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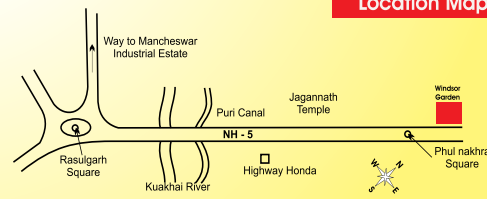
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Location Map



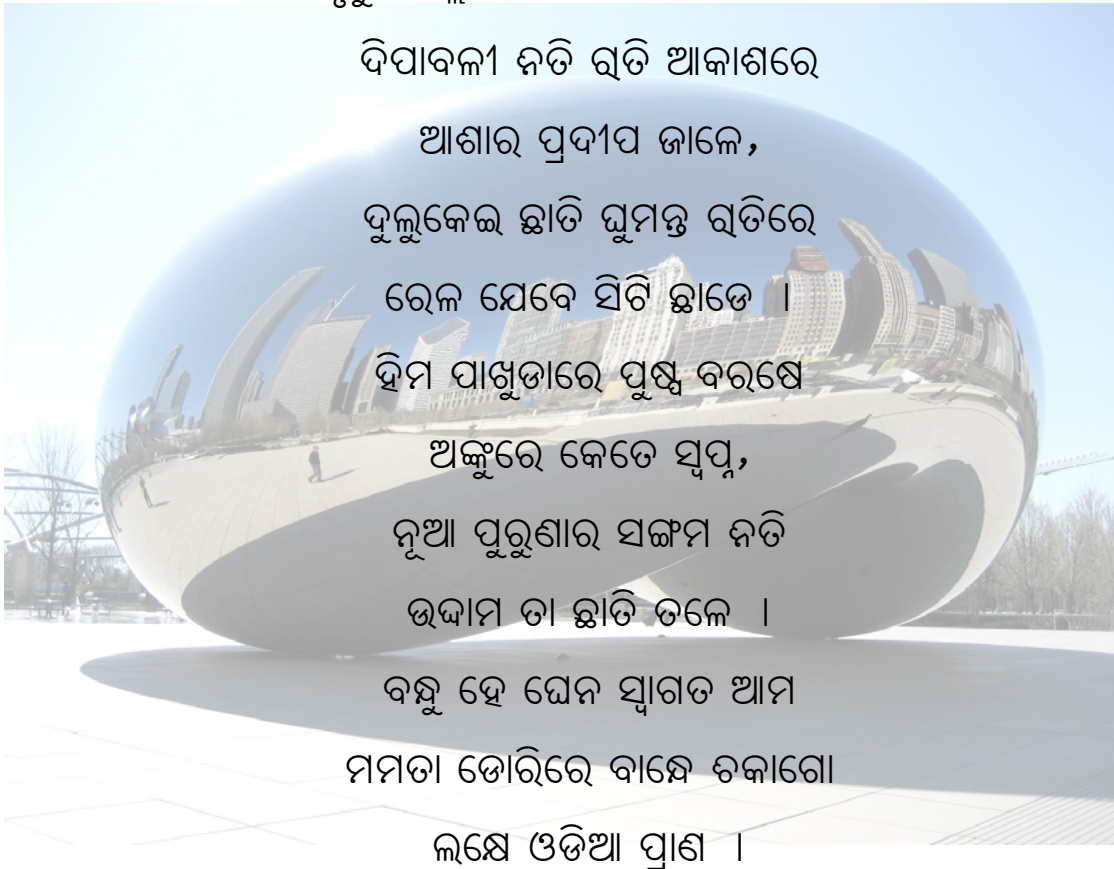
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ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ

“ବିନ୍” ଆଇନାରେ ମୁହଁ ଦେଖୁ ହସେ
 ଆମ୍ଭ ବିଭେଦ ସହର ମୋର,
 ନିଳାମ୍ବରୀ ସଖୀ ହୃଦ ମିତଗାନ
 ମୃଦୁ ହିଲୋଲେ ଉତାଏ ପଶତ ତାର ।



ଦିପାବଳୀ ନିତି ରାତି ଆକାଶରେ
 ଆଶାର ପ୍ରଦୀପ ଜାଳେ,
 ଦୁଲୁକେଇ ଛାତି ଘୁମନ୍ତୁ ରାତିରେ
 ରେଳ ଯେବେ ସିଟି ଛାଡ଼େ ।
 ହିମ ପାଖୁଡ଼ାରେ ପୁଷ୍ପ ବରଷେ
 ଅଙ୍କୁରେ କେତେ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ,
 ନୂଆ ପୁରୁଣାର ସଙ୍ଗମ ନିତି
 ଉଦ୍ଦାମ ତା ଛାତି ତଳେ ।
 ବନ୍ଧୁ ହେ ଘେନ ସ୍ଵାଗତ ଆମ
 ମମତା ତୋରିରେ ବାନ୍ଧେ ଚକାଗୋ
 ଲକ୍ଷେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣ ।

କନକ ହୋତା

(Cloud Gate, referred to as "The Bean", is a sculpture by British artist Anish Kapoor. The sculpture has the appearance of a giant drop of liquid mercury, and its mirrored surface offers an amazing reflection of the city skyline, even more breathtaking on a bright, clear day).



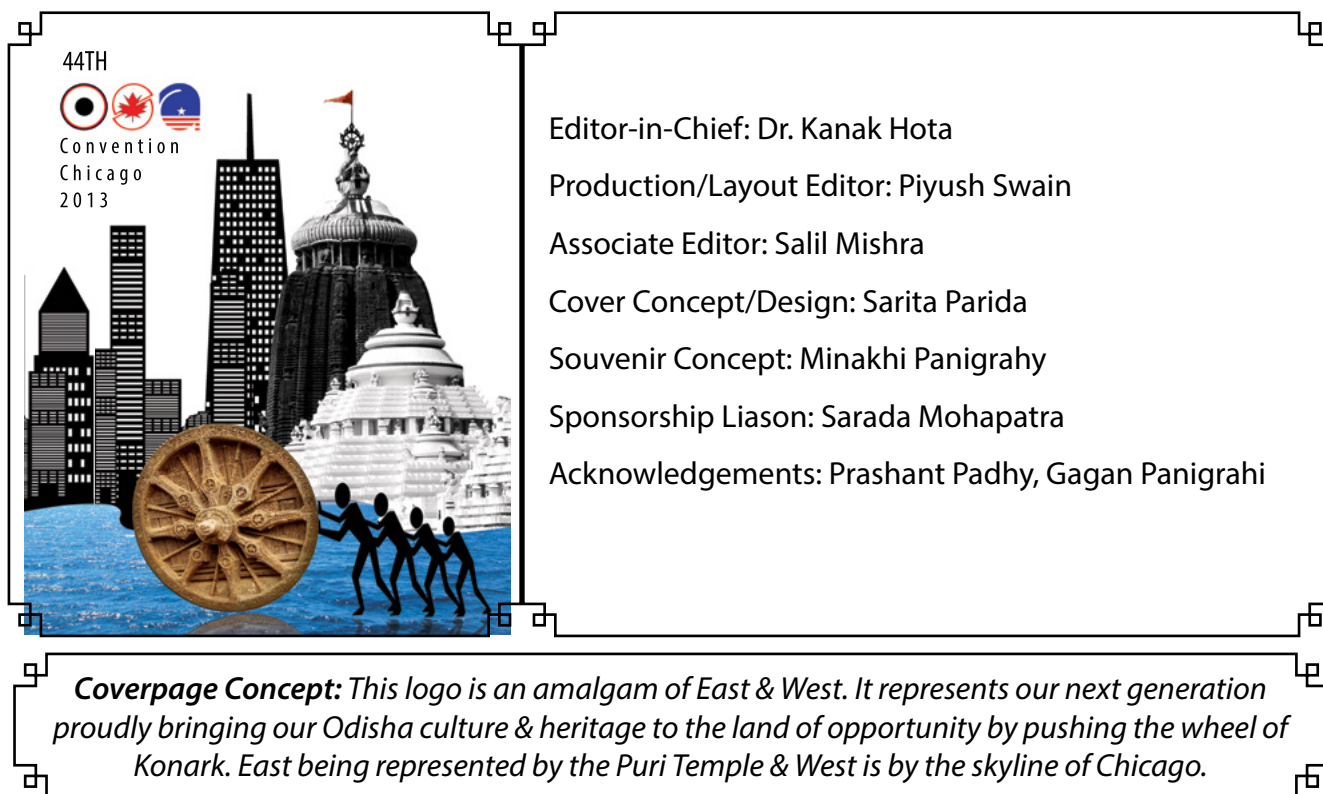


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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Kanak Hota holds a Ph.D. in English literature. Her work explores the impact of indigenous forms of writing on emergent English fictions of the Subcontinent. She covers literary festivals, classical Indian dance recitals and music renditions for the Indian diaspora in the Chicagoland area. An independent researcher, she writes both in English and Odia.

Before moving in to the US she was teaching English literature at BJB College, Bhubaneswar, Khallikote College, Berhampur and Govt College, Bhawanipatna.

Dear Friends

The annual convention of the Orissa Society of the Americas (OSA), one of the biggest cultural extravaganzas outside of Orissa, celebrates the vibrant traditions in our art, music, dance, drama, and literature that forge our collective identity as Odias. The souvenir which commemorates the occasion is a tribute to our widely eclectic globalized existence. The anthology contains reflective and realistic pieces of writing from seasoned as well as young Odias. As the writings show, the generation transplanted and acculturated with their adopted homeland – the Americas – is torn between the two homes. For Odias living far from their homeland, “Odia”, the language, is the most intimate aspect of their self-expression. Besides food, classical Odissi dance and such tangible symbols as the Shree Mandira or the Dhauli Shanti Stupa, the unequivocal symbols of Odisha’s unique heritage, our identity is verbally articulated through our speech and writing. We must congratulate all the writers who have contributed their Odia writings to the souvenir. This, however, does not mean that writing in English makes us less authentic Odias.

In a rapidly changing world with seamless transmission of knowledge, there exists nonetheless a threat to the preservation and promotion of our native language. In the global context the fate of Odia is no less challenged than any other minority language. English was the essential tool of success and the precious cultural capital of upward mobility for India emerged out of a long period of British colonization. The story is not different now.

Coming to the younger generation integrated to the socio-cultural fabric of the Americas, who rarely speak Odia, lead a chorus, a science or debate team in school, read “The Great Gatsby,” “The Color Purple,” or “The Jungle” most often have a pedestrian view of the Odia language. The older generation needs to familiarize them with Odia masterpieces like “Paraja,” “Malajahna,” and “Sri Radha”- products of cultural cross-pollination, through periodic discussions which they would love to listen. Fakira Mohan Senapati’s “Sabhya Jamidar,” a spoof of the urbanite nouveau riche, can inspire equal amounts of laughter as any other comic satire from Western literature.

We congratulate novelist Pratibha Ray, a consummate storyteller, for receiving the prestigious Jnanpith Award for her extraordinary contribution to Indian literature. Ray demystified Draupadi of Mahabharata, made her a woman of flesh and blood who defies the monumental hurdles imposed by the patriarchy and asks for dignity and freedom of choice in “Jagyaseni”.

I must thank Piyush Swain, the lead of the souvenir team, for providing the logistics for communicating, compiling, printing, and distributing the souvenir. I thank Salil Mishra, Sarada Mahapatra, Sarita Parida, and Minakshi Panigrahy for their support. Finally, I express my gratitude to Gyana Patnaik, convener of OSA 2013, for believing in me. I am humbled by the great responsibility entrusted upon me. I may be excused for any inadvertent lapses.

Thank You!

Dr. Kanak Hota, Chicago





ସମ୍ପାଦକୀୟ:

ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ, ଚଳମାନତା ଓ ନୂତନ ଦିଗନ୍ତର ଅନୈଷଣ ମାନବ ସଭ୍ୟତାର ବିସ୍ତାରର ଭିତ୍ତିଭୂମି । ଭଗବାନ ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣ ମହାଭାରତରେ ସାରଥୀ ସାତ୍ୟକିଙ୍କୁ ଏଇ ମର୍ମରେ ଯାଦବ ସମ୍ପ୍ରଦାୟକୁ ପ୍ରିୟ ଗୋପଭୂମି ଓ ମଥୁରାର ମୋହ, ମମତା ଓ ଆକର୍ଷଣକୁ ସ୍ମୃତିରେ ସାଇତି ରଖି ଦ୍ଵାରକାକୁ ଯାତ୍ରା କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଉଦଘୋଷଣା କରିବାକୁ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ଯାଦବର ଗୋପପୁର ପରି ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅନ୍ତରରେ ମାତୃଭୂମି ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଆକର୍ଷଣ, ସ୍ମୃତି ଓ ଅଙ୍ଗୀକାର ନବିତ । ଲୌକିକ ସ୍ତରରେ ପର୍ବ ପର୍ବାଣୀ, ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନ, ଆଭରଣ, ନୃତ୍ୟ ସଙ୍ଗୀତକୁ ଆତ୍ମୀୟତାରର ସହ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ କରିବା ବେଳେ ଭାଷା ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରତି ଅନୁରକ୍ତି ତାର ବୌଦ୍ଧିକ ଚେତନାକୁ ସାକାର କରେ । ତେବେ ବିତମ୍ବନା ଏୟା ଯେ, ଏକବିଂଶ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀର ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ ଓ ବିନମୟ ବିଦ୍ୟାର (କମ୍ୟୁନିକେସନ ଏଣ୍ଡ ଇନଫର୍ମେସନ୍ ଟେକ୍ନୋଲୋଜି) ଅଭୂତପୂର୍ବ ସଫଳତା ଜ୍ଞାନର ଆଦାନ ପ୍ରଦାନକୁ ସୁଗମ କରି ସମଗ୍ର ବିଶ୍ଵକୁ ଏକତାର ସୁନ୍ଦରେ ବାନ୍ଧି ପାରିଥିବା ବେଳେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ଓ ପ୍ରସାର ନୂଆ ଆହ୍ଵାନର ସମ୍ମୁଖୀନ ହେଉଛି । ପ୍ରଥମତଃ, ଇଂରାଜୀ ଭାଷାରେ ଶିକ୍ଷା, ଅପାପ ସମ୍ଭାବନା, ଆର୍ଥିକ ସ୍ଥିରତା ଓ ସାମାଜିକ ସମ୍ମାନବୋଧର ପ୍ରମାଣପତ୍ର ହେଇ ସାରିଛି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ । ବ୍ରିଟିଶ ଶାସନ ସମୟରୁ ହିଁ ଏହି ବିଭୂର ଧାରାର ବିଜ ବପନ ଘଟିଛି, ଓଡ଼ିଶା କାହିଁକି, ସମଗ୍ର ଭାରତ ବର୍ଷରେ । ବାକ ରହିଲ୍ ପ୍ରବାସରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ପୃଷ୍ଠପୋଷକତା ଓ ପ୍ରସାରର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ । ମୁଷ୍ଟିମେୟ ଉତ୍ସାହୀ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରେମୀଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡ଼ିଦେଲେ ପ୍ରବାସରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରତି ଅନୁରକ୍ତି ଏକ ସୌଖୀନ ବିରାମ । “ସାରଳା ମହାଭାରତ”, “ତପସ୍ଵିନୀ”, ଛ ମାଣ ଆଠଗୁଣ୍ଠ” ବା “ ମାଟି ମଟାଳ” ଭଳ କାଳଜୟୀ ଲେଖା ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ବିଷୟରେ ଅନେକ ଅଙ୍କ ।

ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ ପରମ୍ପରା ସହ ଆମର ଆତ୍ମ ପରିଚୟ ଅଙ୍ଗୀକାରୀଭାବେ ଜଡ଼ିତ । ଏହା ଏମିତି ଏକ ମଜଭୂତ ଖୁଅ, ଯାହାକି ଆମକୁ ବିଶ୍ଵ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ବିଶାଳ ସୁନ୍ଦ ସହ ସଂଯୁକ୍ତ କରାଏ-ପ୍ରକୃଷ୍ଟ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସାର୍ବଜନୀନ ମାନବ ସ୍ଥିତିର ପଟ୍ଟଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ।

କହିବା ବାହୁଲ୍ୟ, ପୂର୍ବପାଠି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମାନଙ୍କର ଇଂରାଜୀ ଭାଷା ସହ ପୁରୁଣା ପରିଚୟ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଦୁଇ ଭାଷା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରିବାରେ ସମସ୍ୟା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିନାହିଁ । ଆମେରିକାରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଜୀବନଧାରା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଓ ଜୀବିକାର ମାଧ୍ୟମ ଇଂରାଜୀ । ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଉଠୁଛି ଉତ୍ତର ପାଠିକୁ ନେଇ ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଆମେରିକାରେ ଜନ୍ମ ବା ଏଠି ମୂଳ ଶିକ୍ଷା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଏଠିକାର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ସ୍ରୋତ ସହ ଅଧିକ ପରିଚିତ । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତାର ମାଧ୍ୟମ ମଧ୍ୟ ଇଂରାଜୀ ।

ଅଳ୍ପ ବହୁତ ଭାଷା ପରିଚୟ ଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେମାନେ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ବିଷୟରେ ଅବଗତ ନୁହନ୍ତି । ଚୋନ ମୋରିସନଙ୍କ “ବିଲଭେଟ” କୁ ପଢ଼ିବା ବେଳେ, ସେମାନେ ଦୁଏତ ଗୋପୀନାଥ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କ “ପରଜା” ଭଳ ସମ୍ବେଦନଶୀଳ ଉପନ୍ୟାସ ବିଷୟରେ ଜାଣିବା ଦରକାର । ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଆଲୋଚନା ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଜ୍ଞାନର ଦିଗନ୍ତକୁ ବିସ୍ତାର କରିବା ସହିତ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ବିଷୟରେ ଅବଗତ କରାଇ ପାରିବ ।

ଭରତୀୟ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ସର୍ବୋଚ୍ଚ ସମ୍ମାନ “ଜ୍ଞାନପୀଠ” ପୁରସ୍କାରରେ ସମ୍ମାନିତା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ସୁନାମଧନ୍ୟ କଥାଶିଳ୍ପୀ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ପ୍ରତିଭା ରାୟଙ୍କୁ ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ । ପୁରୁଷ ପ୍ରଧାନ ସମାଜରେ ଚରକାଳ ସମାନତା ଓ ସମ୍ମାନ ପାଇଁ ସ୍ଵର ଉତ୍ତୋଳନ କରୁଥିବା ନାୟିକାଙ୍କୁ ଜୀବନସାଥୀ ଦେବା ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ ସମସାମୟିକ ଜୀବନକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେ ନବିତତାର ସହ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ କରିଛନ୍ତି । “ଯାଜ୍ଞସେନୀ” ର ଲବଣ୍ୟମୟୀ ମନନଶୀଳା ନାୟିକା ଦ୍ରୌପଦୀ ଏକା ଧାରରେ ପୌରାଣିକ ଓ ଆଧୁନିକତାର ସମୟ ସ୍ରୋତରେ ନରବଧୁ ଆତ୍ମ ପରିଚୟ ଖୋଜୁଥିବା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲେକଟିଏ । ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ରାୟଙ୍କ ଲେଖା ନିଷ୍ଠାପତ୍ର ମାନବୀୟ ଆବେଦନର କାଳଜୟୀ ଦସ୍ତାବିଜ । ତାଙ୍କର ଲେଖନୀ ଚଳମାନ ରହୁ, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ଏତିକି ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ।

ସ୍ଵରଶିଳା କମିଟିର ଆବାହକ ପୀୟୁଷ କୁମାର ସ୍ଵାଇଁଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ଵତନ୍ତ୍ର ଭାବେ କୃତଜ୍ଞତା ଦେବାକୁ ଚାହେଁ । ଓସା ପରିବାରର ସମସ୍ତ ଶାଖା ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ସହ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରି ଲେଖା ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଏକାଠି କରିବାର ଗୁରୁ ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ତାଙ୍କର । ଫଟୋ, କଳାକୃତି ଓ ବିଜ୍ଞାପନ ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଲେଖା ସହିତ ସଜାଡ଼ି ମୁଦ୍ରଣ ଓ ପୁସ୍ତକାକାର ଦେବାରେ ସେ ଅକ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ପରିଶ୍ରମ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ସରିତା ପରିଡ଼ା, ସଲିଲ୍ ମିଶ୍ର, ଶାରଦା ମହାପାତ୍ର ଓ ଡଃ ମିନାକ୍ଷୀ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀଙ୍କୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଅକୃଷ୍ଣ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।

ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରାଣର ପ୍ରତିବିମ୍ବ ଏହି ସ୍ଵରଶିଳାର ସମ୍ପାଦନାର ଗୁରୁ ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ମୋ ଉପରେ ସମର୍ପଣ କରିଥିବାରୁ, ଓସା ୨୦୧୩ ଚକାଗୋ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ଆବାହକ ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ଜ୍ଞାନ ରଞ୍ଜନ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଅଶେଷ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଶେଷରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଓ ଇଂରାଜୀ ଭାଷାରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ବହୁମୂଲ୍ୟ ଲେଖା ଗୁଡ଼ିକର ପ୍ରକାଶନ ପାଇଁ ପଠାଇଥିବା ସମସ୍ତ ଲେଖକ ଲେଖିକାଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ଵରଶିଳା କମିଟି ତରଫରୁ ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ । ସମ୍ପାଦନାରେ ଅନଳକୃତ ତୃତି ବିରୂପିତ ପାଇଁ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ କ୍ଷମା ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା କରୁଛି ।

ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।
ଡଃ କନକ ହୋତା, ଚକାଗୋ ।





MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT, ORISSA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS



Dear OSA Family,

Our much-awaited 44th OSA convention is finally here! As you all know, back at home we grew up celebrating thirteen festivals in twelve months (Bara Mase Tera Jatra), in the new land we have adjusted to the demands of life and try to compress all our jatras into one - our annual OSA convention. I am delighted to welcome you all to the 2013 OSA convention to be held during July 4 – 6, 2013 at the Westin, Lombard, in western suburb of Chicago. We the OSA officials were delighted when Jhara Das, the President of OSA Chicago chapter brought the proposal to hold this year's convention in Chicago and after a year's patient waiting, here we are in the windy city to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

My sincere appreciation goes to each of the members of the OSA Chicago chapter and the 2013 Convention Organizing Committee led by Gyana Patnaik for all their hard work, commitment and dedication in organizing this amazing convention. For the first time in OSA's 44-year history, the celebration will be for three days, starting with an Odisha development day on 4th of July, followed by inauguration on 5th of July and packed with exciting and colorful programs, celebrations, and fellow feeling. I must say it is easier to do ten Odia weddings than one convention where 1000-1200 people come together under one roof for three full days sharing every moment together totally saturated with feasts and festivals. Congratulations and a big thanks you to our host OSA Chicago.

The theme of this year's convention is Bidesha Matire Odia Santana Uccha Rakha Tume Odisha Ra Mana - Oh

Children of Odisha in the foreign land - Keep your motherland's pride alive! This sentiment was one of the salient features of our own vision for the OSA when we took office in July 2011 in Dallas, Texas. We have focused on three aspects of that vision – reaching out to the Odia community, collaborating with our state in Odisha and reaching out to the second generation Odias spread out in every corner of North America.

We are proud to announce that we are 1000-member families organization and more than 200 life members and 5-year members have joined OSA over last 2 years, largest increase in OSA's 44 year history. When we took office, our organization had a permanent membership of less than 800 families and our goal was to reach at least the 1000 mark. I am very happy to report that we are there and still striving to go further. In this effort I would like to thank all the members of my team, especially Sushant Satpathy, our treasurer who have worked hard not only to increase OSA membership but also persuade our life members to upgrade their membership to patrons and benefactors. It has been gratifying for me to persuade the younger members of our community to join our organization. I want to express my gratitude to those of them who have heeded to my request and have become life members. This has reduced the average age of our membership from the 50s to 40s. It is definitely a welcoming development for OSA.

During our tenure in office, we targeted to work to improve the Higher education in Odisha. We took the initiative to appoint a committee on Higher Education and worked with them steadily to organize activities





on Higher Education opportunity for students and faculty in Odisha in this country and to collaborate with the leaders of Higher Education in Odisha. We organized a symposium in Vani Vihar in Dec 2011 and last year, in Dec 2012 took a delegation of administrators and academicians from the United States to the Ravenshaw University and to Sambalpur. There has been wide appreciation of our efforts and there are already four- five students inspired by our symposia, are studying at the various Institutes and Centers of Higher Education in this country. One of the exciting developments spearheaded by Prof. Chitta Baral was the promotion of the Buddhist heritage in Odisha. Following a successful symposium on Buddhist Heritage in Odisha at the OSA 2012 in Seattle, the department of Tourism of the Odisha state government organized an international Buddhist Symposium from Feb 1- 4, 2013 to showcase the Buddhist treasures of Odisha. It was interesting to see the collaboration between private and public sectors in promoting Buddhist Heritage initiative spearheaded by OSA. Several hundred Buddhist scholars and government officials attended this international symposium from neighboring countries such as Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Korea, Japan and China. Now I am happy to inform that the Odisha government has already asked the IIT Bhubaneswar to initiate an Archeology program in order to do serious research on the Buddhist heritage and culture of Odisha.

Another aspect of our vision has been to transcend various barriers and build bridges across generations, channeling our services for passing our beautiful Odia culture and heritage to our next generation. One way to achieve this goal has been to increase awareness of OSA among the second generation Odias and enthuse them to become members of our organization. We have been quite successful in reaching out to our youth and a large number of second generation Odias from all over the country have joined our society as life members. I am glad to see many second generation young men and women taking lead in organizing youth focus of the convention and make it unique for all of us. My heartfelt thank you to the convention team, OSA Chicago chapter leadership and all the Odia families for their support for this event. We

still have ways to go, and my sincere appeal to you all is that you ask your successful sons, daughters, son-in-laws and daughter-in-laws to join OSA and make it an even more vibrant organization. My experience has been that if we want to succeed in this society, we have to build bridges and coalitions with like-minded people and make our own culture and contributions visible to the larger society.

We have been very fortunate in persuading our youth to take leadership roles in spearheading various OSA activities. The young people of California have organized a retreat in Santa Barbara during the Memorial Day weekend in September. I can happily say that in their hands, our future is bright. Here I want to single out the heroic contributions made by Nick Patnaik, a former OSA president and our past general counsel, and Esha Bandopadyay Dash, the present general counsel, a bright young attorney who have spent innumerable hours in revising our OSA constitution. Other youth members such as Sanjiv Behera and Barnali Dasverma among others have joined them as part of the constitution committee.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize that our society has done well. Since its inception in 1969 our organization, the OSA, has achieved a lot. It has responded to the ups and downs in our Odia diasporic community. But now in its 44th year, it has acquired maturity and stability that it can build and grow on the strength of our society at large. We have reached the 1000 member families but that is just a fraction of the large number of Odias who are spread out in different parts of North America. We have tried hard to come this far and we are passing the baton in very able hands of Tapan Padhi and his team to move it forward. The key is to involve the younger people in all our activities and encourage them to participate more vigorously in the OSA affair.

It has been my privilege and honor to serve you all. I want to thank each one of you for the support you have given my team and me. Please continue to support OSA to take it to greater heights.

With warmest regards,
Annapurna Pandey
President, OSA (2011-2013)





MESSAGE FROM CONVENOR, OSA 2013 CONVENTION, CHICAGO



Dear Friends,

Namaskar.

It is with immense pleasure, on behalf of fellow Odias of greater Chicagoland, I welcome our esteemed guests and fellow Odias to our 44th OSA Convention. Since last September, our local people are working toward the Convention by making meticulous planning and paying attention to all the details. Our numerous weekends as well as weekdays meetings, conference calls, quick huddles, practice sessions and follow ups have brought out the best in all of us.

As overseas Odias, we take incredible pride in our root, our culture and heritage. In addition to preserving and promoting, we also take persistent effort to inculcate those in our next generation who are born and brought up in North America. We are profoundly grateful to the founding parents who had put tremendous and tireless effort to create this noble organization OSA to give us an identity in our adopted land far away from our Motherland Odisha. Now it is our turn, to make steady and sincere effort to engage our next generation for the cause of Odisha so they will have a good understanding about their roots, proud language, glorious history, rich heritage and dignified tradition. Keeping it in mind, this year, the theme of our Convention is, "Bidesha Matira Odia Santana, Rakha Tume Odisha Ra Maana". Working closely with our younger folks, we have tried to inspire and energize them. One of the evenings cultural program is planned and executed by younger crowd. Our emcees are making tremendous stride to make the announcements in Odia. Most of our convention teams have a good number of younger generation to give us a blend of representation. Our goal to engage younger generation is not just confined to annual Convention but far beyond. We like to see our younger crowd, getting more involved in local Chapter activities by participating and eventually arranging Ganesh Puja, Saraswati Puja, Kumar Purnami, pic-nic, musical evenings and dance programs etc. This endeavor will be the stepping stone to know our culture and eventually being a part and partial of it.

Our sincere thanks to our proud sponsors without whose generous contribution it would have been a herculean task to think of holding convention of such a magnitude.

Let us enjoy our well planned Odisha development symposium, entertaining Cultural Programs and thought provoking seminars.

While working on various events, if any of us unknowingly or knowingly has caused distress to anyone please forgive us with a broad, generous Odia heart.

Sincerely,
Gyana Patnaik
Convener, 44th OSA Convention





MESSAGE FROM CO-CONVENORS, OSA 2013 CONVENTION, CHICAGO



Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Odia families of Chicago, we warmly welcome you to the 44th annual OSA Convention! Over a century ago, here in Chicago Swami Vivekananda first introduced our culture and philosophy to the West, with the simple phrase "Sisters and brothers of America!" Once more, we welcome our Odisha brothers and sisters in a re-introduction and re-invigoration of our shared heritage, and thank you for joining us.

The theme of this year's convention is "Bidesh Matira Odia Santana, Ucha rakha Odishara Maana". Whether in high school, college, graduate school, or the work force, the future of our organization lies with our youth. To us, empowering the youth has meant finding ways to inspire the next generation to engage with the future of OSA. From our Youth Cultural Program, to our many engaging seminars led and organized by our young adults, to the first-ever OSA National Community Service project to be held at the Jagannath Temple in Aurora, I hope that both the younger and older generations are moved to work together to promote the growth of our heritage.

Above all, I hope that you have fun spending time with one another here in Chicago. Serving as co-convener for this convention has been an immense joy and blessing, and my sole wish is that everyone enjoys themselves as much as I have been. So join us for dance, music, food, competitions, chai and late night mehfls, and let's celebrate and show our youth what it means to be an Odia!

Thank you and best wishes!
Sarj Khandai
Co-Convener, OSA 2013



Dear friends,

Thank you all for attending the 44th OSA Annual Convention and being part of such a wonderful experience.

There is nothing more powerful than when people of Odia origin from different parts of USA and Canada come together to celebrate Odia culture and share ideas, stories, and hope for preserving & promoting our cultural heritage in Americas.

We look forward to being your hosts this year.

Best regards,
Tarani Mohapatra
Co-Convener, OSA 2013





MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY, ORISSA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS



June BOG Meeting made me realize that my term as OSA Secretary will be over in the upcoming BOG meeting in Chicago. Asked to myself, what do I do now at 8:30 pm of 1st Sunday of every month?? For a moment as if from Mungeri Lal ke Hasin Sapne, I thought of cancelling my Chicago visit – thinking that might help me in keeping my Secretary job for some more time but soon realized that changes are inevitable - learned from Chinmaya Mission. So instead of wasting time, it would be a smart idea to write a nice farewell message for the souvenir so that people can at least see my name in the souvenir as past secretary.

This thought of mine took me to the visit of past years and made me realize how exciting the time was for the last two years. Whether working with OSA members to improve communication in the chapter, bringing OSA to Odisha, building network with the people around the globe, reach out to help on behalf of the community, implementing ideas to increase membership, taking OSA to the area where its footprints have started to fade, or exploring new ideas to involve our chapter representatives in OSA's affair, our team was working every day along with some committed volunteers of North America to find a fix for it. The outcome reflects the contributions and commitment of every member of our team, and it sets forth the OSA's overarching goals for the last 2 years.

The experience from past two years as an OSA Official have taught me that we must always keep an eye on the future and frequently look closer at existing programs and services and ask: What needs to be changed? How can we serve our members better? How can we bring the community together? How can we make OSA a stronger and larger organization in North America?? And how can we improve OSA's visibility and take it to the next level? Though our team started with these questions, the scopes of these questions are so large that it needs years to implement it successfully. We have tried our best to answer some of the questions but there is always room for improvement. I am very confident that our successors will do a great job in finding answers to some of these same questions and taking OSA to the next level!

Finally, I take this opportunity to welcome all of you to the Chicago Convention and thank all the volunteers for their kind continued help and for being the backbone of the organization with their moral and financial support. I also hope that the long list of volunteers who are serving OSA for years would galvanize our youth into positive direction for the development of our society.

Thanks,
Leena Mishra
Secretary, OSA





MESSAGE FROM VICE-PRESIDENT, ORISSA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS



Namaskar!

It's my immense pleasure to welcome you all to the 44th OSA convention at The Westin, Lombard, in western suburb of Chicago. The theme of this year's convention is Bidesha Matire Odia Santana Uccha Rakha Tume Odisha Ra Mana - Oh Children of Odisha in the foreign land - Keep your motherland's pride alive! The convention will have many eminent guests including the noted social activist Padmashree Tulasi Munda, the eminent writer, Jnanapitha award winner Padmashree Dr. Pratibha Ray, veteran artist, art historian, poet, author, teacher and administrator Dr. Dinanath Pathy, and an internationally respected development thinker, policy maker, telecom inventor and entrepreneur Padma Bhushan Sam Pitroda. The convention cultural program will be embellished by many eminent talents including 2010 Zee Sa Re Ga Ma singing superstar fame, 2010 "The most remarkable voice" title winner Sniti Mishra and Krishna Beura, a very well-known playback singer who has sung songs in commercial Odia and Hindi Cinema. The first day of the convention will focus on The Odisha Development Day which includes Invest Odisha, Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges for Odisha and Odisha Heritage: Buddhist Heritage – Situating Odisha in the Global Map. The OSA 2013 Convention team is working diligently for a common goal of having a quality and entertaining cultural program for all generations with a diversity of traditional and contemporary art form which connects us to our motherland, productive seminars, a variety of activities, wonderful Bandhu-Milana

and much more including a very unique pleasant experience that you will treasure forever.

OSA takes pride in recognizing and honoring many members for their contributions as well as their achievements in different areas of the OSA community. The winners of the OSA National Awards 2013 are: 1. Distinguished Odia Award: Dr Uma Ballav Mishra, 2. Arun Das memorial Kalashree Award: Dr Birendra Jena 3. Yuva Kala Vikas Award: Ananya Kar, 4. Youth Volunteer Award: Anjana Pati, 5. Meghna Memorial Awards for Creative Writing: Senior Award: Suraj Jena, Runner Up: Rishi Satpathy and Junior Award: Abha Panda, Runner Up: Abhishek Misra, Debanshi Nikita Chowdhury, Saswat Pati, Dev Satpathy, Resha Panda, Triya Mahapatra, and Ariya Mohanty (In no particular order).

The clock is ticking and saying it's time to say goodbye. We didn't even realize the time has gone so quickly. With our human instincts, my passionate mind is saying, what!...No, I have just began my bonding with my friends across the OSA land. My journey has only started...

My dream of the vision of MyOSA, which I have planted in my mind has just germinated and have young leaves. We have successfully achieved the core of the vision, making OSA a trustworthy place, youth members taking more interest, giving emphasis on Odia literacy, is now able to become strong and transparent. Last but not least our continuous and determined effort for building the bridge between both the generations and channelizing our services for passing our beautiful Odia





culture and heritage to our next generation is still an ongoing process.

The 2011-2013 OSA Team brought a renaissance to this 44 year old organization. We have tried to contribute our time and had shown our unconditional support to this beautiful organization, which has grown during our tenure in every aspect! The mutual understanding between the national executives, chapter executives and the members has grown tremendously. Today, everybody is welcome to share their opinion and experience to make this organization stronger. We are successful to bring OSA's visibility outside of USA. OSA has conducted many seminars and workshops which has been helpful and well appreciated. For the first time in OSA history, OSA National has conducted competitions for children in the chapter level to propagate the Odia literacy. Many members have acknowledged this noble endeavor and wish this attempt to continue for the betterment of our future generation. Many youth members had shown immense interest in OSA affairs.

The revised version of OSA Awards guideline will be a very valuable, user friendly document. Thanks to many reviewers, well-wishers for their valuable suggestion and input to bring this document to its current form and shape. The OSA Award nomination form was very vague and didn't meet specific requirements in the past. With the help of the Award committee the new guideline has award specific nomination forms and the new matrix has been created for an accurate evaluation. Thanks to many contributors of this document, specifically the core team member. Finally thanks to OSA Executives and Board of Governors for final review and acceptance of this as formal document for OSA award initiative for now and near future.

The constitution review committee had spent an enormous amount of time for reviewing and providing valuable suggestions to improve the revised draft constitution and related documents. These suggested changes will definitely add more value to the existing documents. Hope the

members find it useful and support the cause.

Two of the major accomplishments for our team from organizational stand point are financial stability and membership drive. They are really huge and there is nothing compared to that in OSA's 44 year history! We have close to 1000-families which means during these two years membership would have increased by 25%. Also, addition of \$50K+ to OSA's treasury over last two years would be the most significant contribution to OSA's financial stability. Now we are all ready to welcome the new OSA executives and pass the baton. All our good wishes to the upcoming team for their willingness to build a better and stronger OSA!

On behalf of OSA, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who made these two years journey such a success, including the supportive Board of Governors, the generous OSA community, the tireless OSA National Team, and of course my family, whose encouragement and support helped me to do my service diligently. The blessings and good wishes of the entire OSA community helped us to pass this unforgettable journey pleasantly. My heartfelt gratitude goes to all my teammates for giving me the opportunity to work with them. I had a wonderful learning experience through working with them. In spite of my best effort to do the justice to the position I served, please forgive me if I did anything inadvertently that made anybody unhappy.

Last but not least, I commend the 2013 Convention Organizers and the team for their hard work, dedication and success to put together an amazing entertainment package for your pleasure. I will always cherish the memories of our great journey of organizing the 2013 convention. Hope you all join us and become a part of this historical event!

With Best Regards,
Kuku Das
Vice President, OSA
Co-Convener, OSA2013





MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT, OSA CHICAGO CHAPTER



Namaskar!

On behalf of the Chicago Chapter of OSA, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 44th Annual Convention of the Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA). We look forward to having you as our honored guests and would work towards making your visit enjoyable.

Chicago, The Windy City of broad shoulders and warm hearts will be hosting the convention. The Chicago area with over 100+ families are working together to make this a momentous and enjoyable convention. I am grateful to all the sponsors, the donors and the guests for their support and honored with their confidence in us. Support from OSA National and Community leaders as well as fellow members have helped in working towards this goal. I am grateful to our Convener Gyana Patnaik and his team for their dedication, planning and execution and they are working hard towards the success. I am also grateful to all the members of Odia Community (within Chicagoland and without) for their dedication, team work and perseverance who have made this convention a success and enjoyable. This year the Convention is focusing on the next generation of Odia Americans/Canadians. There are programs and event specially geared to them but is going to be enjoyed by all. The young adults will be organizing their own programs and include community work, seminars etc. We also have been honored by the support from the Odia Diaspora from Odisha and the Odisha Government. We are happy to host visitors and guests from Odisha.

The convention is organized on a resort style, all the events activities are in and around the hotel. This means less time spent on inter event travel, getting lost and more time to relax and enjoy. We have organized unique pre-convention symposiums, and meetings which will be of interest to everyone. The convention promises to have quality events, Seminars which matter to the Odia American diaspora, speeches, competitions, midnight cruises, great food and exquisite shows. We are also honoring the artistic spirit among the Odias. The Walk of Art and related Art activities will definitely satiate and stimulate the creative senses in everyone. This will be an excellent opportunity for everyone to meet old friends and make new ones. We are making arrangements for harmoniously getting to know others and engage in networking. Above all this is going to be fun filled convention and the host families are ready. We will have our website osa2013.org, and this magazine to help you cherish your memories.

We are proud to imbibe the Midwest hospitality spirit with the cordiality of Odias. We welcome you and will make every effort to make this one of the most memorable conventions for you.

Best Wishes,
Jhara Das
President, OSA Chicago Chapter





Dr. S. C. JAMIR

Governor, Odisha



RAJ BHAVAN
BHUBANESWAR - 751 008

May 02, 2013

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that the Orissa Society of Americas (OSA) is holding its 44th Annual Convention at Chicago on July 4-6, 2013. A commemorative souvenir is also being brought out on the occasion.

The Orissa Society of Americas continuously pursues laudable efforts towards preservation and promotion of Odisha's culture and tradition in far off America. It strives to provide opportunity to Odia fraternity to further strengthen their mutual relations and fosters kinship in Odia people dwelling in U.S.A. and Canada and highlights Odisha's identity as a state of rich cultural tradition. I am sure the Annual Convention with participation of eminent personalities from Odisha will witness wide-ranging deliberation on emerging issues from Odisha's development point of view and will give boost to the spirit of the non-resident Odias to come forward and play vital role in Odisha's progress.

On this occasion I send my good wishes to the members of the Orissa Society of Americas.

I wish the 44th Annual Convention and publication all success.


(S.C. Jamir)





NAVEEN PATNAIK
CHIEF MINISTER, ODISHA



Telephone { (0674) : 2531100 (Off.)
(0674) : 2591099 (Res.)
Fax { (0674) : 2535100 (Off.)
(0674) : 2590833 (Res.)
E. Mail—cmo @ nic.in

D. O. No. 315

BHUBANESWAR

Dated 06/05/13

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that the Orissa Society of Americas is holding its 44th annual convention at Chicago from 4th to 6th of July, 2013 and also bringing out a souvenir in commemoration.

The Odia diaspora in the Americas have made significant accomplishments in various fields. I am happy that they are united under one umbrella to preserve and promote our cultural heritage. Connecting to one's own roots gives a distinct identity and respectability. I hope the efforts of the OSA will strengthen the cultural links of younger generation with their motherland.

I extend my warm greetings to all the members of the Orissa Society of Americas on this joyous occasion and wish the Convention a grand success

(NAVEEN PATNAIK)





ଶ୍ରୀ ମହେଶ୍ୱର ମହାନ୍ତି

ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ
ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି, ଆଦି,
ଯୋଜନା ଓ ସମନ୍ୱୟ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା



କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟ : ()
ତୃତୀୟ ଭାଗ : ୨
ଆବନ : ()



ସଂଖ୍ୟା.....

କୁବର୍ତ୍ତା

ତାରିଖ ୧୦.୦୪.୨୦୧୩

ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ମୁଁ ଜାଣି ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଆନନ୍ଦିତ ଯେ, ଆମେରିକା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜର ୪୪ତମ ବାର୍ଷିକ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ଚିକାଗୋଠାରେ ୪ରୁ ୬ ଜୁଲାଇ ୨୦୧୩ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହେବ ଏବଂ ଏ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ଏକ ସ୍ମରଣିକା ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇବ ।

ଚିକାଗୋଠାରେ ପ୍ରାୟ ୧୨୦୦ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଇ ଓ ଭଉଣୀ ବୁଦ୍ଧିଜୀବୀମାନଙ୍କର ଏଇ ସମାବେଶ ଭାବର ଆଦାନ ପ୍ରଦାନରେ ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ସହାୟକ ହେବ । ଆମେରିକାରେ ଗଠିତ ଏହି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ସେଠାରେ ଅବସର ସମୟରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ସୁରକ୍ଷା ଓ ବିକାଶ ଦିଗରେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରିବା । ଏ ଦିଗରେ କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତାମାନେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଦୈନିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟବ୍ୟସ୍ତତା ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ସମୟ ବାହାର କରି ସେଠାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ପ୍ରସାର ପାଇଁ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ନେଉଥିବାରୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ବଧେଇ ଜଣାଉଛି ।

ଏଇ ଶୁଭ ଅବସରରେ ମୁଁ ଆମେରିକା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜର କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତାମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଜଣାଇବା ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗଠନର ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ, ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ଓ ସ୍ମରଣିକାର ସଫଳତା ଏବଂ ସଭ୍ୟସଭ୍ୟାମାନଙ୍କର ସୁଖସମୃଦ୍ଧି କାମନା କରୁଛି ।

(ମହେଶ୍ୱର ମହାନ୍ତି)





HIGHLIGHTS OF OSA ACTIVITIES (July 2011 – June 2013)

“Dreams do not work unless you do it. What is your dream? Go ahead and do that.”

Greetings and welcome to the 44th OSA convention of the Orissa Society of the Americas (OSA) in Chicago. Since we took office in July 2011, we have been very busy doing many things to promote the interest of the Odia Diaspora both here as well as in Odisha. I take this opportunity of outlining some of these activities:

Humanitarian issues connecting OSA with Odisha and Odias worldwide:

Flood relief Drive: A couple of months after we were inducted in our offices in 2011, the state of Odisha was hit by severe flood affecting more than 19 districts where over 2.7 million people lost their homes and were without clean drinking water and food. The OSA officials led by Sushant Satpathy, the treasurer of OSA, organized a massive fundraising among the Odias in the United States. We raised about fifteen thousand dollars, which were sent to various relief organizations in Odisha. All power to the OSA volunteers and their families for spearheading and contributing to this project!

Mr. K. Seshadri Rao's case: We were mired in an unfortunate death in Boston - Mr. K. Seshadri Rao, a bright and promising 24-year-old young man from Odisha was shot near his apartment in Boston, USA. He was studying Management at Boston University. This tragedy taught me a lesson that despite our common bond and commitment to one another, there are still some people who feel isolated in this highly individualistic society. After hearing about it, we OSA officials reached out to Mr. Rao's parents in Odisha and the Indian consulate in New York and did whatever we could to console the bereaved family and offer our help to the Indian consulate in bringing the body of the deceased to his family in Odisha. After this tragic incident, one step we have taken is to develop a guideline on our website, Orissa society.org, to help the new arrivals from Odisha to become familiar with the culture of this foreign land.

UTD student case: Dallas local community tried to reach out to help the student in a trying situation and raised more than 16K. OSA and its members participated to help the cause.

Donation to the Red Cross Sandy relief fund: Donation to the Red Cross Sandy relief fund: the Hurricane Sandy on the East coast has affected More than 50 million people. OSA BOG voted to donate \$1000 from OSA's operational income of 2012-2013 budget.

Established Emergency Fund: Because of various humanitarian cases and need for OSA's intervention on behalf of community, 2012 GBM approved to establish a fund of \$5K, that can be utilized for these purposes with BOG approval.

Jiban Patra case: Jiban Patra was in LA temporarily as part of Piranha Chopra's team and died of massive heart attack in the hotel. In the ensuing time PC's team assured to make arrangement to send the body of the deceased to India. Even after one week, as there was no visible progress OSA was involved and many of our members worked together to highlight the plight of the family back in India. Also, we started a fundraising drive to raise funds to send the body and/or help his family. Finally, because of press furor PC's team arranged to send the body. OSA raised \$12K+ for the family and Dr. Kumar Pati has kindly offered employment to Jiban's wife.

Organizational achievements:

OSA Membership: We are proud to announce that we are 1000-member families organization and more than 200 life members and 5-year members have joined OSA over last 2 years, largest increase in OSA's 44 year history.

When we took office, our organization had a permanent membership of less than 800 families and our goal was to reach at least the 1000 mark. I am very happy to report that we are there and still striving to go further. In this effort I would like to thank all the members of my team, especially Sushant Satpathy, our treasurer who have worked hard not only to increase OSA membership but





also persuade our life members to upgrade their membership to patrons and benefactors. It has been gratifying for me to persuade the younger members of our community to join our organization. I want to express my gratitude to those of them who have heeded to my request and have become life members. This has reduced the average age of our membership from the 50s to 40s. It is definitely a welcoming development for OSA.

OSA's Finance: the Treasurer in a separate document provides OSA's yearly financial report. OSA is a volunteer based organization and is mainly run by volunteers spending countless hours. We are proud to report that we have added 70K to OSA's balance sheet - largest increase in OSA's 44 year history

OSA 2012 Convention in Seattle: We celebrated the 43rd OSA convention in the beautiful state of Washington in July. It was a gala gathering of about five hundred Odias, both diasporic as well as from Odisha. It was held at the Newport Performing Arts Center, Bellevue and was hosted by the Pacific Northwest chapter of the Odisha Society of the Americas. The highlights of this year's convention were the pre-convention symposia- the Symposium on Higher Education in Odisha: Challenges & Opportunities; and the symposium on the Buddhist Heritage and knowledge institutions of Odisha, which was a great success.

OSA 2013 convention in Chicago: Our much-awaited 44th OSA convention is finally here! As you all know, back at home we grew up celebrating thirteen festivals in twelve months (Bara Mase Tera Jatra), in the new land we have adjusted to the demands of life and try to compress all our jatras into one - our annual OSA convention. I am delighted to welcome you all to the 2013 OSA convention to be held during July 4 - 6, 2013 at the Westin, Lombard, in western suburb of Chicago. We the OSA officials were delighted when Jhara Das, the President of OSA Chicago chapter brought the proposal to hold this year's convention in Chicago and after a year's patient waiting, here we are in the windy city to enjoy the fruits of their labor. OSA 2013 convention

in Chicago 4-6 July, 2013: The 44th OSA Annual Convention will take place at Westin hotel, Lombard, a west suburb of Chicago from 4th through 7th of July 2013.

OSA 2014 Convention by Ohio chapter after 30 years: The last OSA convention in Ohio was in 1984. We are pleased to announce that Ohio is going to host the OSA 2014. Congratulations to Arata Rout, the Ohio chapter president and his team and all the Odias who live in Ohio, We look forward to seeing you all in July 2014.

Chapter Relation: Chapter Status Updates. We now have 16 OSA chapters around the country and all the sixteen chapters have been very active in various cultural and educational activities. Thanks to Leena Mishra, the South East chapter led by Sampurna Sravani and the North West chapter led by Subodh Samal have been reenergized and are playing active role in strengthening the OSA community. Kudos to Leena Mishra and her committee for playing an important role in team building.

For a long time the North West chapter was dormant. We have worked with the young leaders in that area and have made that chapter active. I am happy to report that the present President of Minnesota chapter, Debasis Das is very active in the BOG and I am sure, one of these days, they will host a convention.

New California Chapter: California became a chapter and was announced at the OSA 2012 in Seattle. Now the chapter members are organizing an election to elect their first set of officials. I am happy to report that many new members are joining OSA from California.

Awards guidelines revised: We have a revised Award Guideline to make the OSA award selection process more transparent.

Draft Convention Guideline: We have revised the convention guideline and will pass on the draft to the incoming team to implement it.

Draft Chapter Guideline to be adapted to make





it model chapter guideline: We have revised the chapter guideline and will pass on the draft to the incoming team to implement it.

Constitution Revision in progress: This was a continuation of the 2011 redraft of the OSA Constitution. Although we ratified a new constitution in 2011, it was the intention of the 2009-11 and 2011-13 Executive Committees that we would obtain legal counsel to finalize the draft in the course of the next two years. A portion of our operating budget had, in fact, been set aside for this purpose. We are happy to report, however, that our in-house Legal Advisor has completed the revision for us and we have not had to spend OSA funds on outside legal counsel for this task. The draft was presented to members on OSANet and sent to their individual id and there was invitation on OSANet to join Review Committee. Following that a review committee was formed with following members : Sanjiv Behera, Barnali Dasverma, Biswajit Khandai, Amiya Nayak, Deva Pattanayak, Nick Patnaik and Esha Bandyopadhyay (as the Legal Advisor), and Sushant Satpathy (as a representative of the Executive Committee and Board of Governors). Upon completion of the Committee's review, the Board of Governors voted upon the changes proposed by the Committee. The revised draft has been submitted for member comments during this 30-day review period. We hope to present the draft during 2013 GBM.

Champu, Chhanda and Odissi initiative (CCO) and CCO CDs sets produced by OSA: From the first CCO Karaoke CD produced by OSA we created 200 copies and have sold more than 140 copies and after deducting all costs made \$900. The second set of Karaoke CDs under OSA's banner will be available for sale at the OSA 2013 in Chicago. To encourage participation at chapter level OSA sponsored CCO competition at some chapters. 13. Odia Language propagation through Let's Learn Odia and Odia Speech Contest at Chapter Level: On behalf of OSA, our Vice President, Kuku Das has orchestrated an Odia debate event on the occasion of Shree Ganesh

Puja. This is a humble attempt to encourage our children from age 7 to 12 to brush up on their spoken Odia language and encourage them to speak in Odia language (propagation of Odia language and culture). It will also help establish better synergy between the OSA National and individual chapters. Many chapters have come forward to incorporate this debate during the local chapter Ganesh Puja event.

OSA 2013 Drama Festival: The 2013 drama festival is currently organized under the leadership of Sandip Dasverma. For the first time the inter regional drama festival was held in the Bay area, California.

Community Outreach

International Odissi Festival: OSA proudly sponsored the International Odissi festival held in Odisha in December, 2011.

OSA & Odisha

Odisha Development Day incorporated into 3-days convention: As a sizable majority at the GBM 2012 approved it, OSA convention will be a three-day event and the first day will be a self-sustainable event showcasing Odisha.

OSA Higher Education Opportunity Workshop at the Ravenshaw University on 18th Dec, 2012: In order to reach out to our people back home we have initiated higher education opportunity projects in Odisha. We organized a workshop on the Higher education opportunity at the Utkal University, Bhubaneswar in Dec 2011. This year, we will hold it at the Ravenshaw University on 18th Dec 2012 as well as in Sambalpur University in Dec 2012. At least USA universities will participate in the Higher Education symposium. We had a preliminary Higher Education opportunity symposium at the OSA 2012 in Seattle and it was well attended. It will focus on attracting talented students to apply to the USA in various fields in Arts, Sciences, and Engineering among other subjects and to facilitate opportunities for collaboration between universities in Odisha and the USA.

The International Buddhist symposium was held at Ratnagiri Feb 1-3, 2013.





Following a successful symposium on Buddhist heritage in Odisha at the OSA 2012 in Seattle, the Odisha government organized an international Buddhist Symposium from Feb 1-4, 2013 to showcase the Buddhist treasures of Odisha.

Connected with Odias across the globe: Since we took office, we made a conscious effort to connect with the Odia organizations across the globe sharing all the necessary information about our activities and events.

Improved communication with members:

New OSA website: Congratulations to OSA! Thanks to our dynamic new web administrator Bikas Panda, who is working on making the OSA website more interactive. Please visit our new website at orissasociety.org.

OSAnet: OSAnet has been revitalized and as its regular readers know it has helped better communication among the OSA members who are very active in participating in different discussions and debates dealing with various issues involving OSA. Since we took office in July 2011, Manoj Padhi from Texas has joined Sunil Sabat as the OSAnet moderator. He has been very active throughout the year and I would like to commend him for his exemplary service. Also, **OSA website:** Congratulations to OSA! Thanks to our dynamic new web administrator Bikas Panda, who is working on making the OSA website more interactive.

OSA newsletter Utkarsa: OSA newsletter Utkarsa is published quarterly. The OSA editors Sridhar Rana and Julie Acharya Ray have continued as the editors of Utkarsa. Dr. Babru Samal also joined the team as the Special editor and has put together a special Utkarsa issue focused on "The Immigrant experiences" in March 2012.

OSA membership card: When we ask people to join OSA, we are often asked "why? What we get in return?" Our numbers are very small compared to people from other Indian states that may be a compelling reason to stay connected. There are many benefits and it is on our website. I just want

to mention that we have introduced a membership card for our permanent members and we have negotiated discounts from some businesses like hotels, resorts, travel agency, and retailers in Odisha. Currently, the list is small but we plan to add more over months and years to come and may be some from here.

BOG and monthly meetings: We have sixteen OSA chapters and are led by chapter Presidents and vice presidents and other officials. The Chapter Presidents along with the OSA executives are also the Board of Governors - the OSA BOG meetings are held once a month on every first Sunday of the month. OSA executive meetings are held every month on need basis. Apart from that there were frequent meetings for maintaining the optimum health of OSA. It is a wonderful way of communication between all the OSA executives, the Board of Governors and the members of OSA. Also there are regular meetings and email exchanges between OSA executives, committee members and OSA members to discuss OSA, its issues, goals and milestones.

Sincerely,
OSA National Executives (2011-2013)





OSA-ODISHA DEVELOPMENT : 2011-2013 REVIEW

By Annapurna Pandey, Susant Satpathy, Sukant Mohapatra, Abani Patra, Bikash Pattnaik, Suchitra Pattnaik, Chitta Baral, Dharendra Kar, OSA EC (2011-13), O-OD/IO/HE/CH Committee and Amiya Nayak (The article was coordinated/communicated by AN, Member, O-OD/IO/HE Committee).

Background:

This article has been based on the OSA-Odisha Development program review from July 2011 through July 2013. The Committee explored, initiated, developed and executed some of the new ideas related to Odisha Development that may be realistically feasible through continuity by OSA, a socio-cultural and voluntary organization in North America. However, volunteering, funding, organizing and process logistics were experienced as the most challenging areas within OSA.

Objectives:

To create a strategic framework on how to effectively use OSA voluntary systems and resources in support of OSA-organization driven Odisha Development through virtual networks.

The long term objectives are to promote, facilitate & share ideas/info in various development sectors in Odisha such as: virtual development, invest odisha, higher education, social entrepreneurship, and other developmental information exchanges between North America (USA/Canada) and Odisha (India).

Social Business Model:

O-OD is an Innovative Public-Government-Private-Partnership (PGPP) model designed by the O-OD Committee with value added contribution to Odisha oriented development through virtual networks.

Strategic Resources :

1. PGPP model through North America-Odisha exchanges.
2. Volunteer Systems (Committee, Teams, Development Focus Groups such as: Higher Education)
3. Materials (Drafts, Blueprint; Protocol, Meeting

Minutes References, Program Outcome Evaluation).

4. Odisha Development Fund (ODF) – Approved by OSA EC/BOG (January 2012). Already In Use.
5. eGroup (Google): (osa-odisha-development@googlegroups.com) (Jan 14, 2012). Semi-Functional.

Recommendations by the Committee:

1. Re-name OSA-Odisha into OSA-Odisha Development (committee and program).
2. Re-Orient OSA-Odisha Development mission as an OSA Organization-driven and Odisha-oriented program under OSA name, banner, umbrella and platform.
3. Sign a Master Memorandum of Understanding (M-MOU, 10 year and then perpetual/ open-ended) between OSA and Government of Odisha). Proposed - Odisha Development Center, Think Tank, Invest Odisha Business Symposium, PGPP Social Business Model and OSA Virtual University)
4. Identified Top-3 Development Sectors (Virtual Development-Conferences, Symposia, Workshops & Development Information Exchange Networks, Higher Education & Social Entrepreneurship. Other development sectors identified were: Policy Papers & Think Tank, Technology & Social Innovation, Healthcare & Wellness, Tourism, Women & Children, Agriculture/Food & Natural Resources)
5. Guidelines & Continuity: OSA needs a well-defined and documented Information System, Policy & Guidelines, before it starts anything. Formalization for continuity irrespective of the OSA EC's 2 year voluntary tenure in tandem with the prospective committee, volunteers & collaborating partners.





Committee Ideated/Proposed GBM

Agenda Items:

GBM 2012 (approved): July Symposium in North America (USA/Canada, rotating places). OSA annual convention will be a 3-day event, and the first day (July 4) to be devoted to symposia (Odisha Development, Invest Odisha, Higher Education, Culture Heritage, and other items). July 4 day symposia will be coordinated by OSA Convention Team (convener, co-convener), OSA National EC and O-OD/IO/HE/CH Committee. GBM 2013 (to be proposed): O-OD Committee to be a permanent/continuing feature every 2 years. December Symposium in Odisha, (rotate places). OSA in partnership with GoO/Team Odisha/MSME Dept/HE Dept/Tourism Dept and other organizations may co-organize a one-day symposia in Odisha covering July 4 symposia's Odisha Development themes, proceedings and minutes.

OSA-Odisha Higher Education Symposia Organized by HE Committee & Partners:

- Workshop on Higher Education and Research Opportunities in North American Universities, December 22, 2011, Vani Vihar, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- First Symposium on Higher Education in Odisha- Challenges & Opportunity-2012, July 4, 2012, 42nd convention, Seattle, Washington, USA.
- Odisha Higher Education Open House-2012, Dec. 18, 2012, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha.
- Odisha Higher Education-Opportunities & Challenges: July 4, 2013, 44th Convention, Chicago, IL, USA.

Proposed/Planned Items:

- A. Odisha Development Day (Invest Odisha-Business & Entrepreneurship; Higher Education-Opportunities & Challenges; Culture Heritage-ReDevelopment : July 4, OSA 2013 Convention, Chicago.
- B. ODF: to grow and make it sustainable.
- C. OSA Trust/Foundation/Endowment Fund:

being brain-stormed and discussed. For org sustainability.

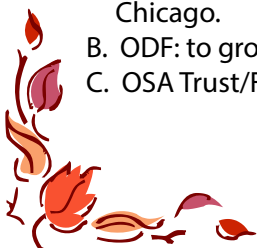
- D. OSA-GoO M-MOU + OD/HE/IO Agreement: Proposed, drafted and being pursued.

OSA History of the Future:

To Continue the O-OD program, a part of OSA's Constitutional Preamble, Vision and Mission. OSA can create a future legacy through new generations, Odisha Development, OSA Development, the creation of an OSA Trust/Foundation/Endowment Fund in North America, and by formalizing a Master-MOU with the GoO and by partnering with Odisha and its people.

References:

1. OSA-Odisha Development. By Annapurna Devi Pandey & The O-OD Committee/Team. The Journal of The Orissa Society of the Americas, 2012 Souvenir Issue, Pages C13-14, 43rd Annual OSA Convention, July 5-7, 2012, Seattle, Washington, USA.
2. OSA Website (<http://www.orissasociety.org/>) : O-OD, IO, HE and CH webpages.





OSA REGIONAL DRAMA FESTIVAL - A RECAP OF 4 YEARS

By Sandip K. Dasverma

History:

OSA Odia Regional Drama Festival (RDF) will complete 5 years in 2013. RDF was introduced in 2008 when the author was in OSA National Executive, 2007-2009*. The first RDF was staged in the year 2009 in Michigan by OSA Michigan Chapter. It was titled Northern Regional Drama Festival. In four years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, we have held thirteen drama festivals where forty four dramas were presented. (See attached List). Initially, as per an OSA national executive resolution in 2008, SriGopal Mohanty was appointed as the sole Coordinator to organize RDF in different regions of North America. In 2010 at his initiative, a three member Coordination Committee was formed consisting of: Sandip K. Dasverma, Sri Gopal Mohanty and Brajendra Panda (Chair). This was confirmed by a resolution of OSA General Body Meeting at Dallas Convention, 2011. At the end of 2011, Sri Gopal Mohanty withdrew from the Committee but remained an active advisor. In 2012, Brajendra Panda also retired from the team. In Seattle convention of 2012, two great drama lovers Priyadarshi Dash and Priyaranjan Mohapatra were nominated to the drama Coordination Committee with Sandip Dasverma, as Chair.

Over years, four flexible regions have been identified: Eastern, Northern/ North Eastern, Central/ Northern(Chicago) and South Western. There have always been attempts to cover other areas. We are eagerly eyeing on Atlanta and surroundings and the Pacific Coast. A most successful and promising development was this year's Pacific South Western RDF held for the first time at Woodside, CA. It is also hoped that a RDF will be held soon in the Atlantic South Eastern region at Charlotte, NC. Three more RDFs are also due to happen, one at Toronto, Canada, the other two at Boston, MA and Austin, TX in September, 2013.

Concept:

The original concept of Regional Drama Festival was:

1. To revive the community contact via visiting families from outside the area and staying with host families of the visited area, like initial OSA convention days.
2. To hold low cost regional mini-OSA gatherings, so as to enhance comradery among members and friendship among kids of the families in different neighboring states & chapters in the region.
3. To develop inherent and latent drama skills (acting, script writing, prop preparation, music etc.) in a region.
4. To promote leadership growth via organizing a multi-chapter event.

Subsequently from experience we have added another two goals:

1. To encourage participation of kids so as to exposed them to Odia language and culture.
2. To ensure that visiting teams are each offered 5 to 10 minutes for program of their kids.

In summary, the objective of RDF is to develop a closer relation among communities of people from Odisha residing in a region, through a festival with a special focus on drama.

Current Status:

In its fifth year RDF is in the verge of a takeoff, with 46 dramas staged in multiple regions, including two this year. The overall experience indicates that RDF has become part of an event of the host Chapter in order to make it financially viable as well as to attract a larger audience. This approach is becoming successful. The initial sluggishness in implementing RDF is withering away and community members in various regions are getting more and more interested and enthused. Members newly initiated into drama seem to enjoy the freshness and novelty





of drama world. In due course families, at least in participating Chapters, are developing rapport among themselves. The expected interest, that RDF was to generate in OSA, is already surfacing.

Benefits accrued:

1. An Odiadrama Yahooogroup(odiadramagroup@yahooogroups.com) has been formed connecting the Odia drama enthusiasts all over North America. It is a discussion group to monitor, assess RDF and brings ideas for the future.
2. A few Odia drama playwrights are emerging in NA, often depicting the American experience, for instance, Gagan Panigrahi of Toronto, Manoj Mohapatra and Salil Mishra of Chicago, Birendra Jena of Cleveland, Swapnalata Rath(Mishra) of MI. Dr. Birendra Jena has already published a collection of plays – “ Dura Pahada O Anyanya Nataka”. He mentions in its forward, specifically that his difficulty in finding script to take part in RDF led him to write them.
3. OSA Conventions rotate from city to city of different areas and are relatively expensive to attend and thus cannot provide opportunity for many to attend these on a regular basis. RDF plays a complementary role to fill the vacuum and provides opportunity for interacting with other members in a region and participating in cultural activities. As a consequence new community leaders are sprouting.
4. The contacts during RDF, between people living in the neighboring states is creating release of positive energy, initiatives and communications, leading to various other initiatives. e.g.
 - a. Odia Poetry reading via conference calls.
 - b. Odia Poetry reading in Radio program in NJ/NY via conference call or skype.
 - c. Publication of an Odia magazine “Pratishruti” from North America, etc.

Lessons Learned:

1. It is very difficult to have a drama when the participants live more than 30 min apart. Though some have taken the innovative step like doing voicing remotely, during rehearsals – the flavor of acting while being present in the same physical space, is still far superior. So it seems, to have the

drama team in one city or within half hour driving distance, is a relevant constraint.

2. The experience when people stay overnight with local families are way better than, when they come and go back the same day. The bonds of even an overnight stay is long lasting.
3. All festivals should have children participation, to keep the kids excited, involved and part of parent’s cultural life and milieu.
4. The drama festivals can’t be held in cities, where population of Odia families is 50 or less, because of shortage of audience. Most halls have a capacity of 200 or more. Costs are of course additional constraint, as of now.
5. The RDFs in North/North East should be preferably held before October 15th. This helps avoid snow storms. Two festivals scheduled in November already suffered for this reason, as the visiting teams could not come to Easetern RDF in 2011 (NJ) & 2012(Washington DC).

A few issues:

Two issues are coming up which need to be addressed for sustainability of RDF.

1. Cooperation and commitment of Chapter Presidents in RDF
2. Financial grant to OSA Chapters for RDF and their viability.

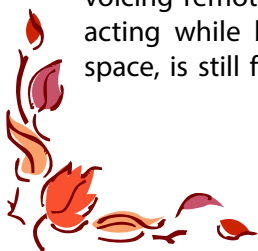
1. Cooperation and Commitment of Chapter Presidents for RDF

The core of RDF success is in the hands of the OSA Chapter Presidents. But for their complete cooperation & support RDF would not have come this far.

They are the key figures in the OSA organization and should be credited overwhelmingly for the success of RDF.

Realizing their importance and remembering the fact that they are elected, it is urged that they consider RDF to be PART of Chapter activities just like Kumar Purnima, Saraswati Puja etc. For smooth operations and cost effectiveness the following steps are most helpful and should be taken as far as possible:

Select a RDF coordinator early who is enthusiastic and proactive.





Before beginning of each year give calls to the other chapters Presidents in the region and decide a mutually convenient date & location (city and chapter).

The reservation of a hall in time, preferably six months in advance so that it is easy to get a good but adequately priced (rents vary widely) hall and it gives enough time to out of town teams to organize. Decide it (i) between February -April for holding the Festival the Fall season and (ii) by the end of October for holding it in the spring season.

Allow enough practice time and patience in order to encourage new participants to join who are necessary for sustenance of RDF in future.

2. Financial grant from OSA National to Chapters for RDF and viability:

The finances are a matter of concern for some small chapters. So far the festivals are being done by the Chapters along with one of their regular programs – thus the costs (\$2000 on average) are absorbed by the local Chapters, except \$500 grant from OSA National.

It will be a good idea if OSA raises these grants to \$1000 by raising special funds. Chapters can sell Ad spaces in their brochures & raise donations from the local enthusiasts for the rest.

OSA grants are a way of encouraging events which will expose new participants/ members to OSA activities, similar to conventions.

OSA national executives would like to have around five, new Life /Five year members for each festival which we think is a fair expectation.

Attempts should be made to have a general insurance in OSA National – so each chapter does not have to buy a separate insurance coverage for the hall. OSA National President & RDF organizing Chapter President can co-ordinate and save significant costs.

A goal of RDF is to make it self financed with some consistent support, like OSA convention today via Ads and sponsorship.

Relevant info:

1. If you are a small town-er, with a few other Odia families around – you should visit nearest RDF first as a visitor/audience. Then you can form your own drama team from among neighbors. RDF is open to all, even those who are not members of OSA.

2. When you and your few friends, are ready to stage a drama, help in getting a script (fit for number of female and male actors enthusiasts available in your area), dress (e.g. a Odisha constable's uniform) or sound (like a typical sound of cycle rickshaw in a Cuttack street), are only a phone call or e-mail away. Info is available with the experienced group members, who are eager to share their expertise. You contact them via the "Odia Drama Group" odiadramagroup@yahoo.com, to access resources, seek help or share problems to be resolved.

*(*Note: Sometime in July 2007, after Detroit convention, we stayed at SriGopal babu's home to visit nearby Nigra Falls. While there, the RDF bug was in my mind and I discussed with him. He liked it. Subsequently, OSA junior most OSA office came my way - completely unexpectedly. I had a chance to give shape to my dream project. SriGopal babu after Toronto convention, agreed to coordinate it. The rest as they say is history).*





OSA TREASURER'S REPORT : 2011-2013



Dear Friends,

Namaskar!

Welcome to Windy City, Chicago! I am delighted to welcome you to 44th OSA Convention. The convention organizing team has planned it well for all attendees to make your time enjoyable and memorable. We don't want it to be best convention ever; we just want you to feel welcome be at home. Relax, enjoy and have fun!

Bird's Eye View of OSA's Organizational Growth (2011-2013)

Like any member organization, OSA's strength lies with numbers both in terms of its membership as well as financials. A growing organization reflects the value it provides to its members in general and the community at large. It is my pleasure to report that organization has seen significant growth on both these counts over last two years.

Membership

Today OSA has close to 1000-member families and in last two years nearly 200-families have joined OSA as permanent members or 5-year members and that is more than 25% increase in total number of members excluding annual members in the span of 2-years!

Membership Category	As of July'2011	As of June 10th, 2013	Increase in Permanent Members (June 10th, 2013)
Life Members	655	806	151
Benefactors	28	41	13
Patrons	50	51	1
5 Year Members	21	53	32
Annual Members	64	33	
TOTAL	818	984	197

In a community like ours it takes a village, I acknowledge the tremendous effort of many individuals in getting or facilitating new members; all OSA officials, Chapter leaders during our time and several members in our community played vital role without whose help we could not have achieved this milestone.

OSA's Financial Status

OSA's financial position has improved considerably due to 3 reasons: increase in membership, substantial surplus from 2012 convention because of prudent management of convention finance and membership upgrade by many members who contributed to help OSA gain its financial footing.





Changes in balance September, 2011 to May, 2012

<u>Total Balance (as of 05/31/2012)</u>	<u>\$130,916.39</u>
<u>Subtract Total Balance(as of 09/01/2011)</u>	<u>\$105,686.55</u>
<u>Net Increase</u>	<u>\$25,229.84</u>

** The total balance includes convention advance. During this time we added 105 new members: 82 life members, 21 5-year members and 2 benefactor members.*

Changes in financial status June, 2012 to May, 2013

<u>Total Balance (as of 05/31/2013)</u>	<u>\$187,329.77</u>
<u>Subtract Total Balance(as of 09/01/2011)</u>	<u>\$130,916.39</u>
<u>Net Increase</u>	<u>\$56,413.38</u>

** The total balance includes convention advance and \$12,329.54 for JP Fund. We have added 89 new life/5-year members; 71 life members and 18 5-year members (more to join). 12 members upgraded to become benefactors and 4 upgraded to become patrons.*

Cumulative change of balances Sept, 2011 to May, 2013

<u>Total Balance (as of 05/31/2013)</u>	<u>\$187,329.77</u>
<u>Subtract Total Balance(as of 09/01/2011)</u>	<u>\$105,686.55</u>
<u>Net Increase</u>	<u>\$81,643.22</u>
<u>Subtract Jiban Patra Fund</u>	<u>\$12,329.54</u>
<u>Net Increase excluding JP Fund</u>	<u>\$69,313.68</u>

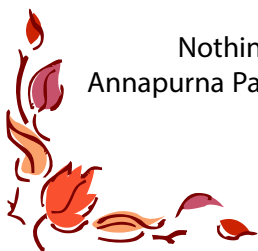
In the span of less than 2 years we have added net \$70K to OSA's balances and may be the largest increase in OSA's history! I can assure you because of the changes in perception regarding organization and its role for the community the best time is yet to come.

Community Outreach (2011-2013)

Over last 2 years we undertook many special projects as part of community outreach. I want to thank you for your hand written notes and words of appreciation that helped reinforce my belief regarding our community. During this period we were together for efforts like 2011 floods in Odisha, Boston University student case, UTD student and Jiban Patra case and together we raised ~\$30K for different causes.

To effectively address issues arising out of sudden humanitarian needs, 2012 GBM approved to create 'Emergency Fund' of \$5K and now its stands at \$7K due to generous support from Dr. Ramesh & Anjali Misra of Michigan. As the next step of this transition process as part of the 2013 Constitution review I had submitted a proposal to establish 'OSA Foundation'; a virtual organization with separate structure to take on community outreach work on humanitarian ground. Because of time constrain we could not include it in the constitution draft and I hope to see the discussion on this proposal to continue and idea to crystallize in coming months and years.

Nothing can be done alone and it is fun to work as a team and I was fortunate to have our President Annapurna Pandey, VP Kuku Das and Secretary Leena Mishra as part of this team; their unstinted support





and unconditional help made everything seem achievable. We could not have achieved these goals without our president spending time and efforts in membership drive, fund raising, reaching out to many in the community. I applaud her faith in our 2nd gen Odias and her constant effort to involve them in OSA affairs. We need to continue that for a healthy and prosperous OSA.

We are ready to pass the baton to incoming team under the leadership of Tapan Padhi, Sikhanda Satpathy, Sabita Panigrahi and Prashant Ranabijuli and cheer them as they take OSA to new heights. I request everyone to extend their full support to the incoming team as you have done for ours. Finally, we are leaving OSA much stronger; both organizationally and financially than we took in. I salute you all for your goodwill and support during these two years. I always had trust in you and at the end we came through. I express my humble gratitude for your support and best wishes.

Many thanks and regards,

Sushant Satpathy
Treasurer, OSA (2011-2013)

OSA ACCOUNT STATEMENT AS OF 05/31/2012

	Amount	Income/ Expense Category
Opening Balance (9/1/2011)		
Checking A/C #1	\$7,830.07	
Checking A/C #2	\$0.00	
CD #1	\$25,631.81	
CD #2	\$62,224.67	
Convention Advance Recv.	\$10,000.00	
Total	\$105,686.55	
Receipts		
	\$10,000.00	2011 Convention Advance - Return
	\$1,560.00	Annual Membership *
	\$712.42	2011 Convention Surplus *
	\$2,775.00	OSA Fee *
	\$402.00	Donation *
	\$497.50	Interest Income *
	\$1,300.00	Donation - Rebuild OSA Fund **
	\$13,114.12	Flood Relief Donations****
	\$1,000.00	Donation - Odissi Festival ****
	\$250.00	Donation - Odisha Development Fund (ODF)
	\$20,550.00	OSA Life, 5-year and Benefactor Membership ***
	\$1,500.00	Donation - Awards*
Payments		
	\$10,000.00	2012 Convention Advance
	\$2,500.00	Regional Drama Festival *





\$412.08	Administrative (Fees , Postage etc) *
\$13,114.12	Flood Relief Disbursement and Expense****
\$1,000.00	CCO CD *
\$1,000.00	Odissi Festival****
\$105.00	Higher Ed - Expense - ODF Fund
\$200.00	Website *
\$100.00	Awards *

Closing Balance (05/31/2012) \$130,916.39

Remarks

* Items marked are operational income or expense

** Items marked will be transferred to fixed deposit/ CD (donations to 'Rebuild OSA Fund')

*** Items marked will be transferred to fixed deposit/ CD except \$1600 from 2 Benefactor Memberships .
\$1600 has been added to operational income.

**** Donations for Flood Relief and Odissi Festival were collected and disbursed separately

Account Balances as of 05/31/2012

Checking A/c #1	\$13,955.00w
Checking A/c #2	\$18,607.41
CD #1	\$25,696.03
CD #2	\$62,657.95
Convention Advance Receivable	\$10,000.00
Total Balance (as of 05/31/2012)	\$130,916.39
Total Balance(as of 09/01/2011)	\$105,686.55
Net Increase	\$25,229.84

Balances under different funds

ODF	\$145.00
Odisha Development-(OSA2010 Convention Directive for the 50% of surplus due to chapter)	\$3,839.50

- Sushant Satpathy,
Treasurer, OSA (2011-2013)





OSA ACCOUNT STATEMENT AS OF 05/31/2013 (UNAUDITED)

	Amount	Income/ Expense Category
Opening Balances as of 06/01/2012		
Checking A/c #1	\$13,955.00	
Checking A/c #2	\$18,607.41	
CD #1	\$25,696.03	
CD #2	\$62,657.95	
Convention Advance Receivable	\$10,000.00	
Total Balance (as of 06/01/2012)	\$130,916.39	
Receipts		
	\$10,000.00	2012 Convention Advance - Return*
	\$19,127.53	2012 Convention Income*
	\$1,690.00	Annual Membership *
	\$2,370.00	OSA Fee*
	\$5,900.00	Membership Upgrade *
	\$18,730.00	OSA new Life and 5-year Membership **
	\$500.00	Donation *
	\$372.60	Interest Income from CD/FDs *
	\$450.00	Donation - OSA Development Fund **
	\$150.00	2013 Convention Donation*
	\$500.00	Awards *
	\$1,986.24	CCO Fund (donations and CD sale)***
	\$2,000.00	Emergency Fund ***
	\$3,580.00	Odisha Development Fund (ODF)***
	\$835.15	UTD student ***
	\$12,329.54	Jiban Patra Fund ***
Payments		
	\$10,000.00	2013 Convention Advance*
	\$150.00	2013 Convention Donation*
	\$120.00	2012 Convention Refund/Adjustment*
	\$1,000.00	Regional Drama Festival *
	\$1,751.64	Administrative (Fees , Postage, Bouquet, Member Card print etc) *
	\$5,000.00	Membership Award*
	\$500.00	CCO Awards***
	\$455.00	Odia Language***
	\$2,104.20	Higher Ed and other Expense - ODF Fund***
	\$1,191.69	Awards *
	\$1,000.00	Hurricane Sandy Relief to Red Cross *
	\$835.15	UTD student ***
Net Increase (Decrease)	\$56,413.38	

Remarks

* Items marked are operational income or expense

** Items marked will be transferred to fixed deposit/ CD (donations to 'Rebuild OSA Fund')

*** Designated special funds





Balances as of 05/31/2013

Checking A/c #1	\$61,421.15
Checking A/c #2	\$12,429.54
CD #1	\$103,479.08
<u>Convention Advance Receivable</u>	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
Total Balance (as of 5/31/2013)	\$187,329.77
<u>Total Balance(as of 06/01/2012)</u>	<u>\$130,916.39</u>
Net Increase	\$56,413.38

Balances under special funds

ODF	\$1,620.80	Total Balance (as of 5/31/2013)	\$187,329.77
CCO Fund	\$1,561.24	Total Balance (as of 9/1/2011)	<u>\$105,686.55</u>
Odia (Language) Developmt.	\$3,384.50	Net Increase	<u>\$81,643.22</u>
Emergency Fund	\$7,000.00	<u>Exclude Jiban Patra Fund</u>	<u>\$12,329.54</u>
Jiban Patra Fund	\$12,329.54	Total Increase	\$69,313.68

- Sushant Satpathy,
Treasurer, OSA (2011-2013)

OSA 2012 CONVENTION ACCOUNT STATEMENT

(Prepared by Satyakam and Repurposed by Sushant Satpathy)

Convention Income

51000 · OSA Convention Income	
51100 · Registration fee	18,540.00
51200 · Food Charges	21,500.00
51300 · Sponsorship	23,260.00
51400 · Donation	16,243.70
51400A · Donation for special purpose	650.00
51500 · Advertisement	10,300.00
51600 & 51700 · Media sale & Vendor Booth	570.50
51800 · Discounts and contra-incomes	-995.00
51900 · Other miscellaneous	797.39
Total 51000 · OSA Convention Income	90,866.59
52000 · OSA National Income	
52100 · OSA Membership Fee	3,090.00
52200 · OSA Convention Fee	2,370.00
52800 · Discounts and Contra-Incomes	-400.00
Total 52000 · OSA National Income	5,060.00
53000 · Special fund for invited artists	
53100 · Fund for Sunanda Pattnaik	9,600.00
53200 · Fund for Trupti Das	1,800.00





53300 · Devraj - Ellora program	1,850.00
53400 · Buddhist Heritage & HE Seminar	2,000.00
53500 · Fund for Prafulla Kar	2,000.00
Total 53000 · Special fund	17,250.00
54000 · Matching Programs	
54100 · Volunteer hours matching	11,525.00*
54200 · Doantion matching	420.00
Total 54000 · Matching Programs	11,945.00
55000 · Investments - Interest, Short-term CD	30.11
Total Income	125,151.70

* \$1700 for Volunteer hours matching was received after final account was submitted by host chapter.

Convention Expense

71000 · OSA Expenses	
71100 · Operation expenses	5,109.25
71200 · Facilities and equipments	12,193.81
71300 · Cultural, seminar and youth	13,101.60
71400 · Awards & prizes (Non-cultural)	3,976.81
71500 · Food services	21,564.44
71600 · Hospitality and guest expenses	4,088.83
71700 · Transportation & accommodation	5,639.56
71900 · Other Expences	700.00
Total 71000 · OSA Expenses	66,374.30
72000 · OSA National refund (Membership and OSA Fee)	5,060.00
73000 · OSA Expense for special program	
73100 · Expense for Sunanda Pattnaik	5,598.28
73200 · Expense for Trupti Das	1,535.22
73300 · Devraj Ellora Patnaik program	3,572.16
73400 · Prafull Kar Lifetime Award	2,000.00
73500 · Expense for Buddhist Seminar	2,254.07
Total 73000 · OSA Expense for special program	14,959.73
Reserve fund (Volunteer Appreciation and others)	502.62
Total Expense and reserve	86,896.65
Net Surplus	38,255.05
50% of surplus to OSA National	19,127.53
50% of surplus to PNW Chapter	19,127.52

Convention Treasurer: Pradeep Sahoo Accepted by Sushant Satpathy, Treasurer , OSA
chapter President: Priyadarshan Patra Convener: Amuly Das
Co-conveners: Pradeep Sahoo, Rakesh Patnaik, Kuku Das

- Sushant Satpathy,
Treasurer, OSA (2011-2013)





OSA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS, PATRONS AND BENEFACTORS

NEW BENEFACTOR MEMBERS

Akhil and Bijoya Gantayat, CA
Debaki and Anjana Choudhury, MD
Gopal and Reva Mohapatra, TX
Kirti Mohapatra and Parimita Mohanty, OR
Priyaranjan and Aparna Mohapatra, NJ
Ramesh and Anjali Misra, MI

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Co-Conveners: Saurya Khandai, Tarani Mohapatra, Kuku Das

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Swarup Garnaik
Swati Garnaik
Arun Reddy
Bikash Mohanty
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Sujata Patnaik
Ipsita Mahapatra
Sikha Panda
Bharati Khuntia
Salil Mishra
Kanak Hota
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Seetal Mishra - Young Adult Lead
Sujatha Nayak - Young Adult Lead
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Jyoti Mishra
Suraj Patnaik
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Kmal Dash
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Ravi Duvvuri
Swadesh Dash

Volunteers

Madhusudan Khuntia
Swarup Garnaik
Swati Garnaik
Arun Reddy
Bikash Mohanty
Sarita Padhi
Sunameeka Panigrahy
Simron Sahoo

Interior & Exterior Decoration Team

Sarita Parida (Co-Lead)
Ajanta Jena (Lead)
Ashok Parida





Youth Section



MEGHNA MEMORIAL AWARD



It 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 Odias 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 heartrending. 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 Mohapatra**, was the only daughter of Lipi and Santosh Mohapatra. 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 a creative writing competition has been started for kids under the auspices of OSA every year.

Hopefully this noble effort will kindle the memory of that smiling face for years to come.

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The Meghna Memorial Award for Creative Writing winners for 2013 are awarded to

Suraj Jena for *Metacognition* under Senior Category (Ages 13 to 18)

Abha Panda for *The Writer's Dilemma* under Senior Category (Ages 13 to 18)

Resha Panda for *The Magic Of A Moment* under Junior Category (Ages 7 to 12)

Runners Up:

Senior Category: Rishi Satpathy (*Ode to Dharmapada*)

Junior Category: Abhishek Misra (*Encyclopedia Holmes*), Ariya Mohanty (*Why Rhinos Don't Make Good Pets*),

Debanshi Nikita Chowdhury (*Mother Earth*), Dev Satpathy (*Voice of Life*), Saswat Pati (*Stepping Stone*), and Triya Mahapatra (*Champ*).

Congratulations to everyone!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Articles for Meghna Memorial Award have been published as submitted. Editorial discretion has not been exercised for these entries.

METACOGNITION

Granted, being human beings we are limited from doing certain things that would make us "different". The world doesn't work on how you think or imagine. It won't change the amount of time left in class simply because you want school to be out. It won't fly by so you won't have to be in a certain situation any longer than you want to be in. Life, in the physical aspect, is just a lot arduous work without the promising rewards your mind might think up. Yet, many believe "if they put their minds to it" they can change the outcome of something. Yes, if you stay focused, an individual can get some work done, but that doesn't mean they'll be completely joyous about it mentally. In this society we live in it seems that the older, and smarter, one gets they're opinions about certain things aren't as appreciated or wanted as they used to be. For instance, many learn from experience that lying has some serious ramifications, but when you tell the truth, on certain occasions, you'll get the same consequences. It's a lose-lose situation, that silently suppresses my opinions. As an individual grows older they become more independent, maybe not move out and get an apartment independent, but mentally they'll start to question things.

Possibly once someone hits the ripe age of thirteen they'll start questioning things, simple things, such as why something is done, why isn't there a simpler way, and what happens if it's not done in that certain way. The topic to this story would have to be thoughts and what causes us to become curious as to why things work. Honestly, most my teenage life I've been wondering why things work and asking over a billion semi-logical questions. Why is the earth round and not flat or maybe even square? Is the world really ending sometime in 2012? Aren't we aliens? If so doesn't that mean the "air" we breathe is poisonous to other life forms far out in space? Since we are living creatures that must mean there are others in this universe correct? Am I really thinking straight or am I actually insane and haven't taken it into consideration? Yet I achieve mental satisfaction from engaging in these thoughts on the human thought process and the human condition. I'm only sixteen. Could I be over thinking everything?

I can never remember the precise moment when I slip from the tired hands of reality into blissful

unconsciousness. The period of time when my imagination takes control and my being exists only in the depths of my sub-conscience. Free from a world of stress and responsibility I am able to release myself from everything which has bored, bothered, badgered and burdened me throughout a cruel day of being awake. Concerns and consequences are all but abolished in the place where I set the laws as well as break them.

It's difficult to describe this paradise that is my dreams. They are a realm of possibilities; things which mere humans can only ponder about and laugh at with their eyes open may occur to me whilst walking down a street. The land which I inhabit most nights is filled with breath taking beauty. Deep green rainforests lead onto the crystal blue shores of a vast ocean, depending on which way you turn next, you will glance upon both rolling hills and valleys, or the golden expanse of never ending desert, bereft from blemish. Of course these lands are far too picturesque to be inhabited

solely by me. There are humans of all races, many of whom are recognizable from my other life. Animals, far too many species to count, many which are extinct and even more which are yet to be discovered. Captivating mermaids and hideous orcs; adorable talking ferrets and terrifying giant spiders; huge mythical dragons which fill your heart with wonder and awe as they float so effortlessly through the sky, and a species of talking ant, whose language is so truly mellifluous you can spend the entirety of a dream listening to them speak about the weather. Of course there are many other weird and magical creatures who call my brain home, most of which exist only in novels written by J.R.R Tolkien.

Although the beauty and majesticities of my dreams are unrivalled by anything I have ever seen whilst not lying parallel to my ceiling, I am never able to relax and soak in the atmosphere. For some strange reason that no scientist, mathematician or even I will ever be able to figure out, I am always threatening my second life trying to achieve something which is seemingly pointless. Jumping over a canyon ten times the width of the Grand Canyon on a scooter, going fishing for great white sharks with my bare hands, and slaying a dragon with only a stick and a shoe, along with thousands of other idiotic ideas which lie dormant in the deepest dungeons of my subconscious



held prisoner on the basis of being too dangerous for the real world waiting to come out and breath when my eyes are firmly closed.

This place of magic and mystery is extremely important to me. It is a world which is untouched and discernible only to me. Whilst I am aware that dreaming is no replacement to the real world, which is even more amazing in its own way, it is always comforting to know that after a stressful day of school, I can escape to a faraway land without walking any further than my bedroom.

- Suraj Jena is a High School Student at Neuqua Valley High School at Naperville, IL. He is going to be a Senior next year. He loves sports like Hockey, Cricket, Football and Basketball. He is also part of High School Rugby Team.

THE WRITER'S DILEMMA

"Attention 8th grade students. We are proud to be hosting a writing competition at our school this year. This event will take place on the 24th of March and will include representatives of 20 schools around the district. If you are interested in becoming a representative of our school please bring back a signed copy of the attached permission form by November 9th. We look forward to seeing you then."

** ** *

Raj clutched the salmon colored paper in excitement, his heart drumming rapidly inside his chest. I can't believe we're having a writing competition, he thought fizzling with excitement. Raj eased the piece of paper into his desk and tilted back in his chair brushing his fingers absentmindedly through his dark hair as he pondered over the unique opportunity. A writing competition would definitely be interesting, Raj thought. No, it would be more than just interesting; it would be a dream come true! In fact, writing was Raj's passion. When he wrote he felt as if the whole universe was stretched out in front of him and he could have it all with just the touch of the pen. A writing competition would be the ultimate chance for him to show off his true talent as a writer, but it would also mean more than that. A writing competition would be the ultimate chance for him, Raj Mohapatra, to prove to his family that just because he wasn't the most brilliant mathematician or scientist at school didn't mean he couldn't be successful in life doing something he loved.

"Raj Mohapatra", the teacher's voice broke through his thoughts. Raj jumped up, startled, his eyes flicking up to his teacher's impatient face. "Raj Mohapatra", the teacher repeated with clear irritation, "your report card". She thrust out the thin piece of paper in front of her. Raj's face flushed scarlet as he scrambled out of his desk, knocking over his chair in his hurry. A few kids in the back of the room snickered. He wove his way down the aisle and received the paper from his teacher in a state

Undoubtedly, we all over think sometime or the other. Being human will forever keep us thinking deep thoughts and obviously over thinking. Now, the real question is on the table, could this really be a story about human thoughts? If so, this story is truly about mental satisfaction or the simple joy of expressing my opinions. Enjoy the time you'll take to think this through, but try not to over think it.

of nervous apprehension. "Please be an A. Please be an A" he whispered as he took it from her. He clenched his fists in anxiety. If his math grade wasn't an A this time around he didn't even want to imagine what his parents would do. They'd probably make him take summer classes, or stop him from playing soccer, or maybe they'd ----. No, Raj couldn't afford to think like that.

He'd just have to have gotten an A this time, because if he didn't he was so totally dead. The thing was Raj just didn't like math. The same way his parents felt about writing, the same way Raj felt about math. All those fractions and decimals did nothing but float around in his head. He just wished his parents would understand that, his dad especially. As he reached his seat and slowly sat down he could feel his heart pound inside of him and he sent up a silent prayer.

As Raj read the report a dark feeling of dread settled over him. B-. 80%. Raj set down the paper in dismay. How could he ever face his parents now?! They'd been pushing him so hard this year to try to get at least an A- Raj couldn't even bear the thoughts of handing them the report card. "Class dismissed" the teacher's voice rang through the room. "Make sure to bring back a signed report card by tomorrow". Raj stuffed his report card into his messy binder and moved to get up but paused when a thin piece of paper spiraled down to his feet. He glanced at it. It was the permission form for the writing competition. Raj sighed and crumpled it up, tossing it overhand into the recycling bin. His parents weren't going to listen to anything thing he said now; with his new math grade, there was no way they were going to sign that form of his.

No matter how hard he tried though, for the rest of the day, Raj couldn't stop thinking about the competition. It's stupid, he thought to himself. I should be focusing on something much more important; like math.

Yet the thoughts of the permission form failed to leave him. During recess he talked to his friend Luke about it.

"Hey man. It's gonna be fine", Luke said passing the ball to Raj. Raj kicked at it and missed. "Look. You're an amazing writer. This is like the thing for you", Luke said dribbling around Raj. Raj was silent as he attempted to thwart the attack. He missed again.

"You said you'd give anything in the world for this one chance, didn't you?" Luke asked him as they faced off. Raj gave him a tiny nod. "Then do it!" Luke exclaimed throwing out his arms in exasperation as if it was the easiest thing in the world. They'd been talking about this for 5 minutes and already Raj regretted having brought it up.

"I can't just do it man." Raj said in frustration looking up angrily to meet Luke's eyes. "My parents are going to kill me!"

Luke gave him a lopsided grin. "You know what Raj," he said poking him in the chest. "You are the best writer I've ever known. If you aren't chosen as a representative for our school, I'll eat a horse". Raj couldn't help but grin. "Deal?" he asked chuckling. Luke gave him a friendly thump on the back, his brown eyes twinkling with laughter. "Deal" he said passing the ball. Raj kicked, and this time he scored.

The rest of the day flew by as Raj pondered over how he was going to get his parents over on to his side. All he could think of right now was if he could convince them that an alien stole his report card on the bus ride home, and there was no way that was ever going to happen. So Raj spent the rest of his day in a silent conflict turning the idea over in his mind. Just as the bell rang he walked to get another copy of the permission form from the school office, just in case. All too soon Raj found himself at his own front door. He sighed. Here goes nothing, he thought, as he gently turned the handle.

As soon as he stepped over the threshold he was greeted by the warm aroma of Indian spices. "Mmm" he said appreciatively as he tossed his backpack on to the floor. As if by magic his mom's head poked out of the kitchen. "Backpack" she scolded pointing an accusing finger. Raj sighed and picked it up. He slipped off his shoes and walked into the living room where he collapsed on to the soft, leather, couch. He watched as his mother hustled back into the kitchen and started frantically stirring and adding turmeric powder into to a small, metal, pan. She turned around and gave him a smile. "Anything fun happen

at school today?" she asked fiddling with the knobs on the stove. Raj sighed. "No, nothing" he mumbled. His mother nodded distractedly. "That's good" she murmured as she started stirring. "Mama" his sister's voice echoed from upstairs.

Her footsteps ricketed throughout the house as she tumbled down the stairs. She caught Raj looking at her and stuck out her tongue. "Yes Anu? Speak quickly" Raj's mom said as she hastily swept the vegetable peels off the counter. Raj smiled and leaned back in the sofa half listening to his sister's reply, peacefully absorbing the normal sounds of daily life that swirled around him. Everything was perfect, or would have been, if he could just get that stupid writing competition out of his mind.

At dinner that night Raj confronted the problem. Well, at least one of his problems. "B-!" his dad exclaimed in shock as he held out the report card with a trembling hand. Raj's face flushed scarlet as he stared down at the tablecloth. "All of the extra classes and tutors and all you can get is a B-?! How do you think you're going to get into college like this Raj? Don't you care at all about your future?!" His dad gave him a long hard stare. "I'm sorry" Raj mumbled under his father's stern gaze. His dad grunted in disbelief, slamming his palm on to the kitchen counter.

"Useless boy can't do anything but write silly stories" he murmured under his breath. Raj's eyes flashed in anger. "Maybe I like writing stories!" he fired back. His father sighed. "Do you think writing stories is what brought me to America!? Do you think getting B's and C's in 8th standard math is what got me a job?!"

"Anil!" his mom said furiously. "He's just a child. He has more than enough time to worry about his future. Let him do what he likes right now."

His dad snorted in disbelief and slammed the report card on to the table, shaking his head in disgust. "Fine" he growled, "but don't tell me I didn't warn you." A moment passed in silence. Raj's heart beat wildly inside his ribcage as he stared down at his food. It hadn't been a positive reaction but then again it could have been worse. He knew if he didn't talk now then he'd have to wait until tomorrow evening to ask about the writing competition. He also knew that he'd have lost all of his courage by then to even bring it up. Could he convince his dad that writing wasn't such a waste of time if he knew how much it meant to him? He summed up his courage. It was now or never. "Dad" he squeaked. "I know you don't think it's a good use of my time to write stories but it really isn't so bad. They even have a competition-" He stopped talking as his dad's eyes flicked up towards him suspiciously. Not trusting himself to say more, Raj reached into his pocket and pulled out the salmon sheet of paper with a trembling hand. He



laid it carefully in front of his dad cautiously waiting for his dad's reaction. His dad stared at him, and then stared at the paper. His mouth opened and shut in disbelief. He looked ready to explode.

Raj cast his eyes downward in disappointment. It was going just as bad as he'd thought it would. "Dad" he whispered. "I love writing. I love it more than anything else in the world. I know you keep saying that math is the only thing that's going to make me successful and I know you're probably right." His dad looked up in surprise. "But" Raj continued "I really, really, don't like math. And I know that one day when I grow up I want, not only to be successful, but I want to be happy too. I know writing stories might not give me the biggest house or even a high paying job, but I'll be happy dad. I know my future is years away and all this might change by then but all I really want is a chance. Even if I fail I'll be content, knowing that I tried. Please, dad, give me that one chance." He looked up at his dad. His dad gave him a long hard stare then opened his mouth and gave him his answer.

- Abha Panda is 13 years old and is an 8th grader at Gahanna Middle School East, Columbus, Ohio. Her hobbies include reading, writing, and spending time outdoors. She loves animals and nature and one day hopes to become a wildlife conservationist.

ENCYCLOPEDIA HOLMES: CASE OF THE MISSING HARD DRIVE

Encyclopedia Holmes was walking down the freshly paved street with a smug smile on his face. He was a 4 foot 10 inch boy who was skinny and every time he went to drink hot cocoa his glasses would fog up. The sun was lowering turning pink as Holmes a fifth grade brainy boy came back from solving a big case or one of his services he provides. If you have a stolen watch or lucky something everyone in school came to him. Encyclopedia would post things on the school blog where students could post anything the school librarian Mrs. Ester approved. That is how his business was popularized. His real name was Ethan but except his friend no one knew that.

His friend Michael the captain of the football team had his lucky football also known as the game ball stolen. The only suspect was the neighborhood bully, a 5"5' bully who was four years older than both Holmes and Michael. His name was Andrew McCoy and Andrew was famous in town for being a mini mafia, stealing iPods, Pokémon cards and hot wheels cars. His only super serious crime was a stolen bicycle, which Encyclopedia found and got Andrew in huge trouble that not even Holmes knew about

Just because Michael was Encyclopedia's friend Encyclopedia didn't charge the normal \$3 plus tax but only 2.50 any tax. As the star of Rochester Middle schools football team it was a huge responsibility carrying around the game ball. The ball was a school legacy. Every year since 2003 Rochester won the championship. Every year it

** ** *

"Raj Mohapatra", the announcer announced. Raj's face flushed scarlet as he rose up and stumbled across the auditorium. He clambered on to the stage dreamily, hardly hearing the roaring applause around him. The writing had been grueling and the competition had been hard but he had done it. Raj Mohapatra had won first place. Trembling in excitement Raj shook the announcer's hand and bashfully took the enormous gold trophy that was handed to him. His heart beat in excitement as he listened to the cheers of the people around him, gazing at the sea of faces who stared back at him in joy. But many years later it wouldn't be the cheers or the trophy that Raj would remember.

It would be of the one moment, when his eyes had met his parent's eyes, and he saw in them a burning pride that he'd never seen before. And right then Raj felt as if he'd truly gotten all that he'd ever wished for.

was restitched. If Michael didn't get his ball he would have been kicked out of the team and Rochester middle school might win the conference. Everyone was depending on Encyclopedia to get the game ball as though it was a life or death situation.

Encyclopedia solved the case when he confronted Andrew and asked him a few questions. Andrew said he didn't steal the ball and was watching a documentary of the 13 total men who walked the moon. Encyclopedia knew 12 men walked the moon so when Andrew heard this he gave the ball back.

Encyclopedia walked home thinking his day was over and he could relax. Holmes opened his garage just as the streetlights came on and since his dad and mom were surgeons they came back little late some of the days. Encyclopedia walked into his home switched on the lights walked past his living room that looked like it was built 100 years ago and up the stairs when the annoying buzzing of the telephone ringtone sounded. The house gave Encyclopedia the creeps and looking at the paintings reminded him of monsters in the story since the paintings were of a war. Holmes ran to the phone.

Encyclopedia's friend who only lived a mile away in Naperville but went to the same school called Rochester Elementary. Ian had a deep voice and was speaking in an exited tone. "Ethan, there is a boy named Charlie from

school who has an urgent case. He needed to create a PowerPoint for his summer camp project and he saved it on a shiny sky blue hard drive made by SanDisk. It is as big as your thumb. He is going to come tomorrow at 10 so meet him at the park I will be there too. There is only one catch he needs it in two days!" Encyclopedia was excited for his new case but he wanted to kick back and relax. It was perfect that Encyclopedia was a detective since clients never let him rest.

He knew Charlie from school and news spread quickly and if Holmes couldn't solve this case in time he would be in trouble at school. He would be known as "the lame kid who couldn't find a flash drive". If he refused it would be equally bad. His reputation was at stake. Encyclopedia paced around his room. He only could think of one thing to do to take all the pressure of his mind, which was sleeping. Encyclopedia changed brushed his teeth and hit the bed and was out like a light bulb.

Encyclopedia woke up and changed and was fully ready to go solve another case. He grabbed a cereal bar and hopped on his neon bike. His parents gave Encyclopedia the responsibility to leave the house but lock it. He passed trees and turned a corner where the park was. There in the park was Ian who was shooting hoops and as he shot his glasses kept on getting loose and next to him were a bag of library books and one was labeled physics. Charlie was sitting on the slide waiting and he wore Oakley sunglasses and a leather jacket. He said hi in a gruff voice.

Ian quickly introduced Charlie III. Holmes could obviously infer Charlie was rich since as a 7th grader he was wearing \$200\$ sunglasses. His dad was a popular surgeon which gave Charlie a spot on the rich kid list.

Charlie said hi Encyclopedia Ian's told me about you. I have an important case for you to solve and it needs to be done today! I was at the youth center yesterday as part of my summer camp and I was near the shark aquarium. I had to turn in a PowerPoint for other students in a lower grade to learn from. He was just taking a glance at one shark when he heard sneakers squeaking and he saw what the neighborhood bully running away looked like Andrew McCoy. He didn't realize until five minutes later that his flash drive was stolen with pictures memos and schoolwork inside. It was ripped from the computer since the computer had a message that said that the flash drive should have been ejected properly.

Holmes stood there thinking and then prepared his confrontation with the first suspect. He asked Ian and Charlie for a minute. There was something like a mini courtroom under the slides where Andrews's gang stayed. No one dared go near since the last time a boy went to get his pencil and came back with a black eye. The worst part was he had to tell everyone he tripped or it was another black eye for him. Ian and Charlie followed and as they got into the shade of the swings the daylight became dimmer and it became colder giving them all the creeps.

Andrew was known for stealing so Holmes entered with an attitude like "give me your best shot I will prove your guilt" Luckily none of Andrews gang was there so only Andrew was there reading a monster truck magazine. Andrew looked up and said, "what do you nerds want?" It was difficult to stay calm but He asked Andrew how he was. Andrew responded.

"I know you don't really care. What do you want from because you'd better leave now or..."

"I just want to ask a few questions alright?"

"Fine, but make it quick before my group gets here, then you're in trouble"

"Where were you yesterday at late noon?"

"Let me rephrase, what were you doing at the youth center yesterday?"

"Did you misplace a flash drive?"

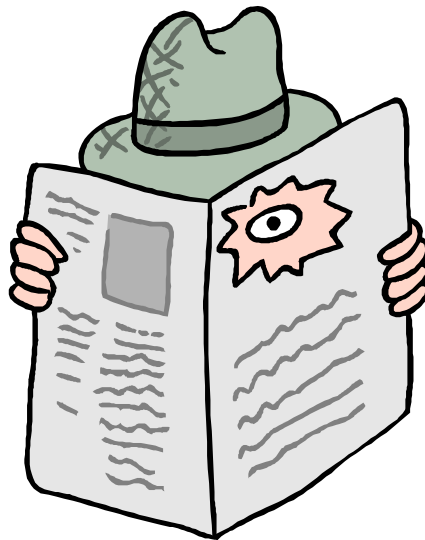
"I went to the center because I needed to get this kid and he started running like a turtle and then... I chased him through the shark tank area where I saw a lame bull shark sleeping on the bottom of the tank. I chased him through the gym where boys were shooting hoops they were failing and through the orchestra where they were playing like Bach and then that why I was at the youth center anyway. And..."

"Alright that's enough"

"See I'm innocent"

"It seems like only yesterday"

"It was"



Encyclopedia analyzed his data and said: "I think we have our criminal"

"What! I'm clean 250%"

"Listen to this"

Answer to Mystery

"Andrew where you really there to chase a kid who was on your section of the playground?"

"Yes"

"How did you know the shark you saw was a bull shark?"

"It said so"

How come you were there to chase a kid when there was a pulled flash drive and a bull shark that are ABNORMALLY "sleeping" on the tank floor?"

"FINE you got me, take your stupid flash drive, Charlie the third"

- Abhishek Misra is 11 years old and is a 5th grader at Indian Prairie School Dist 204, Illinois. He stays in Aurora, Illinois

WHY RHINOS DON'T MAKE GOOD PETS

For those of you who are considering a rhinoceros for a pet, I have some words of wisdom for you to consider in making your decision. Although, there were once hundreds of species of rhinos in the world, there are only now only five species left. In Africa, there is the black rhino and the white rhino species. Interestingly enough, they are both very similar in color. African rhinos have two horns whereas the other species Javan, Sumatran and Indian rhino have one horn. Rhinos adapt to their environment, so the African rhinos love dry desert climates and the Asian rhinos stay in forests near water. Because of widespread poaching, rhinos are an endangered animal. So, first of all owning a rhino would be illegal unless of course you also own a zoo.

Let's say you did manage to get rhino delivered to your house. Get 30 of your strongest friends to help you carry the rhino in to your yard. Rhinos often weigh upwards of 2 tons or about the weight of a SUV. After you get the rhino home, the rhino will start marking its territory with dung and pee. On the plus side you won't have to mow your lawn since rhinos are grazers so, they will feed on your grass throughout the day. You may think this huge beast is lazy and slow but, your new rhino can run as fast as a galloping horse. Also, try to be quiet because your new pet rhino will startle easily and then suddenly charge you.

Because of their endangered species status, in California they are illegal, and most likely poachers would camp outside your house to steal your pet. Another reason, is when it comes to nudge you for dinner, I think

you'll get its point. Remember, rhinos weigh between 1.5 and 2 tons! So you wouldn't want it to try and sit in your lap, it would crush your bones very easily. Also, when you have to clean up after it does its business, you're going to need more a few bags.

If you have any valuables, you might want to hide them, because your rhino might crush it or think of it as food. Eventually, your rhino will get lonely. In the wild they live in herds with their fellow rhinos and so they are used to having other rhinos around to play with.

You may think what does rhino do all day? The short answer is it does whatever it wants. If it decides you need a bigger doorway it will make one. If it decides you should have a swimming pool it will make one. If it decides to take a nap on your lawn furniture, then don't think you can nudge it off or that it will listen to you.

Hopefully by now you've changed your mind about getting a rhino for a pet. Instead you can visit them at the zoo or support WWF and help them save the rhino from extinction. So, if you had been thinking of getting a rhino as a pet, you might want to consider a rhino beetle instead!



- Ariya, 11 years old, is a student in 5th grade, Anaheim Hills Elementary School, Orange, California. She is on the swim team and in the school orchestra.

CHAMP

Aaliya looked out the window. She looked at her dog. You could tell she was depressed. One, I mean just one, look at her, and you would think, wait, scratch that you would know something was wrong. I just had to ask, "You okay? I've been here for like 10 whole minutes, and you haven't said a word."

"Nothing is wrong, Sabby. Oh, by the way... hi. "

"Yeah right! Hi."

Aaliya didn't say a single word. I had no idea what to do. "Watcha wanna do?"

"Nothing."

Okay that set me off like a clock, it was time. "What happened? You always have something to do, whenever I ask you this question, you go ballistic and give me a million ideas."

"It's a long story!"

"I got time." Aaliya tried to hold back a small smile. You can tell, her eyes get really big and she holds her breath. She looks like a monkey. Aaliya got in trouble once for doing that in school. Our teacher thought she was messing around. It was hilarious!

"Fine. You asked for it. Okay, so this is what happened. I was sleeping, but I was not in deep sleep so I could hear a couple things. Anyway, Champ, my dog, which you should know by now, was howling. So I got up, walked over to him and was staring at him. I realized his paw was bleeding. Non-stop. My parents wrapped his paw in gauze and tried to stop the bleeding. Apparently when my mom, or my dad took him out for a walk, a rattlesnake bit him. A rattlesnake's venom can kill a dog. I stayed up all night crying, thinking about what would happen to Champ. In the morning we took Champ to the vet.

The vet said he actually stepped on glass, he hadn't gotten bit by a rattlesnake. He also said that he just needs rest and we have to give him a vitamin every 2 hours. My sister forgot to feed him one vitamin. Champ fainted, I screamed, my sister screamed, and my parents ran in the room. Everyone was so freaked out. Turns out Champ had just dozed off. My Mom said he was just exhausted with the bleeding and trip to the Vet. He is just a small

little puppy, who can really blame him? But just to make sure, we took him to the veterinarian again, who said that this time if we actually accidentally messed it up, Champ would suffer the consequence, death. Not once have we ever been so scared, but the good thing is that we never screwed it up. It's dramatic, right? The whole situation? What I was feeling, what my parents were feeling, what my sis was feeling. Right?"

Like I knew what to say! "Sure!"

"Since we didn't mess up, he got better, and now he is fine."

"Wait, that's it. If he's fine, why are you still so depressed?"

"I'm in still so shocked that this happened."

"Oh... didn't you say that it's a long story?"

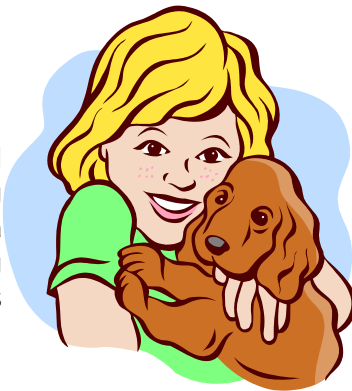
"Now that I actually said it out loud, I guess it's really not that long."

"Since we still have time, wanna go to the pool?"

"That's fine with me!"

—§§§—

After the pool, Aaliya forgot about the whole incident. Aaliya and I still had lots of fun and we weren't even thinking about Champ. Not only did we go to the pool we also went to the mall, got a manicure and pedicure, and also shopped until our feet ached and started to bleed. Champ is back to his self. Not howling any more. Aaliya is also back to her hyper, silly old self, and everything was back to normal.



- Triya Mahapatra is 11 years old and lives with her older sister and parents in Aurora, IL. She received a puppy as gift on her 11th "golden" birthday, and even since the puppies and stories around puppies have become a major part of her life.

TIME FLIES

Once Jim Bishop said, "Nothing is as far away as one minute ago." I can recall times during the beginning of middle school, while my older brother was nearing the end of high school. He was very busy with not only his school work, but also his college applications. While he would consistently be awake well into the early morning hours, I would be asleep hours before. I did not realize how lucky I was, but I now realize how quickly time can pass, and how important it will become in my future. A few years ago, I would think to myself, "I'm glad I don't have to worry about all those college applications and all of that homework and have to get little sleep all the time."

Now, during my senior year in high school, I think to myself, "I wish I don't have to worry about all those college applications and all of that homework and have to get little sleep all the time". I can remember the times when I was in the seventh and eighth grades, and my father would say to me, "Soon, you'll be where your brother is; it will be here before you know it and time will go by fast".

- Adam Pani is 17 years old from White Station High School, Memphis, TN. He has recently graduated from 12th grade.

Of course, he was right.

Sitting here, I reflect on the times that I heard that statement, and I laugh at myself for not paying attention to the meaning. Now that I finally do, I find it serious because being able to manage your time effectively is of extreme importance to everyone. All in all, I now understand how to manage myself wisely, and I no longer take my valuable time for granted. The phrase, "time is of the essence" actually has meaning to me now, because time really does fly. What happened in the past will stay in the past. The reason Bishop's quote is one of my favorites is very simple: we cannot change the past, and we must focus on what we will do in the future. We cannot elude time, we cannot change time, and we cannot delay time; what we can do, however, is manage time.

ABCS ABOUT ODISHA

Ashoka – state flower of Odisha. Scientific name is *Saraca asoca*. The Ashoka grows in the rain forest. The Ashoka is endangered.

Bande Utkala Janani – State song of Odisha. It is written by Kantakabi Laxmikanta Mohapatra.

Chilika lake- is the queen of natural beauty, and a major tourist attraction. Chilika is the largest salty water lake in Asia covering an area of 1100 sq.km.

Dhauligiri - located on the banks of River Daya is where the Kalinga War was fought. Ashoka's rock is located in this Buddhist temple. Ashoka was the emperor of India long time ago and was a Buddhist unlike many other Indian kings.

Ekkakula Island- is a turtle nesting island, part of Bhitarkanika Sanctuary. This island's habitat is favorable for nearly extinct Olive Ridely Turtles. This is a popular tourist site for wild life lovers.

Forty nine alphabets support Odia literature.

Gopalpur- is a small town on sea near city of Berhampur. Its population is about 6,660. Gopalpur used to be an ancient port and now you can see the ruins of ancient Gopalpur if you visit.

Hirakud Dam is built across the Mahandi River. It is one of the world's longest earthen dams. It is also longest man-made dam in the world, around 16 miles. It is also one of the first projects started after India's independence.

IKAT, Bomkai Sarees – are some of the famous Odisha style sarees. Four basic colors, which are found on Lord Jagannath, red, black, white and yellow, are used frequently in these saree designs.

Jagannath- means the lord of the universe. Famous Jagannath temple is located in Puri, Odisha and attracts millions of people during the Car festival, Rathayatra held every year.

Konark – Popularly known as Sun temple, gets its name from the angle at which it's facing the sun. It takes the form of the chariot of Surya, the sun god. It is one of the seven wonders of India and a world heritage site.

Lalitgiri- is one of three main sites (Dauligiri –Udaygiri -Lalitgiri) of Buddhist remains in Odisha. This site dates back to 1st century and a major archeological excavation location.

Muruja, Jhoti, Chita- it is a form of folk art to celebrate harvest seasons and festivals. Muruja is prepared as a powder of different colors and is used with hand to make different patterns on the floor. Jhoti and Chita are art

forms drawn on walls and grounds with a water based rice paste.

Neela kantha – Also known as Indian roller is state bird of Odisha. Scientific name is *Coracias benghensis*. It is about 26-27 cm. long. The Indian rollers body is brownish unlike European rollers which is blue. The Indian rollers tail is sky blue with a terminal band of Prussian blue.

Odissi is the state dance of Odisha. It is the oldest surviving dance on the basis of archaeological evidences.

Patta Chitra- is a traditional form of painting on cloth. These paintings are painted long time ago

Quiet and peaceful are the nature of Odia people. They are mostly peaceful because the wildlife needs peace, so the animals won't run away.

Rasgulla are small dumplings made from a type of chenna and semolina dough and mixed with light syrup.

Sambar deer - Odisha state animal is the Sambar deer. The Sambar deer is also known as the *Rusa unicolor*. It is native to Indian Subcontinent and South Asia.

Temple city, Bhubaneswar – State capital of Odisha is also known as Temple city. More than 2000 temples are part of its landscape. Some of popular ones are Lingaraja, Mukteswara and Rajarani temple.

Upendra bhanja- known as kavi samrata, emperor of

- *Shivank Mishra, a second grader from Illinois, an avid reader, currently on 4th book of Harry potter series in less than a month, also loves soccer and basketball. This is an attempt by Shivank in researching and writing an acrostic poem on Odisha.*

I WAS NOT A STRANGER...

Have you ever gone to a place where everyone knows you, but you have no clue who they are? Well it happen to me.

In August 2008 we went to Odisha. Although this was not my first trip to Odisha but I consider it my best one as I was old enough and remembered most of the things in this trip. It also felt like this trip really introduced me to my families and friends in Odisha. The wonderful journey started just after boarding into the airplane. It was filled with Indians, so I already felt like home. Even though I hardly knew any of our fellow passengers, everyone was so friendly with my little brother and me. As my little brother was getting a little cranky, the elderly couple next to us was telling us interesting stories of Odisha, who were going back to the glorious state of Odisha after visiting their family in the US. I also came to know that Bhubaneswar is the -Temple City, which is also my mother's home town, and the Lord Jagannath

poets, he belonged to a royal family. He gave up the power to pursue his interest in poetry. He wrote over 52 books of poetry.

Viswakarma Puja- is the festival dedicated to Lord Viswakarma, the god of architecture and engineering is wildly celebrated in Odisha.

Weather- Odisha stands on the coastal belt of India. It has a tropical climate which results in hot summer season.

eXtinction - Odisha is home to many animals and birds on the brink of extinction, needing our protection. Examples are white tiger, Gharial crocodiles in Nandan Kanan sanctuary and many tigers and crocodile, turtle species in Similipal National park and Satkosia wildlife sanctuary.

Bali Yatra – most famous state fair held by the banks of Mahanadi River, Cuttack. Yatra means Journey and the festival celebrates ancient Odia mariners sail to distant lands of Bali, in Indonesia for trading

Zilla- means district in English. There are 30 zillas in the state of Odisha.

temple's kitchen in Puri is considered as the largest one in the world. Listening to all these fantastic stories, I got even more excited to go there. I had all these pictures built up in my mind and I didn't know how far they will be true, but I was so looking forward to it. Looking at the elderly affectionate couple made me think, is everyone like them in Odisha? Does everyone welcome you with their open arms even though they are total strangers? There were so many questions, only a couple more hours then I will get all my answers.

When our flight finally landed in Bhubaneswar it was drizzling. In the airport I was amazed to see so many relatives, who were just there to welcome us. For a minute I thought I was a famous NBA player. When we reached Aja's house, Mamu had a basketball for my brother and I; we jumped up in joy and thanked him a lot. He also asked me that how my basketball games were going on, as he knows both of us love basketball. Soon after that

my Aie called me to the lunch table to eat some food, she prepared my favorite foods. I was really amazed as I was meeting many of my family members from my mother side for the first time, to me everyone was like a stranger but for them I was their little grandson. They knew me by every little details right from the birth until now; even they wanted to see all the scratches and cuts that I got growing up. I was overwhelmed with so much love. I started to think how they managed to love me so much even if they haven't seen me until now.

Early next morning we all went to Puri, where my Jeje and Jejema and Apa live. The best part was I got to sit next to Aja in the front seat of the car to Puri. Let me tell you it was super scary! Sitting in the front seat of a car in India was an eye opening event for me. The cars were coming towards us in high speed, but somehow our driver uncle managed to take us to Puri safely. My first step in Puri was like BANG. Everyone said Tanu (my nick name) -how are you or Tanu -you are so cute. I only knew Jeje, Jejema, and Apa, but I didn't know many other people and had no idea who they are, but they knew me. Later I found out that they were our relatives and friends. Then my Jeje told us that we should eat and take some rest. My Jejema and Apa prepared nice food for us; they made all my favorite foods including my favorite the world famous Gup-Chup. Next day early morning I just wanted to move around the house. In our backyard I got to see many big trees including the big coconut trees. I also noticed a person climbing our coconut tree and plucking and throwing them to the ground. It was wonderful to watch how he got those coconuts. Then Jeje asked me if I wanted to help him in getting some stuff from the market. So, my Dad and I decided to walk on the Bada Danda (Grand Road of Puri) and go to the temple to see Lord Jagannath and while returning we would get the stuff for home.



On the way lots of people asked my dad and I about our journey and life in US. While walking suddenly one of my Dad's friend came and ask me if I want to take a ride on the Cycle rickshaw; I enjoyed that ride to the temple. Even the rickshaw puller was very nice person asked me if I will be interested for more rides. During my stay in Puri wherever I went (e.g. grocery store, vegetable store or even sea-beach) usually I found my Jeje and Dad knew somebody, and they start talking. One day when we were about to go to the sea beach a person walked up to us saying "Are you ready to go to the beach", it was like people knew what we were going to do.

For me the best part was living among my family members and relatives; I had many cousins of my own age, uncles and aunts, grandparents and even there were some great grandparents too all living in Puri. Every evening it was like family time, we used to sit together and chat with each other. Some time my brother and I used to dance with my Jeje to the tune of Dam Dada Laka...Sam Sasa Laka... (The famous music for Naga Dance of Puri). It made me feel like I live there forever. The next couple of weeks we had loads of fun. Jeje told me all about Lord Jagannath and told me to always have faith in him. I also learned a lot about our extended families.

Now I am in the airplane on the way back to US. I have all these memories floating by and rolling down my cheeks as tears. I am very mystified as if everyone in Odisha is a member of a tightly knit family. I wish I could go back to Odisha again where Lord Jagannath, my grandparents, my extended family and friends all live. I am happy that I got all of my answers to all of my questions that I had in my mind while going to Odisha. So, now I love to say that there is no land like Lord Jagannath's Land, and I am not even close to being a stranger there.

-Adeep is a 5th grader and goes to Power Upper Elementary School, Farmington Hills, MI.

MY EXPERIENCE IN GITA GOVINDA

It was a Sunday afternoon in January and Odissi class had just finished. Having done Namaskar, I joined my Odissi teacher, Ayushi Di and together we sought the blessings of our guru, Menaka Di and upon touching her feet, she announced,

'This time, we will surely include Ini in the Gita Govinda.' I immediately stood up and turned around, expecting to see someone standing behind me. But there was no one. She was talking to me. Ayushi Di then joined in on the conversation and with a reassuring nod she said,

'Yes, yes.' I immediately realized I must've looked terribly discomposed after hearing this news, so I closed my mouth and straightened my posture. I looked at Ayushi Di and she stared right back at me with a look that said, 'Don't worry, you'll be fine.' I swallowed hard and left the room without saying a single word. Surely they were not serious? They couldn't be. I had seen the Gita Govinda production three years ago when it was performed in Toronto. This was a professional program. I couldn't possibly dance in it. I tried to wrap my head around this new piece of information.

The next Saturday, I was called to the studio for my first session. I have to admit I was slightly nervous as well as excited at the time.

'We will start with the beginning piece.' My teacher played the music and I followed as she instructed. I admire the time and effort both my teachers, Neena Di and Ayushi Di had put into teaching those of us who were new to the show. They spent countless hours with us, trying to teach the steps to us and reinforce them in our minds daily. I recall trying very hard to remember the sequence of steps. Noticing my confusion, my teacher started calling out short phrases to help me remember which step was next. For example, one of the steps in the beginning dance was also present in the item, Mangalacharan. The step I was having difficulty with soon came to be known as 'Mangalacharan'. Practice continued the next day, joint with my regular Odissi class. I started learning Dash Avatar that day. Learning only the entry and practicing the previously learned beginning piece took up all our time. After that, practice continued every day. We covered one avatar per day and sometimes a single avatar would take a couple of days to learn. 'Keshava dhruva, meena sharira, jaya jaga disha hare'. One by one, the avatars passed; Meena sharira, Kachyapa rupa, Shukara rupa, Narahari rupa. The next avatar to learn was Vamana rupa. I had found a website describing each incarnation of Lord Vishnu, but having felt a familiar connection with this particular incarnation, I had skipped over the description

of Vamana Avatar. I recalled my first ever stage experience where I had performed in a children's play as Vamana Avatar. I was three years old at the time.

"*Naa, na. Mora tini pada bhumi darkar.*" To this day, I am frequently teased by an uncle in our community as he remembers my delivery of this dialogue in Odia.

As for the rest of the avatars, all I'm going to say is that the Dash Avatar website became one of my most frequently visited web pages. It's actually still in my Internet browser's bookmarks.

As I continued learning the rest of the items, it was becoming difficult for me to convey my expressions. I did not know what characteristic of Lord Krishna it was that I was describing with my mudras. I wanted to know the meaning behind each stanza of the Sanskrit poem. I asked my father for help. He started by telling me the story of two lovers, Radha and Krishna. In my head, I tried picturing the scenes we were creating as dancers. I was aware that on the day of the show, we would be using projections of Kangra paintings in the background to compliment the dance. He then found detailed translations of the poem online, which I read over multiple times. My mother sat down with me and together we went through the meanings and words. I found it interesting to learn the meanings of Sanskrit words and find the roots of Odia words that I did know, Odia being my first language. Soon, the music and its words had become a part of my daily functioning. On the bus ride home, after my friends' stops had passed and I was alone, I would mentally review the songs and movements. It was the only music I kept in my head. I didn't listen to any of my favourite artists for the two months that followed. The only songs playing in my mind were from Gita Govinda, whether it was Dash Avatar, Lalita Lavanaga, or Chandravali's music. I soon heard my parents unknowingly humming songs from Gita Govinda. They were remembering the time they had seen the show. They too, had fallen in love with the music.

One day, on the way back from dance practice, my dad remembered he had to pick up some groceries. I stayed in the car while my father went into the store. Having come from dance, I had no books with me, so I couldn't do homework of any sort. The only thing left to do was go over my dance. It took my dad rather long to get back to the car. When he returned he said,

'Ini, Sorry about that. This lady in front of me in line. She--'

'It's okay, Bapa. I did Dash Avatar twice in my head while you were gone.' He smiled and got in the car. We

drove home. Dance had really taught me how to manage my time effectively. It gave me something productive to mentally review when I had the time.

Dance has always been a part of my life. It now resided in my family members' lives as well as in my thoughts. Dance takes me to another world, a world of serenity. I remember an incident that occurred one day. I had argued with my mother. I had then rushed down to the basement, tears in my eyes. I hated having disagreements with my family members. It hurt bitterly, knowing that I was unable to turn to the ones closest to me, to talk to. I felt terrible, standing there alone. I looked around in the basement and realized I had stumbled upon the right place. I looked into the mirror standing on one of the basement walls. It usually aided me with dance practice. I glanced over at my dance suitcase lying on the floor. There was something that could make me feel better. I did my Namaskar, seeking Mother Earth's blessings. I started reciting the bol that I knew and then the steps followed. I cried my way through the piece, but still I was dancing. It relaxed me. Dance had worked its extraordinary powers on me.

This new experience in dance was not only helping me emotionally, but also physically. What this rigorous practice has taught me is changing my entire outlook on physical activity. I've never been a kid to enjoy gym class too much. At school, I used to dread going outside to play soccer baseball in the scorching heat. When I was about 5 years old, my parents put me on a soccer team. My teammates probably wanted to murder me because I was definitely one of the worst goalies of all time, failing to defend my net because I had stopped to watch some fascinating birds flying pleasantly across the sky. I'm not really big on sports. With daily dance practice, I've learned to stay hydrated and warm up before doing strenuous activity. Neena Di taught us some pretty intense forms of Surya Namaskar. At school, I have gym class first period every day, so I start my morning with that warm up. My flexibility and reflexes have also improved with practice. I remember not being able to touch my toes two months ago and now I can hold at a position with both my hands past my toes. I am still working on these things by doing flexibility exercises. In gym class, as one of our warm up exercises, our teacher makes us do squats from one end of the gym to the other. Having remembered my brother pushing me to practice squats, I thought to myself,

'Alright, this doesn't look too bad. I just have to sit in chauka, but with my knees pointed forward. So pretty

much, just sit in bad chauka.' While doing the squats, I heard others complaining about how painful it was and how it hurt days later. Once again, dance had come to my rescue.

We all know the snow in the winter can get quite overwhelming. Recently, we had a big snowfall and my dad needed help shovelling the snow. But when he was bending from the waist to pick up the snow with his shovel, his back was hurting. So I showed him a new way to do it. I picked up a shovel and showed him,

'Look, Bapa. All you have to do is, sit in chauka, pick up the snow with your shovel and then come up to throw it away. Like this.' I took a step towards the snow, sat in chauka and demonstrated,

'Chauka, and up. Chauka, and up. There. And no stress on the back whatsoever.' Our laughter helped us get through the gruelling task of shovelling snow.

The outcome of daily dance practices was starting to show. I was learning proper time management and feeling better about gym class. Dance had also improved my learning thought process. I found that it was much easier for me to pick up new concepts in school. In dance, to show that I understood the concept, I had to actually do the step. It is an active learning process. This learning-by-doing motivated me to participate more enthusiastically in Spirit of Math class and school.

An essential component to this journey was learning what true commitment meant. This meant that every day I worked up the energy to go to rehearsal despite the burning pain in my legs and my strong will to do well in school. I had to keep up with daily homework, projects and tests as well as working at Kumon Math and Reading Centre regularly. Some Saturdays, I had to arrive at dance early in the morning so we could finish rehearsal before I had to leave for my work at Kumon at 10:00 a.m. On Tuesday evenings, I went to Spirit of Math class directly from school. Class would finish at 7:00 p.m. and I would go to dance directly from there for rehearsals until 9:30 p.m. I refused to make excuses. I could've taken a break from dance on Tuesdays because of my math class, but instead I chose to go to the studio and commit to my daily practices. No matter how busy I was, I simply had to take time out for dance practices. It was necessary to practice every day to ensure that the steps would remain in my muscle memory. I had to fully commit my body and mind to dance.

There were now only 3 weeks until the show. Our Guru, Guru Sujata Mohapatra was to arrive in one week



before the show. My teachers were working extra hard to make sure we had correct placement and no mistakes with the steps. The greatest emphasis was now on expression and correct technique while dancing. Soon there were only seven days left until the show. We were anticipating her arrival in Toronto, shortly. We got a phone call which told us she had landed. Soon enough, she was at the studio and after a short greeting, we immediately started rehearsal. As we got into position, she said to me,

'So little Ini is dancing Dash Avatar with me now, eh?' I gave a tight, nervous smile with my mouth closed, as I swallowed hard. Although it didn't show on my face, I felt that she had spoken my feelings. I felt truly privileged to dance on the same stage as such accomplished dancers. I had never dreamed of getting this opportunity. I will be forever thankful to my teachers Menaka Di, Sujata Aunty, Neena Di and Ayushi Di. They had patiently taught me and contributed so much time towards this. I will always thank them for giving me the opportunity to be part of such a prestigious production.

And so, the first day's rehearsal was over. I will not lie; the week that followed was not easy. It was to my great advantage that I was on my March Break that week. Most of the daytime was spent doing stretches as recovery from the previous night's practice. One day at rehearsal, one of my teachers asked me how my March Break was going. I replied with,

'To be honest, I'm just trying to make sure I can walk in the evening.' A good portion of my day was devoted to ironing my sari for rehearsal in the evening, which I was not particularly fast at doing. The thought of a burning appliance skidding over my fingers was enough damage to my thoughts. I also had to drink enough water to stay hydrated. It looked as if we were opening a convenience store, the way my parents had filled our kitchen cupboards with granola bars and Gatorade bottles.

The show day was getting closer. My mother's colleagues had already bought their tickets for the show. Some family friends had also said that they were going to join us on the occasion. Sujata Aunty was to perform her solo on the day before the Gita Govinda. We were all tremendously excited to see her performance that night. When we got ready and arrived at the theatre, it was a beautiful atmosphere we got to see there. It was of a love for the arts. The festival celebrated 60 years of the organisation Kalanidhi Fine Arts of Canada, twenty-five of which were spent in Canada. It was called the Kalanidhi Fine Arts of Canada International Festival and it celebrated the Indian Arts in Canada. Dancers from all over the world had been invited to perform at the four-day festival. Sujata Aunty's performance was simply beautiful. The entire

audience was locked in a trance. It was mesmerizing. I was staring for most of the performance with an open mouth. Any amount of praise is not enough to capture the excellence that she portrays in her dance.

I am sure the previous night's performance was an inspiration for us all. It motivated us to work harder and we had a perfect opportunity to do so, the very next day. On show day, I left the house at 10 o'clock in the morning for the studio with all of my dance belongings. After rehearsal, we left the studio for the theatre where we had our tech rehearsal. The show was taking place at the Fleck Dance Theatre at Harbourfront Centre in Toronto. Before this, I had only been to the professional dance theatre to watch performances. I had never dreamed of performing there. After that, it was time to get ready. Under the guidance of Sujata Aunty and Sonia Di's help, I was ready along with my costume, makeup and jewellery. Over the system, I heard,

'Menaka Thakkar Dance Company dancers, there are now 15 minutes to the top of the show.'

After a few minutes we made our way to the stage. The heavy dark blue curtains were drawn and we took our positions. I stared up and prayed that the show would go well. I would not let my teachers down. I was determined not to let the two months of hard work go to waste. I thought about the framed painting with inspirational words that my grade three teacher had given me. I have kept it in my room to this day. She had told us that these words were the key to success. The painting read, 'Hard work pays off.' The curtains opened and the music played. The show had started.

The experience on stage cannot be described in words. It is a magical feeling to see all the pieces falling into place, before your eyes. One by one, the items passed and the show progressed. Soon, the one and a half hours were over. We made our way to the room just outside the theatre. There, I met our family friends that had come to see the show. Upon seeing their smiling faces I felt immense gratitude towards them for joining me that night. I was glad to see so many of my mother's colleagues present, congratulating me whole-heartedly. It was a wonderful feeling to know that they appreciated our hard work and enjoyed the show. Sometimes during the learning and rehearsal months, I felt alone. After school, I would go to dance and when I would come home, I would see my family for about an hour and then wake up the next day to do the same thing. I had the encouragement of my family and friends all along, but a question lay inside of me. What was I doing this for? Why was I sacrificing my time with my family? What for? And now the answer is in front of me. I worked hard to gain experience, to live through it.

To get a taste of what is coming and prepare myself for it. This journey taught me commitment, time management, discipline and sacrifice. These things will always be with me and I know that they will help me in all my future endeavours.

I was standing outside the theatre with my family and friends. I turned around to see Sujata Aunty standing there. And then she hugged me. My grade three teacher's words flashed before my eyes. 'Hard work pays off.' And at that moment I knew that she had been right.

- Ineka Panigrahi is 14 years old and lives with her parents Gagan and Sabita Panigrahi in Toronto, Canada. She looks up to her elder brother, Soman. Ineka has had a passion for dance since childhood. She joined Menaka Thakkar Dance Company in 2011 in order to pursue her interest in Odissi. She has choreographed and performed folk dances at various events in the community and at school. She has danced in annual conventions of the Orissa Society of Americas held in Toronto, New Jersey and Seattle. She has also had the opportunity to attend Odissi workshops at MTDC under Sujata Mohapatra. She has written about her recent experience as a dancer in the Odissi presentation of Gita Govinda at an international festival of the arts.

WHY MY VOICE IS IMPORTANT

My voice is important because I have my own opinion. My opinion is special because it is what I think and it may change the world forever. This is important because it may make an impact in our society, it may be good, yet it may be bad. I might have a different opinion than someone else, but that doesn't mean it's wrong, as long as I can give it a reason of why I think that way. My voice is important when I am against a bully or when I stick up for someone because the bully will most likely back off until- further notice, and will leave that person alone.

Throughout history people have used their voices to call for change in the world, an example is Mahatma Gandhi. He was an activist who spoke out against the British who ruled India at the time. Gandhi led a revolt by saying "we don't want to wear or eat anything you imported from your country!", so instead he wove his own clothes and ate Indian food, also encouraging everyone to do the same. And, even though he helped with India's independence, he didn't want to be prime minister or president. But, the main thing to remember is that he chose his voice through non-violence. People like that in my mind are heroes, and if he didn't think his voice was important from the millions who populate India, my parents and I could be living in India right now under British rule!

Another activist who used their voice for change was Martin Luther King Jr. who led the African-American Civil Rights Movement. This was so that African-American people had the same rights as white American people do. If he didn't think that his voice was important, then lots of us would not be here today as we are. Our current president Mr. Barack Obama could not have won because Dr. King dreamed for ever American to be equal. I think this a good example of why someone's voice is important because it had a big impact on our society just like maybe your voice will be in the future. If you don't believe in your own opinion, how will it come true?

That's enough talk about famous people who changed the world, let's talk about us, and how our voices it affects our everyday lives. For example, if someone in your school dropped their phone or books and didn't notice, wouldn't you TELL them? You wouldn't just walk by and not even blink, would you? Another example is, if a little kid fell outside near your house and you heard them yelling and screaming in pain, it should be natural for you to walk outside and help them up if they are for some reason alone. And, do you know why that is an example of why someone's voice is important? If they didn't scream or yell, how would you know what happened? That is one way your voice may be important in everyday life. Of course if you are a child for this example... Also, my voice is important because I mean, what else is it used for right? And, if you don't think your voice is important, well, you never know, maybe when you grow up you will be the first person in the history of the world to find out if any other planet other than Earth that will have life on it? Or maybe to be the first one to create a life-changing medicine. That would be a goal for me.

Our voices are important for another strong reason, help. Everyone in this room has cried or whined, even whispered for help. I know this because when we were infants we cried for whatever we wanted- right? Well, even if you are an adult and you are working- or even at home, what if someone gets hurt?!?!?!?!?! You have to call out for help and make sure that person is alright. One hesitant move can make a huge impact in our society. Just think about it for a minute, have you ever wanted to say something, but you thought if you said it that no one will care? Well don't worry my friend; we are on your side. Whether you are right or other people get ideas. We all deserve to be heard in whatever crisis we may be in, whether you want sprinkles or your ice-cream, or you want to win an interview for a job.

By listening to other people I realized that our

voices are important for so many things that if 100 people spoke on this same topic, all the reasons would be different. One girl whom I heard speak about this topic spoke about Steve Jobs. Imagine; most of you people who are reading this probably have an Apple product. If Steve Jobs wouldn't have introduced his opinion of making all these Apple electronics, well, let's just say that things would have been a lot different! Also, your voice is important to show your emotions and feelings. God gave our voices to show our happiness as well as our hate. Hundreds of years ago before America got its independence, how they negotiated things is through talking. Imagine having to gain your independence from another country by writing down everything you want to say on parchment and then holding up to the other persons face! Imagine an argument! There would be pieces of paper flying everywhere!

Another reason why my voice is important is because it is my own and I have the power to do anything with it. This is important so that I can control myself and say what is right and not what is wrong. A lot of bad things happen when you misuse your words. And, when you say a single sentence, it can affect the whole world! If, when you are 35 or above, and you want to become president, and you have all the criteria met for it, you could be put in the competition just like that, by saying different things through your voice! If you choose your words carefully, you might even become president or anything else you want to be.

- Anjali is a 12 years old and a Grade 7th student. She wants to be a physician-scientist when grows up. She hopes to find cure for wrinkles. She loves art and music. She enjoys playing tennis and chess, and participating in public speaking and essay writing.

JOURNEY TO JAPAN

My family and I have travelled to a variety of exotic and interesting locations around the world. Our most recent destination, and one of the most remarkable, was Japan. Its culture has always been fascinating to me, and as I had never been to Japan before, I wasn't exactly sure what to expect. I knew Japan was an ancient civilization and had many temples and monuments from centuries ago, but I also knew about the technological prowess of modern Japan. Little did I realize that Japan could be both an intensely modern country while preserving its ancient heritage. I didn't know that I would see two different worlds on those small islands: the culturally rich and historic Kyoto and the intensely modern metropolis Tokyo.

Kyoto, the imperial capital of Japan from 794 to 1869, was the first city we arrived at in Japan. It is a truly remarkable city, a perfect blend of Japanese cultural heritage from ancient times along with its modern

I think most people don't use their voices because they think that their voices are not important and shouldn't be recognized, that is not right. Everyone has a voice and everybody has control over it. If you have ideas shout it out! (Except in class of course) When you think that your voice is not important you are thinking about what other people's opinions are. Just think about yourself and it will deepen the meaning coming from you. I always thought saying my own opinion was good because the best thing about it was there was no answer! And other people could connect to it and add and tell stories about it.

The main thing to remember about your voice is that there is no limit. You can take that literally if you want to, but it has another meaning to it. When you listen that is when you know how to talk. You can talk at the right moment, or the bad moment. By that, I mean that you can't just shout out random words in a random place... You have to say things when you think it is at the right moment and at the right time.

Another key thing to keep in mind is feedback. This is how we KNOW our voice is important. Suppose if you don't want bullying in your school, so you protest. More people will come and support the protest against bullies, why? Because more people agreed with you, they LISTENED to you, THAT is how we know, that our voice is truly important for the right purpose. Let's promise each other today, NO MATTER WHAT, we have a voice, and no matter WHAT anybody says, it IS important!

incarnation as a South Asian powerhouse in information technology and electronics. My mother, sister, and I explored Kyoto over four days. As Kyoto was the ancient capital of Japan for many centuries before Tokyo, there were many historical sights to see such as Nijo Castle, Kinkaku-ji Pavilion, Ginkaku-ji Temple, Todai-ji Temple, Kiyomizu-dera, and many more. Nijo Castle was the seat of the Tokugawa shoguns, who ruled Japan for over 200 years. It was the home of two palaces, a remarkable set of gardens, and an intensely strong fortress with a moat. Not only was Kyoto a seat of government, it was, and is, the home of many important religious places in Buddhism. An example is the spectacular Kinkaku-ji, or the Temple of the Golden Pavilion.

Kinkaku-ji pavilion, Kyoto

Covered in gold leaf and surrounded by beautiful gardens from the Classical period, Kinkaku-ji almost appears divine, which makes sense considering it holds

one of the most treasured relics of Buddha, some of his ashes. Another temple of significance is Todai-ji, a Buddhist temple complex located a short distance from Kyoto in Nara. It has the unique distinction of being the tallest wooden building in Japan. The statue of Buddha inside is so big that five people can stand on its open palm! Todai-ji is set in the former royal deer park where tamed deer come up to visitors and eat from their hands. It was the most important temple in early Japanese Buddhism, and is home to the Kegon school of Buddhism today.

Todai-ji temple, Nara

Kiyomizu-dera is a Buddhist and Shinto temple and shrine complex up in the hills of Kyoto, and is over 1,200 years old. Kiyomizu-dera is still a site of religious worship and has been frequented by tourists and pilgrims from inside and outside of Japan alike. Surrounded by Japanese maple trees in all their autumn glory, it stood serene and lovely among the reds, coppers and golds of the glowing leaves. Yet another interesting sight is Ginkaku-ji. It was built by the son of the emperor who built Kinkaku-ji pavilion. As the emperor who built Ginkaku-ji was also a scholar and a garden designer, he made it his life's work. The grounds of Ginkaku-ji are home to a temple, a library, and what may be the most beautiful gardens I've seen in Kyoto.

While I was touring Kyoto and looking at the many places that remain from long ago, I couldn't help but think of another city – a city that is also full of temples and is known to some as the Temple City. It too was the capital of an ancient empire. I'm speaking, of course, about Bhubaneswar. Bhubaneswar also has an ancient history, reaching back almost 3,000 years. It was the capital of the Kalinga Empire and its successor states for many centuries. Bhubaneswar also remains significant today as the capital of Odisha and a commonly sought destination for tourism.

When I left Kyoto with my family, our next destination was Tokyo. Now, I'd heard quite a lot about Tokyo. I knew it was a very modern city, the financial center for Japan as well as that region of Southeast Asia. Tokyo is also the home of massive skyscrapers and the largest, and most impressive, fish market on Earth. Understandably, my expectations going into Tokyo were pretty high. We had a pretty impressive start to Tokyo. My family and I got our

first glimpse of ultra modernism when our transportation to Tokyo from Kyoto ended up being the Shinkansen, or the bullet train. While travelling at speeds in excess of 250 km/h, we were able to catch a spectacular view of Mount Fuji in the distance. Just like the picture postcards, Mt. Fuji was a perfect snow-covered cone. Our hotel room ended up being on the 31st floor with a phenomenal view of Tokyo Tower and downtown Tokyo at night.

Ginkaku-ji Temple, Kyoto

In Tokyo, one of the most amazing sights we saw had to be the famed Tsukiji fish market – perhaps the largest, and best, fish market in the world. Tsukiji is the home of a tuna auction at 5 a.m. every morning in which sushi-grade tuna is bought and shipped all over the world. For two hours I walked the fish market with my family viewing the giant prawns, octopuses, and hundreds of varieties of fishes from 5 feet to 1 inch long. I even saw whole tuna carcasses bigger than me being sectioned into smaller pieces! Everything sold any day at Tsukiji is fresh caught that morning.

After Tsukiji, we went to the Senso-ji Temple complex in the Asakusa district. Senso-ji itself is a remarkable sight. The tutelary temple of the Tokugawa shoguns, it is reported to have been built in the 7th century. After being bombed during World War II, it's been rebuilt to its previous state and looks beautiful. Senso-ji is known for the road leading up to the temple. The road is lined with dozens of small stalls selling handicrafts, specialty foods and souvenirs. We spent the entire evening there. Senso-ji is visited by tourists from all over.

With my family in front of the Senso-ji shrine, Tokyo Japan is such a different and unique country from what I've been used to. I have never seen a country so ultra modern but also so attached to its cultural heritage. Another country that I can relate to is also growing in modernity and influence on the world stage while keeping in touch with its culture – our very own India. While I was in Japan, I couldn't help but think of the similarities of Kyoto and Tokyo to places in India. Going to Japan was a really enjoyable and beneficial experience for me.



- Anshuman Mishra is an 8th grader at Grizzell Middle School in Dublin, Ohio. He is a 1st degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do and enjoys reading extensively, discussing politics, and playing the guitar in his spare time. He loves to travel with his family to exotic locales all over the world.

MY VISIT TO THE MYSTERY SPOT!

You might think what I am talking about. Mystery Spot? Am I making things up? Am I imagining? No, it really exists. That was my reaction when my parents took me and my little brother to the Mystery Spot during our Spring break in California.

At first I was pretty uncertain about how the place might turn out. We asked so many questions on the way. It was a long drive to the Spot. The road felt like a roller coaster ride when we were going. It is US 17; which had many ups and downs and turns. We reached to the edge of the narrow one lane path which takes you to the Mystery Spot. Mom said, "Who would ever build a tourist spot in such a horrible place?". She was scared that the car might never make it to the Spot. Imagine you have to wait in one corner to let another car from the opposite side to pass you. And there was no space to fit two cars. It's only my Dad who could get us to the Spot safely. He sure is a super hero!

Mom kept praying till we made it to the Mystery Spot. All along she said there would be hardly any people out there to see. Who would want to come to such a place travelling through that dangerous road? To her surprise and to ours as well, there were thousands of people up at the hill. It felt like we were back in Disney world. I was so excited. I could not wait to jump out of the car and run to see. My brother joined me in the fun.

We were told to reach half an hour before the tour starts. We made it exactly one minute before the tour started! After all, that was California traffic and the wooded uphill ride to the Spot was not easy. Once inside the tour group, we were happy that we made it. People it seems have gone and never made it because they missed their time. When we stood with the rest of the group, the tour guide asked all of us how it felt. Everyone replied, "Normal". She smiled and said, "Not for long." She tried to make it sound scary. I was not scared at all. I was looking forward to discovering the famous Mystery Spot.

From the spot we stood, there were these two red wood trees. She pointed that one was leaning and the other was straight. So those who were standing towards the leaning tree were "Cool" and those standing toward the straight side were "Un-cool". Then she said, "Now the tour begins. Let's head up the hill".

There were rails to hold on to because it was a very steep hill. Walking up felt like as if you are walking on a wall. My legs hurt when we reached the top. Everyone had to hold on as we could not stand straight. And everyone was out of breath. After catching up with our breath, the tour guide took us into a boundary area where inside there

was a funny looking hut. It was a wooded hut but it was tilted. So were we! All along the tour guide was carrying a level to show whether the place was level or not. She asked for volunteers to prove her point. She called me too. I was so excited to be part of the show. It made me feel special!

So, now I have said so much about how we reached. But what is this Mystery Spot? That's I am about to reveal my friends. The mystery Spot is a tourist place, found inside a redwood forest in Santa Cruz, California. Basically, the place has abnormal Gravity. The place was discovered in 1939 and opened in 1940. The operators of the small site (which is about 150 feet in diameter) claim that it is a place where the laws of physics and gravity do not apply and provide a number of demonstrations in support of these claims, where water seems to flow upwards, people seem to be standing in slanted positions etc.

At Santa Cruz's "Mystery Spot," balls roll uphill, chairs sit on walls and people lean over so far they can't see their shoes, yet they don't fall down. There's a pendulum that is hanging tilted from the ceiling. When you try to move it back it comes back to its same tilted place. You can't stand in one place without holding. The hut is tilted at a 20-degree angle from the ground. Everyone falls towards the wall. We all climbed the walls. I felt like Spiderman. It was awesome! I can walk on the wall like he did. How cool is that! I was wondering how the balls rolled up and not down, how water rolled up and how someone's Chap Stick even rolled up and not down. That, people, is the Mystery and that is what we want to experience and find out.

My little brother was scared. Mom still took him with her till the wall and made him climb with her. He would not leave mom for even a second. It was a very unusual feeling for him as well as for all of the people there. I felt distorted. People got dizzy. My mom even had a severe headache after getting into the hut. But we were all warned about these effects before we got to the place. Some even got nauseated.

The Mystery Spot is a gravity hill, a tilt-induced visual illusion. The illusion experienced by visitors results from the oddly tilted environment as well as standing on a tilted floor. Inside the tilted room of the Mystery Spot, misunderstanding of the height and orientation of objects occur. People cannot see the true Earth's horizon and they are only allowed to see what the tilted hut shows. So our vision was already tilted. When we are on a level surface standing on the face of the earth, we see everything straight because everything is parallel to the Earth. Here, in this Spot, you can't see the Earth's horizon as you are in

a tilted zone.

We came back home. Our trip was over. But that was not the end. I went online and read about it. I wrote about my experience and shared it in my school. People

may have given different views. For me it was something very special. I would always remember and would always want to go back. After all, who gets to be Spiderman once in awhile! For me , the experience was awesome!.

- Arin Mahapatra is a 2nd Grade student at Ranchview Elementary School, Naperville, IL. He loves reading, swimming, skating and a talented dancer too. He has been awarded Brown Belt for his skills in Taekwando.

MY GRANDMOTHER'S LEGACY

My grandmother, Ahaliya Acharya was born on April 11, 1954 at Dhamanakol Odisha, India. Back in those times, Indian women in India had very little freedom. That is why women like my grandma didn't complete high school. They were expected to stay at home and work as housewives. It was believed that teaching to girl or woman was a sin. My grandmother went to a school that had classes from kindergarten to third grade. Each school year was two years so girls finished third grade at the age of twelve. That system no longer remains. Grandma studied Odia, the language of Odisha. She enjoyed reading a lot of Hindu mythological stories. One of her favorite stories she read was Shri Jaganath, which was a story about Lord Jaganath.

In my grandmother's village, houses were made out of cement, and there was no electricity. The kitchens were outdoors, and cooking was done through wood-fired cook stoves. The house did not have a stove. The food was served on leaf plates, or sometimes steel plates. Like Lord Jaganath, Grandma took care of her siblings, and worried about what will make other happy before herself . My grandmother stayed and took care of her younger siblings, neighbors, the house, and her mother because she was ill. She got married at the age of 15, when she left home to start a new family.

The food in India is very different from food in the U.S. Some examples are rice, Daal (lentils, or you can call it soup), mixed vegetables, Mattar paneer, Malai Kofta, etc. The desserts were sweets; some examples are rasagola, golapjmoon, kaju katli, Manda Pittha etc. Indian food is filled with spices of many types; ginger, garlic, turmeric, red chili, curry leaves, and mustard. These flavors and aromas remain essential to our family traditions.

- Debanjan is a freshman at Clarksburg High School and lives with his parents, Debaki Nandan and Anjana Chowdhury and with a younger sister Debanshi in Germantown, Maryland.

My grandmother is a person of faith and tradition. Some celebrations are Holi, Diwali, Navaratri, Ganesh puja, Sara Swati puja, Durga puja, Rath Yatra, as well as Gandhi Jayanti. Gandhi Jayanti is a day to honor Mahatma Gandhi, considered the "Father of the Nation, and is celebrated on his birthday, October 2nd. Rath Yatra (also known as chariot festival) is celebrated mainly in Odisha, in June or July it is the story of Lord Jaganath going on a chariot to his aunt's house. On the day of Rath Yatra, there are millions of people pulling the chariot. In addition, there are 55,000 police from Odisha and 23,000 police from other parts of India. My grandmother shared stories of Lord Jaganath with me when I was young. She told me to think of Lord Jaganath and pray to him before taking any decisions. I have worshipped, Jaganath at bad times and received a helpful answer.

It was really interesting to know about the way my grandmother ate, lived, and what she did during her childhood. Comparing my way of life to hers, I also worship and have similar celebrations. At home, we eat the same kind of foods that she does. Just like my grandma, I didn't speak English at first. Until the age of five, I spoke Odia at home, and I didn't understand English. When I was in Kindergarten, I began to learn how to speak English. At school I once chanted a prayer. My teachers took that as false values. But I am proud of my faith and religion. I still carry on the prayers privately at home and in temples. I am grateful that my grandmother inspired me to carry on my family's faith and traditions.

MY AMERICA

America. I always think of America as a land of hope, of prosperity and of opportunity. Each and every step you take in America is passed down to you by the great leaders of this land. People all over the world think of America as a land of hope to them and their family. Each and every person who lives in America is a part of America, without them America isn't America. When I look at the buildings that are in America, I see there a place to learn, a place to work, to be at home. Each little nut an ear of corn grown

in America tells a story about its history. No matter what's happening around you America is America. Looking up in the sky, it is the same sky everyone's looking at. America just speaks hope and home to me. Each and every person from a different region of the world is a part of America, citizens or not.

America. My America My home.

-Manaswee Mlshra is nine years old and a 4th grader in Manor woods Elementary school in Ellicott City, Maryland. Her other interests include, painting, dancing and writing poems. This article was written on the occasion of international night of the school and chosen to be shown in their assembly.

INDIAN CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

During the beginnings of the 1990's, an immense economic prosperity or boom occurred in the United States of America. Throughout this period myriads of Indians immigrated to United States due to the quick enlargement of job openings. Indian families started to shelter and raise children. The children were accustomed to a new different environment. They immediately become exposed to this new country, and started a metamorphosis into a true American. The culture of living in America and India contain distinct differences. Parents can do so much to keep the Hindu culture alive to their children, which is an arduous task.

Indian American kids in America are already at a disadvantage early in their life compared to children brought up in India. Throughout my experiences of visiting India, I view kids as young as 2 years old speaking fluent Oriya, or Hindi. Since I was raised in America, I couldn't speak Oriya until I was 8 years old. There is a tremendous gap between. The reason is because in America during school the only language taught is English, and eventually Spanish and other European languages later on in Junior High schools, but not any of the 18 languages of India. Therefore when visiting grandparents and relatives in India, communication poses a colossal problem, unlike fluent Indian speakers.

Another difference between the style of life between an Indian and an Indian American is the life of living. According to the International Statistical Institute, India is a developing country, and the United States is a developed country. Indian Americans brainstorm ideas as quick as a gunshot that India is gruesome, atrocious, filthy, and loathsome. Most of the Indian Americans I've met have stated they dislike visiting India. Indian Americans show an immediate dislike seeing lizards slithering the walls, or the vile red ants and spiders in bathrooms, and finally the vexatious, pesky mosquitos. We hate the

malodorous filthy smell of the litter and cow dunk in the road. Indian children in America can't stand going to these places, because they don't have any experiences living in a developing country, or eating foods like parval, chickpeas, dosa, and idli unlike pizza, pasta, and chicken nuggets.

Also, the culture styles of traditional Indians to American Indians are universes apart from each other. Indians acquire knowledge of Hindu culture in an early age visiting the Jagannath Temple, Lingraj temple, and other millions of temples surrounded by them. They are exposed constantly to festivals like Ratha Yathra and Holi. Parents, friends, family, and teacher can explain these festivals to them. American Indians however can only learn this by their parents or from an Indian community. They learn Saint Patrick's Day, or Easter Day. They can't experience Ganesh decorated and immersed in water. Although parents try their best to show these festivals by forming communities like Shri Jagannath Society of Greater America (SJSJC), and The Orissa Society of America (OSA). Leaders of these groups build chariots for Ratha Yathra, persuade Indian families to sponsor for pujas, organize major holidays like Janmastami, Maha Shivarathi, Shri Ganesh Chaturthi, and Shri Panchami. Since Indian American kids are busy with American sports, hanging out with Americans that they don't participate or show interest in these religious holidays. Thread ceremonies are exceptional in Odisha. It's like being a Brahmin in the older times like shaving your head, wearing a sacred thread, marching out to different various temples, receiving money, and learning mantras.

The education system in America and India are diverse. In India teachers are much harsher and strict in education. Children devote their time to study and compete for top notch universities and jobs. The system in America is corrupt. The top echelon of schools in America allows students even if they don't score enough, or are not intelligent if they have the green stash. In the

United States the degree of difficulty in education is severely low. Teachers are not willing to educate children, and don't care about assisting children to success, and are only in for the money they want to receive. The courses in America finally get rigorous though starting from high school. Children succeed depending on the teaching style of the instructor.

Therefore traditional Indians are smarter than Indians brought up in America. They are able to steal jobs in the United States later on in their lives. Only 66% of the students in America transition into college. The other 33% drop out of high school. The advantage of education in America is the extracurricular activities. American schools provide music classes and art classes which strengthens the brain. Even Life skills classes are available which provides cooking and sewing experiences. There are speech clubs to exercise a brain, and improves communication. Because of lack of money, India can't provide these enjoyable experiences.

Some places in Odisha that catch my attention are the Lingraj Temple, Dhauli, Chilika Lake, Sun Temple, Lord Jagannath Temple, Gundicha Mandir, and Puri beach. The Lingraj temple was built during the 11th century to honor Lord Shiva. There are over 150 shives present.

King Ashoka built Dhauli to present that he became peaceful, and converted to Buddhism. This historic site is built on the Konark highway. Chilika Lake's area is over 1,100 square Km. Chilika Lake is Asia's largest brackish lagoon. There is a unique assemblance of marine, brackish and fresh water eco-systems. This lake has a rich variety of aquatic fauna, and is the home of an enormous amount of endangered species such as ospreys, grey legged geese,

- Adarsh Nanda is 13 years old and goes to Hannah Beardsley Middle School, Crystal Lake, IL. Apart from writing, he is talented dancer and takes lot of interest in Basketball and Football. He is also adept at playing Saxophone and Piano.

THINKING ABOUT NOTHING IS GOOD FOR YOU

When most people hear the word "meditation" they typically envision a Buddhist monk sitting cross legged in the Himalayas or a hippie lighting incense and listening to Ravi Shankar. Meditation is a practice in which an individual trains the mind or induces a mode of consciousness. It dates from back in 1500 BCE and originated in India. It is used to self regulate the mind, gain self realization, and to bring mental processes under regulated control. It was probably dismissed by western medicine until a band from Liverpool brought it mainstream attention. Since then, it has been well studied that meditation has profound beneficial health effects. Meditation affects mental health, physical health, and various medical problems.

herons, cranes, and flamingoes. The Sun Temple was designed as a celestial chariot of the Sun god, Surya. There are 24 wheels and 7 horses in the temple. Over the years some parts have collapsed. How could anyone forget the JAGANNATH TEMPLE!!!!!! Built in the 12th century, the colossal building stands as 65 meters high. The main gate is a 16 sided monolithic pillar known as Aruna Stambha.

During Ratha Yatra, Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra travel to stay at their birthplace Gundicha Mandir for 9 days. And if you want to relax visit the Puri beach with fresh cold salty water gushing up your legs.

Overall, the cultural, living, and educational style of life are different in the United States than in India. Children in America don't experience religious festivals, and have significantly lower knowledge of the Hindu knowledge than Indians. American Indian has communicational problems in India since English become their first language. Living in a developed country compared to a developing country is distinct. The educational system is very different in these two countries. American Indians should take the time to salute their parents for spreading the Hindu religions, and should continue it in life for generations to come. Enjoy visiting India, and the various places like famous temples, and other sites.

Through meditation, one can improve mental health. In Oman, in 2008, a group of students found that practicing meditation changed neurological processes. This led to a variety of benefits such as effective functioning, including academic performance, concentration, perceptual sensitivity, reaction time, memory, self control, empathy, and self esteem.

In another study, it was concluded that meditation reduced stress, and increased forgiveness. Though meditation does all of the above, can it boost your creativity? The Leiden University in the Netherlands found that while meditation did not improve problem solving skills, it did help the mind generate new ideas. Another study at the University of Washington took 45

human resources managers and gave one third of them meditational training. After the training, the researchers gave the test subjects a test, and the ones who had received meditational training. A question you may ask would be, how does meditation help our brain do all these things? In a study through UCLA, researchers took MRI scans of 100 people, 50 of whom meditated, and the other 50 who did. They noticed that the meditators had higher levels of gyrification, which is the folding of the cerebral cortex, which is associated with faster mental processing. Overall, practicing meditation leads to better psychological health and a positive attitude.

With your body, meditation's effects are more significant. Meditation is accompanied by a host of biochemical and physical changes in the body that alter, heart rate, metabolism, blood pressure, and other bodily processes. The State University of New York recommend meditation as a way to relieve irritable bowel syndrome, after a group of patients began practicing meditation and their symptoms lowered significantly. Meditation also has anti-inflammatory effects. Since stress leads to inflammation, naturally meditation would improve calmness, and therefore lower inflammation. A recent study in the journal, *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* took 201 test subjects with coronary heart disease and asked them to either take a class for meditation or a class promoting better eating and exercise. 5 years later the researchers found that the people taking the meditation class had a 48% less risk of heart attacks, strokes, and death.

Meditation can prevent a wide range of diseases and medical problems. These include allergies, anxiety disorders, asthma, binge eating, cancer, depression, fatigue, heart disease, pain, sleep problems, and substance abuse. At a study at Ohio State, it was found that progressive muscle relaxation reduced the risk of breast cancer recurrence. In another study it was found that regular meditation increased the number of white blood cells in the body which gave an individual greater resistance to tumors and viruses. Meditation also prevents chronic pain distress. In addition, since meditation improves the immune system, it can help prevent disease. In sum, practicing meditation can help prevent a variety of medical problems.

In this day of iPhones, Blackberries, texting, email and constant communication we have a generation that believes that they are "multi-taskers" and can perform many activities at once. But, in reality with all this multi-tasking the brain has very little time to focus. As many studies have shown achieving calming state where the brain can focus on a single thought or no thought all can actually improve health and mental abilities. Consistent meditation improves concentration, perceptual sensitivity, reaction time, memory, self control, empathy, and self esteem. It was also found that practicing meditation helps the body improve heart rate, metabolism, blood pressure, and other bodily processes.



So, when you have some quiet time, turn off your cell phone, TV and anything else that demands your attention. Start with a short time such as five minutes and just let your mind focus on a single thought. Some people chant a prayer. An easy trick to blank out your mind is to imagine looking for a black cat in a pitch black room. After your time is up you should feel relaxed and more focused. Gradually meditate for longer amounts of time. Remember, thinking of nothing is good for you.

HEALING

With tears streaming down my face, I ran out the front door in agony. I hate having arguments with my parents; it makes me feel terrible. I sped down the sidewalk to reach the park next to our home. I crossed the park that leads to the beautiful nature trail and stepped on the dirt path. I walked with a vengeance so that I could get away from everything around me. I climbed up the hill and after walking up for half an hour plummeted to the ground all tired and worn out.

The sun was almost on its way down. The crescent moon was starting to shine brightly. There was a zephyr and the tall trees swung lazily and merrily. I could see the rushing stream and the chirping of the birds as they decided to fly back to their home together. Everything

looked so peaceful and serene except for the turmoil in my heart. I looked up to the blue sky above me and closed my eyes and took couple of long deep breathes. I lost track of time and lay there still enjoying nature's tranquility.

When I opened my eyes, I saw that it was getting dark, and I felt better. I thought about my parents and started feeling guilty that they would be worried sick about me. Quickly I started running down the hill. I reached home panting and saw my Mom sitting outside on the porch with a worried look. The moment she saw me, I could see the relief in her eyes. She stood up and I went into her open outstretched arms and I knew that I had reached my safe haven, my home.

- Resha is 12 and half years old, an eighth grader at Windermere Ranch Middle school in San Ramon, CA. She is a Hindustani Classical singer and a competitive swimmer. In her spare time she loves to write poems and short stories.

THIS LIFE

My visits to Odisha have not been as regular as I would like them to be. However, last summer, I had the chance to make a trip to Odisha by myself. I got to spend a few days in Puri during this trip. Every morning, I would take long runs by the beach with my cousin. It was on one such run that I came to a momentous point in life. As I jog along the coast, the early morning breeze and the waves surround me with a sense of inevitability. This is the place where millions have walked before me, wise men have meditated on the self, and attained the meaning of life, this land of the holy is where my ancestors recited poetry, shaped the thoughts of generations, ultimately evolving into an individual. What is my dharma? Is it the sum total of my selfless and selfish activities or is it something else. Those are the questions I ask myself. Am I defined by my Odia identity or my American identity? Which defines me more? My mind wanders.....

I am transported back to the first time I saw the sea in Puri. I am with my family and all my relatives are proudly taking me around town, showing me the Temples, getting me camel rides, eating ice cream and the Oriya special snack Masala-mudhi. I search for toys to build my sand castles, continuously weaving in and out of the water. I see my grandparents sitting by the water, enjoying my restlessness. I let the sand under my feet and the waves around me tell their story.

The sound of the waves breaking on the shore are like clashing of the worlds, where two cultures, two eons, or perhaps two ideas meet. The message resonates, reverberates and then disappears back into the sea. In the distance, I hear the song, the Bhagavad Gita and I

am transported between two worlds Puri and Chicago, balancing the strains of chanting, deciphering the age old truths. I start running a little faster, towards the familiar.....

The Bhagavad Gita, an ancient Indian epic, presents a discussion between Arjuna, a warrior prince, and Krishna, an incarnation of God who acts as his charioteer. Arjuna is about to fight in a war, and when he sees the enemy, he realizes he will be fighting against his relatives and teachers. Hearing of Arjuna's inner turmoil and fears, Krishna carries out a discourse with Arjuna to reeducate him about dharma, which is a set of ethics based on duty. Krishna convinces Arjuna that his actions in the war are justified since he will be fulfilling his dharma and achieve moksha, which is the liberation from the mortal body. One achieves the state of moksha when the self becomes one with Brahman.

Krishna begins the Second Discourse by stressing the importance of following varna dharma, the dharma of his caste, to serve his sacred duty and sustain the order of the universe. Arjuna is a Kshatriya, which is the caste of warriors and kings. Krishna says, "If you will not / engage this fight / for the sake of dharma / you will have shunned / your own dharma / and good name / and shall cause harm". Krishna is talking about the two conflicting dharma that Arjuna believes in and must follow. By not following the warrior aspect of his dharma, his duty as a whole will have been failed, and by not fulfilling his duties, Arjuna will find more difficulties on the path to moksha in the future. Arjuna's dilemma is that his duties conflict. He must fight the enemy. However, his enemy is also his

family, which includes his cousins, his guru, Drona, and his granduncle, Bhishma. Krishna tells Arjuna that, "For the warrior / there can be found / nothing greater / than battle / for the sake of dharma". Krishna urges Arjuna to choose to uphold what is right over what is easy. He says that Arjuna's dharma as a warrior is more important than his dharma to his family or to his guru. My mind wanders to the question about my conflicting identities. Where do I belong? How do I know what I want in life? How do I build my identity? How do I fulfill my dharma?

Krishna also talks about the concept of the "self," Atman, which is analogous to the western concept of a soul. The self is a part of Brahman that rejoins it after realization. He talks about how dharma is the path through selflessness, and how one must be a practitioner of yoga. Krishna covers one yoga in each chapter of the Gita, such as Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga (The Yoga of Devotion). Yoga is the "discipline" or "spiritual path" that one must follow to become one with Brahman and understand Krishna (13.7 Gita). Therefore, the yogas are the principles by which one must live life. Krishna says that "When one / has reached the worlds / of virtuous action / and has dwelt for endless years / one who is lost to yoga / is then born again / in the home / of the pure and illustrious". Doing good deeds accumulates good karma. Therefore, someone who is reborn after living a life that completely follows yoga is born into a place where it is easier to achieve enlightenment. While one life may not be enough time to realize the meaning of the universe, living that life well increases one's chances of the next life. This is because over the course of many lives, the self that follows the path of yoga realizes that it is just a part of Brahman. My mind wanders to deeds. Do good deeds define me?

The "self" is best defined by an example Krishna gives Arjuna in the Second Discourse. Krishna says "Just as one / throws out old clothes / and then takes on / other, new ones; / so the embodied self / casts out old bodies / as it gets / other, new ones". This means that the "self" is in the body but can throw it off. However, the "self" will be stuck in a never-ending cycle, moving from one transient body to another, unless it comes to realize that the meaning of life is to achieve liberation. "The self is not born, / nor does it ever die. / Once it has been / it will never cease to be again". Krishna is attempting to tell Arjuna that, even though he is fighting his family, he is doing so for his dharma, and their "selves" will have a chance to move on to another life that they deserve.



In the final chapter of the Gita, Krishna says, "The one whose self / is tranquil, / of one being with Brahman / who neither grieves nor desires / for whom all beings / are the same / gains the highest devotion to me". He is equating enlightenment as becoming one with him, and as enlightenment and moksha are the final goals of Hinduism, he is saying that becoming one with him is the same as being liberated. However, to do this, the self must be tranquil and unaffected by the minor changes in the transient world. Therefore, by becoming realized and being one with Brahman, one will become completely devoted to Krishna. Later, Krishna says "Devoted to me, / keep your mind intent on me, / give honor to me, / and sacrifice to me. / In this way, you will / truly go to me, / I promise, / for you are my beloved". Krishna states that the converse is true as well, since being devoted to him also allows one to achieve liberation. Since everyone is loved by Krishna, one need only embrace him and the truth that he represents to achieve liberation and become one with Brahman, which include methods like meditation and understanding the Gita. The chanting continues and my mind wanders to changes and the turmoil that accompanies change. What did he mean by devotion?

Through his discourses to Arjuna in The Bhagavad Gita, Krishna explains methods to achieve enlightenment, forming each argument in each chapter represented by a single applicable mental yoga. Each of these yogas is a step towards moksha, liberation from the cycle of birth and death, which is the ultimate goal of Hinduism. One achieves moksha by doing his or her duty and other good deeds, amassing good karma that allows him or her to get closer to becoming one with Brahman, by understanding that the body is a vessel for Atman, the self, which is only part of a larger whole.

The lilting strains of the chanting seem to fade away. The words envelop me as my mind wanders back. As I gaze down, I notice my footprints are erased by the waves just as it must have been for millions before me who have heard the words and lived their lives in this land that is from eons ago. I am filled with a sense of awe for the privilege of knowing this part of my identity in the land of my ancestors. The other half of my identity is back in Chicago. As the sun climbs higher in the sky, I turn around and start running back, calm and peaceful with some answers perhaps regarding my life, conforming to my Oriya-American identity, my spirituality and within me my inner strife is at peace. My "new self" emerges, ready for action.

-Rishi Satpathy, 16 years old, is a Rising Senior at Illinois Math and Science Academy, Aurora. He is son of Sushant and Ipsita Satpathy and lives in Naperville, IL.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

The social contract is very important in our life because it makes us a better person and our behavior will improve. Here are all the things we agree to do but sometimes we don't follow such as...Being Nice, caring, respectful, Helpful, listen, Patient, Friendly, Fairly, Self - Control, using Polite Words, Encouraging, Generous, Gentleness, Understanding, Responsible and Perseverance. Well you should be Nice, if you are nice, people will enjoy having you around them, they like to make friendship with you and they don't bully to you, instead they will like you. Now you should be Caring to others, for example - If one kid is bullying to other kid, don't just be a bystander, instead care for that person who's hurt and bullied and tell to an adult/Teacher. You always have to be Respectful to others this is the most important thing you have to remember. You have to be respectful to your parents, because they buy stuff for you, they take care of you and in return you should give them respect. Next you should be Helpful to people when they are in need, like giving the poor some money, food and clothing and help your friends when they need you. You should always listen; you should have to develop your listening skill, so that you can follow direction properly. Maybe your teacher/parents have something important to say and if you don't listen you might miss it. You always have to be Patient, for example waiting in line for 3 hours for taking a picture with a celebrity be patient don't just push, cut instead get out of line and wait till the line gets shorter. Next you have to be fair to others, don't be a bully or act like a bully to younger kids. You also have to show Self-Control, one of my Moral Focus at my school, you

can't go crazy when the Teacher left the classroom instead show Self-Control and sit quietly. You have to use polite words, not by teasing or saying mean words like you're not smart, or you are stupid! you should encourage to others and to yourself, by not giving up and keep on trying, like when there is a very hard word in the spelling bee you keep on trying and if you don't know do your best guess . And you have to be responsible like at school you have to bring in your homework, be organize at home you have to do your work/chores. Be Confident, to be confident is to believe that you can accomplish your goals, like at school you audition for the school play. Be Courageous, to be courageous is to do what is right and show bravery, like in a swim championship you have to show courage. Be Proactive, being proactive means taking the initiative to get things done, like washing your mom's car without being asked. Be determined, to be determined means you're committed to doing whatever is required to achieve your dreams, like working after school every day to buy a new skateboard. When you start new things in your life , it is always feel difficult in the beginning, but if you show your perseverance and practice hard, you will get mastery out of it at the end. So practice and practice until you get success in your life.

- Rishika Satapathy is studying in Grade 3 and lives with her parents, Ratimukta and Nutan Satapathy, at Canton, Michigan.

THE ASTONISHING ADVENTURE OF THE PURI TEMPLE

Before our family even had gotten our ticket to India they told me that we were going to go to the Puri Temple. My mind wasn't set on going to see my cousins, uncles, aunts, and others, but my mind was set to go see the Puri Temple. I wondered how and what the Puri Temple looked like. My parents got the ticket to go to India and from there, my journey began.

I went on the plane set to go see the Puri Temple. While I played with my gadgets, I was thinking about the Puri Temple. We landed and got out of the plane relieved that everything went fine. Then my mom said to my sister and me, "Hey guys, did you pack your salwar suits to wear to the Puri Temple?" Both my sister and I answered my

mom, "Yes mom we packed two pairs of salwar suits." I saw my uncle and aunt standing there waving at me. I skipped up to them and said, "When are we going to see the Puri Temple?" I didn't even say hi or hello and wanted to hear the answer.

My aunt and uncle started laughing and didn't even give my answer. All they did was told me how cute I was and all the other things. I wouldn't blame them though they just saw me in three years so I just stayed quiet and didn't ask again. We went to their house to get fresh and my parents started talking while my sister and I just sat there looking at them.

My parents talked until their mouth started hurting and then they finally went to bed. My mom cuddled me up and I asked her "Mom, when are we going to see the temple?"

My mom spoke in a quiet voice because everybody was sleeping, "I think we will go tomorrow, but don't worry we will go soon. Goodnight!"

I said in a sleepy kind of way "Goodnight." In my dream I was thinking of all the things I would do at the Temple. Then, finally it was morning. So I got up and I brushed my teeth and got ready to start my new day. I couldn't sleep very well because of jet lag. I went to the kitchen where everybody was and I just sat there ignoring what they were saying.

Then after awhile I heard the word Puri. I jumped up and said "when are we going?" I was waiting for my answer.

My aunt finally said to me, "Today, so be ready because it will be an adventure." Astonished I ran to the room where I kept my clothes and went to go get what I was going to wear.

Everybody got ready and we were going to leave the house. We were going to go in a car. So the car came and I went inside. I saw that there were only five seats. I asked my dad, "Dad, are we going in two cars?"

My dad answered me, "No, that is ok, honey. We will manage in this car." My dad said so calmly.

"But, dad that is so dangerous. How are we going to wear our seatbelts?" I said looking worried.

Quickly my sister replied, "We don't need seatbelts. Plus we are already stuck in this car with so many people." So, after I had gotten all my answers I just sat there thinking of the Temple.

I was blabbering to my sister on how wonderful it would be to go see the Puri Temple. I didn't even know if she was listening, but I didn't care. It took us a while to reach to the Temple, but nothing happened. Suddenly the car stopped. "What is happening? I can't even see the Temple."

My parents replied, "We have to walk from here to the Temple. It approximately takes us 10 minutes because there are so many people." I couldn't see anything because

people were crowding me. I somehow managed to hold on to my mom.

We didn't even get to the entrance when the priests came over to us and started telling dad that they would guide us in. And every priest said that to us so my dad said that we would be fine walking alone. Trying to push our way to at least get to the entrance, we finally got into the temple.

When I entered I said to myself that the Temple was beautiful. Before I even knew it I was sweating and I didn't even know why I was. Just after a few minutes a priest walked up to my dad and said to him, "Do you want to buy some Prasad?"

My dad said raising his voice a little so the Priest could hear him, "No thank you we will manage to go get it ourselves later." Then, we went to go to the Anand Bazar to go get our Prasad. When we got there I didn't see any Prasad, but the only thing I saw was flies. "Dad, I am scared I only see flies, and you know I don't like flies."

"Ok, go stand by your sister and don't go anywhere." My dad told me. I went fighting my way to her. I was standing there silently waiting for them to come back. Then finally after ten minutes, they arrived. My feet and hands were burning so much that I couldn't move. Finally we got to enter the main entrance

When I entered, I was suffocated and couldn't breathe because there were so many people. The only thing I saw was black. It looked like a black plate. I couldn't understand what was going on. Then after a few seconds my mind started working. Then I saw a blurry vision of people. I heard them screaming "Jai Jagannath."

I was scared to death. I was clenching on to my mom's hand. Then, suddenly I heard someone scream in my ear. I turned back and saw that the priest was telling my dad that he would guide us through. There was a long line to see Lord Jagannath. We didn't even have to walk because the floor was so slippery. I didn't even know if that was sweat, tears, or oil.

I was getting pushed by people I didn't even know. Then I heard a voice calling to me, "Ritika, don't look here and there just look straight. Grab on to me." Mom said to me yelling so that I could hear her. Suddenly I felt like I had just fallen on the ground and it was pitch black. I thought



at first that my eyes were closed, but then I knew that it was just like that in there.

I looked up and saw the diya's light which followed to Lord Jagannath, Subhadra, and Balrama. I was amazed by how big they looked. It felt like the gods were looking at me and smiling and saying hi to me. That time when I saw the gods all of my tiredness and questions just went

away. And I said thank you to god for giving this memorial journey.

That was my astonishing journey to the Puri Temple that I will never forget.
Thank you God!

- Ritika Senapati is 11 years old and currently in 5th Grade at Meigs Magnet Middle School. She stays with her parents at Nashville, IL.

THE BOY WHO DOESN'T REMEMBER

One very nice day, I was riding my bicycle. It was fun, riding on that bicycle. I could pop wheelies with that bicycle. I really liked doing that so much.

When I was riding my bicycle, I came across a boy my age. "Help me, help me," the boy said to me. "I can't remember who I am and where I live. Will you please help me?"

"Sure, of course I will help you," I said to the boy. "Someday, you will remember who you are. First, we got to find somebody who already knows you and your parents."

"Oh, thank you, thank you," the boy said to me. "I really appreciate you helping me. And by the way, you have some really nice manners. I really like it."

So, we set off on our journey. Believe me, we met some very nice people, (some of them even let us have tea in their house) but none of them knew who the boy is.

At last, we across a person who knew who the boy is. He told us that the boy was cursed by a wizard. The curse caused the boy not to remember himself.

"This is a very poor boy," the person said to me and the boy. "His parents are looking for him. They don't know where their son is. I know this, because I am their friend."

The boy suddenly spoke, "Hey, you don't know who I am? My name is Jimmy. Pleased to meet you." Then he started shaking everyone's hand.

"Hey, what do you know? The boy, or Jimmy, is back!" the old man said.

Since the curse is gone, we took Jimmy back to his parents. The parents were crying with happiness. And they lived happily ever after.

- Saheb Panda is a fifth grade honor student in Novi Meadows Upper Elementary school in Detroit, MI. He loves taekwondo, reading books, music, dance, to watch TV, spend time with his friends and electronic games.

WILDLIFE OF ORISSA

The beautiful state of Odisha is home to some of the unique wildlife like Sambar deers, Gharial crocodiles, peacock, Asian elephants, and Bengal tigers. There are many protected habitats that these animals live in Odisha. Simipal National Park, Bhitarkanika National Park and the Chilika Lake are just some examples. While these sanctuaries are a great sight for wildlife lovers, it's also subject to animal cruelties. When we overfish, kill animals for game, and cut down trees, develop industries in close proximity, we are becoming part of the extinction of these beautiful species. The wildlife must be preserved today for

the future generations to enjoy.

Chilika Lake runs through the districts of Puri, Khurda, and Ganjam. It is the largest grounds for migratory birds in the winter and home to Irrawaddy Dolphin, kingfisher bird, and Bream fish species. The Irrawaddy Dolphin is a critically endangered species. Chilika Lake is the only place that you can find the Irrawaddy Dolphin in India. This dolphin is threatened by human activity like fishing and keeping them in aquariums for shows. The Kingfisher is a small bird with a variety of colors known for its talent for hunting down fish skillfully. Some species of

this animal can catch crabs, frogs, worms, insects, spiders, and even snakes! These animals are very territorial and will fight to maintain it. The bream is an endangered fish species. It is endangered due to overfishing. There are 132 villages and more than 150,000 fishermen along the Chilika Lake fish to feed their families. This fishing trade poses great danger to the endangered fish species.

Simipal National Park is an elephant and tiger reserve. The national park is home to 99 Bengal Tigers, 432 Asian elephants. This national park also has Gaur and Chausingha also known as the four-horned antelope. It was established to protect animals against hunting. Bengal tiger is the national animal of both India and Bangladesh. Bengal Tigers are endangered and fewer than 2500 tigers are living today. 5 tiger cubs died in Nadankanan zoo recently. Greater care must be provided to protect and nurture the baby animals. The Asian elephant is the largest living land animal in Asia and an endangered species. Poaching is one of the main reasons elephants are endangered today. Elephants are killed for their ivory tusks. Around twenty years ago, two-thirds of the elephants died due to poaching and being captured for doing stunts in amusement parks. Nearly 300 elephants have been killed in Odisha in the past five years. Recently five elephants were run over by a train in Odisha. National parks were established to protect these animals. Poaching and ivory trading was banned. Still illegal activities going on throughout Odisha.

Chandaka Sanctuary is a forest for elephants and other animals, birds and once extended most of Bhubaneswar. With population explosion and

- Samyak Mishra, a sixth grader from Illinois, caring by nature loves music, the environment he is in and craves to have a pet. This is an attempt by Samyak to bring awareness on environment and how to protect animals living in this environment in Odisha.

A JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION

The 70 km car ride brought my parents, the director, and me from Bhubaneswar to the woman's shelter in Puri, Odisha, India. As we drove I reviewed the notes that the professor from UC Santa Cruz had used to coach me. I needed to learn about the occupants living in the shelter and to research what they would need to feel at home, and to prosper. But as the director spoke, I realized that I would come across women today who may not be receptive. I would have to gain their trust and be patient in order to earn their respect. As I stood in front of the blue house in the dusty road I felt nervous. I took a step forward through iron gates and was surprised to see the cheerful faces that had gathered to greet us. Many of them brought sweets to the common room where I sat. Because we were new, complete strangers in their eyes they treated us with love

urbanization, deforestation has happened gradually and its continuous shrinking size is forcing animals and birds to look for new home. There have been many cases of elephants stampeding nearby villages and birds flying away from the forest.

Bhitarkanika National park in Odisha is home to the endangered Saltwater Crocodile, White Crocodile, Indian python, King Cobra. Olive Ridley Turtle is almost extinct due to climate change that is caused by air pollution due to proximity of industries developed by us.

Demand for urban development and industries in close proximity are causing deforestations and air pollutions which is a leading cause of wildlife extinction. Similarly, overfishing causing endangered species of fish to go extinct. Poaching is causing animals like Asian elephant to go extinct. Deforestation causing the animals that live in the forests to go extinct. Air pollution is causing continuous change in climate which causing wildlife migration or death. Majority of these disasters are caused by us humans. We must preserve to maintain harmony between us and nature. Overfishing, poaching, and deforestation, developing industries in close proximity can be stopped by having stricter laws and making sure of its enforcement as well as spreading awareness of how extinction is creating the ecological imbalance. This ecological imbalance will lead to natural calamities and pose threat to our future generations. We all must take action today!

and openness. I noticed their faces wore sad eyes. They hadn't had a visitor in years maybe. I toured the fourteen bedrooms, eight bathrooms, and a terrace; I still could not fathom how this building sheltered a hundred struggling women and children. Their hobbies seemed minimal; they sold paper bags made from newspaper to generate an income for the house. To them it was abundant.

I took a deep breath and sat back down, and it seemed like nothing had changed in the past twenty-five minutes, but it already had. Now, using the detailed questionnaire I had made in California to learn about these abused women in depth seemed utterly useless. I began the interviews, with a notebook, tape recorder, a flip video recorder, and an open mind. I developed an

understanding that it wasn't about the data, it was about them. If I wanted to sink deep into their lives, I would have to tone my voice down, and be the background. Instead of pushing them to answer, I started letting the women reveal their truths on their own terms. Whether it was listening to how this woman had been beaten by her husband, or how that girl had almost been sold into prostitution, or the woman who was lied to about the death of her husband and then later was disowned, I listened to their stories, and recorded them explicitly so the first sentence of each bio would remind me which resident I had been talking to. I was fascinated and wondered if it was okay to react this way to the graphic and sad stories of these women. Even a month later, when I submitted the biographies, I felt a shift in the way I saw people and my attraction to psychology grew.

- Sanuja Das is 18 year old and lives in Santa Clara, California where she has learnt to read, write, and speak Odia. She has practised Odissi since she was 3 years old. Sanuja is currently pursuing major in Psychology/Pre-Law at University of California, Riverside, and aspires to be a lawyer.

FAMILY

When someday asks you, "What's the most important thing in life?" What would you say? You may say swimming, school, or education but the thing that keeps you going is your family. They're the ones that encourage you to do stuff, comfort you when you're sad, support you on everything, and have fun with you when you're happy.

You may take your family for granted and don't even realize how much you need them in your life. You're mom or dad cook for you, feed you, have jobs to get money for you, soothe and help you when you're sick, but the thing they do best for you is love you! There's a way to thank them; you could do something nice like offer to make supper, do the laundry or even do the dishes.

If you have a brother or sister, you may get in a lot of fights but don't you always make up? You need them because they'll always be there for you. They'll be happy for you if you win a competition.

If you don't have siblings you're really aren't missing out on much. You get more time for your parent's attention. And your friends will probably say you're lucky to not have a sibling. And the best part of being an only child is you feel special because not many people have no brothers or sisters.

You're aunts, uncles, and cousins are all part of your family even though they might not live with you. They take care of you when mom and dad are out and love like your parents. Your cousins are the people who hang out

Occasionally, I tried reading someone from afar, guessing what they were feeling. The simple joy I found in reading faces made me realize that I wanted to learn more about psychology. After this experience, not only did I set a goal to fundraise for this group but I also set a life commitment to help individuals in need.

The numerous bridges of connections that this transformation has built with me, to emotion, to the spiritual mind, or even to the physical being has taught me to appreciate the many opportunities that life has to offer; to cherish each one, to establish my thoughts firmly and relative to the goals I want to achieve in life.

with you and you love them even if they're annoying.

Pets are also included in the family tree. They play with you when no one else will. Pets are considered the best therapy and best person to be around when you're upset or happy; they'll always be there for you.

Now, you can have family that isn't even related to you. You're friends! They look out for you and believe it or not you spend more time with your friends than with your actual family! Think about it, you go to school your friends are there! You got to a playdate after school with your friends! You go to classes to learn something you have friends there! And your friends act like your family, they comfort you, they play with you they even laugh with you!

Your whole family will look out for you and you'll look out for the rest of your family. You love every single person in your family even if you won't admit it and they all love you even if they don't say it out loud.

All in all, you wouldn't be able to do anything in life without your family.

- Shilpi Jena is 10 years old and a student at Patterson Elementary School, Naperville, IL. Her favorite color is Orange and favorite animal is Zebra. She loves to read, watch TV and play with her friends. Her friends consider her to be most helpful at school.

THE BREEZE OF AUTUMN

The fragile green clover brushed against my toes, leaving a warm feeling of exhilaration inside my stomach. The frivolous autumn wind fluttered in the air as the prodigious tree thumped along. The birds chirped in delight as they accompanied the chorale. The golden-yellow grass caressed against my arms as I took a deep breath, inhaling the warm, autumn air. The luscious taste of the autumn breeze lingered in my mouth. The very essence of autumn trickled down my spine. The formidable sun seemed to read my thoughts as it adjusted to a calm and delicate surrounding. The empty sky evoked my presence as it called me to join the blissful evening.

- Sanjana Senapati has written the two snapshot write ups - These are just two moments that I have "frozen in time" and written about. These are purely fictional - one is about a peaceful autumn day in the park, while the other is a gloomy night in a haunted castle. Sanjana is 13 years old and currently studying in Grade 8th. She lives in Nashville, TN.

AN ENDURING DARKNESS

The cold concrete tortured my frail toes as I stepped into the dark, gloomy building. Its despairing silence provoked my presence. The brute walls spoke to me in dejected whispers. A feeling of dismay arose inside of me as I took a step towards a darkness that had waited for my company in complete silence. Every miniscule creak echoed through the obscure chamber like a roar in a cave. I had an eerie sensation that apparitions were dancing in the atmosphere around me. A gust of cold wind engulfed me and forced me to lose all sensation, as the world faded to black.

PERCEPTION OF A 2ND GENERATION ODISIA IN AMERICA

My name is Shivangi Padhy and I live in Aurora, Illinois. Living as a 2nd generation Odia in America is much different than it would be in India. This is because in America you are surrounded by many types of different ethnic groups of different cultural and religious background. Even then we keep our culture alive. And I am proud of that.

Every day I get up and get ready to go to school. None of my friends at school are Odia. They all have a different culture background. After school I usually come home. At home we have many things that describe our religion and culture. We have a big puja room and have pictures of god in most parts of the house. On Sundays, my family and I go to Chinmaya Mission. We chant and learn Vedic studies here. We are dedicated to go to Chinmaya Mission.

As you can see even if I am not surrounded by people that are not Odia we still practice our religion at home. If I was living in any part of India, people would understand what I do because of the similar cultural and religious background. In America, sometimes I have to explain to my friends what I do, why I do the way I do.

At home, living with us is my grandma. I am very lucky to have a grandma living with me. This is because my grandma cooks phenomenal Indian food. Some things she cooks is chena tarkari, bean bhaja, ghanto tarkari, saru bhaja, banana bhaja and many more delicious dishes. My mom cooks as well. She cooks fish, salmon, chicken, and a good tarkari with shrimp, soups, pasta and many other

dishes. My grandma makes her food like she would if she was in Odisha. My grandma and my mom cook the most mouthwatering dishes.

Sometimes on Sundays, after Chinmaya Mission, we go to the Jagannath Temple. All of the people from the OSA group in Chicago usually come here to attend a family's puja. On special days, like Ram Navami, Shivaratri, Ganesh Chaturti, etc. everyone gathers and we do a big puja. Usually after the puja, we eat delicious food and join together to watch the cultural events. There is singing, dancing, skits in odia, and many more creative fun ideas. It is very entertaining to watch what we odia's can do. We also have gatherings where we sing and dance as well. We odia's like to have fun with each other a lot.

As you can see, even if I live in America and not everyone around me understands my culture and religion we keep it alive by coming together and having fun with each other. We sing, dance, have fun together, do skits and dramas and bring other Odias in Chicago to join the family. And that's something to be proud about. That's why I am very happy to have the OSA convention 2013 in Chicago this year. And bringing all Odias in America to join us and bring the Odia spirit out of us. This will make us a happier and bigger Odia family.

- Shivangi Padhy is 13 years old and is currently in 7th Grade. She loves music, vocal, travel, camping and swimming, and stays with her parents and elder brother at Aurora, IL.

THE REALITY OF HAPPINESS

Let us take a moment and think: what is it that we all strive for in life? What is that one thing, once achieved; our lives will be full and complete? The answer is "Happiness". Happiness is something we all desire. It is something we all strive toward, knowingly, or not. Ask anyone why they work, why they study, why they do anything in life. Many different answers will ensue, money, to get into a good college, etc. but in the end, it will always be the same answer: they want to be happy. Take a student for example. Why does he or she study? To get into a good school. Why do they want to get into a good school? To get a good job. Why do they want a good job? To make money. Why do they want to make money? This process of questioning can go on farther and farther with multiple answers; however, these answers always reach the same destination: the desire to be happy.

Now before we jump in too far, first we should be clear what it means to be happy, and what a desire is. A desire is a want - an intense want for something that you do not possess. Happiness is the feeling of contentment you get when a desire is fulfilled. But then if you think about it theoretically, we will never be happy because there will ALWAYS be another desire. So that leaves us with two options to be eternally happy. Either we fulfill every single desire, or sublimate them. Now you choose which one is easier. There is a saying: there is enough money in the world for everyone to be happy. But there is not enough money in the world for one greedy person.

Imagine for a moment that every single one of your desires was fulfilled. Whatever you ever wanted is now yours. You cannot deny that you would be unequivocally happy. But after further analysis, we can glean from this situation that the reason behind your happiness is that you have no desires in that moment. Think about it. If every one of your desires is fulfilled, you are left with no desires.

The paradox is, if you start with no desires, you have already arrived to where you want to be. This shows that in order for us to be eternally happy, we have to get rid of our desires because it can take a million lives and there is no guarantee that all of our desires will be fulfilled, but if we can sublimate them, we remain eternally happy forever.

That previous line sounds foreboding doesn't it? But rest assured that it is not anything too difficult if you put your mind to it. There are two mantras I would like to share with you, which I have learned from my father. The

first is the mantra for unhappiness. If you want to be forever unhappy, follow this mantra: "Never be content with what you already have, and keep hankering for what you do not have". The second mantra is the mantra for happiness and it is the complete antipode of the mantra for unhappiness: "Be content with what you have and don't care about the things you don't have". If you live your life like this, nothing can ever affect you. If you get an ice cream, you will be happy, if you don't get an ice cream, you will be equally happy. However, most of us live chanting the mantra of unhappiness but desiring happiness.

You see how ambivalent that is though. But, if you live by the mantra of happiness, automatically you will become happy, because there are no desires your mind is chasing after.

Many people have the wrong idea of happiness: what it is, and how to achieve it. But if one is truly sincere to find out how to be eternally happy, this will click with you. Live your life by these helpful tips and the great sages and scriptures of our glorious past guarantee that you will be eternally happy because you are already the true embodiment of happiness. Simply, one has to re-cognize one's true nature. Our modern education cannot give such a guarantee. This is what Chinmaya Mission and my elders have taught me, and I wish to pass on this simple truth to whoever is willing to take a dig at it.

That is the reality of happiness.

THE INTERNET

What is internet?

The internet is a worldwide system of computer networks which means that a lot of computers are connected to each other and share information with each other. People can find any information that they need on the internet. For example, if you don't know how to make a paper airplane by yourself, you can go on the internet and search how to make a paper airplane. Or if your mom knows how to make the world's best chocolate chip cookies and she wanted to share the recipe with the rest of the world, she would place it on the internet so other people can find it!

History:

The history of the internet began with the development of electronic computers in the 1950s. Since the mid-1990s, the Internet has had a significant impact on culture and commerce, including e-mails, instant messaging, voice over IP and the World Wide Web with its discussion forums, blogs, social networking and online shopping sites. Today the Internet continues to grow, driven by ever greater amounts of online information, commerce, entertainment and social networking.

Interesting facts about the internet:

- o 247 BILLION EMAILS ARE SENT EVERYDAY AND 90 TRILLION EMAILS ARE SENT EVERY YEAR!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- o The first website was published on August 6th, 1991, it was called <http://info.cem.ch/hypertext/WWW/>.
- o The most popular online activity is email.
- o Approximately 11 countries in the world still do not access the internet!
- o There are 255,000,000 websites on the worldwide web.
- o There are 2.7 trillion searches on Google each month!!!

The advantages of internet:

We can't possibly survive without an internet as the technology has evolved so much. We need to keep up-to-date on various subjects e.g. science, math, literature, arts. Interestingly enough, the education/degree can also be earned through Internet. For us, Internet is extremely important to keep up with our culture. The internet

adds a flavor to all occasions, celebrations, festivals and even talking to my grandparents on a regular basis. So if I have to imagine our generation without Internet, the best I could describe is "Moving back by 200 years in your calendar". It would be hard to describe the advantages of the internet in words. The advantages are unlimited.

The disadvantages of internet:

It is very commonly said that "where there is advantage, disadvantage follows". When our generation is exposed to the internet, we get used to the technology too much. We are fully dependent on this for our daily activities. While using the internet, we get distracted by other sites, which are far from being useful. We tend to spend a lot of time in a rather unproductive way. The disadvantages can be categorized into 2 primary reasons.

1- Addiction: We become addicted to spend too much time on browsing useless sites. We neglect completing our homework. We don't spend time with our parents. We suffer from different physical injuries such as bad eye sight, back problem.

2- Information Leakage: There are criminals on the Internet who try to get our personal information and use it to their advantage. They may hack our computer and infect with virus to crash our systems permanently. This can lead to financial losses, credit history downgrades, illegal activity charges, defamation.



Safety Rules online for us:

- o Don't give out personal information such as name, address, telephone number.....without parents' permission.
- o Tell your parents right away if you come across any information that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- o Never send any pictures of yourself or your family members without your parents' permission.
- o Do not give any password or credit card number to anyone (even your best friend) other than your parents, change your password if you think somebody knows it.
- o Don't respond to any messages that are mean or in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable. Tell your parents right away.

- o Check with your parents before installing or downloading any programs or using sites that can slow down your computer.
- o Never agree to meet an online friend in person. This person might not be who you think he is. Even if he says he is a kid and seem nice and friendly, he could be a bad adult posing as a kid. If you feel there is someone you must meet, and your parents agree, make sure they go with you and make the meeting in a public place.
- o Don't accept any offers such as gifts or money from any stranger.
- o Never tell an online stranger what you will be doing or where you will be going.
- o Use the internet only when your parents say it's OK to use. Use the internet for as long as you are supposed to.

Conclusion:

Everything has its positive and negative sides, so also the Internet. The important thing is, we have to balance our activities. We should take advantage of the good things rather than wasting our energy in doing bad things. If we keep this in our mind, Internet is going to be the most powerful tool for everybody.

I would like to request my friends, sisters and brothers, please make good use of the Internet and avoid all the bad things on internet. Live in peace and let others live in peace.

- Shreya Padhy is 9 years old and is currently staying with his parents, Susant and Smita Padhy, at Ottaa, Canada

I CAN DO IT!

Susie Dobson had always wanted to become a writer. But as she grew she found out that there was a huge obstacle in her dream of becoming a writer, it was dyslexia. Dyslexia means it is harder to read or write. And people with dyslexia mix up letters like a d to b or m to w or spelling like search to search and write to rite. But this didn't stop her.

One day as Susie was walking to school a large boy approached her. He looked cold hearted and vicious. She dared to look up.

"Hey you! Yeah you! Look up dork. "she tried hard to look. "My friends told me that you wanna grow up to be a writer. But little girl, how are you gonna be one if you can't even write down your name properly! Ha ha! "

Hearing those negative words, she ran to the nearest tree crying. How could her hopes still soar in the sky ready to be achieved? How could she still have her arms strong enough to reach up to the blue sky? How? All her dreams were now the Titanic and the boy was the iceberg, sinking down all her hopes of being a writer.

Later that day, Susie was talking with her friend Julie. She was telling her all about the incident with the bully.

"Why can't life be normal for me? I have to go through really harsh times, Julie. Sometimes I can't bear it and I just cry." Susie was already sobbing of the thought.

"Susie! Don't even think about that! Since you have obstacles in life they are just ways to make you

strong. And that is something I admire about you, Susie. Just remember I am always with you," Julie said smoothly.

Later that day when they were announcing the test results for the spelling bee.

"Again our three time winner is Amanda Dixie," announced vice-principal Ross, "And again, the three time loser is Susie Dobson." I would take out the loser part. No teacher or principal would EVER do that.

"Ha, ha, Susie Dumbson! I am ten times as smart as you! And you're not even one percent smart! Loser!" Amanda bullied.

After school she headed straight to her father. She wanted to learn to read and write properly. She wanted to start right now.

"Dad I want to learn to read clearly and also writing. I want to start now." commanded Susie.

"Hold your horse, cowgirl! Did you just say that you are now strong enough to overcome your hugest problem, starting now? " her dad asked. "Yes, right now Dad. Now! " she confirmed

"Okay Susie Snake!" Snake is sometimes used as a critical word

They tried really hard making her start with the difference of each letter. Her dad made her come home every day and finish her homework and then continue to practice hand writing and soon to read signs from cereal

boxes to books. She also used a program on the computer that is based on Orton-Gillingham which taught her about phonics, rules, etc. It was a long process. A very long process.

"Susie Snake do you want to know some famous people with dyslexia?" questioned her dad.

"Sure dad! Tell me some!" replied Susie.

"Okay, we have Tom Cruise, uh, Orlando Bloom--"

"Orlando Bloom, the guy from Pirates of the Caribbean! He was Will Turner, right?" Susie interrupted.

"Right, but Susie we have more. Now we have Leonardo da Vinci, Whoopi Goldberg, Ozzy Osbourne, Pablo Picasso, and Thomas Edison. And that is only to name a few!" her dad told her.

"Finally! Some people who know how I feel and probably understand me! This is too cool!" She finally knew that more people out there had been going through what she had. This was a very comforting thought for her.

As she was going to school she saw a lot of people signing their names on a large piece of paper.

"Sign your name on this piece of paper if you would like to enter in the Anthology of Short Stories contest," Julie read. That sounds really amazing! And look right here, it says that if you win, your story will get published in their book. OMG! Can be offensive to some people I'm going to enter, are you? Julie timidly asked. She wasn't full on sure if that was the right thing to say.

"Sure, why not Julie?" Susie said while she signed the paper. "I know a great story to write and send. It's about a girl who is really poor, but she's extremely brilliant. And she becomes rich and she gives some money to her parents. And then there is a bad magician who tricks her into thinking that he is her uncle and gets her money. After that she finds out that he is not her uncle and well, somehow she gets back at him. I haven't thought of that part yet, but is it a good idea?"

"Susie I think you will win! I really think so. That was the best story I've ever heard!" Julie complemented, I think if they don't pick you, then I would that out in case it insults the judges LOL!

They both entered and started writing that day. The story was due in three months. Susie started writing for hours, struggling and struggling. She had never struggled this hard.

As Susie was walking down the street after school she heard a loud cry from her house. She hurried to her house to see what it was.

"Oh, Susie darling! Susie!" her mother cried a hundred tears.

"Mom, what happened? Mom?" Susie knew something was terribly, terribly wrong.

"My little Susie! You'll never be the same, never! Susie, Shakespeare is g-g-gone!" her mother looked as if she would the house with tears.

"What!" exclaimed Susie, her dog Shakespeare was gone! He was D-E-A-D! She had named him after the famous play writer and he passed away.

The next day she stayed home because she said she had an upset stomach, but really it was an upset heart.

She tried writing but she knew somehow this wasn't the right story so she erased it and started a new story called 'My Dog My Shakespeare'. It was a story about Shakespeare's life. This time there was no struggling, but there were a ton of tissues.

"Mom I see the letter from the contest people!" Susie squealed at the top of her lungs. She opened it slowly, carefully trying not to rip it. It said that she had gotten in! She screamed as loud as she could. I got in!

Susie made her parents proud enough to go out for dinner and ice cream. This comes to show with dyslexia everything is tough, but not impossible. Like they say, 'Everything is possible, except impossibility.'

And just remember; keep going on, even if it is hard.

All the adversity I've had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles have strengthened me... You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you. - Walt Disney

ODISSI

Odissi is one of the eight classical dance forms created in India that originates from Odisha. Born in the 2nd Century B.C.E, Odissi was classified into three categories: Mahari (temple dancers), Nartaki (royal court dancers), and Gotipua (boys dancers performing for the general public). After the 17th Century, Mahari and Nartaki dancers ceased to exist and Odissi was carried on by the Gotipua dancers. These dancers dressed up as girls and were part of theater groups or local clubs. Slowly after many years, wealthy and educated families started learning the dance form, making it more socially acceptable. Odissi has a rich and enduring legacy since then. Later in the 1950's through the combined efforts of Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra, Guru Mayadhar Raut, and Guru Devaprasad Das, "modern day" Odissi was born.

Modern day Odissi is characterized by bhargas – choka and tribhangi – and various facial expressions. After many years of training, a dancer will perform a "manchapravesh," which showcases her talents and proves her mastery of the dance. A manchapravesh consists of Mangalacharana: an invocation piece, Battu: a dance performed in the honor of Lord Shiva, Pallavi: a graceful dance enhanced by eye movement, intricate foot movement, and posture, Abhinaya: an expressive piece, and Moksha: the concluding dance which signifies "spiritual liberation."

From my 10 years of experience, I can undoubtedly say that Odissi is one of the most beautiful art forms I have ever encountered. Its flowing grace, intricate footwork, and emotive facial expression enhance the magnificence of Odissi and portray genuine devotion to the Lord. An audience member is captivated by each of the stories a dancer tells and the culture of Odisha and devotion to the Lord is truly evident and contagious. Spectators appreciate and enjoy the performance; but from the dancer, it is a whole different perspective.

- Trisha Mahapatra lives Aurora, IL with her parents and sister. She graduated from Metea Valley HS this year and has been learning Odissi from Guru Smt Ipsita Satpathy for the last 8 years. She is also an accomplished pianist and part of her high school Swim, Youth & Government and Speech team.

When dancing, the audience disappears and the stage becomes part of the dancer; the performance becomes less of a performance, and more of showcase of devotion to the Lord; stories cease to be stories and become reality. Hours of practice and hard work are put forth before performing in front of an audience. Posture, expression, and eye movement must be perfected for each and every mantra, and the emotion and meaning of the song must be clearly portrayed. Although it can be grueling and endlessly tiring at times, it is worth it. The true culture of Odisha is poured out through the musical sound of the ghungroo's and expression of the dancer.

Not many people in the United States have been exposed to Odissi, but I am lucky to be one of them. For this, I want to thank my teacher/guru Ipsita Satpathy for educating me about this dance form. Ipsita Aunty has earned her Master's Degree in Odissi, and has been teaching for a countless number of years. She started the Utkalaa Center for Dance to maintain cultural identity, train and educate the community about this beautiful art form. She has provided the meaning that Odissi has in my life, and is my motivation for completing my manchapravesh.

Odissi is one of the most beautiful dance forms, but there are very few people who are truly exposed to this beauty and the years of dedication that lies behind it. My request to the OSA members is to help Odissi dancers and supporters popularize Odissi within the mainstream USA and Canadian audience. More people need to take the initiative to expose themselves to Odissi. So spread the word, attend performances and better still, take a few friends along with you, find a teacher to train your child, and sponsor whenever you are able to. There are many opportunities to see Odissi performances i.e. in temples, schools, etc. by both students and professionals. By doing so, the culture of Odisha will remain alive through Odissi for generations to come.

NATURE'S FURY

On the news, I had heard that a huge hurricane named Sandy was coming in our way. They nicknamed hurricane Sandy "Frankenstorm". At first I was a little scared, but I knew where we lived, we wouldn't be largely impacted. On the news they told us that Gov. Bob McDonnell of Virginia declared a state of emergency and advised residents in low-lying areas in the eastern part of the state to prepare to evacuate. Gov. Martin O'Malley of Maryland told us a similar order for all counties in his state and activated the National Guard to assist in emergencies. My parents started preparing our emergency kits. My dad found a few videos on what to do when we are in a dangerous storm. All this preparing got me worried. What if the storm was going to really hit us badly? My parents assured me that everything was going to just fine.

I peered outside through the window. I felt a cold shiver all over my body as my father got something from the garage. The wind was howling, the leaves from the trees were rustling. Nobody was outside on this cold and windy night. Everyone was inside to cover up from the storm. I heard the whoosh from the waves as they crash towards the shore.

I held myself tightly. In the distance, I could see the storm terrorizing the town nearby. I could even hear the light pitter-patter of the hail as it stormed down towards the ground. It was coming. The sky started to rumble loudly. I saw a flash of lightning up ahead. I knew my parents were worried but I wasn't. I was as brave as could be. I charged through the rain getting extremely soaked. Just a little rain would not stop me.

Now the storm was getting really close. I closed my eyes just as another flash of lightning bolted down from the sky. The thunder rolled again for a really long time. Another lightning bolt came from the sky. A crackling sound of thunder made me shiver. I knew that the storm was here. I took a deep breath, I was protected and safe.

"Mira, go change in to your nightdress. It is getting late sweetie." My mother advised me.

I ran upstairs to change, but as soon as I got upstairs, I remembered that the power was out. I looked outside the window and noticed that the whole town still was out of power. I grabbed my flashlight and ran downstairs. My parents had already gotten out the battery powered stuff for the night. Sometimes I wished Dad could have been a hotel manager somewhere else, where there aren't severe hurricanes. I was hoping the blackout wouldn't last too

long; it should end by tomorrow. I decided to just to relax and hope for the best tomorrow.

The next morning I woke up and saw that the power was still gone when I attempted to turn on the television. It was still raining heavily but I could see an improvement in the downpour. I looked outside and saw that not much damage was done. But Sandy still did affect us. Obviously there was no school today and the past two days. I decided to work on my math textbook that I brought from school. I worked until lunch, which was a horrifying thirty minutes to chew and swallow. After lunch, I read for an hour and then I took a nap for about two hours. I went back to work on my math textbook for another hour, until my mother called me for dinner. The food again was horrible; I tried to divide the food into small pieces so I could just swallow it with only taking one bite. I decided to work on my scarf for my dad's brother's daughter or otherwise known as my cousin, Julianne.

The next morning I tried again to turn on the television and it worked. I watched the news and I saw all the destroyed houses and buildings. Later they showed pictures of the destruction sent in by others. I was depressed because of all the destruction from Sandy. It was like being surrounded by sorrow and pain. They even interviewed a few sufferers of Sandy. I noticed that a lot of people were badly bruised from the rubble. Many children were orphaned because of Sandy. They even showed pictures of the annihilation done by Sandy. I was so hurt by seeing all the pictures, I felt so bad for the family members who had lost a loved one during Hurricane Sandy. After a few days they announced the number of lost lives. For New York it was 48, New Jersey had 24, in Pennsylvania it was 14, Maryland lost 11, West Virginia had 7, 4 for Connecticut, North Carolina lost 2, in Virginia it was 2, 1 for New Hampshire.

So in total there were 113 lives lost. I was shocked at the number of deaths in New York. I was especially worried where Sandy had hit in New York. I was started to worry because Julianne and parents lived where Sandy had hit the worst. I hoped they had time to evacuate their home before Sandy got even worse. Later that night I heard a huge thump, the phone was dropped. I ran downstairs to see my mom crying with red eyes and a swollen face.

"Mom, mom, tell me what happened?" I asked as my mother moaned loudly.

I picked up the phone and said hello. I recognized

my dad's sister's voice as she repeatedly asked if I was okay. I wondered why Aunt Annabelle was asking if I was okay.

"Mira, I want to tell you that it is okay to be sad and we can never predict what Mother Nature will do to anyone of us. Some might be spared others aren't. Just know that your family is here to help you with this event that occurred. I have already told your father, he is on his way home. I love you very much, Mira." Aunt Annabelle started sniffing.

I wondered what had happened. I started becoming concerned about this 'event that occurred'. I questioned Aunt Annabelle about what she was talking about.

"Honey, I'm talking about Julianne, Aunt Jane, and Uncle Patrick," Aunt Annabelle paused for a moment, "they died. Their house was flooded and, well, they drowned."

Right at the moment my mind went completely blank. I was so shocked that I couldn't even say anything at all. I had no idea what to say, so I quickly told her good bye. My mom had already gone upstairs to wash her face. Why did this tragedy have to occur to my family? I started to shed a few tears because of my loss. I have heard about other people passing away because of natural disasters, but I never knew a single one of them. I know that I'm not the only one who is suffering from this natural disaster. I wish I could help these people so their life can become a little easier through this very harsh period in our life.

- Shreya Tripathy is 11 years old and she stays with her parents at Herndon, Virginia. Shreya is a fifth grader with two younger brothers Ayush and Rishi. She enjoys writing, traveling, and simply hanging out with her family and friends.

A YEAR LATER...

Sandy's powerful impact pushed me to design a program to help the people in need of supplies because of natural disasters. So I had created a program to help donate supplies to survivors of different natural disasters. It was quite successful because we had donated over five hundred supplies all over the country to different people. I felt glad doing this because I felt that since I couldn't help Julianne or her family, I could help other people who have been victims of hurricanes, tornadoes, and many other disasters. We had even sent some supplies to orphanages because many children have been orphaned by multiple disasters. The sense of making someone else's life a little better, made me feel very special because of what I have accomplished.

Just a thought...

Sometimes I wish I could control these disasters as it brings so much of misery to so many people around the world. Knowing that the United States of America has a strong government and is a rich nation, many people were still recovering from Hurricane Katrina and Sandy. Think about the people of poor countries and how their countries might be impacted with such large hurricane. Sandy was the second most costly and Katrina was first. You could compare this to earthquake in Haiti as well. The government could not pay as much money as some other countries could have paid for supplies to help the victims. Several people who survived the earthquake, died because of the short supplies. This is the horrible outcome of a terrible catastrophe.

ORIYA LANGUAGE AND GENERATION

Introduction:

Odia is the principal and regional language of Odisha. Odia language belongs to the Aryan family of languages and is closely related to Assamese, Bengali and Maithili. Under the influence of neighboring regional languages of the Aryan and Dravidian families, as also that of the Austric group of languages current among the tribal groups, Odia has developed many linguistic variations, such as Baleswari (Balasore), Bhatra (Koraput), Laria (Sambalpur), Sambalpuri (Sambalpur and other western districts), Ganjami (Ganjam and Koraput), Chhatisgarhi (Chhatisgarh and adjoining areas of Odisha) and Medinipuri (Midnapur district of West Bengal).

History of Odia Language

The first dated inscription in Odia goes back to 1051 AD discovered at Urajang. The history of Odia language is divided into Old Odia (10th century-1300), Early Middle Odia (1300-1500), Middle Odia (1500-1700), Late Middle Odia (1700-1850) and Modern Odia (1850 till present day). Odia literature upto 1500 AD mainly covers poems and prose with religion, Gods and Goddesses as the main theme. The earliest use of prose can be found in the Madala Panji or the Palm-leaf Chronicles of the Jagannatha temple at Puri, which date back to the 12th century. The first great poet of Odisha is the famous Sarala-Das who wrote the Chandi Purana and the Vilanka Ramayana, both praising the Goddess Durga. Rama-

bibha, written by Arjuna-Das, is the first long poem in Odia language.

The next era is more commonly called the Jagannatha Dasa Period and stretches till the year 1700 AD. The period begins with the writings of Shri Chaitanya whose Vaishnava influence brought in a new evolution in Odia literature.

Balarama Dasa, Jagannatha Dasa, Yasovanta, Ananta and Acyutananda were the main exponents in religious works in Odia.

Other poets like Madhusudana, Bhima, Dhivara, Sadasiva and Sisu Isvara-dasa composed another form called Kavyas or long poems based on themes from Puranas. The language used by them was plain and simple Odia.

The first Odia printing typeset was cast in 1836 by the Christian missionaries. The actual Odia script closely resembled Bengali and Assamese scripts but the one adopted for the printed typesets were completely different, leaning more towards the Tamil script.

Three great poets and prose writers, Rai Bahadur Radhanatha Ray (1849-1908), Madhusudana Rao (1853-1912) and Phakiramohana Senapati (1843-1918) settled in Odisha and made Odia their own. They brought in a modern outlook and spirit into Odia literature. Around the same time the modern drama took birth in the works of Rama Sankara Ray beginning with Kanchi-Kaveri (1880).

Odia literature mirrors the industrious, peaceful and artistic image of the Odia people who have offered and gifted much to the Indian civilization in the field of art and literature.

The current situation

With such a rich culture and language, the importance of Odia language is slowly disappearing from generation to generation. We don't have enough knowledge about the history of our language. There is a saying "Charity begins at home". If we think deeply about this statement, we will know how badly we are neglecting our language. Every Odia should speak their mother tongue. We should remember this - if we don't speak/write our language, the language will just disappear after few generations.

- Shulini Padhy is 13 years old and is currently staying with his parents, Susant and Smita Padhy, at Ottaa, Canada. She is in grade 7. Her hobby is to read small oriya books and always enthusiastic about Oriya culture

How can we help to make it better?

So here are a few ways that we can instill the value of our language in our generation.

- Make sure to speak Odia at home
 - Encourage younger kids to speak their mother tongue
 - Internet is the powerful tool to get in touch with our language on a regular basis
 - Listen to Odia music and read Odia books to bring the awareness of our culture
 - Celebrate all Odia festivals and at least make sure to wish our Odia friends and families on the occasion
- Hurdles on our way

There are many hurdles on our way to preserve our mother tongue

- 1) We are busy with our own education, friends. There is absolutely no time to do the above practices.
- 2) Often more instances, parents don't speak the language at home. They prefer to speak other languages.
- 3) No Odia language schools in several regions in North America.
- 4) Our generation need motivation and encouragement from our elders to promote the language.

Conclusion

So in conclusion I can request all my Odia friends, brothers and sisters, not to let our mother tongue disappear after a few generations. If we can put effort, we will definitely succeed. We should feel proud that we are Odias, we can speak and write Odia.

ME AND MY BROTHER

Me and My brother,
He just turned 4, still tiny, I feel big and strong,
When I see him, I feel excited,
He is a cutie pie; I feel I am sweet,
When he gives me his most innocent look,
I feel winning the world.

Me and my brother,
Together we tried making a snowman,
He jumped, threw snow, messed all up,
And..he made me mad; but I felt awfully bad being mad at
him,
He cried for a while, came and sat near me; I looked at him,
He said "Sorry Bhaina" with his teary eyes rolling down,
I feel deep in my heart loved.

Me and my brother,
He stretched his arms to carry him, I hugged him tight,
Just said it's Okay,
Though deep down I feel blessed for having him everyday,
Ah! I'm so top of this world just to have "Adwik"

- Ayush Panda is 9 years old. He goes to Fred Rogers Magnet academy. He loves to play tabla, is in swimming team and also a junior Black Belt holder in karate. He likes playing with his younger brother at leisure. He loves his Roller Blades too!

ODE TO DHARMAPADA

I am a traveler to an antique land
That bows to a youth of yore
Twelve hundred despondent artisans, whose art
Stands mute in the sand
Untold the sorrow that the artists felt
The sculpture read those passions well
The antique smiles that mocked their art
The capstone, no more stands guard to
Dharmapada: his name stands true
Distraught, despair made significant by heroic work
Immeasurable, that ponderous sacrifice for duty
Nothing remains of that twelve year youth of Odra
But the sound of waves clambering the shore
And courage that survives, stamped on lifeless stone.

- Rishi Satpathy, 16 years old, is a Rising Senior at Illinois Math and Science Academy, Aurora. He is son of Sushant and Ipsita Satpathy and lives in Naperville, IL.

NANDAN KANAN: A TRIP CLOSE TO MY HEART

My trip to Nandan Kanan zoo
Held many memories
I saw many different animals
But first I saw the monkeys

They had brown fur and long tails
One jumped on my head
One stole peanuts from a couple
That was unexpected

Next up were the peacocks
And I saw not one, but two
Fan out their beautiful wings
A mix of green, gold, and blue

The guide showed us a tiger
It was pacing back and forth
As if it wanted to catch some invisible prey
Walking from South to North

We learned many interesting facts
Like hippos are born under water
The scientific name of an Indian rhino is rhinoceros
And in a lion family, the female is the hunter

With my cousins
We went on a bus ride
We laughed and joked around
I had a smile a mile wide

Going to the zoo with my cousins
Wasn't what I was used to
But that made it all the more fun
Because it was something new

The best part was
Being with my family
That's where all the fun begins
And those are my memories

- Disha Das is 12 years old. She is in Grade 7 at Robert Frost Middle School. She stays with her parents, Debananda Das and Deepa Parija, at Rockville Maryland.

NILE AND ELIN

As the whispering desert winds blow, they tell of a story not many know.
 You may find out for a price, in the oasis past the blue ice,
 There sits an old statue, unravel its scarf to find a clue,
 Then go to the cave of din, find the story of Nile and Elin.
 This is a story from the past, made when Egypt was not quite vast.
 Nile (a girl) was a twin, of a rather smart boy named Elin,
 When they were 9 years old the dangers came untold.
 They were found by a group of thugs, taken and tied face to face with slugs.
 Tossed into an old papyrus sack, their mother cried for them to come back.
 In the sea they drifted about, hoping that the tide was out
 Luck finally came as they lay to rest on a shore that they knew best.
 Yet they did not find their mother or their big older brother.
 There was a large empty hut, and a note-but,
 In their way, they had a test, for them to do their very best.
 The note had said they must take the lead by their mother's bed and paint it red.
 They did so and it disappeared and in its place something else appeared.
 A water skin and food untold, and they looked to see what else it would hold.
 a banquet cloth and ribbons were there, left for Nile to wear
 Then when they awoke the next day, their mother came to say,
 I was gone for market day; you must stay inside today,
 I don't want you to go, a sandstorm might a-blow,
 I don't have time so do your chores, and don't say they're more like bores
 And if you wish go cook that fish, I won't make a snack dish,
 Very fast and hard they worked, And in the darkness their brother lurked.
 Nile was concerned by the look on his face, like the day he twisted his ankle at a race.
 Later that night he had asked for help with facts that would make Elin quite yelp.
 His story concerned a sacred book, and an idol he took,
 As he looked at the idol of Thoth, He changed into a sloth.
 A god with the head of a bird, Thoth asked him to tell everything he'd heard.
 The book of Thoth was stolen by the evil lord Bolin
 He made the desert hotter, and took most pure water
 The Nile would dry, and Thoth needed him to fly
 a goddess into the house, where she would change into a mouse.
 Nile interrupted him there, and said, "we can go to his lair!"
 We will be peddling things, and Elin's mice he always brings,
 their brother gave her a bag on a string, that could carry everything,
 They peddled the next day with grace and soon they reached the place.
 As they knocked bravely at his door, the mouse ran across the floor
 But servants seized her by the tail, and would have killed her with a nail.
 The mouse glowed and disappeared when Lord Bolin appeared
 Nile and Elin hid in two baskets, next to cat-sized caskets
 With a spark in the air a scroll came to be, inside it a god's desperate plea.
 Nile and Elin were inside, the place the Book would reside.
 A powerful spell protected it, and the gods couldn't get to it.
 Only mortals could break the spell, and take Thoth's book as well.
 On a sparkly ball was a map with further instruction, about a crown and a griffin with a grip like suction
 They stole into the dining hall, in which there was a sparkly ball.
 they started wanting it so much, when Elin started to touch,
 a water trap opened up and started to fill, with crocodiles and a sharp duck's bill
 In her bag Nile started to grope, and pulled out a string that became a rope.
 she tied the rope onto the ball, and swung across, Elin and all.
 Nile had a scroll that was on the ball. It was a map about to fall

As Nile read of the traps to come, Elin looked at the past one
The trap started to drain, and Elin found something to gain
Elin showed the trap to Nile, and inside was a baby crocodile
She put it in the bag with the map, where it took a long nap
They crept into the corridor, and took an ancient book of lore
It was long ago stolen by the father of Bolin.
He took it from the gods who didn't know he had stolen it long ago
As they took the book of lore the ceiling opened up with ibises galore
Nile took out a large sharp thistle. Waving it, she let out a long low whistle.
The twins blinked in confusion. Was that griffin an illusion?
No it wasn't, but they stared as the griffin fought, teeth bared
The ibises flew away, the griffin swooped down, in its mouth was a tiny crown
As they started to jump onto its back, they heard a tiny quack.
There was a baby duck, whom they named Luck
Elin put her in his pack then put that on his back.
They rode the griffin to a cloud, from which music came, very loud.
Inside the cloud books whirled, twirled, and spun, but the book of Thoth was the only real one.
They picked it up and flew to their brother, who was at the temple with their mother.
He gasped with joy as they flew down and gave him the book and the crown
The twins were regarded as heroes, while before they were just zeroes
Thoth himself came to say, those two twins saved the day
Now the twins had three new pets, which would protect them from new threats
You know, said Elin as he cooked with thyme, I really would like to stop speaking in rhyme

- Ayusha Acharya is 12 years old. She is in 7th Grade and she loves reading and biking.

THE MAGIC OF A MOMENT

The first drop of rain,
falls into my outstretched hand.
The rainbow displays its glorious colors,
just for me.
The full moon glisters brightly above,
winks at me as I long for it.
The sun is up there, providing warmth,
just for me.
The Ocean is a mystery,
mystically intoxicating me.
The waves rush in and dance in glee,
just for me.
The magic is in the air,
lurking, playing hide and seek with me.
The fragrance of it stays there lingering,
just for me.
I cherish these moments and thoughts,
and tuck them safely into my heart.
The magic of these moments resonate love,
just for me.

- Resha is 12 and half years old, an eighth grader at Windermere Ranch Middle school in San Ramon, CA. She is a Hindustani Classical singer and a competitive swimmer. In her spare time she loves to write poems and short stories.

DREAM VACATION

Off I went on a dream vacation,
To a place with no tension to face,
Where we can enjoy, and sprinkle its grace.

Off I went on a dream vacation,
To a place where we spread can sing, dance, and all in
glance,
Where we have peace around and fill all we aspire.

Off I went on a dream vacation,
But I know my dream will end with the blink of eye,
Wish every thought comes true like the eternal sky,
And my dream vacation would be the place to live forever.

- Ayush is 9 year old. He goes to Fred Rogers Magnet academy. He loves to play tabla, is in swimming team and alsos a junior Black Belt holder in karate. He likes playing with his younger brother at leisure.

MY LOVE FOR MY BROTHERS

You are the thought that start all my mornings
And the end to each day,
I imagine you two in everything I do,
And everything I say

You both are the smile on my face,
The glimmer in my eye,
The warmth in my heart,
And everything in my life

The only two hands that's fastened to mine,
The only two shoes on my two feet
I love you my brothers and true friends,
I can never go on without you

You are all that I have ever wanted,
All that I ever needed
You both are all that I have dreamt of,
You both have always meant so much to me

I have given you all my love,
Not a single drop of my love is left
I love you both equally very much
Of my love there can never be any theft

My love for my brothers,
Is for no other....

- Shreya Tripathy is 11 years old and she stays with her parents at Herndon, Virginia. Shreya is a fifth grader with two younger brothers Ayush and Rishi. She enjoys writing, traveling, and simply hanging out with her family and friends.

THE BROOK (Pantoum)

The brook gurgles, trickling on and on;
The nightingale trills, the air its song fills,
The fish swim along, the current flowing strong;
Under the tree's shade, the eggs have been laid.

The nightingale trills, the air its song fills,
A moose bend to sip, using its tough, long lip
Under the tree's shade, the eggs have been laid,
The crayfish molts its shell, swimming rather well.

A moose bend to sip, using its tough, long lip
The doe bends to drink, on the riverbank's brink,
he crayfish molts its shell, swimming rather well,
The brook gurgles, trickling on and on;

- Ayusha Acharya is 12 years old. She is in 7th Grade and she loves reading and biking.

LUCKY GIRL

I have a lot of luck
My brother makes some bucks
But he tried to steal my pot
of gold and got stuck in my
Blankets green folds Oh, I
Have a lot of luck

- Sweta Jena is 10 years old and goes to Patterson Elementary School, Naperville, IL. She loves cute stuffed animals and loves to read, ice skate, & roller skate.

VOICE OF LIFE

As life keeps moving on
At the peak of any age
The light within us shines out true
Piercing through the sky
Carrying away all doubts
Taking us all the way up high .

In the water, truly blue
A droplet falls and changes the hue
The lives of most will not change
But the lake will not be the same
Something has changed
Irrevocable, it will never change back.

Like the lake, our lives continue
Changing at the slightest touch
As our lives ripple and shift
We can give others a lift
And the ripple will continue to spread
Speeding through the world, deeply resonate.

The voice of life
Never stops calling out
And grounds us to our lives
Bolstering and stopping change
And even if it is suppressed
It will come back strange
Filling all with hope abound.

In a world filled with despair
The force of emotions will shimmer in the sky
Even though lives are mysterious
Hearts will tie lives together
Bringing together spirits: forever and ever.

- Dev is a twelve year old, seventh grader residing in Naperville, IL with his parents Sushant and Ipsita Satpathy and his elder brother Rishi.

THEM

They had grey hair and withered cheeks,
They had pale skin and walked slowly.
They all spoke softly and they looked at the children with
love.

They could be my grandparents.
The ones reciting the poems they wrote,
All said it with expression,
I don't think anyone could do better than that.
I came here expecting to be bored,
But they surprised me.
They were like my long-lost friends who I had never seen,
They were cheerful and didn't at all seem like,
People over Sixty.

They were old but young,
They looked sad and desolate but they spoke with
happiness.
When they looked at me,
They froze.
One said, "You remind me of my childhood with that voice
of yours."

Another said, "Your eyes carry so much for your age, I feel
heartbroken."
I looked down.

They didn't say anything bad to me but I was sad,
Sad that their world in which they grew,
has gone.
The fields of lush grass and colorful flowers were now
replaced by,
Factories and buildings.

I wanted to go to the world that they knew,
See it for myself.

A lone tear escaped my eye.
I felt a warm finger wiping it away.
I looked up and was engulfed in the familiar chocolate
swirls of my father's eyes.
"It's alright," he said softly. "You remind them of their past.
That's all."
That's all?

I reminded them of something they would never see again,
Something they longed even more than me.

But then,
Their fate lay in God's hands.

- Srujani Panda is 12 years old and lives with her parents, Dr. Tanmay Panda and Dr. Sunanda Mishra Panda in Toronto, Canada. Srujani studies in Grade Six at Forest Manor School. She is a voracious reader and a creative writer. She also loves to sing and dance.

STEPPING STONE

I came to river to go across but afraid that I would fall
I saw a creaky, ropy bridge but it was very tall
I thought I would use it but my heart said no, no
Instead I saw the stepping stone purely just for show
It was large and round in my mind
Easy enough for my small feet to find
I jumped and landed
I grunted and made it
I saw the next one and starting to regret
But I had gotten this far no way was I going to back out
of it yet
I leaped, frozen in time
I felt sour, as sour as a lime
I landed safely but for how long
I heard the first bell go DING DONG
I had one final stone to go
I thought, then jumped like a pro
I finished spectacularly
I didn't want to get a tardy
I didn't hesitate and made my move
By the time I landed I was in a groove
I ran and hustled
The bag on my back started to bustle
I could see the school and the gates were about to close
I tried and tried and so did my toes
But alas it was not meant to be
I spent my day by the outside tree
I came back home on the wagon
I wish in the morning I had a flying Dragon
I wept and wept
And sadness crept and crept
I came home and told my tale
A journey over hill and vale
I still remember the stone
The helpful Stepping- Stone

- Saswat (11 yrs), lives at East Glen Haven Blvd in Houston, TX. He is the son of Drs. Arati and Debananda Pati. He is a sixth grader at St. John's School. He loves playing Tennis, Star Wars, Legos, and reading books. His hobbies include singing, writing poems, and playing piano.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(An acrostic for his 150th birthday)

Life or Death

Saint of saints, greatest of greats

Wherever he went, people became his "mates"

Anyone he asked if they had seen god,

Most people however, would never nod.

Interestingly, A guru he found at last

Very many times, his tests the guru passed

In the course of time the guru became significant,

Very soon he as a disciple was impeccable

Everyone showed him appreciation

Kindness helped him lead others to salvation.

A conference he attended in the Parliament of Chicago,

No one else spoke about Hinduism, born long ago.

Anyone from far India knew his whole name

Now that he taught many, he had a lot of fame

Distant Americans and Europeans were also taught

And he left behind a legacy, recording all his thought

- Ayusha Acharya is 12 years old. She is in 7th Grade and she loves reading and biking.

MOTHER EARTH

Oh Mother!

All that you give

You make us live

You teach us to be brave

When troubles come our way

Even though, we put you in danger

You never show your anger

We dig holes on you to get water

We blast your body to get richer

From the time we are born, till the time we rest in
peace

We stump on you, fight for land – & forget just to kis

THANKS for giving us a nest to live

You're THE BEST MOTHER! I will shout it aloud, as long
as I survive.

- Debanshi Nikita Chowdhury is 10 years young and are currently a resident at Maryland.

ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A MAN...

Up the street he was gently walking,

Gently walking, gently walking.

Time passed by; the clock was ticking tocking,

Ticking tocking, ticking tocking.

Yet these thoughts had no meaning to him.

The thoughts that he had were neither happy nor grim.

In fact not a thought he had was a thought even dim.

Just consciousness of existence was his power within.

Not a branch moved, not a leaf stirred.

And in this lonely silence not a cat purred.

And in this lonely silence not one was heard.

Because into this lonely silence the darkness was lured.

Yet this man was not affected by it.

To describe this man there was no word fit.

Neither was he normal nor was he bit.

Nor did he use words to show his quick wit.

In fact, it is safe to say that he was an unusual man indeed!

- Devidutta Biswabharati is a grade 9 student with Humberview Senior Secondary School, Caledon, Canada. His other interests are Taekwondo and Tabla.

SUN AND RAIN

I watched the sun, So big and warm.

I felt free, I felt safe.

Until, the sun set.

Now here, The rain. The thunder,

The lightning. Pittering, And pattering.

Not stopping.

Longing for the sun, to set me free.

To take me out, of this prison.

Depressed as the rain falls, sitting back.

Not bothering the others, who long for the sun too.

The sun comes, the others go out.

I stay, in the dark.

I long for the sun, to set me free.

To take me out, of this prison.

Will it happen?

- Parneeta Mohapatra is 13 years old and is in Class 8th. She is currently enrolled in Chattanooga school of liberal arts (CSLA).

OSA'S OSHA

One day, when I was lying down in the gentle breeze,
I closed my eyes and had a peculiar dream.
This made me confused and forced to think,
my connection with OSA and its effect on me.

Every time I celebrate my birthday (2nd July) in the Convention,
I miss all the fun with my friends,
It makes me feel affronted and dismayed,
As if it is the only place available for celebration.

Every time I see my mom taking a long OSA meeting,
I feel unattended and ignored,
Frustrated, thinking my mom is wasting time,
The longer I waited and watched, it delayed my bed time.

I looked for the opportunity to avoid these magic letters, "O-S-A",
But I have no choice other than participating in the Oshas of O-S-A,
Years passed by not knowing when I learnt all the Oshas' of Odisha
Every year I wait for the days to come for the Raja, Kumar Purnima and Rathajatra.

I wait for prathmastami,
To take advantage of being the eldest at home,
I absorb the tradition and culture of Odisha,
through the OSA's OSHA syndrome.

When I go to Odisha, I speak in Odia without hesitation,
That makes my grandmas happy with no reservation
When I meet my elders, I do *mundia without disinclination,
Dear friends, remember this trick to pass as an Odia with distinction.

Now every morning I wake up and think,
should I thank OSA for the belief in me?
I think about mama and OSA all the time,
and realize that meetings were not waste of time.

As the days pass I look back of what my lives have held,
As the year pass I stand proud looking how well my parents have raised.
Every time before I sleep I can't help but thank OSA for the values in me,
Every time I close my eyes I can't help but thank OSA for bringing "OSHA" closer to me.

- Simoni Mishra stays with her parents, Mr. Bitmal Mishra and Mrs. Leena Mishra, at North Potomac, Maryland



Literary Expressions

IT JUST REVOKED WITHIN :
ONE EVENING PARTY

And thus began the party, it was evening then
a party to celebrate Valentines, single and couple
young and old, no matter

I urged not to come though, mood uneven
face swollen and hung, pillow you gifted some time back
stains of over-crying marked the last grief

but I was coaxed to join, solitude no more considered
a great companion really, the party had already began
not waiting for few of us, entered through the hallway
gorgeously decorated in red and silver, color of the day
I wore a laced gown in faded moss, an illustrated scarf
of stripes in brown adorned around to every one's envy

quivering lips, imagination surged with contemplation
till then, I preferred some salad with veggie served
and plain water only, not hot chocolate lest it would
awaken the sleep I was in, could no more feign away
any of it, sat at a corner past the long walkway, self absorbed

silence, as a faithful follower and love roasted in
some one introduced a game of home-making, nevertheless
a tremor in me just finished its round, a sudden shrill sound
interrupted, I took a vision to the other side of the table
an angel with a baby-pink frock, curly long tresses
like a forest brook, chiming with might be some rhymes
opening her almond eyes unto me, eyelashes long enough
to procure love, it was there clinging, not melted, a chirpy big
smile on heart, my-heart-always-on-sleeve-effect trying to woo
me, moments moved to be entrapped
and me, already smitten

the party finished with a bang of John Elton's one famous tune
I was not a part, an overjoyed struggle enamored, looking
towards her, how could she pointedly resemble you
caressing eyes once touched the soul, smile that flied me
up above the mundane with all the affection you reasoned
with me....it just revoked within.

- Sujata Mishra lives with her family at Columbia, South Carolina

IN REMINISCENCE

Naughty Time
 walked past..so fast
 sans whine
 traversed a few nautical miles
 caressing, fondling
 memories of 25 long inseparable years
 some exotic some exclusive whiles
 As i reminisce
 happenings with ease
 the story of twosome
 where similies play cipher
 making room for metaphor
 hope my memories of yester- years
 does not betray my story telling course....
 He came ..he saw ..he decided
 deemed it fit..to tie the knot
 get married
 on the lookout for.....
 a perfect combination
 of beauty,wit and compassion
 rustic appeal..yet outlook modern
 sense of respect for elders
 at equal ease on dance floors
 looking elegant
 donning a saree or
 any formal attire
 for that matter
 or else,sporting a pair of jeans
 any casual outfit or dress
 She had it all
 with a lethal combination of
 beauty poise and grace
 she carried off with elan
 roles of wife, mother,homemaker
 as i distinctly remember
 patience , forbearance
 having occupied
 two most strategic positions
 in the framework of her character
 she helped him realise his dreams
 rise in the rung of success
 ...in all permissible platter
 in all plausible parameter
 he in his value addition mode
 enacted the role of a hero
 in life's all distinct episode
 sharing ..caring being
 their sole purpose of life
 motto of living
 they complemented each other
 like reel life character
 her stint beyond a homemaker

enacted with subtle nuance
 secured meaty roles
 proving her mettle and excellence
 she emerged and dived from her cocoon
 for apt portrayal of characters
 speaker,justice and singer
 in no time
 wielding authority and power
 perse ocured to her
 quite naturally
 as if she was meant to seep into
 the acquired being fully
 He with his sense of commitment
 attitude resolute and defiant
 candid approach,right focus
 went on to become blue eyed boy
 in his professional life
 eventually, achieving,fulfilling
 all his apirations
 yet remained glued to all details
 all facets and aspects
 concerning family's wellbeing
 he got what he wanted
 mused to have....
 god's grace,parent's blessings
 fine tuning,bonhomie,mirth
 revel in joviality
 above all
 bonding with family
 with top-notch values ..peace and bliss
 now, the children having been fully grown
 about to settle in life
 the man fondly looks at
 his lovely wife
 recounting all the great memories
 spanned and scattered along
 these 25 eventful years
 bringing them nearer and closer
 honouring with
 "made for each other"
 together they forge alliance
 redeem the pledge
 once again
 albeit after a lapse of
 two century and five years
 making the bond strong as steel
 redefining the meaning of
 true companionship
 soulful relationship.

- Sujata Dash has penned the poem. She loves to read and write poetry.

WHERE I'M FROM

My blood line is from the sweltering heat and the massive waves from the Indian Ocean
However, I'm from the land of Red, White, and Blue
I'm from the courts, the nonstop suspense, the people, and the skills

I'm from the green that covers up the ground
I'm from the helmet and gold beard, a sense of spirit always inside
I'm from the far shots, bright lights, and classics
I'm from the chases, and the ammo, high up in the community, and respected

I'm from fruits and vegetables, vitamins, nutrients, and energy
I'm from the tiredness, the adrenaline, and the occasional butterflies;
timing of reaction is the difference between success and failure

I'm from all the different gods, elephant, monkey, and human
Festivities and holidays pass and go; most relatives are as common as finding a needle in a haystack
I'm from the rush of employees, the realization of the situation

- Arvin Mohapatra lives in New Jersey with his parents, Prabhat and Yasaswini Mohapatra. He is 13 years old.

MY LITTLE ANGEL

O little one!

When I see your smiling face, I feel I am alive
I nurture you every day so you can grow and thrive
At times I don't bend, as a mother I want to do my best
You can learn a little from me, life will teach you the rest

Dream with open eyes and take my strength to proceed
Face the world with courage if you really want to succeed
Fly as high as you can and spread your wings around
Learn to accept failure if your feet touch the ground

You will remain a child to me even if you grow tall
I am there to hold you in my arms in case you fall
Keep your faith, the world is tough and the path is rough
To reach your goal, my love and blessings will be enough

My eyes are still watching you even when I am not near
He will guide you in your path so move without fear
The day you were born I found world's greatest treasure
How much I love you, I wish anyone on earth can measure.

- Rosalin Samantray lives in Naperville, IL with her husband, Ashok Sahoo, her daughter, Simran and her son, Rohan.

A TRIBUTE TO MOTHERS

This is no substitute for a mother.
Mother understands what a child does not say.
Mother's love makes it possible for her child to achieve the impossible.

Mother gives you life but cannot live it for you.
The best medicine is the world is a mother's kiss.

Mother is home.

Mother can do anything.

There is no velvet as soft as a mother's hand.

All that I am today, I owe to my mother.

A mother's heart is a child's classroom.

A mother's dignity comes from being unknown to the world and her pleasure lies in the happiness of her family.

A joyful mother makes happy children.

Without good mothers civilization is doomed.

A mother is the truest friend.

There is no rose as beautiful as a mother's smile.

- Jointly penned by Bhabna Pati and Ananya Pati

- Bhabna is a junior at Adlai E. Stevenson High school, IL. She is writing poem from very young age. This poem was written by her at age 9yrs. She has received two consecutive, President's Call To Service Award For Community Service (2009 and 2010) from former President George Bush and current President Barack Obama.

Ananya is a 8th grader at Twin Grove Middle School, Buffalo Grove IL. She loves music and cooking different cuisines. She is determined to solve obesity problem through healthy eating and simple living.

A CONVERSATION STARTER

Bande Utkala-Janani
Charu-Hasamayi Charu-Bhasamayi
Janani! Janani! Janani!
I adore Thee, O! Mother Uktal!
How loving are thy smile and voice!
O! Mother! Mother! Mother

When Katakabi Laxmikanta (KL) Mohapatra penned the words to Odisha's state anthem, it's highly improbable that he could have foreseen Odiyas singing them loudly from two oceans over. It's even more improbable that he could have predicted that, like his poem, Odiyas would convene all over the Americas to celebrate all things Odiya.

However, *bhandumane*, it's time for us to face the truth – celebrating Odiya culture for three days is not enough to preserve and sustain Odiya culture. Our culture is dying a not-so-slow death.

I understand the high level of hubris and irony involved with accusing my parents' generation of not taking enough action to preserve Odiya culture as I write in English in an OSA Souvenir Journal. It's easy to dismiss an individual who didn't have to cross two Oceans, establish a family, and a career in a new country, while also navigating through which cultural compromises were worth making.

The Odisha my parents, Aunties, and Uncles left years ago has changed. Go visit Bhubaneswar, Puri and Cuttack – for that matter, any other place in Odisha – they are unrecognizable to the wistful accounts of Odisha I've heard described. Each city has newly-paved roads, new shops and landmarks. And I've heard all the nostalgia about ghara-khaiba, but don't expect to get any in Odisha today. Healthy Odiya staples like dhalma, poee tarkari, enduri pittha, and besara are now only served in restaurants like "Dalema." Family friends and relatives will insist on serving you singhada, chole and aloo dhum from the guy on the corner. And it's alright if the kids don't know Odiya; all of your relatives want to practice their English and hear your family's American accent. Whether or not you approve, Odisha has "progressed." Since it was a conscious decision to immigrate to a new country, NRIs can't blame anyone.

The state of things here in the America is it not much better. Unfortunately, even with the best intentions we lose sight, or choose to ignore, of what is actually going on. Despite the fact we've been growing in numbers – I've seen OSA directory get fatter every year – we have not been able to leave any sort of mark in North American culture or, even more frustratingly, within our own youth community.

Just as an example, every single time I've run into a desi in the last 5 years -- in the Midwest, out East, or out West -- after five minutes of chit chat, we inevitably get to the (never-politically correct) "What Kind of Brown are You?" game. After nodding my head to their answers of "Gujju," "Mallu," "Punjabi," or what not, it's my turn to tell them about my family's origins:

Me: I'm Odiya

Desi: What? You're what?

Me: Odiya, like from Odisha? We have the dance, Odissi? Puri-Jagannath? We're right next to West Bengal...Desi: Yeah, never heard of it. You're the first of that I've ever met.

When you look at Indian diaspora in Western culture, it blows me away Odiyas have zero footprint. Punjabi culture more or less defines Indian identity as we know it today. When first meeting me, non-desis assume we have saag-paneer for dinner, exclusively listen to Daler Mendhi, and that all my kurtas will have a matching Patiala bottoms. Bhangra competitions are some of the most competitive on the national collegiate level. Gujaratis have championed dandia-raas similarly, and to top it off because Gujarati Samaj schools, every Gujarati kid can read, write and speak Gujarati. Everyone in the US knows about Tagore because Bengalis won't let you forget he won a Nobel and don't even get started on the amount of Bharatnatyam Americans have been exposed to already.

I understand Odiya ballads about Jagannath aren't the most "poppy" music, but I think the problem lies here within. As Odiyas, we have counted our culture as not interesting, cool, or worth enough to even try pushing ourselves as a people. We do not take enough pride to value our culture to be as or more interesting/cool/worthy than other desi culture. My generation has not been forced to value our Odiya culture to be an integral part of our identity.

Ask an Odiya youth, the following questions:

1. Where is Dhauri and what is the significance surrounding the site?
2. Who is Jatin Das?
3. What are two main mineral exports?
4. What are Odisha's two main cash crops?
5. What is goti-pua?

Chances are, there are very few Uncles and Aunties, who know the answers to all five, let alone first generation Odiyas. Not only are families not engaging in discussion topics like those, but as a people we have no infrastructure to support those who wish to start these conversations.

Sure, every weekend or two there are Odiya “parties” all around the US. A couple of uncles have an Ikat or Pashapalli kurta on, one auntie will wear an Odiya Pashapalli salwar kurta, and the kids are just happy to get a break from SAT testing prep. If it’s a puja, the kids might get quizzed on “What animal is the vehicle of Ganesha?” but nothing too specific. We’ll know enough to be “good Indians” who can test out of the Hinduism section of our high school “World Religions” curriculum. But aside from these learnings, which are quite marginal, where is the culture? Where is our culture?

I have a friend who one-eighth Italian on her dad’s side. Our senior year of high school, she spent 3-4 hours a week on ancestry.com looking up various things about her family’s lineage. She planned a senior trip to the South of Italy with goals to learn about Italy firsthand and to try and meet 2nd cousin she discovered. When she got back from her trip, she told me about how exciting it was to trace her roots, learn about her culture, pick up a little Italian and meet her relatives. After telling me about how she navigated through the city to meet her cousin, she turned to me and said, “Aren’t you lucky that all you have to do is go to India and your entire family is there! It’s so accessible.”

Accessibility is at the root of the problem. Odiya parties, get-togethers, even OSAs, do nothing to make our culture more accessible when the food is not Odiya, parents speak in English, and people choose not to wear traditional Odiya clothing. Parents often don’t bring their kids along to the mandir either, so the cultural value of our religion is also lost. What makes this all the more frustrating is the fact that we cannot just go back to Odisha and discover our culture the way my friend so easily did. Things in Odisha are changing on such a rapid trajectory, we cannot rely on just going back to the “motherland.” So what are we to do? Firstly, we follow the 12-step method and acknowledge we are facing a cultural vacuum. Secondly, we need to adopt Obama’s “Yes, we can” attitude; we need to believe we can change the situation and take pride in, educate about and preserve our culture. We are armed with best weapons to fight this battle - our parents and grandparents. The Odisha that exists in the minds of the Uncles and Aunties who immigrated to North America between 1965-1990 is the truest version of Odisha that exists today. If you ever forget, think about your last trip to Odisha, and between your relatives and you, who felt more Western? These Uncles and Aunties (my parents included) will always think of Odisha in the most nostalgic, starry-eyed way. Do not devalue your nostalgia. No one else knows or remembers that Odisha. No one else will fight for it.

However, nostalgia alone is not enough. Preservation requires pride and education on a multi-generational level that will take time, effort, and a change in attitude. There are going to be many ways to go about it, some that are more effective than what I will propose, so please take these suggestions as a “jumping off point.”

Aunties and Uncles:

- Speaking to your kids in Odiya: Teach your kids Odiya the same way we learn Spanish in school. Start with speaking only in Odiya at home. If that seems too drastic, start speaking in only Odiya at dinner, or in the car, or on the phone, and work your way up to speaking Odiya at all three. Translate your favorite Akshya Mohanty songs or bhajans; if it’s truly a favorite song of yours, the kids will have heard it before and will be able to keep up. This is how we learn Spanish, French, German and Chinese in school; this should work at home as well.
- Cook Odiya food: We all love pakhala but who still makes homemade dahi? What about chhena poda? If you’re health conscious, make ghanta, dhalma, Illici macha, or mohura. Don’t have the recipe? Suck up your pride and call your mom or mausi, even that one auntie, or any one who still makes it. How are we supposed to pass down recipes if you don’t have them yourself?
- Get the “kids” involved: Do you really think we’re going to start coming to the mandir on our own volition? Most kids my age opt more for the Buddhist route, “more spiritual than religious,” so if you want us to celebrate all the holidays, not just fun ones that have become accepted by the West (Holi and the “Festival of Lights,” Dewaali, obviously), then you might actually need to bring us to mandir. Why do we hate coming with you? We don’t understand any of the Sanskrit, find the sitting and singing boring, and there’s always way too much “politics” going on. So bring us for something simple, maybe just a Jagannath Puja, explain as much as you can, and have us hand out the prasad. When Ratha Yatra comes around, have us paint the Ratha or help chop vegetables. At the end of the day, Hinduism is a lifestyle, not just a religion, so make us see it that way.
- Educate us: Teach us something about Odisha, and not just what you learned in school, something that we can talk about intelligently to our peers. Some suggestions:
 - o What is Odisha’s biggest cash crop?
 - o Who is the current Chief Minister, and can he speak Odiya well?
 - o Puri-Jagannath is consider one of the Four what?
 - o What’s Odisha’s literacy rate?
 - o Why is “Uktal” is synonymous with Odisha?
 - o Who are the famous writers from Odisha?
 - o Did we have any famous patriots fighting for independence from the British?

o Was rassa-golla created in Odisha or is it mishti (Bengali). And what/where is Pahala?

Make sure your kids not only know the answers but understand the significance behind each. We spend time everyday talking about what's going on in the world in terms of sports, politics, celebrities, even Odiya community gossip about what that one "Auntie's son and daughter are doing." If we have time for all that, we should be able to devote five minutes at dinner other every night to ensure kids today know a little something about our roots and what is going in Odisha today.

Odiya Youth

- Learn Odiya: Knowing Odiya comes in so handy! The number of times I was in a public space (early on at school, the dorms in college, my office, the bus, etc.) and wanted/needed privacy, Odiya worked out beautifully. And in case you're wondering, my vocabulary is pretty limited, but when you're desperate, you'll manage to make it work.

- Learn how to cook: So you can make damn good cup of Ramen and are a pro-salad assembler already. Well, fortunately/unfortunately people assume we know how to cook Indian food because we're Indian. The good news, Odiya food is inherently healthy (plenty of veggies, lots of fish, and a fair share of dairy) -- it's just a matter to committing to it. Ask your mom for a spice pack and within an hour you will have over 20 spices in your hands. You'll only need 4 of them on the daily, and the cooking doesn't take that long. Start with something easy like santula, a vegetable bhaja, aloo bharta, or even the generic chole. Bad news, it probably won't taste as good as your mom's cooking the first time. But the good news, if it's really terrible, Ramen only takes 3 minutes to cook.

- Ask questions and get involved: Learn something about Odisha and India in general. Spend 15 minutes on Wikipedia, or talk to your parents and grandparents. It looks terrible when we know less about our own culture than people who have seen a documentary on the Discovery channel or have a cousin who went to Assam. Learn about the cultural and economic ties Odisha historically had with Bali (yup, it's called Bali Jatra for a reason), the Kalinga style of architecture you'll find all over the state, or find out who Sudarshan Pattnaik is and check out his portfolio of work.

In terms of education, this is all just a start, but we need to place value on doing this. I believe the reason why many in my generation of second-generation immigrants are apathetic towards cultural things because we were never exposed to anything in a good light. We saw bickering, bitterness, hypocrisy and narrow-minded attitudes. We saw our families and communities face the same problems but never saw any fresh, new approaches.

We knew even if we did participate and offer our own suggestions, we would never be treated as adults, let alone as equals, since we'd get written off as "pilamane."

And older generations need to shift their methods of preserving Odiya culture. Only when the "pilamane" know what our culture is, will we understand how much it is worth preserving. Instead, The go-to strategy employed thus far by the majority until now has been the stern command of "find a nice Odiya boy/girl." On behalf of every Odiya youth, please stop. This will do nothing for you, me, or preserving what is left of our culture. If an Odiya boy doesn't speak Odiya, hates Odiya food and in general doesn't care about being Odiya, I'm better off finding someone who has a slight interest in my Odiya-ness regardless of his ethnicity.

At this point, you might be thinking, "Who is this self-righteous jhia? Why does she think she can speak to me like this? Why does she care anyway?" Honestly, there's no good answer. My parents forced Bhaina and me to learn and speak Odiya at a young age. They made us sit through Vedanta Society lectures, Hindustani and Carnatic musical concerts, and even took us on a 'historical tour' of the Prachi Nauee when I was just three years old. We went to Odissi performances, heard Mama sing bhajans every weekend, and were forced to eat chhencheda. I remember complaining loudly about all the things I didn't want to do or sleeping through the others, but my parents were persistent. Year after year, they exposed us to more things uniquely Indian and uniquely Odiya.

To some degree my parents got lucky – Bhaina and I were either bored enough or complacent enough to start paying attention. We started enjoying the Indian classical music concerts they were taking us to and wanted to learn the technique behind the perfect podho pittha. We started to understand why our parents had tried so relentlessly, so tirelessly to expose us to Odiya and broader Indian culture; because there was something of value in our culture and they were proud to be able to share that value with us.

Among the kids of our generation, who were brought up in the US or Canada, Bhaina and I are a surprisingly rare breed. And if you're skeptical about the value of our up-bringing, but let me share one insight that only a first generation Odiya can. One of the best feelings on trips to India is going to Bhubaneswar. I love know that when I visit Odisha, I can hold my in Odiya, from the chaha and pakudi sessions I'll be ushered into to getting lost on the street. The best feeling is not feeling like an American tourist like I will when I'm in any other part of India.

My intention is to raise awareness and to start conversations (especially because the community at large

does not engage in wider conversations unless it involves someone running for OSA office). I know there are families like mine out there - who are proudly more "Odiya" than their counterparts in Odisha. But for those who are Odiya in name and nationality only, this should be your call to action.

I might only be an "Odiya youth," who was brought up on first hand accounts of Odisha, but if I can care enough to write up a multipage article in the OSA Journal, the least you can do is start a conversation about whether or not our culture is surviving and what we can do to save it. Because unlike KL Mohapatra, I can imagine a future where there are people singing the Odiya anthem at the 120th OSA Convention but only if we act now. Bhandumane, the future is in our hands.

Footnotes:

**"Odiya youth" definition: a broad, ambiguous term to describe anyone who is of Odiya descent but did not immigrate to the US on their own. While 'youth' typically refers to children and young adults, within the Odiya community, relationships are defined generationally and are socially-enforced. This results in a 40 year old with kids still being referred to as "Odiya youth."*

Answers to the five question to ask your Odiya Youth

- 1. Located on the outskirts (south east) of Bhubaneswar, Dhauli is known as the place where Emperor Ashoka became disillusioned by war and turned to Buddhism. Today, still exists a stupa Ashoka built next to the Daya river, which is said to have turned red from all the blood and lives lost in battle.*
- 2. Famous Odiya Painter and is also the father of actress Nandita Das*
- 3. Iron Ore and Bauxite*
- 4. Cashews and Jute*
- 5. One form of Odissi – Pt Kelucharan Mohapatra trained as a gotipua dancer in his youth.*

About the author

- Prachi Mishra has graduated from University of Minnesota in 2011, and is the Odia Youth Coordinator for Minnesota Chapter.

THE BOY FROM JOYTALONG

He sat there with his legs crossed, one hand loosely on his knee and the other hand close to the broken bamboo stick lying by his side. There was no one else around. It was him and a few birds circling the sky. That stick was the only thing that made him feel safe there. He had picked it up on his way to the mortuary.

Gopi did not know how long he had to wait for the scavengers to finish the last bites off of a body. But he knew that they weren't done. He could see a few vultures still making the rounds eagerly. Today had been a really long day for him. He felt as if he had been sitting on the banks of Paika river for days. It was only a few hours ago that he was sitting at the shop off Highway 12 near Tarapur.

Gopi had not been to Tarapur in a while. After he got a job in Bhubaneswar, he stayed busy with establishing himself at work and adjusting to the city life. He was told the day before that he had been promoted. It was a joyful occasion for him and he decided to celebrate it with his sister's family. He reached Sompur early in the morning and had brought Rasagollas. He wanted to see his own village. It had been five years since he went. His sister said, "Take Tiki with you and go. You don't have to stay there. You can take the last bus out and be back in time for dinner."

Around noon, Gopi and his five year old nephew, Tiki reached Tarapur bazaar.

Tiki wanted to eat his favorite sweet, 'chhena-gajaa'. Gopi was also tired from the ride. It made sense to take a break before they cross the Mahanadi bridge to make the final leg of the journey to their village Joytalong. They got off the bus and made their way to the sweet shop across the street.

The sweet shop was a typical shop that is a common sight in rural India. A small chawl, barely two feet by two feet. One corner housed the coal burner where a tea kettle was constantly boiling the mixture of water, sugar, milk and tea powder to make the over-sweetened, dark brown colored tea. There was a glass container where the 'chhena gajaa' were lined and piled on top of one another. You could see a few flies hovering outside the glass jar. Right outside the shop, a small bench was laid out for customers.

Gopi asked the shop owner for a glass of water. The shop owner handed him the glass and asked hesitantly, "You are Gopi, right?" Gopi nodded. He continued, "I could not recognize you for a minute. It's because of these pants and shirt you are wearing. You look like a pakka babu now

from the city.”

Gopi was least interested in continuing any further discussion on the topic. He asked the shop owner, “Can you get two ‘chhena-gajaa’ for him?” pointing to Tiki. The shop-owner opened the jar, continuing his talk.

“Did you hear what happened at your village today? Your Kanhei uncle passed away this morning.” Then he looked at Gopi with a surprised look on his face, “How did you get the news so fast?” Gopi handed the glass back to him and said, “I didn’t get any news. I came here and wanted to show him my house” pointing to Tiki once again.

The shop owner continued, “Well, you should hurry if you want to see him one last time. I heard they were already on their way to Satara Tota Mashaani with the body.”

Satara Tota Mashaani, which translates to Seventeen Groves Mortuary, was where the people from Tendakuda village usually take the dead bodies to place them on the pyre and burn after all rituals are done. Joytalong being a very small village of barely ten families, used the same amenities as Tendakuda. It was 1969 and the tradition of taking the dead to Jagannath Dham for last rituals was still an expensive and a rare affair at the time.

Gopi kept the glass down. He told the shop owner to take care of Tiki. And he ran. He ran as fast as he could. He stopped briefly at the entrance of the village. There was a patch of bamboo trees growing there. He looked around and saw one lying there on the ground. He tried to bend it, it seemed solid. He picked it up. It was perfect for his purpose.

He ran again holding on to it, fast towards the mortuary.....

He heard some hustle behind him and immediately turned back. He didn’t want to be hit by anyone again. It was a small, black cat further down in the bushes. Perhaps it was hiding from the stray dogs that constantly engage in chasing these cats for mere pleasure. It was getting dark. The sun was setting behind him. Gopi knew that he had to go back to Tarapur soon, pick up Tiki from the shop so that they can catch the last bus back to Somepur.

He decided to take a last look at the reflection of his face in the water. The river was unusually still. The cuts on his forehead were no longer bleeding. He noticed brown patches on his cheeks. The tears had dried up by then and left those marks. He did not care anymore. He picked up the smallest pebble and threw it into the river as far as he could. The ripples made their way to the river banks and his reflection in the water was gone.

He picked up more pebbles, one after another and kept throwing those in. He had a distant look on his face. You couldn’t tell if he was looking ahead or looking back in time. He stopped at the sixteenth pebble. He was counting.

He was trying to remember the day it happened. It was all very blurry. He closed his eyes, the pictures became a little clearer. He clearly saw her feet but couldn’t see her face. He did not understand half of the things that were going around him. He was barely eight years old then. It was the same place, the same mortuary.

She was laid down on the pyre but Gopi could not light the fire for his mother. His guardian was now his Kanhei Uncle and it was his instruction to wait. They waited for three days, her body waiting on that pile of wood. By the third day, there was foul smell coming from his mother. Gopi kept looking from one person to another and hoping they would let him finish this ritual so he could go home and eat something. He was hungry and knew the same of his little sister.

But no one had done anything to help him.....

He ran into the mortuary with the bamboo in his hand. There were four people standing there. They had laid down Kanhei Uncle’s body on the pyre. Gopi ran and hit them, one by one with the stick. He kept shouting, “Whoever lights the fire will die today. I will beat you to death.” One of the guys ran away instantly. He saw the blood in Gopi’s eyes and knew better to stay away. Kanhei Uncle’s son, Baliaa tried to reason with Gopi, but it was all in vain. Gopi beat him up and broke his nose. His nose started bleeding profusely. The stick was as strong as Gopi’s resolves. The other two knew that they had to take Baliaa to the nearby hospital immediately. They decided to do that. It was only Gopi and a dead Kanhei Uncle in that whole area.

Gopi dragged Kanhei Uncle’s body to the banks of the river, with the bamboo stick in one hand. The vultures were already circling around. He pushed the body into the water and kept walking in with it. The water was up to waist. He finally decided to let go of the body. There was very little flow in the river that day. He turned back and started walking towards the river bank. He found a rock and sat himself down, legs crossed and hands clasped. He placed the stick by his side. Tears kept rolling down his cheeks. You could not tell if he was crying or praying. He still had that distant look on his face. He had finally had his revenge...

- Mitali Monalisa lives in Beaverton, Oregon with her husband, Pranabesh Dash.

ARE WOMEN THE WEAKER SEX?

Men in a patriarchal society believe women are weaker sex. This belief leads sometimes to pity or sympathize women and often to misogyny. The dictionary meaning of misogyny is 'hatred of women', but it implies that women are expected to accept the role of stimulators of men's visual interest which focuses on and values the physical characteristics of women while ignoring personal character or any of the inner complexities that are inherent in human beings.

(On 'hatred of women', I recently heard the statement by someone in Odisha who gives religious discourses on Hindu scriptures: we all are born out of narka and have to elevate ourselves spiritually. The implication is that the female genital is the 'hell' and once born should improve ourselves to rise above. I would not be surprised if this belief extends to other religions. Imagine the damage done to the mental process at the grass root level by many such preachers directly connected with common folks.)

The brutal gang rape and murder in Delhi on December 16, 2012 became the catalyst for a wide spread public outcry, particularly among female and male youth in India and all over the world. Otherwise crimes and violence against women have been accepted as facts of life and even so after the incident.

Are women then inferior to men and discriminated as the weaker sex?

Is their existence thus to please and to be dominated by the superior male sex?

Men point to women's weaker physical strength. Unlike women, men will never ask for direction and reach the spot (and may say, ha, ha, I win). Of course they will claim: a man's brain is typically about four percent larger and the size matters. This gives the male the edge of superiority.

So in the movie My Fair Lady, Professor Higgins asks arrogantly;

Why can't a woman be more like a man?...

Can't a woman learn to use her head?...

But she does. Very differently though.

Does only the brain's over all size matter? Not quite. Some very important parts of the female brain are larger than the corresponding part of a man's.

In a recent book 'Unleash the Power of Female Brain' by Dr. Daniel Amen, a psychiatrist and neuroscientist, the opening quote is:

I have an idea that the phrase "the weaker sex" was coined by some woman to disarm the man she was preparing to overwhelm. – Ogden Nash, American Poet

Dr. Amen whose team compared the scans of 46,000 male and female brains in the largest brain imaging study ever done says the front part of the brain called prefrontal cortex which is the largest in humans among any other animal by far is much more active in the female brain and so also the emotional part of the brain. It gives them special strengths like empathy (we feel your pain), intuition (gut feelings), collaboration (can't we just get along), self control (keep in check), and more especially a little bit of worry which most people will never think of as strength. But what his team discovered that most worry-free happy people die early because of accidents or from preventable diseases. Female's worry factor helps to act faster say to go to the doctor at the time of need. (That females have greater empathetic capacity than males and that they are more forgiving are reported by Maganto and Garaigordobil, see http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2011-02/f-sf-wab021811.php).

Because of their strengths women become better bosses and better managers than men and because of self control they go to jail dramatically less than men. Men tend to be competitive, while women are more collaborative and focused on group cohesion.

Dr. Amen thinks women's brains are superior because of these strengths.

According to him, the prefrontal cortex acts as the brain's brake. It helps keep you on track and stops you from saying or doing stupid things. When the prefrontal cortex is low in activity, you can struggle with short attention span, distractibility and problems with impulse control.

Men can be more volatile and swift to anger in a crisis. It may be because the part of their brain, the amygdala, which processes fear and anger, is much larger than a woman's. Women on the other hand find it easier to keep strong negative emotions in check because of their larger prefrontal cortex which puts brakes on amygdala. The amygdala appears to play a role in binge drinking, being damaged by repeated episodes of intoxication and withdrawal. Brain scans also showed that when a woman is feeling aggressive, she's much more likely to launch a

verbal attack - using the highly active language part of her brain - than a physical one.

All these lead to why women are more suitable to peace building activities.

Because men have more grey matter in the bit of the brain that governs intelligence, they are inclined to tackle a task with single-minded focus, not taking into account the peripheral issues that a woman might consider to be important. On the other hand women have more white matter in the part of the brain that governs intelligence. This is the reason why when women tackle a problem, they draw on many areas at the same time. Thus women can multi-task because different bits of their brains talk to each other more. They have brain chatter, and that is a good thing.

It makes sense when women take more interest in protection of environment.

No wonder Rachel Carson became a pioneer in expressing concern for environment in her book 'Silent Spring', published in 1962. No wonder Erin Brockovich, portrayed by Julia Roberts (2000) in the film with the same title, fought against the US West Coast energy corporation Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). And no wonder the 'Chipko movement' was started by a group of peasant women in a Uttarakhand village in India, who acted to prevent the cutting of trees and reclaim their traditional forest rights that were threatened by the contractor system of the state Forest Department.

Well, Professor Higgins, please think of taking some lessons from Dr. Amen before tutoring Eliza Doolittle. Only Dr. Amen and his research came much later than your time in the movie My Fair Lady.

Moreover, women live longer than men.

Men also have fewer brain cells in the major memory centre, which explains the lost keys, glasses, debit cards, shoes, screws, instructions etc.

Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary General, once said, "There is no strategy more beneficial to society, than the ones in which women play a central role."

"To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then, indeed, is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not greater powers of endurance, has

she not greater courage? Without her, man could not be. If "To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by nonviolence is the law of our being, the future is with woman. Who can make a more effective appeal to the heart than woman?"

Mahatma Gandhi

The world has experienced enough of conflicts and wars primarily led by men in the entire history. Can the women be given a chance to change the course?

Acharya Ramamurti, a veteran Gandhian thought of it to say:

"..Can we not use her (woman's) creative talents to make society more human and enlightened?"; and gave the notion of forming Mahila Shanti Sena which came into existence at the Vaishali Sabha in 2002.

Mahila Shanti Sena (MSS) is a peace movement

- to empower women in order to build a peaceful and just society
- to raise mass awareness among women to realize their strength and power
- to focus on problems facing women such as violence, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and neglect.
- to provide training in the rudiments of peace, democracy and development
- to promote Gandhian tradition of engaging in constructive village service.

Participation in MSS peace movement is open to both men and women

The village community needs an army of peace workers, who will not fight among themselves but are willing to solve problems and resolve conflicts and disputes peacefully. In this task of neighbourhood-building, women are likely to be better than men. That is the rationale of Mahila Shanti Sena...

- Acharya Ramamurti

How does MSS operate?

It fosters awareness among women on all the above issues through training camps, workshops and conferences and spreading in regions by formation of MSS groups of five or ten. It promotes neighbourhood building, peaceful settlement of mutual conflicts and peace rallies. It encourages members to join other women groups, say self-help groups (SHG) for income generation.

Often the question is being asked: Peace is for everyone. Why then Mahila Shanti Sena - Women Peace Brigade - not just Shanti Sena as formed by Gandhi?

Dr. Amen's study of brain scans answers this in his book – women are more apt to work for peace and by their collaborative nature will also work with men in this regard.

Simply said, if it is peace then women should lead. A common misunderstanding about MSS often arises that its objective is women empowerment only, ignoring its essential purpose that of peace building.

That is the reason MSS as a movement is different from feminist movement of the West and that's why only economic empowerment of women as a goal like that of SHGs, although necessary, is not enough for MSS's nobler goal of peace building.

MSS has formed groups in ten districts of Odisha. To learn more on MSS in Odisha and elsewhere, see <http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/gandhi/mss/articles.html>

[Dr. Amen says that all these strengths of females described above are associated with their vulnerability to anxiety; depression which they suffer from twice as much as men, insomnia, eating disorders, pain and being unable to turn off their thoughts due to the same increase activities in the prefrontal cortex.. In his book he discusses how to improve female's brain power and reduce these problems.]

- Sri Gopal Mohanty is a life member of OSA and lives with wife, Smita Das and children, Gokul and Mukul in Stevenson Ranch, CA

SEARCH CONTINUES

Life's journey takes one through valleys and tunnels. At that time one is thrown out of the driver seat and control is lost. Even though our lives are mostly effort towards material comfort we encounter a force beyond this space and time at critical moments. This makes one search one's real identity. This is how my life has taken me through some roller coaster ride which has given me severe jolts. My spiritual journey began with such severe jolts when there were many whys a rational mind wrapped up in ego could not answer. The surrender before a higher force is a natural outcome.

The year was 1956 when I was 16 years old. I was growing in Cuttack, Odisha and was going to a well-known school in the town. My father had provided all necessities of life without my asking for them. Life was full of many material enjoyments. The days were full of excitements with many friends, acquaintances and relatives. Our home was full with people almost always and there was no chance for loneliness. My mother was very loving and father provided all material things. He wanted me to be a good student and be excellent in academics. Even though school, friends and related activities filled the days I was also simultaneously exposed to different aspects of religious activities. I was at best neutral to those activities and considered them as mere rituals to be mechanically observed. I did not have much understanding or love for them as they did not mean much to me personally.

Then suddenly around the middle of the year 1956 my life took a roundabout turn. My father fell sick at the age of fifty one and got physically weaker day by day. I could not comprehend how such a capable person could fall sick. In spite of all efforts my father was not getting better. Even though he had the same love for us, he himself was physically getting weaker. As a student I

used to like Science and Mathematics and had great faith on them. Any explanation which was not scientifically explainable was not valid. To my utter disappointment my liking for science or Mathematics did not have any solution to the situation I was going through. As my father was not recovering and was further going into the grips of sickness my liking the outside world, my friends started diminishing. My thoughts were on my father with many unexplainable whys in my mind.

This is the time somehow I came across Srimad Bhagavat- Gita and enjoyed reading the book. This is the spoken word of Lord Sri Krishna for Arjuna in the battle field of Mahabharata. Arjuna, the greatest warrior was overwhelmed by the uncontrollable grief just foreseeing the death of loved ones in the battle which had not even started. Lord Krishna, the Supreme Being took up the role of Arjuna's mentor at this critical juncture when he was mentally paralyzed in grief. Lord Krishna spoke about the immortality of individual soul and how that is an altogether a different entity indestructible by material elements. He spoke about different paths for self and God realization including Karma(Action), Gyana(Knowledge) and Bhakti(Devotion). Finally He gave him the divine power through which Arjuna could see that Lord Krishna was the Supreme Being. This is a book meant for self-realization leading to the vision of God Himself. By the utmost mercy of the Lord I felt inclined to study this book for the first time. I could reflect on Srimad Bhagavat-Gita's content and was amazed by the originality. Even though I had seen the book before I never had any inclination even to open the book. The precious words spoken by Lord Sri Krishna to Arjuna also helped me to be free from the insurmountable grief I was going through. After some time to my wonder I found a certain peace and serenity during a very turbulent life crisis at a very young age.

Then my father passed away in January 1957. I do still remember how I had full faith that my father's soul could not be destroyed by the fire which I had lit for my father's funeral pyre. By then I loved to read Srimad Bhagavat-Gita as many times as I could and was finding deeper meaning each time. After that Life went through normal course but as time passed my love grew for the words spoken by Sri Krishna to Arjuna in Srimad Bhagavat-Gita.

In 1962 I was appointed as a lecturer in Mathematics in Regional Engineering College, Rourkela. College staff was full with young and successful people. We were all having great times together. I do remember how we were showing palms to those who said they knew palmistry. Inevitably the question was if there was a foreign line in the palm indicating that we would go abroad. Space travel, the sky scrapers and very elegant photos of universities definitely attracted most to U.S.A. It seemed to many as if the life destination was U.S.A. and once we could reach there all problems of life would be solved.

Then again In 1963 my life took a big turnaround which I had not envisioned. My very loving mother who educated me after the sad demise of my father had cancer. Eventually I left Regional Engineering College, Rourkela. My mother passed away in 1964 as a sad blow. I was emotionally destroyed. I searched for her missing love. Even though I found some support and love life was no more the same. It was flowing in another direction altogether.

Later on in the prime of youth most important thing became how to have good body. Without any understanding of the subtle spiritual aspects I took to different asana of Hath yoga for good body and mind. Mind even though found some benefit it stayed restless. One year after my marriage in 1967 I had to leave lecturer ship in Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. I joined Punjab University, Chandigarh for advanced studies and research in Mathematics in 1968. There I was inspired by a friend of mine to regularly do Chandi Patha to get happiness in life. Chandi is worshipped as universal mother in charge of the Material Universe. I was inspired by the life history of Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa. My research in Mathematics also benefitted a lot from regular Chandi Patha. At this point I realized that revelations of new ideas are not merely extrapolation of the old ones. That can happen at any time and is not necessarily confined to libraries or laboratories.

Finally time came to come to U. S.A. in 1973. I joined the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas. There I became familiar with Transcendental meditation which in some of the university wall posters promised to give

instant happiness. This meditation was a natural process and only required twenty minutes in the morning and twenty minutes in the evening. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi was the pioneer and inspired many into the meditation. I practiced this for nearly twelve years. Personally this was helping me in the reduction of stress of day to day life.

In the mean time I had left Kansas and came to Chicago in 1976. In the beginning I used to visit regularly the Iskcon temple with my wife and kids. The temple was located at that time in Evanston which is north of Chicago. I never met Swami Prabhupada but met many of his disciples from U.S.A. They were talking about Srimad Bhagavad-Gita. Inevitably the devotees were great scholars even though they were not putting much emphasis on their scholarship. They were very down to earth and only thing mattered to them was service to Lord Sri Krishna. God was a person whose aspect as Ananda was Krishna and this included all his other aspects. Ananda is a Sanskrit word meaning happiness which never ends, is not bound in physical extent and is ever growing. Every living being aspires for Ananda knowingly or unknowingly since there is a personal relationship of every soul as a part and parcel. The world, individual soul and God in the form of Ananda were all real and existent.

The world and individual soul were the energies of God.

In order to fulfill the innate nature for service as a part and parcel to relish pure Ananda the path of devotion was the easiest and most appropriate for the present time. One of the easiest methods is to focus on the name of the Lord to purify the mind. Lord Sri Chaitanya inundated whole of India during fifteenth century by Nama Sankirtan which is a form of group chanting. God's name, form and activities were fully potent and ever attractive. Lord Chaitanya spent a long time in Puri, Odisha. He was described as the incarnation of Sri Krishna as Srimati Radharani who is His innermost potency. The path of Bhakti prepares one for that Grace or Kripa to be received which has been received by many. But for most of us journey continues life after life and we have never found Ananda. By good luck we begin to search and that search continues. In all our past activities we were only doing that search indirectly and unknowingly.

- Manmath Nayak is a life member with OSA, and stays in Naperville, IL with his wife, Priya Nayak, and children, Manoj, Dilip and Sujata.

NAVAKELAVAR 2015

Jagannath Puri Mandir

“Navakalevar” ceremony was last held in 1996, and the next ceremony is scheduled to be held in 2015 during the annual Rath Yatra. “Navakalevar” means leaving the old image and consecrating a new one. The ceremony is expected to attract over 5 million people from all over India and the world. It is estimated that the Government of Odisha plans to spend over Rs. 1,000 crores (approx. US \$200 million) for the event, building roads, hospitals, water services, rest rooms, sanitation, etc.

As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones. This philosophical view is applied to Lord Jagannath. According to various protocols followed from time immemorial in the Puri temple, the provision for changing of the deities has been prescribed in the rituals. The deities are made of wood and therefore are changed to new ones and the supreme power is transferred from the old deity to the new one, in accordance with the prescribed rituals.

I have made an attempt here to provide some facts about this auspicious event that takes place every 8 – 19 years, depending on the Hindu Calendar tithi – a year which has two months of “Ashadha” is auspicious for this ceremony. There have been five ceremonies since 1931, followed by 1950, 1969, 1977, and 1996. Therefore, the event takes place almost every 19 years, except in 1977 when it was celebrated after only 8 years. I was born in the holy land of Puri, Odisha, and have had the opportunity to witness several Rath Yatras in my lifetime, including two “Navakalevars” in 1969 and 1977. I hope to participate in the 2015 celebration, because it will probably be my last opportunity to participate in this age old tradition of “Navakalevar” in this life.

Locating the Sacred trees

No ordinary Neem tree can be used to make the deities. Certain well defined criteria must be satisfied by the tree before it is labeled a Daru Brahma fit for making the image of Lord Jagannath. Locating the four holy trees requires divine intervention. As per long standing tradition the Priests of the Jagannath Temple (Puri) worship Maa Mangala at the Kakatpur Mangala Temple. It is said the Goddess appears to them in their dreams revealing the location of the holy trees.

Ritual Procedures

Elaborate rituals are performed to carry out this auspicious affair. The exact procedure of the transformation of images has been mentioned in the Sanskrit manuscripts written

on palm leaves which are kept in the temple. Only the three head priests of the temple have the sole responsibility of reading and interpreting them.

As the images of Lord Jagannath must be made of wood, the priests must first locate an appropriate tree. As a rule, Neem (Margossa) wood is used to carve out the images of Lord Jagannath. No ordinary Neem (Margossa) tree can be used for this purpose. The tree which will be used has to fulfill many conditions. Lord Jagannath is dark in color. So the Neem tree from which his image has to be carved out should be dark; whereas the trees which would be used for the deities of his brother and sister are lighter in color; as his siblings are fair! The Neem tree for Lord Jagannath must have four principal branches – symbolizing four arms of Narayan. There must be a water body near the tree – like a river or a large pond and a cremation ground nearby. An ant-hill should be close to the tree and at the roots of the tree there must be a snake-pit. No bird must have made nests in the tree; and no branches should be broken or cut. No creepers must have grown on the tree and there should be Varuna tree, Sahada tree and a Vilva tree close by. There should be an ashram and a temple of Lord Shiva in the vicinity. The most amazing requirement is that the tree trunk must have natural impressions of “sankh” (conch-shell) and “chakra” (wheel).

The countdown to the Navakalevar of Lord Jagannath starts with the formation of the search party that would go out to locate the “Holy Tree”. The search party consists of

- 1 member of the Pati Mahapatra family
- 20 Dayitapatis
- 1 Lenka
- 9 Maharanas
- 16 Brahmanas
- 3 Deulakaranas
- 30 police officers and
- 2 inspectors of police

The function begins after the Big Midday Offering to Lord Jagannath. The blessing of the Lord is sought. A twelve foot garland called Dhanva Mala made especially for this day is offered to the lord and His siblings. After worshipping the Lord, the garland is given to the Pati Mahapatra family, who is supposed to lead the procession. He would from then on carry the huge garland until the sacred tree is located. Upon spotting the tree the Garland is placed on top of a coconut and offered to the Tree. Apart from the garland, the robes of Lord are given to the descendants of Bitarachha Mahapatra family, Dayitapatis, and the Pati Mahapatra who would tie it as a turban on their head while going on the procession. Both the garland and the clothes

are significant in the sense that it is indicative of the Lord himself traveling with the team. Patta clothes used by the Lord are also given to the Lenka family representative and the nine Maharanas who accompany the group. They are the actual carpenters who build the new chariots every year and who will make the new Jagannath deities as well. Their first halt would be the palace of the King of Puri where they are required to seek his permission to continue on the holy mission. After staying there for two days and doing meditations and prayers, the team starts out for Kakatpur, a village 50 miles from Puri to the famous temple of Maa Mangala. After reaching the village, they take rest for several days while the oldest Dayitapati sleeps inside the temple. He must have a dream during this stay in which goddess Mangala tells him the exact location where the trees can be found. The trees for the four deities are located at different places. This effort may take as long as 15 days to one month. During this entire period the group would eat the Prasad of goddess Mangala. But sometimes provision is made for Mahaprasad to be brought from Puri.

Once the trees are located that fulfill all the required conditions, a yagna is performed in front of the trees. The Navakalevar team moves in to a temporary thatched hut nearby and stays there until the trees are cut. The cutting of the tree would commence at an auspicious time and with prescribed rituals. The Pati Mahapatra first touches the tree with a golden axe followed by the Dayitapati who touches it with a silver axe. Lastly, the head wood carver of the Maharana family would touch it with an iron axe. During the tree cutting, the 108 names of Lord Vishnu are chanted continuously.

Once the trees are cut, the entire trunks along with the branches are placed in a wooden cart and dragged by the Dayitapatis to the temple. The logs are kept inside the temple in a place known as Koili Vaikuntha. Koili means "burial ground" and Vaikuntha means "Heaven". It is the place where the old deities are buried and the new ones made.

The carving of the images begins with three oldest wood carvers setting on to work on the image of Lord Jagannath. The three oldest wood carvers will be the main sculptors for the deity of Lord Jagannath. The images of Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra are simultaneously carved by other two teams consisting of three carvers each. More than 50 carpenters work as assistant to the main carvers. The work is done with utmost confidentiality and not even the head priest of the temple is allowed to visit the place of work. There is a special enclosure inside the temple premises where the carving of the Lord is done. The enclosure is open on the top but is secured by large wooden doors. The wood carvers are not supposed

to consume anything (eat, drink or smoke) once inside the enclosure. The carvings are completed in 21 days and during these 21 days the carvers are not supposed to leave the temple premises. They would sleep in the temple courtyard in the night and eat Mahaprasad.

Devotional songs are sung outside the Koili Baikuntha day and night throughout the 21 days period. The continuous singing of devotional songs is called "Akhand Bhajan". While this is done by devadasis and temple musicians, shlokas from the Vedas are chanted continuously by Brahmin priests.

After the new deities, are made, they are carried inside the inner sanctum of the temple and placed in front of the old deities, facing them. This is again an act that is done with utmost confidentiality as nobody is allowed inside for Darshan of the Lord, not even the temple priests. The three new deities are carried inside only by descendants of the Dayitapati family. Once they are safely inside, only the three oldest Dayitapati members can stay. No puja is done at this time and no food is offered. Lord Jagannath's height is 5' 7", and His outstretched arms measure 12 ft. across. A minimum of 5 persons must be on each arm, 20 on His backside, and more than 50 in front pulling the deity. Lord Balabhadra's height is 5' 5" and His arms are also 12 ft. across. Subhadra is less than 5' tall, and Sudarsana is 5' 10" tall in a log-shaped form

The rights of the Great Transformation are accorded only to the Dayitapatis as they are considered to be the descendants of the Dayitapati King who was the first caretaker of Lord Jagannath. This ceremony takes place three days before the great Rath Yatra (Chariot Festival). The transformation is complete once the "immortal life substance" (also known as Brahmapadartha) is transferred from the old deities and placed inside the inner cavity of the new images.

There are different rules attached to this act that the Dayitapatis must adhere to. They are as follows:

The three Dayitapatis must be blindfolded.

They must bind a piece of Lord Jagannath's cloth around their hands before the transfer can begin.

They should not have shaved since the first day of the search party procession. This is considered to be the "Shradha" ceremony of Jagannath also. Traditionally, after a member of a Hindu family passes away, the son does not shave for ten days, out of respect for the deceased. The house is also whitewashed after the death of any family member. And since Lord Jagannath is considered to be the Head of their respective households, they are required to have their houses whitewashed after this ceremony.

The children and all Dayitapati family members wear new clothes on the day of the "transfer" ceremony. This rite is considered to be the most auspicious ritual of all in Jagannath temple. It is this ceremony itself that is the actual Navakalevar Yatra, or Transformation Ceremony of Lord Jagannath. The three Dayitapati members fast and meditate the whole day inside the temple. Only after midnight does the transfer of the "Brahmapadartha" occur, and that too in total silence.

What is interesting to note is that no Dayitapati to date has been able to describe what actually this "Brahmapadartha" is. When asked of their experience, the Dayitapatris say, "It is very difficult to describe what the Brahmapadartha is. Our eyes are blindfolded and our hands are covered with cloth when we carry it. Yet a powerful feeling is very much present during the transfer of the Brahmapadartha.

During the midnight, the old deities are carried on the shoulders of the Dayitapatris and buried in the Koili Vaikuntha before dawn. There are three separate graves for the three deities, but all the previous Jagannath images are laid to rest in the same grave, one on top of the other. It is said that if anybody from outside the select group happens to see any of this ceremony, be it from a roof top or from a high rise building, it is considered a bad omen. Therefore, the Government of Odisha orders a full blackout of light on this one night in the whole town of Puri.

On the morning of the second day the new deities are seated on the altar, the "Ratna- Singhasana". On the second day, the daily routine of the temple resumes again, after a lapse of nearly 58 days. Sweet-smelling flower garlands and new garments are offered to the new deities.. Devotees can again come inside for darshan. And on the third day the new deities emerge from the temple for the great "Rath Yatra" - Chariot Festival.

- Kiron Senapati is a life member with OSA and lives in Tampa, FL with his wife Sukanya Senapati and daughter, Gitanjali.

[Note: Information gathered by Kiron Senapati from interviews with residents of Puri, and several written articles on Lord Jagannath.]

CULTURAL PLURALISM IN SHRI JAGANNATH

Everyday hundreds of thousands of people travel to one small city known as Puri in Odisha, India to visit the 215 ft height, 12th century temple of Lord Jagannath. On special festival days millions of devotees flock to the city. The visitors include from every walk of life from beggar to rulers. Everyone comes with their own hopes and wishes to fulfill with the blessings of Lord Jagannath. The straight wide open hands of Lord embrace all without any distinction. Even though there is no proof of specific time, according to Veda, Upanishad, and ancient scriptures this culture has been going on since Satya Yuga. Legends say King Indradumna of Satya Yuga established the current chaturdha Murty (Four deities), Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra, and Lord Sudarshan in Shrikhetra, Puri. Adi guru Sankaracharya in 8th century visited Lord and announced the place as one of four holiest places (Chaturdham) for Hindus. The Ganga dynasty of Odisha in 12th century built the existing temple. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu an ecstatic devotee of Lord Krishna visited Puri in 16th century and established the trinity, Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Subhadra as Lord Krishna, his elder brother Balaram and sister Subhadra. The place is more famous for Vaishnavites but it is equally

popular for Shaivas and Shaktas. The triad is also seen as Vishnu, Shiva, and Shakti, Lord Jagannath is Vishnu, Lord Balabhadra as Shiva, and Devi Subhadra as Shakti. Lord Jagannath is also characterized as combination of Vishnu and Kali. Lord Jagannath is known as Avtari, means the creator of all ten Avatars. In Satya Yuga, HE appeared as Narasingha or Laxmi Narasingha, in Tretaya Yuga HE came to the earth as Sri Ram, in Dwapar Yuga as Lord Krishna. The various veshas (Costumes) the Lord put on in a year corroborate HIM as Avatari. The interpretation of the triad goes beyond the Hindu deities; the Jainas find the triad as the manifestation of the Jaina "Tri-ratna" (three gems of Jainism) representing right knowledge, right thought and right perception. Jagannath is identified with Buddha. His iconographic representation without hands and feet is approximating to the meditating Buddha. The Triad is depicted as Buddha, Dharma and Sangha - the three gems of Buddhism. The numerous Indian cultures including Islam, Christian, and Sikhism have found great deal of commonality in the Shri Jagannath culture. Religious leaders from all major religions in the world have visited Puri and realized their own religious values in Sri Jagannath culture . Most of them have set up their own

establishments known as Ashram or Math in the vicinity of the temple to preach and practice their own philosophy and values. The culture and practice followed in this holy place are based on 'Sanatana Dharma', all major world cultures are fused in Shri Jagannath culture, it represents true philosophy of VASUDHAIVA KUTUMBAKAM - 'The whole world is but one family'.

The name Jagannath means the Lord of Universe. The meaning of the name is very well signified by the color and shapes of three images. The three colors of the triad represent the entire human race in the world, Lord Balabhadra in white color, Jagannath in black color, and Subhadra in yellow color are the representation for white, black, and oriental races of people existing on the earth. The unique shapes of the images are beyond imagination, devotees can see HIM in any form they want. A staunch devotee of Lord Ganesh saw Lord Jagannath in the form of Shri Ganesh, Santh Tulshi Das found Lord Ram in Jagannath, Shri Chaitanya realized Lord Krishna in Lord Jagannath. Shri Jagannath worshipped in both Vedic and Tantric Mantras, this signifies the combined representation of Vishnu and Kali in one. All most all images of Hindu Gods are worshipped inside Jagannath Temple.

The tradition and culture followed inside the temple are based on ages old Sanatana Culture. Shri Jagannath culture reveals the true Indian society and family values of real love, respect, truth, tolerance, unity, equality, social justice, and human service. The daily rituals, various festivals observed throughout the year, the temple traditions, rules, and the processes followed depict the beauty and authenticity of the culture. Inside the Jagannath temple there is no distinction between rich and poor or ruler and ruled, every human being irrespective of cast, creed, and color are equal, all devotees sit and eat Maha Prasad Bhog (delicious food offered to Lord) together in Anand Bazar (the market of happiness & joy). Everyone can reach, touch, and express his/her devotion and share sorrow and joy with Lord Jagannath without any restriction and fear. There is a place inside temple known as Mukti Mandap (freedom platform) where priests of high caliber and knowledge frame rules and provide social justice, this is very unique to Sri Jagannath temple only. The love, respect, and relationship that exist among the three brothers, sister, and Mahalakshmi, the consort Lord Jagannath are beautifully portrayed through the various festivals like Ratha Yatra, Bahuda Yatra, Chandan Yatra, and more.

Service to mankind is one of the important aspects of Shri Jagannath culture. There are number of legends and instances mentioned in different scriptures where Lord Jagannath HIMSELF had come out of the Sanctum

scrotum to help the downtrodden people of society. HE was the friend of his poor devotee Bandhu Mohanty, HE received a coconut from a lower cast devotee Dasia Bauri, HIS chariot waited until HIS Muslim devotee Bhakta Salbeg reached Puri Grand Trunk road to get a glimpse of Lord on chariot. Like this there are many more examples of the deep bond between Lord Jagannath and HIS devotees.

In Bhagabat Gita Lord Krishna has clearly said:

*Naaham tisthami Baikunthe Yoginam hridayena cha
Mad bhaktan Yatra dhyante tatra tisthami, Narad.*

Meaning : Oh Narada neither have I stayed in the heaven nor even in the heart of saints; I reside in that place where my devotees pay / worship Me.

In Chapter 12 of Bhagabat Gita Lord Krishna has said:

*Samah satrau cha mitra cha tatha manapamanayah
Sitosna sukha dukhesu samah sangvivarjitah.
Tulya ninda stutir mauni samhtusto yena kencit
Aniketah sthiramatir bhaktiman me priya narah*

Meaning : He who is alike to foe and friend, also in honor and dishonor who is alike to cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, who is free from attachment, who holds blame and praise equal, who is silent and content with anything, who has no fixed abode and is firm in mind, that man with full of devotion is dear to Me.

The western world recognizing the infinite omnipotence power of the Lord coined the word "Juggernaut," meaning mighty force. Lord Jagannath has been the guiding and inspiring Divine force behind the social, political, religious and cultural life of people of Odisha since the time immemorial. In the context of the modern society, where rank materialism and constant conflict, especially in the name of religion is the order of the day, the tradition of Lord Jagannath propagates a spiritual vision and a way of life with distinctive emphasis of the principle of "unity in diversity" and embraces the vedic tradition "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam",

- Nilamadhab Nanda is a life member with OSA. He stays in Cary, IL with his wife, Ms. Seema Nanda, his daughter, Barby and son, Adarsh.

A TRIBUTE TO MY LATE GRANDFATHER, SHRI DASARATHI MAHAPATRA

It will be exactly ten years this July since my maternal grandfather died...It goes without saying that I miss him dearly, very dearly. When I was born, my grandfather was an Accounts Officer in AG Office in Bhubaneswar and he loved his first grandchild. My mom says that for him it was all about me, everything revolved around me, everything starting from morning breakfast to evening snacks and dinner at night. When I was 4 years old, I stayed with my maternal grandparents for 2 years while my parents were settling down. I was enrolled in a convent school in Unit 8 Bhubaneswar and I remember clearly how he would get up, get me ready, feed me, drop me at school and then he would pick me up from school around 1:00 pm during his lunch time. He would be standing near the school gate five days of the week irrespective of rain, sun or cold. It was the happiest time of the day for me. I would often go with him to Bolangir (a small town in western Odisha) to meet his bedridden nonagenarian father. I do remember him feeding his old father rice and dal. When his father died, I was in Bhubaneswar and aja was in Bolangir. My aja was already balding but when he came back, he had tonsured his hair totally. I remember when my aie (maternal grandmother) opened the door and aja walked in, I started laughing loudly and jumping as I thought he looked funny. He got down on his knees, held me tight and started weeping loudly. I stopped laughing, wiped his tears, gave him a hug and went back to play with my dolls. I didn't understand at that tender age what it was like to lose one's father but now when I look back I understand why he cried. He was just a great man and I am sure he was a great son too.

My grandfather was born in Sonapur (a small town in western Odisha) and when he passed his Grade Matriculation exams with 57%, he was taken for a ride on an elephant in 1945. There weren't many people who cleared exams those days so he was an exception for sure. He went to Rajendra College in Bolangir to do his graduation. After his graduation, he got married to my beautiful grandmother who was a motherless daughter of a district magistrate in Bolangir. I have never seen anyone of his generation treating his wife so well like my grandfather did. He never yelled at my grandmother, he never taunted her, he never blamed her for anything that went wrong in their lives. He would come back from office and help her making rotis for dinner. They were okay financially when they settled down after marriage in a small house in the new independent India but he would always have some money to send to his brother, his father and his sister every month. He was posted in Hirakud (near Sambalpur) in the late 40s and early 50s where Hirakud Dam was being constructed. He had many stories to tell us

about that and he shared those with me and my cousins numerous times including his high profile meeting with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (the first prime minister of India who flew to Hirakud to inaugurate the longest Dam in the world in 1957).

My mother had an older brother (unfortunately he died in 2010). When he was born in 1951, my grandfather decided that he would give him the best education and he was admitted in DM school Bhubaneswar in late 50s. DM school at that point of time was undoubtedly the best school in Odisha. He didn't let my grandfather down too and graduated as the best outgoing student of his batch. But like many things in life, it wasn't smooth later and my uncle was diagnosed with schizophrenia in late 70s while he was doing his Ph.D. in IIT Kanpur. Aja had to make several trips to Nimhans, Bangalore for his treatment. I know he was extremely sad about this but he took it in his stride and he engaged himself in many other activities. He became a member of BJP local chapter in Sambalpur, he taught English to kids in the neighborhood, he wrote stories for small kids and he was also involved in other social activities in general. He was unique in his own way, when he retired in 1987, he got some good amount of money. He decided to go to England for a trip. My uncle (mausa) was a ph.d student at East Anglia University in Norwich and Aja stayed with him for couple of weeks. And when he came back, he went straight to Lehri (a very rural and small village near Sonapur) and stayed with his elder sister who was terminally ill with throat cancer. Aja had no qualms about where he stayed, what he ate and how he travelled. He was an amazing person! Everyone who came in contact with him loved spending time with him and listening to his tales.

My younger brother and I grew up without a father; so aja made sure that we got what we wanted and gave us all the love he had. We were pampered to the core. When he grew older and I was in high school, he started forgetting things but he took great interest in our achievements and academics. I remember during the early nineties I was about to get a first prize in an oratory inter-school competition. He had very high fever and he still went with me in an auto because he didn't want me to miss the opportunity. When I finished my Class 12th in KV Sambalpur and went to Bhubaneswar to do my Engineering, he came with me. I had a blast shopping with him...nothing just the small things I needed in hostel, like buckets, soap bars, clothes...My aja was my best friend. I had really bad asthma when I was growing up, so he would always write letters to me when I was in the hostel. I missed him the most when I was away from home and his letters were my anchor.

Later he suffered from Alzheimer's disease, he didn't remember anything but my name. My mom took care of him during his last days and I remember one day before he died in July 2003, he kept saying my name, so my mom called me up so he could speak to his dearest granddaughter....He did speak...he kept saying "Lisa, Lisa, Lisa...". He died that night on my mother's lap...It was the saddest day of my life. He was 77 years old when he died. I wanted a long life for him but we don't get everything we wish for in life, do we?

He is not amongst us today but I know he watches my family from up there. I miss him dearly...I don't have many regrets in life but I feel sad at times that he died without coming to the US, without meeting my husband and my sons. I miss his soft spoken voice, unconditional love and guidance. I wanted to do so many things for him but he died much before that. May his soul rest in peace! I know he loves me wherever he is and his blessings and love will always be with me.

Amen!

It's been just a year since I stepped onto that wooden stage with a gown and a cap, the crowd cheering me on as a scroll consequent of years of hard work is placed in my hand. Blue and white flashed before my eyes in a constant parade and I remember feeling the toil of night long essays, hand scribbled lectures, and camp fire laughter fall of my shoulders. I was a new person now, released from the burdens of school and college alike. My path was set, my career in place. A job had been offered to me, a job I was ready to take and the smiling tearful faces of my parents encouraged me to move on to the life of achievement that awaited me. I remember hesitating, my feet trembling as I lifted them into the air to continue on the graveled path towards success and happiness. It was easier however, to continue once I had started. I made a place for myself in the workplace, smiling at terrible jokes, working long and hard, cramming to meet suffocating deadlines.

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I had managed to purchase a furnished apartment in the spring of last year, eyeing location after location, kitchen after kitchen, room after room, until my heart and wallet settled on a quaint loft space with two bedrooms, a furnished kitchen/living space, and a secluded balcony facing the ocean. It was simple but it was all I seemed to need.

Mother comes and visits every couple months, usually with a carriage of much wanted home cooked meals and trinkets to remind me of the family back home. We may live just two hours away from each other by

plane but even her love found it difficult to stretch over three states for extended periods of time. Sometimes she brought Dad too, tugging Bhai along to see Nani's adult life. If the three of them came they usually stayed for a week or so, allowing me to take them around Los Angeles and visit the addicting buildings where my time is enjoyably wasted. I always miss them when they leave, my heart stretched on barbed wire strings as my teary eyes follow their unnecessary multitude of luggage towards the airport terminal. Mama always did have a habit of bringing too much stuff. They seem proud, always taking in the stories of my hard work and laughter with sparkling eyes and dazzling smiles. They boast constantly about me and the way I'm surviving alone without them. They tell me it makes their hearts lighter to know they raised me to be able to carry through life on my own, that all their hard work allowed me to flourish into a daughter they can be proud of. My heart always warms at these comments, my life goal of achieving the pride of my parents finally woven into my path. I call every weekend, updating my mother on a week to week basis to staunch her flooded worries about me. Although she's seemed to calm slightly in the course of a year, the scolding is not much lighter if I mistakenly miss a week or two. I had been excited to see them next week, the newly arrived summer months excusing Bhai from school my father's company graciously allowing him two weeks away from work. However, the originally bright and warm day had been tainted with a simple call around lunchtime, the cheer in my voice slipping away as my mother's shook on the other end. I had nearly dropped the phone in shock, my fingers numbing at her sorrowful declarations. My head falls in my hands as I think about that moment and the stinging tears threaten to escape as her voice echoes in my mind, bouncing off rubber walls with never diminishing volume.

"Aai and Aaja have passed on."

A burning drop of saltwater pushes past my crumbling barriers, streaking down my face with painstaking speed. Others follow, the hole in my weak walls widening to allow my pain to break through. My body shakes, trembling under the dropping weight on my heart as small gasps of distress escape out of my body. My mind is swimming now, frantic with panicked emotions, my neurons firing back and forth, trying to find a way to calm me down. The pain is stronger now, ripping through my being as shards of glass slicing me open from the inside. My insides are falling apart, my raw soul exposed and tormented by the hissing, stinging air of tragedy. My hands are numb, void of feeling as the excruciating torture takes its toll. I fall onto the disheveled bed, bringing my knees to my chest and cry into the darkening air, the sound of my sobs quietly filling the empty apartment.

It feels like hours before I manage to compose myself, but a quick glance at the elongated hands ticking along beside me relate that the passage of time has only been about twenty minutes. With a painful intake of breath, I wipe the moisture away from my face and stand again, walking towards the closet to strip out of tainted clothes and slip on ones with comfort. After managing to motion through my nightly routine with just a quivering bottom lip, I finally allow myself breakage again as I slip under the fleece covers of my sheets, curling into the blanketed protection sheltering me from the curses of reality. My eyes close and my teeth sink into my skin as an attempt to hinder the second onslaught of tears but the action is in vain. With fresh tears streaming down my face, my shattered thoughts drift to the smell of jasmine leaves and sandalwood, my grandmother's ingrained scent that showcased her jovial laughter. Pictures of my grandfather's wrinkled brow, his twinkling eyes behind rimmed glasses, his smooth hairless crown shining in the reflected sunlight flit through my memories, driving a knife into my lungs. My two cheerleaders, the givers of unconditional love, my extended parents were gone.

Growing up in America was the obvious obstacle to seeing Aai and Aaja, the distance of oceans and landmasses deterring the physical affection they wished to send my way. Seeing them was rare, occurring every two years or four, stretching the time as I grew older and older without the sound of their warming laughter or the touch of their crinkled skin. They were a fact, a fact that lived on the other side of the world. I knew they were there, I knew they existed, but a fact is only something to know. Giving the fact emotion and feeling makes it important to the heart. My first trip to India was when I was miniscule, my memories of such a young age smothered by the weight of age. However, my first trip to India that has been retained in my memory brought the joy of affection and the biting irritation of mosquitos. Nevertheless, going to India was something I enjoyed, a trip I looked forward to whenever it was announced that our departure was scheduled. Memories of climbing on flattened roofs, weaving through chaotic streets, and being force-fed extravagant delicacies are encoded deep into my brain, used as fuel to light lamps during times of emotional turmoil and darkness. As my age grows, my memories grow more detailed but there are few memories that escape me completely, if only distorted to a small extent. After all, unconditional love exists under all strain, no matter what the constriction.

I think of my grandmother, her muted pastel saris and shining metallic ornaments. The rings on her fingers had glistened in all kinds of light, be it the sharp brightness of the dining room where we would all share stories across bhata bhaja or the muted sunlight filtering in

through streaked windowpanes in the throes of morning. Her glasses were enormous, her eyes magnified behind the curved lenses as she fell into books and movies with insuppressible fascination. Her movements were slow, the effects of old age wearing on her bones and I remember with her every step, her braided locks of hair would sway side to side. Her antiquated voice related the stories she had learned growing up and were passed along to me, my bright eyes shining in curiosity and excitement. Her arms were always warm, wrapping me in melting embraces with a hearty laugh and repeated words of praise. I would lay beside her as she slept, her face smooth as her mind wandered the endless world of dreams where she could do anything: walk, run, dance, and live. The handicaps of experience obstructing her physical movements were gone in her slumber, the tensions and worries dissipating into each slight snore that escaped into the darkened air. Her eyes were bright, full of life, though her body conspired against her. She would speak to me as an equal, someone worthy of her time and love, someone she was proud to watch grow. She would listen to every word that slipped out of my mouth, her full attention riveted on my thoughts and emotions. She explained the workings of the world to me, walked me through the troubles in life. Her hand would rub along my spine, her fingers tracing patterns along the skin.

"You can do anything you want to do in life. All you have to say is 'I CAN!'"

"Make your goal in life not to be known as Debasish and Mousumi's daughter. I want your parents to be known as Ishanee Chanda's mother and father."

"Whatever path you choose, wherever you want to go in life, just make sure to be the best that you can be."

Her soft voice finds its way into my muddled brain and I cry.

My grandfather was an eccentric old man. His laugh was wheezing but joyful, filling up the room in a way only he could. His voice carried when he wanted it to but he often chose to remain quiet, preserving his energy for happier instances spent with the family he desperately missed the presence of. He had a habit of gently knocking his forehead against my own, a symbol of his utmost affection. The rumpled skin above his brow shone in all kinds of light, the gaping absence of hair surrounded by a grazing field of velvet gray. His hands were always clasped behind his back, his posture bent over towards the object of this attention. He had a habit of reading the news each day, pulling up The Time of India and perusing the newest stories while reading under his breath and making sharp

comments along the side. His smile was contagious, happiness easily obtainable in his desires. Our relationship was one filled with teasing and laughter, witty remarks from my end as I retorted smartly to his leveled expectations. He would worry you see, whether it was a thorn prick in the heel or a paper cut on the thumb, something he passed on to me. He taught me how to play carom, took me on my first Scooter ride in India, and fawned over me whenever he could. I remember coming home from school to find him grasping at healthy strong weeds that had overtaken the summer grass, a sheen of sweat beading his brow as he worked in the daunting heat. I asked him why he subjected himself to such discomfort and he replied with a laugh and a snap of his fingers.

"I need something to do. And you watch, in 10 days, I'll make your grass velvet green!"

I found it astonishing that something so simple could bring him such joy. He was hard at work for an hour or so here and there, a couple times a day. He hacked at straggling clumps of green, purifying the newly barren soil we had just set foot on. I wondered if he realized that when the summer heat collapsed upon the metropolis, the green grass he had worked so hard on would wither away, morphing into a sickening brown, the color of death and parchment. But as I saw him work, I came to realize it wasn't the result that mattered to him, it was the pride in the work he had done. There are meaningless tasks we overlook each day, impervious to our notice. Our eyes flit over the menial, ignominious burdens placed in front of us, ignoring them for what we deem bigger and better. But does the achieved intellectual become a common peasant if he partakes in monotonous deeds below his intellectual capability? My grandfather, someone I grew to respect and cherish as a part of my life, was taking part in a chore that was seen as trivial, rustic even. However, his captivation in the task of pulling weeds out of the Earth taught me that it does not matter how others see the choices you make, but rather your pride in the completion of your goals because they are done to the best of your ability. Even now, as an intern in a law firm, my job may seem meaningless and commonplace as opposed to careers surviving in the throes of adventure. But in my life, growing in a burgeoning area of success where there are lessons to be learned around every corner, whether it's how to make the right coffee or replacing the toner in the printer so it doesn't collapse on itself, or even organizing files so a client's details don't get lost in the jumble, all are worth the common status because they do not insult my intellect. They, in fact, enhance it. A simple task does not make a man a commoner just as a cerebral challenge does not make a man an intellectual. Be it pulling weeds out of grass or discovering the cure to cancer, a man's occupation does not define his worth.

Aaja would always tell me that he wanted his Nathuni to go to Harvard University, the biggest and the best in the country. I would scoff at his expectations, refuting his desires by spouting arguments of costly expenses and unattainable dreams. He would chuckle, bump his forehead against my own with his eyes sparkling and whisper excitedly in my ear,

"You will be the best. You will be Aaja's best Nathuni. You will make us all proud."

The crisp, biting air brings me back to the present, the darkness of the apartment suffocating as old memories swirl around in thickening swirls. My tears are slowing now, my eyes staring blankly at the speckled ceiling with emotions caged away in their gaze. My limbs are weary, the exhaustion creeping over my body with stealth. My brain wills me to close my eyes, to escape reality for fleeting moments and I nearly obey, only turning my head slightly to grab sight of a warm image before I lose myself to dreams.

My Aai and Aaja are smiling at me from the light in my window.

"You CAN."

"You will be the best."

"You will make us all proud."

"Always remember come what may, we love you." I feel her hand would rub along my spine, his head bump on my forehead and their warm embrace.....

- Lisa Bedbak lives in Ann Arbor with her husband and two sons, Arjun (6 years old) and Anmol (2 years old). She is originally from Sambalpur, Odisha. She is an alumna of University of Maryland, College Park. She loves to read and write in her free time.

PASTEL SILKS AND SHINING BROWS

It's been just a year since I stepped onto that wooden stage with a gown and a cap, the crowd cheering me on as a scroll consequent of years of hard work is placed in my hand. Blue and white flashed before my eyes in a constant parade and I remember feeling the toil of night long essays, hand scribbled lectures, and camp fire laughter fall of my shoulders. I was a new person now, released from the burdens of school and college alike. My path was set, my career in place. A job had been offered to me, a job I was ready to take and the smiling tearful faces of my parents encouraged me to move on to the life of achievement that awaited me. I remember hesitating, my feet trembling as I lifted them into the air to continue on the graveled path towards success and happiness. It was easier however, to continue once I had started. I made a place for myself in the workplace, smiling at terrible jokes, working long and hard, cramming to meet suffocating deadlines.

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I had managed to purchase a furnished apartment in the spring of last year, eyeing location after location, kitchen after kitchen, room after room, until my heart and wallet settled on a quaint loft space with two bedrooms, a furnished kitchen/living space, and a secluded balcony facing the ocean. It was simple but it was all I seemed to need.

Mother comes and visits every couple months, usually with a carriage of much wanted home cooked meals and trinkets to remind me of the family back home. We may live just two hours away from each other by plane but even her love found it difficult to stretch over three states for extended periods of time. Sometimes she brought Dad too, tugging Bhai along to see Nani's adult life. If the three of them came they usually stayed for a week or so, allowing me to take them around Los Angeles and visit the addicting buildings where my time is enjoyably wasted. I always miss them when they leave, my heart stretched on barbed wire strings as my teary eyes follow their unnecessary multitude of luggage towards the airport terminal. Mama always did have a habit of bringing too much stuff. They seem proud, always taking in the stories of my hard work and laughter with sparkling eyes and dazzling smiles. They boast constantly about me and the way I'm surviving alone without them. They tell me it makes their hearts lighter to know they raised me to be able to carry through life on my own, that all their hard work allowed me to flourish into a daughter they can be proud of. My heart always warms at these comments, my life goal of achieving the pride of my parents finally woven

into my path. I call every weekend, updating my mother on a week to week basis to staunch her flooded worries about me. Although she's seemed to calm slightly in the course of a year, the scolding is not much lighter if I mistakenly miss a week or two. I had been excited to see them next week, the newly arrived summer months excusing Bhai from school my father's company graciously allowing him two weeks away from work. However, the originally bright and warm day had been tainted with a simple call around lunchtime, the cheer in my voice slipping away as my mother's shook on the other end. I had nearly dropped the phone in shock, my fingers numbing at her sorrowful declarations. My head falls in my hands as I think about that moment and the stinging tears threaten to escape as her voice echoes in my mind, bouncing off rubber walls with never diminishing volume.

"Aai and Aaja have passed on."

A burning drop of saltwater pushes past my crumbling barriers, streaking down my face with painstaking speed. Others follow, the hole in my weak walls widening to allow my pain to break through. My body shakes, trembling under the dropping weight on my heart as small gasps of distress escape out of my body. My mind is swimming now, frantic with panicked emotions, my neurons firing back and forth, trying to find a way to calm me down. The pain is stronger now, ripping through my being as shards of glass slicing me open from the inside. My insides are falling apart, my raw soul exposed and tormented by the hissing, stinging air of tragedy. My hands are numb, void of feeling as the excruciating torture takes its toll. I fall onto the disheveled bed, bringing my knees to my chest and cry into the darkening air, the sound of my sobs quietly filling the empty apartment.

It feels like hours before I manage to compose myself, but a quick glance at the elongated hands ticking along beside me relate that the passage of time has only been about twenty minutes. With a painful intake of breath, I wipe the moisture away from my face and stand again, walking towards the closet to strip out of tainted clothes and slip on ones with comfort. After managing to motion through my nightly routine with just a quivering bottom lip, I finally allow myself breakage again as I slip under the fleece covers of my sheets, curling into the blanketed protection sheltering me from the curses of reality. My eyes close and my teeth sink into my skin as an attempt to hinder the second onslaught of tears but the action is in vain. With fresh tears streaming down my face, my shattered thoughts drift to the smell of jasmine leaves and sandalwood, my grandmother's ingrained scent that

showcased her jovial laughter. Pictures of my grandfather's wrinkled brow, his twinkling eyes behind rimmed glasses, his smooth hairless crown shining in the reflected sunlight flit through my memories, driving a knife into my lungs. My two cheerleaders, the givers of unconditional love, my extended parents were gone.

Growing up in America was the obvious obstacle to seeing Aai and Aaja, the distance of oceans and landmasses deterring the physical affection they wished to send my way. Seeing them was rare, occurring every two years or four, stretching the time as I grew older and older without the sound of their warming laughter or the touch of their crinkled skin. They were a fact, a fact that lived on the other side of the world. I knew they were there, I knew they existed, but a fact is only something to know. Giving the fact emotion and feeling makes it important to the heart. My first trip to India was when I was miniscule, my memories of such a young age smothered by the weight of age. However, my first trip to India that has been retained in my memory brought the joy of affection and the biting irritation of mosquitos. Nevertheless, going to India was something I enjoyed, a trip I looked forward to whenever it was announced that our departure was scheduled. Memories of climbing on flattened roofs, weaving through chaotic streets, and being force-fed extravagant delicacies are encoded deep into my brain, used as fuel to light lamps during times of emotional turmoil and darkness. As my age grows, my memories grow more detailed but there are few memories that escape me completely, if only distorted to a small extent. After all, unconditional love exists under all strain, no matter what the constriction.

I think of my grandmother, her muted pastel saris and shining metallic ornaments. The rings on her fingers had glistened in all kinds of light, be it the sharp brightness of the dining room where we would all share stories across bhata bhaja or the muted sunlight filtering in through streaked windowpanes in the throes of morning. Her glasses were enormous, her eyes magnified behind the curved lenses as she fell into books and movies with insuppressible fascination. Her movements were slow, the effects of old age wearing on her bones and I remember with her every step, her braided locks of hair would sway side to side. Her antiquated voice related the stories she had learned growing up and were passed along to me, my bright eyes shining in curiosity and excitement. Her arms were always warm, wrapping me in melting embraces with a hearty laugh and repeated words of praise. I would lay beside her as she slept, her face smooth as her mind wandered the endless world of dreams where she could do anything: walk, run, dance, and live. The handicaps of experience obstructing her physical movements were gone in her slumber, the tensions and worries dissipating

into each slight snore that escaped into the darkened air. Her eyes were bright, full of life, though her body conspired against her. She would speak to me as an equal, someone worthy of her time and love, someone she was proud to watch grow. She would listen to every word that slipped out of my mouth, her full attention riveted on my thoughts and emotions. She explained the workings of the world to me, walked me through the troubles in life. Her hand would rub along my spine, her fingers tracing patterns along the skin.

"You can do anything you want to do in life. All you have to say is 'I CAN!'"

"Make your goal in life not to be known as Debasish and Mousumi's daughter. I want your parents to be known as Ishanee Chanda's mother and father."

"Whatever path you choose, wherever you want to go in life, just make sure to be the best that you can be."

Her soft voice finds its way into my muddled brain and I cry.

My grandfather was an eccentric old man. His laugh was wheezing but joyful, filling up the room in a way only he could. His voice carried when he wanted it to but he often chose to remain quiet, preserving his energy for happier instances spent with the family he desperately missed the presence of. He had a habit of gently knocking his forehead against my own, a symbol of his utmost affection. The rumpled skin above his brow shone in all kinds of light, the gaping absence of hair surrounded by a grazing field of velvet gray. His hands were always clasped behind his back, his posture bent over towards the object of this attention. He had a habit of reading the news each day, pulling up The Time of India and perusing the newest stories while reading under his breath and making sharp comments along the side. His smile was contagious, happiness easily obtainable in his desires. Our relationship was one filled with teasing and laughter, witty remarks from my end as I retorted smartly to his leveled expectations. He would worry you see, whether it was a thorn prick in the heel or a paper cut on the thumb, something he passed on to me. He taught me how to play carom, took me on my first Scooter ride in India, and fawned over me whenever he could. I remember coming home from school to find him grasping at healthy strong weeds that had overtaken the summer grass, a sheen of sweat beading his brow as he worked in the daunting heat. I asked him why he subjected himself to such discomfort and he replied with a laugh and a snap of his fingers.

"I need something to do. And you watch, in 10 days, I'll make your grass velvet green!"

I found it astonishing that something so simple could bring him such joy. He was hard at work for an hour or so here and there, a couple times a day. He hacked at straggling clumps of green, purifying the newly barren soil we had just set foot on. I wondered if he realized that when the summer heat collapsed upon the metropolis, the green grass he had worked so hard on would wither away, morphing into a sickening brown, the color of death and parchment. But as I saw him work, I came to realize it wasn't the result that mattered to him, it was the pride in the work he had done. There are meaningless tasks we overlook each day, impervious to our notice. Our eyes flit over the menial, ignominious burdens placed in front of us, ignoring them for what we deem bigger and better. But does the achieved intellectual become a common peasant if he partakes in monotonous deeds below his intellectual capability? My grandfather, someone I grew to respect and cherish as a part of my life, was taking part in a chore that was seen as trivial, rustic even. However, his captivation in the task of pulling weeds out of the Earth taught me that it does not matter how others see the choices you make, but rather your pride in the completion of your goals because they are done to the best of your ability. Even now, as an intern in a law firm, my job may seem meaningless and commonplace as opposed to careers surviving in the throes of adventure. But in my life, growing in a burgeoning area of success where there are lessons to be learned around every corner, whether it's how to make the right coffee or replacing the toner in the printer so it doesn't collapse on itself, or even organizing files so a client's details don't get lost in the jumble, all are worth the common status because they do not insult my intellect. They, in fact, enhance it. A simple task does not make a man a commoner just as a cerebral challenge does not make a man an intellectual. Be it pulling weeds out of grass or discovering the cure to cancer, a man's occupation does not define his worth.

Aaja would always tell me that he wanted his Nathuni to go to Harvard University, the biggest and the best in the country. I would scoff at his expectations, refuting his desires by spouting arguments of costly expenses and unattainable dreams. He would chuckle, bump his forehead against my own with his eyes sparkling and whisper excitedly in my ear,

"You will be the best. You will be Aaja's best Nathuni. You will make us all proud."

The crisp, biting air brings me back to the present, the darkness of the apartment suffocating as old memories

swirl around in thickening swirls. My tears are slowing now, my eyes staring blankly at the speckled ceiling with emotions caged away in their gaze. My limbs are weary, the exhaustion creeping over my body with stealth. My brain wills me to close my eyes, to escape reality for fleeting moments and I nearly obey, only turning my head slightly to grab sight of a warm image before I lose myself to dreams.

My Aai and Aaja are smiling at me from the light in my window.

"You CAN."

"You will be the best."

"You will make us all proud."

"Always remember come what may, we love you."

I feel her hand would rub along my spine, his head bump on my forehead and their warm embrace.....

- Ishanee is 16 years old, a junior at Plano East Senior High in Plano Texas. She is part of the International Baccalaureate Program and will be college bound in the Fall of 2014. A past Potter-head, Ishanee is a voracious reader and loves to write about all things real and imaginary. She is the daughter of Mousumi and Debasish Chanda of Plano TX.

HOW CAN WE PUT SUSTAINABILITY INTO PRACTICE EVERYDAY?

I have been interested in Global Warming since I was a little girl. When I was in 4th grade, I started a project for the school and learned the seriousness of the problem. During the same year, I visited Mahatma Gandhi's resting place, Raj Ghat, in a six-week trip to India. There I realized the power of one person's vision about something, the determination to achieve it and the collaboration from others could work like a miracle. Since then I am working to convince people to take steps to help save by living a sustainable lifestyle.

After coming back from the trip, I figured out that I have the knowledge, and technology; and collaboration from the school and city government. Now, I am sure that the time was right too. The general public started taking a conscious effort to reduce their carbon footprint, and the library bought \$50,000 worth of books and material to educate the community. I joined city council and become an ambassador between the government and the school district. In addition, I completed the nine-week rigorous course of *The Natural Step for Communities: How Cities and Towns can Change to Sustainable Practices*. This really gave me the knowledge to take the lead. Which I then used to help the students go beyond the school and into the community to help the needy and make it a better place to live. The whole city became green. In addition, the city is still having two semi-annual recycling festivals to sustain the effort.

The work I started as school project reached millions of people by the next Earth Day. For which I have received two consecutive, President's Call to service award (2009 and 2010) from former President George W. Bush and current President Barack Obama. To increase my knowledge, I started collaborating with the Nelson Institute for Environmental Sciences, University of Wisconsin.

After moving to Buffalo Grove, I continued my mission to educate people in this field through my school's Green Team. Recently, we made a film to convince congress to invest in a green future; it was featured in a youth film festival in Washington DC.

The best part of all my work is that once I educate one person, they educate some more and the process goes on exponentially. Everyone is a part of climate change. We all contribute to it and thus we need to take responsibility to reverse it by trying some of these energy saving tips and settling with a little less stuff. You can help make the planet a better place!

- Carpooling: Some people use less energy by carpooling. For example, four people can ride together in one car instead of driving four cars to work.

- Read: Learning about the environment is very

important. Many good books, Teacher, or a librarian will help you learn.

- Save Electricity: Whenever we use electricity, we help put greenhouse gases into the air. By turning off lights, the television, and the computer when you are through with them, you can help a lot.

- Bike, Bus, and Walk: You can save energy by sometimes taking the bus, riding a bike, or walking.

- Talk to Your Family and Friends: Talk with your family and friends about climate change. Let them know what you've learned.

- Plant Trees: Planting trees is fun and a great way to reduce greenhouse gases. Trees absorb carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, from the air.

- Recycle: Recycle cans, bottles, plastic bags, and newspapers. When you recycle, you send less trash to the landfill and you help save natural resources, like trees, oil, and elements such as aluminum.

- When You Buy, Buy Cool Stuff: There are many ways we can improve the environment. One of the ways to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases that we put into the air is to buy products that don't use as much energy.

- Some Things to Think About: You could help the environment if you buy recyclable products instead of non-recyclable ones. Recyclable products are usually made out of things that already have been used. It usually takes less energy to make recycled products than to make new ones. The less energy we use, the better.

- Solar Energy: Solar energy is a fancy way of saying "energy that comes from the sun." Solar energy can be used to heat homes, buildings, water, and to make electricity. Today, more than 200,000 houses in the United States take advantage of the sun's energy.

- Cars: Cars are an important part of life for most people. However, cars also cause pollution and release many greenhouse gases into the air. Fortunately, some cars are better for the environment. These cars can travel longer on a smaller amount of gasoline. They don't pollute as much, either. Using these kinds of cars can help reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the air.

- ENERGY STAR®: Many things, like computers, TVs, stereos, and VCRs, have special labels on them. The label says "Energy" and has a picture of a star. Products with the ENERGY STAR® label are made to save energy. Buying products with ENERGY STAR® labels will help protect the environment.

Please try to choose one option to reduce your carbon foot and pass this onto one person to continue this chain on action. Thanks you very much for your support.

Let's work together to save the environment!

- Bhabna Pati,, Adlai E. Stevenson High School, Buffalo Grove, IL



Chakanayan

This artwork has been created by Pallavi Parida. She is a sophomore at Metea Valley High School, Chicago, IL. She has conceptualized the artwork to illustrate that Odissi dance form is devoted to Lord Jagannath.



ମାତୃଭାଷାରେ

ମଧୁର ବଚନ

ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ, ଡେଟନ୍, ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡ



ପାର୍କର ସେପଟ କୋଣରୁ ଅତି ସୁନ୍ଦର ଗୀତଟିଏ ପବନରେ ଭାସିଆସୁଛି । କି ଭାଷାର କେଜାଣି, କ୍ଷାନିସ୍, ପର୍ତ୍ତୁଗିଜ୍ କି ଇଟାଲିଆନ୍ ହେବ ବୋଧହୁଏ । ଭାଷା ଅଜଣା ହେଲେ ବି ଗୀତଟିର କ୍ଷୟନ ଓ ସ୍ଵରଟିର ମଧୁରତା ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ସଂଗୀତର ସୁଲଳିତ ମୁହଁନା ଶୋଭନାକୁ ମନ୍ଦମୁଗ୍ଧ କରି ଦେଇଥିଲା । ସିଏ ସେମିତି ଛାଣ୍ଟୁ ଭଳି ବସି ରହିଥିଲା । ଯଦିଓ ତାର ଆଖି ଦୁଇଟି ପାର୍କ ଛିତ ହୃଦୟର ନୀଳ ଜଳରାଶି ଉପରେ ନିବନ୍ଧିଥିଲା, କିନ୍ତୁ ଅନ୍ତର ଓ ମନ ସେ ସଂଗୀତର ମୁହଁନା ସହିତ ନିବିଡ ହୋଇଯାଇଥିଲା । ହଠାତ୍ ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର ଉଚ୍ଚକଣ୍ଠ ତାର ଧ୍ୟାନ ଭଗ୍ନକଲା ।

“ଶୋଇପଡିଲଣି ନା କଣ? ସେଲ୍‌ଫୋନ୍ ବି ଧରୁନ । ମୁଁ ଫୋନ୍‌କରି ମେସେଜ୍ ଛାଡିଥିଲି ଚିକେ ଖାଦ୍ୟଟା ଗରମ କରିଦେବାକୁ ।”

ଏଇ ତାର ସ୍ଵାମୀ । ଇଞ୍ଜିନିୟର୍ ଦେବେଶ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ । ଯାହାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଚିକେ ଭଲରେ ଗୀତଟିଏ ଶୁଣିବାର ଅଧିକାର ବି ଶୋଭନା ହରାଇ ବସିଛି । ବାହାରେ ଏତେ ଗରମ । ସେମାନେ ସମସ୍ତେ ପିକ୍‌ନିକ୍ ଆସିଥିଲେ ଆଉ ତିନିଜଣ ସାଙ୍ଗ ଓ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପରିବାରକୁ ନେଇ । ସମସ୍ତେ ବୋଟିଙ୍ଗ୍ କରିବାକୁ ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଶୋଭନା ସବୁ ଜିନିଷ ଜଗି ବସିଥିଲା । ଏ ଖରାଦିନେ ସବୁ ମଣିଷ ଥଣ୍ଡା ଖାଉଛନ୍ତି; କିନ୍ତୁ ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର ଗରମ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଦରକାର ।

ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର ଏମିତି ଅଖାତୁଆ ରୁଚି ସବୁ ଶୋଭନାକୁ ଦିନେ ହସାଉଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏବେ ଏ ସବୁ ଅସହ୍ୟ ହେଲାଣି । ଏଇତ! ହଠାତ୍ ପିକ୍‌ନିକ୍‌ର ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ । ତିନିଜଣ ସାଙ୍ଗଙ୍କୁ ହଠାତ୍ ନର୍ଥ କାରୋଲିନାରୁ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ । ଆଉ ସେ ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ବି ସେମିତି । ଶୋଭନା ମନାକରୁଥିଲା, “ତମେମାନେ ସବୁ ଯାଅ; ମୁଁ ଘରେ ରହିଲେ ରୋଷେଇବାସ କରି ରଖିଥିବି ରାତିଭୋଜନ ପାଇଁ, ନହେଲେ ପିକ୍‌ନିକ୍‌ରୁ କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଫେରିବାପରେ କିଛି କରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେବନି ।”

ଦେବେଶ ବୁଝିଲେନି । ପାଖକୁ ଆସି ଚୁପ୍‌କରି କହିଦେଇଗଲେ, “ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ସବୁ କଣ ଭାବିବେ ?”

ବାସ୍, ସେଇ ପଦଟିଏ କଥା, “ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ସବୁ କଣ ଭାବିବେ?” ସେଇଥିପାଇଁ ନିଜକୁ ଚିଲଚିଲ କରି ପଚାରିବାର ଜାଳିସାରିଲାଣି ଶୋଭନା । ଆଉ କାହିଁକି ସହିହେଉନି । ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଉଥିଲା କହିଦେବାକୁ, “ଯାହାର ଯାହା ଇଚ୍ଛା ଭାବନ୍ତୁ, ମୁଁ କାହାକୁ ଖାତର କରେନି ।” କିନ୍ତୁ କିଛି କହିହେଲାନି । ସେମିତି ବାଧ୍ୟ ଶିଶୁ ଭଳି ସିଏ ପୁଣି ପିକ୍‌ନିକ୍ ଆସିଲା ।

ଦେବେଶ ମେଳାପୀ ମଣିଷ; ମାନେ ଅତ୍ୟଧିକ ଭାବେ ମେଳାପୀ, ସବୁବେଳେ ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀ, ଗହଳତହଳ ଲୋଡ଼ା । ପ୍ରଥମେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ଏ ସବୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ଶୋଭନାକୁ । ଆମେରିକା ଦେଶରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ପହଞ୍ଚି ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଲାଗିନଥିଲା କି ସେମାନେ ବିଦେଶରେ ଅଛନ୍ତି । ଗୋଟିଏ ବର୍ଷ ଭିତରେ ବି କେତେ ସାଙ୍ଗ। ସେତେବେଳେ ବେଶି ଓଡିଆ ନଥିଲେ; ତେଣୁ ଅନ୍ୟ ଭାରତୀୟ ମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ବନ୍ଧୁତା ଗଢିଉଠିଥିଲା । ଏମିତିକି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଦିନମାନଙ୍କରେ ବି ସେମାନେ ଅପରାହ୍ନର ଚାହା ଓ ରାତିଭୋଜନ ପାଇଁ ଅନ୍ୟ ବନ୍ଧୁମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଏକତ୍ର ମିଶୁଥିଲେ । କେବେ ଦୋସା ତ କେବେ ଯୋକ୍‌ଲା, କେବେ ମଣ୍ଡପିଠା ତ କେବେ ପାଣିପୁରି, ଏମିତି ମଉଜ, ମଜଲିସ୍‌ରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଦିନ ସବୁ ବିତିଯାଉଥିଲା । ଏବେ ବହୁତ ଓଡିଆ ଲୋକ ଆସିଲେଣି । ତାଙ୍କ ଭିତରୁ କେତେ ପୁଣି ଦେବେଶ ଓ ଶୋଭନାଙ୍କର ଦୂର ସଂପର୍କୀୟ । କେତେଜଣ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗ, ସହପାଠୀ ମାନଙ୍କର ସଂପର୍କୀୟ । ଏମିତି ହୋଇ ପ୍ରତି ଶନିବାର, ରବିବାର ଦେବେଶ ଓ ଶୋଭନା ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ, ମାନେ ବିଜି ।

ଝିଅ ସୁମନା ଓ ପୁଅ ସରୋଜ କ୍ଷୁଲରେ ପଢୁଥିବା ବେଳେ ଜୀବନ ଆହୁରି ବ୍ୟସ୍ତଥିଲା । ଶୋଭନା ଚାକିରି କରୁନଥିଲା, ତେଣୁ ପ୍ରତିବାଦ ବି କରିପାରୁନଥିଲା । ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର ସମସ୍ତ ଇଚ୍ଛା ପୂରଣ କରିବାକୁ ତା’ର ଚାକିରି । ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର ଖୁସି ହିଁ ତା’ର ବକ୍ସିସ୍, ଦରମା, ପଦୋନ୍ନତି, ସବୁକିଛି ।

ଓଡିଶାରୁ ଡାକ୍ତରୀ ପାଶ୍ କରିଥିଲା ଶୋଭନା । ଏଠି ଶତକଡା ଶହେ ଭାଗ ଗୃହିଣୀ ହୋଇ ରହିଗଲା । ତା’ର ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ଏବେ ରେସିଡେନ୍ସି କରି ପଇସା ରୋଜଗାର କରିବା ସହିତ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା ଅର୍ଜନ କରିଛନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସିଏ ...

ଭଲ କରିଛି କି ଭୁଲ୍ କରିଛି, ଏ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ବୁଝିପାରିନି ଶୋଭନା । ଉଣେଇଶ ଶହ ସତ୍ୟାଗ୍ରାହୀ ମସିହାରେ ତାର ବାହାଘର ହୋଇଥିଲା, ଦେବେଶଙ୍କ ସହିତ । ଶୋଭନା ବହୁତ ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛବାଦିନୀ ଥିଲା, ଅନ୍ୟାୟ ସହେନି, ମିଛକଥା କହେନି, କଳିଝଗତା ଶୁଣିପାରେନି । ବିବାହ ବେଦୀରେ ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ ଶପଥ କରାଇଦେଲେ, ଶୁଶ୍ରୁତଘରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଗୁଡ଼ ଖୁଆଇଥିଲେ, ସବୁବେଳେ ମିଠାକଥା କହିବାକୁ । ଆଇ, ଜେଜେମା, ବୋଉ, ବଡ଼ବୋଉ, ଖୁଡ଼ୀ, ସମସ୍ତେ ଉପଦେଶ ଦେଇଥିଲେ, “କାହା ମନରେ ଦୁଃଖ ଦେବୁନି, କଟୁକଥା ସହିଯିବୁ, ସବୁବେଳେ ମଧୁର ବଚନ କହିବୁ, ଶାଶୁ, ଶୁଶ୍ରୁରଙ୍କ ସେବା କରିବୁ” ।

ପ୍ରିୟ ବାକ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଦାନେନ ସର୍ବେ ତୁଷ୍ୟନ୍ତି ଜନ୍ତବଃ
ତସ୍ମାଉଦେବ ବଚ୍ଚବ୍ୟଂ ବଚନେ କା ଦରୀଦ୍ରତା ॥

ଏ ମହତବାଣୀ ସ୍ତୁଲର ସଂସ୍କୃତ ପଞ୍ଜିତେ ଶିଖାଇଥିଲେ । ଝିଅ ବିଦାବେଳେ ପରିବାରବର୍ଗ ସେଇ ଜିନିଷଟିକୁ ବାରମ୍ବାର ଚେତେଇଦେଇଥିଲେ, “ମଧୁର ବିନୟ ବଚନ, କହି ତୋଷିବ ଜନମନ” ।

କେହି କହିନଥିଲେ, “ତୁ ଡାକ୍ତରୀ ପ୍ରାକ୍ଟିସ୍ ରଖିବୁ । ରୋଗୀ ସେବା କରିବୁ । ଦୁଃସାଧ୍ୟ ରୋଗମାନଙ୍କର ନିରାକରଣ ପାଇଁ ଔଷଧ ବାହାରକରିବୁ ।” କେହି କହିନଥିଲେ, “ଆଖି ଆଗରେ ଅନ୍ୟାୟ ଦେଖିଲେ, ତାର ପ୍ରତିବାଦ କରିବୁ । ଅନ୍ୟାୟ, ଅତ୍ୟାଚାରକୁ କେବେ ପ୍ରଣୟ ଦେବୁନାହିଁ । ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦୋଷୀକୁ ରକ୍ଷା କରିବୁ ।”

ଶୋଭନାର ଡାକ୍ତରୀ ଶିକ୍ଷାର କିଛି ଅର୍ଥ ନଥିଲା । ବାହାଘର ଦିନରୁ ଦେବେଶ ହିଁ ତା’ର ସବୁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ପାଇଟିଗଲେ । ବାହାଘରର ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଦେବେଶ ଆମେରିକା ଆସିଥିଲେ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ବଡ଼ଝିଅ ସୁମନା ଜନ୍ମ ହୋଇସାରିଥିଲା । ଆମେରିକାରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବାର ବର୍ଷକ ପରେ ସରୋଜର ଜନ୍ମ । ଦୁଇପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ବଢ଼ାଇବାର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଭିତରେ ନିଜ ଡାକ୍ତରୀ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନକୁ ଭୁଲିଗଲା ଶୋଭନା । ପୁଅଝିଅ ଦୁଇଜଣ ବଡ଼ହୋଇ କଲେଜ ଯିବାପରେ ସେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ସାକାର କରିବାକୁ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଥିଲା । ଏବେ ସେ ଡେକ୍ସଲ୍ ସ୍କୁଲରୁ ଡିଗ୍ରୀ ପାଇ ଏକ ପ୍ରାଇଭେଟ୍ ଡେକ୍ସଲ୍ କିନିକ୍ରେ ସହକାରୀ ଭାବେ କାମ କରୁଛି । ଯଦିଓ ତା’ର ମଧୁର ବଚନ ପାଇଁ ସେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ପ୍ରିୟପାତ୍ରୀ, ତଥାପି ଏବେ ସବୁ କେମିତି ତା’ର ସହିବାର ସୀମା ବହିର୍ଭୁତ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି ।

ସାନଭଉଣୀ ସୁନୟା କିନ୍ତୁ ସବୁକଥା ଓଲଟା କଲା । ପ୍ରଥମେ ଡାକ୍ତରୀ ଚାକିରି କଲାପରେ ବାହାହେଲା । ଶୋଭନାକୁ ବେଳେବେଳେ ଗାଳିଦିଏ ସେ, “ଅପା, ତୁମା ନିହାତି ଅଳସେଇଟା, ନହେଲେ ଏତେବର୍ଷର ପରିଶ୍ରମରେ ମେଡିକାଲ୍ ଡିଗ୍ରୀ ଶେଷକରି ତୁ ଘରେ କେମିତି ବସିରହିପାରୁଛୁ ?” ସୁନୟା ମଧୁର ବଚନ କହେନାହିଁ । ସବୁବେଳେ ନିଜମନର ଭାବକୁ ସ୍ପଷ୍ଟ ରୂପେ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିଦିଏ । ଶୋଭନା କାହିଁକି ସୁନୟା ଭଳି ହୋଇପାରେନି ?

ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ ତଳର କଥା । ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର କେଉଁ ସାଙ୍ଗର ପୁଅ କାଲିଫର୍ଣ୍ଣିଆରେ ଚାକିରି କରୁଥିଲା । ସେ ଚାକିରି ଛାଡ଼ି ନୂଆ ଚାକିରି ପାଇ ଆସିଲା ଭରଜିନିଆ । ତାର ପରିବାର କାଲିଫର୍ଣ୍ଣିଆରେ ରହୁଥାନ୍ତି । ପିଲାଟା ପ୍ରଥମେ କିଛିଦିନ ରହୁଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ଘରେ; ଶୋଭନା ଭାବୁଥିଲା, ମାସେ ଦୁଇମାସ ଭିତରେ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ଖୋଜି ସିଏ ଚାଲିଯିବ, ହେଲେ ସେ ପିଲା ରହିଲା ନଅମାସ । ସେତେବେଳେ ଡେକ୍ସଲ୍ କୋର୍ସ ଚାଲିଥାଏ ଶୋଭନାର । ପଢ଼ାପଢ଼ି, ହୋମ୍‌ସ୍ଟାଡ଼, ପୁଣି ଏ ପରିଣତ ବୟସରେ । ତା’ ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ଏ ନିତିଦିନିଆ ଅତିଥିଙ୍କ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ । ଦେବେଶଙ୍କୁ ଜଣାପଡ଼େନି; ଭାବନ୍ତି ପିଲାମାନେ ଯିବାପରେ ଘରଟା ତ ଫାଙ୍କା, କିଏ ଆସି ରହିଲେ ଭଲ, ଘରଟା ପୁରିଯିବ । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେଇ କିଏ ଆସି ରହିବା ପାଇଁ ସେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକଟିକୁ କେତେ ଆଡ଼ଜଷ୍ଟ କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ, ସେକଥା ବୁଝନ୍ତିନି ଦେବେଶ ।

ନଅମାସ ପରେ ତା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ଆଣି ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟକୁ ଗଲା ସନ୍ତୋଷ । ସନ୍ତୋଷର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମିତାଲିକୁ ମନେମନେ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦେଇଥିଲା ଶୋଭନା । ସେଇ ହିଁ ବୋଧହୁଏ ଟିକେ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ଲୋଡ଼ୁଥିଲା । ଦେବେଶ ତ କହୁଥିଲେ, “ପିଲାମାନେ ତ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ତମେମାନେ ରହିଲେ ଘର ପୁରିଲା ପୁରିଲା ଲାଗିବ ।” ହେଲେ ମିତାଲି କହିଲା, “ନା! ଭାଇନା, ଆପଣମାନେ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ କାମ କରିକରି ଜୀବନର ଏତେ ଭାଗ କଟାଇଦେଲେ, ଏବେ ଟିକେ ମସ୍ତି କରିବା ଦରକାର । ଆମମାନଙ୍କ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଦେଇ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ କାହିଁକି ପୁଣି ଜଞ୍ଜଳ ଦେବୁ ।” ଭଲ ଝିଅଟିଏ ମିତାଲି ।

ହେଲେ ପୁଣି ଗୋଟିଏ କେଁ ପଶେଇଲେ ଦେବେଶ ।

ଏଇ ଘନଶ୍ୟାମ ବାବୁ । ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର ଦୂର ସଂପର୍କୀୟ । ହାତକଡ଼ି ପିନ୍ଧି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ହାଜତକୁ । ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ରାଗରେ ମାରିଥିଲେ ପାର୍ଲିଙ୍ଗ୍ ଗ୍ୟାରେଜ୍‌ରେ; ଆଉ ଜଣେ କିଏ ଦେଖି ଡାକିଦେଇଥିଲା ୯୧୧ । ପୋଲିସ୍ ବାନ୍ଧିନେଇଥିଲା ଘନଶ୍ୟାମ ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ । ଦେବେଶ ଯାଇ ଜାମିନ୍‌ରେ ଆଣିଲେ । ଜାମିନ୍‌ରେ ଆସି ସେ ରହିଲେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଘରେ, ଦିନେ ନୁହେଁ, ଦୁଇଦିନ ନୁହେଁ, ଚାରିଦିନ ନୁହେଁ; ଚାରିମାସ । ସେମାନଙ୍କର କୋର୍ଟ କେସ୍, ଶୁଣାଣି, କ୍ଲାସ୍, ଟେନିଙ୍ଗ୍ ସବୁ ପରେ ବି ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମାନ, ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କର ବୁଝାମଣା ହୋଇନଥିଲା । ମଧୁର ବଚନ ତଥାପି ଜାରି ରଖିଥିଲା ଶୋଭନା ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଧୈର୍ଯ୍ୟର ସହିତ । ଘନଶ୍ୟାମ ବାବୁ ହୁଏତ ଆହୁରି ଚାରିମାସ ରହିଥାନ୍ତେ । ହେଲେ ତାଙ୍କର ଆଉ ଜଣେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ତାଙ୍କୁ ବୁଝାଇ କହିବାରୁ ସିଏ ଯାଇ ଗୋଟିଏ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟରେ ଭଡା ନେଇ ରହିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଦେବେଶ କିଛି ବି କହିନଥିଲେ ।

ଡେକ୍ସଲ୍ କୋର୍ସ ନେବା ପରେପରେ ଥରେ ଏମିତି କେଉଁ କଥାରେ ବିରକ୍ତି ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିଥିଲା ଶୋଭନା । ଦେବେଶ କହିଲେ, “ଡେକ୍ସଲ୍ କୋର୍ସ ଛାଡ଼ । କଣ ତମର ଅଭାବ ? ଘର ଅଛି, ପଇସା ଅଛି, ଗାଡ଼ି ଅଛି; ଶାଢ଼ୀ, ଗହଣା ସବୁ ତ ଅଛି । ମନଖୁସି ଦରକାର ତ ଯାଇ ମଲ୍‌ରେ ବୁଲ, ସିନେମା ଦେଖ, ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ଭଲେଷ୍ଟିଅରିଙ୍ଗ୍ କର, ଯାହା କରୁଛ କର । କିନ୍ତୁ କଂପ୍ଲେନ୍ କରନାହିଁ ।”

ଶୋଭନାର ପାଟିରେ ଚାବି ପଡ଼ିଗଲା ।

ଏଇହି ଜୀବନ ତା’ର । ବେଳେବେଳେ ଭାବେ ସେ, ସତରେ ତ ତା’ ଜୀବନରେ କିଛି ସେମିତି ଅଭାବ ନାହିଁ । ତଥାପି କାହିଁକି ସେ ଦୁଃଖୀ ? ରୋଜଗାରିଆ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମାନ । କେତେବେଳେ ସେ ହାତ ଉଠାଇନାହାନ୍ତି ତା’ ଉପରେ । କେତେବେଳେ କାହା ଆଗରେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ବିରୁଦ୍ଧରେ କହିନାହାନ୍ତି । ସବୁବେଳେ ବରଂ ରସିକତା କରନ୍ତି ସେ ଓ ଶୋଭନାଙ୍କ ରାକ୍ଷଣୀ, ଘରସଜ୍ଜା ରୁଚିକୁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ପ୍ରମାଣ କରନ୍ତି । ଆଉ ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଏ ଅଲ୍ଲବଦ୍ଧସର ଦଂପତ୍ତିମାନେ ସବୁବେଳେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଉଦାହରଣ ଦେଉଥାନ୍ତି - “ଦେଖ ତ ଦେବେଶ ଭାଇନାଙ୍କୁ, ନାନୀଙ୍କୁ କେତେ ସମ୍ମାନ ଦେଖାଉଛନ୍ତି; ଆଉ ତମେ ସିଏ କି ସବୁବେଳେ ଶହେପାଞ୍ଚରେ କଥାବାଣୀ କରୁଛ । ଖଟିଖଟି ମରିଗଲେ ବି ଟିକେ ଦୟାର ସ୍ୱର ବାହାରିବନି ତମ ତୁଣ୍ଡରୁ ।” ଏସବୁ ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ବି ଶୋଭନା ଦୁଃଖୀ ।

ସେଦିନ ପିକନିକ୍ ସାରି ସମସ୍ତେ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଲେ । ଦେହର କ୍ଳାନ୍ତି ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ବି ଶୋଭନା ପୁଣି ଘରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ପାଞ୍ଚରକମର ଚରକାରୀ ରାନ୍ଧି, ମଧୁର ବଚନ କହି ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ଆତିଥେୟତା କଲା । ରବିବାର ଦିନ ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ସବୁ ଫେରିଯିବା ପରେ ସେ ଦେବେଶଙ୍କୁ କହିଲା, “ଆସନ୍ତା ଶନିବାର ରବିବାର ଟିକେ ଫାଙ୍କା ରଖିବ । ଆମର ଟିକେ ବିଶ୍ରାମ ଦରକାର ।”

“ସେଇଥିପାଇଁ ତ କହୁଛି ଚାକିରି ଛାଡ଼ । ତମର ଚାକିରି କରିବାଟା କଣ ଦରକାର ?”

ଶୋଭନା ଭାବିଲା ଜବାବ ଦିଅନ୍ତା । କହନ୍ତା, “ମୋ ମନଖୁସି ପାଇଁ ମୁଁ ଚାକିରି କରୁଛି; ମନଖୁସି ପାଇଁ ବି ସମ୍ଭାସ୍ତ୍ର ଶେଷରେ ଗହଳଚହଳରୁ ଦୂରରେ ରହି ଟିକେ ଶାନ୍ତି ଅନୁଭବ କରିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଛି; ମୋର କଣ କିଛି ମନ ନାହିଁ ?” ହେଲେ ସେ କିଛି କହିଲାନି । ଘନଶ୍ୟାମବାବୁଙ୍କ ଘଟଣା, ତାଙ୍କ ରିଜେନିଙ୍ଗ୍ ଅର୍ଡର, କିଛି ବି ପ୍ରଭାବ ପକେଇନି ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର ହୃଦୟରେ । ଦେବେଶ ସତରେ ଶୋଭନାକୁ ଭଲ ପାଆନ୍ତି ତ ? ଏମିତି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କେବେ ଆସିନଥିଲା ଶୋଭନାର ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ । ହେଲେ ଏବେ ସବୁ ଯେମିତି ତା’ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଗୋଳମାଳ ହୋଇଯାଉଛି ।

ସେଦିନ ଥିଲା ଶୁରୁବାର । କିନିକ୍‌ରେ ବହୁତ କାମ । ଦେବେଶ ଫେନ୍‌କଲେ, “ଆଜି ଶ୍ୟାମବାବୁ ଘରକୁ ଆସିବେ । ତାଙ୍କର ପୁତୁରାକୁ ସିଏ ଗ୍ରୀନ୍‌କାର୍ଡ ପାଇଁ ସନ୍ଦର୍ଭ କରିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଛନ୍ତି; ସେ ନେଇ କଥାବାଣୀ କରିବେ ।”

“ହେଲେ ଆଜିତ ମୁଁ ଫେରୁଫେରୁ ଡେରି ହେବ । ଆଉ କେଉଁଦିନ ଆସିଲେ ଚଳନ୍ତାନି ?” - ଶୋଭନା ପଚାରିଥିଲା ।

“ତାଙ୍କର ବସ୍ ଡ୍ରାଇଭିଙ୍ଗ୍ କାମ, ଉଇକ୍‌ଏଣ୍ଟରେ ବି କାମ ଚାଲିଥାଏ । ଅନ୍ୟ ଦିନମାନଙ୍କରେ ବି ତାଙ୍କର ଡିଉଟି ଦିନ ତିନିବାରୁ ରାତି ଏଗାରଟା ଯାଏ ।”

“ସିଏ କେତେବେଳେ ଆସିବେ ?”

“ରାତି ନଅଟା ଖଣ୍ଡ ବେଳକୁ ।” - ଦେବେଶ ଜଣେଇଥିଲେ ।

ଶୋଭନା ବେଶି କିଛି କହିଲାନି । କେବଳ “ଠିକ୍ ଅଛି” କହି ଫେନ୍ ରଖିଲା । ରାତି ନଅଟା ବେଳେ ଆସିଲେ ନିଃଃସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଓ ତନର୍ ସାରି ଆସିବେ । ତେଣୁ କିଛି ମିଠା, ଫଳ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ଲେଟ୍‌ନାଇଟ୍ ସ୍ନାକ୍ସ୍ ପାଇଁ ଦେଇ ଅତିଥିସକ୍ୱାର କରିହେବ । ତାଙ୍କଘରେ ଏ ଘଟଣା ଅନେକଥର ଘଟିଛି । କିଏ ଭାଇକୁ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନସ୍ୱପ୍ନ କରିବ ତ କିଏ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀକୁ । ଦିନ ନାହିଁ, ରାତି ନାହିଁ, ଜୁହାବୋଲା ନାହିଁ; ସବୁବେଳେ ଅକସ୍ମାତ୍ ଭାବେ ତା ଘରେ ଗହଳି ଲାଗିଯିବ; ସବୁ ସହିଛି ଶୋଭନା ।

ବେଳେବେଳେ ଶୋଭନା ଆଖ୍ୟାୟିକା ହୁଏ ଯେ ଦୁଇଟି ପିଲାଙ୍କୁ ସମ୍ବୁଲିବା ସହିତ ସିଏ ଏସବୁ ବି ସମ୍ବୁଲି ପାରୁଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏବେ ତାର କଣ ହୋଇଛି ? ପିଲାଙ୍କ କାମ ତ ଆଉ ନାହିଁ । ସତରେ କଣ ଏଇ ଚାକିରିଟା ତାର ସବୁ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତତାର, ଦୁଃସ୍ୱପ୍ନର କାରଣ ?

ତକ୍ତର୍ ଉଇଲ୍‌ସନ୍ ଡିଭର୍ଟି ସାରି ଫେରୁଥିଲେ । ଏବେ ତକ୍ତର୍ ତର୍କିନଙ୍କର ଡିଭର୍ଟି । ସେକ୍ରେଟେରୀ ଗୋରିଆ ଆସି ଡାକିଗଲାଣି; ପେସେଣ୍ଟ ରୁମ୍ ୨୪କୁ ଆଟେଣ୍ଟ କରିବାକୁ ପଡିବ । ଶୋଭନା ଘରକୁ ଫେରୁଫେରୁ ଛଅଟା । ଦେବେଶ ଫେରିନଥିଲେ । ଭଲ ହେଲା, ନହେଲେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବିସ୍ଫୋରଣ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତା । କପତା ବଦଳାଇ ଉଭୟଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଚାରିଖଣ୍ଡ ରୁଟି, ସନ୍ତୁଳା ଓ ସାଲାଡ୍ କରି ଶୋଭନା ଅପେକ୍ଷା କଲା । ଫିଙ୍ଗ୍ରେ ଦୁଇଟି ତରକାରି ଥିଲା, ଚଳିଯିବ । ଦେବେଶ ତଥାପି ଫେରିନାହାନ୍ତି । ସୋଫାରେ ବସି ଟିଭି ଲଗେଇଲା ଶୋଭନା, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ଭିତରେ କେମିତି ଛାଇନିଦ ଲାଗିଗଲା । ହଠାତ୍ କଲିଂବେଲ୍ ବାଜିଲା ତା’ ନିଦ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଗଲା । କଲିଂବେଲ୍ ପୁଣି କିଏ ବଜେଇଲା ଏ ଅସମୟରେ ? ଆଜିକାଲି ବହୁତ ଗଣ୍ଡଗୋଳ ହେଉଛି । ଏକ୍ସିଆ ରହୁଥିବା ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କୁ ଠଉରାଇ ଚୋର, ତସ୍ତର ସବୁ ଲୁଣ୍ଠନ କରିବାକୁ ଚାଲିଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । କଲିଂବେଲ୍ ଜବାବ ନ ଦେବାକୁ ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ କରି ସିଏ ସେମିତି ବସିରହିଲା । ଦେବେଶଙ୍କର ଫେନ୍ ଆସିଲା, “କେତେବେଳୁ କଲିଂବେଲ୍ ବାଜୁଛି, ତମେ ଉଠୋଉନ କାହିଁକି ?”

“ହେଲେ ତମେ କଲିଂବେଲ୍ କାହିଁକି ବଜାଉଛ ? ତମେ ତ ଗ୍ୟାରେଜ୍‌ବାଟ ଦେଇ ଆସିବା କଥା ?” – ଶୋଭନା ନିଦବାଉଳାରେ ପଚାରିଲା । “ଶ୍ୟାମବାବୁଙ୍କ ଗାଡି ଖରାପ ହେଲା । ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ପିକଅପ୍ କରିବାକୁ ଚାଲିଗଲି । ଗ୍ୟାରେଜ୍‌ତୋର୍ ରିମୋଟ୍‌ଟା କାହିଁକି ପାଉନି । ତମେ ଦ୍ୱାର ଖୋଲ ।”

ଶୋଭନା ଯାଇ ଫୁଣ୍ଟୋର୍ ଖୋଲିବା ବେଳକୁ, ତା ସାମନାରେ ଶ୍ୟାମବାବୁ, ତାଙ୍କ ଝିଅ, ସେ ଝିଅର ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଓ କୁନି ପୁଅ, ଓ ଦେବେଶ ।

ଲିଭିଙ୍ଗ୍‌ରୁମ୍ରେ ସବୁ ବିପର୍ଯ୍ୟୟ ହୋଇ ପଡିଛି ।
ଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଚାରିପଟ ରୁଟି ଓ ସନ୍ତୁଳା ।
ଶୋଭନାର ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଭାରୀ ଭାରୀ ଲାଗୁଛି । ଗାଢ ନିଦ ମାଡିଆସୁଛି ।

ଶୋଭନା ପାଟିରୁ କଥା ବାହାରିଲାନି । “ମଧୁର ବଚନ” କେଉଁଠି ହଜିଗଲା । ତାର ଚିରାଚରିତ ସମ୍ପ୍ରାଣଣ, “ଆଜ୍ଞା ନମସ୍କାର”, “ଆପଣ କେମିତି ଅଛନ୍ତି”, “ପାଣି ଦେବି ନା ଜୁସ୍, ନା ଚାହା”, “ବସନ୍ତୁ, ବସନ୍ତୁ”, “ସବୁ ଭଲ ତା”, ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ବନ୍ଦଥିଲା । ସିଏ ଯେଉଁ ସୋଫାରେ ଶୋଇପଡିଥିଲା, ସେଇ ସୋଫା ଉପରେ ରୁପ୍‌ଗାପ୍ ଯାଇ ଲଥକରି ବସିପଡିଲା ।

ତକ୍ତର୍ ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ ଡେପନ୍, ମେରାଲାଣ୍ଡରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ନରେଶ ଓ ତିନି କନ୍ୟା ବାଗ୍ନୀ, ମୃଗାଳୀ ଓ ଶାଶ୍ୱତୀଙ୍କ ସହିତ ରହନ୍ତି । ଯଦିଓ ସେ ଗଣିତରେ ପି-ଏଚ୍-ଡି କରି ଗବେଷଣାକୁ ନିଜର ଜୀବିକା ଭାବେ ବାଛିନେଇଛନ୍ତି, ତେବେ ନାଚ, ଗୀତ, ସାହିତ୍ୟ, ବହୁମିଳନ ଇତ୍ୟାଦିରେ ତାଙ୍କର ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଆଗ୍ରହ । ୨୦୦୯ ଜୁଲାଇ ମାସରୁ ୨୦୧୧ ଜୁନ୍ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସେ ଓସାର ପ୍ରେସିଡେଣ୍ଟ ଭାବେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟଭାର ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ଏହା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସେ ୨୦୦୩ରୁ ୨୦୦୫ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଓସାର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ସଂପାଦିକା ଥିଲେ ଓ ୨୦୦୫ରୁ ୨୦୦୭ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଓସାର ସେକ୍ରେଟେରୀ ଭାବେ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ଆଜିକାଲିର ଯତ୍ନପୁରରେ ମଣିଷର ଦୁଃସ୍ୱ ଅନେକ । ଭଲ ମଣିଷଟିଏ କର୍ମ ଜଞ୍ଜାଳରେ ପଡି ନିଜ ପ୍ରକୃତି ବହିର୍ଭୂତ ବ୍ୟବହାରକୁ ଆଦରିନିଏ । ଏସବୁ ଉପରେ ଆଧାରିତ ଏ ଗନ୍ଧର୍ବ ତାଙ୍କର ଅଜସ୍ର ଆମେରିକା ଅନୁଭୂତିର ଏକ କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ପରିପ୍ରକାଶ ।

ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତର ରଂଗ

ସତ୍ୟ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଆକାଶରେ ଅସ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଆସୁଥିଲେ । କାର୍ ନଦୀକୂଳରେ ପାର୍କ କରି ସେ ଚାଲିଚାଲି ଆସି ସେଇ ପଥର ପାଖରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା । କାଶତଣ୍ଡୀର ଘଞ୍ଚ ବୁଦା । କାଶତଣ୍ଡୀର ଲମ୍ବାଲମ୍ବା ଫୁଲ ପବନରେ ଦୋଳି ଖେଳୁଥାନ୍ତି । ପାଖକୁ ଲାଗି ଛୋଟ ପଥର ଖଣ୍ଡେ । ଦୁଇଜଣ ଖୁନ୍‌ଖୁନ୍‌ ବସିବା ପାଇଁ ଯାଗା । ଅନେକ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ସେ ଆଜି ଆସିଛି ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ଦେଖିବାପାଇଁ । ଏ ଭିତରେ ସେ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତର ରଂଗ ଭୁଲିଯାଇଛି । ଆଜି ସେ ଏକା ଆସିଛି । ବସିବା ପାଇଁ ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ଯାଗା । ବସିବା ଆଗରୁ ସେ ପଥରକୁ ଛୁଇଁଲା । ବହୁତ ଚିତ୍କାଚିତ୍କା ଏ ଯାଗା, ଅତି ଆପଣାର ଏ ପଥର । ଏପାଖ ସେପାଖ ଚାହିଁଲା ସେ । କାଳେ ଅତୀତର ସ୍ମୃତିରୁ କିଛି ମିଳିଯିବ । ସାଉଁଟି ନେବ ସେ । ଛାତିରେ ଯାକିନେବ । ଆପଣାର କରିନେବ । କାଳେ ପବନରେ ତାର ଅତି ପ୍ରିୟ ଲାଭେଣ୍ଡର ପାଉଁଶର ଭୃତୁଭୃତ ବାସ୍ନା ଭାସିଆସିବ ।

ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତର ରଂଗ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଭଲଲାଗେ ବୋଲି କେତେ ସଂଧ୍ୟା ସେ ଏଇଠି ବିତେଇଛି । ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ଦେଖିଛି ନୀରବରେ । ଘଣ୍ଟାଘଣ୍ଟା ବସିଛି ଏଇ ପଥର ଉପରେ ଶୁଭ୍ରାସହ । କାଶତଣ୍ଡୀର ଝୁଲୁହାତୀ ଖେଳ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିଛି । କବିତା ଶୁଣେଇଛି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ତା କାନ୍ଧ ଉପରେ ମଥାରଖି ନିମଗ୍ନ ଶ୍ରୋତାଟେ ପରି ଶୁଣିଛି ।

ତାର ଗୋଟେ କବିତାର ପ୍ରେମରେ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ପଡ଼ିଯାଇଥିଲା ଝଙ୍କାରରେ ପଡ଼ି । ତାପରେ ସେ ମାଗାଜିନ୍, ଖବରକାଗଜରେ ତା କବିତାକୁ ଖୋଜେ । କାଟିକରି ଆଲବମ୍‌ରେ ରଖେ । ଦିନେ ହଠାତ୍ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଆଲବମ୍ ଧରି ତା ପାଖରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲା । ସେ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା ଏମିତି ଜଣେ ପାଠକ ତାକୁ ଏତେ ନିକଟରୁ ଜାଣିଛି ଦେଖି । ତାପରେ ଦିହେଁ କେତେ ସକାଳ କେତେ ସଂଧ୍ୟା ଏକାଠି ବିତେଇଛନ୍ତି । ଗପିଛନ୍ତି । ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତକୁ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ ଚକୋଲେଟ୍ ପରି ପ୍ରେମ କବିତା ଭଲଲାଗେ । ସେ ଯଦି କେବେ କେମିତି ଗୋଟେ ଅଧେ କ୍ଳୀଷ୍ଣ କବିତା ଲେଖିଦିଏ ଶୁଭ୍ରା କଷ୍ଟ ପାଏ । ମନଦୁଃଖ କରେ । ଅନୁରୋଧ କରେ ଏମିତି ନଲେଖିବା ପାଇଁ

। ସେ ବି ତାର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ କବିତା ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ ନେଇ ଲେଖିଛି । ଏକଥା କଲେଜ ସାରା ଜାଣିଛନ୍ତି । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ବି ତାର କବିତାକୁ ନେଇ ଖୁସି ହେଇଛି, ଗର୍ବ କରିଛି ।

ହଠାତ୍ ଦିନେ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତର ରଂଗ ଫିକା ଦେଖାଗଲା । ଫିକା ଦେଖାଗଲା ଯେ ଆଉ କେବେ ରଂଗୀନ୍ ହେଲାନି । ସେ ଅନେକଥର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ଦେଖିବା ପାଇଁ ନଦୀକୂଳକୁ ଆସିଛି । ଏକା । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଆସେନା । ସେ କେବଳ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରେ । ରତ୍ନ ଆସିଛି, ଯାଇଛି । ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତର ରଂଗ ଆଉ ରଂଗୀନ୍ ହୋଇନି । କାଶତଣ୍ଡୀର ଛୁଆଁ କଣ୍ଟାପରି ଫୋଡ଼ି ହୋଇଯାଇଛି ତାର ଦେହ ସାରା ।

ଘରଲୋକ, ସାଂଗସାଥୀ ଅନେକ ବୁଝାଇଛନ୍ତି ତାକୁ । ଏମିତି କିଏ କଣ କାହାକୁ ଭଲ ପାଏ । ଏମିତି କିଏ କାହା ପ୍ରେମରେ କଣ ଜୀବନକୁ ଭଜୁଡେଇ ଦିଏ । ସେ ଶୁଣେ, କିଛି କୁହେନା । ସେ କିନ୍ତୁ ଏଇଆ ହିଁ ବୁଝେ ଯେ ତାର ଆଉ କିଛି ଲୋଡ଼ା ନଥାଏ । ସେ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ସହ ଅଳ୍ପ ଦିନର ଗଳ୍ପରେ ସବୁ କିଛି ପାଇଯାଇଛି । ଜନ୍ମ ପରେ ଜନ୍ମ ସେଇ ଗଳ୍ପର ସ୍ମୃତିରେ ସେ କାଟିପାରିବ । ସେ ଏଇଆ ବୁଝେଯେ ଭଲପାଇବା ହିଁ ସମର୍ପଣର ଭାବ । ଦେବାର ଭାବ । ତାର ଦର୍ଶନକୁ କେହି ବୁଝନ୍ତୁ କି ନବୁଝନ୍ତୁ, ସେ ନିଜେ ନିଜକୁ ବୁଝାଏ ।

ହଁ, ସେ ଜାଣେନା ଏବେ ଶୁଭ୍ରା କେଉଁଠି ଯିବ, ତା କବିତାକୁ ମାଗାଜିନ୍ ଷ୍ଟଲ୍ ଅଥବା ଖବରକାଗଜରେ ଖୋଜୁଥିବ କି ନାହିଁ, କିନ୍ତୁ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତର ରଂଗ ଫିକା ପଡ଼ିଲାଦିନଠୁ ସେ ଆଉ କବିତା ଲେଖିନି ।

୩୫ ! ଅନ୍ଧାର ହେଇଗଲାଣି । ସେ ପ୍ରକୃତିସ୍ଥ ହେଲା । ପୁରୁଣା ସ୍ମୃତିର ଗଳିକନ୍ଦିରେ ବୁଲୁବୁଲୁ ସେ ଆଜି ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ଦେଖିବା ପାଇଁ ଭୁଲିଯାଇଥିଲା । ଘରେ ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଅନ୍ଧାର ଗାଢ଼ ହୋଇଯାଇଥିଲା । ରାସ୍ତା ସାରା ଝାପସା ଷ୍ଟାର୍ ଲାଇଟ୍‌ରେ ତାକୁ କେବଳ ଶୁଭ୍ରାର ମୁହଁ ଦିଶିଯାଇଥିଲା । ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ଯେମିତି ତାର ଖୋଲାକେଶ ପବନରେ ଭଡ଼ିଆସି ତା ମୁହଁସାରା ଘୋଡେଇ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ତା ଖିଲ୍‌ଖିଲ୍ ହସ, ତା ଚାପା କଥା ତା କାନ ଭିତରେ ଗୁଞ୍ଜରିତ ହେଉଥିଲେ । ଆଜି ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଏତେ କାହିଁକି ମନେପଡ଼ୁଛି

ତାର ! ସେ ମନେମନେ ଇଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା କଲା । ପୃଥିବୀ ଯାକର ସୁଖ ତାପାଇଁ ମନାସିଲା ।

ଗ୍ୟାରେଜରେ କାର ପାର୍କ କରି ମେନ୍ ଗେର୍ ଖୋଲିଲାବେଳେ ତାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ଯେମିତି କେହି ତା ପୋର୍ଟିକୋରେ ବସିଛି । ଅନ୍ଧାରରେ ଆଉ କିଛି ଦେଖାଯାଉନଥିଲା । ସେ ବିଚଳିତ ମନନେଇ ପାଖକୁ ଆସି ଯାହା ଦେଖିଲା ନିଜ ଆଖିକୁ ବିଶ୍ଵାସ କରିପାରିଲାନି । ତାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ଯେମିତି ସେ ବୋରାବାଲିର ଭଉଁରୀ ଭିତରେ ଛିଡ଼ା ହୋଇଛି ଓ ତା ପାଦତଳୁ ସବୁ କିଛି ଭୁସୁଡ଼ି ପଡ଼ୁଛି । ତାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ଯେମିତି ଏଇ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ଆକାଶ ଖଣ୍ଡଖଣ୍ଡ ହୋଇ ଛିଡ଼ିପଡ଼ିବ । ଯେମିତି ସମୁଦ୍ର ପାଣି ସୁନାମି ପରି ମାଡ଼ିଆସିବ ଓ ସମଗ୍ର ପୃଥିବୀକୁ ଗିଳିଦେବ । ସେ ସ୍ତବ୍ଧ ହୋଇଗଲା ।

ଯେଉଁ ଝିଅର ଚିତ୍ର ତା ମନ ଭିତରେ ସବୁବେଳେ ଫଗୁଣଭରା ଫୁଲବଗିଚାଟେ ପରି ରହିଥାଏ, ଆଜି ତା ସାମ୍ନାରେ ସେ ଝଡ଼ ପରର ଗୋଟେ ଉଜୁଡ଼ା କ୍ଷେତପରି ଛିଡ଼ାହୋଇଛି । ପାହାଡ଼ିଝରଣା ପରି ଛଳଛଳ ଯେଉଁ ଝିଅକୁ ତା ମନଭିତରେ ସେ ସବୁଦିନ ଦେଖେ ଆଜି ତା ସାମ୍ନାରେ ସେ ମରୁଭୂମିଟେ ପରି ଛିଡ଼ାହୋଇଛି । ସେ କଣ କହିବ, କଣ କରିବ କିଛି ଭାବି ପାରିଲାନି । ତୁପ୍ତାପ୍ ଘରର କବାଟଖୋଲି “ଆସ” କହି ଭିତରକୁ ଗଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ତା ପଛେପଛେ ଘର ଭିତରକୁ ଗଲା । କାହା ପାଗିରୁ ଶବ୍ଦଟେ ବି ବାହାରୁ ନଥାଏ । ସେ ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ ବାଧୁରୁମ୍ ଦେଖାଇ ବାହାରୁ ତିନର ଆଣିବା ପାଇଁ ବାହାରିଗଲା । ତିନର ପରେ ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ ଅନ୍ୟରୁମ୍ ରେ ଶୋଇବାକୁ କହି ସେ ଚାଲିଆସିଲା ତା ରୁମ୍‌କୁ । ସାରାରାତି ତା ଆଖିରେ ନିଦନାହିଁ । କେବଳ ଅତୀତର ସ୍ମୃତିର ଚିତ୍ରପଟ ।

ସକାଳ ହେଲା । ସବୁଦିନପରି ଆଉଗୋଟେ ସକାଳ । କିଛିତ ଭିନ୍ନ ଦେଖୁନି ସେ । ମନରେ ବି କିଛି ଭବ୍‌ବେଗ ନାହିଁ । ଅଫିସ୍ ବାହାରୁ ବାହାରୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ ଠିକ୍ ସମୟରେ କରିବାକୁ କହିଲା । ସାରାଦିନ ଅଫିସରେ କିଛି କାମ କରିପାରିଲାନି । କେବଳ ସେଇ ପୁରୁଣା ସ୍ମୃତିର ଚିତ୍ରପଟ, ଆଗପଛ ହୋଇ ତା ମନଆଖିରେ ଭାସିଆସୁଥାନ୍ତି । ଅଫିସ୍ ପରେ ପାଦ ତାର ଆପେଆପେ ଟାଣିହୋଇଗଲେ ସେଇ ନଦୀକୂଳ ପଥର ପାଖକୁ । ତାର ଇଚ୍ଛାହେଲା ପଥର ଉପରେ କିଛି ସମୟ ବିତାଇବା

ପାଇଁ । ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ହେବାକୁ ଆଉ କେଇ ମିନିଟ୍ ବାକି ଅଛି । ନଦୀକୂଳରେ କାର ପାର୍କ କରି ସେ ଚାଲିଲା ପଥର ପାଖକୁ ।

ସେ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହେଇଗଲା ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ ସେଇଠି ଦେଖି । ଆଜି ଶୁଭ୍ରା ତା ଆଗରୁ ପଥର ପାଖରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଯାଇଛି । ତାକୁ ଚିକେ ଦୂରରୁ ଦେଖି ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଦୌଡ଼ି ଆସିଲା ଓ ତାକୁ ଜୋର୍ରେ ଜାକି ଭୋ ଭୋ କରି କାନ୍ଦିଲା ।

ପ୍ରଥମଥର ସେ ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଆଖିରେ ଲୁହ ଦେଖିଲା । ତାକୁ ବହୁତ କଷ୍ଟ ହେଲା କିନ୍ତୁ କିଛି କହିଲାନି । ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ ଧରି ପଥର ଉପରକୁ ନେଇଆସିଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରାର ମଥାକୁ ନିଜ କାନ୍ଧ ଉପରକୁ ଆଉଜେଇଦେଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରାକୁ କହିଲା, “ଦେଖ, ଆଜିର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ କେତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର । ଯାକୁ ଆଉ ଫିକା କରିବନି ପୁଞ୍” । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ତା ଆଖିକୁ ଚାହିଁଲା । ସେ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତର ଗୋଧୂଳି ରଂଗରୁ ଗୋପାଏ ଆଣି ଶୁଭ୍ରାର ସିନ୍ଦ୍ରିରେ ଭରିଦେଲା । ଶୁଭ୍ରା ଆତ୍ମତୃପ୍ତିର ଗୋଟିଏ ନିଃଶ୍ଵାସ ନେଲା, ତାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ଯେମିତି ତା ଉଜୁଡ଼ା ଉଦ୍ୟାନରେ ଆଉଥରେ ଫଗୁଣ ଫେରିଛି ।

୭୪୭୪ ଡ୍ରିଜିଡମ୍ ଲେନ୍, ଡବଲିନ୍, ଓଡ଼ିଓ ୪୩୦୧୬,
ଯୁକ୍ତରାଷ୍ଟ୍ର ଆମେରିକା

ଆମେ ସବୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ

ଡକ୍ଟର ଦିନନାଥ ପାଠୀ

ଆମେ ସବୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ-ଏହି ବାକ୍ୟଟିର ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣତ ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ ଭିତରେ ପ୍ରଚ୍ଛନ୍ନ ଭାବରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୋଷ୍ଠୀ ଚେତନା ବା ପ୍ରାନ୍ତୀୟ ସଚେତନା ଉଦ୍ଦୀପନରେ । ମନେହୁଏ ଆମେ ସମଗ୍ର ମାନବ ଜାତିର ବିରାଟ ପରୁଆର ଭିତରେ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରବିନ୍ଦୁ ଚିହ୍ନିତ ଧୂଳିଧାରୀ ସାହସୀ ପଦାତିକ । ଆମର ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଚିହ୍ନଟ ଅଛି, ଯୁଗଯୁଗର ଐତିହ୍ୟ ଅଛି ଓ ଆମ ଧର୍ମନୀରେ ବୀର ଓଡ଼ିଆର ଉଷ୍ଣ ରକ୍ତ ପ୍ରବାହିତ । ଆମର ଇତିହାସ ଗୌରବମୟ । ଆମ ପୂର୍ବପୁରୁଷ ଆମ ପାଇଁ ଯାହା ସବୁ ଦେଇଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ଯଥା ଆମ ଉତ୍କଳ ଦେଶ, ଆମ ଦେହ, ମନ ଓ ସଂପର୍କ ସବୁ ବିଭାମୟ । ସଂପର୍କ ଅତୀତ ସହିତ, ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନର ତହ ତହ ବାସ୍ତବତା ସହିତ ଏବଂ ଅନାଗତ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତର ଆହୁରି ଘଟିବାକୁ ଥିବା ଏକ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ, ଉନ୍ନତ, ଦୃଢ଼ମୁକ୍ତ ପୃଥିବୀ ସହିତ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ଏହି ବାକ୍ୟଟିର ପରିପ୍ରେକ୍ଷୀ ବଡ଼ ଉଦାର, ବ୍ୟାପକ ଓ ଗୋଷ୍ଠୀଚେତନାରୁ ଉତ୍ତରିତ ସହାନୁଭୂତିର ଏକ ଭାବଭୂମି, ଯେଉଁଠି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଓ ଅଣଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱହୀନ; ଯେଉଁଠି ଜଣେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ତା' ମାତୃଭାଷା ସହିତ ତାକୁ ପୋଷଣ କରୁଥିବା ମାଟିର ଭାଷା କହିପାରେ ବା କାଳକ୍ରମେ ଉତ୍ତରପିଢ଼ିର 'ଏକଦା ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନେ' ମାତୃଭାଷା ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭୁଲିଯାଇ ଅନ୍ୟଏକ ଭାଷାକୁ ନିଜର ମାତୃଭାଷା ରୂପେ ସ୍ୱୀକାର କରିପାରନ୍ତି । ହୁଏତ ସେଇ ସମୟ ବେଳକୁ ଉତ୍ତରପିଢ଼ିର ଯୁବକ ଓ ଯୁବତୀମାନେ ଜଣେ ଜଣେ ଅଣ-ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମା'ର ସନ୍ତାନ ଭାବେ ଯାହା ସ୍ୱାଭାବିକ, ତାହାହିଁ କରିବାର ସମ୍ଭାବନା ଥିବାରୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆଦିଭୂମିର ଭାଷା ହୋଇଯିବ । ଏଣୁ ତାହାକୁ ସାଧ୍ୟମତେ ପଠନାୟତ୍ତ ଓ ବୋଧ୍ୟ କରିବାର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ପଡ଼ିପାରେ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ତ ଭାଷା ଭିତ୍ତିକ ପ୍ରଦେଶ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଏହି ପ୍ରଦେଶର ରାଜଭାଷା ଓ ଲୋକଭାଷା । ରାଜଭାଷା ହେବାର ସମସ୍ତ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଥିଲେ ବି ନା ଏହା ରାଜାଙ୍କର ଭାଷା, ନା ପ୍ରଶାସନର ଭାଷା ରୂପେ ପ୍ରଚଳିତ । ଯେଉଁମାନେ ମାନବ ଭାଷାକୁ ନେଇ ଗର୍ବ କରନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ତାକୁ ପଠନ ଓ ପ୍ରକାଶନର ଏକମାତ୍ର ଭାଷା ବୋଲି ଡିକ୍ଲେମ୍ ପିଟନ୍ତି ସେମାନେ କୋଶଳୀ ଓ ଦକ୍ଷିଣୀ ଭାଷାର ସୁସ୍ଥତମ ଧ୍ୱନିପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗକୁ ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ କରିପାରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଏଣୁ ଭାଷା ପରିପ୍ରେକ୍ଷୀରେ ଆଞ୍ଚଳିକତାର ସ୍ୱର ଏବେ ତୀବ୍ର ହେଲାଣି । ମୁଁ ସ୍ୱଭାବତଃ ମୋ ଲେଖାରେ ଗଂଜାମୀ ଶବ୍ଦ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରେ । ଏଥିପାଇଁ କିଏ କିଏ ମୋତେ ଜଣେ ଆଞ୍ଚଳିକ ଲେଖକ ବୋଲି କହନ୍ତି । ଆଞ୍ଚଳିକ ଭାଷା ଶାଗ ପଟାଳିର ଛନଛନିଆ କୋଶଳୀ ଓ ଲେଉଟିଆ ଭଳି, ରିଲାଏନ୍ସପ୍ରେସର ହାଇବ୍ରିଡ଼ ଶାଗ ନୁହେଁ । ମୁଁ ତ ଶୁଣୁଛି ଆମେରିକାରେ ଗଗନଶ୍ଚ୍ୟୁୟୀ ବିପଣୀମାନଙ୍କରେ ଶତାଧିକ କିସମର ଶାଗ ମିଳୁଛି ଏ ଗହୀରିଆ କଥାତକ ବୁଝିଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅଣଓଡ଼ିଆ ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗକୁ ଉତ୍ତମ ରୂପେ ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ କରିହେବ ।

ମୁଁ ମୋ ଅନୁଭୂତିରୁ ଦି'ଟି କଥା କହେ । ଅଧୁନା ଆମ୍ଭ ପ୍ରଦେଶର ଶ୍ରୀକାକୁଳମ୍ ଜିଲ୍ଲାର ଶ୍ରୀକୂର୍ମମ୍ ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ଅଙ୍କିତ ଭିତ୍ତିଚିତ୍ରର ପଞ୍ଜିକରଣ ଓ ଅନୁଧ୍ୟାନ ପାଇଁ ସେଠିକି ଯାଇଥାଏ । ଦିନେ ସକାଳୁ ସକାଳୁ ରାସ୍ତାରେ ଘୂରାଫେରା କରୁଛି ଦାଣ୍ଡୁଆରମାନଙ୍କରେ ଅଙ୍କିତ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଝୋଟିଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଉପରେ ଆଖି ପଡ଼ିଲା । କୌତୂହଳୀ ହୋଇ ଗୋଟିଏ ଘର ଦୁଆର ଆଗରେ ଡାକ ପକେଇଲି । ଲାଜା ଓ ଝାଣୀ ପିନ୍ଧା ଝିଅଟିଏ କବାଟ ଖୋଲିଲା । ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଲି ତମେ କ'ଣ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଘର ? ସେ ମୋ ଭାଷା ବୁଝି ନପାରି ଘର ଭିତରକୁ ଯାଇ ତା' ମା'କୁ ଡାକିଆଣିଲା । ମା' ଆସିଲେ ଓ ମୋ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଗଂଜାମୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କଥା ହେଲେ । ସେ କହିଲେ ଦି'ପୁରୁଷ ହେଲା ସେମାନେ ଶ୍ରୀକାକୁଳମ୍ ସହରରେ ରହିଯାଇ ଥିବାରୁ ତାଙ୍କର ପିଲାମାନେ ଆଉ ଓଡ଼ିଆ କହିପାରୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ମୁଁ ସେଦିନ ମା'କୁ ଆଶ୍ୱସନା ଦେଇ କହିଥିଲି ଯେ କଥୁତଭାଷା ନୁହେଁ ବରଂ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ପ୍ରଲୋଭନରେ ପଡ଼ି ମୁଁ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବୋଲି ଚିହ୍ନଟ କରିପାରିଥିଲି । ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ଦକ୍ଷତା କଥୁତଭାଷା ଅପେକ୍ଷା ଅସ୍ଥିତାରେ ମହକ ଭରି ଦେଇଥାଏ । ଝୋଟି ଚିତ୍ରର ରେଖା ବିନ୍ୟାସ ନୈର୍ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିକ ହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ, ରେଖା ଭିତରେ କି ଶକ୍ତିଥାଏ କେଜାଣି, ତାକୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାରେ ପରିଣତ କରିଦିଏ । ଏହା ରହସ୍ୟମୟ, ଯିମିତି ରହସ୍ୟମୟ ଶିଶୁଟିର ଦରୋଟି ଓଠରେ ମାତୃଭାଷା ପଲଟିବା । କିଏ କିଏ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାକୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ଅହଂ ବୋଲି କହିଥାନ୍ତି ।

ଆଉ ଥରକର ଘଟଣା । ମୁଁ ସଡ଼େଇକଳାରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଛନ୍ଦ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବା ପାଇଁ ସେଠାକୁ ଯାଇଥାଏ । ଜାତୀୟ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ବୋଲି ସୂଚିତ କରାଯାଇଥିବାରୁ ମୋ ବକ୍ତବ୍ୟଟି ଇଂରାଜୀ ଭାଷାରେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରିଥାଏ । ସେମିନାରରେ

ଇଂରାଜୀ ଭାଷଣ ଉପସ୍ଥାପନା କରନ୍ତେ ଅଧିକାଂଶ ଶ୍ରୋତା ସମସ୍ତରରେ କହିଲେ ଯେ ସେମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲୋକ ଏବଂ ମୁଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କହିଲେ ସେମାନେ ସହଜରେ ବୁଝିପାରିବେ । ଏହି ଘଟଣାଟି ମୋତେ ଯେତିକି ଆତମିତ କଲା, ସେତିକି ଆମୋଦିତ କଲା ମଧ୍ୟ । ସେହି ସଭାରେ ସଭେଇକଳା ଛଉ ପାଇଁ ମୁଖା ତିଆରୁ ଥିବା ଚିତ୍ରକାର ମହାପାତ୍ରଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଭେଟ ହେଲା । ମହାପାତ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲୋକ ଏବଂ ଦି' ପୁରୁଷ ହେଲା ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମନ୍ଦିରର ସେବକ ଭାବରେ ସେଠି ରହିଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଛଉ ନୃତ୍ୟଶିଳ୍ପୀମାନେ ଯେଉଁ ମୁଖା ବ୍ୟବହାର କରନ୍ତି ତାହା ତାଙ୍କ କାରିଗରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମୁଖା । ମୁଖାକୁ ଦେଖିଲେ, ତା'ର ବନକ ଓ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣକୁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟକଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ନିଆରାପଣ ବାରିହେଇ ଯାଉଥିଲା । ମହାପାତ୍ର ସେଇକଥାକୁ ଏବେ ଟାଣ କଲେ ।

ଏହା ଅବିସମ୍ଭାବିତ ଯେ, କଥିତ ଓ ପଠିତ ଭାଷା ଗୋଟିଏ ଜାତି ବା ଗୋଷ୍ଠିର ବଳିଷ୍ଠ ଅସ୍ଥିତା । କୌଣସି କାରଣରୁ ତାହା ଯଦି ନିରବେଇଯାଏ ତା'ହେଲେ ସେଇ ଜାତିର ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷା ଏହି ଅଭାବକୁ ପୂରଣ କରିଦେଇପାରେ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାଭଳି, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବାନ୍ଧ ଶାଢ଼ି, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଝୋଟି, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଖାଦ୍ୟ, ପିଠାପଣା, ଭାଷାର ସ୍ଥାନ ପୂରଣ କରିପାରେ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କୁ ଭାବର ଗହୀରପଣରେ ବାନ୍ଧିଦେଇପାରେ । ଆମେ ପ୍ରାୟ ସବୁବେଳେ ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲିଖନ ପାଇଁ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଦେଇଥାଉ । ଏହାଏକ ଉତ୍ତମ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ନିଶ୍ଚୟ । ଅଥଚ ଆମ ଅଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟରେ ଘରୁଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ଅବସ୍ଥାକୁ ରୋକିବାକୁ ଆମେ କେବେ ଚେଷ୍ଟିତ ନୋହୁଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷା ତା'ର ମହକ ବିତରିବାରେ କେବେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରିନାହିଁ । ଆମେ କୋଣାର୍କ ମନ୍ଦିରକୁ ନେଇ ଏତେ ଗର୍ବ କାହିଁକି କରୁ ? ତାହା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ବିମଳ ସତ୍ତକ ନୁହେଁ କି ? ଭାରତବର୍ଷର ଅନେକ ମନ୍ଦିର, ଅନେକ କାର୍ତ୍ତିର ମଣ୍ଡଳୀ ଅତି ଅଭୂତ, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ଉଦାହରଣ ନୁହେଁ ବୋଲି ଆମର ସେତେଟା ପ୍ରିୟ ନୁହେଁ ।

ମାତୃଭାଷା ତ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସ୍ୱାଭାବିକ ଭାବେ ଛୁଆର ତୁଣ୍ଡରେ ପଇଟିବା କଥା, ତଥାପି ତା'ର ଆହରଣ ପାଇଁ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଅବଶ୍ୟମ୍ଭାବୀ ହୋଇପଡ଼େ । ପରିବେଶ ପରିସ୍ଥିତି, ସମାଜର ଚଳଣି ବଦଳିଗଲେ ଭାଷା ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ବଦଳିଯାଏ । ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି ରୁଚି-ସଚେତନତା ଉପରେ ନିର୍ଭର କରେ । ଏହି ରୁଚି-ପ୍ରବଣତା ଅଭ୍ୟାସଗତ ଏବଂ ଅଧିକାଂଶ ସମୟରେ ବଂଶଗତ, ପରଂପରାରେ ପରିଣତ ହୋଇଯାଏ । ଆମେ ବେଳେବେଳେ ସେହି ପରଂପରାକୁ ସମ୍ମାନ ଦେଖାଉ ତ ଆଉ ବେଳେ ତାହା ରକ୍ଷଣଶୀଳ ଭାବି ତାକୁ ତ୍ୟାଗି ଦେଉ । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଆମମାନଙ୍କର ଆରାଧ୍ୟ ଦେବତା, ଧର୍ମ, ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକତା ଓ ଗ୍ରହଣୀୟତାର ପ୍ରତୀକ । ଆମେ ତାକୁ ଶବ୍ଦ ଦେବତା କହୁଛୁ । ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କ ଦେବତା ଓ ସମଗ୍ର ଜଗତକୁ ପ୍ରତିନିଧିତ୍ୱ କରିବାର କ୍ଷମତା ବହନ କରୁଥିବା ଠାକୁର(ଜଗତର ନାଥ) ବୋଲି ଆଖ୍ୟା ଦେଉଛୁ । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ତୁଣ୍ଡର ନିରବ ଭାଷା କହନ୍ତି । ସବୁ ଭାଷାର ନିର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ ହେଲା ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମହାପୁ । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଯେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ଅକାବ୍ୟ ପ୍ରମାଣ- ସେଥିପ୍ରତି ଆମେ ସଚେତନ ନୋହୁଁ । ମୌଳିକ ରୂପ, ମୌଳିକ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସମ୍ଭାର ଓ ଅପାର ଭାବରାଜ୍ୟର ସଂକେତ ବହନ କରି ସେତ ବିଶ୍ୱଭାଷା (Universal language) ର ଦ୍ୟୋତକ । ଏଣୁ ପଣ୍ଡା, ପଢ଼ିଆରୀ, ସେବକ, ପ୍ରଶାସନ ଯେତେ ସାମାଜିକ ପ୍ରତିବନ୍ଧକ ଆଣି ଠିଆ କରାଉଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ରୂପର ଅଭୂତ ଆକର୍ଷଣ ଏକ ଚିରନ୍ତନ ନିରବିତ ଭାଷାର ପ୍ରତୀକ ହୋଇଯାଏ ।

ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ, ଶିବଲିଙ୍ଗ, ଗାଁ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଠାକୁରାଣୀ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଝୋଟିର ପ୍ରତୀକାତ୍ମକତା ଏକା ପ୍ରକାରର । ଏମାନେ କିଏ ହେଲେ ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ନୁହନ୍ତି, ଅପରୂପ । ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ବିବର୍ତ୍ତନ, ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ଏବଂ ସର୍ବ-ଗ୍ରାହ୍ୟତାର ଏକ ଐତିହାସିକ ସ୍ୱରୂପ । ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ନିଜକୁ ସଭ୍ୟ, ଶ୍ଳୀଳ, ଭଦ୍ର ବୋଲି ପରିଚୟ ଦେବା ପାଇଁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ କେତେକ ଆଦିମ ରୀତି ନୀତିକୁ ଉଚ୍ଛେଦ କରିସାରିଲୁଣି । ମାହାରୀନାଚ, ଡାହୁକ ଗୀତ ତ କେଉଁଦିନରୁ ଲୋପ ପାଇଗଲାଣି । ରକ୍ଷା ହେଇଛି ଶ୍ରୀମନ୍ଦିରରେ ବର୍ଷରେ ଥରେ ବଳିପ୍ରଥାର ଅନ୍ତ ହୋଇନାହିଁ । ମୁଁ ଥରେ ମୋର ଗୋଟିଏ ଇଂରାଜୀ ଲେଖାରେ ଦାବୀ କରିଥିଲି- Why Deny the Lord His Privileges ? ଆମେ କୋଣାର୍କ ମନ୍ଦିରର ସୁସ୍ଥ ହୋଇ ଶ୍ଳୀଳ ଅଶ୍ଳୀଳ ସମସ୍ୟା ଭିତରେ ଅଯଥା ଘାଣ୍ଟି ଚଳି ହେଉଛୁ । କୋଣାର୍କ, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଓ ଗୀତଗୋବିନ୍ଦ କାବ୍ୟର ନାୟନିକ ସମ୍ପେଦନ ଏକାଭଳି । ଗୀତଗୋବିନ୍ଦ କାବ୍ୟର ଦୃଶ୍ୟ-ରୂପ ହେଲା କୋଣାର୍କ ମନ୍ଦିର ଯାହା ଅନନ୍ତ ସାଗର ବେଳାରେ ଠିଆ ହୋଇଛି । ଏମାନଙ୍କର ଭାବଭୂମିକୁ ଆମେ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ କରିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିନାହିଁ । ପଣ୍ଡିତ ବୋଲାଲବାର ପ୍ରବଣତା ଆମକୁ ଗ୍ରାସ କରିଛି । ଆମେ ସର୍ଜନ ପରାକାଷ୍ଠୀ ମଣିଷରୁ ଏବେ ପଣ୍ଡିତ ସର୍ବସ୍ୱ (textual) ହୋଇଯାଇଛୁ । ଏଭଳି ମଣିଷମାନଙ୍କୁ ସାମ୍ନା କଲେ ମୋ ମନରେ ଭୟଜାତ ହୁଏ ।

କହିଲେ ଦେଖି କୋଣାର୍କକୁ ଆମେ କେବେ ପାଠ କରିଛୁ ? Have we read a temple like a text ? ଆମେ କେବେ ଗୀତଗୋବିନ୍ଦ କାବ୍ୟର, ଭାଗବତ ପୁରାଣର ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିଛୁ ? to appreciate the beauty in them

। ମୁଁ ବେଳେବେଳେ ଭାବେ ଆମ ସ୍କୁଲମାନଙ୍କର ପାଠ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ‘ମନ୍ଦିର ପାଠ’ ବା ‘ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ପାଠ’ର period ରହିବା କଥା । କେବଳ ମନ୍ଦିରକୁ ଦେଖିବା, ତାକୁ ପଢ଼ିବା, ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ବେଳାରେ ମୁହଁମୁହଁ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତିତ ଆକାଶକୁ ପାଠ କରିବା ।

ଖୁବ୍ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଓ ଆଶ୍ୱାସନାର କଥା ଓଡ଼ିଶୀନୃତ୍ୟର ବିଶ୍ୱାସନ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅସ୍ଥିତାକୁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନ ଦେଇଛି । ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ଦେଖାଗଲାଣି ଯେଭଳି ଇଂଲିଶ୍ କ୍ରିକେଟ୍ ଏବେ ଭାରତୀୟମାନେ ଭଲ ଖେଳିଲେଣି । ସେଭଳି ବିଦେଶୀ ଓ ଅଣ-ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନେ ଏବେ ଭଲ ନୃତ୍ୟାଙ୍ଗନା ହେବାର ଗୌରବ ଲାଭିଲେଣି । ତା’ ସହିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ବହୁଧାରୀ ବିଭାଜିତ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି- ଓଡ଼ିଶା-ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ, ଆମେରିକା-ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ, ରୁଷିଆ-ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ, ମାଲେସିଆ-ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ପ୍ରଭୃତି । ଆମେରିକାରେ ରହୁଥିବା ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ରତ୍ନା ରାୟ ଥରେ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ନୃତ୍ୟ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ପରିଚାଳନା କରୁଥିଲେ । ସେ ଏହି ନୃତ୍ୟର ସଂରଚନା କରିଥିଲେ ଓ ନୃତ୍ୟରେ ଅଂଶଗ୍ରହଣ ମଧ୍ୟ କରିଥିଲେ । ନୃତ୍ୟ ସଂରଚନା 9/11- Ground Zero ଏବଂ ଆମେରିକାର Teenage Pregnancy ସମସ୍ୟା ଉପରେ ଆଧାରିତ ଥିଲା । ଗ୍ରାଉଣ୍ଡ ଜିରୋ ନୃତ୍ୟର ହିରୋ (ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଚରିତ୍ର) ହୋଇଥିଲେ ଜଣେ ପଗଡ଼ିଧାରୀ ଶିଖ ଏବଂ କୁମାରୀ ମାତୃତ୍ୱ ନୃତ୍ୟ ପରିବେଷଣ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରାତଃସ୍ମରଣୀୟ ମହାଭାରତର ଚରିତ୍ର ପଞ୍ଚୁ ପାଣ୍ଡବଙ୍କ ମା-କୁନ୍ତଳଙ୍କ ପ୍ରାକ୍-ପରିଣୟ ଜୀବନକୁ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ଯେଉଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନେ ନୃତ୍ୟ ଉପଭୋଗ କରୁଥିଲେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଥିଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ନୃତ୍ୟର ଅନ୍ୟତମ ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧା-ଧୀରେନ୍ଦ୍ରନାଥ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ । ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଧୀରେନ୍ଦ୍ର ବାବୁ ମୋଠାରୁ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନୀତ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ନୃତ୍ୟ ସଂପର୍କରେ ମତାମତ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ମୋ ଉତ୍ତର ସରଳ ଥିଲା- 21st Century Odissi dance । ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷର ଅବଧି ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ପରଂପରା ଗଢ଼ି ଦେଇପାରେ, ଶହେବର୍ଷରୁ ବଳିଥିବା ଆଉ ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷ ସେହି ପରଂପରାକୁ ନବୀକରଣ (re-invent) କରିବାରେ ବ୍ୟୟିତ ହେବା ଖୁବ୍ ସ୍ୱାଭାବିକ ।

ମୁଁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଉପନ୍ୟାସ ଲେଖିଛି, ତା’ହେଲା ପୁନର୍ନବା (୧୯୯୯) । ସେଥିରେ ଶାରଳା ମହାଭାରତରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ଶାନ୍ତନୁଙ୍କ ପିତୃଳୀ ରମଣର ସାଂପ୍ରତିକ ପରିପ୍ରେକ୍ଷା ଉପରେ ନିର୍ଭର କରି କଳାକୃତ୍ତର ମାଟି ପିତୃଳୀ ନିର୍ମାଣ, ଜୀବନ୍ୟାସ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା ସହିତ ଜନ୍ମ ମୃତ୍ୟୁର ସଂପର୍କ ଏବଂ ତହିଁରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ର ପରଂପରାରେ ନାନ୍ଦନିକତାର ପ୍ରତିଫଳନ କଥା କହିଛି । ଉପନ୍ୟାସରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରକର ରାଧାଙ୍କୁ ବନକ କରିବାକୁ ଯାଇ ଶ୍ରୀଅଙ୍ଗରୁ ଶାଢ଼ି ଖୋଲି ଦେଇଛି । କିଛି ରକ୍ଷଣଶୀଳ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପାଠକଙ୍କ ମଗଜରେ ନବକଳେବରର ଏହି ମଞ୍ଜ କଥାଟି ଭୁଲିନି । ସେମାନେ କହିଛନ୍ତି ଏଭଳି ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ଅଶ୍ୱୀଳ । ପୁଣି ଯେତେବେଳେ ଶ୍ରୀରାଧାଙ୍କ ବିଗ୍ରହ ଗଢ଼ିବା ଅବସରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ଶ୍ରୀରାଧାଙ୍କ ସ୍ତନ ଯୁଗଳ ଓ ଗୁପ୍ତ ଅଙ୍ଗକୁ ଲହୁରୁଣିରେ ମାଠୁଛି, କେତେକ ଭାବୁଛନ୍ତି ରାଧାଙ୍କ ସଂପର୍କରେ ଏଭଳି ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନା ଦେବା ଅଶ୍ୱୀଳ ଏବଂ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରଂପରାର ପରିପତ୍ତା ।

ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷା ଏକ ଦେହୋତ୍ତର ଭାଷା । ନାମ ରୂପ ରଂଗ ଅକ୍ଷର ଭାଷା ଉପମା ଓ କଳ୍ପ ନିଜସ୍ୱ ହରେଇ ଦେଲାପରେ ଯାହା ଦର୍ଶକ ଓ ପାଠକକୁ ଆଚ୍ଛନ୍ନ କରେ ତାହା ଚିତ୍ର ନୁହେଁ, ସାହିତ୍ୟ ବି ନୁହେଁ । ତାହା ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ସ୍ୱୟମ୍ଭ, ଦେହ ନୁହେଁ, ନିର୍ବିକଳ୍ପ ଆନନ୍ଦ । ଚିତ୍ର ଦର୍ଶନ ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପଠନ ସାରୋଳାଙ୍କ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ପିତୃଳୀ ରମଣ ଭଳି ।

ଆମେ ଭୁଲିଯିବା ବୁଦ୍ଧିମତ୍ତାର ପରିଚୟ ହେବନାହିଁ ଯେ ଆମେ କୋଣାର୍କ ଦେଶର ଲୋକ । ଜଣେ ଶିଳ୍ପୀର ସର୍ଜନ ପରିକଳ୍ପନାକୁ ସମ୍ମାନ ଦେବା ଏ ଜାତି ଶିଖିଛି ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଇଶ୍ୱର, ଏକଥା ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ କରିଛି । ପୁନର୍ନବା ଉପନ୍ୟାସରୁ ଏଠାରେ କିଛି ଉଦ୍ଧୃତି ଦେବା ପ୍ରାସଙ୍ଗିକ ହେବ ।

“ରାଧାଗୋବିନ୍ଦ କହେ, ହେ ମାନମୟୀ ରାଧା ମୋ କଳ୍ପନାରେ ଧରାଦିଅ ମଞ୍ଜୁଲତା ଭଳି । ସେ ମନେମନେ ସଂକଳ୍ପ କରେ ମୋ ମଞ୍ଜୁଲତାକୁ ହିଁ ରାଧାରେ ବଦଳାଇ ଦେବି (ମଞ୍ଜୁଲତା ଚିତ୍ରକର ରାଧାଗୋବିନ୍ଦର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ) ତାର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀତ ସ୍ତନଯୁଗଳକୁ ଉତ୍ତାଳ କରି ଖୋଦେଇ କରିଦେବି, ତାର ଜନ୍ମନକୁ ଆବେଗର ଫେନକରେ ଗୁମ୍ଫିତ କରିବି । ତାର ଥବିର ନିତମ୍ବରେ ଭରିଦେବି ଅନେଶ୍ୱତ କୋଟି ମାୟା । ମୁଁ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ, ମୁଁ ସ୍ରଷ୍ଟା, ମୁଁ ପାରିବି । ମୁଁ ହିଁ ପାରିବି । ଆସ ଯେତେ ଉପମା ଉପମେୟ ଅଛ, ଆସ । ଯେତେ ଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନା ମଳୟ ବସନ୍ତ ଅଛ, ଆସ । ମୟୂର ମୟୂରୀ, ସେମାନଙ୍କ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ପାଟବ, ଚଂପା ମଲ୍ଲୀ ମାଳତୀ କଦମ୍ବ ବଉଳର ବାସ୍ନା, ଆସ । ଆସ ଅଧାମ ସର ଲହୁଣୀର କୋମଳ କାରୁଣ୍ୟ । ଆସ ଯେତେ ବର୍ତ୍ତୁଳତା ସୁଠାମତା ଘନତା ସାନ୍ଦତା, ଆସ ଯେତେ ଛନ୍ଦ, ଯେତେ ସରାଗ ସବୁ ଆସ । ମୁଁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଏକାକାର କରି ଲେପିଦେବି ରାଧାଙ୍କ ସର୍ବାଙ୍ଗରେ । ନାରୀ ତ ରୂପର ଦର୍ପଣ । ତେଣୁ ତମେ ସବୁ ପ୍ରତିବିମ୍ବିତ ହୋଇଯାଅ ମୋ ପିତୃଳୀ ଦେହରେ ।” (ପୃ. ୨୩୬)

ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରିୟାଶ୍ରୟୀ ହେଲେ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଅବୋଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇପଡ଼େ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରିୟାନୁଭୂତି ବାହାରେ ବୋଧର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଉଠେନା । ଚିତ୍ର ଦର୍ଶନରେ ଏଭଳି ଅବସ୍ଥାଟିଏ ଆସେ । ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପଠନରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅନୁରୂପ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟଟିଏ ଅଛି । ପୁନର୍ନବା ଜଣେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଶିଳ୍ପୀର ଅବବୋଧର କଥା । ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର କଥା କବିଭାଷାରେ । ଅନୁଭୂତିର ଭାଷାନ୍ତର । ଆମ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପରଂପରାରେ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷା ବ୍ୟତିରେକ କାବ୍ୟ ଭାଷାର ଉନ୍ନେଷ ନଥିଲା ବୋଲି ଜାଣିଲାପରେ ଏଠି ଏ ଉଭୟଙ୍କୁ ଏକାସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଅବବୋଧ କରିବାର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ।

ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷା ବା ରୂପଭାଷାର କଥା ପରିସ୍ଫୁଟ । ରାଧାଙ୍କ ଶ୍ରୀଅଙ୍ଗରେ ସାଧାରଣରେ କଥୁତ ଭଣ୍ଡାର ପରିପ୍ରେକ୍ଷୀ ନାହିଁ, ତା'ର ଚମକ ବି ନାହିଁ । ସବୁ କଥୁତ ଭାଷା ନିରବେଇ ଗଲାପରେ ଯେଉଁ ରୂପର ଉଦ୍‌ବେଳନ ଆମକୁ ହତ ଚକିତ କରିଦିଏ, ବିସ୍ମୟରେ ଭରିଦିଏ ତାହାହିଁ ରୂପଭାଷା ବା ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷା, ଯାହାର ସମ୍ବେଦନା Universal ସେଠାରେ ଗୋଷ୍ଠିଚେତନା ବା ପ୍ରାକ୍ତୀୟ ସଚେତନତା ନାହିଁ । ଗୋଟିଏ ମହାମାନବୀୟ ଉତ୍ତଳ ଭିତରେ ରହିମଧ୍ୟ ଆମେ ନାନ୍ଦନିକତାର ରସ ଆସ୍ବାଦନ କରିପାରିବା । ଏଥିରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆତ୍ୱ ହରେଇ ଦେବାର ଭୟ ନାହିଁ । ଇଂରାଜୀ ଭାଷା କହୁଥିଲେ ବି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ଛଟା ବାରିହୋଇ ପାରିବ । ପାଶ୍ଚାତ୍ୟ ଦେଶମାନଙ୍କରେ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରାଚ୍ୟବିଦ୍ୟା ବିଷୟର ଅଛନ୍ତି ଯେଉଁମାନଙ୍କ ଗବେଷଣାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆର ଗରିମା ପରିସ୍ଫୁଟ । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ମୁଁ ଏବର୍‌ହାର୍ଡ୍‌ ଫିସର, ହରମାନ କୁଲକେ, ଟୋମାସ୍ ଡୋନାଲଡ୍‌ସନ୍ ଓ ଜୋଆନା ଫ୍ରିଲିୟମସ୍କ ନାମ ସ୍ମରଣ କରୁଛି । ସେମାନେ ନିଜ ନିଜ ଜୀବନର ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସମୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ କଳା, ସ୍ଥାପତ୍ୟ ଓ ଇତିହାସର ପରିଚର୍ଚ୍ଚାରେ ବିତାଇଛନ୍ତି । ସେମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା କହନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସଂପର୍କ ।

ମୁଁ ହୁଏତ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଯେ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖିବା ବନ୍ଦ କରିଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ସେମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ରହି ଆମେରିକାକୁ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଛନ୍ତି ଆଉ ଯେଉଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନେ ଆମେରିକାରେ ବସବାସ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ସେମାନେ ଶୟନେ ସପନେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଝୁରି ହେଉଛନ୍ତି । ଏହିସବୁ ଝୁରି ହେଉଥିବା ସ୍ୱପ୍ନକୁ ସାର୍ଥକ କରିବା ପାଇଁ 'ଓସା'ର ଜନ୍ମ ।

ମୋ ପୁନର୍ନବା ଚିତ୍ରୋପନ୍ୟାସ ଇଂରାଜୀରେ ଅନୁଦିତ ହୋଇସାରିଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତାହା ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୋଇପାରିନି । ଏହି ଅନୁବାଦ ପଢ଼ି ଜଣେ ଆମେରିକୀୟ ବିଦୁଷୀ Elinor Gadon ଯେଉଁ ଅଭିମତ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ତା ପ୍ରଶିଧାନଯୋଗ୍ୟ ।

"So many levels of insight into that of the creative spirit and practice of the artist, the relationship of eros to creativity, of eros to spirituality... that of the vaishnava tantric, that of the erotico - spiritual which from my perspective is what so distinguishes this tradition from all other religious experience and also the perspective of the common villager. This might be specially interesting to the Western audience, which although obsessed with sex still is unable to reconcile the split between the erotic and the spiritual so central to Christian theology and American Puritanism."

ମାନବୀୟ ଚେତନାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚିତ୍ରଭାଷାର ପ୍ରତିଫଳନ ସଂକ୍ରାନ୍ତୀୟ ଆଲୋଚନା ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଦୀର୍ଘ ହେବାକୁ ବାଧ୍ୟ । ଏଠାରେ କେବଳ ଏହାର ସାମାନ୍ୟ ସୂଚନାର ଅବତାରଣା କରାଯାଇଛି ।

ଶେଷରେ ପୁନର୍ନବା ଉପନ୍ୟାସରୁ ଗୋଟିଏ କବିତାର ଉଦ୍ଧୃତି ଦେଇ ଆଲୋଚନା ସାଙ୍ଗ କରୁଛି ।

ଚିତ୍ର କ'ଣ ସତରେ

ମଣିଷ ଭଳିଆ ଦିଶେ ?

ନା ମଣିଷଙ୍କ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ପରି ଲାଗେ

ସବୁ ଛନ୍ଦାଛନ୍ଦି ଶିଆଳିଲଟା ପରି

ସକାଳ କୁହୁଡ଼ି ପରି

ଘାସରେ କାକରର ମୁକ୍ତା ପରି ।

ଚିତ୍ର କ'ଣ ସତେ ଅକ୍ଳୁହା କବିତା !

ଯା ଦେହରେ କଥା ହଜିଥାଏ

ଯାହା କହିବ କହିବ ହୁଏ

ଅଥଚ କହି ବି ପାରେନା
ରହି ବି ହୁଏନା ନିଷ୍ଠୁରିରେ ।
କେଉଁ ସାଗରର ଅତଳ ଗର୍ଭରୁ
ଆଖିରେ ଆଖିରେ ତୋଳିବାକୁ ହୁଏ
ମୁକ୍ତାହାରା ନୀଳା ଓ ଶାମୁକା ।
ଚିତ୍ର କ'ଣ ନିଜେଇ ମଣିଷ
ନା ମଣିଷଙ୍କ ଛାଇ ?
ମଣିଷ ପରି ଦିଶେ
ଅଥଚ ମଣିଷ ନୁହେଁ
ଯାହା ମଣିଷଠୁ ଭିନ୍ନ
ରୁମ୍ଭନର ପ୍ରତିଧ୍ୱନି ଭଳି
ଖାଲି ଅକୁହା ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ।

ଥରେ ଜଣେ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ରାଜଦରବାରକୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଶୁଆ ନେଇ ଆସିଲେ । ସେ ଶୁଆର ଦୁଇଟି ଗୋଡ଼ରେ
ଦୁଇଟି ସୂତା ବନ୍ଧା ହୋଇଥାଏ । ଗୋଟିଏ ସୂତାକୁ ଚାଣିଲେ ଶୁଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତରେ କଥା କହେ, ଅନ୍ୟ ସୂତାଟିକୁ ଚାଣିଲେ
ଲାଟିନ୍ ଭାଷାରେ କଥା କହିଯାଏ । ରାଜା କୈତୂହଳୀ ହୋଇ ସେ ଲୋକକୁ କହିଲେ, ତମେ ଶୁଆର ଦୁଇଟି ସୂତାକୁ
ଚାଣିଦିଅ ସେ କେଉଁ ଭାଷାରେ କଥା କହିବ ଶୁଣିବା । ଶୁଆଟି ରାଜାଙ୍କ କଥା ମନଦେଇ ଶୁଣୁଥିଲା ଆଉ କହିଲା, “ଏ ମୁଁ
ତଳେ ପଢ଼ିଯିବି ।”

ପଖାଳ ରେଷିପ୍

“ ଜିନୁ” ଦିନ ବାରଟା ସୁଧା ଆସି ପହଞ୍ଚି ଯିବ ବୋଲି କହିଛି । ତାକୁ ସହଜରେ ଛୁଟି ମିଳେନା କାମରୁ । ଆଜି “ଜୁଲାଇ ଫେର”, ଆମେରିକାର ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ଦିବସ । ଏମିତିରେ ଛୁଟିଦିନ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ବି ହୁଅନ୍ତାଲ ତ ଖୋଲାଥାଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏହିପରି ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଛୁଟିଦିନ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ପାଳିକରି କାମ କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ି ଥାଏ । ଜିନୁ ଗଲା “ମେମୋରିଆଲ ଡେ” ଜାତୀୟ ଛୁଟି ଦିନଟି କାମ କରିଥିବାରୁ ତାକୁ ଜୁଲାଇ ଫେର ରେ ଛୁଟି ମିଳିଗଲା ।

ଏମିତିରେ ବି ସେ ନିଜକୁ ସବୁବେଳେ କାମରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ରଖିଥାଏ । ସେ ଡାକ୍ତର । ଛୁଟିଦିନ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ସେ ଚାଲିଯାଏ “ସାଲଭେସନ ଆର୍ମୀ” ଦ୍ଵାରା ଯୋଗାଯାଉଥିବା ମାଗଣା ଚିକିତ୍ସା କେନ୍ଦ୍ରକୁ, ରୋଗି ମାନଙ୍କୁ ମାଗଣାରେ ଚିକିତ୍ସା ଯୋଗାଇ ଦେବାକୁ । ଘରେ ଏକା ବସି କରିବ ବା କଣ । ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁଅ, ସେ ଦୂରରେ ରହି କଲେଜରେ ପାଠ ପଢ଼ୁଛି । ଗତ ଦଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେବ ସେ ତା ସ୍ଵାମୀ ଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ଅଲଗା ରହୁଛି । ସ୍ଵାମୀ ବି ତାର ଡାକ୍ତର । ଦୁଇ ଜଣଙ୍କର ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ବହୁଳ ଜୀବନରେ ପରସ୍ପରର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା କେବେବି ଦୁହେଁ ଅନୁଭବ କରିପାରିଲେନି ବରଂ ସାମାନ୍ୟ କଥାକୁ ନେଇ ଝଗଡ଼ା । ଶେଷରେ ତାହା ଅଶାନ୍ତିରେ ପରିଣତ ହୋଇଯାଏ । ୬ ଡ଼ାକ୍ତର ଦୁହେଁ ଏହିପରି ଦୂରରେ ରହିବାକୁ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିନେଲେ ।

‘ଜିନୁ’ ଆଉ ‘ଶିଖା’ ସ୍କୁଲ ଦିନରୁ ହିଁ ତାଙ୍କର ଜଣାଶୁଣା ଥିଲା । ଏକା କ୍ଳାସ୍ରେ ପଢ଼ୁଥିଲେ । ସେତେ ଘନିଷ୍ଠତା ନଥିଲା ସତ କାରଣ ଜିନୁ ବହୁତ ଧନୀ ଘରର ଝିଅଥିଲା ସେହି ପରି ଝିଅ ମାନଙ୍କ ସଙ୍ଗେ ସେ ମିଶୁ ଥିଲା କେବଳ । ଶିଖାର ବାପା ଜଣେ ସାଧାରଣ ସରକାରୀ କର୍ମଚାରୀ ଥିଲେ । ଜିନୁ ଆଉ ଶିଖାର କୌଣସି ପକାର ମେଳ ନଥିଲା ଜୀବନର ବଞ୍ଚିବା ଶୈଳୀ ଭିତରେ । ତିନି ମହଲା କୋଠା ଘରେ ରହୁଥିବା ଝିଅ ସହିତ ଚିଣ ଛପର ଘରେ ରହୁଥିବା ଝିଅର ଅମେଳ ରହିବା ସ୍ଵଭାବିକ ।

ହାଇସ୍କୁଲ ପରେ ଜିନୁ ଚାଲିଗଲା ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ, କଲେଜ୍ ରେ ପଢ଼ିବା ପାଇଁ । ତାପରେ ମେଡ଼ିକାଲ କଲେଜ୍ । ତାପରେ କେବେ ଦେଖା ହୋଇନଥିଲା ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କର । ତାପରେ ହଠାତ୍ କରି ଦେଖାହୋଇଗଲା ନିୟୁୟର୍କରେ ଏକ ସପ୍ତିମା ମଲ୍ରେ । ଦୋ ଦୋ ଚିହ୍ନାରୁ ପରିଚୟର ଆଦାନ ପ୍ରଦାନ ଏବଂ ସେହିଠାରେ ହିଁ ଘନିଷ୍ଠତା ବଢ଼ିଥିଲା ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ । ଦୁହେଁ ବିବାହ ପରେ ଆସିଥିଲେ ଆମେରିକାକୁ । ନିୟୁୟର୍କର ପାଞ୍ଚ ବର୍ଷ ରହଣୀ ପରେ ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କ ପରିବାର ମୁଭ୍ କରି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ସହରକୁ ଚାକିରୀ ଜନିତ ଘଟଣାରୁ । ତାପରେ ପୁଣି ଦୀର୍ଘ ପନ୍ଦର ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ଦେଖାହୋଇଗଲା ଫିଲାଡେଲଫିଆର ଏକ ବନ୍ଧୁ ମିଳନର ଆସରରେ ।

ଏଥରର ବନ୍ଧୁତ୍ଵ ଟା ବେଶ୍ ନିବିଡ଼ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା । କାରଣ ବୟସ ଓ ସମୟ ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କୁ ବେଶ୍ ଅଭିଜ୍ଞ କରିଦେଇଥିଲା ଏହା ଭିତରେ ଜୀବନ ବିଷୟରେ । ଶିଖାର ପିଲା ଦୁଇଜଣ ମଧ୍ୟ କଲେଜରେ ଘର ଠାରୁ ଚାରିଶହ ମାଇଲ୍ ଦୂରରେ ରହି ପଢ଼ନ୍ତି । ସ୍ଵାମୀ ତାର ଏକ କଂପାନି ମ୍ୟାନେଜର । ସବୁବେଳେ ବ୍ୟବସାୟିକ ଗସ୍ତରେ ବାହାରକୁ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ସେ ନିଜେ ଏକ ସ୍ଥାନିୟ ହୁଅନ୍ତାଲ୍ରେ ପାର୍ଟ ଟାଇମ୍ କାମ କରେ । ଜିନୁ ବି ଏକାକୀ । ଯାହାବି ହେଉ ଏକା ସ୍କୁଲରେ ଏକା କ୍ଳାସ୍ରେ ହାଇସ୍କୁଲର ଚାରିବର୍ଷ ବିତେଇଛନ୍ତି । ଏକା ସହରର ଝିଅ ବି । ଘର ପରିବାର ଠାରୁ ଆଖି ପାଉ ନଥିବା ଦୂରରେ, ଏଠି ଏଇ ସାଂଗ ମାନେ ହିଁ ତ ବେଶୀ ନିଜର ।

ଏବେ ଫେନ୍ରେ ଘଣ୍ଟା ଘଣ୍ଟା ବେଶ୍ ଗପସପ ଚାଲେ । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଦିନ ନହେଲେ ବି ସପ୍ତାହକୁ ଥରେ ଦିଅର ତ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ । ଗୋଟିଏ କଥାରୁ କଥା ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇ ଯେ କୁଆଡେ କୁଆଡେ ଚାଲିଯାଏ ଜଣା ପଡେନା । ପିଲା ବେଳ ଠୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ସ୍କୁଲ ଦିନର କଥା, ନିତିଦିନିଆ ଚାକିରି ଜୀବନ କଥା, ପିଲା ଛୁଆଙ୍କ କଥା, ଏହିପରି ବିତିଯାଏ ଦୁଇ ତିନି ଘଣ୍ଟା । ଏଠି ତ ସମସ୍ତେ ସମାନ । ପିଲାବେଳର ସେ ଧନୀ ଦାରିଦ୍ରତାର ସୀମାରେଖା ଏଠି ମାପିବାକୁ କେହି ନାହାଁନ୍ତି । ସମୟ ବା କାହାର ।

ଦିନେ ଏମିତି କଥା ହେଉ ହେଉ ପଖାଳ ଉପରେ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା ଟା ଯୋରରେ ପଡିଲା । ଜିନ୍ଦୁ ପିଲାବେଳେ ପଖାଳ ବିଶେଷ କେବେ ଖାଇ ନଥିଲା । ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ସେ ତା ପିଉସି ଘର ଗାଁକୁ କୃଚିତ୍ କେମିତି ଯାଇ ଦି ଚାରିଥର ପଖାଳ ଚାଖିଥିଲା ମାତ । ଆଉ ଏଠିକି ଆସିବା ପରେ ପିଜା, ବର୍ଗର, ନୁଡୁଲ୍ରେ ଅଧିକାଂସ ଦିନ ତାର କାମ ଚଳିଯାଏ । ତାର ଏଠିକାର ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଜୀବନ ସରଣୀ ଭିତରେ ରୋଷେଇ କରିବାକୁ ସମୟ ବା କାହିଁ । ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମାନୀ ପୁଅ ସଂଗେ ଥିବା ସମୟରେ ରବିବାର ବା ବିଶେଷ ଛୁଟି ଦିନ ମାନଙ୍କରେ ସେ ରୋଷେଇ କିଛି କିଛି କରୁଥିଲା । ତାହା ବି ଆଜି କାଲି ଖାପ୍ ଛଡା ହୋଇ ଗଲାଣି ।

ଶିଖା କିନ୍ତୁ ଏବେବି ରୋଷେଇ ବାସ କରେ । ଚାଇନିଜ୍, ମେକ୍ସିକାନ୍, ଆମେରିକାନ୍ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଯେତେ ଖାଇଲେ ବି ସେ ତା ଭାତ ତାଲି କୁ ଏବେବି ଭୁଲିନି । ଖରାଦିନ ହେଲେ ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ସମୟ ଥିଲେ ପଖାଳ, ଆଳୁଚପ୍, ମାଛ ଭଜା, ବଡିଭଜା, ଶାଗ ପ୍ରଭୃତି ତିଆରି କରି ଖାଏ ଓଡିଆ ସାଙ୍ଗ ମାନଙ୍କ ଗହଣରେ । ତାରି ଏଇ କଥାରୁ ଜିନ୍ଦୁର ପଖାଳ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଲା । ସେଦିନ ଛୁଟି ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କର ଥିଲା ଶିଖାର ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମାନୀ ଆଂଶୁମାନ ବାବୁ ବି ସପ୍ତାହକ ପାଇଁ ବାହାରକୁ ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ ପଖାଳ ଟା ଜମେଇ କରି ଖାଇବାର ପ୍ଲାନ୍ ହୋଇଗଲା । ତେଣୁ ଆଜିର ଏଇ ପଖାଳର ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତି ଟା ଜିନ୍ଦୁ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ଯେତିକି ଅତୀତର ସ୍ମୃତି କୁ ଦୋହରାଇବା ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେତିକି ।

ଜିନ୍ଦୁର କାର୍ ଶବ୍ଦ ବାହାରେ ଶୁଣି ଶିଖା କବାଟ ଖୋଲିଦେଲା କଲିଂବେଲ୍ ବାଜିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ । ଦୁଇ ବନ୍ଧୁ ଙ୍କର ସ୍ନେହ ଶୁଭାର ଆଦାନ ପ୍ରଦାନ ପରେ ପରେ ଦୁହେଁ ଚାଲି ଆସିଲେ ତାଇନିଂ ରୁମ୍କୁ । ଟେବୁଲ୍ ଉପରେ ପଖାଳ ସାଂଗକୁ ଏତେ ପ୍ରକାର ଭଜା ଭଜି ଖାଇବା ଦେଖି ଜିନ୍ଦୁ ଲୋଭ ସମ୍ବରଣ କରି ପାରିଲାନି । ହେ ଶିଖା ଖାଇବା ଚାଲ୍ । ଆଳୁଚପ୍, ପିଆଜି, ଚାଉଳ ଚୁନା ଦିଆ ବାଇଗଣ ଭଜା, ଶାଗ, ରାଶି ବଡି ଭଜା, ଇଲିଶି ମାଛଭଜା, ଭେଣ୍ଟି ଭଜା । ଆଃ କି ସ୍ବାଦ ଗୋଟେ ଆଳୁଚପ୍, ପିଆଜି ନେଇ ଖାଉ ଖାଉ ଜିନ୍ଦୁ କହିଲା ।

-ହଁ ହଁ ସବୁତ ରେଡି ଚାଲ ଖାଇବା । ଭୋକ ଲାଗିଲାଣି ଜୋରରେ ।

- ସକାଳୁ ସକାଳୁ କାମରେ ତ ନିଶ୍ଚେ ଲାଗିଥିବୁ । ତୋର ଛୁଟି ଦିନ ଟା ନଷ୍ଟ କରି ଦେଲିନି ତ ଆସି ।
- ହେ କ'ଣ କହୁଛୁ ଜିନ୍ଦୁ, ତୋ ଯୋଗୁ ମତେ ବି ବାହାନା ମିଳିଗଲା ଖାଇବାକୁ । ନଚେତ୍ ମୁଁ ବି ସେଇ କାଲିର ବଳକା ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଫ୍ରିଜରରୁ କିଛି କାଢି ମାଇକୋଓଭରେ ଗରମ କରି କାମ ଚଳେଇ ଦେଇ ଥାଆନ୍ତି ଆଜି । ଖାଇବାକୁ ଏସବୁ ଇଚ୍ଛାଥିଲେ ବି ସମୟ କାହିଁ ଏ ସବୁ କରିବାକୁ । ସମୟ ଥିଲେ ବି ଇଚ୍ଛା ହୁଏନା ଜଣଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ କିଏ ଏସବୁ କରୁଛି । ଆଜି ଗରମ ପାଗରେ ଏଇ ଖାଇବର ସ୍ବାଦ କିଛି ଅଲଗା । ପିଲାବେଳର ବୋଉ, ଖୁଡି, ଆଇଙ୍କ ରକ୍ଷା ମନେ ପଡି ଯାଉଛି ।

-ସେ ଯାହା ବି ହେଉ ଶିଖା ତତେ ପ୍ରଶଂସା ନକରି ରହି ପାରୁନି । ମୁଁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିଥିଲେ ଏତେ ସବୁ

କେବେବି କରି ପାରି ନଥାନ୍ତି । ସବୁଦିନ ମୁଁ ହୁଷିଟାଲର କାଫେଟରୀଆରେ ବେକ୍‌ଫାଷ୍ଟ ଓ ଲକ୍ଷ ଖାଇଦିଏ । ସୁପ୍, ସାଲାଡ୍, ବ୍ରେଡ୍ ବା କେବେ ଟାକୋ, ଚିପୋଲେ ବା ଚିକେନ୍ ସ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡଉଇଚ୍, ଏମିତିରେ ମୋର କାମ ଚଳିଯାଏ । ରାତିରେ ଚାଇନିଜ୍ ବା ମେକ୍ସିକାନ ବା ପିଜା ଅର୍ଡର କରି କାମ ଚଳେଇ ଦିଏ । ଏତେ ପ୍ରକାର ଯେ ଅଛି ଖାଇବାକୁ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ତାକୁ ମୁଁ ଭୁଲିବାକୁ ବସିଲିଣି ।

ସେଦିନ ରାତି ଦଶଟା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ରହିଲା ଜିନ୍ଦୁ ଶିଖାର ଘରେ । ତିନର ଟା ବି ତା ସଂଗେ ଖାଇନେବାକୁ ଜବରଦସ୍ତ କଲା ଶିଖା । ଗରମ ଭାତ ଚିକେନ୍ ଝୋଳ ସାଂଗରେ ଦି ପ୍ରହରର ଯାହା ଭଜା ଭଜି ବଳିଥିଲା ତାକୁ ଖାଇ ନେଲେ । ପରେ ହରବାଲ୍ ଟା ସଂଗରେ ଜିନ୍ଦୁ ଆଣିଥିବା ପେକାନ୍ ଓ ଆପଲ୍ ପାଏ ଖାଇବା ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଜିନ୍ଦୁ କହିଲା -ତୋ ହାତ ତିଆରି ରସଗୋଲା ଆଜି ଆଉ ଖିଆ ହୋଇ ପାରିଲାନି ।

-ନା ବେଳ ହେଲାନି ତିଆରି କରିବାକୁ ରେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆରଥରକୁ । ଏଇଥିରେ ତୋର ଆସିବା ତ ସରି ଯାଉନି । ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କ ମନଖୋଲା ହସରେ ବିଦାୟ ନେଲେ ପରସ୍ପର ଠାରୁ ଶୁଭ ରାତି କହି । ଜିନ୍ଦୁ ଯିବା ପରେ ବଳକା ଖାଇବାକୁ ଫିଙ୍ଗିରେ ରଖା ରଖି କରି ଶୋଇବାକୁ ଯିବା ବେଳକୁ ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଏଗାର ପ୍ରାୟ । କାଲି ଶିଖାର ଅଫିସ୍ ଯିବାର ଅଛି । ସେ ଅଧିକାଂଶ ଦିନ କାଫେଟରୀଆରେ ଲକ୍ଷ ଖାଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ କାଲି ଟିକେ ବଳକା ପଖାଳ, ଆଳୁଚପ୍ ନେଇ ଯିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଲା । ଆଜି ପଖାଳ ଖିଆଟା ଏତେ ଆମ୍ ତୁଟି ଦେଲା ଯେ କାଲି ଖାଇବାକୁ ପୁଣି ଥରେ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହେଲା ଶିଖାର ।

ଜିହ୍ଵାର ଲାଳସାରେ, ବିନା ଭାବି ଚିନ୍ତି କାମକୁ ତ ନେଇ ଆସିଲା ପଖାଳ । ଏବେ କିନ୍ତୁ ଖାଇବ କେମିତି । ପଖାଳ ଟାକୁ ହାତରେ ନଖାଇଲେ ମଜା ଲାଗେନା । କାଫେଟରୀଆରେ ଏତେ ଲୋକ ଥିବେ ତା ଆଡକୁ ଆକ୍ଷୟ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରେ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଚାହିଁବେ । ଯେ ଦେଶ ଯାଇ ସେ ଫଳ ଖାଇ । ଆମେରିକାରେ ଏତେ ବର୍ଷ ରହିଲା ପରେ ଚାମଟ, କକ୍ଷା ଚାମଟ୍ ଓ ଛୁରୀରେ ଖାଇବା କେବେ ଠାରୁ ସେ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ କରି ନେଇଛି । ଘରେ ସିନା ହାତରେ ଖାଇଦିଏ ବେଳେ ବେଳେ । ପିଲାମାନେ ହସନ୍ତି । ସେ ହସକୁ ସେ ସହି ନେବ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏ ମାନଙ୍କ ହସ ସେ ସହି ପାରିବନି । ତାର ପ୍ରିୟ ଖାଦ୍ୟର ଏପରି ଅମର୍ଯ୍ୟଦା । ନା ତା ହୋଇ ପାରେନା ।

ହୁଷିଟାଲର ସେଇ ଫ୍ଲୋରରେ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ଛୋଟ ବଡ଼ ବେକ୍‌ରୁମ୍ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅଛି । ନିଜ ଅଫିସ୍ ଠାରୁ ଟିକେ ଦୂର ହେଲେବି ସେଠାରେ ଯାଇ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଆରମ୍ଭରେ ମନସ୍ଥ କରିନେଲା ଶିଖା । ସେଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଛୋଟ ହେଲେ ବି ବସିବା ପାଇଁ ଚୌକି ଟେବୁଲ୍ ଥାଏ । ଭେଣ୍ଟିଲେ ମେସିନ୍ ଥାଏ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରକାର ସୋଡା କିଣି ନେଇ ପିଇବା ପାଇଁ । ମାଲକୋଡ୍ଡୁ ଭି ଥାଏ ଖାଇବା ଗରମ କରିବା ପାଇଁ । ଫ୍ରିଜ୍ ବି ଥାଏ । ପାଷ୍ଟିକ୍ ଚାମଟ୍, ପାଷ୍ଟିକ୍ କକ୍ଷା ଚାମଟ, ଛୁରି ହାତ ସଫା କରିବା ପାଇଁ ପେପର ନାପକିନ୍ , ପାଣି ପାଇଁ ବେସିନ୍ ମଧ୍ୟ ଥାଏ । ତେଣୁ କିଛି ଅସୁବିଧା ନାହିଁ । ଲକ୍ଷ୍ ବନ୍ଧୁ ନେଇ ସେଠାରେ ଯାଇ ଏକ କୋଣରେ କେହି ସହଜରେ ନଦେଖି ପାରିଲା ପରି ଯାଗା ଟାଏ ଖୋଜି ବସିଗଲା ।

ଦୂରରୁ 'ଡେଜି' ଏଇ ଆଡକୁ ଆସୁଥିବାର ଦେଖିଲା ଶିଖା । ଭେଣ୍ଟିଲେ ମେସିନ୍‌ରୁ କିଛି ଗୋଟେ ସ ଫଷ୍ଟ ଡିଙ୍କ୍ ବୋଧେ ନେଇ ଚାଲିଯିବ । କାମ ମଝିରେ କୋକ୍ ବା ସେଭେନ୍ ଅପ୍ ବା ମାଉଣ୍ଟେନ୍ ଡିୟୁ ବା ଅନ୍ୟକିଛି ଏହିପରି କ୍ୟାଫିନ୍‌ଯୁକ୍ତ ଡିଙ୍କ୍ ପିଇବାରେ ଅନେକ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ । ଏ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଟା ଡେଜିର ଟିକେ ବେଶୀ । ଖୁବ୍ ଶିଘ୍ର ସେ କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ହୋଇ ପଡ଼େ । କାମର ବିରକ୍ତିରୁ ରିହାତି ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରତି ଦୁଇ ଘଣ୍ଟାରେ ତାର କିଛି ନା କିଛି

ପ୍ରକାରର କ୍ୟାମିନ୍ ଦରକାର ପଡ଼େ ।

-ହାଏ “ଶିଖା” । ତାକୁ ନଦେଖିବାର ଛଳନା କଲେ ବି ଶିଖା, ତେଜି ତାକୁ ଦେଖି ଦେଇଛି । ତା ଆଡ଼କୁ ଅଗ୍ରସର ହେବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲାଣି । ଶିଘ୍ର ଶିଘ୍ର ଆଲୁଚପ୍ ଆଉ ପିଆଜିକୁ ଛୋଟ ଛୋଟ ଖଣ୍ଡ କରି ପଖାଳ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ମିଶାଇ ଦେଇ ପାଞ୍ଜିକ୍ ଚାମଚରେ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ଶିଖା । -“ହେ ଶିଖା ଇୟୋଓର ପୁଟ୍ ଲୁକସ୍ ଭେରି ତେଲିସିଅସ୍ । ଗୁଡ୍ ସ୍ଲୋ ଓ” । ଦହି, କଞ୍ଚା ଲେମ୍ବୁ, କଞ୍ଚା ଲଂକା ମିଶା ପଖାଳ, ବାସ୍ନା ତ ଦେବ ନିଷ୍ଠୁ ।

ଆଉ କିଏ ହେଉଥିଲେ କଥାର ବିଷୟ ବସ୍ତୁ ସେ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ କରି ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ଗପି ଦେଇଥାଆନ୍ତା । କିନ୍ତୁ ତେଜି ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ବହୁତ ଦିନର ପରିଚୟ । ପ୍ରଥମେ କାମରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଲାବେଳେ ଏହି ତେଜି ହିଁ ତାକୁ ବହୁତ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ତେଜିକୁ ଅନେକ ଥର ତାକୁ ସେ ପୁରି ଆଉ ଚିକେନ୍ କରି, ବିରିୟାନି ପ୍ରଭୃତି କରିକି ଖୁଆଇଛି । ସେ ତ ଏବେ ଭାରତୀୟ ମସଲା ଖାଦ୍ୟରେ ପୁରା ଅଭ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହେଇଗଲାଣି । ତେଣୁ ଆଜିସେ ନଛାଡ଼େ ବନ୍ଧା । ଆଜି ସେତ ଖାଇବା ଅଇଁଠା କରି ସାରିଲାଣି କାଲି ତା ପାଇଁ ଆଣିଦେବ କହି ଜଳଦି ଜଳଦି ଖାଇବା ତା ଶେଷ କରିଦେଲା ଶିଖା । ବାସ୍ନାରେ ଲୋଭ ସଂବରଣ ଅସମ୍ଭବ ।

ସତରେ ତେଜିକୁ ପଖାଳର ବାସ୍ନା ଟା ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ନା ଭଦ୍ରାମୀ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ଏପରି କହିଥିଲା । ସେ ଯାହା ବି ହେଉ ସେ ତେଜି ପାଇଁ ପଖାଳ ନେଇ କରି ଯିବ ନାହିଁ । ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ତେଜି ବି ଭୁଲିଯିବ । ତାପର ଦିନ କିନ୍ତୁ ତେଜି ଭୁଲି ନଥିଲା । ତା ପାଇଁ ସୁପ୍ ଆଣିଛିକି ନାହିଁ ବୋଲି ପଚାରିଲା । ଓଃ ତେବେ ସେ ପଖାଳକୁ ସୁପ୍ ବୋଲି ଭାବି ନେଇଛି । ଆଜି ବେଳ ହେଲାଣି ଆଉ ଦିନେ ଆଣି ଦେବି କହି ତେଜି କବଳରୁ ମୁକ୍ତି ପାଇଗଲା ସେଦିନ ସିନା ପୁଣି ତାପର ଦିନ ସେ ପଚାରିଥିଲା ସେହି ଏକା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ । -ମୋ ସୁପ୍ କାହିଁ ?

ଶେଷରେ ଦିନେ ତେଜିର ବାଧ୍ୟ ବାଧ୍ୟକତାରେ ଯେମିତି ସେ ଆଲୁଚପ୍ କୁ ଛୋଟ ଖଣ୍ଡ ଖଣ୍ଡ କରି ଦହି ଲେମ୍ବୁ କଞ୍ଚାଲଙ୍କା ମିଶା ପଖାଳରେ ମିଶାଇ ଖାଉଥିଲା ସେହିପରି କରି ତାକୁ ଗୋଟେ କପ୍ ଦେଲା । -ଓଃ ସୋ ତେଲିସିଅସ୍ । ଏହାର ରେଷିପ୍ ଟା ମୋର ଦରକାର । ରେଷିପ୍ ପୁଣି ପଖାଳର ମନେ ମନେ ହସ୍ତ ଥିଲା ଶିଖା ।

‘ଜିନ୍ଦୁ’ ମେଞ୍ଚିକାନ ରେଷ୍ଟୁରାଣ୍ଟ କୁ ତା ପର ଶନିବାରକୁ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରିଥିଲା ଶିଖାକୁ । ସାଥରେ ତାର ସ୍ବାମୀ ଆଂଗୁମାନ ମଧ୍ୟ ଥିଲେ । ତେଜିର ପଖାଳ ରେଷିପ୍ ମାଗିବା କଥା କହି ହସିଥିଲା ଯେତକି ସେଦିନ ହସେଇଥିଲା ମଧ୍ୟ ସେତକି ଶିଖା । ଶେଷରେ ଜିନ୍ଦୁ ମନ୍ତ୍ରବ୍ୟ ଦେଲା ଯେ ଯାଇ ତେଜି କୁ କହି ଦେ ଏହାର କୌଣସି ରେଷିପ୍ ନାହିଁ । କାରଣ ଏହା ମୋ ପ୍ରଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତେ ଜାଣନ୍ତି । ବିନା ରେଷିପ୍ ଜାଣି ମଧ୍ୟ ଏହାକୁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରନ୍ତି ଧନୀ ଠାରୁ ଗରିବ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ, ମୁର୍ଖ ଠାରୁ ପଣ୍ଡିତ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ, ଶାଶୁ ଠାରୁ ବୋହୂ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ।

ତଥାପି ସେ ତେଜି କୁ ଅନୁମାନ ରେ ମାପ କରି କହିଥିଲା କିପରି କରିବାକୁ ହୁଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ଯାଣେନା ତେଜି କେମିତି କଲା କିନ୍ତୁ ଆସି କହୁଥିଲା “ପାଖାଲ୍ ସୁପ୍” ଟା ବହୁତ ଭଲ ହୋଇଥିଲା ବୋଲି । ଏକ ଗିଟଙ୍ଗ୍ କାର୍ଡ ଦ୍ଵାରା ତାର ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା ଜଣେଇଥିଲା ।

ଶାନ୍ତି ଲତା ମିଶ୍ର, ରଚେଷ୍ଟର, ମିନେଗୋଟା

ପରମହଂସ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଜୀବନୀ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ବେଦାନ୍ତ ଦର୍ଶନ

- ସ୍ଵାମୀ ଆଦ୍ୟାନନ୍ଦ ସରସ୍ଵତୀ

ବେଦର ଶେଷରେ ଯେଉଁ ଜ୍ଞାନ ଉତ୍ପନ୍ନ ହୁଏ ତାହା ହେଉଛି ବେଦାନ୍ତ । ଏହା ଏକ ମହାବିଜ୍ଞାନ ଯାହାକି ମାନବିକତା ଓ ବିଶ୍ଵ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣତା ପ୍ରକୃତ ସତ୍ୟକୁ ପ୍ରତିପାଦନ କରେ । ବେଦାନ୍ତ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ଓ ମୋକ୍ଷର ପଥ ଦର୍ଶନ କରାଏ । ସମାଧି ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ଶ୍ରୀରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ଏହି ପରମ ଚେତନା ରୂପକ ଜ୍ଞାନକୁ ଆସ୍ଵାଦନ କରିଥିଲେ । ଆତ୍ମା ପରମାତ୍ମାଙ୍କର ବିଷୟରେ ଜାଣିବା ପାଇଁ ସାଧକ ମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଜ୍ଞାନ ଏହି ସମାଧି ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ସାମାନ୍ୟ ମାନବରୁ ସେମାନେ ଦିବ୍ୟମାନବ ହୋଇ ପାରିଥିଲେ । ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆତ୍ମଜ୍ଞାନୀ, ବ୍ରହ୍ମଜ୍ଞାନୀ ବା ସ୍ଥିତ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞ ବୋଲି କୁହାଯାଉଥିଲା । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଅନୁଭୂତିରେ ମନ, ଶରୀର, ବସ୍ତୁ ସବୁ ଉଦ୍ଭେଦ ଯାଇଥିଲା । ଥିଲା କେବଳ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଚୈତନ୍ୟ, ଜନ୍ମ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ରହିତ ଅଖଣ୍ଡ ଆତ୍ମନ । ନିଜ ଶରୀରସ୍ଥିତ ଆତ୍ମନକୁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ ଦେଖି ପାରୁଥିଲେ ଓ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଠାରେ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ ସଜ୍ଜିତାନନ୍ଦ ବ୍ରହ୍ମକୁ । ଦୁଃଖ ସୁଖ ନିନ୍ଦା ପ୍ରଶଂସା ପାର୍ଯ୍ୟବ ଗୁଣ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଅନ୍ତରସ୍ଥିତ ଶାନ୍ତିକୁ ଚଳାଇ ପାରୁନଥିଲା । ସେମାନେ ଥିଲେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମରେ ନିବିଷ୍ଟ । ବେଦାନ୍ତର ତିନୋଟି ଦର୍ଶନ ନିମ୍ନରେ ପ୍ରଦତ୍ତ କରାଗଲା ।

୧. ଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦ ୨. ବିଶିଷ୍ଟଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦ ୩. ଅଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦ

ଦ୍ଵୈତବାଦର ପ୍ରଚାରକ ଥିଲେ ମାଧବାଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀଷ୍ଠକ (୧୧୭୮-୧୨୭୯)

ବିଶିଷ୍ଟଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦର ପ୍ରଚାରକ ଥିଲେ ରାମାନୁଜ ଶ୍ରୀଷ୍ଠକ (୧୦୧୭-୧୧୩୭)

ଅଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦର ପ୍ରଚାରକ ଥିଲେ ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଶଙ୍କର (୭୮୮-୮୨୦) ।

ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ବେଦାନ୍ତ ଦର୍ଶନର ମହାପୁରୁଷ ସାଧାରଣ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ନ ଥିଲେ । ସେମାନେ ଜ୍ଞାନ ବ୍ରହ୍ମା ଥିଲେ । ଭଗବତ ଅନୁଭୂତି ଦ୍ଵାରା ନିଜର ମତକୁ ବ୍ୟାଖ୍ୟା କରିଥିଲେ । ଶ୍ରୀରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ପରମହଂସ ଦେବ ନିଜର ସାଧନା ଦ୍ଵାରା କୌଣସି ମତବାଦକୁ ଉପେକ୍ଷା କରିନଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଏହି ତିନୋଟି ମତବାଦ ପାଇଁ ଯୁକ୍ତିତର୍କ ତଥା ବାଦ ବିବାଦ ଲାଗି ରହିଥିଲା । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ମତବାଦର ଲୋକ ନିଜର ପ୍ରାଧାନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରୁଥିଲେ । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ମତରେ ଯତୋମତ, ତତୋ ପଥ ଏକମ୍ ସଦ୍ ବିପ୍ରା ବହୁଧା ବଦନ୍ତି । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଜୀବନୀ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାଲୋଚନା କଲେ ଜଣାଯାଏ ଯେ, ବେଦାନ୍ତର ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ମତକୁ ସେ ନିଜ ଜୀବନରେ ସାଧନା କରିଥିଲେ । ସ୍ଵାମୀ ବିବେକାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ଭାଷାରେ, ସେ ଏକାଧାରରେ ଥିଲେ ଦ୍ଵୈତବାଦୀ, ବିଶ୍ଵ ଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦୀ, ଅଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦୀ, ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଓ ଭକ୍ତ । ସେ ଏହି ତିନି ମତକୁ ଏକତ୍ର କରିଥିଲେ ଓ କେଉଁଟିକୁ ହେଲେ ବିବାଦ ମଧ୍ୟକୁ ଆଣି ନଥିଲେ ।

ଶଙ୍କରଙ୍କର ଅଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦ : ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ବା ଅଖଣ୍ଡ ଚୈତନ୍ୟ ହିଁ ସତ୍ୟ । ଜଗତ ପରମାତ୍ମିକ ଅସତ୍ୟ । ଜୀବମ୍ନା ଓ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଏକ । ଜୀବମ୍ନାକୁ ଘଟାକାଶ ସହିତ ତୁଳନା କରାଯାଇଛି । ଘଟ ଭଙ୍ଗିଗଲେ ଘଟସ୍ଥିତ ବାୟୁ ସର୍ବବ୍ୟାପି ବାୟୁ ସହିତ ମିଶି ଏକ ବାୟୁ ହୋଇଯିବ । ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ବ୍ରହ୍ମଜ୍ଞାନ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ହେଲେ ମାୟାର ବଶବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ଥିବା ଅଜ୍ଞାନତା ଦୂର ହେବ । ବ୍ରହ୍ମର ପ୍ରତିଫଳନ ହେଉଛି ଜଗତ । ଜ୍ଞାନ ହିଁ ଏକମାତ୍ର ଅସ୍ଵ ଯାହାକି ଆତ୍ମାକୁ ବନ୍ଧନରୁ ମୁକ୍ତି କରିବ । ଆତ୍ମା ପରମାତ୍ମା ବ୍ରହ୍ମନରେ ମିଶି ଏକ ହୋଇଯିବ । ବ୍ରହ୍ମଜ୍ଞାନ ପାଇଁ ଶୁଦ୍ଧା, ଭକ୍ତି ଓ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଦରକାର । ଶଙ୍କର କର୍ମଯୋଗ, ଭକ୍ତି ଓ ଜ୍ଞାନ ସମୁଦୟକୁ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଛନ୍ତି ।

ରାମାନୁଜ : ରାମାନୁଜଙ୍କର ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦରେ ତିନୋଟି ତତ୍ତ୍ଵ ରହିଛି ଯଥା: ଅଚିତ, ଚିତ୍ତ, ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମର ବା ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ବା ବାସୁଦେବ । ପ୍ରଥମ ଦୁଇଟି ତତ୍ତ୍ଵ ତୃତୀୟ ତତ୍ତ୍ଵ ଉପରେ ନିର୍ଭର କରେ । ଶରୀର ଆତ୍ମାର ଅଧୀନ ଏବଂ ଆତ୍ମା ପରମାତ୍ମାଙ୍କର ଅଧୀନ । ରାମାନୁଜଙ୍କର ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ବା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମର ସଗୁଣ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ । ରାମାନୁଜଙ୍କର ମତରେ ଆତ୍ମା ଓ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ଏକ ନୁହଁନ୍ତି । ରାମାନୁଜଙ୍କର ମତ ଅନୁସାରେ ଭକ୍ତି, ଉପାସନା, ଜ୍ଞାନ, କର୍ମ, ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ଓ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାନୁଭବ ମୁକ୍ତି ପାଇଁ ଦରକାର । ରାମାନୁଜ ଭକ୍ତି ମାର୍ଗର ସାଧକ । ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଜିଜ୍ଞାସାର ପ୍ରାରମ୍ଭିକ ନିମିତ୍ତ କର୍ମ ଓ ଜ୍ଞାନ ଜିଜ୍ଞାସା ଦରକାର । ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଦର୍ଶନର ଏକମାତ୍ର ଉପାୟ ହେଉଛି ନିଷ୍ଠାପର ଭକ୍ତି । ବଞ୍ଚିଥିବା ସମୟରେ ଜୀବନ ମୁକ୍ତିକୁ ରାମାନୁଜ ବିଶ୍ଵାସ କରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଜନ୍ମ ଓ ମରଣର କବଳରୁ ରକ୍ଷା ପାଇବା ନିମିତ୍ତ ଭକ୍ତ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭାବରେ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମରଙ୍କୁ ସମର୍ପଣ କରିବ ।

ମାଧବାଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ : ମାଧବାଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟଙ୍କର ମତ ଶଙ୍କରଙ୍କର ଅଦ୍ଵୈତ ବାଦ ଠାରୁ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବିପରୀତ । ତାଙ୍କ ମତରେ ଭଗବାନ ସର୍ବଗୁଣ ଯୁକ୍ତ । ଆତ୍ମା ବ୍ରହ୍ମଙ୍କର ଅଂଶ ନୁହେଁ କି ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ନୁହେଁ । ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ବା ଭଗବାନ ସ୍ଵତନ୍ତ୍ର । ଜୀବ ବିଶ୍ଵଦାତାଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ନିର୍ଭର କରେ । ରାମାନୁଜଙ୍କ ପରି ମାଧବ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମରଙ୍କୁ ନିଜର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମ ଦେବତା ବୋଲି ଭାବନ୍ତି । ଜୀବ ଅଶୁ ପରମାତ୍ମା କନ୍ତ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ସର୍ବବ୍ୟାପି । ସେ ବିଷ୍ଣୁ ଓ ହରିଙ୍କୁ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ବା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମର ବୋଲି ଭାବନ୍ତି । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଜୀବ ଅଲଗା ଅଲଗା । ଭକ୍ତି, ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା, ଧ୍ୟାନ ଓ ଜପ ବଳରେ ଜୀବର ଭଙ୍ଗାର ହେବ । ଜୀବ ମୃତ୍ୟୁପରେ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କର ପାଖାପାଖି ରହିବ । ନିଷ୍କାମ କର୍ମ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଚିତ୍ତ ଶୁଦ୍ଧି ହେବ । ଜ୍ଞାନ ପାଇଲେ ପରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ନିଷ୍କାମ କର୍ମ କରିବାକୁ ହେବ ।

ରାମାନୁଜ ଓ ଚୈତନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଭୃତି ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଆତ୍ମଜ୍ଞାନୀ ମହାତ୍ମାମାନଙ୍କ ପରି ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ପରମହଂସ (୧୮୩୭-୧୮୮୭) ନିଜର ସାଧନା ଦ୍ଵାରା ବେଦାନ୍ତର ସତ୍ୟକୁ ଉପଲବ୍ଧି କରିପାରିଥିଲେ । ସେ ଥିଲେ ଦୟା ଓ ଶାନ୍ତିର ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଅବତାର । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଅମରବାଣୀ ମହେନ୍ଦ୍ର ନାଥ ଗୁପ୍ତଙ୍କର Gospel of Sri Rama Krishna ରେ ଭଲେଣ ଅଛି , ତାଙ୍କର ଏହି ଅମରବାଣୀ ଓ ଦାର୍ଶନିକ ତତ୍ତ୍ଵ, ସ୍ଵାମୀ ବିବେକାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ଦ୍ଵାରା ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ହୋଇଛି । ଶ୍ରୀରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନରେ କଦାପି ଦାର୍ଶନିକ ନଥିଲେ । ଦର୍ଶନ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ର ଅଧ୍ୟୟନ କରି ନଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କର ପାଠପଢ଼ା ବିଦ୍ୟା ବିଶେଷ ନଥିଲା । କନ୍ତ ତାଙ୍କର ଭାଷାରେ ଫୁଟି ଉଠୁଥିଲା ବେଦାନ୍ତର ଗୁଡ଼ତତ୍ତ୍ଵ । ତାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକ ଅନୁଭୂତି ଥିଲା ବେଦାନ୍ତର ଗୁଡ଼ ଦର୍ଶନ । ସେ ତାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଅନୁଭୂତି ଦ୍ଵାରା ବେଦାନ୍ତର ତିନୋଟି ଦର୍ଶନକୁ ଏକତ୍ର କରିଥିଲେ ।

ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଭକ୍ତି ସାଧନା ଦ୍ୱାରା ବେଦାନ୍ତ ଅନୁଭୂତି :

ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ପରମହଂସଙ୍କର ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ସାଧନା କାଳୀଙ୍କର ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ପୂଜା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଏହା ଏକ ଦୈତବାଦ ସାଧନା । ଏହି ସାଧନା ବଳରେ ସେ ଦେବୀ କାଳୀଙ୍କର ଦର୍ଶନ ପାଇଥିଲେ । ଏହି ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ସାଧନା ତ୍ୟାଗ କରି ଗୁରୁ ଚୋତାପୁରୀଙ୍କ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶରେ ଅଦୈତ ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦ ବ୍ରହ୍ମଙ୍କର ସାଧନା କରିଥିଲେ । ଧ୍ୟାନ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ସେହି ମହା ଚୈତନ୍ୟ ଭିତରେ ନିମଜ୍ଜିତ ହୋଇଥିଲେ । ସେ ଦୈତ ଓ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟଦୈତ ସାଧନା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଅଦୈତ ସାଧନାର ଶିଖର ଦେଶରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଥିଲେ । ନରକାର ନଗୁଣ, ଅନନ୍ତ, ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦ ବ୍ରହ୍ମର ସନ୍ତାନ ପାଇଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ଯେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ, ସେ ହିଁ ଆତ୍ମନ ତାର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ପ୍ରମାଣ ଅନୁଭବ କରିଥିଲେ ।

ତାଙ୍କର କାଳୀ ସାଧନା ବିଷୟରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ଆଲୋଚନା କଲେ ଜଣାଯାଏ ଯେ କାଳୀଙ୍କର ଅତି ସୁନ୍ଦର, ବିଶ୍ୱମୋହିନୀ, କରୁଣାମୟୀ , ଜୀବନ୍ତ, ମାତୃମୂର୍ତ୍ତିର ଦର୍ଶନ ସେ ଲଭ କରିଥିଲେ । କେତେକ ସମୟରେ ସେ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ, ସେ ଓ କାଳୀ ପୃଥକ ଶରୀରଧାରୀ । ଏହା ଦୈତ ବାଦର ଚହ୍ମ । କାଳୀ ସାଧନା ସମୟରେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ସେ କାଳୀଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଥମ ଦର୍ଶନ ପାଇଥିଲେ, କାଳୀଙ୍କର ଜୀବନ୍ତ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ଭଭେଇ ଯାଇ ଅନନ୍ତ ବେତନା ଜ୍ୟୋତି ସମୁଦ୍ର ଭିତରେ ନିଜର ସତ୍ତା ହରାଇ ଥିଲେ । ଏହା ହେଉଛି ତାଙ୍କର ଅଦୈତ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାନୁଭବ , ଯେଉଁଥିରେ ଜ୍ଞେୟ, ଜ୍ଞାତା ଓ ଜ୍ଞାନ ସବୁ ଏକତ୍ର ହୋଇଯାଇଛି । ଏହି ସାଧନା ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ସେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଦେଖିପାରୁଥିଲେ ଯେ, ତାଙ୍କର ଆତ୍ମା ଓ ମା କାଳୀ ଅଲଗା ନୁହନ୍ତି । କେତେକ ସମୟରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ ଯେ, ମା କାଳୀ ଓ ତାଙ୍କର ଆତ୍ମା ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଏକ ପ୍ରକାର ନୁହନ୍ତି, କିନ୍ତୁ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ତାଙ୍କ ଶରୀରରେ ଆତ୍ମା ଭିତରେ ମିଶି ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ଅନ୍ତର୍ଯ୍ୟାମୀ ପୁରୁଷ ରୂପେ । ଏହା ବିଶିଷ୍ଟଦୈତ ବାଦର ପ୍ରମାଣ । ବଙ୍ଗଳାର ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ କାଳୀ ସାଧକ ରାମ ପ୍ରସାଦଙ୍କର ଶ୍ୟାମ ସଙ୍ଗୀତରେ ଅଛି, ତୁମେ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ମୁଁ ଯନ୍ତ୍ର । ମୁଁ ଗୃହ ତୁମେ ଗୃହର ବାସିନୀ । ମୁଁ ରଥ, ତୁମେ ସାରଥୀ । ତୁମେ ମୋତେ ଯେଉଁଠିକି ଚଳାଇବ ମୁଁ ସେଠାକୁ ଯିବି । ସବୁହିଁ ତୁମେ । ଆଉ କେତେକ ସମୟରେ ସେ ଅନୁଭବ କରୁଥିଲେ ପାରିପାର୍ଶ୍ୱିକ ବସ୍ତୁ ବ୍ରହ୍ମମୟ ହୋଇଛି । ତାଙ୍କର ଅହଂକାର ବି ସେଥିରୁ ବାଦ ଯାଇନାହିଁ । ସ୍ୱାମୀ ନିଖିଳା ନନ୍ଦ ମହେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଗୁପ୍ତଙ୍କର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ଚରିତ୍ରାମୃତକୁ ଇଂରାଜୀରେ ଅନୁବାଦ କରି ତାକୁ Gospel of Sri Rama Krishna ନାମ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ସେଥିରୁ କେତେକ ଧାଡ଼ି ଏଠାରେ ଭଣ୍ଡିତ ହେଲା ।

Divine mother revealed to me in the Kali temple that it was she who had been everything. She showed me that everything was full of consciousness, the water vessel was consciousness, the alter was consciousness, the door was consciousness. The marble floor was consciousness.

କେତେକ ଏହାକୁ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟଦୈତ ବାଦ ବୋଲି କୁହନ୍ତି । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ କେବଳ ଅଖଣ୍ଡ ଚୈତନ୍ୟ ଛଡା ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ଅନୁଭବ କରୁନଥିଲେ । ଏହା ବ୍ରହ୍ମଦର୍ଶନର ପର ଅବସ୍ଥା । ଏହାକୁ ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଅବସ୍ଥା କୁହାଯାଏ । ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଦର୍ଶନର ପୂର୍ବ ଅବସ୍ଥାକୁ ଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଅବସ୍ଥା କୁହାଯାଏ । ଅଖଣ୍ଡ ଚୈତନ୍ୟ ଅନୁଭବୀ ଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଓ ଭକ୍ତର ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ଭଗବତ୍ ଗୀତାର ଦ୍ୱାଦଶ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟରେ ଭକ୍ତି ଯୋଗରେ ଜ୍ଞାନ ମାର୍ଗ ସାଧନା ଓ ଭକ୍ତି ମାର୍ଗ ସାଧନା ବିଷୟରେ କୁହାଯାଇଛି । ଅବ୍ୟକ୍ତ ନଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମରେ ଅନୁରକ୍ତ ଚିତ୍ତ ଯୋଗୀମାନଙ୍କର ସିଦ୍ଧି ଲଭ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ କଷ୍ଟକର ବିଷୟ । କାରଣ ଦେହଧାରୀ (ମନୁଷ୍ୟ) ଅନେକ କ୍ଳେଶକର ସାଧନା ଦ୍ୱାରା ନଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ବିଷୟକ ନିଷ୍ଠା ଲଭ କରିଥାଆନ୍ତି । ଯେଉଁମାନେ ସମସ୍ତ କର୍ମ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କ ଠାରେ ଅର୍ପଣ କରି, ଚିତ୍ତ ସମାହିତ କରି ଏବଂ ଧ୍ୟାନ ପରାୟଣ ହୋଇ ପରମେଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ ଭଗବାନୀ କରନ୍ତି, ସେମାନେ ଅନନ୍ତ ସଂସାର ସାଗରରୁ ଅତରେ ଭଙ୍ଗାର ପାଆନ୍ତି । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ମତରେ ଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଓ ଭକ୍ତ ଭଭେଇ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଦର୍ଶନ କରନ୍ତି । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି ଯେ, ବ୍ରହ୍ମାନନ୍ଦର ଅନୁଭୂତି ପରେ ସେ ଦେଖେ ଭଗବାନ ହିଁ ସମସ୍ତ ପ୍ରାଣୀରେ ବିରାଜମାନ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ସାରା ବିଶ୍ୱ ହିଁ ଭଗବାନ । ତବିଶ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ହିଁ ଭଗବାନ । ଭଗବତ୍ ଗୀତାର (୭.୧୯) ରେ “ବହୁନାଂ ଜନ୍ମନାସକ୍ତେ ଜ୍ଞାନବାନ୍ ମାଂ ପ୍ରପଦ୍ୟତେ । ବାସୁଦେବଃ ସର୍ବମିତି ସ ମହାତ୍ମା ସୁଦୂର୍ଲଭଃ” । ବହୁ ଜନ୍ମପରେ ଶେଷ ଜନ୍ମରେ ବାସୁଦେବ ହିଁ ସବୁ କିଛି । ଏହି ଜ୍ଞାନ ଲଭ କରି ଜ୍ଞାନୀ ସର୍ବାମିଦୃଷ୍ଟି ଦ୍ୱାରା ମୋକ୍ଷ ରୂପେ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ହୁଅନ୍ତି ।

ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ କାଳୀ ସାଧନାରେ ଅନୁଭବ କଲେ, କାଳୀ ହିଁ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ । ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ମା କାଳୀ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଧାରଣା ଠାରୁ ତାଙ୍କର କାଳୀ ସମ୍ପର୍କୀୟ ମତ ଭିନ୍ନ ଥିଲା । କାଳୀ କେବଳ ସଗୁଣ ଦେବତା ନୁହଁନ୍ତି । ସେ ନଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ମଧ୍ୟ । କେବଳ ନାମ ଛଡା କାଳୀ ଓ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ଭିତରେ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱତଃ କିଛି ନଥିଲା । ଏହିପରି ଅନୁଭୂତି ପରମ କାଳୀ ସାଧକ ରାମପ୍ରସାଦ ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ।

ତାଙ୍କର ରାମ ଓ କୃଷ୍ଣ ସାଧନା ସମୟରେ ଦୈତ, ବିଶିଷ୍ଟଦୈତ ଓ ଅଦୈତ ଅନୁଭୂତି ପାଇଥିଲେ । ରାମ ସାଧନା ସମୟରେ ଦଶରଥ ନନ୍ଦନ ରାମଙ୍କର ଦର୍ଶନ କରିଥିଲେ । ଏହା ଦୈତ ବାଦ । ରାମଙ୍କୁ ସବୁ ପ୍ରାଣୀମାନଙ୍କର ଭିତରେ ଦର୍ଶନ କରିଥିଲେ । ଶ୍ରୀରାମଙ୍କର ନଗୁଣ ନରକାର ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଅବସ୍ଥା ମଧ୍ୟ ଦର୍ଶନ କରିଥିଲେ । ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣ ସାଧନା ବେଳେ ମଧ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କର ତିନି ମହାଭବର ଅନୁଭୂତି ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଇସ୍ୱର୍ମାନ ସାଧନା ସମୟରେ ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ଆତ୍ମା ବ୍ରହ୍ମନଙ୍କୁ ସଗୁଣ ଭବରେ ଦେଖୁଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ଆତ୍ମାଙ୍କୁ ନଗୁଣ ଚୈତନ୍ୟ ରୂପରେ ଜାଣିପାରିଥିଲେ । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନା ଅନୁସାରେ ସଗୁଣ ଭବରେ ଇଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କୁ ଭକ୍ତି କରୁକରୁ ତାଙ୍କର ସାଧନା ନଗୁଣ ଭବରେ ଭପସ୍ଥିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା । କାଳୀ ସାଧନା ସମୟରେ କାଳୀଙ୍କୁ ଧ୍ୟାନ କରୁ କରୁ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ଭଭେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା । ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତେ ସେ ଅଖଣ୍ଡ ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଚୈତନ୍ୟରେ ନିମଗ୍ନ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ସଗୁଣ ସାଧନା ନଗୁଣ ସାଧନାରେ ପରିଣତ ହୁଏ, ଏହାକୁ ଶ୍ରୀ ମଦ୍ଭଗବତ ଓ ଭଗବତ୍ ଗୀତା ଅନୁମୋଦନ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଭାଷାରେ, ଭକ୍ତ ନରକାର ବ୍ରହ୍ମାନୁଭୂତିରେ ଦୁଇଟି ଅବସ୍ଥା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ହୁଏ । ଗୋଟିଏ ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ନିଜର ଇଷ୍ଟ ଦେବତାଙ୍କ ସାଧନା ସମୟରେ, ନିଜର ଇଷ୍ଟ ଦେବତା ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ନରକାର ମହାଚେତନା ରୂପେ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଆନ୍ତି । ଯେଉଁଠାରେ ସାଧକର ସମସ୍ତ ଅହଂକାର ଭବ ଲେପ ହୋଇଯାଏ । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଅନୁଭୂତିରେ ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ଅବସ୍ଥା ହେଉଛି ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଅବସ୍ଥା ଯାହାକି ନଗୁଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମରେ ନିମଜ୍ଜିତ ହେଲା ପରେ ଆସେ । ଏ ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ସାଧକ ସର୍ବଦା ବ୍ରହ୍ମଙ୍କୁ ଦର୍ଶନ କରେ । ଦୀର୍ଘଦିନ ଧରି ସେ ନିର୍ବିକଳ ସମାଧିରେ ରହିଯାଉଥିଲେ । ସେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ନିର୍ବିକଳ ସମାଧିରୁ ଫେରି ଆସୁଥିଲେ, ସେ ସର୍ବଦା ଗନ୍ଧ, ପଦ୍ମ, ପଶୁ, ପକ୍ଷୀ ଓ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ସମସ୍ତ ପ୍ରାଣୀଙ୍କ ଆତ୍ମନ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନର ପ୍ରବାହମାନ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଚୈତନ୍ୟ ।

ଭକ୍ତ ରାମପ୍ରସାଦଙ୍କର ଭାଷାରେ ନଜେ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ନ ହୋଇ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ମଧୁର ସ୍ୱାଦର ଆନନ୍ଦ ଅନୁଭବ କରିବା ଦରକାର । ଥରେ ଗଙ୍ଗାନଦୀରେ ନାବ ବାହିବା ସମୟରେ ଦୁଇଟି ନାବିକ କୌଶସି କାରଣରୁ କଳ କଲେ । ଗୋଟିଏ ନାବିକ ଅନ୍ୟ ନାବିକ ଠାରୁ ବହୁତ ପ୍ରହାର ଖାଇଲ । ତାହାର ବହୁତ ଯତ୍ନ ଥିଲା ହେବାରୁ କାନ୍ଦି ପକାଇଲ । ତାର ସମସ୍ତ ଯତ୍ନ ଶୁଣି ଶରୀରରେ ଅନୁଭବ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ସମସ୍ତ ଜଗତ ଥିଲା ବ୍ରହ୍ମମୟ । ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଶାରଦା ନନ୍ଦ ଲେଖିଛନ୍ତି, ‘ଗୁରୁଦେବ ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ବେଦାନ୍ତର ତିନି ମତବାଦକୁ ବିନା ଦ୍ୱିଧାରେ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କ ଭାଷାରେ ଅଦୈତ ବାଦ, ବିଶିଷ୍ଟାଦୈତ ବାଦ ଓ ଦୈତ ବାଦ ସବୁ ପରସ୍ପର ପରିପୂରକ । ମନର ଗତି ଅନୁସାରେ ଏକ ସମୟରେ ଦୈତ ବାଦକୁ ସେ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ଅନ୍ୟ ସମୟରେ ବିଶିଷ୍ଟାଦୈତ ବାଦ ଏବଂ ଅଦୈତ ବାଦକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ସାଧକ ଯେତେବେଳେ ସାଧନାର ଶୀର୍ଷ ଶିଖରରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି, ସେ ସେତେବେଳେ ଜଗତଜନନୀଙ୍କର ନର୍ତ୍ତନ ଅବସ୍ଥା ଲାଭ କରେ । ସେହି ନର୍ତ୍ତନ ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ସାଧକ ଅବସ୍ଥାନ କରେ । ସବୁ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରାଧାର, ଭବନା, କର୍ତ୍ତା, କର୍ମ, କ୍ରିୟା ସବୁ ଏକ ହୋଇଯାଏ । ପାପ, ପୁଣ୍ୟ, ବନ୍ଧନ, ମୁକ୍ତ ସବୁକିଛି ଏକ ହୋଇଯାଏ । ପୂଜା, ପୂଜ୍ୟ ଓ ପୂଜକ ସବୁ ଏକ ହୋଇଯାନ୍ତି । ହନୁମାନ ପ୍ରଭୁ ଶ୍ରୀରାମଙ୍କୁ କହିଥିଲେ - ପ୍ରଭୁ ମୁଁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଏ ଶରୀରକୁ ଦେଖୁଛି, ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଦାସ । ଯେତେବେଳେ ଭବୁଛି ମୁଁ ଏକ ଆତ୍ମା, ସେତେବେଳେ ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କର ସହିତ ମିଶିଯାଉଛି । ବେଦାନ୍ତର ତିନୋଟି ବାଦ ଏକତ୍ର ମିଶିଲେ ବେଦାନ୍ତ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହେବ । ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ଏକମାତ୍ର ସାଧକ ଯେ କି ସବୁ ଧର୍ମକୁ ନଜର ସାଧନା ଦ୍ୱାରା ଏକ ଇଶ୍ୱର ନିଷ୍ଠାରେ ପହଞ୍ଚାଇ ପାରିଥିଲେ । ସେ କହୁଥିଲେ, କୌଣସି ସାଧକ ନର୍ବିକଳ ଭିତରେ ବହୁତ ସମୟ ରହି ପାରିବ ନାହିଁ । ଭକ୍ତି ଜଗତକୁ ତାକୁ ଫେରି ଆସିବାକୁ ହେବ ।

ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ - ଶଙ୍କର- ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ଗୁରୁ ତୋତାପୁରୀଙ୍କ ନିଦେଶରେ ଅଦୈତ ସାଧନାର ଶୀର୍ଷ ଦେଶରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଥିଲେ । କେତେକ ପଣ୍ଡିତଙ୍କ ମତରେ ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭାବରେ ଅଦୈତ ବାଦୀ ନଥିଲେ । ସେ ଅନେକ ସମୟରେ କହୁଥିଲେ କାଳୀ ହିଁ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ଓ ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ହିଁ କାଳୀ । ସେ ମଧ୍ୟ କହୁଥିଲେ, ଜଗତ କାହିଁକି ଅସତ୍ୟ ହେବ ? ଏହି ପଣ୍ଡିତମାନଙ୍କର ମତରେ ଯଦିଓ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ଅଦୈତ ବାଦୀ, ସେ ଶାକ୍ତ ଅଦୈତ ବାଦୀ । ଏ ପ୍ରକାର ଯୁକ୍ତି ସତ୍ୟ ନୁହେଁ । ଶାକ୍ତ ଅଦୈତ ବାଦୀ ବୋଲି ଏକ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଶବ୍ଦ ନାହିଁ । ଅଦୈତ ବାଦୀ ହିଁ ଅଦୈତବାଦୀ । ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଶାରଦାନନ୍ଦ ଓ ଦୁର୍ଯ୍ୟାନ୍ୟଙ୍କର ଭାଷାରେ ଶ୍ରୀରାମକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଅଦୈତ ବାଦ ଦର୍ଶନ ଶଙ୍କରଙ୍କର ଅଦୈତବାଦ ଠାରୁ ଅଲଗା ନଥିଲା । ସେ ବହୁ ସମୟରେ କହୁଥିଲେ ଶଙ୍କରଙ୍କର ଅଦୈତ ବାଖ୍ୟା ସତ୍ୟ ଅଟେ । ଯେତେବେଳେ ଅହଂକାର ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭାବରେ ଗୁଲିଯିବ, ସେତିକିବେଳେ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ସତ୍ୟର ଅନୁଭୂତି ଆସିଯିବ । ‘ଜ୍ଞାନ ଖଣ୍ଡ ଦ୍ୱାରା ‘ମୁଁ’ର ଛେଦନ କରାଗଲେ, ମୁଁ ବି ଅସତ୍ୟ ବୋଲି ବୁଝାଯିବ ।

ଆଉ ମଧ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ କାଳୀ ଓ ଶକ୍ତି ବିଷୟରେ କହି କଦାପି ଉପନିଷଦ ଓ ଶଙ୍କରଙ୍କର ଅଦୈତ ଦର୍ଶନର ବିରୁଦ୍ଧାଚରଣ କରିନଥିଲେ । ଏହା ଏକ ଭ୍ରମ ଧାରଣା ଯେ, ଶଙ୍କର ବ୍ରହ୍ମନ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଶକ୍ତିଙ୍କର (Primodal Energy) ସ୍ଥିତିକୁ ଆସିବାର କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଶଙ୍କରଙ୍କର ମତରେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମଶକ୍ତି ଯୁକ୍ତ ହେଲା ପରେ ଶକ୍ତି ହିଁ ସୃଷ୍ଟିର କର୍ମାଣ କର୍ତ୍ତା । ଶକ୍ତି ଓ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଅଭିନ୍ନ ।

ସ୍ୱାମୀଆଦ୍ୟାନନ୍ଦ ସରସ୍ୱତୀ
ଶିବଶକ୍ତି ସିଦ୍ଧଯୋଗ ଆଶ୍ରମ

ତମସା

- ସ୍ନେହ ମହାନ୍ତି

ତମସା ଗୋ ତୁମେ,
ଗୋଟିଏ ସ୍ମୃତି ଆସ ନେଇ ମୋ ସପନେ,
ଗୋଟିଏ ନୁହେଁ ତ
କୋଟିଏ ପ୍ରଦୀପ ଆଲୋକ ଜାଳେ ମରମେ । ୦
ଭାଷାର ଆଲୋକେ, ଦିନ ଯାଏ ବିତି
କର୍ମରତା ଏ ଜୀବନ
କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ଦେହ ଖୋଜେ, ଗୁଡିର ପରଶ
ମଧୁଖର ସେ ସପନ
ସେ ସମୟେ ଭାବେ, ଆସିବ କି ତୁମେ
ସ୍ମୃତି ଭରି ସେ ତୋରଣେ

ତମସା ଗୋ ତୁମେ, ଗୋଟିଏ ସ୍ମୃତି,
ଆସ ନେଇ ମୋ ସପନେ । ୧
ଯେଉଁ ସ୍ମୃତି ଭରେ, ମଧୁରତା କେବେ,
ଦିଏ ବି ପୁଣି ଆହତ
କି ବି ଲେଖନୀରେ ରୂପ ପାଅ ତୁମେ
ଅନଳ କବା ଅମୃତ
ସେଇ ସ୍ମୃତି ଦେହେ, ଜୀବନ ସାରା ମୁଁ,
ଖୋଜେ ଅମୃତ ମଉନେ
ତମସା ଗୋ ତୁମେ, ଗୋଟିଏ ସ୍ମୃତି ଆସ ନେଇ ମୋ ସପନେ । ୨

(ଲେଖକ କାଲିଫର୍ଣ୍ଣିଆରେ ବାସ କରନ୍ତି । ସେ ଇଂରାଜୀ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କବିତା, ଗୀତି କବିତା ଓ ଗଳ୍ପ ଲେଖି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି । ସେ ନିୟମିତ ଭାବେ ଓସା ପତ୍ରିକାରେ ଲେଖା ପ୍ରକାଶ କରି ଆସୁଛନ୍ତି ।)

ଉତ୍କଳ ମଣିଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି

- ଅଶୋକ ପରିଡ଼ା

ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ନରୀହ ଶୁଣୁ ବଦନୁ
 ମିଳୁଥିଲା ଦିନେ ଏହି ଆଭାସ,
 ଦୁର୍ବଳ ଦଳତ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜାତିକୁ
 ଦେବ ବୋଲି ଦିନେ ନୂତନ ଦେଶ ।
 କାନ୍ଦି ଉଠୁଥିଲା ବୁକୁ ଯାର ଦିନେ
 ଦେଖୁ ଉତ୍କଳର ଦୁଃଖ ଦୁର୍ଦ୍ଦଶା
 ସେ ଥିଲା ଦୁର୍ଭିକ୍ଷ ବନ୍ୟା ସମୟେ
 ଦୀନ ଦୁଃଖିଙ୍କର ଏକା ଭରସା
 ନ ପାରିବ ଭୁଲି ଏ ଦେଶର ବାସୀ
 ତୁମର ନିଃସ୍ୱର୍ଥ ସେବା ଓ କୀର୍ତ୍ତି
 ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଆଜି ପଲ୍ଲୀ ନଗରେ
 ଗାଈ ଦିବା ରାତ୍ରୀ ତୁମରି ଗୀତି
 ହେ ଯୋଗଜନ୍ମା ଉତ୍କଳ ମଣି
 ମରଣକୁ ତୁମେ ପାରିଛ ଜିଣି
 ଚତୁର୍ଦ୍ଦିଗେ ଆଜି ପ୍ରତିଧ୍ୱନ ହୁଏ
 ତୁମର ଅମର ଅମୀୟ ବାଣୀ
 ସଦା ଥାଇ ତୁମେ ଆମ ସ୍ମୃତି ପେଜ
 ଦିଅ ହେ ପ୍ରେରଣା ଉତ୍କଳ ବୀର
 ଏହି ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ତୁମ ପଦତଳେ
 ମନ ହୁଏ ଥରେ ନୁଆନ୍ତି ଶିର ।

(ଏ ପଦ୍ୟାଂଶଟି ଅଶୋକ ୧୦ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ପୁରୀ
 ଜିଲ୍ଲା ସ୍କୁଲର ୧୦୦ତମ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ
 ୧୯୭୭ ମସିହାରେ ରଚନା କରିଥିଲେ ।)



ମଉଳା ଜହ୍ନ

- ଶର୍ମିଷ୍ଠା ଦାଶ

ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟା ଜହ୍ନ ଆଜି, ଯାଏ ମଉଳ ହଜି,
 କେଉଁ ଦେଶେ ତମେ ଚାଲିଗଲ ଛାଡ଼ି,
 ଧକ ଗଲ ଆଖି ତୁମ ବାଟକୁ ଚାହିଁ ଚାହିଁ...
 ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟା ଜହ୍ନ ଆଜି, ଯାଏ ମଉଳ ହଜି

ଆଉତ ନାହିଁ ସେ ବଉଳ ଛାଇ,
 ମନତ ନାଚୁ ନାହିଁ ଗୀତ ଗାଇ ଗାଇ
 ମନ କାନ୍ଦୁଛି ଖାଲି ତୁମ ନାମ ନେଇ
 ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟା ଜହ୍ନ ଆଜି, ଯାଏ ମଉଳ ହଜି

ପ୍ରିୟତମ ମୋର ସୁଧାଧାର ପରି,
 ପାଶେଥିଲେ ତମେ ମନ ଉଠେପୁରି,
 ତମବିନା ଆଜି ହେଉଗଲ ତୁନା ଏ ମୋର ସପନ ପୁରୀ
 ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟା ଜହ୍ନ ଆଜି, ଯାଏ ମଉଳ ହଜି
 ଦିନ ଥିଲା ସେଇ ଜହ୍ନକୁ ଦେଖି,

କେତେ ଯେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ସଜାଡୁ ଥିଲା ଏ ଆଖି,
 ଆଜି ସେହି ଜହ୍ନ ଏ ପୋଡ଼ା ମନର ଏକମାତ୍ର ମୁକ୍ତସାକ୍ଷୀ
 ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟା ଜହ୍ନ ଆଜି, ଯାଏ ମଉଳ ହଜି

ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟା ଜହ୍ନ ଆଜି, ଯାଏ ମଉଳ ହଜି
 ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟା ଜହ୍ନ ଆଜି ଯାଏ ମଉଳ ହଜି

ପଲ୍ଲୀଚିତ୍ର: ପୁନଃ ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ମିଶ୍ର

(୪କ)

ସେତେ ବେଳର କଥା..

“ ତୋଟା ବେତବଣେ ବସି ଶାରୀ ଶୁଆ
 ହରଷ ଭରେ ଭାବନ୍ତି;
 ପକ୍ୱ ପଳ ଘେନି ବନ ମହୋତ୍ସବ
 କରନ୍ତି ବାୟସ ପକ୍ତି ।”
 (ପଲ୍ଲୀକବି ନନ୍ଦକିଶୋର ବଳ)

ଏମତିକା ଏକା ପଲ୍ଲୀର ବାସିନ୍ଦା
 ହୋଇଥିଲି ପିଲା ବେଳେ,
 ନଇ କୁଳେ ବସି ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଥିଲି
 କବି ହେବି ବଡ଼ ହେଲେ ।
 ଆଜୁଥିଲି କେତେ ମୋ’ ଗାଆଁ ଚିତ୍ର
 ମନର ପରଦା ପରେ,
 ଗୋଟିଏ ଗାଆଁର କୋଟିଏ କାହାଣୀ
 ରୂପ ଦେଇଥିଲି ଥରେ ।
 ସଞ୍ଜ ଆସି ହେଲେ ବିଲୁଆ ନନାର
 ‘ହୁକେ ହୋ’ ତାକ ଶୁଭେ,
 ଆମ୍ବଗଛ ତାଳେ ଲୁଚିଛି କୋଇଲି
 କୁହୁ କୁହୁ ସ୍ୱରେ ରାବେ ।
 ସଞ୍ଜ ଆସିଗଲେ ଗୋଧୂଳି ଝତରେ
 ମୁଖରିତ ସାରା ଗାଁ,
 ଚାଲିଛି ରୋଷେଇ ଚାଳ ଛାତ ଦେଇ
 ଉପର ମୁଖା ସେ ଧୁଆଁ ।
 ଚାନ୍ଦିନୀ ରାତିରେ ନଡିଆ ପତରେ
 ଜହ୍ନର ଆଲୁଅ ଦେଖି,
 ମନ ହୁଏ ଖାଲି ‘ପଲ୍ଲୀକବି’ ସାଜି
 କାବ୍ୟ ମୁଁ ଯାଆନ୍ତି ଲେଖି ।
 ଶିଶୁ ବେଳ କଥା କୈଶୋରର ସ୍ମୃତି
 ରଖି ପୋଥି ଗଦା ତଳେ,
 ରୁଡି ରୁଜୁଳା ମୁଁ ଧରି ବାହାରିଲି
 ଫେରିବାକୁ ଦିନେ ପାଠ ପଢ଼ା ସରିଗଲେ ।”

(ଦୁଇ)

କିଛିଟା କଥା, ଅନେକ ବ୍ୟଥା
 ପାଠପଢ଼ା ସରିଗଲା,
 କେତେ ଯେ ସାଧନା, କେତେ ଯେ ସଂଗ୍ରାମ,
 ଧନ, ଯଶ ଲାଗି ଧାଇଁବାଟା କମିଗଲା ।

ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀର ପରେ,
 ମୋ’ରି ଗାଁକୁ, ଜନମ ମାଟିକୁ
 ଯାଇଥିଲି ବୁଲି ଥରେ ।
 ଦେଖିଲି ଯାହା ମୁଁ ସେଠି,
 କହିବାକୁ ଲାଜ, ନ କହିଲେ ଭଲ,
 ତେଣୁ ମୁଁ ଲେଖିଛି ଚିଠି ।

‘ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ସତକ ଯୋଜନା’ ହେଲା,
 ଓସାରିଆ ଆମ ଗାଁ ଦାଣ୍ଡ ଦେଇ
 ଟାକ୍ସି ଓ ବସ୍ ଚାଲିଲା ।
 ଚିଢ଼ି, ସେଲ ଫୋନ୍ ଟାଣ୍ଡାର ଗଢାରେ
 ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରାକତ ଭରପୁର,
 ଆମ୍ବଗଛ ନାହିଁ, କୋଇଲି ବି ନାହିଁ,
 ସେଲ୍ ଫୋନ୍ ଆଉ ଚିଢ଼ିରେ ବାଜୁଛି
 ସିନେମା ଗୀତର ସ୍ୱର ।
 ଡିଜେଲ୍ ବାସନା, ଗାଁ ସାରା ଭରା,
 ମାଷ୍ଟ ପିନ୍ଧି ଚାଲିଆଜ୍ଞା ହେବାର ଡର ।
 ଏଇ ଗାଁ ଦେଇ ଯବନ ଆସିଲେ, ବର୍ଗୀ ଆସିଥିଲେ,
 ଆସିଲେ ଫିରିଙ୍ଗୀ ଦଳ,
 ନିଜ କାମ ସାରି, ଧନ ଲୁଚି ସାରି,
 ନିଜ ବାଟେ ଗଲେ,
 ଗାଁ ରୂପ କିନ୍ତୁ ରହିଥିଲା ପରିମଳ ।
 ମୋ’ ଦେଶ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନ ହେଲା
 ନିଜ ହାତେ ସବୁ କ୍ଷମତା ମିଳିଲା,
 କରିବାକୁ ଧ୍ୟେୟ ଲୀଳା ।
 ତୁଙ୍ଗ ନେତା ଆଉ କୁଜି ନେତା ମାନେ
 ସବୁ ଏକତ୍ର ହେଲେ ,
 ନିଜ ଦେଶବାକୁ, କେତେ ଯେ’ ଗାଆଁକୁ

ଚଟାପଟ୍ ବିକି ଦେଲେ ।
 ପେଙ୍କୋ, ଚିସକୋ, ଆଉ ଏସାର୍, ମିତଲ୍, ଭୂଷଣ ଜିନ୍ଦଲ୍ ମିଶି,
 ଗାଁ ମାଟି, ଆଉ ପାଣି, ପବନକୁ
 ପ୍ରଦୁଷିତ କଲେ, ହଳାହଳ ବିଷ ପେଶି ।
 ଧରଣୀ ବିଦୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହେଲା, ଗଣଧର୍ଷଣରେ,
 ଗଛଲତା ଲୋପ ହେଲା, ଗଣହତ୍ୟାପରେ,
 କୋମାଲଟ୍, ବକସାଲଟ୍, ହେମାଟାଲଟ୍ ଲୋଭରେ
 ଅମୃତ ସଂଧାନ' ପାଇଁ 'ସମୁଦ୍ରମଛନ' ପରେ,

ବିଚ୍ଛୁରିତ ଚାରିଆଡେ ମହାମାରୀ ବିଷ,
 ଶିଳ୍ପ ସଭ୍ୟତା ନାଁରେ; ପୁଞ୍ଜିପତି ଚକ୍ରାନ୍ତରେ
 ମୋ' ସୁନା ଗାଁଟା ଆଜି ହୋଇଗଲା ପୁରା ଧ୍ୱଂସ ।
 ପୁଞ୍ଜିପତି ଦଳ ଅମୃତ ପାଇଲେ,
 ଗ୍ରାମବାସୀମାନେ 'ଉଦ୍‌ବାସୁ' ପଇସା ଧରି,
 ବିଦେଶ ଚାଲିଲେ ।
 ମୋ' ଗାଆଁ ନା ଥିଲା "ମନୋହର ପୁର" ।
 ପୁରାପୁରି ବନିଗଲା "ଅସତ୍ୟ ସହର" ।

(କଳାଶ୍ରୀ ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ମିଶ୍ର ଅକ୍ଷରିତର ସତବରୀରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି । କବିତା, ଗଳ୍ପ ଏବଂ ନାଟକ ଲେଖନ୍ତି । ସେ ଏକ ବଳିଷ୍ଠ ନାଟକ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶକ ଏବଂ ଅଭିନେତା । ଏ କବିତାଟି ଚରୋଖୋରେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ନନ୍ଦକିଶୋର ବିଶେଷାଙ୍କ ପାଠକ୍ରମରେ ୨୦୧୨ ମସିହାରେ ଆବୃତ୍ତି କରାଯାଇଥିଲା)

କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ପଥକ

- ସ୍ନେହ ମହାନ୍ତି

ଅମା ଅନ୍ଧାରେ, କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ପଥକ,
 ଯେବେ ମୁଁ ଆସବୁ ଖୋଜେ
 ବୁକେ ଅନ୍ଧାର ଭରି ରହିଛି ମୋ
 ଅନ୍ଧାରେ ପୁଣି ହଜେ ।
 ଜ୍ୟୋତିଃମୟ ତୁମେ, ଆଲୋକର ମେଳା
 ଦେବାକୁ ଚିକିଏ ମୋତେ
 କି ପାଇଛୁ ତୁମେ, ମନା କରି କୁହ
 ମାରିଲେ ଆକୁଳେ ଯେତେ
 ଫେରାଇ ଦେଇଛ, ଦୁଆରୁ ତୁମର
 ଯାଉଛି ଫେରି ମୁଁ ଲଜେ
 ଅମା ଅନ୍ଧାରେ, କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ପଥକ, ଯେବେ ମୁଁ ଆସବୁ ଖୋଜେ । ।
 ଖୋଜିଛି ମୁଁ କେତେ ମରୁଭୂମି ପରେ
 ଅସବୁ ମୋ ପଥ ଛାଇ ଚିକେ ଧାରେ

ରୁଦ୍ର ତାପରେ ଚାଲିଛି ଏକା ମୁଁ
 ସାହା ନାହିଁ କେହି ଅମତା ବାଟରେ
 ଫେରାଇ ଦେଇଛ ଦୁଆରୁ ତୁମର
 ଏକ ବଡ଼ପଣ ସାଜେ
 ଅମା ଅନ୍ଧାରେ କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ପଥକ, ଯେବେ ମୁଁ ଆସବୁ ଖୋଜେ । ।
 ନଦୀ ବନ ସ୍ରୋତ, ସାଗର ପର୍ବତ
 ଜଳଧାରୁ ତୁମ ବହେ ଅବିରତ,
 ପିଆସୀ ମୁଁ ଖୋଜେ, ଜଳ ପ୍ରପାତ
 ଧକଯାଏ ପ୍ରାଣ ଶୋଷେ
 ଭୁଲିଲୁ, ମୋତେ, ମରୀଚିକା ପଥେ
 ଆକୁଳେ କେତେ ମୁଁ ହଜେ
 ଅମା ଅନ୍ଧାରେ କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ପଥକ , ଯେବେ ମୁଁ ଆସବୁ ଖୋଜେ । ।

ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷା

ଶିଖଣ୍ଡ ଶତପଥୀ

ପୁଣି ଥରେ ଆସିଛୁ ମଳୟ
ପୁଣ୍ୟର ଶଙ୍ଖଧ୍ୱନି କରି
ତମ ବାଟ ନିରେଖି ନିରେଖି
ଆସି ଦୁଇ ଗଲାଣି ଯେ ଶୁଖି
କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ସ୍ୱର, ରୁଦ୍ଧ ଶ୍ୱାସ ମୋର
ଶୂନ୍ୟ ବୁକୁ କେବେ ଦେବ ଭରି ॥

ମଲିର ମଧୁଭରା ମଦିରାକୁ
ଦେବ ମୋର ଶୁଦ୍ଧ କଣ୍ଠେ ଢାଳି
ବୋଲିଦେବ ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧଶ୍ୱେତ ପାଖୁଡ଼ାରେ
ସପ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ଅବୀର ପାଟଳୀ ॥

ଏଥର ଆସିଛୁ ମଳୟ
ଛିନ୍ନ ତନ୍ଦ୍ରୀ, ସ୍ୱରୁ ବୀଣା ତବ
ରିକ୍ତ ହସ୍ତେ, କିବା ଦେବ ମୋତେ
ଉତ୍ତ ଗୀଷ୍ମର ମରୁତ ପ୍ରଖର
ଦଗ୍ଧ କରି ଅନ୍ତରାଶାର
ବୃଦ୍ଧ ମୁକୁଳ, ନବ କିଶଳୟ ॥

ଆବୋରି ମାୟାମୋହର
ଶରଣଯ୍ୟା କଣ୍ଠିଳ ଅତୀବ
ସୁଧାତୁର ମଧୁକର
କ୍ଳେଶଭରା ଭଗ୍ନ ଏ ଶରୀରେ
ଶାନ୍ତନୁସୁତସମ କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ଅବସାଦେ
ବସିଛି ମୁଁ ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ
ପାର୍ଥର ଭନ୍ନତ ଗାଣ୍ଡିବ ॥

ଆଉଥରେ ଆସ ହେ ମଳୟ
ଆଣିଦିଅ ସବୁଜ ସମ୍ବର
କରିଦିଅ ଶୂନ୍ୟ ହୃଦୟକୁ
ଗୋଲାପରେ ରକ୍ତାଭମୟ
ଉପଶମି ପ୍ରାଣ ବ୍ୟଥାତୁର
ମୁକ୍ତି ଦିଅ, ଦିଅ ହେ ବିଦାୟ ॥

ଜୀବନ ଧାରା

ସରୋଜିନୀ ମହାରଣା

କୋଟି କଳ୍ପନାର ଆଛନ୍ନ ମୁଦ୍ରାରେ ଜଡ଼ିତ ଏ ବାଲ୍ୟକାଳ
ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛ, ପବିତ୍ର, ଶରଦ୍ୱୀନ ଓଠେ ଅସରଳି ପନ୍ଦ୍ରି ମାଳ
ବାଲ୍ୟ ଚପଳତା, ବାସ୍ତବ୍ୟ ମମତା, ସପନର ବାଲିଘର
ମାତୃ ପ୍ରାଣର ନିବିଡ଼ ଉଷ୍ମତା ସ୍ମୃତିର ଅଲିଭା ଗାର

ଯଉବନେ ଯେବେ ପଦାର୍ପଣ କଲି ରାଗ ମହୁର ତୋଳି
ହୃଦେ ବିକଶିଲା ବସନ୍ତ କୁସୁମ ନରମ ପାଖୁଡ଼ା ମେଲି
ମୁଦ୍ରିତ ନୟନେ, ମଳୟ ଲଗନେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନର ବାରିଧାରା
ମୁଗ୍ଧ ଅନୁଭବେ ଝର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଦେଇଗଲା ପ୍ରେମର ପ୍ରଭାତି ତାରା
ମନ ବନାନୀରେ ଝଙ୍କାରୀତ ହେଲା ମଧୁ ସଙ୍ଗୀତର ସ୍ୱର
ରକ୍ତିମ ଓଠେ ପ୍ରହ୍ୱଳିତ ହେଲା ଶୁଭ୍ର ଜୋଛନା ଧାର

ଗୋଧୂଳି ବେଳାରେ ଆବିଷ୍କାର କଲି ଅନ୍ୟ ଏକ ରୂପାନ୍ତର
ମହାର୍ଦ୍ଦ ସମୟେ ସଙ୍ଗିନୀ ହେଲି ମୁଁ ପ୍ରେମଭରା ହୃଦୟର
ସୁକ୍ଷ୍ମ ଭାବନାର ପର୍ଣ୍ଣ କୁଟୀରରେ ମୁହଁ ରାଜ ରାଜେଶ୍ୱରୀ
ସ୍ମିନ୍ଧ୍ୟ ଗୁଞ୍ଜରଣେ ଗୁଞ୍ଜରିତ କଲି ପ୍ରେମ ସୁଧା ଧାରା ବାରି
ଜୀବନ ଛନ୍ଦରେ ମାନ ଅଭିମାନ ମଧୁର ପ୍ରେମ ତରଙ୍ଗ
ପ୍ରତି ଜୀବକୋଷେ ଆଜି ଦେଇଗଲା ନୃତନ ଅସ୍ତିତ୍ୱ ରଙ୍ଗ

ଆଜି ଅପରାହ୍ଣେ, କୁସ୍ଥିତ କପାଳେ, ଆବେଗ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ଗାର
ବିଲିନ ହୋଇଛି ଆସକ୍ତିର ଦୀପ ହୃଦ କନ୍ଦରରୁ ମୋର
ଅସୁମାରୀ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ହୀନ ଅପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣତା ସ୍ମୃତିର ସ୍ଥାନକୀ ମାତୃ
ନିଃସଙ୍ଗ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତେ ଜର୍ଜରୀତ ହୁଏ ଶୂନ୍ୟ ଜୀବନ ପାତ୍ର
ଚତୁର୍ଦ୍ଦିଗେ ଦିଶେ ନିବିଡ଼ ଅନ୍ଧାର ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ରଶ୍ମି ରେଖା
ନିବିଡ଼ ଆଶେଷେ ସମର୍ପିତ ଆଜି ଜୀବନର ଶେଷ ଶିଖା

ସାଗରର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱ

କାନ୍ତିଲତା ସାହୁ, କାଲିଙ୍ଗେଣ୍ଡିଆ

ସାଗର ଗୋ,
 ତୁମେ ତ ମହାନ,
 ତୁମେ ତ ବିଦ୍ୱାନ,
 ଓ ତୁମେହିଁ ଧନୀବାନ,
 ତୁମ ରୂପ,ଗୁଣଓ ଧର୍ମ!

କାହିଁ ଦେଖୁନାହିଁ କୋରଥରେ କମ୍ । (୧)

ଦେଖିଲେ ତୁମର ବିଶାଳ ଆକାର !
 ମନ ହଜିଯାଏ,ମଜିଯାଏ ନିଜକୁ ନିଜେ,
 ଜାଣେନା ତା ନିଜ ଅବସ୍ଥିତି । (୨)

ଆଉ ତୁମ ଗଭୀରତା !
 ଜ୍ଞାନରେ ଭରତି ଆଉ ଧନରେ ଭରତି,
 ନାହିଁ ତୁଳନାୟ ନାହିଁ ତା ଶକତି,
 ତଥାପି ନାହିଁ ଗର୍ବ, ଗର୍ବର ଆଭାଷ । (୩)

ଏ ମାନବ ଜାତି ଶିଖୁ ମହାନତା,
 ପଦେ ତୁମ କରି ଶତ ନମସ୍କାର ।
 ଦେଖି ତୁମ ଗମ୍ଭୀରତା !

ନିସ୍ତବ୍ଧ ସେ ବେଳାଭୂମି ,ନିସ୍ତବ୍ଧ ସେ ନିଶି ,
 ମନେହୁଏ କରୁଛି ତପ ମାନବଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ବସି । (୪)

ରେ ମୂର୍ଖ ମାନବ ଜାତି !
 ସୁଧୁରି ଯାଅ ତୁ ଏବେ ନ କରି ଡେରି,
 ଶୁଣିଯା',ଦେଖିଯା' ଆଉ କରିଯା,
 ଯଦି ହେବୁରେ ମହାନ ସାଗର ପରି । (୫)

ସମତାର ହିତ

(କାନ୍ତିଲତା ସାହୁ କୁପର୍ତ୍ତିନୋ , କାଲିଙ୍ଗେଣ୍ଡିଆ)

ଜୀବନ ବୋଇତ ସୁଖ ଖୋଜିବୁଲେ
 ଆନନ୍ଦ ପରେ ଆନନ୍ଦ ,
 ଭାବେ ନାହିଁ ଦିନେ ସପନ ରାଇଜେ
 ଦୁଃଖ ଆସି କରୁ ମମ । (୧)

ସୁଖ ପାଇବାକୁ ସତକର୍ମ କରି
 ମାନିବ ରୀତିନୀତିକୁ ,
 'ସାମ୍ବ୍ୟ ହିଁ ସଂପଦ' ମନେ ରଖିଥିବ
 ସବୁ ରଖିବ ପଛକୁ । (୨)

ସମୟ , ଠିକଣା ଖାଇବା, ଶୋଇବା
 ରଖ ସମତାରେ ମିତ ,
 ନିୟମିତ ଭାବେ ବ୍ୟାୟାମ କରିଲେ
 ଦେହର ହିତ ବହୁତ । (୩)

ଦେହ ଠିକ୍ ଥିଲେ ମନ ଠିକ୍ ରହେ
 ତା ସହିତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ,
 ଅଯଥା କଥାକୁ ବହୁତ ନ କହି
 ରଖ ମନରେ ସଂଯମ । (୪)

ବେଶି ଖାଇବନି ବେଶି ଶୋଇବନି
 ବେଶି ନୁହଁ ତାଏତିଂ ,
 ବ୍ୟାୟାମ କରିବ ଅତି ବେଶି ନୁହଁ
 ନିହାତି ଭଲ ଖାଦ୍ୟ । (୫)

ବେଶି ବକ୍ତବ୍ କ୍ ବହୁତ ଖରାପ୍
 କଥାରେ ନାହିଁ ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱ ,
 ବୁଝିବିଚାରିଣ କୁହ ହିତ କଥା
 ଲୋକ ବୁଝନ୍ତୁ ତା ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ । (୬)

ସବୁଥିର ଅତି ହୋଇଯାଏ ଇତି
 ନ ରହେ ସେଥିରେ ସ୍ୱାଦ ,
 ଯାହା କରୁଥିବ ସମତା ରଖିବ
 ତେବେ ନ ରହିବ ଖେଦ । (୭)

ଜୀବନ ଯାତ୍ରା

—ବନ୍ଧୁ ସାମଲ

ତୁମକୁ କହିନଥିଲି
 କେଉଁଠାରୁ ଏ ଝରଣାର ଆରମ୍ଭ
 ଆମ୍ଭ ଓ ତାଳ ଗଛ,
 ଧାନ ଖେତ ଘେରା ଚୋଟିଏ ଘରୁ
 ଚତୁର୍ଦ୍ଦିଗରୁ ଛୋଟ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ ବହି ଆସି
 ଜାଣତରେ, ଅଜାଣତରେ
 ଆକାର ଦେଉଥିଲେ ତାକୁ
 ଭିତର ଆଉ, ବାହାରକୁ

ବର୍ଷାଦିନେ ଛତୁ ପରି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଟେକିଲେ
 ମୁଁ କିଏ?
 କେଉଁ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ନିର୍ଧାରିତ ହୋଇଛି ମୋପାଇଁ?
 କେଉଁଠାରୁ ଆସିଛି ମୁଁ?
 କାହାକୁ ଅନୁସରଣ କରିବି?
 କାହା ପାଇଁ ପୂଜା ଓ ଅର୍ଚନା?
 କାହାକୁ ବା ମୁଁ ଭଲ ପାଇବି?

ଉତ୍ତର ପାଇଲି
 କେତେବେଳେ ଠିକ୍ ଆଉ କେତେବେଳେ ଭୁଲ
 କେତେବେଳେ ଉପାୟଶୂନ୍ୟ ହୋଇ କଷ୍ଟ ପାଇଲି

ଏ ସବୁ ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ
 ସବୁ ଜାଣିବାର ଇଚ୍ଛା ମରିଲାନି କେବେ
 ଝରଣା ପରି ବହି ଚାଲିଲା
 ତା ଅଙ୍କା ବଙ୍କା ଯାତ୍ରା ପଥେ

ଗଢା ହୋଇଛି ମୁଁ
 ଗ୍ରୀଷ୍ମର ଉତ୍ତାପରେ
 ବର୍ଷାଭାଜା ମୌସୁମୀ ରାତିରେ
 ପୌଷର ଶୀତରେ

ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଏ ମୁଁ
 ପୁସ୍ତକରୁ ଆରଧୃତ ମଞ୍ଜିରୁ
 କର୍ମକାଣ୍ଡ ଏବଂ ଜନ୍ମଗାରୁ
 ଜ୍ଞାନ ଓ ଅଜ୍ଞାନତାରୁ
 ଠିକ୍ ଆଉ ଭୁଲ୍ ଅନିଶ୍ଚୟତାରୁ

ଗୁଡେଇ ହୋଇଥିବା, ବଙ୍କା ଚଙ୍କା ଏ ଯାତ୍ରା
 ଯାତ୍ରାପଥରେ ଦେଖା ହୁଅନ୍ତି
 କେତେ ଜଣା ଅଜଣା ମଣିଷଗଣ
 ଚଳାପଥ ମୋର ସୁଗମ କରନ୍ତି
 ପୁଣି ଚାଲି ଯାଆନ୍ତି
 ସ୍ୱର୍ଗଭୂମିକୁ ବା ଅନ୍ୟ ପରିବେଷକୁ

ପୁରୁଣା ନଦୀରେ
 ଚିରନ୍ତନ ନବ ସ୍ରୋତର ପ୍ରବେଶ
 କେତେ କଳ୍ପନା, କେତେ ଅନ୍ତତୃଷ୍ଣି
 କାହାକୁ ବା କୋଲେଇ ନିଏ
 ପାତର ଅନ୍ତର କରେ ବା ଫିଙ୍ଗି ଦିଏ

ପୁଣି ଆଦରି ନିଏ
 ନୁଆ କରି ଦେଖେ
 ନିଜକୁ, ଦୁନିଆକୁ
 ଜ୍ଞାନର ଅସୀମ ପରିଧିକୁ
 ଆଉ ଜୀବନକୁ
 ନୁଆ ରଙ୍ଗଭୂମିକୁ
 ବିଜ୍ଞାନକୁ ବା କଳାକୁ
 ସଜାଡିବାକୁ
 କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ଆଉ ମଧୁର
 ମୋର ଏ ଜୀବନ ଯାତ୍ରାକୁ

ପୁଗ ନେଇ ଜୀବନଧାରା

ଝିନୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ

ଚମତ୍କୃତ ହୁଅଇ ଅବଶ୍ୟ
ତୀକ୍ଷ୍ଣରୁଦ୍ଧି ଦେଖି ମନୁଷ୍ୟର
ସୀମାହୀନ ପ୍ରଗତି ଆଜି ଏ
ପ୍ରତି କ୍ଷେତ୍ରେ ଶିଳ୍ପ ବିଜ୍ଞାନର ।

ଇଣ୍ଟରନେଟ୍, କ୍ଷମାପ, ଟେଲିଫୋନ୍
ଦୂରଦୂର କରେ ଆଜି ହ୍ରାସ
ଯେଉଁ ପୁରେ ଯିଏ ବା ଆଆନ୍ତୁ
ନିମିଷକେ ତା ସହ ସଂସ୍ପର୍ଶ ।

ବିସ୍ମୃତ କରେ ଆଇ-ଫୋନ୍
ସାରା ସୃଷ୍ଟି ସତେ କି ଯନ୍ତ୍ରରେ
ସମସ୍ୟାର ସବୁ ସମାଧାନ
ହୁଏ ଆଜି ଅଜ୍ଞାନି ଅଗ୍ରରେ ।

ଜୀବନର ଯାତ୍ରା ହୁଏ ନିତି
ସୁଖକର, ସୁବିଧା, ସହଜ
ଅସମ୍ଭବ ସମ୍ଭବ କରଇ
ଆଜିର ଏ ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ଜଗତ ।

ହେଉଅଛି ଯେତେ ଅଗ୍ରଗତି
ଆଜି ଏଇ ଶିଳ୍ପ ବିଜ୍ଞାନର
ହତୋତ୍ସାହ କିନ୍ତୁ ଦେଖି ଲାଗେ
ଅଧୋଗତି ସେତିକି ସ୍ଵାସ୍ଥ୍ୟର ।

ଘରୁଅଛି ଅକାଳ ବିଘ୍ନୋଗ
ତାରିଆତେ ଆଜି ହାହାକାର
ହାର୍ତ୍ ତିଜିଜ୍, ଓବିଜ୍, କ୍ୟାନସର୍

ନିତି ନୁଆ ରୋଗ ଆବିଷ୍କାର ।

ଆଖୁ, ଅକ୍ଷୀ, କାନ୍ଧର ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା
ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ମିଳେ ବାରମ୍ବାର
ଉତ୍କୃଷ୍ଟର ଜୀବନର ପାଇଁ
ରୋପଣ ଯେ କୃତ୍ରିମ ଅଙ୍ଗର ।

ଦେଖେ ଯେବେ ଆଜିକା ଅବସ୍ଥା
ପିଲାଦିନ ଗାଆଁ ଉଠି ମାରେ
ନ ଥିଲାତ ସ୍ଵାସ୍ଥ୍ୟହାନି ଏତେ
ଅଣଆଇ, ଆଇ ଅମଳରେ ।

କେବେ ପୁଣି ଶୁଣିବି ନ ଥିଲା
ହସପିଟାଲ୍ ନାଆଁ ସେତେବେଳେ
ଶରୀରର ପିତା କମୁଥିଲା
ତେର, ମୂଳି, ପତ୍ର ଓ ବକଳେ ।

ଅଶି ବର୍ଷେ ବସୁଥିଲା ଆଇ
ଆଖୁ ଭାଙ୍ଗି ଧାର ପନିକିରେ
ଅଣଆଇ ମାଡୁଥିଲା ଝାଡୁ
ଅଗଣାରେ ନବେ ବରଷରେ ।

କୋଶ କୋଶ ଚାଲୁ ଥିଲେ ସବୁ
ସିଧା ହେଇ ରୁଢା ବୟସରେ
ପେଟ ପାଇଁ ଖଟୁଥିଲେ ନିତି
ସାରା ଦିନ ବାରି ବଗିଚାରେ ।

ଶୁଣେ ଯେବେ ବହୁ ବିଜ୍ଞାପନା
ଅରଗାନିକ୍ ମହଙ୍ଗା ଖାଦ୍ୟର
ଦିଶିଯାଏ ଗାଆଁର ପୋଖରୀ
ଡେଉଁଆ'ନ୍ତି ରୋହି ଓ ଭାକୁର ।

ଦିଶେ ବାରି ଓଉ ଓ ପଣସ

କାନ୍ଦି କାନ୍ଦି ଝୁଲଇ କଦଳୀ
ଶିମ୍ପୁ, ଜହ୍ନି, ଛୁଇଁ, ବାଇଗଣ
ବାରିର ସେ କଲରା, କାକୁଡ଼ି ।

ମୁଗ, ବିରି, କୋଳଥ ଓ ଧାନ
ବେତା ବେତା ଆସଇ କ୍ଷେତରୁ
ଶାରୁ, ଆଳୁ ଆଉ ଦେଶିଆଳୁ
ଓଲୁଓ ସେ କିଆରି ମାଟିରୁ ।

ଛନ୍ଦୁଛନ୍ଦୁ ସେ ପାଣି କଖାରୁ
ମାଡ଼ିଥାଏ ଛପର ଉପରେ
ମାଡ଼ିଥାଏ ପୋଇ ଓ କଖାରୁ
ଝୁଲୁଥାଏ ସେ ଲାଉ ଡଙ୍ଗର ।

ଲେଉଟିଆ, ଖଡ଼ା ଓ କୋଶିଳା
ଦିଶିଯାଏ ଶାଗ ପଟାଳିର
ବର୍ଷା ଦିନ ବିଲ ମଦରଙ୍ଗ
ସୁନୁସୁନିଆ ଶାଗ ପୋଖରୀର ॥

ସୁତି ଆଣେ ଲାଳସା ପାଟିରେ
ନାଳି ଆଉ ପାଣି ପଇତର
ଦିଶିଯାଏ ଘରର ସୀମାରେ
ଧାଡ଼ି ଧାଡ଼ି ନଡ଼ିଆ ଗଛର ।

ମନେ ପଡ଼େ ତାଳସଜ ସ୍ୱାଦ
ସଦ୍ୟ ତୋଳା ସେ ତାଳ ଗଛରୁ
ପେଛା ପେଛା ଖଜୁରି ଓ ଗୁଆ
ଝୁଲୁଥାଏ ସୁଉଜ ଡାହିରୁ ।

କରମଙ୍ଗା, ପିଜୁଳି, ସପେଟା,
ଆମ୍ବକଣି ଦଶଇ ଡାହିରେ
ବର ଆଉ ଜାମୁ କୋଳି ଗଛ

ଦିଶିଯାଏ ବଗିଚା କୋଣରେ ।

ହୁଏ ଯେବେ ଦୁହିଁବା ସମୟ
ହମ୍ପା ରତି ଶୁଭଇ ଗାଈର
ବାସି ଯାଏ ଘର ମରା ଘିଅ
ଦୁଧ, ଦହି, ଛେନା ଯେ ପ୍ରଚୁର ।

ସରଳ ସେ ଜୀବନର ଧାରା
ଶୋଚନା ଯେ ନ ଥିଲା କାହିଁରେ
ବିଲ ବାଡ଼ି ଉତ୍ତୁର ଦ୍ରବ୍ୟେ
ହସ ମୁହଁ ସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟ ଅଳ୍ପରେ ।

ତିନି ଓଳି ଖାଇବା ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତି
ହୁଏ ତାଜା, ବିଶୁଦ୍ଧ ଦ୍ରବ୍ୟରେ
ସେ ସୁଆଦ, ବାସ୍ନା ଅଟେ ଭିନ୍ନ
ଭାସି ଯାଏ ଏବେ ବି ସୁତିରେ ।

ଶାରିରୀକ ପରିଶ୍ରମ ଥିଲା
ମୂଳ ମନ୍ତ୍ର ସଭିଙ୍କ କାନରେ
ନିତିଦିନ ଜୀବନର ପାଇଁ
ନିର୍ଭରତା ନ ଥିଲା ଯନ୍ତରେ ।

ଯନ୍ତ୍ରବତ୍ ଆଜିକା ଜୀବନ
କାନ୍ତ ରେଖା ମୁହଁରେ ଦିଶଇ
ପାଇ ପୁଣି ନ ପାଇବା ବୋଧ
ଦିବାନିଶି ସଭିଙ୍କୁ ଟାଣଇ ।

ଧାଇଁ ଧାଇଁ ଶରୀର ଅବଶ
ଲୋଟି ପଡ଼େ ଶରୀର କାନ୍ତିରେ
ତାଜା ଖାଦ୍ୟ କିଏ ପଚାରୁଛି
ରେଡ଼ିମେଣ୍ଟ ପତଇ ଆଖିରେ ।

ଯନ୍ତ୍ରପାତି ଯୁଗ ଆଜି ଏଇ

ମକର ସ୍ନାହାନ

- ସୁସ୍ମିତା ମିଶ୍ର

<p>ଗାଁ ନଇ କୂଳେ ସାଗଂସାଥୀ ମେଳେ , ବିଦେଶୀ ଜୀବନେ ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲେ , କାଳି ଅନ୍ଧାରରୁ ମା , ଖୁଡ଼ି ସହ , ବିଲହ୍ନିଡ଼ ଡେଇଁ ଜାଉଥିଲୁ ଧାଇଁ, କେତେ ମଉଜରେ ଜାଡ଼ କାକରରେ, ଅନ୍ଧାର ରାତିରେ ଦୀପର ଆଲୁଅ, ହୁଳହୁଳି ସାଥେ ଛୁଆକଂର ଗିତେ, ଝାନଜ ମୃଦଂଗର ତାଳେ ନାଚୁଥିଲେ, କେତେ ସ୍ନେହପ୍ରିତି ଭରି ରହିଥିଲା, ନଇରୁ ଗାଧୋଇ ଅସିଲେ ମନ୍ଦିର, ସଜ ବାଜହୋଇ ଫୁଲ ଭୋଗଧରି, ମକର ଚାଉଳ ଚକିରେ ପାଇଣୀ, କାହିଁଗଲା ସେହି ପିଲାଦିନ ଖେଳ, ମକର ସ୍ନାହାନ ଠାକୁର ଦର୍ଶନ, ଶିତ ସକାଳର ସ୍ନୋ ପରଦାରେ, ଚାରି କାନ୍ଥ ରୁଧ କୋଠରୀ, ଗାଧୁଆ ଘରଟା ସାଜେ ନଇକୁଳ, ଗିଜର ଗରମ ପାଣିରେ ମକର, ସାଥ୍‌ମେଳ ସୁଖ ଜିଏ ଲଭିଅଛି, ମକର ସାଥ୍‌ରେ କେତେ ସୁଖଦୁଃଖ, ହୃଦୟର କୋହ ଅନ୍ତରେ ମରଇ, ଗଲାନି ତ ଗଲା କଥାରେ ସଂଗାତ,</p>	<p>ମକର ସ୍ନାହାନ ଦିନର କଥା, ଲାଗଇ ଅନ୍ତରେ ଦାରୁଣ ବଥା [1] ଲନଠନ ବଡ଼ି ହାତରେ ଧରି ମକର ବୁଡ଼ରେ ପକାଇ ହୁରି [2] ଗିତ ଗାଉଥିଲୁ ଦିପ ଜଳାଇ ଝଲସାଏ ବନ,ପାହାଡ଼,ନଇ [3] କଲୋଳିତ ହଉଥିଲା ମୂଲକ ମକର ସ୍ନାହାନେ ଗାଁର ଲୋକ [4] ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ମନେ କେତେ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଦର୍ଶନ କରିବୁ ରାଇ ଗୋବିନ୍ଦ [5] ଠାକୁର ଦର୍ଶନେ ଜାଉ ଝପଟି ଜାତରା ଦେଖଣ ଆସୁ ଲେଉଟି [6] ନଇ ତୋଟା ମାଳ କାନନ ଭୁଇଁ ବିଦେଶରେ ଧିରେ ଲିନ ହୁଅଇ [7] ହଜିଜାଏ ସବୁ ସୃତି ଘର ଭିତରେ ମନ ହୁଏ ଗରଗର [8] ବିଜୁଳି ଆଲୁଅ ଲନଠନ ବଡ଼ି ସ୍ନାହାନ ହୁଅଇ ସକାଳୁ ଉଠି [9] ସିଏ କି ଭୁଲିବ ପଲି ମମତା ବାନ୍ତି ମନ ହେଉଥିଲା ହାଲୁକା [10] ସତ୍ୟାପିତ ହୁଏ ଏଇ ଜିବନ ଆଉ କି ଫେରିବ ଅତିତ ଦିନ [11]</p>
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ହୁସ୍ତୁନରେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଓ ରଥ

ଆରତୀ ନନ୍ଦ ପତି

ଆସୁଛି କାଳିଆ ନୀଳାଚଳରୁ ପଞ୍ଜିମ ଆଡକୁ ଚାହିଁ
ସିଂହାସନ ତା' ର ଏଠି ଲୋଡା ନାହିଁ ଶକ୍ତି ଟିକକ ପାଇଁ ।

ବସିଛି ମେଜରେ ଶୂନ୍ୟ କୋଠିରେ ଛାତି ରନୁ ସିଂହାସନ
ବଢାଇ ହାତକୁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଛି ଦୁର୍ଲଭ ଭକ୍ତ ଦର୍ଶନ ।

ଗର୍ଭଗୃହ ଛାଡି ପହୁଣ୍ଡି ପକାଇ ଆସିଛି ସହସ୍ର କୋଶ
ଅବଶୋଷ ନାହିଁ ଛପନ ଭୋଗକୁ ଭୁଲି ଯାଏ ଭୋକଶୋଷ ।

ଷାଠିଏ ପଉଟି ଭୋଗର ମାଠିଆ ଦେଖିନି ଅନେକ ଦିନୁ
ଗୋପାଳ ବଲ୍ଲଭ କୋଠ ଭୋଗଖିଆ ମାନ କରିନାହିଁ ତେଣୁ ।

ହୁସ୍ତୁନ ସହରେ ଓଡିଆ ମେଳରେ ହୋଇଯାଏ ଏକାକାର
ଗେଲ ବସରରେ ଦିନ ସରିଯାଏ ପୂଜାରୀର ଉପଚାର ।

ଭକ୍ତ ଦେବାନନ୍ଦ ଆରତ କଣ୍ଠରେ ନିତି ଧ୍ୟାଇ ଥାଏ ତୋତେ
ଆମ୍ଭ କଦଳୀରେ ମନ ମୋହିଥାଏ ଭକ୍ତି ତରଙ୍ଗ କେତେ ।

ପୁସ୍ତକ ଗୃହରେ ସିଂହାସନ ତୋର ସଭିଜ୍ଞ ସେଇଠି ଭେଟ
ସତର ପାହାଚ ଉଠାଇ ଆଶୁତୁ ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନ ପରିପାଟ ।

ସତ୍ୟ, ସୁରଥ, ନିରଦ, ଦିଲୀପ, ମୃତ୍ୟୁଞ୍ଜୟ ତୋର ସଖା
ନାମ ଜପ କରି ସୁରଭି ବିଞ୍ଚନ୍ତି ମାସକରେ ଥରେ ଏକା ।

ନୃସିଂହ-ଆରତୀ ଭକ୍ତିର ଅଞ୍ଜଳି ଆଶନ୍ତି ଛପନ ଭୋଗ
ସ୍ଥିତା, ଶୁଭଶ୍ରୀ କାକରା ଆଣିଲେ ପୂଜାତାଲା ମହରଗ ।

ଲିଲି, ଅନୁ, ବୁଲୁ, ସୁଶ୍ରୀ, ସଂଗୀତା ଆନନ୍ଦ ବଜାରେ ଥାଇ
ମୁକ୍ତ ହୃଦୟେ ପ୍ରସାଦ ବାଞ୍ଛନ୍ତି ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଗୁଣ ଗାଇ ।

କ୍ଷଣିକ ପାଇଁକି ଦେବାନନ୍ଦ ଗୃହ ଶ୍ରୀ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ପାଇଟି ଯାଏ
ଆମେରିକା ଦେଶେ ବସୁତୁର ମନ୍ତ୍ର ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ବାଞ୍ଛି ଥାଏ ।

ଭଲ ପାଇବାର ବିହନ ଧରି ତୁ ରଥରେ ହେଉ ସବାର
ରଥର ଉପରୁ ବିଞ୍ଚି ଦେଇ ଯାଉ କୃପାର କରୁଣା ଧାର ।

ଆମ ମହାରଣା ମାଧବ ଗଢିଛି ଭକ୍ତିର ଦେଉଳ ରଥ
ସୋମଦତ୍ତ ତାକୁ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ କରିଛି ଧରମାର ପାଳି ବ୍ରତ ।

ପ୍ରତିଟି ଓଡିଆ ରୁମ୍ଠିଛି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତେ ଦେଇ ତାର ଶ୍ରମ ବଳ
ଦାରୁ ଦେବତାର ଦାରୁ ରଥ ଖଞ୍ଜି ଅଭିନବ ଚଳାଚଳ ।

ଦର୍ଜି ଟିଏ ସାଜି ରମଣୀ ସୀଇଁଛି କନାର ଦେଉଳ ତୁଳ
ଉତ୍ତାରି ଆଣିଛି ବାରଶ' ଶତାଢୀ ଶ୍ରୀ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ଅଗ୍ର ମୂଳ ।

ତୁଳୀଟିଏ ଧରି ଜୀବନ ଦେଇଛି ଦାରୁରଥ ଶରୀରରେ
ପଦ୍ମଟିଏ ପରି ପୁଟି ଉଠିଅଛି ଲୋକାରଣ୍ୟ ପୋଖରୀରେ ।

ଅପୂର୍ବ ମିଶ୍ରଣ ପୁରବ ପଞ୍ଜିମ ଶଗଡର ନାହିଁ ଲୋଡା
ରଥ ଗଡୁ ଅଛି ଟୁଲି ଚକ ତଳେ ଆଧୁନିକ ହୁଏ ଯୋଡା ।

ରଥ ଗଢା ବେଳା ଅପୂର୍ବ ଉଚ୍ଛ୍ଵାସ ପ୍ରତି ଘଟେ ଉଦ୍‌ଘୋଷ
ସୋମଦତ୍ତ ଘର ପବିତ୍ର ଶ୍ରୀ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ରଥ ଗଢା ପାଇଁ ସିନା ।

ଓଡିଆ ପୁଅର ହାତର ଗଢଣି ଭକ୍ତିର ସାଗର ମାପ
ଅଶୁ ରେଣୁ ଯୋଡି ଉଜଡା ଖୋଜିଲେ ହିମାଳୟ କରେ କୋପ ।

ସେହି ରଥେ ବିଜେ ଜଗତର ନାଥ ଇଣ୍ଡିଆ ହାଉସ ଦାଣ୍ଡେ
ରଥ ଗତିଯାଏ ଭକତଙ୍କ ସଙ୍ଗେ 'ଜୟ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ' ତୁଣ୍ଡେ ।

ବିଧେ ସମାନତା, ନିଜ ଆଚରଣେ, ସଭିଜ୍ଞ ଆପଣା କରି
ଭେଦଭାବ ନାହିଁ କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟେ ତାହାର, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଧର୍ମ ଭରି ।

କର୍ପୂର ଯାଇଚି

-ଦେବରାଜ ସାହୁ, ମେରିଲାଣ୍ଡ

କର୍ପୂର ଆସିଥିଲା
କର୍ପୂର ରହିଥିଲା
କର୍ପୂର ଯାଇଚି
କିଛି ରଖିଚିକି ?

ନେତା ନୀତିହୀନ
କର୍ମଚାରୀ ଲାଞ୍ଜ ହିଁ ଜୀବନ
ଚୋର ଦିଅଁଙ୍କୁ ଚୋରାଏ
କ୍ରିଡାଳୀ ଠକି ପଦକ ପାଏ

ପକାଇଚି ଚହଳ
ଘରେ ଆଉ ବାହାରେ
ନିଦରେ ଆଉ ବେତନାରେ
ଛାଡ଼ିଥିବା ଗୌରବରେ

ମୁଁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ
ମୁଁ ଖାଣ୍ଟି ଓଡ଼ିଆ
ଘଣ୍ଟ ବଜାଏ
ଈରାଜୀର ବନ୍ୟା ଭିତରେ

କର୍ପୂର ଶୁଣୁଚି
ମୋ ଦେଶ ମହାନ
ମୋ ଠାକୁର ମହାନ
ମୋ ସ୍ଵାଭିମାନ ମହାନ

ମୋ ଦେଶ ବିଶ୍ଵ ଶକ୍ତି
ମୋ ପୁଞ୍ଜି ବିଶ୍ଵର ଆଧାର
ମୋ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ର ବିଶ୍ଵରଜନକ
କ୍ଷୁଧାର ଜ୍ଵାଳା ଭିତରେ

ମୋ ଦେଶ ବୁଝର ଦେଶ
ମୋ ଦେଶ ଗାନ୍ଧିର ଦେଶ
ମୋ ଦେଶ ଅସାଧାରଣ
ମୋ ଦେଶ ଅନନ୍ୟ

କର୍ପୂର ଯାଇଚି
କନା ପଡ଼ିଚି
କରୁଚି ପ୍ରଳାପ
ମୋ କଥା ଶୁଣ

କର୍ପୂର ଦେଖୁଚି
କାମ ଆଉ କଥା
ବହୁତ ବ୍ୟବଧାନ
କଥା ବହୁତ ଶସ୍ତା

ଗର୍ବର ସୀମା
ଘୁଟି ଘୁଟି ଯାଏ
ଆକାଶ ଛୁଇଁ
ପୁଥିବୀ ହତାଶରେ ଚାହେଁ ।

ବାର୍ଷକ୍ୟରେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ

ଷାଠିଏ ବର୍ଷରେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନରେ ଆସ
କିଏ ତୁମେ ପ୍ରୀୟତମା
ଚଷମା ଅଣ୍ଟାଳି ଖୋଜିଲା ବେଳକୁ
ଚଷମା ମିଳେନି ଜମା

'କବିତା' ବୋଲି ସମ୍ବୋଧନ କଲେ
ଉତ୍ତର ପାଏନା ସଖୀ
'ସଂଗୀତା', 'ବବିତା' ଡାକି ଡାକି କେତେ
ତକ୍ତି ମୋର ଗଲା ଶୁଣି

କୋଣାର୍କର ଏକ ନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ଭଳି
ଦେଖିଲି ନିଦା ଭୋଳେ
ତୁମକୁ ଭେଟିବା ପାଇଁକି ବସିଛି
ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଭାଗାର କୁଳେ

ତୁମ ରୂପ ଦେଖି ଜନ୍ମ ଆସେ ଲୁଚି
ଆକାଶରୁ ଖସି ଖସି
ମେଘ ଝୁଲଣାରେ ଝୁଲି ଝୁଲି କେତେ
ଆନନ୍ଦେ ଯାଏ ବରଷି

ସ୍ୱପ୍ନରେ ଥରେ ଆସିଗଲେ ତୁମେ
ଫୁଲର ପଞ୍ଜୁଣ ଆସେ
ହସି ହସି ତୁମେ ଚାଲିଗଲେ ବାଟେ
ବଣ ମଲ୍ଲୀ ସାରା ବାସେ

ହସରୁ ତୁମର ମୁକୁତାର ଝର
ଝରଇ କେତେ କେଜାଣି
ରମ୍ଭା, ମେନେକାର ଚେହେରା ତୁମର
କଥାରେ ଥାଏ ପୁଟାଣି

କଥାଟି ତୁମର ଅତି ସୁମଧୁର
ଶୁଣୁଥାଏ କାନପାତି
ଜଣାପଡେ ନାହିଁ ତୁମେ ପାଖେଥିଲେ
ବିତିଗଲେ ଯେତେ ରାତି

ଗଭାରେ ତୁମର ଫୁଲର ଗଜରା
ଆଣିଛି ହଜିଲା ସ୍ମୃତି
ଓଠରେ ତୁମର ଲାଜ ଲାଜ ହସ
ଖୋଜୁଛି ମୋପାଇଁ ରାତି

ତୁମ ଚାହାଣିରେ ଯୋଗୀ, ରକ୍ଷିଙ୍କର
ମୌନବ୍ରତ ଭାଙ୍ଗେ ସିନା
ମୁଁ ଯେ ଛାର ନର, କେମିତି ରୋକିବି
ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ହେଲେ କାମନା

ନୀଳନୟନା ଗୋ ! ଭରିଅଛ କେତେ
ନୀଳ ରଙ୍ଗ କାହୁଁ ଆଣି
ଆକାଶରୁ ରଙ୍ଗ, ସାଗରରୁ ରଙ୍ଗ
କେତେ ଦେଇଛ କି ବୁଣି

ନୟନର ଧାରେ କଢ଼ଳର ଗାର
ବଢ଼ାଏ ଶୋଭା ତୁମର
ପାଦରେ ପାଉଁଜି ରୁଣୁ ଝୁଣୁ ବାଜେ
ଲାଗେ ସଂଗୀତ ଆସର

ଉଛୁଳା, ଉଠୁଳା ଯୌବନରେ ଭରା
ତୁମେ ମୋ' ସାଧବବୋହୁ
ସ୍ୱପ୍ନରେ ଏମିତି ଆସୁଥାଅ ତୁମେ
ରାତିଟି ବି ଲମ୍ବା ହେଉ

'କବିତା' ଦୁଅଳି 'ବବିତା' ଦୁଅ
ଦେଖାଦିଅ ଆଉ ଥରେ
ତୁମ ହାତଧରି ଥରେ ଚାଲିବାକୁ
ଏବେବି ମୋ ମନ ଝୁରେ

ଶଶଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର
ସିଲ୍ଭର ଷ୍ଟ୍ରିଟ୍, ମେରୀଲ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡ

ତୁମ ବିନା ପ୍ରିୟେ ଗତି ନାହିଁ ଆଉ ରମ୍ୟ ରଚନା ଗଗନ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ

ଜାଣିବାରୁ ପତ୍ନୀ ଭାଇ ବାହାଘର
ଭାରତ ଯିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ତର ତର,
ମୋର କଥା ଛାଡ଼ ପିଲା ଦୁହେଁ ମଧ୍ୟ
ଆଖି ପିଛୁଳାକେ ହୋଇଗଲେ ପର ।

ପଚାରିଲି ତାଙ୍କୁ ନମ୍ର ସହକାରେ
'ତୁମେ ଯିବାଗାକି ନିହାତି ଜରୁରୀ ?
ଗତ ତିସେମ୍ବରେ ଯାଇଥିଲୁ ପରା
ପୁଣି ଯିବା ପାଇଁ କହୁଛ କିପରି?'

ଯେମିତି କହିଛି ଏଇପଦ କଥା
ଗରଗର ହୋଇ ତହୁଁ ଗଲେ ଉଠି,
ତାଙ୍କ ପଛେ ପଛେ ଗୋଡ଼ାଇ ଗଲି ମୁଁ
ଶୋଇଥିଲେ ସିଏ ଘୋଡ଼ାଇ ଯେଉଁଠି ।

ପୁଣି ପଚାରିଲି 'ଯିବା କି ଜରୁରୀ?
ଚଳିବନି ତୁମେ ନଗଲେ ଇଣ୍ଡିଆ ?
ଏଇମିତି କେତେ ପଣପଣ ଲୋକ
ଇଣ୍ଡିଆ ଭିତରେ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ବାହା ।'

ଯେମିତି ଯାଇଛି ପାଟିରୁ ବାହାରି
ଏତକ ବଚନ, ଖତ୍ରୁ ହସ୍ତାହୋଇ,
କରିଲେ ଚିତ୍କାର 'ଇଏ ନୁହେଁ ଲୋକ
ସିଏ ଅଟେ ମୋର ଗୋଟେ ବୋଲି ଭାଇ' ।

ତୁମ ଘର ପରି ନାହାନ୍ତି ମୋହର
ପାଞ୍ଚଟା ଭଉଣୀ ପାଞ୍ଚ ସାତ ଭାଇ,
କିଏ ହେଲା ବାହା କିଏ ବା ନହେଲା
ସେଥିରେ କୌଣସି ଯାଏ ଆସେ ନାହିଁ ।

କାନକୁ ଆଉଁସି ମୁଣ୍ଡକୁ ଆଉଁସି
ପଳାଇ ଆସିଲି ତାଙ୍କଠାରୁ ମୁହିଁ,

ବୁଝାଇ ମନକୁ କରିଦେଲି ଛୁର
ମାନିଯିବା ଛାଡ଼ ଆଉ ଚାରା ନାହିଁ ।

ଦିନରାତି ବସି ଖୋଜିଲି ଟିକଟ
ମିଳିଯିବ କାଳେ ଅଳପ ଦରରେ,
ଖରାଦିନ ଯୋଗୁଁ ଟିକଟର ଦର
ଆକାଶ ଛୁଇଁଛି ଦୁଇ ହଜାରରେ ।

ଯାଆନ୍ତୁ ଏଥର ଏକୃଷିଆ ସିଏ
ଏତେ ଦର ଦେଇ ସଭିଏଁ କିପରି?
ଯିବା ପୁଣିଥରେ ନୁହଁଇ ସମ୍ଭବ
ଯାଇଥିଲୁ ସବୁ ଏଇ କାଲି ପରି ।

କରିଦେଲୁ ଛୁର ପତ୍ନୀ ଏକୃଷିଆ
ଯିବେ ଇଣ୍ଡିଆକୁ ବାହାଘର ପାଇଁ,
ସେହିଦିନୁ ସିଏ କରିଲେ ସପିଙ୍ଗ
ଟରୋଙ୍କରେ ଯେତେ ମଲମାନ ଯାଇ ।

କାହା ପାଇଁ ସାର୍ଟ କାହା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ୟାଣ୍ଟ
କାହା ପାଇଁ ପୁଣି ରିମୋଟ ଖେଳନା,
ଆଇପଡ଼ ଫୋନ କ୍ୟାନନ କ୍ୟାମେରା
ଭାରତ ଭ୍ରମଣ ପାଇଁ ହେଲା କିଣା ।

ପୁଣି ପଚାରିଲି 'ତମେ ତ କେବଳ
ବାହାଘର ପାଇଁ ଯାଉଥିଲ ପରା?
ଏସବୁ ଜିନିଷ କାହା ପାଇଁ ପୁଣି
କିଣା ହେଉଅଛି ବୁଲି ମଲ୍‌ସାରା ।'

କହିଲେ ସହସା 'ଜାଣିବ କେମିତି?
ଜୀବନରେ ତୁମେ ଦେଇଛ କାହାକୁ ?
ଉପହାର କ'ଣ? କାହିଁକି ଦିଅନ୍ତି?
ସହଜେ ଭୁଲନ୍ତା କେମିତି ମୁଣ୍ଡକୁ ?

ହୁଏ ହୁଏ କହି ରାଜି ହେଲି ସବୁ
ରାଜତ ଦେବାଟା କାମ ହେଲା ମୋର,
ସପିଙ୍କ କରିବା ଯେକିଙ୍କ କରିବା
କାମ ତକ ସବୁ ହୋଇଲା ତାଙ୍କର ।

ସେହି ସମ୍ଭାବରେ ଯେମିତି ଆସିଛି
ମାଝର କାର୍ତ୍ତର ଯେମେଣ୍ଟ ନୋଟିସ,
ଦେଖିଦେବା ମାତେ ଛାତି ଧତପତ
ହୋଇଯିବ ବନ୍ଦ ସତେକି ନିଃଶ୍ୱାସ ।

କେତେ ଦିନ ପରେ ସୁଗକେଶ ଭରି
ଗଲେ ବାରୁଆଣି ଭାରତ ଭ୍ରମଣେ,
ସାରା ପରିବାର ଏୟାର ପୋର୍ଟରେ
ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କୁ ବିଦାୟ ଦେଇଦେଲୁ ଦିନେ ।

ଫେରିଆସି ଘରେ ଲାଗିଲା ଉଶ୍ୱାସ
ମିଳିଗଲା ସତେ ପୁଣି ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା,
ଯାହା ଇଚ୍ଛା ତାହା କରିହେବ ଜାଣି
ଲାଗିଲା ଆନନ୍ଦ ଭାବି ସେହି କଥା ।

ସତରେ ଯେମିତି ଜଙ୍ଗଲ ଭିତରେ
ବାଘ ଯିବା ପରେ ମୃଗ ହୁଏ ରାଜା,
ଯିଏ ଭୁଲ୍ ଭୋଗୀ ସିଏ ହିଁ କେବଳ
ଜାଣି ପାରିବ ଏ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ମଜା ।

କିଏ ବା ପଚାରେ ବନ୍ଦ ହେଲା କି ନା
ସାମନା କବାଟ ଅବା ବାତି ପଟ,
ଗରାଜର ଡୋର ଖୋଲା ରାତିସାରା
ଲକ୍ ହୋଇ ନାହିଁ କାର୍ ର କବାଟ ।

କିଏ ଯାଇଥିଲା ତଳକୁ ଏଇନେ
ଲାଗିଛି ଲାଲଟ୍ ବନ୍ଦ ହୋଇନାହିଁ,
କିଏ ଦେଇନାହିଁ ଟୁଥ୍‌ପେଷ୍ଟ କ୍ୟାପ
କହିବାକୁ ଘରେ ନାହିଁ ଆଉ କେହି ।

କିଏ ପକାଇଛି ସକସ ଏଠାରେ
ଯୋତା ପିନ୍ଧି କିଏ କିତେନେ ପଶିଲା ?
ଫୁସ୍ କରିନାହିଁ ଭଲ କରି କିଏ

ଟ୍ୟଲେଟ୍ ଏବେ କିଏ ଯାଇଥିଲା ?

କିଏ ଯୋଇଥିଲା ବାସନ ଏମିତି
ହୋଇନାହିଁ ସଫା ଲାଗିଛି ଅସନା,
ଅବାଗିଆ କରି ରଖିଛି କେ' ଛୁରୀ?
ନିରାପତ୍ତା କ'ଣ ଜମା ନାହିଁ ଜଣା ।

କୁକି ଏଇଥିରୁ କିଏ ଖାଇଦେଲା
ଥୋଇଛି ଏଠାରେ ଖାଲି ଖୋଳଟିକୁ,
ଶେଷ ହେବାପରେ ପିଇଦେଇଥିଲେ
କିଆଁ ମୁହିଁ ପୁଣି କହୁଛି କାହାକୁ?

ତମେମାନେ ସବୁ ବତାଉଛ କାମ
ଖଟି ଖଟି ମୁହିଁ ମରୁଛି ଏଠାରେ,
ଏଇମିତି କଥା ଦିନରାତି ଶୁଣି
ଚାଲି ଯାଉଥିଲା ମଜା ବଞ୍ଚିବାରେ ।

ପୁଣି ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ଲାଭକଲା ପରେ
ଭାରୁଥିଲି ମନେ ପତ୍ନୀ ଆସିବାଟା,
ଆଉ ଏକ ବର୍ଷ ପୁଷ୍ପି ଯାଆନ୍ତାକି
ଅଧିକ ଆଦୁରି ଆରାମ ମିଳନ୍ତା ।

ଯେତେ ଦିନ ଧରି ଖାଇବା ଦରବ
ମହଜୁଦ ଅଛି ଫୁଜ ଭିତରେ,
ସେତେଦିନ ଯାଏ ଚିନ୍ତା ଆଉ କ'ଣ
ତାଙ୍କ ଆସିବାକୁ କିଏବା ପଚାରେ?

ଟିଭିରେ କିକେଟ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମନା
କରିବେନି କେହି ମଜା ଆସିଯିବ,
ଇଣ୍ଡିଆ ଇଂଲଣ୍ଡ ଡ୍ୱାନଡେ ସିରିଜ
ସାଙ୍ଗ ସାଥୀ ତାକି ବସି ଦେଖିହେବ ।

ଦୁଇ ତିନି ଜଣ ଭାଇ ଆଉଥିଲେ
ରହିଯାଇଥାନ୍ତେ କେତୋଟି ବରଷ,
ଫେରୁ ଫେରୁ ପୁଣି ସେତେବେଳ ଯାଏଁ
ମାରିଥାନ୍ତୁ ଆମେ ଶାନ୍ତିରେ ନିଃଶ୍ୱାସ ।

ଏଇମିତି ଗଲା ଏକମାସ ଚାଲି
ବେପରୁଆ ହୋଇ କଟିଲା ଜୀବନ,

ନାହିଁକେହି ଆଉ ଆଦେଶ ଦେବାକୁ
ମାର୍ ଗୁଲି ସବୁ ନିୟମ କାନୁନ ।

ଖୁସି ଦିନ କିନ୍ତୁ ହେଲା କ୍ଷଣକ୍ଷାୟୀ
କ୍ଷଣେ ଉଭେଇଲା ଘଟଣାଟି ଜାଣି,
ମିଳିଥିଲା ଯାହା ହୋଇଲା ଉଭାନ୍
ଆଖି ପିଛୁଳାକେ ସ୍ଵାଧୀନ ଚଳଣି ।

ଅକସ୍ମାତେ ଦିନେ ଝିଅ ପାଶେ ଆସି
କହିଲା ପୁଅରେ ନାହିଁ ଖାଇବାକୁ,
ଯାହାଥିଲା ଖାଦ୍ୟ ହୋଇଗଲା ଶେଷ
କରିବାକୁ ହେବ ରୋଷେଇ ନିଜକୁ ।

ହ୍ଵାଟ ତୁୟୁମିନ କହି ତା' ସାଥେ ମୁଁ
ଡିପ୍ ପୁଅରକୁ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଗଲି,
ଯାହା ରଖିଥିଲେ ଧର୍ମପତ୍ନୀ ଖାଦ୍ୟ
ଶେଷ ହୋଇଗଲା ଦେଖି ମୁଁ ଜାଣିଲି ।

କିପରି ପାଳିବି ପିଲା ଦୁଇଟିଙ୍କୁ
ମୋର ହାତେ କେବେ ସିଝି ନାହିଁ ଖତା,
ସବୁଦିନେ ଘରେ କାମରୁ ପହଞ୍ଚି
କିପରି କରିବି ଏତେ ରକ୍ଷାବଦ୍ଧା ?

ଓଭେନ ପାଖକୁ ଯାଇନାହିଁ କେବେ
କେତେ ଗରମରେ କେଉଁଟା ସିଝିବ?
କେଉଁଥିରେ କେତେ ପକାଇବି ଲୁଣ
ଜାଣିବି କେମନ୍ତେ କିଏବା କହିବ?

ରାଇଡ୍ ଦେବାଟା ଖାଲି ମୋର କାମ
କିଣା ରକ୍ଷା ଥିଲା ପତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ,
ମହା ବିତମ୍ବନା ଉପୁଜିଲା ଆସି
ମୁଣ୍ଡ ପରେ ହେଲା ସତେ ବଜ୍ରପାତ ।

କେତେ ଦିନ ତେଣୁ ଖାଇଲୁ ବାହାରେ
ଆଜି ପପ୍ ଆଇଜ କାଲି ଷ୍ଟ୍ରେଣ୍ଡିଜରେ,
କେତେବେଳେ ପିଢ଼ା କେବେ ବା ସବ୍‌ଷ୍ଟ୍ରେ
ପୁଣି ସାଙ୍ଗ ଘରେ ଉଇକ୍ ଏଣ୍ଡରେ ।

ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀମାନେ ଲୁଚିଲେ ଶେଷକୁ

ଥରେ ଦୁଇଥର ଖୁଆଇବା ପରେ,
ହାଲିଆ ହୋଇଲୁ ଫେନ୍ କରି କରି
ଦେଖା ନମିଳିଲା ଉଇକ୍ ଏଣ୍ଡରେ ।

ଏଇମିତି କେତେ ଦିନ ଗଲା କଟି
ଏ ପଟ ସେ ପଟ ବୁଲି ବୁଲି ଖାଇ,
ଶେଷରେ ଆମକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ବିରକ୍ତି
ଭାବିଲୁ ତିନିହେଁ କରିବୁ ରୋଷେଇ ।

ପତ୍ରୀ ଠାରୁ ଝିଅ ଶିଖିଥିଲା ଯାହା
କହିଲା ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବ ସେ ମୋତେ,
ଦେଖି ଛୁଟି ଦିନ ଭାବିଲୁ କରିବୁ
କିଛିଟା ରୋଷେଇ ଆମ ନିଜ ହାତେ ।

ପ୍ରେସର କୁଙ୍କରେ ବସାଇଲୁ ତାଲି
ଦିଆଯିବ କେତେ ହୁସିଲ ଅଜଣା,
ଝିଅ ମୋ କହିଲା ଗୋଟିଏ ଦବାକୁ
ନମାନି ମୁଁ ଦେଲି ଆଉ ଚାରି ଗୁଣା ।

ତାଲି ତକ ଉଠି ଲାଗିଲା ଛାତରେ
ଟପ ଟପ ହୋଇ ପଡିଲା ତଳକୁ,
ବାପ ଝିଅ ଦୁହେଁ ରହିଲୁ ଅନାଇ
ନିୟିଲି କେବଳ ନିଜ କପାଳକୁ ।

ବହୁ ସାବଧାନେ ବସାଇଲୁ ଭାତ
ପାଣିଦେଲୁ ତହିଁ ଅନୁମାନ କରି,
ଗୋଟା ଗୋଟା ଛାତ ସବୁ ସିଝିଯାଇ
ହୋଇଗଲା ଭାତ ହାଲୁଆ ଯେପରି ।

ଯାହା ହେଲା ହେଲା ଭାତ ଆଉ ତାଲି
ଇଞ୍ଜାକଲୁ ବନ୍ଧା କୋବି ରାନ୍ଧିବାକୁ,
ତୁଲିରେ ବସାଇ ତାଲି ଗଲି କ୍ଷଣେ
ଇଞ୍ଜା ଇଂଲଣ୍ଡ ଖେଳ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ।

ଆସିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଲାଗିଗଲା ତଳ
ପୋଡା ଗନ୍ଧେ ଫଟିଗଲା ଆମ ନାକ,
ଗନ୍ଧତକ ପୁଣି ବାହାରକୁ ଯାଇ
ଆୟାଣ କରିଲେ ପଡିଶାର ଲୋକ ।

ଏତେ ମନ କରି ଭାବିଥିଲୁ ଆମେ
 ଯାରିଦେବୁ ରକ୍ଷା ଉଚ୍ଚକ୍ଷତ୍ରେ,
 ଏପରି ଘଟଣା ଘଟିବାରୁ ଆମ
 ମନଛାଡ଼ିଗଲା ରୋଷେଇ ବାସରେ ।

ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ଯିବା ପରେ
 ଜଗା ବଳରାମ କଷଣ ଭୋଗିବା,
 ଚୁଲିତକ ସୁଖା ଜାଳି ନପାରିଲେ
 ଦୂରରେ ରହିଲା ରୋଷେଇ କରିବା ।

ତିନର ସମୟ ହୋଇଲାରୁ ଆସି
 ରାନ୍ଧିଥିଲୁ ଯାହା ଖାଇଲୁ ତିନି ହେଁ,
 ହାଲୁଆ ଭାତକୁ ପୋଡ଼ା ବନ୍ଧା କୋବି
 ଯେନତେନ କରି ଭୁଞ୍ଜିଲୁ ଗୁଣ୍ଡାଏ ।

ରହି ଭାବି ଶେଷେ ଝିଅ ମୋ କହିଲା
 'ମମି ଆସିବାକୁ ଆଉ କେତେ ତେରି?
 କର ଶୀଘ୍ର ଫେନ ନ ଆସନ୍ତି ଯଦି
 ଏକା ଥରେ ସବୁ ଆମେ ଯିବୁ ମରି ।

ପ୍ରଥମେ ପ୍ରଥମେ ଭାବିଲି ମନରେ
 ଯାଇଛିତ ଯାଉ ରହୁ ଇଣ୍ଡିଆରେ,
 ଭାଇ ବାହାଘର ବଡ଼ ହେଲା ତାର
 ଆମେ ସବୁ ପର ହେଲୁ ଦୁନିଆରେ ।

ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲା ମାଞ୍ଚର କାର୍ତ୍ତର
 ବିଲ ପେମେଶ ହୋଇନାହିଁ ଶେଷ,
 ତା' ଛତା ଆସିଲେ ଦିନ ରାତି ଖାଲି
 ଉଠ ବସ ପୁଣି ଶୁଣିବ ମଣିଷ ।

ରାଗ ଅଭିମାନେ କଲିନାହିଁ ଫେନ
 କଟିଲା ସେଦିନ ହେଲା ପରଦିନ,

ପୁଣି ହେଲା ସଞ୍ଜ ପୋଡ଼ା ଖାଦ୍ୟ ପିଲେ
 ଖାଇବାକୁ ଆଉ କଲେ ନାହିଁ ମନ ।

ନିଜକୁ ବି ତାହା ଲାଗିଲା ଅତୁଆ
 କହିପାରିଲିନି ମନ ଖୋଲି କିନ୍ତୁ,
 ପତ୍ନୀ ବିନା ଦଣ୍ଡେ ଚଳିହେବ ନାହିଁ
 ଯାହାବି ଶାସନ ଯେମିତି କରନ୍ତୁ ।

ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଯାଇ କୋଠରୀ ଭିତରୁ
 ଲଗାଇଲି ଫେନ ଶୁଖୁର ଘରକୁ,
 ରିଙ୍ଗ ହେଲା ମାତେ ପତ୍ନୀ ଆରପଟେ
 ଉଠାଇଲେ ଫେନ ମୋର ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ।

ନ ସରୁଣୁ ମୋର ପାଟିରୁ ବଚନ
 ପଚାରିଲେ ପତ୍ନୀ ଏତେ ଦିନ ଧରି,
 ନାହିଁ ପଡ଼ୁଥିଲା ମନେ କେମିତିକା
 ଏବେ ମନେ କିଆଁ ପଡ଼ିଲା କିପରି ?

ସତ କଥା ତକ କହୁଛି କେମିତି
 ବଦଳାଇ ଦେଲି ସହସା କଥାକୁ,
 କହିଲି ତୁରନ୍ତ 'ତୁମ କଥା ପରା
 ଦିନରାତି ଆସୁଥିଲା ମୋ ମନକୁ' ।

'ସତରେ ସତରେ ହଉ ହେଲା' କହି
 ଗପିଗଲେ ପୁଣି ଭାଇ ବାହାଘର,
 ସେ କଥା ଗୁଡ଼ାକ ଏ କାନେ ପଶାଇ
 କରିଦେଉଥାଏ ସେ କାନେ ବାହାର ।

ଶେଷରେ କହିଲି 'ବନ୍ଦୋବସ୍ତ କର
 ତୁରନ୍ତ କେମିତି ଆସିବ କାନାଡ଼ା,
 ତୁମ ବିନା ପ୍ରିୟେ ଗତି ନାହିଁ ଆଉ
 ହେଲା ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ଆଉ ନାହିଁ ଲୋଡ଼ା ।

ଡକ୍ଟର ଗଗନ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଟରଣ୍ଟୋ ସହରରେ ପତ୍ନୀ ସବିତା, ପୁତ୍ର ସୋମନ ଓ ପୁତ୍ରୀ ଇନିକାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ବାସ କରନ୍ତି ।
 ପୃଥିବୀର ନାନା ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ପତ୍ରପତ୍ରିକାରେ ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ତଥ୍ୟ ସମ୍ବଳିତ ଲେଖା ଲେଖିବା ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କବିତା ଲେଖିବା,
 ଚିତ୍ରାଙ୍କନ କରିବା ଓ ନାଟକରେ ଅଭିନୟ କରିବାରେ ତାଙ୍କର ଶରଧା । ଲିଖିତ କବିତାଟି ଗତ କାନାଡ଼ୋ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପାଠକ୍ରୁରେ
 (୨୦୧୨) ପାଠ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା ।

ସ୍ନେହର ପରଶ

କାନ୍ତିଲତା ସାହୁ, କାଲିଙ୍ଗେଣ୍ଡିଆ
ମୁଖ୍ୟ ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରପାତ୍ରେ ମା' ଯେ ବସିଛି
ଦେଖିବାକୁ ପୁଅଟିଏ,
ସବୁତ ନିଜର କେହି ନୁହେଁ ପର
କାଳେ କେ ଗତାଏ ଲୁହ । (୧)
ମା'ର ମମତା କେତେ ବିଶାଳତା
ଜାଣି ନ ପାରଇ କେହି,
ପିଲା ମାନଙ୍କର ସୁଖରେ ସେ ସୁଖି
ଦୁଃଖରେ ଅଶ୍ରୁ ଗତଇ । (୨)
ଦୁଃଖିରଙ୍କି ଦେଖି କୋଳେ ନିଏ ଟେକି
ପଣତ କାନିରେ ପୋଛି,
ଅଜାତି ଦିଏ ସେ ସ୍ନେହର ପରଶ
କେହି ନୁହେଁ ବଛାବଛି । (୩)
ମନରେ ଗରବ କିବା ବେଖାତିର
ମା'ତ ପାରେନି ସହି,
ହେଉ ଅବା ପୁଅ ଅବା ସିଏ ଝିଅ
ସଙ୍କେତ ଦିଅଇ ରହି । (୪)
ମନର ଯେ ଭାବ ମନର ସୁଭାବ
ରଖିଯାଅ ଶାଳନତା,
ମହାଦୀକ୍ଷା ନେଇ ମହାଶୀକ୍ଷା ପାଇ
ଦୂର କର ମଳିନତା । (୫)

(କାନ୍ତିଲତା ସାହୁ କୁପର୍ଚ୍ଚିନୋ , କାଲିଙ୍ଗେଣ୍ଡିଆରେ ନିଜ ପରିବାର ନେଇ ବାସକରନ୍ତି ।)

ଭାଗ୍ୟଚକ୍ର ଘୁରୁଛି

ବାରମ୍ବାର ମୋ ଭାଗ୍ୟକୁ ନିରୁଛି,
 ବାରମ୍ବାର ଇଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କୁ ଡାକୁଛି,
 ଯେତେପାର ସେତେ ଗାଳି କରୁଛି,
 ତଥାପି କ'ଣ ବଦଳେଇ ପାରିଲି
 ମୋ ଭାଗ୍ୟର ଗତିପଥ ?
 ସେ ପରା ଅଣଲେଉଟା ରୁକୁଣା ରଥ,
 ସେ ପରା ନିୟତିର ହାତ ।

ଅଭାବ ଯେମିତି ଘେରି ରହିଛି
 ମୋ ଚାରିପାଖରେ,
 ମୋ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ, ଚେତନାରେ, ସ୍ଵପ୍ନରେ,
 ସାରା ଜୀବନ ମୋ' ସହ ବସାବାନ୍ଧି ରହିଛି,
 ମୋ ଜୀବନ ସହ କେତେ ଖେଳ ଖେଳୁଛି,
 ଯେତେ ଗାଳି ଶୁଲଜ କଲେବି
 ତଥାପି କ'ଣ ହଟେଇ ପାରିଲି ଅଭାବ ?
 କ'ଣ ବଦଳେଇ ପାରିଲି ତା' ଗତିପଥ ?
 ସେ' ପରା ନିୟତିର ହାତ ।

ବାରମ୍ବାର ଯେତେ ଆଦେଶ, ଉପଦେଶ ଦେଲେ
 ତଥାପି କ'ଣ ବଦଳେଇ ପାରିଲି
 ମୋ ପିଲାଙ୍କ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ?
 ବଦଳେଇ ପାରିଲିକି ତାଙ୍କ
 ଦୈନନ୍ଦିନ କାଟୁଥିବା ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ ?
 ସେ ପରା ନିୟତିର ହାତ
 ଆଜିକା ପିଲା,
 ଯେଝା ହାତରେ ଯେଝା ଚଉଦପା,
 ଯାହା କହିଲେ
 ଏ କାନରେ ପଶି ସେ କାନରେ ଯା,

ରୂପ୍ ନରହି ଖୋୟୁଥିବେ ଖୁଅ,
 ଯୁକ୍ତି ବାଢ଼ିବାକୁ,
 କଥାରେ କଥା କାଟିବାକୁ
 ସବୁବେଳେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତଥାଏ ଝିଅ,
 ସଫେଇ ଦେବାକୁ
 ସଦା ତିଆର ଥାଏ ପୁଅ,
 ଆମେ କ'ଣ ଦିନେ ପିଲା ନଥିଲେ ?
 ତୁମେ କ'ଣ କହୁଛ କୁହ ?
 କେତେ ଚେଷ୍ଟାକରିଛି ବୁଝେଇବା ପାଇଁ
 କ'ଣ ବୁଝେଇ ପାରିଲି ?
 ବୁଝେଇ ପାରିଲିନାହିଁ ବୋଲି
 ବହୁତ ଅବଶୋଷ କଲି ।

ଠିକ୍ ପଚାରି ବରଷ ପୁରୁପୁରୁ
 ସଂସାର ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିବାକୁ ମୋତେ
 ବାରମ୍ବାର କହିଲା ବୋଉ,
 କହିଲା, ଘରକୁ ଆଣନ୍ତୁନି ଗୋଟିଏ ବୋହୂ ?
 ଶୁଣିକି ଶୁଣିଲିନି
 ତା' କଥା ମାନିଲିନି
 ଏମିତି ଦି ବରଷ ବିତିଗଲା
 ଦିନେ ଧମକ ଦେଲା
 ଆତ୍ମହତ୍ୟା କରିଦେବ ବୋଲି କହିଲା
 ବାଧ୍ୟହୋଇ ତା' କଥା ମାନିଲି
 ଆଉ ଉପାୟ ମୋ ପାଖରେ ନଥିଲା
 ଏବେ ଅଖା ଧୋଉଛିତ, ଗୁଣ ଗାଉଛି
 ଲୁଚି ଲୁଚି କାନ୍ଦୁଛି,
 ଅଦେଖା ଘାଆ, ନା ଲୁଚେଇ ହେଉଛି
 ନା ଦେଖେଇ ହେଉଛି,
 ସଂସାରରୁପୀ ଚକ୍ରବ୍ୟୁତ୍ ଭିତରେ
 ଯାହା ମୁଁ ପଶିଯାଇଛି,
 ନା ରାସ୍ତା ଖୋଜି ବାହାରି ପାରୁଛି,
 ଅଜ୍ଞମଙ୍ଗଳା ଯାଇଛି କି ନାହିଁ
 ବୋହୂ ଯାଇ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ଭୁବନେଶ୍ଵର,
 ବୋହୂଙ୍କର ଦେଖାବ ନବ କଳେବର,

ସଂସାରର ମୂଳଦୁଆ ପତୁ ପତୁ
ବୋଉ ଯାଇଥିଲା ଆରପାର,
ଉପରବାଲା ଉପରୁ ବଢେଇଦେଲା
ତା' ଶକ୍ତ ଲମ୍ବା ହାତ,
ସେ' ପରା ନିୟତିର ହାତ ।

ପିଲାଦିନେ ବୋଉ ଟାଣିଥିଲା
ଆମ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀଙ୍କପାଇଁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମଣରେଖା
ବିରାଡି ବେକରେ ବାନ୍ଧିଲା ଘଣ୍ଟ
କଥା ନମାନିଲେ ବାଜିଲା ଛାଟ
କହିଥିଲା- ଏପଟେ ପାପ, ସେପଟେ ପୁଣ୍ୟ
ଏପଟେ ହାର୍, ସେପଟେ ଜିତ୍
ଏପଟେ ମିଛ, ସେପଟେ ସତ
ଏପଟେ ଅନ୍ୟାୟ, ସେପଟେ ନ୍ୟାୟ
ଏ ଶିକ୍ଷାଦେବା ଦାଇତ୍ ମୋର, ନିର୍ଣ୍ଣୟ ତୁମର
ତା' ପରେ ହଠାତ୍ ବଦଳିଗଲା ପୃଥିବୀ
ବଦଳିଗଲୁ ଆମେ ସବୁ ଭାଇ ଭଉଣୀ
ବଦଳିଗଲା ଆମ ଘର କାହାଣୀ
ମାଆ ମନ,
କେତେଯେ ଜୀବନତମାମ ଶିଖେଇଛି,
କେତେଯେ ଭଲ ପାଇଛି,
କେତେଯେ ଲୁହ ଝରେଇଛି
ମୁଁ ବିଦେଶ ଆସିବା ଦିନ,
କହିଥିଲା - ତୁ ଚାଲିଯିବୁ,
ମୁଁ ଆଉ ଦେଖିପାରିବି ନାହିଁ ଧନ
ବିଦେଶରୁ ଫେରିବି,
ବଞ୍ଚିଥିବୁ, ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଦେଖିବି,
ଏ ବାକ୍ୟ ନହୋଇବ ଆନ,
ଏ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ଦେଇଥିଲି
ମୋ' ବୋଉକୁ ଆସିବା ଦିନ,
ଇଚ୍ଛାଥିଲା ଦେଖିବି ତା' ଶେଷ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତକୁ,
ଭରପୁର ଉପଭୋଗ କରିବି ତା ଭଲପାଇବାକୁ,
ନା ଲିଭେଇପାରିଲି ତା' ଆଖିର ଲୁହ ?
ନା ଲିଭେଇପାରିଲି ତା' ମନରୁ କୋହ ?

ନା ଦେଖିପାରିଲି ସେ ଶେଷ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ ?
ନା ବଦଳେଇ ପାରିଲି ମୋ ଭାଗ୍ୟର ଗତିପଥ ?
ସେ' ପରା ନିୟତିର ହାତ
ଭାଗ୍ୟତକ୍ତ ଘୁରୁଛି
କେଉଁଠି ଖାଲ, କେଉଁଠି ଭିପ
ଛାଡିଯାଏ ଅନେକ ମନସ୍ତାପ ।

ଶଶଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର
ସିଲ୍ଭର ସ୍ପିଙ୍ଗ୍, ମୈରୀଲ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡ

ତୁମକୁ ଖୋଜୁଛି

ସ୍ନିଗ୍ଧା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

ଆସ ତୁମେ ରୁପି ରୁପି
ଅମା ଅନ୍ଧକାରେ
ଆଉ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣମାର
ଜୋଛନା ରାତିରେ ।

ମୋ କାନରେ କହି ଯାଅ
“କାହାକୁ ଖୋଜୁଛୁ ତୁ
ମୁଁ ପରା ତୋର
ନିକଟେ ନିହାତି,
ତୋର ଦୁଃଖେ ସୁଖେ
ଆପଦେ ବିପଦେ
ଲୁହର ସାଗରେ ଆଉ
ହସର ଫୁଆରେ
ଜାଣିକି ପାରୁନୁ ତୁହି
ମୋର ଅବସ୍ଥିତି ?”

ଜାଣି ମୁଁ ପାରୁନି ଆଜି
କାହାର ଏ ମଧୁର ସଂଳାପ
ଓ ଶୀତଳ ପରଶ
ଯା' ଭିତରେ ନିଜକୁ ହରାଇ
ମନେ ମନେ ତାକୁହିଁ ଖୋଜୁଛି
ଲୋକକୁହା କଥାକୁ ମୁଁ
ସହଜରେ ଆବୋରି ନେଇଛି
ଯାହା ପାଖେ ମୋ'ର

ସବୁକିଛି ସମର୍ପି ଦେଇଛି ।

ପ୍ରତିଫଳେ ଧକ୍କା ଖାଇବାର
ଓ ଫେରାଇ ଦେବାର ଗ୍ଳାନି ନେଇ
ବହୁଦୂରେ ଚାଲିଯିବାର
ଅଭିନୟ କରିଛି
ଅଭିନୟ ମୋର ଆଜି
ସଫଳ ହୋଇଛି, କିନ୍ତୁ
ମନେ ମନେ ତୁମକୁ ଖୋଜୁଛି ।

ଗୋଟିଏ ଅନୁରୋଧ ମୋର
ଶେଷ ଥର ପାଇଁ
ସ୍ଥାନ ଦିଅ ତୁମ ପାଦ ତଳେ,
ଜୀବନରେ ଥରଟିଏ
ଶାନ୍ତିରେ ମୁଁ ମରେ ।

ପିଠାବିର ମହୁକ ଓ ପିଠାବିର ହୁକ
ଦକ୍ଷିଣା ପକ୍ଷରେ
କରୁଦୁର ଗଣ
ଦିକ୍ଷୁ ରାକ୍ଷୁ କ୍ଷରେ ମୋଡେ
କ୍ଷୁଦିର ପିଠାକ୍ଷ
ପିଠାବିର ଦିକ୍ଷୁଗଣା ରାକ୍ଷେ
କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା ଶାଠି
ଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା ଶୋଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା
ଶାଠିଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା ଶାଠିର ଦୁକ୍ଷ
ଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା ଶାଠି
ମକ୍ଷ ମୋଗା ଶାଠିକ୍ଷେ
କ୍ଷୁ ଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା ଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା
ପିଠାବିର ମହୁକ ଓ ପିଠାବିର ହୁକ
କ୍ଷୁ ଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା ଦିକ୍ଷୁଗା ଶାଠିକ୍ଷେ

ତୁମ ସ୍ଵର

ସୁଜାତା ମିଶ୍ର

ତୁମ ନିଜ ସ୍ଵର ଶୁଣି
ଗୋଟାପଣେ ଖୁସି ତମେ
ମତେ ବି ତୁମ ସ୍ଵର
ଭାରି ଭଲ ଲାଗେ

ହେଲେ ତୁମର ମୋର ଆଉ କଣ ଯେ
ତୁମ ଭିତରେ ମୋ ସ୍ଵର ତ
ଅହରହ ବାଜୁଥାଏ

କେବେ ବୁଝି ପାରିନ

କିଛି ବି ଅଲଗା ନୁହେଁ
ତମେ ଆଉ ମୁଁ
ସେଇଥି ପାଇଁ ତ ତୁମ ସ୍ଵର
ତୁମର ନୁହେଁ
ମୋ ସ୍ଵର ବି ମୋର ନୁହେଁ,
ଆମର

ଜାଣି ପାରନି ନା
ଛାଡ଼ି ତଳେ ଗୋଟେ
ନିରୁଜ କୋଠରୀ
ସେଇଠି ଛୁପାଇ ରଖେ
ସେ ନିଜକୁ

କାନ ପାତି
ଅରୁଚିଏ ଶୁଣ ନିରବରେ
ନିଶ୍ଚଳ ତା ସ୍ଵର
କିନ୍ତୁ ଭାରି ମଧୁର
ଅମୃତମୟ
ତା ଭିତରେ ତମର ଓ ମୋର
ଆମର
ସବୁ ଏକାକାର ହୋଇଯାନ୍ତି
ଏବେ ମୋ ସ୍ଵର ଶୁଭୁଟି ନା !

ବୋହୂ

ପାଦରେ ନୁପୁର ଆଉ ହାତରେ କଙ୍କଣ
ମଥାରେ ସିନ୍ଦୂର ତାର କରେ ଝଲମଲ
ଲାଜ ଲାଜ ହସ ତାର ଆଖିରେ ଚମକ
କଥା ତାର ଚୁପୁ ଚୁପୁ ଲାଗେ ମତେ ଭଲ ।

ମଥା ନତ ଚାଲି ତାର ନମ୍ରତାର ରୂପ
କାନରୁ କାନ ନ ଶୁଭେ କହେ ଯେବେ କଥା
ଧୀର ବସା ଥିର କଥା ଅଳ୍ପ ତାର ହସ
ଭୂମିରେ ତା ଆଖି ଥାଏ, ଉଠାଏ ନା ମଥା ।

ଲୋକଙ୍କର ଆତ ଯାତ ଦିନ ଭରି ଚାଲେ
ପିଲା, ଛୁଆ, ମା, ଖୁଡ଼ି ସଭିକଂ ମେଳରେ
ଦିନ ମାନ ଚାଲେ ଖାଲି ଗହଳି ଭିତରେ
ଲାଜ ତାର ଅଳଙ୍କାର, କିଏ ଖୋଷେ ଫୁଲ ତା ଗଭାରେ ।

ଅଳ୍ପ କଥା, ଅଳ୍ପ ଭାଷା, ଅଳ୍ପ ତାର ଖିଆ
ପାଟି ବଡ଼ କରେ ନା ସେ କିଏ ଦେବ ବାରି
ମନେ ପଡ଼େ ଘର କଥା ମାଆ ଓ ଭଉଣୀ
ମିଛ ସେ ମୁରୁକି ହସା ଆଖି ଲୁହ ଚାପେ ନାହିଁ ପାରି ।

ମୁଣ୍ଡରୁ ଓଢ଼ଣା କାଢ଼ି ସାଇ ଭାଇ ଦେଖନ୍ତି ତା ରୂପ

ପରଖନ୍ତି ରଙ୍ଗ ତାର ଆଉ ପୁଣି ମନ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଅନେକ
ପଚାରନ୍ତି ପାଠ କେତେ ପଢ଼ିଛି ସେ ଝିଅ
ଗହଣା ଦେଖନ୍ତି ପୁଣି ବାପା କେତେ ଦେଇଛି ଯତ୍ନକୁ ।

ଉତ୍ତରେ ସେ ନିରୁତ୍ତର ପାରେନା ସେ କହି
ମନ କଥା ମନେ ରହେ ଆଖି ଚାହେଁ ଭୁଲ୍
ମୃଦୁ ମୃଦୁ ହସ ତାର ଭୀତ ତା ଚାହାଣୀ
ଚୁପ ଚାପ ଶୁଣିଯିବୁ ବୋଉ ଥିଲା କହି ।

ନମ୍ରନ୍ତି ଫଳିନ ବୃକ୍ଷ, ଆଦର୍ଶ ତୋ ହେଉ
ଏହା ମୋ ଶେଷ ଆଶୀର୍ଷ ତୋ ପାଇଁ ଝିଅ
ଶାଶୁଘର ହେଲା ତୋର ଘର ଆଜି ଠାରୁ
ଲାଗୁ ବା ନ ଲାଗୁ ଭଲ, ଇଏ ଥିଲା ବାପାକଂ ଆଦେଶ ।

କଥା ଯାହା ଶୁଣିଥିଲି ଆଜି ସତ ହେଲା
ପାଠ ପଢ଼ା ଚାକିରୀର ମୂଲ୍ୟ ଆଜି ଭିନ୍ନ
ଘର ଦ୍ଵାର ସବୁ ମୋର କଥାକୁ ହେଲେ ବି
ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ମୁଁ ନେଲି ଯେଣୁ ସଫଳେ ମୋ ମନ ।

ପ୍ରଶଂସା ମୁଁ ପାଏ ନାହିଁ ଭଲଟିଏ କଲେ
ନିନ୍ଦା କିନ୍ତୁ ସବୁ ମୋର ପାନରୁ ଚୁନ ଖସିଲେ
ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ଖିଆ ବୁଝିବି, ବୁଝିବି ବି ପିଲାଙ୍କ ଜଂଜାଳ
ଚାକିରୀ ବାହାନା ଏଠି ଆଉ ଯେ ନ ଚଳେ ।

ଶାଶୁଙ୍କର ଫରମାଇସ କରିଦେଲେ ଯାଏ
ଶାନ୍ତି ଟିକେ ଚାହେଁ ମୁହିଁ, ଶାଶୁ ବି ଚାହାନ୍ତି
ଏକା ଛାତ ଡଳେ ବାସ, ଗତି ବା କୁଆଡ଼େ
ମନ ଜାଣି କାମ କଲେ ଆଶୀଷ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ।

ଏକ ମୁହାଁ ଛକ ଠାରେ ମୁଁ ହୋଇଛି ଠିଆ
ଦୁଃଖ ମୋର ସାଥୀ ଏବେ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଛି ମୋ ନାଆ
ଏକୁଟିଆ ବାହି ନେବି ମୋ ଭଙ୍ଗା ସଂସାର
ଶାଶୁ ମୋର ସ୍ମୃତିରେ ବି ଏକ ମାତ୍ର ସାହା ।

ବୟସ ବଢୁଛି ଆଉ ସ୍ଵାସ୍ଥ୍ୟବି ଦୁର୍ବଳ
କେତେବା ଦିନ ବଂଚିବେ ମନେ ମୋର ଆସେ
ବୋଉ ପରି ଶାଶୁ ସେବା କରିବାକୁ ଭାବେ
ବଳ ମୋର ଠୁଳ କରେ ସେବା କରି ବସେ ।

ସୁଲୋଚନା ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ
ଏଲ୍‌ଜି, ମେରିଲାଣ୍ଡ

ମନ ଯାହା କହେ ଅବା ଯାହା ସେ ମାଗନ୍ତି
ସ୍ଵାମୀକୁ ଲୁଚାଇ ଦିଏ, ଦେଖିଦେଲେ ଗାଳି ବି ଦିଅନ୍ତି
ମନ ସହେ ନାହିଁ ମୋର ନ ଦେଇ ପାରିଲେ
ଶେଷ ଇଚ୍ଛା ସବୁ ତାଙ୍କ, ଇଚ୍ଛା ମୋର ପୂରଣ କରନ୍ତି ।

ଏ ଭିତରେ ଗଲା ଚାଲି କିଛିଟା ବରଷ
ଦିଶଇ ଶ୍ରୀହୀନ ଆଜି ଶାଶୁ ବିନା ଘର
ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିନି କେହି ମୋ ହାତ ରକ୍ଷାକୁ
କେହି ନାହିଁ ସାଥେ ମୋର ଯିବାକୁ ମନ୍ଦିର ।

ବୋହୁ ଦିନ ସରିଗଲା ଶାଶୁ ଏବେ ହେଲି
ଦୁନିଆ ବଦଳି ଗଲା ଜାଣି ନ ପାରିଲି
ପୁରୁଣା ସେ ରୀତି ନିତି ଚଳେନା ଏଠାରେ
ବୋହୁ କୁ ଝିଅ ଭାବିବା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କେ ପଚାରେ ।

ମୋ ଉତ୍କଳ

- ସୁସ୍ମିତା ମିଶ୍ର

ଉତ୍କଳ ଏଇ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମୋ ମା ,
 ବିର ଓଡ଼ିଆକୁ ଦେଇଛି ଜନମ,
 ବାର ବରଷର ବାଜି ରାଉତ,
 କରିବନି ପାରି ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣୀ ନଈ,
 ବାରଷ ବଢେଇ ମହତ ରଖି,
 ମାରିଦେଲା କୋନାର୍କର ମୁଠି,
 ଚାରିଧାମ ମଧ୍ୟେ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଧାମ ପୁରୀ,
 ନିଳାଚଳ ନାଥ ନିଳ କନ୍ଦରରେ,
 କାଠିର ରାଜା ଦେଲା ଅପମାନ ,
 କରୁଛନ୍ତି ଯଏ ଦେବିନି ତା ହାତେ,
 ନୁହେଁ ଅପମାନ ରାଜାନ୍ତର ଖାଲି,
 କଳାଧଳା ଘୋଡ଼ା ଚଢ଼ିଲେ ଠାକୁର,
 ଘୁମୁଣର ମାଟି ବୀର ରାଜାପୁଅ,
 ଲେଖିଲେ କାବ୍‌ଅ କବିତା ଅନେକ,
 କାବ୍‌ଅ ପଢ଼ିଲେ ସଭାରେ ପଠିତ,
 ବିଲରେ କୃଷକ ଗାଈଲା ମଧୁରେ,
 ସୃଷ୍ଟି ସମ୍ଭାର ଛତ୍ରେ ଛତ୍ରେ,
 ରାମ ସୀତାକର ବିରହ କାହାନୀ,
 ଭକ୍ତ ମାଟି ମୋର ଜନ୍ମଭୂମି ,
 ଜଗତରନାଥ ମୋର ଆରାଧ୍ୟ ଦେବତା,
 ରହେ କି ନ ରହେ ଏ ପାର୍ଥୀବ ଦେହ,
 ମାଟିର ମଣିଷ ହଜେ ପଠୁଡ଼ୁଡ଼େ,
 ରାଜା ମହାରାଜା ପୁଷ୍ପ ପୋସକେ,
 ଭାବ ପ୍ରବନେ ପ୍ରବଳିତ କବି,

କଳିଂଗ ନାମରେ ଥିଲା ବିଖ୍ୟାତ
 ବୀରଭୂମି ଭାବେ ଜଗତେ ଖାତ (୧)
 ଫଉଜ ଗୁଲିକୁ ଡରିଲା ନାହିଁ
 ପ୍ରଜା ମଣ୍ଡଳୀର ଆଦେଶ ନାହିଁ (୨)
 ହାରିଲା ଜିବନ ନଈରେ ତେଜ
 ଧର୍ମପଦ ନାମ ଭୁଲିଛି କେହି (୩)
 ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରାଜଜେ ବଦାଏ ଶିରୀ
 ବସିଛନ୍ତି ଚକା ଆସନ ପାରି (୪)
 ଚଂଡାଳ ପରୀ ଛେରା ପହଁରା
 ରାଜକୁମାରୀ ମୋ ଗୋଟିଏ ହୀରା (୫)
 ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ହେଲା ମହତ ହାନି
 କାନୁ ବିଜୟର ଆକ୍ଷରୀ ଧାରି (୬)
 ଉପକ୍ରମ ଭଞ୍ଜ ପଢ଼ି ବିରହେ
 ଜେଜେ ବାପାନ୍ତର ସେନେହ ମହି (୭)
 ପଥର ପଥକ ଉଠିଲେ ଗାଈ
 ନର୍ତ୍ତକୀ ନାଚିଲା ମଂଚରେ ଯାଇ (୮)
 ଭୂଂସ୍ଵାର ବିରହ ଲେଖିଲେ ରାସ
 ରଚିଲେ ବଇଦେହିଶ ବିଲାସ (୯)
 କର୍ମ ଭୂମି ମୋର ବିର ଜନନୀ
 ତାଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ଷରୁ ଧରେ ଲେଖନୀ (୧୦)
 ଅମ୍ଳାନ ରହେ ଯସ କବିତା
 କବିତା ହୃଦରେ ରହେ ସାଇତା (୧୧)
 ସାହିତର ଖୁଣ୍ଟି ଥିଲା ଏ ଭୂମେ
 ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରଇ କଲମ ମୁନେ (୧୨)



Obituary

DR. SRINIBAS MAHAPATRA (1948-2012)



On October 30th, 2012, Dr. Srinibas Mahapatra died peacefully in his home in Ann Arbor, Michigan of a heart attack. He was born in Puri, Odisha, India, but spent most of his childhood in Burnpur, West Bengal. After graduating from R.G. Kar Medical School, Calcutta, India, Srinibas emigrated

to England for further studies and training.

After their marriage his wife, Chandana, joined him in England. While in England, Srinibas completed his MRCPsych (Member of Royal College of Psychiatry). In 1987 they traveled to Ann Arbor, Michigan where Srinibas completed further training at the University of Michigan. He went on to work at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System, where he eventually became the Chief of In-Patient Psychiatry and Director of the Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) program. He

was also an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Michigan.

He was respectfully known as Dr. M to the many residents he helped train. They respected him as a great teacher and mentor. He had a good sense of humor and was a great storyteller. Most important, he treated his patients, our American Veterans, with respect, empathy and honesty.

SRI, as he was lovingly called by his colleagues, was respected for his hard work and his years of support for the education and research in the field of Psychiatry. After his passing, his colleagues honored him by naming a Geriatric Psychiatry Education scholarship in his memory.

When not working, Dr. Mahapatra delighted in Indian Classical music and dance. He was involved in organizing multiple performances for ODISSI Dance, a classical dance of India.

He is survived by his wife, Chandana; their two sons, Rahul and Arun; his mother; and four brothers.

DR. NAGABHUSAN SENAPATI (1945-2012)



A scientist and engineer, Nagabhusan Senapati passed away Saturday November 24 morning after a short illness. A brilliant mind and a modest man, he was admired for his professional accomplishments and for his insight into a wide variety of complex engineering

problems. He was an authority on the application of ultrasonic and microwave technologies and made his mark as an inventor of material separation through disruption. His patents ranged from stain removal from various surfaces to fabricating an apparatus for determining gas liquid interfaces. Educated in India and the US, he worked at MIT and Battelle Research Institute and consulted for many companies in the US and abroad. He developed congestive heart failure and ultimately passed away of Acute Re-

spiratory Distress Syndrome. He was 67.

Nagabhusan came from the old stock of Odia families who had made their home in the western hilly terrains of Odisha. The family ancestry might go back to the Kalinga days when the Odia and Andhra culture was intermingled through valor, adventure and determination. His father Sri Ramaswamy Senapati was a pious religious man and served as the Inspector of Schools in Odisha. His mother Manikya Senapati came from a business family in the neighboring Koraput district in Odisha. Nagabhusan was the eldest of seven children, three boys and four girls. Two of his sisters have passed away; the second brother Gangadhar lives in Miami, FL. Two other sisters and the youngest brother live in India. Nagabhusan's wife Rajkumari is the eldest daughter of late Purnachandra and Saraswati Senapaty of Khordha, Odisha. They have two daughters, Sangeeta and Suneeta, both are physicians and live in the US.

After completing his primary education in Bhanipatna, Nagabhusan enrolled in Ravenshaw Collegiate School in Cuttack in 1953. His genius for setting up

experiments was rooted in the school laboratory where he helped set up the after hour Science Club. Other students joined in and the Science Club became a popular attraction for students looking for hands-on activities with strings, magnets, motors and lenses. Nagabhusan acted as the mentor and the leader. He would spend several hours after school in grinding, polishing, winding and just plain looking. His industry in making an experiment show results was infectious and many others would follow him to learn from him and attempt independent projects. The teachers would invite him to set up classroom demonstrations; Nagabhusan gained reputation as the science experiment student in the school.

He finished the Higher Secondary School Examination and was admitted to Indian Institute of Technology at Kharagpur where he enrolled in 1962. He became an active member of the Orissa Society in campus and helped organize various social events to bring people together. Gangadhar joined him there two years later and Nagabhusan continued to help his brother as he had done earlier in School. He studied Mechanical Engineering and took the BTech degree in 1967, winning the President's Gold Medal for having stood first among all graduates. Determined to stay in India, he joined Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute in Durgapur, West Bengal, and worked there for two years. Facilities for fundamental research were not well developed in India those days and he chose to leave India on award of a Tata Fellowship from MIT. He joined the Mechanical Engineering Department as a graduate student in 1969.

At MIT, Nagabhusan connected with a young professor of Indian descent Dr. Padmakar Lele who was starting up a new laboratory to test ultrasonic technology for industrial applications. Dr. Lele was also a physician and Nagabhusan became interested in the medical applications of ultrasonics in creating cavitation and disruption. Nagabhusan would do in-vivo animal studies to study the use of ultrasonic technology in surgical procedures. He became a local expert on the subject and went on to write his doctoral thesis on ultrasonic cavitation dynamics in the mammalian central nervous system.

He was known for his gentle and pleasant manners and had cultivated great friendship with many on campus. Friends had picnics in the local mountains and would go out on road trips. With the completion of his degree in 1974, he married and made his home in Somerville, MA. Nagabhusan's home was a warm meeting place for his friends whom he and his wife treated with extreme hospitality. He loved good food and his wife was great company. He was constantly in touch with his parents in India

with regular calls and remittance of support.

He stayed on as a Research Associate in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and studied treatment of malignant tumors using ultrasonic technology and its application for liver and kidney ailments. He taught graduate courses and supervised thesis work of the students. Ultrasonic technology was gaining prominence for complex applications in aviation, structures, gas lines and surgical procedures. Nagabhusan chose to accept employment with Battelle Memorial Institute in Columbus, Ohio in 1977. Their first daughter Sangeeta was born in the Spring of that year.

The research-based environment at Battelle gave Nagabhusan the opportunity to develop diverse applications of his insight and expertise in ultrasonic technology. He led a team of talented professionals and went forward on a path of inventing engineering techniques in solving complex industrial problems with applications in polymers, plastics, rubber and metals. His work spanned from repairing aircraft structures to high speed packaging, from inventing gadget for dental plaque removal to creating apparatus for cleaning up under-sea debris. He was extremely well liked by his colleagues and he helped groom many future engineers. He made his home in the Columbus suburbs of Dublin and Worthington and also remained active in associating with his friends and organizing social events. His second daughter Suneeta was born in Dublin in 1982.

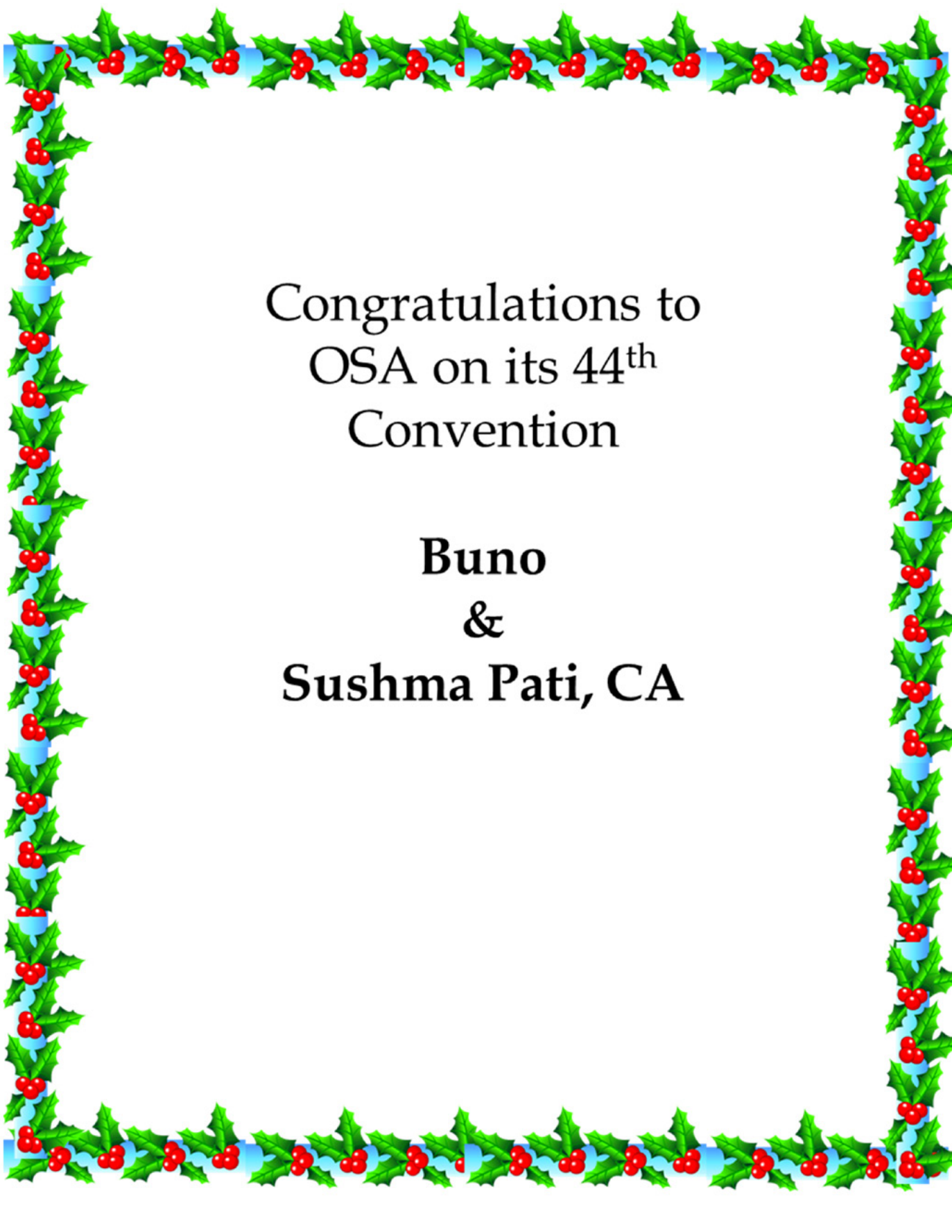
Nagabhusan became an independent consultant in 1996 during which time he worked with Procter and Gamble in Cincinnati, Ohio. He rejoined corporate structure in 1998 with Edison Welding Institute and then went on to become a consultant with Kimberly-Clarke, a consumer products company, where he helped invent new products and better methods in manufacturing. Here he could transform ideas to manufacture and directly affected the consumer market by helping to reduce cost in production and create durability. After thirty two years of work, he retired in 2006, but remained active with occasional consulting activity on medical applications of ultrasonic technology. He had amassed thirty five patents and a large number of publications including four book chapters on his line of work. He served as the US representative for the International Electromechanical Commission on Ultrasonic and also was elected the Vice President of the National Board of Ultrasonic Industry association.

Nagabhusan loved people and loved attending social events. He would be a familiar face in new homes and would share expertise in home making with the younger

professionals. He was instrumental with the initial periods of Orissa Society of the Americas and served as its Secretary from 1979-1981. He helped initiate the temple building in Columbus and contributed his time and energy freely for the cause. He was a great family man, concerned for his brothers and sisters and took care of his children's education and well being. Rajkumari was a fitting support to his bright intellect and the family maintained the strong

ethics and values inspired by scholarly tradition. Nagabhusan will be missed by all who knew him and his life will remain a shining example of humility, perseverance, and studiousness in solving problems in a technological world.

- Written by Bijoy Misra, lifelong friend of Dr. Senapati. He lives with his family at Lincoln, MA.



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INTERNATIONAL JAGANNATHA SOCIETY

14800 Vishnu Way, Suite B
Harvest, AL 35749, USA
(256) 771-7772
EIN: 46-2269676

www.int-jagannatha-soc.org
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Oh Lord, we resort to Thee for the supply of foodstuffs and vigor. May the Creator, the fountain of happiness and knowledge, inspire us for the performance of noblest deeds with our organs. – Sam Veda

International JAGANNATHA Society was conceptualized about 7 to 8 years ago and was finally born on 10th July 2011. IJA is still in its infancy and we are trying to give a proper form and shape. It has been registered as a religious, tax exempt and charitable organization head quartered in Pratiichi Srikskhtra, Harvest, Alabama. A second head quarter is being started soon in Shrikskhtra Puri, India. One of our goals is to set up centers in major cities and important countries where people of Indian origin are living for now. A few guidelines have been formulated but detailed by laws and constitutions are being drafted. The Advisors, Board of Trustees, Executive Committees, and members are being formalized. Since it is a global organization, the boundaries shall go beyond Odisha and India. The horizon for International Jagannatha Society's work schedule is limitless, but for now we are trying to establish two facilities in India such as Veda Pathasala and GuruKulashram to teach eligible students to become priests (Archakas) in Vedic tradition with emphasis on modes of Jagannath Puja, tradition and culture. There would be also an institute doing research on Vedanta and Scriptures. We are organizing one international seminar on Jagannath Philosophy in the last week of December 2013. The participants will have privileges like visiting temples in Bhubaneswar, Puri and Cuttack, and free accommodation and food during seminars. Details are being worked out.

There will be a seminar on Jagannath Tattva and Vishwa Shanti Yajna, attended by renowned speakers, priests and dignitaries coming from various corners of the world in September 2014. This mammoth project would be done by International Jagannath Society and Hindu Cultural Center of North Alabama. All temples and centers in USA and Canada involved with Jagannath worship are requested to participate as organizers and participants. Details to follow.

International Jagannath Society requests you and your organization to be a registered member in IJS with minimal fees. Members will have several privileges.

Fees for member organization- \$250.00 US Dollars

Fees for Individual Member- \$100.00 US Dollars

Contact Person- Dr Bhagabat Chandra Sahu at 256-233-4247

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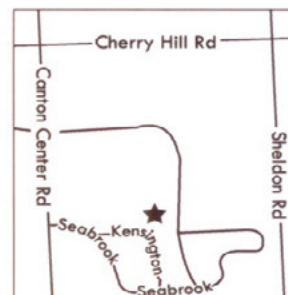
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The background is a vibrant, celebratory design. It features a central area with white text. Surrounding this text are various decorative elements: a large yellow starburst in the top left, a tall yellow and pink starburst on the right, and a cluster of yellow and pink stars and rays at the bottom. The overall color palette is dominated by yellow, pink, and purple, with white text and rays providing contrast.

*Long Live OSA.
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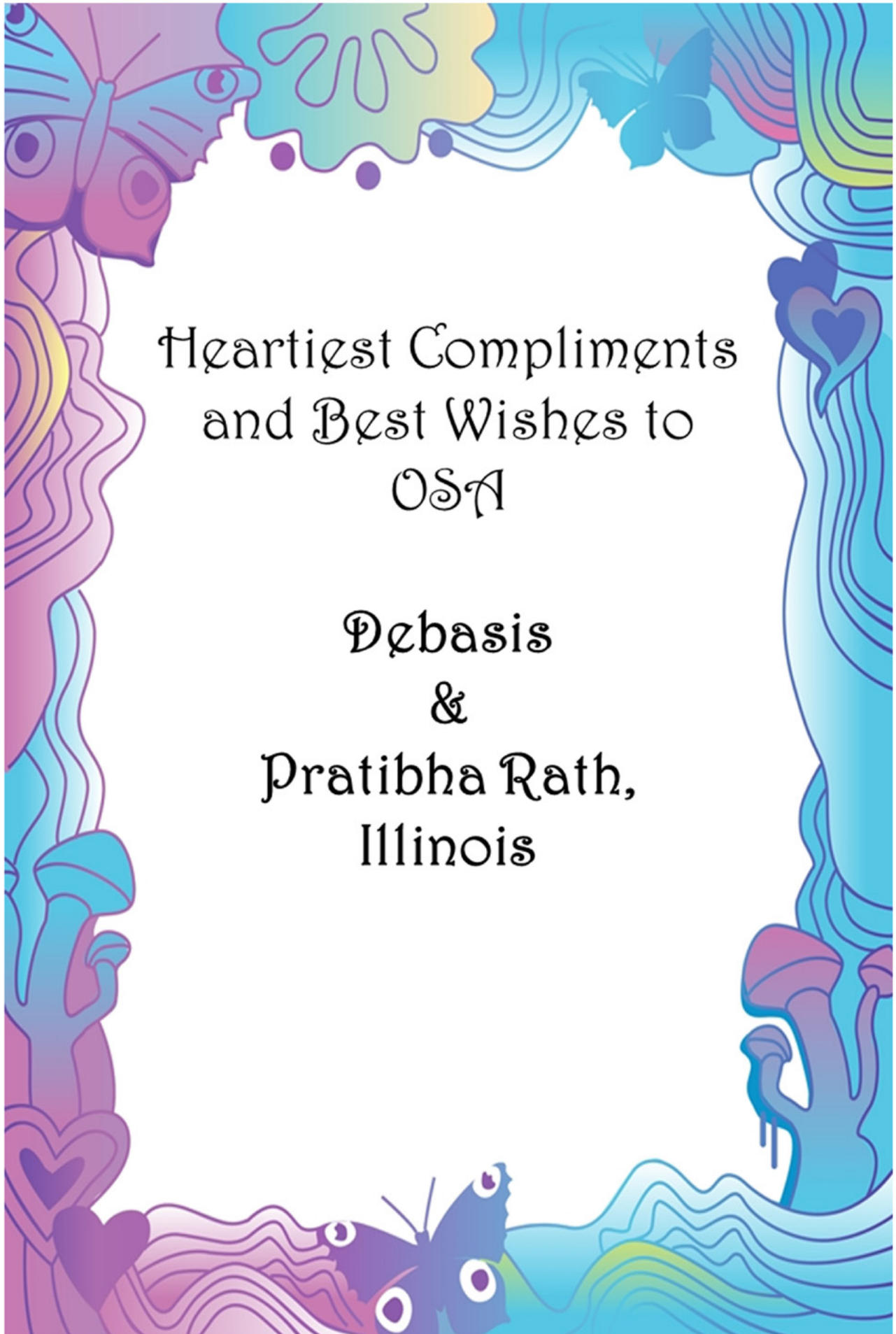
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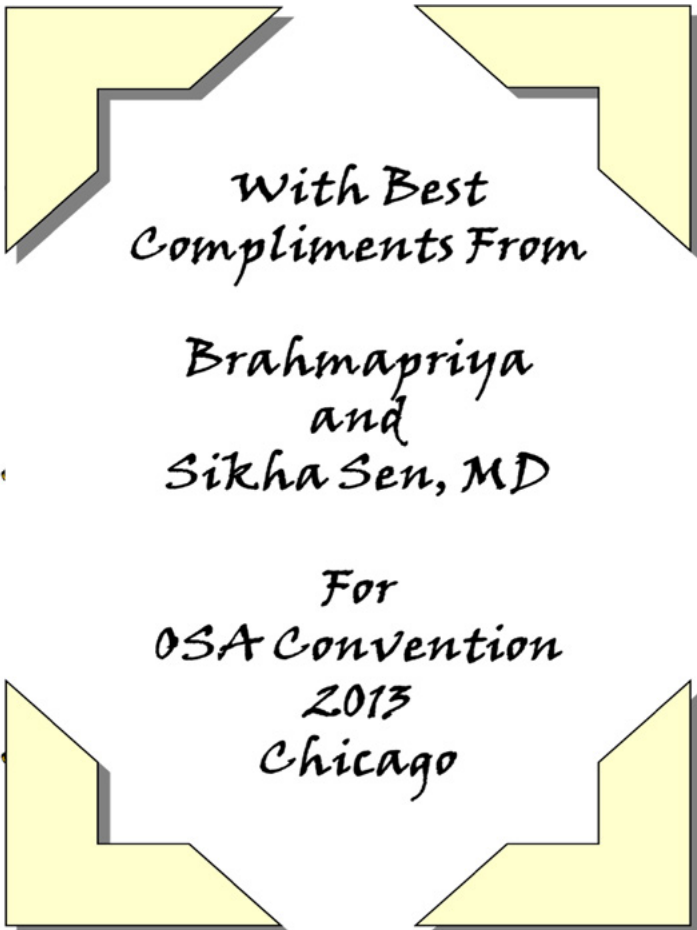
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3. SCB Medical College Library— lifetime grant
4. Basundhara- 7 year support ended 2002
5. Ravenshaw Collegiate School, Cuttack—computer center (teaching 4th to 10th grades) and library renovation
6. Orissa Dance Academy (Guru Gangadhar Pradhan) and Konarak Dance Festival—to promote and preserve Orissa dance styles (1985-2006)
7. Kala Vikash Kendra, Cuttack
8. BKMM Eye Hospital, Dhenkanal—prevention and cure of blindness: Dec. 2006 to present
14,000 cataracts operated, giving back the vision
9. Orissa Development Seminars in OSA Conventions (for the last ten years)
10. Prof. Jatindra Mohanty (5 grants for review publications in Oriya literature)
11. JOGA, Washington, DC (for training of secondary school teachers in Dhenkanal and Angul districts)
12. 1st and 2nd Odissi Dance Festivals (Washington, DC)—third Odissi Festival (International) in Bhubaneswar, Orissa 2011
13. Aamara Biswas, Orissa, Mrs. Jayashree (Ranu) Mahanti, www.aamarabiswas.org –major grants
14. Prachi Youth Organization, Kakatpuri, Orissa—in areas of health and education in rural vil-lages



Information: dmisra@knology.net / 256-.883-5499

Dr. Devi Mishra & Mrs Sarojini Mishra are longtime supporters and contributors of various projects in Odisha as well as OSA. Dr. Mishra lives in Huntsville, AL. They have three children - Chico, Pinky and Samar.

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Akshay Kumar Parija



Noted Banker, Businessman and Philanthropist, Akshay Kumar Parija is an avid promoter of Performing Arts and Culture of Odisha like Odishi, Chau, Pala, Daskathia etc around the world. As a film maker, he gained international recognition for his Odia film “ Jiaanta Bhoota” which won six awards in International Festival, a first for Odia Film Industry. He also won the prestigious National Award for the film from President of India Mrs Pratibha Patil for the Best Film on Protection of Environment. The sensitively portrayed the exploitation of nature and human beings in the name of development and industrialization. The film also won record seven State Awards.

His second film” Thukul” which dealt with an Odia girl’s strenuous journey into Odishi stardom has already won five Stae Awards, which is again highest this year. Besides, the film has

won four awards in Tarang Cine Award and four awards in Etv Cine Award. The film deals with the sad perception of the society for girls leaning dancing.

A banker for more than thirty years in the Middle East in top management positions, Mr Parija cofounded **Blue Lines Shipping Group** in 2010 in Dubai with operations in United States of America, Singapore, Oman and UAE. During a short span of time the company has grown into a large energy career with over half a million tonnage capacity.



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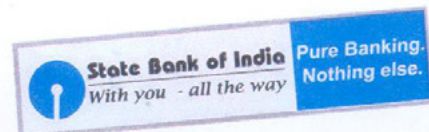
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