



AARATRIKA

MOSCOW DURGA PUJA

1990 - 2011



Imperial Energy



A Siberian company with an Indian heart



EXPLORING AND PRODUCING HYDROCARBONS IN SIBERIA

Best wishes for Durga Puja and Dussehra

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK...



Debasmita Moulick Nair

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to share your thoughts and suggestion
www.moscowdurgapuja.org

Despite the ongoing economic woes and the jasmine revolution followed by the Arab Spring which has kept the global political scene wobbly, 2011 has remained reasonably bright for Asia. In a globalised world, just as South Asia engages the world, the region is also being engaged by the world. There is increasing evidence that civilizational states like India, China and other Asian countries will be players in changing world politics.

There have been reasons for cheer in India like India winning the Cricket world cup. At the cultural front India and rest of the world also celebrated the 150th birth anniversary of Poet Rabindranath Tagore throughout the year. As Tagore's 150th birth anniversary celebration nears end, we gear up for the 150th birth anniversary of mystic and social reformer - Swami Vivekananda who was the key figure in the introduction of Hindu philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the West. He is also credited with raising interfaith awareness, bringing Hinduism to the status of a major world religion during the end of the 19th century C.E. in addition to founding one of the oldest and most credible social welfare organizations in India - The Ramakrishna Mission. In this issue Aaratrika discusses the contribution of Swami Vivekananda in modern times with people from different spheres.

Dear readers, we welcome your thoughts and suggestions in commemorating this significant date. Aaratrika has joined the celebration and in its own little way is eager to enhance the awareness about Swamiji's teaching especially among our young readers.

Puja is usually around the beginning of the third quarter. However, we tend to summarize the year at this time and make a beginning with new promise and possibility. In a reassuring sign that our Moscow Durga Puja family is growing bigger, we have been joined by young energetic members full of vibrant ideas. Nothing is more heart-warming than joining hands before puja gearing for its preparations. Some of the younger members said that puja is a forum for lonely, home sick souls to

wipe out their melancholy with the puja euphoria, fragrance of incense and the clatter of cheerful mindless chatting. What better measure of success can an event have? Puja is also a time to say annual hellos and in some cases das vidaniya for those who's tenure in Moscow comes to an end. Puja here is an annual meeting ground.

As always our most endearing section is that of our children. The travel stories are appealing and the drawings and sketches are teeming with animal imagery from snarling cheetahs to purring kitties. Aaratrika is delighted to have quite a bit of poetry this year and our in-house illustrators have generously contributed with cartoons and sketches to make this issue cheerful.

In Kolkata, as puja shoppers clog the roads throwing traffic out of gear, we in Moscow eagerly await our new protima (the clay image of the goddess) from Kumortoli. Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end. Our kumor or clay idol makers must have taken months to sculpt our new Maa Durga. Interestingly, in earlier days the kumor would stay for a few months with a family while carving their idol. The bond between the kumor and idol is mystic, often a kumor would sculpt in a trance of ingenuity. The final touches to Maa Durga's eyes, known as 'Chokkhu Daan' is traditionally painted by the eldest member in the kumor family and is said to breathe life into the clay image. But then Maa as we know is omnipresent and we certainly feel her presence in the autumn sky.

The celebration of Durga Puja is symbolic of our endeavors at conquering the enemy, particularly that which lies within - **Rupam dehi, Jayam dehi, Yasho dehi Dvisho Jahi!**

(Oh Mother) Grant us spiritual personality, victory and glory and destroy the enemy (the evil forces within and outside).



Launching 150th Birth Anniversary Celebration Of Swami Vivekananda



Sketch by Loretta Bukhtoyarova

Aaratrika will run a trilogy to commemorate the occasion from 2011 to 2013.



Loretta with students from Class 5 EOI

Loretta Bukhtoyarova is an architect from Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. Ten years ago she joined the Embassy of India School in Moscow as the Arts teacher. She has tremendous respect for Indian culture is curious about the Indian philosophy and practices Sahaja Yoga. Loretta has studied the writings of Swami Vivekananda and is extremely fascinated by them. She is delighted to contribute a sketch of Swami Vivekananda for Aaratrika.

150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: REFLECTIONS AND CONTEMPLATIONS



Swami Jyotirupananda

150th anniversary of the Birth of Swami Vivekananda falls in January 2013. This is an event of great importance not only to the members of the Ramakrishna Movement but also to the people of India and the world. It is urgent for us that the event be celebrated in the best way befitting the needs for the mankind at regional, national and international levels and that preparations for the event be begun from 2010 onwards. The actual birth anniversary year extends from January 2013 to January 2014. However, service projects and programmes meant for commemorating the event already started will reach their culmination in the anniversary year 2013-2014. While the celebration provides an occasion for the whole world to pay homage to Swamiji we should see that it is not a passing event, but brings about a lasting social impact and leaves a permanent mark on society. The unique greatness of the Swamiji's personality

President Moscow Durga Puja Committee, instrumental in founding the Society of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre in Moscow in 1993 and organizing our Durga puja from 1991. Maharaj as we address him is the nucleus of our Durga puja family, be it in guiding us through the puja rituals, operational details or conducting a stimulating discussion to clarify a concept in Indian shastras, – he has always been there for us.

as a great spiritual leader of the present age, as Sri Ramakrishna's messenger to the West as well as to the East, as an idol of the youth, Swamiji's contribution to Sanatn up in 2012 or 2013. The Order at present has 171 centres in India and other parts of the world. Besides, 893 private centres are being guided under Ramakrishna Mission's Bhav Prachar Parishad. All the centres with the cooperation of the public in general should generate a positive force for implementation of the projects taken up.

These four major projects undertaken are:

1. Gadadhar Abhyudaya Prakaipa: This is an integrated children's welfare project which aims at physical, mental and spiritual development of children. It is being implemented in 150 selected areas in India.
2. Vivekananda Swasthya Parisheva Prakaipa: This is children's health project which aims at remedying child malnutrition and providing preventive and curative medical care to the children. It also is being implemented 150 selected areas.
3. Sarada Palli Vikas Prakaipa: The project aims at the welfare, education and empowerment of women. Ten vil-

lages will be adopted for the implementation of this project.

4. Swami Akhandananda Seva Prakaipa: This project aims at service to marginalized people in ten pockets of poverty (5 in city slums and 5 in villages). These projects, one or two may be continued even after 2014.

Besides, many other cultural and service programmes have been envisioned such as national and international seminars on Swamiji's contributions to Indian culture and world culture; on the importance of Swamiji's message to the modern world, especially the youths. Inter religious conferences will be held in different places etc.

In view of the national importance of Swami Vivekananda's life and the universal nature of his message, the Central Government of India has decided to actively participate in the celebration of the 150th anniversary of Swamiji's Birth, and for this, it has set up a National Committee under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. The scheme was approved by the National Committee at its first meeting held at the Prime Minister's house on 20 May 2010. The scheme envisages an outlay of Rs. 100 crore.

SRI SRI DURGA MAHAPUJA FROM 2ND TO 6TH OCTOBER 2011

Mahashti 2nd October Sunday	Puja starts at 18:00	Mahanavami 5th October Wednesday	Puja starts at 9:20 Pushpanjali at 11:30 Bhog & Arati at 11:50 Evening Arati at 18:30
Mahasaptami 3rd October Monday	Puja starts at 9:20 Pushpanjali at 11:30 Bhog & Arati at 11:50 Evening Arati 18:00	Bijoya Dashami 6th October Thursday	Puja from 10:00 to 11:00 Shindur Khela 11:00 to 12:00 Immersion 12:00 to 12:30 Shanti jal 12:30
Mahaastami 4th October Tuesday	Puja starts at 9:20 Pushpanjali at 11:30 Bhog & Arati at 11:50 Evening Arati at 17:00 Sandhi puja at 18:44 to 19:32	Sri Sri Lakshmi puja 11th October Tuesday	Puja starts at 19:00



Editors Note: South Asia continues to be a region with a very high economic growth rate. However at the same time, it continues to be a region that is the least integrated in the world. Greater integration of the countries within the region not only promises to spur trade and investment thereby leading to economic growth but also has the potential to facilitate greater exchanges among the countries in the areas of technology, tourism and culture. Greater South Asian integration and the consequent economic growth is sure to promote greater human and social development. In addition to this, climate change, education and human resource development are some other areas that present opportunities to these countries to work together.

Aaratrika is pleased to include very important messages from the Hon. Ambassadors of India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka in which the Hon. Ambassadors share their vision of south Asian integration. We also asked them to share their thoughts about the ongoing celebration of Tagore's 150th birthday and the upcoming 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

H.E. AJAI MALHOTRA, AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION



M.A. in Economics from The Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi. Joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1977. His initial diplomatic assignments were at Nairobi (1979-1982), Moscow (1982-1985), and with the Permanent Mission of India to the UN, Geneva (1985-1989). After serving as Deputy Secretary/Director at the UN Division, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi (1989-1993), he was posted in Moscow (1993-1996), returning as Director/Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi (1996-1999). He served as Minister, Embassy of India, Washington D.C. (1999-2003), Ambassador of India to Romania, Albania and Moldova (2003-2005), Ambassador/Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN, New York (2005-2009), and Ambassador of India to Kuwait (2009-2011). Assumed charge as Ambassador of India to the Russian Federation on May 16, 2011. He is married and has one daughter and one son.

Anniversaries are an occasion for celebration and introspection. In the backdrop of the ongoing 150th anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore and the 150th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, what are your reflections on contemporary relevance of the teachings of these great visionaries? Is there a need to familiarize their educational thoughts and philosophy to the current generation?

The one activity that the versatile genius Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore initially felt he could contribute to was the imparting of a quality education. He devoted much energy to the school he founded at Shantiniketan and envisioned an education rooted in one's surroundings, yet connected to the cultures of the wider world. He visualized an education founded upon enjoyable learning and shaped to each child's individuality. He also favoured a humane educational system that was in touch with the environment and aimed at the all-round development of a child's personality. He believed that the curriculum should revolve around nature and favoured holding classes in open air. Children were to sit on mats beneath trees and be allowed to climb and run around beneath them between classes. Class schedules were to be flexible to allow for weather changes and seasonal festivals. He also regarded the aesthetic development of the senses as being at least as important, if not more so, than intellectual development.

Rabindranath Tagore later founded Visva-Bharati University as a utopian experiment in higher education. He also conceived of it as a national centre for the arts. Without music and the fine arts, he wrote, a nation lacks its highest means of national self-expression and the people remain inarticulate. He saw Visva-Bharati as a meeting-ground of cultures, as a learning centre where conflicting interests were kept to the minimum and students could work together in a common pursuit of truth.

Rabindranath Tagore's educational approaches were ground-breaking in many ways and his educational philosophy may yet emerge as one of his most significant contributions.

The great Indian reformer and thinker Swami Vivekananda regarded education as the very mission of his life. His thoughts about the aim of education derive from the basic theme of his philosophy, which was the spiritual unity of the universe.

Vivekananda believed that the limitation of the education system, as being then pursued, was that it had no definite goal. He defined education as 'the manifestation of the perfection already in man.' Thus, the aim of education was to manifest in our lives the perfection inherent in our inner self. His approach to education was constructive and practical and he believed that only through education was the uplift of the masses possible. He was convinced that education had to reach everyone, if society was to be reformed. He believed that the solution for social evils lay in the transformation of man through moral and spiritual education. He considered the basing of education on the firm foundation of our philosophy and culture, as the best remedy for social ills. His views on education were later to be the inspiration behind the establishment of the Indian Institute of Science.

Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda were both undoubtedly great geniuses and visionaries, especially in the field of education. There is certainly a need to familiarize our current generation with the thoughts on education and the philosophical outlooks of these two outstanding sons of India.

In the last few decades the economic growth rate in the South Asian economies has been impressive. The countries in the region are not integrated. . Do you envisage regional integration as a major strategy to enhance exchange in the areas of education and innovation? Please elaborate.

It was with a view to harnessing our individual strengths for collective benefit that the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was created in 1985 by the leaders of the countries of South Asia. Meant to promote an improved quality of life for the people of South Asia, SAARC was to serve as the chief instrument to actively work for regional economic integration of its member states. At that time, this was an act of great faith. Yet, the slightly over a quarter century that has since elapsed has affirmed that this was also a great initiative.

The healthy growth rate of the Indian economy over the last two decades has had a positive impact, both direct and indirect, on all the economies of our region, creating many new opportunities for trade, investment and jobs. Certainly, considerably more needs to be done in promoting regional economic integration; compared to even East and South East Asia, intra-regional trade and investment flows in South Asia remain far too low. Still, we have in position many structures, institutions and legal mechanisms required for closer integration and regional cooperation. The challenge is to empower these structures and institutions as well as transform the legal mechanisms, into successfully functioning programs on the ground.

Regional integration should undoubtedly focus on enhanced exchange in education and innovation between us. Education is amongst the eleven specifically identified areas of operation of SAARC. It is particularly satisfying that regional cooperation initiatives in education are now well underway. Thus, the South Asia University has been established in New Delhi. It is envisaged as a forum where our academics, researchers and gifted students can work together in the service of human advancement. It will provide high quality education to over 5,000 students from all over South Asia. At the last SAARC Summit held in Thimpu, our leaders agreed that they would work towards finalizing agreements for the mutual recognition of University degrees as well as professional degrees, credit transferring for open and distance education degrees, harmonizing professional curricula, etc. These augur well for the future. Let me add that wherever and whenever world-class facilities and an enabling environment have been made available, our talented people have inevitably excelled.



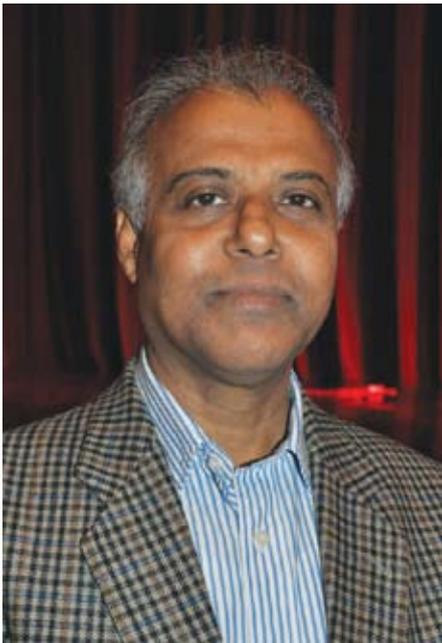
These are a few of my favourite things...

- *Your favourite piece of work by Rabindranath Tagore:* Gitanjali.
- *The one happy moment in your life that you will remember forever:*
Too many to single out only one!
- *The one person that surprised you the most:* Sonia Gandhi.
- *Your favourite festival:* Holi.
- *Your favourite sport:* I have two – football and tennis.
- *Your favourite time of the day:* Early morning.
- *Your favourite film:* Any good comedy!
- *Your favourite food:* Indian vegetarian.
- *The one gift you will always cherish:*
The goodwill and blessings of so many people.
- *Your wishes to the readers of Aaratrika on their 22nd celebration:*

My warmest congratulations on Durga Puja and best wishes for good health and prosperity. May Durga Mata fulfill your dreams and bring happiness into your lives!

As told to Aaratrika on 20th September, 2011

H.E. DR. S.M. SAIFUL HOQUE, AMBASSADOR OF BANGLADESH TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, ALSO AMBASSADOR TO UKRAINE, BELARUS AND THE BALTIC STATES OF ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA.



He is a polyglot, knows Bengali, English, Hindi, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and Czech. In 2008 he wrote a book in conjunction with Dr. Abul Barkhat, 'Deprivation of Hindu Minority in Bangladesh: Living with Vested Property'. His wife Dr. Gopa Hoque is a pediatrician. They have a son who is doing research in Microbiology.

Aaratrika asked:

1) *In the last few decades the economic growth rate in the South Asian economies has been impressive. The region is the least integrated in the world. Do you envisage regional integration as a major device to enhance trade, exchange in education, science and culture? Please elaborate.*

2) *In 2008 the Asian University for Women was established in Chittagong, a brilliant example of regional exchange in education. Please comment. Does Bangladesh plan to*

open more of such institutions?

3) *Your wishes to the readers of Aaratrika on the occasion of their 22nd celebration.*

H.E. Dr. S.M. Saiful Hoque:

I am very pleased to share my message with the esteemed readers of Aaratrika on the occasion of the festive season.

South Asian countries are strongly bonded through historical, social, cultural, emotional and economic bonds and we need to work together in strengthening these further. Over the past few years the enlightened leadership in both India and Bangladesh, as well as other neighbouring countries have shown a keen interest in regional integration. Although formidable challenges remain, there are good intentions on all sides and this is something we can build on.

At a cultural level, there are regular exchanges of artists between Bangladesh and India and this has greatly enriched both countries. Trade between the two countries has increased and has the potential to grow even more significantly in the near future. The Hon. Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and the Hon. Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh have both shown great statesmanship and commitment to promoting greater ties between the two countries and in promoting peace, harmony and integration in the region.

A brilliant example of regional cooperation in education is the founding of Asian University for Women (AUW) for which the Bangladesh government, led by the Hon. Prime Minister – Sheikh Hasina has provided dynamic leadership.

Bangladesh has over the years shown deep commitment to supporting state

and private sector in advancing education. In addition to its secular political culture, a number of notable civil society organizations are involved in women's empowerment, providing an excellent context for a school with the explicit mission to graduate women leaders and change agents.

The Government of Bangladesh has been highly receptive and strongly supportive of the AUW vision since its inception. It has granted over 100 acres of land, while also signing a far-reaching and empowering charter, ensuring academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

Located in Chittagong, Bangladesh, AUW provides a world-class education to promising young women from diverse cultural, religious, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds from across South and Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Location of the university in Bangladesh indicates the country's dedication to the region.

On the social and economic front, "since 1990 Bangladesh has recorded some of the developing world's most rapid advances in basic human development indicators. Primary school enrollment rates have reached more than 90%, up from 72% in 1990, with close to gender parity, and enrollment in secondary education has been rising."(UNDP Human Development Report 2005)

South Asia promises to be a region of growth and prosperity and we look forward to working towards greater south-Asian integration and exchange.

I wish all readers of Aratrika Sharadiya Subeccha.

As told to Aaratrika on 17th September, 2011

H.E. SURYA KIRAN GURUNG, AMBASSADOR OF NEPAL TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION



H.E. Surya Kiran Gurung is the current Ambassador of Nepal to the Russian Federation. He is married with 2 children. He has an LLM from University of Alberta, Canada 1989 and LLM from Patna University, India. Before his current posting, he was the Secretary General of the Parliament of Nepal.

In the last few decades the economic growth rate in the South Asian economies has been impressive. On the other hand, the region is the least integrated in the world. How would you estimate the role of regional integration as a tool to enhance economic and social exchange and promote areas like tourism between the South Asian countries? Please elaborate.

Globalization and free market economy has necessitated interdependence among nations, and isolationism is no

longer a viable option. Moreover, the Euro-American dominance in world economy has been challenged by Asia, and especially China and India, of late. To ensure that this trend continues and South Asia prospers further, a pragmatic approach of integration needs to be worked out by respective countries to avoid the recurrence of existing global crisis.

Economic, social, cultural and political exchange and harmony for mu-

tual benefit between the neighbouring countries will strengthen the ties and sustain economic growth in South Asia. Sharing of technological and human resources are important for the same reasons. One area that merits attention is the vulnerability of our nations to sudden climate changes, and we must work together to combat the damages that this may cause.

Nepal has witnessed economic growth and has also done well in the social sectors, particularly maternal and child health. Following the completion of on-going peace process in the country, it is certain that Nepal will surge ahead in the path of prosperity like our friendly and neighbouring countries such as India, Bangladesh and China.

Nepal looks forward to closer economic integration with these countries in the future.

What would you tell a traveller who is visiting your country for the first time?

To enjoy its cultural, religious, topographical diversity. This diversity is what makes Nepal a grand destination for tourists. Areas like tourism, hydro-power, energy, rare herbal products, and rich heritage sites are great tourist attractions and areas for foreign investments. For instance, Lumbini, the Birth place of Lord Buddha, and Janakpur, the birth place of Sita, are much revered holy sites in Nepal, and are valuable as both pilgrimages and sites for scholarly research activities. Moreover, the Himilayas offer unlimited opportunities

for trekking, mountaineering and eco-tourism. Visit Nepal once and you will feel like visiting Nepal again and again.

On the auspicious occasion of Durga Puja, one of the most sacred and colourful religious festivals of the Hindus devoted to Lord Durga Bhavani, the destroyer of evil and protector of humankind, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Aaratrika family and its readers for providing me this opportunity to express my feelings about Nepal. I pray to Lord Durga for good health, happiness, well-being and prosperity of Aaratrika family and its readers and also wish to congratulate the Aaratrika family for the 22nd publication of the magazine.

*As told to Aaratrika
on 9th September, 2011*

H.E. UDAYANGA WEERATUNGA, AMBASSADOR OF SRI LANKA TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION



H.E. Udayanga Weeratunga concurrently is accredited as Ambassador of the Democratic Socialist republic of Sri Lanka to Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan with residence in Moscow. He was born on 22nd March 1964 in Sri Lanka, is married and has a son and daughter.

learners from all over the world, bears testimony to his visionary genius.

I would say that more than anything else, it is his message of humanism that resonates around the world and is highly relevant in the modern context. Many of Tagore's views on education and dialogue of cultures remain valid and pertinent to this day.

Ananda Samarakoon – the composer of the Sri Lankan National Anthem was highly influenced by Tagore. He composed it sometime around 1939-40, when he was Tagore's disciple at Visva-Bharathi University. Samarakoon's first Shantiniketan stint ended after six months, but it was inspiring enough for him to begin working on a unique variety of Sinhalese music when he returned. He went on to create a whole new musical tradition for the Sri Lankan people, just as Tagore had birthed 'Rabindrasangeet' in India. Tagore visited Sri Lanka thrice and not only presented his dance drama "Shapmochan" and lectured extensively to select audiences, but also drew a lot from the artistic traditions of Sri Lanka, such as the Kandy Dance form and other Buddhist artistic traditions.

In the last few decades the economic growth rate in the South Asian economies has been impressive. The region is the least integrated in the world. How would you estimate the role of regional integration as a tool to enhance cultural exchange be-

tween the South Asian countries?

We agree about the rapid development of Asia in the recent decades. According to Kishore Mahbubani, the well known academic, Asia's major economies are poised to surpass those of Europe and North America in the 21st Century. However I do not agree that South Asia is the least integrated in the world, although I do concur that there is potential for further comprehensive integration.

As members of the region Sri Lanka and India have much in common - we have inherited rich histories and cultures. Sri Lanka has a written history of 2500 years. Though South Asian countries have so much in common, at the same time we are diverse. The diversity of our region is one of our unique features and also one of our best assets. We have to view integration in this context. South Asia is home to one-sixth of the world population. Regional integration will help the people of our region in appreciating the rich cultures of each other and help in dispelling misunderstandings.

On the occasion of Durga Puja I warmly wish all the readers of Aaratrika peace, harmony and prosperity and wish your magazine success in exchanging interesting thoughts and ideas.

*As told to Aaratrika
on 13th September, 2011*

In the backdrop of the ongoing 150th anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore, what are your reflections?

Ayubovan!

I am very happy to be able to share my reflections on Rabindranath Tagore on the occasion of his 150th birth anniversary. As the man who first brought the Noble Prize to Asian shores, and as the composer of the National Anthems of two countries—India and Bangladesh—of the continent, he is, justly, a revered figure worldwide. Tagore upheld the spirit of humanity and freedom which he was able to communicate to the masses through his literary works, especially his poetry, at a time when India languished under colonial rule. His contribution as an educationist is no less significant: the Vishwa Bharati Univeristy, which he founded as a centre of learning and as a point of convergence for scholars and

THE MAKING OF AN 'EXCLUSIVE'



Everything is Everywhere is the aural embodiment of East meets West with an elegant and extraordinary bridge between Indian classical tradition and Western song-writing form. The album is a recently launched collaborative venture between Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Amaan Ali Khan and Ayaan Ali Khan in conjunction with the American folk singer-songwriter Carrie Newcomer. The musicians are accompanied by Grammy nominated percussionist Jim Brock and pianist Gary Walters in the album. The album released in India recently in August this year and will be launched in the United States in October. It has nine tracks and took six months to complete.

A sense of deep spiritual grounding, passion for haunting melodies and an attraction to compelling rhythms are the connecting threads in this novel venture. Aaratrika congratulated and thanked the musicians for this wonderful gift of music, which is already a favourite with many in Moscow, in particular with our young readers. This is what Amaan and Ayaan shared with us about the making of the album:

"Ayaan had attended one of Carrie's concerts in Delhi. He met her also and she gave him some of her CDs. We heard it and it was really nice. Then all of us met and everything fell in place and before we knew it, we were recording an album together. Initially, it was just like a trial album. We did not know where we are headed with it. But it was nice because while collaborating with Carrie, we knew exactly what we wanted out of the album. We knew where to start and where to end. It has come out very well. It's a very spiritual, very calm and peaceful album. We've never believed in pushing it too much because if you do that, there is a bit of a doubt that comes in. Film marketing is different from Indian classical music marketing - if you push a classical album too much, people start doubting you. It is dealing with people who are aware of everything around them. These types of albums are not really mass choice albums. They are for the niche market," Amaan said.

Speaking about the project, Ayaan added, "It is very important to connect with the person you are collaborating with. Carrie's ideas, her philosophy and spiritual connect link her music to our kind of music and that is how this album happened. It is very important to find a meeting point and when you are doing something collectively, the idea is to make a beautiful bouquet of flowers and not to stand out as individual flowers. So you have to concentrate on that. Also, when you are doing an album with lyrics, you need to take care of a few things. You have to see that the instrumentation is not conflicting with the song, that the music is not overpowering the songs. This is an album of collectively recorded songs. And this defines a new culture of song writing and classical music amalgamating together. We had complete freedom to improvise, so did Carrie. So everything was in good faith, good energy and atmosphere. That is really important to make good music."

EVERYTHING IS EVERYWHERE

*There were lentils, rice and hot-spiced tea,
The sunset on the Arabian Sea,
Women swayed in yellows, blues and greens,
The finest thing I've seen.*

*There's rhythm to the rains they come and go,
I heard Bollywood and Dylan on the radio,
The driver's quoting Sufi poetry,
There's ribbons tied around the trees.*

*Would it be so wrong, could it be that bad,
To hope for a little more happy than sad?
This is more that I can hold or bare,
Cause everything is everywhere.*

*On Saturdays in Indiana,
There's a farmer's market in my town,
There's always music, kids and corn and beans,
The finest thing that I've ever seen.*

*When I was troubled a good friend stopped by,
She brought some soup and then she sat awhile,
Love is love it's here and there,
Everything is everywhere.*

*Would it be so wrong, could it be that bad,
To hope for a little more happy than sad?
This is more that I can hold or bare,
Cause everything is everywhere.
There is still so much work to do,
Armloads of sorrow yes, this is true,
But I take heart when I despair,
Miracles are everywhere
I like sweet salt, soda lime,*

*I love the patterns of flowers and vines,
From the train I watch the new moon rise,
The reflection of my grateful eyes.*

*Would it be so wrong, could it be that bad,
To hope for a little more happy than sad?
This is more that I can hold or bare,
Cause everything is everywhere.*

Words & Music by Carrie Newcomer

**Ustad Amjad Ali Khan,
Amaan and Ayaan Ali Khan
wish us a very happy
Durga Puja and subha bijoya!**



Editor's Note: This year we have seen legends from the arts and cultural scene pass away and with them a glorious era has come to an end. Aaratrika pays tributes to these stalwarts - Pandit Bhimsen Joshi and Artist M.F. Hussain. May their soul rest in peace. Ustad Amjad Ali Khan shares with Aaratrika few pages from his life where he interacted with these outstanding personalities.

LEGEND SPEAK

TRIBUTE TO PANDIT BHIMSEN JOSHI

TRIBUTE TO M.F. HUSSAIN



Amjad Ali Khan, Bhimsen Joshi, Semmanguddi Srinivas Iyer and MS Subbulakshmi, Chennai 1988

With the passing away of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, we have lost a legend. It also, in many ways marks the end of a glorious chapter of Indian classical music. Pandit Ji's music has influenced and inspired vocalists young and old and has deeply moved audiences across generations in India and abroad. His impact in the Indian Classical Music scene has been invaluable.

Bhimsenji represented the generation next to the greats such as Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Pandit Omkarnath Thakur and Ustad Amir Khan. He took the vocal classical music by the storm when these senior stalwarts were ruling the scene, thereby ensuring the continuity of the great tradition of vocal classical music. Although he was trained by the legendary Ustad Abdul Kareem Khan and Pandit Sawai Gandharva and started his musical career in the celebrated Kirana Gharana, Bhimsen Ji invested his music with his personal genius and over the years became an institution in himself.

Curiously, it was much later in the day that I discovered that Bhimsen Ji, in addition to learning from many gurus, had in one point in time come to Gwalior and spent three years learning from my father and Guru, Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan Saheb. In fact, he lived in our house (now Sarod Ghar, the museum) at Jiwaji Ganj in Gwalior. Bhimsen Ji especially mentioned about learning the intricacies of Raga Maarwa and Raga Puriya. Interestingly, these were two Ragas that he became synonymous with! In many of his interviews Pandit Ji always mentioned my father's name among his gurus.

I have had the privilege of sharing a very

special bond with Bhimsen Ji for the last four decades and I have shared many music festival platforms with him since the sixties. In fact, on some occasions it was quite a challenge for me to perform after him - such was the power of his music! Angels descended when he sang. I have therefore been a great admirer of Bhimsen Ji - something that only grew over the years.

Pandit Ji's passing away is indeed an immense loss to Indian Classical music. His passing away is also a great loss to me personally. I can never forget the special time and years that I have spent with him and I will miss him dearly.

Amjad Ali Khan



Ustad Amjad Ali Khan

The passing away of M.F. Hussain marks the end of an era of a monumental chapter of Indian Art. Though he died in London, I am sure that the Indian people and the Government of India will create a beautiful memorial in India as a tribute to a legendary artist.

I have known Hussain Saheb, as I called him, for the last four decades. On several occasions he attended my concerts especially in Mumbai and Delhi. I remember in the year 1991 in London we had a collaboration concert conceived by my dear friend Mr. Sam Bhadha at 51 Buckingham Gate. It was a very distinguished audience and it took place in a beautiful ambiance. The canvas of Hussain Saheb placed on was on my left side of the stage. I started with the traditional Raga Malkauns which is a pentatonic Raga (a Raga with Five notes). Hussain Saheb was seated in the front row and after ten minutes walked towards the canvas. His canvas was also facing the audience so I could not see what he was painting. As my tempo increased I could hear the sound of his movements of the brush. After the concert I went up to his canvas and saw the most beautiful piece of art with vibrant colours. I felt he transcended the idea of five musical notes of Malkauns and painted Lord Krishna with four Gopis. That painting was auctioned after the concert fetched a lot of money for a Museum in London.

The second joint venture took place again in London in 1994 where Hussain Saheb was to be joined by his son, Shamshad Hussain and daughter Raisa Hussain while I would play along side Amaan and Ayaan. Unfortunately Hussain Saheb fractured his leg and we had to hold the event without his presence. Mr. Amitabh Bachchan who was present in London for that event very graciously recited verses from Madhushala, his father's iconic poem.

More recently, for Ayaan's wedding I had requested Hussain Saheb to create a card, some how we lost the communication and one month before the wedding we all went to Dubai to perform, Hussain Saheb was in audience and after concert he gave a wondrous painting meant for the wedding card. On his invitation, next day we visited his beautifully done up home in Dubai. He showed us his spectacular latest work inspired by the cult film Mughal-E-Azam. This was indeed the last time I met him. Its really sad he had to emotionally suffer and live in exile in his last years. I wish he was preserved the way Picasso is preserved in his own country.

Amjad Ali Khan

GREETINGS FROM DHAKA



Lubna Marium - aesthete, danseuse, dance pioneer, teacher, choreographer and impresario is a pioneering figure in the contemporary South Asian cultural scenario. Lubna Marium has dedicated a lifetime to the promotion of culture, particularly dance and other performing arts. She is the director of Shadhona - a center for promotion of South Asian performing arts, and principal of Kalpataru -- a school of dance, music and arts in Dhaka. In her message to readers of Aaratrika, Lubna Marium shares information on the revival of some near extinct dance forms that she is a part of.

At Shadhona, we have been working on a folk-narrative, and needed movements that better express the narrative. That started me off on a search for indigenous dance forms. I was astonished to find, in Bangladesh, some beautiful performing traditions which included vibrant dance forms -- Padmar Nachon, Lathi khela, Jari. We couldn't just learn these traditions and ignore the practitioners who have nurtured and preserved them with almost no patronage.

Lathi-khela is an ancient martial art of Bengal that uses a bamboo stick as the basic tool of defense. It requires a high degree of physical and mental discipline in addition to a strong sense of aesthetics. Lathi Khela involves very graceful movements and is hence is a potential source of contemporary choreography. As a martial arts form, it is almost getting extinct and Shadhona is working closely with practitioners from both Bangladesh and West Bengal to revive the form and present to a wider international audience.

Charya Dance is a dance form that is associated with Tantric Buddhism and is a sacred dance form of Nepal, barely

known outside the country. The main purpose of the dance is to support the Vajrayana practice of deity yoga, or visualizing oneself as a deity. This practice involves a mental process of seeing oneself as having the appearance, ornaments, inner qualities, and awareness of the deity one is envisioning.

Buddhist deities are described in Sanskrit hymns known as charya-giti, which are sung as accompaniment to the dance. Charya-giti are sung in a variety of raga (melodies) and tala (meters) and are accompanied by small cymbals and sometimes by a two-headed hourglass drum, or damaru. The songs begin with a flowing raga, followed by a more metrical section that includes description and praise of the deity and usually consists of changing verses and a fixed, repeating refrain.

Technically known as Charya Nritya, which means "dance as a spiritual discipline", this sacred dance form is a meditation discipline, vehicle of bodily and spiritual transformation, and opportunity for an audience to experience a vision of divine beauty.

Thus the 'Robi Cholo Lathi Kheli' proj-

ect started to promote Lathi Khela in Bangladesh and India. Similarly, we are working on a Buddhist narrative, which incorporates the ancient "Charyapada" lyrics. Again, I went a-searching and found Charya Nritya -- a Tantric dance which has its own set of hand-gestures. This led me to researching into the origins of our language of hand-movements. In fact, my interest is in the entire gamut of work dealing with the body-mind connection, on which practices like 'yoga' are based. Lets see where this search takes us.



Nazia Andaleeb Preema is one of the prominent contemporary artists in Bangladesh. Preema studied art in Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka but her artistic endeavor has taken her from painting to graphic design, from web design to developing concepts for corporate initiatives. Art Residency & Workshop Art residency plays a crucial role for Preema's evolution as an artist. She has participated in residencies in (USA, Sri Lanka, UK, Japan, India & Thailand, Hungary). Each of the residencies has added new dimension to her artistic approach, expanding her horizon. Her participation in 9 workshops conducted by international experts has kept her at the forefront of contemporary thinking, sharpening her artistic skills.

Art for me is the reaction to the life. I always try to challenge the typical phenomenon of life and art itself. Hence there is always a conflict between art and the perspective to create an art. I believe art cannot be created; rather it deals with the inner expressions of an individual soul. Therefore the metaphor of my artworks is from my subconscious mind to create an unconscious dialogue with my conscience. Perhaps that's how I want to express my idea and concept through art. I am at soul searching process. And my art only helps me to understand my core to know more about me and about my surroundings.

The series "Staring Women" is just another attempt to my next level of journey where I unveil my inner self by various symbols. I know even if hypothetically when I am unwrapped, I am always under a veil as an Asian Muslim woman; this veil sometimes becomes my weakness but most of the time it projects the strength of the soul beyond gender and other mere issues.

www.preema.net



Illusional Reality, Acrylic on canvas



Desire, Oil and paper on canvas



Still I Have Vision, Oil on canvas

GREETINGS FROM KOLKATA

From Nabaneeta Dev Sen...

She was born in Kolkata in 1938 to poet-couple Narendra Dev and Radharani Devi. She is an excellent award-winning poet, novelist and academic. Her fairy tales can take you to another world, world of dream! Her adventures stories are extremely exciting. Her poem can touch your soul, short stories can amaze you and her vast experience in life is reflected in her novels, features and essays. She has received many national and international awards and honours, including the Padmashree in 2000. She is the President of West Bengal Women Writers' Association. Some of her well-known works: *Bama-bodhini*, *Nati Nabanita*, *Srestha kabita*, *Sita theke suru*.



Sebanti being congratulated by Nabaneeta Dev Sen at the award ceremony

From Sebanti Ghosh...

Sebanti Ghosh has firmly established herself among the young poets of Bengal. She is from Siliguri, since high school studied in Shantiniketan and started writing poetry from a very early age. Last year Aaratrika became friends with her and ever since she has been an integral part of our team helping us stay in touch with the developments in literature back home. On 21st February this year, the day we celebrate International Mother Language Day, Bhasha Dibosh in West Bengal, Sebanti was awarded the prestigious rookie award by the Bengali Sahitya Academy. **She sends us warm puja wishes** and is happy to share a poem from her book *Bangla Mam*, published in 2010.

বাংলা ভাষা

- সেবন্তী ঘোষ।

কেন ভাললাগে জানিনা
এই পছন্দের কফি জয়েন্টে
ফ্রুত ওঠা শীতের সকাল।
না দেখলেও বুঝতে পারছি
লেকের পাতা খসা রাস্তায়
কেউ কারুর জন্য অপেক্ষা করছে,
কেউ কাউকে ছেড়ে যাচ্ছে,
আর ঝড়ফুল পিষে
কেউ অবলীলায় কুয়াশায় মিশে যাচ্ছে।
কড়া কফীর স্বাদে কাফে মধুর,
বন্ধুদের মুখ থেকে ভেসে আসা আন্তর্জাতিকতায়
কেমন বেমানান এই ভার্নাকুলার,
যাকে আমরা এক সময়
বাংলা ভাষা বলতাম।।



Sebanti receiving Amita-Sunil Kumar Basu Pashchim Bangla Academy Puroshkar at Bangla Academy, Kolkata on 21st Feb 2011
From left third Nirendranath Chakravarty, Sunil Ganguly, extreme right Sebanti Ghosh

Bengali Language

Don't know why I love it

This favourite coffee joint

On a frothy winter morning.

Can't see but I can tell

On the lake's leaf strewn street

Someone is waiting for somebody,

Someone is leaving somebody,

And pounding fallen flowers

Someone mindlessly merges into mist.

The bitter coffee makes the café sweet

With friends spouting an international tongue.

What a misfit this vernacular

Bengali, as we called it once.

Translated by Lipika Sen & Debasmita Moulick

GREETINGS FROM EMAMI

Emami Limited was created in 1974, when two childhood friends Mr. R.S. Agarwal and Mr. R.S. Goenka set up a company based on the traditional wisdom of Ayurveda, but used modern manufacturing techniques to realise a vision of "making people healthy and beautiful, naturally". It has been a long journey during which Emami Ltd. has had many milestone achievements and diversified into over 25 brands. The focus has been retained throughout, and a combination of innovation based on a deep understanding of client demands, use of technology, maintaining quality of product and affordable pricing have made the brands – Boroplus, Fair and Handsome, Navratna, Sonachandi, Zandu household names in the country today. Emami is synonymous with natural beauty and health. Emami contributes whole-heartedly towards the environment and the society by investing in self-employment generation schemes for the rural youth viz. Emami Mobile Traders and Small Village Shops in West Bengal and adjoining states.

As we pray to Ma Durga for health, well being and protection, we are happy to enclose a festive message from the joint chairmen of Emami Group of Companies who have formed the empire that provides us with products made with pure and natural ingredients which we have grown to trust.



R.S. Goenka & R.S. Agarwal



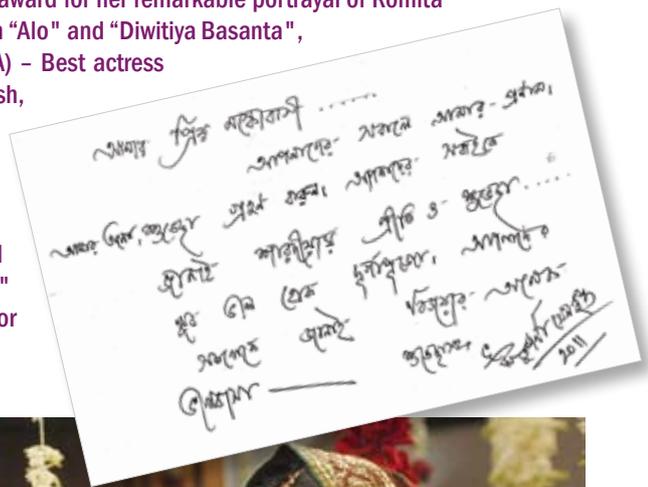
RITUPARNA SENGUPTA



She was in high school girl when director Prabhat Roy discovered her and she debuted with his film “Swet Patharer Thala”. She had already become a popular actress while graduating, performing gracefully in both commercial mainstream and parallel cinema. In 1998 she grabbed the National award for her remarkable portrayal of Romita in “Dahan”, and how can we forget her wonderful performance in “Alo” and “Diwitiya Basanta”, for which she won the Bengal Film Journalist Association (BFJA) – Best actress award. In Utsab, directed by the highly acclaimed Rituporno Ghosh, she played the character of Keya with tremendous honesty and earnestness while her soulful acting as Paramita, in Paramita’s Ekdin by the renowned director Aparna Sen is striking. Rituparna

is a trained dancer and enjoys choreographing dances with Tagore songs in a different way. She says “Rabindra Sangeet is our heritage and an integral part and parcel of our lives. The more we discover it, the more we’ll know it. It is too deep to know it.” She is the mother of two beautiful children and actively involved with a program for children suffering from Thalamssaemia.

She wishes the Indians in Moscow a very happy Durga puja!



GREETINGS FROM VIOLIN BROTHERS



Born into a family of classical musicians in Kolkata, the Violin Brothers, Debsankar and Jyotisanakar were introduced to Western classical music at a very young age. Later they continued their training and graduated from the Licentiate Trinity College of Music, London in 1986. Their CV would impress anyone for they were part of Satyajit Ray’s orchestra providing the background score for many of his movies and have also accompanied Pandit Ravi Shankar on his concerts. But perhaps the most coveted of them all is when they played for Zubin Mehta, the celebrated conductor of the New York Philharmonic and was applauded by the Maestro. For the past three years, Debsankar and Jyotisanakar have been mastering the nuances of Indian classical music under the guidance of Ustad Amjad Ali Khan. However, though their forte is in classical music, they have also made a name for themselves in other genres of music like pop and jazz. As very talented and able musicians, the brothers have performed in some remarkable musical venues throughout Europe, including at the Moscow Conservatory in August this year.

It was our honour to perform at the Moscow Conservatory. We look forward to visiting Moscow again. SHARODIYA SUVECCHA!



Violin Brothers performing at the Tagore festival hosted at Moscow Conservatory on 25th August 2011, commemorating the 150th birth anniversary. The programme was organized by Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Centre in conjunction with DISHA, an NGO focusing on Indo-Russian intercultural ties.

GREETINGS FROM INDIAN EXPRESS

Founded by late Ramnath Goenka on April 11, 1959, Express Publications Limited (Madurai), was formerly known as Indian Express. Following a corporate understanding among the family members pertaining to the erstwhile Indian Express group of companies, the South-based companies came to be known as The New Indian Express (TNIE), effective from December 1998 and is now owned by Manoj Kumar Sonthalia, the grandson of Ramnath Goenka.

The daily newspaper, TNIE, besides The New Sunday Express on Sundays, are published from 24 centres across India and distributed across four southern states and Orissa. Besides the group publishes newspapers and magazines in English, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada. In April, TNIE launched The Sunday Standard in Delhi.

With a circulation of over 1 million, TNIE is one of the fastest growing media houses in the country.

Varsha Gopinathan, sub-editor TNIE was pleasantly surprised to know that we have been celebrating Durga Puja for 21 years. She joined her team in sending us festive greetings.

Team New Indian Express wishes all readers of Aaratrika, Happy Durga Puja!



The New Indian Express office in Express Gardens, Chennai

GREETINGS FROM KABUL



At the MRRD, with the women staff discussing the Gender Policy



Rebecca third from left with the UN Staff, outside her office in Kabul

For the last 15 years I have been working on various gender and human rights concerns. In 2008, I landed in Afghanistan where I remain completely addicted to this harsh yet hospitable land. I started by assisting in the creation of the Institute for Gender Studies at Kabul University. Once seen as a centre of academic excellence in Asia, the University suffered through decades of war and is rebuilding itself. It has approximately 3000 female students who study and live there alongside their male colleagues. I also created a curriculum for a Masters programme in Gender Studies.

I started to work closely with women from the various provinces in Afghanistan. I joined UN Women and travelled across Afghanistan to Parwan, Herat, Mazar and Bamyán, working with shelter homes that have been set up for women. With the high rate of violence against women in Afghanistan, these homes offer much needed aid. The residents are young girls who have escaped forced marriages and domestic violence and receive counseling, medicine, education and learn new skills.

The future of these homes is very shaky given the lack of government support in spite of the fact that it knows that these women would have been killed if they had continued staying at 'home'. My research results are being used by various international aid agencies and national NGO.

Later, I was offered a job with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development in Afghanistan who seeks to elevate poverty through rural development.

The people I met are courageous men and women, who live from day to day in the hope that things will one day be 'normal' in this country that has suffered through 30 years of war. Generations of people, especially the young, have never known what peace is. Thankfully, there is hope and help and that is where my work comes in. At the end of the day, Afghans aspire for the very same things that we want for our own children anywhere else - education, work opportunities and respect.

Greetings to the Indian Community in Moscow!

Rebecca Eapen

LIFE IN MOSCOW

Young people from all over the world converge in Moscow with one hope - a better future for themselves and their loved ones. They study and work hard in a new and different environment from their own at home. And when time permits and opportunities present themselves, they seek out others like themselves, others who are 'alone' in a metropolitan. Our Durga Puja provides them with such an occasion - a place next to their home and school, where they meet in warm and safe surroundings, eat prasad and sing and dance at the cultural events. Here they forge new relationships and make themselves a family. Listen to these fresh voices, all different yet same...

Witty Mittal, an Indian studying medicine in PFUR, loves reading books, cooking, riding bikes and travelling. Favourite hangout in Moscow is in downtown TSUM. He dreams of joining The John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

Five years ago I first stepped on an unusual land full of different people - Moscow. In due course I grew and adapted to the circumstances, thereby making all the unusual stuff around me turned into usual. Having said that, I am still struggling to understand the Moscovite's approach to life.

Free-flowing vodka, chain-smoking, fashion-conscious citizens turning Moscow streets into a catwalk, endless late nightclub parties make me wonder how they still manage to remain so disciplined. They follow traffic rules, keep the city impeccably clean and do not vandalise. Here everyone knows how to work hard with diligence and responsibility, traits that are sadly lacking in my motherland.

Dev, a Guyanese medical student at PFUR, is a positive young man who enjoys travelling, exploring other cultures, and learning languages. Dev reads classical literature, plays chess and fond of Latin American food. His favourite hangout place - Dionis café at PFUR.

Life in Moscow has been a wonderful and life-changing experience. The study of the beautiful Russian language brought with it new understanding of a rich culture. However, in such a megapolis as Moscow, amid so many opportunities, it is easy to lose oneself and one's roots. During all these years, the annual Durga Puja for me has always been not only a heart-warming and refreshing event, but an opportunity to remember my roots. It is undoubtedly a beacon of light, guiding me not only from the dark, chilly streets of Moscow to the warmth of my homeland, but from the agony of separation from my loved ones to a heartfelt comfort in the Divine.

Deboprasad is an Indian medical student at PFUR. Born in Kolkata, Deboprasad is passionate about sports. He also reads and likes music. He hangs out with friends and enjoys food from different parts of the world. He aims to pursue a career in cardio-vascular surgery.

For a Bengali what can be more important than Durga Pujo? Growing up, the Mahalaya days were more about respite from school for ten good days and getting new clothes than anything else. As the years passed its significance gradually changed for me. Pujo is a symbol of victory of good over evil, a time when people forget hatred and forgive their enemies. At the Pujas I saw people from different walks of life, coming together with the same enthusiasm and devotion, be it an Indian or a Russian. I made friends quickly and since then, Moscow has never been a real stranger for me.



Vaibhav Mittal



Dev Persaud



Deboprosad Das





Karamjit Kumar Sewchurn

Kumar, a Mauritian student studying general medicine in PFUR, is always cheerful and optimistic, loves Chinese food especially chicken Haka noodles. Favourite hangout place in Moscow- Tsaritsino park. His dreams are the dreams of his mother and father who want him to become a good doctor.

I am a Medical student arriving in Moscow four years ago where I experienced discrimination of every kind. Bribery was what irked me the most. The language gap apparently worsened my situation. Nevertheless, I feel obliged to God who, in my most dire moments sent me exceptional friends who became part of my small family here in Moscow. The hardships here make us strong. Thanks to the Puja celebrations, I have managed to keep in touch with my roots and my faith in God. This is definitely one bright spot in my life and I await anxiously for this the rest of the year. **May Durga Ma shower happiness and delight on all of you ! JAI DURGA MAI KI !**



Jenny Tapia Lopez

Jenny, a social psychologist from Bolivia is doing her PhD in PFUR. Her favorite meals are Indian especially the sweets. Jenny's hobbies include Mehendi painting and Indian dance and her dream is to visit India and see the Taj Mahal.

My life in Moscow began with the study of the Russian language, which for me became the key to the world. I remember how on hearing the very first beats of Indian songs my heart beat would quicken. It was as if it had awakened from a dream. Inspired, I once even wrote a poem on India. The first time I attended the Durga Puja, I felt as if I had heard the melody of the mantras before. The only thing however is that there is no translation or explanation of the rituals for guests who may not be from India. But I nevertheless go every year with an understanding of the importance of communication with the Divine. For me Durga Puja is a celebration for the soul.

Collated by Agnibh Mukherjee

"AEROCOMFORT"

Wishes you Happy Dusshera!



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OUR DOCTORS FROM KOLKATA

REVISITING NOSTALGIA LANE...

Once upon a time, there were four young people studying medicine at Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University. During puja, they chopped fruits for the prasad, made dandelion garlands for the protima and performed in the evening cultural programmes. Curious, Aaratrika asked them what they had enjoyed about Moscow then and what they miss about it today. And here are the responses from Sumana, Medha, Trisha, Nabarun and Debasmita.

Dr. Sumana Ganguly

Sumana married in 2010 and today lives with her husband Santanu and in-laws in Kolkata. She works at the CNMC, Kolkata.

'I miss my friends, the colorful hostel life at Malaya Pirogovskaya, the starkly diverse Moscow weather from -35°C winter to +40°C in summer; the agony of putting on layers of clothings during winter and yes, the best of the lot is that I miss those free 3 second calls to India.

I enjoyed the late night addas with my buddies and the Durga Puja engagement. I still remember waking up early and taking a quick shower to reach the Puja Mandap on time. It was a family-like atmosphere which I missed so much while was on a tour to Nagaland last Puja. I really can't forget the Bijoya Dashami parties, they were so much fun!



Dr. Sumana Ganguly

Dr. Medha Mozumder

A 2010 medical graduate from Moscow, Medha now lives in Delhi with her parents and is preparing for different competitive exams in India.

'I loved my independence there! I miss the friends of different nationalities, the togetherness of Durga Puja, the 108 lamp aratis of the Sandhi puja. It was fun to see my friend Dinesh perform the Puja so seriously and later make fun of him back at the hostel. I enjoyed the learning experiences there... especially cooking. And yes, Thanks to the Bong crowd there, my Bengali improved a lot!'



Dr. Medha Mozumder

Dr. Trisha Banerjee

She is currently practicing in the Bankura District Hospital in West Bengal and is preparing to specialize in Gynaecology.

'I miss the hostel parties and the delicious food cooked by my friend Dinesh. I miss the weekend trips to the different malls on Tverskaya street and going for the long walks along the banks of the lake at Novo Devichiy's Monastery.

I really enjoyed the surprise birthday celebrations and the cake baked by my friends. It was simply Yummyyyy!'

Aaratrika wishes the young doctors all the very best and - 'We miss you lots!'



Dr. Trisha Banerjee

Dr. Nabarun Majumdar

Nabarun graduated from the same university in 2008. He was closely associated with the Durga Puja of Moscow. He is presently doing his residency at the M.R. Bangur Hospital at Kolkata.

The most I miss about Moscow is the independence I had, doing what I wanted, when I wanted. And, believe it or not, the bitter Moscow Winter!

I enjoyed in Moscow was the Durga pujo will always remind me of the impromptu cooking parties we had in the hostel'



Dr. Nabarun Majumdar

Dr. Debasmita Chattoraj

Debasmita graduated in 2010. She is married and practising now in the Chittaranjan National Medical College Hospital. She lives in Kolkata and fondly remembers the get-togethers with her old college friends.

'There are a lot of things I miss about Moscow - The snowfall, my hostel life and friends and the late night parties, Durga Puja and its awesome bhog, chatting with Maharaj and the Russian language.

What I do not miss are the grumpy old Babushkas and my strict hostel warden Yulya.

Happy Puja to all!

Collated by Dinesh Chakraborty



Debasmita with husband Srirup Chattaraj

Aaratrika wishes the young doctors all the very best and - 'We miss you lots!'

GREETINGS FROM DUBAI FROM THE DHARS...

Privet Everybody!

Remember the plump and bespectacled girl in Moscow? It's me, Anushka. I am away from Moscow but my heart is still there. In my free time now I am dancing, playing the piano, acting and taking part in debates. I love watching movies and one of my recent favourites is "Cars 2". **SUBHO BIJOYA TO ALL THE AARATRIKA READERS!**

I have started a new journey in Dubai with fond memories of Moscow. Initially it was a big shock for me to change my life from the cool, green, beautiful and historic Moscow to the hot, sandy, young and ultra modern Dubai. But in the heat and sand I found my new school - Dubai Modern High School. The school is a big and sprawling one with all the facilities to pursue my extracurricular activities. The friends here are trying their best to make it me feel at home. After school, I go back to my cosy villa with a huge garden and plenty of playgrounds. I am really feeling great here but I miss my favourite festival - Durga Puja. I miss the smell of incense sticks, the bhog and the tasty sweets. This year I will celebrate the Puja in Dubai but I will surely be not comfortable as all the faces will be that of strangers. I miss the familiar faces and my friends. But the change is a part of life and I need to keep exploring the wonders of Dubai ... my new abode.

*Best Wishes
Anushka*



Anushka Dhar



Abhijit, Shrabani, Dev and Neel

FROM THE ROYCHOWDHURYS...

Drasvuite sem, kak delo? **Would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy puja.**

I heard that you will be getting a new protima this year, which is great.

FROM RUPA BHATTASHALI IN HONG KONG

Sharodiyaar Abhinandan to all my dear friends in Moscow! Moscow's Durga Puja was a big part of my life for 10 years since the first Durga Puja was held on Soviet soil in 1990. I still have fond memories of that Puja. It was a lot of excitement and fun for us – the Students and lot of effort, hard work, and most importantly passion on part of the Or-



Durga Protima in HongKong

ganizers that made that Durga Puja in Moscow such a wonderful celebration. Over the years the whole Puja experience in Moscow has evolved. Many of the big and small things that we thought as crises or achievements during that first puja most probably seem quite hilarious now, especially in today's telecom environment, but I believe Moscovite Indians' need and love to stay connected with our culture on a foreign soil and to rejoice at our Indian-ness together as one family is the force that makes Durga Puja in Moscow such a celebration year after year since that first puja, and I am sure will be for many years to come. Oh how I miss the Durga Puja in Moscow!!!! I look forward to join in the celebration again someday – pairing warm sapagi and palto with a lal par saree on a cold Ashtami morning in Moscow – ready for offering Anjali.



Rupa, Arup and Aarushi in front of Forbidden city's wall in Beijing



CHUM RIP SOE FROM CAMBODIA

Pundari says – *Chum rip soe* (dras-vite in Khymer) from the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Kingdom of wonder. After freezing Russia where I cherished the amazing relationship with you all, now I am back to the place where I started my career – Asia. My company Telpha specilaizes in marketing & distribution of pharmaceutical & healthcare needs in ASEAN.

Have chosen Cambodia – to establish our organisation, headquartered in Phnompenh, we expanded our operations to Myanmar and Vietnam. We plan to expand to Malaysia also .

Cambodia – (Kampuchea) is one of the youngest population countries in the ASEAN and a growing tourist destination for its, blue-green beaches & temples (*preay vihar*- the heritage temple) & ANGKOR WAT – the kingdom of Temples. The movie of Angelina Jolie (Lara Croft- the tomb raider) was shot in these temples.

HELLO MY MOSCOW FRIENDS!

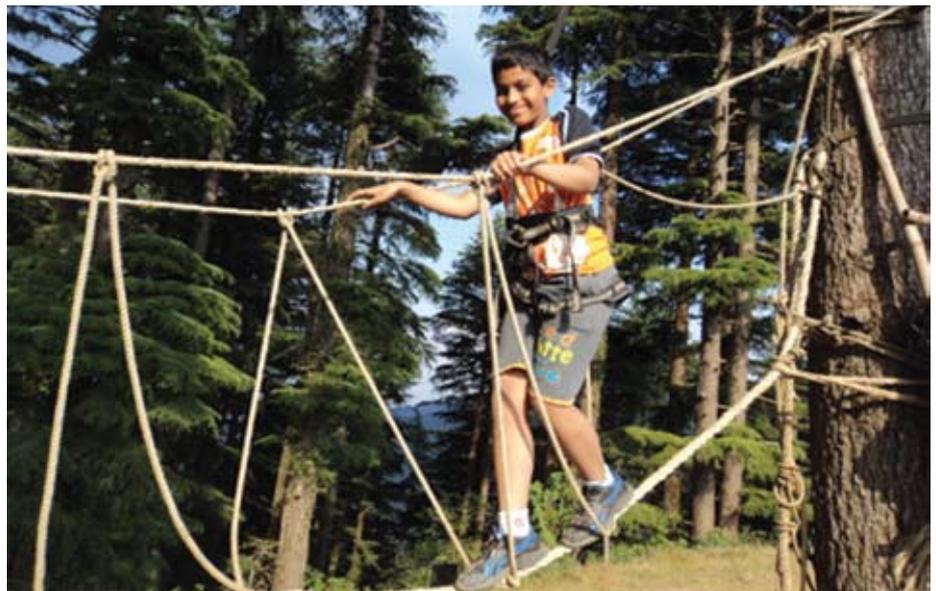


Adarsh with his Mother

Time to wish you all a very happy Durga Puja and a little update from me and my mom. We visited Dhanaulti, a hill

station 24 kms from Mussoorie which is situated at an altitude of 2286m in summer this year. We stayed at a camp doing all kinds of activites and then we went to Rishikesh for rafting. It was so much fun! My mom now works in Delhi with MTS, the Russian mobile operator and she visits me often in Mussoorie. She misses the gathering and fun of Durga Puja in Moscow.

*Adarsh Tripathi, Class 5
Wynberg-Allen School, Mussoorie*



Adarsh in Dhanaulti, this activity is called valley crossing

FROM MUKHERJIS WITH LOVE



Two years have gone by but Nupur & I are still very much heart & soul in Moscow. We miss all the excitement of the Durga puja & miss all our Moscow friends dearly.

One can say that, we are now quite settled back home. Pune is our home town. I have got back with all my school & university friends again. I am also busy doing some consultancy work which keeps me active & in touch with my Russian.

The festive season has started in Ma-

harashtra with the Ganesh Utsav. Huge pandals, clay idols, floral decorations & the beat of the drum marks the festive season spirit across this state. We also celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi in our housing complex with great enthusiasm. This reminds us of the excitement of the Moscow Durga Puja.

There has been addition to our family. We are now doting grandparents to our little Ria, who is only two years old and lives with her parents Shourabh and Do-

lon in New Jersey. We make it a point to meet at least once a year.

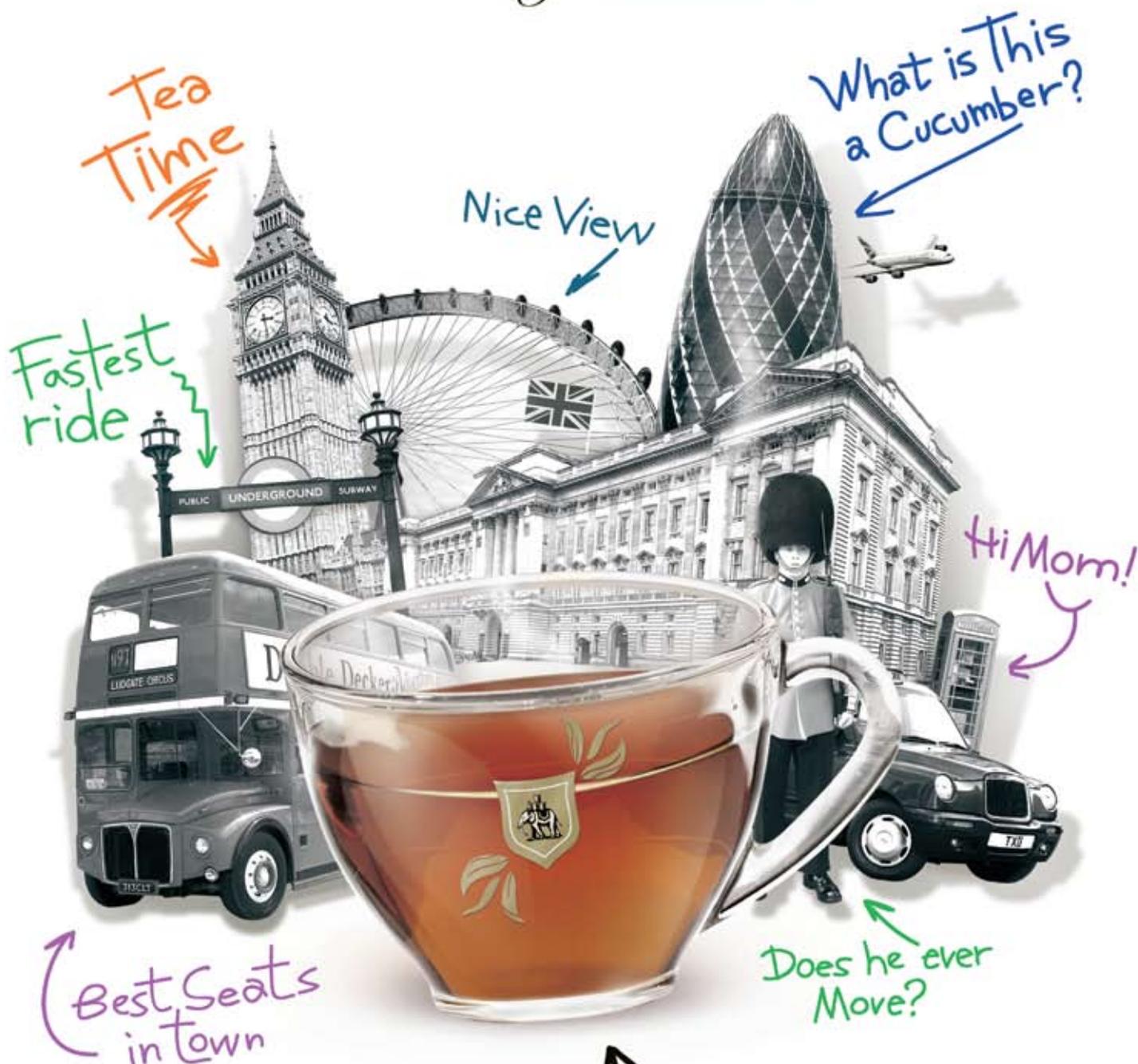
Our younger son, Sujoy is now married to Rolane, a citizen of Philippines. She is very fond of India & wants to be in India, more than anywhere else. We are blessed with two very loving daughter-in-laws.

In our spare time we read books, go for movies, web chat, and watch serials & travel. And there are always friends to call on or they visiting us.

Puja Greetings to you all!

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SIGHTS OF INDIA



Mark Levitin – photographer, adores India and loves to photograph the Himalayas. He spends few months every year in India. Mark feels India is a photographer's delight. Here he shares some of his unique shots with us. The details in his photographs are amazing.



Mr. Pechnikov acting as the uncle

KAMALA

On 9th July this year, Vijay Tendulkar's play 'Kamala' was staged in Russian at the Ershov Theatrical Institute in Moscow. The play was directed by Padma Shree Pechnikov Genady Mikhailovich, the popular Russian actor known for his role as Ramachandra in Russian Ramayana.

The play, an assignment of the fourth year students was translated from Marathi to Russian by T.G. Pechnikova . Genady Mikhailovich shared with Aaratrika his delight and satisfaction at the event. He is extremely fond of Tendulkar's work and the plot of Kamala in particular is very close to his heart.

He wishes the readers of Aaratrika a very cheerful festive season.



Vijay Tendulkar
- playwright
(1928 - 2008)



Scenes from 'Kamala'

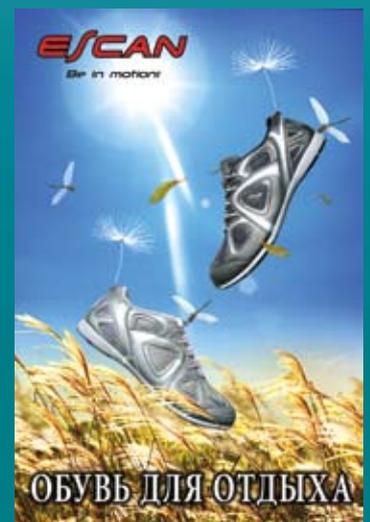


Friendship by Snigdha, Class 10, EOI

*Wishing all a Very Happy
Durga Puja and Dusshera
from Sanjay Yadav & Family!*



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THE THEORY OF DURGA PUJA



Dinesh Chakraborty graduated from Sechenov Moscow Medical University in summer this year.

Durga Puja was traditionally celebrated in the month of Chaitra, the first month in the national civil calendar of India, and it was known as Basanti Puja. But the historical endeavor of Raja Kangsha Narayan, conforming to the theory of Akal Bodhon, as propounded by Krittibas Ojha, in his Bengali version of Valmiki's Ramayan, led to the beginning of Durga Puja during the season of Sarat or autumn. Akal Bodhon denotes the worship of Devi Durga by Sri Ram Chandra before the victory over and killing of Ravana, the demon king.

Now, many of you must be wondering about what the various rituals that the Hindu priests perform during the Puja mean! This year we decided to give you a brief insight into the philosophical interpretation of what we see and do during the puja!

Durga Puja is celebrated for nine consecutive days after the Amavasya (New Moon), which we generally call the Mahalaya. The Bengalis, though, prefer to celebrate the last 5 days of the Navaratri, beginning from Sasthi spanning till the end of Vijaya Dashami, marking the victory of good over evil!

On the Sixth day or Sasthi, the Goddess is worshipped in the form of a Child appearing within the branches of a 'Bel' or wood apple tree as the Mythologies of the Puranas state. The 'Bodhan' or the waking up ceremony is performed at the auspicious 'tithi' or time. It signifies the arousal of all the positive energy of nature after the showers of the Monsoon has heralded the advent of new life force on earth after the dry and arid wrath of the summer sun. The rituals following are the "Adhivaas" and "Amantran", or reception and a formal invitation to the Goddess to arrive and be worshipped for the benefit of all.

Durga as we know her is not just the Ten-handed gorgeous demon-slayer. The tantras describe her as the Energy that flows through the Universe and sustains all life and activity. She is actually the energy present within all of us as what we call Life. This lucidly flowing energy is represented as the water present within the 'Kalash' or pitcher placed before the idol of Durga. The Kalash here represents Mother Earth as the container of fertility. The water within it, into which the spirit of the Goddess is invoked, as the Life-giver energy. The leaves represent life and the fruit on top of the Kalash meaning Divine consciousness. Symbolically, suggesting that the worship of Mother Goddess during Durga Puja is a sort of thanksgiving to Nature. The idol is actually a symbolization for us to imagine the magnanimity of the Goddess and her near human form helps us relate to her.

In traditional Durga Puja, Goddess Durga is worshipped in the form of nine plants (Navapatrika) which is wrapped in a red sari. This is placed in an earthen pot called 'Purna Ghata.' This ritual is known as Kalasa Sthapana or Ghata Sthapana. This is also believed to be the oldest ritual associated with Goddess Durga. The Pot is today placed before the idol of the Goddess on a Yantra. The Ghata or pot symbolizes Durga or her creative power and is closely associated with fertility. The nine plants placed in the Purna Ghata are – plantain, turmeric, barley, bilva or bel, ashoka, pomegranate, paddy, Kachvi and Mana. The nine plants symbolically represent 'navadurga' – nine forms of Durga.

During pujas and worship, the priest use waters from holy rivers to anoint

the Purna Kalash and the plants. Other important items used in anointing the Goddess are sugarcane juice, sesame oil, different types of soils and mud dug up using the horn of elephant or boar or bull etc and from various places on earth including that from the front of the house of a prostitute; various metals and gem-stones. This signifies that the Goddess is not confined within the reaches of only a privileged few, but is omnipresent and is a part and parcel of Nature herself.

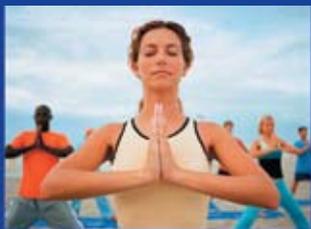
The Priest performing the rituals need to follow a strict code of discipline during the Navaratri or the 9 Holy Nights of Durga Puja. They are required to remain pure in Body, Mind and Soul. During the Puja, he also needs to invoke the Goddess within his material body, signifying that the purity within him purifies all his actions.

On the Physical Plane all the Sacred Mantras and prayers chanted create an atmosphere of sacred feelings and vibrations and add to the sanctity to the whole environment. In Hinduism, the Puja is seen as a communion with the divine. It has many layers and levels. At the highest level it is suggestive of the symbolic offering of our lives and activities to the Divine and receive blessings. At the end we also receive the Prasad which is infused with positive energy.

'Prasad' is the food that is offered to God in a typical Hindu ritual worship or Puja. It is our ignorance ('avidya') which we offer to the deity in a Puja. The food symbolically stands for our ignorant consciousness, which we place before god for spiritual enlightenment. After it is suffused with knowledge and light and breathes a new life into our bodies, it makes us divine. When we share the prasad with others, we share the knowledge we thus gained with fellow beings.



The making of Maa Durga by clay artisans



ପ୍ରତ୍ୟହ = ପଦକ୍ଷୁପ୍ତତାବିତ ନିଃସଂଲଗ୍ନତା
 ବିପ୍ରାଧାୟକ = ପଦକ୍ଷୁପ୍ତତାବିତ ଶତାଧିକାରୀ



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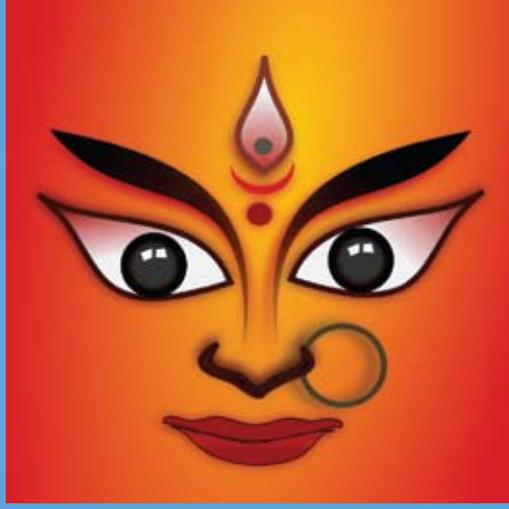
**Om JataJutasamayuktam Arhendu-kritashekharam,
 LochanatrayaSanyuktam Purnendu-Sadrusannam;
 Taptakanchana-Varnabhyang Supratisthang
 Sulochanam,
 Navayouvansampannang Sarbavarānabhusitam;
 Sucharu Dashanang tikshnang pinnonata
 payodhram,
 Tribhanga-Snana-Sansthanang
 Mahisasuramardinim;
 Mrinalayat-Sansparsa-Dasabahusamanvitam,
 Trishulang Dakshine Dhyeyang Khadgang
 Chakrang Kramadasah;
 Tikshnabanang Tatha Sakting Bahu-Sanghesu
 Sangatam,
 Khetakang Purnachapancha Pasankushamurdhatah;
 Ghantang va Parastung vapi vamehadhah
 Pratiyojayet,
 Adhastanmahishang Tadwad Dwisiraskwang
 Pradarsayet;
 Shiraaschedodbbhavang Tadwaddanabang
 Khadgapaninam,
 Hridi Shulena Nirvinnang Nirjadantra-Bibhusitam;
 Raktaraktikritangancha Raktabisphuritekshanam,
 Besthitang Nagapashena Bhrukuti Kutilaananam;
 Apashabasahastena Dhrutekeshancho Durgaya,
 Bamadrudhirabaktrancha devyahah Singhang
 Pradarsayet;
 Devyastu Dakshinang Padang Samang
 Singhoparisthitam,
 Kinchidurddhang Tatha Bamamangusthang
 Mahisopari;
 Stuyamanancha Tadrupa-Mamaraih Sannibesayet,
 Ugrachanda Prachanda Cha Chandogra
 Chandanayika;
 Chanda Chandabatichaiba ChandarupatiChandika,
 Aabhih ShaktiviraSthabhih Satatang
 Parivesthitaam;
 Chintayet Satatang Deving
 DharmaKamarthaMokshadam;**



English Translation:

With matted locks of hair,
 Crescent on her forehead,
 And three bright eyes,
 She looks like the full moon;
 Her molten-gold complexion,
 Her beautiful and calm eyes,
 Adorned with all ornaments,
 She looks primely youthful.
 Her teeth beautifully arranged,
 Her bosom beautiful,
 Her thrice bent posture,
 We pray to that Mahisasuramardini;
 Her ten hands resemble lotus stems,
 On Her We meditate,
 Trident Sword, Sheldrake and arrow,
 Adorn her right hands.
 With mace, purnachap, rope, goad and
 gong,
 In her left hands,
 The Mahish cut into two,
 Lies beneath her feet;
 The weaponed demon,
 Whom she beheads;
 The trident piercing his heart,
 Tearing him apart;
 Blood flowing everywhere,
 He with his blood-red eyes,
 With Nagapasha him she binds,
 Intense anger in his sight;
 With rope in her left hand,
 She holds him by its hair,
 Blood flowing from his mouth,
 Lies the lion beneath;
 Her right foot,
 On the lion rests,
 With fingers of the left foot,
 On Mahisasura she stands;
 To this form of Hers,
 The Gods pray and sing;
 Ugrachanda, Prachanda,
 Chandagra, Chandanayika,
 Chanda, Chandabati,
 Chandarupa and Chandika,
 The eight shaktis,
 They surround Her.
 The giver of Dharma, Artha,
 Kama and Moksha,
 We meditate on Her.

Illustration by Darpan Mondal



सर्वमंगलमांगल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थसाधिके ।
शरण्ये त्र्यंबके गौरी नारायणी नमोऽस्तुते ॥

*Wishing all a Very Happy
Durga Puja and Dusshera!*



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REMEMBERING MALLIKA SENGUPTA



Mallika Sengupta

An eminent poet and a feminist. Head of the Department of Sociology in Maharani Kasiswari College, which is affiliated to the University of Calcutta. Over twenty of her books have been published and many of her works has been translated. She was an active participant at international literary events and was the editor of the poetry section in Sananda, the Bengali fortnightly magazine. Along with her husband Subodh Sarkar, who is a well known poet, she founded Bhashanagar, a magazine on culture. Apart from teaching, writing and editing she actively participated in the cause of gender justice and other social issues. She began her journey as a poet in 1983, her first poetry book is called Challish Chander Ayu published by Virus publication. Her other notable books include Ami Sindhur Meye, Ardhek Prithivi, Meyeder Aa Aaa Ka Kha, Kathamanabi.

Last year we introduced Aaratrika to Mallikadi and she had gladly agreed to write for us.

We love her and shall miss her always.

মল্লিকা সেনগুপ্ত :

হাত কাঁপেনি তার মার্কস কে প্রশ্ন করতে। কাঁপেনি কণ্ঠ তার বলতে সেই না বলা প্রতিটি অবহেলিত নারীর কথা। বরং আগুন কণ্ঠে প্রতিবাদ করেছেন, এই নারীবাদী কবির কবিতা গেঁথে রয়েছে প্রতিটা নারীর মনে। ছেলে কে ইতিহাস পড়াতে গিয়েও তার মনে নাড়া দিয়ে গেছে সে যুগের নারীদের অসহায়তার কথা, তার রচিত “কার্তমানাবী” বই তে উঠে এসেছে সেই কথা। “মেয়েদের অ, আ, ক, খ” তে তিনি বারংবার বিঁধেছেন পুরুষগ্রাস্ত্রী এই সমাজ কে। “আমি সিন্ধুর মেয়ে”, “অর্ধেক পৃথিবী” এই সকল বই তেই খুঁজে পাওয়া যায় তার কলমের স-শব্দ প্রতিবাদ।

আপনি বলুন, মার্কস

–মল্লিকা সেনগুপ্ত

ছড়া যে বানিয়েছিল, কাঁথা বুনেছিল
দ্রাবিড় যে মেয়ে এশে গম্বোনা শুরু করেছিল
আর্থপুরুষের ক্ষেত্রে, যে লালন করেছিল সিন্ধু
সে যদি শ্রমিক নয়, শ্রম কাকে বলে?

আপনি বলুন মার্কস, কে শ্রমিক, কে শ্রমিক নয়
নতুনযন্ত্রের যারা মাসমাইনের কারিগর
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সেই শ্রমিকগৃহিনী
প্রতিদিন জল তোলে, ঘর মোছে, খাবার বানায়
হাড়ভাঙ্গা খাটুনির শেষে রাত হলে
ছেলেকে পিড়ি দিয়ে বসে বসে কাঁদে
সেও কি শ্রমিক নয় !
আপনি বলুন, মার্কস, শ্রম কাকে বলে !

গৃহশ্রমে মজুরী হয়না বলে মেয়েগুলি শুধু
ঘরে বসে বিপ্লবীর ভাত রোধে দেবে
আর কমরেড সুধু জারা হাতে কাস্তে হাতুড়ি !
আপনাকে মানায় না এই অবিচার

কখনো বিপ্লব হলে
পৃথিবীতে স্বর্গরাজ্য হবে
শ্রেণীহীন রাষ্ট্রহীন আলোকপৃথিবীর সেই দেশে
আপনি বলুন মার্কস, মেয়েরা কি বিপ্লবের সেবাদাসী
হবে?

ভাষা

–মল্লিকা সেনগুপ্ত

শতাব্দী আসে শতাব্দী যায়
মধ্যস্থানের মানুষ আমরা
সাঁকোর ওপর আশায় আশায়

শেষ হয়ে এল একশ বছর
বিশ্ববাতাসের রণরক্তের
আসছে নতুন শতাব্দী ভোর।

মিষ্টি নোনতা টক ঝাল তেতো
আসছে নতুন একটি প্রজাতি
ভারত বাংলায় কথা বলবে তো?

আমরা এখন পুরনো পৃথিবী
পাউন্ড শিলিং লিরা পেসো টাকা
ইউরো মুদ্রা নতুন শিবির।

আমরা দোষের আমরা ক্রটির
দুই হাত দিয়ে আগলে রেখেছি
বাংলা ভাষার দুঃখ কুটির।

শতাব্দী আসে শতাব্দী যায়
না হয় পৃথিবী পারমাণবিক
আমরা থাকব বাংলা ভাষায়।



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শখ সব কিছুরই ইলেকট্রন, প্রোটন,
নিউট্রন, মা, আর পাপা-র হাসি। মা
এর হাতে রান্না করা শুক, এর জন্য
সব ছাড়তে রাজি।

Porijayi Pakhi - A Buddhadeb Guha's
admirer, in love with computers!
A dreamer & 'dream comes true'
believer, loves to sing and enjoys
the enigma of life. And of course a
proud Halisahar-ian.



তোর...

তোর..

একটা আউটলুক যেটা কোনদিন
কাজ করেনা..

একটা ফোন যেটাতে..
ব্যালান্স থাকেনা..

একটা হাত-ঘড়ি যেটাতে..
আমার জন্য সময় থাকেনা..

এক মুঠো চাল, যা আর কোনদিন..
রান্না হবেনা..

একটা ঘর যেখানে আর..
ভালোবাসা থাকেনা..

বিশ্বাস কর...

একদিন সব থাকবে..
চাল ফুঁটবে.. ভাত হবে..
আউটলুক কাজ করবে..
একরাশ ভালোবাসা নিয়ে,
ঘড়ি ধরে.. ফোন করার
সময় ফুরবেনা..

সেদিন শুধু পথ চেয়ে থাকা বন্ধু টা থাকবেনা..
আর, সত্যি থাকবেনা..
~পরিযায়ী পাখি ~

অ-প্রাপ্তি..

ওকে বোধহয় না পাওয়ার চেষ্টা করলেই পাওয়া চেষ্টা করলেই..

বোধহয় না ছোঁয়ার চেষ্টা করলেই করলেই যায় ছোঁয়া..

নীল আকাশে কালো চাদর টেনে,, সেই আবার একরাশ আঁকি-বুকি কাটা!

মাথা মনের দ্বন্ধ টা আজও দগদগে রয়ে যায়..

আর শরীর... অশরীরতার লোভে..

মেঘ মেদুরতার হাতছানি তে হারায়..

~~পরিযায়ী পাখি~~

ফিরে আয়...

একদিন চেয়ার টা খালি থাকবে..

থাকবে খালি বিছানা টাও...

আমার হেলান দেওয়া সেই দেওয়াল..

অগোছালো ডেস্ক..

গিস্তরুতায় তুমি শুনবে...

না শুনতে চাওয়া আমার সেই গান,..

একদিন শূন্যতায় ডুকরে উঠবে তোমার দু-চোখ...

সাথে যন্ত্রনার এক গভীর নিশ্বাস..

খান-খান গিস্তরুতায়,

হাজার আটকেয় একদিন তুমি বলবে..

ফিরে আয়...

~~পরিযায়ী পাখি~~



JAI MAA DURGA

FAMILIES OF SIMFERO 7A, MOSCOW,
WISHES YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY
DURGA PUJA AND DUSHERA !



FROM:

PRABIR DAS	& FAMILY
KAUSHLENDRA JHA	& FAMILY
SANJEEV BHAT	& FAMILY
ANAND PUROHIT	& FAMILY
AJAY SHARMA	& FAMILY
PANKAJ RAI	& FAMILY
PANKAJ AGRAWAL	& FAMILY
ALOKE AGARWAL	& FAMILY
PRASHAANT SHARMA	& FAMILY
ASHISH KOUL	& FAMILY
SURENDRA DAGA	& FAMILY
AJAY GUPTA	& FAMILY
ANUPAM JAIN	& FAMILY

রবীন্দ্র ভাবনায় শিশু



Hiren Dasgupta

Dr. Hitangshu Kumar Dasgupta (Bishuda) is one of the founder member of our Puja committee. Here, he shares with us, a writing of his brother Hiren Dasgupta who writes about Tagore's philosophy of education and his tutoring model for children. Born in North Kolkata in 1930, Hirenbabu has been actively associated with the Communist Party of India since 1949. He was General Secretary and President of Bangiya Pradeshik Chatro Federation, was General Secretary of Nikhil Bharat Chatro Federation and he excelled in a post like General Secretary of Sara Bharat Yuva Sangha. While being attached with the Student Movement, he got acquainted with the Student and Youth Movement of Latin America, Cuba and many other countries of Europe, Asia and Africa. His current occupation and passion are writing and studying politics. Three of his books have been published.



হিরেন দাশগুপ্ত

১৯৩০ সালে উত্তর কলকাতা-য় জন্মগ্রহণ করেন, ১৯৪৯ সাল থেকে দীর্ঘদিন কমিউনিস্ট পার্টি-র কর্মী ছিলেন। বঙ্গীয় প্রাদেশিক ছাত্র ফেডারেশানের সাধারণ সম্পাদক ও সভাপতি, নিখিল ভারত ছাত্র ফেডারেশানের সাধারণ সম্পাদক ও সারা ভারত যুব সঙ্ঘের সম্পাদকের মত দায়িত্বপূর্ণ পদে দীর্ঘদিন কাজ করেছেন, ছাত্র আন্দলনের সাথে যুক্ত থাকা কালীন, ল্যাটিন অ্যামেরিকার কিউবা সহ ইউরোপ, এশিয়া, আফ্রিকার নানা দেশের ছাত্র-যুব ও কমিউনিস্ট আন্দলনের সাথে পরিচিত হওয়ার সুযোগ পেয়েছেন। বর্তমানে তার পেশা এবং নেশা, রাজনীতি বিষয়ে পড়া ও লেখা। প্রকাশিত গ্রন্থ: দ্বার দশকের ভাবনা (১৯৯২), আমাদের শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থা (১৯৯৯) এবং লেখক হরিনারায়ন অধিকারী সহকারে, ভারতীয় উপমহাদেশের ছাত্র আন্দলনের ইতিহাস (১৯৯৫)।

রবীন্দ্রনাথের জন্মের ১৫০ বছর উপলক্ষ করে নানা ধরনের অনুষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে তা পালিত হচ্ছে। তবে লক্ষণীয় আজকের বিশ্বে বিশেষ করে আমাদের দেশে তাঁর চিন্তা ভাবনা, জীবন দর্শন, কার্যকলাপের প্রাসঙ্গিকতা এবং তার সার্থক রূপায়নের জন্য আমাদের ইতি কর্তব্য সম্পর্কে বিশেষ কোন আলোচনা বা কার্যক্রম চোখে পড়েনা। যাই হোক দু'চার কথায় রবীন্দ্রনাথ দেশের ভবিষ্যত ও সবার আদরের শিশু জগতের কথা কি ভাবতেন, তাদের জীবন কেমন হবে, যার পথ ধরে তারা অগ্রসর হবে -- এই সম্পর্কে কি ভাবতেন, কি করেছেন, সেই কথা এই অতি স্বল্প পরিসরে বলার চেষ্টা করব, তার থেকে হযত বর্তমানে তাঁর ঐ চিন্তাভাবনা কার্যাবলীর আজকের কোন প্রাসঙ্গিকতা খুঁজে পাব।

আমাদের দেশ ১৯০ বছর ইংরাজদের অধীন ছিল। জীবনের কোন ক্ষেত্রেই ধনী ও সাম্রাজ্যবাদী শাসনের সমর্থক ছাড়া অন্য কোন স্বরে মানুষের জীবনের মূল্যই স্বীকৃত ছিল না। শ্রমজীবী মানুষ সে যে শ্রেণীরই হোক না কেন তাদের শোষণ ও বঞ্চনাই ছিল একমাত্র প্রাপ্য। এই অবস্থার মধ্যেই এক উল্লত জাতীয় সংস্কৃতি গড়ে তোলার অন্যতম রূপকার রবীন্দ্রনাথ, একথা বলাই বাহুল্য। সকলের জন্য স্বাধীন উল্লত জীবনের যে দর্শন রবীন্দ্রনাথ তুলে ধরবার চেষ্টা করেছেন, তার রূপায়নে যে শিক্ষাচিন্তা রূপায়িত করতে সচেষ্ট ছিলেন, তার নিরিখে দেখলেই শিশু জগতের প্রতি তার এক অনবদ্য ভালবাসা তাদের মানুষের মত মানুষ করে তোলবার জন্য যে চেষ্টা তা অতুলনীয়। শিশুদের তিনি দেখতে চেয়েছেন প্রকৃতির কোলে স্বাভাবিক সঞ্চারি, বাধাবন্ধনহীন, পারিপার্শ্বিক অবস্থার স্বাধীন পর্যবেক্ষক হিসাবে। অপরিমিত ভালবাসায় শিশু, কিশোর মনের অভ্যন্তরে যেতে চেয়েছেন। একদিকে যেমন প্রত্যাশা করেছেন তারা হোক নির্ভিক, আদর্শ, কর্তব্যনিষ্ঠ, তার বীরপুরুষ কবিতায় তারই প্রতিধ্বনি শুনতে পাই। এই স্বল্প পরিসরে কবিতাটির উদ্ধৃতি দেওয়া সম্ভব হল না। তিনি অনুধাবন করতেন যে শিশুমনের উপযোগী হয়ে তার মত তার জগতকে বোঝান। তাই দেখি লেখাপড়া করতে না চাওয়া ছেলেটিকে একটু বুঝিয়ে বলার অনুরোধ জানালে কবি বলতে পারেন ছেলেটি যে গুবরে পোকাটি ধরে এনে পরম মমতায় তাকে পোষে, তাকে গোরবগুটি এনে খাওয়ায় তার সঙ্গে কথা বলে। তাদের মধ্যে যে প্রাকৃতিক বন্ধন তাকে বলার যে ভাষা তা কবির নেই। একথায় শিশুমন আমরা বুঝি না বলেই তাদের পূর্ণতা আনতে আমরা প্রায়ই ব্যর্থ হই। সঠিক ভাবে

রবীন্দ্রনাথের শিশুপ্রেম তাদের প্রতি ভালবাসা কর্তব্যবোধ বুঝতে গেলে তার শিক্ষা চিন্তা ও দর্শনকে বুঝতে হবে। এখানে তার শিক্ষাচিন্তার সার্বিক আলোচনায় না গিয়ে তার শিশুশিক্ষা পদ্ধতি, তার দর্শন, তার আঙ্গিক সম্পর্কে আমাদের ধারণা থাকা দরকার।

রুশো, মাদাম মন্টেসরি এদের শিক্ষাচিন্তার সঙ্গে রবীন্দ্রনাথের শিক্ষা চিন্তার একটা মিল আমরা খুঁজে পাই। রবীন্দ্রনাথের ধারণায় শিশুর বিকাশ ঘটবে প্রাকৃতিক পরিবেশের মধ্যে স্বাধীন বন্ধনহীনভাবে। শান্তিনিকেতনে শিশুদের জন্য যে শিক্ষায়তন সেখানে ছিল না জ্ঞানগর্ভ পুস্তকের ওজন। ক্লাস বসত গাছের তলায়, ছেলেদের শুধু পা শিশির ভেজা ঘাসের থেকে যেন বিচ্ছিন্ন না হয়ে পরে। পরীক্ষার সময় প্রশ্নপত্র বই খাতা সব নিয়ে যার যেখানে খুশি গাছের ডালে অথবা খোয়াইএর পাশে বসে ইচ্ছ মত বইখাতা নেড়েচেড়ে উত্তর তৈরী করবে। আর এর মধ্যে দিয়েই গড়ে উঠবে সৃজনশীলতা ও সৃষ্টির আনন্দ। রবীন্দ্রনাথ বলতেন বই দেখে টোকা আর মুখস্থ লেখা তার মধ্যে কোনো প্রভেদ নেই। তিনি প্রকৃতিকেই শিশুদের গড়ে ওঠবার প্রধান উপাদান মনে করতেন। তার পরিচয় পাই তিন খন্ডে লেখা সহজপাঠে। সেখানে গাছ, জঙ্গল, নদীতে ছেলেদের হটোপুটি করে স্নান আর তার পাশে তাদের পাশের মানুষের জীবনধারার ছবি। এই শিক্ষা তিনি বিশ্বাস করতেন একমাত্র মাতৃভাষার মাধ্যমে শিশু সফলভাবে গ্রহণ করতে পারে। এই চিন্তা দর্শনই তাঁকে এক অনবদ্য শিশু প্রেমিক মানুষে পরিণত করেছিল। তাঁর কাছে শিশুদের ছিল অবাধ গতি, তারই প্রভাবে প্রভাবিত তাঁর ভ্রাতুষ্পুত্র অবনীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুরের হাতে সৃষ্টি হয়েছে অনবদ্য শিশু-সাহিত্য। স্থানাভাবে অনেককিছু বলার থাকলেও বলা গেল না। খালি একটা কথা বলেই শেষ করব এই শিশু-চিন্তার যে দর্শন যে কথা আমাদের বলতে চায় শিক্ষায় কোনো শ্রেণীবিভাগ নেই, মাতৃভাষা ছাড়া শিক্ষালাভের বিকল্প হয় না, শিক্ষা সভ্যতাকে এগিয়ে নিয়ে যাবার চাবিকাঠি। যে চাবিকাঠি পরবর্তী প্রজন্মের হাতে তুলে দেবার মানসিকতা নিয়েই শিশু হবে কিশোর, কিশোর হবে যুবক, যৌবনের পথ বেয়ে আসবে বিদ্যাসাগর, রবীন্দ্রনাথ।

এই দর্শন আজ বাজার অর্থনীতির আক্রমণে বিধ্বস্ত। এর বিরুদ্ধে সংগ্রাম রবীন্দ্রনাথের সার্থকতবর্ষকে প্রাসঙ্গিক ফলপ্রসূ করতে পারে, তা না হলে ধর্মীয় ভগবান পূজার বেলেপ্পানায় আমরা দেখব এবং হতাশা থেকে অধিকতর হতাশার গর্ভে নিমজ্জিত হব।

INSTRUCTION MANUEL FOR BENGALI CUISINE

Earlier this year Aaratrika apparently reconnected two childhood friends after a gap of over 25 years! Gora with his childhood friend Ratul. Ratul Bandyopadhyay, the author of this text happened to leaf through Aaratrika and noticed Debashish Sengupta his long lost friend. He writes about the intricacies of Bengali cuisine.



বাঙালি যে ভোজন-রসিক সে কথা সকলেরই জানা। আর কলকাতার বৃক্কে রেস্টোরাঁগুলোর দিকে তাকালেও ভোজন প্রিয় বাঙালির রসিকচিত্তের পরিচয় পাওয়া যায়। ভারতের উত্তর-দক্ষিণ-পূর্ব-পশ্চিম সবদিকে খাদ্যই যেমন সেখানে ঠাই পেয়েছে, তেমনি আন্তর্জাতিক খাবার গুলো ও জাঁকিয়ে বসেছে কলকাতার এঁদো গলিতেও। এর পাশাপাশি যাবার আন্তর্জাতিক রেস্টোরাঁগুলি তো বাঙালি খাদ্যের বিশেষ কদর রয়েছে। পত্র-পত্রিকার পাতা গুলোও এর থেকে দূরে সরে নেই। একালে বঙ্গললনার পাকশালা উঠে এসেছে পত্রিকার পাতায়—রন্ধন এখন সত্যিসত্যিই একটি পরিপূর্ণ শিল্পমাধ্যম হিসেবে বিবেচিত হতে পারে। তবে বাঙালির এই রন্ধনপ্রিয়তা আজকের নয়, বলা যায় ঐতিহ্যানুসারী। আজ থেকে পাঁচ-ছ'শো বছর আগেকার প্রাচীন ও মধ্যযুগের বাংলা সাহিত্য তার প্রমাণ দেবে। দেখা যাক সেকালের বাঙালির রন্ধনপ্রিয়তা ও ভজন বিলাসের ছবি।

খাওয়া-দাওয়ার ক্ষেত্রে বাঙালির প্রবাদই রয়েছে—বাসনার সেরা বাসা রসনায়। খ্রিস্টীয় চতুর্দশ-পঞ্চদশ শতাব্দীতে প্রকৃতপঙ্গল নামে এক গ্রন্থ সংকলিত হয়েছিল। তাতে বিভিন্ন বিষয়ের কতগুলি গান আর কবিতা পাওয়া যায় অপভ্রংশ অবহট্ট ভাষায় লেখা। সেখানকার একটি কবিতায় এক ভোজনরসিকের মেনু উদ্ধৃত করা হয়েছে:

ওগগর ভতা
রন্ধঅ পতা
গাইক ঘিতা
দুক্ষ সজুতা
মোইনি মচ্ছা
নালিচ গচ্ছা
দিঙ্কই কন্তা
খাই পুনবন্তা।

অসাধারণ খাওয়া-দাওয়া--- ওগগর ভতা অর্থাৎ ওগরা (বিশেষ একরকম ধান) ভাত, কলার পাতা, গাওয়া ঘি, জুতসই দুধ, ময়না মাছ, আর নালিচ গচ্ছা অর্থাৎ পাত শাক। ভাবতেই জিভে জল আসার কথা। কিন্তু প্রাকৃত পঙ্গলের এই কবিতার কবিতাও কম রসিক নন। এতসব খাওয়া দাওয়ার আসল রস কোথায় লুকিয়ে আছে তা বলেছেন কবিতার শেষ দুই ছন্দে--
দিঙ্কই কন্তা/খাই পুনবন্তা। অর্থাৎ কান্তা রেঁধে দেয় আর পুণ্যবান খেতে পায়।

ভোজনরসিক ছিল মুকুন্দ চক্রবর্তীর চণ্ডীমঙ্গলের কালকেতুও। কবি কালকেতুর খাওয়া-দাওয়ার একটা ছবি তার চণ্ডীমঙ্গলে উপস্থিত করেছেন। ক্ষুধার্ত ব্যাধ কালকেতু ঘরে ফিরে আসছে। দূর থেকে তার আগমনের সারা পেয়েই স্ত্রী ফুল্লরা হরিনের ছড় পেতে কালকেতুর ভোজনের আয়োজন করেছে। কালকেতু এসে খেতে বসল যথার্থ বীর ভোজন রসিকের মতো--

মোচড়িয়া গোঁফদুটা বাঙ্কিলেন ঘাড়ে
এক স্বাসে সাত হাঁড়ি আমানি উজাড়ে
চারি হাড়ি মহাবীর খায় খুদ-জাউ।
ছয় হান্ডি মুসুরী সুপ মিশ্যা তখি লাউ।
ঝুড়ি দুই তিন খায় আলু ওল পোড়া।
কচুর সহিত খায় করঙ্গা আমড়া।।
ফুল্লরা রন্ধন করে স্বালে গোটা বাঁশ,
ঝোল রাঙ্কি দেয় গোটা হরিনের মাস।।
দশ গণ্ডা মহাবীর খায় নেউল পোড়া।
সার কচুর ঘন্ট খায় নিশ্যয়া আমড়া।।
অম্বল খাইয়া বীর বনিতারে পুছে।
রন্ধন কর্যাছ ভাল আর কিছু আছে।।
এন্যাছি হরিনী দিয়া দধি এক হাঁড়ি।
তাহা দিয়া অল্প বীর খায় তিন হাঁড়ি।।

ষোড়শ শতাব্দীর কবি দ্বিজমাধবের চণ্ডীমঙ্গল বা মঙ্গলচণ্ডীর গীতে খুল্লনার কয়েকটি মিষ্টির রেসিপি রীতিমতো চমকপ্রদ, এককালের ভোজনরসিকেরা এর সবগুলি খেয়েছেন কিনা জানি না। তবে আমার ভাগ্যে জোটেনি।

ক্ষীরপুলি গাঠি বামা হরমিত হয়ে
ডুবাই ওলাইল তাহে ঘনাবৃত পয়ে।।
অপূর্ব পিষ্টক রাঙ্কে লাল মৃগাল
চুপি পানা পিঠা রচে অতিশয় ভাল।।
সমুদ্রের ফেনা পিঠা অতিশয় গনি
দুক্ষ-চুয়া চন্দ্র-কান্তি রাঙ্কে সুবদনী
কলা-বড়া পিঠা রচে মনের হরিশে
নানান সুগন্ধি দিয়া সম্বারয়ে শেধে।।

পুনর্মুদ্রিত



AUTUMN AND I...

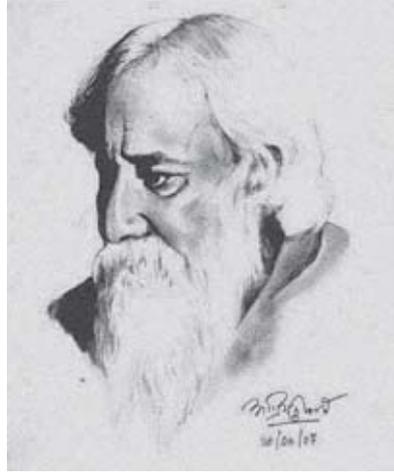
मैं और शरत

आज शरत की शुभ संध्या से
करती हो जैसे पत्तों से हारी
शाखाएँ तरुवर की रुक जाने का
नम्र निवेदन !

मेघों में घुलते मिलते रंग
अरुणा के आँचल के संग-संग,
निभृत मन के स्वप्न दिखाते,
खेल रहे आपस में ऐसे |
आलोकित ये क्षण जीवन के,
इतने दुर्लभ, इतने चंचल,
कब कट जाएँ, अब मैं खुद को
रोकूँ तो रोकूँ भी कैसे ?
फिर कब इस एकाकी में वह
कल्पनाओं का फूल खिलेगा,
जी लेता हूँ आज के फिर कब
जीवन यूँ अनुकूल मिलेगा!

धीरे-धीरे ढलती संध्या,
मुझ तक लाती भटके पूरब
के झोंकों में भरकर कैसी
खुशबू भूले उन फूलों की,
जिनकी खुशबु खोयी ऐसे,
अनजाने में, लेकिन जिनके
कोमल डालों के तन पर हैं
कमी नहीं उगते शूलों की !

आती रजनी शिथिल चरण में,
इस जीवन के घोर विजन में |
तन्द्रा की नौका में मुझको
लेती, मैं चल देता हूँ कब |
पर रह जाती पीछे मेरे
आशा, कुछ गीतों की जो हर
सूखे, उन डालों से मैं नव
उगते मुकुलों में आया भर |
कहीं निखरकर, कहीं मचलकर,
होगा चिनका अद्भुत फिर से
नव फाल्गुन में नव उन्मोचन!



Agnibh with mother

Agnibh Mukherjee - I am a 6th year student of medicine studying in People's Friendship University of Russia. I love doing sketches, painting portraits, writing poems and listening to Rabindrasangeet, Indian and western classical music. My favourite books without which I might have stifled to death are - Palgrave's Golden Treasury: a fine collection of English poems from the classical era, Geetabitan by Tagore and 'Meri Shreshtha Rachnayein' by Harivanshrai Bachchan. One place I invariably visit in Moscow every summer is the Gallery of European and American art from the 17th-20th century, just next to Pushkin Museum.

Agnibh shares with us his poem and a sketch.

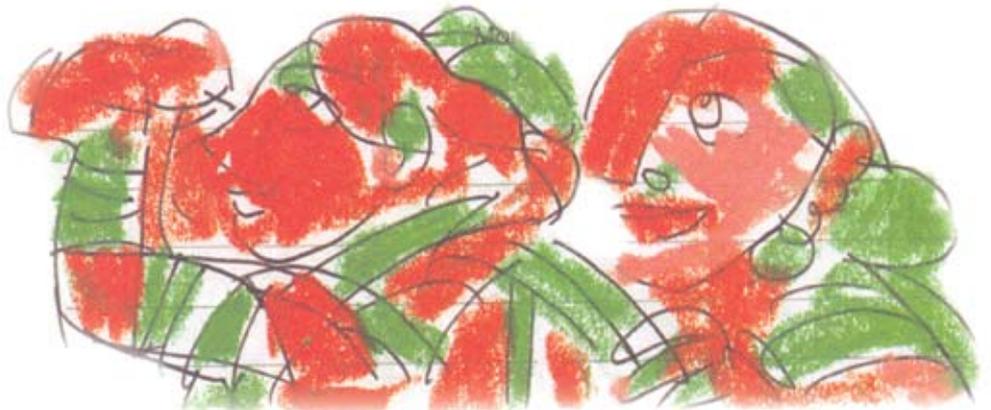


Agnibh with brother Shounak

Shounak Mukherjee is studying Dentistry 1st course in Peoples Friendship University, Moscow. Plays the guitar, sketches funny caricatures and loves watching Bollywood movies, a fan of Hrithikk Roshan. His favourite hangout in Moscow is the KFC near metro Belyevo. In ten years time aspires to be a well established dental surgeon, helping the poor, just like his father.

Back in India I had been like a child in a mother's womb, hardly aware of the truths of life outside. Coming to Moscow proved more than an eye opener for me. This city

had more dimensions than one could find back in India. I used to feel as if unknowingly I had chosen to tread the path of those pricking stones, and while they used to get crushed beneath me all the time, I on the contrary used to swear at them. Never initially appreciated the approach of the Russians, the life of an unbound stream, envied its freedom while keeping myself bonded, the wind that blew around me, again free and the young blossoms used to make me wonder and pity, so full of youth and beauty, choosing to let them get carried away by the breeze, not feeling the slightest pity, rather with glee falling over its path before even achieving the full bloom.



PLETHICO wishes you all a very happy
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Happy Puja to you all!
I hope you like
my cartoon.

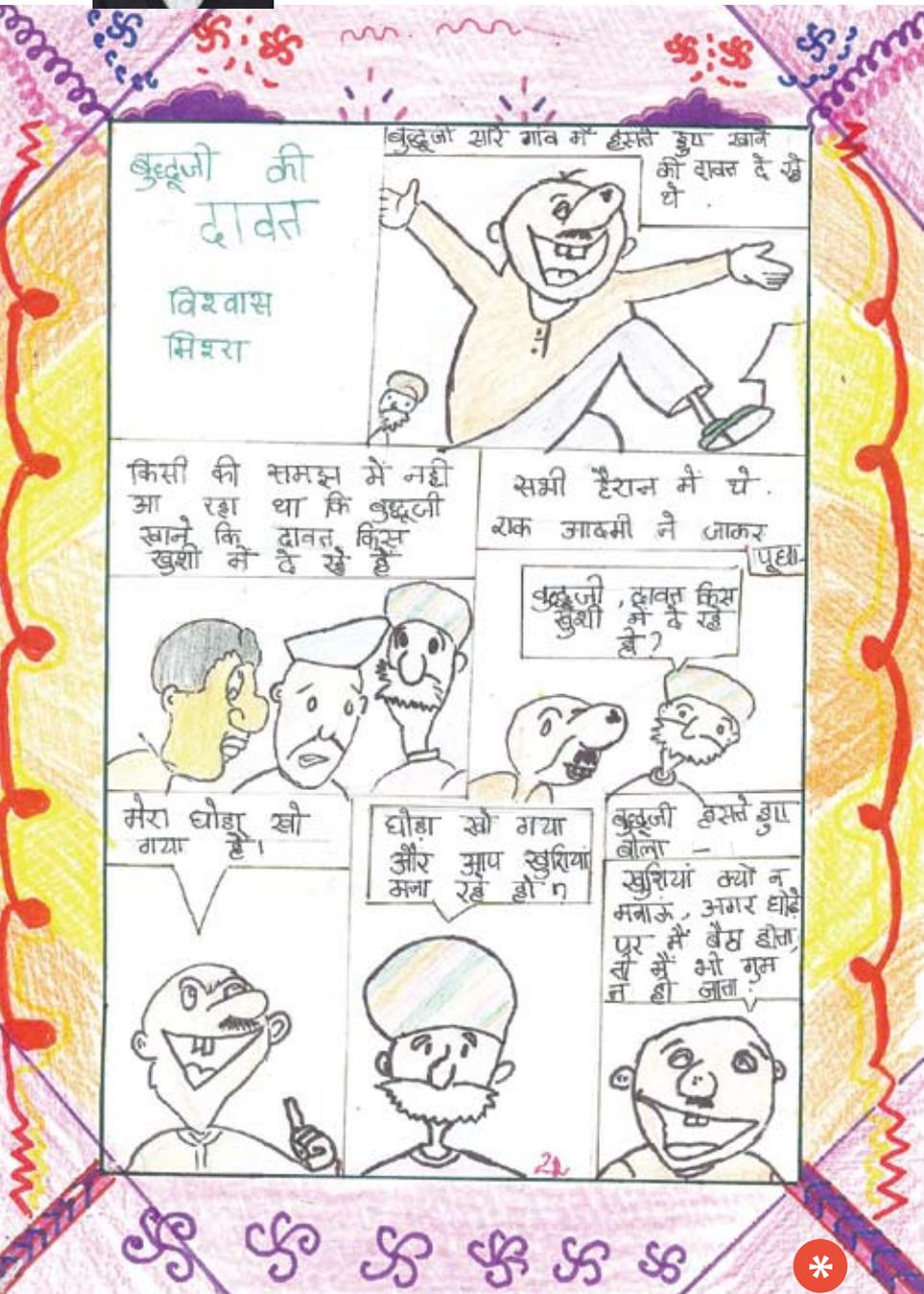
Vishwas Mishra,
Class 5

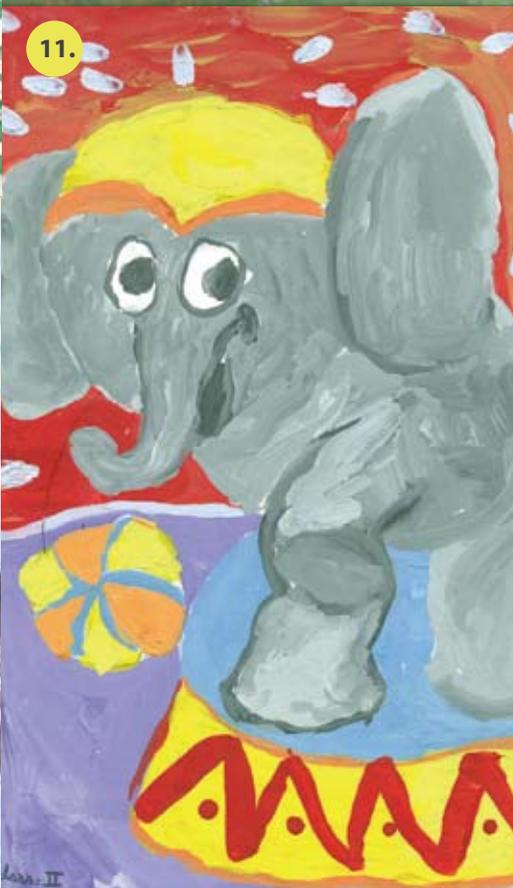
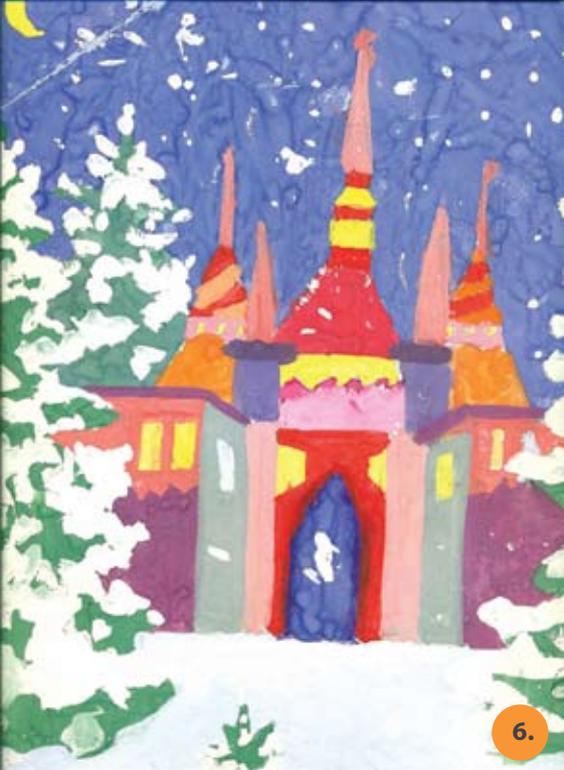
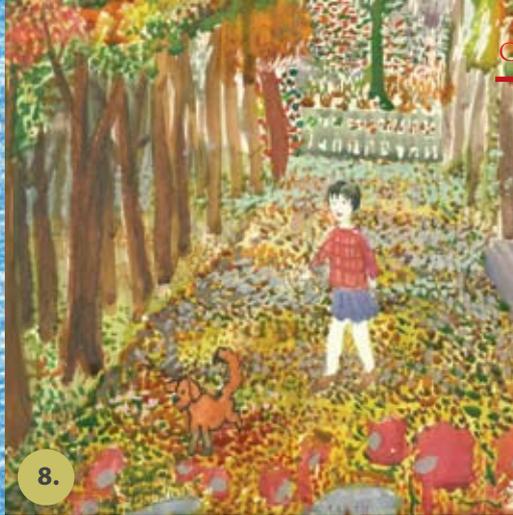
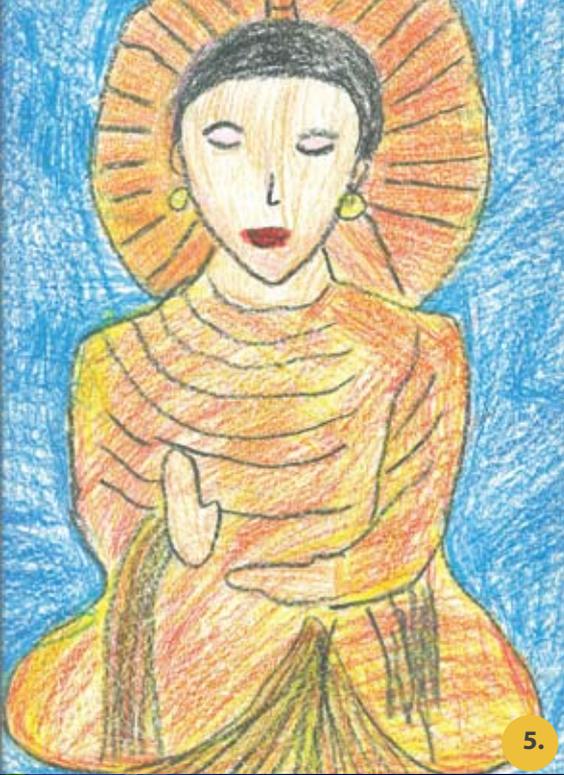
I love my Papa very much
and I like playing with him. I go
to kindergarten now. I want to
paint for you next year.

Aanisha Garzon Dasgupta,
4 years



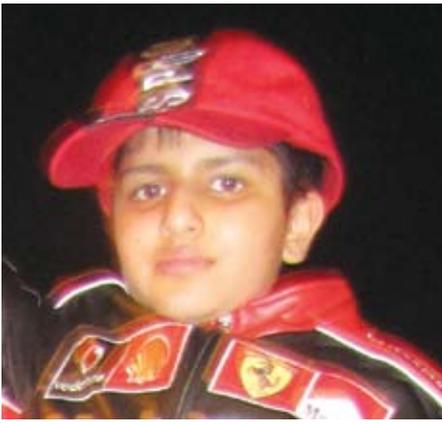
Aanisha with father





From children of EOI, Moscow:

- * Cartoon 'Buddhuji Ka Dawad' by Vishwas Mishra, Class 5
- 1. Reign Deer by Sidhart, Class 2
- 2. Panda by Sidhart, Class 3
- 3. Sita crying by Shruti, Class 3
- 4. Cow by Jivith, Class 6
- 5. Buddha by Ishita, Class 2
- 6. Russian Winter by Taran, Class 4
- 7. Ganapati by Shekhar, Class 2
- 8. Autumn by Lavly Arunika, Class 10
- 9. Cow cart by Sagarika, Class 7
- 10. Fox & Rabbit by Ish, Class 8
- 11. Elephant by Ayushi
- 12. Lord Krishna by Radhika, Class 8
- 13. Russian Beauty by Priyanthi, Class 8



MOYA MOSKVA – I LOVE YOU MOSCOW

I came to Moscow when I was only 3 months old. The most attractive thing in this city is the Ostankino TV tower. It is very tall like Burj Khalifa in Dubai. The Red Square is also very beautiful. I like to look at the onion shaped domes. In the Red Square significant events take place like the 9th May Victory Day parade. I adore Moscow's night view. Mos-

Punit Daga, Class 6

cow's underground subway (metro)) is unique because unlike other cities it is circular in shape. Some of the metro stations here are very beautiful. Moscow has few railway stations and 3 international airports.

I live in a colony along with many Indians and people from foreign community. There are about 25-30

Indian families in our building. That's why our Simferopolsky residential block is called 'Mini India' in Moscow.



Saphronia Thomas, Class 10

Hi I am Saphronia. I came to Moscow in 2008, before that I was studying in Bangalore at St. Francis Girls High School. I love playing the piano and guitar. I enjoy reading Sidney Sheldon, J. K. Rowling and Stephenie Meyer.

ANGEL

*When I have no one to know to,
I am feeling kind of low
When there is no one to talk to
And now I don't know where to go;
I search deep in me,
It is the love in my heart
That let's me know my angels are there
Even though we are miles apart;
A smile that appears upon my face,
When the sun begins to embrace
It may seem that I am alone
But I am never by myself gone ;
An Angel's love is always true
You can depend on that
They will always stand behind you
And will always be your friend;
Whenever I need my angels near,
All I have to do is call
Thanks for being my angel my friend
I will be there for you until the end.*



*Painted by Snigdha Mohan,
Class 10*



Koel Singh, Class 9

Poetry is one of the many ways of expressing your thoughts & feelings. I always wanted to write something about the Tiger & a poem seemed the best way because a poem shows emotion.

A TIGER'S LIFE

*I saw you standing there
Across the path in the jungle.
You stepped out of the bamboo,
proud & beautiful In the morning dew.
My heart filled with fear.
I trembled imagining your roar,
Those paws could kill a boar!
I was a mere sightseer.
Then I wondered, Dear Tiger
Your life is in my hands.
Can I convince enough people,
To save you and not cripple?
I pray the god that made you,
Give me the same strength
To fight your cause
And save you dear tiger,
From being outlawed!*



Painted by Aparna, Class 4

RACE TO THE FINISH LINE



Deepika Karnani

Photo by Avik Dey Bhowmik

The tales of the yore are means of hypothetical inspiration. Today I narrate to you the story of a successful woman who started her life from a small city and is now at an enviably successful position.

The prodigy of this story Pushplata Makhija lived in Udaipur, the beautiful city of lakes. She belonged to a simple family, her father was an employee in railways and her mother was a teacher who used to take her to school every day on a bicycle. On the way she would be asked arithmetical puzzles, general knowledge questions, and spellings by her mother. Pushplata as a kid had immense interest in sports and extracurricular activities. She chose Biology as her subject after being inspired by her biology teacher Mrs. Beena Gupta. Being bold and independent, she had opted to stay in a hostel—something that girls in her time seldom dared to do. Being an all-rounder, she was also awarded scholarship in her college days.

She soon gathered around herself a group of seven friends and these girls were not only good in studies but were passionate about sports too. Pushplata honed her athletic skills to a zenith, becoming a champion of field and track events 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, long jump, short put, javelin and discus throw. She also excelled in games like badminton, table-tennis, basket-ball, volleyball, cricket & carrom. Bagging prizes in all these events and sports she received Individual Athletic Championship

continuously for four years from 1974 to 1978 at Regional College of Education, Ajmer. She also won prizes in poem recitation, storytelling and mono-acting.

She was only twenty when she graduated after which she started teaching at Mira Niketan Girls School, Gandhi Vidya Mandir, Sardarshahar, Rajasthan in 1978. She joined Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) at Vallabh Vidhya Nagar in Gujarat, in 1980 as Biology teacher and since then KVS has become her family. Even after being financially independent she continued her studies. Hereafter, there was no looking back. She began to prepare herself, privately, for a Masters in Economics which was an entirely different from her B.Sc. subject. In order to appear for the final examination, she had to travel from V V Nagar to Ajmer during severe monsoons, and getting a leave from her workplace often proved to be difficult. But she persevered and joined Kendriya Vidyalaya IIT Powai Bombay as Economics teacher in 1984. She was selected for the post of Principal in 2000 after she reallocated to KV Ernakulam.

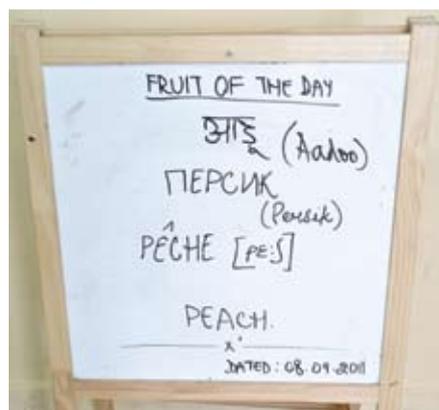
Her passion for sports did not diminish. She stood second in Rajasthan state level contest in short put, and at the Ajmer Inter-Railway competition in short put she secured the 3rd position in 1980 in the Western Railways while Persis Khambatta, the well-known athlete of Shot-put stood first.

KVS provided her with all the opportunities she always sought for. Pushpalata travelled from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, and from Rajasthan to Sikkim amongst which most memorable was her trip to the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi where she met Bachendri Pal, the first lady to climb Mount Everest. Through these travel and activities like trekking, swimming, parasailing, rock-climbing and river crossing she quenched her thirst for adventure.

After 33 years of service out of which she has served 11 years as the Principal, she was acknowledged recently and in 2010 she received the KVS Regional Incentive Award in Mumbai region for meritorious services.

Pushlata Makhija changed her name to Deepika Karnani after she got married to Narendra Karnani who is a Scientist in the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai. They have two daughters.

Deepika Karnani is the Principal of Embassy of India School, Moscow since April 2011.



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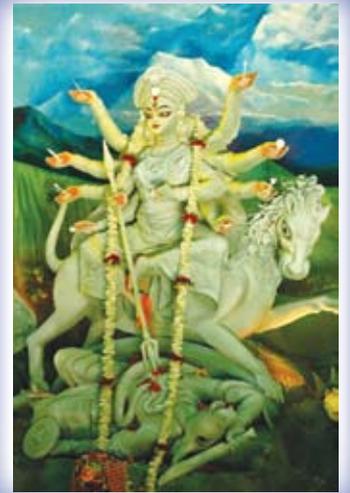
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MY MEMORABLE TRIP TO TAJMAHAL



Ayushi Das, Class 3, EOI School, Moscow

Once my grandma narrated me about the Taj Mahal – one of the seven wonder of the world. Since then I had a desire to see this monument with my own eyes.

During winter holidays I visited India and when I came to know that I might get a chance to visit Agra on my way to Kanpur, where my Dadaji lives, I was thrilled.

We had to leave home early to travel to the Taj. So Mama sent us to bed early but my little sister Avishi was in no mood to go to bed early as she has no interest to see Taj Mahal. We left at 4:30 am for Agra. The day was turning foggy and visibility was poor. We had to wait at a dabha where hot tea was served and mother gave us hot milk and some snacks. After 2 hours we moved on and stopped at Mathura (Vrindavan & Gokul) and saw the birth place of Lord Krishna. My parents were very happy to see the

birth place but I was impatiently waiting for the Taj.

I was feeling sleepy and had a nap in the car. Around 1pm we stopped for lunch at a dhaba again. I didn't enjoy the food as it was pretty oily and hot. Finally we reached Agra and my father negotiated with a guide, who guide took us into the Taj. The guide purchased the entrance tickets without queue. Security was tight . Once we entered through the gate the monument could be seen – like as I have seen on many postcards! It is huge, much much taller than I had imagined. There is no comparison of its beauty. I could only say – AWESOME!. The Taj is so big that it seemed far away and very close at the same time.

It was built in memory of the Shah Jahan's wife Begum Mumtaz Mahal. Her tomb lies at the center of the Taj. He hired two thousand craftsmen to design and build this monument to his Queen. It took twenty-two years to complete it.

I walked around the Taj and its two sister structure of red sandstone and white marble. I saw the Yamuna river.

Further Guide narrated us around 22 types of different precious stones with different designs are used on walls .We also went to mina bazaar to see hand-works. Our guide warned us to be careful of touts . We bought some souvenirs to take to Moscow.

I wanted to spend some more time there but it was already evening and the Taj was more beautiful now. This was my most memorable trip ever.

CROATIA IS FUN



Yash studies in Class-4, School # 1637.

Loves break dance, skate(X) board-ing and basket ball. Favorite saying - "I'm loving it".



Painted by Isha, Class 4

SAFARI AT MASAI MARA

We had lots of fun last year during the winters at Masai Mara. We fed the rhino and said privet to the giraffes, zebras and Simba! You must love animals and take good care of them. We have a doggie – his name is Lucky. We love him very much.

Prarthana, Class 4 & Sanchari Mukherjee, Class 1



Prarthana & Sanchari with parents



Painted by Shlok, Class 3



THE COUNTRY OF MY DREAM - ITALY



Uditangshu, Class 7

This year during my summer vacation I, with my parents visited Italy. It was a memorable experience & I enjoyed the trip a lot. We landed in Rome, which was our 1st destination on the 5th of July 2011. Our hotel was near the 'Piazza de Poppolo' which was a famous square & full of tourists. After a scrumptious meal, we started our journey through 'The Eternal' city. Our first monument was the magnificent Colossus or The Colosseum. Emperor Nero named it as the Coloseo. It was the battlefield for the gladiators & also for prisoners. The gladiators had to fight against ruthless beasts and if they would win they would get money or could retire.



Uditangshu with parents



Uditangshu with mother

Our next place was the Vatican City or 'Holy place of Christianity'. Vatican city is known for its extraordinary beautiful churches and some of them are decorated with paintings by the world famous Michael Angelo - "The Last Judgement". The churches and the dome or the *cupola* as the Italians called it were huge. We climbed 511 stairs to reach the cupola of one on the churches in the Vatican city. It was the a real tiring day, I could hardly stand. The next day we went to adorn the most beautiful fountain I could hardly imagine, it was associated with the God of sea. The name of the fountain was '*fontana de trevi*'. The funniest thing about Rome are the names of metro stations like Barberini, Flamingo.

From Rome we went to the historical ruins of the city of Pompeii. Some people think that Pompeii was buried under lava, but lava fell on the opposite side and the people were vaporized in 16 seconds, with the lava ashes. Horrible situation! We saw many houses which were broken but the paintings on the walls were not damaged and partially seen. Some of the streets in Pompeii are kept as it, the way they were during its civilization. Houses used to be decorated with Mosaic - in some houses, Mosaic can be seen, as if it was decorated few days back only in our time.

Our next destination was Florence. It's a beautiful city. Our hotel was near the railway station in the heart of the city, at main square. Our first place was not far from our hotel. It was a church which was built in the Byzantine period. Our next place was an exhibition of Leonardo da

Vinci's inventions. I saw some of his inventions which are now useful in the 21st century - which he invented few centuries back. Another fascinating thing was the Leonardo da Vinci wrote from right to left (so my name would be ushgnatidu). I saw the original world famous statue of "DAVID", copy of the same, you can see in many museums of the world, but I am lucky to saw it in Original.

Our next destination was Milan - city of Fashion - Cathedral at main square - worth seeing and a must visit place. Near to Milan is - PISA - world famous leaning tower- I am lucky to have visited one of the 7 wonders of the world. Like all visitors, I also tried my best to hold the PISA leaning tower and somehow succeeded.

Our next and last stop was Venice. I read about Venice that everywhere people travel by boat and there are NO cars in Venice? It was an unbelievable thing, but once I reached Venice - I had no option but to believe - that, Yes! - you need a boat / water bus or water taxi.

How odd and funny it was to get on a boat from the railway station and than again going from one place to another - 10 or 15 minutes distance, also by water bus. 4 days without cars - unforgettable experience ... Our hotel was near a bell tower and A famous square named 'Piazza San Marco'. The next day we went to a place called The Dodge's Palace (*Palazzo Duccale*). The Dodge used to rule Venice in the 9th -10th centuries upto 17th century. Venice is also known as the city of masks for the wonderful masks that were worn by rich people. Carnival in Venice is one of the world famous event, after Brazilian carnival. The next day we went to another island name Lido. It was a sea beach where I enjoyed a lot.

We departed Venice on the 18th of July. I still miss the beautiful Colosseum, the leaning tower of Pisa and the unforgettable food of Italy - pizza and pasta, which every restaurant has in its menu and one meal must include either pizza or pasta.



FRIENDLY MALAYSIA



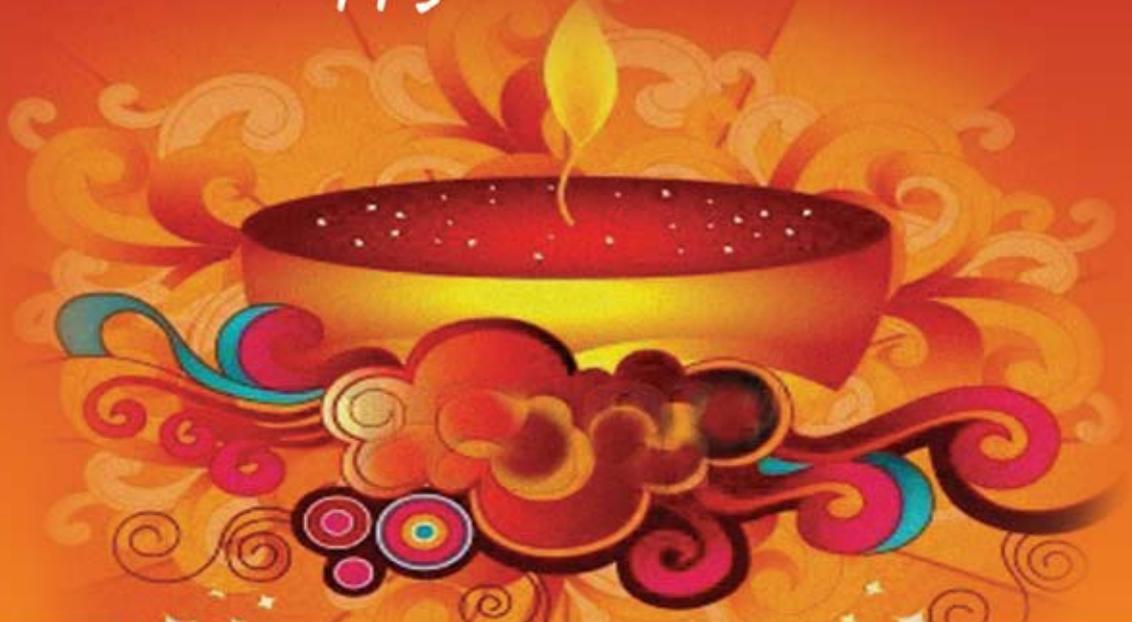
Avik Dey Bhowmik

Hi I'm Avik Dey Bhowmik, 4th year student at 1st I.M.Sechenov Moscow State Medical University **wishing everyone Happy Durga Puja**. During my summer vacation I went to Malaysia, loved everything there: the food, the awesome landscapes and most importantly it's wonderful people who immediately made me a part of their family. I'm looking forward to go there again. How about you guys?



Sights of Malaysia

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LETTER FROM LAOS



*Shumon Sengupta
with daughter Madhura*

Shumon Sengupta is currently working in Laos, as the Country Director of Save the Children.

Recently I visited Northern Laos – to the remote mountainous Sayabouri Province to see our work. Flew to Luang Prabang (the ancient capital of Laos and now a UNESCO heritage site) and from there took the four-hour mountain road journey, made particularly treacherous by the monsoon, to Sayabouri.

Sayabouri is a province that has mountains, forests and rivers in equal measures and this makes it truly spectacular. We drove past dense mahogany and teak forests, the latter in full bloom; crossed valleys dotted with idyllic villages and ancient stepped rice fields and drove through narrow passes and at places, along meandering rivers in their fearsome monsoon gush.

Our four-wheel-drive Toyota skidded often and in one place almost swerved. The sheer beauty of the place was matched in equal measure by the danger of the journey, the former more often than not, overwhelming the latter. Or was it that the intrinsic danger added that extra albeit subliminal edge to the beauty of the journey?

At one point, we drove down a hill and came face to face with the mighty Mekong river (that flows almost all along and through Laos), swollen heavy and in

full spate with the rains of the previous night. While we waited for the small ferry to take us to the other bank, we ordered for some jasmine tea in the thatched road-side eatery on the river bank.

Desperately missing the *pakor*as / *begunis* / *samosas* / *piajus* that would have

and we boarded it. The crossing over took approximately 20 minutes and was so incredibly beautiful that it felt like floating in a dream. It was late in the afternoon with fading sunlight amidst a partially overcast sky. Surrounded by mountains



generally accompanied the tea back in Bangladesh, I inquired if there were any local savories to go with the tea. We were promptly served by the smilingly obliging waitress with an assortment of colorful deep fried insets – mainly different types of giant grasshoppers, seasoned with kefir-lime leaves, fried Thai ginger and red chillies. Being a vegetarian, I politely declined the offer, but not without taking a few pictures of the unfortunate insets and before they were eagerly devoured by the others.

Far away from home, never before had I missed our ubiquitous samosa/pakora as much as I did in that thatched road side eatery by the Mekong in that late afternoon of July.

The ferry – a small and rickety one by Bangladeshi standards, eventually came

and forests all around and the river flowing in between - without a sound but the lapping of the waves and the occasional call of birds, it felt that time had come to a standstill.

We crossed over and resumed our journey by road. Strangely beautiful images of rivers, open skies and the wide expansive landscape of Bangladesh came to my mind. I was reminded of the Padma ferry crossing at Aricha-Goalanondo and of the other numerous beautiful rivers I had seen and river crossings I had made in the last five years in Bangladesh. I was reminded of the open green landscape merging with the blue of the sky and grey of the wide rivers - blending into vast expanses of tender stillness.

Amidst all the beauty and splendor of nature in Sayabouri, I missed home...



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MEDICAL COSMETOLOGY



Dr. Monika Tripathi

A cosmetic dermatologist (medical cosmetologist), working in a cosmetological clinic in Moscow, having Indian as well as Russian patients, residing in Russia since 1987. Married to Dr. Sanjay Tripathi and has two children. Loves reading, watching movies, internet surfing.

We live in times where being well-groomed, stylish and youthful is valued. From teenagers, women to men, a visit to a salon for a regular dose of pampering is the norm.

Signs of aging become visible on the skin from the early-thirties onwards. Depending on lifestyle and genetic make-up, the skin can already be exhibiting deep wrinkles and extended lines as a result of changes to the connective tissue. The skin's appearance gets coarser and the pores get larger. The skin also gets dryer because sebum production declines as we age.

Medical cosmetology, the more intensive side of cosmetology, largely deals with skin care. Problems like pimples, acne, wrinkles, dark spots, post pregnancy pigmentation, stretch marks, scars require medical expertise. Medical cosmetology also deals with fat and cellulite reduction, hair problems such as loss or thinning.

The treatment for these problems and anti aging procedures are:

PEELS

Fruit acid peels open up blocked pores, remove dead skin cells, boost circulation and freshen the complexion. They are used to treat skin problems as pimples, acne, dark sun spots, pigmentations and scars on face, hands or any other body part. A very small or no down time is needed as normal day to day activities can be carried on after the peel is performed.

MESOTHERAPY

Mesotherapy is a combination of neural

therapy, acupuncture and medication therapy. It is an ideal way to rejuvenate the face, neck and cleavage. Mesotherapy also boosts the skin's microcirculation, which improves its ability to absorb nutrients and eliminate toxins. A patient-specific cocktail of vitamins, minerals, amino acids and antioxidants, enriched with hyaluronic acid is prepared to achieve an optimum effect. Mesotherapy is a fast procedure with lasting results. There is no recovery time and you can return to your daily activities straight after the treatment. Mesotherapy gives best results for fat and cellulite reduction in any area of the body, 4 – 10 inches are lost after a course of 10 to 15 procedures done weekly.

Hair loss and thinning is also treated by mesotherapy which gives amazing results.

BOTOX AND DERMAL FILLERS

Fine lines and wrinkles add years to our face. Just looking at the crows feet around your eyes and the scowl lines between your eyebrows, you can feel your youth slipping away. Turn back the hands of time with body and facial rejuvenation. Just one Botox injection to the areas around eyes, forehead and neck, every 4 to 6 months, can reduce the signs of wrinkles and create a youthful appearance.

Medical cosmetology had always been used, in the field of glamour, in Hollywood and Bollywood, but now common people have become aware of it. All skin types and skin colors are treated effectively as treatments and sittings are based individually. More and more people are taking these treatments and presently medical cosmetology is booming in the world.



YOU AREN'T DEPRESSED



Dr. Tushnik Ghosh,
MD, Psychiatrist

A Psychiatrist practicing in his hometown of Howrah, he is getting married in January 2012. He passed out from the I.M. Sechenov Moscow State Medical University in 2008.

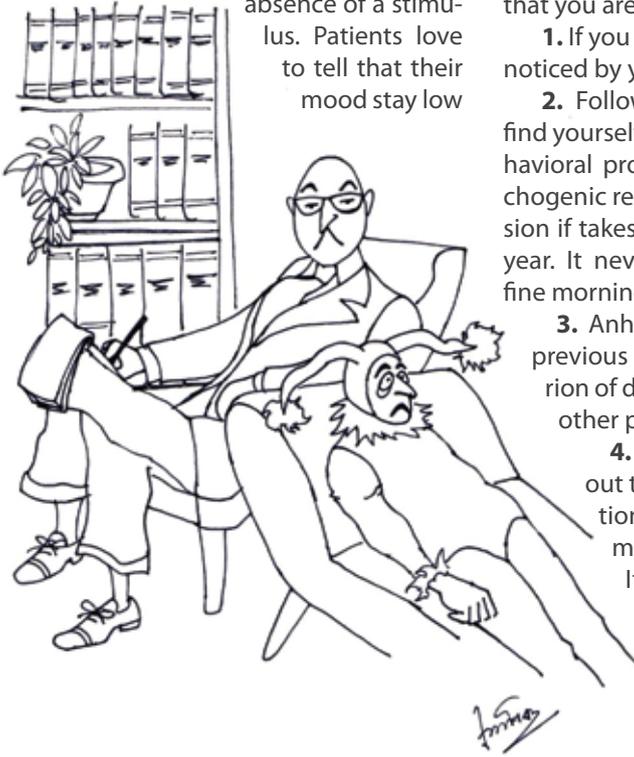
"I miss the picture perfect cleanliness of Moscow and its weather. I am a gourmand and miss the Dutch cheese, the salo, the Russian Cognac and the Staropramen beer! I miss the Night life of Moscow and the outings with my friends".

Depression is a fashion. As a psychiatrist it is my experience that people love to self-diagnose themselves being depressed. As we were told that everyone thinks he is a doctor and an electrician combined together, I see patients telling me points why they are depressed! Only if the making of diagnosis were that easy.

Depression is a syndrome. Only low mood doesn't meet criteria. There have to be decreased physical activities and thought blocking at least. But patients hardly sit in their rooms and do not think about the world, be it Didis new manifesto or recession or Anna Hazare!

Come to low mood! It should persist for 14 days to make depression. In

depression mood follows a cardinal rhythm. There is slight or significant elation of mood during any part of day in absence of a stimulus. Patients love to tell that their mood stay low



"Nothing seems funny anymore"

through out the day. Are you having low mood consistently for last fortnight?

Following are some points showing that you are not depressed.

1. If you are depressed, it will first be noticed by your family but not by you.

2. Following a catastrophe, if you find yourself in low mood and other behavioral problems, they are mere psychogenic reaction to the event. Depression if takes its place, would take a few year. It never occurs suddenly in one fine morning.

3. Anhedonia (indifferent to your previous likings) is not a major criterion of depression. It is seen in many other psychiatric disorders.

4. If your mood is low through out the day without any fluctuation, probably it is something more severe than depression. It can be schizophrenia too. But trust me; a sound man cannot be in low mood for more than 7 days.

5. A vital component of depression is suicidal thought. If you can answer to yourself why you must not commit suicide,

it is hardly depression. A depressed person cannot answer this question.

6. If you are under influence of alcohol or any other dependence, your depression is false and is just to harass your family more.

7. If you show off your depression in public, it is hysteria or OCD according to behavioral nature.

8. Rarely depression comes alone or persists through out the life. A high elation of mood is noticed sometimes for spans of 7 or more days consecutively.

9. Though depression is a psychic disease, it shows many physical signs also. Pain is the commonest of all. This pain doesn't respond to pain killers of any type!

10. Sleep disturbances, especially insomnia is a fundamental symptom of depression. My question is, how many nights did you spend sleeplessly at a stretch without taking a nap in the following afternoon?

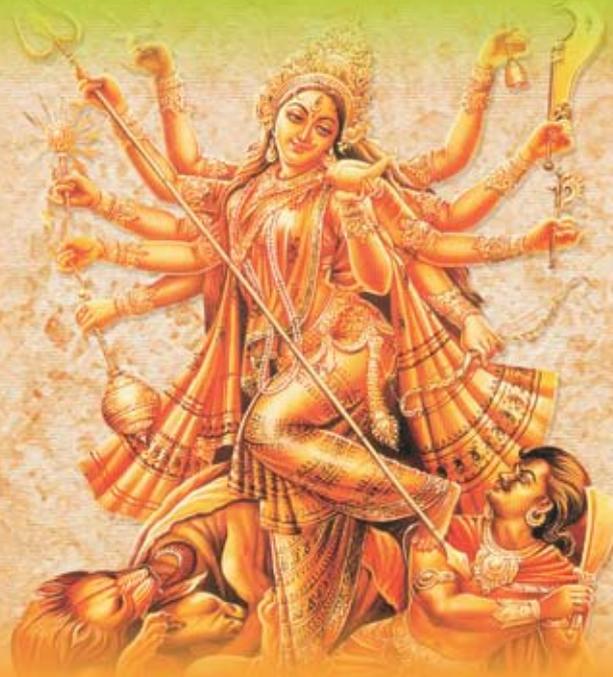
These are enough. I think now you understand that you aren't depressed. But don't jump at joy. I can simultaneously provide 10 more points to prove that you are a bit depressed!

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৪ БЕНГАЛЬСКОЕ НА РУССКОЕ.

ФАКТЫ ИСТОРИЧЕСКИЕ, СЕРЬЕЗНЫЕ И НЕ СЕРЬЕЗ.

Лебедев Герасим Степанович и Бенгалия.

Герасим Степанович Лебедев (1749, Ярославль — 15 (27) июля 1817, Санкт-Петербург) - первый русский индолог. Главными его трудами являются грамматика калькуттской разговорной формы языка хиндустани и труд об экономике, географии и культуре Индии. Открыл первую в Европе типографию, оборудованную станками с индийским (бенгальским) алфавитом. Известен и как пионер бенгальской драматургии — основатель первого в Индии национального драматического театра европейского образца.



В августе 1787 года Лебедев прибывает на корабле «Сноу» в Калькутту — столицу Бенгалии и всей Британской Индии, чтобы провести здесь около 10 лет. Поселился он в арендованном доме недалеко от шотландской церкви Святого Иоанна. Нанял учителя санскрита — это был бенгалец, школьный учитель Голокнатх Дас. Лебедев брал у него уроки языков, сопровождавшиеся ознакомлением с индийской космогонией, мифологией, литературой, арифметикой и астрономией, а взамен, помимо жалованья, обучал его европейской музыке.

В процессе обучения Герасим Лебедев сделал перевод с английского двух пьес — комедии «Притворство» малоизвестного драматурга Р. П. Джодрелла и «Любовь — лучший врач». Причём в «Притворстве» была сделана адаптация под местные условия: перенос действия из Мадрида и Севильи в Калькутту и Лакхнау, изменение имён героев, переделка в духе бенгальских шуточных спектаклей, разыгрываемых на базарах, введение традиционных бенгальских карикатурных фигур — стражей, бродячих музыкантов и фокусников, воров.

По адресу улица Домтола, 25 (ныне Эзра, 37) было арендовано и перестроено помещение под театр. Играли в театре местные актёры и актрисы: 10 мужчин, 3 женщины, а также

музыкальная труппа из 10 человек, и впервые в истории бенгальской сцены женщин играли актрисы!

Открытие состоялось в пятницу 27 ноября 1795 года пьесой «Притворство», три акта которой были сокращены в один, так как опасались, что английским зрителям, плохо знающим бенгальский, будет скучно; но успех был велик.

Было и второе представление, а вот третьему театральному представлению, запланированному на весну-лето 1797 года, сбыться не удалось. Популярность театра Лебедева вызвала

обеспокоенность не только конкурентов, но и британских колониальных властей, опасавшихся пробуждения у местного населения национального самосознания. Судья Верховного суда Джон Хайд неудачно пытался найти подлог в тексте переводов пьес. Лебедева расхваливали в газетах, вынуждая давать обеды и ужины.

Подосланный декоратор Джозеф Баттл, войдя в доверие к Лебедеву,

уговорил сделать его равноправным компаньоном, «заплатив» за долю в деле векселем, будучи при этом должен кому-то 10 тысяч рупий — это могло привести к конфискации театра; под видом улучшения он портил декорации, подменил ряд работников на своих сообщников, растрачивал деньги.

Лебедев пытался обратиться в суд и добиться выполнения договоров или компенсации, но адвокаты не решались под разными предложениями братья за его дело. На него самого безосновательно подали денежные иски столяр, садовник, повар и владелец арендованного под театр дома, 6 апреля Лебедев был даже арестован, но в тот же день оправдан.

10 декабря 1797 года Герасим Лебедев покинул Индию; при нём была лишь сумка с личными вещами общей ценностью в 271 рупию, виолончель, небольшие подарки друзьям и знакомым, а также небольшая коллекция индийских рукописей.

Портреты Лебедева не известны.

БЕНГАЛЬСКИЕ КОШКИ - довольно редкая порода, особенно в России. Люди, знакомые с бенгалами главным образом понаслышке, относятся к ним настороженно и нередко задают вопросы типа: «а оно как - хозяина-то не съест?» Порода-то и в самом деле уникальна, ибо возникла она в результате целенаправленного скрещивания дикого азиатского леопардового кота (*Felis Bengalensis* или ALC) с домашними кошками.





БЕНГАЛЬСКИЕ ОГНИ - смесь веществ, которая при сжигании дает яркий и искристый белый или цветной огонь, изобрели древние пиротехники Бенгалии - части Индии, расположенной вдоль Бенгальского залива. Вот откуда пошло название.

БЕНГАЛЬСКАЯ ДИЕТА. Питание для бенгальца столь же важно, как и песни Рабиндраната Тагора. Нет ничего, что бенгалец не может съесть. Тем не менее, он предпочитает протеины всем иным видам еды. Самый богатый источник протеинов - рыба. Далее идут мясо и *mishti* (сладости), приготовленные из молока или творога. Знанием рыбы бенгальцы наслаждаются больше, чем самой рыбой. Углеводы допускаются, если хорошо зажарены в масле и подаются к рыбе. *Лучи* и *пучка* - это самые любимые источники углеводов.



БЕНГАЛЬСКИЙ ФУТБОЛ. У бенгальцев выдающаяся история достижений в футболе. Не верите? Значит среди ваших друзей нет бенгальцев. Иначе бы вы знали, что Диего Марадона, выглядит совсем как *Bhodrolok* (добропорядочный уважаемый бенгальский господин), нюхает всего лишь нюхательный табак, как делают многие в Калькутте и забивать свой знаменитый гол рукой он научился в Калькутте. В течение последних лет



своей виртуозной игрой бенгальцев постоянно радуется Бразилия. Единственная команда, непризнанная бенгальцами - германская, так как они играют больше эффективно, чем креативно. Другими словами, что о них говорить!

БЕНГАЛЬСКИЙ ТИГР (*Panthera tigris bengalensis*) — особый подвид тигра, обитающий в Северной и Центральной Индии, Бирме, Непале, на территории Бангладеш и Сундарбана (в окрестностях устья реки Ганг).

Это самый крупный из всех тигров: максимальный вес, зафиксированный учеными, составлял 388,7 килограммов, что на пять килограммов больше, чем у самого крупного взвешенного амурского тигра. Но это рекорды, а в среднем самцы бенгальских тигров весят 200 кг. Длина тела без хвоста достигает трех метров, а с хвостом (а он у этих тигров очень длинный) — четырех. Высота в холке достигает 1,1 метра у крупных самцов. Знаменитые белые тигры — не причуда генетиков, а водящаяся в природе разновидность бенгальских тигров. А вот у самих тигров есть причуды – бенгальский тигр настолько всеяден, что в отсутствие другой

еды может есть даже...насекомых.

БЕНГАЛЬСКИЙ ЯЗЫК входит в десятку самых распространенных языков мира. В то же время, проведенный в Калькутте социологический опрос на тему «Можно ли в Калькутте обойтись без знания бенгальского языка» показал, что соотношение ответов ДА и НЕТ – 50/50. Нужно отметить, что на вопрос «Владеете ли Вы бенгальским?» ответ ДА дали 100% опрошенных. Точно такое же соотношение показал опрос на тему «Можно ли городскому жителю обойтись без личного автомобиля?», проведенный

в Москве. 100% опрошенных имеют автомобиль и 50% считают, что могли бы без него обойтись. Напрашивается вывод, а точнее вопрос: Бенгальский язык в Калькутте (или автомобиль в Москве) – это роскошь или средство передвижения?

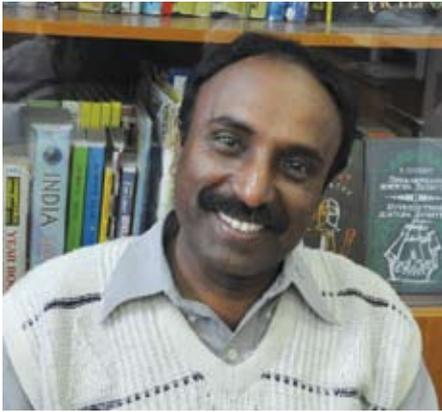


Художник иллюстраций
Sketches by
Andrei Garzon Dasgupta, 7 Class
School #1317



Автор статьи
Collated by Olga Sengupta

LITERALLY YOURS



Rajendran k Photo by Avik Day Bhowmik

The best of a book is not the thought which it contains, but the thought it suggests; just as the charm of music dwells not in the tones but in the echoes of our hearts.

- Oliver Wendell Holmes

Literature has always been man's Guide. Or has it been? This will essentially lead one to another thought. Can Literature, a byproduct of human life, a creation of Man, be a guide to his own life? Isn't that the Creator has always had an upper hand over his Creation? How could Literature be a Guide, then? Isn't it meant to entertain us and stop at that? When is it that the Creator is guided by his creation? Well, to the last question man-machine relationship could be cited as an example, and quite a wonderful example that is indeed! But the questions raised here deserve thorough answers than mere examples.

Before entering into any sort of an attempt to find answers for those questions it will be interesting to understand what Literature really is!



Rajendran k – Educator with two passions : literature and music. He joined EOIS Moscow in April 2011, teaches English. He has been with Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan since 1993 and has served in Nagaland, Manipur and Kerala. A multi-talented person he plays on percussion instruments like Chenda, Thimila and Edakka which belong to his state Kerala.

The word Literature originated from the Latin letter litterae and refers to the art of written works. Literally translated, it means “acquaintance with letters”. The love for man's acquaintance with letters, in all probability, might have come from a deep desire for expressing his inner self. But, why to express it unless there is somebody to appreciate it? And why should one want to appreciate someone else's inner expression unless there is something that he also finds in tune with. Or else the writing should have some relevance in the other's life as well.

They say, no two living things are alike. Moreover, no two human beings think alike. (Not withstanding our claims of doing so, to our dear ones!) Then how is it possible that the written works of one will find resonance in someone else? An interesting and intriguing question indeed! But the answer to the question could be very simple. It is from difference and disagreement that one learns more than from similarity and agreement. The whole process generates new thoughts and encourages men to take routes anew! Robert Frost summed it up so well in his poem “The Road Not Taken”:

**Two roads diverged in a wood, and I
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.**

Human beings have forever wanted to venture into new areas of thoughts and acts. Given this urge in him, it is essential for him to keep a close watch on his past, present and future. This could be the reason for his desire to express the inner self. This could well be the reason for somebody else to be interested in reading it.

When William Shakespeare wrote:

**Out, out brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow**

One cannot but agree with him only!

Not only that, when men stand staring at some of the most intricate complexities of life, Literature come to his help. The Bhagawad Gita gives valuable lessons on ‘detached attachment’ through lines like:

What is yours today, belonged to someone else yesterday,

And will belong to someone else in the day after tomorrow.

You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action.

If there wasn't a Khalil Gibran to tell us that,

Your Children are not your children,

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you.

How would one know that parenting is an Art that one needs to perfect himself in!

Literature is a mirror that reflects life in its actuality without any preconceptions and prejudice. One might agree with this statement or disagree with it partially or fully, but no one can ignore the role it plays in the Saga of Human life on Earth. Like every sphere of human activity it has had its ups and downs, positives and negatives but it has always shown its presence felt. Various branches like Prose, Poetry and Drama have left an indelible mark on human life. Even the ones who have never had any liking for it have contributed to it. Their disagreement has become part of Literature, sure to guide someone another day!

There are many who suggest that Literature is a Guide - a bad one at that. In that case one will have to admit that he hasn't had any idea of his destination. Destination is the choice of the traveler. A Guide shows the path only. It is of no use blaming the path for a destination wrongly chosen. The selection of the right Guide for the right task is the responsibility of the seeker, not the Guide. How to make good use of the Guide is left to the traveler.

Probably Sir Francis Bacon would come handy here with his words from “Of Studies”:

Some Books are to be swallowed, some to be tasted and some others to be chewed and digested.

Amen.

Wishing all a Happy
Durga Puja



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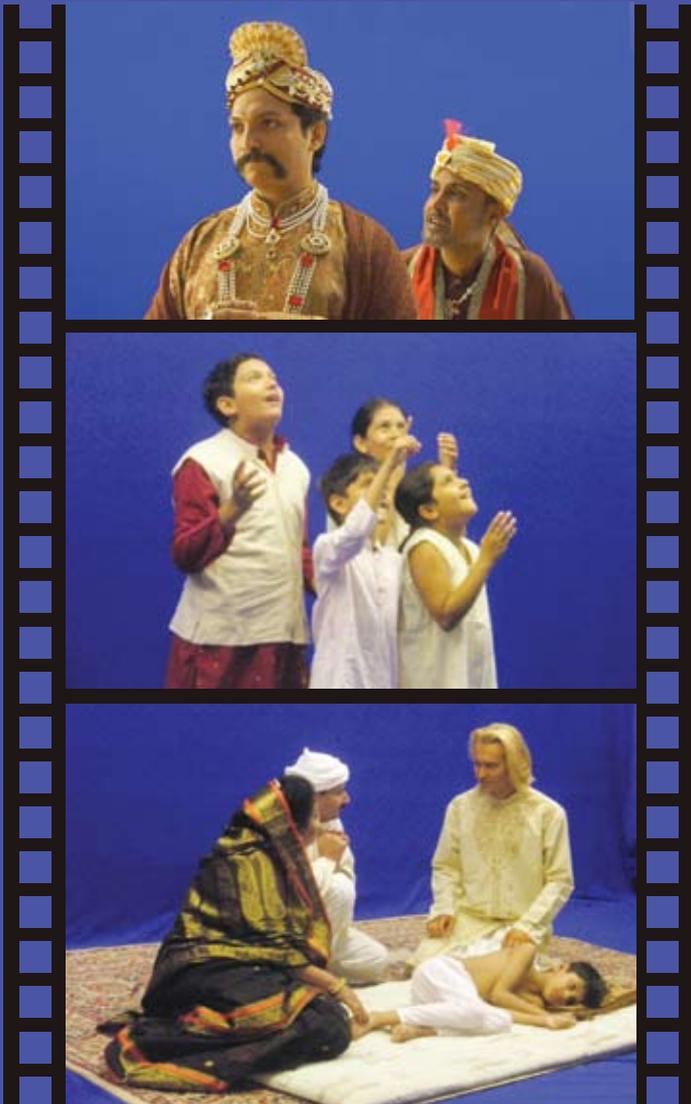
made in Germany

LACALUT



shahnaz
husain

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!



Aaratrika spoke with Pradyumna Chatterjee, the second director of 'Areal' ...

'Areal' is Aleksander Bilayev's last novel written in the year 1941. The film is a fantasy and 70% of it takes place in India in the early 20th century. It is a wonderful piece of creation where fantasy mingles with human emotions. The most remarkable thing is that although Bilayev never visited India he has managed to write about it in such great details, details which even very few Indians hardly notice. We retained 95% of the original script with very minor changes.

Vladimir Moon, an established ad-film maker is the producer, composer and director of this movie. In 2008 his first film 'Berkut' was shown in the Moscow Film Festival. I am the second director and responsible for all that is related to the Indian part of the film. Since the film is being shot in Moscow, I gathered many of our friends to participate in it like Kashia Das, Krishna Roy, Nitin Aurangabadkar, Sudeshna Aurangabadkar, Uditangshu, Dhiru Bhai & his daughter, Viru Bhai and his whole family, Sunit Poddar, Anand poddar, Mukesh & his family. Some of our Bangladeshi friends also took part in the shooting including a child named Sameer Said. We still require another 30 people to act in the Indian mob for a reasonable amount as remuneration, we hope Durga puja will be a good occasion for Vladimir Moon to come and see what exactly an Indian crowd is. Eliza Anam plays the role of my wife, the queen and she flew down from Sweden to Moscow for the shoot. For me this project is very special and close to my heart. This is my first full length film and I am playing the role of a king who is the leading negative character. It is like my dream role Othello who is a beast as well a child.

The Indian part we plan to dub in Hindi in Bombay next year. We plan to release Areal sometime in May/June next year. I am certain it will be endearing for all of you to watch our puja committee members act in it.

FROM THE REHEARSALS OF 2011

Sudeshna Aurangabadkar with our children preparing yet another stunning piece for puja this year.

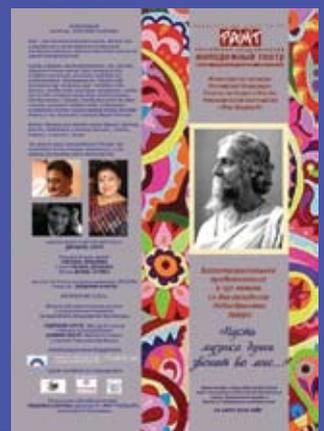


Rehearsing at the Inter Club in PFUR

TAGORE FESTIVAL AT MOLODEZHNY THEATRE

In July this year our friends staged a song-drama celebrating the 150th Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.

The piece was directed by Debashish Sengupta and the program was organized by Lyudmila Sekacheva, World of Tradition.



*Zee TV wishes all its viewers
a very
Happy Durga Puja*



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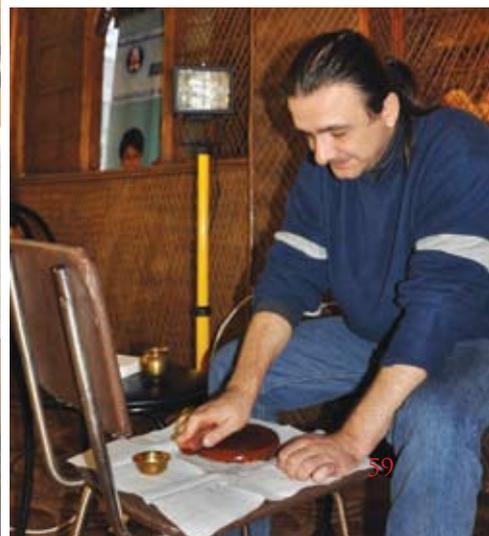
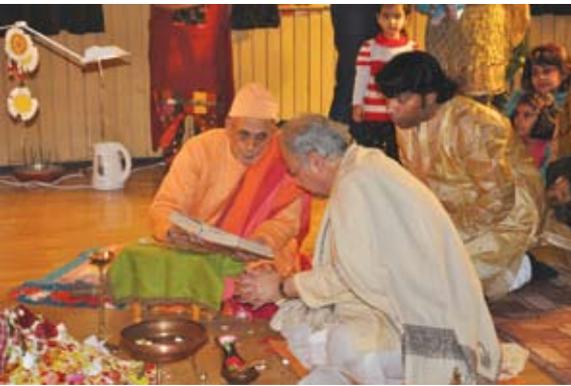
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Masti Dhoom Dhamaka



Durga Puja 2010

Anandamela – khao piyo, piyo khao



Dashami dhamaka



Bijoya fun fare



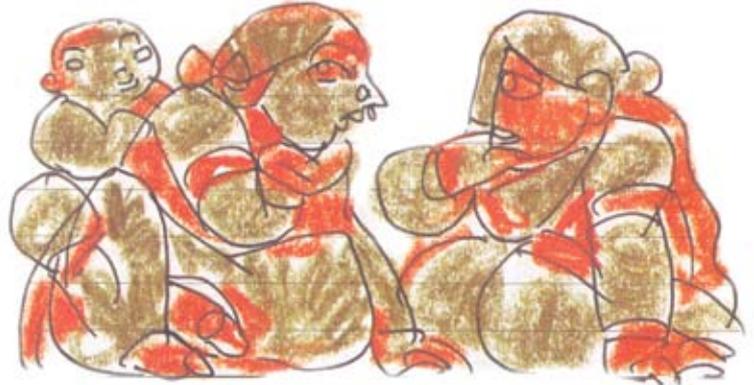
*ASHCHE BOCHOR ABAR HOBE!
Till we meet again next year!*



Aaratrika whole-heartedly thanks artist Ramananda Bandyopadhyay for his art on our cover



Ramananda
Bandyopadhyay



The Bengal School of Art was an influential and avant-garde style of art that flourished in India during the early 20th century. Although it was associated with Indian nationalism and was an artistic endeavour to reclaim India's ancient artistic traditions influenced by its distinctive spiritual qualities, it was also promoted and supported by many British arts administrators. The movement was led by Ernest Binfield Havel - the British art Teacher and Principal of the Government School of Art in Kolkata, with support from artist Abanindranath Tagore, the nephew of Rabindranath Tagore.

Abanindranath Tagore later attempted to develop links with far-Eastern artists in an endeavour to construct a pan Asian model of art. Those associated with this ambitious attempt included Nandalal Bose, Benode Behari Mukherjee and many other eminent artists. Moving away from oil painting (influenced by European academic style) and subjects those were popular with both the British and Indian intelligentsia. Abanindranath looked to ancient murals and medieval Indian miniatures for inspiration both for subject matter as well as indigenous material such as tempera. The philosophy of a Pan-Indian art that he developed found many enthusiastic followers and this came to be known as the Bengal School.

While the Bengal school's influence on Indian art scene was formidable till the middle of the last century, it started gradually decreasing with the spread of modernist ideas, particularly post-independence. In fact Rabindranath Tagore once critiqued the Bengal School for being excessively sentimental and lacking in vitality and life force. The Bengal School however left its lasting legacy in that many artists charted their individual paths, while adhering to the techniques and material popularised by the Bengal School. The Bengal School therefore was a creative fountain head of the art scene of India.

Artist Ramananda Bandyopadhyay is one of the few living artists who paint in the style representative of the Bengal School of Art.

Bandyopadhyay was born in 1936, Birbhum (Bon-Parulia) in West Bengal. He graduated in Fine Arts from Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan in 1957 under illustrious mentors and pioneers of the Bengal School of Paintings like Nandalal Bose, Ramkinkar Baij and Binod Bihari Mukhopadhyay. Bandyopadhyay has served as a teacher of fine arts and has also held the position of director of museum and art gallery at the Ram Krishna Mission Institute of Culture. He was a member of Birla Museum and the Asiatic Society, Kolkata and has held many solo shows and group shows across India and abroad. At 75, he draws and writes daily.

He is inspired by the simplicity and uncomplicated lives of the rustics. A very distinct characteristic of Bandyopadhyay's work is the persistent use of a palette that consists principally of reds, browns, greens and white. The artist says "I owe the three to four colors used in my paintings, exclusively to my mother's addiction to pan (betel leaf). The green of the betel leaf, the lime's white, the catechu's brown and the red of the juice of chewed pan that turned my mother's lips into a pair of pure gems."

Mythology is a favourite subject of this artist. He portrays different Hindu Gods and Goddesses. His parents were ardent followers of the religious tenets of the Ramakrishna Mission and the artist himself spent most of his working life as a Director of the Art Museum and Gallery at the Ramakrishna Mission in Kolkata.

The Bengal School might well be past its heydays, but it still continues to have a deep relevance to the contemporary society. In a world that is so plagued by violence, strife and discord, the paintings of the Bengal School capture a sense of peace, tranquil charm, beauty, simplicity and innocence. It is often a repose to the tormented mind, a balm to the disturbed soul. It is in this that we find the greatness and continuing relevance of Artist Ramananda Bandyopadhyay and his works.

Honours and Awards

- In 2000 Abanindranath Puraskar, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata.
- In 1976 Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata.
- In 1972 All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society (AIFACS), New Delhi.
- In 1961, 1972, 1978 & 1980 Recipient of National Academy Awards, Lait Kala Akademi, New Delhi.
- In 1961 Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata



In his Kolkata studio



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OUR SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Moscow Durga Puja Committee thanks all of you for your participation and support. We look forward to seeing new active members in our team.

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Editing

Shumon Sengupta – Moscow's 911
Teresa Khanna – as always Aaratrika's safety net
Shanti Tavy – the second net and didn't want her name here
Rajendran k – for injecting a dose of adrenalin in our contents
Ritu Jethalia – the third net
Olga Sengupta – for the brainstorming sessions

Illustration

Subir Mitra – for introducing Aaratrika to the eminent Ramananda Bandyopadhyay
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Shounak Mukherjee – Welcome on board as Aaratrika's official cartoonist!
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Moscow Durga Puja celebrations
1990-2011

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Cover picture: Ramananda Bandyopadhyay

In Memory...

Serina Jahan (1966-2011)

Serina loved Russia. She loved this country's literature, nature and over and above everything loved its people. After completing her masters in International Journalism from Peoples Friendship University in Moscow she wrote a book 'Dhusor Moscow' (Moscow through the Mists) in 1996 which was published by Pratikhan. She also wrote a book 'Rokeya Sekhayat Hosen' published by Pashchimbanga Bangla Academy. She was working with Bangla Academy in Kolkata and is survived by her husband Prof. Makhleswar Rahaman and son Lian.



ধূসর মস্কো
সেরিনা জাহান
মূল্য ১০০

একুশ শতক

১৫ শ্যামাচরণ দে স্ট্রিট, কলকাতা-৭৩

*We remember you fondly,
miss you and pray
for your peace.*



বাড়িতে মেদের সাথে, জানুয়ারি ২০০৯

With classmates in Moscow in 1990



Serina with son Lian



মহাভাতে ১৯৯০ সালে সংপর্গীদের সঙ্গে

With Lian at home, 2009



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