



Kārvā

JUNE 2015



From the Editorial Team

क्योंकि कारवां रोज़ नहीं गुजरते

सफ़र पर होते हैं कई कारवां रोज़
जैसे होते हैं हफ़ों पर शब्द नए
कारवां गुजर जाते हैं शब्द ठहरे हैं
यादें है गुजरे कारवां की ज़ेहन में
हफ़ों पर इतिहास उरेकते हैं शब्द
और अमर होते हैं कारवां हफ़ों में
कारवां बनते हैं सम्वेदनायें, शब्द कविता
ऐसा है क्योंकि कारवां रोज़ नहीं गुजरते

Manish Dubey
M.A. Development, 2014-16

Dear Reader,

It is with great anticipation and joy that we launch the fourth edition of Karvan.

Life at Azim Premji University is challenging and at the same time exciting and extremely enriching. Another year of fun, enjoyment, readings and assignments has come to a close. The year started very much like what you all will have now. Most of us (from the first year at least) were stumbling around and trying to come to terms with all the newness around us. Our weeks flew by with dense brainstorming discussions in the classrooms and during field visits and with unattended readings piling on one-over-the-other. We learnt from Marx, Bentham and Mills but we also did learn much more from Arvind Anna at the cafeteria, our roommates in the hostels and our seniors. This journey is going to be challenging in many ways and yet it will allow you to question your ideals, encourage you to think critically and will make you aware of the world we live in.

The celebrations at Azim Premji University start with the Freshers' Party and go on to Eid, Onam, Independence Day, Diwali, Baisakhi, Holi, our own cultural festival Unmukt and end with bidding farewell to our adorable seniors. You are also never going to run out of reasons to celebrate friendship day or to send little notes to your secret crush among students and professors on February 14th.

The same goes for sports. If you want to run, jump, play cricket or football we have events especially for you. For the others who don't want to tan themselves we have indoor badminton and table tennis competitions. Other clubs which are into photography, movie screening, poetry and quizzing will definitely keep your Fridays action-packed all year round.

The promise is of an exuberant, thought-provoking ride that might as well change your life. And through this edition of Karvan we want to give you a glimpse of that colourful ride which you are about to begin with this academic year at the University.

Are you guys ready to embark upon this voyage?

Editorial Team, Karvan' 15

Editorial Team

Amarkant Thakur

Aditya Krishna

Nabila Kazmi

Nishanth K S

Riddhi Pandey

Sarah Jacobson

Saamil Sharma

Theertha Menon

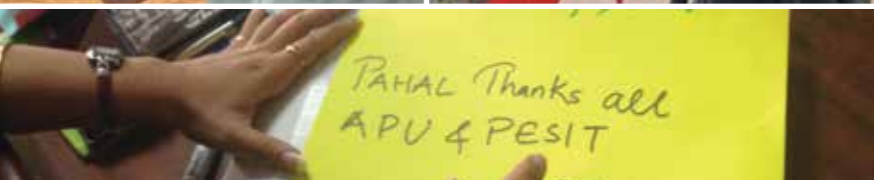
Vishal Janugade

*Cover Design:
Jamuna Inamdar*

The Editorial Team would like to thank all contributors, supporters, members of the University faculty and administration for their contribution in bringing out the 4th edition of Karvan. A special thanks to our faculty-mentors for their guidance and encouragement.

You can email your suggestions, comments and contributions to editorialclub@apu.edu.in

CONTENTS



Messages

From Anurag Behar.....	03
From S. Giridhar.....	04
From Shreelata Rao Seshadri.....	05
From Rajashree Srinivasan.....	06

Life at the University 07

Celebrating Diversity	08
Poetry Club Ka Caravan	09
Kaapi Aur Charcha	10
Pahal	12
Celluloid Club	13
Students' Journal of Education and Development	14

Events at the University 15

National Science Day.....	16
Quoteworthy Words!.....	19

Expressions 23

Selected poems and articles

Field Diaries 53

Aapne India Toh Dekha Hai, Aapko Hum Bharat Dikhate Hai	54
विकास की डायरी के कुछ पन्ने	55
Teacher Recognition in India.....	56
आज मेरे घर चलेंगे सर!.....	57
Live Life with Sense of Joy with Pleasure of Nature.....	59

Reflections 61

तुझे मात्र स्वतंत्र झाले.....	62
Into the Open.....	63
Friendship Guitar	64
The Language Plight	65
Diversity-Are you sure about it?	66
You raise me up to more than I can be.....	67

MESSAGE

ANURAG BEHAR, VICE - CHANCELLOR

One of the privileges of my role is that I meet people who do extraordinary work, helping change this world for the better, almost every day.

I have deliberately called their work extraordinary, and haven't called them "extraordinary people". That's because they won't recognize themselves as being extraordinary, knowing intimately their own limitations, failings and missteps. This doesn't in any way make their work less extraordinary.

The reason I start with this, is that too often do we convey the impression and form a belief, that only extraordinary people or some kind of superwoman, can make a real difference to the world. This is just not true. The biggest difference is made by ordinary people, who relentlessly persevere, in some direction.

For those of you from our third batch, as you go out and work, to help change the world, as you have wanted to and the University has helped you prepare for, let me share a few things that I have seen common across these ordinary people who do extraordinary work:

1. They have expertise. I am using the word expertise as a catch-all for deep understanding of a certain area/kind-of-work, and very strong relevant capacities. Let me give an example: someone who has expertise in public advocacy campaigns will know how to mobilize people on the ground, will understand media behavior, will anticipate responses and concerns of different segments of people, will communicate effectively, will have an excellent sense of the economics of any specific effort, will be able to tie this up together comprehensively etc. One cannot change things without expertise.
2. Even after decades of work, they don't think that they have the solutions or even know all the problems and issues. They are willing to listen and discuss. Since they have learnt much, they value the expertise and learning of others. They recognize acutely that expertise and deep understanding is built with great difficulty, and they try to absorb that from those who have it.
3. They have humility and confidence – together. Without confidence they won't get anywhere, without humility no one will come with them anywhere. Also: this combination of confidence-humility is a natural outcome of having made a difference, at the same time having experienced first-hand, limitations and failures of all sort.
4. They know that nothing can be done alone. In fact this is a big part of the reason that they have humility; they know how critical and important has the role of others been in whatever they have done. So, they develop the ability to work with people, carry people with them and genuinely build lasting human relationships.
5. They are all people of action. They know that everything eventually comes together in what they do; no amount of thinking, feeling, and understanding can actually change things, it has to all come together in the form of action. They work really hard at this, converting everything to action.

Every one of us can learn and develop all these in ourselves, these are all characteristics of ordinary people. Particularly to our students, who have chosen to come to our University, because they want to make a difference, I think these things will make a real difference.

Wish you the very best!



MESSAGE

S. GIRIDHAR, REGISTRAR

Anything that is a creation of the students at the University gives us a special feeling of pride that cannot be described in words. And so when the Quiz club organizes wonderful quizzing programs or when Pahal, the student club that works on concerns in our environment, mobilizes people for a cause, there is joy and satisfaction that our students are doing such work.

It is the same sense of fulfilment with Karvan. It is the students' magazine that they put together with such a lot of passion and energy. The magazine is timed around the end of the academic year. It almost serves as the symbolic passing of the baton from the graduating batch to the next. In that sense, Karvan is perhaps very special. In its own way Karvan tries to express what this University means to students, what they have seen and experienced at the University. Student life is unique and that is not a trite expression. Ask Lijya who came to our university as a fresh graduate or ask Shantanu, a veteran who came here after decades of work experience – both will explain that beautiful feeling of being a student soaking up learning experiences in a vibrant atmosphere.



The magazine brings to us vignettes of student life – their classrooms, their hostels, their diverse interests – but all seamlessly put together in a manner that shows why they chose this university, why they chose to do their Masters in Education or in Development. The students will remember that it was with the caption, “Do you have the head and heart for social change?” that the university invited them to apply for their programs. And, as one browses through the magazine and sees the kind of issues and the kind of interests and experiences that they write about, it becomes clear that both student and university have chosen each other well.

It has become customary for me to sign off with a few thoughts every time I write my piece for Karvan. It is no different this time. So let me place them with the hope that they ring a bell and resonate with all members of the University. The first is that, the graduating students are the most important ambassadors of the University. Wherever you are and whatever you pursue, you will always be representing the university. That puts a responsibility on you but one that we hope you will own with happiness. For the batch that will now enter its second year, the responsibility will be to welcome the new students and set an example that will at all times reflect the ethos and culture of the university. In a nutshell this will mean, at all times the maturity to treat freedom with responsibility. Lastly, a personal admission: When we were around 220 students on campus, I perhaps knew every face and most names but confess that as it crossed 500, I am not in that position anymore. One would like to try and correct this in the coming year. At the University, the faculty and all the members are accessible to every student at all times. That personal touch, that expression of care for student wellbeing will always be uppermost in our thoughts and actions. It is something that most students would recognize. We are one community, students, faculty and all other members – and must remain so at all times.

I wish all the graduating students of the 2013 batch the very best of luck in their future endeavours. We must remain touch. You will retain your @apu.edu.in email Id too which for us is a commitment to being in touch with you always. To the batch of 2014, please carry forward the baton. With the same belief in goodness, idealism, passion and most importantly the trust that this is a good world.

MESSAGE

SHREELATA RAO SESHADRI - PROGRAM COORDINATOR, M.A. DEVELOPMENT

It is wonderful that you are putting together this compilation of your memories of the University, of being part of its student life and this time you have spent in Bangalore. This was started by our first batch, and it is a pleasure to see that subsequent batches are continuing to invest time and energy in keeping that custom going. To me it represents one more example of the activities that are a reflection of the character of our University and already becoming traditions: Unmukt, Kaapi aur Charcha, PAHAL – to name just a few.

Importantly, it is a reminder that it is that time of year already when students are getting ready for their final exam, their last group presentation, their ultimate term paper! It seems as if these last two years have gone by in a blur. I still remember the day when I interviewed many of the hopeful candidates who finally joined the university as students in the M.A. Development or M.A. Education programs. I was so touched the other day when one of the students called me aside and thanked me sincerely for having picked her and given her this opportunity to spend two years with us.

One hopes that these two years have built in all of you the spirit and culture that Azim Premji University stands for. What do I mean by this? I mean the curiosity to learn new ideas, eagerness to exchange and debate opinions, joy in living through a new experience, willingness to meet and understand new people, compassion for the poor and the marginalized, determination to strive for a better world and commitment to make value-based ethical choices – both in your personal relationships and in the work you choose to do.

Every year, one looks forward in anticipation to the new batch of students. When you arrive on campus, you all are a mixed bag - some quiet, some loud, some uncertain, some confident, some shy, some bossy, some studious, some not (!) Your batch was no different: you all came from your own unique backgrounds, with your own unique ideas, likes, dislikes, prejudices and passions. You all had your own unique way of handling the challenges – even conflicts - that have been cast your way. Your experience here should have taught you how to navigate such troubled waters in ways that build a social conscience, with maturity and thoughtfulness. I hope that you will take this with you wherever you go.

All the very best to the batch of 2013! You will be missed. Wherever you are, you are part of the growing Azim Premji University community, so stay in touch.



MESSAGE

RAJASHREE SRINIVASAN - PROGRAM COORDINATOR, M.A. EDUCATION

As I write for this issue of *Karvan*, I recall the year 2012 when my colleague Kinnari and I were faculty advisors for this newsletter ('magazine' now). It was going to be the first written issue of student collective voices. A bunch of students and we sat through unending discussions on whether this written form should be a magazine, a newsletter or a journal? Should it be thematic? Should we include all Indian languages? How do we make it student-driven and a collaborative and participatory work? And the students found answers through dialogue amongst student themselves. One of the highpoints of the work was also about selecting a name for the student newsletter. The students conducted a poll and of the five names that were received, 'Karvan' was chosen to be best suited. And two lines of the Editorial of 2012 *karvan* read as follows: "Karvan was conceived so that we may give utterance to the things that move us most as we discover ourselves, our people, our country and our cause. We hope to create a sense of community that can share its feelings, thoughts, musings, bemusing and perceptions to engender a patch of green for inclusiveness, inventiveness and action". So having participated in the beginnings of *Karvan*, it is a pleasure for me to write and I am delighted that the essence of the vision continues with the fourth newsletter.



Our University, for most of us, is a learning space that represents a continuous striving for the realization of democratic principles through community participation. The real task in this interface between learning and community is to infuse sense, sensibility and sensitivity in every aspect of work so that you develop capabilities to make a difference in the society. The constant encouragement to anchor an extravagance with the higher aims of education, through nurturing critical thinking and an empathetic mind, is central to the task of education and pivotal for peace and harmony in the society.

Your spirited engagement at the University and at the Program level activities energizes the space. The passion with which you discuss and reason; the empathy you show for one another; the joy you nurture in your student, faculty and other staff interactions; the focus you bring to reading and writing, the hues and colours you bring to your farewells and fresher parties; the sense of mission you harbor in your outreach program reflects the profound sense of a community that allows for differences and builds on commonalities. Such a pathway indeed contributes to actualizing the social purpose of our University and the objectives of the programmes.

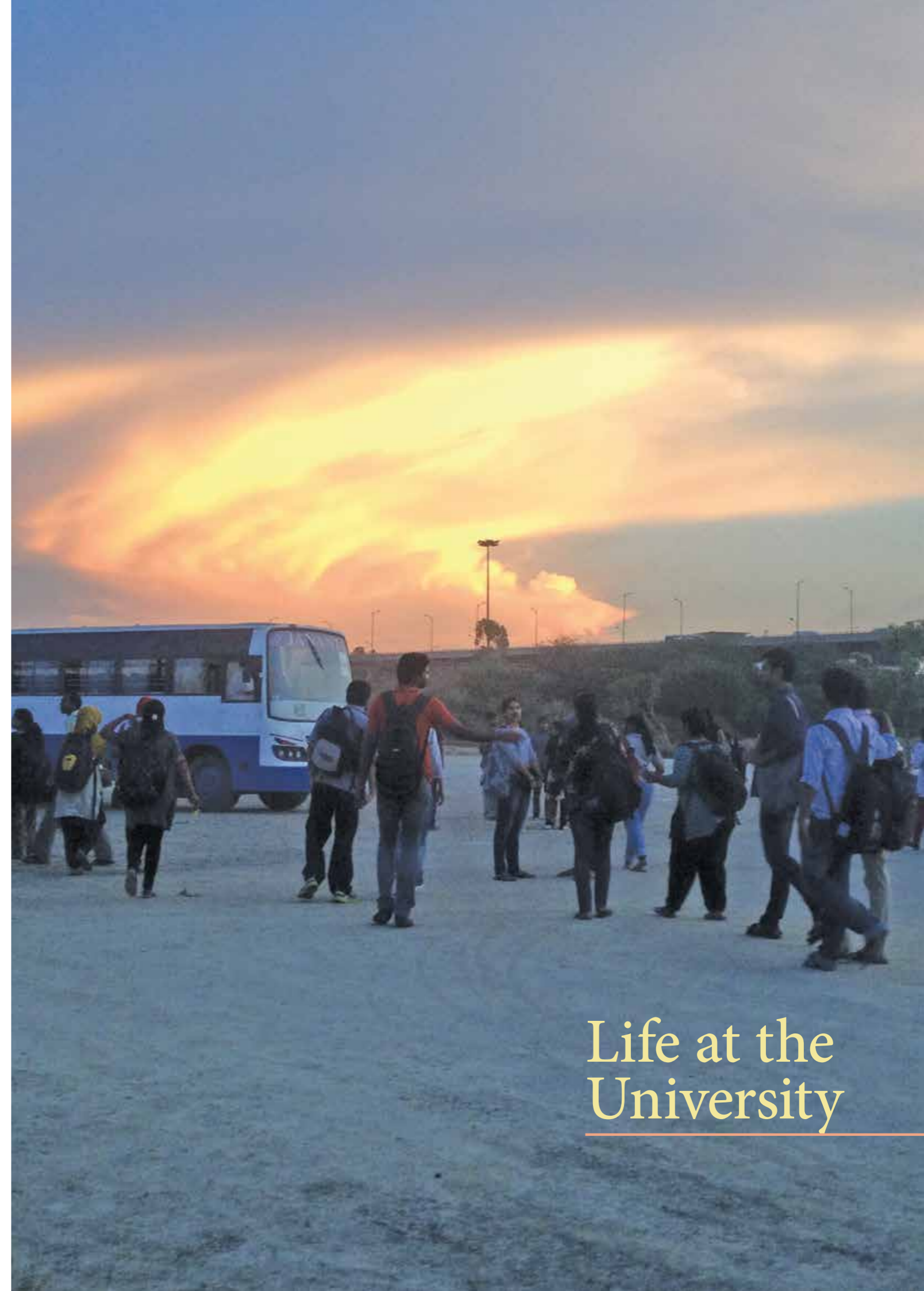
For those joining in new, welcome to the *Karvan*—a journey of hope, possibilities and choices!!

For those leaving the portals of this institution, wishing you the very best! Choose the road less travelled with certain audacity of the spirit, that reconciles excellence with inclusivity, the urgency to make a difference with patience; and your accomplishments with humility.

For those still here, I encourage you to explore newer landscapes with newer eyes!

To recall Tennyson's words for all of you,

**Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell,
That mind and soul according well
May make one music as before**



Life at the
University

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

- Neha Arora, M.A. Education, 2014-16

Our University is very unique. It is different from other Universities in many ways in the fields of academics as well as non-academics. One of the reasons why I cherish this uniqueness is its 'diversity'. You will meet people from different age groups, socio-cultural backgrounds, academic backgrounds and experiences. Interacting with them has been an amazingly enriching learning experience for me and it is difficult for me to put all of that in words! But, my friends (Riddhi and Sarah) who happen to be in the editorial team of 'Karvan' have insisted that I do so. So, here I will try to put down my thoughts to give you a flavor of the diversity!

Usually people celebrate different festivals to enjoy their religious or cultural heritage, but here at Azim Premji University, we celebrate diversity! When I came here, a year back I was a fresh graduate from college and all these experiences were new to me. I started enjoying talking to people, understanding their views, having philosophical and ideological debates. And clubs gave me a wonderfully lively opportunity to do so.

As representatives of Clubs Committee and members of Cultural Club, we initiated 'Mini Carnivals' this year. We put up material items or food items made by students to raise funds for clubs' activities through the Mini Carnivals. We did it twice this year and it was a huge accomplishment. Also, everyone had a good time in the celebrations of Eid, Diwali, Children's Day, Republic Day, Unmukt, Farewell (hostels and college), One Billion Rising, Dandiya night, Valentine's Day, Festival of Harvest-Lohri, Makar-Sankranti, Holi, Bihu, Baisakhi, and the Photography week, Football, Volleyball and Cricket Matches, Badminton, Table-tennis

and Chess tournaments and many more events further gave opportunities for enjoyment to everyone. It was a mixture of activities like face painting, singing, dancing, theatre, mimicry, open-air movie screening and painting among others which made the year memorable. There have been a lot struggles as well in the form of declining participation of students in some of these non-academic activities of the university which we would discuss in our meetings. However, the 'organic' functioning of the clubs has been commendable and that has been great motivation for us.

For me it is difficult to isolate the process and the result. So the awesomest moments have been behind the scene moments - 'the process', where in the midst of assignments, submissions, examinations all of us came together for making rangolis, lighting up the Diyas, cooking food, making momentos and putting up decorations. While doing all of this, we interacted, we worked, we enjoyed, we fought (or should I say we engaged in a 'dialogue'), we teased each-other, and did what not. When today I look back on the road that I have travelled so far, it is these 'moments' and the 'we' that makes the journey worthwhile! And how can I forget to mention my three musketeers - Neha Bhai - Neha Pant; My Momo - Mamta Kandari and Energy ki bharmaar - Alina Alam, who have always been there for me.

At times diversity is something that can be dangerous too but still, I am enjoying this journey and I am sure you are and you will too! So, come let's celebrate this diversity!

*On behalf of The Cultural Club
e-mail: culturalclub@apu.edu.in*

POETRY CLUB KA CARAVAN

- Zahra Kayyum Shakir, M.A. Education, 2014-16

A year back at Azim Premji University in mid June 2014, we all nurtured our futuristic pebbled dreams with an adventurous academic journey knowing teensy about the onward stopovers, halts, encounters, achievements, learnings and more. To begin our voyage we had a two week orientation in June. The orientation program fuzzed the flummoxed level of anxiety to a welcomed spirit of camaraderie affinity. Our 2nd years received us with galore of propitious fete, encouragement, advice and warmth.

Post those two weeks, we sat still; geared up with our seat belts of determination on, eyes right at our academic goals and the wheels of caravan classes (lectures) took its full speed. Initially it took a while to adjust to the new environment, place, university and the mannerism by which we students-faculty and students-students interact. Our University keeps us on our toes. Classes, readings, practicums, presentations, group work, assignments, response paper, term paper, meetings, colloquium and so much more. We embrace happiness while push stress away. But the mantra of our university is to push yourself hard to learn, grow, think and be that "change". We celebrate our work, learning and revel in our friendships. Our strength is "our potential" that is left free at our university. We have a lot of freedom with regard to belief, feeling, voice, choice and need. We fly high with our creativity and readiness to learn and reflect. Very soon our intellectual head started to flutter in the library horizon where we dive in the deep sea of wordy resources. The journey so far in this one academic year from June 2014 to May 2015 has been a stupendously awesome stage where we learnt to agree to disagree, raise questions, learn, adapt, adjust, compromise, forgive, rejoice, enjoy and have fun as there is no tomorrow.

The freshness of the academic journey needs to be maintained and hence we have our CLUBS!! Students CLUBS! Friday is the day. Every Friday post classes, we have a buffet of clubs at our service. We can choose what we want to titbit on. We at the university modicum on all of the clubs tasting a bit of its enchanting zestful essence. Poetry Club is one of the meditative space. A

space where we sit in the open veranda, chat, talk, share and applaud. We sit in the classes and lay our back at rest. We sit near the cafeteria and chatter. We pick up any space that pulls us to be ours for that evening. We recite poems, stories, anecdote, quotes and more. Poetry binds souls and that what we eye.

As we just spoke a lot of flavor and taste, yes, you have got it right; we await for friends to share poems in all languages. We await to hear poems in Hindi, Kannada, Gujarati, Bengali, Urdu, Maithili, Angika, Bhojpuri, Koshur, Marathi, Punjabi and the list is endless. We sing, play musical instruments and be in the moment of joy, tranquility and unwind. We ensure that we have something for all. One does not necessarily have to be a poet, write well, articulate words like a deep thinker. All we call for are "ears". Come, HEAR! Sit under the sky and hear the air conversing with our moods, nurturing poetic encounters. It's our space that needs nurture for our unwinding. We need to restore its beauty, its essence and have reverence for our own space. We have put together the Poetry Club with bricks of unity, cement of love and have watered it with our sprinkles of verses, lyrics, hums rhythmically binding our bond for many years to come. We at the poetry club welcome each and every Azim Premji University family member to pay us a visit, every Friday at a time that stops. Stop by. Joie De Vivre (enjoy life), we say.

As the poet is us always pops up and it's impossible to gulp our thoughts, we put up our feelings in few Poetic Verse - Let's Converse. We repeat - FRIDAY is OUR Day.

UNDULATE ONENESS

Sundry twigs of us, sipping caffeine or tea
In a poetic space, divine Euphoria Sea
Fizzing the words to play with glee waves
Gulping the words, relishing the essence.
Poetry Club, calls out - "Presence".
Flow with the surfs and sit at the shore.
Hear each word tingling your soul.
Poetry Club, Invites All.

*On behalf of The Poetry Club
e-mail: poetryclub@apu.edu.in*

KAAPI AUR CHARCHA

- Janakiraman Durai, M.A. Education, 2013-15

It gives me immense pleasure to invite my new friends, who are reading this, to our University. Also, I am pleased to write about Kaapi aur Charcha, a weekly informal discussion which, as you will soon discover, is as much a part of this University as are classes, coffee and canteen!

The first few weeks in a University like ours, which invites a diverse set of people each year from all over India, are quite interesting in some ways and embarrassing in many other ways. We bump into new faces and new names each day to realize that we had introduced ourselves only yesterday or even worse, the same morning. If the arithmetic progression of the new students coming each year is anything to go by, then I can only imagine the comedy of errors that will ensue! While the University does its part in acclimatizing the students to the new surroundings/culture, we students feel that there is something we can do to personalize this space and feel a sense of ownership. Thus enters Kaapi aur a Charcha.

For starters, 'Kaapi aur Charcha' is an informal discussion with a field practitioner/entrepreneur/activist/scholar/etc. with the purpose of understanding the person behind the 'banner'. In general terms we do appreciate various social interventions by individuals or groups of people whom we come across in our social radar. However, we believe there is some virtue in understanding the thought processes, the belief systems, and the cultural and social baggage of those individuals or groups. At this point, I am tempted to give a bird's eye view of a typical session of Kaapi aur Charcha, but I leave that field to my more enthusiastic friends in the first year (now in second year). I will touch upon few aspects of Kaapi aur Charcha that I have cherished the most.

Let me start with the title itself. 'Charcha' is, as most of my north-Indian friends would have guessed is simply that, a charcha. For my friends from other parts of India, Charcha is an informal, loose, free-flowing talk. And since charcha is accompanied with either tea or coffee, we call it Kaapi aur Charcha. There is nothing sacrosanct about this title, however we stuck with it as it best conveys the objective of the session.

Secondly, it is a student driven activity and thus the students invite the guests on their own accord. The

pictures along with this piece will give you an idea of the guest profile that the student body has engaged with. The setting is informal as opposed to a serious classroom like discussion. Mostly, Kaapi aur Charcha is held between snack time and dinner time, in the foyer area of Pixel B or in the lawn or in the Activity hall. We make it a point to sit squatting on the floor and even lie down if the charcha goes on and on!

A typical session is devoid of any formal introduction of the guest and reading briefs. Also, the guests are not briefed about any topics of discussion. However, if the guests come with a particular agenda in mind, we go with that. The session goes on for about ninety minutes with the generous sprinkling of coffee or tea. After the session, we make it a point to present the guest with a handmade greeting/post card/craft/ sketch work as a token of thanks. That's so much as far as the preliminaries is concerned. Now let's dive deeper.

What is the point of Kaapi aur Charcha, when we already have discussions in classrooms, canteens, hostels, library (oops! No discussion in library!) etc.? A perennial question which I tried answering for myself all the while engaging with Kaapi aur Charcha. I will say this much- Charcha opens us to voices subdued in the din of pedantry. Henry Lowe in "The Great Debaters" says that "the only reason why I am in College is that it is the only place where I can read or discuss all day, other than prison." An honest heart-felt discussion devoid of literati and glitterati gives unforgettable glimpses of the self. My own confession is that through Kaapi aur Charcha we have touched upon the dark and forbidden aspects of our daily life and the society for which our classrooms are uniquely ill-suited, but those issues are very important to discuss. Why not classrooms, one might quip? To quote from 'The Economist'- Special report on Universities, 'Education does not increase social mobility but reinforces existing barriers'. And it is these barriers we have tried confronting in our Kaapi aur Charcha sessions.

A superficial glance at Kaapi aur Charcha would suggest that such sessions are at best informative, but the way I read it is that it is not just another platform where we accumulate facts, but circumscribe more nebulous realms

of doubt. I see there is a sincere effort in constructing knowledge and breaking silences. My conviction, distilled from my engagements in various activities in Azim Premji University, especially Kaapi aur Charcha, is that ideas born out of heartfelt discussions matter.

Moving further, I would like to dispel a few myths that have plagued Kaapi aur Charcha over the years. Firstly, the dominant myth regarding Kaapi aur Charcha is that it is organized by a select group of students - that it is owned and run by that group of students. While it is true that some students are in the forefront in terms of drafting the student invitation mail, arranging for coffee/tea, arranging travel or handmade gifts for the guests etc., these students work in mutual understanding and in no way form the core of Kaapi aur Charcha. In theory, each and every student and faculty is a part of Kaapi aur Charcha's organizing team. Anyone can suggest a guest and invite them to our university for a talk.

Secondly it is not a club in the sense that there is no membership or registration that is maintained of who is in and who is out. Interested students come on their own accord and take it to the next level. As, I said earlier few students help coordinating the session by the virtue of them knowing the contact persons for organizing various conveniences. But that's about it. Anyone can suggest a guest name or volunteer to be a part of organizing a

session. I can recall some of our faculties suggesting names for a Kaapi aur Charcha!

As with everything there are some anxious moments too- Low participants. There are times, when the guest arrives and finds that there are only a handful of students whom he can stare at! Initially, I would panic if there weren't enough students to participate but now the thought barely troubles me. My experience is that people start trickling in once the dialogue begins. To be fair to the students, there are always multiple things one has to attend to in this University, be it events, classes, assignments, submissions or exams. One has to make a conscious choice of what one pursues. I am almost nearing the end of my article and am getting nostalgic about what I am going to say. My most cherished thought about being involved in Kaapi aur Charcha is the bonds established both with my fellow students while working together and the guests who have embraced the occasions. Unwittingly, we have nurtured friendship that elevates our experience in this University to new heights.

In parting, I must thank our University for encouraging us to experiment with our ideas and giving us the space to implement them, our seniors, who have diligently passed on this platform to us, friends from my batch and the following batch who have believed in the idea of Charcha and helped this idea to grow wings and try new winds.



A mindful exchange with linguist Dr. Annamalai

PAHAL

- Team Pahal

Pahal reflects the idea that the welfare of an individual is ultimately dependent on the welfare of the society as a whole. The aims of Pahal specify the need to inculcate the practice of social welfare, and to provide service to the society without any biases or discrimination. At Pahal we give our volunteers tremendous scope to expand their leadership abilities and develop as individuals. Our team's efforts aim towards ensuring that those in need become capable to stand up for their rights so as to enhance their standard of living in order to lead a life of dignity. We also work to reduce the effects of anthropogenic factors adversely affecting the environment by spreading awareness as well as leading the route towards sustainable development across various spheres. Our main idea is to inculcate severe fervor of selfless service in the hearts of our volunteers, without being enticed by any form of superficial gains.

The projects at Pahal were decided upon as the result of a common ignition which a group of us shared with respect to bringing about a change in the lives of the vulnerable and deprived simply because we want to, we can and we should.


Our ongoing initiatives are:

- Kachra Crusaders : Waste Management
- Adopting an Old Age Home for the Mentally Challenged
- Working for Destitute Children affected by HIV/AIDS-DESIRE Society
- Voluntary Blood Donation
- Slum Improvement at Vimochana Nagar
- Working with Children of Construction Workers

We are contemplating the following projects in this academic session:

- Tree Plantation
- Spot fixing public walls with Wall Graffiti
- Water bowl initiative to mitigate the thirst of birds and stray animals

The club is under the guidance of Prof. Sujit Sinha, the faculty mentor of Club.



How can you help us?
There is no hard and fast rule about how you can help Pahal in its initiatives. Some ways can be by accompanying us to the field, through donations, by sharing your ideas and prayers, everything is welcome. :)

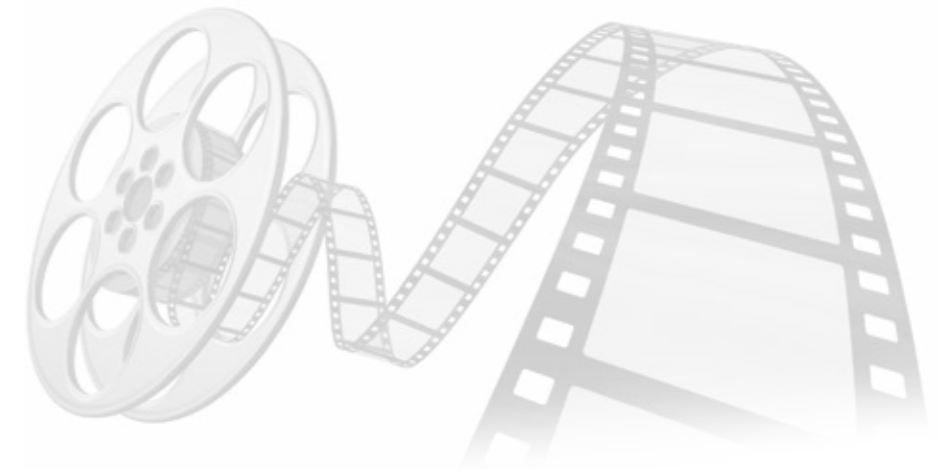
To get connected with us you can email us at pahal@apu.edu.in



Celebrating birthday of old women Conducting PRA in Vimochana Nagar Drawing workshop for construction worker children



CELLULOID CLUB



This year saw a variety of movies that were screened as part of the Celluloid Club at Azim Premji University. These ranged over multiple genres and languages, Hindi, English, Malayalam, Tamil and French to name a few. Even a few documentaries were screened by the club on several themes.

During 'Unmukt' the club ran a marathon of movies and even did an open-air screening on the night before the start of the cultural festival. This was done in the campus for the first time ever and indeed was received with a lot of enthusiasm by all.

Different themes were taken up and they connected with festivals or events happening at that time of the year. So for instance on Onam a Malayalam movie was screened, on Children's day we had a screening of the movie 'Little Rascals' and so on. Here is a snapshot of some the popular movies among the student fraternity from last year's screenings.

*On behalf of The Celluloid Club
e-mail: celluloid@apu.edu.in*



STUDENTS' JOURNAL OF EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

- Saumil Sharma and Sarah Jacobson, On behalf of the SJED II Team

Academic journals have played a central role in the creation and sustenance of scholarly communities. Over the last few decades, there has been an increase in the number of academic journals for graduate and undergraduate audiences - produced by the students themselves, so that can learn from each other. The Students' Journal of Education and Development (SJED) has been conceptualised as a student managed initiative, guided by faculty mentors at the Azim Premji University, Bangalore.

While most academic journals publish the works of established experts or scholars pursuing their advanced research; there are now, also, an increasing number of academic journals which seek to support and encourage high quality research and writing from university students.

SJED provides an open space for students and alumni of Azim Premji University, working in any domain of development and education to sustain critical engagements and dialogues regarding relevant issues and debates in these fields. It aims to promote interdisciplinary and reflective work that can aid the current and future practices and engagements of the students of these domains of social sciences. All entries to the Journal are peer-reviewed or referred.

It is an initiative led by the students of Azim Premji University and primarily publishes the work of students and alumni of this university. However contributions from students working in these areas in other universities are welcome.

Working with the SJED Second Edition project and its editorial team has been a good learning experience. It has taught us about several aspects such as how is a journal framed, what are the fundamental requirements of getting a paper peer reviewed, why is there a need to anonymize papers, how should one go about resolving conflicting views posed by two different editors on the same paper and of course, the importance of building relations. A paper that gets published in the SJED is considered a formally published paper and hence we urge all students to share their work with everyone. The hard copies of the journals will be distributed across many institutions in India and e-copies will be available for wider distribution.

The first edition of the SJED was published in September, 2014 and can be accessed at www.azimprejijuniversity.edu.in/SitePages/pdf/SJED.pdf We are presently working on the second edition of the SJED which should be published officially in August, 2015 and released at the University campus.

We look forward to the new batch of students as well as the existing second year batch to share and contribute any original academic work within the domain of development, education and public policy and governance for the SJED III .

For any comments and contributions or to become a part of the SJED III team, do write to us.

e-mail: studentsjournals@apu.edu.in



Events at the University





NATIONAL SCIENCE DAY

With the idea to bring 'Science to All', Azim Premji University students and faculty celebrated 'National Science Day' to commemorate C.V. Raman's confirmation of the discovery of the 'Raman Effect' on 28th February in 1928.

Interesting stalls were organized hosting various fun activities based on the themes of sound, light, projectile motion, Newton's law, centrifugal force, electric circuit (conductivity), pressure, center of gravity, etc. Over 150-plus students, faculty and administrative staff got to engage with science experiments on their own. They crafted whistles out of straws and witnessed how longitudinal waves travel. They were mesmerized by the magical 'diver', 'crazy ball' and experiments with dry ice. The centrifugal force was demonstrated with a couple of real life problems. Various puzzles and models pushed visitors to think through the 'why' by observing 'what' they observed instead of seeking readymade answers usually given in texts. Questions like 'how do you know?' were thrown by presenters at the visitors. There were other in-depth activities as well - 'open' sessions through the day, 'slotted' sessions and an enriching lake-walk with discussion around the Kaikondrahalli lake.





QUOTE WORTHY WORDS!

We're always scribbling down words spoken by our faculty in our classes or by the guest speakers at the colloquiums, only to quote them later. The articulate phrases and sentences that they utter sound magical, often containing in them some profound truths about life. But it's not just the wise and the learned who can say quoteworthy words. At Azim Premji University we believe that everyone learns from each other in equal measure and hence, everyone has something valuable to say. And so for the very first time a 'Quotation Quest' was organized for all members of the University during Unmukt, which allowed them to share their 'quotations'! The only condition was that the words and the ideas in the quotations had to be completely original. Here we bring to you some of the most quoteworthy thoughts that were shared!

You don't have to compromise on intelligence to be unapologetically stupid. Seeing another person laugh is worth it, even if it is at your expense.!

Anita Jose

Victory gives you happiness and defeat gives you reason to find that happiness again.!

Preeti Khurana

In the name of perfection, we killed creativity.

Madhan

Do some nonsense now so that it makes sense later!!!!

Kushal

Hume sab pata hai.....iska matlab ye nahi ki hume sab pata hai.....!!!

Pankaj Sharma

Smile a while and while you smile you will see miles and miles of Smile.

Anjali

The more I read, the more I'm getting confused.

Bhairava Prasad

Without friction ... no light ... no fire.

Shriharsh Chandak

To be truly free is to not have to lie to anyone about anything.

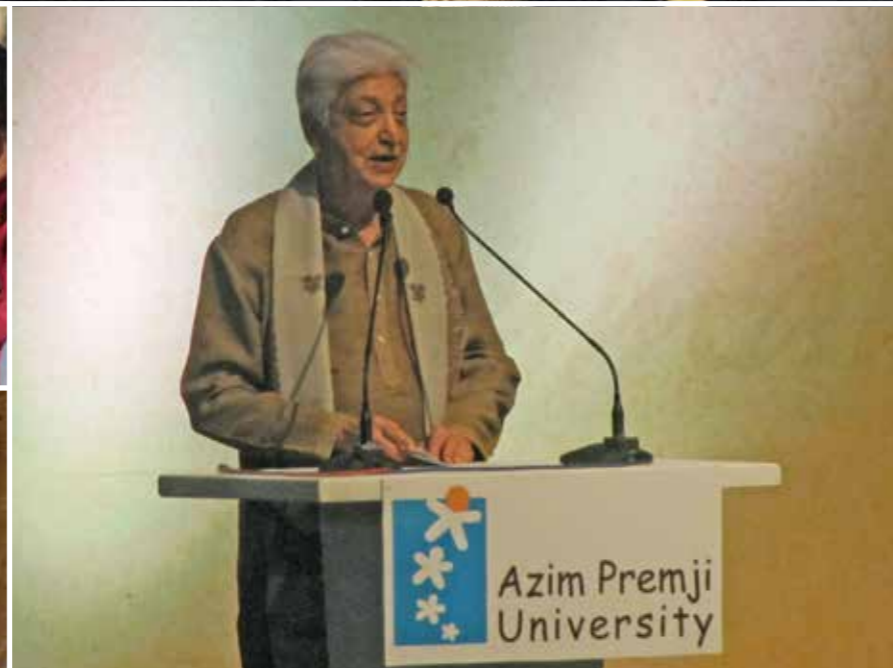
Riddhi Pandey

The more I read, the more I'm getting confused.

Bhairava Prasad

Motivation I see, Motivation I spread.

Preeti Khurana



“

Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught.

- Oscar Wilde

”



REFLECTIONS ON THE ANNUAL FACULTY-STUDENT CRICKET MATCH

- Shreelata Rao Seshadri, (Faculty)

Just back from the Azim Premji University Faculty-Student cricket match, I feel inspired to record some reflections on this annual event. This is the third year: the students won the last two rounds and – lest you think this story ends any differently – they won it this time too. But....there was a difference. In fact, there were several.

For one, the students had turned out in impressive numbers. The last couple of years had seen a dismal turnout, but this time they made up for it. Boys and girls were milling around, making for a festive atmosphere, lots of cheering, lots of laughter. A pity that faculty attendance continued to be low....

There was a microphone and two able young commentators - who had obviously been watching cricket matches since early childhood, since they were fluent in the commentator's patter. "...and here is Sudhir, this is his two hundred and fortieth test match, he has a career record of 299 wickets. Will today be the day that he reaches 300?...." And so on, you get the idea. They also called Sudhir India's Anil Kumble – some confused fellow-students were heard asking "India's? Kyun Anil Kumble Pakistan ka hai, kya?"

The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor played for the students – in fact, he captained their side... This added significantly to the faculty's burden, since he racked up 34 runs. But this was a small price to pay for the bonhomie it created. It also created some dramatic moments – such as when the Registrar bowled to the VC. As the commentator pithily put it - "It was the Titan of Clashes!"

The faculty side was missing a few of their key players, but there was a bright side to this too – some people who otherwise wouldn't have played had to get on to the field. This gave the commentators the opportunity to say stuff like – "Purnendu has taken a wonderful eco-friendly shot" – whatever that means!

I learned something new – apart from 'fielding, fielding' and 'bowling, bowling', it is also fine to call out 'well left, well left' when the batsman jumps back and allows the ball to fly past. And all the time I thought the batsman was just trying to avoid getting hit....

But finally – it was jolly good fun. It was a great way to spend a morning with the students outside of class and participate in some mutual ribbing and friendly competition. Where else would you hear one faculty member say to another "Hey, I didn't even know I had a muscle in this spot, but now it's hurting." The simple truth is that the students age a maximum of one year before they graduate, but there is no such age limit for the faculty!

So as one of the students said when receiving the winner's trophy – "The faculty did not win the match, but they won our hearts!" Plus, IMHO, they played a mature and elegant innings. So if you see them on Monday wincing and clutching a tender shoulder or knee, please treat them gently



SHAKE YOUR TEA BAG

- Ashish Koshi (Alumnus)

All my life, I have believed that the forces at play in my country were out of my control. As I grew up I realized that similar forces existed outside my country, all over the world. But again these were out of my control, larger than I could ever imagine, and more powerful than my feeble mind could overcome. So I decided to put my head down and toe the line that everyone told me was for me- a good school, a good college, a good job, lots of money, parties, a hot girlfriend, and things would get better. Well even if things around me didn't get better I would still be able to insulate myself from it all. And to be honest, it worked. The world around me would always be shit, I convinced myself. People from this country would always be backward, prejudiced, ill-informed, unschooled, un-educated, local, cherri, gawaar, and undeserving of any of the things that I had made mine. These people didn't work for anything, congested progress, and were simply a part of the problem; an obstacle, a pest that needed to be weeded out. Not just the country's sake but my own. It would seem that if they weren't around, or if they weren't so many of them, this country would be better, this world would be better; I would be happier, I would be richer, my house would be bigger. In short- they were the problem and I was obviously the one who suffered from their very existence.

But recently, I have been seeing things in a new light. I have been realizing the insufficiency of our education; the propaganda of our information arrangements; the complete disassociation of our lives from authenticity; the blind acceptance of the world of money and power as reasonable. Each and every person's world today is sequestered, separated, disconnected from the ones who do not share our beliefs, who do not come from where we do; who do not shop from where we shop; who do not talk like we talk; who do not spend like we spend; who don't laugh at our jokes; who don't encourage poverty and agony and inequality

and avarice and viciousness, like we do. And contrary to popular opinion, you don't become a better person if you're on the top end of this power ladder. In fact, you may become worse.

Are we really progressing? Or are we simply learning to toe the line? To play into the hands of the rich and powerful, we work for hours in offices in front of screens. We talk politics and business as if we really care about these things. We scream and shout about certain injustices, but shrug at the plight of others. Are we really educated? Are we really advanced? Are we really deserving of the money that we earn? Television screens spew a venomous glut of garbage into our minds and we lap it up; internet twists and contorts of visions of beauty, love and family till there is only an empty shell and still we lap it up; customs and gods convince us that forgiveness is ours for a price, and that we alone are the children of God, and without a second thought, we lap it up. There is right and wrong in this world. The only problem is finding out which is which.

We are on a continuum; where we are in a constant state of flux between accepting the reality of the world, and shedding our own customs and habits that have been our defining qualities till now. It is in this interplay of hot and cold, fast and slow, real and plastic, that we find ourselves. It is like a cup of water with a tea bag placed in it without shaking. The bottom quarter of water infuses with the tea creating a gorgeous reddish green pool of flavor, leaving the rest of the water as clear as before. Unless we shake and stir the calm water the tea will not mix with the water. We need to shake up our lives to know what is right in every situation. My only fear is that I will become complacent once again. Believing that we are on the right track, with the right beliefs, with the right friends, and the right ambitions. The truth of the matter is that my life is not my own, it is made up of you all. And that is its beauty and its curse.

LIBERTY

- Chitra Lakhera, M.A. Education, 2014-16

I am for liberty
My pace glows with paranoia
And they say,
I am mad!

Alas! How severe is this misbelief
This looming ahead of vengeance.

I am for liberty, I insist
They prick my skin with arduous lullabies.
I say I am not a kid,
They resign to spoon feeding!

I am for liberty, I cherish.
The insignificant rumours cutting across my heart.
I won't accept the placebo
They shall have to retreat!

I am Liberty
Oozing with the perforated chiasm.
Ensnared by the ethereal warmth.
I reject servitude!

THE ARROGANT VIRTUES

- Riddhi Pandey, M.A. Development, 2014-16

You think you're good to everyone.
You think that you care.
You ask concerned questions.
And offer comforting words
Maybe even help once in a while.
This makes you kind.

You think you know all about it.
You think that you are clever.
You have read all there was to read.
And that you remember every bit.
Maybe you do know something after all.
This makes you wise.

You think you have gone through much worse.
You think that you've seen it all.
You have the unbeatable first hand story.
And you remember well, how it felt then.
Maybe your circumstances do have some meaning
They give you experience.

You think it's your duty to help everyone.
You think that they are dependent on you.

You go the extra mile, to make their lives worthwhile
And what would they do without you?
Maybe they owe you for what you do.
This helps you be good. Or does it?

If you believe you are kinder than the other,
If you believe you are wiser than the other,
If you believe you have deeper experiences,
If you believe you did better than the other,
Just stop, and think once again.
It's the arrogance of being kind.
It's the arrogance of being wise.
It's the arrogance of experience.
It's the arrogance of doing good.

Know that arrogance is assuming.
And assumptions are seldom real.
Be kind, because no one deserves unkindness.
Be wise, because knowledge is powerful.
Have experiences, because they add meaning to life
And do good because it is the right thing to do.
And by doing it all, don't try to seem better than the other.
Because, in truth, you don't have to be.

THE GRAND ANNUAL DIVERSITY CELEBRATION COMPETITION

- Sandhya, M.A. Development, 2013-15

I grew up along the Eastern coast, 80 Km south of Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Kalpakkam is a Department of Atomic Energy township, housing employees of the Indra Gandhi Center for Atomic Research and the Madras Atomic Power Station. Needless to say, the population is from all over the country. The place spells diversity like nothing else. There were Bengalis, Malayalis, Telugu-speakers, Tamilians, Tamil Brahmins or "Tam Brams" (word is that they are an ethnic group in themselves), Marathis et al. Each of these groups was a sizable number that they even had their own registered *Samithis* or associations, where particular ethnic festivals were organised and celebrated in great pomp. The best thing was that despite the cultural differences, where you were from didn't matter in Kalpakkam. We were one big family.

Growing up, I saw diversity the most around October, during the festival of Navratri. Navratri or Durga Puja, I've found, is the yearly mega-event for many, and Kalpakkam always saw its Bengalis and Tam Brams at the fore. By the time, I was 12, I had even picked up on the underlying competitiveness between these folks. The Bengalis went all-out for the *Pujo* celebrations. The celebration hall mid-town was booked for all nine nights. Ma Durga's idol would be custom-made and brought in by Bengali artisans in Chennai. The whole of decorations and set-up would be taken care by the Bong Aunties United Front, who ensured not one detail was out of place, not one flower out of line and not one item missed. Then came food arrangements (incidentally, my area of interest). They had *halwais* come to town all the way from Kolkata, especially for the *Pujo* and these people made magic with every sweet and savoury on menu for those ten days. I made it a point not to leave a single item untasted and my taste-buds are that much richer, today. The biggest attraction of all, however, was the event-plan for the evenings. Every evening had a cultural program, the expertise and aesthetics of which, can blow the average mind. I've always considered the best part of my childhood as being exposed to such high levels art and talent. There were Hindustani and *Ghazal*

singers, based in various parts of the country, each voice as mesmerizing as the next. Performers of various dance forms (even different styles of one dance form) would keep us glued to our seats for whole hours. They even had mime artists come and perform, expressly from Kolkata. The scientists were great connoisseurs of art, to say the least.

While such a multitude of events were arranged by the Bengalis, a whole other kind of celebrations were organised by the Tam Brams. Their manner was more private, so as to say. Navratri by the Tamilians, is celebrated by an elaborate, decorative and highly metaphorical arrangement of the *Golu*. On a set-up of odd-numbered steps are arranged an assortment of dolls and miniatures. Principally, all of them denote a blessed and holistic life and are prayer to the gods that one's life be prosperous, all year round. Everyone went all out for these decorations. Whole situations were replicated as miniatures and that was an art in itself. Dolls collected over years showed up from the attic during the time and they were of great variety. Everyone invited each other to their homes for *Golu* every evening. Between houses, there was even competition as to who had the most realistic park or beach or cricket match. The part that I enjoyed the most were the "goody-visits". Little girls and women went to visit *Golus* and sang songs. In return, they got some sundal (a yummy mix of steamed pulses and spice) and goodies like key-chains, jewellery and other pretty things. There was a direct proportion; bigger the *Golu*, better the goodies.

There was a lot of vying that happened between the Bongs and the Tams, simply because everyone's timing clashed. The events of the *Pujo* were so interesting, nobody wanted to miss out. But what better time to visit the *Golus* than in the pleasant evenings. Oh, the dilemma! Of course, we used our scientific objectivity and problem-solving abilities to work around petty issues like these. Our colourful celebration of diversity barring no holds was on a much higher scale in the grand scheme of things.

THE RADIANT

- Nishanth KS, M.A. Development, 2014-16



Led to believe that life's end is nigh
These walls let out their collective sigh.
And as they closed in on me,
The darkest depths shouted, be free.

Each crack of dawn was an invitation to dread,
With a mangled man at the day's end.
Across eons did this solitude spread,
Only addiction got me into bed.

Men are but weak,
Without the purpose that they seek.
With minds frail,
Gathering rust is our life's tale.

And yet my anodyne was not the blinding light,
That faith sets alight.
It was not the drink that gave one flight,
It was not death that left earth a little light.

It was, but a radiant 'she' ,
In her eyes I found solace,
That soothed my life's constant grimace.
Winds laced with her fragrance, sweet,
Put out my fires that hell lit.

She kindled this heart,
Once long lost to despair and rot.
And so the blood comes thawed again,
Retracing its path once again.
Her beauty made these dark clouds part,
And let the light fall on this failing heart.
Unshackled do I become,
As I realise, thy kingdom is but a sum.

Love becomes us,
Together we become
Sol Invictus. (*Latin for "The Unconquered Sun"*)

SMILE PLEASE!



- Amarkant Thakur, M.A. Education, 2014-16

I recently had the chance to attend the marriage ceremony of one of my cousins. I was happy to see that the socio-religious function was not (as usual) controlled by the ponga-pundit; but my happiness soon withered away to see the digital photographer taking charge of that position, as he made everyone dance on his fingertips, saying SMILE! He made the pundit pause while he took pictures of the groom performing havan, he made the couple redo the ring ceremony and made almost everything pose-ful, if not purposeful. As it is, such rituals are illogical and away from reason and the great cameraman turned the event into a photography session. Forget about compensation, he was in fact getting paid for this 'art'. I doubt whether any of the attendees realised that though they were having the 'moments captured' which would be preserved for years to come, they were losing the invaluable treasure of good memories.

I still remember my grandfather, in his seventies, fondly recalling his child marriage and days of his youth with his young bride with very clear and detailed descriptions; which would even project a clear image (abundant with my own imagination) in my mind. An image that grew with my age, making it more romanticized, something which no digitally recorded image can do. Just take a look at the photographs of your farewell or the picnic or the images of a get-together. Don't you find them irritating, with those fake smiles and poses, those forced hugs and laughter and that unnatural fitting of self into the rest? Notice the felicitation clicks in the newspapers, where both the felicitator and the recipient stare at the camera lens with forced smiles, instead of looking at each other. This sect of cameramen do not even hesitate to guide artistes of the calibre of Pt. Jasraj and Chaurasia ji to adjust their pose so as to fit into the recording frame.

I have visited historical monuments like the Taj Mahal and the Ajanta-Ellora caves and I can recall those tours

sufficiently ruined by flashes of cameras and beeps of recorders. I do not oppose a few clicks as a memory of the visit, but it seems that a few people are crazy enough to have themselves clicked with every pole and fence and wall of the structure. Instead of being lost in the tranquility of Buddha in Ajanta, there are these clans of people who get lost in their own world of cameras and iphones in a hurry to upload their 'pics' on Facebook!

Last Holi, one of my aunts surprised me because she carried a mirror in her bag, so that she could judge the right moment (with just the right amount of colour) to get her picture clicked. Just give yourself a moment for a flashback and you will realise that most of the significance of festivals has been reduced to the capture-the-moment purpose. On Eid at one of my friend's place, I could not control my laughter when one of the guests was hugged four times, instead of the conventional thrice, only because the photographer had missed the shot.

The camera, according to me, has become an evolved social being (instrument). Haven't you seen the expressions of the khadi-clad leaders changing at the sight of a camera or the news reporters using Mr. Camera as their greatest companion? To sum up, all cameras are a boon as great as the fabled Time Machine, which can help you travel in the past for years when you look at those snaps and stood-still moments on paper prints; also they can become the Dementors who suck all your positive memories of the past!

So the next time you visit some place or celebrate a festival or reunite with your colleagues or just sit in silence, say to yourself, 'SMILE PLEASE' and excuse the camera for a while! I am sure you won't need as many gigabytes or the complications of downloading and editing and uploading. And the best part is- these files of memories can be viewed anywhere, anytime without any internet network.

स्तुति

- Prabhat Kumar Himanshu, M.A. Education, 2014-16

कृपा की न होती, ये आदत तुम्हारी ।
न घर -घर में होती, इबादत तुम्हारी ॥

न हम होते मुजरिम, न तुम होते हाकिम ।
तो सुनी ही रहती, ये अदालत तुम्हारी ॥
कृपा की न होती...

न हम होते बालक, न तुम होते माता ।
तो सुनी ही रहती, ये आँचल तुम्हारी ॥
कृपा की न होती...

न हम होते सेवक, न तुम होते स्वामी ।
तो सुनी ही रहती, ये नाता तुम्हारी ॥
कृपा की न होती...

न हम होते भिखारी, न तुम होते दानी ।
तो सुनी ही रहती, ये दरवाजा तुम्हारी ॥
कृपा की न होती...

न हम होते धागा, न तुम होते मोती ।
तो सुनी ही रहती, ये माला तुम्हारी ॥
कृपा की न होती...

LET ME BE WHAT I WANT

- Ganga Singh, M.A. Development, 2014-16

Let me search self- entity
In the dark shadow of cedar
Let me bloom and move up
In the large regime of hibiscus.
Let me get sun light
In that dark shadow rime
Let me feed and bright
In that hibiscus regime.
Let me sing among nightingales
As melodious as my own voice
Let me play with lion cubs
As strong as my own choice.
Let me go out to see the world
As far as I want to be bold
Let me do that deed
Which afford me, my feed.

MY MOTHER

- Satendrasingh Lilhare, M.A. Development, 2014-16

My mother is the best.
I am the rest.
She guides me like a teacher,
As good as a preacher.
Whenever I am ill,
She keeps my head chill.
She always encourages me,
Never lets others discourage me.
She is very good,
And prepares lots of tasty food.
She takes my care,
And always teaches me to share.
God has sent our mothers,
Who looks after others.
Rose and Lily cannot be compared with you,
Because you are the best and no one is like you.
No one is like you, no one is like you

LOOKING BACK

- Avichal Pathik, M.A. Development, 2014-16

A thought came to my mind.
I pondered over it till it made sense.
Gave a meaningful name to it.
Just a word.
To explain it, I started with a sentence.
Misunderstood, I wrote a paragraph.
Things led to a page.
And then to a chapter.
The mood dictated me to finish the book.
And I ended up writing a series.

Looking back

When I read what I had written.
I concede my series into a single book.
To present it, into a chapter.
Summarized in a page.
Expressed it with a sentence.
Gave it a title.
Then frustrated, just thought over it.

आओ साथी, संग चलें

- Varun Sharma, M.A. Education, 2013-15

क्या अभी भी पशोपेश में हो?

परिवर्तन चाहिए या नहीं?

तुम कुछ करोगे या नहीं?

कुछ कर भी सकते हो या नहीं?

नामर्द महसूस करने पर

औरत और हिजड़ों की उपाधियां देना बन्द कर दो

जिया हूँ उनके साथ, मिला हूँ अक्काई से

मर्दों से कहीं अधिक मर्दानगी के साथ जीते हैं वो।

अभी भी सोच रहे हो परिवर्तन होना चाहिये या नहीं?

घर की सुहागरात से बाहर निकलो

एक कदम से काम नहीं चलेगा

स्वयं को आन्दोलन बनाना होगा।

दुनिया के कोने कोने में जाना होगा

भाई-बहनों से फिर रिश्ता जोड़ना होगा

अखबार पढ़ने से काम नहीं चलेगा

मूक-बधिर की संज्ञा तुम्हें कैसे दूँ

वे भी अभी तो तुमसे अधिक सुदृढ़ हैं।

निकलो बाहर, पैर गन्दे करो

वो गन्दा पानी पीकर देखो

जो तुम्हारे करोड़ों बहन-भाई रोज़ निगलते हैं

रात-दिन उनके साथ उन जैसा बिता कर देखो

बच्चों को सरकारी स्कूल में पढाओ।

मैं कहता हूँ जवाब मिलेगा

बस घर से बाहर आ जाओ

सुबह-शाम के दफ्तर को आग लगा दो

आओ चौबीस घण्टे काम करें

किसी कॉर्पोरेट भेड़िये के लिये नहीं

अपने सम मनुष्यों के लिये।

जवाब की सुगन्ध आई?

चक्रव्यूह से बाहर निकलो मेरे दोस्त

चक्रव्यूह से बाहर निकलो।

जानती नहीं!

- Neha Arora, M.A. Education, 2014-16

कौन हूँ मैं

जानती नहीं

क्या हूँ मैं

जानती नहीं

क्यों ये हलचल है मन में

जानती नहीं

क्या मैं चाहती हूँ

जानती नहीं

क्यों समय थमता नहीं

जानती नहीं

क्यों ये अंधकार मिटता नहीं

जानती नहीं

क्यों हम ये रात ढलने नहीं देते

जानती नहीं

कौन हूँ मैं

जानती नहीं

क्या हूँ मैं

जानती नहीं

जानती हूँ तो बस इतना

कि इस दुनिया का एक कतरा

हूँ मैं

किन्तु फिर भी

उसे पहचानती नहीं

किन्तु फिर भी उसे जानती नहीं!

THE DAY THE SEA VISITED

- Sandhya Shankar, M.A. Development, 2013-15

In the town of Kalpakkam, in December 2004, a tsunami swept up over 40 lives and scarred the rest. I have been one of the lucky few to survive and I thank God every day for it.

This could be anybody's story.

It was a bright Sunday morning, right after Christmas. Our street was very quiet, none of the kids were outside yet. Probably sleeping in. My brother and I didn't want to spend it sleeping - mornings like these were meant for everything outdoors. We had a big banyan tree right outside our house. It was so old that the trunk could hide an auto rickshaw. The roots that hung from its branches were our source of entertainment - we would swing on them for hours, pretending to be Tarzan from that computer game we liked. When we got tired, we would spread an old bed-sheet in its shade and sleep. Or read story books, while munching on yummys. We never had to go beyond the tree if we were playing hide-and-seek. But we didn't go to the banyan tree that morning.

That morning, we decided to climb the old gnarly tree that was just outside our fence. Brother and I had never tried climbing that tree for some reason. I can't remember now. I can't even remember what made us notice it that morning. We stood by it, watching all the branches. It looked child-friendly - there were a lot of branches that looked sit-able and the rest were all climbable. What luck! I kicked off my chappals, grabbed the trunk and started climbing. I passed the lowest branches; very easy. I passed a small one and the medium-sized bough. "Sit on that one. I want to climb too", called out Brother. "No, I'm going higher", I retorted. I had my eye on the perfect bough to sit on. It even looked perfect to lie on. "Careful with the dry branches. There are higher up", I heard Brother say. Looking down, I could see his doubtful frown, as if he was afraid I would fall. Ha! He'll see. Higher, I climbed. Almost close to my bough. One more branch to go.

SNAP. My foot fell off with the branch and my hands left the trunk. I grabbed at the smaller branches above my head and only caught leaves. "Owww!!" I yowled as I landed on my bottom, right at Brother's feet. He only wore his told-you-so smirk. "I'll get some ice", he said, going into the house. I held the trunk for support as I got up to go in.

"Oh my god! Come quickly! There is water coming from the beach! Father!" I heard Brother cry. Sure enough, water was coming into the land, just like how the waves came in on the shore. It was very quick. There was water around our banyan tree in seconds. "Climb that tree now! Hold on to the trunk tight and don't let go no matter what. You understand?" Father had never sounded so harsh and scary. I climbed on to the closest sitting bough, ignoring the pain in my legs and back. I swung one leg over so that I could hold the tree better and turned towards the house. The water had gone

into the house by then. Fighting a sob, I put my hand to my heart to try to stop it from bursting out.

There was water everywhere, all around. The park was almost submerged. Far off, I could see people on their roofs. Our garden was eaten up too. Everywhere, the water seemed to be rising, bit by bit, inch by inch. More and more water was going into our house. Suddenly, I felt some warmth at my feet and saw the water climbing too. Panic took the breath and voice out of me. I sat paralyzed, watching water rise up. Quickly, I pulled up my feet and turned around so that I was hugging the tree. Closing my eyes tight, I prayed for the water to stop rising. After a while, I realized it had. Our town had become one big pond. I quickly turned towards the house, hoping to catch signs of Father and Brother. Nothing. The house stood as it always did, only half full of water. It felt like a really long time, while the water stayed exactly as it was. Everything was still. "Father?" I called. No answer.

All at once, I could sense movement around. Trails of water seemed to be going towards the sea. The water was going back! I could see bits of the rocks used to make the beach wall. The sea must've broken down the entire stretch of wall. Everything was being pulled along. I could see our books and things go, too. I felt tears well up at that. The sea was taking my stuff. Suddenly, I was bending forwards without moving. My tree was getting pulled down too. Panicking, I screamed. Nobody was in sight. Only water, floating rocks, branches, leaves, even cycles and bikes, but not a single person. The level was reducing, visibly. Lesser and lesser water all around. "Father, where are you?" I shouted as much as my lungs would let me. Still no answer. I could now see more of the road.

Jumping off my perch as fast as I could, I ran to the house. Everything was strewn everywhere, dirty with wet sand, sea weed, dead fish and other debris. I shouted for both of them again. "We're here", I heard Brother's voice. It came from the bedroom. They were on the bed, caught between the two huge Godrej cupboards. "You should have waited for us to come out. What if more water had swept in again? Learn obedience for once", scolded Father. I jumped on to hug him. "Sorry, sorry, sorry, a million times. I was so scared", I said between tears into his shoulder. "We're safe now. It's alright. We're together", he soothed me, holding me tight.

I woke up with a start, sweating and crying at once. It was 2 a.m. Ten years since and the dream (or was it a nightmare?) hadn't stopped even once. After popping the sleeping pills, I took the old photograph from under the pillow and held it close. It was the only one I had managed to salvage. The only material proof that I hadn't always been an orphan. Sleep came on and I was once again in a world where Father could scold me all he wanted and Brother and I would keep climbing trees. If only for the sea's deadly visit.

नारी

- Manish Dubey, M.A. Development, 2014-16

सुनी थी कभी ममतामयी नारी की विजय-गाथा
माता को माना जाता था सृष्टी का जन्मदाता
कभी इस सुरम्य सृष्टी का आधार थी नारी
आज की अबला नहीं अवतार थी नारी
वेदों में कभी गरिमामयी माँ सरीखी थी
पुराणों में कभी काल-कराली सी लगी थी
कभी अनुसुइया, कभी सीता, कभी सती सी लगी थी
कभी राधा, कभी मीरा, कभी मनु सी दिखी थी
जब पूजा जाती है शक्ति के रूप में नारी
फिर किस दंश के कारण अबला दिखी नारी
क्यों आज के परिपेक्ष में गाली हुई नारी
हो कर जगत-जननी बेचारी हुई नारी
क्यों भूल कर बैठी है अपना गरिमामयी इतिहास
जब हर बार दुष्टों पर भारी रही नारी
किसलिये स्वयं को सीमित किये बैठी
जब हर बार सीमांकन की परिभाषा रही नारी
क्यों शक्ति-पुंज आज शक्ति-विहीन हो गया
क्यों विश्व का भाग्य करवट ले कर सो गया
क्यों रोज़ चौरस्ते पर अस्मत् लुट रही है आज
क्यों तेज़ विभा-मण्डल का निस-तेज़ हो गया
अब बहुत हो गया हे माते जगती में करुण-क्रंदन
अब रौद्र-रूप धारण कर फिर हरो तिमिर-आछंदन
अब पुनः रूप धर दुर्गे का करो महिषासुर मर्दन
अब विश्व शांति हेतु हे नारी करो रूप परिवर्तन

ON THE BRINK...

- Astha, M.A. Development, 2014-16

There are two windows on this castle,
I could see you outside in a hustle.
You are going somewhere,
of I don't know where,
You don't tell me why,
but you have to go.
I shut those windows so that your
fragrance stay,
Till the time you are gone
I would be this way.
Through cracks I try to look outside,
Maybe I see you
coming back on your ride.
Everyone is trying to break in,
But for me anyone inside
would be a sin.
Still I live in the fragrance you left,
I do not claim, but
stealing heart is also a theft.

I pray those windows,
that they shut forever,
If I can't see you by my side ever.
I just want to break free,
In that bigger silence to
which my life agree.

LET'S GET THIS "STRAIGHT"

- Ranjani Polepeddi, M.A. Education, 2013-15

There is someone who loves a man but cannot be open about it because it could potentially freak the man (and most people around) out. Not because the former is "ugly" or is a difficult person or is in extremely difficult situations financially, physically or mentally. It is because this person is not of the sex that is "allowed" to love a man "that" way.

There is someone who wants to wear a skirt to work, not trousers and wants to wear make-up. This person can be himself only in the confines of his bathroom (or closet) and only for a few minutes. Your gender is a big part of your life-style. How can someone live in their bathroom?

All of us (openly or secretly) feel terrible when a girl in a movie, book or series is forced to marry the other guy in place of the guy she loves because of family pressures or the situation. How different is it from the plight of men and women who are forced to marry someone from the opposite sex against their wish? They are left having unhealthy relationships not only with their spouse and family but also with themselves.

There have been cases across the world, for decades, of people who have been oppressed, violated, ostracized, depressed and suicidal because they have felt that they are trapped in the wrong body. Their gender is female while their sex

categorizes them as male and vice-versa. As if the feeling of being imprisoned in your own body was not bad enough. How can anyone have not one person in the world who tells him/her that he/she can just be how ever he/she wants to be!?

We, Indians, are a proud country of a record-breaking amount of diversity among our citizens. More often than not, we seem to celebrate every kind of diversity (religion, culture, food, etc) other than sexual. Like everything else, if it has to begin, it has to begin with you and me. I am sure it will turn out to be a dimension of diversity that will teach us as much as our cultural and religious diversity has taught us.

It took almost 67 years for the Supreme Court of our country to recognize that a third gender exists and should be entitled to rights and opportunities like the "other two genders". Let us not take years to open ourselves up to them and to many others who choose to be at different points on the gender & sexuality spectrum.

One organ in your body should not be allowed to dictate how you lead your life and whom you choose as a partner, unless this organ is your brain (emotional, sexual, hormonal and logical headquarters), of course!

जिंदगी

- Prabhat Kumar Himanshu, M.A. Education, 2014-16

आहिस्ता चल जिंदगी, अभी कई कर्ज चुकाना बाकी है ।
कुछ दर्द मिटाना बाकी है, कुछ फर्ज निभाना बाकी है ॥

रफ़्तार में तेरे चलने से, कुछ रूठ गए कुछ छूट गए ।
रूठों को मनाना बाकी है, रोटों को हँसाना बाकी है ॥

कुछ रिश्ते बनकर टूट गए, कुछ जुड़ते -जुड़ते छूट गए ।
उन टूटे -छूटे रिश्तों के, जख्मों को मिटाना बाकी है ॥

कुछ हसरतें अभी अधूरी हैं, कुछ काम भी और जरूरी हैं ।
जीवन की उलझी पहेली को, पूरा सुलझाना बाकी है ॥

जब साँसों को थम जाना है, फिर क्या खोना, क्या पाना है ।
पर मन के जिद्दी बच्चे को, यह बात बताना बाकी है ॥

आहिस्ता चल जिंदगी, अभी कई कर्ज चुकाना बाकी है ।
कुछ दर्द मिटाना बाकी है, कुछ फर्ज निभाना बाकी है ॥



← From the passing out batch...

Being the part of this place was the best phase of my life. It gives a lot of moments to remember that are unforgettable. Discussion with friends in a class are the best! Every moment spent on campus and hostel is precious and gives a lot of learning. The support from faculty, and administration, co-fellows is hard to forget. Golden years of my life.

— Abhijit Singh

I have lived and loved these two years at the university. I actually experienced what it is like to express your feelings without fear and shame. I learned what it is to live with someone else; you get to hate them and love them. I learned what life is all about. Thanks for the ride, totally worth

— Sanket Karkare

◀ ○ □ ▾

← From the passing out batch...

Best years of my life.. This place has given me a lot of courage and strength and have grown here as a person. It is a place where I have met people from various backgrounds and have got beautiful friends. It gave me an opportunity to travel and also learn lessons for life! My journey was wonderful and I will cherish it throughout my life!

— Shivani Tanwar

While in Mussoorie working for the Society for Integrated Development of Himalayas, I was living amongst the hills and in the cold weather for the first time and could not wake up till 10. But waking up surrounded by mountains was the most beautiful experience ever. I would have not had it if not for Azim Premji University. I am forever grateful!

— Sripriga Pratinidhi

◀ ○ □ ▾

உயிர்ப்பா (SONG OF THE SOUL)

- Sriram Kumar, M.A. Education, 2013-15

அசிம் பிரேம்ஜி பல்கலைக்கழகம் ...
ஆனந்தக்கல்வி!

(Azim Premji University ... Joyful Learning)

இந்த அனுபவம்
ஈடு இணை இல்லை!

(There is no parallel to this experience)

உன் கல்வி
ஊர் சிறக்கும்!

(Your education will make the world better)

என்னை என்றும் எண்ணி
ஏற்றம் பெற வைக்கும்!
ஐயமில்லை!

(I'll ever cherish this experience and feel elated ... there is no doubt)

ஒன்றே நம் கொள்கை
ஒயாமல் உழைத்திட!
ஒளவியம் ஒழித்திட!

(We have a single goal for us to work forever and not indulge in gossips)

அதொன்றே எண்ணம்! இது திண்ணம்!!
(This is my thought (at the moment) for sure)

ஸ்ரீராம் குமார், முதுகலை (கல்வி) இரண்டாம் ஆண்டு

परिवर्तन

- Varun Sharma, M.A. Education, 2013-15

सभी चिन्तित परेशान
समाज, संस्कृति, शिक्षा
जागरूकता, सामर्थ्य, दृढ़ता के लिये
उथल पुथल मची सब ओर।

सोई हुई युवा शक्ति
थका हुआ बुद्ध
धर्मों की मर चुकी आत्मा
उथले पानी में बाल धोने से
उछले छींटों से नहीं जायेंगे।

युगलों का गला रेतने से उठी चीखें
चकलों में रोटी सी बिछी आत्माओं की चित्कारें
सुन सकने से कुछ नहीं होगा
बुद्ध और गहरी नींद में सो जायेगा।

लक्ष्मी को विष्णु के पैर में चिकोटी काटनी होगी
बुर्का हटा फैंकना होगा
मर्दानगी के झूठे कपड़े फाड़ देने होंगे
मत सोचो कुछ बदल जायेगा
ये तो बस शुरुआत होगी।

खुद में उतरकर
एक दूसरे के सामने नंगे होकर
गहराई में उतरना होगा
जब तक फेफड़ों में हवा का पानी ना बन जाये।

ऊपर बैठे समाज के ठेकेदार
कपड़े ना उतार फेंकें
तुम्हें बचाने को खुद को बचाने सा ना देखें
तब तक गहराई के उस पार जाना होगा।

समय की नीयति के पार,
तुम्हें दुनिया बदली हुई मिलेगी।

बेअख्तयारी....

- Neha Arora, M.A. Education, 2014-15

ख्वाब बुना करती थी बेअख्तयारी के
जी रही हूँ उसी ख्वाब को
ट्रेन की खिड़की से झांकती मेरी नज़र

रेल की पटरी पर ठहरती

तो कभी वही नज़र

दौड़ते पेड़ों में कुछ दूँदती

कुछ तलाशती मेरी नज़र

चमक उठती देख सुरज को ढलता

वही चमकती नज़र

पीछा करती कुछ मनचले पंछियों का

फिर वही मनचली नज़र

चंचलता से पूछती है एक मासूम सवाल

जिसका दिमाग ने दिया तुरंत जवाब

जिसपे दिल ने नहीं किया ऐतबार

और पूछा बार-बार

क्या भला प्रकृति का सौंदर्य समाया नहीं इंसान में

फिर क्यों देखती है यह चंचल नज़र

खिड़की के बहार की बंजारी पवन

जबकि इस पार बैठे उस साथ वाले अजनबी में

समाया है मेरे ख्वाबों का बेअख्तयारपन!

சுயம் தேடும் நலங்கள்

- Rajesh S, M.A. Development, 2014-16

எனது பிம்பம் இமைகளில்
பதிந்திடும் முன் நான் எடை
பொட்ப்பட்டுவிட்டேன். என் குரல் செவி
தாக்கும் முன் நினைவில் எனை கனித்து
விட்டமையால், வார்ப்பில் இட்ட ஈயம் போல்
நானும் நினைவிட்ட வழி இசைதல் ஆனேன்.
அதனால் என்ன, என் அடையாளம் நான்
அறியும் முன் ஏழை என்றும், தலித் என்றும்
பிறரால் பட்டம் சூட்டப்பட்டுவிட்டேன்.
அத்துடன் வாழ பழகி விட்ட எனக்கு இது
ஒரு பொருட்டல்ல. என் பசி எனது நிஜம்.
அது எனது நிழலை பொன்று நிறந்தரமானது.
பெழைகளின் பூட்டி வைக்கப்படும் மச்சி வீட்டு
பட்டின் ஷ்பரிசத்தை எனது நித்திரை கனவிலும்
தொட்டுணர போவதில்லை. எனது வேர்வை
துளிகளென எனது தூசி படிந்த தேகத்தின்
வஷ்திரம் ஆகி விட்ட பொது பட்டு என்றால்
என்னை விட்டு வைப்பார்களா?

துளை இடப்பட்ட இறும்பு குழாய்களின்
இறும்பல்களின் எச்சம் பட்டு எனது உடன்
பிறப்புக்கள் மரண குழியில் கிடத்தப்படுகின்றனர்.
அவர்களை நீங்கள் ஒருவேளை எழுப்ப
எத்தனிக்களாம். அவர்கள் நான் யார் என்று
ஒருவேளை சொல்ல முற்படலாம். ஆனால்
அவர்களின் நெற்றி பொட்டில் இருந்து சிந்தி
தெறித்திடும் குருதியின் வீசம் உங்கள் நாசியை
பைய்ய துளைத்திடலாம். அதை நீங்கள்
உங்கள் பண்பால் பொருத்திடலாம். செவி
தீட்டி நீங்கள் அதை கேட்டு தொலையுங்கள்.
என் பதிவை காட்டிலும் அது நான் யார்
என்ற உங்களின் தெடலுக்கு திருப்தி கரமான
பதிவை தரக்கூடும். உடனெ அதை உங்கள்

நோட்டு புத்தகத்தில் பதிந்து வையுங்கள். ஏன்
என்றால் செத்தவர்களை அடிக்கடி எழுப்புவதல்
முறையல்ல.

நான் இடது சாரி அரசியல் பெசுவதாய் எண்ண
வேண்டாம். என் அரசியல் மூன்று தெருக்கள்
மட்டுமே உள்ள எங்கள் ஊரின் காவல் கிணற்று
அய்யனாரையொ, சுமை தாங்கி கல்லையொ
கடந்தது இல்லை. எனது கால் நடை பயணங்கள்
ஊர் இடு காடு தாண்டியது இல்லை. எனது
தேடலும், புரிதலும் என்னுள் மட்டுமே
சாத்தியம். எனது காதல் தோனித்துரையின்
செதுக்கிய படிக்கரையின் விட்டுச்செல்ல பட்ட
அவளின் ஈர கன்னிக் கால் தடங்கல் காயும்
வரை சாக வரம் பெற்றிருந்தவை. காமம் அது
கள்ளுத் தெழுவின இன்சுவையில் கரைந்தவை.
போதும் என்று நினைக்கின்றேன். எனக்கு
கட்டுபடுவது எனது சொல் மட்டும் தான் என்பது
எனது கற்பனை. ஆனால் நீங்கள் இத்துடன்
எழுதுவதை நிறுத்திவிடாதீர். எழுதத் துணிந்து
விட்ட உங்களுக்கு எதை பற்றி எழுதுவது என்ற
தெளிவு இல்லையா?

மெற்கில் எடுவாரொ கலியானோவின்
இலத்தின் அமெரிக்காவின் விரிந்த நரம்புகளை
வாசியுங்கள். நமது பரவர் செம்படவர்
தம் கட்டுமரக்கதைகளை எழுத்திலாவது
உணருங்கள். செவியும் பிற புலனும் சிறக்க
அரையனா கூத்து பட்டரையில் சேர்ந்திடுங்கள்.
அத்தனையும் இருக்கட்டும் இப்போதைக்கு
என் கணக்கு முடியுங்கள். எனது இராஜ்யம் ஆறு
ஜோடி கண்களோடும் கண்ணாடி குடுவையுடன்
பசி கலந்த காதலோடு காத்திருக்கிறது.
நடையை கட்டுவோம்.

WILL YOU SPARE ME?

- Anita Jose, M.A. Development, 2014-16

Tall and mighty I stand with my friends,
Trying to reach out and touch the sky.
I watch the clouds move free and happy,
They're always busy traveling, I wonder why.

I dance to the rhythm of the soothing wind,
Whose every touch raise my spirits high.
I'll grab the soil firm if the wind went wild,
And stand a natural roof for every passerby.

Overwhelmed with joy, I permit a little bird,
To build upon my hands her soft cozy nest.
I make a silent promise that during angry weather,
To protect her delicate one's, I'll always do my best.

Water gushes out through the doors of heaven,
As an instant reply to my call.

And sprays its coolness over the hills and plains,
Helping life to grow steady and tall.

I await with immense pride and patience,
As the sweet ones I bear grow day after day.
To satisfy the hunger of both men and beasts,
I readily though painful give them away.

I wonder with grief how long would it take,
Before I feel the cutter's axe piercing me.
With my existence restricted I just can't imagine,
What life on this earth would be?

To those who can think and work on their thoughts,
This is what I would like to say;
Spare me today and I shall prove to you
That tomorrow will be a much brighter day.

RUNNING STREAM IN THE HEAVEN

- Ganga Singh, M.A. Development, 2014-16

All streams run down
One stream runs up
All natures silence shown
Water roar and swallows up.
It comes from dark cave
Whirling and roaring
Starching and quarrelling
It's huge horrible waves.

Dirty souls swimming in
Water scratching their flesh
Dragging and floating them
For their innumerable sins,
Some more souls are gazing
Palpitating and desperate
They will be rewarded more
In black deep bright stream

THE SWING

- Zahra Kayyum Shakir, M.A. Education, 2014-16

Garden where the child place, swinging play.
Feet grounded on the mud clay.
Anticipated breath that the child playfully delay,
Swinging across the air peeping in its freshness.
Enthusiasm, freedom, mischief entwining,
In the midst of this stands the untidy hair disturbing the fun.
The feet that touches back on the ground,
Heads back to the air; for a new encounter.
Similarly, Swing back to life with a zing.
Touch your feet on the ground of humility,
Part ways from the blockages of mindsets.

The sky of polluted wrecked air,
Where intolerance dominates asleep hearts;
Let the fresh air of compassion invisibly
Awaken the locked hearts without a start.
Be there in the seconds that falls short,
Before feeling the ground of infant minds.
Swing again, Learn, Unlearn and Flow
In the home of wisdom, freedom and OM.
Omnipresent existence of purified vibrations.
Swing back in the womb of the universe,
Where only vacuum exists
Where only Life persists.

जिंदगी

- Shriharsh Chandak, M.A. Education, 2014-16

जिन्दगी जकड़ी हुई है जैसे किसी मकड़ी के जाल में,
आदमी फस गया है जैसे किसी के बनाए चाल में ॥

पिंजड़े से दोस्ती करा दी पंछियों की,
जो फिर उड़ ना पाई खुले आकाश में ॥

मजबूरियों की जंजीर कोई हमें पहना गया,
सपनों के रंग भरने से पहले उन्हें जला दिया ॥

एक कदम हिम्मत से हम उठा भी लेते ,
अगर चलने से पहले रोकने की वे सलाह नहीं देते ॥

डराने वालो ने मुझे इतना डरा दिया,
सुबह के इंतज़ार से भी भरोसा उठा दिया ॥

सूरज की किरानो से भी बदन जलने का खतरा है,
रात में दिया जलना भी बेवजह लगता है ॥

विचार और समझ की क्या हम बात करे,
अब तो शरीर में ताकत बनाए रखना चुनौती लगता है ॥

दिल की आग को हम जलाने भी देते,
अगर पेट की भूक को हम सह लेते ॥

किस्मत से क्या हम मांग लेते,
जब आँखें सपने नहीं देख पा रहे ॥

हमारे आँसू किसी को नहीं दिखा,
सीवाए मज़ाक उड़ाने के, उन्हें और कुछ नहीं सूझा ॥

वक्त ना रुका हमारे मदद के लिए,
छोड़ गया बेबसी के हाल में ॥

सोच रहा हु की यह मैं लिख रहा हूँ,
या कोई और मुझसे लिखा रहा है ॥

मैं खुद ही रो रहा हु,
या कोई और रुला रहा है ...

बनारस - एक अलहड़ शहर

- Manish Dubey, M.A. Development, 2014-16

पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश का एक ऐतिहासिक जिला है बनारस जो अपनी कई खूबियों के लिए जाना जाता है, जैसे कभी देश के सोलह महा-जनपदों में से एक (तब ये काशी था), कभी धार्मिक राजधानी, और कभी शैक्षणिक राजधानी, आदि-आदि। यहाँ दो चीज़ें बड़ी मशहूर हैं एक तो काशी नरेश और दूसरा दक्षिण दिशा। दोनों का अपना-अपना महात्म है, काशी नरेश तो भाई भये राजा जिनके आगे महादेव को छोड़ सब काशी में शीश नवाते हैं दूसरी बची दक्षिण दिशा तो इसके ऊपर तो कई हज़ार ग्रन्थ लिखे जाए तो भी इसका महात्म न चुके फिर मैं तो काशी को ही ठीक से नहीं जनता तो दक्षिण को कितना जानूंगा आप समझ ही सकते हैं। हमारे लिए तो कैंट से बनारस हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय तक ही बनारस था जो शायद पूरा बनारस शहर भी नहीं था।

दक्षिण दिशा के बारे में कहा जाता है की जो कुछ नहीं कर पाता वो दक्खिन (दक्षिण का बनारसी पर्याय) हो लेता है, लेकिन हमारा मानना है की बनारस में है तो कुछ कर ही लेगा। गंगा भी बनारस शहर के दक्षिण में है और उसके घाट भी चाहे वो अस्सी हो या मणिकर्णिका या कोई और घाट हो। मेरा मतलब तो अब आप समझ ही गये होंगे, क्या कहा खाक समझे, तो सही ही समझे, मैं समझा भी यही रहा था मतलब भी सीधा है जिससे कुछ नहीं होता वो इन घाटों को प्यारा हो जाता है चाहे मणिकर्णिका या हरीशचन्द्र पर जल के या बची राख की भभूति मल के। बड़े मस्त कलंदर फिरते हैं इन घाटों पर कोई नंग-धड़ंग कोई टीप-टॉप। देखा जाए तो ये बनारस के घाट न जाने कितनी सभ्यताओं को एक ही धागे में पिरोये हुए हैं बिना किसी भेद के राजा हो चाहे परजा, कबीर हो या तुलसी, हरीशचन्द्र हों या डोम राजा सबका एक सा आतिथ्य कही कोई भेद नहीं।

कुछ इतिहास के जानकार कहेंगे कबीर तो गरीब जुलाहे थे और हरीशचन्द्र रहें राजा तो एक से कईसे! अरे हमारे अक्ल के दुश्मन इतिहासकार भईया अब इ तो आप न जानते हैं, गंगा मईया के तो दोनों ही अपने बच्चे हैं उ काहें भेद करे। यहाँ बड़े संत हुए बड़े महात्मा हुए पर सब रहे दखिहन्य, घाट

पर ही अब चाहे करपात्री और कीनाराम हो या तुलसीदास और कबीरदास सब का ठिकान तो इन घाटों पर ही लगा। जितने बड़े गविया-बजयिया हुए बिस्मिल्ला खान से लेकर छन्नुलाल लाल सब ने यहीं रियाज़ किया इन्हीं घाटों ने उनमें ऐसा राग भरा की दुनिया दीवानी हुई जा रही है। बिस्मिल्ला खान तो घाट पर आरती में सहनाई बजा बजा माई गंगा का आशीर्वाद बटोर लिए। हाँ भईया हम सही कह रहे हैं यहाँ कोई भेद नहीं है गंगा माई सब को अपनाती हैं अब हमको ही लेलो तीन साल अप्रवासी पक्षी की तरह यहाँ का जल का पिया पूरी दुनिया का जल हो गया हमारे लिए खारा। अब जब ज़ोर की प्यास लगती है तो दौड़ लगाते हैं और रुकते सीधा काशी में ही हैं। इहाँ हम हो गये पपीहा की पानी तो बस स्वाति का ही पीना है चाहे प्राण जाए या बचे। एक हम ही नहीं हैं इस दौड़ में हमारे जैसे ना जाने कितने पपीहे आते हैं यहाँ, कुछ तो यहीं बस भी गये की कोन रोज़-रोज़ दौड़-भाग करे और सबको अपना लिया बनारस और गंगा ने बिना भेद किये।

बनारस के दो और नाम हैं काशी और वाराणसी, काशी तो भया पुराना नाम और छानुलाल मिश्र जी कहते हैं वाराणसी इसलिए की वरुणा और अस्सी नदियाँ यहां बहती हैं और बनारस इसलिए की यहाँ का रस हमेशा बना रहता है कभी खराब ही नहीं होता। तो बात भी सत प्रतिशत सत्य है यहाँ कुछो हो लोग हमेशा चका-चक रहते हैं। किसी बात का दुख ज्यादा देर तक यहां नहीं टिकता, टिके भी कहाँ से भांग के हरे-भरे गोले टिकने दे तब ना। बनारसियों का बस चले तो भांग को राष्ट्रिय मिठाई, भोजन और न जाने क्या-क्या बनवा लें। आपको यकीं न हो तो हो आइये एक बार महादेव की नगरी में खुदय समझ आ जायेगा। यहाँ मुर्दा भी गाज़े-बाज़े के साथ चलता है और बारात भी सही मानों में काशी में ही गीता का मर्म समझा जाता है, “दुःख और सुख दोनों एक सामान हैं” किसी की भी परवाह क्यों करना “खाओ-पियो मस्त रहो” यही है काशी का मूल मन्त्र जो शायद इन्हें चार्वाक ने दिया होगा। बनारस भी उस गुरु-मन्त्र का अक्षरस पालन कर रहा है और छान के भांग घुला के पान मस्त अपने ही अलहड़पन में हुआ घूम रहा है हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय से लेकर शिव पुर तक।

BEAUTY UNCLASSIFIED

- Bhuvana Balaji, M.A. Development, 2013-15

I see her cross a busy road,
And I can't stop staring.
Gorgeous yellow saree,
Way brighter than the cloudy morning.
A string of fresh jasmines embrace her hair,
Like two bodies intertwined in love.
The *araku pottu** on her forehead shone,
And her smile, a semblance of her beauty.
She chats with her friends at the crossroad,
And I can't stop staring.
She then covers her head with the *thalapu**
Protecting her long, wavy, black tresses.
My bus takes me in the opposite direction,
I turn, look out the window, keep staring.
No, she doesn't notice me,
I am the common one lost in the common crowd
She is the one with the striking face filled with joy.
As I move forward, she does too,
Forward; away from me,
Like a bright yellow speck as I blur out the crowd.
Her determined stride signifies business as usual,
Graceful as it might be, her eyes tell a different tale.
The tale of begging and being ridiculed for it,
The tale of trading her body for bread.
The tale of being sidelined by known and the unknown,
The tale, where he is not accepted for being her.
**Arakku pottu*: Maroon bindi, **Thalapu*: Pallo of a saree

(UNTITLED)

- Garima Awasthy, M.A. Education, 2014-16

Between the deserted whirlwinds
Is a quiet snowstorm,
Which induces the mystique to rise
With the shreds.
Draped in the sadness of white
Is a swirling arch.
She remains-
The broken unbroken.
Besides the calm sea,
On a rocky shore;
The powerful was rendered powerless.
All that could be thought,
That the powerless seemed powerful
Because honor was forsaken.
The art of power was then
Learnt from the powerless.
And power in its true sense
Pervaded after the sharpened pain-
In all its nakedness.

खेती, हम और हमारे अन्नदाता

- Vikas Kumar, M.A. Development, 2014-16

“मेरे दादाजी कहा करते थे की तुम्हे तुम्हारी जिन्दगी में एक बार, एक डॉक्टर, एक वकील, एक पुलिसवाला और एक उपदेशक की जरूरत होगी लेकिन हर एक दिन, दिन में तीन बार एक किसान की जरूरत है.”- Brenda Schoepp

जब भी हम कभी खेती-बारी की बात करते हैं तो हमारे जेहन में एक खास तस्वीर उभरती है, आसमान की ओर निहारते हुए बरसात की बाट जोहता एक गरीब किसान, सूखे खेतों में फटी हुई गहरी दरारें, ऐसा लगता है जैसे पानी के बगैर धरती ऐसे तड़प रही है, जैसे एक माँ अपने बच्चे को गले लगाने के लिये बेचैन हो, जैसे समुन्द्र के दो किनारे एक दूसरे से लिपटने के लिये तड़प रहे हों। आज देश का हरेक आदमी शुद्ध,ताजा और कीटनाशक रहित फल और सब्जियां खाना चाहता है लेकिन शायद ही कोई खेती करने की इच्छा रखता है। हम खेतों में जाकर अपने हाथ पांव गन्दा नहीं करना चाहते। जनाब !!!!! ये तो वही बात हुई की अपने घर की सफाई में हाथ गंदे कौन करे? किसान कहा करते हैं कि “जब ये शरीर ही मिट्टी से बना हुआ है तो फिर मिट्टी से नफरत क्यों, बहुत खुशनसीब होते हैं वो लोग जिन्हें मिट्टी नसीब होती है।”

कृषि, हमारे देश की अर्थव्यवस्था की रीढ़ है, आज बहुत बुरे दौर से गुजर रही है, ये रीढ़ अब कमजोर पड़ती जा रही है। आज 50 % से भी ज्यादा जनसंख्या प्रत्यक्ष और अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से कृषि कार्य में लगी हुई है फिर भी हम कृषि के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर नहीं हैं, शायद इसलिए कि किसानों को कहीं से कुछ भी समर्थन नहीं मिल रहा। नेता-मंत्री तो कमाल ही करते हैं, इनके बयान तो समझ से परे होते हैं। कोई ये कहता है की अगर खेती से फायदा नहीं है तो खेती करना छोड़ दो। कोई ये कहता है की किसान सरकार के भरोसे ना रहे। अब इनसे कोई पूछे की अगर किसान खेती करना छोड़ दे तो ये खायेंगे क्या?? अगर किसान बुरे वक्त में सरकार से उम्मीद ना रखे तो किससे रखे, सरकार भी तो किसानों से बहुत उम्मीद रखती है अपने बुरे वक्त में, चुनाव के समय। सरकार-मौसम-बाज़ार जब एक साथ मेहरबान हो तब जाके कहीं किसानों का काम बने और उन्हें मुनाफा हो। लेकिन आज के समय में ये हिन्दुस्तान-पाकिस्तान-तालिबान के रिश्तों की तरह है। जो शायद ही कभी अपने रिश्ते सुधारें।

अजीब है ये आम आदमी

घर की चारदीवारी में बंद, मूंगफली फोड़ते हुए, बड़े आराम से एक दुसरे को जिम्मेवार ठहराते हैं, मसला चाहे जो भी हो। हम हर एक बात के लिये सरकार को जिम्मेदार मानते हैं, हालांकि

अब तो गिरगिट की तरह रंग बदलने वाले, अठखेलियाँ करने वाले, बदतमीज़ बादलों ने सरकार की बदनामी का जहर खुद पीना शुरू कर दिया है। अब तो सरकार खराब मौसम का हवाला देकर अपना पल्ला झाड़ लेती है। अगर हम प्राकृतिक आपदाओं या बेवजह बरसात, ओले आँधी या तूफान की बात छोड़ दें तो कौन जिम्मेवार होगा किसानों की बदहाली के लिये, सरकार कि नीतियाँ, बाज़ार या कृषि अधिकारी ??

मेरी नज़र में आम आदमी। जब भी सब्जियों के भाव 40-50 रुपये प्रति किलो होता है तो ये आम आदमी ही है जो महंगाई का डंका पीटता है, धरना देता है, और महंगाई के नाम पर सड़क जाम करता है। लेकिन जब सब्जियों के भाव जब गिर कर 2-4 रुपये प्रति किलो हो जाता है तो हम बहुत खुश होते हैं, आवश्यकता से ज्यादा खरीदते हैं। उस वक्त हम किसानों के बारे में ये नहीं सोचते की कितनी लगन, मेहनत और त्याग से हरेक मौसम में चाहे वो चिलचिलाती धूप हो या कंपकपाती ठण्ड हो या मुसलाधार बारिश, किसान सब्जियां उपलब्ध कराते हैं। इस भाव में उन्हें क्या फायदा मिलेगा? जब भी हम बाज़ार जाकर फल और सब्जियां खरीदते हैं तो हमें एक जन्मसिद्ध अधिकार याद आ जाता है, मोल-भाव करना। शायद इस काम के बगैर हमारे पेट का पानी ना पचे और अगर कोई स्त्री सब्जी खरीदने जाये तो फिर मोल-तोल का क्या कहना! 22 रुपये की सब्जी को मोल-तोल कर के हम 20 रुपये में लेते हैं और घर पहुंचकर खुश होते हैं, पैसे का महत्व याद आता है। जब हम किसी जलपान गृह में खाना खाने जाते हैं तो उन्ही सब्जियों का 5-6 गुना ज्यादा पैसा देते हैं, बैरे को बकशीश देते हैं और कागज़ी रूमाल से हाथ-मुँह पोंछते हुए बड़े खुशी से निकलते हैं, यहाँ पैसे का महत्व याद नहीं आता हमें, लेकिन एक किसान से सब्जी खरीदते समय 1-2 रुपये के लिये लड़ते हैं। "अजीब है ये आम आदमी"

दूसरा भगवान कौन--चिकित्सक या किसान

बचपन से हम ये बात सुनते आ रहे हैं की चिकित्सक को "दूसरा भगवान" कहा जाता है। ये दर्जा किसने दिया ये तो नहीं पता लेकिन आज के समय में ये बिल्कुल ही गलत प्रतीत होता है। आज इलाज़ बाद में, पहले पैसा मायने रखता है। आज एक आम आदमी के बस के बाहर है, किसी अच्छे से निजी अस्पताल में इलाज करवाना। चिकित्सक किसी भी बीमारी के लिये बहुत सारे जाँच करने को कहते हैं, फिर बहुत सारी दवाइयां और अपना इतिहास भी बताना पड़ता है जैसे की क्या खाया है, कब खाया है, कहा खाया, कितना खाया, परिवार में किसी को ये बीमारी तो नहीं, रात को सही से नींद आई या नहीं वैगरह वैगरह। दूसरी तरफ किसान जो की पेड़ पौधों से बात नहीं कर सकते, उनकी समस्याएं पूछ नहीं सकते

अगर किसान कुछ कर सकते हैं तो वो है बीमारी के लक्षण को पहचानना, जांचना, परखना और फिर अपने अनुभव का इस्तेमाल करके उनका इलाज़ करना, जो की बेहद ही कठिन काम है। बहुत सारी फसल, बहुत सारे कीड़े और बहुत सारी बीमारियाँ लेकिन फिर भी किसान उनका नियंत्रण कर लेते हैं। अगर इन तथ्यों पे हम एक किसान और एक चिकित्सक की तुलना करें तो शायद एक किसान का पलड़ा भारी होगा। तो क्या चिकित्सक को "दूसरा भगवान" कहना सही है? क्या ये दर्जा किसानों को नहीं मिलना चाहिये जो हमारे अन्नदाता हैं? इलाज़ तो दोनों करते हैं, बस फर्क इतना है की एक प्रकृति का विनाश करने वाले इंसान का इलाज़ करता है और दूसरा प्रकृति को हरा-भरा बनाने वाले पेड़-पौधों का।

अपने देश में किसानों को उतनी इज्जत नहीं मिलती जितनी दुसरे देशों में मिलती है, खासकर विकसित देशों में जैसे की अमेरिका, फ्रांस, इंग्लैंड इत्यादि। अभी कृषि को युवाओं का बल और बुजुर्ग किसानों के अनुभव की जरूरत है ताकि हम कृषि को एक मजबूती प्रदान कर सकें, एक ऊँचाई प्रदान कर सकें, कृषि में आत्मनिर्भर बन सकें और शायद अभी युवाओं की बहुत जरूरत है नए प्रोद्योगिकियों को कृषि में उपयोग में लाने के लिये, अच्छे विपणन के लिये, किसानों को उनका हक दिलाने के लिये, एक क्रांति के लिए। ताकि हर एक किसान ये गर्व से कह सके "हाँ, मैं किसान हूँ।"

DARK FACES OF JUSTICE

- Ganga Singh, M.A. Development, 2014-16

Justice, you darkened in every age
In ancient you served monarch lay,
Serf always forced to unwanted pay,
You never heard kneel down prays.
In the age of the monarchy
You turned into red and pink
Sucked blood being patriarchy
Printed by serf's red blood ink
In the age of aristocracy,
You turn into blue and yellow
Oppressed proletariat being suppressy
Hunting mute and pushing below,
In the age of democracy
You have turned into spurious white
Betraying us showing purity and gracy
You only protects some elite right.
Your modern form is worse
Always powering and saving elite,

Suppressing poor like curse
Fearing them extricating their right
This is not my assumption
I know your modern form
Which stroke poor like storm
And begets huge corruption
I have seen your dark shadow face
Your exploitation and corruption
You turn truth into false and
False into truth by dominant race.
I became puppet in your jurys hand
My innocence proved was like hot desert sand
When I went before the jury bench
Seeking justice it proved to be a barren ranch
Accusers are awarded and granted licence
I was poor and mute while he was sufficient
Jury sold you which I called justice
I was ignored for being a rustic.

असमंजस

- Amrish Rai, M.A. Education, 2014-16

चिरध्वनि चारुलता से गुंजित हो रही थी, एक क्षण अपने को इतिहास में बदल रहा था,

बीज वो माटी से उपजकर पौधा बन चुका था, प्रसन्नता अपने चरम पर था

क्या ये भाव-विह्वल कर देने वाला था या अन्यथा!

अब वो पौधा सघन वृक्षों से घिर चुका था, कुम्हारों की कतार सज चुकी थी,

यह आगमन था या वि-गमन संशय पूर्णतया बरकरार था ,

चिलमिलाहत अभी तक अबोध को स्पर्श न कर सका था,

अभी तो प्राणी मानुष-कृत प्रघटना में प्रवेश कर रहा था या प्रारंभ से ही इसका अभिन्न अंग था,

किन्तु सूक्ष्म से लघु और लघु से दीर्घ की तरफ बढ़ रहा था,

असमंजस तो सही मायने में यहाँ से प्रारंभ होती है,

क्या वो दीर्घता एक वृहत सूक्ष्मता के लक्षण थे, या वही थे???

अब अबोध मानुष-कृत बोधता की तरफ बढ़ चला था, उतार-चढ़ाव का बाढ़ सा आ गया था,

किन्तु अब भी, क्या वो अनभिज्ञ था, जो भी, वरन अब लगता था धारा की प्रवाह में बह रहा था,

नीर अपना रंग ले रहा था, रेत को अपनी आगोष में भर चुका था,

दुविधा अब थी क्या अब भी वह इससे उबर सकता था?

संभवतया पूर्णरूपेण नहीं, परन्तु उसकी चेष्टा और ललक कहें या उस धारा की उलटी परिस्थितियाँ,

उस संपूर्ण धारा की प्रघटना को बदलने के लिए लालायित थीं.

अब वो क्षण से तारीख पुनः रंगमंच सजाये शतरंज की चार्लें चल रहा था,

किन्तु ये सोच एक विडंबना थी, जो स्वयं मे असमंजस की उपस्थिति प्रभावपूर्ण कर रही थी.

यह वास्तविक था या कुछ और, यह तो ज्ञान-मीमांसा के सिद्धांत ही तय कर सकते थे,

किन्तु असमंजस अपने चरम पर था, जोकि सापेक्षवाद के व्यक्तिगत और सार्वभौमिकता के मझदार में उलझ चुका था.

किन्तु यह कुछ यह अलग ही वैचारिकी थी, जिसे वो आधार बनाकर आधारशिला की तरफ आगे बढ़ चला था,

परन्तु ये दुस्साहस था उस पौधे का, जो अब लगभग वृक्ष हो चुका था,

तारीख एक बार पुनः अपनी रचना एक जननी की तरह जनित कर रही थी,

किन्तु इन परिदृश्यों को कुछ हद तक समझते हुए वह पद को आगे कर रहा था,

क्या करता यह उतना सरल न था जितना पहले प्रतीत होता था,

किंकर्तव्यविमूढ़ता बाहें खोल उसके इन्तेजार में बैठी थी,

किन्तु बस यही कह सकते हैं क्या यह धम्म के संवेगता से प्रबुद्धता का प्रथम चरण था,

जो इक निराशा लिए हुए चेतनीय आशा की तरफ बढ़ चला था,

या पुनः एक बार सोचना गलत न होगा की, यहाँ से असमंजस प्रारंभ होती है?

MY STORY...

- Astha, M.A. Development, 2014-16

I weave my story in this art,

To this I give my soul and heart.

I don't know which thread to hold and from where to start,

That every inch is tangled and there is wreck in every part.

Pain is an overshot arrow,

As the pain will pass, this is an illusion of tomorrow.

The more I try happiness, the more I feel shallow,

I am a human, a happiness evaporated hollow.

The night appears silent and blank,

As at the horizon my ship of imagination sank.

Silent are my thoughts,

There is some strangeness it has brought.

My eyelids are heavy, closure they plead,

My thoughts are dead, cold and to nowhere they are lead.

It's all barren, nothing I could seed,

But there is a sense that from breathing I could be

freed.

A JOURNEY WORTH SHARING...

- Deepak Kumar, M.A. Development, 2013-15

She, in her late fifties, was not frail and weak as I thought to be. She was a very determined lady, bold and humorous. Little did I know about her as it was a train journey and we are always told to be careful with strangers, doesn't matter the age and gender. However, I could see and hear her tongue-in-cheek remarks to everyone be it co-passengers, pantry car people and other passers-by. She was very much advisable and at the same time critical of things like inflated prices of food items and tea with more content of water minus other ingredients.

The journey from YPR to NZM during last winter was long and I thought it was going to be irritating one with this old lady blabbering constantly. But it was not, and thanks to this lady for making the more than 50-hour long journey memorable with her interesting cooking recipes besides making me deplore over the question of price rise and condition of elderly parents.

Her husband died 18 years ago. Since then she was dependent on her children for a while but then eleven years ago they forced her to move out. And now she is working as a maid and living on her own in Bangalore. She wishes to start a small shop one day to sell delicacies made by her and also to serve the poor and the hungry.

A proud mother of three—two sons and one daughter--, she said she was forced to leave her sons' home at night and stayed at Aligarh railway station for a few days when a couple from one of her acquaintances took her with them as a maid. With them she has now moved to Karnataka and now earning a living. Besides an expert in cooking some mesmerising dishes she is also an excellent weaver that is her favourite pass time; she showed me some samples of hand crafted sweaters with various work of *zari* on it that she had woven for her daughter's child. When asked where was she heading she told me that ultimately she would go to her home in Aligarh before paying a visit to her son's place in Delhi where she was hopeful of not receiving any warm welcome in the wintery season as her son called her and asked whether she was having any blanket with her for the stay in Delhi. Amid warm and delicious recipes of *biryani*, *dam aalu*, *paneer kebab*, *kofta*, *ishtu* (a chicken recipe), *halwa* of all sorts, *banana kebab*, her eyes got wet when she shared this news of not bringing a blanket.

To lift her mood we (other passengers included) tried to keep asking her about the recipes and pantry car people constantly paying a visit and asking her for tea (not for free though); and it was nice to see how amusedly she would respond to vendors over doing a disservice and cheating people.

Doesn't matter she was lying or her story was true. But she was one keeping everyone's mood upbeat in the odd and long journey. I didn't have much reason of not believing her as I could see her doing things on her own without asking for anyone's help; it seems she has learnt a lesson, thanks to her children, to be independent and not believing in others for help. I saw her changing the bandage on her finger that was hurt when she was cooking.

She wanted to have some rice and dal as she was fade up of eating *puri* that she had brought with her and asked the pantry people for it but the price of a few grams of rice and dal was Rs 70 that was exorbitant for her that she could not bear and then ultimately she managed with the *puri* only. In a country where we have concession for elderly in almost all public services I am wondering why cannot same be done in case of food! They should be given concession in food as well. Crony capitalism and its resultant factors have made the life of poor miserable up to the extent that one has to think multiple times even for having one time meal of simple rice and dal.

She was narrating about her days when food cost was low, in five rupees once she had more than a dozen bananas; gone are the days, now we pay more money than we eat food, she said. True we have reached a time of exorbitant price regime; essential food costs are too high; are we paying the right price? I wondered. Isn't it we are robbed of our situation where private and individual interests are abnormally high. Yes we are being cheated due to hoarding, government blindness over black money inside the country and many more factors involved.

However, the journey was full of good memory of mouth-watering recipes and some introspection over price rise and condition of elderly in our country. The lady has on her target politicians with false promises, children not heeding to elderly parents, high cost of food and full of suggestions for other passengers.

DE-MANUFACTURE THYSELF

- Nishanth KS, M.A. Development, 2014-16

"That depends on how you see Utopia. In a sense, an ideal society would be a static society, and any such society is an evolutionary dead end. Happiness is a byproduct of function, purpose, and conflict; those who seek happiness for itself seek victory without war."

- William S Burroughs

It is hard indeed to glean the idea of 'purpose' from a society that has grown increasingly narcissistic in ideals. We have become a gluttonous mass of half baked ideals roiling amongst the throes of self indulgence. The new "social" web 2.0, avarice stricken corporations, the politics of ecstasy, delusional power and control (both the family and the state) are what suffuses, nay dictates modern society. All of which harps at the strings of self-aggrandizement.

The greed of a few have obscured our individual visions of purpose, cutting off the very ideas begotten. The sun's rays no longer herald the arrival of a new dawn but has become a diffused semblance of something that once was. The idea of 'happiness' has become much alike a swashbuckling trailer of a high budget flick, that proceed to run weeks on empty. Visions turn bleaker as the years roll by. We've become thralls to senseless ideals of hedonism. Lethargy and listlessness weave their webs evermore. Each day we conform to the larger trend of slow death.

On a very personal note, when my grandfather passed away, I saw a man whose life was an achievement in society's eyes. First one in his locality to have had the privilege to walk the corridors of a college. A Bachelor's degree in Economics, had made his sons and daughters successful, indeed squarely sitting in with society's definition of 'success'. And yet at the fag end of his life, here was a man that had given up on his life long before he succumbed to the vagaries of illness. There was a glazing of melancholy on death's scythe when it swung down. And yet I couldn't help feel that here was a man that had a literary skill that had been honed by the wisdom that years of reading and age had bestowed upon him. And yet, it withered away untapped right in front of him. As much as it hurts me to say it, he went across the pale without realizing what he truly was or wanted to be. There was a certain fatalism in his eyes and I couldn't help but run away from it. It was a gaze that oozed out despondence, and in a way saying, "I have just one regret". Feeling guilty that I was unable to

help but all the more so because I feared my own future to be on the same line. Of leaving this world with only anguish to leave behind.

Doesn't most of humanity grapple with this fear, the fear of not knowing oneself? We've left most of the generation including our parents', to becoming what they are not. Our collective ignorance, a by-product of our constantly 'socially engaged' lives have left them in the dark. Too self absorbed, too self addicted. I am party to it myself. We have all inadvertently become party to it.

We hunker down not at the intimidation that the idea of death brings, but in response to the thought of leading a life that lacks meaning. That is what we are truly afraid of.

And as life goes on this roughly hewn uncertain path, increasingly populated by shards of distraction that prick and cut at our feet, we are gently prodded to go off base by unseen machinations.

The act of thinking about oneself is slowly lead into the grave. Tomes of knowledge burn at in excess off Fahrenheit 451 (Ray Bradbury). Technology's steamrolling advance has helped us gain ground in several spheres of life, but it has left many a person in the dark, including my granddad who seemed out of place. One's ability to think has lost relevance, as everything is thought for him or her. And in this mire he lay stymied and confused by what he has become or plain unaware of what he has become. Indeed we might as well be laying the groundwork for Aldous Huxley's Brave New World.

And yet there maybe hope...

When Descartes in an enlightened reverie blurted out "Cogito ergo sum" (I think, therefore I exist) , it became the basis of almost all modern knowledge creation (epistemology). And yet it can be reinterpreted as one of the most powerful statements dealing with the idea of purpose. The very fact that we need to think has never been better propounded.

Indeed we lay blinded by the light of innumerable possibilities and yet that 'will' to choose one constantly eludes us. At the heart of it I believe is our inability to sit idle and think of anything. Finding time for oneself is not an option, confirmed increasingly so by a society's fantasy with the same. This age of distraction thrusts upon us the burden of secondary thought (somebody else's thought), already thought for you, so you could save time. And in our country this is further compounded by the idea of 'expectation', contrived but not brooded upon, by family and society at large. To be 'practical' to get a 'good job'. Most of us here I believe go through these very same motions, for one I know I do. There are no trains of thought, it's just the compartments.

"Then it comes to be that the soothing light at the end of your tunnel, is just a freight train coming your way." - *No Leaf Clover, Metallica*

Today's society places at the very start of these tunnels. We venture forth only to be mowed down.

And yet all hope is not lost.

A timely de-manufacture is what it calls for. A mental separation of the self into its different constituents and

a reassessment. Wilfully cast aside all society inflicted wounds, topple the salt cellars, read yourself between the lines. Give yourself time, learn to understand what you have become in retrospect and why you have become so. Doubt yourself.

"Not all those who wander are lost." - *All that is gold does not glitter*, J R R Tolkien

Lay bare your life's contents on a mental table so that you may re-examine them for once with due diligence. Leave the tyranny that time imposes at the door. It's time we like the protagonist, Billy Pilgrim, in Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse 5, came "unstuck in time".

Break these manacles... Undo what these caged years have done to you...Commence de-manufacturing thyself...

For once quit being another brick in the wall to somebody else's idea of a garden. Gorge upon knowledge, brood upon it, and let your thoughts guide you.

"As a man thinketh, so is he." - James Allen (Essay of the same name).

METRO - GET RETRO

- Nazma Shaik, M.A. Development, 2014-16



An overburdened road
Silently sobs, gulps all the horns
It has its dreams, to rest for a while.
To hear noiseless nature conversing.
The irony is my city hears screeches,
Screams, agony adding to the aches.

My town bears rape, abortion, murder.
It sees infidelity, divorce and nightmares.
It slips to the golden time, where lamp burners
Where my ancestor studied.
Today my city looks bling, bright, colorful

Tall concrete jungle, juggling chaos
All that shines is not gold.
I feel my city pleading.

Hold on, it said,
Take me back to my glory.
Rewind me, I shall tell you a story.
A tale, where pride was my people.
Bale me, save me, Let me breathe
Freely... Set me free and you shall be FREE!!
Metro, get Retro.

WHOLE IN WORDS

- Jafar Saddique, M.A. Education, 2013-15

With shattered symbols ordered in lines
Eyes going along with said it's creepy ever.
Mind was flowing by quick pleasure giving stuffs.
Several times of days, weeks, months and even year,
Sucking happiness of fallacies in FB,
Infinite fantasies of adventurism in the dream world
Being rustler, singer, brighter and lover,
In action nothing is happening
In dream everything is occurring
I saw myself as a creature of finite joys
Nothing in depth but tasting every thing
Without focusing, only false engagement of life.

With eyes I kept mind to travel along the creepy
seeming words
It was amazing, words take me into an enduring
pleasant
New words blessed with greater access of ideas
Delight of mind was eternal.
Knowledge seemed more and more authentic
Feasible to bring back as needed.

Can talk with great confidence and evidence
Task of memory becomes easier and easier
Darkness of ignorance fading away
Moon of knowledge being full moon.

By the way revelation came out,
Read, read and read again
By the time everyone is realizing
Times of life in reading fills us with knowledge
Makes us wise, moulds our character of best
And shapes our destiny of tomorrow,
Though arrows of distractions ought to be weeded out.
Patience is door of it, knowledge is the promise of it
We are reading; conquering the world of knowledge
Feeding mind and brains with vitamin foods
Continuation makes us stronger and stronger,
Speed of this horse becomes faster and faster
Understanding level dives into deeper and deeper
Storage of noble stones pile up day by day
Life is lighting up making us worthy creatures on this
earth.

WEEPING SKYLARK

- Ganga Singh, M.A. Development, 2014-16

Oh skylark don't sing
In the murmur sound
It's hurting me a lot
And increases bound.
Oh skylark don't feel the lament
Black clouds are not permanent
Nothing more than patience
It defeats big giant.
You dwell on the green grassland

Yet you feel the lament,
What you say about them,
Who dwell in burning desert sand.
You, the symbol of delightful sound
Better than all ethereal treasures,
You fly high on the sky,
Can predict through vaticinate eye
Teach me the way to overcome from,
Such filthy and dirty social ground.

(UNTITLED)

- Jagjit Singh, M.A. Development, 2014-16

जब देश आज़ाद हुआ था तो हमारे पिता जी रिकशा चलाते थे।
उस रिकशे से उन दिनों भी घर का गुजारा बड़ी मुश्किल से होता था।
मैं, मेरे दो भाई, एक बहन, माँ, दादी, इतने पेट और एक रिकशा।
खाना खाते हुए हम भाई-बहनों को इतनी समझ थी कि डिब्बे से कितनी रोटियाँ उठानी हैं और कितनी सब्जी से उन्हें समेटना है।
हाँ, उस उम्र में भी हमे यह समझ थी, भूख हमने कभी समझ पे भारी नहीं होने दी।
हमारे यहाँ बच्चे थोड़ा जल्दी समझदार हो जाते हैं।
कुछ दिन स्कूल भी गए, मास्टर जी कि सरकारी तनखवा, टपकती हुई स्कूल की दीवारें, अपनी फटी पुरानी यूनिफार्म और रोता हुआ बस्ता।
हम वहाँ भी यह जल्दी ही समझ गए कि रोटियों का डिब्बा छोटा है और खाने वाले हाथ ज़्यादा।

स्कूल छोड़ हम स्कूल के पीछे वाले खण्डहर में अपने जैसे और समझदार दोस्तों के साथ ज़िन्दगी के नए सबक सीखने लगे।
बीड़ी पहली बार हमने वहीं सूँधी थी।
फिर इक दिन उसी खण्डहर में उसी फटी पुरानी यूनिफार्म, और रोते हुए बस्ते कि गोद में बीड़ी का धुआं दफन करते हुए खबर आई कि बाबूजी चल बसे।
उस दिन उस खण्डहर में सब कुछ छूट गया।
खण्डहर से घर तक पहुँचते-पहुँचते मैं बच्चे से जवान हो गया था।
बाबूजी का रिकशा घर के बाहर ही खड़ा था, मुझे माँ की याद आ गयी।
जैसा की मैंने कहा, कि हमारे यहाँ बच्चे जल्दी ही समझदार हो जाते हैं।
कुछ ही दिनों में बाबूजी का वह रिकशा हमारे हाथ आ गया।

सुना है, देश को आज़ाद हुए आज 68 साल हो रहे हैं।
पर रिकशे की पहली सीट से पिछली सीट तक का सफर न तो बाबूजी तय कर पाये थे, न हम।

ಅವಳಿಗಾಗಿ...

- Priyanka, M.A. Education, 2014-16

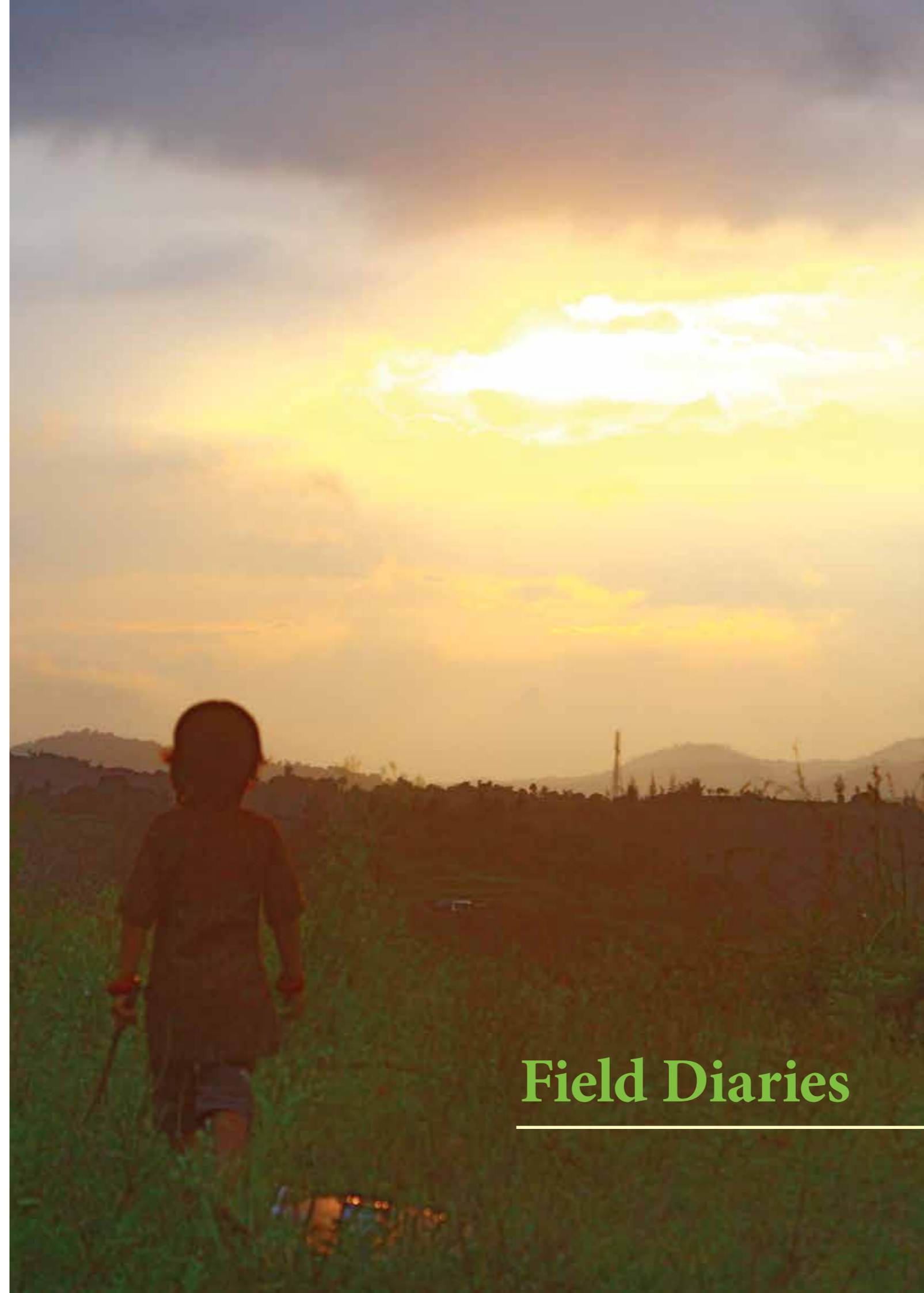
ಅಮ್ಮ ನನಗೆ ಹೊರಡಲು ಅನುಮತಿಕೊಡೆ
ನೀ ಕಂಡ ಆ ಕತ್ತಲ, ಬೆತ್ತಲಜಗತ್ತಿನ
ಜೀವನ ನನಗೆ ಬೇಡ...
ಎಂತಹ ಕ್ರೂರತೆಯ ಪಾಪಿಗೂ
ನೀ ಸೆರಗ ಹಾಸಿದ್ದೆ
ಕನಕಾಂಬರಿ ನೋಟು ಸಿಕ್ಕಾಗ, ನನ್ನ ಬಗೆಗೆ
ಕನಸುಗಳ ಕಂಡಿದ್ದೆ...
ನಿನ್ನ ಬಿಸಿ ಉಸಿರ ನಡುವಲ್ಲಿ
ಸುಳಿದಾಡಿದ ಆ ಮೀಸೆಗಳ ಹೊತ್ತವರು
ನನ್ನ ಬಳಿ ಸುಳಿಯದಂತೆ ಬಚ್ಚಿಟ್ಟೆ,
ನೀ... ನನ್ನೊಂದಿಗಿಲ್ಲದ ಆ ರಾತ್ರಿಗಳು
ಭಯ ನಡುಕಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ... ನಿನ್ನ
ಧ್ವನಿಯ ಮಂಪರಲ್ಲಿ, ಕತ್ತಲಲ್ಲಿ

ಕಳೆದಿದ್ದೆನಮ್ಮ...
ನಿನ್ನ ಸುತ್ತ ಕೇಕೇಹಾಕಿ ನಕ್ಕ
ಆ... ತೀಕ್ಷ್ಣ ಕಣ್ಣಳ ನೋಟ
ಸತ್ತ ದೇಹದ ಸುತ್ತ ಸುತ್ತೋ ಹದ್ದುಗಳೆಂತೆನಿಸುತಿದೆ
ನೀ ಹೇಳಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟ ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ...
ಆ ರಾಮನ ರಾಮಾಯಣದಲ್ಲಿ
ಬಿಬಿಬದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕುಳಿತ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಜಿಯ ಉಪನ್ಯಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ
ನನ್ನ ನಿನ್ನ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳಿಲ್ಲ ಯಾಕಮ್ಮ?
ಹೊಸ ಪಾತ್ರದ, ಹೊಸ ಜೀವನದಡೆಗೆ
ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವೆ... ನಿನ್ನಿಂದ ದೂರವಾಗಿ
ಮರೆಯಾಗಿ ಸಾಗಲಿಚ್ಚಿಸಿರುವೆ
ಬಾಳಲಿಚ್ಚಿಸಿರುವೆ...
ನಿನ್ನ ಮಗಳು...

“

Let yourself be silently
drawn by the stronger pull
of what you really love.”

- Rumi



Field Diaries

'AAPNE INDIA TOH DEKHA HAI, AAPKO HUM BHARAT DIKHATE HAI'

- Harveen Kaur Narula, M.A. Education, 2014-16

I come from an urban background and I had hardly visited the interiors of our country. It was a different experience in the state of Rajasthan when I got to visit some not very known places as part of my first field immersion. But there in Rajasthan I a girl clad in an Indian suit popularly known as the churidaar felt out of place. The place had moved on with respect to availability of mobile phones and its usage but not so much in values.

The Bharat that I saw had women clad in beautifully bright dresses (lehngas). They were wearing beautiful jewellery from nose rings, to earrings, kamar band, bangles, tikka, kadi (a kind of anklet), toe rings, just about everything you can imagine. Every married woman was wearing it, young or old. These women take care of all the household chores, the cattle rearing, the children and various other tasks, all this in their traditional attire.

I was in the so called interiors of Rajasthan. We were in the local bus going from one block to another when I saw a 16-17 years old girl who was married. I identified the same by her attire and the beautiful adornments that she was dressed in. She was wearing a bright yellow lehenga, it had painstaking embroidery. Along with that she was wearing all the above mentioned ornaments. The weight of the girl would have increased about 7-8 kgs because of her attire and the jewellery. There was hardly any place to stand in the jam packed bus. Yet everyone around and the girl herself didn't find anything amiss. For them everything was completely normal. This is Bharat.

On talking to one of the male teachers of a government school in the area we found out that underage school going girls are silently married during vacations. This happens so that no one comes to know about it. They aren't sent away to their husband's houses (as that happens only when they are legally allowed to get married) but they are made to wear kadi in their ankles. Kadi is

a heavy anklet usually made of silver, weighing 500 gm. each (minimum weight). This the married women have to wear in both their ankles. Other kids on seeing the kadi tease these girls. This is one of the reasons why girls leave school as they don't want other children to make fun of them. This is Bharat.

While on another trip within the interiors of Rajasthan I was looking out of the bus's window and saw 3 women. The elderly lady was sitting on the bench sipping tea. The younger women were squatting in front, sipping tea with their ghunghats upto their nose. It is common tradition that the daughter-in-law (bahu) is not supposed to sit at the same level as her mother-in-law (saas) and the father-in-law (sasur). This is Bharat.

When I and my friend (a girl) were staying in the block everyone seemed to know about our arrival. We were looked at as though we were aliens in their land. It seemed very difficult for people to accept such boldness and independence from women. We were stared at by every passing person. We were asked as to why we were in the block, where were we from, where were we staying, and many other such questions. Clearly people couldn't accept that women could come to a new place and live on their own and roam about the streets on their own. This is Bharat.

Our country is full of paradoxes. On one side we are doing (whatever little) for girl's education on the other we silently accept girl child marriage. In the corporate girls are taken as equivalent to boys' at least it is an accepted assumption but in villages' girls are a liability. The goddess Durga is given most respect but the daughter in law is like an unpaid servant during the day and an unpaid escort during the night whose attrite and ornamentation is a symbol of being chained to her husband or her husband's family but it is taken as tradition. This is Bharat.

विकास की डायरी के कुछ पन्ने

- Varun Sharma, M.A. Education, 2013-15

कल पता चला की गौरी दीदी की तबियत खराब है। गौरी दीदी ग्राम विकास में काम करती हैं और हमारे लिये माँ से प्यार के साथ खाना बनाती हैं। इससे कहीं अधिक वो हमसे और हम उनसे बहुत स्नेह रखते हैं, पर रिश्ता इससे भी कहीं अधिक गहरा और अपना बन चुका है, मात्र एक महीने में ही। अब हम कौन हैं? हम तीन, फेल्लोज़ हैं, जो ग्राम विकास के साथ उड़ीसा में विभिन्न कार्यक्रमों पर एक वर्ष काम करने वाले हैं। आज अभी गौरी दीदी सुबह आई थी, चेहरा उतरा हुआ, बता रही थी कि उन्हें 'बेसी जुर' हो गया, सात-सौ रु. की दवाई लेनी पड़ी उन्हें. कल उन्हें तीन इंजेक्शन लगे थे- कमर, हथेली के पिछले हिस्से में और कन्धे से नीचे हाथ में, आज एक और लगेगा, कल एक और, दवाइयां अलग जो पानी के साथ लेनी हैं। मुझे कुछ समझ नहीं आया की इतने पैसे क्यों।

मैंने पूछा की किस डॉक्टर को दिखाया, तो उन्होंने बताया, "तेलुगु डॉक्टर"। सरकारी अस्पताल के बारे में पूछने पर उन्होंने कहा कि, "भोल्लो नाही" मतलब अच्छा नहीं है। मैंने उनकी दवाइयां देखी, तो उसमें चार प्रकार की टेबलेट और दो, एक ही प्रकार के इंजेक्शन थे। इंजेक्शन के पीछे लिखा था कि "प्रथम स्टार के मलेरिया के लिये नहीं, सेरेब्रल मलेरिया या उससे गम्भीर स्तर के लिये"। मैंने गौरी को दीदी को कहा कि, "से दुबाई भोल्लो नाही" (ये दवाई अच्छी नहीं है) और "मूँ आपण सौंगे चालुओछी" (मैं आपके साथ चलता हूँ)। सबसे पहले मैंने उन्हें सरकारी अस्पताल चलने के लिये राजी किया। वहाँ डॉक्टर नहीं था, सिर्फ कम्पाउण्डर था। डॉक्टर परसों तक तो थे बोलने पर, कम्पाउण्डर जी ने कहा कि वो 'लीव' पर हैं। 'लीव' की सच्चाई पर बात करना यहाँ बेतुका लगा, गौरी दीदी का स्वास्थ्य अधिक महत्वपूर्ण था। उनसे बातचीत की, दवाई दिखलाई, उन्होंने कहा की इसका किडनी पर बुरा प्रभाव पड़ेगा। गौरी दीदी को बताया की तेलुगु डॉक्टर पढ़ा लिखा नहीं है, हम पढ़े लिखे हैं। मैं पक्का नहीं कह सकता की गौरी दीदी को पता था या नहीं की किडनी क्या होती है। उन्होंने गौरी दीदी को स्वास्थ्य खराब होने पर वापस आने की सलाह दी। बाहर निकल कर गौरी दीदी बार बार यही कहती रहीं की यहाँ 'बेसी पैसा' लेते हैं (जिसकी सच्चाई मुझे थोड़े दिन पता चली जब गाँव का एक लड़का जो मेरे साथ काम में मेरी मदद करता, अस्पताल के बाहर मिला और उससे पता चला की वो अस्पताल में इलाज के हज़ार रुपये देने आया था)। अस्पताल

से निकल हम पहुँचे 'तेलुगु डॉक्टर' के पास, महाशय अन्दर एक मरीज़ को लेटा कर मछलीनुमा प्लास्टिक वाइब्रेटर से सरदर्द का इलाज कर रहे थे बाहर एक सूटकेस था, मेन-गेट पर एक सर्टिफिकेट भी लगा था, जो निहायत ही फर्जी था जब 'डॉक्टर साहेब' बाहर आये तो मैंने उनसे गौरी दीदी की रक्त जाँच के बारे में पूछा, उन्होंने कहा PF+, यानी उच्च स्तर का मलेरिया है, मैंने रिपोर्ट दिखाने को कहा तो वो दवाई वाले पर्चे की ओर इशारा करने लगे की इसमें लिखा है ना। मतलब रक्त जाँच हुई या नहीं इसका भी सही से पता नहीं। इंजेक्शन दिखाते हुए मैंने कहा की ये तो पहले स्तर के मलेरिया के लिये नहीं है, तो मेरी आँखों में देखकर उन्होंने कहा, "आप जिम्मेदारी लेंगे, इन्हें कुछ हुआ तो?" एक आदमी जो गरीबों को लूट रहा है, मलेरिया का टेस्ट किये बिना सेरिब्रल मलेरिया की दवाई दे रहा है, वो मुझसे मेरी जिम्मेदारी पूछ रहा है, मुझे हैरानी हुई और गुस्सा भी आया। ये मनोवैज्ञानिक दांव-पेंच हैं, जो सामने वाले को परखने के लिये अक्सर काम में लिये जाते हैं, सो उन महाशय ने भी लिया। मैंने कहा की ये इंजेक्शन वापस लीजिये, हम सरकारी अस्पताल में दिखायेंगे, ये सुनकर महाशय गौरी दीदी पर चिल्लाने लगे। ये देख कर मैंने गुस्से को रोकना छोड़ उन्हें शिदत से झिड़का और चुपचाप दवाई वापस लेने को कहा। दवाई वापस कर मैंने गौरी दीदी को हिदायत दी की अगली बार थोड़ीसी ताबियत खराब होते ही सरकारी अस्पताल में दिखाना, पर उनका फिर वही कहना की सरकारी अस्पताल में 'बेसी पैसे' लेते हैं।

इससे ये तो स्पष्ट है कि आदिवासी गाँव इतने गहरे दलदल में धंसे हुए हैं की ये दलदल चक्रव्यूह की तरह घूमता हुआ इन्हें चूसता जा रहा है। शिक्षा की कमी, जर्जर स्वास्थ्य, भोजन की कमी, अन्य मूलभूत सुविधाओं का शून्य की ओर झंकाता मुंह, ऊपर से 'तेलुगु डॉक्टर' जैसे लोग और फर्जी छुट्टियाँ मनाते सरकारी अस्पताल के डॉक्टर और पिस्सुओं की तरह खून चूसते कभी-कभार खुलते ये अस्पताल। जवाब नक्सलवाद जैसे आन्दोलनों में तो नहीं है, इतना समझ में आता है। जवाब सामाजिक और राजनैतिक ही है, पर हमें सच्चाई की ओर गहराई में जाना होगा और अच्छे से आँखें मिलानी होंगी। आत्ममंथन, आत्मसंघर्ष, चिन्तन और कर्म सब को साथ में लेकर चलना होगा, ताकि इंसान बने रहने की कोशिश चलती रहे, बढती रहे।

TEACHER RECOGNITION IN INDIA

- Qadir Maaz, M.A. Education, 2014-16

The teachers are the torchbearers who pass on the knowledge, culture, traditions, language and technology to the next generation and it is a continuous cycle. The teachers have the job of dealing with the maturing children, it is the toughest job as humans are not machines. The children whose parents are educated, mostly do get lots of supervision and support at home. In this circumstance some part of guidance comes from parents and some part does come from school. There are some children (Urban\semi-urban) who attend private tuitions, get home work supervisions, class dairy check, on-line education support and most importantly motivation. The other set of students are 'first generation' school goers who usually do not get as much support as enjoyed by other children as they depend only on supervision and support at school. The first generation school goers are those children who are the first to get formal education among their family members. The family where none has gone through formal education, how much do they understand the value of education, if they value then how much can they understand the aims and mechanisms of education. This is to briefly understand the different kinds of students we have in our country. How much effort do the teachers have to put on first generation school goers. There was an enrolment program where an Educationist had to speak with a parent. The activist asked the parent as to why he does not send his child to school. The parent questioned what can a child get by attending the school. The perception of wage workers is usually an immediate remuneration or return, how can a teacher or an education activist convince this parent? And even if we get a 100% enrolment, how do we maintain the quality of education. How are we to analyze and design the training and support mechanisms for these teachers to meet the expectations?

How do we recognize the efforts of the teachers? There are thousands of teachers who work to the very core of

their energy and capacity. Let us visualize a day in a teachers' life. This is a lady teacher in Uttarakhand state who travels every day to school. She boards the bus to travel 16 km through the hills and again trek through the hills for around 2 km. She enjoys her work and engages with students, parents and community at the village government school. She is happy travelling and engaging and also happy with the salary she earns. Apart from internal motivation what other motivation and recognition does she get at least say annually. Usually in rural regions there is much need to support children. Many of the teachers do put the effort, first by travelling to the challenging places and second through teaching.

There are some schools with a 'single teacher' handling the job of the principal as well as that of the teacher for up to 5 grades. Usually these schools can have a pupil strength of 10 to 70 including all the grades. These school teachers are usually deprived of in-service training, they face difficulties in claiming leaves for personal requirements. It's very easy to challenge rural government school teachers in terms of quality of education. On the other hand these teachers need a lot of moral support as well as recognition.

If we look at MNC companies' culture there is a good pattern of employee recognition. Thus it is highly advisable that in lines of teacher accountability initiatives we should also have recognition initiatives. The initiatives like the best teacher award at block level, which could be monthly, quarterly, yearly. And also awards such as the best school award in respect to discipline, infrastructure, sustainable initiatives and so on.

Let us respect our fellow citizens. Let us strive for participatory democracy, freedom is not free.

'Being informed and inform everyone'.

Think moral. Change is you...

आज मेरे घर चलेंगे सर !

Aakash Chowkase, M.A. Education, 2013-15



गन्ने के खेत में

(फील्ड इंटरनशिप के दौरान लिया हुआ एक हृदयस्पर्शी अनुभव)

“आज मेरे घर चलेंगे सर!”, थानेंद्र ने घोषित कर दिया. “नहीं सर. आज मेरे घर.”, नीलकंठ बोला. “नहीं सर. मैंने पहले बोला था”, थानेंद्र गुस्सेसे बोला. “हां. उसने पहले बोला था. आज मैं थानेंद्र के घर जाऊंगा”, थानेंद्र का लाल चेहरा देख मैंने तुरंत निर्णय बता दिया.

पिछले दो दिन से शाला के बाद किसी न किसी के घर जाने का न्योता मिल रहा था. कल किशन के घर गया था. उसके झोपड़े में बड़ी प्यार से बैठाकर उसने उसके माँ के हात के बने हुए मुरमुरे और बिना दूध की चाय पिलायी. उसके बापू मजदूरी करते हैं और माँ बाजार में मुरमुरे बेचती हैं. माँ ने बोला, “मेरा बच्चा पढ़ने में कमजोर है. लेकिन घर के काम में पूरा एक नंबर. खाना भी बना लेता है.” आज थानेंद्र के घर ऐसेही कुछ देखने-सुनने को मिलेगा यही सोचकर मोटर-

सायकिल शुरू किया. थानेंद्र और नीलकंठ भी गाडी पर कूदे. दोनों ही बड़े उस्ताहित थे.

किशन, नीलकंठ, थानेंद्र यह सब मेरे पांचवी कक्षा के बच्चे हैं. छत्तीसगढ़ के कबीरधाम जिले में राजानवागाँव नाम के एक छोटेसे गाव में सरकारी शाला में पढ़ते हैं. मेरे इंटरनशिप के दौरान मैं उन्हें गणित पढ़ा रहा था.

कीचड़ भरे रस्ते से छोटी छोटी गलियाँ पार कर हम थानेंद्र के घर पहुँचे. घर को ताला देख वह नाराज हो गया उतनेमे उधरसे उसकी माँ खेत से आ गयी. “खुर्सी नहीं है सर. चटाई पे बैठेंगे?”, उसकी माँ ने बड़ी प्यार से पूँछा. हम नीचे बैठ गये. तब तक पूरे ‘सतनामी’ पारे में बात पहुँच चुकी थी. शाला से मास्टरजी आये हैं. ये भीड़ लग गयी. सतनामी समाज अनुसूचित जाती (SC) के अन्दर आता है. लेकिन प्यार की क्या कोई जाती होती है क्या?

“सर, खेत देखने चलेंगे क्या?” बच्चों ने पूछा. १०-१५ बच्चे मुझे लेकर खेत दिखाने चल पड़े. “सर यह देखिये. यह मेरा खेत.”, “सर वह वाला, जिसमें पीले रंग के पत्ते लगे हैं, सर वह अमित का खेत.”, “सर मेरे वाला उसके पीछे है.”, “सर अपना मनमोहन है ना उसका वह खेत. अभी कटाई हुई है. उसकी माँ अभी मरी सर.” बच्चों बिना रुके बताये जा रहे थे. “सर, इसको देखो. चना लगा है. हम इसके पत्तों की भाजी खाते हैं. आप खाते हैं सर चने के पत्ते?” बच्चों के लगातार मुझसे सवाल चालू थे.

“सर यह है टी वेल, इससे पानी निकलता है.” मैं कुछ समझा नहीं. थोड़ी देर बात पता चला की बच्चों ट्यूबवेल की बात कर रहे थे. एक तो बच्चों छत्तीसगढ़ी में बोल रहे थे. और दूसरा, एक साथ ४-५ लोग इकट्ठा बोलते. लेकिन बड़ा मजा आ रहा था. गरम धूप जा कर अब हवा में ठण्ड बढ़ रही थी. जितनी दूर नजर पहुंची उतने पीले, हरे खेत ही खेत नजर आ रहे थे. पूरब में नीला सफ़ेद आकाश. और पश्चिम, केसरिया चादर ओढ़ रहा था. चाँद निकल चुका था. बड़ा सुहाना चित्र था.

“सर यहाँ फोटो खींचो ना.”, “सर, मेरा अकेले का लो.”, “सर मेरा मेरी बेहन के साथ.” फोटो का मानो भूत सवार था बच्चों पर.

“सर ये खाईये. हम इसके दाने खाते हैं.”, “सर इस फूल का रस चूसिये. बड़ा मीठा होता है.” “सर, यह लो गन्ना खाओ.” “सर, ध्यान से. यहाँ काँटा है.” - कोई तुरन्त झुकता और उसे दूर फेंकता. “सर वहाँ से मत आना. कीचड़ है. पाँव धस जाएगा.” बच्चे बड़ा खयाल रख रहे थे. घंटे, डेढ़ घंटे का चक्कर लगाने के बाद, पेटभर गन्ना चूसते हुए हम वापिस थानेन्द्र के घर पहुंचे.



खेत में नाच करते हुए मनमोहन, थानेन्द्र, रुपेश और ओमान (R तो L)

“सर, चाय.” बिना दूध की चाय का आज आश्चर्य नहीं हुआ. “मेरा बच्चा गधा है सर. उसे ठिकसे पढ़ा दो.” तुरंत याद आया कि थानेन्द्र ने बताया था उसके बारे में अच्छा अच्छा बोलने के लिए. मन ही मन मुस्कराते हुए मैंने कहा, “आपका बच्चा तो बिलकुल गधा नहीं है. और ठिकसे ध्यान देकर पढ़ेगा तो बहुत अच्छा आगे जायेगा.”

“सर कोई जादू दिखाओ ना जैसे आज कक्षा में दिखाए थे.”, एक बच्चे ने बोला. तीस छोटे-बड़े बच्चों ने मुझे घेर रखा था. मैंने मेरा सायंस किट खोला. बोतल और गुब्बारे से दो प्रयोग दिखाए. बच्चों ने ताली मारी. मैंने कहा, “जादू वादू कुछ नहीं होता. सब विज्ञान का कमाल है.” “और एक सर. प्लीज और एक.” इसबार मैंने कांच की बोतल निकाली. लेसर खोला. और प्रकाश को मोड़ने वाला ‘जादू’ दिखाया. इतना मोड़ दिया कि पूरा प्रकाश उल्टा बोतल के अन्दर मूढ़ गया. बच्चों विस्मित रह गये. जब बड़े होंगे तब पढ़ेंगे Total Internal Reflection को. उनकी उत्सुकता बढ़ गयी थी. ‘क्या होता अगर हम बच्चों को शाला में हमेशा ऐसे सम्मोहित करने में सफल होते!’, मैंने खुदसे कहा.

“सर अब मेरे घर.”, “मेरे घर.”, “नहीं. मेरे घर.” मैं अपने विचारों से बाहर निकला. किसको चुनूँ? मेरे पास कोई जवाब नहीं था. अँधेरा होने को था. लेकिन, मानते तो वह बच्चों कैसे. मुझे और तीन घर जाना पड़ा. एक बच्चा सरसर इमली के पेड़ पे चढ़ गया. हमने मस्त इमली खाई. फिर सबने भर भर के मूंगफली, इमली, दाने, गन्ना घर ले जाने के लिए दबाव बनाया. पेट पहले से भर चुका था. बच्चों के प्यार का मेरे पास कोई जवाब नहीं था. “सर, आज मत जाओ ना. प्लीज सर. रुक जाओ ना. किसीके भी घर रह लो सर. प्लीज सर. मत जाओ.” मेरा भी जाने का कतई मन नहीं कर रहा था. आखिरी घर से मैं बाहर निकला तब तक बाहर अँधेरा हो चुका था.

चाँदनी ने सतनामी पारे की सुन्दरता को कई गुना बढ़ा दिया था. गुरुद्वारा में मत्था टेकते हुए हम मेरी गाड़ी के पास पहुंचे. ठंड बढ़ने लग गयी थी. अब और देरी करना मुनासिब नहीं था. बच्चों ने नीचे झुककर पैर छुए. मैंने बड़ी मुश्किल से गाड़ी शुरू कर दी. “बाय सर. कल फिर आना. बैट-बॉल खेलेंगे.”, बच्चे भी घर जाने का नाम नहीं ले रहे थे.

बस्ती पीछे छूट गयी. गाँव के धीमी रोशनाई की जगह अब अँधेरे ने ले ली. शहर की तरफ ले जाने वाले सुनसान रास्तों पर अब सिर्फ दो साथी चल रहे थे, एक दुसरे से द्वन्द्व कर रहे थे - मैं और मेरा भारी मन - एक, जो शहर की तरफ जा रहा था, तो दूसरा जो गाँव के प्यार की तरफ.

LIVE LIFE WITH SENSE OF JOY WITH PLEASURE OF NATURE

- Srinivas, M.A. Education, 2014-16

The journey of my ‘concrete jungle’ began with different aspects like people, shops, vendors, street food, clothing of the people, faces of the people, and attachment of the people to their spaces which makes their place. This week my observation focused on catching hold of the *smells* of the concrete jungle. This is interesting because the “fragrance of the flourishing flower is the jewel for the jungles”.

In my ‘concrete jungle street’ we cannot find plants and flowers but the fragrance makes special presence with multiple forms. When we walked through the people makes us feel its presence with *axe effects*. If you are keen you can make sense of *Fa, Spinz, Yardley, Godrage, Park Avenue, Cinthol, and Wild Stone* the wild names of *scents* in the modern jungle nothing last for few seconds. *The perfumes are so strong and hot that they try to vanish the sweat of the youngsters who walk out of the concrete structure* (because they spend such kind of expenses on it).

The smell of the street changes according to the time from morning to evening. Early in the morning it smells with fresh and flowery that comes from woman selling flowers at the street corner, scents of sandalwood incense sticks from the different shops, foamy smell of the salons, oily aroma of *Dosas* and *Puris* at hotels. When we walk by the roadside ‘stale garbage’ forces us to pull our hankies over our noses to avoid its pungent and rot-

ten presence. The dogs which sleep in the middle of the street could claim that they lost their natural sense of smelling by living in this concrete jungle. As every morning colorful passerby (boys and girls with different attires) walk pass in the quest of ‘sweat’ with the strong and sweet ‘anti-sweat’ fragrances to their destiny (offices, colleges etc.). On their way back to their homes in the evening the sweat catches the sense of victory over the sweetness of the perfumes. The ‘fragrance and color’ are so very diverse and mixed in their *walking life (mechanical life)* as living beings seem to have lost their ‘natural senses’ in the concrete jungle. Every day the ‘faded life’ in the city rises with the hope to meet its original colors and sets with its masked happiness. The days of faded life are acquired with full of scents, perfumes, incenses as unfulfilling desires and emotions. The sense of humanness is lost in the concrete pillars and roads. The aesthetics of shrilling songs of birds flying away, the cracking sounds of machines and fragrance of flowers escaping in scents of anti-sweats, visions of the beauty covered by the darkness of multicolor, tastes of sweetness melting in the junky (worthless) spices of puffs and burgers. The faded life (man) of concrete jungle still wakes up with dreams every day to build hopelessness more and more-on and around, up and down far reaching through the vast stretches of our city with no sense of humanness.

“

The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience. ”

- Harper Lee



Reflections



तळे मात्र स्वतंत्र झाले

- Vishal Janugade, M.A. Development, 2014-16

University मध्ये येवून फक्त 1.5 महिना झाला असेल आणि हळू हळू मन रमू लागले होते. येणारा स्वतंत्र दिवस सर्वांनी मोठ्या उत्साहाने करावयाचे ठरविले होते आणि त्यानुसार तयारी हि चालू होती.

अमित भाऊंनी Email वरून सर्व कार्यकर्त्यांना जे कोणी मराठी संस्कृती शी परिचित असतील त्या सर्वांना बोलाविले होते. मग त्यामध्ये राज्या बाहेरील लोकांचा सहभाग हि लक्षणीय होता. विविध Groups नि विविध नाटक, कविता आणि पथनाट्य इ. ची तयारी चालू केली होती. आम्ही ३५-४० च्या कंपूने महाराष्ट्राची लोकधारा सादर करावयाचे ठरवू practice चालू केली होती.

उद्या १५ ऑगस्ट, देशाच्या स्वातंत्र्य प्रमाणे आम्हीहि स्वतंत्र झालीची भावना मना मध्ये होती. गेली 3-4 दिवस मोठ्या उत्साहाने गौळण, भारूड आणि पंढरीच्या वारीचे नाद APU मध्ये घुमू लागले होते. Delhi च्या प्रीती, चेन्नई ची दिव्या यांचा तर उत्साह अप्रतिम होता, बिहारचा मित्र सुहावाने तर मलाही जमणार नाही असा जबरदस्त वारीचा ठेका धरिला होता.

आकाश आणि हर्शल ने अनपेक्षित धक्का देवून महत्त्वपूर्ण असे काम केले ते म्हणजे लेझीम आणि टाळ मिळविण्याचे कारण बंगलोर मध्ये या गोष्टी असणे म्हणजे वाळवंटात पाण्याचा झरा असण्या सारखे होते. निकिता, अपर्णा, शुभांगी आणि पूजा यांनी भारूड साठी अपार मेहनत घेतली. सचिन मोहिते भाऊने टोपी, नव वारी साडी आणि फेटा यांची सोय चक्क विमानाने केली. अशाप्रकारे साहित्य जमविले, स्वप्नील - सचिन (भावी राज्यपाल) च्या जोडीने गाण्याला वैदर्भीय चाल छान जमवून दिली. तसेच अजिंक्य - अतुल च्या जोडीने लेझीम च्या सुंदर अश्या चाली बसविल्या.

नेहा कुमारीने songs चे छान compilation केले होते. मनोहर, निधी, प्रतिष्ठा, इरा ने हि नाविन्यता, सादारीकर्ण यावर विशेष मेहनत घेतली. सर्व काही मनासारखे झाले असे वाटत होते आणि सर्वजणांनी अगदी रात्री दहा पर्यंत रेअरसेल केली आणि उद्या जोरात सादारीकरण करून वारीचा जयघोष सर्वत्र पसरणार याची मला खात्री पटली.

१५ ऑगस्ट च्या Management कामात रस घेतल्याने मला

सकाळी लवकर जायचे होते त्यामुळे मी माझा परम मित्र चंदू माउली कडून bike ची चावी घेवून ठेवली पण त्याने रात्री खूप उशीर झाल्याने bike campus मधेच ठेवली होती. बाहेर थोडा थोडा पाऊस पडत होता. खूप थकल्यामुळे गाढ झोप लागली आणि सकाळी लवकर उठलो, ६:१५ ला मी होस्टेल मधून निघालो, वाटेत झेंडा वंदन साठी लागणाऱ्या काही गोष्टींची खरेदी करत गेलो.

घड्याळात ६:४० झाले असतील आणि मी कॅम्पूस मध्ये पोहोचलो, आणि पाहतो तर काय, समोर अथांग असे पसरलेले पाणी. ते दृश्य पाहून मला Graduation चे रत्नागिरीतील दिवस आठविले. मी अजून झोपेतच आहे कि काय आणि समुद्रकिनारी असल्याचे स्वप्न पाहतोय कि काय असे वाटले. पण नाही हे दृश्य वेगळेच होते. कॅम्पूस मध्ये Ambulance, Police van, फायर ब्रिगेड उपस्थित होत्या. कर्नाटका क्रिकेट Association चे Ground तर होते कि नव्हते असेच जणू झाले होते. कॅम्पूस च्या बाजूला असणाऱ्या तळ्याने आपली सहनशीलता सोडल्याचा भास झाला. आणि चले जाव चळवळी सारखे तळ्याने संपूर्ण परिसर व्यापून टाकला आणि निर्वाणीचा इशारा दिला होता. सतत चालू असणारी पाऊसाची रिमिझीम, चारी बाजूने होणारे अतिक्रमण आणि देवसेंदिवस कमी होत चाललेले क्षेत्र, पाणी पुढे जाण्यास झालेला प्रतिबंध या सर्वांमुळे तळ्याने त्याचा हि नाईलाज झाल्यामुळे परिघाच्या बाहेर पाणी जाऊ देण्यास सुरुवात केली असावी. कदाचित तळ्याने हि या विद्यार्थ्यांचा कार्यक्रम पूर्ण होण्या परंतु शांत राहण्याचे ठरविले असावे पण threshold च्या पुढे त्याचे हि काही चालले नसावे आणि त्याने सर्वांशी असहकार पुकारला.

University तून कार्यक्रम Cancel झाल्याची बातमी Email द्वारे पसरविली आणि पेल्यातील वादळ पेल्यातच राहिले.

यासर्वातून एक गोष्ट मात्र प्रखरतेने जाणविली, ती म्हणजे निसर्गाचा प्रकोप ! आणि प्रत्येक गोष्टीला अंत हि असतोच. नुकतेच शिकत असलेली Ecology आठवू लागली, वाढते शहरीकरण, असमान वाटप, जमीन अतिक्रमण, नियोजनाचा अभाव, आणि पर्यावरणाचा नष्ट होत चाललेला आत्मा या बदल दुखद संवेदना मनात उमटून गेली.

सोबतच आठवण झाली कि माउली ची bike हि आत मध्ये आहे, मग फायर ब्रिगेड च्या सहायाने पाण्यामध्ये संपूर्ण

बुडालेल्या आणि श्वास अडकीलेल्या bike बाहेर काढून ढकलीत परतीच्या वाटेला निघालो.

मित्रांना हि याची कल्पना दिली, आमच्या गुप बरोबर इतरही मित्रांना कार्यक्रम रद्द झाल्याची नाराजी जाणविली. पण झेंडा हा फडकवाय चा या इराद्याने झेंडा खरेदी करून होस्टेल मध्ये कार्यक्रम केला. आलेल्या प्रलायामुळे आनंदावर विरजण पडले पण उमेद मात्र कमी झाली नाही.

केलेल्या प्रयत्नाला अडथळे आले पण सर्वांच्या साथीला सलाम. कार्यक्रम बसविण्यासाठी खूप लोकांचे सहकार्य लाभले प्रवीण,

INTO THE OPEN

- Nabila Kazmi, M.A. Education, 2014-16

The day I walked into those doors of Azim Premji University I knew life was going to change. I was no more going to wake up in the morning and walk into an air conditioned office and work on software development, something that I had been doing for the past 3 years. Having worked in the corporate world for a while had made life so monotonous that one fine day when I did not have to follow the 'routine' it just seemed that it was the onset of a change that was much needed. The decision of leaving a fairly comfortable life, a job and the money that came with it, I admit was a difficult one. It meant persuading people around me and convince them that this was a decision that was taken after much consideration and thought and not something in the 'spur of the moment'.

What kind of people will I meet? Would I be the only one with work experience and feel out of place in a classroom? These and many more questions kept popping into my head time and again in the anticipation of what was to come. However people around me wondered what I was expecting to do with this degree, a question to which even I did not have a clear answer. Perhaps that is why I was here, to find those answers, but I could not risk telling everybody that I was taking this plunge without

किशोर, आदिती, अद्वैत, संकेत, सतेंद्र, ललित, इम्पणा आणि अजून बरेच लोक, त्या सर्वांचे आभार. तसेच सहकारी राम, कुलदीप, अर्लीना, नेहा, सौमील, गरिमा या टीम चे, लेझीम पुरविलेल्या शाळेचे, तसेच अनेक अदृश्य हातांचे शतःश्या आभार. न करता आलेल्या गोष्टी "उन्मुक्त" मध्ये पूर्ण केल्याच आणि संपूर्ण APU ला पूजा ने तिच्या "आता वाजले कि बारा "नृत्या वर खरोखरच उन्मुक्त करून सोडले..

पण अजूनही मनात वाटत राहते कि आम्ही जरी स्वतंत्र दिवस मोठा साजरा नाही करू शकलो तरीहीशेजारचे

knowing what it would bring with itself. So with utmost confidence I came up with some made up answers to these questions because somewhere deep down I knew it would work out. But that gut feeling was not enough to convince my parents as to why I was leaving a life of 'a bright future' behind me. Some even thought I must be crazy for doing so and I knew that from that look on their faces when I told them about quitting my job and going into the 'social sector'. "Do some social work on weekends, why do you have to study for this?" this was a usual response that I had gotten used to by the end of it all.

Perhaps there were days I myself questioned what it was that I was doing and why I was doing it. But then I held on to my horses and made sure I stuck to this decision and just did not let go. And today I couldn't be happier that I did not give up on those days when I was flooded with questions and confusions. Not giving up on the belief that I was doing the right thing and holding on to the faith that I had on my decision was indeed brilliant because I know today that it was one of the best decisions ever taken. Life has taken a drastically beautiful turn from the day I entered those doors of Azim Premji University.

FRIENDSHIP GUITAR

- Sajitha Nair, M.A. Education, 2014-16

Now, when I think of the day I first entered my room I remember feeling so happy and lucky that I got this room. It will be a good question to ask that what is so special about this room. The truth is, it's not the room it's the people I met in that room. Yes! My roomies! My family! One of the best non-blood relations I could have ever had. Our room is like a body of a guitar and we are like its 6 strings which makes that room musical, memorable and close to our hearts. This guitar is much more special in a way that we don't need someone to tune our friendship we tune it ourselves and that makes it more melodious. Each of us are different persons having their own individuality like every string having its own tune which makes our music of friendship livelier. This is the reason why our musical notes are so unique and special. These musical notes have filled our lives with music, music and more music. After coming here, there's not even a single day when we didn't sing a song. Our day starts with singing and most of the times ends with singing. We sing and we dance, we sing and we laugh, we sing when one of us gets sad, we sing even when we eat food. The life I have always wished for, life I have always dreamt of, the friendship I always admired of. This musical friendship has brought us together, made us trust each other, understand each other and most importantly no matter what happens always to be there for each other. Together we have created our own home. A home filled with love, happiness, fun and music. We never forget to spend time together at least once a week. Even if we are tired we spent some time with our family. We plan our family dinner once in a month. Each of us tries to polish and nurture our friendship each and every time possible. Our music of friendship does not only fill our lives with happiness but also touches a lot more hearts and bring them close to our family.

Before coming here, I was very much scared thinking about the kind of the people that I was to live with. I heard a lot of stories about hostel life and most of them were depressing. Till the day I met you people this fear was always there at the back of my mind. Then I met Nabila, a pretty lady surrounded by a bulk of huge suitcases. You seemed to be mature and with a lot more experiences in life than me which I found out to be true. From the day one I respect you as a person as well as a friend. You can be mature and in no minute you can turn

into a child. One admirable person you are!!! Next day I met Brica, I always dreamt of having a north-eastern friend and there you were standing. I felt so happy. You seemed to be sweet which you are. Then as days passed by I came to know you well. I remember how you used to stay all time in your room because you were not able to speak in Hindi and also were not able to understand our conversations. But then lady, you put in your effort and learnt Hindi really well and really fast. I love to listen to your voice especially when you sing Hindi songs. And we all love you more when you speak in Hindi with us. One cutie pie you are!!! Then in the evening I met Chitra and Zamar together. In the first impression I thought you Chitra looked like a clumsy person and Zumi you looked like a person who loved to have her own space and not so friendly. But you guys were just opposite to what I thought of. Chitra you are like an angel. Most amazing and hardworking person I have ever seen. The way you enjoy each and every moment of your life is wonderful. You and your smile is truly beautiful. Your thoughts inspires me a lot. The way you think there are only few people who can think like that. We love to have you around. One best companion you are!!! Zumi you are the most sweet, loving and caring person. You were the first person I came close to. You, your nature and your art are beautiful in themselves. Your happiness when you see sale at brand store and non-veg dish is amazing. I can see stars in your eyes at that time. When you come suddenly and cuddle us tightly gives an amazing feeling. One beautifully beautiful lady you are!!! And lastly Vasu, best way I can describe is you is the most "dildaar" person I have ever seen. When I saw you first time you were shouting it seemed like happiness was far away from you. So stressed out you were. But then as I started to know you I felt so happy to have you in our lives. An amazing person you are. Doing everything for everyone and making them happy is really a hard job to do. But you do that easily. We all are really happy to have you in our family. With your own tune you have made our life perfectly beautiful and melodious. One daringbaaz person you are!!!!!! I can count on each one of you, after my parents and my best friend if someone has taken care of me in such a loving way it's you guys. Thank you for making my life a wonderfully musical journey. Best "Days of my life" ;) Hope you got the "" meaning Nabi and Vasu. Love you guys to the core!!!!

THE LANGUAGE PLIGHT

- Ishika Das, M.A. Education, 2013-15

An incessant hum. A blank.
As I stare at the words before me.
Marx, Weber, I like those guys.
I get what they are talking about.
But there are others.
They leave me stumped.
Lost in a labyrinth,
I stare at the pages inked with their wisdom.
I stare and stare some more.
I can't seem to decipher their meaning.
I've been trained in the English language,
From the age of four.
How is it that I can't understand?
I struggle. I read once, twice, thrice.
I think "I get it now!"
A class test! An assignment!
They will legitimize my intelligence.
I need proof after all.
I got an A. Am I still good enough?
My neighbour in class is brilliant.
I don't think I've met such a knowledgeable person before.
Conversations with him flow from one topic to another.
It is not redundant or plagiarised.
His thoughts, his experiences.

Rich with reflection and learning.
He got a 'D' for the same things I wrote.
I know he knew the paper inside out.
He was clearing my doubts!
How can he get a grade lower than me?
Something is wrong, definitely.
We pour over his paper to find the flaw.
Then we see it. It was there all along.
English.
His training has been all wrong.
He should have been trained like me.
Known about syntax and semantics.
His experience has no role here.
His English doesn't show it.
Articulation of his thoughts
Has to be just right.
But how does he articulate
The plethora of his insight?
The 'D' will define him
Until he gets his English right.
But don't you think it's a problem?
That a man so bright,
Can be recognized for his brilliance
Only if his English is just right.

DIVERSITY – ARE YOU SURE ABOUT IT?

- Ruchi Mittal, M.A. Education, 2013-15

So, APUites
You want diversity, right?
I suppose that makes sense
Diversity is a nice word
You know, the latest fad
Sort of like education and development

But do you really understand what diversity means?
Yes, it's about different people coming together
People from different economic backgrounds
Different social backgrounds
Different cultural backgrounds
Different religious backgrounds
We all know that

But that's not all it is
Diversity includes all
The liberal
And the conservative
The religious
And the atheist
The castes you belong to
And the castes you've grown up hating
The poor people you pity
And the rich ones you hate
The men who love other men
And those that hate them for doing so
The ones who drink and smoke
And the ones who detest all such actions
The ones who are complete vegetarians
And the ones who eat anything that moves
The ones who love our PM
And the ones who hate him
Those who believe in equality of sexes
And those that don't
The ones you hang out with every day
And the ones you've never given a second glance

And diversity means
That all their opinions count
Whether you like them, or not
Whether you agree with them, or not
Whether they make you uncomfortable, or not
Whether they make your blood boil, or not
Their opinions matter as much as yours
You say we're diverse because we exist together
On the same campus
In the same classrooms
In the same study groups
But all around
The other groups reign
You know
The ones we 'belong to'
The "Bihari group"
The "Malayalee group"
The "DU group"
And so many others

You want to make a claim for diversity
Then step out of the groups
Talk to the people you don't talk to
The ones whose opinions piss you off
The ones you rarely agree with
And listen
Actually listen
With an open mind
Not to be convinced
Not to convince
But to learn from each other
To learn from their thoughts
To learn from their experiences
To learn from 'diversity'

Otherwise
It'll just be a nice word
You know, the latest fad
Sort of like education and development.

YOU RAISE ME UP TO MORE THAN I CAN BE

- Lijya Perayil, M.A Development, 2013-15

So here I am, a year older, a year gone by, and most importantly, a year experienced. It was a tough year, a year filled with challenges, tears, breakdowns, and loss of trust. But it was also a year of love, new friendship, old friendship, and family. It has been a year of fulfilment, of desires, of promises and magic. We have come together, broken apart. But most importantly, we have met.

I met diversity when I came to the Azim Premji University a little over a year ago. I met different people here, from different parts of our country. Each person so different from the other in thought, mind and ideas. Each one enriching another's life so much by just being there, a part of the environment. The way each one dressed, gestured and moved left me incredibly intrigued. And it still continues to do so. The different languages that I hear here, leave me enchanted.

Some of the conversations that this past year at the university has nurtured, have simply blown my mind away. I wish I could capture every spoken word and gesture made during some of those conversations and etch them in my memory forever. Other incidences left me exasperated. And some others, I had never imagined (in my wildest of dreams) would turn out the way that they actually did. My heart was the fireplace of emotion. I felt anger and pain. I learnt to respect differences but am struggling with ways of moving forward with differences. I experienced love and friendship, became mindful of the power of silence. I tried to build. I picked up broken pieces when they fell to the ground and walked away. To build again. Something new.

One of the first lessons that diversity taught me was patience. And enormous amounts of it I learnt, being on the Students' council. I learnt to listen. One voice at a

time, each voice bringing with it rich experiences from their own past and applying them in the hope to make something better this time around. I perceived amongst us all that ONE honest intention. But there were always so many ways to get to this goal, thanks to diversity. It's incredible. And the magic that diversities can churn out is beyond imagination. But it's this very same process which can be equally painful and trying. It demands your time, energy and belief that something valuable is going to come out of the process. It requires enduring engagement and mindful thought. Sometimes however, it's at the cost of the things that you probably don't want to be giving up. But I've made those choices and (tadaa!) the second lesson that diversity has taught me is to make these difficult choices. When I look back now, if given the chance to make those choices again, I don't think that I will have do it any differently. The choices that I've made have made me the person that I am. And I've learnt to humbly respect and live with that, even grow with that is some ways. I've made mistakes and diversity has taught me how to deal with it in breathtakingly different and magical ways. There's always so much celebration around university all the time, whether it is Onam, Diwali, Gudi Padwa, Holi, Vishu, Bihu, Baisakhi or Eid-courtesy Diversity. I've thoroughly enjoyed, learnt and I'd like to believe grown from these experiences to become a much richer person in thought, mind and soul.

I'm almost at the end of my two years at the University now and as I write this, my heart grows anxious as the last days are drawing closer. The thought of leaving this institution, its ways, its smell, and the winds here, the dogs, people and their delightful diversity leaves me feeling uneasy. The time spent here has been extraordinary in many ways and to this fascinating university that continues to grow, flourish and facilitate this diversity, I raise my humble toast. Thank you. *Clink, Clink!*

- Prameet Chopra, M.A. Development, 2014-16

I would like to share some memories that we share of Satish bhai, who was a member of our family at the Azim Premji University and the Sai PG Accommodation.

Everyday we have conversations with many people but only few of them leave their mark on us. Satish bhai was one of them. He was an MA Development student in the first year. Section 3 of the MA Development, 2014 Batch also has some fond memories of the time they spent with him. I too was one among those who were close to him.

For all of us at the Sai PG Accommodation, he was one person who was senior to many of us in terms of age and experience. We all enjoyed his presence. He could be a very entertaining company and by making small conversation he would bring a smile on your face. He was your friend when you needed one the most. I remember that once his roommate was ill and admitted in the hospital. To help him Satish bhai spent an entire day in the market searching for a special kind of leaf (which is related to some traditional herbal medicine practice.) In his little ways he was very humane, helpful and cooperative. Some of us knew that he had some major issues at home and in his personal life. He was also struggling hard with the content of the course. But he never shared or burdened others with his troubles.

He was my neighbour in the hostel and now his flat is allocated to someone else. But whenever I pass by that flat, his smiling face comes in the front of my eyes.

Satish bhai, you will be always in our hearts and will be a part of the Azim Premji University Family.



THE UNIVERSITY CARAVAN

BEYOND THE ANNUAL COLLEGE MAGAZINE "KARVAN" @ THE BLOGGING SITE

The editorial team of this university magazine Karvan thought of the wonderful idea to have a university blog where students can share their ideas, ask questions, find answers and have healthy debates on issues that interest them.

The University Caravan is run by the Editorial Club at Azim Premji University. It was started last year in 2014 and we hope that it grows in the years to come. A students led initiative and 'beyond Karvan, the annual university magazine', you can now scribble, doodle or write whenever you want and share with your batchmates and alumni!

This is an informal platform for the students and by the students. It is akin to a virtual foyer area or cafeteria where we sit and chit- chat, jam and hum and share our thoughts.

We welcome students' original articles (essays, short stories, poems and other interesting writings), art work, cartoons and photographs, videos and every other possible form of expression in all languages. We will try to bring a variety of expressions together through certain pre-determined themes. However, we would also love to know and share your thoughts on anything that is worth a read. It may just help us to create a new theme!

So, what are you waiting for? Go ahead and express yourself on the "The University Caravan", till we invite articles, poems etc. for the next issue of the university magazine - Karvan. We also publish selected articles from the blog in this magazine at the end of the year!

The University Caravan can be found online at <http://theuniversitycaravan.weebly.com>

You can send in your entries to editorialclub@apu.edu.in



Azim Premji University

Pixel Park, B Block, PES University Campus

Electronics City, Hosur Road, Bangalore - 560 100 India.