝିଅଟି କହିବାରେ ଲାଗିଲା ଯେ ତା’ଘର ନୟାଗଡ ରାସ୍ତାରେ ସୁନାଖଳାର ଆଉରି ତଳମାଳିଆ ମଫସଲରେ । କାଞ୍ଚନର ମା’ ବିଧବା । କାଞ୍ଚନ ଆଠ ବରଷ ବେଳେ ବାପା ତାର ବାଉଁରେ ମରି ଯାଇଥିଲା । ସେଇଦିନଠୁ ଗୁଜୁରାଣ ମେଣ୍ଡେଇବାକୁ କାଞ୍ଚନର ମା’କୁ ଘରୁ ବାହାରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ହୋଇଛି । ଗାଁ ହାଇସ୍କୁଲ ଓଳା ପୋଛା କରେ । ଆଉ ଘରଘର ବୁଲି ଧାନ କୁଟେ,



ମୁଢ଼ି ଭାଜି ବର୍ଷଟିର ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ମେଣ୍ଟି ଯାଏ ଖୁସିରେ କାରଣ ଛୋଟ ଜମି ଖଣ୍ଡ ବାପର ଥିଲା ବର୍ଷଟିର ଚାଉଳ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚକୁ । କାଞ୍ଚନ ତୃତୀୟ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରୁ ଆଉ ପାଠ ପଢ଼ିବା ବାପା ଚାଲିଯିବା ପରେ । ମା ଯୁଆଡ଼େ କାମକୁ ଯାଏ କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ସାଥରେ ଧରି ଯାଏ ଆଉ ସେଇ ଭିତରେ ସମୟ ଗତି ଯାଇଛି । କାଞ୍ଚନ ଜାମା କୁରୁତା ଛାଡ଼ି ଶାଢ଼ୀ ପିନ୍ଧିଛି, ନୁଖୁରା ବାଳରେ ତେଲ ଦେଇ ଚିତ୍କଣ କରି କୁଣ୍ଡେଇଛି । ଗାଁ ଦୋଳ ଯାତାରୁ ଲଙ୍କ ସାବୁନ କିଣି ଦେହରେ ଲଗେଇଛି ଆଉ ବଡ଼ ଆଇନାରେ ମୁହଁ ଦେଖିଛି । ଯାଆଣ ଆସଣ ଯୁବାଠାରୁ ଅଧାବୟସ ମିଶିପଙ୍କ ଆଖିର ଠାରକୁ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିଛି, ନିଜକୁ ଭଲ ପାଇଛି ଆଗଠାରୁ ବେଶୀ । ଉଚ୍ଚତ ଯଉବନର ମହୁଆ ନିଶାକୁ ଅନୁଭବ କରିଛି । ଯୁବକଟି ସଙ୍ଗେ ଗଡ଼ବର୍ଷ ନୟାଗଡ଼ ରଥଯାତ୍ରାରେ ଦେଖା ହୋଇଥିଲା । ତା' ନାମ ଅମର ସେ ଆସିଥିଲା ତା ମାମୁଁ ଘର ନୟାଗଡ଼କୁ । ଅଜା, ଆଇ, ମାମୁଁ ମାଉଁଙ୍କ ସଙ୍ଗେ ନୟାଗଡ଼ରେ କିଛି ଦିନ ରହି କଲିକତା ଫେରିବ । କଲିକତା ଗରୀୟାହାଟରେ କୋଉ ବିସ୍ମୃତ କଂପାନୀରେ କାମକରେ । ତା ବାପା, ମା' ଆଉ ଛୋଟ ଭାଇ ସଙ୍ଗେ କଲିକତାରେ ରହେ । ବାପା ମା ତାର କେବେଠୁ ଉଠି ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି କଲିକତା । କଲିକତା 'ବେହେଲା' ପାଖ କୋଉ ମାଲ ଗୋଦାମରେ କାମ କରି ଅମରର ବାପା ତାର ଭଲ ପଇସା କମାଏ ବୋଲି କହିଥିଲା କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ । ଅମର ହାଇସ୍କୁଲ ପାସ କରିଥିଲା ବୋଲି କହିଥିଲା ମଧ୍ୟ । ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ବାସିକୁ କାଞ୍ଚନ ନୟାଗଡ଼ରୁ ଫେରିଆସିଛି ସିନା, କିନ୍ତୁ ଦେଖା ହେବା ଦିନଠୁ ପ୍ରତି ଦୁଇ ଦିନକୁ ଥରେ ଅମର ଆସିଛି ସୁନାଖଳା -କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ନ ଦେଖି ପାଗଳ ହୋଇଛି, କେତେ ନିଛାଟିଆ ଦୁଇପହର, ଆଶିନ ମାସର ମୁହଁ ସଞ୍ଜ ନିଛାଟିଆ ଗାଁ ଆମ୍ବ ତୋଟା ତାଙ୍କ ପୀରତିରତିରେ ଭରି ଯାଇଛି । ମା ନ ଥିଲାବେଳେ ନୁଆଁଣିଆ ସଞ୍ଜ ରେ ମନ୍ଦିର ବେଢା ପଛ କୃଷ୍ଣଚୂଡ଼ା ଗଛତଳେ ପୀରତି ରସର ଫୁଆରାରେ କାଞ୍ଚନ ଭିଜିଛି ଇଛା କରି । ରାତିରେ ଶୋଇ ପାରିନି ସକାଳର ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ, ସକାଳ କାଟିଛି ସଞ୍ଜର ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ । ଅମରମୟ ଚଉଦିଗ । ଅମରର ପୀରତି, କାମନା ଓ ବାସନାର ପଲ୍ଲବୀତ ରାଗିଣୀରେ ଜୀବନ ଭରି ଯାଇଛି । ଦିନ କଟିଛି, ପଥ ହୁଜିଛି କାଞ୍ଚନର ଓ ମାକୁ ଲୁଚେଇ ଅମର ସହ ପୀରତିର ବନ୍ଧନ କଠିନ ହୋଇଛି । ତିନି ମାସ ପରେ ଅମର ତାକୁ କଲିକତା ନେଇ ବାହା ହେବାର ଲୋଭ ଦେଖେଇଛି । ଶିବମନ୍ଦିରରେ ପ୍ରତିଜ୍ଞା କରିଛି । ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ଦେଇଛି ଓ କହିଛି କାଞ୍ଚନହିଁ ତା ଜୀବନ । କହୁକହୁ ଦିନେ କାଞ୍ଚନ ମା ତା' ପାଇଁ ରଖିଥିବା ଚଂପାକଢୀ ମାଳ କଥା କହିଛି । କାଞ୍ଚନ ତା' ସହୀ ମଲ୍ଲିକା ସଙ୍ଗେ ବୋଲଗଡ଼ ବୁଲିବାକୁ ଯିବ କହି ମା'କୁ ପଚେଇ ନେଇଛି । ମା' ର ସବୁ ସଂପତ୍ତି ଭିତରେ ଥିବା ବଡ଼ ନିଧି ସଂପତ୍ତି ଚଂପା-କଢୀ ସୁନାମାଳ ଟିକୁ ଧରି ଘର ଛାଡ଼ିଛି । ମରିବାର ଦୁଇଦିନ ଆଗରୁ କାଞ୍ଚନର ଆଇ, ମା' କୁ ଦେଇଥିଲା ସେଇ ଚଂପାକଢୀ ସୁନାମାଳ ଟିକୁ କାଞ୍ଚନ ପାଇଁ । ସେଇ ଦିନ ଠାରୁ ସୁନାମାଳଟିକୁ ମା' ଛୋଟ କାଠହାତବାଙ୍କରେ ସାତତାଳ ପଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ରଖିଲା ଭଳି ଛିତା ଖବର କାଗଜ, କନା ବିଷ୍ଣୁ ଭିତରେ ନାଲି କନାରେ ଗୁଡେଇ ରଖିଥିଲା କାଞ୍ଚନର ବାହାଦିନ ପାଇଁ । କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ସାତ, ଆଠ ବରଷ ହୋଇଥିଲା, ଦିନେ ମୁହଁ ସଞ୍ଜରେ କାଞ୍ଚନର ମା' ଦୁଆର ବନ୍ଦ କରି ନଲଂଗ ଆଲୁଅରେ କାଠ ହାତ ବାଙ୍କୁ ଖୋଲିଥିଲା । ଆଉ ଦେଖେଇଥିଲା ସେଇ ନିଧି ସଂପତ୍ତି ଚଂପାକଢୀ ସୁନାମାଳ ଟିକୁ । କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ଗେଲ କରି କୋଳକୁ ଆଉଜାଇ ନେଇ କହିଥିଲା 'ତୋରି ପାଇଁ ରଖିଛିଲୋ କାଞ୍ଚି, ଭଲ ଡୁଆଁଇ ଦେଖି ତତେ ବାହାଦେବି, ମାଳଟି ପିନ୍ଧି ଶାଶୁଘର ଯିବୁ ଡୁଆଁଇ ସଙ୍ଗେ' । ଆଖିରୁ ଝରି ଆସୁଥିବା ଲୁହକୁ ଶାଢ଼ୀ କାନିରେ ପୋଛି କହିଥିଲା ଜାଣିନି କେମିତି ମୁଁ ବଞ୍ଚିବି ତୋ ବିନା କାଞ୍ଚିଲୋ । କାଞ୍ଚିର ପିଲାମନ ବୁଝି ପାରି ନ ଥିଲା ମା କାହୁଁ କାହିଁ ଏଇ ଖୁସିର ଦିନ ପାଇଁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରି ? କାଞ୍ଚି ବୁଝି ପାରି ନ ଥିଲା ସେଇ ଦିନ, ଯେ ସବୁ ମାଁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମଣ ଝିଅ ପାଇଁ ସେଇ ଗୋଟିଏ କାମନା, ଝିଅଟିକୁ ଶାଶୁ ଘରେ ପଠେଇ ଶୂନ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ଯିବାକୁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ବୁଝିପାରିଥିଲା ସେଇ ତାର ଛୋଟ ମନରେ, ନଲଂଗ ଆଲୁଅରେ ବି ହଳଦି ଗଣି ରଙ୍ଗର ଚଂପାକଢୀ ସୁନାମାଳର ଅମୂଲ୍ୟମୂଲ ତାଙ୍କ ତୁନ ଲିପା ଚାଳ ଘରେ । ମା' ସେଇ ଅମୂଲ୍ୟ ମୂଲକୁ ତା କାଞ୍ଚି ପାଇଁ ସାଜି ରଖିଛି ବୋଲି ସେ ଦିନ କାଞ୍ଚନର ଗୋଡ଼ ତଳେ ଲାଗି ନ ଥିଲା ।

ବଡ଼ ହୋଇଛି କାଞ୍ଚନ । ଦିନେ ମା'କୁ ଲୁଚେଇ ମା ନ ଥିଲାବେଳେ ପୁରୁଣା ଦଉଡ଼ିଆ ଖଟ ତଳେ ପଶି ଛିଣ୍ଡ କମ୍ପଳ ଘୋଡେଇ ହୋଇଥିବା ସେଇ ଛୋଟ ହାତ ବାଙ୍କୁ ଖୋଲିଛି । ମା ର ସମତୁରେ ରଖିଥିବା ଅମର କାଗଜ, କନାକୁ ପରସ୍ତ ପରସ୍ତ କରି ଖୋଲି ସୁନାମାଳଟିକୁ ଟେକି ନିରୀକ୍ଷେଇ ଦେଖିଛି, ଉଣେଇଶିଟି ଚଂପାକଢୀକୁ ଗୋଟି ଗୋଟି କରି ଗଣିଛି । ବେକରେ ଲଗେଇଛି, ଗାଁ ଯାତରାରୁ କିଣିଥିବା ହାତ ଆଇନାଟିକୁ ଟୋଳି ଧରି ଦେଖିଛି, ମୁରୁକୀ ହସିଛି । ପୁଣି ଅରଖ ଯେମିତି ଥିଲା ସେଇମିତି ରଖି ଛିଣ୍ଡ କମ୍ପଳଟିକୁ ହାତ ବାଙ୍କୁ ଉପରେ ଘୋଡେଇ ରଖିଛି । ମାର ଆସିବା ସମୟ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି ବୋଲି ଖଞ୍ଜାତକୁ ବାହାରି ଆସିବା ବେଳକୁ ମାର ପାଟି ଶୁଣିଛି କାଞ୍ଚିଲୋ... କାଞ୍ଚନ ନିର୍ଯ୍ୟାତ ଜାଣିଛି ମା କେବେବି ରାଜି ହେବନାହିଁ କଲିକତା ଭଳି ଆଖି ପାଉ ନ ଥିବା ଯାଗାକୁ ଏଇ ପରଦେଶୀ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ତାକୁ ବାହାଦେଇ ଦୂରେଇ ଦେବାକୁ ସବୁଦିନ ପାଇଁ । ପିଲାବେଳୁ କାଞ୍ଚନ ଶୁଣି ଆସିଛି ମା ତାର ସାଙ୍ଗ-ସାଥୀ ସାଇପତିଶାଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ପୁରୁତେଇ ଗପିବାର 'ପାଖ ଆଖର ଜମିଜମା ଥିଲାବାଲା ଚାକିରିଆ ପୁଅ ଦେଖି କାଞ୍ଚିକୁ ମୋର ବାହାଦେବି, ମନ କଲେ ନିଜେ ଦଉଡ଼ିଯାଇ ଦେଖି ଆସିବି ଓ କାଞ୍ଚି ତା ପିଲାପିଲିଙ୍କ ଧରି ଗାଁ ଯାନି ଯାତରାଠୁ ରଜ, କୁଆଁରପୁନେଇ ସବୁଠୁ ସବୁରେ ମା ପାଖକୁ ଆସିପାରିବ, ବାପଘର ଆଉ ସପନ ହବନି । ଜମିଜମା ଥିବା ପାଠ ଶାଠ ପଢ଼ା ଚାକିରିଆ ଡୁଆଁଇଟିଏ ହେଲେ କାଞ୍ଚିକୁ ତାର ବିଧବା ମା ଭଳି ଘର ଘର ବୁଲି କାମ କରିବାକୁ ହବନି କହି ଜିଭ କାମୁଡ଼ି ପକେଇଥିଲା ଆଉ ହାତ ଟେକି ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ ମନାସ କରିଥିଲା କାଞ୍ଚନର ହାତ କାତ ବଜର ହେଉ ବୋଲି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ବୁଝିଲେ ଯୁବକ ଅମର କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ଠକି ଭୁଲେଇ ଦଗା ଦେଇ ଚାଲି ଯାଇଛି । ଗଲାବେଳେ କାଞ୍ଚନ ବେକରୁ ମା'ର ନିଧି ସଂପତ୍ତି ଚଂପାକଢୀ ସୁନା ମାଳଟିକୁ ଗୋରୀ କରି ହୁଏତ ଖଡ଼ଗପୁର ଷ୍ଟେସନରେ ଓଲଟେଇ ଯାଇଛି କାଞ୍ଚନର ନିରୀହ ନିତୋଳ ରୂପରେ କଳା ଛିଟିକା ମାରି ଦେଇ । ହାତରା ଷ୍ଟେସନ ପାଖେଇ ଗଲାଣି ବୋଧେ, ଟ୍ରେନ ଧିମେଇ ଧିମେଇ ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଦେଇଛି । ଦଶ ପଇର ମିନିଟ ଭିତରେ ହାତରା ଷ୍ଟେସନରେ ଲାଗିଯିବ । କଲିକତା ତଳର ମଫସଲ ଗାଁ ଘର ଗୁଡିକ ଦୂରରୁ ସକାଳ ଆଲୁଅରେ ପରିଷ୍କାର ଦେଖା



ଗଲାଣି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ତୁମ୍ଭ ହୋଇ ଭାବିଲେ କଣ କରିବେ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ । ଝିଅଟିର କେହି ନାହିଁ ସାହା -ସାଥୀ । ଭରା ଯୌବନର ଆକର୍ଷଣରେ ଅମର ଭଳି ବହୁ ଠକ ଲୋକ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବାକୁ ଆଗେଇ ଆସିବେ, ଶରୀରର ସୁଧା ମେଲେଇବାକୁ । ସେଇ ଭଳି ଲୋକ ମାନଙ୍କର ଅଭାବ ହେବନି ଦୁନିୟାରେ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ମନକୁ ସ୍ଥିର କରିନେଲେ ଝିଅଟିର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ନେବେ ଓ ତା ମା ପାଖରେ କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ଛାଡ଼ିବେ । ସେଇ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ତାଙ୍କର । ଏତେବେଳେ ପୃଥିବୀରେ ସୁଦୂର ତାଙ୍କର । ସେ ହିଁ କରିବେ । ଅସହାୟା ଯୁବତୀଟିର ତାଙ୍କ ଛତା ଆଉ କେହି ନାହିଁ ଏଠି ।

ହାତରା ଷ୍ଟେସନରେ ଗାଡ଼ି ଲାଗିଲା । ହେ...ଏ... ଚାଇ ଗରମ୍, ଗରମ୍ ଚାଇଇ, ହେ ଚାଇ... ଶରରେ ସାରା ଷ୍ଟେସନ ଯେମିତି ମୁଖରୀତ ହେଲା ଅକଳନ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଗହଳୀରେ । ବାବୁ କୁଲୀ...ଇ, ମା କୁଲୀ..., କୁଲୀ...କୁଲୀ ଶରକୁ ନାଲି ସାର୍ତ୍-ହାଫ୍ ପ୍ୟାଣ୍ଟ ପିନ୍ଧା କୁଲୀଙ୍କର ଗରାଖଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଠେଲା ପେଲା ଚାଲିଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କର କୁଲୀକୁ ଦେଲାଭଳି ଜିନିଷ ନ ଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ କାଞ୍ଚନର ଭାରି ଚିଣ ସୁଗନ୍ଧେଣ ପାଇଁ କୁଲୀଟିର ଦରକାରୀତା ଆନୁଭବ କରିଲେ । ପାଖରେ ଯାଉଥିବା କୁଲୀଟିକୁ ତାକି ଜିନିଷ ବଢାଇ ଦେଇ କାଞ୍ଚନର ହାତ ଧରି କହିଲେ 'ଆ କାଞ୍ଚନ ମୋ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ' । କାଞ୍ଚନ ତା' ଲୁହ ଭିଜା ଆଖିକୁ ପଶତରେ ଥରେ ପୋଛି ନେଇ ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କ ପଛ ଧରିଲା । ବୁଝି ପାରିଲା ଶୁଭ୍ରା ହିଁ ତାର ଅଭୟ କବଚ, ଗୁରୁତର ଅକ୍ଷମଣୀୟ ଅପରାଧରୁ ତାକୁ ଚରି ନେବାକୁ । ମେସିନ ଭଳି ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କ ପଛକୁ । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଚାହିଁଲେ କାଞ୍ଚନର ମୁହଁକୁ । ଗତ ରାତିର ସେ ଫୁଟନ୍ତ ଶେଫଳୀ ଝରି ଯାଇଛି, ତା ମନକିଣା ହସ ହଜିଯାଇଛି, ଜୀବନର ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଆଉ ନାହିଁ ତା ଭିତରେ । ଭୟ ଓ ହତାଶାର କାଳୀମାରେ ଯେମିତି ସେ ହଜି ଯାଇଛି ତା ନିଜଠୁ, ଉଜୁଡା ଭଙ୍ଗ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନକୁ ଆଉଥରେ ହାତରା-ଷ୍ଟେସନରେ ଅଗଣନ ପାଦ ତଳେ ଦଳିଦେଇ ।

ଶୁଭ୍ରା କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ଧରି ଟାଙ୍କିରେ ବସିଲେ ଓ ଟାଙ୍କିବାଲାକୁ କହିଲେ, "ଜଗଦୀଶଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ରୋଡକୁ ନେଇ ଚାଲ " । ହୋଟେଲରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଗାଧୁଆ ପାଧୁଆ ସାରି ରାତିର ବଳିଥିବା ଲୁଚିଖଣ୍ଡକୁ ଭଙ୍ଗାରେ ରୋଲ କରି ପାଟିରେ ପୁରାଇ କନ୍ଦର୍ପଚରନ୍ଦ୍ରକୁ ବାହାରି ଯିବା ଆଗରୁ କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ କହିଗଲେ ଗାଧୁଆ ପାଧୁଆ ସାରି ବଳିଥିବା ଲୁଚି ଓ ଭଜା ଖାଇ ନେବାକୁ ଗଲାବେଳେ କବାଟରେ ଭଲ କରି ଚାବି ଦେଲେ ଓ ଦୁଇଥର ଭଲକରି ଭିଡି ଦେଖିନେଲେ କେଜାଣି କାହିଁକି । ଗାଧୋଇ ସାରି କାଞ୍ଚନ ଗତ ରାତିର ଶାଢ଼ୀ ବଦଳିଲା ନିଶ୍ଚେଜ ଶରୀରର ନିରବ ଗୁନିକୁ ଘୋଡ଼ାଇବାର ଅସମ୍ଭବ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟରେ ।

କନ୍ଦର୍ପଚରନ୍ଦ୍ର ଦୁଇଦିନ ଶେଷ କରି ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଜଣେ ଚିହ୍ନା ଭଦ୍ରଲୋକଙ୍କ ଡରିଆରେ ଫେରିବା ଚିକଟ ଚିଏ କିଣିଲେ କାରଣ କାଞ୍ଚନର ଫେରିବା ଚିକଟ ନ ଥିଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଭାବିଲେ ମା' ତାର ମୁଣ୍ଡ ବାତେଇ କାନ୍ଦୁଥିବ ହୁଏତ ବଢିଲା ଝିଅ କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ନ ଦେଖି । କିନ୍ତୁ କାଞ୍ଚନ କହିଲା ମା' ତାର ହୁଏତ ତଥାପି ଭାବୁଥିବ ଯେ ସେ ସହୀ ମଲ୍ଲୀକା ସଙ୍ଗେ ବୋଲଗତରେ ଥିବ ବୋଲି । କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ପାଟ ବରଷ ହୋଇଥିଲାବେଳେ ସହୀ ମଲ୍ଲୀକା ସଙ୍ଗେ ସେ 'ମକର' ବସିଥିଲା, ଆଉ ସେଇ ଦିନଠୁ ପରସ୍ପରକୁ 'ମକର' ହିଁ ଡକାଉଥିବ ହୁଏତ, ନାମ ଧରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ମା' ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦୟରେ କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ମକର ଘରକୁ ଛାଡ଼େ ଓ ମକର ମଧ୍ୟ ଗାଁ ଯାତ୍ରାକୁ ସବୁ ବରଷ ତାଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ଆସେ । ମା ହୁଏତକିଛିଦିନ ଧରି ପାରି ନ ଥାନ୍ତା ଏ ଅଘଟଣକୁ । କଲିକତାରୁ ଫେରି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ତାଙ୍କ ବିଜେବି ଫୁଟ୍ କ୍ଳାବରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ନିତ୍ୟକର୍ମ ସାରି ଦିନ ଦୁଇଟାରେ ଛାଡ଼ୁଥିବା ନୟାଗଡ ବସରେ ବସିଲେ କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ଧରି । ବସଟି ସୁନାଖଳା ଦେଇ ଯିବ । ପ୍ରାୟ ଦେଇଘଣ୍ଟା ଖଣ୍ଡକ ପରେ ବସ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲା । ବସରୁ ଓଲଟେଇ ଦେଇମାଇଲ ବାଟ ଚାଲି ଗାଁ ଭିତରେ ଏକ ନୁଆଁଣିଆ ଚାଳ ଘର ପାଖେ ଦେଖିଲେ ଛତିଶ/ସଇଁତିରିଶ ବର୍ଷର ମାଇପୀଟିଏ ବାହାରେଥିବା ବାଉଁଶ ଅଲଗୁଣିରେ ଲୁଗା ଶୁଖଉଛି । କାଞ୍ଚନ ପାଟିରୁ ଅସ୍ପଷ୍ଟ ସ୍ୱରରେ ବାହାରି ଆସିଲା 'ମା' ଶର ଆଉ ପାଦର ଗତି ତାର କମିଗଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ କାଞ୍ଚନ ଓ ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଚିକେ ଦୂରରୁ ଦେଖି ଅଧାଭଙ୍ଗ ଲୁଗାକୁ ତଳେ ପକେଇଦେଇ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନୀକ ଆଖିରେ ଆଗେଇ ଆସିଲା ପତଳୀ ହୋଇ ମାଇପୀ ଜଣକ ଆଉ ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖି ହସିଦେଇ ପଚାରିଲା 'ନୁଆ ମାଷ୍ଟ୍ରେଣୀ ହୋଇ ଆସିଛ କି ଗାଁ ଇସ୍ତୁଲକୁ ?' ଶୁଭ୍ରା କିଛି ଉତ୍ତର ଦେବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ କାଞ୍ଚନ ଛାଡ଼ି ପଟେଇ ମାକୁ ଜତେଇ ଧରି କାନ୍ଦିବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିଦେଲା, ମା ଛାଡ଼ିରେ ମୁହଁଗୁଞ୍ଜି । ଯେମିତି କ୍ଷମା ଚାହୁଁଥିଲା ମା'ଠୁ ତାର ଅକ୍ଷମଣୀୟ ଅପରାଧ ଲାଗି । ଆଉ ମା' ତାର ଆଖିରେ ଆଖିଏ ଭରା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନରେ 'କଣ ହେଲା ମୋ ଝୁଅର' କହି ବାହୁ ବନ୍ଧନରେ କାଞ୍ଚନକୁ ଗୁଡେଇ ନେଲା ନିଜ ଛାତି ଉପରକୁ । ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ଚାହିଁ 'କଅଣ ହେଲା, କଅଣ ହେଲା ମୋ ଝିଅର' କହି ଦୁହ୍ନ ଓ ଅହେତୁକ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନଭରା ଚାହାଣୀରେ ଶୁଭ୍ରାଙ୍କୁ ପୋତି ପକଉଥିଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଦେଖିଥିଲେ ଅଭୟ ରକ୍ଷାର କବଚ କାଞ୍ଚନ ମା ର ଜତେଇ ଧରିଥିବା ବାହୁ ବନ୍ଧନରେ । ଦଶ-ଦୋଷ କ୍ଷମା କରିବାର ବହୁ ଉଚ୍ଚରେ, ମାତୃତ୍ୱର ପରାଭୟରେ, ସନ୍ତାନର ଅଗଣନୀୟ ଦୋଷ କ୍ଷମା କରିବାର ଦୁର୍ଗା ଦୁର୍ଗତିନାଶିନୀ ରୂପରେ ।

(ତତ୍କ୍ୱର ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ପଟନାୟକ (ୟୁନିଭର୍ସିଟି ପ୍ରଫେସର), ସ୍ୱାମୀ ତତ୍କ୍ୱର ଶୁକଦେବ ସେନ୍ ଓ ଝିଅ ସୁଜାନ ପଟନାୟକ ସେନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଡେରୋନା ବିଟ୍, ଫୁରିତାରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି । )

ସର୍ପକୁ କ୍ଷୀର ଯେ ପିଆନ୍ତି, ସର୍ପର ଘାତେ ସେ ମରନ୍ତି ।

## ପ୍ରଭୁ! ଆସିଥିଲ ? କଞ୍ଚନା ଦାଶ

ବାହାରେ ଝଟ ବଜୁଛି । ବରଫ ଝଟ ! ବର୍ଷର ସବୁଠାରୁ ବଡ଼ ବରଫ ଝଟ । ବିଜାତ୍ କଣ୍ଠସନ । ଛେଲା ଛେଲା ବରଫ ଛାଡ଼ି ଝରକା କାଚ ସବୁ ଘୋଡେଇ ହେଇ ଯାଇ ବାହାର ଦେଖିବା କଷ୍ଟ ହେଉଥାଏ । ଇଲେକ୍ଟ୍ରିକ୍ ଲାଇନ୍ କାଳେ ଚାଲି ଯିବ ବୋଲି ତର ତର ହେଇ କିଛି କାମ ସାରି ଦଉଥାଏ । ଲଣ୍ଡି ଚଲେଇ ଦେଇ ଠାକୁର ବାସନ ମାଜି ଦେଲି । ଦିଆସିଲି, ମହମ୍ମ ବଡ଼ି, ଫୟାଜ୍ ପ୍ରେସ୍ ପାଖରେ ଲଗ୍ ରଖିଦେଲି ବାହାରେ ବରଫ ସବୁ ଆଇସ୍ ହେଇ ଯାଉଥାଏ । ପବନ ବୁଲେଇ ବୁଲେଇ ପିଚୁଛି । ସବୁତକ ଫୟାଜ୍ ପ୍ରେସ୍ ର ତୋର୍ ଧତ୍ ଧାତ୍ ଶବ୍ଦ କରି ବାଡେଇହଉଛନ୍ତି । ଲଣ୍ଡି କୁ ଡ୍ରାୟର୍ ରେ ପକାଇ ଦେଇ ମୁଁ ଏୟାର୍ ଲାଇନ୍ କୁ ଫେନ୍ କଲି । ଯୁଦ୍ଧର ଫାଇଟ୍ କାଲି ସକାଳୁ ୧୦ ଟା ରେ ଲାଣ୍ଡିଙ୍ଗ୍ । ପୁଅ ନେଇ ମଝିର ରେ ଛାଡ଼ିବ । ବ୍ୟାକ୍ ଟୁ ବ୍ୟାକ୍ ମିଟିଙ୍ଗ୍ ଅଛି ଦିନ ସାରା । ମୁଁ ଯାଇ ତାଙ୍କୁ ମଝିରରୁ ଆଣିବି । ଏତେ ସବୁକଥା କେମିତି ହବ? ଏଣେ ଟେଲିଭିଜନ୍ ରେ ବାରମ୍ବାର ଟାଉଣେଲ୍ ଆଡ଼ଭାଇଜରୀ ବୋଲି ଘୋଷଣା କରୁଥାଆନ୍ତି । ବଡ଼ ଆକ୍ଷୟର କଥା ଯେ, ଯୁଦ୍ଧର ଫାଇଟ୍ ଡେବେବି କ୍ୟାନସେଲ୍ ହେଇନି । ନାତି ଦିଜଣ ଖେଳଣା ଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଖାତା, ବହି, କ୍ରେୟୋଲା, ଜେଜେ ବାପାଙ୍କ ଡ୍ରୟାର୍ ରୁ ନାନା ଜିନିଷ କାଜି ଘର ତମାମ୍ ପକେଇଛନ୍ତି । ତାକୁ ରଖା ଥୁଆ କରୁ କରୁ ରାତି ହେଇ ଗଲା ।

ଦେହ ହାତ ବହୁତ ବିଷୁଛି । ବାହାରେ ବହୁଳ ଅନ୍ଧାର । ଲାଇନ୍ କିନ୍ତୁ ଚାଲି ଯାଇନି । ବେକ ସଳଖି ବାହାରକୁ ଚାହିଁ ବସିଲି । ବରଫ ର ମଧ୍ୟ ଗୋଟେ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଆଲୋକ ଅଛି । ବହୁତ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଦେଖା ଯାଉଛି ବାହାରଟା । ସ୍ନୋ ପାଉ ଆସି ସର୍କଲ୍ ସଫ କରୁ ଯାଇଥିଲା । ଆମ ପାଞ୍ଚ ପଡୋଶୀ ଙ୍ଗର ମଧ୍ୟ ନିଜ ନିଜ ପାଉ ଆସି ଡାଇଭ୍ ଓ୍ୱେ ସଫ କରୁ ଜାଇଥିଲେ । ଅଧର, ତା ଉପରେ ବରଫ ପଡ଼ି ପାହାଡ଼ ଉଠି ହେଇ ଗଲାଣି । ଯୁଦ୍ଧ ସବୁ ଦେଖିବା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ମୋର କିଛି କମ୍ ନୁହଁ । ଉଠି ଯାଇ ବାହାର ଲାଇଟ୍ ଜଳାଇଲି । ରାସ୍ତା ଶୁନ୍‌ଶାନ୍ । ରାତି ନିଶ୍ଚୟ । ଭଗବାନଙ୍କ ଦୟାରୁ ଲାଇଟ୍ ଏ ଯାଏ ଯାଇନି । ଯଦି ଯିବ, କେତେ ସମୟ କି କେତେ ଦିନ ପାଇଁ ଯିବ ଜଣା ନାହିଁ । ଇଏ ହୋଟେଲ୍ ରୁମ୍ କୁ ଅଧିକ ରାତିରେ ଫେରିବେ - ପାଗ ଯୋଗ କଥା ଯାଣିଛନ୍ତି - ଏବଂ ଆମ ସହର ରୁ ଯାଇଥିବା ତାଙ୍କ ସହ ଆଉ କେତେଜଣ ଲୋକ ମଧ୍ୟ ଫେରିବାର ଅଛି ସେଇ ଫାଇଟ୍ ରେ - ଯାହା କରିବେ ତ ସମସ୍ତେ କରିବେ । ମୁଁ ତେଣୁ ଚିନ୍ତା କରିବା ଉଚିତ୍ ନୁହଁ ଭାବି ବସିଗଲି ଚିତ୍ତି ସାମନାରେ-ଦେଖାଯିବ କାଲି କଥା । ଶେଷ ଥର ପାଇଁ ଏୟାର୍ ଲାଇନ୍ କୁ ଫେନ୍ କରି କାଲି ଯୁଦ୍ଧ ଫାଇଟ୍ ଷ୍ଟାର୍ଟ୍ ବୁଝିଲି । ଫାଇନାଲି ଯୁଦ୍ଧର ଫାଇଟ୍ କ୍ୟାନସେଲ୍ ହେଇ ଯାଇଛି । ଭଲହେଲା । ନିଶ୍ଚିତ୍ ହେଲି ରାତିଟା ପାଇଁ ନିଉଜ୍ ରେ ଦେଖିଲି କେତେ ପାସେଞ୍ଜର୍ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଯାଗାକୁ ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ଏୟାର୍‌ପୋର୍ଟ ରେ ଷ୍ଟେଣ୍ଡର୍ ହେଇବନ୍ତି । ରାତିସାରା ସେଇଠି ରହିବେ । ପାଗ ଭଲ ହେଲେ ସେମାନେ ନିଜ ନିଜ ଯାଗାକୁ ଯିବେ । ଯଦି ଫାଇଟ୍ ଠିକ୍ ଠାକୁ ଚାଲିବ । ନାଟୁରାଲ୍ ଡିଜାଷ୍ଟର ହେଲେ ଏୟାର୍‌ଲାଇନ୍ ଲିଜିଙ୍ଗ୍ , ବୋର୍ଡିଙ୍ଗ୍ ପ୍ରୋଭାଇଡ୍ କରେନି । ଦେହ ବିଶାମ ଖୋଜିଲାଣି । ବରଫବୃତ୍ତ ରାତିର ଗଭିରତା ଜାଣି ହୁଏନି ଯତ୍ନ ନଦେଖିଲେ । ରାତି ବାଆର । ଧୋଇ ଧାଇ ହେଇ ଶେଯରେ ଲୋଟି ପଡ଼ିଲି । ବେକରେ ବହୁତ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା, ଟେଲିଫୋନ୍ ଧରିଲେ ଏତେ ସମୟ, ବେକ କଷ୍ଟ ବଢ଼ି ଯାଉଛି । ନିଦ ବହୁତ ଲାଗୁଛି। ଅଧର ବେକ ସକାଶେ ଶୋଇ ପାରିଲିନି । ଆଖି ବୁଜି ଭଗବାନଙ୍କୁ ଧ୍ୟାନ କଲି । ଫାଇନୋମାୟୋଲଜିୟା ସହ ଲଢେଇ କରୁ କରୁ ମୋ ଆୟୁଷର ସବୁ ମୂଲ୍ୟବାନ ସମୟ ତକ ଚାଲି ଗଲାଣି । ମୋ ଶରୀର ର ପ୍ରତି ବିନ୍ଦୁ ଶକ୍ତି ମଧ୍ୟ କ୍ଷୟ ହେଇ ଗଲାଣି । ଅନେକ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା, ଘୁଞ୍ଚେଇ ଦେଇଥିବା ତକିଆଟି ଆଣି ପୁରଣି ମୁଣ୍ଡ ତଳକୁ ରଖିଲି । ବହୁତ କଷ୍ଟ ଦେଇ ବଞ୍ଚେଇଲି ପ୍ରଭୁ. ଏବେ ତୁମେ ଦେଇଥିବା ଦେହ ଚି ନେଇଯାଅ । ଏବେ ଏ ଦେହ ର ଆଉ କିଛି ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ନାହିଁ । ଆଖି ବୁଜୁ ବୁଜୁ ମୋର ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ଭିନ୍ନ ରୂପ ଧରିଲା । ପିଲା ଦିନେ କେତେ କାହାଣୀ ଜେଜେ ବାପା, ଜେଜେମାଆଙ୍କ ପାଖରୁ ଶୁଣିଥିଲି । ବଡ଼ ହେଇ ଗଲାବୁ ପୁରାଣ କଥା, ବାଇବେଲ୍ କଥା, ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଧର୍ମ ର କାହାଣୀ ରେ ପଢ଼ିଥିଲି ଯେ, ପ୍ରଭୁ ବଡ଼ ସକର୍ପଣରେ ଆସି ଭକ୍ତକୁ ଦେଖା ଦେଇ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ହେ ଭଗବାନ୍ ତୁମେ ଆସନ୍ତୁନି ଚିକିଏ, ଆମଘରକୁ କେତେ ଲୋକ ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି - ତୁମେ ଆସନ୍ତୁ । ବସିବାକୁ କହନ୍ତି - ଯଥାବିଧି ତୁମର ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା କରନ୍ତି, ଗପସପ କରନ୍ତି..... କାହିଁ ମୋର ସେ ଭକ୍ତି ! କାହିଁ ମୋର ସେ ଭାବ!! କାହିଁ ମୋର ସେ ଭାଗ୍ୟ !!! ମୁଁ କି ଏତେ ଭକ୍ତ କୋଟିର ଭକ୍ତ ଯେ, ଭଗବାନ୍ ଆସିବେ ମୋ ପାଖକୁ ମୋର ଆତିଥ୍ୟ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବାକୁ । ଆଃ ମୁଁ କଅଣ ସବୁ ସତେ ଭାବୁଛି? ତେତନା ଆସିଗଲା କେତେ ଯଲ୍‌ଦି । ସେ ଭାବ ରାଜ୍ୟରୁ ଖସି ପଡ଼ିଲି । ଯତ୍ନ ଦେଖିଲି ୧୨ ଟା ୩୫ । ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ମୁଁ ମାତ୍ର ୩୫ ମିନିଟ୍ ହେବ ଶେଯରେ ପଡ଼ିଛି ।

ଫେନ୍ ରିଂ ହେଲା । ମୋର ସେଲ୍ ଫେନ୍ । ଧତ ପତ ହେଇ ବସିଲି । ଇଏ ବୋଧେ ହୋଟେଲ୍ ରୁମ୍ କୁ ଫେରିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏତେ ରାତି ରେ ସିଏ ମତେ ଉଠେଇବା ଲୋକ ନୁହନ୍ତି । ସେଲ୍ ଫେନ୍‌ରେ କିଏ ଡାକୁଥିବେ ଆଉ? ମୋର ତତ୍ତା ତୁଟିଗଲା ଭଏସ୍ ଶୁଣି । ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ବନ୍ଧୁପତ୍ନୀ ବଡ଼ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହେଇ ଡାକୁଛନ୍ତି । ପୁଅ ତାଙ୍କର କଲରାତୋ ସ୍ପିଙ୍ଗ୍ ରୁ ବୋଉନ୍ ଯିବା ବାଟରେ ମିନିଆପଲିସ୍ ଏଆର୍ ପୋର୍ଟ ରେ ଅଟକି ଯାଇଛି । ଆସନ୍ତା କାଲି ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଫାଇଟ୍ ନାହିଁ ଚାଆର । ମୋ ବିବଶତା କଥା ତାଙ୍କୁ ବୁଝାଇ ଦେଇ ଫେନ୍ ରଖିଲି । ଉଠି ବସି ବାହାରକୁ ଚାହିଁଲି. ବିଜାତ୍ କଣ୍ଠସନ ଆଦୌ କମିନି । ନଚେତ୍ ପୁଅକୁ ଡାକି କହିଥାଆନ୍ତି ଏଆର୍‌ପୋର୍ଟ କୁ ଚାଲିଯିବାପାଇଁ । ତା' ସହ ପରାମର୍ଶ ବି କରି ପାରୁନି କାରଣ ରାତି ଗୋଟାଏ ବେଳେ ସିଏ ଶୋଇ ପଡ଼ିଥିବ । ଏଣେ ଫେନ୍ କରିଥିବା ବାନ୍ଧବୀ ଜଣକ ଯେ ଗୋଟିଏ ମାଆ! ପୁଅ ହୁଏତ ଆଉ ପାଞ୍ଚ ଜଣଙ୍କ ସହିତ ନିରାପଦରେ ଥିବ - କିନ୍ତୁ ମାଆ ମନ ତ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ତହକ ବିକଳ ହେବ, ରାତି ତମାମ୍ । ସକାଳେ ହୁଏତ ମୋ ପୁଅ ଯାଇ ତାକୁ ଆଣିବ । କିନ୍ତୁ ହୁଏତ କାଲି ବେଶି ଆସୁବିଧା ହେଇଯିବ, ବେଶି ଝଟ ତୋଫାନ୍ ବଢ଼ିଯିବ । ପୁଅଟି



ବୋଝନ୍ ରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଅଥବା ଏ ପୁଅଟିକୁ ପୁରଣି ଥରେ ଦେଖିବା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ଅନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ କାଳ ପାଇଁ ମାଆଟି ନିଃସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ପୁଅ ପାଇଁ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହେଉଥିବ । କଅଣ ମୁଁ ଆଉ କରିବି । ଏ କଣ୍ଠସନ୍ ରେ ତ କେହି ବି ଘରୁ ବାହାରୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ଚିତ୍ତ ରେ ତେବେବି କହି ଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ଯେ ‘କାଲି ସଂଧ୍ୟା ୬ ଟା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଚାଉଳ ଆଡ଼ାଉଳଜରୀ ।

ନିମିଷକେ ଭଗବାନ୍ ମତେ ଦୁଇ ମୁହଁ କରି ଦେଲେ- ମୁଁ ସେ ବନ୍ଧୁପୁତ୍ରଙ୍କ ସେଲ୍ ଫୋନ୍‌କୁ ଡାଏଲ୍ କଲି । “ବାପା, ବୁଝିଦେଲୁ, ଯଦି ଚାହିଁ ସର୍ତ୍ତସ୍ୱ ବାତିଲ୍ ହେଇନି, ତେବେ ତୁ କାଳ ବିଳମ୍ବ ନ କରି ଘରକୁ ଚାଲିଆ - ନିହାତି କମ୍ରେ ଆରାମରେ ଶୋଇ ପଡ଼ିବୁ, କଅଣ ଚିକିତ୍ସା ଖାଇ ଦବୁ । ସକାଳୁ ଭଲରେ ଗାଧେଇ ପାରିବୁ, ତୋର ଫୁଲ୍ କାଲି ଯଦି ଯାଉଥିବ, ତତେ ଆମେ ନେଇ ଏୟାର୍ ପୋର୍ଟ ରେ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦବୁ । ପୁଅ ମୋ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବରେ ଭାରି ଖୁସି ହେଇଗଲା ଏବଂ ମତେ ଡାକିବ କହି ଫୋନ୍ ରଖିଲା । କହିବା ବାହୁଲ୍ୟ, ଆମ ଘର ଠାରୁ ଏୟାର୍ ପୋର୍ଟ ମାତ୍ର ୧୫ ମାଇଲ ଦୂର ।

ମୋର ଏ ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ବନ୍ଧୁପୁତ୍ରଙ୍କୁ ଜଣେଇ ଦେଲି - ଏବେ ଆମ ଦୁଇ ମାଆଙ୍କର ଚିନ୍ତା ଦୁର୍ଦ୍ଦିନ୍ଦା ରେ ପରିଣତ ହେଇଗଲା - ଏ ଝଡ଼ରେ ଚାହିଁ ଆଣି ନିରାପଦରେ ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚେଇବ ତା! ସିଏ ପହଞ୍ଚିବା ପରେ ମୁଁ ଫୋନ୍ କରିବି କହି ଫୋନ୍ ରଖିଲି । ଭାତ ଦିଲଟା ବସେଇ ଦେଇ ରେଫିକ୍ସନରେଟରୁ ତର୍ଜାଣୀ ପତ୍ର ବାହାର କରି ରଖିଲି । ବାହାରକୁ ଚାହିଁଲି - ବରଫ ଧିମେଇ ଧିମେଇ ପଡ଼ୁଛି । ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ଝଡ଼ ପବନ ବହୁତ କମି ଯାଇଛି । ଆମ ଡ୍ରାଇଭ୍ ଓ୍ବେ ଏବଂ ସର୍କଲ୍ ପୁଣି ଥରେ ସଫା କରିଦେଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଫୋନ୍ କରି ବୁଝିଲି ଯେ ସିଏ ଲାଇନ୍‌ରେ ଠିଆ ହେଇଛି- ମୁଁ ନିଃଶ୍ଚିନ୍ତରେ ଝରକା ପାଖରେ ବସିଲି, ଜନ ମାନବଶୂନ୍ୟ ବରଫବୃତ୍ତ ରାସ୍ତା କୁ ଚାହିଁ ଜପ କରୁ କରୁ ମୁଁ ନିଦ ଭାରରେ ଢୋଳେଇ ପଡ଼ୁଥାଏ । ଫୋନ୍ ପୁଣି ରଙ୍ଗ ହେଲା, “ଜେଠେଇ, ମୁଁ ତୁମ ଘର ପାଖରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଗଲିଣି । କିନ୍ତୁ କ୍ୟାବ୍‌ଟି ସ୍ନୋ ରେ ପଶିଗଲା । ତମେ ଏଇଠୁ ଅଧି ମତେ ନେଇଯା ।” ଚିକିତ୍ସ ରହି ପୁରଣି ସିଏ ମତେ ଚିକିତ୍ସ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିବାକୁ କହି ଫୋନ୍ ରଖି ଦେଲା । ମାଇଲା, ଏବେ କଅଣ କରିବି! ରାତି ଦୁଇଟା ହୁଏ ପଛକେ ପୁଅକୁ ଫୋନ୍ କରି ପରାମର୍ଶ ନେବି, ମୋର ତତ୍ତ୍ୱା ତୁଟିଗଲା ! ମୁଁ ଯେତେ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କଲି ଯମା ଠଉରେଇ ପାରିଲି ନାହିଁ ସିଏ ଅଟକି ଯାଇଥିବା ଜାଗାଟି ଆମ ଘରଠାରୁ କେତେ ଦୂର - ହାଇପର ଥରମିଆଁ କାଳେ ହେଇଯିବ ତ -ବଡ଼ ଅସୁବିଧା ହେଇଯିବ । ମତେ କିଛି ଭଲ ଲାଗୁ ନଥାଏ । ସେଇମିତି ଅସ୍ୱପ୍ନସ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଉପରକୁ ଯାଇ, ଗେଞ୍ଜ୍ ରୁମ୍ ଏବଂ ବାଥ୍ ରୁମ୍ କୁ ସଜାଡ଼ି ଦେଲି - ବନ୍ଧୁ, ରାତି ପୋଷାକ, ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ରଖୁଛି,ତୋରୁ ବେଲ୍ ବାଜିଲା ପରି ଶୁଭିଲା । ତଳକୁ ଦଉଡ଼ି ଆସିଲି । ଚାଲି ଚାଲି ପୁଅଟି ପଳେଇ ଆସିଲା କି ! କବାଟ ଖୋଲିଲି । “ଆରେ ବାପା ତୁ !” ସତ କୁ ସତ ପୁଅଟି ଠିଆ ହେଇଥିଲା ।

‘ବିଚାରା ଚାହିଁ ତାଜାଭର ଗାଡ଼ି କାଟୁଛି ବରଫ ଗଦାରୁ । ମତେ ଦୁଃଖ ଲାଗିଲା । ଅଧିକା ୫୦ ତଳାର ଦେଲି ।’  
ଯୋତା ଖୋଲୁ ଖୋଲୁ କହିଲା ସିଏ । “ହଉ, ଭଲ କଲୁ- ଆଗ ମା’ କୁ ଫୋନ୍ କରିଦେ - ତାପରେ ଖାଇବସ”, ମୁଁ ତାକୁ କହିଲି । ମତେ ଯଥାବିଧି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନାମ୍ କରି ମା’କୁ ଫୋନ୍ କଲା, ଖାଦ୍ୟଗରମ୍ କରି ଟେବୁଲରେ ଥୋଇବା ଭିତରେ ମୋ ଅଖିରେ ବହୁଳିଆ ଲୁହ ଗୁଡ଼ା ଜଳେଇ ଆସିଲା, ଅନେକ ଦିନ ତଳୁ ଅସମୟ ରେ ଆମସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଯାଇ ଥିବା ବାପା ଚି ଯାର ଏଇମିତି ଥିଲେ- ବହୁତ ସ୍ନେହୀ, ଭାରି ଦୟାଳୁ ଥିଲେ ।

ହସ ହସ ଖୁସି ଖୁସି ହେଇ ଝଡ଼ ରାତିର ଅତିଥି ଚି ଖାଇ ପିଇ ଶୋଇବାକୁ ଗଲା । ମୁଁ ବି ଶୋଇ ଗଲି । ଭୋର୍ ୫ଟା ମୋର ନିୟମିତ ଉଠିବା ସମୟ - ନିଦ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଗଲା । ଆଖି କିନ୍ତୁ ଖୋଲୁ ନଥାଏ । ଚିତାନସ୍ ଇଞ୍ଜେକ୍ସନ୍ ନେଇଥିବା ହାତଟି ଉଠେଇ ହେଉ ନ ଥାଏ । ଇଏ ସାନଆକ୍ସେନିଓ ରେ ଏକ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ କନ୍‌ଭେନସନ୍ ରେ ଯୋଗ ଦବା ପାଇଁ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଆଜି ଭୋର୍ ଫୁଲ୍ ରେ ଫେରିବା କଥା । କିଛି ନବୁଝି ନସୁଝି ହୋଟେଲ୍ ରୁମ୍ କାଳେ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେବେ, ହଇରାଣ ହେବେ । ଉଠି ପଡ଼ି ତାଙ୍କ ସେଲ୍ ଫୋନ୍‌ରେ ମେସେଜ୍ ଛାଡ଼ିଲି । ବାହିଁ ଦେଖିଲି ଅତିଥି କକ୍ଷଟି ବନ୍ଦ ଅଛି ତେବେବି ଅତ୍ୟଧିକ ଶୋଇ ଯାଇଛି ମହା ନିଃଶ୍ଚିନ୍ତ ରେ । ଯାହା ବି ହଉ, ଆସିଲା ଭଲ ହେଲା; ହଇରାଣ ହେଲା ପଛକେ ଏୟାର୍‌ପୋର୍ଟରେ ରାତିସାରା ଢୋଳେଇବା ଅପେକ୍ଷା ଇଏ ଭଲ ।

ଗାଧୁଆ ପାଧୁଆ ପୂଜା ପାଠ ସାରୁଛି, ବାପ ପୁଅ ଉଭୟେ ଫୋନ୍ କଲେ । ଇଏ ରାତି ଫୁଲ୍ ରେ ଫେରିବାର ସ୍ଥିର ହେଲା । ମୋ ପୁଅ ତେଣେ ଗତ ରାତିର କାହାଣୀ ଶୁଣି ମୋ ଉପରେ ବହୁତ ବିରକ୍ତ ହେଲା । ଭାବିଲି ଏଣୁ ମାଇଲେ ଗୋ ହତ୍ୟା ତେଣୁ ମାଇଲେ ବହୁହତ୍ୟା ! ଏମିତି ବରଫ ଝଡ଼ି ରେ ସିଏ ଯାଇ ଅତିଥି କୁ ଆଣି ଥାଆନ୍ତା । ତା ସହ ସମୟ ଦବା ପାଇଁ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଆସିବ ବୋଲି କହି ଫୋନ୍ ଥୋଇଲା ।

ମୁଁ ବନ୍ଧୁପୁତ୍ରୀ ଙ୍କୁ ଫୋନ୍ କରି କିଛିଟା ଗପିବା ସହ ରୋଷେଇ ବାସ କଲି । ଯାହା ପୁଅ ତାଙ୍କର ଭଲ ପାଇ ଖାଇବ - ବୁଝି ନଉଥାଏ କଥା ମଝିରେ । ଅତିଥି ଚି ତାଆର ନିତ୍ୟକର୍ମ ସାରି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲା ମୋ ପାଖରେ । ମୁହଁରେ ତାଆର ସେଇ ଭୁବନ ମୋହନ ହସ ଚିକକ ଲାଖି ରହିଛି । ଆଜି କାଲି ପିଲାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ତାହା ବିରଳ । ଖାଇବାକୁ ଦେଇ ବସିଲି ତାଆ ପାଖରେ । ଗପ ସପ ହେଲା । ଗୋଟେ ଜେନେରେଶନ୍ ଗ୍ୟାପ୍ ଆମର । ତଥାପି ଆମର ପରସ୍ପରକୁ କହିବା ପାଇଁକିଛି ଥିଲା । ପରସ୍ପରଠାରୁ ଶୁଣିବା ପାଇଁ ମଧ୍ୟ କିଛି ଥିଲା । ସର୍ବ ଆଖି ସୁଇଚ୍ । ଗୋଟେ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତିର ପୁଲକ ଏବଂ ଗୋଟିଏ ଶାନ୍ତି ର ଝଲକ ମୋ’ମନରେ ଖେଳିଯାଉ ଥାଏ । ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରିତ ସମୟରେ ବନ୍ଧୁପୁତ୍ରଙ୍କୁ ଏୟାର୍‌ପୋର୍ଟରେ ଛାଡ଼ି ବାପାଙ୍କୁ ଏୟାର୍‌ପୋର୍ଟ ରୁ ଆଣି ଘରେ ଛାଡ଼ି ପୁଅ ଫେରିଗଲା ତା’ ଘରକୁ ।

ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଉଲକଏଣ୍ଟ ର କଥା ଇଏ, ଏକ ଝଡ଼ ରାତିର କାହାଣୀ, ଦ ଲ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡ୍ ଅଫ୍ ଅପରବ୍ୟୁନିଟି ର ଅନୁଭୂତି ଇଏ ମୋର । ଆଜି ମନେ ପଡ଼ୁଛି ଆମ ମାନଙ୍କର ଏଇ ସୁବ ବୟସର କଥା । ଏଇମିତି ଗୋଟିଏ ନିଷ୍ପନ୍ ରାତିରେ ଇଏ ଝରକା ପାଖରେ ସାରା ରାତି ଠିଆ ହେଇ

ଥିଲେ । ଏଇ ପୁଅର ବାପା, ସେତେ ବେଳେ ବିବାହ କରିନଥିଲେ,ଚାକିରୀ କରିନଥାନ୍ତି, ଆମ ପାଖକୁ ଆସିବାର ଥିଲା । କିଛି ଅସୁବିଧା କାରଣ ରୁ ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚି ନଥିଲେ ଅବା ଆମକୁ ଜଣେଇ ନ ଥିଲେ । ସେ ସମୟର ଉତ୍କଳ୍ୟା, ଆମେ ଭୁଲିନୁ । ରାତି ଅଧିକ ହେଇଗଲାକୁ ମୁଁ ଶେଯକୁ ଚାଲିଗଲି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଇଏ ସାରା ରାତି ଝରକା ପାଖରେ ଠିଆ ହେଇଥିଲେ । ଏଇ ଆଶାରେ ଯେ, କାଳେ ଆମକୁ ହଇରାଣ ହବାକୁ ନ ଦେଇ ଚାଲି ନେଇ ପଳେଇ ଆସିବେ । ଅଧିକ ମନେ ପକେଇ ମନକୁ ଭାରାକ୍ରାନ୍ତ କରିବାକୁ ଚାହିଁଲିନି । କେତେ ମାୟା କେତେ ମମତା ଲଗେଇ ପୁଉଣି ସବୁ ତୁଟେଇ ଦେଇ ଅନେକ ଦିନରୁ ବନ୍ଧୁ ଚି ଆମର ଅତି ଅଳ୍ପ ବୟସରୁ ଆର ପାରିକୁ ଚାଲିଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଏଇ ପୁଅ ତାଙ୍କର । ଇଏ ସବୁ ଶୁଣିଲେ, ବନ୍ଧୁ ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କ ସହ ଏବଂ ପୁଅ ସହ କିଛି ସମୟ ଫେନ୍ କରି ଗପ ସପ ହେଲେ । ଜୀବନ ପୁଣି ତା ବାଟରେ ଆଗେଇ ଚାଲିଲା ।

ତା’ ପରଦିନ ସକାଳ । ଖରା ବିଛାତି ଦେଇ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଉଠି ଅସିଲେ । ରାଜ ରାସ୍ତା ପରିଷ୍କାର । କାମକୁ ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହେଲି । ପୁଣି କଲାବେଳେ ପୁଉଣି ମନେପଡ଼ିଗଲା ସେଇ ଧର୍ମ ସମ୍ବଳିତ ପୁରୁଣା ପୁରାଣ କାହଣୀ ଗୁଡ଼ିକ । ଯୋତା ସିଲେଇ କରୁ କରୁ ଭଗବାନ୍ ମୋଟିକୁ ଦେଖାଦେଇ ଗଲେ ଅଥଚ ସିଏ ଚିହ୍ନି ପାରିନ ଥିଲା । ଗୀତାପଣ୍ଡା ଭାରିଯା କୁ ଭାର ଥୋର ନେଇ ପ୍ରଭୁ ଦେଖା ଦେଇ ଗଲେ । ଚନ୍ଦନ ଘୋରୁ ଘୋରୁ ମୋ ହାତ ଅଟକି ଗଲା । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କୁ ଚାହିଁଲି; ହସୁଥିଲେ, ଭୁବନମୋହିନୀ ହସ, ଆରୋ!!!! ସ୍ୱତଃ ବାହାରି ଆସିଲା ପାଟିରୁ,“ତେବେ କଣ ପ୍ରଭୁ, ତୁମେ ଆସିଥିଲ ? ସେ ଝଡ଼ ରାତିରେ, ବନ୍ଧୁପୁତ୍ର ରୂପରେ ତୁମେ ମୋର ଅତିଥି ହେଇ ଆସିଥିଲ?????”

ମିନିଆପଲିସ୍,ମିନେସୋଟା

ଭାବକୁ ନିକଟ, ଅଭାବକୁ ଦୂର ।



Sarita Misra

ଧେନୁ ପଛେ ପଛେ ବସ୍ତା ଗମେ କ୍ଷୀର ଲୋଭେ,  
ଭକତ ପଛରେ ତୁହି ଥାଇ ସେହି ଭାବେ ।  
ଭକ୍ତ ସାଲବେଗ





## ପ୍ରକୃତି ଚିତ୍ରା ରଥ

ହେ ପ୍ରକୃତି,  
ଧନ୍ୟ ତୁମ ସହନ ଶକ୍ତି ।  
ମନ ଭରି ଉଠେ ତୁମ ସହନିୟତା ରେ,  
ଶ୍ରୀବତ୍ସ ର ଅବୀରଣ ଧାରା ଓ  
ଶୀତ ର ଅସରଳି ନିର୍ଯ୍ୟାତନା ପରେ  
ଆଶ ତୁମେ ଏ ଧରା କୁ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବସନ୍ତର;  
ଭରିଦିଅ ଅସୁମାରୀ ପଲ୍ଲବୀରେ ଏ ଧରା  
କାନେ କାନେ ଗୁଞ୍ଜି ଉଠେ କୋଇଲିର ସ୍ଵର ।  
କଳକଳ ଝରଣା ବୋହିଯାଏ  
ମନ ହୁଏ ପୂଲକିତ ପାଲ୍ଲବ ଆଶାରେ,  
କର୍ମମୟ ଜୀବନ ହୁଏ ଆନନ୍ଦିତ

ମନ ଉଠେ ଭରି ରଂଗୀନ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନରେ,  
ଭସା ଭସା ବାଦଲ ଭିତରୁ  
ଝରିଯାଏ ଶୀତଳ ଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନା  
ତୁବାଲ ଦେଇ ଶରୀର କୁ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ଵାଳନା ରେ!  
ହେ ପ୍ରକୃତି,  
କିଂପା ଦିଅ ମଣିଷ କୁ ଏତେ ମୋହ ତୁମେ?  
ଏକାକୀ ପୃଥିବୀ ସେ ଭାସୁଛି ଜୀବନ ସ୍ରୋତେ  
ମିଶିବାକୁ ପରା ପାରାବାରେ !  
ପ୍ରେମୋ, ଟେକ୍ସାସ୍



ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ଏ ମାୟାମୟ ଜଙ୍ଗଲରେ  
ସୁନାର ହରିଣ- ଦୁଶିଯାଏ, ପୁଣି ହଜେ  
ଛାତି ତଳେ ସବୁକାଳେ ଡେଇଁ ଡେଇଁ ଲୁଚିଯାଏ  
ଲତାକୁଞ୍ଜ, ଛାୟାଛନ୍ଦ, ପ୍ରାଂତର ଓ ଘନଘୋର ବଣଭୁଇଁ ଟପି  
ନିଜକୁ ଉଜାଡି ଦେଇ ଧାଇଁବା ଇ ଆମର ଭାଗ୍ୟ  
ତା' ଗୋପନ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶରେ  
ବର୍ଷା ପରି ଲକ୍ଷ ତୀର ଆପଣାର ଛାଇକୁ ନିଷେପି ॥  
ସୀତାକାନ୍ତ ମହାପାତ୍ର , କବିତା : ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମଣ



## ମନ ଆଶାଶ୍ରୀ

(୧)

ଏ ମନର କାତ ଆଇନା  
ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରଧନୁ ସପ୍ତରଙ୍ଗେ ହୁଏ ଯେବେ ରଙ୍ଗ,  
ଏ ଜୀବନ ଜହ୍ନେ  
ଆସେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିଳ ତରଙ୍ଗ ।  
ଏଇ ମନ କେବେ ହୁଏ ପାହାନ୍ତି ଆକାଶ,  
କେତେ ଶାନ୍ତ, କେତେ ସ୍ମିତ୍, କେତେ ସୁରଭିତ ।  
ଏଇ ମନ ପୁଣି କେବେ ଅସହିଷ୍ଣୁ ହୁଏ,  
ରାଗ ରୋଷ ଆଭିମାନେ ଗରଳ ଝରାଏ ।  
ଏଇ ମନ ଦିଗବଳୟେ କେତେ  
ପୁଣି ଆଶା ଅସୁମାରୀ  
ସତେ ଅବା ଝରୁଅଛି କେଉଁ ଏକ  
ଅନ୍ତହୀନ ସମୁଦ୍ର ଲହରୀ  
ଏକ ଆଶା ପୁଣି ମାତେ,  
ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୁଏ ଅନ୍ୟ ଏକ ଅଶା  
ନାହିଁ କେବେ ଶେଷ ତାର,  
ନାହିଁ କେବେ କ୍ଷୟ ।  
କାମନା ର ପୁର୍ଣ୍ଣତା ରେ ମନ ହୁଏ ବାଦଶାହୀ,  
ଅପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ କାମନା ନେଇ ମନ ହୁଏ ମୃତବତ୍  
ଜତ ଓ ପାଶାଣୀ ।  
ଏଇ ମନ ଲଗାବା ରେ  
କିଏ ହୁଏ ତାକୁ ଖୁନି, ସଇତାନ୍ ଆତ୍ମା,  
କିଏ ଏଠି ହୁଏ ପୁଣି ସାଧୁ, ସନ୍ଥ ଓ ମହାତ୍ମା ।  
ଏଇ ମନ ଶକ୍ତିବଳେ ପଞ୍ଜୁ ଲଘେ ଗିରି  
ଏଇ ମନ ଶକ୍ତି ବିନା ପାଦ  
ଥମି ଯାଏ ଥିରି ।  
ଏହିକ୍ଷଣେ ମନ ମୋର ଲାଗି ରହେ ପ୍ରଭୁ ଶ୍ରୀଚରଣେ,  
ଅନ୍ୟ କ୍ଷଣେ ମନ ମୋର ଭ୍ରମି ହୁଏ ସଂସାର ଜଂଜାଳେ ।

(୨)

ଏ ଅବୁଝା ମନ ମୋର ବୁଝିଯାଆ ଚିକେ  
ଅମାନିଆ ହୋଇ ବାଟବଣା  
ହୋ'ନି ତୁ ଏତେ ।  
କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ଧାଇଁ ତୁହି  
ପାରିହୋଇ କେତେ ବନ ଉପବନ ?  
ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମର ଯେ ଭରିଛନ୍ତି  
ସ୍ୱର୍ଗୀୟ ଆନନ୍ଦ ର ଝର  
ତୋ'ରି ଭିତରେ ।

ମନ ମୋର, ବିନା ସର୍ତ୍ତେ  
ଦୁନିଆ କୁ ରଖ ତୁ ବାନ୍ଧି  
ସ୍ନେହ, ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା, ମୈତ୍ରୀ ତୋରିରେ ।  
ଏତେ ବଡ଼ ଦୁନିଆରେ  
ନୁହେଁ ତୁହି ଏକା,  
କିଏ ଏଠି ଭାଇ ପୁଣି  
କିଏ ଏଠି ଭଉଣୀ  
କିଏ ପୁଣି ସଖା ଏଠି,  
କିଏ ବି ସଜ୍ଜନୀ ।  
ଏ ଜୀବନ ହାତେ କିଏ କେବେ  
ମୋତି କିବା ରତି !  
ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଜୀବ ଅଭ୍ୟନ୍ତର  
ସମାନ୍ତର ଅତି ।  
ଉତ୍ପାନ, ପତନ, ସୁଖ ଦୁଃଖ  
ସଦା ଆସେ ଧୂପ ଛାୟା ପରି,  
କେବଳ ଓ କେତେବେଳେ  
ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ ଓ ଭାଗ୍ୟର  
ବିତଂବନା ସିନା ।  
ମନ ମୋର ରହିଥାଅ  
ଅତଳ ମହାମେରୁ ସାଜି  
କରିତାଳ କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ ସଦା ହୁଏ  
ମହାତ୍ମା ଜୀ ପରି ।  
କିଏ ଯାଏ ଆଗେ, କିଏ ଯାଏ ପଛେ  
ଏ ଜୀବନେ କେବେ କିଛି  
ଅଛି କି ଭରସା ?  
ସେ ପାରି ରୁ ତାକ ସତେ  
କେବେ ଯେ ଆସିବ  
କିଏ କି ପାରିବ କହି !  
ମନ ମୋର !  
ଚିରନ୍ତନ ଲାଗି ରହ  
ପରୋପକାର ପରି  
ସ୍ୱର୍ଗୀୟ ସେବାରେ !

(୩)

ପରମ ପିତା ମୋର ଜଗତ ଗୋସାଇଁ,  
ଏତିକି ମିନତୀ,  
କୃପାକର କୃପାବନ୍ଧୁ !  
ମୁଁ ବାହେଁ ମନ ଚିଏ





ପୃଥିବୀ ପରି ଉଦାର  
ଆକାଶ ପରି ବିଶାଳ ଥାଉ  
ସାଗର ପରି ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ଯିଏ,  
ଦିଅ ତାକୁ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ  
କଠୋର ବଚନେ ସେ  
ଭାଙ୍ଗି ନ ଯାଉ,  
ଲଜୁଥାଉ ଜୀବନ ର ଯୁଦ୍ଧ,  
ଲଜୁ ଥାଉ ପାପ ପୁଣ୍ୟ ଭଲ ମନ୍ଦ ବିଚାରର ଶକ୍ତି !

ମନ ମୋର ସଦା ଭକ୍ତ ଶ୍ରୀହରି ନାମ  
ମନେ ମୋର ଝରୁ ଥାଉ  
ଭଗବତ୍ ପ୍ରେମ ।  
ତୁମ ଅବିନାଶୀ ଶତଜ୍ୟୋତି  
ବଳେନୋ ମନ ଦର୍ପଣ ହେଉ ଦୀପ୍ତିମନ୍ତ କୋଟି ସୁଧର୍ମସମ  
ଶତ ପ୍ରେରଣା ର ଉତ୍ସ  
ଜନ୍ମ ହେବ ତେବେ ମୋର ସାର୍ଥକ  
ଆଉ ମୁକ୍ତି ମାର୍ଗ ହେବ ମୋର ସହଜ, ସୁଗମ୍ୟ ।  
ମିତିଗାନ୍



Flower arrangement- Ranju Samantray

ଯାହା ମୁଁ କରଇ ଯାହା ମୁଁ କହଇ ଯାହା ମୁଁ ଚିନ୍ତଇ ମନେ,  
ଜଗତର କର୍ତ୍ତା ଜଗତ ଇଶ୍ଵର ଜାଣୁଛନ୍ତି ପ୍ରତିକ୍ଷଣେ ।



## ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଭ୍ରମଣ ଶଶଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର

ଚାହୁଁଚାହୁଁ ତିନି ସପ୍ତାହ ବିତିଗଲା  
ସମୟ ଦେହରେ ସତେ ଡେଶା ଲାଗିଗଲା ।  
ଫେରିଆସୁଥିଲି ସେଦିନ  
ଚଞ୍ଚଳ ହେଉଥିଲା ମନ  
ଅନବରତ ଧାଉଁଥିଲା ଜୀବନ  
ବିଧାତା ଲେପୁଥିଲା କଟାଘାରେ ବୃନ୍  
ଦଦରା ଛାତି ଭିତରେ ଉଠୁଥିଲା କୋହ,  
ଆଖି କୋଣରେ ଜକେଇ ଆସୁଥିଲା ଲୁହ ।

ସେ ଦିନ ପାହିଗଲା ଶୀଘ୍ର ରାତି  
ଧକ ଧକ ହେଉଥିଲା ଛାତି  
ଆସିବାର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀଥିଲା କେଉଁଠି ?  
ଦେହଟି ଆସୁଥିଲା ସତେ  
ଆତ୍ମାଟି ରହିଗଲା ସେଇଠି ।  
ମଣିଷ ଜୀବନଟା ସତେ ଏକ ଲମ୍ବା ରାସ୍ତା,  
ଯିବା ଆସିବା ସବୁ ଲେଖିଛି ବିଧାତା ।

ଝେସନକୁ ପିଛାକରି ଛାଡ଼ିଲା ଟ୍ରେନ୍  
ତୁ ଆଖିବୁଜି ହାତ ହଲାଇଥିଲୁ,  
ମୁଁ କାଳେ ଦେଖିବି ବୋଲି  
ମୋ ଆତକୁ ପଛକରି ଲୁହ ନିଗାଡୁଥିଲୁ,  
ଟ୍ରେନ୍ କିଛିବାଟ ଯାଇ ଅଟକି ଗଲା,  
ତୁ ଧାଇଁ ଆସିଲୁ,  
ତହଳ ବିକଳ ହୋଇ ଚାହିଁଥିଲୁ,  
ଟ୍ରେନ୍ ପୁଣିଛାଡ଼ିଲା,  
ଚିକିଏ ଯାଇ ଅଟକି ଗଲା,  
ତୁ ଅଜାଣତରେ ପୁଣି ଧାଇଁ ଆସିଲୁ ମୋପାଖକୁ,  
କିଛି କହି ଆସୁଥିଲୁ, ଥରି ଉଠୁଥିଲା ତୋ ଓଠ,  
ତୋ'ମନ କଥା ସବୁ ବୁଝୁଥିଲି, ସବୁ ଜାଣୁଥିଲି,  
କିଛି କହିପାରୁ ନଥିଲୁ ତୁ,  
ଭାଷା ନଥିଲା ତୋପାଟିରେ,  
ମିଶେଇ ଦେଉଥିଲୁ ଆଖିକୁ ଆଖିରେ,  
ଲୁହ ବହି ଯାଉଥିଲା ତୋ ଗାଳରେ  
ଲୁଚାଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଥିଲୁ,  
ପୋଛି ଦେଉଥିଲୁ ତୋ ପଗଟ କାନିରେ,  
ସେ ତୋର ମାମୁଲି ଲୁହ ନୁହେଁଟ ?  
ତୋ' ହୃଦୟରୁ ସ୍ଵଇଚ୍ଛାରେ ଝରୁଥିବା

ସତେ ଏକ ଉଦ୍‌ଘା, ପାହାଡ଼ୀ ଝରଣା;  
ଅମାନିଆ, ଅବାଧ୍ୟ ଏକ ଆଷାଢ଼ୀ ବନ୍ୟା;  
ବହିଯାଉଥିଲା ହୋଇ କଳକଳ,  
ସେଥିଲା ଶୀତଳ, ସ୍ମିରାଧ, ପବିତ୍ର ଗଙ୍ଗାଜଳ;  
ସେ ଥିଲା ତୋ' ଭଲପାଇବାର ଚିହ୍ନ,  
ଦୁନିଆରେ ଆଉ ସବୁ ତାପାଖେ ହୀନ,  
ଭାରାକାନ୍ତ କରିଥିଲା ମୋ ମନ ।

ନା କିଛି କହିବାର ଥିଲା ?  
ନା କିଛି ଶୁଣିବାର ଥିଲା ?  
କଣ ବାକିଥିଲା ଯେ ?  
ବୋଧହୁଏ କହିଥାନ୍ତୁ,  
ରାଶ ମୋର, ଫେନ୍ କରୁଥିବ;  
ଚିକିଏ ଆବାଜ ଦେଉଥିବ,  
ବଞ୍ଚିଥିଲେ ପୁଣି କେବେ ଦେଖା,  
ବର୍ଷ ବର୍ଷର ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷା,  
ଜଗା ବଳିଆ ହେଉ ସାହା,  
ଘଣ୍ଟ ଘୋଡ଼ାଇ ରଖୁ ଚଉକାହା ।

ଟ୍ରେନ୍ ପୁଣିଛାଡ଼ିଲା,  
ତୁ ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ହେଇଗଲୁ;  
ଅଗଣିତ ମଣିଷ ଭିତରେ ଲୁଚିଗଲୁ,  
ଟ୍ରେନ୍ ଅଟକିଗଲା ପର ଝେସନରେ,  
ମୁଁ ହଠାତ୍ ଅନୁଭବ କରୁଥିଲି  
ତୋ ଛାଇ ଯେମିତି ମୋ'ପାଖକୁ ଦଉଡ଼ି ଆସୁଛି,  
ମୋ ସାମ୍ନାରେ ଛିଡ଼ା ହୋଇ କାନ୍ଦୁଛି ।

ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀହେଉଥିଲା ସମୟକୁ ଘୁଞ୍ଚାଇଦେବାକୁ  
ପଛକୁ କିଛି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତକୁ,  
ଅଟକାଇ ଦେବାକୁ ସକାଳର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟୋଦୟକୁ,  
କିବା ଅନ୍ଧାରରେ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଦେବାକୁ;  
ଆଉ ବହଳ ନିଦରେ,  
କେଉଁ ଏକ ଅଜଣା, ଅପହୁରା ରାଇଜରେ  
କିଛି ସମୟ ଶୋଇ ପକାଇବାକୁ ଚଢ଼େଇମାନଙ୍କୁ;  
ଶବ୍ଦସବୁକୁ ନିଃଶବ୍ଦ କରି ଦେବାକୁ ।

କ'ଣ କରିନଥିଲୁଯେ ?





କ'ଣ ଖୋଜନଥିଲୁ ? ପେଇନଥିଲୁ ?  
ଦେଖେଇନଥିଲୁ ? ଶୁଣେଇନଥିଲୁ ?  
କ'ଣ ବାକିଥିଲାପେ ?

ମୋ'ସବୁ ପାପର ପ୍ରାୟଶ୍ଚିତ ପାଇଁ  
ଦେଖେଇନେଲୁ ଯାଜପୁରରେ ବିରଜା,  
କେନ୍ଦ୍ରାପଡ଼ାରେ ବଳଦେବଜୀଉ,  
ପାରାଦୀପରେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମନ୍ଦିର,  
ଆହା କେତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର, ଚମତ୍କାର,  
ଛିପିଥିଲୁ ସମୁଦ୍ର ଲୁଣାପାଣି ଆଣି,  
ପାଇଥିଲୁ ନିଜେ ପାଦୁକମଣି ।  
ଦେଖେଇଥିଲୁ ଝଙ୍କରରେ ଶାରଳା,  
ବାଟରେ ଗୋରଖନାଥ,  
ଭୁଲିନଥିଲୁ ବି ଦେଖେଇବାକୁ ଧଉଳି,  
କୋଣାର୍କ, ପୁରୀ, ହରଦ୍ୱାର, ରକ୍ଷିକେଶ,  
ଆଉ ତୋ ଶାଶୁଘରେ ଅକ୍ଷ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ପଡ଼ିଥିବା,  
ନିଜକୁ ଘୋଷାରି, ଘୋଷାରି ଚାଲୁଥିବା  
ତୋ'ର ସତୁରି ବର୍ଷର ଶାଶୁବୁଢ଼ୀ ,  
ଓ ତାଙ୍କର ଦେଇଥିବା ଆଶିର୍ବାଦ ସହ  
କିଛିତ ଆୟୁଷ ।

ଦେଖେଇଥିଲୁ ହାତଧରି ଠାକୁରଘର କାନ୍ଧରେ  
କେଉଁ ମାୟାତା ଅମଳରୁ ଝୁଲୁଥିବା  
ନିରିମାଖୀ ଆମ ବୋଉର ପଟ୍ଟୋ,  
ଶୁଖିଶୁଖି ଆସୁଥିବା ତା ଲମ୍ବା ମୁହଁ,  
ଶାଢ଼ୀ ତଳେ ଲୁଚିଥିବା  
ତା'ର ଦିଖଣ୍ଡ ପଞ୍ଜରା ହାତ,  
କଖି ପଡ଼ିଯାଇଥିବା ତା'ସବୁ ଦେହ,  
ସରି ସରି ଯାଇଥିବା ତା ଆୟୁଷ,  
ଲିଭିଲିଭି ଆସୁଥିବା, ଫିକା ପଡ଼ିଯାଇଥିବା  
ମିଲିୟନ ତଲାର ତା'ହସ,  
ତୁମ୍ ବାପୁ ବସିଥିବା କାଠର ଏକ ମୁଣ୍ଡି,  
ଓ ତା'ର ଚକାଚକା ଦୁଇଟି ଆଖି,  
ଅକ୍ଷରରେ ଝଟକୁଥିବା, ଆଲୋକିତ କରୁଥିବା,  
ପରମବହୁ ସେ, ଏକ ଦିବ୍ୟ ଜ୍ୟୋତି,  
ମିଞ୍ଜିମିଞ୍ଜି ହୋଇ ଜଳୁଥିବା ଦୀପ,  
ଅଧା ଜଳା ଧୂପ,  
ଗାଁ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଥିବା ଭଙ୍ଗ ମଠଘର  
ଗୌତମ ବାବାଙ୍କର ସଂସାର,  
ବାତିରେ ଶାଗ ପଟାଳି,  
ଭଣଜା ଭାଣିଜିଙ୍କର ଅର୍ଦଳୀ,  
ଝଙ୍କା ଫାଙ୍କେ ନାଚୁଥିବା ଖରା,  
ଆକାଶର ଅଗଣାରେ  
ଲୁଚକାଳି ଖେଳୁଥିବା କୁଆଁତାରା,

ବାତିତାଳଗଛରେ ବାଇତଢେଇର ବସା,  
ଚଗର ଫୁଲର ବାସ୍ନା,  
ଅଗଷ୍ଟ ମାସରେ ଆକାଶ ଛାତିରେ  
ରୁଷିହେଇଥିବା କଳା ହାଣ୍ଡିଆ ମେଘ,  
ଓ ତୁହାକୁ ତୁହା ବର୍ଷା,  
ଗ୍ରାମ ଦେବତୀ, କ୍ଷେତବାତି, ଚକବନ୍ଦି,  
ବାପାଙ୍କର ସମାଧି, ଗୋସବାପାଙ୍କର  
ଜମିଦାରୀ ଓ ବୁଦିଆଦିର ଇତିହାସ  
କେତେ ହସ ଖୁସି  
ସାକ୍ଷ୍ୟାଧିମେଳରେ ଥଙ୍ଗା, ତାମସା, ପରିହାସ ।

ଦେଖେଇଥିଲୁ ଖରସ୍ରୋତା ନଇକୁଳେ  
ଧୁଆଁଳିଆ ଆକାଶ, ଦୂରରେଥିବା ବେତ ବଣ,  
ତୁବିଯାଉଥିବା ସୁଧ୍ୟ ଓ ତା'ର ନାଲି କିରଣ,  
କି ମନୋହର !  
ସତେ କି ଦିବ୍ୟ ଦର୍ଶନ !  
ଦଳଦଳ ହୋଇ ସଅଳ ସଅଳ  
ବସାକୁ ଫେରୁଥିବା ପକ୍ଷୀ,  
ଓ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ମୁକ୍ତିର ଆନନ୍ଦ  
ନା'ଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କର ଦକ୍ଷିଣ ନା ଶୋକ,  
ସତରେ କେତେ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନ ।  
ଦେଖେଇଥିଲୁ ନଇରେ ଭାସିଯାଉଥିବା ଦୁଲି ତଙ୍ଗ,  
ନଇବନ୍ଧେ ଗୀତଗାଢ଼ ଯାଉଥିବା ଶଗଡିଆ,  
ଆକାଶରେ ଭାସିଯାଉଥିବା ବାଦଲ,  
ନଇ କେତେ କେତେ ଫୁଟିଥିବା ଘାସଫୁଲ,  
ବାଟ ଚାଲୁଗାଲୁ ଝୁଞ୍ଚିପଡୁଥିବା ବୃକ୍ଷ,  
ଉଠିପଡ଼ି ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଥିଲା ସେ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତିବନ୍ଧ,  
ମା' ପଛେପଛେ କାନ୍ଦିକାନ୍ଦି ଦୌଡୁଥିବା ଶିଶୁ ଓ ଅନବରତ  
ଝରୁଥିବା ତା ଅଶ୍ରୁ,  
ପାଣି ଢୋକେ ପାଇଁ ଛାଡୁଛି ଚିକ୍କାର  
ବୋଧହୁଏ ତୃଷାତୁର, କି କ୍ଷୁଧାତୁର ?  
ପାଖ ହରିଜନ ସାହିରୁ ଆସିଥିବା,  
କେତେ ନେହୁରା ହୋଇ ଭିକମାଗୁଥିବା  
ଅଧା ଲଙ୍ଗଳା, ବାଳ ନୁଖୁରା ଝିଅଟିଏ,  
ନିରନ୍ତ୍ର କାଙ୍ଗଳ, ମାଛେଉଣି ପିଲାଟିଏ,  
ଭାଙ୍ଗିରୁଜି ତୁରମାର ହେଇଯାଇଥିବା ତା ସପନ,  
ଦେହରେ ଥାଇ କି ନଥିଲାଭଳି ତା' ଜୀବନ,  
ତା'ର ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ଆଶା,  
ଓଲିଏ ମାଗି ଓଲିଏ ଉପାସ ଶୋଇ  
ଭାଗ୍ୟସହ ଖେଳିବାର ନିଶା ।

ଶୁଣେଇଥିଲୁ  
ପିଲାଦିନେ କାନ୍ଦୁଥିଲା ବେଳେ



ବୋଉ କହୁଥିବା କାହାଣୀ,  
 ସପନା ପାଟରେ ତାହାଣୀ,  
 ରାତିରେ ତା' ପାଟିରେ ଜଳୁଥିବା ଆଲୁଅ,  
 ଆଉ ଧୂ ଧୂ ଖରା ବେଳେ  
 ଭଙ୍ଗ କୁଅ ଓ ଓଷ୍ଠଗଛ ମୂଳେ  
 ବାହାରୁଥିବା ଗେରୁଆ ବସ୍ତ୍ରଧାରୀ  
 ଏକ ଛୁଆଧରା ବାବାଜି,  
 ହାତଠାରି କାଳେ ଡାକିନିଏ,  
 ସିଏ ଥିଲା ଏକ ବଡ଼ ପାଜି,  
 ସେ କାହାଣୀ ନୁହେଁତ ?  
 ସତ ଭଳି ଲାଗୁଥିଲା,  
 ବେଶ୍ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଜନ୍ମାଇଥିଲା,  
 ଦୁନିଆର ସବୁ ମା' ଭଳି ଥିଲା ଧୂରନ୍ଧର,  
 ସେ ଥିଲା ତା'ର ଚତୁରତା,  
 ବୋଧ କରିବାର ମହାମନ୍ତ୍ର,  
 ସେ ଥିଲା ଏକ ଯାଦୁକରୀ,  
 ଭୁଲାଇବା ଥିଲା ଏକମାତ୍ର ଶତଯନ୍ତ୍ର ।

ଆସନ୍ତ ସିନା ମାସେ କି ଦିମାସ,  
 ନିରୋଳାରେ ବସି ଖୁବ୍ ଗପୁଆନ୍ତେ,  
 ବରା, ପିଆଜି, ମସଲା ମୁଢ଼ି ଖାଇଥାନ୍ତେ;  
 ସୁଖ, ଦଖ୍ଖ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତେ;  
 ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ଦେଖୁଥାନ୍ତେ  
 ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ସବୁ କେତେ ଜନମର,  
 ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ଡାକିଥାନ୍ତେ,  
 ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ପୂଜିଥାନ୍ତେ,  
 ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ସେ ଯେ ଜଗତଠାକୁର ।  
 କହିଥାନ୍ତୁ,  
 ଦିନେ ଉଠୁଥିବା ପଡୁଥିବା ଘରେ  
 କାହିଁକି ବିରାଜମାନ ଏ ନୀରବତା ?  
 କାହିଁକି ଏଠି ଲିଭିଲିଭିଯାଏ ସଞ୍ଜ ସଳିତା ?  
 କାହିଁକି ଏଠି ଚାରିଆଡ଼େ ଖାଁ ଖାଁ ଭାବ ?  
 କାହିଁକି ଏଠି ସବୁଥାଇ ସବୁର ଅଭାବ ?  
 କାହିଁକି ଏଠି ହଜି ଯାଇଛି ମଣିଷର ସ୍ୱର ?  
 କାହିଁକି ଏଠି ଦୀପ ତଳେ ଅନ୍ଧାର ?

ବୋଧହୁଏ ଭୁଲିଗଲୁ କହିବାକୁ  
 ଆସୁଛି ହେଲେ ଅଢେଇଦିନ,  
 ..

**ମେରୀଲ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡ**

(୨୦୦୫ ଅଗଷ୍ଟ ମାସରେ ମୁଁ, ମୋ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଓ ମୋ ପିଲାମାନେ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରୁ ଗୁାଲିଅର ଟ୍ରେନ୍ରେ ଆସିବାବେଳେ ମୋର ସାନ ଭାଇ ଓ ଭଉଣୀ ମାନେ ଟ୍ରେନ୍ ଛେସନକୁ ଆସିଥିଲେ ବିଦାୟ ଦେବାକୁ । ମୁଁ କାଳେ ଦେଖିବି ବୋଲି ମୋ ସାନ ଭଉଣୀ 'ଡଲି' ମୋଆଡକୁ ପଛ କରି କାରୁଥିଲା,ତା'ଲୁହକୁ ଛପାଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଥିଲା । ଯିଏ ମୋତେ ଭଲପାଇବା କ'ଣ ଶିଖେଇଛି ତା'ପାଇଁ ଏ ଲେଖା । )



ସକଳ ପରାଣ ଝୁରଇ ତୁମକୁ ତୁମେ ଯେ ବିଶ୍ୱପ୍ରାଣ,  
 ସବୁରି ଅନ୍ତରେ ଭରିଦିଅ ପ୍ରଭୁ,  
 ତୁମେ ଯେ ବିଶ୍ୱ ପ୍ରେମ ।  
 କାଳନ୍ଦୀ ଚରଣ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ



## ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଓ ଜୀବନ ଯାତ୍ରା ଆତ୍ମା ମହାପାତ୍ର

ସେ ଦିନ,  
ଜୀବନର ପ୍ରଥମ ପାହାଚ,  
ନୀଳ ଢେଉ ଉପରେ  
ସକାଳ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟର କୌତୁକିଆ ହସ,  
ମୋର କୁନି ପାଦ  
ବାଇଶି ପାହାଚର ପ୍ରଥମ ପାହାଚରେ,  
ପଡ଼ାରିଲି ଜେଜେ ମା....  
ଉତ୍ତର ମିଳିଲା,  
“ବାହୁମୋଟ, ହୁଦୟ ଛୋଟ  
ଘୋଟ ନୟନକାରୀ  
ଜୟ ଜୟ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଶଙ୍ଖ ଚକ୍ରଧାରୀ !”  
ତାପରେ,  
ରଞ୍ଜନ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଗୁଡ଼ାକ ମଝିରେ  
ମଧ୍ୟାହ୍ନର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଟା ନାବୁଥିଲା  
ସହର ମଝିରେ,  
ତୃଷାର୍ଥ ଆତ୍ମା ଟା ଝାଉଁଳି ପଡୁଥିଲା  
ଜୀବନର ଜଟିଳତା,  
ଯାତନା ଓ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ଭାରରେ,  
ଭାବିଲି,  
“କାଳସର୍ପ ଆପଣ କବଳ କର ପବନମାନଙ୍କ ସବୁରି ।”  
ଆଜି  
ବାଇଶି ପାହାଚ ଶେଷରେ  
ଜେଜେମା’ ଓ ଅନେକ କେତେ ହୃଦି ଗଲେଣି  
ମନ ର ମାଦଳା ପାଞ୍ଜିରେ,  
ହାଲିଆ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟଟା ହାଲ ମାରୁଛି ସହର ଶେଷରେ,  
ସମୁଦ୍ର ଛୁଆର ମୁଣ୍ଡ ପିଚୁଛି ସ୍ୱର୍ଗଦ୍ୱାରେ  
ଏବଂ  
ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ,  
“ମୁଁ ମାଗୁଛି ଶରଧାବାଲି ରୁ ହାତେ ।”

Dr. Ava Mohapatra lives in  
Palm Spring , California with her  
husband Dr. Sitikantha Mohapatra  
and children.

ଏ ମନ ଭାବୁଥାଏ ଯାହା କାଳେ ପ୍ରାପତ ହୁଏ ତାହା ।

## ଓଁକାର ଭଜନ ଘୋଶେଶ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ପଣ୍ଡା

ଓଁ ଭଜ ମନ ଓଁକାର ଭଜ  
ପାଗଳାମି ତେଜି ନିଜକୁ ଖୋଜ ।

ବହୁରୁ ବିନ୍ଦୁ ହୋଇଲା ଉତ୍ସନ୍ନ  
ବିନ୍ଦୁରୁ ଓଁକାର ହେଲା ଜନମ ।

ଓଁକାର ମାତା ଯେ ଓଁକାର ପିତା  
ଓଁକାର ବିଶ୍ୱର ଜନମ ଦାତା ।

ଓଁକାର ହେଉଛି ବିଶ୍ୱ କଂପନ  
ସର୍ବ କଂପନର ସମସ୍ତି ଜାଣ ।

ଏହି ଭାବେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ବ୍ୟାପୀ ଜଗତ  
ଏକରୁ ଅନେକ କ୍ରୀତୀରେ ରତ ।

ରଞ୍ଜୁ ପରେ ସର୍ପ ଭାବ ଯେସନ  
ବ୍ରହ୍ମରେ ଜଗତ ପ୍ରତିଫଳନ ।

ଏମନ୍ତେ ବିସ୍ତାରି ଅଛି ସେ ମାୟା  
ପ୍ରାଣୀମାନେ ହେଲେ ମାୟାରେ ବାୟା ।

ତୁ ମଧ୍ୟେ ଲୟ ରଖି ତୁ ମନ  
ଓଁକାର ଧ୍ୱନିରେ ହୁଅ ନିମଗ୍ନ ।

ମହାମାୟା ଯେବେ ଛାଡ଼ିବେ ବାଟ  
ଖୋଲିଯିବ ତୋର ଜ୍ଞାନ କବାଟ ।

ଚିତ୍ତ ବୃତ୍ତି ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦରେ ଲୀନ  
ଜଗଦପସରି ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଦର୍ଶନ ।

ଜପି ମନ ଓଁ ତୁ ନିରନ୍ତର  
ନର ଜନମକୁ ସପକ୍ଷ କର ।

Jogesh Panda has been on an active  
spiritual quest for the past sixteen  
years.He lives with his wife Smriti and  
daughters Suman and Poonam in  
Canton, Michigan.



ତୁଣ୍ଡ ବାଲଦ ସହସ୍ର କୋଶ । ତୁଣ୍ଡରୁ ତୁଣ୍ଡ ହେଇ କାହିଁ କେଉଁ କାଳରୁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଗାଁଗାହଳୀରେ ଢଗଢମାଳୀର ବ୍ୟବହାର ହୋଇ ଆସୁଛି । ସେଗୁଡ଼ିକର ଆରମ୍ଭ କେମିତି ହେଇଥିଲା, କାହିଁକି ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଥିଲା, କେତେବେଳେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଥିଲା ଲିଖିତ ଭାବରେ ତା'ର କୌଣସି ପ୍ରମାଣ ନାହିଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ବଢ଼ିଥିବା ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାମାଜିକ ଜୀବନସହ ପରିଚିତ ଥିବା ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ସେଇ ଢଗଢମାଳୀ ସହିତ ପରିଚିତ ଏବଂ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବାରେ ଅଭ୍ୟସ୍ତ । ସେଇ ଢଗ ଗୁଡ଼ିକର ବ୍ୟବହାର ଓ ସାମାଜିକ ଜୀବନରେ ସେଗୁଡ଼ିକର ପ୍ରୟୋଗକୁ ନେଇ ଦ୍ଵିତ ଭାଷାରେ ରଚିତ ଏଇ କଥାକୁ । (ସଂପାଦିକା)

## ଏଇ କଥାକୁ ବଢ଼ି ବାହନ ସାମଲ

Sayings or ଢଗମାଳି are like the signature of a society. Using similes from day to day chores and familiar themes, people transmit the collected wisdom of a society in this form horizontally (from person to person) as well as vertically (generation to generation). Every primitive society has observations and recommendations which betray modern psychoanalysis and socioeconomic studies. Here, I am making a short incursion into the Oriya ଢଗମାଳି. I hope this will create an interest in us, the Diasporas, to look into the jewels we have at home. I am sure there is much more elaborate research on the subject by anthropologists and social scientists, which could be followed up the aficionados. Almost all the ଢଗମାଳି are related to the complexities of social labyrinth, family life, human nature and even, believe or not, love life. It also sheds light onto the frailty of human existence and the fragile human nature.

### Social labyrinth:

Oriya society has a very rigid hierarchical organization. It is impossible to confront people at higher places. ସରଗକୁ ନିଶ୍ଚିଣ ନାହିଁ କି ବଡ଼ ଲୋକକୁ ଉତ୍ତର ନାହିଁ. The family members of the higher classes can get by with murder. ପଣ୍ଡିତ ପୁଅ ମାଙ୍କଡ଼ ମାରିଲେ ଦୋଷ ନାହିଁ. People at the lower spectrum of the society are most exploited ଗରିବ ମାଲପ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଶାଳୀ. They can neither avail opportunities ବେଲ ପାରିଲେ କାଉର କି ଯାଏ nor get equity for their efforts ଭୋଲ ଖାଏ ମାତ, ହାଡ଼ି ନିଏ କଉଡ଼ି. Those who have, usually get more while the have-nots get no where ତେଲିଆ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ତେଲ. They are reduced to being onlookers. ମାରି ନେଲେ ମହାପାତ୍ରେ ଚାହିଁ ରହିଥିଲେ ଜଳକା. Exploitation is systemic କାଶୀ ବିରାଡ଼ିର କୁଜୀ ଅସରପା ଉପରେ ଚୋଡ଼. The situation of female is worse. There is not much they can do but to oblige ପୁରୁଷର ଭାଗ୍ୟ ପତର ତଳେ, ସ୍ତ୍ରୀର ଭାଗ୍ୟ ପଥର ତଳେ.

In this impossible situation, the oppressed have no choice but to believe in fate. ଦଇବ ଦଉଡ଼ି ମଣିଷ ଗାଇ, ଯେଣିକି ଚାଣିଲେ ତେଣିକି ଯାଇ. They even give up trying ଅଭାଗ୍ୟ କପାଳକୁ ସମୁଦ୍ର ଶୁଖେ or day dreaming ମନ କହୁଛି ଯୋଡ଼ା ଚଢ଼ିବାକୁ ଭାଗ୍ୟ କହୁଛି ଯାସ କାଟ. So ଭୋକେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ନିଦ ଯାଏ .

### Family Life:

It is the fate that also decides who marries whom, ଯାହା ହାଣ୍ଡିରେ ଯେ ଚାଉଳ ପକେଇଛି; ଯାହାକୁ ଯିଏ, ବିରିକି ଚାଉଳ ଚିତ୍ତେଇ ଦିଏ. In marriage, family status could override beauty of the daughter-in-law କୁଳ ବୋହୂ କାଳୀ ହେଉ, ତୀର୍ଥ ଜଳ ଗୋଳି ହେଉ.

The girl gets married and leaves parents' home ଝିଅ ଜନମ ପର ଘରକୁ for the home of in-laws. In spite of the uncertainties and the overwhelming mother-in-law, the newly married girl





(ନୂଆ ବୋହୂ) has an enormous impact on the decision making process of the husband ପାଖରେ ଶୁଣି କାନରେ କୁହେ, ତା କଥାକି ଅନ୍ୟଥା ହୁଏ?; ଭାରିଜା ତରରେ ସାନ ଶଳାକୁ ମୁଣ୍ଡିଆ even though that influence degrades with time ନୂଆ ନୂଆ ଭାରି ଆଦର, ପୁରୁଣା ହେଲେ ଘସା ପଥର.

She tries to make the best of the situation ଯେହ୍ନା ଘର ଯାକୁ ମଧୁରା ପରି, ଯେହ୍ନା ବର ଯାକୁ ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣ ପରି. She becomes strong to endure and flourish in her new life ପଥର ପରି ହେଲେ କରିବୁ ଘର, ପଥର ପରି ହେଲେ ହସିବେ ପର and gets prepared for rainy days ଲମ୍ବ ପଶତ ସବୁ ଆଡକୁ ପାଏ even though her happiness and sorrow are tied to the capability of her husband ସ୍ୱାମୀର ଅଯୋଗ୍ୟ ପଣେ, ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଶୋଇ ଥାଏ ଚାକୁଣ୍ଡ ବଣେ. However in a very competing interest situation, he can be sacrificed ଘଇତା ପଛେ ମରୁ, ସଉତୁଣୀ ରାଣ୍ଡ ହେଉ. When she becomes a mom she becomes be all and end all of her children ମା ନାହିଁ ଯାହାର, ସାହା ନାହିଁ ତାହାର. Kids dare not to approach the authoritative father figure ମା ଗାଳି ଦାଣ୍ଡ ଧୁଳି, ବାପା ଗାଳି ଘର ଛାଡି. She becomes the emblem of understanding in all spheres of life କାଲ ଠାର କାଲ ମାଆକୁ ଜଣା.

### Work Ethics:

Perseverance, hard work, diligence and attention to details are essential for making a living. One can not depend on handouts ମାଗି ଆଣିଲା ତିଅଣ ସୋତକେ and what you get that way is not always the best of the best. ଗଛ ଚଢି ନ ଜାଣେ ସିଂ, କାଉ ଅଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଖାଏ ସିଂ. One can not depend for ever on the family wealth to enjoy forever ବସି ଖାଇଲେ ନଇବାଳି ସରେ and has to depend on his two hands. ଆପଣା ହାତ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ. In this world you snooze, you loose ଶୋଇଲା ପୁଅର ଭାଗ ନାହିଁ. One has to be on the top of his stuff ନିଜେ ନ ମଲେ ଯମର ଦର୍ଶନ ନାହିଁ. Perseverance and patience finally pay off ଯତ୍ନକଲେ ରତ୍ନ ମିଳେ ; ଧୀର ପାଣି ପଥର କାଟେ. Usually most people grow up to fill the shoes they get ବେକରେ ପଡିଲେ ବଜେଇ ଶିଖନ୍ତି.

Being self employed is better than working for some one else ଚାକିରୀ ତାଳଗଛ ଛାଇ. Different professions have different needs ଚାଷ ତର ତର, ବଣିଜ ମଠ. In work, attention to details matters. ବାପ ପୁଅ ରାତି ଅନିଦ୍ରା, ମୁଗୁରା ପଛ ମେଲା. One also can not kill the chicken to get all the golden eggs right away, ଲେଉଟିଆ କିଆରି କାଟି ଖାଇବ, ମୂଳରୁ ଉପାଡିଲେ ଗଲା. For attacking any problem knee jerk reaction is not the best approach. One has to think a lot before taking action, ହାତେ ମାପି ଚାଖଣ୍ଡେ ଚାଲ. It is a fact that there is no free lunch and what we get depends on what we did earlier, both good and bad ଦେଇଥିଲେ ପାଇ, ବୁଣିଥିଲେ ଦାଇ, କ୍ଷୀର ଉତୁରିଲେ ତୁଲିକି ଯାଏ, ମଣିଷ ଉତୁରିଲେ ଗାତକୁ ଯାଏ. In a society, presentation skill is a must କଥା କହିଲେ ପାଣିରେ ସର ପଡେ; କହି ଜାଣିଲେ କଥା ସୁନ୍ଦର ବାନ୍ଧି ଜାଣିଲେ ମଥା ସୁନ୍ଦର; ଖାଇବା ଖାଇବ ଗରମ, କଥା କହିବ ନରମ. Getting the best of the situation ନାହିଁ ମାମୁଁ ଠାରୁ କଣା ମାମୁଁ ଭଲ, avoiding unnecessary arguments କଥା ମାଜିଲେ ମୋଟା, ସୁତା ମାଜିଲେ ସରୁ and developing a win win strategy ସାପ ମରିବନି କି ବାଡି ଭାଙ୍ଗିବନି to serves well in long run.

**Human Nature:** Human nature is beyond comprehension, ନର ମାୟା ନାରାୟଣଙ୍କୁ ଅଗୋଚର; ପବନର ଗତି, ପୁରୁଷର ମତି, କୁବେରର ଧନ, ନାରୀର ମନ, ଏ ଅକଳଣ. The personality is set pretty early in life ତୁଳସୀ ଦୁଇ ପତ୍ରରୁ ବାସେ, ବିଛୁଆଡି ଦୁଇ ପତ୍ରରୁ କୁଣ୍ଡେଇ ହୁଏ and rarely changes ଘୁଷୁରୀ ପ୍ରକୃତି ପଙ୍କେ ଲୋଟେ, ମଣିଷ



ପ୍ରକୃତି ମଲେ ତୁଟେ; କ୍ଷୀରରେ ଧୋଇଲେ ଖଣ୍ଡରେ ମୋହିଲେ ନିମ୍ନ କି ମଧୁର ହୋଇବ. **People are creature of habit** ଢିଙ୍କି ସ୍ୱର୍ଗକୁ ଗଲେ ବି ଧାନ କୁଟେ. **They come in with all different flavors. Some people have no guts to take any risk** ବିରି ମାତ ଦେଖି କୋଳଥ ଚୋପା, **ask for help** ଶିଳ ଶିଳପତା ଗଗନେ ଉଡୁଛନ୍ତି, ଶିମୁଳି ତୁଳା କହୁଛି ମୋତେ ରଖ **or run for cover at the slightest provocation** ଏଣୁଥ ଦଉଡି କିଆରୁଦାକୁ **while others don't know their limits** ଓଧ ସାଙ୍କର କଳା ବିରାଡି ବାଇ; କୁଆ ଧାନ ଖିଆ ଦେଖି ବଗ ଧାନ ଖାଉଛି. **Some don't want to get into any trouble with a** କାଦୁଅକୁ ଯିବିନି ଗୋତ ଧୋଇବିନି **principle after some traumatic experience** ଯା ପୁଅକୁ ସାପ କାମୁଡିଥାଏ ତା ମା ପାଳ ଦଉଡି ଦେଖିଲେ ତରେ, **while others love trouble** କଙ୍କଡାକୁ ଗୋଳିପାଣି ସୁଆଦ **and ask for it** ଆରେ ମହିଷି ମୋତେ ଭୁସ୍; ମାଉସୀଲୋ ମାଉସୀ, ମୋତେ ପଦେ ଗାଳି ଦେ. **Some mess up every thing they do** ଗୋଦତା କୋତେ ଯେତେ ମାତେ ସେତେ **or just ferment trouble wherever they go** ସଜ ଗୋବରରେ ପୋକ ପକାନ୍ତି **while others go nuts when praised** ଛୋଟିକି ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ କହିଲେ ଗୋତ ବୁଲେଇ ବୁଲେଇ ପକାଏ. **Some are good at giving advice to others but mess up their own life.** କହି ଦେଉ ଥାଏ ପରକୁ, ବୁଦ୍ଧି ନ ଥାଏଇ ଘରକୁ **while others are too sensitive** ବୋର ଉପରେ ମାନ କରି ଖପରାରେ ଖାଇବା.

**Some need no introduction** ଚିହ୍ନା ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣର ପଇତା ଦରକାର ନାହିଁ **but may not get respect they deserve due to familiarity** ଗାଁ କନିଆ ସିଙ୍ଗଣି ନାକୀ **while others are born politician** ଏ ଘର ମାଉସୀ, ସେ ଘର ପିଉସୀ **and are good at** କୁମ୍ଭୀର କାରଣା. **They are really creeps and should not be trusted.** ଉପରେ ହସ ଭିତରେ ବିଷ; ମଧୁର ବଚନ ତୀଳକ ସରୁ, ତେବେ ସେ ଜାଣିବ ଠକଙ୍କ ଗୁରୁ; ଶାଗୁଣା ସବୁରି ମାସ ଖାଏ ଶାଗୁଣା ମାସ କେହି ଖାଆନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ. **They are good at wheeling and dealing** ମାଛ ତେଲରେ ମାଛ ଭାଜିବା **and use people for their own selfish interests only** ବାହା ଘର ପରେ ବେଦୀମୁହଁ ପୋତା. **Some just make lots of noise but are harmless** ତାତିଲା ପାଣିରେ ଘର ପୋତେନା; ଗରଜିଲା ମେଘ ବରଷେ ନାହିଁ **while others are creepy and very dangerous** ସାନ ସାପର ବିଷ ବହୁତ. **Trouble does not bother a few** ବାୟାର କି ଯାଏ, ବାଆ କଲେ ବସା ଦୋହଲୁ ଥାଏ **while others die of worries all the time** ଲୁଗା ଖାଏ ହାଣ୍ଡି, ଚିନ୍ତା ଖାଏ ଗଣ୍ଡି. **Irrespective of the status in the society every one has some thing to worry about** ଯେତେ ବାଉଁଶ ତେତେ ପୋଲ **and people of similar personality stick together** ଆଲୋ ମୁତୁରି ଶୋଇବା ତୁ ତ ମୁତୁରୀ ମୁଁ ତ ମୁତୁରୀ ହେଁସ କାହିଁ ପାଇଁ ଧୋଇବା?

**Love Life:**

**Love is spice of life and every one gets bitten by the love bug at least once in his/her life time** ପୁରୁଷ ହୋଇ ଜାତି ନାହିଁ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ହୋଇ ସତୀ ନାହିଁ. **People fall in love because** ପୀରତି ପଥ ଖସତା. **Love breaks all barriers.** ବଢିଲା ନଇ ବନ୍ଧ ମାନେ ନା **and obeys no rules.** ପ୍ରୀତି ନ ଜାଣେ ରୀତି. **To one in love, lover has no faults.** ଯାହା ମନ ଯେଉଁ ରସେ ତାକୁ ସେ କିଆ ଫୁଲ ପରି ମହ ମହ ବାସେ . **Some are too shy to make any move** ଦେଖିଲେ କଥା ନ କୁହେ, ନ ଦେଖିଲେ ଝୁରି ହୁଏ **making life more challenging for the other party.** **People suffer in silence** ମୁଁ ମରୁଥାଏ ଯାହା ପାଇଁ ତାର ଚିକେ ଦୟା ନାହିଁ **waiting for the time to get lucky** ବିରାଡି କପାଳକୁ ଶିକା ଛିଣ୍ଡିଲା. **Some times, nothing works leading one to yearn forever for the lost lover** ହଜି ଗଲେ ଛିଣ୍ଡା କନା ଖୋଜି ଗଲେ ମଠା. **In romance, wealth is not a substitute for youth** ବୁଢା ବର କୋଠା ଘର ଲୁହ ବହେ ଝର ଝର, ପତର ଘର ଗୋକା ବର ହିଅ ହସେ କର କର **and old age is not attractive any more.** ବାସୀଫୁଲର ମହକ ନାହିଁ, ବାସୀ ଯୌବନର ଚହଟ ନାହିଁ **So better not to waste time and youth by indecision** ସେଇ ଘଇତା କଲୁ ବୟସ ଗଡେଇ ଦେଲୁ. **The secret love affair has its own problems.** ପର ପ୍ରୀତି ଦରା ଦିଆ **especially when it bears fruit** ମନ ଜାଣେ ପାପ ମା ଜାଣେ ବାପ





Then every one talks about it. ଚମ ବାଇଦ କୋସେ, ତୁଣ୍ଡ ବାଇଦ ସହସ୍ର କୋସ- People talk and they talk mean, really mean ଅତି ରସିକ, କଖାରୁ ଫୁଲକୁ ପାରତା ପୋକ. That hurts ଝିପି ଝିପି ବରଷା ଶରୀର ଭିଜେ, ଚୁପୁ ଚୁପୁ କଥା ମରମ ବିଛେ-

### Social Scrutiny:

It is difficult to escape the scrutiny of the people. One can be ridiculed for spending too much time in make up ବାଞ୍ଛ ମାଲପର କି ପାଇଟି, ସିନ୍ଦୂର ଫରୁଆ କଜଳପାଟି or being religious in old age ବୟସ ବେଳେ ନଅ ଶହ ଘଇତା, ବୁଢ଼ୀ ବେଳେ ଚିତା ପଇତା- A beautiful person invites envy ରଙ୍ଗ ଡହ ଡହ ଶିମୁଳି ଫୁଲ, ସବୁ ଦିନେ ସେ କି ରହିବ while an ugly person gets no sympathy ଦାନ୍ତୁରୀର ହସିବା କାନ୍ଦିବା ସମାନ- The worse situation is where one is homely ଜହ୍ନି ମଞ୍ଜି ପରି ଗୋରା and gets married to a wealthy family ପେଟା ଚଢ଼େଇକି ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପିଞ୍ଜରୀ- One can also get ridiculed for not acting according to his/her position ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ଗଲେ ପସର ଫାଟି, ସାନ ଆଇଲେ ବେସର ବାଟି or disregarding the status in the society ମା ଧାନ କୁଟି, ପୁଅ ନାଗର; ଏତିକି ଛଇ ବାପ ବିକୁ ଥିଲା ଚିଞ୍ଜୁଟି ଶୁଖୁଆ ମା ବିକୁଥିଲା ପୋଇ-

A showy person is a target for ridicules ଅପୁଲି ଫୁଲଲ ହେଉଛି, ଘଇତା ଆଣିଛି ସାରୁନ ଖଣ୍ଡେ, ଗାଁଯାକ ବୁଲି କହୁଛି; ମୂଳରୁ ମାଲପ ନାହିଁ ପୁଅ ନାଁ ଗୋପାଳିଆ; ତୁଛାକୁ ଏତେ, ମୁଦି ନାହିଁ ଗୋଡ଼ କତାତୁ କେତେ? One may be criticized for being stupid (ଗଧ) କାଳ ଆଗରେ ମୂଳା ଚୋବାଇବା or being an intransigent person ଅବୁଝା ରାଜାକୁ ପାଳବିଷ୍ଣୁ ମନ୍ଦା- One can be negatively complemented too ସକାଳେ ଫୁଟି ସଞ୍ଜେ ଯା, ଜହ୍ନିଫୁଲ ପରି ଆୟୁଷ ପା- On the other hand, not every one who criticizes is beyond criticism ବାଲୁଣୀ କହୁଛି ଛୁଞ୍ଚିକି, ତୋ ପଛରେ ଗୋଟେ କଣା; ଗୋଦରୀ ଲୋ, ତୋ ଗୋଡ଼କୁ ବାହାଁ- It is all in the mind.

Finally the description of the Oriya society and culture can not be completed without a reference to mind and spirituality. An individual's universe is a creation of his or her mind. ମନ ତୋହର ନିଜ ଗୁରୁ, ଉଦ୍ଭବ କେତେ ତୁ ପଚାରୁ?; ସାହାର ମନ ଯେତେ ତାର ପ୍ରଭୁ ତେତେ; ମନ ନେଇ ଫଳ ନଦୀ ଗୁଣେ ଜଳ. Life is short ଜୀବନ ପାଣି ଫେଟକା; ମା କହେ ପୁଅ ବଢ଼ୁଛି, ଯମ କହେ ପୁଅ ଛିଡ଼ୁଛି and the old age reminds us that our sojourn in this world is coming to an end soon ତଳ ବରତା ଖସୁଛି, ଉପର ବରତା ହସୁଛି, ମଝି ବରତା କହୁଛି, ମୋ ଦିନ କାଳ ଆସୁଛି ।

(Almost all the ଉଗମାଳ cited here were obtained from the mother of Rajalakshmi Padhi, California. Unfortunately she is not alive any more.)

“କହି କମଳା କହି କହି ଯାଏ ଅଠର ନଳା ।”

କଥାରେ ଚିହ୍ନା ହୁଅଇ ଲୋକ

ମୁହଁର ନାହିଁ ଲୋତା

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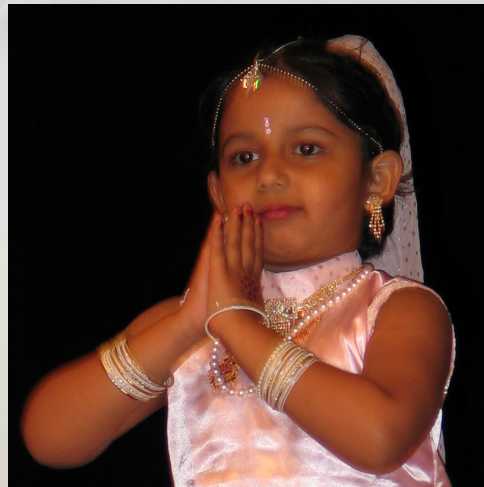
ସିଝିବ ନାହିଁ ଖତା ।

ଶୁଚୀସ୍ମୃତୀ ସାହୁ (କହି ଜାଣିଲେ...ସୋଭେନିୟର୍୯୮)



## **In Memoriam: Meghna Mahapatra, A Little Darling (1999-2005)**

**I**t was an exciting evening in November 2005 in Michigan. The usual celebration of Kumara Purnima was in full swing. Everybody especially the kids were very happy to be part of the joyous celebration. But none was expecting the most unexpected. Perhaps it was one of the saddest days for all of us. Michigan Oriyas were stunned as a little girl wouldn't see the next morning. A little life would be snatched away by the cold hands of Death! It was heart rending. In the face of such incidents, we feel how helpless we are - a puppet in the hands of Providence.



This cherubic 6 year old girl, Meghna Mahapatra, was the only daughter of Lipi and Santosh Mahapatra. She came to Michigan in August 2001. She was a beautiful child and won the love of all.

Turn of events leading to end of one's life sometimes happen in the most unsuspected ways. That is the mystery which is beyond the common people to unravel. Her father didn't want to come that day as he had some other important work. But Meghna insisted that she must go and be with others to be part of this great celebration. As it is difficult for any loving father to see tears in the eyes of the kids, her father gave in. Meghna gave a wonderful performance on the stage on that day. It was late in the night when they drove back. But the dark night never dawned for her. She was lost for ever by a tragic road accident on the way back home.

In Bhagavad Gita it is said that one who is born has to die. But when an innocent life is taken away so suddenly and untimely, it becomes extremely difficult to accept. May the soul of Meghna rest in peace!

OSA Michigan community decided to keep her memory alive at this great loss. In 2006 the Oriya community of Michigan established the Meghna Memorial Trust to commemorate this wonderful life. Through this trust an essay competition has been started for kids under the auspices of OSA for the first time this year. Hopefully this noble effort will kindle the memory of that smiling face for years to come. ■



ଶାନ୍ତିସ୍ତୂପ, ଧଉଳି ଗିରି



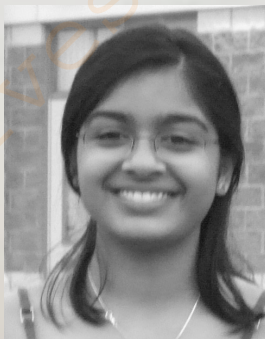
ଓଁ ଶାନ୍ତି ଶାନ୍ତି ଶାନ୍ତି

1st Place Winners of Meghna Mahapatra Memorial Creative Writing Contest 2007

## Topic: My U.S.A/ Canada, My Orissa



**Upasana Senapati**  
**Age Group: 14-18**



**Anya Rath**  
**Age Group: 9-13**



**Selina Mohanty**  
**Age Group: 4-8**

The 2007 Souvenir team invited essays for an essay competition from the children of Oriya origin, from U.S.A and Canada, by three age groups. We consider all of our participants as winners because they all followed the guidelines for submission. OSA-MI Chapter and the Meghna Mahapatra Memorial Trust decided to announce the first place winner for each age group as the Meghna Mahapatra Memorial award winners. **Congratulations to our winners!**

Sincerely,  
OSA Souvenir Team 2007

**May God Bless All Our Children**



## Presidents of OSA

1970 Gauri Das	1989 Amiya Mohanty
1971 Bhabagrahi Misra	1990
1972	1991 Digambar Misra
1973 Gauri Das	1992
1974	1993 Sita Kantha Das
1975 Amiya Patnaik	1994
1976	1995 Hemant Senapati
1977	1996
1978 Pramode Patnaik	1997 Gopa Patnaik
1979	1998
1980	1999 Anadi Naik
1981 Ladukesh Patnaik	2000
1982	2001 Shanak Patnaik
1983 Rabi Patnaik	2002
1884	2003 Laxminarayan Bhuyan
1985	2004
1986 Saroj Behera	2005 Niranjana Tripathy
1987 Asoka Das	2006
1988	



## Convention Locations

1970 Hartford, CT	1989 Nashville, TN
1971 Hartford, CT	1990 Washington D.C
1972 Riverdale, NJ	1991 Chicago, IL
1973 Riverdale, NJ	1992 Atlanta, GA
1974 College Park, MD	1993 Troy, MI
1975 Riverdale, NJ	1994 Pomona, NJ
1976 Toronto, Canada	1995 Minneapolis, MN
1977 Riverdale, NJ	1996 Washington D.C
1978 Wheaton, MD	1997 Houston, TX
1979 New Brunswick, NJ	1998 Monterey, CA
1980 Detroit, MI	1999 Toronto, Canada
1981 Chicago, IL	2000 Nashville, TN
1982 Minneapolis, MN	2001 Chicago, IL
1983 Bowie, MD	2002 Greenbelt, MD
1984 Glassboro, NJ	2003 Princeton, NJ
1985 Kent, OH	2004 Dallas, TX
1986 Toronto, Canada	2005 Newport Beach, CA
1987 Stanford, CA	2006 Columbia, MD
1988 Saginaw, MI	2007 Detroit, MI



**With  
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to  
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from**

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Manju Agarwal  
Dr Avinash and Allison  
Agarawal  
Dr. Ritu Agarwal**



## Souvenir Editors

- 1971 Gauri Das  
1972 Gauri Das  
1973 Gauri Das  
1974 Pramode Patnaik  
1975 Pramode Patnaik  
1976 Jnana Ranjan Dash  
1977 Jnana Ranjan Dash  
1978 Amiya Patnaik  
1981 Jnana Ranjan Dash  
1982 Jnana Ranjan Dash  
1983 Jnana Ranjan Dash  
1984 Jnana Ranjan Dash  
1985 Deba P Mohapatra  
1986 Lalu Mansinha  
Saradindu Misra  
1987 Lalu Mansinha  
Saradindu Misra  
Sabita Panigrahi  
1988 Lalu Mansinha  
Saradindu Misra  
1989 Digambar Misra  
1990 Digambar Misra  
Sura P Rath  
1991 Digambar Misra  
Sura P Rath  
1992 Kula Misra & Minati Biswal  
1993 Kula Misra  
1994 Alekh K Dash  
1995 Purna Patnaik  
1996 Binod Nayak  
Susmita Patnaik  
1997 Srikanta Mishra  
1998 Jnana Ranjan Dash  
1999 Ashok Archarya  
2000 Lalu Mansinha  
Kula Misra  
2001 Jhinu Chhotray  
Raj Kishore Pati  
2002 Anadi Nayak  
Subhakanta Behera  
2003 Pradyot Patnaik  
2004 Sikhanda Satapathy  
Tapas Ranjan Sahoo  
2005 Nirode Mohanty  
2006 Babru Samal  
Jayashree Samal  
Abhijit Ray  
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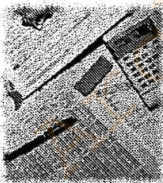
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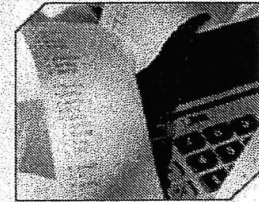
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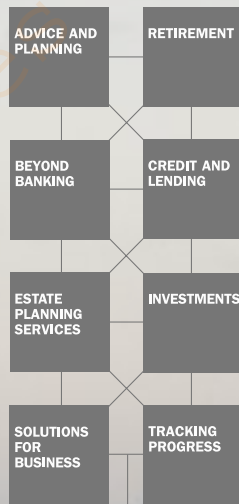
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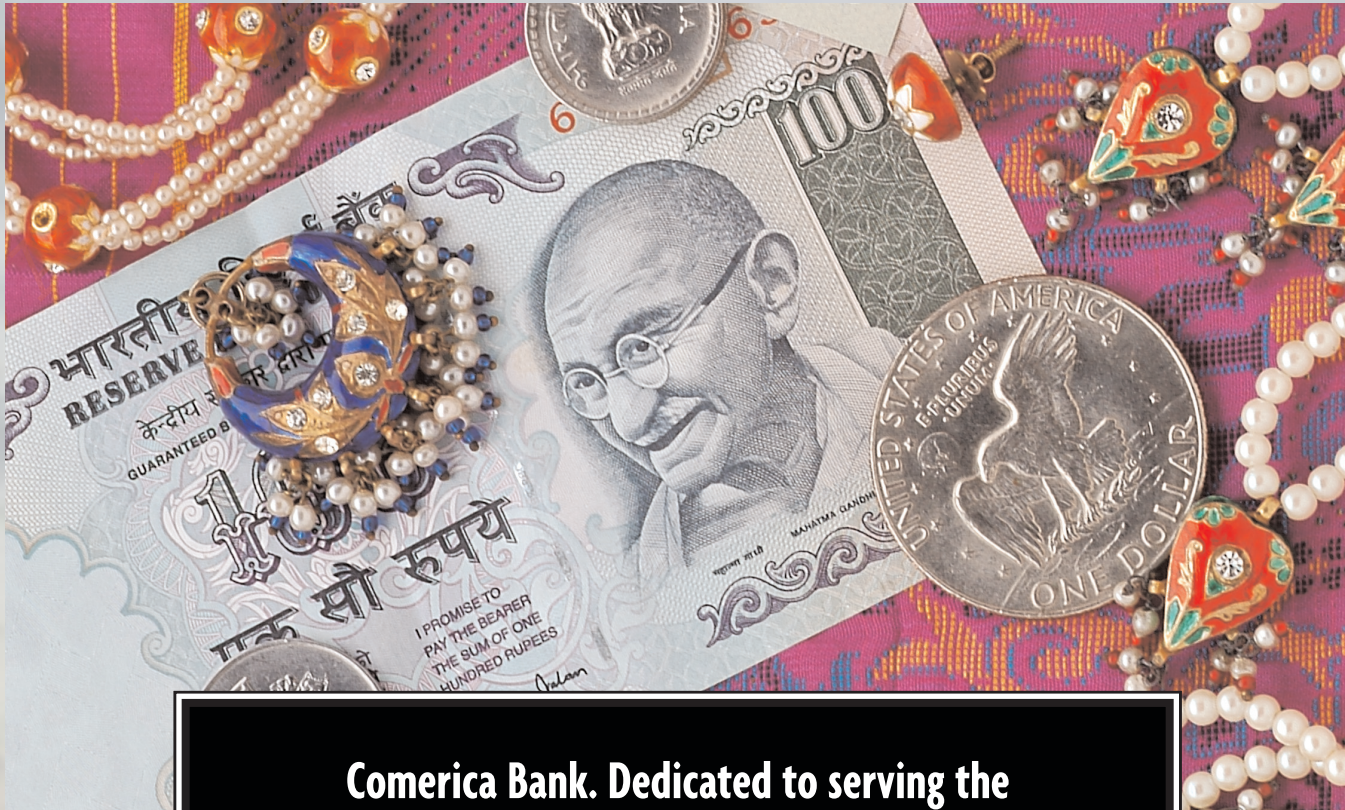
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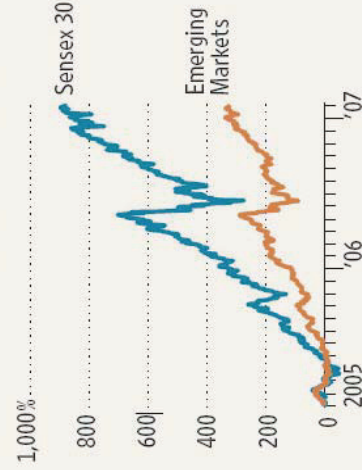
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### Fast Indian Passage

Two-year performance of India's benchmark stock-market index and the DJ Wilshire Emerging Markets Index



Sources: WSJ Market Data Group; Reuters via WSJ Market Data Group

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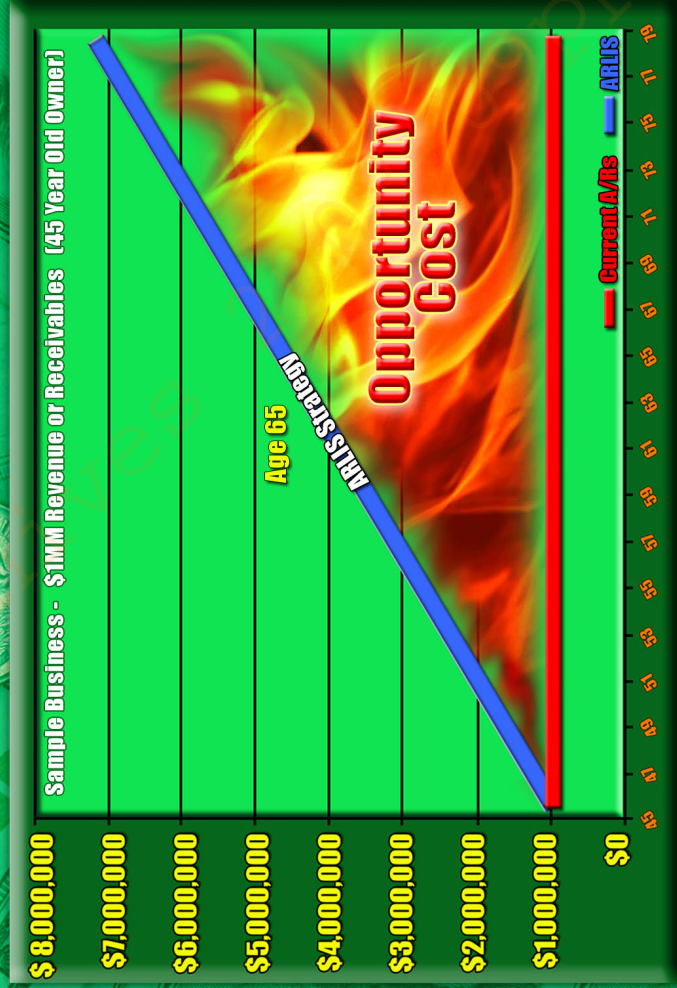
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