

# MADHUBANT CONTROL C



A Mega Musical Evening

featuring

# Madhubanti and Dipayan

Durga Puja 2018 Oct 13th, 9.30PM Orangevale Community Center

coming to US this Durga Puja

enjoy at your nearest Puja venue

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# Literary Committee

Anupam Mitra
Biswanath Mukherjee
Somen Nandi
Mainak Banga
Manas Ray
Rajat Saha
Rashmi Nandi (Editor)

Cover designed by Santana Das

Since 2008, Chowrongee is online and can be accessed at https://utsavsac.org/magazine/

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# সম্পাদকীয়

#### **Editorial**

দেখতে দেখতে বছর ঘুরে গোলো, চৌরঙ্গীর ও বয়স আরো এক ধাপ এগিয়ে গেলো। স্নিগ্ধ শরতের আকাশে বাতাসে পূজো পূজো গন্ধ কলকাতা থেকে ক্যালিফর্নিয়া অবি, আসুন সকলে মিলে করে তুলি দেবীর আবির্ভাবকে সার্থক ও সুন্দর। গণেশ পুজো থেকেই শুভ সূচনা ঘটে আর মহালয়া মানেই তো সাজো সাজো রব। এই ভাবেই সাদা মেঘের ভেলা. শিউলির দল ও কাশগুচ্ছ আমন্ত্রণ জানায় মঙ্গলময়ীকে। শারোদৎসব মানেই রঙিন দিন, ভিন্ন স্বাদের অনুষ্ঠান, ফ্যাশন পর্ব, বাহারে সাজ, ভুরিভোজ, নতুন গানের আবির্ভাব ও রংবেরং পত্রিকার আত্মপ্রকাশ। চৌরঙ্গীও উৎসবের নানা আঙ্গিকের মধ্যে নিজস্ব পরিচয় গড়ে তুলেছে, চৌরঙ্গীর ঐতিহ্যের শরিক হোন, পড়ুন ও আপনাদের প্রিয়জনকে। এবারের শারদডালি আমরা সাজিয়েছি নানা স্বাদের সম্ভারে. প্রবীণ - সবার লেখা পাবেন, কৃতি সদস্যদের অভিনন্দন জানান, নতুন বন্ধুদের সুস্বাগতম। আশাকরি আমাদের এই প্রচেষ্টা আপনাদের ভালো লাগবে।

পৃথিবীব্যাপী নানারকম সংকট, আমেরিকার দক্ষিণপূর্ব কুলে ফ্লোরেন্সের ঝাপ্টা, ক্যালিফোর্নিয়ার দাবানল, কলকাতার মাঝেরহাট ব্রিজ ভেঙে জীবনহানি - দুঃসংবাদের কোনো ইয়ত্তা নেই। উৎসব ও হারিয়েছে দুই নিকট বন্ধুকে এবছর - অমিতা কর ও প্রদ্যোৎ ভট্টাচার্য। ওনাদের পরিবারবর্গকে আমাদের আন্তরিক সমবেদনা।

আপনার আমার নিজের পূজো, ভুল-ক্রণ্টি ক্ষমা করবেন। সম্পাদকমন্ডলীর সকল সদস্যকে আমার বিনম্র শ্রদ্ধা ও ধন্যবাদ। পৃষ্ঠপোষক, শুভাকাঙ্খী ও সদস্যদের শারদোৎসবের নমস্কার ও শুভেচ্ছা জানিয়ে ইতি টানছি, সকলের জীবনে পরিপূর্ণতার আলো ও সমৃদ্ধি আসুক।

ধন্যবাদ। **রশ্যি নন্দী**  Welcome to Utsav's exciting 2018 Durga Pujo celebration! I'm humbled and thrilled to write the Editorial for Chowrongee's 17th edition. Together with your dedication, perseverance, energy, and talent, we have come across a long way, and we continue to count on you to reach an important milestone of 20 years down the road! I would like to thank each and everyone of Utsav family whose creativity has given new dimension to Chowrongee. You have led us to where we are today, and we are convinced that the future is bright for Chowrongee in upcoming years.

Don't just leaf through Chowrongee's pages; take your time to read the wonderful community news, articles and poems; and appreciate the colorful drawings by our li'l artists and you will be amazed. Salute to the award winners, heartiest congratulations to college-bound students and other achievers: your hard works have very well paid off. We lost two of our close friends this year – Amita Kar and Prodyot Bhattacharya; our sincere condolences to the bereaved families.

We could not have put up a two-day event without patrons and sponsors, so your contributions have not gone unnoticed. Thank you. I'm proud to share how much passion and commitment each member of the Literary Committee holds; two families have welcomed newborns but I have not seen any gap in their diligence. Congratulations parents! Thanks to Santana Das once again for her gorgeous art work on the cover page. Kamalesh Sengupta is indispensable to Utsav, as he has been instrumental in typing our Bengali pieces from scratch.

Despite being mentioned at the end, natural disasters around the world are occurring at an alarming rate; typhoons, hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, etc. Please keep the affected in your thoughts, and support the organizations who are providing critical relief to those impacted. Stay safe and be well.

Pujo Greetings to you all!

Rashmi Nandi

# **Utsav Committee Members**

**Governing Body Members (GBM):** 

Rajat Saha (President)

Saumen Dey (Vice President) Anima Kumar (Treasurer)

Tanushree Ganguly (Cultural Secretary)

Joydeep Ray (Public Relations)

Community Council Members (CCM) and

**Election Committee:** 

Adi Choudri

Biswanath Mukherjee

Somen Nandi

**Literary Committee:** 

Anupam Mitra

Biswanath Mukherjee

Somen Nandi Mainak Banga Manas Ray Rajat Saha

Rashmi Nandi (Editor)

**Cultural Committee:** 

Tanushree Ganguly (Lead)

Joydeep Ray Joya Banerjee

Sanhita Bandyopadhyay

Suvra Mukherjee

Mala Paul

**Puja Committee:** 

Anima Kumar (Lead)

Santana Das Mitra Choudri Rupa Chowdhury Seema Chanda Soma Nayak

Paramita Bhattacharya

**Registration Committee:** 

Prodosh Chakraborty (Lead)

Adi Choudri

Biswanath Mukherjee

Manas Ray Barin Kumar Subhra Gima

**Website Committee:** 

Joydeep Ray (Lead)

Rajat Saha

Siddhartha (Neil) Ray

**Utsav Youth Group:** 

Sharod Nandi Dayita Biswas Ena Nayak Viru Joshi Sayak Datta Siddhartha Dey

Ronit Mukherjee

Rupa Chowdhury (Lead)

Sangita Biswas (Lead)

**Food Committee:** 

Saumen Dey (Lead)

Sanjib Nayak Subir Sarkar Joy Mukherjee

Pradosh Chakraborty

Barun Bandyopadhyay

Somen Nandi Soummya Mallick Shomeek Paul Somnath Ganguly

**Welcome Committee** 

Mitra Choudri (Lead)

Sharmila Mallick – Roseville/Rocklin Supriya Mukherjee – Davis/UC Davis

Lily Sarkar – Folsom

Sanchita Dey (Soma) – Elk Grove Suvra Mukherjee – Rancho Cordova

# Message from the Utsav Boardroom

Dear Utsav Families and Friends,

Namaskar! Hope you all are in good health and geared up for the most eventful part of the year which all Bengalis around the globe look forward to – Durga Puja. At Utsav, the oldest Bengali organization in the Greater Sacramento area, we are celebrating our 17<sup>th</sup> Durga Puja, and preparations for this event are going on in full swing for the past several months.

A quick recap of our activities over the past year is in order. We observed Saraswati Puja on January 27, 2018, at the Orangevale Community Center. Excellent entertainment was provided by our local artists.

Utsav celebrated Holi on March 10, 2018, at Spoto Creek Park of Rancho Cordova. This colorful and fun-filled event coupled with mouthwatering food (cooked on-the-spot by Utsav's young members from UC Davis) attracted many non-member participants as well.

Our Annual General Meeting-cum-Picnic, was on August 5, 2018, at Folsom Lake Beals Point; it was also an enjoyable event with fun, water activities, and food.

And now we are eagerly awaiting Ma Durga's arrival for Utsav's 17<sup>th</sup> Durga Puja. Our local talents – natok team, kids and adults – are working hard to dazzle us with their performances. Utsav natok enthusiasts have been practicing hard over the past few months to give you a glimpse of what happens in a "prabasi Durga Puja" through their in-house production "Live from Banglaville." You don't want to miss it!

We are also looking forward to enjoy the performance of **Madhubanti and Dipayan**, the famous Bengali singers from Kolkata, with live bands on Saturday (October 13, 2018) evening. Note that all these programs are free for Utsav members.

Utsav has a long tradition of supporting and organizing fundraising activities for charitable and other community enhancement purposes, and this year was no exception. Utsav's youth volunteer, Ena Nayak, did a fundraising for the flood victims of Texas and Kolkata. Another Utsav youth volunteer, Sayak Datta, did a fundraising program for the Shankara Eye Foundation. Utsav is very proud of them, and will continue to support such initiatives.

It would be very remiss if we did not offer our sincere thanks to those volunteers whose tireless work year round has made all these events possible. A very special thank you goes out to all our donors and sponsors. Without your support, we would not have been able to pull off our events. Thank you once more, and on behalf of the GBM, I wish you a healthy, prosperous, and peaceful Durga Puja and "Subho Bijoya".

Rajat Saha **President**, Utsav 2017-18

#### **Governing Body Members (GBM):**

Rajat Saha (President) Saumen Dey (Vice President) Anima Kumar (Treasurer) Tanushree Ganguly (Cultural Secretary) Joydeep Ray (Public Relations)

# **Utsav Accounts\***

July 2017– June 2018

		Amount	Amount
Balance Savings from 2016-2017(Incl. \$3110 from Savin	ngs)	\$9455	\$9,445
Revenues  Montage Land (Donne Brita 2017)		\$2700 <i>5</i>	
Membership Fees (Durga Pujo 2017) Cash & Ticket+Book Sales (Pujo 2017)		\$27995 \$3187	
Holi 2018			
Saraswati Pujo 2018		\$0 \$620	
Total		\$020	\$31,802
Total	<b>Total Revenues</b>		\$31,802 \$41,257
Expenses	Total Revenues		Φ-1,237
Utsav Website Renewal		\$403	
Insurance for 2017-2018		\$568	
Gold River Storage Rental Fee(2017-18)		\$1,320	
Mail Box UPS(4/18-4/20)		\$652	
RRF payment		\$125	
Durga Puja 2017:			\$3,068
Hall Rental (Orangevale Community Center)		\$6240	. ,
Transport & Set Up		\$475	
Magazine Printing		\$808	
Pujo Proshad Expense(\$450 sponsored by member)		\$138	
Priest Officiation &Travel Expenses		\$831	
Food		\$3,644	
Sound & Audio (DJ Sneh)		\$2300	
External Artist & Props (Natok)		\$4554	
Kitchen Help		\$1156	
STL		\$325	
SIL		\$323	\$20,471
Saraswati Puja 2018:			4,
Hall Rental (Orangevale Community Center)		\$1,464	
Transport & Set up		\$225	
Priest Donations (Vedanta Society)		\$200	
Food Expense		\$889	
Kitchen Help & Clean Up		\$391	
DJ &Stage Rental		\$585	
Pujo Prosad		\$191	\$3,945
Holi 2018 – Park Rental, Food, Clean Up		\$1,325	\$1,325
Annual General Meeting-cum-Picnic 2018		\$578	\$578
	<b>Total Expenses</b>		\$29,387
	Net Balance 2017-2018		\$11,870

<sup>\*</sup>To be audited



# Program Schedule\* for 17th Durga Puja, 2018

# Saturday October 13, 2018

Registration	9:00 AM onwards
Durga Puja (Shaptami and Mahastami)	9:30 - 11:30  AM
Anjali	11:30 AM
Arati and Bhog	12:00 – 12:30 PM
Prasad	12:30 PM
Lunch	1:00 – 2:30 PM
Sandhya Arati, Chandipath and Dhunoochi Dance	6:00 - 7:00  PM
Cultural Program	
Bangla Natok – Lagey Raho TV: Live from Banglaville	7:00 - 8:30  PM
Dinner	8:30 – 9:30 PM
Performance by Madhubanti and Dipayan	9:30 – 11:30 PM

## Sunday October 14, 2018

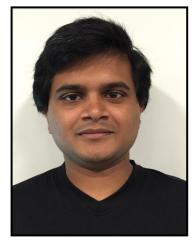
Durga Puja (Nabami and Bijoya Dashami)	10:30 AM
Anjali	12:00 – 12:30 PM
Prasad	12:30 - 1:00  PM
Shanti Jol, Bishorjon, Sindoor Khela	12:30 - 1:00  PM
Lunch	1:00-2:30  PM
Award Ceremony	2:30 - 3:00  PM
Cultural Program - Utsav Got Talent	3:00 – 6:00 PM
Wrap Up	6:00 - 7:00  PM

<sup>\*</sup>Subject to change

# **Community News**

**Dr. Abhishek Gupta** received his PhD Degree from the Department of Computer Science at University of California, Davis, in June 2018. His PhD Dissertation is entitled Minimizing Operating Expenditure of Cloud and Communication Networks using Virtualization Technologies. Since then, he has been working as a Member of Technical Staff at Amobee Inc. in Redwood City, CA.





Congratulations to Anima and Barin Kumar, founding members of Utsav, for having a granddaughter, **Samina**. She is the daughter of Soma Kumar and Eric Luedke and was born on October 29, 2017 in San Diego, California.

Anish Adoni, son of Anand Adoni and Subhra Chakraborty, graduated from Folsom High School as a valedictorian and a National Merit Scholar. He is attending College of Engineering at UC Berkeley as Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) major. He aspires to be an entrepreneur specializing in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.





Archita Bhattacharya, daughter of Paramita and Anirban Bhattacharya, graduated from Oak Ridge High School in El Dorado Hills and has joined University of California, Berkeley to pursue a major in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS). We wish her all the success for her undergraduate studies and beyond.

Ananya and Anupam Mitra introduce their little bundle of joy-Anaisha (Mishti) Mitra, born on July 1, 2018.

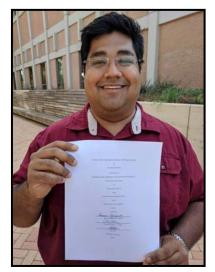




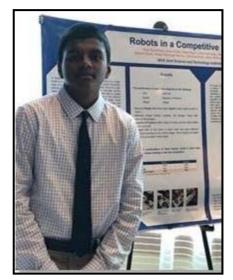
Khounish Sharma, eldest son of Ashrukana and Kingshuk Sharma will be attending University of Southern California (USC) pursuing a major in Biology as Pre-Med. He has been chosen as a Presidential Scholar and selected for Freshman Honors College at USC. He graduated from Mira Loma High School with an International Baccalaureate Full Diploma in June 2018. We wish him all the success in his studies and life.

Sandipan Datta tied the wedding knot with Behnaz Hekmat at Sacramento Laxminarayan Temple on July 29, 2018, in accordance to the Bengali ritual. The ceremony was officiated by our dear Ramendranath Chakraborti. The wedding was well attended by family and friends of both bride and groom.





**Dr.** Aveek Das received his PhD Degree from the Department of Computer Science at University of California, Davis, in June 2018. His PhD Dissertation is entitled Context-Aware Information Mining for Wireless Networks. Since then, he has been working at ForeScout Technologies in San Jose, CA.



Sharod Nandi, son of Rashmi and Somen Nandi, 11th grader, has been awarded with STEM Fellowship for High School students by the United States Department of Defense (DoD). Department of Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) together with Joint Science and Technology Institute (JSTI) provided a two-week hands-on science research and engineering training to promising students from throughout the United States and DoDEA schools from around the world in Washington DC area from July 21 through August 3, 2018.

**Shimika Basuroy**, daughter of Sudeshna and Nirupom Basuroy, graduated from Folsom High School in May 2018. Starting Fall 2018, Shimika is attending University of California, San Diego, intending to major in Cognitive Science.

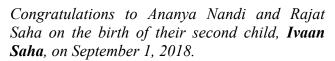




Sneha Banerjee, daughter of Sunanda and Barun Bandyopadhyay, graduated from Mira Loma High School at the age of 17. She graduated with a full IB diploma and has held several posts. She was the President of stem cell research and has also been a National Honor student. She was among the first 10 in the state for forensic medicine. Sneha ran cross country and stood 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> positions in 200 m and 400 m events, respectively, in the district. She also played basketball and got awards for it. She has made all of us very proud! Sneha is going to UC Davis for Biological Sciences and wants to pursue a career in Medicine.



Samara Saquib, daughter of Lubna and Najmus Saquib, graduated from Oakridge High School, El Dorado Hills, and has joined Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, with a goal for her undergraduate studies in Computer Science starting Fall 2018. We wish her all the success in her studies in life.





# Utsav Award Winners (2003-2017)

#### Utsav gratefully acknowledges the winners of Utsav Awards in past years.

Cultural Award
2003: Somen Nandi
2004: Shyamal Chattaraj
2005: Nabanita Sen
2006: Shashwati Roy
2007: Sharmila Mukherjee
2008: Marvel Gima
2000 I 1 D

2008: Marvel Gima 2009: Joydeep Roy 2010: Mala Paul

2011: Tuhina Ghosal and Sanjib Sarkar

2012: Ajay Joshi

2013: Bipasha Chowdhury and Rajat Saha 2014: Joydeep Ray and Snehungsu Guha

2015: Sanhita Bandyopadhyay2016: Tanushree Ganguly2017: Suvra Mukherjee

#### Literary (and Educational) Award

2003: Arijit Chatterjee

2004: Arun Das

2005: Dilip Roychowdhury

2006: Rashmi Nandi and Pat Chatterjee

2007: Santana Das 2008: Manas Ray 2009: Rashmi Nandi 2010: Manas Ray 2011: Tapati Bhowmik 2012: Prodyot Bhattacharya

2013: Avishek Nag 2014: Shimika Basuroy 2015: Manju Roychoudhury

2016: Barin Kumar 2017: Tapati Ray

#### **Fundraising Award**

2003: Udayan Chanda 2004: Deb Saha 2005: Anita Ghoshal 2006: Somen Nandi

2007: Deb Saha

2008: Anima Kumar

2009: Ajay Joshi 2010: Deb Saha 2011: Anima Kumar 2012: Deb Saha 2013: Joy Mukherjee 2014: Udayan Chanda 2016: Marvel Gima 2017: Sanjib Nayak

#### **Outstanding Volunteer Award**

2003: Suvayu Bose

2004: Shashwati Roy and Mala Paul

2005: Santana Das 2006: Joy Mukherjee 2007: Seema Chanda

2008: Rupa Chowdhury and Koushik Das

2009: Subir Sarkar

2010: Anima Kumar and Rashmi Nandi 2011: Koushik Das and Arun Chowdhury

2012: Biswanath Mukherjee

2013: Mitra Choudri and Pulak Chowdhury

2014: Subir Sarkar2015: Shomeek Paul2016: Prodosh Chakraborty2017: Sangita Biswas

#### **Outstanding Youth Volunteer Award**

(This award was initiated in 2004)

2004: Joey Chakraborty 2005: Mohana Roy 2006: Natasha Choudri 2007: Aninda Chowdhury 2008: Robby Chakraborty 2009: Arunav Sarkar 2010: Rudrani Ghosh

2011: Sunoy Nandi and Sharod Nandi 2012: Sunoy Nandi and Sharod Nandi

2013: Neel Chanda

2014: Avishek Umesh Jadhav 2015: Ayan Chowdhury

िजक्ला

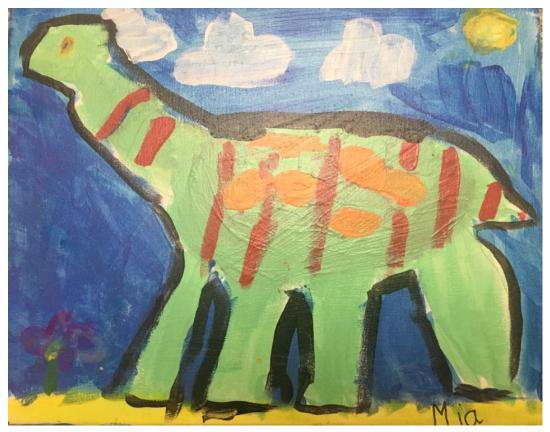
Drawings







**Ishaan Majumdar** is a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader at Star Academy Natomas Charter School, Sacramento, CA.



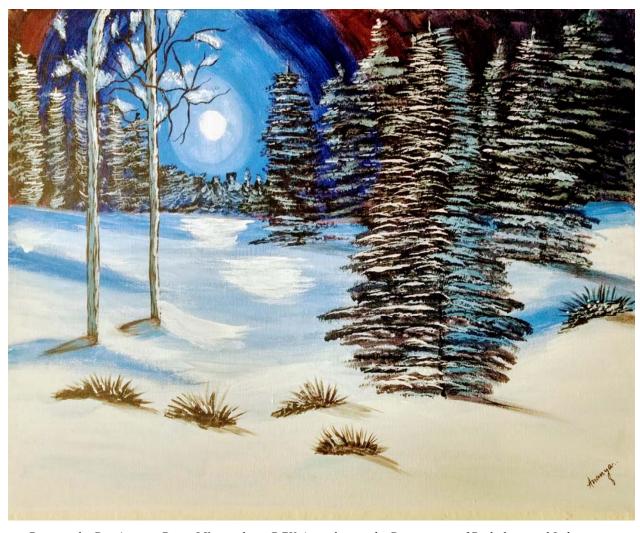
Kritika (Mia) Das, 7 years old, is a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader in Empire Oaks Elementary School, Folsom, CA.



Rishan Dey, 4 years old, is at Pre-Kindergarten, Little Blossom Montessori School, Sacramento, CA.



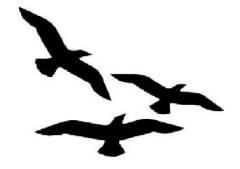
Painting by Ishita Mukherjee, who lives in Rancho Cordova and works at xFusion Technologies, Inc.



Painting by Dr. Ananya Datta Mitra, who is PGY-4 resident in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of California, Davis, School of Medicine, Sacramento, CA.

কবিতা

# Poems



# নিশীথ রাণী

বুলু খাটুয়া

তুমি "লাস ভেগাস" দিবালোকে নিদ্রা যাও রাতের বেলায় জেগে থাকো তাই তো তুমি "নিশীথ রাণী" হাতছানি দিয়ে পথিক ডাকো। হাজার বাতির রঙিন আলোর নেশায় তুমি মেতে থাকো পথিকের কাছে টেনে রূপের নেশায় ভুলিয়ে রাখো । ভোগের শেষে কড়ি দিয়ে পথিক যখন চলে যাই স্মৃতি হয়েই থাকো তুমি তাতে কি আর এসে যায়? প্রতিদিনই নতুন করে নতুনের কাছে পাও আসা যাওয়ার পথিকেরে খুশিতে মন ভরিয়ে দাও।।

#### মরুপ্রান্তর

বুলু খাটুয়া

"লাস ভেগাস" কে বলে তোমায়
মকপ্রান্তর?
কে বলে তোমায় শুষ্ক এক
মক্রভূমি?
পাহাড়ে ঘেরা, ফুলে-ফলে ভরা
তুমি তো অপূর্ব এক উর্বর ভূমি।
দেখি যত চেয়ে
সবুজ আছে ছেয়ে
এতো সুন্দর, এতো মনোহর তুমি!
কে বলে তোমায় মক্রপ্রান্তর
শুষ্ক এক মক্রভূমি?



বুলু খাটুয়া কবি, সমাজসেবী ও ভ্রমণপিপাসু। লাস ভেগাসের দুটি ভিন্ন রূপ উদ্ভাসিত হয়েছে তার কলমে।

#### বাংলা

অম্লান রায়

বাংলার মাটি, বাংলার জল।
বাংলায় আছে অ্যালকোহল।
পশ্চিম যবে খুলেছিলো দার
সেথা হতে আসে জনি ওয়াকার।
কোথায় গন্ধ, কোথায় ঝাঁঝ
রূপসী বাংলা বধূর সাজ।
পাগলা হাওয়ার বাদল দিনে
শ্রমিক কৃষক বাংলা কেনে
বিদ্ধদজন আত্মভোলা
নবান্ন আজখালাসিটোলা।
তবুও বাংলা বিশ্বময়।
ঢালুন একটু বলুন হয়।



#### এলোমেলো

অম্লান রায়

আমি রামকানাই
তুমি যামিনী।
একই পাড়ায় থাকি
আগে কেন দেখিনি?
দুলালের তালমিছরি
আলালের ঘরে।

দু হপ্তা বিছানায় ভাইরাল জুরে। মহেন্দ্র ছাতা হারায় কে সি পালের বাড়িতে। লোকনাথের ফ্র্যাঞ্চাইজি অলিতে ও গলিতে। ন্যাড়া আছে বেলভিউয়ে বেল পড়েছে মাথায় বেলতলাতে ফ্ল্যাট কিনেছে প্রোমোটারির টাকায়। নীললোহিত চাকরি করে সেক্টর ফাইভে সুনীল বাঁচিয়া নাই কি করিয়া খাইবে? অবনী বাড়িই আছে ঠেকে যাওয়া বন্ধ জনি ওয়াকারে আজ মা মাটির গন্ধ। বলেন প্রমহংস কথা এখন মৃত দেখিলে পরমসুখ পাইলে আপ্লুত। একই বৃত্তে দুটি ফুল ম্যানুফ্যাক্চারের ভুলে কে সি দাসের ব্লাড সুগার দৌড়ায় সকালে। রাজুর গেঞ্জি নেই খালি গায়ে ঘোরে এ গরমে ফ্যান নেই উষাদের ঘরে। অঞ্জলি জুয়েলার বিজলী গ্ৰীল পুজোয় নতুন জুতো খড়মেতে হীল।

অম্লান রায় কলকাতা নিবাসী, অবসরপ্রাপ্ত চিত্রশিক্ষক। এখন সাহিত্য সাধনায় লিপ্ত।

#### এখন বসন্ত

অরূপ চন্দ্র

বসন্তে কিসের বিলাপ
চারপাশে জুলছে অশোক পলাশ
কৃষ্ণচূড়ার গায়ে সেঁধিয়ে রাধাচূড়া
শরীরে প্রাণঘাতী কাঁটা নিয়েও ডাকছে শিমূল এমন মায়াবী রাতে চাঁদ ওঠে।

কখনো বজ্রনির্যোষ আসে ঘুমন্ত চোখও খুলে যায় আশা দেয় লক্ষ্যভেদে

শক্তি নামে মেরুদণ্ডে কমলা পাহাড় আর অরণ্যে মিটিমিটি আলো জুলে
কচি পাতাগুলো ডালে ডালে দোল খায়
পাখির ডানায় নাচে সমুদ্র- ঢেউ
ঘরের আনাচে কানাচে কচি কচি কোলাহল
মাঠে মাঠে ফুটফুটে প্রজাপতি ওড়ে
অন্ধও পথ খুঁজে নেয় হলুদ দুপুরে।

বসন্তে কিসের বিলাপ কেন এই শোকগাথা?

# মৃত্যুহীন

অরূপ চন্দ্র

অরণ্য পাহাড় নভ শব্দহীন চুপি চুপি আসে ঘাতক মৃত্যু সবচেয়ে বড় কাপুরুষ -

হঠাৎ ঝড় ওঠে বৃষ্টি আসে হড়পা বানে ধ্বস ভূমিকম্প স্বৰ্গীয় আলোয় ভৱে ওঠে মৱণের মুখ

জ্যোৎস্নার আলোয় স্থির চতুর্দিক কুৎসিত কাপুরুষ উদ্ধত অস্ত্রে অতি ক্ষুদ্র জীবের মতো আমার সম্মুখে

> আমার শক্তিমান শরীর মৃত্যুদূতের বুকে কাঁপন ধরায় আমার সাথে লক্ষ সেনানী

প্রক্ষিপ্ত লাল আলোয় ও এখন অন্ধ নির্বিষ নীল সবুজ আলোর আড়ালে

মৃত্যুর কাপুরুষতা উঁকিঝুঁকি মারে অন্তিম মারণ বিষ ছড়াতে চায় গরল হয়ে গাল বেয়ে নামে।

অরূপ চন্দ্র বহরমপুর নিবাসী, কবি, প্রাবন্ধিক, চিত্রকলা ও ইতিহাস গবেষক, বহু সাহিত্য পুরস্কারে ভূষিত।

# অগ্নিবৃত্ত

তপতী রায়

ধূসর ধোঁয়ায় আচ্ছন্ন দিগন্ত জুলন্ত পৃথিবীর তপ্ত বুকে অনিচ্ছার আহুতি কত পশু পাখি

লেলিহান আগুনের স্পর্শে
গৃহহীন সর্বস্বান্ত মানুয
অঙ্গার কণা তার প্রাণ বায়ু
আশা করে কোথাও আছে
মেঘে ঢাকা রামধনু

মায়াবিনী বর্ষা ফেরার মর্মর শব্দে ভাঙ্গে গাছের চিতা।



তপতী রায় অবসরপ্রাপ্ত এনাস্থেসিওলজিস্ট, বাংলা ও ইংরেজি দুটি ভাষায় লেখালেখি করেন, নিউক্যাসল, ক্যালিফর্নিয়া নিবাসী।

#### দহনবেলা

তন্দ্রা ব্যানার্জী

জ্বরবিকারের ঘোরে স্বপ্ন দেখে একলা আকাশ
মেঘেরা গিয়েছে চলে সেই কবে উড়োচিঠি ফেলে
খরাপৃথিবীর বুকে আঁকিবুকি রোদের আঁচড়
জ্বলেপুড়ে যায় আজকুটোকাঠি মনরাখা কথা
পাতা উলটিয়ে দাও, তামারঙ সময় পেরিয়ে
চলো আজচোখ বুঁজে একঝাঁপে পার হয়ে যাই
ফিরে যাবো কোনো এক অলৌকিক কিশোরীবেলায়
বানভাসি বুকে নিয়ে বাতাসের ভিজে হাত ধরে।

### নদী

তন্দ্রা ব্যানার্জী

কীর্তিনাশা বয়ে চলে যায়
জীবনের মাঝখান দিয়ে
দুধারে চিকন বালি, সোনাগুঁড়ো
হাড় আর কড়ি ঝিকমিক
এ ঘাটে দাঁড়িয়ে দ্যাখো
সহমরণের মেয়ে একা একা
কপালে সিঁদূর আর
লাল চেলি আঁচলে আগুন
ওর চোখে এখনো রয়েছে
শুভদৃষ্টির আবছা ঘোর
বিসর্জনের প্রতিমার মতো
গর্জনতেল-মাখা চিবুকের ডৌল
কীর্তিনাশা, ঠাঁই দাও ওকে।

তন্দ্রা বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় পেশায় গ্রাফিক ডিজাইনার, যাদবপুর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় থেকে বাংলা ও ইংরেজি ভাষায় স্নাতকোত্তর উপাধি অর্জনকারী। দুটি ভাষায় লেখালেখি করেছেন অনেক লিটল ম্যাগাজিনে, ছবিও আঁকেন এবং প্রদর্শনী করেছেন।

#### মানুষ

#### আরতি পালিত

করবো আমরা দুঃখ জয় মানব জাতির।
করবো আমরা দুঃখ জয় পশুপাখীর।
মানুষ আমরা মানুষ হয়েছি সকলের তরে,
মানুষের মত মানুষ হয়ে বাঁচব বলে।
নিজের সুখে সুখী আমরা নিজের দুঃখে দুঃখ পাই।
পরকে আপন করতে নারি পরের জন্য দুঃখ নাই।
এরই নাম কি মানুষ?
রক্তে মাংসে গড়া আমরা সকলের রক্ত লাল,
একই রক্ত সবার শরীরে মানুষ কিন্তু ভেজাল।
জাতিভেদ নিয়ে করি দ্ব আমরা দুরে থাকো কাছে
নাহি এস,

ব্রাহ্মণ আমি শুদ্র তুমি একথা মনে রেখো।
মানুষের মাঝে মানুষ আমরা, আমরা সকলের তরে
মানুষ হয়ে এসেছি ধরে মানুষ হয়ে বাঁচব বলে।

#### নদী

#### আরতি পালিত

তোমার তীরে সকলে মিলে, খেলাম মনের মতো ভোজ, ঘরে ফিরে তোমার আর কেউ করিনা খোঁজ। নদী তুমি আপন মনে আপন বেগে যাও, পিছন ফিরে কভু নাহি চাও। এক ফোঁটা জল দিয়ে প্রাণ বাঁচাও তুমি, গ্রাম ভাসাও শহর ভাসাও নদী মাতৃভূমি।

#### DI

#### আরতি পালিত

সকালের ঘুম ভাঙে এক কাপ চা পেলে, রমনীর রাগ ভাঙে এক কাপ চা দিলে, ট্রেনে উঠবার পর মরি চা তরে, স্টেশন এলে চ্যায় গরম চ্যায় গরম করে জানালার ধরে।

মনটা শান্তি পায় পেয়ে গেছি চা,

যত দূর ট্রেন যায় আর চিন্তা নাই।

জল চিনি চা দুধ মিশ্রণে হয় চা।

পরিমাণে ঠিক হলে চা হয় ঠিক,

পরিমাণে ভুল হলে চা হয় বেঠিক।

এক চুমুক চায়ের কি মহিমা

মনের মত চা পেলে খুঁজি তার ঠিকানা।

ছোট বড় কে না ভালবাসে চা

চায়ের মহিমা সকলকেই টানে

কাজ করার শক্তি বাড়ে মনে আর প্রাণে।

চা চা করো কেন? এস বস আহারে।

আহারের পরে চুমুক দাও এক কাপ চা পরে।



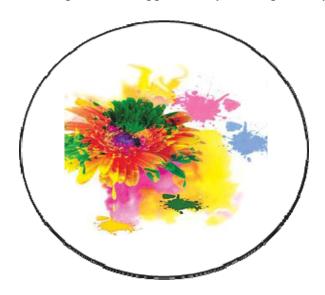
**আরতি পালিত** দুর্গাপুর নিবাসী, উৎসব সদস্য শুল্রা মুখার্জীর মা। উনি স্যাক্রামেন্টোতে এসে উৎসবের সাথে পরিচিত হন।

#### Love

#### Sibaprasad Raychaudhuri

Respect may be to please,
love fails when you try to please.
Love is not to have the pleasure by pleasing someone;
love is the pleasure that pleases you.
Love is that smiley face, love are those innocent bright eyes.

Love is that smell of your hair,
which makes the Jasmine that sparkly white.
Love is that flower, the flowing brook,
that you want to see again and again.
Love is that spirit which appreciates your deep blue eyes.



Love is beyond where the sky meets the meadow!

Love is that charm, love is that poem

which you recite in your dreams.

Love is the pleasure that pleases me.

Sibaprasad Raychaudhuri, Professor, School of Medicine, University of California, Davis.



1337 Mission Ave., Carmichael, CA 95608, Phone: (916) 489-5137 Email: society@vedantasacto.org, website: www.vedantasacto.org

> Swami Prapannananda: Minister and Teacher Swami Ishadhyanananda: Assistant Minister

The Society was started in 1949 and made a branch of Ramakrishna Math, Belur Math, India, in 1952.

#### Activities at a Glance:

- Daily worship and group meditation in the chapel, and vesper service on Sundays.
- Sunday service, Wednesday evening classes on Vedanta scriptures,
   Saturday evening classes on the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami
   Vivekananda, and also interviews to students and spiritual aspirants.
- Several lectures outside the Society.
- Celebration of the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada
   Devi and Swami Vivekananda, and also a few other festivals.
- Spiritual Retreats
- A library and a reading room and a bookshop.
- The Santodyan (Garden of Saints), a beautiful 4-acre retreat located behind the Society, is extensively used by the devotees.

#### Bookstore:

Our bookstore has a good selection of Vedanta, Ramakrishna, and Vivekananda literature; and books about the lives and teachings of saints in all major spiritual traditions. CDs and DVDs of classical music and spiritual topics are also available, as well as incense and burners, and a small selection of spiritual art objects.

Please visit our website to view the catalog of books.

Bookstore Timings: Tuesday: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesday: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Thursday: 2 pm to 5 pm, Saturday: 12:00 to 2:00 p.m., Sunday: 12:00 to 2:00 pm.

Telephone: 916-489-2116; E-mail: <a href="mailto:vedantabookstore@zoho.com">vedantabookstore@zoho.com</a>.

# প্রবন্ধ

# Articles



#### আমার বাবা

মঞ্জু রায়চৌধুরী

আজকে যার কথা বলতে সবচেয়ে বেশি ইচ্ছে হচ্ছে তিনি আমার বাবা। ১৯৭৫ এ তিনি পরলোকে গেছেন, আমার স্মৃতিতে একেবারে সমুজ্জুল। একটা ঘটনা বলি আমি দেখিনি, মায়ের কাছে শোনা। বাবা ডাক্তার হবার পর বসে না থেকে উড়িষ্যার তালচের নাম কোনো জায়গায় চাকরি নিয়ে যান. বোধহয় কোলিয়ারি ছিল। তিনি ওই আত্মীয় পরিজন ছাড়া দেশে বিশেষ একলা বোধ করতেন। একটি ক্লাব আবিষ্কার করে সেখানে যাতায়াত সাইকেলে চডে। করতেন, বাবার ঘরের কাজ করতো একটি বালক বললে হয়, তার নাম মার যাবার কোনো উপায় নেই, নিজের ছেলেরা ছিল, আবার হতে যাচ্ছিলো। বাডিও দারভাঙ্গায় ঠাকুর্দার বাড়িতে বেশ গোছানো নয়. রাজসিক থাকা, অতএব! সে অন্য গল্প।

একদিন হলো কি, বাবা অনেক রাত্রে বাড়ি অনেক দূর থেকে দুটো দেখছেন হেডলাইটের আলো। ভাবছেন এতো রাত্রে কোনো লরি আসেনা। কি ব্যাপার? বেশি বলবো না. কাছাকাছি আস্তে আস্তে দেখলেন রাস্তায় কালভার্টের উপর মুখোমুখি বসে আছে দুটি ব্যাঘ্রপুঙ্গর! অসীম সাহসী লোক, তারও তখন সাহস চলে গেছে। পেছনে ফিরলে প্রাণ যায়, সামনে এগোলেও প্রাণপনে খুব স্পীডে সাইকেল চালিয়ে মাঝখান দিয়ে চলে গেলেন। ঘাড়ের ওপর কেউ লাফ দিয়ে পডেনি. বিশ্বাস হচ্ছে না। শেষ পর্যন্ত বাড়ি পৌঁছেই সাইকেল আছড়ে ফেলে জিবছাকে গলা ধরে তুলে তার খাটিয়ায় শয়ন। সে বুঝেছিলো কিছ। দিন পরের সকালে অন্য ডাক্তার প্রতিবেশীদের খবর দেয়। তিনি প্রচন্ড জুরে বেহুঁশ ছিলেন। এক সপ্তাহ কিছু বলতে পারেননি।

আমার মায়ের অবস্থা অনুমান করা যায়। বাবা সাড়ে তিন বছর বয়েসে মাতৃহারা। বড় হয়ে দেখেছি তিনি সকালে রোজ বেরোবার আগে মায়ের ছবিতে পূজা-প্রণাম করতেন। মায়ের বিশ্বাস বাঘের মুখ থেকে তিনিই ছেলেকে বাঁচিয়েছেন। এর পরে আমার মা বলেছেন, তিনি তার শাশুড়িকে স্বপ্নে দেখেছেন। বাবা উড়িষ্যার চাকরি ছাড়লেন, ভারতীয় রেলেতে চাকরি পেলেন, উত্তরপ্রদেশে এলেন এবং শেষ পর্যন্ত ছিলেন।

কলকাতায় বাবার স্কুলজীবন নিজের কাকার বাড়ী থেকে। তারপর মেডিকেল কলেজ. সেখানে থাকতেই বিয়ে | তখন ওটাই রেওয়াজ। এরপর পরে চাকরি। দারভাঙ্গায়। তারও কলকাতার ভালোবাসা কি যায়? বাবার শৃশুরবাডী, বাডী, বাবার ছোটভাইয়ের বাড়ী। ঠাকুমার ছেলে। আরো আছে কম বয়েসের থিয়েটার দেখা। "চিরকুমার সভা" এতো ভালো লেগেছিলো পরপর ৭ দিন দেখেছেন ( অবশ্যই গানগুলি), কলেজে থাকাকালে। চাকরি জীবনে বেশি উপায় নেই।

আমার কলেজ তখন বন্ধ ছিল, বাবাকে বললাম "অনেক দিন কলকাতা যাওয়া হয়নি। " বাবা "চলো যাবে?" আধঘন্টার মধ্যে তৈরী। বললেন, তারপর দেরাদুন এক্সপ্রেস বাবার ফেভারিট, ভোরবেলা হাওডা পৌঁছবে। ট্যাক্সির লাইন নেই। আগে জানা থাকলে মামাবাড়ীর গাড়ী আসক আমরা বেশ আড্ডায় জমে আছি। তখন স্টেশন মনে নেই। বেশ গোধূলি বেলা। দাঁড়িয়ে আছে। একটু পরে খাওয়া যাবে। এমন সময়ে দুটি যুবক রেল লাইনে ঘুরছিলো অনেকেই দেখেছে। একজন আমাদের জানালায় ঢোকবার চেষ্টা করছে, পাখির মতো করে পা ঢুকিয়ে। তখন জানলায় গরাদ থাকতো না। সবাই হ্যাঁ হ্যাঁ করে চেঁচিয়ে উঠলে লোকটা ডাকছে অন্য একজনকে "কমরেড ইধর আজা" হিন্দিতে।

ওখানে একজন মহিলা অসুস্থ অবস্থায় মনে হয় শুয়ে পায়ের কাছে জড়সড় ভদ্রলোক বসে আছে. ওর স্বামী হয়তো। তারও কিছু বলার শক্তি নেই। ততক্ষনে ট্রেন সিগন্যাল পেয়েছে, ছাড়বে। আমি স্তব্ধ বসে আছি। বাবা বললেন "ইয়ে কেয়া বততমীজি হ্যায় ?" তখন আবার ও কমরেড কে বাবা স্থির হয়ে বললেন "আও কমরেড কে বচ্চে। থোড়া চাখো।" বলে কিছু উত্তম-মধ্যম দেওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করে. কলার ধরাই ছিল। টেন তখন চলতে শুরু করেছে। অতএব ওই ছোকরাকে বাইরে নিক্ষেপ করলেন। ঠাগু এরপর বেশ চেহারায় দরজাটি বন্ধ করে এলেন। তারও পরে সাবান দিয়ে হাতটি ধুয়ে এলেন। ভাবখানা, খেতে বসতেও পারেন। একজন ভদ্রলোক বাংক থেকে নেমে এসে বললেন "বাঙালির বাহুতে এতো বল রয়েছে. আমার ভেবে আনন্দ হচ্ছে।" ওর কাছে বসে থাকা লোকটি হিন্দিতে ধন্যবাদ দিলেন। সত্যি সত্যি তিনি অতি সুমিষ্ট ভাবে গরহণ করলেন। আমি বাবাকে বলেছিলাম খাবার কথা। দুপুরে বেশি লেট করে ফিরলে লাঞ্চ করতেন ১ গ্লাস ঘোলের সেদিনও তাই. শরবত। ভাত খেতেন না। খাওয়া হয়নি। বাডীর খাবার ছিল তাতে মাংস বেশী ঝোল কম, ক্যাটারার যা দেয় তাতে মাংস কম, ঝোল বেশী। তিনি অনায়াসে খেতে বসলেন এবং আমাকে বারবার নেবার জন্য বলতে লাগলেন যেন কিছুই হয়নি। এই আমার বাবা !!! তিনি অন্যায় সহ্য করতে পারতেন না। বাবার মাতৃবিয়োগ হলে ঠাকুর্দ্দা দুর্ব্বল হয়ে পড়েছিলেন। তার চার কন্যা এবং একটি পুত্র রেখে কাজ করা অসম্ভব তিনি রাজপুতানার চাকরী ছেড়ে পডল| একবছর অপেক্ষা করে শেষে মনিরামপুর থেকে বিয়ে বার কর্লেন তার নাম উনি বিমাতা ছিলেন না. সত্যিই মা ' পষ্পলতা' । হতে পেরেছিলেন। দাদুর মেয়েরা বেশ নাম মিলিয়ে বিদ্যুৎলতা, স্বর্ণলতা, হেমলতা, স্নেহলতা করে মোট ৭ টি লতা ছিলেন। তখন যে রাগ্লা

সে "রসোইয়া।" খাওয়াতো রাজপুতানা থেকে সে নেপালী এবং রসিক। এলেও আমি দেখেছি তাকে। কাছে আসতেন বৃদ্ধ বয়েসে। বাবার বাবাকে খোকা বলে ডাকতেন, বাবা নিজের টেবিলে বসিয়ে খাওয়াতেন। বাবার ছেলেবেলায় সত্যই হয়তো বেশি রাখতে নানা গল্পো আছে। হয়নি। ছোটদের শেখাচ্ছে. বাজার ডাকাডাকি করবি খাবার দিতে. কি এতো রাম্না করছো?" আমি তখন বলবো "বয়গন কি কোফতা অউর ঠান্ডি পোলাও।" সেটা কি বুঝলি না? বেগুনপোড়া আর পান্তা ভাত। দাদুর মেয়েরা সবাই ছোটটি 'বনলতা'। এবার বললেন ঘরপোছা লতা। হিন্দি শব্দ বুঝলিনা? বাবা রাসোইয়ার ছেলেকে শিক্ষিত করেছিলেন, কম্পউত্তার হয়েছিল। তার ছেলে আবার 'মিডল ইস্ট' এ চলে যায়। তার শেষ খবর আমরা কেউ জানি না। বাবা নিজে একটি 'সেলফ-মেড-ম্যান', ছাত্ৰ ভালো ম্যাট্রিক পাস করার সময় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ছিলেন। ভূগোলে সর্বোচ্চ মার্ক্স পেয়ে একটি স্বর্ণ পদক পান। আমার সযতেু রাখলেও, চাবি নিয়ে আলমারী খুলে কেও সেটি সরিয়ে ফেলে। বাবার পুরস্কার আমাদের কাছে অমূল্য ছিল, সোনা দিয়ে না। বাবার জন্য কোনো টিউটর লাগেনি কোনদিন। নিজের খেয়ালে যা মনে হতো করে ফেলতেন। ক্লাব থেকে বাবুর্চি কে নিয়ে এলেন আমাদের বিদেশী রান্না শেখাবে। সপ্তাহে একদিন ব্রেড রোল, ফিশ মেয়োনীজ, আসতে লাগলো। ইংলিশ মটন রোস্ট। মাঝখান থেকে আমরা সূপ ইত্যাদি যোগ করে ভালোভালো খাই সেদিন। নটেগাছটি মুড়োতে সময় লাগেনি। আমি কলকাতা এলাম বিয়ের পর। সেখানে বয়স্করা মাংস খেতেন মাছ অবশ্য রোজ হতো | কোন বাবুর্চির (১৯৫১ সালে) বাড়ীতে আসার প্রশুই ওঠেনা। সেইসব ওভেন ও নেই. চিকেন ঢুকতোনা। গ্যাস আসবার পর অনেক কিছু করেছি।

আরেকটা খেয়ালের গল্প বলছি। এখন যেমন পমফ্রেট মাছ পাওয়া যায়, তখন যেত না। বোম্বে মেইল ট্রেনটিতে পাওয়া যেত ডাইনিং কার এ। আমার মনে পরে তাকে বলা হতো বোম্বে ডাক। স্টেশন পর্যন্ত রোজই বেড়াতেন, ইটা কাশীর কথা। বেয়ারাদের জানাছিল, আমার বাবার চায়, ওরা রেখে দিতো। এখন কলকাতায় আর এখানেও পমফ্রেট ছড়াছড়ি। দাম যাই হোক। এই বেয়ারা জি এফ কেলনার এর, তারা আদ্দিকালের লোক, যাত্রীদের খাবার ক্যাটার করতো। এখন উঠে গেছে।

আমার বাবা নিজে নিষ্ঠাবান হিন্দু হলেও অন্য কোনো ধর্মে বিদ্বেষ করতেন না। সকলের সঙ্গে মেলামেশা, খাওয়া দাওয়া করতেন চিকিৎসা ছাড়াও। তিনি নিজে সুপুরুষ ছিলেন এবং হাসিখুশিও। বাবা হিন্দি আর উর্দু বলতে পারতেন স্বচ্ছন্দে। একটুও লিখতে শেখেননি। দারভাঙ্গায় যাতায়াতের কারণে মৈথিলী বলতেন অতি শুদ্ধ ভাবে। অনেকে হয়তো জানেন এই ভাষায় রচিত বিদ্যাপতির কথা। বাবার হয়ে বলতেন গোলে এটুকু বলতে পারি সততার প্রতিমূর্তির প্রতীক তিনি। উচ্চশিক্ষার জন্য লন্ডনে যাবার ইচ্ছা সত্ত্বেও যেতে পারেননি। সংসারে জডিয়ে গিয়ে। তারও আকার ছোট নয়. নিজের পুত্র কন্যা ছাড়া বেকার ভাই, ঠাকুর্দ্দার বৃদ্ধাবস্থার

পরিচর্যা, এইসব বাধা হয়ে দাঁড়ালো। ডাক্তারি যত উন্নত হয়েছে বাবার পড়াশোনা চলেছে। সরকারি বেতন ছাড়া আয় নেই। ওই হাসপাতালে রেলওয়ে কর্মচারীরা ফ্রী চিকিৎসা পায়। তার পরিচিত কিছু লোক কল দিলে টাকা দিতো, সে সামান্যই। আমার মনে পড়ে হাসপাতালে চক্ষু পরীক্ষা চলছে, বাবা খেতে এলেন না। যারা লাল সবুজ দেখতে পায়না তারা টাকা খাইয়ে পাস। এখানে সেটি চলবে না। সিগনালের বাবু ফেল, ডাক্তারবাবুও ফেল। নিজের বাড়ী হলোনা।

আমার ঠাকুর্দ্দা ভাগলপুর (বিহারে) একটি বাগান সমেত বাড়ী করেছিলেন। অবসর নিয়ে বাবা সেখানে আড্ডা গাড়লেন। দাদু ইতিমধ্যে কাশীতে চলে গেছেন। বাবা পৈতৃক বাড়ীতে শেষ পর্যন্ত ছিলেন। একদিন প্রাতঃকালে মায়ের সঙ্গে বসে চা খেয়ে বিনা কস্টে ইহলোক ত্যাগ করলেন। সেদিন রথযাত্রা ছিল। অনেকে বললো জগন্ধাথ হাত ধরে নিজের রথে তুলে নিয়ে গেলেন।

শারদীয়া শুভেচ্ছা রইলো। সকলের মঙ্গল হোক।

মঞ্জু রায়চৌধুরী, অশীতিপর, গ্র্যানাইট বে - তে অবসর জীবন যাপন করছেন। বাংলা ভাষা, রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্য ও সংগীতের প্রতি তার আনুগত্য তাঁকে লেখালেখি ও পড়াশোনায় ব্যস্ত রাখে।

## ভায়রা- ভাই

#### গৌতম সরকার

একই সাথে কান ধরে বেঞ্চের উপর দাঁড়ানো, বা ক্লাসরুমের বাইরে নীলডাউন হবার পর স্কুলের বন্ধুরা যখন হয় ভায়রাভাই!

ধ্রুবর সাথে আলাপ সেই ৭০-এর দশকের শেষার্ধ থেকে, যখন আমরা একসাথে বালিগঞ্জ গভর্নমেন্ট হাই স্কুলের ক্লাস ওয়ান এ ভর্তি হলাম। স্কুলে যাতায়াত করতাম স্কুলের বাসে। বালিগঞ্জের বাড়ি থেকে কয়েক পা হাঁটলেই গোলপার্ক, আর সেখান থেকেই স্কুলের বাসে ওঠা-নামা। ভোরবেলা তো মা ভালোয় ভালোয় বাসে উঠিয়ে দিতেন। কিন্ত ফেরার সময়? যদি ঠিক স্কুল বাসে না উঠি, বা বাস থেকে ভুল জায়গায় নেমে পড়ি, তাহলে? তাতেই মায়ের চিন্তার শেষ ছিল না। মা মোটেই রাজি ছিলেন না যে আমি এতো দূরে কোথাও স্কুলে যাই (আসলে কিন্তু হেঁটেই যাওয়া যায়।)। বাড়ির কাছেই তো জগবন্ধু (জগদন্ধু), আর তা না হলে আর দু পা এগোলেই পাঠভবন বা সাউথ পয়েন্ট, তা হলে? কিন্তু বাবা-কাকারা নাছোড়বান্দা। এই স্কুল থেকে নাকি প্রত্যেক বছরই স্কুল-ফাইনালে ' স্ট্যান্ড' করে, কোনো কোনো বছর নাকি ফার্স্ট-সেকেন্ড-থার্ড সব একই সাথে। তা ছাডা কে নাকি একজন সত্যজিৎ রায় এই স্কুলেরই ছাত্র ছিলেন। অগত্যা মায়ের বারণ ধোপে টিকলো না।

মা তাই রোজ পাখি পড়ানোর মতো করে আমাকে স্কুলবাসে ওঠার আগে বলে দিতেন যে "স্কুল ফেরত ওই যখন গোলপার্কের বিবেকানন্দের মাথা দেখতে পাবে, জানবে তখনই বাস থেকে নামতে হবে"। আমার কি ছাই আর অত মনে থাকে, যে কখন বিবেকানন্দের মাথা দেখতে হবে? কিন্তু হুসেনদার (ড্রাইভার) স্কুলবাসে আরো একজন থাকতেন, যার কাজই ছিল আমাদের ঠিকঠাক নামিয়ে দেওয়া। বয়সে হয়তো তিনি আমার বাবার চেয়েও বড়, কিন্তু সবাই তাকে বলতো 'ধ্রুবদা'। ভারবেলা মায়ের কথা তাই আর তেমন গায়ে মাখতাম না, জানতাম যে আমি ভুলে গেলেও ধ্রুবদা ঠিক জায়গায় নামিয়ে দেবেন। এরই সাথে আর একটা জিনিস নজরে এল, আমাদের ক্লাসের

ওই কালো করে ছেলেটা; যে ওই পার্ক-সার্কাসের মাঠের দিকটায় স্কুলবাসে নাম ওঠা করে, ওর নামও তো ধ্রুব।

তারপর কোথা দিয়ে সময় চলে গেলো। মর্নিং-সেকশন, 'মুনমুন সেন' পাড়ি দিয়ে আমরা পাড়ি জমালাম ডে-সেকশনে। বেশ বন্ধুত্ব হয়েছে ততদিনে ধ্রুবর সাথে। একবার একটা কথা শুনে কেমন যেন অদ্ভূত মনে হলো ছেলেটাকে; ও নাকি বড় হয়ে ইন্ডিয়ান ক্রিকেট টিমের ক্যাপ্টেন হতে চায়. এ কেমন কথা? আমি তো জানতাম বড় হয়ে ডাক্তার বা ইঞ্জিনিয়ার হতে হয়।

এর মধ্যেই মা পাড়ি দিলেন অন্য এক জগতে। সব কিছুই কেমন ওলট-পালট হয়ে গেলো, পৃথিবীটাই কেমন যেন ফ্যাকাশে, বিশ্বাদ আর পানসে হয়ে গেলো। এইসবের মধ্যেও ধ্রুবর উপস্থিতি ছিল বিশেষ ভাবে।

ক্লাস সেভেন থেকে আর স্কুলবাসে যাতায়াত করা যায় না। অগত্যা পাবলিক-বাস। কিন্তু কিছুদিনের মধ্যেই ডানা গজালো আমাদের। স্কুল ফেরত পাবলিক বাসের বদলে যদি হেঁটে যাওয়া খানিকটা পথ, বা পুরোটাই; তাহলে? তাহলে তো ক্লাসের আড্ডাটা আরও একটু বাড়ানো যায়, কি? তেমনই হলো। স্কুল থেকে বালিগঞ্জ সার্কুলার রোড ধরে হেঁটে, সুচিত্রা সেন - মুনমুন সেনদের বাডি পেডিয়ে বালিগঞ্জ সাইন্স কলেজ ছাডিয়ে সোজা বালিগঞ্জ ফাঁড়ী। সেখান থেকে ধ্রুব বাসে যেত আর আমি একটু পার্ক- সার্কাসের দিকে, উল্টোমুখে গড়িয়াহাট-গোলপার্কের দিকে। আরও কয়েকজন থাকতো, সুমন্ত (চক্রবর্তী), (চন্দ্রনাথ রায়চৌধুরী), হোজো (জ্যোতির্ময় দত্ত), ইন্দ্র (ইন্দ্রনীল চ্যাটার্জী), কল্লোল (রায়) মাঝেসাঝে যোগ দিত প্রমিত (মুখার্জী), গৌরাঙ্গরা (চ্যাটাজী)। মাঝপথে সপ্তপণীতে সুমন্তর বাডিতে আড্ডা হতো অনেক সময়। ধ্রুবর সাথে বন্ধুতু। এখন থেকে আর শুধু স্কুল আর স্কুল ফেরত রাস্তায় নয়, একে অপরের বাড়িতেও যাতায়াত শুরু হলো, আড্ডাও বাড়লো। ধ্রুবর

বাড়িতে গেলে কাকু- কাকিমা (ধ্রুবর মা- বাবা) খুশি হতেন, বিশেষতঃ কাকিমা। মনে হতো যে কিছুক্ষনের জন্য হলেও, উনি আমার মায়ের অভাবটা কোনো না কোনো ভাবে পুষিয়ে দিতে চান।

একই সাথে জুটি বেঁধে আমি আর ধ্রুব জিতেছিলাম আমাদের স্কুলের বাৎসরিক ক্যারাম-চ্যাম্পিয়নশিপ, আমাদের ক্লাস ৯ এ, এমনকি স্কুলের ১০, ১১ বা ১২ এর বড় বড় দাদাদেরও হারিয়ে দিয়ে।

মাধ্যমিক এলো, গেলো। তেমন কিছুই টের পেলাম না। শুনেছিলাম আমাদের স্কুলের ফেল করা ছেলেও নাকি মাধ্যমিকে ফার্স্থ ডিভিশন পায়, ঠিক তেমনটাই হলো, সেটাই দেখলাম। উচ্চমাধ্যমিক এলো। সবার মধ্যেই আই আই টি. আর জয়েন্ট এন্ট্রান্স- পরীক্ষায় বসার হিড়িক পড়ে গেলো, ডাক্তার, ইঞ্জিনিয়ার হবার বাসনায়। ধ্রুবর মধ্যে এই ব্যাপারে তেমন কোনো হেলদোল দেখলাম না. ও বোধহয় বেশি ব্যস্ত ছিল ইন্ডিয়ান ক্রিকেট টিমের সাফল্য কামনায়।

ওই সময় নাগাদ ধ্রুব মাঝেসাঝেই নর্থ-বেঙ্গলে ওর কাকাদের বাড়িতে বেড়াতে যেত স্কুলের ছুটিতে. ফিরে এসে আমাকে ওদিককার গল্প শোনাতো: ওদিককার মানুষরা নাকি অন্য রকম, এদিককার থেকে ভালো। ওখানে নাকি অমুক বাড়ির তমুক কাকিমা তমুক বাড়ির তমুক মামিমার বাড়ি বেড়াতে গিয়ে নির্বিকার ভাবে কুটনো কেটে বা বাটনা বেটে গল্পগুজব সেরে দিব্যি নিজের বাড়ি ফেরত আসেন। আমারও আর কলকাতায় মন টিকছিল না। বাইরে কোথাও যাবো সেটাই মনে মনে ঠিক করলাম। কিন্তু নৰ্থ- বেঙ্গল আমার মনে তখন নয়. শুধুই আমেরিকা।

কিন্তু মুখ ফুটে বাড়ির কাউকে সে কথা বলার সাহস পেলাম না, ছোট মুখে বড় কথা, বামন হয়ে চাঁদ ধরা - এইসব শোনার ভয়ে। বাড়িতে লুকিয়ে লুকিয়েই শুরু করলাম মার্কিন ইউনিভার্সিটিগুলোতে এপ্লাই করা, আর SAT-TOEFL পরীক্ষার প্রস্তুতি। কিন্তু এইসব করতে টাকা লাগে যে। তা পাবো কোথায়? কয়েকটা প্রাইভেট টিউটরিং শুরু করলাম। কিন্তু তা যথেষ্ট নয়। এতো কথা পেটে চেপে রাখতে পারছিলাম না। বলেই ফেললাম দুই-একজনকে। ধ্রুব তাদের একজনা শুনে ও অবাক হলো না খুশি

হলো তা ঠিক বুঝতে পারলাম না। ও শুধু জিজ্ঞেস করলো যে কত টাকা লাগবে আমার, ওই পরীক্ষা দুটোয় বসতে?

দিন কয়েক বাদে দেখি ও সকাল সকাল এসে হাজির আমার কাছে। এই সময়েতে তো ও এমনিতে আসে না। বললাম কি রে, কি ব্যাপার, এতো সকাল সকাল? দেখি ও ওর পকেট থেকে টাকা বার করছে। বললো "নে এই টাকা কটা রাখ, দেখছি আর কি করা যায় তোর ঐ SAT-TOEFL-এর জন্য।" এবারেও 'পরিত্রাতা ধ্রুব', শুধু 'দা' - টা বাদে।

৩০০ টাকা। ওই সময় আমার কাছে অনেক। হিসাব করে দেখলাম যে এতে আমার TOEFL-এর ফী হয়ে যাবে। আর আমার টিউটরিং থেকে SAT-এর ফী। কেল্লা ফতে। বন্ধুর বাড়ি পড়তে যাচ্ছি -এই মিথ্যা ফেঁদে বাড়ি থেকে পালিয়ে পরীক্ষা দুটো দিলাম, পাল্লা দিয়ে চালালাম এপ্লিকেশন করা। ক্রমে বাড়িতে জানাতে বাধ্য হলাম। আমেরিকা থেকে চিঠি-পত্র আসতে লাগলো বাড়িতে, যে না জানিয়ে আর উপায় ছিল না। তারপর একদিন এলো সেই বহু আকাঙ্খিত চিঠিটা - একসেপ্টেন্সে লেটার, উইথ ক্ষলারশিপ।

ধ্রুব এমনিই একদিন দেখা করতে এসেছিলো (তখন আমাদের বাড়িতে ফোন ছিল না।) ওকে জানালাম। শুনে আমাদের শোয়ার ঘরটার মধ্যেই ও বার কয়েক লাফালো, তারপর জড়িয়ে ধরে, চুমুখেয়ে, একেবারে একাকার কান্ড। আমার দেশ ছাড়ার দিনও ও এসেছিলো, দমদম-এয়ারপোর্ট পর্যন্ত। সেদিন আর কোনো লম্ফ-ঝম্প ছিল না। বিদায় জানানোর সময় শুধু দেখলাম যে ওর চোখের কোণ থেকে ঝরে পড়লো কয়েক দানা মুক্ত। আমিও মুখ লুকিয়ে হাঁটা দিলাম এমিগ্রেশন অফিসের দিকে।

এরপর আটলান্টিক আর প্যাসিফিক ছাড়াও আমাদের আলাদা করে প্রায় বারো ঘন্টার 'টাইম-ডিফারেন্স', আমাদের দৈনন্দিন জীবনের রুটিন আর আমাদের সামগ্রিক জীবনধারার তফাৎ, প্রায় বছর ২৫ যাবত। তারই মাঝে যতবার ভারতে এসেছি, ওর সামিধ্য পেয়েছি খুব কাছ থেকে, কলকাতায়, মুর্শিদাবাদে, শিলিগুড়িতে। ও ঠিক মনে রাখে যে আমি কোন ধরনের গল্পের বই পড়তে বা গান শুনতে ভালোবাসি, তাই আগাম কিনে বা জোগাড় করে রাখে সেগুলো আমার জন্য। এগুলোর অনেক

কিছুই আমেরিকাতেও পাওয়া যায়, কিন্তু ওর কাছ থেকে পেতেই আমার বেশি ভালো লাগে. গল্পের স্বাদ বেডে যায়. গানগুলো যেন আরো বেশি শ্রুতিমধুর লাগে। ওর ধারণা যে ওর দীর্ঘদিন যাবত আমেরিকা-বাসী বন্ধু বোধহয় আর ভারতীয় বিধি-ব্যবস্থায় ততটা সড়গড় নয়, তাই দেখা করার সময়ও আগলে রাখে আমাকে (অনেকটা আমার দাদার মতন, দাদার কথা পরে লিখব।) আমাকে ওর কাছে যেতে হতো না. ওই আসে আমার সাথে দেখা করতে, যখন, যেখানে, যেমন ভাবে সম্ভব। একসাথে কোথাও যাওয়ার থাকলে ওই এসে আমাকে নিয়ে যায়, ট্রাম, বাস, ট্যাক্সি বা ট্রেন-এমনও হয়েছে যে আমি ওর বাড়ি থেকে গেছি আমার 'মুর্শিদাবাদের' দেশের বাড়িতে, কিন্তু টেনের টিকিটটা পয়সা খরচ করে কেটে আমাকে ট্রেনে উঠিয়ে দিয়েছে ওই. ট্রেন ছাডা পর্যন্ত আমার জানলার পাশে প্রাটফমর্মে ঠাই দাঁডিয়ে থেকে।

এই সূত্রেই সম্প্রতি সম্ভব হলো ওর শালীর সাথে আমার বিয়ে; কারণ আমেরিকা থেকে আমি যখন কলকাতায় এসেছিলাম, তখন হঠাৎ করে ধ্রুব ওর কর্মস্থল শিলিগুড়িতে আমাকে ওর কাছে বেড়াতে না নিয়ে এলে হয়তো এমনটা হওয়ার কোনো সম্ভাবনাই ছিল না। এই প্রসঙ্গে একটা মজার ব্যাপার মনে পড়ে। আমরা যখন ক্লাস সেভেন বা এইটে পড়ি, ধ্রুব তখন একাই একদিন এক অদ্ভূত সমীক্ষা চালিয়েছিল, আমাদের ২০ মিনিটের টিফিন-ব্রেকটার মধ্যেই। সেইদিন ও আমাদের ঘনিষ্ঠ বন্ধু বান্ধবদের একক আর আলাদা ভাবে জিগ্যেস করেছিল যে সুযোগ হলে আমরা অন্য কোনো ক্লাসমেটের

সাথে একসাথে থাকতে চাইবো কিনা, রুমমেট বা একিই পরিবারের সদস্য হিসাবে। যে কোনো দুই বন্ধুর ইচ্ছা আর উত্তর মিলেমিশে এক হয়ে যায় কিনা সেটা জেনে নেওয়াই ছিল ওর উদ্দেশ্য। এমনটা যা বাস্তবে সম্ভব, তা কিন্তু ভেবেছিলো ওই ছোট্ট ধ্রুবই। এই প্রসঙ্গে জানিয়ে রাখা ভালো যে সেদিন আমার সাথে যার উত্তর মিলে গিয়েছিলো, সে ধ্রুব নয়, তপদেব (চক্রবর্তী), যে কিনা আজ বহুদিন যাবত ইংল্যাভবাসী।

বন্ধু তো ও ছিলই, বরাবরই। ধ্রুব এখন আমার ভাইরাভাইও বটে। আমি ভাগ্যবান। এ ছাডা আর কী বা বলতে পারি? আমরা একই পরিবারের সদস্য, সেটাই বা আর আশ্চর্য কি? বিয়ে উপলক্ষে ধ্রুবকে বেশ কয়েকদিন একসাথে খুব কাছে পেলাম। ওর শালীর সাথে ওর বন্ধুর বিয়েতে ওর ছুটো-ছুটি. দৌড-ঝাঁপের কোনো অন্ত ছিল না। করতে কলকাতা থেকে আমি যখন সপরিবারে শিলিগুডি এসে পৌছালাম. তখন নিউ জলপাইগুডি স্টেশনে আমাদের নিতে এসেছিলো ধ্রুব। লগ্নে ফুল দিয়ে সাজানো গাডিতেও আমাকে নিয়ে যেতে এসেছিলো ওই। ওর শোয়ার ঘরে. বিছানায় বাসর-রাত কাটালাম - বৌ সাথে থাকলেও মনের অনেকটা জায়গা জুডে ছিল শুধুই ধ্রুব। মনে হলো যে বিগত ২৫ বছর কখন যেন তলিয়ে গেছে ওই আটলান্টিক বা প্যাসিফিকের কোন এক অতল গহুরে।

পুন\*চ: - ধ্রুব এখন পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকারের মস্ত অফিসার। সরকারি কাজেই সম্প্রতি ঘুরে গেছে অক্সফোর্ড ইউনিভার্সিটি থেকে।

# বাঙালীখানা

त्रिभा नन्दी

"হোয়াট ডু ইউ কল দোস রাউভ স্টাফ লাইক ডোনাটস বাট হ্যাভ এয়ার পকেটস ইনসাইড এন্ড ডিপ ফ্রাইড?" ক্যারির প্রশ্ন শুনে কয়েক মুহূর্ত লাগল বুঝতে, তারপর ওকে বললাম - ওহ -ওটাকে বলে লুচি। ইয়েস, লুছি, লুছি, করতে করতে মাথা নেড়ে চলে গেলো, একটু পরে ফিরে এসে বলে "আই ওয়ান্ট টু ইট দ্যাট". প্রতিশ্রুতি দিলাম ওকে লুচি বানিয়ে খাওয়াবো। ভীষণ আনন্দ করে লচি মাংস খেয়ে বিরাট একটা ঢেঁকুর তুলে সহকর্মী ক্যারি ফিরে গেলো কাজে লাঞ্চের পর । প্রথম অভিজ্ঞতা হলো আমার একজন আমেরিকানকে বাঙালি রান্না খাওয়ানোর। তার মাস খানেক পর ক্যারির বেবি শাওয়ারে ক্যারির আব্দারে ফের লুচি বানাতে হলো। সে ঘটনা প্রায় কুডি-বাইশ বছর আগেকার। আর একজন ছিল গ্লেন, আমার কর্তা সোমেনের সহকর্মী, অকৃতদার, ভিগান গ্লেন প্রায়ই কাজের পর চলে আসত আমাদের বাড়ি. হয়তো কিছুই নেই সেদিন ওকে খেতে দেবার মতো, কিন্তু গ্লেনের কুছ পরোয়া নেই - গিভ মি সাম ডল-ভট। অৰ্থাৎ ডাল-ভাত। সঙ্গে যদি আল সেদ্ধ করে দেওয়া হতো তো সে ভুরিভোজ গ্লেনের কাছে, ম্যাসড পট্যাটো উইথ ডল-ভট বলে দারুণ তুপ্তি করে খেত।

শুনেছি যাঁরা ৬০-৭০ এর দশকে এসেছেন আমেরিকাতে, তাঁদেরকে অনেক দুর দুরান্তের ভারতীয় দোকান থেকে চাল, মশলাপাতি ডাল, অর্ডার করে আনাতে হতো অথবা ক্যালিফোর্নিয়ার বাসিন্দারা লস এঞ্জেলেস বা বার্কলি অনেক পরিমাণে কিনে বাডীতে এনে রাখতেন। আজ আমাদের এই স্যাক্রামেন্টো শহরে এদিকে সেদিকে প্রচুর দেশী দোকানে মায় পটল থেকে ইলিশ মাছ অব্দি কি না পাওয়া যাচ্ছে, হয়তো বেশির ভাগই ফ্রোজেন।

একবার আমার ছেলেরা গরমের ছুটিতে ব্রিটিশ সকার ক্যাম্পে নাম লেখালো, ব্রিটেন থেকে কোচরা ক্যালিফোর্নিয়া এসে নানা শহরে ঘুরে ঘুরে ট্রেনিং দেবে বাচ্চাদের এবং বাবা মায়েদের কাছে কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুরোধ এক একজন কোচকে এক সপ্তাহ করে এক এক বাড়ীতে রাখার দায়িত্ব নিতে হবে। আমাদের বাড়িতে রইলো কোচ মার্ক, কলেজ পড়ুয়া ছেলে সামার জব করে পয়সা উপার্জন। আমুদে ছেলে মার্ক. নানা রকম গল্প করতো আমাদের সঙ্গে, সকাল বেলা ব্ৰেকফাস্ট বেরিয়ে যেত, ফিরত সন্ধ্যেবেলা, তারপর আমরা একসঙ্গে সবাই ডিনার করতাম। তো একদিন হলো একদিন হলো বার-বি-কিউ. চাইনিজ খাবার আনানো হলো. তো একদিন বেকড ক্যাসারোল করলাম, কিন্তু তারপর আমার আর মাথায় কুলোচ্ছে না কি খেতে দেবো ... শেষে মুরগির ঝোল আর ভাত রেঁধে দুশ্চিন্তা নিয়ে খেতে দিলাম - কি জানি বাবা খেতে পারবে কিনা । ডিনার টেবিলে মার্ক মাংস ভাত দেখে অতি আপ্লুত - তুমি এতদিন আমায় চিকেন এন্ড রাইস দাওনি কেন? আমার সবচেয়ে প্রিয় খাবার। সত্যি খুব আপসোস হচ্ছিলো আমার সেদিন - ইংল্যান্ডের খোদ সাহেব নাকি চিকেন টিক্কা মাসালা ও রাইস দিয়ে সপ্তাহে দু দিন ডিনার করে।।।

আমাদের প্রতিবেশী বব ও মেরি প্রায়শই উইকেন্ড হলেই চলে যায় ওদের ভাগ্নির বাড়ি ১০০ মাইল দ্রের পথ। একদিন এসে গলপ করছে - জানো ববের ভাগ্নির বিয়ে হয়েছে ভারতীয় ছেলে সৌরভের সঙ্গে, ওদের শিশুকন্যা আমাদের কাছে বিরাট আকর্ষণ, তবে তোমার কাছে স্বীকার করছি তার চেয়েও বড় আকর্ষণ সৌরভের সুস্বাদু রাশ্না মুর্গ-মসল্লম, শাহী পানির, আলু গোবি - আহ ছেলেটা যা রাঁধে না - তোমায় কি বলবো! বলে মেরি জিভের জল টানে।

আমার কাজে ভারতীয়র সংখ্যা খুবই নগন্য, মাঝেমাঝে যখন পটলাক হয় আমার জন্য কোনো সোজা জিনিস নিয়ে যাওয়া চলবে না, স্ট্যাভিং অর্ডার - ভালো ভালো দেশি রান্না করে নিয়ে যেতে হবে - যেমন রগরগে ডিমের ডালনা, মাছের চপ বা মাংসের কিমা দিয়ে ঘুঘনি ... কিন্তু অন্যরা স্যালাড, পাস্তা, স্যাভউইচ বা একবাটি প্রেটজেল

অথবা ক্র্যাকার এন্ড চীজ এনে বসিয়ে দিলে তাতে কোনো অসুবিধে নেই। কি আর বলবো!

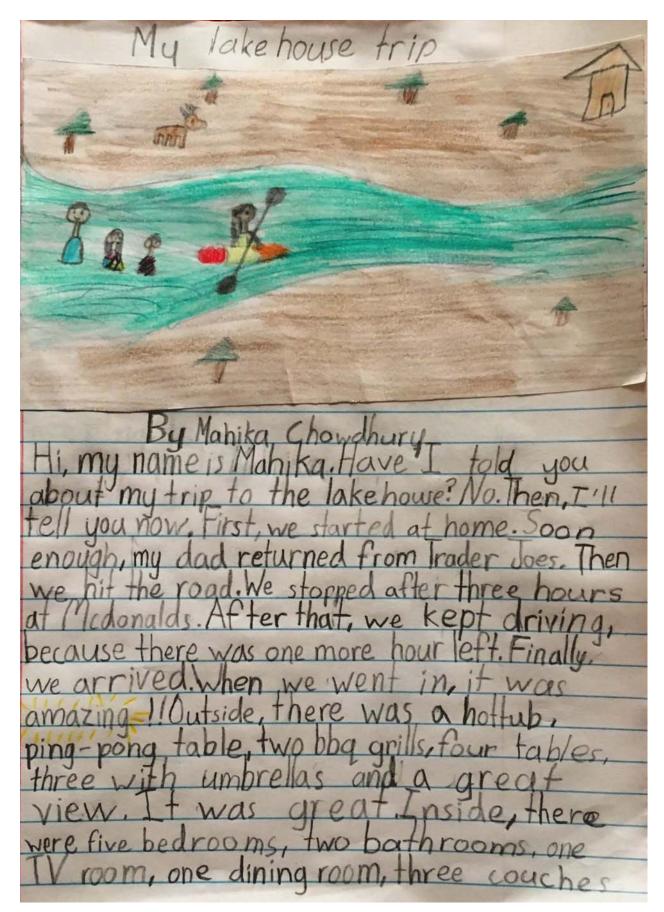
টেলারের কথা না বলে শেষ করলে এই গল্প অসম্পূর্ণ থাকবে। আমার ছেলেদের বন্ধু টেলার। ওর বাবা মা একবার ওকে আমাদের কাছে রেখে বেডাতে গেছে. সেই উইকেন্ডে পড়েছে আবার আমাদের দুর্গাপুজো। তো টেলারের মা ম্যাকারনি এভ চীজ, চিকেন নাগেট, ইত্যাদি সব নানা রকমের খাবার ছেলের জন্য দিয়ে গেছে. আমি সেসব খাবার নিয়ে গেছি ছোট্ট টেলারের জন্য, ও তো আর আমাদের মাটন বিরিয়ানি বা চিকেন কষা খেতে পারবে না। কিন্তু কি বলবো খেতে বসে টেলারের মহা আপত্তি মায়ের দেওয়া খাবার খেতে, বলে আমাকেও বিরিয়ানি দাও, বাঁ হাতে জলের বোতল, ডান হাতে বিরিয়ানি, হুস-হাস শব্দে, ঝালের চোটে, চোখের জলে, নাকের জলে দুঃসহ অবস্থা কিন্তু বিরিয়ানি খতম। সে দৃশ্য ভোলার না।

ভারতে থাকাকালীন আমি কখনো আর্টিচোক বা রেড চার্ড অথবা জুকিনি, লীক, ব্রাসেল স্প্রাউটস খাইনি, কিন্তু দিব্বি এসব সজি আমাদের হেঁসেলে স্থান করে নিয়েছে বাঙালি রান্নায়। বেশ ক বছর আগে পর্যন্ত আমাদের একটা মাছের পার্টি হতো, ছেলেরা রান্না করতো, টুনা মাছের চপ, কড মাছের কালিয়া, স্যামন মাছের সর্যে বাটার ঝাল অথবা ক্যাট ফিশের ফিশ ফ্রাই - কে বলবে সামুদ্রিক মাছ বাঙালির মুখে রোচে না?

সবশেষে উৎসবের ফুড কমিটিকে অসংখ্য ধন্যবাদ জানাই। তিনদিন ধরে কোমর বেঁধে হৈহৈ করে খিচুড়ি, বেগুনি, লাবড়া থেকে শুরু করে মাছের ঝোল ও মাটন রেজালা রান্না ও পরিবেশন করে সবাইকে খাওয়ানো সে তো চাট্টিখানি কথা না! তার ওপর আছে আবার মনমাতানো বাহারে ঘরে তৈরী মিষ্টি - চমচম ও সন্দেশ। বাঙালীখানা জিন্দাবাদ। দুর্গামাই কি জয়।

রশিম্ম নন্দী - ন্যাটোমাস নিবাসী, পেশায় বিজ্ঞানী, নেশায় সাহিত্য অনুরাগী





and one of them could turn into a bed! It was super!! The next day we went to the lake. It was so fun. I my mom and my brother came early because we all got a little sick. We had warm noodles for lunch. Yum!!!! It was super yummy. I ater on everybody went in the hottub. It was not getting warmer, that was fine. The next morning. I woke up late because I stayed up late the night before It was fine to go. I had an amazing time!!

Mahika A. Chowdhury, 8 years, is a 2nd grader in Elliot Ranch Elementary School, Elk Grove, CA.

# My Trip to London and Paris

And why you should go there too!

Evani Paul

I had an awesome summer, by taking a trip to London and Paris. First, I went to my friend Suhaan's house. We arrived at his penthouse and it was nice. The kids ran around and played while the grown-ups sat about and talked.

At the lobby of Duncombe House

My first stop was Trafalgar Square. Its name commemorates the Battle of Trafalgar, a British Naval victory in the Napoleonic wars with France and Spain.

Sadly, the Big Ben was under construction so we couldn't see it. Big Ben is the name given to the great bell of the clock in the Elizabeth tower that is located in Westminster London. Its construction was finished in 1859. The people who built the tower are named Augustus Pugin and Charles Barry. The

height of the tower is 315'. The Palace of Westminster was destroyed in a fire in 1834. Augustus and Charles wanted to redo it, so they added a clock tower with bells!



Sad about Big Ben construction:(

Next we saw the Eye of London. It was big, but we were a little too far from it. I have a picture of me standing in front of it. I also saw the Buckingham Palace. It was super pretty. I have a lot of pictures. I also climbed the big golden statue! Buckingham Palace is a large townhouse built for the Duke of Buckingham in 1703. The architects were John Nash, Edward Blore, William Winde, Aston Webb, and Thomas Cubitt. London was pretty fun, I hope you decide to go there too!

Finally, in London, I was happy I could see GMT. GMT was originally set up to aid

navigation when travel around the globe started to open up with the discovery of the "new world" (America) in the fifteenth century. Greenwich, due to the presence of the Royal Observatory, was the national center for time and had been since 1675, the choice was obvious. Nevertheless, GMT was not adopted officially by Parliament until August 2, 1880.





I also took a long train ride to Paris. I saw the Eiffel Tower from my room. At night the lights would go off, and it was beautiful. One side of the street we were on led to the Eiffel Tower, and the other side led straight to the Arc de Triomphe.



The Arc de Triomphe is one of the most famous monuments in Paris standing on the western side of the Champs-Elysees at the center of Charles de Gaulle, formerly known as Place de L'Etoile, the l'etoile or "star" of the juncture formed by its 12 radiating avenues. The Arc de Triomphe honors all the people who fought and died for France in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Beneath its Gaul lies an unknown soldier from World War I. The Arc de Triomphe was built on August 5, 1806.

I also went to the Louvre! It was big! I am small, so the adults pushed me out of the way when I went to see the Mona Lisa. Meanies: (The Mona Lisa is a half-length portrait painted by the Italian renaissance artist Leonardo da Vinci that has been described as the best known, the most visited, the most written about, the most sung about, and the most parodied work of art.





London and Paris were great! So, you should go there too.

The Louvre or the Louvre Museum is the world's largest art museum and historic monument, in Paris, France. A central landmark of the city, it is located on the right bank of the Seine River in the city's first arrondissement. The Louvre was built in August 10, 1739, by Phillip 11.

Finally, my favorite, I went to the Eiffel Tower! The view was beautiful! It has always been my dream to go and see the Eiffel Tower. The Eiffel Tower was built by Gustave Eiffel. The Eiffel Tower consists of more than 2.5 million rivets and 18,000 individual pieces of wrought iron. The structure was to be used as the gateway entrance to the World's Fair, so it had to be truly incredible. By the time it was done, it stood at nearly 1,000 feet tall, which was a title it held for over 40 years!



**Evani Paul**, 11 years, is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader in Sutter Middle School, Folsom, CA.

### An Amazing Trip to Agra and Delhi

Nirvik Basuroy

This summer, during my usual trip to India, my family and I visited Agra and Delhi, two major cities located in Uttar Pradesh. Last year, as a sixth grader, I learned about the history of Ancient India and Hinduism, and this year, as a seventh grader, I'll learn about Islam and Mughal-Era India in medieval history, so I wanted to see Agra and Delhi in order to know some of Indian and Hindu history, and to also get a headstart in understanding Islamic and Mughal-Era Indian history.

#### Day 1 (Agra)

Upon arriving at Agra by air from Kolkata, we took a limo ride to Fatehpur Sikri, the red sandstone palace belonging to the third and fourth Mughal emperors, Akbar (1542 - 1605), and Jahangir (1569 - 1627). Akbar was at first a Muslim emperor who later became secular after marrying wives who practiced different faiths including Islam. His three main wives were, first, his Muslim wife, the Mughal empress known as Ruqaiya Sultan Begum (1542 - 1626), second, his Hindu wife and most favorite, the Rajput princess known as Mariam-Uz-Zamani commonly known as Jodha Bai (1542 - 1623), and third, his Christian wife, whose name was unknown. Our guide showed us many beautiful carvings of different religious symbols including Hindu Swastikas, Christian Crosses, and Buddhist Lotus Flowers and Golden Wheels in the sandstone pillars of the palace. The palace included royal guest houses, dining rooms and kitchens, summer and winter bedrooms for the king and queens, library, and a huge board game called "Pachisi" inscribed on the courtyard ground. During the time of the construction of Fatehpur Sikri, precise math calculations were used when planning the layout. For example, four prayer rooms were

organized with a gap between each room so as to make the pattern of an unseen Christian Holy Cross. On the other side of Sikri stands Buland Darwaza, the tallest gateway in the world, numerous mosques, burial areas, and small water bodies for holy bathing.



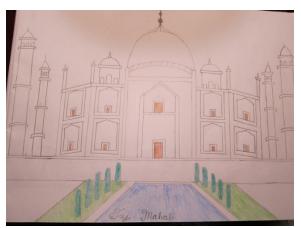
Fatehpur Sikri (Panch Mahal in background)

After visiting Fatehpur Sikri, we went to our hotel, the ITC Mughal, and spent the remainder of the day there.

#### Day 2 (Agra and Delhi)

On the second day of the trip, my family and I paid a visit to the famous Taj Mahal. There were flowing fountains at the main gate to Taj Mahal. This wonder of India and the world was built by fifth Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (1592 - 1667) starting in the year 1631 as a tomb for his favorite wife Mumtaz Mahal (1593 - 1631), who died from childbirth. Mumtaz Mahal, after her death. in temporarily buried a cemetery Burhanpur, a historic city in Madhya Pradesh. Later, Shah Jahan, who mourned his wife's death, built a beautiful mausoleum with different expensive stones and marbles from the Arabian Peninsula, Europe, and western Asian countries. When he got old and his

health started to weaken, Shah Jahan started to build another mausoleum on the opposite bank of the Yamuna River, known as Black Taj Mahal, where he wanted to be buried after his death. However, just after constructing the foundation of his mausoleum, his son, the sixth Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (1618 -1707) didn't let him build the mausoleum any further, claiming that he was spending too much money on it, and imprisoned his own father in the Agra Fort. After Shah Jahan died, his corpse was buried in a casket next to Mumtaz Mahal's casket inside Taj Mahal. While entering the dome, we saw Arabic, Persian, and Urdu inscriptions on the frame of the entrance. Inside, we observed beautiful stone designs on the ceiling and walls that reflected splendid colors from the guide's flashlight. We saw replicas of Shah Jahan's and Mumtaz Mahal's tombstones, as tourists are not allowed to enter the underground burial chamber, where they were actually buried. Our tour guide was very enthusiastic and took many pictures of us at Taj Mahal.



My sketch of Taj Mahal

We then took a taxi to Agra Fort. Before entering the fort, we saw on display Jahangir's huge bathtub. Inside the fort were numerous rooms, large halls, bathroom with mirrors (Sheesh Mahal), mosques where Shah Jahan used to pray, and the marble prison where Aurangzeb had imprisoned Shah Jahan. This prison was completely opposite from an

ordinary prison. Shah Jahan's prison in Agra Fort was actually quite fancy.

Later, we took a taxi from Agra to Delhi, travelling on the really nice and clean highway, and checked-in at Dharampura Haveli. The hotel was previously a wealthy family's ancestral home, which later fell into shabby condition. It was then renovated into a Haveli or Indian-style guest house.

#### Day 3 (Delhi)

On our last day, my family and I spent the remaining time visiting Lotus Temple, Red Fort, India Gate, and Jantar Mantar. Lotus Temple is a Baha'i (Neareastern monotheistic religion) temple where people do their daily praying. Lotus Temple got its name for its lotus flower shape. Many beautiful gardens surrounded the temple. We then visited Red Fort, which was another fort, similar to Agra Fort. There was a small moat inside the fort that flowed from the Yamuna River. There used to be many crocodiles that swam inside the moat, used for attacking trespassers.



Standing in front of Misra Yantra

Next, we visited India Gate. This gate was built in the 1930s when India was under the British Rule. Several flags were waving in front of the gate, which symbolize the Indian Armed Forces. The gate is an enormous memory stone which honors some of the members in the Indian Armed Forces who died in combat. Finally, we spent the last two hours

at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, an observatory built in 1724 by Maharaja Jai Singh II, a Rajput prince, and a scientist and mathematician. Jantar Mantar consists of three scientific instruments: Samrat, Jayaprakash, and Misra Yantras. We finally took a flight back to Kolkata. This trip to Agra and Delhi was very exciting, enjoyable, and memorable.

*Nirvik Basuroy*, 12 years old and is a 7<sup>th</sup> grader in the Sutter Middle School, Folsom, CA.



# An Overnight Field Trip

Sid Dey

On Thursday, March 8, 2018, all fourth graders of our school, along with our chaperones, went to Coloma for an overnight field trip. We went there in two school buses: one was for boys, and the other was for girls.

goes like this: "We are the town of Rough n' Ready. We don't know if we like spaghetti. You can't beat us 'cause we're steady throughout the land. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!"



During the bus ride, my friend Xander sat next to me. I read a book called Summer of the Sea Serpent. The bus journey was really pleasing, I viewed all of Sacramento.

When we got to Coloma, a woman named Ms. American came and introduced herself to us. She used two words called pancake and spatula to be used while walking to Coloma Outdoor Discovery School (CODS). Pancake means freeze, and spatula means keep going.

There was a play going on. The play was about the gold rush. In Coloma, in 1848, an old man named John Sutter hired another old man named James Marshall to build a sawmill. Marshall named the sawmill Sutter's Mill. Marshall found something in the river. It was yellow. It was really shiny. It was a gold nugget. That is how the gold was found in Coloma area first.

After that, we ate lunch. I ate a pesto sandwich. It was yummy.

We were called for each town. A woman named Snake Bite Sue called a town called Rough n' Ready which I became part of. We made a theme song for our town. The song



We went to a straw house where we got a CODS journal and wrote a recipe of how to make corn bread. We bought all the ingredients from Justin Beaver. We took them to the house with straw. We got our bandanas with our town name. At the table, we mixed the ingredients. We poured them into a pot. We put the pot on a fire. Like Justin said, if they heard the word campfire, then they said, "Campfire? We love campfires!" We let the corn bread cook. We ate the corn bread.



We took our luggage and went to our cabins. My cabin was Cabin 402. It was a six-person cabin. I stayed in the top. It was an amazing experience. Then, we had our fire drill. The fire drill was really fun.

After that, it was our dinner time. We went to the River Side Kitchen. We got spaghetti for our dinner! The spaghetti tasted really good. After dinner, we played on the playground and went to a hoedown. There were two dances: the Circle Dance and the Virginia Real. In the Circle Dance, there were some moves called the Right Arm Swing, the Left Arm Swing, the Dope See Doe, the Right Arm Star, and the Left Arm Star. In the

Virginia Real, we move sideways and peel out and everybody else follows, and gets under a bridge we made with our hands.

On Friday, March 9, 2018, we got up, went to the River Side Kitchen. We ate pancakes for breakfast. We went on a hike and saw the monument of James Marshall pointing at the American River. Marshall was born in 1810 and died in 1885. He died in the age of 75. In 1848, the gold rush began. We saw Sutter's Mill. It had a wheel that moved a saw blade up and down. We were really excited and had lots of fun there. Then, we came back to CODS once again, took our bus, and came back to school.

Sid Dey is a 5th grader at Star Academy, Sacramento, CA.

# মাথায় চক্রগুপ্তর মুদ্রা ছোঁয়ানো নাগবাড়ির রীতি

নিজস্ব প্রতিবেদন, বর্ধমান: নয় নয় করেও প্রায় ৪০০ বছরের পুরনো বর্ধমানের সাটিনন্দী গ্রামের নাগ পরিবারের হরগৌরীর পুজো। এখনও প্রাচীন রীতিনীতি মেনেই পুজো হয়। তবে কালের নিয়মে কিছু রীতি বাদ পড়েছে। যেমন আগে হত মোষ বলি। কিন্তু বলিতে একবার বাধা পড়ার পর থেকে তা বন্ধ।

তখন বাংলায় নবাবরাজ। মূর্শিদাবাদে বাংলার নবাববাড়িতে রানার মশলা-সহ বিভিন্ন বাসনপত্র সরবরাহ করত গলসি থানার সাটিনন্দী গ্রামের নাগ পরিবার। যদিও নাগ পরিবারের পূর্বপরুষ থাকতেন খণ্ডঘোষে। কিন্তু ৪০০ বছরেরও বেশি আগে তাঁরা চলে আসেন সাটিনন্দী গ্রামে। সেখানেই পত্তনিদার হিসাবে চিহ্নিত হন বর্ধমান রাজ পরিবারের পক্ষ থেকে। এই নাগ পরিবারেই চলে আসছে হরগৌরী পুজো। বর্তমান বংশধর অসিত নাগ, বিশ্বনাথ নাগ, চন্দ্রচুড় নাগদের কথায় জানা গেল, তাঁদের কলগুরু ঘণ্টেশ্বর দেবশর্মার কাছে ছিল এই হরগৌরী মূর্তি। কিন্তু তাঁর আর্থিক অবস্থা পড়ে যায়। তখন তিনি তা নাগ পরিবারের হাতে তলে দিয়েছিলেন এই মূর্তি। আর তখন থেকেই ঘটা করে পূজো হয়। একচালায় ডাকের সাজে



Coverage of 400-year old Durga Puja in the ancestral village of former Utsav member Avishek Nag in renowned Bengali newspaper Aajkaal on October 5, 2018.

# "Your Attention Please. We are Starting our Descent..."

Shampa Sarkar

Eyes closed, leaning back on my airplane seat, I let my mind drift through the past year. Very eventful it was, this past year.

Why?

I had moved from India a year ago. India, my Motherland; the beautiful land which had everything one could long to see, spread evenly all over the country. You liked mountains? It offered Kashmir, Kulu Manali,

Leh, Ladakh, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Shillong, all strung together by the mighty Himalayan range; and the breathtaking Western Ghats in the South. If rivers are your passion, Beas,



Yamuna, Godavari. Ganga, Saraswati. Narmada, Kaveri, Gomti, Teesta, Damodar, the mighty Brahmaputra, mentioning just the better known ones. How about beaches? The choices are mind boggling: Havelock Island, Island, Wandoor, Bangaram Paradise. Auroville, Goa, Kovalam, Varkala, Om, Yarada, Dhanushkodi, Puri, Juhu, Marina, Mandarmani, Digha, to name a few. If National Parks are your passion, your choices are Manas, Kaziranga, Gorumara, Sundarbans, Jaldapara, Simlipal, Corbett, Bandhavgarh, Gir, Periyar, Mudumalai, Desert, Blackbuck, Gangotri, Valley of Flowers, Nanda Devi... oh where do I stop?

As a Railway Officer's child, I have lived all over India, from obscure train junctions, to Araku Valley, to the exotic Lumding, the cloud-hugged Haflong, gallivanting happily throughout that beautiful country, through the inaccessible but wondrous places, thanks to Daddy's privilege passes. So I knew why I thought India is incomparable, unique... my home...

Life happens, you move, but your heart remains there...

I moved to Florida, the Sunshine State. Yes, beautiful blue skies, palm trees, sand the

> color of salt, endless pristine beaches with lots of Sunshine, the sea of Sawgrass in Everglades. Intense green, sultry and flat. Gorgeous in its own way, but has one wondering if one can see the curvature of the Earth in the horizon from everywhere... did mention endless Sun? As a

typical Indian, I stayed out of the sunlight, but went to beaches to show my new home land to visiting friends and family.

Today, we were taking a vacation to California. I knew Florida and California were the only two states with mild weather. So, as we took the long flight, I was expecting more of the same except the Atlantic to be replaced by the Pacific.

As the air hostesses' voice continued its melodious monotone, I lazily opened my sleep-filled eyes to look out the window, and they flew open as all my senses were assailed immediately. Was I dreaming? Oh what a view!!!!! Clear deep-blue bay waters, meandering through hills of every size, in a multitude of shades of green and gold, promising depth and variety, should I seek it. The spell was cast.

Yes, I am talking about the first time I set eyes on the San Francisco Bay.

The next seven days went like a dream. The gorgeous wilderness, the hillside sceneries, the exhilarating waterfalls, the snow-topped hills, endless snowy ski slopes, the mist-covered Bay, pristine deep-blue calm Pacific waters, redwood forests... like God himself had built this place to fulfill every fantasy of natural beauty Man could imagine... an answer to every prayer...

That first view through the window was literally a shock through my system, one that I simply could not recover from. I was bewitched by a place... it spoke to my soul, which responded to its call.

Fast forward... 26 years... I excitedly look out the plane window as it prepares to land, to catch a glimpse of that lovely land which had stolen my heart. Only this time there is excitement, anticipation, and hope... as I wonder, am I finally home?

**Shampa Sarkar** is a graduate of R. G. Kar Medical College, Kolkata, India. She is a psychiatrist and has moved to Northern California a year ago.

#### Nuclear Fission Versus Fusion

#### Barin Kumar

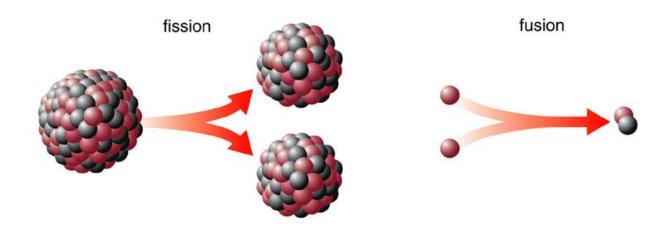
#### Fission:

Fission is the splitting of the nucleus of an atom into smaller fragments such as Uranium-235 (U-235) atom into smaller atoms.

#### Pros and Cons:

- a) Fission releases a lot of energy in obedience to Einstein's mass-energy equation  $E = mc^2$ . Nuclear fission reactors generate energy based on this principle.
- b) Fission of 1 gram of U-235 can generate energy equivalent to burning 1 ton of coal.
- c) Fission is the only source of a huge amount of carbon-free energy available now.
- d) Along with the generation of this energy, a lot of radiation is released with the nuclear reaction which needs to be contained.
- e) Nuclear fuel such as U-235 is scarce and a

- h) Though nuclear power is clean, it is not cheap.
- i) The nuclear power is not accident-free and can cause release of radioactive materials to the environment. Three Mile Island (TMI) in 1979, Chernobyl in 1986, and Fukushima in 2011 remind us that the future nuclear plant design should address all possible accident scenarios and cost-effectiveness at the same time.
- j) Bill Gates put \$2 billion of his foundation's money to develop safe nuclear power. He invested his own money in Terra Power, a maker of next-generation fission plants, which is developing a reactor to generate power by burning nuclear waste.



finite resource. Thorium-232 (Th-232) is another source but its fuel cycle is not developed yet.

- f) Nuclear waste is hazardously radioactive and can remain radioactive for centuries.
- g) In USA, so far we have no permanent underground repository planned as in Sweden and Finland. Underground is much more safe than storing the waste on surface.

#### **Challenges:**

a) Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) needs to strictly enforce safety regulations to prevent future disasters in areas such as fire protection, illegal release of radioactively-contaminated liquids, etc. along with upgrade of seismic and flood protection of the operating plants.

- b) All US operating plants are now capable of operating between 4 to 8 hours without any offsite power supply but they should be capable of operating for much longer time periods as learned from the Fukushima accident.
- c) The entire nuclear industry is evaluating and incorporating as necessary the impact of the Fukushima event in reactor design. Westinghouse will incorporate lessons learned into their Generation III AP1000 reactor design. Most current reactors, out of a total of 104 or so, are either Generation I or Generation II.
- d) The new Generation IV reactor design uses either gas or liquid metal instead of water. The commercialization of these reactors in not possible in the near future as many technical challenges need to be addressed.
- e) We need to establish a permanent underground repository of nuclear waste. Compared to keeping waste on surface indefinitely, putting it 500 meters underground is much safer.
- f) Economically, nuclear power should be made more attractive than natural gas to make contribution of carbon from power plant to zero or near zero. This is the area where government can play an important role by introducing a price for carbon emission to the environment so that nuclear power would be advantageous economically.

#### **Fusion:**

Nuclear fusion is the reverse of nuclear fission. Instead of splitting atoms, small atoms are squashed together to form bigger ones such as Deuterium and Tritium, two isotopes of Hydrogen, which can be squashed together to form Helium, which is essentially happening in our Sun.

Pros and Cons:

- a) Fusion releases lot of energy, as in fission, by the same Einstein's equation, E=mc<sup>2</sup>.
- b) Fusion can produce three to four times as much power as nuclear fission. It is estimated

- that the Lithium from a single laptop battery and the Deuterium from 45 liters of water could generate enough electricity using fusion to supply an average UK consumer's energy need for 30 years.
- c) Fusion is a huge source of carbon-free energy like fission.
- d) The fuel is not toxic and not mostly rare. Fusion runs on common elements such as Hydrogen, which is the most plentiful element on the universe.
- e) Fusion produces little to no radioactive waste.
- f) Fusion power is not there yet. There are many engineering challenges to be resolved before a commercial fusion reactor can be developed.
- g) Unlike fission, fusion releases little or no radiation.
- h) Unlike solar or wind, fusion would provide energy constantly, not intermittently, but there has to be enough of it.
- i) Several methods are being studied for the engineering design feasibility to contain plasma and create nuclear fusion such as magnetic confinement fusion (tokamak), inertial confinement fusion with laser, fusion by particle accelerator, etc. Plasma is a fourth state of matter, neither liquid nor solid nor gas. Atomic nuclei are composed of protons and neutrons, and positively charged. To force the atoms together requires tremendous amount of heat and pressure. At temperatures of millions of degree Celsius, atoms are moving so fast that they shake off their electrons and become a cloud of free-range electrons and nuclei, which is called plasma.
- j) The development of fusion energy requires tremendous amount of effort and money. Only government, university, and consortium of many countries were driving this effort for a few decades with limited success. But in past 10 years or so, a few start-up companies have taken up the problem of fusion. According to some experts in this area such as Even Prager, head of the Princeton Lab. the fusion

commercial reactor is possible in the next 20 years if not sooner because of the involvement in this effort by the private sector.

#### **Challenges:**

- a) The gain or the ratio of energy-out to energy-in of a commercial fusion plant would have to be in the range of 15 to 20. To date, no fusion reactor has yet reached 1, the breakeven point. So the challenge is enormous.
- b) The next question is how exactly to extract the fusion energy from the reactor in the form of heat.
- c) Heat and pressure necessary for fusion to take place are extreme. Essentially it is an effort to replicate conditions in the heart of Sun. The temperature at the center of Sun, which is 330,000 times that of Earth, is around 17 million degree Celsius. It is estimated that feasible fusion on earth starts around 100 million degree Celsius because amount of fuel is so much smaller.
- d) The containment of plasma at 100 million degrees and extreme pressure are other challenges. The fusion of plasma has to take place without any contact, as anything will instantly vaporize at that temperature.

#### **Summary**:

In a world defined by climate change, many experts hope that an electricity grid of the future will be powered entirely by solar, wind, and hydropower. Yet few expect the cleanenergy grid to manifest itself soon enough to bring about significant cuts in greenhouse gases within the next few decades. Though solar- and wind-generated electricity are growing faster than any other category, together they account for less than 2% of world's primary energy consumption in 2015, according to the Renewable Energy Policy Network.

Societies will be able to depend on renewable energy more heavily as storage and other technologies make them more reliable.

After decades of always being 30 years away, nuclear fusion may finally come into its own.

Some analysts insist that nuclear fission's reliability and zero emissions are the best choices to shoulder the burden of the world's rapidly-electrifying economics.

As the globe warms and climate becomes increasingly unstable, the argument for nuclear will become more obvious. Jane Long, a former associate director of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, California, says, 'It has got to come to the point where people realize how much we need nuclear'.

#### References:

IEEE Spectrum, November 2011 issue TIME, November 2, 2015 issue IEEE Spectrum, June 2018 issue

**Barin Kumar** is a 32-year resident of Sacramento. He is an electrical and nuclear engineer, who worked for Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) at Rancho Seco Nuclear Generating Station and SMUD Power Distribution for many years. He can be reached at <a href="mailto:barinkumar@sbcglobal.net">barinkumar@sbcglobal.net</a>.

# October is Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month in California

June 25, 2013, was a historic day for Hindu Americans. On that day, the California State Senate unanimously passed Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 32: California Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month. Introduced by State Senate Majority Leader, Ellen Corbett (10th Senate District), SCR 32 designates October 2013 as California Hindu American and Appreciation Month and "recognize[s] and acknowledge[s] the significant contributions made by Californians of Hindu heritage to the state."

This measure recognizes and acknowledges the significant contributions made by Californians of Hindu heritage to the state and seeks to increase awareness and understanding of the Hindu American community.

"As the Senator representing the 10th State Senate District, I am honored to represent constituents from many diverse backgrounds, including a significant number of Hindu Americans," said Majority Leader Corbett. "California is home to a thriving community of over 370,000 Hindu Americans that enrich our state's diversity and professional assets in fields as diverse as academia, science, technology, business, arts and literature. I thank my colleagues for supporting SCR 32 that recognizes Hindu American contributions in California, as well as designates October 2013 in their honor."

The unanimous passage of SCR 32 was celebrated by a Hindu American Foundation (HAF) delegation of more than 70 Hindu Americans who travelled to the State Capitol from various parts of the state. The delegation was presented with a commemorative version of the resolution on the Senate floor. The delegation was joined on the Senate floor by local Hindu American elected officials, including San Jose City Council Member Ash

Kalra, Fremont Vice-Mayor Anu Natarajan, Fremont City Council Member Raj Salwan, and Union Sanitary Board Vice President Anjali Lathi.

The resolution also received the support of 55 non-governmental organizations, interfaith leaders, civil rights activists, and community leaders from across the country, who previously wrote to all State Senators urging them to pass SCR 32.

Since then, California Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month in October is celebrated with several events throughout the state.

Following is the salient points text of the Assembly Concurrent Resolution (passed in California Assembly on August 28, 2018, and passed in California Senate on August 31, 2018) relative to California Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

WHEREAS, California and the nation have been influenced by the extraordinary cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity of its residents; and

WHEREAS, There is an estimated one billion Hindus worldwide, and approximately 3.23 million Hindu Americans live across the nation; and

WHEREAS, California is home to the largest Hindu American population in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Americans in California represent diverse ethnic backgrounds, including individuals of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Malaysian, Indonesian, Afghani, Nepali, Bhutanese, Sri Lankan, Fijian, Caribbean, and European descent; and

WHEREAS, California and our nation have greatly benefited from Hindu Americans, especially through the Vedanta philosophy, Ayurvedic medicine, classical Indian art, dance, music, meditation, yoga, literature, and community service; and

WHEREAS, 2018 marks the 125 year anniversary of when Hinduism was officially introduced to the United States by Swami Vivekananda in 1893 at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and the 118 year anniversary of when he founded the Vedanta Society in San Francisco, California in 1900; and

WHEREAS, Hindus are primarily an immigrant community and first started immigrating to California and the United States in the early 1900s, and came in increasing numbers after the lifting of the Asian Exclusion Act of 1924 in 1943 and the abolishment of quotas for immigrants based on national origin in 1965; and

WHEREAS, Most Hindu immigrants have come to the United States as students, in search of better economic opportunities, or to unite with family members, while others have arrived in this country after facing religious persecution in their countries of origin; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Americans and the Vedanta philosophy have significantly influenced notable intellectuals such as Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, J. D. Salinger, Christopher Isherwood, Aldous Huxley, Huston Smith, and Joseph Campbell; and

WHEREAS, The first Hindu temple in the United States was built in San Francisco, California, and at the dedication of the temple on January 7, 1906, it was proclaimed to be the "First Hindu Temple in the Whole Western World"; and

WHEREAS, There are now over 120 Hindu temples, religious centers, and cultural centers throughout California, and the greater Bay Area is home to over 40 of those temples and centers; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Americans have greatly enriched California's higher education university systems by teaching numerous students, especially in the academic fields of astrophysics, computer science, engineering, law, planetary science, psychology, and neuroscience, and a majority of Hindu Americans are in high-skill occupations; and

WHEREAS, Seventy-seven percent of Hindu American adults have a college degree and nearly 50 percent of Hindu American adults have a postgraduate degree, according to the Pew Research Center; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Americans share the entrepreneurial spirit of America and contribute to California's economic vitality, having been pioneers and leaders in Silicon Valley and founded several of its early startups. Hindu Americans are estimated to be employed in 40 percent of startups in Silicon Valley; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Americans have also contributed to many of California's economic sectors and have particularly excelled in the areas of business, law, politics, information technology, medicine, and science; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Americans now serve in various levels of government across the state and nation, including four Members in the United States House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, California Hindu temples, organizations, and individuals actively engage in seva, a Sanskrit word for selfless service, towards their fellow human beings through charity, public service, and the provision of free medical and legal services; and

WHEREAS, Ahimsa, which is the Sanskrit word for noninjury or nonviolence, is a central principle for Hindu Americans in California, and it provides the ethical foundation for vegetarianism, environmentalism, and harmonious living; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Americans in cities throughout California celebrate numerous holidays and festivals, such as Diwali, which celebrates the victory of good over evil and knowledge over ignorance; and

WHEREAS, Despite their positive contributions to California and this nation,

Hindu Americans face stereotypes and misconceptions about their heritage and have been the targets of bullying, discrimination, hate speech, and bias-motivated crimes; and

WHEREAS, Many Hindus and their families in California and the United States face an uncertain future in this country due to inequitable immigration policies and decadeslong backlogs for green cards; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Americans promote the ideals of tolerance, pluralism, and religious freedom, which are inherent to their beliefs and respect the diversity of all faiths, and the Vedas, the 5000 year old texts of Hindu Americans, provide the basis for these core principles: "Truth is one, the wise call it by many names" (Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti); now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate concurring, that the Legislature hereby designates the month of October 2018 as California Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

October is the month of two major events of Hindus – Durga Puja/ Dussera and

Deepavali. Let us celebrate these events by spreading the awareness about Hinduism among our non-Hindu neighbors.

#### Comments:

California (probably other states too) designates and associates a month with one or more causes. For example, in California, April is Sexual Assault Awareness month, May is Watershed Awareness month, August is Muslim Awareness and Appreciation month, November is Sikh Awareness Appreciation month, etc. The list is long and there may be more than one cause associated with a particular month. I sent this report for publishing as I think most of our members (who are Hindus) may not be aware of an awareness month for Hindus too. The process of achieving this recognition can be found in Google search. One of the relevant links is http://www.newsbharati.com/Encyc/2013/6/26 /October-declared-Hindu-Awareness-monthin-California.

#### Sources:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\_id=201720180ACR261

http://www.rediff.com/news/report/california-declares-october-as-month-for-hindu-awareness/20130626.htm

### The Importance of Parenting

Patricia Chatterjee

I hadn't dwelled much on my father's life until after he died, but after the shock of his death passed, I began to think a lot about it. Yes, he was a decorated war hero who struggled greatly after the war to get back on his feet and raise us, however there was another aspect of his life which interested me more. That was his parenting. The more I thought about it, the more I came to appreciate the importance of parenting because I came to the realization that how a parent raises a child doesn't only have an impact on one generation, but has an impact on future generations of children too.

My Father died on September 23<sup>rd</sup> three years ago at the age of 96. His death wasn't unexpected, yet it was a shock. My mother had died before my fifth birthday, and I had at least one parent for more than seventy years and then suddenly none.

After reconciling with myself that he was no more, I started to think about his life, perhaps while I am driving around or sitting quietly somewhere. He spoke little of his bravery during the war, mentioned only once about the time he was shot down and was able to return to England with the help of the Dutch Resistance, and also said little about his two trips to Buckingham Palace to receive the awards for his bravery from King George the sixth, father of the current Queen Elizabeth. He was a private man who disliked having his photograph taken. After the war and my mother's death, it must have been a great

struggle for him, yet I never remember him getting cross and complaining.

Having said all that, he was very strict, and he was very much a principled man. He taught us to respect everyone, we were never allowed to be rude to anyone. He was incredibly honest, and one time sent me back to a shop to return three pennies extra that had been given to me in change for something he had sent me to buy for him. Thinking about all this made me realize the importance of parenting and the effects on generations to come.

His principles definitely rubbed off on me. When my children were in high school, the physics teacher took me aside one day and said she thought I was too strict, but I knew my children were extremely well behaved. I could take them anywhere. One time, when we were driving back from Los Angeles and stopped to get gas, the pump went a few pennies over, and my son insisted on going back inside to pay the attendant those extra pennies.

Sometimes, when I'm out and about or at home with my children and their children, I sometimes feel they are being a bit too strict with my grandchildren, but I now know that what my father taught me I have unwittingly passed onto my children, and they are unwittingly passing the same high principles my father gave to me to their children.

In summary, I believe good parenting is extremely important and affects generations to come.

Patricia Chatterjee is a beloved grandmother of three little angels.

#### 33G Notebook:

# An Italo-Spanish Wedding, Andulacia, and Slovenia

Biswanath Mukherjee

An Italian man marries a Spanish lady in Cordoba, Spain. Andalucia (Southern Spain), conquered and ruled by the Moors for over 500 years. Slovenia, former Yugoslav state, which gained independence just 20 years ago. These experiences are covered in this edition of 33G (which is a travel notebook... penned by the author for Chowrongee since 2005.)

#### Massimo weds Angela in Cordoba, Spain

Dr. Massimo Tornatore has been known to me for over 15 years... since the time he was a PhD student at the Politecnico di Milano, (the best engineering college in Italy). He came to my lab (in the Computer Science Department at UC Davis) as a Visiting PhD student for research collaboration, and we have been very good friends ever since. After PhD, he served as a full-time post-doctoral researcher in my lab for a number of years. Then he went back to POLIMI for a full-time faculty position to be close to family, but he never left us. Over the past 10 years, he has been visiting my lab twice a year, aggregating 3 months/year working with my students on joint research. He is now also an Adjunct Professor at UC Davis.

Massimo met Dr. Angela Canovas in Davis a few years back, so I have had a role in getting them to meet! Angela's academic situation is somewhat similar to Massimo's; she was a visiting scientist in the Animal Science Department at UC Davis. Now she is a faculty member at University of Guelph, Canada. Angela's temperament / personality match very well with Massimo's.

Naturally, we were delighted when we heard they were going to tie the knot... and that my wife (Supriya) and I were also invited to the wedding. The wedding would be in Cordoba, Spain, where Angela is from. It was a rare treat for us to experience the Italo-Spanish wedding: it was so festive!

At the pre-wedding event the previous evening at "Bodegas Campos" Restaurant (founded in 1908), we spent a typical Spanish

night with a traditional tasting menu of wines and food from Cordoba. Although the event started at 6:30 pm, we were late by nearly four hours due to flight delays (and Supriya's suitcase did not arrive); but Massimo insisted that we come even if very late, and we are glad we did. When we arrived, we were very surpised to find, in the middle of a narrow, crowded cobblestone street, lots of people dancing to loud rhythmic songs being blared by five young men and their Spanish guitar; we looked up to see Massimo and Angela on the second-floor balcony. They were being serenaded by friends and family, Spanish style! The wedding mood was totally on!



Massimo and Angela at Pre-Wedding Event

It was also Massimo's 42<sup>nd</sup> birthday. And the huge birthday cake was being sliced by what appeared to me to be a big sword. We were delighted to meet Massimo's family: his mother who is quite energetic, and his three older sisters. Massimo says: "I have been raised by four mothers!"

On the wedding day, we headed to Zara for shopping as Supriya's suitcase was lost; we had only an hour given the wedding time and when shops open. But we did manage!

The wedding ceremony took place in a chapel called "Capilla del Sagrario" of the Mezquita Cathedral. The Mezquita was built as a mosque in 785 AD by the Moors, but it was converted to a Cathedral after the Catholics came to power five centuries later. The Mezquita is huge and beautiful, and has to be seen to be believed. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985. In case you have visited the Mezquita, our access door was the "Patio de los Naranjos," closest to the chapel where the Holy Mass took place.

We assembled outside the chapel to attend the elaborate Catholic wedding. In an outdoor covered area, we were entertained by the same five boys from the previous evening, singing loudly with their guitar. Then, at the wedding, besides the formal ceremony of exchanging wedding vows, etc., several close family members and friends gave short speeches and a formal music ensamble played attractive tunes. After the wedding, back at the "Patio de los Naranjos", there was the "Petalda" event... where guests shower (i.e., throw from far) on the newly-married couple rose petals and rice, given to us in advance in packets. This reminded me of some of our Indian customs.

After "Petalda", and a short tour of the Mezquita, all 175 of us guests were bused to the wedding reception at the Restaurant "Torre de la Barca," located on top of a hill offering breathtaking views of the city.

At the appetizer hour, guests co-mingled in the patio; and artisans carved out "jamon" and served wine from a barrel. There were chilled shrimp (on ice) and various other drinks. Suddenly, Supriya noticed a full-size flag of India; in fact, there were 14 such flags on display, decorations representing all the countries guests were from. Angela and Massimo went out of their way to make this a memorable event, starting with the wedding

invitations, programs, website (<a href="https://www.zola.com/wedding/massimoandangela/event">https://www.zola.com/wedding/massimoandangela/event</a>), and lunch menus, all of which were in three languages – Spanish, Italian, and English; all these details require tremendous effort to execute flawlessly!

The schedule stated that the sit-down lunch would last four hours (3-7 pm), and much to my surprise, it did last that long. (Note: It was lunch, not dinner, as the Spanish eat late!) Both Spanish and Italians are foodies, and item after item kept coming. Numerous tapas, followed by soup, salad, multiple main items, and dessert had every guest more than full. Reminded me of the Italian dinner consisting of antipasti, primi, secondi, and we had multiple items in each category (but many of the later dishes we could not finish). All the while drinks kept free flowing. In between, Massimo and Angela made their grand entrance, and they were greeted by all guests waving their napkins. Of course, there were wedding cake cutting and some videos.

Over 30 people from Davis attended the wedding; and our table seated the "adults". Besides Supriya and I, our other tablemates were from Animal Science; one of them, Alfredo, an Animal Science spouse, was very funny, cracking frequent jokes, and keping everyone entertained. The younger Davis people, including Massimo's Davis Italian friends, some of whom I knew, had their own separate tables.

After the gala banquet, we moved to an adjoining room, where we were treated to a surprise Flamenco performance. The artists belted out powerful songs, accompanied by Spanish guitar; Angela showed us wonderful Flamenco dancing with her sister; and their dad performed a song on the guitar (just presented to him by Angela and Massimo). There were wonderful slideshows about Angela and Massimo and how they met, including quite a bit of coverage on Davis!

Around 8 pm, we moved to yet another large room where a DJ was playing dance

music and the audience was obliging. A very interesting scene was when Massimo and Angela were dancing with the Spanish and Italian flags. There were tons of candy and sweets (and cigars) for guests to enjoy. Around 10:30 pm, we were treated to mini hamburgers (sliders) and mini pizzas (Massimo's favorite food!) Two buses (at midnight and 2 am) would take us back to our hotels. We took the midnight one, and guess what? All the "adults" including Massimo's mom and his sisters also took this bus; only the "young people" could stay up longer after a long, funfilled day!

Attending an Italo-Spanish wedding in Spain, with all its festive elements, was a rare treat and the opportunity of a life time!

#### Andalucia, Spain

After the wedding, we traveled for a few days in southern Spain, visiting Granada and Seville as well. (Getting around by high-speed train was quite easy.) This region is also called Andalucia, after Al Andalus, a Moorish king. The Moors came from Africa across the Mediterranean, in the eighth century, taking 13 years to conquer this land (almost all of Spain). It took the Christians over 500 years to win back the land. Today, Christians and Muslims live here in relative harmony, and cross-cultural influences can be seen in their buildings, food, culture, etc.

The Moors were excellent builders and architects, so upon getting back the land, the Christians chose to save the Moorish buildings (adding Christian enhancements). Good thing they preserved these monuments, which we get to enjoy today, such as the Mezquita in Cordoba, Alhambra Palace in Grenada, and Alcazar in Seville.

Our tour guides gave us many interesting lessons. For example, the Christian kings would live in castles which would be fortified and accommodate a few 100 people. Thus, conquerors would take over the common people, and finally the king had to surrender.

In contrast, the Muslim kings would build fortified walls around their entire city, protecting 1,000s of their people, so they were much harder to beat, and they also included lots of gardens to grow food to serve their population. (This explains the 13-year vs. 500-year durations of Christian-to-Muslim-to-Christian control of the land.)

The Alhambra Palace in Granada is a mini city (by today's standards) built on top of a hill (to protect from invaders), and it provides beautiful views of Granada in all directions. Most of it is well preserved such as a theater, watch tower, summer palace, gardens, etc. One can see the role water played in Muslim architecture, not only for decoration but circulation through the floors to keep the rooms cool. These Muslim architectures reminded me of the Agra Fort and the Delhi Red Fort, which were built a few centuries later by the Moghuls but were structurally very similar.

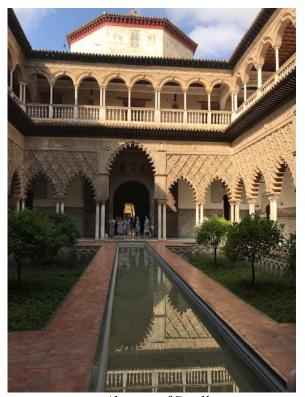
The Alcazar in Seville is a similarly marvelous structure. We visited the Seville Cathedral (where apparently Christopher Columbus is buried). We enjoyed a formal Flamenco show (dance, vocals, and Spanish guitar)... and excellent tapas (including chicken curry on rice as a tapas item)! I wish we had more time to spend in this land.

If you plan to visit the Alhambra Palace, note that the English-guided tour fills up fast, so book your tour months in advance.

#### Slovenia

Our Europe trip actually started with a one-week stay in Slovenia's capital, Ljubljana (pronounced Lyub-liana). Marketing slogan: Slovenia is the only country with "love" in its name! Slovenia is a former state of Yugoslavia, and it took only 10 days to earn its independence 20 years back (from Serbia) (vs. the long, bloody independence wars faced by Croatia, Bosnia, etc.) Today, Slovenia is a part of the European Union and is modernizing, but one can see its past Soviet

influence in the "boxy" buildings and architectures. Slovenians, it seems, are not so fond of their Soviet past; in school, they learn English as well as German, the latter due to huge German aid pouring in to rebuild the country. The people are peaceful and fun loving as we experienced a street fair on a Saturday afternnon and evening with music, dancing, food, and wine in the city center where all traffic was blocked.



Alcazar of Seville

In the heart of the capital city is the Ljubljana castle, on top of a hill, which one can climb on foot but a faster option is the funicular (an incline railway), which we took. The Ljubljanica River meanders through the city, and around the castle's hill, providing the castle natural protection.

Slovenia's famous attraction is Bled Lake, which is very beautiful and has an island in the middle. One can reach the island on "pletna" boats (which are wooden boats, whose upkeep and operations are passed from generation to generation in the same family). On the island,

a climb of 99 steps will take you to the top where there is a church where many couples get married. Legend has it that, if a groom can carry his bride on his lap these 99 steps, the wedding will be very holy. While we were there, we saw a guy doing just this! Close to the lake is a vacation home of Marshall Tito (Leader of Yugoslavia after World War II); it is a Soviet-style box now converted to a hotel. Also next to the lake is Bled Castle, offering majestic views of the Lake and surroundings from several terraces. One evening, we enjoyed a banquet on the upper terrace.





Predjama Castle

Solvenia is a small country, so our day trip included Bled Lake and Bled Castle in the morning, and Predjama Castle and Postojna Cave in the afternoon. Predjama Castle is a very unusual castle, built into a high overhanging cliff face, so it is very well fortified. It has a secret opening at the top in a jungle on a mountain, and it has a river flowing underneath, so getting rid of debris and troublemakers/prisoners by the king was easy. Located close to Predjama Castle is the Postojna Cave which is the largest underground karst cave in Slovenia and one of the most beautiful ones in the world. (Karst definition: "landscape underlain by limestone that has been eroded by dissolution, producing ridges, towers, fissures, and other landforms; characterized underground by systems with sinkholes and caves".) A train ride followed by a rather long walk followed by a return train ride allowed us to discover a wonderful underground labyrinth of tunnels, passage ways, and chambers full of karst formations of amazing shapes, sizes, and colors.

Our other day trip included "three countries". First, we visited Groznjan, a town in Croatia, which is more like a village by today's standards. It is nearly 1,000 years old, and its medieval architecture has been preserved, including its cobblestone roads, old houses, a very interesting jail, etc. Today, the

buildings are mostly occupied by artists who are making and selling their crafts. Next, we were back in Slovenia, visiting the city of Piran, which is on the Adriatric coast. People come here mainly for vacation to enjoy the warm blue water and the beaches. You must have seen many attractive photos of seaside towns with white shiny houses. Well, Piran could be one of them; it is picture-postcard perfect! Our final stop was Trieste in Italy, home of the Illy coffee. From a mountain top, we enjoyed more majestic views of the Adriatic Sea and its cities. We walked around in Trieste's Plaza dell'Unita d'Italia, taking in views of the magnificent architectures, the sea, and the waterways. Got to see a Bata shoe store also. And, of course, a visit to Italy would not be complete without gelato!

While Slovenia was a lot of fun, more excitement awaited us... as we were heading next for Massimo's and Angela's wedding!

#### **Tailpiece**

In Slovenia, I was giving a talk at the European Conference on Networking and Communications (<a href="www.eucnc.eu">www.eucnc.eu</a>). The theme was "5G" and my talk was entitled "Rising Power of the Network User". Today, these are jargons... but give it a few years, and they will probably become part of your vocabulary!

**Biswanath Mukherjee** is Distinguished Professor (and Past Chairman) of Computer Science at University of California, Davis, where he has been for the past 31 years. Readers can visit the author at: http://networks.cs.ucdavis.edu/~mukherje/

# Puja Time Journey to Gangotri

Shyamal Roy



I think of America as my father, but India will always be my mother. That is why I have travelled in India whenever I can to refill my spiritual cups. Like any other Bengali, Puja time rekindles the travel spirit, and 30 years ago I decided to visit Gangotri in the Himalayas after spending the Puja days with my biological mother in Delhi. FYI, Gangotri is a conjugation of two Hindi words "Ganga" and "Utri" meaning where Ganga descends from the heavens. It really does with a thunderous sound – more or that later.

My journey started at New Delhi railway station on a cool October early morning. Accompanying me was my usual photography "sathi" Mr. S.P. Basu from Calcutta, widely known as Banshi Da, an accomplished photographer and avid India traveler. The

Dehradun Shatabdi left noisily right on time at 6:45 AM, and after brief stops at too many stations, it dropped us at Haridwar around 11 AM.

After brief negotiation we engaged a local taxi and were on our way. Although it is possible to get a taxi all the way from Delhi, it is better to get one in Haridwar because the drivers are more experienced in driving in the Himalayas. Our first stop was at Rishikesh where, after a great vegetarian lunch, we did some shopping for the road. The whole area is strictly vegetarian and animal-based food, other than milk based forbidden, except that boiled eggs could be bought as "Safed Aloos".

Our next stop was the Government Rest House at Chamba where we reached around 5 PM. After early dinner of Chapati, Daal, and "Patta Gobi" (cabbage curry), it was off to bed in the crisp mountain air while looking at the flickering lights of Surkhanda Devi temple at 10,000 feet near the guest house.

The morning chai in the guest house lawn was blessed by a panoramic view of the great Indian Himalaya peaks – Trishul, Bandr-Punch, and Chau Khamba. After a light breakfast, we were on our way to Uttarkashi – our next stop – which is as holy a spot as Varanasi for Shiva worship. After a quick visit to the temple and lunch, we were on our way to Harsil at 9,000 feet elevation, a

beautiful Himalayan Meadow for afternoon tea.

From Harsil to Gangotri was a brief drive where we checked into the Government Guest House. We were assured rooms with electricity but unfortunately the generator gave up. Fortunately, I had one of the best dinner in my life with freshly-made chapatis and "Jeera Alu" cooked inside a tent over a wood fire while it rained heavily as the ferocious Himalayan thunder storm raged outside. With the roar of young Ganges descending 200 feet in the background – it was indeed a Pink Floyd moment!

**Shyamal Roy** was born in Old Delhi in India and is a graduate of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. Shyamal studied photography under various masters in Paris, France, and attended the Nikon School of Photography.

# "Be God Before Worshipping God"

Swami Ishadhyanananda

When a Hindu ritualistic worship, pūjā, is going on, we, the onlookers, usually cannot relate to the rituals the priest is performing. Because we don't understand the mantras and significance of the rituals, to us pūjā appears to be a meaningless, lengthy ritual. We cannot derive the true benefit from it. "The knowledge of the significance of an act is a part of the act" says one ancient Indian text, and "without this knowledge real performance of the act is not possible" (arthajñānasya karma anuşthāna amgatvama, na hi artha jñānam antarena anusthānam sambhavati— Nyāya Prakāśa). On the other hand, if we know the philosophy and significance of the pūjā, the joy we derive from attending the celebration multiplies. Plus, we can derive the spiritual benefit from it.

What is the philosophy of Pūjā? What are the significance of rituals? Let me try to answer these questions very briefly.

Philosophy of Pūjā: "Don't worship God unless you have become God, worship God only after becoming God"—this statement from the Padma Purāṇa, a Hindu Scriptural text, captures the essence of Hindu ritualistic worship. Worship of any Hindu God or Goddess, such as Durgā, revolves around this thesis: Worship the God after becoming God. In any Hindu worship, brief or elaborate, the worshipper needs to first elevate herself to the level of the deity and then worship the deity. How does she do it?

To know that, we need to know the significance of the steps involved in pūjā.

The Basic Structure of Pūjā: Pūjā is like an iceberg. As only one tenth of an iceberg is visible above the water, so also the worship proper constitutes only a tiny fraction of the entire ritualistic worship. Only after performing many preparatory and necessary rituals, the pūjā proper can be started.

Every pūjā consists of some basic steps. Depending upon the pūjā, these steps can be brief or elaborate, but these are the fundamental steps in any ritualistic worship. The steps are: (1) preparations, (2) purifications, (3) divinization of the worshipper, (4) invocation of the divine in the image, (5) offerings, and (6) conclusion of the pūjā.

**Preparations:** These are the steps necessary for beginning the Pūjā. First of all, ācamaṇa: rinsing of mouth, purification of the mouth with which the mantras would be uttered during the pūjā. Then, svasti-vacana: Uttering words of auspiciousness. Samkalpa: Resolve to perform the worship and declaration of the purpose of the worship. Sāmānya-arghya: Consecration of water by invoking the water of seven (gange ca yamune caiva godāvarī sarasvati l narmade sindhu kāverī jale'smin samnidhim kuru ||) holy rivers of India into the *kosa*.

Purifications (śuddhi): An integral part of worship, the ritual purification aims to divinize everything associated with pūjā. Thus are done the rituals of sthāna-śuddhi - purification of place of worship, kara-śuddhi purification hands. puspa-śuddhi of purification of the flowers, devata-evampūjādravya-śuddhi - purification of the image of the deity and articles of worship, mantra*śuddhi* - purification of mantras, dehamārjanam-ātmaraksa-ca - purification and protection of the body-mind. The mantras used in doing these rituals remind the worshipper the purpose of pūjā which is to evolve on the path of bhakti. Purification actually means divinization of all that is involved in doing pūjā — vessels, mantras, self, and even the image of the God being worshipped.

After purifying the place and the articles with which the deity would be worshipped, the worshipper then proceeds to purify herself by way of divinizing her whole being.

**Divinization of the Worshipper**: The worshipper first performs  $pr\bar{a}n\bar{a}yama$  to purify her subtle body ( $suksma \dot{s}ar\bar{i}ra$ ) which, according to the Hindu philosophy, is made up of five subtle elements — space, air, fire, water, and earth.

Then, the worshipper performs *bhuta-śuddhi* to burn the gross and subtle bodies. This is a highly-developed Yogic process whereby the worshipper purifies her inner personality in order to be fit to worship the deity and meditate on the deity in her heart. The worshipper meditates on the *kundalinī* power as rising from the *mūlādhāra*, the base of the spine, to the head, *sahasrāra*, where it gets united with the light of the supreme spirit. The worshipper, during this process, imagines that her impure gross and subtle bodies become dried and burnt up by the mystic fire. This drying up process is accomplished by uttering the mystic syllables *yam* and *ram*.

Next is *nyāsa*, which means "to place" mantras on specific locations of the body. By this process, the worshipper assumes a divine body. This ritual helps to purify and offer the body-mind to the divine. In this ritual, the worshipper touches various parts of her body with appropriate mantras and identifies all these parts now with the body of the deity. She imagines that she is putting on a new divine body, free from all taints of sin, created out of her luminous Self.

Jīva-nyāsa: By this process, the worshipper invokes the divine presence in the heart of the new luminous body. Then the self, five vital energies, five sense organs, and five motor organs of the deity are invoked in the divine body of the worshipper, respectively, by pīṭha-nyāsa, ṛśi-ādi-nyāsa, kara-nyāsa, aṃga-nyāsa, and vyāpaka-nyāsa.

This is the technique of consecrating the body to the chosen deity. Thus, the aspirant feels intensely that her body belongs to God. She thus cultivates the consciousness that all her actions belong only to God. The worshipper gradually feels: "I am verily the God whom I worship." Then, she meditates on the deity in her heart. Then, she does the  $m\bar{a}nasa~p\bar{u}j\bar{a}$ , mental worship, with a lengthy mantra and mentally worships the deity with flower, incense, light, etc.

With mental worship, the worship is in fact complete. But, to externally worship the deity, the worshipper again separates herself from the deity and worships the deity externally. In order to do that, the worshipper has to invoke the divine in the image she is going to worship. How does she do that?

Through āvāhana.

Invocation of the Divine in the Image  $(\bar{a}v\bar{a}hana)$ : The next ritual is called  $\bar{a}v\bar{a}hana$ . In this process, the worshipper imagines that the deity who is seated in her heart comes out through her breath onto a flower in her hand. The flower is then placed on the image. This is followed by the infusion of power called  $pr\bar{a}na-pratisth\bar{a}$  in the image through special gestures,  $mudr\bar{a}$ .

Offerings (*upacāra*): This is the external pūjā, the visible part of the pūjā, wherein the worshipper, after the mental worship, offers various articles to the deity. The number of articles can be five, ten, sixteen, and even more, depending on the occasion and duration of the pūjā being performed. Accordingly, the pūjā could be *pañca-upacāra*, *daśa-upacāra*, *sodaśa-upacāra*, etc.

The attitude behind these offerings is one of profound love and adoration for the Lord. The deity is considered living and present in human form, and treated as a much loved and respected guest. Hence, articles such as water for washing feet, rinsing mouth, a mixture of honey, curd, and ghee (*madhuparka*), oil and water for bathing, cloth, and sandal paste are offered. Then, incense and lights are waved. Finally, fruits and sweets are offered as *naivedya* along with water for drinking,

rinsing mouth, etc. This is followed by offering of *tāmbula* or betel. All these offerings are done with appropriate mantras with an attitude of loving adoration of the deity as one's very own. Every article is purified and divinized before offering.

**Conclusion of pūjā**: After the formal worship of the deity, the pūjā proper is complete. Usually, ārati or showing of lamp marks the end of pūjā. After that, handfuls of flowers, called *puṣpāmjali*, are offered to the deity. Then, the worshipper surrenders herself and the fruit of the worship at the feet of the deity with  $s\bar{a}stamga\ pran\bar{a}ma\ (s\bar{a}st\bar{a}mga\ =\ sa$ 

+ aṣta + aṃga, sa = with, aṣta = eight, aṃga = limbs), prostration with eight limbs—two toes, two knees, two palms, chest, and the forehead.

Thus, we see that the ritualistic Hindu worship has a profound philosophy behind it. Each step of the ritual has deep significance too. If done sincerely, with proper understanding of the ritual, it is a highest form of spiritual discipline which has helped countless *sādhakas* down the ages to realize the spiritual truth that human beings are essentially divine.

Swami Ishadhyanananda is Assistant Minister of the Vedanta Society of Sacramento.



### Brief History of Utsav

Utsav is a nonprofit organization promoting Bengali culture in Sacramento Valley. Utsav was founded in 2002, with one goal: creating a positive and enjoyable experience of friendship, happiness, and harmony via our Bengali heritage. Although Utsav is predominantly a Bengali organization so far, we want to reach other communities as well. Membership in Utsav is not limited to any particular race, religion, or ethnic origin".

#### The Journey

The Beginning: It was a fine afternoon of Saraswasti Puja of 2002. A few new Bengali arrivals in Sacramento were standing in front of 1317 Montridge Ct., El Dorado Hills, reminiscing over the Puja celebrations in their homeland in India. The participants in that gathering – Deb Saha, Udayan Chanda (UC), Arun Chowdhury, Samrat Basu, Anirban Bhattacharya, Suvayu Bose, and Joy Mukherjee – all felt the need to host their own Durga Puja in Sacramento, and the idea of an organization was thus born. In an hour, they came up with the name, Utsav, first proposed by Suvayu Bose. Later, Mala Paul designed the Utsav logo.

A few weeks after that momentous gathering, several Sacramento Bengali old timers were contacted with the help of Mita Chakraborty. Everyone who we spoke to got excited to have our own Durga Puja and to have our own organization. Through this process of joyous interactions between the new arrivals and the old timers of Sacramento, Utsav found some strong pillars in the names of Adi and Mitra Choudri, Somen Nandi, Biswanath Mukherjee, and others, who had an immediate impact to make Utsav a grand success.

In July 2002, Utsav was officially formed. Adi Choudri, Deb Saha, Udayan Chanda, Arijit Chattopadhyay, and Joy Mukherjee –

with smiles, happiness, and glitters in their eyes – signed the official paperwork. We celebrated our first Durga Puja in October 2002. The participation of member families was outstanding and the joy was boundless. With time, the Utsav tree has expanded and the bondage among families grew deeper.

The baton of responsibility transferred to other able hands from the hands of those who started the organization. But the founders and senior members continued to remain very active in different roles.

Utsav members include 80-90 families, from which several individuals are elected every two years to serve as officers. (For the first few years, our elections were held annually.) So far, many of our members have ably served our organization with the leadership of our following Presidents:

- 2003: Arijit Chattopadhyay
- 2004: Udayan Chanda
- 2005: Mitra Choudri
- 2006: Biswanath Mukherjee
- 2007: Dipankar Chattopadhyay
- 2008: Deb Saha
- 2009: Adi Choudri
- 2010: Sharmila Mukherjee
- 2011-12: Joy Mukherjee
- 2013-14: Ajay Joshi
- 2015-16: Sanjib Nayak
- 2017-18: Rajat Saha

#### Our Activities:

We organize several annual events: Durga Puja; Saraswati Puja; Annual General Meeting (AGM) + Picnic; etc. Our events enjoy strong participation from our children. Our next generation – for whom exposure to Bengali culture is invaluable – is very active in our cultural programs, literary activities, and puja activities. It is gratifying to note that many of our young members, even after

going to college, still come back for our Pujas and look forward to attending them.

Our other activities include the following:

- Cultural Program productions, as parts of Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja, Anandamela, India Day, California State Fair, etc.
- Our Past Durga Puja External Artists include the following famous performers:
  - Mala Ganguly
  - o Lopamudra Mitra
  - Antara Chowdhury
  - o Bhoomi
  - o Rezwana Chowdhury Banya
  - o Somdatta Basu
  - Utpalendu Chowdhury
  - o Nachiketa
  - Sougata Ganguli (Sarod)
  - o Jojo (2007 and 2016)
  - o Anup Ghoshal
  - o Raghav Chatterjee
  - Suchismita Das
  - o Shubhomita
  - o Arnab Chakrabarty
  - Kaya
  - o Tanusree Shankar and Troup
  - o Aneek Dhar and Anwesha
  - o Parnava
  - o Cactus
  - o Abanti
  - o Kinjal
- Youth Activities: Utsav has organized several youth activities over the years: some highlights follow:
  - o In 2009-10, Dr. Mitra Choudri initiated a youth volunteer group, led by Utsav kids. They organized clothes drive and served a meal at St. John's Shelter, performed Spring Cleaning at Vedanta Center, and raised funds for Haiti Disaster.
  - o Later, Rupa Chowdhury led youth activities over many years; in recent years, Sangita Biswas has been leading our youth activities, such as Walk4Literacy, serving food at Saint John's Program for Real Change, etc.

- o In Dec. 2015, Utsav Youth Group volunteers (Aditya Chowdhury, Ayanta Chowdhury, Debangshu Das, Sharon Sarkar, and Neha Joshi) participated in the KVIE Public Television fundraising event during their pledge drive, attending the phone bank, accepting donations, etc. The group gave over 60 hours of their time in support of PBS and public television, and helped raise over \$6500.
- Recently, Utsav's youth volunteers, Sayak Datta, Ena Nayak, and Dayita Biswas, led fundraising efforts for the flood victims of Texas and Kolkata.
- In 2018, Sayak Datta led a fundraising program for the Shankara Eye Foundation.
- High-quality production of our Annual Magazine, Chowrongee (please visit our website for archives), thanks to Past and Present Editors: Dilip Roychowdhury, Arun Das, Rashmi Nandi, Manas Ray, Avishek Nag, and Rajat Saha.
- **Drama Productions**, under the Direction of Somen Nandi, such as:
  - Obak Jolpan (Sukumar Roy), performed also at Durgotsav'07 by an all-female cast under the direction of Sharmila Mukherjee.
  - o **Mamago** (by Sukumar Roy).
  - o Makuda Chole Gelen (Gautam Roy).
  - Bifole Mulyo Ferot (Samir Dasgupta), also performed at 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual North American Bengali Conference (NABC), Long Beach, CA, July 2003.
  - o Hum Do Hamara Do (Amol Roy).
  - Public Servant (Gautam Roy), performed also at Bay Area Natyamela, May 2005.
  - o **Jampati** (Sruti Natak) (by Sanjib Chattopadyay).

- o **Babuder Dalkukure** (Manoj Mitra), also performed at Bay Area Natyamela, June 2006.
- Apaharan (Sruti Natak) (Baidyanath Mukhopadhyay), performed at Bay Area Natyamela, June 2007.
- Our participation in 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual North American Bengali Conference (NABC) (Bongo Sammelan), Long Beach, CA, July 2003: with a Children's Dance Program (Production: Mala Paul) and Drama Bifole Mulyo Ferot (see above).
- Transfusion (November 2005; Producer: Mala Paul; Keynote Speaker: Dr. Ernie Bodai): Fundraiser for donating \$5,000 to Cancer Foundation of India.
- Our participation in 29<sup>th</sup> Annual North American Bengali Conference (NABC), San Jose, CA, July 2009: Dance Program (Production: Shashwati Roy and Mala Paul) and Drama Hoitey Sabhdan directed by Joydeep Ray.
- Ramayan (October 2009; Directed by: Ajay Joshi): A children's drama.

- Chalo Kolkata (October 2010; Written by: Manas Ray; Directed by: Mala Paul): A musical drama.
- **Bir Purush** (October 2010; Directed by: Paramita Ghosh): A children's drama.
- Halud Himu Kalo Rab (October 2012; Directed by Manas Ray): A drama based on Humayun Ahmed's novel.
- 100 Years of Bollywood (October 2013; Directed by Nupur Joshi).
- Dance pe Chance (October 2014; Directed by Joydeep Ray).
- Naacher Taale Pujo Pandale (Oct. 2015; Directed by Mala Paul and Manas Ray).
- Occupy Wal-Mart (at NABC 2017; Script: Manas Ray; Direction: Somen Nandi).
- Live from Banglaville; Script and Direction: Joydeep Ray).

Information for this writeup is gathered from the past several years with the objective to help new and future members who are expected to take forward and improve the Utsav legacy.



### **Utsav Membership Roster (2018-19)**

#### Platinum Sponsors (contribution: \$1200 and above)

Chanda, Udayan & Seema Choudri, Adi & Mitra Nayak, Sanjib & Soma Nandi, Somen & Rashmi Saha, Dev & Neena (Shetty)

#### Gold Sponsors (contribution: \$600 and above)

#### Silver Sponsors (contribution: \$400 and above)

Chatterjee, Satya & Pat Dey, Saumen & Manjula Ganguly, Somnath & Tanushree Majumder, Arijit & Srijita Mukherjee, Arun & Sharmila Mukherjee, Kokonad & Shatabdi Paul, Shomeek Saquib, Najmus & Lubna

#### General Members

\*Adoni, Anand, Subhra (Chakraborty), Anish, and Aisha
Bagchi, Shyamal and Ossing
\*Banga, Mainak, Pubasha and Toushini
\*Bandyopadhyay, Barun, Sunanda, Sneha, and Hiya
Banerjee, Amit, Snigdha (Ghosh), Isha, Shriya, and Aayan
Basu, Mrinmoy and Kajal
Basu, Shantanu, Rina, and Dhiya
Basuroy, Nirupam, Sudeshna, Shimika, and Nirvik
\*Bhattacharya, Anirban, Paramita (Chakraborty), Archita, and Zini
\*Bhattacharya, Srilekha
\*Biswas, Debabrata and Sangita
\*Biswas, Shina

Bhaumik, Partha and Shenjuti (Gupta)

Bhowmick, Rana

Burman, Prabir and Family

\*Chakraborty, Prodosh, Mita, Joey, and Robby

Chakroborty, Soumya and Priosmita

\*Chakroborty, Shyama and Paris

\*Chanda, Udayan, Seema, Neel, and Natasha

Chatterjee, Madhura and Mahesh

\*Chatterjee, Satya and Pat

\*Choudri, Adi, Mitra, Neil, and Natasha

\*Chowdhury, Arun, Rupa, Ayananta, and Aditya

\*Chowdhury, Pulak, Sanchita (Dey), and Mahika Adishree, Vivan Mayukh

\*Chowdhury, Shyamal, Bipasha, Sudip, and Anindya

Chowdhury, Ujjwal and Family

Das, Aveek

Das, Kamal and Trishita (Paul)

\*Das, Koushik, Santana, and Debanshu

\*Das, Koushik, Paramita and Family

\*Das, Modan, Shilpi, Neil, and Raj

Datta, Jyotirmoy, Namita, Srijon, and Orjon

\*Datta, Sandipan and Behnaz Hekmat

\*Datta, Subrata, Alodipa, Sayak, and Sarthak

\*Devavarapu, Pradeep, Sanhita (Bandyopadhyay), and Suhaan

\*Dey, Saumen, Manjula, Siddhartha, and Rishaan

Dey, Gautam, Namrata, Trinity, and Arsha

Dubey, Paromita

Dutta, Ayushman

Ganguly, Apratim and Rohosen (Bandyopadhyay)

\*Ganguly, Somnath, Tanushree, and Shoyoma, Sudhit

Ghosh, Rupa, Shovik, and Rudrani

\*Ghosh, Sumanta, Paramita, Sumita, and Shayan

Ghoshal, Surajit, Tuhina, Tuli, and Tithi

\*Ghoshal, Chaitali, Ritwika, and Anusha

\*Gima, Marvel and Subhra

Guha, Deeptarghya and Priyanka

\*Guha, Snehungsu and Tanusree (Dasgupta)

\*Joshi, Ajay, Nupur, Neha, and Veer

\*Jadhav, Umesh and Poonam

Karmakar, Amit, Carol, Deven, and Asha

Khan, Abdul Quyyum, Jasmin, Sami, and Nafi

Khatua, Tara and Krishna

\*Kriplani, Indru and Pramila

\*Kumar, Barin, Anima, Soma, and Eric

Majumder, Arijit and Srijita

Majumdar, Samrat and Suchanda

Majumdar, Tapas and Saptarshi

\*Mallick, Soummya, Sharmila, and Family

\*Mandal, Amit and Amrita

\*Mathew, Brandon and Family

\*Mitra, Anupam and Ananya

Mohammad, Billah (Rana), Baby, Farah, and Farhan

\*Mukherjee, Arun, Sharmila, Ballari, and Kajori \*Mukherjee, Biswanath and Supriya \*Mukherjee, Joy, Suvra, Rinita, and Ronit \*Mukherjee, Kokonad, Shatabdi, and Family Mukheriee, Sourav and Suparna \*Mukherjee, Tuhin and Ishita \*Mullins, Mala P. and Evani Paul \*Najmus, Saguib, Lubna, Samhita and Samara \*Nandi, Somen, Rashmi, Sunoy, and Sharod \*Nayak, Sanjib, Soma, Ena, and Ashna Padihari, Prasanna and Aishwarya \*Paul, Debashis \*Paul, Shomeek and Evani \*Paul, Subrata, Soma, Dipto, and Sreeja \*Ray, Joydeep, Dipanjali (Banerjee), Siddharth, and Sanjoli \*Ray, Manas and Shashwati Ray, Monika, Naveen (Atray), Sultana, and Dhruv (Atray) Roy, Shyamal Roy, Tania Saha, Deb, Nina Shetty, Rohan, and Ishaan \*Saha, Rajat, Ananya, Ileena, and Ivaan \*Saha, Subir, Seema (Chowdhury), Shopneil, and Spriha \*Saquib, Najmus, Lubna, Samhita, and Samara \*Sarkar, Shampa Sarkar, Sandeep, Debolina, and Ryan \*Sarkar, Sanjib, Hem, Arunava, and Sonia \*Sarkar, Subir, Lily, Sahana, and Sharon \*Sarkar, Sudeep, Suman, Aditya, and Aryav \*Sharma, Kingshuk, Ashrukana, Khounish, and Eashaan Sircar, Tanushree and Sunil Somarajan Shrivastava, Sanjay and Karuna Verma, Ravi and Barnali (Roy Choudhury)

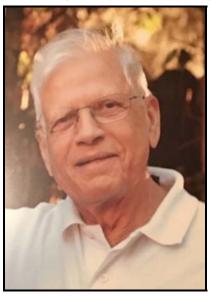
# Thanks to All Volunteers and Donors Who Have Tirelessly Contributed To The Success of All Utsav Events In 2017-18



<sup>\*</sup> Denotes membership renewed for 2018-19 during press time. Our apologies if the information has any inaccuracy; please drop us an email at utsavpr@gmail.com with corrections.

# In Memorium Professor Prodyot Bhattacharya

(September 30, 1930 - March 9, 2018)



We mourn the passing away of Professor Prodyot Bhattacharya, a dear friend of the Bengali community in the Davis-Sacramento area, at his home in Davis on March 9, 2018. He is survived by his wife Srilekha Bhattacharya, two daughters, and four grandchildren.

Professor Prodyot Bhattacharya, who was known as Prodyot-da to all, young and old, was born in Kolkata, India, on September 30, 1930. Prodyot and Srilekha were married in 1964. Their older daughter Suparna is a doctor living in Southern California, and their younger daughter Aparna is a biostatistician living in Connecticut. He was a great connoisseur of fine arts - literature, music and opera, among others. The Bhattacharyas have been very involved in activities of the Bengali community, and Prodyot-da performed Utsav's Durga Puja in 2012 and 2013.

Professor Bhattacharya received his doctorate degree from Calcutta University in 1960, and worked at the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, till he moved to the United States in 1965 to join the Mathematics department at the University of Arizona, Tucson. He joined the Statistics faculty at UC Davis in 1980 as a professor and took an early retirement in 1994. He was known to all his colleagues and students as simply 'PK'. He was a highly-accomplished and internationally-known and respected scholar, and a highly-cherished teacher.

We will miss him and remember him for his gentleness, deep integrity, and wisdom. A long-time colleague has described him as a rare noble person. May his soul rest in peace!

[Professor Prodyot Bhattacharya's UC Davis faculty colleagues and long-time friends - Professors Prabir Burman and Debashis Paul - are gratefully acknowledged for writing this obituary]

# In Memorium Amita Kar

(January 27, 1948 – January 28, 2018)



We mourn the sudden passing away of Amita Kar, a dear friend of the Bengali community in the Sacramento-Davis area, at her home in Kolkata on January 28, 2018.

Amita, who was known as Mukta to all her friends, was born in India on January 27, 1948. Her father was a distinguished officer in the India Army and her brother carried on that tradition. In India, she worked as a school teacher for eight years and then ran their family business single-handedly for five years.

She was married to our departed friend Shubhrendu Kar and came to Sacramento in June 1990. In Sacramento, she started working with California State Park Services and later joined the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. What an amazing career for an Indian lady, working in so many areas in India and in California! During her time in Sacramento, she dedicated herself to all community activities and worked tirelessly for all Utsav events.

She leaves behind her son Shomeek, a successful IT engineer, her eleven year old granddaughter Evani, and her brother, sister and their families in Kolkata. Here, in California, we will always remember her smiling face and charming personality and cherish her memory with love and respect.

May her soul rest in peace!

[We are grateful to late Professor Prodyot Bhattacharya, a long-time friend of Mrs. Amita Kar, for writing this obituary]



# In Association with



# **UTSAV Drama Team**

Presents

# AN UNSTOPPABLE LAUGH RIOT!







# Live from Banglaville

What happens in Banglaville? You won't believe!

Oct 13th, 7PM
Orangevale Community Center
6826 Hazel Ave, Orangevale, CA 95662
Admission is Free for Local Programs