

ଉତ୍କର୍ଷ Utkarsha

Spring
Edition 2025

Circle of Life
ଜୀବନ ଘରିକ୍ରମା



THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF THE AMERICAS

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President's Message Leena Mishra



Namaskar!

Once again, it's Utkarsha Time, but this is the last Utkarsha for our team. We didn't realize how quickly time passed, and now it's time for our team to say goodbye to Utkarsha.

During our tenure we concentrated on clear Communication, Process improvement and Streamlining the Operation of Convention. We came up with the idea of a "A Trip to The Memory Lane" to help us stay connected with OSA's history and remind everyone of the contributions made by past office bearers and members. We made every effort to ensure the timely submission of BOG meeting minutes, thoroughly capturing all relevant information for future reference. Our goal was also to provide members ample opportunity to stay informed about the current business and address any concerns by following up on the minutes when necessary. Additionally, we established the OSA PRO team to manage OSA's external communications. We visited chapters like NY/NJ, Carolinas, Florida in addition to Washington DC, Chicago, Minnesota and OSA-Southwest.

We focused on raising awareness about the proper use of the OSA logo and created OSA document templates for consistent communication. In addition to resolving the FL chapter election, we worked with all chapters to emphasize the importance of conducting OSA chapter elections on time and familiarize them with the chapter election process. We updated the convention and award guidelines with the latest information. We organized an extra virtual happy hour for all chapter officials alongside the regular BOG meetings to discuss other chapter and OSA related issues. Training was provided to chapter officials, and we held separate meetings with chapter secretaries and treasurers to help them maintain accurate financial records for OSA. We also added liability insurance for all OSA office bearers and ensured that each chapter treasurer is an OSA member. Membership database, Communication forum and distribution list were cleaned up and updated. OSA's It infrastructure was updated and a centralized convention website was created. A special BOG area was created for members to access BOG-related information. We also discussed creating a standardized process for awarding volunteer hours to students.

In addition, we aimed to raise awareness that the OSA convention is an annual event primarily dedicated to discussing OSA's business for the year. The cultural and intellectual activities surrounding the convention are meant to strengthen the bonds among members during this time. We communicated frequently with members and host chapters to explain various processes related to the convention, emphasizing that all chapters are equal stakeholders and the convention does not belong to any one chapter. In addition, we integrated the convention registration process with the OSA membership database to ensure seamless membership validation and the addition of new members.

Lastly, the OSA election committee conducted the election for the term 2023-2025. The election committee declared the following candidates won uncontested for their respective posts for the term 2025-2027.

- Mr. Nageswar Rajanala - President (OSA NY NJ Chapter)
- Mr. Utkal Nayak - Vice President (OSA Washington DC Chapter)
- Ms. Snigdha Hota - Secretary (OSA Washington DC Chapter)
- Mr. Sanjeeb Rout - Treasurer (OSA Carolinas Chapter)

With this, we bid farewell to the final edition of OSA Utkarsha for the 2023-2025 term. Thank you,
Leena Mishra

Message from OSA Vice President



Sarada Kanta Panda

Namaskar,

First of all, wishing you all Happy Holi, upcoming Odia New year & Utkala Dibasa. I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of the OSA executive team for the last 20 months.

Our upcoming 56th annual OSA Convention to be held in DFW Metroplex in TX from July 3rd through July 5th, 2025. OSA South-West Chapter is actively working with its volunteer members to host another great convention. So far more 425 families have registered and it is growing. I am taking this opportunity to invite you all to attend this Convention to enjoy amongst ourselves, our friendship, our culture and our heritage.

Registration for the 2025 OSA Convention will close early this year due to the huge number of participants. Please visit the convention site to learn more at <https://osa2025.osaconventions.org/>

Starting in 2024, the convention website has been hosted within OSA's domain. Starting the 2025 convention the membership validation is integrated with the Convention website real-time. This will eliminate manual updates of membership data between these two sites. Also, it will eliminate manual reconciliation and update of new members for membership databases after the convention. This will help the OSA and Convention team tremendously.

Our Award committee is working to get the nominations to award some of our fellow members who have achieved tremendous success in their lives and it should be our pleasure to recognize them. So, I request you all to nominate your fellow members and check it out at <https://www.odishasociety.org/awards/> for more information

OSA regular activities are in full swing as usual with Chapter events, Chapter Elections, weekly EC meetings, monthly BOG meetings, convention meetings, etc. We are also working tirelessly on streamlining many of the OSA processes, Guidelines, etc.

Regards Sarada VP, OSA

Secretary Report



Santwana Dash
Secretary, OSA

Namaskar,

Greetings to all the members of the OSA Family. It has been 20 months since I took office as the Secretary of our organization. Throughout this journey, my team and I cherish numerous memorable moments.

After assuming office, I worked diligently on setting up official email accounts for all officials and committee members to streamline communication. While some emails were already in place, others had to be created. We have requested all leaders to use their official OSA email accounts for communication purposes.

The OSAnet email distribution list has been updated with members' registered email IDs. As per the announcement, OSA retains only the email ID used for convention registration, which is also linked to member logins. The email addresses have been updated in both the OSAnet and OSA all members' distribution lists.

Ensuring the accuracy of personal details in the membership directory remains the responsibility of all the members. We send periodic reminders for updates—some members update their details independently, while others request assistance, which we accommodate accordingly. Every month with the OSA Treasurer, I validate membership payments and update the membership records accordingly. To enhance communication at the chapter level, I have created chapter-specific email distribution lists and shared them with respective Chapter Presidents for effective use. I will continue updating these manually until the end of my tenure.

The Southern Chapter's election is scheduled to take place at the end of March and the new Southern Chapter officials will be announced. Canada Chapter election has been done and the new officials will take office from April 20th. The Rocky Mountain Chapter election is in process.

As part of our continuous efforts to engage our members, we have maintained the "Trip to Memory Lane" initiative, which has now reached 20 episodes. BOG meeting minutes have been shared with members and updated on the website as well. With the effort of OSA editors Utkarsha, the quarterly magazine of OSA has been published within the time frame.

"Akhyara Mala" a unique seminar was hosted by the effort of our OSA literature committee. The primary objective of this seminar was to educate members on Odia typing in digital format, making it easier for them to type Odia characters efficiently. We hosted a Member Interaction Meeting where we tried our best of our ability to answer some queries of our esteemed members. With that, we hosted another session focused on membership growth. We reached out to expired members, those nearing expiration, and registered individuals who are not yet members via email. Additionally, we requested all Chapter Presidents to circulate the message within their respective chapters to reach prospective members, address their queries, and encourage them to join OSA.

I remain committed to serving the organization to the best of my abilities and ensuring effective communication and membership engagement.

Thank you to all the OSA members for your support and cooperation.

Editorial

The Circle of Life

Hello and Namaskar to all the readers of Utkarsha. We are glad to thank all the excellent Utkarsha poets, writers, and different chapter presidents for extending their love and support. This spring edition is our last publication for the current editorial team. Every ending is a beautiful new beginning. It's a lovely journey with all of you. Utkarsha is a monument and continues to influence OSA members. Many members give their love and affection to Utkarsha. We found many noble thoughts, kindness, and writers' excellence in the last two years. We also have lost some precious OSA members.

The theme for this spring edition is "**The circle of life.**" Everything continuously flows with time. Nobody stops and waits for anyone. Similarly, Utkarsha has embarked on with time.

Utkarsha is a beautiful journey for all our Odias living in the United States and Canada, whose destination is an endless journey. They all have oneness, unity, perfection, and affection, which makes them limitless. Utkarsha is a beautiful circle where all writers and poets are equally taking love and affection. In this circle, you can start anywhere.

In this Universe, everything is connected to a circle. We are interconnected from birth to death by a circle. In many circumstances, it has given us many significant memories. But Life is never a straight line—day after day, month after month, and year after year. Everything goes with time. Many rulers rule this earth, and many leaders are guiding this earth, but nobody forever. It only leaves a variety of experiences and their footprints, sweet or bitter. Life is always an ever-changing process by nature.

Our love, actions, and emotions are interconnected in this world. Years are ending, and another year is coming. There is no beginning and no endpoint. Utkarsha is a living magnet that attracts OSA members' creativity. Utkarsha will continue its journey in future with new hands. But it only changes the cycle—our love and respect with Utkarsha. We are lucky to have connected in this ocean of Utkarsha. We are thankful to all OSA office bearers and OSA family members.

Surve Bhabantu Sukhinah

Thank you,
Chinmayee Devi,
On behalf of the Editorial Team

OSA Editorial Team



Chinmayee Devi
Illinois



Smita Suvadarsini Panda
Georgia



Sumedha Jena
New Jersey



Convener's Message

Message from OSA 56th Annual Convention: Tapan Padhi (Convener)

- Gearing Up for the 56th OSA Convention: Dallas OSA Volunteers in Full Swing**

The excitement is building as the local Odia community in Dallas gears up to host the 56th Annual Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) Convention on July 3 at the Frisco Embassy Suites Convention Center. With just a few months to go, preparations are in full swing, driven by the tireless dedication and selfless service of hundreds of volunteers. From cultural coordination to logistics management, seminar planning to community outreach, the local Dallas Odias are pouring their hearts and souls into making this event a grand success. Their collective efforts reflect a spirit of unity and pride, ଏକତା, ସଂସ୍କୃତି, ସମୃଦ୍ଧି as they come together to celebrate Odia heritage and strengthen community bonds.
- Business Symposium: Setting the Stage for Success**

The convention will kick off with a Business Symposium on July 3, and preparations for this prestigious event are in high gear. The symposium team is working round the clock to finalize the lineup of speakers, panelists, and networking opportunities. Volunteers are busy coordinating with successful entrepreneurs and professionals from across North America, ensuring that the symposium becomes a platform for sharing ideas and fostering innovation. Behind the scenes, teams are organizing presentation spaces, arranging audiovisual support, and managing logistics to make sure everything runs smoothly. The focus is on creating an atmosphere of collaboration and inspiration, with topics ranging from entrepreneurial success stories to professional development.
- Cultural Programs: Curating an Unforgettable Experience**

The cultural team is putting in countless hours to prepare a spectacular lineup of performances that showcase the rich artistic heritage of Odisha. Dance troupes, musical ensembles, and theater groups are rehearsing tirelessly to perfect their acts. Volunteers are meticulously planning every detail—from costume coordination to stage setups and sound arrangements.

To ensure a seamless experience, cultural coordinators are working closely with performers from both the local community and other parts of North America. They are also busy designing backdrops, setting up lighting effects, and coordinating with technical teams to create a truly immersive atmosphere. The goal is to captivate the audience with performances that blend tradition and modernity while celebrating Odisha's artistic diversity.

- **Seminars and Workshops: Enlightening and Engaging**

Parallel to the cultural festivities, preparations are underway to host a series of seminars and workshops that will offer valuable insights into social, cultural, and professional topics. The seminar planning team is working hard to secure thought leaders and experts who can share their knowledge and inspire meaningful discussions.

Volunteers are coordinating speaker schedules, preparing presentation materials, and ensuring that the technical setup is flawless. They are also actively curating topics that resonate with the diaspora—ranging from preserving Odia traditions in modern times to leveraging technology for community development. The team's dedication to creating intellectually enriching sessions is evident in their meticulous planning and coordination.

- **Logistics and Hospitality: Ensuring a Smooth Experience**

Managing logistics for such a large-scale event is a daunting task, but the logistics team is tackling it with enthusiasm and efficiency. From coordinating hotel bookings to managing transportation and food arrangements, volunteers are leaving no stone unturned to ensure a comfortable and welcoming experience for every guest.

The registration team is working tirelessly to process participant sign-ups and issue confirmation details. Meanwhile, the hospitality volunteers are planning warm and traditional welcomes to make guests feel at home from the moment they arrive. Their dedication reflects the genuine warmth and hospitality that define Odia culture.

- **Outreach and Promotion: Building Excitement and Unity**

Promoting an event of this magnitude requires consistent and widespread communication, and the outreach team is doing just that. They are actively connecting with Odia families and communities across North America through social media posts, email campaigns, and personal outreach.

Volunteers are working on designing promotional materials, creating video snippets, and gathering testimonials from past attendees to build excitement. The goal is not just to inform but to inspire everyone to be part of this grand celebration of Odia culture and identity.

- **A Labor of Love and Dedication to celebrate ଏକତା, ସଂସ୍କୃତି, ସମୃଦ୍ଧି**

With each passing day, the energy and enthusiasm among the volunteers are growing stronger. The dedication of the local Dallas Odias is truly inspiring, as they balance their personal commitments with the demanding tasks of organizing this landmark event.

The preparation for the 56th OSA Convention is not just about logistics and planning—it is a labor of love, driven by the desire to bring the community together and celebrate their shared heritage. As the countdown to July 3 continues, the spirit of collaboration and dedication shines brightly, promising an unforgettable event that will leave lasting memories for all who attend.



Chapter Reports



OSA Georgia Chapter

Chapter Report - Utkarsha Spring 2025 Edition

As spring blossoms, we're excited to share the report from the OSA Georgia chapter for the Spring 2025 edition. Now in our fifth year, our chapter has experienced its first executive leadership transition. We continue to flourish thanks to the collaborative efforts of our members, whose dedication and innovation remain the driving force behind our chapter's success. Below are the list of events conducted in the last quarter and some of the upcoming events.

1. OSA Georgia Steps Fitness Challenge 2024 (Nov 11th to Dec 8th 2024)

We had a superb Steps challenge over a period of 4 weeks. Each week the person with the maximum steps was announced the winner of the week. The steps were tracked through the fitness app. There was a healthy competition among the members and lots of conversation in our WhatsApp groups during the competition. This event helped in a lot of community building.

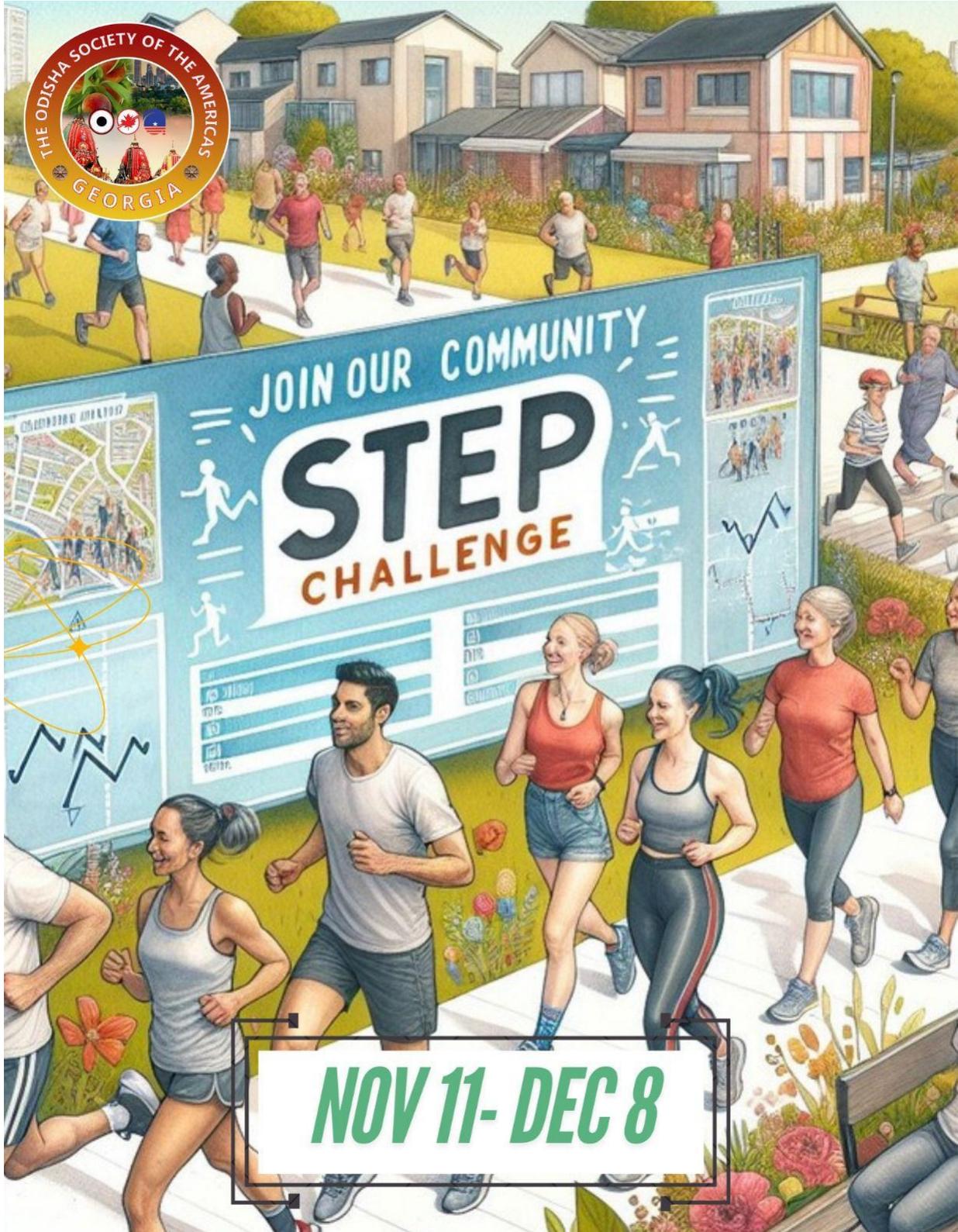
Week 1 Winner : Bhabani Buxi Week 2 Winner : Pallavi Mohanty

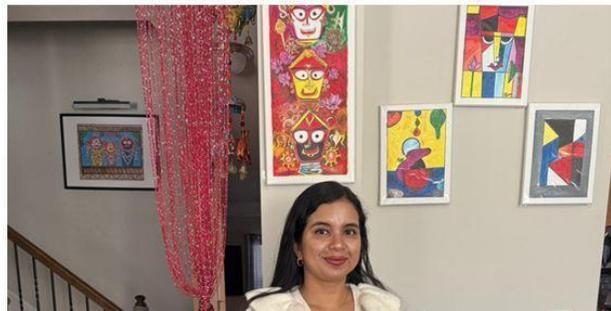
Week 3 Winner : Shashibhushan Rath & Rashmi Tripathy Week 4 Winner : Sujaya Dash

Overall winner : Shashibhushan Rath

A cumulative of around 12 million steps were done by all participants over the period of 4 weeks.

A big thank you to the organizer of the event Soubhagya Rout. He always brings in similar innovative ideas to the community.





2. AVAHANA 2025 (January 18th , 2025)

This year was the year of Maha Kumbha Mela and we were lucky to be able to host the event during this auspicious time. Our theme for this year was "Global peace through Spirituality". We were celebrating the event with a theme of Kumbha Mela , Prabhasi Bharatiya Dibasa held at Bhubaneswar and Makara Sankranti. During the event we had a very high quality of singers and songs. Some of the songs even gave us goosebumps moments. We had wonderful spiritual discourse by Swami Sarandananda ji and very useful Yoga asanas by our Yoga panelists Dr. Rabindra Acharya and Shree Diganta Das. We even got to have a live stream from Maha Kumbha Mela camp with some useful information from researchers.

Lot of hard work was involved to make this event a success. The team had started planning the event before Dec 15th. Lots of coordination with singers, guest speakers, getting material for Kumbha mela, Prabhasi Bharatiya Divasa, releasing teasers etc. Even our kids helped with their beautiful art work and showed us what they are learning at Barnabodha Sikhyalaya. Although it is a virtual event, it was more hard work than an in person event.

The whole event was captured in the YouTube links.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/SZAubrVpLT8?si=sTglziT9s5U6DBna>

AVAHANA 2025
Global peace through spirituality
SATURDAY 18TH JANUARY, 5:30PM EST ONWARDS

OSAGAGeorgia invites you to

- YOGA BY KIDS AND ADULTS
- MAKARA SANKRANTI CELEBRATION
- REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION
- MAHA KUMBHA MELA
- PRABHASI BHARATIYA DIBASA
- DEVOTIONAL & PATRIOTIC SINGING BY ARTISTS ACROSS THE GLOBE

Spiritual discourse by Swami Sharanananda
Chitrapada Mission

LIVE ON ZOOM AND YOUTUBE

100% FREE - OPEN TO EVERYONE

Time	Performer	Program
6:00pm to 7:00pm	Chanting by Georgia members	Avahana Chanting
	Arpita Patnaik, Georgia	Kala thakura
	Sujata Acharya, Georgia	Bada natikhat hai re Krishna konehiya
	Ritangali Pattnaik, Georgia	Thada Dhiyan Logo
7:00pm to 8:30pm	Katalina Rout, Georgia	Payaaji maine Ram Ratan dhan payo
	Yoga Georgia kids & Adults	A practice for better and healthy living
	Dr. Rabindra Acharya & Dr. Diganta Dash	Yoga for stress relief & mental clarity: A Panel discussion
	Spiritual Discourse	Global peace through spirituality by Swami Sharanananda
	Aditri Thakur, Georgia	Satyam shivam sundaram
	Ashok Pangarik, Connecticut	Kotha bhage kisa ma chaha akhia
	Subhaxmi Prathori, Virginia	Jagatranatha oaha Jagannath
	Padmasana Das, New Jersey	Voishnav Jan ka teene kahiyee je
	Pravasi Bharatiya Dibasa 2025	Celebrating the Indians abroad hosted by Odisha
	Prasad Sastry, California	An Astopadi from Gita Govinda: Dheera sameere Yamuna teere
8:30pm to 9:30pm	Rukia Rathi, Georgia	Asharam madharam
	Ruchir Bal, Georgia	Ae waton waton mere azaad rohe tu
	Kirton Sahoo, Virginia	Kede Madhura Tuma Nama Rasa
	Kumbha Mela	The Festival of the Sacred Pitcher
	Barnabodha Sikhyalaya	Ana Bhasa, ama Sanskrutti, ama Aitihya ebang Parampara
	Manoja Mishra, Texas	Hattia Thakura
	Prisha Mahapatra, Georgia	Sang Goshwastham Sang Badodhram
	Sasmita Satpathy, Connecticut	Prabhu pada Praneti dhale
	Leena Mishra, Colorado	Guhari suna bhagabana
	Artwork Georgia kids & Adults	Celebrating Makara Sankranti & Republic Day through Artworks
9:30pm to 10:30pm	OSAG Convention Team	The largest social and cultural association for Odias in North America
	Devika Tripathy, California	ଠିକିଂ ଚିତ୍ତେ ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣ
	Suprakash Rath, Georgia	Ohi shivoham
	Gayatri Senapati, North Carolina	Ek Radha ek Meera
	Madhusmita Panda, Georgia	O paalanhare
	Rani Acharya & Soni Acharya, India	Jibana Jamuna bahi jai acchi
	Farazh Mahapatra, Georgia	Jagata na Mathe, ahe Jagannatha
	Nabojyoti Das, India	Ashihili Kalia to Darashana peasin Re
	Surendu Mishra, Colorado	De re Kalia de to pada sharama de
	Bighnaraj Mahanty, Australia	Dhali Dia Sara Dharanire aji

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Dr. Rabindra Acharya

Shri Diganta Dash

Yoga for stress relief & mental clarity: A Panel discussion

When: 5:30 pm EST on Saturday January 18th
ZOOM Link: <https://tinyurl.com/OSAGA-AVAHANA2025>
YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/OSAGA-YouTube>
Meeting id : 822 1932 0303
Passcode : 319314

3. C

As mentioned earlier, this was the first time the executive committee baton was handed over to a new team. So, we had a get together to show gratitude and appreciation to the past office bearers who served the community for 4 years which included the difficult Pandemic years also. We had more than 70 people who came together and shared the memories of the past 4 years. It was a great evening of community building.



Upcoming events :

4. NDF 2025 (March 22nd)

Our chapter will be submitting 2 dramas for the NDF 2025. Both the dramas are novice concepts and the actors and technical team have worked hard over the past 2 months to bring the drama from a concept to video.

5. Kalyana Jyoti 2025 (March 22nd)

We will be having a tree plantation event on March 22nd. This will be part of the Kalyana Jyoti initiative.



6. Utkala Dibasa 2025

Like every year, this year also Utkala Dibasa will be celebrated with great pomp and show. Preparation is in full swing for one of our flagship events. Teams have started practicing for different programs during the event. Several leads and volunteers are working to make this a successful event in all departments. We have invited singers from Odisha to perform during the event.

**THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF THE AMERICAS
GEORGIA CHAPTER**

INVITES YOUR PARTICIPATION IN

UTKALA DIBASA 2025

A CELEBRATION OF THE CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF ODISHA

Event Tickets
(Includes Snacks & Dinner)
12 Yrs and above - \$30
5 - 11 yrs - \$20
0 - 4 yrs - FREE

Early bird expires on 3/31
at 11.59 pm

APRIL 12, 2025
Saturday, 2 PM Onwards

At Dacula High School
123 Broad St, Dacula, GA 30019

LIVE Performance

Singers Manas Preetam & Suman Das from India

- SOULFUL LIVE SINGING
- MESMERIZING DANCES OF ODISHA
- AUTHENTIC ODIA DELICACIES
- ODIA DINNER (VEG AND NON-VEG)

Odisha Society of New England

Chapter Report - Utkarsha Spring 2025 Edition

OSNE Chapter Report:

Odisha society of New England (OSNE) celebrated Maa Saraswati Puja, held at The Trinity Church, Northborough on February 8th 2025. It was yet another successful and fun-filled celebration organized by OSNE. It was great to see a lot of enthusiastic members joining in despite an impending snow storm prediction. We were happy to see our regular members as well as many new members who were welcomed into our OSNE family.

The event started off with Maa Saraswati's puja , which was conducted by our very own member Surya Tripathy. The puja also included the traditional 'khadi chuan' which was performed very enthusiastically by our youngest members in expert guidance of their parents. Each participating kid was presented with a notepad and a pen. The puja ended with Pushpanjali which was followed by Prasad Sevan which included Kala Chana, Suji halwa, Chuda Ghasa, Boondi and fruits.

As the evening progressed it was time for our cultural line up where we provide a platform for all our kids and grown ups alike to showcase their talents. The whole program line up was exceeded by our youths who are always given enough opportunities to shine and lead. As usual there was a great lineup of dance, vocals and instrumental performances followed by Osne updates given by President Dillip Behera.

The evening ended with a delicious dinner spread which was home made food prepared with love by our members which included traditional Dalma, Bhaja, Saga besara, paneer, khatta, Kanika, puri, kheeri, Chhena poda, to name a few.

As usual this event too was meticulously planned keeping all the timelines in check and executed perfectly by our executive team as well as our selfless volunteers who are an integral part of our success.

The event was a huge success, both in terms of people engagement as well as time management. We are already looking forward to the next upcoming event which is Utkal Diwas scheduled for April 5th 2025.









Thanks
Dillip K Behera



OSA Rocky Mountain - Colorado

Chapter Report: Utkarsha 2025 Spring Edition

OSARM Annual Cultural Event:

The Odisha Society of America (OSA), Rocky Mountain Chapter, is renowned for celebrating and promoting Odisha's rich culture, traditions, and heritage through cultural events. In February 2025, we proudly organized the 9th edition of the Annual Cultural Event, which served as a gathering point for the Odia community in the Rocky Mountain region, fostering unity and cultural pride. It offers a platform for community members to showcase their talents, particularly in traditional Indian art forms. The Rocky Mountain Annual Cultural Event plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting Odia culture, fostering community among Odias, and introducing the wider Indian community to Odisha's rich and diverse culture.

This year's event featured a variety of performances, including Odissi dance, Sambalpuri and Chau dance, and traditional Odia music, offering both entertainment and education about Odisha's cultural heritage. Performers from other Indian communities were also invited to showcase their talents and learn about Odia culture. The event concluded with a fantastic fashion show, a signature performance for many years. A standout feature of this year's event was the "Master Of Ceremonies (MC)," whose engaging presence and ability to captivate the audience added the icing on the cake. His dynamic interactions and seamless transitions made the overall show feel like a well-choreographed play, enhancing the experience for all attendees.

Overall, the meticulous planning and execution by our Volunteers were highly appreciated by over 650 audience members, making the event a grand success.









Ganesh Puja:

All OSARM members, along with members from various communities, celebrated Ganesh Chaturthi at the Hindu Temple of Colorado. OSARM members prepared Prasad in the morning and were able to serve approximately 650+ attendees from different communities. It was a deeply devotional day, and everyone felt blessed to organize such a significant event at the Temple.



Diwali Celebration:

Diwali, also known as Deepavali, is a major festival celebrated in India and by Indian communities worldwide. Diwali is indeed a special time for bringing communities together and celebrating with loved ones. In the OSARM community, it is a cherished tradition where members dress in traditional Indian attire and celebrate together as a family. The festivities include a potluck with homemade, delicious food. Although fire restrictions prevented the use of firecrackers, the main goal was to come together and celebrate as one OSARM family.



OSA SW Chapter Updates : An invite to attend OSA-Convention-2025

Dear All. As you all know we will be hosting OSA Convention 2025 in Dallas and we extend a special welcome to all OSA Family to attend and be part of this to make it a memorable one for all of us. Many teams are actively working proactively reaching out to you all and we need all your help and participation to make it a grand success. We anticipate that this will be a first time OSA Convention for many attendees here and all across OSA Family and our Next Generation and Youth. We want it to be a memorable Convention and seeking all your blessings and cooperation.

Convention Website: <https://osa2025.osaconventions.org/>

Attendees List: <https://osa2025.osaconventions.org/attendee-list/>

Registration: <https://osa2025.osaconventions.org/osa-registration-form/>

Cultural: <https://osa2025.osaconventions.org/cultural/>

Few Chapter events we conducted recently:

ସୁରଭି

(ଆମ କଳାକାର ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସଙ୍ଗୀତର ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବ)

ସୁରଭି, ଓଷା ଦକ୍ଷିଣ-ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଶାଖାର ବାର୍ଷିକ ସଂଗୀତ ଉତ୍ସବ | ସୁରଭିର ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଉତ୍ସବ ଅଗଷ୍ଟ ୩, ୨୦୨୪ ରେ ହୁଏଟ୍ସନ ର ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଠାରେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା | ସୁରଭିର ଏଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ହୁଏଟ୍ସନ, ଅଷ୍ଟିନ, ଡାଲାସ ଓ ସାନ ଆନଟୋନିଓ ସହରର କଳାକାର ତଥା ଅତିଥି ମାନେ ଯୋଗଦାନ କରିଥିଲେ ଏବଂ କଳାକାର ମାନଙ୍କୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସାଙ୍ଗୀତିକ କଳା ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନ ଦେଇଥିଲେ | କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟି ର ସପ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟରେ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରୀୟ ସଂଗୀତ (ହିନ୍ଦୁସ୍ତାନୀ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ) ପରିବେଷଣ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା | ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରଧନୁ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟରେ ସୁଗମ ଓ ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟ ସଂଗୀତ ର ପରିବେଷଣ ଅତି ଆକର୍ଷିତ ଥିଲା | ସମୟ ଅଭାବରୁ ରାତ୍ରି ଭୋଜନ ପରେ କୃଷ୍ଣଚୂଡ଼ା ର ମେହଫିଲ ହୋଇପାରିନଥିଲା | ସ୍ୱାତି ସମବେଦନା ସାହୁ ଓ ତପନ ବେହେରା ଅତି ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭାବରେ ମଂଚ ପରିଚାଳନା କରି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟିକୁ ଆହୁରି ଆନନ୍ଦଦାୟକ କରିଥିଲେ | ଶିବରଞ୍ଜନ ମହାପାତ୍ର ଏଇ ବର୍ଷର ଉତ୍ସବ ଚିର ଦାଉଡ଼ ନେଇ ସଫଳତାର ସହିତ ଉତ୍ସବ ସମାପନ କରିଥିଲେ |



ଏଇ ଉତ୍ସବ ରେ ଚାରିଜଣ ଯୁବ କଳାକାର, ଶ୍ରୀଜୀଲ ମହାପାତ୍ର (ସାକସୋଫୋନ), କ୍ରିସା ରଥ (କଣ୍ଠ ସଂଗୀତ), ଯାଶ ପୁରୋହିତ (କଣ୍ଠ ସଂଗୀତ), ତେଜସ କୋଲହଟକର (ତବଲା ବାଦନ) କୁ "ଯୁବ କଳାକାର" ମାନପତ୍ର ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ତାଛଡା ଦକ୍ଷିଣ-ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଶାଖାର ସଭାପତି ସ୍ମରଣିକା ରାଉତ କୁ କଳା ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ପ୍ରସାରଣର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା, ଏବଂ ସାମାଜିକ ସଂଯୋଗଶୀଳତା ଉଦ୍ୟମ ପାଇଁ "ପ୍ରବାସୀ ପ୍ରତିଭା" ମାନପତ୍ର ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର (ଓସିସି) ର ସଭାପତି ଡ୍ର. ଗୋପାଳ ମହାପାତ୍ର, ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଡ୍ର. ଆଦିତ୍ୟ ସାମଲ ଓ ଓଷା ଦକ୍ଷିଣ-ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଶାଖାର ସଭାପତି ସ୍ମରଣିକା ମାନପତ୍ର ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରିଥିଲେ । ସୁରଭିର ସଫଳ ସମାପ୍ତିରେ ଅନେକଙ୍କ ର ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ଓ ସହଯୋଗ ରହିଛି । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ସହଯୋଗ, ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ଓ ପ୍ରେରଣା ପାଇଁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।

ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ

(ରଜନୀଗନ୍ଧା - ଆମ ସୁମଧୁର ମନଛୁଆଁ ସଙ୍ଗୀତର ଗୋଟିଏ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା)

ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ ର ପଞ୍ଚମ ଅଧିବେଶନ ରେ ସଙ୍ଗୀତର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ରଜନୀଗନ୍ଧା ଜାନୁଆରୀ ୧୦, ୨୦୨୪ ରେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଚି ଓଷା ଦକ୍ଷିଣ-ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଶାଖା ଓ ହୁଏଟ୍ଟନ ସ୍ଥିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର (ଓସିସି) ତରଫରୁ ଆୟୋଜନ କରାଯାଇଥାଏ । ଓଡ଼ିଶା ର ବିଭିନ୍ନ କଳାର ପ୍ରସାର, ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟତା ଓ କଳାକାର ମାନଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହିତ କରିବା ଏଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ଉଦ୍ଦେଷ୍ୟ । କଣ୍ଠ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ଗୁରୁ ରବିନ୍ଦ୍ରନାଥ ମିଶ୍ର, ବେହେଲା ବାଦକ ସୁରମଣୀ ରମେଶ ଦାସ, ବଂଶୀ ବାଦକ ଜବାହର ମିଶ୍ର ଓ ତାଙ୍କର ସହଯୋଗୀ କଳାକାରଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ସଙ୍ଗୀତର ଏଇ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ଆୟୋଜନ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରସ୍ଥିତ ସିଦ୍ଧଲର ସୁଡ଼ିଓ ରୁ ଜୁମ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ଶ୍ରୀନିବାସ (ମିଲନ) ଘରୁଆରୀ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟିକୁ ପରିଚାଳନା କରିଥିଲେ । ଅନ୍ୟ ଯେଉଁ କଳାକାରମାନେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ସେମାନେ ହେଲେ କଣ୍ଠ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ସାଗରିକା ପଣ୍ଡା, କଣ୍ଠ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ପ୍ରୀତିନନ୍ଦା ପରିଡ଼ା, କଣ୍ଠ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ମାନସ ରଞ୍ଜନ

ମହାରଣା, ମରଦଳ ବାଦକ ରଶ୍ମି ରଞ୍ଜନ ମିଶ୍ର, ତବଲା ବାଦକ ଅମୃତ ରଞ୍ଜନ ଦାସ, କି ବୋର୍ଡ଼ ରେ ସୁବ୍ରତ କୁମାର ମଥାନ ଓ ଅକ୍ଟୋପ୍ୟାଡ଼ରେ ବିଶ୍ୱନାଥ ମଲିକ |



କଳାକାରମାନଙ୍କଦ୍ୱାରା ପରିବେଷିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ, ଗୀତଗୋବିନ୍ଦ, ଭଜନ, ପଲ୍ଲୀ, ଆଧୁନିକ ଓ ଚଳଚ୍ଚିତ୍ରର କେତେଗୁଡ଼ିଏ ସଂଗୀତ ଆମର ସବୁ ସ୍ରୋତା ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଅତି ମନମୁଗ୍ଧକର ଥିଲା । ଆମେରିକାର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସହରରୁ ଅନେକ ସଂଗୀତ ଓ କଳାପ୍ରେମୀ ନିଜର ମତାମତ ଜଣାଇଥିଲେ ଏବଂ କଳାକାରମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରସଂଶା କରିଥିଲେ । ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଏବଂ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ସୋସାଇଟି ର ଆମ ପରମ୍ପରା ର ପ୍ରସାର ଓ ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟତା ପାଇଁ ଏଇ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟାକୁ ସମସ୍ତ ଅତିଥି ଭୁଇଁୟସି ପ୍ରଶଂସା କରିଥିଲେ । କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ସମାପନ ରେ ସବୁକଳାକାର ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଓସିସି ଓ ଓଷା ସାଉଥ-ୱେଷ୍ଟ ଡରଫରୁ ସଭାପତି ଡ୍ର.ଗୋପାଳ ମହାପାତ୍ର, ସଭାପତି ସ୍ମରଣିକା ରାଉତ ଓ ଓସିସି ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଡ୍ର.ଆଦିତ୍ୟ ସାମଲ ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କର ଆମ କଳା ଓ କଳାକାର ମାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଓ ସମ୍ମାନର ପ୍ରତୀକ ଗୋଟିଏ ଲେଖାଏ ମାନପତ୍ର ପ୍ରଦାନ କରିଥିଲେ । ସାଉଥ-ୱେଷ୍ଟ ଉପସଭାପତି ଉତ୍ତମ କୁମାର ସାହୁ ଓ ସେକ୍ରେଟାରୀ ବାବାଜୀ ବେହେରା ମଧ୍ୟ ତାଙ୍କର ମତାମତ ଦେଇ କଳାକାରମାନଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଜଣାଇଥିଲେ । ମାନପତ୍ର ରେ ପ୍ରବାସୀଙ୍କର ଏଇ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାର ଗୋଟିଏ ଭାବନା "ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଗହଣେ ରଞ୍ଜିତ ଆଜି ସୁର-ସୁରଭି ର ଗୋଟିଏ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା, କଳାକାର ତୁମେ ଆମ ହୃଦୟର ସୁବାସିତ ଫୁଲ ରଜନୀଗନ୍ଧା" ଲେଖାହୋଇଥିଲା ।



OSA NYNJPA - Chapter Report

Date From: December 2024

Date To: March 2025

OSA Activities During the period:

1. FITNESS DAY ORGANIZED BY OSA NYNJPA WOMENS FORUM

The Chapter Women's Forum organized a Fitness Day on March 22nd. The motto was to spread the word of fitness and togetherness. It was a medium intensity aerobics class conducted by our own Nibedita Bal.

2. OSA NYNJPA ODIA MOVIE DAY

As part of the Govt of India's promotion of regional movies, we were able to bring one Odia movie (Delivery Boy) to a theater in NJ on March 16. The movie show was attended by 270+ community members including Consul General, NY and Consul – Culture, NY. Members were very happy to see an Odia movie at a local theatre with so much excitement for the first time. We received very positive feedback on the arrangements as well as the movie itself.





3. OOL ODIA SCHOOL “BIDYAMANDIARA” STUDENTS APPEAR FOR LEVEL-1 EXAM

The Chapter started the Odia School “BidyaMandira” based on the OSA Odia Learning initiative last summer. The classes are conducted online every week with an in-person class every month. The first batch of 12 students appeared for the Level-1 oral and written exams on Mar 2. They all have successfully completed the Level-1 and have enrolled into Level-2 class now.

4. OSA PARTICIPATION IN THE NY TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE SHOW

The New York Travel & Adventure Show is where travel lovers come for travel inspiration, expert information, and cultural interaction. Source: Travel Shows
<https://search.app/xKyquX3EUAWEQ1dn9>

The Indian Consulate at NY participated in the event for the first time and partnered with OSA NYNJPA to present the cultural show. OSA NYNJPA dancers performed Odissi Sambalpuri, Rabindra Nritya, Manipuri, and Ghoomer dances. This was a great platform to showcase our culture and heritage to a global audience.





5. MAA SARASWATI PUJA

The 2025 Saraswati Puja was organized at the Iskcon Temple of Central NJ, Plainfield, NJ and attended by 200+ community members. The puja was conducted by our own Subhash Mahapatra where he chanted and explained the mantras for everyone's ease of understanding. The puja was followed by coconut breaking by our community kids and Khadi Chhuan ritual for our younger kids who were going to start their educational journey with Maa Saraswati's blessing. The Jajamans for this year were Anita Pradhan and Pradeep Biswal.

After puja, attendees were served with Bhoga consisting of Chuda Ghasa, Sev-Bundi, Khaja, fruits and so many other items prepared by our community volunteers. The cultural program consisting of Bhajans, Classical dances by our member kids were all well prepared and mesmerizing.

The cultural programs were followed by lunch for which the temple kitchen prepared tasty prasad which was enjoyed by all attendees. Below are some pictures from the event.



6. X-Mas Fund Raisher for Community Food Bank of New Jersey (CFBNJ)

For the past 10+ years volunteers from OSA NYNJPA families have gone to the CFBNJ center at Hillside, NJ to help them in various food packaging activities. At OSA, we pride ourselves on giving back to the community and every year before XMas volunteers organize a fundraising event to raise funds so that we can send X-MAs dinner boxes to at least 50 families through CFBNJ. During 2024 X-Mas our chapter volunteers generated a fund of \$2500 which was sent on time to the organization. Below are some pictures from the volunteering activities at the CFBNJ center.



OSA Odia Learning Team Report

Bigyani Das

Team Members: Sujata Patnaik, Chicago (Management Lead), Ullasini Sahoo - South East (Tech Lead), Bigyani Das– Washington DC (Content Lead)

OOL Examination Test Coordination: Smita Panda

During the last OSA fiscal year (2023-2024), 4 levels of OOL learning were introduced. They are:

1. Level 1 (Basic Odia Certificate) – (ପ୍ରାଥମିକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାର୍ତ୍ତିକେଟ) Complete goals for chapters 1 and 2
2. Level 2 (Upper Primary Odia Certificate) – (ଉଚ୍ଚ ପ୍ରାଥମିକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାର୍ତ୍ତିକେଟ) Complete additional goals for chapters 3 and 4 (all goals of chapters 1-4)
3. Level 3 (Intermediate Odia Certificate) – (ମାଧ୍ୟମିକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାର୍ତ୍ତିକେଟ) Complete additional goals for chapters 5 and 6 (all goals of chapters 1-6)
4. Level 4 (Advanced Odia Certificate) – (ଅଗ୍ରଣୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାର୍ତ୍ତିକେଟ) Complete additional goals for chapters 7 and 8 (all goals of chapters 1-8)

During 2024-2025 OSA fiscal year, OSA OOL App for Level 1 course was fully implemented. The reference book for Level 1 was also published.

The students enrolled in the OSA OOL learning program were given access to the OOL App. Students were also provided the OSA OOL book for reference. Students that opted for appearing in the Level 1 OOL examination were given the opportunity to be trained for the examination with sample test papers.

The criteria used for taking tests are in the following areas:

Reading
Writing
Speaking
Listening and Following Instructions

The tests were prepared on the knowledge of Odia alphabets, matra, simple sentence creation, understanding the Odia meaning of several entities such as flowers, animals, numbers, environment, directions, relationships, opposites, household items etc.

Level 1 examinations were held on the following days:

October 5, 2024
December 21, 2024
December 22, 2024
January 25, 2025

The format of the examination included 20 questions in total, out of which, 10 questions required written answers and 10 questions were for oral answers.

In total, until now 15 students have appeared in the Level 1 examination and most of the students have scored well. We thank their parents for guiding them and providing encouragement to learn Odia language.

On October 5th, 2024 two students from Odia Chatashali School (Director: Ullasini Sahu), OSA-Carolinas chapter appeared for OOL Level-1 examination. They are:

Aarushi Kumar
Sharlav Das

On December 21, Saturday the examination was held from 2PM to 4PM EST.

Students that took the exam were from Barnabodha Shikhyalaya (Director: Smita Panda), GA.

They are:
Ritisha Bal
Jay Bal
Lopamudra Nayak
Sayantav Kar
Madhusmita Sethi



On December 22nd, Sunday, following students appeared for the test. They are from Chatashali Odia School, OSA Carolinas Chapter.

Chetna Das
Prayushi Khuntia
Adyasha Sharma
Ayushman Swain

On January 24, 2025, 4 students from Chicago Odia School appeared for the test. They are:

Reyansh Singh
Aniruddha Subudhi
Swayam Garnaik
Devvrat Khuntia

The OOL team also organized a discussion session with the children that appeared for the test and their parents. We sought the inputs about the questions, the test taking environment and about improvement areas.

The next Level 1 test will be offered in April 2025. Exact date and time will be announced soon in various local and National OSA mediums.

We are currently working on completing materials for the Level 2 OOL test. OOL APP and the study materials will be released by April 14, Pana Sankranti day.

Until now, around 85 students have subscribed to the OSA OOL App. Thank you, all the subscribers.

For children interested to join the OSA OOL Odia learning program, attend classes, take tests, get access to OOL App and study materials, please contact the following members.

Smita Panda, Barnabodha Shikhyalaya, GA (smita.panda@gmail.com)
Ullasini Sahu Kar, Chatashali School, NC (sahooullasini@gmail.com)
Sujata Pattnaik, Chicago Odia School, IL (patnaiksujata@yahoo.com)

A photograph of a window with a white flower box. The window has a white frame and is set in a pink wall. The flower box is filled with white flowers and green leaves. The text "Odia Poems" is overlaid on the image in a white font with a pink outline.

Odia Poems

ନିସ୍ତକ୍ଷତାର ପରିଚୟ

ସୁରଥ ରଥ
(ହୁଏତ୍ସନ, ଚୋକ୍ତସ)

ବ୍ୟାକୁଳ ହୃଦୟେ ନିସ୍ତକ୍ଷତା କହେ,
ଶୁଣ ଶୁଣ ଚିକେ ମତେ!
ଜାଣିଛନ୍ତି ତୁମେ ମୋର ପରିଚୟ,
କହିବକି ପ୍ରିୟ ସତେ ।

ମେଘ ଗରଜିଲା ଅହଂକାର ହୃଦେ,
କରୁଥାଏ କୁର ପରିହାସ,
ପରିଚୟ ମାଗୁ ନିଶିଦ ନୀରବେ?
ଜାଣେ କିଏ ତତେ ?
ଗର୍ଜନ ମୋର ଧରା ଫଟାଉଛି,
ଅଜଣା ଅଶୁଣା ରହିଥିବୁ ତୁହି,
ନୀରବେ ହେବ ତୋ ପରିକ୍ଷେପ ।

ତୁପ୍ ତୁପ୍ ତୁପ୍ ବରଷା ପଡ଼ିଲା,
କହିଲା ଗର୍ବିତ କଣ୍ଠେ,
ହେ ନିସ୍ତକ୍ଷତା!

ଶୁଣୁଛୁ ମୋ ଶବ୍ଦ, ମୋର ପରିଚୟ ?
ଚମକି ଉଠନ୍ତି ଶୁଣିତାକୁ ପୁଣି,
ଲତା ବୃକ୍ଷ ଆଉ ପ୍ରାଣୀ ଗଣ ।
ଅପରିଚିତ ତୁ ରହିଥିବୁ ସଦା,
ପଚାରୁଛୁ ତୋର ପରିଚୟ ?

ଝର ଝର ଝର ଝରଣା ଝରିଲା,
 ପୁଲକିତ କଳା ସବୁରି ପ୍ରାଣ,
 କଳ କଳ କଳ କଂଠେ କହିଲା ସେ,
 ହେ ନିସ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟତା !
 ନୀରବତା ତୋର ମୂଲ୍ୟହୀନ ସିନା,
 ନାହିଁ କିଛି ତୋର ପରିଚୟ ।

କୁଞ୍ଜ ଉଡ଼ାଳରେ ବସିଛି କୋଇଲି,
 କି ଗୀତ ଗାଇବ ଭାବୁଛି ଆଜି ।
 ବିଜୁଳି ଗର୍ଜନ, ବର୍ଷା ର ଗୋପା, ଝରଣାର ଝର ଝର,
 କେମିତି ଗାଇବି? କିଏବା ଶୁଣିବ ? ନୀରବତା ଅଛି ମୋର ପ୍ରୟୋଜନ ।
 କହିଲା ଉଜାଙ୍ଗ କଣ୍ଠେ କୋଇଲି,
 ହେ ନିସ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟତା !
 ତୁମେ ମୋର ସଖା,
 ସବୁ ଶବ୍ଦର ପରିଚୟ ତୁମେ,
 ଅଛି ମୋର ତୁମ ପ୍ରୟୋଜନ ।
 ଚାଲ ଯିବା ଦୁହେଁ ଆମ୍ବପଲ୍ଲୀ କୁଞ୍ଜେ,
 ଗାଇବି ଚିକେ ମୁଁ ମଧୁର ଗୀତ ।
 ଜାଣିଥାଅ ସଖା !
 ତୁମେ ଏକା ମୋର ପରିଚୟ ।
 ଗାଉଛି ଯଦି ମୁଁ ମଧୁର ସଂଗୀତ,
 ସେଇ ତୁମ ପରିଚୟ, ସେଇ ତୁମ ପରିଚୟ ।

ସମାପ୍ତ

(ସାରା ବିଶ୍ୱ ଓ ସବୁ ଜୀବନର ଆରମ୍ଭ ଶବ୍ଦରୁ, ନାଦବ୍ରହ୍ମରୁ, କିନ୍ତୁ ପରିଷେଷ ନୀରବତା ରେ ।
 ସେଇତ ଗୋଟେ ଜୀବନ ଚକ୍ର! ନିସ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟତାହିଁ ସବୁ ଶବ୍ଦର ମାତୃକା)

ଜୀବନ ବୃତ୍ତ

ମମତା ମିଶ୍ର

ବାଲ୍ୟକାଳେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଇତିହାସ ବହିରେ
 ପଢ଼ିଥିଲି ରାଜପୁତ୍ର ଗୌତମଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ କଥା
 ରୋଗ ଜରା ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ଦେଖୁ ଶୋକାକୁଳ ରାଜପୁତ୍ର
 ରାଜ୍ୟ ପରିବାର ତେଜି ଦୁଃଖ ପ୍ରତିକାର ଖୋଜି
 କରିଥିଲେ ଅନ୍ୱେଷା ଓ ଘୋର ତପସ୍ୟା
 ଦୁଃଖନାଶ ପଥ ପାଇ ତଥାଗତ ବୁଦ୍ଧ ହୋଇ
 ଫେରିଥିଲେ ଚାରିଟି ପରମ ସତ୍ୟ ନେଇ
 ଚାରିଟି ପରମ ସତ୍ୟର କଥା ରହିଥିଲା
 ବାଲ୍ୟ ହୃଦୟରେ ଅବିକଶିତ ବୀଜ ଯଥା
 ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରୁ ପୁରୀ ଯାତ୍ରାପଥରେ
 ଦୟାନଦୀ ଅତିକ୍ରମ ସମୟରେ
 କିଶୋରୀର କଙ୍କନା ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରେ
 ଦେଖୁଥିଲି କଳିଙ୍ଗ ଯୁଦ୍ଧର ଦୃଶ୍ୟ
 ଦୟା ନଦୀର ରକ୍ତିଳ ଜଳ
 ଯାହା କରିଥିଲା ପ୍ରକମ୍ପିତ
 ଚଣ୍ଡାଶୋକର କଠୋର ହୃଦୟକୁ
 କିଶୋରୀର କଙ୍କନା ଶୁଭିରେ
 ଶୁଣିଥିଲି ପୁତ୍ରହରା ମାତାର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ
 ଯାହା କରିଥିଲା ଖଣ୍ଡ ବିଖଣ୍ଡିତ
 ଚଣ୍ଡାଶୋକର ବିଜୟ ଦର୍ପକୁ
 ଜାଣିଥିଲି ଧର୍ମ ଶିକ୍ଷା ବଳରେ
 ଚଣ୍ଡାଶୋକ ହୋଇଥିଲା ଧର୍ମାଶୋକ
 କରିଥିଲା ଧର୍ମଚକ୍ର ପ୍ରବର୍ତ୍ତନ
 ବହିଥିଲା ଧର୍ମର ଶୋକମୁକ୍ତି ବାଉଁ

ସାରା ଭାରତବର୍ଷକୁ ଓ ଭାରତର
 ପୂର୍ବସ୍ଥ ଦେଶଦେଶାନ୍ତରକୁ
 ରାଜପୁତ୍ର ମହୀନ୍ଦ୍ର ଓ ରାଜକନ୍ୟା ସଂଘମିତ୍ରା
 କରିଥିଲେ ପୂର୍ବଦିଗେ ବିଦେଶ ଯାତ୍ରା

ଭାରତ ଛାଡ଼ିବାର ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ
 ଆମେରିକାରେ ଏକ ଧାନକେନ୍ଦ୍ରରେ
 ଏକ କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ନିଭୂତ କୃତଜ୍ଞତା କୁଟୀରରେ
 ଦେଖୁ ଛବିଟିଏ ହେଲା ଭାବାନ୍ତର
 ଛବିର ନାୟିକା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମିତମସ୍ତକା
 ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାସିନୀ ସଂଘମିତ୍ରା
 କରେ ବୋଲତରେ ସିଂହଳ ଯାତ୍ରା
 ଭାବିଲି କି ବିଚିତ୍ର ଏ ଜୀବନ ବୃତ୍ତ

ଭାରତରେ ଜନ୍ମି ଭାରତରେ ଜନ୍ମିଥିବା
 ଧର୍ମଶିକ୍ଷାପଥ ନପାଇଲି ଦେଶେ
 ପାଇଲି ପାଶ୍ଚାତ୍ୟ ବିଦେଶେ
 ପାଶ୍ଚାତ୍ୟ ଦେଶଜନ୍ମିତ ଶିକ୍ଷ୍ୟକଗଣ
 ଶ୍ୟାମ ଦେଶେ କରି ଅନୁଷ୍ଠଣ
 ଭାରତରୁ ଶ୍ୟାମଦେଶେ ଯାଇଥିବା ଧର୍ମ
 ଶିକ୍ଷା କରି ଫେରିଆସି ଶିଖାଇଲେ ମୋତେ
 ଦ୍ଵିସହସ୍ର ବର୍ଷ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ଵ କଳିଙ୍ଗ ଯୁଦ୍ଧ ଜନ୍ମିତ
 ପୂର୍ବାଭିମୁଖୀ ଧର୍ମଚକ୍ର ସହିତ
 ଯୁଦ୍ଧକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ନିକଟରେ ଜନ୍ମିଥିବା ଏ ଜୀବର
 ପଶ୍ଚିମାଭିମୁଖୀ ଗତି ହେଲା ମିଳିତ

ମୁଁଠାଏ ପାଉଁଶ

ସଲୋନି ମହାନ୍ତି

ଜାତରୁ ମହାଯାତ୍ରା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଯାତ୍ରା
 କେତେ ଯେ ଅଭିଜ୍ଞତା କେତେ ଯେ ଅନୁଭୂତି
 କେତେ ଶିକ୍ଷା, କେତେ ସମୀକ୍ଷା, କେତେ ଡକ୍, ବିତକ୍
 କେତେ ଅଭିଯୋଗ, କେତେ ସଂଯୋଗ, ଆଉ କେତେ ସ୍ମୃତି

ଶୈଶବର ନିରୀହ ମନର ଚପଳତା
 ସରଳ ବିଶ୍ୱାସର ଅଖଣ୍ଡ ପ୍ରୀତି
 ଭାଙ୍ଗିପାରେନା ତାକୁ କୌଣସି ଆଘାତ
 ଭାଙ୍ଗେ ଯେବେ ଶୈଶବ ଆସେ କିଶୋର

କୋମଳ କିଶୋର ମନର ଚଞ୍ଚଳତା
 ପାଏ ପୁଣି କେବେ ପହିଲି ପ୍ରେମର ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣ
 କେବେ ଆୟୋଜିତ କେବେ ରୋମାଂଚିତ
 ଭୁଲିହୁଏନା ସେ ଅନୁରାଗ ବିତିଯାଏ କେତେ ବର୍ଷ

ଜୀବନ ନିଶ୍ଚିତର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ସୋପାନ
 ଯୌବନ ଆସେ କେତେ ଆଶା, ଆକାଂକ୍ଷା ସହ
 ବ୍ୟାପ୍ତ ହୁଏ ସମ୍ପର୍କର ବଳୟ
 ଗ୍ରାସ କରେ ବସ୍ତୁବାଦ ସଭାର ମୋହ

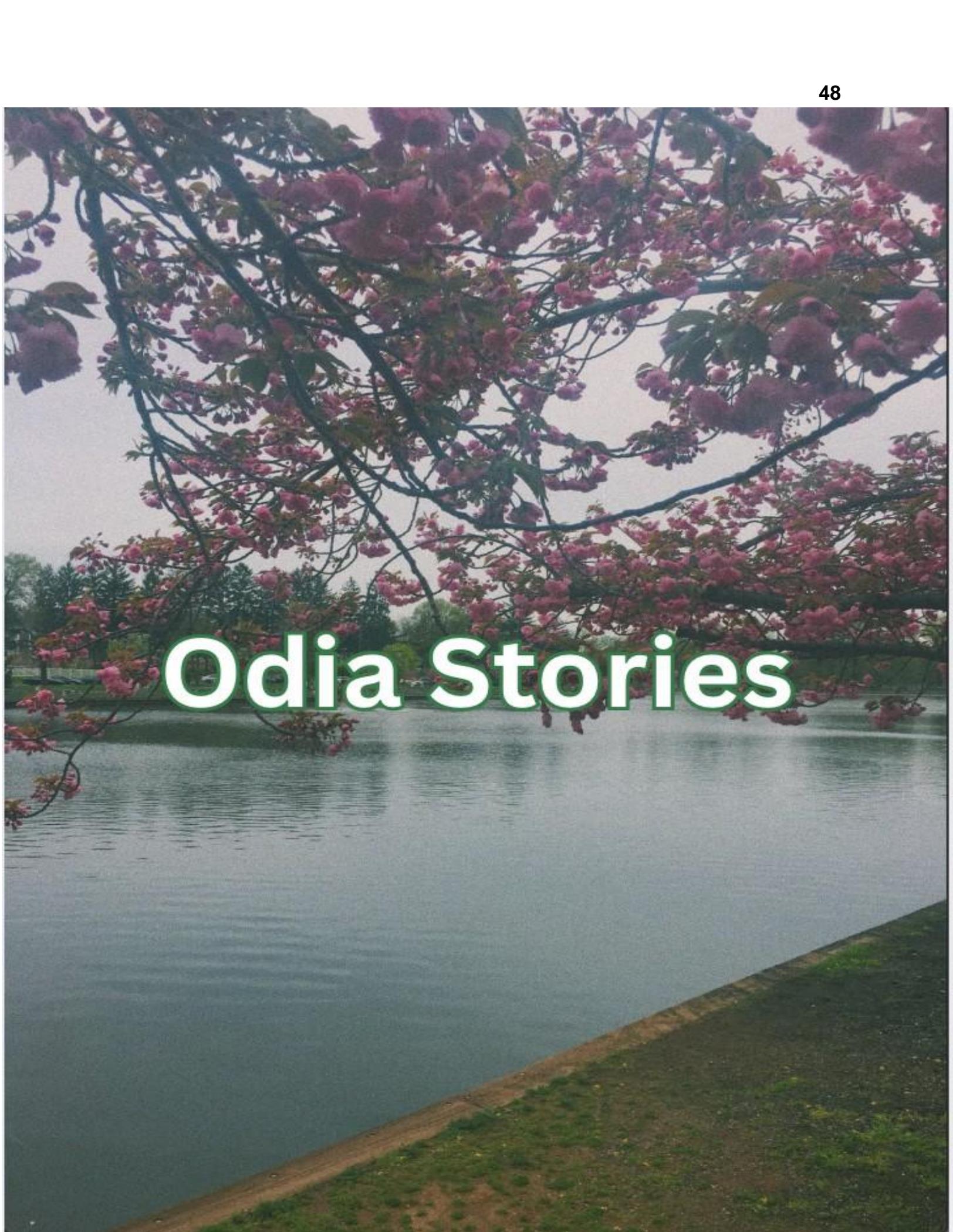
କେବେ ସଫଳତାର ଚରମ ଶିଖରରେ
 କେବେ ପୁଣି ବିଫଳତାରେ ମର୍ମାହତ

ଯୌବନରୁ ଗୃହସ୍ଥର ରୂପାନ୍ତର
ଦାୟିତ୍ୱବୋଧର ଚାପେ ହୁଏ ଭାରାକ୍ରାନ୍ତ

ସ୍ଥିରତା ଆସେ ବୟସର କ୍ରମଃବିକାଶରେ
ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ମୋତେ କରେ ସ୍ଥିତପ୍ରଜ୍ଞ
ପୋଥି ପୃଷ୍ଠା ପାଶୋରି ଅନୁଭବ ସାଉଁଟି
ବ୍ରହ୍ମଜ୍ଞାନ ଅପେକ୍ଷାରେ ମୁଁ ରୁହେ ଅଜ୍ଞ

ନାମ ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନ ଜପତପ ଧ୍ୟାନ
ପରମାତ୍ମାରେ ଲୀନ ହେବାର ଆଶା
ଲିଭିଯାଉ ଜୀବନ ପ୍ରଦୀପ ତୁଣ୍ଡେ ଧରି ନିର୍ମାଳ୍ୟ
ମୁକ୍ତି ଦେବେ ପ୍ରଭୁ କରି କରୁଣା ବର୍ଷା

ପଛେ ରହିଗଲା ସଂସାର ମୋହ ମାୟା ସବୁ
ନଶ୍ୱର ଏ ଶରୀର, ଅନ୍ତ ହେଲା ମୋର କ୍ଳେଶ
ଅନନ୍ତରେ ମିଶିଗଲି ମୁଁ, ଅବର୍ତ୍ତନୀୟ ସତ୍ତୋଷ
ଜୀବନର ମୂଲ୍ୟାଙ୍କନ ସତେ ବା ମୁଠାଏ ପାଉଁଶ

A scenic photograph of a lake with pink cherry blossoms in the foreground. The text "Odia Stories" is overlaid in the center.

Odia Stories

ମୋ ଘର, ଆମ ଘର

ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ



ଅନନ୍ତ ୧୯୮୫ ମସିହାରେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ସେ ଘରଟି କିଣିଥିଲା, ସେତେବେଳେ ତାର ମୂଲ୍ୟ ଅତି କମ୍ ଥିଲା । ସେତେବେଳେ ସାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ପଚାରିଥିଲେ, “ତୁ ତ ଏକଲା ଲୋକ, ଏତେବଡ଼ ଘରଟିଏ କାହିଁକି କିଣୁଛୁ ।”

ଅନନ୍ତ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଇଥିଲା, “ମୁଁ କଣ ସବୁଦିନେ ଏକଲା ଥିବି ? ହାତକୁ ଦୁଇହାତ ହେବି ନା ନାହିଁ ? ବୋଉ ତ ମୋ ପାଇଁ କେତେଯେ ଝିଅ ଦେଖିସାରିଲାଣି ତାର କଳନା ନାହିଁ । ହେଲେ ଏବେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଫେରିବା ମାତ୍ରେ ଦେଖିବ ତମମାନଙ୍କ ଭାଉଜକୁ ଧରି ଫେରିବି ।”

ସତକୁ ସତ ସେଇଆ ହେଲା । ୧୯୮୬ ମସିହା ଫେବୃଆରୀ ମାସରେ ସିଏ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଯାଇଥିଲା, ବାପା, ବୋଉ ବସେଇଉଠେଇ ଦେଲେନି । ଆଜି ଏଠିକୁ ଯାଆ ତ କାଲି ସେଠିକୁ ଯାଆ । ସବୁଠି ଝିଅଦେଖା ପର୍ବ । ଅନନ୍ତକୁ ଭଲଲାଗୁନଥାଏ । ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିଅକୁ ଦେଖିବ, ତାଘରେ ଖୁଆପିଆ କରିବ; ପୁଣି ସେଠି ଯଦି ଝିଅ ପସନ୍ଦ ନ ଆସିଲା, ତେବେ ଖରାପ ଲାଗିବନି । ଅନନ୍ତ ବିଗିଡ଼ିଗଲା । ବାପା, ବୋଉଙ୍କ ଝିଅଦେଖା ନୀତି ତାର ପସନ୍ଦ ହେଲାନି । ସିଏ ଏବେ ତା' ପାଇଁ ଝିଅ ପସନ୍ଦ କରିବାର ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ତା ବଡ଼ବାପାଙ୍କ ଝିଅ ରାନ୍ତୁଅପା ହାତରେ ସମର୍ପଣ କରିଦେଲା । ଆଉ ସତକୁ ସତ ରାନ୍ତୁଅପାର ପ୍ରଥମ ପସନ୍ଦର ଝିଅ, ଅନନ୍ତର ବି ପସନ୍ଦ ହୋଇଗଲା । ଆଉ ସତକୁ ସତ ରାନ୍ତୁଅପାର ପ୍ରଥମ ପସନ୍ଦର ଝିଅ, ଅନନ୍ତର ବି ପସନ୍ଦ ହୋଇଗଲା । ପ୍ରକୃତ କଥା ହେଲା ସେ ଝିଅଟି ରାନ୍ତୁଅପାର ସବୁଠୁ ଭଲସାଙ୍ଗର ସାନ ଭଉଣୀ ଥିଲା ଯିଏକି ହିସାବରେ ତାର ନଶନ୍ଦ ମଧ୍ୟ ଥିଲା ।

ଅନନ୍ତର ମନ ବହୁତ ଖୁସି । ଏବେ ତାର ବାହାଘର ହେବ । ତାର ନିଜର ଗୋଟିଏ ସଂସାର ହେବ, ପରିବାର ହେବ, ପିଲା ହେବେ, ସିଏ ବାପା ହେବ । ଏମିତି କେତେ କଣ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନରେ ଭାସିଗଲା ।

ଛୋଟବେଳୁ ଅନନ୍ତ ଭାରି ସ୍ନେହୀ । ଭରପୁର ସଂସାର ତାକୁ ଭଲଲାଗେ । ସବୁ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀଙ୍କ ସହିତ ତାର ଭଲ ସଂପର୍କ । କିଏ ଦାଦାଙ୍କ ପିଲା ହେଉ କି କିଏ ବଡ଼ବାପାଙ୍କ ପିଲା ହେଉ, ସେମାନେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଏକା ପରିବାରର । ସେଠି ସମସ୍ତେ ଆପଣାର । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଅନ୍ୟ ସାଙ୍ଗମାନଙ୍କ ଭଳି ବିବାହ ପ୍ରତି ଅନାସକ୍ତ ରହେନି । ତାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଥିଲା ପି.ଏଚ୍.ଡି. ସରିବା ମାତ୍ରେ ବାହା ହେବ । ସତକୁ ସତ ସେମିତି ହେଲା ।

ବାହାଘର ଠିକ୍‌ଠାକୁ ହୋଇଗଲା । ସେ ସମୟ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଖୁବ୍ ଧୁମ୍‌ଧାମ୍‌ରେ ତା ବାହାଘରର ସବୁ ବିଧି ସଂପନ୍ନ ହେଲା । ନୂଆ ପତ୍ନୀକୁ ଧରି ଅନନ୍ତ ଆମେରିକା ଫେରିଲା । ପତ୍ନୀ ଅଳକା ନୂଆଘର ଦେଖୁ ଖୁସି ।

କିଛିଦିନ ପରେ ସେ ଘରେ ଦୁଇଟି ପିଲାଙ୍କର ଆବିର୍ଭାବ ହେଲା । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ନାଆଁ ବି ଆଦ୍ୟ ଅକ୍ଷର 'ଅ' ରେ ରଖାଗଲା । ପୁଅର ନାଆଁ ରଖାଗଲା 'ଅରୁଣ' ଓ ଝିଅର ନାଆଁ ରଖାଗଲା 'ଅରୁଣିମା' ।

ଜୀବନ ଏକ ମଧୁର ଛନ୍ଦରେ ପ୍ରବାହିତ ହେଉଥିଲା । ସାଙ୍ଗମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ କେବେ ଯଦି ଅନନ୍ତ “ଆମ ଘର” କହୁଥିଲା, “ଆମ ଘରକୁ ଆସନ୍ତୁ କେବେ”, ସେତେବେଳେ ଅଳକା ସଂଶୋଧନ କରି ମନ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଦେଉଥିଲା, “ସେଇଟା ତ ତମ ଘର, ତମେ କିଣିଥିଲ, ତମେ ପସନ୍ଦ କରିଥିଲ; ମୋ ଘର କହୁନ, ଆମ ଘର କାହିଁକି କହୁଛ ? ”

ଅନନ୍ତ ହସିହସି କହୁଥିଲା, “ହେଲେ ଏବେତ ତମେ ମୋର, ମୁଁ ତମର, ଏବେ ସବୁକିଛି ଆମର, ସେଠି ମୋରର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ନାହିଁ । ଯାହା ତମର, ତାହା ମୋର, ମାନେ ଆମର । ଯାହା ମୋର, ତାହା ତମର, ମାନେ ଆମର ।”

ପିଲାମାନେ ଏକଥା ଶୁଣିଲେ ଆମୋଦିତ ହେଉଥିଲେ । ସେମାନେ ମନ୍ତ୍ରବ୍ୟ ଦେଉଥିଲେ, “ବାବା ଆମର, ମାମା ଆମର, ଘର ଆମର, ସବୁକିଛି ଆମର ।”

ଏମିତି ଭାବେ ସେ ଘରଟି ସତରେ ବୈକୁଣ୍ଠ ଭଳି ଥିଲା । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ମନରେ ସ୍ନେହ, କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟବୋଧ ଓ ସମ୍ମାନ ଥିଲା ।

ଅନନ୍ତର କିଛି ସାଙ୍ଗ ତେରିରେ ଘର କିଣିଲେ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ଘରପାଇଁ ସବୁ ନୂଆ ଡିଜାଇନ୍ ଆସିସାରିଥାଏ । ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଗୃହପ୍ରବେଶକୁ ଯାଇ, ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଘରର ନବୀନତା ଓ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟବୋଧ ଦେଖି, ପିଲାମାନେ କହିଲେ, “ଏ ଘରଟା କେତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ହେଇଛି ନା ବାବା । ଆମେ ଏମିତି ଗୋଟିଏ ନୂଆଘର କିଣିଲେ କେମିତି ହୁଅନ୍ତା ?”

ଅଳକା ଅଟକେଇଦେଲା । “ଆମର ତ ସେ ଘରେ କିଛି ଅସୁବିଧା ହେଉନି । ତାପରେ ତମେମାନେ ତ କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ପରେ କଲେଜ ଯିବ । ସେତେବେଳେ ଏଇ ଘର ହିଁ ଆମକୁ ଅଧିକ ଲାଗିବ । ନୂଆଘର ସବୁର ଦାମ୍ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅଧିକ । ଆମେ କାହିଁକି ବିନା କାରଣରେ ଅଧିକ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ କରି ନୂଆଘରକୁ କିଣିବା ?”

ପିଲାମାନେ କଲେଜ ଚାଲିଗଲେ । ଅଳକା ଏବେ ନିଜେ କିଛି ପଢ଼ିବ, ନିଜେ ନିଜ ପାଇଁ ଗୋଟିଏ ପରିଚୟ ଗଢ଼ିବ ବୋଲି ଭାବିଲା । ସେଇଠି ଅନନ୍ତର ଯୁନିଭର୍ସିଟିରେ ସିଏ କିଛି କୋର୍ସ ନେଲା । କଲେଜରେ ଅର୍ଥନୀତି ପଢ଼ୁଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ଅର୍ଥନୀତିର କିଛି କୋର୍ସ କଲା । ସବୁ କୋର୍ସରେ ଭଲ ମାର୍କ ରଖିଲା । ତାର ପ୍ରତିଭା ଦେଖି ତାର ଜଣେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ତାକୁ ଅର୍ଥନୀତିରେ ମାଷ୍ଟର୍ସ କରିବାକୁ ପରାମର୍ଶ ଦେଲେ, “ଏମିତି ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୋଟିଏ କୋର୍ସ ନେଲେ କିଛି ହେବନି; ତମକୁ ଡିଗ୍ରୀ ମିଳିବନି; ତମେ ମାଷ୍ଟର୍ସ ପ୍ରୋଗ୍ରାମରେ ଆଡମିଶନ୍ ନେଇଯାଅ” । ଅଳକା ମାଷ୍ଟର୍ସ ସାରିଲା । ତାପରେ ପି.ଏଚ୍.ଡି. ବି ସାରିଲା ।

ଅନେକ କଂପାନୀ ଅଳକାକୁ ଚାକିରିର ଅଫର୍ ଦେଲେ । ଅଳକା ଅନନ୍ତକୁ ପଚାରିଲା, “ତମେ କଣ କହୁଛ, ମୁଁ ଚାକିରି କରିବି ।”

ଅନନ୍ତ କହିଲା, “କାହିଁକି ନୁହେଁ । ତମେ ଏତେ ପଢ଼ିଲ, ଜ୍ଞାନ ଅର୍ଜନ କଲ । ସେ ଜ୍ଞାନକୁ ତ ପୁଣି ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବ । ବ୍ୟବହାର ନକଲେ, ସେ ଜ୍ଞାନ ପୁଣି ସେମିତି ଲୋପ ପାଇଯିବ ।”

ଅଳକା ଗୋଟିଏ କଂପାନୀରେ ଯୋଗଦେଲା । ୪ ବର୍ଷ ଭିତରେ ଅଳକାର ଦରମା ଅନନ୍ତର ଦରମାରୁ ଅଧିକ ହୋଇଗଲା । ପ୍ରଥମ ଥର ପାଇଁ ଅନନ୍ତକୁ ଚିକେ ଧକ୍କା ଲାଗିଥିଲା । ସିଏ ନିଜକୁ ପ୍ରକୃତିକ କଲା ଓ ବୁଝେଇଲା, “ଏଥରେ ମୋର ନିଜକୁ ତଳେଇକି ଭାବିବାରେ କଣ ଅଛି ? ସେଇଟା କଂପାନୀ କାମ । ଏଇଟା ଯୁନିଭର୍ସିଟି କାମ । ଏଥରେ ପାର୍ଥକ୍ୟ ଅଛି ।”

ସେସବୁ ଏତେ ସହଜ ହେଲାନି । ଅଳକା କଂପାନୀ କାମରେ ବାରମ୍ବାର ବାହାରକୁ ଗଲା । ଦେଶ, ବିଦେଶ ଯିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିଲା । ଅନନ୍ତର ତ ପଢ଼େଇବା କାମ । ସବୁ ସମୟରେ ଏମିତି ଇଆଡେ ସିଆଡେ ଯାଇଛୁଏନି । ସେ ସମୟରେ ସେ ଘର ଆଉ “ଆମ ଘର” ହୋଇ ରହିନଥିଲା । କାରଣ, ସେ ଘରେ କେବଳ ଅନନ୍ତ ହିଁ ରହୁଥିଲା । ସମସ୍ତେ ବାହାରେ, ପିଲାମାନେ ବାହାରେ, ଅଳକା ବାହାରେ ।

ଏମିତି ଯେଉଁ ଅଭିମାନଟା କୁହୁଳିକୁହୁଳି ହୃଦୟ ଭିତରେ ଜଳୁଥିଲା, ସିଏ ଦିନେ ପଦାକୁ ଆସିଲା । ଏମିତି ଅଶାନ୍ତି ସୃଷ୍ଟିହେଲା, ଝଗଡ଼ା ଲାଗିଲା ଯେ, ସେଥିରେ କେବଳ ଅଳକା ନୁହେଁ, ସେମାନଙ୍କର ପିଲାମାନେ ବି ଅନନ୍ତର ଆଉ ଏକ ରୂପ ଦେଖି ଚମକିପଡ଼ିଲେ । ପଢ଼ାପଢ଼ି ପାଇଁ ବାହାରେ ରହିଲେ ବି ଯେଉଁଟା ତାଙ୍କର ଘରବୋଲି ସେମାନେ ମାନିନେଇଥିଲେ, ଏବେ ସେମାନେ ସେ ଘରୁ ଦୂରେଇଗଲେ । ଅଳକା ପାଖରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଘରଟିଏ କିଣି ଚାଲିଗଲା । ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କର ସମସ୍ତ ଆସବାବପତ୍ର ସେ ଘରକୁ ଚାଲିଗଲା । ସେ ପୁରୁଣା ଘରେ ରହିଲା କେବଳ ଅନନ୍ତ ।

ଏମିତି କାହିଁକି ହୁଏ କେଜାଣି ? ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଟିଏ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମଠାରୁ ଅଧିକ ଉନ୍ନତି କଲେ, ସେଇଟା ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମ ସହିପାରେ ନାହିଁ । ଏଇ ମନୋଭାବ ବିଶେଷ କରି ଭାରତୀୟ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମାନଙ୍କ ମନରେ ରହିଥାଏ । ଭାରତୀୟ ଚଳଚ୍ଚିତ୍ର ମାନଙ୍କରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏଇ ମନସ୍ତତ୍ତ୍ୱକୁ ଆଧାର କରି କେତେସବୁ କାହାଣୀର ଅବତାରଣା କରାଯାଇଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ନିଜଜୀବନରେ ଏମିତି କିଛି ଘଟିଯିବ, ଅଳକାର ମନରେ ସେସବୁର ଧାରଣା ନଥିଲା । ବିଶେଷତଃ ଅନନ୍ତ ଏ ଦେଶରେ ଏତେ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲା ରହିଲେଣି,

ସିଏ ପୁଣି ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟରେ ଜଣେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ । ତା ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ବି ସିଏ ଯେମିତି ଭାବେ ଅଳକାର ଉନ୍ନତି ପାଇଁ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଦେବା ବଦଳରେ ଇର୍ଷା କଲେ, ଅଳକା ଉପରେ ମିଥ୍ୟା ଅଭିଯୋଗ ଆଣିଲେ, ଅଳକାର ସହକର୍ମୀ ସହିତ ସଂପର୍କ ଜୋଡ଼ିଦେଇ ଅନେକ ଅସଙ୍ଗତ କଥା ସବୁ କହିଗଲେ, ସେସବୁ ଠିକ୍ ନଥିଲା । ଅନନ୍ତ ହଠାତ୍ ଏମିତି ବଦଳିଯିବେ, ସେ ଅନୁମାନ ବି ତାର ହୋଇନଥିଲା ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ଏସବୁ ସତ ଥିଲା ।

ଅନନ୍ତ କହିଥିଲେ ଅଳକା ଚାକିରି ଛାଡ଼ିଦେଇଥାନ୍ତା । ଅନନ୍ତ ଯଦି କହିଥାନ୍ତେ, “ଅଳକା, ତମେ ଘରଠାରୁ ଦୂରରେ ରହିଲେ ମତେ ଏକାଏକା ଲାଗୁଛି । ମତେ ଭଲଲାଗୁନି । ମୁଁ ତମ ହାତରକ୍ଷା ଖାଦ୍ୟକୁ ଝୁରୁଛି”, ତେବେ କଥା ଅଲଗା ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତା । ଅଳକା ବି ଅନନ୍ତକୁ ଝୁରୁଥିଲା । ତାଙ୍କଠାରୁ ଦୂରରେ ରହି ତାକୁ ଭଲଲାଗୁନଥିଲା । ହେଲେ ସେମିତି ନକହି, ଅନନ୍ତ ଅଳକାର ଚରିତ୍ର ଉପରେ ଆକ୍ଷେପ କଲେ, ଅନ୍ୟ ଜଣେ ସହକର୍ମୀର ନାଁକୁ ଜୋଡ଼ି ତା' ନାଆଁରେ ଅନେକ ବାଜ୍ୟେ କଥା କହିଲେ, ସେତେବେଳେ ଅଳକାର ମନ ମଧ୍ୟ ବିଦ୍ରୋହୀ ହୋଇଗଲା । ସେସବୁ ଅଭିଯୋଗ, ଅଭିମାନ ଏମିତି ଭାବେ ହୁତୁହୁତୁ ହୋଇ ଜଳିଲା ଯେ, ଶେଷରେ ସେମାନେ ପରସ୍ପରଠାରୁ ଅଲଗା ହୋଇଗଲେ ।

ଅଳକା ଅଲଗା ହୋଇ ଚାଲିଯିବାର ପନ୍ଦରବର୍ଷ ବିତିଗଲାଣି । ରାଗ, ଅଭିମାନରେ ଅନନ୍ତ କିଛିଦିନ ବିନା ପ୍ରତିକ୍ରିୟାରେ ନିଜର ଭାବନାକୁ ଲୁଚେଇ ରଖିଲା ଓ ନିଜ କାମରେ ଅଧିକ ମନୋଯୋଗୀ ହେଲା । ଯୁନିଭର୍ସିଟିରେ ତାର ପ୍ରମୋଶନ ହେଲା । ତେବେ ପାଞ୍ଚବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ରିଟାଇର୍ଡ଼ କରିବା ପରେ ଏବେ ନିଜ ଭୁଲ୍ ସବୁ ମନକୁ ଆସୁଛି । ବେଳେବେଳେ ମନ ହେଉଛି, ଅଳକାକୁ ତାକି ନିଜ ଭୁଲ୍ ସ୍ୱୀକାର କରିନେବାକୁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଅଳକାକୁ ସିଏ ଯେଉଁ ଆଘାତ ଦେଇଛି, ଅଳକାର ଚରିତ୍ର ଉପରେ ଅସଙ୍ଗତ ମନ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଦେଇଛି, ତାକୁ କଣ ଅଳକା କ୍ଷମା କରିବ ?

ଏବେ ସେ ଘରଟା ତା ପାଇଁ “ମୋ ଘର” ହୋଇ ରହିଥିଲା । ବେଳେବେଳେ ପୁଅ, ବୋହୂ ଆସୁଥିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଅତିଥି ଭାବରେ, ପାଖରେ ରହିବାକୁ ନୁହେଁ । ବେଳେବେଳେ ସେମାନେ

ଘରକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆସୁନଥିଲେ । କୋଉଠି ଗୋଟିଏ ଭୋଜନାଳୟକୁ ଡାକି ସେଇଠି ବାପାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସଂପର୍କ ଜାରି ରଖିବାର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ କରି ଫେରିଯାଇଥିଲେ ।

ସେଦିନ ଥିଲା ଫଗୁନଶମୀ । ସକାଳୁ ଗାଧୁଆପାଧୁଆ କରି ହିନ୍ଦୁମନ୍ଦିର ଯିବାକୁ ଯୋଜନା କରିଥିଲା ଅନନ୍ତ । ହେଲେ କାହିଁକି କେଜାଣି ସକାଳୁ ତାକୁ କିଛି ଭଲଲାଗୁନଥିଲା । ଦେହ ଯେମିତି ଝିମ୍ଝିମ୍ଝି ହେଉଥିଲା । ସିଏ ଡରିକରି ୯୧୧ ଡାକିଲା । ହସ୍ପିଟାଲର ଷ୍ଟାଫ୍ ଆମ୍ବୁଲାନ୍ସ ଆଣି ତାକୁ ନେଇଗଲେ । ତାପରେ ତାର ଆଉ ଚେତାନଥିଲା । ଚେତା ଫେରିବା ବେଳକୁ ସିଏ ଡାକ୍ତରଖାନାର ରୋଗୀ କୋଠାରେ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ରାତି ୯ଟା । ପାଖରେ ପୁଅ ଅରୁଣ ଜଗି ବସିଥିଲା । ଅନନ୍ତକୁ ଆଖି ଖୋଲିବାର ଦେଖି, ସିଏ ଡାକ୍ତରଙ୍କୁ ଖବରଦେଲା । ଡାକ୍ତର ପହଞ୍ଚିଲେ । ଅନନ୍ତକୁ ଚେକ୍ କଲେ । କହିଲେ, “ଆପଣ ଟିକେ ନିଜର ଯତ୍ନ ନିଅନ୍ତୁ । ଆପଣଙ୍କର ରକ୍ତଚାପ ବଢ଼ିଯାଇଥିଲା । ଆପଣ ଠିକ୍ ସମୟରେ ଔଷଧ ଖାଇଛନ୍ତି ତ?”

ତାପରେ ସାନପୁଅକୁ ଡାକ୍ତର ଜଣେଇଲେ, “ଏବେ ସିଏ ଏଠି କିଛିଦିନ ରହିବେ । ତାଙ୍କର ରକ୍ତଚାପ ସ୍ଥିର ରହୁନି । ଆମେ ତାକୁ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟବେକ୍ଷଣରେ ରଖୁ । ଯଦି ସବୁ ଠିକ୍ ରହିଲା, ତେବେ ସିଏ ୪ ଦିନ ପରେ ଘରକୁ ଯାଇପାରିବେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ କେହି ଜଣେ ରହିବା ଉଚିତ ।”

ଚାରିଦିନ ପରେ ଦୋଳପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣମୀ । ଅନନ୍ତ ଯେବେ ଘରକୁ ଫେରିଲା, ଘରଟା କେମିତି ପୁରିଲାପୁରିଲା ଲାଗୁଥିଲା । ବୋହୂ କବାଟ ଖୋଲିଲା । ନାତି ଆସି ଆଲିଙ୍ଗନ କଲା । ଦାଣ୍ଡଘରେ ବାପାଙ୍କର ରହିବାର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରି ସାନପୁଅ ନିତ୍ୟକର୍ମ ଶେଷ କରିବାକୁ ଗଲା । ତାପରେ କୋଠା ଭିତରକୁ ଯିଏ ସକାଳ ଭୋଜନ ଧରି ପ୍ରବେଶ କଲା, ତାକୁ ଦେଖି ଅନନ୍ତ ସ୍ତବ୍ଧ ହୋଇଗଲା । “ତମେ ?”

“ହଁ, ମୁଁ । ଏତେ କଥା ଘଟିଗଲା, ହେଲେ ଟିକେ କାହାକୁ ଖବର ଦେଇପାରିଲାନି ? ଆଉ କହୁଥିଲ କଣନା, ତମେ ମୋର, ମୁଁ ତମର, ସବୁକିଛି ଆମର ।”

“ତମେ ଆସିଲ, ଏବେ ମୁଁ ଠିକ୍ ହୋଇଯିବି । ସେତେବେଳେ କହୁଥିଲି, ଆଜିବି କହୁଛି, ତମେ ମୋର, ମୁଁ ତମର, ତମର ଯାହା ମୋର, ମୋର ଯାହା ତମର, ସବୁକିଛି ଆମର ।”

“ହଉ ଛାଡ଼ । ଉଠି ବସ ଓ ଖାଅ । ତମ ପସନ୍ଦର, ସ୍ଵାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ହିତକର ସାଗୁ ଉପମା ଓ ଅମୃତଭଣ୍ଡା ତରକାରୀ ଖାଅ ।”

“ଆଜି ପରା ହୋଲି । ଏଇ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଦେଉଛ ? କିଛି ବିଶେଷ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ତିଆରି କରିନ ।”

“ନା, ଆଉ ଏକ ବିଶେଷ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଦେବି । ଏସବୁ ଖାଇସାରିବା ପରେ ।”

ଅନନ୍ତ ଖାଇସାରିବା ପରେ, ମୁହଁ ପୋଛିଦେଇ ଅଳକା ଅନନ୍ତର ଗାଲରେ ଚୁମାଟିଏ ଦେଲା ।

ଦୀର୍ଘ ୧୫ ବର୍ଷର ଅଭିମାନ, ଗ୍ଳାନି, ସବୁକିଛି ଗୋଟିଏ କ୍ଷଣରେ ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କର ଆଖିର ପାଣି ହୋଇ ମିଳାଇଗଲା ।

ବାହାରୁ ନାତି ପାଟି କରୁଥିଲା, “ବାବା, ମତେ ରଙ୍ଗ ଦିଅ, ମୁଁ ଆଜି ଜେଜେ, ଜେଜେମାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ହୋଲି ଖେଳିବି ।”

ଘରବାହୁଡ଼ା

ଅଭିଳିଷ୍ଟା ଜେନା, ଓନ୍ଦେରିଓ, ଟୋରୋଝୋ

ସେଦିନ ବିମାନର ଠିକଣା ଥିଲା ନୁଆଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ଆଜିବି ସେଇ ଏକା ଠିକଣା । ସାତ ବର୍ଷ ତଳର ଉଡ଼ାଣ ଥିଲା ହଜିଯାଇଥିବା ନିଜକୁ ଖୋଜିବା ପାଇଁ, ଆଜିର ଉଡ଼ାଣ ନୁଆ ଉସାହର, କାଲିର ଅଲରା ଶମ୍ବାଲୁଆ ଛିଟ ପ୍ରଜାପତିଟିଏ ହେଇ ଉଡ଼ିଯିବ ତା ନିଡ଼କୁ ।

ଆନମନା ହେଉଥିଲା ମିତାଲୀ, କାନାଡାରେ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଜାତୀୟ ନୃତ୍ୟଉତ୍ସବରେ ସେ ଆଉ ତା ଟିମ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ନାଚି ପ୍ରଶଂସା ସାଉଁଟିଛନ୍ତି । ମନେପଡୁଥିଲେ ରୋଜୀ, ମାଉସୀ (ରୋଜୀର ମା), ଅବିନାଶ, ବାଉଁଶରାଣୀ ଝିଅ, ବାପା, ବୋଉ ଜଣାନାହିଁ ଆଉକିଏ ସବୁ ।

ହାତଠାରି ଡାକିଲା ରୋଜୀ, ବାପାଙ୍କର ବଦଳି କଟକ, ବଡ଼ମ୍ବା, ନୁଆଜାଗା ପ୍ରଥମ ସାଙ୍ଗ ରୋଜୀ । ପାହାଡ଼ କାଟି ଘର, ମଝିରେ ଅଗଣା, ସିଡି ଘର ଭିତରେ ବାଲିଗଦା । ବାପା କହନ୍ତି ପାଖରେ ଯୋଉ ଛୋଟ ନଈ ଅଛି ଭାଲୁ ଆସନ୍ତି ବରକୋଳି ଖାଇବାପାଇଁ । ବାପାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଛାତ ଉପରେ ତାରା ଗଣ୍ଡୁ ଗଣ୍ଡୁ ଶୋଇପଡେ ଗାଢ଼ ନିଦରେ ।

ରୋଜୀର ତାର ସବୁଦିନ ବହେ ଖେଳନ୍ତି । ଦିନେ ରୋଜୀଘର ମାଉସୀ ଚାଣି ନେଇ ଚଉକା ବସା ସିଖେଇଲେ, କହିଲେ ଝିଅ ବାକି ଝିଅଙ୍କ ସହ ତୁ ଆଉ ରୋଜୀ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ଶିଖିବ । ମାଉସୀ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ଗୁରୁ ଥିଲେ । ବାପା ବଦଳି ହେଇ ଯାଜପୁର ଆସିଲେ, ରୋଜୀ ରହିଗଲା ବଡ଼ମ୍ବାରେ ।

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ପଢ଼ିବାବେଳେ ତିନିବର୍ଷ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ଶିଖୁଥିଲା । ପରେ ଓ.ଇ.ଏସ୍ ଅଫିସର୍ ହେଇ ଚାକିରିରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇଥିଲା । ଚାକିରିକୁ ଦେଉବର୍ଷ ନପୁରୁଣୁ ବାହାଘର । ଚାକିରିଛାଡ଼ି ବେଙ୍ଗାଲୁରୁ ଗଲା ଅବିନାଶ ସହ । ଦିନ କେଇଟାରେ ରୁକ୍ଷି ହେଇଗଲା ମନ, ବେହୋସ ହେବା ଯାଏ ମଦ ପିଉଥିଲେ ଅବିନାଶ, ଆପତ୍ତିକଲେ ଘରେ ପାଲା ଚାଲୁଥିଲା । ଯେବେ ହୋସରେ ଥାଆନ୍ତି, ମିତାଲୀ ଯଦି ସଜେଇ ହେଇ ମଲ୍ କି ଗେଟଚୁଗେଦରକୁ ବାହାରିଲା, ଛିଗୁଲେଇ କହିବେ କାହାପାଇଁ ଏତେ ସଜେଇହେଇଛି । ବାପା, ବୋଉ, ସମାଜ କଥା ଭାବି ଚୁପ୍ ରହେ ମିତାଲୀ ।

ମଝିରେ ରାଗି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ବାହାରିଥିଲା, ହଠାତ ବଦଳିଗଲେ ଅବିନାଶ, ତା ଓଠ ଧରି କହୁଥିଲେ ମୁଁ
ଆଜିଠୁ ପିଇବିନି ।

ବେଶ୍ କିଛିଦିନ ଖୁବ୍ ଭଲରେ କଟିଗଲା । କାନାଡା ଯିବେ ମିତାଲୀ ଓ ଅବିନାଶ ଦୁଇ ବର୍ଷ ପାଇଁ ।

ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା କାନାଡା । ଅବିନାଶ ବୁଡ଼ି ଯାଉଥିଲେ କାମରେ, ସାଙ୍ଗ ମେଳରେ ଆଉ ମଦରେ ।
ଚାରିବର୍ଷ ହେଲା ବାହାଘର, ପିଞ୍ଜରାର ବନ୍ଦ ଚଢ଼େଇ ଭଳି ଛଟପଟ ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ତାକୁ ।
କେତେଦିନ ତା ଇଚ୍ଛା, ଆକାଂକ୍ଷାକୁ ମାରି ଆଉ କାହାର ତୃପ୍ତି, ସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟି ଭିତରେ ରୂପଚାପ୍ ଗେଞ୍ଜି
ହେଇ ଆଡ଼ଜଣ୍ଟ କରିବ । ହୃଦୟ ଏକଲା ପଣର ବୋଝରେ ଭାରି ହେଉଥିଲା । କୁଆଡେଗଲା ସେ
ଦେଖୁଥିବା ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ସବୁ, ତା ଖୁଲିଖୁଲି ହସର ଲହଡ଼ି । ଆଡ଼ଆଖିରେ ବି ଚାହାନ୍ତିନି ଅବିନାଶ । ତା
ଖୁସି, ହସ, କାନ୍ଦର କିଛି ମାନେ ନଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ । ନିରେଖୁ ଦେଖୁଥାଏ ନିଜକୁ ଆଇନାରେ
। ଆଖିତଳେ ବହଳ କଳା, ତୋପା ଜହ୍ନ ପରି ଚେହରା ଆଜି ଉଦାସ, ମଳିନ । କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ଦିଶୁଥିଲା
ମନ । ଖୁବ୍ ଜୋରରେ ଏଣ୍ଟି ଡୋର୍ ବନ୍ଦ କରି ଚପଲ ହଳକ ଘୋଷାରି ତଳକୁ ଆସିଲା,
ମାଇନସ୍ ଷୋହଳ ଡିଗ୍ରୀ ତାପମାତ୍ରା, ଦେହରେ ଜ୍ୟାକେଟ ନାହିଁ । କେମିତି ବା ବାହାରକୁ
ବାହାରିବାର ସାହସ କରିପାରିଲା । ରାସ୍ତା ଦୁଇପଟରେ ବରଫ ସ୍ତୁପଭଳି ଗଦା ହେଇଛି । ଚିକେ
ଦୁରରେ ବରଫ ସଫା କରୁଥିବା ଗାଡ଼ିର ଶବ୍ଦରେ ସେ ପ୍ରକୃତିସ୍ଥ ହେଲା । ନିଜେ ବହଳ
ବରଫଗଦାଟିଏ ହେବା ଆଗରୁ ଘର ଭିତରକୁ ଚାଲିଆସିଲା । ଫ୍ଲାଇଟ୍ ବୁକ୍ କଲା ନିଜେ, ଘରକୁ
ଯିବ ସେ ଜଡ଼ ହେଇ, ଅପସରି ଯିବନି ସେ । ନିଜକୁ, ନିଜ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନକୁ ବାଛିବ ଏଣିକି ସେ, ବାସ୍
ଏତିକି ।

ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିବାର କେତେମାସ କେମିତି କଟିଛି ସେ ଜାଣିପାରିନି । ଡିପ୍ରେସନ୍, ଆନଜାକଟି
ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ବୋଉ କେତେପ୍ରକାର ଔଷଧ ଦିଏ । ଲମ୍ବା ବେଶୀ କାଟି ଦେଇଛି ମିତାଲୀ ନିଜେ, ସାତ
ବେଣ୍ଟି କଲାପରି ଦିଶୁଛି, ଦୌଡ଼ିଆସି କୁଣ୍ଠେଇ ପକେଇଲା ବୋଉ । ତଳଘର ରୁମ୍‌କୁ ଆଇ
ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ମନ୍ଦିର ଆସିଛି ମିତାଲୀ । ଫେରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଦେଖିଲା, ବାର, ତେର ବର୍ଷର ଝିଅଟେ
ବାଉଁଶରାଣୀ ଖେଳ ଦେଖାଉଛି, ଆଉ ତଳେ ସାତ ଆଠ ବର୍ଷର ଝିଅ ଆଳିଟେ ଧରି ପଇସା
ମାଗୁଛି । କ୍ଷଣିକ ପାଇଁ ଭୁଲିଗଲା ତା ଦୁଃଖ,ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ।

ଦୁନିଆରେ ଏମିତି କିଏ କେତେ ଯାତନା ପାଉଛି ତା ହିସାବ କରିହେବନି, କିନ୍ତୁ ତାର ଉପଶମ ପାଇଁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରାଯାଇପାରେ । ଛୋଟ ଝିଅ ଦୁଇଟି ସଂଘର୍ଷ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ବଞ୍ଚିବା ପାଇଁ । ତା ଦୁଃଖ କଣ ଏତେବଡ଼, ସେ ବି ସଂଘର୍ଷ କରିବ । ଝିଅଟି ହାତରେ ଶହେ ଟଙ୍କା ଗୁଞ୍ଜି ଦେଇ ଘରକୁ ପଳେଇଆସିଲା ।

ପୁରୁଣା ଆଲମାରି ଖୋଲି ଯତ୍ନରେ ସାଇତା ପୋଟଳୀ ଖୋଲିଲା, ଘୁଙ୍ଗୁର ହଳକ କାଢ଼ିଆଣି ଜଡାଇ ଧରିଲା । ଧାର ଧାର ବହିଯାଉଥିବା ଅମାନିଆ ଲୁହକୁ ଦି ହାତରେ ପୋଛି ପକେଇ ପାଦରେ ଘୁଙ୍ଗୁର ବାନ୍ଧି ନାଟି ଚାଲିଲା ତାକ...ଧା...ଆ...କତକ.....ତା..... । ଝାଳ ସରସର ହେଇ ଲମ୍ବ କରି ବସିପଡ଼ିଲା, ଭିତରୁ କିଏ କହୁଥିଲା ଜୀବନ ଚକ ଗଢିବା ଦରକାର । ତୋ ପରି କେତେ ମିତାଳୀ ଜୀବନ ସଂଗ୍ରାମ କରିଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ତାର ହିସାବ ନାହିଁ । ହଁ ସେ ଉଠିବ, ପଢ଼ିବ ଝାଡ଼ିଝୁଡ଼ି ହେଇ ପୁଣି ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିବ । ଏଥର ଉଠିବ ସେ ଆଗକୁ ଆଗକୁ । ଫିକ୍ କିନା ହସିଦେଲା ଆମ୍ବତୃପ୍ତି ଭରା ହସଟେ । ପୁ୍ୟପାରୁ ପ୍ରଜାପତି ପାଲଟୁଥିଲା ସେ । ବୋଉ ଖାଇବା ହେଲାଣି ଭାରି ଭୋକ..... ଚମକିପଡ଼ିଲା ବୋଉ ତା ତାକ ଶୁଣି । ଆଶା ଆଶଙ୍କାକୁ ସାଇତ କରା ବାପା, ବୋଉ ଓ ମିତାଳୀ ଖାଇବାରେ ମନ ଦେଲେ ।

ଦୁଇ ବର୍ଷରୁ ଅଧିକା ସମୟ ବିତିଯାଇଛି ଯା ଭିତରେ । ମିତାଳୀ ରାୟ ଏବେ ଓଡ଼ିଶୀ ନୃତ୍ୟ ଗୁରୁ ନବଗୁଞ୍ଜର ନୃତ୍ୟ ଏକାଡେମୀର ମାଲିକ । ଦେଶର ନାଁ କରା ମଞ୍ଚ ସବୁରେ ନାଚ ପରିବେଷଣ କରି ମାନ ସମମାନ ପାଇଛି । ଏ ସାତ ବର୍ଷରେ କିଛି ହରେଇଛି ତା ଭିତରେ, ନିଜକୁ ଖୋଜି ପାଇଛି । ଜୀବନର ଚକ୍ର ଯୋଉଠି ହାରିଯାଇଥିଲା ଦିନେ ଠିକ୍ ସେଇଠି ତା ଜୀବନର ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ ନୂଆ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେବାକୁ ଯାଉଛି ।

ବୋଉର କାଶ୍ମିରି ସାଲ୍ ଘୋଡେଇ ହେଇ ମିତାଳି ଗୁଣ୍ଡୁଗୁଣ୍ଡୁ ଗାଇ ଚାଲିଥିଲା,” ଜୀବନପାତ୍ର ମୋର ଭରିଛି କେତେମତେ”॥

ଉଡାଣ ଭରୁଥିଲା ଯାତ୍ରୀବାହୀ ଜାହାଜ ଟୋରୋଷ୍ଟୋ ଏୟାରପୋର୍ଟରୁ॥



English Poems

MEET ME ON THE OTHER SIDE..

Meet me on the other side of the road,
Where I promise to be a new person
I will be smiling more,
Stressing less
I will be loving more,
Judging less

I will be caring more,
With all my heart
I will be truthful,
Supporting more
I will be transparent,
And learn some more

I will leave my fears behind,
And let my soul unwind
I will cherish the silence,
Finding peace in the noise
I will listen deeply,
And speak with poise

Meet me on the other side of the road,
Where my soul and I stand bold and whole
Together we will rise, unshaken and clear
A fearless version of who I am meant to be.

Prachi Mohanty, Allen, Texas

The Circle of life!!

Priya D. Palo

The Circle of life!!

This life is very beautiful indeed, sometimes we do not get all the meaningful changes we see in life!!

Like a caterpillar, it starts changing its shape, size and color and turns into a beautiful Butterfly.

Like plant life cycles include seed, dormancy, germination, growth, and flowering.

Like Chicken life cycle, it starts from egg, embryo, hatching and chic, Adult Chicken.

Like the Rain Lifecycle, it starts with collection, condensation, evaporation, Precipitation

Like the Human cycle, it starts from Conception, pregnancy, Childbirth, infancy, Toddler, Teenage, Adulthood, Old age, Death .

We should use this life to nurture, care and utilize this life to spread happiness !!

Ultimately Life starts from a drop as an embryo and ends in ashes!!

Renewal

By: Sumedha Jena

the wounds that scarred you, they shan't define
your worth and spirit will transcend in time
those prior ailments, though sharp their sting
have a gifted perspective, an altered view to bring.
like petals emerging, obstinate but pure
breaking through the gloom, your resilience clear
no bitter wind can destroy your drive to bloom
for in the depths of your being, indelible strength awaits.
with each fragile unfolding, reveals deeper beauty
the breaking has ruptured, your soul self-healed.

move ahead from the agony that once carried you captive.
your true self is crowned at the flowering rebirth.





English Stories

Reincarnations of Vishnu

By: Ayaan Mahapatra, 15 years



Image generated by Copilot



Vishnu, one of the three primordial gods, is responsible for preservation and balance. He often ensures that either mortal or immortal doesn't destroy everything and that things don't get mass-produced. However, to solve problems on earth, he usually had to become mortal, turning into the common 10 reincarnations across different Yugas(periods). Here is some information on them.

The 1st Avatar was Matsya, the Giant fish, who appeared in the Satya Yuga (the golden age). What happened is that there was a big flood, making Vishnu want the human race to continue, transforming into a fish, no smaller than a leaf. He then appeared in King Manu's (the 1st human) and asked Manu to feed & protect him. Over time, Matsya grew bigger & bigger, until he was big enough to live in the ocean. Grateful to Manu, Matsya warned Many of the large flood, telling him to build a giant boat & gather a few animals & the 7 Vedic rishis, as well as the Vedas, so that they can survive the flood. When the Flood finally came, everyone went on the boat, only to See Matsya, even bigger now, telling them that he would pull them to safety, so they gave him a rope that was tied to the boat, with Matsya pulling them all. When the storm ended, Matsya swam away, never to be seen again.

The 2nd Avatar was a giant turtle, Kurma, during Satya Yuga. He became off, due to The Devas (gods) Arrogance. You see, this story begins when Sage Durvasa, comes to the god's abode to give a holy garland to Indra, god of lightning, thunder, and sky. Indra, being arrogant and already busy with something, gave the garland to his Elephant, Airavata, with Airavata Not liking the smell, threw it to the ground. Sage Durvasa, feeling mad at this disrespect, Took away Deva's immortality, with the gods only being able to get it back by churning the ocean of milk, with the nectar of Immortality coming out of it. With the Asura's help, they managed to get it out.

The 3rd Avatar is the boar man, Varaha, during the Satya Yuga. A common story of this is that the Asura, Hiranyaksha, carried the earth, submerging it into the cosmic ocean, challenging Vishnu to fight him. If Vishnu wins, the Earth can be carried out. Vishnu, turns into Varaha, fighting the Demon for Centuries if not millennia. Finally defeating Hiranyaksha, Varaha Finally carried the earth out using his tusks, successfully saving the world (again).

The 4th avatar is the Half Lion, half man, Narasimha, being the last avatar during the Satya Yuga. This story takes place a bit after The events of the 3rd avatar. Hiranyaksha's brother, Hiranyakashipu, mad that His brother was defeated, started praying to lord Brahma, primordial of creation. Brahma then appeared to Hiranyakashipu, asking him to tell what his boon was.

Hiranyakashipu wanted immortality, but Brahma refused. So, instead, Hiranyakashipu thought of a clever idea, that neither man nor animal can defeat him, he can't die inside or outside a building, daytime or night, on the ground or the sky, or by any sword or such weapon. With this wish, Hiranyakashipu went on a rampage, destroying the abode of the gods. But his son, Prahalada, was a huge devotee of

Vishnu. Not liking that his son is not following in his footsteps, Hiranyakashipu tried killing him via burning, poison, starvation, weaponry & from a huge fall, with Prahalada, miraculously surviving each time. At last, getting impatient on a sunset, Hiranyakashipu asked Prahalada if god was everywhere, with Prahalada, said yes. Hiranyakashipu, then broke a pillar, saying that if Vishnu didn't pop out, Prahalada would die. But he didn't. Because Vishnu, in the form of a lion-man hybrid, picked up Hiranyakashipu, got to the courtyard, made him lay on his lap & killed Hiranyakashipu, not with any weapon, but with his claws. Then he proceeded to go on a rampage, only stopping when Prahalada begged him to stop.

The 5th incarnation is the Dwarf, Vamana, and is the 1st avatar of the Treta Yuga. During that time, there was a demon, Mahabali, who was rising in power, which was feared, due to Indra losing his kingship & immortality. It was up to Vishnu to protect everyone from Mahabali. So, while there was a sacrifice going on, with Mahabali doing it, Vishnu turned into a Brahmin dwarf & went to the yagna. Being a Brahmin, Vamana asked Mahabali to give him all the space he could cover in 3 strides, with Mahabali, not knowing who he was dealing with, allowed him to. So Vamana grew to a colossal size, with one stride covering earth, another covering heaven. With his last step, he then put his head on Mahabali's head, stomping on it so hard that Mahabali died, sinking into the underworld.

The 6th incarnation is the axe killer sage, Parashurama in the Treta Yuga. When he was young, he started doing penance to Shiva, primordial of destruction & yoga. In doing so, he got a flaming legendary Parashu (axe). A little while later, a king known as Kartavirya Arjuna, and his men appeared in his father's ashram. The king came, asking for Kamadhenu, a magical cow that can give infinite food. When the father (Jamadagni) refused, The king took Kamadhenu by force. Parashurama, pissed that they can't get infinite food, went to said king's army, destroyed them & then killed Kartavirya Arjuna. Kartavirya Arjuna's kids then became mad, killing Jamadagni. Parashurama, furious that they killed his father, decided on a wide killing spree, killing all the Kings, to stop them from abusing their power. Which was good, except he also killed the good kings. He even met his other reincarnate, Rama.

The 7th incarnation is Rama, being the Last in the Treta Yuga. As we all know, he was the son of King Dasaratha & Queen Kausalya, as well as the brother of Laksmana, Bharatha & Shatrugna. He married Sita, daughter of the earth goddess & stepdaughter of King Janak, at 16 years old, during a competition. Then, 10 years later, King Dasaratha is about to make Rama king, when Kaikei, Bharatha's stepmom, becomes jealous that Bharatha won't be king. So she forces Dasaratha to make Rama exiled for 14 years, making Bharatha king. Dasaratha complied, but died shortly after, with Rama agreeing to the arrangement, because of his honor. Sita & Laksmana follow him. 13 years later, the demon king Ravana kidnaps Sita, for him to marry, So Rama & Lakshmana try to get her back. With the help of the Banaras, Rama defeats Ravana, gets Sita back & becomes king. He also abandons Sita, making her raise their children in an ashram,

The 8th incarnation is Krishna, being the 1st in the Dwapara Yuga. Krishna, unlike the others on this list, doesn't just solve 1 problem, he solves multiple problems, as well as being a side character needed in the Mahabharata. He was born as a son to Yashoda, defeating his evil uncle at 16 years old, along with other problems.

The 9th incarnation, which is the last one in the Dwapara yuga, is quite tricky to pinpoint. Some answers say that the answer is Siddhartha Gautama, also known as the Buddha, who gave rise to Buddhism. Other people say it is Lord Jagannath, an incarnation of Krishna, modeled by the carpenter of the gods, Vishvakarma. Other people say it is Balaram, Krishna's older brother.

The 10th incarnation, which will happen in the Kali-yuga (current yuga) is Kaliki. Note that I said 'will happen'. That is because Kaliki did not appear yet. Basically, in all the yugas, we are living in the worst possible yuga, in which Kaliki will kill any bad people, starting the cycle again, making it the Satya Yuga.

This all goes to show one thing about the Circle of life, Once one thing dies, another thing is born, as shown in Bhagavad Gita, when Krishan gives an analogy to Arjuna, where dying is like someone (the soul) changing out of old clothes (your body when you die) & goes inside a new one (your soul's new body). Like that, the incarnations of Vishnu show how life moves, you are born, and dead, then you come back in a different situation, like how Vishnu 1st appeared as a Fish but then turned into a god prince.



Charudutta Panigrahi

Shivoham, Shivoham – mining inside

Shivoham” means “I am Shiva”. Shiva means auspicious and benevolent. When you meditate, the silence builds your bridge with the absolute. It makes us pragmatic because it reminds us of our oneness with the absolute. That is why we emerge stronger, stress-free after every stint of meditation.

Shiva is the Yogiraj – the epitome of penance. Only penance can appease him. Meditation essentially means to remain unoccupied and unattached. Occupation is an escape and distraction. So, when you are still, the energy moves towards the centre. It settles down towards there. But when you are unstable, the energy dissipates and moves out.

Doing is a way of spilling out and non-doing is a way of gathering in. So, the engagements or occupations make you cling outside your being. They are excuses to remain on the fringes, outside. You would not have the courage to gather yourself. That is why it seems so difficult to meditate. It seems because we do not make an attempt to face ourselves and our silence. Always running away makes us resort to an external locus of control.

Shiva meditated, looked inside, sought silence in the mountains, and hence exemplified absolute control on the absolute. And for Him the absolute was self. Hence, He never sought material creatures and lived the life of a nomad. He was the richest and why would He look for external embellishments to put up a good show? He did not ever pay attention to His clothes or riches because His belief and message was that all these are external. They are cosmetic.

To start an inward journey is often scary because we have made ourselves chaotic and a puddle of muddy water. When we enter ourselves, we have to cross our own doing and that puts us off. The self-created ghosts scare us. We need the courage to be oneself, and to move inwards. The courage to be meditative is the greatest courage, one where you are one – both inside and outside. This assimilation needs tremendous fluidity.

Another meaning of the word Shiva is acceptance. If you accept there is no blockage. Fluidity gives us the reach and the independence. You can breathe better if you are fluid and accepting. You don't have to create wily ways of carving your own path. In this activity of carving our own path, we bring in ego to our doing. The momentary achievements in having the paths paved give the pride of a doer. It destroys the beauty of creation. Everything is given. Why are you so anxious

to build your own estate? Learn to enjoy. The rage of Shiva is the fire in a sacrificing Yagna. It is meant to signal the sprouting of ego and hence the need to gut it down.

Start collecting yourself and drop the frills. They do not belong to you. Are you sure that you belong to yourself? For a change, be selfish by collecting yourself, your traits, your absorption with nature, the Supreme. You have come a long way and do not abandon yourself any further. Yogiraj might be sitting on the rocks, with snakes around him and no riches and jewellery but He has the 'entire' with Him.

This composure inside has opened His third eye – the completeness beyond everything and nothing. When you meditate and do that consistently you will realise that you develop a strong intuition. This intuition is a little drop of the third eye or the power of “looking beyond”, contemplating the unknown. Meditation is just to be, not doing anything –no thought, no emotion, no action. You just are. There is complete fulfillment or richness in mediation. It comes from nowhere and it comes from everywhere. Existence is always complete, designed for everyone and everything and still we feel so deprived, depraved, and disillusioned.

On this Shivratri day, pledge to sit with yourself, gather your energies, listen carefully to what Shiva has to tell you, and only then you can dance. Tandav is easy provided you know to dance to the tune of nature. For Shiva is the Supreme nature, the most human of creators, and the ultimate role model.

Joy is your sanctum sanctorum. Whenever you are happy, you are happy for no reason at all, whenever you are unhappy, you have some reason to be unhappy. Happiness is the stuff you are made of. Repeating the “Shivoham Shivoham” mantra and constant inner mining would help you in your inward journey to freedom.

You are Shiva. But first, centre yourself and know your true worth, not your asset list. Don't remain poor, this Shivratri.

(Charudutta Panigrahi is learning to get inside himself, another beautiful creation of the Supreme. He may be contacted at charu.panigrahi@gmail.com)

Precious for Life

Chinmayee Devi



Education is the most precious thing in this world. It influences every human being. Education may be a simple word around the world, but everyone knows this simple acronym word can change everything. Education enhances our inner strength. It is an essential requirement for our inner consciousness. Our lifestyle, judgment, social responsibility, all of these depend on our education and the values we learn from our education.

Thousands of organizations, schools, colleges, and universities are educating students worldwide. Every year, millions of students graduate, but many students are sabotaging their future, and many scholars are depressed. The whole world is concerned about education and finding scholars, but we are still reading news about guns, killing, corruption, war, and many social crimes. Then, how can education cure social crime? Students should learn how to improve their thinking, cognitive ability, good character, and competence for social growth.

Nature has taught us many things more than getting a degree. Earth and sky are nurturing us, the soil is feeding us, and water and fire are essential for our life but we are more close to artificial world. People can't see earth's pain by how they are disturbing nature. Now a days people connect more with technology which is not bad but not good all the time. People lose emotion, love, patience. People slowly become solitude.

Gaining knowledge to help society, not only understand math and science but also understand the earth's nature and its opulence.

Every day nature nurtures us and teaches us some new consciousness. Every season contrasts with each other and they have different creations, beauty, and unique power, like every place has unique beauty and charming attraction. Ocean, river, trees, desert, farming land, mountains, trees, and animals are not competing with each other. All these have a superpower and they can happily live together, maintain peace and help the earth. Some people understand that destroying nature means destroying our future, which is our biggest wealth, but every day we are disturbing and hurting nature. The whole world is making noise about pollution and leaders discussing global warming yet, pollution is still rising.

Earth is our home and If we continue to fight with each other than war continues in our home causing pollution to go high level. That means nobody understands what is happening around us, how many people think about their Nobel contribution to earth. Because Earth is our home. We all need peace. When you feel peace then your brain starts thinking about welfare for our society. Ultimately a healthy person depends on food, a good environment, and living in a healthy society. All these are possible when people wish well for each other and try to do something for global warming. People can do all these with only their knowledge.

Education eradicates our negativity power not our positivity power. Student getting 100 percentile does not mean a student understands how to survive life, Earning a good salary also does not decide you get a better life. Some time we see news some wealthy people killing each other or suicide.

Sometimes homework does not solve the problem of your life. Every year new medicines, doctors, and new machines are coming to maintain a better life, but at the same time, we notice new diseases, new challenges, and the big wealth in human life is deteriorating. That means we need education which helps to solve our problem. Doctors, professors, and many educated and wealthy people suffer from Anxiety and depression.

The world is running behind in wealth and technology. But no one understands what is the biggest wealth. Technology does not cure your mental health. We have to grow more humanity, be kind, help each other, and understand Earth's pain. Students have to understand that someone can earn thousands, millions, billions, but can't make a life, plant, or a planet. It is hard to earn kindness and calmness, The rich and poor, who have contagious diseases, a hero or an ordinary man. It doesn't matter for the earth. We all survive the same air quality and same soil, we all are one under the sky on this earth, not on Mars or a different place in this universe. We have small rooms or bigger mansions. We all depend on each other. Only our thought processes, our Nobel ideas, our education, our nature, kindness, and acceptance are different. But Our nest is only on earth. Not out of the world. We are not destroying any enemy or any neighbor, any country. Only We are destroying ourselves, destroying our nest earth.

It matters how we apply our education. Education is the mother of every technology, weapon, and system. We should understand whether our education helps the earth or destroys the earth. Our education makes money or education makes the power of humanity. Education is more precious than anything in the world. It matters what we choose in our life. What is the purpose of our life? How do we want to educate ourselves? We need an education to understand the sweetness of our earth and that education makes consciousness with the human brain for a healthy society. We are taking a breath and our desires are unlimited. Please join hands together to help each other and not hurt each other save our Earth.

God bless all.
Chinmayee Devi Chicago, USA

The Sourdough Starter

By: Sushreeya Devi Mishra



Like a sourdough starter, life starts with something small and seemingly unimportant—a combination of elements that don't seem to have any relationship or purpose at first. But with time, patience, and attention, they become more than the sum of their parts. The process of caring for a sourdough starter is a metaphor for how we develop, change, and discover purpose in the seemingly routine times of our lives.

When you begin to cultivate a sourdough starter, it's nothing more than flour and water, mixed in a jar. At first, you're not able to tell the wonderful life that's soon to jump at you, full of all the adventures you'll embark on. While this appears to be bland, it's the beauty of nature. Two simple things, sweet and full of love, came and created something beautiful.

However, in the same way that a sourdough starter requires consistent feeding and the right balance of warmth, it is through our experiences—both good and bad—that we learn. The starter may bubble and expand one day, only to fall flat the next. It may smell off or seem as though it's on the verge of giving up entirely. Life, too, often feels like it's not progressing as we had hoped. There are days when everything seems to go wrong, when our efforts feel futile, and when we wonder if we'll ever rise to the occasion. These moments of struggle are not only inevitable; they are essential to the process.

The sourdough starter needs time to ferment, and so do we. Time allows the starter to grow more complex, to develop the wild yeasts and bacteria that give it its unique flavor. Similarly, time allows us to absorb the experiences, lessons, and relationships that shape us into the people we are meant to become. The difficult moments—the ones that test our patience, resilience, and strength—are often the ones that contribute the most to our depth. Without the challenges, we would never know the sweet satisfaction of rising above them. Without the fermentation of life's complexities, we wouldn't understand the beauty of transformation.

There are moments when the starter seems to be failing, just as there are moments in life when it feels like we are stuck in a place of despair. The bread may not rise, the dough may not form, and the starter may become stagnant. It is in these moments that we are tested the most. The secret, however, is in persistence. The sourdough starter doesn't give up—it's just waiting for the right conditions, the right care. So we too must continue to nurture ourselves, even when we feel defeated. We must trust that growth is happening beneath the surface, even when we can't see it immediately.

Then, one day, the starter is ready. It bubbles with life, full of potential. It is transformed into something that can rise and fill the kitchen with warmth and aroma. Likewise, when we reach the right moments of clarity and self-understanding, we begin to rise. The struggles we've faced and the time we've spent growing and learning all culminate in a version of ourselves that is stronger, more resilient, and more capable than we ever imagined.

Life, like sourdough, is an ongoing process. There is no fixed moment of "completion," but rather a constant cycle of growth and renewal. We continue to ferment, to rise, to fall, and to rise again. Through the patience we've developed, through the care we give ourselves and others, we evolve. The sourdough starter doesn't know where it's going, but it trusts in the process. Likewise, we must trust in our journeys, understanding that every challenge, every moment of doubt, is simply a part of our unique recipe for growth.

In the end, both sourdough and life are about transformation. What begins as a simple mixture of ingredients—like the raw potential of a human life—becomes something much more. It becomes a symbol of patience, persistence, and the beauty of becoming. And just as we savor the warm, golden loaf of sourdough, we can savor the person we have become after all the time, care, and effort we've put into our personal growth.

Sushreeya Devi Mishra
Chicago

Tribute to Fakir Mohan Senapati

By Sambheet Dash, Columbus, GA

If he wasn't born in Odisha on that winter day of January 13, 1843, we Odias would be possibly reading and speaking Bengali today. Fakir Mohan Senapati, a legend of Odisha was way ahead of his time. He was a writer, patriot, social reformer and a shrewd strategist rolled into one, who fought for the survival of Odia language which at one point of time was on the verge of extinction.

Had he not been there, in all probability Bengali would have taken over Odia as the medium of teaching in the state where Odia is the mother tongue of the overwhelming majority. Many eminent, powerful Bengalis at the helm of affairs those days living in Cuttack led by one Anandilal Mitra made this fallacious proclamation - "ODIA EKTA SWATANTRA VASA NAYE, "Odia is not an independent language".

Fakir Mohan fought tooth and nail against this wrong notion. He strategized in order to achieve the goal of saving Odia language from total annihilation. First he started a printing press in Odia and published several books in his mother tongue. Odia survived as a language, thanks to his efforts and the likes of Sri Gourishankar Ray and Utkal Gouraba (The Pride of Odisha) Sri Madhusudan Das and the Das duo of Utkalamani (Jewel of Odisha) Sri Gopabandhu Das and Pandit Nilakantha Das.

Fakir Mohan's life was a sad saga of personal tragedies and struggle. Born in the district of Balasore, he lost his parents at an early age. In abject poverty he worked as a laborer to finance and further his childhood education. A lanky man of small frame he suffered from multiple ailments. Tragedies struck him one after another as he lost his wife, remarried and lost his wife again. He went through bouts of alcoholism in order to cover up his frustrations with life.

He did several odd jobs to make a living - doing business in sea salt, working as an accountant and being DEWAAN (Prime Minister) of Vassals and Zamindaars (Landowners). Though never financially secure, it didn't stop him from writing some brilliant short stories - from serious ones like REBATI where a girl child's education was blamed for cholera deaths in her family to funny ones like PATENT MEDICINE, the story of a perpetually drunk man. This play was later immortalized by its musical version made by the multi-talented Akhshay Mohanty. Personally, I was impressed by his short story DHULIA BABA (The Sand Shrouded Saint). In that epic story the writer has exposed the duplicacy of a BHANDA BABA (fake mendicant).

Fakir Mohan realized that Odia language can only be taken to the next level by popularizing and expanding its literature through various publications. His friend Gourishankar Ray published an Odia magazine named UTKAL DIPIKA (The Lamp of Odisha) for the first time on August 4, 1866. They left no stones unturned by reporting the failure of the British administration to prevent and contain the great famine of 1865-66 when millions died from starvation.

Mr. Senapati, irrespective of being weak and having a weakness for alcohol, lived 75 years at a time when average human longevity was less than half of that. He loved Brandy and had a good number of English friends who supplied him with Foreign brands

- a luxury those days. On one cold winter evening of 1866, when he was 23 years old, there was a hot discussion amongst drinking buddies inside the exclusive Station Club of Cuttack. They were pulling the legs of E. J. Barton, the Assistant Collector of Khurda who was accused by a local woman of fathering his daughter. It was the outcome of an affair of an Englishman with a native girl in an age without contraceptives.

The folks believed her, for the newborn baby was looking like an English woman with her sparkling blue eyes and reddish white skin - a genetic trait nowhere close to the generally dark complexioned local men. A Khurda man's progeny can't be a blue eyed boy, an English child. The case was eventually dismissed due to lack of evidence at a time when DNA tests were strictly fantasy and the British were in power.

This news about the blue eyed girl came like a bolt from the blue on that blue, starry evening at the Club as gossip filled tongues kept wagging about the spicy incident in the milieu amongst the bland, mundane life of the government officials. The English ladies giggled and bitched about the hot news as hot as their piping hot afternoon tea. This news was picked up by Utkal Dipika and was arguably the first tabloid scoop by an Odia magazine which certainly helped increase its circulation. Nothing much has changed 150 years down the road. Spicy gossips sell well.

Fakir Mohan was smart and witty. While working as Dewan in Keonjhar he was kept under house arrest by mutineers. He was closely monitored, not allowed any communication to the outside world. He wrote a letter to one of his close friends - "Dear Bholanath Khamaria. Send me 100 betel and 100 betel nuts. Irrigate the sugarcane fields by watering from the North. Otherwise, you will lose the entire field of crop".

The letter looked too innocuous to raise any kind of suspicion. His captors duly sent it to the intended addressee. Needless to say betel was the codename for guns and nuts for bullets. The instruction was to attack from the north, lest the sugarcane field (the palace) will be destroyed. The recipient decoded Wily Fakir Mohan's note and soon sent armed soldiers to rescue him.

Sad that the name of a statesman of great stature now languishes in the dustbins of history, restricted only to a Government College in Balasore named after him and few stamps released on his 175th birth anniversary. Hardly anyone remembers him these days. My thousands salute and tribute to the man for his service to the state of Odisha.