

AMRIT

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67TH INDIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Contents



Bilateral	3
Feature	9
Religion	10
Culture	12
Art	14
Tradition	15
Hungarian Section	17
Hindi Section	18
Childrens' Corner	19

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Ambassador presented his Letter of Credence to Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia & Herzegovina



LEFT: Ambassador Presenting his Credentials to H.E. Mr. Dragan Covic, Chairman of the Presidency of BiH in the company of Madam Chhabra, Mr. Vijay Khanduja (First Secretary), Mr. Bhattacharya (HOC). **RIGHT:** Ambassador Chhabra receiving a congratulating handshake from H.E. Mr. Dragan Covic

The Embassy of India in Budapest is concurrently accredited to Bosnia & Herzegovina. Ambassador Rahul Chhabra presented his Letter of Credence to the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia & Herzegovina, H.E. Mr. Dragan Covic on 3 December 2015. During the ceremony Ambassador was accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Kavita Chhabra, as well as Mr. Vijay Khanduja, First Secretary (Political/Commercial) and Mr. Dhiman Kumar Bhattacharya, Second Secretary (HOC/Consular), from the

Embassy of India, Budapest.

The official ceremony was followed by a discussion with the Chairman of the Presidency in which important issues of the bilateral relationship were discussed.

Ambassador Chhabra also called on H.E. Dr. Mladen Ivanic, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia & Herzegovina with whom he discussed bilateral relationship and the plans of further strengthening relationship between

India and Bosnia & Herzegovina. Ambassador met with Mr. Amer Kapetanovic, Assistant Minister for Bilateral Relations, Mr. Mirko Sarovic, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers & Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH, Dr. Bruno Bojic, President of the Foreign Trade Chamber of BiH and Dr. Ivo Komsic, Mayor of Sarajevo. This successful visit was followed by a celebratory reception organized on the occasion of the Republic Day of India on January 29. ■

Republic Day reception in Budapest

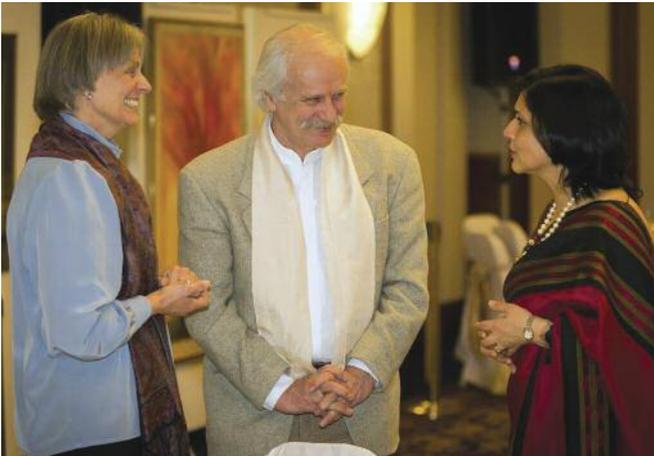
On 26 January 2016, Embassy of India celebrated the 66th anniversary of the Republic Day of India by organising a festive reception in the Hilton Hotel of the Buda Castle District. The event was attended by several prominent personalities, including H.E. Mr. Csaba Balogh, Minister of State for Public Administration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, H.E. Mr. Peter Cseresnyes, Minister of State for Employment and President of India-Hungary Parliamentary Friendship Group, H.E. Ms. Zsuzsanna Nemeth, Minister of State for Financial Services, H.E. Mr. Peter Medgyessy, former Prime Minister of Hungary and Mr Peter Darak, President of the Curia. In addition, members from the civil society, judiciary, members of the Diplomatic Corps residing



Ambassador Rahul Chhabra reading Hon'ble President's Message to the guests



LEFT: Dr. Csaba Balogh, Minister of State for Public Administration and Chief Guest, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade giving speech on the occasion. **RIGHT:** Listening to the National Anthem. Left to right: Dr. Csaba Balogh, Minister of State for Public Administration and Chief Guest, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ambassador Rahul Chhabra, Mr. Péter Cseresyés, President of Indo-Hungarian Parliamentary Friendship Society, Dr. Peter Medgyessy Former PM. Mr. Vijay Khanduja, First Secretary



LEFT: Renowned painter Mr. Imre Szakács showcased some of his best works, providing a small exhibition for the occasion. He also met Ambassador's wife, Mrs. Chhabra. **RIGHT:** Indian classical music by the Daithankar Troupe

in Budapest, prominent representatives of the Hungarian political, business and cultural scene of both Hungary and India and notable Indologists were also present.

The evening started with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by the dignitaries followed by the National Anthems of the two countries. Ambassador Rahul Chhabra in his welcome remarks, gave an overview of the bilateral relationship. Ambassador informed the audience that Indian companies have invested around \$ 2 billion in Hungary and employ around 10,000 people. India was the highest investor in Hungary in 2014, thanks to investment of Euro 475 million by Apollo Tyres in a greenfield plant at Gyongyosalasz. Ambassador also informed the audience about the growing relationship in other fields, most notably political, and culture, including film-making. Chief Guest Dr. Csaba Balogh broadly touched upon excellent cooperation

between the two countries in all fields, most notably in the fields of culture and education where Hungary has offered 200 scholarships to Indian students.

The celebration continued with a mellifluous Santoor music performance by Dr Dhananjay Daithankar and his group. Dr. Daithankar enchanted the audience with his virtuosity of melodies and *jugalbandi* (jamming) with Mr. Sameer Puntambekar on tabla. The invitees also enjoyed the art exhibition of Mr Imre Szakács, member of the Szentendre Art Association, titled 'The World of Sarees'. In his own words, Mr. Imre Szakacs explained that "His India inspired paintings, characterised by both relevance and surreal reflect his experiences and atmosphere of the journey with special mixture of earthly and heavenly symbols and colours".

The invitees also enjoyed Indian gastronomical delights. ■

Republic Day reception in Sarajevo



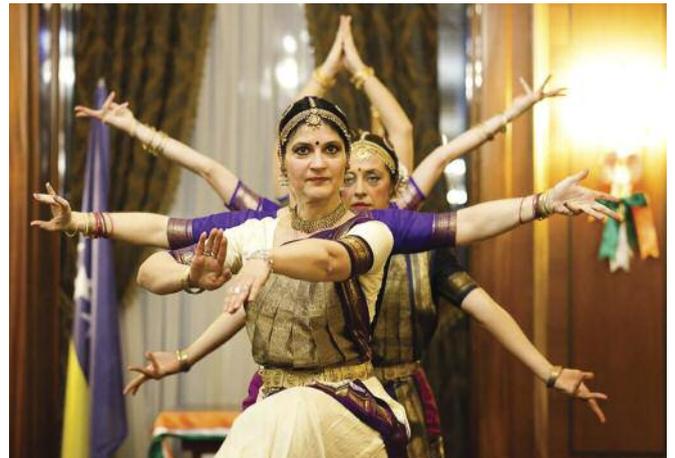
LEFT: Assistant Minister Amer Kapetanovic and Ambassador Chhabra at Hotel Europe.



RIGHT: Assistant Minister Amer Kapetanovic and Ambassador Chhabra at Hotel Europe lighting the lamp



LEFT: Ambassador with Ms Fatima Cita Somun, President of the Indo-Bosnian Friendship Society.



RIGHT: Bharatanatyam performance by Ms Panni Somi

India organized its first ever National Day Reception in Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina, a country of concurrent accreditation for Embassy of India, Budapest. The event was organized at the prestigious Hotel Europe, and marked the 20th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and BiH. Distinguished guest from the diplomatic corps, officials from the BiH and entity governments, members of the civil society, prominent members from the business and cultural circles, and friends of India attended the event. Ambassador Rahul Chhabra highlighted that India and Bosnia & Herzegovina have enjoyed traditionally friendly relationship and that they have a lot in common.

India and Bosnia-Herzegovina are multi-ethnic and

multi-cultural societies and can cooperate and learn in a variety of ways. Mr. Amer Kapetanovic, Assistant Minister for Bilateral Relations from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Mr. Kapetanovic echoed the sentiments expressed by Ambassador Chhabra and pitched for taking the relationship to new heights.

After the lighting of the traditional lamp, the guests had a rare chance to enjoy Bharatanatyam classical dance performance by members of Sivasakti Kalananda Dance Theatre lead by Ms. Panni Somi.

The evening was crowned with a delicious dinner in the delightful company of the invitees amongst joyful conversation. ■



ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA 2016 New Delhi: January 25, 2016

My Fellow Citizens

On the eve of the sixty-seventh Republic Day of our nation, I extend warm greetings to all of you in India and abroad. I convey my special greetings to members of our Armed Forces, Para-military Forces and Internal Security Forces. I pay my tribute to the brave soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice of their lives in defending India's territorial integrity and in upholding the rule of law.

Fellow Citizens

On twenty-sixth January 1950, our Republic was born. On this day, we gave ourselves the Constitution of India. This day saw the culmination of heroic struggle of an extraordinary generation of leaders who overcame colonialism to establish the world's largest democracy. They pulled together India's amazing diversity to build national unity, which has brought us so far. The enduring democratic institutions they established have given us the gift of continuity on the path of progress. India today is a rising power, a country fast emerging as a global leader in science, technology, innovation and start-ups, and whose economic success is the envy of the world.

Fellow Citizens

The year 2015 has been a year of challenges. During this year, the global economy remained subdued. Unpredictability ruled the commodity markets. Uncertainty marked the institutional responses. In such troubled environment, no one nation could be an oasis of growth. India's economy also had to face the blowback. Weak investor sentiments led to withdrawal of funds from emerging markets including India putting pressure on the Indian rupee. Our exports suffered. Our manufacturing sector is yet to recover fully.

In 2015, we were also denied the bounty of nature. While large parts of India were affected by severe drought, other areas reeled under devastating floods. Unusual weather conditions impacted our agricultural production. Rural employment and income levels suffered.

Fellow Citizens

We can call out these challenges because we are aware of them. There is a great virtue in acknowledging a problem and resolving to address it. India is building and

implementing strategies to solve these problems. This year, with an estimated growth rate of 7.3 percent, India is poised to become the fastest growing large economy. Contraction in global oil prices has helped maintain external sector stability and control domestic prices. Despite occasional setbacks, industrial performance this year has been strong.

Aadhaar, with its present reach of 96 crore people, is helping in direct transfer of benefits, plugging leakages and improving transparency. Over 19 crore bank accounts opened under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana is the single largest exercise in the world at financial inclusion. The Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana aims to create model villages. The Digital India programme is an effort to bridge the digital divide. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana targets farmer's welfare. Increased spending on programmes like MGNREGA is aimed at enhancing employment generation to rejuvenate the rural economy.

The Make-in-India campaign will boost manufacturing by facilitating easy conduct of business and improving competitiveness of domestic industry. The Start-up India programme will foster innovation and encourage new-age entrepreneurship. The National Skill Development Mission envisages skilling 300 million youth by 2022.

There will be, amongst us, occasional doubters and baiters. Let us continue to complain; to demand; to rebel. This too is a virtue of democracy. But let us also applaud what our democracy has achieved. With investments in infrastructure, manufacturing, health, education, science and technology, we are positioning ourselves well for achieving a higher growth rate which will in the next ten to fifteen years help us eliminate poverty.

Fellow Citizens

Reverence for the past is one of the essential ingredients of nationalism. Our finest inheritance, the institutions of democracy, ensure to all citizens justice, equality, and gender and economic equity. When grim instances of violence hit at these established values which are at the core of our nationhood, it is time to take note. We must guard ourselves against the forces of violence, intolerance and unreason.

Fellow Citizens



The President Mr Pranab Mukherjee addressing the Nation on the eve of the 67th Republic Day, in New Delhi on January 25, 2016

For revitalizing the forces of growth, we need reforms and progressive legislation. It is the bounden duty of the law makers to ensure that such legislation is enacted after due discussion and debate. A spirit of accommodation, cooperation and consensus-building should be the preferred mode of decision-making. Delays in decision-making and implementation can only harm the process of development.

Fellow Citizens

Peace is the primary objective of a rational consciousness as well as our moral universe. It is the foundation of civilization and a necessity for economic progress. And yet, we have never been able to answer a simple question: why does peace remain so elusive? Why has peace been so much more difficult to attain than degenerate conflict?

As the twentieth century closed down with a remarkable revolution in science and technology, we had some reason for optimism that the twenty-first century would mark an era in

which the energies of people and nations would be committed to a rising prosperity that would eliminate, for the first time, the curse of extreme poverty. That optimism has faded in the first fifteen years of this century. There is unprecedented turbulence across vast regions, with alarming increase in regional instabilities. The scourge of terrorism has reshaped war into its most barbaric manifestation. No corner can now consider itself safe from this savage monster.

Terrorism is inspired by insane objectives, motivated by bottomless depths of hatred, instigated by puppeteers who have invested heavily in havoc through the mass murder of innocents. This is war beyond any doctrine, a cancer which must be operated out with a firm scalpel. There is no good or bad terrorism; it is pure evil.

Fellow Citizens

Nations will never agree on everything; but the challenge today is existential. Terrorists seek to undermine order by rejecting the very basis of strategic stability, which are

recognized borders. If outlaws are able to unravel borders, then we are heading towards an age of chaos. There will be disputes among nations; and, as is well-known, the closer we are to a neighbour the higher the propensity for disputes. There is a civilized way to bridge disagreement; dialogue, ideally, should be a continual engagement. But we cannot discuss peace under a shower of bullets.

We on our subcontinent have a historic opportunity to become a beacon to the world at a time of great danger. We must attempt to resolve the complex edges of our emotional and geo-political inheritance with our neighbours through a peaceful dialogue, and invest in mutual prosperity by recognizing that human beings are best defined by a humane spirit, and not their worst instincts. Our example can be its own message to a world in anxious need of amity.

Fellow Citizens

Each of us has the right to lead a healthy, happy and productive life in India. This right has been breached, especially in our cities, where pollution has reached alarming levels. Climate change has acquired real meaning with 2015 turning out to be the warmest year on record. Multiple strategies and action at various levels is necessary. Innovative solutions of urban planning, use of clean energy, and changing the mindsets of the people call for active participation of all stakeholders. Permanence of such changes can be ensured only if people own these changes.

Fellow Citizens

Love for one's motherland is the basis of all progress. Education, with its enlightening effect, leads to human progress and prosperity. It helps us develop forces of spirit which can revive lost hopes and ignored values. Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan had said and I quote: "End-

product of education should be a free creative man who can battle against historical circumstances and adversities of nature" (unquote). The advent of the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" demands that this free and creative man should also be able to master the velocity of change to absorb disruptions which are getting embedded in the systems and societies. An eco-system that fosters critical thinking and makes teaching intellectually stimulating is necessary. It must inspire scholarship and encourage unfettered respect for knowledge and teachers. It must instill a spirit of reverence towards women that will guide social conduct of an individual throughout his life. It must breed a culture of deep thought and create an environment of contemplation and inner peace. Through an open-minded approach to the wider spectrum of ideas emanating from within, our academic institutions must become world-class. A beginning has already been made with two Indian institutes of higher education finding place in the top two hundred in international rankings.

Fellow Citizens

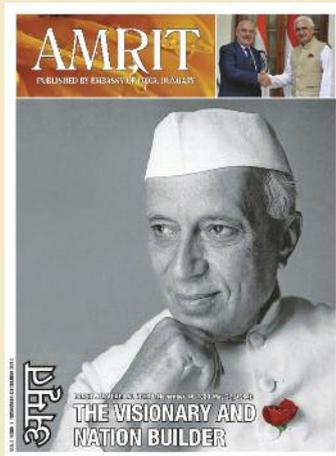
The generational change has happened. Youth have moved centre-stage to take charge. March ahead with Tagore's words from Nutan Yuger Bhore:

*"CHOLAAY CHOLAAY BAAJBEY JOYER
BHEREE – PAAYER BEGEYI POTH KETEY JAAY,
KORISH NEY AAR DERI"*

Move ahead, the roll of drums announce your triumphal march; With feet of glory, you shall cut out your own path; Delay not, delay not, a new age dawns.

Thank you.
Jai Hind!

Some of the previous issues of Amrit



IMPORTANCE OF REPUBLIC DAY

by Sayantan Chakravarty



Let's rewind for a moment, and turn the clock back. Unwilling to let the sun set entirely over its prized colony, it was nearly 90 years ago that the British empire offered dominion status to India. Freedom, the empire proposed, somewhat unwisely in retrospect, would be limited, and come with several strings attached. It was an idea that failed to divide India's subjugated masses. The nation plundered and pillaged through much of its modern history, rose in united fervor to reject the offer of dominion status, outright, once and for all. Led by the eternally course-correcting Mahatma, and helped by a band of visionary, incorruptible and deeply patriotic leaders, India instead declared Purna Swaraj. The country, they proclaimed in unison, was to be fully independent of British rule, nothing less would do. The British simply had to leave the Raj and give up the riches of the subcontinent they had forced themselves upon for 300 years.

That day of declaration was January 26. The year, 1930.

It took 20 years since that day for India to become a sovereign, democratic Republic. On November 26, 1949, the Constitution of India provided the exact words that would define the would-be Republic, and what true freedom would entail. Those words proclaimed Justice (social, economic and political), Liberty (of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship), Equality (of status and of opportunity, and to promote among them all), Fraternity (assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation). Finally, when on January 26, 1950, India was declared a Republic, from every corner of the country echoed the powerful and fiercely nationalistic sentiments of January 26, 1930.

So when on January 26, 2016, President Pranab Mukherjee, along with the chief guest at India's 67th Republic Day, French

President Francois Hollande, and others raised themselves for the Indian national anthem, also rose into the crispy cool Delhi air the values of freedom, justice, liberty, fraternity.

France that had also occupied a slice of India—Pondicherry, Yanam, Chandernagore, Mahe and Karaikal—sent 136 of its soldiers from the 35th Infantry Regiment, at the 67th Republic Day Parade. It was for the first time in the history of the Indian Republic Day that a foreign contingent had marched across the Raj Path. As it turned out, there was a method in the choice of the regiment. Founded in the 1600s, the 35th Infantry had fought British troops alongside the army of Hyder Ali in southern India between 1781 and 1784. The regiment's motto is *tous gaillards, pas d'traindards*—meaning all strapping fellows, no dawdlers.

The Republic Day Parade, considered the most spectacular one of its kind in the world, has gone from strength to strength. These days over 25 marching and mounted contingents, dozens of army vehicles, over a score of military bands, 30 cultural tableaux, 30 aircraft, in addition to cultural performers and over a thousand school children make up the parade. It starts from the President's House in Raisina Hill, and goes past the India Gate, some 2 km away. Each year the Prime Minister lays a floral wreath at the Amar Jawan Jyoti, a memorial to unknown martyrs and soldiers at India Gate, before joining the President.

The unknown martyrs of those glorious years of struggle for liberation from British rule who gave their present such that the sweet scent of freedom would be available to generations to come, are the real heroes of Republic Day. Without them, Purna Swaraj would definitely have remained a distant dream. It is important that we renew our engagement with that piece of inspirational history, year after year. ■

Symbols of Christmas

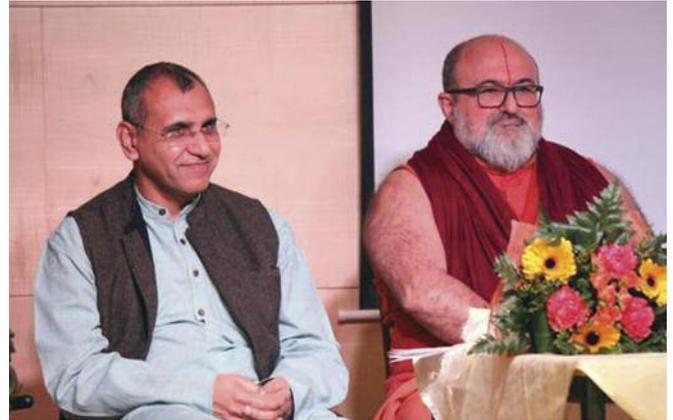
by Bhagirathi Upasika

Under the aegis of the Vedic Society, Embassy of India organized a programme on December 16, 2016, on the theme "Symbols of Christmas", at which Venerable Lama Csopel from Hungary Karma Kagyu Buddhist Community and Venerable Shri Swami Shankaratilaka Paramahansa Sarasvati, from Vedic Foundation of the Himalayas, gave insights of Christmas celebrations. Shri Vijay Khanduja, First Secretary, welcomed the venerable speakers, comparing them with Santa Claus who had come to give the gift of knowledge on the occasion of Christmas.

Venerable Lama Csopel, in his address, delivered beautiful insights into the unity of all religions and that all paths lead to the Supreme One. He quoted from the teachings of Jesus Christ and compared the same with Buddhist principles. He emphasized that if the days are holy, all days are holidays.

Swamiji Shankaratilaka Paramahansa Sarasvati, who was born in Granada, Spain, and is the direct disciple of His Holiness, Shri Swami Tilak Paramahansa Sarasvati, in his address mentioned that Christmas represents two aspects of birthday of Jesus and Christ - Christ being the person who appeared after the sacrifice to rescue mankind from its sins. Yeshua was his Hebrew name and Christ his Greek one since he was crucified. The horizontal line of the cross represents his human nature while the vertical line of the cross represents the immortality and his divine nature. So the hope of all mankind, according to Christian doctrine, is that all human beings can have the opportunity to achieve the divine nature too as humans, the same way as Jesus got his divine connection with his Father.

In the ancient time, when celebrating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ it was time to think about the suffering and the impermanency of the existence. The time to get salvation from suffering and know what is our real Nature. In our Vedic tradition it is not possible to find any *Jivanmukta* or *Bodhisattva* without *prema* for all humanity. Because their love is transformed in *yajya*, in sacrifice. They dedicated their lives to all of us and furthermore they renounced their *Asmita*, their conception of their own "I" for a concept of "we are one". It is really important to think about this *Buddhi-prapti* or the enlightenment of our intelligence about who we are. A very famous sentence in Ishopanishad and also Narayana Upanishad says: "Vasudeva kutumbhakam", our attitude as Vedic or



Mr Vijay Khanduja and Shri Swami Shankaratilaka Paramahansa Sarasvati



Honourable Láma Csöpel – Hungary Karma Kagyu Buddhist Community speaking on the occasion



Shri Swami Shankaratilaka Paramahansa Sarasvati speaking about the symbols of Christmas

Hindus is to feel we are one and the entire universe is our home. In the full sentence they say the *vipra* or intelligent person thinks that everything that happens in the universe happens to him. Any kind of suffering is his suffering. There is no better definition of love than that you sacrifice yourself for others. Following the natural Law of Dharma when I say "I like you" is egotistic whereas when thinking in transcendental Dharma, the love means that I live for you. I am ready to live giving the last drop of my blood for all. This was the hope of the Jews when thought of the Messiah, a great hero who comes to rescue us from the darkness and slavery. They might have thought that he was coming to rescue them from the Egyptians or Romans, but the biggest slavery is the ignorance, of not knowing who we are.

Jesus Christ was part of the congregation of the Essenes, congregation to which his Guru, St. John the Baptist, belonged also. Like in the Vedic culture where there is concept of being a *dvija*, to get a *vijanma* or a new birth in life, to be a twice born. There is also the concept of purifying ourselves to reborn again without dying when taking a sacred bath in Ganges. In the same way, in Palestine they had this conception with the Jordan River. It was not possible to start a new spiritual life without taking bath and purify the human nature first.

Speaking on Immaculate Conception, Swamiji mentioned that like Krishna and Buddha, Jesus Christ came to this world in a magical way because as Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita: "I appear in this Universe by my own maya, my own power" which means that he is not coming by the interaction of positive and negative energies. This happens with the *Maha Avataras*. The others are the *Guna Avataras*, who come from natural birth by the interaction of two human beings, although their purified soul were full of Divine Power.

The symbol of the Christmas Star is our *agnya chakra* (the energy centre between the two eyebrows), which symbolises the enlightenment of our consciousness. The Christmas star was also charged with the supreme God eye. This symbol was used by the Egyptians by a religion called Atom, the only monotheist religion among Egyptians. When we see the Christmas star, astronomers say it is a star but the followers say it is the rise of the consciousness. The symbol carries the feeling of the person who believes in it.

Swamiji added that his Gurudeva taught him that if he wanted to see the face of God, it has to be seen first in the face of my mother, that is why it is very important for Christians to think of the Virgin Mary because she is the Mother. She is the Shakti Devi and becomes the winner over demons like Durga did, over all the demons who always wanted to put our life in darkness. It is very

important that this brave lady brought into life the saviour of humanity. Manu, one the most important legislator in our Vedic Sanskriti, Tradition, says: our mother is our first Guru. Any noble thought we have, we learn it from our mother. This is the reason Manu suggested that women need to be religious. It is not possible to be divine without being a good human being. When Jesus Christ was on the cross, everyone was far from him. Only his mother remained with him. This is, why sacrifice is a word that must be linked to motherhood.

Swamiji emphasized that it was important to have moments of silence for oneself and to contemplate on the meaning of life and to take inspiration from great teachers like Christ. The symbolism of Christ's birth in a stable represents the darkness of the heart. In the stables there were two animals: a donkey, which represents our stupid ego and a cow, which represents motherhood, all the blessings. This ego only learns with problems, beatings and mistakes. Unfortunately the donkey is with the father because the ego is associated with 'malehood'.

The Christmas tree is an imported and latter day tradition. St. Boniface was a British missionary who preached in Germany in the 8th century. For the druids and Celtic people the tree was sacred as they were connected with the Vedic Tradition. The pine was sacred where St. Boniface was preaching and it was not possible to cut it. After his preaching, he cut the tree and all the trees around it fell down except a little one, it remained untouched. Christianity is a mix with a lot of Traditions. The small tree represents the new gospel of Jesus. For this reason we don't use a big tree but a small one, which represents Jesus winning over all kinds of idols and Gods.

The star represents the high consciousness, the globes the good desires and the gifts the blessings. Christianity is not a religion only for the West as Christ was from East. The three gifts from the wise Kings were Gold, Incense and Myrrh. The Gold represents the King Nature of Jesus Christ. But in the spiritual field, the Gold is the highest value of virtuosity, it is the supreme truth. If you want to be a good leader never cheat your followers. This is the reason why there is no higher Dharma than the truth. The incense represents the God Nature of Jesus. And in the mental field it is the opportunity to dissolve the ego and do *ekagrata parinama*, that is to say the perfect focus of the mind in one point. We use it to purify ourselves and attain deep concentration of the mind. The Myrrh is the human Nature of Jesus and represents the need to do one mission. In the physical field Myrrh means instinct, so it represents the charismatic nature. Joining the three elements we get a perfect human being combined with a good leader. ■

ASCC ACTIVITIES



Film Club

On every first and third Friday of every month film evenings are arranged at the Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre. Four films were screened at the Cultural Centre in December 2015 and January 2016 under the aegis of the

Indian Cine Club:

Bioscope (2008), Hindi	04.12.2015
Gangoobai (2013), Marathi/Hindi	18.12.2015
Commando (2013), Hindi	08.01.2016
Singh is Kinng (2008), Hindi	22.01.2016



LEFT: Mr Gábor Pilári & Ms Zsuzsanna Vajda giving chai to the audience.

RIGHT: Displaying leather puppets



material. The evening concluded with a discussion and a Q & A session with the speakers, and they also did a small demonstration of leather puppets brought from Kerala. The presentation was so interesting that the audience did not want to let the artists finish the screening.

**‘The symbols of Christmas’:
lecture under the aegis of Vedic
Society**

16 December 2015



LEFT: Kerala shadow puppets. RIGHT: Screening about Kathakali puppetry



Mr Vijay Khanduja, First Secretary,
speaking on the occasion

Temple shadow play, Kathakali theater, Kerala – Travelogue by Márkus Theatre

15 December 2015

Embassy of India and Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre organized a lecture on puppetry and shadow play of India on 15 December, 2015 in the Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre. The programme started with chai tasting, which was prepared by the lecturers. After the chai ceremony, the two

speakers greeted the audience and introduced themselves and their work. This was followed by a presentation of photos taken during their scholarly trip to Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. The puppeteers took part in a festival, which was followed by a professional training in a house of a Malayalee family. They studied the shadow play technics and the traditional Kathakali puppetry here. The presentation was set up of their photo and video



The audience listening
to the greetings



Vinod Dhaygude singing a song
Community speaking



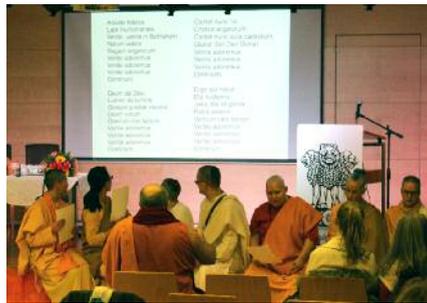
Venerable Lama Csöpel,
Karma Kagyu Buddhist

the divinity which is every man's true nature. (...) Both the goal and the methods employed for reaching it are called Yoga."
(Swami Vivekananda)

The legendary pioneer Rukmini Devi, founder of Kalakshetra rightly observed that dance is a form of Yoga. She said: "Every performance becomes a means of not only making the dancer one with the higher Divine Self but the audience too. This oneness is Yoga."
(Rukmini Devi)



LEFT: Venerable Swami Shankaratilaka Paramahansa Saraswati (Vedic Foundation of the Himalayas). **RIGHT:** Common singing in the end of the event



With these mottos the dancers came on stage. During the performance, unity was born from prose and dance: on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, the artists evoked the Guru's teachings, which was illustrated by Bharatanatyam dance pieces.

Under the aegis of Vedic Society of Hungary, Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre organized an event on 16 December 2015 from 18.00 onwards at Embassy of India, Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre.

of the 2016 semester on 12 January 2016, 18.00, a bharatanatyam dance performance titled "The yoga of dance, the dance of yoga: homage to Swami Vivekananda".

The programme started with the welcome address of Mr Vijay Khanduja, First Secretary (Pol/Com). It was followed by two lectures: one lecture by Honourable Láma Csöpel of Hungary (Karma Kagyu Buddhist Community) and one by the Venerable Swami Shankaratilaka Paramahansa Saraswati (Vedic Foundation of the Himalayas) on the symbols of Christmas. Both the lecturers gave a speech on the subject comparing different religions' aspects, emphasizing the similarity of the essence of all. The evening concluded with a Question-Answer session and with Indian refreshments and tea.

"The ultimate goal of all mankind, the aim and end of all religions, is but one—reunion with God, or what amounts to the same, with



Ms Éva Berki & Ms Mariann
Ádász performing

Ms Éva Berki and Ms Mariann Ádász have both been interested in dance and in India from an early age. The two interests met in 2003, when they started to learn Bharatanatyam in Szegec city. In Budapest, both continued their studies as disciples of Ms Ildikó Gulyás. In India they had the opportunity to learn from the famous Pandanallur guru, Smt. Meenakshi Chitharanjan. Having followed a rigorous training since September 2010, they participated in a group performance in February 2011 and performed their Arangetram at the end of the year. The artists also tried themselves in Carnatic music under the guidance of Smt. Randhini Arvind. Coming home from India in the summer of 2011, they have held several successful programs in Hungary. ■

The yoga of dance, the dance of yoga: homage to Swami Vivekananda—Bharatanatyam performance by Ms Éva Berki and Ms Mariann Ádász

Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre organized the first occasional programme



A house-full audience seeing the artists

Diverse Art Movements in the First Half of the 20th Century

by Kavita Chhabra



Bharat Mata by Abanindranath Tagore



Jamini Roy (Mother and Child)



Nandalal Bose: Shiva drinking world poison

What is an art movement? What influences an artist from any field to give birth to this movement? Is it the people, environment, technology, new material, or their heightened sensitivity to their surroundings? While Europe was breaking from traditional art, we in India were looking at traditional art for inspiration in the early 20th century. Was it to resuscitate our cultural identity?

The early part of the 20th century saw enormous changes in the modes and meanings of art work produced in Europe. *Modern artists* experimented with new ways of seeing and with new ideas about the nature of materials and functions of art; a tendency away from the narrative, which was characteristic for traditional art. Painters like Vincent

van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, Georges Seurat and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec all of whom were essential for the development of *modern art*, experimented and thus gave birth to different art styles like fauvism, cubism, expressionism.

India, however, in the early years of the 20th century was under the British Raj and saw a different kind of movement: a group of nationalistic and *avant-garde* painters with renewed upsurge of patriotic fervour. The art of India is a vital cultural expression of India. It is intertwined with assertions of nationalism, the equation of modernisation and westernisation, and a desire to preserve its cultural heritage. Artists rejected the art of Raja Ravi

Varma, who was notably the most famous Indian artist of those times. His works were considered superficially Indian by them, because despite depicting mythological Indian themes, it imitated Western styles of painting. They declared that such a style was unsuitable for depicting Indian myths and legends.

This group felt that western art was “materialistic” in character and a genuine Indian style of painting must draw the inspiration from the non-western art practise, and that India needed to return to its own traditions to recover spiritual values. Thus the *Bengal School of Art* was born, as one of the earliest art movements of this country.

This nationalistic project was led by Abanindranath Tagore and supported by open-minded British art administrator E. B. Havell. Some of the prominent artists who joined this movement were Nandalal Bose, Gaganendranath Tagore, Asit Kumar Haldar, Jamini Roy, Ramkinkar Baij, Rabindranath Tagore, and Sunanyani Devi. They started experimenting. Firstly, they broke away from the oil paintings. Next, they turned for inspiration to medieval Indian traditions of the miniature paintings and ancient art of mural paintings in Ajanta Caves, as well as indigenous material such as tempera.

The continuity of earlier traditions was sought to be maintained by

borrowing from legends and classical literature like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Gita, the Puranas, and the writings of Kalidasa and Omar Khayyam. At the same time, these artists were also influenced by the art of the Japanese artist Yokoyama Taikan and art historian Okakura Kakuzo, who visited India at the time to develop an *Asian Art movement*. The Bengal school's influence in India declined with the spread of modernist ideas in the 1920s.

During the 1930s and '40s, a number of groups were active in the cultural arena in India. Along with theatre professionals and writers, visual artists joined together under the banner of "*progressive*". In Bombay in 1947, Francis Newton Souza, M.F. Husain, and others

formed the *Progressive Artists' Group*. They had leftist leanings, rejected the nationalist art of the *Bengal School*, and embraced international *modern art* practices.



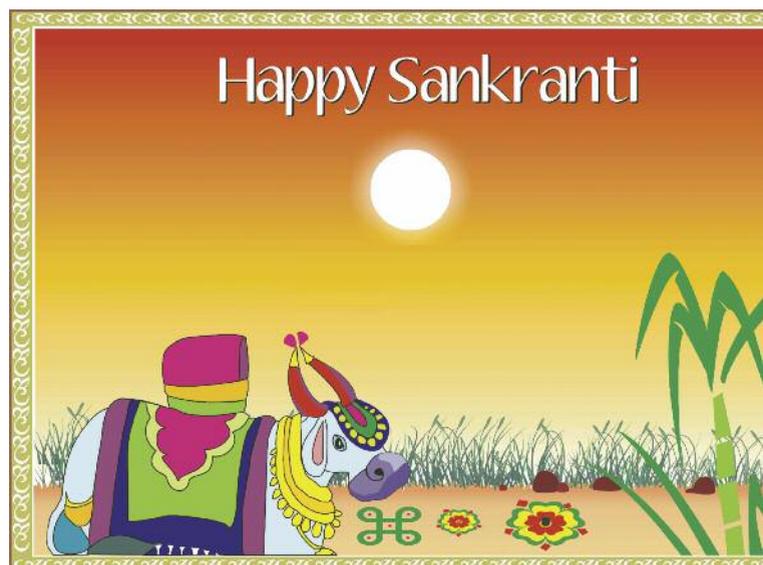
Cocooned in its environment the artistic expression of the artists from *Bengal School of Art* was able to emerge as a movement; while one wonders in this day and age, with the reach and influx of internet, would this movement have developed in its pure form? ■

Festivals of India

by Raji Nateshan

Being a highly spiritual country, festivals are at the heart of people's lives in India. The numerous and varied festivals that are held throughout the year are a unique way of seeing Indian culture at its best. In India, festivals have a great religious and social significance and are dedicated to different gods, goddesses and also to the Mother Nature. When religion intervenes to invest the festivals with spiritual meaning, it becomes worship. People observe these festivals with great devotion as they purify their minds and inspire them to lead better and fuller lives. The Festivals of India can be associated with religion and at the same time serve as a thanksgiving to mother earth, the natural elements, and the seasons of the year.

January is the month that marks the beginning of the harvest season, hence sets the tone of celebration for harvest festival across the length and breadth of the country. This occasion is celebrated as Makar Sankranti in most parts of India. As the first festival in the year's calendar, everyone eagerly awaits it. Considering India's size and diversity, it is no surprise that the celebration of Sankranti is varied, and has deep scientific and cultural reasons to support its gaiety and vibrancy. India being a predominantly agricultural land, sun and rain influence the lives of farmers immensely. When the sun travels southwards, the days are shorter, colder, and bring less sunlight, which is unsuitable for agriculture.



Hence, the northward journey of the sun is advantageous and eagerly awaited by farmers.

According to the Hindu astronomy, on Makar Sankranti, the 14th of January, the sun enters the Makara rashi (Capricorn) thereby beginning its northward journey (Uttarayan). Sankranti represents the beginning of the



farming season and the farmer community, pray to the Sun god by offering sweet puddings cooked from the new harvests, to bless them with bountiful crops. Unlike other festivals, which are based on lunar positions, Sankranti is a solar event and falls on the same date every year.

In Tamil Nadu Sankranti is known as 'Pongal' and is a four-day festival. 'Bhogi Pandigai' marks the beginning of celebrations of Pongal, which is one of the most important traditional festivals of Tamil people. The theme of Bhogi Pandigai is to throw away and burn old and unwanted stuffs to bring in spiritual bhogam (prosperity) into our house and heart. In Andhra Pradesh too, it is celebrated as a three-day harvest festival. In essence, in the South this Sankranti is worship for the Sun God. The Telugus like to call it 'Pedda Panduga' meaning big festival.

In Gujarat Sankrant is observed as 'Uttarayan' and there is a custom of giving gifts to relatives. The elders in the family give gifts to the younger members of the family. The Gujarati Pundits on this auspicious day grant scholarships to students for higher studies in astrology and philosophy. Kite flying has been associated with this festival in a big way. It has become an internationally well-known event.

Makar Sankranti" or "Sankrat" is one



of the major festivals in the state of Rajasthan. The day is celebrated with special Rajasthani delicacies and sweets such as 'pheeni'(either with sweet milk or with sugar syrup) sweets made with jaggery and sesame. In Bundelkhand and Madhya Pradesh this festival of Sankranti is known as 'Sakarati' and is celebrated with great pomp and merriment accompanied by lot of sweets.

In Punjab, Sankranti is celebrated as "Lohri". Huge bonfires are lit ... merriment. In Uttar Pradesh, on Makara Sankranti people give Khichadi (a mixture of pulses and rice) in charity, take ceremonial dips in holy rivers, participate in the Uttarayani fairs and celebrate the festival of 'Ghughutia.'

In Assam, this festival is celebrated as 'Bhogali Bihu,' originating from the word 'Bhog' that is eating and enjoyment. It is a harvest festival and marks the end of harvesting season.

In Orissa people prepare makara



chaula, uncooked newly harvested rice, banana, coconut, jaggery, sesame, cottage cheese puddings for offerings to gods and goddesses.

These celebrations teach moral lessons to people and unite them as they have their roots in the ancient folk-traditions. The festivals may differ from one state to another and the manner in which they are celebrated but they all preach communal harmony, teach gratitude and oneness with nature.

Makar Sankranti is one of the most auspicious days for the Hindus, and is celebrated across the country, in many forms and hues, with great devotion, fervor and gaiety. ■



P. KIRAN GAYOR

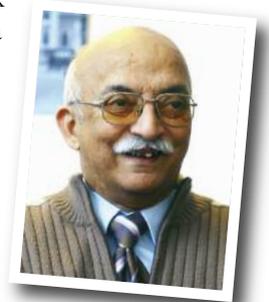
Kevés városlakónak kell bemutatni Gayor Kiran Prabhat gyermekorvost, aki már hosszú évtizedek óta a Sarló utcai rendelőjében praktizál. Igazi egyéniség ő, akit a gyerekek és a szülők egyformán imádnak.

A doktor úrnak elképesztő a memóriája. 1967 van Magyarországon. Pedig 1986. október elseje óta, amióta a Sarló utcai rendelőben praktizál, több tízezer kis páciensnek volt a doktor bácsija. Amikor lánya kicsi volt, mindig azt mondta: „Apa, én megyek veled, Te mindenhol megállsz.” Az utcán is folyton ismerősbe botlik, beszélgetni kezd, hiszen őt komolyan érdekli a „gyerekei” jövője, hogy mit csinálnak épp, mi lett velük. Akik – az ő szavaival élve – „neki születtek”, azoknak a nevét, lakcímét, ha éjfélkor felkeltik álmából, akkor is el tudja mondani.

A gyerekeknek nagyon kellemes élményeik vannak a doktor bácsiról. A váró közepén apró székek voltak elhelyezve, a falon rajzfilmfigurák képei, miniatűr asztalkák, ahol a kicsit elüthetik az időt várakozás alatt. Injekció utáni sírás nemigen történt. Olyan volt mindig, mint egy varázsló, aki a trükkjeivel könnyen elterelte a gyerekek figyelmét. Humora emlékezetes maradt számukra. Ilyen volt pl. a rosszaság vagy az év végi hármas osztályzat elleni szuri, a sok-sok viccelődés, ami a legszótlanabb gyerekből is

szavakat csalt elő.

A doktor most is pulóvere alatt hordja a sztetoszkópot, ingzsebbe rejtve. S nem azért, hogy lássák, orvos, hanem hogy mindig meleg legyen, ne pedig egy rossz emlék. Gayor doktor Mumbaiban született, de Delhiben is élt. 1967-ben érkezett Magyarországra. Családjában sok orvos volt, nagypapja, nagybátyja, unokatestvérei után ő is az orvosi pályát választotta. Magyar feleségével az egyetemen ismerkedtek meg, évfolyamtársak voltak. Két gyermekük született, egy fiú (orvos-közgazdász) és egy lány (angol-némettanár), mesterképzés Veszprém, veje orvos-kardiológus, és ma már egy unoka büszke nagyszülei. Mindig szerette a gyerekeket, ezért lett épp gyermekorvos. Velük nehezebb összeveszni is. A szülőkkel persze előfordulnak konfliktusok, ami a szívében, az a száján, mert szókimondó ember. Könyörögni nem tanult, kiáll az igazá mellett, de igyekszik mindig korrekt lenni. Legtöbbször persze rajongásig szeretik. Sok éves lelkiismeretes munkáját 2014-ben Fejér Megyei Prima díjjal tüntették ki. ■



—Buthy Lilla írása nyomán

2015 novemberében Horváth Lili első mozifilmje, a "Szerdai gyerek" nyerte a legjobb mozgóképeknek járó Arany Bengáli Tigris díjat a kalkuttai nemzetközi filmfesztiválon.

Az összegzés szerint a november 14. és 21. között 61 országból 149 filmet vonultatott fel a kalkuttai filmfesztivál, amely India legfontosabb nemzetközi filmes eseményeinek egyike.

"Az, hogy a miénktől ennyire távoli kultúrában is utat tör magának a Szerdai gyerek, döbbenetes és megható számomra. Azt remélem, a hazai közönség is szeretni fogja a filmünket"- reagált a hírre Horváth Lili.

A Szerdai gyerek sikere egy jórészt elsőfilmesekből álló fiatal kreatív csapat közös munkájának eredménye. Horváth Lili rendezőn és Vecsei Kinga főszereplőn kívül ez az alkotás a nagyjátékfilm bemutatkozása többek közt Fehér Károly producernek (Popfilm), Szabó Dániel vágónak és Maly Róbert operatőrnek is. A Szerdai gyerek zeneszerzője Presser Gábor, hangmérnöke Várhegyi Rudolf, koproducere Henning Kamm és Pataki Ági.

A Szerdai gyerek hőse az állami gondozásból frissen

kikerült 19 éves Maja (Vecsei Kinga) önsorsrontó hajlama ellenére azért harcol, hogy négyéves fia felügyeleti jogát megszerezze - nem akarja, hogy a gyerek sorsában a sajátja ismétlődjön meg. Önmagával folytatott küzdelmei egy váratlan lehetőséghez és egy szokatlan új szerelemhez vezetnek. Maja, aki ahhoz szokott hozzá, hogy mindenben gyereke apja (Antal Zsolt) döntsön helyette, először találkozik olyan férfival (Thuróczy Szabolcs), aki úgy tűnik, bízik benne. A régi megszokásoktól azonban nem egyszerű szabadulnia.

(Forrás: MTT)

A film december 3. óta látható a magyar filmszínházakban.

Előzetes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wls6yzhxXg&feature=youtu.be

—Hungarian director Lili Horvath's socio-realist drama "The Wednesday Child" won the best film award at the 21st Kolkata International Film Festival in November, 2015. Overall, 149 movies from 61 countries were screened at the festival.

"The Wednesday Child" is a tale of a rebellious teen mother determined to regain custody of her young son.

—Source: The Indian Express

परिवार की परम्परा

अम्मी फज़र की नमाज़ के बाद कुरान ए पाक की तिलावत कर रही थी। अल्लाफ अब्बू के साथ पास के ही हाई स्कूल के मैदान में पसीने बहा रहा था। अब्बू फौज़ से रिटायर्ड सूबेदार थे। अब वह गाँव के बच्चों के लिए एक छोटा सा स्कूल चलाते थे। अल्लाफ अभी छुट्टियों में घर आया हुआ था। बचपन से ही उसका सपना फौज़ में जाने का था। हवलदार अब्दुल हमीद से लेकर विक्रम बत्रा तक और न जाने कितनों की वीर गाथाएँ सुनकर ही वो बड़ा हुआ था।

अम्मी हलवा और पूरी बनाने में मसगूल थी, उसके लाडले का जन्मदिन जो था। पर अल्लाफ अब तक लौटा नहीं था। अम्मी बार बार दरवाजे की तरफ देखती और पूरी बेलती जा रही थी। आज वो बहुत खुश थी। लेकिन देरी के कारण मन ही मन में झुंझला रही थी। “कहाँ रह गए दोनों। तुम्हारे अब्बू को आज के दिन तो कम से कम अल्लाफ को नहीं ले जाना था। देखा नहीं साढ़े आठ बज गए हैं, उन्हें भी खुद स्कूल नहीं जाना क्या?” मैं मन ही मन मुस्कराकर अम्मी के हाँ में हाँ मिला रही थी। वर्जिश के बाद अब्बू के साथ अल्लाफ किशोरी दास के इंटरनेट कैफे में आया हुआ था। आज उन दोनों का सपना पूरा होना था। उसके हाथ बड़ी तेजी से माऊस और की-बोर्ड पे चल रहे थे। बेटे से ज्यादा बाप बेचैन था। रिजल्ट देखकर अब्बू कि आँखों से आंसू छलक आए। अल्लाफ ने रक्षा अकादमी की परीक्षा पास कर ली थी और अगले महीने से उसे ट्रेनिंग पर पूणे जाना था। फख्र से अब्बू का सीना चौड़ा हुआ जा रहा था। आखिर एक सूबेदार का बेटा फौज़ में अफसर बनने जा रहा था। बधाईयों का तांता लगता गया। “तोहरा बेटा भी फौज़ में भर्ती हो गया रे फौजी मास्टर। अब ई भी फौज़ का बन्दूक से दुसमन का सीना चीरेगा रे”। कमलेस्वर काका जो अब सत्तर बरस के हो चले थे, दूर से ही चिल्लाते हुए आकर बाप बेटे के गले लग गए। “गाँव का नाम फिर से रौशन हो गया रे” पुजारी चाचा ने ये कहते हुए माथे पर तिलक लगाकर आशीर्वाद दिया। हुजूम बढ़ता गया। कल्लू हलवाई की मिठाइयाँ कम पड़ती गयीं। पूरा हुजूम अब घर की तरफ बढ़ चला था। इन सब बातों से अनजान अम्मी अपने बेटे के जन्मदिन की तैयारियों में लगी थी।

अम्मी ये खबर सुनकर पहले तो बहुत खुश हुई। अल्लाफ को गले से लगा लिया लेकिन अगले ही पल बेटे के माथे को रोते हुए चूमती गयीं और बोली “तुझे नहीं जाना फौज़ में, सुना तू”। अम्मी की आँखों के सामने बरबक्स इरफान मामू और नानू का चेहरा आ गया। अतीत की घटनाएँ एक-एक कर आती चली गयीं और उनका गला रून्धता चला गया। “आपकी अम्मा के तो थे तीन-तीन बेटे। सो एक को फौज़ में भेजना सुहाया होगा उन्हें। मेरा तो एक ही लाल है। मुझे उसे नहीं भेजना कहीं पूना वूना।” अम्मी का रोकर बुरा हाल था। अब्बू एकदम खामोश थे।

“लेकिन अम्मी! अल्लाफ भाईजान की मर्जी जाने बगैर आप अपने इमोशन्स उस पर थोप तो नहीं सकती ना?” मैं बीच में ही बोल पड़ी। “और फिर मैं हूँ ना यहाँ आपके पास।” मैं अम्मी हो हिम्मत बंधाने

की कोशिश करने लगी। तुम चुप रहो डाक्टर खुशी। नाम तो मेरा खुशीदा था लेकिन अम्मी प्यार से मुझे कभी खुशी और चिढ़कर डाक्टर खुशी ही बोला करती थी। “अजी! आप कुछ भी नहीं कहेंगे क्या?” अम्मी जल्द से जल्द निर्णय चाहती थी।

अल्लाफ नाश्ता कर अपने कमरे में बंद हो शहर के अन्य दोस्तों को खुशखबरी देने में व्यस्त हो चुका था। इधर माँ ज़िद पकड़े बैठी थी। अब्बू वहीं कमरे में चक्कर काट रहे थे। जैसे कुछ सोच रहे हों। उनके लिये भी तो निर्णय लेना टेढ़ी खीर था। बरसों पुरानी फौजी परंपरा रही है घर में और अब इकलौता अल्लाफ। उनका भी कलेजा मुह को आ रहा था।

माँ थी तो काफी हिम्मती लेकिन अतीत कि यादों ने उन्हें परेशान कर रखा था। बेटे को फौज़ में भेजने की पुरानी तमन्ना, देश के लिए फर्ज और ममता के बीच वो झूल रही थी। रात को अम्मी को नींद न आनी थी, ना आयी। आखिर छोटी उम्र में ही बाप और फिर साथ बड़ा हुआ एकदम जवान इकलौते भाई की शहादत और उसके बाद के घर के हालात ने उन्हें तोड़ कर रख दिया था। कहते हैं के वक्त सब जखम भर देता है तो उन्हीं उम्मीदों के साथ हम बढ़े हो रहे थे। बचपन में अम्मी हमें नाना और मामू की वीरता की कहानियाँ परियों की कहानियों से ज्यादा रोमांचित करने वाली होती थी। और अल्लाफ तो बचपन में ही अम्मी को सैल्यूट करके तोतली जबान में गाने लगता – “दना गना मना अदिनायत ती दय हे, भालत भाग्य बिदाता” और फिर मूट्टियाँ लहराकर नारे लगाता – भालत माता की दया। अब्बू फौज़ में सूबेदार थे। साल में एक महीने की छुट्टिया लेंकर जब वो घर आते तो एक महीने हमारे लिए दिवाली, होली और ईद सब कुछ तो होती थी। मैं डाक्टर बनना चाहती थी और भाई फौज़ में बड़ा अफसर। फिर जब ज़िंदगी थोड़ी पटरी पर आई ही थी के फौज़ से खबर आ गई अब्बू समेत तीन फौजियों की गुमशुदगी की।

अम्मी की तो दुनिया ही उजड़ गई। हम तो अभी बच्चे थे। हमें कुछ मालूम नहीं था के क्या हुआ। लेकिन कुछ तो हुआ था। ये अम्मी की आंसुओं और लोगों की दिलासाओं से साफ जाहिर था। हमें तो बचपन की कहानियों से मालूम था के कैसे नाना और मामू दुश्मनों से लड़ते हुए शहीद हुए और उनका जनाजा बन्दूक की सलामी के साथ दफन किया गया। लेकिन हमारे अब्बू तो घर आए ही नहीं थे और जब हम अम्मी से पूछते तो वो कह देती अभी सीमा पर गोली चल रही है न तो लड़ाई खत्म कर के घर आएंगे अब्बू। देखते ही देखते दो साल और गुजर गए। शायद अम्मी की दुवाओं का असर था या खुदा को हमारे हालात पर तरस आ गया था, एक दिन अब्बू के मिलने की खबर आ ही गई और फिर एक महीने के बाद अब्बू भी जिन्दा सही सलामत हमारे सामने मौजूद थे। दुश्मनों की कैद से भागकर वो किसी तरह आये थे। इस बार अब्बू हमारे साथ दो महीने रहे और फिर फौज़ में लौट गए। कुछ दिनों के बाद ही अब्बू फौज़ से रिटायर

हो गए और फिर हम सब साथ रहने लगे। घर के गुजारे के लिए अब्बू बच्चों को पढ़ाने लगे जो कुछ दिनों में स्कूल में तब्दील हो गया। अम्मी अपने अतीत के इन्हीं ग़मों को याद कर अल्ताफ को फौज में भेजने से मना कर रही थी। रात भर यही सोचते-सोचते कब उनकी आँखे लग गयी, उन्हें पता नहीं चला।

अचानक वो चिल्लाते हुए नींद से जगी। उनका माथा पसीने से तरबतर था। शायद किसी बुरे सपने ने झिंझोड़ा हो उन्हें। मैं भागी भागी पानी ले आई। अब्बू अम्मी को सहारा देकर ठीक से बैठा रहे थे। अल्ताफ के तो आँखों में आंसू ही आ गए थे। वो अम्मी से लिपट कर कहे जा रहा था- “ठीक है अम्मी, मैं फौज में नहीं जाऊंगा।”

“तू जायेगा!” हमें तो सहसा विश्वास ही नहीं हुआ। पसीने से तरबतर चेहरे के बीच अम्मी पुरसकून थी। तुम्हारे नाना आये थे ख़ाब

में। मामू भी थे। दोनो बहुत खुश थे। मैं रोकर तुम्हारे नाना से कह रही थी के अल्ताफ और उसके अब्बू को समझाइये। अल्ताफ ज़िद लगाये बैठा है के वो पूना जायेगा फौज की ट्रेनिंग करने। मैं अपने इकलौते रत्न को खोना नहीं चाहती। तो जानते हो तुम्हारे नाना ने क्या कहा- “खून का वो आखिरी कतरा जो वतन की हिफाजत में गिरे वो दुनिया का अनमोल रत्न है।” ये कहकर वो ओझल हो गए। मैं उनका इशारा समझ गयी। तुम्हे जाना होगा अल्ताफ। हम सब की आँखों में आंसू थे। खुदा का शुक्र था परिवार की परम्परा कायम रही और माँ पे फख्र था कि उन्होंने देश पर ममता को हावी नहीं होने दिया।

■
-हेना जौहर (स्वतंत्र रचनाकार)



Mátyás három lustája

Hollós Mátyás királyunk országa nem a naplopók, nem a gondtalan restek országa volt, de nem ám: az az idő se' katonát, se' polgárt, se' urat, se' parasztot, se' kisembert, se' nagyembert nem engedett ellustulni. Örökösen tomboltak a vérontó hadak a határokon, a határokon belül izzott a munka, lángolt az igyekezet, aminek az ország hatalmát, dicsőségét fenn kellett tartani. Ebben az időben bizony megemlegették, ha valamire egy haszontalan tunya ember találtatott. Olyan nagy országban, amilyen Magyarország volt, került azért akkor is egy rakás megátalkodott lustafi, kik minden istenadta nap Szent Heverdelt szerettek ünnepelni.

Mátyás királynak egyszer olyan gondolata támadt: megfogatta Magyarország leghírhedtebb három lustáját, akik még azt se állották meg nyögés nélkül, ha a kisujjukat kellett mozdítani. Ezt a csuda három lustát felhurcolták a királynak Buda várába, ott Mátyás rendelkezésére külön takaros kis házat kaptak, az volt a dolguk, hogy semmi dolguk a világon ne legyen. Szolgákat, szolgálókat adtak melléjük, akik a három lustára takarítottak, fűtötték, főzték, öltöztették, vetkeztették, mosdatták őket, talán még a falatot is megrágták, mielőtt a lusták szájába kerülne. Így kellett a budavári három lustának a házban élnie csúfságra, nevetségre, egész ország csak leste, meddig bírják azt a rettentő semmittevést.

Bírta a Mátyás három lustája, egyik jobban bírta, mint a másik. Egész nap heverték, szuszogtak, mert úgy meghíztak, mint a malac karácsonyra. Ha megunták a hátton fekvést, a hasukra fordultak, ha abból is elégük volt, vissza a hátikra. Olyan lusták voltak már, a legyet is lusták voltak elkergetni



az orruk hegyéről. Egyszer azután, hogy esett, hogy nem, kigyulladt a Mátyás három lustája felett a tető. A járó-kelő nép nagyban kiabálta a tüzet odakint, a láng is megcsapta már az ablakot. Akkor az egyik heverő fickó odaszól a másikhoz, álmosan:

- Úgy látom, koma, ég a ház.
A másik ásított egy nagyot, azután azt mondta:
- Hadd égjen, majd kivitet a király, ha baj lesz.
A harmadik nyöszörögve nyitotta ki a száját:
- Hogy nem restelltek már ennyit beszélni.
Így lett vége a Mátyás három lustájának, még a halálukon is nevettek az emberek. ■

HISTORY OF THE RED FORT

The Lal Qila or Red Fort is one of the most magnificent palaces of the world. Constructed in 1648 by the fifth Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan as the palace of his fortified capital Shahjahanabad. The Red Fort is named for its massive enclosing walls of red sandstone and is adjacent to the older Salimgarh Fort, built by Islam Shah Suri in 1546. The imperial apartments consist of a row of pavilions, connected by a water channel known as the Stream of Paradise (Nahr-i-Behisht). The fort complex is considered to represent the zenith of Mughal creativity under Shah Jahan and although the palace was planned according to Islamic prototypes, each pavilion contains architectural elements typical of Mughal buildings that reflect a fusion of Timurid and Persian traditions. With the Salimgarh Fort, it was designated a *UNESCO World Heritage Site* in 2007 as part of the Red Fort Complex.

The *Divan-i-Am* with its courtyard is the central feature, and from the lesser courtyard in front of the *naqqarkhana* or music hall (the royal band played here five times daily, except on Sundays and the king's birthdays).

The roofs, walls, and colonnades of the *Divan-i-Am* were hung with brocaded velvet from Turkey and silk from China. A gorgeous canopy (especially prepared for the occasion in the royal factory at Ahmedabad) was supported by silver columns, while another splendid canopy (for the throne) was supported by golden pillars, wreathed with bands of studded gems.

The Red Fort is an irregular octagon in plan – its two long sides are one the east and west while six smaller ones are on the north and south. It has a total length of some 915 metres and is 518 metres wide, with one side facing the Jamuna river.

The Lahore Gate and the Delhi Gate are the two noble gateways that give a finishing touch to the citadel that was the pride of the city of Delhi. The Lahore Gate facing the end of Chandni Chowk is very imposing, especially with its splendid side towers and great central arch, 12.4 metres in height by 7.3 metres. The gate is protected by a barbican, which was built in the reign of Aurangzeb. Its walls are 12.1 metres in height. The wooden draw-bridge of the barbican was replaced by bridges built by the Mughal emperor, Akbar II.

The arched rooms were originally used as shops. In the Mughals times this bazaar hummed with activity.

The *Divan-i-Am*, or Hall or Public Audience, stands in the centre of a court, which was originally 164.5 metres x 128 metres. This hall, designed in a stately manner to suit the solemn functions that were held here, it built of sandstone, but was originally covered with shell plaster, polished to the smoothness and whiteness of ivory. It is a colonnaded hall open on three sides and enclosed at the back. The richly carved and inlaid marble platform, where the emperor sat in state, is still there. In the recess behind this marble platform can still be seen some specimen of Italian *pietra-dura* work.

Even more majestic than this hall is the *Divan-i-Khas* or Hall of



Private Audience (close to the river) measuring 27.4 metres x 2.04 metres. Fergusson considers it “*if not the most beautiful, certainly the most highly ornamented of all Shahjahan’s buildings*”. It is a pavilion of white marble, supported on pillars of the same material, the whole of which are or were richly ornamented with flowers of mosaic work of cornelian and other stones. It is indeed a noble building. The symmetry of the arches produces an effect of beauty and elegance. The marble dais, which formerly stood in the hall, is said to have supported the famous-peacock throne of Shahjahan.

Another exceptional building is the *Rang Mahal*, remarkable for its richness in architectural and decorative treatment. It was “the crowning jewel” of Shahjahan’s seraglio. The *Rang Mahal* has a main central hall with small compartments at each end. The central hall is divided up into fifteen bays by means of ornamental piers. The beautiful ceiling has long since disappeared, and little of the mural painting is visible. By far the most important feature of the hall is the marble and inlaid fountain basin in its centre. Every device was used – precious stones, carving inlay, and coloured marbles – to adorn this work of art.

Between the *Rang Mahal* and the *Divan-i-Am* lies a garden, one of those chains of gardens for which the Palace of Delhi is so famous and which have added so much to its attraction as a palace of residence. Other notable buildings of this splendid Mughal Palace are the *Musamman Burj* (Octagonal Tower), the *Shah Burj* (Royal Tower), the *Hammam* (Royal Baths) and two small pavilions named after two monsoon months, “Sawan and Bhadon.”

The Red Fort was the residence of the Mughal emperor of India for nearly 200 years, until 1857. The Red Fort has become the symbol of India’s freedom for it was on its ramparts that Pandit Nehru unfurled the National Flag on 15th August, 1947 – Independence Day ceremony, this ceremony is held every year amidst national rejoicings.

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