

# V O G



**Voice of G.S.B.**

New  
Year,  
New  
Beginnings

# *Hidden Talent*



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**UPDATION OF MEMBERSHIP RECORDS**

We would like to be in touch with our members. Please e-mail us your mobile number and email id to [gsbsabha@gmail.com](mailto:gsbsabha@gmail.com). While sending the details, please include your membership number or your complete address so that we can locate you correctly in our membership records.

The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the text/articles published in this issue belong solely to the author, and not necessarily to that of the G.S.B. Sabha, the editorial committee of Voice of GSB and its printer, publisher and editor.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Dear Members :**

**Namaskaru,**

Trust you all are safe and healthy.

This year we had a muted approach to all our festivals. Dushera, Diwali and Karthik - the month of lights too followed the same pattern. But the undying spirit of our Samaj ensured that all festivals were celebrated with the same gusto, remaining within the statutory framework and advisories.

We continued our online connect with our samaj bandhavas. Our Mahila Shakha took a lead role in conducting some impactful talks and tutorials. In the Samvaad series, we had sessions on the new National Education Policy, Yoga and Devi Mahatme. We supplemented our popular "Phool Gantuche" tutorials with tutorials on Achaar-Vichar (Hindu Calendar Months simplified) and on traditional GSB cuisine.

The world has moved to the virtual platform and this has made many of us wonder on if this could be the "new normal", well hope not, I guess. Surely and safely, we would get back to the "real" world. In the next few months, we would have the vaccines and this may make it possible.

This edition of the VoG regained its physical form after missing out three quarters. We are sure some of the members are eagerly waiting for it. However, in parallel, we would continue with the e-version for the benefit of our tech savvy readers. In case you have missed our digital issues for the quarters of April to June 2020, July to September 2020 and October to December 2020 and a Lockdown Special Issue and would like to access them now, please visit our website [www.gsbshamumbai.org](http://www.gsbshamumbai.org) or you can write to us at [gbsbsabha@gmail.com](mailto:gbsbsabha@gmail.com) and we will be pleased to send you the links for accessing these issues.

One of the constant requests we have been receiving from our members is the renaming of the Destitute Senior Citizen Welfare Fund, which was launched by the Sabha in 2006 and is used to



provide quarterly financial assistance to needy senior citizens of our Community. We are supporting 34 senior citizens from this Fund presently. Members have suggested to us that the name "Destitute" is too harsh and we should replace the same. The Managing Committee took note of these suggestions and renamed this Fund as the GSB Senior Citizen Adhaar Fund. The Mahila Shakha Senior Citizen Adhaar Fund was set up from the surplus of its Diamond Jubilee Programme held in 2017 and is used to facilitate the stay of needy GSB senior citizens in old age homes. We have now merged these two Funds as they serve a common purpose.

During Diwali we did a fund raiser to enhance the monetary assistance to the Senior Citizen beneficiaries that we support. We are happy to get a good response considering that this was done over the virtual platform. There is still an opportunity to help us as we are short of our target.

It was heartening to note some initiatives by our sister organizations that would directly benefit our community members - The "Shilanyas" of Seva Mandal's hospital project at the divine hands of Kashimathadhipati, H. H. Shrimad Samyamindra Tirtha Swamiji on 8th December and the Sevanjali Charitable Trust's Sevanjali Arogya Health card program. These two initiatives in the healthcare sector will go a long way in the welfare and wellness of our community.

The Sabha will have its 81st Annual General Meeting on Sunday, 24th January, 2021 at Kreedha Mandir. The Annual Report will be despatched to all of you. Please make it convenient to attend the meeting.

We are sure that, by the grace of God and the blessings of our Guru parampara, the vaccination program would be huge success and benefit mankind.

Happy 2021 - Stay safe, stay healthy.

Dev baren koro.

Thanks and regards,

**Laxmikant Prabhu**



# Brief History of Gosripuram Mahakshetram Cochin Thirumala Devaswom A GSB Temple, Gosripuram, Kochi



by Divakara Shenoy, Kochi

Centuries old Gosripuram Mahakshetram of Thirumala Devar Sree Venktachalopathy, known as COCHIN THIRUMALA DEVASWOM, has a long history and one can write volumes about it. The temple is situated in Cochin, present Kochi, Kerala. The temple was built in the year 1599 A.D. by the Gowda Saraswat Brahmin community, known as MAHAJANAM of Cochin. The notable feature of the temple is the festival mood throughout the year and increasing number of devotees every day to offer SEVA and prayers. Most of the days of the year, Kalyanotsavam is a regular Seva offered by the devotees. Swarna Garuda Vahana Pooja is the highest Seva that is performed many times in a year whereby several thousands of devotees attend the functions.

As per historical records available in the temple office, it is mentioned that in 1560 A.D. several families of Gowda Saraswat Brahmin community migrated to Kerala from Goa, then ruled by the Portuguese. They settled in port cities of Kerala like Calicut, Cochin, Alappuzha situated on the Arabian Sea Coast. It is being said that they had to face hard times with problems under Portuguese rule, such as forced conversion. The people who settled in Cochin were given refuge by the Maharaja of Cochin. The group of families settled in Cochin is known as MAHAJANAM.

It is said that the idol of Sree Venkatachalopathy Thirumala Devar (Lord Venkateswra), believed to be a Swayambhu, was once worshipped by Saluva Narasimha Raya of Vijayanagar. After the ruin of the city, the idol was taken to Cochin (Kochi) by

Swami Vijayeendra Thirtha of Kumbakonam Math in the 16th Century A.D.

Swami Vijayeendra Thirtha handed over the beautiful idol to Gowda Saraswat Mahajanam of Cochin (Kochi), who are said to have performed an Abhishekam of Gold collected from rich and poor members of the G.S.B. community under the leadership of Mala Pai, a rich businessman. Gosripuram temple was built in 1599 A.D. Swami Vijayeendra Thirtha performed the first prathishta ceremony of the idol of Thirumala Devar, known to be Gosripuresa. Raja Veera Kerala Varma of Cochin is said to have granted certain rights and privileges to the Mahajanam of Kochi in the year 1627, the order was inscribed on a copper plate.

The Kashi Math Samsthan, historically was founded around the year 1540. The first Swamiji of Kashi Math was given Deeksha by the celebrated H.H. Swami Vijayeendra Thirtha of Kumbakonam Math. In the year 1644 A.D. H.H. Upendra Thirtha Swamiji of Kashi Math Samsthan gave directions and instructions for the performance of Pooja Rituals and for administration of the temple.

In the year 1622 Portuguese attacked the temple and in 1719 the temple was renovated and the second prathishta ceremony was performed by H.H. Devendra Thirtha Swamiji of Kashi Math in the year 1791 A.D. Thereafter, the deity was removed and shifted to Alleppey (present Alappuzha) to protect from depredation of Raja Sakthan Thamburan. Again, in the year 1853 A.D.,

the deity was brought back to Kochi and the third Prathishta ceremony was performed by H.H. Swami Bhuvanendra Thirtha of Kashi Math Samsthan.

## GOSRIPURAM MAHAKSHETRAM

Cochin Thirumala Devaswom Mahakshetram is situated in West Kochi, Kerala, God's own country. Kochi is also known as Queen Of Arabian Sea. Gosripuram temple is magnificent and the biggest GSB temple of India and also a chief socio-religious institution and like a Headquarters of the Gowd Saraswat Brahmin Community of Kerala. This temple is dedicated to



**EAST GOPURAM**

**INNER VIEW OF NORTHSIDE OF TEMPLE**

**NORTH GOPURAM OUTSIDE VIEW**

Lord Venkateswara, also known as Gosripuresha. The idol is also known as Marathaka Pacha. The temple Bell is the largest one of Asia. Many communities like the Konkanis, Gujaratis, Jains and Marathis, residents of Cochin, are also devotees of Gosripuresha.

The temple was constructed strictly in compliance with the Temple Vastu Shastra and considered to be a perfect Mahakshetram, as per temple architecture. The temple is majestic in look, unique in terms of architecture, magnificence and splendid appearance. The temple occupies a very large area with roads known as Ratha Veethi (path

for temple Chariot) on all four sides. Mainly GSB communities are residing around the temple. Ratha Veethi is the path of the temple chariot to be moved around during festivals. The temple has Gopurams on all four sides. Within the temple premises, there are 7 Pradakshina Veethis. The old North Gopuram chiefly made of wood is unique in terms of beauty and antique look. It has a lower floor and an upper floor. Sanskrit Veda school functions here. The renovated multistoried East Gopuram is splendid in appearance.

The Sanctum Sanctorum (Gharbagriha) is in the centre of the temple facing East and houses the idols of Chief deity, Lord Venkateswara with his

consorts, Sridevi and Bhoodevi on either side. These idols, known as Sthapana Moorties, are placed on the top step of the Simhasana. Utsav Murti with consorts at the middle step, Utsava Murti of Lakshmidēvi at the lower step and Saligrama in Gold plate at the lowest step.

The Sanctum Sanctorum is enclosed by an inner Parswa Mandapam hall with entrance from all 4 sides for access to the Sanctum Sanctorum premises. Outside the Sanctum there are 4 Upa-Kovils dedicated to Hanuman, Ganapathy, Lakshmidēvi and Garuda respectively and one Vrindavan of Shri Sukratheendra Swamiji

(Samadhi 1949 A.D, 19th Madadhipathi of Kashi Math). Around the Upa Kovils, there exist two very long parallelly built Pradakshina Mandapam also called Parswa Mandapams.

Around the Parswa Manadapams, there is very spacious open space (sandy area) which could accommodate many thousands of devotees visiting the temple during festivals. On the outer boundary of the open area, there are on all 4 sides what is known as Agrasala buildings built enclosing the temple premises and mainly used for marriages and other social functions & meetings and also used as Godowns to store food grains. There is a Bungalow within the temple premises dedicated to Kashi Math Samsthan and staff for use during camping at Gosripuram.

There is a very big Sheeveli Madapam in the front side of the temple bell to accommodate about 6 elephants in a row to perform Sheeveli during festival days.

### **VAHANAS & PALANQUINS**

There are seven Vahanas in the temple, they are Garuda, Hanuman, Ashwa, Chandra, Iravatha, Hamsa and Sesha Vahanas. There is also a Swarna (Gold) Garuda Vahana used during final days of



**LORD ON SWARNA GARUDA VAHANA**

the festivals. Hundreds of thousands of devotees from all over India visit the temple to offer prayer and seek blessings of the Lord and also to attend the auspicious pooja function of the Lord Gosripuresha on Swarna Garuda Vahana. The Swarna Garuda is a unique and adorable piece of



**VIEW OF THE TEMPLE BELL**

majestic grandeur. There are also Silver and Gold Palanquins and chariots in the temple.

### **LARGEST BELL OF ASIA**

Another unique feature of the temple is the largest bell of Asia, a huge bronze bell of six feet height and four feet in diameter. The bell is hung on a large wooden beam and frame supported on 4 huge pillars of masonry. It is a mystery as to how such a heavy bell was lifted and hung in position as there were no mechanical devices or cranes available in those days. It is said that the chiming sound of the bell could be heard by people several miles away.

### **LAKE MANDPAM**

Outside the East Gopuram, there is a large Water Pond (temple tank) which is situated on the North Eastern side. At the centre of the water Pond stands a beautiful structure called as Lake Mandapam. The Mandapam has an upper floor and lower floor and roof thatched with copper sheets resembling the style of Kerala





**LAKE MANDAPAM**

Architecture. The Mandapam gives an illusion of a floating building. During final day of the festivals Mahotsavam and Rathotsavam the Utsavamoorties of the Lord and Lakshmidivi are brought to Lake Mandapam and Pooja is performed . An image representing the idol is taken to the lake water for performing sacred abluion. On completion, the ritual Arti is performed whereby several devotees plunge into the sacred lake water known as Papanasam Theertham for abluion.

### **UPAKOVILS**

There also are several other small temples under The Cochin Thirumala Devaswom Mahakshetram , such as Udyaneswar Temple installed with a huge SIVALINGA, Manja (yellow) Bhagavathy Temple and Kuladevatha Mahalakshmi Temple and others.

### **FESTIVALS**

Two festivals Rathotsavam and Mahotsavam each

8 days long are celebrated in the Gosripuram Temple annually. Several thousand GSB devotees from all over Kerala as well as other states visit the temple during festival days to offer payers, seek blessings of Lord Gosripuresha and take part in the Samaradhana , (Brhamana Bhojanam) conducted thereafter.

### **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

For the welfare of the communities residing in and around the region there are educational institutions established by the Gosripuram Thirumal Devaswom such as T.D.HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL, T.D.TEACHERS TRAINING SCHOOL, T.D.GIRLS LOWER PRIMATY SCHOOLS, T.D.LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL, VEDA PATHASALA AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

T.D. HIGH SCHOOL IS ONE OF THE OLDEST established in the year 1887 A.D. which has played an important part in educating and shaping lakhs of its students, irrespective of cast and creed, into scholars, well disciplined and able citizens of India, many of whom had held and even today adorn various highly responsible position in the Government administration and private corporate locally and internationally.

### **PILIGRIMAGE**

Gosripuram is considered a place of pilgrimage. It is believed that those pilgrims who are unable to go to Thirumala Thirupathi to offer Seva to the Lord Balaji could fulfill their wishes by offering prayers to Lord Gosripuresha.

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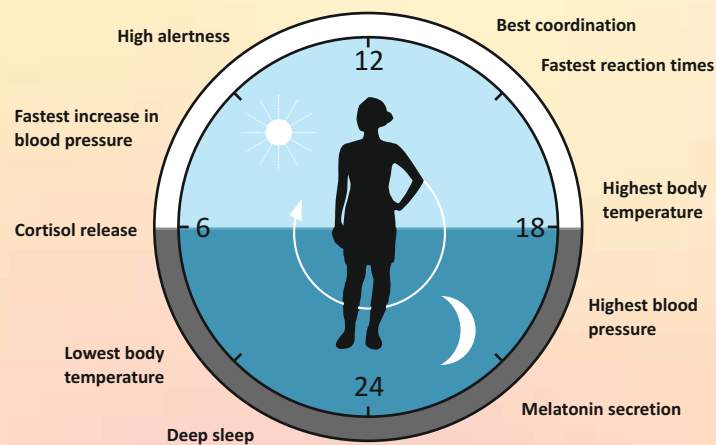
# Biological Clock versus the Mechanical (Wall) Clock

“Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise,” is a popular proverb. Good food, good sleep and good exercise keeps us in good shape.

*“ We are increasingly violating the biological cycle that the body expects us to follow ”*

Our body functions in a coordinated manner as a result of the invisible roles played by our hormones and enzymes. That is why we sleep at night, wake up in the morning, digest food and so on.

With a fast paced lifestyle, basic good practices like good food, proper sleep, some physical exercise, an enjoyable social activity and so on are neglected or are relegated to a vacation. This leads to an irregularity in the biological clock (<https://tinyurl.com/yxly4r9q>). The biological clock governs our body processes. The illustration below shows a twenty-four hour clock and the attributes of our body at different times of the day.



The biological clock maintains the day-night rhythm of our body. Respecting this natural clock

by Gurudatta Wagh



inside our body is essential for our well-being. However, we realise its importance only when it sounds an alarm in the form of some discomfort like acidity, etc.

We are increasingly violating the biological cycle that the body expects us to follow. Our body is governed by a biological rhythm or biological clock. Just as we see the changes occurring in nature in the different seasons, so does our body experience cyclical changes during the twenty-four hours.

An increase and decrease in the hormones during the twenty-four hours causes us to wake up (cortisol) and sleep (melatonin). Similarly, other feelings too are governed by the respective hormones in our body - happiness (serotonin), pleasure (dopamine), trust (oxytocin) and so on.

Our biological clock is influenced by external factors such as light, temperature and food. To maintain good health, we are expected to respect the biological cycle.

But because of the compulsions to lead a well to do and comfortable life, we tend to follow the mechanical (wall) clock more than the biological clock. Thus we orient more towards the wall clock instead of the biological clock.

Our wall clock becomes our master and our biological clock becomes its slave.

Even after knowing the adverse effects of a fast paced lifestyle, we surrender to the circumstances and face the consequences in the form of lifestyle

diseases. Our body does adjust to a certain extent, but over a period of time diabetes and hypertension (blood pressure) accompany the body.

Irregular habits take their toll and the stomach bears the brunt. A properly fed stomach is supposed to be a major source of wellness. If the stomach can stomach the food we eat, we remain healthy. That is why when we suffer from some illness, a common question asked by Doctors is: What and when did you eat yesterday? Did you have proper bowel movements?

Our teachings of food etiquettes include chewing for thirty-two times before swallowing, and eating in a stress free and enjoyable atmosphere. These practices ensure a slow and peaceful process of digestion, in keeping with the slow biological processes.

A careless approach towards sleep causes sleep deprivation and a drowsy start to the next day. Over indulgence with television and mobile, extending to midnight and beyond disturbs the biological clock. Headache and similar issues related to sleep deprivation invite us to consume pain relieving tablets the next day. Normally, a good eight-hour sleep is said to give us good health.

In villages, where electricity is a constraint, people go to sleep much earlier and wake up much earlier than people living in cities.

In addition to the irregularities in having food and sleep, we excuse ourselves from exercise.

Exercise in moderation becomes a pleasurable activity. Exercising in the open gives us natural exposure to sunlight and increases our enthusiasm.

Awareness of lifestyle diseases resulting from unhealthy practices is necessary to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Although long vacations have become a thing of the past, it is a good practice to thoroughly enjoy small vacations and ease ourselves from our normal city routines. Routines bore us whereas vacations refresh us.

A vacation to our native place gifts us with a slower pace of life, relaxes our brain, and revitalises us. Vacations enjoyed at our native place in typical natural surroundings and places replete in natural beauty are always more rejuvenating.

Single storeyed houses in smaller places with an abundance of open spaces, fresh air, bountiful nature, sunlight and a comparatively slow pace of life attract us urbanites immensely. Besides, a traditional lifestyle and food habits satiate the body and mind. All these have a soothing effect on our body as a whole.

The tussle between the biological clock and the mechanical (wall) clock comes to an end when we are vacationing in slow paced places.

It dawns upon us to treat the biological clock as our master, rather than enslaving us to the mechanical (wall) clock.

॥ आरोग्यम धनसंपदा ॥

*Gurudatta Wagh, born in Karwar, residing in Pune, is associated with Samyukta Konkani Sabha, Pune activities. Working in a science research institute, his hobbies include reading, writing, and physical fitness*

# London - a city full of life

My husband, a Roger Federer fan, wanted to see him play at ATP World Tour. We had planned this trip and booked our flights almost a year in advance and were looking forward to it. We arrived in the evening and being November, it was quite dark already. It was cold and the temperature was ranging between 3 to 6 degrees all through the week. The days started and ended early but the warm clothing we carried made it a good experience.

If you are visiting London then a visit to Windsor Castle is a must. A tour of the castle gives you a peek into the royal lifestyle.

Bayswater is where we stayed which was very close to the Bayswater and Queensway underground. The area around the stations is lively, full of shops and restaurants. The underground is the best way to travel in London. Next day, we took the famous hop-on hop-off bus and toured Central London. Taking a long walk alongside the Thames river we reached the London eye. The London Eye, or the Millennium Wheel, is a cantilevered observation wheel on the South Bank of the River Thames in London. It is Europe's tallest cantilevered observation wheel, and is the most popular paid tourist attraction in the United Kingdom with over 3 million visitors annually. The structure is 135 metres tall and the wheel has a diameter of 120 metres. The London eye takes about 45 minutes for 1 rotation while providing a panoramic view of London. The London Dungeon, Shrek 4D adventure, Sea Life Aquarium are in the same stretch towards the London eye.



by Maitreyi Prabhu



British Parliament



Piccadilly Circus known for its video display and neon signs



Tower Bridge



**View from the London eye**



**London eye by day**



**London eye by night**



**A quick lunch at a small restaurant by the river**

The following day we visited the Buckingham Palace to see the change of guards and later, Greenwich. Change of guards takes place every alternate day - it is recommended to check the days online and schedule your visit accordingly. The main activity happens inside the gates of the palace, so it is better to stand near the Main Gate.



**Outside Buckingham Palace**



**Green Park**

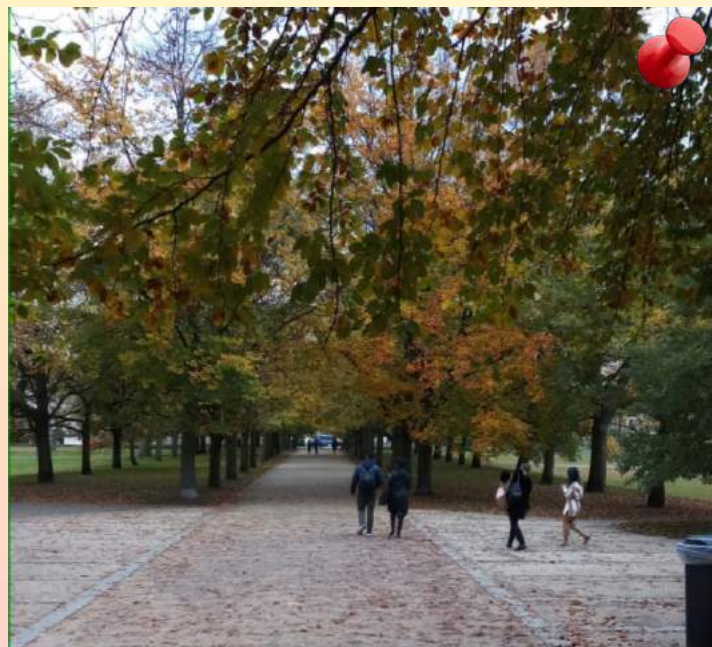
Next stop was Greenwich – famous for the GMT line. You take a ferry and then it's a nice walk from the pier to the Royal Observatory which has a huge park. The last part in the park is up a slope leading to the observatory.



**The ferry to Greenwich**



**View from the top at Greenwich**



**The park leading to the observatory**

Greenwich also has a market open 7 days a week selling food, antiques, art, fashion etc which is located close to the pier.

Third Day we visited Lords Stadium. We had pre-booked a tour of the stadium and shown around.



**Lord's Cricket Ground**



**Replica of the Trophy**

From Lord's we headed to Camden market. The place is famous for shopping – clothing, crafts, food, souvenirs etc. It is the fourth-most popular visitor attraction in London.

The fourth day, we visited Wimbledon. Here too, we had pre booked the tour.



**Tour of Wimbledon Lawns and centre court**



From Wimbledon, we headed to Borough Market which serves fresh food. We had lunch there – Paella and mussels were outstanding.



**Paella and**



**Mussels at Borough market**

If you are visiting London then a visit to Windsor Castle is a must. A tour of the castle gives you a peek into the royal lifestyle. The train from Paddington station takes you directly to Windsor. The Windsor station shopping area is very pretty and has small boutique shops.





**Paddington station**



**The entrance at O2 Arena**



**First look of Windsor Castle**



**Beautiful Christmas decoration**



**Inside the Castle**



**The live match**

Our week-long holiday came to an end and we realised that even 1 week is too less to explore London. We left our hearts in the vibrant city hoping to return some day and

club the next visit with Scotland and Wales.

The last day was shopping at Marble Arch followed by the much-awaited Federer match at the O2 Arena. Watching him play live was a surreal experience.

*The writer is herself a travel connoisseur and founder of her own travel firm and can be contacted on [connect@tripweavers.com](mailto:connect@tripweavers.com) or 98209 64655.*

# SARASWATS AND GOD

The Continuation of a 6,000 Year Old Journey

*Who were the ancestors of Saraswats?*

*How did the ancestors of Saraswats begin to think about GOD?*

*What were their contributions to the development of Vedic scriptures?*

*How did they develop the practice of Shiva and Devi Worship?*

*When did they begin worshipping Goddess Sarasvati?*

*How did they adopt image worshipping of family deities?*

*When did a segment of community adopt Vaishnavism?*

*How did they begin and continued the tradition of Kuldevtas, Maths and Swamijis?*

*How is the community continuing its religious practices over thousands of years?*

## ASHOK PRABHU

*Dr. Ashok Prabhu has more than 35 years of experience in Electronics Industry. He has B.Tech degree from IIT Mumbai and Ph.D. from Purdue University, USA in Material Engineering*

*Since retiring, he has been analysing synergies between Vedic thought and recent scientific discoveries in Mankind's Spiritual progress. He has also been studying about accomplishments of Saraswat community and their impact on global economic environment*

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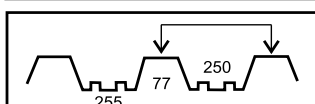
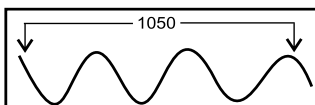
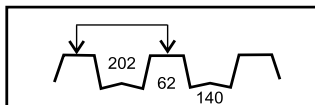
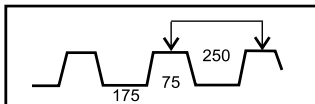
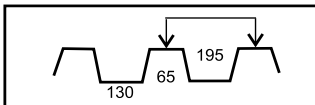
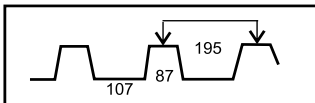


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# My Ājjā – A Mūla Puruṣa

Konchady Gopalkrishna Shenoy—also known as Meghdooth Gopal Shenoy—is a man who has always cared about family. Some people know this from his words, and others know it from his actions. I grew up with my head stuck in a book, so I knew it from a page. Three-and-a-half decades ago, Ājjā took up a labour of love and community, and helped set the Konchady Shenoy family tree down on paper—root by branch, diagram by diagram, as far back and far out as it would go. I remember picking up a copy of that book—maybe I was eight, or nine—and flipping through it over and over, baffled at this arcane feat of human intelligence that could resolve the incomprehensible mass of people who insisted at weddings that they were related to me into a neat edifice of rows, lines, columns, and connections (ākkā, if I've ever forgotten your name, and I probably have, I'm sorry).

*One paradox—a man who was generous and family-loving, but also headstrong and exacting—begets another:*

I am an only child, and a confirmed misanthrope: this was not something I could understand. The box marked 'Family' in my head contains ten people, two dogs, and a book. That's not Ājjā's understanding. Now, however, years after paging incredulously through that family tree, I have realized something about him that I think is very important.

The book that Ājjā and others put together so painstakingly lists many, many generations of ancestors. All of them trace back to one mysterious, unknown, anonymous forefather: 'The Original Man'. I tried to imagine what this person might have been like—who gets to start a family? Who gets to head a family? Why?—before it occurred to me that my grandfather, sitting there quietly eating pista, is living proof. He's not the

by Niyati Misra-Shenoy



original Konchady Shenoy. He's not even a very conventional Konchady Shenoy. But he's spent his entire life keeping the family together—not just his wife and kids and grandkids, but the whole family. That's the sort of person he is. And that's the sort of person who deserves to be called the head of a family, even now, in the twilight of his life.



So I have to come back to Ājjā. He's mūla puruṣa to me. He's always wanted us to remember our ties to one another. For me, that starts with remembering him.

Ājjā was born on October 11th, 1935, to Narayan and Saraswathi Shenoy of Chilimbi, Mangalore. He was the fourth of nine children, the third-eldest brother; his mother Saraswathi, a true matriarch, got the family by solely on rearing cows and selling milk. Ājjā had a somewhat rocky start to life—he dropped out of school in the seventh standard without telling his parents, because he could not face a classmate to whom he owed money (he had borrowed it to buy a spinning wheel to weave cloth and sell in a Fair, but the wheel broke). Just thirteen, he ran away, hitching a ride on his maternal uncle's truck, and made it to Bombay, where he cleaned tables for four years at an udipi joint. He saved prodigiously, sending money to his family back home, and continued to support them when he came back to Mangalore at the age of seventeen to work as a bus conductor (and later, a driver).

By the time he was twenty, Ājjā had a job driving trucks under the same uncle who had helped him get to Bombay and had already set his sights on building his own transport company, saving to buy trucks one by one. At twenty-two, it was time for him to marry; he had already had two offers. He chose my Bāppammā, Radha Shenoy, out of both affection and compassion: Bāppammā was an orphan, a victim of unkindness and neglect at the hands of the relatives who were raising her. Ājjā knew he could give her a better life. And so he did.

From then on, my dad tells me, Gopal and Radha Shenoy's house was an open house-overflowing with dogs, cats, children, grandparents, sisters, cousins, guests, and even cows. Dad, the second of five siblings, remembers home as a place alive with community. His fondest childhood memories are of the holidays; every summer, all of Ājjā's siblings and their families would converge at his place and spend weeks together-twenty, thirty, people under the same roof, little kids running wild. My pāchi, Vijaya Shenoy, who grew up with my dad and his siblings, tells me that her aunt and uncle's hospitality made their house a magical place. "To me as a young kid, my uncle [Gopal] has a larger than life personality: he was big-built, had a big moustache, lived in a big house, had a big car to suit his persona. But what mattered most was that he had an even bigger heart. During summers my uncle would make sure there was plenty of food for all of us young, hungry, growing kids to eat: baskets of the choicest mangoes, large bunches of bananas, jackfruits which we could just pick up and eat when we were hungry. Being a foodie, he loved to pamper us with biscuit roti, malpuas, and other delicacies of Mangalore. My aunt, who loves kids, cooked the most delicious meals for us. A whole bunch of cousins, lots of space in and around the house to play indoor and outdoor games, plenty to eat, and total freedom: as kids, this is all we want!"

Ājjā, now the head of his own transport company, proud owner of five trucks, was an active,

decisive, take-charge kind of guy-and deeply generous, even to a fault, with his money, time, and assistance. He gave a home to his parents; he employed relatives in his business; he helped four of his sisters arrange their marriages; he offered his hospitality to cousins and nephews traveling through Mangalore, seeking an education; and he found ways for his siblings to purchase land at low prices and build their own homes. Bāppammā used to say that Ājjā had a big hole in his palm-that was why no money ever stayed in his hands! He sent extra food to orphanages, contributed to animal shelters, and contributed money generously to funds for poorer members of the GSB community. He helped people to help themselves.

Although Ājjā never completed his formal education, he was highly intelligent, and had a deep understanding of human psychology. Perhaps this is why, even as he went out of his way to help his family and community and was known for his fair-mindedness, he could also be a strict, even authoritarian, father-given his own story of running away at a young age to prove himself, he quite literally embodied 'my way or the highway'. At home, Ājjā's word was law-and he insisted that his children take their education seriously. One paradox-a man who was generous and family-loving, but also headstrong and exacting-begets another: my dad, who often chafed and rebelled against Ājjā's authority, ended up outdoing himself at school and college just to escape it, achieving precisely the result his father wanted! "He had a gruff and tough exterior," my dad says, "but he is a big softie in reality. All of us children are really proud to call him our father."

Sadly, Ājjā's fortunes took a dive just as his children were beginning to grow older. In 1976, when my dad was in the ninth standard, his transport business suffered a series of blows. Two of his five trucks met with bad accidents, and insurance did not cover all the expenses, so the business fell into debt. Ājjā did not complain or

blame anyone; he took it in stride and made every effort to shield his children from the stress and worry he must have felt, even as finances grew extremely tight. Spirituality sustained him and gave him purpose; he offered seva to Swamiji of the GSB Kashi Mutt, driving Swamiji and his entourage wherever they needed to go.



Despite his deep faith, however, Ājjā has never been a conservative or dogmatic man, and has never tried to impose his views on others. In 1989, he embraced and blessed my parents' marriage, even though my mom is from Lucknow, and the match was unconventional at the time. When Ājjā was fifty-eight, his children, now grown and financially independent, persuaded him to finally sell his business.

He had been working for forty-five years.

My earliest memories of Ājjā are—and how could they not be?—of his belly. Before we learned of his intelligence, his love of conversation, or the imposing personality that no one in a room could ignore, my cousins and I knew that enormous, jovial, baniyan-covered belly. We were fascinated by it: we circled it, orbited it, crashed into it, like small planets bound by the gravity of a sun. Sun-like, too, were the enormous yellow undos, sweet

and chewy and bulging with nuts and kishmish that he would bring to give to me every time he and Bāppammā came to Bombay to visit. Slightly less enamoured was I, however, of the stinky, spiny jackfruits that were his other favourite gift; Mom and I would run for the hills, our North Indian noses twitching, every time one of those came out of its crate. I was always amused by how summarily Ājjā dealt with our spoiled, overcoddled pets; the dogs desperately adored him, but were always too scared to step over the line and risk being scolded by that deep, booming voice.

In Mangalore, Ājjā would take us on joyrides to Pabba's, to parks, to the beaches. I could tell how much he liked to drive, and how much he liked to be with us. Even though my mom is shaky on Konkani and I can't speak it at all, talking and joking with Ājjā was almost entirely unhindered by this language barrier. Once, a Hindi teacher at school forced me to memorize a poem about Krishna for an elocution contest, and I went about reciting verse after silly verse about the big, round, red cheeks of Gopal-Ājjā's name—whenever I saw him. It never failed to crack him up.

These days, Ājjā is quieter. His health isn't the best, and his memory is failing. That big, garrulous belly is gone, the hair that stayed black for so long is now properly white, and his eyes aren't as sparkingly alert as they used to be. Bāppammā calls the shots; gone is the era of endless snacking on sweets, of joyrides, of heaps of fish and prawns and kubbo. But Ājjā radiates peace.

Konchady Gopalkrishna Shenoy has always cared about family. He's a little forgetful nowadays. But he will not be forgotten.

*Niyati Misra-Shenoy grew up in Bombay, has lived and studied in Bombay, California, London, and Thailand, and is currently a PhD candidate in South Asian history and gender studies at Columbia University in New York City. She loves dogs, mangoes, mountains, scooters, and pomfret masala fry.*

# Hand Washing



**Dr. Rajeev Redkar**



**Dr. Anuja Redkar**

Also popularly known as hand hygiene, hand washing can be defined as the act of cleaning hands for removal of dirt or microorganisms. This is usually performed as a personal habit, but commonly associated medically too. Nowadays, especially being brought to everyone's notice in light of the recent prevailing pandemic, handwashing has gained a long-overdue gain in importance. Having multiple methods to advocate the cleanliness of hands, via soap, disinfectant or even ash, the tradition of hand washing first came into spotlight in the mid-19th century, and it was recognized and propagated by two eminent personalities – Hungarian physician Ignaz Semmelweis and the English “Founder of Modern Medicine” Florence Nightingale.

The personal implementation of hand washing is as imperative as it is in the medical fraternity, now even more than before. Hand hygiene simply must be maintained, especially before consumption of meals, and after using the toilets. It prevents multiple faeco-orally transmitted diseases, such as amoebiasis, cholera, typhoid and dysentery, and of course, Covid-19. The regular practice of hand washing and maintaining hand hygiene has the potential of curbing multiple such epidemics and even pandemics. This is the best way of prevention of deadly diseases.



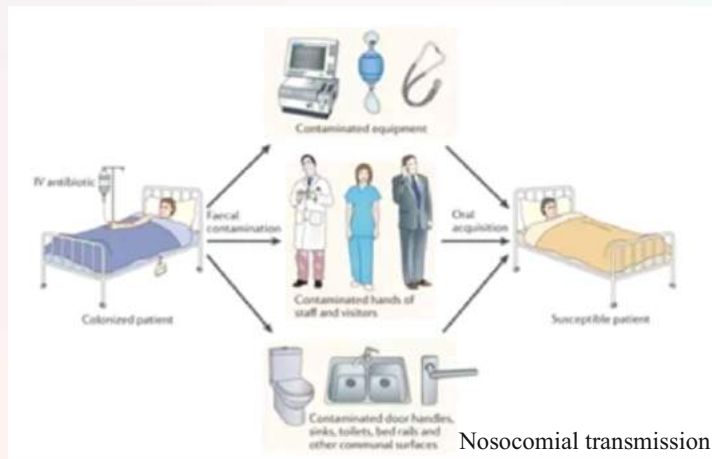
The best and one of the oldest and the best example of this can be none other than Mary Mallon. Popularly known as Typhoid Mary, in 1900s, Mallon, employed as a cook, was identified as the first asymptomatic carrier of *Salmonella typhi*, the pathogen responsible for the typhoid fever. She, unknowingly, was responsible for almost 50 fatalities via meals prepared by her. All of these deaths could have been avoided, had she maintained hand hygiene before the preparation of meals.



This habit slowly but steadily proved its magnanimous importance in our medical fraternity, be it due to the foodborne outbreaks or the epidemics of swine flu, and even the rapid outburst of Covid-19 across continents. The purpose of hand washing in the healthcare setting is solely to avoid transmission of pathogenic microorganisms, especially from one patient to another. Many highly infectious microorganisms such as *Staphylococcus*, *Streptococcus*, *Pneumococci*, MRSA (Methicillin resistant *Staph. aureus*), *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, Corona virus, Rota virus and the list goes on. This can be prevented from causing major and rampant damage, not to mention, the spread of the aforementioned faeco-orally transmitted diseases can be widely reduced, by the simple habit of maintaining hand hygiene. The technique to contain and reduce the epidemic



and pandemic frequency is none other than this elemental skill.

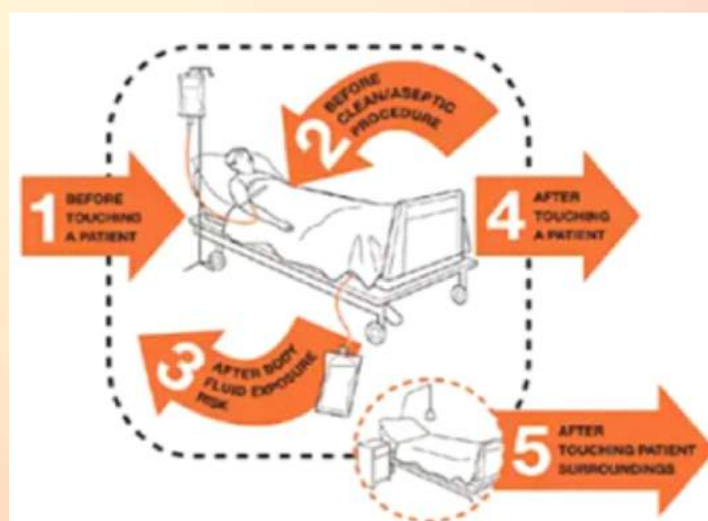


### Simple steps of hand washing

The World Health Organization has recommended "Five Moments" for washing hands:

- before patient care
- after environmental contact
- after exposure to blood/body fluids
- before an aseptic task
- after patient care

The following situations can be adapted to reduce nosocomial transmissions, specifically



This primitive procedure seems gargantuan, especially if expected to be carried out at such frequent intervals. However, there have been various other attempts at the maintenance of hand

The idea of hand washing must be put to practice amongst not just the surgeons, but even the physicians who inspect multiple patients, both indoor patients and outdoor patients, on a daily basis. Maintenance of hand hygiene is of primary importance, and helps prevent unnecessary complications, especially of widespread diseases. However, in our hospitals, the concern with nosocomial (hospital borne) infectivity is minimal. According to the World Health Organisation, at any given time over 1.4 million people across the globe suffer from a nosocomial or hospital-acquired infection (HAI). The first step towards improving these statistics is the essential implementation of hand hygiene, and this parlour trick can reduce the mortality and the morbidity rate fast.

The process of hand washing goes as follows – firstly remove all accessories that have been worn, such as watches, rings and other jewellery. Then, wet hands in warm water. Using soap, lather all surfaces, including the lower one third of the arms and under the nails, for the better half of a minute, as per the recommended duration. In case of surgical scrubbing, chlorhexidine or iodine must be used instead of soap. Rinse off for thirty full seconds. Dry completely with a clean, disposable towel. Then use the towel to turn the tap off.

hygiene intermittently. For one, the introduction of alcohol and gel rinses have gained immense popularity amongst the western cultures of medicine. They take far less time to use, and the higher concentrations of 50 to 95% are as effective at killing organisms as regular hand washing.

Unfortunately, the use of these is minimal, although highly convenient. Even though they have been implemented inside selected hospitals, they are barely being used. This situation is further emphasised by the fact that administrative and financial support in public hospitals is insufficient to fund full infection control programmes, which invariably results in increased spread of infection.

This is one of the gravest, yet, one of the simplest problems faced by our profession. The responsibility to include hand hygiene as part of clinical examination is pressing down upon us heavily, and is unnecessarily costing us the lives of many of those who entrust us, as doctors, with their health.

The solution to this problem, though in theory may sound very meagre, is nothing short of a Herculean task. Propagating the importance of maintaining hand hygiene, and the indispensable use of alcohol

and gel rinses from time to time and between every patient contact, must be done. The doctors, both surgeons and physicians alike, as well as the nursing staff, must be educated about the significance of this basic skill. The idea of hand washing must be publicized. This can be done by holding seminars about the benefits of hand washing, and small pamphlets and posters can be printed out, briefly explaining the process of hand washing and its benefits, which could be put up near sinks.

There goes a proverb, 'Hygiene is two thirds of health.' The propagation of this basic habit can go a long way to reduce the complications of the pathogenic microorganisms and prevent such further pandemics. It is an avoidable consequence, and we, as doctors, should take it upon ourselves to make this minor change in our daily habits for the betterment of our patients. We must also propagate this idea amongst our patients, to reduce the spread of such diseases.

The minimal duty of the general population to curb such a rampant spread lies in this small, and extremely essential task. After all, this small act can be the drops which form the big ocean of high quality of hygienic and safe environment in the world.



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- *MBBS Intern at Grant Medical College and JJ Group of Hospitals*

# Some Sweet Dishes to Begin the New Year.

by Anuradha Prabhu



## Kesar Bhaat

**Ingredients:** 1 cup basmati rice, 1 cup sugar, 4 tbsp ghee, 3-4 cloves, 1 tsp cardamom powder, 8-10 cashewnuts, 8-10 raisins, A pinch of saffron, A few drops of kesar food colour

**Method:** 1) Heat 2tbsp of ghee in a vessel, fry a handful of cashews till light golden. Remove & keep aside. 2) In the same ghee add cloves, stir for a minute, add rice. Saute on a medium heat till all the rice is coated with ghee. 3) Add 2 cups of water & pressure cook the rice. Once the rice is done add sugar, fried cashews, raisins, a pinch of saffron & 1-2 drops of kesar food colour. 4) Mix all gently & cook till the sugar dissolves. Add 2-3 tbsp of ghee, stir for a few minutes, add a tsp of crushed cardamom. 5) Decorate with fried cashews & serve.

P.S You can add 1/4 cup of more sugar while cooking if u want it sweeter.



## Sweet Khichdi

**Ingredients:** 1/2 cup moong dal, 1/2 cup rice, 3/4 cup jaggery, 2 tbsp ghee, 1/2 cup grated coconut, 1 tsp cardamom powder

**Method:** 1) Heat a karahi and dry roast the moong dal till light brown. 2) Add rice, stir for a minute, add 3 cups of water, bring to a boil, lower the flame and let it cook till done. Add more water if required. 3) The rice and dal should be soft and not mushy. Add jaggery and cook. 4) Add the grated coconut and mix well, add ghee and cardamom powder and mix well. 5) Serve with a dollop of ghee on top.



## Govan Kana (Broken Wheat) Payasam

**Ingredients:** 3/4 cup broken wheat (lapsi), 1 cup jaggery, 1 cup thick coconut milk, 2 cups thin coconut milk, 1 tbsp ghee, A handful of cashews | 1 tsp cardamom powder

**Method:** 1) Heat ghee in a vessel and lightly fry the cashews. Keep the cashews aside. 2) In the same ghee fry the lapsi for 3-4 minutes. Add the thin coconut milk and let it cook till soft. 3) Add the jaggery and cook till it melts. Add the thick coconut milk, cardamom powder and cook for a 5-7 minutes, stirring frequently. 4) Garnish with fried cashews and serve.

# Walking an extra mile

I have read many articles on tobacco addiction and firmly believe that with proper counseling, we can wean people away from this addiction. Hence whenever I get a chance, I request people not to chew tobacco or eat Gutkha.

Usually, when I see someone chewing tobacco or Gutkha I request/advise them to give up the habit and also tell them the ill effects of chewing tobacco. Since I travel by rickshaw most of the times, I encounter rickshaw drivers chewing tobacco. Many a times I advise them.

**I felt that with proper counseling, taking little pains, walking an extra mile, we can make a difference in somebody's life.**

Once, when I was travelling in an autorickshaw on Rakshabandhan day, I asked the rickshaw driver not to consume tobacco. And to my surprise, he threw away the tobacco and said that he respected a lady's (sister's) advise on Rakshabandhan day!

My maid servant also had the habit of eating tobacco. I tried to counsel her but she never listened to me. When I asked her how much she spent on tobacco daily, she told me that she spends Rs.10/- daily. I told her if she leaves the habit she can save Rs.300/- per month and Rs.3600/- per year. But all my advices fell on deaf year.

For a short period, we stayed in Surat on account



by **Veena Shenoy**

of my husband's transfer. Our driver who was around 48 years old was accustomed to tobacco chewing. As usual, I told him about the disadvantages of chewing tobacco and asked him to do away with the habit. He said that he would slowly try to give up the habit. One day he fell sick and was diagnosed with diabetes, although it was very mild. He was a bit worried. I thought it was the right moment, to counsel him. Again I asked him to give up the habit, stressing that as he was diagnosed with diabetes, tobacco would do more harm. Of course, I was not knowing exactly if there was any direct connection between tobacco addiction and diabetes. However, I justified myself with the saying "ignorance is bliss" and there was nothing wrong in telling a lie or two for a genuine cause.

I think the driver took my advice seriously. One day he told me, that he had completely given up chewing tobacco. Although I was happy, I did not trust him as I knew old habits die hard. However, I am of the opinion, even if a single person gives up the addiction on my advice, I shall be happy.

The watchman of our building was an elderly gentleman from Uttar Pradesh who always chewed paan and tobacco. We used to call him "Kaka". Although many times I thought of advising him about the ill effects of eating tobacco, looking to his age I never advised him.

On festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi and during holy month of Shravan, along with prasad I gave all the watchmen of the building, sweepers, and our driver a new napkin and soaps and told them about the importance of cleanliness. The watchmen in the building used to buy tea from a nearby tea shop who used to give them tea in plastic/thermocool glasses. I had read somewhere that drinking tea in plastic/thermocool glasses is hazardous to health. Secondly, this would also increase the plastic waste which we are trying to reduce. Hence, I gave three steel glasses to Kaka and told him that instead of using the plastic glasses, they should use the steel glasses. One fine morning when I saw that two of our watchmen were drinking tea from the steel glasses, I was happy that they had done away with plastic glasses. I was also happy that I had reduced use of plastic, to that small extent. I was content at the small achievement.

One day I saw our Kaka sitting with a file. I could make out it was a medical file. I asked Kaka whether he was not well. He told me that he went to see the doctor as he was having stomach ache. He told me in Hindi "pet mein gad badh hein". I immediately found an opportunity to advise him on ill effects of tobacco addiction. I really wonder whether his stomach ache had any connection with tobacco chewing, but again saying that ignorance is bliss, I gave my usual advice (lecture) about the harms of tobacco addiction. When I asked him how much he spent on pan and tobacco every month, he told me around Rs.500/-. He told me that he was addicted to tobacco and betel nuts since 46 years. I requested him to give up the habit

and told him that I would give him roasted fennel seeds (saunf) and he can eat that whenever he felt like eating tobacco. Accordingly, I bought fennel seeds, roasted them with turmeric and salt, put the same in a small container and gave it to Kaka. I firmly believe that when we counsel/advise some person, the person should feel that we sincerely believe in his/her well being.

I totally forgot about the incident. I never imagined that he would give up the habit which he was accustomed since 46 years. After four to five days, when I met kaka, I couldn't believe that he wasn't chewing tobacco. He told me that he has completely given up the habit and not eating tobacco and Gutkha. I was surprised and was also happy. He told me that his friends told him that he would have problems if he left the habit so suddenly. When he told this, I could not say anything. How could I tell him to start the habit once again if he was feeling uncomfortable? Moreover, he told me that he was still having stomach ache, but the doctor had prescribed some medicines to him and he had also brought some Ayurvedic medicines. But he promised me that he would never touch tobacco again. After my husband's retirement we left Surat.

Recently Kaka called my husband to share a personal event/moment in his life. My husband casually asked him whether he eats tobacco, to which he said "aap logon ne meri aadat chudva diya" (you people made me leave the addiction).

After the above incident, I felt that with proper counseling, taking little pains, walking an extra mile, we can make a difference in somebody's life.

*Smt. Veena Shenoy regularly writes for newspapers. Till date, 600 of her articles and letters have been printed in the newspapers.*

# A cure for Type 2 Diabetes ?

Today's topic-- a cure for type 2 diabetes! That's right, a cure, not just a pill or a bandage. But, if I share this secret with you, you have to promise to work towards committing to curing yourself! If you remember Ajoy's article from the last newsletter you may recall that the \*true cause\* of diabetes is not sugar, but fat- the fat that your body accumulates over time as well as the fat that you ingest.

So, let's jump right into it. We have two types of fat in our bodies- belly fat (we call it subcutaneous fat), and the lesser known fat called visceral fat- this fat is deep inside and around our organs. How can we decrease both these fats in our bodies? One way is to decrease the fat that's already there (we'll discuss this later on) and the other is to take less fat in through your diet.

**You don't have to be low carb, just smart carb! Just go easy on the fat when you do use it.**

If you are diabetic or pre-diabetic, what should you eat? (i.e. food as medicine) The good news: you can eat all the veggies. All of them! In unlimited quantities! How many times have you heard a doctor telling you- "You can eat as much as you want"!? Vegetables are nutrient rich but calorie poor, so load up. Especially for high fiber vegetables like kanag, laal bhaji, vaali, and of course, my personal favorite- daali (the split legume!.) All these contain fiber which helps bind some of the 'bad stuff' that you ingest, like fats (including cholesterol). Think of it like a broom for your colon. The more fiber you take in, the better and cleaner your intestines will be! And the less bloated you will feel.

The bad news: you need to take in less fat. In fact, you should try to avoid all saturated fats- what is



by Dr. Jenny Prabhu

saturated fat? Simply put, it is any oil that is solid at room temperature. So, basically all fats from animal products (meats, cheese, cream, butter, you get the idea) and then of course, ghee itself. A word about ghee (or thup as we call it)- we understand that this is controversial, but in our practice we only recommend it in ayurvedic medicine because there, the mechanism of action is different than simply adding it in your food.

Plant based fats like oils, nuts, avocados are certainly healthier, and should be consumed, but only in limited amounts. And, if you only remember one thing from this article, please try to avoid the combination of oil + refined carbohydrates. Think french fries! This is your enemy, and diabetes' best friend!

The so-so- news: Here is something surprising-- Carbs are not completely forbidden! Refined carbs should be avoided for the most part (white bread, white pasta, white rice, chips, namkeen, biscuits made of maida). You can have unprocessed/whole grain carbs to your heart's content! Yes! Even if you are diabetic! If you are taking insulin however, we'd recommend that you discuss the finer points with your doctor. Quinoa, barley, cracked wheat, jowar, ragi, etc. Multigrain atta is a good happy median- it is minimally processed but still keeps the fiber and protein that your body needs. So, you don't have to be low carb, just smart carb! Just go easy on the fat when you do use it. So in our house for example, we make rotis (phulka) made of multigrain atta but don't make chapatis as that means adding oil on it.

Next, how to get rid of that subcutaneous fat- that

fat that surrounds our bellies? Exercise! Ajoy and I always emphasize that exercise is not the primary means of losing weight. In fact, as you've probably heard us say before, exercise will only contribute about 15-20% to your weight loss journey. But, it can absolutely help get rid of the last stubborn pounds (and, in essence, diabetes-feeding fat stores) and as an added bonus, cardiovascular exercise is essential to keeping your heart and blood vessels happy- they need their oxygen!

How to begin? If you rarely or never exercise- it would be great to start with some simple at home, to get your blood going. Check out our earlier video we did for the GSB community for some examples. Here is a link to view it- <https://bit.ly/ch-simple-exercises>. But, even simpler than that- get out and walk (fast enough so you are winded, not just a leisurely stroll)! 30-45 min 3-4x a week is enough to get your blood moving. Side note, even if you don't see the pounds fall off with exercise, I can guarantee that the fat is redistributing, and your blood work will show an increase in HDL- the 'good'/protective cholesterol. All signs that good things are happening. But remember, just to drive the point home, you can't expect to see changes with exercise alone!

How to get rid of that visceral fat? I hope you have already watched my “electrifying” video on intermittent fasting (if not, here is the link- <https://bit.ly/ch-if>) so I won't get into too much detail here. Suffice it to say that, over time, giving your body a chance to heal (instead of working on digesting food), allows it to make use of (i.e. melt away) those deep-seeded fat stores- the layers of fat surrounding your organs. You may not be able

to see them in the mirror, but they are there, and they are truly the biggest risk/smoldering fire for someone with diabetes and one reason why some people that are “skinny fat” wonder why they have diabetes.

Finally, we always like to impress upon our patients that we try to avoid medication at all costs and/or if you come to us, we try to peel off your medications, often right in the first meeting itself! However, there is a time and a place for meds- often, just temporarily, until the above measures start to take effect.

As we have said time and time again- making a lifestyle change is a long term commitment- it is a marathon, not a sprint. You will see incredible results, we promise, but in-turn, you have to promise to stick to it. We want you to be safe and your body to stay in the best possible shape in the short term so it can heal in the long term- and stay that way for good!

Just to recap- Diabetes (type 2) is a disease of fat. To treat and prevent diabetes, we need to get rid of the two main types of fat (belly fat and organ-fat) and stop new fat from collecting, by watching what we put into our mouths. Eat plants- all the plants. Avoid animal protein and fats at all costs. Eat good fats (from plants) eat good, whole grains/seeds and minimally processed carbs. Don't be afraid of them. Exercise frequently and to your best ability. Try to fast if you can. If you need meds, it's not the end of the world- and it's usually just temporary. Above all- have a positive attitude and look to the future! Please do reach out to us if you have any questions or have suggestions for our next set of articles.

*Dr. Jenny Prabhu is co-founder of Circee Health, a chronic disease reversal clinic. She is double boarded MD in Internal Medicine and in Pediatrics. She is one of the first foreign doctors to be permanently licensed in India. She still treats thousands of patients in the US.*

*From Team VoG – Our October to December, 2020 issue had an article by Dr. Ajoy Prabhu titled “The True Cause of Type II Diabetes.” This article by Dr. Jenny Prabhu is a follow-up article to the same.*

# Yoga is an Elephant

by Ajita Kini



Huh? Yes, Yoga is an elephant. Surely, you have heard the story of the 5 blind men who wanted to know what an elephant was. The one who felt the trunk, described it as a snake; the one who felt the tail, said it was like a rope; the one who touched the leg, described it as a tree trunk; the one who felt the stomach, said it was like a wall; and the one who felt the ear, described it as a fan. Each was convinced about his own perception, because his personal experience, was his truth. So it is with yoga.

**It became a challenge – regaining movements in joints and muscles that I had unwittingly abused, for so many years.**

I started learning yoga so I would live a healthy life for whatever be my lifespan (āyush in Konkani). The initial years were only about overcoming the effects of many years of desk work, jogging-running and wearing stiletto footwear on polished stone floors. All killers for the hip and knee joints, as I learnt when I discovered how the movement in these joints had become restricted. It became a challenge – regaining movements in joints and muscles that I had unwittingly abused, for so many years. A way to make reparation, or apologise to my body.

As the body regained mobility, the mind moved to extending the duration for which each pose was held. And lo, here was the next learning. As the duration extended, I found that the body would “relax” into the pose. The pose was no longer something to be “conquered” or “achieved”, but something to initiate and then wait for it to “happen”. At this level, the body no longer sweated, nor did the breath rate change (except in some of the more challenging balancing poses).

It took years of disciplined practice to reach this stage. In our achievement-oriented culture, we're so used to working hard and striving for things, that the approach of just waiting and allowing

things to happen was quite alien and counter intuitive. The most difficult part of reaching this stage, was learning to let go of control!

The process was not only slow, but painful. Our teachers tell us to embrace pain. A certain amount of pain is there as part of our individual karma or prārabdha. If you avoid physical pain, it will manifest as emotional pain; if you avoid emotional pain, it will come as psychological pain. The pain that is part of our prārabdha has to be experienced in this lifetime itself, so best to experience it as physical pain and get it over with, since that is the easiest to handle!

Pain is not necessarily a bad thing. One soon develops the discrimination (viveka) to distinguish between the pain of unused muscles being forced to work, or crooked joints being forced to straighten after many years of non-use. This is different from the sharp pain of something going wrong, as anyone who has experienced a slipped disc, dislocation or fracture etc. knows. So, we learn to embrace pain as a sign that unused parts of the body are starting to work, which means that the breath and prāṇic energy will soon start flowing freely there.

And then the lockdown happened. Suddenly, there was plenty of time to devote to the practice. No interruptions for outings, visitors, or even the maid coming in to clean! The practice intensified, and in the silence of the lockdown, I started becoming more aware of what I could sense happening behind the skin and muscle. Ligaments and tendons, bones and joints buried deep underneath the flesh, started to come alive. Our teachers tell us, where the mind goes, the breath goes; where the breath goes, prāṇa (life force) goes; and where prāṇa goes, good health is inevitable. This was when the absorption (laya) started taking place – the engrossment of watching what was happening deep, deep inside the body.



It was like going into an unknown dark room, with a torch. You have no idea how large, or what shape the room is. The initial perception is that the extent of the room is as much as is covered by the beam of the torch. As you direct the beam of the torch elsewhere, to your surprise you find



us), but a person who dispels the darkness, the dark unknown spaces, within us. Not for nothing is it said that the body is a microcosm of the macrocosm. Everything that is there in the universe and beyond, is there within our body as well. This is beyond the realm of physics

the room extends there as well. Similarly, we think we know our bodies. But as the sensitivity increases, one realizes the inner dimensions of the body are much beyond what was initially perceived. Our inner body is a huge, huge room, much beyond what can be imagined. We only need to move the beam of the torch – our mind, our awareness - there.

or modern science. This is esoteric science.

And so the voyage of discovery continues. Every so often, there is another aha moment, as yet another dark corner of the inner room is lit up. This is how, what started out as a purely physical “fitness regimen” has become the corner stone of an adhyātmic practice, a practice of constant self-study, self-purification

Thus it dawned on me why a Guru is called a GuRu – a dispeller of darkness. Not someone who brings us to the light (whether outside or inside

*Ajita Kini is a student of Iyengar Yoga since 2007*

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Savita P.  
*Weight gain & Diabetes*

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\* besides many other conditions.

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# Vasanth's Poetry Corner



by **Konchadi Vasanth Pai**

## == Father at 94 !!! ==

When I cast my eyes on the paper this morning  
On the front page was his photograph adorning  
Another Guinness Book record was broken  
In glowing terms his achievement was bespoken  
A 94 year old Jat from Sonipat became a father  
When his 55 yr old second wife delivered, we gather  
A bonny child, a male nevertheless, cute newborn  
This signal achievement please do not scorn  
If you want to know the secret of his virility  
It is not eating parathas dripping with pure ghee  
But eating half kilo of almonds every day  
(which at today's price will cost our half month's pay)  
washed down with buffalo milk - full three litres  
Even to think of imitating him gives me the jitters  
Hail this new hero, Ramajit Raghav is his name  
Another feather in the cap to boost Haryana's fame

## Love In the Times of Internet

### Point

There resides a Gopika in every maiden  
That waits up for the flautist divine  
Mind dances to the enchanting music  
Love lures to amours clandestine  
If the flute drew the damsels nightly out  
In the dreamy days of yore  
A ring or a ping in the e-world  
Makes lasses' hearts to beat by the score

### Counterpoint

It is not only the ring or the ping  
There are applications galore  
Poking, hugging, kissing and many more  
The maidens may get confused in this spree  
And decide to remain fancy free !!

**Note:-** The first part "Point" was penned by my d.i.l's sister Dr. Sandhya Pai who teaches English at St Joseph's College, Alleppey and the second part "counterpoint" was my rejoinder

*Konchadi Vasanth Pai (87), has spent over 60 years in the pharmaceutical industry in Govt. and non Govt. sectors and as consultant after retirement. He has also worked in NGOs such as Sanjivani in Delhi and Childline in Pune. He presently lives with his son in Bengaluru. He is passionate about blogging and social networking.*



# The Abhijeet Kini Section

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**“EVERY AAMCHI KNOWS ONE BHAANGRAMAI”**

Abhijeet Kini, founder of Abhijeet Kini Studios, is a Mumbai based illustrator, animator and independent comics publisher, known for his comic series "Angry Maushi" and "Fanboys".



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*This is a new series wherein we will share with our readers select tales from the vast repertoire of stories in our Hindu texts. What better to commence this series than with a story about Moksha – the ultimate goal and Bhagwan Shri Krishna.*

## King Muchukunda

(Source-Purana: Shrimad Bhagvatam)

### The Chase:

The brothers, Balarama and Krishna killed Kamsa. Kamsa had two wives, Asti and Prapti; both daughters of the mighty Magadha Emperor Jarasandha. Kamsa's death angered Jarasandha. He gathered his mighty army resembling an ocean of men and laid siege to the city of Mathura. The Yadavas were no match for the might and strength of Magadh army. Although, Krishna and Balarama were capable of slaying Jarasandha, Krishna knew the time was not right for the same. Krishna instead decided to reduce Bhoomi Devi's burden by destroying the army and allowing the vanquished Jarasandha to return defeated and shame faced. Jarasandha attacked Mathura 17 times, each time with a greater vengeance and bigger army consisting of many Akshouhinis\*. He was forced to return repeatedly with his army completely destroyed and a greater humiliation heaped on him by sparing his life on the battle field.

**His kingdom was long gone and earth had changed a lot over the span of many years due to time.**



by **Tanushree Rao Shenoy**

The eighteenth time, Jarasandha strategically partnered with another formidable King, Kalayavana. He promised to fight alongside Magadha army with his three crore Mleccha (foreign/non-vedic) army. The Yadava brothers in anticipation of this partnership amongst their enemies had strategically moved their citizens to a new city Dwaraka, far away from Mathura, built in the middle of the sea and specially built for the Yadavas by the great architect of Gods- Vishvakarma. The enemies unaware of this, laid siege to Mathura at night. At dawn, the Mleccha army saw a young man walking out of Mathura city gate. As soon as he saw the army men, he began running frantically. By now, Mlecchas realized Mathura had been abandoned. Kalayavana was informed. Krishna paused long enough to be noticed and recognized by Kalayavana. Immediately, Krishna ran. Kalayavana began chasing him without his weapons, yet, as soon as he reached close to his enemy he seemed to escape from his grasp. They both covered quite a distance and entered a forest. Krishna suddenly sprinted towards a mountain and spying a cave entered it quickly. Kalayavana followed Krishna. Kalayavana was tired from all the running. The cave was dark and all that was visible to him was a human form lying down on the rock inside the cave. Highly infuriated by the chase and 'out of grasp' enemy, Kalayavana contemptuously kicked the person lying in front of him. The sleeping form stirred and looked around for the person who kicked him. Kalayavana realized it was not Krishna. Alas! it was too late;

for Kalayavana was burnt to ashes as soon as the stranger rested his eyes on the Mleccha King. This stranger was King Muchukunda of Krita Yuga, son of the great Monarch, Mandhata.

### ***King Muchukunda's boon:***

King Muchukunda ruled in the Krita Yuga. His fame and glory as a great ruler, righteous king and a valorous fighter had spread amongst the world of men as well as the Devas. The Devas were fighting a battle with the Asuras from a long time but they were without an able commander for their army. They requested King Muchukunda to fight as commander of their army. Muchukunda agreed and fought a very long and tough battle till the Devas found a worthy commander in Bhagwan Kartikeya. Indra wanted to repay the services of the King and so he requested Muchukunda to ask for any boon from the Devas except Moksha as that could only be granted by Bhagwan Narayana.

Muchukunda had fought in Devloka for many years resulting in sweeping changes on earth. His wife, children and relatives were long dead. His kingdom was long gone and earth had changed a lot over the span of many years due to TIME. Muchukunda realized he had nobody left on earth to call his own, his bonds and desires were all gone. Also due to the long battle, he was very tired as he hadn't slept during the entire time. Muchukunda said to Indra "grant me sleep for a very long time, undisturbed sleep. Also, anybody who wakes me up from my sleep should be burnt to ashes as soon as I see him."

Muchukunda entered the cave and slept through Krita Yuga\*\*, entire Treta Yuga and most of Dwapar Yuga which was nearing its end.

### ***Moksha for Muchukunda:***

Kalayavana was now reduced to a heap of ashes. Muchukunda was fully awake as he saw before him a mesmerizing form of Krishna. Krishna revealed his identity to Muchukunda who prostrated before Bhagwan. Krishna granted any boon that Muchukunda would desire. Muchukunda free of any bonds, desires and attachments desired Moksha. Krishna blessed Muchukunda with Moksha after one more birth.

As Muchukunda exited the cave he realized, earth had changed beyond recognition. Trees, animals and humans were shorter than when he entered. He moved towards Badrikaashram to perform tapas and achieved Moksha as promised after his next and final birth.

**\*An akshauhini is described in the Mahabharata as a battle formation consisting of 21,870 chariots; 21,870 elephants; 65,610 horses and 109,350 infantries as per the Mahabharata. Thus, one akshauhini consisted of 218,700 warriors. The ratio is 1 chariot: 1 elephant: 3 cavalries: 5 infantry soldiers.**

**\*\*A Yuga (Sanskrit: युग, lit. 'age' 'epochs'). In Hinduism, it represents a large period of time as it relates to the past, present and future. It is mostly used to describe one of the four dharmic ages - Krita (Satya) Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga or Kali Yuga - or a cycle of the four ages, Chatur Yuga.**

*Tanushree Rao Shenoy is an Equity Research Analyst by profession and an avid reader on Hindu texts and philosophy by interest. She is of firm belief that our ancient stories and texts are the gateway to solutions for all our problems in life.*

# How the guru guides and takes care.

I would like to share an experience that I had last October. We visit Shirdi every year, but for the last two years I was unable to do so, as I underwent a hip replacement surgery. My husband and I cannot travel anywhere together because of my mother's advanced age.

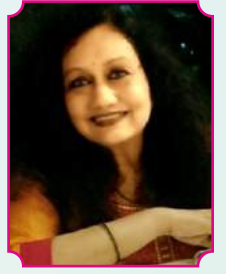
This urge to visit Shirdi was intense and I casually told my husband, I doubt whether I would ever be able to make it for the next few years. He immediately said, "Why don't you ask one of your friends to accompany you? It is a matter of just one day. Go and seek Baba's blessings for all."

*"We reached more than half way towards it when a huge dog marched in majestically from rear end of the line. People gave way, because most of them were scared."*

I was thrilled when Nandini a good friend readily agreed and I lost no time in getting ready to go and book the bus tickets. As my husband and I were about to leave, I received a call from a very good friend of mine who lives in the USA. I told her I would talk to her after a while as I was on my way to book tickets. She said, "Just stay put". I am doing it. All my protests were in vain. She booked our tickets, our online Darshan passes and our one day stay at a beautiful hotel called Neem Tree. It was all done within a matter of minutes.

What is it if not the grace of the Guru and the blessings of the One above?

What a beautiful Darshan it was! No words can describe the feelings coursing through me. Both Nandini and I were able to spend half an hour inside the temple in front of Baba. There was a sea of people all around us as it was a Thursday. Volunteers were asking them to keep on moving. We just stood there with folded hands and prayed. Nobody asked us to move. It was as if they couldn't see us! We were inside the Samadhi Mandir praying for half an hour! Thousands of devotees with bunches of flowers or garlands thronged the temple. The Poojaris just put them in a huge steel container kept for the same, but the flowers that I



by Vinaya Prabhu

had taken were offered at Baba's feet. The picture of those Baby Pink roses lying atop Baba's feet is still dancing before my eyes. Pooja of Baba's paduka was going on, so we got to see the Arati too. I received a tiny orange coloured Chaddar which had been lying on the Samadhi. As we came out, we saw the Rudrabhishekh which is conducted once a year, being performed by one of the trustees at the Gurusthan. What a sight to behold! As we proceeded towards the other temples surrounding the Samadhi Mandir, we heard loud chanting from the other side so we went that way, wondering as to what Pooja was being conducted. Samuhik Satyanarayana Pooja was being done by couples with the Poojari guiding them. Both of us went and stood beside him. Watched him performing Abhishek to Baba's and Lord Ganesha's tiny brass idols. Then started the Arati which is sung during the Madhyanarati. I was so thrilled because I watch it being performed at Shirdi every day on my mobile and sing along. After the Arati, the Poojari called us and gave us Tirth with which he had performed Abshishekh to Baba and Lord Ganesha and the Satyanarayana Sapad bhaksha. My happiness knew no bounds! We were the two blessed ones to receive it.

We then proceeded towards Dwarakamayi. There was a long queue. We reached more than half way towards it when a huge dog marched in majestically from rear end of the line. People gave way, because most of them were scared. He came, looked up at me and slid close; must have stood pressed close to me for two minutes. Then without a sound just turned around and went the way he came. I am left wondering at Baba's Grace and kindness! We also were fortunate to have Prasad at the Sai Prasadalya.

Peace be to all. Om Sai Ram.



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You can visit the centre and also get more details from the Office.

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## India's turn to take the lead

Covid has shown that Indian culture is the best. Traditionally we always washed our hands and legs several times a day. We ate home cooked food and we always had meals together which modern lifestyle did not encourage but with lockdown and corona, this has become a habit. We greeted each other with a Namaste and we did not have the 'hug' culture and now the world is following us, thanks to corona. Coronavirus has brought home the fact that Indian culture and traditions are the best in the world. What two hundred years of British rule in India did not accomplish, the virus has accomplished it in one stroke. It has made the British Prince Charles welcome everyone with a Namaste! Which is being followed by the former US President Trump and others, it is reported. Indians did not shake hands or hug each other traditionally and now the world is going to follow suit.

**The Indian way of life, whether it is yoga, meditation, turmeric, basmati rice or behaviour is now going to rule the world**

by Dr. Veena Adige



We have not been over fond of cold food, fridges becoming an absolute necessity only in the last three or four decades (even now rural homesteads do not have them). Indians have always insisted on piping hot straight from the chulha, fresh food, hot tea and coffee rather than sodas or cold drinks. And look what the people of the world are now doing; they are having hot water to kill the possible corona viruses in their throats! They are avoiding ice creams and other cold food. Haven't we become the leaders of the world?

The Indian way of life, whether it is yoga, meditation, turmeric, basmati rice or behaviour is now going to rule the world. Isn't that the biggest positive side of the coronavirus? Our culture, our habits, our behavior is now finding a soft corner in the hearts of people round the world. All this is now followed by the world over because of corona. Social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands, drinking hot water et al is now the

new norm and the new etiquette.

We have led in the culinary field by using turmeric in food, a system now followed by the west. We always had haldi ka doodh to cure us of ailments and now Turmeric Latte rules the restaurants. The small amount of ginger, asafetida, garlic, jeera and other spices raised our immunity, which is now being told to others. Our Yoga has become international and so have our Om chanting, our pujas and the like. India culture has always been pure, something which our British masters put down at every stage. Our glorious history was overshadowed by the written history of others. We were taught to look down upon our colour, our habits, our culture and were raised to believe that the West is the best.

Now it is our turn. India can and will lead and show

the way to other countries of the world. Our atma nirbhar plans will make us self-sufficient. Our Ayurveda and homoeopathy streams of medicine will keep us safe and set examples to others who are already reeling under the exorbitant prices and side effects of the allopathic brand of medicines. Our food habits-of having fresh home cooked food which has been made compulsory because of the continuous lockdowns in the last three or more months- our stress on vegetarian food, our consumption of lime juice(sherbet), dairy products, milk, buttermilk, curds, butter and ghee-will get us more followers from round the globe. There are already vegans and vegetarians gaining grounds and there will be many more. The coming decades are ours. Our once golden land will become more so in the days to come.

*Dr. Veena Adige is a journalist, an author and a writer. She has written five novels, six e-books and hundreds of articles, stories, interviews, reviews, features and the like and her work has been translated into many languages..*

## Report : Online series of Inspirational talks under “Samvaad” Series and Online Tutorials

### National Education Policy

On 2nd October 2020, Mahila Shakha organized a Samvaad on National Education Policy 2020. The speaker was Mrs. Shakuntala Bhandarkar, a mentor and curricular designer who is in the field of education for more than 30 years. She said that the NEP is restructured with a new pedagogical and curricular structure of 5+3+3+4 i.e., from the age of 3 -18 years. The NEP also focuses on honing the skills of the child and introducing technology at an early age and also making education available to every child. It was followed by a brief Question and Answer session. It was well received by the online audience.



### Yoga talk by Shri Jawahar Bangera, Senior Iyengar Yoga Instructor

On 4th October 2020, in a highly interactive, free flowing session, wholly focused on answering peoples' queries, Shri Jawahar Bangera, Senior Iyengar Yoga instructor addressed on what can be done to increase oxygen in take and boost immunity in the current situation, what super senior citizens could do to sleep better at night, handling asthma, returning to an active life after a heart bypass or delivering a baby. With his student, Ms. Ajita Kini, demonstrating, Jawahar-ji showed the audience how everyday household props could be used to coax stiff muscles and ligaments to work. He explained how this physical



movement works to fight disease. The lymph nodes, which drain the lymphatic fluid from the body, are located throughout the body, and concentrated in the armpits, leg-pits (vākkau, in Konkani), abdomen, chest and neck areas. By working to soften and open out these regions, the lymphatic fluid can drain more efficiently and rid the body of toxins formed when the body fights disease causing germs. Thus, not only does removing stiffness give us a better range of movement, but it also helps drain the lymph nodes better.

Scheduled for an hour, the questions continued well past the allotted time as the audience urged Jawahar-ji to continue for a further half an hour until everyone was satisfied. The session motivated young and old.

## Devi Mahatme

On the occasion of Navratri on 18th October 2020, "Devi Mahatme" was organised by Mahila Shakha. The speaker, Smt. Shantala Bhat, affiliated to Chinmaya Mission, as a prelude to the pravachan explained how Lord Brahma has created the 3 worlds i.e Swarga loka, Bhoo loka and Patal loka. After which she went on to explain the significance of worshipping the 9 forms of Goddess Durga during Navaratri and how we can eliminate all the evils which exist within us and evolve to become better human beings i.e Triumph of good over evil. It was indeed an enriching experience.



## 'Phool Gantuche' Tutorials

On our FB page, flower knitting or 'Phool Gantuche' tutorials are posted regularly by our Mahila Shakha to help people master this art. 17 videos have been posted so far, with various combination of flowers and other items. In addition to earlier combinations of flowers, the

latest combination of flowers is Daswala / Hibiscus Mala, Crepe Jasmine (Tagar) Mala, Navratri special Bangle mala, Kartik mass special Amla (Gooseberry) Mala. The videos are liked and appreciated by many.



Mahila Shakha extends their thanks to Smt. Gautami Acharya for making these very popular videos.

## Tutorial on Achaar- Vichaar (Hindu Calendar month simplified)

On the auspicious occasion of Kartik Ekadashi GSB Sabha Mumbai's Mahila Shakha began a tutorial series on explaining of important days (Tithis) in our Hindu Calendar Month and their importance and Significance.

Mahila Shakha extends their thanks to Vedamurthy Shri Trivikram Acharya for conducting these sessions.

## Tutorial on traditional G.S.B. Cuisine

Its an indispensable experience when you cook food at home for your loved ones, There is no limit to your joy when you cook authentic GSB cuisines at home like savouries, sweets, chutneys, gojjus etc etc. There are many dishes which we are not aware of or tasted. Traditionally people prefer to prepare Diwali sweets at home. To share the making of and the receipes of all these GSB dishes Mahila Shakha introduced tutorial video with Diwali Phalara Poleru ( Diwali plate of Snacks). The videos of how to make Besan Laadu, Chakuli, Tukdi, Chivda was published on FB. It was well received and appreciated.

Mahila Shakha extends their thanks to Aditi Shenoy for demonstrating and sharing the receipes.

# Phanchadika with Shweta Nayak Bagul Best Principal of the Year (India)



by Dr. Veena Adige

Shweta Nayak Bagul was recently awarded the Best Principal of the Year for her hard work and the success story of her school. She is the Founder of Bright Beginnings International Preschool and Learning Centre in Thane which is a unique school where she has innovative ideas and interesting programs for preschoolers. Bright Beginnings has adopted UNESCO's Living Values Education Programs. She organizes varied entertaining through play which is loved by the children and their parents. Even during the lockdown, she kept them active with items like showcasing corona fighting ideas. It is also a Daycare center.

former Corporation Bank employees, she now handles tiny tots with enthusiasm, devotion and hard work which has earned her the Best Principal award.

Even during the Lockdown Shweta has been busy organizing online programs for kids.

**Q: Did you expect this award? What is your feeling on getting it?**

A: This award is a surprise to me. I am really happy to get awarded as I always believe in 'keep doing good work success will follow'. Also being consistent is what I felt is important.. giving quality education and happy safe environment .I will always work towards it.

**My school is the first home for children whose parents are working from 8.30am in the morning to 7.30pm in the evening**



She is the Co-Founder for Seekh Teachers Community and Parenting.in. Shweta has many certifications in the education industry like a course in Finnish phenomenon based learning, Brain gym kinesiology, Jolly Phonics, Waldorf Foundation

course and others. Not only that, she is the founder of 'Meraki-Your Mentor to Education Excellence' which aims at Teachers Enrichment, curriculum development/enhancement and Education Solutions for preschools. She is a preschool consultant and trainer and holds workshops, gives talks and organizes conferences.

Tall and slim Shweta worked in a bank after graduation before changing course and going in for preschool children's activities. She is currently pursuing Masters in Early Childhood Education. Daughter of Subhash and Surekha Nayak, both

**Q: How did you think of starting Bright Beginnings after holding a bank job?**

A: I was working in a bank after completing my graduation till I conceived my first baby. I had no heart to leave him behind as I always wanted to spend time with my child. When he turned 3 months old, with all the support from my husband and my family, I got trained and certified as an early years' educator. It was a complete change in my profession. I used to stay up with my husband to complete all my assignments given during internship and finally completed the course. I worked as a coordinator, teacher, day care in charge and center head and learned everything before I ventured out to open my dream place "Bright Beginnings International Preschool and Learning Center."

It was exciting and at the same time I was nervous too. Running a preschool and a learning center is not as easy as it looks. It is like being a mother to

100 kids coming to my school with loads of expectations from parents sending their kids with 100% trust and faith leaving infants as young as 6 months old. I always wanted a working mother to get a complete solution at my center which I could not find when my baby was young. My school is the first home for children whose parents are working from 8.30am in the morning to 7.30pm in the evening. I just love the thing that I am doing!!!!

**Q: *What difficulties / problems did you face and how did you overcome them?***

A: Problems and difficulties can arise in any business. So is it for the center. We faced initial teething issues to develop the trust and faith in parents. We started Bright Beginnings in 2016 with 19 kids. 2019-20 we had 160 students at our center.

**Q: *What is your aim?***

A: I aspire to open Bright Beginnings Centers in every city, which helps mothers who wish to continue working after having a baby and be assured to get the best for their kids.



My center aims at holistic early childhood development. At Bright Beginnings, we are committed to nurturing happy individuals, supporting the growth in children's minds, bodies, and souls, through an

integrated, holistic curriculum that challenges and elevates all aspects of the child. Our educational philosophy is based on the image of the child as being infinitely curious, capable of complex thinking and ripe in making connections. We believe that learning is an active

process and not the transmission of pre-packaged information. We want children to be active participators in their own learning for which we provide them with multiple ways of expressing themselves. Our approach is inspired from global best practices in early years teaching and learning with a focus on developing the all-important attributes of grit, empathy, collaboration and a growth mindset in children from an early age.

Children's right to play is central to our value system. What children need to achieve their true potential is an environment that piques their curiosity, leads them on a journey of exploration and provides them with warmth and

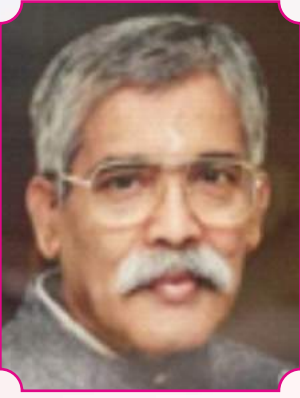


wonder. And hence we are creating centers of learning where children love to come every day and where educators are empowered to make a genuine difference in a child's life.

Shweta is the mother of eleven-year-old Vihaan and three-year-old Aditri, two lovable and naughty kids. Shweta goes in for continuing education keeping herself abreast with the latest methodologies in teaching and enjoys her work for which she puts in her heart and soul. She has a team of like-minded dedicated young educators who have made Bright Beginnings a delightful place for tiny children.

Here's wishing her progress and success in her venture.

*Dr. Veena Adige is a journalist, an author and a writer. She has written five novels, six e-books and hundreds of articles, stories, interviews, reviews, features and the like and her work has been translated into many languages.*



## Obituary

### **Shri Ashok Nayak**

Shri Ashok Nayak was our former committee member. He passed away on 20.11.2020 after a prolonged illness. He was also on the committee of GSB Seva Mandal and Walkeshwar Kashi Math Sansthan. He also worked in Dahisar Kashi Math for a few years. He was an ardent devotee of Sri Mahaganapathy. Bhajan saptah was his favourite.

Being a staunch disciple of HH Srimad Sudheendra Teertha Swamiji, he was a very eager philanthropist and gave his time, money and life to noble causes in the community. We have lost a very nice human being and an asset to our community. We pray to the divine heavens to grant him Sadgati.



## Obituary

### **Smt. Vasanthi Nayak** (11.09.1945 – 18.10.2020)

“Remember there's no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end.”  
– Scott Adams

Our dear friend Vasanti Nayak was a former committee member of GSB Mahila Shakha for a long time. During her tenure, for some time she was Jt. Secretary of Mahila Shakha and took active interest in the various programs conducted.

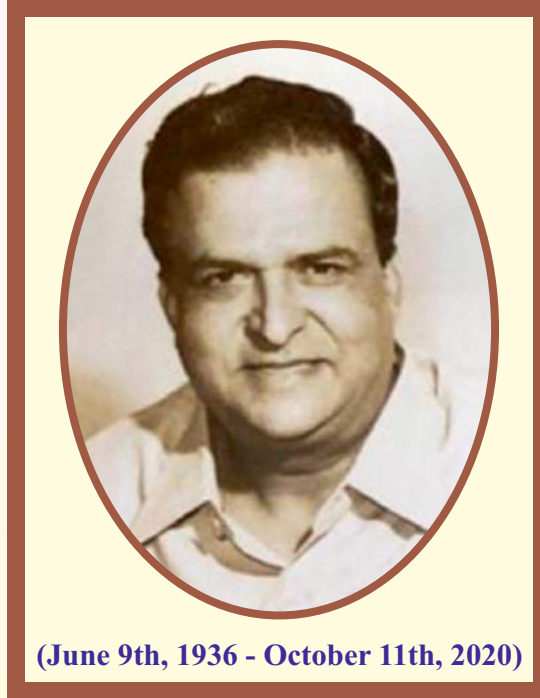
Even before joining Mahila Shakha, she used to be regular attendee for the Anand bazaar and Haldi Kumkum functions organised by Mahila Shakha. She started taking active interest in our various activities and volunteered during Anand Bazar. Eventually she became a part of Mahila Shakha and was involved with all activities of the Mahila Shakha.

Smt. Vasanti Nayak was a simple human being who loved to give back to the society through her services. During Anand Bazaar, she would come early in the morning with Smt Meera Shenoy (Meera akka) and helped with arrangements and helping in boosting stall sales. She also helped out in the matrimonial services held every fortnight by Mahila Shakha for several years.

Vasanthi was always enthusiastic to volunteer, until she had a bad fall and was injured which took a toll on her confidence. Despite that, she continued to carry out her duties giving it her best effort for a while. She had to eventually move to Thane with her husband, to be close to her son and daughter-in-law because of her declining health. She remained unwell for some time and ultimately breathed her last on 18th October 2020.

We will miss her immensely and will always be remembered for her good work towards Mahila Shakha. We have lost a close friend and well-wisher. May her soul rest in peace.

# In loving memory of Dr. Prabhakar S. Pai



by Dr. Kavita Pai

(June 9th, 1936 - October 11th, 2020)

A Medical Practitioner, a Municipal Councillor ( 1968-1984), Dr. Pai has fully dedicated himself to social and public welfare. He was the Vice President of Ramakrishna Mission, Mumbai. Dr. Pai was elected as Mayor of Mumbai, 1982-1983. He has worked with the LIC of India for over 50 years. Dr. Pai founded Janata Seva Sangh, a charitable trust working towards community service.

Dr. Pai was born in humble circumstances but was blessed with priceless qualities of industry and relentless resolve among others which drove him to become one of the most inspirational and respected figures of his time. His imposing stature never caused him to stray from his core moral values and he always carried in his heart a great consciousness to apply these values and use them to live a principle-centred life. He always believed in the merits of a good education. He was very modest about his accomplishments. He was a strong family man who always instilled a sense of care and responsibility. He impressed upon his family the incalculable worth of hard work, self-discipline, a sense of honour, loyalty and accountability, the very qualities that defined his being.

Some of our favourite memories are the quality times we spent together on our trips during our holidays. He had a special way in which he spoke that was unique to him which we have unconsciously imbibed and therefore emulate his ways whilst we talk bringing to mind so many sweet memories of him. He had an unshaken determination to finish any work given to him in the best way possible and at the earliest. We fondly remember his jokes and laughter, his kind and giving nature, his love for life and in the last few difficult years when we seemingly lost him to Alzheimer's we in fact felt closer to him than we ever did. We prayed a lot together and he assured us in his own way that we will be together again someday. We are consoled by this pledge of love, the greatest gift he gave our family.

**Join Us In Strengthening Our Community  
By Donating To Our Funds  
Every Little Bit Helps**

S.No	Fund	Objective	Financial Year 2019-2020	
			Amount Disbursed	Number of People Assisted
1.	GSB Senior Citizen Adhaar Fund	Providing sustenance support to disadvantaged senior citizens of our Community, including facilitating their stay in old age homes	2,88,500	41, including stay of one couple at an old age home
2.	GSB Senior Citizen Medical Welfare	Cover domiciliary medical expenses of economically weaker section of senior citizens of the community with daily medical expenses <i>Not covered by any other health scheme</i>	7,77,015	37
3.	Medical Aid	One-time assistance for hospitalization expenses	2,23,000	13
4.	Medical Aid (Critical Illness)	Assistance towards medical emergencies, hospitalization or surgery expenses to those battling 23 critical illness as defined	1,25,000	4
5.	GSB Higher Education	Provide assistance to needy and meritorious students for pursuing higher education	6,02,000	15
6.	Vidyanidhi	Educational assistance to school students from Std I to X, under-graduate and graduate college students and students pursuing post graduate / professional courses	5,11,000	200
7.	MS Marriage Assistance	Assistance to the bride's family for conducting the marriage ceremony	25,000	1

**If you wish to support us kindly contact us by email at [gsbsabha@gmail.com](mailto:gsbsabha@gmail.com)  
We will be happy to contact you.**

**LIST OF IMPORTANT DATES IN THE QUARTER JANUARY-MARCH, 2021**

DATES	DAY	FESTIVAL
2nd January 2021	Saturday	Sankashta Chaturthi
14th January 2021	Thursday	Makar Sankranti
26th January 2021	Tuesday	Republic Day
15th February 2021	Monday	Shree Ganesh Jayanti
2nd March 2021	Tuesday	Angarak Sankashta Chaturthi
11th March 2021	Thursday	Maha Shivratri
28th March 2021	Sunday	Holi Poornima
29th March 2021	Monday	Holi Dhoolivandana
31st March 2021	Wednesday	Sankashta Chaturthi
13th April 2021	Tuesday	Gudi Paadva (Chaitra Navaratri Aarambh)

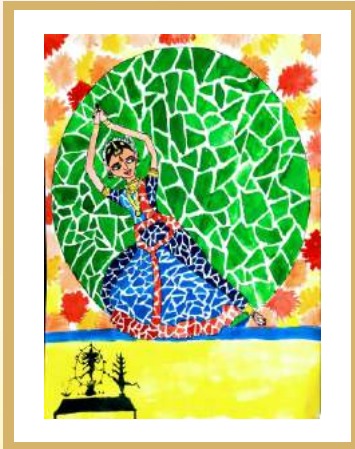




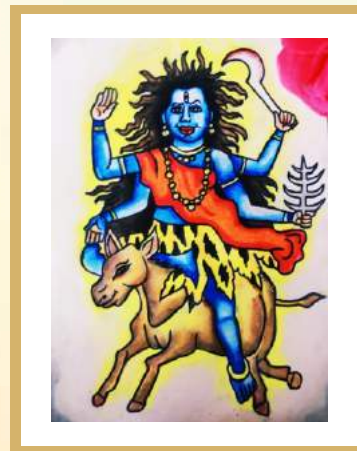
## Our Artists for this Quarter



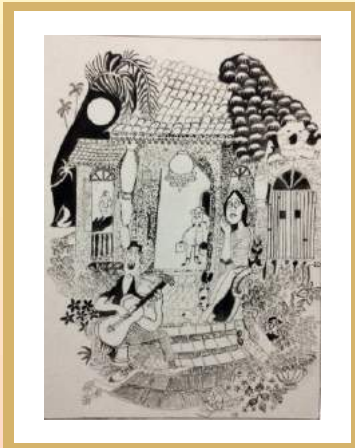
Drawing by : **Arjun Pai**  
8 yrs



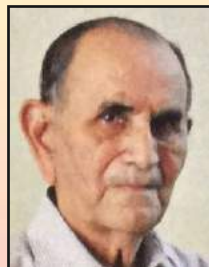
Drawing by : **Anagha Nayak**  
11 yrs



Drawing by : **Deepika Bhat**  
12 yrs



Drawing by : **Sarvottam Bhatt**  
95 yrs



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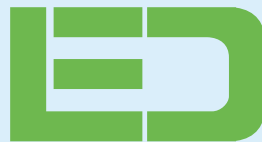
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